

# OUR LOCAL MANIFESTO

FOR A FAIRER, GREENER

WORCESTER

2025-2029



# INTRODUCTION

People in Worcestershire are facing uncertainty and fear for the future. Despite being in one of the world's wealthiest countries, many struggle with basic needs—nurses rely on food banks, school buildings are deteriorating, housing is unaffordable, and hospital and dentist access can be scarce.

The climate crisis adds to these challenges, with scientists warning that we are on a dangerous path towards a 2.5°C rise in global temperatures with impacts on our doorstep with increased flooding in Worcester. Yet the County council's current target of net zero by 2050 fails to reflect that we can, and must, do so much more.

**We believe this can change.** Together, we can create a greener, fairer society where everyone feels safer, happier, and more secure. But it requires county councillors ready to make bold, principled decisions.

**By voting Green on 1st May, you show your belief in a fairer, greener future—one worth fighting for.**

## Greens offer real hope and real change:

Our city needs councillors who bring hope with solutions; who listen to residents and stand up for them whilst doing politics differently.

As the leader of the Green group at the County Council, Councillor Matthew Jenkins has encouraged a better culture of collaborative working, listening, and treating people with **kindness and respect.**

## Greens are needed, now more than ever

Due to climate change and years of **chronic underfunding** of public services by governments, these are difficult times and local authorities are looking for more ways to cut funding to essential services that we all value.

At a time of uncertainty about the future organisation of local government, Greens want to lead the debate about any reorganisation. Greens will advocate for strong local decision-making, putting local communities at the centre. We want to ensure any changes are locally supported not imposed.

Greens will help local communities through actions, not words.

The Greens were the first to call for the county council to declare a climate emergency and set a net zero target.

The Greens changed county council policy to make it easier for residents to request resident parking schemes.

The Greens work tirelessly to hold the administration to account, fighting cuts to bus services, scrutinising failing special educational needs and disabilities services and ensuring that the needs of residents and the environment are heard.



County councillors Andrew Cross and Matthew Jenkins



# OUR LOCAL MANIFESTO – SIX KEY THEMES

- Tackling the climate and nature emergency
- Improving the health and wellbeing of residents
- Supporting vulnerable people
- Enhancing green spaces for people, nature and food production
- Better learning, education and school
- A working transport system for clean air and liveable streets

For each theme, we outline:

**GREEN VISION**            What we are aiming for overall

**GREEN PRIORITIES**    What we will aim to do in the next four years

**GREEN ACTION**        What we have done already

For the Green Party's national policies:  
[greenparty.org.uk/about/our-manifesto/](https://greenparty.org.uk/about/our-manifesto/)



# URGENT ACTION ON THE CLIMATE AND NATURE EMERGENCY

## GREEN VISION: What are we aiming for?

Urgent action is needed to avoid large-scale human suffering and the loss of many more species of wildlife. We can only avoid catastrophic climate and ecological breakdown by leaving fossil fuels in the ground and rapidly moving towards net zero greenhouse gas emissions.

Worcester residents know that climate change is real because we see the River Severn flood our city more often and more seriously, bringing disruption and suffering. We need to adapt the city not only to more floods but also to increasingly hot summers and more frequent and intense storms. We need action from politicians to help bring the changes that are needed to achieve climate goals- how we travel, heat our buildings, produce food, generate electricity, keep warm, and reduce waste.

## GREEN Priorities: What we will try to do in the next four years

- Continue to reduce the energy use of county buildings, generate renewable energy and support staff and councillors to walk and cycle.
- Ensure that the city is prepared to adapt to the local and global impacts of climate breakdown such as extreme weather, flooding, displacement of people and disruption to supply chains and provide support for residents and businesses.
- Encourage residents to produce less waste, improve recycling rates, bring in food waste and the collection of a wider range of materials.
- Lobby the government to support farmers and landowners with more funding for environmental measures.
- Ensure that caterers offer more local and plant-based food, and push for other local institutions and event organisers to do the same.
- Lobby the government to provide funding for flood defences and recovery for the city.
- Lobby Environment Agency to improve water quality.
- Support the Local Nature Recovery Strategy to take action on the Biodiversity Crisis.



