

Political Parties: Climate Change Policies

Stewart Edge Nov 2023

Challenges

- LD/Lab/Green Manifestos not yet written
 - 'Pre-manifesto' papers for Lab/ LD, not for Green
 - Have included some details from elsewhere in party policies / 2019 manifesto
 - Source of funding for (state) expenditure unclear
 - Often different measures, so comparing apples and oranges
 - Identifying actions (rather than simple targets and wishful thinking)
 - Conservatives
 - No pre-manifesto statement at Conference, but.....
 - Conference announcements withdrew some Net Zero progress
 - Previous (Sept) session covered Climate Change Committee 2023 Report
 - which said confidence UK would meet targets had reduced
- Particularly in Industry, Buildings and Surface Transport

Sources

- LABOUR

- Final policy platform on which manifesto will be based – presented at Labour Conference
 - <https://labourlist.org/2023/10/labour-national-policy-forum-final-document-summary-policy-manifesto-party-conference/#one>
- Some reference to 2019 manifesto

- GREEN

- Policy Statements to 2023
- Green Party 10-point Climate Plan (2020/21)
- 2019 manifesto and long term sustainable goals (2017)

- LIBDEM

- ‘Pre-manifesto’ policy paper – confirmed at the LibDem Conference 2023
 - <https://www.libdems.org.uk/conference/papers/autumn-2023/policy-paper-for-a-fair-deal>
- Additional detail from the 2019 manifesto and 2023 Conference specifics (eg Housing)

- OTHER

- Some references to Carbon Budget 6 report and Carbon Budget Delivery Plan for context
- ..and Climate Change Committee 2023 Report (focus of my Sept U3A presentation)

Overall Targets

- Net zero by....
 - (Current Conservative policy by 2050, though with concern from Climate Change Committee)
 - Labour 'accelerate' transition to net zero
 - LibDem 'by 2045'
 - Green 'sooner than others' / ASAP (in 2017 'in 10 years' !!!!)
- ➔ Lab/LibDem / Green all want to make better progress

Overall Funding

- Labour

- (in 2021) Was £28B a year.....but
- Now Will 'ramp up to £28B a year by middle of Parliament'
- (debt must be falling as share of National Income after 5 years))
- (Growth in economy seen as essential)) **Fiscal Caution**

- LibDem

- No headline funding figure ('manifesto will be fully costed')) **with**
- (Day to day spending < money raised in taxes in medium term)) **Growth**
- (Growth in economy required)

- **Green**

- **£100B a year capital - from (low interest!) borrowing and 'Green quantitative Easing'**
- **(Change system to come off 'growth treadmill' and growth by 'debt-based' money)**

State direct involvement (? Grants / loans/ ownership?)

- Labour
 - 2019 nationalisation plans dropped
 - Great British Energy (£8B initial funding)
 - New renewables energy generation (including nuclear)
 - National Wealth Fund
 - Invest alongside private sector in gigafactories, steel, ports, hydrogen, carbon capture
- LibDem
 - Green Investment Bank (£5B in 2019 manifesto)
- Green
 - Nationalise 5 largest energy supply companies
 - All railways into public ownership in 10 years
 - Considerable Capital Funding (eg electricity renewables, grid, storage; and insulation, heat)

Electricity Generation

- Renewables Targets
 - (Current, Conservative)
 - Net Zero by 2035
 - Labour
 - Net Zero generation by 2030
 - LibDem
 - 80% renewables by 2030
 - Green
 - 70% Wind (only) by 2030!
 - Can increase renewables by planning rules / licence auctions....but readiness to manage variable renewables unclear
- | | | |
|--|-------------|-------------------------------|
| | Achievable? | How? |
| |) | For comparison |
| |) | 6 th Carbon Budget |
| |) | 70% renewables in 2035 |

Electricity Generation: wind and solar

- Current 15GW onshore wind; **15GW offshore wind**; 14 GW solar
- Carbon Budget 6 - **40GW offshore wind** (? Solar / on-shore) by 2030
- Current targets (per Govt Carbon Budget Delivery Plan)
 - 15GW still ? On shore wind, **50GW off shore wind (2030)** ; 70GW solar (2035)
- But note failure of recent Off shore Wind Auction
- **Lab/LD/Green all promise greater renewables**
 - Including removing restraints on on-shore wind and solar
- Labour **triple wind to 90GW**, solar triple to 44GW (Date...2030?)
- LibDem 80% renewables by 2030 but no wind/solar specifics
- Green **100GW wind by 2030** ('70% of total supply')

Electricity Generation: other

- **Nuclear**

- Labour Yes to New Nuclear and SMR's
- LD Silence (Previously 'no state funding' → No new)
- Green No to any New Nuclear; No? to SMR's

- **Grid**

- Lab/LD/Green all say 'do more'
- (Shortcomings at present mean new offshore wind can't be commissioned)
- Lab Open up new grid construction to competitive tendering
 Involve GB Energy in 'coordination'
 Is this aimed at weakening the monopoly of privately owned National Grid?

