labour.org.uk

Vote Labour

Please display in your window

Your 2021 Cambridge Labour City Council Report

A message from Cllr Anna Smith, Labour Leader of Cambridge City Council

I am delighted to introduce this annual report from your Labour city councillors, my first as Council Leader.

The local elections on May 5th are your chance to choose the candidates who will help deliver the Cambridge you want to see.

Last year in our manifesto we promised to work hard to tackle the climate and biodiversity emergencies, to address poverty and inequality, to build council homes, help the homeless, and maintain our core services in the face of Tory cuts.

Tackling climate change and protecting and enhancing biodiversity is central to our vision. Cambridge now has a detailed plan to become a net zero carbon council by 2030, 20 years before the Government's totally inadequate 2050 target.

In this leaflet, we are reporting back to you on our pledges, showing just a few examples of the difference a Labour council makes to residents' lives, led by a fantastic team of Labour councillors.

Labour in Cambridge is all about ***actions.*** We are proud of our record, but we know there is so much more to do, especially in the face of the cost of living crisis.

It's only by voting Labour on May 5th that you can ensure this vision continues, and help create One Cambridge Fair For All.

Anna Smith

Labour took joint control of the county council in May 2021, and in just 12 months, here are their top ten achievements.

- **Free school meals for all eligible Cambridgeshire children**
- **£20 straight into the pocket of every benefit claimant in Cambridgeshire**
- **More money for libraries**
- **20 mph zones and school streets to tackle antisocial driving**
- **Following Cambridge City's example by paying all council employees a Real Living Wage**
- **A climate strategy for a net zero council by 2030 and a net zero county by 2045**
- **More money for road maintenance and repair**
- **More care home beds for the winter**
- **Council Tax exemptions for all care leavers**
- **£2 million per year programme to tackle homelessness in the areas where rough sleeping is highest**

Printed by Greatledge Printers, Gorebrook Works, Pink Bank Lane, Longsight, Manchester M12 5GH. Promoted by Leo Chapman on behalf of Cambridge Labour Party all at Alex Wood Hall, Norfolk Street, Cambridge, CB1 2LD

On addressing the climate emergency, we have:

Driven progress towards becoming **a net zero council** by cutting carbon emissions from our own estate and operations by 21.7% (down 44.3% on the 2014/5 baseline)

Initiated a **£1.7 million de-carbonisation scheme** in our swimming pools to reduce emissions from Parkside pool by 37.5% and from Abbey Pool by 47.5%

Reduced the carbon emissions and air pollution from our waste and recycling collection with the introduction of a second electric bin lorry

Installed 21 new electric charging points for taxis to support the move to electric vehicles, cutting air pollution

Updated the council's climate rating tool to ensure that all strategies, policies and projects are now measured against our 2030 net zero carbon target as well as their overall climate impact, putting us **in the top 10% of UK councils**

Introduced carbon literacy training for all city council staff and elected members

Introduced a weekly food waste collection trial in **9205 households across Greater Cambridgeshire**

Delivered a high-performing refuse collection service to residents, with **99.8% of bins successfully collected** despite ongoing staffing pressures as a result of the pandemic

Responded to residents' concerns about fly-tipping, clearing up 2,300 reported incidents, and ran 19 free neighbourhood clean-up events between July 2021 and April 2022

Worked with local partners, such as Action on Energy Cambridgeshire, to **make home retrofit accessible to more residents**

On the biodiversity emergency and planning for a more sustainable city, we have:

Trialled **alternative, low-carbon methods of maintaining our open spaces** such as using heavy horses to harrow Stourbridge Common

Initiated **a 12-month herbicide-free trial** in Newnham and Arbury wards, building on our 2019/20 ban on herbicide use on parks and open spaces

Planted 594 trees in 2021, plus 269 Free Trees for Babies, 91 trees under the Neighbourhood Canopy Campaign, 260 trees on Logan's Meadow Nature Reserve, 35 on Paradise Nature Reserve and 600 in East Chesterton's Tiny Forest

Protected and enhanced nature across the city, building 10 bee banks,11 bat boxes and 230 metres of beetle banks. We've also planted **5740 m2 of insect-friendly wildflower meadows,** planted 320 m2 of native woodland bulbs and managed 80,000 m2 of our open spaces as long grass areas

Collaborated with local residents' groups to win a third Green Flag status for the city at Jesus Green

Maintained our **open spaces for physical and mental health,** including arts projects for local children in North Cambridge

Continued our investment in a sustainable food system, planning for a permanent community food centre and delivering **151 new allotment plots**

Successfully submitted bids to the Cambridge and Peterborough Combined Authority to enhance Logan's Meadow and **further protect our chalk streams**

Ensured that biodiversity is considered in any development through a supplementary planning document (SPD) allied with a new five-year biodiversity strategy

On tackling poverty and promoting food and fuel justice, we have:

Awarded **£1.7 million in grants to community and voluntary groups.** This includes over £300,000 to the Cambridge and District Citizens' Advice Service to help them provide free legal, debt and money advice to local people

