



Bristol Green Party



A Manifesto for a Fairer Bristol

www.bristolgreenparty.org.uk

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Introduction

This manifesto shows how I will work to turn Bristol into a truly Green city. A city where environmental and social justice is put into action every day.

Our vision is for a city that we are proud to live in, where what matters most to us is the spaces we share – like high quality public transport, streets and parks. We will also fully accept our responsibilities towards each other and to future generations living on one small planet.

In this manifesto you will find the proposals to create new jobs through renewal of our infrastructure. We also set out ways to move towards a more equal city and one which is uniquely welcoming with its high quality environment: a city that nurtures our businesses but is not dominated by them, a more democratic city.

Some of the steps we will take will be quicker and easier than others. Some proposals need collaboration with other local authorities; some are not currently within the powers that an elected mayor for Bristol will have.

Our vision for Bristol is of a more sustainable and autonomous city, a city that generates more of its own energy, feeds itself from its local region, and is much more equal.

I love Bristol, my children were born here. Vote for me to have the first ever directly elected Green Mayor in Britain.



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Bristol as a Working City

Daniella says:

“We in the Green Party strongly believe that the current economic system has got its priorities wrong. The narrow drive for profit has come at the expense of equality, fairness and ultimately happiness.

The economy is run by a business elite and our political leaders seem to work to protect their interests. As Green Mayor I will commit to putting an end to this, instead prioritising the creation of a strong local economy that puts people at its centre and keeps wealth circulating in Bristol. As the only female Mayoral candidate I have an immediate understanding of the challenges and difficulties of accessing affordable childcare. The provision of sufficient childcare in the city is critical for the city’s future economic success.”



1.1 Employment and Business

Investing in People and the City

Jobs

The Green Party believes that every Bristolian has a right to decent, meaningful employment. It will be my priority as Mayor to enable job creation for local people, particularly young people who are currently unable to find work.

The Green Party is fundamentally opposed to the cuts to public services that have resulted in spiralling unemployment, hitting hardest the 99% who are not responsible for the financial crisis. As the wealth of the top 1% of earners continues to increase the Coalition’s policies are nothing less than an assault on ordinary people. The only Mayor who can be trusted to oppose austerity is one willing to take a bold stance and seek innovative means of boosting employment.

Long-term infrastructure investment bonds

The Green Mayor will work to collaborate with local credit unions and ethical banks to create bonds. They will offer a safe investment opportunity in projects which will create jobs for local people. As an added bonus this will give Bristolians the chance to directly invest their money into our city with the confidence that their money will be used responsibly for the benefit of the public, not city bankers.

Training provision

We also recognise the importance of training and will lobby the Government to make apprenticeships mandatory across a wide range of industries, ensuring that these are paid a fair living wage. The Green Mayor will call for the abolition of Workfare and unpaid internships in Bristol. Allowing employers to use unpaid labour undercuts those on minimum wage. This can result in some of the lowest paid workers losing their jobs and makes the policy to get people into work by exploiting their unpaid labour completely counter-productive.



Supporting small businesses

Small and medium enterprises (SMEs) provide 60% of the jobs in the UK. SMEs deliver one job for every £108,000 of turnover, whereas larger enterprises only deliver one per £160,000 of turnover. If large enterprises were as effective at delivering jobs as SMEs they would create an additional 4.8 million private sector jobs. Sole traders are the most effective job creators needing just £55,000 of turnover to create one job. (source: Department of Business Innovation and Skills.)

SMEs are important sources of innovation, respond quickly to changes in local markets and are more likely to be linked to other local businesses through supply chain development. The Government has cut support to small businesses by closing down the national Business Link network. The Green Party will support the development of local enterprise agencies and business associations to provide support and advice to SMEs.

The Green Mayor will take the practical steps outlined below to level the playing field and counteract the undue influence exerted by large companies with near monopoly status.

- Opening the bidding process to smaller businesses: The Green Mayor will work with local enterprise agencies and business associations in Bristol to establish a scheme similar to the CompeteFor system that already operates in London or the Public Contracts Scotland website that opens up public sector contracts encouraging bids from small companies as well as large. The Green Mayor would seek to provide help and guidance to micro and small businesses in bidding for public and private sector contracts. A small charge on all contracts signed will fund this program.
- Expand the current policy of Council contracts being tendered 'in parts' or 'lots' wherever possible to enable small, local and community organisations to win contracts: About 23% by value of Bristol's procurement is currently supplied by SMEs, a little below the government target of 25%. The Green Mayor will have an initial target of 30% procurement from SMEs.

