

Health Equity Policy

(Version 1)

Values and Principles

HE 101 The Green Party's core values are social justice and environmental sustainability. The values and principles that underpin our distinct approach to health both support and are built on these firm foundations.

- i. People's health is inseparable from the health of the planet. As a party we acknowledge the WHO Shanghai declaration which states that: '*health and wellbeing are essential to achieving the United Nations Development Agenda 2030 and its sustainable development goals.*'
- ii. Health and well-being for all is a core duty of government, for all ages and all 'protected characteristic' groups. This *includes* taking responsibility for, and action to reduce, health inequalities.
- iii. Health is a human right and must be a driver across all government policy. Prevention and treatment must be universally, publicly and comprehensively provided, publicly accountable, free at the point of use and publicly planned and funded according to need through taxation.
- iv. We will protect all precious health care and social care resources and service delivery through having the healthiest population possible, achieved by promoting good health as a core consideration of all policy areas and budgets.

Definition of Health and Health Equity

Health

HE201 Health is a positive concept emphasising social and personal resources as well as physical capacities. It is relevant at the individual, population and planetary levels.

HE202 Individual Health

- i. Good health is a state of complete physical, mental and social wellbeing, not merely the absence of disease or infirmity.
- ii. Good health is a resource for everyday living, not the objective of living.
- iii. Mental health is a state of wellbeing in which the individual realises his or her own abilities, can cope with the normal stresses of life, can work productively and fruitfully and is able to contribute to their community.
- iv. Maximising health through all stages of life is a fundamental right for all and not a privilege of the few.

HE203 Population Health

- i. We all have a stake in population health. Population health can be defined as what we as a society do collectively to assure the conditions in which people can be healthy (Institute of Medicine, 1988).
- ii. Population Health Management uses historical and current data to understand what factors are driving poor outcomes in different population groups. We can then be proactive in actions to create and improve health and wellbeing.
- iii. Joined up actions for population health can improve social and environmental conditions for all, whilst accelerating the rate of improvement for those suffering disadvantage or discrimination.
- iv. Economic development is only valuable in terms of its contribution to human, social and planetary well-being.

HE204 Planetary Health

- i. ~~Planetary health recognises that changing our planet's natural systems risks adversely affecting both population and individual health and not always in ways that we would expect. Understanding and acting upon these challenges calls for massive collaboration across disciplinary and national boundaries to safeguard our health~~
- ii. Planetary health is a solutions-oriented, transdisciplinary field and social movement focused on analysing and addressing the impacts of human disruptions to Earth's natural systems on human health and all life on Earth.

Deleted: →

HE205 Health Equity

- i. Health Equity means a fair opportunity to live a long, healthy life for all
- ii. Health inequities refer to systemic, avoidable and unjust differences in the health status of different population groups. This is sometimes expressed as a 'health gap'.
- iii. Inequities in health are not inevitable or necessary, they are the product of unfair social, economic and political arrangements.

Aim

HE301 Green Party Health Inequality Policy aims to improve the health of everyone, whoever they are, wherever they live. We will directly address the large and widening gap in the number of years people are living in good health between the least and most well-off.

HE 302 The approach is what the World Health Organisation refers to as Health in All Policies (HiAP).

HE303 Most of the factors that impact on an individual's health status are outside the health and social care systems and beyond their control. Acknowledging that requires a health inequality policy that fully encompasses the wider determinants of health. This includes amongst other factors commercial determinants, spatial determinants and social determinants of health which are all subject to non-health governmental policy.

Evidence

HE304 Our policy objectives and their priorities will be always informed by the latest evidence. The underlying structure to our policy is based on the equity and wider determinants of health work of Sir Michael Marmot and the Institute of Health Equity.^{1 2}

HE305 At least one fifth of the NHS clinical budget is devoted to treating avoidable illness caused by the wider determinants of health. These influence the upstream causes of illness, in particular, but not restricted to, non-communicable disease. These upstream factors include lack of fulfilling employment and unhealthy working practices, inequality, poor housing, air pollution, poor support for active transport, and lack of access to, or poor quality, local amenities. Green reforms in these sectors of the policy and the economy will be actively targeted to reduce the burden they place on the national health service and social care.

