



High Peak Green Party

Local Manifesto

Derbyshire County Council Election 6th May 2021

Our policies

Our policies will help create sustainable, thriving communities for a fairer society. They will improve the natural environment and limit the effects of climate change through considering these two crises in everything we do. Because local government does not have the capacity to do everything itself, so to implement our policies we will build partnerships with public, private and voluntary organisations across Derbyshire. We will listen to local communities from early on in decision-making.



Education

Education is about the whole person, not just one set of knowledge and skills. Schools should look after the whole child and help all children develop their talents. But education is not only about schools. It should be available to anyone. Learning new skills can improve people's well-being at all stages of their life, as well as giving them new skills for employment, volunteering and enriching their lives.

To achieve this, Green councillors will work for education and training which provide:

- Well-being and social skills
- Both Practical and academic skills, for every child's needs
- Understanding of our place in the world and in nature
- More guidance and support from the Council to school staff, so schools can meet every child's needs
- Post-16 training in skills for the future for young people and anyone who needs to update their skills. There are currently skills gaps in green construction and renewable energy.
- Much more Adult Education, for reskilling and for improving people's social connections and well-being. This could be fee-paying but subsidised for those on low incomes.

Health and social care

The County Council has an important role in helping people stay healthy, and providing support for those who need it. Our experience through the Covid pandemic has shown how hard people work in the caring professions, but also how much health workers and carers themselves need support. We all recognise that 'prevention is better than cure', but too often there has not been the commitment to prevention that is needed. And we recognise that a healthy lifestyle is usually good for the environment.

A Green councillor would:

- Make sure that all major Council projects have a formal *Health Impact Assessment* undertaken, so that they are designed and implemented in ways that make the population healthier
- Support the Council's Public Health team in projects such as Active Derbyshire, helping people to stay healthy
- Green social prescribing: time in nature to help people's, physical and mental health
- Fight for more resources for Public Health, including for a locally run 'test and trace' programme
- Work both within the Council and with NHS partners to promote the integration of health and social care
- Argue for more funding for social care to ensure social care staff are properly rewarded for their hard work and to fill staffing gaps
- Strengthen Council oversight of private social care providers to ensure the highest quality of care, as the people of Derbyshire deserve!

Roads and traffic

Derbyshire needs to change its policies to respond much better to local knowledge and local needs, and the challenge of climate change. We need to reduce car use to make our communities safer and to reduce pollution in towns and rural areas, so we must have good alternatives to cars. To achieve this the Council must work with local communities, public transport providers, the Peak Park and other organisations. It must build staff skills to draw up really good plans in order to secure more funding.

Green Councillors would work for:

- A network of safe routes for cycling and walking, including using government funding in our area
- Hourly, reliable, affordable public transport, including rural bus services taking local people where they need to go, for work, social visits, recreation, shopping and other everyday purposes.
- new ways to manage public transport to link our towns and villages, based on good data about where people travel.
- Safety first, not after several accidents or fatalities, as is currently Derbyshire's policy.
- 20 mph limits in residential areas, working with the 20's Plenty Campaign
- Roads kept in good repair, for the safety of all users
- No new roads; it has been shown that new roads do not reduce congestion or pollution, but simply encourage more car use. Money for roads would be better spent on other things.

Economy and finance

We need a strong local economy which provides local jobs, supports local businesses and encourages new, green ideas. Funding should be redirected from polluting activities such as road building to education, health and social care and decarbonising the economy. Derbyshire's budget is around £500 million; how it is spent can make a difference.

A Green Councillor would therefore work to:

- use local companies for Derbyshire's own procurement wherever possible
- Prioritise funding for education, health and social care and greening the economy
- Support green jobs for house-building, retrofitting existing homes and green energy production.
- Support small and innovative businesses with advice, premises, good broadband, help with costs
- help people into self-employment
- Divest Council funds from fossil fuels and other risky investments which harm people and the environment
- Press for openness about how public money is spent and where it is invested
- where allowed by central government, press for higher council taxes for larger properties

Police and crime

Our police do all they can. But there are not enough police to cover our area and enforce the law. Better communications from Derbyshire, working with other authorities, would help stop crime, along with other Green policies. Not only the police but also other organisations need more capacity to turn people away from crime.

Green councillors would work for

- As well as policing crimes such as burglary and abuse, more officers specifically to tackle rural crime such as theft from farms, and wildlife crime such as illegal persecution of birds of prey.
- More traffic police to enforce regulations such as speed limits and help make our roads safer
- Working with other organisations to provide more activities for young people to lead them away from crime, coupled with better public transport so they can travel to local towns and cities for recreation
- Working with the Peak District National Park for more rangers, including volunteers, and better education of visitors
- Better communications between local communities, police and other agencies.

Nature and wildlife

Most people in the UK love nature, yet even in a rural place like Derbyshire, including in the Peak Park, it is declining rapidly. House building on green field sites (rather than within existing settlements), road building, quarrying – all these contribute to the decline of nature and reduce the green spaces which are essential for our well-being.

- Work with partners, including landowners, to create an interconnected network of habitats across Derbyshire, protected to the level where nature can flourish
- Manage public land, including road verges and parks, for a rich mix of species
- Full assessment of the impact of policies on habitats and wildlife
- Give access to green space for everyone, through expanding and protecting them.
- Oppose culling of wild animals in the whole of Derbyshire; there are other alternatives where nature has become unbalanced
- Communicate the impact of human activity on individual species and their habitats