

Liberal Democrats

Printed, published and promoted by C Smart on behalf of Cambridge Liberal Democrats all at 15 Ronald Rolph Court, Wadloes Road, Cambridge, CB5 8PX. Promoted by A Van de Weyer on behalf of Edna Murphy (Liberal Democrats), all at 15 Ronald Rolph Court, Wadloes Road, Cambridge, CB5 8PX.

Cambridge Liberal Democrats Election Platform 2024

Support our vision for Cambridge



There's so much that needs doing in our city. So let's...

END THE COMPLACENCY

NOW



**Why it's important to
challenge Labour
and elect Liberal
Democrats on
May 2nd ...**

Cambridge Liberal Democrats



Election Platform 2024

The case for electing Liberal Democrat city councillors on May 2nd is compelling:

- **End local Labour complacency**
They are no longer willing to listen to the day-to-day needs of city residents that don't fit their top-down view of what's good for us. Dismissive responses indicate they are now above considering other ideas or even defending their own approach. Despite millions still piling up in council coffers, basic council services are not getting the attention that people need.
- **Keep debate alive**
Apparently tired of reaching decisions through discussion in cross-party committees, Labour is now on the point of closing them down so they can take decisions amongst only selected Labour councillors. This is not a formula for robust decisions nor for democratic expression across the city.
- **Push back on Michael Gove's power grab for Cambridge's future**
The government has announced a new Growth Company and a Development Corporation to shape the future of our area – and it's getting only a timid response from Labour. Cambridge needs more housing, but it is best delivered by locally elected representatives, not imposed by bureaucrats. Our plan provides a better way.

Read on for our plans for our city...

Immediate Change in City Council Services

We will immediately address two issues on which Labour have lost the plot, both basic to people's everyday lives and to why we have a local council.

We will implement the proposals we recently made to address the kinds of **modern urban nuisance and anti-social behaviour** that affect the quality of everyone's lives – very seriously for some. Labour dismissed them as “mucking around”.

- Restore the cutback in environmental patrols so that rules can be properly enforced, such as littering, or cluttered pavements or abuse of public open space
- Fund acoustic monitoring cameras to clamp down on noisy midnight racers through city streets
- Prohibit motorbikes, mopeds and illegal e-scooters from crossing council open spaces and introduce lower 'geo-fenced' speed limit on licensed e-scooters
- Double the number of neighbourhood 'skip days' to curb fly tipping across the city
- Draw up plans to replace the city's worst and hopelessly inadequate public toilets on Jesus Green which attract anti-social behaviour.

And we will overhaul the continuously under-performing **repair and maintenance of the city's 7,500 council homes**. Our proposals have been repeatedly rejected in favour of 'smoke and mirrors' temporary fixes, which don't address the long-term problems.

It is unacceptable that the council as landlord is unable to report on the condition of 20% of its stock because it has no idea of what it is! Despite recent health concern about damp and mould, the story of backlogs and unspent budgets goes on from year to year while practical opportunities are missed to help tenants with their utilities bills through small-scale retrofit and efficiency measures.

While supporting the drive to build additional council housing, we want to see more focus on the needs of tenants who will be living in existing properties for many years to come.

Modernising the council's democracy -

NOT RIPPING IT UP!



We will scrap Labour's plan to get rid of all-party committee decision-making and will concentrate on simplifying outdated procedures, which get in the way of transparency and public understanding.

We will combine the unnecessarily separate roles of executive councillor and committee chair and proceed with decision-taking by committees, composed of all parties in proportion to their strength on the council as a whole.

We will also trial a performance review panel to probe into the effectiveness of past decisions and learn lessons for the future.

We will also develop a new public forum for councillors to discuss neighbourhood priorities with residents of the wards they represent, with published data on crime, anti-social behaviour and waste management.



Cambridge is a place with a high level of engagement in public debate. It cuts against the grain to shut out opposition and minority voices from the taking of decisions and to destroy the equality of voice that every elected councillor should have.

