



Conservatives

Brentwood Borough Council Conservatives

Manifesto 2011



“Your Brentwood Your Future”



Vote Conservative

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Index

Introduction

Investing In Brentwood

Achieving In Brentwood

Your Brentwood Your Finance

Your Brentwood Your Environment

Your Brentwood Your Community

Your Brentwood Your Society

Your Brentwood Your Business

Your Brentwood Your Communication

Your Brentwood Your Council

Your Opportunity

Commitment To Your Future

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Introduction



Since 2004 it has been our privilege to run Brentwood Borough Council and for the last two years it has been my personal honour to be Leader of both the Conservative Group and Brentwood Borough Council.

Together with residents, we have taken our Borough forward. We have delivered huge investment across every part of our Borough, from improved street cleaning to better community facilities. We are now one of the most desirable places to live in Essex.

The financial strain on this country after 13 years of a Labour Government has required our Conservative – led Coalition to make some tough decisions in order to restore our country's finances and move our nation's economy forward.

Brentwood is not immune to any of those difficulties and faced with significant budget cuts, we have worked hard to cut waste, improve efficiencies and drive up value for money in order to protect our vital frontline services. By the end of 2012, we will have saved over £5m in running costs and for the coming year, will be doing this at a zero percent increase in council tax bills!

Whilst the financial pressures that we face will not disappear for a while, we know that Brentwood is a great Borough but it can be ever better. This manifesto sets out how Brentwood has changed, the challenges we face and how we will move it forward over the coming years if re-elected in this year's local elections.

I hope you find it an interesting read.

Kind regards,

Louise McKinlay

Cllr Louise McKinlay

Brentwood Conservative Group Leader



Investing In Brentwood

When people work together anything is possible. When people come together for the good of their community, that is when things get done. In 2004 we said Brentwood Deserves Better, well that is exactly what we have offered. We have offered better services across our town and increased investment in our community.

| | |
|--|---|
| Disabled Facilities Grant £984,000 | Hart Street Improvements £226,000 |
| CCTV £113,000 | Community Halls £150,000 |
| Council for Voluntary Services £76,000 | Play Areas £460,000 |
| Brentwood Centre £724,000 | Open Spaces & Commons £231,000 |
| Cark Parks £512,000 | Recycling Schemes £2,079,000 |
| Parks £160,000 | Citizens Advice Bureau £392,000 |
| Affordable Warmth Grant £226,000 | Parish Councils £1,308,000 |

Since 2004 we have invested over £8.4 million across projects in Brentwood.

Since 2004 we have invested over £14.1 million into Housing for our community

Conservatives have and will invest in Brentwood

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Achieving In Brentwood

Brentwood Conservatives believe that responding to the issues which affect local residents is the most important aspect of our work. Residents in Brentwood have responded to show their support for the work we are doing across the Borough.

93.8%

of Brentwood residents are satisfied or very satisfied with their home and neighbourhood

**1st
In Essex!**

**1st
In Essex!**

69.6%

of Brentwood residents are satisfied or very satisfied with how the Council keeps public land clear of litter

84.2%

of Brentwood residents are satisfied or very satisfied with how local tips, waste and recycling centres are maintained

**1st
In Essex!**

**2nd
In Essex!**

89.8%

of Brentwood residents are satisfied or very satisfied overall with Brentwood as a place to live

Since 2004 we have listened and responded to Brentwood residents

Conservatives have and will achieve for Brentwood



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Your Brentwood Your Finance

Brentwood Conservatives believe in low Council Tax and with an average increase of 2.7% compared to 10.7% under the Liberal Democrats, we deliver on our promises. With a strong belief in value for money, we work hard to ensure that every penny of taxpayers money goes further. At the same time, we are on target to save over £5 million in just 3 years by cutting waste in our Town Hall, working with our partners and providing quality services at lower cost.

The financial situation this country faces after 13 years of a Labour Government is unprecedented. Our Coalition Government are taking the difficult decisions to safeguard our future. At the same time they are placing huge demands on local Councils. This is our opportunity to drive our waste from our town hall and provide services in a smarter and efficient way.

Brentwood needs strong leadership, Brentwood needs decisive action, Councillors determined to act to safeguard the vital services of today and invest in the provisions for the future. We have and will always face up to that challenge.

“Your Finance Pledges”

- We will deliver a Council Tax freeze for 2011–2012 as we work with the Coalition Government.
- We pledge that we will only increase Council Tax if it is absolutely necessary and will always look at other ways to raise money before doing so. Any rise introduced will only be to ensure we continue to deliver the best for Brentwood.
- We will extend the 5% cut on all Special Responsibility Allowances and introduce a further 10% cut for all Basic Councillor Allowances.
- We will commit to run the successful “Your Brentwood Your Budget” consultation every year whilst we are the administration.
- We pledge to deliver value for money by driving out waste and cutting costs in order to deliver more for less, to make every penny of taxpayers money go further.
- We will create “Local Neighbourhood Partnerships” across the Borough giving a greater voice to Parish Councils, Community Groups, Residents’ Associations to work together.



