

York Liberal Democrat 2023 Manifesto

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FAIRER.
SAFER.**

Working for You. Working for York.



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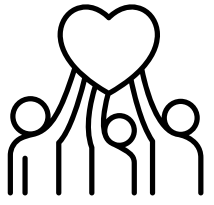
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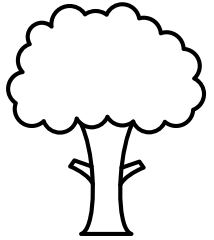
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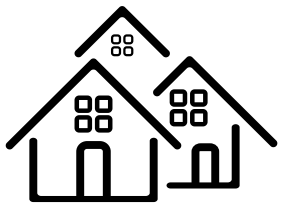
OUR PRIORITIES



Safe, resilient and vibrant communities and culture for all



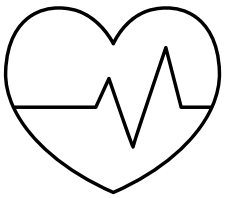
Greener York on path to carbon zero



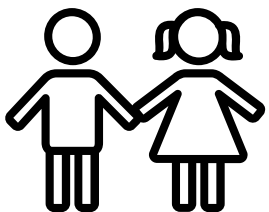
Affordable and sustainable Homes that York needs



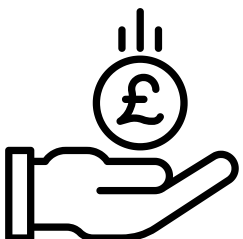
Better, greener, and more accessible transport



Healthier, more active, and happier lives for all residents



Better start for York's children



Stronger and fairer economy with jobs for all



Open Council that listens and represents all

FOREWORD

Dear friend,

With world renowned heritage, distinct and diverse communities, natural beauty and leading innovation - York truly has it all.



Since 2019, when we formed a Joint Administration at the City of York Council, we have supported the city through the most challenging time in recent memory and delivered on our priorities.

Despite the challenges brought about by the pandemic, inflation, cost of living crisis and the drying up of government funds, I am extremely proud of the hard work and achievements of the Liberal Democrat-led administration. The 21 Lib Dem councillors have been the champions of their communities, working all year round to fix issues, standing up for their residents' interests and investing in our communities. Working together, we have delivered for the whole city – from unlocking the once in a lifetime opportunity of the York Central project, delivering hundreds of new homes, investing millions in local community priorities, expanding mental health services, building a fantastic new stadium and new libraries, creating the new community woodland, electrifying and safeguarding local buses, delivering a Local Plan and so much more.

We are determined to continue improving the services that matter to residents. With more hardworking Liberal Democrat Councillors elected this May, we will deliver on our bold and sensible plans that put our vibrant communities and residents first to unlock York's full potential.

If you want a Council that is focussed on your local community, frontline services and York's future, vote Liberal Democrat May 4th.

ACHIEVEMENTS

Before embarking on another election campaign, it is important to reflect on what we as Liberal Democrats have achieved for residents and for the city. There have been many accomplishments of which we can be proud, and we reflect on some of these below.

Support through the pandemic

Our time at the helm of the city was significantly impacted by the unprecedented and devastating Covid-19 pandemic. We are incredibly proud of the response by our communities, frontline workers and health and care staff across the city.

We invested 1million extra Council funding directly supporting the most vulnerable in the city. Pioneering micro and small business support schemes also saw us protect and save hundreds of local businesses and the livelihoods of those running and working at them. Support across the city was coordinated through community hubs, which ensured that those who needed it the most received help, food, and medicines at their homes.



Ward investment for local community priorities

Local communities now have more power and funding available to them because of Liberal Democrat Councillors. We have devolved power and budgets to residents by protecting Ward Committees and releasing up to £1 million every year to be spent in local communities on local priorities.

For example, over the last four years, funding has been used to create new parking laybys and active travel infrastructure, deliver new play parks, upgrade community buildings, and deliver summer activities schemes for young people.



