
**RISING TO THE
CHALLENGES OF OUR
TIME, TOGETHER**

Hammersmith & Fulham

 **Labour**
Councillors
On your side

Introduction

From our earliest days in opposition, Hammersmith & Fulham Labour's mission to *'change the world beginning with our small part of West London'* has been central to our belief that the public deserve their elected representatives to always fight their corner and achieve huge improvements – no matter how difficult or challenging.

Against the odds, we saved [Charing Cross Hospital](#), [Sulivan School](#), and [the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates](#).

We promised to combine compassion with toughness. So we introduced the most [comprehensive crime-fighting measures](#) in H&F's history. We [abolished the unfair charges](#) the Conservatives made local elderly and Disabled people pay for vital home care – and we are the only council in England to abolish these charges. We provide [free breakfast to all primary school children](#) and free lunches for our most economically disadvantaged children in and out of school term time.

We are the only council to have an Industrial Strategy shared with a world leading academic institution. This is transforming our borough into an [inclusive global economic hotspot](#).

We said we'd approach land development very differently – by banning lobbyists, refusing all hospitality and taking an assertive approach to speculators and developers who sought to side-line residents and avoid their obligations to society. And that's what we did.

We have empowered young people in civic life as never before, initiating new ways for their voices to be heard – and leaving all who worked alongside them proud of what these young people achieved and hopeful for what they might do next.

The council's budget has in fact been cut by a third since the Conservative-LibDem government introduced austerity in 2010. Despite that and because of our ruthless approach to financial efficiency, H&F's [council tax is now 9% lower](#) in real terms than it was when we entered office. And we help our poorest residents by removing their obligation to pay council tax with one of the most generous support schemes in the country. We introduced an [ethical approach to debt](#) for those that struggle to pay.

All of this comes from the ambitious goals we set out in our manifestos in 2014 with [The Change We Need](#) and in 2018 with [The Change We'll Bring Together](#).

We promised much and we did what we promised.

When Covid hit, we were on our residents' side – [pioneering local test and trace](#), protecting [residents in care homes](#), and building the borough's biggest ever community support programme.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

As we look forward, setting out new ambitions to make residents' lives better, we do so in the most testing of times.

The British people face the tightest cost-of-living crisis since records began. There is an emerging climate and ecological catastrophe. And Vladimir Putin has unleashed a vile war in the heart of our European homeland, requiring our vigilance and an effective response to the many different consequences.

The damaging impact of Brexit is driving costs up, producing labour shortages and limiting opportunities. And populists challenge the principles of our country's enlightened liberal democracy.

Terrorism remains an ever-present threat and after twelve years of damaging Conservative government, crime is rising across the country. A shocking 37% of children in London now live in poverty and the Chancellor's budget is set to plunge many more into that predicament.

More than ever, our residents need their local government to be on their side. [That premise](#) has been the basis of every campaign we've run for over a decade. We have always seen our [manifestos as a contract](#) we hope to make with the people of our borough.

Since the borough was formed in 1964, Hammersmith & Fulham has only ever been led by either a Labour or a Conservative administration. No other party has come close to winning a seat here in decades. The difference between the two parties could not be more stark as The Independent detailed in [this polemic](#) published the day before the 2010 general and local elections.

For the last eight years this quote has hung on our office wall: *"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has."* It is from Margaret Mead, a cultural anthropologist. It epitomises H&F Labour's approach to seeking public office.

This manifesto builds on what's gone before and starts a new chapter. It sets out how we will bring people together and create new alliances for change so together we can rise to the challenges of our time and build a stronger, safer, kinder borough for everyone.



Councillor Stephen Cowan
Leader of the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham

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1. Confronting the Conservatives' cost-of-living crisis

People across our borough face the deepest fall in living standards on record. As energy costs rocket and food bills soar, Boris Johnson's Conservatives are hiking taxes and slashing wages. Poverty levels already increased significantly across the UK once the Conservative-LibDem government introduced Austerity in 2010. The challenge facing local people today is even more stark.

H&F Labour council is helping residents across the board – opening food banks, introducing free breakfast in all our primary schools, expanding advice services, and abolishing the charges the Conservatives made elderly and Disabled people pay for care at home.

This year we defied the Conservatives' call for an £800 hike in each resident's council tax and again froze the H&F bill. Today, council tax is 9% lower in real terms than when we came into office – the best record in the country over the last eight years.

Helping residents through the cost-of-living crisis will be the urgent priority for an incoming Labour administration.

Creating an alliance of support

- We will build an alliance of support – just as we did during the pandemic – working with residents, local businesses, third sector organisations and others to find new ways to help people through these difficult times.
- We will develop and implement a Financial Inclusion Strategy with strategic partners to improve access to financial information, including debt advice, better access to affordable credit and financial services, and building residents' financial understanding and capability.
- We will host a cost-of-living conference in Autumn 2022, bringing partners together to find new ways of helping residents navigate this crisis.

Supporting partners in the fight against food poverty

- We will maintain our close support for charities like the Food Bank, the Nourish Hub and the Smile Brigade. We will work with businesses and third sector organisations to expand these schemes where they are most needed.

Getting greener, cheaper energy

- We will raise major capital investment to install solar panels on council housing and buildings, and form an alliance of building owners to scale this across the borough.
- We will switch all council housing tenants from top-up electricity to central heating and smart meters via a green provider.
- We will source and provide green energy offers that help people insulate their homes.
- With schemes like Solar Together London, we will make it easier and more affordable for residents to generate their own, better value, green energy.

Feeding, clothing and supporting children at home and at school

- We will protect the borough's free breakfasts in all primary schools and look to offer these in secondary schools.
- We will maintain free school lunches in the schools we operate the scheme in.
- We will do even more to feed children who need support outside of school term time, making sure they get two good, nutritious meals a day.
- We will work to introduce an extensive community clothing co-op so parents wanting to pass on good quality, used children's clothes can get these to those who most need them.
- Amidst rising rates of mental health problems among children and young people, exacerbated by the pandemic, we will provide access to counsellors at every school, all year round.
- We will ensure a particular focus on early intervention and prevention work with children and young people through schools, youth services, family teams and the voluntary sector.
- We will bring in experts to address the education inequality which arose during the pandemic to narrow and erase the gap through a range of interventions, including additional tutoring and digital learning programmes.

Expanding affordable childcare

- We will scope the feasibility of offering free childcare. Parents face horrendously high childcare costs. These are unaffordable for most people and damage women's life chances in particular. We will review the hours of our nurseries and work with private firms and the third sector to offer affordable childcare to residents.

This could include lively breakfast club slots where children and young people can gather from 7.30am to have breakfast and socialise or get ahead with homework in a quiet space, meanwhile generating income for our schools to reinvest back in facilities and materials.

- We will look to develop a pilot on flexi-working in the borough to end the rigidity of fixed-hour jobs and to support flexible working that is more compatible with raising a family. This will particularly benefit parents – mothers in particular – who want to return to work but can't because of childcare commitments.

Improving employment for residents on the housing waiting list

There are 2,500 H&F residents on the waiting list for social housing and the many new homes we are building cannot keep pace with demand. Many of those currently unemployed will have the ability and skills to re-enter the workplace. They may also not be getting all the benefits they are entitled to. Helping them towards a higher income would give them the chance to rent in the private sector and relieve pressure on the waiting list.

- We will introduce a bespoke targeted, programme to offer genuinely supportive mentoring, jobs and benefits advice from the council (e.g. Workzone) to all on the housing waiting list and increase their chances of accessing the private rented sector.

Cutting energy costs for council housing residents

- We will deliver a £600 million retrofitting and improvement programme that will make council homes more energy efficient and help cut heating bills.

Cutting parking costs

Eight years ago, we blocked the Conservatives' exorbitant planned increases in residents' parking charges – and we have frozen the cost of resident permits every year since. Our [Visitors Permit](#) has also kept down the cost of visits by family, friends and tradespeople.

In 2020, at the height of the Covid-19 pandemic, we introduced higher parking charges to discourage the increased numbers of out-of-borough motorists using H&F as a cut-through or a cheap car park, including those going to central London along the A3, M4 and M40 corridors.

However, we realise that many residents have felt put off from visiting friends and services in the borough by the cost of parking outside their residential zone. This has particularly affected elderly and Disabled people.

- We will introduce emissions-based residents' parking, which will reduce parking fees for many residents and include free parking for clean vehicles outside of high-volume neighbourhoods and rush hour and school-run traffic.
- We will maintain a policy targeted at non-residents.

