

WORKING TOGETHER FOR OUR ISLAND'S FUTURE

OUR RECORD

We made clear at the 2009 elections that public spending would have to be curtailed, as a result of the huge deficit created under the Labour Government. Since then the Coalition in Westminster has reduced this deficit by 25%, but there is much more to do. Councils have faced a significant reduction in funding, and will continue to do so. Island Conservatives have steered the Isle of Wight Council through this difficult time, while freezing council tax and releasing funds to support economic growth.

- ✓ **Frozen council tax** for three years in a row; helping in difficult economic times.
- ✓ **Delivered savings** at County Hall, releasing money to support the economy and frontline services.
- ✓ **Secured £480 million as a government grant** to upgrade roads over 25 years.
- ✓ **Implemented education changes** leading to the best ever results for 11 year olds, which will lead to future improvement.
- ✓ **Reduced the number of young people not in education, employment / training** to one of the lowest nationwide — through award-winning apprenticeship schemes.
- ✓ **Allocated more personal budgets for older and vulnerable residents**, giving them a greater say in their care provision.
- ✓ **Doubled recycling rates and reduced waste going to landfill.**
- ✓ **Boosted the local economy** with capital projects across the Island; from leisure centre upgrades to primary school builds.
- ✓ **Established a tourism industry-led marketing group**, which is spending over £1 million this year attracting visitors.
- ✓ **Awarded a lease from the Crown Estate** to establish the Solent Offshore Energy Centre for tidal energy generation.

THE AUDIT COMMISSION says the Council has demonstrated “financial resilience” and is improving “efficiency and productivity”. This is because of tight financial management from the Island Conservatives.

OUR PLANS FOR THE FUTURE

We've listened to what you've told us. Our key priorities are:

HELPING ISLAND HOUSEHOLDS

Responding to residents, we will:

THE COST OF LIVING

- Keep council tax as low as possible, with any increases at or below the inflation rate.
- Continue with energy switching schemes and the Green Deal to reduce heating and fuel costs.

HOUSING FOR ISLANDERS

- Help more families onto the housing ladder by expanding the new mortgage deposit scheme.
- Give top priority to Island families for affordable and suitable housing.
- Prioritise housing to residents in work or taking steps toward employment.

DIGNITY IN OLD AGE

Help more older residents live independently for longer by:

- Supporting the expansion of the Good Neighbour Scheme and linking it with the community bus initiative.
- Working with housing providers to develop suitable properties for older residents.
- Further integration of health and social care services through “My Life: A Full Life”.

ENERGISING THE ECONOMY

Responding to businesses, we will:

ISLAND BUSINESSES

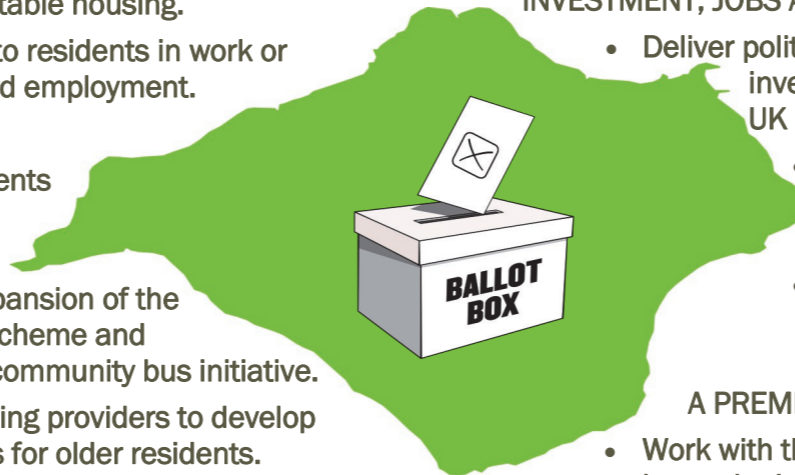
- Introduce a business rate-free period for businesses starting up in empty retail premises.
- Invest in superfast broadband to support the growth of the digital and rural economy.
- Support the introduction of a validated “Island Mark” for Island-sourced products and services.
- Simplify the procurement process for public sector work and launch a “buy local” campaign.

INVESTMENT, JOBS AND TRAINING

- Deliver political stability and economic investment to the Island from the UK and abroad.
- Expand training, apprenticeship & entrepreneurial opportunities for young people.
- Work with other councils to make a strong case for Assisted Area Status at county level.

A PREMIER TOURISM DESTINATION

- Work with the tourism industry-led group to boost the Island as a visitor destination; improving the quality of the offer.



OUR ISLAND

We should celebrate our Island's past, but must ensure that its strengths and uniqueness are preserved.

We aim to deliver quality of life, prosperity & opportunity for residents and the next generation of Islanders by:

- Protecting the Island from inappropriate development and agreeing neighbourhood plans for our communities.
- Partnering with the police to tackle anti-social behaviour and reduce crime in towns and villages.
- Supporting our high quality Fire & Rescue Service to deliver more community safety initiatives.
- Transforming the Island's highways network over the next seven years, with £480 million of government funding.
- Enhancing and expanding the Island's walking and cycling routes for the benefit of residents and visitors.
- Delivering appropriate and reliable renewable energy, including solar and tidal power generation.
- Working with education providers to boost the skills and life chances of Island young people.
- Supporting community organisations to provide more sport, music and leisure activities for young people.
- Revitalising Newport Guildhall by establishing a publicly accessible County Record Office and heritage centre.

OUR PARTNERS

Island Conservatives work with others to get things done. We don't have all the answers and often there are other groups and organisations who may be better placed to deliver services themselves, or in partnership with us. We will work with a range of partners to help deliver quality services.

> **Integrating local public services**
We will continue to work with the Isle of Wight NHS and the police to make best use of our shared resources, keeping decision-making local and providing services here on the Island.

> **Working with other local authorities**
We will continue to explore sharing management and back office administration with other councils, releasing funds to ensure frontline services on the Island are retained.

> **Linking with local groups and parishes**
We will continue to help community-based organisations improve the services they offer to residents. Town / parish councils understand their areas well and can contribute to this work.

> **Supporting business associations**
We will ask business groups in towns and villages to identify and help deliver what needs to be done to boost community-based economies.

> **Enabling the private sector to flourish**
We can help businesses to grow by using the Council's resources to make the Island a good place to do business. New legislation will help the Council do more to help the economy in the future.

> **Giving the Island a voice in Whitehall**
Working with national government has secured major investment in roads, schools & our economy. We will continue to advocate the interests of the Island in Westminster and Whitehall.

OUR TEAM

The Conservative Team come from a range of professional and community backgrounds. We are committed to working together to give the local authority clear direction at a time when there are further financial challenges ahead.

We are not promising the earth, but are setting out realistic plans for the next four years which are achievable and deliverable.

Collectively, our principal objectives are to help Island households and energise the Island's economy. These aims can be best achieved by tight financial management at County Hall, to free up resources.

Only the Island Conservatives offer the Island a clear and focused direction, to steer the Council through the next few years and ensure it is fit for the future.

CLEAR DIRECTION FROM ISLAND CONSERVATIVES