



Haringey Labour Climate Action

(incorporating Hornsey and Wood Green and Tottenham Labour Parties)

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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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Out of the ashes Coronavirus and the climate emergency

The coronavirus crisis has shaken up the world, with unprecedented government spending and interventions, new community support structures, and uncertain political outcomes.

As with previous crises, this disruption raises a sense of potential major change, of 'things can never be the same again'. Things can change –the welfare state after WW2; US military occupations after 9/11. But often the existing order rears its ugly head again, with a lot of help from its friends, as after the 2008 crash. World wars don't "end all wars".

So the big questions for Climate Activists are: WHAT CAN WE DO NOW to channel all this upheaval to build a greener fairer world out of the ashes?

How can we prevent reinforcement of global finance, with its march towards climate and ecological disaster? How can we stop short term emergency measures from becoming long term deregulation, or restrictions on our rights.

This question is urgent, as there are already moves in both directions:

- Our UK government raced to protect business, before our most vulnerable members of society, strengthening the financial/climate status quo.
- US Congress has just defeated moves to include climate action in their Covid-19 federal stimulus. (Conservatives accused Democrats of "trying to exploit the urgent need for coronavirus relief to foist an environmental agenda on a wounded country")
- The plastics lobby falsely claim that cotton bags are a greater virus risk.
- Everywhere environmental protections are waived, and emergency deregulation risks taking long term root.

- And we can't be confident that massive falls in current global emissions will lead to long term reductions.

But there are major reasons to be hopeful.

- There are innumerable articles about opportunities for positive change after the crisis. (some references and links below). Most focus on the potential for governmental change. But some stress the essential role of popular engagement.
- Many new campaigns are emerging:

Greenpeace has launched a petition calling for the government to protect our people and our future with a cleaner, fairer world.

Campaigners are calling for aid to airlines to be conditional on their future climate impact.

- And crucially, everywhere people are coming together and organising around all manner of community mutual support.

How might this unprecedented community engagement raise awareness of our collective power to change a failing system and build a better world?

Let's start a discussion about how we might mobilise around this, right here, right now, during lockdown.

As Naomi Klein said, the biggest risk would be to fritter away these days of idleness sitting at home on our social media feeds!

Could we engage in discussion, avoiding political jargon, on the burgeoning new mutual aid and community sites? Who else should we be reaching out to at local, council, national or international level? What is the potential for on-line meetings or assemblies, including between disparate thinkers and activists? And how can we now support Keir Starmer, to develop Labour proposals for Covid-19 with a just green transition at their core? Please let us have your ideas. Send them chrisjbarker46@gmail.com.

References (just a small selection of the many articles on the subject)

<https://www.theguardian.com/world/2020/mar/31/how-will-the-world-emerge-from-the-coronavirus-crisis>

<https://www.carbonbrief.org/coronavirus-what-could-lifestyle-changes-mean-for-tackling-climate-change>? (Brief statements from a range of green writers and activists)

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=_QaelxWsxG4&feature=youtu.be (Hope & Action interview of Ann Pettifor by Dan Edelstyn)

https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/coronavirus-government-spending-austerity-climate_uk_5e7e0cc1c5b6cb9dc19ecb95 (article by Caroline Lucas)

<https://350.org/just-recovery>

petition about justice recovery after coronavirus, worth signing

A message from David Lammy MP Tottenham

‘In these times of extreme hardship, I believe it remains vital we do not forget to continue addressing and fighting the other crisis growing larger by the day: the climate crisis.’

This was an email I received just last week from a constituent. He was concerned that as the nation deals with the outbreak of Coronavirus, other fundamental issues like climate breakdown were sadly falling off the radar. It was apt that this plea was sandwiched in between hundreds of other emails concerned about the government’s response to the Coronavirus outbreak. As we sit in self-isolation, forests are still burning, species are still extinguishing, sea-levels are still rising and our planet is still dying. By reaching out to me, my constituent had raised a vital question: how do we tackle the current humanitarian crisis of a pandemic without ignoring the far graver existential crisis of climate breakdown?

