

A BETTER MK THE CONSERVATIVE PARTY MANIFESTO

**MILTON KEYNES COUNCIL
ELECTIONS - 5TH MAY 2016**



**Milton Keynes
Conservatives**

Conservative Manifesto

Over the last two years we have seen the Labour Council failing to get a grip on the priorities that Milton Keynes desperately needs sorting out. We have seen rocketing costs for temporary accommodation, a declining city centre, a parking crisis, struggling high streets, and a council running on an overdraft. Conservatives are determined to turn this around.

As Milton Keynes is approaching its 50th anniversary, now more than ever we need clear leadership and a plan for our future. There is so much about Milton

Keynes to be cherished and protected but there is also a lot to be done to ensure our future prosperity. Conservatives will see that a vision for MK, owned by its citizens, is created. We will then deliver it.

Making this happen depends greatly on developing strong partnerships with businesses, town and parish councils, the voluntary, health and education sectors and importantly with neighbouring councils. We intend to build those partnerships and plans. The future for Milton Keynes





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and its strength depends greatly on our collective ability to collaborate.

At a national level Conservatives believe that a strong economy underpins everything. The same is true of Milton Keynes. A sound local economy creates jobs, new housing, attracts visitors, enables investment in cultural facilities and the delivery of vital services to vulnerable people. We understand this and will work tirelessly to deliver all the things needed to make Milton Keynes the best place to live in the UK.

Our Manifesto makes clear our pledges to you. Conservatives have a strong, experienced and talented team, ready to lead our city forward.

Conservatives will deliver a better, brighter future for MK. Vote Conservative on 5 May 2016.

**Cllr Edith Bald
Leader of
Conservative
Group**



Our Pledge - A better economy



A strong local economy is vital to Milton Keynes' prosperity.

We need this in order to create jobs, build new housing, attract visitors and enable investment in cultural facilities across the borough. In turn, business rates and council tax collected from a sound economy support the delivery of council services including social care, road maintenance and community facilities.

- We will promote MK and the surrounding towns as a place in which to invest.
- We will work with the Milton Keynes Development Partnership, Town and Parish Councils and other stakeholders to welcome investors who come with ideas to redevelop the neglected parts of the borough.
- We will insist on high quality, innovative developments which were the hallmark of MK in its early days.
- We will look to create an innovation zone for business start ups with basic infrastructure provided, to make it easier for young people to get started in business.

In short, we will ensure that Milton Keynes maintains its position as one of the best places in the UK for business, retail and leisure; with our local economy going from strength to strength.

Although results for primary school children have improved across the borough, GCSE and A Levels are below the national average. This means the prospects for some students in the job market are limited, a position which is unacceptable.



Conservatives will support schools in the work they are doing to drive up and improve standards.

- We firmly believe apprenticeships should carry equal weight to the traditional university route. Focus should be put on preparing students for the job market, whichever way they choose to do it – providing employers with the skilled workforce they need.
- We want to attract the best teachers to Milton Keynes and will work with schools to create initiatives to attract the best and brightest teachers, including a 'Key-Worker' housing offer.

Conservatives believe in providing a wide range of education choices for parents when they are looking for the best place for their children to learn.

Every day over 1,500 children travel to grammar schools in Buckingham and Aylesbury, because there are no grammar schools in Milton Keynes. Demand is growing.

Responding to this demand and the need for more choices to be available for Milton Keynes families, Conservatives are in open discussion with Bucks County Council, exploring the potential for grammar schools in Milton Keynes.

