

We must go further on buses, say Greens



Green Party

13 July 2022

- **Adrian Ramsay: “It’s no good having cheap fares for buses that don’t exist”**

Responding to government plans to cap single bus fares in England at £2 this winter [1], Greens are calling for massive public investment to provide a “genuine bus revolution” which would mean everybody had access to an expanded and high frequency bus network.

They have also called for a cap on fares to be permanent, not just for six months over the winter. Greens say diverting the £27bn away from road building could pay for huge improvements to public transport services.

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“Boris Johnson’s planned bus revolution got stuck in neutral, indeed many communities across England have seen bus services go into reverse. But a genuine bus revolution, creating an expanded, high frequency and sustainable bus network to all corners of England, is possible. It’s a question of priorities. We say axe the damaging £27bn road building programme and divert this money into supporting buses.

“While a temporary £2 cap on single bus fares is hugely welcome and is an important move to help address the cost of living crisis this winter, it must come with fresh funding – councils cannot be expected to foot the bill. We also need such a cap to be permanent, not temporary.

“It is also no good having cheap fares for buses that don’t exist. So the fares cap policy must be matched by massive public investment in the bus network as well as an improvement in pay and conditions for bus staff to tackle the shortage of drivers facing the industry.”

Councillor Matt Edwards, Green Party transport spokesperson, said:

“Buses are vital to creating fairer, greener communities. We have to accept, not everyone drives. In urban areas they can help tackle congestion and air pollution – especially where old diesel buses are replaced by electric

vehicles. In rural areas, buses can serve as a lifeline, especially to the elderly, the young and the disabled.

“Greens in government have been taking a lead on reducing costs for those using public transport – in Scotland Greens successfully pushed for free bus travel for all those under 22 and in Herefordshire, Greens on the Council ensured that Covid Recovery funds were used to provide free weekend buses. Meanwhile in Germany, where Greens are in coalition government, there has been the introduction of a 9 euros monthly rail ticket.

“We will continue to push for a genuine affordable bus revolution in England and believe this can be best delivered when buses are a public service not run for private profit, and where local authorities set routes and fares.”

Notes

1

<https://www.mirror.co.uk/news/uk-news/bus-fares-cost-no-more-27442809>

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[Greens call for general election in wake of Boris Johnson resigning](#)



Green Party

7 July 2022

Responding to the news that Boris Johnson is resigning as Prime Minister [1], Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“That it has taken so long and so many scandals for us to reach this stage is a travesty. I hope that Boris Johnson’s resignation will bring to an end this shameful and unedifying period of British politics.

“It is clear though that this resignation has come far too late to avoid doing lasting damage to our democracy and country at large, and the

Conservative MPs who have backed him until now are the ones to blame for that.

“For too long, the Tories have allowed the situation to drag on while protecting a Prime Minister who has lied and lied again in order to cling on to power despite the fact it was rendering the government useless during multiple crises.

“The British public cannot forget the damage the Conservative Party as a whole has wilfully inflicted on this country in the middle of a pandemic, a cost of living crisis and the accelerating climate crisis.

“Boris Johnson was not just one bad apple, the whole tree is rotten. The public have lost confidence in this government and that is why it is so important that we now have a general election to give people a say on how they want their country run.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/uk-politics-62072419>

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[Green Party response to resignations of Sunak and Javid](#)



Green Party

5 July 2022

Responding to the resignations of chancellor Rishi Sunak and Health secretary Sajid Javid, co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales Carla Denyer said:

“Cabinet Ministers Sunak and Javid have taken far too long to find their backbone, but their eventual resignations must now signal the end of this shameful episode in UK politics.

“With the Cabinet in revolt, it is essential that Boris Johnson resigns immediately. But that is not enough. He is a bad apple, but the whole tree is rotten. This is a government mired in sleaze, scandal and law breaking which has undermined public trust and confidence.

“We need a general election to give the people a chance to give their verdict on this corrupt and spent government, which is not competent to address the critical issues facing this country.”

