

**GREEN PARTY**

**BME**

**MANIFESTO**



**BME MANIFESTO 2017**

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# HEADLINE POLICIES

- » **Anonymous CVs** to break down exclusion from workforce for BME people
- » **An end to scapegoating of migrants** and reform of asylum process and spousal income requirement
- » **Reform of stop and search and Prevent** – community cohesive policing rather than antagonising communities

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# INTRODUCTION

**This is what Green MPs promise to do in Parliament for Black and Minority Ethnic communities living in the UK. Britain's diversity is one of the strengths of our society but still more can be done to foster equality for BME communities and redress systemic inequalities. We will always fight for equality because equality and social justice are integral parts of what it means to be Green.**

The Green Party has long been at the forefront of calling for a fair and humane immigration system, which takes responsibility for Britain's ongoing role in causing the flow of migrants worldwide. An immigration system which treats people with respect and dignity. We aren't afraid to challenge the nasty anti-immigration rhetoric which has become part of the mainstream political narrative because we recognise and value the contribution that migrants make to our society. We are proud to do politics differently.

Green MPs in Parliament will work tirelessly to challenge racism and discrimination.



# 1. WORK

Your background or ethnicity should not mean you are disadvantaged at work. Yet too many BME workers face barriers into getting into work, discrimination in the workplace and unequal pay. We will seek to end the oppression of marginalised groups in the workplace.

## Green MPs will:

- » **Progressively introduce anonymised CVs** in businesses bigger than 50 employees so fewer female and BME candidates are screened out before the interview stage.
- » **Reduce tribunal fees** so that workers facing discrimination at work can afford to seek justice and recompense.
- » **Push for public disclosure** of race, gender and pay bands in businesses bigger than 50 employees.
- » **Reduce the gap between the highest and lowest paid**, and increase the minimum wage to reach a living wage of £10 an hour by 2020.
- » **Ensure that employers breaching minimum wage law are brought to justice**, as a means to challenge the BME pay gap.
- » Set targets to **improve BME representation on boards**.

## 2. MIGRATION

Britain has a rich and diverse history of migration and has long been a place which migrants can call home. Britain has also been a safe haven for those fleeing war and persecution. Yet the current Government's "hostile environment" agenda has left migrants unfairly scapegoated for successive failures in government policy and we have closed our doors to refugees.

The Green Party would seek to put fairness back into our migration system. We need a migration system that embraces dignity, justice and common sense, and which ensures those needing safety and security can find it in the UK. We will ensure all migrants feel welcome and celebrate the contributions that migrants make to our communities and our economy.



### Green MPs will:

- » **Abolish the Minimum Income Requirement** that requires a British citizen to have an income of at least £18,600 a year before their partner can come to live in the UK, which unfairly separates families.
- » **Ensure responsibility for immigration enforcement falls solely to immigration officials**, and ensure that enforcement does not include community-led controls carried out by doctors, landlords, teachers and employers.
- » **Bring an end to indefinite detention for immigration purposes** by introducing a 28 day time limit of refugees and migrants, with a priority to end the detention of women and children.
- » **Grant asylum seekers the right to work** whilst asylum claims are processed.
- » **Reform asylum processes** to ensure safe and legal routes into the UK and increase funding to ensure asylum cases are completed quickly and fairly.
- » **Commit to reforming the asylum support system**, ensuring it meets the needs of all, including those with specific needs arising out of their particular characteristics and circumstances.
- » **Review access to legal aid** and legal appeals for refugees to ensure they are given a fair hearing and access to justice.
- » Ensure that refugees fleeing their country of origin because of their sexuality, gender identity, ethnicity or religion **receive a fair hearing**.



## 3. COMMUNITIES

The politics of division has marginalised and side-lined BME communities. The Green Party will prioritise the fight against Islamophobia, anti-Semitism and racism. Policing and local government can play a vital role in improving community cohesion and ensuring the fair treatment of BME people within the justice system.

### Green MPs will:

- » **Bring an end to stop and search programmes** which disproportionately target people of colour.
- » **Implement an independent review of our Criminal Justice System, to improve trust in the system, challenge sentencing biases and improve diversity of magistrates.**
- » **Ensure local authorities are fully funded** and resourced to run schemes which facilitate community cohesion and celebrate all local communities.
- » **Strengthen hate-crime legislation** to ensure people who commit acts of violence against a community are brought to justice.
- » Require county councils and local authorities to **provide sufficient Traveller sites.**
- » **Scrap the xenophobic Prevent policing strategy** and replace it with a community led programme to tackle extremism.



## 4. DEMOCRACY

We want a political system which ensures that everyone has a voice and for that voice to be heard. We want to ensure that we have a fair voting system in which every vote counts and BME communities are fairly represented in Parliament.

### Green MPs will:

- » **Introduce proportional representation (PR)** for parliamentary elections and votes at 16.
- » **Increase diversity with a 50/50 Parliament** and replace the House of Lords with an elected second chamber.
- » **Give power to local communities** by allowing for 20% of the local electorate to secure a referendum on local government decisions or to recall their MP.

## 5. HOUSING

Everyone should have a safe, affordable, secure and warm place to call home and BME communities are more likely to live in some of the worst housing conditions. We will tackle the causes of the housing crisis: giving renters get a fair deal, making social housing widely available and bringing the housing market under control.

### Green MPs will:

- » **Introduce a living rent for all** through rent controls and more secure tenancies for private renters, an end to letting fees and mandatory licensing for all landlords.
- » **A major programme to build affordable homes**, including ½ million social rented homes over 5 years.
- » **End mass council house sales** and scrap Right to Buy at discounted prices.
- » **Abolish the cruel and unfair bedroom tax.**
- » **Action on empty homes** to bring them back into use and a trial of a Land Value Tax to encourage the use of vacant land and reduce speculation.
- » **Re-instate housing benefit for under 21's** and reverse housing benefits cuts.
- » **Stop declaring people as 'intentionally homeless'** and give local authorities the same duties towards single people and childless couples as to families.

## 6. EDUCATION

We want to build a bigger, more hopeful future for everyone. Education can transform lives, so alongside our policies on lowering the voting age, protecting the environment, tackling the housing crisis, rebuilding the public sector and for a stable, fair economy, we will stand up for young people's right to education and opportunities.

### Green MPs will:

- » **Scrap university tuition fees**, fund full student grants, and greater public investment in further and higher education.
- » **Allow international students the opportunity to work and live in the UK** for two years after graduation.
- » **Restore Education Maintenance Allowance** and guarantee apprenticeships to all qualified young people aged 16–25.





# Green Party

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