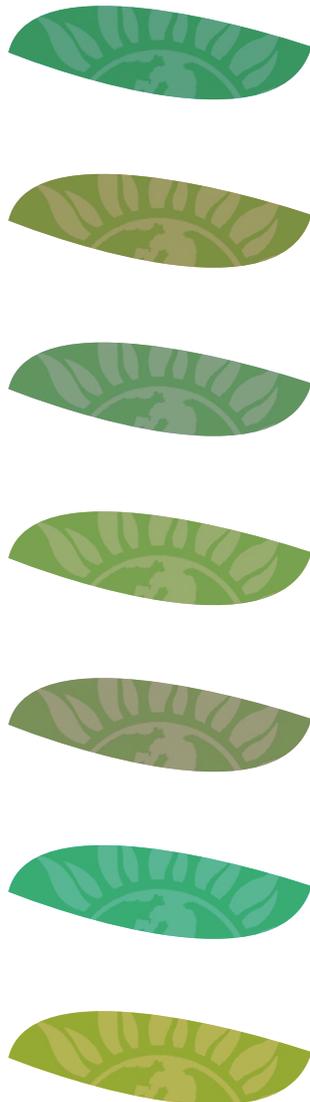


Manifesto for Devon

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION 2 May 2013



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Green Party candidates, clockwise from top left: **Andrew Bell** Exeter St. David's, **Sharon Pavey** Honiton St. Michael's, **Robert Vint** Totnes Rural, **Anna Presswell-Clarke** Ashburton and Buckfastliegh, **Ricky Knight** Barnstaple North, **Katie Reville** Ivybridge.

Local Green Parties that have contributed to this manifesto and their candidates: [East Devon](#) • [Exeter](#) • [Mid Devon](#) • [North Devon & Torrington](#) • [Plymouth*](#) • [South Devon](#) • [South Hams](#) • [Torbay*](#) • [West Devon](#).

*Although there are no elections in these unitary authorities this year, we would like to acknowledge contributions made by the Torbay and Plymouth Green Parties.



Foreword

On Thursday 2 May 2013 you will have the opportunity to vote for Green Party Councillors to represent you on **Devon County Council**. The Green Party is putting up more candidates than ever before across Devon.

This manifesto provides a set of distinctive and deliverable policies that elected Green Councillors will work hard to implement. The Green Party is the only Party that can offer the bold yet desirable solutions to the many social, economic and environmental challenges facing us.

Our manifesto is guided by our commitments to social and environmental justice. We believe in equality, prosperous and resilient local economy and community participation.

To find out more see **Local Green Party Contacts** on page 23 or email **devon@southwest.greenparty.org.uk** telephone **07812 354144**

To download this document in pdf format **[click here](#)**



Economic stability

The pursuit of endless growth has led to cycles of boom and bust, and a consumer and debt culture which has greatly contributed to today's economic and ecological crises.



The Green Party challenges assumptions about economic growth. Gross Domestic Product (GDP) is a poor indicator of true progress and does not adequately measure people's sense of well-being. We believe that nationally and regionally we should be striving for economic stability, security, fairness, equality and sustainability and focusing on the needs of the least fortunate rather than endlessly chasing economic growth.

The priorities must therefore be to create more quality jobs and job security in low carbon industries, well suited to Devon, including renewable energy, recycling, eco-housing, local tourism, organic farming, local food, and innovative manufacturing and knowledge-based industries.

Jobs in Devon need to provide opportunities and levels of pay which enhance quality of life and in turn increase productivity and profitability for local businesses and enterprises. A *Living Wage* will help young people afford local homes and stay in the County to develop their careers; a strong local economy will encourage local investment to utilise the County's natural environmental assets. We believe that a resilient economy is built on locally based economic activity, driven as far as possible by locally owned and run enterprises, engaged in the local trading of goods and services. Local trade keeps money circulating in communities instead of being sucked away by multinational corporations.

Did you know that in Devon ...

84% of businesses are small, employing less than 10 people; over a quarter are not registered to pay VAT

Many young people aged 20-24 leave to live in other places to find jobs.

Key workers can be and are priced out of the market because of the popularity of retirement and second homes.

There is four times more agricultural activity than the national average; Devon is home to many innovative and well known food producers.

Average wages are lower than the UK average; there are large differences in earnings between the best and worst off areas in Devon.

Nearly six million visit per year; hotels and catering make up 7% of the economy, twice the national average.

