



NEW GROUND SPRING 2017
Campaigning for environmental change & social justice



DEVOLUTION CHALLENGES

*MAKING DEVOLUTION
WORK FOR CLIMATE CHANGE
AND THE ENVIRONMENT*

Lesley Griffiths AM
Labour's progress in Wales

Mary Creagh MP
*Why we need a
new Environmental
Protection Act*

Andy Burnham MP
*The power of Mayors
to tackle air pollution*

Welcome to our 2017 Spring Edition

ANDREW PAKES

Now that Theresa May has signed us up for hard Brexit, the realities of life outside the European Union are beginning to be understood. If it was down to the right wing of the Conservative Party or UKIP the environment would be doomed. But this isn't a time to be down at heart. We need to renew our efforts to protect the environmental gains made over the last three decades. Nature directives, climate leadership, the Emissions Trading Scheme, investment in innovation and clean energy all need champions during our Brexit negotiations.

Change isn't just about Europe. This edition of New Ground looks at opportunities for devolution and how Labour councils (and councillors) are leading the way on environmental and community-led progress. SERA Co-Chair Melanie Smallman provides an update on our campaign for a new Clean Air Act – an issue Labour Mayor Sadiq Khan has been pressing on in London. Andy Burnham picks up the same theme in his contribution about the priority he will give to

tackling air pollution and improving transport as Mayor of Greater Manchester. Cllr Joanne Platt writes about eco-schools in Wigan helping to demonstrate environmental progress to a new generation. Climate lead on Leeds Council Cllr Alex Sobel adds his insight into an exciting new hydrogen project for his city.

Devolution highlights a path for Labour to provide leadership and practical examples of the difference we can make in government, at whatever level. Across the UK, Labour councils are showing the way, responding to considerable financial challenges and innovating on climate and environmental policy. It's not just where Labour runs councils, however, as Joe Fortune shows with his piece on community transport in Oxfordshire.

This is no doubt a challenging time for those of us who believe in social justice and environmental progress. But there is a job to be done – winning the future was never meant to be easy. I hope this issue provides a starting point for the fightback.



ANDREW PAKES is the editor of New Ground and a member of the SERA Executive. He tweets at @andrew4mk

CONTENTS

WELCOME 2017 / <i>Andrew Pakes</i>	2
NEWS / SERA news	3
DEVOLUTION / Tackling Air Pollution in Manchester - <i>Andy Burnham MP</i>	5
DEVOLUTION / The Creeping End of Natural Gas - <i>CLLR Alex Sobel</i>	6
DEVOLUTION / Eco Schools in Wigan - <i>CLLR Joanne Platt</i>	8
DEVOLUTION / Bus Services - <i>Joe Fortune</i>	10
DEVOLUTION / Labour's County Challenge in May - <i>Hywel Lloyd</i>	12
DEVOLUTION / Environmental Progress in Wales - <i>Lesley Griffiths AM</i>	14
FEATURE / Brexit - <i>Mary Creagh MP</i>	16
FEATURE / The Carbon Budget - <i>Dr Alan Whitehead</i>	18
FEATURE / Industrial Strategy - <i>Tom Lafford</i>	20
FEATURE / Breath of Fresh Air, Campaign Update - <i>Melanie Smallman</i>	21
FEATURE / Divestment - <i>Louisa Casson</i>	22
FEATURE / A New Integrated Transport Vision - <i>Jake Sumner</i>	24
VIEWS / Green Jobs & Growth, Local Government - <i>Adam Dyster</i>	26
VIEWS / May's Damning Silence - <i>Melanie Smallman & Andrew Pakes</i>	27
VIEWS / A View from City Hall - <i>Leonie Cooper AM</i>	28
VIEWS / A View from Scotland - <i>Claudia Beamish MSP</i>	30

ABOUT

New Ground is published by SERA, Labour's environment campaign www.sera.org.uk
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The views expressed in New Ground are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the editor, SERA its executive or its members.

Printed and published by UNP, The I.O. Centre, Unit 7, Skeffington Street, London, SE18 6SR



NEW ORGANISER FOR SERA

In January, Adam Dyster joined SERA as our new Organiser, taking over from Tom Anderton.

He'll be working full-time across SERA's projects and campaigns, from air pollution to events at party conference.

Adam has previously worked at the Hansard Society and the Institute for Public Policy Research. He became involved in environmental campaigning as a teenager, representing the East of England as one of DEFRA's nine youth 'Climate Change Champions', and worked on green jobs and climate education campaigns with the UK Youth Climate Coalition.



If you'd like to get in touch with Adam, you can email him at adam.dyster@sera.org.uk or send a letter to SERA, 200a Pentonville Road, London N1 9JP



LABOUR'S ENVIRONMENT CAMPAIGN

Full details at www.sera.org.uk/join-sera

SERA is a member-led campaigning organisation working towards environmental progress and social justice.

JOIN US AND HELP MAKE A DIFFERENCE

www.sera.org.uk

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GOVERNMENT BEGINS HEATHROW EXPANSION CONSULTATION

Beginning a four-month public consultation, the Government has published its plans for a third runway at Heathrow. But despite claiming that expansion can be

delivered within current climate targets, there is little indication over how emissions from the extra runway could be managed.

Recent analysis by CarbonBrief estimated that, with increased demand for flights inevitable due to increased capacity, the aviation sector could account for nearly two-thirds of the nation's Carbon Budget by 2050.

Equally worryingly, air quality regulation is also missing from the Government's policy document, with even a spokesperson from Heathrow

itself 'surprised' at the omission. In revised modelling for Heathrow, the government has itself admitted that a third runway could delay compliance with legal limits on air pollution set by the EU.

The consultation on gov.uk is open until May 25 2017. MPs will still have to vote on the statement for it to become law, with a final decision expected at the end of the year.



VIEW FROM LABOUR'S NEC

A WORD FROM JAMES ASSER
SOCIALIST SOCIETIES
REPRESENTATIVE ON
LABOUR'S NATIONAL
EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

One of the things you can always praise the Labour Party for in Government is that we will take on the opportunity to reform, change and modernise the country. When it comes to modernising our internal processes though, which often look a bit careworn and dated, we are, sadly, often lacking the same zeal.

So over the last year we have been running a party reform project; trying to look at how our processes work and how we develop the way the Party

functions. Led by Tom Watson we've already started to develop and roll out some much needed changes to bring our digital platform up-to-date; including the creation of a new digital membership card; the new My Labour account; a new canvassing app and we are looking at options for a phone bank app too.

We are also consulting with members and affiliates on ways we can increase the breadth of candidates and the access to Party structures from people and groups that are under-represented. The Party will be reporting back on this and bring forward proposals over the coming year to make our structures more accessible.

For affiliates like SERA this could open up opportunities for greater involvement in the Party by its members; as well as providing opportunities to increase its own membership. Developing our structures will also provide

greater chances for affiliates to reach Party members and officers both locally and nationally to drive campaigns and shape policy. That's on my agenda as part of this reform process and I know the Socialist Societies will be working together to help achieve that too.



JAMES ASSER is a member of Labour's NEC and represents the Socialist Societies – Labour's affiliated organisations

DEVOLUTION: TACKLING *AIR POLLUTION IN GREATER MANCHESTER*

ANDY BURNHAM MP



WHEN THE BEATLES PLAYED THE ARDWICK THEATRE, NOW THE APOLLO, IN MANCHESTER THEY WERE PHOTOGRAPHED WEARING MASKS TO PROTECT THEM AGAINST SMOG.

You might think air quality had improved but the polluting factories of 1965 have been replaced by congested traffic which is becoming the scourge of our region – damaging business, health and the quality of life.

When I visited a primary school in Greater Manchester the level of dangerous pollutants was more than twice what it should legally be.

It is on one of the main routes into Manchester where the noise and pollution caused by traffic is so bad that staff cannot open its windows. The school has had to install air conditioning to protect the lungs of its children.

One pupil told me that when he's playing football on the fields at the back of the school the traffic noise is so loud that he can't hear the instructions of

the coach. Others said how they regularly had to use an inhaler.

Every day young children are breathing in harmful amounts of nitrogen dioxide. The main effect of breathing in unsafe levels of the colourless gas is the increased risk of respiratory problems. Experts say nitrogen dioxide inflames the lining of the lungs, and can cause wheezing, coughing, colds, flu and bronchitis, as well as more serious health problems.

Greater Manchester has been in breach of its legal limits for Nitrogen Dioxide every year since 2011. Figures I have obtained show that last year 64,000 people – 14,000 of them children under the age of four – were admitted to hospital with respiratory problems.

