

Small business and enterprise

What we have now

Many traditional jobs have disappeared or have been automated. Our high streets are dying due to competition from on-line shopping, huge supermarkets and big business chains, many owned by foreign companies.

Older people who have run businesses for years and expected to sell them on as a pension for retirement find that younger people cannot afford to take them over.

Small businesses have to work their way through complicated regulations, for example on employing staff. Business rates, VAT and expenses such as insurance and advertising place a huge financial and administration burden on start-ups and small businesses.

Unless we want everything to be owned and sold by huge multinational companies and life to become entirely 'branded' we need to support new enterprise.

Huge numbers of people are choosing self-employment for a more satisfying lifestyle.

What the Green Party proposes

Better information and help with costs will relieve the burden on small businesses. It will also contribute to diverse and thriving communities.

Improving information and support

- There are several schemes to help start-ups and small businesses but these are not well publicised. We will ensure all small business are made aware of these opportunities
- Work with the chamber of commerce to set up dialogue to help and encourage enterprise
- Working with business, create self-supporting networks of small businesses to share good practice and share markets for services and goods
- Work with schools and small businesses to include advice on self-employment in careers counselling, for example through talks by small businesses

Reducing costs

- Reduce the business rate
- Reduce charges for re-cycling and other rubbish collection, aiming to abolish these charges as part of our **waste management** policies.
- Reinvigorate local markets and reduce stall fees. This includes licensing more markets to encourage successes such as the Treacle Market in Macclesfield or Chesterfield children's market

Reducing other barriers

- Work to improve broadband speeds and mobile phone signals so local companies are not handicapped by inadequate services.
- Bring council owned empty properties back into use as offices, shops and workshops if they are unsuitable for housing
- Investigate ways to make it easier for small businesses to hire and support apprentices.