

# Green Party rejects government attempts to downplay structural racism



# Green Party

22 October 2020

- **Government must acknowledge that higher Covid risk is built on centuries of oppression and exploitation**

Ahead of Equalities Minister Kemi Badenoch's statement to the Commons, Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack has rejected comments made by government advisor Dr Raghiv Ali that "structural racism is not a reasonable explanation" for black and south Asian people's greater risk of illness and death.[1]

Womack said:

"The higher rates of Covid infection amongst communities of colour can largely be explained by poorer quality housing and the fact that they have access to a narrower range of jobs. But what the government is failing to accept and respond to is that these reduced life chances are the result of centuries of oppression and exclusion."

In Black History Month, Womack emphasised the link between past oppression and present disadvantage.

She said:

"The Green Party has called for an All-Party Commission of Inquiry for Truth and Reparatory Justice to begin to address these inequalities caused by structural racism.

"Telling the truth about Britain's history of colonialism and its central role in the trans-oceanic trafficking in enslaved Afrikans is the first step towards a society where all can flourish."

Womack repeated the Green Party's call for urgent action now to address structural inequality.

She said:

"We agree with the BMJ that 'tangible action must be taken now to protect

BAME people'. But we would go further and argue that urgent action must be taken to ensure that people from minority communities are given equal chances in our society.

“Such measures could include affirmative action in employment, mandatory levels of representation on company boards and public bodies, and the use of blind CVs in recruitment processes.”

ENDS

## Notes

### 1

Dr Ali made his comments during a briefing on the first quarterly report on Covid disparities, led by the government's Race Disparity Unit and the Minister for Equalities, Kemi Badenoch.

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/health-54634721>

### 2

On 11 October, the Green Party Conference passed a motion committing to reparatory justice for Afrikan enslavement:

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2020/10/11/green-party-commits-to-reparatory-justice-for-afrikan-enslavement/>

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**[Scrapping spending review shows PM's 'build back greener' promise is hollow, warn Greens](#)**



Green Party

21 October 2020

- **“The climate emergency won’t wait,” says Molly Scott Cato**

The Green Party has criticized the government’s decision to abandon the three-year spending plan that was to have framed the policy agenda for the Johnson government.

Molly Scott Cato, the party’s finance spokesperson and an economist, said:

“This is a failure of vision from a Prime Minister whose promise to ‘build back greener’ has been shown to be hollow. The climate emergency won’t wait.

“At the last election we called for £100bn every year to fund a green transition. This would not only improve our homes and our transport system but also create thousands of jobs in communities across the country to replace those lost to the Covid crisis. Without this level of ambition we risk falling into the worst recession this century.

“This failure to establish a direction of travel for the economy will create greater uncertainty for local authorities as well as business and stall the medium-term investment that is so vital to enable our economy to recover.

“The government that will host the next round of COP talks in little over a year is failing to make the long-term investments that the climate crisis demands. It is a time to show leadership and that means long-term and large-scale investments in the Green New Deal that the country and the planet are crying out for.”

ENDS

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**[Rich countries have historic responsibility to help those on climate crisis frontline, warn Green Party](#)**



# Green Party

20 October 2020

- **Molly Scott Cato responds to latest Oxfam report which finds climate finance is increasing debt OF poorer countries**

The Green Party has warned richer nations must provide grants to help poorer countries prepare for the climate crisis as a new report finds 80% of assistance has come in the forms of loans. [1]

Responding to the latest Oxfam report, Molly Scott Cato, Green Party finance spokesperson and economist, said:

“Rich countries such as the UK have a responsibility to help those who are on the frontline of the climate emergency, as a result of the historic carbon emissions that have helped us build our wealth.

“Climate justice means that neither rich governments nor private companies should profit from vast sums many countries in the Global South have to spend on preparing for climate change.

“The wealthy nations that are responsible for the largest amount of historic emissions should be offering grants, not loans, to help those now paying the price for our abuse of the natural world in order to become rich.

“As we prepare for COP26 next year we urge the government to look at this report’s recommendations and find new ways of providing the finance these countries need to protect themselves against the worst impact of the climate emergency

“Whether that is cancelling debt or taxing the worst polluters to pay for adaptation investment, it is our responsibility to protect those that are now paying the price for our greed and short-sightedness.”

ENDS

## Notes

### 1

The Oxfam report, Climate Finance Shadow Report 2020, was published on Tuesday 20 October

<https://www.oxfam.org/en/research/climate-finance-shadow-report-2020>

<https://ourworldindata.org/contributed-most-global-co2>

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## [Green peer Jenny Jones welcomes Lords' "regret" amendment to Internal Market Bill](#)



# Green Party

20 October 2020

- **Jenny Jones: “The Internal Market Bill is part of the government’s executive power grab and the main losers will be the devolved nations and regions”**

The House of Lords has today [Tuesday 20 October] passed an amendment to the Internal Market Bill regretting the provisions which, if enacted “would undermine the rule of law and damage the reputation of the United Kingdom.”

The regret motion was put forward by Lord Judge, an ex-Lord Chief Justice for England and Wales and passed by a majority of 226.

Baroness Jenny Jones, a Green Party peer, said:

“The scale of the government defeat does not surprise me, as the Lords is packed with judges and bishops who take a dim view of the government deliberately breaking international law.

“I enjoyed hearing the tough speeches from Tory Lords like Michael Howard and Kenneth Clarke. This is not a question of being pro-Brexit, or a Remainer, as opposition to government law-breaking is coming from all sides.

“The government are not defending the Good Friday Agreement, as this Bill gives Ministers the power to by-pass Parliament in modifying or disapplying the Northern Ireland Protocol. Nor are government defending parliamentary sovereignty, as it was Parliament which recently voted for Boris Johnson’s deal that had been sold to people at the General Election and which this Bill tries to unpick.

“The Internal Market Bill is part of the government’s executive power grab and the main losers will be the devolved nations and regions. If the Lords are unsuccessful in amending this legislation, then our neighbours won’t trust us and Northern Ireland will start to dominate our headlines for all the wrong reasons.

“If this Bill cannot be sufficiently amended, then the Lords must act as guardians of the constitution by rejecting the Bill in its entirety.”

ENDS

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## [New restrictions in Lancashire must be supported with a universal basic income, Green Party warns](#)



Green Party

16 October 2020

- **Former MEP says government’s handling of crisis in Lancashire has been “nowhere near sufficient”**

The new tier three restrictions in Lancashire must include a universal basic income to support people through the potentially devastating financial impact of the latest lockdown, the Green Party has warned.

Gina Dowding, Lancashire County Councillor and former Green Party MEP for the North West, said the government should also scrap its failing privatised test and trace system and fund local health teams to carry out contact tracing.

Dowding, who has twenty years of experience as a councillor in Lancaster and Lancashire and who formerly worked in public health in the NHS, said:

“The new tier three restrictions affecting people across Lancashire are unfortunately necessary due to the rising infection rates in the region. However, it is clear they will have a devastating impact on people’s finances and the government’s handling of this crisis in this region has been nowhere near sufficient.

“People are confused and no longer have any trust in what the government is advising them to do. We need our communities to trust and support measures in order to keep everybody safe, but for this to happen communities must also feel supported.

“A universal basic income would help people to do the right thing during lockdown and prevent anyone from falling through the gaps this winter.

“The government should also abandon the disaster of the privatised test and trace system and instead properly fund our expert public health teams in local authorities across the north to perform the contact tracing. They are the experts and we must trust them to do their work.”

ENDS

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