# Zack Polanski's election as Green Party leader signals a shift towards radicalism and social justice



Zack Polanski, a long-time environmentalist and self-described "eco-populist," has been elected leader of the Green Party of England and Wales in a decisive victory. Securing 20,411 votes, he overwhelmingly defeated the joint leadership bid from Green MPs Adrian Ramsay and Ellie Chowns, who together received only 3,705 votes. Polanski’s election marks a clear shift towards a bolder and more radical direction for the party, with a sharp focus on social and environmental justice.

Polanski, who has been vegan for about a decade following a prior decade as a vegetarian, has woven his environmental ethics closely into his political platform. His longstanding commitment to veganism resonates with his broader agenda of sustainability and animal welfare, reflected in his previous collaborations with advocacy groups such as Viva! to champion plant-based initiatives in public institutions. Earlier this year, Polanski contributed to “A Cruelty-Free Manifesto For London,” proposing key measures to tackle climate change, food poverty, and public health, including urging Mayor Sadiq Khan to adopt plant-based meals by default in City Hall and schools.

The Green Party under Polanski intends to position itself as a stronger left-wing alternative amidst the shifting political landscape in the UK. With traditional parties like Labour perceived to be moving towards the centre or right, the Greens have gained ground on local councils, holding 859 seats across 181 councils and making significant gains in recent elections. Public opinion data suggests that nearly half of potential Green voters are motivated by the party’s climate policies, while others are drawn to its broader progressive stance. Polanski himself has indicated that some Labour MPs disillusioned with their party’s direction are considering defecting to the Greens, further signalling the potential for the Greens to reshape the left-of-centre political space.

In his victory and subsequent statements, Polanski emphasised urgency and ambition, asserting the need for the Greens to become a “bold mass-membership political force” capable of challenging major parties. He voiced a commitment to build a “green left” that does not leave anyone behind, highlighting social issues such as opposition to the two-child benefit cap and cuts to disability benefits. Polanski also expressed openness to collaborating with Jeremy Corbyn’s planned breakaway party, signalling a willingness to unite progressive forces. His leadership vision seeks to directly challenge the current UK government, which he and others say is mishandling climate and social policy at a time when 84 percent of Britons acknowledge climate change and nearly 70 percent attribute it primarily to human activity.

Polanski’s rise comes as climate concerns intensify in the UK, and political disillusionment grows. Amid this backdrop, his campaign promises a more radical Green Party—one that could redefine the country’s environmental and social agenda and present a credible alternative to existing political binaries.

### 📌 Reference Map:

* Paragraph 1 – [[1]](https://plantbasednews.org/culture/politics/vegan-politician-zack-polanski-elected-leader/), [[2]](https://news.sky.com/story/zack-polanski-elected-new-leader-of-the-green-party-13423601), [[5]](https://greenparty.org.uk/members/internal-elections/2025-internal-elections/leader/), [[7]](https://thanet.greenparty.org.uk/2025/09/04/under-new-leadership-zack-polanski-is-the-new-green-party-leader/)
* Paragraph 2 – [[1]](https://plantbasednews.org/culture/politics/vegan-politician-zack-polanski-elected-leader/), [[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zack_Polanski)
* Paragraph 3 – [[1]](https://plantbasednews.org/culture/politics/vegan-politician-zack-polanski-elected-leader/), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/zack-polanski-green-party-leader-vote-ellie-chowns-b2818413.html), [[5]](https://greenparty.org.uk/members/internal-elections/2025-internal-elections/leader/), [[7]](https://thanet.greenparty.org.uk/2025/09/04/under-new-leadership-zack-polanski-is-the-new-green-party-leader/)
* Paragraph 4 – [[1]](https://plantbasednews.org/culture/politics/vegan-politician-zack-polanski-elected-leader/), [[3]](https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/eco-populist-zack-polanski-announced-new-green-party-leader-b1245560.html), [[4]](https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/zack-polanski-green-party-leader-vote-ellie-chowns-b2818413.html), [[6]](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zack_Polanski)

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## Bibliography

1. <https://plantbasednews.org/culture/politics/vegan-politician-zack-polanski-elected-leader/> - Please view link - unable to able to access data
2. <https://news.sky.com/story/zack-polanski-elected-new-leader-of-the-green-party-13423601> - Zack Polanski has been elected as the new leader of the Green Party, securing 20,411 votes and defeating the joint leadership bid of Adrian Ramsay and Dr Ellie Chowns, who received 3,705 votes. Polanski, a member of the London Assembly, aims to steer the party in a new direction with his 'eco-populist' approach, challenging both Labour and Reform UK. He expressed his intention to make the Greens 'bolder' and more radical, focusing on social and environmental justice.
3. <https://www.standard.co.uk/news/politics/eco-populist-zack-polanski-announced-new-green-party-leader-b1245560.html> - Zack Polanski, the new leader of the Green Party, has expressed openness to future collaboration with Jeremy Corbyn's planned breakaway party. In his victory speech, Polanski emphasised the need for bold action and leadership, stating the Greens aim to 'replace' the Labour Party. He highlighted issues such as the two-child benefit cap, disability cuts, and the situation in Gaza as areas where the current government has failed, positioning the Greens as an alternative.
4. <https://www.independent.co.uk/news/uk/politics/zack-polanski-green-party-leader-vote-ellie-chowns-b2818413.html> - Zack Polanski has been elected as the new leader of the Green Party, winning a landslide victory with 20,411 votes against Ellie Chowns and Adrian Ramsay's joint campaign, which received 3,705 votes. In his victory speech, Polanski pledged bold action and leadership, stating the Greens aim to 'replace' the Labour Party. He criticised the current government's policies, including the two-child benefit cap and cuts to disability benefits, positioning the Greens as a progressive alternative.
5. <https://greenparty.org.uk/members/internal-elections/2025-internal-elections/leader/> - Zack Polanski, the Deputy Leader of the Green Party and a London Assembly Member, has been elected as the new leader of the Green Party of England and Wales. In his campaign, Polanski advocated for a bolder approach, aiming to make the party more visible and take a more 'eco-populist' direction. He emphasised the need for the Green Party to become a bold mass-membership political force capable of challenging other political entities.
6. <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Zack_Polanski> - Zack Polanski, born David Paulden on 2 November 1982, is a British politician who has been the Leader of the Green Party of England and Wales since September 2025. Prior to leading the Green Party, he was active in the Liberal Democrats and later joined the Green Party in 2017. He has served as a London Assembly Member since May 2021 and was elected Deputy Leader of the Green Party in September 2022. Polanski is known for his 'eco-populist' approach and focus on social and environmental justice.
7. <https://thanet.greenparty.org.uk/2025/09/04/under-new-leadership-zack-polanski-is-the-new-green-party-leader/> - Zack Polanski has been elected as the new leader of the Green Party, marking a clear shift to the left for the party. He won by a landslide, defeating the joint ticket of Adrian Ramsay and Ellie Chowns with 20,411 votes to 3,705. In his acceptance speech, Polanski emphasised the need for a 'green left' and expressed his intention to challenge both Labour and Reform UK, stating that the Greens aim to 'replace' the current government.