

GreenView

The green newspaper for Norwich



Action for a Stable Economy

The Green Party has repeated its call for action to address the root causes of the economic crisis and to build a secure economy based on lasting jobs and local production.

The Government has responded to the recession by making sweeping cuts to public services. The Green Party has said from the outset that this is the wrong approach. The cuts are punishing the most vulnerable in our society while failing to address the reckless behaviour of parts of the banking industry that caused the recession in the first place.

Creating Jobs

Adrian Ramsay, Green Party Deputy Leader, said: "Cutting jobs and public services is a false economy as it leads to more people claiming benefits and greater burdens on the NHS, police and social services. The best way to build a stable economy is to create jobs in areas where they are most needed. Producing more of the foods and manufactured goods we need in the UK would boost jobs and cut carbon emissions. Investing in home insulation

schemes, rail and bus services and renewable energy could create a million new jobs while cutting people's bills."

Banks

The Green Party is also calling for tougher regulation of the banking sector and believes that bailed-out banks should be transformed into low-risk banks that serve the public good, such as the mutuals, ethical banks and co-operatives.

The Government could avoid savage cuts to public services and generate billions of pounds by clamping down on tax evasion (see page 2) and supporting a Robin Hood Tax. This proposed tax, on high-risk transactions between financial institutions, would raise an estimated £20-£30 billion each year in the UK if levied at 0.05%.

A Stable Economy

The Green Party believes that regulation of the financial sector and rebalancing the economy with a greater focus on local production will help end the cycle of 'boom and bust' we've seen in recent years.



Green Party Leader Caroline Lucas MP is calling for the Government to invest in new jobs and create a stable economy for the future.

Greens are calling for a wider range of measures to judge the success of the economy. Currently the Government just looks at levels of economic activity but does not consider the types of economic activity, health and wellbeing in society, levels of inequality, access to public services or the impact of the economy on natural resources and the environment.

Current economic thinking fails to value many 'free' goods, such as the services provided by nature (pollination, soil formation, water and climate regulation). This leads to the destruction of valuable assets for short-term profit, while ignoring long-term costs such as cleaning up pollution, or dealing with floods, erosion or health problems.

► **For more information on alternative economics please visit www.neweconomics.org**



The Green Party is the main opposition to the ruling Labour Cabinet at City Hall. The Green Party increased its number of seats to 15 at the local election in May 2011.

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Tackle Corporate Tax Evasion, say Greens

Green Party MP Caroline Lucas has proposed a new Bill in Parliament aimed at clamping down on corporate tax evasion that costs the UK economy billions of pounds every year.

The new *Tax and Financial Transparency Bill* would recover billions

of lost pounds by forcing multinational companies to publish information on where they make their sales, record their profits and pay their taxes.

Caroline Lucas MP said: "The first aim of this Bill is to tackle the scandalous reality that around 500,000 companies appear not to be paying tax in the UK. HM Revenue & Customs admits that tax evasion and avoidance together come to at least £40 billion a year. When the Government is cutting public services across the board we can't afford to make it easier for tax dodgers to get away with not paying their fair share."

Mark Serwotka, General Secretary of the Public and Commercial Services Union (PCS), said: "This Bill goes right



to the heart of the economic issues facing our country. If the Government were serious about protecting the most vulnerable people in our communities from the cuts it would start investing in tax collection and proper regulation so that companies would not be allowed to simply disappear without paying the taxes they owe."

News in Brief

Green Party Councillors are supporting the campaign to protect the Britons Arms on Elm Hill from sale on the open market. Norwich City Council proposed selling the building at auction but the current occupants and other local residents are concerned that this could result in the closure of the restaurant and the loss of public access to this historic building. Local Green Councillors are supporting a petition to save this community facility and are calling on the City Council to accept proposals from combined heritage trusts to lease, repair and run the building and keep its ownership public. The City Council is currently reviewing the management and ownership of all its buildings. Green Councillors have asked for information about the review and will press for buildings of historic and community significance to be kept public. For more info see www.tinyurl.com/3facx69

Norfolk County Council will be resubmitting a bid for funding to make traffic changes in the Chapelfield area after the Government asked for further information. The proposal would make Chapelfield North, Cleveland Road and Bethel Street two-way and close Little Bethel Street to motorised traffic. The aim is to improve access to the city centre, particularly for buses and cyclists. A public consultation on the proposals will be held if the funding is approved in May 2012.

