

A REAL CHANCE FOR REAL CHANGE

A MESSAGE FROM CLLR KEN JONES

**From the Liberal Democrat Group Leader
33a Elianore Road, The Glen, Colchester**

Dear Essex Resident,

The Liberal Democrat team of county councillors, has been busy since we were elected to serve the people of Essex four years ago.

I am proud of the Liberal Democrats' record of achievement. We have:

- been at the forefront of the campaign to **boost recycling** and **avoid incineration** of waste in Essex.
- won extra money to boost **early years education** for Essex children, at the time when it matters most
- worked with the Health Service to bring **better care** to the elderly and ill in Essex.

Individually our strong team of councillors has helped hundreds of Essex residents with their problems and concerns.

The Tories currently control the county council by just one vote. Four solid years of Tory control would be a disaster for Essex.

Every extra Liberal Democrat vote and every extra Liberal Democrat seat will help protect our environment, ensure investment in education, and promote a better transport system in Essex.

Every Liberal Democrat vote will help implement the policies in this manifesto. Your vote could be crucial.

Councillor Ken Jones (Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group)

ESSEX COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 7 JUNE 2001



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

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INVESTING FOR OUR FUTURE

The Liberal Democrats have a strong record of investing in education, which is essential for the future prosperity of our county and the well-being of our children. Liberal Democrat councillors will:

- ◆ Treat **early years education** as a priority, because this is when it makes the most difference to a child's life. We will match the supply of childcare and early education more closely to demand..
- ◆ Replace the most **dilapidated temporary classrooms** in Essex. It would cost about £100m to get rid of all the temporary classrooms in Essex and this would need an increase in government funding – so we will start on the worst first.

Essex is suffering from the Labour government's failure to tackle bureaucracy and workload in schools. Essex faces a shortage of teachers, especially in south and west Essex. The Lib Dems have positive policies to attract more teachers.

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- ◆ Reduce the number of schools at risk of failing by offering '**early intervention**' to tackle specific weaknesses where the Head and Governors agree.
- ◆ Tackle **teacher shortages** in Essex by improving the support and benefits available to teachers and being innovative in recruitment.

CARING FOR ALL ESSEX'S PEOPLE

The County Council provides essential services for some of the most vulnerable in our community, such as children who need protection from abuse, older people who cannot care for themselves without help, and people who need help because of mental illness or learning disability. Liberal Democrats will:

- ◆ Work with district councils and the voluntary sector to introduce a **seven day a week Meals on Wheels** service, in line with the recommendation made by the Liberal Democrat chaired Health and Social Services Select Committee.
- ◆ Improve links between Education and Social Services when dealing with children at risk of offending or in care. This will help reduce crime and youth nuisance.
- ◆ Continue to work closely with the NHS to reduce the number of people ready to leave hospital but delayed because their care has not been organised. Joint Boards with the North Essex and South Essex Health Authority were set up when the Liberal Democrats chaired the Social Services Committee.
- ◆ Focus our services to older people on supporting people to live at home when they want to, and ensuring that an adequate supply of residential beds are available in each local area for those who need the care of an Older Person's Home.

Essex has suffered from the fact that the Tories have set all the budgets since the last election.

This election gives us a chance to elect more **Liberal Democrat councillors** who will work hard, put local people first and take action to improve local services.

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The Liberal Democrats are contesting all 79 seats on Essex County Council. Our candidates come from every walk of life. Each candidate, if elected, will bring experience and enthusiasm to the job.

Most of all, each candidate is determined to speak up for his or her area and work to improve local services.

PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

The Lib Dems are the greenest of all the main political parties and have a long record of campaigning for a more sustainable future. Liberal Democrat county councillors will:

- ◆ Refuse to sign any waste management strategy that is based on incineration rather than **recycling**.
- ◆ Consider whether indications that the Government might change its pro-incinerator policies justify major revision of the Waste Plan.
- ◆ Work with district and borough councils to increase **composting** and **kerbside recycling**, in order to achieve the 60% by 2007 target agreed when the Lib Dems chaired the Waste Committee.

Lib Dem councillors have been at the forefront of working for recycling and against incineration in Essex.

Liberal Democrat influenced councils such as Colchester and Epping Forest top the county's recycling tables.

The trials in Witham and Colchester are reaching recycling rates of 50% and above.

