

# The change we need

Hammersmith & Fulham Labour's manifesto  
2014 council elections



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# The change we need

## Introduction

For the last year Hammersmith and Fulham's Labour candidates have been campaigning on five early pledges. We consulted residents about our manifesto irrespective of their usual party political preferences and have taken on board what people have told us.

If elected, there is much we will continue with. We support the tri-borough initiative but think it can be made leaner and more effective. We will cut council taxes and we will stick within the Borough's total spending forecasts that have already been set out.

But there's much that needs changing, too...

The Independent reported that "Hammersmith and Fulham council is the only council out of 11 in London affected by the hospital closures to have supported them"\*. In fact, Conservative councillors voted to back plans to demolish Charing Cross hospital and replace it with what will mainly be a GP-led clinic only 13% its size. They then spent tens of thousands of pounds of tax-payers' money putting out council propaganda that falsely claimed they had "saved" the very hospital they had agreed to demolish.

### Here are our 5 early pledges

**Save our hospitals** The Conservative Council plans to demolish Charing Cross Hospital to build flats for overseas investors. **Labour will block this and defend our hospitals.**

**Cut council tax** The Conservative Council is wasting millions on propaganda, overpaid officials and new Town Hall offices. **Labour will cut Council Tax by ending waste.**

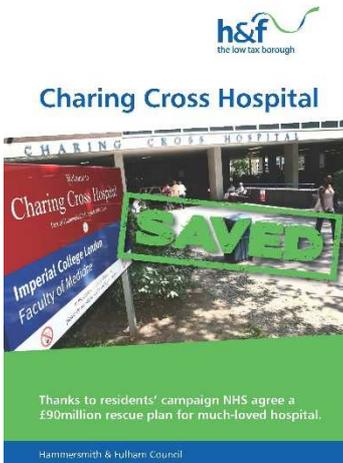
**Homes for residents, not overseas investors** The Conservative Council approves more new homes for overseas investors than local people. **Labour will reverse this and ensure homes are built that residents can afford - and we will support social and private tenants.**

**Defend neighbourhood policing** Since the last election, the Conservative Council has cut police by 32 and slashed the safer neighbourhood teams. **Labour will put police back on the beat.**

**Put residents first, not property speculators** The Conservative Council has put property speculators first and ignores residents. **Labour will give residents a real say with new powers.**



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The Local Government Ombudsman has twice found the Conservative administration guilty of maladministration. Most recently for charging elderly residents living in sheltered housing twice as much for their water supply as H&F Council were buying it for from Thames Water. Last time for refusing to provide the homeless help a young pregnant woman was legally entitled to after she had been badly beaten up by her so-called partner. She was later found terrified - sleeping in a local park a few weeks before she was due to give birth.

Any resident who has engaged with the council about any large planning scheme in their neighbourhood will tell you it was a done deal.

Conservative councillors accept hospitality and allow private un-recorded meetings with the Borough's most controversial developers outside the formal planning processes. And they approve vastly more investment homes for overseas property speculators than homes for local people to live in. People deserve better than this.

We have set out the change we need. Vote for it and we will work with local people to make Hammersmith and Fulham the better borough we all want it to be.

\*18<sup>th</sup> February 2013

# The change we need

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# The change we need

## 1. Saving our hospitals and defending our local NHS

Conservative councillors voted to back plans to demolish Charing Cross Hospital so developers could build flats for property speculators. Labour will block this and defend our hospitals and A&Es.

Unless we can stop the Conservative-backed plans, at least 60% of the Charing Cross Hospital site will become luxury flats, most of which will go to overseas investors. The new building will only be 13% of the size of the current hospital. The UK's leading stroke unit and 450 acute beds will go. The A&E will be downgraded to a minor injuries unit, not taking "blue light" ambulance cases.

### Labour will fight to save the hospital

We will use the council's planning and legal powers to defend Charing Cross Hospital and our local A&E. We will negotiate to preserve acute services, work with independent medical advisers and throw the council's weight behind the resident-led Save Our Hospitals campaign.

### We will help residents stay healthy

We will carry out a public review of residents' access to a GP and act to improve this.

We do not support the loss of community health services at the Milson Road Health Centre and will act to protect this as an NHS site for residents.

Although the council has been given important new powers to shape public health services, the Conservatives have done little to shape these services so they reflect the needs of local residents. We will:

- Sharpen the council's focus on public health
- Offer better support to residents with long-term health problems
- Work with voluntary groups to provide better sports facilities and more activities and restore important health and fitness facilities such as the running track at Hurlingham Park.