Co-locating council and other services in the community

The public sector is a force for good but can work in silos. The same person or family may have to deal with a range of agencies dotted around the borough. For example, the probation service works with people in contact with the criminal justice system, while children's services help families in need and JobcentrePlus helps people find jobs or get benefits. It would get better results for residents and make their life easier if these different bodies could join up, understand either other better and not duplicate effort.

- We will exploring Co-location Hubs, for example in children's centres, where different agencies will work together and take a wrap-around approach to supporting residents with multiple needs.

2. Britain's most inclusive, smartest economic hotspot

Our first-of-its-kind Industrial Strategy with Imperial College London sets out a new, inclusive way forward: one that rethinks the role of local government in the economy and is delivering our residents some of the best life opportunities anywhere. H&F is fast turning into a global hotspot in the science, technology, engineering, maths, medicine, media and artistic sectors. We are creating the climate for the next Steve Jobs or Martha Lane Fox to come from H&F.

We developed our approach while in opposition, drawing inspiration from the German Länder and city states, whose constitutional powers facilitated the Federal Republic's 75-year economic miracle, and from California's Bay Area and Massachusetts' Kendall Square, whose practical links between world-leading academic institutions, city authorities and the tech sector transformed them into world leading industrial ecosystems. We launched our Industrial Strategy in 2017 and together with Imperial set up [Upstream](#) to provide targeted business support.

We are determined that local people of all backgrounds should share in these new opportunities, so we are aligning the work of our schools, apprenticeships and retraining programmes alongside building an £118 million education and youth centre called [Ed City](#).

And we are developing new European partnerships, such as our new agreement with the City of Barcelona which links their [22@Barcelona](#) innovation district with ours so we can innovate together and provide exciting life chances for our citizens.

The [White City Innovation District](#) is at the heart of this new eco-system. In the last five years over 6,500 new jobs have been created in biotech, medtech, cleantech, engineering, AI, quantum computing and foodtech.

We've attracted global anchor organisations like Novartis, Airbus, ITV, the Royal College of Art and NATO, who sit alongside biotech pioneers like Synthace and Autolus. Over 60 life science businesses have been created or grown or have moved into our borough. White City incubator companies have raised over £100 million in investment and over £1 billion has been invested in H&F businesses since 2017.

The new products and services being generated here are already helping the world rise to the challenge of climate and ecological disaster, reduce the harm caused by pandemics and shape a better future for all.

Opening up new opportunities for our residents

It is crucial that all our educational institutions, from nurseries upwards, align their activity with the opportunities on their doorsteps. Schools like [Phoenix Academy](#) and [Fulham Cross Academy](#) are already aligning their work with the borough's Industrial Strategy.

- We will extend to more local schools the many excellent things already happening.
 - As part of *Tech4Kids*, the United and Ready Tech Go charities have distributed over 1,700 high quality laptops and devices to support learning by children from lower-income families during the pandemic.
 - Three schools have used the *I-explore* module to co-design and deliver STEM-based lesson plans and inspire pupils, while Hammersmith Academy is giving students up to 20 hours of STEM lessons.
 - Imperial College's *Makers Challenge* has got students aged 14-18 interested in design, coding and making things.
 - The *Urban Flyers* robotics and drone club is active in H&F youth clubs.
 - For pupils making the transition from primary to secondary school, Fulham Cross Academy has run science-based summer sessions around a murder mystery theme, while Hurlingham Academy has offered Avonmore primary pupils and staff fun science lessons.
 - The Chelsea Foundation's *Digital Blue* events use robot football to teach coding.
- We will work with smart apprenticeship providers and local firms to combine apprenticeship levies so that more local young people can take up the local opportunities and employers will be able to draw on a wider local talent pool.
- We will work with skills providers to offer new schemes that give people a chance to retrain and take up the new jobs and opportunities.

Backing good growth

- Green jobs are [forecast to increase by 8% a year over the next 10 years](#). We will find new support for, and promote, companies tackling climate change and the ecological catastrophe.
- [The UK Competitiveness Index](#) predicts that Hammersmith & Fulham will see one of the highest ongoing rates of productivity per worker. We will take measures to support productivity-led growth.

- We will continue to support businesses in the emerging economic eco-system to deliver another 6,000 new jobs in STEM industries, medicine, media and the arts in the borough by 2026.
- We will create an investment model to unlock major growth opportunities and grow small businesses, particularly in the STEM industries, medicine and the creative sectors.
- We will support local businesses to gain more of the council's contracts, leading to greater local expenditure within the borough.

Providing infrastructure that supports the economy

- We will encourage entrepreneurs in the borough by ensuring 20% of all new office space is deemed affordable and flexible and is made available as start-up and scale-up space for local businesses.
- We will enter into strategic partnerships to achieve ground-breaking change and improvement across all areas of public services.
- We will use our [Upstream](#) partnership with Imperial College London to give business leaders expert advice, facilitate learning and development, and extend networking opportunities.
- We will maintain low rental levels on the council's industrial estates and enterprise parks, providing preferential rates for new start-up firms.
- As we know that Hammersmith & Fulham's liveability and environmental factors are key to attracting investment by anchor institutions, we will work to clean the borough's air, enhance its environment, expand its arts and leisure and make H&F the best place to live in a major city.
- Recognising that the pandemic has had a devastating effect on many retail and hospitality businesses, we will:
 - Improve the public realm to make it a better place for people to shop, eat, drink, relax and enjoy local arts and facilities;
 - Coordinate a vision for our high streets as experience destinations and community hubs, supporting budding, local SMEs to use pop-up and 'meanwhile' spaces, e.g. Friday and Saturday night food courts or breakfast pop-up markets in residential areas;

- Shape this vision by asking residents what they'd like to see and use nearby to inform developers and business owners, helping to cluster popular businesses and industries;
- Support the revival of nightlife, with more late licenses in non-residential areas to make H&F an even more attractive place to live and work and to keep money in the local economy rather than people needing to travel into central London for nightlife;
- Encourage well-managed late licences in non-residential areas so restaurants and cafes can profit from a considerate night-time economy; and
- Develop new partnerships with municipalities and innovation districts around the world.

Making Thames Water act to protect residents' homes from flooding

- Thames Water's approach to protecting residents' homes from flooding has been disgraceful. We will take every possible action to make them introduce the necessary measures to protect people's homes.
- It is shocking that flood victims struggle to get insurance once their home has been flooded. We will work to change this and lobby for Parliament to act.

Boosting the arts

- We will build on the borough's strong artistic and creative heritage to grow the arts and creative economy, working with the renowned Lyric and Bush theatres, LAMDA and other partners.
- In 2021 Upstream launched the [Digital and Creative Network West](#) to bring together start-ups, academia and large anchor organisations. We will extend this work.
- We will continue to promote the West London sub-region as the 'Screen Capital', a globally significant cluster recognised as a world leader for talent, innovation and sustainability in the TV/Film industry. BBC Studios, ITV, Disney and UKTV will all be important anchor institutions for this growth.
- The Shepherds Bush Comedy Festival got off to a good start but was curtailed by the Covid pandemic. We will advertise for a private company to run this and work with local hospitality and retail firms to make it a festival that gains national prominence.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

- The new Civic Campus which replaces the old Town Hall will include a public art gallery, concert hall and four-screen cinema. We will employ a curator to ensure all the necessary spaces are continuously activated and add to our residents' cultural life.
- After the Conservatives sold off the Sands End Community Centre, we promised to try and replace it. On being elected, we negotiated £3.6m from developers to build a brand-new [Sands End Arts & Community Centre](#) at no cost to residents. We will work with the new independent Trust we set up to run the centre to improve opportunities for residents of all backgrounds to create and experience a wide range of art forms.
- We will provide more cradle-to-grave opportunities for local people of all backgrounds to participate in creative and artistic activities for fun and personal satisfaction. For example, we will look to Music for Youth as a gateway to working with local schools.
- Through planning, we will gain agreements with developers for new, affordable artist studios, performance and rehearsal spaces and artistic event spaces across the borough.
- Working with partners, including the Lyric and Bush theatres and LAMDA, we will increase arts and cultural opportunities for all young people in the borough.
- Having enabled the restoration and exhibition of the core of the Cecil French Collection of pre-Raphaelite art, we will restore the remainder and through planning ensure it gains a long-term gallery home in the borough.
- We will develop an ongoing programme of public visual art, making use of our parks, public spaces and public buildings to promote the borough as a major artistic and cultural environment.
- With residents' support, we will organise community street theatre in local neighbourhoods to strengthen community relationships, improve community resilience and make neighbourhoods happier places to live in. For example, we will begin by putting on a play in Brackenbury Village.

Planning new infrastructure and regeneration

- In summer 2022, we will bring forward a paper, including initial economic and financial modelling, to deliver the A4 fly-under.

