

Green Party local election launch: time to unlock policies that will create hundreds of thousands of affordable homes



4 April 2024

The Green Party of England and Wales launches its local election campaign in Bristol today with a pledge to support councils to massively increase their supply of affordable housing.

Co-leader Carla Denyer, who is standing as MP candidate in Bristol Central, said:

“This country faces an acute housing crisis. There are over a million households on council waiting lists [1]. In England the average home for sale now costs more than 8 times the annual average household earnings [2].

“We desperately need a massive increase in the supply of affordable social housing. I hear regularly from people who have been living in unacceptable conditions, crying out for a secure home or struggling to make ends meet because their rents are through the roof.

“Councils have a vital role to play but they need a framework that supports them to provide the homes that people desperately need. We need to unlock the policies that will make hundreds of thousands of extra council homes available – for good. We also need a fair deal for the millions of people renting in the private sector.”

The policies the Green Party would introduce to help councils increase the supply of affordable housing include:

- Providing funding to councils to meet their needs for affordable social housing and lift the overly restrictive rules on council borrowing for

housebuilding – ensuring at least an extra 150,000 council homes a year are made available through a mix of new build, refurbishment, conversions and buying up existing homes

- Ending Right to Buy, enabling local authorities to keep council homes available and affordable in the community for good
- Taming the private rental market through rent controls, in places where the rental market is overheated, to ensure a fair rent, as well as ending no-fault evictions.
- Creating a ‘community right to buy’, giving councils, housing associations and community housing groups first refusal to buy certain properties that come onto the market, including former social housing bought under Right to Buy; properties in need of energy efficiency improvements; or any property left empty for an unacceptably long time.

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay, who is standing as parliamentary candidate for Waveney Valley – the area where Greens won a majority on Mid Suffolk District Council last year, added:

“Whilst our housing crisis is one of supply, it is also a crisis of housing quality, and homes too often being built with a view to developers’ profits rather than community needs.

“That’s why our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price charter [3] would transform the planning system to ensure all new homes are built to the highest environmental standards, prioritising brownfield sites, while requiring all new developments come with investment in local services, such as extra school and GP places, better bus services and infrastructure for walking and cycling. [1]

Deputy leader and Green London Assembly member, Zack Polanski, said:

“London is far too expensive for so many including our key workers in the NHS, hospitality and other areas. The Green Party want to see a ‘Living Rent’, where median local rents would take up no more than 35% of the local median take-home pay. The fact that this is so commonly exceeded is forcing people into fuel or food poverty. This is a scandal.

“Greens demand rent control powers for London and a two-year rent freeze when we get them. We will also set up a Rent Commission to look at bringing down private rents.”

The Green Party will launch its local election campaign in Bristol [4]. Co-leader Carla Denyer said:

“The Green Party has built up a head of steam in Bristol. We are aiming for a record number of seats in the city and believe we could emerge as the largest party and leading the next administration. We go into these local elections with around 760 councillors on nearly 170 Councils in both urban and rural settings, and Greens already a governing party in 10% of all councils in England and Wales.”

Notes

1. [14,000 social homes lost last year, as over a million households sit on waiting lists – Shelter England](#)
2. [Home buyers in England face paying 8.7 times annual earnings: ONS – Mortgage Strategy](#)
3. [Greens call for Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat housing crisis and protect green space | The Green Party](#)
4. The local election launch will take place on Thursday 4 April at the [Engineers House Conference Centre](#) at 11am. The co-leaders of the Green Party, Carla Denyer and Adrian Ramsay will launch the campaign and be available for photos and interviews. Deputy leader Zack Polanski will also be available.

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