



## A new name, a new manifesto

After the 1974 elections Michael Benfield admitted that the name PEOPLE didn't seem to have connected well with people and they didn't understand what the party stood for.

Various options for a new name were considered in the run-up to the 1975 Conference – in the end one choice emerged a clear leader – The Ecology Party.

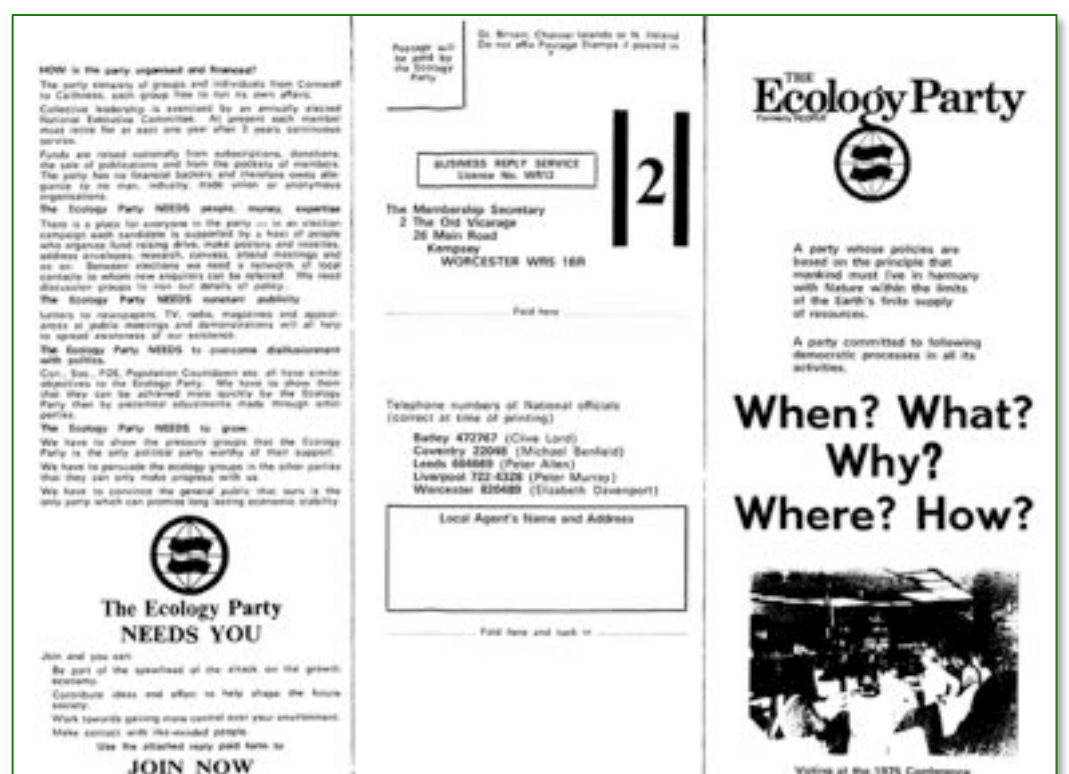
Conference was held again in Coventry. The party had been at a low ebb after the October '74 election, this was an opportunity to regroup and for new activists to come to the fore.



Peter Allen, one of those who had been critical of the 1974 manifesto, drafted a new "Manifesto for a Sustainable Society" which was debated and accepted by conference.

With the new name there were also new faces on the NEC, with the Whittakers retiring to try self-sufficiency in Devon and Jonathan Tyler joining.

At this stage they still eschewed a formal constitution and strongly rejected centralisation and leaders.



# Elections 1975-78

## Local and bye-Elections, and a referendum

### Euro referendum 1975 – so what?

The UK joined the European Economic Community in 1973.

