

Liverpool  Green Party

Think green? Then, Vote Green



A local manifesto for Liverpool

Note: We are living through truly unprecedented times We cannot predict with any certainty the depths of the coming economic recession or the ultimate toll in lost and damaged lives wrought by the disastrous mis-management of Covid-19. However, we do know that each comes on top of a climate emergency and environmental crisis that is already here.

Our manifesto will evolve as events unfold around us. And we need your help to make it constantly relevant to the lives of all the people of Liverpool. Please tell us what you think: what is your vision of the future of our city?

We believe that better is possible, and indeed necessary. We know that social justice and environmental justice are inseparable. We believe that together we can deliver a green recovery and build a city of nature, energy, activity and health and education for all because everything is connected and we know the power of people can make change happen.

We can now glimpse what is possible

by **Councillor Tom Crone**, Green Party candidate for Mayor of Liverpool City Council



Liverpool is a great city, always facing outwards to the wider world.

That's why we have a special role to play.

By facing up to our past as a city built largely on the proceeds of slavery *and* tackling today's climate emergency we can unite our city with a vision of a sustainable future built on foundations of equality and justice.

But that takes leadership; democratic leadership and that involves people creating our future together.

The global Black Lives Matter movement proves that racism, discrimination and inequality are still evident in many areas of society.

A report from Oxfam found that the richest 10 per cent of people produce half of the planet's individual-consumption-based fossil fuel emissions, while the poorest 50 per cent - about 3.5 billion people - contribute only 10 per cent.

Most of the world's poor live in countries with majority Black populations. Poverty,

inequality and the climate emergency are linked. Black people pay the highest price while contributing least to the problem.

The struggle to overcome racism, discrimination and inequality, and the fight to force action to address climate breakdown are connected. Social justice and environmental justice are indivisible. The Green Party has long maintained this fact.

The Green Party is the first and only political party in the UK to have a policy which supports reparation for the transatlantic trafficking in enslaved Africans which is the source of so much local, national and global inequality today.

Liverpool Green Party supports the demands of Greens of Colour and is committed to creating a more sustainable and just society where everyone is valued, respected and empowered, regardless of their age, race, class, gender, disability or sexuality. Reparation will have a profound impact on inequalities across our city – not just economic, but cultural, educational and in health and wellbeing.

The Coronavirus pandemic and the climate crisis dictate the need for an

urgent new vision for Liverpool. There is no going back to how things were before. The response to Covid-19 is one of our most serious challenges.

We have seen people coming together in new ways across our city to meet those challenges. And we have seen what is possible when we organise our lives differently.

We have decorated our windows with rainbows representing hope. We are organising in local communities to support the most disadvantaged.

And many of us have taken the time to stop and appreciate our remaining green spaces. Our parks have been rediscovered as refuges for those without gardens. Our air has become less toxic, as traffic has reduced.

We can now glimpse what is possible - if we decide to build back better.

We can see what governments, both local and national, can do if they really believe there is an emergency.

We have seen unprecedented employment support from a Conservative government, and our cash strapped local authority swiftly mobilised a remarkable response to support the most vulnerable at this difficult time.

Contrast this with how we have responded to the climate emergency and the threat of species extinction. Over a year ago, Liverpool Council declared a climate emergency, but there is scant evidence of real action since.

It's clear that this one-party council grasps neither the urgency, nor the interconnectedness, of the climate emergency, and that it knows even less about how to steer us onto a better path to future sustainability.

As Green Mayor, I will build on the national sense that we need a new way of doing things.

I will unleash democracy and harness people power to take swift, well-considered action.

I will enact a series of bold policy proposals to reimagine a greener healthier, more united Liverpool.

I pledge that our recovery will be a green recovery; a recovery which includes all members of society and ensures we fulfil our obligations to future generations who are counting on us to act now.

Cllr Tom Crone

A YouGov poll in mid-April found that only 9 per cent of the country wanted life to return to 'normal' once the pandemic is over. They had seen noticeable environmental improvements, 51 per cent noticing cleaner air and 27 per cent more wildlife.



A Green economic recovery

Liverpool faces some stark choices over the next few years.

We cannot base a post-Covid economic recovery on what has failed before.

Relying on global tourism – drawing visitors in through an expanded airport and ever bigger ships berthing at a new cruise liner terminal – was always bad for the environment. Post-pandemic, it will also be a non-starter for the economy and job security as fewer people travel the world.

