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# Climate Change and the General Election

We look at the vital issue of climate change and what the main parties are committing to do to tackle it.

With a general election two weeks away, PCS reviewed the main party manifestos, focusing on any mention of the civil service's future, pay, jobs and trade union rights. We have also paid close attention to the vital issue of climate change and the pledges, or lack of them, which parties are making to tackle this universal issue.

Whichever party secures victory on July 4, we need urgent action to tackle the climate emergency. PCS will continue to work with sister unions to promote a green agenda which includes the creation of green jobs which are well paid, skilled and secure, supporting a wider economic and social transformation.

[For more information on the general election, please visit our dedicated page.](#)

## Conservatives

- Treble offshore wind capacity, build the UK's first two carbon capture and storage clusters.
- Invest £1.1 billion into the UK Green Industries and Growth Accelerator (more than doubling its funding) which supports manufacturers in becoming more energy efficient.
- 'Rapidly expand nuclear power', including a new power plant and two new fleets of reactors.
- Introduce a new carbon pricing scheme to stop companies offshoring emissions by importing raw materials from companies with weak climate policies.

Not mentioned in the Tories' climate package is their controversial continuation of North Sea oil and gas licenses.

## Labour

The Labour Party describes climate change as 'the greatest long-term global challenge that we face'. Their main manifesto policies include:

- Zero-carbon electricity system by 2030, achieved by doubling onshore wind by 2030, doubling insulation spending, tripling solar energy and quadrupling offshore wind.
- No new licenses for North Sea oil drilling and coal mining; 'ban fracking for good'.
- Spend an extra £6.6 billion (double the current plans) on home energy efficiency improvements to 'upgrade five million homes'.
- Homes in the private rented sector will have to meet 'minimum energy efficiency standards' by 2030.

Absent from their manifesto is the watering down of their 2021 green investment plan, which has been sidelined until the second half of the next parliament because, as Shadow Chancellor Rachel Reeves states, no-one could have foreseen what Liz Truss would do to the economy. Labour have also committed to retaining Ulez zones around London.

### [Liberal Democrats](#)

The Lib Dems have not set out how much money will be put aside for climate policies within their manifesto, despite acknowledging that urgent action is needed. Their policies include:

- Bring forward the UK's net zero target from 2050 to 2045
- Raise the proportion of UK electricity generated by renewables to 90% by 2030
- 'Emergency upgrade programme' for home efficiency, including free insulation and heat pumps for low-income households.
- 'Rooftop solar revolution' including help for people to install solar panels and a guaranteed price for selling excess power back to the grid.
- A new Clean Air Act, enforced by a new Air Quality Agency, to tackle air pollution, and new legal

Another key part of their climate pledges is the establishment of a sustainability department within the Treasury to ensure the economy is sustainable.

### [Green Party](#)

Ranked highest in the [Friends of the Earth](#) assessment of party manifesto pledges on climate change, the Green party unsurprisingly centred their manifesto around creating a greener, fairer and safer country. Their key manifesto pledges relating to climate policies include:

- Accelerating the UK's net zero deadline to 2040, mainly by rapidly ramping up wind production
- Spend £40 billion a year in 'shifting to a green economy', supported by a carbon tax on the use of fossil fuels
- Stop all new licenses for oil and gas extraction and cancel recent ones granted for major North Sea projects.
- Hand ownership of 'energy sources' to their local communities
- Scrap the UK's nuclear power production, phasing it out over the coming years

The Green Party's aims and spending objectives are highly ambitious but there is a clear and centralised focus on the country's future climate ambitions.

### [Plaid Cymru](#)

Plaid is committed to reach net zero targets in Wales by 2035, with the additional aim of reversing biodiversity decline by 2030. Plaid acknowledges that investment in green jobs is desperately needed, creating opportunities for learning and skills development. Their key climate pledges include:

- Establishment of Wales' own national energy company, Ynni Cymru, through working with the Welsh Government.
- Plaid Cymru will ensure that Wales takes full control over the Crown Estate in Wales, which has already been devolved to Scotland but not yet to Wales.
- Plaid Cymru opposes the development of new sites for nuclear power stations, and would oppose new licenses for oil and gas drilling.
- Plaid Cymru would devolve the responsibilities of Ofgem to regulate the design of whole-systems energy grids and markets which serve Wales, while aligning with emerging UK, European and global standards.

### [SNP](#)

Within their manifesto the SNP have demanded the devolution of 'powers over energy regulation, pricing and production to ensure that our natural energy resources are used to best serve the needs of the Scottish people'. They state that they see the immense economic opportunity of a green transition to net zero

and that their commitment to climate change and nature loss is unwavering, despite the loss of the power sharing deal with the Green Party in Scotland due to their rowing back on climate pledges. Their key policies include:

- Taking an evidence-based approach to oil and gas. Decisions will be made on a rigorously evidence-led, case-by-case basis, through a robust climate compatibility assessment.
- Bring forward an immediate emergency budget following the election to reverse cuts to public spending and deliver meaningful investment in economic growth, including green energy.
- Modernise the Contracts for Difference scheme to enable the stable deployment of Scotland's renewable energy pipeline.
- Support the North East and the Just Transition
- Deliver a sustainable future for Grangemouth
- Rule out new nuclear power plants in Scotland. The SNP believe the best pathway to net zero and secure, affordable and clean energy is through significant growth in renewables, storage, hydrogen and carbon capture.
- Promote Scotland's hydrogen export potential.