



Green Party
for the common good

South East Dorset Green Party

Local Manifesto

Website: <http://sedorset.greenparty.org.uk/>

Facebook pages: Bournemouth Green Party and
Friends of South East Dorset Green Party

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FOREWORD

South East Dorset Green Party is active in the area covered by Bournemouth, Christchurch, Poole and the surrounding areas. We cover the five Parliamentary Constituencies of Bournemouth East, Bournemouth West, Christchurch, Poole, Mid Dorset and North Poole as well as part of the South Dorset constituency that sits within Purbeck District Council, and part of the North Dorset constituency that sits within East Dorset District Council.



Since the 1970s local democracy has been steadily weakened as many of the powers of local authorities have been taken over by central Government. As a result, participation in local elections has also steadily declined to the extent that most people eligible to vote do not take part. The Green Party

takes the view that this trend can be reversed – local people will be far more likely to participate in local democracy if they know that their participation can make a real difference to the life of their locality. All policies recommended for this local manifesto are in line with national Green Party policies, which can be viewed in full by visiting the website at <http://www.greenparty.org.uk/>

ECONOMIC STABILITY

The pursuit of endless growth has led to cycles of boom and bust, and a consumer and debt culture which has greatly contributed to today's economic and ecological crises. This current model of economic activity is not sustainable. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a poor indicator of true progress and does not adequately measure people's sense of well-being. We believe that nationally and regionally we should be striving for economic stability, security, fairness, greater equality and sustainability.



Job creation priorities must therefore be for more quality jobs and job security in low carbon industries, including renewable energy, recycling, eco-housing, local tourism, organic farming, local food, and innovative manufacturing and knowledge-based industries, either by legislation or incentives. Strong and resilient local economies are built on locally based economic activity, driven as far as possible by locally owned and run

enterprises, engaged in the local trading of goods and services. This has environmental and social benefits.

We support a Citizen's Income, and for the moment, a rise in the national minimum wage level to that of the 'Living Wage' campaign. In London, an independent study of the business benefits of implementing a Living Wage policy found that more than 80% of employers believe that the Living Wage has led to improved performance of their staff, while absenteeism has fallen by approximately 25%.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Promote the introduction of a Living Wage for all Council employees.
- Introduce the Living Wage Employer Mark to Dorset, Bournemouth, Christchurch and Poole, based on the successful scheme in London set up by the Living Wage Foundation, offering the award to all local employers already paying the Living Wage, or those committed to an agreed timetable of implementation.
- When considering procurement of public sector sub-contracted goods and services, prioritise businesses and social enterprises that pay a Living Wage, have no more than a 10:1 pay ratio (highest earner to lowest earner) and can demonstrate their local connections.

- Through contracts, publicity and local planning guidance documents, support
 - the growth of innovation in manufacturing and in the knowledge-based and renewable energy-generating sectors.
 - moves towards a circular economy: one which uses and re-uses materials, encouraging re-manufacturing, less consumption and less waste.
- Ensure long-term empty industrial units are offered rate-free for a negotiated period to support local start-up enterprises and businesses. Ensure, as far as possible, that economic regeneration projects and investment include support and space for local businesses and enterprises.
- Provide more affordable housing by incentivizing reuse of empty buildings and building new homes using income generated from taxing second, holiday homes.
- Lead a Dorset-wide 'Buy Local, Buy Green' campaign to prioritise procurement of local and sustainable produce.
- Support Farmers' Markets through increased frequency and wider promotion to help them flourish.
- Support the Transition Town movement across the County and publicise ideas, initiatives and achievements to build more resilient local economies.
- Develop a Fair Trade procurement policy for Council spending.

PUBLIC AND SOCIAL SERVICES

The Green Party believes that public and social services are the bedrock of a civilised society. We appreciate that the country has huge debts that need to be reduced and managed but believe that the drastic cuts being made to public services and their rapid privatisation by the current government are largely ideologically driven and completely unnecessary.