We need a new, bold vision for our local economy based on a Green New Deal that protects people's incomes and creates jobs that are sustainable for people and the environment.

A Green mayor and council would work with businesses and civil society to achieve a vision for Liverpool built on

equality and social justice whilst safeguarding our natural environment.

A radical green economy:

Moving toward a four-day week

A Universal Basic Income to protect everyone out of work and in precarious employment

Backing existing businesses and new enterprises that invest in people's talents to create new green, sustainable jobs

Supporting those who have been impacted by benefit cuts and sanctions which have increased their misery and suffering

Greens will invest in the possibilities of the future, not continue to peddle the failures of the past.

Investing in renewable energy, clean transport and knowledge-based technology is the way forward.

We must enact these changes now, providing proper training that allows people to develop the skills they need to undertake well-paid jobs in these sustainable industries.

Making every home in our city clean, warm and green offers security for everyone. It protects for the planet and creates skilled jobs for the future.

Now, is the time to borrow to invest in jobs for multi-skilled retrofit teams and build back better.

We will turn the road-building budget into a fund for investing in fully accessible, 21st century transport where pedestrians, cyclists and electric vehicles can move safely and cleanly around their communities, opening our city up to all citizens.

We will back tomorrow's jobs creators through creative community workspaces like Baltic Independents and the Ten Streets in North Liverpool to nurture the new, low-carbon jobs of the future.



Believe in people

In Liverpool, one political party has a monopoly on power, and has done so for years.

Power concentrated in so few hands always stifles democracy and eventually leads to corruption.

We need to invest in our people and our democracy just as much as we need to invest in our economy.

Our communities are hotbeds of creative ideas and positive action. Green councillors listen to voters and have delivered on cleaning up neighbourhoods, improving local biodiversity, enabling innovative compost schemes and much more.

This is the real spirit of democracy, and we want to see it grow. From designing local transport to meet the needs of everyone, to deciding what kind of

businesses to support, local communities should have the power and resources to decide.

We need:

- New Citizens Assemblies to devolve power to the people
- City finances open to public scrutiny and public budgeting
- Developers working for the people, not signing cosy deals behind closed doors which result in a loss of precious green space
- A united city making democratic demands on the government

We face crucial decisions that all too often divide people – for instance, how to deal with the climate crisis? Do we create more roads for car use, or establish more bus and cycle lanes?

Today, such life-changing decisions are either: taken by a tiny handful of people

who all owe their jobs to the Mayor, or: are dodged altogether by politicians trying to hold on to office through our failed first-past-the-post system.

The same tiny handful of people make multi-million pound decisions hand-in-hand with land and property developers. More often than not, these decisions are not in the interests of the majority of citizens.

We need a different approach that puts trust in people and enables transparent, democratic decision-making.

For our biggest decisions we need citizen's assemblies made up of 100 people taken from a cross-section of Liverpool's population. These assemblies would hear and carefully weigh up all the evidence before making recommendations that have the authority of the people behind them.

It's an approach that has already been tried at a national level and we can now make it work here.

The Green Party commitment to extending democracy includes elections. First-past-the-post actually robs people of their votes. Minority votes elect most MPs and councillors – more people vote against the winner than for them – and yet they get to wield all the power.

We believe that every vote should count equally, and that people should vote for what they actually want. This means bringing in a system of Proportional

Representation for all local and national elections.

Better is possible, if we trust the people.

'We come from all walks of life and all across the UK. We have, between us, many different values, views and experiences. But we have worked together in an atmosphere of respect, co-operation, tolerance and humour to arrive at the considered recommendations in this report.'

*Climate Assembly UK,
commissioned by six Select
Committees of the House of
Commons*

City of energy

Liverpool's early growth and wealth was powered by the misery of the slave trade.

It is time to make reparation for the past and build a truly diverse, equal and welcoming city where everyone can prosper.

Our status as a global city exporting music, sport and goods brought new fame and fortune.

Now, In the face of the climate emergency and a post-pandemic economic slump, we need to urgently develop a new future for our city. The time for talking is past – we need action - and we need it now.

A Green Party Mayor and council would put a new vision in front of the people backed by actions which will ensure Liverpool takes the lead in energy transformation.

Fossil fuels are killing our people and will destroy our environment. We need a radical new way to fuel our economy and invest in our environment.

We need to decarbonise our energy system by replacing destructive fossil fuels. We can invest today in renewable sources of energy and storage, including batteries and green hydrogen.

There are a host of opportunities for developing and attracting energy businesses and markets such as Statkraft and Arcola.

