

100

MORE

Innovations by
Labour in Power





Thank you to everyone who took the time to share innovations from their councils and Labour Groups with us. We received over 300 submissions which made it very difficult to pick out the top 100, and it has been fantastic to see all of the positive work that Labour in local government has been doing. Given the volume and quality of submissions, we wanted to make sure they all could be accessed in the future, so we've set up a website – www.lgalabourinnovations.com.

This will have all of the innovations in this booklet plus the rest of the submissions, and throughout the year we'll be encouraging the submission of new innovations and achievements. This will become a one stop shop for Labour in local government to share ideas and achievements, allowing Labour MPs, Peers, councillors and activists to access these achievements to share them in Parliament, to help inform local manifestos, and for use in research and publications.

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It is testament to the ingenuity and energy of Labour councillors that you are reading the second edition of the LGA Labour Group's '100 Innovations' series just two years after the first was published.

This new version contains another 100 practical examples of how Labour councils have used their creativity and experience to find new ways to best defend those we were elected to protect – a task of which they should rightly take pride.

Year on year, Labour councils have shielded their communities from the worst of Tory austerity. The government have systematically stripped our communities of assets, hit the poorest in society with welfare cuts, and continued their attack on Labour local authorities through disproportionate cuts to the most deprived areas. But Labour councils have listened to and worked with our communities to understand their priorities and have found ways of stretching every pound left available to us. We have demonstrated the determination and imagination required to generate radical policy ideas, to subvert tired ways of working, and to find modern solutions to old problems.

This book is bursting with the fruits of this approach – practical, smart innovations that are shining examples of how Labour councils are able to translate their values into action. Ideas that help give children and young people the best start in life, improve health and wellbeing, ensure equality, and deliver inclusive growth. Novel policies that support new jobs, protect the environment, and keep our communities safe. Each one is the result of Labour councillors working with their local communities to understand their needs, and of identifying the solutions that best suit their local area.

'100 More Innovations' also illustrates how Labour councils listen to and work with partners from across our movement. Ideas such as the Ethical Care Charter developed by Unison, and the Cooperative Party's campaign to end the scourge of modern slavery, have been taken up much more widely by Labour councils than non-Labour authorities.

Foreword

What is perhaps most impressive about this focus on innovation is that it has been achieved despite councils having both hands tied behind their back – constrained by both crippling austerity, and the suffocating interference of Whitehall. Just imagine what Labour councils could achieve under a future Labour government that both supplied the funding needed to deliver quality services, and also had the confidence to abandon the usual Whitehall command-and-control attitude that so often stifles place-based approaches that deliver the best local outcomes.

Localism has been consistently proven to deliver efficient and improved public services, but there is also a formidable political argument in favour of giving power back to local communities. Many voters have displayed anguish at a loss of local identity, and the feeling that they no longer have control over their own lives – most obviously revealed in the vote to leave the European Union. The public have always placed more trust in their local council than in the national government, whoever is in power. Truly empowered and independent local government offers the next Labour government a meaningful, accountable, and democratic path to return power and control to every community in the country.

Though Labour are not in power in Westminster, more than half of the population of England and Wales live under a Labour Council or Labour Metro Mayor, and there are close to 7,000 Labour councillors working with local communities to put real Labour values into practice. Labour councils continue to demonstrate leadership in the toughest of times, and to provide an example to Labour frontbench colleagues in Parliament about how to deliver for voters.

Labour councils desperately want to see a Labour government, and we punch well above our weight in campaigning towards that aim, but we do not shirk our responsibility to achieving all we can for our residents until it is realised.

I believe that after reading '100 More Innovations' you will see that Labour councils don't just talk about a better future - we also deliver it.

Nick Forbes .

Nick Forbes

Leader, Labour Group, Local Government Association



Securing the best start in life for our children and young people

01

Protecting the rights of children

In August 2018, **Bristol City Council** along with key partners from across Bristol launched the Bristol Children's Charter. This Charter, which is the first of its kind in the UK is based on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. Since the launch the Charter has become the guiding principle for the council and city partners around spatial and urban planning, has been a key support document for central government funding, and has increased public engagement. There are over 40 organisations signed up across the city.

02

Working to provide quality mental health provision in schools

In response to the need for a discussion of mental health issues within the school curriculum, **Newport City Council** set up the Arrow Project. This project has developed a series of mental health workshops over the last 2 years to be used in schools in Newport, placing mental health at the heart of the curriculum. The council is looking at how to take this project forward, looking at possible improvements and widening the impact of this work.

03

Supporting care leavers into adulthood

As a Partners in Practice Local Authority, **South Tyneside Council** is leading an innovation project, "The Workplace". This provides a comprehensive support package to young people exiting the care system, recognising that this population may face a range of additional barriers to entering work. The service works with local training providers, employers and other key stakeholders such as social workers to align the needs of care leavers with tangible job prospects and ensure a network of pathways into employment and training.

04

Creating a learning partnership

Ealing Council have established the Ealing Learning Partnership (ELP) in which schools have access to almost £600,000 of extra council funding and, through joint subscriptions, new avenues to learn from one another's best practice. The ELP enables schools to share the costs of training and procurement, support each other in terms of staff development and to tackle issues around recruitment and retention. This reduces the isolation of individual schools in weathering the effects of ongoing government cuts by sharing the burden together. 95% of all Ealing's maintained schools are signed up to the ELP and they aim to achieve 100% by 2022.

05

Providing tailored family support

Using restorative approaches is a key element of **Leeds City Council's** ambition to become a child friendly city. These approaches provide staff with a range of language, behaviours and tools that strengthen their relationships with children, young people and families, empowering them to share responsibility by using a solution-focused approach to support positive change. These practices are an important part of the way in which they support families to become better equipped to solve their difficulties and address challenges. One of the ways they do this is through a Family Group Conference. Extended families and staff meet together to consider risks and concerns about their children. The family talk privately to create a plan that fits in with their individual dynamics, and enables family leadership in the process. Through adopting restorative practices they have been able to safely and appropriately reduce the number of children being taken into care by 11.5% over 7 years, compared to a rise of 10.9% nationally over 6 years. This represents a saving in Leeds of £6m per year. Children's Services in Leeds have recently been rated outstanding by Ofsted.

06

Council Tax Exemption for Care Leavers

When young people leave care and move to independent accommodation, they begin to manage their own budget fully for the first time. Many find themselves dealing with the challenges of living independently without the support of family to help them navigate this stage of their lives. Labour councillors take their responsibilities as corporate parents to children and young people in their care very seriously, and there are countless examples of good practice in ensuring they get the best start in life.

The Children's Society report 'Wolf At The Door' revealed that council tax debt was a particularly frightening experience for care leavers. What can start out for many care leavers as falling slightly behind can very quickly escalate to a court summons and enforcement action being taken. As a result, many Labour councils have decided to make care leavers exempt from paying Council Tax until they turn 25 – this gives young people a few valuable years to learn how to manage their finances and have a better chance at avoiding problem debt in the future.

For instance, Labour councillors in **Manchester City Council** decided to make all care leavers exempt from paying any Council Tax until they reach the age of 25 – an increase in entitlement from the earlier decision to exempt until 21 in 2017. This decision means that up to 1000 young people in Manchester no longer have to pay Council Tax.

Over 60 Labour councils have introduced similar exemptions for care leavers – making up over 75% of all councils to have done so across the country. They include **Birmingham, Blackburn and Darwen, Bolton, Bury, Camden, Cheshire West and Chester, Cumbria, Darlington, Doncaster, Dudley, Enfield, Gedling, Greenwich, Halton, Hartlepool, Hounslow, Kingston upon Hull, Leicester, Middlesbrough, Milton Keynes, North Tyneside, Oldham, Redbridge, Rochdale, Rotherham, Salford, Sandwell, Sefton, Slough, St Helens, Sunderland, Tameside, Wakefield, Warrington, Wigan and Wirral.**

07

Increasing the recruitment and retention of foster carers

To improve the recruitment and retention of foster carers, **Barnsley Council** used one of its area councils to access their community knowledge to increase foster carer recruitment. Following a launch event the Fostering Team attended local events, materials were distributed throughout the area and an article appeared in the community magazine with the help of the area team. Existing foster carers acted as Fostering Champions and attended events to speak about their experiences. It resulted in a 75% increase in enquires about fostering from the year before. This campaign is being rolled out across the borough within each ward area.

In 2015, **Doncaster Council** was one of eight fostering providers to pilot the Mockingbird Family Model, an alternative method of delivering fostering with the potential to improve placement stability for children and young people in care and to improve support for, and retention of foster carers. It uses the constellation model which is where 6 to 10 fostering families live in close proximity to a dedicated hub home of specially recruited and trained carers offering tailored support. Following the successful pilot, additional investment enabled an expansion of the model to five hubs by 2018. Analysis of the model has demonstrated that children experience more stable placements when looked after within the hubs and increased foster carer retention. The pilot is estimated to have reduced future costs by over £500,000, and there are now plans to extend the number of Hubs.

08

Protecting children from harm

Redbridge Council has seen significant issues for young people with missing episodes, gang and "county lines" activity and child sexual exploitation often all interlinked. The Family Intervention Team (FIT) went live in April 2018, specialising in bespoke interventions, support and conflict resolution to stop children from going into care and being exploited. The FIT is also developing a dashboard to map child sexual exploitation and gang activity across the borough, analysing data to provide insights on locations and trends in the hope of identifying further potential victims and targeting services in areas of concern. The council is estimating a saving of roughly £400,000 in 2018/19 as a result of implementing this model.

09

Bringing the school curriculum to life through the workplace

The Bradford Education Covenant is a pioneering initiative that supports the learning journey, starting from birth and continuing for life, inside and outside formal education. The Covenant, led by **Bradford City Council**, has been actively supported by 4,699 businesses in the 2017/18 academic year through work experience, site visits, industry visits, internships and other learning placements connecting young people with the world of work. The Bradford Community Champions – a group of successful people from non-privileged backgrounds who are role models for local children – have given inspirational talks to over 1,500 young people over the year.

As a result of **Islington Council's** Fair Futures Commission, the council set up "100 Hours of the World of Work". This helps young people prepare for the world of work, working in partnership with local schools to develop an employment preparation offer for all children and young people. The offer includes developing core skills, and ensures that children get 100 hours of meaningful experience in the world of work by the time they are 16. This also enriches the curriculum, bringing learning to life.