In London, an independent study of the business benefits of implementing a *Living Wage* policy found that more than 80% of employers believe that the *Living Wage* has led to improved performance of their staff, while absenteeism has fallen by approximately 25%.

Green County Councillors will:

- ▶ Introduce a **Living Wage** for all County Council employees.
- ▶ Introduce the **Living Wage Employer Mark** to Devon, based on the successful scheme in London set up by the Living Wage Foundation, offering the award to all employers in Devon already paying the Living Wage, or those committed to an agreed timetable of implementation.
- ▶ Prioritise businesses and social enterprises that pay a Living Wage; have no more than a 10:1 pay ratio (highest earner to lowest earner) and can demonstrate their local connections when considering procurement of public sector sub-contracted goods and services.
- ▶ Support the growth of innovation in manufacturing and in the knowledge-based and renewable energy-generating sectors.
- ▶ Support moves towards a **circular economy**: one which uses and re-uses materials, encouraging re-manufacturing, less consumption and less waste.
- ▶ Ensure empty industrial units are offered **rate-free** for a negotiated period to support local start-up enterprises and businesses.
- ▶ Ensure that **economic regeneration projects and investment** include support and space for local businesses and enterprises.
- ▶ Provide more **affordable housing** by incentivizing reuse of empty buildings and building new homes using income generated from taxing second, holiday homes.
- ▶ Explore fully the potential for Devon County Council owned farms to be used to generate **renewable energies**.
- ▶ Lead a Devon-wide **Buy Local, Buy Green** campaign to prioritise procurement of local and sustainable produce.
- ▶ Develop more **permanent market sites and market squares** to accommodate and support Farmers' Markets and other local businesses.
- ▶ Support **Farmers' Markets** through improved infrastructure, increased frequency and wider promotion to help them flourish.
- ▶ Seek to develop the **inland tourism market**, promoting a longer season not dependant on good summer weather.
- ▶ Support the **Transition Town** movement across the County and publicise ideas, initiatives and achievements to build more resilient local economies.
- ▶ Support Devon's growing **Fairtrade Town** network; work to ensure Devon retains its Fairtrade County status.



Public and social services

The Green Party believes that public and social services are the bedrock of a civilised society.

We appreciate that the country has huge debts that need to be reduced and managed but believe that the drastic cuts being made to public services and their rapid privatisation by the current government are largely ideologically driven and completely unnecessary.



Green Party councillors and activists, up and down the country, have been at the forefront of campaigns against cuts and privatisation in our workplaces, community and welfare services. Furthermore, the Green Party believes the cuts are not only morally wrong; they are also financially short-sighted. Many public services save more money than they cost by preventing a host of social and health problems. Dismantling our public services is no way to build a fair society or a strong economy.

Our vision is to restore and strengthen public and social services. We want to increase the status of working in the public sector, to increase wages and reduce excessive private profit in health and care sectors. We want to see a Devon-wide policy to raise care standards, increase job satisfaction and improve the quality of life of 'cared for' people and those committed to care for them.

Did you know that in Devon ...

There are 160,400 people aged 65 or over – 21% of the total population; the national average is 16%.

More than 72,400 people (of all ages) act as carers – 1 in 10 people.

Approx 9% of pupils are eligible for free school meals.

Funding per pupil from Central Government is the 4th lowest in England - £395 less per pupil than the national average.

Devon County Council acts as Corporate Parent for over 600 children in care.

Green Party Councillors will:

- ▶ Work to ensure the highest quality services are delivered to all the people of Devon in all their diversity; we seek to provide services that meet the needs of urban and rural communities alike, within an equal opportunities framework irrespective of age, gender, class, ethnic origin, sexuality, (dis)ability or religious faith.
- ▶ Focus on returning services in-house wherever possible, within the financial and contractual limitations of existing provisions.
- ▶ Ensure where services are contracted out to private providers, e.g. Community Health and Children's Services, the Council take full regard of their own equality policies and that no decisions are taken without the full and fair consultation of those affected by such contracts.
- ▶ Focus on vulnerable people as a priority and ensure that care is based on need.

- ▶ Value the views of service users and involve them in consultations about the design and delivery of services.
- ▶ Embrace Trade Unions as important partners in forming policy regarding public service delivery and in achieving and maintaining fair pay and conditions for employees within the public services.
- ▶ Oppose short-term 'money-saving' measures that cost more in the long term; show how public-service provision can prevent problems such as homelessness, crime and social break-down.
- ▶ Support and invest in the workforce to increase training opportunities and job satisfaction for those doing 'unskilled' jobs and to recognise and celebrate the value of such work.



