

[Green Party women take direction action against fracking in Lancashire](#)



Green Party

31 August 2017

Four women including two Green Party Councillors took direct action yesterday outside Cuadrilla's fracking site on Preston New Road near Little Plumpton in Lancashire.

The women are all members of the Green Party and are peacefully protesting against increasing extraction of fossil fuels. Three of the women locked themselves together outside the entrance to the fracking site and were later arrested and charged with obstruction of the highway.

Caroline Jackson is a Lancaster City Councillor and a retired headteacher. She said:

"We have brought a boat to the fracking site to highlight the fact that fracking will make climate change worse by emitting more greenhouse gases into the atmosphere. Fracking will therefore contribute to rising sea levels. Around half a billion people around the world are at risk from rising sea levels."

Emily Heath is a university lecturer in Earth Sciences. She said:

"Continuing to develop new sources of fossil fuels is utter madness. We have abundant renewable energy all around us, and yet the Government is hell-bent on undermining the renewable energy industry, because they have vested interests in the fossil fuel industry and seem to be incapable of thinking beyond the short term."

Mollie Foxall is a retired NHS manager. She explained:

"I am taking direct action because the Government has left me no choice. They overturned the local democratic decision to not allow fracking in this area. We are calling on the Government to put people's lives ahead of corporate profits, and stop backing fracking."

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[Green Party: Government failing immigration detention promise](#)



Green Party

25 August 2017

The Green Party has warned progress to cut immigration detention is still far too slow to keep the last Government's promise [1] to reduce the numbers of people locked up and the time they spend detained.

Home Office immigration figures released yesterday (Thursday 24 August) [2] show the number of people entering detention in the past 12 months decreased by 12%.

The Green Party has repeated calls for an end to indefinite detention after the figures show eight people detained for more than five years [3].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

"Detention is not the answer for anyone and progress to reduce the numbers in immigration detention centres is still far too slow. Amber Rudd needs to take bold action if she is to meet Government commitments to cut detention.

"Across the country detention centres are indefinitely holding people who have committed no crime and are often fleeing torture, with these stats revealing eight people currently in detention have been locked up for more than five years. This is obscene and a violation of human rights.

"The uncompassionate and ineffective practice of indefinite detention must end."

The stats were released a day after reports that the number of EU citizens detained for suspected immigration offences has risen by 27% in the past year [4].

Bartley added:

“The rising number of EU nationals in detention adds to the already hostile environment currently facing those from European countries who have made their home in the UK.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2016/jan/14/uk-must-reduce-detention-shaw-immigration-report>
2. <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/immigration-statistics-april-to-june-2017/how-many-people-are-detained-or-returned>
3. Table 14:
https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/638608/detention-apr-jun-2017-tables.ods
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/uk-news/2017/aug/23/number-of-eu-citizens-detained-in-uk-up-by-27-figures-show>

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[Greens welcome EU decision to investigate Bayer-Monsanto merger](#)



Green Party

22 August 2017

The Green Party has welcomed the announcement of a detailed investigation into the implications for competition in the seed and pesticides markets of a merger between agribusiness giants Bayer and Monsanto [1].

The investigation was opened today by Margrethe Vestager, the European commissioner for competition.

Green MEP Molly Scott Cato, together with other MEPS, launched a petition to block the merger in 2016 [2].

Dr Scott Cato, who sits on both the Economics and Agriculture committees in

the European Parliament, said:

“It’s clear from the commission’s initial review of the potential merger that they share our concerns, as Greens, about risks of further consolidation in the market for seeds and pesticides. What is surprising is that this has not led them to reject the proposed merger at this stage. We are convinced that giving more power to agribusiness will only impoverish EU farmers further. It is the EU’s responsibility to protect its farmers against the power of the agro-chemical companies, and only a rejection of the merger can achieve this.

“We have seen that Commissioner Vestager has the courage to act on market abuse by corporations in the information and financial sectors, but nothing could be more important than controlling the power a small number of companies have over our food supply. This merger can only further undermine the livelihoods of Europe’s farmers and we call on the commission to follow the logic of their own review and refuse to grant permission for the merger.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.reuters.com/article/us-monsanto-m-a-bayer-eu-idUSKCN1B21GJ>
2. <https://www.ft.com/content/c815119c-6f4f-11e6-9ac1-1055824ca907>

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[Green Party: Ford’s scrappage scheme will only clean up its own image](#)

The Green Party has responded to news Ford has launched a diesel scrappage scheme [1], saying what is really needed to clean up the UK’s air is a proper plan from the Government including a national scrappage scheme and investment in public transport, walking and cycling.

The Government’s clean air strategy, announced in July this year, did not include a scrappage scheme to help people get rid of their dirty diesel vehicles [2].

Jonathan Bartley, co-leader of the Green Party, said:

“We shouldn’t put our health in the hands of car makers or rely on their altruism to have a right to clean air. Any scrappage is welcome, but Ford’s scheme doesn’t go far enough for long enough to make a real difference to much more than the company’s own image.

“Instead of the scatter gun schemes we are seeing at the moment, there must be a coherent plan from the Government to clean up our toxic air including a national scrappage scheme to help people get rid of their dirty diesel vehicles, as well as investment in public transport, walking and cycling.”

Notes:

1. http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/business-41005208?ocid=socialflow_twitter&ns_mchannel=social&ns_campaign=bbcnews&ns_source=twitter
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/jul/26/governments-air-quality-plan-is-cynical-headline-grabbing-say-critics>



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[New position paper on trade confirms 'cake-and-eat-it' approach to Brexit](#)



Green Party

21 August 2017

Molly Scott Cato MEP, Green Party Brexit spokesperson, has responded to a new government position paper published today on its negotiating approach to 'goods on the market' [1]. The paper seeks to ensure 'the freest and most frictionless trade possible in goods and services' and provide exporters and businesses with confidence to plan ahead.

Dr Scott Cato was dismissive of the government's approach:

“Talk of a 'smooth and orderly' withdrawal from the EU will be fantasy if it involves leaving the single market and customs union. My discussions with businesses have made clear that remaining in both are seen as key to the health of the British economy and protecting jobs, something the CBI also recognise, though secretary of State for Business, Greg Clark, has his head

in the sand on this.

“The problems the government is seeking to address in this paper demonstrate exactly the reasons the single market was first established – to allow unrestricted trade across the EU and avoid unnecessary duplication of compliance activities. Now the Tories, who supported the creation of the single market for these reasons in the first place, want to re-invent the same thing outside the EU.

This is the have-your-cake-and-eat-It approach to Brexit we have come to expect from both the Tories and Labour. But the EU27, rightly, can't accept the UK enjoying the benefits of the single market and customs union without being members.”

“This is also another attempt to lead the EU where they have consistently refused to go: to discuss our future relationship ahead of resolving matters such as the question of the Irish border, the rights of EU citizens living in the UK and a divorce settlement.”

Notes:

1. <https://www.gov.uk/government/news/position-papers-published-ahead-of-round-three-negotiations>

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