

Green Party pledges equal treatment for physical and mental health



10 May 2017

***Greens announce three mental health policies in Worcester**

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley: "We must support those who are suffering – very often alone and in silence – with the weight of a mental health illness"**

The Green Party has announced three mental health pledges in Worcester today [1], promising to tackle Britain's growing mental health crisis by to giving mental health parity of esteem with physical health and ensuring everyone gets the treatment they need.

The Greens will also introduce awareness and empathy education to help prevent bullying and school-based therapy to treat mental health earlier.

The announcement comes during Mental Health Awareness Week [2], which runs from May 8 to 14.

The Green Party will pledge to:

- Give mental health parity of esteem with physical health
- Make sure everyone who needs psychological therapy receives it within 28 days of being referred
- Roll out of new school-based therapy to treat mental ill health earlier and awareness and empathy education to limit the likelihood of bullying

New figures released last month show mental health budgets are being cut by £4.5m in five English regions this year [3], despite the Conservative Party promising to up spending [4]. Three in four people who need mental health support are not getting it [5] and between 2013 and 2016 the amount of the health budget spent on mental health fell from 1.4% to 0.7% [6].

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"We must put the wellbeing of people ahead of the Conservative Party's destruction of our public services. The Green Party will make sure mental health is treated with equal seriousness to that of physical health so that we can finally support those who are suffering – very often alone and in silence – with the weight of a mental health illness.

"The Greens are committed to creating a caring Britain that looks after people with mental health problems and our plan for schools will build a society where people look out for each other. We won't just treat illness but reverse the Tory Government's failed policies to tackle the factors that contribute to poor mental health, like housing shortages, rising poverty and cuts to public services."

Notes:

1. Jonathan Bartley, co-leader, and Amelia Womack, deputy leader, announced the policies in Fort Royal Park, Worcester.
2. <https://www.mentalhealth.org.uk/campaigns/mental-health-awareness-week>
3. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-merseyside-39702976>
4. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-politics-39832997>
5. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2016/feb/13/mental-health-services-crisis-britain-revealed-leaked-report>
6. <https://www.mind.org.uk/news-campaigns/news/charity-reveals-shocking-spend-of-less-than-1-per-cent-on-public-mental-health/#.WRGnIVXyuUn>

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