



## Manifesto

## For A Fairer Future For Fenland



Promoted by Richard Hirson on behalf of all Labour candidates listed on the last pages. All at Alex Wood Hall, Norfolk Street, Cambridge CB1 2LD. Copied and printed from the NECambridgeshire Labour Party Website <https://northeastcambs.laboursites.org>

**Are you satisfied with the way Fenland District Council runs?** Does it feel as if the Council is working for you or do other interests take priority? If you want a different way and a better future, then this manifesto is for you.

Fenland District Council has been dominated by Conservative councillors for 24 years and is currently the second most complained about council in the country with most complaints relating to housing, planning and development. Following the 2019 local elections Fenland was named the top rotten borough in England by the electoral reform society as 12 Conservative district councillors were elected unopposed.

**Voters are turning to Labour's positive plans** and message of hope that we can have a better future. It is time for change.

There will be a General Election soon; next year is most likely. The choice will be straightforward: Labour or Conservative.

**On 4 May 2023 you elect a new District Council.** We are proud to share our vision for a fairer, greener and more dynamic Fenland.



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### Labour candidates have:

- ★ The **ambition and determination** to change Fenland for the benefit of all residents. Our policies are based on the success of Labour councils elsewhere.
- ★ The **resolve to say 'enough is enough'**. We don't have to accept that everything is broken. We can start to give people their future back.
- ★ The compassion that means we will listen to what residents want, build trust, co-operate across villages and towns and **work with and for local communities**.



Real wages – the amount people earn in relation to their cost of living – [fell by an average of £76 a month in 2022](#).

Key workers in the public sector are even worse off in real terms, losing £180 a month.

Workers have suffered the sharpest fall in real wages since 1977. As families struggle, the Conservative Government has done little other than offer sticking plasters.

Locally we see Tories doing the same; boasting about foodbanks and ‘warm hubs’ when in reality it’s a scandal that people can’t afford the basics.

There’s plenty that Fenland District Council can change and Labour will make it a top priority.



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### Labour councillors will:

- ★ Declare a cost of living emergency and use this to drive action across the Council.
- ★ Commit the Council to paying the [Real Living Wage](#) and make a permanent commitment to pay all staff and all contractors' staff enough to live on.
- ★ Create and implement a Fenland anti-poverty strategy. We will involve people on low incomes, relevant public agencies and voluntary groups.
- ★ Appoint a Financial Inclusion Officer to support financially vulnerable residents, including through outreach sessions. Reinstate funding to Citizens' Advice.
- ★ Tackle digital exclusion through support for low-income and other residents to learn new skills.
- ★ Negotiate a comprehensive agreement with public sector unions to deliver reliable services for residents and valued jobs.
- ★ Sign up to the 'Right to Food' campaign to end the scandal of foodbanks in one of the world's richest countries.
- ★ Provide free sanitary products in community centres to cut period poverty ([that affects 1 in 8 British women](#)).
- ★ Build on the work of Labour County Councillors who delivered their free school meals pledge and backed the [Household Support Fund](#). Find ways to spread necessary costs across the year.

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A decent home is a basic human right.

The Tories have failed to deliver affordable homes. [Fewer than 1 out of 5 new homes built is classed as affordable](#). When there was a Tory mayor, millions of pounds meant for cheaper homes were lost to our area.

Homes in Fenland are poorly insulated and expensive to run.

Labour's plans are designed to provide truly affordable, safe and good quality homes. Local people should have the choice to keep living in the area that they know and love.



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### Labour councillors will:

- ★ Insist on 40% min affordable homes in developments of 15+ homes. Prioritise social housing with secure tenancies.
- ★ Aim to build our own social housing and earn income for our community. Be ready when suitable brownfield sites become available. [Government-backed Public Loans](#) could fund this programme.
- ★ Press for homes for sale to be first offered to local people to live in.
- ★ Set targets for housing to be accessible to people with disabilities, with at least 5% of new homes specifically adapted.
- ★ Push towards new homes at net zero carbon standards to cut heating bills. Better promotion of existing insulation schemes to reduce running costs.
- ★ Expect infrastructure to be in place before people move in.
- ★ Increase inspection and enforcement against landlords.
- ★ Cut local homelessness with a strategic prevention service to deliver long-term change.
- ★ Work with the [Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance](#) to improve our response. Lack of housing is the main barrier to fleeing violence (for women especially).

