

**Scottish Green Party**

**Glasgow City Council Elections Manifesto 2017**

# **POWER IN YOUR HANDS**



# POWER IN YOUR HANDS

It is no accident that Glasgow has been voted the world's friendliest city by many of its visitors. From its people to its architecture, from its culture to its history, Glasgow stands out as a city of warmth, creativity and great experiences. Our city welcomes refugees, offers glorious parks and green spaces for its residents, and has world-famous museums and arts venues. It has a renowned industrial heritage, vibrant business sectors – such as engineering, life sciences and digital and creative industries – and world-class universities. Glasgow is a city where generations of citizens have struggled for better conditions and equality for all.

We want to see Glasgow fulfil its potential. Many people are locked out of the opportunities that our city has to offer because their community has been marginalised, because they have insufficient income, because they are disabled or they feel unsafe. Many people

find it difficult to travel across the city because the transport system is fragmented. Many people suffer from the pollution in the city centre streets, which contributes to Glasgow's reduced life expectancy. We know that these inequalities affect every citizen in some way – we are all the poorer for them.

Local democracy should empower people – local views matter and their voices must be heard. The best way to create vibrant, safe and inclusive neighbourhoods is for local communities to have the power to make decisions, own local resources, and help themselves. But trust in politicians and the political system is low and many people tell us they feel disenchanting and cynical, and they see the workings of democracy as remote and lacking accountability. They see public money being spent in their area, when they've had little or no say over how that's done, often resulting in poor choices being made.

Our Glasgow Green party councillors will accept the challenges that exist in Glasgow. We will work alongside local people for a more equal, healthier, safer Glasgow where the environment is protected for all.

*This manifesto complements the national Scottish Greens manifesto with a focus on Glasgow issues.*



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## Cleaner transport that works for you

Greens will invest in transport that improves health and connects communities, with affordable Glasgow-owned electric bus services, as well as new cycle and walking routes throughout the city.



### Getting Glasgow moving

Moving around Glasgow doesn't need to be an unhealthy, frustrating, disjointed and dangerous experience. Greens will work for a transport plan that makes it "miles better" for people and all forms of transport:

- Safe cycling and walking routes, separate from motor traffic; 10% of transport budget to be spent on walking and cycling.
- 20mph speed limit throughout residential areas.
- Integrated and improved public transport with an easy to use Glasgow "Oyster card".

- Campaign for implementation of Crossrail to reconnect Glasgow's rail network.
- Introduce low emission zones, with a traffic-free city centre as a long-term aim
- Roll out of electric vehicle charging points and push adoption of electric vehicles in council fleet, buses and in taxis.
- Expand the Glasgow Car Club to cover the whole of Glasgow.
- Spend money on maintaining existing roads and pavements, not building new roads.

## High quality education for every child

Greens will invest in more teachers and support staff to help all children achieve their potential, ensure a broad curriculum within inclusive schools, and keep a janitor in each school.



### Education

Education is at the heart of a good society. It must remain the responsibility of local authorities, who can support schools working together as well as individually to meet the needs of Glasgow's children and young people. Before and beyond school, education should be a right not a privilege. Greens councillors will:

- Fight to fund local authorities for more teachers and classroom assistants, to replace staff who worked on sharing and developing good ideas between schools, and to ensure one janitor for every school.

- Support better staffing and more coherent support for children with additional support needs, as well as for vulnerable and marginalised groups so that we can not only avoid discrimination but actively promote equality.
- Stand up for schooling that inspires young people, gives them practical life skills, relates to issues they face in their local communities, and builds understanding of real world challenges and opportunities.
- Commit to working across services to reduce the attainment gap; enhance the care experience for young people and help them with the transition to adult

independence; increase free childcare provision; and harness professional expertise to ensure every child benefits from a high-quality preschool education.

- Support lifelong learning in the city including digital learning, family learning, English for Speakers of Other Languages, Gaelic and other community-based adult learning programmes that support community involvement, enhance employability and promote health and well-being.

