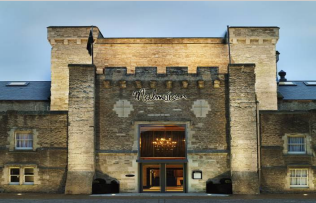




# Oxfordshire Conservatives

**LOW TAXES REAL CHOICE VALUE FOR MONEY**



**CARING & CAMPAIGNING FOR OUR COMMUNITY**

**LOCAL ELECTION MANIFESTO 2009**

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## Explanation of cover images

**Malmaison Hotel**, part of the Oxford Prison/Castle regeneration scheme, a public/private partnership that has set a benchmark for quality in the City and the County. The County Council retains the freehold interest in the Castle site.

**Park & Rides are FREE:** The Cabinet Member for Transport, Cllr Ian Hudspeth, removing ticket machines after the County Council takes over the three City Council Park & Rides and makes parking at them FREE.

**Diamond Light Synchrotron:** The County Council recognises the huge potential this Research Council investment brings to Oxfordshire and is working hard to support further investment in Science Vale UK which covers Didcot, Grove, Harwell, Milton Business Park and Wantage.

**International Final of the Kids' Lit Quiz** is hosted by Oxfordshire County Council, in 2007 and 2008. The English heats are to be run again in Oxford in 2009.

**Two leaders**, Rt Hon David Cameron, Conservative Party Leader & Cllr Keith Mitchell CBE, Leader of Oxfordshire County Council pledge a decrease in the council's carbon footprint of 18%

**Flooding in 2007** brought serious problems to many parts of the county. This pub in remote West Oxfordshire suffered serious flood damage. Our Fire & Rescue Service led work to save lives and properties while many other service areas played a key part in rescue and recovery.

**Oxfordshire young people** learn life skills, mutual respect and responsibility on one of our many youth activity programmes.

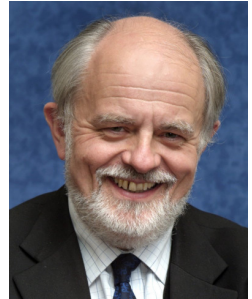
**Supporting our work force:** Cllr John Howell, MP for Henley, Mark Fysh of Oxfordshire Unison and the Leader of the Council receive a Unison petition for John to raise in the House of Commons.

**The "hamburger" roundabout** at Headington has brought significant improvements to the journey time into Oxford from the M40. It was designed by our highways team; it has won awards in recognition of its innovative design and it was built on time and to budget.

## **FOREWORD**

**by Cllr Keith R Mitchell CBE**

County Council Elections on Thursday 4<sup>th</sup> June give the electors of Oxfordshire an opportunity to judge the achievements of the Conservative Administration at County Hall over the last four years and to decide to whom they will entrust the running of this large organisation over the next four years. I am content to submit to that judgment and I hope this Manifesto will provide an evidence base on which electors can make that judgment.



Oxfordshire is a great place to live, work, learn and relax. Oxford is a world-class global brand, reflecting academic excellence and high quality heritage. We have the ability to lead the country out of recession with our high-tech, science-based, innovative economy together with a strong health sector, renowned car and motor sports industries and more publishers than London. My ambition is to support strong growth in our economy without damaging the superb environment for which the City and County are recognised.

I also want to ensure that all of our residents share in that economic recovery, that we build stronger and more confident communities and that we break the cycle of deprivation that has existed for too long in pockets around the County.

We have transformed this council over the last four years, turning it from a poor performing organisation with no strategic leadership to one that is low-spending, focussed on providing good services and passionate about providing leadership to the more than 630,000 people who live in Oxfordshire.

When you have examined our record over four years, I hope you will support a continuation of a Conservative Administration for Oxfordshire for the next four years.

