

A CITY
TO BE PROUD OF

A CITY
FOR EVERYONE

**A CITY
FOR THE FUTURE**



BRIGHTON & HOVE
GREEN PARTY MANIFESTO 2019

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Dear Resident,

We are proud of Brighton & Hove and know that you are too. We have heard you want change as well though, and we are committed to delivering it. Like you, we are ambitious about creating a city where everyone has a safer, happier future – and we want to do it together.

We have listened on the doorstep, in the community and to the experts. We know you want Brighton & Hove to remain a bold, vibrant, welcoming city and one where jobs pay enough for people to live well. Where small businesses thrive. Where everyone has a roof over their head. A city which leads the way on tackling the climate emergency. Where you benefit from the city's own generation of clean power and heat. Where we take care of everyone in our community. Where we can all breathe clean air, and the city is walkable, cyclable and crisscrossed by affordable electric buses. Where we have slashed plastic use and have a recycling service that is fit for purpose. Where residents are consulted on the decisions that shape their lives.

We will be honest about what is possible. No council can make this change alone, especially with funding cut to the bone. We want to draw upon your creativity and knowledge to transform Brighton & Hove into the country's greenest, fairest, and most democratic city. Greens across Europe are showing what is possible.

And where the Greens lead, we know others will follow.

Best wishes,



Councillor Phélim Mac Cafferty



Caroline Lucas



A CITY TO BE PROUD OF



Residents have told us that the local issues that concern them most are levels of litter, missed refuse and recycling collections and fly-tipping. They are worried by traffic volume, road safety, the poor train service and expensive buses; homelessness and the plastic that finds its way onto our beaches and into the sea.

Brighton & Hove's residents deserve better. So, what will the Green Party do about it?

A CLEAN CITY: PLASTICS, WASTE, RECYCLING AND CLEAN STREETS

Our priority is to deliver a waste and recycling service that works. We will start by revisiting the expensive private finance initiative (PFI) contract Labour agreed with Veolia in 2003, which a Conservative-led council extended to 2033, and which currently limits recycling levels. We will also:

- reduce waste, encourage re-use ahead of recycling and promote projects that use food waste to generate renewable energy
- care for our streets and seafront through a more effective street cleaning system
- make major events in Brighton & Hove single-use plastic-free by no later than 2020

TRANSPORT AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Residents want a healthy city which is easy to get around. We will invest in joined-up infrastructure for walking, cycling, electric buses, and other e-vehicles. We will also:

- expand clean air zones
- work with local communities to establish more green spaces and sustainable transport choices
- continue the roll-out of on-road, high-speed charging points for electric vehicles
- discount pay-by-phone parking charges for electric vehicles
- improve road safety through education and by expanding and enforcing 20 mph zones
- lobby public transport providers to reduce fares and improve services, thereby building on the improvements to bus lanes, bus stops and punctuality achieved when we led the council
- oppose cuts to - and fight for more frequent - train services, as Greens have already done so successfully in Preston Park, and support the Brighton Main Line 2 project

REDUCING HOMELESSNESS

The Green-led council (2011-15) earmarked an extra £1 million a year to reduce homelessness and was one of the first councils to develop an innovative “Housing First” programme of unconditional support to homeless people failed by traditional approaches. Even in opposition, we have forced changes to council rent policy to make rents genuinely affordable, expanded Housing First, and convinced the Labour council to fund a 365-day-a-year shelter. If we run the next council, we will seek to treble the impact of the Housing First programme. We will also:

- develop partnerships with community homelessness and church projects
- replace privately-run temporary and emergency accommodation with council-owned provision
- deliver a programme of quick-build non-traditional and modular homes
- sign up to a Bill of Rights for the homeless

A CITY FOR EVERYONE



We know residents are also proud of Brighton & Hove as a bold, vibrant, welcoming city. Secure, well-maintained and affordable housing, adequate services and proper support for marginalised groups should all be part of that welcome.

For years, council finances have been squeezed by increasing demand for critical services and savage funding cuts imposed by Conservative-led governments. Nationally, councils have begun to go bust. Greens will fight for adequate funding for local government, for progressive funding approaches and sources that allow councils to plan beyond the next financial year, and we will challenge PFI contracts.

HOUSING FOR EVERYONE

The Green council (2011-15) built Brighton & Hove's first council houses in a generation, oversaw the delivery of 508 affordable homes and set in motion construction projects that are still transforming the city today, including the new homes in the North Laine. In addition, we renovated council homes to make them more energy efficient, saving residents money, and we installed solar panels on 300 council homes. We will improve on that legacy by developing 1500 homes over four years on mostly brownfield sites including those above car parks and shopping centres. We will seek to buy the Brighton General Hospital site to avoid its privatisation. We will also:

- spend unused borrowing resources towards delivering 600 new council houses (the current Labour council has built fewer than 200)
- increase the help available for those struggling with housing costs
- increase the social housing stock by buying off-plan from developers
- encourage the building of carbon neutral housing
- introduce stricter ecological studies for urban fringe sites and ensure that any housing built there is 100% affordable

