

# Norwich Green Party

## Local Elections Manifesto 2016



### How will we pay for it?

The government wants to cut back local government as far as possible. So, finding ways to afford our plans means being creative. Our ideas include:

1. Charging a small fee for advertising boards on streets in the town centre to raise money, which could be spent on other street improvement services.
2. Lobbying to introduce a "city tax" of £1 per night for visitors to the city, to help support the services both visitors and residents use.
3. Looking for sponsorship for large civic events such as the Lord Mayor's Procession and the Firework Display, and getting more funding from the city's businesses for events.
4. Reducing the council's communications budget by making *Citizen* magazine self-funding.
5. Introducing a late-night licensing levy on premises that wish to remain open beyond midnight at weekends or 11pm on weekdays. Revenue will be shared with the Norfolk Constabulary, but will help offset the considerable extra street cleaning budget required in the late-night activity zone.

**None of these ideas are the solution - fairer funding and a government that believes in local services is. But we think that we should do as much we can to raise the money to keep our services running for everyone to use.**

### A Fairer City, A Finer World

Norwich is a vibrant city. At the same time, many residents continue to suffer from social and economic deprivation, made worse by the Government's deep cuts to local government spending.

In Norwich, Green councillors have strongly opposed the Council's austerity cuts. We put forward different spending priorities: more spending on supporting people and less on building multi-storey car parks.

Addressing climate change and becoming more resilient to its effects are the highest priority, to protect the future of our children and of the Earth. Norwich could lead the way to becoming a zero-carbon economy and one which enables all its citizens to realise their full potential.

To create a city in which everyone's views are heard, we need a Green City Council with a culture of openness, transparency and public participation. In contrast to councillors from other parties, who may be instructed by their party on how to vote, Green councillors vote according to their principles and the needs of residents.

If elected, a Green Council in Norwich would do everything in its power to oppose the national government's spending cuts and ensure that Norwich becomes a cleaner, healthier city.



# Our priorities for Norwich

## HOUSING:

*Houses should be homes not investments. They should be places of comfort and security and everyone should have access to quality housing. Nobody should have to live in fear of homelessness and fuel poverty.*

**House building** – we will continue to support building new Council homes, and force landowners to build on big sites with planning permission.

**Houses in safe, clean communities** - we will prioritise improving communities as well as houses. We will add secure entry systems to Council flat blocks where residents want them to improve security, and consider regulation of certain types of housing such as Houses of Multiple Occupation. We will expand the Council landlord accreditation scheme to protect tenants and support fair landlords, and crack down on rogue landlords.

**Affordable student housing** - we will campaign for better quality student housing and work with universities to ensure their halls are affordable to all.

**Stop the “Bedroom Tax”** – we will not evict tenants if they cannot pay the Bedroom Tax, and will continue to campaign against it.

## ECONOMY AND WELLBEING:

*Everyone should be able to contribute to the life of the city. Meaningful opportunities to work or volunteer should be available for all. New developments in Norwich should benefit Norwich citizens, not just the corporations who build them.*

**Real living wages** - we will campaign for a real living wage in Norwich; £10 an hour by 2020 without age restrictions. We will improve benefits processing times so nobody is left without money due to Council delays.

**Entrepreneurs and sustainable technology** – we will make Norwich a centre of excellence for sustainable technology by encouraging investment in local low-carbon industry and offering low-cost office and shop space to local entrepreneurs and start-ups.

**Improve Norwich market** – we will work with traders and customers to make the market a vibrant, friendly and accessible place that supports local traders and the city economy.

**Support credit unions and community banks** – we will provide support to help citizens access sound financial advice and avoid exploitative sources of credit.

## ENVIRONMENT AND TRANSPORT:

*A healthy environment is essential for the well-being of people; safe communities, green spaces, trees, and clean streets. We will work with others to create a sustainable, modern public transport system and cycle network rather than continued road-building.*

**Protecting Norwich's living heritage** – we will provide communities with support to look after their green spaces. Quality outdoor spaces improve people's physical and mental health and strengthen community ties. We will re-instate the trees budget that has been cut by the Council.

**Clean air** - we will clean up the City's diesel bus and taxi fleet and create a network of electric car charging points to tackle the public health crisis caused by air pollution.

**Safer streets** – we will aim for 20mph speed limits in all residential areas, supported by traffic calming where needed, to save lives and cut emissions. We will create safe, continuous walking and cycling networks.

**Investing in public transport** – we will regulate buses and make public transport (including the Park and Ride) cheaper and more accessible.

## COMMUNITY AND DEMOCRACY:

*Public services should be run for the good of everyone, not the profits of a few. Too much power has been transferred to unaccountable bodies. We think decision-making should involve all councillors and the people they represent.*

**Involving communities** – we will directly consult as many residents of Norwich as we can, including community groups, and will listen to their concerns.

**Learning from mistakes and good scrutiny** - we will ensure decisions made by the Council can be reviewed and that mistakes are learnt from. We will involve residents as much as possible and improve the Council's Scrutiny Committee.

**Promoting community life** – we will provide support to the city's community centres, residents' associations and community groups. We will campaign to protect local services such as children's centres and libraries.

**Equality and diversity** - we will value and support everyone. We will improve accessibility to the city for people with disabilities, including non-visible ones, and encourage everyone to be part of decision making, especially underrepresented groups.