

Greens thrilled by local election results



Green Party

8 September 2017

The Green Party was celebrating today after it achieved two storming victories in by-elections on Thursday 7 September.

Greens won seats on Lewes District Council and Cannock Chase Council, both of them from the Conservatives and by a wide margin – achieving almost 50% of the vote in Cannock Chase and 40% of the vote in Lewes.

Co-Leader Jonathan Bartley welcomed the results and the elections of Johnny Denis (Lewes) and Stuart Crabtree (Cannock) saying:

“That’s two new Greens making a difference in their community. Two new Greens putting in place the foundations for yet more future success.”

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Green MEPs accuse Theresa May of 'running scared' of European Parliament



Green Party

8 September 2017

The UK's three Green MEPs have responded to news that Theresa May has refused an invitation to address the European Parliament, insisting she will only talk to Parliamentary leaders behind closed doors.

Jean Lambert, MEP for London said:

"We're meant to be transforming into a brave, new "global Britain". However, our Prime Minister runs scared whenever she is invited to make her case in public. Theresa May's refusal to address the European Parliament is yet another signal that her political mandate is hanging by a thread.

"Perhaps it has slipped her mind that Members of the European Parliament will be voting on the final Brexit deal? If May doesn't convince us that she has softened her stance on issues such as citizens' rights, Green MEPs – and many others – will reject any agreement put to us in 2019. She would do well to involve us in discussions, rather than shutting herself away behind closed doors."

Keith Taylor, MEP for the South East, said:

"May lives in fear of scrutiny, especially when it comes to the Tory government's variously magical thinking and entirely contradictory aims and claims on Brexit. If we weren't governed by democracy, it'd almost be understandable that she doesn't want to lay out the Brexit shambles for all to see.

"The first rule of negotiations is: you've got to show up. If May can't even be bothered to speak to us, how she expects to get a deal through the European Parliament is beyond me."

Molly Scott Cato, MEP for the South West and Green Party speaker on Brexit, said:

"Theresa May might be in the habit of shutting out democratic debate in her own Parliament, but ultimately she will have to face down the European Parliament.

"Admittedly, her extreme Brexit plans and the disdain her ministers have shown towards EU negotiators means this is going to be a hard sell. But she would be wise to put some energy into trying to get MEPs on side. Perhaps with her Party in a state of civil war over Brexit and her own position

precarious in the extreme, she realizes she is in no position to lecture the European Parliament on her reckless Brexit shambles.”

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Grenfell: We need a new council with new ideas says Green Party



6 September 2017

The Green Party has called for the full resignation of the Kensington and Chelsea Council Cabinet after it was revealed that of 196 households who survived the Grenfell fire, only 29 have been found new permanent accommodation [1].

The party says that the resulting byelections would give local residents the opportunity to vote for “leaders in whom they have faith”.

The party has also said that a new council should commit to a set of “radical” policies to help house survivors from the Grenfell fire including a new agreement that social housing must take planning and building priority going forwards.

The Green Party candidate for Kensington Jennifer Nadel said:

“It is utterly scandalous that the majority of survivors from Grenfell have still not been housed. Many are living crammed into tiny hotel rooms unable to begin the process of healing from their trauma and grief rebuilding their lives.

“It shows yet again that this council is not fit for purpose. The same councillors who presided over the tragedy and the appalling failures that followed still have their seats. They should resign now triggering by-elections so that residents can elect leaders in whom they can have faith. It is a continuing insult that they remain in place while residents who have lost everything have not even been housed. The council has the money to solve this problem, what it lacks is the will and that has to change.

“A new council with fresh ideas could commit to a radical set of reforms including taking hold of empty homes to house residents, the conversion of abandoned buildings into new social housing, and an agreement that from now on the priority will be to build social homes rather than to give planning permission for more new, expensive, private homes that are beyond the reach of most residents.”

Notes

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EU must block imports from Amazon forest reserve, say Green MEPs



Green Party

4 September 2017

Green MEP Molly Scott Cato has joined with fellow Greens to call on the EU Commission to block all imports extracted from Amazonian reserves in Brazil.

The call follows recent proposals by the Brazilian President, Michel Temer,

to open up at least 30% of the 46,000 square kilometer [Renca reserve](#) – an area the size of Denmark – to mining and large-scale agroindustry.

In a [letter](#) to Trade Commissioner, Cecilia Malmström and Commission President, Jean-Claude Juncker, the MEPs urge the Commission to use the [EU-Mercosur Agreement](#), a new trade deal currently being negotiated between Latin American countries and the EU, to prevent further destruction of the Amazon rainforest. With Brazilian imports into the EU being dominated by primary products – over a quarter of which are minerals – Greens fear the deal could do the opposite and encourage European extractive and agribusiness to exploit exports from areas like the Renca reserve.

[In a letter published in today's Guardian newspaper](#), Molly says:

"The proposal to open up the Renca reserve in the Amazon for exploitation by large mining companies would be catastrophic for the earth's climate, for biodiversity and for local indigenous communities. At the same time, the EU is negotiating a new trade agreement with Mercosur, the Latin America regional trade bloc, of which Brazil currently holds the presidency. This is a vital opportunity for the EU to use our trade muscle to make clear that the Amazon is not for sale and that minerals extracted from a protected reserve will never find their way onto European markets."

The Green MEPs also urge the Commission to remind Brazil of its commitment to the [UN Convention on Biological Diversity](#) and point to [WTO rules](#) which say that trading parties have a legitimate right to ban imports on products if it is "necessary to protect human, animal or plant life or health.

Molly Scott Cato has pledged Greens will vote against any deal that threatens protected areas in Brazil. She said:

"The European Parliament has a commitment to rainforest conservation and sustainable forest management in Brazil. MEPs will have a final vote on the Mercosur trade deal and Greens will vote against any agreement that increases trade in raw materials whilst threatening the most important rainforest on the planet."

Although a Brazilian court last week [blocked](#) the attempt by President Temer to open up the Renca reserve, it is likely to be only a temporary reprieve for the area. Previously higher court judges have overturned rulings made by local courts.

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Green Party responds to arrest of life-member and activist Tina Rothery



Green Party

2 September 2017

Responding to the news that Green Party life-member and activist Tina Rothery was arrested for protesting at the fracking site at Preston New Road today, Deputy Leader of the party Amelia Womack said:

“I offer my full support and total admiration to Tina. She is an inspiration and has proved time and again that to live in a free society we must be constantly challenging the decisions of those in power. She has put herself on the line to stop dirty and destructive fracking and with supporters and her political party behind her that effort will not be in vain.”

ENDS

Notes

Tina Rothery was awarded a life-membership of the Green Party for her activism. She is a member of the “Anti-Fracking Nanas” and is the former candidate for Tatton. She was arrested this afternoon on Preston New Road, Lancashire, as she protested against Cuadrilla’s fracking of the site. She will appear in court on 10 October 2017.

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