Governance

HE401 A Green Government will create a new central government department for 'People and Planetary Health', this would be independent from patient orientated policy, budgets and service delivery, integrating as relevant with all non-NHS departments whose activity impacts health. The focus would be to deal with upstream determinants of health, health equity and planetary health. This would include the so called 'causes of the causes' of illness at population level. A National Director of Public Health would be an officer in this department.

HE402 To this end the Green Party will publish a consultation paper on promoting health and wellbeing and reducing health inequalities within six months of forming government. There will be specific consultation exercises to ensure that groups in poorer health are heard and that non-health policy areas and professions whose activities impact on health and/or health inequalities are proactively included. The findings will inform all policy areas that have relevant impacts including health planning itself. The scope will deliberately seek alignments between population health and planetary health across the UK.

HE403 The consultation process will be administered by an independent high-level multi-sector commission with the view to testing the formation of a shadow then full government department for population and planetary health, to be established to separate government responsibilities for health (involving multiple policy areas) from health care delivery services.

HE404 It is increasingly clear that government functions, policies and activities in urban development, housing, energy, food policy, agriculture, water infrastructure, transport and the natural environment as well as mitigation of and adaptation to climate change, all have significant health implications. The Green party will seek to ensure that all departments of government and public regulatory bodies are obliged to assess and mitigate the effects of their policies on public health and inequalities in health. Central enforcement of a "health in all policies" approach will be used to coordinate action, enforce obligations and avoid conflicts and unintended consequences. This will be underpinned by a new 'Duty for Public Health Maintenance' for government departments whose policies have demonstrable effects on health and health equity.

¹ <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review/fair-society-healthy-lives-full-report-pdf.pdf>

² <https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/marmot-review-10-years-on>

Research

HE501 The Green Party will fund research into supporting the building of a healthier population via non-medical 'health creation' and 'health protection' interventions. This will include policy and cross-government interventions aimed at reducing avoidable health inequalities arising from the wider determinants of health.

HE502 Multiple inequalities conspire to reduce wellbeing and healthy life-expectancy and impose burdens on NHS services. The Green Party refer to strategies to tackle these as "non-medical" health interventions. Currently public data on wider determinants of health are not well aligned with health outcomes data in ways which give insight or permit research into health creation or illness prevention.

HE503 Preventing illness is cheaper and more humane than treating it; well-funded public health research is an investment in a flourishing population in the longer term. The Green Party will seek to establish a greater profile for preventative health research and increase funding in recognition of the greater cost-benefit ratio of high-quality, cost-effective public health policies and interventions compared to traditional reactive spending on treating illness.

HE504 The Green Party will ensure that independent public health research and health economic analysis expertise are made available to all government departments whose policy remits include areas which have demonstrable health impacts.

HE505 Funding of the National Institute for Health Research, Public Health Research Programme will be substantially increased. The remit of that programme will be reviewed to ensure research is carried out that focuses on the ways in which the activities across a wide range of non-NHS sectors of the economy can be more effective in contributing to creating health, reducing illness and minimising health inequities. Where there is not adequate evidence of effectiveness for an otherwise feasible and promising intervention, early adopter sites will be implemented and rigorously evaluated before being up-scaled through the existing the NIHR PH dissemination programme but with stronger advocacy and support from the enhanced Directors of Public Health remit (see Health Services Policy). This will create a fast-track mechanism recognising the low-risk and potentially high benefit of innovative public health interventions and will ensure rapid learning from existing and new interventions.

Commented [AL1]: 'Doubled' reads as a somewhat arbitrary, inflexible aim.

Policies to Reduce Health Inequalities

HE601 Our policy framework is divided into six headline objectives as follows:

- Objective A Give every child the best start in life.
- Objective B Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives.
- Objective C Create fair employment and good work for all.
- Objective D Ensure a healthy standard of living for all.
- Objective E Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.
- Objective F Strengthen the role and impact of health prevention.

HE602 These objectives and their priority actions and recommendations, as set out in 'Fair Society, Healthy Lives'³ will be used as a review template for all Green Party policies. Policies will be amended and updated where necessary to ensure there is a full policy framework aimed at reducing health inequalities.

HE603 The current state of this template is set out in Appendix A. Further guidance for the Convenors of Policy Groups in addressing these objectives can be found in the document 'Fair Society: Healthy Lives' and the 2020 update.

