Zack Polanski and Hannah Spencer in Manchester to announce plan to revive our high streets

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Zack Polanski and Hannah Spencer hit up a Manchester high street last week to speak to local businesses and announce the party's three-step plan to bring our high streets back to life.

The Green Party's leader and its newest MP were in sunny Levenshulme in Hannah's constituency of Gorton and Denton, speaking to shopkeepers and outlining the Green Party's vision for our high streets to be places that serve our communities – not just the private profits of corporations.

Communities before corporations: the Green vision for high streets

Our high streets should be hubs for our communities.

Places where small, local businesses thrive; where empty spaces are used for the benefit of the community; and where residents can have direct input into how their neighbourhoods are planned and developed.

But many of our high streets have had the life sucked out of them over the years, as local businesses have been squeezed out and huge chains have crowded in.

The result: too many corporations funnelling wealth out of the community; too many spaces left empty for too long; and too little say for local people over the space at the heart of their community.

Hannah Spencer and Zack Polanski in sunny Levenshulme (Photo: Grace Jackson)

As Hannah said: “Too many of our high streets are either boarded up or full of huge companies that suck money out of our local economies and pay profits to big bosses and private shareholders.”

“Our high streets can and should go back to being places that serve the needs of the communities they’re in, instead of making corporate chains even richer.”

So how would the Green Party go about reviving high streets and enabling local communities to reclaim them?

Three steps to revive the high street

Hannah and Zack laid out three simple steps with one common goal: putting the local community first.

The plan:

1. Affordable leases for local businesses on every high street to end the dominance of multinational chains and to help independent traders to thrive.

2. The use of powers such as compulsory purchase orders to bring long-term

empty shops back into public use – bringing art, leisure and music back into the heart of the community.

3. A real voice for residents in shaping their high streets, putting decisions in the hands of local people and making sure the money spent in the local community stays there.

KING KARA
we buy
we sell

Hannah Spencer and Zack Polanski in sunny Levenshulme (Photo: Grace Jackson)

Zack said: “Green Party councillors would put the interests of the local community first.”

“Our three-step plan will keep wealth in the very communities that generate it and make high streets places that reflect local priorities.”

Hannah added: “Our three-step plan will reverse high street decline and give us back town centres that we can be proud of.”

Help us elect councillors we can be proud of

Of course, Zack and Hannah weren’t just in Manchester to talk local high streets – but also local elections.

Polling day on 7 May is just over a week away and it is still all to play for.

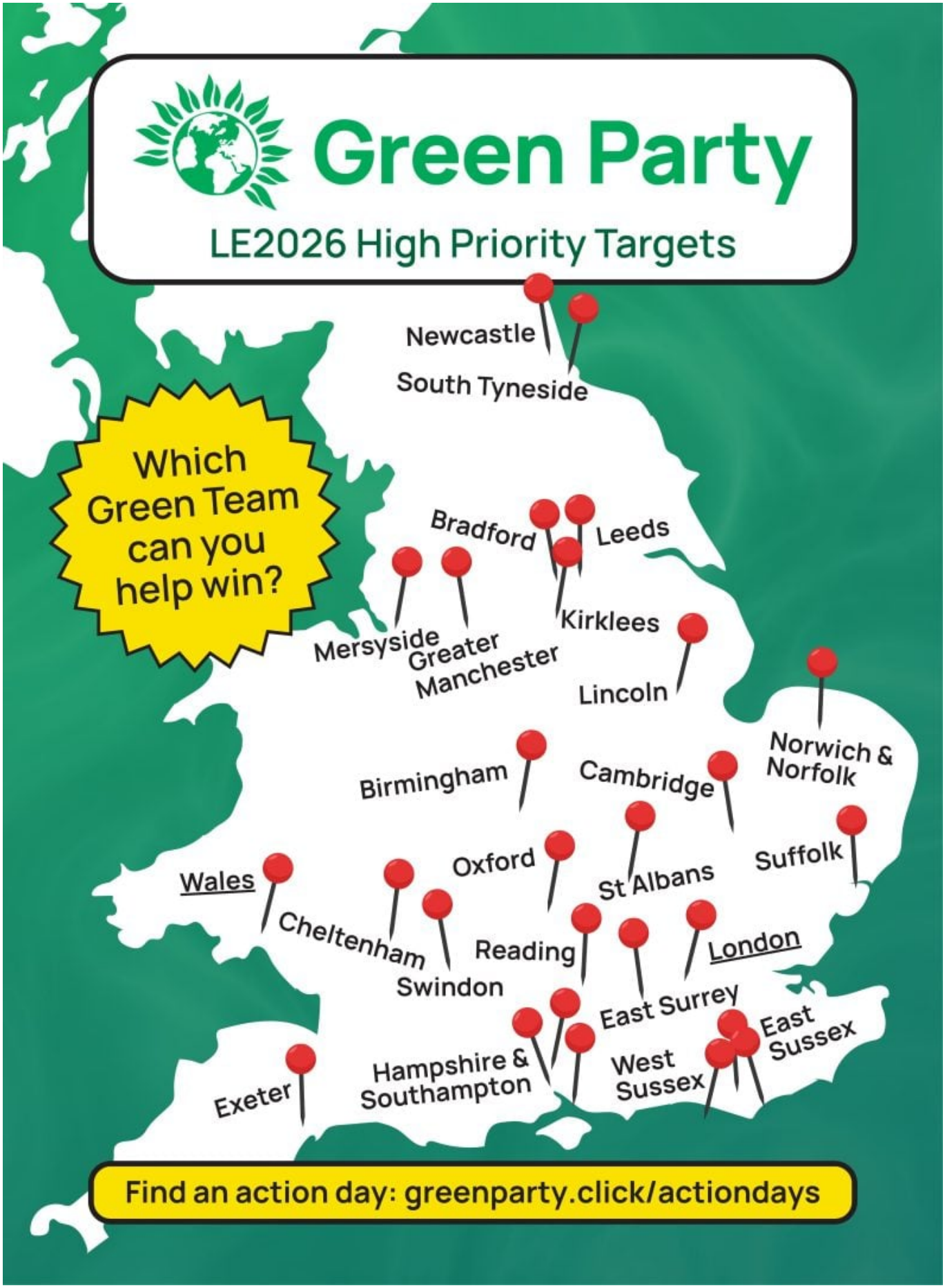
Speaking in Gorton and Denton, Zack told media that Hannah’s stunning victory over Reform and Labour showed there are no longer any “no go” areas for the Greens, and the party is focused on “stopping Reform in their tracks and replacing Labour”.

