

ACT GREENS POLICY PLATFORM

APRIL 2012



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ABORIGINAL AND TORRES STRAIT ISLANDER PEOPLES

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be recognised as Australia's first people—traditional custodians of this country, who have a unique cultural and spiritual relationship with it
2. recognition is due to the traditional custodians of the lands of the ACT and surrounding regions, while acknowledging the diversity of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT
3. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have a right to self-determination and to fully participate in the political processes of the broader Australian community
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have the right to equality with other Australians
5. the understanding and respect shown towards Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities by government bodies and the Australian people have a crucial impact on their capacity to achieve social equality and secure self-determination
6. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples should be celebrated for their positive contribution to the ACT community.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. equality of outcomes for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples on all major indicators of health, education, training, housing, employment and living standards
2. the Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Elected Body and the United Ngu(n)nawal Elders Council to be recognised as the formal representative bodies of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities, and therefore regularly and routinely consulted in a genuine and sincere way on issues that affect these communities
3. a legislative and regulatory framework that values the role, culture and input of the traditional custodians and other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the ACT
4. greater recognition of, and respect for, the skills and knowledge of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples
5. greater participation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in local politics and the processes of government
6. to support greater involvement and participation of members of the local Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities in the development of programs, funding allocation and policies for their people
7. increased opportunities for both mainstream services and targeted services to understand and build respect for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures
8. more culturally appropriate initiatives to enhance the provision of safety and justice services to Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
9. more culturally appropriate initiatives that seek to address the gross over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in the ACT justice system, and evidence-based approaches to addressing the underlying causes of crime, including social disadvantage
10. to support more Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander small business and self-employment initiatives in the ACT
11. increased consultation with traditional custodians of the ACT and surrounding regions on the care and management of nature parks and other public land in the ACT.

ALCOHOL, TOBACCO AND OTHER DRUGS

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. illicit and licit drug use, including alcohol and tobacco, has a wide range of adverse health, social and economic effects
2. problems associated with drug use are best addressed within a health and social framework
3. drugs that are currently illegal should not be legalised
4. imprisonment for personal use of illicit drugs, when not associated with other crimes, is not an appropriate solution
5. prevention of and early intervention in problematic drug use is desirable
6. a government funding mix should be adopted to enable supply reduction, demand reduction and harm reduction
7. harm minimisation approaches best reduce the negative impacts of drug use
8. policies and programs concerning drugs, drug users and the families of drug users should be evidence based and subject to continual evaluation
9. targeted strategies are required to reduce smoking rates amongst people from vulnerable backgrounds, as well as broader strategies for the general population
10. information and education programs are necessary for informed debate about the effects of all drugs, including prescription, non-prescription, licit and illicit drugs
11. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities have a right to be engaged to facilitate maximum community control over drug policies and programs, and to gauge their effects on individuals and families.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. reduction in the harmful use of drugs
2. to minimise death, disease, crime and corruption resulting from drug use
3. effective management and treatment of, and regulatory and judicial responses to, drug use in the community
4. reduced advertising, promotion and sponsorship of alcohol and tobacco products
5. reduced rates of alcohol-related violence
6. reduced rates of vulnerable people with a tobacco addiction
7. to move to civil rather than criminal sanctions in situations where personal drug use is not associated with other crimes
8. effective treatment and care of people experiencing co-morbidity
9. to combat the high rate of blood-borne diseases resulting from drug use in jails and other places of detention
10. adequate support and services for families with a member adversely affected by the use of alcohol, tobacco or other drugs.

ANIMAL WELFARE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. animals must be recognised as sentient beings that deserve our care and respect
2. where humans have control over other animals, we should ensure the highest standards of husbandry and care
3. bio-regional approaches based on habitat and other ecological criteria are required to manage native fauna, pests, domestic animals and production animals.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. responsible ownership of, care for and breeding of domestic pets
2. the adoption of a broad approach to tackling domestic animal neglect and cruelty, through rehabilitation, education and counselling as well as legislative solutions
3. to better protect native habitats by mandating cat containment areas in new suburbs and retrofitting in other appropriate areas
4. reduced road kill in 'black spot' areas by construction of mitigation measures such as wildlife underpasses, barriers and signage
5. strong, enforceable animal welfare laws that ensure humane treatment of animals in all situations
6. well-resourced animal welfare services in the ACT
7. humane alternatives to the intensive 'factory farming' of livestock
8. support for sustainable farming practices that result in the least impact on native animal habitat
9. the use of animals for scientific research only in situations where there is a clear and significant benefit for human or animal health, where there is no alternative research method, and where the highest standards of care are used
10. the use of humane, effective and ecologically sustainable methods to control pest animal species.

ARTS

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. the arts extends our ways of knowing and experiencing the world, and should be open and accessible to everyone to engage with, participate in and enjoy
2. arts and cultural activities make a vital contribution to our identity and help define our many communities
3. the arts plays a significant role in all cultures, history and heritage, from time-honoured and ancient to contemporary and new media forms
4. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures make a vital and continuing contribution to arts and culture in the ACT
5. an active and diverse ACT arts sector enriches our community and strongly contributes to residents' quality of life and wellbeing
6. a diversity of arts practice, including both community and high-level professional arts practice, should be supported in the ACT.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. increased community-wide participation in arts and cultural activities, with well-frequented, accessible venues across the ACT
2. access to arts and cultural programs for our whole community irrespective of age and socioeconomic circumstances
3. opportunities for artists to develop their abilities to a high level
4. strong links between artists, workplaces, schools, institutions, urban designers and developers
5. increased financial engagement between ACT businesses and the arts
6. a vibrant, diverse and sustainable ACT-based professional arts industry
7. a thriving live music and events scene in Canberra
8. well-regarded training courses at college, tertiary and specialist institutional levels
9. recognition of and appreciation for the work of artists based in our region
10. a whole-of-government approach to developing and implementing arts policies
11. a regional approach to arts events and activities
12. arts and cultural programs to contribute to lifelong learning.

BIODIVERSITY AND CONSERVATION

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. our natural environment is unique and inherently valuable, and deserves our care and protection
2. current generations have a responsibility to ensure that the environment is preserved and, where possible, enhanced for the benefit of future generations
3. environmental conservation is the shared responsibility of government, industry, business, communities and individuals
4. biodiversity, ecosystems and ecosystem processes maintain Earth's life support systems, including the climate system
5. the protection and conservation of biodiversity is essential for the wellbeing of all life on Earth
6. human-induced habitat loss and fragmentation, together with the spread of invasive species, each exacerbated by climate change, are significant threats to local and global biodiversity
7. maintaining, expanding and connecting protected areas is vital to preserving biodiversity and therefore our health and wellbeing
8. where there are threats of serious or irreversible environmental damage, lack of full scientific certainty should not be used as a reason for postponing measures to prevent environmental degradation
9. local Indigenous knowledge should be integrated into the conservation and sustainable management of our natural resources
10. biodiversity offsets should not be pursued as a primary conservation strategy.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. to maintain and enhance the resilience of local and regional ecosystems by increasing ecological connectivity
2. to ensure that Canberra's native bushland and protected areas are preserved and enhanced as our urban footprint grows
3. to reverse the degradation of land, vegetation, water, soil and air quality in the ACT
4. integrated regional management of native habitats, including regional biodiversity corridors and buffer zones, and enhanced riparian and water management strategies
5. programs which educate the ACT community about the importance of biodiversity and how to protect and enhance it
6. initiatives to monitor, manage, repair and report upon the status of the ACT's protected ecosystems
7. ACT planning and land maps to clearly display biodiversity data and identify, by priority, areas in need of protection
8. greater public investment in the management of Canberra's nature parks and conservation reserves, and enhanced integration and support for the significant volunteer effort provided by residents in caring for these areas
9. management of the ACT's protected areas to demonstrate best practice
10. targeted programs to address the negative impact of invasive weeds and pests in Canberra's conservation reserves and surrounding rural areas.

