

# Regional Responses

## North East

### National Political Strategy

#### Objective One

First 3 bullet points regarding local government must be the top priorities for the party, to build on the success we have had with our strategy so far, with the LE results in 2019 being beyond best projection.

The sixth bullet point however, increase the number of Green MPs is clearly not achievable in the period of this plan, so should be deleted.

At the time of writing our party has failed to win, or even make significant progress towards winning, a parliamentary seat for nearly 10 years; not since Brighton Pavilion in 2010. Conversely our local election strategy is booming and we need to take inspiration from that. Instead of targeting seats inhabited by active candidates, mainly in cities with young voters; we should be looking at MPs who are easier to pick off, who aren't in the public eye and aren't very good constituency representatives (who mainly get in because of which party they are in). Pick ONE of the most likely and develop a way to get hundreds, if not thousands of activists to campaign on a regular basis for an extended period of time, which we have plenty of given when the next GE is. We need to create a 'vacuum seal' over a whole constituency, like the way we do over a ward in locals.

It's what's called Moneyball. Developed in Baseball but used in various fields, including politics. The whole theory is centred around 'winning at an unfair game'; we cannot achieve PR from where we are and it's now incredibly unlikely to happen for at least a decade with this government in charge. We need to play the game in a different way, rely on factors not used by the larger parties.

Factors like:

- Which party holds the seat? (Much more joy where Tories hold than Labour).
- One dominant party in a constituency (not a marginal).
- 'Safe seat' (complacency? not much funding/people on the ground)
- Who's the MP? Are they prominent/unknown? Do they do a good job locally?
- No parties other than the big two challenging.
- Active local GP? Council seats? (Not as desirable, but still fairly important).

#### Objective 5

The current objectives are in line with our policies as decided at conference, however what has happened at the last two General Elections has not been in line with this.

Our recent decisions to form both formal (2019) and informal (2017) alliances with other parties in elections has on the whole been very bad for the party. The Progressive Alliance resulted in us standing down in too many seats, which hurt our result. More seriously in Unite To Remain alliance was a complete disaster

from start to finish. We are now known as the party who stands down when asked by others for no clear benefit for us, we have both local Lib Dems and Labour parties just expecting this to happen now.

In future, the number one consideration must be what impact would a decision have on the local, regional or national party; organisationally, politically, reputation wise. **We must change the language from 'standing down' to 'not standing' and be flexible about where and how we do this; not having any hard and fast rules about it.**

### **Objectives 2 and 3**

**Prioritising issues** - We need to get back to a situation where we are combining social and environmental issues, bringing the people with us (especially the working class, who are affected more severely by both aspects). We need to do more with Youth Strike for Climate as they combine these issues very well and have awareness of the bigger picture (working with Trade Unions and other campaigns groups very proactively) much more than XR who are rehashing the same narrow arguments which only appeal to our core supporters (white, middle class), they also collaborate with police. We also need to get away from discussing extremely divisive issues such as Trans rights, 5G and depopulation. Even if we don't mention these externally it needlessly distracts from larger more important issues and diverts precious debating space. There are people at the top of this party who openly condone these subjects being discussed at length and those with singular agendas taking over.

**How we are seen as a party** - We need to be seen as an independent party, who takes its own positions on issues, puts these issues first and doesn't get involved in political squabbling which has characterised the last few years (voters hate it). Stay above the noise. We also need to develop a class analysis of the situation facing us and take sides on the major discussions. Be distinctive.

**Political positioning (the future)** - We are under no illusions that GPEW has moved towards the centre in recent years, couple with a decline in membership and election results. We must break free from the influence of the Lib Dems and the Labour right; outflank them from the left. We should have never vacated our position in 2015 when Labour moved left under Corbyn, we should have stood our ground and it would have paid off. Labour are now guaranteed to move rightwards, whoever is elected (most likely Starmer, in this case it will be very far to the right). We have a golden opportunity to once again stake a claim like we did in 2015. If we don't, we face irrelevance. The centre is dead and will continue to be so.

