

High air pollution in Northern Ireland

Localised high and moderate levels of air pollution from particulate matter, are currently experienced in North West Northern Ireland. The weather situation is unlikely to change significantly over the next 24 hours which may cause this pollution to persist.

Adrian Ramsay makes key demands on UK government during visit to Suffolk nature reserve



Green Party

9 December 2022

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay has made a series of key demands of Environment Secretary Thérèse Coffey during a visit to a nature reserve in her Suffolk constituency today [Friday] which sits in the shadow of the planned Sizewell C nuclear power plant.

Ramsay visited the important RSPB Minsmere site while politicians from around the world attended the UN COP15 biodiversity summit in Montreal. He called on the Environment Secretary to show international leadership on the issue, starting with fully reversing the government's attacks on nature.

Ramsay has called on the government to:

- Publish a clear pathway to meet its commitment to restore 30% of land for nature by 2030
- To scrap plans to weaken protections for nature in the Retained EU Law (revocation and reform) Bill
- Stop dragging its feet on introducing the promised nature-friendly

farming payments scheme

Ramsay, who is standing as a parliamentary candidate for the Greens in Suffolk at the next general election, said:

“The government’s attacks on nature have rightly been very strongly challenged by the RSPB, the Wildlife Trusts, the National Trust and others. The UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. Protecting and restoring nature is deeply important to people in Thérèse Coffey’s constituency and around the country. During the biodiversity COP, the Environment Secretary must rethink the government’s approach and show international leadership on this crucial issue.

“Minsmere is a great example of rich and varied landscapes, managed carefully by the RSPB to ensure that the huge variety of wildlife survives and thrives. Yet this site, within the environment secretary’s constituency, is under threat from the Sizewell C nuclear power plant [2], which was given the go ahead by the government last week. Meanwhile the government’s weak and harmful policies are failing to prevent and reverse further declines in wildlife and nature at sites across the country.

“That’s why the Green Party is calling for the government to immediately stop dragging its feet on introducing the promised nature-friendly farming payments scheme, publish a clear pathway to meet its commitment to restore 30% of land for nature by 2030 and scrap plans to weaken protections for nature in the Retained EU Law (revocation and reform) Bill.”

Earlier in the week the Green Party also called on the government to introduce a Rights of Nature Act to extend legal protections for wildlife and habitats in England and Wales, and establish an independent Commission for Nature to oversee the Act’s enforcement [3].

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/minsmere/>

2

<https://www.rspb.org.uk/our-work/casework/cases/sizewell-c/>

3

<https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2022/12/07/greens-call-to-extend-legal-protections-for-wildlife/>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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Cumbria coal mine decision shows “government is the pits” on tackling the climate crisis



Green Party

7 December 2022

Commenting on Levelling-Up Secretary Michael Gove’s go ahead for the Cumbria coal mine, Green Party of England and Wales co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

“It’s a disgrace that this decision has been cynically delayed until just after we have ceased to hold the COP Presidency. This government really is the pits.

“England and Wales have huge natural advantages and the economic strength to harness renewable wind, wave and solar power. The government should be leading the world toward renewable forms of energy not encouraging it to move backwards.

“The government’s environmental credentials are in tatters. Around the world, countries are striving to tackle the climate crisis by closing coal mines, yet here the government is opening one.

“This latest decision follows the green light for new North Sea oil and gas licences.

“Global leadership must begin at home and we need to see a clear commitment from this government to keep fossil fuels in the ground. This means no new fossil fuel mining and a clear pathway to move rapidly away from oil, coal and gas in favour of renewables and a nationwide programme of home insulation to cut both emissions and energy bills.

“The mine will not be ‘carbon neutral’ as previously claimed and its coking coal is not essential to the future of steel production. At most, only 13 per

cent of the coal from this mine is destined for the UK market [1]. The rest will be exported.

“Steel production is currently one of our most carbon intensive industries. That has to change and the companies themselves know it. Low carbon production technology exists and should be encouraged by government, not held back by creating new sources of dirty fuels.

“There is no doubt West Cumbria needs jobs but over-promising in order to open a new coal mine is not the answer. There needs to be investment in the green technologies that will create the sustainable jobs of the future.”

Jill Perry, Green Party councillor on the Shadow Authority of Cumberland Council and long-term campaigner against the coal mine, said:

“This is really bad news for local people, because what we really need are green jobs that benefit everyone in the community, not dirty jobs in an old industry where the profits are sucked out and hidden in tax havens.

“If we invest in retrofit of insulation and renewable technologies in our leaky housing stock, a lot of which isn’t even on the gas network, it will provide more jobs, cheaper heating bills and keep the money circulating in the local area.

