

Updated October 2023

# THE GREEN PARTY POLICY PROCESS



**Green Party**  
for the common good

# What forms of policy are there?

Generally, “policy” refers to the Policies for a Sustainable Society (PSS) – the Party’s book of longer term policies agreed at successive conferences and listed in right-hand column at:

<http://policy.greenparty.org.uk/philosophical-basis.html>

Policy also includes:

- The Philosophical Basis
- Policy Statements - see ‘What we Stand For’ and ‘Record of Policy Statements’ at <http://policy.greenparty.org.uk/philosophical-basis.html>
- Manifesto – see <https://campaigns.greenparty.org.uk/manifesto/>



The screenshot shows the 'Policy' page of the Green Party website. The header is green with the text 'Policy Green Party' and a globe icon. Below the header is a navigation menu with links: Home, Public NHS, Fair Economy, Decent Homes, Safe Climate, Free Education, Better Transport, and a search bar. The main content is divided into two columns. The left column is titled 'Philosophical Basis of the Green Party' and contains the text 'We believe that:' followed by two paragraphs. The right column is titled 'What We Stand For' and contains a list of links: 'Our Core Values', 'Philosophical Basis', and 'Record of Policy Statements'. Below this is a purple button that says 'JOIN THE GREEN PARTY'. The bottom section is titled 'Long Term Goals' and contains a list of links: 'Animal Rights', 'Climate Change', 'Countryside', 'Crime and Justice', 'Culture, Media and Sports', 'Disability', 'Drug Policy', 'Economy', 'Education', 'Energy', and 'Europe'.

# Principles – Green Party policy-making aims to be:

## Democratic

Policy is made by our members. Every member has an equal right to propose policy, debate policy on the members' website and in conference, and vote on policy at conference.

## Consultative

Policy is made through an open process. Members can read and comment on proposed motions, and now on amendments too. Proposers need to demonstrate that they have consulted with groups within and outside of the Green Party to ensure that motions are well informed and researched.

## Consensual (ideally)

Obviously our members don't always agree on everything. Nor should they. But the policy making process includes opportunities for debate and refining of ideas, with the aim of reaching consensus where possible. Significant divisive ideas have to be researched and discussed multiple times.

# Green Party policy is made:

- Through a clearly defined process
- By members at conference for PSS, Philosophical Basis and the Record of Policy Statements (RoPS)
- By Green Party Regional Council, taking authority from PSS (for manifestos and policy announcements)

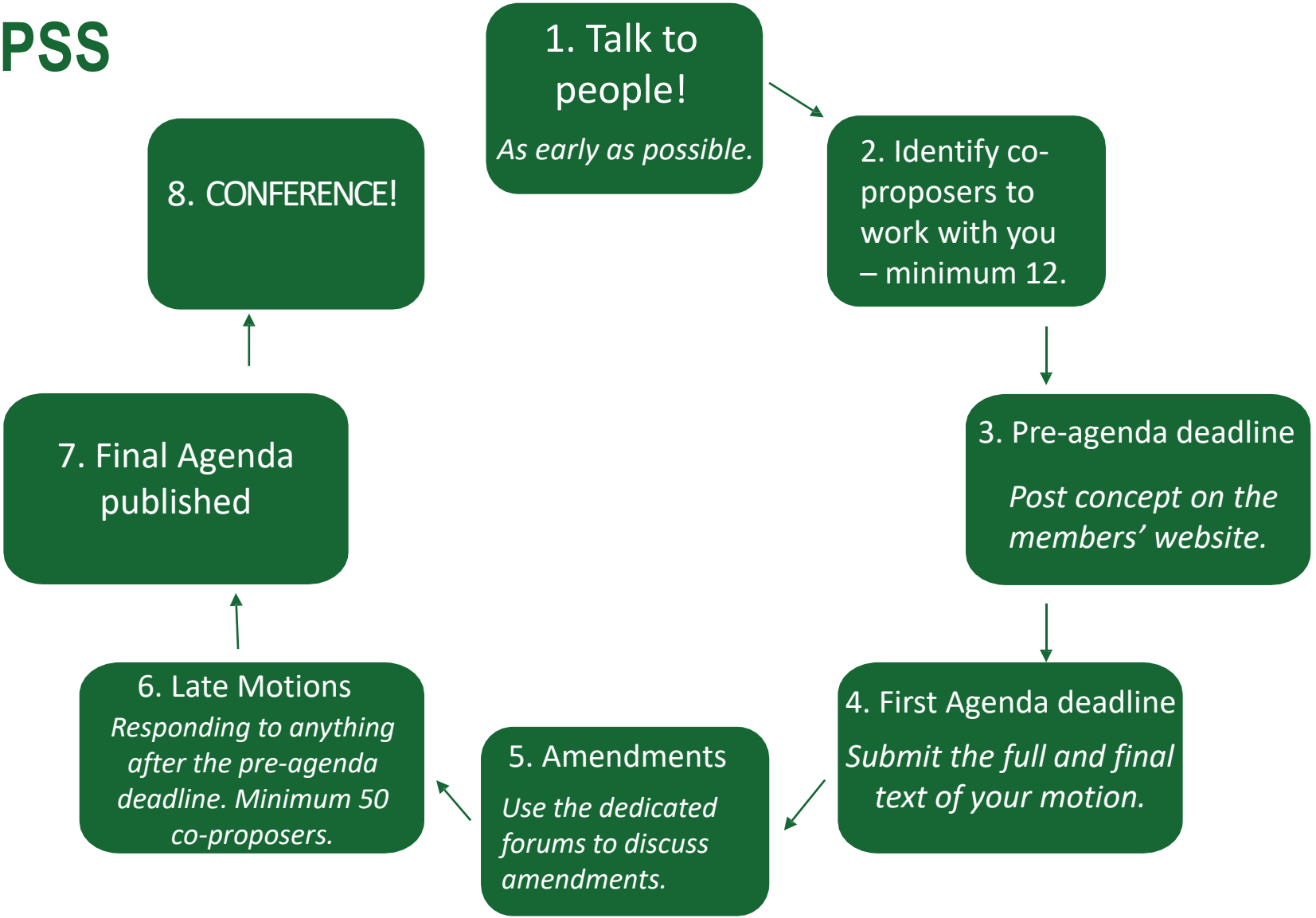
It is **not** decided by

- Our leaders or elected representatives
- Policy Development Committee or the office staff
- A member of the public or a party member, who emails or calls us with a good idea

# Step by step guides to changing Green Party policy

1. Simple amendments to PSS – including Late Motions
2. RoPS entries - often via an Emergency Motion
3. Major amendments to PSS
4. Manifestos - whether for a General election or a specialist topic such as Animals, LGBTIQ, Disability, Youth....