Green Councillors and campaigners highlight the impact of flooding on the city

## GREEN ACTION: What we have done

- We were the first to call for the county council to declare a climate emergency and to set a target date to reach net zero. The council committed itself to reach net zero by 2050, which is far too late.
- Greens supported calls for a biodiversity emergency.



# IMPROVING THE HEALTH AND WELLBEING OF RESIDENTS

## GREEN VISION: What are we aiming for overall?

The Green Party is committed to a fully public, properly funded health and social care system, and to keeping the profit motive well away from the NHS. Investing in GPs and public health is key to prevention, early diagnosis and improving our quality of life, while also reducing the burden on the NHS.

There's been a dramatic rise in mental health problems in recent years, particularly among young people, with far too many unable to access help when they need it.

We need better support in the school system for neurodivergent children and children with special educational needs.

Helping residents to be independent and active is key to good health. For those without cars, providing safe ways to travel is key. This is true for all but especially for children, the disabled and the elderly.

## GREEN Priorities: What we will try to do in the next four years

- County care services suffer from chronic underfunding. Combined with increased demand, this has resulted in a crisis. We will lobby the government for more funding.
- Due to lack of places, children with special educational needs often fail to get suitable school provision. We will push for an increase in specialist school places.
- Improve air quality within the city.
- Help residents to improve the energy efficiency of their homes.



More benches have been installed to help those who struggle to walk far

## GREEN ACTION: What we have done

- Successfully lobbied for an increase in the proportion of spending on pavements by the county council.
- More benches installed on routes into the city centre to help those who struggle to walk far.
- Successfully lobbied for real-time pollution monitors to show the air quality within the city.
- Successfully called for an investigation of the health impacts of the covid pandemic.

# SUPPORTING VULNERABLE PEOPLE

## GREEN VISION: What are we aiming for overall?

Most of us want to live in a country where everyone is treated with dignity, not one where record numbers of children are in poverty, older people can't keep warm and disabled people are badly let down. We can do so much better, lifting everyone up and making sure all of us can access extra help when we need it.

Many people are awaiting care reviews, payments or assessments, and there are large staff vacancies in the care sector. Investing in social care will take pressure off the NHS.

Supporting struggling families will help prevent children ending up in the care system.

## GREEN Priorities: What we will try to do in the next four years

- Lobby the government to properly fund adult and children's services.
- Waiting time for care reviews
- Privatisation of children's homes is a bad thing where there should be no profit and a focus on their safety and no benefit of a market. Non-profit organisations. Support voluntary sector and charities who are well placed instead of venture capitalists. Profiting from private care homes and children's residential care
- Greater support for fostering
- Focus on support for parents through Family Hubs, rather than waiting until things go seriously wrong
- Focus on prevention. Any child, no matter what their needs, should be supported in their families to be safe and to thrive
- Supporting wider family network for children who are on the edge of care through Kinship Care and Family support meetings, with a family-led approach.

## GREEN ACTION: What we have done

- Supported residents to get better accommodation
- Supported residents apply for grants to help them get warmer homes etc.
- Worked with social housing providers to allow access for disabled residents.
- Taken action on damp and mould and rats in homes.



Green county councillors at a full council meeting



# ENHANCING GREEN SPACES FOR PEOPLE, NATURE AND FOOD PRODUCTION

## GREEN VISION: What are we aiming for overall?

We are part of nature; unless it flourishes, we cannot flourish either, but the UK is one of the most nature-depleted countries in the world. We must also halt the loss of wildlife- both for its own sake and for all the ways we rely on it, such as crop pollination. We can support this by growing more food locally and making it easier for people to get involved in food production.

