

BUILDING A BETTER BOROUGH

Labour's manifesto for
Rotherham 2021





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Five years ago Rotherham Council was still in turmoil. In our last manifesto, we committed that Labour councillors would turn the Council round, and put the borough's children and young people where they always should have been – at the top of our agenda. That's what we have done.

The improvements we have made have given us a platform to start making the other changes that Rotherham needed to see. We have started the biggest council house building programme in years. Our roads investment has reduced the number of potholes in the borough's roads by a third. Because

we have been ambitious for our local economy, we have secured critical investments; the McLaren plant at the Advanced Manufacturing Park, Gulliver's Valley theme park, and the University Centre Rotherham as part of our town centre masterplan.

That progress has come despite the fact that the Tories have forced £200 million of cuts on your council. That has meant tough decisions had to be taken – and will still mean difficult choices lie ahead, even if the money begins to come back. The Tories just won't give our borough a fair deal. But that hasn't dimmed our ambition for Rotherham and the surrounding areas, and the people who live in them.

At this critical election, Rotherham can't afford to put that progress at risk.

Over the last year, through the Coronavirus pandemic, the need for strong public services has been clearer than ever. None of us exists in isolation. Whether it's help when ill or dealing with the cruel fallout from the pandemic, we depend on each other. Good public services are social justice made real.

So at this election we set out not just the most comprehensive Labour agenda for Rotherham Council ever, but also the most ambitious. It's an agenda for a stronger, fairer economy, and

ensuring that no Rotherham resident gets left behind. This is Labour's agenda to build a better borough, and what you should expect from Labour councillors.

- ▶ £2.2m extra to keep our streets clean
- ▶ 1,000 new council homes, and ending rough sleeping
- ▶ Investing in every library
- ▶ Halving the number of potholes
- ▶ Supporting our most vulnerable children and families
- ▶ Jobs and investment in economic recovery

Over the coming pages we set out how we intend to improve the lives of people in Rotherham. But we can only do it with your support.

No other party will be setting out this kind of bold agenda. No one else is rooted in our communities and able to make the commitments that your Labour candidates can.

We can't afford to go backwards.

Only Labour will stand up for the public services, jobs and homes that our communities need. And if you value those, we need you to vote for them on Thursday May 6th.

Cllr Chris Read
Labour Leader, Rotherham MBC



Rotherham Labour Councillors' contract with you

Effective councillors provide important leadership in the community, hearing your views and holding the council to account for the services it delivers. In exchange for your support, this is the Labour Contract between each of our candidates and their local electorate to:

1. Be accessible to residents, on email, by phone, and at face to face surgeries
2. Consult with local residents on their priorities for spending ward budgets, and report back with an annual report as a minimum
3. Play a full role in the town hall, including in Scrutiny or Cabinet.

Getting the basics right in every community

Council services are the most commonly used public services. We all depend on roads, pavements, streetlights, getting the bins emptied, maintaining grass verges and green spaces. Over the last few years we have done all that we could to protect those services in the face of £200m of Tory cuts. In every community we want to ensure that residents live in a clean, safe environment. This is how we will do it.

- ▢ We are changing how services work so that **every community will have a dedicated team that works alongside local councillors** to get the best outcomes for local people. Street cleaning, grounds maintenance and enforcement staff will be organised on a locality basis, joining Housing and other services that already work in this way, along with local policing teams.
- ▢ We have introduced ward-based budgets, funded in part by cutting

some allowances that were paid to councillors, to ensure local projects are supported. We will increase these budgets further in the coming year.

▶ **We will invest an additional £2.2 million over 2018/19 levels to improve the cleanliness of our streets.**

We will replace old and damaged street waste bins, and fund four additional Streetpride teams.

- ▶ Our *Love Where You Live* volunteer scheme has supported hundreds of people to play their part in local litter picking. We celebrate their commitment and achievements. We will continue to back the scheme in addition to, but not to replace, paid staff.

- ▶ We have introduced household collections of plastics for recycling, and the amount of paper, cardboard and glass being recycled has increased. We will continue to examine opportunities to increase the kind of materials that can be collected from households.

- ▶ **The biggest investment in road resurfacing for a generation:** We have already reduced the number of potholes reported in roads in the borough by a third. Our “£24 million to 2024” Roads programme – the biggest investment in our roads for a generation – will further halve the number of potholes, and begin to repair pavements in the borough.

- ▶ We are expanding the roadworks licensing scheme to reduce the number of days lost to roadworks and make utility companies responsible for ensuring repairs are up to scratch.

