

Greens counter Labour doomsayers with positive conference message

'Things can get better if we invest to build a fairer, greener economy'

- Manchester conference to greet four new Green MPs
- Party pledges to press new government to be braver and bolder
- Green MPs counter Labour gloom and offer real hope with ambitious and positive proposals which increase taxes for the wealthiest

The Green Party will celebrate historic electoral gains at its first conference since the General Election with a call for the new government to be more ambitious in offering real hope and real change.

Green Party co-leader and MP for Bristol Central, Carla Denyer, said:

"As Greens, we counter Labour's message of doom and gloom. Things can get better – and fast – but only if the new government has the courage to invest.

"Green MPs are already working hard to press the new government to be braver and bolder.

"The Budget at the end of October will set the course for the rest of this parliament. Green MPs do not accept the need for public spending cuts. On 4th July people didn't vote for things to get worse. They voted for change, and that's what we are offering as Green MPs.

"Greens want a bold budget for investment in our broken public services and the green economy of the future. By making the tax system fairer and increasing taxes on the wealthiest we can avoid public spending cuts. We believe this fairer approach will also deliver something that is in short supply in Labour's plans so far – real hope."

The Green Party says that tax changes it is proposing will generate the funds needed to increase public health budgets to 2015/16 levels and boost GP funding; enable the government to restore social care charging reforms; restore and increase funding for nature friendly farming and embark on a major programme of home insulation.

Co-leader and MP for Waveney Valley, Adrian Ramsay, said:

"We need to invest in defending public services and protecting our environment – and we can do so with some changes to the tax system to ask the wealthiest in society to pay a little more. These tax changes are modest by the standards of many other European countries who recognise that having high quality public services and a greener economy needs investment.

"This government risks pushing more people into poverty. They have removed

winter fuel payments for pensioners and won't budge on the cruel two-child benefit cap. Meanwhile, our NHS is severely overstretched, and the government has reduced funding for nature-friendly farming, just as this crucial scheme was starting to take off.

"We can tackle poverty and inequality, improve wellbeing and protect our environment. These are political choices."

Proposals the Green Party MPs are pressing Rachel Reeves for in her October budget, include:

- Introduce a wealth tax on billionaires and multi-millionaires
- Reform Capital Gains Tax so it aligns with income tax rates
- Align tax rates on investment income with National Insurance rates on employment income
- Remove the Upper Earnings Limit on National Insurance – to remove the tax break for higher earners.
- Reform inheritance tax, ensuring that intergenerational transfers of wealth are taxed more fairly
- Close the loopholes in the fossil windfall tax
- Raise fuel duty to speed up the move to electric vehicles and generate funds to invest in public transport, active travel and fixing our potholed roads.

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