

# A record of action A promise of more

Our plan to make Braintree District an even better place  
to live, work and raise a family

Conservative Manifesto for Braintree District  
Council elections, Thursday 4 May 2023

**Braintree District Conservatives**  
Working hard for all residents of Braintree District

 **Conservatives**



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# A personal message from the Conservative Leader of the Council

Dear Resident

Running Braintree District Council during the COVID pandemic has been a unique challenge, but one which my Conservative colleagues and I were proud to undertake. During this time, Braintree District Council played a major role in supporting communities and distributing tens of millions of pounds of grants to our businesses.

Despite the intensity of this additional pandemic work, normal service standards and customer satisfaction remained high! A phenomenal tribute to the way the Council is run and the excellent staff who serve our District.

We delivered some of our major capital projects, including: Horizon 120 Enterprise and Innovation Park at Great Notley, Braintree Town Centre Pedestrianisation, the I Construct innovation hub, and the Plaza Centre. Affordable new home delivery is also at a record high!

We have achieved a lot and are poised to deliver even more - with planned town centre works in Witham and Halstead and other community facilities and enterprise centres to bring forward.

We promised Jobs, Journeys, Health and Homes, with a well run District Council in 2019. We did that and we supported our communities through incredibly dark times and are still helping residents, giving them a £25 refund on their council tax this year! Better times lie ahead!

Over the next few pages, you can read about our achievements and our plans for the future. For 20 years we have kept Braintree District Council moving forward. Please do not put that at risk in these upcoming elections!

*Graham Butland*



Cllr Graham Butland

Cllr Graham Butland  
Leader of Braintree District Council Conservative Group



# Largest council tax reduction in the country and cost of living support in these difficult times

## New homes bonus to support residents

- £25 refund to all council tax paying households
- £1 million over two years to help community groups support cost of living concerns
- New homes bonus has funded infrastructure and economic growth

Councils are given a bonus for every new home built in their District. We have never used this money to prop up our current account, as other councils do. It has been invested in infrastructure and support for businesses. This year we are using unallocated amounts to help those who need it.

Your Conservative-run council will be giving each council tax paying household a refund of £25, to help with the bills in difficult times, thanks to the proceeds of new homes bonus collected in recent years. This will be the largest council tax reduction of any District Council in the country and we believe it is the right thing to do when budgets are constrained.

There will also be a package of £1 million spent over two years to help with concerns over the cost of living. As local residents, we have terrific community groups and organisations who do wonderful work, and Braintree District Council will work with them to allocate the £1 million funding to support their initiatives, meaning the money stretches further and the benefits are greater.

As local Conservatives, supporting you is our top priority as we go through these difficult times together. Thanks to sensible financial running of the council, this help can be given, now! We would not have had the money if local residents had not accepted the need for new homes, and if the new homes bonus hadn't been saved and invested wisely.

It is this acceptance of the need for new homes, and sound investment, that has helped develop enterprise centres, investment in infrastructure planning and paid for improved broadband to our most remote and difficult to access residential properties and business premises. We have also funded staff resources in project management and economic development. All with the purpose of increasing social value, supporting communities and playing our part in helping our Braintree District be more prosperous and bounce back better post-pandemic.

This is why Conservative-led Braintree District Council is respected across the country, for doing so much more than collecting refuse and other such services.

# Delivering our pledges to you



In difficult times, Conservatives have delivered on what we promised in 2019 and have a clear plan for the next four years, to run an efficient council with excellent services.

## What we've achieved together...

### 1 Kept council tax low and protected key services

In challenging times, we kept council tax low, whilst protecting services during the pandemic, thanks to years of sound Conservative financial management.

### 2 Delivered major projects

Completion of investment in multi use Victoria Square Development and pedestrianisation of Braintree High Street. Multi million pound enterprise centres and employment land developed.

### 3 Launched a climate change strategy and cycling strategy

Invested in a climate change strategy and sustainable transport plans, to improve connectivity and play our part in achieving net zero.

### 4 Distributed tens of millions of pounds of grants to businesses

During the pandemic, BDC dispatched huge quantities of grants to our businesses and provided its own financial support to help business adapt and survive.