BUSHFIRE MANAGEMENT AND RESPONSE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. bushfire has been an integral part of the Australian ecosystem for thousands of years
2. the ACT should adapt to the changing climate, noting increases in both the severity and frequency of bushfire in the ACT region
3. the risks associated with living in a bushfire-prone landscape need to be anticipated in urban planning and infrastructure decisions
4. fuel-reduction techniques are an appropriate part of the suite of fire prevention and mitigation strategies
5. community awareness about bushfire hazard, fire risk and arson is an essential part of any fire management strategy
6. a strong ACT Government response, including appropriately resourced and coordinated bushfire services, is essential to protect both human life and the natural environment
7. the Strategic Bushfire Management Plan for the ACT is a comprehensive document which guides the preparation of annual Bushfire Operations Plans to reduce the risk of bushfire and its negative impacts.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. annual Bushfire Operations Plans to combine the most recent long-term weather forecasts with the best possible scientific information, and to incorporate measures to protect biodiversity and be consistent with ecosystem maintenance
2. the ACT community to be prepared for the risks of living in a bushfire-prone landscape
3. the continued refinement of new technology, such as text messaging to mobile phones, as a way to assist in broadcasting emergency warnings
4. bushfire services to be adequately resourced, coordinated and supported to meet the needs of the ACT community
5. bushfire services to be constantly monitoring new developments in firefighting techniques, and ensuring the ACT is adopting a best-practice approach
6. continued strong collaboration between ACT and NSW volunteer and professional firefighting services and personnel
7. full recognition of the importance of volunteer emergency services personnel.

BUSINESS

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. a long-term vision for a just transition of business to a clean, green economy in the ACT is vital and requires ACT Government decision-making to be consistent with that vision through fostering and showcasing sustainable and innovative ACT industries
2. as the national capital, the ACT has many unique business opportunities
3. working together with business, government and the community sector can best achieve mutually beneficial outcomes, significant innovation and more efficiency
4. a diversified, resilient, dynamic and sustainable business sector will support a prosperous community
5. the ACT needs a robust and sustainable private sector which generates significant and meaningful employment in the region
6. ACT Government procurement decisions are an important way to support the local and regional economy
7. the ACT Government should work with business to enable it to be responsive to challenges such as climate change, food security and peak oil, and able to meet social and environmental best practice
8. business competition should be fair and equitable
9. businesses should be given the opportunity to participate in decision-making which affects the ACT economy
10. small businesses are a vital part of the ACT economy and provide scope for much non-public service employment, innovation, diversity and leading edge enterprises
11. small businesses face particular financial, administrative and employment challenges
12. social enterprises have the potential to affect positive social and economic outcomes, particularly amongst disadvantaged groups within the community, and should be fostered.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. delivery of a long-term strategic plan for business that drives the transition to a clean, green economy in the ACT and helps the ACT meet its legislated climate change targets
2. a more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable private sector in the ACT
3. any government financial support to the private sector to be made public
4. a comprehensive government strategy which encourages diverse, creative and vibrant retail, hospitality and entertainment sectors
5. better utilisation of local regional supply chains
6. ACT Government procurement opportunities to be easily accessible to local and small businesses
7. simplification of ACT Government charges, regulations and compliance costs as they apply to business
8. additional retail space to be made available only when economic impact assessment shows there is sufficient demand
9. the ACT Government to facilitate an environment conducive to a flourishing business sector
10. responsive relationships between business and government based on mutual respect, understanding and communication
11. the ACT Government's supermarket policy to support fair competition in the ACT.

CARERS

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. carers provide unpaid care and support to family members, partners and friends who have needs associated with disability, ageing, physical or mental health issues or substance use
2. carers make a substantial social and economic contribution to the ACT community
3. caring is a potentially rewarding role that should be undertaken by choice, and not as a result of inadequate social or health services
4. relationships involving the provision of care are a partnership in which both parties have the right to quality of life
5. carers have the right to equity in opportunity, particularly in relation to participation in education, employment and community activities
6. carers should be involved in decisions that have an impact on them as individuals
7. the knowledge and experience that carers have should be recognised
8. respite can be necessary for the health and wellbeing of carers and the person they are caring for
9. there are a wide variety of carers who each have different needs
10. a lack of secure, long-term supported accommodation for people with disabilities impacts adversely on older carers.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. increased recognition of and respect for carers
2. support for the health and wellbeing of carers
3. carers to receive adequate support prior to crisis occurring
4. stronger rights for carers, including the right to make choices and optimise their quality of life
5. a person-centred response to carers' needs
6. clear information to be available to carers about services that could be suitable for them and the person they are caring for
7. carers to receive adequate advice and assistance when needed about how to best care for their family members, partners and friends
8. carers to be able to access advocacy support
9. a coordinated, well-resourced and strategic response to meet the needs of carers and the people they care for.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. children and young people¹ are to be respected and valued for who they are now, as well as who they may become in the future
2. children and young people have the right to live in a healthy, safe and sustainable environment in which they can thrive
3. children and young people have the right to live free of physical and emotional abuse, neglect, exploitation and discrimination
4. decisions that affect children and young people must be in their best interests
5. children and young people are entitled to express opinions and to have them taken into account by decision-makers, appropriate to their age and maturity
6. children and young people have the right to relax and play, and to join in on a wide range of cultural, artistic and other recreational activities
7. in protection and promotion of the rights of children and young people in the ACT, such as the right to education and safety, consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
8. children without their family, including those who are unable, for their best interests, to stay in their family, are entitled to care and protection under government supervision, with respect for their individual rights, needs, beliefs, culture and language
9. children and young people who do not live with both of their parents have the right to know, and maintain meaningful relationships with, their non-resident parent(s) and extended family, where this is practicable and safe.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. continual enhancement of Canberra as a child-friendly city²
2. effective mechanisms for children and young people to express their needs, opinions and aspirations to the ACT Government and the broader community
3. a reduction in the incidence and impact of neglect, abuse and disadvantage amongst children and young people in the ACT through
 - 3.1 improving food security through food relief, meal services and practical assistance to low-income families
 - 3.2 increasing access to safe, affordable housing through public housing, community housing and supported accommodation
 - 3.3 enhancing service coordination and resources for children and young people who may be at risk
4. promotion of the health and wellbeing of children and young people
5. children and young people to be valued as active citizens of the ACT
6. continued provision of youth services for all young people aged 12–25 years in the ACT
7. continual enhancement of ACT legislation to strengthen the human rights of children and young people
8. children and young people to have increased access to public spaces and community facilities throughout the ACT
9. collaboration with representative and advocacy organisations to engage children and young people in community consultation activities and government decision-making

¹ 'Child' refers to a person under the age of 12 years. 'Young person' refers to a person aged between 12 and 17 years.

² Information regarding 'child-friendly cities' is available at <http://www.childfriendlycities.org/>.

10. those aged 16 and 17 years to have the option to register and vote in ACT elections
11. proper recognition of the important role of kinship and foster carers in the child protection service system
12. clear targets that help ensure improved outcomes for young people making the transition from out-of-home care to independent living.

CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENERGY

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. human-induced climate change poses the greatest threat to the future of our planet
2. immediate action is required to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels and transition to renewable energy
3. achieving a safe climate will require a return to an atmospheric concentration of 350 ppm or lower of greenhouse gases (CO₂ equivalents), and our global, national and local climate change strategies must reflect this need
4. inaction on climate change will result in widespread negative social and economic impacts
5. mitigating rather than offsetting emissions should be our primary method of addressing climate change
6. in addition to primary emissions reduction measures, sequestration measures such as afforestation and revegetation will need to be implemented to reduce existing greenhouse gases
7. early action to reduce emissions will have the lowest economic cost in the long term, and will deliver the most benefits for the community
8. well-designed economic instruments, legislation and regulation can all be used as a means to address climate change
9. the ACT is well placed to lead Australia in addressing climate change
10. all ACT Government agencies, businesses, organisations and individuals have a responsibility to reduce their greenhouse gas emissions
11. energy-efficiency measures and renewable energy generation will be a core component of the ACT's emissions reduction strategy
12. the cost of reducing greenhouse gas emissions and adapting to climate change should be distributed locally, nationally and internationally and should account for the principle of common-but-differentiated-responsibility
13. the ACT Government has a responsibility to ensure the costs and benefits of reducing greenhouse gas emissions are distributed equitably across the community
14. addressing climate change requires significant investment in education and community engagement, and the benefits of energy and ecological literacy are extensive
15. renewable energy should be prioritised over gas to accelerate transition to a low-carbon economy.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. an ACT climate change mitigation strategy which will deliver greenhouse gas emissions reductions of at least 40% (on 1990 levels) by 2020 and net zero emissions by no later than 2060
2. the ACT's emissions reduction target to be regularly updated in accordance with scientific developments in our understanding of climate change
3. a local energy strategy which reverses the ACT's growing demand for energy, improves energy efficiency and transitions to a 100% renewable energy future
4. the ACT Government to become carbon neutral by 2020 through energy-efficiency measures and by increasing its purchase of renewable electricity to 100% by 2016
5. at least 50% of the ACT's electricity consumption in 2020 to be met by renewables
6. to build capacity within our communities and industries to develop and expand the local renewable energy sector
7. the Climate Change Authority to recognise ACT reductions that exceed the national target when setting national caps, as provided for in federal legislation

8. improvements in energy efficiency through mandatory energy-efficiency standards for new buildings and retrofitting programs for existing buildings
9. a modern smart grid that reliably manages distributed energy and electricity demand
10. climate change mitigation and adaptation strategies to be integrated into the ACT's urban planning policies and processes, waste disposal and recycling systems and transportation infrastructure
11. any carbon offsets purchased to comply with the Australian Government's National Carbon Offset Standard
12. recognition of soil and vegetation sequestration in the ACT's greenhouse accounting scheme and a clear strategy to maximise sequestration programs and activities
13. the ACT's climate change strategy to deliver efficient and equitable economic outcomes for the Canberra community, with the impact of costs and benefits viewed both from a long-term and short-term perspective
14. energy pricing structures which reflect the environmental and economic cost of provision, and which include support for socioeconomically disadvantaged users
15. comprehensive public engagement campaigns on energy use.

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. meaningful community engagement is vital for democracy and a society that values inclusion
2. ACT Government decision-making, legislation, policies and programs should be informed by genuine, ongoing community engagement
3. the full range of informative, consultative, participatory and deliberative community engagement processes should be utilised, including provision of sufficient government information to allow for real participation
4. it is necessary to match the scale of community engagement processes appropriately to the potential impact of ACT Government legislation, policies and programs
5. community engagement requires adequate, balanced and timely involvement of a diverse range of individuals and groups to be effective and meaningful
6. the ACT Government has a responsibility to ensure community engagement processes are transparent
7. community engagement processes must be clear in purpose, and provide accurate descriptions of the types of consultation to be used, to create realistic expectations of the outcomes.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. the ACT Government to become a national leader in participatory governance
2. mutual trust, respect and increased cooperation in decision-making between the ACT Government and the ACT public
3. free, timely and accessible information to ACT residents and stakeholders about ACT Government activity, including objective background information
4. maximum participation of community organisations and individuals in public debate without fear of negative repercussions from the ACT Government
5. to provide genuine opportunities for all affected people to be included in community engagement activities
6. sufficient resourcing of the Community Engagement Unit to ensure comprehensive coordination with all ACT Government agencies
7. incentives for ACT Government agencies to demonstrate excellence in community engagement activities
8. to update the Community Engagement Manual to include deliberative democratic processes¹ and extend the training of ACT Government officers in its effective use
9. to ensure that community engagement processes are adequately and appropriately resourced and include appropriate timeframes for engagement
10. to provide information to the community about processes in which they participate, including reasons for taking up or rejecting recommendations
11. to assist organisations delivering government-funded services to institute appropriate community engagement which adheres to the Social Compact
12. increased capacity for ACT Government agencies to release data, analysis, research and other information of public interest.

¹ Deliberative democratic processes can be large- or small-scale processes matched to significant, often contentious, government decisions. Processes can include deliberative conferences, citizens' juries, 21st century town meetings, deliberative polls and participatory budgeting (as in Porto Alegre, Brazil). These processes are being adopted in many countries including Australia (mainly in Western Australia), United States, United Kingdom, Germany, Canada, Brazil, Scandinavia, Italy and France.

COMMUNITY SECTOR

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. community sector organisations provide essential services for the most vulnerable and disadvantaged people in our community
2. the community sector has valuable insights to offer and should be consulted by government, as a matter of course, in a genuine and sincere manner to inform the development of policies
3. the community sector is built on principles of social justice with both paid staff and volunteers who are committed, passionate and skilled, from a wide range of backgrounds and cultures. Their contribution should be acknowledged and respected
4. the community sector plays an essential role in generating and promoting public debate.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. increased viability and resilience in the ACT community sector, in terms of career pathways, professional development, and remuneration that further develops the diverse range of skills and knowledge in the ACT
2. to maintain appropriate levels of accountability in the community sector, while reducing administrative burdens for community organisations
3. a community sector that is adequately resourced to identify community needs, and is able to respond those needs in a timely and effective manner
4. a strong and relevant Social Compact that forms the basis of a mutually respectful relationship between government and non-government community services, and creates an authorising environment for frank and open communication and dispute resolution
5. increased roles for community organisations in the development of public policy and advocacy, and greater integration of feedback from community organisations
6. to create more opportunities for volunteers to receive subsidised training and other support, as part of a comprehensive workforce strategy.

CULTURAL AND LINGUISTIC DIVERSITY

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. that cultural and linguistic diversity in the ACT population greatly enriches our community and should be celebrated and accepted
2. cultural and linguistic diversity should be promoted within the context of respecting democracy and universal human rights
3. the ACT should be a safe and welcoming place for asylum seekers, refugees and migrants.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. an ACT community that accepts and celebrates cultural and linguistic diversity
2. equity of opportunity for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, and the elimination of discrimination
3. people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds to actively engage in democratic processes and government decision-making
4. an appropriate response to the needs of asylum seekers and refugees who settle in the ACT
5. ACT Government policy processes to maximise the contribution of culturally and linguistically diverse communities
6. a strengthening of organisations' ability to represent and work with people from culturally and linguistically diverse groups
7. the provision of appropriate services for people from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, recognising that people from these backgrounds may experience barriers to accessing mainstream services.