One of my priorities as Mayor will be to introduce a Clean Air Action Plan. We can only improve air quality by cutting traffic congestion. So I will re-regulate our buses using powers demanded by Labour council leaders in Greater Manchester as part of the devolution deal and introduce more dedicated cycle-ways.

I have written to the Prime Minister, Theresa May, to remind her how in the last decade Government action on tobacco led to a sustained reduction in the number of people smoking and in all likelihood saved tens of thousands of lives. Now is the time for a similar, sustained campaign to combat the effects of an equally dangerous pollutant.



ANDY BURNHAM MP is Labour's candidate to be Mayor of Greater Manchester. You can follow more about his campaign at www.burnhamformayor.co.uk

THE CREEPING END OF NATURAL GAS

CLLR ALEX SOBEL



THE ROLE OF CITIES IN COMBATting CLIMATE CHANGE IS CRUCIAL WITH THE URBAN POPULATION AT 54% OF THE WORLD'S TOTAL AND GROWING BY ABOUT 1.5% A YEAR. THE UK IS ALREADY 80% URBAN. THE URBAN AREAS PRODUCE CO₂ WELL IN EXCESS OF THEIR POPULATION SHARE. LARGE CITIES ARE GROWING, WITH THE UN ESTIMATING THAT 393 MORE CITIES WILL PASS THE 500,000 POPULATION BETWEEN 2011 AND 2025. SO CITY SCALE SOLUTIONS AND DEVOLVING POWER TO THE CITIES FROM CENTRAL GOVERNMENT TO SOLVE THEM IS CRUCIAL.

Just prior to the COP21 Paris talks Leeds was one of the 67 Towns and Cities to commit to a complete shift to clean energy by 2050. This poses many challenges, like how do we decarbonise the grid and will we be able to replace the internal combustion engine.

But there's a dirty fuel which we have been using for over 200 years which is still in use and

contributes around a third of emissions. The technology is gas and it is hard to imagine our lives in the UK without it. This is in fact our biggest energy challenge.

The UK first had town gas, which was locally made and contained around 50% hydrogen mixed with carbon monoxide and methane, made by distilling coal and later oil. Once cheap and plentiful North Sea Gas was discovered, the UK went through a large scale conversion programme converting 40 million appliances reaching a peak of 2.3 million a year in the 1970s. So within living memory we have undertaken the sort of transformation project we need to embark on once more.

The UK Government has looked at conversion to electricity and district heat and power as the post-gas solution. Although clearly part of the solution this poses some significant issues. The most important issue being that the additional electricity load required to replace gas is well outside the planned expansion of generating capacity even with new nuclear power stations. Also

if you look at gas use it peaks in the winter and troughs in the summer whilst electricity load is currently quite steady and solar power also peaks in the Summer when it would be less needed if we were to become a country where electricity provides heat.

The UK has invested significantly in its pipeline infrastructure with a replacement of iron pipes with polyethylene since 2002. A post-gas future dependent on electricity would create a huge amount of redundant infrastructure. The UK population has also become accustomed culturally to heat and cook with gas. Although many cultural shifts will need to happen to achieve our 2050 commitment does this need to be one of them?

In Leeds we think not. We think that the decarbonisation of gas is achievable by replacing methane-heavy natural gas with Hydrogen. We have started the H21 Leeds City Gate with partners led by Northern Gas Networks to achieve gas decarbonisation by 2030. This frees us to concentrate



on the rest of the city's energy infrastructure and potentially be a clean energy city before 2050.

There are many ways to produce hydrogen and the method proposed for H21 is to strip the carbon atom from methane. This would still produce around 50 gm/kWh CO2 equivalent including indirect emissions but this is much less than the 180 gm/KWh CO2 produced by natural gas. The H21 project would need to utilise four steam methane reformers in Teesside fitted with carbon dioxide capture technology. The CO2 would then be sequestered under the North Sea alongside Salt Caverns which would provide storage for fluctuations in demand. However work to produce methods of productions without emissions are ongoing, including those led by Nobel laureate Professor Carlo Rubbia in Karlsruhe which would in future remove the need for capture and sequestration.

The infrastructure especially in large cities coupled with Polyethylene pipe conversion makes our Cities suitable for transporting 100%

hydrogen. The domestic appliance market does represent a challenge with current generation boilers need replacing and many ovens having potential for conversion but many not. To pave the way for hydrogen, manufacturers would need to produce 'HySwitch' hydrogen-ready appliances in much the same way as digital-ready televisions were introduced.

However if we are to achieve this switch we either need central Government support especially on capture, sequestration and storage and domestic appliance conversion or an energy devolution where Cities and Regions are given powers to deliver their own clean energy future.



CLLR ALEX SOBEL is the Deputy Executive Member for Sustainability and Climate Change on Leeds City Council, a Labour & Co-operative Councillor and member of the SERA Executive Committee



ECO-SCHOOLS MAKING A DIFFERENCE IN WIGAN

CLLR JOANNE PLATT

HOW CAN CHILDREN IN ECO SCHOOLS HELP BRING ABOUT A CHANGED RELATIONSHIP ACROSS THE SERVICES OF A BOROUGH? THE WIGAN DEAL.

In Wigan there is a Wigan Deal between the people and the Council. We realised early on that we could not carry on with the way that we were working and took a different approach in how we deliver key services. This is how 'The Deal' was established and was used to form an informal agreement between the council and everyone who lives and works in the borough, including our partners, such as schools, health and other public services. We undertook to keep the rates down in return for different kinds of support direct from members of the public. We negotiated ways in which the community can work differently too. Fundamentally, The Deal signals a positive approach for individuals and communities that encourages self reliance and independence through an equal partnership. It also includes the creative initiatives of local community-run organisations.

Waste had become a problem, not just because of the landfill tax we had to pay, but because we are a borough where we can not afford to waste food when people are hungry. In Wigan we used to say that we

were re "Fur Clempt" when we were starving. The Council has had to accept the need for Food Banks, but local social entrepreneurs and creative volunteers have contributed a new way of doing things – The Fur Clempt Café

People are trying out new relationships with the Council. And there are children all over Wigan who know they can make a difference too. They understand that food waste also makes methane a more dangerous greenhouse gas than CO2. They understand that there are targets for each Borough in Greater Manchester to reduce our CO2 emissions year on year. They also understand that the transport of food creates food miles, with CO2 emitted from the exhausts of trucks and lorries. These children are part of a Borough-wide army of change agents. Their schools are signed up as Eco Schools, an internationally recognised award scheme co-ordinated by Keep Britain Tidy in England. 98% (127) of schools in the borough are registered as an Eco-School (making us 3rd nationally). 22% (28) have achieved the Green Flag award, 40% (58) silver and 14% (18) bronze.

Wigan Council now offers support to all schools that need help with their application process and

deliver education to help achieve awards. To start, schools register as an Eco-School. They can then gain a Bronze and Silver award and Green Flag award. The Bronze and Silver awards are self-assessed and the Green Flag is awarded by an Eco-Schools Assessor. The Green Flag has to be renewed every 2 years to retain Green Flag status. The program focuses on nine topics: Litter, Waste, Energy, Water, School grounds, Biodiversity, Healthy Living, Transport and Global citizenship.

The Eco-Schools programme not only encourages the whole school to work together but is also a brilliant way to get everyone in the wider community involved to create a cleaner, safer and greener borough. The participating schools benefit as well. OFSTED found that behaviour is often better in Eco-Schools, whilst by taking part in the programme schools can reduce costs through reducing waste disposal costs and energy bills. Eco-Schools create good assertive environmental citizens who, in turn, encourage those at home and in the wider community to behave in a more eco-friendly way.

As part of 'The Deal – Schools in Action', teachers can access a range of council services who can deliver education in schools.

i ABOUT 'FUR CLEMT' CAFÉ

Based in Central Park Academy, Fur Clempt is a volunteer-run cafe and 'food boutique' which uses surplus stock donated by wholesalers and supermarkets to create delicious meals for the public. They provide hot meals, on a pay-by-what-you-can-afford basis. Food is also available to take home from the 'Food

Boutique'. Their motto is 'Feed bellies, not bins' and the main aim is to divert edible food from landfill. In November 2016 they launched a 'Fuel for School' project, which aims to help provide food for breakfast clubs and enable schools to set up their own 'food boutique' where parents can get food directly from the school to take home.

DEVOLUTION



A list of which can be found on Wigan Council's website.

