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# *foreword*

Business as usual, brought to you by the main political parties, has given us a series of linked economic, environmental and social crises. Why would you trust these same parties to sort the crises out? The state of Britain in May 2010 cries out for fresh thinking and new progressive voices.

What have the other parties got to offer?

The financial crisis has torn the veil from the Tories' 'compassionate conservatism'. They will let the market rip, roll back the State, and hope that the voluntary sector will pick up the pieces. It is hard to imagine a recipe more guaranteed to deepen inequality and destroy the planet than this – yet that is what David Cameron offers you.

New Labour has its back to the wall in the far corner of the last chance saloon. After thirteen years in power its fingerprints are all over the unjust and unsustainable economy that the new Government will inherit. New Labour is stimulating the economy through increasing consumption – exactly the wrong thing to do.

The Liberal Democrats – the 'nice party' – have just got nastier. The fig-leaf of higher taxes for the wealthy has gone, and Nick Clegg has imposed a 'the state is a problem' mentality on his party.

Unlike any of the other parties, we believe this is exactly the time to address the rising inequality which has so disfigured our society in recent years. We want to address the triple economic, environmental and social crises, and give every member of our society the opportunity to have a better life. Only the Green Party understands the need for a new economic and environmental settlement, in which our economy and our environment work with rather than against each other, for the benefit of all.

So I urge you to vote Green on May 6th for a fairer world.

**Caroline Lucas, Green Party Leader**

# *introduction*

The Green Party is the party of hope and radical change.

Years and years of politics as usual have given us broken communities and remote services, financial chaos and environmental breakdown.

***But there is an alternative: a transforming green alternative.***

Across the country voters have already found out that the Green Party is different to all the rest.

Over 100 Green councillors have been elected in recent years. Green policies link strong local communities and public services, fairness and sustainability. The two Green Party London Assembly Members, Jenny Jones and Darren Johnson, have ensured huge investments in communities and services, and continue to defend these in the face of cuts from the current Conservative Mayor. The two Green Party MEPs, Caroline Lucas and Jean Lambert, have led the cause of equality and sustainability in Brussels. In Scotland, Green Party MSPs have done the same in the Scottish Parliament. Everywhere, Greens get elected and stay elected.

***Now it's Westminster's turn.***

This General Election is a historic opportunity to turn local, London, Euro and Scottish success into UK success. For the first time ever, the Green Party can break the Westminster monopoly and take a creative, radical and independent new voice into Parliament to address the unprecedented times we are in. This is a breakthrough moment, and you can be part of it.

***Throughout Britain voters have learned that the only wasted vote is a vote you don't believe in.***

New thinking is needed for the challenges and opportunities we face. There are three defining crises of our time: a debt-fuelled economy teetering on the edge of collapse and haemorrhaging jobs, massive inequality of income and assets, and catastrophic climate change. We need to tackle these crises together, and only the Green Party knows how.

We have been consistently ahead of our time, calling for what was needed before others even recognised the need. We've been proven right time and time again about the threats facing the country and this, our one and only world. Now is the time to trust us to deal with those threats, and lead the way to a better life for us all.

We are living in a time of great change and therefore great opportunity. The world is opening up and the old rules are being thrown to the four winds. If we believe in something better, now is a time when we can actually achieve it. Our challenge to you is to dare to dream the better future and to work with us to make it happen.

***At the heart of our joined-up approach is the Green New Deal.***

Ever since coining the phrase with her colleagues in the Green New Deal group of economists in the summer of 2008, Green MEP and Party Leader Caroline Lucas has led the way on this ground-breaking proposal to tackle the three crises of economic collapse, inequality and climate change. The Green New Deal is all about investing massively to create jobs and move towards a sustainable, zero-carbon economy.

Private enterprise can't bring the jobs and the people together, so the Government has to act, just as the US Government did in the 1930s, to train and employ unemployed people to do the work required.

Green MPs will fight to move the management of money from the casino capitalism underlying the current collapse to productive, useful investment. This will relieve unemployment and kick-start the move towards a zero-carbon energy system. It will stabilise the economy generally, lead to new and attractive ways of investing personal savings and pension funds, create more fairness, and bring back a sense of purpose to an economy characterised by drift, profiteering and consumerism.

Britain is at a crossroads. More financial chaos and environmental breakdown, or policies that make good social and environmental sense? Cutbacks in public services, or good-quality local schools and health services? More relentless materialism or a fairer, more satisfying, more affordable life?

***It's your choice.***

Trust the Green Party, and together we can make it happen.

## *our vision*

***Some will tell you that ‘green’ issues are a luxury in times of economic hardship. Wrong. Green policies are essential if we are to get out of this mess and create a sustainable and fair economy.***

***Our vision is of a fairer society that meets everyone’s needs, and an economy working with nature rather than against it. Of a more equal society. Of higher incomes for pensioners rather than bonuses for bankers. Of quieter, cleaner, safer streets. Of stronger local communities and the space for children to play and learn. Of healthier, safer, better food and the quality time to appreciate it. Of a natural world left more to itself.***

***This dream is achievable. All it requires is political courage – and popular democratic backing for that courage. Only the Greens want to see the back of rampant inequality, deregulation and laissez-faire. Only the Greens have understood the lessons of the financial crisis, and know what to do about it. Only the Green Party has a vision for Britain that will see a better quality of life for everyone.***

## 1

# *The Economy:*

## *Making it fair, making it work*

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### **The Green Party has plans to put the country back to satisfying and meaningful work**

What we've seen over the past year is an economy in turmoil, leaking jobs and eating into pensions and savings. It's so obvious that business as usual doesn't work. We have to build a sustainable economy and society, otherwise there's no future for anyone. Cutting investment now could lead to a double-dip recession, while the Green New Deal promises job security and economic stability.

The financial system of Britain and the world has grown out of all proportion to the real economy it is supposed to serve. By building on easy credit and financial speculation, it has lost touch with its physical underpinnings. Casino capitalism has become more important than making things and providing services. Houses have become speculative investments instead of somewhere to live.

Part of being sustainable is being more equal. An unsustainable, polluting economy affects us all, but it's worse for the poor than the rich – the poor live where the air and water is most polluted, the environment least healthy.

We have one planet, and the best way to take care of it is to share its riches more fairly. No one must be so poor that they don't have a stake in the eventual success of our efforts. We need policies for both sustainability and fairness – one doesn't work without the other. That is why we argue for the same carbon quota for all, better pensions and free insulation – because they are fair, and good for both people and planet. We must use resources wisely and divide them up fairly.

Inequality in British society begins at birth, or even before, with low birth-weight and infant and child mortality significantly higher among economically disadvantaged groups. Around one in five children continue to live in low-income households. Children from these groups are less likely to complete GCSEs and A levels, and to attend universities.

### *Inequality is bad for all of us*

New evidence, published by the Equality Trust ([www.equalitytrust.org.uk](http://www.equalitytrust.org.uk)), has shown that inequality is associated with many social ills, and equality with success. The points below are not just the sentimental prejudices of left-leaning politicians, they are facts based on scientific evidence.

- People trust each other more in more equal countries.
- More students drop out of high school in the more unequal US states.
- Children in the more equal US states score better in maths and reading.
- More equal countries have fewer people in prison – the US imprisons people at 14 times the rate of Japan.
- If you had poor parents, you are more likely to become rich in equal societies like Norway, and much less likely in the unequal US. And social mobility has declined in Britain in recent years.
- Unequal societies are more violent, with more homicide.
- Fewer teenagers become pregnant in more equal societies.
- Child well-being, as measured by the UNICEF Index, is best in more equal countries. Among rich countries it is worst in the UK.
- More equal countries recycle more of their waste.
- It's not just the poor people in more equal countries that benefit from greater equality; rich people in more equal societies do better than rich people in less equal societies.

And inequality also makes you ill; for more on health and inequality see the box on page 23.

Minority ethnic groups, lone parents, and people without formal qualifications have an unemployment rate of about double that for the total working-age population. The richest 1 per cent of households own more than 20 per cent of Britain's wealth. The gross inequalities continue throughout life, with around 25 per cent of pensioners living in poverty, and significant disparities in life expectancy, particularly among men, associated with income. And inequality has risen in recent years, most steeply under Mrs Thatcher's Conservatives since 1979, before declining a little in the early years of New Labour, only to rise again in recent years.

Inequality is not just wrong in itself. It makes us ill, causes us to die earlier, raises crime levels, depresses educational achievement, and creates stress and mental illness. New research has shown that more equal societies do better, and that equality – rather than simple average wealth or even lack of poverty – is the main route to a better society for everyone, rich and poor.

Underpinning all this is green economics, which is the only realistic economics. Greens understand that we need a one-planet economy that uses no more than the resources it gives us, not the fantasy multi-planet economy of

the other political parties that will one day hit the buffers with a catastrophic crash. The very way we measure economic ‘success’ today shows the bankruptcy of business as usual. ‘Gross Domestic Product’ measures all the economic activity in Britain – even the money spent on picking up the pieces of our unfair and unsustainable society. Prisons and pollution are as ‘productive’ as schools and sanitation in the world of conventional economics.

We want to improve the welfare of people and the health of the planet rather than the size of the economy. Because size matters: if the economy gets too big it will grow beyond its ecological limits. Now we are up against a very challenging limit: the capacity of the atmosphere and the Earth to absorb our greenhouse gas emissions without overheating. Only the Green Party is willing to face up properly to these limits, and to say that limitless economic growth without thinking about the consequences is a dangerous and careless fantasy.

There is much work to be done to create a secure and stable economy. The transition to a sustainable, fair economy will create hundreds of thousands of jobs in manufacturing, design, building and engineering. And there is much work that is already being done but not yet recognised, like work in the home. Carers should be rewarded for the work they do. Job-sharing, part-time work, and time off for study or recharging should not be the poverty trap they are under the current benefits system.

In sum, we will create a fair and sustainable economy through redistributing income and assets, reclaiming the tools of economic management, and freeing the diverse talents of our citizens.

## *managing the economy*

### **Short-term management of the economy that returns to the basics – sound money, less debt, responsible lending, proper regulation and no risky financial instruments**

Ending unemployment and repairing the Government’s finances are obviously currently top of the list. But we must also make important long-term changes to rebuild the economy: move to a zero-carbon economy, move away from an obsession with growth, and build a more equal society.

Unlike the Tories, we believe that this will require considerable Government intervention, both in terms of direct Government expenditure and in measures directed at the monetary system. Unlike Labour, we would not focus on encouraging consumption but protect public services, spend on investment in the new green economy and create greater equality. Labour’s approach will sow the seeds of future crises by encouraging crippling debt and unsustainable consumption.

We believe that only the following policies will deliver the equitable, stable and sustainable economy we so badly need:

- **Invest in the green economy now** – and if, in certain vital sectors such as energy generation, the private sector is acting too slowly and on an insufficient scale, then the Government must take the lead.