Currently, too much NHS, public health and adult social care activity is undertaken separately in silos. We will drive a joined-up approach between doctors and social care professionals, including those working in the area of mental health.

# The change we need

## 2. Cutting council tax and waste, increasing efficiency

H&F raises a staggering £64.5m from stealth taxes such as parking charges. The council also wastes millions on propaganda, overpaid officials and new Town Hall offices. We guarantee to cut taxes and root out waste. We will do this while sticking to the council's current overall spending forecasts - we will not increase spending in one area without matching it with efficiencies elsewhere.

### Cutting council taxes

In these tough times, we do not think that residents can afford to pay more. So we will cut council taxes. Residents pay more under the Conservatives, who have introduced 600 stealth taxes totalling £64.5 million per year.

By entrapping motorists, the council makes the fourth-highest profit in the country from traffic fines. They have increased charges on child care, meals on wheels and home care for the elderly, sick and disabled. They now charge for using a personal trainer in parks and it costs over £60 to play football in Hammersmith Park where it used to be free. They are hurting small shops and offices by charging more for waste collection. Astonishingly, the Conservatives were this year blocked from charging grieving parents up to £1,692 for burying a lost child, which had always been free in the borough. Hammersmith and Fulham is currently a high tax borough.

### Rooting out waste

We have undertaken a thorough review of the council's finances and structure and have identified over £20 million in structural, ongoing waste that we will strip out through root-and-branch organisational change.

### Town hall waste

The Conservative authority employs five of the eight highest-paid local government officials in England and agreed to spend over £7,000 of residents' money on a retirement party for their chief executive. We will:

- Cut the senior management team by reshaping the council into fewer departments to encourage joint working and pooled budgets
- End the current exorbitant pay rises which totalled 16% in one year
- Freeze the use of management consultants, with any consultancy above £5,000 requiring the council leader's approval
- Block the council and its contractors' waste of millions of pounds by the use of former local government employees who have retired on generous settlements returning as full-time "consultants" so they can get around local government pension and employment rules and receive double payments.

# The change we need

## Developers' waste

Conservative councillors are too close to developers. They gifted what is now estimated to be over £200 million worth of council land to a developer to get £35 million of new and unnecessary Town Hall offices.

- We will stop this and re-invest funds in better services and lower charges.
- Across the borough, we will end the cosy relationship with developers and ensure they are required to contribute properly to the area through the Community Infrastructure Levy, Section 106 agreements and planning fees.

## Propaganda waste

The Conservatives spend £5 million on propaganda, including expensive vanity banners hanging from the borough's lamp posts.

- We will end all non-statutory advertising by the council and the use of council funds to promote party politics.

## Doing things differently

Residents should be more involved in decisions that affect them. The Council is also far too centralised, leading to wasteful decisions. We will:

- Establish Ward Panels to commission some local services within the community, with a lead councillor working with each panel to ensure quality and local oversight and generate cost savings
- Undertake a zero-based review of all council activities, stripping out those that don't benefit residents and submitting the results to an expert Critical Friends Board
- Review all contracts over £50,000 a year, seeking opportunities to renegotiate long-term service contracts to improve performance and reduce cost
- Undertake joint activity with other public sector bodies outside of local government to maximise efficiency through shared procurement and contract management
- Carry out a review of the use expensive agency workers and unnecessary zero hour contracts, cutting the use of agency workers to all but emergency situations
- Merge all finance, procurement, legal, property and HR staff into a single cross-council back-office support function
- Ensure staff are trained to listen and understand residents and are focussed on delivering customer satisfaction to all residents no matter what their circumstances or disability.

## Working better with other boroughs

The tri-borough concept has benefits, but it has been implemented too narrowly and has no independent oversight. We will:

- Establish an independent Critical Friends Board that will review the current structure to establish where it is working and where it is not, seeking further efficiencies
- Extend to other interested councils areas of joint working that have saved cost without harming services
- Work with other councils and public authorities in areas not covered by the tri-borough.

## 3. Supporting homes for residents, not overseas investors

There is a housing crisis. The charity Shelter says average Londoners in their 20s have just a 15% chance of getting onto the London property ladder before they retire. Those who need affordable homes to rent struggle to get anything suitable in the private or social housing sectors. Locally, our Conservative council has refused to build any new homes to rent, failed to deliver on home ownership and approves “buy-to-leave” homes for overseas investors rather than truly affordable homes for residents. It has also offered up a third of all council housing for demolition. Labour will change this. We will protect social housing, improve private renting conditions and provide more new affordable homes for residents to buy or rent.

