

# Renew Bedford Borough

*Labour's 2023 Manifesto*



Bedford Borough

**Labour** On Your Side

*Bedford Borough Labour Party has a proven record of standing up for residents by protecting front-line services and advocating for the change we need in our communities.*

*Along with a future Labour government and your local Labour councillors, as Mayor of Bedford Saqhib Ali will remain wholly committed and available to residents, working on your behalf all year round.*

*Working closely with our Labour MP Mohammad Yasin, Labour Councillors have continually raised residents' concerns, campaigned to defend*

*services, led the way on climate issues, and sought funding from central government to renew our Borough.*

*This manifesto reflects the concerns residents have raised, and delivers a positive vision for the future of Bedford Borough.*

*All of your Bedford Borough Labour representatives will strive to work with the local community and organisations, with the common aim of making life in Bedford Borough the best it can be for all of our residents.*

## Our pledges for Bedford Borough



**Renew Bedford Borough**



**Protect & improve local health services**



**Zero tolerance of anti-social behaviour**



**Prioritise the climate emergency**



**A quality education for all**

## Renew Bedford Borough

Labour will deliver a cohesive plan to realise Bedford's potential across the whole Borough, driving sustained social and economic renewal based on what residents want for the future of our community, not the past.

Bedford Borough Labour will carry out a comprehensive consultation with residents on the future of our Borough, "Unlocking the Town Centre," in partnership with the Cooperative Party to establish what the community needs from its council.

Renewal of Bedford Borough in any form will be centred around the local economy. This means incentivising residents and businesses to spend more of their money locally, building community wealth, and drawing outside expenditure to the Borough.

Labour will support our innovative small businesses in providing a vibrant leisure experience, by exploring the possibility of creating an indoor market space in Bedford Town Centre. This will support small businesses and offer visitors to the town centre a broader range of cultural leisure activities.



Harpur Street, Bedford Town Centre

Long-term and large-scale developments will be vital for the renewal of our borough, but these mustn't come at the expense of day-to-day services. We will be maximising the



Your current Labour Councillors, at Borough Hall

Borough's assets through targeted capital expenditure, driving the Borough's recovery from the economic decline caused by austerity. Investments in new and existing assets will deliver sustained revenue growth.

Bedford Borough Labour will continue to support the East West Rail link via Bedford, provided that a solution can be found that does not require homes to be demolished in the Poets' area. We will also remain committed to pushing for it to be electrified from day one.

Bedford Borough Labour representatives have always engaged with residents and opposed the demolition of homes in the Poets area, and will continue to do so.

Labour in Bedford Borough supports the relocation of St John's Station to a site immediately adjacent to the hospital, with suitable pedestrian and cycle links. Residents will benefit from direct access without having to travel into Midland Road reducing traffic in the Prebend Street and Midland Road area.

A Labour-led council will ensure links to the town centre, Riverside North and connectivity to the rest of the urban area by bus, taxi, cycle and foot will come with the improvements to our rail network. This is an overdue opportunity for investment and regeneration in this area of our town, and must not be missed.



## Protect & improve local health services

A Labour-led council will work closely with dentists, GPs, and other service providers to coordinate efforts and ensure residents can access the services they need.

Labour will continue to work tirelessly in bringing together health services, our local NHS Integrated Care Board, and other stakeholders to deliver a Kempston Health Hub. This will be part of a wider effort to enhance local health services across the Borough.

Labour in Bedford Borough will continue to lead in drawing charities, public services, and communities together to improve public health and provide opportunities for all residents.

A Labour Council will protect our existing green spaces and invest in new ones with activities and youth centres at their heart, and create a network of organisations providing advice and activities for young people across the Borough.

## Zero tolerance of anti-social behaviour

We all want to live in a clean, safe, and pleasant environment that is free from anti-social behaviour. That is why a Labour-led council will take a tough approach on this issue.

To make our residents and communities feel safer, we will work with partner organisations to tackle anti-social behaviour and drug related issues that cause so much concern in our communities. We will focus on the causes of anti-social behaviour, working together with health professionals and other organisations to provide the help and support needed - and the police for the enforcement action. It is vital we work with partner agencies to protect children and vulnerable adults from exploitation, and support victims of domestic abuse.