DISABILITY

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. all people have a right to independence, self-determination and choice in their lives
2. there are a variety of medical, societal and environmental reasons why people's individual abilities differ; disabilities arise when society fails to accommodate these differences, and creates, or fails to remove, barriers to equitable access for all
3. people with disabilities, and their families and carers, should have the opportunity to actively participate in policy and service planning and delivery
4. a person-centred approach should be taken in service provision
5. people with disabilities should have access to a range of secure, long-term supported housing options
6. the adequate provision of transport options for people with disabilities is necessary for their full participation in society
7. respite is necessary for the health and wellbeing of people with disabilities and their carers
8. services provided to people with disabilities must be safe and not subject them to abuse
9. governments hold primary responsibility to display ongoing leadership in fulfilling the obligations under the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. people with disabilities to be integrally involved in all levels of decision and policy making, including in their own service development and delivery
2. people with disabilities to be able to participate fully in all aspects of life, including education, training and employment
3. people to have access, where necessary, to appropriate facilities and support personnel in order for them to be able to undertake their chosen activities
4. the timely and full implementation of the National Disability Insurance Scheme
5. the elimination of barriers to access the ACT community, public transport system, information and communication technologies, public facilities and services
6. disability support services funded or provided by the ACT Government to be subject to the same level of scrutiny as those services provided by non-government organisations
7. equal access to primary and secondary education, vocational training, adult education and lifelong learning
8. increased pathways for school leavers with disabilities to make the transition from school into meaningful employment, educational and vocational programs or other community-based activities
9. increased number of social enterprises employing people with disabilities operating in the ACT, and an increase in social procurement from the ACT Government
10. an increase in the availability of secure, long-term supported accommodation for people with disabilities, operating under a range of models
11. an increased availability of respite services for people with disabilities and their carers
12. improved pay and conditions and career structures for providers of services for people with disabilities.

ECOLOGICAL FOOTPRINT OF THE ACT POPULATION

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. the ACT's ecological footprint is determined by the number of people in the ACT, their per capita consumption of resources, and technological choices for urban design, transport options and how and where we produce our food and manufactured goods
2. economic growth driven by population growth and consumption is unsustainable, and an alternative approach to prosperity should be explored
3. achieving an ecologically sustainable population for the ACT must take into account economic considerations, equity and social justice on a local, regional and global basis, and should be consistent with international human rights obligations and multiculturalism
4. the ACT should set an example that may encourage other regions to also achieve a more sustainable footprint.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. the ACT to be a leader in providing a small-footprint way of life
2. the ACT's per capita ecological footprint to fall
3. the ACT to play its part in stabilising the planet's population
4. an ACT community that is aware of the impact their consumption has on the local, regional and global environment
5. an ACT climate change mitigation strategy which will deliver greenhouse gas emissions reductions of at least 40% (on 1990 levels) by 2020 and net zero emissions by no later than 2060
6. a regional approach to addressing transport, urban development, food production, and other issues that are not constrained by state and territory borders
7. an ACT and region-specific strategy developed to prepare for the predicted consequences of peak oil¹
8. the ACT Government to use the State of the Environment Report by the ACT Commissioner for Sustainability and the Environment as a key benchmark for measuring progress towards sustainability.

¹ 'Peak oil' occurs when the maximum rate of global oil extraction is reached. After this time the rate of production enters terminal decline.

ECONOMIC MANAGEMENT

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. social, environmental and financial wellbeing should be considered equally in setting economic policy objectives
2. economic policy must be ecologically sustainable and take into account intergenerational equity
3. economic growth reliant on population growth and consumption is unsustainable in the long term
4. economic growth is not the only measure of prosperity, and an alternative approach should be embraced
5. a timely shift to a low-carbon economy will deliver the greatest economic benefits to the Territory
6. an ACT economy that serves our long-term social and environmental needs requires public investment in public infrastructure which delivers long-term benefits—economically, socially and environmentally
7. markets have an important role to play in the allocation of resources. However, governments have a responsibility to regulate markets, correct market failures and achieve social, economic and environmental objectives
8. taxation should be progressive and can be used to correct market failure
9. good economic policy includes strategic planning of skill needs and training requirements, to ensure full employment
10. ACT Government decisions and activities have significant consequences for ACT economic and social development, resource use and the environment, and should aim to create a diversified economy which capitalises on the skills, assets and innovation in the ACT community.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a timely and just transition to a clean, green economy
2. a strong, diverse and sustainable local economy
3. a balanced budget over the economic cycle
4. public sector investment in assets that assist the transition to a low-carbon economy
5. financial accountability and transparency in public, private and community sectors
6. a more environmentally, socially and economically sustainable private sector in the ACT
7. the ACT Government's net worth maintained or increased
8. taxes, fees and charges levied by the ACT Government to provide a sustainable revenue base for government services without discouraging efficiency or imposing unnecessary compliance burdens
9. triple bottom line accounting, assessment and reporting to be a key part of ACT Government economic management and budget processes
10. growth in social enterprises in the ACT
11. legislated standards for the ethical investment of public money which include both positive and negative investment screening.

EDUCATION

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. high-quality, free and equitable education is a cornerstone of a healthy democracy, and is fundamental to Australia's continued prosperity
2. learning is a lifelong process fostered in both formal education and informal settings, from early childhood through adult life
3. everyone should have equitable access to an education that meets their needs and aspirations and gives them the skills and capacity to participate in society
4. it is the responsibility of government to ensure the provision of high-quality, well-resourced and safe learning environments that are open to all students
5. a responsive and relevant education system is underpinned by community involvement and recognises that parents and carers play a critical role in the education of their children
6. a high-quality education should equip children and young people with life skills and positive experiences of community engagement and social inclusion
7. government and non-government schools funding policy must ensure equity of educational outcomes that allows for diverse approaches, and must be based on need.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a vibrant and properly funded public education system that attains world-class standards of excellence and is built on an innovative curriculum
2. government and non-government education funding to be based on a formula that allows equity of educational outcomes, and is allocated in a transparent and accountable manner
3. an end to the gap in academic achievement associated with students' socioeconomic status and cultural background
4. improved educational and training outcomes for young people with a disability or a learning difficulty, by expanding and diversifying alternative settings and programs within schools for students with complex learning needs or experiencing barriers to mainstream education
5. to maintain and further develop the conditions and career opportunities of all ACT education professionals to increase the recruitment and retention of a high-quality teaching force
6. a professional and well-supported education workforce, with access to relevant, up-to-date and innovative professional development opportunities, and greater frontline support to engage with children and young people, including gifted and talented students
7. increased access to high-quality early childhood education in a range of settings
8. high school and college systems that engage with, and provide opportunities for, all young people to extend their knowledge and capabilities in ways that enrich their lives
9. a range of accessible education and training programs, offering new opportunities to adults at all stages of their life, including those re-entering the workforce and adjusting to changed circumstances, with a particular focus on literacy and numeracy
10. a high-quality vocational education system which offers new skills or re-skilling for future occupations, including those industries emerging in the green economy
11. to grow and strengthen the links between schools and their communities, and to facilitate greater parent and carer involvement in student learning
12. improved transitions between the primary, secondary, tertiary and higher education systems, and greater planning and coordination of education and training programs across all education sectors
13. a safe and healthy school environment for all students, teachers and other staff

14. improved student support services, ranging from learning assistance to health and welfare needs
15. teaching pedagogies and policies, including disciplinary policies, that are evidence based
16. improved access to affordable housing for all higher education students
17. culturally appropriate learning methods and resources, particularly for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander students, refugees, asylum seekers and migrants, including ongoing access to tuition for those who wish to study English as a second language
18. a continued and increased strategic approach to identifying skills shortages and training needs for the ACT, with genuine community input, to plan the future directions of vocational education in the context of the changing labour market and social needs in the ACT
19. increased curriculum focus on environmental studies, language and the arts, and cross-curricular approaches to sustainability.