# 1. Simple amendment to PSS



# Step 1. Talk to people!

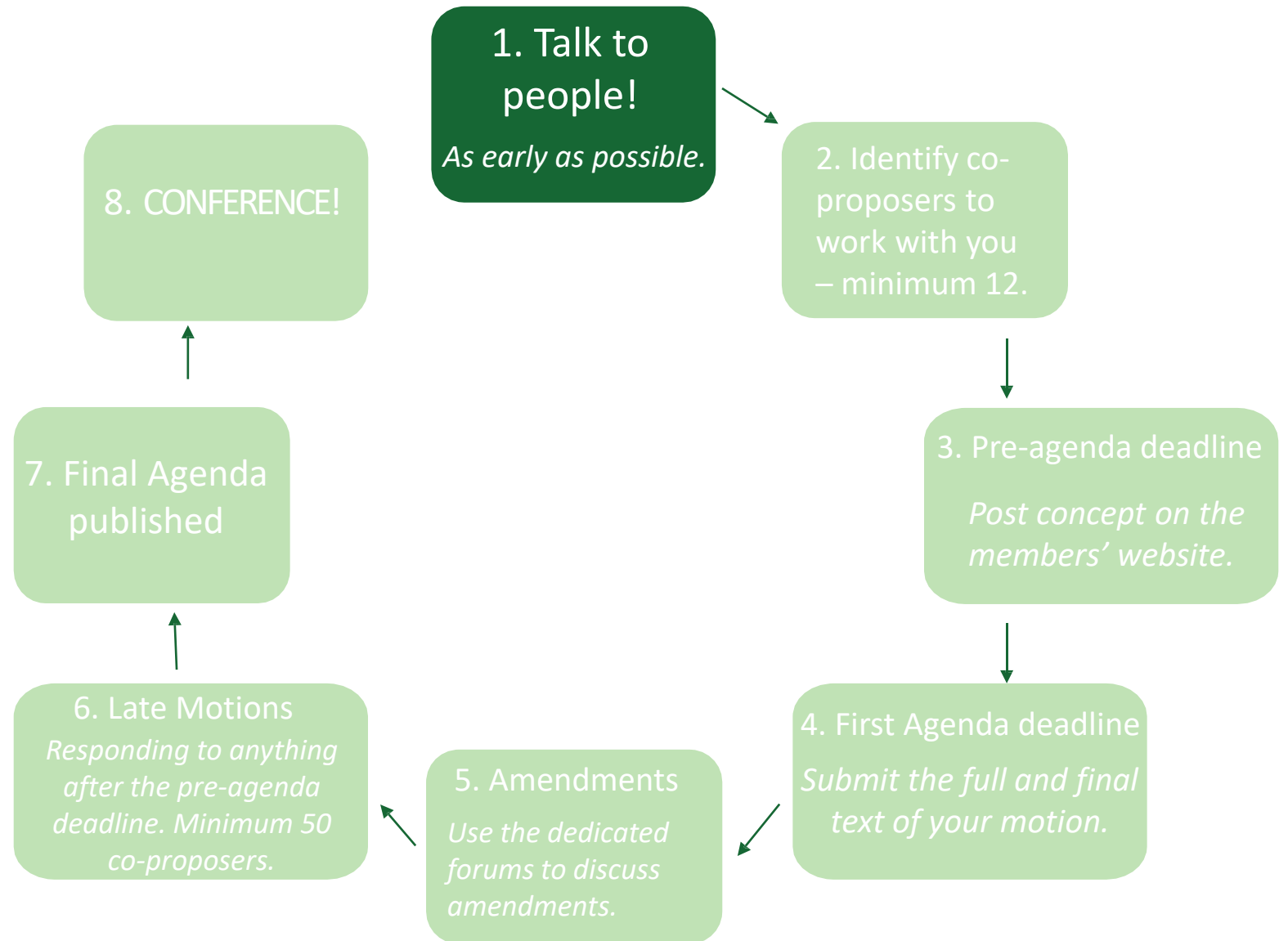
It's important to talk to people who know about your policy topic – not just those who agree with you, but who can challenge your ideas too.

Policy Development Committee can offer accreditation to motions where the proposers provide evidence of thorough consultation and where other high standards are met. We expect consultation with:

- outside organisations in a relevant field,
- internal groups such as Policy Working Groups,
- GPEW members

Accredited motions have often been endorsed by a local and/or regional party, a recognised members' groups, or a Policy Working Group.

**Talk to PDC about accreditation *as early as possible* – well before the first deadline.**



# What is “accreditation”?

A clear way for Policy Development Committee to identify motions where the proposers have met high standards:

- consulted widely, outside the party as well as within,
- ensured that the motion is well researched,
- made a range of good quality supporting evidence available to other members
- clearly identified what they want to change and where in PSS it will go.

Motions which have satisfied the requirements for accreditation will go into Section C of the Final Agenda. All other policy motions will go into Section E and be discussed separately from the accredited motions.

**It does NOT mean that Policy Development Committee endorse the content or intent of the motion.**

If you wish to seek accreditation for your motion, speak to Policy Development Committee as early as possible – well before the Pre-Agenda deadline. Email [policy@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:policy@greenparty.org.uk)



# Step 2. Identify co-proposers to work with you

Motions must have a *minimum* of **twelve** co-proposers under the new process or else the support of a local/regional party or a recognised Working Group.