The city's universities provide the focus for developing the skills and knowledge required for the region to build out the energy sector, for example the Stephenson Institute for Renewable Energy at the University of Liverpool and LJMU's Built Environment and Sustainable Technologies Research Institute (BEST)

We will roll out house retrofit programmes to make homes cheaper to keep warm - helping to reduce fuel poverty which drives too many people into debt.

We will develop training for council staff and councillors in energy policy and planning to support these actions.

We don't need to wait decades and waste billions on an unproven idea like a new Mersey tidal barrage.

Council operations should be net zero carbon by 2030, saving energy costs.

We will establish funding arrangements to attract direct investment in the city's energy programmes.

Liverpool can take the lead in developing the City Region as a focus for energy research and technology development attracting sustainable jobs and energy companies.



City of nature

During the lockdown, our parks and green spaces became vital lifelines for people, particularly those without gardens.

Never again must we allow the one-party council to try to sell-off our parks and green spaces to developers.

A Green Mayor of Liverpool and Green council would have a very different vision for developing our parks and green spaces. They would become the vital foundations - not for millionaire mansions - but for a City of Nature.

Every green area in our city, including our allotments and central reservations, plays a vital role in avoiding climate disaster. They reduce air pollution, preserve wildlife and keep people healthy.

Yet, our city is scarred by injustice and inequality, not least the glaring lack of access to green spaces in the North of our city.

A Green-led council would immediately invest in a North City Green Route, planting trees, greening derelict land, expanding allotments, and turning unkempt verges into miniature wildflower meadows.

Liverpool, City of Nature, would not only be beautiful, it would have cleaner air, less pollution, adsorb more carbon, cut flood risks, reduce human stress and encourage us all to go outdoors more and take physical exercise.

Our green investment would save money on unnecessarily cutting grass and would plant more trees and wildflowers that require less costly upkeep.

We would reform planning laws to protect our green spaces and encourage new green planting, securing an improvement in biodiversity.

For instance, new buildings should be constructed with green roofs encouraging vital insects and bees while naturally removing carbon and pollutants from the air.

We will work with bus companies to put green roofs on bus shelters and with

schools to plant hedges around their perimeters to improve air quality and provide habitat.

We would join our parks and green spaces together by creating a network of fully accessible green foot and cycle ways, linking our schools and opening up our city for everyone, wildlife included.



City of activity

We need to become an active city by cutting car use and opening up our city through full pedestrianisation and by greening the city centre to benefit everyone who lives in, works in and visits Liverpool.

We want to invest in our cultural life and in all the jobs and communities that sustain it. We want people from outside Liverpool to enjoy our city's culture just as much as we do.

That means supporting community arts and culture, encouraging pop-up events and arts spaces, and recognising the value that culture brings to people's lives as well as to the economy.

We must move people in and out of our city without clogging up our roads.

Being an active city means ensuring that our cultural economy offers green, environmentally sustainable events that are zero carbon.

We will introduce a road-pricing system that pays for investment in a 21st century public transport system that is fully accessible to everyone.

Spring 2020 saw dramatic reductions in cars and lorries on our roads because of lockdown, and along with it, a noticeable improvement in air quality.

Of course, it should not have taken the awful pain of the pandemic to prove to the council that its plans to expand roads, such as building a dual carriageway on

Riverside Drive, are wasteful and dangerous.

The British Lung Foundation found that just before lockdown, air pollution was killing 1,040 people a year in Liverpool – a health crisis with its roots in our environmental crisis.

Car ownership is lowest amongst our poorest and our Black citizens, but these groups are the most likely to die from the air pollution caused by cars. The people most affected are the least responsible.

Once again, environmental injustice walks hand-in-hand with economic inequality.