### Using planning powers to deliver new homes for residents to buy or rent

The Conservatives have consistently used the ‘three dragons’ and other financial modelling to sidestep the GLA’s and borough’s planning guidelines and thus avoid building homes for residents to buy or rent. Labour will reverse this and will:

- Strengthen the planning criteria for developers to build social rented homes and low-cost homes to buy that residents can afford
- Use planning and legal powers to ensure new homes built in the borough go to residents and are not marketed as investment units for investors
- Join Camden and Islington councils in examining means of applying charges to “buy-to-leave” speculators who buy homes and leave them empty
- Work with reputable housing associations and developers to provide more homes that residents can afford to buy
- Review the borough’s land holdings and make maximum use of them for new affordable house building
- Lobby the government to provide more opportunities for sustainable home ownership
- Adapt planning policies to encourage the building of larger homes to help with overcrowding.

### Supporting the squeezed 20- and 30-somethings

- We will ensure homes are built that first-time home seekers resident in the borough can buy or rent.
- We recognise that ‘generation rent’ needs action to improve housing conditions in the private rented sector and will take action to do that.
- We will provide new means for home ownership

### Ensuring decent homes in the private rented sector

- We will work with tenants and private sector landlords to establish an ‘H&F Landlords Charter’ that will license landlords and agree commitments to best practice on rents, housing standards, charges, tenants’ deposit protection and security of tenure.
- We will prosecute rogue landlords.

# The change we need

- We will explore a borough-wide compulsory licensing scheme for private landlords to help improve standards and tackle hazardous living conditions.
- Just as New York City successfully uses rent controls, we will seek agreement on a London Living Rent and will lobby the government to introduce legislation that is fair to both tenants and landlords and which limits exorbitant rent rises.

## Protecting council house residents' homes from demolition and improving services

The Conservatives have proved to be unsuitable custodians of Hammersmith and Fulham's council housing. They have offered a third of it to property developers for demolition and have described all residents in social housing as 'locked in a culture of expectancy and dependency'.

- Labour will take immediate measures to protect council homes now and in the future.
- We will work with council housing residents to give them ownership of the land their homes are on.
- Each year the Conservatives have hiked rents and service charges up by significantly more than inflation. Labour will take action to keep rents and service charges low.

Labour will also:

- Provide new opportunities for secure rented tenures
- Provide new opportunities for council residents to own their homes
- Give residents power to terminate housing management contracts, buy in housing services and determine the level of their neighbourhood services (e.g. concierges and anti-crime measures)
- Take action to stop council homes being bought by buy-to-let investors.

## Fairness for leaseholders

We will:

- Defend resident leaseholders against exorbitant charges
- Set up a Leaseholders Commission for resident leaseholders that will agree an 'H&F Leaseholders' Charter' which gives new rights and controls to resident leaseholders.

## Council house residents advice and representation

The Conservatives have cut all independent housing advice and curtailed representation of council tenants and leaseholders. But the council still charges residents for these services.

- Labour will work with residents to change this and establish new and effective residents' advice and representation.

## Tackling the bedroom tax, housing benefits and Local Housing Allowance cuts

Labour will:

- Mitigate the Conservative/Lib Dem government's bedroom tax and support those unfairly targeted (Ed Miliband has pledged to scrap the bedroom tax)
- Negotiate with private sector leaseholders to limit residents being forced out of the borough
- Support those unfairly targeted by housing benefit and Local Housing Allowance cuts.

# The change we need

## Encouraging new types of home ownership

We will:

- Lobby the government to provide more opportunities for sustainable home ownership, including a new entitlement to a share of rented council and housing association property which tenants can cash in and sell back to the landlord
- Work with other councils to encourage lenders to maximise the flow of sustainable mortgages to first-time local buyers
- Investigate schemes to guarantee buyers' deposits to help buyers get their first home

## Improving sheltered housing

The Conservatives have cut a third of all sheltered housing wardens, were found guilty of maladministration for charging some residents twice as much for their water as the council was buying it for from Thames Water and have increased sheltered housing rents to twice those of general council housing. Labour will:

- Give new powers to residents and work with them to improve the quality of housing and reduce costs
- Work with the NHS and others to deliver new types of private and social sheltered housing which include on-site home and medical care.

## Backing supported housing

- Labour will work with providers, the NHS and other agencies to ensure that the most vulnerable in our community can live in a supportive housing environment.

