

Redditch Conservatives Manifesto 2023

#Redditch2030

Making Redditch an even better place to live, work and raise a family.

Conservative Manifesto for the Redditch Borough Council
elections on the 4 May 2023



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A message from the Conservative Group Leader

Dear Resident

I am extremely proud of Redditch, the residents, the projects delivered, and plans made. I am proud of my hardworking team and groups that make everything possible.

I am proud of our aspirations for Redditch— for it to be a vibrant town, and an even better place for people to enjoy living, working and raising families.

I want to ensure our town is fit for the future and that our younger generations want to remain here and have every opportunity available to them, here in their hometown.

Just like families evolve through lifetimes, so do towns, therefore we also need to update and develop our town to ensure security and future proof it. Not only for the youth of today, but also for tomorrow's.

This manifesto provides many opportunities for families to remain in their hometown, from schooling, achieving skilled careers and qualifications, enjoying a varied evening entertainment offering, building families, building communities... throughout generations to come.

The streamlining of the emergency services into a Blue Light Hub to house both the Police and Fire Service, will enable the opportunity for a new Innovation Centre. This place of education will help our school leavers to achieve vital skill sets for innovative careers and retain our young adults in the town.

Collaboration of community services within the new Community Hub, provides a one stop shop approach of convenience, many services and corporations under one roof.

With the inclusion of an enhanced Library provision (TBC), the Community Hub means the space will be available for a Plaza—a thriving leisure area in the heart of our town.

These ambitious and exciting plans, are aimed at securing the bright future Redditch, and its communities deserve.

The changes within this manifesto cannot be achieved instantly, it has been established with the view of plans coming to fruition for a [#Redditch2030](#) and beyond.



Cllr Matt Dormer—Leader of Redditch Council

Cllr Matt Dormer

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Matt Dormer', written in a cursive style.

Delivering our pledges to you



Since 2018 we have been working to deliver an ambitious program of change. We want to keep building on this as we take Redditch into the 2030's and beyond.

What we've achieved together...

1 Built a brighter future

For the first time since the 1990s we've built council houses in Church Hill with many more being planned to reduce waiting lists.

2 Delivered record investment in our parks

From a new café, toilets and equipment in Morton Stanley to upgrading playparks throughout Redditch so all children are close to quality play equipment.

3 Improved our air quality

We have invested in electric vehicles and changed bin lorry fuel to assist in reducing air pollution and tackling climate change.

4 New Youth centre

We have launched a new Youth Centre and hired 2 new youth workers. We've ensured our outreach workers are pro-active—engaging with over 200 children a month.

5 Invested in safety

Upgraded 24 CCTV cameras throughout the town and secured £430,000 from the Home Office to reduce crime in Woodrow.

6 Putting Redditch on the map

We've built a new events space the 'canopies' that enabled us to introduce the successful Digbeth Dining Club with more events being planned.

And what we'll do next...

1 Ensure Safer streets

Work with the Police and Crime Commissioner to reduce crime, anti-social behaviour and speeding.

2 Deliver greener, and cleaner Redditch

We will ensure the council reduces its CO2 emissions by 50% by 2030. We will also focus on improving walking and cycling routes across our town, further tackling climate change commitments.

3 Invest in our children

Provide many more positive activities for children to learn, explore, grow and have fun.

4 Rejuvenate Redditch

We will deliver £37.1 million worth of upgrades to our town centre from a new train station to an innovation hub making Redditch fit for the future.

5 A council that works for you

We will deliver an extra 230 council houses by 2030, reduce the maintenance back log and improve customer service.

6 Better value for money

We will implement a local economic strategy, reduce council costs and introduce more commercialism to reduce council tax rises.

Our 2030 vision for Redditch

A record of action - We Have:

- **Declared** a climate emergency, **published** a **strategy** to halve the councils CO2 emissions by 2030 and be net zero by 2040.
- **Reduced** rough sleepers numbers every year in office to a record low.
- **Created** 'the canopies' event space that has already led to the creation of Redditch Dining Club with more events planned.
- **Changed** the council houses policy so people from Redditch have the highest priority.
- **Established** a Businesses Improvement District (BID) in the town centre to lead on **economic growth** and provide events in the town centre.
- **Created** a 9 point plan to **support** the armed forces **community** and ensured the council achieve a bronze award with aspirations for gold.
- **Built** council houses and significantly reduced the number of void properties, **providing** more Redditch people with a good home.
- **Delivered** new state of the art play equipment at both Morton Stanley and Arrow valley parks, a new café, parking upgrades, plus many neighbourhood parks are being **upgraded**.