- We will work with residents to redesign central Hammersmith, with new genuinely affordable homes, affordable office space and a more attractive town centre for all residents.

Building genuinely affordable homes for residents

- We will continue to demand that developers build 50% genuinely affordable homes on their residential developments.
- We will work with anchor institutions and developers to create a 'campus model' of homes which are affordable to, and targeted at, employees working in the borough.
- We will develop and introduce a LBHF shared equity, affordable home ownership solution for residents in the borough to allow H&F residents to purchase equity in a new home without the need to pay rent on the unsold equity.
- We will prioritise intermediate affordable housing for key workers, enabling them to live and work in the borough.
- Where possible we will acquire affordable rent homes in private developments so the council is the landlord, giving more people the security of a social housing tenancy.

Insisting on decent land development

The contrast here between H&F Conservatives and H&F Labour could not be greater. The Conservatives took lavish hospitality from property speculators and developers, they accepted developers' [viability assessments](#) at face value and they prioritised the concerns of property lobbyists and their clients over residents. Conservative councillors even flew to [MIPIM](#) on the French Riviera trying to sell off all the borough's council estates, youth clubs and community centres.

The Conservatives sold off the borough's land at knock-down prices and tried to socially cleanse the borough of social housing residents. By the time H&F Labour entered office in 2014, they had already sold Fulham Town Hall and many community buildings – as well as the West Kensington & Gibbs Green estates, which Labour managed to win back in 2019.

Putting aside for a moment the moral issue of selling people's homes against their wishes, the sell-off of the West Kensington & Gibbs Green estates was one of the worst land deals ever undertaken by a public authority in modern British history. Not only did the two estates make up a third of the land to be developed – and were on

the most easily developable land – but they were sold for £104 million to be part of a scheme which the property speculator had valued at £12.05 billion at the time.

Yet that wasn't even the worst aspect of the deal. The Conservatives agreed with the developer that the council would have to buy out the freeholders and leaseholders with the money they got for the land – but because the sale wasn't index-linked, the council would have had to spend more money giving the developer vacant possession than it had received. This would have bankrupted the council's Housing Revenue Account.

Labour [took on the property speculator](#) behind that house-of-cards scheme, whose flawed business model relied upon selling parcels of their Earls Court site to billionaire overseas speculators, who in turn might build flats largely marketed at millionaire overseas speculators.

Having the third highest land values in Britain means that H&F continues to attract unwanted attention from overseas speculators in Russia, the Middle East, China, and elsewhere. Many are keen to use the 'London laundromat' as a means of safely storing sometimes ill-gotten funds.

- H&F Labour councillors reassert that they will continue to:
 - Refuse all hospitality;
 - Not allow lobbyists access;
 - Take a tough approach to Viability Assessments;
 - Take a tough approach to negotiating with developers;
 - Listen to residents and protect council homes;
 - Act against immoral investors who seek to use our borough's high land values as a part of the 'London laundromat' to park their money; and
 - Work closely with residents and community groups to encourage developers to build beautiful buildings that meet the needs of the community and are in keeping with the character of the neighbourhoods they would be in.

Improving private renting

- We will clamp down on those landlords who flout health and safety rules and will maintain an additional licencing scheme for HMOs.
- We will clamp down on rip-off lettings agencies, gaining accountability on behalf of our residents in rented or shared ownership properties. A component of this will be a Glassdoor-style ratings system to enable renters and owners to give feedback.

- We will work with private landlords to green their properties and ensure they meet energy efficiency standards

Reimagining a new artistic, cultural, retail and recreational Civic Campus that strengthens local democracy and revitalises Hammersmith

In 2014, we set out to run a different kind of council: one that works with local people to find smarter, more creative ways to take all of us forward. In doing so, we aspired to strengthen civic life. That's why we're reimagining the tired old Town Hall, turning it into the first Civic Campus in the country – a public amenity set to become a vibrant entertainment, arts, business, education and social destination.

Our scheme will break even. It replaces the Conservatives' scheme which would have cost over £100m, relied on selling flats off-plan to overseas speculators from Russia, the Middle East and the Far East, and would not have had any public facilities.

Our new [Civic Campus](#) will be a modern work, entertainment and retail place. It will rejuvenate Hammersmith while retaining the historic listed elements of the Town Hall we once knew. It makes better use of space – so the directors and councillors' courtyard car park is gone, with the space used instead for a new art gallery and meeting place and the first floor of the new offices.

The scheme reduces the Town Hall space to the back of the building and opens much of the rest of it to residents as new public facilities. Modern new offices will be let to businesses, bringing in hundreds of new customers to local shops, cafés, restaurants and pubs while providing new revenue streams for the borough and thus helping us to maintain important public services and keep council taxes and charges for our residents at some of the lowest in the UK.

The Grade II Listed building will be the most environmentally positive building of its type in Britain. It will also be one of the most accessible buildings in the world thanks to the work and on-going advice from resident volunteers on the H&F Independent Disabled Residents Team.

The scheme has been hugely benefitted from the volunteer residents who have worked tirelessly on the Civic Campus Commission.

- The new Civic Campus will include the following benefits:
 - A new four-screen cinema, with room for cafes, shops and restaurants built on the existing cinema and car park site;
 - 204 new homes, of which 52% will be classified as genuinely affordable for local residents;

- New homework spaces for children and students;
 - A new art gallery;
 - New event spaces;
 - A new public rooftop café and sky bar;
 - New affordable, flexible office spaces for start-up entrepreneurs;
 - New public squares with space for performances and events in front of the restored Town Hall building;
 - Inclusively designed buildings to ensure full access for Disabled people;
 - Eco-friendly buildings to minimise our carbon footprint and cut fuel bills; and
 - New shops, cafés, and restaurants.
- We will do the following:
 - Open the Civic Campus by Christmas 2023;
 - Hire a curator to activate the space to ensure ongoing artistic and cultural attractions from concerts, theatre in the new public square, art exhibitions, etc; and
 - Attract retailers and hospitality outlets that are in keeping with the values of the campus.

3. Cracking down on crime

Keeping people safe is the most fundamental responsibility of any administration. Tackling crime and its causes is has been and will remain one of our highest priorities. Since 2010, violent crime has been rising across England, with County Lines drug gangs better organised, crimes against women and girls more prominent than ever and the exploitation and abuse of children up by a terrible 259%. This is a damning indictment of the Conservative government.

Tackling the causes of crime is an essential part of everything we do. But we also believe we must never tolerate crime and must crack down hard on criminals.

Funding policing is the responsibility of national and regional governments – and the Conservatives have cut London's police numbers by 400 since 2010. H&F Labour council has now stepped in and invested £6 million to fund the biggest crime-fighting operation in the borough's history.

Our five-pronged approach

There are five parts to the strategy we will pursue to cut crime and crack down on criminals.

1. We will maintain and grow funding for the council's new, 72-strong Law Enforcement Team (LET) patrolling local neighbourhoods.
2. We will work closely with the police and coordinate a common strategy and day-to-day approach.
3. We will maintain and grow funding for our new, first-of-its-kind Gangs Unit to tackle gang crime and protect young people.
4. We will further extend our award-winning CCTV network – already the most extensive in the UK and monitored by experts 24/7.
5. We will deliver our new, locally-focused strategy to tackle Violence Against Women and Girls.

Tackling gang activity

The borough's new Gangs Unit has been hugely successful since it was introduced in April 2021. Its work is essential to tackling County Lines and local drug dealing and keeping young people safe from being press-ganged into criminal drug dealing activity.

- We will increase our investment and prevent more young people becoming victims of gang crime and exploitation by:
 - Identifying young people at risk of becoming involved in gang activity or exploitation;
 - Providing effective early-intervention strategies to vulnerable children, young people and their families;
 - Offering long-term support and guidance to young people that helps them transition safely away from gang association;
 - Identifying, disrupting and acting against specific gangs;
 - Providing ongoing support for victims;
 - Using technology to allow young people to self-refer more quickly, easily and, critically, in confidence;
 - Working better with families who are concerned that their child is being drawn into gang activity; and
 - Developing our work with partners to enhance the outreach programmes provided, including mentoring.

Stopping violence against women and girls

Stopping violence against women and girls (VAWG) in all its different forms is a priority for us.

- We will deliver [our strategy](#) to prevent VAWG, support survivors and hold abusers to account. This will include:
 - Increasing the number of VAWG Law Enforcement Officer women's champions across the borough;
 - Extending our work with residents, partners, the third sector and victims to provide a comprehensive programme of zero tolerance of VAWG; and
 - Ensuring that all perpetrators of VAWG are brought to justice in partnership with the police and key stakeholders.

