

**April 2019**



## **Our 2019 General Election manifesto**

Friends of the Earth will assess the 2019 political party General Election manifestos based on 10 demands, ranging from policies on aviation to improvements in democracy.

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## **Climate, nature, people.**

Climate change, nature, and human wellbeing are inextricably linked. If these are not addressed adequately then the cost to current and future generations in terms of lives lost, livelihoods damaged, and economic harm will be severe. It is the poorest in the world who are suffering most, despite contributing least to the problem.

Yet the worst can still be avoided. The solutions to avert catastrophic harms are readily available. With real determination and focus the situation can be turned around. Many of the solutions also bring significant co-benefits, such as green jobs, clean air, warm homes and thriving nature for all. This will require investment on the same scale as education and defence, with £42 billion needed per year over the next spending review, of which £25.3 billion is new annual expenditure<sup>1</sup>. But taking the right actions and investing just 5% of government spending (or 2% of GDP) will demonstrate international leadership and be an appropriate response to the protests and concerns of young people across the UK and the rest of the world.

## **Scoring the manifestos**

Friends of the Earth will assess the political party General Election manifestos using our 10 manifesto demands below. We will:

- Conduct and publish an initial assessment of party manifestos to see how in line they are with our policy demands.
- Send our assessment to the political parties and allow a short period of time for parties to issue any clarifications or further information on their policy positions.
- Publish our updated analysis and scoring of party manifestos and share this with the public. This will help the public to hold them to account for their pledges if elected.

## Our manifesto demands

### 1. Meeting our international climate commitments (max. score is 5)

- Commit to going much faster than Net Zero by 2050. Ask the Committee on Climate Change (CCC) to undertake a new study to identify the fastest possible UK emissions reduction scenarios<sup>2</sup>, and their impacts, bringing forward recommendations to tighten the 4th and 5th carbon budgets.
- Enact Secondary Legislation to the Climate Change Act 2008 to fully include international aviation and shipping into the UK's carbon targets.
- Rule out the use of international offsetting in meeting UK carbon budgets.
- Make a new 5 year commitment to international climate finance, in line with the UK's commitments under the UNFCCC and in line with our global fair share. These funds must be genuinely new and additional sources of public finance, not from existing ring-fenced finance for the aid budget.
- End public financing of coal, oil and gas projects overseas – both directly and indirectly under UKEF and Official Development Assistance.

### 2. Surface transport (max. score is 6)

- Invest £14.33 billion, of which £11.55 billion is new money, into transforming public transport, cycling and walking.
- Provide the under 30s with free bus travel.
- Review the £28.8 billion road building programme, including scrapping all new road projects that will lead to increased carbon dioxide emissions.
- Cancel the £90 billion HS2 project.
- Set a 2030 cut-off date for the sale of petrol and diesel cars, vans and buses and 2040 for HGVs.
- Introduce a new Clean Air Act with binding air quality standards that guarantees healthy air for all.

### 3. Aviation (max. score is 3)

- Commit to reduce greenhouse gas emissions from aviation to well below the level in the year 1997 as fast as possible.
- Cancel the approval of Heathrow expansion and ban the expansion of regional airports.
- Introduce a graduated tax to discourage frequent fliers (a frequent flier levy).

#### **4. Energy (max. score is 4)**

- Speed-up the deployment of renewable energy capacity - from an average of 7.7 GW per year to around 14 GW per year.
- Permanently ban fracking in England. It's unpopular, threatens to industrialise large swathes of the countryside, and runs counter to the necessary transition to a clean energy future.
- Build on the success of the UK's Carbon Price Floor mechanism in reducing coal use by raising the rate to £30/tCO<sub>2</sub>e, and raising it steadily year on year, to accelerate the transition from gas to renewable energy and to provide funds for a heating transformation programme.
- Develop a renewables-to-hydrogen pathway to enable the complete phase-out of natural gas in heating and electricity production, and to enable excess renewable energy in the summer to be stored for use in the winter.

#### **5. Homes (max. score is 4)**

- Introduce a national energy efficiency infrastructure programme with ring-fenced additional public capital investment of at least £1 billion per year.
- Provide £2.3bn of additional public capital per year initially for low carbon heating scaling to much larger investments in future spending reviews.
- For private rented homes, increase step by step the minimum energy efficiency standards on the path to a minimum EPC band C in 2030, increasing the maximum threshold of spending by landlords to at least £5000.
- Reinstate the Code for Sustainable Homes (or equivalent) to require all new homes to meet the level 6 standard (net zero CO<sub>2</sub>), including fitting renewable energy technology (solar PV or thermal, heat-pumps) and incorporating green and water infrastructure (e.g. green roofs, nesting boxes, trees, water capture, sustainable drainage, etc.).

