

**Bracknell Forest  
Borough  
and  
Town Council**

**Manifestos 2023**

***Bracknell's Better  
with Labour***

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*The following pages describe Labour's manifesto commitments for Bracknell as we approach the May 2023 elections.*

*Our ability to execute this manifesto will depend on the degree of control that Labour gains in the Borough, Town and Parish Council elections.*

*If you share our vision and objectives for Bracknell then make sure you cast your vote for Labour on May 4<sup>th</sup>.*

# Labour's Pledge to Bracknell

Bracknell belongs to its citizens. With its thriving commercial sector and excellent provision for the arts, Bracknell is a great place to live and work. The new Lexicon shopping centre, the wonderful parks and green spaces and the outstanding centre for the arts and entertainment at South Hill Park, all help to make Bracknell stand out as a highly attractive town.

We have excellent schools, a range of first-class sports facilities and a reasonable transport infrastructure, although we recognise more needs to be done to improve local bus provision.

Labour's manifesto is intended to build on what we already have, while simultaneously tackling the difficult challenges now facing us all. A shift to the green economy will require investment and a more intensive focus on public infrastructure, from buses and trains, to charging points and parking.

With the rising costs of everything, from energy, food and housing, the council will need to provide support to the most vulnerable, thus enabling every citizen to participate fully in the life and development of our town.

Our plans and ambitions for Bracknell are contained in the following pages but those plans must always reflect what you, the people of Bracknell Forest, want and need. We therefore commit to holding regular open days and surgeries so that all local residents have an opportunity to influence council policies and decisions.

## The Nolan Principles of Public Life

Labour is also strongly committed to the Nolan principles of:

- Selflessness,
- Integrity,
- Objectivity,
- Accountability,
- Openness,
- Honesty,
- Leadership.

These principles at the heart of our actions and form the bedrock on which we will strive to build trust between everyone involved in making Bracknell an excellent place to live.

## Our Mission

Labour believes that local democracy is key, and we will work to ensure that your voice is heard by Central Government.

Labour believes:

- that there should be an increase in well trained local police on our streets.
- every child should have the opportunity to reach their full potential.
- every adult deserves appropriate, quality care when the time comes.
- it is essential to speak out against austerity, foodbanks, and hardship.
- it is essential to demand urgency on climate change proposals.

**Residents are at the heart of every decision we make.**

# Bracknell Forest Borough Manifesto

## Children's Services

It is vital that families are fully supported during the early years of parenthood if their children are to reach their full potential. Too often parents can feel isolated and blamed when they have a child that requires additional support: whether because of illness, disability or economic deprivation.

Labour will focus on fully supporting Family Centres to ensure their effective use while improving the integration of services and early diagnosis for all disabilities. Key to this is increasing the number and improving the training of the support staff within the council.

SEND (Special Educational Needs) provision is vital in helping those in greatest need and Labour will increase the assessment capacity within the Borough Council. Currently, children in need are waiting months to receive an initial assessment, and longer before the necessary help is put in place.

## Youth Services

Labour will listen to the youth community and will support activities for youth in all areas throughout Bracknell Forest.

Labour will employ Outreach Youth Workers, encourage Active Youth Involvement, and support Youth Leaders and clubs in the fields of Sports, Music, Art, and Drama. Young People up to the age of 18 will be able to access these.

## Adult Services and Caring

The recent pandemic highlighted the destructive disconnect between health and social care. Beds are blocked in hospitals as care provision is not available. Meanwhile promised care funding has been redirected to the NHS to assist its recovery. Further depriving the care sector of much needed additional capacity,

Labour understands that Adult Services and Health are inextricably linked and provision must be coordinated and funded if care is to be effective and timely: truly meeting the needs of residents.

In order to achieve this Labour will ensure that Contracts for Caring mean that Carers are paid at least the minimum wage, sick pay, holiday pay, and paid for travel time, and we will support Caring as a Career and will promote the Health and Social Care qualification for young people.

We will also continue to be proactive in identifying Young Carers, and ensuring they get all the support they need both at home and at school.

We will work with the local NHS Trusts and the care providers to improve the overall delivery of care to Bracknell's residents.

## Education

We recognise the challenges faced by nurseries and schools, including tight budgets and the lack of services to support mental health and special educational needs.

We will increase the places available in Bracknell Forest for our children with special educational needs. We are committed to ensuring all our children and young people have the support they need and the best possible start in life.

## **Housing**

There is an urgent need to provide high quality affordable housing for everyone in the community. Whether they are home owners, living in rented private or social accommodation.

or and will encourage 'tenants' associations' for those in both housing association and private rented accommodation, enabling them to have a voice to address common concerns.