## Working with housing associations and assured tenants

We will:

- Work with housing associations that have tenants on their boards, a genuine tenant-involvement scheme, a commitment to low and affordable rents and a high standard of housing management, including addressing anti-social behaviour
- Develop close partnerships with housing associations and insist that they pro-actively seek land for the building of low-cost affordable housing to rent and buy
- Fight to preserve the security of tenure and other rights of assured tenants

## Tackling housing supply

Labour will:

- Work with other local authorities and agencies to encourage institutional investment in new developments
- Work with the government, other local authorities and agencies on innovative new financing of new developments.

## Reducing empty homes

- Labour will take a variety of measures to bring empty and derelict homes back into use.

# The change we need

## Attacking homelessness

Conservative councillors have been found guilty of maladministration by the Ombudsman for mistreatment of the homeless. They closed down volunteer and professional homeless support, banned winter night shelters, sold off homeless hostels and described homeless people as “a law and order issue”. They have also consistently breached government rules on leaving children in unsuitable B&B hostels.

Homelessness comes in many different forms. Labour will take measures to tackle its causes, support those suffering the many different types of crises that have led to their homelessness, and reduce homelessness in our borough. We will:

- Work with homeless charities, faith communities and homelessness prevention professionals to provide safe, warm accommodation for homeless individuals and homeless families
- Act to help people in danger of homelessness
- Take measures to support homeless people out of homelessness
- Take action to ensure homeless children are provided with suitable homes and support
- Make sure that young homeless people have safe accommodation and access to police-checked mentors who will support their wellbeing and help them back into education or employment.

## 4. Backing business and a strong local economy

We are on the side of small local firms and local retailers and will champion business in our borough. Councils are a significant part of local economies and a major employer. They have an important role as custodians of high streets and other local amenities. Unfortunately, Conservative councillors' complacency means that small business and high street retailers in our borough are suffering. We will end the council's ideological, hands-off approach and will actively support local businesses, young people entering the workforce and our high streets.

### Supporting small firms

Labour will run a council that is sensitive to the needs of enterprise and is pro-business, not pro-regulation. We will insist that council officials treat local firms not as targets for fees and charges but as engines of economic growth, which need to be supported.

- *Procurement:* The Conservative council spends many millions of pounds on buying in goods and services without ensuring that this supports our local economy. Under Labour, while still keeping costs down, council procurement will take a "community benefit" approach that supports local jobs and businesses and develops young people's skills through apprenticeships. At a first step, we will identify and remove barriers that small firms face in trying to win council contracts.
- *Approach:* We will require council officials to adopt a business-aware, bottom-up approach towards compliance and to identify and remove unnecessary and damaging regulations, working directly with local firms, charities and social enterprises.
- *Finance:* To stimulate business start-ups, we will develop new local enterprise partnerships and encourage local credit union finance.
- *Small business voice:* Local firms' voice has been too weak under this council. We will strengthen it by insisting that a Small Business Impact Survey is first undertaken to assess all policy proposals for their impact on the local economy and small businesses.

### Boosting the third sector

Charities, small firms and social enterprises can provide the most innovative solutions to local challenges. However, they are often squeezed out from bidding for council contracts due to bidding costs. We will redesign the procurement process to ensure that they have a fair chance.

### Backing local jobs

The council is a major local employer and should encourage local employment by its contractors and sub-contractors and in major developments. Labour will:

- Set local employment and apprenticeship targets in Section 106 agreements and in council contracts

# The change we need

- Bring together the borough's major employers, including the three football clubs and the media organisations, to focus on developing youth services and apprenticeships that get our young residents into good jobs with good career prospects.

## Improving our high streets

Our high streets are significant employers, particularly of young people. They should be vibrant places to shop and eat. Sadly, the council is overseeing the decline of some of our most important high streets and parades. In a 500-metre stretch of North End Road alone, there are 20 empty shops and 17 betting and loan shops. Labour will:

- Set up Ward Panels, which will work with local firms and landlords to develop a long-term vision to attract new businesses and shoppers to our high streets, including greater retail diversity
- Stop the clustering of gambling and loan shops, which damage existing business and deter new investment by making our high streets less attractive to visit
- Ensure that parking policies encourage rather than deter shopping at local high streets
- Promote inventive uses of empty shops for the benefit of the local community until new businesses are found.

## Stimulating arts and culture

The borough is fortunate to enjoy excellent local arts and cultural facilities. These enrich, educate and improve lives and add greatly to making this borough such a wonderful place to live. Labour is committed to protecting the arts and widening their appeal to all groups of local residents.