“The steel industry doesn’t need this coking coal plant and neither do we.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://theecologist.org/2022/dec/01/cumbrian-coal-mine-decision-imminent>

For more information or to arrange an interview contact the press office on press@greenparty.org.uk or call 0203 691 9401

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[UK transport falling behind – we need legislation to “get Britain moving”,](#)

say Greens



Green Party

7 December 2022

The Green Party has accused the government of leaving transport “in a mess” by refusing to tackle key issues after the Transport Secretary says there is no time for new legislation in this parliament.

The statement was made at the Transport Select Committee [1] where he also suggested that the government could cancel plans for Great British Railways.

Councillor Matt Edwards, the Green Party transport spokesperson said.

“It’s frankly astonishing that the British government is looking at the state of our railways and thinking that there is no problem to solve here.

“Privatisation on our railways has been a disaster and the creation of Great British Railways was meant to better coordinate all aspects of services including the planning of engineering works on the network.

“Years of underinvestment and lack of direction have meant that the railways, particularly in the North of England, are past breaking point. The government can’t keep looking for ‘alternative views’ when the common sense approach doesn’t fit with their extreme market-led ideology.”

Greens also say that legislation is needed to finally address the legal situation with other pressing issues including pavement parking. Parking on the pavement is only illegal in London, but a new ban has been promised for years and would cover the whole of England.

Councillor Edwards said,

“I know the impact the delay on legislation around pavement parking is having, particularly on disabled people and parents with prams and pushchairs. The law is complicated and in many cases people are left with neither local authorities nor the police willing to tackle problems.

“The job of government is to govern. We need new legislation to fix all the loopholes in our laws and get Britain moving. But the government seems determined to avoid taking any responsibility for anything.”

ENDS

Notes

1

<https://www.parliamentlive.tv/Event/Index/20875a20-10d7-4d50-868a-d1f6b8776b14>

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[Greens call to extend legal protections for wildlife](#)



Green Party

7 December 2022

- **Call for legal protections for wildlife and habitats in England and Wales comes as COP15 biodiversity summit meets in Montreal**
- **Regeneration of nature should be at the heart of all policy making**

Green Party co-leader Adrian Ramsay has called on the government to introduce a Rights of Nature Act [1] as scientists, government officials and activists gather for the UN COP15 biodiversity summit in Montreal today [Wednesday, 7 December].

The Act would extend legal protections for wildlife and habitats in England and Wales, and establish an independent Commission for Nature to oversee the Act's enforcement.

Ramsay has also accused the environment secretary, Thérèse Coffey, of arriving "empty handed" at the UN COP15 biodiversity summit in Montreal. He

said a Rights of Nature Act is exactly what is needed to demonstrate the UK is genuinely committed to halting and reversing species decline.

Adrian Ramsay said:

“This government stands accused by a wide variety of environmental and conservation groups of an attack on nature [2]. Ministers deny this, but the government is pushing through new laws that will weaken protections for nature and dragging its feet on introducing the promised nature-friendly farming payment scheme.

“Despite the UK being one of the most nature depleted countries in the world, Thérèse Coffey is attending the UN biodiversity summit empty handed.

“There is little confidence in the government meeting its target to halt the decline in species by 2030 [4], and the government appears to have made no progress on its commitment to restore 30% of land for nature by 2030.

“Instead, the pace that we are losing nature continues to accelerate and there is no sign of a reversal in this trend. We face an ecological emergency which poses real threats to human society – to food and water supplies, to clean air, to our ability to adapt to a warming world.

“This is why the Green Party wants to see a Rights of Nature Act [5]. This would provide legal protections for wildlife and habitats in England and Wales, and be enforced by an independent Commission for Nature. It would also ensure that the regeneration of nature is at the heart of all policy considerations.

“Such an Act would also seek to increase accessibility to nature for all, as this is an important way to improve physical and mental health and general wellbeing.

“If the UK government wants to demonstrate a genuine commitment to halting and reversing species decline, and avoid arriving at future biodiversity summits empty handed, it will show leadership by introducing a Rights of Nature Act.”

Notes

1. <https://www.rspb.org.uk/reserves-and-events/reserves-a-z/minsmere/>
2. <https://www.greenparty.org.uk/news/2021/10/23/green-party-backs-a-rights-of-nature-act-to-give-nature-legal-rights/>
3. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/rspb-england-government-national-trust-wildlife-trusts-b2174501.html>
4. <https://www.theguardian.com/environment/2022/nov/28/tories-embarrassingly-poor-nature-targets-2030-labour-says>
5. <https://theecologist.org/2021/nov/01/rights-nature>

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