

WEST DEVON GREEN PARTY MANIFESTO 2021

WEST DEVON GREEN PARTY HAS A FAR-REACHING VISION FOR A GREEN DEVON THAT IS INCLUSIVE, EFFECTIVE AND ACHIEVABLE. IF YOU WANT TO SEE CHANGE THAT IMPROVES LIFE FOR ALL RESIDENTS, VOTE FOR THE GREEN PARTY.

NOW IS THE TIME FOR A GREEN RECOVERY FROM THE COVID CRISIS. WE NEED A SAFER, FAIRER SOCIETY THAT PRIORITISES OUR COLLECTIVE WELLBEING AND PROTECTS THE NATURAL WORLD THAT WE ALL RELY ON. WE NEED STRONGER LOCAL ECONOMIES, LESS RELIANT ON GLOBAL SUPPLY CHAINS.

Here is our 12–point plan to achieve this pledge:

1. Planning – For too long local views on what is built and developed have been ignored. Top–down imposition of large–scale developments has left local communities to deal with all the negative impacts on local infrastructure, struggling health services, overcrowded schools, increased traffic congestion and inadequate public transport. Preventing development from harming communities and the environment is a Green priority.

2. Agriculture is also vital to Devon – we will do all we can to support farmers in looking after wildlife and the countryside, as well as promoting access to land for those seeking careers growing food. Improve marketing and consumption of local food and promote local markets for local producers.

3. Transport – Reliable and frequent public transport to more communities is essential for Devon, as are innovations such as car–share schemes and dial–a–ride services. More safe cycle routes should be provided for everyday trips to work, school and shops as well as for visitors and recreation. We will use council powers to promote e–bikes as accessible and practical alternatives to private car use.

4. Economy and Business – Tourism and hospitality are a major part of the local economy. We must protect the natural beauty of the countryside and coasts as well as the historic towns which attract visitors. Devon should lead in environmentally sustainable tourism.

5. Homelessness – Homelessness and poor–quality housing have increased hugely in recent years due to policies that favour expensive home ownership and unregulated private rentals over other types of accommodation. Waiting lists for social housing have increased. We will discourage second–home ownership and prioritise social and affordable housing for local people. Having a decent home is a human right. Empty homes will be brought back into use.

6. Enterprise – Devon should support small local enterprises including community businesses and promote local suppliers. We will promote investment in sustainable local jobs which pay a genuine ‘living’ wage. Locally owned and managed enterprises tend to provide more fulfilling jobs and retain wealth in local communities.

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7. Social Care – the social care budget is one of the largest areas of Council expenditure. Yet access to at-home social care and affordable residential care is poor. Excellent care services are essential to enable people to live at home for as long as possible. The Greens support the enhancement of care work as a professional career, with improved wages, good career progression and improved terms and conditions. There must be a fairer system for funding social care, and the removal of artificial barriers between health services and social care.

8. Children and Young People– Healthy, happy children are key to our future. Children's services are currently under resourced and stretched to capacity. We will prioritise early years services including greater access to children's mental health services and provide a range of educational opportunities. Early years nursery care should be free or low cost to use. A holistic service enfolded around the child is our aim. Opportunities for learning through play and non-academic activities are vital, as well as equitable access to technology and information.

9. Land Management – The Green party would promote land management to let nature and wildlife flourish, eg hedges cut only as much as safety requires, with verges as wildflower havens becoming the norm. All common areas should include wildflower meadow areas and the reinstating of ponds and creation of woodland areas where possible. Council contractors should have appropriate training. Chemical pesticides will be replaced by natural methods whenever possible. The Green party supports the Environmental Land Management scheme currently being trialed in Devon.

10. Building and Homes – The construction industry has been too slow to use sustainable building methods and builds few homes that are carbon neutral and energy efficient. It requires improved leadership to ensure all homes are built to meet the highest standards. 'Brownfield' sites and improvements to existing homes and buildings should be the focus rather than building on 'greenfield' sites. All homes should have easy access to green spaces and wildlife friendly environments.

11. Waste and Recycling – We should all be aiming to consume fewer resources, and to reuse and recycle everything we can, as an urgent priority. The Council must provide better leadership on this issue. The Green Party would ensure increased opportunities for the re-use of unwanted materials, and greatly improve recycling services.

12. Carbon reduction and the environmental emergency – The Green Party have been leading Devon's efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions – but there is so much more we can do. With more Green councillors we can move faster toward protecting our common environment, supporting people, changing careers to green jobs, and sharing resources more fairly.

FOR A FAIRER, GREENER DEVON