



More than an election programme

The climate takes no account of
Schöneck's indolence

Local elections in Schöneck on 14th March 2021

Dear readers,

Election campaigns are the time of big plans. In their programmes, the parties and electoral associations write down all the things they plan to do in the next election period. In the end, reality often looks differently. Let's take a look at the initiatives we Greens have launched in the last five years, which were successful, which were not, and because of what or whom they failed.

A general observation when looking at the last five years: Almost all initiatives on climate and environmental protection came from us Greens and sometimes even found approval - even if often with a delay. But - and this has to be said quite clearly - especially with the CDU and the FDP, no climate protection could be achieved in the past parliamentary term.

A second observation on diversity and political participation in Schöneck: In 2011, the Free Voters' Association (Freie Wählergemeinschaft, FWG) entered parliament because their representatives did not feel sufficiently represented by any party. In 2016, the Wahlalternative Schöneck (WAS) also entered parliament, because its representatives did not feel sufficiently represented by either a party or the FWG, although the core issue of the WAS - the prevention of the sale of the castle - was already similarly represented by the FDP and the FWG. Since 2016, the FWG has been pushing ahead with a "planning for the future" initiative, in which other citizens are now to be involved. However, THE survival issue of our time - climate protection - does not appear in the topic packages of the three working groups to be formed: You look for the word in vain.

Our position: The wheel must be reinvented with regard to the substantive content, not with regard to the participation processes. Because municipal politics is certainly not perfect, but we know of no better system of citizen participation - the democratic culture in Schöneck works. You will find open ears in the parliamentary groups for the issues that are on your mind. The parliamentary groups are also happy to hear from other participants. Become active. Or talk to the representatives between elections: in the open parliamentary group meetings, in the committee meetings, in the meetings of the local advisory councils, in which non-parliamentarians can also participate.

Our request: Go to the polls, vote for climate protection, support the Green idea. Our competitors have not recognised the urgency!

Your candidates from

Bündnis 90 / Die Grünen Schöneck

In the following text you will find examples of our initiatives of the last five years, divided into policy areas. In the boxes you will find our priorities for the next five years. The sources mentioned in the footnotes can be found here (in German language only): https://gruene-schoeneck.de/userspace/HE/ov_schoeneck/Dokumente/Kommunalwahl-2021/Wahlprogramm-2021-bis-2026-Quellen.pdf

I. Climate protection

The municipality is still flying blind and has no overview of the development of its CO2 emissions. Yet Schöneck had already adopted a climate protection concept in 2012 (!). However, the implementation of measures has been slow. Our demand for a climate protection manager who would take care of the implementation of the conceived measures on a full-time basis was unsuccessful.

In June 2019, in view of the umpteenth heat record and following the example of many other municipalities, we demanded that Schöneck also declares a climate emergency in order to finally treat global warming for what it is: a survival crisis! The main point of our proposal was that applicants must make a self-assessment of the impact on climate protection for each application to the municipal council. A year later, it was put to the vote and fortunately found a majority. The central point, however, against the votes of CDU and FDP.¹

Our demands for the new election period:

- Learning from the pandemic: crisis management against global warming
- Update the climate protection concept
- Hire a climate protection manager
- Establish monitoring

We know from the climate protection concept: The main levers for reducing CO2 emissions in Schöneck lie in the fields of action of housing and transport. Our initiatives have therefore focused on these two areas up to now.

1. Housing

In the existing housing stock, we were able to launch a "heat" subsidy catalogue, which promotes measures for heat insulation and heating system renewal.²

In new buildings, our demand for maximum energy efficiency was regularly rejected by the majority. In the sale of municipal land (Hanauer Pfad in Budesheim, Dresdener Straße³ behind the fire brigade in Kilianstädten) as well as in municipal projects such as the new construction of the U3 childcare centre in Budesheim. This is particularly annoying, because at no time can energy be saved more cheaply than in new buildings. 0815 buildings of today are the energy refurbishment cases of tomorrow.