Summed Up

£21 trillion - estimated financial benefit of nature's 'free' services to humanity every year (including crop pollination, water regulation, flood prevention, soil formation and other vital services)

£11 trillion - total economic activity (GDP) produced by all the world's countries in one year

32 million - acres of forest destroyed every year globally (an area the size of England)

1.6 billion - number of people whose livelihoods depend on forests (a quarter of the world population)

£16 billion - annual cost of tax evasion to UK taxpayers

£1 billion - cuts being made to social care services across the country

Responsible Dog Ownership

Norwich City Councillors have agreed a motion calling on the ruling Cabinet to introduce a Dog Control Order (DCO) requiring owners to keep their dogs on leads in parts of the city where there have been problems with dangerous dogs.

There has been a spate of incidents in recent months of other dogs and cats being attacked and injured or killed by dogs. Initially, the ruling Labour Cabinet at City Hall said it would not take action, claiming there was a lack of evidence of the problem.

Green Party Councillors have been working with the RSPCA in pressing the Council to take action to promote



responsible pet ownership. An RSPCA representative has asked the Council if it will take part in the nationwide Community Animal Welfare scheme, where councils are awarded for positive measures taken.

Amy Stammers, Green Party City Councillor for Mancroft Ward (pictured), said: "I think there is significant evidence to show that a DCO is needed in parts of the city. I hope that the ruling Labour Cabinet responds positively to the motion that was agreed and also engages with the RSPCA. Any DCO that is agreed needs to be combined with action to promote animal welfare across the city."

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Green Schemes Create Money and Jobs

GreenView Profile



Councillor Ruth Makoff and Adrian Ramsay with council tenants on Jex Road, who may have solar panels installed on their roof as part of a Council scheme.

Norfolk County Council is to install solar panels on Council buildings as part of a plan initiated by Green Party Councillors. The scheme will generate electricity on site, reduce fuel bills, cut carbon emissions and create jobs locally.

The new Energy Services Company will install solar panels on many schools, libraries and museums in Norfolk. The project will reduce energy bills and also create a new income stream from the Government. This income is a reward for creating clean energy and reducing demand on the national grid.

Work to install solar panels will take place between now and April. Over the

same period Norwich City Council will be installing solar panels on 500 council homes and on the roof of City Hall. This will reduce the use of electricity from fossil fuels, save tenants money on their fuel bills and create jobs.

Green Party County Councillors Phil Hardy and Marcus Hemsley are also advising Norfolk Constabulary on how to reduce its energy use and save money at the same time. The force has set a target of 30% reduction in carbon emissions over the next five years.



Andrew Boswell, 55, has been the Green Party County Councillor for Nelson Ward in Norwich since 2005. He lives on Havelock Road with his wife Jacqui and has two grown up daughters and a step son.

How did you get involved in Green politics?

Local councils could make a big difference in tackling climate change. We need relentless individuals to push for this and I stood for election because I hoped I might be one.

What are the main issues you are campaigning on at present?

This summer, I have been bringing together parents, headteachers and the police in the area I represent to make our streets safer, particularly around schools.

I have been campaigning against the proposed Northern Distributor Road and incineration in Norfolk since before I was a councillor. Both are big infrastructure projects with huge price tags to the public purse. They are preventing Norfolk developing greener solutions to transport and waste management. With the Greens spearheading the demands for more open government in Norfolk, I am challenging the flawed decision making process and lack of proper consultation on both schemes.

Tell us about your professional background.

I have worked on protein structure, design of computer chips and scientific computing at UEA, including support for climate change models.

What do you most like about living in Norfolk?

I first came to Norfolk on a Broads sailing holiday when I was 16 and loved the natural environment. I still enjoy that whenever I can - walking in the county and canoeing on the local rivers.

Street Cleaning Petition

Norwich City Council has agreed to publish its programme for cleaning of streets and drains, following a petition submitted by Green Party Councillors. The Council has said that the information will be published on its website when it is fully updated before the end of the year.



Claire Stephenson, Leader of the Green Party City Councillors (pictured), said: "A number of local residents

contacted me to ask if the Council would let them know when their streets were going to be cleaned so they could move their cars out of the way. There's a particular problem with drains not being cleaned - sometimes for years - because cars are parked over them, and in time blocked drains lead to flooding. We've asked the Council to make it a priority to clear drains on streets that have experienced flooding as well as to improve communication on when street cleaning is planned.

"At the moment the Council is telling us that many residential streets are being cleaned every thirteen weeks but residents are saying that they don't know when the work is happening. Publishing the cleaning schedule will mean that residents and councillors can monitor if the cleaning is happening when it should and highlight to the Council where the work is not adequate."

