



Kent County Labour Party

Better for Kent

Manifesto 2009

Contents:

- **Dr Mike Eddy's Message**

- **Better for Kent's Families**
- **Better For Kent's Young People**

- **Better For Kent's Health & Care**
- **Better For Kent's Environment**

- **Better For Kent's Economy**
- **Better For Kent's Communities**

- **Council Tax In Kent**

- **Labour Government Grant To Kent**

- **Tory Waste In Kent**

- **Liberal Democrats In Kent**

- **Contact Kent Labour**

Your Labour Leader in Kent

Dr Mike Eddy



The County Council elections give us a real opportunity to make life better for everyone in Kent. Since May 1997 the Labour Government has invested billions of pounds in Kent, as it has nationwide, to make our public services more effective and our future more secure.

But in Kent we haven't seen the full benefit of Labour's

investment, and that's because Kent County Council has been dominated by the out-dated, divisive policies of the Conservative Party.

The Conservatives at KCC blame the Labour Government for their failures. That's one reason why they spend over £6 million a year on publicity. They know they've got to shift the blame for a lot of failures.

It is high time that the people of Kent enjoyed the full benefits of a Labour Government and only Kent Labour can

bring these benefits to the County.

Only KCC led by Kent Labour can make best use of the Labour Government's investment to improve our schools, our health, our social care for the elderly and vulnerable, our businesses, our roads, our environment, and our communities.

There would be a real difference between the KCC that's currently dominated by Conservatives and a KCC led by Labour. Kent Labour's Manifesto sets out how we plan to make

this difference. It explains some of the key ways in which we will make Kent better for everyone.

Kent Labour will work to make life better for the many, not the few. We will use resources to get the greatest benefit for the most people.

That's why voting for Kent Labour means you'll be voting for a better Kent.

If you would like to help Labour during the election, would like a postal voting form, posters or if you have any comments or questions about our manifesto please contact us using the following details:

Call

01622 694320

Email

mike.eddy@kentlabour.org.uk

Website

www.kentlabour.org.uk

**Labour Group Office
Sessions House County Hall
Maidstone Kent
ME14 1XQ**

Better for Kent's Families

Kent Labour believes that families are at the heart of our society.

Kent Labour will:

- ✓ Continue to roll out the Labour Government's Sure Start Children's Centres programme, so children and families in every community are served by a children's Centre by 2010
- ✓ Work with a Labour Government to continue to reduce child poverty
- ✓ Work with nurseries to increase the range and quality of Labour Government-funded free childcare
- ✓ Make best use of the Labour Government's £235 million investment in better play areas for our children
- ✓ Reduce bullying both inside and outside school
- ✓ Work with a Labour Government and other partners to create family-friendly neighbourhoods
- ✓ Work with district and borough councils to encourage the development of social housing in the county

Under local Conservatives, much of the Labour Government's investment in Sure Start Children's Centres has been wasted.

Under local Conservatives, nurseries have been struggling to increase the range and quality of Labour Government-funded free childcare, because of unnecessary red tape imposed by the County Council.

The Conservatives' policies have failed our families.

Better for Kent's Young People

Kent Labour believes that young people are the future of our society.

Kent Labour will:

- ✓ Work through local Children's Trusts to develop skills and opportunities for young people through education
- ✓ Improve performance, raise standards and reduce educational inequalities for all
- ✓ Support the Labour Government's plan to extend the work of schools into communities
- ✓ Make best use of the Labour Government's £1.8 billion *Building Schools for the Future* programme
- ✓ Work with communities to look at reducing class sizes where necessary, rather than closing schools
- ✓ Expand the Children's University and holiday courses for school-age children
- ✓ Encourage breakfast clubs and after-school clubs
- ✓ Increase facilities for our young people out of school
- ✓ Encourage more young people to go on to further education
- ✓ Support children with disabilities to be educated in mainstream settings where appropriate

Under local Conservatives, selection in schools disadvantages most children, labels 11-year olds as failures and means that Kent continues to under-perform educationally.

