



# Exeter Green Party

## Manifesto Summary Summer 2010

Exeter City Council election on Thursday 9th September

### Foreword

**Exeter Green Party are committed to creating a fairer, healthier and sustainable low carbon city with a sustainable local economy where every voice counts.**

**Our refreshing attitude to social and environmental problems means that we're driven to building considered and connected policy.**

**We've already begun to work towards a more just, sustainable and secure future for the city. With our manifesto comes a pledge to continually update our policies and ideas and be ready to respond to the changing needs of the city - its communities and environment.**

**The changes we need to make will not happen overnight, and our immediate focus will be on fighting for the essential services that will be impacted by the cuts being demanded by the Conservative-Lib Dem Government. We will prioritise fighting for services that will affect residents' everyday lives in Exeter.**

**It is good to know that one voice remains active for real changes, consistent and distinctive - The Green Party. *Vote The Green Party on September 9th.***

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### 1. Local Democracy

Elected Green Party councillors will fight for greater democracy in local government. Our aim is for city-wide referendum style polls to be conducted on important decisions that affect all residents in

Exeter. This will avoid costly and foolish decisions that work against the best interests of Exeter residents. The recent Unitary Authority bid is one such example where local people, not politicians, should have had the final say. We need fairer and more imaginative ways of administering the council tax: lowering tax rates for the lowest value homes and ending reductions for underused properties will ensure that council tax better reflects an ability to pay.

Exeter City Council is currently consulting on how to shave £1million off its annual budget. We believe that the reduction in services that would result from these cuts make them unacceptable. We also believe they are completely unnecessary and we offer positive ideas on how to protect services by increasing revenue: selling council generated renewable electricity to the grid, implementing a workplace parking levy (see below) and higher council tax rates for top band properties. We will argue for a Living Wage for City Council employees to narrow the pay gap between the highest and lowest-paid workers at the council. We will push for better provision for communities to take control of important community assets.

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### 2. Housing & Planning

The current Conservative-Lib Dem government are making significant cuts to housing benefit, meaning that people on low incomes who receive local housing allowance could lose over £600 a year. This is equivalent to some of the poorest residents in the city paying an income tax rise of over 4.5%.

Meanwhile, some of the wealthiest people in our country evade taxes which could raise billions of pounds a year. Exeter Green Party is committed to supporting local residents by fighting for a fair deal.

All residents have a higher quality of life in a community that has a mix of housing, shops, appropriate light industry and green spaces, such as allotments, and easy access to the countryside. We will encourage the appropriate use of brown field sites and insist on the highest environmental building standards for new developments - energy efficiency, renewable energy options and water saving measures as standard and support low car housing with car share clubs, high quality public transport and cycle routes. Green councillors will also fight to strengthen protection for pubs, post offices, and other community assets.

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### 3. Transport

Road traffic with its associated congestion, pollution and threats to safety consistently features as the major local issue of concern for Exeter residents. A study into travel behaviour for Exeter City Council revealed that the vast majority of residents support measures that favour walking, cycling and public transport, even if these disadvantage car use.

The Green Party supports the introduction of a workplace parking levy\* - a new levy on parking spaces provided at places of work. This would only apply to businesses over a certain size and would generate much needed funds for sustainable transport initiatives. In particular we would like to see subsidised bus fares for children and families; improvements to the city's cycle network and rolling out 20mph zones to all areas of Exeter. Such measures will help to make our streets safer, our environment cleaner and healthier and contribute towards helping Exeter become a low carbon city.

In the short term, we believe a proportion of the levy might be needed to prevent the cuts to services threatened by the Conservative-Lib Dem government's spending cuts. The workplace parking levy offers a win, win, win solution.

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\* For full details of about the Workplace parking levy and how it would benefit the local environment, the economy and improve the quality of life for Exeter residents see our manifesto notes at: [www.exetergreenparty.org.uk](http://www.exetergreenparty.org.uk)

## 4. Local Food

Green Party councillors will champion small local businesses through initiatives such as 'Buy Local'. We will argue that the council buys goods and services locally, of a high environmental quality. We support the expansion of allotments and food growing spaces in the city and community agriculture projects. Exeter Green Party support Real Food Exeter, a proposed community enterprise local food store; we favour expanding the Farmers Market and moving it to a prominent central and all-weather location. Maximising opportunities for Exeter residents to buy seasonal and local produce supports local producers and is key to generating a sustainable local economy.

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## 5. Waste & Recycling

Green Party councillors will demand that our waste is seen as a valuable resource which, when recycled properly through good door step collections, will provide funds for reinvesting in our city rather than being a cost to taxpayers. We need to move away from environmentally damaging and expensive processes for dealing with waste such as the proposed waste incinerator in Alphington. We will seek to introduce the collection of food waste coupled with the development of an anaerobic digester to create green electricity. We will actively work towards a 'zero waste' strategy, reducing the amount of waste produced in the city, re-using, repairing and recycling all goods. As well as improving the doorstep collection of waste, we will develop a litter and fly-tipping reduction strategy and support the introduction of city centre facilities for the recycling of batteries, ink cartridges, CDs, DVDs and mobile phones. We will continue to lobby central government for a tax on packaging and encourage shops to take back non-recyclable materials.

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## Contact Us...

If you have any questions for Exeter Green Party, or you would like to talk to the Green candidate in your ward, then please phone **01392 247616** or e-mail: [electioncandidates.2010@exetergreenparty.org.uk](mailto:electioncandidates.2010@exetergreenparty.org.uk) letting us know the ward that you're in.

Or you can find your candidate on our website:

[www.exetergreenparty.org.uk/candidates](http://www.exetergreenparty.org.uk/candidates)