Promoted food justice by supporting our network of local food hubs, distributing over 200 tonnes of food to people in need, and started the work to make Cambridge a Right to Food City

Invested **£200k to establish a community food centre and community kitchen,** housing it in council properties since 2020

Tackled digital poverty by funding groups such as Cambridge Online, **helping to get over 700 households online** and giving 500 of those a digital device

Led the campaign to encourage all Cambridge employers to pay the Real Living Wage as a minimum standard, meaning that over 1000 workers in our city have received a pay rise, and started the work to make Cambridge a Real Living Wage Place

Funded groups that help families, young people and individuals in need, including Red Hen, the Meadows Children and Family Wing, Abbey People and Cambridge United Charitable Trust

Provided free events such as Music in the Parks and sports sessions, because health, culture and wellbeing activities shouldn't only be for those who can pay

Developed and supported community lending schemes which will reduce waste and help cut bills

Added an extra £75,000 to our Discretionary Housing Payment Fund to help council tenants who are struggling with their rent

Tackled fuel poverty and helped to cut energy bills by putting roof insulation in every council home and investing in an ambitious retrofitting programme

On building a new generation of council homes and tackling homelessness, we have:

Exceeded targets for building new council homes, with 542 completed or started on site, including over 500 by 2021, 12 months ahead of schedule, with plans for a further 1000 by 2031

Initiated an **ambitious retrofitting programme** including £3.2 million scheme to retrofit 150 1930s solid wall council homes to energy rating 'B', and a £5 million pilot to retrofit 50 homes to net zero carbon

Committed £1 million a year for 5 years from 2019 to improve our estates, including new fencing, security gates and footpath resurfacing, designing out crime with secure cycle stores and bin stores

Increased the proportion of council homes meeting the Decent Homes Standard to a **record high of 96%**

Invested in homelessness services, including our 'Housing First' provision, with 22 self-contained flats and £60,000 management costs

Collaborated with It Takes A City to **improve winter provision for the homeless** beyond intermittent hostel provision, including 20 ensuite rooms

Initiated enforcement action against rogue private landlords, including illegal evictions. Completed 120 HMO inspections and investigated over 200 tenant complaint

Exceeded our target of bringing **at least 20 empty homes back into use** in 2021

Commissioned a report to explore expanding our capacity to provide sub-market housing, particularly to those **(including key workers)** who cannot afford market housing but are low on our Council housing needs register

Pushed developers to meet our affordable homes targets for private housing schemes

On protecting essential services, we have:

Set a balanced budget, which prioritises the needs of all residents, in the face of Tory cuts

Run **one of the most generous Council Tax Reduction schemes in the country,** currently working with over 6500 households

Supported our residents throughout the pandemic, working with mutual aids, voluntary groups, faith groups and businesses to make sure that residents got all possible support and advice during a difficult time

Initiated a Green Infrastructure Programme, ensuring that the climate and biodiversity emergencies are considered in all our future plans

Employed an Economic Development Officer to work with local businesses to restore a vibrant and resilient Cambridge economy, post-pandemic

Supported hundreds of local businesses through the pandemic, with **£50 million in business rates relief** and a further £5 million on a range of grants

Invested in improvements to our council's communications, which will keep residents better informed of work and projects across the city and improve our consultations

Invested in our city centre's infrastructure at the Park Street development, keeping the project on target and on budget

Retained free green bin collections and a successful pest control service, unlike many other councils

Invested £3.5 million in the 'Our Cambridge' transformation programme, which will improve the council's resilience in the face of future challenges

For our local election manifesto, and other policies, please visit our website: **www.cambridgelabour.org.uk**

On tackling inequality and promoting diversity, we have:

Strengthened our commitment to personal safety, winning Purple Flag status in 2019. Retained our Domestic Abuse Housing Alliance accreditation, continued to support the Ask Angela campaign, and pledged action on drink spiking

Run an older people's visiting support service to help with independent living and combat isolation, and funded groups working with older people including Age UK, Care Network and COPE

Built 31 fully wheelchair adapted council homes, exceeding our target of 5% adapted properties, and ensured all new properties are fully accessible

Built Changing Places toilets at Clay Farm and Storey's Field community centres

Pledged support, as a City of Sanctuary, to refugees from Syria, Afghanistan and Ukraine

Supported groups advocating for the rights of our diverse communities, and ensured that EU citizens are aware of their rights

Funded women's groups such Women's Aid, Cambridge Women's Resource Centre, and Rape Crisis, and led a domestic abuse conference for professionals and survivors

Taken a strong stand against anti-GRT hatred and racism, working with Traveller advocacy groups, especially after Jimmy Carr's comments

Commemorated Holocaust Memorial Day, celebrated Black, LGBTQ+, South Asian, Disability and GRT History months; and funded events to celebrate the unseen role of women in Cambridge

Funded LGBT+ groups and events, including Cambridge Pride and the Kite Trust, and continued our commitment to the 'Safer Spaces' campaign