Green Party councillors and activists, up and down the country, have been at the forefront of campaigns against cuts and privatisation in our workplaces, community and welfare services. Furthermore, the Green Party believes the cuts are not only morally wrong; they are also financially short-sighted. Many public services save more money than they cost by preventing a host of social and health problems. Dismantling our public services is no way to build a fair society or a strong economy.

Our vision is to restore and strengthen public and social services. We want to increase the status of working in the public sector, to increase wages, to increase job satisfaction, and to reduce excessive private profit in health and care sectors. We want to see a Dorset-wide policy to integrate health and social care to provide better, more cost-effective services, and to fight for publicly-provided



health care. We want to improve the quality of life of 'cared for' people and those committed to care for them. In Dorset, 29% of the population is aged 65 or over (national average 19%). In South East Dorset 12% of the population is providing unpaid care to a relative or friend (national average 10.3%). Many of these are themselves

elderly or not in good health and can be caring for 50 or more hours a week.

Local housing, particularly in Bournemouth, is amongst the least affordable in the country – key workers can be priced out of the market and young people leave to live and work elsewhere. 47.6% of our children are living in low income families (national average 45.4%, South West Dorset average 40.5%). In Bournemouth 16.2% of pupils are eligible for Free School Meals, one of the Government's indicators of poverty.

The Green Party opposes the erosion of accountability of schools to the local community by the Government's programme of academies and free schools. These policies have reduced the Local Authority services for monitoring and supporting their schools.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Work to ensure the highest quality services are delivered to all the people of Dorset.
- Focus on returning services in-house wherever possible, within the financial and contractual limitations of existing provisions.
- Ensure where services are contracted out to private providers, e.g. Community Health and Children's Services, the Council take full regard of their own equality policies and that no decisions are taken without the full and fair consultation of those affected by such contracts.
- Focus on vulnerable people as a priority and ensure that care is based on need.
- Value the views of service users and involve them in consultations about the design and delivery of services.

- Work with Trade Unions as important partners in forming policy regarding public service delivery and in achieving and maintaining fair pay and conditions for employees within the public services.
- Oppose, as far as possible, short-term 'money-saving' measures that cost more in the long term; show how public-service provision can prevent problems such as homelessness, crime and social break-down.
- Support and invest in the workforce to increase training opportunities and job satisfaction for those doing 'unskilled' jobs and to recognise and celebrate the value of such work.

PLANNING

South East Dorset has a population of 455,250 (61% of the county as a whole), with the majority living in the Bournemouth/Poole/Christchurch conurbation. We have one of the fastest-growing populations in the country – since the 2001 census, the average growth in Bournemouth is 12.3% and Poole 6.7% (national average 5.6%).

The Green Party seeks planning solutions which will help Dorset maximise its natural and human resources while preserving and enhancing the environment. We seek to involve local people in planning decisions. We must balance the needs of the thousands who visit Dorset annually while maintaining flourishing urban and rural communities for those who live and work here. We want to see thriving economies in our high streets. Planning also needs to support the region's growing renewable energy-generating, manufacturing and knowledge-based sectors.

The Green Party will support a strategic planning framework that encourages the use of local resources wherever practicable; prioritises locally based businesses and enterprises and increases training and apprenticeship opportunities. This sustainable approach will ensure a flourishing economy, reduce the need for long commutes, maintain a young labour force in the County and keep our heritage intact.

Dorset Council and Bournemouth/Christchurch/Poole Borough (BCP) are responsible for planning at a strategic level such as Dorset-wide structural plans and planning applications for mineral extraction, waste management, transport, schools and libraries. Waste and transport are treated in separate areas of this manifesto.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Consider the long term rather than purely the short to medium term impacts of planning decisions.
- Promote the use of the Strategic Environmental Assessment* in all planning strategy at local and regional levels.
- Prioritise social needs at strategic planning level when considering brownfield land.
- Ensure flood risk assessments take into account both adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.
- Prioritise water conservation and management by ensuring protection from deterioration in the quality, quantity or natural flow of underground, surface and coastal waters.
- Ensure all new developments incorporate collection and reuse of water schemes and assess the feasibility of a sustainable water supply in areas identified as having significant growth.
- Promote the use of wetland, natural and constructed, in water quality and flood management.
- Promote technical and management solutions with planning applications, to reduce carbon emissions to as near carbon-neutral as possible.
- Promote use of environmentally sustainable building practices above and beyond current national standards in both new build and existing structures, through favourable planning consideration.
- Push for Council managed property to become carbon neutral through energy generation and efficiency measures.
- Review Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Minerals Core Strategy Survey (www.dorsetforyou.com/mcs) process to provide clearer guidelines and more thorough community evaluation procedures.