## Culture and sport accessible to all

Our city has rich cultural, arts and sporting scenes — these are part of making Glasgow a great place to live, work, visit, learn and play. But it's essential that these opportunities are protected, and open for everyone to take part. Greens will:



- Open up creative, cultural and sporting opportunities for all. We'll work to remove barriers for marginalised groups to take part in the cultural and arts life of the city, and to keep access to museums free.
- Protect our cultural heritage and push for sustainable investment in sporting cultural venues and events, including at the grassroots.
- Love our libraries! Greens will push for sustainable investment to make libraries vibrant, creative community hubs, free to use and full of diverse learning opportunities for all citizens.
- Space for making: we'll push for vacant council-owned shop fronts to be available on short-term leases, and make it easier for creative pop-ups to appear.
- Celebrate Glasgow's growing cultural diversity and support opportunities to express it.

## Empowering young people

Young people's rights have been eroded by Westminster Tories, with no access to housing benefit and no living wage. In our city, young people are scapegoats for complex social problems; meanwhile youthwork budgets have been squeezed and young people's voices ignored in decision-making. Green councillors will stand up for Glasgow's young people.

- Ensure that Glasgow's 144,000 young people are valued and heard. We will work alongside young people, pushing for meaningful youth involvement in decision-making structures across council services.

- Move council resources away from short-term "intervention" towards long-term, sustainable, high-quality youth work. We'll work to create affordable, accessible places where young people can gather.
- Advocate for and improve support for young people's mental health.
- Support campaigns against exploitative employment and the injustice of zero-hours employment for young people.
- Campaign for inclusive, consent-based sex education, and increased training for teachers to tackle homophobic, biphobic and transphobic bullying.



# Power in your hands

Green councillors will push for decisions about Glasgow to be made in Glasgow, with more control over local finances and community involvement in budgets and planning.



## Revitalising local democracy

Greens stand for a revitalised local democracy that acquires greater powers then transfers those on to local people, supporting and empowering communities so they can make a real difference. We will:

- Campaign for greater community control over how land is developed, through a planning system where the interests of communities are powerful and equal to other interests in the planning process
- Campaign nationally for a new Common Good Act to give

communities greater control over common-good property and assets in Scotland's towns and cities.

- Return the council to a more democratic committee system, which ensures the voices of all parties are heard.
- Review Glasgow's Association of Local Energy Officers and private providers, with a view to returning as many as possible to in-house delivery and democratic control.

## Delivering an economy for everyone

While Glasgow is doing well as a city in many ways, it's too dependent on

large employers, and far too many people are left behind. Greens will work to improve peoples' chances in the economy, and work to improve the jobs base of the city.

### People in Glasgow's economy

- Participation in economic decisions and allocation of funding, especially by women, disabled people, BME communities and those with direct experience of poverty.
- Creating jobs in insulation of housing and of council buildings, cutting fuel poverty and council energy bills.
- Community benefit clauses in council contracts to promote worker representation and living wage, training and modern apprenticeships, and environmentally friendly working;

and using council's purchasing power to buy goods and services locally wherever possible.

- Support household incomes with trial of Universal Basic Income, campaigning for a living wage of £10 an hour by 2020, and access to affordable credit through support for credit unions.
- The cost of childcare remains prohibitive for many who wish to work and crippling for those who do. We will work to increase access to affordable childcare.

### Stimulating Glasgow's economy

Small and medium businesses play a vital role in Glasgow's economy. We will support sustainable expansion in industries such as great quality food production, medical and life sciences,



engineering and the low-carbon energy industry. Retail and financial services will always be important parts of our economy, but Glasgow deserves an economic strategy with a sustainable industrial core providing good quality jobs in the real economy.

