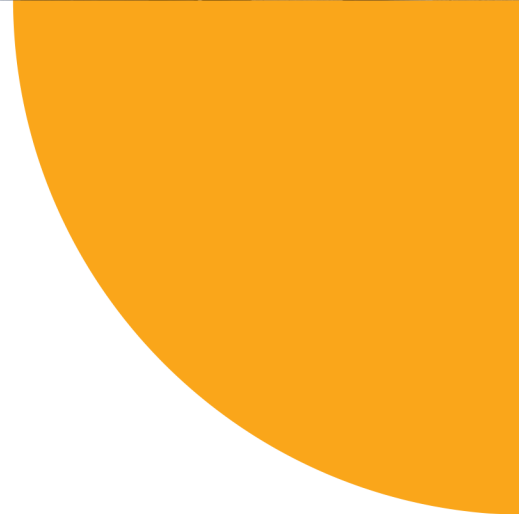




Our Manifesto

Creating a Greener, Fairer and
More Connected Chelmsford





Chelmsford will be

greener

with the Liberal Democrats

Our pledge in 2019

Take action to address urgent environmental issues facing all of Chelmsford residents.

New developments must enhance our local communities, not blight them, that new homes must be sustainable, in the right places and with the right infrastructure.

Press for better bus services and well-maintained roads and pavements.

Create a "green investment fund"

Make more of the waterways in Chelmsford, including linking the canal and the River Chelmer.

Monitor ECC's management of highways within Chelmsford so they fix the issues with potholes and pavements – properly at the first attempt.

What we did (2019 - 2023)

We declared a Climate and Ecological Emergency; pledged to make the City Council net-zero carbon by 2030; agreed an Action Plan to get there. We have reduced carbon emissions, cut energy use, reduced waste & pollution.

We have forward-funded a new bridge in the garden community, so that it supports walking and cycling not just lorries. We have made land available for the new station. We have part-funded building works at primary schools.

We have required Essex County Council to develop a plan for a safe cycle route from Great Baddow into central Chelmsford and taken other steps to support more sustainable travel choices.

We set aside £100,000 a year to fund local green initiatives.

We developed a plan for a lock which could replace the wear near the Records Office. Then boats could access central Chelmsford.

We have reported hundreds of road and pavement defects to Essex County Council.

What we'll do (2023-2027)

The City Council will be almost carbon neutral. We will plant another 70,000 trees; replace gas heating in City Council buildings; finish the roll-out of LED lights; buy low-carbon vehicles, and maximise the use of green electricity. We will continue to protect, enhance and connect habitats through a network of green corridors, extending from the heart of Chelmsford city centre to every corner of the district.

We will continue to raise a levy from all new development to fund improvements to local communities. We will require developers to substantially increase the amount of wildlife habitat within all development sites and make them plant three new trees for every new home.

We will make Chelmsford an attractive place for walking and cycling, to reduce the need to rely on cars. This is a long-term project, but we will develop a plan for a comprehensive network of walking and cycling routes.

We will continue the fund and further promote it, to create greener neighbourhoods.

We will deliver the first phases of the Waterside development and will work to secure funding for the lock that will be needed to enable navigation from the centre of Chelmsford to Maldon/Heybridge.

We will continue to press Essex County Council to take our crumbling roads and pavements more seriously, despite their current plans to cut their budget by half.



Chelmsford will be fairer
with the Liberal Democrats

Our pledge in 2019

Take action to end the scandal of rough sleeping

Find more homes for homeless families.

Address the desperate shortage of affordable homes, because the Conservatives had never in 16 years met the target that larger developments must include 35% affordable housing (AH).

What we did (2019 - 2023)

We convened an all-agencies homelessness forum and worked with charities and others to ensure a joined-up approach. We put the right wrap-around services in place and offered a proper roof over the head of everyone sleeping rough in Chelmsford.

We formally declared a housing crisis in February 2022 and introduced a new Housing Strategy so everyone can reasonably aspire to having a home that meets their needs. This contains an Action Plan to make specific improvements.

We stuck firmly to the affordable requirement and have achieved a significant increase in the proportion of affordable housing.

We have built extra affordable housing at Woodhall Road (12 larger homes at social rent), Amber Close and Rainsford Lane and have developed plans for more at Railway Street, Pease Place, St Michael's Drive, Medway Close, Glebe Road, George Street, Rectory Lane and Chelmer Waterside.