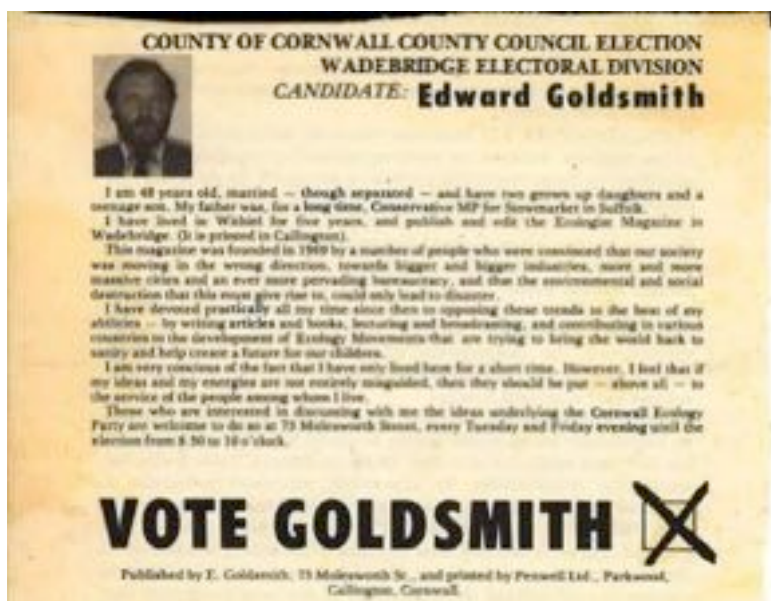
The Labour held a referendum on 31<sup>st</sup> May 1975 to ask whether the UK should remain a member.

PEOPLE/Ecology Party position, in common with other embryonic green parties across Europe, was clear. We wanted close ties with our neighbours, but the EEC was not an appropriate vehicle, being essentially designed to promote unsustainable growth.

Therefore, we should vote to leave.



### Locals 1976 – first councillor



So far as we know no PEOPLE candidates stood in the 1975 local elections, but in 1976 a total of six Ecology Party candidates stood with much better results than in 1974. **John Luck** was elected to Rother District Council as our first councillor.

As a result the NEC decided that strategically the party should focus on local elections – and then promptly decided to put resources into a parliamentary by-election.

### Walsall North 1976 – not such a good idea

Sitting MP John Stonehouse had resigned in disgrace but despite a lot of effort the result for Ecology was dismal – 181 votes. In the melee around Stonehouse little publicity was obtained. The party didn't contest another bye-election until 1979.

### Locals 1977 – a county councillor

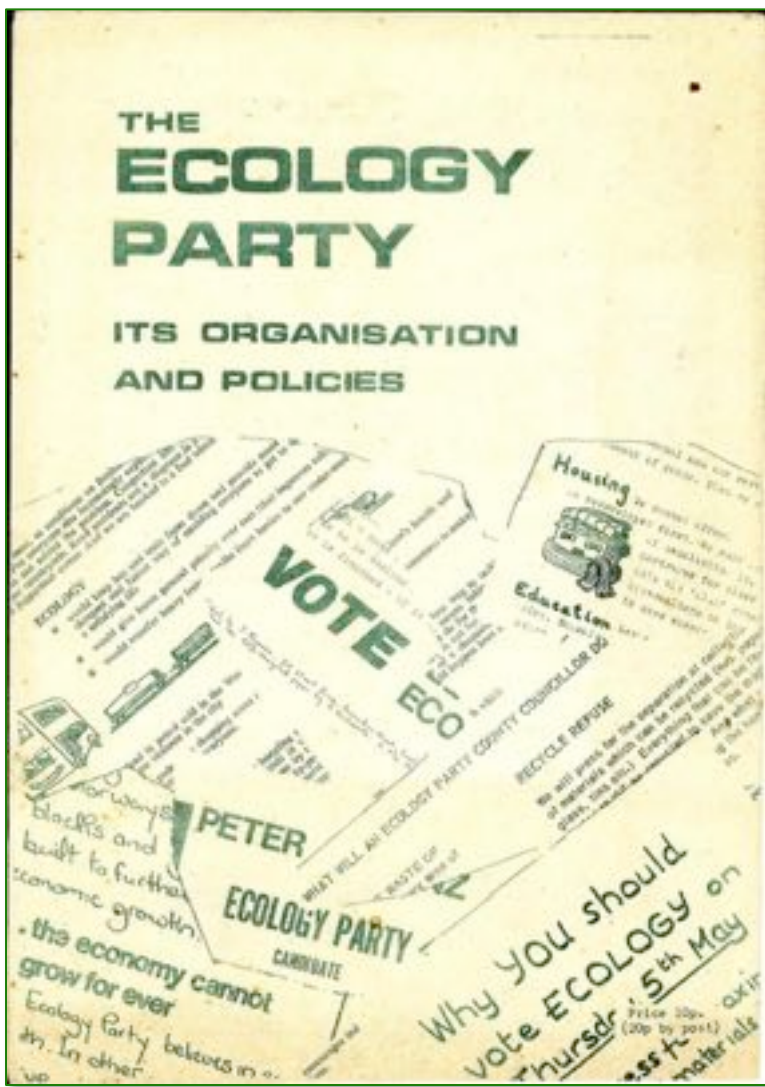
In the 1977 local elections progress resumed. 21 candidates stood with **Jeremy Faull** getting onto Cornwall County Council when his opponent dropped out saying that he could not fault Jeremy's manifesto! Elsewhere results over 10% were achieved in several wards.