### **West Midlands Green Party**

GPEW Political Strategy Review March 2020

Compiled by Emma Bullard, GPRC rep from the small number of responses received. Respondents included a W Mids committee member and an elected councillor.

Comments relate to the Revised Political Strategy Objectives v.2 document.

## General:

The strategy doesn't reflect the realities of First Past the Post. It's based too much on the experience of the European Greens in countries with Proportional Representation.

## Objective 1:

Suggest we delete the aim to progress beyond 8% average of the vote in GE. It's not feasible and if it doesn't translate to extra seats it's irrelevant.

Suggest that instead we fund (say) 4 long-term campaigns in different areas of the country with the aim of getting more MPs in 10 years, and thus achieving the aim (which of course we support) of building a Green group in Parliament.

The last bullet point here also needs to change. Yes we want more Greens elected at all levels but under FPTP that does not follow from a national increase in vote share. It is Target to Win campaigns that get us extra seats.

## Objective 2

Yes we need clear policies and clear messaging frameworks so that we are consistent.

Also we support a full revision of PfSS.

However, alongside this we need to remember that few people vote based on policies.

## Objective 3

Some concern about the basis for this. Does it assume issue -based campaigns will lead to electoral success?

Where campaigns have a clear relevance for electoral progress we'd be supportive; but there are other campaign groups that can do a lot of this better than we can, and we need to be working alongside them rather than replicating what they are doing.

We have a real opportunity through our elected councillors. Definitely agree with the final bullet: "Support Green councillors to deliver success through their local campaigns"

## Objective 4

Out of date, should be deleted. There is obviously need for a strong Environmental Protection Act but this is a current campaign not part of a medium term strategy.

## Objective 5

Yes as an objective but the goals need to be much more clear about when and if this might involve standing down in elections. As we know this is very controversial.

## Objective 6

We are in agreement with this objective but feel the goals need more work.

As noted in the document we have no definition of an activist (e.g. some active local campaign volunteers may not even be Green Party members) and we don't

currently measure their numbers; yet arguably this is the most crucial goal for increasing electoral success.

The other numbers also need more work. Is it feasible to get to 100,000 members or 2 million supporters? In the latter case how would we measure it?

29 March 2020

## Eastern

When the current document was passed in 2018. The target number of councillors was quite conservative and obviously we have exceeded that, as we did with MEP in 2019. We need to plan for further growth at local level.

However, our strategy was based on the assumption that we could attract Labour/Lib Dem supporters attracted by our green agenda. In some respects we have failed to be the political party of the expanding green movement. There are plenty of XR supporters who remained loyal to Lab and Lib Dems, or who swerve political parties altogether.

Our attitude to Labour was flawed because we underestimated their ability to steal policies and present themselves as green. We understand that this is an illusion, but the electorate are in general not as wised up. This may alter once Corbyn's replacement is announced.

The strategy to target Lab/Lib Dem supporters led us down a cul de sac in the 2019 General Election. Obviously in rural areas of East Anglia, Labour has little traction and in some areas the Lib Dems are all but non-existent. In areas where we had hard working, reliable, long serving councillors we gained votes, saved deposits etc.

In the future we need a strategy that doesn't put all our eggs in the one basket of capturing Labour seats. Obviously, we need a different strategy in cities such as Norwich & Cambridge (and of course London & Manchester) than the one we pursue in rural areas of Norfolk and Suffolk.

We underestimated the loyalty of Labour voters, even if they disliked the leader, in general election campaigns, they know that under FPTP a Labour vote is still the most likely way of getting the Tories out.

TTW has served us well at local level but our record at General Elections needs revisiting and a brutal reassessment is needed and its likely we have time to do this. I think campaigning for broad electoral reform needs to move to the centre of our strategy. At local level we need to work to create broad based movements that will push Labour towards PR.

