

# Sheffield Green Party



## Fairness for All

**a manifesto for the 2010 elections**

# **The Green Party offers hope, real change and fairness for all**

Many people are concerned about the economy and jobs, the gap between rich and poor, public services, energy and climate change. We work for a fairer and more equal society, which reflects the needs of everyone, including future generations. That means a real change, turning all our concerns into hope for a fairer and better world.

## **Our overall vision**

- Investing in green jobs, with fair wages and incomes
- Fairness for all in housing, education, health and transport
- Helping communities work together to become closer, stronger and safer;
- Tackling action that harms others or our planet.



Cllr Jillian Creasy, Cllr Rob Murphy, council candidate Rob Unwin, and Cllr Bernard Little

To find out more, visit [www.sheffieldgreenparty.org.uk](http://www.sheffieldgreenparty.org.uk)  
or telephone 07526 223902

# **What we stand for...**

## **A. Jobs, the economy and equality**

We are in favour of investing for a more equal society - creating jobs, and increasing pensions and child benefits while making the tax system fair.

### ***Employment and skills***

1. We would implement a Green New Deal nationally which would help to create many thousands of jobs for young people and adults in Sheffield and elsewhere, including those relating to home insulation, renewable energy, food growing and other areas in manufacturing, construction, engineering, agriculture and transport.

2. In Sheffield we would invest over £11million from the Council to create hundreds of jobs insulating and installing renewable energy on houses and council buildings across the city. We would also establish a centre of excellence through the Council to help encourage the low-carbon economy, by raising awareness, providing advice and demonstrating good practice.

3. We would work towards ending the use of agency and contract workers across the Council, to provide stable long-term jobs.

4. The existing Sheffield Green Bond should be enlarged, using money currently given to regional quangos, to invest in further local job creation in sustainable industries and community-based enterprises.

### ***Development and Planning***

5. We would put in place measures to support businesses and organisations in Sheffield, for example we are pushing for a distinctive New Retail Quarter designed around local and independent retailers instead of national and multinational chains.

6. We would press for all building developments in Sheffield to take full account of the needs of local residents, including such aspects as green roofs, energy and water conservation, transport and business hours.

### ***Income and poverty***

7. We will continue to argue for a Living Wage, nationally and in Sheffield, that would benefit many of the lowest paid workers in the city. We believe

greater income equality has many social and health benefits and will support trade union and other campaigns for fair wages.

8. Nationally, we are proposing a Citizen's Pension of £170 per week that would support all pensioners, along with bringing back the 10% tax band for lower earners, paid for by increasing tax on the well off and cracking down on tax havens.

9. In Sheffield, we would give priority to employment, housing and other programmes that improve the well-being of those most affected by poverty and ill-health. Council funds, including all money devolved to Community Assemblies, should be allocated on the basis of need. Third-sector and non-profit organisations in the city will be funded as partners in delivering services to disadvantaged people, e.g. advice centres.



## **B. Everyday life and public services**

We continue to argue for the investment needed for high-quality housing, education, health and other public services. We will fight against the privatisation of public services and wasteful PFI deals.

### ***Housing and energy***

10. Nationally, we would substantially increase the amount of social housing, to provide housing for those who need it and jobs for people in building-related occupations. We would reduce the number of housing repossessions through a Right to Rent scheme.

11. In Sheffield, we will continue to campaign for children in social housing to be given ground floor accommodation.

12. In Sheffield, we would ensure that new homes are built to the highest environmental standards. We would give greater emphasis to eradicating slum landlords and bringing housing stock up to new standards.

13. Locally, we would give greater priority to energy efficiency measures for existing homes, and extend the affordable warmth programme to hard to treat homes, not just cavity wall and loft insulation. We would also

introduce a scheme, similar to the RE-Charge scheme in Kirklees, offering low cost loans to Sheffield residents for renewable energy installation.

14. We will argue nationally for funding and legislation to encourage increased energy efficiency measures and renewable energy, for example, by: supporting generous tariffs for home generation of energy; introducing higher energy-efficiency standards for appliances; and shifting subsidies from nuclear and fossil fuels to the renewable energy sector.

15. Locally, we would re-open the feasibility study into windfarms in Sheffield, including exploring the financial benefits for local communities through offering shared ownership and profits.

## **Food**

16. We have proposed a Green food strategy for Sheffield, which would have economic, environmental, health and cultural benefits. It would enable and encourage everyone to grow or buy locally-produced organic food, thus reducing the amount of imported food bought by Sheffield people.