*Strategic Environmental Assessments evaluate, then change or mitigate existing objectives to more sustainable and ecologically benign projects. They consider cumulative effects of planning proposals to determine potential build-up of pollutants, noise, space crowding, fragmentation of habitat and other issues over time. In general these effects are not currently

dealt with effectively in environmental impact assessments.

ENERGY AND CLIMATE CHANGE



Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing society and we all play a part in it through the energy and fuel we use in our daily lives. Reducing the amount of energy we use and using it more efficiently is the most cost effective way to help reduce the impacts of climate change.

Reducing energy use and ending fuel poverty are key commitments for the Green Parties in Dorset but the county also has huge potential to generate energy from renewable sources such as the wind, sun, tidal power and waste food/wood. By fully supporting and enabling the growth of renewable energy industries, Dorset can stimulate its economy and significantly reduce its contribution to climate change.

Generating our energy from renewable sources also reduces the need for nuclear power stations and exploration into environmentally damaging energy sources, such as shale gas (fracking) - both of which the Green Party fundamentally opposes.

The numbers of those living in 'fuel poverty' (defined as needing to spend more than 10% of income on heating) are as follows: Bournemouth 13.9%, Purbeck 12.3%, Poole 8.9% of population. This is due to housing conditions, a relatively low income, or a combination of the two. Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Councils have together developed an Action Plan to eliminate fuel poverty by 2016, and to reduce CO2 emissions by 30% by 2020.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Promote small incentives for localised small scale renewables and energy saving installations.
- Prioritise the development and use of renewable energy technologies and oppose nuclear and expansion of fossil fuel based energy generation.
- Prioritise community owned small renewable energy programmes but support large scale projects where appropriate.
- Set annual carbon budgets for council services and report on these alongside the financial budget each year to ensure ambitious carbon reduction targets are met.
- Circulate information to all Councillors and appropriate officers on renewable energy technologies and their economic benefits to Dorset communities.
- Instigate a county-wide energy efficiency and insulation programme, targeting residents living in fuel poverty as a priority.

- Work with others to deliver an integrated education and media campaign to keep climate change at the forefront of people's minds; encourage behavioural change across all sections of the community and emphasise financial savings from such changes.
- Oppose applications for shale-gas extraction (fracking).
- Support the aims outlined in the Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan.

TRANSPORT

We need to create a transport network in Dorset that is integrated, affordable, safe and accessible for all, and causes minimum negative environmental impact. We recognise the social and cultural value of people being able to visit different places and thus the value of a countrywide integrated network. To achieve this requires strategic planning at a national level. We would encourage localisation of resource use to decrease the need for goods transportation, and decentralisation of jobs to decrease commuter-miles. We would campaign to use regulation for maximum pollution/emission levels of various vehicles, and beyond that, tax fuels by volume according to the economic burden of counteracting their environmental impact -so phasing out vehicle excise duty. We will place high priority on increasing the safety, convenience and comfort of walking and cycling, and on funding improvements to public transport.



