

**Build more
social
housing**

**Sort out
Council
finances**

**Protect
leisure
services**

**Help with
the cost-of-
living crisis**

**Protect the
environment**

**Help Parish
Councils**

**Time for change at Mid Devon
District Council**

• Clarity • Competence • Compassion • Confidence •



Councillor Luke Taylor
Liberal Democrat Group Leader



Time for Change

- “ For the last two years Mid Devon District Council has been badly run by a Conservative administration.
- “ The turmoil now crippling the Council has been caused by unwise loans to property developer 3 Rivers Developments Limited.
- “ The Council has lost sight of its role to meet the needs of local people and to manage carefully the Council Tax they pay.
- “ On the **4th May**, if you elect the Liberal Democrats to run the Council I promise we will refocus the Council on its proper role with an **ambitious plan** to put services for our local communities at the heart of its work.
- “ It is time to change things.
- “ We have 6 priorities that will bring **clarity** back to the Council’s work. We will ensure **competence** is brought to running things. At the same time we will exercise the **compassion** that many struggling through the cost-of-living crisis need.
- “ Above all we will give local people the **confidence** that their Council Tax payments are spent carefully, wisely and in their interest.”

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Luke Taylor'.

Councillor Luke Taylor
Bradninch Ward
Liberal Democrat Group Leader



Our Priorities

- ① Build more social housing
- ② Sort out the Council's finances
- ③ Protect Council run leisure services
- ④ Help people and businesses through the cost-of-living crisis
- ⑤ Put protecting our environment at the heart of Council planning
- ⑥ Help Parish Councils be the heart of their community.



Teignbridge Council a social housing success story

Liberal Democrat run Teignbridge Council is a shining example of what can be achieved. When they took office Teignbridge was not building any social housing. Now the Council has embarked on an ambitious programme of building high quality, well insulated homes for reasonable rent.



A



B



C

A Liberal Democrat Councillor **Simon Clist** (Upper Culm) is a long term advocate for social housing. Simon introduced proposals for more social housing as long ago as the 1980s.

B Liberal Democrat **Andrea Glover** (Lower Culm) discusses the problems of poor construction and damp in rental property with local Liberal Democrat MP **Richard Foord**.

C Liberal Democrat Councillor **James Buczkowski** (Cullompton Vale) discusses the Cullompton relief road with Liberal Democrat leader **Ed Davey** and Liberal Democrat MP **Richard Foord**.

1 Build More Social Housing

'A new start'

- There is an enormous demand in mid-Devon for affordable housing. We believe that part of that demand can be met by social housing. But the perilous state of the Council's finances means that realistic promises must be made.
- We will start a programme of building that can be delivered within the Council's resources. These new homes will be designated for local people so they can stay in the areas in which they were born and can help those areas thrive.

'Communities not estates'

- They will be **small scale developments** to meet the need for homes not the huge estates preferred by speculative property developers.

'Homes not houses'

- We will build **homes not houses**. That means:
 - Space to live comfortably
 - Gardens for children to play in
 - High standards of insulation to minimise energy costs and reduce environmental damage
 - Outstanding construction standards so properties are fit to live in and easy to maintain
 - Spaces to park
 - Sensible options for recycling and waste storage.

'Developers doing their bit for the community'

- For too long some property developers have sought to maximise profit and have done too little to build communities. We will ensure the Council Planning Department are **more rigorous in holding them to account**.
- We will also push for developers to ensure **40%** of the homes they build are **'affordable homes'** for local people.





ncil Tax Bill 2

how the Cou

& Crime Commission

2 Sort out the Council's finances

'Sound finances not speculation for profit'

- Starved of money by their own Government, Conservative Councillors took the decision to turn to property development as a way of 'plugging holes' in the Council budget.
- This has resulted in the Council now being exposed to £millions in loans to 3 Rivers Developments Limited.
- There is a very real risk of suffering a catastrophic loss which would be disastrous for the local tax payer.
- We would take immediate steps to stop the Council throwing 'good money after bad'.
- We would revise the plan for 3 Rivers to ensure it **meets the needs of local people struggling to get on the property ladder.**
- We would also institute a thorough review of how the Council spends Council Tax payers' money. The Council needs to get better value for what it spends.
- We would review how the Council contracts services to ensure where a company can offer multiple services more cost effectively (for example grass cutting and hedge cutting) these are not contracted separately in the same location.





Leisure centres are community centres as well as sports facilities. During the pandemic they played a key role as vaccination centres. Liberal Democrat Councillor Frank Letch was one of thousands that volunteered.

3 Protect Council run leisure services

'Secure our sports-centres'

- There is huge pressure on the Council budget caused by the reckless policies of previous Conservative administrations.
- We are prioritising returning the Council to sound finances. We recognise that this will involve some painful decisions on spending.
- **But we promise that we will do our best to protect Council spending on the three Mid Devon District Council leisure centres in Tiverton, Crediton and Cullompton.**
- We believe the leisure centres provide an essential community service.
 - They are centres where our children can learn to swim and take up new sports
 - They improve fitness and well being for busy mums and dads
 - They provide wellbeing and social contact for grandparents
 - They create a healthier community.

'Improving performance'

- In giving this commitment we recognise it cannot be a 'blank cheque'.
- The leisure centres make high demands on energy and we must continue to improve their energy efficiency.
- They must also meet the needs of the whole community and we will ensure there is an even greater effort to reach local people, and to involve local sports, recreational clubs and societies.