Planning

Devon is the third largest county in England with a population of 1.1 million. It is largely rural with the majority of the population focused in a few urban areas, the largest being Exeter with a population of 117,000. The remaining population lives in scattered rural communities.



The Green Party seeks planning solutions which will help Devon maximise its natural and human resources while preserving and enhancing the environment. We seek to involve local people in planning decisions. Our rural heritage and national parks necessitate a particular approach to ensure we balance the needs of the thousands who visit Devon annually while maintaining flourishing rural communities for those who live and work here. We want to see thriving economies in our high streets; support systems for Devon's large and important farming community and help for local and cottage businesses and enterprises. Planning also needs to support the region's growing renewable energy-generating, manufacturing and knowledge-based sectors.

The Green Party will support a strategic planning framework that encourages the use of local resources wherever practicable; prioritises locally based businesses and enterprises and increases training and apprenticeship opportunities. This sustainable approach will ensure a flourishing economy, reduce the need for long commutes, maintain a young labour force in the County and keep our heritage intact.

Please note: Most planning decisions are made at District Council level. Devon County Council is responsible for planning at a strategic level such as Devon-wide structural plans and planning applications for mineral extraction, waste management or transport plans together with planning applications for the County Council's own development such as schools and libraries. Waste and transport are treated in separate areas of this manifesto.

Did you know that in Devon ...

Around 95,000 people live in wards ranked among the 25% most disadvantaged in the country.

75% of settlements have populations of less than 1,000.

54% of the natural landscape is subject to special protection or designation.

Only 50% of new dwellings were on previously developed land (2006-2009).

There is a risk of flooding in populated areas including: Lynmouth, Exmouth, Exeter, Bideford, Newton Abbott, Shaldon and Ringmore.

Just 486,000ha of farmed land supports over 8100 farms in Devon.

Green County Councillors will:

- ▶ Consider the long term rather than purely the short to medium term impacts of

planning decisions; all decisions will be based on long-term forecasting for future generations.

- ▶ Promote the use of the Strategic Environmental Assessment¹ in all planning strategy at local and regional levels.
- ▶ Challenge the growth forecasts outlined in the Regional Development Framework and Spatial Strategy, particularly relating to large scale housing developments.
- ▶ Minimise development on greenfield sites wherever possible, by re-using previously developed sites which have fallen into disuse, and prioritise social needs at strategic planning level when considering brownfield land use (e.g. prioritise social/affordable housing over supermarkets etc.).
- ▶ Ensure flood risk assessments take into account both adaptation to and mitigation of climate change.
- ▶ Prioritise water conservation and management by ensuring protection from deterioration in the quality, quantity or natural flow of underground, surface and coastal waters;
- ▶ Ensure all new developments incorporate collection and reuse of water schemes and assessing the feasibility of a sustainable water supply in areas identified as having significant growth.
- ▶ Promote the use of wetland, natural and constructed, in water quality and flood management.
- ▶ Promote technical and management solutions with planning applications, to reduce carbon emissions to as near carbon-neutral as possible.
- ▶ Promote use of environmentally sustainable building practices above and beyond current national standards in both new build and existing structures.
- ▶ Seek to maintain and build on our farming heritage and ensure that sustainable and ethical farming practices are at the heart of Devon County Council owned farms; support farm management as a real career opportunity.
- ▶ Push for County Council managed schools and libraries to become carbon neutral through energy generation and efficiency measures.
- ▶ Review Devon's Minerals Core Strategy Survey process to provide clearer guidelines and more thorough community evaluation procedures.

1 Strategic Environmental Assessment evaluates, then changes or mitigates existing objectives to more sustainable and ecologically benign projects. It considers cumulative effects of planning proposals to determine potential build-up of pollutants, noise, space crowding, fragmentation of habitat and other issues over time, and provides a more inclusive, and options-led scoping of plans to mitigate likely impacts as part of regional planning and land use. In general these effects are not currently dealt with effectively in environmental impact assessments because of limitation of scope.



Energy and climate change

Climate change is one of the greatest challenges facing society and we all play a part in it through the energy and fuel we use in our daily lives. Reducing the amount of energy we use and using it more efficiently is the most cost effective way to help reduce the impacts of climate change.