- Our programme **has to be paid for**, and we accept that the Government borrowing of 12% of GDP is unsustainable. Like the Government, we would aim to more than halve the deficit by 2013, and the programme of taxation and spending in this manifesto is designed to achieve that.
- **Raise taxation** from its current very low level of only 36% of GDP – for example it exceeded 40% in all Mrs Thatcher’s years in office. The fiscal gap is not caused by too much public spending but by taxation dropping to unacceptably low levels.
- Ensure that **those most able to pay bear their fair share**, and introduce a much-needed increase in **environmental taxation**.
- **Regulate the financial sector more strictly**, preferably at the international or EU level, but if necessary just in the UK. In particular, separate retail from investment banking.
- Support new institutions like a **green investment bank** and local community banks in the financial sector, and new ways of investing in the green economy, such as **green national savings bonds**.
- Reverse the trend towards an economy ever more dependent on financial services, and build a new and sustainable **agricultural and manufacturing base** to the economy.
- **Protect basic public services**, which are the foundation of an equitable society. Modest efficiency savings may be possible (perhaps £2–3bn, or 0.25% over the entire public service each year, and in particular by improving energy efficiency in schools and hospitals), but nothing on the scale relied upon by the other parties to make their figures add up. Cuts to health and education services will hit the poorest and most vulnerable first.

We must help the poorest pensioners and children in particular.

- Abandon gross domestic product as the key **measure of economic success**, and seek instead to increase our overall welfare.
- Encourage greater sharing of intellectual property by **reducing, but not abandoning, levels of patent and copyright protection**. In particular we would legalise **peer to peer copying** where it is not done as a business and make it impossible to patent broad software and cultural ideas.

## *work and jobs*

### **Working to live, not living to work**

The loss of jobs that has gone with mismanagement of an unsustainable economic model is a criminal waste of talent and aspiration, and has turned life into a daily struggle for survival for millions of our fellow citizens. As top bankers continue to pocket your money in the form of unearned bonuses, factories, firms and farms are forced to lay off more and more workers by the day, week and month.

This must end. Our major and immediate priority is the creation of an extra million jobs and training places within a full year of operation of our major investment plan, the Green New Deal. This would address both the employment and the environmental problems. It would consist of a package of measures

*Our energy policy is not just the best for climate change – it also produces the most jobs:*

ENERGY SOURCE	JOB PER YEAR PER TERAWATT HOUR
Wind	918–2400
Coal	370
Gas and oil	250–265
Nuclear	75

But the real winner for creating jobs is energy efficiency, like our proposals for insulation. It has been estimated that an energy efficiency increase of 1% a year, sustained over a ten-year period, would create 200,000 additional jobs in the EU sustained over ten years.

described throughout this manifesto, including workforce training, investment in renewables, public transport, insulation, social housing and waste management.

We would also:

- **Offer Green workforce training** and an environmental community programme including training courses for jobs in energy conservation and renewable energy, with grant-funded conversion courses for skilled engineers from other industries. We would spend £5bn in the next year on creating 350,000 training places, offering opportunities to 700,000 unemployed people, in particular the young unemployed.
- **Work towards a 35-hour working week.** Full time UK employees work the longest average hours in Europe: 43.5 hours, as against 38.2 in France and 39.9 in Germany. A 35-hour week will both improve the work/life balance, help to share out work, and be part of a just transition to a low-carbon economy.

- Resist any weakening of the **Working Time Directive**.

- Promote **gender equality**. The pay gap per hour between men and women remains as high as 38% for part-time workers; retired women's incomes are typically 40% less than men's. Our policies on Citizen's Pension, childcare and non-discrimination at work will help to fill these gaps.

- Introduce **equal pay audits** for larger employers
- Promote legal changes to make it much easier for women to take **equal pay cases** to court, and to allow women to take such cases as a group.
- Require **40% of board members** of larger companies to be female within five years.
- Introduce more generous **maternity and paternity leave**.
- Spend £1bn a year on enhancing and expanding **Sure Start Children's Centres**, creating 10,000 jobs. Sure Start has been

## *Green councillors in Norwich defend local services*

Working with local residents, Norwich South Parliamentary candidate Adrian Ramsay and other Norwich Green Councillors successfully campaigned to stop the County Council from closing the Sure Start nursery on Wolfe Road in Thorpe Hamlet. Sure Start centres provide vital support for parents and their young children. Greens are working to protect them from further cuts.

proved to make a real difference to the lives of some of our poorest children.

- Support a **National Minimum Wage that is a living wage**, at 60% of net national average earnings (currently this would mean a minimum wage of £8.10 per hour). This policy will lead to an estimated saving of up to £6bn a year in Tax Credits, and further savings not quantified here on Council Tax and Housing Benefits.
- Work towards ensuring that the **maximum wage** in any organisation is no more than ten times the minimum wage in that organisation.
- Ensure that no one is **forced to retire** before they want to.
- **Reject workfare** and forcing unemployed people into unsuitable jobs by removing benefits.
- Radically increase the amounts people on benefits can earn, perhaps to the equivalent of 6 hours work at the minimum wage ('**earnings disregards**'), without having their benefits withdrawn. Participating honestly in such part-time work is the best route back into employment.
- Uphold the right to join or form a **trade union**, to obtain union representation and to take industrial action, and repeal anti-trade union laws.
- Support unions in their roles as **health and safety and environment representatives**.
- Ensure that **workers' rights** apply to part-time, casual workers and the self-employed, and from the first day of employment.
- **Oppose discrimination in the workplace**, whether on the on grounds of sex, race, family status or responsibilities, disability, sexual orientation, religious belief or age.
- Value and protect **carers**, and volunteers.
- Support moves towards **workplace democracy** and ensure that workers and former workers control their pension funds.
- Support a greater role for **mutuals**, like **worker co-operatives**. In particular, prevent further existing mutuals from being changed into companies, consider returning Northern Rock to the mutual sector and introduce a process whereby in certain circumstances an organisation can be turned into a mutual if its workers or customers wish to do so. A first application for this latter process would be **football clubs**.

# welfare

## Let's start with decent pensions

After 13 years of Labour rule we still have unacceptable levels of poverty. It is particularly offensive that 25% of pensioners and 20% of children still live in poverty. Our creaking welfare system gets ever more complex as it attempts to fill the gaps, yet it often fails to reach those entitled to benefits but who do not claim them.

In the longer run a fundamental reform is needed, where most of the complicated benefits, means tests and qualifying contributions are swept away, and all citizens receive as of right a basic income – a Citizen's Income. The cost of this would be recovered through a more progressive income tax system. We recognise that with the public finances in their present state this is not the time to introduce such a scheme. However, we can make a start by helping the two vulnerable groups above, with a decent Citizen's Pension scheme and a major increase in Child Benefit.

Our present pension system is a disgrace. We pay an inadequate state pension (only £97.65 per week for a full state pension for a single

person), the level of which is still not linked to average earnings (and which is not up-rated at all for UK pensioners living abroad in certain countries). It depends on an individual's contribution record, discriminating in particular against women, but also against others with poor contribution records such as those with poor health or a broken work record, or who have been carers. This is in theory topped up by means-tested Pension Credits, which discriminate against anyone with very modest savings, creating a massive disincentive to save to provide for yourself. As many as one in four pensioners live in poverty.

## Introducing a Citizen's Pension

We need a new system of Citizen's Pensions. The Citizen's Pension would be paid unconditionally to all pensioners in the UK (independent of contribution record) at the rate of the official poverty line (currently £170pw for someone living alone, and the rate would be £300pw for couples), and would be linked to average earnings. It would also be paid to, and up-rated for, the one million pensioners living abroad. Housing Benefit and disability benefits would continue to be paid. The demeaning Pension Credits would be abolished.

### *Defending sheltered housing residents against service cuts*

In December 2008, Brighton and Hove's Green Councillors joined forces with local residents in defence of services provided to those living in Sheltered Housing. As a result, Brighton & Hove City Council was forced to drop plans to switch to a 'floating' style of support for sheltered housing tenants, which would have seen a reduction in the number of 'on-site' scheme managers.

## *How would we pay for Citizen's Pensions*

There are about 12 million pensioners living in the UK and a further 1 million living abroad.

Paying a single rate of £170 per week and a couples rate of £300 per week will cost £110 billion a year.

But the basic state pension already costs £56 billion, and when certain other specific pensioner benefits like the Pensions Credits paid to those of pension age are abolished the total saving will be almost £70 billion.

That leaves £40 billion to find. Abolishing tax relief on pension contributions raises £20 billion, and a further £19 billion would come from abolishing employer national insurance contributions and employee National Insurance rebates associated with pension schemes.

The final £1 billion will come from increased income tax receipts from pensioners. Because the number of pensioners is gradually rising, and we would link the pension level to average earnings, Citizen's Pension will cost a further £0.8 billion by 2013–14. This figure is included in our figures for general taxation.

There will also be savings (not quantified here) on Council Tax Benefits and Housing Benefits.

And it is right too to do something significant about child poverty. Rather than add further to the complex and means tested Child Tax Credits system, we would simply more than double the existing and universal Child Benefit payment, by paying an extra £20pw, which would be taxable, for each child. This would cost a further £14bn per year, much of which would be recovered by increased taxation on the most wealthy.

## **A fair deal for social carers**

A vast proportion of social care in the UK is provided by unpaid family carers who save the NHS £87bn a year. Carer's Allowance (CA) is an income-capping straitjacket. CA paid to family carers aged 16 and over is the 'Cinderella Benefit': £53.10 for a 35-hour week minimum commitment is no real compensation.

Child carers under the age of 16 receive nothing at all. They are perhaps our most vulnerable child labourers, often working very long hours and bearing emotional burdens far beyond their years. These children receive no financial support and in many cases work longer hours than their older counterparts. Their schooling and education are often compromised and some simply never have the chance to 'play'.

The Green Party is committed to:

- A more **generous** Carer's Allowance, increased by 50% to £80pw.
- Offering **support** to people who want to give care, recognising their pivotal position while increasing the amount of care available.
- **Healing the rift** between adults' and children's social services that was created by New Labour.

- Providing more **short breaks** to families, including disabled people or those with long-term illnesses. Such early intervention schemes have been shown to save money by preventing crises.
- Improving **working conditions** for professional staff at all levels, paying for preparation time and follow-through, as well as contact time, and providing more in-service training to help cope with the vast spectrum of service user requirements.
- Instituting **workforce health checks** as advocated by UNISON.
- Repealing the oppressive **Welfare Reform Act (2009)** as a prequel to supporting people through lifelong development for their own and the planet's well-being.
- Cancelling the **DWP benefit entitlement** assessment contracts with private sector.
- Restoring the link between state benefits and **earnings**.
- Giving carers cheaper **local travel** on bus, trains, tube and trams.

## *taxation*

### **Promoting fairness, sustainability and citizenship**

This manifesto is not an uncosted wish list. It is a practical and realistic plan to move towards a more equal society, fight climate change and protect public services.

Unlike the other parties, we argue that increases in taxation for the better off are required. This is no bad thing in itself. Taxes are the fees we pay as citizens for services that are best provided collectively. They are also an instrument for fairness. The corrosive belief that taxes are no better than a necessary evil, nurtured by successive Governments over the past 30 years, is at the root of the difficulties in financing public services during the same period.

