



THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT  
2010 MANIFESTO  
[SUTTON-LIBDEMS.ORG.UK](http://SUTTON-LIBDEMS.ORG.UK)

BUILDING OUR FUTURE  
TOGETHER

LONDON BOROUGH OF SUTTON





Dear Resident

Every so often we are faced with unforeseen difficulties that place heavy responsibilities on councils, the decisions they make and their priorities for the future.

That's what has happened with the global and national recession. In such times, resources are scarce, and we expect very significant cuts to be made to the council's funding by central government over the next few years. As a result we have to deliver more for less, give better value for money and work hard to improve efficiency at every level.

Your Liberal Democrat council is ambitious for our borough and we are determined to meet the expectations and high standard services that residents want.

Now, more than ever, we will work in partnership with the police, the NHS and the voluntary sector. We need to find better, more efficient ways of working together to continue to deliver excellent services.

This approach is already working well and has enabled us to freeze council tax this year.

Most of all we need to continue to work with our residents because together we can make a real difference. What has been delivered by our local committees is ample proof of the importance and effectiveness of local decisions made by local people.

We want our Sutton to be a safer, fairer and greener borough – one in which all can take part and all can take pride.

**Cllr Sean Brennan**  
**Leader of Sutton Council**

# Making Sutton Safer

## What we have achieved:

- Big reductions in crime and fear of crime;
- Set up a unique crime-busting partnership between police and council;
- Addressed anti-social behaviour with a dedicated Council/Police Anti-social behaviour unit and a highly-effective Safer Parks Team;
- Invested in high-quality CCTV;
- Strictly enforced licensing laws.

People need to feel safe to be confident about the future. If they are not, they won't want to be a part of the community and could become isolated. Although many older people feel this way, it's more often our young people who are victims of crime.

But in the past four years crime in Liberal Democrat Sutton has dropped dramatically – criminal damage is down 36%, motor vehicle theft down 29% and violence down 23%. The Met Police have confirmed that Sutton is now one of the safest boroughs in London, and fear of crime has fallen steadily.

The explanation lies with the pioneering work by the Liberal Democrat Council and our local police. Together we have set up the Safer Sutton Partnership to allow community teams from both council and police to work together under a single management reporting directly to the Council's Chief Executive and the Borough's Police Commander. It's the only partnership of its type in the country, and has been held up as a shining example of how working as partners can bring real benefits.

This has led to a sharp reduction in crime, and greater public confidence ... and we are determined this will continue.

Three years ago we arranged for new Metropolitan Police teams to patrol our parks. They replaced the council's former parks service but are still paid for by the council. Twelve fully equipped police officers have brought new levels of safety to our parks. They also work closely with the 18 Safer Neighbourhood Teams and with the joint Council/police antisocial behaviour unit we have also established.

There's a strong partnership role too in the strict enforcement of licensing laws. In 2009 council and police teams made 700 visits to licensed premises. We issued 47 penalty notices, revoked the licences of two premises, suspended the licences of another 8, and issued 20 temporary closure notices.

And as a further crime-busting aid, we have invested in the very latest CCTV equipment. Constantly monitored by the police, it has produced excellent results in enforcement and prosecution.

## Our plans for the future:

- Set up an Alcohol Task Force with the police and the health service to tackle the destructive effects of excessive drinking;
- Crack down on hate crimes and domestic violence;
- Provide more activities and places to go for young people.

The problem of alcohol misuse and under-age drinking will continue to be high priority for the next Liberal Democrat administration. We will work with the police to further reduce problems of antisocial behaviour and alcohol-fuelled disorder, and block access to alcohol for under-age drinkers through strict enforcement of licensing powers.

To help achieve these aims, we have set up a top-level Alcohol Task Force to use our own extensive knowledge, and the experience of others, in implementing practical measures to overcome this problem. We will bring together borough agencies such as police, health and voluntary services to support the Council in this work.

As well as our campaign against problems with alcohol, we will continue to tackle other crimes such as domestic violence (where we have already carried out pioneering work) and drug misuse, and provide support for the victims. We will also work to reduce hate crimes such as the harassment and bullying of people with learning disabilities.

We have had considerable success in identifying vulnerable children so we can provide early support. We will strengthen prevention and early intervention programmes because we want to offer appropriate protection and support to our most vulnerable citizens.

We will not let up in our fight against crime generally, and will further strengthen our highly successful partnership with the police to reduce the incidence and fear of crime.

