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The SNP is "running scared" after begging the Greens not to stand candidates in seats it thinks could be vulnerable.

MP Tommy Sheppard said the Greens would "have to choose" when it came to certain constituencies in a bid "not to split the pro-Yes vote".

The Greens' "co-convener" Maggie Chapman has already hinted at support for "non-Green candidates" in parts of the country, so long as they're backing separation.

In 2015, 31 Green candidates stood in the General Election, losing the deposit in all but three seats.

The Scottish Conservatives have warned the party to "put up or shut up", adding that its core voters wouldn't forgive lying down to the SNP.

Scottish Conservative candidate for Aberdeen South Ross Thomson said:

"The Greens have to put up or shut up.

"They can't pretend to be a proper party while sitting this election out and begging its voters to back someone else.

"That's a shameful approach, and any genuine Green voter will be disgusted with it.

"It's also very telling that the SNP has taken this step.

"It shows the party is rattled and running scared, and its MPs right across Scotland are terrified of losing their seats.

"So they should be. People are sick of the nationalists' rabble-rousing on separation, and this latest intervention will just put more people off."

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- **Maggie Chapman said that she would be happy to support 'non-Green candidates' and that the Party would not stand in constituencies that it had previously lost its deposit in. 'I would be quite happy for us to**

support non-Green candidates if it meant getting Tories out of Scotland and making sure we had elected representatives who walk the walk of the politics of the new Scotland we want to see... I think what we need to do is use this as an opportunity to talk about the kind of Scotland we want to see, the kind of politics we want to see, and I'm hopeful we can agree to say let's back the candidates who offer those kinds of views and that kind of outlook for Scotland. I don't see us standing in seats in areas where we lost deposits last time.....I've always advocated political co-operation. I think it's an important element of how we do politics as Greens and this is possibly an opportunity for us to put this belief into practice, to work with it to make sure we see a more forward and outward-looking representation for people.' (*The National*, 19 April 2017, [link](#)).

- **Patrick Harvie said that the Greens had to 'weigh up' reducing the number of Scottish Conservative MPs and staying true to their 'principles' and 'the reasons we're in politics at all'.** 'The question of course for independence supporters is how the cause can be advanced in the context of this snap election... Few people would wager a pint of beer against the SNP winning most of Scotland's constituencies in June, but I dare say not many would bet heavy on them winning 50 per cent of the vote single-handed... So as all our parties approach an election we didn't expect, we have a lot to weigh up. How to minimise the Tory presence in all our lives, and the reach of their odious policies. How to successfully reassert the mandate for an independence vote. And how to stay true to our principles and the reasons we're in politics at all' (*The National*, 20 April 2017, [link](#)).
- **The SNP have ordered the Greens to not split 'the pro-Yes vote' and to stop 'targeting' SNP marginals.** Tommy Sheppard said: 'I know the Greens will want to stand some candidates but I also know they have never stood everywhere. So they are going to have to choose. They will want to stand some candidates as they are a national party and will want to put their case to their base, but in deciding which seats to contest and not to contest I think they should be mindful of not splitting the pro-Yes vote and certainly not splitting the anti-Tory vote.' Referring to Edinburgh South particularly he said 'It's not a four way marginal with the Greens, it's a three way marginal and in those circumstances I don't think the Greens should be targeting that sort of seat.' (*The National*, 26 April 2017, [link](#)).
- **Patrick Harvie has recently said that the Greens could enter into a formal coalition with the SNP in the Scottish Parliament.** 'Absolutely. I think the idea of remaining in opposition for all time isn't one that's attractive to any political party. If you believe in proportional representation you believe in a fair balance of political parties across parliament and coalition is the most likely way for a government to form a majority. The previous session, where there was a single party majority, was, I think, an aberration, and I don't think it's likely to happen again.' (*Daily Record*, 18 April 2017, [link](#)).
- **In the 2015 General Election the Scottish Greens stood candidates in a**

record 31 constituencies. However, they were only able to save their deposit in three Edinburgh East, Edinburgh North and Leith and Glasgow North (*Scottish Greens*, 22 February 2015, [link](#)).