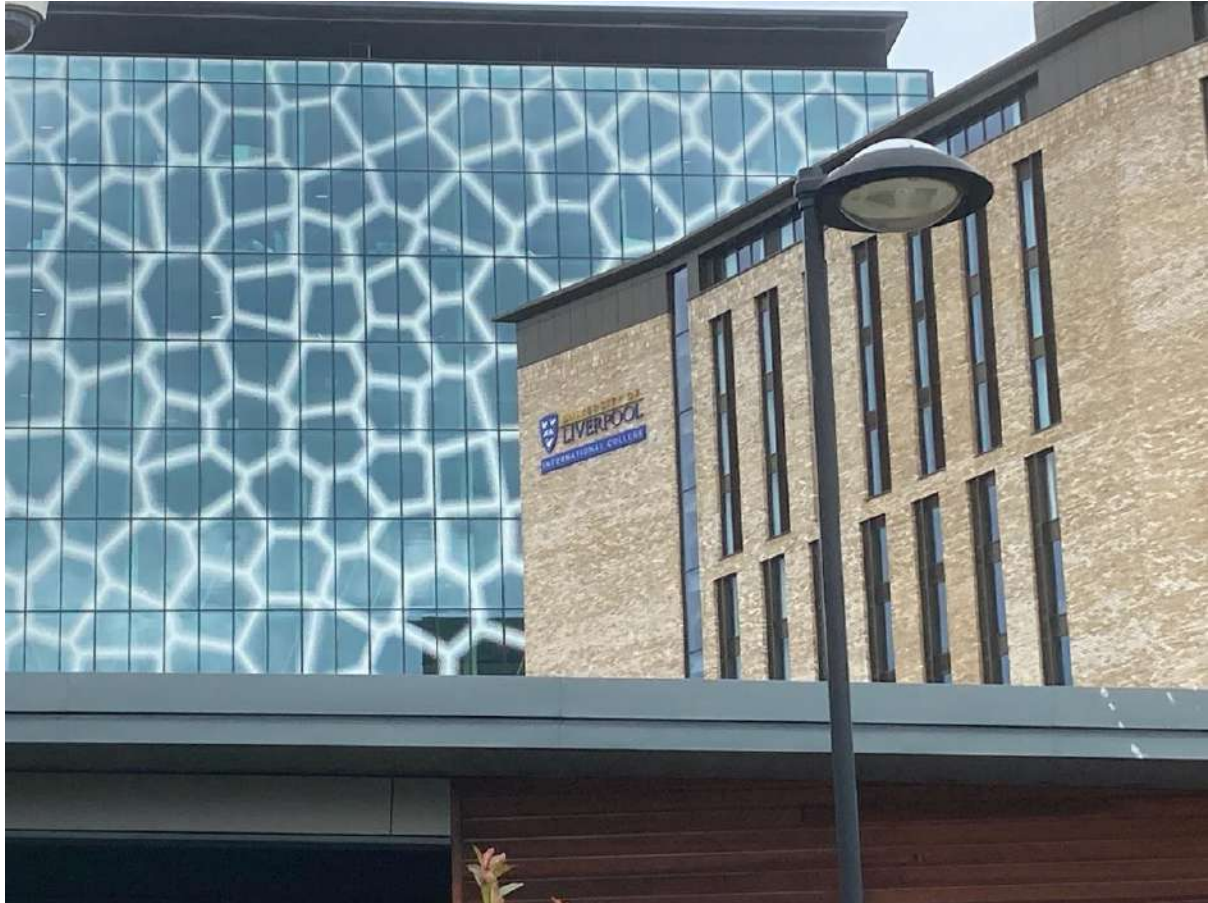
A Green council in Liverpool would take immediate steps to place the issue before a Citizens Assembly so that its recommendations would command support across the city, from car owners and non-car owners alike.

The Citizens Assembly would be asked to consider how to cut city centre traffic by

50 per cent in the first year and further in subsequent years.

Options would include:

- investing in more foot- and cycleways that are fully accessible to everyone, including people with disabilities
- electric public transport that is Covid-safe and accessible to all
- using a fleet of electric vehicles to make city centre freight and goods deliveries
- placing 20mph speed limits on all urban roads and 40 mph speed limits reduced to at least 30mph
- introducing safe walk-to-school initiatives
- bringing in workplace parking levies
- Planning refusals for any developments neglecting to provide easy routes to fully accessible public transport



City of health and education

Our National Health Service has once again proved its value as a publicly-owned, free service, but too often it has been deprived of funds and public health and social care services have been left to wither.

Our public services are in a dire state because local councils have been starved of funds.

Our local staff have been left overworked, underpaid and under appreciated by national governments.

We believe that health and social care should be fully integrated with a much greater role for local councillors who are closest to the people in need. Together,

they can offer a seamless service to each of us, paid for by all of us.

As with health and social care so with education. Schools, colleges and universities should be in public ownership, free at the point of use, and subject to local democratic control.

Local councils working with the communities they serve should decide what is taught in our schools, rather than distant bureaucracies with London-centric views.

And our schools need to be supported by community based youth centres staffed by well-paid and qualified staff.

