

GreenView

The green newspaper for Norwich

Spring 2014



Green Party

Energy Crisis: Real Solutions



The Green Party has outlined its plans to tackle the issue of energy price rises.

The party's 'Green New Deal' programme would see every UK home fitted with modern heating insulation, at no cost to homeowners. The funding would come from levying a windfall tax on the profits of energy companies.

The Conservative and Labour parties have been arguing over how to stop bills rising in the short term – but the Green Party argues that the problem can only be solved by reducing energy use.

Rupert Read, the Green Party's lead candidate in this year's European election, said: **"The only way to effectively keep energy bills down is to reduce our use of expensive fossil fuels. We need a nationwide programme of**

home insulation to bring every house up to a good standard. This would also create new jobs."

Meanwhile, Norwich City Council has agreed a proposal from Green Party councillors that new council homes should be built using the best modern techniques for energy efficiency. Previous housing association projects have shown that these measures could reduce fuel bills by 90%.

The Green Party is the main opposition to the ruling Labour Cabinet at City Hall



Number of councillors by party on Norwich City Council

Fair Fares?

The Green Party organised protests against rail fare rises again outstripping rises in wages.

On 2nd January protesters spoke to early morning commuters at each main station in the eastern region, including Norwich where a year's season ticket to London now costs £8,432. Rail fares rose by an average of 3.1% at the beginning of the year. The privately owned train operating companies on our fragmented railway system charge some of the highest fares in Europe.

Green MP Caroline Lucas has put forward a Bill in Parliament to bring the UK rail network back into public ownership. She said: **"By taking back individual franchises when they expire, or when companies fail to meet their conditions, the Government could save over £1 billion a year, every year. This is money that could and should be reinvested in services, and also used to reduce fares."**



Green Party Policies on Energy:

- Greater investment in energy production through clean renewable sources – wave, wind and solar power.
- A nationwide programme of home insulation to tackle fuel poverty and create thousands of new jobs.
- Encouraging the installation of solar panels on public buildings, transforming them into safe and secure 'power stations' serving their immediate neighbourhoods.
- Opposing fracking for shale gas, which would prevent Britain meeting its carbon reduction requirements and lock us into a high-cost energy future. Fracking also involves multiple heavy vehicle movements, heavy water use and a possible risk of earthquakes and aquifer contamination.

www.norwichgreenparty.org

Norwich Green Party: c/o 27 Clarendon Road, Norwich, NR2 2PN

Promoted by Ash Haynes on behalf of Norwich Green Party and Eastern Region Green Party European election candidate list (address above).

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Green MEPs' Achievements

There are 48 Green MEPs in the European Parliament, in the fourth largest political group. They have successfully influenced a wide range of legislation including:

- A cap on bankers' bonuses.
- Access for all young people to the European Social Fund, for education, training and support from voluntary organisations.
- Consistent measuring of human rights progress across all EU countries.
- Ban on cosmetic animal testing.
- Passing the Energy Efficiency Directive – to reduce energy consumption by 20% by 2020
- Protection of the countryside: improving farmers' pay, banning bee-killing toxins and promoting seed biodiversity – towards a GMO free Europe.
- Monitoring groundwater and ensuring companies are liable for environmental damage they cause during shale gas extraction (fracking).
- More efficient asylum processes – protection of vulnerable persons (children and victims of trafficking or torture) and more equal access to rights and benefits.

www.greens2014.eu

Green Policies

Five Green Party policies you might not know about:

- Use the planning and tax systems to **support independent shops** and help communities stop large new supermarkets.
- **Clamp down on corporate tax avoidance** and introduce a 'Robin Hood' tax on risky currency speculation.
- **Abolish student tuition fees.**
- **Mend Britain's broken democracy** by devolving power to local level, introducing elections to the Upper House, reducing the voting age to 16 and protecting the rights of campaign groups.
- **Keep Our NHS Public:** protect services from privatisation and place more attention on promoting good health and preventing illness.

New City Centre Forum

A new residents' forum is working to address anti-social behaviour in the Prince of Wales Road area.

Green councillors set up the new Stakeholders' Forum to help tackle problems around pubs, clubs and takeaways in the city centre. Over 50 residents attended the first public meeting to discuss the issues with senior police officers and council officials.

Further meetings will take place in March and April. Green councillors are organising a workshop on how residents can influence licensing decisions to encourage best practice in late night businesses.

There will also be a follow-on meeting of the forum to hear what action has been taken by the police and the council.