The climate emergency hasn't gone away, but I'm not sure how politics will refocus post coronavirus. I suspect there will be more disillusionment with the centre and grassroots local politics will attract a new group of people. More emphasis needs to be given to Town & Parish Councils especially while Tories are in government. Worth remembering that these councils aren't capped and can best respond to local community's needs.

## East Midlands

### **1. What did you use from the political strategy - either to guide what you did in the region or to campaign on?**

a) nothing

b) Loughborough and North West Leicestershire: The intention to replace the Liberals/UKIP as the third Party was very helpful. I am ground down by the number of our members who were advocating doing some sort of "a deal" with Liberals or Labour as if they had no faith of us to ever get out of our fifth position. I think many of them see their own Party as some sort of protest group and were inclined to vote Lib or Lab because they felt we had no hope of getting Green success.

It would have been helpful if this was coming over more clearly from the top of our party and not making cozy electoral pacts with the Liberals and Plaid Cwmry!

c) I was unaware of the strategy so none of it, I've been a member since May 2019 & I do find the party to generally be poor at sharing information. Particularly coordinating members who are willing to be more active.

d) I was not aware of this document

### **2. What do you see as the positives in the current strategy?**

a) The fact that it exists and is nicely presented

b) I think your ambitions are good. Certainly the more you can have local government representatives the higher will be your profile. This is definitely the way to build strong foundations. And your 6 objectives are all good.

The ambition of the strategy to become the 3rd biggest party is a good target, ambitious but not impossible

### **3. What do you see as hindrances?**

a) It is too aspirational, a Strategy is a plan, it sets out how identified aims and objectives are to be achieved and what resources are needed. It has to be realistic. In hindsight, this strategy was not realistic. This document says what we want to achieve, but is not clear about how we are to do it and what role the various structures within the party are to play, therefore for most active members it is irrelevant, because it does not speak to them.

a/ I think you still show your origins as a campaign group, which did have the luxury of standing outside the power structures, and having no actual responsibilities to be blamed for. Thus - I do not think, among your values, that "empathy" reads well. Once you have control of eg the Housing Committee on a local District Council, you will find that practical matters generate heated disputes between your own members, and also with the general public. Heated disputes will not sound like empathy, so I would take this one out.

b/ You are right in saying that you have no Big Policy that is known to the general public. I will suggest two things. Firstly - Recycling. All the District Councils & Unitary Authorities having responsibility for Rubbish Collection need to get together so that Recycling systems across the country are not so very different from each other. This is causing confusion among the packaging industry who don't know what is wanted. They are therefore rather unwilling to

innovate, in case the changes they produce satisfy only 10% of Local Authorities. In the continuing absence of a clear national policy for permitted packaging, it falls to Local Authorities to agree on perhaps just 3 different systems across the country. Secondly - Housing. District Councils and Unitary Authorities have always (or at least since the 1970 local government reforms) been responsible for housing. Council housing has been devastated since the 1980s and only now are local authorities being allowed to build a few more homes. Only a big improvement in this, and a curb on Buy-to-Let Landlords will bring housing prices down significantly. There is a whole generation of millennials who are having trouble buying a house (despite having a fairly good job) or who are having trouble finding anywhere to live at all. Private rents are so high, Council housing is non-existent, and Housing Association houses are few and far between. (History lesson - the Thatcherites thought their idea of Housing Benefit would bring in lots of private landlords in the 1980s - it did, but it is much too expensive.)

Personally I would say all Local Authorities should also be pushing hard for the building of flats for sale, suitable for those aged 70+ to move into, in order to vacate family homes for younger people. These blocks of flats should have a secure private garden behind, a secure car-park (maybe with locking bollards) behind, and should be high enough so that lifts are installed. You need 4-6 storeys to make a lift truly affordable, and it is better to have 2 lifts in case of breakdown. Very small blocks of 2-3 storeys never have a lift, so getting furniture delivered is very expensive (many companies charge more). Also if you have Internet shopping deliveries, I think extra charges will apply if the driver has to walk up a flight or two - if he will even agree to deliver in the first place. Blocks of flats allow for more open green areas with trees - estates of 2, 3, 4-bed houses use up too much land.

