

PAUL BELL

a people's
mayor for
lewisham



#BackBell

#PeoplesMayor

Return your ballot paper
by 19 September

Backed by:

LEWISHAM

momentum



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A PEOPLE'S MAYOR FOR LEWISHAM



Dear Labour member,

Very soon you'll be receiving a ballot at your Lewisham address to decide who should be the Labour candidate for the next Mayor of our borough.

I supported Jeremy Corbyn at both Labour leadership elections, am endorsed by Lewisham Momentum and GMB Union, and now I'm asking for your vote and your support in this election.

I'm a proud socialist and trade unionist from a working-class family in Sheffield, who, growing up as a gay man in the 1980s, faced the discrimination and homophobia of Thatcher's Britain.

Since joining the Council, I've campaigned for our local hospital, championed animal rights, served as chair of planning and been a director for Lewisham Homes, managing 14,000 properties.

I'm so proud to live in Lewisham but seven years of Tory misrule have pushed Council services, and many local people, to the brink. Costs are too high, wages are far too low.

Only a radical, socialist agenda, ending privatisation, fighting discrimination, tackling austerity and eradicating poverty, can really improve the lives of people, all people, in our borough.

Please support me and together we'll build a Lewisham that works for the many, not the few.

Paul Bell

“We’re living through the worst housing crisis since the 1940s and the only solution is for the rampant marketisation of local property to end.”

LEWISHAM: A PLACE TO CALL HOME

When it comes to housing, I have always fought for my socialist principles. In 2011, I was the only Councillor to reject the ill-fated development around Millwall stadium.

As a people’s Mayor, I will:

- **Build 1600 new homes, a total of 800 council homes and 800 council-controlled properties on the open market targeted at key workers like nurses, home care workers and firefighters**
- **Launch new plans to ‘take back control’ of empty housing and deal with the appalling waste of over 800 more properties standing empty while families go homeless**
- **Never sell off Council land to private developers and never demolish existing, high-quality council homes**
- **Make all private landlords sign up to a licence scheme and pursue those who leave tenants living in squalid conditions**
- **Fit sprinklers in all Council tower blocks, and campaign to see them installed in private blocks**



SCHOOLS THAT MAKE THE GRADE



Our schoolchildren, parents and teachers have been let down by the government as they underfund and quietly seek to privatise local schools through the academy system.

The Tories went into the general election promising to cut funding to Lewisham schools by £26m, or £724 per pupil, and it's still not clear what their plans for education are. I want to see our schools protected. I will:

- Oppose new academies and free schools, maintaining Council control of schools wherever possible
- Protect teachers' jobs and maintain smaller class sizes
- Secure affordable childcare for working parents, either in the statutory sector or through new voluntary schemes
- Publish annual plans to ensure every local child has the chance to go to a school a reasonable distance from home
- Bring Lewisham's 'young people' service back in-house for the benefit of the community
- Introduce a Lewisham Fair Workload Charter, to improve conditions for teachers and ensure a good education for all

A CLEAN BILL OF HEALTH

“The NHS was Labour’s crowning achievement in a cradle-to-grave welfare state. The Tories think they can sell it off but Lewisham Labour have shown we won’t stand for it.”

Social care is in crisis, and the Tories intend to sell off the NHS piece-by-piece to the private sector. The Council has rightly protected the most vulnerable, but more must be done. As Mayor, I will:

- Campaign and support the NHS Reinstatement Bill, holding GPs and NHS England to account if they take steps to privatise services in Lewisham
- Review contracts and home care provision in the borough with the aim of providing as much as possible in-house
- Campaign for government to allow all councils in England to use the business rate surplus to fund social care
- Sign up to UNISON’s Ethical Care Charter to see home care workers recognised and properly rewarded for their work
- Review our ‘looked-after children’ provision to ensure it is centred on the rights of children



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MANY NOT

THE FEW

“We commemorated the Battle of Lewisham because our borough isn’t scared to stand up for what is right. As Mayor, I would build on that tradition.”

A people’s Mayor wouldn’t just have the chance to direct the Council, but also have a strong influence over our local party. I’d use that strength, with members, not just to resist Tory attacks but to build for the Lewisham we want to see:

- I’ll campaign to see Labour activists become political educators and campaigners
- I’ll oppose random stop and search and use of spit hoods by Lewisham police officers, which hurt community relationships
- I’ll actively campaign for Trans rights and build the breadth of gender and sexual identity into Council systems, training our staff to fight discrimination
- Zero tolerance for sexual violence: I will invest in women’s shelters and start a public awareness campaign to teach the importance of consent and give survivors a voice
- I will campaign to see sex work decriminalised and unionised as an urgent workers’ rights issue



BANGING THE DRUM FOR LEWISHAM

“There’s a wealth of cultural diversity and academic rigour in Lewisham. Our Council should nurture that.”

Working with Goldsmiths University, I’ll fight to reinvigorate the creative traditions at the heart of our borough:

- I will not close any more libraries but strengthen provision in Lewisham, making them creative and interactive hubs for local people. Good education is a right, not a privilege, and anyone of any age should have access to the wealth of resources only a library can provide**
- I will launch a national campaign to showcase Lewisham’s co-operative, enterprising and creative industries. I want to see investment flowing and the economy growing in the interests of local people**



DEMOCRATISE

LEWISHAM

The way the Council works needs urgent reform. Currently we have a system where the Mayor appoints nine Councillors to be his executive, who vote on contracts and otherwise only advise. In addition to my manifesto pledges, I will:

- Ask the cabinet to work with the Council committees, to devolve power closer to local people
- Set up the Labour Group to function as a decision-maker
- Re-establish direct negotiation with trade unions, inviting the chair of the Council's trade unions to sit on cabinet
- Review the Mayoral system in full and look to re-establish the committee system permanently

GET IN

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