



Haringey Labour Climate Action

(incorporating Hornsey and Wood Green and Tottenham Labour Parties)

July 2021

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 events

Wood Green Woodland Walk

Friday 9th July, 1 to 2 pm

Meet at Highgate tube station for a walk through Hillcrest Estate and Queens Wood. Sponsored by Catherine West MP.

Hillcrest Estate

Here are typical examples of trees under threat from regeneration, and see the benefits of mature trees on housing estates.

Queens Wood

We need to ensure planning and other policies protect and restore what we still have, as well as create new woodlands.

As we walk we would also like to highlight other issues:

Insurance case

LB Haringey Accessibility project

LB Haringey Flood management plans

Build Back Better and Fairer - CLP Zoom event

15 July @ 7.30pm

How to Build Back Better for the environment and health - it's even more crucial now.

We have a great panel of speakers, so join to hear their perspectives, and also address what Labour and campaigning groups can do to drive this agenda at the national and local level. There will plenty of time for Q&A and discussion.

Speakers:

- Chaitanya Kumar, New Economics Foundation - leads on Green New Deal
- Dr Jessica Allen or colleague, Institute of Health Equity (Marmot reports)
- Annalie Riches, Mikhail Riches Architects (deigned Goldsmith Street, Norwich - largest passivhaus scheme in UK)
- Alan Whitehead MP, Shadow Minister (Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy)
- Mike Hakata, Cabinet Lead for the Environment, Transport and Climate Emergency

See below for the Zoom link to join:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81627078587?pwd=TUZVbTUwcGhrdkxFYUxEQnZteGVXZz09>

Meeting ID: 816 2707 8587

Passcode: 549413

Catherine West MP - Update from Parliament

This month, the G7 met in Cornwall, the first in-person meeting of the group since the pandemic began and the first visit of US President Joe Biden to Europe. It should have been the opportunity for Johnson to prove that he was serious about repairing our climate and investing in a greener economy. However, as per this inept Conservative Government, it was a let-down.

Prior to the summit, the Government refused to budge on its plan to cut the international aid budget from 0.7% of the national budget to 0.5%. How can the Tories claim to be serious about tackling global warming when it is planning to cut funding to international sustainable development initiatives and projects? This aid cut will be a blow to climate finance and ambition all over the world and will seriously undermine the Government's reputation ahead of COP26.

I believe this Government failed to deliver the significant and radical proposals that we needed from the summit. Although the leaders promised to move away from using coal plants without carbon capture technology, there has been no detailed plan on how this will happen. We need a bold transformation that offers year-by-year investment for green industries, technology, and research.

Here are some of the things I've been doing in Parliament since your last newsletter:

Online Climate Consultation

On 30th June, I organised a virtual Climate Consultation with my constituents to hear their thoughts and concerns on the Government's Environment Bill and to understand what they believe is needed to tackle the climate emergency. My colleague Ruth Jones MP, Shadow Environment Minister, attended and highlighted Mr Johnson's feeble climate budget announcement of just £4 billion, compared to President Biden's \$800 billion. Labour wants £30 billion of new money for the climate – we would invest in sustainable homes, green jobs, and green industries.

The Environment Bill is the most important piece of legislation that must be passed before the UK hosts COP26. Unfortunately, the Conservatives would rather play party politics than pass a serious and competent Bill and Ruth explained that they voted against every single Labour amendment and committee contribution. For example, we called for a fracking ban, stronger air quality rules and independent powers to the OEP (Office for Environmental Projection). I believe that the Government is wholly unprepared for the challenges ahead – how will it tackle polluted rivers and lakes; how will it protect biodiversity and animals, and when will it properly invest in its tree planting scheme?

I also heard from my constituents on local issues concerning the environment, including:

- The possibility for all governmental departments to have green budgets
- The reliance on incinerators instead of recycling in London
- More funding for the purchasing of electric cars and charging points, as well as public transport
- Introducing National History GCSE and more inter-subject discussion on climate change and the environment. The opportunity for a panel debate on the climate emergency for sixth formers
- The world of work and sustainability, in particular for carers and the social care system – this would look at sustainable local transport, support for burn-out, better pay and working conditions and the active involvement of trade unions.
- Sustainable housing, including the over-heating of homes, and the Government's pulling out of the Green Homes Grant
- Monitoring the Low-Traffic Neighbourhood scheme so it does not discriminate against those who rely on cars or that it does not push traffic to other areas

- Better protection of local trees – this includes protecting existing trees and improving the tree planting scheme.