Under local Conservatives, small primary schools in less well-off areas have been closed, while others in well-off areas have been left open.

Under local Conservatives, poorly-funded youth workers struggle to do their best for our young people.

The Conservatives' policies have let down our young people.

Better for Kent's Health and Care

Kent Labour believes that everyone has a right to a healthy, independent lifestyle.

Kent Labour will:

- ✓ Work with a Labour Government to promote healthy lifestyles for all
- ✓ Scrap the local Conservatives' wasteful £400,000 'Health Watch' scheme and make best use of the Labour Government's LINK health and social care watchdog
- ✓ Remove charges for cycling proficiency classes and tests and progressively introduce subsidised swimming lessons for school-age children
- ✓ Ensure proper sports provision in every school
- ✓ Work with partners to ensure future developments facilitate walking, cycling and use of public transport, to encourage physical activity and reduce traffic and air pollution
- ✓ Hold domiciliary care charging at the rate of inflation for future years
- ✓ Promote the rights of people with disabilities and work with partners to improve their opportunities
- ✓ As a high priority, extend schemes to involve families in deciding the best care packages for elderly and vulnerable people, including direct payments
- ✓ Work with health colleagues to extend joint step down beds in intermediate care
- ✓ Encourage the provision of supported housing for older and vulnerable people

Under local Conservatives, KCC has wasted £400,000 on an unnecessary 'Health Watch' scheme.

Under local Conservatives, charges for social care have increased.

Under local Conservatives, playing fields have been sold off

Better for Kent's Environment

Kent Labour believes that the environment is key to sustainable economic growth and everyone's quality of life.

Kent Labour will:

- ✓ Improve access to recycling centres

- ✓ Improve KCC's own environmental performance throughout its estate, including schools
- ✓ Make full use of planning powers to go beyond current building regulations in order to encourage sustainable homes and communities
- ✓ Minimise the impact of new building by using brownfield land wherever possible and safeguarding Green Belt land
- ✓ Work with other councils across Kent to improve town centre environments
- ✓ Develop a flooding strategy that makes full use of KCC's influence as a council and as a landowner to reduce the risks and impacts of flooding - for example, by encouraging tree-planting schemes in historically wooded areas to reduce flood risk and enhance the countryside
- ✓ Employ the County Council's full powers to make public transport easier and safer to use
- ✓ Work with partners to improve public transport links for rural areas
- ✓ Encourage freight to move from road to rail, reducing air pollution and congestion on our roads
- ✓ Work with partners to encourage the development of more safe walking, cycling and riding routes throughout the country
- ✓ Introduce a scheme to recycle plastics across the county
- ✓ Work with supermarkets and packaging manufacturers to reduce waste being created in the first place

Under local Conservatives, we have seen Kent's countryside threatened by super-depots and lorry parks.

Under local Conservatives, Kent's councils have failed to use their powers to make buildings more eco-friendly.

Under local Conservatives plastic recycling has been cut while money has been spend on wasteful leafleting campaigns.

The Conservatives' policies spoil our environment.

Better for Kent's Economy

Kent Labour believes the county's people and businesses have world-class potential.

Kent Labour will:

- ✓ Encourage the growth of existing businesses in Kent
- ✓ Rebuild the county's economy, particularly in those areas with highest levels of unemployment and economic and social deprivation
- ✓ Work to attract positive business investment in the county, especially in those areas which have low levels of quality employment for local people
- ✓ Work with partners to provide homes in sustainable communities with appropriate investment in infrastructure
- ✓ Support co-operatives and other social enterprises
- ✓ Develop a more social element to KCC's own trading activities
- ✓ Work with schools, colleges and local employers to improve prospects for people of all ages in Kent by developing their skills, through further education and adult education, apprenticeships and in-work training
- ✓ Work with a Labour Government, regional bodies and European neighbours to encourage and maximise investment in Kent
- ✓ Improve our road network and road safety to make Kent a better place to do business
- ✓ Continue to work with partners to improve transport links with the rest of Britain and Europe
- ✓ Work with a Labour Government for a Kent & Medway Passenger Transport Authority as a voice for commuters and travellers

Under local Conservatives, Kent's economy has grown more slowly than other parts of the South East.