10

Empowering young people

Stroud District Council support a vibrant Youth Council and Youth Forums across the district. Young people are mentored to develop skills that enable them to deal maturely and professionally with adult agencies. They challenge statutory agencies who provide services for young people and they raise the profile of young people's issues in the district. They have become so well respected that the local Clinical Commissioning Group and Public Health team invited youth members to sit on the commissioning panel for new mental health services for young people in Gloucestershire.

Stevenage Borough Council actively consults with children and young people to help inform improvements to their local play areas. During 2018 over 350 children and young people were consulted about improvements to four sites across the town. This approach supports young people in making decisions about the services provided for them, ensures budgets are spent effectively, results in a decrease in vandalism to the improved sites, and has resulted in 90% increases in satisfaction with local play areas.



Delivering high quality social care

11

Helping vulnerable people to live independently

To support vulnerable people in the community, **Kirklees Council** have changed their housing allocations policy to give care leavers and vulnerable adults the highest banding on the housing register, ensuring a short wait for permanent accommodation. These residents are given one to one intensive independent living skills training, tailored to their needs, and they are allocated a Housing Solutions Officer to help make the transition from care to independent living as smooth as possible.

12

Supporting mothers towards a positive future

To support mothers who have had more than one child taken into the care of the local authority, **Newport City Council** worked with partners in the NHS, health sector and the local university to establish Reflect, which gives women access to provisions to meet their needs for positive futures. This includes access to sexual health services. The service has been evaluated and is now being rolled out across Wales.

13

Making services more accessible for the over 60s

Lewisham Council runs the Safe and Independent Living Connections (SAIL) programme. A series of accessible questions on a checklist means SAIL provides a quick and simple way for over 60s to access a wide range of local services. Through completing the checklist, residents can access a wide range of support services that improve health and wellbeing, mental resilience, social isolation, financial inclusion, fire safety, home security, safeguarding and personal safety and security. Over an 18-month period, SAIL Connections has received 1,063 SAIL checklists and supported 926 older people.

14

Not for profit homecare services

Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council has established a not-for-profit social enterprise to provide home care services. The scheme sees the council work in partnership with Five Lamps, a local community-led social enterprise to provide personal care support to adult residents. The service, which provides over 600 hours of weekly care for clients, has been rated 'good' by the Care Quality Commission. The scheme was designed to strengthen the provision of quality home care services while providing a highly trained and motivated workforce with opportunities for career progression. Profits are reinvested in growing and strengthening the services provided.

15

Investing in the skills needed for the social care system

The Health and Social Care Career Academy was launched in 2018 by **Blackpool Council**. It is led by the council and delivered in partnership with health, education and social care partners across Blackpool. The vision of the Academy is to facilitate better and more specific education around providing care, as forecasts suggest employment in this sector in Lancashire is set to grow by 1.7% in the next six years. A particular focus of the Academy is to raise the positive profile of health and social care and the many and varied career paths that exist within and alongside care.

Plymouth City Council has launched an Academy of Social Work as part of a wider ambition to lead social work education and practice in the south west. The Academy aims to set standards of excellence in training, recruit more social workers, provide ongoing professional development and retain front line social workers. The Academy places young people's voices at the centre of practice and explores innovative ways to become leaders in the field of social work education. The Academy far exceeds national benchmarks on recruitment, retention, and standards of sustainable professional and career development.

16

Ethical Care Charter

Labour councils believe people have the right to live the life they want to lead, and supporting people with high quality social care is a vital part of this. Social care strengthens communities and reduces pressures on our NHS, but it relies on high quality staff delivering help at home - and they deserve decent working conditions, proper pay, and good training opportunities. With a growing population of older people, and more people living for longer with long-term conditions it is more important than ever that councils offer excellent care.

Signing up to UNISON's Ethical Care Charter is a simple way for councils to improve homecare for the vulnerable people they are responsible for. It is a set of commitments that councils make which fix minimum standards that will protect the dignity and quality of life for those people and the workers who care for them. The Charter sets out a strategy for councils to improve homecare for vulnerable residents by safeguarding employment conditions that do not routinely short change residents, and ensure the recruitment and retention of a stable workforce through a sustainable pay structure, working conditions and training levels.

Labour councils have led the way in signing up to the Charter. Thirty-one of the thirty-three English councils that have signed the Charter so far are Labour councils (or were at the time of signing). Since featuring in the previous version of 100 Innovations, even more Labour councils have signed up to the Ethical Care Charter, including **Swansea, Salford, Bristol, Knowsley, Hartlepool, Halton, Reading, Sheffield, Haringey**. Both **Trafford** Labour and **Plymouth** Labour pledged to sign it as part of their election campaigns in 2018 - and after winning control both are now delivering.

The most likely time for councils to sign up to the Charter is before they renew a contract with a homecare provider, but councils are able to sign up at any point, and implement the changes when they renew their contracts with homecare providers.

If Labour councils want to learn more about UNISON's Ethical Care Charter they can contact m.egan@unison.co.uk



17

Providing specialist care to LGBT communities

Manchester City Council is building the country's first LGBT Extra Care Scheme to support older members of the LGBT community. Manchester has one of the largest LGBT populations in the UK and older LGBT people have said that as they grow older they can fear discrimination, particularly in relation to their care needs. This scheme will offer access to care on-site if needed, while remaining completely independent. A 60 unit site aimed at the LGBT community will be built in the next few years. In advance of the scheme 'going live' work has commenced to develop a new LGBT 'kite-mark' for assessing the quality of home care and residential services from an equalities perspective. This dovetails with a scheme already in place to award a 'Pride in Practice' for primary care services.

18

Abolishing home care charges

In 2015, **Hammersmith and Fulham** became the first council in the country to abolish charges for adult home care. The initial funding for this came from reducing senior management numbers, closing down seven council magazines and other wasteful PR and introducing zero-based budgeting. That has benefited 1,266 people in H&F needing help to carry out everyday tasks such as having a bath, cleaning or doing the shopping.



Improving health and wellbeing outcomes in our communities

19

Tackling childhood obesity and encouraging healthy habits

Wakefield Council set up a child weight management programme, putting emphasis on prevention work. This had £2.5 million of funding from public health money, and also other grants. The programme has seen a rise of over a fifth of participants saying that they are moderately active, and those who say they are eating healthily has risen by over half.

South Tyneside Council has introduced the 'Best Start In Life' model to all of its schools, promoting health and wellbeing to all 20,000 pupils. Initiatives introduced under scheme include the provision of healthy breakfast clubs, counselling and mindfulness sessions, and the Daily Mile where children and staff are invited to run or walk one mile per day. As a result of the successful engagement with the programme, this has now been extended to Early Years settings.

20

Improving HIV diagnosis and treatment

One in ten people living with HIV in London remain undiagnosed and more than a third of new HIV diagnoses are late, causing damage to their health and increasing the risk of onward HIV transmission. **Lambeth Council** leads HIV prevention work across London, increasing early testing and diagnosis as part of their award-winning 'Do It London' campaign. This year, the council has set up the world's first social impact bond to improve HIV diagnosis and treatment which will invest £2m in services across **Lambeth, Southwark** and **Lewisham**.

21

Improving access to sport for people with disabilities

Gateshead Council operates Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne and Wear, a sporting club that provides weekly sports training in 10 sports to children and adults with disabilities, equipping 174 athletes with the skills and confidence to compete in regional, national and international competitions. The sporting club has enabled people to make new friends, increase their feelings of self-worth, improve their fitness and provide opportunities to showcase their talent and potential. 22 athletes competed in the Special Olympics European Anniversary Games in Stirling, Scotland in August 2018 winning a total of 18 medals. In addition, 3 Special Olympics Gateshead Tyne and Wear athletes have been selected to represent Great Britain in the Special Olympics World Championships in Abu Dhabi in March 2019.

22

Using parks for active living

To encourage residents to be more active in open spaces, **Coventry City Council** used Public Health money to provide 100 metre markers in 45 of the city's parks. This has meant that when residents go to their local park they can walk or run from one marker to another and they will know how far they have travelled. On Stoke Common, the council built a running track of 1km, and it has been used extensively by hard to reach communities. The English County Cricket Board also awarded the council a grant of £50,000 to enable cricket strips to be put in a number of parks in the most deprived areas of the city.

23

Fizz free February

Southwark Council launched a new borough-wide campaign to encourage people to switch from sugary drinks to water and sugar-free drinks. This was delivered borough wide, with participation from public sector partners including Public Health England. The campaign has been presented to the Department of Health and Health Ministers, and has been championed by Deputy Leader of the Labour Party Tom Watson MP.

24

Increasing levels of physical activity in the community

A new £2m, 50 metre Olympic size swimming pool is being built at Becontree Leisure Centre by **Barking and Dagenham Council**. Set to open in early 2019, the pool will be the first modular 50 meter pool in the country and the only Olympic size facility in East London outside of the Olympic Park in Stratford. Becontree Leisure Centre already has one of the largest Learn to Swim programmes in the country and is now only set to get bigger with the arrival of the new pool.

Bridgend Council has set up “Life Centres” where residents can be active either in group settings or alone. The Life Centres run the Exercise Referral Schemes, which support the thousands of people in the area that suffer with health problems to get into physical exercise. As a result, Bridgend has one of the highest levels of over 60s swimming in the whole of Wales.

Waltham Forest Council has found innovative ways of keeping its residents healthy, opening two brand new state of the art leisure facilities: the £23 million Waltham Forest Feel Good Centre in Walthamstow, and the £11 million Feel Good Too Centre in Leyton. Between the two centres, they offer first class community facilities including floodlit pitches, Olympic standard beach volleyball courts, a swimming pool and a gym. Ensuring residents have access to sports facilities is a key part of the council's commitment to improve residents life chances, which is why they have also maintained funding for free swimming for under 18's and over 60's.

25

Providing comprehensive sexual health services

Alongside **Newham, Tower Hamlets** and **Redbridge, Waltham Forest Council** has transformed their sexual health services available to residents as a part of the London Sexual Health Transformation plan. This includes offering comprehensive online testing, enabling people to skip queues at sexual health clinics to get their results and concentrating the expertise of sexual health professionals on the higher need individuals that most need support. In Waltham Forest, this move towards specialist provision on the old Olympic site has meant improved access across the borough, with new satellite clinics operating from community and GP settings.