So the Green Party wants to rehabilitate progressive taxation. This requires two things: raising taxes fairly and explaining them honestly. Labour's plans depend upon wishful thinking about how quickly the economy and tax revenues will recover. They are unwilling to tell you about the cuts and tax increases coming later. The Conservatives will cut public spending, but have not put forward a plan that adds up to remotely enough cuts without tax increases to cut the deficit.

In contrast, the Green Party is open about what we would cut, what we would defend, and about the fact that we need to raise taxation from 36 per cent of GDP in 2009–10 to around 45 per cent in 2013. This would halve the gap between Government

expenditure and revenues by 2013–14 (as the Labour Government proposes) and progressively close the gap thereafter.

We favour a Robin Hood Tax – a tax on financial transactions (see page 47) – but because that would work best with wide international agreement we do not rely on it to fill the gap in the Government’s finances, though we believe there is also scope to act unilaterally by introducing a tax on sterling foreign exchange transactions, and that the UK should demonstrate global leadership.

Our tax changes come in two groups – those that close the gap between rich and poor, and those that mainly discourage environmentally damaging activity.

## TAXES TO REDUCE INEQUALITY

We support a special tax on **bankers’ bonuses**, though we would make it permanent. Also, no one in one of the wholly or partly state-owned banks should get a bonus of more than £25,000. And our changes to pension tax reliefs (see box on page 13) will radically reduce the huge advantages the present pension system gives to the most wealthy. But this is only a beginning. We would also:

- Introduce the new higher rate of **income tax at 50% for incomes above £100,000**, raising £2.3bn pa.

- Abolish the **upper limit for National Insurance contributions**, raising £9.1bn in 2010.
- Help lower earners by **raising the lower National Insurance limit** to the personal allowance rate (which is £6,475 a year, or £124.52 a week), costing £3.9bn.
- Help lower earners by **reintroducing the 10% tax band and the 22p basic rate**, costing £14.9bn.
- **Increase the main rate of Corporation Tax** from 28% back to 30% and reduce the small firms rate back to 20%, altogether raising £1.4bn.
- **Raise the Capital Gains Tax** rate from 18% to the recipient’s highest income tax rate (that is 22%, 40% or 50%), raising £1bn.
- **Reform inheritance tax**, so that the level of taxation depends on the wealth of the recipient rather than that of the deceased, raising £3bn by 2013. This will encourage people to distribute their property widely.
- **Crack down on tax havens** and other methods of tax evasion and avoidance, raising £10bn in 2010 rising to £13bn by 2013. In particular press for a transparent international accounting standard that requires companies to report on a country-by-country basis so that their profits can be located and taxed.
- **Reform Council Tax** by making people in more expensive houses pay more and those in smaller ones less, adding an additional band at the top for the biggest houses, raising £1.7bn. In the long run we favour moving to a system of Land Value Tax, where the level of taxation depends on the rental value of the land concerned.

## TAXES TO PROTECT THE ENVIRONMENT

We would reform the tax system to put far greater emphasis on taxes that discourage environmentally or other damaging behaviour. If these changes were implemented the share of environmental taxation in total taxes would double from about 7 per cent now to 14 per cent in 2013. Some of these proposals involve raising existing taxes, some are new taxes and some modify existing exemptions and reliefs to achieve environmental purposes. In the long run we would aim to replace VAT by environmental taxes, but the current state of the public finances does not allow this in the short term.

We also recognise that some of these changes, for example on VAT or placing fuel duty on aviation, may involve international negotiation and cannot be introduced immediately.

We would:

- **Reintroduce the fuel duty escalator**, raising fuel duty by 8% per year. This will raise £2.2bn in 2010 rising to £10bn by 2013. In the longer run we would introduce a system of domestic carbon quotas.
- Modify the regime for **Corporation Tax Capital allowances** so that the allowances are only available for investment in sustainable technologies, raising £7bn in 2010 rising to £10bn by 2013.
- Introduce **VAT and fuel duty on aviation**, raising £7bn in 2010 and £10bn by 2013.
- Increase the rates for the **Climate Change Levy** and for **Landfill Tax**, raising £300m.

- **End the zero-rating of VAT** on new dwellings, putting them on a level with conversions and renovations of existing dwellings, raising £5bn in 2010 and £7.5bn by 2013.
- Tax plastic bags and other unnecessary **packaging**, raising perhaps £1bn by 2013.
- **Levy eco-taxes** on non-renewables or pollutants, in particular pesticides, organo-chlorines, nitrogen and artificial fertilisers and phosphates.
- Introduce new taxes on **use of water** by businesses and **waste heat** from power stations, raising £3bn by 2013.
- **Replace vehicle excise duty** by a new graduated purchase tax on vehicles that heavily penalises over-sized or over-powered vehicles. Overall this would be tax neutral.
- Make tax concessions on savings, such as ISAs, only available for investment in **sustainable technologies**, raising £1.8bn.
- **No longer offer zero VAT rating to financial services and betting duties**, which are of limited value to the real economy, raising £5.6bn by 2013.
- Gradually **increase alcohol and tobacco taxes** by about 50% to match anticipated increases in expenditures on the NHS, raising £1.4bn in 2010 rising to £5.6bn by 2013.

Taken together, these tax changes are sufficient to pay for the entire programme set out in this manifesto, and also to more than halve the deficit as a proportion of GDP by 2013, setting the economy on a path that will almost eliminate the deficit by the end of the Parliament. The details of how we would pay for our programme are set out in the box opposite.



## How we would pay for our programme

There are many spending commitments in this manifesto. And there are proposals for new and increased taxes (see pages 14–16). Does it all add up, and in particular will they in total more than halve the deficit by 2013–14?

In summary terms, our plans, compared to those of the Labour Government (as announced in the Budget Report 2010), are as follows (all in 2010 real terms):

ITEM	2010 £ billions	2013 £ billions
1 Labour Government planned public expenditure	704	700
2 Labour Government anticipated tax receipts	541	617
3 Labour Government fiscal deficit to borrow*	163	82
4 Green Party proposed basic public expenditure	704	704
5 Net additions to public expenditure in this manifesto	72	80
6 Total Green Party proposed public expenditure**	776	784
7 Green Party anticipated tax receipts on existing Government tax plans	541	603
8 Net additional taxation proposed in this manifesto	73	112
9 Total Green Party proposed taxation†	614	714
10 Green Party proposed fiscal deficit to borrow‡	162	70

Notes: \*Item 1 – item 2. \*\*Item 4 + item 5. †Item 7 + item 8. ‡Item 6 – item 9. Figures might not add up exactly due to rounding. In item 7, the Green Party figure for tax receipts on existing tax policies in 2013 is lower than that for the Labour Government assumption in item 2 as we assume a lower rate of GDP growth. Notice that Green Party borrowing plans in item 10 are lower than the Labour government plans in item 3.

We would freeze basic Government spending at £704bn (item 4 above). Our programme of additional spending and selected cuts (set out below) would add £72bn in 2010 rising to £80bn in 2013 (item 5 above). We believe that the Government's projections for GDP growth are too high, and that tax receipts on existing policies in 2013 will be only £603bn (item 7 above), £14bn less than the Government's assumed £617bn (item 2 above).

On Government spending we have first of all a modest programme of savings totalling £20bn in 2010 rising to £28bn in 2013. We would save £8bn on defence in 2010 falling to £6bn in 2013 (including cutting Trident; see page 43), £1bn initially rising to £3bn on road-building (page 38), £2.5bn on ID cards and £0.5bn rising to £1.5bn on prisons (pages 24 and 26). We believe modest cumulative annual efficiency savings of 0.5% on 60% of Government spending are possible, saving £2.3bn in 2010 rising to £9.4bn in 2013. In addition our minimum wage policy would save about £6bn a year on tax credits throughout the period.

Apart from Citizen's Pension we have a programme of additional expenditure totalling £52bn rising to £64bn in 2013. The major items are a £20pw rise in Child Benefit (£14bn; page 13), investment in public transport (£4bn, rising to £5bn; page 38), social housing and right to rent (£4bn; page 20), elderly care (£3bn in 2010 rising to £8bn by 2013; page 22), renewables and insulation (£5bn rising to £10bn in 2013; pages 20, 35), an increase in the aid budget (£3bn in 2010 rising to £4.5bn; page 48), training and community programmes for the unemployed (£5bn, but unnecessary by 2013; page 10), investment in waste management (£3bn pa; page 26), abolition of higher education fees (£1.8bn in 2010, but £3.6bn in later years; page 21), and about £9bn rising to £12bn for the 14 smaller commitments, all of which involve £1bn or less in 2010.

In terms of public expenditure, Citizen's Pension will cost an extra £40bn rising to £44bn, so the overall increase in public expenditure will be £40bn (Citizen's Pension) plus £52bn (gross cost of manifesto) less £20bn (public expenditure savings), or £72bn (as in item 5 above). The comparable figure for 2013 is £80bn.

On taxation our proposals are set out on pages 14 to 16, where it is clear that together with the tax changes on Citizen's Pension these proposals will add £73bn in 2010 and £112bn in 2013 (item 8 above).

## 2

*Everyday Life*

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*local living*

The quality of our lives depends a great deal on the quality of our local services. None of us wants to travel miles to go to school or to the doctor. Services must be accessible. This means they must be easy and affordable to reach by public transport – and within walking distance in urban areas. It also makes environmental sense to have good local services. Less travel means less carbon.

We all live in local communities of one sort or another. Our communities are where we take action when we want to do things, when we want to change things, when we want to make a difference. This is why the Green Party believes that issues should be decided at a local level whenever possible. Decentralise and relocalise. Trust citizens to make the change.

Key services must be free at the point of delivery. The Green Party believes that we should pay for these services with a taxation system that promotes fairness and rewards behaviour that's good for society and good for the environment.

The Green Party will reverse the trend towards the liberalisation, privatisation and deregulation of public services and utilities. Services must be easily available to everyone who needs them. The poor and the vulnerable suffer most when they are far away or too expensive, but we are all affected by the undermining of the social fabric and common culture that good public services represent. The Private Finance Initiative (PFI) in particular has been a giant scheme of outdoor relief for private contractors, equivalent in folly to buying your house on a credit card. We would end it.

The Green Party opposes the trend towards bigger schools, hospitals, councils and prisons, and more centralised surgeries and Post Offices. Many so-called efficiency savings are bought

## *Lewisham Deptford candidate Councillor Darren Johnson prevents social service cuts*

Greens have campaigned hard to highlight and oppose any attempts to cut services to vulnerable people within Lewisham. In 2007, they managed to get £1.8m of cuts reversed and persuaded the Mayor to reject the same proposals in 2008.

A Green MP in Lewisham Deptford would have even greater influence in fighting cuts.

at a high social cost: isolation, inaccessibility, impersonality, remoteness. They also make our communities less able to cope with change. Communities and services must be on a human scale. Size matters. Quality local services are much more important than having a phony choice between a number of distant ones.

