



A Green New Deal for the West Midlands – and beyond

No one can deny that we face dire economic problems. No one should deny that we can find solutions.

We recognise the crises outlined by the Green New Deal Group, that the global economy is facing a 'triple crunch'; a combination of credit-fuelled financial crisis, accelerating climate change and soaring energy prices underpinned by an encroaching peak in oil production. Like the Green New Deal group, we want to see a more sustainable, just and stable economic and financial system created through action to combat the recession.

A group of organisations coordinated by Localise West Midlands are investigating plans to implement some parts of Green New deal proposals in the West Midlands, specifically:

- intelligent public spending that creates jobs and enterprise that tackle the emerging energy, climate and resource crises
- developing financial innovations for intelligent investment in energy efficiency and other beneficial uses in the region
- stable, locally based banking for people and businesses, free from the global financial 'casino'
- steps towards a financial system that underpins the productive economy and the fundamental operating systems of family, community and the environment upon which we all depend.

In the West Midlands we are well placed to tackle this. We already have the excellent low carbon economy commitments of the Regional Economic Strategy, which the Green New Deal approach would build on and take further. We also have manufacturing and technological skills, a growing employment need, and strong social enterprise, training and energy efficiency sectors.

A major principle of the Green New Deal approach is that as much of this activity as possible happens within the region's own diverse and resilient local economies: empowering local communities to respond to our current and future challenges by building local capacity. Local businesses and social enterprises contribute disproportionately to local multiplier and job creation, and help create the social glue that holds communities together during hard times.

Together, to achieve all this, we are seeking commitment from economic fora, regional bodies and political representatives to develop the following approaches:

- Pilot schemes – delivery of comprehensive energy efficiency schemes (for example, insulation for homes and businesses) within a few neighbourhood areas with the right conditions, which we can use as testers/pilots for bigger schemes
- Generate interest, support and funding for bigger schemes of the scale envisaged by the Green New Deal Group and others
- Generate interest in and proposals for new/rejuvenated investment mechanisms (bonds etc)
- Investigate other 'intelligent spending' job creation schemes within the region
- re-harness existing budgets to meet multiple, sustainable outcomes.

Organisations involved in our regional Green New Deal group include energy/training social enterprises, housing associations, trades unions, private sector representatives and environmental groups. We are also networking with others across the country who are working on responses to the current crises.

With these partners we have identified or assembled: suitable pilot areas with housing or employment need; energy and training businesses; potential private investment sources and bonds expertise; retrofitting research for the region - the conditions are met for decision-makers at every level to take steps towards implementing a better economy along Green New Deal lines.

National and International Green New Deal

We also know that the global nature of the problems we face require action at the international level and we want our Government and others across the world to:

- Create a secure, accessible local banking system for people by increasing the role of post offices and community finance such as credit unions; demerge banks that are 'too big to fail'. Put a floor under house values; prevent the stress involved in repossessions; introduce a moratorium on crash-related home evictions.
- Give poorer countries the opportunity to escape poverty without fuelling climate change, by directing development finance towards investment in climate-change adaptation and renewables. Allow all nations greater autonomy over domestic monetary policy (interest rates and money supply) and fiscal policy (public spending and taxation).
- Set a formal international target for atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations that keeps future temperature rises as far below 2°C as possible and deliver an equitable international climate agreement to succeed the Kyoto Protocol in 2012.

Next steps

We would urge you to take these principles and ideas forward in any forum in which you are involved. If you would like to discuss with us our plans both for local implementation of low carbon system jobs and training; and for encouraging and supporting national action towards Green New Deal concepts, please contact us.

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Localise WM is a small West Midlands-based not-for-profit campaign group, think tank and consultancy, promoting a more localised approach to supply chains, money flow and decision-making in order to form a more just and sustainable economy.