



# **A fair, responsive and responsible future for Cambridge.**

The Liberal Democrat manifesto for  
the 2012 City Council elections

**[www.cambridgelibdems.org.uk](http://www.cambridgelibdems.org.uk)**

## **Investing in Cambridge's future**

The Liberal Democrat vision for Cambridge is a vision which meets housing need, supports the Cambridge economy, cares for our environment, tackles anti-social behaviour and meets the needs of the vulnerable.

## **Our Liberal Democrat values**

We work for you in an open and responsive way, taking a lead from you and taking decisions as closely as possible to the people affected by our decisions.

We always have in mind the guiding Liberal Democrat principles expressed in our constitution.

*"The Liberal Democrats exist to build and safeguard a fair, free and open society, in which we seek to balance the fundamental values of liberty, equality and community and in which no-one shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity".*

## **Clear priorities for new spending on your future**

### ***Supporting vulnerable individuals and communities***

We are helping young people, resettling the homeless, rehabilitating street drinkers, nipping anti-social behaviour in the bud, starting a new job club, and installing welfare advice points.

### ***Investing in our streets and open spaces***

To tackle litter we are piloting street champions, and have a new programme of dual use litter bins; our 20 mph scheme will calm streets, and we are promoting Mill Road and refurbishing toilets.

### ***Getting Cambridge's future right***

We are investing in strong communities in new neighbourhoods, integrating with the city; and we are investing in cutting energy use and in renewables. We make the case for sustainable transport.

## **Value for money**

The hard work we have put in over many years to find better ways for the council to deliver services has meant we have preserved investment and protected frontline services during these tough times. Going forward we will continue to do things better for lower costs, with a focus on working more smartly behind the scenes.

## **A Liberal Democrat future for Cambridge**

## **The Liberal Democrat Vision for Cambridge**

The Council has a clear vision for the future of our city, a vision which we share with Cambridge citizens and with partner organisations.

### ***Cambridge – where people matter***

A city which celebrates its diversity, unites in its priority for the disadvantaged and strives for shared community wellbeing

A city whose citizens feel they can influence public decision making and are equally keen to pursue individual and community initiatives

### **Cambridge – a good place to live, learn and work**

A city which recognises and meets needs for housing of all kinds – close to jobs and neighbourhood facilities

A city which draws inspiration from its iconic historic centre and achieves a sense of place in all of its parts with generous urban open spaces and well- designed buildings

A city with a thriving local economy that benefits the whole community and builds on its global pre-eminence in learning and discovery

A city where getting around is primarily by public transport, bike and on foot

### ***Cambridge – caring for the planet***

A city in the forefront of low carbon living and minimising its impact on the environment from waste and pollution

## ***WHERE PEOPLE MATTER***

### ***A city which celebrates its diversity, unites in its priority for the disadvantaged and strives for shared community wellbeing***

#### **We have:-**

Invested in new climbing wall at Kelsey Kerridge, new skate park at Jesus Green, and extension to canoe club on Coe Fen.

Supported inclusion and understanding of the Muslim community in the life of the city through a series of projects

Worked closely with community organisations and the Police to avoid confrontation with the English Defence League and to protect our multi-ethnic communities

Partnered with the Citizens Advice Bureau to bring professional advice on rights out into the community, with automated kiosks now operating at Addenbrookes, Arbury Community Centre, East Barnwell Health Centre, the City Council's Customer Service Centre in Regent Street, the CAB offices in Devonshire Road and the Meadows Community Centre.

Refurbished changing facilities and improved disability access at Parkside Pool

Supported the Strawberry Fair in its successful re-launch

#### **We will continue to:-**

Work with partners to mitigate the impact of government funding cutbacks for advice services in the city

Advise City Homes tenants and others on debt and money matters through special advice days as well as regular contact

Ensure the provision of community centres across the city where residents of all ages can engage in social activities

Involve children and young people in play and youth provision through community centres, facilities such as our play bus, community play boat, and urban adventure play centre, as well as in schools and on open spaces

Support sports, both as a bridge between communities and as an aspect of healthy living

Support free cultural events, such as Arbury Carnival, Chesterton Festival, Cambridgeshire Celebrates Age, Black History and LGBT Months, Holocaust Memorial Day, the Big Weekend and Bonfire Night

Maintain a dialogue with ethnic minority and disability groups within the city

#### **We will:-**

Appoint a new youth officer to increase our capacity to support teenagers, following the savage cutbacks in the County Youth Service in the city

Organise a new youth sports participation project that engages those young people who feel on the edge of the community in the city: we intend it should leave a long term sporting legacy.

Strive to prevent isolation among older people by enhancing the social activities in City Homes sheltered schemes and encouraging others to join in

Set up a new City Health Partnership with the city's GPs to assist working together on Public Health

Provide support and advice for residents dealing with changes to their benefits and fund further CAB advice kiosks for siting at the Job Centre, Cherry Hinton Library, the Grafton Centre and for locations to be identified in East Chesterton and the East Area of the city.

