

# Greens call for 'sensible measures' to stem surge in Covid cases



# Green Party

5 July 2022

- **Reintroduction of mandatory mask wearing on public transport and in crowded indoor venues while case rates are high**
- **Reintroduction of free Covid tests**
- **Introduction of statutory sick pay for those who test positive**
- **Retention of special paid leave for NHS staff off work with Covid-related sickness**

The Green Party has called for urgent measures to be introduced to help stem the latest wave of Covid infections. Greens have called for the reintroduction of mandatory mask wearing on public transport and in crowded indoor venues and free Covid tests, along with statutory sick pay for those self isolating due to a positive test.

The call comes as Covid cases jumped by 32% in a week, with an estimated 2.3 million people, or one in 30, having the virus. Almost 9,000 hospital beds were taken up with Covid patients on 30 June [1].

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

“A policy of ‘living with Covid’ shouldn’t mean throwing our hands in the air and accepting that millions of people have to catch it, which is what is happening at the moment. Hospital admissions are surging and many workers, both in and outside the health service, feel compelled to go to work even if they have symptoms.

“Reintroducing mask wearing on public transport and in crowded indoor venues alongside free testing and statutory sick pay for those who test positive are sensible measures in the short to medium term to help contain the rapid spread of the virus.”

The Green Party's Health, Social Care and Public Health spokesperson, Dr Pallavi Devulapalli, who is a GP, added:

"While the current vaccinations are successful at preventing serious illness for the majority, they are doing little to prevent the spread of the BA.4 and BA.5 Omicron subvariants. We need urgently to introduce a series of measures to help prevent our health services becoming overwhelmed and to prevent a situation where the most vulnerable are faced with the prospect of getting infected or forced to go back into a self-imposed lockdown in order to protect themselves. The more cases there are, the more people there will be needing hospitalisation and potentially suffering long Covid. We also know that a high number of cases leads to a greater chance of mutations and new variants.

"It is also vital that the government shows its support and sympathy for NHS staff and the huge pressures they are under by retaining special paid leave for staff off work with Covid-related sickness [2]. To withhold sick pay at this time feels like a slap in the face, especially since NHS staff have experienced real term wage cuts since 2010 [3]."

#### Notes

1. <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-62030083>
2. <https://inews.co.uk/news/health/paid-covid-leave-rules-for-nhs-staff-scrapped-in-england-as-cases-soar-1719806>
3. <https://www.nuffieldtrust.org.uk/resource/chart-of-the-week-real-terms-nhs-staff-pay-from-2010-to-2020>

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**[Labour and Tories ignoring disaster of Brexit out of own self-interest, Greens warn](#)**



# Green Party

4 July 2022

Responding to the news that Labour leader Sir Keir Starmer is to use a speech today to vow to “make Brexit work”, while ruling out taking the UK back into the customs union or restoring freedom of movement [1], Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“At a time when the economic devastation caused by Brexit is becoming increasingly clear, and as public opinion is turning against the decision to leave the European Union, it is quite perverse of Keir Starmer to stick his head in the sand and insist he will make Brexit work.

“This is an idea driven only by Labour’s self-interest rather than the best interests of the country.

“While businesses are suffering and the permanent fall in the value of sterling means we are importing inflation, making the cost of living crisis worse, the fact that the two main parties are indistinguishable from one another on Brexit is a major failing of our political system and is letting millions of people down [2].

“The Green Party has already called for rejoining the customs union, which would ease the tensions in Northern Ireland caused by Johnson’s hard Brexit [3], and for maintaining alignment with EU law and we utterly oppose government attempts to undermine environmental and social protections offered by EU legislation.

“We believe that the ending of freedom of movement has taken away rights and opportunities from our citizens as well as causing employment crises in sectors as varied as agriculture and social care.

“As Greens, we remain proud Europeans and want to see a close relationship with our European partners and real action to address the economic hardship being caused by the current hardline approach. We believe that our future lies at the heart of Europe and we should not be writing off any chance of becoming a member once again at some point in the future when the conditions are right.”