Single party cabals whose members just agree with each other are not the democracy the city needs.

Yet that is what the city will get if Labour is not challenged in this election, as they are set to start that change directly after May 2nd!

Shaping Cambridge's Future

Cambridge has a large importance to the UK's national economy. It also has a chronic shortage of housing, which strains the social fabric, promotes long distance commuting and stunts successful innovation of global significance. Growth has happened fast here and needs managing carefully and sustainably. It certainly needs support from the government – primarily for funding infrastructure. But it does not need a takeover by government.

A new Growth Company and a Development Corporation are Michael Gove's plan for growing Cambridge, staffed by unelected Whitehall nominees. It is founded on an arbitrary target of building 150,000 homes over the next 25 years, more than double what we have today in Greater Cambridge.

We believe locally elected councillors are the right people to shape Cambridge's future. They know the area's character, heritage and landscape and they are accountable to the people of the area. They are not hostile to growth and have planned significant successful development, such as at Trumpington under a Liberal Democrat city council.

The basis of local planning is - and should be - evidence. In contrast Michael Gove has not articulated a shred of evidence for his 150,000 or his 25 years, nor how they could be realistically achieved, nor why a Growth Company and a Development Corporation are necessary for the actual challenges that exist in our area - except to take it out of local hands.

All this paints the picture of a defensive political whim, needing a theatrical power grab to show that action is being taken - after so long with none.

Our concern from the muted response of local Labour is that a technocratically-minded Labour government might carry on with what Michael Gove has started - if we let it.



Say No to Michael Gove

What is needed from government is partnership.

No plans for growth should be pursued without targeted investment in sustainable water supply, which is at breaking point locally. This needs government action.

No significant plans for growth will be feasible without investment in transport infrastructure. That needs government support.

And no big expansion of housing in this high price area will be balanced without significant funding for social housing, also needing government help. **These needs do not make the case for a takeover.**

We will push back on Michael Gove's plans.

Our alternative approach would be to improve the conditions for easier partnership with government by forming a single council covering Greater Cambridge.

This would enable locally elected leadership to speak directly to central government without needing a room full of people from different levels of council and from councils representing different parts of the area.

It would have the additional benefit of simplifying accountability and co-ordination of all council services within the area.

With this in place, the government could afford to collaborate and empower local democracy to do what it does best, taking away talk of its Growth Company and Development Corporation.

We fear that without challenge, Labour will sleepwalk us into a central government takeover, which would not make sense under any party, leaving local councils fragmented and weak.



Liberal Democrat values for Cambridge

What is our compass for the future? What sort of city are Liberal Democrats working towards?

We think ours is an inclusive vision which works with the grain of Cambridge people, both longstanding and newly arrived. It elevates reason and evidence and sets aside easy populism.



The Lib Dem vision for Cambridge, a city that is...

A global power for good...

Projecting its **ideas, innovation and humanity** round the world, renewing our connections with **Europe and beyond** and breaking down barriers in the **local community** to share out its opportunities.



An evolving city...

Providing homes for people in all walks of life, embedding **sustainability with growth** and **respecting nature** and the limitation of its resources while blending the best of old and new.

Prizing the wellbeing of its people...

With green and social space, a **clean and healthy environment**, equal access to arts and recreation, **quality public services**, neighbourhood amenities, and **'voice' in the community**.



Living lightly on the planet...

With less traffic and **more public and active transport**, easy to adopt a **low waste, low carbon** lifestyle and a leader in the **fight against climate change** and for biodiversity.

A generous city...

Where people are **free and safe to be who they are** and live their lives their own way; they can **come together as a community** and there is **kindness** to those suffering disadvantage.



Vote Lib Dem on May 2nd to help us build a better Cambridge.



This election, you have **TWO** votes.

For a strong voice as our local councillor:

Liberal DEMOCRATS



For a real champion to tackle crime:

Edna MURPHY