Expanding our Law Enforcement Team

The Conservatives have said they will cancel funding for the new 72-strong Law Enforcement Team and instead only fund a much more limited and less effective parks police operation, which won't have powers to support residents across the vast majority of the borough.

- In contrast, we will build on the success of the 24/7 team, which already has officers patrolling every ward, and will increase its size.

- We will make sure our Law Enforcement Officers build strong relationships with local people so they continuously hear residents' views and gather local intelligence – and are able to act when crime or anti-social behaviour occurs.
- The Law Enforcement Team will also:
 - Ensure parks are safe places for residents to enjoy;
 - Prevent and disperse unlicensed music events; and
 - Facilitate crime prevention 'community days' which include the police and the fire brigade.

Designing out crime

- We will [design out crime](#), making design that minimises drug use and dealing a core component of planning approval

Preventing crime

- We will enhance, improve and upgrade our award-winning CCTV network across the borough.
- We will ensure all violence against 'protected groups' under the Equalities Act 2010 (which includes age, race, disability, sex, sexuality and religion) is challenged and prevented.
- We will work with local business to improve and provide career paths for ex-offenders.
- We will provide opportunities for young people to gain work experience that is consistent, meaningful and valuable.
- We will introduce a mentoring programme for young people who come into contact with the youth offending service, using volunteers from across the borough.
- We will work more closely with the probation services to prevent further offending.
- We will work with the police to ensure 'stop and search' is used proportionally and appropriately, and we will review the Stop and Search Monitoring Group.

Tackling anti-social behaviour and cuckooing

- We are building an enhanced approach towards anti-social behaviour and cuckooing. We will support victims and bring perpetrators to justice.

Fighting modern slavery

- We will take a zero-tolerance approach to all aspects of modern slavery. We will fund and introduce a new strategy that seeks to support victims and bring the perpetrators to justice.
- We will ensure that the council's significant procurement footprint does not fund any goods produced using modern slavery.

Preventing terrorism

The Conservative government has been negligent in slashing funding for the Prevent programme, which is designed to prevent people becoming radicalised.

- We will invest in our Prevent team.

4. Rising to the challenge of climate and ecological emergency

Human activity is warming the planet, destroying ecosystems and causing the extinction of a wide variety of life on earth. The climate and ecological emergency is one of the greatest collective challenges we face. It is incumbent on all of us to act with boldness and innovation.

In 2019, H&F Labour led the borough to declare a climate and ecological emergency and set an ambitious target for the borough to reach net zero carbon emissions by 2030. We set up and funded a new, cross-cutting Climate and Ecological Emergency Unit to coordinate action across all of the council and borough's activity, and we assess every new council policy to confirm its compliance with our zero-carbon goal.

Climate change is a cross-cutting issue and is addressed throughout this manifesto. The transition to net zero will provide many wider benefits, including economic opportunities, reduced energy bills, improved health, improved council housing and increase green spaces.

We are grateful to the volunteer residents who took part in the council's [Climate and Ecological Emergency Commission](#). They played an important role in helping to develop our [strategy](#) – deemed the [best in London](#).

Now, working with our volunteer Climate Change Commissioners, our expert in-house climate change team and residents, we are focused on the professional implementation of climate change measures across all we do.

Although a small West London borough, we want to influence global change. We have joined the global network ICLEI – Local Governments for Sustainability and have reached out to our twinned boroughs of Neukölln in Berlin and Anderlecht in Brussels to share best practice. We plan to twin with a municipality in every European Union country to further our climate change and ecological emergency goals.

We're also working with innovative educators, such as the United Nations-accredited [EduCCate Global](#), to give future generations the knowledge and inspiration to act and develop new solutions.

While we understand that changing how we live will be the crucial factor, we also know that advances in science, technology and engineering will play an important role – and we have made tackling climate change a core goal of our Industrial Strategy.

Cleaning our filthy air and improving our residents' health

London and most of our borough's air is filthy. High levels of pollutants are all around us. These particulates cause developmental harm, damage our young and accelerate health problems in our elderly. This pollution harms all of us throughout our lives, damaging vital organs and contributing to a wide variety of illnesses, including dementia, cancer, asthma and heart disease. Pollution is particularly bad for people who already have a health condition, contributing to disability and early death.

But just as with the early days of campaigning against tobacco, there are bad actors who argue against any measures to tackle dirty air and disseminate fake information.

- We will take bold measures to remove CO₂ from the air in all the neighbourhoods across our borough and we will act to cut NO_x pollution and bring the borough in line with the new [World Health Organisation threshold of 20 ug_m³](#).
- We will combine revenue raising with improvement to air quality looking at possible new innovations like Ecologi billboards and [bionic trees](#).
- We will improve and implement our Clean Air Strategy across the borough, building on the work of the resident-led Air Quality Commission.

Our innovative and pioneering scheme to [reduce traffic, congestion and pollution](#) in South Fulham is winning [national awards](#) for its action to improve air quality. Launched in July 2020, it has taken one tonne of CO₂ and 8,000 cars a day off our streets, with the vast majority of drivers being non-H&F-resident, rat-running commuters. Air quality has significantly improved (NO_x pollution has fallen by 60%) and the area is now one of the few places in London below the [World Health Organisation threshold](#) of 20 ug_m³. Traffic has reduced by 75% in the streets to the east of Wandsworth Bridge Road and by 12% on Wandsworth Bridge Road. Overall traffic in South Fulham is down by 23%.

Sadly, the Conservative opposition have argued there should be more cars on the streets of South Fulham, not fewer, and the local Conservative MP – despite being Minister for Energy, Clean Growth and Climate Change – is campaigning against the South Fulham scheme which has so improved local air quality.

- We will continue to consult widely with residents and local businesses and work with them to expand schemes which improve air quality by reducing traffic, congestion and pollution.

Monitoring air quality

If you can't measure it, you can't manage it. That's why we reversed the Conservatives' policy of turning off air monitors and instead installed the largest network of air quality monitors in Europe.

- We will expand our air monitoring network as part of our Clean Air Strategy.

Ensuring sustainable development

- We will ensure that the new [Civic Campus](#) we are building will turn the old, Grade II-listed Town Hall into the most environmentally-friendly listed public building in Britain. This will include ensuring that the whole Civic Campus benefits from new sustainable technologies such as a ground source energy system to heat or cool all the new facilities.
- We will apply the highest possible planning and design standards to ensure all new major developments in the borough are net zero carbon as a minimum.
- We will ensure that 3,000 new energy efficient affordable homes are built and/or underway in our next term.

Installing the most electric charging points in Britain

It is better for our environment if people cycle, walk or catch public transport. But if people still need or want cars, we want to help them operate cleaner vehicles.

- We will continue to ensure the borough contains the highest density/largest number of electric vehicle (EV) charging points per head in Britain.
- We will ensure at least one EV charging point in every street in the borough, matching supply with demand via an easy-to-log registered interest in buying electric cars.
- We will work with providers and develop our own schemes to bring down the price of electric vehicle charging.

Increasing access to active travel

- We will introduce a sustainable transport strategy with active travel at the forefront: more pocket parks, traffic calming, bike hangars and safe cycle paths; better crossings and pedestrian safety; and a cycling/walking campaign.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

- We will introduce high quality, segregated cycle lanes. We will encourage the Mayor of London to run a cycle lane down the A4 and take other measures to make cycling safer.
- We will improve pedestrian safety and take action to encourage more courteous cycling.
- We will work with TfL to put high quality safe cycle paths along Wood Lane, Uxbridge Road and Goldhawk Road.
- We will work with residents to implement healthy school streets and we will challenge schools that fail to encourage parents not to use motor vehicles to drop their children off.
- We will encourage schools to take students who live locally.
- We will review safe walking routes to schools, making sure every school has safe crossings to its main entrance.
- With the third sector, we will provide free learn-to-cycle schemes for residents.

Having more trees, better drainage and more green spaces

- We will increase the numbers of street trees.
- We will continue the policy of giving free trees to residents.
- We will continue our 'greening the grey' policy of removing tarmac and paved areas to increase green planting and reduce flooding.
- We will implement further sustainable drainage systems (SuDS) and flood reduction and mitigation schemes.

Using 'green' divestment and procurement

- We are already the best council in Britain at pension divestment from harmful fossil fuels. We will fully divest from all fossil fuels and then tackle other negative ecological impacts of pension investments.
- Through social value procurement, we will incentivise better environmental performance from our suppliers of goods and services.

Encouraging developers to tackle climate change

- We will make being net carbon zero a planning requirement for all new developments.
- We will encourage developers to find clean, non-fossil-fuel power sources for all new developments.
- We will introduce Blue-Green developments into planning policy.