They should help you develop the motion, not just put their name to it when it comes to submitting!

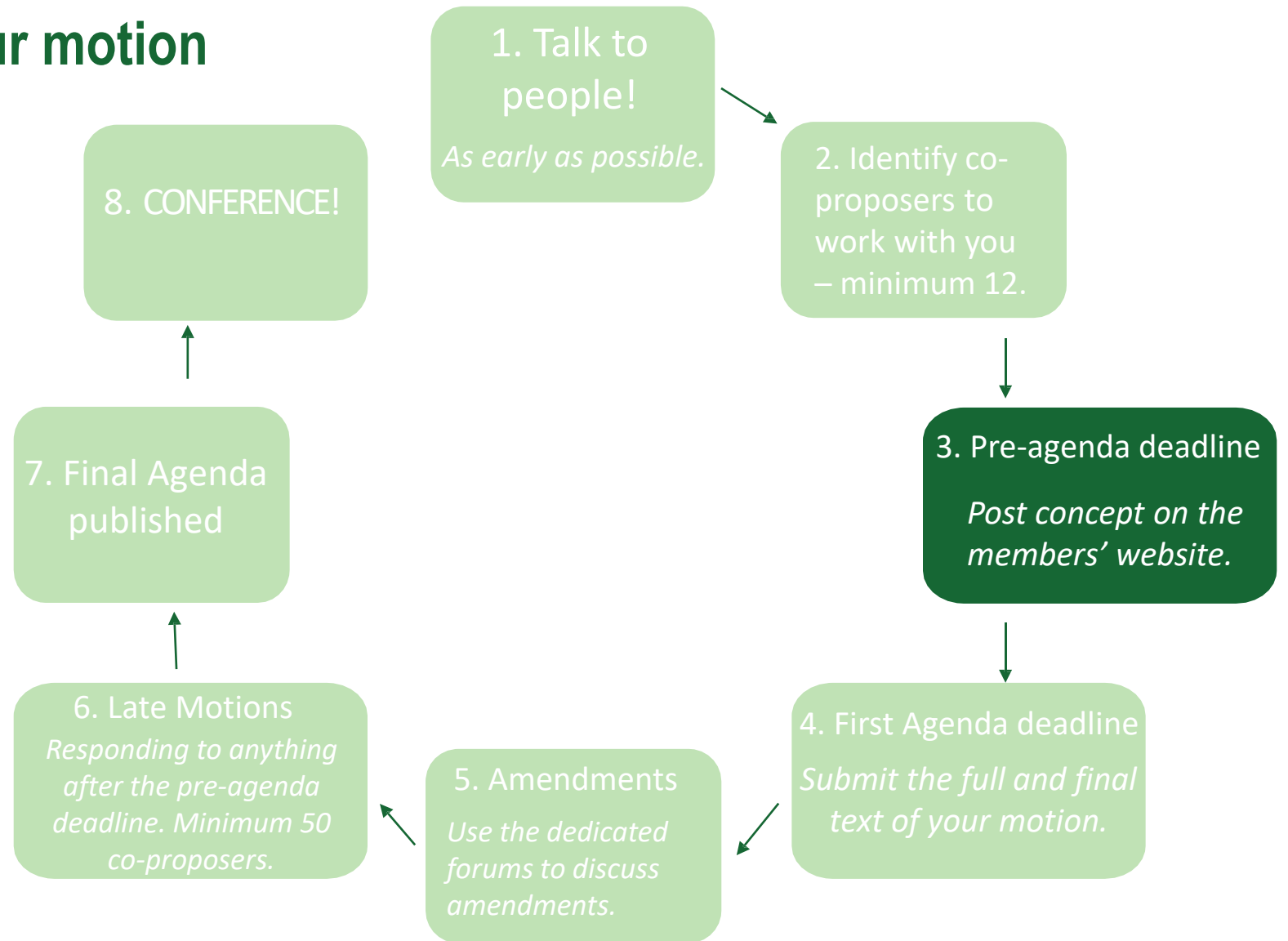
Try to identify them NOW so they can help write the motion, arrange consultations, and send evidence of this to Policy Development Committee if you're seeking accreditation.



## Step 3. Post the concept of your motion on the members' website

A basic outline of your motion **MUST** be posted on the members' website by the pre-agenda deadline. This does not need to be the *final* wording.

- Motions which are not posted in time **WILL NOT** be included in the agenda for the upcoming Conference.
- This is a chance to build support and refine the motion.



# The pre-agenda forum

You should post your motion outline in the Stream of the Pre-Agenda Forum that has been opened in Green Spaces on the member website, for the relevant conference. You need to 'join' the Forum Space.

HOME NEWS DISCUSS > FEED SPACES CALENDAR

SC

SPRING CONFERENCE 2020 - AGENDA FORUM  
THE PLACE TO DISCUSS AND PROPOSE YOUR IDEAS FOR THE NEXT PARTY CONFERENCE

105 Posts 255 Members 27 Followers

+ Invite

Space menu

- Welcome
- Policy Process Outline
- Adding your idea to the stream
- Searching for something on this page
- First Agenda Submission Form
- List of First Agenda Proposers
- Finding the permalink for your motion
- Stream
- Files

### WELCOME TO THE PRE-AGENDA FORUMS

Please note changed deadlines due to changes in the conference dates.

This is where members can discuss potential motions to conference. Proposals to make changes to The Party policy book "Policies for a Sustainable Society" are required to go through the process of consultation specified in [Standing Orders for the Conduct of Conference](#) 'with a view to achieving consensus within the Party'.

To this end - if you want to make a proposal to change our policies - you need to start that discussion here, engage with it and seek to make your motion as acceptable to the widest group of people possible before bringing it to conference.

To start discussion on your ideas for proposal to conference (called a motion), any member can start a new post in the stream for this space.