Labour will work with partners to build Social Housing, whenever possible (60% of private rent), and will strictly enforce the agreed 25% (soon to be 35%) of new developments to be Affordable Housing (80% of private rent). Labour will promote a Landlord Accreditation Scheme for those private landlords that meet and maintain the required standards for their rented properties.

Labour will also review the provision of affordable housing for key workers.

## **The Environment**

Labour accepts that this is a Climate Change Emergency and believes that reducing the Carbon footprint to net zero by at least 2050 is essential. In order to achieve this Labour will work with the whole community to promote good practice and will ensure that reductions achieved each year are carefully monitored and reported.

A Labour Council will show leadership to support residents and businesses to achieve the necessary changes, including working with partners to provide on street charging for electric vehicles, not just in car parks, and we will also review the charges for domestic building waste and large domestic items to avoid the cost of clearing fly-tipped items.

## **Public Transport**

All public transport is of great benefit to the community and to the environment. It needs to be frequent and dependable.

Labour will set up a Transport Review to explore all options, including expansion of publicly owned bus companies, to ensure better access to services for all communities, including those in rural areas.

We will open discussions with neighbouring councils to seek economies of scale and better integration,

## **Parking**

We recognise parking is a Major Issue in Bracknell.

Labour will work with partners to provide additional parking spaces wherever possible, and ensure parking bays are clearly marked out to enable maximum use of available space. Labour will also encourage cycling to work and car sharing schemes to reduce the need for individual car ownership.

## **Policing**

A Labour Council will strongly support visible Community Policing and explore the re-opening of local police stations.

Labour will work with the police to improve involvement in the communities and to ensure better communication.

## **Sports, Leisure, and the Arts**

Sports, Leisure, and Arts facilities are essential for the wellbeing of all, and we will ensure that there is no reduction in the services available to Bracknell Forest residents, including South Hill Park and our green spaces.

Labour will support our local Community Centres and Libraries – the hub of each community – including support for volunteers and staff. We will encourage the learning of life skills, including the use of computers and we will ensure there is a voice for users of all facilities.

## **Local Businesses**

A Successful Community needs a vibrant business sector and a Labour Council will always use responsible local businesses and contractors, wherever possible.

Labour would engage with local businesses, including shopping centres, and the business networks such as The Federation of Small Businesses, the OMNI Business Network, the Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce and the local Institute of Directors etc. This would allow us facilitate their business requirements including:

- Coordinating jobs and skills with local schools and Further education establishments;
- Adjusting local taxes wherever possible to promote new business and level the playing field between virtual and “bricks & mortar” businesses;
- Facilitating inward investment;
- Involving businesses in planning discussions concerning infrastructure (transport, roads, parking etc.);
- Encourage local businesses to provide schools with work experience opportunities and offer apprenticeships for young people and,
- Promoting the inclusion of disadvantaged groups into the workplace

# Bracknell Town Council Manifesto

Bracknell Town Council is responsible for the maintenance of the majority of the recreation areas and play facilities on the Bracknell wards within Bracknell Forest.

It also provides allotments and community grants.

Labour will ensure:

- That our recreation facilities, including 42 play areas, continue to be maintained to the highest standards.
- That the Council continues to employ its own maintenance staff: ensuring that real care is taken of our green spaces.
- That the Greening Agenda is accelerated, ensuring all pavilions have solar panels and machinery is electrically powered.
- Biodiversity is increased on every site.
- More challenging play equipment is included on all sites to cater for older children.
- 'trim trails' are introduced.
- Higher seats are provided to cater for our older residents in all parks and recreation grounds.
- TV licensing grants are reviewed and updated.
- South Hill Park, the jewel in Bracknell's recreational and cultural crown, will continue to be supported.

# Vote **Labour**: Vote for Better

If you are considering who to vote for in the coming elections, you might like to remember some of the more fundamental aspects of British life that Labour has introduced over the last 80 years.

**Some of Labour's contributions to the country over the last few decades.**

- 1924 Council Houses**
- 1942 The Welfare State**
- 1948 The NHS**
- 1948 Social Security**
- 1965 Outlawing Racial Discrimination**
- 1967 Decriminalising Homosexuality**
- 1970 Introducing Equal Pay**
- 1976 Modern Higher Education**
- 1969 The Open University**
- 1997 Devolution**
- 1998 Humans Right Act**
- 1998 National Minimum Wage**
- 1998 Sure Start**
- 1998 Good Friday Agreement**
- 2005 Civil Partnerships**
- 2008 World First Climate Change Act**

**.....And there is so much more to do!**