HE604 Where there is compelling evidence that actions taken in pursuit of other policies have, or will, lead to an increase in health inequalities or place an avoidable burden through increased illness on the health service, social care or employers; this extra economic and social burden must be taken into account in policy decision-making.

Objective A - Give every child the best start in life

HE605 The WHO life-course model acknowledges that both individual and societal actions at this stage of life as paying-off with more robust healthy behaviours and outcomes throughout life, including into old age.

HE606 Priorities for Objective A

- i) Reduce inequalities in the early development of physical and emotional health and cognitive, linguistic and social skills.
- ii) Ensure high quality maternity services, parenting programmes, childcare and early years education to meet need across the social gradient.
- iii) Build the resilience and well-being of young children across the social gradient.

Objective B, - Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives.

HE607 Priorities for Objective B

- i) Reduce the social Gradient in skills and qualifications
- ii) Ensure that schools, families and communities work in partnership to reduce the gradient in health, well-being and resilience of children and young people.
- iii) Improve the access and use of quality life-long learning across the social gradient.

Objective C - Create fair employment and good work for all.

HE608 Priorities for Objective C

³<https://www.instituteofhealthequity.org/resources-reports/fair-society-healthy-lives-the-marmot-review/fair-society-healthy-lives-full-report-pdf.pdf>

- i) Improve access to good jobs and reduce long-term unemployment across the social gradient.
- ii) Make it easier for people who are disadvantaged in the labour market to obtain and keep work.
- iii) Improve quality of jobs across the social gradient.

Objective D- Ensure a healthy quality of life for all

HE609 Priorities for Objective D

- i) Establish a minimum income for healthy living for people of all ages.
- ii) reduce the social gradient in the standard of living through progressive taxation and other fiscal policies.
- iii) Remove the 'cliff edges' faced by people moving between benefits and work.

Objective E - Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities.

HE610 Priorities for Objective E

- i) Develop common policies to reduce the scale and impact of climate change and health inequalities.
- ii) Improve community capital and reduce social isolation across the gradient.
- iii) Embed health, well-being and health equity objectives into all policies processes, practice and programmes where evidence shows that they can have a maximum positive impact in terms of return on investment.

Objective F - Strengthen the role and impact of health prevention.

HE 611 Priorities for Objective F

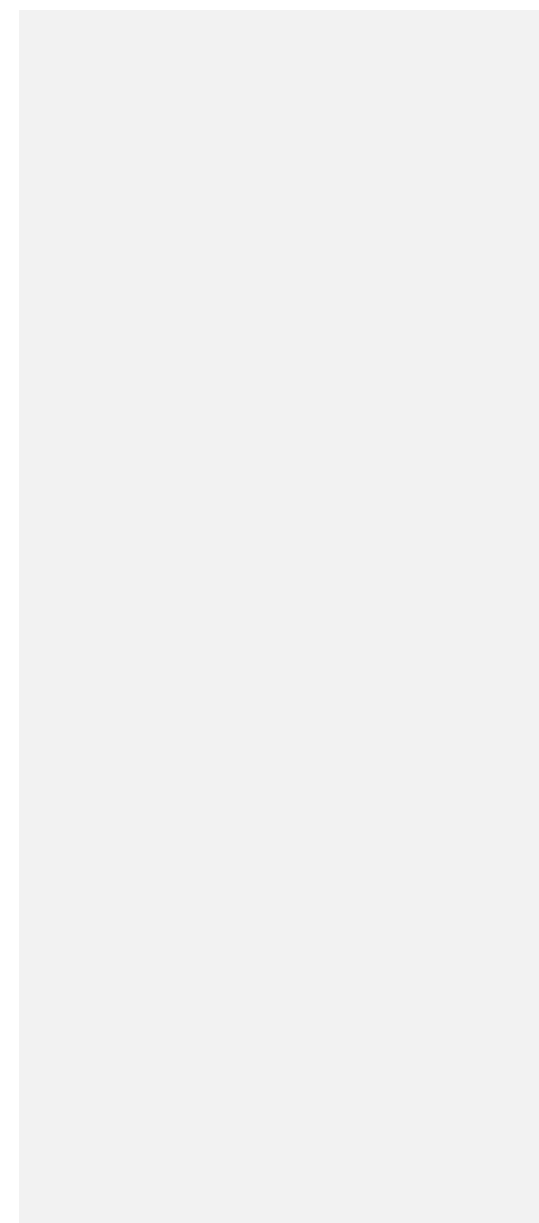
- i) Prioritise prevention and early detection of those conditions most strongly related to health inequalities.
- ii) Increase availability of long term and sustainable funding in ill health prevention across the social gradient.