- ▶ **Cracking down on littering, fly-tipping and anti-social behaviour:** Working in partnership with Doncaster Council we have restored enforcement against those who damage the local environment with litter, fly tipping and dog fouling. As a result the number of fines issued against littering increased 80-fold up until the beginning of Covid lockdowns.

- ▶ **Safe taxis:** Rotherham's taxi licensing policy is now recognised as national best practice. We will continue to maintain high standards of taxis to keep both the travelling public and people who work in the industry safe.
- ▶ We have invested in new mobile CCTV to tackle anti-social behaviour in every ward in the borough. Over the next three years we will overhaul the borough's CCTV network to ensure it continues to be fit for purpose.
- ▶ Under the Tories, one in six domestic abuse refuges have been closed. In contrast we are increasing investment in services to support victims of domestic violence by £150,000 a year, and continue to attract additional external funding.
- ▶ **We have already committed £450,000 to support local road safety schemes** in areas where residents have told us they are worried about speeding or dangerous driving, and we will roll these out over the coming year.

In the coming three years we will adopt a coherent approach to local 20 mph speed limits, ensuring that children and older people alike feel safe on small residential roads.

- ▶ We know that in many areas, parking for residents is a real concern, with cars parked blocking pavements being a worry for people in wheelchairs and parents with pushchairs. So we will consult on the localised use of traffic powers to make pavement parking in specific areas punishable by fixed penalty notices.
- ▶ **Investing in every library in the borough:** Under the Tories 800 libraries have closed across the country. Labour in Rotherham know that closing libraries means more than just the loss of books; closed libraries reduce community activities and make it more difficult for people to access council services. That's why we will invest in community libraries across the borough to continue to ensure access to books, computers, and community events. In Brinsworth we have worked with the parish

council to move the library into a new purpose built building. In Thurcroft and Swinton we will move the existing libraries into improved facilities and locations. Alongside the potential new central library, that would mean four new library buildings. For every other library in the borough, we are investing in new public computers and improved facilities - we have scrapped library fines, and we are increasing the budget for library stock.

- ▶ We will make the necessary investment to ensure Herringthorpe Stadium remains open and in use.
- ▶ **£4 million to improve local town and village centres:** Our new fund will improve the appearance and attractiveness of our local centres, based on consultation with local residents.
- ▶ We will protect and continue to improve Rotherham Show as the major annual public event in the borough. As it becomes safe to do so, we will bring people together,

providing more resources for public events over the coming year, and take measures to tackle loneliness and isolation. We will continue to mark Armed Forces Day and Remembrance Day as important milestones in the civic calendar. And in 2025 we will showcase a year long festival to celebrate our young people and the opportunities they have for the future, as the first *Children's Capital of Culture*.

- ▶ **Flooding:** the 2019 floods devastated parts of our community, and sadly such events are only becoming more common. Since 2007, the council has spent £26 million to flood defence projects across the borough, but there's still more to do. So Labour councillors are committing an additional £5.8 million to accelerate the defence schemes needed at Kilnhurst, Parkgate, Whiston Brook, Eel Mires Dyke and Catcliffe. We've also secured additional funding from the City Region, and we are lobbying the government to ensure all the schemes are fully funded.




Jobs and investment in economic recovery

Even before Covid-19, Rotherham still stood in the shadow of the collapse of the old economy. For too many people, work is hard to come by, and low paid when they do find it. Over the last year, that situation has only worsened. But Rotherham also stands on the brink of a new manufacturing economy. Hundreds of jobs have been created at the Advanced Manufacturing Park by prestigious employers like Boeing, Rolls Royce and McLaren. The UK Atomic Energy Agency chose

Rotherham as the place to develop nuclear fusion technology. We need to seize those opportunities to bring the full benefits of the future economy to our borough.

Over the coming years, as we face the fallout of the pandemic, we must redouble our efforts to ensure that our economy leaves no one behind. We must take opportunities for green growth. And we can't afford an economic recovery that doesn't create chances and security for everyone.

- ▣ We will bring more jobs to the borough, continuing to work hard to attract inward investment,



and support new Rotherham businesses.

- ▶ **Taking back control:** We have secured a devolution deal for South Yorkshire that brings more resources and decisions to our area, because people in the North know much better what the North needs than Westminster and Whitehall. Because of our devolution deal we have secured a **Young People's Pledge**, which will mean cheaper bus fares and more training opportunities for people aged 18 to 21 from this summer.
- ▶ Over the coming year, a Labour council will create 89 work placements for young people at risk of long term unemployment, to be paid at least the Real Living Wage. And we will provide careers development support through the ADVANCE programme.
- ▶ **Our Labour council will give preference to suppliers that employ local people**, spend money in the local supply chain, create apprenticeship opportunities, and pay at least

the real Living Wage. Already 800 low paid day care workers have received a pay rise as a result. Our Social Value policy means that people working to provide goods or services to the council will be treated more fairly, and there will be more opportunities for local businesses.

