

Greens and the fight for civil liberties. Would you have voted to abolish parliament ?

The Green Party has condemned the government's Legislative and Regulatory Reform Bill, and criticised the opposition parties in Parliament for failing to speak out effectively against it.

The Bill will effectively allow government ministers to amend, repeal or replace any legislation without consulting Parliament. It even allows ministers to create new offences with penalties of up to two years in prison, without having to submit to a Parliamentary vote. In the words of the Bill, 'A Minister of the Crown may by order make provision for ... amending, repealing or replacing any legislation ... in any way that an Act might.'

Keith Taylor, Principal Speaker for the Green Party, said: "Hardly anyone knows about this Bill, and yet its impact on our constitutional liberties will be immense. It has already been referred to by Cambridge Law Professor, John Spencer, as the 'abolition of Parliament' Bill, as it will give the Government the ability to completely bypass democratic scrutiny on most issues. At a time when we have seen increasing intrusion by the state, culminating in the approval of the ID cards Bill, this Bill will remove the relevance of Parliament altogether."

(read the full story at www.greenparty.org.uk)

Greens in Harrow : Continuing Renewable energy success

The experimental solar electric flat passed its first anniversary in November. On midwinter's day, enough energy was collected to keep the lights burning, while on Christmas Day and Boxing Day the whole flat was running on solar power. January and February, often poor months for sun nonetheless saw solar power keeping the lights on most days, and during the clear cold snaps at the end of the January and the 8th and 9th of February the system was collecting enough to run the main circuits independently from the mains.

The grid was hard pressed during this winter. On Feb 9th we found the mains voltage down to 219 volts from the normal 240, while the solar generator was still feeding out its stored energy at the full voltage. It is gratifying to realise that the experimental work has been able to play its part in meeting the winter energy shortage; the flat was able to leave the grid at periods of high demand and reduce the load.

Meanwhile, the news is of all the energy companies making record profits during the period of energy shortage.

The advantage from the Green Party's energy policies is that they will enable you to benefit from nature's generosity, rather than suffer corporate greed.

Greens in Scotland show the way.

A bill proposed before the Scottish Parliament is set to reward householders and businesses in Scotland, who go eco friendly with measures such as installing solar panels with council tax rebates. The bill has recently gone out to public consultation. The party's co-leader, Shiona Baird, described the proposals as "realistic and ambitious".

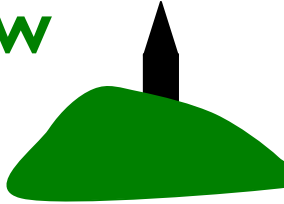
She said she wanted householders who installed solar panels, wind turbines or ground-source heat pumps to be given a one-off council tax rebate of up to £90.

She argued their fuel bills would also be dramatically reduced - insisting that in a scheme in Dundee, fuel bills have come down by £100 per year.

Harrow residents who install modern energy efficient boilers are already able to obtain a cashback discount negotiated with a major manufacturer by Harrow Council. Harrow Green councillors would seek to have Harrow follow Scotland's excellent example by pressing to open negotiations between Harrow Council and the suppliers of such micro power installations to secure a similar cash back and discount scheme for solar or micro wind power systems.

Stop Press : Sarah Kersey (Greenhill) and Grainne Byrne (Wealdstone) join the Green Party's Harrow Candidates :- Jenny Hunt (Headstone South), Rowan Langley (Rayners Lane) and Bradley Warren (Kenton East)

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ENERGY SPECIAL

Talking Point : Energy Folly

This winter saw the first fruits of the Dash for Gas begun by the conservative governments of Margaret Thatcher and John Major. British fuel reserves with a lifespan of around three hundred years were abandoned in favour of gas from the North Sea with a lifespan of less than fifty. As these reserves are used up, in turn we become dependant on imports from Europe and Russia. With forty percent of UK electricity now generated from gas with less than forty years left (we have already used ten years worth since the dash began in 1992) we need more buildings like the Harrow bachelor flat with their own micro green power station.

Nuclear Power : the art of spin.

Has anyone else noticed the subtle spin campaign waged by Tony Blair's government trying to soften up public opinion on nuclear power?

Step one: Release of stories in the media suggesting Chernobyl wasn't as bad as it seems - after all less than one hundred people actually died as a result. This forgets that the whole surrounding area has had to be evacuated since the accident, and is an insult to a generation of children from Chernobyl suffering chronic ill health as a result of their exposure to radiation from the accident.

Step two: Circulation of rumours about a record cold winter. Fuel prices rocket and the resulting furore buries the news that last year was the warmest year **ever**.

Step Three : presentation of nuclear power as a done deal, hoping people will feel there is no point in protesting about the dangerous waste we will leave for our grandchildren



Photovoltaic panels saving North Devon County Council money on the Barnstaple Civic Centre's electricity bills

Nuclear Power : the hidden weapons.

Not every nuclear weapon goes bang with a big mushroom cloud, or even has a nuclear reaction. A waste product from nuclear power, the depleted uranium left behind after enriching uranium for power or weapons production, finds a welcome home in artillery shells. The material is denser than lead, so a shell with the depleted uranium packs a bigger punch on impact.

Iraq is littered with radioactive dust and shrapnel from these weapons used in both Gulf Wars, exposing at least two generations of children to a health time bomb.

Write to "Talking Point", Harrow Green News,
Brent and Harrow Green Party, PO Box 42434, London NW10 3XT
Telephone : 07841 160 593

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- I would like to join The Green Party – please send a cheque for £31 (waged) £10 (concessions) payable to "The Green Party.
- I'd like to donate to Brent and Harrow Green Party
- £25 £50 Other
- I can help deliver Harrow Green News in my street/ area.

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