

South Devon Green Party



Torbay Manifesto



South Devon Green Party is a successful, vibrant, diverse and growing political party. Our aim is to create a fairer and healthier low carbon region where every voice counts.

We believe that social and environmental injustice has created huge inequalities in our locality and nationally. Mismanagement of the economy and the cuts being enacted by the Conservative / Liberal Democrat Government will create further poverty and environmental degradation. We will prioritise saving services that will affect residents' everyday lives in Teignbridge while creating a more open

and efficient council which enables local residents to enjoy a high quality of life.

What A Green Councillor Will Do

We will:

- Keep in touch with residents through newsletters and personal contact
- Respond quickly to every phone call, email or letter
- Hold regular Ward surgeries
- Ensure residents are informed about nearby planning and licensing applications, and speak on their behalf at the relevant meetings
- Be a loud and consistent Green voice on the Council, raising the profile of Green ideas and pushing for their implementation in all areas of local government

The Local Economy

National Government policy has recently taken millions of pounds away from our districts, with staff and services facing an uncertain future. A Green council will fight recession and climate change by making our district a focus for Green and local investment. Localism increases employment, sustainability, and reduces our carbon footprint. We will promote local businesses, encourage the creation of green jobs and establish a more secure and sustainable future.

We will:

- Lobby central government to allow councils to introduce equitable business rates that encourages economic and environmental sustainability and those with an emphasis recycle, reuse and repair.
- Encourage the development of training courses which offer the practical skills needed to support the growing demand for renewable energy and the installation of energy efficiency measures
- Encourage an inclusive democratic Local Enterprise Partnership with the emphasis on sustainable development and on developing people's skills and training
- Strengthening local businesses, with particular emphasis upon the small enterprises (SME). Encouraging vibrant diverse local products through our support of local economies. Ensure that our councils buy local goods and services for our locality wherever possible integrating environmental policy with local product procurement
- Promote South Devon as a Fair Trade region and commit ourselves to scrutinising fair trade claims
- Use the Planning system to encourage a successful light manufacturing sector in our towns to ensure a healthy mix of employment
- Introduce a Living Wage for Council staff and encourage other employers in the area to pay their staff a Living Wage. A Living Wage is

higher than the minimum wage, and one that people can actually live on.

- Begin to reduce the salary gap between senior managers and front-line staff in the public sector. We will pay workers fairly, with the aim that the highest paid earner within the council will, in time, take home no more than ten times the full-time equivalent of the lowest paid
- Ensure that we work to establish and support credit unions and provide debt and financial advice for South Hams residents. We will continue the work of the current administration which helps people on low incomes.
- Strengthening local businesses, with particular emphasis upon community & social enterprises, and small business, this can be achieved through offering discretionary business rate relief to small and medium sized local businesses.
- Encouraging the production and provision of diverse local products
- Ensure that we work to support and develop credit unions, such as Teign Reach, providing financial advice for Local residents.

**Buy
Local**
SPEND IT HERE • KEEP IT HERE

Quality, Secure & Affordable Housing



South Devon Green Party believes that high quality, affordable, secure and energy efficient accommodation is a right for all. Low wages and high housing costs have a damaging affect upon residents in our region. We are committed to increasing the influence held by tenants and residents over housing, and oppose the control held by central government over

housing policy and finances. We will seek a broad range of types of housing to suit different needs, such as sheltered housing schemes and shared ownership options.

We will

- In order to empower local communities and to democratically hold developers to account, we will, as a matter of urgency, put into place a robust Local Development Framework. Current and persistent failure to implement such a framework has disempowered communities across Teignbridge for far too long.
- Support community proposals for cooperative housing models such as Community Land Trusts and Mutual Home Ownership, positively engaging with them on any sale of council-owned land and support self-help housing co-operatives in bringing empty homes back into use
- Oppose the privatisation of social housing and actively campaign for national government to increase funding to build new council housing, and lobby the Homes and Communities Agency to prioritise putting more of its budget into council housing.

- Support 'co-housing' initiatives and developments where families and individual residents have the chance to share facilities and living space
- Work with other organisations on early intervention to prevent homelessness
- Work with tenants and Tenants and Residents Associations to establish effective ways for tenants to be involved in setting housing policies and priorities
- Actively encourage the setting up of Tenant Management Organisations, enabling tenants and leaseholders in a particular area to take over management of their homes and public areas
- Support the establishment of a private tenants' association to represent the interests and rights of private sector tenants and improve links with private landlords
- Tackle the problem of empty houses, for example, by supporting property owners who want to bring their houses back into use, making full use of Empty Property Management Orders and allowing empty houses to be reported online more easily
- Investigate fast-tracking serious complaints regarding anti-social behaviour from social housing tenants
- Use the planning system to ensure an appropriate proportion of new housing is accessible to residents with disabilities.
- Campaign for a council tax increase of 200% or local impact tax for second homeowners Demand that this council tax from second homes is ring-fenced to provide affordable local homes
- Support more integrated workplace and home development, especially in rural areas, cutting down on travel to work.

