

## The Green Vision for South Tyneside

### The Green Party - unique and proud of it!

Environmental issues have long formed a core of Green Party policies, but the Green Party recognises it is nothing without people.

The Green Party is the only truly democratic political party, having no top-down leadership structure. Policy decisions are still made democratically at conference - not in secret by a cabal. Policy is guided by recognition of the genuine sustainable needs of our society, not by narrow focus groups, greedy business interests and cynical poll-led spin. We will not let media panic set our agenda.

### The old guard: old ideas

We can't ignore the other parties, so a review of their track record is in order.

**Labour** has failed our society, put our future in dire risk and:

- led us into two disastrous conflicts;
- presided over rising CO2 emissions;
- encouraged unsustainable increases in road traffic;
- started the destruction of our post offices;
- eroded our civil rights;
- taken us to the brink of financial catastrophe.

Locally, Labour has backed environmentally disastrous projects like the second Tyne Tunnel, proposals for building on the Fellgate greenbelt and waste burning. Currently Labour is pushing massive supermarket plans in Hebburn which may increase local congestion and parking problems, and rip the guts out the town's local retail businesses.

**Lib-Dems** have also backed the tunnel, against their own party's policy which recognises that we can't solve congestion by building more roads, and have opposed plans for a wind turbine in Hebburn.

**Tories** have defended the Tyne Tunnel and waste incineration, and opposed proposals to reduce road speeds to improve pedestrian safety. Warm words on climate change have not been backed up with action.

The **Progressives** have shown support for waste incineration, and have backed the removal of green verges.

Greens have been consistently outspoken critics of unsustainable projects and proposals which risk negatively impacting on communities.

The other parties make nice sounds about the environment - but only the Green Party means business.

### A better future

We have a better vision - for us all - one that is being realised in places like Brighton, Kirklees and London, where Green Party councillors are making a real difference to people's lives. Greens aren't scared to say when something is wrong. Similarly, the Green Party has plenty of fresh ideas to give us a safe, clean and sustainable future.

### The Green Party new vision for South Tyneside:

#### Climate change

South Tyneside council is not taking climate change seriously. The Green Party wants the impact of climate change to be considered in all council decision, and the creation of ambitious initiatives, and the adoption of challenging targets and measuring mechanisms so South Tyneside could do it's bit to tackle global heating.

#### Communities

The Green Party would protect open spaces and play areas for children. Communities would have genuine local community centres; young people would not be forced out of their locality to benefit from youth community services.

#### Development

Greens, as they have already proved in South Tyneside, fight to protect our greenbelt from development. Inappropriate developments would be challenged and alternatives sought.

## **Education**

The Green Party would remove pointless and outdated bureaucracy in education. Children should be able to attend schools in their local community to encourage travel to school by foot, and reduce travelling by car (or even bus).

The aims of our society to become low carbon, low waste would be enshrined within each school's management mechanisms and planning.

Schools would be protected from the unaccountable and undemocratic drive to privatise educational services.

## **Finance**

The Green Party would take prudent care of the council's finances. No more CAF money would be allocated to parking schemes and ripping up green verges under the guise of 'environmental funding'. CAF funds would only be invested in schemes with genuine environmental and social benefits.

We would end council tax subsidising council staff car parks, and change the street lighting contract to use cheaper low energy lighting units.

## **Homes**

New homes can be genuinely affordable and sustainable. The Green Party would change planning rules to ensure all new properties are built to high environmental standards.

To bring existing properties up to basic insulation standards, the Green Party would make it cheaper and easier for people to insulate their homes, and would encourage people to insulate their homes by changing planning policy to give planning permission for home improvements only for those homes that already meet minimum standards.

Greens would stop the slide of our social housing into private hands for bargain basement prices.

## **Transport**

Streets need to be taken from cars given back to people. Cyclists and pedestrians would be given priority over cars and irresponsible parking and anti-social driving would be dealt with severely. Pavement parking would be banned.

All local estate roads would have their speed limits reduced to 20mph. The Green Party would introduce traffic slowing measures to make estates safer and more people friendly. In shopping areas, roads would be raised to pavement height to encourage drivers to be more careful and treat pedestrians with respect.

The Green Party would remove support for the growth of Newcastle Airport.

## **Waste**

Many people from older generations don't see what all the fuss is about with reduce, reuse and recycle. This isn't because they don't care, it's because it's old news to them - because they were brought up to be prudent, and "make do and mend". This is probably why so many older people are such good recyclers and waste so little.

The Green Party can see the sound economic benefits in partnering with our neighbours to share the costs and benefits of managing our waste, but this cannot be done using costly and dangerous techniques such as incineration. Any proposals to deal with waste should form part of a long term plan aiming for a 'zero waste' culture.

Greens want the 'reduce, reuse, recycle' concept placed at the heart of all council business and decision making.

## **One World – your chance**

Most people are 'Green'; they just don't realise it. They are prudent, recycle, and reuse their shopping bags. They want better public services; safer communities; to travel on clean and safe public transport; health and education services protected from the ravages of privatisation.

Most of all, they want a world which will be fit for their children.

Of all the political parties in South Tyneside, only one party offers a fresh alternative to the tired old 'business as usual' dirty habits of the other parties.

## **The Green Party.**

