

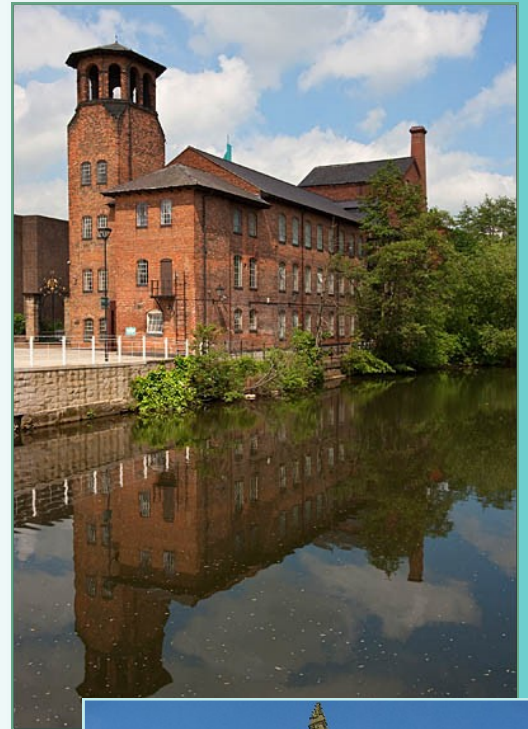
***Moving Derby***

***Forwards***

**Liberal**

**Democrats**

**Manifesto 2012**



For Derby City Unitary Authority elections on Thursday 3rd May 2012.

## **Top ten policies for Derby**

- **Freeze Council Tax 2013/14 - as we have the last two years**
- **Pursue every opportunity to bring jobs to Derby**
- **Prepare for a Derby bank**
- **Oppose congestion charging and workplace parking levies**
- **Deliver top quality leisure facilities – Multi use sports arena**
- **Protect our local green spaces**
- **We will keep all Derby's libraries open**
- **Create more purpose built housing for older people**
- **Review orange bag cardboard recycling scheme**
- **Ensure every child can go to a good quality local school**

## Foreword

**Lucy Care, Chair of Derby Liberal Democrats**



The Liberal Democrats have been working in Derby for well over 20 years.

During that time we have worked closely with local communities, involving local people both in citywide campaigns and on local issues on individual streets. We work all year round, knowing that issues arise throughout the year, not just at election times.

There have been Liberal Democrat councillors in the city for nearly all that time. They have worked hard for local people, dealing both with individual problems, addressing concerns in the areas they represent and helping move the whole city forward.

Successes include:

**The rollout of doorstep recycling across the city.** Ten years on it's hard to remember the time before the fortnightly collection of blue and brown bins and other recyclables. At that time recycling on this scale was ground-breaking, but the Liberal Democrats showed leadership in making it work. The people of Derby reacted excellently, making Derby a leading city for recycling.

**Investment in libraries in local communities.** Library closures in the early 90s were strongly resisted by the Liberal Democrats. Giving libraries a high profile in the city has led to further investment, with most communities now having a local library, providing not just books but a wide range of other services and information.

**Saving other local facilities.** Liberal Democrats are strong supporters of local services and worked hard and successfully alongside the local community to get Gayton Pool rebuilt when Labour decided to close and demolish it – only weeks after promising to save it.



**Caring for carers.** Under the Liberal Democrats the City Council has been doing ground-breaking work in providing support for elderly and disabled people by working closely with the health sector. This enables people to stay in their own homes healthily for longer. We have also given a higher priority to carers, who can now access much more support so that they are able to care for their loved ones without their own health suffering.

**Completion of the inner ring road.** For decades, routes around the centre of Derby zigzagged crazily around the backstreets. Approval to build the new road through derelict plots of land has changed the traffic flows for ever. The Liberal Democrats pressed for the new road to be people-friendly. It avoided dividing the communities along its route by including many pedestrian crossings and excellent cycling and walking facilities.

**Involving local people in council business.** Council meetings these days include the opportunity for public questions – a development Liberal Democrats were calling for long before it became a requirement. Similarly we pressed for local areas to have more control over their own affairs, leading the way for Area Panels and then Neighbourhood Forums. We have been able to ensure that these local bodies have more money to spend for the benefit of their local areas.