Traffic is the region's most significant contributor to air pollution which has serious effects on human health. Traffic congestion is costing the UK economy nearly £4.3bn a year and every urban household an average £107 per year in wasted fuel and time. Road traffic collisions are a significant contributor to premature deaths in the region,

particularly of young people; around half of road deaths in the South West are people under 30. Road danger is a strong disincentive to walk and cycle, and therefore can indirectly contribute to rising levels of obesity. Busy and fast roads sever communities; the physical presence of motor traffic, as well as the risk of crashes and injuries, present barriers to interpersonal networks and social contact.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Introduce area-specific traffic reduction targets, with the highest targets for urban areas suffering severe congestion and air pollution, and set annual Dorset-wide transport pollution reduction targets.
- Ensure the environmental impact (primarily pollution: chemical, noise, visual) of alternatives are considered before allocating funding to proposed transport projects and developments. Also, the social and health benefits of non-motorised options should be considered.
- Introduce a Car Park/Garage Tax, based on 'market rent value' (this could result in a corresponding decrease in Council Tax or Business Rates). These tax revenues would be used to subsidise green sustainable transport, including subsidised rural bus services, car clubs in towns, and initiatives proposed by businesses in Dorset to reduce car journeys to work.
- Support, where feasible, the reopening of old railway lines and stations, and creation of new non-road based public transport schemes, ensuring they are properly integrated.
- Introduce through-ticketing to cover journeys on more than one mode of transport, and speed up the introduction of SMART-card ticketing.
- Ensure greater provision for bicycle spaces on trains and at stations, and provision for carriage of bicycles on certain bus routes across the County, beginning with Council supported services (this should be free or minimal extra cost – say no more than a 10% surcharge).
- Establish secure and covered 'cycle park & ride' sites at major bus interchanges and junctions.
- Work with a network of sustainable transport bodies to improve infrastructure and facilities for walking, cycling and public transport across the county.
- Push for the expansion of the rail freight network across Dorset.
- Ensure transport considerations are integral to all new housing, business or industrial developments; ensure that anyone could live or work happily in such a development without a car.
- Push for all housing developments within urban areas to incorporate secure cycling facilities, reliable and frequent public transport links and easy access to a car club.
- Use supplementary planning guidance to ensure developers fully fund sustainable transport infrastructure and facilities and that these are established before the completion of the development.
- In urban areas reduce taxi licensing fees for electric or hybrid vehicles.
- Extend 20mph speed limit sections of streets where this is judged to be important for safety, following requests by local residents.
- Establish a Dorset-wide transport forum for input by the public and existing public transport users groups to get a grass roots picture of needs and issues.
- Support the direction of aims outlined in the Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 2011 to 2026.

WASTE AS A RESOURCE

The Green Party believes in a waste hierarchy that places waste reduction at the top, followed by reuse and then recycling. However, it may take some years to reach the ultimate goal of zero waste through this hierarchy. In the meantime, waste is no longer a problem that needs solving by environmentally destructive landfill or incineration. Our waste can now be dealt with in an environmentally safe manner, be a source of revenue and provide energy.



Our waste often contains many valuable materials that can be reused and/or sold commercially for profit. Extracting resources from waste is more accessible, cheaper and less environmentally damaging than the use of virgin resources.

The Green Party is pushing for waste treatment technologies that avoid landfill or incineration, which produces toxic ash which must be landfilled in special sites. We support fully automated Material Recycling Facilities (MRF),

Plasma Gasification (PG) which safely converts waste to gas, electricity and building materials and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) which converts organic waste into soil conditioner and gas which can be pumped directly into the national grid. Technologies such as PG and AD can be scaled down to work with any town of around 8,000 providing the potential for community owned generating sources, and a combination of energy from these and other abundant renewable sources in Dorset could enable the County to be self-sufficient in energy within a reasonably short time.

On average each person in the UK generates just over half a tonne of household waste per year.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Implement a Sustainable Waste Management and Resource Recovery system that identifies a strategy for dealing with all wastes during a period of transition from a fossil fuel based economy to a low carbon economy.
- Oppose licensing of incinerators.
- Implement alternative technologies to deal with residual waste, such as Plasma Gasification and Anaerobic Digestion, for the safe, efficient, sustainable conversion of waste into electricity, gas, soil conditioner and building materials.

