

new Labour
for Britain

Labour Group Manifesto 2008

*Creating a thriving
Swindon for ALL*



new Labour for Britain



Welcome to the **Labour Party's Manifesto** for the **2008 Swindon Borough Council Elections**. As in previous years we have set out a clear set of policies that will create a thriving Swindon for all its citizens.

This year's manifesto is bold, ambitious and provides a positive and achievable alternative vision for Swindon. **Labour** will **support greater bus travel; freeze car park charges** (which have risen by about 25% since the Tories took charge); stop the Tory plans to build a new Civic campus and **build a new theatre** and concert hall instead. We will work with Swindon Town FC to develop a new ground on the existing stadium footprint, and work with the owners of the Mechanics' Institute to secure a long-term future for the building.

The Conservatives have failed to achieve their affordable housing targets. **Labour** will rip up their plans and introduce a bold new standard of **40% affordable homes for all new developments**. On the environment we will seek to increase the number of eco-friendly homes, and introduce a bottle and cans recycling scheme for Swindon's pubs, clubs and restaurants. **Labour** will also seek to introduce a **weekly wheelie bin collection service**, whilst supporting and expanding the household-recycling scheme.

We want to build on our track record of economic success that we achieved between the 1960's and the 1990's, and create a Swindon that is an ideal location for all types of business. This can only be achieved by having a multi skilled and plentiful workforce. That is why our number one economic policy is to **bring university education to the borough**. We will raise the skill levels in our deprived areas, and ensure that all Swindon residents benefit from our economic success.

In the five years the Tories have been running our borough we have seen many promises but little action. Our town centre is in desperate need of renewal, but all we see are empty building sites. They have failed to curb anti-social behaviour; our streets are dirty, with rubbish building up on nearly every corner. Our schools are performing below the national average for Key Stage Four, even though the government has poured £millions into educating Swindon's children. When you look behind all the hype, Swindon is a two star authority and was recently accused of stagnating by the Chairman of the Audit Commission.

Only **Labour** is committed to creating a **thriving Swindon for ALL**, and establishing neighbourhoods that people can call 'My Community'. You can play your part in making our borough a better place by **VOTING LABOUR** on 1st May.

Kevin Small
Labour Leader, Swindon Borough Council

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Housing

Labour will:

- Set a new 'Swindon Standard' of 40% affordable homes 'to buy' or rent for all new developments.
- Work with developers to increase the number of eco-homes in Swindon.
- Remove the double taxation on housing tenants, introduced by the current Tory administration.
- Retain Swindon's Council housing stock for as long as tenants want it.

Children's Services

Labour will:

- Work with higher education partners to secure a University for the people of Swindon.
- Guarantee every child a hot and nutritious school meal at lunchtime.
- Raise attainment Swindon wide so our schools are a beacon for other authorities.
- Expand facilities for Young People and consult with them on how to develop their role within the community.



Social Care



Labour will:

- Invest in more respite across the board for all carers.
- Continue to support and promote Meals on Wheels and Home Help services.
- Increase the number of care homes and supported living units in the borough for those with learning disabilities.
- Ensure that the most vulnerable members of our community are supported and protected, and enable them to maintain independence and dignity.

Economic Development

Labour will:

- Continue to support the redevelopment of the town centre and ensure that the benefits are shared by all.
- Continue to promote Swindon as an ideal commercial business and manufacturing location.
- Establish urban regeneration programmes in deprived areas and seek to raise the skills level to create greater employment opportunities.
- Implement strategic partnerships to tackle health inequalities as part of our urban regeneration.
- Create an economic environment that will enable small and medium enterprises to prosper.



Transport



Labour will:

- Provide half fares for all children on all buses, with the view of eventually implementing a free travel scheme for under 18's.
- Increase the amount of Sunday, evening, and bank holiday buses and continue to support park and ride.
- Freeze car park charges; commit to not raising them for the next two years and continue to support the existing free car parks.
- Further develop Swindon's cycle network.
- Investigate feasibility of a new light transport system and new transport hub in Swindon centre.

Highways

Labour will:

- Cancel the Canal and not waste £60m that could be spent on more important projects.
- Invest significantly in drainage across Swindon to aid those most vulnerable to flooding.
- Invest in highway maintenance to ensure private vehicles are not damaged by potholes.
- Launch a Swindon wide street light scheme, as part of the 'My Community' initiative so residents feel safe in their communities.
- Enforce 'be safe zones' outside all schools, including 20mph speed limits and safe drop off areas.



Communities



Labour will:

- Force the Borough Council to use its ASB powers to tackle crime, vandalism and unacceptable behaviour.
- Implement a CCTV scheme in neighbourhood hotspots as part of the 'My Community' initiative.
- Seek to increase capacity and support for the voluntary sector.
- Develop strong communities, and increase community engagement.
- Retain existing community buildings, and develop new facilities in expanding parts of the borough.

Environment

Labour will:

- Seek the introduction of a non-recyclable 'wheelie bin' weekly waste collection service.
- Protect urban Swindon's green spaces.
- Introduce a glass and tin-recycling scheme for Swindon's pubs.
- Introduce a free recycling scheme for schools to highlight the importance for future generations.
- Improve street cleaning across the borough and tackle residents that fly-tip.



Leisure & Arts



Labour will:

- Build a new concert hall/theatre for the people of Swindon.
- Establish a multi use games area within half a mile of all residential areas, and Increase the number of Children's play areas Swindon wide.
- Protect branch library network.
- Work closely with STFC to develop the existing stadium.
- Work with the owners of the Mechanics' Institute to secure a long-term future for the building.