



Haringey Labour Climate Action

(incorporating Hornsey and Wood Green and Tottenham Labour Parties)

October 2020

We publish this newsletter four times a year for circulation amongst Labour Party members and other concerned people. We would welcome comments, suggestions and contributions from readers. Please contact Chrisjbarker46@gmail.com. Opinions expressed here are not necessarily the views of the Labour Party.

What we stand for

Our general aim is promote action and change through raising awareness that:

- Climate change and environmental degradation are primary and urgent global survival issues - they are already destroying livelihoods and the planet, and need to be urgently and dramatically addressed to prevent further potentially disastrous consequences throughout the world.
- Climate change and environmental degradation are primary and urgent political issues - the main obstacles to tackling climate change are inadequate government and corporate measures, which in turn are due to short term-ism and putting profit before people and planet.
- Therefore tackling Climate change and environmental degradation provides an opportunity for social and political transformation to a green economy based on socialist principles of sustainable growth, equality, and collective social and global responsibility.

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Forthcoming event

Retrofit and the Green Homes Grant

A zoom event on 12th October from 6.00 - 7.15pm. presented by the Highgate Society's Sustainable Living group in partnership with the Muswell Hill Sustainability Group.

The Chancellor's July [Green Recovery statement](#) included:

“£2 billion Green Homes Grant scheme for homeowners and landlords this year to pay for green improvements such as loft, wall and floor insulation providing at least £2 for every £1, up to £5,000 per household. For those on the lowest incomes, the scheme will fully fund energy efficiency measures of up to £10,000 per household.”

It is not easy to find out the precise details of the scheme, even though all the work must be completed by 31st March 2021, so the Sustainable Living group has organised this event to help Highgate people to decide if they want to take up the offer. Further details are on the [Sustainable Living Events](#) page. Attendees who register on [Eventbrite](#) will be sent the zoom link before the meeting.”

Haringey Citizens' Panel

Haringey Together Citizens' Panel has been launched as 'a space where more regular interactions with residents across a range of topics and activities is possible.' Residents who join will be asked to complete regular surveys and invited to workshops – with rewards for participation. See <https://www.haringey.gov.uk/citizenspanel> for more information and to sign up.

The Need for a Green Recovery A message from David Lammy MP Tottenham

The need for a Green Recovery is real and immediate. Throughout the pandemic, the UK public has demonstrated an ability to respond to crisis with seriousness and understanding, and many have already embraced some of the lifestyle changes necessary to reduce our environmental impact. It is therefore immensely disappointing that the Government have completely failed to capitalise on this opportunity.

A Green Recovery requires the Government to think about how it can stimulate demand for, or directly invest in green infrastructure, technologies and jobs. (https://2912b012-09d1-4857-9589-b6408ce7e8c6.filesusr.com/ugd/d71e9e_4e70ab6e929440e191e7de53c6abf7d0.pdf). We are already on course to miss the already conservative 2050 net zero target (www.independent.co.uk/environment/climate-change-uk-carbon-target-global-warming-a9073256.html), and Sunak's £3bn for decarbonisation of homes is frankly pathetic. The German government have promised to invest €40bn, the French €15bn (<https://labour.org.uk/press/ed-miliband-responds-to-the-government-green-jobs-investment-announcement/>).

Proper investment in renewable energy technologies, especially offshore wind, for which the UK is perfectly suited and is already a world-leader, represents an economic opportunity on the path to net zero that looks set to be missed. Wind and solar energy are already cheaper than the alternatives, and are set to become even cheaper. I am exasperated that the government is not taking the initiative. (https://www.carbonbrief.org/wind-and-solar-are-30-50-cheaper-than-thought-admits-uk-government?utm_campaign=RevueCBWeeklyBriefing&utm_medium=email&utm_source=Revue%20newsletter).