- Establish models of community ownership of small waste-treatment plants so that local people benefit from the energy generated and gain financial returns.
- Provide incentives to encourage the public and businesses to reduce, reuse, repair and minimise waste.
- Provide staff training and incentive-based targets for all Local Authority waste managers and commercial operatives and staff at recycling and resource recovery sites.
- Engage in public education programmes about the true costs of waste management and the benefits of waste minimisation, materials recovery and alternative technologies.
- Ensure that, wherever practical, waste is transported (other than very short local journeys), by the most environmentally sound means.
- Work with supermarkets and other retailers and the communities they operate in, to reduce the amount of unnecessary packaging.

DECISION MAKING



The Green Party believes that a democracy should allow its citizens to contribute ideas for consideration by those making decisions, and that there should be widespread opportunity for open and informed debate. Freedom of information and open-ness of government and its procedures are vital to accountability and the creation of a more democratic society.

The Green Party also believes passionately in electoral reform. We will continue to call for a more democratic electoral system for national and local government, where representation is as directly proportional to votes as possible. The Green Party supports a committee system of local government because we believe single party cabinets take decision-making powers away from whole councils by placing them in the hands of a few individuals.

Green Party Councillors will:

- Support a politically-balanced committee system of local government to provide for direct member involvement in decision-making.
- Offer local people a greater say in designing, delivering and monitoring local services, by giving them power to set up local neighbourhood councils with devolved community budgets and decision-making powers (parish equivalents, probably current wards).
- Better publicise existing Council surveys, consultations and on-line polls, to provide feed-back to councillors and officers.
- Deliver fully open and transparent government, ensuring council records and information are easily available.
- Ensure open access to information on all public and private organisations performing public functions and/or operating with public funds.
- Encourage cross-party cooperation and oppose a system of whipping councillors into line; Green Party Councillors will call upon other parties to support this.
- Continue to call for proportional representation at national and local level.

REFERENCES AND FURTHER INFORMATION

Reference for all policy areas

POLICIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY

<http://policy.greenparty.org.uk>

SOUTH EAST DORSET GREEN PARTY

<http://southeastdorset.greenparty.org.uk/>

Economic stability

LIVING WAGE FOUNDATION

<http://www.livingwage.org.uk/about-livingwage>

Public and social services

SOUTH WEST OBSERVATORY STATISTICS

<http://www.swo.org.uk/>

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/statistics>

Planning

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/statistics>

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/planning>

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/dorset-minerals-eip>

BOURNEMOUTH, CHRISTCHURCH AND POOLE (BCP) COUNCIL

<https://www.bcpCouncil.gov.uk/Home.aspx>

Decision Making

GREEN PARTY POLICY: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND GOVERNMENT

<http://policy.greenparty.org.uk/pa#PA252>

OPEN GOVERNMENT STANDARDS

<http://www.opengovstandards.org/>

Energy and climate change

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/statistics>

The Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Energy Efficiency Strategy and Action Plan

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/environment-and-sustainability/ClimateChangeandCarbonReduction/Documents/BournemouthDorsetandPooleRenewableEnergyStrategyto2020.pdf>

<https://www.bournemouth.gov.uk/environment-and-sustainability/ClimateChangeandCarbonReduction/Documents/BournemouthDorsetandPooleRenewableEnergyStrategyto2020.pdf>

Transport

SOUTH WEST OBSERVATORY:

Travel, Transport and Health

<http://www.swo.org.uk/>

ROAD TRAFFIC TECHNOLOGY:

<http://www.roadtraffic-technology.com/>

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

Bournemouth, Poole and Dorset Local Transport Plan 2011-2026

<http://www.dorsetforyou.com/media.jsp?mediaid=165300&filetype=pdf>

Waste as a resource

FRIENDS OF THE EARTH

<http://www.foe.co.uk/>

DORSET COUNTY COUNCIL

Bournemouth, Dorset and Poole Waste Local Plan

<https://www.dorsetCouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/dorset-county-council/waste-planning-policy/waste-local-plan.aspx>

<https://www.dorsetCouncil.gov.uk/planning-buildings-land/planning-policy/dorset-county-council/waste-planning-policy/waste-local-plan.aspx>

THINK LEADERSHIP

<http://www.thinkleadership.org.uk/waste.cfm>