- ◆ Implement **Quiet Lanes** in appropriate rural locations and **Homezones** or **20mph limits** in urban areas where pedestrians and cyclists are at high risk, to reduce death and injury on our roads.
- ◆ Invest in flexible **Community Transport** schemes where commercial bus routes are uneconomic.
- ◆ Implement an emergency plan of action to deal with the **worst potholes** in Essex, caused by the recent wet weather and years of underinvestment by the Government.
- ◆ Seek to safeguard potential **new rail routes**, such as Braintree to Stansted and Epping to Ongar and ensure that new developments are accessible by public transport, walking and cycling.
- ◆ Campaign to persuade the Government not to force **inappropriate development** on Essex, and to give local communities more control over the kind of housing provided, so local people doing essential jobs are not priced out of the county.
- ◆ Protect our landscape, countryside, and historic buildings, villages and towns.

A green thread binds together all our thinking. Without steps to preserve our planet for future generations, none of our other policies would have much purpose.

Internationally and locally the Liberal Democrats are working for a cleaner and safer environment.

MAKE THE DIFFERENCE

LIFE & LEARNING IN ESSEX

The Liberal Democrats want to make Essex an even better place in which to live and work. Liberal Democrat county councillors will:

- ◆ Expand **Sunday opening**, started when the Liberal Democrats chaired the Libraries committee, to more libraries.
- ◆ Expand **free Internet access** in all Libraries and new Community Information Points and invest in **Learning Centres** in libraries.
- ◆ Seek to ensure that workforce skills match the needs of a successful local economy.

The Liberal Democrats believe in lifelong learning and training to support you at work and leisure.

Learning isn't restricted to what happens in school, but is a vital part of life at all ages.

It also benefits the economy and prosperity of our area.

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YOUR COUNCIL

The County Council belongs to the people of Essex. But too often local people get the impression that the county council is doing things **to** them, rather than **with** them or **for** them. The Liberal Democrats will bring the county council closer to local people, taking more account of what local people say and want.

- ◆ We will introduce local decision-making meetings, where local people or their representatives can put their views across and make themselves heard on the issues that matter to them.
- ◆ Unlike the other parties we recognise that Basildon has different needs to Braintree and that Castle Hedingham is different to Castle Point. Our local arrangements will therefore be flexible, depending on the wishes and priorities of local people.
- ◆ We will give parish councils the right to comment at meetings of the Development Control Committee.
- ◆ We will improve access to information about how the county council affects you by publishing better contact and other details for all departments on the Internet and in other publications.

Four more years of Tory control at Essex County Council would be a disaster.

The Tories have broken their pledge to keep taxes low. They have cut millions from services.

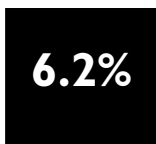
Labour has let Essex down. We have teacher shortages and fewer police.

The Liberal Democrats are putting forward positive policies for the people of Essex.

Tory tax rises

Despite claiming to be in favour of low taxes the Tories hiked the county tax by 44% since 1997.

See the difference!



Average Lib Dem tax rise 1994-1997

11%

Average Tory tax rise 1998-2001

LOOKING AFTER YOUR MONEY

Liberal Democrat councillors never forget that they are spending your money, and that every penny spent must be for a good reason.

Essex suffered for years under a Conservative Government who dramatically underfunded the council. Our schools and other key services suffered under year after year of cuts.

But Labour has been little better. The Labour Government has given Essex less money than it needs to meet the increasing demand for local services. The situation has been made worse by the reckless and irresponsible way that Conservative County Councillors have set the county council's budget.

The Conservatives have set every budget since 1998, increasing council tax at an average rate of 11 per cent yet still making millions of pounds worth of cuts.

Liberal Democrat county councillors will:

- ◆ **Consult** local people on the level of services they receive and the amount they are prepared to pay.
- ◆ Tell you **clearly** how your money is spent.
- ◆ Set **clear priorities**, so that money isn't wasted on unnecessary projects.
- ◆ Regularly review the **quality and efficiency** of our services.
- ◆ Work closely with **other organisations**, public and private, to improve value for money for local residents.

For more information about the Liberal Democrats in Essex or details of your local candidate, please ring 01245 430329 or email essexcld@cix.co.uk.

You can also get more information about Liberal Democrat policies and campaigns at www.libdems.org.uk