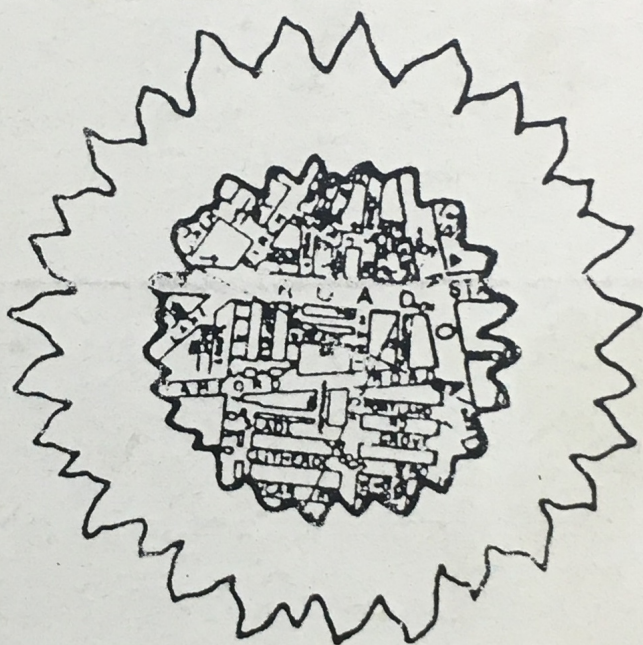


CITY

1989
December Issue

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GREEN

Newsletter of South Manchester Green Party

Manchester - Politicals A-Z

City Green Goes Tabloid?

What is the meaning of City Green's new tabloid style, easy-to-read-over-breakfast-size layout? Why has the CIA taken over our internal business? Why does J gin , or G fik? Who is Jo Waffles? All these questions and more will be answered if you read on.

Things you won't read about till the next issue include: Euro- candidates going round on bicycles - Green Party Speaker coming to Manchester - the Humanist Party coming too - the One-World shop, why aren't we there? - and lots, lots more.

In the year when the Prime Minister claimed to be a member, and the Secretary of State for the Environment claimed we didn't exist, nothing seems real anymore.....

BROOKLANDS BY-ELECTION BEFORE LONG?

Although there is no firm date as yet it is more than likely that there will be a City Council by-election early in 1989. Chris Ireland has already been provisionally accepted as our candidate in the Brooklands ward where he lives, and though we have not stood there before, we are confident Chris will do very well.

After all, Council by-elections are not notoriously high-profile events. If we actually all get out there and do some leafletting or canvassing or put up posters, we might even give ourselves (and the other parties) a surprise! More news as and when it reaches us.....

A MANIFESTO FOR MANCHESTER

I was surprised to find when I first joined SMGP that there was no local manifesto or policy statement. In fact there was very little discussion of issues at any of the meetings, and when someone was asked a specific question - such as 'What do the Greens think of the LRT project?' - more often than not the reply was an embarrassed silence. But this will not be the case for much longer because a start is already being made in the process of producing our first, very own and original manifesto.

Early in 1989 we plan to hold a day-long session of policy discussions and workshops in order to produce policy papers that can be put forward for acceptance by the party as a whole. Once accepted, these policies can be bundled together to form the basis of our manifesto.

To set the ball rolling, six people have agreed to write draft papers to be taken to the day of workshops; their names and the policy areas they will cover are listed below. It is hoped however that they will not be left all on their own to do this, and that anyone who has ideas, feelings and useful knowledge will let the appropriate person know sooner rather than later, so that all contributions can be incorporated. Brief summaries of these papers will be ready (won't they, everyone!) for inclusion in the next CITY GREEN.

I do hope that a lot of people get involved in this project - it should be not only interesting in itself, but also provide us all with a useful tool in helping us to get our message across.

Paul

Education	Joe Otten - see Contact list.
Health & Environment	Zina Ryan 15 Marlborough Street Whalley Range tel 860 7581
Housing	Paul Harrison - see Contact list.
Inner Cities	Sid Laserson 22 Beechfield Street Cheetham M8 tel 205 3367
Local Government & Democracy	Colin Kirby 16/18 Whalley Road M16 tel c/o 227 9167
Transport	David Wild - see Contact list.

Even the 'Great Communicator' himself, Ronald Reagan (a part now being played by George Bush), did not write all his speeches himself. It was a badly-kept secret that no single human brain could possibly know anything about everything that Ronnie pontificated on. To this end the President was provided with a 'Larry Speaks' - (how Americans love their mnemonics). This was in fact, unbeknown to the great Ron, a large number of men in suits, who did Ronnie's thinking and speech-writing for him.