Social and environmental audits

The Green Mayor will introduce an annual audit of both public and private companies based or operating in Bristol. The accounts will be available to the public to ensure transparency and to highlight any exploitative behaviour. There will be a minimum score and all services contracted out by the Council must perform above this baseline.

Doing business co-operatively

The Green Mayor will increase the specialist resources available to support the development of co-operatives and social enterprises in Bristol. Support will be available for new start-ups and for the expansion and growth of the existing successful and important co-operative and social enterprise sector. Mentoring, peer-support and training courses will be made available in all regions of the city, not just the centre.



A Living Wage for Bristol

The Green Mayor will champion the adoption of the Living Wage throughout the city. Bristol City Council should lead by example and lend its name to an award offered to employers who pay all employees the Living Wage; currently £7.20 per hour but adjusted regularly in line with inflation. The Living Wage will help ensure all workers earn enough to provide for themselves and their families and is a step toward eradicating poverty in Bristol. Promoting the Living Wage in Bristol will be a crucial part of the Green Party vision to make our city a hub for ethical employers.

The Green Mayor commits to paying all employees of Bristol City Council the Living Wage for Bristol, including those providing services that are contracted out. This specification would be clearly written into the procurement policy.

The Green Mayor will actively encourage all businesses and employers in the city to adopt the Living Wage policy. Businesses adhering to the payment of the Living Wage to all employees would receive accreditation to demonstrate to all customers and clients that they have an exemplary pay policy.

Backing the Bristol Pound

The Green Mayor will continue the Council's support for the Bristol Pound – to be launched September 2012 – and ensure that 20% of procurement is paid for using this currency. This target will rise to 50% by 2050. This will help build links between local businesses and customers and keep money within local communities.

City deal

Bristol must be free to control more of its locally raised business rates, and not just those from the Enterprise Zones. During future negotiations the Green Mayor would ask to retain 50%, as is often the norm in other successful European cities. Currently Bristol retains closer to 13%. Higher retention of local rates would allow us to invest in Bristol and its people and would allow for decreased business rates for small independent traders and start-ups.

Affordable childcare

Affordable, high quality childcare is a critical economic issue for the city. Ensuring that high quality childcare is available to all will boost maternal employment rates, increase family income, maintain women's connections to the labour market and increase the tax base.



1.2 The High Street

The 'High Street' is more than just a collection of shops, it is a hub of social interaction where goods and services are bought and exchanged and where members of the community can engage with each other. Though the Green Mayor will focus on revitalising the local shops and services, we acknowledge that all high streets have their own personalities and should be 'free to develop' rather than 'be developed' by the Mayor.

Increasing foot-flow

Over the last few decades our high streets and neighbourhood shops have been steadily eroded by shopping arcades and superstores which concentrate shops and provide a safe pedestrianised shopping experience. The Green Mayor will try to make all Bristol's high streets as pedestrian friendly as possible. Local transport links must be improved to ensure the transport home of goods is as easy as possible.

Changing planning law

The Green Mayor will lobby central Government for changes to the planning law that will make it harder for multi-nationals and large chain stores to trade in areas that have a history of local traders. Planning policy must protect and strengthen our high streets.

Opening up shops

In areas of decline, the Green Mayor will encourage local traders to return to or set up on high streets and estates by decreasing business rates. Where the Council directly owns the building (shop, office or public house) rents will be reduced to a minimum and elsewhere landlords in possession of vacant properties will be encouraged to do the same to reduce dereliction and incentivise new facilities and business opportunities for communities.

Tackling visual pollution

The Green Mayor will seek to end street advertising. This will include (but not be limited to) all billboards, advertising on telephone boxes, buses, taxis and street furniture. Studies have demonstrated that this boosts the local economy, as customers rely more on word of mouth and reputation rather than the subliminal bombardments of the multi-national corporations.

Supporting traders' associations

Strong communities are resilient. To help strengthen high streets around the city the Green Mayor will invest in dedicated facilitators whose sole job will be to help establish and support traders' associations and meet local customers' needs.

Promoting local investment

Where they could be beneficial, Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) may be implemented. Currently just the domain of large purpose-built shopping centres (such as Broadmead) BIDs can be established to help boost the local high street. Within the BID area a levy on the business rate is collected by the city but the BID is responsible for the spending of this locally raised fund to improve the area. Clifton Village is attempting to establish a BID with support from its Neighbourhood Partnership. The Green Mayor will watch this development closely as it may be a model for independent traders to use in other parts of the city.

