Green Party Language Charter

(2020 amendment)

Introduction

This Charter is a central element of Green Party policy in order to show the party's commitment to the development and encouragement of Irish internally, in a practical and planned way. Lip-service to the language is a common problem amongst political parties, which often leads to hypocrisy on the issue, something which does not benefit the state of the language. This Charter endeavours to give meaning to our words within the Green Party on this issue.

The most important aspect is that it be clear to the public and to our members that the use of Irish is welcome in dealing with the Green Party and that the party itself is seeking to implement its own Irish language policy internally as much as is possible, subject to the resources available to us. On that basis, this Charter is based on the sociolinguistic concept of 'active offer'.

Party administration

- The Executive Committee will chose one of its members annually after the Annual Convention to be responsible for supervising the implementation of this Charter. That person will deal with the party's professional staff to achieve this, and will regularly consult with the party's Irish-Language Spokesperson, the chairperson of the Irish-Language Policy Group and with the ordinary members of the party to get feedback on its implementation. He/she will report regularly to the Executive Committee on the implementation of the provisions of this Charter. The EC member chosen will give a formal report to the Executive Committee on the implementation of this Charter once a year at least.

- The party will find out which public representatives of the party, both elected and non-elected, have Irish and are prepared to deal with the media, the members and the general public through Irish. The above-mentioned member of the Executive Committee will direct this process and the details collected will be made available to the party press officer/press team and to the national Irish-language media. A note will also be made of their specific range of expertise, so that a wide

range of representatives will be available to speak knowledgeably in Irish about various subjects on which the party comments. This list will be updated annually.

- The party will find out which staff members have Irish and are prepared to deal with the members and the public in Irish. They will be recorded on a list and will be asked to indicate clearly in the signature of their professional email address that they can deal with people in Irish. The above-mentioned member of the Executive Committee will direct this process and the details collected will be given to the principal officers of the party as appropriate to facilitate language services within the Green Party. This list will be updated annually.

- The party will find out which ordinary members of the party have the skills to translate to Irish and who are prepared to translate material for the party voluntarily. The above-mentioned member of the Executive Committee will direct this process and whatever final file is produced will be provided to the appropriate members of the party's administrative staff in order to produce bilingual versions of public texts provided by the party and to facilitate Irish-language services within the party.

The Internet, email and IT

- A short Irish language message will be added to the signature at the bottom of emails from info@greenparty.ie to show that correspondence in the Irish language is welcome from both members and the general public.
- The party will provide a fully-bilingual website to the general public and its members. The English version will be at greenparty.ie and the Irish version at comhaontasglas.ie, with a link (a clearly visible button) between each respective page of the two sites. When the party decides to get a new website, it will be taken into account from the beginning of the planning process that the site must be completely bilingual and its design/layout will be planned accordingly. It will be made sure that the software used for it facilitates acute accents (síntí fada, a.k.a. fadas) and other grammatical symbols used in the Roman alphabet.
- The party leader/deputy-leader will do a short web video to show his/her support for the new party approach to Irish so that this new approach can be advertised on social media and on the Internet in general.
- The party will ensure that the acute accent (síneadh fada) in written Irish will be facilitated in any technology used by the party and it will be a requirement in the case of new software that the party buys in the future.
- The administrators of the party will ensure that Irish-language names are recorded in the party database as given (i.e. Ó Néill, rather than O'Neill/O Neill/Ó'Néill) and that Irish language spelling of names is facilitated when members provide their name in that form.
- Members will be able to register/reregister their membership through Irish on the website, as well as manage their membership through Irish on the site.
- The party will see to it that the visibility of Irish in the party's activities on social media is increased. The party already has Irish-language pages on Facebook/Twitter, namely, 'Gaeilge sa Chomhaontas Glas'. These will be supported and promoted as much as possible through the main English-language accounts that the party has. The 'Green Party Ireland' Twitter account will share every tweet sent from the Irish-language account (often the case already). It will share one post per day at least from the GP Irish page on Facebook when there are

posts made on that page, and will endeavour to share as many of them as possible, especially on certain days where very little is being posted from the English-language account.

- The party commits to replying in Irish to any correspondence/comments received electronically in Irish, be they by email or on social media.

Banners and logos/emblems

- The Irish language and English language text will be the same size on all official banners and emblems created for the Green Party in future, something which is common on party banners already, though on an inconsistent basis. The party will also ensure that the Irish-language website is shown as well as the English site when a URL is to be shown on those banners.
- Irish language Green Party logos/emblems will be shown/advertised to the members of the party so that they know that they are available for publicity purposes, especially during election time.
- The party will see to it that the status of Irish on the party's membership card is also improved when the next one is designed.