If you want to create a motion which will change our policies (the things which we would do in government) then please tag it as "Section E (policy)" if you want to change the way that we work as an organisation, then please tag it as "Section D (organisational)". Please try and tag everything before you post.

There are 4 major deadlines which cover the process:

**Pre-Agenda** - by when the final version for any D (organisational) or E (policy) motion (and A, B, and F motions) must have been posted on the correct Pre-Agenda Forum. This will be: **23:59 on the 4th January 2020**

**First Agenda** - by when the final text for any relevant A, B, C, D, E or F motion must have been posted to the Forums and submitted to Standing Orders Committee ready for First Agenda publication. This will be **23:59 on the 17th January 2020**

**Amendment Forum Deadline** - by which time all ideas for amendments to motions in the first agenda need to appear on the conference spaces on the members website. This will be **23:59 on the 14th February 2020**

**Final Agenda** - by when amendments to motions published in the First Agenda must be submitted to Standing Orders Committee ready for Final Agenda publication. This will be **23:59 on the 21st February 2020**

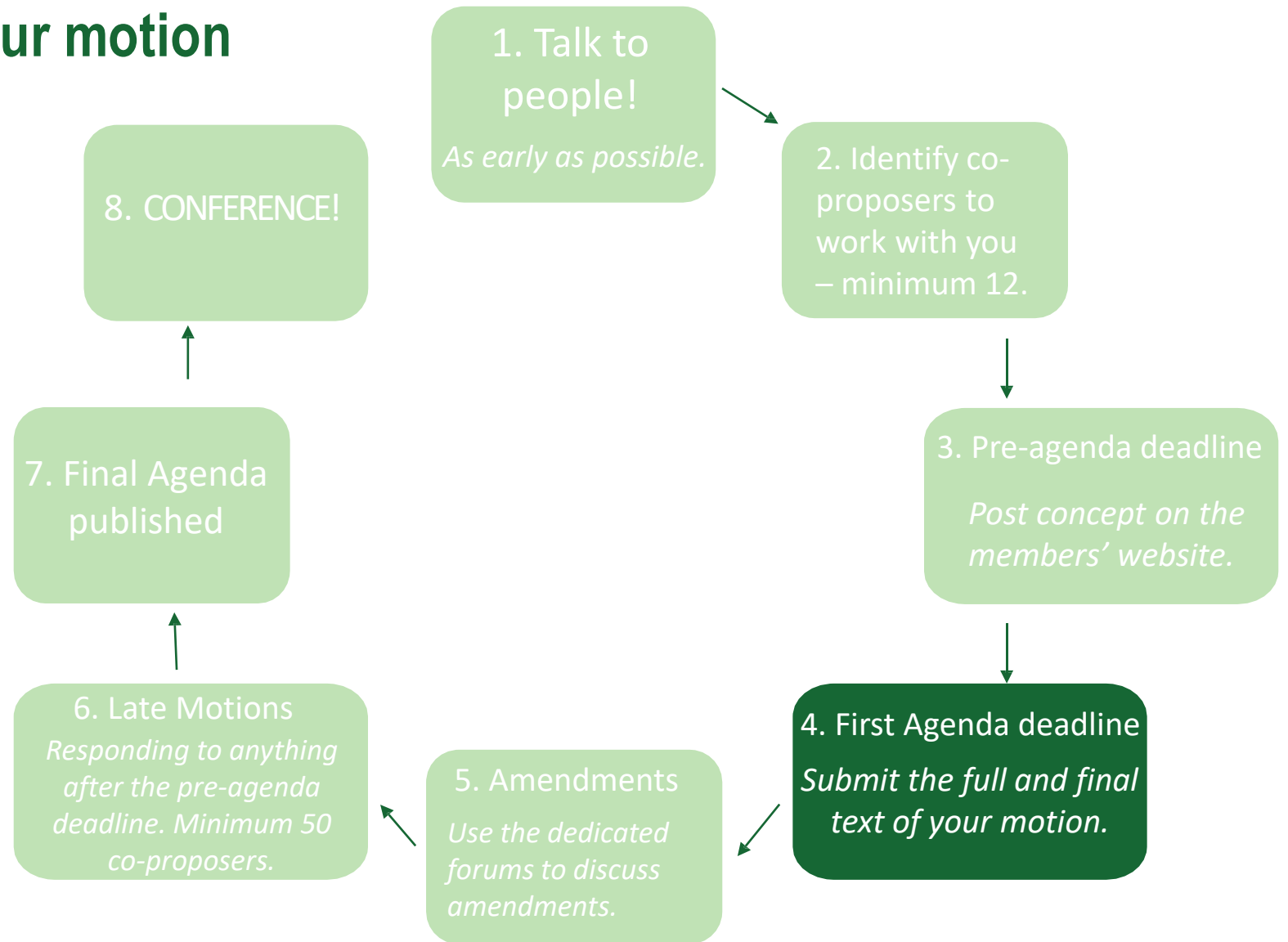
Make sure you read any instructions which Standing Orders Committee have posted in the Space. You can find out more detail from Standing Orders for Party Conference in the SOCC Space in Green Spaces.

You should clearly summarise what you intend to develop as your motion, and identify which area(s) of Policies for a Sustainable Society (PSS) it will go into or change. You can also post ideas for motions to create an entry in the Record of Policy Statements (RoPS) or to change party documents such as the constitution.

## Step 4. Finalise and submit your motion

The **full** and **final** text of your motion must be posted into the Stream for members to see. You should then submit that text to Standing Orders Committee by the 'First Agenda deadline'.

- Submit via webform on members' website or email ([soc@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:soc@greenparty.org.uk))
- The lead proposer and at least 11 others (or from an official group, 3 others) must all submit the full motion to SOC stating that they propose the motion.
- It must include a synopsis of no more than 50 words.



# Example motion: new policy for PSS

## Support for ILO169

### Synopsis

This is the only international law that recognises and protects the land rights of indigenous people, whose existence is intertwined from the preservation of natural habitats, and flora and fauna conservation. Every country that signs it strengthens it.