**School investment.** When Derby became a unitary authority it inherited decades of under-investment in schools from the Labour-controlled County Council. A priority was therefore to provide buildings where good learning facilities and therefore outcomes could be achieved. Liberal Democrats have been persistent in seeking funding for school rebuilds and improvements and examples can be seen across the city.

**Campaigning for businesses.** Derby people need Derby jobs, and Liberal Democrats have campaigned for investment in Derby. Most recently we have lobbied government to support Bombardier and are delighted that their immediate future is safeguarded. We continue to press for further investment in rail and improvements in the structure of government tenders.

**Transport for the future.** As fuel prices increase, alternatives to the private car are becoming more and more attractive. The Liberal Democrats have been keen supporters of bus services. Their research and campaigning led to the introduction of mainstream services like that serving Heatherton, and of niche ones giving mobility to elderly people on estates with no services. Liberal Democrats approved the building of Derby's new bus station. The Liberal Democrats strongly supported Derby's position as a Cycle Demonstration Town, which has led to a more cycle-friendly city and means that all primary school pupils can access cycle training.

**Sustainable Derby.** Liberal Democrats have been strong supporters of biodiversity in Derby, from the early days of Riverlife to the network of Friends of Parks. We also recognise the importance of improving our energy usage, and have championed the climate change team within the council who provide support to reduce the energy costs for local homes and businesses.

However, Liberal Democrats are better at looking forward than back – and the following pages share some – though by no means all – of our priorities and hopes for Derby for the coming years. –Lucy Care

# Councillor Hilary Jones

## Deputy Leader of Derby City Council



“Derby City Council has also been run by a Conservative/ Lib Dem coalition for the last year. Whenever two (or more) parties work together there will be a need for negotiation and compromise – but also an opportunity for some manifesto promises to be delivered.

“Here in Derby we have been able to take forward projects which were started several years ago when the Lib Dems were running the council. I am particularly pleased that the ‘Extra Care’ complex by the A38 in Mackworth will be completed later this year, and that the Sports Arena on Pride Park has been given planning approval.

“Projects like these move Derby forward, but it is not just new buildings that Derby needs.

“During the last year Liberal Democrats have been instrumental in campaigning for Bombardier. We are delighted that jobs there have been safeguarded for the present, and we will continue to lobby for further improvements in standard tender documentation for government projects.

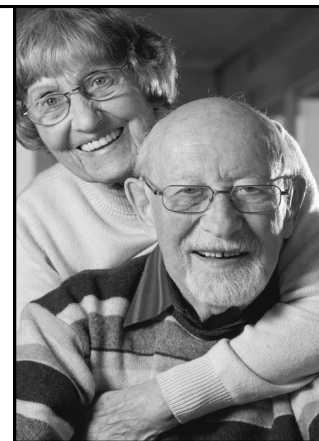
“Local jobs continue to be a priority for the city and we will continue to work closely with businesses. We have secured funding to provide access for the development of Chellaston Business Park.

### Homes for older people

Users of the ring road/ A38 will have noticed the new building being erected on the edge of Mackworth. This is Derby’s newest “Extra Care” community. Lib Dem Councillor Ruth Skelton is the cabinet member responsible.

Old age can be a time of loneliness and isolation. “Extra Care” can change this, providing on site a wide range of services used by its retired residents, while they continue to live independently in their own flats. As needs grow, additional support can be provided without people having to move into residential care.

Sites for further communities are being sought and the trend continues the Lib Dem tradition of caring for our elderly.



“Our commitment to localism doesn’t stop with national action. Here in Derby we have ensured that local areas have more money to spend through their Neighbourhood Boards and we are keen to engage more people in developing local plans as part of the new Planning Framework.

“Empty buildings and empty sites give a poor impression of the city and local areas. We are therefore pleased that more decisive action on empty properties is already bringing more homes back into use, and several city centre sites are now moving forward with private sector developments.

“The Council itself is looking to the future with the refurbishment of the Council House which is continuing according to plan. When the building reopens later this year it will provide accommodation for all the central council staff, and be powered from water flow around the Longbridge Weir just outside.