Senior lawmakers review draft law, resolutions

The chairman and vice chairpersons of the Standing Committee of the National People's Congress (NPC) met on Wednesday afternoon.

They reviewed opinions from lawmakers about a draft amendment to the surveying and mapping law, which is undergoing a second reading at the bi-monthly session of the NPC Standing Committee.

The meeting was presided over by Zhang Dejiang, chairman of the NPC Standing Committee.

They also reviewed opinions on draft plans on a quota for electing new NPC deputies for regions and ethnic groups, a border defense cooperation agreement among member states of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, as well as a treaty on transferring convicted criminal offenders between China and Tajikistan.

After further revisions, the documents will be reviewed at the next meeting of the chairman and vice chairpersons, during which they will decide whether to put them to vote.

Innovative solutions for sustainable working lives recognised at the EU-OSHA Good Practice Awards ceremony

In the run-up to the World Day for Safety and Health at Work on 28 April, the Healthy Workplaces Good Practice Awards ceremony is held in Valletta, Malta. Organised by the European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA), the awards showcase successful interventions by European organisations to make their workplaces safer and healthier for workers of all ages – and therefore more productive.

By implementing good practices in age management, employers can protect their workers' health and safeguard the future of their businesses.

[The Maltese Presidency of the Council of the EU](#) is hosting the Healthy Workplaces [Good Practice Awards](#) ceremony on 26 April 2017 as part of its tripartite conference on occupational safety and health (OSH) "*Safeguarding Vulnerable Groups*". The competition, which is a key element of the 2016-17 '[Healthy Workplaces for All Ages](#)' Campaign, aims to highlight innovative examples of organisations taking action to promote sustainable working lives.

Speaking ahead of the conference, the Maltese Minister for Social Dialogue, Consumer Affairs and Civil Liberties, the Hon. Dr Helena Dalli, said, '*A key priority for the Maltese Presidency is putting the needs of citizens at the centre of everything we do. Many European workers aged over 50 believe that their work has a negative effect on their health. We hope that the awards will encourage enterprises throughout the EU and in Malta to take steps to make their workplaces safer, healthier and fairer for their employees.*'

Commenting on the importance of safe and healthy working conditions throughout working life, Dr Christa Sedlatschek, Director of EU-OSHA, said, '*The European workforce is ageing, and many countries are raising retirement ages. By implementing good practices in age management, employers can protect their workers' health and safeguard the future of their businesses. With this competition we engage relevant stakeholders, provide examples of successful interventions and create a prevention culture across Europe.*'

Entries to the competition came from all over Europe, from a wide range of sectors and from organisations of varying sizes. The awarded and commended examples were demonstrably successful, sustainable and transferable to other workplaces.

The winning organisations include an Austrian lighting manufacturer that established a new department dedicated to ensuring that employees were willing and able to remain in the workforce for longer; a German tyre manufacturer that created a company-wide database of positions and employee requirements to improve reallocation and reintegration of employees with specific needs; a family-owned Finnish construction company taking action to reduce the number of serious occupational accidents to zero by 2020; and a car manufacturer in Spain that introduced measures to tailor work to individuals and assess risks on a person-by-person basis.

Links:

Read more about the awarded and commended entries in the [Good Practice Awards Booklet](#)

Find out more about the [Good Practice Award](#)

Read about the [Programme of the Maltese EU Presidency](#)

Visit the [Healthy Workplaces for All Ages campaign website](#)

Awarded examples:

- **VitaS**, Belgium: participatory measures to minimise physical and psychosocial risks in the social care sector.
- **Continental AG**, Germany: a company-wide ergonomics and demographics programme in a major car manufacturer.
- **Heidelberger Druckmaschinen AG**, Germany: promoting health, know-how and flexibility through participatory action.
- **PSA Group**, Spain: tailoring jobs for employees in car manufacturing to increase the employability of all.
- **MAVIR ZRt**, Hungary: improving the work ability of older workers in the energy sector.
- **Zumtobel Group AG**, Austria: maintaining and improving work ability and retaining workers in manufacturing.
- **Rudnik**, Serbia: management and miners working together to reduce early retirement.
- **Lujatalo Oy**, Finland: helping to ensure that construction workers reach retirement in good health.
- **SAP SE**, official campaign partner: 'Run Your Health' – empowering employees of all ages to take action for their health.

