



**Green Party**



***Real Progress***



# CLIMATE CHANGE



Action not words. Every other political party talks about action on climate change but have failed to deliver. The Green Party will take immediate action and has the political will to make difficult decisions that the other parties shy away from.

We can already see the effects; flooding, extreme storms, altered weather patterns, and that's just in the UK. Elsewhere climate change is threatening to devastate the developing

world and drive the world's poor to seek refuge elsewhere. We must take international action now. Aid budgets should be used to export the very best clean energy technologies.

As a developed economy, we have some of the highest greenhouse emissions in the world - so we have a duty to everyone to make a bigger contribution to cuts. We need a just and equitable solution. The Green Party believes we can reduce

much of our climate change impact by cutting the amount of energy we waste. Greens would help people saving energy by abolishing standing charges for power. We'd just pay for what we use. Greens would make those who use dirty fuels pay for causing pollution.

We'd switch money from road building to public transport and stop handing subsidies to airports and airlines.

Britain is also blessed with some of the world's best renewable energy resources; we should invest properly in wind, wave and solar power. For instance, we'd help build 2 million solar roof systems in the next five years.

Greens estimate that we could create 200,000 jobs in the renewable energy industry with the added benefit of making us less dependent on oil from places like Iraq, Iran and Saudi Arabia.

Green councillors are making real progress in implementing positive change on the ground. Just in the local authority of Kirklees, recent Green Group successes include securing £100,000 for solar street lighting and £500,000 for energy-savings measures in schools and old people's homes.

Wind turbines are being installed on schools. A 100 dwelling "solar village" is soon to be built. Photovoltaics and solar water heating have been put on the roof of the local community centre. These sorts of green measures are being seen by the people of Huddersfield every day. And it's the Greens who are the driving force for real, positive change.

# TRANSPORT



The car has revolutionised our lives. It allows us a freedom to travel undreamed of by previous generations. But cars also bring problems.

Some, such as pollution and contributions to climate change, may one day be solved as we develop clean fuels. Others will be tougher to crack. Already, this generation of children have the highest ever rates of asthma. Our towns and cities have been taken over by cars and nothing short

of reducing car use will turn our neighbourhoods back into places where people, not vehicles, come first.

Greens want to make taking public transport the easy choice so that we can start to choose to leave our cars at home. We want to give pedestrians, cyclists, buses, trams and trains priority in our cities, towns and villages. We would shift £30 billion from road building to make that dream a reality.

Forty years ago the Beeching recommendations took an axe to our railways and more and more people have had to buy cars. Greens want to make good the damage and give many of our smaller towns their train service back.

Greens would keep our public transport public. A Green government would bring the railways into public ownership, and give our cities the public transport networks they deserve.



On the London Assembly, the Green Party's Jenny Jones AM has promoted Road Safety as a member of the Metropolitan Police Authority. The Greens have also supported London's successful congestion charge, and are backing calls for its extension. British Green MEPs have made real progress in pushing for cuts in aircraft noise and for the airlines to pay for damaging the environment. The Greens have also pushed for train travel to always be a cheaper option than flying, and Greens on local authorities across the county have been successful in securing routes and local transport plans that prioritise pedestrians and cyclists over the dominance of motor vehicles.



# EDUCATION



Each and every one of our children is full of potential. For some that will shine through from the beginning. For others it may take longer to be noticed, or it may need to be brought out. And a child who only seems to be interested in engineering at fourteen, might at forty decide to be a psychoanalyst, or an actor or a gardener.

We only get one life and our path through it shouldn't be planned out for us almost before we've begun.

Greens want education to guide us on our lifelong journey, to help us change direction, to enable us to explore our whole selves.

That means allowing people to move in and out of education whenever they need to. It means funding properly our schools, colleges and universities, having much smaller class sizes, scrapping tuition fees and restoring maintenance grants.

Greens want more time for play, especially in the early years,

because it is then that children develop the social and emotional skills that will set them up for life.

