

## INFORMATION AND DIGITAL RIGHTS

We live in the information age and we know that information is power. But how should information be controlled? What information should be available, and to whom?

The Green Party supports a world of open, freely flowing information. We don't want disproportionate or unaccountable surveillance or censorship. We want a transparent state, but we want control over the data that our digital lives create. We need copyright laws that reward creators but that are consistent with digital technologies. Above all we want democratic political control of this technology. We would consider combining elements of the policies below into a comprehensive Digital Bill of Rights.

We would:

- Oppose any case for secret unaccountable *mass surveillance* of the type exposed by Edward Snowden. We do accept that government law enforcement agencies may occasionally need to intercept communications in specific circumstances. Such specific surveillance should be proportionate, necessary, effective and within the rule of law, with independent judicial approval and genuine parliamentary oversight.
- Replace the Regulation of Investigatory Powers Act 2000, which has failed
  - to regulate the deployment of undercover police;
  - to support the confidentiality of journalistic sources;
  - to support legal confidentiality; and
  - to enshrine an open and effective right of redress.
- Support and protect *Internet freedom*.
- Follow *human rights judgments* limiting surveillance and data retention in full.
- Support the EU's proposals to strengthen data protection laws against opposition from large US data-driven companies.
- Limit the censoring or takedown of content or activity to exceptional circumstances, clearly set out within a comprehensive *legal framework*.
- Make *copyright* shorter in length, fair and flexible, and prevent patents applying to software.
- Introduce a more satisfactory law on so-called malicious comments made on *social media* than the blanket and crude section 127 of the Communications Act 2003.
- Oppose the *privatisation of data* held by the government that should be open to all, such as the Postcode Address File, or by companies providing public services, such as data on the progress of buses that can be used by Smartphone apps to predict waiting times.
- Oppose the *sale of personal data*, such as health or tax records, for commercial or other ends.
- Use government purchasing power to support open standards in information technology.

## MEDIA, SPORTS AND THE ARTS

How politics is reported is vital for our democracy – active citizenship has to be informed citizenship. Public support for the arts is part of a civilised society. We would:

- Tighten the rules on *cross-media ownership* and ensure that no individual or company owns more than 20% of a media market.
- *Support the recommendations of the Leveson Inquiry* into press ethics and for the cross-party Royal Charter. But if this is not supported by all the major newspapers we will support legislation to implement the Leveson system of independent press self-regulation.
- Maintain the *BBC* as the primary public service broadcaster, free of government interference, with funding guaranteed in real terms in statute to prevent government interference.
- Increase government arts funding by £500 million a year to restore the cuts made since 2010 and reinstate proper levels of funding for local authorities, helping to keep local museums, theatres, libraries and art galleries open.
- Reduce VAT to 5% for *live performances*.
- Work to support *fair pay* productions in the arts.
- Support initiatives to make the *arts and sports accessible to all*.
- Set targets for *participation* in sports by *women, ethnic minorities* and *disabled* people in particular.