Our young people tell us that they want more activities. We will develop imaginative new activities for young people in places where they gather, such as parks. We will also maintain the best of the traditional youth facilities. And our innovative Sutton Life Centre will provide an exciting venue for young people to learn new skills, spend time together in a safe place and use its extensive library and sports facilities. It will offer structured guidance in helping young people face up to life's challenges, and facilities such as its climbing wall to encourage a sense of challenge and adventure.

We will continue to improve the physical environment to make our Borough safer, improving street lighting, redesigning street furniture and removing clutter, and improving the positions of bus stops and cab ranks.

Sutton residents are generous donors to charity but the presence of so many charity collectors in Sutton town centre and elsewhere is becoming an annoyance to many. That's why we intend to license legitimate charities to carry out collections in our town and district centres, limiting their numbers and checking their legitimacy.

# Making Sutton Fairer

## What we have achieved:

- Huge investment in our children's centres and schools;
- Successfully won major investment for St Helier Hospital;
- Protected care services for those with a wider range of needs compared to most other councils; recognised and supported their carers;
- Given people more control over their care services;
- Enabled residents with disabilities to take an active part in the community, and pioneered short breaks for carers;
- Invested in Council housing;
- Invested in our libraries;
- Built two new ground-breaking leisure centres.

Liberal Democrats believe in a fairer society where everyone should be able to realise their potential and enjoy the best quality of life.

The key lies in a good education for people of all ages. Although we have some of the best schools in the country, we have placed high priority on reducing the gaps in achievement among children and young people, while improving standards still further. We have opened ten new children's centres to help the most vulnerable children and families, and have continued to invest heavily in our schools.

We are working with the local NHS to improve the health and life expectancy of all residents. With our two MPs we successfully campaigned for funds to rebuild St Helier Hospital, and local health centres. We are committed to providing nutritious school meals for children and warning them of the dangers of smoking and alcohol. We have invested in our existing leisure centres and are promoting healthy living and sports activities.

We are determined to reduce inequalities in the Borough and protect the frail and vulnerable. Only Liberal Democrat Sutton and Richmond in outer London continue to provide home care services to people with moderate needs, and not just the most vulnerable residents. We recognise and support the immense contribution that carers make in looking after their loved ones, and their value to the community. For carers of disabled children, we have led the way in London with a major programme to provide them with opportunities for short breaks.

We believe in promoting independence and helping people lead full and active lives. We are transforming social care so that people have control over their budgets and can decide which services they prefer. We have provided homes in the community for people with severe learning disabilities and have built new extra-care sheltered housing at Belsize Court in central Sutton.

We have completely re-built two new libraries at Middleton Circle and the Sutton Life Centre which includes a brand new youth and community centre. We have refurbished the central library and all branch libraries, and have built two new leisure centres – Sutton Arena and the Phoenix Centre (the Phoenix with its own new library and a range of other community facilities).

We value diversity, promote equality and challenge discrimination. We believe everyone should be treated with respect and have encouraged the formation of new community groups where people work with the Council to tackle the issues that they care most about.

## Our plans for the future:

- Campaign for fairer access to local schools for Sutton children;
- Provide extra classrooms for more than 200 primary school children;
- Rebuild Stanley Park High School and 5 other schools;
- Provide more in-borough places for children with special needs;
- Keep Cheam Leisure Centre open and refurbish Westcroft Leisure Centre;
- Make major improvements to our social housing;
- Redevelop Honeywood Museum;
- Develop further our local committees to encourage more people to take part in decisions to improve their areas.

We recognise the concern that many parents and children feel about the unfair admissions arrangements supported by central government. We will campaign to ensure that all of Sutton's children have fairer access to the borough's excellent schools. We will work with local schools to set targets to increase the percentage of Sutton children admitted to these schools. We will also campaign to make the system fairer overall.

Sutton's recent birth-rate increase is one of the highest in London, and we will cater for the increasing demand for places by providing extra primary classrooms. We will also rebuild and revamp five of our most needy schools under the Building Schools for the Future programme if funding already promised by the government is guaranteed. We will completely rebuild Stanley Park High School on a new site with more vocational courses to help young people into employment. We will provide more places for children with Autistic Spectrum Disorder so they can go to school in the Borough. We will establish four more children's centres with free learning and play opportunities for the very young, and a range of support services for their families.