*Keith R Mitchell*

**Cllr Keith R Mitchell CBE**  
**Leader of Oxfordshire County Council**

**LOW TAXES  
REAL CHOICE  
VALUE FOR MONEY**

**ACHIEVED  
IN THE LAST  
FOUR YEARS**



This Administration was first elected in May 2005 on a Manifesto commitment to **Low Taxes, Real Choice, Value for Money**. In our May 2005 election Manifesto we undertook to reduce the Council Tax increase year-on-year with a 0.125% reduction in each year, taking the tax increase down from 4.5% in 2005/06 to 4% by 2009/10. In fact, we did better than that and reduced the Council Tax increase to 3.75% by 2009/10.

In terms of maintaining **Low Taxes**, our financial position has been impacted, like all other businesses, by the national economic landscape and the international banking crisis. We are in the middle of a three year Local Government Settlement from central government which saw only a 2% increase in funding in 2008/09 and which reduced to a 1.75% increase for 2009/10, with the promise of only 1.5% for 2010/11. Because Oxfordshire is a floor authority, these minimal increases represent ministerial decisions. These decisions are derived from a financing system that is now so opaque as to make any coherent analysis impossible and to leave us with the suspicion that it has been designed to minimise transparency and understanding and to maximise the opportunity for political manipulation. Despite the tight financial settlement, this Administration is determined to maintain downward pressure on Council Tax increases both to recognise the national economic conditions and to ensure we continue to deliver real choice to service users and a further improvement in value for money. We are delighted that our robust management of the Council's affairs means we are in a position to do this and has been recognised in our **Four Star** Use of Resources Assessment by the Audit Commission.

In offering a low tax regime, we are determined to maintain **Real Choice**. We have therefore set our customers at the heart of service delivery. Indeed, our Change Management Board has delivered several projects which focus on our customers:

**Charter Mark:** In July 2008, we became the first County Council to be awarded a Corporate Charter Mark, covering the whole organisation. This is a national programme with wide recognition. We have used the Charter Mark framework to improve internal and external customer service standards across the authority in a consistent and accredited way. This was achieved ahead of the original target date of 31 March 2009.

**Shared Services:** This programme also completed to plan in 2008, with the operational transfer of staff to the new offices. It has consolidated the

activity and resources delivering finance and human resource support within the council. It has created a centre of excellence that delivers more streamlined processes, has improved performance, efficiency and high quality professional support to all areas of the organisation. The savings from the project will be re-invested in front line services.

**Time to Change:** The Time to Change Programme was completed in March 2008. This delivered electronic social care records and a single assessment programme. Further work is currently underway to review the information requirements of adult social care, especially in the light of the programme to transform adult social care.

**Better Offices:** This programme is continuing to deliver changed ways of working across the organisation. During 2008/09 it has seen the opening of the new Knights Court offices; the refurbishment of the top two floors in County Hall and is continuing with the development of the remaining floors, as well as creation of a new Banbury hub.

Securing **Value for Money** is the link between planning for **Lower Taxes** and continuing to offer **Real Choice**. If we are to reduce the rate of increase in the Council Tax year-on-year without making radical cuts in services, we need to find better ways of delivering those services. We have achieved this in a number of ways:

Tight budget management has once again meant that we will end 2008/09 with spend very close to budget;

Our balanced scorecard ensures we monitor four key aspects of performance regularly. They are: Customers, Finance, People and Process. The scorecard operates as a cascade from cabinet and directors throughout the council to provide an integrated performance tool that enables managers at all levels to monitor and manage effectively;

Our integrated Service and Resource Planning process ensures service and financial issues are considered as two sides of the same coin and provides constant pressure throughout the organisation to look for improved **Value for Money**.

Since this Administration assumed control in May 2005, we have delivered efficiency savings of £40m. These savings have enabled us to absorb pressures on our spending, such as those caused by the increasing numbers of older people living in Oxfordshire and the increase in the numbers of adults with learning disabilities.

## Economic Recovery

As soon as the **credit crunch and recession** became apparent last year, we:

Speeded up bill payments to our small and medium-sized suppliers;

Subsidised free bus journeys from our Park & Rides into Oxford on late-night shopping evenings;

Made it easier for local small businesses to contract with the County Council;

Led the establishment of an economic task force to monitor the economic position;

Monitored the state of the Oxfordshire economy monthly at our Cabinet.

