

# Horsham Labour

A manifesto for the many not the few in 2023



**Transforming the Horsham District,  
Putting Residents First, Creating a Greener,  
Fairer Place to Live and Work**

## Managing your money

The council is responsible for spending large sums of residents' money. We will ensure the highest levels of scrutiny, accountability and value for money whilst enhancing local service provision.

## Improving safety in our local community

Residents and visitors have the right to feel safe and secure, both at home and on the streets. Nationally there has been a reduction in police and community support officers equating to 11,000 in the last 13 years. Nationally Labour will increase the number by 13,000. Safety and security will be improved by working with other agencies as appropriate:

- Increasing the number of police officers on the beat including night patrols.
- Ensuring safety for children and vulnerable adults by re-investing in youth work and providing safe spaces for young people.
- Raising drug awareness and helping people with all forms of substance abuse.
- Promoting the provision of hostels and support for victims of domestic abuse, exploitation and crime.
- Improving street, car park and public area lighting.
- Increasing the number of Community Support Officers, Local Authority Wardens and Neighbourhood Watch Schemes.
- Designing, planning, landscaping and maintaining areas with safety and security in mind.
- Turning areas of unused waste land into well designed public areas to avoid its use for drug, alcohol and gang related activities.
- Working with other agencies to ensure CCTV is properly maintained and installing additional cameras as appropriate.





## Protecting the environment, protecting our future

Climate change and protecting the environment should be at the heart of all decisions taken by the council. Horsham's Labour councillors are committed to leading the way forward by:

- Setting up a climate change committee to assess the environmental impact of all council decisions.
- Creating a senior council role to engage with residents and community groups.
- Ensuring innovative environmental initiatives are developed and implemented across the district.
- Supporting zero-carbon housing with all new builds to include solar panels, adequate electrical charging points and ending the installation of gas boilers.
- Continuing to oppose the waste incinerator plant to the north of Horsham at every opportunity in the planning process.
- Introducing a weekly food waste recycling scheme making use of anaerobic digestion.
- Using all the levers of local government to reduce the impact on the environment and commit to a programme of divestment ensuring that none of Horsham District's reserves and pension funds are invested in companies whose operations have a negative impact on our environment.
- Reducing the use of pesticides across the district.
- Reducing the cutting of green spaces that are not used for recreational purposes to promote biodiversity and increase civic amenity.



## Building homes everyone can afford, creating sustainable communities

Everyone should be entitled to a decent, secure and affordable home. In Horsham where it requires 11 times the average Horsham wage to buy an average house, soaring rents in the private rented sector and the shortage of genuinely affordable homes to rent means that many people in our District are unable to access that entitlement.

The Council's failure to implement policies that would ensure the number of affordable homes our community needs are delivered has resulted in a housing crisis in our District. The numbers on the council's housing register and the numbers struggling with their housing costs increases year on year. At the same time, thousands of new homes that are unaffordable for many local people are being built. The development of thousands of new houses around the district has put pressure on local services and infrastructure which previous administrations have failed to cater for.

We will resolve this crisis by:

- Ensuring the planning process puts the interests of our communities first.
- Ensuring any developer seeking planning permission complies with current council policy. Labour will go further and insist all developments deliver homes built as genuinely affordable, with an appropriate mix of homes with social rents, shared ownership and supported living schemes.
- Investing in council housing and Direct Labour Organisations.
- Ensuring developers phase affordable housing throughout any developments rather than back loading.
- Requiring developers to build affordable housing to the same standard as other houses on developments.
- Requiring developers to make provision for the infrastructure to meet the needs of the growing population before new applications are approved.
- Reducing the length of time housing register applicants have to wait for a decent home.
- Reviewing the eligibility criteria for applications to the housing register.
- Providing support and advice to those trying to find a home.
- Prioritising council expenditure on supporting services to help those who are homeless to find secure accommodation and to address the challenges in their lives.



## Local Democracy

Introducing a new approach to open up local democracy and increase the clarity of council decisions to residents by:

- Introducing decision making by the full council to improve transparency and scrutiny
- Re-introducing the right for residents to petition and present their case to the council if a threshold of 500 residents on the District electoral role has been met and to receive a full and considered response.
- Providing more time for residents to ask questions at the start of council meetings with replies either at the meeting or afterwards.
- Changing the frequency of HDC elections to one third, one third, and one third over a four year cycle to provide more opportunities for residents' views to be reflected in the make up of the council.

## Democratising the planning process

The Horsham District has suffered from uncontrolled development, a lack of appropriate infrastructure and no District Plan. This will be addressed by:

- Introducing a 5-year land bank.
- Developing a District Plan in conjunction with local Neighbourhood plans and other stakeholders.
- Promoting more engagement with local residents through public meetings to take resident's views into account.
- Increasing the number of local residents allowed to speak at planning meetings and increasing their time allocation to 4 minutes.
- Challenge all planning applications that do not meet the council's local plan and guidelines.
- Putting communities before developers.





