

Students pay a heavy price from latest Starmer U-turn say Greens



3 May 2023

The Green Party has slammed Labour over its U-turn on a pledge to abolish student fees, something that was in Labour's 2019 election manifesto and Keir Starmer promised to support during his leadership campaign [1].

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

"This is the latest U-turn from Keir Starmer's Labour and this time it's students who are paying a heavy price. The Green Party thinks tuition fees should be scrapped and grants restored.

"Higher education is a public good and should therefore be properly funded by Government. Students in England pay some of the highest fees in the world, while in Scotland, Germany and Sweden university education is free. This shows that the whopping £9000 charge for students, introduced by the coalition government and now backed by Labour, is a political choice. Publicly funded higher education is not only possible but essential to a society committed to equality and social mobility."

Co-chair of the Young Greens and a student at Oxford University, Kelsey Trevett, added:

"This U-turn from Labour is deeply disappointing but is exactly what we have come to expect from Keir Starmer's Labour. It is no surprise that the architects of tuition fees won't commit to their abolition, and for millions of students, this solidifies what we already knew: Labour is not on our side. Sky-high tuition fees are adding to the yawning gap between the generations and the growing sense of injustice among young people."

Notes

1. [Labour set to ditch pledge for free university tuition, Starmer says – BBC News](#)

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Greens repeat call for end to fossil fuels as climate activists gather in London



19 April 2023

The Green Party has reiterated its call for a rapid transition away from fossil fuels as climate activists gather in London this weekend [1] and said a vote for the Greens in the local elections next month is a vote for climate action.

Several high profile Greens will be speaking during the four days of action, taking place from Friday 21 April to Monday 24 April, which have been organised by Extinction Rebellion with the support of many leading environmental charities and civil society groups. The organisers have said the event will be peaceful and non-violent.

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“While the Green Party cannot speak for the organisers of this event, it is clear that we share their aim of moving beyond fossil fuels.

“Our climate is facing breakdown and nature is in freefall. Those in power should be taking decisive action now. The fact they aren’t doing is why events like these, and getting Greens elected at all levels of government, is so important.

“At the Green Party, we share the positive and ambitious vision of those joining this event, but our route to action is through electoral politics. We share their main demand that we get serious about transitioning away from fossil fuels.

“We also share the frustration at a government failing to quickly move us to net zero and instead take us in the wrong direction by granting permission for a new coal-mine, giving a green light to more oil drilling in the North Sea and investing billions in new roads.

“That’s why we desperately need more Green politicians both in parliament and running local authorities across the country, pushing for urgent action on the climate and ecological emergency.

“On May 4th millions of people will have the opportunity in the local elections to vote for a political party that places the climate and ecological crisis front and centre stage. A vote for the Green Party is a vote for climate action.”

ENDS

Notes

1 <https://extinctionrebellion.uk/the-big-one/>

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[Green Party response to Junior Doctors' Strike](#)



11 April 2023

Responding to strike action by junior doctors, **co-leader of the Green Party Carla Denyer**, who has today joined junior doctors on the picket line, said:

“Junior doctors are absolutely right to call for their pay to be restored to pre-austerity levels. Most people clearly agree that it is unacceptable for junior doctors to work ever longer hours while being asked to accept a real terms pay cut. A new poll shows 54% of the public back junior doctors taking action, while only 26% oppose [1].

“Years of government underfunding has pushed the NHS to breaking point and resulted in poor pay, thousands of unfilled vacancies, declining working conditions, overworked staff, and stretched capacity. Strike action by junior doctors and other health service workers is the inevitable consequence.

“The Green Party is committed to a properly funded NHS. We would increase investment by at least £6bn each year and ensure junior doctors and other health workers are decently paid. And to tackle the fact that one in three hospital beds in parts of England are occupied by patients well enough to be discharged but unable to access social care [2], we would also provide free social care.

“Health and social care, free at the point of use, could be funded through a wealth tax on the richest 1%, a single unified income tax – raising an additional £24 billion – or adding a social care levy to a more progressive tax system. Failure to provide adequate funding for decent health and social care is a political choice.”

Notes

1. <https://news.sky.com/story/politics-latest-junior-doctors-beginning-96-h-our-walkout-as-industrial-action-to-last-until-saturday-12593360?postid=5759113#liveblog-body>
2. [Up to one in three English hospital beds occupied by patients fit for](#)

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[Greens are achieving for their communities and people want more, say co-leaders at Mid Suffolk launch](#)



5 April 2023

Speaking at the launch of their local election campaign in Stowmarket, the co-leaders of the Green Party said hundreds of communities were poised to elect Greens to represent them at every level of local government.

Co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“In towns and cities and villages all across the country, Greens are gaining the trust and confidence of voters. Why? Because they want something different from the status quo. They want – and we hear this again and again – people that are really listening, not taking their support for granted and going about business as usual.”

The launch was held in Mid Suffolk because the Green Party is on track to become the largest party on the council. Co-leader Adrian Ramsay, who hopes to become the next MP for Waveney Valley, said:

“Here in Mid Suffolk we are on track to make history and become the largest party on the council – an incredible feat and a credit to the fantastic councillors already working hard for the people that live here, and the candidates who will join them next month. This shift is also a credit to the residents of this county – who have asked for something different and had their request answered.”

“Greens are winning in all kinds of communities. What we’re hearing in our neighbourhoods, is that regardless of where people live or what they look like, they share our values. They’ve seen what Greens in their communities are achieving and they want more.”

The Green Party used the launch of their local election campaign to announce their [Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price charter](#) to address the housing crisis and ensure green spaces are protected.

