

Dear Croydon Climate Action

Thank you for your request for information about the Liberal Democrat manifesto commitments to climate and ecology. It is our policy not to complete individual questionnaires, but on behalf of our four Croydon Parliamentary Candidates I wanted to set out the key policies that speak to the issues you have raised.

### **Meeting Net Zero by 2045**

Liberal Democrats are committed to cutting greenhouse gas emissions to net zero by 2045 at the latest. We would:

- Meet the UK's commitment under the Paris Agreement to reduce emissions by at least 68% from 1990 levels by 2030.
- Give Ofgem and other regulators a duty to help deliver net zero.
- Require the National Infrastructure Commission fully to take into account the environmental implications of all national infrastructure decisions.
- Put tackling climate change at the heart of a new industrial strategy.
- Coordinate action across the UK by creating a Joint Climate Council of the Nations
- Invest in education and training to equip people with the skills needed for the low-carbon economy of the future.
- Ensure that nature-based solutions, such as tree planting, form a key part of the UK's strategy to tackle climate change.
- Put our farming and food system on an environmentally sustainable footing.
- Make it cheaper and easier to switch to electric vehicles; restore the requirement that every new car and small van sold from 2030 is zero-emission, invest in active travel and public transport, electrify Britain's railways, and reduce the climate impact of flying.
- Require all new homes and non-domestic buildings to be built to a zero-carbon standard - fitted with solar panels.
- Reintroduce requirements for landlords to upgrade the energy efficiency of their properties to EPC C or above by 2028 together with advice and support.
- Introduce a new subsidised Energy-Saving Homes scheme, together with advice and pilots to find the most effective combination of tax incentives, loans and grants.
- Introduce a social tariff for the most vulnerable energy users to provide targeted discounts for vulnerable households.
- Create incentives for installing heat pumps that cover the real costs.

### **Renewable and Community Energy**

Renewable power is key to improving the UK's energy security, reaching net zero targets and reducing the cost of heating. Liberal Democrats want:

- Investment in renewable power so that 90% of the UK's electricity is generated from renewables by 2030.
- The Conservatives to remove their unnecessary restrictions on new solar and wind power and to invest in innovative clean energy sources like tidal and wave power.
- To expand the incentives for households to install solar panels and offer a fair price for electricity sold back into the grid.

- To invest in energy storage, including green hydrogen, pumped storage and battery capability.
- To build the grid infrastructure required, facilitated by a land use strategy.
- To work together with our European neighbours to build a sustainable supply chain for renewable energy technology.
- To build more electricity interconnectors between the UK and other countries to guarantee security of supply, located carefully to avoid disruption to local communities and minimise environmental damage.
- To implement the UK's G7 pledge to end fossil fuel subsidies, while ensuring a just transition that values the skills and experience of people working in the oil and gas industry and provides good opportunities for them and taking special care of the regions and communities most affected.
- To keep the ban on fracking and introduce a ban on new coal mines

Liberal Democrats champion the expansion of community and decentralised energy. We would:

- Reduce access costs for grid connections.
- Reform the energy network to permit local energy grids.
- Guarantee that community benefit funds receive a fair share of the wealth created by local renewables.
- Give small low-carbon generators the right to export their electricity to an existing electricity supplier on fair terms.
- Make it a requirement that large energy suppliers work with community schemes to sell the power they generate to local customers

### **Tackling sewage and water pollution**

Liberal Democrats have a plan to tackle the national scandal of sewage polluted rivers, waterways and beaches, and making water companies work for people by:

- Transforming water companies into public benefit companies.
- Banning bonuses for water bosses until discharges and leaks end
- Replacing Ofwat with a tough new regulator with new powers to prevent sewage dumps.
- Introducing a Sewage Tax on water company profits.
- Enforcing existing laws to ensure that the storm overflows only function in exceptional circumstances.
- Setting legally binding targets to prevent sewage dumping into bathing waters and highly sensitive nature sites by 2030.
- Embracing nature based solutions to tackle the problem of sewage dumping.
- Strengthening the powers of local authorities to monitor the health of our rivers, lakes and coastlines, restore our natural environment and tackle climate change.
- Setting a new 'blue flag' standard, introducing a 'blue corridor' programme for rivers, streams and lakes to ensure clean, healthy water and awarding bathing water status.
- Requiring more regular and stricter testing of water quality, particularly bathing water and sensitive nature sites.
- Giving local environmental groups a place on water companies' boards.

- Introducing a single social tariff for water bills to help eliminate water poverty within the next parliament.
- Implementing Schedule 3 of the Flood and Water Management Act to require sustainable drainage systems in new developments.
- Mandating all water companies to publish accessible real-time data on any sewage they dump.

### **Protecting and enhancing nature**

Nature-based solutions are vital to a Liberal Democrat strategy to tackle climate change. We would enhance nature-based solution for climate change by:

- Planting at least 60 million trees a year, helping the UK reach net zero and restore woodland habitats, and increasing the use of sustainable wood in construction.
- Tackling “greenwashing” by introducing new Blue Carbon and Soils Carbon Standards that are properly enforced and accredited.
- Restoring our peatlands as a carbon store with a ban on the use of horticultural peat and the routine burning of heather on peatlands, and restoring damaged peatlands to health.
- Protecting and enhancing the UK’s temperate rainforest and doubling woodland cover by 2050.
- Creating and restoring habitats like saltmarshes, mudflats and seagrass meadows to guard against coastal flooding and erosion whilst absorbing carbon emissions.
- Working with international partners to tackle deforestation around the world.
- Creating a network of marine protected areas which are properly protected from destructive activities, protecting and restoring blue carbon and ensuring climate resilience at sea.

### **Air Quality**

Liberal Democrats want to ensure everyone has access to a healthy natural environment, regardless of where they live, by:

- Pass a Clean Air Act, based on World Health Organization guidelines, enforced by a new Air Quality Agency.
- Strengthen the Office for Environmental Protection and provide more funding to the Environment Agency and Natural England to help protect our environment and enforce environmental laws.

I hope that this clearly sets out our position on these crucial issues.

Claire (on behalf of the 4 Croydon PPCs)