## Providing and creating opportunity for all Horsham District's Residents

Every child in the Horsham District has a right to fulfil their potential by hard work and talent, rather than have their futures determined by factors outside their control such as where they live, and how much money their parents have, or by characteristics such as gender, ethnicity or disability. Creating equality of opportunity will not only create a fairer society but it also makes business sense.

Social mobility will be improved by:

- Working with local education providers so that all young people benefit from and have access to careers advice.
- Working with local employers to offer training and development opportunities such as apprenticeships and advertised paid work experience and internships.
- Paying all HDC staff a fair wage and ensuring that its contractors do likewise.
- Improving access to IT and faster broadband.
- Using monies from S106 arrangements and new homes bonuses to ensure a wide range of services and facilities are available to all to promote wellbeing and fulfilment of all residents.

## Nothing less than a Living Wage

All employees across the District have a right to be able to provide for their families. We will support employees by:

- Paying all council employees the Living Wage as a minimum.
- Requiring all contractors and sub-contractors engaged on council contracts to pay their employees the Living Wage as a minimum.
- Working collaboratively with all council employees and their trade unions to deliver the very best outcomes for our district.
- Working with local businesses to help them adopt the Living Wage across their workforce.
- Investing in apprenticeships.



## Generating Civic Pride across the District

The Horsham District is a beautiful and historic part of the country. We will encourage civic pride in the area, further enhancing the environment and the amenity for all residents by:

- Encouraging the residents of the district to recycle rather than discourage recycling by charging for it.
- Ending the charges on Garden Waste bins which will help address the increase in fly-tipping and dumping of garden waste at the Recycling Centres at Hop Oast and Billingshurst.
- Making Horsham District a Smart Town in Waste Management and a shining example of environmentally friendly green policies.
- Investing in new waste technologies, which have been successfully introduced in many parts of the world, to increase the efficiency of waste collection, thus addressing the need to better handle food waste.
- Introducing regular pick-ups of separated food waste increasing recycling rates, reducing CO2 emissions and progressing towards zero waste to landfill.
- Increasing the number of compostable of Dog waste bins and changing these to Smart bins to reduce the incidences of overflowing bins, so that operatives can empty the bins before they become too full and start to overflow.
- Creating efficiency savings by the adoption of Smart Waste Management to increase expenditure on keeping our green spaces clean and tidy.
- Introducing water fountains in recreational areas to progress to a “zero” plastic bottle district and encouraging the use of reusable water bottles.
- Encouraging local restaurants and takeaways to stop using single use items.
- Making Horsham Park a ‘Field in Trust’ to ensure its ongoing protection and returning maintenance to an in-house service.
- Managing our green spaces and parks to the highest environmental standards and protecting all our flora and fauna.



## Delivering the best Education for all our Children

Our children deserve the best start in life and this includes properly funded schools to support teachers and including the provision of resources and facilities. We support the public control and funding of state schools through local authorities as the most efficient and effective way to provide equality of opportunity for all and oppose the introduction of free schools and the academisation of existing schools.

## Bringing shoppers and visitors back to our High Streets

The Horsham District has a number of High Streets and shopping areas. Their success is key to providing a vibrant modern community. Shoppers will be encouraged to return to these areas by:

- Encouraging shoppers to use alternative forms of transport.
- Attracting visitors and shoppers with regular street markets and street entertainment, making our shopping areas focal points.

## Transport and Interconnectivity

Labour Councillors will commit to reducing environmental damage and promoting an integrated transport system for all and encouraging residents to leave their cars at home by:

- Continuing our consultation with local residents, working with communities and the County Council to introduce safer streets with a maximum speed limit of 20 mph in residential areas.
- Prioritising the maintenance and improvement of the cycle network across the Horsham District.
- Working with local cycling groups and parish councils.
- Providing free travel to senior bus pass holders throughout the day.
- Introducing free travel passes for young people in education.
- Working with local bus companies to ensure all new buses meet the highest environmental standards, to restore services across the district and to maintain an acceptable level of cleanliness.
- Working with all stakeholders to deliver a high quality and reliable rail service for the Horsham District.
- Championing the return to public ownership for the benefit of users and employees.
- Ending parking charges at Horsham Hospital.
- Introducing free parking for Blue Badge holders in HDC car parks.





## Leisure, Health and Wellbeing

Leisure, Health and Wellbeing are important aspects of everyday life which we will promote by:

- Working in partnership with local sports centres to provide free passes for under 21s in full time education and those on low or no income.
- Introducing a free parking scheme for users of the Pavillions in the Park and up to 2 hours free parking in other Park car parks.
- Providing an all-year-round running surface in Horsham Park.
- Re-introducing free tennis within Horsham Park.
- Re-introducing youth centres to provide a safe environment for young people to socialise, learn new skills and get involved in the local community.
- Working in partnership with The Capitol and other arts venues to provide reduced rates for the under 21s and those on low or no income.



# Vote Labour



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