Within Devon the challenge to help people save energy lies in the rural nature of the county, the number of old buildings and the lack of access to the mains gas network. These factors also result in many of our residents struggling to afford to keep their homes warm and so living in fuel poverty. This can have serious consequences for their health and well-being and is a public health priority in the county.

Reducing energy use and ending fuel poverty are key commitments for the Green Parties in Devon but the county also has huge potential to generate energy from renewable sources such as the wind, sun, tidal power and waste food/wood. By fully supporting and enabling the growth of renewable energy industries, Devon can stimulate its economy and significantly reduce its contribution to climate change.

Generating our energy from renewable sources also reduces the need for nuclear power stations and exploration into environmentally damaging energy sources, such as shale gas – both of which the Devon Green Parties fundamentally oppose.

Did you know that In Devon ...

1 in 4 households is classed as fuel poor and could benefit from help to make their homes more energy efficient and to maximise their incomes.

There are higher CO2 emissions from domestic, road transport and land use sectors than in any other county or unitary authority in the South West.

There is the potential to produce over 2000MW of energy from renewable sources but by 2010 we were only producing 33MW from renewables.

Devon County Council spent over £30 million in 2011/12 on energy, with the majority of this money leaving the county to multinational corporations.

Green County Councillors will:

- ▶ Prioritise the development and use of renewable energy technologies and oppose nuclear and fossil fuel based energy generation.
- ▶ Prioritise community owned small renewable energy programmes but support large scale projects where appropriate, e.g. Atlantic Array wind turbine scheme in the Bristol Channel.
- ▶ Set annual carbon budgets for council services and report on these alongside the financial budget each year to ensure ambitious carbon reduction targets are met.
- ▶ Ensure that 100% of electricity used in DCC offices is sourced from renewables by 2015.
- ▶ Ensure the County's transport infrastructure is safeguarded against the effects of climate change.

- ▶ Require all council-owned properties to carry out a Green Energy Audit, including identifying potential for energy generation, and to act upon recommendations.
- ▶ Establish in-house training, for all Councillors and appropriate officers, on renewable energy technologies and their economic benefits to Devon communities.
- ▶ Instigate a county-wide energy efficiency and insulation programme, targeting residents living in fuel poverty as a priority.
- ▶ Explore ways to enable rural communities to move away from dependency on heating oil.
- ▶ Work with others to deliver an integrated education and media campaign to keep climate change at the forefront of people's minds; encourage behavioural change across all sections of the community and emphasise financial savings from such changes.
- ▶ Refuse all applications for shale-gas extraction (fracking) and oppose it in neighbouring authorities.



Transport

We need to create a transport network in Devon that is integrated, affordable, safe and accessible for all. To achieve this we need to manage demand and ensure transport planning is based on a hierarchy of modes which places walking and disabled access at the top, followed by cycling, public transport, rail and water-borne freight, then light-goods vehicles, taxis and low-powered motor cycles and finally private cars and heavy-goods vehicles at the bottom of the hierarchy.



We believe that by adopting the ‘polluter pays’ principle and implementing charges and levies on the most polluting forms of transport, we can decrease traffic levels, reduce health damaging levels of air pollution, particularly in urban areas, and help fund sustainable transport solutions. Investment needs to move away from road building and road widening schemes towards transport that is environmentally sustainable and increases physical activity. We will place high priority on increasing the safety, convenience and comfort of walking and cycling and on funding improvements to public transport.

Did you know?

At least a third of carbon emissions in Devon are attributed to road transport.

Traffic is the region’s most significant contributor to air pollution which has serious effects on human health.

Traffic congestion is costing the UK economy nearly £4.3bn a year and every urban household an average £107 per year in wasted fuel and time.

Lack of adequate public transport means Devon is highly dependent on private transport, particularly in rural areas with 83% of households owning at least one car, resulting in isolation for those who do not have access to cars.

Road traffic collisions are a significant contributor to premature deaths in the region, particularly of young people; around half of road deaths in the South West are people under 30.

Road danger is a strong disincentive to walk and cycle and therefore can indirectly contribute to rising levels of obesity.

Busy and fast roads sever communities; the physical presence of motor traffic, as well as the risk of crashes and injuries, present barriers to interpersonal networks and social contact.