RIGHTS FOR TENANTS

We know how expensive private rented accommodation in Brighton & Hove can be and that council tax debt is the greatest problem for households. We have already pushed the council to adopt the Citizens Advice council tax protocol to help people in financial crisis. We will ensure that tenants get a fairer deal by setting up a council-run not-for-profit lettings agency and will press for rent controls. We will also:

- protect from eviction any council tenants in arrears due to the bedroom tax or Universal Credit
- take action against landlords guilty of health and safety violations

CHILDREN AND YOUTH SERVICES

We will protect funding for youth services and support the delivery of a new Brighton Youth Centre and more playgrounds. We will also:

- create a long-term health plan for the youth of the city
- maintain provision for children with additional support needs and for those from marginalised groups, including refugees and LGBT+ young people
- support early intervention programmes in schools to address sex discrimination and sexual harassment
- work with schools to encourage access to sports facilities and kitchens during school holidays

HEALTH AND CARE SERVICES

Greens believe in a publicly-owned and publicly-run National Health Service that is free at the point of use and includes social care and wide-reaching public health programmes. We will lobby for better mental health provision for the over-25s and tackle the causes of ill health: dirty air, barriers to getting active, malnutrition and poverty. We will also:

- resist cuts to the National Health Service and call providers to account over lengthening waiting times
- fund an HIV education and prevention programme, support funding for sexual health services and work to reduce rates of other sexually transmitted infections
- push to have privatised local health services returned to the public sector, and for the reinstatement of bursaries for nurses
- tackle malnutrition among frail older people and help them stay in their homes for longer
- reverse the policy of rationing provision of adult social care
- lobby central government to properly fund the Staying Put programme for 18-year-olds leaving care

EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY

We intend to protect, welcome and celebrate our BAME, LGBT+ and international residents. We will do this partly by reserving seats on the council's powerful Policy & Resources Committee for the BAME community.

Between 2011 and 2015 the Green council adapted 3,580 homes to meet the needs of disabled council and private tenants, was named the country's leading council for LGBT+ education and won awards for its work on trans equality. Since then, annual cuts to services have disproportionately affected carers (usually women) and those with disabilities or from marginalised communities. We will always oppose these unfair cuts, and if re-elected we will:

- improve support for residents with disabilities
- protect funding for Brighton Women's Centre
- lobby against the state pension inequality affecting women that has resulted from increases in the state pension age
- protect per capita funding for Violence Against Women and Girls programmes and run an awareness-raising campaign aimed at local employers to promote the needs of domestic violence survivors
- make anonymised CVs mandatory within the local public sector to ensure that Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME) candidates are treated fairly
- work with the BAME and LGBT+ communities to protect them from discrimination, for example by setting up an LGBT+ housing group, and encourage front-line workers to challenge prejudice
- support annual celebrations of the civic contribution of BAME and LGBT+ communities

THE COMMUNITY AND VOLUNTARY SECTOR

Brighton & Hove is fortunate in having a very active community and voluntary sector that works in neighbourhoods the council is less able to reach. A Green council will support investment and oppose cuts to the sector. We will help community groups access resources and in-kind support through providing buildings, meeting rooms and funding advice.

AN INTERNATIONAL CITY

We are proud that ours is an outward-looking city, a City of Sanctuary that stands up for refugees' and asylum seekers' rights. We all have friends, neighbours, work colleagues or family members who have come to this country from elsewhere. We value the skills they bring to our economy and public services, and the diversity that enriches our society.

The Green Party has consistently opposed Brexit and campaigned for a People's Vote. Whatever the final outcome of this process, we will work to ensure that the many residents of and visitors to our city who come from elsewhere in the EU feel welcome and supported.

A CITY FOR THE FUTURE



Addressing climate change is a huge challenge. But to ignore it is not an option. Recently, United Nations climate scientists gave us 12 years to address global warming and an international report found that up to 46% of animal and plant species could be wiped out by 2050. This would have a devastating impact on food security, resources more generally and on migration.

Many of the city's diverse and visionary small businesses are already promoting ways of future-proofing our city by recycling, reducing food waste and providing clean transport and renewable energy. We want to work with these businesses to identify ways of making the city carbon neutral by 2030. We intend to encourage district heat networks (supplying cost effective, low carbon heat through a network of insulated pipes) and community energy projects, so residents have warm homes and lower energy bills. The Green council (2011-15) ran pilots for Neighbourhood Governance schemes which support community decision-making on local budgets. We will also expand public consultation so that residents are genuinely involved in the decisions that affect them.

