

Greens will guarantee every child a Good Childhood



Childhoods are being eroded by the policies and actions of recent governments, and child poverty is a growing crisis. The Resolution Foundation has assessed that Conservative plans will mean a rise in children growing up without basic material security to a 60-year high of 34 per cent, while the new investment planned by Labour will only prevent the problem getting worse.[2]

Only the Green Party will eliminate child poverty by investing nine times more into transforming the callous and chaotic welfare system and introducing a Universal Basic Income.

Schools are also facing cuts, and children, teachers and parents are pressured from the moment a child starts school to focus on tests rather than time and space for children to develop.

A Green education system would remove testing and Ofsted, aim for smaller class sizes, broaden education to include more sport, culture, environment and nature lessons, and shift formal lessons in school to start at six years old.

As children get older, community spaces and youth work that can help them flourish and develop have been dramatically cut back, contributing to a crisis of youth violence and mental health. Sian Berry's work in London has exposed a cut of nearly half in council youth service budgets since 2011, and over 100 youth centres have closed in the capital city alone.[3]

Greens would restore £10 billion of funding to councils to provide a full youth service and community support.

Co-leader, Sian Berry says:

“Children who are supported to play, learn and grow as active citizens are the foundation and responsibility of a good society and only the Green manifesto in this election comes close to recognising that, backing the principles of a Good Childhood up with a comprehensive policy programme.

“Young people growing up need a community around them that values their growth and wellbeing, and our plans for system change within both welfare and education will make a profound difference to how children are treated and valued in Britain. They will do what no other party comes close to with their plans: eliminate the blight of child poverty.

“Greens also believe in the principle of giving young people a real voice in policy-making. With both votes at 16 and the ability to stand for Parliament at the same age, Greens will put the spirit of the climate strikes at the heart of our democracy. Young people are leading the way and we must listen

to them and provide for their development as citizens with the Good Childhood they need.”

Green Party Education Spokesperson and candidate for the Isle of Wight constituency, Vix Lowthion says:

“A good childhood means fundamentally changing how we see education. Education should be about nurturing potential and inspiring a love of learning. Yet all too often it can feel like a production line, manufacturing children-shaped pieces to fit gaps in the workplace.

The freedom to let children play, flourish and grow has been replaced with endless testing and measuring. It demoralises teachers and adds yet more pressure on young people. Children growing up today cannot wait another five years for things to change.”

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Friends of the Earth have got this wrong: Green Party responds to league table



7 December 2019

“We think Friends of the Earth have got this wrong. Going through a similar exercise, Greenpeace scored the Green Party with the highest score. Friends of the Earth themselves actually also score the Green Party manifesto the highest overall, but Labour have simply made additional promises that were not included in their manifesto. We would question Labour’s commitment to any promise they have made which does not appear in their manifesto.

“Friends of the Earth should also analyse the economic policies of the different parties. For as long as Labour and any other party remain locked into growth-based policies, they simply can’t make the ambitious systems-wide changes that we need.

“Our manifesto clearly sets out the most ambitious Green New Deal of any political party and we are also the only party to commit to reaching net-zero carbon by 2030. It is the Green Party that has consistently led the way on the environment and pushing climate change to the top of the agenda. We encourage voters to read our manifesto to see why both Friends of the Earth and Greenpeace have scored it highest.”

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Caroline Lucas launches Green Party nature commitments, and A New Deal for Nature



5 December 2019

Caroline Lucas, former co-leader of the Green Party and its candidate in Brighton Pavilion, showcased the Party's commitments on nature and launching A New Deal for Nature, at an event at The Linnean Society in central London.

A New Deal for Nature is an independent report commissioned earlier this year to inform her work in Parliament, as well as to feed in to the Green Party's policies on nature and stimulate public and political debate. It's been written by a group of leading UK conservationists and nature writers, Mark Cocker, Jeremy Mynott, Jake Fiennes, Helen Smith and Patrick Barkham.

"We are not only running out of time on the climate emergency, there's also little time left to reverse the catastrophic decline in nature and wildlife," Lucas said.

"This election has to mark a turning point and the moment when people vote for Nature."

Green party commitments on nature and wildlife

It is more urgent than ever to reverse the decline of wildlife and nature in Britain, one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. The 2019 State of Nature report found that 41% of species in the UK have declined, and a quarter of mammals are at risk of disappearing altogether.

The Green Party's manifesto has more than 70 proposals related to nature and wildlife, with the boldest and best policies for protecting it – for the benefit of people and nature. As the UN global assessment of nature, the IPBES, made clear, the breaking of environmental limits presents extreme danger for all humanity.

Among manifesto pledges are a 10-year transition to agro-ecological farming, more outdoor learning and the introduction of a GCSE in Natural History to encourage better knowledge and understanding of nature.

One of the party's key proposals is for a Sustainable Economy Act, so that

the way we run our economy works with nature not against it, with new legally binding targets for biodiversity, soil health and water quality alongside other measures.

It is a broken economic system which has caused both the climate and biodiversity crises, and that has to be addressed if we are to restore our natural world.

That means moving away from endless consumption and GDP growth as the measure of economic success, scrapping environmentally destructive projects like HS2 and airport expansion, and repurposing the economy so that it also serves the needs of future generations.