### Locals 1978 – progress continues, but slowly

By 1978 membership was starting to grow, confidence was building. However only 17 candidates came forward, with mixed results. In Bath 16% was reached in both wards, Leeds ranged from 7.5% to 0.7% across 11 wards averaging 3.4%

# Ecology Party literature

From the 1970s



**Defence** Full international co-operation on the phasing out of nuclear weapons, but sustained ability to defend Britain's freedom to determine her own future, in spite of increasingly unstable international conditions.

**Health** More progressive medicine, medical services capable of maintaining standards in spite of recession. Detailed preparation of alternative sources of supply as food and other necessities for health become scarcer.

**Racial minorities** Reduction in unemployment, the flashpoint of racial conflict, without forcing integration of communities where this is not desired.

**Environment** Full commitment to environmental protection in recognition of man's dependence on natural systems.

**Devolution** Devolution of responsibility and motivation to regions, neighbourhoods and people, combined with clear political leadership to provide a framework for social and economic change.

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**ABOUT THE PARTY**

The Ecology Party was founded in 1973 after the publication of the *Blueprint for Survival*. It has no political connection with either Right or Left. It has put up candidates in national and local elections, and has won seats on county, district and parish councils.

The party is organised into branches within twelve regions. Each elects one representative to the National Executive Committee, which elects the Chairman. The party's funds are contributed by members.

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**MEMBERSHIP**

The party depends completely on its members for its money, its ideas, its literature, its existence. Here are some of the specific ways in which members can help:

1. The Party needs help at elections. The other parties have a mature organisation to tell voters about their policies, and even though they are finding recruitment more and more difficult, the Ecology Party has a long way to catch up, and must do so quickly.
2. It needs money for research, administration and printing, for fighting elections, and above all, for time. At present the Party is run by people working in their spare time. Sufficient funds to pay workers could shorten the process of growing into a major party by years, and there isn't much time for leisurely progress.
3. It needs people to become members to learn about the policies of the Party and to discuss them with friends. This doesn't sound very important, but in some ways it's the most important of all. The stable society is not a familiar idea in political discussion, and at first it is difficult to see how the principles of such a society really do hold together as a coherent and necessary system. The more you talk about them, the more will the logic and urgency of the Party's purpose take shape in your mind.
4. There are many jobs to be done in the local and national organisation of the Party. Here is an opportunity to build up something from the beginning. If you have a local branch, do get in touch and work out practical ways in which you can help. If there isn't yet a branch in your area, why not help to start one up?
5. The Ecology Party particularly invites people with relevant technical knowledge to help with the task of filling out the current statement of purpose. Its immediate objective is, by means of full public discussion, to refine outline statements into a detailed and fully-endorsed plan which could be a basis for action by an Ecology Government.