A promise of more - We Will:

- **Create** a local **economic strategy** with local businesses to make Redditch's economy competitive and provide more high paying jobs.
- **Install EV charging** points throughout Redditch.
- We will **ensure** every child in Redditch is no more than 15 minutes walk away from **quality play provision**.
- **Build** a night time **economy** to provide jobs and a quality night out.
- **Create** a new **community hub** in the town hall putting all public services under one roof and reducing the costs to the tax payer.
- We will **reduce** the **waiting list** for houses by building a minimum of 230 council house by 2030.
- **Regenerate** Winyates and Matchborough centre improving the transport links, retaining both centres and building new facilities for the community.
- Look at ways to fund the **regeneration** of Woodrow centre by 2030.
- **Deliver £140K upgrade** to Greenlands **sports** provision.
- Work with the County Council to deliver a **brand new train station** and further regeneration of our town centre.
- **Ensure** our next local plan **protects** our environment and open spaces to enable a Cleaner, Greener Redditch
- **Initiate** internal system **enhancements** to enable residents to report housing issues easily and check progress

The choice at this election

Conservatives

We've **introduced** a new council tax **reduction scheme** exempting young people leaving care and those who genuinely are unable to afford to pay.



Ensured the **voluntary** and **community** sector **grant scheme** is open to all groups and **awarded** according to merit.

Delivered the first **council houses** constructed by Redditch Borough Council since 1994 with more on the way.

Ensure all compliance and **safety checks** including gas are **completed** in all of our housing, on time.



Secured burial provision in Redditch for residents, ensuring the chosen site **increases bio diversity**, conservation and enhances wildlife.

Successfully applied for government **funding** wherever possible to enable enhancements across the town. So far achieving over **£40 Million**, and we will continue to apply for all funds on offer where we can.

When we do require to uplift the public purse, we ensure to **obtain** fair market **value** for any assets sold, to enable re-**investment** into local communities.

Labour

Labour when in office **voted down** any **tax relief** for **care leavers** and didn't exempt the most vulnerable from paying tax.



Ring fence the funding so **only** groups who **rent council buildings** are **eligible** for support.

Failed to build a single council house in any of their terms of office since 1994.

Failed to complete gas safety checks on more than 900 houses putting **residents at risk** and requiring the regulator to intervene

Failed to agree or provide any future **burial** provision site in Redditch for residents.



Failed consistently to work with central Government to ensure Redditch received its fair share of funding.

Failed to secure any benefit from asset sales. Sold some assets way below market value, some for as little as **£1!** (Hewell Rd swimming baths for example).



Building a town fit for 2030 and beyond.

Rejuvenating Redditch

- Building a new £10.5 million Blue Light Hub.
- Upgrading the train station in a £10 million expansion project including a second line, better parking and housing.
- Secured £15.6 Million from government for improvements including a new community hub, innovation centre and other upgrades to the town centre.

Redditch Conservatives have secured £37.1 million for upgrades to Redditch town centre. This is the largest public sector investment in our town since the Redditch Development Corporation.

A new state-of-the-art Blue Light Hub will be constructed on Middlehouse lane. This will provide both the police and fire services with a modern building, equipped with the latest facilities whilst saving money that can be invested into front line services. This co-location, creates more opportunities for collaboration to keep Redditch residents safe.

A £10 million project to create a train station that Redditch deserves. The new station will be equipped with a café and a safer car park. It will also create a new 'green entrance' to the town as run down buildings surrounding the current station are replaced with housing. This will vastly improve the initial impression those who travel to Redditch by train have, and enhance travel experiences for our residents who commute.

The station is also future proofed by adding in the ability to build a second line in the future, increasing capacity and reducing waiting times.

This is part of our bold vision for a successful and thriving town.



Artists impression of Redditch Community Hub

A community hub will be created in the Redditch Town Hall to create a 'one-stop-shop' for support services. The Community Hub will house an array of organisations, including the council, the NHS, police, CAB, DWP, charities and community groups.

Placing these services under one roof will save the tax payer money, which can be reinvested elsewhere. The Hub will be at the heart of the community and able to provide support for everything from setting up a business to housing to drug and alcohol rehabilitation.

A further £3m will be spent on enhancing the historic heart of the town around St Stephen's Church. These public realm works will help give Redditch a more distinct character and vibrancy ensuring it is an appealing place to visit.

By 2026, a new hub for leisure and the night-time economy will be built in the town centre. Building upon the success of the 'canopies', which allowed the introduction of the Digbeth Dining Club, this new public space will provide new food and drink units whilst creating a fantastic feature and public square. This investment will help to drive the wider town centre regeneration by increasing footfall, the provision of jobs, and a higher quality leisure provision within the town.



Redditch Council Houses being built in Church Hill

A digital manufacturing and innovation centre will be constructed on the site of the current police station. This will provide 2,500 square meters of high quality space for innovative digital businesses. This will upskill our local workforce and ensure the high-skilled and high-paying jobs of the future can be found here, in Redditch.

Our vision is not only confined to the town centre we will also regenerate both Matchborough and Winyates centres. We are also fully committed to improving Woodrow centre, following the huge success of the safer streets project. Enhancing local amenities, creating new commercial space, improving the local environment and providing new homes are the key objectives of this project. The centres will be fit for the future,

- Delivering a community hub where all services are under one roof saving tax payer's money,
- Creating a digital manufacturing and innovation centre to increase skills and wages in the town.
- Improving public open spaces in our town centre so its an attractive place to be.
- Winyates and Matchborough centres will also be regenerated.

as tired out-of-date structures, are replaced with modern, open and attractive new centres, designing out crime and anti-social behaviour. All of this will boost the local economy by creating centres that draw people in, enhancing the offering to residents and heighten use of the centres.