- The borough has been kindly bequeathed some excellent art collections such as the Cecil French Bequest. We will work with others to explore how they can be publicly displayed so that residents can appreciate them.
- The Lyric Theatre is the borough's predominant cultural centre. We will continue to support it, the improvements being made to its buildings and its work with young people.
- We are fortunate to have LAMDA, excellent theatres, comedy clubs, cinemas and cultural centres in Hammersmith and Fulham. We will encourage greater working together to achieve wider appeal and greater access to the arts for all residents.
- Labour has already campaigned to protect Riverside Studios from the Mount Anvil development. We will take measures to ensure that it continues to be preserved as a centre of arts and cultural excellence in the future.
- We will take measures to modernise and widen the appeal of the borough's libraries.

## 5. Greening the borough, being fairer to drivers and better for cycling

Hammersmith and Fulham is a green and beautiful borough. However, the Conservatives are threatening this with park sales, which started in 2013 with Hammersmith Park in the north of the borough. The Council is also using our open space and our roads as a means to raise income through charges, fees and fines. Instead of working to protect cyclists and pedestrians, officers are incentivised to entrap motorists using one of the largest arrays of CCTV cameras in the UK. Labour will protect our green spaces, improve our environment and tackle causes of climate change. We will work with resident, motorist and cycling groups to make our roads safer and less congested through good planning rather than entrapment.

### Protecting our parks

The council should be a trusted custodian of our parks. Instead they have signed over Hammersmith Park to private developers, who now charge £60 for football where it used to be free. They have even tried to license Ravenscourt Park for raves, late night drinking and wrestling. Labour will:

- Put our parks in a residents' trust to prevent them being sold off
- Maintain fair access that keeps our parks open to all and restricts their use for private events and by out-of-borough schools.

### Safer residential streets

Labour introduced 20 mph Home Zones in many residential neighbourhoods across the borough - such as the Grove Home Zone. We will:

- Extend the Home Zone programme so that all residential streets, not trunk roads, become 20 mph
- Take measures to slow traffic and cut rat-running in residential streets
- Take measures to improve safety for pedestrians and make our neighbourhoods better places to live.

### Enhancing the borough's environment and cutting energy bills

- We will help residents and local businesses cut their energy bills and reduce their carbon footprint, helping people switch to cheaper energy providers by promoting the "Big London Energy Switch".
- We will also practice what we preach by incentivising council staff to reduce the council's electricity bill by at least ten per cent.
- Greener cars are good for us all. So parking permits for hybrid or electric vehicles will be free
- We aim to increase the ports for charging electric cars and will encourage innovative car sharing and car clubs and the use of electric cars.
- We will continue to oppose the building of a third runway at Heathrow.

# The change we need

## Cleaner air

Air pollution in parts of the borough already exceeds European limits adding to the health risk for residents and damaging our planet. Labour will:

- Properly monitor and measure air pollution
- Require the council's planning department to consider the impact of new developments on air quality and ensure developers takes measures to cut air pollution
- Ensure that council departments work together to ensure they act as one to cut air pollution
- Work with other boroughs, the London Mayor, government and the European Union to cut air pollution.

## Ensuring cleaner streets and better recycling

- Labour will reduce fly-tipping and tackle littering and dog fouling and use the fines to provide better street cleaning.
- We will make it easier for everyone to recycle as much waste as possible. We will explore community composting of food waste and food growing projects on our estates
- In order to reduce the amount of commercial waste sent to landfill, we will expect a more constructive attitude from council employees towards business.

## Making driving and parking fairer

- Our Conservative council has a record for entrapping innocent motorists - fines for moving traffic offences have increased 18-fold in six years. We will work with resident, motorist and cycling groups to reintroduce fairness on our roads.
- We will also ensure that new developments don't take parking spaces away from existing residents.
- We will make it easier for family and friends to visit local residents by exploring the replacement of the council's complicated Smart Visitor scheme with simple parking vouchers that residents can buy for others.
- QPR, Chelsea FC and Fulham FC match days continue to cause parking problems for local residents in some areas, particularly just outside existing zones with special restrictions, and we will work with Ward Panels to address this where required.

## Encouraging more and safer cycling

- We support the introduction of Barclay Bikes across the borough and are pleased these bikes have enjoyed cross-party support since Labour first introduced the pilot scheme for them.
- We support the London Cycling Campaign's call for more safe space for cycling in the borough to ensure greater safety for children, pedestrians and cyclists.
- We will take action to make sure our pavements are safe for pedestrians

## Backing Hammersmith flyunder

- Conservative councillors initially voted down Labour's proposal to give Hammersmith a new "flyunder" and remove the flyover, which is unsightly and blocks access between neighbourhoods and the river. Labour will deliver the flyunder to reduce traffic congestion and reconnect large parts of Hammersmith to the riverside.