### 5 Built a record number of affordable homes

In 2021/22, we exceeded our target for affordable homes with 417, exceeding a target of 250 per year. We will continue to set a high target and are well on course to beat that target this year.

### 6 Agreed a local plan to protect communities.

We agreed a local plan, setting where future development will be in the District and agreed a number of neighbourhood plans led by local communities.

## And what we'll do next...

### 1 Maintain services that we rely on -

including a straightforward, reliable waste service and keeping council tax as low as possible. We will continue to take a commercial approach, to generate income to pay for quality services.

### 2 Support communities with grants-

councillor community funding continues and we will spend Government's Shared Prosperity and Rural Prosperity funding to help communities and businesses. We will continue to work with partners to tackle rural isolation and poverty.

### 3 Keep our town centres prosperous -

complete improvements in our towns (Halstead, Witham and Braintree) and help encourage more people to visit and spend money, working with retailers and businesses.

### 4 Plan future housing and protect our rural way of life -

maintain policies that protect the most beautiful villages in East Anglia. We will also continue to bring forward much needed affordable homes.

### 5 Help businesses grow -

support our businesses to grow, help start-ups and attract new jobs to the area. We will provide business support and help local employers with their skills needs.

### 6 Invest in our District to make our communities stronger and our area more prosperous -

We have a great record of delivering investment projects that also generate revenues to pay for services, and will continue to look at all opportunities.



# Sound financial management of the council and quality services for residents

## We have:

- High levels of customer satisfaction for our services and a high ambition for recycling
- Maintained a sound and resilient financial position, and have a plan to tackle future challenges
- Set up an Investment Development Programme to help fund future services
- Reviewed our local assets to make sure they are generating the highest possible income for the authority

Sound financial policies are our key priority as Conservatives, meaning quality services.

We take a broad-minded approach to running our services - no ideologically-driven outsourcing! Our waste collection is in-house and is one of the most efficient in Essex and resident feedback points to high satisfaction across all our council services.

Our investment development programme relies on financial investments, proceeds from major projects and commercialisation/revenue-generating initiatives, to help fund the authority in the future.

We believe residents get 'double value' from projects that provide additional community and economic benefit, with the revenue generated helping to pay for front line services.

A continuing Conservative council will look to push ahead with a reenergised focus on commercial income generation and will look at models that help the council achieve this, including a potential 'arms length commercial company', to run our assets and offer external income-generating services. We will play a major part in discussions to share services with other authorities, but only if it means better value for our residents.



# Supporting our communities and businesses

## We have:

- Promoted healthy lifestyles and kept our leisure facilities going during the pandemic and after
- Supported communities with grants and have plans to spend Government funding
- Distributed tens of millions of pandemic grants to businesses
- Worked with the County Council to enable better access to broadband connections in rural communities
- Developed multi million pound projects to support health, homes and job creation

We are proud of our community work at Braintree District Council and the role our team plays in keeping residents safe. Ensuring this team is well resourced to support communities will be a key priority for us.

Maintaining the quality of our leisure facilities in difficult financial times is challenging, but thanks to the work of our provider, Fusion, we are able to offer a comprehensive service, that coped with the challenges of COVID and continues to promote healthy lifestyles. This has been complemented by BDC investment in sports pitches and other

community assets. This will be a priority of the next Conservative council, with a refreshed Live Well strategy, reflecting on the burdens of difficult times on residents, both mentally and physically. We have been very proud to support dementia awareness and will continue to do so.

Helping our communities as they bounced back from the pandemic was a major role Braintree District Council played. We have action plans ready to go, to spend the Government's Shared Prosperity Funding and Rural Prosperity Funding to support our communities and businesses.





Hidden poverty and rural isolation have been identified as an issue in the rural parts of our District. We will continue to work with Essex County Council to help with better digital connectivity, and campaign for improved public transport.

Our intended capital programme includes delivery of projects in Witham, but also allocates capital sums for community benefit in Halstead. Nearly £700K is allocated, with a bidding process from potential applicants in order to secure the funding.