The Government's headline policy in England is a grant of £5,000 to cover two thirds of the cost of installing energy efficient improvements (or up to £10,000 and the full cost of the improvement if the homeowner is in receipt of any income-based or disability benefit). For most, this requires the homeowner to have at least £2,500 spare cash to invest themselves; more if they want to install low carbon heating such as an air-source heat pump, which typically cost over £10,000 to install. With 40% of UK adults having less than £2000 in savings (<https://www.statista.com/statistics/824450/average-cash-saving-united-kingdom-by-age/>), clearly many households will be priced out of the scheme and priced out of making the improvements we need to make to as many homes as possible.

While this scheme is far from as accessible and comprehensive as I'd like it to be, for now it is all that the Government are making available. If you would like to see if you can make use of it, please do see this website for further information: <https://www.simpleenergyadvice.org.uk/pages/green-homes-grant>. There is currently only a 6-month window running until the end of March 2021, so do act quickly if you'd like to take advantage. <https://www.gov.uk/guidance/apply-for-the-green-homes-grant-scheme>

A lack of financial support is not the only factor preventing a revolution in British home insulation and heating. Currently, the UK does not have enough skilled workers to install some of the necessary technologies at the pace required. The Government should look to develop training and re-training programmes as part of a Just Transition Plan for areas impacted by efforts to decarbonise, and should expand this as part of a solution to the oncoming national jobs crisis (<https://labour.org.uk/press/labour-has-challenged-the-government-to-take-urgent-action-to-ensure-the-uk-remains-credible-on-climate-change-ahead-of-the-cop26-un-climate-summit-in-glasgow-next-year/>). That the Chancellor made no suggestion that he would do this is therefore immensely disappointing.

With the Climate Assembly on Climate Change producing an interim briefing showing that the UK public would be overwhelmingly supportive of a Green Recovery plan (https://2912b012-09d1-4857-9589-b6408ce7e8c6.filesusr.com/ugd/d71e9e_7b3d148d375c46eb8b3686c25f464dd6.pdf), and their recent report brimming with

ideas about how this could be achieved <https://www.climateassembly.uk/report/>, we must continue to press the Government to do more, and do more quickly.

Following on from my message about Black Lives Matter and climate change in the July newsletter, this October will see the release of my own Ted talk on the interactions between climate justice and racial justice. I will also be talking to TedX London about the topic, 5-6pm on October the 13th. I welcome everyone to join the event and to watch the talk, both of which will soon be accessible via the Ted and TedX websites respectively.

<https://www.ted.com/>

<https://tedxlondon.com/>

Report from Parliament: Catherine West MP

During the height of lockdown in April, global carbon emissions fell by 17 per cent. By June, they were back to within 5 per cent of last year's levels with the concentration of greenhouse gases in the Earth's atmosphere reaching a record high. Our world cannot sustain "business as normal" so it is deeply frustrating that instead of a clear plan to rapidly decarbonise our economy through a green recovery to this terrible crisis, the Government has their head in the sand.

We've seen during Covid-19 how the Government can intervene dramatically when they want to, why isn't the climate emergency given the same priority? Not only are Ministers set to miss the 2050 target that Parliament legislated for just over a year ago, they are not even on track to meet the less ambitious one that preceded it. With an ambitious plan and action to achieve it, we could (and should) enhance 2030 emissions reduction targets and demonstrate real leadership as the host of the COP26 conference in Glasgow next year.

I've had lots of emails from constituents this month about the **Climate and Ecological Emergency Bill** and I took part in a zoom chat about it with local members of Extinction Rebellion. It's a Presentation Bill, which means there'll be no debate or vote in Parliament, but instead it's a way of seeking to draw attention to an issue that requires a change in the law. Only 12 supporters can be named on the Bill and protocol means that's usually back benchers rather than shadow Ministers like me. However, I believe it's a vital and important step in supporting the move to a more sustainable society and I hope it will eventually come to Parliament for debate.

