



**AFTER COVID,  
WE NEED A  
PEOPLE'S  
GREEN NEW  
DEAL**

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LABOUR  
FOR A

  
GREEN  
NEW DEAL



# After Covid, We Need a People's Green New Deal

## Introduction

The UK is facing multiple crises: a health crisis, as the coronavirus pandemic takes the lives of more than 50,000 souls in this country, following the Tory government's failures; an economic crisis, with the British economy contracting by a record 20% and millions of jobs under threat; and a climate crisis which rages on, as the Arctic burns. We can add to this the ongoing crisis of inequality, with soaring riches for those at the top alongside three million people going hungry amidst lockdown, following ten years of austerity.

This crisis has, however, shown the extraordinary power of state intervention in the economy for the public good, from the furlough scheme to the housing of the homeless. It has thus shown the arbitrary nature of the rampant inequality in our society, and the ability of the government to redress it. Poll after poll shows people do not want to simply 'go back to normal'. What's more, to do so would be to double down on an exploitative economic system driving the climate crisis. What we need is a step-change in our economic system: healthier, fairer, greener. Public health must now always come before private profit.

The following document from Labour for a Green New Deal presents an overview of what policy measures the Labour Party should push for and prioritise so we can tackle the threats posed by climate change and the inequalities highlighted by the pandemic. They respond to the framing questions put forward in both the NPF and Green Recovery consultations. They are designed to ensure the UK emerges from the coronavirus era a more equitable society, and to set us on a path towards rapid decarbonisation.

At the heart of our programme lies the question of public ownership. The market has consistently failed to serve the social good: failed to decarbonise our economy; failed to prevent thousands of layoffs; failed to build an equal and just society. Whether it's insulating homes or providing broadband connectivity, only the state can ensure the rapid economic transformation we need.

This is equally true of the struggling aviation and fossil fuel sectors, which Labour members have [made clear](#) should not be reconstructed as they were. Labour must lay out clear plans for retraining for workers who have or might lose their jobs, in addition to government interventions, including sector-wide deals, to scale down these industries in a managed just transition. Building back better is as much about reducing our pollution as it is about investing in a green recovery.

Finally, as we lay out, Labour's green recovery programme must be internationalist - it must not replicate the neo-colonial role Britain too often plays on the global stages. Now is the time to end the scandal of the UK's global finance for fossil fuels once and for all. Equally, it must mean supporting Global South countries by cancelling debt and sharing technology and finance for a just energy transition.

In all this, Labour should build on the [motion](#) passed overwhelmingly by Labour members and trade unions at Party Conference last year, and the subsequent manifesto. These provide 'oven-ready' plans for an ambitious and radical green recovery. As a democratic socialist party, policy passed by our sovereign body must be respected.

It has not been possible to answer every question or cover every facet of such wide-ranging consultations, whose remit naturally covers a huge range of policy areas. Questions such as private finance, and its regulation, have not been

addressed but should certainly form part of a comprehensive green recovery plan.

Equally, the projects proposed in these documents involve heavy up-front costs. Labour should be clear in rejecting the self-defeating logics of austerity, recognising the long-term financial, as well as social, benefits of measures such as Warm Homes for All and universal broadband access. These should be accompanied by increased taxation of the wealthy, including the Big Polluter tax proposed by Labour in the 2019 manifesto. Likewise, the regional manifestos provided last year form an excellent starting point to address questions of regional inequality and investment in 'left-behind' areas.

As Ed Miliband recently [wrote](#), Labour has lessons to learn about the past, but it must not give up on its vision of "a radical transformation of our country". From a global pandemic to the existential threat of climate breakdown, this moment calls for a huge shift in our political and economic systems. Popular support for a Green New Deal is high. Now is the time to push for it.

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