Conservatives do not just promise low council tax increases, we deliver them. Since we took control of the Administration, every budget we have set has risen by less than 4%.

Council Tax Increases: 1996 to 2010

| Year | Council Tax Increase % | Budget Set By |
|------------------|-------------------------------|----------------------|
| 1996-1997 | 18.36% | Liberal Democrat |
| 1997-1998 | 19.21% | Liberal Democrat |
| 1998-1999 | 4.6% | Liberal Democrat |
| 1999-2000 | 3.35% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2000-2001 | 5.28% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2001-2002 | 12.98% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2002-2003 | 9.74% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2003-2004 | 12.85% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2004-2005 | 3.46% | No Overall Control |
| 2005-2006 | 0% | Conservative |
| 2006-2007 | 3.89% | Conservative |
| 2007-2008 | 3.98% | Conservative |
| 2008-2009 | 3.99% | Conservative |
| 2009-2010 | 1.89% | Conservative |
| 2010-2011 | 2.89% | Conservative |
| 2011-2012 | 0% | Conservative |



Your Brentwood Your Environment

Brentwood Conservatives are the party for a greener and cleaner Borough. Conservatives believe in a greener town. We have delivered record recycling rates for Brentwood by working with residents to develop a respected and admired system to cut our landfill waste and radically improve recycling from the low levels under the years of Liberal Democrat control.

“Your Environment Pledges”

- We will introduce incentives to recycle more by working with residents and local businesses via the RecycleBank initiative, providing residents who recycle in Brentwood with reward vouchers to spend in local shops, supporting local economy and our local environment too.
- We will always be the strongest advocates of our Green Belt, it is what makes our town special and is crucial to retaining our identity.
- We will retain the Weekly Waste Collection and always campaign against plans introduced by Labour to introduce bin taxes.
- We will work to deliver a recycling rate for our Borough of 60% by 2015 and introduce a Council Climate Change Policy to cut our total emissions and improve our planet.
- We will establish “Brentwood Community Rangers” helping to protect our town centre, parks, open spaces, shopping centres and other key locations to keep our Borough cleaner, greener and safer.

| Year | Recycling Rate % | Administration |
|-----------|------------------|--------------------|
| 2001-2002 | 11.78% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2002-2003 | 14.23% | Liberal Democrat |
| 2003-2004 | 14.58% | No Overall Control |
| 2004-2005 | 24.28% | Conservative |
| 2005-2006 | 26.59% | Conservative |
| 2006-2007 | 31.18% | Conservative |
| 2007-2008 | 41.20% | Conservative |
| 2008-2009 | 42.45% | Conservative |
| 2009-2010 | 43.5% | Conservative |
| 2010-2011 | 45% | Conservative |

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Your Brentwood Your Community

Brentwood has much to offer to both residents and visitors, through our strong community ties. Our ambition is to build on the success stories in our Borough, invest in our community and give more power to people.

“Your Community Pledges”

- We will establish a “Brentwood Big Society Board” where the Council, residents’ groups, local charities and voluntary groups can work together to enhance the delivery of services in the Borough.
- We will continue to improve the facilities and opportunities available in our wonderful Country Parks and Open Spaces across our Borough.
- We will explore all opportunities to secure external funding to support community initiatives and investment in our Borough play areas.
- We will introduce the “Brentwood Youth Scheme” for all 7 to 17 year olds to allow them to earn recognition for community or charitable work and win regular prizes to support their efforts
- We will work with local Post Offices to explore opportunities for council services to be available to these offices, providing residents with local contact points and helping support vital local facilities.
- We will work to ensure money is directed towards our frontline services, by driving out waste and finding more efficient and cost effective ways of working with community partners through shared working arrangements.
- We will support local residents in the fight against planning incursions and will defend against illegal activity from all sectors of the community, ensuring everyone is treated equally.



Your Brentwood Your Society

Creating a Big Society is about working to bring together residents, businesses, charities and local councils to deliver the best services to our Borough. Our society is stronger when we all work together to achieve the best for our family, friends and generations to come.

“Your Society Pledges”

- We will continue to work with Crossrail and will campaign for the best possible outcome for our residents in both the short term and long term.
- We will campaign for additional improvements to Brentwood Station beyond those planned by National Express through the “Fix Our Station” campaign. We will lobby every level of government and business to fight for these improvements.
- We fully support the work of Parish Councils and Resident Associations and pledge to do all we can to enhance the delivery of services for the benefit of local residents.
- We will never forget the service of our Armed Forces as they fight in the name of Queen and Country. We will therefore honour all those who have fallen in the line of duty by annually marking Armed Forces Day.
- We are committed to the provision of good quality housing across the Borough’s portfolio and we will instigate a full and comprehensive review of our Sheltered Accommodation provisions.
- We will support and encourage the growth of “Community Champions” across all wards in the Borough, creating a pool of people as the eyes and ears of their own communities.
- We will invest in Big Society projects across Brentwood with a £55,000 commitment for 2011/2012.



Your Brentwood Your Business

Promoting and encouraging the growth of business in Brentwood is vital to supporting our national economic recovery. As the country faces up to the reality of these Labour Party cuts we are prepared to work together with businesses to build lasting partnerships and economic vitality in our town.