Our Pledge

A better quality and choice of education

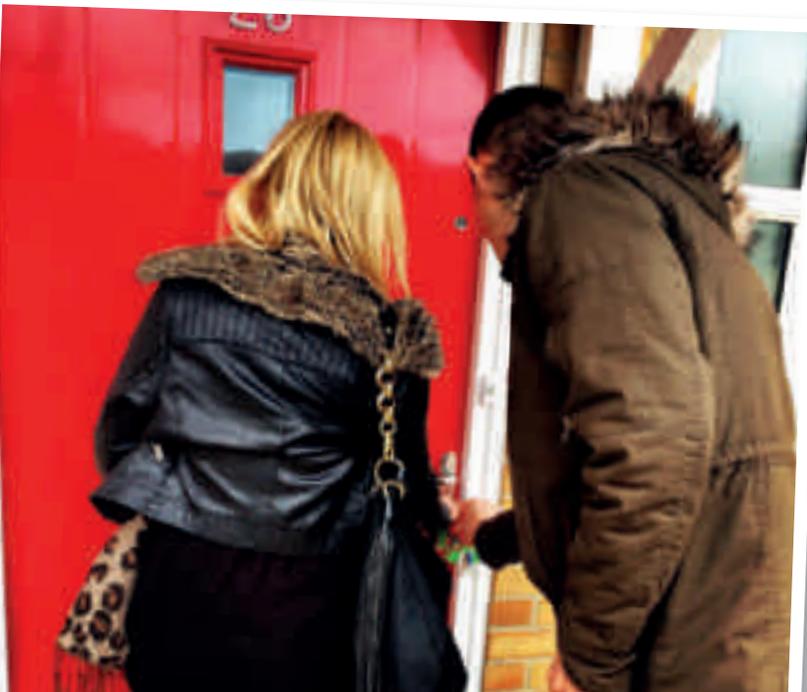
Our Pledge

BETTER HOUSING

Access to affordable housing is one of the biggest issues in Milton Keynes.

Too many people can't get onto the housing ladder. Too many people are in temporary accommodation, which has a devastating social impact on families and is costing tax payers a fortune. Conservatives will focus on increasing housing supply through a range of initiatives as well as giving future buyers support.

- We will deliver the Government's promise to cut social rents by 1%.
- We will continue to build more social housing for those in genuine need.
- We will look to radically expand and improve shared ownership schemes available, to make them more accessible for those who want to own their own home.
- We will expand housing solutions for key workers such as teachers and nurses.



If you work hard, save hard and have the aspiration to own your own home, we will help you to make this a reality. We will create a one stop shop advice service to explain the options available through starter homes, right to buy, help to buy, shared ownership and self build schemes. We will work with banks locally to make it easier for buyers to access mortgage advice.

Our Pledge Better health care for Milton Keynes



We understand that there is nothing more important than your health. The council plays a vital role in delivering services for the most vulnerable in our society and we want to improve the quality of the services on offer.

- We believe in forging better relationships with the NHS and other partners to jointly tackle the needs of MK's growing population.
- We will engage fully with the Healthcare Review to get the best possible outcome for Milton Keynes and prevent the hospital being downgraded.
- We recognise the importance of GP care and the ever growing difficulty

some residents have in getting appointments. We will lobby the local NHS to improve access across the borough, 7 days a week. We will improve the Council's planning processes in development areas.

- We will work with the NHS, Age UK and other partners, to get vulnerable people out of hospital and in their own homes with appropriate support reducing bed blocking which has become so prevalent.

With so many organisations responsible for the delivery of health services in Milton Keynes, the answer to improving services lies in collaboration. We will pursue this agenda vigorously because there is so much at stake.

Our Pledge

A better funded Voluntary Sector



Conservatives believe the Voluntary Sector does a vital job, often supporting the most vulnerable in society. However, relationships between the council and the voluntary sector appear to have become strained mainly due to pressure on the council's ability to offer funds.

- We will work more closely with the Voluntary Sector to ensure their work in our community is seen as an integral part of service provision and properly acknowledged.

- We will encourage donors from all walks of life, including businesses as a way to sponsor social investment.
- We will introduce a community lottery to provide additional funding for the voluntary sector.

Although not an overnight solution to the problem, the introduction of an additional funding stream could prove to be a life line to groups such as Luncheon Clubs and Scouts. The potential, we feel, is enormous.

Our Pledge Better parking

Parking has become a major barrier for employees, employers, the retail trade and the market. Lack of spaces in the right place at the right price is discouraging people from visiting, damaging our local economy. A solution is urgent.

- We will create more spaces by building at least one multi storey car park, announcing plans for the first one in September 2016.
- We will also reduce premium rate parking tariffs and introduce new tariffs to encourage more visitors and longer stays.

Conservatives will certainly not reduce the width of parking bays!



Our Pledge

Better ways to get around Milton Keynes

Milton Keynes needs better, more sustainable transport solutions.

Conservatives believe that continuing to reduce bus services is not an acceptable position, leaving some people, especially in rural areas isolated.

- We will investigate ways to improve bus services and to provide alternative solutions to bus travel where buses are uneconomic.

- We will encourage cycling as an alternative to cars and buses and we will promote redways as a safe way to travel.
- We believe grid roads should be incorporated into all new development areas. We will address the barriers preventing this, most notably funding and the will to build them.

We need to future proof and improve the transport offering in Milton Keynes, and while the city was made for the car, we recognise that a wide range of transport choices are necessary for a growing city.





Our Pledge A Better Environment

Conservatives believe that well maintained streets and open spaces are important because they create a sense of well-being for the people who live here and visit.

A good environment encourages pride and respect for places and people.

- We do not believe Labour's plans to withdraw pink sacks make

sense financially. We will review the situation when we take office.

- We will also review overall waste collection solutions including impact on recycling rates and landfill costs.
- We will focus on basics like clean and clear signposting and white line markings.

LOCAL CONSERVATIVES

working for the residents of Milton Keynes