ENDS

**Notes**

**1**

<https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/labour-brexit-northern-ireland-protocol-prime-minister-northern-ireland-b2114948.html>

2

[An Ipsos UK study found last week](#) the proportion of Britons who think Brexit has made their daily life worse has risen from 30 per cent in June 2021 to 45 per cent; only 17 per cent said their lives had been made better

3

<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2022/jul/03/northern-ireland-wants-stability-tearing-up-the-brexit-agreement-will-put-peace-and-prosperity-at-risk>

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## [New Green Party spokespeople adds to 'rich tapestry of talent'](#)



# Green Party

24 June 2022

The Green Party of England and Wales has unveiled five new spokespeople for the Party, making a 14-strong speaker team who will stand alongside the party's leadership as experts in their areas of advocacy.

The new positions include spokespeople for Transport and Healthy Streets; Peace and Global Justice; Equalities and Diversity; Housing and Communities; and Health, Social Care and Public Health [1].

Commenting on the new list of speakers, Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

"The Green Party is delighted to unveil this list of knowledgeable and passionate spokespeople whose expertise adds to the rich tapestry of talent that makes up our strong list of spokespeople.

“Following the landmark local election results in May, where Greens gained 78 seats, from both Tories and Labour, our spokespeople will play a pivotal role in reaching new voters in every corner of England and Wales. They will put forward fresh thinking and bold solutions for the problems facing society and help consolidate the party’s growing reputation as the party of social, economic and environmental justice.”

## Notes:

### 1. List of new spokespeople:

**Transport and Healthy Streets:** Cllr Matt Edwards (Bradford) @greenmattbfd

Originally from Merseyside, Matt has lived in Bradford for 13 years after moving to the city after university. He was elected as a Green councillor for Tong Ward in 2021 and represents some of the most left behind communities in the country. He has a keen interest in transport matters and has been part of campaigns to stop road widening in his ward and improve transport connections within Bradford

**Peace and Global Justice:** Cllr Hannah Clare (Deputy Leader Brighton and Hove City Council) @hannalytical

Hannah is formerly co-chair of the Young Greens of England and Wales. As a green councillor, she has campaigned on refugee rights, particularly those of young people. Hannah is taking an active role in Brighton & Hove’s response to the war in Ukraine and ensuring the council provides the right levels of care and support. She gained an active interest in peace while studying peace processes at university and is committed to promoting the values of peace and global justice.

**Equalities and Diversity:** Ria Patel @Ria\_\_Patel

Ria is a 21-year-old, Queer non-binary demi-woman, who is neurodiverse. They are currently studying psychology at university, and campaign on social justice issues. In the Green Party, they are currently the Co-Chair of LGBTIQ+ Greens. She has previously worked with Greens of Colour, The Deyika Fund and Young Greens, and is looking forward to working closely with all the Green Party’s Liberation Groups and Policy Working Groups, to highlight national equality and diversity issues. They have also been elected as a Councillor in Croydon.

**Housing and Communities:** Cllr Ellie Chowns (North Herefordshire) @EllieChowns

Ellie is the cabinet member for environment and economy at Herefordshire Council, and a former Green MEP for the West Midlands. She works part-time as a University lecturer in international development and has spent her career in charities and in education. Ellie lives on an organic farm and has two grown-up sons. In recent years she has become actively involved in politics because she believes we all need and deserve better, and wants to be part of that positive change.

**Health, Social Care and Public Health:** Dr Pallavi Devulapalli (a practising GP in Norfolk) @doctorpallavi

Pallavi is an NHS GP in West Norfolk. She has been an active Green Party member for the last seven years taking on campaigning, membership and Parish Councillor roles. Pallavi has represented the Greens in both Parliamentary and European elections.

## 2. Full list of Green Party

**spokespeople:** <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/people/green-party-spokespeople/>

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# [Green Party calls for lawyer MPs who break rule of law to be suspended from professional bodies](#)



# Green Party

23 June 2022

The Green Party has called for legally trained politicians who vote for legislation which disregards the rule of law to be suspended from the Law Society and the Bar Council.

Co-leaders Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay have written to the two legal professional bodies asking them to consider whether voting for legislation that breaks international treaties would constitute serious professional misconduct and could therefore lead to being suspended [1].

The letter comes as in the wake of the EU launching legal action against the UK to stop Boris Johnson from unilaterally rewriting the post-Brexit arrangements for Northern Ireland [2], and Government plans to override the power of Europe's human rights court and abolish the Human Rights Act – moves

described by Stephanie Boyce, the president of the Law Society, as “deepening the government’s disregard for the checks and balances that underpin the rule of law” [3].