We have strengthened **our economic development role** through the Oxfordshire Economic Partnership (OEP). In particular, the County Council has out-posted staff previously in the Environment & Economy Directorate to support the work of the OEP.

We are a key player in the **West End Steering Group** (planning the regeneration of the West End of Oxford); in the Science vale UK partnership (planning for the development of the economy around Didcot, Milton Business Park, Harwell and Grove & Wantage); and in the Bicester Vision Partnership (planning for Bicester's economic success).

Publicity for the need to provide **support for returning military personnel** surfaced during 2007 and the Council agreed to establish a £100,000 fund to assist in welcoming military personnel returning to Oxfordshire from serving abroad and supporting them and their families. We are working in partnership with the military to see how we support both our local economies and their personnel in continuing this fund for a further year.

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The 2009/10 budget includes a further £100,000 to support military personnel in Oxfordshire. This will be directed primarily to resettlement and support for employment as service personnel reach the end of their military service.

**ACHIEVED  
IN THE LAST  
FOUR YEARS**



**WE WILL  
DELIVER IN  
THE NEXT  
FOUR YEARS**



We have had a programme of developing Apprenticeships over the past few years to support skills development and to increase opportunities for young people. These have been across a number of fields including Social Care, Administration and Civil Engineering. We are continuing to invest in this programme. This will provide an opportunity for young people to gain a step into a new career and help us to build our workforce for the future.

We are using our Local Authority Business Grant Incentive Fund to fund support for Job Clubs. We are also negotiating terms for supporting, jointly with Oxford City Council, the Cowley Road Carnival which is in danger of folding and the Covered Market which is badly in need of structural repairs.

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**ACHIEVED  
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## **Education and Skills**

From January 2009, we improved **parental choice** in a number of ways:

First, we implemented a change to full-time admission for all reception-aged children. We did this by working with private and voluntary sector providers to ensure a continued wide range of choice.

Next and following consultation, we ended the anomaly whereby children attending special schools in Oxfordshire could not stay on beyond 16. Building improvements were completed to enable parents to choose special schools as a post-16 option for children with special educational needs from September 2008.

We have also seen the successful establishment of an Academy to replace Peers School, following the pattern created by the North Oxfordshire Academy which replaced Drayton School. These Academies are part of our strategy to drive up attainment across the county.

We have worked relentlessly for improved examination results from our schools. Our Cabinet Member for School Improvement, Cllr Michael Waite, has visited every school in the county and used a combination of exhortation, admonition and, when needed, naming and shaming to drive up attainment levels. We are beginning to drive out the culture of complacency from the system.

We have invested substantially in capital schemes across the county to provide new schools, to expand existing ones and to improve the environment of those schools most in need.

One of the most significant programmes which will impact on schools in coming years will be the **Building Schools for the Future** (BSF) programme. The Council was originally in one of the later waves for BSF but, due to slower than expected take up, the Government has asked for renewed expressions of interest. We have submitted the necessary information and now await the outcome. However, to undertake such a large scale programme, there is considerable planning and preparation which the Council would need to fund from its revenue account. To ensure that our bid for inclusion in this programme is taken forward, we have included the funds we believe are necessary to undertake this. This includes £3.4m of one-off funding as well as £0.160m of ongoing resource.

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Oxfordshire's **school attainment** is not yet good enough. Although results are at the national average and GCSE results improved this year, a county with our socio-economic characteristics should be performing considerably above the national average and we are determined to continue to drive up attainment. The cycle of deprivation in some areas of the county prevents young people from attaining their full potential in life. We wish to break that pernicious cycle. To this end, we are continuing to invest in our Youth Service which will be working more closely with other organisations, including schools, to support raising attainment and breaking the deprivation cycle. The Chill Out Fund of £0.2m per annum, established in 2006, continues and we have exciting plans to improve a number of youth centres in our Capital Programme.