Supporting residents and businesses to tackle climate change

- We will provide easier access to information and encourage more cost-effective means of making homes carbon neutral in order to make it easier for residents to:
 - Play their part in achieving the borough's climate action plan;
 - Replace gas boiler heaters with heat pumps such as ground source pumps; and
 - Get free planning advice on all renewable energy sources, including solar panels and double/triple glazing.
- We will support businesses to use electric vehicles and 'last mile' delivery options.
- We will install solar panels on buildings across the borough to generate renewable energy to benefit residents and businesses.

Improving our ecology

- Building on the resident-led biodiversity commission, we will develop a biodiversity action plan for the borough.
- To support our ecosystem, we will only plant trees that are native to our ecology. We will not plant street trees that are proven to cause allergies such as silver birch.
- We will re-introduce native flora in our parks and open spaces.
- We will plant more 'tiny forests'.
- We will increase vegetation and green space in public places through living roofs and vertical planting.
- We will develop and implement new planning guidance for new developments, ensuring they are both carbon neutral and provide a net gain for wildlife and ecology.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

- We will use the borough's green spaces to encourage natural habitats and promote rewilding, including by working with residents to plant wildlife-friendly species in small, unused green spaces owned by the council across the borough.
- We will implement our 'parks for the future' strategy, putting us in harmony with the needs of nature in our open spaces.

Building ecological centres

- Taking the Eden Project as our inspiration, we will build ecological centres in the north and south of the borough and link them to educational programmes. We will open the first in 2023.

Arming our young people to be climate and ecology change leaders

We have introduced a United Nations-accredited qualification on climate change and are working with students across our borough to improve understanding and skills around climate change and ecology. So far 690 children and 68 teachers across 23 local primary schools have been engaged in climate education. We have developed programmes with six secondary schools, and Hammersmith Academy has won an award for sustainable school of the year from Global Action.

- We will extend this activity.
- We will explore further forest school training for our maintained schools, and build links between schools and our green spaces

Implementing our strategy at pace

- We have been independently rated as the top London council in the development of our strategy to reach net zero 2030. We are also focused on improving our ecology. We will continue to implement improvements at pace by:
 - Rolling out the retrofitting programme to make our buildings more energy efficient;
 - Developing new ways of supporting private residents to meet net zero by 2030;
 - Switching to independent renewable sources of energy generation as far as possible and working with partners to innovate and achieve much greater use of solar, heat pumps, etc.;
 - Better promotion of zero emissions active travel, walking and cycling wherever possible;
 - Promoting more net zero last mile delivery services – e.g. using cargo bikes and electric delivery vehicles; and

- Developing our neighbourhoods for the future to make us more adaptable and resilient to climate change.

Opening Libraries of Things

- We have opened our first Library of Things so residents can share commonly used equipment and we will open more.

5. Education for life

Equipping young people with the knowledge, skills and attitudes to live good lives, contribute to society and pursue happiness is a profound responsibility. We are grateful to everyone who works hard in Hammersmith & Fulham to make that happen.

Our approach to education is scattered throughout this manifesto. It is central to everything we do.

We understand how challenging it has been for students, parents, teachers and support staff during the Covid pandemic. But we've come through it with new ways of working and stronger ways of achieving educational goals.

We want to empower all our young people to feel ambitious for their future and to give them opportunities to discover the areas where they can thrive.

This thinking lies at the heart of our Industrial Strategy (see Chapter 2). We want to give our young people the very best possible career chances and business opportunities and are bringing these to their doorstep by transforming our borough into one of the smartest parts of the new global economy.

Ensuring first class, inclusive education

- Building on the borough's Ofsted-accredited 'outstanding' special schools and our purpose-built Stephen Wiltshire Centre for disabled children and other services, we will continue to invest to ensure that children and young people with additional needs, and their families, are able to access the services they need at the earliest opportunity – and locally.
 - We will invest in and re-design the H&F special school estate to create an inclusive campus;
 - We will establish an early speech and language offer and strengthen outreach; and
 - We will continue our investment in maintained schools to provide our pupils with the facilities for a first-class education.
- We will explore ways to harness the energy for a learning partnership with industrial partners to develop a family of schools.
- To maintain our connection to European neighbour, we will aim for an ambitious European language offer, with humanities subjects (history and geography) taught

in French, German and Spanish at secondary school and children leaving sixth form speaking multiple languages fluently.

- We will offer Mandarin classes to prepare young people for a future key international language of business.

Supporting the best start in life

We want every child, young person and family to be able to access the right support at the right time.

- We will develop a Children's Charter as a guiding principle for everything we do across the council.
- We will review, refine and refocus our range of early interventions to ensure that services are accessible and coordinated by improving multi-agency support for children across education, health and social care.
- We will develop a new pre-birth-to-5 strategy, working with health partners, residents and local businesses.
- We will continue to innovate and make changes to identify and meet need earlier in life.
- We will develop family hubs to make it simpler for families to access a wide range of council services.
- We will join the 'Safe and Together' programme to strengthen our support for families experiencing domestic abuse.
- We will pilot an enhanced hours service to enable children and families to be able to access services when they need them.
- We will review and enhance our fostering service to ensure the best possible outcomes for children and families.

Supporting people with dyslexia

It is estimated that one in ten people nationwide has some degree of dyslexia. Students with dyslexia need additional support with reading and writing. Even where this is available, the cost of assessment can be a barrier.

- We will subsidise the assessment of students thought to have dyslexia to help them gain access to crucial support right the way through to university.

Insulating families from poverty

The rising cost of living is already having a devastating impact, with a number of families in our borough facing real hardship. No family should have to choose between fuel and food.

- We will develop a Food Strategy so that no-one goes hungry or is malnourished in Hammersmith & Fulham, everyone in our borough can eat healthily, no-one in our borough has to eat alone and people are able to eat without harming the environment.
- We will create a 'Family Boost' Pledge, which will offer support to families to alleviate hardship and ensure that all children receive the best start in life.
- We will invest in 'social supermarkets' and holiday activities to prevent holiday hunger.
- We will continue to support the borough's food banks and food charities.
- We will work with local arts and entertainment venues to offer subsidised arts and culture in and around the borough for residents who would otherwise struggle to afford it

Delivering an ambitious Youth Guarantee

- We have a strong 'Youth Voice', and we will continue to listen to and respond to what our children and young people tell us they want and need to be safe and thriving.
- To help equip all children and young people, whatever their background, for the challenges of the future and ensure a successful pathway into adulthood, we will harness the Industrial Strategy to develop a Youth Guarantee. This will deliver the best employment, mentoring and apprenticeship opportunities.
- We know that many talented children in the north of the borough perform well at GCSE level without commensurate applications to university, further education or apprenticeships. To remove the barriers to our younger residents achieving their potential and to give them the direct experience that they need to set them up for a broad range of careers in the modern economy, we will work with Industrial Strategy partners, businesses, organisations and our well-connected residents across the borough to create a bespoke package of support – including mentoring, financial support and application support, as well as work experience.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

- We renew our pledge to our care leavers to improve their opportunities for independence by supporting them with training, employment, health and housing.
- We will co-produce a digital strategy with schools and local businesses to equip H&F children and young people with the skills, technology and opportunities to take advantage of future technology and green careers.
- We will develop schemes for vocational excellence, focusing on careers in the green economy and the care sector, and supporting a chef's training college.

Working for net zero emissions by 2030

- We will reduce the council's carbon footprint by maximising smart working as part of the 'Hello Hybrid Future' programme and the use of virtual and community hubs.
- We will work with partners to decarbonise council schools.

Supporting schools and teachers

- Having consulted widely and listened to residents, we will move ahead with the community schools programme at Avonmore and Flora Gardens primary schools. We will ensure these are green projects that create high quality learning spaces for our children and offer more genuinely affordable homes for local people, teachers and key workers.
- We will build affordable homes for teachers.

6. Improving residents' health and wellbeing

Pioneering Britain's best cradle-to-grave health and social care

We are the only council in the country to have abolished charges for care at home for elderly and Disabled people. Only in Hammersmith & Fulham – and in no other borough – do residents get the care they need for free, just like the NHS. Everywhere else they pay anything from £15 to £30 an hour.

We also offer free 'reablement' support rated 'Outstanding' by the Care Quality Commission to enable residents to keep living in their own home as independently as possible. This includes helping people to recover after time in hospital.

H&F Conservative councillors have voted unanimously against supporting free home care in H&F. They have a record of betrayal. When they last took control of H&F council in 2006, they brought in home care charges despite promising in the election that they wouldn't.