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[Greens call for ‘sensible measures’ to stem surge in Covid cases](#)



Green Party

5 July 2022

- **Reintroduction of mandatory mask wearing on public transport and in crowded indoor venues while case rates are high**
- **Reintroduction of free Covid tests**
- **Introduction of statutory sick pay for those who test positive**
- **Retention of special paid leave for NHS staff off work with Covid-related sickness**

The Green Party has called for urgent measures to be introduced to help stem the latest wave of Covid infections. Greens have called for the

reintroduction of mandatory mask wearing on public transport and in crowded indoor venues and free Covid tests, along with statutory sick pay for those self isolating due to a positive test.

The call comes as Covid cases jumped by 32% in a week, with an estimated 2.3 million people, or one in 30, having the virus. Almost 9,000 hospital beds were taken up with Covid patients on 30 June [1].

Co-leader of the Green Party, Adrian Ramsay, said:

“A policy of ‘living with Covid’ shouldn’t mean throwing our hands in the air and accepting that millions of people have to catch it, which is what is happening at the moment. Hospital admissions are surging and many workers, both in and outside the health service, feel compelled to go to work even if they have symptoms.

“Reintroducing mask wearing on public transport and in crowded indoor venues alongside free testing and statutory sick pay for those who test positive are sensible measures in the short to medium term to help contain the rapid spread of the virus.”

The Green Party’s Health, Social Care and Public Health spokesperson, Dr Pallavi Devulapalli, who is a GP, added:

“While the current vaccinations are successful at preventing serious illness for the majority, they are doing little to prevent the spread of the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants. We need urgently to introduce a series of measures to help prevent our health services becoming overwhelmed and to prevent a situation where the most vulnerable are faced with the prospect of getting infected or forced to go back into a self-imposed lockdown in order to protect themselves. The more cases there are, the more people there will be needing hospitalisation and potentially suffering long Covid. We also know that a high number of cases leads to a greater chance of mutations and new variants.

“It is also vital that the government shows its support and sympathy for NHS staff and the huge pressures they are under by retaining special paid leave for staff off work with Covid-related sickness [2]. To withhold sick pay at this time feels like a slap in the face, especially since NHS staff have experienced real term wage cuts since 2010 [3].”

Notes

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62030083>
2. <https://inews.co.uk/news/health/paid-covid-leave-rules-for-nhs-staff-scrapped-in-england-as-cases-soar-1719806>
3. <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/resource/chart-of-the-week-real-terms-nhs-staff-pay-from-2010-to-2020>

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Labour and Tories ignoring disaster of Brexit out of own self-interest, Greens warn



Green Party

4 July 2022

Responding to the news that Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer is to use a speech today to vow to “make Brexit work”, while ruling out taking the UK back into the customs union or restoring freedom of movement [1], Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“At a time when the economic devastation caused by Brexit is becoming increasingly clear, and as public opinion is turning against the decision to leave the European Union, it is quite perverse of Keir Starmer to stick his head in the sand and insist he will make Brexit work.

“This is an idea driven only by Labour’s self-interest rather than the best interests of the country.

“While businesses are suffering and the permanent fall in the value of sterling means we are importing inflation, making the cost of living crisis worse, the fact that the two main parties are indistinguishable from one another on Brexit is a major failing of our political system and is letting millions of people down [2].

“The Green Party has already called for rejoining the customs union, which would ease the tensions in Northern Ireland caused by Johnson’s hard Brexit [3], and for maintaining alignment with EU law and we utterly oppose government attempts to undermine environmental and social protections offered by EU legislation.

“We believe that the ending of freedom of movement has taken away rights and

opportunities from our citizens as well as causing employment crises in sectors as varied as agriculture and social care.

“As Greens, we remain proud Europeans and want to see a close relationship with our European partners and real action to address the economic hardship being caused by the current hardline approach. We believe that our future lies at the heart of Europe and we should not be writing off any chance of becoming a member once again at some point in the future when the conditions are right.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/labour-brexite-northern-ireland-protocol-prime-minister-northern-ireland-b2114948.html>

2

[An Ipsos UK study found last week](#) the proportion of Britons who think Brexit has made their daily life worse has risen from 30 per cent in June 2021 to 45 per cent; only 17 per cent said their lives had been made better

3

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jul/03/northern-ireland-wants-stability-tearing-up-the-brexite-agreement-will-put-peace-and-prosperity-at-risk>

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