

## Winchester Labour Manifesto

**Labour's message: for a fairer and greener city, with cleaner air, that is people and planet friendly**

### **Bus users deserve a first class new bus station**

The Council's plans for central Winchester include providing bus stops in the city to free up the current bus station area for re-development. It is unclear whether a new bus station or hub will be provided despite public support when people were asked for their views on central Winchester. A new bus station is essential to make journeys more pleasant for current and new bus users – rather than just having on-street bus stops. It makes it easier to transfer from one bus to another. New facilities, such as a café, toilets, sheltered waiting areas, and access to information, e-bus charging, cycle parking/hire and mobility scooter hire, could be provided. This should be prioritised over a new multi-storey car park in Barfield Close. Electric buses and environmentally friendly delivery of freight will help give us cleaner air.

Public spaces and streets need to be inspiring and friendly for all ages and abilities for **walking and cycling**. The Councils should support the Winchester Cycling Charter, providing a connected network of cycle infrastructure and cycling lessons for children.

**Labour supports more shared mobility schemes** in every community - to hire electric cars, bikes and e-bikes.

### **Let's start a conversation about School Streets**

Good walking and cycling routes to all primary and secondary schools in Winchester, plus decent, affordable bus services to secondary schools from each neighbourhood are essential. We would also be keen to work with families and schools who would like to set up a School Street. This would temporarily restrict motor traffic in the road outside of a school for a short time at school drop-off and picking-up times. This will mean a safer, healthier and more pleasant environment for everyone.

### **The future of Winchester City Centre - let's get it right this time!**

The Central Winchester Regeneration project has staggered from one botched scheme to another under both the Conservatives and the Liberal Democrats. Winchester really does deserve better with proper open consultations with local people followed by decisions made in public with the views of local residents taken on board. What will now be the best uses for the various empty sites in the City Centre as the city recovers from the Covid pandemic? We must make sure that young people, too often unrepresented, are fully engaged as it is they who will have to live with the decisions now being made. Let the council consider buying empty stores so that local people have a real say in their future. Let's work together for real success.

### **First class homes in the right place, right size and right price**

The Council has a key role in helping everyone live in a decent, secure home that they can afford. It should build as much council housing, as close to net zero carbon, as possible. But they should be social rented council homes, not let at so-called affordable rent, at 70% of open market rents. Low-energy homes through retro-fitting programmes for all housing. The Council should make more use of council owned land. The Bar End Depot site needs to be considered for local housing and community needs, not sold off to a developer. An older people's housing strategy should include discussion on new council built bungalows. At least 40% of housing in new developments should be social housing at genuinely affordable rents. Tenants, leaseholders and renters need support to have a stronger voice.

Working with homeless people, the Council should aim to end homelessness and rough sleeping in Winchester.

**Move council services back in-house** to encourage innovation + to support + grow a skilled local workforce with high quality apprenticeships.

### **Helping households reduce and recycle Waste**

Instead of paying for a garden waste collection, we would like to provide the chance for people to trial a free home composter. This could include those who don't have a garden. The knowledge gained could be used to repeat the scheme so that more people can compost their garden and any suitable kitchen waste at home. Residents who already have a brown bin could also be given the opportunity to exchange it for a free home composter. This will help to improve garden soil, remove the need to buy soil improvers, while increasing the amount of home recycling.

We would also like to see more Council initiatives on reducing waste. These could include an online A-Z directory of what can be recycled by council, shops and charities in Winchester, and zero waste hubs, where you can donate items you don't need, and learn the skills to repair items you do need.

### **Early years - a vital start for children**

We need to restore the Labour Government's aim to give children the best possible start in life through improvements to childcare, early education, health and family support, with an emphasis on outreach and community development.

### **Labour values all key workers and unpaid carers**

We are all grateful to the wonderful care workers who have helped so many local people during the Covid pandemic. Labour will work with the unions to tackle insecure work, to seek to raise pay to at least the Real Living Wage for carers and provide better training and career progression. Unpaid carers need more support too. The County Council should agree to become a Real Living Wage employer.

### **The future of Leisure in our City**

The new Leisure Centre at Bar End is soon to open. Labour councillors would press to ensure that the charges are appropriate for local people. The present council has put forward significantly greater charges than at River Park. This cannot be right. It's two years since the contract with the new operator was agreed. We need to know what was in that contract. The fees for young people mustn't discourage them from swimming. The access and car parking arrangements need careful monitoring to protect local residents.

Labour will press for a charter for children and young people at the forefront of all council decisions. The current pandemic has highlighted the needs of children and young people which must be met in all aspects of their lives.

To encourage local people to be outdoors more in other parts of the city, we need to upgrade open spaces with toilets and improve playgrounds.

### **People Friendly Democracy**

Everyone in Winchester should be able to have their say in decisions made by the Council. No-one should be left out. We would like to see more conversations, rather than start-stop consultations, with local people about things that matter to them in their area. Residents, as citizens, need to be fully involved and engaged in the council's decision making, through a range of new and traditional methods. This could include citizens' assemblies, forums for diverse voices and under-represented groups such as bus users and those with disabilities, and more involvement in how public money is spent through participatory budgeting. Labour will work to ensure greater co-operation between the City and County Council to ensure the success of projects and campaign for more transparency in council decisions.