



BEXLEY DESERVES BETTER

**BEXLEY LABOUR
MANIFESTO**

2026

An opportunity for change



Elections offer choice, but on Thursday 7th May 2026, Bexley has an opportunity to change the direction of our borough for a better future with investment and stop the managed decline of public services in Bexley.

This year's election is the opportunity to look to the future and build better housing for everyone, including good quality homes to buy, more family homes, genuinely affordable housing and council housing for the first time in a generation, so future generations can afford to live in Bexley and invest in a better future with new fresh ideas, not out of date and tired ideas that have not worked for years and cannot work in the future.

Bexley Labour has a plan to deal with the challenges this borough faces. We will work constructively with the Labour Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, and the Labour Government to deliver better public services and more housing for everyone.

We will prioritise using the council's powers and resources to address the housing crisis, supporting the police and being tough on crime, safeguarding education, children and young people, investing more in our roads and pavements, keeping the borough tidy all year round and treating older citizens with dignity and respect.

The Conservative council refuse to accept that they have created a housing crisis in Bexley; this has failed young people who are denied a foot on the ladder and grown-up children are forced to stay at home long after they hoped to fly the nest. A new Labour council will address the housing crisis and ensure that Bexley residents have a decent home to live in

We are proud of living in Bexley, but after 20 years of Conservative council cuts to grass cutting, waste collections, street cleansing, road safety, school crossings patrols and road maintenance, many

residents no longer feel Bexley is delivering good public services as they are fed up of the 'pay more, get less' costs and cuts to council services.

A new Labour council will budget consistently and maintain highways and pavements year in and year out. We will keep the borough clean and tidy throughout the year, not just at election time. Thursday 7th May is an opportunity to change that and make Bexley's future a fairer-one that works and will continue to work for all residents.

A new Labour council for a better future for Bexley.

STEFANO BORELLA

Labour Group Leader

CONTENTS

01 HOUSING AND REGENERATION

Council housing p6

Lack of affordable homes to rent p6

Rough sleepers and hidden homelessness p6

Lack of affordable homes to buy p7

Planning and development p7

Social infrastructure and sustainable communities p7

Decent homes for Bexley p7

Leaseholders carrying the cost of poor-quality building p8

02 INVESTING IN PEOPLE

Education p12

Climate Change p12

Attracting investment and regeneration p13

Supporting our local economy and vulnerable people p13

Getting our local economy back on its feet p13

Skills p13

Children's Services p14

Foster carers p14

SEND – supporting our vulnerable young people p14

Supporting our Older and Disabled Residents p15

Promoting equality for all p17

03

A BETTER BEXLEY

Libraries p19

A healthy borough p20

A safe and secure borough p20

Domestic Violence p21

Tackling knife and drug related crime p21

Voluntary Sector p21

Waste and recycling collections p21

Parking / Highways / Transport p22

Grass cutting / Ground maintenance p23

Leisure centres p23

Community centres p23

Parks / Open Spaces p24

04

IMPROVING OUR COUNCIL

Council Finances p26

Bringing services back in house – a strategic approach to procurement p26

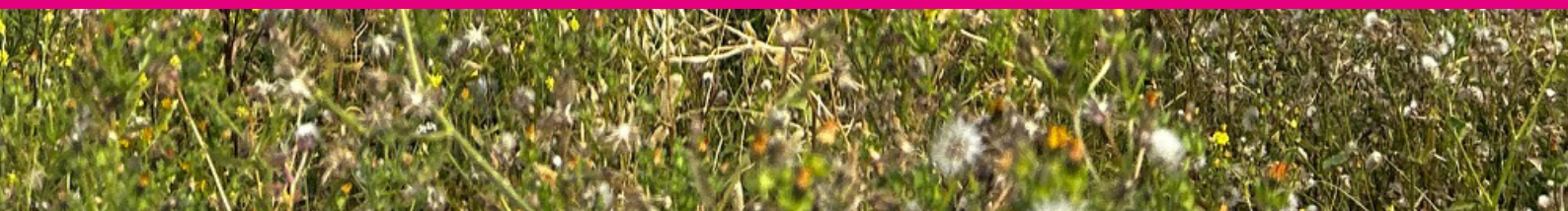
Contact your council / customer service p26

Staff morale p26

Democracy and decision making p26



Housing and Regeneration



The housing crisis in Bexley is one which affects us all. The current Conservative Council have no answers and no plan to deal with the housing crisis and build housing for everyone.