Greens would stop the constant testing and abolish official league tables.

And Greens would solve the problem of teacher recruitment by treating teachers as responsible professionals.

After all Britain's biggest natural resource is us; its people. Release our full potential and you unleash an unstoppable force.



Greens on councils around the UK are fighting for proper spending on education, and for the right to have local schools and nurseries within easy reach of home. And led by Keith Taylor, the Green councillors in Brighton have ensured that in major construction projects, local people should be given vocational training by the developers as a condition of the contract. Greens in local communities across the country are fighting for smaller scale, more child-centred education to become the model for schools.

In the European Parliament, Green MEPs Jean Lambert and Caroline Lucas are fighting to prevent Britain's education sector from being forced open to international competition and privatisation.

# HEALTH



Life is precious and good health allows us to make the most of it. But our National Health Service, once the envy of the world, has been taken for granted by generations of politicians who expect doctors to do more and more on less and less money.

Poor cleaning by some private contractors has contributed to the rise of hospital 'superbugs' - that's just one result of the NHS's private sector schemes. Under the Private Finance Initiative we have seen

NHS hospitals costing six times as much as they would have done if built with public money - with profits going to construction conglomerates.

Greens believe we need to put new life into the NHS by changing the way we think about health, rather than making bad bargains with the private sector. Curing people is far more expensive than helping to keep us all healthy in the first place: that's how we can save money and make better lives for us all.

Green policies have health promotion built in; we want to cut pollution, improve the quality of Britain's food and make our communities safe for pedestrians, cyclists and joggers.

We also want to preempt sickness. Channelling more funds into regular health checks, screening, health education and disease prevention will save money in the long run, money which can be used to widen the range of treatments available. Greens recognise that

doctors and nurses need more time to treat each of us as a 'whole person', to listen to us and identify the wider causes of illness, not just the symptoms. We want to encourage the properly regulated use of alternative treatments and make hospitals places to heal the person as well as the body.

But above all Greens are determined that Britain should have properly funded, publicly run healthcare, free at the point of use for all.



In the Scottish Parliament, the Green Party has helped local communities achieve a parliamentary committee inquiry into the health risks of the controversial new 'TETRA' communication masts.

In Europe, Green MEPs have obtained bans on substances that are carcinogenic, mutagenic or toxic to reproduction from being used in cosmetics. In order to obtain better air quality, especially in terms of sulphur dioxide, the Greens have been working for several years for the improvement of fuel quality both for cars and ships.

And everywhere the Green Party is winning the battle of getting healthy local produce into school meals, rather than having cheap processed foods fed to our children.

# POLITICS FOR PEOPLE



Politicians have a tendency to forget that power isn't their property; they merely have it on loan from the people.

Yet despite devolution power in the UK is kept further from those it belongs to than in most countries in Europe. Greens believe that key decisions should be taken at the most local level possible to give the people they affect the best chance of shaping the

way those choices are made. That's why we want to reforge the links between local government and the community.

Greens oppose giving more power to unelected bodies in Brussels like the European Commission. We believe in a Europe that celebrates diversity, not one that tries to push the continent's square pegs into round holes. We are in favour of a constitution for the EU, but

not the one proposed, which favours big business, military expansion and the nuclear industry over the needs of Europe's peoples.

Nor is there any excuse for an unelected House of Lords in the 21st Century. There is a role for an upper chamber to act as a check and balance on the House of Commons, but as a people we are grown up enough to choose our own representatives.

We don't need politicians to do it for us. Greens support proportional representation in all elections. Finally the British people have always stood up to tyrants and terrorists alike to preserve their freedoms – not to have them limited by politicians using such threats as an excuse. ID cards and draconian laws which infringe our liberties are themselves a threat to our way of life.

Gina Dowding, one of the 8 Green councillors in Lancaster, blew the whistle on Lancaster City Council allowing the local nuclear plant to get away with putting off paying its business rates at a cost to local taxpayers of £18000. Green MEP Dr Caroline Lucas dug further and sparked a European Commission legal investigation that uncovered a vast web of subsidies paid by the Labour government to dinosaur nuclear companies that costs the British people 100s of millions of pounds every year. That's a real green victory for ordinary people over the power of governments and big business.



