



"Joseph Chamberlain transformed Birmingham in the 19th Century, by building roads and parks, and by supplying gas and water to homes.

For too long, the second city has settled for second best. The Liberal Democrats want to turn Birmingham into a 21st century city that we can all be proud of. We are tired of the city's reputation of unemployment, failing public services and dirty streets. Our vision is for a clean and green city that is better connected and more engaged. We want Birmingham to be Britain's best city. The best city to live, the best city to visit and the best city to work and to do business."

Colin Green and Ian Garret

Lib Dem Candidates for Harborne Ward

www.colingreen.org.uk

Printed by Saxoprint at GW2 Great West House, Great West Road, London TW8 9HW. Published and Promoted by Colin Green on behalf of Ian Garrett and SW Birmingham Liberal Democrats, all at 31 Ribblesdale Road, Birmingham B30 2YS



A New Start For Birmingham

Our aims for the new council

Birmingham has suffered from a lack of vision and leadership for too long. To tackle this, we have 5 aims:

- **Get the basics right**
- **Housing that meets everyone's needs**
- **Serve our communities and neighbourhoods**
- **The environment and the built environment**
- **Public transport that works**



Empty the bins

The city's most basic service, emptying the bins, is simply not good enough. The current council's reforms have failed to make improvements. We will draw up plans to fix refuse collections for good.

Clean the streets

Dirty streets rob communities of pride in themselves. It makes our streets look like no-one cares for them. We will reverse street cleaning cuts made over recent years.

Tackle fly tipping

Dirty streets encourage fly tipping. We want to make Birmingham a city to be proud of. We will tackle the people who fly tip using mobile CCTV to catch people dumping rubbish at common fly tipping sites.

Fix the roads

Some of our roads are in a very poor state and wait for months or more for repairs. Others seem to be resurfaced even though they're not too bad. We will repair and maintain the roads better by adding flexibility to the repair schedule, to be more responsive to community priorities.

Collect unpaid council tax

Council budgets have been badly squeezed by government cuts. We will ease budget pressures by reducing the amount of unpaid council tax.

Meet our environmental and recycling targets

The city is not meeting its recycling targets. Over recent years, the improvements the Lib Dems achieved have been reversed. If our neighbours in Sandwell, Walsall, Wolverhampton and Dudley can do it, then so should we.



Get the basics right

Birmingham has been let down by mismanagement and a lack of vision. In 2015, after serious failings of the council, the government appointed an Independent Improvement Panel to oversee improvements to the city's governance. The city has still under supervision because it has not made sufficient improvement. Amongst the criticisms of Birmingham is that it couldn't even get the basics right, like emptying the bins and cleaning the streets. We want to put an end to this. We have a plan to improve public service in Birmingham to make a city we can be proud of.





Housing

Build more social housing

As part of the council until 2012, we were part of the city's first drive to build new homes for a generation. The city needs more homes, especially more affordable homes. It is shameful that so much land is left unused while people wait for homes to be built.

Make more land available for housing

Where council land is unused, we want to make it available for housing, particularly affordable homes.

Self build

We want to support the self-build movement by making land available, and by splitting larger plots into single house units.

Bring empty houses back into use

We would step up the drive to bring the city's 5,000 empty properties back into use.

Student accommodation

Birmingham has a growing student population. It brings money and jobs to our city. But it increases pressure on our housing supply. We will work with our universities to get build the kind of accommodation students want to live in.

Convert empty shops into houses

Some districts have more shops than are needed to serve the community. With so many people waiting for houses, we should allow empty shops to be converted into new homes.

Insulate council owned houses

We would like to restart the insulation of existing council owned properties, especially the many unclad tower blocks. We will lead the way in making our homes warm and environmentally sustainable.

Birmingham has a chronic shortage of housing, especially social housing. There are over 18,000 people on waiting lists for affordable rented homes. Meanwhile, around 5,000 houses in the city sit empty. It is time we looked after people in our own city. We will make sure there are enough houses for us all to live in.



Make better use of local libraries and community centres

Our local libraries and community centres are often the heart of local communities, but funding cuts threaten them with reduced hours or closure. We will raise funding by hiring out rooms for community use or moving in council offices to share the running costs of the buildings.