A Labour council will:

- Develop a new housing strategy, which understands the challenges our borough faces and provides a solutions-based approach through building more decent homes for everyone, getting tough on rogue landlords, and improving housing standards across the borough.
- Review the business plan and priorities of BexleyCo to deliver affordable and social housing, rather than the limited focus of a financial dividend to the council.
- Work constructively with Labour Mayor of London and the Labour government to achieve more housing for all in Bexley.

Council housing

Bexley currently has no council housing stock. The borough has missed crucial funding opportunities to develop new housing whilst neighbouring boroughs like Greenwich deliver award-winning council homes.

A Labour council will:

- Deliver the first new council housing in Bexley for a generation, working with the Mayor of London to develop new housing schemes making rent and home ownership more affordable for everyone.
- Work with housing associations to ensure that any estate regeneration supports those living there already and ensure that we maintain nomination rights on properties.

Lack of affordable homes to rent

Bexley has many families in temporary accommodation, placed in insecure private accommodation out of the borough, away from their support networks. The recent "Single offer" policy has forced desperate families to accept homes that far from meet their needs, are often in a poor state of repair and leave residents scared to raise maintenance issues with their landlord for fear of eviction.

A Labour council will

- Review the single offer policy and allow residents time to consider offers of housing.
- Deliver more housing to ensure less families living in temporary accommodation and is within the borough.
- Ensure that all offers are truly "suitable" with well-maintained properties that meet all the needs of the tenant.
- Work to stop the use of single room hostel accommodation for families.
- Seek to set up a Housing revenue account to build council housing for the first time in a generation.
- Overhaul the Bexley Co business plan to provide more affordable homes to buy and rent.

Rough Sleepers and hidden homelessness

Rough sleepers and those "sofa surfing" or living in their cars is increasing. Not having a home has a profound effect on physical and mental health, sometimes preventing working or education. Rough sleepers in our borough depend upon charities, food banks, night shelters and faith groups.

A Labour council will:

- Work with charities and organisations on initiatives to help rough sleepers.
- Support the work rough sleep shelters are providing in the borough.
- Work to provide accommodation for single homeless people.
- Stop the redevelopment of estates that remove housing for single people

Lack of affordable homes to buy

High house prices mean that Bexley families and young people looking to buy a home may be subject to overcrowding or seek cheaper housing outside the borough. This divides families and can place additional pressures on social care as they may be far from their aging parents.

A Labour council will:

- Ensure that Bexley Co properties are affordable and prioritise Bexley residents.
- Work with other developers to ensure homes are affordable, by challenging more effectively viability reports, which is more based on the local economy rather than the market rate.
- Challenge developers to maximise S106 and CIL contributions to reinvest in our Borough.
- Be transparent about the investment of S106 and CIL contributions in our Borough.
- Update the Bexley Local Plan to reflect local need and local growth opportunities.

Planning and development

The new Labour government has made house building a key priority and we will work constructively to achieve these ambitions in Bexley. A key driver in delivering our housing strategy will be ensuring that the planning process works effectively. Too many large applications are passed without provision for affordable housing, while developers make huge profits at the expense of local people.

A Labour council will:

- Strengthen the Bexley Local Plan to address the housing crisis, ensuring a tougher approach is taken on viability assessments to deliver higher proportions of genuinely affordable homes.

Social infrastructure and sustainable communities

Too much development in our borough takes place without regard for the vital social infrastructure needed alongside new housing.

A Labour council will:

- Develop a Social Infrastructure Strategy to supplement our Local Plan and planning policies to ensure this delivers the infrastructure that is needed like more health provision, better roads and community facilities that are needed in Bexley.