Commended examples:

- **Service Facility for the Ministry of the Interior**, the Czech Republic
- **Region Midtjylland (Central Denmark Region)**, Denmark
- **Tarkett S.p.A.**, Italy
- **Vassiliko Cement Works PLC**, Cyprus
- **Loders Croklaan**, the Netherlands
- **Police Directorate Murska Sobota**, Slovenia
- **Duslo, a.s.**, Slovakia
- **The Federation of Finnish Technology Industries**, Finland
- **Toyota Material Handling**, official campaign partner.

2. '**Healthy Workplaces for All Ages**' is a Europe-wide campaign open to individuals and organisations at the local, national and European levels. In more than 30 European countries the campaign is managed by EU-OSHA's country-specific focal points and is supported by media partners and Official Campaign Partners – pan-European and multinational organisations.

Throughout 2016 and 2017, EU-OSHA is campaigning to raise awareness of the need to encourage safe and sustainable working from the beginning of the working lives of employees. The campaign raises awareness of good practice in OSH management in terms of ageing employees and tailoring work to the needs of individuals to ensure their continued participation in the labour market. The Healthy Workplaces Campaign 2016-17 has the following key objectives:

- to promote sustainable work and healthy ageing from the start of the working life;
- to prevent health problems throughout the working life;
- to provide ways for employers and workers to manage occupational safety and health in the context of an ageing workforce; and
- to encourage the exchange of information and good practice.

3. The **European Agency for Safety and Health at Work (EU-OSHA)** contributes to making Europe a safer, healthier and more productive place to work. The Agency researches, develops, and distributes reliable, balanced, and impartial safety and health information and organises pan-European awareness raising campaigns. Set up by the European Union in 1994 and based in Bilbao, Spain, the Agency brings together representatives from the European Commission, Member State governments, employers' and workers' organisations, as well as leading experts in each of the EU-28 Member States and beyond.

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[New Legal Powers to Help Prevent Flooding](#)

Wokingham Borough Council now has new legal powers to help prevent flooding across the borough, following its successful application to the Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) to make land drainage byelaws.

Wokingham Borough Council has published the following press release:

New Legal Powers to Help Prevent Flooding

The Flood and Water Management Act 2010 allows local authorities to make land drainage byelaws to help regulate changes to flows in watercourses, manage obstructions and vegetation, and repair damage to river banks, among others.

Failure to adhere to these byelaws in the Wokingham Borough is now a criminal offence which can be prosecuted in magistrates' courts. This will help the borough council carry out its duties as a highway authority and also as the lead local flood authority.

"The risk of flooding and the impact of new major developments are matters of concern to very many residents and businesses in our borough," said Josie Wragg, interim director of environment at Wokingham Borough Council.

"Although we always try to persuade those who don't act responsibly to rectify problems, it will be useful to have these powers if action is ignored."

Wokingham Borough's specific byelaws give the borough council control over land within eight metres either side from the bank of a ditch. This will prevent development, or any features and structures, from being put too close

to the ditch. This will allow the council to protect the natural flood plain, create a 'buffer zone' for biodiversity, and stop properties from flooding.

A six-week public consultation was held last year before the council's application to DEFRA to make sure the views of residents were taken into account.

A copy of the confirmed byelaws can be found on the flooding webpage, under 'useful information and websites' section, on the borough council's website: www.wokingham.gov.uk/community-and-safety/emergencies/drainage-and-flooding/

Vice Anhui governor under investigation

Zhou Chunyu, vice governor of east China's Anhui Province, is under investigation for suspected serious violations of the Party code of conduct, China's anti-graft authority said Wednesday.

The Central Commission for Discipline Inspection of the Communist Party of China released the news on its website.