For information about forthcoming meetings, please contact Councillor Lesley Grahame: **(01603) 632228** or l.grahame@cldr.norwich.gov.uk



Green Party Councillors Lesley Grahame and Simeon Jackson are helping residents address anti-social behaviour problems in the city centre

Save Norwich's Trees

Green Party councillors are running a campaign to persuade the City Council to replace cut down trees.

Since April 2012 removed trees have not been replaced – except in conservation areas – creating a net loss of

around 100 trees per year.

Councillor Amy Stammers, Green Party environment spokesperson, said: **"Trees are part of our city's identity and provide huge benefits in terms of wildlife, public health and reducing the risk of flooding."**

Green councillors proposed an amendment to the council budget last year to provide money for tree planting but this was rejected by ruling Labour councillors. Now the Green Party is collecting signatures for a petition urging the City Council to rethink this decision. Green councillors have highlighted that tree planting and maintenance is good value for money and would not affect crucial services such as social care, which are funded by the County Council.

To sign the Green Party's petition please visit: www.norwich4trees.co.uk



Green Party Councillor Amy Stammers and campaigner Tim Jones (left) discuss College Road tree felling with a concerned resident

20's Plenty say City Residents

Residents across the city are joining forces to campaign for 20 mile per hour speed limits to improve their quality of life.

Green Councillors are supporting residents' calls for 20mph limits in several areas, including around Hotblack Road, Grove Walk, St Philips Road and Wolfe Road.

Andrew Boswell, Leader of the Green Party City Councillors, said: **"20mph limits make our streets safer and our air cleaner. Indeed they were recently highlighted in an academic study as the best single workable policy to improve public health."**

"They are relatively inexpensive compared to other traffic calming measures, and add only 40 seconds to average journey times."

Green Councillor Richard Bearman organised a public meeting last summer to launch the campaign for 20mph limits in all residential side streets. He commented: **"Many cities already have city-wide 20mph limits. Introducing a standard city-wide limit is the best way to make sure drivers know what the limit is."**

To join the campaign please contact Richard: **(01603) 504124** or richard.bearman@norwichgreenparty.org

20mph: the facts

- The most common cause of death in 5 to 25 year olds is road accidents.
- At 30mph, 1 in 5 pedestrians hit by a car dies, compared with 1 in 40 at 20mph.
- 71% of drivers support 20 mph speed limits for residential streets (British Social Attitudes Survey, 2011).
- When introduced in Germany 30 km/h (18.5 mph) zones meant drivers changed gear 12% less often, braked 14% less often and required 12% less fuel on average.

www.20splentyforus.org.uk

News in Brief

Large-scale YouGov poll shows that the Green Party is on track to win a seat in the European Parliament in Eastern region.

The poll states: *“Research shows... Greens would gain 12% of the vote, and the LibDems 10%.”*...putting the Green Party’s Rupert Read on course to win the seat currently held by the LibDems in May’s election. Across the country the number of Green MEPs would increase from two to six.

Over 500 petition County Council over care cuts.

Green councillors and local campaigners presented a petition calling on the County Council to make social care a top priority. The Labour-led council initially proposed £56m of cuts to social services: personal budgets, care packages and preventative services. Green councillors have argued for a small council tax rise to secure the future of social care.

What's the green space like where you live? Would you like to make it better?

Green councillors are currently working with 11 community groups on projects ranging from hedge planting in Eaton to litter picking in Lakenham. Vegetables are sprouting in Marlpit, fresh herbs at Wensum View and Train Wood's getting tidied too.

Councillor Ben Price said: *“Across the city people are creating bee and wildlife friendly areas, growing vegetables, fruit and herbs. However small your patch we can work together to improve it, and access funding and support.”*

To begin a group please contact: (01603) 621709
b.price@cllr.norwich.gov.uk



Green Energy for County Hall

Solar panels are to be installed on the roof of County Hall – a move long championed by Green Party Councillor Richard Bearman.

Norfolk County Council will benefit from clean energy and reduced bills when the council’s Energy Services Company (ESCo) installs solar panels on the roof of County Hall. The ESCo was set up in 2011 based on a Green Party proposal and has been installing renewable technologies on council buildings – creating a new income stream for the council.

Green Councillor Richard Bearman has been lobbying the County Council Cabinet to install panels at County Hall. He highlighted that, since once of the main costs of installation is the scaffolding, it makes sense to install the panels while the current refurbishment work to the building is taking place. This is now set to happen.

The ESCo has also installed solar panels on libraries and fire stations. Recently it established 19 wind turbines on council-owned farms as part of an effort to reduce the council’s carbon footprint.

The council also benefits financially from the ESCo. The solar panels mean lower energy bills and the council also receives income for the energy produced, through the feed-in tariff scheme. This income can be used to help protect other council services.