# The change we need

## Improving public transport

- We will support older residents by maintaining the Freedom Pass and work with other London boroughs to block Conservative proposals to end it.
- We will lobby Transport for London to improve north-south bus routes.

## Preventing flooding and the Super Sewer

- More needs to be done to protect our homes from flooding. We will campaign to make Thames Water stop sewage flooding streets and basements.
- We will also stop the growing concreting over of open space in order to prevent the increased run-off of surface water, and will insist that new parking areas and hard standings are rainwater permeable
- Local Conservatives have done a bad job of negotiating over the Super Sewer and were outplayed by the London Mayor and MPs south of the river. They are now spending residents' money to prepare for the Super Sewer's construction. Labour opposes Super Sewer works being in our borough and will seek to stop this.

## 6. Putting children and families first

Too many families in Hammersmith and Fulham do not get their child into their preferred school. Instead of supporting good schools to address this issue, however, the Conservatives have voted to close Sullivan Primary School, one of the best primary schools in London. Labour will work with schools of all types, including free schools and academies, to promote excellent teaching and the best outcomes for the borough's children. We will make sure that the area's most vulnerable children are well looked after and safe.

### Every school matters

Labour supports excellent teaching and learning in every school, be it a community school, free school, academy or church school. We will:

- Work to attract and retain good teachers, which may include offering support with accommodation
- Encourage all schools to develop strong links and share resources with the local community
- Ensure that faith schools serve their local communities
- Start planning now for how the borough can best meet the growing need for more primary school and high quality local secondary school places.

### Child care

- Excellent child care is expensive and difficult to find. We will carry out a public enquiry via the new policy and accountability committee to review how we can bring cost down and increase the availability of high quality child care that suits the demands of hard working people in the modern economy.
- We will work with the government, employers, schools and the third sector to deliver better, more affordable childcare.

### Saving Sullivan School

The Conservative council is forcing the award-winning Sullivan Primary School in Fulham to close and merge on the site of another school against the wishes of Sullivan's parents and children. We are appalled at the contempt this shows for local people. We have instructed officials to have provided options for a new Labour administration to save the Sullivan School site for Sullivan School. We view this as an urgent priority and expect officials to have done as we have asked.

### Backing parental choice

We will:

- Be active in helping parents choose the best school for their child - this will include online information and advice and events for families to find out more about schools, as well as play and youth work opportunities
- Create strong links with parents' groups, including those for children with learning disabilities and complex needs.

# The change we need

## Helping children be healthy

We will:

- Help more children participate in sport and have free access to active play, through local sports partnerships and working with sports clubs in the borough
- Support schools, children's centres and youth clubs to provide healthy food and stop any child going hungry
- Work with fast food outlets near schools to improve the nutritional content of their food
- Support communities in local streets to facilitate temporary closures to become play streets.

## Improving children's chances in life

- In our first year, working closely with children's centres, health visitors, families and others, we will develop a strategy to promote early intervention and reduce child poverty.
- We will automatically enrol all the borough's children in a library to encourage them to read for pleasure and thus expand their chances in life.
- We will identify young carers and ensure their support needs are being met.
- We will urgently review the Conservatives' cuts to Sure Start with the aim of re-establishing an effective Sure Start service.

## Supporting disabled children and their families

Disabled children and their families often require extra support to lead ordinary lives. We will:

- Ensure that services are designed to meet the additional needs of disabled children and their families
- Offer strong support to the borough's outstanding special schools
- Support mainstream schools to become better at supporting children who have disabilities or other physical and mental health needs
- Target public health resources on early speech and language intervention.

## Joining up transition planning

- Young people and their families tell us that the transition from children's to adult services can feel like falling off a cliff. Once a child turns 14, a Labour council will require adult and children's services to work together on transition planning.

## 7. Social inclusion and improving adult social care

The Conservatives have treated old people and vulnerable adults on a low income shamefully by charging them more for essential services. They have reintroduced home care charges and raised them to £12 per hour, and have increased meals on wheels charges by above inflation to among the highest in London.

### Reducing charges

With the cost savings we will make by reducing top management, chopping council propaganda and attacking waste, we will abolish home care charges and will review meals on wheels charges.