## *services*

### **Promoting localism, efficiency and access**

We would:

- Reopen those **Post Offices** that misguided Government policy has shut down, and eventually increase their number. We would set aside £1bn per year to subsidise the local Post Office network.
- Encourage a **new, local and mutual financial sector**, based on trust rather than greed, and including **community banks**, credit unions, local exchange schemes and local currencies.

We would provide initial funding of £2.5bn over the next Parliament to assist communities in setting up such a network.

- **End ‘contracting out’ and the Private Finance Initiative (PFI)**. Restore the idea of commitment to public trades and industries. Dedicated staff providing a public service are much more likely to deliver a good service than agency staff with poor work contracts and a high turnover.
- **Support local shops** through planning policies including business conservation areas, ensuring basic shops are available within walking distance in all urban areas and restricting the power of supermarkets.
- Preserve **smaller local** schools and libraries, hospitals and other health facilities.
- Ensure that public transport provides **access** to local facilities.
- Support **local markets** giving access to **local food**.
- Encourage **local live performance in the arts** by moving funding from the regional to the local level and modifying regulations so that small-scale live performance in pubs and similar venues is not stifled.

# housing

## Promoting affordability and sustainability

We would:

- Resume direct investment in **council and other social housing** and allow local authorities to use receipts from sales to fund new affordable accommodation. In particular, while the building trade remains depressed because of the recession we would provide £2bn in 2010 rising to £4bn in 2011 to local authorities to expand social housing, mainly through conversion and renovation, and create 80,000 jobs.
- There are about one million **empty homes**. Halve this number through empty property use orders.
- Provide **more rights for homeless people**, giving local authorities the same duties with regard to single people and childless couples as to families, and ending the practice of declaring people 'intentionally homeless'.
- Take steps to ensure that **development is more evenly distributed** across the whole of the country, so reducing pressure on housing in the South East in particular.
- Minimise encroachment onto undeveloped '**greenfield sites**' wherever possible by reusing previously developed sites that have fallen into disuse .
- End the right to buy and introduce the **right to rent**. People facing severe difficulties with paying their mortgage and facing repossession should have a right to rent their existing home as council housing, analogous

but opposite to the Tory 'right to buy'.

We would make up to £2bn per annum available to local authorities to support 'right to rent.'

- Introduce a **free home insulation** programme for all homes that need it, with priority for pensioners and those living in fuel poverty, aiming to insulate 4 million homes every year. Such a programme would cost £2bn in 2010 rising to £4bn a year and create 80,000 jobs.
- Introduce incentives totalling £2bn per annum to encourage homes to become more **energy self-sufficient** by aiming for 1,000,000 solar roofs, and support generous feed-in tariffs for micro-generation, creating 40,000 jobs in the installation industries.
- **Abolish standing charges** on fuel bills and set tariffs to favour smaller consumers.
- Set building regulations to require **excellent energy standards** on a points-based system, which will cover embodied energy of building materials, energy used in construction, energy consumption in use, on-site energy generation and use of heat distribution networks.
- Increase the tax-free amount on the '**Rent a**

### *Greens have real experience of running a free insulation scheme*

Green Councillors in Kirklees worked in partnership with energy companies to provide free insulation for households in Kirklees, Yorkshire, in a scheme that has created more than 128 jobs and new training facilities. The scheme cost £20m over three years, and aims to insulate 40,000–60,000 homes in total.

**Room' scheme** from £4,250 to £9,000 a year. This would reduce repossessions, provide more affordable housing and make better use of the existing housing stock.

- Support **self-build** social co-operatives.
- Accept that climate change will mean that some housing cannot be protected from **flooding** in a sustainable way, and assist financially those whose homes become uninhabitable. Also invest £1bn in sustainable flood defences and sustainable drainage systems, creating 20,000 jobs, and ensure that insurance is available for flooding.
- Oppose new arm's length management organisations and ensure genuine **tenant participation** in existing ones.
- Ensure that **new housing proposals** are based on independent housing needs surveys. Commercial house builders and their representatives should not be involved in the process.

## *education*

### **Promoting free, public learning**

Education should be at the heart of communities, and should promote social and emotional well-being, equality, inclusion and responsibility. Schools need more freedom to frame the curriculum around the needs and interests of the young people in the school. There should be an emphasis on pupil-centred learning, which caters for different learning styles, interests and needs.

### *Saving school playing fields in Norwich*

Sport at school needs playing fields, too often under threat from developers. Norwich Green Party and Norwich South candidate Adrian Ramsay have successfully campaigned to save school playing fields from being sold for development. Greens played a key role in the campaign to save playing fields at Hewett School and Blackdale Middle School.

We would:

- Ensure most children are able to attend a **good local school** with admissions policies decided locally and applying to all schools.
- Move gradually to **smaller class sizes** by spending a further £500 million on 15,000 more teachers to get classes down to an **average of 20 pupils** by the end of the Parliament.
- Defend existing **smaller schools** and create more smaller schools. Large secondary schools in particular are alienating, and the Government's current plan to rebuild all secondary schools offers the perfect opportunity to do so on a more human scale.
- Phase in the **abolition of student tuition fees** in higher education.
- Gradually expand care for those **younger than school age** over the period.
- **Move towards ending the need for private education** by creating a programme of voluntary assimilation of private schools into the state sector. Schools that remain in the private sector would have charitable status removed and would pay all relevant taxes, such as VAT.

- **Phase out City Academies** and Trust Schools. It is wrong to allow business and other outside organisations to have too great an influence over schools.
- Let teachers teach – **abolish** the remaining SATS tests, and give schools and teachers more freedom over the curriculum they teach.
- Provide a full half day a week of inviting **physical activity** for every child, and at least one day a year **learning** in the natural environment.
- Provide **free school meals** for all – with locally sourced or fair-trade and (where possible) organic food, and with a vegetarian option. This will encourage healthy eating, combat obesity, improve concentration and end the stigma associated with free school meals. There can be few better ways of spending up to £2bn a year, only a fraction of the amount spent on bonuses in the city.
- Introduce children to **renewable technologies at school** by ensuring that most schools get the bulk of their energy from on-site renewable sources.
- Where **parents** choose to **educate their children at home** this would be supported by Local Authorities, which would work to ensure that all young people have a broad and diverse education of a high quality.

# *health*

## **Restoring national health**

**Compassion** in healthcare and the **prevention** of illness should be at the forefront of our healthcare service. We would:

- Maintain a **publicly funded, publicly provided** health service, and oppose NHS privatisation and treating healthcare as a market.
- **Decentralise healthcare responsibility** to local government, ensure that minimum service levels and national guidelines are provided to prevent a postcode lottery, and oppose further health service centralisation.
- **Keep the health service free** – abolish prescription charges, reintroduce free eye tests and NHS dental treatment for all, and ensure NHS chiropody is widely available.
- In particular, maintain the principle of a free NHS by implementing in England and Wales the scheme that provides **free social care to the elderly** in Scotland. If the Scots can do it, so can the rest of us. This would be phased in, costing about £3bn in 2010 rising to £8bn pa, and could create 120,000 jobs.
- Ensure that **all cost-effective treatments are available** to all patients who need them.
- **Patient safety** is essential – to improve this we will regulate all healthcare practitioners and therapists.
- Ensure that all medicines meet **safety standards**, are properly labelled with ingredients and have information on side-effects.
- Make available on the NHS **complementary medicines** that are cost-effective and have been

## *Prevention is better than cure, and part of prevention is greater equality*

The Green Party believes in a much stronger emphasis on prevention of ill health, via living healthier lives and greater equality. This shows how, unlike other parties, our policies are woven together into a coherent whole.

We cannot have an effective preventive approach, and thus a long-term-thinking 'health' service, unless we encourage healthier eating, more exercise, a lower-stress, slower-living society, a serious reduction in environmental pollutants, and greater access to tranquil countryside. And we recognise the connection between mental and physical well-being.

Simply making our society more equal will improve our health, without spending a penny extra on the NHS. Life expectancy, infant mortality, low birth-weight and self-rated health are worse in more unequal societies. Mental illness is much more common in more unequal countries. Drug addiction is more common in more unequal societies. Obesity is less of a problem in more equal societies like Japan and worst in the most unequal ones like the US.

Better health is not a matter of ever-increasing spending on the NHS. A surer route, which can't be disrupted by the need to bail out bankers, is to support simple things like good food, less competition and less stress.

shown to work. More NHS dental care rather than the mass **fluoridation** of drinking water.

- Provide accessible, **local community health centres** that provide a wide range of services, including out-of-hours care, and are an additional tier of healthcare rather than a replacement for your GP.
- **End phony patient choice.** For most of us patient choice is much less important than getting good treatment at our local hospital or health centre – which is often, for many, the only practical choice.
- **End mixed-sex accommodation** in hospitals.
- Oppose a **two-tier health service.**

The quality of your care should not depend on the depth of your pocket.

- Treat patients with **dignity.** Patients have both rights and responsibilities – they are not customers who can come and go. Their dignity should be recognised, but they should also treat NHS staff with respect.
- Provide the **right to an assisted death** within a rigorous framework of regulation, and in the context of the availability of the highest level of palliative care.
- Support the **ban on smoking** in enclosed public spaces.
- Use **increased taxes on alcohol and tobacco** to fund overall real growth in the medium term of at least 1.2% per annum in the NHS budget.

## *Brighton Pavilion candidate Caroline Lucas tackles alcohol-related health and disorder problems*

For every 100,000 residents of Brighton, 36 will die from alcohol-related causes this year. Pressure from Brighton Pavilion candidate Caroline Lucas and Green councillors led to a new range of measures being taken by the council to protect people, and especially young people, from alcohol abuse. Now local pubs and off-licences have been formally requested to stop selling super-strength lager, to stop loss-leading practices and to adopt a 'Challenge 25' policy to curtail underage drinking.

## *crime*

Crime, and fear of crime, blight too many lives, especially in many of our poorest and most deprived neighbourhoods. No one should have to live in fear of street gangs, nor endure robberies or burglary, and shops should not be faced with constant shoplifting. Nor should we tolerate white-collar crime or internet fraud.

To deal with crime we have to address why it occurs and what to do when it does. On the causes of crime we must first recognise that there is more crime in more unequal societies, and that by making our society more equal in the ways set out in this manifesto we will also make it safer. Second, we must act on the fact that over half of all crime is caused one way or another by misuse of Class A drugs, mainly heroin or crack cocaine. Radical reform of our drug laws will massively cut crime. Making our streets safer through lower speed limits will foster community and indirectly cut crime. Finally, much crime is committed by young people, especially young men, and we need specifically to address this.

What to do after a crime has been committed is important too. Simply expensively imprisoning offenders, often without any remedial work, is worse than useless. The victim must come first, though, and we would introduce a system of restorative justice, where the onus is on the offender to restore the position of the victim as far as possible to where it was before the crime took place. Of course we accept that there will be some recalcitrant or violent criminals who will refuse this approach, and for them other options, leading up to imprisonment, will continue to be required.