Wigan Council offers support and guidance to schools looking to become an Eco-School, including delivering education on the nine Eco-Schools topics. But how will the Deal make the most of these young activists inside schools? Sending out broad information to all Head Teachers is a vital step. But sometimes running an Eco-Schools programme is down to just one Eco Club enthusiast and the Senior Management Team have other more pressing issues to deal with. The eco champions' messages may not get beyond the school gates.

In Wigan, schools are kept up to date about Council (and wider) initiatives via a termly Eco-Schools newsletter, twice yearly Teachers' Network meetings and an annual Eco-Schools Conference. The conference is open to all schools, with 34 schools attending last year's conference held at Central Park Academy. Teachers and pupils had the chance to listen to various presentations and view a range of stalls set up by eco providers, ranging from birds of prey and mini beasts to the NHS school nursing team and GM Police.

Guests also took the opportunity to learn more about the Deal

and how their school can get involved, whether helping to renovate local grot spots, linking with local community groups or carrying out their own awareness raising campaigns. Support is available for these activities from council services, from recycling to supporting Wigan Borough in Bloom. The conference was a huge success with 93% rating the event as 'excellent', and guests praising the opportunity to network with other schools and organisations.

The Deal for Children and Young People sets out clear recognition and commitment to the centrality of schools, particularly primary schools, which are often found in the heart of our communities and are best sourced for universal services for that place. The Eco schools project is an integral part of the 'Deal approach' offered and we are already seeing how our schools are connecting with the wider community as they manage and nurture their surrounding environment alongside other partners that have signed up to the Deal.

With cuts, many boroughs have seen their service delivery break down into fragments or silos. In the current challenging financial climate, it's really important to recognise that it's not just about one service: this

changed relationship approach has to go across all services. It's really important that we have full buy-in from all stakeholders involved in our schools, as workforce reform is key.

I am really happy that our education services will be taking this positive message out to all School Governors across the borough, highlighting the positive work that the Eco Schools project is doing for our children, creating resilient individuals who are connected to their communities, and making effective contributions as well informed and responsible citizens. This is an intergenerational collaboration between citizens of all ages. In Wigan children have a voice for change.



CLLR JOANNE PLATT
is the Cabinet Portfolio
Holder for Children and
Young People's Services on
Wigan Borough Council



BUS SERVICES: *A COMMUNITY ASSET*

JOE FORTUNE

WHILST THE BUS SERVICES BILL MAY NOT HAVE HIT THE NATIONAL HEADLINES, MANY UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF THE SERVICE WHICH IT SEEKS TO REFORM.

The legislation has been subject to the lobbying power of the industry and the metropolitan regions of England both giving unique insights to the needs of communities and passengers. Bus franchising, enhanced quality partnerships etc provide an particular authorities and combined authorities to manage services differently and in some cases perhaps cross subsidise across their networks.

It is clear that bus routes and bus services are seen as a community asset, something which is able to support some of the most intrinsic aspects of our everyday lives – access to work, leisure and family ties.

Too often we see bus routes shortened and cut – this happens as a result of commercial decisions from industry and Local Government struggling to provide finance from dwindling local budgets. Indeed, Campaign for Better Transport figures show these cuts to routes number some 1700 since 2010.

Too often these cuts happen to communities who find they have no say, no ability to influence the decision and at a timetable which they struggle to keep up with. Perhaps now is the time that bus routes are given the legislative footing as community assets, thus slowing down these cuts giving communities time to look to alternative not for profit arrangements which will keep their areas connected. This idea would place bus routes on the same legislative footing and regime as community assets such as pubs, community buildings and land. This is something the Labour Party will articulate as the Bill goes on.

In absence of this support there are positive stories of communities coming together and in the face of market failure doing it for themselves.

For example, after a year of work by local Labour & Co-operative councillors in Witney they have saved local bus services for the community, the People's Bus service in Witney has begun to carry passengers.

The West Oxfordshire Community Transport (WOCT) Community Benefit Society has maintained

timetables, fares, and the routes that people in the area rely on. But one thing will be different: for the first time their buses will belong to the community itself, run for passengers, not profit.

As a Community Benefit Society, anyone can join and become a member of WOCT, enabling them to get involved in the running of the organisation and to support it as it develops.

And while the big commercial operators might have struggled to turn a profit on these two local routes, that's less likely to be a problem for this group. As a not-for-profit organisation, all WOCT's income will be ploughed back into improving the service for the community, not siphoned off for shareholders.

The concept of local transport being run for people, rather than profit, should not be a radical one – it is idea whose time has come. The example of HCT Group shows us what's possible. HCT started life back in 1982 in much the same way, when a handful of volunteers founded Hackney Community Transport to provide low cost minibuses for local groups. These days HCT employees 800 people

with a fleet of 500 buses and a turnover of £44.2m, and is actively taking on the big operators.

There is an alternative to the big five and it is coming out from progressive ideas which place community investment ahead of shareholder profit.



JOE FORTUNE is a SERA executive member and National Political and Policy Manager at the Co-operative Party



DEVOLUTION

the co-operative party

100 years of pioneering the future
1917-2017

Over the past century we've seen a lot of change.

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LABOUR'S COUNTY CHALLENGE IN MAY

HYWEL LLOYD

MAY 4TH 2017 . . . THE
NATIONAL LOCAL ELECTIONS.

As some of you will already know and be campaigning towards, May 4th will see local elections taking place across Scotland, across Wales and across every part of England (other than the capital).

Of particular note are the nine county councils with no overall control south or east of Birmingham, and the UKIP and Conservative challenges in south and east Wales.

In addition there will be a number of new mayoral positions created to lead the combined authorities of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough, the Liverpool City Region, Greater Manchester, Tees Valley, the West Midlands and the West of England on the back of the city deals and so called devolution agenda of the previous Chancellor. Each is a mix of urban centre and rural hinterland.

With the quasi-federal nature of the UK becoming more established in the minds of voters in Scotland, now governed by its fifth parliament and in Wales, now governed by its fifth Assembly, there is a case for seeing May 4th as both a national local election, and as a set of national elections. The fate of Labour in these local authority elections in

Scotland and in Wales will in part be driven by the different perceptions of voters of their respective governments, and yet the whole will add up to a national view of Labour's prospects during this time of considerable political turmoil.

Taking England more specifically, we have the direct elections for the combined authority mayors, which will see six new mayoral posts come into being. Most commentators seem to expect us to win the Liverpool City Region, thus electing Steve Rotherham; to win Greater Manchester, electing Andy Burnham, and Tees Valley, electing Sue Jeffrey. The other three mayoral elections look to be much more contested, so we wish our candidates well and will be offering our support, not least on policies that could help them win.

For the rest of England, including many of the towns of England that are the basis of many English parliamentary constituencies, the county council elections were last fought in 2013. In that year, where they fought seats UKIP managed to win 25% of the popular vote, pushing Labour into third on 22% (with Conservatives on 36%, Lib Dems on 17% and Greens on 8%).

Yet as we know under a first past the post system the relative

evenness of UKIP support meant their performance in seats was much poorer, coming in fourth with 139 gains to give them a total of only 147 seats in all. The Independents in 2013, of many and varied persuasions, held 186 seats having gained 24.

The Conservatives
won 1,116,
a loss of 335 since 2008/9

Labour
won 538, gaining 291

The Lib Dems
held 352, losing 124

In the view of Professor John Curtice the 2009 results meant 'Labour, in contrast, did have real gains to celebrate'. Though he adds that was hardly surprising given 2009 was 'one of its worst ever'.

So for 2017, can we perform towards the 2013 end of the spectrum or are we at risk of something more akin to the 2009 end?

To govern well means being in touch with the realities of the whole of the nation; while to have a chance of representing

*To govern well means
being in touch with
the realities of the
whole of the nation*



the nation at least means being present in every community, whether you see representation as providing a voice or an elected representative. Both can be of help to a community, particularly if they have otherwise been forgotten, either by the Tories who take them and their votes for granted, or by Labour when we, to paraphrase Jeremy Corbyn, 'write off 'the Tory shires'', and if Labour doesn't offer those communities solutions, no one else will.'

So we have the chance to turn that around in these elections, not least as they offer the first opportunity for the Labour Party to deploy its huge national membership of some 600,000 members, vastly greater than any other party.

Yet there is also a particular challenge for Labour; the Party is concentrated in the major cities and urban areas of the UK. Reports last year suggested something like 40 per cent of the membership live in Greater London, which would be approaching some 125,000 people across the capital, compared to say some 30,000 members in the South West. Yet more people live in areas of England that are defined as rural than live in London (9.2m compared to 8.6m).