For the current discussion on new residential areas, we have once again put forward the demand for the application of the passive house standard and backed it up by external experts in committee meetings.⁴

Our demands for the new election period:

- New buildings only in the passive house standard and with the use of solar energy
- Promotion of energy-efficient renovations

¹ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, June 25, 2020, rejection of climate emergency by CDU/FDP

² Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 7, 2019, TOP 7

³ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, March 22, 2018, rejection energy efficiency Dresdener Straße

⁴ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, June 25, 2020, TOP 25

2. Mobility

The time is ripe! Many people realise, e.g. in the morning traffic jam to Bad Vilbel, that a "business as usual" approach has no chance of success. Many of our initiatives concern the traffic turnaround towards a climate-neutral, healthy mobility with less congestion, noise, exhaust fumes and land sealing. We have been able to achieve some partial successes.

A beacon is our Radius 7 concept (bicycle traffic in and around Schöneck within a radius of 7 kilometers), which achieved a majority in the municipal council at the second attempt (again against the votes of the FDP - with one exception - and the CDU) and for which funds were made available in the current budgets for implementation. The cycling concept is already being worked on with broad citizen participation. The position of the Schönecker CDU is absurd, which would literally leave subsidies on the street⁵, which their colleagues in the black-green Hessian state government make available to the municipalities in the amount of up to 70 percent. For the sake of completeness should be mentioned that we Greens did not invent cycling on our own and that on the initiative of the FWG, road markings are being created and signposts renewed in inner-city areas.

Our attempt to purchase electric bicycles for the administration was rejected for the 2018/2019 budget.⁶ At the suggestion of the administration, however, funds were approved in the 2020/2021 budget and the employees and the environment are now benefiting from the advantages that the bikes have on the short routes in our district. On our initiative, cycling against the one-way direction was also opened in Frankfurter Straße.

In addition to the creation and improvement of cycle paths, safe and convenient parking facilities are essential for the development of cycling as a means of transport. This applies both at home and in public spaces.

For 100 years, the political instrument regulating the parking of vehicles - the parking space statute - has ensured that sufficient car parking spaces are available outside every front door. For a traffic turnaround, we must now ensure that it becomes a matter of course that bicycles can be parked safely and securely directly in front of the front door so that, for example, the heavy e-bike does not have to be heaved up from the basement. Here, too, our attempt to modernize the parking space statutes, which also provided charging options for electric cars, initially failed in December 2018.⁷ Less than a year later, a weakened new version of the administration was approved by parliament.⁸

In the public space, the bicycle parking facilities at the citizens' meeting place and at the Nidderhalle are being extended, renewed and improved at the request of the Greens, so that even higher-value bicycles can be securely locked there.⁹

We had demanded charging points for electric vehicles in public spaces.¹⁰ The first one has now been installed at the new U3 building in Budesheim. This was made possible by the municipality's cooperation with the car-sharing provider mobileeee, which not only leases an electric vehicle to the municipality as part of the deal, but also provides an electric charging point in each district. In addition, the vehicle is available as a sharing vehicle outside office hours. That's good! However, the municipality intends to lease the vehicle back after the minimum leasing period. Not good, because Car-Sharing needs time and reliability.

⁵ Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, May 14, 2019, TOP 7

⁶ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, December 14, 2017, Budget request 22

⁷ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, December 13, 2018, TOP 5

⁸ Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, November 26, 2019, TOP 6

⁹ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 13, 2020, Budget request No. 13

¹⁰ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, December 14, 2017, Budget request No. 21

There is agreement in parliament and also in the neighbouring municipalities, according to a joint resolution agreed across municipalities, that the Niddertalbahn should be expanded.¹¹ The results of a feasibility study confirm that electrification and double-track expansion between Büdesheim and Kilianstädten meet the economic viability criteria required for federal funding. However, the majority in parliament did not want to earmark their own funds for planning, as we had proposed.¹² That's not going to work!