FAMILIES

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. that family structures are increasingly diverse and should be valued in all their forms
2. families are essential to the wellbeing and strength of our community
3. supportive family relationships enhance individual wellbeing and resilience
4. public investment in quality health, education and family support services, particularly in the early years of childhood (0–8 years), is a sound investment in the future
5. parents deserve choice and support to balance their family commitments with their involvement in the workforce and community life
6. some families are vulnerable, and may require support or intervention to protect them or to reduce the risks of harm.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. increased investment from both the ACT Government and the Australian Government in family support services, including intensive and coordinated support to vulnerable families
2. targeted initiatives to ameliorate rising living costs for families
3. the introduction and expansion of family-friendly work policies, including parental leave and flexible working arrangements for all carers
4. adequate and appropriate interventions to ensure the safety of families and prevent and respond to the serious issues of abuse, neglect and domestic violence
5. effective, accountable, transparent, safe and high-quality services for ACT families
6. to have meaningful consultation and to work with local community groups to engage families in the evaluation and development of ACT Government policies and services
7. strategies that support the specific needs of separated families, sole parent families, step and blended families, families with parents with disabilities, families with adolescent parents, families with same-sex parents and families in which children are cared for by grandparents or extended family members
8. to continually enhance the availability of a mix of adequate and affordable high-quality early education and child care services for ACT families.

FOOD SECURITY

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. food security exists when all people, at all times, have physical, social and economic access to sufficient, safe and nutritious food to meet their dietary needs and food preferences for an active and healthy life
2. food insecurity in a global context can dramatically disrupt livelihoods, economies, geopolitical security and vital life support systems including biodiversity, water and nutrient flows, and genetic diversity
3. agriculture should be sustainable, taking into account local ecological constraints such as variable rainfall, poor soil fertility, frosts and the proneness of soil to wind and water erosion, as well as global constraints such as peak oil and phosphate supplies, soil and water pollution, loss of genetic diversity and increased biosecurity threats
4. local food production, in particular urban production, should be promoted and encouraged. This will have local food security, social and cultural benefits, as well as significantly reduce food miles
5. food waste is a valuable resource that can be utilised
6. genetically manipulated organisms (GMOs), their products, and the chemicals used to manage them, pose threats to natural and agricultural ecosystems
7. sustainable agriculture is the basis of economically viable rural and green urban communities, and the skills of our food growers and researchers are to be valued
8. land and water should be treated as scarce and precious resources.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. to plan, adapt and retrofit our inland capital city towards significantly increased local food production
2. adoption of best practice in urban and peri-urban agricultural land and water management
3. to increase the level of locally produced organic food
4. less wastage of food and better distribution of surpluses to those in need locally, nationally and internationally
5. to cooperate with neighbouring regions to enhance food security
6. to foster communication and networking between local and regional growers, thereby enhancing their resilience so they can share ideas, livestock and produce, particularly in poor food production years
7. food security concerns to be considered in the approval of any development that affects agricultural production areas
8. the ACT to be GMO free
9. protection of ecologically vulnerable habitats that provide important ecosystem services such as pollination, water and nutrient cycling services
10. strategies to be implemented and technologies to be developed that divert local organic waste from landfill to be composted for local food production
11. a full life-cycle analysis to be applied to the disposal of food waste. Conservation of resources should underpin these decisions, taking economic, environmental and social considerations into account.

GOVERNANCE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. the ACT Government should be a leader and innovator in good governance
2. a healthy democracy requires frank, transparent and accountable practices in all aspects of government
3. a culture of honest and dedicated service to the community is as important to good governance as official rules and procedures
4. in the importance of the separation of powers between the executive, legislature and the judiciary
5. the ACT parliament must seek to openly and honestly represent the interests of all ACT residents
6. parliamentary rules, conventions and structures must keep pace with changing community expectations
7. the ACT public service should be provided with the resources and support that it needs to ensure it can provide accurate and thorough advice to the government of the day without fear or favour
8. ACT Government decisions and activities have significant consequences for ACT economic and social development, resource use and the environment, and represent an opportunity to help shape a more sustainable local economy
9. the negative social and environmental impacts of ACT Government decisions and activities must be identified, accounted for and ameliorated
10. to properly make and evaluate key government decisions, triple bottom line accounting which measures economic, social and environmental factors should be applied
11. a whole-of-government approach is important for enhancing coordination and implementation of key government policies and strategies and to breaking down 'silos'.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. open and transparent access to government documents, including a clear presumption in favour of document disclosure as part of a robust freedom-of-information system
2. the ACT Government to copyright all government publications under creative commons licences
3. adequate powers and resources for all integrity agencies to monitor the implementation of their recommendations by the ACT Government
4. ACT Government procurement decisions to be made using triple bottom line assessment
5. strengthened performance reporting in ACT Government agencies' annual reports and the introduction of consistent, meaningful and measurable triple bottom line indicators for annual reporting and budget processes
6. sound environmental research, informed by the precautionary principle, to underpin ACT Government decision-making where there is a substantial environmental impact, and to be put into practice through environmental management plans
7. to develop measurable goals, performance indicators and strategies to reduce any identified adverse ecological, economic and social sustainability impacts of ACT legislation, policies and programs
8. a strengthened ACT Public Interest Disclosure Act to adequately protect whistleblowers.

HEALTH

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. fair, equitable and universal access to quality health services is a basic human right
2. health is a state of physical, mental and social wellbeing with outcomes influenced by the inter-relationship of biological, social, economic and environmental factors
3. a social determinants of health¹ approach should underpin government decision-making across all portfolios
4. an effective health system must be based on primary health care and preventive health care, including health promotion, disease prevention and early intervention
5. people should be encouraged to interact with health services before they become unwell
6. consumers have the right to be fully informed about an illness they may be suffering and the options for treatment, and to fully participate in decision-making about which treatment to pursue
7. strategic decision-making and resource allocation in the health sector to deliver long-term sustainable funding should involve a partnership between the government, community, health care consumers and health service providers
8. all health professionals should be recognised for their training, skills and abilities
9. peer support programs are a valuable tool to assist a person who is experiencing or has experienced an illness
10. carers need to be supported in their role (see Carers policy)
11. a well-resourced public sector is an integral part of the delivery of health services
12. all health care service providers must:
 - 12.1 respect the human rights of those who use their services
 - 12.2 deliver safe services
 - 12.3 be accountable for their funding and service provision
13. strategies to reduce ACT health workforce shortages must take into account the needs of regional and overseas communities who have access to limited health services as compared to the ACT.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a safe and clean environment that promotes health and wellbeing
2. a whole-of-government approach to achieve improved health outcomes for individuals and communities
3. community health threats to be identified and targeted before they have significant impacts
4. a health system which has strong, well-funded primary care and prevention services as well as acute, hospital-based care
5. consumers to have access to reliable, up-to-date, impartial information about health and treatment options
6. vulnerable communities to be a particular focus of preventive health measures and campaigns
7. improved access to bulk-billing general practitioners and primary dental care, particularly for people who are disadvantaged

¹ 'Social determinants of health' are the conditions in which people are born, grow, live, work and age, including the health system. These circumstances are shaped by the distribution of money, power and resources at global, national and local levels, which are themselves influenced by policy choices. Social determinants of health are mostly responsible for health inequities—the unfair and avoidable differences in health status seen within and between countries. (World Health Organization, available at http://www.who.int/social_determinants/en/)

8. the Australian Government to recognise the shortage of general practitioners in the ACT and facilitate more financial incentives for them to work here
9. to eliminate the health inequities experienced by Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people
10. for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander communities to be involved in the design and delivery of health services
11. waiting periods for surgery (including elective surgery) equal to or less than the national average
12. to decrease rates of obesity in the community
13. all people to be able to access sufficient, safe and nutritious food
14. a built environment that encourages active living
15. to prepare health services for the regional impacts of climate change
16. ACT women to have access to impartial, high-quality information and services in the areas of reproductive health, pregnancy termination, ante-natal care and childbirth
17. people experiencing a chronic illness to be supported in self-managing their illness
18. to improve the quality of life for those people living with or affected by mental illness
19. a decrease in community stigma around mental illness and suicide
20. to provide an adequate level of supported accommodation for people experiencing a mental illness, living in the community, and requiring assistance
21. high-risk communities to be involved in the design of prevention programs for blood-borne viruses
22. detainees at the Alexander Maconochie Centre to be able to access the same level of health services as is available to the general community
23. people with a terminal illness to be respected in their choices regarding their treatment
24. a high-quality professional health workforce with the capacity to meet current and projected needs of the community
25. a health system that is responsive to feedback from community and health workers
26. an increased accountability from the ACT Government on consumer outcome measures as compared to the current sole focus on output measures.