SO CAN LABOUR GET
LONDON MEMBERS OUT:

- To fight the county council elections south of Staffordshire?
- To fight the marginal West Midlands or West of England mayoralty?
- To fight the Welsh local authority elections East of Bridgend?

Labour: COAST&COUNTRY have argued for an active twinning of each of the 30 or so London Borough Local Campaign fora with the counties of England, the marginal combined authorities and the south eastern local authorities of Wales.

Or, of course, you can make it happen yourselves, and directly contact a local campaign forum that makes sense to you and your borough. It is only 90 minutes by train from Camden to Stoke-on-Trent (& Staffordshire); or from Islington to Derby(shire); Sudbury (Brent) to Sudbury (Suffolk), or less than that from Holborn to Sittingbourne Kent (a twinning we are already aware of).

May 4th can set us up on the path to success in 2020; it is time for London members to get out into England and Wales to help make that happen.



HYWEL LLOYD, is a member of the SERA Executive, and Co-Founder of Labour: COAST&COUNTRY
<http://www.local.gov.uk/devolution/directly-elected-mayors>



LEADING ON *ENVIRONMENTAL* *PROGRESS IN WALES*

LESLEY GRIFFITHS AM

MY PORTFOLIO IS BROAD, AND DIVERSE, RANGING FROM FOOD AND DRINK, TO FARMING AND FISHERIES, ANIMAL HEALTH AND PLANNING. I HAVE NOW BEEN IN THE ROLE FOR 8 MONTHS, PLENTY LONG ENOUGH TO UNDERSTAND THE IMPORTANCE OF A STRONG, LABOUR GOVERNMENT TO THE ENVIRONMENT AND ECONOMY OF WALES.

Leaving the European Union will have a major impact on Wales. As well as simple economic issues, environment and rural affairs policy areas have been devolved since 1999, and since that time our policies have diverged from England, particularly since the Tories took power in 2010. My priorities for the Brexit negotiations are –

- Respect for devolved responsibilities. Teresa May has promised to respect devolution; however this has not stopped UK Ministers talking about 'UK agricultural policy'. I have made it clear there is no such thing. We support the need for some UK level

frameworks, however they must be negotiated and not imposed.

- Full and unfettered access to the EU Single Market. Restricted EU export market access would have a dramatic, negative effect on Welsh farmers and fishermen. Many sectors are also reliant on EU labour.
- Certainty that existing EU funding will be replaced, in full, by the UK Government. This is what was promised, and it is what we expect.
- A clear plan on how to maintain social and environmental protections and values we prize in Wales, once these are no longer guaranteed through UK membership of the EU. In contrast with the Prime Ministers words earlier this month, I have made clear in roundtable sessions with farmers and environmental groups, leaving the EU is not an excuse to roll back environmental controls in Wales.

Of course, there are also opportunities from Brexit. I will be working hard with Cabinet

colleagues to maximise those benefits for the people of Wales.

Our Wellbeing of Future Generations Act became law in Wales on 29 April 2015. It is central to our way of working and our legislative programme, and is one of a few laws of its kind anywhere in the world. As the United Nations have said: *"... what Wales is doing today the world will do tomorrow. Action, more than words, is the hope for our current and future generations."* The goals of a prosperous, resilient, healthy, more equal Wales, with a thriving culture and cohesive communities and which is globally responsible, embody international values of sustainable development and well-being.

I am committed to reducing Wales' reliance on fossil fuels and promoting renewable energy. I attended COP22 in Marrakech at the end of last year and was inspired by the people I met and the innovative approaches I saw.

We have a manifesto commitment to support renewable energy, including tidal lagoons. We continue to oppose fracking in Wales.

*... what Wales is doing today
the world will do tomorrow.
Action, more than words,
is the hope for our current
and future generations.*



Of course, the UK Tory Government's changes to support for renewable energy have dramatically undermined confidence in investment in one of the industries that has provided growth during the recession and should be driving a more prosperous economy. I continue to put pressure on the UK Government to develop a sustainable approach to renewable energy.

We are all working towards UK targets to reduce emissions by 80% by 2050.

Our ground-breaking Environment (Wales) Act 2016 sets out the need to establish carbon budgets, which set limits on the total emissions allowed in Wales over 5 years. This process is now underway, and it is becoming clear to everyone that our approach can not be 'business as usual' but require dramatically different ways of working in all sectors in Wales.

We are also working hard on practical measures to improve the quality of the local environment in Wales. These have included recent consultations on measures

to improve air and water quality, litter and fly-tipping.

At the end of last year, I announced Wales recycled more than 60% of its municipal waste in 2015-16. Recycling levels are increasing every year, in contrast with the situation in England where they are falling, probably as a result of Tory micro-management of waste and swingeing cuts to council budgets.

We now have higher recycling rates than any other UK nation and we are aiming for 70% recycling by 2025.

On 1 October 2011 Wales became the first country in the United Kingdom to introduce a minimum charge of 5p on all single use carrier bags. In the intervening five years the policy has resulted in a significant reduction in the use of these types of bags and an increase in support among consumers for the charge. Following this success, other countries across the UK have adopted similar policies.

We continue to look at innovative ways to safeguard the environment and improve recycling levels; including measures like deposit

return schemes and banning single use food and drink containers (including coffee cups and polystyrene take away containers).



LESLEY GRIFFITHS AM is the Cabinet Secretary for the Environment and Rural Affairs in the Welsh Government and Labour Assembly Member for Wrexham

BREXIT: *A NEW ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION ACT*

MARY CREAGH MP

THERESA MAY'S SPEECH ON BREXIT WAS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR HER TO SET OUT HER PLANS TO PUT BRITAIN'S NATIONAL INTEREST FIRST AS WE LEAVE THE EU. INSTEAD, IN ORDER TO PLACATE HER BACKBENCHERS, SHE HAS PUT THE COUNTRY ON A COURSE THAT RISKS THE UK "CRASH-LANDING" OUT OF THE EU, AS CAROLYN FAIRBAIRN, HEAD OF THE CBI HAS WARNED. THE PRIME MINISTER HAS SAID NO DEAL IS BETTER THAN A BAD DEAL. BUT NO DEAL IS ABSOLUTELY THE WORST DEAL FOR OUR COUNTRY.

A disorderly hard exit from the EU would harm the environment, our farmers and rural communities. The cross-party Environmental Audit Committee, which I chair, found that changes from Brexit could put our countryside, farming and wildlife at risk. Protections for Britain's wildlife and special places currently guaranteed under European law could end up as 'zombie legislation' even with the Great Repeal Bill. We recommended that the Government

should safeguard environmental protections against Brexit with a new Environmental Protection Act.

Andrea Leadsom told my Committee that, even with the Government's Great Repeal Bill, copying EU legislation into UK law will not work for up to a third of EU environmental legislation. There is a risk that EU legislation transposed into UK law will no longer be updated because there is no UK body to update it; will not be enforced because there is no body with the legal duty to enforce it; and will be vulnerable to being quietly dropped with minimal parliamentary scrutiny. And she did not distance herself from the calls from some parts of the Conservative party for a sunset clause in the Great Repeal Bill, which would see all protections removed if not adopted within five years.

The Birds and Habitats directives protect Britain's iconic species and special places. But these key EU protections will no longer apply in UK law, even if the UK were to remain in the single

market. This is why we need a new Environmental Protection Act, passed into law before we leave the EU. The Government must set out how they will provide an equivalent, or better, level of protection when we leave the EU.

Farmers and farm businesses, who account for a quarter of businesses in England, face a triple jeopardy from leaving the EU. First, the loss of subsidies from the EU's Common Agricultural Policy, which makes up on average half of UK farm incomes. The Government have given farmers no guarantees that there will be subsidies after we leave. Some observers believe that without this support as many as 90% of farms would collapse.

Second, new free trade agreements could threaten incomes if they result in tariff and non-tariff barriers to exports. At the moment, 95% of British lamb goes to the EU. Leaving the EU's customs union would result in a tariff on lamb of as much as 40%. Andrea Leadsom told the Oxford Farming Conference

The Prime Minister has said no deal is better than a bad deal. But no deal is absolutely the worst deal for our country.

that farm exports to the EU will fall after we leave the EU..

