

LOCAL ELECTION 2011 MANIFESTO



**STAFFORDSHIRE
MOORLANDS
LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**

Liberal Democrat Priorities

COMMUNITY SAFETY

- a. Reduce crime and the fear of crime so that the Moorlands is a safer place to live in, work and visit.
- b. Deliver a more joined up approach to Community Safety by effective partnership working, and supporting volunteers where appropriate.
- c. Work with partners to improve leisure and sporting opportunities for young people.
- d. Maintain a fully digital state of the art CCTV monitoring system and review it for effectiveness
- e. Ensure that the Council's Enforcement Officers are given powers to tackle environmental crime
- f. Support the Refuge for the sufferers from Domestic Abuse, as well as initiatives which aim to remove the perpetrators of abuse from the family home.
- g. Encourage Community Speedwatch schemes across the district.
- h. Support the 'Fire Operations Group' which plans to prevent and fight moorland wildfires.

DEMOCRACY

- a. Reduce the number of District Councillors to save costs and improve accountability.
- b. Lead the way on Localism and follow best-practice to deliver, with partners, cost-effective services. Ensure that where possible decisions about your area are made in your area.
- c. Open up Cabinet, Full Council and other meetings to Public Question Time with written questions submitted in advance.
- d. Promote new technologies and social networks for accessing council services.
- e. Oppose any take-over by neighbouring local authorities, but co-operate with other authorities where it is in the District's interests.

ENVIRONMENT

- a. Maintain our position as the country's top recycler and explore opportunities for further improvement.
- b. Develop a climate change strategy for the District to include a programme of projects that move communities and all Staffs Moorlands District Council property towards carbon-neutral status.
- c. Explore opportunities to generate green energy; Identify via the Local Development Framework zones for wind generation of power. Remove planning application fees for domestic green-energy generation schemes.
- d. Source and facilitate grants for insulation schemes to promote higher standards of insulation for all homes; require a very high environmental specification for all new homes, including Affordable Housing schemes.
- e. Work towards requiring developers to produce 25% of all energy required for the development in a sustainable manner.
- f. Recognise good practice in the implementation of Green Travel plans for schools, colleges, businesses and other employers in the District.
- g. Encourage more families to take up the "Real Nappy" scheme to remove disposable nappies from the residual waste stream, and explore the development of nappy laundering schemes to assist parents.
- h. Restore civic pride through partnership work with Town and Parish Councils, businesses, retailers and voluntary groups, aimed at reducing litter, weeds, untidy public spaces and other eyesores.

HEALTHY LIVING

- a. Explore and deliver innovative ways of encouraging greater use of Leisure Centres during the day time.
- b. Provide opportunities for family membership of Council leisure facilities.
- c. Encourage the re-instatement of "Leisure Prescriptions" from GPs - [free use of Leisure Centres for 12 weeks].

- d. Develop a Community Toilet Scheme which enables local businesses like pubs, restaurants and shops, to work together with the Council to make more clean, safe and accessible toilets available to the public throughout the District
- e. Develop a 'well-being' strategy, in partnership with other agencies focusing on young parents and carers, especially those still at school.
- f. Tackle alcohol and substance misuse across the District.
- g. Encourage family focused leisure activities, festivals and entertainments.
- h. Develop the Play Strategy beyond 2012 including linear routes like the Biddulph Valley Way, Trim Trails etc.

HOUSING

- a. Actively encourage developers to install domestic sprinklers in all new housing.
- b. Deliver substantially more affordable homes by innovative schemes and via planning gain, by requiring a contribution to the provision of affordable homes on all developments, not just on larger sites.
- c. Roll out the Affordable Housing programme to villages and rural areas, so that younger people and families are encouraged to remain living locally. Our employment, transport and leisure policies will support this.
- d. Deliver Extracare Housing Schemes for vulnerable people together with partners.
- e. Work with partners on bringing empty properties back into use.

REGENERATION

- a. Protect our town-centres from damaging developments: Use the Sustainable Communities Act and Localism legislation to support small independent retailers in competing against the Internet and large supermarkets; resist the proliferation of charity shops in town centres.
- a. Keep a high profile for our Tourist Centres: Tourism is vital and has great potential. We will promote the vision of the Moorlands as a gateway to the National Park, with Biddulph's Bateman heritage, Cheadle's 'Pugin-land' and Leek's antique heritage theme etc.
- b. Work with partners to bring new/relocating businesses to the Moorlands and encourage local recruitment.
- c. Encourage more business start-up units with serviced accommodation and seek the conversion of redundant mills for mixed use. Promote enterprise using traditional and locally available skills, supporting Live/Work units.
- d. Work with partners including British Waterways to create the Caldon Canal basin in Ladderedge and enhance the canal corridors, maintaining towpaths throughout the Moorlands.
- e. Together with partners, work to ensure that a Community Arts Centre is functioning in Leek as soon as possible.
- f. Continue work on the Cheadle, Leek and Churnet Valley Masterplans to guide all development within these areas.

TRANSPORT

- a. Delegate the decision on Car Parking charges to Town & Parish Councils so long as all costs of providing the service are recovered either through Town or Parish precepts, charges or 3rd Party subsidy, such as businesses etc.
- b. Resist any proposals for on-street car parking charges.
- c. Facilitate the extension of the Churnet Valley Rail line into Leek and ultimately Stoke-on-Trent and Alton Towers; support the proposal to move minerals from Caldon quarries and cement works by rail.
- d. Develop Transport strategies with partners, to provide help for the elderly and other disadvantaged groups who are trapped at home without a car.
- e. Encourage bus operators to co-operate on providing travel cards and tickets which can be used on a variety of services.
- f. Support innovative dedicated cycle schemes across the District.