Bristol as a Green City

Daniella says:

“I will put environmental responsibility at the heart of decision making. All policies will be assessed for their environmental impact.

Bristol must do more to generate its own energy, ensure our homes are fit for the future and do not cost too much to run. We need more homes, built to high environmental standards. We need to encourage self-builders and housing co-operatives.

The key to a really green city is an excellent and integrated network of public transport coupled with a comprehensive walking and cycling strategy. Bristol will only wean itself off cars by having cheaper public transport.”



2.1 Transport

It is no secret that Bristol has one of the worst public transport systems of all UK cities. The Green Mayor will focus on rail and on a city-run bus fleet to provide affordable, integrated public transport. The city centre and community shopping centres will be freed up for pedestrians and cyclists. This will lead to a safer, more connected, less polluted city.

City deal

Bristol Green Party welcomes the new powers given to the city over transport. The Green Mayor will cooperate with the other local authorities to make sure this opportunity is not wasted. What is urgently needed is a Passenger Transport Executive to bring the Bristol City region's public transport into the 21st century.

Improving local rail provision

The Green Mayor fully supports the Bristol Metro project to bring more rail tracks and stations into service for our city, including restoring a passenger line to Portishead and the implementation of the Henbury loop. The introduction of station attendants and better, more versatile ticketing will be a Mayoral priority.

Reducing fares

The high level and inflexibility of fares makes public transport unattractive. The Green Mayor will set up a project to work out the most economical way of reducing fares across all operators and implement it.



Bus Rapid Transit 2 and South Bristol Link

The Green Mayor will not pour good money after bad into schemes that will be bad for Bristol. Instead of the damaging South Bristol Link and BRT2 projects, she will invest in the policies below. For new road-based public transport, she will consider ULR (Ultra-Light Rail).

Creating a transport hub

The Green Mayor will incorporate a major local bus and train hub at the modernised Temple Meads station, alongside rail electrification. This will provide easy seamless interchange between services to and from all parts of the city, marking a step change in journey quality.

Bringing buses under public control

The Green Mayor will campaign to bring our buses back under full public control to ensure fair fares and a better service.

A network to meet real needs

The Green Mayor will commission a study of actual journey patterns so that future transport planning will be based on evidence, not guesswork. As the Metro is implemented, bus services will be reviewed to ensure they complement rather than compete with the rail services, with tickets valid on both.

Accessibility

Public transport must be completely accessible to all users. No wheelchair user should ever be told to wait for the next bus and drivers will be trained in assisting the visually and aurally challenged traveller. Prams and wheelchairs should not have to compete for limited space.

Introducing 20 mph zones

The Green Mayor will continue the roll-out of 20 mph speed limits throughout the city to make it safer for all road users.

Safer streets for walking

The Green Mayor will support greater pedestrianisation of the city centre and will work closely with The Living Heart campaign. She will make high streets more welcoming for pedestrians and will provide more rest areas and benches.

Cycling

The Green Mayor will continue investment in cycling infrastructure, to include making one-way streets two-way for cyclists. She will lobby to change the law to enable cyclists to turn left on a red light. She would make it mandatory for taxi drivers to take a cycle awareness test as part of their licence application and she will lobby the DVLA to make this an element of every driving test.



2.2 Homes

The Green Party believes in homes, not just houses. We all need a roof over our heads, but we also need a place to feel safe and a space to enjoy life.

Empty houses are a waste

There will be no council tax reductions for homes left empty for more than six months. The Green Mayor will work to ensure that Bristol's 6000 empty homes are brought back into use to help reduce the housing shortage in the city.

An Energy efficiency fund

The Green Mayor will work with industry and partners to release dedicated funds for Bristol homes and provide a variety of payment schemes that will enable both homeowners and tenants to upgrade the energy efficiency of their home and save on fuel bills.

Sustainable new builds

New build homes will be built to high environmental standards (Code for Sustainable Homes level 5 or higher). New housing proposals will be based on an Independent Housing Needs survey. Commercial contractors and their representatives will not be involved in this process.

Using brownfield sites

As well as encouraging remediation and re-use of brownfield sites the Green Mayor will support self-builders and housing co-operatives across the city in their search for suitable sites.

Monitoring private landlords

The Green Mayor will use the Council's housing team to ensure that rented houses meet appropriate standards and ensure adequate enforcement action is taken on substandard properties. She will promote energy efficient private rental housing to reduce occupancy costs for tenants and explaining the benefits to those renting will be a priority.