### Motion

Insert new IP227 into the Indigenous Peoples section of Green Party International policy:

IP227 The Green Party supports the UK signing up to the International Labour Organization Convention 169, the only international law that can secure tribal people's land rights.

NOTE: Policies for PSS should clearly state what text or clauses are to be inserted or deleted.

# Example motion: Insertion into RoPS

## Opposition to Prevent Strategy

### Synopsis

Statement in opposition to the Government's Prevent Strategy

### Motion

Insert into RoPS the following statement: “The Green Party calls for urgent review of the implementation of the Prevent strategy and its implications for tackling extremism as well as preserving good community relations. We would pursue community-led collaborative approaches to tackling all forms of extremism and not allow the disproportionate targeting of the Muslim community as evidenced by Prevent in its current form.”

NOTE: Policy Statements should be on topical subjects and should accord with PSS. They can call on governments, councils, party bodies or elected representatives to do something to progress a policy. The current ones are listed at <https://policy.greenparty.org.uk/record-of-policy-statements.html>

# Example motion: Change to Constitution (An Organisational Motion, not a Policy Motion)

## Synopsis

No Synopsis provided.

## Motion

In section 4, part vii of the constitution, insert in the final sentence between “campaign” and “for”:  
“for, or advocate voting”

So that it reads:

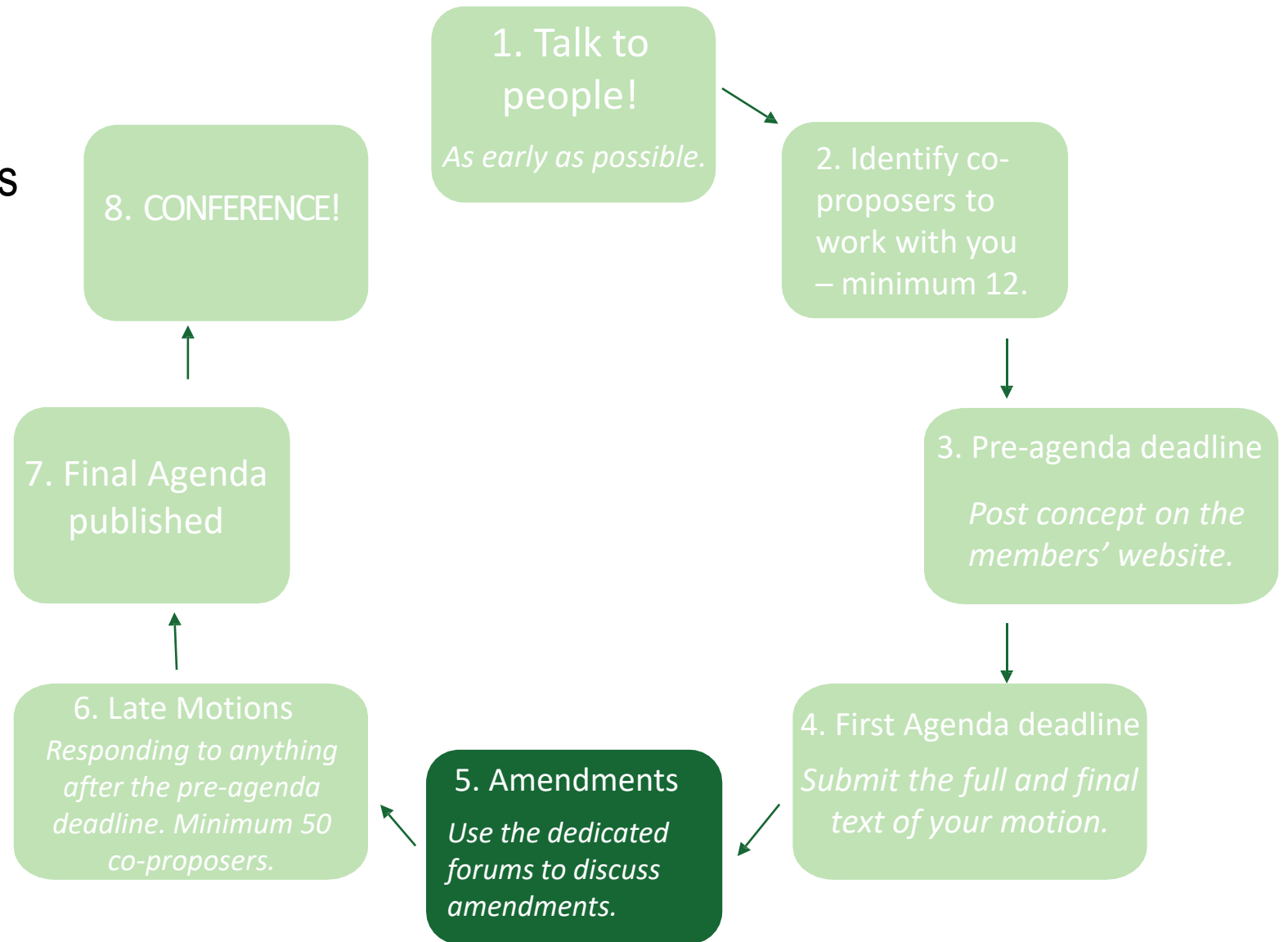
“No member may campaign for, or advocate voting for any candidate standing against a properly selected Green Party candidate.”

NOTE: Organisational motions aim to change the way the party works. They usually amend party documents such as the constitution and subsidiary documents (standing orders, code of conduct). These are not all in once place but the constitution is on the member website front page under Governance. Some are in the Standing Orders Committee space in Green Spaces.

## Step 5. Amendments

The First Agenda is published on the members' website shortly after motions are received.

- Any member (plus at least 3 other co-proposers) can then propose amendments to the motions.
- Draft amendments must first be posted on the members' website, giving the motion's original proposers, and others, an opportunity to discuss the amendments.
- Once finalised, amendments must be emailed to [soc@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:soc@greenparty.org.uk) by the Amendment Deadline.