I understand some change in the Law is probably needed, so that people who buy a flat are able to predict the future "Service Charges" and have some control over it. Perhaps it is a matter of buying the freehold, and holding the freehold as a group of tenants but I really am not clear about this. I do know lots of people are afraid to buy a flat simply for fear of increased service charges later on.

The strategy needs to recognise the biggest hurdle to its aims: the voting system. More emphasis needs to be placed on working with Labour & the Lib Dems to push through electoral reform, otherwise none of the party's aims will ever go beyond being blue sky thinking. It is concerning that we target Labour/Lib Dem voters whilst the voting system means it is a winner takes all affair, we need an informal "coalition" with these parties until the voting system is changed.

Still too long, wordy and worthy - need specifics if possible! Eg This should be underpinned by Policy for a Sustainable Society (PfSS) and reviewed annually to stress test to our Zero Carbon 2030 commitments.

Develop messaging frameworks to ensure that there is messaging continuity and consistency across all party campaigning.

What does that really mean? Plus don't really like objective goals under objectives?

b) It talks about targeting Labour and Lib Dem voters. This may be all well and good in London and Brighton, but in most of the country it makes no sense. The strategy needs to be equally valid for local parties in Tory-dominated areas (where we gained most of our seats last May)

We need to address the failure of our media approach to cut through at a time when widespread concern about climate change and its consequences should be presenting us with an open goal. During the recent emergency in south-eastern Australia, and the daily reports of unprecedented flood levels in this country, I didn't see a member of our leadership team being asked to comment on the news. I know linking individual extreme events to climate change is problematic, but every year now brings the hottest/coldest/ wettest/driest weather on record in this country, and people are starting to join up the dots.

#### **4. What would you say should be our ambitions for 2024?**

a) Assuming this is a general election year, to have the ability to field a full slate of candidates in England and Wales with the realistic possibility of winning more than one seat. By the way - keep 2023 locals in focus, we need to and should be able to make serious gains, subject to being able to campaign!

I agree generally with your stated aims, and the 6 objectives especially the close ties with Europe. What can be done about this I don't know. Can I be mischievous and say perhaps this awful Pandemic will derail Brexit? Better not say that too loudly. I am worried about the possibilities of fundraising. Knowing as I do, the histories of the main political parties of the 20th century, I know that the parties of the rich, whether aristocrats or business, always had a built-in advantage. The Labour Party only managed to get into power by forming a close alliance with Trades Unions. The Trades Union members often had a basically conservative outlook on social matters, but struck a bargain with the party for their own benefit - job security, unemployment benefits, old age pension rights, free healthcare, etc.

When Tony Blair tried to separate Labour from the unions, he both betrayed his party's history and he ran into lots of trouble with dodgy sponsors. (Bernie Ecclestone, and others).

I cannot quite see where your sound financial base is, to challenge the Conservative Party. Many of your well-wishers could prove to be fickle friends. Election spending since the 1980s has always seemed to be to be more than was previously considered to be legal. This is a great big challenge for you. I dread the day when we follow too closely the USA habit of being ruled & financed by millionaires.

Achieving electoral reform, whether brought about by the green party or a coalition of multiple political party's. The form of voting system chosen to replace FPTP will be very important also, the previous failed Lib Dem coalition referendum showed how the type of system selected & how it is presented to the public is key.