In our own power-crazed lust for office we in SMGP of course intend to model ourselves closely upon this paragon of Greenness. Hence we too would like to establish our own Larry Speaks - I propose that it should be called Jo Waffles - a list of people who will come to the rescue when either someone's voice or brain gives out.

Anyone at all who thinks they might be able to be a bit of an 'expert' on any particular subject, either to brief our candidates and speakers, or to be one of these, please come forward now and tell me, Paul on 226 6683, so a list can be kept for future reference in time of need. Minimum qualifications: being confident that you know more about Green things than Ronnie. You don't have to wear a suit.

LETTERS TO THE EDITORS

Dear Bruce and Paul,

I want to know three things:

- 1 Why haven't we got any professors in SMGP? We used to have one in Scotland where I lived when it was called Caledonia.
- 2 Why hasn't CITY GREEN got a letters page?
- 3 Isn't it time we changed the local party name? We cover more than South Manchester these days.

Yours on the mend,

Colin

This letter has been cut, not to say mutilated - eds. However, the last point is worth discussion. If anyone has any views let us know please.

Cities & the EEC

With the European Election campaign just getting underway, now is a good time to look at some of the effects the EEC has on urban policy in the UK.

The EEC is able to exert considerable influence with the funding at its disposal. The annual budget is in the region of 30,000 million, about 1% of Community GNP, and the Common Agricultural Policy accounts for two-thirds of this. Of the remainder, there are two funds of which a significant proportion is spent in cities.

The European Regional Development Fund (ERDF) is the main channel for regional aid with an annual expenditure of about 9% of the entire EEC Budget. The UK is guaranteed about 15% annually of this. Over 90% goes to 'infrastructural' projects. 42% of the Fund is earmarked for regions designated 'most disadvantaged', of which only one - Northern Ireland - is in the UK.

ERDF Assistance takes various forms of which 'project financing' is most appropriate to inner cities. It favours job-creating projects in industrial, tourist and service activities. In the UK, funding is retained by the government as reimbursement of state aid, freeing more of the latter for other projects: thus funding for non-inner city projects could indirectly benefit inner cities, and vice versa. Funds are also available for infrastructural development, especially mains services and roads. Housing projects are excluded as in practice are schools and hospitals. Leisure projects and anything 'cultural' must be linked to tourist promotion in order to qualify.

The other main relevant fund is the European Social Fund which aims to promote employment opportunities for workers in the EEC. It covers job creation and training schemes. This Fund totals £2100 million p.a. of which about 19% goes to the UK.

Relatively small amounts of EEC Poverty Programme money is targetted on deprived urban areas for the benefit of, among others, young and long-term unemployed, the elderly and single parent families.

Also, £100m is allocated to the UK for small businesses in areas affected by the decline in the steel, shipbuilding and textile industries.

EEC regional priorities are based on notional 'scores' calculated according to economic criteria, such as GDP and unemployment levels, and make little or no direct reference to demographic factors such as urbanisation or otherwise. Regional policy can be seen as a partial corrective to the inevitable centripetal force of the very free market economy which the Treaty of Rome sets out to promote. This is borne out by the fact that the two main beneficiaries of ERDF since 1975 have by a large margin been the UK and Italy, countries on the periphery of the EEC area (Spain, Portugal and Greece have of course been members only for part of that time). Cities conform to this pattern of relative deprivation, Glasgow, Belfast and Naples contrasting with the more prosperous cities closer to the Paris-Brussels-Cologne 'golden triangle'.

EEC regional policy brushes a broad stroke and is not apt to deal with pockets of deprivation in prosperous areas, for example. The smallest unit of assessment is the so-called 'Level II' region, of which there are 35 in the UK. The funds available are inadequate to achieve "a mechanism to rectify disparities between regions" as required by Green policy for federation in Europe (FP501 of MSS) but are nevertheless large enough seriously to distort domestic policy-making, both at national and local level. When you look at the enormous sums of money, much of it from the EEC, which are being spent on road schemes in Salford and then look at the condition of some the housing estates in the city, the reality of outside control of expenditure becomes obvious.

'European Information Service' is published by the International Union of Local Authorities and Council of European Municipalities and Regions. It shows how recent EEC grants have been allocated and shows that the urban

schemes favoured for funding are road schemes, airport expansion, Convention Centres and the like, which shows a lack of responsiveness to actual local needs similar to that which marks the government's approach, as made clear in its glossy booklet, 'Action for Cities'.

The whole approach is 'supply side', bent on creating an economic environment where profits can be made, without any serious attempt being made to target grant aid in response to people's actual needs.

It is in inner cities, where the problem of remoteness of people from the decision-making processes which affect their lives is especially acute, that the need for a return of local democratic control over policy and funding is particularly pressing. The structure and aims of the EEC work against any such objective.