Adrian Ramsay said:

“Our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter will simultaneously protect valuable green space for communities, reduce climate emissions, tackle fuel poverty and provide genuinely affordable housing.”

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[Greens call for Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat housing crisis and protect green space](#)



5 April 2023

Greens today (Wednesday 5 April) will call for local councils across the country and the government to sign up to a new Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat the housing crisis and ensure green spaces are protected. [1]

The Green Party will launch its Local Election campaign 2023 in Stowmarket, Suffolk, where easy to heat, affordable homes are out of reach for too many people. [2]

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay, Parliamentary Candidate for Waveney Valley which includes much of the Mid Suffolk district, said:

“We need councillors and national government to work together to deliver the homes people need and can afford to rent and buy, where people need them.

“Today, speculators and developers are allowed to chase the biggest profits and ignore local needs. Too many villages and towns have seen large-scale developments take place without the community infrastructure expanded alongside, such as GP surgeries, bus services, cycling and walking networks and nurseries and schools.

“What we need is local councils supported to build quality, affordable housing in the right places where people live and work, with the right supporting infrastructure and local facilities.

“Our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter will simultaneously protect valuable green space for communities, reduce climate emissions, tackle fuel poverty and provide genuinely affordable housing.

“We’ve seen how Green councillors have made a difference in Mid Suffolk, where developers are now expected to provide EV points, not connect to the

gas grid and provide heat pumps as standard.

“The villages of Suffolk and Norfolk are facing the same problems as much of the rest of the country – developers being allowed to build houses local people often can’t afford and failing to ensure local services like buses and GP surgeries get the investment they need.

“Developers are being allowed to ride roughshod over the needs of communities and the environment and this has got to stop.”

Co-leader Carla Denyer, who is a serving councillor and Parliamentary candidate in Bristol, said:

“Up and down the country, people are experiencing the same problems as people here in Stowmarket – homes that are unaffordable to buy, unaffordable to rent and unaffordable to heat. There is a generation of people who are trapped in the private rental market by spiralling rents that bear no relationship to incomes.

“To address this, in the short term, we would introduce an immediate rent freeze and eviction ban to prevent people being made homeless in the middle of this cost of living crisis, as the Scottish Greens have already done as part of the Scottish Government.

“In the longer term, we would give councils the power to bring in rent controls in areas where the housing market is overheated. We would also place much stricter controls on the type of new homes being built to include more affordable and social housing for buying and renting.

“Everyone deserves a place that they can call home. That is why our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter will deliver the change we want to see across the housing sector and create fairer, greener communities.”

The Greens’ Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter would:

- End the housing crisis by creating enough affordable homes – including 100,000 new council homes a year built to the Passivhaus or equivalent standard
- Empower local authorities to bring empty homes back into use
- Transform the planning system to:
 - Incentivise renovation and improvement of existing buildings to reduce the environmental impact of new construction
 - Incentivise local authorities to spread small developments across their areas, where appropriate, rather than building huge new estates

- Protect valuable green space for communities
- Require new developments to be accompanied by the extra investment needed in local services, such as providing extra school and GP places and better bus services

1. Transform building regulations to ensure:
2. Ensure all new developments will be located and designed to ensure that residents do not need cars to live a full life
3. Introduce rent controls
4. End no-fault evictions

Councillor Andy Mellen, leader of the Green councillors on Mid Suffolk District council, said: "Greens make a difference when elected. I want to see a stop to unplanned development. Instead, we need the delivery of truly affordable and sustainable homes, with the infrastructure provided so that the 'liveability' of our communities is improved.

"These are the practical, radical solutions that Greens across the country are offering to implement if elected on 4 May."

Carla Denyer added:

"This year's local elections are a crucial step for the Greens as we look to not only defend hundreds of seats across the country but continue our unprecedented growth, breaking through on to new councils and gaining control of councils where we already have representation.

"With the cost of living crisis, the climate crisis and more and more people looking for a fresh political voice, it has never been more important to get Greens elected."

Adrian Ramsay added:

"Over the last few years, we have seen Green councillors elected in record numbers, winning seats from Labour and the Conservatives in roughly equal numbers, in rural and urban areas alike. We know that people like what they see.

"That's why we are fully expecting this growth to continue this year right across the country, be that in places like Lancaster and Lewes where we are already in administration, or Mid Suffolk where we could gain control of the local authority." [3]

Notes

1. The number of households in England is projected to rise from 23.2 million in 2018 to 26.9 million in 2043 – an average increase of around 150,000 households per year. (ONS, Household projections for England, 2018-based: Principal projection dataset, 29 June 2020). According to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities' 'English housing survey 2021–22', 4.6 million households (19%) rent privately; 4 million households (17%) rent from a social landlord, and 65% of households in 2021–22 were owner occupiers. These comprised 35% who owned their home outright and 30% with a mortgage.

2. <https://www.suffolknews.co.uk/bury-st-edmunds/news/scale-of-suffolks-social-housing-problems-unveiled-9299006/>

3. Greens currently hold 12 seats on Mid Suffolk District Council and are the second largest party, with the ruling Conservatives on 17 seats. Greens could take control of Mid Suffolk on 4th May. Much of the Mid Suffolk District is in the new Waveney Valley Parliamentary constituency where Adrian Ramsay is standing as the Parliamentary candidate. Across Suffolk as a whole Greens hold 31 seats, nearly all of which have been won from the Conservatives..

4. The Green Party currently has 563 councillors on 172 principal authority councils in England and Wales. It will be defending 281 seats in this year's local elections in May and will be looking to make further gains across the country.

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