Third, any new trade deals with the rest of the world, could lead to competition from countries with lower animal welfare, environmental and food safety standards. David Davis told Parliament that he will do "everything necessary" to protect the stability of the UK's financial services sector. Even with those assurances HSBC has announced it will move 1,000 jobs from London to Paris, and UBS is considering moving jobs to Frankfurt. The Prime Minister gave a "letter of comfort" to Nissan, but there have been no such assurances for rural businesses.

These issues were not properly discussed during the referendum campaign. We were told that a vote to leave would enable us to 'take back control', but now we risk losing all control over our ability to tackle pollution. There is a risk that key EU food safety standards are traded away as part

of new deals with Donald Trump's America. The Environmental Audit Committee has just launched an inquiry looking at what Brexit means for chemicals regulations. It may not sound exciting, but the EU has ensured the chemicals used in everything from children's toys to food additives are safe for consumers and workers.

I respect the result of the referendum, but if we see clear evidence that what the Tories are doing poses risks to our country, we have a duty to speak out. People voted for Brexit at no cost, not Brexit at any cost. Theresa May's strategy seems to rely on threatening the rest of the EU with the UK's economic suicide, and a Brexit that would be disastrous for our environment, agriculture and rural communities. The absurdity of these threats reveals the weakness of her bargaining position. And like David Cameron before her, she seems intensely relaxed about making our country a great deal poorer to placate her own backbenchers.



MARY CREAGH MP is the Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee and the Labour MP for Wakefield

WHY THERE IS NO CARBON PLAN TO MEET THE FIFTH CARBON BUDGET... YET

DR ALAN WHITEHEAD

IN PARLIAMENT, WE'RE EAGERLY AWAITING THE PUBLICATION OF THE LATEST UK EMISSIONS REDUCTION PLAN, WHICH WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE FOLLOWED THE ADOPTION OF THE UK'S FIFTH CARBON BUDGET IN JULY 2016. AT THE RISK OF TEACHING PEOPLE TO SUCK EGGS, IT WILL BE REMEMBERED THAT UNDER THE TERMS OF THE CLIMATE CHANGE ACT 2008, THE GOVERNMENT IS REQUIRED TO ADOPT FIVE-YEARLY CARBON BUDGETS WHICH LIMIT THE LEVEL OF EMISSIONS PERMISSIBLE AT THE END OF EACH BUDGET PERIOD. PARLIAMENT IS SUPPOSED TO ADOPT CARBON BUDGETS THREE BUDGETS OUT – WE'RE CURRENTLY IN THE MIDDLE OF THE 2ND CARBON BUDGET (2013-17) AND THE FIFTH BUDGET COVERING THE PERIOD 2028-2032 HAS JUST BEEN ADOPTED IN JULY OF LAST YEAR.

The targets set by carbon budgets are quite challenging – by the middle of the third budget,

emissions should be 35% below the base year of 1990: the Fourth Carbon Budget requires a drop of 50% by 2025, and the fifth, a further drop to 57% of the 1990 figures by 2030. We are likely to be able to meet the first three carbon budgets targets partly because of substantial decarbonisation of the power sector with the switch away from coal, but after that the going gets tougher. Currently, the UK is estimated, on present policies, to be off target from meeting the Fourth Carbon Budget by about 10%: worse still, we look like having no serious chance of meeting or approaching the targets we have set for the Fifth Carbon Budget: and it is instructive to look at why for a moment.

The supposedly definitive plan for meeting the Fifth Carbon Budget now that we have adopted it, is supposed to be contained in the Government's Emissions Reduction Plan, supposed by law (the 2008 Climate Change Act) to be published 'as soon as practicable' after the adoption of the budget. This document was supposed to

be out at the end of 2016, which didn't happen. Government then said in January that the plan would be published by March 2017: but most recently in the Government's 'industrial strategy' green paper, this promise is changed to "during 2017". So nine months after the adoption of the budget, we have no plan, and no prospect of one for most of this year.

This looks to be because civil servants are having great difficulty in putting together a plan that looks remotely coherent in the light of what has been happening to climate change policies over the recent period, and it is at this point that the long term consequences of actions that look to have been taken with short term considerations in mind start to be apparent.

And to find this out, we need only look at the last Emissions Reduction Plan, published in 2011, and covering how we would aim to meet the terms of the Fourth Carbon Budget (which we're

currently lined up to miss on the basis of that plan, by the way).

So what was in the 2011 plan? As you would expect, some (then) quite plausible extrapolations of the long term effects of policies at that point underway: energy efficiency would play a strong role in the targets because of the Green Deal: 'all cavity walls and lofts... expected to be insulated by 2020' and other policies would result in 'up to 1.5 million solid wall insulations.' Electricity generation will be rapidly decarbonised: 'by 2030 new nuclear could contribute... up to 20GW' and 'fossil fuel with carbon capture and storage could contribute as much as 10GW... renewable electricity could deliver between 35 and 50GW'. And for heat, well progress will be as rapid: 'over 130,000 low carbon heat installations are expected to be carried out by 2020... by 2027 emissions from buildings should be between 24 and 39% below 2009 levels'. And on transport, the plan envisages that the average for new vehicle emission levels by the early 2020s will be '50-70g CO₂' achieved because vehicles 'will run on ultra-low emission technologies such as batteries, hydrogen fuel cells, plug in technology'.

It is a measure of the way that low carbon plans have gone off the rails since that these scenarios now sound like fairly wild fantasy (at least on present policies) rather than an achievable, if stretching, goal. And as anyone with a reasonably clear memory can see, it is largely because of deliberate policy interventions by Government that this is so. We will not, for example, get anywhere near targets for generation with

Carbon Capture and Storage attached because the Government cancelled the CCS pilot programmes for two CCS-equipped power stations last year, and we have at present no CCS strategy at all. And as far as generation goes, fans of new nuclear will be aware that the seven year delay to the building of even one new nuclear power station (Hinkley C) means that we will have (probably) just one new power station coming in at about 3GW by 2030. The adoption of a tidal lagoon programme might substitute, but that has not been concluded yet. And of course the attack on renewables, particularly onshore and solar mounted last year, means that the target for renewable contribution must be in doubt.

As far as energy efficiency goes, the collapse of the Green Deal and the reduction in obligation funding for harder to treat homes means that we will fall desperately short of the treatments needed by the early 2020s, with no new plan in sight. And the truncation of the Renewable Heat Incentive will set the ambition of emissions from buildings seriously back.

In transport, noises suggest that electric and low carbon vehicles are really taking off – and in many ways they are – but not remotely at the speed likely to achieve the ambition in the 2011 plan – five years after the plan was published registrations of low carbon vehicles stood at only 1.3% of the total for 2016.

In short, the shortfall in the Fourth Carbon Budget, and the likely extreme difficulty of making the new facts fit any feasible attainment of the Fifth Carbon Budget, is pretty much entirely down to the abandonment of schemes

with long term consequences which previously were at least taking us down the road towards meeting carbon budgets.

All this means that a new Labour Government will inherit a desperately stalled carbon budget plan, and will need to take very radical measures to get it back on track, which is what the 2008 Climate Change Act was designed to avoid. A steady programme of budget emissions decreases and the ability to allow programmes to unfold coherently to meet them was the Act's design: the legacy of George Osborne's period in office particularly is that the legs of many of those programmes have been knocked away, with, as we can see desperate long term consequences for our climate goals.



DR ALAN WHITEHEAD is Shadow Energy Minister and the Labour MP for Southampton Test

A GOOD OR BAD INDUSTRIAL STRATEGY?

TOM LAFFORD

IT'S TEMPTING TO DISMISS THE TORIES' SUDDEN INTERVENTIONIST CONVERSION - BUT LABOUR MUST LEARN FROM THE GOVERNMENT AND PUSH FOR ITS OWN BOLDER, MORE RADICAL PLAN.

Industrial strategy spent decades in the bin of forbidden phrases in Westminster. Blamed for the drift from competitiveness to collapse in the car, steel and shipping industries, the phrase stood for the blunders of politicians from a different era.

Yet in the past six months industrial strategy has moved from a term of abuse to the title of one of the largest Departments on Whitehall. Sweeping aside Cameron-Osborne economics, Theresa May launched her new Government with the announcement of "a proper industrial strategy to get the whole economy firing". It can be tough for Labour folk to swallow when the Tories launch intervention as a solution. Shadow Ministers will no doubt be tempted to attack the lack of clarity as proof of bad faith, dismissing the strategy as nothing more than a PR gimmick. That would be a mistake.

Like the Northern Powerhouse, the industrial strategy shows a genuine intellectual openness at

the heart of this Conservative government. If it can combine industrial strategy with devolution then the Government could perhaps overturn repeated failures to rebalance the economy away from London.