- ▶ **The Rotherham Social Value Charter:** Learning from our colleagues in Preston, we will extend the principle, working alongside our local “anchor institutions”, public services and large employers, to ensure that they too are using their spend to benefit the local community.
- ▶ We will ensure that the council becomes an accredited Living Wage employer.
- ▶ We will introduce local labour clauses as part of planning permissions for large scale developments, ensuring that local people have the opportunity to access jobs or training and benefit from investment coming to the borough.

- ▶ Alongside our city region partners we have rolled out superfast broadband to thousands of properties across the borough in areas that otherwise wouldn't have been served. Now we will explore options to deliver "ultrafast" gigabit fibre broadband to key areas in the borough, bringing speeds equivalent to some of the fastest in the country to homes and businesses.

- ▶ **A £200 million upgrade for Rotherham town centre:** For too long Rotherham town centre has been in decline, a situation made worse by big retailers closing high street stores across the country. Labour will regenerate the town centre. A cinema operator, Arc, have confirmed their intention to open on the site. Building is underway on nearly two hundred more homes in the town centre. The bus interchange has been revamped and the multi-storey car park saved from collapse, and we have secured a significant investment to improve the streets and public realm. We are extending

free Saturday parking and will introduce free public wifi. A major programme of investment to the markets complex, and a new town centre library, will be delivered if we successfully secure government match funding.

- ▶ We are investing in the council's existing business centres, which are home to up to 100 local small businesses at any given time, providing expert support. And we've secured funding to build a new centre at Manvers which will bring more jobs to the area.
- ▶ But Labour will speak up against industries that are harmful to our community. That's why we have banned fracking on council land, we were the first council in the country to turn down a planning application from the fracking giant Ineos, and we are setting out a credible plan to reduce the council's carbon emissions. It is also why we have adopted a "zero cap" on exploitative sex entertainment establishments.

Building the transport system of the future

Good quality transport connectivity is the lifeblood of the local economy, and Labour councillors are backing a series of major long term investment proposals that would be funded with money from government or the City Region, to improve journeys and secure a more environmentally friendly future. These include:

- ▶ **Restoring mainline train services** through the borough for the first time in a generation, with a potential new mainline train station at Parkgate.
- ▶ Delivering a new local station at Waverley, creating a rail connection between the new community and Sheffield city centre, and opening up access to job opportunities from Kiveton and the south of the borough.
- ▶ **Extending the tram train** service out to Doncaster, with connections from Swinton and Kilnhurst, a new stop at Magna, and a park and ride

facility at Parkgate Shopping that's accessible from Aldwarke Lane.

- ▶ We've already secured dozens of public charging points for electric vehicles. Government figures in November 2019 suggested that Rotherham has more electric vehicle charging (EV) points per person than anywhere else in South Yorkshire. We will ensure that all new residential and commercial developments with parking are required to provide EV charging points.
- ▶ **A new high quality cycle network:** We are bidding for government funding to secure new high quality segregated cycle lanes, creating a network that connects the town centre to Meadowhall, the AMP, Catcliffe and Broom, with works already underway on the route along Sheffield Road. We will consult on a new cycling strategy for the borough, and have committed resources to improve the condition of the existing 90 miles of cycle ways in Rotherham over the coming year.



- ▶ We want to improve bus connections between Maltby and the town centre with a series of junction improvements to make bus journeys more reliable, and we're asking the government to pay for new buses with cleaner, more efficient engines, to reduce poor air quality.
- ▶ We have reversed planned cuts to tendered bus services and we will examine the options for a new Quality Bus Partnership or franchising model, depending on the funding available from the government.
- ▶ We will also invest in highways upgrades where these are needed. That's why we are undertaking a £45 million upgrade of the Rotherham end of the Parkway, and the necessary improvements through Greasbrough.
- ▶ We have consistently opposed the so-called M18 route of High Speed 2, which cuts through the borough but would provide no benefit to Rotherham residents, and we'll continue to oppose the dangerous so-called "Smart Motorways".

Investing in modern social care services

Over the last four years, tackling child sexual exploitation and improving services for the most vulnerable children and families has been our top priority - and it will always remain so.

An additional £20m per year of investment, alongside a major programme of reform, training and improvement, have led to Ofsted judging Rotherham's Children's Services to be "Good" and with some elements considered "Outstanding" - which is the highest possible rating. But with more children coming into care than ever before across Britain and child poverty soaring we will never be complacent and we will continue to improve services.