2.3 Energy

Green policy and common sense says that we need to reduce energy use throughout the city of Bristol. We should be focusing on sustainable energy management to make the best of what we use and generating as much energy as we can from local sources as well as investing in off-site renewable generation.

Insulating homes

Energy efficiency surveys of streets and findings from neighbourhood energy assessments or aerial surveys can identify the worst areas of heat loss in buildings. This will aid the Green Mayor's strategy to prioritise help for the worst insulated homes and the Green Mayor will work with neighbourhood energy groups to bring the benefits of high quality installations to more people across the city.

Microgeneration

The Green Mayor will ensure that there is dedicated support available for co-ordination between all levels of micro-power generators; from families with solar panels on their roofs to community trusts wishing to tap into ground-source heat pumps and anaerobic digesters.

Taking control of the energy markets

The Green Mayor will continue to support the work of the Bristol-based energy services company. She will lead in the establishment of a nationwide network of Local Authorities to bulk-purchase Green Energy thus boosting the renewables industry and tackling fuel poverty.

Renewable infrastructure

The Green Mayor will stand on an international stage to attract the industries that are market leaders in renewable energy generation. Though the city does not have the money to directly fund these large off-site projects, she will work closely with industry and neighbouring authorities and encourage the development of our wind and tidal potential.

Combined Heat and Power projects

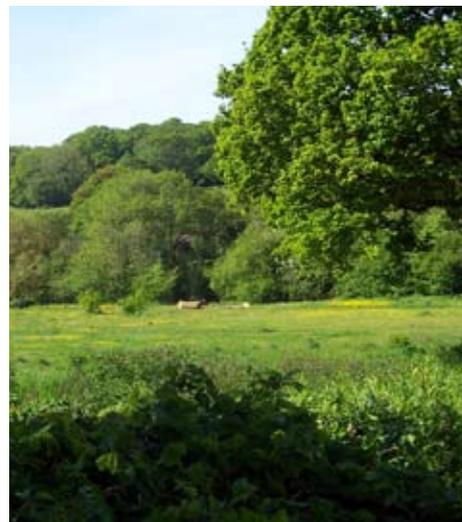
The Green Mayor will encourage the use of Combined Heat and Power systems in public and private buildings. These use low-grade heat from electricity generation, which would otherwise be wasted, to heat homes, businesses and community buildings at low cost.



2.4 Green Spaces

Protect green spaces

Green space in Bristol is being sold off and built upon for short-term gain. This is not acceptable. Green spaces are an important resource for all communities. They are used for allotments, providing fresh air, sports activities, dog walking and crucial nature corridors. They are important for good health and it is vital that they are protected. The Green Mayor will work with Neighbourhood Partnerships to ensure we find investments to improve them for all.



2.5 The Built Environment

A safe and accessible built environment is the backbone of a successful city. Bristol has too many public buildings which have been taken out of public use, either through neglect or by private ownership. The Green Mayor wishes to redress this balance and encourage greater community ownership and pride in our city's built environment once again.

Protecting our public buildings

The Green Mayor will work with all communities in Bristol, within the new parameters set by the Localism Act, to bring buildings which address community needs, such as youth clubs, back into public use.

Preventing speculation of office space

The Green Mayor will establish a supplementary planning notice which prohibits the construction of more office space if over 15% of office space in an area is already empty.

Encourage exemplar building design

This will enable Bristol to be a beacon for outstanding architecture and design. This will be in keeping with the Green Mayor's main aim to create a truly sustainable environment on a human scale.

Audits of empty buildings

The Green Mayor, working with Neighbourhood Partnerships, will audit all empty buildings and units across the city in order to highlight the amount of space available for homes.

2.6 Consumption and Waste

The Green Party is committed to reducing the waste of limited resources. The Green Mayor would aim to make Bristol a world leading city in waste reduction by implementing the best schemes from around the globe that are appropriate for Bristol. This will be done in ways that are easy for Bristolians to use and from which Bristolians will benefit.

Reduce waste

About a third of the food produced in the UK is wasted. Much packaging is unnecessary and, because of the way things are sold, sometimes it seems to make sense to buy more than we need. Many items can be produced to last longer or be made to be more easily repaired. Some useful items are discarded for the lack of spare parts. The Green Mayor would tackle these issues and similar ones to the benefit of Bristolians.

Reuse

The Green Mayor would develop a citywide infrastructure, building on existing schemes, to help people and organisations pass things they no longer need onto organisations that could reuse them. It might be computer equipment or office furniture in a large company being passed to a charity or business start up, or a spade in a shed that is never used being passed to a community garden or new allotment holder.