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Cambridgeshire is particularly at risk from climate change. The threat of floods, heat waves and drought will affect homes and businesses in towns and in the countryside.

Residents can see the impact of climate change all around. Heavy rain and hard frosts opening up potholes. Hot summers causing peat shrinkage and roads falling in.

We must reduce our carbon emissions and water use, and make our towns and villages resilient to the effects of climate change.

One local council can't solve the climate crisis, but that's not an excuse for inaction.

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### **Labour councillors will:**

- ★ Speed up progress to a net zero council. Stop buying or investing in fossil fuels.
- ★ Create [Local Nature Recovery](#) plans, with communities and landowners, that enhance our fens, grasslands, meadows, woodlands and chalk streams.
- ★ Protect our communities from the impact of climate change, e.g. nature-based anti-flood measures and keep gullies clear.
- ★ Work with the County Council to move away from just patching up potholes to a pro-active repair programme. This reduced pothole numbers by a third last summer.
- ★ Cut the local waste sent to landfill. Put recycling bins next to litter bins and encourage more [repair cafes](#).
- ★ Increase tree cover. We need projects such as ['Trees for Streets'](#) and re-wilding of open areas.
- ★ Install more electric vehicle charging points especially in terraced streets with limited or no off-road parking. Phase in a requirement for taxis to be low emission.
- ★ Work with Parishes and community groups to provide good quality, well-signposted foot and cycle paths. Add secure parking.
- ★ Stand with our [Labour Combined Authority Mayor](#) to improve public transport despite relentless Tory cuts. Campaign for bus franchising to run services for public good.
- ★ Invest in a greener local economy and raise additional funding through a [Community Municipal Investment fund](#) (ethical crowdfunding for local people).



Labour's vision for our district is for towns and villages where people can enjoy their neighbourhoods. Where their work, home and leisure and cultural activities can take place locally, and where the air is clean and people are healthy and happy.

Labour people are natural co-operators, we will listen to residents, and work with others so that every part of Fenland enjoys decent services.

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### **Labour councillors will:**

- ★ Strengthen the network of Community and Sports Centres to deliver a range of clubs, sports, leisure activities and entertainment for all ages. Involve disadvantaged groups.
- ★ Organise more free and low-cost activities, seeking sponsorship to support this. More play apparatus and outdoor gyms.
- ★ Support local businesses, through a new Economic Recovery Officer. Work to keep our high streets accessible and lively.
- ★ Champion 20mph limits in areas where people live and children play. Labour County Councillors backed a [new fast-track process](#) for communities to request 20mph zones.
- ★ Introduce [Civil Parking Enforcement](#) to end the scourge of bad parking. And make good use of CCTV to improve safety.
- ★ Help local people to take action to improve their areas through 'seed project' grants.
- ★ Consider how to improve air quality in council buildings to reduce infection risks.
- ★ Get a grip of the management of waste collections.
- ★ Provide extra bins or collections at busy times, picnic spots and on market days. Keep commercial bins stored out of sight.
- ★ Cut fly-tipping with [Community Skip Days](#). Prosecute those who dump rubbish.
- ★ Hold regular councillor surgeries and Ward Walks to stay in touch with needs.
- ★ Improve consultations with more ways to have a say, so that they are truly representative of residents' opinions.
- ★ Consult with the community about setting up 'Transition Town' schemes

Labour believes that the Government, at every level, has a duty to use its powers for the good of the community.

Working people are the real wealth creators. Wealth created by the community should be retained locally so that we all benefit.

And we believe in the importance of engaging with the community because local people know best what's needed.