One of the most interesting points discussed throughout the call was the importance of national and local climate justice – making sure that any green new deal doesn't discriminate against the most vulnerable members of our society. My constituents want a fair and just climate transition – we must ensure that people are able to retrain in new, green industries and are not left behind.

Westminster Hall Debate

I led for the Opposition in the debate on Brazil and deforestation in the Amazon on 23rd June. Scientists estimate that a staggering 76 billion tonnes of carbon is among the vegetation and trees making up the forest, and it is home to a rich tapestry of wildlife and indigenous peoples who live in the deepest parts of the forest. Despite this, the situation is precarious. Some scientists estimate that if we lose just 5% more of the Amazon, it will trigger a tipping point where the rainforest will no longer be able to sustain itself - we will lose the Amazon as we know it.

We need international action, and as the host of COP26 we have the chance to make it clear to the Brazilian government that their plans are unacceptable and pose a threat to the world. It is the Government's moral, environmental, and international duty to ensure that any post-Brexit trade deal with Brazil guarantees that the UK is not further contributing to the destruction of the Amazon. You can read my full speech [here](#).

Environment Bill

I took part in the Parliamentary debate on the Government's Environment Bill to highlight the important work of Surfers Against Sewage and express concern that the Bill doesn't go far enough in protecting our forests and oceans. I also drew attention to the concerns that so many constituents have raised with me over recent months about urban trees and the need to ensure they are also protected. You can read my contributions [here](#). **I will be doing a local tree walk with the Woodland Trust next month and will share an invitation to anyone interested in joining.**

Ocean Recovery Strategy

A number of constituents got in touch with me in support of the call for an Ocean Recovery Strategy to mark World Ocean's Day on 8th June. I believe that World Ocean Day 2021 is a chance for us to celebrate our magnificent and fragile oceans and a reminder that the Government must do more to protect them. I shared the concerns of constituents directly with the Secretary of State. You can read their response [here](#).

My response to the Queen's Speech

According to the UN, just one decade is all that remains to stop irreversible damage from climate change. However, the Queen's Speech did not reflect this sense of climate emergency. The Government did not announce the much-needed investment for green jobs and infrastructure, and I am disappointed at the lack of concrete plan to tackle the world's most urgent issue. You can read my speech [here](#).

Some of my recent Written Parliamentary Questions

- To ask the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs, what assessment has been made of the environmental & carbon impact of the agricultural products that will enter the UK food market, as a result of the UK-Australia trade deal. Response [here](#)
- To ask the Secretary of State for Transport, whether his Transport Decarbonisation Plan will include targets to halt and reverse the growth of road traffic. Response [here](#)

Message from David Lammy, MP

After more than a year of lockdowns and restrictions, there is light at the end of the tunnel. As we make our transition out of one crisis, however, we are accelerating into another. Or, rather, we are accelerating into a host of interconnecting crises: an impending recession, growing economic inequality and planetary collapse. These crises do not exist in isolation from each other. Far from it. To build a strong, resilient and more equitable economy is to build a green, sustainable and ecologically balanced economy.

There are welcome signs that the international community is committed to this endeavour. It is particularly encouraging to see the United States return to the fight against climate change, hosting the Climate Summit back in April. However, this summit cannot be the apex of global climate ambition. We need urgent investment in green jobs, focused on decarbonising the global economy. We need a just transition to renewable energy on a mass scale, so that a new green workforce can apply new skills, with training, to newly decarbonised industries.

Similarly, it was welcome to see the Chancellor Rishi Sunak announce his plans for a Net Zero Review. However, it was extremely discouraging to see further delays to its publication. We need meaningful action, not empty words.

I will continue to call for a national recovery that is grounded in social, economic and environmental justice. We have a chance to come out of the pandemic with a renewed focus on building a fair, green economy. One that protects our children's future. One that is built on the principles of mutuality, sustainability and care. One that ensures our collective survival.

North London Waste Authority AGM Deputation on the Edmonton Incinerator

There were thirteen deputations to the NLWA AGM on 24th June, all criticising the plans to enlarge the Edmonton incinerator. Helen Mayer represented Haringey Labour Climate Action and this is what she said.