Labour should welcome the Government's conversion and press for further ambition – and firm details. With devolution to cities, regions and combined authorities, a Conservative industrial strategy could put Labour politicians back in control of their constituents' future.

This is crucial as the drive to a zero carbon economy begins to change the way we use energy and the kind of cars we drive. These disruptions risk opening up new inequalities in the access to clean transport and cheaper energy. We should take the logical step and start building our plans from expertise beyond Westminster, building an opposition based on the facts on the ground.

Facts that aren't easy to spot from the Terrace of the Palace of Westminster: the fact that hundreds of workers employed to build diesel engines are being retrained to build electric motors in Coventry, or that the offshore wind industry has

brought decent jobs back to skilled seamen and fishers in Grimsby.

Labour should demand a strategy that gives our towns and cities what they need to deliver an industrial strategy.

The Mayors and Councillors in Labour cities know that Government has failed to fully appreciate the importance of the mini-industrial revolutions underway where they live.

The blunders of the past will be repeated unless the regions and industries most affected by the global drive to decarbonise have an equal say in this strategy. It is Labour's job to get them in the room.



TOM LAFFORD is a member of SERA's Executive Committee

A BREATH OF FRESH AIR: CAMPAIGN UPDATE

MELANIE SMALLMAN

AIR QUALITY SHOT UP THE AGENDA AGAIN IN JANUARY 2017, WHEN LONDON AND OTHER PARTS OF THE UK WERE SUBMERGED IN YET ANOTHER SMOG EPISODE. DURING A WEEK WHEN LONDON EXPERIENCED WORSE AIR POLLUTION THAN BEIJING, LABOUR MAYOR SADIQ KHAN ISSUED THE HIGHEST EVER WARNING, DESCRIBING THE CAPITAL'S POOR AIR QUALITY AS A 'HEALTH CRISIS'.

Against this backdrop, SERA's "Breath of Fresh Air" campaign for a clean air act for the 21st Century has continued to gather support – from members and politicians alike. At SERA's AGM in November 2016, Shadow Brexit minister Keir Starmer highlighted the particular challenges to the environment posed by plans to leave Europe – and how vital it will be to enshrine in UK legislation the air quality protection currently offered by European Laws. Calor Gas's Head of Strategy and Corporate Affairs Paul Blacklock argued on SERA's website that it was up to Labour to clean up our city air, with solutions that include phasing out diesel through increasing electric and LPG vehicles. "Addressing the current air quality

crisis provides Labour with a major opportunity to improve the health and well-being of everyone in society, but especially those living in poorer neighbourhoods" he argued. In January 2017, SERA, with the support of Calor Gas, brought together Labour MPs, Shadow Cabinet members, London Assembly members (including SERA's Leonie Cooper) and campaigners to discuss London's toxic air pollution crisis, and the next steps for tackling air quality in the capital. ClientEarth's Simon Alcock updated the group on the organisation's recent Supreme Court victory and its policy implications, which means the Government must publish a revised Clean Air Plan by the 24th April. The fear however is that the plan will do the legal minimum and so there is a clear need for us to ramp up the pressure both in Parliament and beyond.

Within Parliament, there is one clear opportunity for action. As we have been calling for in SERA's Breath of Fresh Air campaign, SERA member and MP Geraint Davies has presented a Private Members' Bill calling for a new Clean Air Act for the 21st century. The Bill

proposes new powers for local authorities, restrictions on high-emission vehicles and the promotion of low-emission transport. SERA is strongly supporting this bill and in the next few weeks will be inviting all members to write to their MP to add their support too.



MELANIE SMALLMAN is co-chair of SERA and a leading campaigner for better air quality

IT'S UP TO LABOUR *TO DIVEST PARLIAMENT*

LOUISA CASSON

WHEN YOU'RE FEELING AT THE MERCY OF POWERFUL FORCES PUSHING US TO THE BRINK OF GLOBAL CATASTROPHE, IT'S IMPORTANT TO FOCUS ON WHAT WE, AS INDIVIDUALS, CAN DO TO ALTER WHAT CAN FEEL UNALTERABLE.

With the rise of the far-right, Trump and harrowing conflicts dominating the headlines, it's easy to feel powerless.

But the climate movement's divestment campaign changes this.

Divestment tackles the new climate sceptic orthodoxy head-on. It points the finger firmly at fossil fuel companies, whose business model is premised upon fuelling rampant climate change. It is grounded in the reality that the clean energy transition is well underway, where continuing to invest in fossil fuels is actually a riskier financial bet as these assets become stranded – a warning echoed by the Bank of England. And it tackles the problem head on: as institutions and individuals remove their support for fossil fuels, this erodes both the industry's financial dominance and social licence.

Already over 600 organisations and tens of thousands of individuals with assets worth over \$3.4 trillion have made commitments to divest from fossil fuels, making this the fastest growing divestment movement the world has ever seen.

And in the last few months, a cross-party group of MPs alongside 350.org have launched a public campaign to get Parliament's pension fund to come clean from fossil fuel investments. This would be a huge victory for a fund worth £589 million, with political influence across the world.

Since 2014, a group of MPs across the political spectrum have been privately urging the trustees of the MPs Pension Fund to reveal how much of the fund is invested in dirty energy, and to improve their responsible investment policies when it comes to climate risk.

While the trustees, made up of MPs past and present, do now accept that climate change may pose a financial risk, they have so far resisted calls for greater transparency and improved risk management – an alarming prospect for all fund members.

The Divest Parliament campaign is therefore calling for all MPs to show leadership on climate action and responsible investment by supporting action on their own pension fund.

Parliament has already shown global leadership on tackling this threat, passing Labour's world-leading Climate Change Act in 2008 with cross-party support.

If MPs are serious about tackling climate change, they shouldn't be investing in fossil fuels. To align their money with their values, the Environment Agency's Pension Fund became the first pension fund in the UK to agree to divest almost the entirety of its portfolio from oil, coal and gas in 2015.

Now Labour can help Parliament get its books in order. Labour has consistently pushed climate change up the political agenda, and frontbench spokespeople have talked up the lessons we can learn from divestment.

Labour also has a particularly important voice in making the case for reinvesting these funds in the sustainable economy of the 21st

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century, prioritising a socially just transition to clean energy jobs and investment at the heart of Labour's vision for an industrial strategy.

Labour councils like Waltham Forest and Southwark have also been the first in the country to divest their pension funds from fossil fuels. These landmark victories have been the result of cooperation between local environmental campaigners, residents and councillors, with support from local MPs.

Since we launched in December, Labour MPs have been fastest at signing up to the Divest Parliament pledge, calling on the fund's trustees to "quantify, disclose and review the fund's investments in carbon-intensive industries, engage in a dialogue with fund members and managers on responsible investment, and commit to phasing out fossil fuel investments over an appropriate time-scale."

So what next does this mean for the Labour movement? SERA members can contact their MPs to make sure they've signed the pledge using the email tool at divestparliament.org. Passing motions at CLP meetings can add pressure if

MPs needs convincing, and 350.org are also looking for help to drive divestment up the agenda for this spring's local elections. And for SERA members that are MPs, past or present, please sign the pledge to Divest Parliament!



LOUISA CASSON is an environmental and climate campaigner and is a member of the SERA Executive Committee

A NEW INTEGRATED TRANSPORT VISION

JAKE SUMNER

WHEN THE OYSTER CARD WAS INTRODUCED IN LONDON IN 2003 IT WAS PART OF A VISIONARY APPROACH THAT SAW INVESTMENT IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT, NEW POLITICAL LEADERSHIP IN THE LONDON MAYORALTY, AND A NEW TRANSPORT AUTHORITY, TRANSPORT FOR LONDON (TfL). OYSTER HELPED INTEGRATE PUBLIC TRANSPORT, BROUGHT BENEFITS TO PASSENGERS SUCH AS CHEAPER FARES AND DID AWAY WITH MILLIONS OF PAPER TICKETS.

With the with the capital's continual growth, the urgent need to tackle critical issues like air pollution, and the new technological possibilities, there is an opportunity for a new visionary approach - which the Mayor of London can lead. Could a portal not be created to bring together transport options and every passenger given a 'virtual transport account'? Linked with a phone for payment, the portal and account would enable payment for all transport options: not only the bus and tube, but cycle hire,

taxis and even private transport via the congestion charge, low emission zone and parking charges.

