

## **I helped fund Just Stop Oil, but no more. The ballot box will be more powerful than disruption**

**By Dale Vince, *The Guardian*, October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2023.**

*Dale Vince is a green energy industrialist and campaigner.*

5 I have supported and funded Just Stop Oil since its foundation. I have given more than £340,000, and that's because I agree with its simple demand: no drilling for new oil in the North Sea. The international political and scientific consensus is clear: to avoid the worst of the climate crisis, we cannot produce any new sources of fossil fuel.

10 I have defended Just Stop Oil's people and actions in countless media interviews. Protest is one of our fundamental democratic rights, and the more disruption, the more effective the protest. Just Stop Oil has taken this to a new level, but it has done so peacefully even when faced with aggression from members of the public and the state. (...) So, I supported Just Stop Oil every way I could through this summer of very direct action, even joining campaigners on a march. (...)

15 Our government is not only unmoved by these protests; it believes it has struck electoral gold. It has made clear that no amount of protest will sway it, and has doubled down in a desperate attempt to get itself a toehold in the next election. Witness the hundreds of new drilling licences, the five-year delay on banning new petrol and diesel cars, and the backtracking on energy efficiency targets for tenants – not to mention the bogus announcements on meat taxes, car-sharing and “seven recycling bins”. This government has declared war on net zero and “green wokery” in a way that  
20 is not just dishonest, but dangerous.

For one thing, it falsely claims that these policies will save the public money in the face of hard evidence to the contrary. I have innovated and created green business in three big industries in need of change: energy, transport and food. In all three the business case is clear: the best policy for the environment is also the best policy for the economy. The green economy is how we solve  
25 our cost of living crisis, create sustainable and well-paid jobs, sustain economic growth and tackle the climate crisis.

The next general election is the most important of our lifetimes. And what the Tories will do if they get another stretch in power is crystal clear: abandon net zero, open new coalmines and oilfields, and continue presiding over spiralling living costs.

30 And so today I announced a change of direction: I am no longer going to fund Just Stop Oil. Under the current government, protest cannot work. I would go so far as to say that anything that could feed the Tories' culture-war narrative is counter-productive. In order to “just stop oil”, first we need to just stop the Tories. (...) So I'm going to dedicate my time, energy and funding to the coming election through a new campaign announced today: Just Vote.

35 Our aim is twofold: first, to help younger voters navigate the obstacles placed in their path and encourage them to vote. Nobody has more skin in this game than young people today: the climate crisis will define their lifetimes.

40 Second, Just Vote aims to reach across generational and political divides to share a simple perspective: (...) The dividing lines have been drawn: Labour is green, the Tories are not. A vote for anyone other than Labour, or no vote at all, is a vote for another Tory government – this time with a mandate to pursue its anti-green crusade. Preventing that from happening is the only way to “just stop oil”.