Decent homes for Bexley

Many rented homes in the borough have damp and mould and are poorly maintained, both in the private and social sector. Many residents do not feel they have a voice and suffer with health and safety issues and increase in lung related medical issues. Many residents are scared to raise maintenance issues for fear of eviction and so move house more often

leading to unconnected communities and increased fly tipping as properties are voided.

A Labour council will:

- Introduce a private renters charter to protect renters in Bexley by ensuring they are fully informed of their legal rights.
- Strengthen the Rent it Right scheme to take stronger enforcement against rogue landlords to protect tenants and investigate expanding the area from the present area of Belvedere ward.
- Increase the Selected licencing scheme across the whole borough.
- Introduce a scheme to reuse furniture from voided properties and reduce fly tipping.
- Investigate introducing the five basic amenities for those living in temporary accommodation; Cooking Facilities, Laundry Access, WiFi, Secure Storage, Clear Information.

- Work with leaseholders to provide support on service charge and ground rent issues support.
- Invest in more capacity to strengthen building control.
- Tackle build quality at Planning stages.
- Update the Bexley Local Plan to reflect local need and local growth opportunities.

Leaseholders carrying the cost of poor-quality building

The New Labour Government has made Leasehold, and renters reform a key priority since being elected. Many leaseholders are stuck in the trap of paying for poor build quality from developers who are out to make quick profits. The safety issues raised by the Grenfell Tragedy has put the financial burden on leaseholders to ensure their homes are safe and many are unable to sell without the necessary certification.

A Labour council will :

- Work with leaseholders to get advice on their legal rights.



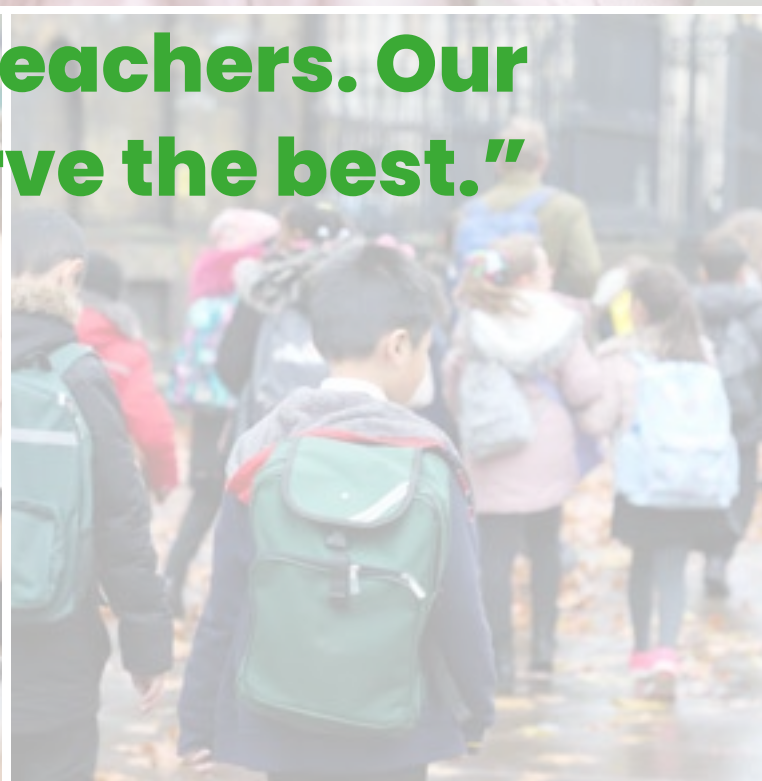
“We promise to work constructively with Labour Mayor of London and the Labour government to achieve more housing for all in Bexley.”



Investing in People



“We will continue to lobby the government for more money for education to give our children and young people the very best start in life, to ensure that our schools are better resourced and to enable us to attract the very best teachers. Our children deserve the best.”



Education

Every child deserves the opportunity to make the best start in life, to attend a good school.

Since the start of Conservative led austerity in 2010, education funding has been cut. The new Labour government since being elected in 2024 has made progress in investing more in our crumbling school buildings, to recruit more teachers and create more breakfast clubs in our schools.

Bexley's 2023 appalling SEND inspection, has highlighted the challenges within the Educational, Health and Care Plan system.