26

Improving wellbeing through Wellbeing Hubs

Plymouth City Council, together with a range of local partners has led an initiative to create Wellbeing Hubs across the city. A dozen Wellbeing Hubs are opening across neighbourhoods over the next two years as part of an initiative designed to focus on prevention and make services easier to access in neighbourhoods. The Wellbeing Hubs scheme has four main aims: to improve the health and wellbeing outcomes for local people; reduce inequalities in health and wellbeing; improve people's experience of care; and improve the sustainability of the health and wellbeing system. One of the key services the Wellbeing Hubs will provide is social prescribing which allows GPs and health professionals to refer patients to non-clinical services such as social clubs or gyms. This could help to address problems with loneliness, debt, relationship difficulties, and many other issues.

27

Using planning to address public health issues

South Tyneside Council has responded to concerns that the number of hot food takeaways in the area increased by 18 per cent since 2014. Led by the Health and Wellbeing Board, whose strategic aim is to tackle unhealthy lifestyles and obesity, the council adopted new planning guidance aimed at restricting the number of these fast food outlets. The new planning guidance seeks to refuse planning permission for takeaways in wards where the levels of obesity for Year 6 pupils is more than 10 per cent, or for premises within 400m of a secondary school. Earlier this year, the councils rejected plans for a town centre takeaway, citing childhood obesity levels in the area as one of the grounds for refusal.



Tackling the housing crisis

28

Supporting homeless people

Lewisham Council has set up an employment project with its local Job Centre to support households who are at risk of homelessness or are homeless already to find employment or training opportunities. So far 117 households have worked with the service: 16 clients are now in vocational or upskilling training to lead to employment, and 17 clients have moved into work. These households will also be supported to find stable and affordable accommodation where they feel safe, with households having a better opportunity to find a home that suits their needs due to their increased income.

To support residents in emergency accommodation, **Croydon Council** holds regular events to help people look at all aspects of finance and housing, including rent arrears, debt advice, income maximisation, budgeting and the promotion of a range of housing options. These are regularly attended by over 50 residents who are classed as homeless and living in emergency accommodation. 185 residents have successfully found their own home of choice in areas they wanted, reducing the pressure on council run temporary accommodation.

29

Setting up housing companies to deliver high-quality housing

Labour councils across the country have been setting up housing companies to deliver quality council-owned housing for local residents. **Telford and Wrekin Council** have set up NuPlace to deliver 420 homes for private rent by 2020, bringing income to the council and bringing brownfield sites back into use. **Blackpool Council** have set up the Blackpool Housing Company which acquires, converts and refurbishes homes for rent. Since 2016 it has brought 250 homes into the rental market, and it aims to have 1000 properties after the first ten years of operation. It also has started managing services for the wider rental sector. **Barking and Dagenham Council** are using their housing company Reside to provide more affordable private rented sector properties than any other London borough. Reside now manages 600 properties across the borough with another 2,000 in the pipeline across 40 sites in the borough. Chapter Homes is the house building company established by **Durham County Council** in 2015 to ensure the council utilises its land bank effectively and delivers quality homes to meet local expectations – it will deliver upwards of 1000 new homes throughout County Durham.

30

Providing new council homes

Despite centrally imposed government restrictions **Corby Borough Council** has continued its commitment to building new council houses. 230 new homes have been built in Corby since 2010 as part of regeneration of the borough. A further 103 are planned for and funded through a combination of grants, right to buy receipts, housing reserves and borrowing against the HRA. In total over 7000 new houses have been built since the turn of the century of which over 600 have been “affordable”. Corby is well on its way to fulfilling its long held ambition of doubling the population to around 100,000 by 2030.

Tower Hamlets Council is leading an innovative project to procure factory-built homes to tackle the number of households living in temporary accommodation in London. Tower Hamlets has an initial target of delivering 200 of these homes to ensure that families are no longer in B&B accommodation for more than 6 weeks. The project is supported by the Greater London Authority, who are investing £11m from their innovations fund.

31

Low energy homes for the future

Norwich City Council have committed to providing low energy homes that are fit for the future. The council will be the largest provider of 'Passivhaus' standard houses, which means they will contain mechanical ventilation with heat recovery (MHVR) systems, triple-glazed windows and traditional combi boilers providing hot water and minimal space heating, delivering both lower energy bills for residents and reduced carbon emissions. The latest phase of building is the largest mixed-tenure Passivhaus development in the UK, with everything from one bed apartments to five-bedroom family homes available. The council will manage the social housing on the development.

32

Housing fit for heroes

South Tyneside Council is committed to supporting ex-service personnel and recognises that having a home when they return to civilian life is central to their wellbeing. Working with partners, the council established a project to provide dedicated 'move-on' accommodation for veterans and secured £17,000 in funding from the Ministry of Defence's Covenant scheme. A block of nine one and two-bedroomed furnished flats is now available for affordable rent to servicemen and women as they leave the forces. An Outreach Worker – also ex-services – helps identify prospective tenants and makes referrals as well as being able to help people access training, education, employment and funding opportunities.

The award winning Nelson Project is a partnership between **Plymouth City Council** and local and national housing partners. During the course of the project, ex-service personnel played a vital role with the construction of the 24-home site that includes 12 self-build homes for military veterans and 12 mixed use affordable homes, including supported housing. As well as providing ex-servicemen with a place to call home, the veterans completed construction training and courses that helped them develop the skills needed to engage with the project, as well as provide them with valuable job-based skills. Many have now found work in the construction industry.

33

A new approach to fundraising

Cambridge City Council has developed Cambridge Street Aid as a totally new way for residents to donate to help homeless people living on city streets rebuild their lives and ensure that no-one needs to be in a position where begging feels like their only option. The scheme gives donors easy and effective alternatives to giving to people begging to street and includes making £3 donations at tapping pay points in the city centre– or by text. All the money raised goes in grants directly to homeless people who need help getting off the streets. 80% of the money raised so far has already been allocated, including to help people with new housing, equipment and clothing, and to assist several get training and wider support needed to gain jobs locally. In less than two years, the campaign has already raised over £40,000 in small donations.

34

Innovative approaches to building new homes

To help alleviate homelessness in the city, **Southampton City Council** have teamed up with Hugg Homes to build 44 two-bedroom family homes on a former council depot site, which, aptly for a port city such as Southampton are constructed from creatively purposed shipping container units. The scheme will provide 16 units for affordable rent and 6 units for homeless families. Phase 2 will create a further 22 units at an affordable rent. The scheme paves the way for further developments to tackle homelessness problems right across the city and has helped minimise the use of Bed and Breakfast accommodation.



Ensuring a sustainable environment

35

Cleaning up the gas supply

Leeds City Council is committed to an ambition to achieve 100% clean energy in the city by 2050. The council recognises that reducing the carbon footprint of heat is one of the biggest challenges it faces, and is working with Northern Gas Networks (NGN) to develop the H21 project which will make Leeds the first city in the UK to run on hydrogen instead of natural gas. NGN have secured £10m from OFGEM and are now demonstrating the safety case of using 100% hydrogen in the gas network, while working closely with the council to identify demolished or derelict sites where mains networks still exist in order to provide a safe, 'real-life' test environment with no customer impact. H21 is a hugely ambitious and innovative project which could play a major role in enabling the UK to meet its Climate Change Act targets. For Leeds, the long term prize is an estimated £7m per year in economic value generated by the jobs created or supported directly as a result of the project, together with an 11% reduction in regional carbon emissions.

36

Using LED streetlights to save energy and money

Many Labour councils are moving to LED streetlights in a bid to save money on energy bills and become more energy efficient. **Barking and Dagenham Council** have replaced over 16,500 lights, saving £321,000, **Kirklees Council** has already changed 21,000 streetlights, with a view to changing all 52,000 streetlights in the borough in the next five years amounting to a 70% saving in energy costs, and **Stockport Council** plans to replace all 33,000 streetlights, making cost savings from reduced energy bills and maintenance costs of 40%.

37

Cracking down on single use plastics

Plymouth City Council has pledged to ban single-use plastics ahead of the European deadline of 2021. The council is working with partners to implement a ban in the city by 2020, starting with a voluntary code of conduct. All the council's buildings will go single-use plastic free by September 2019, and all events on Plymouth City Council land will be required to show how single-use plastic will be eliminated, replaced by alternatives, or at the very least, reduced to an absolute minimum. A 'Plan for Plastics' is being produced to eliminate plastic from the natural environment. This is a truly citywide collaboration of businesses, education organisations, research establishments and communities.

In response to concerns about single use plastic, **Gedling Borough Council** became one of the first "Plastic Clever Councils" in the country. The initiatives include phasing out all sales of single use plastic bottles and use of single use plastic items such as cutlery and drinking straws in council-owned buildings, installing public water fountains across the borough with two already installed and three coming in the next few months, running an annual plastic-free challenge to encourage councillors, employees, residents, organisations and businesses in the borough to reduce their single-use plastic use and promoting a "Kids Against Plastic" campaign.

38

Improving the natural environment

Stevenage Borough Council is the only council in Hertfordshire with its own Biodiversity Action Plan (BAP). The BAP was produced in partnership with Hertfordshire & Middlesex Wildlife Trust and seeks to protect, enhance and develop sites considered to be important for biodiversity which require protection, and sites where biodiversity can be improved through habitat creation. The actions within the plan are delivered through volunteers, the council's in-house teams and specialist external contractors. In 2018 the Green Space Volunteers gave over 300 hours to support the delivery of biodiversity. Providing and protecting green urban space is a key value in their local plan and improving the quality of our biodiversity is an indicator of their commitment to an environmentally sustainable future.

Stockport Council has brought forward funding to embark upon the largest tree planting programme since the borough was created. Work has begun to plant 2200 highway trees over the next four years.

39

Managing water consumption

To effectively manage water consumption and achieve cost savings, **Blackpool Council** has become the first public sector organisation to be granted a water self-supply licence. The council buys water and wastewater service directly from the wholesaler, United Utilities, but is managing its own meter readings, administration and billing for over 120 sites across the borough. As a result, it is estimated that costs savings of up to £194,000 will be achieved over three years and with more efficient water consumption.