- We will keep home care free.
- We will improve the quality of the home care we provide, so that residents have carers who are consistent, well trained, regular, punctual and knowledgeable about individual residents' needs.
- We will focus our home care support around enabling independent living for residents, with a strengths-based approach that starts from people's abilities, not what they can't do.

The Conservative government claimed to put a 'protective ring' around care homes early in the Covid pandemic but it did nothing of the kind. It actually required hospitals to discharge residents back into the homes without testing, which tragically cost lives – 50 in H&F alone. When we found out this was happening, we saved lives by closing our care homes and introducing a rigorous testing regime.

- We will always fight to protect H&F residents' health and care services.
- We will seek to improve residents' health and wellbeing in all we do, such as improving air quality.

Protecting our hospitals and local health services

We said that if elected, we would try and save Charing Cross Hospital – and, working with residents, we succeeded in saving it, even though Conservative councillors and the local Conservative MP consistently undermined the campaign.

Now a new threat has appeared with Boris Johnson's shocking plan in the Health & Care Bill to stop residents having a say over future hospital closures. This could end the means we used to save Charing Cross by enabling the government to ignore local councils and communities. Shamefully, the local Conservative MP voted for it.

North-West London's health services are being brought together in an eight-borough 'Integrated Care System' (ICS). While the final form is still unclear, councils should have a greater opportunity to shape local health services for residents.

- Together with residents and local groups such as Hammersmith & Fulham Save our NHS (HAFSON), we will always fight any threat to Charing Cross Hospital. We will collaborate with Labour MPs and peers to oppose the threat in parliament.
- We will work to ensure that councils have a strong and equal voice in the ICS and that H&F residents do not lose out from plans to 'equalise' services across North-West London.
- We will reject any proposal that private healthcare companies be invited to join the ICS's Board or committees.

Making H&F the best place for Disabled people

We are determined to be the best borough for Disabled people and to be 'ruthlessly inclusive' in all we do. Following our ground-breaking independent Disabled People's Commission, we have adopted the UN social model of disability and are committed to co-producing improvements with Disabled residents.

- We will provide greater choice over support and services through the country's first, comprehensive local independent living service.
- We will further expand direct payments so they reach more residents.
- We will meet all needs identified by a community care assessment.
- We will support more Disabled and under-represented residents to get local jobs.
- We will work with local businesses so that Disabled people are not excluded from enjoying local goods and services.

- We will support more Disabled residents to get involved in community action to improve their lives.

Supporting mental health

The pandemic triggered a mental health crisis across the population.

- We will offer free counselling service in all schools to support our young people with the pressures of growing up and learning who they are, alongside the pressure of exams and deciding on their next steps.
- We will pilot mental health gardens across Hammersmith & Fulham to support people who are feeling stressed and overwhelmed.
- We will set up wellbeing hubs, focusing on social prescribing across all council services, making smart links when residents get in touch with us on a number of fronts where the need for extra support is often identified.
- We will form strategic partnerships with existing companies testing innovative models and delivery systems. With this funding and support, we will host wellbeing hubs with a rotating focus, including social prescribing, financial management and family and paediatric hubs

Ending ethnic health inequity

The Covid-19 pandemic has both increased ethnic health inequity and shone a spotlight on it. Vaccine reluctance has exposed how little trust many Black and minority ethnic residents have in the health services after experiencing worse access, treatment and outcomes throughout their lives.

- We will tackle structural racism in health and other services and work to ensure everyone enjoys equity of access, treatment and outcomes no matter their background or the colour of their skin.
- We will work together with our communities and the NHS in a new way that enables Black, minority ethnic and other residents to shape the services they receive and to feel confidence in the system.

Supporting people with dementia and their families and carers

Dementia affects more people each year and many of us have experienced its impact on family members and people we know. We are delighted to have supported the independent H&F Dementia Action Alliance to co-produce a new Dementia Strategy

for the borough with people living with dementia and their family and carers.

- We will make the borough a dementia-friendly community and implement the Hammersmith & Fulham Dementia Strategy. This will include:
 - Working with the NHS to increase diagnosis and trained support for people living with dementia;
 - Offering a range of dementia-specific and dementia-inclusive activities that give choice and control;
 - Reducing social isolation for people living with dementia;
 - Providing clear accessible information about how to get services and support; and
 - Establishing a Dementia Partnership Board to oversee the strategy.

7. The best council homes

Up until 2014, when Labour was elected, the Conservatives argued that there should be no council housing or social housing in Hammersmith & Fulham (see Chapter 2).

They offered all our council estates and street properties for sale to property speculators and at knock down prices. A policy document written by the Conservative council Leader, *Principles of Social Housing Reform*, said in a nutshell that Hammersmith & Fulham was an expensive place to live so people who could not afford it had no right to live here and should be moved out. That thinking influenced national Conservative government housing policy and was often featured in the media – best summarised by this [short video in The Guardian](#).

The consequences for council tenants, leaseholders and freeholders were dreadful. Taking the example of the West Kensington and Gibbs Green estates, tenants would have been forced out of the borough, with leaseholders unlikely to be given sufficient funds to buy a like-for-like home elsewhere in London, let alone in the borough.

Meanwhile, the Conservatives hollowed out the council housing service and slashed investment in the planned maintenance of council homes in preparation for selling these off. In 2013, they entered into an underfunded repairs contract which quickly went wrong. When Labour got into office, we found a mess. It took until 2019 to get out of the contract, and the pandemic and Brexit then both further challenged the already depleted repairs programme.

We are rebuilding the housing service with a £600 million investment and improvement programme – the biggest ever. We want to make Hammersmith & Fulham the best place to live in a council home in any city in Britain – and that is what we will do.

Fixing council homes repairs

As a result of the problems described above, too many people are experiencing a sub-standard maintenance and repairs service.

- We will not tolerate this and will fix housing repairs by:
 - Gripping the management of individual repairs, with a ‘right first time’ approach to jobs;
 - Ensuring operatives turn up on time and are properly prepared for the job;
 - Making residents aware of the compensation they are entitled to when something goes wrong, and resolving compensation claims speedily;

- Focusing on aftercare, checking all jobs are completed to residents' satisfaction;
- Communicating fully and courteously with residents (appointments, delays, checks, etc.);
- Bringing void properties swiftly back into use;
- Taking officers out of the office and onto the estates, walking around regularly and spotting and fixing obvious problems (e.g. broken lights);
- Ensuring that service charges are seen as fair, transparent and timely;
- Helping meet residents' wider needs by joining up housing, other council services (e.g. social care), healthcare and third sector support;
- Working in close partnership with other social landlords (e.g. by extending the Community Board model) and supporting their tenants with any housing problems;
- Stamping down on anti-social behaviour, working closely with the council's Law Enforcement Team;
- Ensuring that all CCTV on all estates is operational; and
- Ensuring that street properties and gap sites are included in major work programmes and resident engagement opportunities, with a new Street Property Taskforce.

Supporting Disabled and older residents

- We will fully implement our [Disabled People's Housing Strategy](#), working in co-production with Disabled residents.
- To ensure that residents who live in sheltered housing are getting the support they need when they need it, we will:
 - Ensure as a priority that there is a dedicated sheltered housing officer or warden for each 'scheme' who is physically present on site and can also be contacted directly by phone or email; and
 - Co-produce with residents a review of the support provided by the council and make any improvements identified.
- We will understand the numbers and needs of older and Disabled residents living in non-sheltered council housing.

Greening our council homes

- Our £600 million council homes improvement programme will make homes more energy efficient and help cut heating bills.
- We will offer an energy saving audit, followed by advice.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

- We will ensure that major improvement works always make council homes more energy efficient and meet the highest green building standards.
- Both for major works and on an ongoing basis, we will improve insulation and look at more efficient heating systems.
- We will install more cycle storage and more green roofs on our estates, and create wildlife-friendly green spaces there.
- We will increase recycling opportunities including food recycling and furniture upcycling.

8. A beautiful public realm

Delivering the cleanest streets and more recycling

Our streets are clean despite the challenges of the pandemic, which include randomly having significant numbers of staff off due to Covid, and an increase in dog mess following 29% growth in dog ownership.

- We will continue to invest and make sure H&F continues to have some of the cleanest streets in the country.
- We will continue weekly rubbish collections.
- We will significantly improve recycling rates to over 40%.
- We will pair up with a major delivery company to deliver all parcels by neighbourhood, improving our roads and air by significantly reducing the volume of delivery vehicle traffic.
- We will roll out 'containerisation' of general waste and recycling in food waste collections, along with composting and anaerobic digestion of green/food waste.
- We will keep streets free of weeds.
- We will reduce fly tipping and clear it more quickly.
- We will develop a neighbourhood bulky waste collection offer (as opposed to collection by household).
- We will ensure the electrification of the waste collection fleet.