A Labour council will:

- Continue to lobby the government for more money for education to give our children and young people the very best start in life, to ensure that our schools are better resourced and to enable us to attract the very best teachers. Our children deserve the best.
- Lobby the government to review the approach and processes around SEND.
- Work effectively with parents of disabled children; by improving communication to ensure they get the resources to which they are entitled.
- Work with the government to allow councils to make more interventions into multi academy trust schools that are under performing.
- Make sure that all schools in Bexley are at least 'strong' graded from Ofsted inspections.

Climate Change

The council is one of a handful across London that has refused to declare a climate emergency.

A Labour council will:

- As part of the council's strategic long term 2050 vision, we will make the London Borough of Bexley carbon neutral and publish an annual report outlining the progress on sustainability and carbon neutral targets.
- Work with businesses, and all groups across Bexley to identify commitments to support this strategy through the establishment of a Climate Action Working Group.
- Explore opportunities to divest our pension fund investments and work to ensure that wherever possible any future investments are assessed against these principles.
- Ensure that sustainability is central to our Procurement strategy.
- Work to reduce the use of single-use plastics across all Council buildings.
- Incentivise carbon neutral development, microgeneration, and renewable energy schemes.
- Ensure a named Cabinet Member is accountable for all issues relating to Climate Change and that all-council policy documents will address the effect of climate change against a local 2034 target of net Zero Carbon.
- Review School Safety Initiatives to improve road safety around the borough's schools and measures to increase walking and cycling.
- Introduce more car clubs to reduce car usage by offering an alternative to private car ownership.

- Work with partners to access more funding to increase EV charging stations in place across the borough and look at innovative schemes to allow residents in terraced streets to use domestic charging points more easily.

Attracting investment and regeneration.

Much of our borough has seen change in recent years from the new housing developments in Thamesmead and Abbey Wood, to high streets such as Sidcup. Making our town centres, high streets, and community hubs attractive encourages people to shop local and can be a massive boost to our local economy.

A Labour council will:

- Work with key partners and developers to unlock the huge potential to regenerate Erith and deliver the housing, transport, and health facilities that residents deserve.
- Work to drive inward investment towards our borough and maximise the opportunity to regenerate neglected parts of our town centres and high streets.

Supporting our local economy and vulnerable people

Under the previous Conservative government has seen the number of vulnerable people in our borough rise, with higher numbers relying on universal credit and our food banks under pressure.

A Labour council will:

- Investigate the potential to deliver an income maximisation team to increase benefit take up, with residents who are entitled.
- Work with food banks, debt and benefits advice services, housing associations, and others to deliver cost of living and debt advice to vulnerable residents receive the advice.

- Review how the council uses bailiff orders and consider if they should be banned for cases involving vulnerable residents.

Getting our local economy back on its feet

Changes to shopping habits has put pressure on our local shops, high streets, and town centres, as well as other businesses across our borough. It is vital that we support business through these tough times.

A Labour council will:

- Work with local businesses, local BIDs to work with key partners and the government to deliver investment in our high streets and town centres to encourage people to shop local, and we will support our boroughs SMEs and the hospitality industry to become more resilient, win new contracts and employ more staff.

Skills

The way we work is changing and the need to embrace innovative technology is vital to unlock this potential. Many in our borough fear being left behind, as the economy and the nature of work adapts.

A Labour council will:

- Develop and implement a renewed focus on skills, ensuring that residents can change or further their careers across a whole range of industries, like technology, construction, hospitality, and the care sector.
- Work with local businesses, stakeholders, and developers for more apprenticeships to be offered and work with local colleges to offer the skills and courses that jobseekers need to fulfil their potential.

Children's Services

One of the council's most important roles is not only to ensure our children get the best start in life, but to help those children who need extra support and intervention by children services.

All professionals agree that the 'early years' are the most important during a child's lifetime. The last Conservative Government delivered 14 years of austerity, has seen Bexley take out hundreds of thousands of pounds from these very vital services. The newly elected Labour government is starting to reverse this decline since being elected in July 2024

A Labour council will:

- We would seek additional funding from the government to reinvest in early years prevention to ensure that our children get the very best start in life.
- The council would seek additional funding from the government to reopen full-service children's centres and open more family hubs around the borough, reversing Conservative cuts that have decimated support for families.