BUILDING BRIGHTON & HOVE'S ECONOMY

The potential impact of Brexit is forecast to be equivalent to over 4,200 job losses among Brighton & Hove residents. In the face of that, we believe it is doubly critical that the council supports the local economy. We will do this by changing the way the council outsources its services so as to help small local suppliers win council contracts or by bringing services in-house. We will focus on what the city already does well - its key sectors of technology, culture, design and education - and we will encourage local financing cooperatives, such as the Credit Union, to ensure that the local economy benefits all of us. We will also:

- ensure regeneration schemes provide social and sustainability benefits
- use empty shops on the high street to encourage business start-ups
- work with local urban designers, ecologists, architects and residents on a design charter for the city
- deliver major development projects such as Shoreham Harbour, Station Gateway and the King Alfred and explore the possibility of the council itself becoming a developer
- restrict the conversion and spread of short-term holiday-let homes or AirBnB property development
- work with public-sector pension funds to encourage divestment from the fossil fuel industry
- encourage the wider adoption of the Brighton & Hove Living Wage, which we introduced for council employees
- work with organisations such as the Brighton & Hove Food Partnership to implement a sustainable food strategy for the city, building on the Silver Sustainable Food Cities Award achieved under the Green council in 2015

EDUCATION

We will work with schools to help them manage the funding crisis and will campaign for better school funding. We will continue our opposition to the introduction of academies. We will also:

- work with our universities to invest in lifelong learning, to promote Brighton & Hove as a centre of innovation and educational excellence, to enhance the city's skills base in key sectors and to encourage greater partnership between the universities and local communities
- promote outdoor education and programmes to increase children's exposure to nature, theatre, music and sports
- build on earlier Green Party initiatives, the BikeShare scheme and bus passes for eligible school children, by working to introduce free bus passes/free annual subscriptions to Brighton BikeShare for teenagers
- encourage schools at both primary and secondary level to achieve the Arts Council's Artsmark gold standard

WILDLIFE AND ECOSYSTEMS

A Green council will work to address the climate and biodiversity emergency by boosting the protection of species, habitats, biodiversity and ecosystems throughout Brighton & Hove. We will also:

- work with tenant farmers on council-owned downland to ensure it is managed for wildlife, supports sustainable grazing and increases chalk grassland areas
- work with stakeholders to set up a downland advisory board
- cut the use of herbicides and pesticides (including a 90% cut in the use of glyphosate) in our parks and open spaces
- work with local partners, landowners and communities to plant bee- and pollinator-friendly flowers and native trees to reduce air pollution and flooding, and to capture carbon emissions

ANIMAL PROTECTION

We want Brighton & Hove to lead the way in promoting the highest standards of animal protection and opposing cruelty to animals wherever it occurs. We will:

- push for higher standards of care for animals where they are used for sport or entertainment and oppose the use of performing animals in shows
- promote best practice in animal care in pet shops
- campaign for cats and dogs to be microchipped to encourage responsible pet ownership
- fight for higher animal welfare standards in purchasing, including in cleaning products and in all catering

ARTS AND LEISURE

Residents are justly proud that, despite years of austerity, Brighton & Hove remains the region's cultural hub. The Greens have protected local arts organisations, saved Hove Library from closure and will continue to provide in-kind support to arts organisations and studios. We will also:

- address the delays in the King Alfred scheme, including exploring the option of bringing the redevelopment in-house, to deliver the leisure facilities the city needs
- invest in public parks, particularly through the development of Stanmer Park as a recreational resource and gateway to the National Park
- implement a 10-year cross-party Arts Plan for the city to enable those within the sector to plan ahead
- continue to protect the city's libraries
- build on Brighton & Hove's Film City status
- invest in a programme of sustainable business models for the arts

KEY ACHIEVEMENTS 2011-2015

THE GREEN-LED COUNCIL:

We were one of the top four cities in the country for business start-ups and the country's most popular seaside resort. We protected our precious downland and coastal environment with a new UN biosphere.

HOUSING

- Greens brought nearly 900 empty private or council-owned properties back into use
- We developed a pipeline of 220 new council house building schemes to pass on to the incoming Labour council
- We prevented 2,739 households a year from losing their homes (the figure for the current Labour administration is 2,072 a year)

TRANSPORT

- Under the Greens, the city won European City of the Year for sustainable transport and awards for our transport improvements on Lewes Road
- We made the city's roads safer, with a 15% reduction in serious injuries

REGENERATION OF THE CITY

- We regenerated the Level which, five years after completion, is still winning awards
- We agreed the £100m regeneration proposal for Circus Street which includes housing, a new home for South East Dance, retail, office and teaching facilities for the University of Brighton
- We kickstarted the redevelopment of the Royal Sussex County Hospital and guaranteed it to be PFI-free

FAIR PAY

- We dealt with previously unresolved issues on equal pay for council staff

AND OVER THE LAST FOUR YEARS IN OPPOSITION...

We have persuaded the Labour council:

- to declare a climate emergency and set targets for making the city carbon neutral by 2030
- to spend £31.3 million of unused resources on housing in the next two years
- to use empty council properties as homeless accommodation
- and we have campaigned to protect funding for Youth Services and library services

HELP US BUILD ON THESE ACHIEVEMENTS.



VOTE GREEN ON THURSDAY 2 MAY!