Elections

- A minimum of 20% of the generic posters of the national party shall be in the Irish language.
- Election slogans shall be presented in both official languages from the beginning of any election campaign.
- Support will be given to encourage the provision of election literature in the Irish language in counties where there are Gaeltacht areas. Candidates/Green local groups in these areas will be reminded that there is a Gaeltacht in their constituency and they will be encouraged to provide election literature in Irish to that Gaeltacht community when canvassing/electioneering there, if they can afford it. The Irish language group within the party will provide free Irish-language translation of text to the candidates in these constituencies, which should greatly lower any cost involved in producing Irish-language election literature.
- Candidates and the organisers of their campaigns generally around the country will be informed that the Irish-language group can provide Irish-language translation of text for their literature to them for free, provided that the English text is made available for translation in good time. All candidates will be encouraged to use this service for their own leaflets, if they wish to do so. They will also be reminded that they can use the Irish version of their profile on comhaontasglas.ie in their publicity material as well.
- An Irish version of the party's election manifestoes will be made available in Irish and party officers/staff will see to it that the English version is completed in good time for an Irish translation to be completed for the launch events of the campaign.

Party members

- The party will facilitate the establishment of an associate group for the Irish speakers of the party, along the lines of Mná Glasa, Queer Greens, Young Greens/Óige Ghlas etc.
- At least one Irish-language social event will be organised at the Party's National Convention each year as a way to introduce Irish speakers within the party to each other. People often don't recognise the number of Irish speakers around them in a mainly English-language environment and this initiative is something that can help facilitate a network/community of Irish speakers within the party. Irish-language events will be organised with an emphasis on events **through** Irish rather than just **about** Irish (i.e. a workshop through Irish on climate action).

Public documents and party policies

- All of the completed and ratified policies of the party will be provided bilingually to the public on the party's website. This will mean that it will be a lot easier to put together a full Irish-language version of the election manifesto for the next general election, since it will be possible to do a large amount of 'cutting and pasting' from the Irish language versions of policies to that end.
- All policy groups will send the final drafts of new policies to the appointed translators of the party to be made available in Irish and we will endeavour to launch the Irish-language and the English-language versions together, where possible.
- Any other public documents produced by the party which are made available to the public will be made available in Irish.
- The Charter will be displayed clearly in the main office so that there is no ambiguity about its contents and so that the administrators/workers of the party can easily familiarise themselves with it. It will also be emailed to relevant party members and will be displayed on the national website.
- We will ensure that the party's publicity documents (leaflets/literature about the party at conventions/conferences etc.) are available bilingually as well.

Media

- We will endeavour to provide more press statements bilingually and increase the number over time.
- The press office will maintain a database of the contact details of all Irish-language media in order to keep them informed of Irish-language developments in the party and as the number of Irish-language press releases is increased.
- The party will see to it that all videos/electronic images/memes created by the press office will have an Irish version as well, especially videos containing only text on screen.

The Annual Convention

- The party will ensure that the slogan of the Convention will be translated to Irish and will be shown as large as the English text on Convention banners and on the main lecterns for speakers. If there is more than one lectern on stage, one will have only Irish on it and English on the other. The Irish-language website address will be shown with the same prominence as the English-language site.

- In order to improve the visibility of Irish and to support the Irish-language community within the party, the party will provide stickers or badges on which the words 'Tá Gaeilge Agam' (I speak Irish) is displayed, at the Annual Convention. The party's dedicated Irish-language email address will be shown on it as well (gaeilge@greenparty.ie). One of these will be given to each member who registers at the convention registration desk and it will be explained to them. Of course, it will be left up to the individual member if they wish to wear it.

Internal elections/referenda/preferenda of the party

- In the case of elections/(p)referenda conducted to make national decisions/elect officials/the party leader, the party will ensure that Irish is of equal standing to English on the ballot paper sent out/given to members, in the same manner as the ballot papers used in State elections/referenda.

Progress and development

- Members of the party will be kept informed in Irish and in English about Irish-language developments/the Language Charter within the party over time through the party's email updates.
- This Language Charter will be reviewed every three years at least, but it can be amended anytime if the members of the party consider that necessary. Progress and the amount achieved since it was first implemented will be examined and ways to improve it and to strengthen bilingualism within the party further will be explored.
- Feedback will be accepted continually from members of the party and from the general public about this Language Charter after its implementation has begun and that feedback will be taken into account in the next review of it. Anyone wishing to give their opinion on this should send it by email to gaeilge@greenparty.ie