

USING ENERGY WISELY

Renewables can supply all the energy we need for a comfortable standard of living, but only if we invest wisely and manage our demand more sensibly – by reducing energy waste and improving efficiency. The Green Party would seek to cut energy demand by one-third by 2020, one-half by 2030 and two-thirds by 2050.

The UK already has the technology it needs. What is lacking is the political will to build a cleaner, home-grown, more local, more affordable, more democratic and ultimately more reliable energy future.

Caroline Lucas and fuel poverty

When joint chair of Parliament's cross-party group on ending fuel poverty and promoting energy efficiency, Green MP Caroline Lucas was a leading advocate of urgent action to end the scandal of cold homes. She initiated a debate in Parliament's Westminster Hall about curbing the power of the Big Six energy companies and has asked parliamentary questions, lobbied ministers, spoken in debates and tabled amendments to legislation demanding action on warm homes and lower bills.

Caroline has campaigned for home energy efficiency to be made a UK National Infrastructure priority and to be given the necessary funding. She has stood up in Parliament for an Energy Bill revolution – the creation of the world's most ambitious home energy-efficiency programme, which would slash energy bills and carbon emissions, create over 100,000 jobs and help end the fuel poverty crisis once and for all.

Home energy improvement will be central to this drive to accelerate energy saving while ensuring energy is affordable to all. We will:

- Provide a free nationwide retrofit *insulation programme*, concentrating on areas where fuel poverty is most serious. This is designed to insulate 9 million homes in total and take at least 2 million homes out of fuel poverty, aiming for the Passivhaus ultra low-energy refurbishment standard by 2020. It will offer up to £5,000 worth of free insulation, or other energy improvements such as solar photovoltaics (PV) if the insulation is already up to the standard, to every home in designated areas. To reach Passivhaus standards, there will be the option of up to a further £15,000 in subsidised loans from the Green Investment Bank for each dwelling for further improvements. This programme will invest £45 billion over the course of the Parliament (including investment in training and awareness), be delivered by local authorities and create well over 100,000 jobs. It will become part of a new Green National Infrastructure programme.
- Give tenants the right to require landlords to achieve the same improvement to the energy performance of their home, and require all private rented sector housing to meet Energy Performance Band C by 2025.
- Require all new homes to be built to the *Passivhaus standard*.
- Support this investment in insulating and building to Passivhaus standards with *investment in training* for the design and building industries, by creating a national college for training in energy home improvement, and building relationships with a network of affiliated facilities, including existing colleges and private training providers.
- Invest too in *energy awareness programmes* so that people become as aware of the energy performance of their home (and of other buildings too) as they are now of the miles per gallon of their car.
- Continue a fully funded *Renewable Heat Incentive* scheme.
- Provide £4.5 billion over the Parliament to support *research and development* into less energy-intensive *industrial processes*.
- Prioritise *public over private transport, electrification* of the transport system and *access over mobility*.
- Give councils the power to insist that *communal heating schemes*, for example using waste heat from industrial sources, are implemented where practicable.
- Establish mandatory standards for commercial building performance such as ISO 5001.
- Use *carbon taxes* (based on the present system) to fund investment in energy-efficiency measures, and prepare for the following Parliament a *carbon quota* scheme to regulate the level of demand for energy.

Green councillors make home insulation happen...

Work began last year in Stroud on a five-year £12 million programme planned by Green councillors Phillip Booth and Simon Pickering to improve the energy efficiency of over 1,000 homes in the district. New local jobs will be created for trades people to install insulation, solar panels and heat pumps.

The four Greens on Kirklees Council secured three years of free home insulation funding, against the active opposition of Labour councillors, who later tried to claim credit! This saved householders around £76 per year at 2011 prices and cut emissions. It also created 243 jobs in the local economy.