

The Green Party will be fielding its first ever Parliamentary candidate in Gosport at the next General Election.

It has selected Andrea Claire Smith, 39, who lives in Hardway and works in an after-school club in Gosport and for Caroline Lucas, the Green Party Euro-MP. She also works as a writer, and her fourth book was published last month.

She said: "The Green Party is going from strength to strength. We have seen many former Labour supporters disillusioned with Blair over Iraq switch to us. My selection is part of that growth.

"Locally my concerns are transport and jobs. We won't solve Gosport's traffic problems until more people can find work within the constituency and we won't be able to attract many businesses to the area until we solve the transport problem.

"It's a vicious circle, but there is a way to break out of it - by supporting small businesses already in the towns and encouraging more people to set up new ones that will provide the work, shops and services that people go outside the borough to find.

"The parking charges have increased this problem. They have been imposed at the wrong rates and better transport services should have been in place first. They are driving people out of Gosport.

"The daily exodus hurts the local economy and creates traffic, pollution, and the greenhouse gases that have created the most dangerous threat facing this planet - climate change."

The Greens also want to keep health services local and public. They are opposed to the closure of Haslar hospital and the use of expensive public finance to build public facilities, such as schools, hospitals and incinerators.

She said: "Three local councils - Hampshire, Portsmouth and Southampton - have discovered the annual charge they will have to pay to burn residents' waste has trebled from the expected £1million per incinerator.

"This shows the hazards of doing deals with private companies that last decades. If you don't get the contract right, tax-payers will pay the price for a very long time."