We now have two **Academies** at North Oxfordshire (replacing Drayton School) and on the old Peers site and they are already transforming the life chances of children attending as well as demonstrating the value of good education to their wider communities. We are exploring the opportunity for a third Academy where there is ongoing concern for attainment levels.

The overall level of funding for **school budgets** was determined last year by central government as part of a three year agreement. For 2009/10, the Dedicated Schools Grant (DSG) has increased by 3.7% per pupil. This follows an increase of 4.5% in 2008/09, and there will be a 4.3% increase in 2010/11. The total allocation to schools is determined by a locally agreed formula. This may change with central government seeking to move more funding into deprived areas within a local authority by requiring formula adjustments. While additional funding is welcome, especially to drive up attainment, some schools may find future years' budgets will not reflect the overall level of increase in the DSG. We will carry out a review of our school budget allocation formula in the new Council to ensure funds



are directed to those areas most in need. This review will be subject to wide and extensive consultation.

The government's **Primary Capital Programme** starts in 2009/10. This year's allocation will be used for Bayards Hill School and Wood Farm School as exemplar projects in areas of high deprivation. Between 2009/10 and 2013/14, there is planned spending of over £61m. Five out of 13 Locality Reviews have been undertaken to date and the remainder will be completed this year. Each review identifies a prioritised list for investment under the government scheme. This overarching programme will include Replacement of Primary School Temporary Buildings at Charlton-on-Otmoor, The Grange, Great Milton Mill Lane, and Tackley and the proposed investment in Primary School Improvements/Replacements include Combe, East Challow (St Nicholas), Eynsham, Harwell, Launton, Peppard, Radley and Tetsworth. Contrary to rumours, the Primary School Review is not about identifying small primary schools for closure!

The government's programme for **Secondary Schools**, Building Schools for the Future (BSF), is being accelerated and local authorities not already in the programme, including Oxfordshire, have been invited to submit revised "expression of interest" in having their inclusion to the programme brought forward. The Government's response is awaited.

The Council's own investment in **Secondary Schools** across the next 5 years will be around £53m. This total includes grant funded schemes such as Oxford Academy (£29m). Specialist areas are also being planned for Cheney, Chiltern Edge, Chipping Norton, Larkmead, Marlborough and Oxford. Modernisation is planned for Bartholomew and Henry Box. It is important to note that some of these projects may be subsumed within larger schemes if BSF Programme is brought forward.

Investment continues in **Children's Centres** and **Extended Schools** with £1m in 2009/10 and £7.4m in 2010/11. The **Flexibility in Childcare Programme** will also be initiated with £2.9m capital investment in 2009/10 and £4.7m in 2010/11.

**Special School Modernisation** is planned for Fitzwaryn, Frank Wise, Lord Williams Autism Unit, Northern House, Woodeaton Manor and the development of 16-19 provision at special schools.

**Provision of additional school places** is planned for Bodicote, Bicester Carterton, Didcot, Grove/Wantage, Hanwell Fields (Banbury), Marlborough, Witney and among others. This is a total investment of some £95m. Timing of this investment is dependent upon housing developments and, in many cases, progress has been slow or halted as a consequence of the current economic downturn.

## Caring for Young People

Our Chill-Out Fund has provided £600,000 of support for local youth projects over the last four years and enables many localities to support youth work that meets their particular needs, whether it is revenue funding for particular activities or capital funding for equipment.

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IN THE LAST  
FOUR YEARS**



The difficult issue of teenage pregnancies has been tackled sensitively and with vigour. Although there has been some success, the matter is never going to be solved and there are signs that initial success has been checked. Inevitably, media stories do not help in addressing what will always be a difficult area.

We have developed a strong Children's Trust Board which takes a lead role on the important issue of safeguarding vulnerable children. The Board is chaired by Cllr Mrs Louise Chapman, Cabinet Member for Children, Young People and Families.

Since 2008, we have been developing Children's Centres across the County. These centres offer children under five and their families, whatever their background or circumstances, all the services they need to thrive and make the most of life's opportunities. There are now 31 in operation, with another 14 about to open. There are also innovative approaches to providing them in the rural areas.