“Derby is a successful city, but we cannot rest on our laurels. The world continues to change, and Derby must not be left behind. Please read on for more details on Liberal Democrat priorities for the coming year.”

## **Sport and Leisure**

Two years ago Liberal Democrat Councillor Joe Naitta began work on the council’s ‘Leisure Strategy’, updating and expanding the sports facilities and ‘opportunities in the city.

The new Arena will be an iconic building on Pride Park, providing a much-needed performance venue for the city, as well as a velodrome for the region.



# Derby's economic well-being

## Highlights:

- Leave money in people's pockets freezing council tax bills.
- Lobby for a local bank to serve Derby and its local area.
- Stop wasting energy, in the council and across the city.

Liberal Democrat councillors have voted for two years running to freeze council tax for Derby residents. Right now is not the time to squeeze pockets, therefore we aim to keep Council Tax as low as possible. For 2013/2014 we will once again work towards freezing Council tax for Derby residents.

Derby has grown up alongside engineering and creativity. It is now a major force in transport manufacturing, with major manufacturers Rolls-Royce and Bombardier within the city, and Toyota just outside. Together with their supply chains, these companies form the bedrock of Derby's purpose and success.

However, being dependent on a few industries is a risk. Encouraging investment by our small and medium enterprises to grow and diversify will help the city for the future. To do this we need banks willing to see investing in business as wise. In practice this will require changes to national regulations, so the first steps are to develop our business case and lobby the government.

The refurbishment of the Council House, to be much more energy efficient and to house all the Council's central staff, will result in real savings. The building will use electricity from the turbine across the Longbridge Weir on the adjacent River Derwent.

Reducing waste is one of the best ways to make money go further. As energy prices go on rising, we need to identify what further steps we can take to improve energy efficiency and renewable power generation both for the council itself and for Derby more widely.

## Other points:

- We oppose scrapping the single person's Council Tax rebate which Labour has suggested.
- The Eagle Market and Market Hall are struggling at present, and we are willing to explore new ways to make our markets successful and the spaces well-used.
- The Regeneration Fund is beginning to bear fruit with the start of Friar Gate Square. Forward planning of further projects and more investment funds must continue.



# Travelling around Derby

## Highlights:

- 20's Plenty! New Lib Dem regulations allow lower speed limits on local roads more easily.
- Supporting alternatives to private cars to help people save by filling up less often.

National changes mean that the speed limit on local streets can be reduced to 20mph without expensive bumps and chicanes. This isn't suitable for every road, but many roads on both new estates and older backstreets could be converted if local people wish. Neighbourhood Boards will continue to have money to help pay for this.

As the cost of filling up the car increases, more and more people are considering the alternatives – buses, cycling, walking, car-sharing and more. Information like notices at bus stops, cycle route signs and on-line lift-share schemes can all help make it easier to try something new. We will be happy to back ideas from businesses and others which will help support this vision. We will seek to introduce flexible bus tickets to allow passengers to buy a single ticket but travel on services provided by more than one bus company.

In our current economic situation some local bus services have been threatened with closure by withdrawal of subsidy. We will continue to press for these important services to be maintained.

## Other points:

- We'd like to explore cheaper evening taxi fares for holders of the pensioners' gold card, or ways to co-ordinate taxi-sharing.
- Road repairs continue to be a priority, and we feel there are still opportunities to make them more cost-effective and long-lasting.
- As energy costs go up, flexible street lighting is the way for tomorrow, and we'll review options for 'smart lighting' where individual lights can be turned up or off as needed.
- Using 'composites' (plastic based materials) for manhole covers is safer for cyclists and motorcyclists – and they don't attract metal thieves.
- We are opposed to introducing congestion charging and work place levies.





# Planning Derby

## Highlights:

- Open spaces where people value them.
- Housing to meet our needs.
- Space for future jobs.

The new planning legislation and the Localism Act are changing the way that land use planning is decided. While this is intended to give local people more 'say' over their local areas, we are also concerned that developers may be quicker at identifying opportunities for themselves. We will therefore seek to work with existing 'Friends of Parks' organisations and others, to ensure that open spaces across the city are given appropriate protection in the new system.



