



The Liberal Democrats

BOROUGH COUNCIL ELECTION SPECIAL

ON 6 MAY RE-ELECT PETER X WEXHAM

**The Strong
Voice We Need
to Continue
to Speak Up
For Leigh!**

PETER WEXHAM is Leigh's longest-serving councillor. On 6 May he is standing for re-election to Southend Borough Council.

Peter is Leigh's Champion. He always puts Leigh first.

We need Peter's absolute integrity, deep knowledge, determination and perseverance to keep Leigh special – to work with our team and to stand up for us, our town and its character and interests.

Others may try, but no-one is better placed to do that. Beware of pale imitations ...

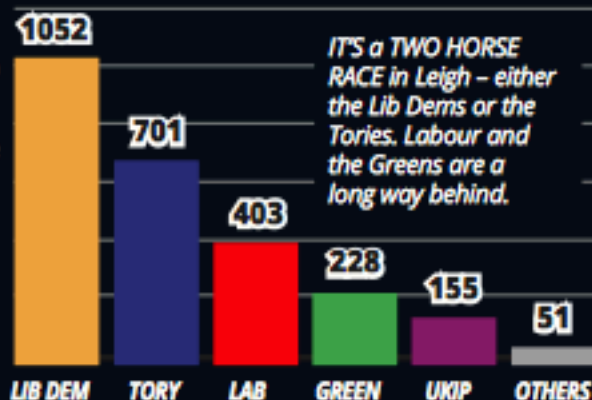
Cllr Carole Mulrone says: "Peter is known not just as a long-standing, hard-working councillor, but as someone with a love for Leigh, its fishing and its history – and, of course, our local environment."

"His encyclopaedic knowledge, analytical skills and principled approach make him a highly-valued member of our Lib Dem team in Leigh and on Southend Borough Council. Please give him your vote on 6 May."



IN the most recent election, in 2019, the Lib Dem vote surged and Ashley Thompson was elected to the council.

This year, Peter Wexham is up for re-election – with your support, he will continue to be the strong voice we need for our town.



A FOUNDER member of the community project to save the cockle boat Endeavour, which became one of the Dunkirk 'little ships', Peter Wexham really has been there from the start! Peter found the boat in Kent and brought the Endeavour back to Leigh. With a team of people including well-known Leigh man Mike King he helped raise the funds and worked as part of the team that carried out the renovation.

Others came into the project later, when the Endeavour went back in the water, but what a great honour to help rescue and restore this great symbol of our past.



A strong voice for Leigh and West Leigh

BUDGET BUILDS FOR THE FUTURE, YET STILL REPRESENTS GOOD VALUE

SOUTHEND Borough Council's Joint Administration, where Liberal Democrats play a major part, has put together a careful budget that delivers on key priorities.

Part of the small rise in Council Tax over last year – less than 4% – is a direct result of the Government shifting more of the cost of social care onto local councils. Don't take our word for it:

'... much of the increase is down to the fact that ministers have passed on responsibility for raising funds for England's social care system to town halls, rather than increasing grants.'
Daily Mail, 25 March 2021

No-one wants to pay Council Tax, but Leigh and West Leigh families pay LESS than if they lived in

neighbouring towns. Band D in Leigh / West Leigh (including £50 for Leigh Town Council) is £1,827.72 for the coming year compared to £1,856.79 in Castle Point, £1,902.24 in Basildon and £1,915.79 in Rochford.

Even so, Southend is investing in our future. "Residents want much more from their Council than Conservatives' neglect and mismanagement in the past," explain Cllr Peter Wexham and Katie Kurilecz.

"The Lib Dem Councillors, working within the Joint Administration, have agreed a budget which improves our environment, cares about vital local services and housing, will repair our roads and pavements and invest in much, much more – even new trains for our famous Pier."

Don't let the Tories cut services again!



A strong Lib Dem team, working together for you! Cllr Ashley Thompson, Katie Kurilecz, Cllr Carole Mulrone, Cllr Peter Wexham, Cllr Beth Hooper

The Lib Dems say ...

GREEN PRIORITIES STAY TOP OF THE AGENDA

A TOPIC close to the heart of all Liberal Democrats – especially Leigh's Peter Wexham and West Leigh's Katie Kurilecz, a keen cyclist – we regularly report back to you in FOCUS and on Facebook on tree planting in our local parks, open spaces and at the roadside, as well as measures affecting Two Tree Island and the coastline.

Working with Cllr Carole Mulrone, we're pleased to lead on the Council's commitment to increase tree canopy cover across the Borough by planting hundreds more trees and thousands of new shrubs this year – all helping to reduce air pollution alongside other strategies around biodiversity and waste recycling. The new budget adds to this, committing to:

- Southend's Green City Action plan contains innovative projects to improve the environment and give us a Pathway to Net Zero Carbon
- PlastiCity, a project working with our European neighbours in France, Belgium and the Netherlands to increase the amount of plastic that is recycled
- £1.8million capital investment for other initiatives to help the environment, like air quality measurement, electric vehicle (EV) projects and solar panels
- £3.9 million capital investment for Southend's coastal defences and cliff stabilisation.

