



South Shropshire Green Party

Officers 2003



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Articles for next edition of Grapevine due with the editor by Sept 10th. Please send by email if possible.

UK GREENS IN EUROPE

(Continued from page 5)
and improve conditions for pedestrians. After the UK's disastrous experience of rail privatisation both Caroline and Jean have voted to oppose a Europe-wide rail liberalisation proposal.

With 80% of environment legislation coming from Europe the achievements of our MEPs demonstrate how effective Greens can be.

Fuller details of Caroline and Jean's achievements can be seen on the Green Party website at <http://www.greenparty.org.uk>

On holiday on June 10th ?
Register for a postal or proxy
vote NOW.
Call the Electoral Services
Office on
01584 813277 or 813272



Grapevine



Newsletter of the South Shropshire Green Party

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HELP ELECT A GREEN WEST MIDLANDS MEP

We can win a Green seat in Europe - and we will win !!

Its up to you - don't be tentative, get out there and talk to your family. Tell your neighbours, tell your colleagues at work and all your friends.

And don't forget to put up a poster.

This is an opportunity that only comes round every five years and because it is proportional representation we can win a seat. It is an opportunity we must not miss.

See what only two UK Green MEPs have achieved in the last five years in the European Parliament (pages 4/5/7). More Green MEPs will help transform Europe's decision making in the Parliament.

Give your whole hearted support this time. We don't want to lose out by just a few votes as we did in 1999 in the West Midlands.

We can do it. Use your vote and encourage others to do likewise. Vote Green Party and make real progress.

Use your vote on June 10th - Vote Green Party



Can you display an election poster or board ?
If so please contact John Lloyd on 01694 723143

On the regional Green Party list ...



European elections use proportional representation. The Green Party has a list from whom the top candidates ones will be chosen as MEPs if we gain sufficient votes across the region. Top of the list are ...

Chris Lennard

Chris has served as both a District and Town Councillor in

Malvern. He paints and exhibits in oils and watercolours. Chris has been a Green Party Member since 1982 and has been the Party's campaign coordinator. He stood as a Hereford & Worcester County Council candidate in 1989 and again in 1993 before being elected as a councillor in Malvern in 1995. He works in the NHS.

Felicity Norman

Felicity has been a member of the Green Party for over twenty years and has contested local, parliamentary and European elections in the West Midlands. She is a former agriculture spokesperson for the party. She lives on a smallholding with her family and served as a Green district councillor for 7 years, until local government reorganisation in Herefordshire in 1998.



South Shropshire Generosity!

The West Midlands Green Party has to provide a deposit so that it can nominate candidates. The deposit is returnable if our vote reaches 5%.

Members and supporters from South Shropshire have been very generous in their support for the Euro Election bond. So far I have sent cheques for over £540 to the West Midlands Green Party. This money will be used to pay for the election deposit which is £5,000! If we save our deposit (by getting more than 2% of the vote) the money will be returned. Bonds are in multiples of £10 - please add 50p (non-refundable) to cover the admin costs.



You may, of course, choose to donate the money, or part of it, to help support the Green Party and the many other expenses of putting forward candidates in this election.

If anyone is still thinking of sending in a donation or would like an election bond, please send a cheque made out to "West Midlands Green Party" direct to Pete Harvey, 36, Rose Hill, Rednal, Birmingham B45 8RR.

Thank you very much.

Diane Gaffney

How has having a green MEP improved my environment?

Over 80 per cent of environmental legislation in the UK is initiated at the EU level. The Greens work to toughen that agenda. European laws influence the products that you buy and their labelling; the quality of your air, water and food; the level of pollutants in your earth; how much your energy use contributes to global warming; the safety of your transport; and your rights to access information. Europe introduced the "polluter pays" principle and succeeded in improving laws on issues such as animal welfare and genetically modified crops.

Do you only deal with environmental issues?