In the current and future planning of new housing developments, the means of our choice are: Car-sharing, public transport, rentable flexi-parking spaces, storage for bicycles, cargo bikes, strollers & Co. We want to give people a home for whom not having their own car is a benefit. We don't want to force them to build two expensive parking spaces if they don't want to have their own car. In this way, we also contribute to affordable housing. The new residents benefit, as do the neighbouring municipalities, which do not have to cope with additional car traffic, and last but not least the old-established residents of Schöneck, who do not want new car traffic through their residential areas and who can also use the new infrastructure. Our motion on this is still "in the course of business".¹³

So far, we have only been moderately successful in enforcing a 30 km/h speed limit within the town. We only achieved a speed limit at night for noise protection reasons on the main road in Büdesheim, although it would also make sense during the day in order to be able to cross the road safely at least along the shops between the town hall and the fire brigade. On market days, we believe this is even a must for safety reasons!

In Kilianstädten, a 30 km/h speed limit in Frankfurter Straße failed because otherwise a considerable state subsidy would have to be paid back for the renovation between Raiffeisenstraße and Büdesheimer Straße. Unfortunately, this is where the room for manoeuvre of local politics ends, but in 2021 there will also be federal elections ...

Our demands for the new election period:

- Investments in the cycle path network for the completion of the RadiuS7 measures to be made permanent through the provision of € 30 per year and inhabitant ¹⁴
- Set up bicycle racks in the town centres
- Expanding the e-charging point network in the town centre
- Promote the expansion of the Niddertalbahn railway line
- Establish alternative mobility concepts based on public transport, car sharing and bicycles for new residential areas
- Bundestag election: Reverse the principle of road traffic regulations so that the speed limit of 30 km/h becomes the standard speed in built-up areas and exceptions to this must be approved

¹¹ Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, November 26, 2019, TOP 16

¹² Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 13, 2020, Budget request No. 41

¹³ Source: Request for a meeting of the Committee for Construction, Environment, Transport, Energy and Climate Protection. As of 09.10.2020, this has not yet been dealt with.

¹⁴ 30 € per year and inhabitant correspond to a recommendation of the ADFC: For Schöneck this would be approx. 360 T€ incl. approx. 50% state subsidies, i.e. approx. 180 T€ own means of the municipality.

II. Nature conservation

Time and again a wave of indignation sweeps through the community, even across party lines, when trees are felled in the local area. Trees not only shape the appearance of the village, but also help to keep the microclimate in the village bearable through shade and oxygen production in the increasingly hot summers. Protecting the trees is therefore an immediate on-site measure to adapt to global warming. It is thus regrettable and hardly comprehensible that so far each of our attempts to enact a tree protection statute has failed miserably. Most recently in September 2020 with only 5 votes in favour and 27 against.¹⁵

The overheating of the earth does not only affect far away burning bushes, steppes or forests in Australia, Siberia or California. No, even in the Schöneck forest, right on our doorstep, the consequences are obvious: trees are dying because of the drought. As a result, the felling by the forestry industry is already determined to a significant extent by the removal of dead stands and by road safety measures. It is gratifying that, at the request of the CDU, budget funds have been earmarked for reforestation.¹⁶ The symptoms are being alleviated, so to speak. This remains a consolation if nothing is done about the causes.

Schöneck's forests contain old beech stands with a high value for biodiversity, which is why the forest between Kilianstädten and Büdesheim is classified as a European NATURA 2000 protected area. For years, we have also been fighting to take the "Kite Centre" in the Büdesheim Book Forest out of timber use. According to the state ornithological station and the Schönecker Bird Protection Society, the Buchwald is an outstanding habitat for the protected birds. As a partial success, logging has now unfortunately been temporarily abandoned. Once again, however, the opportunity to combine ecology and economy has been lost.¹⁷ A permanent closure of the 11.4 ha area would be rewarded with ecopoints worth at least €171,000. According to Hessenforst, forest management generates an average surplus of € 116 per hectare and year, which would be € 1,322 per year for the Milanzentrum. This means that the 11.4 ha would have to be managed for 129 years in order to realise the equivalent value of the ecopoints credited upon decommissioning.

