

## Health

This year we have been focused on health as never before. What we have seen is a country where years of cuts have left a threadbare service, over-stretched and under-paid staff, and disgraceful inequality in terms of the ability to live long and healthy lives. A Green Future for Health would build on the founding principles of the NHS- a universal, free health service to give individuals the support they need to improve their health in the aftermath of the pandemic. The government's failed test and trace system, coupled with a worsening mental health crisis, means funding must be given urgently to community-led services that are best placed to meet these needs. An end to privatisation is also crucial to stop any profit motive within healthcare.

### **Pandemic recovery and increased funding**

- Last year the Green Party called for a contact-tracing system based on our local public-health teams. Instead, the government gave billions to their cronies for a system that has never worked - with thousands of lives lost as a result. It's not too late to put this right and get a local test-and-trace system properly funded before restrictions are lifted.
- And we need to ensure that people are financially supported to self-isolate when they are infected. The Greens are also supporting calls for a public inquiry into the government's handling of the pandemic, which has resulted in thousands of avoidable deaths and left families grieving for lost ones.
- The Green Party would increase funding for the NHS by at least £6bn each year by cancelling schemes such as the government's road building project (£5bn per year), and would support the trade union campaign for a 15% pay increase for health care workers.

### **Mental health services**

- The coronavirus has exposed the inadequacy of mental health services in the UK. We would focus our funding to enable major improvements to ensure mental health has equal importance alongside physical health.
- Mental health therapy services would be able to be accessed by anyone who needs them within 28 days of a request, with more specific provisions made for more particular difficulties experienced by LGBTQIA+ members, those from BAME communities, children, adolescents and older people.
- The Greens would provide stronger powers to Health and Wellbeing boards to represent the wishes of the public within the NHS as a first step towards the full reinstatement of a public health service with no role for private companies.

### **Decentralisation and an end to privatisation**

- We would replace private sector involvement in the NHS with community-led services. The implementation of a 'bottom up' approach within the local authority setup would see services planned and provided without contracts through Health Boards.
- An end to the internal market must also be enacted and a focus on Caroline Lucas' NHS Reinstatement Bill deployed to help tackle the issues within the healthcare system.