

A Record of Action A Promise of More

The Conservative Manifesto for the
Herefordshire Council elections on 2 May
2019





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A personal message from Council Leader Jonathan Lester



Jonathan Lester Leader of the Council

Dear Resident,

Over the past four years the Conservatives have delivered for Herefordshire. Under our leadership Herefordshire Council has continued to invest in Herefordshire and maintain its key services. At the same time we have successfully made the huge savings that were required. This has been an incredible achievement and I am very proud of what has been accomplished. We have an excellent track record on delivering our pledges and we have taken all of the tough decisions necessary. We have improved the way services have been delivered and addressed all of the challenges that have come our way.

So much has been secured. We have managed the council finances at a time when there have been the greatest cuts in local government history. As a result the council has emerged with balanced budgets, found more efficient ways to provide services, and been able to provide resources to invest. At a time when councils have had to deal with enormous pressures regarding looking after the most vulnerable in our society the Conservatives have led the way in how to transform services and get best value for money. This has not been easy, and there is much still to do, but it is only by being responsible with finite resources that we have continued to deliver on our promises.

We remain committed to protecting the most vulnerable and making best use of resources. At the same time we have created the opportunities that will invest in Herefordshire's future and build firmly on the successes that have already been achieved. With your help we can continue to support those most in need, maintain and invest in our infrastructure, sustain and promote vibrant communities, and continue to grow our economy so that we can provide prosperity and wellbeing for all.

It is only the Conservatives who have a clear vision for Herefordshire. We have consistently made the right decisions. So now it is time to build on what has been achieved. Our Manifesto is both evidence of what progress has been made and a commitment to fulfill those opportunities that we have created which will succeed with our continued plan of action. I welcome your support so that together we can do what is right for Herefordshire.

Cllr Jonathan Lester
Leader, Herefordshire Council

Putting The People Of Herefordshire First

The Conservatives have

- Delivered a balanced budget
- Protected the County's most vulnerable.
- Invested millions in our road network; building new roads, resurfacing old roads and repairing thousands more potholes.
- Rebuilt Herefordshire Council's reserves to provide resilience
- Prioritised the Education of our children by delivering new and improved Schools across the County.

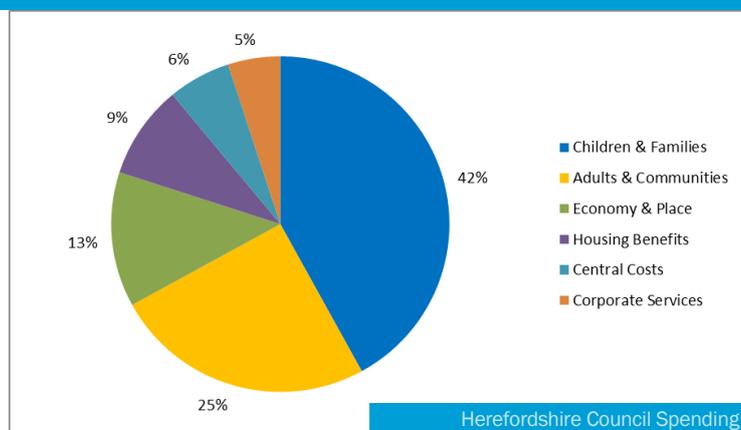
■ Over the last four years, the Conservative administration has focused on delivering the promises made in 2011.

We have taken the tough decisions necessary to deliver, on time, savings of around £90 Million in total over the last decade whilst safeguarding our vital services and protecting the most vulnerable.

Whilst the council's finances have contracted, the demand for services has grown and the council face a constant challenge to manage the year on year increases in demand for adult social care and looked after children. The council must also deliver further savings of £8 million over the next three years to ensure the council budget remains balanced.

As the current administration, we have set out clear plans on how we can and will achieve these savings and we believe we are the only party that will deliver on this challenge.

Under the Conservatives, Herefordshire has an excellent track record of transforming services in difficult financial times and continuing to meet the needs of our residents.



This shows exactly where the Council's budget is spent. Of the total budget, £104 Million comes from you in the form of council tax and we are committed to spending this as responsibly as possible. That is why:

- Nearly half of all council expenditure is retained within Herefordshire delivering on our commitment to support local businesses.
- Central costs have been reduced to 6% freeing up more money for vital services like those that safeguard our children and vulnerable adults.
- We have prioritised the need to maintain financial stability, deliver efficiencies and support investment in priority services. The Council must demonstrate value for money and maintain service quality. Only the Conservatives can deliver this.



Delivering Good Jobs



The Conservatives have delivered investment in key areas to safeguard and deliver thousands of jobs across Bromyard, Hereford, Kington, Ledbury, Leominster, Ross-On-Wye and the surrounding areas.

A record of action

1 New State of the Art Livestock Market

The new livestock market, one of the busiest in the country, with over 450,000 head of stock per annum from England and Wales.

2 Investing In Business Infrastructure

Around the county over 600,000 sq. ft. of workspace developed. and The Rotherwas industrial estate continues to welcome new businesses. Supporting local jobs for local people.