### **Being safe, being secure**

To address the causes of crime we would:

- Treat **heroin and crack addiction as a health issue** and not wait for them to become a crime problem. We would offer treatments that may include prescription of heroin thus removing the cause of most petty drug-related crime carried out by the addicts and removing the market from heroin dealers.
- Concentrate police and customs resources on the **large-scale production**, importation and marketing of these drugs.



## Youth policy

- A doubling of the current investment in young people. This will mean an increase from the current £98 spent per person aged 13–19 per annum on out-of-school services to just under £200. This would come at an estimated cost of £1bn.
- The creation of 2000 *Young People's Centres* (YPCs). Dedicated spaces for young people to meet and be creative. The centres would also offer access to information and specialist support for teenagers in difficulty.
- The creation of a *national lead body* to regulate youth clubs and YPCs.
- A UK-wide *Young People's Executive Council* scheme will give representatives aged 11–17 (elected by voters aged 11–18) executive control over a small chunk of their local council's budget (£25,000), which will be a designated *youth fund*.
- Every young person under the age of 18 and in full time education should be entitled to *free off-peak bus fares*, to encourage public transport habits in young people early on with a view to making this a behaviour for life.
- *Raise the age of criminal responsibility to 14 years old*. Reform of the judicial system to create a strong statutory presumption against the imprisonment of young offenders.
- Fashion industry *ban on size 0 models* to reduce pressure on girls to conform to an unhealthy and unrealistic ideal.
- National youth *volunteering programme* for every young person under the age of 18, fostering intergenerational community cohesion, as well as generating money for the economy.

- Take the £4bn a year illicit trade in **cannabis** away from criminal street gangs, by decriminalising its possession, sale and production, and by introducing a properly regulated trade with clear age limits.
- Give **young people** better things to do by doubling expenditure on local authority youth services, spending a further £1bn pa on ensuring universal access to quality facilities for music, art, drama, dance and youth clubs, as well as sports.
- Restrict police use of random **stop and search** powers, which damage police and youth relations.
- Improve the design of our cities to provide **safer streets** and public spaces.
- Focus on crime prevention measures, including **more community policing under local democratic control**, more local police stations, and the return of bus conductors and others who have an important effect on social order.

- Save £2.5bn per annum by not having **ID cards**, which are an unnecessary invasion of our privacy and will do nothing to prevent crime and terrorism.
- Provide proper funding for **Women's Refuges** for victims of domestic violence.

After crimes have occurred we would:

- Look to establish **restorative justice** as a key feature of the UK criminal justice system. While denouncing the crime, this deals constructively with both the victim and the offender. As a result, we would drastically reduce the numbers sent to prison, saving up to £8bn over the next Parliament.
- Provide **reading and writing** courses for UK prisoners (two-thirds of UK prisoners have literacy skills below those of an 11-year-old).
- **Repair damage** done to public amenities and spaces promptly.
- Continue to oppose the use of the **death penalty** abroad.

## *waste*

### **Reduce, reuse – and only then recycle**

Government must provide the infrastructure to make it easy to do the right thing.

We would:

- Do the simple things like providing a **free compost bin** and composting advice for anyone who wants them.
- Allow councils to integrate locally the **domestic and commercial waste** systems.
- Oppose the **incineration** of waste, but encourage domestic composting.
- Almost **double spending** on recycling and waste disposal. We have to recognise that sophisticated waste management costs more than burying it in the ground. We would spend an extra £3bn pa, creating 60,000 jobs. Burying waste gives rise to both greenhouse gases and pollution, and is no longer acceptable.
- **Design** products and packaging with a view to what happens to them when they cease to be useful. We will use taxation on unnecessary packaging to discourage its use, and would be prepared to regulate the way things are made so as to prevent them entering the waste system.
- Aim to recycle 70% of domestic waste by 2015 as a move towards a **zero-waste** system. The Government provides the infrastructure, people do the recycling.

# *small business*

## **Promoting diversity**

We would:

- **Simplify PAYE** by aligning the lower National Insurance limit with the personal allowance and abolishing the upper limit.
- In the long run, aim to **merge National Insurance into Income Tax**.
- Make it illegal for a contract with a self-employed person to imply a pay rate below the **national minimum wage**.
- Amend **planning laws** to allow appropriate small businesses to operate in residential areas

and ensure all large new retail developments include spaces for small local businesses.

- Help small businesses cope with **regulation** and provide tailored advice on energy efficiency.
- Introduce a network of **local community banks**, which will provide, among other things, a new source of finance for small businesses.
- Use our proposals to revitalise the **Post Office** network (see page 19), in particular to help small businesses.
- Provide special help for small **rural** businesses.
- Introduce legislation to **penalise late payment**.
- Reduce **corporation tax** for small firms to 20% (see page 15 above).

### *Green councillor earns fairer rents deal for seafront traders*

After Conservative-led Brighton & Hove City Council hiked rent and other costs for many seafront businesses, members of the Seafront Business Association asked local Green Councillor Jason Kitcat for help. Through a Freedom of Information request Councillor Kitcat revealed a council deal with private chartered surveyors, who would receive a commission of 30 per cent on any rent increase they could negotiate with the seafront traders, on top of their fixed fee. As a result, the assessment of the majority of seafront rents has now been handed to a new in-house team; the result should be fairer rents for traders.

## 3

# *Citizens and Government*

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## *consumers and citizens, public and private*

### CONSUMERS

Most people living now are much richer than people living in 1950. But we haven't got any happier. Why not? Partly because evidence shows that, once we have a certain minimum income, what mainly concerns us is our position relative to everyone else. So if society is more equal we are happier; if it is unequal we want to live the lives of rich celebrities. And we are unhappy if we don't achieve our aims. So a growing material economy with increasing inequality, as we have had for the past thirty years, not only ruins the planet but also undermines well-being.

Of course money is vital, and too many people in Britain today don't have enough of it. That is why Green taxation and economics are aimed at making a more equal, as well as a more sustainable, society. But other things improve well-being too. Also important are family relationships, the quality of work, friends, the natural world, health and freedom. All these things require space and time – space and time that are increasingly unavailable in a society dedicated to getting and spending. A society less dedicated to material growth will not only avoid ecological collapse but also make us more content.

### CITIZENS

As citizens we think of the good of everyone and of the future, and not just what we think is good for ourselves, now. Creating a fair and

sustainable society is a job for government at all levels – but it is also a job for us as citizens. The Green Party will work towards sustainable consumption through the creation of a citizen culture as well as the more efficient use of resources.

A particular concern for the Green Party is to respect the right of future generations of citizens not to be disadvantaged by damage that this generation does to the environment. We must also support solidarity between existing generations, between young and old.

## PUBLIC AND PRIVATE

We would spearhead a revival in public spaces – libraries, parks, playgrounds. Fairness and sustainability require a public effort. Millions of unco-ordinated actions aimed at maximising individuals' private interest will not bring about the society we want and deserve. Only citizens, aided by a Green Government, can do that.

We would initiate a revolution in trust. We've got the location and balance of regulation wrong: banks are under-regulated and citizens are over-regulated. Citizens and workers are infantilised by health and safety, ground down by audit. The paraphernalia of surveillance costs a fortune and assumes we will behave badly unless we are threatened into behaving well. We believe this dog-whistle relationship with citizens is counterproductive. The Green Party will trust citizens and workers, not over-regulate them.

# *policies for citizenship*

## Promoting trust

We would:

- **Oppose ID cards.** They will not reduce or prevent crime. We also have grave concerns over the development of a national dataset, including detailed biometric data, which has potential for the infringement of civil liberties.
- **Free up information** – allow us to see the data they have on us. We believe that citizens should be entitled to access to information held by Government except where specifically restricted. Restrictions should protect the privacy of individual citizens and national security. Information on policy formulation, the conduct of public affairs, the environment and health and safety should be freely available.
- Reform the system of **parliamentary expenses** so that politics becomes a respected vocation, not mired in sleaze and scandal.

## Promoting equality, celebrating diversity

The Green Party aims to treat everyone equally and fairly. We will work to ensure respect for everyone whatever their ethnicity, gender, age, religious belief or non-belief, sexual orientation, class, size, disability or other status.

Here we use the example of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex (LGBTI) issues to illustrate this general policy in more detail. Other areas of discrimination are equally important and will have their own emphases.

## LGBTI ISSUES

We would:

- Amend the **Equalities Bill/Act** to provide explicit protection against harassment of LGBTI people.
- Require all police forces to have equality and diversity liaison officers whose remit is to tackle, and take preventive action on, **crimes against LGBTI people**, people from ethnic minorities (including refugees and asylum seekers) and disabled people.
- Legally target **incitement of hatred** on the grounds of gender identity and amend the Equality Bill/Act to provide explicit protection against harassment of LGBTI people.
- Open up **civil marriages and civil partnerships**, without discrimination, to both same-sex and opposite-sex couples.
- End the blanket, lifetime ban on gay and bisexual **blood donors**.
- Campaign for homophobic, transphobic and racist crimes, and crimes against **disabled people**, including people with learning difficulties, to be dealt with effectively and on a par with racist crimes.

- Ensure **legal parity for parents** and those wishing to become parents regardless of sexual orientation, and equality of provision of maternity services; lobby for widely available, affordable state-funded creches.
- Push for the rewriting of the **Mental Health Act** to remove trans people from the Psychiatric Disorder Register.
- Campaign against any reduction in the **AIDS/HIV budget** and target health promotion work to prevent sexually transmitted infections.
- Ensure **safe haven and refugee** status for LGBTI people fleeing persecution in line with other social groups according to the Geneva Convention.
- Refuse visas and work permits to '**murder music**' singers and others who incite homophobic and transphobic violence.
- Oppose all opt-outs from equality and anti-discrimination laws by **religious organisations** and remove special treatment allowing faith schools to promote homophobia on the grounds of religion.
- Provide comprehensive **training for teachers** and educational staff on all diversity and inclusion issues; schools to promote equal opportunities in their anti-bullying procedures; equality issues to be monitored in teaching recruitment.
- Support the **human rights** struggles of LGBTI movements in oppressive states such as Jamaica, Iran, Uganda, Malawi, Iraq, Nigeria, Zimbabwe and Russia.

## OTHER AREAS OF DISCRIMINATION

Among our key policies in other areas of discrimination, we would:

- Implement a UK-wide strategy to tackle **violence against women**, including domestic violence, rape and sexual abuse and trafficking.
- Ensure that effective action is taken to prevent discrimination against **disabled** people.
- Work towards ending stigma against people with **mental health** problems, including discrimination in employment.
- Enforce penalties against employers who continue to implement **unequal pay**.
- Work vigorously towards ensuring that all levels of Government are **representative of the diversity** of the populations for whom they work.

### Keeping information public

We would promote **broadcasting to high standards** by:

- Maintaining the **BBC** as the primary public service broadcaster, free of Government interference.
- Tightening rules on **cross-media ownership**.
- Ensuring that all have **digital access**; give BT an obligation to provide affordable high-speed broadband-capable infrastructure to every household.
- Strengthening controls on **advertising directed at children**.

