

Greens warn Tory attack on democracy can only be stopped if other parties work together to stop power grab



Green Party

28 May 2017

***Deputy leader Amelia Womack: “Progressive parties have a responsibility to the public to work together to protect democracy”**

Green Party deputy leader, Amelia Womack, will today (May 28) use a high profile panel at Hay Festival to warn Labour and the Lib Dems that they urgently need to come together in an attempt to stop what she will describe as an “attack on democracy” by the Conservative Party.

Womack will point to pledges made in the Conservative manifesto to change the voting rules for mayoral and assembly elections in England and Wales in ways that will favour them [1]. The Conservatives want these elections to be conducted using first past the post, a system which usually favour larger parties.

Womack will appear on a panel with Guardian columnist Zoe Williams, author David Boyle and Andrew Simms of the New Weather Institute to discuss ‘The Alternative – Is it time for a new progressive politics to arise in Britain?’ [2].

Speaking ahead of the festival, Womack said:

“There’s no denying our voting system is broken but the Tories are trying to overhaul it for the worse. Their push to spread the first past the post system to mayoral and assembly elections is an attempt to gain control at all levels and a direct attack on fairness within our democracy.

“Other progressive parties need to wake up to what’s happening. In particular Greens, Labour and the Lib Dems have a responsibility to stand up for every member of the public’s right to a vote that counts, to democracy. We should work together to stop this power grab and advocate for proportional representation, which is widely supported [3] and would result in fairer representation in the age of multi-party politics.

“The Labour leadership’s refusal to even have a conversation about electoral

alliances during the election campaign [4] is dangerously neglectful of the people they claim to represent. The Lib Dems were at least prepared to talk but, sadly, were not able to agree any reciprocal agreements in key constituencies. Despite the obvious challenges around forming electoral alliances during a snap general election campaign, we have seen significant and growing grassroots support for doing politics differently, with widespread recognition that our broken electoral system is denying too many people a voice. It will be deeply disappointing if the other progressive parties continue to be complicit in this after June 8.

“This is the most important election in a generation and the outcome will affect us for years to come – but it is not the end of the road and we must consider how to work together to build a positive future for the next five, 10, 50 years.

“When I’ve been on the doorstep talking to voters across the country the appetite for grown up politics is there, we just need the political will to make it work. I hope that progressive parties will be able to get round the table, look at the state of the political system and agree that it needs root and branch reform.”

Ends

For more information contact: press@greenparty.org.uk / 0203 691 9401

Notes:

<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/june2017/2017/05/are-conservatives-trying-change-rules-politics-so-they-never-lose-again>

<https://www.hayfestival.com/p-12259-zoe-williams-amelia-womack-david-boyle-and-drew-simms.aspx>

<https://www.change.org/p/make-this-the-last-general-election-to-use-our-broken-voting-system>

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/05/09/lucas-labour-and-lib-dems-have-betrayed-the-people-they-represent/>

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[Green Party responds to Corbyn's speech](#)



Green Party

27 May 2017

The Green Party has responded to Jeremy Corbyn's speech on foreign policy and terrorism. The Greens praised Jeremy Corbyn's 'tough on terrorism, tough on the causes of terrorism approach' but noted only 11 Labour MPs voted against the military intervention in Libya which went on to be harshly criticised by the Foreign Affairs Committee.

Jonathan Bartley, Green Party co-leader, said:

"The responsibility for terror attacks like that in Manchester lies solely with those who perpetrate these heinous crimes, but it is important to look at the wider picture too. The Labour leader is right to point to failed Western intervention as a cause of instability. Indeed when you look at the Libyan Intervention you see failure at almost every level. If we're going to beat terrorism we need both adequate security measures at home and a look at how Britain's role in world affairs can have serious unintended consequences which lead to greater insecurity. Greens are united in our belief in a foreign policy built on diplomacy and peacebuilding and when you vote Green on June 8th you know that you'll be voting for someone who will seriously scrutinise the march to war of any Government."

Ends

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[Greens suspend campaigning / Leader's statement](#)



Green Party

23 May 2017

***Jonathan Bartley: “Our country will never be divided by terror”**

The Green Party has suspended campaigning today after last night’s terrorist attack in Manchester.

All national campaigning events, including the billboard launch and Welsh Green Party manifesto launch are cancelled.

In a statement following the attacks, the Green Party co-leader Jonathan Bartley said:

“Our thoughts are with those affected by this appalling incident in Manchester. For young people to be targeted in this way is utterly atrocious.

“As ever our emergency services have done us proud – and we pay tribute to the police, firefighters and paramedics who stepped up in this time of need.

“Our country will never be divided by terror. The people of Manchester showed last night just how strong the bond of friendship is between the people who live on these islands – and in the coming days and weeks we’ll show that we won’t let terrorism tear us apart.”

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[Full manifesto and speeches: Green Party launches ‘Green Guarantee’](#)



Green Party

22 May 2017

The Green Party has launched its 'Green Guarantee' in London this morning [1], setting out the key priorities for MPs elected to Parliament on June 8th, to transform politics and create a confident and caring country.

Co-leaders Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley pledged Green MPs would protect the environment, reverse the privatisation of the NHS, give people a referendum on the terms of any Brexit deal and bring forward plans for a basic income and shorter working week [2].

Notes:

1. The manifesto was launched at 10.30am on Monday 22 May, at Wayra offices, 20 Air Street, Soho, London, W1B 5AN.
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2017/05/22/green-party-launches-plan-for-a-confident-and-caring-country/>
3. The Green Guarantee is available at: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/green-guarantee/>
4. A pdf copy of the Green Guarantee is available at: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/gp2017/greenguaranteepdf.pdf>
5. Full speeches (check against delivery):

Jonathan Bartley

Thank you for coming to today's launch of the Green Party's Green Guarantee.