HERITAGE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. heritage is to be interpreted broadly in order to reflect the diverse nature of our Territory's history from pre-European settlement to present day society, inclusive of Indigenous, immigrant and contemporary Australians
2. heritage in the ACT is a precious asset and resource to be respected and protected for current and future generations
3. heritage protection is not limited to the preservation of buildings and other physical structures, but also includes preservation of intangible heritage such as the memories and stories of our elders, including Indigenous elders, which in turn fosters our sense of place and community
4. funding and financing of developments and projects involving our shared heritage, by government, non-government bodies, the private sector and private individuals, is in the public's interest
5. libraries, museums and other collecting institutions are essential repositories of heritage.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. appropriate heritage sites, including 20th and 21st century sites, to be identified and protected
2. alignment, where practicable, of ACT, National Capital Authority (NCA) and Commonwealth heritage protection laws to overcome the present complexity of jurisdictional responsibilities in the ACT
3. increased community consultation in relation to identifying what is considered as appropriate heritage and what constitutes its adequate protection, including reasonable measures to ensure that publicly and privately owned or controlled heritage is able to be adequately conserved
4. government-owned heritage-listed properties to be audited in respect of energy efficiency and carbon emissions, in order to better integrate the principles of adaptive re-use and environmentally sustainable design in the refurbishing and maintenance of such properties
5. heritage values being appropriately integrated into all urban planning policy to ensure that new development, particularly in existing suburbs, takes into account heritage values
6. the establishment of a searchable public ACT heritage database that includes items on the ACT, NCA and Commonwealth heritage registers, as well as intangible cultural heritage items such as genius loci, crafts, folklore, oral histories and traditions, and living cultural assets such as flora and fauna and living treasures (people)
7. the ACT Heritage Council to be well resourced so it can fulfil its obligations and strategic directions, including considering nominations in a timely manner
8. better recognition of, and respect for, the skills and knowledge of traditional custodians and representatives of other Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in relation to conservation and heritage issues.

HOUSING

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. access to safe, secure, appropriate and affordable housing is a human right and an essential prerequisite to health and social equity
2. affordable housing requires a whole-of-government approach
3. housing should be environmentally sustainable
4. housing should facilitate community interaction
5. the ACT Government has a duty to provide sufficient public housing, community housing, crisis accommodation and supported accommodation to meet current and projected demand
6. the current rate of homelessness in the ACT is unacceptably high and must be reduced as a matter of urgency
7. the housing needs of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be met as a matter of urgency
8. older people should be supported to age in place where appropriate
9. security of tenure enhances quality of life and economic wellbeing, and is integral to the effective provision of social housing and the regulation of the private rental market
10. housing affordability is defined not only by the price to own or rent a house but also the costs associated with running a house, and water and energy efficiency can make a house more affordable.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. equitable access to safe, secure and affordable housing for all ACT residents
2. a mix of housing that provides affordable options for everyone
3. continued innovation in models of home ownership
4. public housing to comprise 10% of all housing
5. to improve the utilisation of the existing housing stock
6. a reduction in the environmental impact of housing, both during construction and throughout the life of the building
7. public housing options that cater to the diverse needs of tenants and provide adequate support to people with special housing needs
8. minimal waiting times for people trying to access emergency accommodation or on the public housing waiting list
9. sufficient levels of long-term and secure supported accommodation options for people with disabilities or mental illness
10. Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people to have access to adequate, secure, well-maintained, safe and culturally appropriate long-term housing.

HUMAN RIGHTS

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. economic, social, cultural, civil and political rights are interdependent and must be respected and protected
2. cultural, religious, gender and other differences need to be taken into account to ensure equal rights are enjoyed by all
3. where a balance must be struck between competing individual and community rights, careful, transparent deliberation is necessary
4. human rights are a dynamic concept which can evolve to cover new ground through ongoing public discussion.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a culture of respect for and fulfilment of obligations for human rights locally, nationally and globally
2. advanced legislative and procedural human rights protection in the ACT
3. the ACT to continue its role as a leader among Australian jurisdictions in fulfilling human rights obligations and as a key participant in discussions on evolving human rights
4. the ACT legal profession to engage in the ongoing public discussion about rights and to contribute positively to the growing body of human rights jurisprudence
5. a culture of human rights to be cultivated across the government, non-government and private sectors
6. a community that is well informed about human rights issues, and an ongoing and active community discussion about human rights and their application in the Territory.

INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. the ACT Government should provide a fair and equitable industrial relations system to workers not covered by the federal system
2. the ACT should maintain its high standard of workplace laws, and harmonisation processes should not weaken the ACT's workplace protections
3. accessible independent systems must be provided for conciliation and arbitration of workplace disputes
4. ACT workplaces must be non-discriminatory and provide equal opportunity for all workers
5. workers have the right to:
 - 5.1 organise and collectively bargain, and to be represented by a union where they so choose
 - 5.2 a healthy and safe workplace, and to be treated with dignity and respect
 - 5.3 work-life balance
6. laws governing contract employment should seek to ensure job security and prevent exploitation.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. greater equity in employment conditions across the ACT public, private and community sectors
2. equal pay for equal work
3. an end to discrimination, bullying and harassment in the workplace recognising that these are a workplace and occupational health and safety hazard
4. balance between paid work and personal time, and fair remuneration for overtime
5. a commitment to innovative and flexible working conditions
6. procedures that promote collective negotiations for workers, with particular priority for vulnerable working people
7. workers to have access to and understand information about their legal rights regarding their employment
8. to strengthen occupational health and safety standards, requirements, education and enforcement
9. appropriate employment for people with special employment needs, including creating opportunities through social enterprise
10. greater enforcement of protections for casual workers
11. access to appropriate compensation in occupational health and safety cases for all workers
12. transparent consideration of minimum industrial relations standards in ACT Government contracts
13. unions' right of entry to workplaces, including on occupational health and safety grounds, and the rights of unions to prosecute to be reinstated
14. adequate resourcing of WorkSafe ACT to uphold industrial protections
15. increased protection for workers reporting unsafe work practices or environments
16. management models that involve worker representation in decision-making
17. ACT public service employment conditions to remain sufficiently competitive to attract and retain public service staff.