## *government: it's ours*

Government is vital, but it's got a bad name, and the expenses scandal was the last straw. Untainted by the 'Westminster bubble', and with a great track record in local, Scottish and European politics, the Green Party will restore faith and trust in Government.

Government is important because it can do things that other parts of the system can't do. We rely too much on the private and voluntary sectors for the provision of public goods and services. The private sector is dynamic but tends towards short-term stakeholder interests. The voluntary sector is a tremendous source of good, but it sometimes lacks resources and influence. So while we back the private and voluntary sectors, they will not achieve a fair and sustainable society on their own.

Only the Government can make laws that bind us all. It sets the framework for the private and voluntary sectors, and it sets its sights on the long-term public good. It is our guarantor against sectional interests and the Green Party will revive its good name.

The Government is ours but right now it feels remote and out of touch. It spends our money but we have no say in what it spends it on. That is why the Green Party would initiate a revolution in participation and legitimacy, starting with the immediate introduction of proportional representation for all elections.

# *participation*

## **Bringing government to the people**

We would:

- Bring in **proportional representation (PR)** using the Additional Member System for Parliamentary elections and introduce fixed term Parliaments. Only the 200,000 votes in marginal seats really counted in the last election – that’s less than 0.5% of those eligible to vote. Make everyone’s vote count.
- Introduce the right to **vote at 16**.
- **Reform the House of Lords** to become a fully elected body chosen by proportional representation. But to promote its independence, members should only be elected for one fixed term of ten years, with half the house being elected every five years.
- Manage **MPs’ expenses** through an independent body.
- End the corrupting effects of big private and Trade Union **donations to political parties**, and bring in a fair system of state funding.
- Ensure that all **lobbying**, and in particular corporate lobbying, is registered and fully disclosed.
- **Revive local government**, with the introduction of proportional representation and with grassroots democracy spreading through the use of smaller community and district councils. Such authorities should have enhanced powers, and in due course new tax-raising powers.
- **Referenda** on local government decisions if called for by 20% of the local electorate.
- **Recall referenda on MPs**, and other representatives if 40% of electors request it.
- Move towards a **written constitution** with a Bill of Rights.



## 4

*Our Environment*

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*climate change***The canary in the mine**

Miners used to take canaries down mines with them to check for poisonous gases. They were an advance warning of impending problems. That's what climate change is today – a threat in itself to our survival as a species and a warning of more general ecological collapse. The evidence from Copenhagen suggests that mainstream governments just haven't grasped the nature and scale of the changes that need to be made, from massive investments in energy saving, to green technologies and infrastructure, to transfers of funds to developing countries.

Human-made climate change is an unprecedentedly serious threat to our welfare. But only the Green Party understands that this is just one sign of the stress our economies

and lifestyles put on the environment. Other political parties will have you believe that it's just an isolated problem. But it's not. It's a sign of what's to come unless we get our planetary home in order.

We know that every person, every community, every country has a carbon footprint that contributes to climate change. And we know that those with big footprints – the wealthy and those with extravagant lifestyles – have to make them smaller.

But carbon isn't the only footprint we have. We have water footprints, and other footprints too. Added together, these different footprints add up to our total ecological impact – and it mustn't be bigger than the planet we live on. Today, though, the scale of economic activity has taken us dangerously beyond what the planet can bear if it is to continue to support flourishing human and other life, and population growth only makes things worse.

### *Why we need to reduce emissions by 10 per cent per year*

The concentration of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) in the atmosphere has risen from 270 parts per million (ppm) CO<sub>2</sub> in the 19th century to about 435ppm CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent (that is, including other greenhouse gases like methane) today. The Government assume that we should aim in the long run to stabilise the greenhouse gases in the atmosphere at about 550ppm CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent. Their target of an 80% reduction by 2050 (or about 2.5% per year) is based on that. But the Government's own *Stern Report* (which summarises the scientific consensus) says that at that level of greenhouse gases there is a 75–99% chance (that is, near certainty) of global warming exceeding 2°C. If that happens there is a high chance of runaway and disastrous climate change. We in the Green Party think it is both imprudent and immoral knowingly to accept that level of risk. We think we should aim to stabilise the level of CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent in the atmosphere at a level just slightly above the present level (i.e. around 450ppm). The scientists agree with us. To achieve 450ppm, global emissions need to drop by as much as 60% as soon as 2030. And industrialised countries with high emissions, like the UK, can both afford to, and need to, reduce their emissions rather faster: a 90% reduction by 2030. That means an annual reduction of about 10% per year from now until 2030.

That is why climate change is more than an isolated threat – it is a warning of the catastrophic social and environmental consequences of business as usual.

The failure of the Copenhagen Conference makes it more obvious than ever that finding a global solution to climate change is not just a technical and economic issue. The solution must also involve justice on a global scale, equity and interdependence. And it is an area where the UK should play a leading role in the EU and at international level to secure a fair, ambitious and binding deal.

That is why we support the Contraction and Convergence framework for mitigating climate change. Under such a system all countries would eventually converge on the same low emissions per capita. Rich countries would need to contract to that level quickly, while poorer countries would contract much more slowly to that level, or in a few cases expand to meet it. Under that scenario, and to avoid

warming exceeding 2°C, the UK needs to adopt an initial annual carbon dioxide emissions reduction target of around 10 per cent, with the aim of reducing emissions by 90 per cent from 1990 levels by 2030, and 65 per cent by 2020 – starting now.

## *energy*

### **Reducing demand, securing supply**

We would:

- Prioritise **the new 3 Rs**: Remove, Reduce, Replace. First remove demand altogether where possible (e.g. by stopping the carbon-intensive activity altogether, or by true zero-carbon technology); then reduce demand

(e.g. by energy-efficiency measures); then switch to renewables for whatever energy need is left.

- Discourage use of fossil fuels by bringing back the **fuel duty escalator**, increasing duty in real terms by 8% per annum and through a series of other measures in this manifesto.
- In the longer run, **introduce carbon quotas** (see box on page 37) and protect low-income households, especially pensioners, from **fuel poverty**. Without these measures, 'peak oil' will disastrously undermine our social fabric.
- The private sector has not responded to the challenge of renewable energy with sufficient vigour and investment. We would introduce a massive programme of **direct Government investment** in large-scale wind and other **renewable generation**,

and investment in the grid, spending as much as £20bn over the Parliament and creating 80,000 jobs in installation and equipment manufacture.

- Require all major development plans and planning applications to show how they will contribute to **carbon reduction targets**.
- Aim to obtain about half our energy from **renewable sources** by 2020 and ensure that emissions from power generation are zero by 2030.
- **Phase out nuclear power and resolutely oppose any new nuclear power stations.** Nuclear power is expensive and takes longer to produce than renewable energies. In addition to its known risks, there is still no safe or affordable way of disposing of nuclear waste.

### *Peak oil – dwindling supplies*

Oil is a finite resource; there is only so much in the ground. One day it will run out. But our problems begin long before then. The global rate of oil production is about to reach a maximum, stay constant for a number of years, and then gradually decline. This peak and decline in oil production has already happened on a national scale in many countries, including the USA (1971) and in the UK (1999). The majority of predictions for the global peak fall between now and 2015.

Once demand for oil exceeds supply the price will go up. From now on, oil is going to be dirtier, harder to extract and more expensive to refine. A similar fate awaits natural gas. The peak in gas production is expected to be later than for oil, but the decline will be much faster when it occurs.

We use oil for nearly everything in our modern way of life - as fuel for transport and heating, and as a feedstock for solvents, plastics, asphalt, pharmaceuticals and packaging. Oil is also vital for today's industrial agriculture, providing chemical fertilisers, herbicides, fungicides, pesticides, fuelling machinery, processing and food delivery. High oil prices will wreck economies, leading to inflation and slump. Competition for oil has already led to war.

## *Nuclear power is not the answer*

We recognise that some environmentalists, faced with the urgent need to combat climate change, have reluctantly decided that nuclear power will have to be part of the energy mix.

We do not agree. For example:

- Sustainable Development Commission research has established that even if the UK's existing nuclear capacity were doubled, it would only result in an 8% cut in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions by 2035.
- No long-term solutions to the problem of nuclear waste are yet available.
- The economics of nuclear new-build are highly uncertain, whereas wind power, for example, is now well established and predictable. There is a clear risk that the taxpayer will have to pick up the tab.
- Nuclear is a centralised system of generation when we should be pressing ahead with micro-generation and local distribution networks.
- A new nuclear programme gives the impression that a major technological fix is all that's required, undermining the need for energy efficiency.
- If we build new nuclear power stations, we cannot stop other countries doing so. This increases the risks of accidents, radiation exposure, proliferation and terrorist attacks.

- Not permit any further investment in **new coal-fuelled power stations**.
- Encourage renewable heat and **combined heat and power** by levying a waste heat tax on new power stations and by helping councils develop heat distribution networks in suitable urban areas. Work to increase the adoption of biogas from organic sources such as agricultural and sewage waste materials, working with the water companies to build digestion plants.
- **Oppose the large-scale cultivation of bio-fuels**, especially in poor countries where they compete with land for food, or result in the destruction of tropical forests.
- Introduce stronger planning policies to **support onshore wind**, tidal, wave, solar and geothermal energy schemes, and help local planning authorities to make more consistent decisions. Give micro-renewables 'permitted development' status.
- Bring the electricity network and gas mains into a fully accountable **public sector** and develop them where needed for renewable energy schemes.
- Introduce **smart meters** and appliances.
- Enlarge and develop renewable energy **feed-in tariffs** paying premium rates for large and small producers of renewable electricity
- Support **Europe-wide renewable energy initiatives** such as an under-sea grid for off-shore wind and marine power, concentrating solar power plants in southern Europe and the North African deserts and the building of highly efficient long-distance high-voltage DC power lines.

### *Carbon quotas would work like this*

Each year a carbon budget would be set for the UK. The budget would define the total amount of carbon dioxide that can legally be emitted, and thus the total number of carbon quota units available. This budget would be successively reduced each year in line with targets for reductions in greenhouse gas emissions.

About half the carbon quotas would be distributed, free of charge, to all the adults in the country. Each person would have a 'carbon account' and would receive the same number of carbon units. Parents would receive a lower allocation on behalf of their children.

The rest of the carbon units would be sold by the Government to companies and other organisations.

Whenever you buy fossil fuels (or airline or train tickets) your carbon account card would be debited. You would have to pay in carbon units as well as in pounds and pence. If you buy other goods or services that involve carbon emissions in their manufacture or delivery, then the units the manufacturer has used will be reflected in the price.

You will be able to sell excess carbon units, or buy extra units if you need to, at a wide range of outlets, like petrol stations or from energy companies.

As poorer people use less carbon, carbon quotas would redistribute wealth significantly.

