

BROMLEY GREEN PARTY NEWS

COVERING THE FOUR CONSTITUENCIES: BECKENHAM, BROMLEY & CHISLEHURST, LEWISHAM WEST & PENGE, AND ORPINGTON

SPRING/SUMMER 2023

RESIST RACISM

INTERNATIONAL DAY FOR THE ELIMINATION OF RACIAL DISCRIMINATION

This was celebrated on 18 March by marches in London, Cardiff, and Glasgow.

The message this year was to oppose the 'Illegal Immigration Bill', as 'No Human is Illegal'. This bill is thought by many to be inhumane, divisive, spreading hatred and scapegoating the comparatively small number of those seeking asylum for our economic crisis. These desperate human beings have risked their lives to come to this country to make a better life for themselves, and can, like many immigrants before them, make a very positive impact to our society.

It is vital that racism is kept out of elections, and for anti-racists to challenge attempts to whip up and fuel racism to win votes.

Bromley Green Party members also joined a vigil in Bromley Market Square, with Bromley Friends of the Earth and Peace Council. The main message on their placard was 'Climate Justice for people affected by rainforest destruction' emphasising the way in which corporations are profiting at the expense of marginalised indigenous people, and the impact on climate change.



Some members of Bromley Green Party joined the London march and rally, and others held a vigil in Bromley Market Square.

REFUGEE "CRISIS" – SOME COMMON MYTHS EXPLAINED

We are concerned about how the media but also the government talk about those seeking asylum, often repeating myths and misunderstandings regarding the issue. Here are some clarifications:

- Most refugees seek asylum close to home¹
- Compared to other European countries, the UK does NOT get any more asylum seekers¹.
- The UK offers next to no legal ways for refugees to get to the UK³
- Refugees do NOT need to claim refuge in the "first safe" country⁴ (– under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention that the UK is committed to¹). There are a range of reasons why refugees may choose the UK such as language, existing family links etc.
- Most of those arriving at our shores have a legitimate claim^{2,5} – there is a massive backlog to process claims⁵ which some have argued may be deliberate.

The Green Party's migrant and refugee spokesperson Cllr Benali Hamdache commented on the government's plans:

"We're wasting millions of pounds on deterrents that don't work. We could be putting that money into a fairer and kinder asylum process. Building much needed new homes and reducing the backlog of asylum applications."

Sources: 1: UNHCR, 2: Refugee Council, 3: Care4Calais, 4: Amnesty International, 5: Migrationobservatory.ox.ac.uk

HOUSING SHORTAGE – MAKING USE OF EMPTY PROPERTIES IN BROMLEY

Successive governments have failed to deliver sufficient affordable social housing (e.g. sold council properties were not replaced etc.). Many of the planned new homes also in Bromley are not affordable. Thus, there is a clear need for more social housing.

Linked to this is the issue of long-term empty homes. According to Bromley council's webpage "there are currently around 350 homes in Bromley which are liable for council tax and are recorded as having been empty for two years or longer." The Green Party backs a call to retrofit these empty homes; they should be adequately insulated (to reduce emissions) and be brought back into use. This would provide warm and comfortable homes for those who cannot afford one; at the same time this would help solve the housing, climate and health crises.

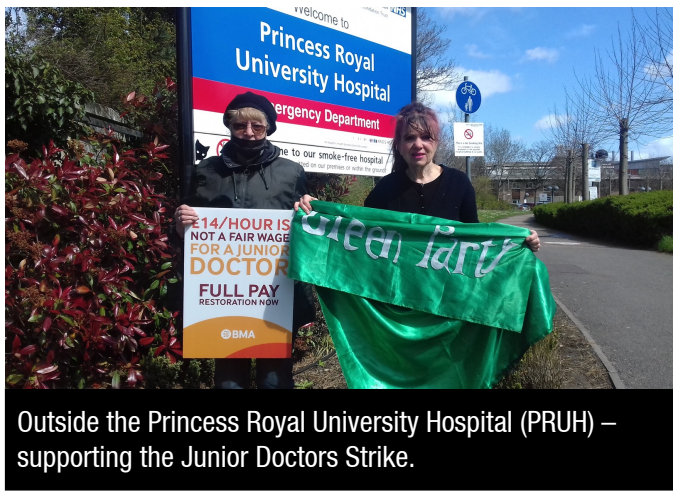
Future housing development should be led by affordability, quality and environmental standards.



GREENS ARE PASSIONATE ABOUT BUILDING A FAIRER BROMLEY WHERE EVERYONE HAS A GOOD QUALITY OF LIFE

SUPPORTING STRIKES

Bromley Green Party members have supported striking workers, such as rail workers and postal workers, over the last few weeks and months. Similarly, we are fully behind NHS staff in their fight for decent pay and working conditions. Some of our members showed their support for the Junior Doctors Strike – at a local hospital, the PRUH.



Outside the Princess Royal University Hospital (PRUH) – supporting the Junior Doctors Strike.

RECENT EVENTS

Bromley Green Party held a public fundraising/social event. The event was to draw awareness of the plight of homeless people. Some of the proceeds were donated to Shelter, plus further donations were collected for this charity on the day. There were various speakers and a play, which depicted the trials and tribulations faced daily by homeless people.



CAN YOU TAKE THE CHALLENGE? - "NO MOW MAY", AND LEAVE SOME OF YOUR LAWN UNMOWED DURING SUMMER!

We are supporting the national annual campaign "No mow May". All garden owners and green spaces managers are encouraged not to mow during May, thus providing a space for nature to thrive. Wildflowers provide a feast for pollinators, tackle pollution, reduce urban heat extremes and lock away atmospheric carbon below ground. Leaving just one square metre of unmowed lawn throughout the summer will have a positive impact for pollinating insects. You might also want to leave a small tray with water out (ideally with small sticks and pebbles for insects to land on) to offer a drink – especially on hot days!

VOTER ID REQUIRED - FUTURE ELECTIONS

Applying for a free Voter Authority Certificate



SCAN ME!

Despite little evidence of "large scale electoral fraud"¹, the government has introduced a new voter ID policy. There are no elections happening soon in Bromley, but residents should be aware of the changes as these will apply to all future elections.

The Electoral Commission lists the different forms of identification that can be used on their webpage (e.g. passport, driving licence etc.). However, criticism emerged quickly as the acceptable IDs seem to favour older age groups (thus it makes it more difficult for younger people to provide an ID), and it is also a concern that already disenfranchised communities will be affected more as they are less likely to have relevant forms of identification. Thus make sure you check whether you have a valid ID for future elections as you do not want to be turned away at the ballot box. Keep in mind that this does not apply to postal votes – there are no changes in relation to postal votes.

Source: 1 The Electoral Commission

GET IN TOUCH

BROMLEY GREEN PARTY

You have a local issue you want to tell us about.

✉ bromley@bromley.greenparty.org.uk

 @BromleyGreenParty

 @BromleyGreens

JOIN THE GREEN PARTY

Could you help the Green Party grow even more?

There's never been a better time to get involved.

join.greenparty.org.uk



SCAN ME!



Green Party

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