Combating Climate Change

We have delivered the York Climate Change Strategy, “A City Fit for the Future” together with an extensive action plan that sets out our vision to be net zero and provides a framework to both reduce carbon and be more climate resilient by 2030. Much of the work to make this plan a reality is under way, from the new community woodland, the UK’s only voluntary clean air zone, biggest electric P&R bus fleet and major multi-million flood defence projects. York was recognised as a global climate action leader thanks to the city’s vision and action to combat climate change. York is amongst only 122 cities across the world to be awarded an A rating for climate action leadership by the Carbon Disclosure Project (CDP).



Building more affordable and sustainable homes



Work is well under way to deliver more than 600 new homes across the city, as part of our ambitious Housing Delivery Programme, each designed to have a net carbon emissions figure of zero.

224 affordable homes have been delivered in the 2021/22 financial year – the highest number in the last decade. In total 477 affordable homes have been delivered by the Lib Dem led administration over the last 3 years, since 2019. This compares to 464 homes delivered by the Labour administration over their full term of 4 years at the helm of the city.

Protecting and building more libraries

We are not only protecting the future of our library service at a time when so many councils are cutting it but building more services to support our communities. Since 2019, a new community library has been delivered in Haxby and Wigginton, investment has been approved for Acomb library and work to build a new major library and community centre in Clifton has begun.



Investing in play areas

We distributed £175k amongst 30 York play areas, with community partners providing up to £228k in match funding. Communities across the city successfully bid for improvements and new equipment for their local play facilities across the city.



Keeping York safe

After several years of partnership work across the city, York has been awarded the prestigious Purple flag status in recognition for its diverse, safe and vibrant evening economy.

The achievement of the award, a 2019 York Lib Dem manifesto commitment, recognises the continued collaboration with partners to provide a safe and vibrant night-time economy.



Investment in York's future

We have worked tirelessly to secure major investment in York's future. After decades of discussion, it's the Liberal Democrat led administration which has unlocked a £650m investment pot which is seeing construction works now taking place on the York Central site. The project will deliver more homes, better paid jobs, and new community spaces on the city-centre brownfield site.



New facilities delivered

At the start of 2021, we were proud to open the state of the art 8,500-seater stadium with leisure facilities, a community hub, a library and community offices for the NHS as well as local charities.

In early 2022, the restoration of the Guildhall was completed, with one of York's historic buildings now ready to support local businesses and drive economic growth as one of the most sustainable historic buildings in the country.



Supporting sustainable transport

The project to bring a station back to Haxby for the first time in over 90 years is well under way, with crucial multi-million funding package unlocked, and planning application set to be submitted in 2023.

Plans to dual the city's outer ring road are moving forward to reduce congestion, moving car journeys out of the city centre, and improving active travel facilities for pedestrians and cyclists.

The Tier e-scooter and bike project is seeing an average 1,000 miles of travel a day, with over 4,000 users.

We continue to expand the city's electric vehicle charging facilities, having recently opened the biggest EV hyperhub in the North of England. York has been recognised to have the best access to EV charging outside of London.



Tackling the attainment gap

A pioneering children's speech and language programme is being rolled out across the city.

Created in partnership by City of York Council and York and Scarborough NHS Foundation Trust, Early Talk for York is improving the communication and language outcomes for children aged 0 to 5 years and closing the local attainment gap.



Local Plan for York

York's Local Plan is a framework to guide development and protect the quality of the city's unique historic, natural, and built environment.

With hearings concluded, the Local Plan is set to be adopted in Summer 2023 - the first plan in over 60 years. The plan strikes the right balance for the city, ensuring that there is economic growth and new jobs, securing the delivery of new community facilities and delivering the homes that York needs.





**Greener
Fairer
Safer**

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**Safe, resilient and
vibrant
communities and
culture for all**

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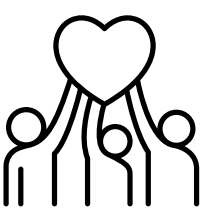


Safe, resilient and vibrant communities and culture for all

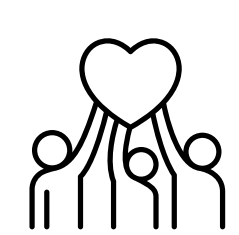
Our communities are the most important asset in our city. We want to build safe and resilient communities across the city, particularly in the face of Conservative cuts to police and community services.

