

Greens dismiss dental recovery plan and call for full costs of dental treatment to be covered



Green Party

7 February 2024

The co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, has dismissed today's announcement of a 'dental recovery plan' by the government saying it will 'fail to fill the giant hole in NHS dentistry provision.' Greens are calling for dentists to be paid the full costs of NHS dental treatment.

Ramsay is standing as parliamentary candidate in Waveney Valley, the area recognised as the worst 'dental desert' in the country, with one in three people trying to get an NHS appointment not being able to [1]. He said:

"In the Waveney Valley and across England and Wales, the Green Party is fighting back against the decay in NHS dentistry services.

"The scenes of people in Bristol queuing up in desperation to secure an NHS appointment and having to be held back by police are truly shocking [2]. The British Dental Association also reports cases of 3-year-olds with dental sepsis, an epidemic of DIY dentistry and the return of scurvy [3]. This indicates just how broken our society is.

"I speak to people all the time who are furious that successive governments have allowed this to happen. The rot set in with the universally despised dental contract – where independent providers are contracted to the NHS – introduced by the Labour government between 2006 and 2010. Then the Coalition government took power and made savage cuts to the amount spent on NHS dentistry. The budget has fallen by over a third – a real terms cut of £1bn [4]. This is unacceptable and unnecessary in what is one of the wealthiest countries in the world.

"The dental recovery with its paltry £200 million offer will clearly fail to fill the giant hole in NHS dentistry provision. The underlying problem is that dentists are not being paid the full costs of NHS dental treatment. That's why I am proud to back the Toothless in England campaign – that took root in Suffolk [5] – which aims to get contracts for NHS dentists that cover their costs.

“Being able to see a dentist when you need one is a basic need for good physical and mental health – but sadly, it’s becoming a luxury often only available to those people who can pay to go private. It doesn’t have to be that way.

“The Green Party is calling for a new approach, starting with new contracts for NHS dentists that cover the costs of care. I am pushing hard for this now and will make this an urgent priority as an MP.”

Notes

1. <https://www.england.nhs.uk/statistics/2023/07/13/gp-patient-survey-dental-statistics-january-to-march-2023-england/>
2. [Hundreds queue at new NHS dental practice in Bristol hoping for treatment | The Guardian](#)
3. [Dentists tackling Victorian disease in 21st century Britain \(bda.org\)](#)
4. [A billion in cuts \(bda.org\)](#)
5. [Toothless in Suffolk takes campaign nationwide – BBC News](#)

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