Green Party Councillor Richard Bearman pressed the County Council to install solar panels at County Hall. Pictured with a typical domestic solar panel installation



Ash Haynes

Ash, 23, has been a Green Party City Councillor for Town Close ward since 2010.

Tell us a bit about yourself.

I’ve lived in Norwich since 2008, when I started my degree at UEA. I got married last year and we’re now expecting our first child. When I’m not busy with politics I like reading about twentieth century history, horse riding and knitting.

You are campaigning to protect residents from the Bedroom Tax. Why are you so concerned about this?

It’s one of the Government’s policies that hits residents hardest but where councils can reduce the impact by refusing to evict tenants. We’ve asked the City Council not to evict tenants who can’t pay but the ruling Labour Cabinet has refused. This policy is cruel and misguided. It’s affecting vulnerable people – in many cases the rooms are used for medical needs and children’s visits.

As the Green Party’s local spokesperson on housing, what improvements would you like to see in housing in Norwich?

We need more genuinely affordable housing built in places where people will have access to shops, bus routes and community facilities. I’d also like to see better standards in private rented housing.

What issues are you currently campaigning on in your local ward?

Traffic, road safety and parking are big issues in many parts of Town Close. We’ve been working with residents to maintain green spaces in their area. We’re continuing to work with residents to protect the Vauxhall Street Post Office.



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**Rupert
Read
Writes...**

Saving Childhood

A series of recent reports has shown that children growing up today are far more disconnected from the natural world than previous generations. Children are spending less time playing outside and more time in front of screens.

At the same time, health problems among children are on the rise, with one in ten young people suffering from a mental health condition, increasing levels of attention disorders and one in three children clinically obese.

So, are these two trends linked? Writer Richard Louv argues that alienation from nature has resulted in "diminished use of the senses, attention difficulties and higher rates of physical and emotional illnesses".

His concerns are shared by the National Trust, the RSPB and a wide range of other

organisations who have come together to launch a new film-based campaign called *Project Wild Thing*. This aims to promote the benefits of free outdoor play for children's physical and mental health.

At the same time, there is growing support from parents and professionals for a rethink of the UK's approach to early years education. The Government is increasingly basing its policies for nursery years on 'school readiness' and introducing more formalised learning, including use of computers, at a younger age.

The *Too Much Too Soon* campaign rightly highlights that the nursery years are a crucial stage of a child's development, where play helps children to develop their communicative skills and explore their natural creativity. We should consider a longer period of nursery education and a later start to formalised

schooling – a policy that has been very successful in Scandinavia.

More and more parents, professionals and campaigners are becoming very concerned about our children's alienation from nature. Our society has become highly commercialised in recent decades and children are suffering as a result. We need an urgent rethink about how we protect children's wellbeing and encourage the next generation to grow up enjoying nature and wanting to protect it for the future.



For more information

please visit:

www.projectwildthing.com

www.toomuchtoosoon.org

Rupert Read is the Green Party's lead candidate for the 2014 European election. He is a former Norwich councillor and a founder member of the Leave Our Kids Alone campaign, which argues for a ban on advertising aimed at children.

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For more information or to offer help please get in touch –

PHONE: (01603) 611909 **EMAIL:** enquiries@norwichgreenparty.org

POST: 27 Clarendon Road, Norwich, NR2 2PN.

SURGERIES: Green Party Councillors hold the following surgeries. Come along to raise a local issue or problem. No appointment needed.

First Tuesday of each month, 5–6pm at Inner Space
(Maude Gray Court, St Benedicts Street).

First Wednesday of each month, 6–7pm at Belvedere Community Centre
(Belvoir Street, off Dereham Road).

Advertising in GreenView

Affinity scheme discounts & bonuses
Advertise over multiple platforms:
print, e-bulletins and online

CONTACT:
Alaine.Mukene@greenparty.org.uk

Scan this code with your
smartphone to tell us
online how you can help:



Can YOU help Norwich Green Party?

Yes, I will help by:

- Voting Green at the City Council elections on 22nd May 2014
- Voting Green at the European election on 22nd May 2014
- Displaying a window poster for this year's elections
- Displaying a garden poster board for this year's elections
- Delivering some leaflets in my area
- Coming to a Green social event (please tick to request details)
- Helping to develop policy ideas
- Making a donation (cheques payable to 'Norwich Green Party')
- Joining the Green Party (please tick for details)

Name:

Address:

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Please return to: Norwich Green Party, 27 Clarendon Rd, Norwich, NR2 2PN.

The Green Party will contact you using the details you have supplied. If you do not wish to receive information from the Green Party please tick here:

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