- Support start-ups and an inclusive economy by tapping everyone's potential.
- Support investment in apprenticeships, colleges and universities.
- Work for Glasgow to realise its potential as a global centre for renewable energy research and industry. Promote investment in research and innovation to support a low carbon future,
- Create a generation of community-owned projects, and promote business models that deliver more such as co-operatives, social enterprise and fan-owned sports clubs, all designed to unlock community power.
- Empty council properties, such as vacant shopfronts, to be made more easily available for use as short-term start-up business, community or creative spaces.
- Campaign to support credit unions and local banks to create a network of accountable finance institutions. We will also explore whether local currencies can encourage local trading activity to support independent retailers and small high street traders.

## Funding and supporting sustainable change

Glasgow Greens recognise that Glasgow needs more resources in order that all its citizens benefit. Scottish Greens have already protected £17 million for Glasgow in the budget settlement this coming year, and we need to go further. We want to see fairer, more transparent and more local ways of raising the money needed for essential local services. We will:

- Campaign for reform of local government finance so that local authorities are able to raise up to 50% of the money they spend, instead of being dependent on central government.
- Push for a local Vacant Land Tax, which could bring in £25 million each year, while acting as an incentive to bring derelict land into productive use.
- Make responsible use of the ability to raise council tax when necessary to protect local services.
- Make Glasgow a more equal city by acting on the findings of social impact assessment tools looking at poverty, gender, health and inequality.
- Lead a comprehensive inquiry into the costs of PFI / PPP, which would examine options for cancellation or significant renegotiation of existing contracts and ensure the council adopts a strategy of direct public financing of capital projects as the norm.

## Homes for people, not for profit

Greens will act to limit excessive rent increases, promote social housing in planning, champion measures to reduce fuel poverty, and invest in services which tackle homelessness.



## Providing affordable energy and tackling fuel poverty

There is an abundance of highly talented people working in Glasgow's energy sector. We want to see these skills flourish in a sustainable energy sector which contributes to a low carbon future. Green councillors support investment to provide affordable energy supplied by clean, renewable means.

- Investment in better insulation, energy efficiency and the use of renewables for warmer homes with lower fuel bills – a "win-win" for local residents and the climate.
- Oppose any proposals for hydraulic fracturing (fracking) or coal bed methane extraction in the city. This risks irreversibly contaminating

water supplies and has no part to play in a sustainable energy policy.

- Work with public sector partners and local businesses to build commitment to energy-saving measures. Invest in a council-run renewable energy company to contribute to local energy generation, to bring down prices and potentially earn additional income.
- Develop training programmes in renewable technologies and home insulation in partnership with local schools, housing associations and Glasgow City Building. Develop and support "energy champions" to promote energy efficiency within all council services.
- Work to improve street lighting, stair lighting and door entry requirements and invest in LED and

light-dimming technology, which will produce more light for less energy.

## Greenspace, biodiversity and animal welfare

Glasgow has green spaces that make a vital contribution to the quality of life in the city. Our gardens, parks, rivers, roadside verges and even the railway embankments are a rich habitat for biodiversity, and provide an abundance of wildlife in every local community. Green councillors support effective stewardship of our city's natural resources, to leave a legacy of clean air, abundant woodland, vibrant urban green spaces and plentiful wildlife.

- Support the development of more community greenspaces throughout Glasgow, reducing environmental inequalities, improving people's health and giving communities greater control over the management of valued open spaces.
- Protect and enhance our green corridors — the rivers, parks, and open spaces — that provide the "green lungs" of Glasgow.
- Support birds and other wildlife within Glasgow by development of a Biodiversity Action Plan.
- Support a comprehensive approach to protection, management, planned replacement and additional planting of trees across the city.

- Promote the welfare of animals in the city by encouraging responsible pet ownership and support for local animal shelters.

## Cutting waste

A city where resources are creatively conserved and reused to minimise waste – in other words, a city with a sustainable, joined up local approach that helps people and planet.