The EU-wide ban on the carcinogenic plant poison glyphosate was prevented by the federal government. We Greens wanted to take advantage of the municipalities' room for manoeuvre and ban the use of glyphosate at least on municipal fields. The explanation of our farmers in a committee meeting that the agent is harmless when used carefully was enough for the other parliamentary groups to reject our application. Just imagine which farmer would say that he/she uses the product carelessly...¹⁸

Steinbachplatz - Some decisions of the municipal council could hardly be more contradictory: In June 2019, the municipal council unanimously decided to launch a competition for "Schöneck's flowering gardens" and called on its citizens to "do without stone beds or rock gardens".¹⁹ And in November it decided to pave over the small park on the corner of Frankfurter Strasse and Raiffeisenstraße and henceforth call it Steinbachplatz - the name says it all. A role model? No way! Instead of spending € 70,000 to deal better with global warming in the town (key words: infiltration and cooling), exactly the opposite is being done. This measure is completely out of date. With our renitency were (almost) alone in the opposition.²⁰

¹⁵ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, September 24, 2020, TOP 5

¹⁶ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 13, 2020, Budget request No. 16

¹⁷ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, October 18, 2018, TOP 4

¹⁸ Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, May 14, 2019, TOP 8

¹⁹ Source: Municipal Council of Monday, June 17, 2019, TOP 3

²⁰ Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, November 26, 2019, TOP 5

Our demands for the new election period:

- Enact tree protection statute
- Forest: give the biotope and nature conservation function of the forest a higher priority than timber production; protect the Milanzentrum in the Büdesheimer Buchwald and the old beech stands by permanently refraining from forestry use (with the exception of traffic safety); give natural regeneration priority over expensive planting measures and use the natural genetic diversity within the individual tree species
- Extend the Nidderau nature conservation areas
- Ban glyphosate on communal fields

III. Resource efficiency

Our motions on resource efficiency are small-scale and certainly won't save the world. Even there, however, the other parliamentary groups find it difficult to agree.

Since tap water is the most tested foodstuff in Germany, we proposed that in future tap water should be served instead of mineral water in the municipality's area of responsibility. A majority in the municipal council did not come about, the prejudices were too great.²¹

You know it from your annual electricity and gas bill: at a glance you can see how consumption has developed compared to the previous year and how economical - or not - you are compared to similar households and can thus take countermeasures if necessary. Our success: From 2021, this will also be possible for waste in Schöneck; you can see how many kilograms of waste you disposed of in 2020 and, for comparison, in 2019. We are still working on waste water.²²

Unfortunately, the cleaners in the administration and the municipal council were also "successful" when it came to bulky waste. Because it seemed unacceptable to some that twice a year foreign people (disrespectfully called "waste tourists") drive through Schöneck in vans to save our wealth from the scrap press and to continue to use it, bulky waste dates are now no longer published. For citizens and the administration, this has increased the effort involved in finding and registering dates. For everyone, however, the costs for the disposal of bulky waste have also increased. On the occasion of a revision of the waste statutes, our amendment to return to the old practice is currently in the course of business.

Our demands for the new election period:

- Increase resource efficiency also through small-scale measures
- Avoid waste

²¹ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, May 3, 2018, TOP 15

²² Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, November 26, 2019, TOP 3

IV. Local development

With a lot of effort, we were able to preserve the possibilities for expansion of the Kilianstädter fire brigade in the third attempt by retaining the rear access road when building on the area behind the fire brigade. The fire station, which is located on a slope, was farsightedly equipped with a roof that could be driven on, in order to enable a later extension by adding a storey. The administration's design almost wantonly gambled away this option.²³

The fight for more protection from noise is also tough. Since 2016, we have had the night-time speed limit in Büdesheim - due to our application from 2013. It was finally made possible by the government participation in Wiesbaden.²⁴ The closure of the ungated level crossing behind the Thylmann Mill to make the warning horns - also at night - superfluous also goes back to our motion and is about to be implemented.²⁵ We are currently campaigning for further improvements at the Jung & Schmitt company, where the nightly pre-cooling of the truck air-conditioning units causes considerable noise emissions.²⁶

We had to persistently pursue our initiative for more accessibility in the Schöneck path network. From the simple request for a decision in principle that if roads or pavements are to be renovated anyway, they should be lowered in crossing areas, a CDU amendment initially resulted in a study to determine the need for lowering and the costs for this. This study would probably have disappeared in the town hall drawers if we had not requested funds for the prioritised measures in the 2020/2021 budget so that they could now be successively implemented.²⁷

