

A Stronger Local Economy in a Fairer Islington



Islington Liberal Democrat Manifesto 2014-2018

What we stand for

Islington Liberal Democrats will stand up for our community and make it a fairer place to live through help with the cost of living, tax cuts and extra investment. We will create more jobs by investing in a stronger local economy, and place a special emphasis on building a cleaner, greener place to live. At all times, we will spend your money wisely and treat all Islington residents with respect.

How we will help you

To help you get on life, save you money and create jobs, we are campaigning for:

- **2,500 new affordable homes in the borough** – creating jobs and tackling Islington’s housing crisis.
- **1,000 new apprenticeships in Islington** - creating jobs and opportunities in a stronger local economy.
- **council tax freeze for four years** - saving the average Islington household almost £400.
- **free breakfast and after-school club places for children** - helping your children learn, saving you money and helping you work.
- **safe cycle routes and extending the London Cycle Hire scheme across Islington** - cutting pollution, improving health and saving you money.

A Stronger Local Economy in a Fairer Islington



Dear Resident,

Islington Liberal Democrats believe in giving everybody the support they need to reach their full potential. Our vision is to create a stronger local economy and a fairer Islington based on our five campaign priorities. Together we believe they can make Islington a borough to be proud of, where everyone benefits in thriving local communities.

We want to change the way things are done in Islington. Liberal Democrats will work for our communities, not just represent the Town Hall in our neighbourhoods. As your local councillors, Liberal Democrats will campaign on our pledges whatever the outcome of the election. We will work with others such as local businesses, community groups and the voluntary sector to build cross-party support for these ideas to make them a reality over the next four years, not just during the election campaign.

We will fight for the Council to get the basics right and work for all residents equally. We will continue to highlight positive ways the Council could spend your money more wisely, get better value for money and create a cleaner, greener borough.

Please join us in our campaign for a Stronger Local Economy in a Fairer Islington by voting for your Islington Liberal Democrat candidates on Thursday 22 May.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Terry Stacy". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.

Councillor Terry Stacy
Islington Liberal Democrat Council Group Leader

Saving you money

Even though the economic situation is starting to improve - unemployment is falling and more jobs are being created all the time - many Islington residents are still struggling with the day-to-day cost of living.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Freeze council tax for four years** to reduce the cost of living.
- **Expand breakfast and after-school clubs in all schools** to give parents a helping hand and support them back into work.
- **Freeze the cost of parking permits and introduce a 'grace period'** for local shoppers before being ticketed.
- **Expand the council's cheaper community energy scheme and speed up its home insulation programme** to ensure more residents benefit from lower heating bills.
- **Expand the London Cycle Hire scheme across Islington** to encourage more cycle use and reduce transport costs.
- **Ensure free and secure wi-fi access for all residents** to prevent a new digital divide between rich and poor in Islington

More jobs in a stronger local economy

Liberal Democrats will work with Islington businesses to help our local economy grow. We will create lasting jobs and apprenticeships, as well as supporting our local high streets.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Work with businesses and council contractors to create 1,000 new apprenticeships** to revitalise the local economy and create lasting jobs for young people.
- **Create new jobs by using local employers for council contracts and work**, wherever possible, and make Islington as attractive a place as possible for new employers.
- **Explore how to make Islington a London day-tourist destination to boost our local economy** and create local jobs.
- **Expand the 'Jobs & Enterprise Hubs' offering information and support on jobs and training**, as well as desk space, mentoring and crowd-funding platforms for start-up businesses.
- **Offer business loans through the Council to help residents start up new companies in Islington** and get the financial support they need to get trading.
- **Encourage residents to invest in and create new small local businesses** through the Government's new Seed Investment Enterprise Scheme.

Tackling Islington's housing crisis

Since Labour took control of the council in 2010, they have built far fewer affordable homes than the Liberal Democrats when they ran Islington. Council housing waiting lists have soared to a record 18,000 and private rents are becoming impossible for many, forcing them to move away from Islington.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Build 2,5000 new affordable homes across the borough and stop Labour's sell-off of existing council homes** to tackle the housing crisis, create new apprenticeships and ensure new homes for all, not just large families.
- **Get tough on rogue private landlords and unfair letting agent charges.**
- **Help those on middle incomes who can't get on the property ladder** by increasing the number of shared ownership homes available.
- **Sort out the Council's new housing repairs service** and Partners for Improvement.
- **Put right the Council's much-delayed home insulation and new boiler programme** to cut heating costs and make homes warmer.
- **Make leaseholder bills fairer** by requiring the Council to provide evidence of works and photos.

