

# Lambeth Conservatives Manifesto May 2022

## Lambeth Conservatives Manifesto, May 2022

### Our 7 Key Pledges are as follows:

1. **Democracy** – Giving residents a **voice**
2. Improving **council efficiency** and getting value for residents
3. Making Lambeth **safer**
4. Improving **life chances** for children and adults
5. Making Lambeth **greener and cleaner**
6. Improving **transport** facilities
7. **Planning**, Development, Homes and Housing

# Lambeth Conservatives Manifesto May 2022

## 1. Democracy – Giving residents a voice

- Embody the Nolan Principles of standards in public life into the Constitution to end the ‘cover up culture’ at Lambeth Council, and avoid any repeat of allegations of racism or misogyny among Labour councillors.
- End the skewed surveys designed to support a particular outcome by having open and transparent ballots and proper consultations designed without bias or leading questions, for example in relation to proposals to:
  - ❖ demolish homes
  - ❖ close roads or bridges
  - ❖ hold huge music events in public spaces and parks
- Support the objectives of Lambeth Homeowners Association to establish for all tenants and leaseholders a democratic and open structure of resident engagement with council officers responsible for housing management.
- Set up an independent Redress Scheme, as promised to the survivors of sexual and physical abuse whilst in the care of Lambeth Council, so as to ensure that anyone who suffered abuse is compensated, including survivors from Melting Pot homes and children abused by foster carers who are currently excluded, and the families of survivors who have committed suicide. The scheme must ensure that the correct level of payment is made to all survivors regardless of their race.
- Make more effective use of Council resources and buildings for advice and guidance on issues raised by residents
- Encourage local groups to use the Localism Act 2011 to shape and determine planning priorities for the benefit of their communities.

## 2. Improving council efficiency and getting value for residents

- Link up with other boroughs to provide better services, by sharing staff and contracts, saving £10 million each year.
- Set up a centralised Contracts Team to procure and manage all contracts across the Council, ending opportunities for corruption, in place of the current Commercial and Advisory Team which helps individual line managers to procure and contract.
- Ensure that all contracts and accounts are published online to help end the 'cover up culture' at Lambeth Council that prevents councillors and officers being held responsible for spending decisions. Commercial confidentiality should only be preserved during the tendering process.
- Hold council suppliers to account when they do not deliver, with tougher performance-related sanctions and Key Performance Indicators.
- Review the pay and performance of council officers earning over £100,000 to ensure value for money.
- Stop Labour councillors paying themselves special allowances out of public money for political appointments that do not require any extra work, which last year cost residents over £65,000.
- Reduce Council Tax each year in line with the cost savings in this manifesto, which will improve social mobility and opportunities for children from lower income families. Residents in Lambeth currently pay almost twice as much Council Tax as residents in next-door Conservative Wandsworth, which has better services.
- Reduce the number of spin doctors for Labour councillors, and council officers providing political help to councillors, saving residents £2.14 million a year.

### 3. Making Lambeth safer

- Review the location of police stations and police hubs throughout the borough, and lobby the Mayor to reopen certain police hubs, so as to ensure that police are located in areas of greatest need, and lobby for further increases in police numbers where necessary.
- Encourage the recruitment of special constables to support community policing, and support both existing and new Neighbourhood Watch groups.
- Reduce crime by spending an extra £250,000 on CCTV and other crime prevention measures.
- Address the causes of youth crime and knife crime with a proper Anti-Crime Strategy focusing on saving lives and looking after young people at risk. Lambeth has the worst level of youth knife crime in the country, which is a disgrace.
- Ensure that there is better lighting and police response times in areas of higher risk across the borough to help improve safety, especially for women and girls.
- Protect the safeguarding of vulnerable children.
- Respect women's rights to single sex spaces and services, and support the right of organisations to determine how they discharge their responsibility for the safety of their users.
- Carefully distinguish when necessary between sex and gender in language, law, policy and regulation. Support the right of people to transition genders and treat them with kindness, sensitivity and respect.

## 4. Improving life chances for children and adults

- Prioritise youth facilities closed by the Mayor and Labour councillors, including youth clubs, sports clubs and other organisations, with a view to improving the life chances of younger people, especially in areas of high deprivation.
- Improve life chances for Lambeth children from lower income families in line with Wandsworth Council standards – Wandsworth now having the 4<sup>th</sup> highest levels of social mobility in the country.
- Ensure that all external suppliers of council services pay employees the London Living Wage, which Labour councillors have consistently failed to do.
- Review extending the entitlement of lower income families to Council Tax relief.
- Provide funding for out-of-school tuition using third party providers for all primary school children from lower-income families, as part of our social mobility agenda.
- Supplement the government's apprenticeship scheme for jobseekers by working with local and national employers and training providers to ensure access to quality apprenticeship programmes.
- Support schools to focus on improving academic standards and opportunities for our children, in order for children to learn to challenge the *status quo*, rather than limiting free speech and children's ability to think for themselves.
- Welcome the 2.4% increase in Conservative government funding for schools across Lambeth this year, and the 4% increase in funding for children with high needs, following an 8% increase last year.
- Provide an extra £1 million a year to expand the Lambeth Edge of Care early intervention team, so as to improve the life chances of children growing up in difficult circumstances.
- Welcome the Conservative government's *improved Better Care Fund* providing £14.9 million this year to our most vulnerable residents, and the Social Care Support Grant of £16.2 million (up from £12.3 million last year) to look after vulnerable children and adults.