The development of housing will help to ensure the centres remain sustainable. A mix of housing, including affordable housing, will be provided with a commitment that people from Winyates and Matchborough can continue living in their communities.

New transport links in the area will be made by linking the east and west sides of both districts together, and walking and cycling routes will be improved. In addition, new sport facilities will be installed to aid children's education and health and fitness for the wider community.

A cleaner, greener Redditch.

What have we done?

- Delivered a plan to half the council's CO2 emissions by 2030 and be net zero by 2040.
- Providing grants of up to £10,000 to improve the energy efficiency of households earning less than £31,000.
- Changed the bin lorry fuel to reduce air pollution and climate changing emissions.

Your conservative-led borough council has delivered a climate change strategy setting a path to net zero by 2040, after declaring a climate emergency.

A decarbonisation scheme has already been delivered, saving over 200 tonnes of carbon. This has involved upgrading the Town Hall and Greenlands Business Centre by installing air source heat pumps, and improved the insulation, reducing the reliance on gas. The next phase will comprise of:

- * Installing solar panels on more council buildings,
- * installing Electric Vehicle (EV) charging points in car parks
- * Upgrading the heating systems of our leisure assets like the Abbey Stadium and Forge Mill Needle Museum.

In partnership with the government, your conservative led council is delivering the Green Homes Grant. This means households with an income of less than £31,000 can make their home energy efficient, from installing draft proofing, to solar panels. This will be particularly important during the current economic climate, by ensuring everyone has access to affordable warmth. A project to improve the energy efficiency of all our council houses has also been launched, to help both our residents, and the environment.

In 2022, we introduced bio-fuel to our bin lorry fleet, this will save 486 tons of CO2 releasing into the atmosphere each year and reducing air pollution. We are committed to improving this further by introducing electric or hydrogen vehicles as soon as technology allows.

The conservative-led council has also secured funding to plant 'the Queen's orchard' in honour of our late Queen Elizabeth II. Hundreds of fruit trees will be planted with traditional orchard spacing to improve biodiversity and create a new focal point for the community in Arrow Valley country park.

Our commitment to biodiversity continues with a pledge to expand the grass verges policy, introduce living walls into urban areas of the town, and increase tree planting.

Working with Worcestershire County Council, we will improve walking and cycling routes across the town. This builds on our success in bidding for a slice of £649,200 to enhance the routes in the Arrow Valley park.

E-scooters have also been introduced to the town, following a bid in which Redditch was the only successful town in the county, and one of the smallest in the whole country to successfully bid for them. The E-Scooters enable residents to make more eco-friendly travel choices by helping to reduce local car journeys. We are exploring ways to introduce a bike rental scheme, this will be delivered by 2025.

We are actively tackling air pollution to ensure Redditch has clean air for future generations.

Levelling up Redditch



Building a stronger community

- Creating opportunities for our young people, and providing more activities to occupy their time.
- Reducing council waiting list by building more homes and reducing voids.
- Ensuring every child is a 15 minute walk from quality play equipment.
- Making Redditch a safer place by investing in community safety.

We believe every child should be within 15 minutes walk of quality play provision. That is why we have started to upgrade play parks throughout Redditch such as Headless Cross and Winyates with many more being developed.

We are committed to building a better Redditch that works for everyone in our town, including our young people. This year the conservative-led council, working with our partners, have opened a new youth centre called W.I.S.E in the town centre. This project included the hiring of two new youth workers and has so far helped 12 young people gain trade qualifications.

By 2025 we will ensure at least one more new youth centre is established in the town so more children can access high quality services. We will continue to work with community groups to ensure every child can access meaningful activities.

We have unveiled a new café, toilets, car park and play equipment in Morton Stanley Park. Arrow Valley Country Park has also received new play equipment, including the tallest play tower in England, with funding already improved for further upgrades.

A Conservative-led council has a fundamental belief that everyone deserves a good home. This is why we've commissioned the first council housing project since 1994, and have aggressively cut the time properties are void, to dramatically reduce

waiting lists. We will build 230 more environmentally friendly council houses by 2030.

We have upgraded 24 CCTV cameras and installed a new one on the town hall. With partners, we have successfully bid for £430,000 of funding to make Woodrow a safer place.

This funding, resulted in many local improvements, from better lighting in Woodrow centre, to more secure bin storage.

Staying with safety, we believe all licensed taxis should be easily recognisable and their badge number clearly displayed. We will ensure all Redditch taxi's have signs prominently placed to give residents peace of mind that they are using a licensed vehicle

A strong economy is vital in ensuring everyone in Redditch has ample opportunity to succeed. In addition to our regeneration projects, including the Matchborough and Winyates district centres, we will publish a local economic strategy; this will be developed in collaboration with businesses, education providers, partners, and residents.

This will include projects designed to improve the skills of our workforce, ensure businesses have the right conditions to succeed; encouraging and enabling people to set up their own business .



Conservatives

REDDITCH

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