40

Reducing energy consumption

South Tyneside Council has significantly reduced energy consumption across its building portfolio resulting in a 21% reduction in heating and lighting over the last four years, and generating an annual saving of £346,000. This was achieved by installing LED lighting and motion detector sensors throughout a number of council buildings, installing solar panels on 20 council buildings, and on over 1,025 council homes. Investment in smart meters and technology to ensure accurate readings for gas and electricity has enabled targeted communications to staff during high cost/demand periods.

41

Taking action to tackle air quality

Oxford City Council launched a new Charter for Cleaner Air, in full cooperation with Greenpeace and Friends of the Earth, to call on the Government to put the health of communities first. This includes removing polluting vehicles from city and town centres, more funding for sustainable and public transport, an end to the sale of new petrol vehicles earlier than 2040, more funding for electric vehicle charging infrastructure, tighter legal limits on air pollution, a new Clean Air Act and an independent post-Brexit watchdog with real powers. Launched in 2018, the Charter has so far been signed by Labour councils in **Southampton** and **Brighton and Hove**, showing that Labour administrations are leading the way in cleaning up our air.

Poor air quality is the biggest environmental health crisis in a generation, which is why **Waltham Forest Council** has spearheaded the pioneering 'Enjoy Waltham Forest' programme of highways and public realm interventions in order to reduce pollution levels. This successful programme of work has seen households exposed to illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide in the borough go down from 60,000 to 6,000, with levels expected to fall by a further 15-25% by 2020. Research suggests residents in Waltham Forest will increase their life expectancy by 6-7 weeks as a direct result of these infrastructure changes.

In response to high levels of Nitrogen Dioxide, **Southampton City Council** launched a Clean Air Strategy to tackle pollution that is largely caused by road traffic and was causing 110 premature deaths each year in the city. Every bus that operates in the city is being retrofitted with cleaner technology, and taxi drivers are being offered incentives to switch to cleaner vehicles. 48 electric charging points have been installed for public use. Electric vehicle drivers enjoy a 90% discount on parking permits. In addition to this, a ten year cycle strategy has been introduced, encouraging more residents to cycle. The council is working with the Port of Southampton to drive down pollution associated with shipping.

42

Waste Commission

Newcastle City Council set up a team of top experts to take a radical new look at how the city deals with its mountain of waste. It's believed to be the first time that a major city has set up a Commission to take a root and branch look at all aspects of waste. The Commission examined in detail the journey of waste from the moment it is produced through to the moment it is disposed of to see how the city can dramatically reduce its waste mountain. Although the recommendations are for Newcastle, it is acknowledged that they will be applicable to other cities across the UK and even influence Government policy.

43

Encouraging ultra-low emissions vehicles

Recognising the positive benefits of electric vehicles on the environment, **Exeter City Council** is replacing its fleet of vehicles with electric vehicles in order to reduce costs and the carbon footprint of the council. Electric vehicles used by council staff has led to a massive 75% reduction in CO2 emissions compared to 2010. The council is also providing Plug and Park sites to charge electric vehicles around the city to encourage private electric car ownership.

Islington Council is committed to improving air quality and working with neighbouring **Hackney Council** will ban all but the 'cleanest' vehicles from driving on a group of 'ultra low emission streets'. Petrol, diesel and older hybrid vehicles will not be allowed to enter nine streets during peak commuter periods, which will be reserved for ultra-low emission vehicles like electric cars, e-bikes, the newest hybrids and hydrogen vehicles, as well as pedestrians and cyclists. These changes are aimed at creating an environment that will encourage more walking and cycling, improve air quality, and reduce emissions within the local area.

To reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to improve air quality, **Southwark Council** is helping people to switch to electric cars by converting lamp-posts to provide charging for electric vehicles. In a borough where few people have a driveway and most people live in flats, on-street charging is vital to enable people to change over from petrol to electric. The first 75 will be installed by April 2019, and a further 75 by April 2020.

44

Taking action against fly-tipping

Durham County Council is delivering its award winning "Operation Stop It" a multi-agency approach involving the council, Police, Environment Agency and Crimestoppers to tackle fly-tipping. This has involved awareness campaigns, increasing outlets for legal trade waste disposal, and installing CCTV at fly-tipping hotspots to catch criminals, even confiscating and crushing their vehicles. The work is seen as national best practice and since its launch there has been a 23% reduction in fly-tipping across the county, resulting in a saving of more than £100,000 in clean-up and disposal costs.



Keeping arts and culture at the heart of our communities

45

Using the arts as a catalyst for regeneration

The Shakespeare North Playhouse in Prescot will offer a year round programme of drama, student and community theatre and other entertainment. Supported by **Knowsley Council**, the Playhouse has already brought benefits to Prescot town centre, where the evening economy is growing and a new Shakespearean themed hotel is being built. Investors in the local area have been very clear that the Playhouse scheme has led them to invest in the area, showing the importance of the arts in stimulating economic growth in Prescot and the wider Knowsley area.

46

Using tourism to drive investment

In 2010 **Blackpool Council** bought a number of the town's most prominent attractions for £34 million so that it could invest and run them differently. This move brought the Blackpool Tower into public ownership for the first time and paved the way for a major regeneration programme. Merlin Entertainments was selected as the operator of the Tower attractions bringing with it the already established Eye and Dungeon brands. The investment, development, and marketing that have resulted from the partnership since then has played a major role in re-establishing Blackpool as a family resort.

47

Supporting community arts centres

Harrow Council has secured the future of the Harrow Arts Centre, a vital community and cultural hub. To guarantee the financial sustainability of the Arts Centre, the council has increased the capacity of the Arts Centre's auditorium to which has enabled the venue to attract big ticket acts. Revenues from room hire and ticketing have been increased, with revisions made to hire charges to make a more competitive offer and increase off-peak use. In doing so, the Arts Centre had its most successful year to date in 2017/18, receiving 231,442 visitors and putting on 26 sold-out events. The Arts Centre also hosts a community outreach programme, with 903 people taking part last year.

48

Bringing town and cities to life through arts and culture festivals

In 2017, **Blackburn with Darwen Council** hosted the first ever National Festival of Making, taking over streets in the town with art, performance, tours, talks, markets and street food. When the festival returned in 2018, it generated an economic benefit of almost £1m, and over 10,000 people from around the UK and from overseas visited. There were over 100 workshops, supported by 130 volunteers. It was recently shortlisted in the UK Festival Awards, and has provided a huge tourism boost for the town.

In 2018 **Wolverhampton City Council** held the Enjoy Wolverhampton programme of events, which ran over 22 days and was promoted extensively beyond the city and on local and national media. The showpiece Festival of Food and Drink attracted over 25,000 visitors, which brought an economic benefit to the city of almost £500,000. Enjoy Wolverhampton also included an Armed Forces Day, art exhibitions, concerts and free fitness activities.

49

The first ever London Borough of culture

Waltham Forest will be the first ever London Borough of Culture in 2019. The award from the Mayor of London will ensure that arts and culture are placed at the heart of the community. **Waltham Forest Council** put the theme "Radicals, Makers and Fellowship" at the heart of their bid to be London Borough of Culture. The council will work with local residents, artists and creatives, creating a memorable cultural extravaganza. The programme of events will shine a light on the diversity, character and cultures of the borough, celebrating the communities that live there.

50

Strengthening cultural partnerships

To support the arts in the town, **Ipswich Borough Council** offers a pot of money - worth £200,000 - to its Arts Council National Portfolio Organisations (NPOs) to support the work they do that makes a direct contribution to cultural life and the local economy. Ipswich is proud to be home to 8 NPOs, which include an award winning theatre, a regional dance house, a theatre company with a global reputation and a cutting edge bi-annual festival of performance. In return, these organisations, under the banner "We are Ipswich" promote the town on regional, national and global stages and are friends and advocates for the council in our local community.

Liverpool City Council continues to prioritise arts and culture, ten years on from being European Capital of Culture. In the last two years Culture Liverpool has boosted the local economy by at least £142m. More than 20 major events have taken place in the city during the last year, including internationally renowned events such as Royal de Luxe's Giants, the Mersey River Festival and Liverpool International Music Festival. As a result, the city has welcomed a staggering 3.2 million visitors. The council has funded 36 arts organisations through the Culture Liverpool Investment Programme to the sum of £4.8m, which in turn safeguarded 1,780 jobs and secured a further £90m economic spend.

A large, light green circular graphic containing a white silhouette of a briefcase with a handle, positioned behind the main title text.

Supporting new jobs and creating skills locally

51

Supporting residents to get into work

Tower Hamlets Council have set up the WorkPath scheme. In its first year, it placed 5,000 residents into jobs or training. WorkPath targets residents who have been unemployed for 6 months or more and provides employment support tailored towards to resident's needs, access to work experience, apprenticeships or graduate schemes, CV help and interview preparation. It has a particular focus on groups such as BAME women, over-50s and those with poor mental and physical health. A Young WorkPath programme has also been launched, focusing on 16-24 year olds.

3,462 local residents have found work through **Barking & Dagenham Council's** Job Shops since 2014. The Job Shops have been so successful that they recently secured £475k from Job Centre Plus to fund five projects that will help residents claiming out of work benefits to find employment. The programme includes support for residents in Dagenham after Tory cuts led to the closure of the Job Centre Plus there. It will also help young people aged 16 to 24 who are claiming an out of work benefit, as well as those affected by the rollout of Universal Credit.

Coventry City Council launched a Job Shop to offer local residents help in finding a new job. The Job Shop offers 1:1 support, careers guidance, CV and job application support, confidence building and interview preparation. The council works with partners such as the National Careers Service and Coventry Adult Education to deliver the service. Since the launch, over 35,000 people have visited the Job Shop, with over 7,000 finding employment.

52

Opening up affordable workspace for small businesses

Across the country, councils are setting up affordable workspaces to support micro businesses, SMEs, creatives, entrepreneurs and tech companies by offering genuinely affordable workspace well below market rates. Many micro and small businesses are priced out of the local property markets due to high rental cost of workspace or prohibitive lease terms which means workspace is dominated by larger national or international organisations that are less likely to source staff and services locally, depriving the local economy. **Lewisham, Islington, Lambeth** and **Southampton** have all set up affordable workspaces, either through their planning strategies or using disused council buildings and space in shopping centres. In Lambeth alone, the affordable workspace scheme has already helped support over 200 local businesses and over 400 jobs.