The ability to support our businesses is something we are particularly proud of, and the council distributed tens of millions of pounds of grants during the pandemic, efficiently and reliably. We also signposted business support and other funding streams through the period of recovery, strengthening our unique relationship with our businesses.

The successful building of the Horizon 120 site, The Plaza Enterprise Centre and the I Construct innovation hub were all brought forward during the pandemic and have played their part in attracting inward investment and creating jobs. As a council which committed to a climate change strategy, many of our developments are of BREEAM standard and encourage sustainability.



After years of private sector failure, Braintree DC intervened to develop the bus park site in Braintree as a mixed use scheme. The development has included a new bus interchange, hotel, homes, medical hub, retail spaces, new public toilets and improved public realm. This has helped revitalise the town, as has pedestrianisation.

The role of town centres has changed and once committed improvements are completed, we will undertake a refresh of our town centre strategies across all three towns, working with town councils, community groups, retailers and residents. This will be complemented by a series of events and initiatives, such as the popular Street Markets, to encourage footfall.

With plans for further projects, we have refreshed our economic plan to focus on business growth in emerging sectors, such as innovation in

## We will:

- Complete improvement works across all three town centres
- Allocate Halstead capital funding for community projects
- Deliver the Enterprise Centre in Witham
- Deliver the new Maltings Community Centre in Witham

construction and science and medicine. Our location and proximity to London, Stansted Airport, Port of Harwich and Cambridge gives our area a unique opportunity. We will keep supporting our businesses, helped by our work as part of the North Essex Economic Board, where funding is pooled to support skills and business support programmes.

The infrastructure deficit, both traditional and sustainable, is keenly felt in Braintree District and we will push forward with our cycling strategy and continue to campaign hard for a dualled A120 between Braintree and the A12. Our area is suffering as a result of congestion and this limits our economic potential.

Braintree DC has been bold but prudent with investments, and we will continue to look for opportunities that allow us to invest and bring forward projects to support communities, residents' wellbeing and economic development.



## Planning policies and housing for the needs of local residents

### We have:

- Agreed a local plan allocating the areas of growth for our District
- Supported communities with neighbourhood plans
- Built record numbers of affordable homes
- Worked with partners to keep meeting the housing needs of local residents
- Developed policy to protect the rural character of our District

Having agreed a local plan, our District has its sites for providing future homes agreed and a shield against speculative development. Key to our planning policies was protecting the rural character of our District and sustainability, and these will continue to be our aims.

Having this major piece of strategic policy in place differentiates Braintree District from next door Residents Association - run Uttlesford District, who are at the risk of developers determining where houses will go and who have blown millions on failed planning appeals. The same chaos is taking place at Independent-run Castle Point Borough,

where councillors threw out their local plan.

We were very pleased to support many communities with their own neighbourhood plans over the last four years, and look forward to continuing with planning forums, ensuring communities have a greater say in planning matters.

We have a proud record of affordable home delivery, with 417 built against a target of 250 in 2021/22. We believe this Council has a major role to play in the delivery of affordable homes. High targets will be set and we will work with others to bring forward these homes.



# What we have achieved and what we will do...

## A record of action

- Developed 65 acres of employment land at Horizon 120, Great Notley, attracting new jobs and companies to our area. We also built The Plaza Enterprise Centre, part funded by £7 million of Government's Get Building Fund.
- Pedestrianised Braintree High Street and completed Victoria Square development, including new homes, hotel and bus interchange.
- 417 affordable homes developed in 2021/22 against a target of 250 homes.
- Developed I Construct innovation hub to support the development of new goods and services in the innovative construction sector.
- Revenues from The Plaza and I Construct now supporting the authority's income.
- Undertaken a wide - ranging review of the commercial activities of the Council and its Assets with the aim of improving financial performance.
- Adopted our Local Plan in July 2022, to establish our planning policies and determine where in the District we want to see residential and commercial development.
- Continued to promote the need for a dualled A120 between Braintree and the A12.