“Your Business Pledges”

- We will conduct an annual Brentwood Business Audit with businesses across our Borough, listening and responding to their feedback.
- We believe in strong relationships with the Federation of Small Businesses and Chamber of Commerce and will be close partners as we work together for our Borough.
- We will continue to develop a Town Centre Strategy to build on the work we have done to date to support local retailers and encourage more people to our town centre and shopping parades across the town.
- We will work with “The Big 9” employers of our town to promote the local economy for the benefit of all local businesses.
- We will continue to work with our business partners to deliver Business Summits and Retailers Forums to promote open dialogue between the Local Authority and commercial sector.
- We are committed to developing and improving the Brentwood Renaissance Group, to improve our Town Support, through working with the Borough’s main businesses, local retailers and residents. We will launch the “Brentwood First” campaign designed to provide focused attention and ensure delivery.
- We will carry out a full review of parking charges in the Town Centre and in relation to the Crossrail project, ensuring charges are fair, justifiable and have the input of both residents and retailers.



Your Brentwood Your Communication

Brentwood Conservatives will always involve the people of Brentwood on the big decisions that affect our town. We are here to listen and to serve. We are also elected to act and make the decisions required for the prosperity and growth of our town. We won't sit on the fence, we won't wait for someone else to make the difficult choices, we will stand up and be counted, we will always do the best for our Borough.

One of the greatest assets we have as a Borough is the willingness of Brentwood residents to engage in the local decision making process and to get involved in our Borough.

The historic "Your Brentwood Your Budget" consultation gave residents real power over the budget making process. We will always listen and act.

"Your Communication Pledges"

- We will introduce a monthly eBrentwoodNews for every resident who wants to be connected with regular news on activities across our town.
- We will transform the way we connect with you, making better use of the internet and local community groups. We will continue to be more open and increase transparency in the way we operate.
- We will always put residents at the heart of what we do, and will continue with regular Leader and Deputy Leader roadshows under the "My Brentwood My Home" banner.
- We will consult with residents over all key matters affecting our Borough and will always act in residents' interest, we are prepared to make the necessary decisions to move Brentwood forward.
- We will introduce a programme of "Ward Walks" involving senior Councillors, (including Leader, Deputy Leader, Executive Chairman) and local ward Councillors to meet with residents across all wards to tackle local issues.



Your Brentwood Your Council

Brentwood Conservatives are committed to creating an open and transparent Council. We have led the way in opening the doors to democracy in Brentwood and will never choose secrecy over openness.

We will ensure that the entire Council portfolio of property provides the best value for money for residents. The hard earned money of Brentwood residents will not be wasted on our watch. We will always aim to deliver more for less in this time of difficult economic challenges.

“Your Council Pledges”

- We remain committed to the streamlining of the Council’s Committees, and will also focus efforts on decision to keep costs down.
- We will oppose plans for a Directly Elected Mayor for Brentwood, as this would place a huge financial burden on Brentwood taxpayers. We passionately support retaining our Civic Mayor.
- We will continue to review and monitor all Council properties and vital assets to make sure they offer value for money for residents. Our assets must work for the best of Brentwood residents.
- We will publish the voting record of every Councillor for every item on resident sensitive Planning and Licensing Committees.
- We will continue to publish all Council spending over £500 in the continued pursuit of transparency and will look at further ways to expand our People’s Right To Know project.
- We will be seeking a full review by the Boundary Commission on the number of Councillors across the Borough, making the case for a reduction in the total number.



Your Opportunity

We have set out a bold and radical manifesto to build on the success across our Borough. On Thursday 5th May 2011 you will have the chance to decide the future of our Borough. It will be your chance to vote across Brentwood for your local councillors to serve you for the next four years.

It is the day that you will choose the Administration of Brentwood Borough Council. The choice will be clear. A future built on secure finances, investment in our community, support for our businesses, providing the best leisure and cultural opportunities in Essex and an open door for you on your democracy.

The choice is clear, the choice is a future for Brentwood or a return to the wasteful dark Liberal days of the past.

We have been proud to lead this Council for the last 7 years and will be proud to lead it over the coming years if you elect us to do. We will be resilient when making the difficult decisions for the best future for our town. We will be strong vocal champions of our town.

The choice is clear, it is about:

“Your Brentwood Your Future”

 **Vote Conservative**

Commitment To Your Future

We believe in the successes, challenges and pledges we have outlined in this manifesto for Brentwood. So we are prepared to put our name to it!

Brentwood North Candidate

Brentwood South Candidate

Brentwood West Candidate

Brizes & Doddington Candidate

Herongate & Ingrave Candidate

Hutton East Candidate

Hutton North Candidate

Ingatestone & Fryerning Candidate

Pilgrims Hatch Candidate

Tipps Cross Candidate

Warley Candidate

Cllr Louise McKinlay
Conservative Group Leader

Cllr Roger Hirst
Conservative Group Deputy Leader

 **Vote Conservative**

Together we can campaign for Brentwood

Together we can be the champions of our Borough

Your Brentwood Your Future



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