

# MEPs in action

*For peace, social justice and the environment*

Winter newsletter for JEAN LAMBERT – London's Green MEP



## Jean Lambert awarded MEP 2005 for Justice and Human Rights



**Jean won the MEP 2005 award for Justice and Human Rights in October 2005. The awards honour, highlight and acknowledge the work she has done on the issue.**

NGOs and not for profit organisations across Europe nominated MEPs they felt had made an outstanding achievement in different policy areas. MEPs voted for the winner.

Jean, who has been actively involved in issues surrounding Justice and Human Rights for many years, was thrilled to have won the award and commented; *"Being nominated by people I have worked with is fantastic, but to win was completely unexpected! I am honoured to receive this*

*award. As a Green MEP I come across so many cases where people's human rights are being abused both in the UK and around the world. It is vital that we continue to make sure this does not go unnoticed and move towards a fair and equal society."*

At the beginning of 2005 Jean introduced proposals to the European Parliament, through the Green Refugee Plan, making radical improvements to the way refugees are treated. She is a member of the Civil Liberties Committee.

## Greens descend on London

**Green MEPs from across Europe came to London in November 2005 when Jean and her Green colleague Caroline Lucas, South East England's MEP, hosted the European Parliament Green Group Conference on Climate Change, marking the UK Presidency of the EU.**

Eleven Green MEPs from eight EU countries joined with NGOs and Greater London Assembly Members to discuss the UK's record on tackling climate change – ways to improve it, the link between nuclear power and terrorism, transport and planning in London, training for 'green'

jobs, and delivering a sustainable Olympic Games in 2012.

The conference highlighted the fact that there is an alternative to the climate change crisis but, Jean warned, we must act now if this is to be effective; *"Climate change is a serious problem but we have got solutions. Energy efficiency is something we can all do now by simply switching to energy efficient light bulbs or turning the heating down, for example. We now face an extremely cold winter with rising fuel prices. Maybe this will push the government into taking action against climate change."*



*The European Parliament Green Group conference hosted a reception at the Natural History Museum's Earth gallery.*

# Opposed to the mast – then lay on the grass!

In Wanstead, T Mobile and Redbridge Borough Council threatened to erect a phone mast just yards from a school. Jean made up part of the 'M' at the T-Mobile mast protest.



Before Jean joined the protest, **Opposed to the mast, then lay on the grass!** she warned planners to put health and safety above commercial gain; "It is ludicrous to suggest that a phone mast built so close to schools and houses, right in the middle of a designated conservation area, would be appropriate. Not only would it have a visual impact on the environment but could also risk the health of local residents." Spelling 'NO T-MOBILE MAST' with their bodies the demonstrators forced the council to rethink their decision.

## Green belt under threat

London's green spaces are under threat with an increasing number of developments being built around the city.

The Barnes Wetland Centre, home to over 200 species of birds and beautiful wetland life, is the first of its kind in the world with more than 40 hectares of land in the heart of a capital city, but a proposed development nearby threatens to disrupt the dark corridor and green belt the birds rely on. On **World Animal Day** Jean raised the problem with the local council and residents bringing the real issues to the surface.



Jean showed her support when she visited the Barnes Wetland Centre.



Jean with one of London's cleaner, greener cabs.

## Green is the new black for London's Hackney Cabs

In London over 15,000 taxis will be required to comply with Euro 3 emission standards by July 2007.

Giving the keynote speech at the Licensed London Hackney Carriage Conference in September Jean urged cab drivers to help tackle the air pollution threat in London and upgrade their vehicles to the highest possible standards they could afford.

## Call to halt cruel bile farming

The Asiatic Bear, otherwise known as 'Moon Bears' for the beautiful golden crescent across their chests, are subject to a life of torture and misery. They are milked for their bile up to twice a day often through catheters implanted into their gall bladders causing severe physical and mental pain.

The bile is used in Chinese Traditional medicine, but research has shown that over 50 herbal and synthetic products, that are cheaper and equally effective, can replace this.

At the launch of a new campaign Jean called on the Chinese government to end milking bile from the bears before the 2008 Beijing Olympic games and expressed her concern over the 'barbaric practice';

*"This is a vile practice, it is clearly cruelty when there are alternatives available. It can not be argued that it is for medical benefit when bear bile is used in shampoo and we know there are herbal and synthetic alternatives."*

*"Ethical standards in both Beijing and London, where we too will be Olympic hosts, must be addressed. The Chinese government are making positive efforts to close the bear farms and help the Animals Asia Foundation free the bears, but thousands more remain in captivity so we must continue to fight for their freedom."*



## So Much Hot air?

During the UK Presidency of the EU Tony Blair pledged to make tackling climate change a priority but failed to do this.