Foster Carers

Foster Carers play a vital role in looking after our most vulnerable children who often come into the care of the council during a crisis.

A Labour council will:

- We would ensure that pay and support is at an adequate level to enable us to attract the very best foster carers in Bexley and reduce the need for costly agency staff.
- We would investigate exempting foster carers who live in the borough from paying council tax and other exemptions to encourage more foster carers.

We value our social workers who work in children services and would do all that we can to maintain a stable team which is in the best interests of the children we look after.

A Labour council will:

- We would constantly monitor social workers caseloads to ensure that they are not put under unbearable pressure and create a supportive environment to give them the very best chance to achieve good outcomes for our children.

There is a housing crisis in Bexley, and we need to ensure that our care leavers are being offered appropriate accommodation to allow them to thrive as adults.

- We would carry out an audit of the accommodation our care leavers under the age of 25 are living in to make sure it is appropriate and work with our housing associations and private providers to put right any issues found.

We recognise that looking after a disabled child can often be particularly challenging for families.

- We would work with the voluntary sector and families to ensure that there is adequate weekend and holiday services, respite support, and support within the home for children with disabilities.

SEND – supporting our vulnerable young people.

After the appalling SEND inspection result in 2024, which was damning in its assessment of some of the councils' actions, we would look to improve this area further so that children with SEND are not let down and given as much opportunity as possible to achieve their potential.

A Labour council will:

- Campaign for changes to government funding for the High Needs Block
- Work towards a fairer fund distribution to schools with higher numbers of children with SEND/EHCP needs.
- Resource the EHCP team to ensure timely decisions and assessments.
- Work with schools to ensure they can offer support to pupils with SEND in mainstream education where possible.
- Work towards a joined-up approach for all services to help support families of children with SEND.
- We would review SEN Transport to ensure safeguarding, quality and confidence of parents and guardians in the service.
- Campaign for Care experienced residents are recognised as a protective characteristic under the Equality Act.

Supporting our Older and Disabled Residents

Caring for our older, disabled, and vulnerable residents is one of the most important jobs we can all do. In retirement our older people contribute a huge amount to the life of the borough and are often at the heart of our communities, creating and sustaining many of our community organisations. However, when our older residents require our support for various health conditions, Conservative austerity has impacted the very services they rely upon. Families who are caring for adult children with disabilities must battle to ensure that adequate service levels are maintained.

A Labour council will:

- Work with the government to achieve its ambition of a National Care Service and a long-term solution for the funding of Adult Social care.
- Ensure our older residents get excellent care through looking at better care delivery models, including bringing services back in house.
- The recruitment and retention of a stable workforce through more sustainable pay (at least London Living Wage levels), conditions and training levels.
- A career progression for those staff who want to progress.

Support and value Bexley's 20,000 family carers who are looking after loved ones by offering them appropriate respite care at an affordable price – they need a break.

- Hold 'ageing well events' to ensure that all our elderly residents are aware of volunteering opportunities, leisure activities and services which will improve their quality of life.
- Work with the Alzheimer's Society to become a dementia friendly borough.
- Work with housing providers to deliver new attractive housing that benefit older residents and younger residents that require additional support.
- Work with our housing partners and the private sector to develop new housing schemes for older people who wish to downsize, freeing up housing for our younger residents.



“Caring for our older, disabled, and vulnerable residents is one of the most important jobs we can all do. In retirement our older people contribute a huge amount to the life of the borough and are often at the heart of our communities, creating and sustaining many of our community organisations.”

Promoting equality for all

Bexley has a diverse community, and it is important that our borough is welcoming to all our residents. We must celebrate that diversity and ensure it is reflected in all our cultural events and activities. All Labour Councillors will sign up to all adopted pledges and abide by them. A Labour council will:

- Ensure that our council reflects our community at all levels.
- Ensure that the council actively supports activities and events which support Black History Month, LGBT History Month, and International Women's Day .
- Ensure that support is given to cultural groups and work with them to promote cultural opportunities.
- Adopt the All-Party Parliamentary Group on British Muslims working definition of Islamophobia.
- Ensure that the borough's diversity and groups representing all parts of the borough are reflected in our events and cultural activities.
- Conduct a review of users of council services by protected characteristic.
- Include an Equalities Impact Assessment (E.I.A) on every council decision to help identify the impact of changes in service provision to our different communities.
- We will maintain the council's commitment to the IHRA (International Holocaust Remembrance Alliance) definition of antisemitism.