# OUR ENVIRONMENT



Our environment defines us. It's not just our glorious countryside; it's our landmarks, our streets, our housing estates and our towns. Greens have always been in the forefront of the struggle to protect and improve the world we live in.

Greens believe that Real Progress towards a better environment means putting a human dimension back into development, designing homes and neighbourhoods with character and for our needs, revitalising

old buildings, reusing wasteland and not destroying green fields. It means stopping motorways and urban sprawl from disfiguring hills and forests that have inspired generations of musicians, writers, poets and painters; artists who in turn inspire us still.

Real Progress towards a better society also means respecting the right of animals not to suffer. We don't believe that farm animals growing faster than their hearts can stand or cows producing drugs instead of

milk is progress.

Greens oppose factory farming and advocate banning cruel live exports.

We want an end to animal experimentation and real investment in non-animal chemical testing.

We want to make better use of the things we'd throw away, and invest in re-using and recycling materials, not pointlessly and harmfully incinerating them. It's Government's job to make recycling not a chore but easy and second-nature.



Green MEP Dr Caroline Lucas has helped increase funding for the validation of non-animal test methods. Greens in the London Assembly have saved several threatened green spaces from development and brought about an Animal Protection Officer for London. British Green MEPs have fought for tighter rules on mobile phone masts, real action on climate change, and campaigned against the trade in meat from endangered species, the import of cat and dog fur, intensive factory farming, and towards ending live animal exports

On local authorities, Greens are consistently a voice for the preservation of old and historic buildings, rather than free-for-all new developments.

# PEACE AND JUSTICE



Greens are democrats. This means we support the right of people around the world to choose their own leaders even if we don't agree with them.

Greens believe that the troubled and dangerous world we live in now is partly the result of decades when supposedly democratic Western governments have propped up dictators who have oppressed their peoples and abused their human rights.

What's more the weapons we sell these dictators are sooner or later turned on UK troops when they're sent in to intervene in the mess that we helped create.

Meanwhile, our governments make out that they are acting in conscience - rather than cynically imposing control over resources like oil.

Greens would push for a worldwide treaty governing the sale of conventional weapons so that they

can't end up in the hands of dangerous regimes. At home, we would seek to end our involvement with the arms trade. Greens would oppose wars for oil.

Nor do Greens believe that nuclear weapons offer any sort of deterrence. The greatest blow we can strike with nuclear weapons is to show it's possible to give them up.

Greens believe that real security comes from international

justice. That means cancelling poorer countries' debt, giving them a fair deal when it comes to international trade and not supporting corrupt politicians just because they do us favours.

Countries with stable, accountable governments, where people are fed and have jobs, where their rights are respected, where the poor aren't trampled by the rich; such countries rarely pose a threat to others.



Green Party MEP Caroline Lucas has spoken of her experiences in Iraq and Palestine at rallies across the UK. Dr Lucas – a world famous author on trade issues – is also pushing the EU Commission to review world trade rules in favour of developing countries. Green groups on local authorities around the UK have persuaded their councils to adopt anti-war and fair trade stances.

It was the Greens who convinced the European Parliament to adopt a resolution calling for a ban on radioactive warheads and cluster-bombs.

And it was a model from Greens Euro-MP upon which the International Criminal Court (ICC) was founded.



# FOOD AND FARMING



As our lives get busier and busier sometimes we're simply too rushed to think about the basics; and what could be more basic than food.

Many of us no longer have time to cook. We buy ready meals from the supermarket and just move them from the fridge to the oven to the table. We trust those who produce the food to make it wholesome and safe.

But that trust isn't always respected. Not only is much of our food loaded with excess salt, sugar, fat and additives, sometimes banned substances find their way in. Then there is GM. No one knows what the long term effects of GM food will be – but that doesn't stop biotech companies pressuring the government to let them feed us GM products without telling us.

