

Green Party: Climate change risk increasingly severe



Green Party

25 January 2017

The Green Party has responded to a report published today which reveals Europe is warming at a faster pace than the global average and faces multiple climate hazards [1].

The European Environment Agency report is the most comprehensive study of Europe's vulnerability to climate change available [2]. It predicts Atlantic-facing countries will face heavier rainfalls, increased flood risk and more severe storm damage.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"Our environment is being destroyed all around us – our oceans and mountains, our wildlife and our homes are all under direct threat from climate extremes. As the planet races towards the 2C warming limit, we have two options as country. We can drag our feet and watch our environment suffer or we can move decisively away from the dirty, dangerous technology of the past by keeping fossil fuels in the ground and investing in renewables.

"Standing up to climate deniers has never been more important – even if they hold some of the most powerful positions in the world. The actions Donald Trump takes in the US will directly impact our lives in Europe.

"The EEA report makes for terrifying reading, but it's also an opportunity for Europe to develop effective strategies for tackling greenhouse gas emissions and for Britain to step up and lead the way on transitioning to a zero carbon economy."

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jan/25/europe-faces-droughts-floods-storms-climate-change-accelerates>
2. <http://www.eea.europa.eu/highlights/climate-change-poses-increasingly-severe>

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[Improvements at the Riverside area](#)



I am pleased to report a number of proposed improvements in the Riverside area to the road surface and parking situation as follows :

+ Parking improvement : On Monday evening, the council's [City Development Committee](#) agreed to a waiting restrictions at the parking area near the Bridgeview Station Restaurant. This will restrict parking to 2 hours meaning the car park will be used for people using the playing fields and visiting the restaurant and stop all-day parking. I have long campaigned for this at the request of the football pitch users and residents who are patrons of the restaurant.

An additional disabled bay will be provided and the long unmade parking area to the west will remain without parking restriction.

It will not be possible to undertake the change until after the new flooding defence works take place in the summer.

+ Surface improvement 1 : A positive by-product of the flooding defence works in the summer is that my request to have the long unmade parking area to the west of the above area will be properly surfaced for the first time, greatly increasing the amount of parking with a quality surface.

+ Surface improvement 2 : The surface in front of the nearby Riverside Pavilion on the north side of Riverside Drive has become very uneven again, with numerous potholes, including a large one at the entrance. I raised this with the council's Neighbourhood Services and the Projects and Development Manager has responded positively as follows :

"I have ... arranged the entrance of the car park to addressed and we will look to fill in more of the larger pot holes. ... We are looking to do more works down at Riverside and are looking to put an item to Committee in the

Spring.”

[Travel agency boycotts Japan hotel over history denials](#)

China International Travel Service Limited announced on Wednesday that it will end all business relations with a Japanese hotel chain which refused to remove books from its guest rooms denying the Nanjing Massacre took place.

The official statement released by CITS, a State-owned enterprise, said that APA Hotels' actions had outraged all Chinese.

“After the news came out, we immediately removed APA Hotels from our website so that no tourists could book that hotel through us,” said the statement.

“We have also asked our head office and all subsidiaries to check whether they have business relations with the group. Any such business has to be stopped immediately. We will not suggest the hotel group to our clients and we will not run any of its advertisements either.”

At a news conference on Tuesday, Zhang Lizhong, spokesman for the China National Tourism Administration, said APA Hotels' actions were a blatant provocation to Chinese tourists and had violated professional ethics.

Zhang said the administration has asked the whole industry to stop doing business with APA Hotels, adding that they hope all Chinese tourists boycott the chain.

On Dec 13, 1937, during the War of Resistance Against Japanese Aggression (1937-45), the Japanese invaders captured Nanjing. Over the following six weeks, they conducted a massacre where an estimated 300,000 people, including children, were tortured, raped and murdered.

[Beijing specifies 198 key tasks for 2017](#)

The Beijing municipal government will have 198 key tasks in 2017, and each task will be supervised by at least one government leader, the executive meeting of the municipal government has approved.