In order to do this, we will:

- **Tackle anti-social behaviour through investment in youth services, more CCTV at ASB hotspots and lobbying for more visible community policing.**
- **Explore ways to deliver more youth outreach work and spaces for young people to spend their free time.**
- **Champion and extend Purple Flag work beyond the city centre**
- **Explore options for expanding street rangers schemes or similar community support initiatives.**
- **Enhance and safeguard community funding pots, which enable councillors to invest in priorities in their communities.**
- **Support residents most in need during the cost-of-living crisis, building on the work begun at the York Cost of Living Summit.**
- **Tackle period poverty by exploring ways to deliver free sanitary products in schools and Council buildings.**
- **Continue to invest in play areas and leisure spaces across the city.**



- **Deliver the Community Hub model to support resident access to support and services.**
- **Develop the Local Area Coordinator programme to ensure each community has access to LAC.**
- **Maintain and expand York's Libraries, including delivering improvements to existing libraries and delivering new libraries.**
- **Coordinate and better engage with local volunteers, including the over 4,000 volunteers who stepped up to support their communities during the Covid emergency.**
- **Expand initiatives that protect women and fight against violence towards women and girls, working with North Yorkshire Police and local charities and advocacy groups.**
- **Support local pubs to tackle spiking.**
- **Back creative and artistic initiatives - from outdoor performances to art trails – to showcase local artists and nurture local culture bringing communities together.**
- **Take action to help bridge the digital divide by providing equipment, connectivity, and training to those in danger of being left behind.**
- **Continue to campaign to retain Huntington Fire station full time staff and engine.**



- Support the work to make York an anti-racist City and tackle hate crime
- Support York's City of Sanctuary status and local organisations, helping those feeling violence and seeking safe asylum and refuge





A greener York on path to carbon zero

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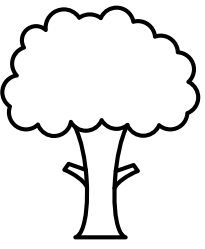


A greener York on path to carbon zero

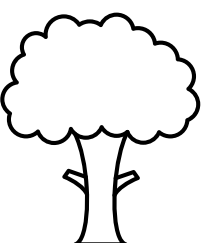
Under the leadership of the Liberal Democrats, extensive work is taking place to make York greener and more sustainable for generations to come.

With more Liberal Democrat Councillors elected in May, we will:

- **Plant a tree for each resident - 210,000 in the new community woodland and over 4,000 extra trees in urban areas.**
- **Increase recycling rates, building on the work which has seen more plastics accepted as part kerbside recycling, supporting our residents to recycle even more. This will form part of a wider strategy to Reduce, Re-use and Recycle.**
- **Expand clean air initiatives, for example through School Streets projects and crackdown on vehicle idling.**
- **Support sustainable developments - we will explore ways to require developers to deliver a 30% net gain in biodiversity on new developments (introducing living roofs, living walls and rain gardens on urban sites).**
- **Support the pollinator strategy, through planting more wildflowers, rooftop planting, community gardens, exploring alternatives to glyphosate and support of local green initiatives.**
- **Increase use of renewable energy across the city – for example, installing solar lights at leisure centres, schools, council offices, council homes, buildings in our parks.**



- **Support residents to switch to green energy.**
- **Invest in sustainable transport initiatives.**
- **Deliver actions identified in the Climate Change Strategy and Action Plan to move towards carbon zero York.**
- **Work with Yorkshire Water to crackdown on sewage discharge into York's waterways.**
- **Expand the use of recycled materials to repair potholes and resurface roads, as has been done for example in Wheldrake.**
- **Explore ways to change all streetlights to LED and as many as possible to solar powered.**
- **Deliver flood defence projects to protect communities, including in Fulford and Strensall, and continue to work with the Environment Agency to deliver more flood defence solutions across the city.**
- **Reduce car usage in new developments.**
- **To make York even cleaner we will:**
 - **Crackdown on fly tipping;**
 - **Remove graffiti, building on the partnerships established; with broadband providers to clean utility boxes;**
 - **Strengthen enforcement on dog fouling;**
 - **Invest in street cleaning throughout the city;**
 - **Explore a more frequent gulley cleaning schedule.**





Affordable and sustainable Homes that York needs

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Affordable and sustainable Homes that York needs

There is no silver bullet to solve the national housing shortage, which is also impacting York, but work is well underway with the leadership of the Liberal Democrats to deliver the homes that York needs. In order to help more people find a home in our city, we must build the homes York needs, whilst simultaneously protecting York's special character.

