

LONDON 2016 GREEN PARTY BAME MANIFESTO

The Greens have always been proud defenders of the diversity of London. The city is richer for the communities who have built their lives here. Our streets, our culture and our neighbourhoods would not be the same were it not for London's ethnic communities.

Yet despite this undoubted legacy we live in uncertain times. Too many politicians would scapegoat migrant communities and gamble away the international and vibrant city we have built. Moreover, too many politicians cannot see the systematic inequalities and challenges many Londoners face because of the colour of their skin, their faith or their culture.

Every Londoner should have an equal opportunity to find work, gain an education and build a home. Ethnicity, race or faith should not predetermine poorer outcomes in life. Yet currently in London it all too often does.

As Mayor of London, Sian Berry would take active steps to challenge racism in London and fight for a more equal London. This manifesto sets out just four main strands of our thinking as this relates to the impact of policy upon the lives of people, who wish not to be judged by their appearance but by their talents.

By electing Greens, and in greater numbers, to the London Assembly you will also help to bring in the good ideas needed to break down decades of disadvantage and entrenched privilege. The remedy for a more equal and more harmonious London is to vote Green on 5 May.

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EMPLOYMENT

Unemployment is becoming entrenched and the lack of progress on tackling this is deeply troubling. Figures from 2015 found that long term unemployment in BAME people had increased by 50% since 2010. Members of ethnic minority communities face additional challenges to enter the workforce not faced by their white British counterparts.

Research has found too many barriers for ethnic communities entering the workforce. Job applicants who are identifiably BAME are far less likely to be asked to interview than a white British applicant, even if they have the same qualifications. Research by the Department of Work and Pensions has found the job market to be systematically discriminatory against BAME workers.

The Green Party will implement the power of good ideas to get more people into work by:

- Making the initial stages of recruitment to all City Hall and contractor jobs anonymous to avoid race and gender bias. Anonymised applications are an important step in levelling the playing field for candidates of all backgrounds. By removing names when job applications are assessed and shortlisting is carried out, we would remove the biases that keep BAME applicants from advancing to the interview stage, as well as helping with gender bias too. Women from BAME backgrounds are often doubly discriminated against.
- Making it a specific commitment of the new public Bank for London to support entrepreneurs and businesses from diverse backgrounds.
- Fighting the cuts to local government that have threatened the BAME voluntary sector.
- Help the Bank for London to ensure that charities, particularly Muslim charities, that have unfairly had access to banks accounts restricted still can have a bank account.
- Working alongside businesses to bring in voluntary targets on BAME apprenticeships.
- Working to preserve and support BAME run businesses which are currently losing out from redevelopments and rent increases. We will work to ensure that the London plan is used to ensure established businesses are not demolished, uprooted or removed through gentrification and redevelopment.

POLICING

Keeping communities safe is one of the core roles of the Mayor of London. We firmly believe that all Londoners deserve the right to feel safe on the streets. Nonetheless that must not come at the cost of civil liberties, nor leave certain groups feeling persecuted or singled out by the police.

We know policing in London can be improved. The major cuts to the services, the increase in hate crime, and a corresponding decrease in successful prosecutions are all causes for concern. In response the Green Party will:

- Improve the diversity of the Met, setting ambitious targets for the number of women and BAME officers to reflect the local community, including a target for 50:50 gender balanced recruitment,
- Introduce a clear strategy for identifying areas of underrepresented talent and actively promoting women and BAME officers. Strategies similar to the successful NHS Race Equality Standard will be adopted,
- Review implementation of the Prevent strategy and its implications for tackling extremism as well as preserving good community relations. We would pursue community-led collaborative approaches to tackling *all* forms of extremism and not allow the disproportionate targeting of the Muslim community as evidenced by Prevent in its current form.
- Review and reform stop and search policies. Current policy is resulting in certain groups being disproportionately singled out by police. We would introduce a lifetime ban on officers performing stop and search if they misuse the power even once, a practice currently used by Northampton police. We would also introduce a new independent body to oversee the use of stop and search in London.
- Ring-fence funding for dealing with hate crime in London and review current strategies for dealing with such crimes. Preserve the hate crime hot lines currently in use and resist calls for merging anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and homophobic hotlines.
- Continue to build relationships with communities to ensure individuals have more confidence to report anti-Semitic, Islamophobic and other hate crimes.
- Help to eliminate deaths in custody and police shootings by supporting independent inquiries into every death.

HOUSING

Housing is a crisis for all Londoners yet some aspects of the current crisis undercut certain communities more keenly. In particular, the impact of the Immigration Bill threatens access to housing for identifiably non-white British tenants. Forcing landlords to act as border agents risks having landlords seek to reduce the extra burden upon them by simply refusing to rent to people from BAME backgrounds.

Greens will defend housing as a right for all by:

- Creating a task force to investigate the impact of the Immigration Bill upon BAME people seeking housing and to prosecute clear breaches of the Equalities Act.
- Fighting plans for the demolition of estates and the eviction and destruction of existing communities. The current government's plans to destroy entire neighbourhoods risk the mass gentrification and social cleansing of entire areas.
- As part of our proposal for a London Renters Union, supporting BAME Tenants Unions, both in their existence and their unique ability to support communities.
- Introducing and promoting hotlines for tenants and would-be tenants to report discrimination in the housing market, within the unions or independently of those.

ENVIRONMENT

London is a highly interconnected city. Many citizens of this city have friends and family who reside all over the world. It's one reason why London's environmental impact sits heavily upon the world and this city. The impacts of climate change should not be seen as remote. They already impact the lives of Londoners, particularly for those of us who have roots in other countries.

Unfairly, climate change is likely to impact most those that have the smallest hand in causing the destruction. It is black women of the global south most likely to feel most keenly the impact of climate change. It is another reason why we recognise that climate change is ultimately a matter of both environmental and social justice.

We would:

- Create a Zero-Waste city by making London entirely self-sufficient with waste processing by 2030.
- Block the creation of new landfill or incineration sites.
- Create a not for profit London energy company providing cleaner, cheaper energy for Londoners.

- Champion international action on climate change through organisations such as the C40, and by supporting technology transfer to help the global south transition.
- Take real action on air pollution. BAME communities often live in congested or high density neighbourhoods with high road traffic levels, so are particularly affected by London's illegal pollution levels.