

# CHAPTER 16

## IT DOES ALL ADD UP: THE FINANCIAL APPENDIX

In 2010 the major election issue was the economy, and in particular the state of the public finances. The Coalition parties pledged to close the deficit – the gap between government spending and government income. They have not done so; the gap between spending and income in 2009 of 11% of GDP has narrowed, but was still 5% in 2014. This is hardly surprising because the other parties' election manifestos gave no costed plans for how they would reduce the deficit. They made promises but gave no details. We were treated to post-election surprises such as increased VAT and huge cuts to essential public services such as benefits, libraries, children's centres and mental health support. By contrast, the Green Party produced a worked-out financial plan in its 2010 manifesto.

Again in this manifesto, we are providing a costed plan for how we would protect and improve our NHS, schools and public services, and pay for them with fairer, more progressive taxation. We use current government data and show exactly how we would do things differently. In this financial plan, we take no account of any extra money that could be available to government as a result of 'Regaining control of our money' (see the box in Chapter 9) – instead, these plans are based on the real-world current economic environment and on strict assumptions about the effects of changes.

Although it has not been our prime objective to end the current account deficit (that is, including expenditure other than investment) by the end of the Parliament, these plans show how we would do it.

After a brief note on territorial coverage, there are three sections – our basic economic assumptions, our plans for spending and our plans for taxation. We conclude with the overall effect on government finances and on the gap between spending and income. We are publishing separately an illustrative costing for Basic Income.

### NOTE ON TERRITORIAL COVERAGE

This is the manifesto of the Green Party of England and Wales. Separate sister Green parties cover Scotland and Northern Ireland. Many public services are devolved, with the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly or the Northern Ireland Assembly taking responsibility. However, most decisions on government expenditure and on taxation are ultimately taken on a UK basis, this is a UK general election and, despite the fact that this Green Party covers only England and Wales, and to maintain consistency and comparability, all the figures in this chapter are UK figures.