Of course, this is not to say that our response to the climate and pandemic crises should exist in separate spheres. In fact, they are intimately related. Both crises represent a large-scale threat to human life. And both crises reveal fundamental flaws in how our society and economy are organised. It wasn’t our exploitative economy that caused the outbreak. But it was our exploitative economy that left us utterly defenceless in dealing with it. Our NHS left paralysed by years of austerity. Nurses overstretched by competitive system that fails to acknowledge the value of care-work. And a collapsing global market that relied solely on taking profits from people’s work, something that has now been abruptly halted in order to avoid mass death.

It’s the same system that is burning our planet. Our global economy is reliant on endless and unequal growth, extracting land and resources to keep up with the demands of profit. If we continue to put these profits before people, our planet will not survive.

For this reason, it’s crucial that we do not sit around and wait until 2024 to make political change. We need to act now. That means building movements from below,

engaging particularly with organisations that have the power to change how our economy works, such as trade unions and local government.

Ultimately, it is no coincidence that pollution has temporarily lowered around the world during the lockdown. Make no mistake, this is not because *human* activity has paused. It is because our *economic* system has paused. Once this period has ended, we must learn the right lessons, one of which is to fundamentally change how our societies function. In light of impending climate breakdown, we do not have a minute to spare.

Report from Parliament: Catherine West MP

The fight against the Covid-19 pandemic has been a powerful example of what can be achieved in record time when the political will is there. When this is defeated, and it will be, then we must turn that attention and zeal to the issue of climate change. We also need to ensure our streets and neighbourhoods are designed to enable us to build on the spirit that we've seen during the pandemic of a daily form of exercise outside. Across the country there have been reports of packed parks and crowded pavements, with joggers and cyclists jostling for space with walkers. Rather than playing the blame game, we should move heaven and earth to encourage more walking, jogging and cycling and invest in the physical infrastructure to allow this step change in our approach. We already know our society is too car centred, and our post Covid-19 window will, I hope, offer us the chance to move away from cars, build on sustainable transport, and make our neighbourhoods more people centred and encouraging.



Attending Highgate Woods model UN conference to discuss the climate emergency

Before Parliament was adjourned, I was working in my role as Shadow Sports Minister to push for carbon neutrality and a sustainable transport system for the 2022 Commonwealth Games in Birmingham. I also made the climate crisis the theme of my budget speech, [setting out why I believed it was a real missed opportunity](#). I highlighted the role local government can and should play insulating properties, preventing heat loss, ensuring lower bills for millions of low-income people, introducing proper cycle lanes and developing highly skilled green jobs in a micro way. A lot of the climate agenda and the climate challenge is very localised – local councils need the resources to carry out that role.

There is no sense that Boris Johnson's Government is treating this emergency with the urgency it needs and the gap between our emissions reduction goals and the Government's policies to meet them is only increasing. I was deeply disappointed that the government decided not to re-establish a dedicated Department for Climate Change in the recent reshuffle. With Britain hosting the COP26

Climate Summit later this year there is a real opportunity for Britain to strike out as a world leader in tackling the climate emergency, but the lack of a dedicated Ministry and with lukewarm proposals for action it seems like the necessary action won't be taken.

Locally, I've spoken at the London Hazards Centre Annual General Meeting on the transition to sustainability and met constituents visiting Parliament in support of the Teach Our Future education campaign. I also took part in a lively panel discussion with sixth formers at Fortismere School on what more the Government could be doing to tackle the climate emergency and joined the Model UN Conference at Highgate Wood School on the same subject.

I've asked Parliamentary Questions on a range of issues including:

- Questioning the Government on their plans to move the Government car pool to electric cars.
- Pressing them to bring forward the ban on new petrol and diesel cars.
- Pressing the Department for International Development on the proportion of their funding going to clean energy.
- Pushing the Government to reveal which Minister was attending Davos and urging them to call for firms to divest from fossil fuels.
- Pressing the Government to urge UK Universities to divest from fossil fuels.
- Pressing the Government to ensure UK Export Finance does not provide financial guarantees for fossil fuel-based investments.
- Urging greater spending on renewables.