APPENDIX A - progress on a health inequality policy framework

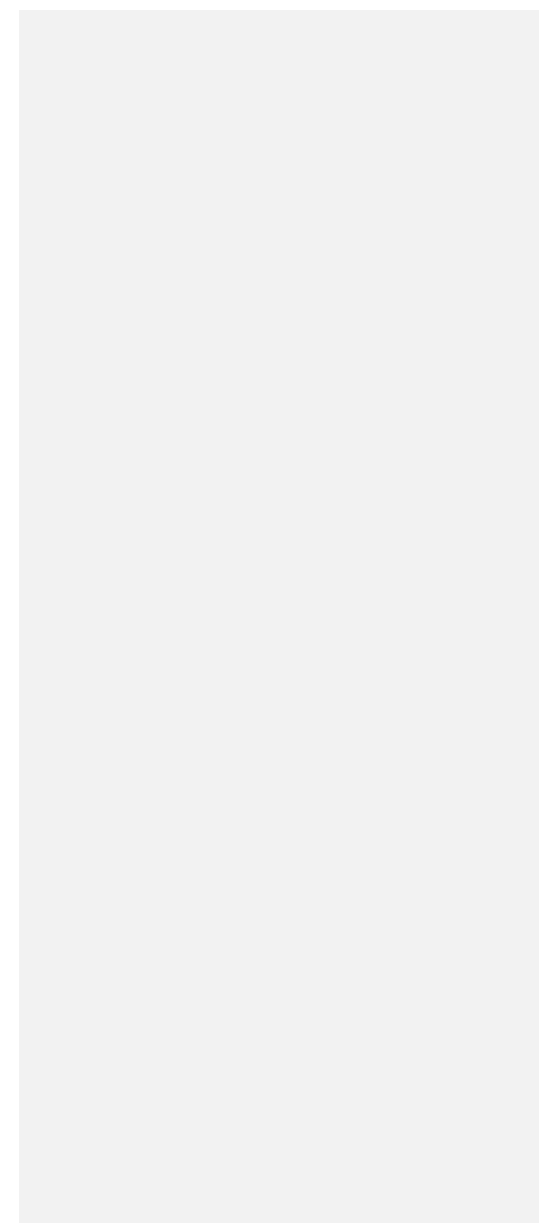
Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
<p>A Give every child the best start in life</p>	<p>i) Reduce inequalities in the early development of physical and emotional, health and cognitive, linguistic and social skills</p> <p>ii) Ensure high quality maternity services, parenting programmes and early years education to meet need across the social gradient.</p> <p>iii) Build the resilience and well-being of children across the social gradient.</p>	<p>Increase funding for early years provision, focused on the social gradient. Support families to achieve progressive improvements in early years development by:</p> <p>1 Giving priority to pre and postnatal interventions, such as intensive home-visiting programmes, that reduce adverse outcomes of pregnancy and infancy</p> <p>2 Providing paid parental leave in the first year of life with a minimum income for healthy living</p> <p>3 Providing routine support to families through parenting programmes, children’s centres and key workers, delivered to meet social need via outreach to families</p>	<p>The GP Early Years policy (in the education policy) does not cover these issues.</p> <p>Maternity section of health policy TBA</p> <p>Green Party Policy for parental/maternity/adoption leave is 22 months paid leave at minimum 90% pay. Also Universal Basic Income supports this recommendation</p> <p>Mat/early years in Health Policy TBA</p> <p>Not covered in Education/Early Years</p>	<p>Worker's Rights and Employment Policy</p> <p>https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/wr/html</p>

Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
		4 Developing programmes for the transition to school.		Economy Policy https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/our-policies/long-term-goals/economy/
B Enable all children, young people and adults to maximise their capabilities and have control over their lives	<p>i) Reduce the social gradient in skills and qualifications</p> <p>ii) Ensure that schools, families and communities work in partnership to reduce the gradient in health, well-being and resilience of children and young people.</p> <p>iii) Improve the access and use of quality life-long learning</p>	<p>Ensure that reducing social inequalities in pupils' educational outcomes is a sustained priority.</p> <p>Prioritise reducing social inequalities in life skills through:</p> <p>1 Extending the role of schools in supporting families and communities and taking a 'whole child' approach to education</p> <p>2 Consistent implementation of the full range of extended services in and around schools.</p> <p>3 Developing the school-based workforce to build their skills in working across school– home boundaries and addressing social and emotional</p>	Not clear how current Education policy achieves these objectives.	

