

CHAPTER 11

GOVERNMENT AND PEOPLE, PUBLIC AND PRIVATE, LOCAL AND NATIONAL

Imagine being part of another kind of coalition. Not the grubby one that's handed democracy over to the private sector, but one made up of elected politicians determined to govern for the common good, a revitalised local government, a regulated private sector, the third sector and non-profits – and you and me. Imagine a voting system in which your vote actually counts. Imagine more decisions being taken where they really matter – locally. Imagine going to your reopened public library, strolling round your well-tended local park, taking your child to a school brought back under local authority control, and visiting an elderly relative in a local authority care home staffed by trained and well-paid carers. Imagine the end of cronyism, corruption and the 'Westminster bubble'. Imagine Parliament belonging to the people...

WHO GOVERNS?

We elect politicians to govern in our name, not to hand power over to huge corporations acting in shareholder interest.

Successive governments, and particularly the current one, have outsourced government to the unaccountable private sector. This hollowing out of government is based on dogma – that the private sector does things better than the public sector. Successive scandals and failures of provision have proved this dogma wrong. But still the contracts get handed out, with the private sector taking all the profit and the taxpayer – you and me – shouldering all the risk. Government has been put out to tender. Corporate interests, heading a coalition of the rich and powerful, have ruled the roost for too long.

This has brought politics and politicians into disrepute. When things go wrong, the government blames the companies to which it has outsourced its work, and politicians are accused of being on the make. Some are, as we found out during the expenses scandal. But many aren't, and the Green Party will lead a revolution in standards, putting politics back in the hands of the people and governing for the common good.

It is well placed to do this. The Green Party has made electoral gains at local, national and European level. Our councillors, our MP and our MEPs work effectively for the people who voted for them.

The biggest lesson of the Scottish referendum was that, when people are given the responsibility for making big decisions, they grab it with both hands. The Green Party will turn the tide on apathy and disillusionment by making these opportunities the rule rather than the exception.

A Green government would:

- *Regulate the private sector* in the common interest, including *curbing excessive pay* for executives and senior managers.
- Introduce a *Public Service Users Bill* to bring back into *public ownership* sectors of the economy on which we all depend.
- Recognise that, if government is small, society doesn't automatically become big – the *third sector* needs strong, enabling government.
- Treat *citizens* as grown-ups, capable of recognising the common good and acting on it.