## A promise of more

- Spend Government Rural Prosperity funding and Shared Prosperity funding to help our communities and businesses.
- Continue to promote Braintree District and North Essex through Locate Braintree District, attracting new companies and jobs to our area.
- Continue to work with the North Essex Business Board to support our businesses, taking advantage of our location between Stansted Airport and the new Freeport at Harwich.
- Support our town centres with initiatives that encourage footfall and bring forward updated strategies for our three town centres.
- Deliver our refreshed economic strategy, supporting business growth.
- Set an ambitious target for affordable new homes and look at new and innovative ways to build them.
- Continue to campaign for improved infrastructure for our District.
- Ensure that development comes with the required infrastructure and is sustainable.
- Massive support to help residents through the cost of living crisis.

# What we have achieved and what we will do...(continued)

## A record of action

- Established the Planning Committee Members Forum, an innovative process for this Council in order for members to engage with developers before applications are submitted, to achieve better designs.
- Over £250,000 given to councillors for the community grant scheme.
- Supported our volunteer services to continue delivering essential services to our communities. We continued to recognise those who go above and beyond with the Braintree District Council volunteer awards.
- Led on community safety partnerships 'action plan' to tackle social issues across the District.
- Delivered a cycling strategy that will encourage a change of habits, allowing safer cycling connectivity across the District.
- Distributed tens of millions of pounds of pandemic grants to our businesses.
- Worked with North Essex authorities to provide further business support to promote post-pandemic recovery.
- Refreshed our economic strategy to support economic growth in the district.
- Council provided over £158,000 capital funding towards a new 3G Artificial Grass Pitch at Braintree Sport and Health Club.
- Resurfaced the all weather sports pitch in Halstead.
- Supported a range of dementia activities including: walks, cinema, dance, music and choir singing.
- Greatly increased income from recyclables, particularly from plastics, paper/card and glass.
- Introduced a new waste management system including Bartec in-cab technology, leading to greater efficiency.
- Adopted a climate change strategy and action plan to make the Council's activities carbon neutral as far as practical by 2030.
- Given advice to the public and local businesses to help reduce their carbon footprint.
- Planted - with the help of schools, parish/town councils and community groups—18,700 native tree whips and 73,000 bulbs.

## A promise of more

- New community facility in Witham and funding towards community facilities in Halstead.
- Safer Streets funding from Government and Police, Crime and Fire Commissioner in Witham.
- A new 'Live Well' Strategy for the Braintree District—promoting healthy lifestyles.
- Develop a new cultural and tourism strategy for our District, to help encourage inward investment.
- Work with Essex County Council and other partners to tackle health inequalities.
- Keep our leisure centres providing the activities that residents want, to keep fit and healthy.
- A programme of business support, relevant to the needs of our businesses and growing sectors.
- Investment opportunities explored, to bring forward projects that promote community and social benefit. and generate revenues.
- Work with Essex County Council and other partners to tackle rural isolation and deprivation.
- Continue to provide an excellent waste and recycling collection service and aim for even higher customer satisfaction rates.
- Work with Essex County Council and other member Councils of the Essex Waste Partnership to ensure any changes benefit residents.
- Continue to inform residents/businesses of grants that would enable them to have the best deals on heating and encourage a reduction in their carbon footprints.
- Continue to have forums that enable residents, community groups and businesses to share ideas as to how they can tackle climate change.
- Continue with campaigns to educate the public of the financial and environmental costs of littering and fly tipping.

# The choice at this election



At this election there is a clear choice to be made. A Conservative Braintree District Council which will protect services, run a financially sound District Council and support communities and businesses. A coalition of other groups, with no plan and no experience of running a Council.

## Conservatives

Strong local leadership with a clear plan for Braintree District.

A commitment to support our residents with an unprecedented £1 million funding to help with cost of living concerns and a £25 refund to council tax paying households, paid for from the proceeds of building new homes.

Sound financial management to protect statutory services and a commitment to commercial approaches to generate revenue, to pay for residents' services and keep council tax as low as possible.

Working with other authorities to keep the cost of services down and investing to improve services.

Supporting the economy and helping businesses, attracting funding from Government and other agencies, as we did with £7million for the Plaza.

Local plan and housing policies under regular review.