We will tackle the causes of child poverty by giving children from disadvantaged backgrounds every opportunity to fulfil their potential. We will work to reduce the level of teenage pregnancy which lowers the life chances for too many of our young people.

The recession has hit many families hard, and Liberal Democrat Sutton Council was one of the first councils to recognise this with practical support for the local business community, and we will continue to seek ways of providing further support. However the recession poses a major threat to the grant funding we receive from central government, and we need to find new efficiencies in the way the council is run so we can maintain front-line services and reduce the impact on the level of council tax.

# Making Sutton Greener

## What we have achieved:

- Pioneered new bus services, increased cycling and public transport use and reduced car journeys;
- Made recycling easier with kerbside collections in one bin and introduced more local recycling centres;
- More than doubled the rate of recycling at the borough's Reuse and Recycling Centre;
- Boosted funds for projects chosen by residents to improve their local areas;
- Opened new nature reserves at Anton Crescent wetlands and Belmont pastures.

Sutton has a national reputation as a green and pleasant place to live, with excellent parks and playgrounds, the highest density of street trees of any London borough, and high levels of recycling and composting.

But we also have a well-deserved reputation for working with residents in carrying out innovative environmental projects. For example, the Mayor of London's Transport Adviser has praised Lib Dem Sutton Council for transforming the way people travel in the borough. In just three years, with support from Transport for London, we have encouraged 75% more people to take to bicycles, boosted bus use by 16%, and reduced car use by 6%. Sutton's example as the nation's most successful transport town is now being used as a model for other local councils.

We have a long history of such positive action. The hugely successful 'S' bus routes and the concept of hail and ride were our initiative. Initially funded by the Council, the 'S' routes have become self-financing and cover most of the borough. This is another idea which has been copied all over London and further afield.

We do appreciate the car is still vital for many people, and that's why we have introduced the most realistic parking standards of any London borough. For example, motorists who forget to display a parking ticket in an outdoor Sutton car park can have the fine waived on the first occasion. We are one of only a few London Boroughs to provide free visitors' parking permits to people who live in controlled parking zones and we plan to improve that service.

Road safety is an important priority in Sutton and schemes to manage traffic have helped to reduce the number of accidents across the Borough.

We were ahead of most in recognising the fact that our homes produce almost one third of the harmful climate change gases, so led the way with projects like BedZed, the world's first zero-energy housing development. BedZed continues its pioneering role in demonstrating how homes can contribute towards environmental sustainability, and will be central to an ambitious new programme to create the Hackbridge 'sustainable suburb'. New housing, offices and other buildings in Hackbridge will produce, and then use, their energy locally from renewable sources.

In 2008 we became the first UK council to become a 'One-Planet' Borough (if everyone in the world lived like the average European, we would need three planets to live on). We are committed to reducing our consumption of natural resources. Council buildings already have cut water use by 30% over the past decade, use 19% less fossil fuel, and have cut electricity use by 5% in the past six years.

We have encouraged residents to play their part by introducing popular kerbside collections for paper, card, plastic and tins, and has recently added glass and tetrapaks. For 9 months of the year we also offer a free garden waste collection service and 15,000 households took up our offer of free home composters. The steady increase in recycling rates has reduced the impact of increasing annual costs of sending waste to landfill.

We have reorganised our street-cleaning services to ensure that everyone has a local street cleaner. This service is supported by a year-round central 'hit squad' to deal with grime, and by a graffiti removal team.

The borough's green spaces are among our most-admired features, and we have continued to invest in our parks. We have landscaped the Kimpton industrial site and turned some of it into attractive parkland. With the support of an army of local volunteers we have now also opened 11 local nature reserves and have introduced protection measures in 42 sites of interest for nature conservation, and plan to extend that cover.

## Our plans for the future:

- Major plans for improved transport facilities in Wallington and Worcester Park;
- Increase the items you can recycle and reduce the amount of waste we send to landfill;
- Further investment in our parks, playgrounds and district centres;
- Protect our open spaces and back garden land to retain the suburban character of our borough;
- Increase access to local produce, supplying local schools and hospitals.

Recycling and reuse of all types of products and materials will continue to have high priority for Sutton's Lib Dem Council. We will promote a range of measures to reduce the amount of rubbish that we send to landfill to increase the current borough-wide recycling rate of 38% to a challenging 70% by 2025. However, we strongly oppose old-fashioned, mass-burn incineration as a solution.