Everything is connected

Better is possible when our economy serves our environment and our wellbeing, when challenges are solved by the communities who face them.

The Green Party sees the connections and has the vision to make the radical changes needed to create a circular economy where we recycle and re-use before we throw away.

The government has a legal target to recycle at least half of all council waste by December 2020. The latest figures show it is achieving just 45.1 per cent nationally. Liverpool – under this one-party monopoly council – recycles just 23.6 per cent of household waste. We are a shameful 338th in the league table of 345 councils.

We can set a zero-waste target by 2030 and achieve it by working with people and businesses.

We need to make recycling easier by:

- providing more at home bins to separate different items
- offering community recycling options for flats and smaller houses
- siting recycling bins in parks and public spaces

- introducing a bottle deposit scheme to reduce single use containers in the city
- supporting local initiatives like community compost sites and clothes recycling
- educating children and adults on how to recycle
- supporting charities and community initiatives repairing furniture and goods for re-use
- backing the businesses that are committed to cutting waste, recycling and re-using

We need to keep our streets clean and our parks free of waste by:

- Encouraging people to take their litter home
- Increasing fines for businesses and individuals who litter
- Ending single-use plastic packaging in takeaways
- Offering home collection to take small items to recycling centres for those without easy access
- Supporting community clothes recycling schemes

We need to do more to cut the production of waste in the first place by ending single-use packaging on goods and in takeaways and moving away from all plastics.



Paying for it

Government cuts mean that our city has £436 million less to spend each year in real terms than it did in 2010 – equivalent to a 63 per cent cut.

In addition, the government promised to cover the local costs of dealing with the pandemic, but actually left our city £44 million short.

So where is the money going to come from for our new vision for the city?

It is obvious now that governments – national and local – can act when they are forced to do so.

But waiting until things become desperate should not be the default position.

Liverpool declared a local climate emergency two years ago, we are in the

middle of an international pandemic health emergency now and a deepening national economic emergency.

So, we must spend to transition to a new economy that protects our health and our environment.

That means directing capital funds away from increasingly worthless projects like a new cruise liner for passengers who will never arrive, a tidal barrage that won't produce a kilowatt of electricity for decades and new roads to nowhere.

We would invest those savings in a new Green Deal Transformation Fund.

The fund would support the policies we have outlined here:

- green homes that are warm and energy efficient
- electric vehicle fleets
- renewable energy based on hydrogen
- sustainable jobs in the local businesses of the future
- community recycle and re-use schemes
- greater local democracy.

We will also invest savings from green initiatives back into the local economy. For instance, we will reduce the amount paid to Merseyside Waste and Recycling Authority as we reduce the waste that is produced.

We will fight for a fairer funding settlement for local government

Wealth and income inequality across the country means that those who can afford to pay the most actually end up paying the least.

Across the country, the wealthiest 1 per cent of households hold about 20 per cent of household wealth while the top 10 per cent hold over 50 per cent of wealth.

Incomes are just as unequally shared. The richest fifth enjoy incomes more than 12 times the amount earned by the poorest fifth who struggle to make ends meet.

Alongside Universal Basic Income to ensure everyone can live, we need a radical overhaul of local and national taxation to reduce wealth and income inequalities and release investment funds for the people and communities most in need.

Finally, with interest rates at historic lows, we will borrow to invest to bring to life our vision of sustainable jobs and communities and a city that leads the world in tackling the climate emergency.



Think green? Then, Vote Green

If you like what you read here, then please turn out and vote for all your Green Party candidates in the election on **Thursday 6 May 2021**.

The Green Party already holds 362 seats on 120 different councils across the country, including four here in Liverpool.

Greens can win here with your votes.

Vote Green on Thursday 6 May 2021

Are you registered to vote by post?

If you are worried that you may not be able to vote in person because of Covid-19, or any other reason, you can vote by post instead. Apply for your postal vote online at: www.gov.uk/government/publications/apply-for-a-postal-vote, or telephone 0151 233 3028 and ask for a postal voting form to be sent to you.

Support our local election campaign

Liverpool Green Party relies entirely on donations from members and supporters for all it does.

Taking out a monthly Standing Order means that we receive regular income and can plan ahead, particularly for the local elections. All you need to do is set up a regular Standing Order with your bank using these details:

Account Name: Liverpool Green Party

Sort Code: 16-58-10

Account Number: 21031010

You choose the amount and the frequency - and you can change the details at any time.

Find out more about the Liverpool Green Party

Visit: www.liverpool.greenparty.org.uk

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