**Membership secretary**  
2 The Old Vicarage, 26 Main Road, Kempsey, Worcester.

**Annual subscription**

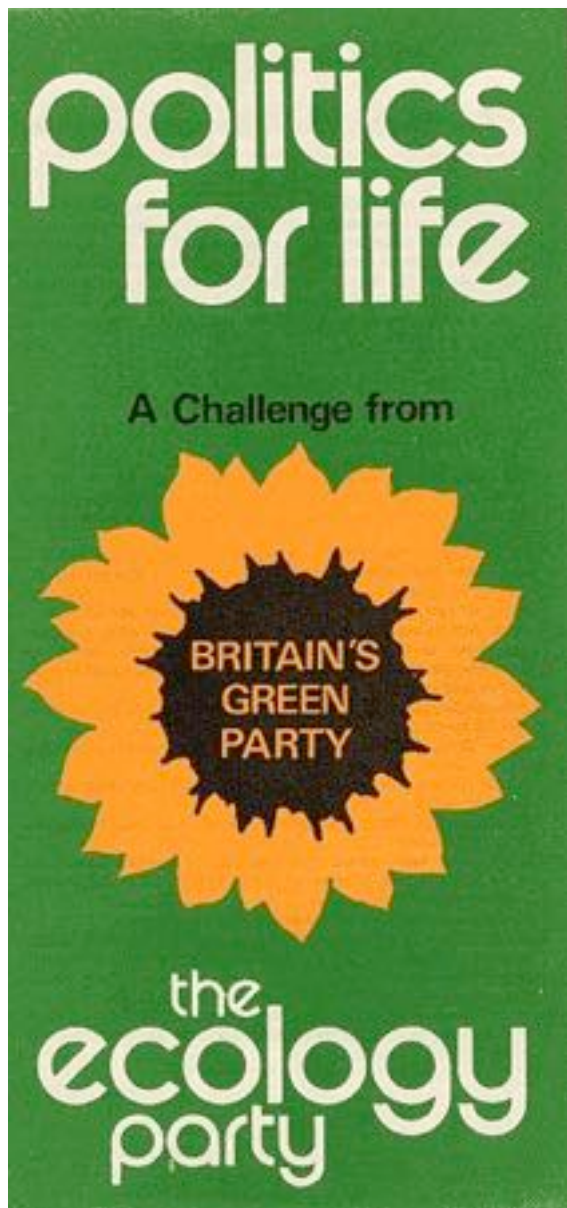
Standard	£4
Couples	£6
Students and pensioners	£2
Couples (students and pensioners)	£3

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Introduction to the Party

ecology party

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ecology party

tomorrow's Britain  
tomorrow's jobs  
tomorrow's energy  
tomorrow's cities  
tomorrow's food  
tomorrow's trade  
tomorrow's voters  
tomorrow's political party  
ecology party

**"WHEN I GROW UP I WANT TO BE..... EMPLOYED"**

Today 1.5 million people in Britain are unemployed. 6 million people in the EEC. Six per cent of the work force in the ten major industrial countries of the world.

It's never looked so likely before that unemployment is here to stay. Or that the future will bring economic and social problems for which we in Britain are almost totally unprepared.

The Ecology Party stands for thinking ahead. About energy, raw materials, and employment. About the environment, food supplies and freedoms. About the things we value.

It exists to provide the leadership needed to build a stable society in Britain.

That means a simpler and healthier economy in which Britain is more self-sufficient in the things she needs. It means an alternative to economic growth. And it means jobs.

ECO stands for a different way of living and working, that's adapted to tomorrow's world, and that's built to last.

It's time to think again. Join tomorrow's political party, now.

eco



# Newsletters

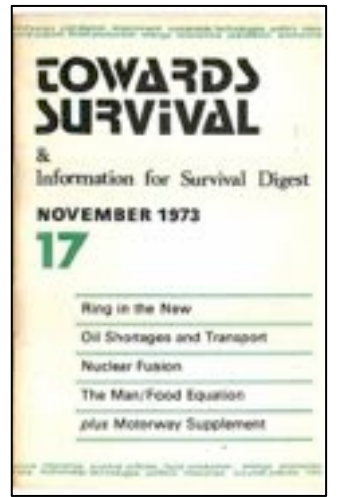
## Keeping in touch with no internet

Before email and the internet the only way to keep in touch with members was by phone and post.

Telephone trees were used to spread urgent news, and regular newsletters were mailed out to members.

Initially these were home produced using a typewriter, stencil paper, and a duplicator machine. The quality and layout would be pretty basic.

Occasionally the party would attempt to partner with a regular publication to carry the party news. In the very beginning a copy of **Towards Survival** was mailed out with the first PEOPLE newsletters. For a couple of issues **The Ecologist** carried party news. Later **Good Earth** was distributed with the newsletter. When EcoNews disappeared briefly in 1980, **Green Line** magazine started as an independent alternative.



During 73 and 74 the newsletter was a simple duplicated sheet, occasionally using the letterhead paper for the front sheet.

For the Ecology Party, Michael Benfield remained in charge of communications and newsletter editor. He moved the newsletter, now called Alliance reflecting a continuing push for movement building, to a litho printed format giving a much more professional feel.

Attempts were made to sell this to non-members, and the party news only occupied a small amount of space.

This lasted less than a year and then Alliance folded, and the newsletter switched to being part of Good Earth, another low cost special interest publication targeting the eco demographic.

EP News and then EcoNews followed, stepping up the quality as circulation rose.