We will continue to bring new life to our town centres. With support from Transport for London we have started a £3 million revamp of Sutton town centre, and a £1.6 million scheme in Wallington to help people get around more easily on foot, bike or public transport. Work has also begun in Worcester Park to improve Central Road and access to and from the station. Other ambitious projects are planned for Carshalton, Rosehill, Cheam and other district centres over the next five years.

We will look closely at ways of making our streets better for everyone. We will continue to remove unnecessary guardrailing and street clutter, making drivers and pedestrians more aware of one another and opening up our public places to be shared and enjoyed by everyone.

We will continue the popular public realm funding that we introduced four years ago, encouraging Local Committees to invest further in our parks, with playgrounds and play facilities for all ages a priority. We will ensure that those public spaces are safe, attractive and accessible for everyone to enjoy.

To prepare for any future bouts of freak winter weather, we will provide more grit bins around the borough, and offer free supplies of grit before winter to residents who want it.

Although supermarkets have been a feature of modern life, we believe that residents should have access to nutritious and affordable food produced locally. We have set up a community farm in Carshalton and are helping people develop skills to grow and cook their own food. We will work with local producers to integrate local produce into school meals and increase access to fresh produce for hospital patients. We will continue to support the very successful farmer's markets selling local produce in Sutton and Wallington.

Sutton Council has taken active measures to reduce inappropriate development. Over the past four years we have rejected 560 unsuitable schemes. In spite of the tough housing targets set by Government and London's Mayor, we will continue to protect our open spaces and defend our back gardens against unscrupulous developers through the implementation of new planning policies developed in consultation with local residents. Our new sustainable suburb in Hackbridge will help meet these housing targets whilst minimising the impact of new housing, offices and other buildings on the local community and environment.

## [Links to more detailed documents and websites:](#)

Our environmental policies: *Making Sutton Greener Policy Statement* <http://www.suttonpartnership.net/cgi-bin/members/briefcasesearch.cgi/5a%20greener%20statement.doc?action=viewfile&itemid=9970341156193>

Our policies on crime and safety: *Keeping Sutton Safe Policy Statement*  
<http://www.suttonpartnership.net/cgi-bin/members/briefcasesearch.cgi/safer%20statement%20final%20amended%20version%20from%20consultation%20060110.doc?action=viewfile&itemid=9990343064474>

Our policies on equalities and quality of life: *Making Sutton Fairer Policy Statement*  
<http://www.suttonpartnership.net/cgi-bin/members/briefcasesearch.cgi/item%204%20making%20sutton%20fairer.doc?action=viewfile&itemid=9990319460302>

How we spend your council tax: *A to Z Council services* <http://www.sutton.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=2172>

Our policies for our youngsters: *Sutton's Children & Young People's Plan*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5114&p=0>

*Children & Young People's Scrutiny Committee Final Report: Secondary School Places*  
[http://sutton.moderngov.co.uk/Published/C00000322/M00002306/AI00012882/\\$SecondarySchoolsFinalReport.docA.ps.pdf](http://sutton.moderngov.co.uk/Published/C00000322/M00002306/AI00012882/$SecondarySchoolsFinalReport.docA.ps.pdf)

Our policies for our elderly: *A Better Sutton For Older People*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=1693&p=0>

Our policies for our residents with learning disabilities: *Learning Disabilities Business Plan*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=6237&p=0>

*Learning Disabilities Day Services Modernisation Plan*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=7321&p=0>

Our long term vision for the Borough: *Sutton Strategy 2009-2020*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=5240&p=0>

Our policies on sustainability & One Planet Living: *One Planet Action Plan*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=8680&p=0>

*The Hackbridge Master Plan 2009*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/index.aspx?articleid=3990>

Our policies for a successful Sutton economy: *Sutton's Economic Strategy*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=633&p=0>

Working closely with the police: *The Safer Sutton Partnership Plan*  
<http://www.sutton.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=3126&p=0>

Our policies for close working with the voluntary sector: *Voluntary Sector Compact*  
[http://www.thecompact.org.uk/shared\\_asp\\_files/GFSR.asp?NodeID=100419](http://www.thecompact.org.uk/shared_asp_files/GFSR.asp?NodeID=100419)



**THE LIBERAL DEMOCRAT**  
**2010 MANIFESTO**  
**SUTTON-LIBDEMS.ORG.UK**