With more Lib Dem councillors after May, we will:

- **Adopt the Local Plan to:**
 - **Deliver the homes that York needs - 18,000 homes, including over 4,000 new affordable homes over the next 15 years;**
 - **protect the quality of the city's unique historic, natural, and built environment for the first time in 60 years;**
 - **Support new infrastructure delivery, including schools and transport infrastructure.**
- **Continue to deliver affordable homes to high environmental standards as part of an ambitious Council Housebuilding programme and through partnership working with Housing Associations, and maximise affordable housing delivery through the planning process.**
- **Regulate short term lets (Airbnb), whilst continuing to push for more stringent national legislation which would enable local action**



- **Work to end rough sleeping on York's streets - we will work to provide the necessary temporary accommodation and continue to support those facing homelessness.**
- **Charge Double council tax to owners of empty second homes, to bring these properties back into proper local use.**
- **Develop and establish a 'Good Developer' Scheme to hold local developers to account.**
- **Increase shared ownership and social rent schemes to support more people to get on the property ladder.**
- **Speed up repairs to council properties and bring empty council homes back into occupation more quickly.**
- **Increase standards and speed of repairs, particularly tackling mould and damp.**
- **Work with developers to address and discourage land banking.**
- **Take advantage of the new Community Infrastructure Levy to deliver infrastructure that communities need.**
- **Create streamlined planning support to enable the delivery of sustainable, accessible, and affordable homes across the city**
- **Explore ways to offer more financial assistance for renters.**
- **Deliver more stringent enforcement of regulations and renter protection in HMOs, limiting their expansion in areas with an existing high number of HMOs.**





Better, greener, and more accessible transport

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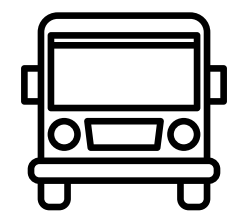


Better, greener, and more accessible transport

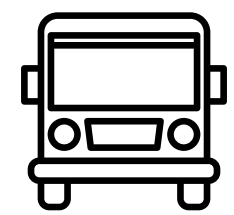
York has its own unique challenges when it comes to getting around in the compact and narrow city centre whilst also ensuring good links to communities outside the inner ring road.

In order to build on our work since 2019 to create better links and more sustainable and accessible transport options for residents and visitors to use, we will:

- **Deliver a comprehensive and ambitious Local Transport Strategy to help create a transport network fit for York's future.**
- **Deliver new and maintain existing walking and cycling infrastructure, including better connecting all of York's communities with the city centre, secondary shopping areas, workplaces and schools.**
- **Support the local bus network during the current bus crisis, particularly safeguarding current services and exploring options for expanding rural services.**
- **Work with operators and users to deliver long term improvements to bus services and infrastructure through the Bus Service Improvement Plan.**
- **Work with operators to deliver an all-electric bus fleet by 2030.**



- **Deliver more EV charging facilities, including exploring options for residential streets, building on the creation of the biggest EV charging hubs in the North of England.**
- **Deliver Haxby Station, now that the project is at its furthest stage in decades.**
- **Deliver York Outer Ring Road dualling to cut congestion and move car journeys out of the city centre, enabling more active travel interventions and measures to support bus usage.**
- **Deliver Station Frontage improvements.**
- **Protect ward capital funding pots, to ensure councillors can commission smaller local improvements that reflects residents' priorities.**
- **Deliver more dropped kerbs and improve the state of pavements across the city, some of which currently pose hazards for vulnerable pedestrians and users of mobility aids.**
- **Deliver more cycle parking across the city.**
- **Expand cycle hire schemes and e-scooter and e-bike network.**
- **Tackle pavement parking, working with the Police to strengthen current enforcement and lobbying Government to change current pavement parking legislation.**
- **Improve quality of road repairs to ensure frontline staff do not have to re-patch multiple times, and have a more transparent approach to decisions around the management of highways assets.**