Under local Conservatives, traffic congestion has increased, bringing some parts of the county to near-standstill.

The Conservatives' policies have actively damaged local business.

Better for Kent's Communities

Kent Labour believe in putting people first and concentrating on services and delivery, not on bureaucracy and self-promotion.

Kent Labour will:

- ✓ Spend less time and money on telling local people how well KCC is doing and more on listening to their views about what KCC should do
- ✓ Scrap Kent TV and improve KCC's website
- ✓ Ensure that real consultation is carried out before major decisions are taken and that feedback is given to everyone consulted
- ✓ Test our policies against standards of best practice to achieve long-term benefit rather than short-term 'fixes'
- ✓ Scrap the Conservatives' failed top-down Local Boards and roll out Neighbourhood Forums across the county, to give local people a stronger voice in matters affecting them
- ✓ Develop modern library facilities that meet the needs of Kent's communities, by investing in comprehensive stock and up-to-date IT, and extending the mobile library service
- ✓ Ensure that Community Wardens are posted in the areas where they're most needed
- ✓ Work with a Labour Government, the Police, trade unions and employers to prevent people trafficking and the exploitation of temporary workers
- ✓ Promote social cohesion and integration, while retaining each community's unique character

Under local Conservatives, the people of Kent have felt remote from the decisions that affect their daily lives.

Under local Conservatives, KCC has made policy by press release and spent over £6 million a year on publicity.

Under local Conservatives, KCC has spent £48,000 on image consultants and £1.4 million on a broadband TV station.

The Conservatives' policies are out of touch with reality.

Tory Council Tax Increases and Labour's Alternatives

Deputy Labour Leader County Councillor Derek Smyth

Kent Labour has proposed alternative budgets designed to save the Council Tax Payer from unnecessary Council Tax Increases. The last two years are laid out below:

Year:	Band 'D' Charge by Tory controlled KCC:	Tory Percentage Increase:	Band 'D' Charge as proposed by Kent Labour:	Kent Labour Percentage Increase:
2007/2008	£964.17	+4.9%	£951.75	+3.6%
2008/2009	£1001.79	+3.9%	£997.92	+3.5%

Kent Labour proposed savings of £5.25million in both financial years (2007/08 and 2008/09)

This would have save the Kent Council Tax Payer £10.5million by eliminating Tory waste such as the universally unpopular Kent TV

Government Grant & Kent County Council

Deputy Labour Leader County Councillor Derek Smyth

In the years up to 1997 the Tory Government had consistently cut back its grant to Kent County Council.

Since the election of a Labour Government in May 1997 grants to Kent County Council have been consistently ahead of inflation.

The three year settlement which began in 2008/09 is planned to deliver real increases in grants to Local Authorities in 2009/10, albeit at a lower level than in the last ten years.

George Osborne, Tory Shadow Chancellor of the Exchequer originally accepted the Labour Government's three year settlement but has now reneged on this promise.

This can only mean a return to the cutbacks experienced under the Tories in the years prior to 1997.

Such cutbacks can only delay our recovery from recession.