A BETTER BEXLEY





Libraries

After years of cuts to opening hours and days at each of the six council libraries and further grant cuts to the six community libraries, this policy needs to be reversed. We need to encourage more creative ways of working with other stakeholders to deliver community hubs delivering and increase services.

A Labour council will:

- Review the current library provision and with key partners to develop a community hubs model of libraries that deliver more services, share costs, and deliver longer opening hours and opening days.
- Create a new community strategy to link service delivery across Bexley.
- Develop further provision that can be offered from council libraries to increase footfall.
- Review the asset condition of our libraries and the future capital investment which the borough's libraries require.
- Investigate ways of providing a new Central library either on the current site or elsewhere in Bexleyheath to allow redevelopment of the current Central library site and investigate other sites for future library improvements.
- Monitor the delivery through libraries of services for those who use the facility as their only means of accessing council services.

A healthy borough

Residents in Bexley have one of the lowest number of GPs per patient in London. Many must travel far to use medical facilities and there is a difficulty getting appointments. New housing developments place pressure on existing medical services in the area. Healthy residents means better outcomes for residents in their work and home life.

A Labour council will:

- Be a champion for our NHS, publicly provided free at the point of use.
- Work with the NHS and partners to improve GP provision in our borough.
- Work to increase Social Prescribing ensuring that doctor appointments can be used for clinical matters and not administration.
- Ensure new housing developments include health amenities.
- Work to understand the impact that a lack of suitable housing has on mental and physical health of our residents.
- Identify the wider impact of council services on the mental health of our borough such as housing, education, waste and street cleansing, the voluntary sector and perception of public safety.
- Work with mental health organisations to identify gaps in service provision, to ensure services meet the needs of all our community.
- Ensure that services are available to respond when our residents need them, especially at a time of crisis.
- Work with government initiatives, schools and health providers to improve NHS dental provision, improve prevention and dental hygiene.

- Work to make Bexley an autism friendly borough.
- Work with the Labour government to increase Public Health funding to assist with improving prevention services to help residents deal with obesity and who want to stop smoking and deal with abuse of alcohol, vaping, drugs, and Nox gas canisters users.

A safe and secure borough

Bexley is seen as a safe borough, but the perception of crime is higher, residents are concerned at the impact of the cuts under the last Conservative government. People are wanting the police to be more visible in their communities and there is a disconnect between the police and the public.

A Labour council will:

- Work constructively with the Mayor of London to improve local police services and investigate models of delivering new police hubs in Bexley.
- Work with the police to ensure that Dedicated Ward Officers and Safer Neighbourhood teams are based in the communities they serve.
- Work with police, local stakeholders, and council services to enable a tough approach to anti-social behaviour.
- Promote stronger relationship between the police and our communities.
- Use the boroughs CCTV cameras in an effective way in the fight against crime.

With the increase of violence against the person, violence against women and girls is one of increasing concern.

A Labour council will:

- Provide safer streets, design, better

street lighting and maintain our public spaces to make them safer for women.

- Support the Women’s Night Safety charter and encourage reporting by victims and bystanders through campaigns.
- Work with the police and our community to make Bexley a safe place for all and once again become the safest borough in London.
- Keep all Bexley residents safe regardless of background.

Domestic Violence

Whilst Bexley has lower than the average reported incidents of Domestic Violence, the devastating and long-term effect on families, adults and children means it must continue to be a priority.

A Labour council will:

- Prioritise approaches to tackling domestic abuse in all its forms.
- Ensure that services are funded and accessible for all our community.

Tackling knife and drug related crime

Whilst Bexley has low levels of knife and drug related crime compared to other London Boroughs, we have seen increases in these areas due to cuts to police funding but also in the lack of Youth activities and funding for schools.