Investing in our future

Education is one of the best ways we can help Islington residents get on in a fairer society. Labour has benefitted from the good work started by Liberal Democrats and our secondary schools are now among the best in England.

But the Council has taken its eye off the ball and attendance levels, primary school standards and the number of school places are issues that need to be tackled now to ensure Islington's young people have the best possible start in life.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Expand the number of free places available at breakfast and after-school clubs** to help children learn, save parents money and help them back to work.
- **Increase the amount of free childcare** available to parents of 2-4 year olds who want to work.
- **Improve children's play areas and facilities** in parks and on estates.
- **Work with schools to provide proper long-term planning to increase the number of reception and primary places** available to children.
- **Ensure a consistent approach to standards in all Islington schools** and tackle weaker schools earlier.
- **Improve attendance levels** at all Islington schools to allow all Islington's young people the best possible life chances

A Cleaner, Greener Islington

Islington is the most densely-populated boroughs in the country and we have some of the least amount of open space and highest levels of air pollution. Yet, the Labour council can't even get the basics right with street cleaning getting worse and recycling levels falling.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Crack down on dog mess** across the borough and ensure more dog-free children's play areas.
- **Clean up Islington's streets and estates** by installing and emptying more bins, making recycling easier and using new technology for residents to report problems and ensure council response times are met.
- **Build a network of segregated lanes and safe routes for cyclists and expand the London Cycle Hire scheme** across the borough as part of our ambition for Islington to be the best cycling borough in London.
- **Improve local air quality** by planting more trees and flowers, creating a new borough-wide low-emissions zone and moves to stop buses and taxis leaving their engines running needlessly.
- **Make the Council carbon-neutral** by 2020.

Keeping Islington safe

People have a right to live in their own neighbourhoods without fear or intimidation. Many residents feel the Council is letting them down by letting street robberies and burglaries increase all the time. We will support our police to make Islington a safer borough.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Work with the Police to prioritise street robbery and burglary hotspot areas** around Islington.
- **Launch a major recruitment drive for more Special Police Constables** in the borough to boost police numbers on our streets and offer a council tax discount to those Islington residents who become a Special Constable volunteer.
- **Ensure the Police understand local police and crime priorities** by making them part of the Council's regular local meetings with residents and councillors.
- **Lobby the Mayor of London to increase police numbers** to ensure that every area of Islington has the full number of local police officers it should.
- **Find new ways to tackle possible gang activity and repeat offending** in the borough.

Spending your money wisely

It is not right when many residents are so pressed for cash and the Council complains about cuts that Labour councillors are wasting millions of pounds a year on agency staff, consultants, spin doctors, glossy propaganda and taxis.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Cut the Council's spending on catering, taxis, spin doctors, consultants and agency staff and other waste** and get better value for money for residents.
- **Invest council money more wisely and ethically**, putting investment funds into housing, education and jobs, rather than tobacco firms and payday loan companies like Labour in Islington.
- **Explore how the Council's banking and investment funds can work better** for the Islington local economy,
- **Reduce the 'special allowances' pay bill for senior councillors** and cut the number of councillors.

Respecting all Islington residents

Islington is an incredibly diverse borough and its communities have a long and proud history. More and more people are making Islington their home and Liberal Democrats believe that our local communities are the key to making the borough an even better place to live.

Islington Liberal Democrats will:

- **Always stand up for our local communities**, putting local residents first.
- **Focus on local priorities** that make a real difference to people's everyday lives and work with all community representatives on a cross-party basis to make them happen.
- **Improve the way the Council consults residents** and involves the community and local voluntary groups. We will support residents in taking on the Council.
- **Give council decisions and money back to communities** by making sure every decision possible is taken by Area Committees with local residents.
- **Change the Council's Planning Service** so that consultations involve more residents, appoint a new, independent Planning Advocate to advise residents on planning issues and increase the amount of time the public can speak at planning meetings.