

CAMBRIDGE CITY CONSERVATIVES



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MANIFESTO 2024

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OUR SIX PLEDGES



Cambridge has been taken for granted by Labour and the Liberal Democrats for too long. While council tax and wasteful spending has gone up and up, the Labour-led council has neglected our roads and public transport. Anti-social behaviour is on the rise and house prices have got out of control. Families and businesses are struggling. Labour and the Liberal Democrats have simply stopped listening to people.

Labour and the Liberal Democrats' Congestion Charge was the last straw. We Conservatives were the only party to stand with the community to oppose the Congestion Charge. No if's, no but's. The Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) and the City council thought they could keep taking Cambridge for granted and do as they pleased. The people of King's Hedges proved them wrong and elected a Conservative Councillor in July 2023.

Since then, our new councillor, Delowar Hossain, has been working round the clock to get results for King's Hedges. If you vote Conservative this May, you can help get more hardworking councillors elected who will actually listen to your concerns and act accordingly. This is our plan for a different Cambridge that works for local people. Our candidates have all signed up to making these six pledges to you:

- Protect Our Motorists
- Improve Public Transport
- Tackle Anti-Social Behaviour
- Build a Greener, More Affordable City
- Support Families and Small Businesses
- Stand Up for Local Democracy

We have a plan for change and a team of candidates ready to put it into action. Give the Conservatives your support on 2nd May and send a message to Labour and the Liberal Democrats that the people of Cambridge will be listened to and want a better way of doing politics.

SIGNED BY: COUNCILLOR DELOWAR HOSSAIN

DAVID SMITH – ABBEY
ROBERT BOORMAN – ARBURY
SZYMON SAWICKI – CASTLE
SHAPOUR MEFTAH – COLERIDGE
FRANK RIBIERO – EAST CHESTERTON
NAZRUL ISLAM – KING'S HEDGES
JOHN MARENBON – MARKET

SUSIE WILLIAMS – NEWNHAM
PAUL ROPER – PETERSFIELD
ROBIN NELSON – ROMSEY
STEVEN GEORGE – TRUMPINGTON
MIKE HARFORD – WEST CHESTERTON
MO PANTALL – CHERRY HINTON
ERIC BARRETT-PAYTON – QUEEN EDITHS

PROTECT OUR MOTORISTS



Residents and businesses should have freedom of movement without having to pay a road charge.

In November 2023, the Liberal Democrat leader of the South Cambridgeshire District Council said that 'road charging in some form is coming'. Conservatives have been the only party who have constantly opposed road charging throughout the years, whereas other parties have been taking equivocal stances. After the 2nd May elections, what will stop Labour and the Liberal Democrats from going back to their previous plans?

Road reclassification plans in Cambridge City could mean that certain roads are closed off to motorists, which then leaves them having to make unnecessarily long journeys. Such journeys ultimately lead to more pollution and more congestion on main roads, so why do we need this?

City council should focus on making our roads better and safer, not worse, and more expensive. Your Conservative Councillor Delowar Hossain has been constantly reporting potholes and unsafe road conditions in King's Hedges and other city wards. Although this is the responsibility of the County Council, he has stood up for motorists by personally reporting and following up with the Highways England team to fix problems with our roads.

IMPROVE PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Helping motorists does not mean that we do not recognise the urgent need for efficient and sustainable public transport within Cambridge. Current routes that service areas outside the city centre such as Cherry Hinton often suffer from cancelled services and delays.

Buses are essential for providing a link to work, study, and vital services such as Addenbrookes. Without these, people cannot plan their schedules and would be forced to opt for private means of transport to get from A to B. This also affects the elderly and disabled, who would be trapped within their homes, if more bus routes are cancelled. We are calling for more and better running of bus services linking areas around the city to the centre.

We also believe that Cambridge needs to have a forward-thinking outlook to public transport. While more efficient buses are the short-term solution, we propose starting discussions around options such as light rail and trams. Integrated ticketing could transform public transport use. These have been successfully running in cities like Birmingham and Manchester, and offer an opportunity to rethink how public transport is run, and used by local residents. If local people have more choice over public transport, they will also be less likely to use cars. Offering choice is a better option than the proposals of road rationing that has often been put forward by Labour and the Liberal Democrats.



TACKLE ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR



Crime and anti-social behaviour is a growing concern across Cambridge. There have been increased reports from residents of anti-social behaviour, particularly along our high streets. We know where the hotspots for crime in our community are but the City council is not doing enough to make Cambridge safer or putting enough pressure on the police to enforce the law.