We have achieved significant reductions in offending and re-offending rates among young people which places Oxfordshire's performance in the top 20% of councils nationally.

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**WE WILL  
DELIVER IN  
THE NEXT  
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Following on from the appalling Baby P case in London, we have thoroughly reviewed our processes in Oxfordshire. While we feel that controls are sound, we believe that the public expect us to assure the safety of the children in our corporate care. We are accordingly:

Increasing the number of Children's social workers, adding 4 more in 2009/10 and a further 4 in 2010/11;

Increasing training for social workers; and

Providing additional administrative support following the national implementation of the government's Integrated Children's system which has

led to our social workers being seriously hampered in doing the front-line work we need them to do.

We will continue to fund the Chill-Out fund for the next four years of the Council to support local youth activities.

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## Caring for Vulnerable Adults

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We continue to deliver our **Extra Care Housing Strategy** and partners, especially District Councils, are now very much on board in helping to achieve the aims of this programme. In May 2008, the Council was successful in being awarded a £1.35m grant from the Department of Health to build a 40-unit home in Banbury.

We have a fantastic **Resource Centre** in Bicester, offering a breath-taking range of facilities to vulnerable adults in the area. It has become a benchmark to roll out across the County. The new day centre in Witney opened in March 2009. It operates as a Resource Centre, following the hugely successful model developed in Bicester and offers an enhanced range of activities to service users.

We have established a partnership with the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust to deliver continuing partnership working to ensure the Council's clients receive the best outcomes and are not worried by who is delivering their services. The services are Internal and External Day Services; Internal and External Home support and Intermediate Care. This will take the **Older Persons, Physical Disabilities and Equipment** pool to a total of £97.0m.

The County Council has also created a pooled budget with the NHS for **Mental Health** services with a total value of £45m. This should ensure a more seamless service.

We have a close working relationship with the Oxford Radcliffe Trust and the Oxfordshire Primary Care Trust. As a result of some intensive work, the level of **bed blocking** has been reduced considerably and there is a combined desire to maintain the momentum

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We are committed to support the delivery of 20 additional places of **Extra Care Housing** in 2009/10 and a growth of 330 places by 2013/14.

To deal with the **demographic pressures**, we are spending an extra £35m on these critical services over the next four years. This funding, together with our investment in transforming service delivery should ensure the future of these services. In addition we are investing in:

Additional Social Care staffing - We have provided additional funding in 2009/10 to help staffing pressures within the occupational therapy service. This will help to reduce further the waiting list and ensure that all assessments take place within 28 days.

Delayed Transfers of Care - Together with the Oxford Radcliffe Hospitals Trust and the Primary Care Trust, the County Council has invested in a project to tackle the longstanding problem of delayed discharges from hospital. This has had a major effect on delays this year. Delays from all hospitals have averaged 88 so far this year - well below the target in the Local Area Agreement of 102 and 33% lower than the figure for last year. The average number of delays from the acute hospitals has averaged 45 so far this year - 24% lower than last year. We are investing an additional £100k in 2009/10.

Learning Disabilities Supported Living: We are investing an additional £0.4m in this service to enable adaptations and extensions to be made to properties to increase capacity and reduce unit costs of support. This is a major part of the strategy to make efficiency savings in the cost of delivering services to adults with learning disabilities. Several developments are now progressing and due to deliver in 2009/10, with further projects in the planning stage.

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## Keeping Oxfordshire Moving

Immediately after the results of the 2005 elections and in line with our Manifesto commitment, we made parking at the two County Council **Park & Rides** free.

We also introduced free on-street parking in Oxford City in the evenings and on Sundays.

We delivered a hugely successful Headington (“Hamburger”) Roundabout scheme which has greatly improved access to the ring road from the M40. It was completed



on time and on budget and has won awards.

Following negotiations with the City Council the running of the three Park and Ride Car Parks was transferred to us in October 2008. This enabled us to improve **customer choice** and to encourage more bus use by offering free parking at all sites.