4 Help people and businesses through the cost-of-living crisis

- Thousands of mid-Devon residents are struggling through the cost-of-living crisis caused by the Conservative government.
- Businesses are struggling too.
- Mid Devon Council is largely there to provide services (rather than welfare) but there are some things we would do if we ran the Council.
 - Set up an 'Exceptional Hardship Fund' for those struggling to pay their Council Tax
 - Ensure any future Council Tax increases are as low as possible
 - Where we can we would freeze charges for Council services - such as for parking or leisure centre services
 - Cap the cost of garden waste removal at the current level
 - Introduce innovative service ideas, such as allowing free parking for 30 minutes in Council car parks, and off-peak special rates for Council swimming pools and sports facilities.
- We would require the Council to buy goods and services locally, when possible, and pay promptly in order to help local businesses.
- We would encourage businesses with which the Council trades to pay a 'living wage' (rather than minimum wage) and to institute apprenticeship schemes.



Liberal Democrats led the fight against increased Council parking charges - Councillors Sandy Chenore, Frank Letch and John Downes deliver petition leaflets to Crediton businesses.





Liberal Democrat Councillor Josh Wright introduced the Council's 'net zero by 2030' policy.



5 Put protecting our environment at the heart of Council planning

'Leading the way'

- Liberal Democrats introduced the policy for the Council to ensure all its services are 'net zero' (not adding to greenhouse gas emissions) by 2030. We will continue working for this.
- We will also:
 - Encourage all companies that deal with the Council to have their own clear policies for achieving 'net zero'
 - Require the Council Planning Department to ensure that all development proposals set out how they meet net zero standards
 - Institute a review of Council owned land, property and buildings to see where solar panels and other energy generating devices can be installed in a cost effective and appropriate manner
 - Champion the **installation of more electric vehicle charging points** especially in more isolated rural locations
 - Review the possibility of allowing **fully electric vehicles to park for free** in Council controlled parking.

'A commitment to green AND clean'

- Our commitment to the environment extends beyond ensuring energy generation and consumption is 'green'. It extends to ensuring our environment is also clean.
- Devon suffers from amongst the worst sewage dumping in England and we will ensure the Council maximises pressure on **South West Water to clean up its act.**
- There is also a need to take action on air pollution in some of our busier towns.





Liberal Democrat Councillor Luke Taylor introduced the kerb-side recycling of small electrical goods.

'Extending recycling'

- Liberal Democrats have lead the way on recycling with Councillor Luke Taylor introducing the kerb-side recycling of small electrical goods.
- We will review the costs and potential for moving to weekly recycling collections.
- We are committed to extending recycling with:
 - Collection of a wider range of plastic materials
 - Battery recycling with a '*bag-a-battery*' scheme
 - The kerbside collection of metal items such as pots, pans and baking trays
 - The collection of 'coffee pods' used in coffee makers.

'10 for 1'

- The scandalous felling of a 100 mature trees by Conservative controlled Plymouth City Council is still fresh in people's minds. We would ensure no trees on Council properties are felled, except in exceptional circumstances and after very careful review, including consulting with the public.
- We would also ensure that the Planning and Environment Departments are more rigorous in questioning the need for any felling during property development. We would place an obligation on anyone felling a tree to replace it with 10 other saplings.

'End tipping'

- We would take measures to reduce the anti social behaviour that is fly tipping and increase fines for those caught abusing our beautiful natural environment.



Liberal Democrat Councillor Guy Cochran planting a tree in Crediton





6 Help Parish Councils be the heart of their communities

- Mid Devon has hundreds of small villages and hamlets, and the local Parish Council is often at the heart of these communities. We believe the Council should be doing more to help Parish Councillors and volunteers.
- All too often Parish Councils find themselves 'reinventing the wheel' when problems have been solved and solutions found elsewhere. We will ensure that the Council provides a systematic way for Parish Councils to access helpful information, such as 'emergency plans' and planning guidance.
- With many isolated and rural communities, and the crisis in the NHS and ambulance services, it is more important than ever that local communities can provide sometimes life saving interventions. We would set up a Council backed programme to help Parish Councils provide CPR and first aid training to local volunteers, and to access defibrillators.
- Many Parish Councils take responsibility for their village halls, local sports facilities and children's play areas. We would look to see if there are economies of scale, that will save Parishes money, if the maintenance services for these can be purchased centrally.
- By their nature our villages are rural and often quiet. Many want to introduce '20 is Plenty' speed zones to protect children, pets and tranquillity. But support is not universal and some drivers find the zones frustrating. We would lead a Council review to set out 'best practice' policy to meet the greatest need.
- Liberal Democrats have always believed local representation and volunteering is best for our communities and we would put Parish Councils at the heart of local action.



Liberal Democrat **Matt Fletcher** is championing traffic calming measures and '20 is Plenty' in Cullompton Vale.



Liberal Democrat **Sean Ritchie** championed, project managed and delivered the development of the new play area in Hemyock.





**Liberal
Democrats**
Mid Devon

Are our values your values?

If they are why not join the Liberal Democrats, or become a supporter?

You can join here...

<https://tinyurl.com/2p9knsbh>

Or scan this QRCode...



You can also contact us on

questions@libdems.online

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