Repair

It now often seems cheaper to discard something and get a new one rather than repair it. The Green Mayor would look to set up a network of repair centres throughout Bristol that would repair equipment that could be reused. These would be run for profit and aim to create skilled jobs. These centres would work with existing organisations to provide good quality working equipment to those who need it.

Recycle

People recycle most when it is easy to do so. The Green Mayor would speed up the introduction of easy to use high quality recycling throughout Bristol. She would ensure that local composting is expanded and believes the digestion of waste to produce biofuels is a good way to produce usable energy from a waste produce.

Jobs and buildings

To implement Bristol's integrated Waste Reduction Plans will require the creation of skilled jobs and use of currently empty shops and other buildings. These activities will help regenerate Bristol and provide a legacy of technological expertise.

Making Bristol a centre of world excellence

Bristol has a proud history of technological innovation. The Green Mayor would create a Business Park devoted to developing the technology and understanding of waste reduction. This would create highly skilled jobs and global environmental benefits. In the long term Bristol would sell its expertise around the world.



Bristol as an Inclusive City

Daniella says:

“It is the role of the Council to do as much as it can to reduce inequalities in Bristol. This means respecting the needs of children, enabling silent voices to be heard, and recognising the imbalances in our political system and that women and minority groups do not have equal political representation.

The Green Party recognises that the cuts will have most effect on the most vulnerable in our society and will disproportionately impact women. We do not agree with the logic of cutting public spending at a time of recession. As Mayor I will fight for Bristol’s resources and exercise care to minimise the damage of cuts on the most vulnerable.

Our education and democracy policies show that we emphasise collaboration and the power of the citizen. I will work with the elected Police Commissioner to see that our policies of inequality reduction and protection of the vulnerable and minorities extend to the criminal justice system.”

3.1 Education

The Green Party believes it is important to preserve both diversity of opportunity and equality of opportunity for students (of all ages) in an education system which encourages social cohesion. Everyone in Bristol has the right to a good education, whatever their age or family background and wherever they live. Young children need high quality nursery education and a place at their local primary school. Older children deserve a secondary school that can respond to the needs of every child in the area. Young adults have the right to accessible and supported routes into work or higher education. And adults need varied and affordable classes to help them develop essential or sought after skills.

The educational landscape is changing nationally, with new and challenging roles for all local authorities. The Green Party recognises the significance of the Bristol Education Partnership Statement, which articulates a vision for Bristol in this context of reduced funding, increasing diversity of provision, greater school autonomy and increasing need. The Green Mayor would plan to do the following:

Request transfer of control over academies and free schools

This should move from the Secretary of State for Education to Bristol City Council. The responsibility for all schools would then rest with Bristol’s Mayor, the cabinet member for Children and Young People’s Services and the relevant scrutiny committee. Democratically elected local authorities are best placed to ensure high quality education for all and should be given the resources to do so.

Ensure a sufficient supply of school places

Place planning has become increasingly problematic for all local education authorities for a number of reasons, both demographic and political, and a fragmented system causes distress and damage to all concerned. The Green Mayor would support Bristol City Council’s plans to ensure sufficient places for all children, but in addition would generally oppose the opening of any further free schools, such initiatives making impossible all attempts at co-ordinated pupil placement.



Build learning communities

New school partnerships, or 'school to school' support, are already being explored in Bristol. In addition the Green Mayor would aim to build neighbourhood learning communities: partnerships of schools, colleges, universities, libraries and children's centres, throughout the city. Collaboration of this kind, linking education, care and cultural providers, is already working effectively in other areas, with significant benefits to everyone in the community.

Increase vocational training

The Green Party welcomes the City Deal's People and Skills Programme as this will increase the availability of vocational and apprentice-based training. Green work force training and environmental community programmes would be encouraged. The Green Mayor would campaign at a national level for the reinstatement of the educational maintenance allowance, which helped young people from low-income families to stay in education.

Support lifelong learning

It is essential to have more funding and support for people over eighteen. The Green Mayor will strive to build stronger, more equal communities through providing classes that will: help eradicate illiteracy and innumeracy, improve IT skills, teach ESOL, help with financial planning, and provide training in new skills. Support will be available for any initiative that looks at new ways of providing for adult education in Bristol.