There has been a considerable demand for controlled Parking Zones in various parts of the City as well as other parts of the County. These require enforcement and, in line with many other councils, we are levying a very modest charge to cover the cost of this enforcement. They are largely in place in the City and may shortly be introduced, subject to consultation, in Banbury and Bicester.

In 2008, we gained acceptance onto the Regional Transport Programme for funding **Access to Oxford**. Planning for the first key element of the project, Oxford Station, is progressing well and we are working closely with Network Rail to meet their timetable for a new bay platform in 2011. The Regional Transport Board has agreed to bring forward £6 million of the Access to Oxford funding to enable the improvements to be delivered closer together.

We have started a pilot **Rent-a-Bike** scheme to see if the sort of scheme that works in a number of European cities would work in Oxford.

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Recent proposals by Chiltern Railways for new services from Oxford to London via Bicester are likely to increase the scope of **improvements at Oxford Station** and we will ensure these are incorporated into our planning.

**WE WILL  
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**Transform Oxford** is a key priority for supporting the retail economy and improving the pedestrian experience in the City. Phase 1 is planned and funded and includes:  
Queens Street interim scheme - summer 2009  
St Giles scheme - summer 2010

Longer term Public Realm quality will be enhanced by additional external funding proposals and future Local Transport Plan 3 development which will include Phase 2.

We recognise that **maintaining our infrastructure** is of key importance to maintaining our economy. We have therefore invested in improving the appearance of key urban streets, working with the Districts to improve our Local Area Agreement targets on street scene and greener cleaner objectives and the integrity of kerbside

management in villages and market towns. We also plan to improve the quality of infrastructure appearance on the key approach roads to Oxford.

We will review and rationalise our current **tree management** activities to provide a coherent strategy and single delivery programme which will manage trees on a risk assessment basis – targeting resources where they are most needed - across council services and liabilities.

We are currently negotiating a new **Oxfordshire Highways Contract** which should provide greater efficiencies with a more streamlined organisation, enabling us to reinvest the savings into improving the road network.

We are also working on **Local Transport Plan 3** This will set out our key aims and targets from 2011 onwards to reflect the growth in Oxfordshire while tackling congestion and improving the quality of life of our residents.

Other **key transport projects** which we plan to deliver are:

In parallel with bringing forward the Oxford Station improvement, **Access to Oxford** planning work is now focused on developing options for the other rail and road elements to work up and take to public consultation during 2009/10. This is part of making the business case to secure Government approval for the funding in 2013-16;

Work on the **Cogges Link Road** continues with the key planning stage about to commence. Subject to the outcome of this process, the main construction will commence in 2010;

**Oxford High Street** Phase 3 maintenance improvement will be carried out during 2009/10 and follows the successful earlier work to repair and strengthen the road and de-clutter the street scene over the last two years;

The major London Road scheme to reduce congestion, improve journey time reliability and increase safety is already under way and will continue through 2009/10.

## Keeping Oxfordshire Green

As members of the Oxfordshire Waste Partnership, we have secured the sign-up of all six councils in Oxfordshire to a comprehensive

**Waste Strategy** to deliver EU and central government targets about reducing landfill and increasing re-cycling.

We have developed a process for **reducing the amount of waste going to landfill** so that it is now ready to be considered by the new Council after 4<sup>th</sup> June.

We have signed up to an **18% reduction in our Carbon Footprint**.

**ACHIEVED  
IN THE LAST  
FOUR YEARS**



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We will continue our work on **Climate Change** and our target of reducing carbon emissions from the council's own activities and, also, in adapting to extreme weather which we can expect as a result of climate change. On this last point, we are very pleased to be working in a national lead partnership with the UK Climate Impacts Programme.

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The Council has been in the process of a Waste Dialogue for a new Treatment facility, which will help to reduce future costs. The long term implications are built into our current assumptions, but we will monitor this area carefully as the project develops. Planning applications for an Incinerator will now be considered in the new Council as will the letting of any contract.

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## Keeping Oxfordshire Safe

In the **July 2007 floods**, our Fire and Rescue Service worked with Thames Valley Police, the Ambulance Service and other emergency services to protect life and property. Working with colleagues from the District Councils, they did a magnificent job.