Oil and Gas

- Government
 - New Rosebank Licences to improve UK Energy Security
- Labour
 - Will not revoke / will not issue new licences ; will manage for lifespan of existing fields
- LibDem
 - End 'fossil fuel subsidies' by end 2025; end export credits& discourage financial invest.
 - Increase windfall taxes on oil and gas.
- Green
 - Remove subsidies from oil and gas& prevent(?) Financial investment
 - Increase taxes on oil and gas
- Lab/LD/Green – all **ban fracking**

Transport - surface

- Lab/LD/Green
 - All keen to improve public transport (Green the most)
 - All would improve roll out of charging points
- LD
 - All new cars electric by 2030 (???hybrids?)) recent govt delay to 2035
- Green) (incl hybrids)
 - All new cars and vans electric by 2030 (???hybrids?))
- Lab / LD
 - Make electric cars cheaper (LD – reduce VAT to 5%)
- Green
 - **Stop increasing road capacity**
 - **Reduce overall mileage and number of vehicles on road**
 - (In 10point plan, by 50% by 2030)

Transport - Rail

- Lab/LD/Green
 - Increase use of rail freight
 - Lab / LD
 - Improve Northern railways
 - LD
 - Freeze Rail fares
 - Green
 - Bus and train to be cheaper than car
 - Switch funding from HS2 to other new railways
- Green
Northern + many more others as well

Transport - Air

- Note – Carbon Budget 6 does allow for 25% growth in air miles (2018 to 2050) (cf 65% if unconstrained); no net capacity growth
- Lab - silent
- LD
 - Moratorium on any net increase in runway capacity
- LD/Green
 - **Introduce a frequent flyer levy**
- Green
 - Reduce air miles by 70% by 2030/33
 - Stop all airport expansion
 - Carbon tax on aviation fuel

(in 10 pt plan)

Buildings – existing (Insulation and heating)

- Lab
 - EPC C for every home in 10 years
- LD
 - ‘Insulate all homes in 10 years’
 - Low income & rented - EPC B within 5 years, EPC B where possible
 - Phased introduction of heat pumps
 - (Mix of grants and Tax incentives)
- Green
 - EPC >A for 10M homes by 2030;
 - EPC A for all rented homes
 - 1m / year heating upgrades

Buildings - New

- (Current Plans: no new gas boilers from 2025)
- Lab ?
- LibDem
 - All new homes to have solar panels, heat pumps
 - All to PassivHaus standards by 2024
- Green
 - All to PassivHaus standards

Industry

- CCC 2023 Report identified significant risks / challenges meeting targets for Industry
 - Especially strategy and delivery of Carbon Capture, Hydrogen, Gigafactories, Industrial electrification
- Labour
 - National Wealth Fund Investment; Particular focus on green steel; also gigafactories, ports, hydrogen, carbon capture
 -and 'just transition'
- LibDem
 - Green Investment Bank; Particular reference to carbon capture, steel and cement
 - Particular reference to recycling, re-use, circular economy
 - ..and 'just transition'
- Green
 - 'Grants to support transition to low carbon'
 - Carbon tax on fossil fuels and embedded emissions
 - Carbon capture scheme for steel, cement,
 - Particular reference to recycling, re-use , circular economy

Food, Agriculture and Land Use

- Current: CCC 2023 Report lamented that promised framework for Agriculture/Land Use not yet published.
- Lab/ LD/Green
 - All support incentives for ‘sustainable farming methods’
- Green
 - Specifically propose moving away from livestock (reduce meat/dairy by 70% 10pt plan)
 - **(Carbon) Tax on meat and dairy over next 10 years**
- Trees – LD 60M / year; Green 700M in 10 years
- Lab/LD/Green
 - All wish better protection for Natural Environment and improvement of biodiversity

OTHER - Inequality

- Lab/LD/Green
 - All make references, particularly in sections on Fuel poverty, Industrial change
- Green
 - Identify Universal Basic Income (£5K/yr non means tested) mentioned as an integral part of Climate Change policies to protect the poor.

OTHER

- LD
 - Include ensuring that trade deals include reference to the parties' obligation to progress Climate Change policies
- LD and Green
 - Carbon Taxes seen as essential part of future
 - Greens plan much more aggressive use of/ higher revenues from these
- Green
 - Long term goals include 'UK should encourage small families'
 - However they do extend (in 2019 manifesto) child benefit to > 2 children

SUMMARY of (non Conservative) policies

- All (Lab/ LD/Green) All have greater ambition than current government
- (All) greater speed of construction of **Wind / Solar** (esp on-shore)
- Lab Yes to **(new) Nuclear**. LD & Green Existing only
- **Oil / Gas** Labour use inherited licences / LD discourage / Green prevent(?)
- **Surface Transport** All more public transport. / Green reduce road use
- **Air** LD & Green Frequent Flyer levies and limited (LD)/ no (G) runway expansion
- **Buildings** Lab limited to EPC C; LD&Green heat pump start and higher EPC B (LD) EPC A (G)
- **New buildings** Lab ?; LD&Green PassiveHaus ASAP
- **Industry** All urge more, but Lab more direct approach;
- **Food / Land Use** All speed up sustainable farming; Green reduce meat/dairy
- **FUNDING** – Lab & LibDem fiscal caution & growth; Green borrow – and avoid growth

Green Party Overview

- (Target net zero 'in 10 years' (in 2017!)....say by 2033 ???? NOT in manifesto)
- Faster movement in electricity generation, housing, transport than others
- *Clearly interventionist to reduce demand*
 - *Reduce car miles by 50% by 2030/33*
 - *All fossil fuel cars / vans off road by 2030/33*
 - *Reduce air miles by 70% by 2030/33*
 - *Tax on Meat and Dairy over next 10 years*
- *£100B / year 'Green New Deal'*
 - *Quite radical tax plans*
 - *Not clear what borrowing is implied*
 - *(Universal Basic Income)*