Green County Councillors will:

- ▶ Introduce area-specific traffic reduction targets, with the highest targets for urban areas suffering severe congestion and air pollution; set a Devon-wide target to reduce motorised traffic levels by 10% by 2020, based on 2010 levels.
- ▶ Ensure a ‘hierarchy of modes’ test is applied when allocating funding to proposed transport projects and developments.
- ▶ Oppose and reverse all plans for new road building and road widening schemes where possible, investing money in sustainable transport solutions instead.
- ▶ Introduce a Workplace Parking Levy (WPL) on all large employers in major urban

areas, to secure funding for green sustainable transport, including subsidised rural bus services, car clubs in all cities and towns, and initiatives proposed by businesses in Devon to reduce car journeys to work.

- ▶ Plan for an extensive and expansive *Devon Metro* project with high quality rolling stock and high frequency services, full integration with bus services, and the reopening of old railway lines and stations.
- ▶ Introduce through-ticketing to cover journeys on more than one mode of transport; speed up the introduction of SMART-card ticketing.
- ▶ Ensure greater provision for bicycle spaces on trains and at stations and introduce/reintroduce carriage of bicycles on certain bus routes across the County, beginning with DCC supported services.
- ▶ Establish secure and covered 'cycle park & ride' sites at major bus interchanges/ junctions.
- ▶ Work with a network of sustainable transport bodies to improve infrastructure and facilities for walking, cycling and public transport across the county.
- ▶ Oppose any further expansion of regional airports and increase in numbers of flights; promote lower-impact transport options for tourism and trade and show how these can benefit the local economy.
- ▶ Push for the expansion of the rail freight network across Devon and investigate potential for greater use of waterways to carry freight.
- ▶ Ensure transport considerations are integral to all new housing, business or industrial developments; ensure that anyone could live or work happily in such a development without a car.
- ▶ Push for all housing developments within urban areas to include a proportion of car-free housing, ensuring high quality and secure cycling facilities, reliable and frequent public transport and easy access to a car club.
- ▶ Use supplementary planning guidance to ensure developers fully fund sustainable transport infrastructure and facilities and that these are established before the completion of the development.
- ▶ Work with District Councils to encourage reduced taxi licensing fee for electric or hybrid vehicles, but increased fees for non-electric/hybrid vehicles.
- ▶ Make 20mph the default speed on residential streets across Devon; create 'Home Zones' in all new developments.
- ▶ Open dialogue with school pupils and college students to involve them in planning safe routes and safe journeys to school.
- ▶ Establish a Devon-wide transport forum for input by the public and existing public transport users groups to get a grass roots picture of needs and issues.



Waste as a resource

The Green Party believes in a waste hierarchy that places waste reduction at the top, followed by reuse and then recycling. However, it may take some years to reach the ultimate goal of zero waste through this hierarchy. In the meantime, waste is no longer a problem that needs solving by environmentally destructive landfill or incineration. Our waste can now be dealt with in an environmentally safe manner, be a source of revenue and provide energy.



Our waste often contains many valuable materials that can be reused and/or sold commercially for profit. Extracting resources from waste is more accessible, cheaper and less environmentally damaging than the use of virgin resources.

The Green Party is pushing for waste treatment technologies that avoid landfill or incineration, such as fully automated Material Recycling Facilities (MRF), Plasma Gasification (PG) which safely converts waste to gas, electricity and building materials and Anaerobic Digestion (AD) which converts organic waste into soil conditioner and gas which can be pumped directly into the national grid.

A combination of energy from PG and AD and other abundant renewable sources in Devon could enable the County to be self-sufficient in energy within a reasonably short time. This could eliminate the need for nuclear power stations and exploration into environmentally damaging energy sources such as shale gas (fracking) both of which the Green Party fundamentally opposes.

Did you know that in Devon ...

An average 524kg of waste is produced per household; a figure placing Devon in the middle of a waste league table in the South West.

194,720 tonnes of waste was landfilled in 2009/10, the largest amount in the South West.

In 2009/10, South Hams had the lowest level of residual domestic waste in the South West with an average 341kg per household.

There was a 57% domestic recycling rate in 2009/10, the fourth highest level of recycling in the South West.

Incineration produces toxic ash which must be landfilled in special sites; no such landfill sites exist in Devon so any toxic ash from Devon incinerators must be transported out and dumped in a neighbouring County.

Technologies such as Plasma Gasification and Anaerobic Digestion can be scaled down to work with any town of around 8,000 providing the potential for community owned energy generating sources.