Labour Government Financial Support to KCC

Financial Year :	% Increase:
1998/1999	+2.5%
1999/2000	+2.4%
2000/2001	+6.5%
2001/2002	+5.6%
2002/2003	+9.7%
2003/2004	+8.6%
2004/2005	+2.0%
2005/2006	+3.7%
2006/2007	+2.5%
2007/2008	+0.8%
2008/2009	+0.3%

Conservative Government Financial Support to KCC

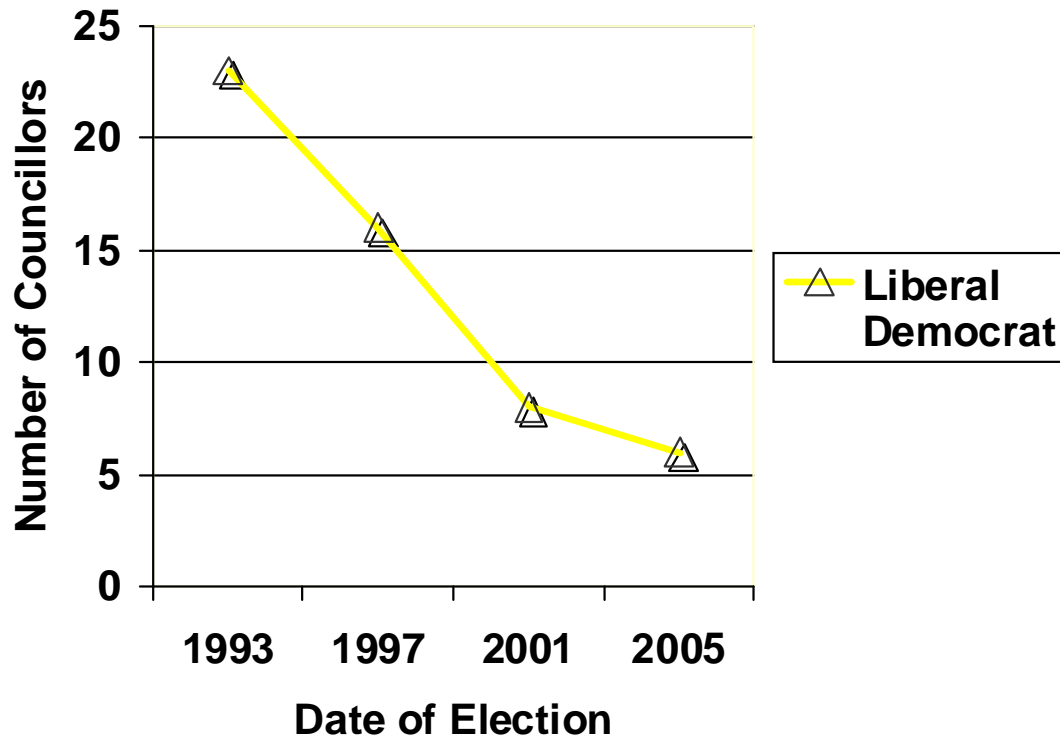
Financial Year :	% Decrease:
1994/1995	-0.6%
1995/1996	-3.9%
1996/1997	-0.7%
1997/1998	-0.1%

Tory Waste (It's your money they're spending)
Deputy Labour Leader County Councillor Derek Smyth

Pet Project / Failed Scheme:	Cost to the Kent Council Tax Payer:
Kent TV:	£1.4 million (another £400,000 proposed)
Turner Contemporary Failed Project:	£6million
Kent Highways Reorganisation:	£17million
Failed Manston Airport Project:	£200,000
Trips to the United States of America:	£35,000
Image Consultants:	£48,000
Total Tory Waste:	£24,683,000

Tory financial incompetence has also seen £50million lost in the Icelandic Banks Fiasco.

Liberal Democrat County Council seats, 1993 - 2005



- There is no point voting Lib-Dem in Kent.
- The Lib-Dems are in free fall across the county as previous election results show.
- The table above clearly shows that should this trend continue the Lib Dems will consist of a group of just two Members after 2009.

If you would like to help Labour during the election, would like a postal voting form, posters or if you have any comments or questions about our manifesto please contact us using the following details:

Call

01622 69430

Email

mike.eddy@kentlabour.org.uk

Website

www.kentlabour.org.uk

Labour Group Office
Sessions House County Hall
Maidstone Kent
ME14 1XQ