Complete the programme of investments in community facilities in the east of the city

Explore the feasibility, under the new funding regime, of running branches of the Post Office in City Council facilities

Help young people finding it most difficult to get into the job by offering five 6-month paid traineeships in voluntary sector organisations

***A city whose citizens are engaged and feel they can influence public decision making and are keen to pursue individual and community initiatives***

We have:-

Developed a code of best practice on consultation, so that we can establish a more consistent approach across the council in seeking public input and using that input in decision making

Broadened community involvement in the North area of the city by attracting over 600 contributions to shaping the agenda for their neighbourhood

Published our pay policies including those for senior management, and all financial transactions over £500

Reduced the average response time to emails from 6 days to 3 hours; dealt with 90% of phone call queries first time; introduced twitter and facebook contact points for customers to report issues and get information about the council

We will continue to:-

Involve tenants as full partners in the Housing Management Board and other aspects of

Help make the voluntary sector more sustainable with grant aid to assist organisations adopting techniques of social enterprise and by sponsoring partnerships between them and local businesses

Put as much information as possible on our website so that FOI requests are a last resort

Use the quarterly Open Door magazine to communicate with City Homes tenants including regular questionnaires and the 'You said: We did' section

Encourage our partnership bodies to adopt our code of open meetings, public questions and published agendas and minutes.

Involve councillors of all parties in decision making so that we get things right the first time

We will:-

Extend community engagement across the city to shape the neighbourhood agenda, following the successful North area pilot.

Devolve more power and money to Area Committees so decisions are taken closer to the communities, identifying gaps and needs in community, leisure and open space provision

Devolve Safer City grants to Area Committees so ward councillors can respond to residents' safety concerns

Publish our developer contribution database

Find ways to give better feedback on our decisions to residents, especially after consultation

Improve our website to promote citizen engagement with the council

Lobby government to devolve more power to Cambridge and our partner authorities so we can take charge of our future

***A city where people behave with consideration for others and where harm and nuisance are confronted wherever possible without infringing the liberty of everyone else***

We have:-

Introduced a new policy to regulate sexual entertainment venues

Worked with the River Cam Conservators to reduce nuisance punt touting on King's Parade

Expanded the enforcement team to give more weekend cover to tackle littering and stray dogs.

We will continue to :

Fund a community psychiatric nurse in the street outreach team who organises a specialised

evidence suggests they are needed

Encourage greater transparency, public debate and scrutiny on policing priorities

Bring together Police and other relevant parties to address recurrent anti-social behaviour in particular locations as we have in Sidney Street, the area around the Grafton Centre, Histon Road, and Norfolk Street

Seek to deal with the causes of anti-social behaviour in children and young people through working in partnership with the County Council, police, probation, health and voluntary organisations

Address homelessness as a causal factor In some types of anti-social behaviour

Provide useful environmental work for the Community Payback Scheme run by the Probation Service for offenders.

## We will

Expand the detox programme for street drinkers administered by the community psychiatric nurse by funding an extra project worker

Introduce a Restorative Justice programme by creating Neighbourhood Resolution Panels for the referral of low level offences, with victim and offender consent

## ***A GOOD PLACE TO LIVE, LEARN AND WORK***

### ***A city which recognises and meets needs for housing of all kinds - close to jobs and neighbourhood facilities***

We have

Embarked on a new council house building programme, with eight houses completed since the government gave us this new freedom. Three are specially adapted for disabled people.

Negotiated better rent terms with the government for new affordable housing on the large Southern and North West developments

Refurbished Brandon Court, providing 30 better flats for older people and transformed all our sheltered housing so that there are no more bedsits with shared bathrooms but very popular well insulated self-contained flats for older people.

We will continue to:

Require all major new developments to include 40% housing for a mixture of social rent and low cost equity purchase

Promote building on suitable locations adjacent to the city and close to jobs.

Create real new communities and neighbourhoods with a vibrant mix of housing, a full range of community facilities and generous open space in similar proportion to the best provision in the existing city.

Work with the Southern Fringe and North West Community Forums to help the integration of the urban extensions with the rest of the city

Develop exemplar housing schemes on council owned land at Clay Farm and Orchard Park

Progress the refurbishment of Roman Court, this will provide flats where the Papworth Trust can support 17 young people with disabilities and, separately, some extra flats to let to people waiting for homes.

We will:-

Rebuild the outdated provision for older people at Seymour Court

Provided external insulation for the rest of the council houses on the Foster Road estate that need it, to bring bills down in especially hard to heat homes

Prepare to use the new "financial freedoms" with the Housing Revenue Account to build more homes for rent.

Deploy a team of youth and community workers to help build the community in the Southern

***A city which draws inspiration from its iconic historic centre and achieves a 'sense of place' in all of its parts, with generous urban open spaces and well designed buildings.***

We have:-

Extended the Mill Road Conservation Area and updated the Riverside Conservation Area

Developed a new vision for the Eastern Gate area around the Elizabeth Way roundabout

Published a new conservation study of Newmarket Road

Improved the appearance of Riverside including an innovative tree planting scheme.