53

Using apprenticeships to improve skills and boost employment

Over 100 Hackney residents are now employed through **Hackney Council's** award-winning in-house apprenticeship programme, an increase of 300% since 2016. These roles are across the council, addressing skills gaps with over half of the previous cohorts moving into full-time employment at the council. The scheme gives residents the chance to have an apprenticeship, paid at the London Living Wage. The council specifically targets opportunities at disadvantaged groups such as care leavers and those from minority backgrounds. The council has also been supporting local businesses to create high-quality apprenticeships for people who live or study in Hackney. Council assistance in targeting means ensuring that a diverse range of residents have greater access to opportunities.

54

Filling skills gaps in the construction industry

'Building Plymouth' is a **Plymouth City Council**-led, private and public sector partnership with the construction and built environment sector which aims to reduce the skills gaps and shortages facing the local construction industry. This aims to increase the number of skilled people joining the industry to deliver the 10,000 projected new jobs being created in the city. To support this, the council is accredited as a National Skills Academy for Construction, committed to maximising employment and skills opportunities through planning and procurement on construction projects in Plymouth. During the past 12 months, Building Plymouth has supported over 5,000 local people through their delivery of extensive career events.

55

Modern Slavery Charter

Modern Slavery is where traffickers and slave masters use whatever means they have at their disposal to coerce, deceive and force individuals into a life of abuse, servitude and inhumane treatment. It is one of the great evils of our time and it's estimated that tens of thousands of people in the UK could be victims

Much modern slavery occurs in industries that may well be commissioned by councils - from cleaning to construction, and from car washes to factories. Many firms that supply councils will use contractors and suppliers of their own too, that may also be affected. Supply chains are a complex business, but Labour councils are working hard to ensure that their resources aren't being used to support exploitation. Collectively, local authorities in England spend more than £40bn per year procuring goods and services on behalf of their citizens, and councils do business with thousands of different suppliers – both large and small.

Labour councils, working with sister party The Cooperative Party, are leading the way in ensuring that this cruel exploitation has no place in council supply chains. They have developed a new set of principles that help tackle the problem. The Co-operative Party's 'Charter Against Modern Slavery' goes further than existing law and guidance, committing councils to proactively vetting their own supply chain to ensure no instances of modern slavery are taking place. Councils are committed to train its corporate procurement team to understand modern slavery, challenge abnormally low-cost tenders to ensure they do not rely upon modern slavery, and highlight to all suppliers that workers are free to join a trade union. Councils must also report publicly on the implementation of the Charter annually.

Over 50 Labour councils have already signed up to support and implement the Charter, including **Brent, Blackburn with Darwen, Calderdale, Cannock Chase, Chorley, Coventry, Darlington, Enfield, Harrow, Lincoln, Liverpool, Merton, Oldham, Oxford, Rotherham, Sheffield, Stevenage, St Helens, Sunderland, Tameside, West Lancashire, and Wolverhampton.**

You can find out more about the Charter from the Cooperative Party website: <https://party.coop/local/councillors/modern-slavery-charter/>

56

Supporting people with disabilities and learning difficulties into work

Gateshead Council set up GATES, a supported employment service for residents with disabilities. The service has secured paid employment for 48 service users over the last five years. In the last 18 months, the service has established an internship programme with IKEA, whereby people with disabilities undertake placements with IKEA on the premise that if they demonstrate proficiency within their work role, IKEA will find a permanent position for them. So far, 3 people have secured permanent work with IKEA.

In 2016, **Knowsley Council** set up the Supported Internship Programme in partnership with Knowsley Community College. 11 young Knowsley residents with learning difficulties who weren't in employment started placements with local businesses providing them with skills and confidence. A second wave of 11 interns started in 2017, and of the 22 interns, 15 have secured permanent paid employment, and the remaining 7 are pursuing volunteering and training opportunities. A further 10 young people were welcomed in September 2018.



Ensuring equality and working with communities

57

Building understanding between faiths

Lewisham Council organises an annual interfaith walk through the borough, visiting various religious and faith locations including the Sivan Hindu Temple, Lewisham Islamic Centre and Catford Synagogue. At each location a candle is lit to show that all faiths in Lewisham are united in friendship and against hatred. The walk is attended by hundreds of people each year.

In Interfaith Week, **Brighton and Hove City Council** joined a number of other local councils who have signed up to the Faith Covenant. The Faith Covenant was a recommendation of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Faith and Society, and aims to promote better understanding and collaborative working between local authorities and all faith groups in their local areas. The council has also funded the local Faith in Action group this year to carry out a project with the aim of increasing religious tolerance and tackling religiously motivated hate crime in the city.

58

Supporting Refugees

Labour councils have a strong track record in welcoming and integrating refugees that have been forced to leave their own countries to escape war, famine, or political persecution. This has included both emergency responses to situations like the closure of the Calais camp, and longer term resettlement work. Labour councils led the way in building additional capacity for children from the Calais camp. For instance, **Hammersmith and Fulham Council** organised social workers to visit Calais to assess children and to undertake assessments of new families, and Labour councils added their support to the campaign to adopt the Dubs Amendment.

Labour councils continue to support resettlement of Syrian refugees. **Gateshead Council** is a leading authority area on the Syrian Refugee Resettlement Programme, settling 312 individuals to date with further intakes expected. The service has helped with accommodation, employment, education and health, and has made a strong focus on integration and building links within the local community, including working closely with local church groups, social activities including the arts music, and even a Sunday league football team. **Islington Council**, recognising the impact of the Government's 'hostile environment' policy, created a new 'Migrants Champion' position. Held by a backbench councillor, the champion ensures that services consider the needs and experiences of migrants, and advocates for an inclusive community. The council has welcomed 15 Syrian families, sourcing all homes for the families through partnerships with voluntary and community groups, and has pledged to welcome 100 unaccompanied child refugees over the coming years.

Lewisham Council is also expanding its refugee resettlement programme, with a target of resettling a further 100 refugee households, and is working towards being recognised as the leading London borough for refugee resettlement. The council is developing a support resettlement service and recruiting a full time Refugee Programme Manager, as well as ensuring that refugees are assessed on their English language ability and can access accredited English for Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) courses. **Stevenage Borough Council** has helped to support five refugee families from Syria to settle in the town, working with local community and faith groups and the Refugee Council to settle families into the community and access local schools and resources.

59

Becoming an age friendly city

In 2010 **Manchester City Council** joined 12 other cities across the world to found the World Health Organisation's Global Network of Age-friendly Cities and Communities. Manchester was the first UK member, a recognition of the commitment by the city to work with local agencies, residents and academics to create a 'great place to grow older'. The programme now has over 700 cities, towns and other affiliated members, including Greater Manchester, which in 2018 became the UK's first City Region to get WHO recognition.

60

Creating safe zones around abortion clinics

To protect women accessing abortion services in the borough **Ealing Council** teamed up with local pro-choice campaigners to establish a safe zone around the Marie Stopes clinic which was a regular target for anti-choice activists. Following a public consultation, which presented harrowing evidence about the level that women and staff faced from the protestors, the Cabinet established a Public Spaces Protection Order (PSPO) around the clinic with the support of 90% of local residents. Eight other local authorities are investigating similar measures, and councillors in Ealing are calling on government to roll this out nationally.

61

Using local democracy to engage residents

Newham Council has launched a programme of Citizen's Assemblies, which bring residents together to discuss local issues and areas of concern and develop solutions. Citizen's Assemblies are aimed at introducing greater local accountability to the council's work, engaging local residents and actively involving them in the council's decision-making. Newham has held 30 Citizens' Assemblies to date, which aim to enhance local democracy and enable local people to help shape their local areas. Citizen's Assemblies have been held in every ward in Newham and a full programme of regular assemblies and engagement is being delivered across the borough.

To improve public engagement **Kirklees Council** have embarked on a programme of work to redesign local democracy. The council now has a new approach to citizen engagement, based on dialogue around neighbourhoods, villages, and towns instead of consultation. There are regular Question Time events where residents can put their questions to councillors, as well as video guides available to explain council meetings. There has been a focus on ensuring that young residents have more opportunities to learn about democracy and to have contact with councillors than in the past.

62

Tackling violence against women and girls and putting gender equality at the heart of our communities

Lambeth Council was one of the first councils in the UK to develop an integrated Violence Against Women and Girls (VAWG) strategy; bringing together all strands of violence that either only, or disproportionately, affect women under the same umbrella. Under Labour, tackling VAWG is a political priority and the 2018 manifesto pledged to retain their 52 refuge beds. The majority of Lambeth's work now takes place at a local community centre which last year supported more than 1,700 women. The centre, which is run on their behalf by domestic violence support charity Refuge, is viewed as a model for the rest of the UK.

Alongside neighbouring London boroughs, **Waltham Forest Council** has opened up the first walk-in clinic in England that offers victims of FGM cervical cancer screening tests and specialist support. The council is a key player in the 'Ask Me' campaign which aims to raise awareness of domestic abuse and trains Community Ambassadors to recognise the signs, support victims and educate the community to prevent all forms of abuse by tackling the values, attitudes and behaviours that underpin violence towards women and girls. The borough also trains Youth Health Champions, who share information and run campaigns within their schools, such as the award winning 'Stop the Silence' campaign around Violence Against Women and Girls.

Barking and Dagenham Council is the first council in the country to adopt a Gender Equality Charter. The Charter is a commitment on behalf of the council and its partners to create a fair and just society where people are treated equally, discrimination is tackled and the barriers to achieving equality are removed. The Charter has been signed by 162 local community organisations, businesses, schools and council partners who have all pledged to work towards ending gender inequality.

63

Working with the Community and Voluntary Sector

Brighton and Hove Council has faced significant funding challenges, but despite this they have maintained their support for the community and voluntary sector. The council has worked with the sector on a new approach to grant funding, and have been able to consolidate this new approach and protect the level of grant funding that is supporting it. Grants made to the community and voluntary sector are able to generate additional income as a result, and the latest estimate of this locally is that the council's grants programme generates £3 for every £1 of investment. By maintaining the grants programme, the council is bringing many additional benefits to vulnerable residents in the city who are supported by the local community and voluntary sector.

64

Parental Leave for Councillors

Improving the diversity of our elected representatives has always been a priority of Labour in local government. The LGA Labour Group has set up the LGA Labour Women's Taskforce to address the barriers faced by women in local government. In autumn 2018, the Taskforce launched a parental leave policy that can be adopted by councils and Labour Groups alike.