This would:

- Generate much more data to support more comprehensive management and planning of transport systems
- Use the data to bring traveller benefit such as enabling travellers to pick cheaper and better choices and offering tailored transport options
- Promote modal shift and encourage non-polluting forms of transport through incentives
- Integrate private transport (and future forms like driverless cars) enabling road management through less controversial mechanisms than stand-alone road pricing

The current Oyster and contactless arrangements bring together access to public transport options: tube, bus, river and train services

- it's a public transport card rather than a transport card.

Cycle hire is not integrated. If it were it would link the most sustainable form of transport within the TfL system and enhance the investment in the cycle superhighways. Incorporating the congestion charge would link private travel and public transport; inclusion of the low emission zone would take this further and in time, the planned ultra-low emission zone. Local authority parking and permit schemes could be included, as could car clubs.

Integrating black cabs and new private hire services would link transport options that many people use. Uber has proved popular with new possibilities and price points. However, there are issues such as the increase in (polluting) vehicles. Uber also collects considerable transport data, indeed the CEO of the company has indicated that this is about designing new transport systems. Should this not be in the hands of TfL, integrated and

with a system of accountability and ability to leverage public gain?

Road pricing has traditionally floundered as it is seen an extra tax for government coffers. The portal would connect road management such as the congestion charge within the whole transport system. The congestion or emission zones would be the way to pay to drive in parts or all of London. In effect, it becomes a license to travel. Yet rather than simply payment penalty for driving, because the portal connects forms of transport there are possibilities to encourage positive alternatives in a coordinated way, from public transport to cycling. Transport could be more effectively managed at busier times and with price points as Uber does; as well as supporting initiatives like car-pooling.

An integrated portal could also support diesel scrappage enabling a vehicle to be traded for public transport discounts or travelcard. Consumer power could speed the conversion of vehicle fleets such as taxis to less polluting options via cheaper booking rates. Westminster Council is trialling higher parking costs for diesels in some areas: this could happen more widely and in an integrated way. When

driverless cars come on stream, it provides a mechanism for potential management and integration.

With so much more data, transport planning would vastly improve and public money used more effectively. Looking to the energy sector, one company, O-Power, has driven down energy consumption by comparing a household's use with their neighbours, highlighting savings. Data could be used similarly for transport, allowing people to more easily compare the cost of a car versus other options.

With London's size and TfL's reach, and with incentives for signing up for travellers and transport providers, momentum and scale could be built. More powers for the Mayor and TfL over transport would also help. Technologically, the likes of Nectar, apps integrating retailing options, the internet of things, and TfL's existing systems, provide paths forward.

The leadership that the Mayor and TfL could show could be a model for urban transport systems both across the UK and globally. London would be creating a truly integrated system, managing road use and re-galvanizing support for sustainable, low carbon and clean transport.

FEATURE

CAMPAIGN 2017



JAKE SUMNER is SERA co-chair and previously worked at TfL





WANT TO SEE REAL PROGRESS ON GREEN JOBS AND GROWTH?

LOOK TO LOCAL GOVERNMENT

ADAM DYSTER

SERA'S NATIONAL ORGANISER, ADAM DYSTER, ON WHY LABOUR IN POWER ARE LEADING THE WAY ON CLEAN ENERGY

When asked how to beat the winter blues, spending a Saturday in a Warwick University conference centre probably wouldn't have been top of my list of suggestions.

Yet last week SERA travelled to the university for the Labour Local Government Conference there - and what we found was reason for hope in a difficult political environment.

Across the UK, Labour in power is making a real, practical difference, leading ambition and collaboration on everything from economic growth to hate crime. The LGA Labour Group's new publication, launched at the conference, makes this clear, listing 100 innovations by Labour in Power.

There are few places however where this is more evident than clean energy. SERA, with the support of UK100, brought together local leaders to discuss green jobs and growth for a fringe event: Cllr Judith Blake, Leader of Leeds City Council, Cllr Helen Holland, Cabinet Member for Place, Bristol City Council, Cllr Sue Jeffrey, Labour's

candidate for Tees Valley Metro-Mayor & Leader of Redcar and Cleveland Council and Cllr James Noakes, Liverpool City Council lead on Energy and Smart City.

From Liverpool's new municipal energy company to Bristol's insulation drive, Labour councils are already investing in green jobs and infrastructure, and reaping the investment. Whilst the Conservatives pursue energy policies that are at best inconsistent, and at worst harm economic growth, Labour authorities have embraced a new clean energy era. Whilst the government threatens to crucify the solar industry with an eight-fold rise in business rates, councils like Bristol and Leeds are working with business, big and small, to support new low-carbon projects.

These projects and initiatives weren't driven by an abstract sense of good, but instead by economic and social need. Leeds' work on energy has been driven by shocking fuel poverty figures, whilst Bristol's long-term targets have helped secure investment and stable jobs. It is fossil fuels that are now the risky bet, with renewable energy jobs both sustainable and high-skilled.

With the election of new Metro-Mayors across the country, there

is the opportunity for yet more leadership on clean energy across the country, regardless of national policy. Perhaps one of the most exciting contributions to the panel came from Cllr Sue Jeffrey, on her plan to secure sustainable jobs for the Tees Valley by transforming carbon-intensive industry via reuse of waste and carbon capture and storage, if elected Mayor.

As our Co-Chair Melanie Smallman set out, if Labour wants to act on the environment and clean energy, it must be now and at the local level. Labour in power can lead the way on clean energy and jobs, tackling social need and inequality as it does so.



ADAM DYSTER is SERA's new organiser. To contact him adam.dyster@sera.org.uk

BREXIT: MAY'S DAMNING SILENCE *ON THE ENVIRONMENT*

MELANIE SMALLMAN & ANDREW PAKES



SERA VIEW: AS THE PRIME MINISTER IGNORES THE ENVIRONMENT IN HER BREXIT PRIORITIES, GREEN GROUPS NOW FACE THE FIGHT OF OUR LIVES

The Government has now decided that the UK is heading for hard Brexit – and the environment does not feature high in their plans. After months of silence on the Government's plans for Brexit, the Prime Minister has finally shown her hand and explained what she had in mind when she said "Brexit means Brexit".

With the Government's 12 priorities, Theresa May set out the case for her post-Brexit "Global Britain". Yet for all her talk of a "profoundly internationalist" Britain - one which had voted "to embrace the world", it was what the speech didn't mention that spoke volumes about the Conservatives' priorities.

Besides one scant mention of energy, the environment was ignored. There was no mention of climate change, no mention of environmental protections, no mention of air pollution - all vitally important topics intrinsically linked to our position in Europe. Nor was there any mention of the low carbon economy and how the UK was going to compete in world with these industries of the future. Since the Prime Minister announced her plans for hard Brexit, the Government has also slipped out that the UK will leave the Euratom Treaty governing nuclear waste as well as the EU.

How can you present a vision of 'A Global Britain' yet completely

ignore some of the greatest challenges – and biggest opportunities - facing the globe?

Challenges such as air quality can't be solved without working closely with partners across Europe; pollution doesn't respect national borders. The environmental impact of products for and from our biggest trading partner will still be significant post-Brexit. Britain will be no less affected by and no less responsible for climate change after Brexit. But by abandoning environment principles, our role leading European climate ambition will likely be lost. By staying silent, we risk walking away from years of hard-earned progress, and saying that we now don't care, as well as losing the important ground we have gained in low carbon industries – the biggest growth sector during the last economic downturn.

The Government will of course dismiss these arguments, claiming instead that the UK's role as an environmental leader in Europe is implicit in an 'internationalist' Britain and that environmental regulation will be protected through the "acquisition" - the body of existing EU law, into British law. But the constitutional arrangements for simply transposing EU legislation are far from clear. Even if enacted, it would be easy for the Government, with its Commons majority, to chip away at them, small amendment by small amendment.

Furthermore, if Britain is committed to the environment, then why wasn't it mentioned alongside crime and terrorism or science and

innovation in the Prime Minister's speech? And what signal does this silence send to the industries that we will rely upon to provide the homegrown jobs of the future? By ignoring the environment, and staying silent on issues that will affect every single one of us, Theresa May has made worryingly clear her priorities. Why should green businesses invest in growth, or even stay in the UK, if there's no support from the government at a time of such turmoil? And how will the environment even feature in the future trade negotiations, when leaders such as Trump appear to put even less value on our planet's future?

While Brexit presents many unknown threats to the economy and livelihood of people across Britain, it is clear that for the environment and for Britain's low-carbon industries Theresa May's proposals for Brexit present an existential crisis. Everything that SERA and the wider environment movement has fought so hard for over the past 40 years is at stake, along with our chances of developing a strong, low-carbon economy for the future. We cannot let this happen on our watch. Over the next few months we will be asking environmental groups and low carbon industries across the UK to join us in fighting to keep our environmental laws.