Saturday
DECEMBER 3RD

Join the journey

FROM NORWICH TO
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www.Greenhoustrust.co.uk

INTERNATIONAL DAY OF CLIMATE ACTION

The next international climate change conference (COP17) is taking place in Durban, South Africa, from 28th November to 9th December. The conference will be seeking a second round of commitments from countries around the world on reductions in carbon emissions. The Greenhouse in Norwich is organising a 'virtual journey' to the conference to highlight the event and raise money for its climate change education work. You can join in by walking, cycling, jogging or swimming a certain distance, and raising sponsorship. It is hoped that the total distances will add up to the 10,000km to Durban.

HAS YOUR SCHOOL SIGNED UP FOR ARTHUR'S CHOICE YET?

- New fundraising scheme for schools run by local independent organic company.
- Fruit and veg bags for parents and teachers from just £5.50, delivered to your school. £1 donated to the school for every bag purchased.



01603 621797
www.arthurschoice.yolasite.com
Arthur's Organic Deliveries

A local company is offering healthy organic fruit and veg to parents and teachers in Norwich. Fruit and veg bags will be delivered to schools and £1 will be donated to the school for every bag purchased. Tony Park of Arthur's Organics is running the scheme, called Arthur's Choice, based on a successful venture in London where £800,000 has been raised for schools. Mr Park said: "Not only will the scheme help local schools but it will also support local farmers who supply our produce. Organic produce also holds many benefits for the environment."

Planning Reforms Threaten Our Countryside and Communities



Adrian Ramsay writes...

Over 100,000 people have signed a National Trust petition against the Government's proposed new National Planning Policy Framework. The proposals would make it easier for developers to build on the countryside and other greenfield sites, creating a presumption in favour of development.

It's no surprise that there is such strong public opposition to the plans when local communities already have an uphill struggle to defeat unpopular planning applications. It's also no surprise that Britain's biggest property companies are the main supporters of the plans.

As well as threatening cherished green land, the proposals would make it harder for councils to gain contributions from developers towards building social housing. With growing council housing waiting lists this approach is simply unethical.

There are a third of a million potential homes in the UK that already have planning permission as well as nearly a million empty properties. If the Government wants to provide homes and create jobs then it could take action on companies sitting on this land – without destroying the countryside.

With continued public pressure let's hope that we see another U-turn on this disastrous plan, as we did on the proposal to sell our forests.

▶ You can read more at www.nationaltrust.org.uk

Adrian Ramsay is Deputy Leader of the Green Party nationally and a local campaigner in Norwich.

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Bring in Living Wage, say Greens

Samir Jeraj, Green Party City Councillor for Town Close Ward, outlines the benefits of a Living Wage...

What is the Living Wage?

The hourly pay that a worker needs to provide themselves and their family with a decent standard of living, as calculated by economists.

How much is it?

In most of Britain the Living Wage is £7.20 per hour. However, in London it is £8.30.

Why do we need a Living Wage when we've got the minimum wage?

Half of children in poverty live in families where one or both parents are working. Increasing their wages means child poverty would be cut dramatically. Introducing a Living Wage will also mean people are

happier in work, healthier and more productive.

Is the Living Wage realistic in the current economic climate?

Yes. In London it has been introduced for all council workers. It is optional in the private sector but many companies have chosen to bring in a Living Wage for their employees.

What is the Green Party doing about the Living Wage?

The Green Party-controlled Council in Brighton has raised the wages of lowest paid staff to the Living Wage. In Norwich Green Councillors are calling for all City and County Council staff and contracted workers to be paid a Living Wage.

▶ You can read more at www.livingwage.org.uk

Contacting Norwich Green Party:

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

Phone: (01603) 611909

E-mail:
enquiries@norwichgreenparty.org

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

Surgeries: The Green Party Councillors hold the following surgeries. You can come along to raise a local issue or problem. No appointment needed.

First Tuesday of each month, 5pm to 6pm at Inner Space, Maude Gray Court, St Benedicts Street

Second Monday of each month, 6pm to 7pm at Belvedere Community Centre, Belvoir Street.

Can you help Norwich Green Party?

Yes, I will help by:

- Voting Green at future elections
- Displaying a window poster at future elections
- Displaying a garden poster board at future elections
- Delivering some leaflets in my area
- Doing some paperwork, such as stuffing envelopes
- Helping with fundraising activities
- Coming to a Green social event (tick to request details)
- Making a donation (cheques payable to 'Norwich Green Party')
- Joining the Green Party (tick for details)

Name:

Address:

Telephone:

E-mail:

Please return to: Norwich Green Party, 27 Clarendon Road, 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 this box:

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