

District, Town and Parish Council Elections 2019

Labour's vision for a better future for Mid Sussex





Mid Sussex Labour
Burgess Hill - Haywards Heath - East Grinstead

Foreword

As a local party with over 750 members across Mid Sussex we are growing in influence year on year. In the 2017 general election we almost doubled Labour's previous best vote in the constituency. Our media coverage increases all the time and Labour is now the only credible opposition to the Conservatives in Mid Sussex.

Councils make choices as to how they spend your money. Good Councils of any party need an effective opposition to discuss and, where necessary, challenge decisions and spending priorities.

We have listened to and talked with local people. We have campaigned through our street stalls and our presence at town and village events. We have leafleted and campaigned at our train stations against the Draconian fare increases.

We campaigned for a Remain vote in the Brexit referendum and played a full part in the success of obtaining a majority for Remain in Mid Sussex.

Our communities are under constant pressure from speculative developers. We have positively contributed to the planning processes supporting some applications and objecting to many. We have been involved in the drawing up of Neighbourhood Plans which should, in theory, provide some protection in future. We will fight to ensure Mid Sussex continues to be a good and affordable place for us and our children to live and work.

We are confident that you will find this manifesto one that you can support and that will appeal to Mid Sussex people. We look forward to a strong campaign that brings local election success in May 2019.

Mid Sussex Constituency Labour Party Executive Committee



District Council Responsibilities

The District Council must ensure fairness in the allocation of financial and staffing resources between town and parish councils.

Our Labour councillors will fight to:

- ensure county, district, the three town councils and parish councils work together.
- work with councils to ensure contacts and lines of communication are good, transparent and easily accessible.
- ensure a fair spread of resources across the District and influence spending decisions to support our communities.

Planning & Building

Local democracy – more power should be given to local councils. As many decisions as possible should be made at local level involving the community.

Our local Labour councillors will fight to:

- bring back local planning committees.
- have an enforceable minimum quota of 40% affordable housing for **all** developments.
- demand that Section 106 development money for roads, schools, medical facilities, community buildings, parks, sports facilities and open spaces is required from all housing developers, with open and transparent accounting for the contributions.
- have infrastructure in place at the same time as development rather than has been happening, where thousands of houses are built with little apparent benefit to local communities.
- ensure that development fully complies with the District and Neighbourhood Plans.
- have high building standards and include renewable energy, electric car points, bin storage and adequate car parking facilities.

Waste & Recycling

We will continue to develop and enhance waste & recycling facilities throughout the district.

Our Labour councillors will fight for:

- reinstatement of extensive opening hours at local recycling facilities.
- cheaper green bin collections to encourage their use and discourage fly tipping.
- stronger action on fly tipping: publicising and naming convicted fly tippers, regular clearance of hot spots along with the use of cameras as deterrents, and prosecution of offenders.

Leisure & Sport

Our local leisure and sports facilities are a valuable resource for local people.

Our Labour councillors will:



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- support local sports facilities and keep costs affordable for all
- properly maintain changing rooms and other facilities.
- explore the possibility of leisure centres being taken back into local government control, reinvesting profits back into other facilities.
- properly manage and protect our green spaces and parks, ensuring access for all, including through better transport links.
- fully support: the Chequer Mead Centre in East Grinstead, Clair Hall in Haywards Heath and the provision of a new arts and entertainment centre in Burgess Hill.

Parking & Travel

A fundamental review of road infrastructure is urgently needed that takes into account population growth across Mid Sussex and planned re-developments. Congestion is already increasing in Haywards Heath, Burgess Hill and East Grinstead as well as our villages.

Our Labour councillors will fight to:

- bring in lower car parking charges to encourage residents to support local businesses rather than travelling outside our district and will consider free two-hour parking as in many other towns.
- encourage workers from industrial estates to patronise town centre businesses by providing free shuttle bus services at lunch times.
- urgently set up a working party that involves all the district, town and parish councils in order to recommend improvements to traffic management.
- restore bus services and seek to improve them so that everyone can get to work and have access to education and leisure facilities.

We need to build a good public transport network and encourage cycle schemes and car sharing.

Environment

We believe that this is a major issue and we will take much needed action.

Our Labour councillors will fight to:

- provide cycle links, investigate new cycleways and walking trails.
- advertise existing footpaths and reinstate maintenance of existing footpaths and bridleways, for example, the bridge by St Andrew's Church in Burgess Hill.
- protect and improve new and existing green spaces for the benefit of both our health and wellbeing.
- support the completion of the *Green Circle* in Burgess Hill, which should contain fitness trails, with equipment and signed distance trails, for example 2km, 3km etc.

We will seek community engagement and support for these actions and use funding generated from new developments and other sources. People of all ages and situations benefit from green space, which must work for the whole community.



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Industry

We need to develop a wide range of industry to provide good quality, well-paid work for people within the district. Working locally is not only a real benefit to people, providing more leisure time, but also serves our environment with less necessity to drive or to commute by train. Families also feel part of the community and are more likely to use local shops and leisure facilities.

We would insist on there being a better balance between the needs of big business and the interests of the community.

Care

We will oppose all cuts to care services for people who are vulnerable. We will fight to:

- ensure everyone has good access to their local GP.
- improve transport access routes to both GP and hospital services.

Town & Parish Council responsibilities

Councils should ensure that contacts and lines of communication are good, transparent and easily accessible. The public should be able to easily find and communicate with the town and parish council officer accountable for each area.

Another key responsibility is working with local communities, schools etc.

Our Labour councillors will:

- run regular surgeries.
- promote cooperation between town, district and county councils.
- set up local *Environmental Forums* to involve local communities in environmental decision-making.
- advocate the return of *Youth Councils*.
- explore the provision of extra services to enhance the environment and a feel good factor in our towns and villages. We will fully discuss financial implications with local people and explore the possibility of sponsorship for hanging flower baskets, flower beds etc.
- ensure bus shelters, seats and other street furniture are regularly inspected and properly maintained.
- fully support, including financially, local initiatives on a wide range of activities such as bonfire society festivals, farmers' markets, play facilities, craft fairs – all things that encourage people into our towns and villages.

Thank you for taking the time to read this manifesto, which sets out Labour's vision for a better future in Mid Sussex. We believe the decisions that are being made by councillors across Mid Sussex will significantly improve with Labour councillors' voices. Vote Labour on 2nd May in the local elections!