- Keep the operation of city centre access arrangements under review once the hostile vehicle measures recommended by the Police and Terrorism experts to protect all in the city centre have been installed, ensuring most up to date Police advice is followed and all alternatives and mitigations are explored.
- Continue to progress plans for a city centre shuttle bus service
- Explore options to expand the Park and Ride network and deliver 'Transport Hubs'.
- Work with the new York and North Yorkshire Combined Authority to deliver on York's transport priorities.
- Continue to lobby for adequate investment following years of cuts to highway maintenance budgets from the Government.





Healthier, more
active and happier
lives for all
residents

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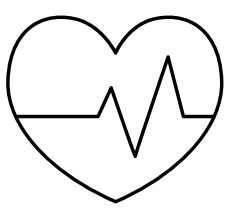


Better, greener, and more accessible transport for York

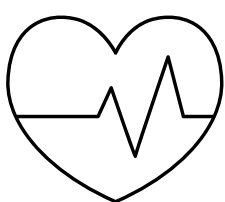
The pandemic highlighted the vital importance of good physical and mental health and the real disparities that exist across the city. The national NHS crisis following years of underfunding is putting what little access many of our communities have to GPs and dentists at risk.

To support York's residents to lead healthier, more active and happier lives, we will:

- **Continue to address health inequalities in York, building on the work taking place with health partners and organisations across the city.**
- **Enact the Health Strategy to address life expectancy gap between more affluent and deprived parts of York.**
- **Deliver more mental health hubs, based on the success of the community mental health hub at 30 Clarence Street**
- **Work to tackle GP crisis:**
 - **Secure better access and better facilities and use Council's influence to safeguard access to local GPs;**
 - **Support the creation of community pharmacies to take pressure off over-stretched GP services;**
 - **Explore options to use Section 106 funds to deliver more GP surgeries and community health facilities.**
- **Work with health partners to improve access to dental services in the city, including through supporting dental hygiene initiatives at schools and continuing to lobby for a fix to the broken NHS dentistry system.**



- **Work to deliver the Dementia Strategy to support early diagnosis and local support.**
- **Encourage active lifestyles by developing new sports parks and facilities.**
- **Continue to tackle childhood obesity through innovative Council and school initiatives.**
- **Update and implement an all age Autism Strategy.**
- **Work through the York Health Partnership to ensure that local NHS and health funding is prioritised on the needs of York's communities.**
- **Work with health partners across the city to support alcohol and drug recovery services.**
- **Work with hospitals and healthcare providers to reduce delayed discharge, supporting care in the community.**
- **Develop and enact a strategy to combat loneliness.**
- **Provide new homes suitable for people with physical and mental disabilities.**
- **Call for fair and adequate investment in the NHS and care system.**





Better start for York's children

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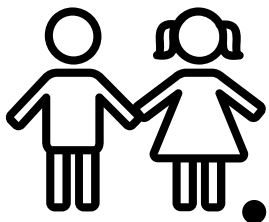


Better start for York's children

We value the significant work of families in our city, and we recognise the important role of the Council in creating an environment that enables young people to flourish, particularly in the aftermath of the pandemic.

