



Our vision for your new council

**LIBERAL DEMOCRATS MANIFESTO
FOR WESTMORLAND & FURNESS COUNCIL**



Forward

I'm proud of the work that Liberal Democrats have done running local councils here in Cumbria.

Liberal Democrats on Cumbria County Council have done brilliant work creating more 'extra care' beds so that our loved ones can be looked after in the best possible way.

On Eden District Council, we have helped families with electricity and gas bills by helping to make their homes more energy efficient, which is also important in our bid to tackle climate change.

And on South Lakeland District Council, we have helped to build hundreds of affordable homes so that local families have a roof over their head.

Very soon we will have a brand new Westmorland and Furness Council which will give us the chance to make our local communities even better places to live and work. Rather than it being a big, remote council, Liberal Democrats' top priority will be making sure that power lies closer to you than ever before.

Elections do change things. It's important that you vote and if this manifesto speaks to your vision for our community then I would urge you to vote for your Liberal Democrat candidates on Thursday May 5th.

With best wishes,

Tim Farron MP



Working with communities

The creation of a new council gives us a fresh chance to make sure that your council is close to the residents and businesses that it serves.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Build strong links with Parish and Town Councils, local community groups and other organisations.
- ✓ Strengthen the local planning process to ensure that residents are more involved.
- ✓ Devolve power, decision-making and finances to local areas.
- ✓ Keep local government centres for services in Kendal, Barrow and Penrith.
- ✓ Keep in contact with you and be available all the time – not just when there are elections!





Climate change

Climate change is a threat to our way of life and Liberal Democrats believe that the new council should be providing leadership in our drive to become carbon neutral.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Declare a climate and biodiversity emergency.
- ✓ Establish and deliver a 5 year action plan including more electric vehicle charging points.
- ✓ Plant a tree for every resident.
- ✓ Encourage homeowners to insulate homes and lobby government to provide funding to help them do that.
- ✓ Ensure new homes meet sustainability standards.
- ✓ Ensure housing developments provide a 20% net biodiversity gain.
- ✓ Improve public footpaths and cycleways.
- ✓ Partner with industry and trainers to promote green jobs and build skills in our local workforce.



Roads and transport



Liberal Democrats believe in working closely with local people to improve our roads and transport.

Covid-19 has led to a better appreciation of the benefits of “active travel” – walking and cycling – and we will do much more to make it easier and safer to walk and cycle around.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Make it easier for you to report faults on our roads.
- ✓ Ensure that more money is spent maintaining pavements and footpaths.
- ✓ Work closely with rural parish councils to cooperate on the cutting of verges and help with the funding of parish lengthsmen.
- ✓ Promote the production of walking and cycling plans for every town and village and progress these when funding is available.
- ✓ Install more speed indicator devices to help slow traffic down coming into our towns and villages.
- ✓ Make it easier to get 20mph limits in our towns and villages.
- ✓ Work with schools to develop ‘safe routes to school’ so that as many pupils as possible can walk or cycle to school safely.
- ✓ Lobby for better rail services in Cumbria, including a passing loop on the Lakes Line, electrification of the Furness Line and the reopening of the Penrith to Keswick line.
- ✓ Continue to progress the Kendal Northern Relief Road, which will take traffic out of the centre of Kendal.
- ✓ Work with partners to improve safety on the A590 and to progress with upgrading the A66.
- ✓ Work to improve transport in rural areas, including better bus services and introducing car share schemes.



Housing and Planning

We want local families across Westmorland & Furness to be able to afford to live in the communities where they grew up.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Increase the building of affordable homes for local families.
- ✓ Keep our green open spaces in our towns and villages.
- ✓ Revitalise our town centres and business areas, enhancing their cultural and social offer.
- ✓ Build homes to higher eco and space standards.
- ✓ Promote the retrofit of existing homes.
- ✓ Lobby government for powers to limit the number of second homes, holiday lets and AirBnBs where these threaten to overwhelm the local community.



Health and social care



We believe that the council has a role to help residents improve their health and fitness.

The costs of social care are continually rising whilst demand increases due to our aging population. Our longer lives are welcomed by us all but increase the demand for social care.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Campaign to protect and enhance our local hospital services, including by:
 - lobbying health bosses to bring a radiotherapy unit to Kendal
 - lobbying health bosses to stop vital services being moved further away from local residents
 - lobbying health bosses to save the community ambulance service in Alston
- ✓ Strive to deliver the type of service residents need, and support carers to do their job under the best possible circumstances.
- ✓ Prioritise ensuring that people with disabilities and learning difficulties have suitable housing and are able to thrive in their community.
- ✓ Campaign to ensure mental health support is readily accessible at all levels and is recognised as being as important as physical health.





Children and young people



Liberal Democrats are ambitious for all our children and young people.

During the Covid crisis, our children and young people have made so many sacrifices. They have missed out on their education, they have been deprived of their friends and, for many, there is a real impact on their mental health.

That is why we say that now is the time for us to really listen to the aspirations of our children and young people and show them how much we care.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Help our children catch up with the lost learning through the pandemic by working with school leaders, teachers and parents.
- ✓ Continue to develop Special Needs services for those children and young people who need additional support.
- ✓ Support the mental health of children and young people by providing easy access to early help.
- ✓ Seek to reinvest in Children's Centres and encourage families to take part in activities.
- ✓ Work with local communities to provide youth services to provide opportunities for young people.





Economy and Culture

Our Cumbrian economy is driven by advanced manufacturing, tourism, agriculture and food production.

Covid-19 has hit our economy hard and we face a challenging time.

Liberal Democrats want businesses to thrive as they transition to a low carbon economy.

A Liberal Democrat council will:

- ✓ Support new business creation with more new business hubs across Barrow, Penrith, Kendal and all our towns.
- ✓ Increase training available for the new jobs needed for the transition to a low carbon economy.
- ✓ Actively support festivals and cultural events.
- ✓ Continue to eliminate the “Not Spots” with the aim of superfast broadband for all.
- ✓ Work with local communities to revitalise and enhance our town centres.