In 2017, the Fawcett Society found that only 4% of councils had a parental leave policy in place and many councillors, particularly women, spoke of the challenges faced juggling the role of a councillor and having a baby or young child. Since the launch **Southampton City Council, Sunderland City Council, Lambeth Council, Islington Council, Newcastle City Council, Corby Borough Council and Lincoln City Council** have adopted the policy for their full councils and for their Labour Groups. **Gloucester Labour Group** passed the parental leave policy then passed the motion at the Tory-run Gloucester City Council full council meeting. **North Warwickshire Labour Group** adopted the parental and after a motion at full council pledging to look at parental leave for councillors are one step closer to achieving this at a council level. **Bristol Labour Group, Erewash Labour Group, Bolsover Labour Group and Staffordshire Labour Group** have all adopted the parental leave policy, and will be taking it to full council meetings. The parental leave policy will give certainty to councillors who become parents, allowing them to take a period of leave from their role after becoming a parent.



65

Young Black Men Project

The Young Black Men Programme set-up by **Hackney Council** is a ground-breaking 10-year long initiative aiming to tackle inequalities for young black men in the borough. Hackney's young black men face a higher education attainment gap, a higher risk from developing mental health issues and are more likely to live in a lone parent household. To tackle persistent inequalities a cross-sector partnership with a long-term vision was needed to improve life chances for future generations, as well as coordinating support and opportunities for those who are 18-25 now. The partnership involves the council, community and voluntary sector groups, local businesses, schools, and parents coming together with clear goals over the next 10 years. The programme involves local schools and the local Clinical Commissioning Group, as well as an Inspirational Leaders programme challenging negative stereotypes and portrayals in the media and inspiring young black men and boys across Hackney with positive role models in action.



Tackling the cost of living crisis

66

Tackling holiday hunger and food poverty

Plymouth City Council's library service joined up with CATERed, a co-operative trading company for its Big Summer Food Tour over the summer for Lunch at the Library. Every Wednesday in August children were able to pick up a free lunch and join in with family friendly activities. By joining up library services with CATERed's Big Summer Food Tour, Plymouth helped those who may struggle to provide food and entertainment for children over the holiday period.

Lambeth Council was selected by the Mayor of London to be a Food Flagship Partnership borough which shaped a healthy food system for local residents, sustained improvements in school meals, made healthy eating more affordable and expanding food growing across Lambeth including in GPs' surgeries. In summer 2018, the council piloted a 'Holiday Hunger' scheme supported by the Mayor of London. Brixton Library and Brixton Soup Kitchen as well as other local businesses offered hot meals for families with Brixton Library targeting families living in food poverty. A total of 19 families, 22 adults and 40 children participated in the scheme with 371 meals were provided throughout the sessions.

Other Labour councils have set up schemes to tackle holiday hunger. In summer 2018, **Islington Council** piloted a scheme that provided healthy lunches and activities to 750 children in three locations. "Lunch Bunch" provides meals to children from low income families who may otherwise not be able to eat in the school holidays. Along with three partners, **Greenwich Council** provided free meals to school aged children in summer 2018 using surplus food from Fareshare, a local charity that stops food from going to waste. The project delivered 4560 meals across 10 centres in the borough over the summer holiday period.

67

Tackling the Failure of Universal Credit

The rollout of 'Universal Credit' has caused a raft of problems for low income families, ranging from increases in debt, to homelessness, mental health issues, and domestic violence. Labour councils that were 'pilot' areas for the reforms sounded an early warning that the change to benefits was causing harm, and have often stepped in with emergency measures to try to reduce and mitigate the harmful impact on their local residents. **Newcastle City Council** is one of many Labour councils to have agreed measures to combat the raft of problems caused by Universal Credit

In 2018, **Gateshead Council** commissioned qualitative research into the impact of the roll out of Universal Credit in the area. It found a system prone to administrative errors that was difficult to navigate, and that was pushing many into debt, rent arrears and serious hardship. The impact of Universal Credit has exacerbated health problems, led to greater food insecurity and increased the risk of eviction and homelessness. The study concluded that the Universal Credit system is not working for claimants and does not simplify the system or improve work outcomes. The UN Special Rapporteur on Extreme Poverty and Human Rights referenced the research in his report.

The failure of Universal Credit pilots and the harmful effects on low income families led to many Labour councils including **Oxford, Stockport, and Newcastle**, to demand the roll-out be paused and reviewed due to the effect on residents in their area. As further problems have emerged and the government has refused to listen, Labour councils have begun to call for Universal Credit to be scrapped entirely – **Tower Hamlets Council** passing a motion stating that 'Universal Credit should be stopped completely, and that a genuinely comprehensive system should be introduced in which nobody will be worse off', and **Islington Council** following suit in calling it 'a Government policy of deliberate destitution', and calling for it to be scrapped entirely.

68

Improving financial inclusion

Since **Bradford Council** set up the Bradford Credit Union, it has used innovative methods to reach financially excluded people and give them a chance to save or borrow ethically and sustainably. The Credit Union hosts interactive 'jargon-buster' workshops which have been delivered to 150 people to date, demystifying financial issues in these times of austerity and the introduction of Universal Credit. It also runs the 'LifeSavers' scheme with partners – a Savings Club which teaches good financial habits and skills in primary schools, with 76 children registered who have saved over £6,000. Membership of the Bradford District Credit Union has grown from around 3,500 in 2012 to 6,600 today, with savings increasing from approximately £2.5m to £4.8m.

Brighton and Hove Council supports a partnership of organisations that work on financial inclusion, and in 2016 supported the local credit union with a subordinated loan of £250,000. Most recently due to the many difficulties for low income people of the roll-out of Universal Credit, the council has supported the Credit Union around this specific issue, committing £100,000 to this in 2018/19. Under a project called "Get Bank Ready", a specialist Customer Service Advisor now helps those without bank accounts to get set up with credit union accounts so that they can get their benefits. The advisor also supports anyone having difficulty making their online claim for Universal Credit.

69

Helping people get the best energy deal

In 2017, **Telford and Wrekin Council**, in partnership with Agility Eco and UK Power, launched a new Energy Support Service, "Switch Telford". This service provides people with free, impartial price comparisons and the ability to switch providers. In the first year almost 600 switches were made with an average saving of £200 per year, with the highest saving of £650.

Nottingham City Council have led the way in setting up their own council-owned non-profit energy companies, to challenge the 'Big Six' energy companies and deliver value for residents. Other Labour councils have also developed their own 'white-label' energy companies, including **Liverpool**, **Southampton** and **Bristol**.



Supporting inclusive economic growth

70

Harnessing economic growth with the private sector

In January 2016, **Exeter City Council**, in partnership with local private sector company Global City Futures, launched Exeter City Futures (ECF), a Community Interest Company, to help Exeter solve its urbanisation challenges whilst reducing social inequality and contributing to economic growth. The role of ECF is to bring together public and private sector partners together with communities to harness individual effort, create shared responsibility for delivering a better Exeter and bring coordination and focus to the big transport and energy challenges we face. The ambition for the city has to date inspired 80 local businesses across the city to partner to support transformation in Exeter and the work with local accelerator programme Exeter Velocities has supported 24 start-ups to build and test new products and services that address our goals.

An arcade, supported by **Stockton-on-Tees Borough Council** and based prominently on Stockton High Street provides the ideal place for young businesses to test their trade while being able to access business support, marketing and financial advice. Since it opened in 2011 around 88 tenants have been based in the beautifully restored 140-year-old building selling a wide range of high quality and unusual goods. Many of these fledgling businesses go on to expand and take up their own retail space in the town centre.

71

Using enterprise zones

In September 2017, **Blackpool Council** bought Blackpool Airport after it was faced with the threat of closure. The airport is an integral part of the future development of the Enterprise Zone. Established in 2016, Blackpool Airport Enterprise Zone is a 144 hectare site and is one of the largest in the UK. Over its 25 year lifespan it will transform the economic base of Blackpool & the Fylde Coast and position itself as a premier business location in the North West. The approved Enterprise Zone Delivery Plan estimates that the land released by the relocation of the airport operational facilities, together with the new airport facilities, could generate investment to support 2,156 new jobs, £34m retained business rates growth to support further investment and £374m value added over the life of the Enterprise Zone.

72

Delivering an industrial strategy

To deliver growth in STEM industries in the borough, **Hammersmith and Fulham Council** have partnered with Imperial College London to create an industrial strategy to attract the biggest global technology and innovation firms. Making the economy for everyone is at the heart of the scheme, with the joint venture working as one to deliver life-long learning, new infrastructure such as quality, affordable office space, and working to support local schools so local children will grow to take up these life opportunities that are on their doorstep.

73

Municipal entrepreneurship

In July 2018 **Gedling Borough Council** completed the acquisition of Arnold Market and is now managing the market. The council purchased it from its private owner to give it a new lease of life and make significant improvements after a period of neglect and deterioration for the market. The market improvement will be boosted by a bid for £1.25 million of funding from the Local Growth Fund that supports town centre improvements, administered by the Local Enterprise Partnership.

74

City and Town Deals

Southampton City Council, in conjunction with a neighbouring council, developed a joint programme, using City Deal, ESF and local resources, to support 1100 long term unemployed people with a health condition to get back into work. The Solent Jobs Programme provides a holistic localised response linking a range of specialist agencies to help people overcome barriers to work. It is based on evidence-based interventions and support, including skills and employability training, Cognitive Behavioural Therapy to build self-confidence and motivation, and health and wellbeing courses to support individuals to make healthy lifestyle choices and demonstrate impact on working capacities. The programme has created 249 paid work placements and so far 285 permanent jobs, taking 35% of participants into paid work.

In 2018 **North East Lincolnshire Council** signed the Greater Grimsby Town Deal which will focus on four core themes to drive economic growth, accelerate housing delivery, transform Grimsby's waterfront and improve skills and educational attainment. It brings together over £67m of government and local investment which will help accelerate the delivery of North East Lincolnshire Council's adopted local plan, which sets out ambitious targets for 8,800 jobs and over 9,700 new homes by 2032.

75

Community Asset Transfer programmes

Bradford Council's Community Asset Transfer (CAT) programme is the biggest in West Yorkshire. The council has expanded its CAT team, published a CAT toolkit and hosted information workshops for community groups to build robust business cases for taking on assets. The scheme empowers local communities by enabling them to take over their much loved buildings and run them for social and community benefit at a time when such assets are otherwise at grave risk from government cuts. To date the council has received over 125 applications, completed 20 transfers and is progressing a further 79, of which 23 are close to completion.