Trees, Timber, Reuse – returning to the natural circle of life

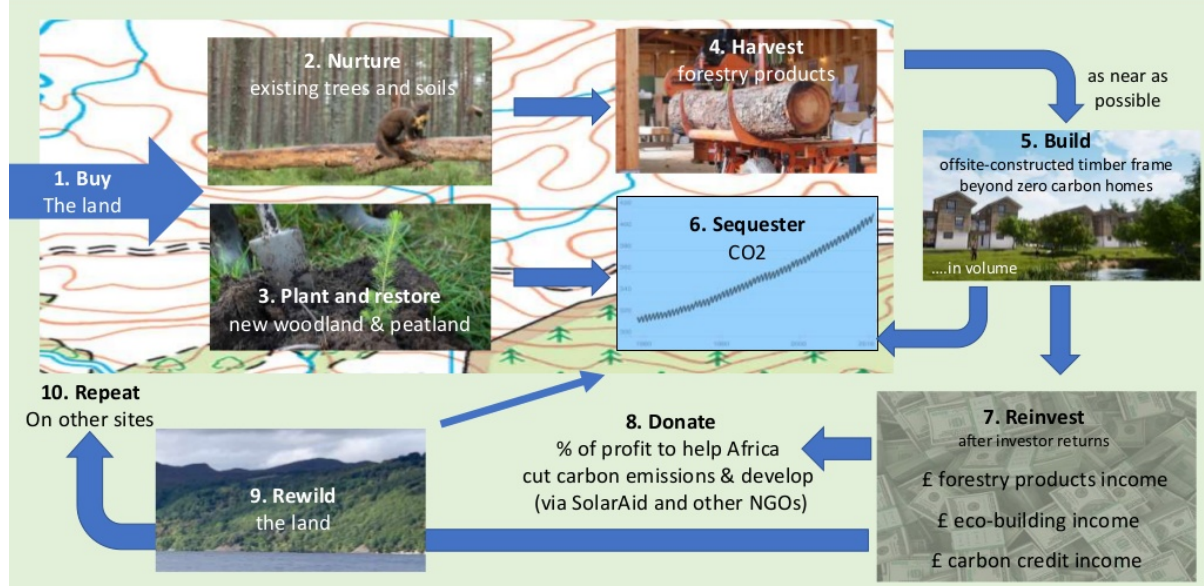
Jeremy Leggett is a well known commentator on our path to destroy the planet and is a major player in the solar industry and in charitable solar work in Africa. He was a founder member of the Green New Deal Group¹ that underpinned the UK and US movements.

He is now trying to beat capitalists at their own game by starting up a new innovative company. **Zero Carbon Revolution** could revolutionise the global business model, switching from a world that releases carbon from the ground to the atmosphere, to one that locks carbon into trees, the ground and our buildings.

Jeremy Leggett's first step was to buy a plot of woodland and peatland in Scotland to demonstrate the virtuous circle of forestry, timber, reuse, managed peatland and rewilding. Sounds simple.

This infographic illustrates his plans:

ZeroCarbon Revolution will buy such plots on a much bigger scale, and maximize their potential as holistic carbon-sink exemplars in a modular, cyclical, and highly collaborative process



From *A Search for Hope on the Climate Front Line* ² (slide 26)

The concept aligns with the ideas of ecologist Vandana Shiva³ who explains how the Shakti concept of the self-renewing creative force of the universe could be rediscovered in India.

“Energy is not just oil and gas. Energy is an all-pervasive element of life.”

Recarbonising and Decarbonising

Sequestering enough carbon to achieve Net Zero would require an heroic effort to transform the UK’s land use. Plant a Trillion Trees⁴ says that, planting 1.2trillion trees of the right species would sequester 205 billion tons of carbon. According to the Committee on Climate Change’s⁵ recommendations action on forests could save 14MtCO₂ and action on Peatlands 5MtCO₂.

An equally heroic effort to displace high carbon cement and steel with low carbon materials to achieve net zero carbon in new buildings is advocated by the London Energy Transformation Initiative⁶.

The Government is not listening to any of this advice so it is being left to individuals to adapt land use to reduce our carbon emissions.

Global financial systems as a force for good

The Green New Deal movement has revealed how the financial and economic system could be redirected from enriching the rich to providing local jobs and healthier lifestyles for all. **Zero Carbon Revolution** plans to use the investment of ethical individuals, and pension funds divesting from that are divesting from fossil fuel investments now in a death knell phase. The experience of the pandemic is exposing the weaknesses of the world order and new understanding of what really matters to citizens could mean that the incumbent model has had its day.