Meanwhile the pressure to make food ever cheaper is ruining our farmers, emptying our seas of fish and driving out small shops in favour of supermarkets.

Greens will push for 30% of our food to be produced organically by 2012, work to change European policies on agriculture and fishing, ban GM food, prosecute supermarkets for anti-competitive behaviour and make animal welfare

a cornerstone of food production in Britain. Greens will champion local food producers who take pride in what they do, treat their land and animals with respect, understand the need to conserve fish stocks and keep our traditional foods and varieties alive. We will support those who work long hours, often for little reward, to put the best local produce on your table.



On the London Assembly, Green Party Assembly Member Darren Johnson has successfully promoted community allotments, and secured an anti-GM clause for the Mayor's Biodiversity Strategy. Green Party Euro-MP Dr Caroline Lucas has been an outspoken critic of the Common Agricultural Policy and has campaigned for an organic, local and safe agricultural system. She has written reports proposing ways of reducing supermarket power, and has lobbied the UK government to use EU money to help farmers promote local food initiatives. And Green councilors have been pro-active in the promotion of allotments, farmers markets, local food directories and Fair Trade towns.

# HOW WE LIVE



Ask you yourself, what makes you happier; spending an afternoon with friends and family or spending an extra five hours at work so you can save up for a bigger telly?

Every year our working hours are getting longer, we spend more time in jams on the way to and from work and we see less and less of those we care about.

Greens believe it's time to restore the balance in our lives.

We will make it tougher for employers to force employees to

work long hours, we will give extra help to small businesses and encourage people to work closer to home.

Greens will introduce a basic allowance for everyone in the country, a 'Citizen's Income'. People can choose how much to work or what time to devote to caring for children or elderly parents. It will eliminate the trap between the benefits zone and the world of work.

We will restructure taxes to make essentials cheaper but hit those who dam-

age the environment. We'll change income tax to help the less well off and we'll ask the very wealthy to contribute more.

And for those who've given to society their whole lives we'll create a real Citizen's Pension: we'll raise pensions by between a quarter and a third, pay them to all regardless of contributions or savings and link them to wages or the cost of living not inflation so as the country grows wealthier, pensioners share in that prosperity.



Green MEP Jean Lambert is active in the Wage Poverty campaign, speaking nationally on the need for an increased state pension. She is also pushing for EU legislation to extend full-time employment rights to temporary staff. And our MEPs have campaigned for a binding legal framework for corporate social responsibility.

Closer to home, Greens on councils are doing everything from backing smoke-free environments to promoting local nappy laundry schemes; from building community centres to championing local art and performance. Meanwhile, the parliamentarians in Scotland have been improving the Nature Conservation Bill, so that when we finally do get out of the office, there is still some nature left to enjoy.

# WHY NOT JOIN US?

There are now over 150 local Green Party groups around England and Wales. They are making a difference in their community and serving on local councils. They provide the foundation for our success at European and Westminster Parliament levels.

In Lancaster, for example, the Green Party have two members of the city council's cabinet and six other councillors. They organise community litter picks, support local campaigns and hold "Green Drinks", the "Green Feast", and "Green Fairs" at Christmas. As one old Labour Party member commented ruefully one Christmas: "The Labour Party doesn't do community any more". Greens do. The Lancaster Greens' eco-friendly community centre has been built on a poor council estate, without council funding from the reluctant Labour-run council. But because the Green councillors' elected status allows them to act as champions of the community, they found funding elsewhere.

Greens are making these differences up and down the county – but only with the help of people like yourself. Your time, or even just your generosity can help green shoots grow in your local area. Just £3 a month is enough to ensure you've helped put Green politics on the map. You can get involved, just as an armchair member, or if you intend to become more active. Take the first step and give generously. The government won't pay us to make these changes. It's only ever up to ordinary people like ourselves.



*Sister Green Parties operate in Scotland and Northern Ireland*



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