Greens beat Reform in Manchester and again in Kent thanks to the incredible turnout of Green campaigners.

We can win big all over the country next Thursday – but we’ll need your help.

You can help us replace Labour and defeat Reform. There are action days all over the country. Find one near you and sign up today.

Quick question, are you on the Zack Polanski call later today? If you’re a member, **check your emails** for an invite to a confidential briefing on the final stretch of the local and Senedd campaigns. You don’t want to miss it!



All featured photos: Grace Jackson

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Green reaction to Rachel Reeves considering one year rent freeze

28 April 2026 / 28 April 2026 by Green Party

Responding to the chancellor, Rachel Reeves, allegedly considering imposing a one-year rent freeze on private sector homes in the wake of the impact of the Iran war on the cost of living, Green MP, Carla Denyer, said:

“When the public is crying out for bold action to end the affordability crisis, reluctant half-measures floated in the press won’t cut it. If this Labour government is in any way serious about improving the lives of the 11 million private renters in England, I challenge them to announce a package of rent controls now, in full, as the Green Party has been campaigning for for years.

“I have spent over a decade making the case for rent controls as an essential part of making housing truly affordable, alongside funding councils properly to build and buy more council homes, and scrapping Thatcher’s ‘Right to Buy’ council home sell-off scheme.

“I can’t help but notice that after years of Labour ministers telling me their party does not support rent controls, and after rejecting my attempts since 2024 to amend the Renters’ Rights Act to include rent control powers, the Chancellor is choosing now, the week before the local elections, to ‘consider’ the idea. Could it be that they have been out door-knocking and discovered that our policies to protect renters are cutting through to a public fed up with Labour’s failures?”

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Greens to call for ‘a boost for buses’ to breathe life into struggling communities and ease the affordability crisis.

26 April 2026 / 26 April 2026 by Green Party

Green Party leader Zack Polanski on a campaign visit to Newcastle today, will say that the experiment on bus privatisation has been an unmitigated disaster, and Green councillors will fight to bring back buses into public control.

The Greens will make bus fares free for all people under 22 years, and Zack Polanski will say that reliable and accessible public transport is one of the best tools we have at our disposal to help tackle both the cost-of-living crisis and climate crisis.

Buses are the most used form of public transport in England, but usage has taken a huge and sustained drop recently, down from 4.6 billion journeys in 2009 to 3.6 billion in 2024.

Zack Polanski will say that,

“Years of deregulation have led to soaring fares, unreliable services and cut routes. Bus privatisation has been an unmitigated disaster. We need to bring buses back into public control so that local councils, who know what their communities need best, can put a ceiling on how much can be charged and make sure their communities are well served. Spiralling transport costs is one of the greatest causes of the affordability crisis and lack of services and the expense of fares affects rural communities in particular.

“Electing Green councillors will help end this and herald in a new age of the bus, to help rebuild our struggling high streets and boost our communities.”

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