Waste

LOVE
FOOD
hate waste

Landfill sites cannot take our rubbish forever, and damage our environment so alternatives must be found, however we are opposed to a mass burn incineration as a solution. We will demand a 'zero waste' strategy, reducing the amount of waste produced in the region and re-using, repairing and recycling materials, moving to 82% which achievable almost overnight, whilst 90% could be achieved in 2 years. Further to this we would insist that the most economic and environmental efficient solution to residual waste is explored and implemented.

We will

- Increase doorstep collections for food, recycling and hazard (dirty nappies) collection from houses and flats for every 3 weeks in 4
- Collect non recyclables every 4th week
- Demand the establishment of a local resource recovery park which would re-use and repair waste material and also create green jobs
- Develop and introduce a litter and fly-tipping reduction strategy
- Continue to lobby central government for a tax on packaging and mandatory charges for bags given out by shop
- Encourage acceptance by retail outlets of returned non-recyclable materials.
- Use our waste to create energy and re-usable products that benefit our community



Energy & Climate Change

Green councillors support local production of renewable energy as well as looking for ways to ensure that everyone in Teignbridge can have a warm home. We want to reduce household fuel bills, tackle climate change and create local jobs by providing and promoting insulation and local energy production. A Green councillor will work with all sections of the community to cut South Hams carbon emissions by 40% by 2020.



We will:

- Provide opportunities for people who live in South Hams to fully insulate their homes and install photovoltaic solar panels. We will do this either by investing in partnership with energy companies or by setting up our own Energy Services Company. This renewable energy will cut the carbon emissions produced in South Devon and enable residents to heat their homes more cheaply
- Introduce carbon budgeting at the council, so the environmental impact of every decision is recognised and recorded
- Work with the Energy Saving Trust to provide advice on saving money and energy to residents through community-based energy saving programmes; targeting funding assistance towards people with low incomes
- Relax planning guidelines to enable residents of the Teignbridge to add renewable energy systems to their homes more easily
- Demand a change in planning laws that will require larger businesses to incorporate energy saving renewable technologies as part of their buildings design.

Communities & Neighbourhoods



We all want to live in safe communities where we feel comfortable. Green councillors will strengthen local communities by tackling inequality and exclusion. At the same time we will help residents to shape their own communities in the way that they want. Clean streets and clear pavements will allow residents to feel secure where they live. Green councillors will maximise access to sport, music and the arts, by promoting cultural and organised leisure activities across Teignbridge

We will:

- Establish action days to promote community use and ownership of our beaches, including litter picks.

- Increase community involvement, particularly when a decision will affect a specific area, and make it obvious how residents can become involved
- Engage with residents in a variety of ways, using digital media as well as public meetings and consultations
- Enable residents to use the powers in the Sustainable Communities Act
- Provide support to community sports clubs and organisations with particular emphasis on youth inclusion, as part of a wider strategy to reduce anti-social behaviour
- Channel resources into outlying areas of Teignbridge to make cultural activity more accessible and work towards a change in licensing/band laws which currently make it difficult for venues to host live music
- Support local charities and voluntary & community organisations in raising resources and networking co-operation to make the most of their effectiveness

Parks and Environment



A healthy local environment is essential if residents of South Devon are to have a high quality of life. Formal and informal green spaces must be protected and properly managed to enhance their value to wildlife and to people.

We will:

- Support the use of parks and green space by the local community and encourage input from local residents by promoting 'Friends of Teignbridge schemes'
- Install drinking water fountains in parks and town areas reducing the need for bottle water and return natural springs to public use
- Increase the number of allotment plots
- Identify areas of council land where community gardens and food-growing areas can be established
- Develop a Garden Share scheme so people who have larger gardens than they can manage, may share them with people who don't have a garden
- Safeguard and enhance existing 'green corridors' through our towns and ensure that green spaces are integral to all new housing and commercial developments
- Work with residents to increase the number of trees in public spaces, including fruit trees. This will improve the local environment, provide free food and contribute to combating climate change
- Promote biodiversity at every opportunity
- Make the countryside more easily and safely accessible to pedestrians and cyclists

Social Care

The Green Party recognizes that much social welfare work is done by volunteers, charities, help-lines and family members, including children. Unpaid family carers save the NHS £87bn a year and need support from social welfare services and need access to respite care, in order to carry out their vital role. In addition too many people are finding that the work-life balance is tipped to far in favour of work demands, whilst others are trapped within an inflexible benefit system or are unable to take their full place in society due to discrimination.