The Green agenda goes far beyond the obvious environmental issues. True sustainability has three pillars: economic stability, environmental protection and social justice. Combined this means Quality of Life. Green MEPs address issues such as employment conditions, a better balance between work and other aspects of our lives, campaign against corporate power, for the rights of the individual and of communities. Priorities are to fight poverty, social exclusion, intolerance, discrimination and inequality wherever they exist. Sustainability cannot be built on injustice.

Why Green?

More and more people are coming to recognise that old ideas won't solve new problems. Free trade does not solve poverty. Securing oil supplies does not bring security to people or the planet. A changing world demands a change of politics. Our future depends on co-operation across borders in our common interests: a healthy environment, a more equal standard of living, a peaceful and secure future.

(With thanks to Jean Lambert MEP)

TOGETHER IN EUROPE

Gordon Gissing reports on the Green Parties of Europe, who are now working together to develop a common policy approach.

There was an important development on 21 February 2004 in Rome when the Green Party launched the first 'European Green Party'.

Thirty two Green Parties from 29 countries took part. Six of the Green Parties came from outside the EU, Switzerland, Russia, Ukraine, Bulgaria, and Romania. Interestingly the document was signed in the same room as the Treaty of Rome which founded the EU.

The European Green Party hopes that by presenting a united front they will increase their current standing of thirty six seats in the European Parliament. There will be difficulties as this new Green movement is still to develop.

Five Main Issues

In a keynote speech to over a thousand participants, the effective message from Joschua Fischer the German Foreign Minister and a

Green party member was 'Good ideas are fine but what we need is power'.

The main issues on which the united Green Party will fight are:

- safeguarding the environment
- commitment to a social dimension
- development of democracy
- reinforcement of policy for peace
- a 'bottom up' approach to globalisation

Some Criticisms

Some critics of the development maintain there are major policy differences amongst some members.

For example, UK and Ireland Greens are eurosceptic whereas German Greens are strongly federalist.

No doubt other differences will emerge with so many countries with different backgrounds. Nevertheless this united front can only be of benefit to the Green movement in the long term.

DIARY DATES

Thu June 10th	European elections - if you would you like to be at the count contact Diane Gaffney.
Sun July 25th	Green Fair - Ludlow - all day. Green Party Stall. Ideas for exhibition on the stall ?
Sun Oct 24th	Apple Fair - Church Stretton (<i>NOTE: change of date</i>)



Climate change is the biggest threat to the world economy
Reducing emissions would help abolish fuel poverty and create jobs in renewable energy and recycling.



Economic globalisation is taking us in the wrong direction
But it is not inevitable. Acting now can protect local markets and local jobs and preserve democratic economic control.



Green policies could create a million UK jobs
They would help restore manufacturing, stabilise agriculture, stop jobs going abroad and create sustainable quality of life.



Everyone is entitled to healthy wholesome food
Real Progress is the promotion of local food production along with radical changes to the Common Agricultural Policy which encourage healthy organic production, cut out surpluses which get dumped on the third world, and are better for wildlife.



We need reliable alternatives to driving
Greens would re-nationalise and integrate the railways, along with investment in community bus schemes, dial-a-ride and disabled transport. We must make the public transport option cheaper than the car.



Clean, Green affordable power for all
Germany installs more solar panels in a month than the UK plans to do in three years. It has a Green energy minister.



Public services should not be for private profit
Our public services should be run for the benefit of the people who pay for them, not for the convenience of politicians. Greens want Real Progress through effective partnerships between community, workers and government.



Peace and justice - safer country, safer world
Greens are engaged in long-term efforts to overcome the established cultures of violence that have reached a new crescendo in recent months. We believe it is realistic to seek a safer world based on a just international system.



Human rights - equality with dignity and rights
Human rights means equal treatment for all people. Even the wealthy EU is blighted by inequalities and poverty.



Replacing suffering with compassion
The Green Party believes animals have rights that should be protected in law.