We're here with the other deputations to yet again call for a pause and review of the new incinerator. Brilliant statements so far. Surely we can't all be wrong.

We welcome the Ecopark proposals. And we recognise we may still need SOME residual waste incineration.

But things have moved on significantly since this scheme and DCO application were formulated, way back in 2015. There's growing evidence that in its current form it's no longer environmentally or financially sustainable.

It has to adapt.

So pause and review isn't a climb-down, it's an opportunity. An opportunity to update the proposals, to adapt to huge advances in technology and policies since 2015 and, importantly, to build in flexibility, as these continue to rapidly evolve, to future proof it. Yes, there will be short term costs. But these could avoid the cost of a potential stranded asset in the long term.

And realistic, better, options, do exist.

I'll briefly re-iterate some of the changing circumstances that necessitate review. Other deputations have brilliantly covered these.

I'll then note some interventions by prominent experts and politicians.

So:

- Over-capacity
Capacity is increasing, with new schemes in Herts and Essex, just as new technologies and regulations will reduce residual waste. The mayor's office predicts surplus capacity of 950,000 tonnes for London.
- Recycling
The Waste Authority has committed to reduce residual waste. But there's widespread evidence that the need to feed incinerators hinders this. Edmonton already burns recyclables from 'black bag' waste, including high carbon plastics. New tried and tested material recovery facilities could extract this.
- Flexibility and future proofing
The treatment streams in the proposed plant have been reduced from 5 to 2. This prevents the flexibility needed to adapt to projected reductions in residual waste. The Authority plans to *import* waste if local supplies reduce, instead of lower carbon alternatives.
- Carbon
Since 2015 we've seen major advances in renewable energy and the energy efficiency of buildings, and a lower carbon grid. The Climate Change Committee now recommends Carbon Capture for all incinerators. And the next Carbon Trading Round may well include incineration to meet new government obligations. So EfW can no longer be claimed to be a low carbon or cost-effective option.
- Air quality
There's no substantiated evidence that incinerator emissions are safe for the surrounding, socially and environmentally deprived, Edmonton community.

- Local economy
The circular economy offers more long-term sustainable investment in local training and jobs than incineration.
- Cost
Pause and review would enable future-proofing measures, such as more waste streams, advanced material recovery facilities, carbon capture and lower carbon options for the Decentralised Energy Network. Long term savings would outweigh short-term costs.
- And most urgently, the Climate and Ecological Emergencies.
We simply can't afford to compromise – even our most ambitious efforts may not be good enough.

Prominent experts and politicians back this case.

Labour MP's include Daniel Zeichner, Stephen Doughty, Darren Jones, Alex Sobell, Sharon Hodgson, Edmonton's Kate Osamor, who's called for "an immediate pause and review", and Alan Whitehead, Shadow Minister, who's said "the age of incinerators is over"

Sadiq Khan's said "I've been clear London is facing a climate emergency and will continue to oppose new incineration in London"

South-East Region TUC and growing numbers of CLP's have passed pause and review motions.

Defra's warned that incineration investment [hinders recycling progress](#). WRAP Cymru's reported 75% recyclables in their residual waste.

Wales has restricted household waste incineration up to 2025, with no landfill or incineration after 2050

Recent parliamentary debates called for a halt to EfW investment, and an incineration tax. The government said a tax was possible if Environment Bill targets weren't met. And stop press - the Climate Change Committee raised this just today!

So let's not go against the flow. Let's pause and review. Let's redesign the proposals to reflect new developments, for the benefit of our boroughs and our planet.

Waste and the Environment Bill

The **Conservative Manifesto 2019**¹ promised to introduce a deposit return scheme (DRS) for plastic and glass; an extended producer responsibility scheme (EPR) and to ban the export of plastic waste to non-OECD countries. Defra's Environment Bill² in passage has been designed to enable the Deposit Return Scheme³ and Extended Producer Responsibility⁴ scheme, in conjunction with consistency in recycling (in consultation⁵), to make massive improvements to the handling of recycling and waste across England. The Environment Bill's current version, mandates that all English Waste Collection Authorities will collect these six separate recycling streams:



- Glass
- Metal
- Plastic
- paper and card
- food waste.
- garden waste

Defra's Consistency Recycling consultation⁵ seeks targets beyond just the weight of waste to be introduced, eg carbon emissions, contamination levels, and the amount of waste sent to landfill and incineration. Exemptions for Local Authorities to collect certain mixed material

streams can be agreed by the Secretary of State if 'it is not technically or economically practicable to collect separately, or if there is no significant environmental benefit from separate collection'.