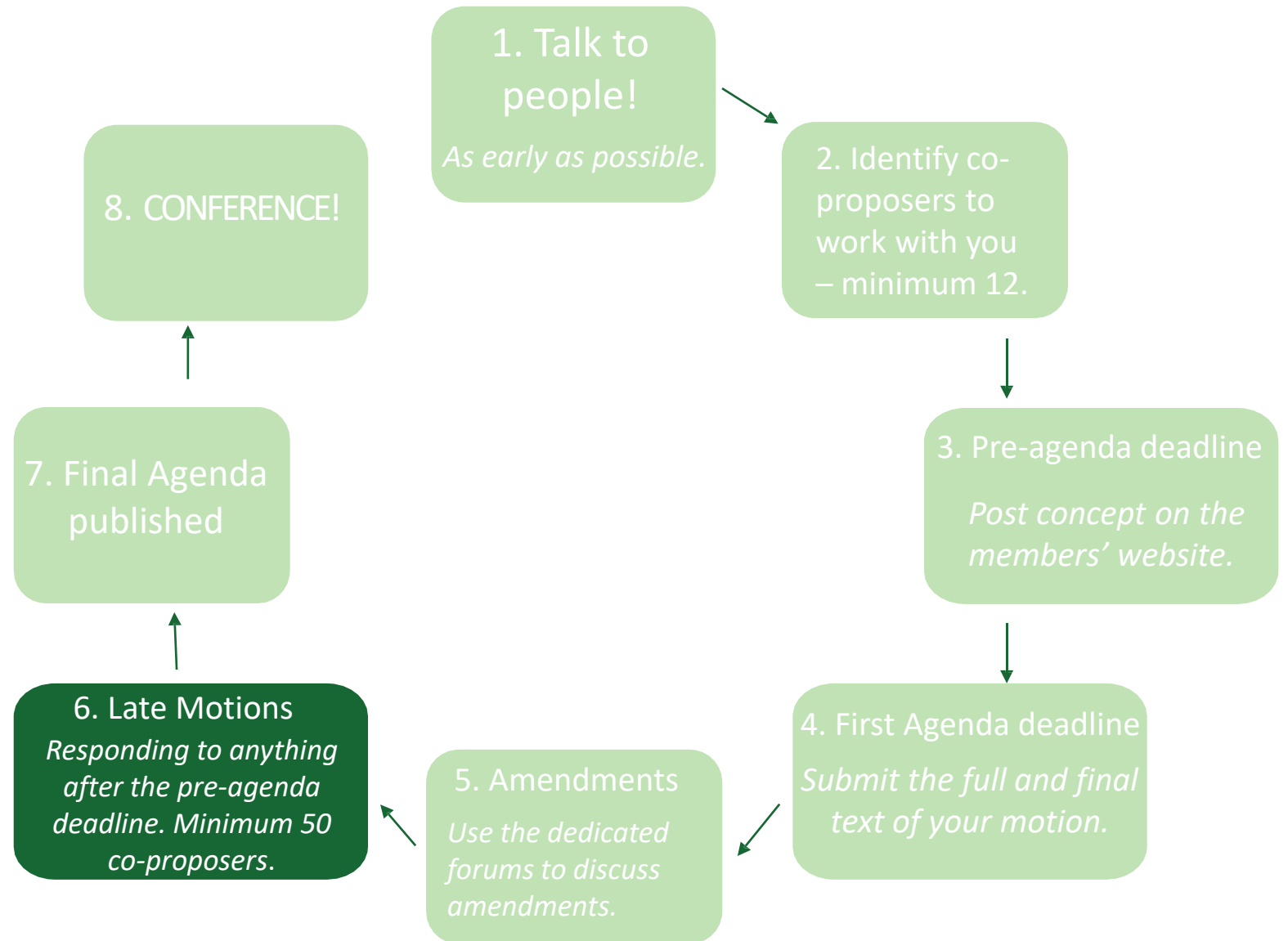




## Step 6. Late Motions

For events occurring after the pre-agenda deadline, you can now submit a Late Motion.

- Can be proposed by GPEX, GPRC, or any **fifty** members.
- Must only relate to an event or circumstance which has arisen since the pre-agenda deadline.
- Unlike Emergency Motions, Late Motions will be able to change or create new entries in Policies for a Sustainable Society.
- A dedicated forum will be provided for discussion on the members' website