Green County Councillors will:

- ▶ Implement a Sustainable Waste Management and Resource Recovery system that identifies a strategy for dealing with all wastes during a period of transition from a fossil fuel based economy to a low carbon economy.
- ▶ Reverse all further planned incinerators and terminate all incineration contracts where possible; such contracts are costly and provide a financial return to private contractors rather than to Devon County Council and communities in Devon.

- ▶ Implement alternative technologies to deal with residual waste, such as Plasma Gasification and Anaerobic Digestion, for the safe, efficient, sustainable conversion of waste into electricity, gas, soil conditioner and building materials.
- ▶ Establish models of community ownership of small waste-treatment plants so that local people benefit from the energy generated and gain financial returns.
- ▶ Provide incentives to encourage the public and businesses to reduce, reuse, repair and minimise waste.
- ▶ Provide staff training and incentive-based targets for all LA waste managers and commercial operatives and staff at recycling and resource recovery sites.
- ▶ Engage in public education programmes about the true costs of waste management and the benefits of waste minimisation, materials recovery and alternative technologies.
- ▶ Ensure that, wherever practical, waste is transported (other than very short local journeys), by rail, river, canal and sea.
- ▶ Work with supermarkets and other retailers and the communities they operate in, to reduce the amount of unnecessary packaging.



Decision making

The Green Party believes the highest form of democracy is direct participation. All the major political decisions which affect our lives should ideally be made with our active participation, which requires open and informed debate. We believe people should be able to contribute ideas and evidence that lead to policies and decisions which best serve society, the environment and broad democratic interests. Freedom of information, and openness of government and its procedures, are vital to accountability and the creation of a more democratic society.

The Green Party also believes passionately in electoral reform. We will continue to call for a more democratic electoral system for national and local government.

We support the Additional Member System (AMS) where electors vote both for the party of choice and for their councillor(s). This would mean some council seats being allocated according to the overall proportion of votes cast. The Green Party supports returning to a committee system of local government because we believe single party cabinets take decision-making powers away from whole councils by placing them in the hands of a few individuals.

Green County Councillors will:

- ▶ Seek to reintroduce a committee system of local government to provide for direct member involvement in decision-making.
- ▶ Offer local people a greater say in designing, delivering and monitoring local services, by giving them power to set up local neighbourhood councils with devolved community budgets and decision-making powers.
- ▶ Better publicise existing Devon County Council 'Listening to you' processes such as surveys, consultations and on-line polls, to provide feed-back to councillors and officers.
- ▶ Deliver fully open and transparent government, ensuring council records and information are easily available.
- ▶ Ensure open access to information on all public and private organisations performing public functions and/or operating with public funds.
- ▶ Encourage cross-party cooperation and oppose a system of whipping councillors into line; Green Party Councillors will call upon other parties to support this.
- ▶ Continue to push for electoral reform at national and local level; to push for the introduction of citizen referenda.

Green Party spokespersons

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Decision making

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The Green Party in Devon

The Green Party in Devon is made up of several local Parties across the County. Listed below are all the local Parties and contact details

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Plymouth Green Party

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References and further information

Reference for all policy areas

POLICIES FOR A SUSTAINABLE SOCIETY
<http://policy.greenparty.org.uk>

Economic stability

LIVING WAGE FOUNDATION
<http://www.livingwage.org.uk/about-living-wage>

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<http://www.devonomics.info/devon-story>

Public and social services

SOUTH WEST OBSERVATORY STATISTICS
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Energy and climate change

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AND HEALTH
<http://www.swo.org.uk/sotsw2010/public-health/health-related-behaviour-and-lifestyle/travel-transport-health/?locale=en>

ROAD TRAFFIC TECHNOLOGY: CONGESTION
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Waste as a resource

SOUTH WEST OBSERVATORY STATISTICS
<http://www.swo.org.uk/EasysiteWeb/getresource.axd?AssetID=50042&type=full&servicetype=Inline>

EXETER FRIENDS OF THE EARTH: THE CASE
AGAINST INCINERATION
<http://www.eclipse.co.uk/exeter/foe/incinrep.htm>

Decision making

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL LISTENING TO
YOU
<http://www.devon.gov.uk/index/councildemocracy/listeningtoyou.htm>

GP POLICY: PUBLIC ADMINISTRATION AND
GOVERNMENT
<http://policy.greenparty.org.uk/pa#PA252>

OPEN GOVERNMENT STANDARDS
http://www.opengovstandards.org/?page_id=60