

**East Hertfordshire District Labour Party**

**Manifesto Highlights for 2013 by-elections**

The District relies on workers who cannot compete for expensive houses. Young people have to move away because starter homes are not available.

- New developments must have at least 50% affordable homes.
- Co-operative housing schemes should be established, giving tenants control.
- Marketing of the county-wide scheme for help with deposits on starter homes must be improved.
- Empty properties must be brought back into use, if necessary using compulsory purchase powers.
- As shopping shifts more from the high street to the internet, suitable empty shops should be converted to homes.

The Government predicts a large increase in the population and 17,000 homes are required to be built in the District in the next 20 years.

- The full infrastructure for new developments must be planned, including transport, schools, shops and leisure facilities. Often this requires substantial developments, rather than the use of scattered infill sites.
- Green areas must be retained in towns.
- Whilst large scale development should be planned on a district basis, there should be east and west development control committees so that local councillors decide on such local issues.

Environmental policies are currently driven by Government and European regulations, rather than a real desire to minimise the harm that we do to our environment.

- Recycling rates should be up with the best local authorities at 60% or more (total waste recycling was 46.7% in 2011/12).
- New houses must be required to meet very high standards of insulation and should be equipped with solar panels and/or heat pumps.
- There should be facilities for recycling collections from flats.
- The plan costing £2.6m for households to have three refuse bins and one box, which arises from botched decisions about waste disposal by the Tory county council, need to be reviewed to assist the many people who do not have sufficient space for the extra bin.
- Where planning permission is needed for improving the environmental impact of existing properties, the council should make clear that the presumption will be to grant permission, even for listed properties.

Car-parking arrangements are important for local businesses as well as for the convenience of visitors to towns. The arrangement to top-up car-parking charges by mobile phone are a step forward, but is not sufficient.

- Car parks should revert to pay on exit when current machines need replacing to encourage more shopping in towns.
- Local people, local businesses and the relevant town/parish councils should be consulted fully about car parking arrangements.

- Park and ride schemes should be instituted for Hertford and Bishop's Stortford on Saturdays and market days.

Some steps, such as web-casting of council proceedings, have been taken. However, it remains difficult for the ordinary citizen to find out what is being decided on their behalf, since they have to trawl through minutes and papers on the website.

- Improve the website so that citizens can readily follow the decision-making process on major issues as they go through the council.
- Give town/parish councils a greater role in local issues.

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