Maximising use of our existing homes is one way to reduce pressure on open space, so we will continue to work with local people to get empty homes back into use as swiftly as possible. For many older people, 'Extra care' is an attractive way to maintain independence, be part of a friendly community and have good support services available when needed. We will be continuing to seek to increase provision within the city, working both with private providers and on council schemes.

As the cost of commuting increases, we will seek to provide opportunities for new jobs within the city. This includes continuing the development of the Chellaston Business Park, where we hope to achieve excellent transport links to reduce the use of the private car. We will work with others to help ensure that there are premises available for new business start-ups and the growth of existing businesses.

## Other points:

- Recent improvements along the River Derwent upstream of the Silk Mill have highlighted the poor access across Darley Park. We will look again at options for this area.
- Derby is a green city with valuable trees, hedges and wildlife areas. We will continue to support initiatives that further encourages wildlife in the city.



# Education, recreation and well-being

Highlights:

- Judging schools on future employability as well as exam results.
- Increasing leisure activities on offer in Derby
- Caring for older people

League tables too often judge schools on pure academic performance, more than the value that their teaching and wider education has had on its pupils. Future employers aren't just looking for literacy and numeracy, they want employees who can also work together, are reliable, honest and hard-working. When young people are finding it hard to get jobs, these qualities matter all the more, and Lib Dems in Derby will work with schools to share best practice for employability, independent of a pupil's academic ability.

When money is tight, time out in Derby may be a good alternative to a weekend away. So we want to ensure that the range of opportunities on offer here is attractive. Investment in a new Arena on Pride Park is progressing well, and we are seeking ways to ensure the road track can also be provided without impacting on the nature reserve nearby. The wider sports strategy will mean that wherever people live in Derby they will be able to access sports facilities for recreation and training.

We are also prepared to consider new uses for old buildings; we would welcome a practical scheme to save the Hippodrome. The old Debenhams site and Duckworth Square area also have the potential for new uses.

Across the city there are groups and individuals involved in the creative and performing arts, as participants and audience.

Other points:

- Later this year the new Police Commissioner will be elected for Derbyshire. We will emphasise the importance of good community relations and crime reduction as part of continued close-working with the police.
- Public events can be excellent value and help build a feeling of community. Lib Dems will continue to encourage support for such activities on our parks and in the city centre, either directly or with support from Neighbourhood Boards.



## **With an eye to the Future...**

Highlights:

- Waste as a resource.
- Local food.
- Local skills.
- Local economy.

Derby has a good record for recycling, but we still have a lot of black bin rubbish which is not recovered in any way. Liberal Democrats will find ways to ensure that more of this material is seen as a resource, and reused. The change to separate cardboard collections with orange bags still has problems and we will review whether there are practical alternatives.

Like energy, the cost of food is increasing faster than general inflation. Allotments are popular again, and most now have a waiting list of people wishing to rent plots. The Lib Dems will be willing to explore the potential for providing more allotments in the city and will also encourage other opportunities for food growing such as the community adopting council-owned but under-used open spaces and helping organise 'garden-shares' where keen gardeners look after other people's garden for a share of the produce.

Increasing people's skills can improve lives, and the Liberal Democrats will continue to seek ways to make both formal and informal training available to ensure that a wide range of skills are taught in the city, from cooking and gardening to computer and cycle repair.

Skills are also important in the wider economy, and we will work with trade bodies, unions and others to identify where input is needed to improve skills, and seek partners to deliver training. The local economy will also be supported by using local providers wherever possible, and we will seek to make it easier for smaller, local businesses to tender for council work and materials contracts.

## **In touch with local people**

Liberal Democrats keep in touch with the people they represent with regular newsletters, all year round. They welcome comments from everyone in their wards and do their best to meet everyone's needs and address their concerns.

Liberal Democrat councillors are available all year round to help and advise with local issues.

**Thank you for taking the time to read this document. The only way to get Derby Moving Forwards—Vote Liberal Democrat on 3rd May 2012.**