3 Delivering The Old Market Development

The first major retail development in Herefordshire in 25 years with a catchment of nearly 400,000 and an annual footfall of over 5 million.

4 Building the Infrastructure We Need

The completion of the City Link Road has opened up acres of land to new development opportunities that will boost the local economy and provide jobs for our young people.

5 Restoration of the Master's House, Ledbury

The Council and its partners delivered a multi-million pound refurbishment to create a library and community space for local residents.

6 Unlocking Private Investment

We have led the way on attracting private investment to allow for multi million pound projects such as the redevelopment of fire-damaged buildings in High Town.

A promise of more

1 Promoting Herefordshire As A Tourist Destination

We will take a proactive approach to promoting tourism throughout the county. Attracting more visitors to boost the local economy.

2 Promoting Herefordshire as a Cyber Security Hub

We are partnering with Wolverhampton University and the Marches LEP to create a Cyber Security centre that will allow us to capitalise on this growing industry creating jobs and boosting our local economy.

3 Regeneration of Brownfield Sites

Investing in the regeneration of sites like the £6.5 million development of the Old Shell Store at Rotherwas to deliver facilities for new businesses.

4 Creation Of A New Transport Hub

We will create a new centralised transport hub at Hereford Railway Station to improve transport links and explore options to redevelop the old bus station site.

5 Investing In Business Infrastructure

Delivering the Model Farm business estate in Ross-On-Wye, investing £7 million and providing 300,000 square feet of commercial space.

6 Boosting Capital Investment to Create Jobs County Wide

We Are committed to investing millions of pounds in capital projects that will boost the local economy and provide higher value jobs across the County.

Prosperity For All



Prioritising initiatives to improve our environment and build a Herefordshire fit for the future.

A record of action

1 Leading the Way On CO₂
We have invested £7 million pounds in LED street lighting, saving 29 tonnes of CO₂ and delivering a saving to the council taxpayer of nearly £1 million per annum.

2 Diverting 40,000+ Tonnes of Waste From Landfill
We are committed to protecting our local environment and that is why our county waste is used to generate electricity. Saving 14,000 tonnes of CO₂ every year and producing enough energy to power Hereford.

3 Investing In Our Roads
Between 2013-18 we resurfaced over 675 miles of highways in 2018 alone we dealt with over 32,000 potholes—continuing to invest in road safety across the County.

4 Putting Planning In Your Hands
Overseeing the introduction of over 42 Neighbourhood Plans, the Council has provided local communities with a strong voice to influence developments which affect them

5 Delivering A Local Development Framework
This provides planning guidance for the delivery of housing where it is needed the most. Helping to deliver Herefordshire's housing needs.

6 Improving the Wye Catchment Area
Our rivers and their wildlife are part of what makes Herefordshire such a beautiful county, and we have worked hard to deliver improvements to water quality and protect our wildlife.

A promise of more

1 Investment in Our Road Network
We will work closely with our local MPs to lobby the Government and bid for challenge funds to help meet the demands of our rural road network.

2 Delivering the Hereford Bypass
Traffic congestion pollutes our city and damages our local economy. We are committed to delivering a bypass in both Hereford and Leominster to help ease congestion and improve air-quality.

3 Meeting Our Housing Needs
By investing through our development partnership delivering appropriate affordable housing on council owned land.

4 Improving Road Safety
We are committed to improving the safety of our road network by identifying dangerous areas and working closely with communities to deliver improvement.

5 Investing in Solar Energy
We will deliver solar projects in Hereford, Bromyard and Leominster to help reduce our costs and our carbon footprint.

6 Managing Traffic For Residents
We will continue to consult on the introduction of Resident's Parking Schemes for communities, where problem parking is an issue.

Opportunity For All



As Conservatives, we believe that every individual should have the same opportunity to succeed, and that is why we have invested heavily in projects which give the next generation the best possible start in life.

A record of action

1 Our Schools Outperforming The National Average.

Our secondary schools and academies outperformed schools nationally against key indicators. Ensuring our children have the best start possible.

2 A Primary Education Of Which We Can Be Proud

We have invested to ensure every Child has the opportunity to succeed. In September 2018 Ofsted stated that Herefordshire “has the best Primary Schools in the West Midlands”.

3 Building the Schools Our Communities Need

The Conservatives have given the go-ahead for a new school in Peterchurch, and delivered on our commitment to build a new school in Colwall.

4 Safeguarding Our Children

The Children’s safeguarding services have been inspected by Ofsted under their new inspection regime and they have approved our plans to improve the service.

5 A New University for Herefordshire

With support from the Marches LEP and the Department of Education we have facilitated the delivery of the new NMITE university.

6 Prioritising Early Help Assessment

Targeting our support to identify and help vulnerable families before the need of intervention from statutory services. Improving the life chances of these vulnerable residents.

A promise of more

1 Capital Investment Where It Is Needed Most

We will continue to invest in our schools to provide a better quality education, and learning environment with £5 million already earmarked.