Maintaining world-class parks, open spaces and cemeteries

H&F has over 231 hectares of parks and green open spaces accessible to the general public, as well as four cemeteries. Nineteen have been awarded the prestigious international Green Flag status.

The Covid pandemic has underscored the importance of open spaces to people's wellbeing, particularly for those without a garden. Keeping our parks, green spaces and cemeteries open and well maintained is also central to our ecology and climate change work.

Trees bring health and social benefits and contribute to good mental health. The oxygen they provide gives us cleaner air, and tree canopies block harmful UV rays which can cause skin cancer. Mature and veteran trees provide historical, cultural and educational value – for instance, many of today's medicines originate from compounds found in trees (such as aspirin, found in Salix / willows).

- We will invest in improving the appearance, maintenance and facilities of our parks and open spaces. We will use green vehicles and introduce sustainable drainage system (SuDS) solutions to protect trees and grassed areas.
- We will further increase the number of Green Flag parks and green spaces.
- We will develop a Sports Strategy designed to allow every LBHF resident who wants to become active a chance to do so.
- We will provide free lessons for residents who wish to learn to swim or cycle, and offer free access to our swimming pools for under-18s and over-65s.
- We will ensure that there are state-of-the-art sports facilities and clubs in every corner of the borough – ideally no more than a 20-minute walk away – to include a Hurlingham Park refurbishment and enhancement of Wormwood Scrubs.
- We will build on the successful installation of well-used cricket pitches in spaces like Lillie Road Recreation Ground by scaling this in other spaces across the borough. Similarly, we will scale the learn-to-row programme so that every school child has the opportunity to row on the Thames along the iconic Hammersmith river stretch.
- We will create a digital hub for sports bookings. This will also provide accessible information about H&F parks and park events.
- We will seek opportunities for sporting exchanges with our European partner boroughs.
- We will ensure accessible toilet facilities are provided in or nearby to all our parks, open spaces and cemeteries.
- We will work closely with schools and local colleges to provide students with outside space in the borough's parks and open spaces to learn.
- We will ensure all our parks and open spaces are patrolled, checked and locked at night by the borough's Law Enforcement Team (LET) Officers

- We will increase the number of native trees grown in the borough.
- We will save or replace all those trees lost through decay or damage which are a danger to residents' safety.
- We will open up more disused green spaces owned by the council for residents to use for community gardening, following successful pilot initiatives during the pandemic.

A safer, 20-miles-an-hour borough

- We will extend the 20mph speed limit across all the boroughs' roads

Making roads safer for pedestrians

The vast majority of cyclists are very careful but a small number are not. This is particularly frightening for elderly and Disabled residents. Since the pandemic, there has also been a huge growth in the number of people ordering food via food delivery providers. The deliverers are paid in a way that encourages urgency and a high number of visits. Many use scooters, electric bicycles and regular bicycles. Too many do not travel safely.

- As we improve safe cycle infrastructure, we will act against those cyclists who do not respect pedestrian safety, such as adults cycling on pavements or travelling dangerously close or too fast when using shared spaces such as the riverfront pathway.
- We will work with providers to develop and implement a delivery drivers' Code of Conduct which stops deliverers using pavements and forces them to adhere to the Highway Code.
- We will take action to regulate the use of the extended river path so that pedestrians always have priority and mopeds and electric bicycles are banned, accompanying this with permanent signs along the riverfront to underline pedestrian priority and encourage compliance.

Improving visitor parking

- We will resolve visitor parking in areas where there is confusion and unfairness, such as Milson Road in the Brook Green ward.
- We will work with RingGo to make it possible for personal visitors and tradespeople to pay for discounted visitor parking themselves instead of this

having to be paid by the resident they are visiting.

- We will look at enabling residents to pay for their visitors to park where there is a space on any neighbouring street, not just at specified locations outside their house/flat.
- We will review how well the RingGo App meets residents' needs and will discuss with RingGo and other councils who use the system how improvements can be introduced, such as a pre-paid voucher alternative.
- We will insist that RingGo publicise more clearly that it charges residents for keeping them updated by text.
- We will provide clear indications on streets of where the nearest pay machine is, look at reinstating more pay machines and ensure the council's website is up to date regarding the location of these.
- We will deliver more regular information to residents' homes about how RingGo operates and do the same for parking controls and traffic schemes to improve air quality.

9. A ruthlessly efficient, modern organisation

H&F Labour has the best council tax record in the country over the last eight years – delivering a 9% real-terms cut for residents. This is despite a 54% cut in our grant from the Conservative and Conservative-Lib Dem governments during their programme of Austerity.

We did this by radically reforming the council, turning an old-fashioned bureaucracy into a modern organisation geared to supporting residents. We cut £126 million of waste out of the annual council budget that we inherited by taking a ruthless approach to financial efficiency. This included saving £19 million a year by being more commercial and saving £15 million a year by cutting senior management costs.

H&F Labour also exited a series of wasteful, long-term Conservative contracts – many of them let through the ill-conceived tri-borough initiative – which locked the council into a bloated bureaucracy with a poor record on procurement. By leaving the tri-borough and these contracts – which included disastrous transport provision for disabled children – we saved £27 million a year while improving services for residents.

At the same time, we have invested an extra £64 million a year in services – including £18 million a year on protecting children and £20 million a year on free care for elderly and Disabled people.

Taking a modern, business-like approach

- We will launch a modernisation programme of the council, using new technologies to make it easier and more efficient for residents to contact officers and access the help and services they need.
- We will run the council with the culture of a social enterprise, ensuring creative and well-connected frontline public services which offer excellent direct interface with residents and are restless in learning from these and making improvements.
- We will refine how we develop policy with residents so that their voices are always heard and their talents can easily contribute.
- We will dedicate a ventures fund which provides seed funding to smart ideas generated locally, similar to the [Resolution Foundation's Ventures Fund](#)
- We will run a council jobs scheme favouring talented, community-minded borough residents to bring together candidates with technical skills and local know-how.

- We will partner with other public and third sector organisations in the borough to join up services to residents, breaking down the organisational barriers that make it difficult for people who need help and saving the council money to keep council tax low.
- Alongside the new Civic Campus and the borough's Industrial Strategy, we will deliver an expanded Commercial Revenue Strategy to bring in new income to keep council taxes low and support services for residents.

Supporting families in need

- We will operate a full council tax support scheme for the poorest families in the borough, ensuring that those people who can't afford to pay council tax don't have to.
- We will maintain a ban on the use of bailiffs to collect council tax from borough residents – leading the country in the use of ethical debt collection.
- We will work closely with local debt advice charities to stop families falling into the hands of pay-day-loan companies and becoming homeless.
- We will maintain free home care for the elderly – the only council in England to offer this – and extend our unprecedented eight-year freeze on other charges in social care and children's services.

Reforming how the council works

We have made significant progress in the ongoing training and development of our officer management and leadership teams and now have one of the best programmes in local government.

- We will use our Business Intelligence data and team to inform all aspects of decision-making and service transformation, both existing and predictive.
- As our staff are our most important resource, we will do more to give them ongoing support to develop the necessary skills to deliver the most effective council in Britain.
- We will develop a council Reform Strategy, working with council staff, the public and experts in public management, and focusing on efficiency, streamlining, identifying bottlenecks and innovating the best ways to deliver services.

Making residents' access and experience better

- We will enhance residents' ability to access the council services that they need in a range of ways (e.g. by phone, online or in person)
- We will continue to improve residents' experience when they interact with the council so they feel they are getting a first-class service across all departments – and we will regularly measure resident satisfaction.
- We will ensure that the council meets people's accessibility requirements in accessing services – if residents need to speak to someone, they will be able to do so.
- We will introduce a bespoke 'resident satisfaction' training programme for frontline council staff and contracted operatives.

Improving how the council communicates

Like other local authorities, H&F council too often talks in council-speak. It uses unusual language to describe things and it overly relies on acronyms. This excludes people, causes confusion, detracts from the council's communications objectives and can make the council appear odd.

- We will introduce checks and balances that make sure that the council:
 - Uses plain language;
 - Limits the use of acronyms and instead picks language that describes what it is doing; and
 - Communicates in a way that is accessible to all.

Driving co-production

- We will transform the council to be 'ruthlessly inclusive' of all residents.
- We will continue to expand co-production across all council departments and services so that residents are fully involved from the earliest stage in shaping the services that affect their lives.
- We will co-produce a new vision for Independent Living in the borough with residents.
- We will work with voluntary sector organisations in H&F to co-produce their services and ensure that our is the country's leading borough for co-production.