3.2 Local Democracy

The Green Mayor will introduce democratically elected neighbourhood councils. This project is central to creating a Green Bristol. Power will be devolved to be closer to citizens who will have more control over what happens in their areas and be able to ensure value for money in local Council services. A key principle of Green politics is that nothing should be done centrally if it can be done locally so the neighbourhood councils will counteract the concentration of power represented by the elected mayor.

The elected councils will also reinvigorate democracy. Firstly, the ratio of councillors to citizens will be lower, reducing the workload of councillors making it a more attractive role. Secondly, it has been demonstrated that decentralisation in local government results in much higher voter turnout because people know their votes will make a difference and their voices will genuinely be heard. For example, after a decentralised structure was adopted in Tower Hamlets in 1986, voter turnout rose by 15% between 1982 and 1990 as opposed to 6.1% on average in all other London boroughs. (source: 'The Politics of Decentralisation.' Burns, Hambleton and Hoggett, Macmillan 1994)

The Green Mayor will establish a working group with a six month timetable with the following terms of reference:

- Establish the ideal size and boundaries of neighbourhood council areas
- Establish the ideal number of councillors
- Consider lowering the voting age to 16 for these local councils
- Recommend which responsibilities would best be devolved to the councils
- Recommend changes it will be necessary to make to the existing structure and number of councillors as a result of the formation of the neighbourhood councils.

3.3 Asylum

Bristol is a 'City of Sanctuary' but much more must be done to make this a reality for asylum seekers here. The current Home Office system is woefully inadequate, complex to navigate and disrespectful of basic human rights. Asylum seekers who come to Bristol are often fleeing persecution or war, sometimes the effects of wars that the UK has participated in. We must see their presence as an indictment of the UK's foreign policy, not as a means to castigate, alienate and reject those who come from other countries. We want to transform a climate of fear to one of tolerance and understanding.

End destitution for those who are refused asylum applications in Bristol

Many people are left in limbo without recourse to public funds, housing or the right to work and rely on charity to survive. This is not right. The Green Mayor will work closely with refugee and asylum seeker voluntary organisations in the city to ensure that all refugees and asylum seekers have their basic needs met, including shelter, food, healthcare and education.

She will lobby central government for asylum seekers who can't be returned to their country of origin to be given leave to remain in the UK on a temporary basis. She will argue strongly for the principles that made Bristol a 'City of Sanctuary' to be made a reality by the UK Government so that sanctuary seekers are treated with dignity and welcomed as friends.

3.4 Justice

In the UK, the prison population has doubled since 1990. The introduction of 'three-strikes' laws, minimum mandatory sentences, harsher punishments for minor breaches of suspended sentences and the creation of anti-social behaviour orders has meant that some convicted offenders are receiving longer sentences for minor crimes. Time and again it has been shown that prison does not work in terms of correcting offending behaviour. For this reason the Green Party favours restorative justice.

Support for restorative processes

These bring those harmed by crime or conflict, and those responsible, into communication. This enables everyone affected by a particular incident to play a part in repairing the damage and finding a positive way forward. It gives the victims the chance to tell offenders the real impact of their crime, to get answers to their questions, and an apology.

Restorative justice holds offenders to account for what they have done and helps them understand the real implications of their actions, to take responsibility and make amends. The Green Mayor will liaise with the Police Commissioner and local courts to advocate a much greater use of restorative justice for the criminal justice system.

3.5 Violence Against Women

Violence against women goes largely unreported and can take many forms, such as domestic violence, forced marriage, trafficking for sexual exploitation, prostitution and child abuse. The Green Party supports the CPS Violence against Women and Girls Strategy. The Green Mayor will take an active and public stance against all forms of violence against women and girls (VAWAG).

Efficient and effective community engagement

The Green Mayor will continue funding of specialist co-ordination of Bristol's VAWAG strategy and would work with other interested groups to improve local responses to violence against women and girls. She will work with the Police Commissioner and advocate an appropriate sharing of information between relevant bodies such as the local authority and the prosecuting authorities, so that those that are violent to women and abuse children are identified and dealt with.

Increased support for women who have suffered from violence

Women should be properly assisted through the local court process and in dealing with related issues such as housing and access to benefits. The Green Mayor will consider new approaches for tackling violence against women and will work with the Police Commissioner in addressing these issues. By analysing the results of prosecutions for violence against women, she will consider what appropriate local action plans can be developed.

Prostitution is an issue in some areas of Bristol and the Green Mayor will work with police, the CPS and other relevant parties on this subject. Many of those who sell themselves for sex are vulnerable, often addicted to drugs and controlled by others. The Green Mayor will ensure that these women have access to help and advice.