Continuing to make sustainability/nature/the environment a key political issue, both to continue the momentum of the party as an electoral force, but also to continue to force the other political parties to incorporate greener policy in to their thinking; making the right environmental choices as a legislature generally

is more important than any one government/party being able to claim it was their idea first etc etc

Ensure we remain free from influence from private interests caused by relying on their funding & alike. For me this is a huge selling point of the party; clear funding & no seedy favours owed therefore, which is a big problem for the Conservatives

Promotion of the idea of more direct democracy (such as citizens councils), many people are fed-up with MPs & parliament generally, there must be scope to become the party of the people by promising not to just get in to power & be the same as the existing arrangement, but rather to give people a genuine platform for change

b) I feel we need to keep pushing manufacturers to produce eco-friendly products at a reasonable price, which should be easy to buy and not in a quirky online store that majority of people won't find. We should educate people in how the little changes they make can help.

Improvement in infrastructure to be furthered, with EV so we can abandon fossil fuels as early as possible, to include public transport, local and national deliveries. We also need to consider banning internal flights in the UK as a matter of course.

Homes are at a premium. There are cheaper (flat-pack) builds we could be taking advantage of. We should aim to instal solar panels on every viable roof and more renewable products as standard and all new build properties and stop installing gas boilers. (I write this a someone who works for Vaillant Group).

Hospitals in general have an issue with parking; s we need to help with this. The right public transport at a fair and reasonable price will help more people use their own cars less and maybe not need to own one at all. Healthy foods should be cheaper than unhealthy foods; it's too easy to get rubbish food.

Education requires an overhaul. We should be teaching children skills as much as calculus, about mental health issues, budgeting, finances, how to run a house and car.

More people should vote. Renumeration for Members of Parliament and the Lords should be more transparent.

We need to get into the mind of voters more, as do TV, Radio interviewers. We should try to get out and engage with the public too.

We must change the perception that it's a wasted vote to vote Green. To do this we need to have some serious and credible policies. One thing I was very disappointed in that we did not have enough people standing in all the areas, which again would help.

c) We left the European Union six weeks ago; the opportunity for remaining in the EU and a second vote on the referendum has now passed. We must instead push for a better, green-minded trade deal with the EU and furthermore we must campaign for retention as a signatory to the European Convention on Human Rights; our position in that convention is potentially at risk.



Increasing our activist base to 20,000 with a rise in membership to 100,000 means in practice we have to double the proportion of active members from 10% (estimated) to 20%. This means more support to rural local parties and local parties based in towns instead of major cities. We need to become less city-centric (and especially less Londoncentric) and establish more offices in the Midlands (and North of England).

UKIP are no longer a relevant political force. Overtaking the Liberal Democrats will require a significant change of Green image so we can win over the types of voters they and Labour cannot in the shire counties-we need to stop portraying ourselves as explicitly "left wing", for a start, because voters do not think along "left/right" lines when voting

Improving the financial stability of the party requires some significant national changes e.g. holding conference only once per year (in the autumn) instead of twice per year, and increasing membership fees slightly. We also need to establish good relationships with green-minded businesses and cooperatives who can aid our cause.

Increasing our councillor numbers to over 1000 is certainly important but this will not be possible in practice until 2023 at the earliest, since most councils now have full council elections every four years. Also, county council election years (2021,2025 etc.) have fewer seats available to win, although those wins will be more important for us in shire counties.

We have already exceeded the initial target of 300 council seats in England & Wales (we now have 359). Keep in mind that boundary changes are likely at the next general election, meaning analysis of notional results and councillor numbers in a constituency will be critical when targeting seats then.

Regarding the East Midlands specifically, there are major gaps we need to plug. We had no parliamentary candidates at all in the parts of Lindsey in 2019 (meaning no candidate for Gainsborough, Louth & Horncastle or Boston & Skegness) and Mid Lincolnshire and North Nottinghamshire both need considerable regional assistance. hope these comments will be useful to the political strategy in the East Midlands.

Less policy focus and more action - eg where are we with hs2 fight and support for groups - not enough to support with words

## **5. What would you say are the key factors that will enable us to deliver this?**

Completing the organisational objectives above coupled with candidate and campaign training. However, we must now consider alternative ways of campaigning, the big parties, notably the Tories, hold all the media cards and they will play them to their advantage shamelessly. So - securing and maintaining media penetration remains a key objective.