The 198 tasks are put into eight categories. They are as follows:

1. To set forth main goals for social and economic development.
2. To relocate Beijing's non-capital functions and advance the coordinated development of Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.
3. To promote the supply-side structural reform, and improve Beijing's economy both in quality and in efficiency.
4. To strive to address "big city problems" and expand the city's capacity for sustainable development.
5. To deepen the innovation-driven development strategy, and build Beijing as the national sci-tech innovation center
6. To adhere to the path of the advanced socialist culture, and build Beijing as the national cultural center.
7. To uphold the people-first principle, and safeguard and improve people's livelihood.
8. To strengthen the construction of the government itself.

Among these specific categories, to address "big city problems" and to improve people's livelihood are given priority with tasks under these two categories totaling 85; tasks of removing Beijing's non-capital functions number 26. Each of the 198 key tasks will be overseen at least by one municipal government leader.

As per the requirement of the city's 2017 government work report, breakthroughs should be made in three key areas. They are as follows:

1. To complete the construction of Beijing-Qinhuangdao Highway; to continue with the construction of Pinggu Rail Transit Line; to promote traffic integration in Beijing-Tianjin-Hebei region.
2. To plant 100,000 mu (1 hectare equals 15 mu) of ecological water resource protection forest in Beijing and Hebei, and 40,000 mu of forest for environmental protection in Beijing and Tianjin; to advance environmental remediation and ecological repair of the Yongding River, the Chaobai River and the north section of the Beijing-Hangzhou Grand Canal, among other inter-provincial rivers.
3. To properly link up industries; to guide certain industrial projects to relocate and cluster in areas such as Caofeidian demonstration zone; to promote the development of the Tianjin Binhai – Zhongguancun service platform for innovation; to support the green industrial development in Zhangjiakou – Chengde ecological function area.

The construction of the sub-center will focus on the building of the administration and ancillary facilities in 2017. According to the government's work plan, four municipal authorities, along with government-affiliated administrative departments, will start relocation at the end of this year.

The sub-center building also includes the road-system construction, improvement of the environment, landscape showcase work of cultural resources highlighted by the Grand Canal.

With regard to advancing the supply-side structural reform and improving the quality and efficiency of Beijing's economy, active moves will be made to phase out companies stuck in deficit. More than 50 "zombie enterprises" will be eliminated from the market. Health, senior care, culture and sports, recreation and tourism industries will be given to boost.

The will of Parliament

Yesterday Opposition MPs shed crocodile tears about the need for a sovereign Parliament. They were under the misapprehension that Parliament has no proper role in the Brexit process. They seemed to think only unelected Judges could uphold the sovereignty of Parliament against a government determined to implement the wishes of the electors as expressed in the referendum.

Let me explain a few home truths to them. The first is we do not currently have a sovereign Parliament. That was the main point at issue in the referendum. All too many MPs in recent decades have voted away the powers of Westminster, passing authority on issue after issue to the EU. The public voted to reverse that. I have spoken out against the puppet Parliament we currently suffer from. All too many laws, budgets and policies are determined in Brussels in ways the UK Parliament cannot gainsay.

Any opposition there is to implementing the wishes of the people should properly concentrate on the Parliamentary process. It should not need to go to the courts, and the courts themselves need to be careful not to think it is their job to set the Parliamentary agenda. If there was a big body of MPs who wanted to reverse the decision of the referendum and thwart the will of the people, there are ways they can seek to do so. The opposition parties have days allocated to their choice of business. They could use any one of those to hold a debate and a vote to prevent Brexit. They can use government debates on the EU which are available in abundance to make their case. They can make it during the various Statements the government issues. They can seek Urgent Questions on matters they rank as important. They can use their seats on the Brexit and European Affairs Committees to put their case. They can oppose the repeal of the 1972 European Communities Act when we get to it, when there will be government led votes where they can vote against.

The fact that they have chosen to do none of these things tells you that they rightly judge they must not be seen to deliberately seek to countermand the decision of the voters in the referendum. The Commons voted 6 to 1 in favour of a referendum, described as transferring the decision to the people by the government introducing the Bill. How can MPs who voted for the referendum go back on its central promise to let the people choose? If only more of these

Opposition MPs would grasp that we do not currently have a sovereign Parliament. What a cruel irony that some Members of Parliament prey in aid the idea of a sovereign Parliament, whilst doing all they can to stop one being recreated. At least the Supreme Court was right to tell the Scottish Parliament that our membership of the EU is a matter for the whole UK and for the UK Parliament. They do not have veto on this national decision.