2 Improving Our Children's Services

We have already invested £1.6 million to improve the performance of Children’s services and we are committed to investing a further £2 million per annum.

3 Expanding The Council's Apprenticeship Programme

Training the next generation whilst providing a route to a professional qualification as an alternative to university.

4 Improving Health and Wellbeing of the Under Fives

Reconfiguring £3.5M for children between 0-5 years. Including delivering children centre services; improved health visiting and school nursing

5 Supporting Herefordshire's New University

We will continue to support the new NMITE university to access facilities by making previously redundant council facilities available.

6 Unlocking Investment for Student Accommodation

We have attracted an £18 Million promise of investment in Herefordshire by unlocking land for the development of student accommodation

A Good Quality Of Life For All



Delivering a better quality of life for residents and enabling those at all stages of their lives to better integrate and contribute within their community.

A record of action

1 Improved Leisure Facilities across the County

We have invested to improve leisure facilities in Bromyard, Hereford, Ledbury, Leominster and Ross-On-Wye through our partnership with Halo.

2 Protecting Our Heritage

The Conservatives have acted to protect our libraries, museums and archive services in the face of significant funding pressures. Encouraging user groups and communities to help keep these vital services open.

3 Welcoming Syrian Refugee Families to Herefordshire

We have successfully welcomed Syrian refugee families to Herefordshire through the Home Office resettlement scheme.

4 Boosting Broadband Speeds across the County

We have invested significant resources into delivering superfast broadband across the County. 86% of premises can now access this compared with 0.6% in 2012.

5 Launched The Community Hub Project

To augment council services by championing community voluntary initiatives. Improving the quality of life for everyone.

6 Launched The Home First Service

Helping those leaving hospital by ensuring they receive the support that helps them regain and maintain their independence as quickly as possible.

A promise of more

1 Investment in Our Market Towns

They are the lifeblood of rural communities, and with our investment partner, we will prioritise projects which can benefit these areas.

2 Fighting Crime and Anti-social Behaviour

We will work closely with the police and other agencies to fight crime and antisocial behaviour. We will also invest in disrupting people trafficking and "county lines" drugs operations.

3 Superfast Broadband For All Of Herefordshire

86% of premises already have access but we are committed to delivering further investment to reach the remaining 14% of premises.

4 Public Transport Fit For The 21st Century

We will enhance real time monitoring of vehicles, improve timetabling and make more information available about the services offered across the County.

5 Sustainable Travel Measures

We will improve walking, cycling and bus routes to decrease traffic, improve air quality and giving a choice about how they travel.

6 Tackle Rough Sleeping In Herefordshire

By enhancing the Rough Sleeper Outreach Service our ambition is to tackle rough sleeping and its causes in Herefordshire.

Prudent Financial Management



“This is probably the best positioned authority’s accounts I’ve seen in terms of year on year performance for some while. I fully appreciate that there are ongoing austerity issues but the balance sheet is very robust indeed”

External Independent Adviser

A record of action

1 Facing Financial Pressures Head On

Our government support grant has been reduced from £60M (2010) to £0.6M now. We have taken the difficult decisions when necessary.

2 New Roads, Housing And Job Opportunities.

Maintaining over 2000 miles of road, and working with Government to providing improvements to our County strategic routes; A4103, A44, A438 and A465

3 Robust Budgeting

We have managed to deliver a balanced budget for the last four years whilst building our reserves, not raiding them like neighbouring councils.

4 Delivering Efficiency Savings

Renegotiating supply contracts to remove waste and focus on delivering key outputs and taking legal action to recover millions from previous contractors.

5 Prudent Management of Council Borrowing

Herefordshire Council's borrowing is prudent for a Council of our size and within realistic limits despite the funding pressures we face.

6 Cutting Red Tape to Deliver Better Services

We have Improved access to claimant advice by combining with the Department of Work and Pensions to deliver a one stop hub for benefits and housing.

A promise of more

1 Invest In the Environment

We are committed to increasing the use of LED lighting, improving heating controls and introducing an more environmentally friendly car fleet to reduce our carbon footprint.

2 Keeping Herefordshire Moving

We will invest over £90 million during the next 4 years in highway improvements, addressing accident black spots and potholes. Investing in our own multi-use velocity pothole patching and gritting vehicles.

3 Develop and Implement a County Wide Economic Plan

To help deliver on the Invest Herefordshire vision for a vibrant and successful local economy. Protecting jobs and creating employment.

4 Deliver Hillside Dementia Care Centre

Protecting our most vulnerable elderly residents, and facilitate training for the next generation of Herefordshire's care workers, by building this much needed facility.

5 Future Financial Resilience

With the uncertainty on Government funding post 2020, we are safeguarding Herefordshire's future by maintaining the necessary reserves.

6 Enabling an Enterprise Culture

Investing in business development sites and opportunities, facilitating training and education initiatives including NMITE and, continuing investment in Fastershire.