## *transport*

### **Promoting safety and sustainability**

The emphasis in transport policy should be upon improving access to local facilities and everyday transport. We would prioritise transport modes according to the following hierarchy:

1. **Walking and cycling**
2. **Public transport (trains, trams and buses) and rail freight**
3. **Cars**
4. **Heavy goods vehicles**
5. **Flying**

To encourage walking and cycling for shorter journeys and improve road safety we would:

- Reduce **speed limits** (e.g. to **20mph in built-up areas**, including villages).
- Make streets safe; make them **public spaces** again. Plan for mixed-use developments where shops, housing and businesses are closely located and connected by pavements and cycleways.
- Introduce a maximum speed limit of **55mph** on motorways and trunk roads, and **40mph** on rural roads, to make them safer for all road users.
- Introduce schemes such as **Home Zones**, Safe Routes to School and pedestrianisation.
- Ensure that at least 10% of transport spending is on securing a shift to more **active travel** like walking and cycling.

- Reallocate the £30 billion the Government has earmarked for road-building over the next 10 years. Spend the money on a programme of **investment in public transport** over the Parliament.
- Provide affordable, **cheaper local transport** that is accessible to those with disabilities by investing in buses and subsidising some routes. Make public transport public.
- **Reregulate** bus services nationally.
- Assist businesses with **green workplace travel plans**.
- Give higher priority to railways and plan for a **growing railway network**.
- Open **additional stations** on existing routes.
- Invest in new **Light Rapid Transit** systems (using appropriate technologies).
- **Simplify fares** for all public transport, with discounted fares for off-peak journeys and for those with low incomes.
- Support **free local transport** for pensioners.
- Return the **railways**, tube system and other light railway systems, including both track and operations, to **public ownership**.
- Support in principle a new **north–south high-speed line**, which would reduce the number of short-haul flights within the UK.

We would make the cost of private cars more effectively mirror their environmental cost to wider society:

- **Abolish car tax** and replace it with a purchase tax on new cars that reflects their emissions. That way we would affect the types of car chosen at the time that matters, when they are bought new.
- Prioritise public transport, then if necessary work towards the **introduction of road pricing schemes** like the London congestion charge.

### *Investing in public transport*

Expansion of public transport (and walking and cycling) is critically important to decarbonising our transport infrastructure, which is the only sector in which climate-altering carbon emissions are currently growing.

We would divert money currently being wasted on huge road projects and put more of the UK's transport budget into public transport, and especially into local schemes for walking, cycling and bus travel.

We would spend £1.5 billion subsidising existing public transport to make fares up to 10% cheaper, and £30 billion over the Parliament on investing in a better system. This will have the effect of strengthening communities, promoting a greater appreciation of place, reducing crime, improving the health of the population and reducing traffic fatalities. It would also create 160,000 jobs.

The new investment in public transport should itself be in low-carbon technologies as far as possible.

We would reduce heavy freight and shift it from the roads to the railways:

- **Reduce the demand for freight transport by localising the economy.**
- **Expand the rail freight network** and make greater use of waterways, where suitable.
- Safeguard **land** adjacent to railways for use in freight distribution projects.
- Introduce road user **tolls for heavy lorries.**

*Lewisham candidate Darren Johnson leads Lewisham Green councillors in local action on climate change*

At every opportunity Lewisham Green councillors have pushed for decisive action in tackling climate change and put forward practical solutions to help local residents play their part. Green councillors won a series of concessions in the Council budget-setting, including:

- More money for sustainable transport officers to promote cycling and walking and carry out cycle training in schools.
- Cash for a bid to be the first London borough to run a street-by-street energy reduction scheme.
- Smart meters on loan through libraries.
- Solar panels fitted in local primary schools.

As an MP Darren could extend his work to the national scene.

We would reduce air travel:

- Introduce **taxation on aviation** that reflects its full environmental costs. Failure to tax aviation fuel, and choosing not to levy VAT on tickets and aircraft, amounts to a subsidy worth around £10bn every year in the UK alone.
- **Stop airport expansion and shift** shorter air journeys **to the railways** (45% of all air trips in the EU are under 500Km) .
- Ban **night flying.**

## *farming, food and animal protection*

### **Healthy and affordable food and recreation**

We would:

- **Localise the food chain**, including assistance for small farms, starting farmers' markets, farm box schemes and locally owned co-ops.
- Set new targets every five years and a minimum conversion of **10% of UK food production to organic every five years.**
- **Replace the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP)** with support for smaller farms, organic agriculture, local food markets, and measures to increase biodiversity in our countryside – European subsidies must support planet-friendly farming.

- **Replace the Common Fisheries Policy (CFP)** with policies that prioritise protection of the oceans and provide sustainable support to fishing communities. In particular, properly finance the implementation of the Marine and Coastal Access Act.
- **Support GM-free zones** and continue to work for a complete ban on genetically modified food in Europe.
- **Intensive livestock farming** is a major contributor to greenhouse gases through the production of methane. We will work to measure and reduce the impact of our meat and dairy consumption, while recognising that traditional rotational grazing has potential for storing carbon in the soil.
- Improve **food skills** by encouraging schools to involve children in growing, preparing and cooking food.
- **Reduce the dominance of supermarket chains** through a range of measures, such as:
  - vigorously enforcing monopoly legislation against the existing largest chains;
  - introducing a supermarket Ombudsman to protect farmers from supermarket bullying;
  - prohibiting new out-of-town retailing, and requiring parking charges for private car parks with exemption for the disabled;
  - insisting that 50% of retail floor space in all new developments is affordable space for local small businesses;
  - including clear policies on sustainability to enable planning authorities to give priority to local firms and farms;
  - prohibiting new private retail parking in large developments, apart from disabled; and
  - providing many more allotments.
 Most people who want an allotment should be able to get one. Councils should use existing powers to designate new allotments in perpetuity.

## Taking animal protection seriously

We share the world with other animals and are not entitled to ill-treat or exploit them. Accordingly we would:

- Phase out all forms of **factory farming** of animals and enforce strict animal welfare standards generally, including in organic agriculture.
- Ensure that the European ban on seal imports is implemented fully; ban the import of real **fur** products, but ensure that real fur is clearly labelled until a ban is in place; press the EU to ban fur factory farming; bring in non-lethal alternatives to shooting seals at fish farms.

### *Allotments – seeding the future*

330,000 people have allotments – and 100,000 are waiting for one. Allotments cut carbon and are seeds for communities to grow. They also:

1. Allow people to save money.
2. Provide an area for abundant wildlife.
3. Help to absorb carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.
4. Help to cut the amount of carbon dioxide in the world's atmosphere: people grow their own food instead of buying it all, thus reducing 'air miles' (and shipping and lorry pollution).
5. Provide people with a community group to belong to and enjoy.
6. Provide people with a space to exercise while doing something worthwhile.
7. Promote resilience.



- Maintain the ban on hunting with dogs and extend to other **blood sports**, including the use of snares, and oppose badger culling.
- Immediately **ban causing harm to animals** (including but not only primates) in research, testing and education, and invest in the development of alternatives to animal experiments.
- End **live animal exports** and limit journey times for all animal transport.
- Implement a full ban on the production and sale of eggs produced from hens kept in **battery cages** (including 'enriched' cages).
- **Protect biodiversity** and human and animal health. We will always adopt the 'precautionary principle' with regard to any alleged benefits of new technologies such as genetic modification, cloning, xenotransplantation and nanotechnology.
- Regulate the **companion animal** trade including a ban on the import of so-called 'exotic pets'.

## *wildlife, open spaces and landscape*

We must protect our wildlife and landscape and their diversity, both for their own sake and ours – clean air, water, food and flood regulation all depend on the natural landscape. Biodiversity is under threat. Human activity is driving the sixth great extinction

and we are losing about 30,000 species per year. We have a historic opportunity not only to halt the degradation of our natural environment, but to begin to roll back two centuries of exploitation. We would:

- Promote **landscape-scale conservation**, using reform of the Common Agricultural Policy and the planning system to encourage restoration of heathlands, woods, marshland and other important habitats.
- Reduce dramatically the use of **pesticides** and introduce measures such as 'buffer zones' around sprayed fields to protect humans as well as wildlife.
- Oppose the introduction of a non-elected **Planning Commission**, particularly for new roads, runways, incinerators and inappropriate housing developments, and ensure that sustainable development, not just economic development, is at the heart of the planning system.
- Press to extend the amount of land covered by the **EU Habitats Directive** in the UK, and ensure that protected sites are in good condition.
- Set up a national **Environmental Protection Commission** (EPC) to promote and integrate research and development on public health and environmental protection.
- Protect wildlife abroad by cracking down on the **illegal trade in wildlife products** such as ivory, protect biodiversity in British Overseas Territories, and oppose all forms of commercial and 'scientific' **whaling**.
- Increase the tranquillity of our **urban** environments, with less litter, less noise, reduced light pollution and more green spaces. Everyone should live within walking distance of natural green space.

## 5

# *International Development, Peace and Security*

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Green Party international policy is aimed at reducing global inequalities, in the name of fairness, sustainability and peace, and in the context of an interdependent world.

We will make Britain a force for international good, respected throughout the global community, and cease simply being the United States' best and most reliable ally. Respect is gained through international policies designed to help the vulnerable to help themselves in a global framework that gives every country a voice in decision-making. Respect is gained by taking a leading role in preventing conflict, protecting civilians threatened by conflict and promoting human rights and international law. The Green Party wants Britain to have this kind of respect.

International organisations today reflect power rather than democracy. The Green Party will work towards democratising the international community, sharing power, influence and wealth more fairly and more widely.

These are the foundations of peace and security for all. Secure peoples, at ease with themselves and with others, seek peace rather than war.

## *foreign policy and defence*

### **Respecting the international**

We would:

- **Take the troops out of Afghanistan.**

It is now absolutely clear that our security has been compromised, not improved, by our part in the counterproductive invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan. We believe that the best way forward is a regional peace process involving all the Afghan people and the countries in the region.

## *Gaza*

Green Party Leader Caroline Lucas has spoken out against Israel's longstanding campaign of 'collective punishment' against the people of Gaza, which cuts off the flow of fuel, commercial and humanitarian supplies, profoundly affects the region's water and sanitation system, and is responsible for the suffering of over 860,000 vulnerable people.

The EU's Association Agreement with Israel is expressly dependent on both sides respecting basic human rights. Despite persistent breaches, these clauses have never been invoked. Caroline says 'Under these circumstances, the EU's Association Agreement with Israel must be immediately suspended. Suspending the trade agreement and attaching the necessary conditions to any future trade policy with Israel would allow the EU an opportunity to play a significant role in bringing peace and stability to the Middle East.'

- **Not attack Iran.** Iran's genuine security concerns must be properly addressed, and military intervention would be counter-productive.
- As preconditions of continued favourable trading relations, oblige **Israel to end the siege of Gaza**, stop settlement expansion and commit to ending the occupation. We recognise that peace will only be achieved when the principal peacemakers adopt a less one-sided approach.
- **Not replace Trident.** We cannot conceive of any circumstances in which we would use these expensive and immoral weapons; we would decommission the existing system and not renew it.
- Otherwise **reduce defence expenditure**, partly by withdrawing from Afghanistan, and by reviewing the need for certain expensive weapons systems, but always ensuring that where our forces are committed they are properly equipped.