#### **6. Food, farming and land use (max. score is 4)**

- Commit to and fund the doubling UK tree and woodland cover in order to take carbon pollution out of the atmosphere, provide space for nature and reduce reliance on unsustainable timber imports.
- Set an ambitious target to reduce the use and impacts of pesticides and set out proposals to make the use of Integrated Pest Management by farmers and landowners' standard practice.
- Produce an overarching food strategy which leads to a shift to sustainable, healthy diets with "less and better" meat and dairy, using regulatory tools, procurement, guidance, and fiscal measures to deliver this shift.
- Introduce binding targets to halve UK food waste from farm to fork by 2030 including through funding weekly food waste collections for every household as proposed in the Resources and Waste Strategy.

#### **7. Nature protection and restoration (max. score is 4)**

- Introduce an Environment Bill that sets ambitious targets for the restoration of nature and ensures the UK is a world-leader in environmental protection and governance, with a well-funded powerful regulatory regime - including an expanded role for environmental tribunals to improve access to justice for the public.
- Introduce a Plastics Pollution Bill to eliminate the plastic pollution that is the scourge of rivers and oceans as well as streets, roadways and fields, with a particular focus on action to reduce plastic use and increase the re-usability of products.
- Invest an additional £5.6 billion in mapping, protecting and developing an extensive network of wildlife sites with nature-friendly corridors between them.
- Restore, protect and expand natural carbon sinks to remove carbon dioxide from the atmosphere through restoring degraded peatland, protecting and creating new salt marshes, and halting the damaging practice of moorland burning.

#### **8. Local action (max. score is 6)**

- Require local authorities and combined authorities to reduce carbon emissions within their area in line with national carbon budgets through setting local carbon budgets.
- Require planning authorities to plan for sustainable energy generation, working in partnership with communities, energy providers and utilities.

- Enable local authorities to raise finance from new sources to fund local carbon action (such as a local public transport payroll levy, visitor lodging levy, or eco-levy for road use, all of which have been successfully used overseas to transform transport).
- Require and fund local authorities to coordinate area-by-area eco-heating and energy efficiency transformation programmes.
- Rewrite national planning rules to make carbon reduction, and nature's restoration and recovery a legal requirement in the planning system.
- Remove restrictive rules on approving new onshore wind developments.

#### **9. Brexit (max. score is 4)**

- Oppose a No Deal Brexit under all circumstances, and support a close and cooperative future relationship with the EU. Guarantee in law that high environmental standards and protections will be maintained, without regression and enhanced over time.
- Ensure the UK has access to a powerful, independent environmental watchdog to police environmental law through the courts and issue fines, and that environmental rights and principles, including the precautionary and polluter-pays principle, are enshrined in law and must be applied by all public bodies (including in Northern Ireland, where current governance regimes are particularly weak).
- Pass an Agriculture Act that enshrines a "public money for public good" approach to financial support for farmers, to reward agro-ecological farming approaches which enhance nature, protect soils and contribute to drawing down carbon dioxide from the atmosphere, while ensuring farmers get a fair deal for their produce from the food supply chain.
- Ensure any future trade deals promote global sustainability, increase environmental standards and guard against imports produced to lower standards, with scrutiny by Parliament and transparency for civil society.

#### **10. Rights and democracy (max. score is 5 points)**

- Legislate to enable 16 and 17 year olds to vote in future parliamentary elections, local elections and referendums.
- Introduce proportional representation for Westminster elections.
- Introduce a Future Generations Act for England, building on the success of the Welsh Wellbeing of Future Generations Act and Future Generations Commissioner, to ensure the interests of future generations are heard in decision-making.

- Undertake a comprehensive review of electoral law (including the so called "Lobbying Act") to ensure it is fit for the digital age, provides genuine transparency on lobbying, electoral donations and spending, and protects the voice of legitimate civil society.
- Protect the right to peacefully protest including from corporate anti protest injunctions and end labelling peaceful, environmental activists as domestic extremists.

Friends of the Earth is independent of all political parties and we do not endorse or favour any particular party. We are calling on all political parties to adopt these policies in their manifestos and will hold them to account for any promises made following the election.

**[Read more content on the 2019 General Election.](#)**