

Sian Berry speech – Green Candidate for London Mayor



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Thank you so much.

I'm honoured to be chosen as the candidate for mayor in the Green Party's biggest and boldest ever campaign across London.

And I'm so excited to be standing alongside such an incredible team of people ready to represent Londoners on the Assembly.

I want to take this moment to thank everyone who put themselves forward, and to all the Green members who played a part in selecting us as candidates. Thank you so much.

This is the most exciting slate of candidates that the Greens have ever put forward for these elections – I've worked with many of these amazing, diverse, experienced, passionate, young, talented people – and Greens at last are starting to represent the real diversity of our amazing city – in our people and in the issues we are known for achieving on too.

Our record over the past two decades at delivering for Londoners can only grow with more of these brilliant people in City Hall in the Green Group of Assembly Members.

I can't wait to start campaigning with all of them and continuing to cement our status as London's third party.

Greens are well known for our good ideas.

We look at the challenges of today, and tomorrow, and we find the right, and the fair, solutions.

And on the national stage too – from the four day week, to the Green New Deal, where Greens lead, others follow.

But here in London, elected Greens don't just come up with good ideas.

With Assembly Members in City Hall we have the power to put them into practice.

Greens make change happen.

Greens deliver for Londoners.

For nearly three years now, I have worked alongside Caroline Russell in the London Assembly.

We learned how to be effective Assembly Members from the amazing Greens before us since 2000, and we are all proof of the power of having Greens in the room – we get things done and we deliver.

Greens early on won the introduction of the London Living Wage

Last year won ballots for Londoners on estates whose homes face demolition.

And we won £45 million in funding for youth services after we exposed the huge cuts across the city.

On so many issues, we've pushed for action, when the Mayor has dragged his heels.

And just in the last few months, because of elected Greens pushing for action, the Mayor has

agreed to make emergency plans for climate change,

to campaign for rent control powers,

and to support a People's Vote on Brexit.

When you put a Green into power in London, you get someone who delivers for London.

There are so many problems facing our city today.

But few are more pressing than the housing crisis, which continues to get worse and worse.

For far too long, development in London, even on our public land, has been led by the biggest of the big developers.

But Greens have been listening to Londoners about the solutions to the housing crisis for many years. And when we make a promise, we deliver.

We promised to fight for the right for residents to have a real say – a ballot, a final say that matters – in any regeneration plans. We faced

resistance from the Mayor, but now we have ballots in force and being held for schemes the GLA funds and beyond those too.

But we need to go further – not just to prevent the worst of the top down ideas...

But to put real power in the hands of Londoners to find the right places for our new homes and plan for the housing we need from the ground up.

That's why a Green Mayor will give Londoners control over more land across our city with a People's Land Bank.

Greens will empower Londoners to seek out the places where we can build new homes, and choose how to build them.

Right across the city there is so much land going to waste.

Empty buildings. Underused car parks and garages. Pockets of unused space. Space around and above with no need to demolish anything to make way.

Our People's Land Bank would work with estate residents and community groups across the city – to map and find these empty buildings and spaces that we can build on.

Because the solution to our housing crisis isn't just about bricks and mortar. It's about giving people the power to plan what happens to their city.

It's about making sure houses are built to be homes, not speculative financial assets for the rich.

Our People's Land Bank will bring communities together and put community organising at the heart of solving the housing crisis.

From the housing crisis to the climate crisis, only Greens have the answers to the most pressing problems facing our city today.

London is overdue a Green Mayor and the fresh ideas – and the record of delivery – that we bring.

Every single Mayor so far has failed Londoners on the biggest issues.

They are all over social media but nowhere to be seen in our communities actually listening to Londoners.

People know now that Labour's slogans and the Conservatives' vested interests don't lead to the action we need. They know that the Lib Dems are dwindling – and people are ready for real change.

I'm here today to tell you that Greens are delivering.

Other parties let Londoners down. But Greens listen to Londoners, and we act on what you say.

Where other parties offer empty promises, we get results.

Every single Green you put in City Hall next year will deliver for Londoners.

Other parties can take up Green ideas in the end, but it always takes years for them to catch up with us. Why should London wait?

Vote Green in 2020.

Thank you.

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