76

Encouraging start-ups and supporting small businesses

Despite being the smallest local authority in Greater Manchester, **Bury Council** has almost twice as many new business start-ups than any other borough in the region. The research conducted by Red Flag According to analysis by Manchester-based business intelligence service Red Flag Alert, 5,644 start-ups were launched in 2017. This works out as 29 per 1,000 people, a rate twice as many as its nearest rival. The report by Red Flag specifically referenced Bury Council's "Bury Means Business Initiative" which provides support to businesses including topics such as business viability, employment advice, business and cash flow planning and marketing.

To encourage new businesses and start-ups in three town centres as well as to support existing businesses in the borough, **Rochdale Council** launched a business rate reduction scheme. It offers eligible businesses an 80% discount in the first year, 50% discount in the second and 30% discount in the third year. The scheme has improved the quality of town centre areas for residents and seem the number of vacant properties decrease.

77

Maximising investment opportunities

Newcastle City Council has turned major investment opportunities into funding streams for local services. The council is redeveloping its Civic Centre to create a hub for public sector bodies that improves access to services for residents. This includes a new regional family court and tribunal centre, and office space for a range of public sector partners such as ACAS and the NHS. This innovative use of the council estate is also generating rental incomes that are being used to maintain services for vulnerable residents in the face of Government cuts.

78 Creating an entrepreneurial city

To create 6,000 jobs in Sunderland, **Sunderland City Council** have set a vision to be “an entrepreneurial university city at the heart of a low-carbon regional economy”. There will be a focus on a small number of important sectors and the city centre, and an International Advanced Manufacturing Park is in development to ensure that the necessary infrastructure is in place to support this vision. The city has also recently opened a landmark bridge, Northern Spire, across the River Wear, which is part of improving road infrastructure between the city centre and port.

79 Delivering a new town hall and regenerating the town centre

Crawley Borough Council recognized that the Town Hall was coming to the end of its life, and rather than patch it up, they decided to take the opportunity to build a new Town Hall and use it as a catalyst to regenerate the town centre, as well as making the new Town Hall far more energy efficient and fit for purpose. The scheme will deliver a Combined Heat and Power plant to deliver low-carbon energy across the town centre, over 250 homes with 40% at affordable rent and significant public realm improvements.

80 Improving our public spaces

Stockport Council has actively looked at areas where they can invest to upgrade and repair public spaces and property, including over £3.5m of money invested in children's play areas and outside sports facilities, found in-part through unused Section 106 monies. They have invested £1m of additional capital funding to clear the backlog in potholes. In addition, they have invested £130,000 in cleaning and repointing War Memorials ahead of the Armistice centenary ceremonies. In each of these cases, the funding has helped provide lasting repairs and upgrades which should reduce maintenance costs in the future.

81

Cooperative Councils and Community Wealth Building

Preston Council has developed 'Community Wealth Building', which aims to build a more inclusive model of economic growth in Preston and the surrounding area. Since winning back control of the council in 2011, Preston Labour has been transforming the council's procurement culture to make it a driver of social value.

Drawing on work in areas including in nearby Manchester and Cleveland in the US, Preston is working with anchor institutions such as the local university to encourage the development of supply chains that benefit the local economy. Between 2013 and 2017 it helped to increase the amount of procurement spend retained within Preston by £74m and within the wider Lancashire area by £200m, supporting local businesses and local jobs. All contracts let were on a fully commercial basis – they have not paid any additional premium for buying locally.

A leading member of the Cooperative Councils Network, Preston Council also established the Guild Co-operative Network to promote the ideas of co-operation, and more recently have created the Preston Co-operative Development Network (PCDN), modelled on Spanish cooperatives. New worker co-operatives are now being formed, and a successful food distribution co-op has also been set up. They have also established the first UK inner urban area Neighbourhood Council, handing over planning and other powers to the local level and helped the group secure significant implementation funding from the Big Lottery. In recognition of these and other steps which the council has been taking, Preston was recognised as the most improved city in the UK in the 2018 PWC/Demos 'Good Growth for Cities' annual report.

Mayor Damien Egan of **Lewisham Council** has also adopted principles of community wealth building, by creating the 'Lewisham Deal' – a common commitment across local anchor institutions to tackle poverty and promote inclusive local growth. The council is now working together with partners to increase spending in the local economy, to create more apprenticeships, and to support residents into work. Over 120 independent businesses attended a Meet the Buyer event, which will be held annually. The events will be held annually as part of Lewisham's efforts to boost local spending and support the local economy.

Find out more about the Cooperative Councils Network at:
<https://www.councils.coop>





Using technology to deliver council services

82

Supporting the hospital discharge process

In January 2018, **Knowsley Council** launched a pilot exercise to offer a free 12-week Assistive Technology package, including a lifeline pendant and a smoke alarm, to support the hospital discharge process. The pilot was targeted at people aged over 65 being discharged from hospital who were either in need of support or who may need support in the future. There were 96 people being discharged from hospital took up the offer. In March 2018, this pilot was extended to include people aged over 65 living independently at home, who were contacting or being referred to the council. This wider offer has proven successful, with 90 new enquiries received in the first three weeks – double the usual enquiry rate. The number of service users has continued to increase each month, and it is anticipated that the total will reach 3,000 by March 2019.

83

Using data modelling to identify vulnerable children

Brent Council is working with IBM to build a predictive model that could allow children most at risk of child exploitation to be identified in advance. This project uses a range of data sources from youth offending services, social care, schools and gang area intelligence. Although in its infancy it is hoped that this model could use indicators to provide instant intelligence and insight into priority cases; including young people considered to be at a heightened risk, such as missing children and those living in a known gang area.

84

Cracking down on fly-tipping

Barking and Dagenham Council is inviting residents to work with them to prevent fly-tipping by helping to identify culprits on its new 'Wall of Shame' webpage and fortnightly video appeals. The videos feature CCTV footage from some of the borough's fly-tipping hotspots and ask residents to help name and shame those responsible. So far, the videos have received over 12,500 views on YouTube, and fines totalling £1,800 have been issued by the council's enforcement team.

85

Improving digital skills

To improve digital skills in the area, **Wigan Council** has become a pioneer council for the Duke of York's Inspiring Digital Enterprise Award. The scheme allows users to choose topics they are interested in, such as online safety and animation, and gives families the option to learn digital skills together. Over 1,500 people have achieved the Digital Wigan Badge, 17,000 have won iDEA badges, 335 have achieved the Bronze Award and 17 people have already achieved the Silver Award.

86

Using technology to engage students

The student population in Durham is large, mobile and hard to reach on certain civic issues such as housing, waste management and being a good neighbour. **Durham County Council** worked in partnership with students, the University and the Police to create an app that would be attractive, easy to use and relevant. "Durham Student Life" provides a quick and easy method for students to access practical assistance immediately, including providing them with a map of safe night time routes, calling taxi firms and also providing practical content for support in mental health, sexual health and drug and alcohol matters in a safe secure and personal environment whilst also giving the council the ability to send out notifications to students with important messages.



Making our communities safer

87

Upholding standards in the private rented sector

Barking and Dagenham Council's borough-wide private landlord licensing scheme has proved to be hugely successful in tackling rogue landlords that blight the area. Over 14,000 licences have been granted and each property is inspected by council enforcement officers before the licence is granted. So far, nearly 700 enforcement notices have been issued to rogue landlords whose properties did not meet the required standards. Barking and Dagenham Council is committed to breaking the business model of any landlord who seeks to exploit vulnerable residents by letting out unsafe and overcrowded accommodation.

Brent Council has become the first authority in the country to use the Proceeds of Crime Act (POCA) against a landlord who crammed thirty-one people in a property licensed for seven. This is a landmark legal decision for their zero-tolerance policy against rogue landlords. Rogue landlords can no longer hide behind previous rulings to avoid being required by the courts to pay back rent whilst their tenants lived in squalid and dangerous conditions.

Newham Council became the first local authority in England to introduce borough-wide selective licensing to address poor standards across the private rented sector, to protect tenants and to tackle criminal landlords. Through licensing, Newham has initiated prosecutions against 1,306 criminal landlords since it was introduced six years ago. In 2017, Newham's prosecutions alone accounted for nearly 60% of all prosecutions against criminal landlords in London. Over 112 civil penalties have been issued to criminal landlords since this power was introduced in April 2016. Licensing has also assisted with recovering over £5.3m of unpaid Council Tax, detected and stopped £300,000 of Housing Benefit fraud, and led to over 770 arrests for other crime.

88

Leading support after terror attacks

Following the London Bridge Terror Attacks in June 2017, **Southwark Council** worked closely with local, London and national partners to ensure that the learning from the incident response informed the development of national guidance and policies. Innovative aspects of the work included a strengthened role of the Director of Public Health in responding to incidents, establishing a mental health and resilience response programme, developing mutual aid for public health guidance and revisiting the framework and approaches for needs assessments and data sharing.

In May 2017, Manchester suffered a terror attack at the Manchester Arena. **Manchester City Council** worked with partners across the city, with all of the Manchester Combined Authority and with organisations both nationally and internationally to deliver a sustained response to the attack lasting nine days. This response consisted of opening a family assistance centre by 2am on the night of the attack, establishing a We Love Manchester Emergency Fund, enabling a vigil to take place less than 24 hours after the initial incident, and meeting with community groups to understand the key issues they were experiencing following the tragic events of 22 May 2017.

89

Tackling sexual exploitation

In October 2017 **Tower Hamlets Council** set up a multi-agency team to tackle sexual and criminal exploitation. This team includes 4 police officers, 6 social workers, and 4 gangs workers who are commissioned from the third sector, and undertakes work with the most vulnerable teenagers in the borough, joining up work around Child Sexual and Criminal Exploitation, missing children and County Lines. Over the past 12 months there have been 17 arrests of adults who were felt to pose a direct risk to young people because of exploitation concerns. In addition over 115 young people were supported to end or reduce concerns of exploitation, involvement in County Lines, or risk of going missing.

