

**SOCIAL
CO-OPERATIVE
MUTUAL
COMMUNITY
ETHICAL
LOCAL
FAIR
SOCIETY**

**ENTERPRISE
FINANCE
BUSINESS
SHARES
INVESTMENT
MARKETS
TRADE
PROFITS**

**THE BEST IDEAS FROM
THE LEFT & THE RIGHT.**
SOCIAL ECONOMY ALLIANCE

MANIFESTOS REVIEW

Over the last year and more the Social Economy Alliance has campaigned to get social economy solutions into the manifestos of the main political parties for the 2015 general election. With these now published, we have compiled a *mashup* of the best ideas from the left and right that could help the social economy transform peoples lives for the better.

NB. You'll also notice that this *mashup* includes one of the essential linchpins in any election campaign: how many pictures of hard hats appear in each manifesto.

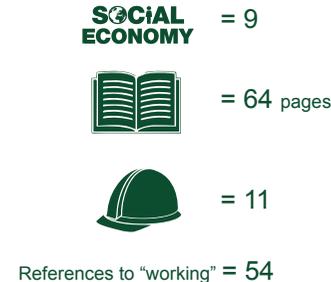
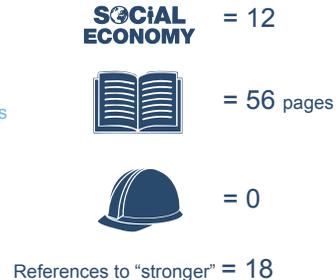
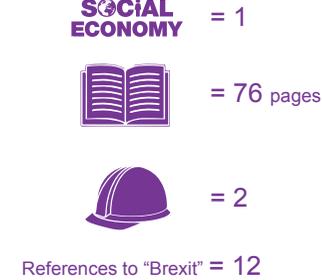
-  LABOUR
-  CONSERVATIVES
-  GREEN
-  PLAID CYMRU
-  LIB DEM
-  UKIP
-  SNP

 SOCIAL ECONOMY MENTIONS

 NUMBER OF HARD HATS

 LENGTH OF MANIFESTO

References to "long term economic plan" = 16



NB: Social economy mentions include any reference to social enterprise or entrepreneurship, social investment or social innovation, co-operatives, mutual and community ownership.

Too much power is unaccountable, concentrated in the market and the state, at the expense of individuals and their communities:

- Change company law to permit a German-style two-tier board structure to include employees.
- Amend company law to ensure that medium and large companies have employee and consumer representatives on their boards.
- Increased employee representation on company boards, believing that this can help bolster long-term decision-making and improve industrial relations.
- Encourage alternative company models to the limited company/plc model... encourage the creation of companies which are owned or controlled by employees.
- Encourage employers to promote employee participation and employee ownership, aiming to increase further the proportion of GDP in employee-owned businesses.

- Institutional investors will have a duty to... prioritise long-term growth over short-term profits.
- Financial institutions, local councils and others to encourage divestment from fossil fuels and develop alternative investment.
- Change takeover rules to enhance the role of long-term investors by restricting voting to those already holding shares when a bid is made. In addition, we will strengthen the public interest test.
- We are keen to see spending increase, and profits remain, within local communities so that more money is being circulated locally, generating jobs and opportunities for the benefit of all.

- Tackling tax evasion and aggressive tax avoidance... is an important part of our long-term economic plan.
- Exempt foodbanks and charity shops from charges imposed by local authorities to dispose of unwanted food waste and other goods
- A major review into business rates by the end of 2015 to ensure that from 2017 they properly reflect the structure of our modern economy.
- Amend company law to ensure that medium and large companies take account of and report on the environmental and social impact of their activities.

- Work with companies to ensure they have sustainable supply chains that are free from slavery, treat their workers fairly, and pay taxes where they are due.
- End a growing practice whereby large companies extend their payment terms to small companies by arranging for their supplier to take out a bank loan to facilitate their demands.

A PRO SOCIAL ECONOMY

Public procurement policy as a tool of local growth and community development:

- Using government procurement to promote the Living Wage, alongside wider social impact considerations.
- Using public contracts to deliver clear community benefits, including local employment and training opportunities and support for community initiatives.
- Open up public procurement to SMEs and to the voluntary sector. Strengthen community rights to run local public services. Extend Freedom of Information laws to cover private companies delivering public services
- Make it easier for small and medium-sized businesses with 250 employees or less to tender for public sector contracts
- Raise the target for SMEs' share of central government procurement to 1/3, strengthen the Prompt Payment Code.

- All decisions can be taken at the level closest to the people.
- Local democratic control and accountability is brought to healthcare decisions directly affecting our local communities.
- Introduce a Public Service Users Bill.
- Back the principle of 'open data by default', releasing public sector performance data wherever possible.
- Ending commercial confidentiality within the NHS.
- Spread mutual structures and employee participation through the public sector. Support users in pooling their personal budgets into mutual support arrangements.
- Guarantee a 'right to mutualise' within the public sector.
- Fund a co-ordinating service for older people in every county, combining resources from across the NHS, social services, community agents and the voluntary sector.

- A Prevention Fund to encourage preventative, integrated working at local level... ensure organisations work together in a transparent manner with clear democratic accountability.
- Innovation Challenge Fund to help address major societal and industrial challenges.
- Establish an incubator for social enterprises developing innovative solutions to policy problems.
- A national community development programme... a Social Innovation Hub... co-operative and co-production methods to deliver better local services.