JUSTICE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. in a safe and peaceful community where everyone has the right to be free from crime and fear of violence
2. the rule of law and judicial independence are fundamental to a democratic society
3. a preventive approach addressing systemic causes of crime should be pursued wherever feasible
4. all elements of the justice system should be transparent to ensure accountability and consistency
5. every person should be considered equal before the law
6. those experiencing disadvantage should be supported to ensure equality before the law
7. community participation in the justice system is important in order to foster understanding and respect for the justice system and its processes
8. law reform should occur in a timely and coordinated manner, based on sound research and engagement with the legal sector and the broader community
9. the justice system must be responsive to the needs of those in the ACT community who come into contact with it, particularly vulnerable people who have specific needs
10. delivery of justice is not wholly dependent on intervention by the courts, and early access to dispute resolution mechanisms or legal advice can be beneficial in resolving issues before they escalate and need adjudication by a court
11. in a 'police service' rather than a 'police force', to underline the role of police in serving the community
12. fundamental principles of criminal law, including innocence until proven guilty, open courts, habeas corpus and the right to remain silent should be preserved and upheld
13. incarceration is only appropriate as a sentencing option of last resort, and remandees should not be detained longer than necessary
14. safety, health and rehabilitation of victims and offenders, and the reduction of recidivism and trauma, should be a high priority for the justice system.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a criminal justice system that respects the human rights of victims, alleged and convicted offenders, witnesses and others affected by crime
2. victims of both civil and criminal wrongs to receive the necessary social and professional support to facilitate their recovery
3. commitment to an evidence-based approach to addressing crime that recognises the value of crime prevention
4. an end to politically motivated law-and-order campaigns and the threat of terrorism being used to undermine or discard basic principles of law
5. a reduction in the level of unmet legal need by improving access to private lawyers, Legal Aid and community legal centres
6. acknowledgement that mental health and drug and alcohol addiction are contributing factors for many who come into contact with the legal system
7. a significant reduction in the over-representation of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people in custody in the ACT
8. an ACT police service well positioned to respond to the needs of the community
9. people held in correctional facilities to be provided with a standard of care that ensures they exit detention in good health
10. detainees to have adequate access to through-care and after-care programs to assist in their return to the community and reduce the likelihood of re-offending.

OLDER PEOPLE

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. a well-functioning society values all of its members and recognises the contributions that older people make
2. in a society that maximises the social, economic and political participation of older people
3. in promoting positive views of ageing, rejecting ageism and challenging negative stereotypes
4. older people have the right to high-quality health and aged-care services regardless of their income, status, background or location
5. older people have the right to feel sage and live free of abuse, neglect and violence.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. promotion of 'positive ageing'
2. protection for the safety and rights of older people, including freedom from discrimination based on age
3. older people to be consulted and engaged in the formulation and implementation of policies that affect their wellbeing
4. a coordinated, well-resourced and sustainable response to meet the changing needs of older people and to address the ageing of the population
5. policies and strategies that assist older people to determine the timing and pace of their withdrawal from paid employment, including in the public service
6. acknowledgement of and respect for the diversity of older people, and services that address this diversity
7. accessible information for older people on ACT Government services and community services
8. facilitation of the social inclusion and involvement of older people in community activities
9. government and community organisations to review and improve the safety of older people in their homes, in service settings and in the broader community, including appropriately funded advocacy services
10. the Australian and ACT governments to assess, and respond to, current and future demand for aged-care services, with a focus on person-centred care that gives older people more choice and control over the care they receive.

SEXUALITY AND GENDER IDENTITY

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. freedom of sexual orientation and gender identity¹ are fundamental human rights
2. people have the right to assume their self-identified gender
3. acceptance and celebration of diversity are essential for genuine social justice and equality
4. discrimination on the basis of sexuality and/or gender identity is unacceptable.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a legal and regulatory environment free from discrimination on the basis of sexuality or gender identity
2. an ACT community that accepts diversity of sexuality and gender identity
3. a reduction in the disproportionate representation of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people in 'at risk' circumstances
4. access for people with needs related to their sexuality and gender identity to the range of health and support services they require
5. equitable, respectful and sensitive provision of all health and mental health services to address the specific needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and intersex people
6. robust sexuality and gender diversity anti-discrimination policies in all ACT Government workplaces, including requiring ACT Government departments and agencies to respect the preferred gender identity of transgender and intersex people
7. legislative amendment to the Commonwealth *Marriage Act 1961* to allow for legal marriage between two consenting adults regardless of sexuality or gender identity.

¹ 'Gender identity' is defined as how a person sees themselves in relation to the categories 'man' and 'woman'. Some people may identify as a man and/or a woman while others may identify as man in one setting and a woman in another. This suggests a gender continuum rather than simply an opposition between one gender (man) and another (woman). It should also be noted that an individual's perceived gender identity can change through a lifetime.

SOCIAL EQUITY

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. a fair and democratic society relies upon equity of opportunity and social inclusion
2. everyone in the ACT should have access to the resources and support they require to participate in the life of the community and reach their potential
3. poverty and systemic social disadvantage undermine social equity and should be eliminated
4. inequity in society leads to relatively low educational achievements, higher crime rates, social conflict and poor physical and mental health
5. social equity can be achieved through community development approaches that seek to empower the communities affected.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. coordinated, well-resourced, short- and long-term strategic responses to poverty and social disadvantage in the ACT
2. enhanced and better-integrated services for people in the ACT affected by poverty, including those who are homeless
3. a long-term whole-of-government and whole-of-community approach to preventing and alleviating social inequity, through long-term investment in community development, housing, health, education and public transport programs
4. to work in respectful partnerships with community not-for-profit organisations that are preventing and responding to poverty, exclusion and homelessness.

SPORT

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. sport and active recreation are an essential part of human physical and mental wellbeing
2. participation in sport and active recreation should be accessible by all Canberrans
3. community sporting clubs play a vital role in building stronger and better communities
4. the contribution of volunteers to sport and recreational activities is significant, and should be further encouraged
5. sport and active recreation are important sources of employment and economic and social activity
6. sporting excellence should be encouraged and recognised, and opportunities for improvement and competition provided
7. the staging of sporting events and the building of facilities should have minimal environmental impact.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. improvement in public health through participation in sport and recreational activities
2. the costs of participation in sport and recreation to be kept as low as possible, with assistance provided to disadvantaged people to prevent them being excluded from involvement
3. provision of sporting and recreation infrastructure to reflect changing demographics, the development of the city, and the popularity of activities
4. a strong role for the community in the planning, control and management of sporting and recreation facilities
5. a reduced insurance, financial and administrative burden on sports organisations, including simple and transparent funding processes
6. to ensure that regulations that apply to volunteers don't create barriers to their involvement
7. a strong relationship between the ACT Government and sports stakeholders to deliver progress on ACTIVE 2020 – the long-term strategic plan for sport and active recreation in the ACT and region
8. well-maintained facilities to support appropriate and safe sport and recreational activities in parks, lakes and natural areas
9. equity of access to sporting venues for people with disabilities
10. to facilitate major sporting events in the ACT, without entering into unaffordable bidding wars with other states and territories
11. to attract significant mass participation sporting events to the ACT, recognising the tourism, employment and volunteer benefits that accompany this
12. a culture of equity, fairness, inclusiveness, non-violence and freedom from harassment, particularly in junior sport
13. greater recognition of women's sport and improved gender equity in sports funding allocations.

TRANSPORT

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. public transport should be regular, rapid, reliable, accessible, clean and safe
2. walking and cycling should be convenient, safe and attractive modes of transport
3. a high-quality public transport system is a viable alternative to private car travel in Canberra and reducing the reliance on car travel is a key element of sustainable transport planning
4. everyone in the ACT has the right to access effective public transport, including people with mobility issues
5. effective public transport is an essential response to the challenges of housing affordability, social exclusion, climate change and peak oil¹
6. the ACT transport system should be evaluated on a triple bottom line basis
7. ACTION should remain publicly owned
8. the current level of transport-related injuries and fatalities is unacceptably high
9. cooperative governance between jurisdictions is required to reduce the ecological impact of moving people and goods to and from, and within, the ACT
10. all low-emissions transport options need to be considered in order to create a sustainable transport system in the ACT.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. transport policy and funding to favour active transport² and public transport, and to reflect the ACT's commitment to a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions on 1990 levels by 2020
2. affordable, accessible and high-quality sustainable transport infrastructure that is intended for use by everyone in Canberra and recognises regional transport issues including the volume of cross-border traffic
3. an extensive, rapid, modern public transport network that supports convenient and flexible travel Canberra wide
4. ACT public transport operations and service delivery to meet world best-practice standards, including pay, conditions and career opportunities
5. public transport patronage to increase by 10% per year between 2012 and 2016
6. the ACT to become Australia's leading jurisdiction for walking, cycling, public transport and energy-efficient vehicles
7. urban and regional planning to include integrated sustainable transport design, to ensure Canberra's growth is centred on transport corridors, and to ensure new developments have excellent active transport facilities and access to public transport
8. reductions in the cost of living by reducing the need for households to own multiple cars
9. strategic engagement, education and incentives on sustainable transport for schools, offices, other institutions and the community
10. the ACT to be prepared for and responsive to the changes caused by peak oil
11. a road-safety system that prioritises human life and recognises the special vulnerability of pedestrians, cyclists, children, elderly people and motorcyclists
12. the ACT Government to operate a carbon-neutral vehicle fleet
13. the ACT to significantly increase the proportion of its freight travelling by sustainable means.