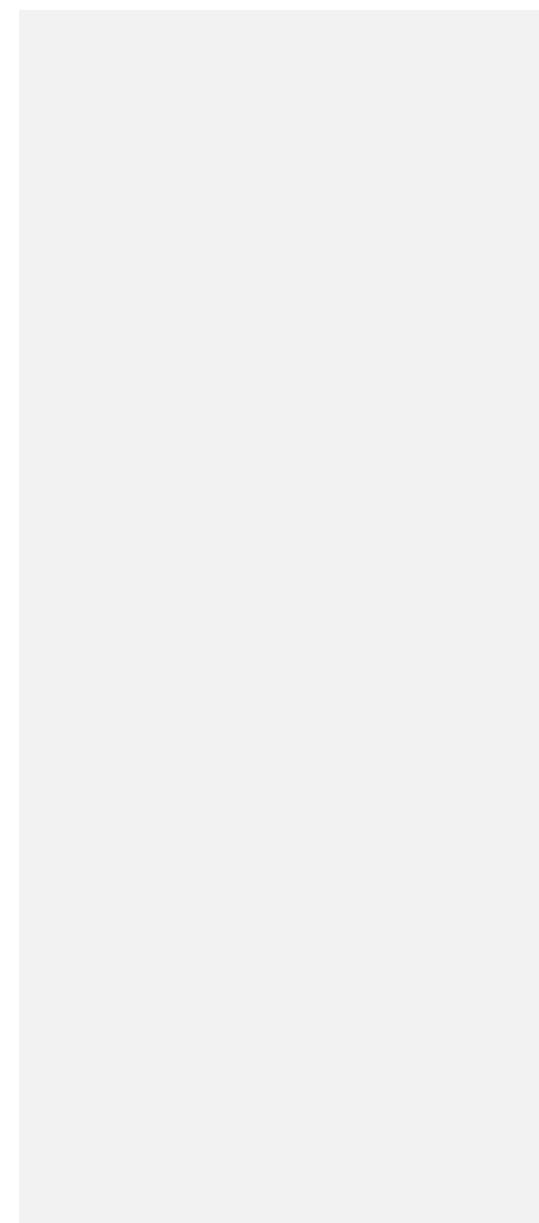
Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
	across the social gradient.	<p>development, physical and mental health and well-being.</p> <p>Increase access to and use of quality lifelong learning opportunities across the social gradient by:</p> <p>1 Providing easily accessible support and advice for 16–25 year olds on life skills, training and employment opportunities</p> <p>2 Providing work-based learning, including apprenticeships, for young people and those changing jobs/careers</p> <p>3 Increasing availability of non-vocational life-long learning across the life course.</p>	<p>There are some points in the Worker's Rights and Employment policy, but nothing age specific</p>	
C Create fair employment and good work for all	i) Improve access to good jobs and reduce long-term unemployment across the social gradient.	1 Prioritise active labour market programmes to achieve timely interventions to reduce long term unemployment.	<p>Not covered in existing policy</p> <p>But UBI policy will make it simpler to work when you can.</p>	