## *Terrorism and the causes of terrorism*

The Green Party condemns the indiscriminate use of violence to achieve political ends, and especially the targeting of civilians. We believe that the normal processes of criminal investigation and law should be used against the perpetrators of such attacks.

Terrorist attacks in the UK are linked to our invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan, and we believe that part of the ultimate solution lies in a just overall settlement in the Middle East. We believe that the overwhelming majority of UK Muslims oppose such attacks, and we condemn the scapegoating of the Muslim community. We oppose the way the Government has used the attacks to introduce ever more draconian measures that undermine all our civil liberties, and would end the use of control orders, restrict pre-charge detention of terrorist suspects to 7 days and end the policy of 'Deportation with Assurances' (which can result in torture).

- Act to **reduce arms sales** worldwide by ending Government support for and subsidies of arms exports, including through UK Trade & Investment's Defence & Security Organisation and the Export Credits Guarantee Department.
- Press for successful negotiations over a robust and comprehensive global **Arms Trade Treaty**.
- Use skills and resources at present tied up in **military industry** in the UK to create new jobs and produce socially useful products, especially in the renewable energy sector.
- Not participate in the **US missile defence** system, and leave **NATO**.
- Recognise the importance of **civil society** organisations and of a free press worldwide and their role in promoting transparency, democracy, good governance and fighting corruption.
- **Reform the UN** and other international institutions. The current structure of the UN Security Council, with permanent seats for France, the UK, the US, Russia and China, is made undemocratic and often impotent by

### *A positive role in Europe*

A fundamental principle of Green politics is that decisions should be taken at the lowest practicable level: sometimes things dealt with at national level might better be decided regionally or more locally. So why bother with the European Union at all?

Greens are internationalists; we want to foster solidarity between peoples, and we believe co-operation builds peace, as it has done in Europe. Our geography means that we are part of Europe. We believe in Europe, but not in a European superstate.

Our vision for Europe seeks to replace the unsustainable economics of free trade and growth with the alternative of local self-reliance. We want to foster co-operation on issues of common interest, not establish international institutions for their own sake. Accordingly we are critical of many of the objectives built in to the EU treaties, of the EU institutions and how they work, and of many particular EU policies. We believe many things done and decided in Europe might better be done by member states or by regions or localities. So while we are members of the EU we will work for its fundamental reform.

However there are matters – safeguarding basic rights, peace and security achieved through mutual understanding, environmental protection, the spread of culture and ideas, regulation of the financial system – where we agree that EU action is appropriate. While the EU has control over trade, we accept that in practice the way to affect these matters is to call for EU action – so we call, for example, for an EU ban on genetically modified (GM) foods because in current circumstances that is the best way to achieve a ban in the UK. And there are other matters – for example, welfare policy – where although member states retain basic control, the Open Method of Coordination between member states allows for a useful measure of discussion and co-ordination on matters of mutual interest.

the right to veto. Poor countries in particular need better representation. We will work to reform the United Nations by abolishing all permanent seats on the Security Council and introducing decision-making by majority vote.

- **Outlaw** the use of **torture**, including the practice of extraordinary rendition. We support free speech and the right to protest.
- The EU needs a proper constitution, but the Lisbon Treaty is not up to the job. A **European Constitution** should define the values, objectives, powers, decision-making procedures and institutions of the EU, and also set out the basic rights of citizens. In every action of the EU, social justice and environmental factors must be regarded as over-riding purely economic objectives. We oppose the militarisation of the EU.
- We oppose UK adoption of the **European single currency**, the euro.

## *immigration*

Migration is a fact of life. People have always moved from one country to another, and as a practical matter the ability to control borders without oppressive measures is more limited than most politicians like to pretend. Much of our language, culture and way of life have been enriched by successive new arrivals over two thousand years. It is not just a matter of immigration – over 5 million British Citizens benefit from other countries' liberal immigration policies by living abroad.

The causes of a person moving to the UK are complex. For the person concerned, there may be escape from persecution and improved economic prospects, but also separation from home, friends and family. For the country of origin, there may be the loss of skilled workers, especially health professionals, but also the receipt of remittances from the immigrant, and many migrants return with improved skills. For the community that receives the immigrant there may be the benefits of getting done jobs that no one in that community wants to or can do, more taxes being paid and the creation of a more cosmopolitan atmosphere. But there may also be costs in terms of unwelcome competition for jobs, pressure on housing and other resources and longer-term pressures on overall population.

In deciding policy on immigration it is important that all these points are considered and balanced against each other. We must accept too our legal and moral obligations to give sanctuary to those fleeing persecution, and the principle of free movement throughout the European Union. Against this background our policy is as follows:

- Where we are limiting numbers, our **priority** must be to meet our obligations to refugees and those seeking sanctuary, including the increasing numbers of people displaced by environmental change, above the needs of our economy.
- Our immigration policies must be **fair and non-discriminatory**, respect the integrity of families and be applied promptly and effectively.
- Our international policies should everywhere seek to **reduce** the economic, political and environmental **factors that force people to migrate**. Emigration should be a positive

choice, not the outcome of desperation. In particular, **free movement within the EU** is a fact. We should press for EU policies that make all parts of the EU an attractive place to live.

- We reject the use of immigration as a **political issue** to mask problems such as a lack of high-quality social housing. The proper solution is to provide enough social housing, as we propose elsewhere in this manifesto.
- We should not tolerate the long-term presence of large numbers of people whose **immigration status** is not defined. Such immigrants are vulnerable to exploitation by unscrupulous employers and others, undermining national terms and conditions of employment. We would open up ways for existing illegal migrants who have been here for three years to become legal. In particular, a **legal status** must be provided for people who have not succeeded in their claim for humanitarian protection but who cannot be returned to their country of origin due to the political situation there.
- We would review the **asylum procedures** to ensure that destitution plays no role in the asylum process by allowing those seeking sanctuary to work.
- We would **review the Nationality, Immigration and Asylum Act 2002**, particularly with regard to issues of access to legal advice, childcare and levels of subsistence allowance.
- Those who have been **trafficked** should not be subject to summary deportation. They should receive a temporary right to stay and have the same right to apply to remain as others seeking to migrate.
- Those seeking sanctuary should not be detained, and in particular the administrative detention of **children** is unacceptable and should cease immediately.

## *trade, aid and debt*

### **Making it fair, making it sustainable**

Free trade has been globalisation's mantra for over 30 years. It comes at a cost because:

- It encourages a 'race to the bottom', in which countries are forced to compete with one another to offer the lowest costs, leading to downward pressure on wages and environmental protection, as well as lowering of corporate taxation.
- The liberalisation of trade in goods and services has rendered the world economy increasingly unstable because economic contagion spreads more quickly.
- It destroys infant industries in poorer countries, which are forced to open their markets to imports from more developed countries, and undermines efforts to become more self-reliant in both North and South.
- It produces increased international trade, which makes a significant contribution to the rise in transport-related carbon emissions.

So we seek trading relations, particularly with poor people in poor countries, that give them a fair price for their products within a stable and sustainable pattern of trade. Poorer countries are entitled to protect their people and their markets from unregulated competition, and we would seek to turn the World Trade Organization into a General

Agreement on Sustainable Trade, which, together with a reformed International Monetary Fund, would better reflect the interests of smaller countries.

We would:

- Promote **fair trade**, so that trade with developing countries is based on decent pay and conditions, with a fair price paid to producers.
- Ensure that trade deals, whether global or with the European Union, allow developing countries to **retain control** over their economies and do not force through deregulation and liberalisation.
- Promote an international **Financial Transactions Tax** (a Robin Hood Tax) on transactions between financial institutions, and introduce unilaterally a small levy on foreign currency transactions involving the pound sterling.

### *Promoting fair trade starts at home*

Led by Green Party local councillors and Norwich South candidate Adrian Ramsay, a Green Party motion for Norwich to become a Fair Trade City was adopted by the City Council. This means that the Council stocks and helps to promote fair trade goods.

- Support the **decent work** agenda, by encouraging developing countries with which we work to implement core International Labour Organization standards.
- Ensure that **UK companies** operating abroad adhere to environmental and human rights standards.

### *The Robin Hood Tax*

We support the idea of a Robin Hood Tax, sometimes called a Financial Transactions Tax (and similar to the special case of a 'Tobin Tax' on currency transactions). It would involve a very small tax (maybe 0.05%) on the value of every financial transaction between financial institutions worldwide. Globally this tax has the potential to raise as much as £250 billion, as well as help stabilise the financial markets.

Any global climate change treaty must involve a transfer of resources of well over US\$150 billion a year from rich countries to poorer countries channelled through the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) to pay for the development of renewable energy technologies and climate change adaptation, and to help resist deforestation.

We favour dedicating the revenues from an international financial transactions tax to this purpose and to wider global sustainable development. If that does not prove successful the UK must pay its fair contribution from other resources.

## *Debt, and ecological debt*

The Green Party calls for a reassessment of the nature of debt itself by acknowledging the historical ecological debt owed by rich to poor countries.

A 2008 study by the University of California, Berkeley, found that the rich world's ecological debt to the poor world outstrips the traditional debt owed by poor countries to rich ones. For example, greenhouse emissions from low-income countries have imposed US\$740 billion of damage on rich countries, while in return rich countries have imposed US\$2300 billion of damage on poorer countries.

The ecological debt has been built up by: the extraction of natural resources without proper payment; the use of local and indigenous knowledge for the development of products (e.g. medicines) without proper recompense; the use of local land for mono-crop export rather than for feeding the local population; and the appropriation of the atmosphere for the disproportionate emission of climate change gases.

Ecological debt needs to be acknowledged and paid for. Simultaneously, the Green Party wants to see the cancellation of all unjust and unsustainable traditional debt 'owed' by the developing world to richer countries.

Debts are often unjust and they worsen poverty. Much of the poorer world's debt is left over from reckless lending by wealthier countries in the 1970s. Some of the effects of this are made worse by corrupt government in parts of the developing world, but the real damage is done by the huge repayments demanded by the IMF, the World Bank, and rich-country governments.

At the moment there are lots of strings attached to debt cancellation, often unjust and undemocratic in themselves. We want to see these strings removed. In the end the only way to avoid debt in the future is economic justice now. This is why we positively support the Millennium Development Goals and their achievement by the 2015 target.

- Fully implement and enforce the **UN Convention against Corruption (UNCAC)** and the OECD Anti-Bribery Convention.
- **Increase aid.** We will exceed the UN's 0.7% target and allocate at least 1% of UK Gross National Product for aid by 2011, adding an extra £4.5bn pa. Aid should be targeted for the poorest, not involve economic policy conditions, respect gender equality and not be diverted to equipping security forces.
- Keep an **International Aid Department** separate from the Foreign Office, with its own Secretary of State, so as to separate foreign policy interests from humanitarian assistance.