

Hundreds of NHS ambulance staff waiting for driver training despite deadly delays

When there is a real shortage of ambulance drivers and patients suffering in pain and distress, it is staggering that the Government has not tackled the backlog of NHS paramedics waiting for vital training.

The Liberal Democrats submitted a Freedom of Information request to NHS ambulance Trusts across England, asking how many staff are currently waiting to complete C1 and Blue Light driving courses. The data show that more than 700 NHS staff across the country are currently waiting to complete a C1 driving course. 630 staff are on the waiting list to complete a Blue Light driving course.

Ambulance drivers are required to complete C1 training to drive a vehicle up to 7.5 tonnes – these courses can cost around £1,000 and paramedics are required to pay for it themselves in most cases. Paramedics also do a Blue Light training course which is considered the gold standard for emergency response drivers.

This is adding serious pressure on our frontline emergency workers.



The Liberal Democrats are calling for the Government to address the backlog by bringing forward a plan to recruit more specialist driving instructors and assessors, as well as covering the cost of ambulance driver training.

Earlier this year, the Lib Dems revealed that 43,000 people died before an ambulance reached them. Recent figures have also shown almost 500 NHS patients suffered permanent or long-term harm due to emergency response delays.

The Conservatives are asleep at the wheel, while patients struggle to access emergency treatment. **Ministers need to get a grip on the situation**, starting by bringing forward a plan to recruit more specialist driving instructors and assessors, as well as covering the cost of ambulance driver training so that paramedics can jump into action as soon as they graduate.

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[Green Party calls for a tax on the super-rich in response to effective bankruptcy of Birmingham City Council](#)



Green Party

5 September 2023

Responding to the effective bankruptcy of Labour-run Birmingham City Council [1], Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“This is just the tip of the iceberg. Over the next two years at least 26 councils in some of Britain’s most deprived areas are at risk of going the same way [2] and the Local Government Association has warned councils in England face a funding gap of almost £3 billion just to keep services standing still [3].

“Thirteen years of Tory austerity has left day-to-day local services delivered by councils crumbling. This cannot be fixed without extra revenue.

“This should serve as a wakeup call to Labour. It’s time to tax the super rich who have seen their wealth mushroom in recent years, so as to provide extra money to maintain vital public services.

“Even millionaires themselves have joined economists and politicians from around the world in calling for extra taxes on the richest [4]. Labour needs to play catch-up and pledge to tax the super-rich, or a future Labour government will drag the country into bankruptcy.”

The Green Party Group Leader on Birmingham City Council, Cllr Julien Pritchard, also blamed mismanagement from the local Labour Administration for the crisis. He said:

“Our Labour-run Council has been dealt an awful hand but they have also played it terribly. They have utterly mismanaged an equal pay crisis with awful consequences. Ordinary Brummies shouldn’t have to pay for Labour’s mess.

“The government will need to step in to ensure Birmingham residents don’t suffer – it’s vital this isn’t solved with a fire sale of the city’s assets at knock down prices.

“We need to see solutions that ensure those most in need in our city are protected. This includes tackling the Council’s appalling housing conditions, supporting residents through the cost-of-living crisis, and protecting the vital services our residents rely on.”

Notes

1. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/sep/05/birmingham-city-council-financial-distress-budget-section-114>
2. <https://www.theguardian.com/society/2023/aug/28/at-least-26-english-councils-at-risk-of-bankruptcy-in-next-two-years>
3. <https://www.local.gov.uk/about/news/lga-analysis-councils-face-almost-ps3-billion-funding-gap-over-next-two-years>
4. <https://taxextremewealth.com/>

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[Education system left crumbling after 13 years of Tory austerity, say Greens](#)



Green Party

4 September 2023

Responding to the reinforced autoclaved aerated concrete (RAAC) crisis, where crumbling concrete has resulted in the full or partial closure of 104 schools, the co-leader of the Green Party Carla Denyer said:

“Our education system has been left crumbling after 13 years of Tory austerity. But successive governments have known about the problems with RAAC going all the way back to the 1980s.

“Our schools are not fit for purpose. This was revealed during the pandemic when failures to properly ventilate our schools became apparent. We’ve also seen portacabins in place semi permanently in many schools. And now this dodgy concrete crisis.

“As chancellor, Rishi Sunak decided to axe investment in new schools from 100 to 50. That was despite a Department for Education survey that revealed the need to rebuild 300 to 400 schools.

“At the very least, the prime minister should reverse the decision he made as chancellor to halve the rebuilding programme. Beyond that we need proper investment in our schools’ infrastructure to bring buildings up to a standard fit for the 21st century.”

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[Green Party co-leader Carla Denyer makes urgent call to save rail ticket](#)

offices



Green Party

1 September 2023

Carla Denyer, MP candidate for Bristol Central and co-leader of the Green Party of England and Wales, has urged residents to make clear their objections to the closure of ticket offices before the public consultation ends at midnight tonight [Friday 1 September].

The three-week consultation has been over proposals to close most of England's 1,000 station offices, including at Bristol Temple Meads Station.

Carla said:

"Stations in and around Bristol are vital transport hubs for thousands of people and the ticket office staff there are often the only source of advice for people trying to navigate the ticketing system.

"Having a human presence at a ticket office is especially important for disabled and elderly passengers who may have additional requirements.

"The fact that our trains are operated by different, privatised companies already makes ticketing overly complicated, making ticket office staff crucial. And, in our current cost of living crisis, they are invaluable to helping people find the cheapest route to get from A to B.

"This is all part of the Government's lack of investment in public transport in recent years to the detriment of people and communities, particularly the disabled and elderly who can become isolated without these crucial services.

"If the Government wants to save money on the subsidies it gives to private train operating companies, it should do what the Green Party has long proposed, return the franchises to public control when they expire so that money spent on trains goes back into trains – and ticket offices – not into the pockets of remote shareholders.

"Public transport should be run for people, not profit. I hope as many residents as possible are able to take part in this consultation before it closes today and make sure their concerns are heard."

ENDS

Image of Carla at Bristol Temple Meads Station ticket office available upon request

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Road improvement scheme for A23 Moneyreagh Road, Moneyreagh

A carriageway and footway resurfacing scheme on A23 Moneyreagh Road, Moneyreagh will commence on Monday 11 September 2023.