### Ensuring high home care standards

We will:

- Ensure that users of the council's home care services receive high standards of care by giving service users, their carers and families a formal voice in ensuring that home care providers deliver those standards
- Improve the council's monitoring of home care contracts - we will not renew contracts if standards are not being met
- Introduce a whistle blowers' charter to protect staff with concerns about standards of care.

### Eligibility for services

- We will maintain the current "upper moderate" eligibility criteria for access to adult social care.
- Within the financial constraints in which the council has to operate, we will also work with user and residents' groups to review how best to manage the future quality and availability of services.

### Improving housing, supporting mental health

- People with learning and other disabilities, and the family members who care for them, need decent homes. We will consult with users and other stakeholders to ensure that we are able to put in place the most modern, appropriate supported housing for disabled people.
- We will promote better mental health through joint working between adult social care, the NHS and the voluntary sector.

### Social inclusion

We will:

- Set up a cross-cutting social inclusion unit that will tackle exclusion
- Work with the third sector and users' groups to make sure that the council improves all aspects of how it works to tackle exclusion
- Develop partnerships with government agencies, the third sector, business and others to use resources better and take a more focused and joined-up approach towards tackling social exclusion.

# The change we need

## Food banks

We will:

- Support local food banks and take measures to sort out the causes of food poverty
- Make the council sort out its ineffective processes that contribute to food poverty.

## Community transport

The reduction of community transport services has been particularly criticised. It has increased isolation and been detrimental to people's wellbeing.

- We will review this with the aim of providing a mix of cost-effective modern community transport services that meet a variety of needs.

## 8. Creating more opportunities for young people

Our borough's young people are often marginalised. A Labour council will engage with young people, not stigmatise them. Labour will change the council's tone of voice and provide services that encourage opportunity, good citizenship, learning and development.

### Engaging with young people

We will:

- Create a Youth Mayor and give young people a formal role in scrutinising and improving the services they receive from the council
- Stop the sell-off of our community centres and work with young people and partners such as the borough's thriving media, theatre and arts community to create genuinely attractive youth activities and clubs
- Maintain and improve our children's centres, in particular the Sure Start centres
- Work with local sports clubs and leading athletes to offer an exciting array of sporting activities for young people
- Facilitate more activity for young people after school and during the holidays, focusing particularly on the areas of highest child poverty.

### Preparing for the world of work

We will:

- Start to raise children's aspiration from an early age, with careers weeks for children and parents in primary schools
- Improve careers advice for older children, including by encouraging school visits by young people who have completed apprenticeships and vocational qualifications
- Encourage local employers to offer Saturday jobs to young people.

### Tomorrow's entrepreneurs

We will take practical measures to support young people aspiring to start their own successful businesses:

- We will work with schools and businesses to develop an enterprise unit that will help young people understand more about business
- We will facilitate accredited business mentoring for young people
- We will take measures so that the council supports rather than hinders young entrepreneurs.

### Supporting voluntary groups that support young people

We applaud the many local voluntary groups from the Scouts to the volunteer centre and will support them.

## 9. Tackling crime and anti-social behaviour, boosting police on the beat

Since the last election, the Conservatives have cut police by 32 and only last year slashed the safer neighbourhood teams by more than half, removing this reassuring presence in many neighbourhoods. Under Labour, community policing reduced crime. Abandoning it has led to localised increases in burglary and other crimes. Labour will put police back on the beat.

### Tackling neighbourhood policing

We will:

- Reverse local police cuts
- Take measures to re-establish high profile neighbourhood policing
- Draw on existing and future section 106 agreements with developers to deliver additional police
- Enable the new Ward Panels to use ward budgets to invest in extra policing if that is a local priority, and to work with Neighbourhood Watch schemes to maximise their effectiveness
- Create a new knife crime task force and support the work of the Hammersmith and Fulham Drug Squad

### Prioritising CCTV

- We will consult with tenants and residents about the use of CCTV in their areas and prioritise the extension of CCTV in areas of high crime and anti-social behaviour

### Cutting environmental crime

We will:

- Move the policing of environmental crime such as noise to a Community Safety Unit to make it more effective
- Increase the number of noise patrol officers providing cover between 9pm and 6am.

### Reducing public nuisance

We will:

- Together with local and park police, develop a policy for responsible dog ownership to tackle dangerous dogs, dog fouling and letting dogs off leads where this puts children's safety at risk
- Continue to support the controlled drinking zone
- Maintain the sensible use of the legislation relating to dispersal zones.