Open up the Library of Birmingham

It is ridiculous that we have the biggest central library in Europe but it's opening hours have been cut so much that many people can't use it. We will push to restore longer opening hours by hiring out spaces in the library for events.

Promote the Arts in the communities

We want to make Birmingham a lively and fun place to be. We will investigate promoting the arts by making venues available to event organisers. We will look at ways of promoting events in a similar way to the Jazz Festival, to encourage events like street theatre.

Fly tipping and Anti-Social Behaviour

Around 100 incidents of fly tipping reported every day. Reports of fly tipping doubled following cuts to bulky rubbish and green waste collections. We will restore a bulky rubbish collection per house per year and will restore green waste collections. Plus we will do more to catch people who are fly tipping.

Local improvements

We plan to increase funding to the city's district engineers. This will fund local improvements where there is local demand, like zebra crossings, dropped kerbs for push chairs or pedestrian refuges on busy roads.



Serve our communities and neighbourhoods

Birmingham's communities and neighbourhoods are being neglected. Our community spaces, parks, playgrounds and libraries are being under funded and threatened with closure. Communities are the grass roots that make neighbourhoods thrive. We want to put the heart back into our neighbourhood by protecting the spaces that make our communities live.



A solar city

Birmingham has acres of unused rooftops and more sunshine than we get credit for. Fitting solar panels to our larger roofs would generate huge amounts of clean energy for our city.

Fitting solar panels on canopies over car parks can add to the acres of unused rooftops, creating zero emission power for our city.

Increase recycling

Recycling in Birmingham peaked when the Lib Dems were part of the ruling council group. We want to improve the city's recycling rate beyond even this. Half of the 'residual waste' in Birmingham is food waste. The Lib Dems will introduce food waste 'recycling', turning food waste into compost rather than landfill.

Cycling and walking routes

Birmingham's roads are busy and congested. It makes them unfriendly places for cyclists. We want to encourage journey by bike by providing safe cycle routes across the city. We want to link the city's 'town centres' to parks and green spaces with footpaths and cycle routes. We will make the routes well lit and well drained so they're suitable for year round use.

Cleaner Taxis

We would like to use licensing to make all new taxis electric or hybrid vehicles, with exceptions for accessible vehicles.

Combined heat and power

Combined heat and power schemes generate electricity from natural gas and use the waste heat to warm the building. Using the gas 'twice' saves cost and reduces pollution. We want council run civic centres, tower blocks and apartment buildings to benefit while we also protect the environment.



The environment and the built environment

Take a lead on the built environment we all live in. Grow green paths across the city. Clean up our transport. Use our size as our advantage. We have enough large roof spaces to make a solar farm, creating electricity without polluting the air we breathe.



Transport and traffic

Birmingham's road management systems are out-dated, causing congestion and pollution. We will bring 21st century traffic management to our city starting with "smart junction" schemes.

New public transport routes

Moving about our city is constrained by our narrow roads. To tackle this we will explore opening new mass transit corridors. Old railway lines Moseley and Kings Norton route can be brought into use. Tramways can be build along our trunk roads and Bus-Trams like the Birmingham Sprint can make smarter use of roads where trams cannot.

High Speed transport corridors

Making public transport faster than driving is key to encouraging people to leave their cars at home. Priority bus lanes and smart traffic lights mean express buses never have to stop and wait.

Birmingham Sprint

Improving public transport is vital to our city. Birmingham Sprint is a bus-tram hybrid. As fast as going by car, as green as taking the bus. The high tech buses works like a trams, and with active traffic management, it never waits at traffic lights. Roll out of the scheme has stalled and the Lib Dems want to get it moving again.

Contactless travel

We will work with Centro to make payments made easier by accepting contactless card payments on buses and trams.

Refocus 20 MPH limits

In the right places, 20 MPH speed limits can make roads safer. But 20 MPH limits slow down ambulances and fire engines. Many recent 20 zones have had little impact on safety. We will scrap 20 MPH limits where there is no evidence they have reduced accidents. We will more carefully asses new 20 MPH schemes.



Transport that works

A city can only work if people can travel across it freely. Too often, traffic is a barrier to people's lives. We need a transport revolution. Our aim is to make public transport faster than going by car. We aim to make cycling or walking easier, safer and healthier than sitting in traffic.