At the same time, a growing elderly population and the changing expectations of Adult Social Care users have meant that we have had to take a fundamental review of the way that these services work. We need social care services that intervene early, and help people to make their own

decisions about their lives so that everyone can live independently for as long as possible.

We have secured Unison's Ethical Care Charter, ended the standard of 15 minute home care visits and with fundamental changes now in place we are investing millions of pounds in brand new facilities to meet the needs of service users.

▢ **Meeting our commitments on child sexual exploitation:** We will meet our commitment to Rotherham's survivors of child sexual exploitation, including continuing to commission the long term support services that survivors need, informed by their own feedback and experiences. We will continue to work closely with the National Crime Agency to deliver justice for those who suffered such terrible abuse in the past. And we will continue to lobby the government to secure the resources that are required to ensure that justice is done.

▢ At the same time, we will continue to drive high standards to protect

children at risk of all forms of exploitation today. We will continue to work closely with Barnardo's to provide early intervention and education services, and we will maintain a dedicated multi-agency team to ensure that services work together to support families and prosecute those who seek to abuse children.

- ▶ **New care facilities:** The consequences of Tory austerity have hit vulnerable families hard. There are now more children in care across Britain than there have ever been before. We will continue to drive high standards of Early Help and social work to ensure that families get the help they need before a child needs to come into care. But for children who do need to come into care we will also recruit more foster carers so that more children can remain in our area where it is in their best interests to do so. We have already opened a new in-house residential home for children who are looked after, and have plans and funding in place for three more.

- ▶ **More on-street youth work:** We know that many residents worry about children and young people having places to go and things to do, which is why we have committed to more detached youth work, reinforced with an additional £50,000 in our latest budget. More youth workers will be able to engage with young people on the street, in parks, or wherever they are.

- ▶ Reform of Learning Disabilities facilities has demonstrated how we can help people with learning disabilities to live more independently, and with more control over their own lives. But for those people who do need day care, we will invest up to £2.1 million in a new home for the REACH day centre, ensuring it is fit for purpose for the future.

- ▶ To make sure that families of people with learning disabilities get the breaks that they need we have replaced the council's outdated respite facilities with new, purpose built, in-house respite care at Conway Crescent which opened recently.

▶ For many people, social care is a critical part of the journey out of hospital and back into their own home. So alongside local NHS services we will consider whether new specialist Intermediate Care facilities could better support people who need support for a period of weeks, without going into residential care.

▶ We will deliver new multi-purpose specialist housing, invest in aids and adaptations to enable people with specific needs to stay in their own homes rather than move out, and we will look to secure more extra care housing locally to support those who can live semi-independently.

▶ **Integrating Health and Social Care locally** - bringing together NHS and council services so that they work more closely - is a critically important way of improving the experiences of people who rely on services, and we are proud that the Rotherham Place Plan has been recognised as national best practice. Social care and Health staff work closely

together and an increasing number of local GPs are signed up to a common system of health and social care records and the Rotherham Health app. However, it's important that services come together on their own terms and where it is in the best interests of residents. That's why the council is not a signatory to the Tories' regional Integrated Local Care System. Labour will always oppose cuts to the Health Service or attempts to privatise it.

A middle-aged man with grey hair, wearing a dark suit, white shirt, and a pink patterned tie, is smiling and holding a large red sign. He is standing in front of a large building under construction, which is heavily scaffolded. Several construction workers in high-visibility yellow gear are visible on the scaffolding. The sky is overcast and grey. The sign he is holding has white text and a Labour Party logo at the bottom.

**Protecting
the most
vulnerable
children**



Labour

BUILDING A BETTER BOROUGH

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Leaving no-one behind

Under this Tory government, the most vulnerable have been hit hardest. The rollout of Universal Credit alongside the benefits freeze has ensured that the poorest members of our community have become poorer. When the Tories refused to step up and fund free school meals for 10,000 Rotherham school children last year, Labour councillors stepped in. Nearly 9,000 children have received help with the cost of school uniforms through the council, and working with private donors we have secured thousands of laptops for children who need them to study from home. We will do all that we can to prevent members of our community being left behind.

- ▶ The council's food bank support scheme ensures that more than 4,000 food parcels each year get to those who would otherwise literally go hungry. Through the pandemic that support has been invaluable. We have committed an additional £100,000 over the coming year

to support local foodbanks and support development of a "social supermarket" to help to move people on from foodbank use.