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### **Labour councillors will:**

- ★ Put Lead Councillors in charge of key policy areas. If the Council is to drive change, we need accountability.
- ★ Work with local communities to create a new [Local Plan](#). A plan where local people, not developers, decide what's best. A plan that includes public transport connectivity.
- ★ Develop a [Community Wealth Building Strategy](#) to grow and reinvest local prosperity for residents' benefit. Embrace a local-first approach to council spending.
- ★ Capitalise on [Section 106 planning powers](#) to provide and maintain the infrastructure the community needs, e.g. roads, cycle ways, recreation, education, nurseries, GPs and dentists, and homes for local people.
- ★ Review Community Land Trusts (CLTs). And support only those that are community-led, have wide support and that focus on affordable housing.
- ★ Link good employment practice to council contracts, insisting on jobs and apprenticeships for local people.
- ★ Assist the [investigation](#) into huge loans of public money to developers. Loans agreed by the Previous Conservative Mayor.
- ★ Assess how to pay for council services. The Tories boast of low Council Tax but bills have gone up. Why? Because Parish Councils fill the gaps left by Tory cuts. The average Parish tax charge has gone up 54% in nine years: nearly double inflation.
- ★ Sign up to the [Fair Tax Declaration](#) and make sure we spend money with companies who pay their taxes.



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I want to support our public services and to make sure people feel safe, have the opportunity to thrive, and to have the skills they need to prosper."**

**Ian Moyes**



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland



**"Our council could do so much more if we had political change in the district. Voting Labour is the only way change for the better will happen."**

**Phil Snowdon**

North East Cambridgeshire

 **Labour**

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"As a regular bus user myself, I feel very strongly about maintaining the local bus services so that residents of all ages are able to engage fully in public life without any barriers."**

**Katie Clark**



North East Cambridgeshire

 **Labour**

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"The people of March deserve councillors with compassion and integrity, and who care for the community that they serve. They deserve councillors with Labour values."**

**Martin Field**



North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I will be a listening and caring councillor who will serve the people of March with compassion and a strong sense of community."**

**Katharine Bultitude**



North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I am passionate about the need for local people to feel they have a voice. Too often residents are just passive onlookers of changes made by those in power. Changes that happen largely unchallenged".**

**Angela Mayes**





North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I believe locals deserve a voice about the changes that are happening. They are not being listened to and it is time for change. I want to speak out and make a difference."**

**Rob Williams**



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**" I am standing as your local Labour candidate because I believe in honesty, accountability and working hard for my community. "**

**Clare Hale**





North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"Labour care about hard-working families, which is why I promise to listen to residents about the local issues they face."**

**Hannah Orbell**



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"The District Council needs to do more for the local community in this cost of living crisis. We need affordable housing and decent public transport. We need fair funding to local authorities and Councillors who will stand up for their community."**

**George Broughton**



North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**'I am experienced at working pragmatically with others to find sensible, proportionate solutions to problems to help make March a better place for all.'**

**Martyn Balmont**



North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"Everyone should feel represented and have a voice that is equally heard. At the moment, many in our community are feeling ignored. Our Labour candidates want to change that"**

**Janet O'Keefe**



North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland



**"I want to defend local public services to make sure we have a council that listens to the community it is supposed to serve."**

**Peter Gilman**

North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I believe strongly that the delivery of comprehensive and efficient public services is fundamental to the cohesion of local communities. A Labour Council can make that difference."**

**Stephen Clay**





North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I am committed to  
transparency, accountability  
and will work in collaboration  
with other council members  
and local residents to achieve  
our shared goals."**

**Benedict Allen**



North East Cambridgeshire

 Labour

For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"Compassion in all we do"**

**Marian Phillips**





North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"I believe in raising public engagement so that local people's voices are heard and acted upon promptly, fairly and honestly. I believe in improving access to high quality health and social care service. I believe in ensuring that improvements to public transport happen."**

**Amanda Hirson**



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**"We all want to live our lives with equal opportunities and equal access. Vote for your Labour candidates to improve all public services in Fenland"**

**Seb O'Keefe**



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**Since I have been living in Fenland I  
have been shocked what little  
political diversity there is in our  
local councils. We need to work  
together to make our communities  
the best they can be.'**

**Kathryn Hearn**



North East Cambridgeshire



For a Fairer Future in Fenland

**It's time to invest in the Fens and its  
people. We need more wealth in our  
community, so we create a circular  
economy to help each other."**

**Stewart Hearn**