I really support the need to grow the Membership and particularly the Activist base. I don't think anyone really understands just how much work falls upon the local officers, particularly the Co-ordinator (who in this case is getting on in years!). Of our 150+ membership we only have less than 20 who ever attend meetings and less than 5 who are really in any way pro-active. Trying to energise our local party is extremely hard work.

Working with Labour & the Lib Dems; at all levels from activists to MPs

Clear coordination of the Party's message & countrywide representatives delivering that message (& trained to do so), most achievable by a network of strong local parties

Climate change is going to naturally put the limelight on the Green Party when it's worst features appear, it will lead to Green Party representatives being invited on to public platforms (TV, radio etc), we need to think now & plan for what message (about the Green Party) we want the public to take away from these events - can we find a easy to sell/ understand message to link natural disasters etc to a lack of flexibility in the political system & then thus the need to change the voting system & improve democracy

We need to be seen and visible and doing in communities

### Feedback:

**Introduction:** Do not start with a negative statement as this document - and the PB - does. The expression 'The Green Party is the only.....' is overused, trite, debatable to the point of being inaccurate. Start with a positive visionary statement - without a vision of what we are trying to achieve we become rudderless. We will be in danger in building an organisation for the sake of having that organisation, more concerned with its internal structures than its impact in the world - sound familiar?

Something like.... A society based on cooperation and democracy that prioritises the many, not the few, and does not risk the planet's future with environmental destruction and unsustainable consumption. [adapted for PB second paragraph].

**Positioning:** This is a jumble of values, analysis and aspiration, it is not a statement of political position. A general statement of 'position' is probably not helpful to members, positioning relating to specific issues is very helpful but needs to be produced by Political Committee as issues arise.

In general we position ourselves as independent of any vested interest or historical power grouping and we do not position ourselves on the conventional and now dated left/right spectrum - a controversial point with some members still, so best not mentioned in a strategy document.

**Values** No harm in stating them but courage etc are qualities not values. They describe desired behaviour, they do not describe what Green philosophy is built on. The opening of the PB makes reference to equality, cooperation, sustainability and democracy.

There is strong reference to the natural world - to nature and to human society: '...the Green Party seeks healthy interdependence of individual, nature and society.' Therefore, while we value the individual person - the mantra of the right we also value, on an equal footing, society - as does the left, and the natural environment, ignored by both left and right.

We value:

- Equality of opportunity to allow the full expression of the individual [PB303]
- Diversity - of both society and nature [PB205]

- An open and fair society in which individual people can express their full potential [PB404]
- Democratic process securing dialogue between the people and government at all levels [PB302]
- A healthy environment in which nature can flourish [PB201]
- Above all we value balance: '[The Green Party] seeks a balance between a number of different processes which contribute to human well-being,' [PB 112]

Where we position ourselves on issues will be guided by these values and not simply pragmatism and political expediency. Therefore getting these values right is important.

**Targeting existing voters:** The strategy described here and used in 2015 was a disaster because it was too inflexible and failed to pick up on 'Corbyn mania'. We have to be very flexible in our direct appeal to the known voters of other parties. The tactic of 'target and squeeze' needs to be used carefully informed by local knowledge and should not be directed centrally. The party needs now to recognise the vulnerability of the Conservative vote and be prepared to attract this vote. Most of our values will in fact appeal to conservative minded people if correctly packaged free of traditional left wing rhetoric.

**Supplementary Strands** The three identified: Green economy, quality of life and localism with democracy are important and together with care for the environment should be elevated to main messaging themes. These can appeal across the electoral spectrum and we do have a unique take on each

### **Objectives**

The first three remain relevant, 4 & 5 not so and we failed to deliver on them anyway - not the Green Party's fault.

These objectives are a mixture of organisational and political, it would be as well to separate them out.

