Greens promise to protect social housing at local election launch

5 April 2018

*** Greens promise to repair social homes, give residents a say in their future and stand up against unwanted demolition of estates**

*** Jonathan Bartley, co-leader, calls on Government to "treat social housing with the value it deserves" and end Right to Buy**

*** Bartley: "Greens value social housing and will fight to protect it"**

The Green Party will promise to protect social housing today at the launch of its local election campaign.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, will make the pledge at the launch in Central Hill housing estate in London [1], one of six facing demolition under regeneration plans by Lambeth Council [2].

Bartley will promise Green councillors elected on May 3 will always work to repair social homes instead of demolishing them in favour of developers building private housing. He will also pledge Green councillors will give people a say in their futures – with meaningful input into plans for their community and a ballot for residents on the demolition of their homes.

Greens are contesting more than 2200 seats on May 3 and hope to elect Greens on more local authorities than ever before as the party works towards having a Green on every council [3].

At the launch Bartley will also call on the Government to "treat social housing with the value it deserves" and end Right to Buy, which has seen the number of social homes sold increase by more than 400% since Conservative ministers revamped the rules in 2012 [4].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, is expected to say:

"Cosy, complacent councils like this one in Lambeth have forgotten the communities they are meant to serve. Greens know that houses and flats aren't

commodities, they are the homes where we build our lives, start families and make memories.

“Any community which puts a Green on their council chooses someone who values social housing and will fight to protect it. Greens will always work to give people a say in their futures – and stand with them to oppose the demolition of homes against their wishes

“With the political will, we could work to repair social homes rather than demolish them and scatter communities across the country. It’s time, too, the Government treated social housing with the value it deserves and ended the Right to Buy scheme which has pushed stock to crisis point.

“Greens will always be a bold, brave voice standing up for local communities and challenging the status quo. One Green has the power to transform a community.”

Notes:

1.

Green Party local election campaign launch

Thursday 5 April 2018

Speech from Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, with campaigners in Central Hill housing estate in London, which is facing demolition.

2.

In Lambeth Green councillor Scott Ainslie has stood with residents on six estates facing demolition by the Labour led council. The planned regeneration of Central Hill housing estate will destroy a community and leave the borough with fewer social homes as a result. The Green Party believes residents should always get a say over what happens to their homes and will never stand by while social homes are destroyed.

https://lambeth.greenparty.org.uk/news/2018/03/06/green-party-councillor-denied-call-in-of-central-hill-decision-by-lambeth-council/

3.

https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2018/04/05/green-party-launches-ambition-for-a-green-on-every-council/

4.

In April 2012 Conservative minister “revamped” RTB rules. Since then the number of homes sold off has increased by 409 per cent: from 2,638 in 2011-12 to 13,416 in 2016-17. They raised the maximum discount on a property to £75,000 – it has since increased further, to more than £100,000, in some parts of the country.

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Green Party launches ambition for a Green on every council

5 April 2018

*** Green Party launches strongest ever local election campaign standing candidates in 2200 seats**

*** Party stands record number of candidates since these seats were last contested**

*** Jonathan Bartley: “One more Labour or Tory councillor won’t make a difference. But one Green could change everything.”**

The Green Party will launch [1] its strongest ever local election campaign today (Thursday 5 April), with hopes of electing Greens on more local authorities than ever before as the party works towards having a Green on every council.

Greens are contesting 2200 seats on May 3, more than half seats up for election. The party is standing a record number of candidates since these seats were last contested, and the most candidates ever in London.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, will appeal to voters to choose a Green to stand up for their community instead of adding “one more Labour or Tory to already complacent councils.”

Bartley will also highlight the impact Green councillors across Britain have when they are elected, like in Sheffield where Alison Teal has stood with residents against the felling of healthy street trees after the council gave a £2 billion highway maintenance contract to a private company [2].

The launch will take place in Central Hill estate in London which is facing demolition by Lambeth Council. Green Councillor Scott Ainslie has stood with residents opposing the demolition [3], and the Green Party is hopeful to make gains in Central Hill in May.

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, is expected to say:

“The Green Party wants to see a Green on every council to build a better Britain from the bottom up.

“Across the country councils have forgotten the people they are meant to serve. From Lambeth council planning to demolish residents homes to Sheffield sacrificing the natural environment to private contracts, one party state councils are riding roughshod over the wishes of their communities.

“In these local elections people have the choice to add one more Labour or Tory councillor to already complacent councils – or choose a Green who can change everything.

“Greens will always be a bold, brave voice standing up for local communities and challenging the status quo. One Green has the power to transform a community.”

Notes:

1.

Green Party local election campaign launch

Thursday 5 April 2018

Speech from Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, in Central Hill housing estate in London, which is facing demolition.

2.