- ▶ **Ending rough sleeping:** Over the last few years under the Tories, the number of people becoming homeless in the borough has trebled.
- ▶ The council and partner organisations support around 17,000 people with welfare rights advice each year. We have set out plans for a "Single Advice Model"; a streamlined efficient advice service making sure that people get the right advice quickly regardless of which organisation they approach first.
- ▶ **A new Rothercard:** We will deliver a new universal entitlement, including a mobile phone app, that guarantees discounts on council services for those who need them most.
- ▶ **Saving the average home £150 on their energy bills:** Our Community

Energy Rotherham scheme will help to tackle fuel poverty, helping people to switch supplier or benefit from available grants.

- ▶ Labour councillors have committed £100,000 this year to join forces with other councils in the region cracking down on the financial exploitation of vulnerable people. The scheme, which saw the first successful prosecutions in the country for financial exploitation last year in Calderdale, will now be extended to help to protect Rotherham residents.
- ▶ The last year has shown again how important it is to be able to get online and use IT. Over the

coming year, supported by Health partners, we will roll out a £450,000 programme to tackle digital exclusion and help people to get online.

- ▶ We won't cut our Local Council Tax Support Scheme for those on the very lowest incomes.



Affordable, decent housing

For all of us, a safe place to call home is the cornerstone of our lives. But for too many people, home ownership remains unaffordable, or private rented accommodation creates uncertainty. We have already set out one of the most ambitious council home building programmes in the country, and over the next four years we will go further. Labour councillors want to ensure that our communities encourage residents to live side-by-side, and where people can stay in those communities throughout their lives if they choose to do so.

- ▢ **We will build or buy 1,000 new council properties for local people** between 2018 and 2026,

the biggest council home building programme in the borough for a generation. These will include properties for single people, specialist housing, and bungalows suitable for older people. Through our local connections allocations policy, we prioritise local people for council housing.

- ▢ We will increase the supply of shared ownership homes, helping people on lower incomes to get a foothold on the housing ladder if they choose to.
- ▢ We are piloting modern methods of construction homes – the 21st century modern version of prefabs – as a way of creating new types of homes and new economic opportunities around their construction.

- ▶ We will continue to use Selective Licensing to regulate private rented properties where necessary. This has already demonstrated improvements in parts of Dinnington, Eastwood, Masbrough and Maltby, bring hundreds of sub-standard properties up to a safe habitable condition. We are now rolling it out further into Parkgate and Thurgroft.



Caring for the environment

As well as providing local services to help to keep our communities clean, it is also important that the council plays its part in dealing with the wider environmental issues that confront the planet. We've already cut the council's carbon emissions by 1,800 tonnes per year.

- ▢ We have declared a climate emergency, and set a target of 2030 for the council to become carbon neutral. We'll make all our decisions subject to a view as to whether they help or harm the climate and the council will set out a clear plan to reduce its carbon emissions and help the planet.
- ▢ **We will ban single use plastics** in council offices and other buildings, and work to reduce their use at

public events.

- ▢ We will ensure more than 11,000 trees are planted, and we have committed that every tree removed by the council should be replaced by three new ones.
- ▢ We will develop local renewable energy sources and earmarked £1 million to deliver this.
- ▢ We will increase investment in our local parks and green spaces over the next two years, and draw up masterplans for our three country parks so more people can enjoy them in the future.

A modern, efficient council

We want the council to provide good value for money to local residents, providing services that you can rely on, and making decisions in an open and transparent way.


Over the last four years we have restored the council to full democratic control, undertaken a boundary review that has resulted in fewer councillors, and cut the cost of councillors by 15%. Now we will:

- ▶ Develop stronger online systems, enabling residents to arrange more services online 24/7, and track delivery via the council's website, whilst ensuring telephone and face to face services remain for those who need them so that services are accessible to everyone. We are recruiting additional telephone operatives to cut call waiting times this year.
- ▶ Consider all outsourced council contracts as they come up for renewal, and seek opportunities to

bring these back in-house where it makes sense to do so.


- ▶ Report annually on how council services are responding to the different needs of people with protected equalities characteristics, setting out an annual plan to meet respond to the needs of women and men, people from different backgrounds, people with disabilities, and ensuring the council meets its legal obligations.
- ▶ Continue to submit council services to regular reviews and peer challenges by experts from other councils to ensure they work as effectively as possible.



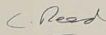
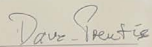

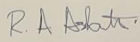

the public service union

UNISON Ethical Care Charter

This certificate declares


Rotherham
Metropolitan
Borough Council

has adopted UNISON's Ethical Care Charter

 Councillor Chris Read Leader of Rotherham Council	 Dave Prentis UNISON General Secretary
 Councillor David Roche Cabinet Member for Adult Social Care and Health	 Ruth Askwith UNISON Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Branch Secretary



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