UK GREENS IN EUROPE - a continuing story of commitment, imagination and determination

Five years ago two Green MEPs were elected to represent the UK. Caroline Lucas was elected in the South East and Jean Lambert in London. Both have taken prominent roles in the Green Party in the European Parliament as well as acting as UK green spokespeople and campaigners.

Globalisation

Tony Blair claims that globalisation is "inevitable". Green Party MEPs have been demonstrating this is not the case and have worked for radical reform of the rules governing world trade in the European Parliament and at World Trade Organisation meetings.

Caroline Lucas has proposed Green alternatives, highlighting the importance of local democratic control of an economy. She co-authored a report which set out measures to 're-localise our economies', reducing trade in favour of goods and services which can be produced locally.

Jean Lambert has called for a Framework Directive on the ethical and environmental conduct of business and has challenged the effectiveness of voluntary rules on corporate social responsibility. Caroline has also been at the forefront of opposition to UK pressure to join the Euro.

Peace and Human Rights

The Green Party has been a distinct, and sometimes quite lonely, voice against war, and against the present conflicts in Iraq and Afghanistan. Jean Lambert spoke at the Hiroshima Peace Convention,

Caroline Lucas visited Iraq on the eve of war last year and undertook a mission to Israel and

Palestine to see first hand the impact of the 'apartheid' wall being built by Israel - a wall condemned by the UN.

Both have spoken up about nuclear arms and the use of depleted uranium in battlefield weapons. Police violence in controlling demonstrations in Italy, and deaths in police custody in the UK have been among the human rights issues both have raised in Europe, while UK financial backing for the environmentally controversial Ilisu Dam project in Turkey, whose human rights record is poor, has also come in for fierce criticism.

Discrimination, Asylum and Migration

The Green demand for gender equality to be a key EU employment guidelines was adopted by the Parliament. Opening up opportunities for the employment of women in industries where they are particularly under-represented is a continuing challenge.



"Throughout these five years, our work has been supported and informed by our friends and colleagues in the NGO world and in the Community Groups in our constituencies and in other organisations. "The Greens in the European Parliament are a significant force which aims to ensure that the EU's emerging social and economic agenda has the environment and social justice at its heart."

*Caroline Lucas (left above)
Jean Lambert (right above)*

Jean Lambert has successfully won Parliamentary backing for a measure which will allow disabled people to move between European countries and retain benefits rights.

Anti-racism is a core policy and both MEPs have consistently spoken out at rallies and in meetings against the growing rise of fascism in Europe.

Victims of persecution have the international right to seek asylum and closed door policies in Europe are giving human traffickers new business. Europe is in a muddle over the issue and Green are challenging the

Council of Ministers to reach agreement based on fairness and opportunity, countering the racism of the far right. In the UK migrants account for 8% of the population and 10% of gross domestic product.

Food and Farming

The Greens in Europe have been instrumental in ensuring that all GM products are labelled and they fought for the UK's

right to take appropriate measures to prevent the unintended presence of GMOs, protecting organic products.

Reform of the Common Agricultural Policy to ensure that farmers receive fair prices for what they produce, as well as to allow a better focus on environmental damage, is a longer term objective.

Caroline Lucas has been working with farmers organisations seeking fair prices, controls on supermarkets, and the development of local food economies. The Greens want to give power back to those who produce food and are pressing the UK government to help farmers create and promote local food initiatives.

Environment and Transport

Pollution and waste are long-standing Green issues which everyone can relate to. Both MEPs have opposed the construction of waste incinerators promoting instead a zero-waste policy with emphasis on reducing packaging, promoting re-use and increasing recycling.

Coastal pollution has been a particular issue for Caroline, whose constituency includes a stretch of the south coast. Surfers Against Sewage was a pressure group seeking to strengthen the EU's Bathing Water Directive. Despite attempts by other parties to weaken its content, Caroline managed to build an alliance of MEPs in order to secure safe standards for bathing beaches across Europe for all their users.

The Greens support alternatives to car use that will increase access to public transport

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