Saved the Alexandra Gardens trees

Developed new planning guidance for where tall buildings should and should not be permitted in Cambridge

We will continue to:

Work on conservation studies on Hills Road, Trumpington Road and Long Road, as well as the Conservation Areas at Newtown & Glisson Road and Castle & Victoria Road.

Fund programmes of area based environmental improvements decided by area committees

Roll out major Developer Contribution projects such as the refurbishment of Coleridge Recreation ground

Plant over 60 new trees on city centre parks as part of a £200,000 tree planting programme

We will:-

Appoint a Mill Road Champion, and lobby government for powers to preserve diversity on our high streets

Invest at Mill Road in higher quality street lights than the County Council would provide

Refurbish Lion Yard public toilets

Enhance the city with new public art including the Olympics community public art project, the Snowy Farr Memorial and the Mill Road cemetery project

Roll out dual use street litter bins on our streets and parks to promote recycling

Invest in new allotments off Kendal Way and on Empty Common

Explore ways to regulate the Moorings on Riverside that meets the concerns of all parties.

Seek maximum public involvement in the review of the Cambridge Local Plan, which sets out policies on which planning permission decisions are based.

Fast track work on how to protect community pubs and pub gardens

***A city with a thriving local economy that benefits the whole community and builds on its global preeminence in learning and discovery.***

We have

Introduced 11 apprenticeships into our streets and open spaces team. Eight gained NVQ qualifications.

Secured funding through our Local Strategic Partnership to help young people into employment

We will continue to

Use university research for ideas on city development such as energy efficiency, criminology, and architecture

Work with the Greater Cambridge Greater Peterborough Enterprise Partnership to build the Cambridge economy

Regularly discuss issues of mutual concern with the student representative bodies

We will

Enable the growth of the higher education sector in Cambridge through our planning policies, while expecting the sector to continue to set exemplary design and sustainability standards

Support the growth of jobs in the city through the planning process

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Seek partnership with the universities on broader community objectives, recognising their role as landowners and major employers.

Promote the use of our land at Cowley Road to benefit the Cambridge economy

***A city where getting around is increasingly by public transport, bike and on foot***

We have

Used the resources, gained through the Cycling Demonstration Town status, to improve The Tins, New Bit and Madingley Road cycle paths.

Extended City Council bus subsidies for Citi 2 evening, Citi 3 evening, and 114 into 2012/13

We will continue to:

Invest in new and replacement bus shelters having consulted local residents and area committees

Fund improvements to cycleways in Cambridge in conjunction with the County Council and looking for other sources of funding.

## We will

Consult residents as to whether and where we introduce a city-wide 20mph speed limits

Press the County Council to develop a proper transport strategy for the Cambridge area

Argue for safety measures to be carried out on the A14 to reduce the number of accidents and to improve traffic flow, but without increasing the congestion in Cambridge

Work with the County Council to improve cycle parking at Cambridge station and in the city centre

## ***CARING FOR THE PLANET***

### ***A city in the forefront of low carbon living and minimising its impact on the environment from waste and pollution***

#### **We have**

- Reduced the City Council's carbon footprint by 11% since 2005
- Been rated a Leadership Council by the Green Alliance
- Made steady progress on raising recycling levels in the city
- Introduced kerbside recycling of batteries
- Increased recycling services to flats
- Introduce bring bank recycling of small electrical goods and pots, trays and tubs
- Introduced recycling street litter bins
- Replaced the cremation equipment at the Huntingdon Road Crematorium enabling best practice in abating mercury contamination and energy efficiency

#### **We will continue to**

- Develop a plan for a Combined Heat and Power district heating scheme for the city centre
- Install very low energy LED lighting in our car parks
- Press ahead with new energy policies for our next local plan,
- Work with Heatseekers to assess housing heat loss and provide insulation services.
- Invest in our nature reserves to improve bio-diversity

#### **We will**

- Invest in solar thermal panels on council building including housing
- Invest in a large programme of dual use litter bins in our streets and parks
- Ensure all new council vehicles meet stringent emission standards
- Launch a carbon management plan and a new climate change strategy
- Give grants to homeowners to improve home energy efficiency
- Give grants to landlords to improve energy efficiency of rented properties

***We will seek value for the public money the city spends***

We will continue to

Review all our services to find an additional 3.6 m in savings over the next three years

Enhance the popularity of the Corn Exchange while cutting its subsidy

Seek further sponsorship for popular events in the Arts and Entertainment programme

Find further opportunities for savings including looking at joint commissioning of services where appropriate

Further develop the economies of scale offered by the Customer Service Centre in taking routine enquiries to free up other professional staff to focus on their main work.

Consult with the community, so that funds negotiated from developers improve Cambridge and mitigate the impact of growth, for example in public art, cycleways, the public realm and open spaces.

***We will seek to improve services through innovation and readiness to learn from experience***

We will continue to

Involve councillors of all parties in making decisions so they are right first time

Build on our redeployment of City Council staff from other duties to help the County Council clear heavy winter snowfall, especially to secure more self-help by providing access to a supply of grit for residents group.

Acknowledge and learn from experience when things go wrong

Seek further advice when experts disagree as we did in the case of Alexandra gardens trees