Student Loans

In one of the government's most ill-thought out plans for legislation yet, it circulated a White Paper, 'Top-up Loans for Students'.....

Loans will total £1150 over 3 years of a degree or other HE course. Repayments will be automatic when a graduate earns >85% of the national average wage (regardless of family responsibility or repayments on existing debt). The loan portion will increase each year.

p.t.o.

Students will lose all entitlement to welfare benefits, i.e. no Housing Benefit at all, no income support over summer, no unemployment benefit over summer even if enough stamp has been paid. Only some benefits, for the disabled and single parents, will remain.

The Department of Education and Science say that students will lose £150 p.a. in Benefits. NUS, who work with students at local level, say students will lose £1200 in London and £800 pa elsewhere. Thus loans will only just cover the loss of benefits and students will continue to run up overdrafts of between £100 and £300.

The level of grant and parental contributions will be frozen, with the result that more low-income parents will end up paying as their wages rise with inflation. Students will be expected to take part-time work during term time. Work schemes on campus will be especially encouraged, taking low-paid part-time work away from unionised, mainly women workers. Working while at college is known to lower 'performance'.

There will be *no* loans for the over-50's:

The loans system will be an administrative nightmare. No commercial banks have yet shown an interest in even government-underwritten loans. It will cost around £850m p.a. With that you could simply increase the level of the grant.

In other countries, loans have been unsatisfactory, e.g. in the U.S. there is a 15% default rate. In Sweden, grants are being increased after they found that loans meant an 11% fall in working class people entering education. Loans will do nothing to end the discrimination in Higher Education in favour of young white male middle-class students.

This legislation is expected to be introduced by Autumn 1990, thus affecting present first-year students. Education is often an issue that Greens avoid discussing for various reasons, but faced with the extremes of

injustice that this government gets away with we need to defend at least one of our basic rights - the right to gain knowledge and develop as human beings. The nature of education forms the basis of Green politics and any attempt to restrict access to it must be understood and challenged by anyone who calls themselves Green. This is why Greens, carrying Green banners in a sea of red will be supporting all actions against loans - in spirit and body.

- Steph

TELEPHONE NETWORK

Here is the new space saving phone network diagram. The letters to the right of your name refer to your contacts. Everyone has three.

A	Liz Honeybell	B E S
B	Edwin Howard	A E F
C	Branwen McHugh	D F H
D	Guy Otten	C H R
E	John & Frances Poole	A B I
F	Bruce Bingham & David Wild	B C G
G	Stephen Morton	F I K
H	Gary Lawson	C D L
I	Brian & Mary Candeland	E J M
J	Anna Carder	G I N
K	Bryony & Dave Howarth	G L O
L	June Buchan	H K P
M	Paul Emmerson	I N Q
N	Joyce Foster	J M R
O	Joe Otten	K P S
P	Alan & Linda King	L O T
Q	Allison Hunt & Jonathan Booty	M T R
R	Brenda Kellet	D N Q
S	Chrissi Blatch	A O T
T	Beryl & Steve Clarke	P Q S

If you can't follow this or don't know the phone no. of any of your contacts; or to have your name added to or taken off the list, ring David on 227 9167.

The New Year begins with some changes to the local party set-up. There are three new committees which between them cover most of the time-consuming domestic stuff which used to take up most of our business meetings. The Committee for Internal Affairs (CIA - geddit?) will look after the Newsletter, Policy development and internal democracy. It will also support the Secretary and Membership Secretary. The External Committee (ideas for snappier title welcome) will take on campaigns, including elections, and press and publicity. The Finance and Fundraising Committee is pretty well self-explanatory: it will also support the Treasurer.

We hope this will free time at full party meetings to discuss more interesting and wider issues. It should give us scope to invite outside speakers more often.

All committee meetings are open to all party members. To get involved with any of them please contact the respective Convenors - see Contacts list.

Circumstances have forced a change of style for CITY GREEN. We also welcome a lot of new readers - the members of Altrincham & Sale local party who we will be keeping in touch with this way while the Euro-election campaign is in progress. Needless to say we will be pleased to receive contributions from any reader.

-----DIARY-----

January 5	External Committee 9 Whalley Grove 8 pm.
January 7	Area Euro-election meeting at Manchester Town Hall, 10am - 5pm
January 9	Finance Committee at 26 Atwood Road Didsbury 8.15 pm.
January 11	Business Meeting at 72 Milwain Road 8pm.
January 16	'CIA' 96 Gretney Walk, Hulme 8.30 pm.
January 18	European election campaign meeting 9 Whalley Grove 8 pm.
February 25-26	Area Meeting: details Judith Filmore (see Contacts list)

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Think Globally



Act Locally

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