

SUMMARY ELECTION PROGRAMME GROENLINKS UTRECHT 2022 UTRECHT, A HOME FOR EVERYONE

GroenLinks is working for equality for everyone, in order to make Utrecht a city in which we live in balance with nature and with each other. We are for the environment and for animal welfare. We are providing affordable housing. We are fighting poverty and growing inequality, not only in income, but also in health. We are fully committed to the transition to green energy. We place the health and happiness of Utrecht's citizens above economic growth. We plan for a circular economy. We give everyone the chance to develop through education and investment in social and civic integration and participation. We give cyclists and pedestrians a green light, we protect residents from crime and exclusion, make sport a priority, give art and culture room to flourish and work for a city with clean air, without noise pollution or litter. This is something we do together with the residents of Utrecht. For that reason we take civic participation seriously and actively encourage it. We have to work intelligently and efficiently in order to realize all these ambitions within our budget. That way we can work towards a fair and sustainable city for everyone. We need to ensure that investment is directed towards sustainability, the polluter pays, and the most well-off carry a bigger share of the cost.

We add green spaces wherever we can, in order to face the consequences of the climate crisis and to keep Utrecht enjoyable and liveable for a growing population. We plant more trees, construct playgrounds from natural materials, put in Tiny Forests, and invest in walking and cycle paths in open space. We want the biodiversity in Utrecht to be much better four years from now. We can accomplish this by connecting green spaces with water, greening public spaces and promoting animal-friendly gardening. GroenLinks believes that all animals have a right to be treated with respect. As much as possible we aim to prevent cruelty to animals, such as by discouraging the sale of products that involve animals suffering. Our highest priority is creating affordable housing. We are swiftly finding places for temporary housing, in order to ease the worst shortages. In addition, we will see to it that there is more long-term housing. We will create 60,000 new dwellings by 2040. In order to do this, we will transform monotonous office parks at the borders of the city into lively residential/work zones. Examples are the areas along the A12, in Papendorp, Rijnsweerd, and the Merwedecanal zone. We use the space we already have efficiently, in order to give housing to many, and encourage living above stores. In solving the housing shortage, we will work to create more diverse neighbourhoods, with at least 40% city-subsidized rental units in each area. Building each new dwelling will be as sustainable and accessible as possible.

We do everything we can to put an end to poverty and the increasing inequality in Utrecht. We have made more generous regulations for those on income support, and aim to continue pursuing our ambitious and successful approach to settling personal debt, while making additional funds available for low-income residents.

We are totally committed to the transition to sustainable energy, and ensure that this energy is affordable and available to all. Firstly, we ensure that more buildings have better insulation. Then we increase the production of sustainable energy, with smaller and larger

projects, in which the residents are actively involved. We will begin with residents in those neighbourhoods which will be the first to transition to an alternative to natural gas.

We want care for everyone, close to home and based on trust. We focus on preventive care, so that ultimately people require less urgent care, and we work on reducing health inequality. We give care to people needing it, as soon as we can, to everyone. This will prevent health problems getting worse. We also need to work on improving children's and youth services.

GroenLinks considers the well-being and happiness of Utrecht's citizens as more important than economic growth. We are for broad prosperity within the bounds of what is ecologically feasible. **We want to move to a local, circular economy**, driven by sustainable energy and sustainable (re-)use of raw materials. We stimulate socially orientated, green and local entrepreneurship, and encourage experimentation and cooperation. We will create a greater awareness of sustainability among all of Utrecht's citizens, and make greener choices available to everyone.

Everyone in Utrecht has the right to good education. **We want everyone to be able to develop as individuals**, by acquiring knowledge and skills, and by getting to know people from all walks of life. We aim to create equal opportunities for all the city's children and young people. We give extra help to people who have difficulties with reading, writing and computer skills. We offer unemployed residents, or those with insecure work situations, opportunities for continuing education.

We stand for a just and humane refugee policy. Refugees in Utrecht must be allowed to participate in society. We invest in their housing, training and employment, and therefore in civic and social integration and in participation. We see to it that they have shelter, even those without official residence status. We fight against exploitation and conditions which compromise human dignity.

GroenLinks advocates a liveable city, in which we all can get around regardless of age, income or physical ability. **We prioritise foot and bicycle traffic**; more and more streets are primarily for pedestrians and cyclists, with the car in second place. This will result in better air quality and safer streets.

Freedom and safety are universal rights. We are not afraid to stand up to the growing problem of organized crime in Utrecht, but measures must be part of a long-term solution. The most effective way to increase safety in Utrecht is crime prevention and awareness. The city is investing in contact between residents, and connection within each neighborhood. We fight racism, sexism, vandalism, discrimination and exclusion. A legal system must also protect people from their own government. For that reason, we take the privacy of Utrechters seriously and limit collection of data. We condemn and fight against every form of institutional racism and ethnic profiling.

We put the focus on sport, both as an end in itself and as a way to improve health and increase participation in Utrecht. Expanding the opportunities to participate in sports for children in socio-

economically disadvantaged neighbourhoods will break down the division between the city's rich and poor. We give our full support to small and large sports associations as structural places in the city for exercise and socialising. We plead for a re-appreciation of Utrecht's art and culture sector. Its intrinsic worth is key. Corona has had a devastating effect on Utrecht's culture sector. We will help it to recover, and to emerge stronger than before, by continuing to invest locally in art and culture in all its forms. In our plans for organizing the city, such as the (re-)development of boroughs, we will leave room for art, culture and innovation.

The air quality in Utrecht must improve. This is healthier for everyone, in particular people with fragile health. This is why in the last few years, GroenLinks campaigned for the clean air zone in the Utrecht city centre. We will expand this zone and reduce the number of cars in the city so that we meet the World Health Organisation's air-quality standards by 2030 at the latest.

We will intervene in noise pollution, the #2 environmental cause of illness after air pollution. Our noise-pollution policy will give priority to areas with a lower socio-economic status.

The city needs its citizen's trust and their knowledge to be able to do good work. GroenLinks wants the city to confer more with Utrechters in making its policies. We want the city to gain trust by listening attentively to residents, and by being honest about how much room there is to alter plans. **We take participation seriously and actively seek out opinions and ideas of those who are reluctant to speak up.** In pursuit of this goal, we are involving and strengthening networks of Utrechters. GroenLinks makes space for those residents who show initiative, letting them help in creating solutions for the social problems within the city. The city has to be open to hearing criticism, put people first and improve services.

GroenLinks has great ambitions to make Utrecht a sustainable and socially just city for all. We will accomplish this by using the available budgets intelligently and effectively. We will ensure that investments help the city become more sustainable, that the polluter pays and that the heaviest burdens will fall on those who can bear them.

In 2020 and 2021 a lot of extra money had to be spent unexpectedly because of the coronavirus pandemic. GroenLinks is choosing not to cut back drastically on spending, which will only make the crisis worse. We will not let anyone fall through the cracks financially because of corona, and **we will continue to invest in the future.**