

There are still good judges - which makes it vital that...

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Not long ago [I reported on the actions of a judge](#) who has been persistently denying defendants in climate change protest cases the right to refer to their motivation for protesting when presenting their defences to court.

It is therefore [good to report another case](#) when seven Just Stop Oil activists appeared at Wolverhampton Magistrates Court before District Judge Wilkinson answering the charge of Aggravated Trespass. The court heard how the Just Stop Oil supporters had arrived at the site at 4am on the 3rd April 2022, and had stopped all distribution for around 12 hours.

In summation the judge stated:

"It's abundantly clear that you are all good people. You are intelligent, articulate and a pleasure to deal with. It's unarguable that man-made global warming is real and we are facing a climate emergency. Your aims are admirable and it is accepted by me and the Crown Prosecution Service that your views are reasonable and genuinely held. Your fears are ably and genuinely articulated and are supported by the science."

"When the United Nations Secretary General gives a speech saying that the activity of fossil fuel companies is incompatible with human survival, we should all be very aware of the need for change. Millions of people, and I do not dispute that it may be as many as 1 billion people, will be displaced as a result of climate change."

"No-one can criticise your motivations. You all gave evidence that was deeply moving. I certainly was moved. The tragedy is that good people have felt so much, without hope, that you feel you have to come into conflict with the criminal justice system."

"Thank you for opening my eyes to certain things. Most, I was acutely and depressingly aware of, but there were certain things."

"I say this and I mean this sadly, I have to convict you. You are good people and I will not issue a punitive sentence. Your arrests and loss of good character are sufficient. Good people doing the wrong thing cannot make the wrong thing right. I don't say this,

ever, but it has been a pleasure dealing with you."

"You should feel guilty for nothing. You should feel proud that you care, have concern for the future. I urge you not to break the law again. Good luck to all of you."

There is hope for society, after all. But it has to be defended, including from far-right judges.