

Greens call for Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat housing crisis and protect green space



5 April 2023

Greens today (Wednesday 5 April) will call for local councils across the country and the government to sign up to a new Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter to beat the housing crisis and ensure green spaces are protected. [1]

The Green Party will launch its Local Election campaign 2023 in Stowmarket, Suffolk, where easy to heat, affordable homes are out of reach for too many people. [2]

Co-leader Adrian Ramsay, Parliamentary Candidate for Waveney Valley which includes much of the Mid Suffolk district, said:

“We need councillors and national government to work together to deliver the homes people need and can afford to rent and buy, where people need them.

“Today, speculators and developers are allowed to chase the biggest profits and ignore local needs. Too many villages and towns have seen large-scale developments take place without the community infrastructure expanded alongside, such as GP surgeries, bus services, cycling and walking networks and nurseries and schools.

“What we need is local councils supported to build quality, affordable housing in the right places where people live and work, with the right supporting infrastructure and local facilities.

“Our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter will simultaneously protect valuable green space for communities, reduce climate emissions, tackle fuel poverty and provide genuinely affordable housing.

“We’ve seen how Green councillors have made a difference in Mid Suffolk,

where developers are now expected to provide EV points, not connect to the gas grid and provide heat pumps as standard.

“The villages of Suffolk and Norfolk are facing the same problems as much of the rest of the country – developers being allowed to build houses local people often can’t afford and failing to ensure local services like buses and GP surgeries get the investment they need.

“Developers are being allowed to ride roughshod over the needs of communities and the environment and this has got to stop.”

Co-leader Carla Denyer, who is a serving councillor and Parliamentary candidate in Bristol, said:

“Up and down the country, people are experiencing the same problems as people here in Stowmarket – homes that are unaffordable to buy, unaffordable to rent and unaffordable to heat. There is a generation of people who are trapped in the private rental market by spiralling rents that bear no relationship to incomes.

“To address this, in the short term, we would introduce an immediate rent freeze and eviction ban to prevent people being made homeless in the middle of this cost of living crisis, as the Scottish Greens have already done as part of the Scottish Government.

“In the longer term, we would give councils the power to bring in rent controls in areas where the housing market is overheated. We would also place much stricter controls on the type of new homes being built to include more affordable and social housing for buying and renting.

“Everyone deserves a place that they can call home. That is why our Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter will deliver the change we want to see across the housing sector and create fairer, greener communities.”

The Greens’ Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price Charter would:

- End the housing crisis by creating enough affordable homes – including 100,000 new council homes a year built to the Passivhaus or equivalent standard
- Empower local authorities to bring empty homes back into use
- Transform the planning system to:
 - Incentivise renovation and improvement of existing buildings to reduce the environmental impact of new construction
 - Incentivise local authorities to spread small developments across their

areas, where appropriate, rather than building huge new estates

- Protect valuable green space for communities
- Require new developments to be accompanied by the extra investment needed in local services, such as providing extra school and GP places and better bus services

1. Transform building regulations to ensure:
2. Ensure all new developments will be located and designed to ensure that residents do not need cars to live a full life
3. Introduce rent controls
4. End no-fault evictions

Councillor Andy Mellen, leader of the Green councillors on Mid Suffolk District council, said: "Greens make a difference when elected. I want to see a stop to unplanned development. Instead, we need the delivery of truly affordable and sustainable homes, with the infrastructure provided so that the 'liveability' of our communities is improved.

"These are the practical, radical solutions that Greens across the country are offering to implement if elected on 4 May."

Carla Denyer added:

"This year's local elections are a crucial step for the Greens as we look to not only defend hundreds of seats across the country but continue our unprecedented growth, breaking through on to new councils and gaining control of councils where we already have representation.

"With the cost of living crisis, the climate crisis and more and more people looking for a fresh political voice, it has never been more important to get Greens elected."

Adrian Ramsay added:

"Over the last few years, we have seen Green councillors elected in record numbers, winning seats from Labour and the Conservatives in roughly equal numbers, in rural and urban areas alike. We know that people like what they see.

"That's why we are fully expecting this growth to continue this year right across the country, be that in places like Lancaster and Lewes where we are already in administration, or Mid Suffolk where we could gain control of the

local authority.” [3]

Notes

1. The number of households in England is projected to rise from 23.2 million in 2018 to 26.9 million in 2043 – an average increase of around 150,000 households per year. (ONS, Household projections for England, 2018-based: Principal projection dataset, 29 June 2020). According to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities’ ‘English housing survey 2021–22’, 4.6 million households (19%) rent privately; 4 million households (17%) rent from a social landlord, and 65% of households in 2021–22 were owner occupiers. These comprised 35% who owned their home outright and 30% with a mortgage.

2. <https://www.suffolknews.co.uk/bury-st-edmunds/news/scale-of-suffolks-social-housing-problems-unveiled-9299006/>

3. Greens currently hold 12 seats on Mid Suffolk District Council and are the second largest party, with the ruling Conservatives on 17 seats. Greens could take control of Mid Suffolk on 4th May. Much of the Mid Suffolk District is in the new Waveney Valley Parliamentary constituency where Adrian Ramsay is standing as the Parliamentary candidate. Across Suffolk as a whole Greens hold 31 seats, nearly all of which have been won from the Conservatives..

4. The Green Party currently has 563 councillors on 172 principal authority councils in England and Wales. It will be defending 281 seats in this year’s local elections in May and will be looking to make further gains across the country.

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