In Sheffield Green councillor Alison Teal has stood with residents protecting the city’s trees – 5,500 of which have already been felled after the Labour led council gave a highway maintenance contract to a private company. Alison and other residents have been arrested for their efforts, with charges later dropped. The Green Party believes our environment is more important than profit and Green councillors will always stand up against the destruction of the local environment.

https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/oct/27/sheffield-councillor-cleared-of-breaching-tree-felling-order

3.

In Lambeth Green councillor Scott Ainslie has stood with residents on six estates facing demolition by the Labour led council. The planned regeneration of Central Hill housing estate will destroy a community and leave the borough with fewer social homes as a result. The Green Party believes residents

should always get a say over what happens to their homes and will never stand by while social homes are destroyed.

https://lambeth.greenparty.org.uk/news/2018/03/06/green-party-councillor-denied-call-in-of-central-hill-decision-by-lambeth-council/

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"The point of no return might be near but there is still time to change course" – Keith Taylor MEP

29 March 2018

Thursday, 29 March marks the midpoint between the triggering of Article 50, on 29 March 2017, and the date on which the Government has said the UK will leave the EU, 29 March 2019.

Green MEP Keith Taylor is using the 'Brexiversary' as an opportunity to reiterate his commitment to fighting for the people of Britain to have the final say on any Brexit deal in a 'People's Poll'.

Mr Taylor has also moved to reassure voters that, although "the point of no return might be near," there is still time to "change course".

The senior Green politician, who also recorded a video addressing supporters directly, said:

"Brexit, of any type, is not in Britain's interest.

"It inevitably means cutting ties with our closest friends and neighbours and abandoning a project that has delivered much positive social and environmental change in Britain and across Europe. More than that, it means

departing from a union that has fostered solidarity and proven one of the most successful peace projects in recent history.

"Brexit, of the type a bitter and divided Tory government is dragging us towards, is a monumental calamity.

"The Government's approach to negotiations has been unforgivably shambolic. The result is that we, the people of Britain, will have no idea what kind of post-Brexit future we're heading for when we leave the European Union.

"All that we can be sure of as we approach the point of no return is that any and all Brexit outcomes will have hugely damaging economic impacts, according to the Government's own (secret) studies. The fact the transition period delays the worst of these impacts until 2020 is of little comfort when the fundamental question of what our future relationship with the EU will look like remains unanswered.

"In the meantime, it's clear that any notion of "taking back control" has been hijacked by the Tory Government planning to give itself, as part of the Withdrawal Bill, unprecedented powers to bypass Parliamentary democracy.

"What is more, almost every day new details emerge about vital information being kept from the public while allegations about a potentially illegal disinformation campaign run by Leave groups continue to mount.

"The referendum was supposed to signal the start of a democratic process, not the end of democracy.

"I campaigned for and voted Remain, as did voters in Berkshire, Buckinghamshire, and Oxfordshire and Surrey, East and West Sussex; across the region, more than 48% of people voted Remain. These voices are being increasingly sidelined by a Government desperately afraid of its own Brextremist fringe and in hock to the DUP.

"I stand committed to the 'Green Guarantees' I set out after the referendum: safeguarding environmental laws, defending freedom of movement, supporting young people to study and work across Europe; guaranteeing workers' rights, jobs, food safety and animal welfare by advocating single market and customs union membership.

"Above all, I still believe that we are fairer, greener and safer inside the European Union. It is why Greens are fighting for a People's Poll on the final terms of any deal – with remaining in the EU an option on the ballot.

"The point of no return might be near but we still have the chance to change course."

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Bartley: Waiting times scandal further proof that UK immigration system broken

28 March 2018

Green Party Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley expressed his outrage that waiting times for UK immigration appeals rising by 45% over the past year [1].

The fact that half if appeals lodged are upheld shows that “the system is broken”.

Bartley said: “People come to Britain because they want a better life and often a better future for their family. To make them wait twelve months to have their appeal processed, and face all the stress and anxiety that comes with that, is unacceptable. The system is broken, it needs a total overhaul and an end to the hostile environment that migrants face”.

ENDS

[1] https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/home-news/immigration-appeals-home-office-waiting-times-soar-delays-a8276436.html

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Greens welcome National Grid support for bringing forward petrol and diesel ban

27 March 2018

The Green Party of England and Wales today expressed their support for the announcement by the National Grid's Director of Electric Vehicles that they would support the government bringing forward its 2040 ban on new petrol and diesel car sales by a decade. [1]

Speaking today, Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley noted that this was a further sign that the Green message was resonating:

"Phasing out petrol and diesel sooner will be better for everyone. Not only will it make the air we breathe cleaner and healthier, but it will make a significant dent in the UK's carbon emissions. We support the National Grid in this announcement. The government should show some ambition and deliver what is clearly possible."

ENDS

[1] https://www.theguardian.com/business/2018/mar/27/national-grid-backs-plan-for-earlier-petrol-and-diesel-ban

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