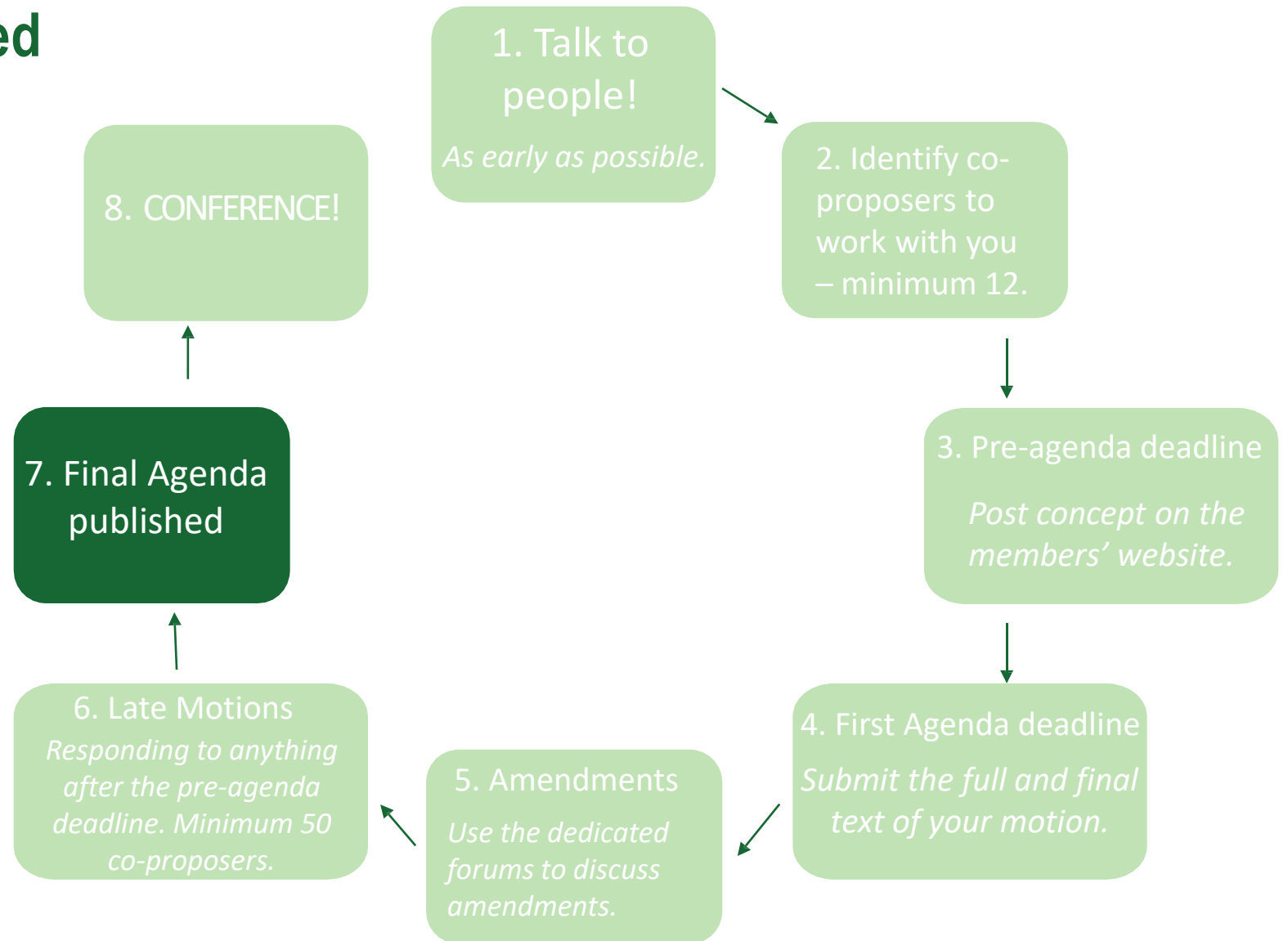


## Step 7. Final Agenda published

The Final Agenda is published on the members' website a few weeks before Conference. It lists all the motions and amendments which will be heard, as well as reports from various bodies in the party. The order in which motions are heard is primarily based on:

- Prioritisation Ballot – linked from the members' website soon after the First Agenda is published.
- How many motions have been **accredited** by Policy Development Committee.

Occasionally, SOC will re-prioritise motions if they have been brought to several previous Conferences but not been reached within the time available.

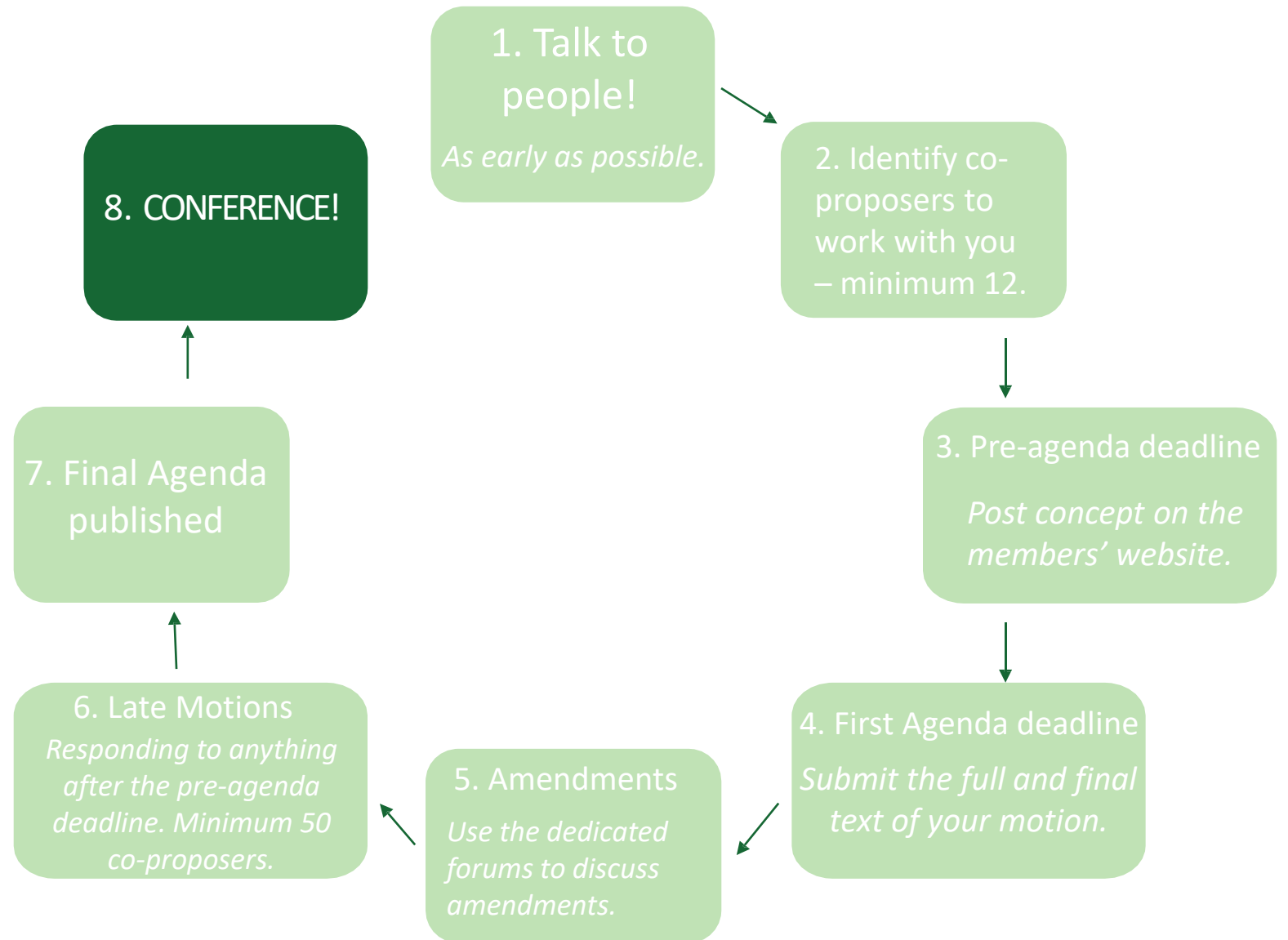


# Step 8. CONFERENCE!

At Conference your motion usually will go through two stages:

- **Workshop session** - discussion of the motion and straw poll
- **Plenary session** – speech proposing the motion, speech opposing, report from the workshop, usually further speeches, then a **vote**.

There is a table at Conference for background papers on motions, and they should be made available on the members' website too.



# Possible outcomes of Conference:

- If your motion passes it will be incorporated into PSS (or RoPS) and the policy website will be updated.
- If it falls, there will be no change.
- Whether the motion passes or falls, no motion on the same topic can be brought to Conference for the next 2 years.
- If a motion is felt to be not quite ready, it may be *referred back* for further work rather than being voted on.
- 26 weeks till the next Conference!



## 2. RoPS entries and Emergency Motions

- RoPS entries can be proposed through the process as just described, or through Emergency Motions. These are not policy amendments but statements of position on specific issues.
- Emergency Motions can be submitted during conference. They are for subjects that have arisen, or significantly changed, since the deadline for proposing motions. They cannot be used to change PSS.
- To submit an Emergency Motion:  
Email Standing Orders Committee before or during conference or ask them for a template to submit an Emergency Motion: [soc@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:soc@greenparty.org.uk)
  - Post a hard copy on the Emergency Motions noticeboard and collect signatures.
  - Most plenaries have time allocated for Emergency Motions; those with the most signatures get debated first.
  - Usually 3 to 5 Emergency Motions are debated across a Conference.

# Example of an Emergency Motion

## Plane Stupid Activists

Plane Stupid activists occupied Heathrow Airport on 13 July 2015, less than two weeks after the Airports Commission recommended a new runway at Heathrow. Heathrow Airport is a major source of greenhouse gas emissions. The science confirms that greenhouse gases must be dramatically reduced from present levels to tackle climate change. In addition, Heathrow Airport is a major cause of illegal and deadly levels of air pollution in London. Local residents also suffer serious health impacts as a result of noise pollution and sleep disturbance.

Conference instructs GPEX to include and publicise an item on the Green Party website supporting the 13 Plane Stupid climate activists who on 13 July 2015 took non violent direct action at Heathrow Airport. Their trial is from 18 - 29 January 2016 at Willesden Magistrates Court.

Passed Autumn 2015

### 3. Major amendments to PSS

A major amendment requires a longer process and at least three conference motions:

1. An **‘Enabling Motion’** – essentially a proposal to develop new policy or revise an existing substantial body of policy , usually a chapter. If this is passed, a Policy Working Group will be assigned or formed. Any party member may join a Policy Working Group.
2. Within two years a **‘Draft Voting Paper’** must come to conference. This is a draft motion including options identified by the Policy Working Group, especially anything contentious.
3. Within four years a **Voting Paper** must come to conference - a proposal of the final policy change.

If you’d like to find out more about making a major amendment, speak to **Policy Development Committee**. They will advise on, and support, the process (but do not do the work of policy development). [policy@greenparty.org.uk](mailto:policy@greenparty.org.uk)

## 4. Policy Reviews

- If there is no final Voting Paper on a major amendment up for discussion, Policy Development Committee will usually propose a review of a whole policy chapter (it tends to be one that is considered out of date).
- The chapter is then put forward as a the equivalent of a Voting Paper (with a motion to delete all the original, existing text and to replace with exactly the same text). Members can then put forward a range of proposed changes and additions as amendments to it.
- Policy reviews of whole chapters can be passed at a single conference.



# How is the General Election manifesto written?

- The elected Green Party Executive (GPEX) establishes a Manifesto Working Group and appoints the manifesto authors. The convenor is usually the Policy Development Co-ordinator.
- The Manifesto Working Group, comprising elected officials of the Party, oversees and steers the work of the manifesto authors, including commenting on drafts. Candidates and special interest groups will also be consulted, also other UK Green parties.
- The elected Green Party Regional Council (GPRC) and the Elections Co-ordinator of the Green Party Executive Committee (GPEX) sign off the final version.
- The policy authority for the manifesto derives from the PSS but the manifesto is written as a programme for government over the lifetime of one parliament.

# What about other manifestos ?

- The policy authority for all manifestos derives from the PSS.

Specialist manifestos are often produced by groups within GPEW for national elections. These include topics such as Animals, LGBTIQ, BAME, Youth, British Sign Language, Easy Read (for people with learning disabilities) and Braille. GPRC and the Elections Co-ordinator have final sign-off.

Local and regional parties can create manifestos for local elections, but we do ask that Policy Development Committee see a near-final draft so that we can check for inconsistencies with PSS.

## How else can members get involved in policy making?

- Attend conference to debate and vote on motions. You can also vote by proxy if you cannot attend (though a card ballot, where proxies are counted, is only taken when the result is close).
- Take part in panels and fringes at conference – where many ideas get started and refined.
- Comment on draft motions to help improve them before they come to conference.
- Join – or start – a policy forum on the members' website.
- Join a Policy Working Group – see the members' website for a listing and contacts.
- Put any relevant areas of expertise / professional experience on your members' website profile if you want to be available for consultation, or apply to be on our register of Policy Experts.
- Stand for election to Policy Development Committee to help support others in the process (this now takes place as part of the annual ballot of the party, alongside elections for GPEx).