The Bill also provides powers to the Secretary of State to add new recyclable waste streams through regulations later. For example, if a proposed new waste stream is suitable for recycling or composting and there is a market for it after collection.

Beyond the Environment Bill

The proposals to build on the Environment Bill in line with the election promises include:

- **Dry Recycling changes** - moving away from co-mingling dry recyclables because 'Evidence shows that recyclable waste streams that are collected separately from other recyclable waste streams and residual waste are of a higher quality than those collected in a co-mingled system and fetch higher prices on secondary materials markets'. The proposal is for foil, foil trays, metal aerosols cans, metal jar lids and aluminium tubes to be put in the metal stream (with householders told to put heavily soiled items in residuals and advised how to empty aerosols safely). Eventually plastic film and flexible packaging could be collected in a new stream, but initially will be in the plastic stream together with more front of store collections.
- **Food and Drinks Cartons** – 'the majority of food and disposable drink cartons are exported or treated as non-target material and disposed of as residual waste. Both aseptic and chilled cartons are, however, recyclable and end markets exist for these

materials'. 70% of drinks containers are put into the kerbside recycling collection currently, but the calculation of the DRS Impact Assessment⁶ is that this will be reduced to only 7% and that 85% will be returned for deposit - leaving only 8% left for residual treatment.

It is proposed to move cartons from the card stream to the plastic stream. (as UK paper mills typically do not want to receive laminated materials).

- **Food Waste** – The Bill also expects 'food waste to be treated through anaerobic digestion or In Vessel Composting (IVC) rather than Mechanical Biological Treatment (MBT) processes'. Food waste will need to be collected at least weekly, separately from other household waste and from the dry recyclable waste, using free caddy liners, and sent for recycling or composting.
- **Garden Waste** – 'The collection of garden waste for recycling or composting has several benefits, including job creation and diverting the material from residual waste streams where it can end up in landfill and release harmful greenhouse gases. The recycling of garden waste also generates compost or digestate, contributing to a more circular economy, and 'a free garden waste collection delivers carbon savings' based on 'a 25% increase of garden waste tonnage collected for recycling, shifted from residual waste'. 'The current Environment Bill version will require that garden waste is collected in a separate stream, and the Consistency consultation proposes that this is at no cost to the householder - unless an exemption has been obtained to collect it with food waste.

The cost to Local Authorities

The cost of 'new burdens' is to be covered by Government - including up front transition costs and ongoing operational costs. For instance the 'Government will ensure that local authorities are resourced to meet any new burdens arising from this policy'. Though investment will be needed in new machinery for LAs that do not currently collect and handle plastic film, this will be paid for by the Extended Producer Scheme.

Timescale

The timescale proposed is aligned to the timescale of the Extended Producer Responsibility, due in a phased approach from Oct 2023, with plastic film up to 2027 in some instances and some exemptions up to 2030, eg where there are fixed contracts for unsuitable machinery.

Implications

Clearly, if the Conservatives implement all these measures, recyclable processing will soar, there will be no need for landfill and carbon rich feedstock for incineration will plummet.

Sydney Charles

References

1. **The Conservative Manifesto 2019** https://assets-global.website-files.com/5da42e2cae7ebd3f8bde353c/5dda924905da587992a064ba_Conservative%202019%20Manifesto.pdf (p43)

2. The Environment Bill's Waste Fact Sheet

<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/environment-bill-2020/10-march-2020-waste-and-resource-efficiency-factsheet-part-3>

3. Impact Assessment of Deposit Return Scheme (closed 04/06/21)

https://consult.defra.gov.uk/environment/consultation-on-introducing-a-drs/supporting_documents/Impact%20Assessment.pdf

4. Extended Producer Responsibility Consultation (closed 04/06/21)

https://consult.defra.gov.uk/extended-producer-responsibility/extended-producer-responsibility-for-packaging/supporting_documents/23.03.21%20EPR%20Consultation.pdf

5 Consistency in Household and Business Recycling in England

https://consult.defra.gov.uk/waste-and-recycling/consistency-in-household-and-business-recycling/supporting_documents/Recycling%20Consistency%20Final%20Consultation_May%202021.pdf