This month in Parliament, I've spoken out about the need for the Government to guarantee there will be no weakening of our environmental standards in pursuit of trade deals. [Watch my intervention here.](#)

As **Chair of the All-Party Parliamentary Group for Ethics & Sustainability in Fashion**, I also launched our new report at a virtual event. Coronavirus has exposed the deep inequalities and unsustainability in the garment industry and we must seize this moment by pushing the government to be a global leader, helping to build a more sustainable and ethical fashion industry, boosting fabric recycling and bringing manufacturing jobs back to the UK. [You can read the full report here.](#)



I took part in Oxfam's #SecondHandSeptember challenge and joined a photo session on College Green. The fashion industry is the second largest consumer and polluter of water globally and the amount of clothes Oxfam save from landfill each year weighs as much as the Eiffel Tower.

Finally, the Environment Bill completes its committee stage this week and will be returning to the Commons. It's sadly weak in a number of areas including on air pollution, despite polluted air contributing to 40,000 premature deaths in the UK each year. We need enforceable targets to bring harmful levels down, yet the Government voted down Labour's proposals earlier this year when we sought to include a target in the Bill to meet the WHO guidelines on fine particulate matter by 2030. We'll keep seeking to strengthen the Bill when it comes back to the House.

Promoting a Green Recovery Hornsey & Wood Green CLP meeting

Introduction

On 17th September a Zoom meeting was held by Hornsey & Wood Green to discuss how we can achieve a national green recovery and how Haringey can participate. It included four speakers and was chaired by Celia Dignam, Chair of the CLP, see <https://www.hornseywoodgreenlabour.org.uk/news/>

Shadow Minister for Climate Change

Matthew Pennycook, Shadow Minister for Climate Change, noted that the Tories have co-opted the concept of a green recovery – but have done little about it, and have not so far provided either a detailed strategy or the necessary investment. We need to take people along with us and focus on jobs and economic and social justice.



Dimitri Zenghelis Senior Visiting Fellow at LSE

Dimitri is an economist who advises the Mayor of London and the Committee for Climate Change. He pointed out that real interest rates are very depressed and that it was patently obvious that much greater investment is needed and is possible. Change needs to be managed to ensure equal access to new jobs. We need to invest in public services ie in natural capital to increase trust in them. Covid 19 underlines the necessity of public

intervention in the form of borrowing and spending.

Jo Rees Wales TUC

Jo Rees is a Policy and Communications Support Officer for Wales TUC. She has been working on a Social Partnership for Wales which will be the catalyst for achieving a greener, fairer recovery and a pathway to a net-zero Wales. Wales is also set to be Zero Waste by 2050. Fair work is another objective: all jobs in the green economy should be fair and have proper pensions and wages. There is a very good case for government investment in carbon industries.

Also a strong need for creation of new green jobs; Wales could create 60,000 jobs but government has promised only £3bn investment; however the Welsh government is investing in social housing.

David Timms – Head of Political Affairs Friends of the Earth

2/3rds of public want a green recovery. 2 bn per annum needed to achieve a green retrofit but the Coalition cut retrofit funding by 90%. David advocates a £5 bn per annum programme on restoring nature and an immediate pledge of a living wage for the unemployed. He considers that climate change was down-graded as an issue in Starmer's speech to the TUC.

Rebekah Diski Labour for a Green New Deal

Rebekah is a Haringey-based activist for LGND which has an ambitious programme:

- A totally decarbonised economy
- millions of well-paid jobs
- Building Back Better

But it needs to spend more effort on defining priorities.

Conclusion

Matthew Pennycook said that Keir will give a speech soon about climate change and the shadow Spending Review will include green policies. David Timms said that individual shadow ministers tend to compartmentalise Climate Action when the whole shadow cabinet should be publicising it continuously.

Norman Beddington

Haringey's Good Economy Recovery Plan Ensuring sustainability HLCA meets with councillors

On 1st October a few HLCA members met with Haringey Council representatives to discuss how to ensure that sustainability is fully embedded in their Covid-19 recovery plans.

This meeting came out of our initial approach to Councillors Gideon Bull and Kirsten Hearn last July, asking about Council preparations for a sustainable recovery, and how HLCA might contribute to these.

