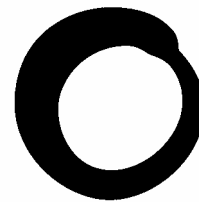


Welsh Assembly Elections 2003: The Green Challenge



**Friends of
the Earth
Cymru**
**Cyfeillion
y Ddaear
Cymru**

What can the National Assembly for Wales do for you?

On the 1st of May, Wales will go to the polls to elect members of the National Assembly for Wales. Friends of the Earth Cymru is challenging candidates to put the environment at the heart of the election.

Why does the Assembly matter?

The National Assembly for Wales has the power to make a real difference on many environmental issues and show a positive lead to the rest of the UK. On GM, waste, energy, transport and planning it is the National Assembly who is making the decisions that are shaping Wales.

"Wales is acknowledged as one of the world's leaders on sustainable development. It is one of only three governments in the world to have a legal duty to sustainable development... That is a huge honour, a huge responsibility and a huge opportunity. But it's only the start... There are difficult choices to be made – energy and climate change are just two examples. But these are challenges we cannot back away from. Doing nothing is not an option."

Rhodri Morgan, First Minister, December 2002

The Green Challenge: a five point manifesto

1. A GM-free Wales

Friends of the Earth Cymru has campaigned against the growing of Genetically Modified (GM) crops in Wales since 1997.

It has not been proven that GM crops are safe for human health and the environment.

GM science is new and the scientific experiments have largely been carried out by the biotech industries themselves,

GM crops can contaminate non GM and organic crops.

What has the Assembly done?

The Assembly has a cross party consensus against GM in Wales. In May 2000 it voted unanimously to pass motion restricting the growth of experimental GM crops in Wales, no GM crops were grown in Wales in 2002.

What the Assembly should do:

Block the commercial growing of GM crops by refusing to add ChardonLL to the national seed list,

object to new GM crops being approved for planting in Europe,

set up an independent Advisory Committee to deal with GM issues.

2. A zero-waste Wales

Wales has an appalling recycling record, communities are living next to leaking landfills and Wales could be threatened with proposals for rubbish hungry and polluting incinerators.

93 per cent of waste collected by councils in Wales every year is buried in landfill sites, only a disgraceful 7 per cent was recycled (2000/2001).

What has the Assembly done?

The Assembly's waste strategy (2002) set higher recycling targets than England. However the Assembly has not gone far enough and Wales could be threatened with proposals for polluting incinerators.

What the Assembly should do:

Establish Wales as a zero-waste nation within 25 years with clear targets and money to enable councils to meet them,

declare a 10 year freeze on building new incinerators.

(please turn over...)

3. Transport for all

Despite the Assembly's commitment to sustainable development there has been little shift in the pattern of spending over the past few years from traditional road building to public transport and reducing car dependency.

What has the Assembly done?

Still spending more on roads than investment in public transport,
still believes that new roads are necessary for economic growth for Wales,
is resisting proposals for an intercontinental airport at Severnside, near Newport.

What the Assembly should do:

Redirect transport spending from road building to public transport, cycling and walking,
say no to the A40 dualling in Pembrokeshire and declare that it will not build the M4 relief road,
support tram schemes in Cardiff, the valleys and other major centres in Wales.

4. Supporting an energy efficient and renewable future

Wales needs to forge ahead with new renewable and energy efficiency technologies. This will benefit the economy, the environment and help tackle climate change. Failing to do this will leave the door open for new nuclear power stations and the risks of nuclear waste, huge costs and terrorism.

What has the Assembly done?

Set a target of achieving at least 20% of Wales' current electricity demand by renewables by 2010,
1000th on shore turbine in the UK was opened by Rhodri Morgan, January 2003, near Llanrwst, north Wales,
Wales is leading the way in offshore wind development with two schemes proposed for north Wales.

What the Assembly should do:

Set high targets for renewable energy in Wales,
progress new renewable technologies such as tidal lagoons,
declare that no new nuclear power stations will be built in Wales.

5. Planning justice for Wales

Planning decisions can shape the future of localities for generations and can have major environmental and social consequences. Too often these decisions exclude the voice of the local community.

What has the Assembly done?

The National Assembly has done very little so far to make the planning system in Wales more open and accountable to people.
In its recent reform of the planning system the Assembly had the chance to give 'third parties' (people who comment on an application other than the local authority or the person who makes the planning application) the right to appeal to the National Assembly on planning decisions - as the developer does - but refused to even consider it.

What the Assembly should do:

Introduce a third party right of appeal on larger and controversial planning decisions.

Press for change

When lots of people start asking politicians about the same issues they take notice. Show your Assembly candidate that the electorate care about the environment and ask them to take the environment challenge.

Ask your Assembly candidates questions on these issues when they come knocking on your door,
ask party workers in the streets,
get involved with TV and radio discussion programmes.

To find out who your candidates are:
visit www.waleslink.org or contact Friends of the Earth Cymru.

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