- Social impact bonds and payment-by-results... scale these up in the future, focusing on youth unemployment, mental health and homelessness.
- Improving facilities and qualifications for childcare and older persons' care, including social enterprises and co-operatives.

A SMARTER STATE

Rebalance power from large corporations and big government institutions and put it back into the hands of the people of this country:

- Expand community energy, building on Britain's first ever community energy strategy with additional financial and regulatory support.
- Make it simpler for communities to establish local energy companies and easier for community schemes to access the grid.
- Plans for a not-for-dividend energy company...that will put our energy and natural resources in the hands of the people.
- For those on low incomes, we will make 200,000 homes warm every year, delivered street-by-street by local authorities and community organisations.
- Ensure any libraries under threat of closure are offered first for transfer to the local community

- New powers for communities to shape their high streets, including power over payday lenders.
- Establish ownership of existing buildings, including empty houses, disused warehouses and offices and seek to convert them into housing or other useful spaces to meet local need.
- Grant employees the legal right in certain circumstances to buy out their companies... and turn them into workers' cooperatives.
- Support employee buy-outs when businesses are being sold.
- A commitment to bringing empty properties back into use. Charge those whose homes are empty for more than two years 50 per cent more than the applicable rate of council tax.

- Greater transparency in the land market and give local authorities new 'use it or lose it' powers.
- Protect community assets like pubs by bringing forward a Community Right to Buy.
- Strengthen the Community Right to Bid that we created. We will extend the length of time communities have to purchase these assets, and require owners to set a clear 'reserve' price for the community to aim for when bidding.
- Grant the right to turn sporting clubs, in particular football clubs, into community and supporter cooperatives.
- Give communities stronger powers to protect their local assets, including land and buildings.

- Extending the community asset transfer provisions.
- Enable community groups to obtain small loans to pay for feasibility work, lawyers' fees, or materials for refurb.
- New Land Reform Bill will improve transparency and accountability of land ownership and ensure... land can be best managed in the public interest.
- Build a new generation of garden cities.

PRO SOCIAL OWNERSHIP

Our charities, mutuals, co-operatives and social enterprises are pioneering new models of production that enhance social value, promote financial inclusion, and give individuals and communities power and control:

- Support social enterprise. Encourage small firms, which are more embedded in their local communities.
- Expanding the Social Entrepreneurs Fund, to encourage and support community social enterprises.
- We find our greatest innovators and entrepreneurs within our small businesses. The businesses they start and grow will take us out of the economic turmoil we've suffered in recent years and back into the black.
- Encouraging mutuals, cooperatives, and employee participation and by increasing the opportunities for people to take democratic control over the services on which they rely.

- We will give more people the power and support to run a school, start their own social enterprise, and take over their own local parks, landmarks and pubs.
- Double the number of businesses which hire apprentices, including by extending them to new sectors of our economy.
- Expand cooperative education, teaching young people the history of cooperatives as well as how to set them up in practice. Ensure business qualifications will give the same emphasis to cooperative and mutual business models as to other private enterprises.
- An economy based on mutual obligations, encouraging employers and employees to build partnerships for improving both business performance and job quality.
- Treble our successful Start Up Loans programme during the next Parliament.

- Ensure that no individual or company owns more than 20% of a media market.
- Help people form new energy cooperatives so they can benefit from group discounts and cut their bills. At least 30% of the household [energy] market to be supplied by competitors to the 'Big 6' by 2020.
- An inclusive wealth-creating economy works when there is a shared sense of responsibility, so we will be a government that is both pro-business and pro-worker. We value all our businesses as organisations of innovation and wealth production, and we will work strategically with them to create wealth.

- Introduce a cooperative development fund managed by community banks to finance new and expanding cooperatives, alongside a much more comprehensive nationwide network of cooperative development bodies providing the necessary education, training and legal support.
- Help lift people out of poverty through trade, not aid.

ENTERPRISE FOR GOOD

Continue to support and help develop the social economy:

- Ensure that Companies House actually collects data due from companies and has accurate data on their beneficial ownership.
- Not allow large companies to continue getting away with paying zero or negligible corporation tax in Britain.
- Requiring large companies to publish their tax payments and profits for each country in which they operate.
- Ensure developing countries have full access to global automatic tax information exchange systems.
- The generation and supply businesses of the 'Big Six' energy companies will be separated. They will be required to open up their books.

- Commitments to pay the living wage, not use exploitative zero-hour contracts and to take forward a programme of innovation. In return... targeted support and advice to help companies export, grow, innovate and become more productive.
- Companies with more than 250 employees to publish details of the different pay levels of men and women in their organisation. By 2020, extend transparency requirements to include publishing the number of people paid less than the Living Wage and the ratio between top and median pay.
- Establishing a Fair Work Convention... promote best practice, while making it easier to work effectively with our partners across the business community, third sector and trade unions.
- Act to control payday lenders and offer alternatives.
- Improving access for co-operative and mutual organisations to growth finance.

- Encouraging the growth of crowdfunding and alternative finance models, encouraging Local Authorities to use these platforms to improve credit access in their areas.
- Continue to support the credit union movement in making financial services more accessible.
- A windfall tax on payday lenders that can be used to promote credit unions and responsible lending.
- A market share test and at least two new challenger banks.
- Help new and existing challenger banks to inject fresh competition into the market for personal current accounts, mortgages and business loans.

- A new community banking sector to support small and medium-sized enterprises and social enterprises. Support social investment, ensuring charities and social enterprises can access the support and finance they need.

OPEN BUSINESS