This is the fight of our lives, for the sake of our planet.

MELANIE SMALLMAN, SERA Co-Chair, and ANDREW PAKES, Editor New Ground

THE VIEW *FROM CITY HALL*



LEONIE COOPER AM

IT HAS BEEN A BUSY FEW MONTHS SINCE THE NEW MAYOR AND NEW ASSEMBLY ARRIVED IN LONDON CITY HALL IN MAY 2016. WHILE THE MOST EYE-CATCHING AND WELL-PUBLICISED MAYORAL ENVIRONMENTAL INITIATIVE HAS BEEN THE WIDE-RANGING PACKAGE OF MEASURES TO START TO ADDRESS AIR POLLUTION, A LOT OF WORK HAS BEEN GOING ON IN OTHER AREAS TOO.

The Mayor has tasked his new Deputy Mayor for Energy & the Environment with producing a new Environment Strategy, that he wants to see properly linked together with both the new London Plan and his housing strategy. Behind the scenes therefore a lot of work is going on to develop detailed strategies across all areas of the environment. A new Sustainable Drainage Action Plan was launched in December 2016, the first of many new outputs. The Assembly Environment Committee has been equally busy.

FUEL POVERTY

The Environment Committee is currently completing a report on Domestic Energy and Fuel Poverty, with recommendations we want to feed into the Mayor's forthcoming Fuel Poverty Action Plan. The rise in fuel poverty across the country is dwarfed by the situation in London, where comparatively few buildings benefitted from insulation programmes and, due to the incredibly high cost of living, many people have to choose between paying the rent, heating their house or eating. The Mayor is keen to tackle the high cost of energy bills – so watch this space for developments. London has never had a Fuel Poverty Action Plan before.

PARKS AND GREEN SPACES

One of the most pleasant aspects of living in London is the astonishing number and range of parks and open spaces. Most were transferred to the control of London's Councils some years ago – and with the massive cuts to their budgets some Councils have been cutting back on staff and maintenance. The Environment Committee has been investigating how parks and open spaces will be managed and maintained going forward. Like our fuel poverty investigation, we did a call for evidence – and received 1,500 replies. This is a record response for an Assembly call for evidence, and shows how much Londoners value their open spaces, in terms of recreation, relaxation, well-being and health. Our report will come out in April, with a range of recommendations.

HEATHROW EXPANSION, BANNING DIESEL AND BURST WATER MAINS

The Environment Committee has also taken evidence on a range of other crucial issues. In November, as Heathrow expansion had been announced we heard from experts about the noise and air pollution that will flow from expansion, as well as the climate impact due to the increase in CO2 emissions. In December, after Madrid, Paris, Mexico City and Athens all announced they plan to ban diesel vehicles from 2025, we called in guests at short notice to ask why we were not considering this for London as well. In January, with a spate of massive burst water mains occurring all over London we questioned Thames Water to explain what is going on and why they are not yet able to stop this from happening.

"AT HOME WITH NATURE: BIODIVERSITY IN THE NEW HOUSING DEVELOPMENTS"

Finally, I've just completed a piece of work, through the Assembly Housing Committee, on how we can best ensure that biodiversity is included in all the new housing developments.

Many of these are going to be quite dense in terms of the sheer numbers of flats and houses included on site. To make sure we are still creating places that have nature within these developments we need to get property developers considering how best to do this right from the start – as a matter of course. Sticking in a couple of box bushes by the front door is not enough – and if large areas are to be paved over then

particular attention is needed to the drainage to prevent surface water flooding.

I launched the report at the end of January and the Mayor has already expressed an interest in seeing a "Green Space Factor" included in the new London Plan and making it clear now that is the new direction of travel. Obviously, this goes hand in hand with the Environment Committee's work on parks and green spaces – if we can manage to maintain these and increase nature in the new housing developments then London will remain a very liveable city for years to come.



LEONIE COOPER AM is the Chair of the London Assembly Environment Committee and the Labour Assembly Member for Merton and Wandsworth

MOVING TOWARDS *SUSTAINABLE LAND USE IN SCOTLAND*

CLAUDIA BEAMISH MSP



FOR RURAL SCOTLAND, BREXIT MUST NOW BE USED AS AN OPPORTUNITY FOR SIGNIFICANT REFORM. THE ONUS LIES WITH POLITICIANS ACROSS THE COUNTRY TO STAND STRONG IN NEGOTIATIONS, AND SEIZE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR POSITIVE CHANGE IN OUR RURAL COMMUNITIES, ENVIRONMENT, AND ECONOMY.

The agricultural sector subsidy regime under the European Union had its flaws, but the EU referendum decision creates huge challenges ahead and questions of funding beyond 2020 remain unanswered. We need to link environmental, social and economic objectives with a bottom-up, holistic approach. Scottish Labour's vision for the future of Scottish agriculture is one of sustainability; that supports rural economies and local businesses, delivers fresh and affordable produce locally to eliminate food poverty, is lauded for its quality exports, and protects our environment and tackles climate change as a priority, not just an afterthought.

Even before the Brexit vote, Scotland spent the second lowest amount per hectare in the EU on agri-environment schemes from CAP pillar 2. With agriculture and related land use the third heaviest emitting sector, there is a serious need for greening measure participation to increase. Furthermore, it seems that Scotland will not meet the biodiversity targets for 2020, and it is ranked in the lowest fifth of all the countries analysed in the intactness index. Amid the uncertainty around the future of CAP, I am concerned that further progress may falter.

It must be respected that our farmers are not only producers of food; they also act as custodians of our land. Of Scotland's land mass, 75% is used for agricultural production, and the sector directly employs 63,000 people. Limiting global warming is a responsibility that we all share, but we must respect the fact that farmers' shoulders cannot be expected to bear the brunt of that, and it is unreasonable to demand and

expect those business owners and rural communities to act in the public interest without being provided with proper support in the transition.

This point is paramount - we must bring agricultural workers with us to the forefront in the green shift, and Scottish Labour will fight for farmers' rights in trade negotiations and rural policy and in securing a just transition.

There are fantastic examples up and down the country of sustainable and innovative land use, be it organic farming, monitor farms, peatland restoration, agroforestry, or using forests for biomass boilers or art and craft opportunities, such as the Tweed Valley Forest Festival in my region of South Scotland. The Forest Policy Group have a wonderful way of describing the wealth of uses for forests - "a bank, playground, meeting place, nature reserve, classroom, larder, gym, mental health spa, and centre for the rehabilitation of those who need help to re-orientate their

There are fantastic examples up and down the country of sustainable and innovative land use, be it organic farming, monitor farms, peatland restoration, agroforestry, or using forests for biomass boilers or art and craft opportunities



lives.” We need structures that enable more community and co-operative ownership of forests so these benefits can be reaped across the country, adding more diversity to forestry culture. Of course, in addition to this, the forestry sector acts as one of Mother Nature’s helping hands in the fight against climate change – sequestering more carbon than it produces (around 10 million tonnes of CO2 every year.) It is a pity that more has not been made of such a gift, as the Scottish Government has failed to reach forestry planting targets year on year. An estimated 30% of Scotland is suitable for growing trees, without impinging on conservation areas or key farmland.

The Scottish Government’s draft Climate Change Plan renewed ambition in forestry is welcome; increasing woodland cover from 18% - 21% by 2032. However, we must constantly challenge ourselves to ensure that we consider the tensions between forestry planting

and peatland restoration in relation to both climate change and protecting our fragile ecosystems and wildlife.

Sustaining woodland is an aspiration shared around the world. Number 15.2 of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals is to “by 2020, promote the implementation of sustainable management of all types of forests, halt deforestation, restore degraded forests and substantially increase afforestation and reforestation globally.”

There are numerous opportunities coming up in the Scottish Parliament for environmental focus. Along with colleagues, I am currently scrutinising the Climate Change Plan, and we anticipate a Forestry Bill and Good Food Nation Bill. Scottish Labour will continue to hold the SNP Scottish Government on the path to a sustainable and just Scotland.



CLAUDIA BEAMISH MSP is Scottish Labour’s Spokesperson on Environment, Climate Change and Land Reform

see inside...

For New Ground's Devolution Special Edition
with *Mary Creagh MP, Andy Burnham MP,*
Lesley Griffiths AM, Cllr Alex Sobel & many more.

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