Jean and her Green colleague Caroline Lucas MEP for South East England, commissioned a new report, **So Much Hot Air**, that revealed the UK has failed to fully implement EU laws designed to tackle climate change. Jean urged the UK Government to make the recommended changes, as outlined in the report, that would cut CO2 emissions and said; *"The UK has promised action on climate change and signally failed to deliver. How on earth does Tony Blair think he can exercise global leadership on tackling climate change when he won't even implement those measures his Government have already agreed."*

The report is available at [www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk](http://www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk) or on request.



*Jean warns of the climate change crisis we face.*

## Jean welcomes new citizens to the UK



*In Walthamstow Jean welcomes new citizens to the UK as Guest of Honour.*

**Jean Lambert, welcomed 26 new citizens, from 14 different countries around the world to the United Kingdom, as the Guest of Honour at the Citizenship Ceremony in Walthamstow.**

Jean congratulated the group on their new status as British Citizens and said;

*"The UK is made up of a wide range of*

*people of a variety of faiths, cultures and backgrounds. By becoming a British Citizen you have not only joined this diverse and inclusive community, but also that of the European Union. You now have new rights across twenty five countries and are making a positive contribution to our common future."*

## ISSUES IN 2005

### Rape Crisis Campaign

Earlier this year Jean warned that we face an international rape crisis and has continued to support the **Rape Crisis Campaign** launched by The Observer and Glamour Magazine. Jean also maintained her support for Amnesty International and the Violence Against Women Campaign.

### Challenge for change – us or the climate?

During **One World Week** Jean urged people at a public meeting in Welwyn Garden City to make changes to their lifestyle. If we all switched to energy saving light bulbs the combined impact would be considerable.

### Green jobs

During **Energy Efficiency Week** in October 2005 Jean called for action to provide Britain's workforce with the essential skills needed to implement renewable energy schemes and meet climate change targets. Further discussion at the European Parliament's **Green Group Conference** in London also raised the question of whether we have the correct skills to build a truly sustainable 2012 Olympics.

### Black History Month

Jean marked **Black History Month** in October when she visited the SIMBA Project. Jean urged Londoners to remember the past and those that are sadly still subject to slavery today, but recognise how today's society has been shaped by Black communities. The visit to Greenwich culminated in a 'Black – Green Dialogue' conference to ensure that the concerns of African women and Black perspectives are heard and incorporated in the Green message.

## London's air quality breach

In July of this year it emerged that air quality levels in London were in breach of EU standards and had broken the EU limit of 35 breaches by an astonishing 108 days. Jean tabled two parliamentary questions and called on the Commission to monitor the situation.

## Visit to Lampeduza

Jean visited Lampeduza, Italy, with a delegation from Parliament's Civil Liberties Committee in October 2005 following reports that the centre, receiving immigrants from the North African Coast, simply could not cope with the number of people arriving. Amnesty International was previously denied access fuelling fears that people were being held in unhealthy conditions, treated without dignity or respect.



To receive monthly email news bulletins about Jean's work send an email with the word 'INFO' in the subject header to [jeanlambert@greenmeps.org.uk](mailto:jeanlambert@greenmeps.org.uk)

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These articles are available in large print on request from the Office of Jean Lambert.

# Brides without borders

**Jean has been supporting the Brides Without Borders campaign, a group of couples and families facing separation due to immigration laws.**

Jean attended the lobby in Parliament Square, which saw protestors wearing wedding dresses, morning suits and drinking sparkling fruit juice in champagne glasses to highlight their message. Jean slammed the UK Government's asylum

policy commenting; "The actions of the Home Office leave me utterly astonished. These couples and their children are facing an uncertain future because the UK Government is so keen to reach targets and lower the numbers of asylum seekers remaining in this country. People are no longer being treated as individuals but numbers, without their personal circumstances being taken into account."



Jean took wedding confetti and balloons to the demonstration to highlight the campaign.

## Services Directive should not undermine public services

**As UK Green / EFA Co-ordinator on the Employment and Social Affairs Committee, Jean has been particularly concerned with the controversial Services Directive.**

Defending universal public services established across Europe at a meeting of Trade Unions working in the services sector Jean questioned the benefits of such a directive; "We really need to be clear about what the directive does and doesn't cover. This is about clarity, the Commissioners proposal is so flawed that it creates more questions than it answers. We need to be assured that health and public services are explicitly excluded. People have fought hard to establish universal public services in Europe and we don't want to see them chipped away – especially by a directive that we have been told has no such intention."

Jean's new report **The Bolkestein Directive: Health Warning** provides an idea of why the Greens are opposing the inclusion of health in the directive. Visit [www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk](http://www.jeanlambertmep.org.uk) to download the report or contact 020 7407 6269 for a hard copy.



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