

Our vision for North Herts

More homes and higher standards

Labour will not only release public land and money to build more high-quality, affordable houses and starter homes, we will also actively engage with Housing Partnerships to ensure that people and families on low incomes can rent and buy them. Where people are made homeless, we will co-operate closely with social services to provide them with support quickly, working with housing associations to provide temporary homes. We will press the County Council to ensure that more elderly people can stay in their own homes by utilising the Government's "Supporting People" grant.



Beating the recession

Labour wants the Council to devote more energy to creating opportunity and supporting jobless people. We will work with businesses and other agencies to encourage apprenticeships, provide free skills training and stimulate local enterprise. Credit unions can be an important source of funds to address the financial needs of individuals and we will continue to support them vigorously.



Involving people

Local communities are often better at running community centres, halls and parks than the Council. Labour will encourage the transfer of such facilities to local groups, consulting fully beforehand. Through Area Committees, Council surgeries, and community liaison events, and in partnership with other service providers, we will continue to respond to the needs of individuals. In particular, we wish to give young people a voice and will work closely with them to provide improved youth facilities, projects, activities and services.



Greener, healthier living

We need to enhance the rate of recycling in the District and reduce car usage, so Labour will introduce doorstep collection of plastic waste and address the barriers to recycling experienced by large families and those with special needs. We will also extend the special arrangements for collection from flats throughout the District. To reduce the District's dependence on imported fossil fuels, by 2020 we will aim to cut carbon dioxide emissions to 60 % of 2005 levels by helping homeowners to install more effective insulation, sending non-recyclable waste to clean energy plants, encouraging the use of solar heating and permitting wind turbines to be erected in suitable locations. Labour will also greatly enhance cycling and pedestrian facilities and bus services while setting up schemes for car sharing and home working. We will ensure that sports and leisure facilities are accessible at times which are convenient for everyone and we will accelerate the provision and refurbishment of our parks and gardens.



Where we live

Labour rejects intrusive development in our valued green belts but will support development elsewhere which meets the needs of local people while retaining the individual character of our towns and villages. We will resist cramming of housing onto town sites and the disposal of community and historic buildings. We wish to involve business and local communities more fully in planning the future of our town centres so that they remain vibrant and attractive. We will encourage towns to become Transition Towns so that they can be sustained for the enjoyment of future generations.