With more Liberal Democrat Councillors elected this May, we will:

- **Build on the work of Early Talk for York to help less fortunate children and their families by improving levels of literacy and numeracy and closing the attainment gap.**
- **Continue to improve children's care services and Special Needs Services in York for those children and young people who need additional support.**
- **Continue giving council tax relief for care leavers and explore options for extending this scheme.**
- **Work to improve support for kinship carers and increase the number of mainstream foster carers in York.**
- **Continue to support York's looked-after children and work to improve existing services to meet increased demand.**
- **Improve and safeguard family and children's centres across our city.**
- **Support and, where possible, safeguard local schemes which provide food and activities for pupils most in need.**



- Explore ways to provide additional support for pupils who have fallen behind following COVID-19.
- Work with York's maintained schools and academies to improve mental health support for pupils in schools.
- Work with education partners and communities to help York's schools stay strong and resilient.
- Deliver more youth spaces, based on the views and needs of local young people.
- Expand apprenticeship offers working with local employers and the Council.
- Prioritise lobbying the Government for fair funding for York's schools – York is amongst the lowest funded councils, we could receive an additional £13 million per year if funding was to be redistributed based on need.
- Lobby the Government for more support to deal with child poverty and its causes.





**Stronger and fairer
economy with jobs
for all**

Working for You. Working for York.



Stronger and fairer economy with jobs for all

York has a wealth of assets that mark our city as one of the leading economies in the North of England. However, challenges facing businesses and residents, particularly after the pandemic and during the cost-of-living crisis, highlight the need to ensure everyone benefits from the success of the city.

We will work to create more and better paid jobs, attract greater investment and generate the revenue needed to fund public services.

In order to do this, we will:

- **Seize the opportunity of York Central and major investment in the city to deliver more and better paid jobs.**
- **Continue to deliver investment to local shopping areas in Acomb and Haxby and support local trader groups.**
- **Champion and extend the Good Business Charter and its core values of fair and sustainable business.**
- **Introduce a Tourism Tax to invest in frontline services, local communities and businesses.**
- **Explore further ways to incentivise shopping local, including further discount schemes for residents.**
- **Deliver My City Centre vision, including delivering improvements to public spaces and toilets.**



- Take advantage of York's green skill opportunities, supporting local businesses and initiatives to deliver more green jobs and green the local economy.
- Explore opportunities of how to best use public spaces in the city for innovative pop ups and community spaces.
- Convene a banking summit to preserve access to banking services and cashpoints, exploring options for the creation of local 'Banking Hubs'.
- Continue to work to establish a Government Hub in the city and relocate and create new civil service jobs .
- Support the expansion of York's strongest industries to deliver new well paid jobs, including in rail and IT.
- Explore best ways to deploy the apprenticeship levy to fill key vacancies.
- Support the establishment of a York Economic Partnership to facilitate long term economic recovery.





Open Council that
listens and
represents all

Working for You. Working for York.



Open Council that listens and represents all

Since 2019, we have striven to deliver value for money services at a time when national funding continues to dry up and the need for support is increasing. We shall ensure that the City of York Council listens and works for our communities and delivers on their priorities.

With more Liberal Democrat Councillors elected in May, we will:

- **Keep Council tax low - council tax bill for a band D property in York is about £100 less than national average.**
- **Improve Council website and access to digital services, particularly addressing issues with digital resident parking system.**
- **Embed the social model of disability in council policies and processes.**
- **Improve Council's customer service waiting times.**
- **Engage more with underrepresented groups and young people through Council consultations.**
- **Support and engage more with local community groups and parish councils, making it easier for residents to have their voices heard.**
- **Support engagement with Parish Councils, building on the objectives of the Parish Charter.**



- **Support the creation of Residents' Associations to amplify tenant voice.**
- **Continue to deliver responsible and stable leadership that represents York's communities and fights for its interests regionally and nationally.**
- **Explore adoption of alternative governance models, including the 'Committee System' model for the council.**
- **Work with partners in West and North Yorkshire to ensure a stronger voice and investment in our region.**
- **Ensure the new directly elected Mayor of York and North Yorkshire is accountable and responsive to York's needs and priorities.**





GREENER.
FAIRER.
SAFER.

This manifesto sets out York Liberal Democrat policies and priorities for the City of York Council, for the 2023 local elections.

The manifesto can be found online at
www.yorklibdems.org.uk

If you require this document in an alternative format, such as large print or a coloured background, please contact info@yorklibdems.org.uk

Published and promoted by Derek Wann on behalf of the City of York Council Liberal Democrat Candidates, all at 12a, Victoria Farm Estate, Water Lane, York, YO30 6PQ