**ACHIEVED  
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Our **Fire and Rescue Service** has secured a 4 star rating under inspection – one of a very small number in the country to achieve this top score.

**Flooding and drainage prevention** is a key issue for many residents. We will enhance our contribution to the Oxfordshire flood prevention partnership and achieve a specific programme of works targeted at key risk locations throughout each district of the county. The programme will cover 30+ schemes to improve the drainage of our highways infrastructure.

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In recognition of the status of our **Fire and Rescue Service** as a highly efficient and cost-effective organisation, we are again funding schemes which are of value to communities and which, although not part of their statutory obligations, provide positive links with our youth activities. We have also exempted the service from other efficiency savings that are required, as a matter of routine for other service areas, in recognition of the important life-saving responsibilities that the service carries and the rigorous safety and inspection regime that goes with it.

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## **Supporting Oxfordshire's Cultural Life**

We have delivered a new library for **Thame** and plans are advancing for the new **Bicester** town centre library, despite the credit crunch and recession. Some funding is available for a new **Banbury** library but difficulties in finding a suitable site remain.

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Unfortunately, due to the current economic climate, work on the project to improve consumer choice in our **Central Library** by undertaking a substantial refurbishment in partnership with the Westgate developers has not started but we are determined it will do so once the economic position in the UK improves.

We are very pleased to have kept **Cogges Manor Farm Museum** open and have well advanced plans for securing its future with sufficient funding in the budget to support those plans.

We have supported our **Oxfordshire Music Service** throughout our term, regarding it as a jewel in the crown. We have developed a strong partnership with the *Oxford Philomusica*, the University orchestra in residence.



Despite the considerable investment in Adult Social Care and especially in the demographic pressures, we have been able to work with local people to develop a charitable Trust for **Cogges Farm Museum** to take forward the running of the museum. Additional short term revenue funding is proposed to provide the Trust with three year core funding to help it to become financially sustainable in the longer term without County Council revenue support. We are also including in the Capital Programme a sum of £0.25m which will help in obtaining a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund to improve some of the outbuildings at the farm. This will allow them to be used for a wider range of activities and increase the income available to the Trust.

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We hope to play a part in preserving a smaller version of the **Cowley Road Carnival** in 2009.

Given the budget pressures we are likely to face, we will be looking at ways of **enhancing our library service** both in terms of hours of access and the services available within a static or declining financial base.

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## **Standing up for Oxfordshire**

We fought the government over not funding our 2007 flood relief work adequately and we comprehensively lost with a cost to Oxfordshire of some £4 million.

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We fought the government over plans to hand over strategic planning to the unelected Regional Development Agencies and won.

We fought the government over imposing crazy housing targets on the South East and secured a lower number than the government wanted.

We fought the daft idea for an eco-town at Weston-Otmoor and we think we have won that argument.

We continue to fight the City Council's wish to build on the Green Belt at Grenoble Road.

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We will stand up for Oxfordshire and fight any daft, half-baked scheme that this government of the next one invents if it is not right for our residents.

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## How to get in touch with us and follow our campaign



**BY EMAIL** [campaign2009@oxfordshireconservatives.com](mailto:campaign2009@oxfordshireconservatives.com)



**BY PHONE** 0845 230 4026



**BY POST** Freepost Oxfordshire Conservatives



**ONLINE** [www.oxfordshireconservatives.com](http://www.oxfordshireconservatives.com)

**Visit us online to find out more about our campaign  
and to find details of your local candidate.**



**VOTE CONSERVATIVE ON THURSDAY 4TH JUNE**

# OUR 7 KEY PLEDGES

We will freeze  
Council Tax  
under a  
Conservative  
Government.

We will support  
our local  
economy.

We will protect  
our environment  
and heritage.

