

GREEN WEST OF ENGLAND PLEDGES



This is the Green West of England Pledges document. It covers the West of England, not the whole of the United Kingdom.

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FOREWORD

Dear voter,

Like me, most people who live and work in the West of England love it here. But if you dig a little deeper they will tell you that things could be a lot better. They want buses that run on time, they want to be able to rent or buy somewhere they can afford. They want to breathe clean air and enjoy the outdoors. They want the Council to 'get on with it'; less talking and more action. They want to be well looked after if they get ill or if they need help as they get older. They want their bins emptied and their roads repaired.



They want their kids to be able to get to school safely, on foot or by bike, and they definitely don't want to be stuck in traffic jams every day.

Is this too much to ask? I don't think so.

Of course, the new Metro Mayor won't have control over all of this, but the government's devolution agenda is a huge opportunity for local areas to make important decisions on housing, transport, adult education and economic investment.

The Metro Mayor will lead the West of England Combined Authority, responsible for agreeing a joint plan and spending a budget of at least £1bn, along with the opportunity to raise even more from local investment.

We must support joint working, identify our joint interests, aspirations, commitments.

We believe that by acting on long term plans for prosperity that put people first, we will take steps toward a future that everyone can look forward to.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Darren Hall'. The signature is stylized and written over a horizontal line.

Vote Darren Hall for Metro Mayor
The Positive Choice

MY PRIORITIES

1

ECONOMY FOR LIFE

I will help make sure the West of England creates the most resilient, diverse economy in the UK, helping Bristol & Bath to become a world leader in the next generation of smart urban living, where prosperity means more than just GDP and creates high quality of life for everyone.

2

TRANSPORT FOR LIFE

As part of an integrated transport strategy, I will renegotiate the region's bus contracts making sure that not a single pound of tax payer's money is given away as profit for a private bus companies and I will set up a system to enable social enterprise community transport companies to run the bus services people really need to get around cheaply, easily and reliably.

3

HOMES FOR LIFE

I will make sure we lead the UK in building more affordable, energy positive housing, changing the way we build houses and making sure that everyone can afford to buy or rent somewhere they can call home.

4

SKILLS FOR LIFE

I will fight to make our region the most equal in the UK, standing firm on decisions that are in the best long term interests of those who need our help the most.

5

FUTURE FOR LIFE

I will make sure that the beautiful natural environment of our region is protected and enhanced, and that we use every opportunity to help reduce our collective impact in the world.

ECONOMY FOR LIFE



1

Bristol, Bath and South Gloucestershire form a market area that is one of the most successful in the UK, with higher than average wages, productivity and employment. However this success is not shared by all, and many struggle to provide for their families even though they have good jobs. Our vision is for greater job security through fair employment contracts, and for our region to be the UK leader in paying at least the official living wage.

We must also make sure that our economy is resilient and diverse enough to withstand the global challenges that are inevitable as a result of political instability, Brexit, resource constraints and climate change. We must extend the smart cities agenda, using our creative industries and engineering expertise to become a world leader in the circular economy.

I will work with businesses to set up a Regional Business Investment Fund to focus and strengthen our local economy so more money stays here. I'll set up training for skills we'll need in the future and promote the value of diversity. I want the West of England to lead the way in creating well paid jobs for local people. With a Green Metro Mayor, we can achieve this.

Specifically:

Raise the region's profile as a world leader in the low carbon, environmental goods & services, renewable energy and ethical finance

Set up a Regional Business Investment Fund to strengthen the local economy

Investing in local businesses that put the West of England at their heart

Build strong links with Europe that will extend beyond Brexit

Establish specific business contribution schemes to improve investment in productivity, sustainability and energy efficiency



I will build a regional, joined-up transport system that gets people where they want to go and is reliable, regular and reasonably priced.

That's not what we have now. Underinvestment, local politics and short term thinking have left a legacy of traffic jams and poisoned air. Bus travel is overpriced and overcrowded. Rail travel is patchy and connections to the capital ridiculously expensive. Currently, cars come first, profit second and people last. But it doesn't have to be like that.

Let's share data across the area and create solutions based on fact not guesswork. We can use that evidence to make sensible decisions about rail and bus services. Aiming to keep traffic out of our towns and cities. Increasing local rail links and supporting electrification, trialing a regional Bus to Work scheme and increasing the provision of free to use Electric Vehicle charging points.