Objective 6 [organisational] remains important but the focus now needs to be to build the strength and capacity of local parties so that we have a functioning local party covering every constituency and therefore local government area. This needs to be prioritised and elevated to Objective 1. We can not claim to be a significant national party if there are areas with no effective local party activity.

The objective of central party reorganisation has to be shelved for now to allow a period of serious rethink about what is needed.

To achieve effective local party development the Regions have to be involved in a partnership with the central party - which seems to be evolving. The failure of successive GPEX Local Party Coordinators to have any impact demonstrates the impossibility of the central party managing by itself the development of a robust local party structure.

Objective 1: I question the value of setting targets. It results in resources being wasted in trying to hit the target rather than laying the foundations by which the target can be achieved. It is a product of an obsession with metrics and statistics. If we are strong in depth we will be successful.

Since we are unlikely to have a general election for the next 4 years [OK not impossible!] The national party electoral objective should be to support the regions [all regions not just London] in developing their electoral capability and gearing up for what will be a major local election round in 2021. Each region will have different needs and opportunities. A strong partnership needs to be built now between the regions, including their electoral team and elected officers and the central party including the 2 Governance bodies and professional staff. Getting this structure right and working by the summer will be far more effective and rewarding than flogging the dead horse of

'Governance Reviews'. This is now an organisational objective, from this each region may well wish to set its political objectives and targets.

Objective 2 [organisational in my opinion] remains important but the approach is flawed. Good messaging begins with good policy that is relevant and up to date. The difficulty of being able to update policy has to be addressed urgently. [I know to my cost the near impossibility of trying to update an entry in the PfSS, this is a ludicrous situation.]

Set an objective of having up to date and relevant policy that can easily and quickly converted to policy statements for the leadership and media team and enable Policy Committee to do this task. Don't allow Conference or SoC to block this essential updating work. The route chosen in this strategy - the 'professionalisation' of messaging has all the dangers of special advisers. While external consultation is necessary, policy making by outside professionals is the road to disaster.

The political objective then becomes selecting the messaging - a task for the Political Committee, with internal consultation. We need to recognise that a national messaging strategy may not always work at the local level, this needs to be understood by PolCom who have to come out of the London bubble.

Objective 3 - yes, but do it! This needs an effective Campaigns committee, again with strong regional links to plug into campaigns both national and local.

Other objectives: Accepting that it is now very difficult in present circumstances to set objectives, and we can not know what organised events will be happening - getting real action out of COP 26 could be a new objective.

Also, ensuring that there is post Brexit settlement that benefits the greater majority and our natural environment could be another political objective for the year ahead

Margaret Lewis: thank you for this. I have put my comments in capitals. First, it is a really great example of greens doing great work. However, i think it is far too long and includes explanations of terms such as courage, empathy and diversity, which are not needed. Reads Beautifully and makes me proud to be green, but is it a bit worthy

Signalling?

I'd prefer very short document listing measurable, digestible targets in plain english and lots of local action - we need to engage and work with local communities fighting hs2 etc, and we will build green respect that way?

# South East Federation Green Party

GPEW Political Strategy Review March 2020

Compiled by GPRC representatives Andrew Bradbury and Martha James from discussions and submissions.

- What did you use from the old political strategy – either to guide what you did in the region or to campaign on

Some comments that once issued the Political Strategy was not widely known about or referred to at local level.

Essential we ensure that the Strategy (and any Manifestos) are equally relevant outside metropolitan areas as inside i.e. it needs to apply in non-metropolitan, rural and small town constituencies also.

Green New Deal seen as potentially a good unifying theme.

- What do you see as the positives in the existing strategy?

Two strands: Environmentalism and Social liberalism seen as strong and should be retained. One suggestion that we add a third: System Change.

Strong themes that we need to retain, reinforce and build on: Climate Emergency. We need to extend this into other issues such as Peace and Circular Economy.

- What do you see as hindrances?

One submission that it is over complex (objectives/key values/core elements/ 10 point programme).