Labour will tackle homelessness with a proactive approach, preventing people becoming homeless in the first place and seeking long-term solutions to reduce the need for temporary accommodation.

A Labour-led council will provide opportunities for young people including refurbishing and creating new urban green spaces to provide safe environments, especially for young people to socialise and join community activities.

Investment in the restoration of youth programmes is not only a social good, but a sensible economic policy. The stability, positive life-influence, support network, and guidance that comes from well-funded and accessible youth programmes, particularly for older teenagers, all increase economic activity and reduce the financial cost of social deprivation and lack of employment.

Over 90% of youth services have been lost in England since 2010. By investing funds in early intervention and prevention, action can be taken before safeguarding, child protection and policing become the prevailing issues. Cuts to youth services, family support workers, and community development workers are a false economy as they push those in need of support into higher-cost services.

Labour will continue to lead in drawing charities, public services, and communities together, creating a network of non-profit organisations supporting young people in the Borough. This will build awareness of referral pathways between the various organisations looking to support young or vulnerable residents.

## Prioritise the climate emergency

Labour Councillors have led the way on climate issues, including the declaration of a climate emergency, installing solar panels on public buildings, and working on rewilding projects.



A Labour-led council will build on these achievements, with environmental assessments to be built into all major decisions made by a Labour-run Bedford Borough Council. Labour will continue work on rewilding areas of the Borough to protect our local ecosystem, and will also seek to install more solar

## A quality education for all

Bedford Borough has an excellent opportunity to become a leading hub of science, education, and technology in Britain. It is essential we make the most of this, to ensure we emerge from over a decade of stagnating wages and growth under a Tory government.

Labour has led the way in delivering funding for a new SEND school on the site of the old Robert Bruce site in Kempston. The school will serve children and young people throughout Bedford Borough, providing education for children aged 2-19 with special needs. It will also mean that some children who currently travel outside of their area to access education will now have a suitable school local to them. A Labour-led council will continue to make progress on raising the standards of education in the Borough.

panels on Borough-owned buildings to reduce the council's carbon footprint.

We will address parking issues in town and urban areas that create frustration for communities, as well as restore and protect our pedestrian and cycling paths to make Bedford Borough a safer, more enjoyable place to travel by foot or bike.

Labour will improve cycling infrastructure and provide good street lighting, highly visible path and cycleways, and open design with clear lines-of-sight to ensure public spaces are safe and inclusive for all residents. Labour will commission feasibility studies into measures such as bottle and can deposit schemes, community gardening projects, and carpooling schemes, to reduce waste, improve health, and raise air quality in the Borough.



Labour will work with the University and Further Education sectors to deliver courses that build Bedford's economy, as well as enhancing and extending the impact of Cranfield and Bedfordshire Universities on the Social, cultural and economic life of the Borough.

Labour Councillors have protected access to Early Years provision throughout the Borough and will continue to protect and promote these vital services.

Follow our Mayoral candidate, Saqhib Ali, at:

[www.facebook.com/SaqhibAliForMayor](https://www.facebook.com/SaqhibAliForMayor)

To find out more about Labour's work in Bedford Borough, go to:

[www.BedfordLabour.org.uk](https://www.BedfordLabour.org.uk)

Keep up with the campaign at:

[www.facebook.com/bedfordlabourparty](https://www.facebook.com/bedfordlabourparty)



## Don't lose your vote

All voters will need to bring Photo I.D. if they vote in person at a Polling Station on Thursday 4th May.

This is a new law, and might cause some delays at the polls.

Here is how you can make sure you don't lose your chance to vote:

- Register to vote at: [www.gov.uk/register-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/register-to-vote)
- Apply for a postal vote to avoid the queues
- If you need to vote in person, bring some photo I.D.

These are some accepted forms of ID:



DRIVING  
LICENCE



PASSPORT



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See the full list, or get your free Voter Authority Certificate, at:

[www.gov.uk/how-to-vote](https://www.gov.uk/how-to-vote)