



Green Party

for the common good

High Peak Green Party

Winter 2016

Why I joined the Green Party by Paul Dobson

We know that human activities are seriously damaging our planet. Of all the crises we face, none compare to the dangers posed by climate change. It must be our top priority.

I'm a research scientist working in Industrial Biotechnology. I believe mass adoption of green technology is now the only way to reverse Climate Change. Slowly, Britain is turning on the renewable energy taps with some wonderful engineering. But we're aren't going fast enough to reverse Climate Change. What's the problem?

Many politicians recognise the importance of Climate Change, though many resist it for absurd reasons. The Paris Agreement is a step in the right direction. Big companies are starting to tackle Climate Change as an existential threat rather than a source of bad PR. We're getting there, but we must move faster.

Each of us must start to see climate change as our problem, make changes to their lives and, more importantly, tell politicians to get global temperature rises under control.

Then the tidal turbines and barrages, wave power and thousands of offshore and onshore wind farms will appear. Electric vehicle infrastructure will be built. Energy saving technologies will be mandatory. We know how to fix things at a technical level. We need the political will!

Only the Green Party has Climate Change at the heart of its policy, so for me it was the obvious choice.

I admit to apprehension before my first meeting. After all, I design GMOs for a living to reduce energy use in chemical manufacturing. I'd met Greens before so I knew the welcome would be warm, but I also knew about their passion. How would my technophilia fly? I'm pleased to report it went down very well. Nobody tried to make me hug a tree!

Regarding the technologies I advocate, 'cautiously receptive' is the phrase I would use. Informed caution is no bad thing when it comes to new technology. I sense the urgent need for technological solutions is understood within the Green Party even where these technologies challenge traditional Green thinking.

Political and commercial alliances will be required that might not sit well with our green ideals. Greens will need to rethink their opposition to some technologies. Tough. By not acting sooner we've painted ourselves into a corner.

Now pragmatism trumps principles. Soon everyone will understand Climate Change as nature throws its consequences in their faces. By then it will be too late. I joined the Green Party as it is the leading environmental light in politics, but I also issue them a challenge. The time for gentle activism is over.

Climate Change is now an emergency. We have the remedies, but we need the people to demand their application. We must move faster.

Wildlife Conservation by Pat Thompson

As a child I went to Burbage School. On nature walks, we'd gather frogspawn to take back to the classroom. Every year, the school took part in the "Bird and tree" festival where we observed one species of bird and tree over the year. We even won a national competition!

I remember hearing the curlew and peewit in the fields at Bishops Lane. Not anymore and there are no longer yellow hammers around Chapel-en-le-frith. The common house sparrow is no longer common. The call of the cuckoo can no longer be heard in Grinlow Woods in spring. Wild flowers, small mammals and butterflies are seen less often now.

I joined Buxton Field Club at the age of 7. This natural history society holds nature walks in the summer and indoor talks in the winter and I learned to love the nature on my doorstep. The records the club keeps show a decline in species.

Nationally 56% of species of wildlife have declined and 15% are at risk of disappearing altogether. Climate change is affecting our weather and the distribution of plants and flower. Urgent conservation is needed.

What can be done about the diminution of our countryside? We can farm less intensively preserving the margins of fields for wildlife. We can keep green belts undisturbed and mainly build on brownfield sites. We can end burning moors for grouse shooting and preserve hedgerows as corridors for wildlife.

Our gardens can be oases for wildlife. The national curriculum in schools can include more nature study. Recently moves are being made nationally to bring nature back from the brink. Our countryside is being managed more for wildlife than food production.

More Special Sites of Scientific Interest and marine nature reserves are being created. There are schemes to bring back the otter, water vole, polecat and wildcat. Buxton Civic Association is creating open glades in its woods to attract flowers and insects for birds. Buxton Field Club educates people about local wildlife.

But the policies of government are all important and this is where the Green Party comes in. It is the only party that has concrete plans for wildlife conservation and is against the degradation of the planet by economic growth.

It prioritises tackling climate change. It campaigns for a countryside rich in nature, supporting farmers and landowners to deliver environmental benefits. Locally, the party can protest against industrial and housing developments that threaten open countryside, encourage recycling of our waste products and promote small-scale water, wind and solar energy generation in our economy.

What economic price can be put on seeing a delicate wild flower or hearing a familiar bird song? We need a national transformation of our political system and only the Green Party leads the way!

What to know more about the Green Party?

National Party www.greenparty.org.uk

High Peak www.highpeakgreenparty.org.uk

Contact www.greenparty.org.uk/contact.html

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Season's Greetings from High Peak Greens!