For example, residents in King's Hedges have been concerned for years about frequent illegal encampments on parks. The camps prevent local residents from using the parks and taxpayers have to fund portaloos and litter cleanup. Last year's Arbury Carnival was put at risk by an illegal camp on Arbury Park. Conservative Councillor Delowar Hossain is fighting for a barrier to stop illegal encampments on Arbury Park and for purpose-built sites to be provided for the Traveller community instead.

Working with the Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner, we will call for a more regular and visible police presence in known hotspots and tougher action against petty criminals. Delowar is already fighting for proper park lighting in parks that are poorly lit and feel unsafe at night, driving anti-social behaviour. Conservative Councillors will also push for better street lighting and more CCTV to keep our communities safe.

BUILD A GREENER, MORE AFFORDABLE CITY

Cambridge is home to world-class universities and a vibrant start-up ecosystem. Life sciences, artificial intelligence, robotics, and computing all fuel business growth and technological innovation. Building on a long and proud history, Cambridge is Europe's science capital. But this has created new challenges as well as opportunities. There is an urgent need for new homes, offices, and labs to help our city keep attracting talent for work and study. Housing is becoming increasingly unaffordable to buy or rent within the city for everyone and this is driven by a lack of housing stock. Cambridge needs to expand in a sustainable way that reduces congestion, tackles inequality, and improves quality of life.

We must have the right development in the right places. This means getting additional infrastructure and making sure new buildings are beautiful and reflect the historic character of this special and unique city. We will also push for more housing for local people with the right public services. Water scarcity is also a real issue that needs to be resolved. A new urban quarter in Cambridge has the potential to be a positive development, but it will require sustained and serious dialogue. In that spirit, we will work constructively with the Cambridge Delivery Group to deliver proposals that work for the whole city.

We are also committed to achieving net zero by 2050. While that seems like an incredibly challenging goal, there are actions that can be taken at the city level. Cambridge has vast green spaces such as the Botanical Gardens, Grantchester Meadows, Paradise Nature Reserve, Jesus Green and Lammas Land. As Conservatives, we believe that vital spaces like these should be protected as they constitute a part of our natural heritage. We also believe more can be done to improve biodiversity by the City council. If elected we will oppose development that would see too much of valuable green space disappear.



SUPPORT FAMILIES AND SMALL BUSINESSES



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Conservatives have always believed in the value of hard work and aspiration, especially when helping families and small businesses to get ahead. This means local councils have a solemn duty to ease the burden on taxpayers and ensure their money is spent wisely. But we have seen the City council waste public money on pet projects instead of people's priorities.

City council services impact so many aspects of our day to day lives. The future of our green spaces, public transport, social housing, and waste collection, and how they are funded, are all shaped by local elections. On average, Labour councils charge £80 a year more in council tax for Band D homes than Conservative councils. The Labour Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough has decided to triple the mayoral precept from £12 to £36 a year.

At the same time that tax is going up, services are being reduced by Labour's and the Liberal Democrats' four-day week trial. The City council has cancelled major community events like the Bonfire Night fireworks and the Big Weekend. Local people deserve a full-time council and should not be paying more for less. As Conservatives, we believe in protecting these vital services while keeping council tax as low as possible.

STAND UP FOR LOCAL DEMOCRACY

Cambridge residents are often invited to take part in endless consultations, but response rates remain low. This has led to a skewed sample size which does not really reflect the wishes of the majority. We believe this can be improved by making residents more aware of these exercises through in-person meetings, street surgeries, and more coverage on social media. When there are changes being made to their local areas, residents deserve to have a say.

Local governance for Cambridge has become too complicated and blurs the lines of responsibility. This makes local decision makers less accountable and effective. It is not a coincidence that the unelected Greater Cambridge Partnership (GCP) was responsible for introducing the Congestion Charge proposals. It was only by electing a Conservative councillor in King's Hedges that these plans were put on hold. We will call on the Government to abolish the GCP so this can never happen again.

In planning the future of Cambridge, we will strongly encourage the Government to work constructively with local authorities and the community to find the right solutions. This must not be a top-down process. Residents must be kept informed and consulted throughout. Of the utmost importance, there needs to be a clear plan to address major challenges such as water scarcity. The 30-month long approval process for the Greater Cambridge Plan will now be delayed until late 2025. We would use this time to put pressure on the City council to ensure local people are consulted and their interests put first.



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