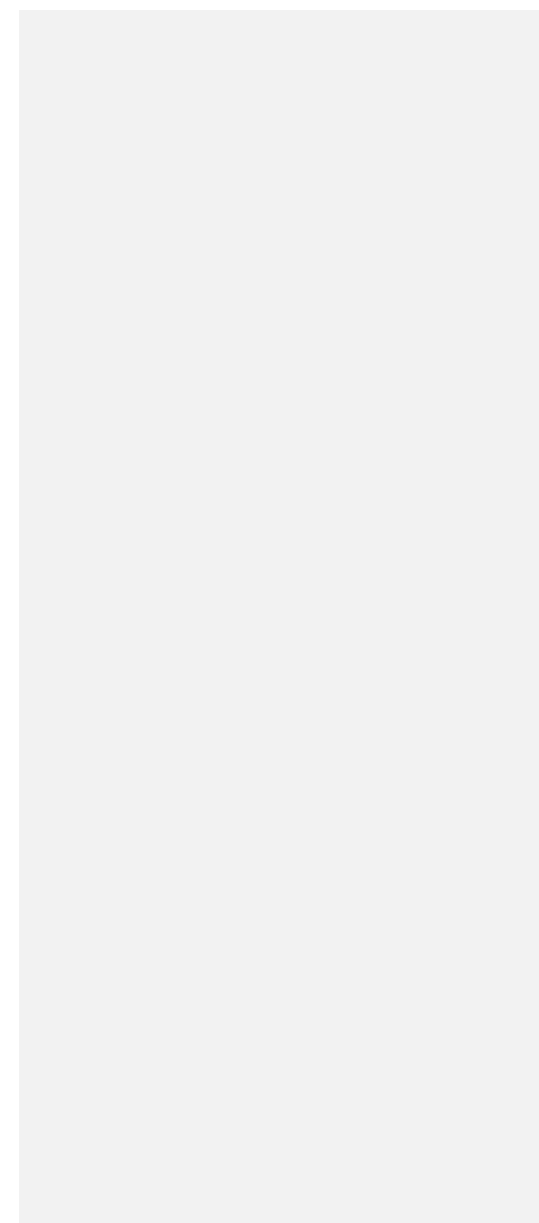
Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
	<p>ii) Make it easier for people who are disadvantaged in the labour market to obtain and keep work.</p> <p>iii) Improve quality of jobs across the social gradient.</p>	<p>2 Encourage, Incentivise and where appropriate enforce the implementation of measures to improve the quality of work across the social gradient:</p> <p>-</p> <p>-Ensure public and private employers adhere to equality guidance and legislation.</p> <p>-Implement guidance on stress management and the effective promotion of well-being and physical and mental health at work.</p> <p>Develop greater security and flexibility in employment by: -</p>	<p>There are policies on working hours reduction (WR343-345), incentivising employers to provide support (W348) and parental leave (WR350), time off for education, carers etc and the regulation of zero hours contracts (WR351-354).</p> <p>Not explicitly covered but</p> <p>IN624 covers equality audits which can be requested by employees</p> <p>Not explicitly covered, but some policies will remove sources of stress.</p> <p>Not covered</p> <p>Not covered</p>	



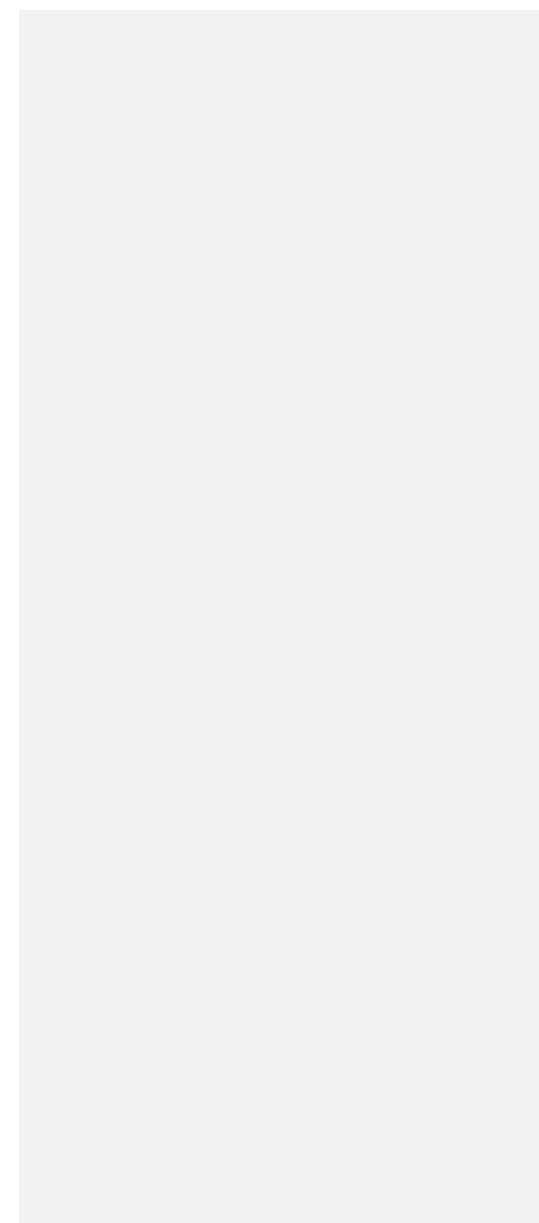
Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
		<p>-Prioritising greater flexibility of retirement age.</p> <p>-encouraging and incentivising employers to create and adapt jobs that are suitable for lone parents and people with mental and physical health problems.</p>	<p>Some points in Industry and Jobs Policy relate to inequality in regional development and jobs.</p>	
D Ensure a healthy quality of life for all	i) Establish a minimum income for healthy living for people of all ages	<p>1 Develop and implement standards for minimum income for healthy living.</p> <p>2 Review and implement systems of taxation, benefits and pensions tax</p>	<p>The Green Party Policy of Universal Basic Income (UBI) (EC730 - 731) establishes minimum income, but at the moment this relates to 'basic needs'. Can this be amended to encompass healthy living?</p> <p>The proposed GP direct taxation system is highly progressive. (EC720 - 728). The policy recognises that indirect taxes</p>	<p>Economy Policy</p> <p>https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/our-policies/long-term-goals/economy/</p>



Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
	<p>ii) Reduce the social gradient in the standard of living through progressive taxation and other fiscal policies</p> <p>iii) Remove the 'cliff edges' faced by people moving between benefits and work.</p>	<p>credits to provide a minimum income for healthy living standards</p> <p>3 Remove cliff edges for those moving in and out of work and improve flexibility of employment</p>	<p>can be regressive and seeks to balance this effect through other taxes. (EC770-779)</p> <p>UBI effectively removes all 'cliff edges' and improves employment flexibility.</p>	
<p>E Create and develop healthy and sustainable places and communities</p>	<p>i) Develop common policies to reduce the scale and impact of climate change and health inequalities.</p> <p>ii) Improve community capital and reduce social isolation across the gradient.</p>	<p>1 Prioritise policies and interventions that both reduce health inequalities and mitigate climate change by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> — Improving active travel across the social gradient — Improving good quality spaces available across the social gradient — Improving the food environment in local areas across the social gradient 	<p>See Policy: Local Planning and the Built Environment</p> <p>LP604 ensures food shops and markets within 15 minutes walk.</p> <p>? fast food outlets?</p>	



Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
	iii) Embed health, well-being and health equity objectives into all policies, processes, practice and programmes where evidence shows they can have a maximum positive impact in terms of return on investment.	— Improving energy efficiency in housing across the social gradient.	HO405 covers retrofitting Energy efficiency standards for new housing? Via Health Equity Policy	Local Planning and the Built Environment https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/our-policies/long-term-goals/local-planning-and-the-built-environment/ https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/our-policies/long-term-goals/housing/
F Strengthen the role and impact of ill health prevention.	i) Prioritise prevention and early detection of those conditions most strongly related to health inequalities.	1 Prioritise investment in ill health prevention programmes and health promotion across government departments to reduce the social gradient 2 Implement an evidence-based programme of ill health preventative interventions that are effective across the social gradient by:	All policies mentioned in this paper addressing wider determinants Health Policy - General Practice programme focusing on metabolic health will target NCDs which are strongly related to health inequalities.	



Marmot Objective	Priorities for the objective	Marmot recommendations	Relevant Green Party Policy	Link
	<p>ii) Increase availability of long term and sustainable funding in health promotion across the social gradient.</p>	<p>-Increasing and improving the scale and quality of medical drug treatment programmes.</p> <p>-Focusing public health interventions such as smoking cessation and alcohol reduction on reducing the social gradient.</p> <p>-Improving programmes to address the causes of obesity across the social gradient.</p>	<p>See Drug and Alcohol Policy</p> <p>Proposals on Commercial Determinants of health.</p> <p>Health Policy - public health proposals</p> <p>General Practice programme re earlier diagnosis</p> <p>Actions on ultra-processed food, Commercial Determinants section of Health Policy</p>	

