

Worthing Liberal Democrats 2008 Council Election Plan for Worthing

Greener, Livelier, Friendlier Worthing: A Town for Life

Introduction

The 2008 Liberal Democrat manifesto for Worthing will be fully costed. Worthing residents will know we can achieve our aims without hitting their pockets.

The Conservatives have failed to deliver on promises they have made, and failed the people of Worthing by making the wrong decisions. We offer a better way, and will make the differences between us and the Conservatives clear in this manifesto.

We recognise the urgent need to make Worthing a more environmentally friendly town. Worthing needs actions, not words, and the manifesto contains pledges that we can, and will, keep, to do our part for global change.

Headline Pledges

Our six key **Pledges for Worthing** have been decided and will be revealed during next year's election campaign. We think you'll agree with us that they are exciting, decisive, and good for the town without costing the earth; all we can tell you for the moment is that the pledges cover the following themes, and **all can be begun immediately we control the council:**

1. Leisure – new and better facilities, provided without dithering or delay
2. Seafront – making the seafront safer and more welcoming for everyone
3. Transport – improving access to our town for residents and visitors, and helping the environment
4. Community – Bringing people together for the benefit of all our residents
5. Waste – reducing waste and reducing our impact on the environment; while also boosting local businesses!
6. Crime and Justice – community responsibility and reduction of crime

Democracy and Value

We will reinstate open decision making. The Tories want to do everything in secret – we want to give you every chance to see what is planned, to have your say, and to know the decisions.

We will look beyond the Tories' merger with Adur, to find the best, and best value, partnerships for every service. We believe Worthing should be run by councillors from Worthing, not from Lancing or Shoreham.

Worthing has some real strengths which could be shared with other councils. This should not be limited to sharing with just one authority.

Public Health

We will continue to support the campaign to retain and strengthen Worthing Hospital.

There is a great need in Worthing for public conveniences. The needs of the residents (particularly the elderly) have been ignored by the Conservatives. We will introduce a scheme for shops, restaurants, etc., that allow non-customers to use their conveniences. They will display a sign showing they are participating, promoting businesses, saving money for council tax payers, and increasing the number of facilities available.

Restaurants and cafés will be required to display food hygiene ratings clearly in their window; giving customers confidence, raising standards, and promoting conscientious businesses.

Environment

We will work with supermarket chains to provide bike trailer loan and to set aside some tills as 'green checkouts' where people using eco-friendly packaging get priority, and where customers can leave excess packaging and return recyclables.

We will encourage self-monitoring by residents of recycling in their areas, and we will promote and reward streets or communities that do well.

We will introduce annual Worthing Green Awards: for residents, communities, businesses, and buildings that are environmentally friendly.

We will appoint a Community Energy Efficiency Officer, and will organise an annual Ecology/Environment Fair for Worthing.

We will work to improve Worthing's status and rating as a Fair Trade Town – an award which the Conservatives have done nothing to progress in the past four years.

We will use existing external funding sources such as the Energy Saving Trust, to improve Worthing's environmental performance. The Council will set an example by becoming carbon neutral, by encouraging workers to use public transport and cycle, by reducing energy use and waste, and using biodiesel for council vehicles.

Community

We will ensure that the Local Strategic Partnership who are preparing the new sustainable community Strategy is politically-led ensuring that the residents of Worthing receive the best services in partnership with all other agencies. Worthing Liberal Democrats launched the first Community Strategy for Worthing in 2004 and continue to support the 2007 Interim sustainable Community Strategy on which Community Stakeholders are being consulted.

We will continue the longstanding Liberal Democrat support for local post offices, and campaign against planned closures.

We will work with local conservation groups to establish village greens at Goring, Beach House Green, and elsewhere, to protect our green heritage.

We will aim to provide extra police resources for dedicated Worthing Community Support Officers, based on the experiences of other councils.

Our councillors will ask residents how they want the local project money spent in their wards – not use it for party political benefit.

We will introduce a Community Champions award to recognise volunteers working in our communities.

Leisure, Culture and Sport

We will improve the running of Worthing's theatre's by a new and community-based approach.

We will refurbish and upgrade the West Worthing Leisure Centre.

We will build a new bandstand on or near the seafront, and provide other public performance areas in suitable locations, to encourage local art, music and performance.

We will find an alternative community and cultural use for the pavilion at the seaward end of the pier, not waste it on a nightclub.

Transport

We will reinstate the bus route between West Durrington (Tesco) and the hospital at no cost to the tax payer, and will investigate other possible routes on the same basis, as soon as possible.

Economic Development and Planning

We are committed to the need to adapt Worthing to the future and so support the Masterplan. We will ensure that we do not become so committed to the plan that the interests of Worthing are sold out to developers for the next generation, as the Cons are doing in Teville Gate.

We will consult with residents to identify businesses we want to bring to Worthing, and will actively market the town to these companies. Where the Cons wait passively for people to come to them, we will act.

Every new house built in Worthing should be a 'green' house. We will require West Durrington, and all future large developments, to use sustainable energy and materials. Economies of scale may mean we can work with developers to offer solar roof tiles or other energy generators to existing householders at reduced cost.

We will raise the requirement for affordable housing to 50% of new developments – providing more homes for people in our community, and discouraging developers from pillaging Worthing's land to line their own pockets. The Cons have done everything they can to encourage more residential development and more building on gardens in Worthing by setting the requirement at only 30% – we will reverse this idiotic policy.

We will push ahead with the East Worthing Access Road to reduce traffic congestion and pollution, and support local business.

We will cancel work on the Building Out to Sea project, which wastes council officers' time (and therefore YOUR money), and will only damage Worthing's community and environment.