

## [Greens respond to Sheffield's vote to fell memorial trees](#)



13 December 2017

Responding to the news that Sheffield Council Cabinet has voted unanimously to fell 41 memorial trees, Alison Teal, Green Party Councillor for the city, said:

“This week we’ve seen trees adorned with Christmas decorations brought down without notice and now the council has decided that the social historical significance and beauty of 41 memorial trees can be dismissed and disregarded. I urge the council to cease their insensitive felling of the city’s trees and restore its green heart and heritage.”

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## [Greens: PIP statistics reveal government's "twisted priorities"](#)



13 December 2017

Co-Leader of the Green Party Jonathan Bartley says the latest statistics [1] on the use of Personal Independence Payments (PIP) reveals the government's "twisted priorities".

The annual statistics show that nearly half (47%) of claimants to the Disability Living Allowance element of PIP who had a reassessment this year either saw their allowance decreased or disallowed. The statistics reveal that 443,000 people will have had their claims reduced or removed.

Meanwhile a Freedom of Information request submitted by the party to the Department of Work and Pensions found that the amount paid to the private companies tasked with carrying out PIP assessment has increased by an average of 30% [2].

Bartley said:

“The Government is taking food from the mouths of disabled people while laying on a banquet for private companies. This comes only a week after Philip Hammond revealed his biases by labelling disabled people a drain on UK productivity. It shows just how twisted the Government’s priorities have become.

“By slashing away at welfare, the Government is heading in totally the wrong direction. It is weaponising welfare against those it should help. It is time it recalibrated it’s moral compass and steered it’s policies in a new direction. We need a new, modern vision for the welfare state – one that removes barriers for those who want to work, while giving real choices and opportunity to everyone. It could start by piloting a universal basic income that supports every person, with extra payments made available to those – like the disabled – ensuring everyone can lead the pursue the life they want.”

## Notes

[1]

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/666525/pip-statistics-to-october-2017.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/666525/pip-statistics-to-october-2017.pdf)

[2]

	13/14	14/15	15/16	16/17
	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals	Actuals
IAS	£20,254,568	£128,482,423	£158,604,257	£199,985,576
CAPITA	£3,073,986	£61,371,930	£44,682,003	£66,797,479

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## [Greens: “Crucial step forward” as police consider making misogyny a hate crime](#)



8 December 2017

The Green Party says a “crucial step” has been achieved in its campaign to make misogyny a hate crime, after a police official said they were considering the idea [1].

Deputy leader Amelia Womack announced a campaign for misogyny to be made a hate crime during her speech to Green Party autumn conference in October [2].

Assistant chief constable Mark Hamilton told the Women and Equalities Committee that misogyny could be considered a factor in crimes like harassment and assault. He gave evidence to the committee on Wednesday during a discussion about sexism and sexual harassment faced by women.

Hamilton, whose work focuses on hate crime, described misogyny as a 'significant issue' and said 'we are planning to put papers through... about the consideration of misogyny as a sixth strand of hate crime'.

Womack was motivated by her own experience of domestic violence, which she spoke publically about for the first time earlier this year [3]. On November 25, the International Day for the Elimination of Violence Against Women, the Green Party handed in a petition to the Home Office signed by more than 5000 people calling for misogyny to be recorded as a hate crime.

Womack said:

"It's great to see police are taking misogyny seriously and recognising that sometimes women are targeted simply because they are women, whether it's groping on the dance floor, harassment in the streets or rape. I'm really pleased to see our campaign take this crucial step forward.

"If gender-based violence was properly recognised there would be new avenues for women to report acts of aggression or abuse. It's so important that women feel confident to come forward and talk about their experiences. It's beyond time that our society acknowledged the suffering caused by misogyny."

#### Notes:

1. <https://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/commons-select/women-and-equalities-committee/news-parliament-2017/khkj/>
2. <http://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/green-party-calls-for-hate-crimes-to-be-recorded-by-the-gender-of-victims-a7992236.html>
3. <https://inews.co.uk/opinion/comment/i-abusive-relationship-two-years-police-let-now-im-fighting-chan>

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## [Beavers in the Forest of Dean: Green](#)

# deputy leader claims “green triumph”



8 December 2017

Green Party deputy leader Amelia Womack has claimed a “green triumph” after the Environment Secretary Michael Gove confirmed that beavers will be introduced to the Forest of Dean.

The idea was championed by Green Party councillor Sid Phelps and has been warmly received by the local community [1]. It is hoped that by introducing beavers, the council will enhance the biodiversity of the Forest of Dean and improve the area’s resilience to floods. Their activities regulate water flow which minimises the risks of both flooding and drought.

Womack said:

“This is wonderful news and I am proud to claim this as a Green triumph. Sid made the introduction of beavers to the Forest of Dean a major part of his campaign for election and it is so exciting to see his efforts bearing fruit so soon after he became a councillor. This just shows the difference a Green councillor can make.

“In the last few weeks I’ve been travelling the country, visiting innovative projects that are proving flood management does not need to be all about building concrete walls – it could and should be about enhancing, fortifying, and strengthening the green spaces around us. The lessons I have learned are being so clearly put into practice. Well done Sid and well done everyone involved in this project.”

In the last few months Amelia Womack has visited Devon, Stroud, and Yorkshire as part of a series of visits to learn about modern alternatives to flood management. She saw the beaver reintroduction project in Devon and has invited Michael Gove to visit the project with her, hoping that he will take up the concept of “rewilding” as a way to protect the environment.

## **Notes:**

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2017/sep/16/beavers-uk-flood-defences-forest-of-dean>

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# Green MEP and QC launch judicial review proceedings against government



7 December 2017

Green MEP Molly Scott Cato and Jolyon Maugham QC of the Good Law Society have today applied for judicial review in the High Court over the Government's refusal to release sectoral studies carried out by DExEU into the impacts of Brexit, and a Treasury study into the effects of leaving the customs union. The application comes a day after Brexit secretary David Davis told the Committee for Leaving the EU that impact studies do not exist [1]. However, for months the government has said sectoral studies do exist [2] and independent experts have asserted specific knowledge of the content of the Treasury study.

Scott Cato said:

"The country has run out of patience with the bluff and bluster of some of our senior Government representatives. We need the cold, clean scalpel of the law to separate fact from fiction and establish exactly what studies have been carried out – and to make them available for us all to see. Mr Davis will now have to explain himself in front of a High Court judge.

"For eight months I have been seeking release of these studies to inform myself and those I represent about the potential impacts of Brexit on our economy. It is frankly astonishing to hear the Brexit secretary now proclaim that these studies, which he has fought so hard to keep hidden from us all, do not in fact exist.

"Withholding information and keeping us all in the dark is a serious dereliction of duty for the man tasked with negotiating a change of such potentially devastating consequences."

Jolyon Maugham QC said:

"Let him throw his smoke bombs. David Davis can't escape from one simple principle: a Government of the people should never hide from the people what it plans to do to the people."

**Notes:**

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2017/dec/06/sector-by-sector-brexit-impact-forecasts-do-not-exist-says-david-davis>
2. <https://www.newstatesman.com/politics/staggers/2017/12/many-times-david-davis-talked-about-brexit-analysis-he-says-doesn-t-exist>

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