It sets out what any Greens elected to the House of Commons would stand up for on your behalf.

These are big bold ideas that, with the right political will, are possible. They are about building a confident and caring Britain and a future that we can all be proud of.

Confident because we are creating a resilient, diverse and people powered economy that allows us all to live larger lives and cope with the challenges ahead.

Caring because we are redefining the welfare state, striving to end inequality and committed to redistributing both wealth and power.

We live in the 5th richest country in the world. In such a country no renter

should have to live in damp, cold, and neglected accommodation, no parent should have to compete with other parents to find their child a decent school, no one should have to wait ten hours in an emergency ward before getting the care and attention they need.

Most importantly of all: no one should tell you that your voice doesn't matter, that when it comes to the biggest decision this country has faced in generations, you will not get a say on whether, having seen what life outside the EU will look like, we should choose that future or choose to remain.

The media and the old parties will tell you that there are only 2 options on the ballot paper at this election. That's not true – and it is a disservice to our democracy.

If you believe in a welcoming Britain, a country of compassion, a fair economy where those with the most contribute more, the protection of our countryside and a nation confident enough to build bridges, not walls – then you have a choice.

If you believe things can change for the better, and that the next generation must be defined by fairness, not foodbanks – then we give you that choice.

If you believe that our future will be defined not by the size of our nuclear arsenal but by harnessing the enormous potential of the people who live in this country – then join us and stand up for what matters.

And on June 8 chose a positive future and Vote Green for a confident and caring Britain.

Caroline Lucas

I want to thank Wayra for hosting this launch. Since 2012 they have supported 160 new start-ups – getting behind bold, creative ideas, setting the agenda and shaping the future through brave leadership.

By being here today, we are choosing a future of opportunities for pioneers and innovators like them.

A new kind of economy, that meets people's needs and protects the environment.

A confident and caring Britain that reaches for a bigger future that we can be proud of.

The Green Guarantee is about hope, at a time that feels more uncertain than any other in my lifetime.

Brexit. Climate change. An NHS in crisis.

We face challenges that we can't possibly pretend to fix in 100 days or even 1,000.

Threats to our economic future and our security. Threats to the planet

But by working together and standing up for what matters we can change the course of history.

While other parties ignore the environment, Greens will protect it

We will transform people lives with bold policies like a basic income and shorter working week.

We will protect the NHS and roll back privatisation.

We will defend free movement and we will give the British people an explicit option to remain part of the EU as part of a 'ratification referendum' on the Brexit deal.

This election is about our country.

It's about the future we choose for our children.

It's about protecting our values of openness, compassion and co-operation.

The Green Guarantee is our promise that a confident and caring future is possible if we work together, do politics differently and dare to be different.

It says: we are ready – and we hope you'll join us by voting Green on June 8.

Ends

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**Green Party launches plan for a
'confident and caring country'**



Green Party

22 May 2017

***While other parties ignore the environment Greens will protect it**

***Green MPs will protect NHS and roll back privatisation**

***'Ratification referendum' promised to the British public**

***Party pledges to fight for bold policies like a basic income and shorter working week**

The Green Party has today set out its key priorities for MPs elected on June 8th [1]. At their Green Guarantee launch in central London the co-leaders of the party pledged that Green MPs will fight to transform politics and create a confident and caring country.

They promised Green MPs would protect the environment, reverse the privatisation of the NHS, give people a referendum on the terms of any Brexit deal and bring forward plans for a basic income and shorter working week.

Caroline Lucas and Jonathan Bartley focussed on young people, claiming that a generation has been let down by a Government 'hell-bent on an extreme Brexit' and an economy that 'fails the majority'.

The Green Party also announced plans to introduce an NHS Reinstatement Bill to Parliament, to reverse the privatisation of the Health Service. They also pledged to 'reverse the NHS funding gap', in part paid for by scrapping Britain's nuclear deterrent.

The Party pledged to immediately guarantee the rights of EU citizens, protect freedom of movement and give the British public, rather than just Parliament, the final say on any EU deal.

The Green Guarantee also promises to 'take steps towards the introduction of a universal basic income, including a government sponsored pilot scheme' and 'phase in' a shorter working week.

At the launch Caroline Lucas, the party's co-leader, said:

"The Green Party has big, bold ideas to create a confident and caring country we can all be proud of. That means protecting our environment for our children and grandchildren. Saving our NHS from crisis and ridding it of private sector profiteering. It means giving people a proper say on the Brexit deal, not shutting them out of the process. And it means exploring changes to our economy to make it fairer and fit for the future. Green MPs elected on June 8th can be trusted to protect our public services, fight for a close relationship with the EU and truly hold whoever is in Government to account.

"If we do end up with a Tory Government you can be sure that Green MPs will hold Theresa May's feet to the fire."

Jonathan Bartley, the party's co-leader, said:

“By voting Green on June 8th people can elect MPs who will always fight their corner, and push for the major changes we need to make this country a world leader, rather than the little Britain envisioned by the Tories. We are unapologetic in fighting to remain close to Europe, and in defending free movement as a wonderful gift to my generation that is being robbed from the next. We will always defend our public services, stand up for our NHS and push for bold changes so our economy delivers on fairness and on pioneering new technology.

Notes:

[1] The ‘Green Guarantee’ outlines the key priorities for MPs elected to Parliament on June 8th. It is available here: <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/green-guarantee/>

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