Carla Denyer said:

“We have learned from history that the slippery slope towards despotism begins with small steps and that institutions outside the political realm can save the rule of law when they step up to defend them.

“This government clearly already shares features of authoritarian regimes in that it believes it can act with impunity and is above the law. From partying in lockdown to trying to rip up international treaties it has itself signed, this government does not feel constrained by the rule of law.

“As so many MPs are qualified barristers and solicitors, we believe the Law Society and the Bar Council both have a particular duty to set out clearly what professional standards are expected of these politicians and to consider suspending any that vote for legislation which breaks international treaties.

“Legally qualified politicians can not be allowed to use their status as a veneer of respectability to their political machinations while at the same time so willingly undermining the rule of law.”

In the letter, the co-leaders point to a series of actions by the government which have undermined the rule of law including:

- The politicisation of the role of Attorney General, who has repeatedly expressed political support masquerading as legal advice
- The significant diminution of the role of Lord Chancellor, and a failure of successive office holders to stand up for the independence of the judiciary and to defend the judiciary against political attack from government ministers
- Overseeing a raft of constitutionally dubious legislation, including the so-called “Bill of Rights”, the Internal Markets Bill, and the proposed legislation designed to violate the Northern Ireland Protocol.

Adrian Ramsay said:

“We know that non-political institutions can play a key role when democratic values come under threat.

“We welcome the way that the Archbishop of Canterbury has criticised the Rwanda policy and the action by the legal bodies to defend their members against government attacks [3].

“We are now asking them to go a step further and challenge legislators who are undermining the rule of law while themselves members of the legal

profession.”

## Notes

1. See the [full version of the letter to the Bar Council](#). Letter to the Law Society is identical.
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2022/jun/15/brexit-eu-plans-carrot-and-stick-approach-to-uk-northern-ireland-move>
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/law/2022/jun/21/uks-new-bill-of-rights-will-curtail-power-of-european-human-rights-court>
4. <https://twitter.com/thelawsociety/status/1536739630623641600?s=21&t=iJx49j2ydR7Gcc-4xNpfsQ>

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# Cost of living crisis is actually an income crisis and inequality scandal, say Greens



# Green Party

17 June 2022

- Increase minimum wage, ensure public sector wages keep pace with inflation and start restoring real wage losses from years of austerity
- Restore the £20 uplift to Universal Credit and double it to £40 per week
- Increase tax on the wealthiest to tackle rising inequality and support those on lowest incomes

As Green Party members join this weekend's TUC Cost of Living march [1], the



Party is calling for the government to increase the minimum wage, ensure public sector wages keep pace with inflation, and start restoring the real-terms wage losses from years of austerity. Last year the Green Party was the only major party to support the #NHSPay15 campaign – a 15% pay rise for all NHS workers [2].

The party is also calling for a restoration of the £20 uplift in Universal Credit and doubling it to £40 a week, with equivalent increases for those on legacy benefits. They say measures to support those on the lowest incomes should be paid for through higher income taxes on the wealthy.

Greens point to increasing inequality during the Covid pandemic, and say genuine levelling up must involve a redistribution of wealth and a boost to incomes of the poorest.

Green Party co-leader, Carla Denyer said:

“As Greens we fully support the TUC’s call for an increase in wages, with public sector increases being funded by the Treasury. The cost of living crisis is actually an income crisis. It is vital that wages keep pace with inflation this year. We also need to see a reversing of the real-term wage losses that took place during the Tories’ era of austerity.

“The situation facing those who claim benefits is even more serious – whether or not claimants are in work. This is why Greens have long called for restoring the £20 Covid uplift to Universal Credit and doubling it to £40 per week, with equivalent increases for those on legacy benefits.

“We are also witnessing an inequality scandal in the UK. During the Covid pandemic, the richest 10% of households enjoyed an estimated increase in wealth of £50,000 each on average [3], dramatically widening the gap between the richest and poorest households. We need to raise taxes on the highest incomes to redress this imbalance and fund support for those on the lowest incomes.”

## Notes

1. TUC “We Demand Better march on the cost of living” is on Saturday 18th June: <https://www.tuc.org.uk/DemandBetter>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/03/06/green-party-supports-calls-for-15-pay-rise-for-nhs-workers/>
3. <https://www.theguardian.com/business/2021/jul/12/uk-wealth-gap-widens-in-pandemic-as-richest-get-50000-windfall>

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