A Labour council will:

- Work with the Bexley Community Safety Partnership to tackle violent crime in our borough.
- Work with schools to support disaffected pupils to reduce exclusion rates.

- Fund youth services and volunteer programmes working to reduce the impact gangs have in our borough.

Voluntary Sector

We recognise the role of the voluntary sector in enriching our community. The recent pandemic showed how the voluntary sector can increase our social wealth, providing services not covered by paid work and filling a need especially during a crisis.

A Labour council will:

- Introduce a community strategy that will effectively map out services provided around Bexley by the voluntary sector, community groups, and the council to ensure more effective delivery of services and use of facilities.
- Ensure funding is agreed over longer periods to enable organisations to make longer term plans.
- Ensure that voluntary work is not used as an alternative to paid work.

Waste and recycling collections

A new contract was awarded to Countrystyle in October 2021 and will not come up for renewal until after the next local elections in 2030, in the next 4 years it will be important that the contractor delivers services that residents expect and continue to see a reduction in missed bin collections and that the staff that deliver these services are paid well and treated with respect. Fly tipping continues to be a significant issue which is not being helped by actions to restrict the use of and increase income at our two refuse/

recycling centres and the pressures on staff responsible for enforcement.

A Labour council will:

- Ensure stronger enforcement of contracts to ensure operators carry out waste collection and street cleansing effectively and in a timely fashion.
- Ensure pay of waste collection staff is competitive and not repeat the race to the bottom of staff wages in the past.
- Make Bexley the number one recycling borough again.
- Reduce missed bin collections.
- Increase capital investment of fox-resistant food bins and a borough wide campaign to encourage food recycling.
- Focus on improving street cleaning, including residential areas, not just town centres.
- Review bulky waste charges.
- Invest in enforcement teams to reduce the long-term costs of removing fly-tipping by practicing zero-tolerance on fly-tipping and those who litter with the support of new investment in CCTV and by bringing prosecutions against those who spoil our borough.

This will include measures to act against those who fly tip or dump rubbish at mini recycling centres, in council car parks and other persistent fly-tipping areas.

- Investigate the introduction of 'Smart' litter bins so that the council is aware when bins are full and require collection.
- Carry out a review of policies in place at the two refuse/recycling centres to ensure recycling can be maximised and that the policies support the council's efforts to reduce fly-tipping.

Parking/ Highways/Transport

The Labour Government has recently provided more certainty in Local government finance and more funding dealing with potholes, a Labour Council would campaign to improve public transport in Bexley and improve active travel options in Bexley. In addition, we would work to invest more to improve the borough highways and pavements, which have been left in a shocking state after years of underinvestment by the Conservative Council.

A Labour council will:

- Review our parking charges and policies to ensure they achieve the balance between protecting residential parking and supporting our town centres.
- Increase funding above existing planned expenditure to renew roads and pavements.
- Make streets safer around our schools.
- Lobby for the maximum amount of TfL and Government funding to assist in the reduction of road casualty and fatality numbers and to increase the number of residents, walking and cycling in the borough.
- Lobby Network Rail to ensure outstanding works on road and foot bridges within their ownership are carried out and proper lighting and accessibility is provided.
- Substantially increase car clubs, including through the planning process, to reduce car usage by offering an alternative to private car ownership.
- Promote public transport infrastructure in Bexley including closing the deal to bring the Docklands Light Railway to Belvedere.
- Pressure the Treasury and Department of Transport and work with London

government to deliver Crossrail to Ebbsfleet.

- Develop segregated transport links to improve transport connectivity in the borough and integrate them with rapid transits links in neighbouring boroughs.
- Lobby the Government, to bring national rail routes operating in the borough into the Transport for London family, to ensure metro services all week round and to bring about improved levels of staffing on transport services and fully accessible train stations.
- Lobby the Mayor of London to develop new river crossings integrated with options to extend public transport at the same time.
- We would review remaining areas of the borough that have high levels of air pollution and develop an action plan to identify measures to reduce it.
- Work with TfL and the Mayor of London to improve existing bus routes and introduce new bus routes to improve connectivity across the borough, including extension of the SL11 into Bexley and to improve Night Bus provision.
- Thameslink services to stop at Belvedere and Erith.
- Work to improve public transport accessibility for all groups in the community.
- Work with London Labour Councils to keep the Freedom pass for older residents, with no changes.