Being ruthlessly inclusive

- We will continue to strive for our workforce to reflect the communities we serve.
- We will roll out further equality, diversity and inclusion training to all council staff.
- We will work to eliminate discrimination in all its forms and be recognised as a leading local authority in the UK for equality, diversity and inclusion across our different services, measuring this across all levels of seniority across the council.
- We will tackle structural racism in our borough's health and other services and enable Black, minority ethnic and other residents to shape the services they receive.
- We will support women, LGBTQ+ people and people of colour with access to development opportunities and leadership programmes.
- Older LGBTQ+ people can face particular challenges around isolation, loneliness and getting the services they require. We will ensure that their support needs are understood and met, including through the establishment of a local support network.
- We have a high number of people living in single unit housing, particularly older people without family or support living nearby, which exacerbates isolation and loneliness. We will provide better practical and social support to these people and maintain an individual connection through local council staff and NHS and community workers to support them in the round and spot unreported issues quickly.
- We will introduce a bursary fund for Disabled people looking to stand for elected office in the borough as part of removing the barriers to inclusion in our civic life. (See also ' Making H&F the best place for Disabled people' in Chapter 6.)

Cutting the use of agency workers

- We will continue to ensure ruthless financial efficiency across the council and will further reduce our spend on agency workers.

Councillors' work and remuneration

We expect Labour councillors to do weekly surgeries, undertake regular street surgeries, attend all committees and consistently work hard for residents.

- In 2014, we cut each councillor's pay by 10%. We have frozen councillors' pay each and every year since, which is a further cut in real terms. We will increase councillors' pay so it keeps up with inflation.

10. A kinder, happier Hammersmith & Fulham

The premise of a good society, developed since the earliest Enlightenment thinking, should be central to any approach to government. Our goal is to have stronger, safer, happier and more resilient communities, living in a cleaner, greener and ever more beautiful environment.

We will work with residents and other partners to make Hammersmith & Fulham the finest place to live and work in London.

Stimulating happier neighbourhoods

The Covid pandemic showed how important it is for people to know their neighbours. Now, with more people working from home and some retailers, cafes, pubs and restaurants still struggling, there is a need to re-imagine the neighbourhoods we live in to make them greener, happier places to live.

- We will work with and consult widely with residents to deliver supported schemes such as the Better Brackenbury project.
- We will work with residents to put on events such as community concerts, parties, food markets, street theatre, tea dances and other happy initiatives to improve people's quality of life.

Working with residents as partners and building alliances for change

We believe in doing things *with* residents, not *to* them. This means council officers working in co-production with residents to get their input at the earliest possible stage of formulating ideas. Such effective community engagement is an adjunct to statutory consultation, not a replacement.

The 16 independent resident-led Commissions we have launched put residents at the heart of decision-making in Hammersmith & Fulham. These have helped developed the borough's policy on the climate and ecological emergency, biodiversity, air quality, cycling and walking, parks, Disabled people, older people, women's equality, policing and crime, teaching, poverty and worklessness, rough sleeping, business, airport expansion, council housing, the arts and the Civic Campus.

- We will make effective community engagement central to all future council key policy decisions that affect residents. Those developing new council services will be required to demonstrate how these have been co-produced, with final decisions made in partnership with H&F residents and service users.

Rising to the challenges of our time, together

- We will embed our value of 'doing things *with* residents, not *to* them' in a new Community Engagement Strategy. Its core aim will be to shape an improved relationship with H&F residents and the council, aiding individual residents to work closely with council officers in making decisions and delivering excellent service.
- We will also set up a Community Engagement Board where there is no effective Tenants and Residents Association on a housing estate. This will ensure that residents and leaseholders are properly engaged and consulted on local issues that might affect them, including estate improvements.
- To increase participation by poorly-reached groups, we will employ and train Community Outreach Officers in a determined effort to engage those in our community who tend to feel invisible to the council or under-represented. These officers will also keep an ear to the ground for problems affecting residents or where particular support is required. They will proactively identify and resolve issues while helping residents navigate complex systems.

Taking pride in H&F's diversity

Hammersmith & Fulham is one of London's most diverse places to live. We delight in that diversity – in the value added to our community by the differences in culture, nationality, colour and creed.

- We will shine a spotlight on, and celebrate, H&F's diversity, starting with hosting annual events celebrating Black history.
- We will launch a Black History Trail to bring into focus the famous Black, Asian and minority ethnic people who have lived or worked in our borough – such as Mahatma Gandhi, Esther Bruce (whose autobiography first chronicled the life of a working-class, Black British woman) and prominent music industry businesses.
- We will pursue work with historical groups in the community, members of the Windrush generation and others towards setting up a Black History Museum in the borough.

Backing our third sector

Hammersmith & Fulham has been called '[officially the most caring area of London](#)', with the highest happiness rating and among the highest percentages of recycled waste, low carbon emissions and number of charities per 100,000 people.

- We will keep our ear to the ground in our outreach with communities across H&F so that residents can tell what us they would like the council to support and invest

in. This will entail proactively knocking on doors to gather ideas across all our communities and corners of the borough

- We will continue to invest in and enhance our partnership with third sector organisations, not least those supporting residents with the cost-of-living crisis, poverty and social exclusion.
- We will take forward the co-production of a new, post-pandemic Third Sector Strategy.

Building new links with Europe

Brexit remains a disaster for our country in so many ways – a damaged economy, the cost-of-living crisis, labour shortages in vital services, and much more.

H&F is lucky enough to have tens of thousands of EU citizens living here. The tone of the Leave campaign caused anxiety to many. So from that first morning after the referendum result came in we underlined [our pride in having EU citizens](#) as our friends and neighbours. And when it quickly became evident that [recorded hate crimes had soared](#), we took a series of actions to tackle that and proudly flew the Flag of Europe from our Town Hall.

Now the importance of cooperating with our closest neighbours – Europe’s liberal democracies, who share our values and interests – is once again in the public psyche. Putin’s vicious war in the heart of Europe, future threats from Russia, climate change and globalisation are all things that unite us to work together with other European democracies.

H&F Labour also recognises that the 70% of H&F residents who voted to remain in the EU shared a desire with the residents that voted to leave for our children to know the joy of travelling in Europe and being enriched by its culture and opportunities.

- A Labour-led Hammersmith & Fulham will strive to strengthen our relationships with our current twinned municipalities of Neukölln in Berlin and Anderlecht in Brussels. We will seek to extend our new innovation district relationship with Barcelona and we will twin with a municipality in every democratic European country.
- At the earliest opportunity, we will twin with a Ukrainian municipality and support them through exchanges, knowledge sharing and links to H&F charities, businesses and residents to support their recovery from Russia’s illegal invasion.

- We will act with our twinned municipalities to enrich and improve the lives of our residents by:
 - Developing cultural exchange programmes to share art and artistic experience;
 - Developing new links between civic groups, residents' associations, amenity groups, and local societies;
 - Sharing knowledge and develop programmes to jointly tackle climate change, improve biodiversity, and protect ecology;
 - Sharing knowledge to tackle social issues from crime fighting to ending poverty; and
 - Developing programmes for children and young people to share in sport competitions and artistic and cultural projects, and cooperating around youth mayors, youth parliaments and other democratic initiatives.

Supporting refugees

- We will provide a wide range of comprehensive support to all refugees hosted in the borough.
- We will support sponsors hosting refugees, including with network meetings and information sharing.
- We will provide financial and other support to Ukrainian refugees who arrive in the UK through the Family and Friends scheme and those already here on short term visas such as students.
- We will continue to press the Home Office to prioritise the rehousing of thousands of Afghan families left in limbo in bridging hotels, to give resettlement funding to local authorities to enable Afghan refugees to find their own self-arranged accommodation, and to extend the Homes for Ukraine scheme to Afghan refugees.
- We will press for government funding for the eventuality that any private hosting of Ukrainian refugees breaks down as this will have a major impact on the council's budget and housing services.
- We will challenge the government's inhumane and wasteful plan to place asylum seekers in overseas detention centres such as Rwanda, and will press the government instead to provide open safe routes for asylum seekers to seek refuge, to prevent people smugglers and child traffickers exploiting those in desperate need of shelter and safety.
- We are committed to being a compassionate [City of Sanctuary](#).

Ending rough sleeping and homelessness

- We will build on the successes of our rough sleeping strategy and work closely with third sector partners to provide pathways out of homelessness
- We will deliver more [‘Housing First’](#) homes

Driving digital inclusion

- Too many residents of all ages are isolated and excluded because they cannot use or afford to run a mobile phone, tablet or computer. We will tackle this ‘digital exclusion’ by making technology accessible and affordable for residents, including working with partners to provide the hardware that is often the affordability barrier to people using technology, as well as training.