Newcastle City Council has been hailed as a leading example of how to tackle sexual exploitation. The council's role in this has been to bring together agencies in the city to support victims. The Multi Agency Safeguarding Hub (MASH) for safeguarding adults is key to this. MASH are designed to facilitate information-sharing and decision-making on a multi-agency basis through co-locating staff from the local authority, health agencies and the police. The MASH in Newcastle will see the co-location of staff from Adult Social Care and Northumbria Police as well as a mixture of virtual and co-location relationships with additional key safeguarding partner agencies, providing an integrated front door for safeguarding adults.

90

Protecting young people from alcohol use

The Hastings Community Alcohol Partnership (CAP) launched in July 2017. It is led by **Hastings Borough Council** in partnership with a number of public and private sector organisations. It aims to reduce the sales of alcohol to young people, advise them on the dangers of drinking, provide alcohol-free activities through youth services and local charities and contribute to reducing youth related disorder. The CAP recently won a national innovation award by commissioning research into young people's drinking behaviours which dispelled many local myths about the effects of alcohol. Student 'CAP ambassadors' are visiting local primary schools to run peer-led information sessions to spread the word about the risks associated with underage drinking and how to deal with family alcohol consumption issues.

Sandwell Council have received national recognition for their Blue Light Project, which brings together a range of organisations to manage treatment resistant drinkers. It's also saved estimated costs to emergency services by around £150,000. Eleven partner organisations now meet regularly to co-ordinate support for those who won't access treatment but place a disproportionate demand on emergency services. The project also trains specialist and non-alcohol specialist staff in working with change-resistant drinkers. The first year of the scheme engaged nine people for a full year. Seven received sustained treatment or some level of support, significantly reducing the costs to local emergency services of managing them from an estimated £244,154 to £92,730. NHS England has assessed the project as meeting Quality, Innovation, Productivity and Prevention productivity gains.

91

Reducing reoffending rates

The Fresh Start 4U Project, funded by **Bradford Council** supports adult offenders to reduce their offending, increase their employability and reduce their reliance on public services. To date the project team has worked with 150 service users and the re-offending rates are an estimated 75% lower than comparable criminal justice cohorts nationally. Overall annual savings from reduced reoffending and savings in welfare benefits from those who have been supported in to work are around £475,500 a year, or £3.40 for every £1 invested. 46% of service users have achieved an employment, training or education outcome. The project has shown that a key area where it provides benefit is in supporting those who have not received support in the past.

92

Tackling gang activity

Responding to community concerns about gangs, and a commitment to supporting all young people, **Islington Council** has created its Integrated Gangs Team (IGT). IGT works with gang affected young people aged 10-24, and is a multi-agency approach with co-located teams who take a safeguarding approach. The joined up intelligence approach has proved to be invaluable for all services working with gang members. IGT is now extending from disruption into prevention including work with siblings. The new operating manual is regarded as a model of best practice in London, and helped contribute to a reduction in serious knife crime among under-25s of 13%, compared with an increase overall in London.

Waltham Forest Council has implemented a new strategy to tackle gangs after commissioning a report from South Bank University, looking into how gang operations have changed in the last decade. The report identified an 'evolutionary' progression from territorial, postcode gangs alliances to a more 'entrepreneurial' model based on drug distribution and supply. On the back of this report the council announced an additional £806,000 funding on top of the existing £2.2 million they committed to spend over the next 4 years. Adopting a public health, preventative approach, they have committed to employing a Crime Financial Investigator to 'follow the money', deliver a trauma-informed community mentoring programme, create a hyper-local engagement model and work with third sector partners and introduce a safeguarding approach to managing the risk associated with young people on the periphery of gang involvement.

A large, light blue circular graphic containing a stylized white bus icon. The bus is facing forward, with a rectangular window and a smaller rectangular area above it representing a destination sign. The bus is centered within the circle, and the circle is partially overlaid by the main title text.

Improving transport in our towns and cities

93

Supporting bus use

Brighton and Hove Council was the top local authority outside of London in 2016/17 for passenger journeys per head, recording 172 bus journeys per resident, an 8.3% increase over five years. The council has identified funding to protect all 19 of their council-subsidised bus routes for the next four years, helping keep all communities connected, reducing isolation and helping residents get to work.

94

Sustainable transport strategy

Stevenage Borough Council is working with residents, businesses, and partners to develop and agree upon a sustainable transport vision for Stevenage. This has led to the preparation of an Integrated Transport Strategy connecting residents and businesses with a range of opportunities, and working cooperatively with communities to create living streets that local people can enjoy. The creation of the New Town incorporated sustainable infrastructure in the form of dedicated cycle tracks, a network of local bus routes and public spaces for residents to enjoy. The council is working with partners to make the most of this outstanding connectivity that has been so important to the success of the town. This will be supported by an action plan and funding strategy, to attract external funding to bring real benefits to Stevenage people.

95

Improving cycle infrastructure

For the past 5 years **Waltham Forest Council** has been rolling out a programme to increase levels of active transport through new infrastructure and improving the safety and priority for pedestrians and cyclists. The council has installed over 300 cycle hangars in residential streets, has closed off 43 residential streets to through traffic, improved 104 pedestrian crossings, created 15 new pocket parks on reclaimed road space, made 91 junctions safer by prioritising pedestrians, built 22km of segregated cycle lanes and introduced 43 'Tiger Crossings'. These actions have led to a significant reduction in car use. The 2018 Department of Transport survey has found that Waltham Forest has the second highest number of residents walking five or more times a week and now have the highest number of residents cycling five or more times a week in Outer London.

The **Lewisham Council**-run Lewisham cycle loan scheme allows residents to hire a bike along with a helmet, a lock and high visibility vest for four weeks for just £10. Over 1800 people have taken up the scheme that allows people to try cycling for the first time, with 78% of participants new or occasional cyclists. At the end of the month, people can buy their bikes for a reduced price.



Campaigning from Opposition

96

Protecting vulnerable residents

In Staffordshire, over 2000 older and disabled people were to be affected by a sudden decision to withdraw the maintenance and servicing contract for people using fixed equipment such as stairlifts or specialised toilets with the users themselves having to cover the costs. It left vulnerable people with both the financial responsibility of maintaining the equipment they need and the fear of being without these essential services. Members of **Staffordshire Labour Group** called in the decision to highlight the unfairness of this proposal, proposed better ways forward and prompted a wholesale rethink which offered a longer transitional period as well as a more affordable solution for service users.

97

Securing affordable housing

With the average local house priced at over 12 times the average wage in West Oxfordshire, **West Oxfordshire Labour Group** were determined to campaign on the issue and persuade the Conservative-run council to take long-term decisive action on the issue locally. Together with the local CLP the Labour Group launched a petition, led by two younger members who are experiencing the issue first hand, with the support of the FBU. The petition triggered a debate within the council, which in turn creating an impetus for action – the Conservative administration agreed to an investment of £10 million in the local housing association to provide affordable homes, which is exactly what West Oxfordshire Labour Group campaigned for.

98

Developing a positive alternative to a local plan

In North Warwickshire, **North Warwickshire Labour Group** made a decision to oppose the council's Local Plan because of the way that proposed new housing swamped existing towns and villages. The Labour Group also made the decision that the debate around housing should not be about numbers but about the location of housing, its affordability, and the need for accompanying infrastructure. They worked with land owners and community groups to develop a pro-housing alternative plan to build a new garden village in the borough. In doing so, they ran an effective three year campaign, gaining ground in by-elections with one Labour gain and two increases in the vote – including taking the Tory leader's ward to within 38 votes! The development of an alternative Local Plan has delayed the introduction of the council's own damaging plan, which currently sits with an inspector. Labour's positive campaign for a new settlement helped to cut through to local people and could be key to winning control of the council in May 2019.

99

Challenging unfair parking charges

In November 2017, **Rushmoor Labour Group** carried out a survey after becoming aware of masses of complaints about private parking operators. Over half the responses were about Smart Parking, the parking provider at Aldershot Centre for Health. They set up a petition which called on Aldershot Centre for Health to provide parking that puts patients first attracted over 2,250 signatures. This was followed up with a YouTube video about the issue and the Labour Group submitted a report to Rushmoor Borough Council attended by NHS Property Services. This resulted in Smart Parking being sacked from providing parking at Aldershot Centre for Health earlier this year.

100

Labour Councillors Fighting Austerity


Labour councillors have been at the frontline of the fight against Tory cuts since austerity began. Labour councillors have organised protests, attended marches, and spoken out against Tory cuts every year since 2010.

In 2017 **over 100 Labour council leaders** wrote to the Chancellor demanding a decent pay rise for council workers – and Labour councillors voted for a public sector pay cap-busting 4% pay increase for local government workers despite opposition from Tory councils. The **LGA Labour Group's** radical manifesto for local government, 'On Day One', set out the case for significant re-investment in local government by the next Labour government.

The LGA Labour Group launched the 'Breaking Point' campaign in October 2018 to highlight the damage caused to public services by Tory austerity. Over **5,000 Labour councillors** signed the 'Breaking Point' campaign petition demanding that the Tory Government immediately reverse the £1.3bn cut to council budgets in 2019/20, make an emergency £4bn investment in services to protect vulnerable children and adults, and pledge to use the Spending Review to restore council funding to 2010 levels. Labour Groups across the UK passed motions of support for the campaign, and the **Cheshire East Labour Group** even managed to get a Breaking Point motion passed despite being in opposition!

Labour Groups up and down the country have campaigned locally too. **Islington Labour Group** launched their own local campaign 'The Cuts Don't Work' after receiving a 70% cut to their core government funding since 2010, and asking local people to sign their petition. **Bristol Council** Mayor Marvin Rees organised a mass rally in parliament to protect against the cuts to council budgets.

**BREAKING
POINT.**
LABOUR COUNCILLORS FIGHTING AUSTERITY



Thank you to all the members and officers who contributed the information and good practice that enabled us to compile this publication – together, we're showing the difference that Labour in local government can make.

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Supporting work by the LGA Labour Group Office.

The LGA Labour Group exists to fight the corner for Labour councillors and Labour councils at a national level, both within the cross-party Local Government Association, in the corridors of Westminster, and in the Labour Party. The Group provides a strong voice for Labour local government and acts as a platform for ideas and argument for all those committed to an effective localist element to Labour politics and policies.

The Labour Group has good working relationships with the shadow Communities and Local Government front bench team, MPs and Peers and the Labour Party, and seeks to influence policy and political decisions through frequent individual and group meetings between leading councillors and shadow ministers.

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