Grass cutting / Grounds maintenance

- A Labour council will work with new contractor to review the current arrangements to maximise the number of grass cuts per year and to ensure the promised number of grass cuts take place.
- Review weed spraying methods.
- Ensure contracted workers are paid decent wages.

Leisure centres

Leisure centres deliver key activities across the borough but are working in a more competitive market. It is crucial that the 3 centres offer good sporting facilities at a fair cost, to ensure more active and healthier residents.

A Labour council will:

- Carry out a review of the offer available at our leisure centres to understand where it may be able to be expanded and to support the retention of long-term sporting facilities across the three sites.

Community centres

After years of underinvestment, neglect, and poor management, it is time to take a fresh approach with our community centres and review how they are managed and operated to work better to achieve better outcomes for residents and help outreach and prevention.

A Labour council will:

- Change the current 'ground rent and go away' operating model and deliver a new model to modernise these centres so they are fit for purpose.



Parks/Open Spaces

Bexley residents cherish parks and open spaces, and we would work to improve the 103 parks and Open Spaces in the borough and work with new grounds maintenance contractor to deliver better outcomes for Bexley residents.

A Labour council will:

- Carry out a review of all the facilities on offer in all the boroughs parks and playgrounds including the availability of bins (including 'Smart' bins), toilets, and catering facilities to encourage increased usage of our parks and open spaces.
- Develop a programme to introduce more play equipment that can be used by children with disabilities across the borough and to produce a key of these facilities to help parents to identify the facilities on offer for their children.



IMPROVING OUR COUNCIL

Council Finances

Local government finance is in a precarious position following years of Conservative cuts coupled with rising demand for services. The new Labour Government has made a start in providing more certainty for local government funding.

A Labour council will:

- Not Increase Council Tax above government policy
- Change Fee and Charges annual implementation to align with the calendar year, instead of the existing financial year which will allow for more effective evaluation of income targets.

Bringing services back in house – a strategic approach to procurement

Bexley's Tory Council has outsourced almost all of its services, as the default option in recent decades from grass cutting to bin collections, from home care to leisure services. In handing over control of the services we all rely on they have compromised on the quality of those services, while private businesses make huge profits at the expense of our services.

A Labour council will:

- Develop a responsible and strategic procurement policy, and where appropriate we would seek to return services in-house, if they offer value to the taxpayer and deliver better services and look to invest to save to deliver better outcomes for residents.

Contact your council/customer service

Residents across the borough are growing frustrated by the inability to reach the council about services they pay council tax for. Whether it is a missed bin, checking details of library opening hours, or to complain about a planning application, residents should be able to

reach the council and receive info by phone, by email or in information on our website.

A Labour council will:

- Review how residents contact the council to ensure they receive the best possible service.
- Improve the content of Bexley magazine and investigate alternative options to communicate more effectively with residents.

Staff morale

The New Labour government has brought in measures to deal with the strikes, improve workers' pay and protect workers rights. We would ensure that our staff are treated fairly recognising their commitment to their jobs and ensuring that Bexley Council is an attractive place to work.

A Labour council will:

- Work to become an accredited Living Wage employer, including any contracted services, and ensure that action is taken to address the gender pay gap and to ensure that our workforce is diverse and represents our borough, particularly at senior levels.

Democracy and decision making

Bexley's democratic structures do not allow for proper engagement from residents or scrutiny from opposition councillors. The council should always be able to defend and debate the decisions it takes.

A Labour council will:

- Undertake a Democracy Review, to ensure that our community and elected representatives have a proper say in decisions being taken and allow for better and more effective scrutiny than at present.





CONTACT US:

bexleylabour.org.uk

contact@bexleylabour.org.uk

020 8304 0762

Campaign Centre, 67 Pickford Lane,
Bexleyheath DA7 4RN

Bexley  **Labour**

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