Support for disadvantaged women from minority communities

Women may experience gender based violence in the form of forced marriage and honour based violence. The Green Mayor would work with the prosecuting authorities and support groups in identifying these victims so that they can gain access to justice and protection from violence and abuse.



3.6 Minority Groups

The Green Party appreciates and encourages diversity and recognises the extent to which this strengthens a society. It has been well reported over many years that minority groups are disproportionately stopped by police. The issues raised by the Stephen Lawrence case still resonate today. The Green Party supports members of all minority groups and works to resolve the issues that concern them. The Green Mayor would ensure that their concerns are listened to and taken into account.

Examine stop and search figures in relation to minority groups

The Green Mayor will liaise with the Police Commissioner with a view to seeing if any action needs to be taken in this area.

3.7 Decriminalisation and Regulation

The prohibition of drugs doesn't work. It does not protect society in any way and makes it more difficult to minimise the harm caused by drug use. Addicts are treated as criminals, rather than patients in need of treatment. Every year, tens of thousands of people are put through the criminal justice system, needlessly clogging up the resources of the police, courts and prisons. Families are torn apart and people are made jobless and homeless just because they are criminalised by outdated laws. Drug barons are profiting from prohibition and using that money to corrupt those individuals and institutions that should protect society.

Recognise prohibition neither prevents nor controls drug use

In fact, it directly leads to the unregulated peddling of adulterated substances beyond the reach of the law. The Green Party drugs policy accepts the reality of drug use and strives to minimise harm, both to the user and to society.

The Green Mayor will seek to redress these problems by working very closely with the elected Police Commissioner, the health authorities and local politicians, as well as the local groups and bodies in Bristol that support those addicted to drugs.



Bristol as a Healthy City

Daniella says:

“Mental and physical health depends upon the health of the environment and I believe that Bristol’s citizens deserve to grow up and age in an environment that promotes good health.

Health means so much more than the absence of disease, it is about being safe, fulfilled, having a decent place to live and access to meaningful employment, thus every chapter in this manifesto is about the health of Bristolians.”



4.1 Food

Good food is vital for good health. We consume increasingly unhealthy food and this has led to a decrease in the quality of life and a staggering rise in diabetes, obesity and related avoidable disease. This causes unnecessary suffering and adds to the burdens on the NHS. A complete food policy combines health, education, procurement and development of local food chains. The Green Mayor would tackle the following issues.

Procurement

The city authority is ultimately responsible for much of the food served in public and city buildings. We would focus procurement to favour locally produced, seasonal and organic produce where possible. This will strengthen local food chains and provide an economy of scale for local producers and distributors. In turn this will lower the general cost to the public of making local and fresh food more accessible and less costly than the supermarket alternatives.

Food deserts

Food deserts must be addressed; there are many areas of the city that lack the basic provision of a greengrocer and other independent food retailers. The Green Mayor will identify these areas and allow Council-owned properties of relevant size and classification to be rented at a minimal charge to encourage retailers to provide an alternative to supermarkets and boost the status of Bristol’s high streets.

Food Fare

Many people on lower incomes cannot afford to eat healthily – especially with the new reforms to welfare – so now it is more important than ever to make nutritious food available for everyone. The Green Mayor will work with existing charities to establish a programme to collect subsidised and donated food from local producers and vendors. This will include recently out-of-date but perfectly edible food currently thrown away by local supermarkets that can then be delivered to households who cannot afford to feed their families and to homeless shelters. The Green Mayor will look to Toronto for leadership in this process and will partner with the excellent charities here in Bristol.

Children

The Bristol Mayor aims to incorporate food growing clubs and hands-on classes throughout all the city's schools. Where possible all schools will have vegetable gardens managed by the children with the produce used in the schools' own kitchens. In this way, children will learn at school how to cultivate plants and to understand the relationship between themselves, the soil and the food they eat. Cooking healthily and nutrition will form part of the curriculum of every school.

Get growing

The Green Mayor will aim to encourage the practice of local growing programmes and enterprises. Allotments are one way forward; others include city farms and inner-city growing beds, co-operatives, community orchards and local food swap-schemes for growers. All city parks should include growing beds for a range of produce from herbs to vegetables and flowers. Where wasteland lies idle the Green Mayor will encourage people to use it for growing food.

How do we feed Bristol?

The Green Mayor will commission a follow-up report to the excellent 'Who Feeds Bristol?' report. This report will outline the infrastructure resources and links that are needed to feed the city, minimising the use of fossil fuels and all other environmentally damaging aspects of our food chain.