Our food system is failing us all. Poor diets are estimated to cost our NHS £6.5bn a year yet successive governments have failed to take on the unhealthy food lobby. Meanwhile, the way we produce our food is damaging our natural world and our climate. Our food system accounts for a third of all greenhouse gas emissions and is the greatest driver of nature loss and pollution in our rivers.

## GREEN Priorities: What we will try to do in the next four years

- Encourage more local food-growing initiatives such as allotments, school growing plots and community gardens.
- Set up groups to care for neglected green spaces in the city.
- Plant more trees, which will mitigate the effects of climate change by providing shade and keep our streets cooler in extreme heat.
- Continue to campaign against the dumping of sewage in the River Severn by Severn Trent Water.



The Worcester Community Garden shares food growing skills

## GREEN ACTION: What we have done

- Organised regular litter picks to help keep Worcester a cleaner and nicer place to be.
- Worked with community groups to plant trees, bulbs and fruit bushes.
- Helped organise the installation of swift boxes on residents' houses.
- Lobbied the county council to reduce its use of toxic weed killers.
- Successfully pushed for the council to help local farmers with the impact of the shortage of seasonal workers due to Brexit.



Greens organise regular litter picks

# BETTER LEARNING, EDUCATION AND SCHOOL

## GREEN VISION: What are we aiming for overall?

Education should be about inspiring a love of learning and ensuring that every young person can reach their potential. Yet too many children are failing to thrive in an education system that operates like a production line rather than valuing their individual qualities. An investment in the next generation is the most important investment we can make.

School budgets are tight, insufficient funding lack of provision for SEND especially with complex needs. Lots of children missing out on an education and leaving school with no qualifications. Part-time school goes on for too long with a negative impact.

Valuing training and opportunities for apprenticeships to support the green economy.

## GREEN Priorities: What we will try to do in the next four years

- Lobby for investment in school buildings.
- Lobby the government to expand the provision of SEND places within the city.
- Push for free school meals.
- Call for more climate education within our schools.
- Implement School Streets where people want them, to make the walk to school safer and healthier.
- Provide primary school children with access to one-to-one counselling to help tackle the mental health crisis.



Free school meals

## GREEN ACTION: What we have done

- Met with local schools and lobbied for more SEND provision.
- Called for a "Wheels to Education" programme to help more deprived residents without access to a car or public transport to get to education sites by bike.
- Successfully called for an investigation into the impact of the pandemic on the educational outcomes of the most disadvantaged.



# A WORKING TRANSPORT SYSTEM FOR CLEAN AIR AND LIVEABLE STREETS

## GREEN VISION: What are we aiming for overall?

Our transport choices account for around a quarter of carbon emissions, so it's vital to make it easier to opt for greener choices. Yet public transport provision continues to decline, often leaving those on low incomes with no affordable options.

Worcester has poor air quality and high levels of pollution which are driven by traffic congestion. Walking, wheeling and cycling don't just help reduce carbon emissions and air pollution – they can make us all happier and healthier too.

We aim to make it easier for people to travel sustainably within Worcester.

## GREEN Priorities: What we will try to do in the next four years

- We want to see a regular, affordable, and zero-emission bus network for our city.
  - Replace short-term bus funding with a stable, long-term plan.
  - Set minimum service levels.
  - Make buses more frequent and affordable.
  - Redirect funding from carbon-heavy transport projects, like road building, towards buses.
  - Speed up the switch to zero-emission buses.



We want a regular, affordable, and zero-emission bus network for our city

- Implement 20mph where residents support them.
- Dedicated annual budget for walking and cycling, with the aim to increase walking and cycling to 50% of all journeys in Worcester.
- Support the expansion of bike buses to all schools in Worcester.
- Greater focus on pavement maintenance and dropped kerbs
- Introduce at least three park & ride sites around the city.
- Support EV charging for residents without off-road parking.



Sign our petition

## GREEN ACTION: What we have done

- Worked with Enterprise to expand their car club scheme in Worcester.
- Instigated a review of the county council's 20mph policy.
- Helped set up and run bike buses for local schools