# The change we need

## Other crime measures

We will:

- Recognise strong local concern over Stop and Search by working with police to monitor the local impact of the practice alongside an ongoing government review
- Appoint a councillor to be a Victims' Champion, working with police and council officers to improve the ease with which victims can report crime or anti-social behaviour and their experience when they do so
- Give our new Ward Panels access to police and council officers to monitor patterns in crime and anti-social behaviour.
- Promote the use of mobile CCTV cameras by police and the council to address areas with short-term or emerging crime and anti-social behaviour problems
- Review the effectiveness of the Youth Offending Team within the new tri-borough arrangement to ensure the quality of the service has not been impaired.

## 10. Renewing local democracy and giving residents new powers

The Conservative council puts property speculators first and ignores residents. Policy is developed in private and local input is requested as a tick-box exercise only after decisions have already been made. Labour will give residents a real say with new powers.

### Giving residents new powers

- Labour will set up new Ward Panels made up of residents, local associations, small business groups, social enterprises, youth organisations and local councillors. These will develop neighbourhood improvement plans for each ward.
- We will devolve powers, budgets and resources to the panels so that action can be delivered cheaper, quicker and more efficiently.

### Renewing our democracy

- We will end the Conservatives' culture of secrecy and will open up council decision-making and policy-making by setting up new Policy and Accountability Committees, cutting all but the statutory scrutiny committees.
- Each new Policy and Accountability Committee will have sufficient support to hold the administration to account and take a full part in developing policy.
- We will give residents and users' groups co-opted roles on the relevant Policy and Accountability Committees.

### Devolving power to neighbourhoods

- We will give greater powers to residents of the council's housing estates across a broad range of areas.

### Promoting volunteering and the third sector

- There are many skilled people in Hammersmith and Fulham looking to share their talents with the local communities. Through our new Ward Panels, we will match volunteers with those most in need of their skills and experience.
- The third sector has suffered in recent years, as the Conservatives have evicted charities from their offices and denied funding to critical services like the Hammersmith and Fulham Law Centre. Labour will reinvigorate the council's relationship with local charities, integrating them into the new Ward Panels and the scrutiny process where relevant and encouraging them to bid for council contracts.

## 11. Reforming planning and giving residents new powers

The planning process is broken. Conservative councillors have a cosy relationship with developers, enjoying free hospitality and taking planning decisions that reward overseas speculators rather than local residents. They and their officials have many meetings with developers that are not minuted or recorded prior to the start of the official public consultation. Labour will change that, banning hospitality, reforming the planning process and giving residents a meaningful say over developments in their area through Ward Panels.

### Banning hospitality from developers

Conservative councillors have enjoyed a wide range of hospitality from developers behind the borough's most controversial schemes, including free trips to the proms, free football matches and free polo matches, many free dinners and lunches and much more. Residents expect councillors to be on their side, working for them and not enjoying hospitality as developers' guests.

- Labour will ban all of its councillors from taking any hospitality from developers or other businesses seeking to profit from the council.

### Immediately reviewing contentious developments

- The Conservative council has rushed through many highly contentious planning decisions in recent months. Labour will establish a Contracts Unit that will immediately review these developments.
- We oppose the schemes for West Kensington and Gibbs Green Estates, Shepherds Bush Market, the new Town Hall offices, Sullivan School, Hammersmith Park and Riverside Studios/Mount Anvil. We aim to re-negotiate these and halt the use of council powers such as Compulsory Purchase Orders on any of them.

### Bringing back fair and decent planning

Labour will:

- Consult and work with residents to adapt the Local Development Framework
- Work with an independent design panel on all major developments
- Reintroduce a minimum planning requirement for affordable homes for rent and to buy

### Giving Ward Panels a role in planning, sweeping away secrecy

- Our new Ward Panels will have a right to be notified when a developer begins talks with the council on any new large scheme.
- We will introduce new rules that make it public when developers begin discussions about large sites and encourage members of Ward Panels to engage in early conversations about schemes.
- Currently administration councillors and officials have discussions with developers in secret. No agenda or minutes are kept and in answer to a Freedom of Information request, the council will say only who attended. Labour will not only publish when the meetings take place but we will also list all who attended and publish the agenda and minutes.

# The change we need

## Other improvements to the planning process

Residents affected by major developments often do not hear until it is too late. We will revamp the consultation process so that local residents get a proper say in how their area changes.

- We will give Ward Panels and other community groups speaking rights at the Planning Applications Committee on all major planning applications.
- Planning decisions are currently voted on in the Town Hall without any visits by voting councillors to the areas that will be affected. We will ensure that the Planning Committee visits contentious development sites before making decisions.
- Labour will set up a genuinely independent design forum to assess each scheme.