4.2 The NHS and Social Care

Healthcare is not a commodity to be bought or sold. The Green Party believes in a fully integrated NHS, publicly funded and committed to high quality universal provision with free services at the point of use. It should be a public service funded by, run by, and accountable to local and national government and devoid of privatisation.

Accountability

In the ever-changing world of NHS re-organisation what is important is that there is local and democratic accountability in the health service. The Green Mayor will ensure that local people, and those who have the least ability and resources to speak out, have a voice in the health service. The newly created and democratically elected Neighbourhood Councils (see section 3.2), will link with and have an input into both primary care and community health services. The aim is that local people's voices, and not just those with the loudest voice, will be heard.

Access

The Green Party recognises that physical access to clinics and appointments is an issue of major importance for many. The Green Mayor's plan to focus on reducing the cost of public transport and improving all bus and rail services will help.

Prioritise children's and family services

Sure Start and other children's and family services perform a vital role. The Green Mayor will ensure that funding for these services is maintained.

Promote well-being and mental health of individuals and communities

Services such as those that promote healthy diets and exercise, anger management courses and services related to substance misuse will also be given sufficient resources. Where they have been shown to be effective, complementary therapies will be supported.

Social care

Care for the elderly, the mentally ill and the disabled, including long-term and respite care and rehabilitation, needs to be well integrated with the wider NHS. The Green Mayor will recognise the commitment and dedication of the staff providing these services and promote the highest standards of care by ensuring that all care staff have full and appropriate training.

Care for the elderly, the mentally ill and the disabled

This is a vital service delivered by the Council. After Christmas the Green Mayor will halt further care home closures, to offer care to all those who need it. The aim will be to keep as many services as possible in public ownership pending a full review of all social care within Bristol. Following the review it may be necessary to close homes while they are converted into sheltered accommodation, or renovated. The Green Mayor will ensure the council retains its own care home provision. The funds for this work will come from the bonds to be issued by the Council to invest in public infrastructure. The Mayor will ensure that the Council continues local government control, using co-operatives to offer care services run by staff and users together.

4.3 Arts

Bristol has an international reputation for its vibrant and grass roots artistic scene, including street art, the performing arts and circus skills, as well as for established institutions such as The Bristol Old Vic and St George's Brandon Hill. There are also many community-based artists who contribute so much to the vibrancy and health of the city.

Continue the discretionary rates discount

Recent developments have seen artists, craftspeople, performers and many more suffer from the ending of discretionary business rates. The funding is being depleted. Being judged purely on economic terms, they have been found to be 'victims of their own success'. This cannot be allowed to continue. They offer so much more to Bristol in terms of health and well-being than just the economic profits they may make. The Green Mayor will commit to continuing this discount. She will also be open to other ways in which we can continue to nurture talent within the city.

With more control over these rates – as given to us under the 'City Deal' – this is a simple move to make, and one that will link with Green policies to help small businesses as a whole.



4.4 Sport and exercise

After the inspirational Olympic Games there will not be a better time to help Bristolians adopt healthier lifestyles and to encourage sport and exercise for all in Bristol. Health is greatly dependent on exercise and the Green Mayor will promote initiatives to support an active lifestyle. This will in part be accomplished by making greater provision for walking and cycling throughout the city but also through fun activities and sporting opportunities.



Improve sports facilities

Most people in Bristol currently have limited access to an adequate range of sporting facilities. Investment will focus on improving community facilities so that health and fitness is not a postcode lottery. Employers will be encouraged to provide exercise facilities for staff within the workplace. The Green Mayor will look at the possibility of providing a small rate reduction for employers to help them do this. She will support the use of school sports facilities by the public outside school hours in order to maximise their use. She will seek funding to enable us to provide sufficient public sports facilities, both indoor and outdoor, to meet demand.

Daily exercise at school for all children

Exercise should become a part of the school curriculum. The Green Mayor will encourage all schools in Bristol ensure every pupil has a full unbroken half day of sport each week in addition to daily opportunities for physical exercise. Schools will also be encouraged to seek greater ties with local sports clubs, amateur and professional, to get assistance with coaching, share facilities and provide a way into sports outside school.

Revive the School Sport Partnership in Bristol

The Green Mayor will revive the School Sports Partnership in Bristol.

A national arena

The Green Mayor would work towards ensuring that Bristol has a national arena built for a recognised Olympic sport and that a centre of excellence is set up for this sport in Bristol. The Green Mayor will consult with the British Paralympic Association to see how Bristol could best support Paralympic sport.



