

Green Party supports striking university and college staff



Green Party

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Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley has today expressed the Green Party's support for the strike by University and College Union (UCU) members at 80 universities around the UK.

Bartley said: "This is about the long-term wellbeing and welfare of both staff and students. Staff at our universities have been pushed beyond breaking-point by institutions that are not giving them proper pay and conditions, or pensions, and that are leaving huge numbers trapped in the uncertainty of zero-hours and variable hours contracts.

"The future of our world-class universities, and the quality of education of students, is dependent on staff being treated properly. I know from speaking to UCU members at previous strikes how much they fear not only for their own futures, but also their students' futures. University pay structures need to be rebalanced away from ludicrously high pay for a few management staff, and towards maintaining the pay and conditions for those doing the teaching and research."

Carla Denyer, Green Party MP candidate for Bristol West and a local councillor representing a ward with many university staff and students living in it, said: "At last week's Student Union hustings at the University of Bristol, I spoke to many students who are highly sympathetic to the staff's plight, and who will be joining them on the picket lines.

"Students are weighed down by the huge weight of student debt, a pressure the Green Party plans to take away from them by ending tuition fees and paying off existing student debt, but their lecturers are increasingly suffering also from intolerably low pay, poor conditions and insecurity.

“I have been on the picket lines and at the rally in Bristol this morning supporting striking university workers. The commercialisation of higher education benefits nobody. I fully support the UCU’s demands, especially their call for an end to casualisation of the workforce. The Green Party wants to stamp out casualisation in education, and would do this by offering all hourly paid staff and agency staff salaried contracts.”

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