Jeremy Leggett's vision is breathtakingly ambitious, but he has a lifetime experience of business and supporters at the highest levels around the world – so he could just succeed.

References

1. [Green New Deal Group](#)
2. [A Search for Hope on the Climate Front Lines in 2020](#)
3. Vandana Shiva [Soil not Oil Climate Change, Peak Oil and Food Insecurity](#)
4. [Plant a Trillion Trees](#)
5. Committee on Climate Change [Land Use policies for a Net Zero UK](#)
6. London Energy Transformation Initiative [Embodied Carbon Primer](#)

Sydney Charles

Launch of Haringey's Climate Change Action Plan

On March 10th Haringey Council Cabinet reviewed its new Climate Change Action Plan following on from its declaration of a Climate Emergency in March 2019.

Haringey Labour Climate Action were joined by Extinction Rebellion, Haringey



Climate Forum, Muswell Hill Sustainability Group and Friends of the Earth for a rally outside the Civic Centre before the meeting. Banners and placards displayed slogans such as 'Tell the Truth 2041 is too Late, and 'Green New Deal, Time for A Change'.

Three delegations were given permission to address the Cabinet meeting; these were from Extinction Rebellion, Haringey Climate Forum and from a 15-year old pupil at Woodside School. A common theme

was the urgency of effectively dealing with Climate Change and the real ambition that could only drive this. Haringey Climate Forum highlighted the need for new transport initiatives such as increased parking charges, and improved air quality. Immediate needs are better active travel conditions including cycle lanes and low carbon neighbourhoods.

Cllr Kirsten Hearn, cabinet member for Sustainability, responded to the delegations by saying how much she valued being able to work with the voluntary sector.

Norman Beddington

What next?

The 75- page Action Plan makes a number of sensible recommendations for action; on the housing stock, on transport and energy, on the Council's own emissions from its transport and buildings and on national and regional lobbying. The main criticisms made are on whether the targets are really ambitious enough, whether enough funding will be available to meet targets, and whether a proper monitoring system could be set up to help achieve real progress. There are doubts as to whether the council has the resources and infrastructure to engage social housing tenants, private sector owners and landlords and vehicle owners.

In the midst of Covid lockdown, Haringey Labour Climate Action needs to think carefully about the Action Plan. There will be extensive public consultation on it at some point and we need to play a full part in that.

But with Covid it is clear that the big issues we have in creating a fairer and more sustainable society are not just about energy and climate change but health and social care too. Deliberate Government underfunding and the selling off of public assets over the past decade has made it much more difficult for us to respond adequately to any of these challenges.

Sydney Charles has prepared a commentary on the Climate Change Action Plan - see <https://www.dropbox.com/s/wds7yb5bi9ps06d/Haringey%20zero%20by%202041%20comments%20180320.docx?dl=0>.

Haringey XR have also published a detailed response to Haringey climate Change Action Plan and will be hoping to use this as basis for discussion with the council in due course – see:

https://docs.google.com/document/d/1UZ1gq0rR4co3l_8_q_y0O_70EorawnbC3ZpXFBNYsbw/edit#

Alan Morton

en10ergy looks to the future

Many of you will know about en10ergy limited, the community energy company that grew out of the Muswell Hill Sustainability Group. Over the years we have worked closely with Haringey Council to install solar panels on the M&S in Muswell Hill Broadway, Muswell Hill Methodist Church, Woodside High School in White Hart Lane, and most recently at Fortismere School.

We're now looking for new projects. This is difficult because the Government has removed any subsidy for PV schemes, including those installed by community groups. One result is that many of the solar firms we have approached to get quotes

have gone out of business. And the Covid lockdown has meant it is virtually impossible to make any progress.

The schemes we are considering are

- a PV canopy for the carpark behind M&S in the Broadway. This would connect with our existing array on the roof of M&S. In addition rainwater would be collected for a Sustainable Urban Drainage Scheme
- Extend the existing PV array on Highgate Wood School

Alan Morton