We will:



- Argue for a more generous Carer's Allowance, increased by 50% to £80pw.
- Offer support to people who want to give care, recognising their pivotal position while increasing the amount of care

available; this will ensure that carers, and volunteers are valued and their welfare protected.

- Work to improve the situation for carers under 16 both financially and through ensuring that the support is in place so that their schooling, education and right to 'play' do not suffer.
- Argue that residential care for elderly or those with disabilities should be provided free for those that need it and house owners would not be required to sell their home to pay for such care.
- support the purpose of the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) which is to ensure disabled people have the same opportunities as non disabled people to participate in Civic life. As well as arguing for access to free and appropriate social care.
- Support opportunities, creative projects, day care, supported housing and provision of psychological and social therapies for those with Mental illness and work towards reducing the stigma.
- Help unemployed people to Participate honestly in part-time work through supporting increases in the amounts people on benefits can earn ('earnings disregards'), without having their benefits withdrawn, since this is the best route back into employment.
- Ensure that workers' rights apply to part-time, casual workers and the self-employed, and from the first day of employment.

Education

Whilst constrained by the Government in the funding and content of education, the LEA has a vital role to play in determining how education is delivered. We believe that Torbay Council should be far more creative in executing this role. The Green councillors will ensure



that its education policies support the following aspirations:

We will :

- Provide essential numeracy and literacy skills
- Promote a sense of responsibility, confidence and respect in all young people within a strong locally based school community

- Cater for all specialisms and needs, inspiring a desire for learning in all areas: academic and non-academic, therefore young people to pursue what they are good at rather than what is expected of them
- Promote a healthy lifestyle through good diet and exercise. We will provide, locally sourced, nutritious school meals to all. Children will be encouraged to understand food in the context of how and where it is grown and we will promote the growing of vegetables by pupils in school grounds or on adjacent land.
- Classrooms should be places for the children to explore and discover new things.
- We believe that quality education should be adequately funded by Government and oppose the private funding of state schools in any form, and say no to academies and Free Schools.
- All children will have the opportunity to attend their local school, which will provide diverse support for people with special needs.
- We will strongly advocate that school buildings are environmentally sustainable sourcing local materials
- We will encourage sharing and recycling within schools.
- We will encourage schools to include pupils in decision-making. By setting up a 'schools council' in every school that is comprised of students of all ages we will empower young people to take responsibility from an early age
- We will encourage school and community-led initiatives to expand the use of schools, for their mutual benefit.

Transport

With rising fuel prices Green councillors will work towards reducing reliance upon individualized transport and develop transport alternatives to keep people moving. More than half the people unlucky enough to be hit by a car doing a seemingly harmless 35mph die. Reduce the speed to 20 mph and only 1 in 40 of us die. We believe that people on foot and on bicycles have just as much right to feel safe on the streets where they live as car users, so we will introduce a 20 mph limit in residential urban areas, including villages.

Cars traveling at 20 mph hit 60% fewer people, kill far fewer of those they do hit and do not scare kids so much that they are afraid to play outside. In the end, driving is a privilege, but being able to walk the streets safely is a right.

We will :

- Green councillors will demand that our residential streets are return to safe environments where families can live, work and play
- Work with Network Rail to improve the infrastructure of our railway stations to include cycle racks, seating, and warm waiting rooms
- Develop a more integrated public transport system to include bus and rail companies sharing timetables
- Work to reduce congestion and pollution problems in the Bay by working with local companies to help restructure

- Oppose the building of the Kingskerswell bypass as travel times could be reduced by the same amount by the use of Smart SCOOT traffic management systems. This would result in a reduction of congestion and air pollution, fewer accidents, the retention of ancient woodlands, and an increase in local economic activity
- We will reduce traffic speeds to improve safety, reduce emissions and reduce noise. In addition, speed reduction along with lowering traffic volume would provide a reduction of environmental noise and provide a much improved urban environment for residents and workers.
- We will provide increased financial support for essential but 'uneconomic' bus and train routes. We will improve the facilities provided on them.
- We will encourage council staff and elected officials to utilise public transport.

Percentage of UK Transport Carbon Emissions
(Including International)