# Lambeth Conservatives Manifesto May 2022

- Preserve and improve library services, which are community hubs and places where people from all backgrounds can realise their potential, in stark contrast to Labour councillors who have overseen the closing of libraries.
- Use innovative befriending schemes like 'Give and Take Care' to help end the blight of loneliness for older adults in our communities.

## 5. Making Lambeth greener and cleaner

- Ensure that Climate Action Plan policies undergo a proper cost-benefit analysis, taking in to account the long-term environmental cost of not implementing a particular policy.
- Invest in new equipment to keep streets cleaner for longer, and for streets to be cleaned more frequently.
- Work with community groups to encourage the planting and effective management of trees, shrubs and plants, and prioritise respecting and improving the diverse ecosystems of open spaces across the borough.
- Maintain and replace, whenever necessary, pavements and road surfaces to ensure that they are safe and level for both able-bodied and disabled people to use.
- Employ more environmental enforcement officers to enforce:
  - ❖ a 'one warning' system, followed by fines, for dog owners not clearing up dog mess.
  - ❖ fly-tipping penalties more effectively.
  - ❖ penalties for excessive noise and anti-social behaviour.
- End the mismanagement and over-exploitation of parks and green spaces by Labour councillors allowing huge music events, and ensure that funding for improved amenities such as playgrounds and waterplay areas in parks and green spaces continues.

## 6. Improving transport facilities

- Remove the misnamed 'Low Traffic Neighbourhood' road and bridge closures that create traffic gridlock and high pollution levels on boundary roads.
- Review all closed roads over 3 years old in a proper consultation with all local residents.
- Improve bus links across the borough, encouraging greater use of public transport for everyone including disabled people, and lobby the Mayor for more clean air electric buses.
- Support walking, cycling and cycle quiet routes.
- Remove all wooden 'parklet' seating areas that are blocking roads and replace them with disabled parking bays.
- Arrange for more cycle storage at transport hubs such as rail and underground stations in Lambeth.
- Increase electric charging points across the borough to match Wandsworth levels, and encourage car club membership and car sharing schemes.
- Lobby for South London Crosslink to extend into the borough, so that it will be easier for residents in Clapham High Street, Brixton and West Dulwich to travel across South London.
- Continue to lobby Transport for London (TfL) for direct train services from Victoria to Clapham High Street to help relieve not only congestion and traffic gridlock, but also overcrowding on the Northern Line.
- Lobby TfL to improve accessibility for disabled passengers on bus, rail and underground in Lambeth, and to provide more direct buses to hospitals and employment hubs in Central London
- Campaign against TfL's continuing attempts to cut bus routes and services in Lambeth.

## 7. Planning, Development, Homes and Housing

- Support the regeneration of Lambeth's high streets with sustainable and responsible development, working with Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) and community forums, and consider tax holidays and incentives for incoming businesses.
- Introduce a Repairs Charter for tenants and leaseholders who have Lambeth Council as their landlord, enforcing sanctions against contractors, and compensation for tenants and leaseholders when repairs are poorly done or ignored.
- Copy Wandsworth Council by preparing annual assessments and fire safety reports for each property managed by Lambeth Council, in order to carry out repairs pro-actively, rather than not responding to complaints from residents effectively, or at all.
- Ensure that each Lambeth-run property has a named housing officer as a point of contact.
- Work with residents to review as to whether or not the worst-managed Lambeth estates should be managed by housing associations in order to improve conditions.
- Set up a scheme to enable council tenants to part-buy their properties and staircase to full ownership.
- Amend and improve the Lambeth Local Plan to ensure that any new developments:
  - ❖ do not exceed the height of surrounding buildings, and do not conflict with the architectural character of the area
  - ❖ have clean, well-lit basements with adequate parking spaces for all, and electric vehicle charging points
  - ❖ have fibre-optic broadband installed into the structure.
- Copy Wandsworth Council's 'hidden homes' initiative to identify existing council-managed land and build 1,000 new council homes.
- Provide emergency, but comfortable, prefabricated 'pop up' homes for families currently housed in temporary accommodation.
- Use the large number of empty council-owned properties to end street homelessness.

# Lambeth Conservatives Manifesto May 2022

- Discontinue the failed 'Homes for Lambeth' private development company, replacing it with borrowing from the Public Loans Work Board in the usual way to fund the building of new council homes and affordable housing.
- Wherever possible, consider estate refurbishment as preferable to demolishing people's homes.
- All new build properties should be built to Passivhaus energy efficient standards.
- Crack down on illegal sub-letting and Airbnb-style short term lets in council properties by undertaking an effective audit of illegal occupiers of council properties, so as to free up availability for homeless individuals and families in Lambeth.
- Increase funding to the private sector housing team to ensure that the existing rights of tenants to live in properties that are fit for habitation are properly enforced.
- Establish a new centralised Contracts Team to help to ensure that service charge bills and bills for major works are itemised in a way that is detailed and correct, so that leaseholders can finally understand exactly what they are being charged for.

On behalf of the 63 Lambeth Conservative Party Candidates

Release date: 12<sup>th</sup> April 2022