Good cycling infrastructure saves money, and encouraging people to walk significantly improves people's health - but only if the air we breathe is clean. We must retrofit our buses to higher environmental standards. We need to create Clean Air Zones for Bristol and Bath so that residents are put first.

Specifically:

Pooling community transport budgets to create a social enterprise public transport system

Clean Air Zones for Bristol and Bath

Prioritise space for pedestrians and ensure dedicated cycling routes are integrated into all future transport schemes, ensuring those that are already in place are easier to use

Share data across local authority boundaries to ensure solutions are evidence based

Trial 'free EV charging' as part of your parking charge.

HOMES FOR LIFE

3

We live in a beautiful part of Britain, but houses cost 10 times average wages. What's the solution?

We will start by insisting on higher building standards so homes are cheaper to run. Renewable energy and proper insulation required in the design. New developments over 40 units will have to be energy producers by 2020. Then let's get building: good quality homes in the right places, connected by a fit-for-purpose transport system with schools and health services nearby. Using modern technology, with ultra-fast broadband to transform work-life balance.

Working with developers to build the cosy, affordable homes described in neighbourhood plans, to give older people the opportunity to downsize - young people to get on the housing ladder. For those who prefer to rent, a voluntary Renter's Charter will set the a benchmark for landlords. We can roll out a region wide Ethical Lettings Charter that supports the good landlords out there.

From experience, I know how to combine building partners and land already identified for development to create future-proof housing. Let's stop selling public land off to the highest bidder and instead put in place an 'open data land registry'.

Specifically:

Promote neighbourhood plans and community led developments

Introduce Renter's Charter and a Living Rent to support landlords and tenants

An ethical lettings charter that requires landlords to achieve EPC level-C rating in 5 years

Support innovative housing solutions such as custom-build, co-housing and self-finish

Ensure all new developments over 40 units are net-energy positive by 2020, raising building standards to eradicate fuel poverty

Cease the sale of public assets to private developers and introduce an 'open data land registry'

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Business can't get the skilled employees they need, and yet hard-working people can't get the jobs they want. What's going wrong? We have a great opportunity to lead the world, offering full employment in building houses, generating renewable energy, growing food and producing local goods.

The world of work is changing but our education system isn't keeping up. Instead of creating money for the banks, we should be investing in people helping them retrain to access work. We need to offer everyone opportunities for lifelong learning that will help them keep their skills and knowledge up to date.

With skills funding due being devolved in 2018, we must work with local businesses, colleges and training providers to ensure we have a skills program that meets the needs of the economy, boosts social mobility and ensures that everyone has the opportunity to do a job they love.

We should not be closing libraries. They should be transformed into centres for community and neighbourhood learning, with access to online education programmes that are freely available.

Specifically:

Support skilled workers from overseas to remain within the West of England

Work with local businesses, colleges and training providers to create skills program that meets needs of both people and the economy

Commit significant resources into the adult learning sector to develop lifelong learning

Committing to maintain open libraries and centres of community learning

Assist the long term jobless in returning into work

Support increasing equality and diversity by supporting women, non-binary genders and BME groups in the workplace

FUTURE FOR LIFE

5

We need to move away from the obsession with coal and gas: they pollute our air, cause climate change and need to stay in the ground. Dirty energy is already too expensive and will only get more expensive as fossil fuels become more scarce.

Nuclear may seem like an attractive option, but we are being sold an expensive lie by the Government. At a time when our impressive technology sector could do with additional support due to Brexit, our Government would still prefer to invest in foreign regimes.

Instead let's focus attention on locally based, renewable energy. There is a great opportunity to build the cheapest form of energy, on-shore wind farms, which would start to generate a bright future for us. We have the businesses, the knowledge as well - but a lack of political will.

The UK is facing an unprecedented loss of its natural habitat, with thousands of species in decline and many facing extinction. Our national parks are under threat from fossil fuel extraction, and our rivers & streams are polluted with plastic. A Green Metro Mayor would use every available opportunity to ensure policy improves rather than damages the environment.

Specifically:

Be a strong pro-Remain voice that campaigns for clean energy investment

Support local, renewable energy providers

Campaign to stop Hinkley C being built and investing instead in renewable energy

West of England to be 100% Frack Free

Ensure farming practices are nature friendly

Protect & improve green infrastructure including natural schemes for flood prevention and mitigation

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DARREN HALL, THE POSITIVE CHOICE