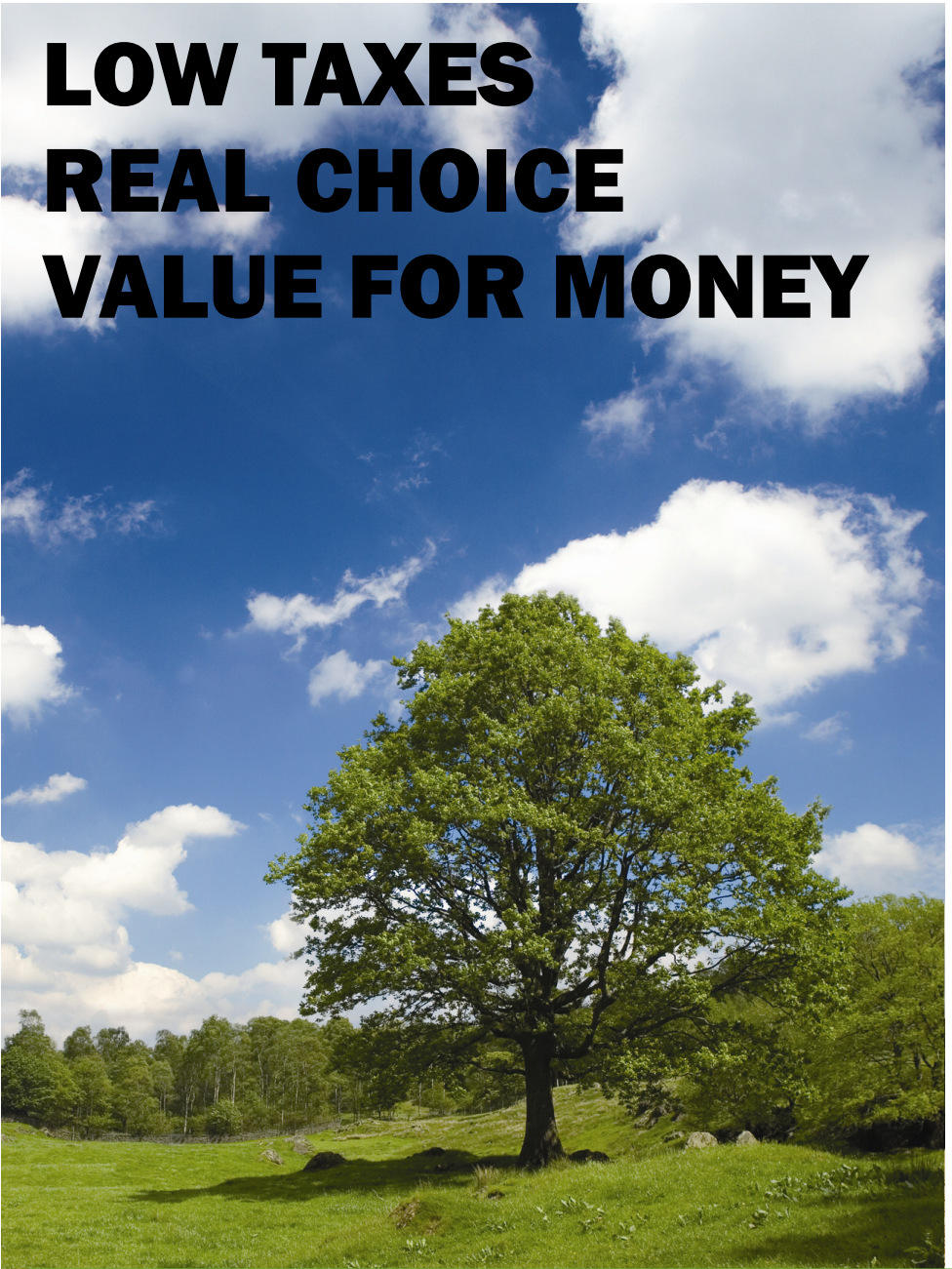
We will improve  
opportunities  
for young people.

We will promote  
safer and  
greener  
communities.

We will improve  
services for older  
people.

We will make it  
easier to get  
around  
Oxfordshire.

# **LOW TAXES REAL CHOICE VALUE FOR MONEY**



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