

# Local Independents for Tiverton (LIFT)



## 2023 Manifesto

## **Who are we?**

Local Independents for Tiverton (LIFT) are a group of like-minded ordinary people from Tiverton looking to renew and reinvigorate the political arena in Tiverton and Mid Devon. We are a progressive, green group, with an inclusive approach and fresh ideas. Through discussion, collaboration, positivity, and determined action we will help our Town and District to thrive.

## **What do we feel?**

Tiverton is a fantastic place to live, work and enjoy, with a wealth of activities, teams, organisations and community groups for people of all ages. However, we are in danger of becoming merely a dormitory town and losing the community spirit and pride in our area that makes Tiverton special.

Too many aspects of what will happen in our town are decided by Mid Devon District Council (MDDC) – often by Councillors with no real understanding or vested interest in the future of our community.

We believe that elected members of both the Town and District Council should be working together to drive a secure future for Tiverton.

Too often the needs, voices and requests of Tiverton residents are ignored by ruling factions at both Town and District level, with narrow party-political objectives dominating decision making.

LIFT works differently, reflecting and amplifying the voices of our residents and making sure that all efforts are aimed at making life better for all people in the Town.

## Where are we now?

At the last election in May 2023 we successfully got 6 Councillors on the Town Council. Our ambition is to gain a majority of LIFT members and supporters of this manifesto to oversee major change during the next 4-year council term.

As a group we have already:

- Driven the move by the Town Council to declare a climate emergency and formed a Climate Committee.
- Organised the town's response to Covid, delivering 'Lunch on the go', coordinating volunteers and charities in the town, obtained funding for the food bank and fuel poverty schemes.
- Organised opposition in the town to hunting with dogs, in particular the hunt meeting on Boxing Day.
- Held monthly street stalls to engage with local people and to discuss issues affecting our community.



Our priorities for 2023 and beyond focus on four areas – Planning and Housing; Community Resilience; Regeneration of the Town; and the Climate Crisis. These are ambitious yet achievable targets, that we will work on collaboratively with Councillors, community groups, local businesses, and residents.



## **PLANNING AND HOUSING**

The District Council is the Planning authority and has a Local Plan in place that directs all housing and business building for the next fifteen years. The Town Planning committee is routinely sidelined and ignored, even though it is representative of the views of residents. LIFT Councillors will work to ensure that residents' views are given greater weight. We will hold MDDC to higher standards of scrutiny, ensure that developers deliver more affordable housing, and that s106 payments benefit the town.

LIFT will campaign for the closure of MDDC's 3Rivers Development company, full repayment of all public monies loaned to the organisation, and accountability for the decisions made at both Officer and Cabinet level. Planning decisions should be guided by community need, not by MDDC greed.



## REGENERATION OF THE TOWN

We believe that Tiverton Town Council should control the publicly owned assets in the Town, rather than Mid Devon District Council. Assets including parks, property, public toilets, and open spaces should be managed for the good of the Town. We will work to return these assets to the Town, ensuring that the finances to secure and maintain them comes with them.

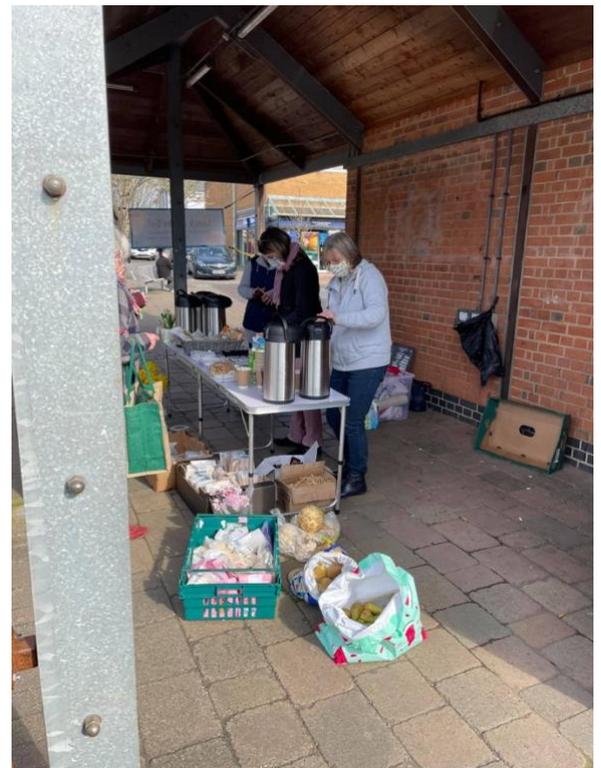
We should look to invest the Town Council's reserves into the purchase of properties in the town centre which have derelict living space above and bring this back into use as social housing. We could then offer the retail space at affordable rent to start up Tiverton businesses. We will also work on a presumption that empty town sites should be available for community use.



## COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

We will continue to organise the Town Council to support local people through the cost-of-living crisis. We have ensured there is now a Community Resilience committee dedicated to supporting and coordinating the local voluntary sector and would continue to make this a priority. Through this committee we will create a Poverty Strategy for Tiverton, with the aim of eliminating poverty within the town by 2030.

Our work with local groups and other government agencies will continue, as we co-ordinate community resilience including defense against flooding and natural disasters.



## CLIMATE CRISIS

We will ensure that green issues are put at the heart of our work for the town. Our members organised the Town Council to declare a climate emergency, and to launch a Climate Committee to promote working towards making Tiverton a carbon neutral town. Over the next four years we will:

- Transform green travel options for all areas of the Town, including safe and accessible walking and cycle routes
- Bring empty sites into use as community open spaces, with tree planting and rewilding
- Co-ordinate the development of hydroelectric power for community benefit
- Develop more allotment and community growing sites
- Work with all Tiverton schools to create a Green Plan for Tiverton



If you would like to join us, support us or stand as one of our candidates please see our Facebook page, our website, or contact us directly at our street stalls.



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