

Greens pledge to end 'dental deserts' with £3bn for new NHS contract

The Green Party has vowed to end Britain's 'dental deserts' by restoring full access to NHS dentistry after years of cuts that left millions unable to get affordable dental treatment.

Elected Greens will push for a new contract for NHS dentists that ensures everybody who needs an NHS dentist has access to one, backed by an additional £3bn for the dentistry budget by 2030.

This will begin to reverse more than a decade of real terms spending cuts and begin to restore the incomes of dentists providing NHS services.

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay said:

"In many parts of the country it is now impossible to register with an NHS dentist, and many dentists are de-registering NHS patients to avoid treating them at a loss.

"Too many of us are feeling the consequences: dropping from regular preventative dental visits to only going when we have a problem that needs treatment. Prevention is so much better than treatment, and it's a national outrage that tooth decay is now the top reason for child hospital admissions.

"Our Green plan for dentists will put the billions into the NHS needed to turn around fourteen years of Conservative failure, and ensure every person in every community will have access to an affordable NHS dentist.

"Green MPs will commit to meeting with the British Dental Association as soon as possible after the election, so that we can pile the pressure on the next government to fix dentistry as a matter of urgency."

The announcement comes after the British Dental Association (BDA) reviewed the dental policies in each party's manifesto. (1)

The BDA stated that "meaningful reform needs to go hand in hand with fair funding" and noted the "multi-billion-pound promises" made in the Green Party manifesto.

By contrast, the BDA noted a "modest pot of new money from Labour for 700,000 urgent appointments", but that Labour's wider promises on dentistry "have yet to be priced in and will likely hinge on future negotiations."

Elected Greens are also committed to pushing for all children to have a daily free school meal, made from nutritious ingredients and based on local and organic or sustainable produce. The BDA supports universal free school meals, "to fight the severe impact child hunger and poor nutrition are having on children's dental health." (2)

NOTES TO EDITORS

1. BDA review of the parties' manifestos: *"Meaningful reform needs to go hand in hand with fair funding. We've seen multi-billion-pound promises from both the Greens and Lib Dems for the NHS. There is a modest pot of new money from Labour for 700,000 urgent appointments, but pledges on reform – "a shift to focusing on prevention and the retention of NHS dentists" have yet to be priced in and will likely hinge on future negotiations."*

<https://www.bda.org/news-and-opinion/blog/nhs-dentistry-where-we-go-beyond-election-day>

2. BDA manifesto supports free school meals: *"Extend free school meals to every primary school child in England to fight the severe impact child hunger and poor nutrition are having on children's dental health."*

<https://www.bda.org/what-we-do/campaigns-and-advocacy/general-election-2024/manifesto>

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[Givan welcomes Trade Unions' response to EA Pay and Grading Review](#)

Education Minister Paul Givan has welcomed confirmation from support staff unions that they will consult their members on the proposed Pay and Grading Review resolution.

[Ministers committed to all island sustainable tourism](#)

Ministers Conor Murphy and Catherine Martin have today signed an agreement on the need for tourism to be environmentally, socially and economically sustainable on the island of Ireland.

[Preliminary works to commence at site of £24.5m Lagan pedestrian and Cycle bridge](#)

Geotechnical Investigation works will commence on the River Lagan on Monday 24 June at the site of the proposed Lagan Pedestrian and Cycle Bridge.

[“You can judge a society by how it looks after those in need” says Greens as they promise £20bn social care package](#)

- Greens will introduce free personal care along the lines successfully brought in by the Scottish Government, to ensure dignity in old age and for the disabled.
- Increase pay rates and introduce a career structure for carers to rebuild the care workforce.
- An additional £3bn to enable local authorities to provide high-quality children’s social care

The Green Party is today highlighting their ‘take greater care’ commitment, pledging better care for millions of people in the care system and those working in it. The Green Party manifesto includes a commitment of £20bn extra a year to ensure free personal care available for all and increased pay rates and a career structure for carers.

Currently there are 150,000 staff vacancies in the care sector. In England there are estimated to be 4.7 million unpaid carers.

The Green Party Communities Spokesperson, Ellie Chowns, said:

“You can judge a society by how it looks after those in need.

“With this test the UK is clearly severely failing and must do better.

“That’s why Greens have committed to invest £20bn a year into social care and will put it on a par with health.

"We believe that health and care services must go hand in hand.

"Investment and an increased priority given to care, will help free up hospital beds and reduce waiting lists.

"The Green Party believes free social care is fundamental to ensuring everyone is shown compassion and dignity at any stage in their lives when they need extra support."

The Green Party has also pledged greater care of social care workers. Chowns continued:

"There are 150,000 staff vacancies in the care sector and in England an estimated 4.7 million unpaid carers.

"Green MPs will seek to bring together local authorities, trade unions and private providers to ensure increased pay and improved terms and conditions for all care workers.

"The current system is failing some of the most vulnerable in society.

"It is only The Green Party who are being honest about the levels of investment needed to give people the dignity and wellbeing they deserve."

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