While the Green Party manifesto is more ambitious and comprehensive than any other in its pledges on nature and wildlife, the Party recognises the importance of being challenged by experts to ensure policies measure up to the challenges we face.

Report recommendations

A New Deal for Nature focuses on eight areas for change including farming, schools & young people, urban wildlife, the marine environment and biosecurity. Among its 80 recommendations are:

- New national parks, with a goal of designating 20% of Britain as national park.
- Every farmer should devote a minimum of 15% of their land to nature, and be paid to do so.
- All primary schools should deliver one hour a day outdoor learning every day, in addition to break time.
- Twin every primary school with a farm
- Encourage more wildlife-friendly gardens by casting off the obsession with tidiness. Ban the sale of all plastic grass, unless for sports pitches via planning permission.
- Wild public land. Hospital grounds to be re-greened and re-wilded to aid patient recovery
- Permanently protect some brownfield sites as SSSIs, give others “pop-up” temporary wildlife protection
- A moratorium on expansion of aquaculture operations, particularly open-cage salmon farming, shown to be harming the aquatic environment..
- Improve early-warning systems to assess the threats posed by invasive, non-native species which are growing by 10-12 species every year.

Caroline Lucas said at the report launch:

“Other parties still ignore the fundamental economic and infrastructure changes we need to truly protect the natural world. We’re looking ahead to what’s being called ‘2020 super year’ for nature and climate with crucial international summits taking place.

“Yet we’re also looking at a Johnson Brexit deal that is even worse for the environment and nature than the May hard-Brexit deal. Now more than ever, we

need more Green MPs to stand up for wildlife and put the wellbeing of people and nature first across all policy making.”

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Green Party to invest £12 billion a year in renewables for energy revolution



3 December 2019

The Green Party will invest £12 billion a year in renewables to revolutionise the way we produce energy and produce 75,000 jobs in the process, it has announced today.

The fully-costed plans include a massive investment of £8.4bn each year to build an additional 40,000 wind turbines by 2030, providing 70% of the UK's electricity.

The Greens will also provide additional support for other renewable energies such as solar, geothermal, tidal and hydro to provide much of the remainder of the UK's energy supply by the end of the next decade.

This investment will be focused on enabling local communities to develop their own renewable energy projects, so that the benefits of locally generated energy can stay local.

The radical proposals form part of the Green Party's ambitious Green New Deal which aims to ensure the UK is on track to carbon net zero by 2030.

Former Green Party leader and candidate for Brighton Pavilion, Caroline Lucas, said : “We need a radical transformation of our energy system if we are to meet net zero carbon emissions by 2030. Investing in community-based renewable energy will not only help reach that target, but also puts power in people's hands.

“This is the Green New Deal in action: delivering clean energy, green jobs and empowering local communities”.

Lucas today [Tuesday 3 December] visited a solar farm in Bristol with Bristol West candidate Carla Denyer, a former wind farm engineer.

Denyer said: “Before I got into politics, I was a renewables engineer. But I got frustrated trying to change the world one wind turbine at a time. With this policy, the Green Party would usher in the kind of large-scale change to our energy generation that Britain needs to be carbon neutral by 2030.

“It’s ambitious and optimistic. But the time for delay on climate action is over. We have the technology to go carbon neutral. We have the people and we have the skills. All we need now is the will. The time for action is now.”

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Green Party announces end to “throwaway economy” and create a “Repair Cafe” in every community



3 December 2019

The Green Party has promised to end the “throwaway economy” with a new suite of policies designed to encourage repair and reuse.

The launch takes place at the Goodlife Centre, Southwark; a community focused studio and workshop space. The Party will announce two key policies: a “Right to Repair” and “Repair Cafes”.

A comprehensive “Right to Repair” will require manufacturers to keep goods operational for years after purchase and encourage repair and reuse. The practice of producing goods with the deliberate intention that they will become obsolete within a few years time will be banned.

“Repair Cafes” will give local communities the skills and tools to repair, upgrade and customise their belongings. Using and borrowing equipment will give people access to expensive items such as power tools and sewing machines.

Based on figures from WRAP, this policy could save the average UK household around £800 a year, which is the value of electrical equipment thrown out and replaced.[3]

Green Party Co-Leader, Sian Berry, and Deputy Leader, Amelia Womack, delivered a keynote speech.

Sian Berry, Co-Leader of the Green Party, said:

“From the coffee cup you chuck in the bin, to the smartphone you upgrade year after year, disposability is at the heart of our economic model. And we all know it’s not right. It doesn’t feel right. It doesn’t make us happy. Nobody wants to add to the mountains of junk choking our natural world

“Today, we are pleased to propose a right to repair, which would make it a legal requirement for companies to lengthen the lifespan of their products, make spare parts available, and build them in ways which can be fixed by everyday tools.

“This is an essential step towards cutting waste and going net-zero by 2030, and none of the other parties are even talking about it.”

Amelia Womack, Deputy Leader of the Green Party, said:

“Today, we’re excited to pledge that Greens will support the creation of a repair cafe on every high street in Britain.

“Our high streets have been devastated over the last ten years. We need to rebuild the fabric of our communities. Repair cafes are just one step to deliver innovative ideas that support people’s needs and save people money, while helping the environment

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