Some comment that Electoral Reform is essential but it is over promoted by the GP.

- What would you say should be our ambitions for 2024?

Firstly, let's be ambitious and set a range of measurable objectives now for 2021.

To win the balance of power at the next GE. To make it the Environment Election.

- What would you say are the key factors that will enable us to deliver this?

Ambition itself is a good starting point. Some recent ambitions have been unclear. We seemed to commence GE2019 aiming for three seats, but we weakened that as the campaign progressed. Our ambitions in EU2019 were too modest.

Milestones/ measurables to our objectives which are part of the route plan.

Be bold, toughen up, less complaining.

Be realistic: the people resources in some local parties are restricted. We should extend the use of online meetings and other communication platforms.

- Is what we are suggesting suitable for the GP

There is a difference of opinion in the GP between those identifying it as a left wing party and those for whom this description is either not invited or not useful.

The latter submit that there is scope to build support amongst those with low level affiliations across all three of Labour, Liberal and Conservative parties.

If we aim to be elected then we need to forge a more constructive position with regard to large and medium business. Challenging capitalism is not comprehensible to most voters and not a political strategy for electoral success within a five year period.

- Is what we are suggesting feasible

The new strategy needs to be framed in a way which all sides of the GP can subscribe to. GE2019 seems to have irritated in the party the difference between essentially 'liberal' and the essentially 'socialist' political outlooks in the GP.

- Is what we are suggesting going to be acceptable both to the wider membership and the voting populace at both local and GE level

Political Strategy needs to be bold, well communicated and embedded in the culture of local parties and the Field Team.

#### Addendum: Comments on terminology and punctuation in PS 2018-2022

1. The GPEW is the only major political party in the UK -> Green Parties are the only major political parties in the UK

(mustn't forget Scotland and Northern Ireland have Green parties)

2. planets limits -> planet's limits

3. General Election in June 2022. -> General Election on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May 2024.

([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Next\\_United\\_Kingdom\\_general\\_election](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Next_United_Kingdom_general_election))

4. 'we believe diversity enriches us all' is vague, what kind of diversity are we talking about here? I suggest: 'we believe diversity of origin, identity and belief enriches us all'

5. our planet, and not just the rich and powerful, -> our planet, not just the rich and powerful

6. urgent collective action on climate change -> urgent collective action on climate change and the ecological crisis

7. 'equality, social justice' is that a tautology? Or does social justice mean some people becoming more equal than others? This is an important distinction in current arguments about 'equity' meaning equality of outcome, not equality of opportunity.

Is it socially just to deliberately disadvantage some groups of people, for reasons which are beyond their control, in the name of striving for perceived equity?

8. offer in this area leaving -> offer in this area, leaving

9. number of voter with -> number of voters with

10. to become the third most popular -> to become the most popular

11. we will aim by 2022 to -> we will aim by 2024 to
12. number of Green's -> number of Greens
13. retaining our MP -> increasing our number of MPs
14. To overtake the Liberal Democrats and UKIP -> To overtake the Liberal Democrats and Labour
15. for why The Green vision -> for why the Green vision
16. we will continue to push for the British people to have a vote on the final Brexit deal negotiated by the Government, including the option of remaining in the EU. But whatever -> Whatever (i.e. cut the whole first sentence)
17. 'We aim to double the Party's paid-up membership to 80,000 by 2022' (please check current figures)
18. and manifestos' for -> and manifestos for
19. by the end of January 2018 -> by the end of March 2020
20. The Strategy will be launched formally at the Party's Spring Conference in Bournemouth at the beginning of March 2018. -> The Strategy will be launched formally at the Party's Autumn Conference in 2020.
21. A Policy Programme will be drawn together for adoption by GPEC and GPRC by the end of March 2018. -> A Policy Programme will be drawn together for adoption by GPEX and GPRC by the end of March 2020.
22. by the end of June each year -> by the end of June each year.