- Support a council-run Zero Waste Strategy for Glasgow, drawing on best practice from around the country and abroad. Glasgow will sign up to the Zero Waste Scotland charter.
- Enhance doorstep service, including in tenements, to enable residents to reduce landfill, support reuse, and recycle easily. Improvements to information and support for householders, including leaflets and online information in different languages. Clear information displays in residential properties, the use of community competitions and door-to-door advice would help to increase recycling rates.
- Support public sector partners and local businesses to reduce waste production and increase the number of small scale recycling sites around the city for a wide range of recyclables.
- Campaign for a Deposit Return Scheme for drinks bottles where a small deposit paid when buying cans or bottles is refunded when empty containers are returned.

- Review customer service system and support for householders, to ensure that they are provided with accurate and up-to-date information on any missed bins. The customer service system should be focused on solving the root cause of customer complaints and move to a "getting it right first time" approach.

## Warm, safe homes for all

A warm, safe home is a basic requirement for living. It improves health, decreases fuel costs, and good housing promotes strong communities. This is not yet available to all Glaswegians. Green councillors will:

- Campaign for more homes of good quality, which are sustainable, affordable and meet the needs of our communities. Support new developments that achieve this, and challenge those which will not. Set ambitious targets to bring more empty homes back into use.
- Call for increased resources for the council to use their full enforcement powers against those private landlords who rent out substandard or overcrowded accommodation, or refuse to carry out repairs.
- Challenge housing developers to build housing which is fully accessible and which, in the context of an ageing population, enables people to live at home for as long as possible.
- Use new powers as they come in to

limit excessive rent rises in areas with very high rents. Continue to campaign for greater rent controls and against benefit changes that severely restrict housing benefit for many single people and vulnerable groups.

- Work to ensure that Glasgow City Council meets its statutory responsibilities to accommodate people who are homeless and ensure that an effective community homelessness service is developed.

## Safer communities

We all want to live in safer, fairer, thriving communities. Greens are working for a fairer, more equal Glasgow, because in more equal societies there is less crime. We will:

- Carefully scrutinise new reforms and support Glasgow's move to approaches which prioritise crime prevention.
- Support the work of Victim and Witness Support in Glasgow, work to support people with convictions in the community and the families of prisoners.
- Work with residents' groups, the police, the third sector and Safer Glasgow Group with methods proven to reduce crime and reoffending.
- Support work which tackles the causes of crime, including mental health services, anti-poverty work and homelessness support services.
- Support work to prevent domestic violence and hate crimes.

## Make Care Fair

Green councillors will ensure health and social care services are properly planned and funded, aim to bring paid care under direct council control, and support unpaid carers.



## Good health for all Glaswegians

The more equal a city, the healthier its citizens are likely to be. Green councillors will prioritise:

- Working with local communities, health workers and researchers to make all Council policies aim to improve health.
- Campaigning for an improved financial settlement for health and social care services.
- Fighting for social care to be a face-to-face service rather than a bureaucratic one.
- Keeping Lightburn hospital open

and making sure there are the right services for our older population and an increasingly ethnically diverse population.

## Affordable, nutritious food

Access to good food should be a fundamental human right. To make sufficient, affordable, nutritious food which is vital for good health and wellbeing more available, Green councillors will:

- Promote solutions to lack of access to food that are based on improving income and equality rather than reliance on foodbanks.
- Campaign for more resources for

local and community growing and eating, including the conversion of council-owned land to small farms, orchards and allotments.

- Campaign for local sourcing of high-quality food for use in public services such as hospitals and schools.
- Support the Glasgow Food Policy Partnership be given more power to develop Glasgow as a sustainable food city.

## Supporting older people

Our ageing society is a challenge but should also be something that we celebrate. Glasgow can adapt to these shifting demographics and ensure we all retain our independence as we get older. More Green voices in the City Chambers would work hard to bring about an inclusive culture where more

people of all ages play a positive role in society.

- Celebrate and support the contribution of older people in volunteering and in the social and cultural life of Glasgow.
- Support resources for advice and financial health check-ups to help older people make the most of their money, secure the best energy tariffs and make it easier to access bank accounts.
- Provide practical and financial support for kinship and foster care families.
- Support investment in our health and social care partnerships, transforming primary care and increasing the numbers of GPs, nurses and social workers working in our communities.





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