

Vote Green to protect local services and the environment, co-leader says



7 April 2017

***Party standing record number of candidates**

***Co-leader Jonathan Bartley launches campaign in Worcester**

***Campaign priorities listed in five point pledge**

The Green Party has pledged to protect the environment after Brexit and oppose cuts to local services as it launched its local elections campaign this morning.

Co-leader Jonathan Bartley launched the campaign in Worcester today, where Green councillors hold the balance of power [1]. The party is aiming to attract voters across the country who feel let down by other parties.

Over 90% of people in the UK live within 20km of a site protected under the EU's nature laws [2] and Green councillors will be fighting to protect the local environment after Brexit. The Green Party is campaigning for a new Environmental Protection Act to replace EU legislation [3].

The Green Party will be challenging council cuts at a local level as well as opposing an extreme Brexit. Candidates will be campaigning to stop cuts to essential services and calling for investment in affordable housing, clean transport, healthcare and education. On Worcestershire County Council, the two Green councillors have held the council to account for the building of an environmentally damaging new incinerator and for attempting to reduce bus services.

The party has unveiled a five point pledge for its local elections campaign. Green councillors will fight for:

***Local green spaces**

***Decent social care**

***Air fit to breathe**

***Affordable homes**

***Action on climate change**

The Green Party is fielding a record number of candidates in the elections on May 4, with 1,561 standing across England, Scotland and Wales [4].

Bartley said:

"Brexit is an unprecedented threat to the environment and puts 40 years of legislation at risk. These laws protect our air, water and climate and they affect everyone in the UK who values our natural world.

"Our message today is clear: vote Green on May 4 and our councillors will stand up for the environment, whether they are fighting fracking, improving air quality, investing in renewable power and natural flood defences or divesting council pensions from fossil fuels.

"Wherever they are elected, Green councillors make a meaningful difference in their communities, by working with other progressive parties to improve people's lives and oppose unnecessary cuts to local services. Everyone deserves proper social care and to live in their own home.

"The Green Party is the only party fighting both an extreme Brexit and Tory Government cuts, protecting public services locally while strengthening relationships internationally."

Notes:

1. Worcester City Council was one of the first to adopt the Living Wage. The two Green councillors also worked with other parties to set aside money in next year's budget to install solar panels on a council-owned multi-storey car park, generating income as well as operating electric car charging points. They also helped introduce energy efficiency measures at the Grade 1 listed Guild Hall and to plant trees in air pollution hotspots to help reduce health problems.
2. The contributions of the EU nature directives to the CBD and other multilateral environmental agreements. *Conservation Letters*, 9(6), 479-488. Beresford, A. E., Buchanan, G. M., Sanderson, F. J., Jefferson, R., & Donald, P. F. (2016).
3. <https://inews.co.uk/essentials/news/environment/caroline-lucas-accuses-government-extraordinary-complacency-brexit/>
4. The Green Party also has candidates in five mayoral elections on May 4. Will Patterson is standing in Greater Manchester, Tom Crone in Liverpool City Region, James Burn in West Midlands, Julie Howell in Cambridgeshire & Peterborough and Darren Hall in West of England. Jess Mayo is contesting the Manchester Gorton parliamentary by-election.

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