

GREEN PARTY MANIFESTO FOR HASTINGS AND ST LEONARDS

HASTINGS DESERVES BETTER

The Green Party is the fastest growing political force in Hastings, and reaches out to people of all backgrounds and in every part of town. In the upcoming May elections we are delighted to be standing candidates in every ward. We offer an independent outlook, valuable life experience, and a commitment to see Hastings become the cleanest, greenest, most creative community on the South Coast.

**Hastings deserves better. It's time for a change.
We are proud to offer a clear, compelling, alternative vision.**

CLIMATE CHANGE

Tackling climate change needs to be the lens through which we make all our decisions. The council can't do this on its own, but needs to be the leader, bringing partners together to create a shared vision and harnessing the power and imagination in our community to devise solutions that meet everyone's needs but fit within planetary limits.

TACKLING FUEL POVERTY

We will be a campaigning council actively demanding more funding for insulating homes and will support the Great Homes Upgrade campaign lead by the New Economics Foundation. We will learn from Greens in Lewes who have developed the Lewes model whereby councils cooperate to pool resources in order to insulate existing housing, and to create a supply chain for the skills and workforce needed for a mass insulation drive.

This means good jobs, warmer homes and lower energy bills.

BACKING LOCAL BUSINESS, BUILDING GOOD IDEAS

Hastings is bursting with talent. Our many independent traders contribute to the town's vivid personality. We want to draw on local ideas to create a stronger economy, marked by good jobs and greater prosperity.

Wherever possible, council contracts should go to the town's own enterprises, to keep income local. Where skills need to be brought in from outside the town we will look at ways for those to be shared to build our local skill set and increase our adaptability in an ever-changing world.

With budgets stretched, the temptation is to go for the quick fix. We need to be much more imaginative.

Council-owned land and buildings should not be sold off for others to develop. Public ownership benefits our local community in the long term.

GREENING OUR STREETS AND OPEN SPACES

We have amazing parks, but many streets are treeless. We will press for a major tree planting programme, and support the Hastings Garden Town initiative, which will build on the existing network of community gardens and green our town. We will encourage Optivo and other housing providers to release land for allotments.

AFFORDABLE HOUSING

Rising house prices and rent increases make life tough for local people. The council owns a lot of land and buildings. We will audit unused council-owned land with a view to building well-designed, energy efficient accommodation, or adapting existing buildings for homes. We will not build on flood plains or sell off prime sites to developers with little control over standards and quality.

Hastings Borough Council has committed to building 500 affordable homes over the next five years. We want these built to Healthy Homes principles so they are fit for the future and adaptable as people's needs change.

Too much former council accommodation is drab and depressing. We will press social housing providers to improve standards. We need properly maintained and serviced estates, with decent play facilities.

The rise in AirBnBs has created an acute shortage of rental housing. We support proper regulation so that currently vibrant neighbourhoods don't lose their sense of community.

PROMOTING LOCAL CULTURE AND FOOD

The town's creative and food economies are growing strongly. We will actively promote Hastings as a market leader in both areas, reinforcing our valuable tourist profile. Hastings is famous for its history. Our food and arts economies should now take centre stage.

However, one in four children in Hastings still goes hungry, despite the brilliant work of the town's foodbanks. Our food network needs to benefit everyone by providing access to fresh, local, healthy food.

CLEAN SEAS

Southern Water is pumping vast amounts of raw sewage into our coastal waters. We will continue to hold Southern Water to account, and to push for proper regulation, so our waters are safe for swimming. Amanda Jobson and Becca Horn, two of our candidates, have taken the lead, setting up a crowdfunder to pay for our seawater to be tested through the winter, when the Environment Agency doesn't test.

20 MPH AND ACTIVE TRAVEL

We need a child-friendly approach to urban planning. To reclaim our streets, we are pressing East Sussex County Council to impose a 20mph speed limit in residential areas. We want to make it easier for people to make their journeys on foot, cycle or public transport and provide on street secure cycle parking.

AIR QUALITY

Air quality is poor in many parts of Hastings, leading to respiratory illnesses like asthma. We will push for proper monitoring and action to identify and improve the worst performing streets. We want the council to impose fines on people who break the law by leaving their cars idling.

HASTINGS DESERVES BETTER REPRESENTATION

The Green Party will make Hastings Borough Council more open and transparent as well as more accessible to its residents. Too many decisions have been taken in private meetings with few opportunities for question and debate. We don't believe the closed shop approach of the past offers the people of Hastings the representation they deserve.

Elections are just round the corner!

We believe that the overall effect of these policies will be a happier, healthier, more equal and wealthier borough, and we commend them to you.

If you agree that Hastings deserves better - then Vote Green on May 5th to deliver a different kind of independent politics that puts serving residents first. **Put it in your diary! Let's make change happen.**