Hardworking, dedicated local ward councillors, who work as a team for the whole District.

A commitment to affordable housing delivery with a minimum number of 250 units per year.

## Other groups

A mixture of other groups with no plan for the District and no experience of managing a Council and its finances.

# Your Conservative Council Candidates for Braintree District in the Braintree area

Lynette BOWERS-FLINT

BOCKING BLACKWATER

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01376 512386

Lyn WALTERS

BOCKING BLACKWATER

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01376 512386

Felicia ODUN

BOCKING NORTH

---

01376 512386

Jack EDWARDS

BOCKING SOUTH

---

01376 512386

Sandra CANNING

BRAINTREE CENTRAL AND BECKERS GREEN

---

01376 512386

Kevin BOWERS

BRAINTREE SOUTH

---

01376 512386

George PRIME

BRAINTREE WEST

---

01376 512386

Diana GARROD

BUMPSTEAD

---

01376 512386

Graham BUTLAND

GREAT NOTLEY AND BLACK NOTLEY

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01376 512386

Frankie RICCI

GREAT NOTLEY AND BLACK NOTLEY

---

01376 512386

Ola SENBANJO

HALSTEAD ST ANDREWS

---

01376 512386

Justin WRENCH

BOCKING BLACKWATER

---

01376 512386

John BAUGH

BOCKING NORTH

---

01376 512386

Trevor McARDLE

BOCKING SOUTH

---

01376 512386

Andrew HENSMAN

BRAINTREE CENTRAL AND BECKERS GREEN

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01376 512386

Karen BROWN

BRAINTREE CENTRAL AND BECKERS GREEN

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01376 512386

Saif REHMAN

BRAINTREE SOUTH

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01376 512386

Mary CUNNINGHAM

BRAINTREE WEST

---

01376 512386

Peter SCHWIER

GOSFIELD AND GREENSTEAD GREEN

---

01376 512386

Tom CUNNINGHAM

GREAT NOTLEY AND BLACK NOTLEY

---

01376 512386

David FINCH

HALSTEAD ST ANDREWS

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01376 512386

Barrie BRITTEN

HALSTEAD TRINITY

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01376 512386

# Braintree area cont...

Libby POOLE  
HALSTEAD TRINITY

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01376 512386

Philip RAWLINSON  
HEDINGHAM

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01376 512386

Iona PARKER  
STOUR VALLEY NORTH

---

01376 512386

George COURTAULD  
THE COLNES

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01376 512386

Stephen CANNING  
THREE FIELDS

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012376 512386

Richard van DULKEN  
YELDHAM

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01376 512386

Jason FERRANDO  
HEDINGHAM

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01376 512386

Glenn YOUNG  
RAYNE

---

01376 512386

David HOLLAND  
STOUR VALLEY SOUTH

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01376 512386

Gabrielle SPRAY  
THE COLNES

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01376 512386

John WARNER  
THREE FIELDS

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01376 512386

# Your Conservative Council Candidates for Braintree District in the Witham area:

Sue WILSON  
COGGESHALL

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01376 520649

James COLERIDGE  
HATFIELD PEVEREL & TERLING

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01376 520649

Robert MITCHELL  
KELVEDON & FEERING

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01376 520649

Darrin HAMMOND  
SILVER END & CRESSING

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01376 520649

Toby WILLIAMS  
WITHAM CENTRAL

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01376 520649

Ethan WILLIAMS  
WITHAM NORTH

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01376 520649

Joe TRIGG  
WITHAM SOUTH

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01376 520649

Ron RAMAGE  
WITHAM WEST

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01376 520649

Chris SIDDALL  
COGGESHALL

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01376 520649

Charley DERVISH  
HATFIELD PEVEREL & TERLING

---

01376 520649

India JAYATILLAKE  
KELVEDON & FEERING

---

01376 520649

Jack BAYFORD  
SILVER END & CRESSING

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01376 520649

Sindhu RAJEEV  
WITHAM CENTRAL

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Billy TAYLOR  
WITHAM NORTH

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William KORSINAH  
WITHAM SOUTH

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Jon HAYES  
WITHAM WEST

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