Our proposal to carry out a land consolidation for the Nidderaue is as functional as a "Swiss army knife". The multiple effects: A reorganisation of the land leads to an improvement in the water quality of the Nidder and in flood and nature protection. In addition, it can reduce the distances that Schöneck farmers have to travel to their fields and meadows and improve the network of paths for pedestrians and cyclists. The municipality would thus comply with the European Water Framework Directive and could exploit synergies with the existing "Schönecker Rundweg" (Circular Route Schöneck) initiative and the "RadiuS7" cycle path project. In addition, Schöneck would connect to the land consolidation procedure already underway in the town of Nidderau and enable the near-natural development of the Nidder and Nidderaue over a large area. Our application from August 2019 is still in the course of business.²⁸

Our demands for the new election period:

- Further reduce avoidable noise
- Lower pavements at intersections
- Carry out land consolidation in the Nidderaue: For better nature and flood protection, shorter access routes for agriculture and an improved road network
- Open up design statues for the use of renewable energies
- Create safe crossing possibilities for pedestrians on Schöneck's main roads
- Expanding the broadband network
- Expanding local supply in Oberdorfelden

²³ Source: Meeting of the Committee for Construction, Environment, Transport, Energy and Climate Protection of Thursday, October 26, 2017, TOP 3

²⁴ Source: Meeting of the Committee for Construction, Environment, Transport, Energy and Climate Protection (Election period 2011 - 2016) of Monday, May 13, 2013, TOP 3

²⁵ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, March 16, 2017, TOP 14

²⁶ Source: Meeting of the Main and Finance Committee of Tuesday, April 21, 2020, TOP 9

²⁷ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 13, 2020, Budget request No. 8

²⁸ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, August 29, 2019, TOP 4

V. Social

A lot has happened in Schöneck in the last few years regarding childcare. Schools have taken the path to becoming all-day schools through the "Pakt für den Nachmittag" (Pact for the Afternoon). There is a colourful mix of community, church and independent facilities. In the kindergarten area, there is a forest group, and there are enough childcare places for children of all ages. Since 2018, funded by the black-green state government, morning attendance for kindergarten children has been free of charge. However, our motion to take advantage of the situation and waive the afternoon fees as well, since the volume is low and the administrative billing costs are not in good proportion to the fee income, did not find a majority.²⁹ The CDU was on a different track here, seriously wanting to carry out an "organisational study with the aim of reducing expenditure in the day-care centres". Fortunately, the coalition partner SPD was able to contain them, and the project petered out.³⁰

Our demands for the new election period:

- Expand the Pact for the Afternoon
- Support childcare associations
- Support music schools
- Maintain services for senior citizens
- Expand offers for young people
- Strengthening the culture of welcome
- Promoting diversity
- Organise transport for pupils from Oberdorfelden to Niederdorfelden
- Promote gender equality

²⁹ Source: Municipal Council of Tuesday, May 14, 2019, TOP 6

³⁰ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 7, 2019, TOP 4

VI. Old Büdesheim Castle

The whole discussion ultimately comes down to the question of whether or not the municipality should continue to own the castle. Some of our competitors have partly taken a clear position on this, while others have the impression that - without a clear position - the wave of indignation is to be exploited further, and others have the impression that the issue is to be left open until after the local elections and that one is playing for time with further expert opinions. After the presentation of the extended redevelopment report in November 2019, which showed an immediate need for redevelopment in the amount of 1.5 million euros, we Greens had most recently proposed as a compromise to sell only the castle without building on the square between the castle and the sportsmen's home. We did not find a majority for this.³¹ We are convinced that, apart from the one-off renovation, the long-term maintenance of a historic building is also an expensive business. Wealthy private individuals who want to live in a beautiful - and perhaps prestigious - castle are happy to pay for it. The municipality cannot afford this in the long run, because it would mean saving money elsewhere, which we urgently need for sustainable projects, or generating additional income through taxes. Whatever the case, the castle is of course important, but we see climate protection as THE dominant issue in local politics in the years to come.

Our demands for the new election period:

- Sell the castle: Willingness to compromise only for solution that preserves the castle in the long term, but avoids cost and financial risks for the community

³¹ Source: Municipal Council of Thursday, February 13, 2020, TOP 5