¹ 'Peak oil' occurs when the maximum rate of global oil extraction is reached. After this time the rate of production enters terminal decline.

² 'Active transport' means travelling by physically active means – walking and cycling. It also refers to public transport that is effectively integrated with walking and cycling.

URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe that urban planning and development in the ACT should:

1. be based on ecologically sustainable development principles, regularly reviewed in light of the challenges associated with climate change, peak oil¹, food security, population growth, bushfire risk and biodiversity conservation
2. respect Canberra as the national capital of Australia and the 'bush capital'², as well as in the context of the local environment and the existing character and heritage of the city
3. be based on sustainable transport oriented design integrated with transport planning, and direct high-quality and energy-efficient higher density development to areas with good connectivity for low-energy transport modes such as walking, cycling and public transport
4. facilitate excellence in all levels of urban design which strongly contributes to quality of life
5. promote the health of residents through access to various modes of active transport³ and to recreational facilities
6. ensure that Canberra is a people-friendly city where children, older people and people with disabilities can easily get around
7. promote inclusiveness, equity and diversity, as well as a sense of community and place
8. facilitate affordable and appropriate housing for residents, including housing which caters for all stages of life
9. facilitate Canberra's transition to a sustainable, green economy
10. when practicable, consider the full life-cycle cost of actions, which will often lead to renewing existing structures rather than demolition and rebuild or new construction
11. include cooperative governance between jurisdictions to reduce the ecological impacts of regional and suburban growth
12. ensure that appropriate agricultural areas are set aside for food production
13. be informed by appropriate community consultation.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. the ACT to become a world leader in ecologically sustainable urban planning and design
2. urban planning in the ACT to become a model of low- or zero-emission development, and support the ACT's commitment to a 40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions on 1990 levels by 2020 and ACT carbon neutrality by 2060
3. the ACT to mandate new buildings to be zero carbon by 2016, allowing for renewable energy production to contribute to the energy balance
4. well-designed urban development, properly integrated with sustainable transport infrastructure, community facilities, urban open space, and government and commercial activities
5. a dynamic and vibrant city centre
6. high-quality and energy-efficient higher density residential development around town, commercial and group centres, serviced by an effective network of active and public transport
7. a planning system that is responsive to innovation and encourages sustainability
8. a well-resourced, consultative planning process that resolves planning issues equitably in a timely manner
9. relevant community organisations to be appropriately informed and resourced to respond to planning issues
10. sustainable urban planning and development to become the catalyst for better affordability and more economical, healthy and energy-efficient living and working spaces.

¹ 'Peak oil' occurs when the maximum rate of global oil extraction is reached. After this time the rate of production enters terminal decline.

² 'Bush capital' has different meanings for different people. We use it to include the concepts of no development on hills, buffers and ridges; not allowing development in our nature reserve system, and establishing viable corridors between nature reserves; and protection of green spaces within suburbs.

³ 'Active transport' means travelling by physically active means – walking and cycling. It also refers to public transport that is effectively integrated with walking and cycling.

WASTE AND POLLUTION

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. best-practice management of waste and resources is important for reducing greenhouse gas emissions and conserving scarce resources
2. the ACT should adopt a 'zero waste' approach to waste management
3. waste management strategies should be based on the hierarchy of avoiding waste generation, reducing waste, and then reusing and recycling residual waste
4. waste should be treated as a resource and reused in a way that achieves the maximum economic and environmental benefit, taking into account a full life-cycle analysis
5. high resource-recovery targets will bring long-term environmental, social and economic benefits to the ACT, and these benefits must be considered in decisions about the creation, management and disposal of waste
6. investment in waste management solutions should not depend upon a high level of waste production
7. product designers and manufacturers should bear responsibility for their products' life cycle, and use closed-loop cycles of production and emphasise principles of recovery and remanufacture and generating minimal to no waste
8. the use of toxic chemicals and the generation of polluting substances should be minimised.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. the ACT to become a world leader in waste reduction and resource recovery
2. a community that is well informed and resourced to contribute to waste avoidance, minimisation and recycling
3. strategies to be implemented and technologies to be developed that divert waste from landfill to be recycled and reused to their highest value, based on a full life-cycle analysis
4. the ACT to foster local recycling and sustainable waste management industries as part of growing our green economy
5. all ACT Government agencies to adopt best-practice waste management systems consistent with climate change targets
6. rigorous waste reduction strategies and programs to be implemented throughout the ACT's business sector and industry
7. a more integrated approach to e-waste management in the ACT, which is consistent with the Commonwealth's national product stewardship legislation
8. an expanded approach to the collection and recycling of materials from public places
9. environmental degradation from poor waste management to be reversed through thorough clean-up, restoration and rehabilitation programs.

WATER

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. water, regardless of its source, is scarce and must be valued properly and used efficiently
2. the objective of water policy should be to protect human health and maintain, or where necessary improve, ecological health
3. water management should occur at the catchment scale, involve all relevant governments and communities and be based on the best possible scientific information, recognising the linkages between surface water and groundwater
4. the history of reform for the Murray–Darling Basin has been hampered by lack of cooperation between basin jurisdictions, and the ACT has an obligation to contribute to reforms in a positive manner
5. a minimum supply of water is necessary to meet basic needs such as drinking water, cooking and personal hygiene
6. all sectors of the ACT community have an obligation to use water wisely
7. investment in water infrastructure, whether through direct government investment or via subsidy, must be based on long-term considerations of the sustainability of water supplies, and should incorporate measures to protect ecosystems and their functions
8. water pricing should incorporate the full social, health and environmental costs of extraction, transport and use.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. a comprehensive water management strategy, including groundwater, that is based on a vision for long-term water security and responsive to the challenges of climate change and Canberra's changing demographic structure
2. drinking water in the ACT that meets or exceeds World Health Organization and National Health and Medical Research Council national drinking water standards
3. improved health of watercourses and ecological water systems, including adequate environmental flows
4. the ACT community to be wise about water use
5. improved water quality for our urban lakes and ponds to ensure they can be used for a range of recreational activities
6. water treatment options in the ACT that are safe, energy efficient, appropriately scaled, and matched to water use
7. public ownership and control of ACT water resources.

WOMEN

PRINCIPLES

The ACT Greens believe:

1. in removing barriers to women achieving full equality
2. discrimination, harassment and violence against women should be eradicated
3. whole-of-government strategies are required to address discrimination against women
4. the historical and contemporary contribution of women to the ACT and Australia should be recognised and celebrated.

GOALS

The ACT Greens want:

1. an end to discrimination, harassment and violence against women
2. to identify and address disparities in social and economic wellbeing for women
3. equitable participation of women in public life, leadership and decision-making
4. respect for the rights of women locally, nationally and internationally
5. to encourage and facilitate the leadership, participation and engagement of women in all areas of public and community life.