The meeting was attended by HLCA and Haringey Climate Forum representatives Norman Beddington, Sydney Charles, Quentin Given and Helen Mayer of HLCA, and Council representatives Gideon Bull (Cabinet Member for Local Investment and Economic Growth); Diane Southam (Head of Economic Development) and Joe Baker (Head of carbon Management).

The discussion centred on the Council's Good Economic Recovery Action Plan, issued in August, and our initial response to this, which we had circulated before the meeting. The Action Plan can be found on:

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/business/haringey-s-good-economy-recovery-action-plan#downloads>

and our initial on response on to this can be found on:

<https://www.dropbox.com/s/zxrdxe88ihirmxy/hlca%20response%20to%20good%20economy%20recovery%20action%20plan.docx?dl=0>

The plan is based on 4 immediate priorities:

- High Streets and Town Centres
- Support businesses through recovery and into renewal
- Support residents into work and training
- Secure social and economic value through investment in our neighbourhoods and communities.

Although sustainable measures are referred to throughout – our main concerns were that:

- these were not always sufficiently integrated and sometimes came over as ‘add-ons’
- they generally lacked specific detail
- there were some obvious oversights – for example we commented that the proposal for ‘new and improved homes’ should include high energy-efficiency requirements, as set out in the Council’s draft ‘Climate Change Action Plan’, to speed decarbonisation.
- Training, eg for retrofit, must urgently be put in place now
- the plan needs a framework of key dates and monitoring to ensure progress from intention into action.

However, we did get the impression that all the Council representatives present were genuinely committed to taking a sustainable approach, listening to and engaging with the community, and working closely with HLCA and Haringey Climate Forum.

So, calling all HLCA members to help to really build on this – it’s a chance to make a difference!

Council takes action against single use plastics

We are delighted that the council adopted a policy on single use plastics on 15th September 2020.

The policy and action plans are divided into

(a) what the council is doing in the borough and

(b) what the council is doing in its own estate. Joe Baker (Haringey Head of Carbon Management) tells me that some of these things were put in place before March but others have been delayed until staff return to work post-Covid.

(a) Plastics in the borough

- 1 Events organisers will be expected to follow more stringent criteria for sustainability and SUPS and, at large events, council staff and volunteers will be provided with reusable water bottles and a refill station.
- 2 Laminated signage will be reduced.
- 3 Haringey will be collaborating with the Mayor`s office, the GLA and Thames Water to provide more water fountains and Thames Water has agreed to cover the cost of maintenance, which had previously been a sticking point for Haringey.
- 4 The Refill scheme is being promoted in parks and businesses – currently there are 78 refill stations and the number is growing.
- 5 Plastic reduction information is being made available to the food industry – to takeaways and restaurants.
- 6 A new section is being created on the Haringey website with advice on how to reduce waste and eliminate SUPs.

(b) Plastics in the council estate

No more plastic cups will be ordered by the council and staff will be encouraged to use reusable coffee cups.

The register office at George Meehan House has banned plastic cups, lids, individual milk containers and cutlery and the use of confetti cannons and artificial confetti. In civic buildings, coffee pods will be recycled and some food waste bins are being trialled. Many staff bring in milk in plastic bottles, so, to combat this, a delivery service which uses glass bottles is being investigated.

There is a commitment to increasing recycling rates across council buildings and parking tickets will now be issued in glassine and kraft paper bags.

The council is actively encouraging schools to sign up to one of the plastic reduction projects.

New guidelines on procurement are being developed and will be monitored. The time frame to introduce these guidelines is `by Summer 2021` and the monitoring `by 2022` so we need to be vigilant to ensure that this does happen. It is very important for everyone to keep up the pressure for the elimination of SUPs in all council activities.

Although the policy has been issued later than we hoped, it is pleasing to see that it has now been adopted.

Plastic Free Crouch End is developing its own website and will be providing links to the council website and to other active groups in the borough.

Annette Baker
Community Lead
Plastic Free Crouch End