What we'll do (2023-2027)

We will continue to work with charities and others to offer temporary accommodation and support from housing officers, volunteers and other agencies to those sleeping rough in Chelmsford.

We will continue to work with housing associations and others to build extra affordable housing. We will complete the sites we've started and find further sites for affordable housing, attracting the funding this needs.

We will review Chelmsford's Local Plan to maximise the amount of affordable housing, especially family homes that are hardest to find. We will provide for development to bring the infrastructure that is needed (roads, schools, doctors/dentists, community halls, etc.).

We will lobby Government to give us the power and money to deliver yet more affordable homes for Chelmsford families.

Chelmsford will be

more connected

with the Liberal Democrats



Our pledge in 2019

Chelmsford will have stronger communities and more arts and cultural events.

Chelmsford will be safer

Chelmsford will have more well-paid jobs.

What we did (2019 - 2023)

We worked with partners on a new Cultural Strategy to set Chelmsford's direction as an innovative, collaborative place that celebrates culture and gives voices to all communities. We have brought a range of new events to Hylands, such as Enlightened, All About Dogs, Foodies, Open Days, music in the Stables courtyard and more. Go Ape will be coming to Hylands Park this summer.

We have invested in our theatre – giving it a much-needed refurbishment that revitalises it, bringing more footfall into the city centre to help other businesses and retailers, bars and restaurants – and instead of standing empty for most of the day, the space is now in use all day long, making the most of an important council asset.

We worked closely with Essex Police on many projects, including securing over £500k to invest in new CCTV, lighting and educational projects to ensure women and girls are safer and feel safer. We've refurbished our city-centre lighting, providing a brighter, safer space to be enjoyed at all times of the day.

We have supported over 600 small businesses with grants and advice through Covid. We bought an office block to provide a base for small businesses rather than see it sold to a developer. We have also brought together specialist businesses working in the tech sector under our innovative 'Tech Ambassadors' group – helping businesses to forge partnerships and sustain and grow jobs in Chelmsford. We've supported businesses by providing free training in areas such as import and export, social media use for business, and becoming carbon neutral.

What we'll do (2023-2027)

We will ensure that the new cultural strategy reaches out to communities across the district and connects with new audiences, especially young people. We will revive events such as the Three Foot People Festival.

We will enhance public spaces such as Market Square and will review other council-owned assets and push for under-used buildings to be brought back to life and into use for the community.

We will ensure a joined-up approach between the City Council and the Police, to support and encourage those who need to take the help that is available while responding proportionately to anti-social behaviour by others.

We will host a second "invest in Chelmsford" event, to attract new businesses to Chelmsford and revise the Local Plan to allow for as many new jobs as houses. We will enhance the links we have created with Anglia Ruskin and Writtle Universities to train the skilled workforce that Chelmsford needs. We will continue to provide support to businesses through training, advice and other support.

Our pledge in 2019

Chelmsford will have a thriving High Street and other shopping areas.

Address isolation and loneliness for young and old and campaign for Essex County Council to overturn cuts to youth services and voluntary groups.

Review how the central urban area that doesn't have parish/community councils can be best served at a very local level.

What we did (2019 - 2023)

We supported the Business Improvement District on plans to enhance the area around the High Street and backed their re-election for another five years. We have met the new owner of The Meadows to enhance the southern end of the High Street.

We funded an extension to the Age Concern Day Centre and invested in lighting at the skate park in Central Park. We brought together bodies such as the NHS, police and probation and voluntary bodies to discuss health & wellbeing. We consistently pressed Essex County Council to increase funding for youth services.

We consulted residents on parish / community councils, including whether the central urban area should have this level of local council. We implemented what residents supported in the consultation.

What we'll do (2023-2027)

We will work with the Business Improvement District on new projects to attract people into the High Street and encourage the new owner of The Meadows to deliver the best possible masterplan. We will work with businesses in neighbourhood shopping areas to improve those localities.

We will work with statutory and community groups to secure new community hubs as part of redevelopment sites, such as in Fox Crescent. We will oppose any proposals from Essex County Council to undermine the voluntary sector.

We will work with partners such as CVS to improve community support, in particular in areas without parish / community councils.