17. In Sheffield, over 2000 people are on the waiting list for allotments, partly because the Council allotments team is understaffed, and partly because many allotments are under-used. We would manage allotments better. We would also promote more productive use of Sheffield's agricultural land, community gardens in parks, and food growing on suitable derelict land. This would help to increase jobs, training, and the proportion of food grown locally.

18. We would support farmers' markets and local shops rather than supermarkets, to encourage local distribution of food. We would also make sure the Council buys from local suppliers and pushes health and education partners to do likewise.

## **Education**

19. We will continue to fight against schools being turned over to private academies, to help ensure that different needs are met across the city and that schools support one another. We will support parents and community groups who wish to stop their local school from closing.

20. Nationally, we would end SATS tests, reduce class sizes, and provide free school lunches for all using locally-prepared food from the region.

21. We will support teachers, schools, home educators, and children in making learning a joint endeavour that takes into account the child's interests and needs, to help them to become well-rounded citizens and motivated life-long learners.

22. We propose to better support students in further education and abolish student tuition fees and reintroduce maintenance grants.

## **Health**

23. By creating a more equal society, we will tackle a root cause of many health problems, including stress, teenage pregnancy and drug/alcohol/tobacco abuse.

24. We propose nationally to give free social care for the elderly without means testing, and to make the health service publicly funded, publicly provided, and under the democratic control of local people.



## **C. Communities and the environment**

We believe in strong, safe and harmonious communities created through meeting housing, recreation, and economic needs, underpinned by a sustainable environment and healthy democratic systems.

### ***Strong and safe communities***

25. We would ensure that each community in Sheffield has easy access to important local facilities. This should include shops, schools, post office services and appropriate financial services, such as community banks and credit unions. We continue to campaign for the urgent reinstatement of post office services in the Crookes Valley area.

26. We are continuing to press for safer and more harmonious streets and neighbourhoods, partly via crime prevention measures such as more local and community policing, and partly by effective measures to address noise nuisance.

27. We will argue for genuine restorative justice as a key feature of the criminal justice system, in such a way that it helps the victim and brings the offender back into the community.

## **Transport**

28. We have taken the lead in Sheffield Council in pushing for 20mph speed limits on all residential streets (other than main routes) in the city, so as to improve road safety, and will step up the pressure for this in the future.

29. We would give more emphasis to walking, cycling and public transport through measures including: more pedestrian crossings and bike parks; more parking schemes in appropriate areas; improving bus priority measures; re-regulating bus services and bringing the rail network back into public ownership.

30. We favour greater use of bus services to meet particular needs, especially where car transport is less appropriate. For example, we will work with the Transport Authority to explore extending the Freebee bus service to cover hospitals and universities and introducing night bus services, to serve both student and other areas.

31. We will press for improvements to rail services in the area, including re-opening the Woodhead Tunnel to reduce congestion on the A57 through Broomhill and other trans-pennine routes; and re-opening Heeley and Millhouses railway stations.

32. We will continue to argue, as part of the Residents Against Station Closures campaign, that Sheffield station should allow free movement between the city centre and the Norfolk Park and Park Hill areas.

## **Waste and environment**

33. Waste management strategies should work to reduce how much is wasted as a priority, then consider dealing with waste by re-use, repair and recycling. We support small businesses and social enterprises offering these services. We will work towards transferring the waste contract from the current provider to such local companies to create jobs and reduce carbon emissions.

34. Nationally we would make as a priority the reduction of waste through incentives to design long-life products and legislate to reduce the packaging on things like food. Locally we would provide affordable and convenient recycling facilities, including for hazardous waste from batteries and fluorescent light bulbs; provide a free collection service for bulky waste so more can be refurbished and re-used where possible; avoid landfill at regional level through use of existing resources, such as the

energy from waste incinerator; and support composting and anaerobic digestion of green and food waste.

35. We will continue to press for more action to safeguard the planet, including action to address climate change, avoid pollution, and prevent the exploitation and ill-treatment of animals.

### ***Democracy and representation***

36. We would immediately introduce proportional representation using the additional member system for all elections at local and national level.

37. We will take action to enable better decisions to be taken by representatives and officials without party politics or vested interests getting in the way. For example, we will: push for ward councillors to be responsible for council decisions in their ward, so they can be held directly to account; promote agreement and partnerships between parties whenever possible in Council; and commit to openness and honesty in political decision-making and campaigns.

38. We will involve local residents as partners in the decisions about what services their community needs and how they are delivered; and will help residents if they want to deliver services or meet needs themselves.

39. We will push for greater devolution of Government and regional powers to local areas through mechanisms such as the Sustainable Communities Act. Our overall aim is that no decision will be taken at a higher level if it can be taken at a lower one, and that decisions are taken by accountable bodies rather than by quangos.

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FAIRNESS FOR ALL



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