Our Lib Dem Councillors are also championing School Streets to make the school run safer for residents, parents and pupils and are progressing with proposals to pilot 20mph zones in residential streets.

The Lib Dems say ...

WE'RE GETTING RID OF POTHOLES

A 'GAME-CHANGING' £50million is being invested over 5 years to upgrade roads and pavements across Southend.

"This much-needed new investment will help reverse the neglected state of our pavements, verges and roads" says Cllr Peter Wexham. "Unbelievably, one Tory councillor recently had the nerve to suggest potholes helped road safety by stopping speeding!"

"We know a lot about neglected pavements, roads and verges in Leigh & West Leigh, but we don't make silly excuses to avoid getting the job done," comments Katie Kurilecz.

"Working alongside our Leigh & West Leigh Councillors, I've seen for myself just how many repairs and resurfacing jobs have already been done in roads right across the two wards (not forgetting the major upgrade and safety measures for Hadleigh Road, pushed through by my West Leigh colleague, Cllr Beth Hooper). Please tell us of any issues in your road so we can ensure it's on the action list."

The Lib Dems say ...

CRIME AND SAFETY MATTERS

SADLY, we've seen a rise in crime. Even before recent tragic events in Old Leigh, plans were under way for more security and to reassure residents and visitors.

Temporary CCTV is already in place, with plans for more cameras by summer. "A new frontline base for the Old Town inside Leigh Heritage Centre opened in mid-March and will help Community Safety Officers and police to patrol" reports Peter Wexham.

We know how worried residents are about crime and we're pushing for more resources after years of cuts under the Tories – police numbers in Essex have been CUT by over 300 officers since 2010. There has been money in the Council Budget since last year and it is still there waiting for the police to draw on it.

But policing is ultimately the responsibility of the Government and the Conservative Police Commissioner, not the Council. Judge the Conservatives by what they do, not what they say.

The Lib Dems say ...

PARKING: STILL FREE IN FOUR KEY LOCAL CAR PARKS

WE'RE pleased to announce that the following local car parks, essential for residents and businesses, will stay FREE to use at all times: Hadleigh Road, Leigh Hill Car Park, Uttons Avenue and Sutherland Boulevard.

What about the new Southend Pass? A great innovative idea by the Joint Administration!

Katie Kurilecz explains: "The Pass costs £8.50 a month by direct debit and allows everyone to park for up to three hours free in any Council car park or street parking bay across the Borough, every day. If you want to stay longer, just 'top up' by paying the normal rate. All car parks will now be free of charge after 6pm, great for going to an evening film or show at the Odeon or Cliffs Pavilion, a meal at a restaurant on the seafront, or catching waves on the beach."

She adds: "With the Pass, you can move between car parks in different zones. So you could park for three hours in Leigh then the Central High St car parks to shop, then park on the seafront or go to any of the other zones, all for no cost."

Most main car park charges will stay the same or go down. The main change will be the 'Central Seafront Zone', although charges are in line with many other seaside towns (and cheaper than some). With the Southend Pass, seafront parking from midday for the rest of the day would cost just £6.50. "Not a bad bargain," says Katie. In line with many major seaside resorts, visitors staying in participating hotels qualify for a 50% reduction.





RE-ELECT PETER WEXHAM AS LEIGH'S CHAMPION

I WANT to continue playing my part on the Council to ensure we make Leigh - and Southend - fit for the future.

With Lib Dem Council colleagues, I'm working to ensure our town makes the best possible recovery from the pandemic and lockdowns, so our small shops, bigger businesses - and cafés and restaurants - can flourish and grow again.

There are many aspects to address, including security and safety. Even before recent tragic events in Old Leigh, plans were under way for more security and to reassure residents and visitors, as explained on page 3.

Change is inevitable and usually it's welcome, to keep our town fresh and vibrant. But we need to ensure that change takes us in the right direction. Recent threats to the future of Old Leigh and our fishing industry appear to be going in the wrong direction and I'm seeking answers before it's too late. See the story on this page!

I've campaigned on the environment all my life. Leigh Councillor Carole Mulroney and I have managed to push the environment and climate change up the agenda and into Council policy. I'm very proud that the Environmental Charter I introduced has evolved to become the Council's Green City Action Plan!

There's still a lot more to do and I'll continue to watch and push for action.

Just a few of Peter's achievements

- Forced the Council to repair Two Tree Island's sea defences to stop contaminated water leaching into the river
- Campaigned for a secondary sewage treatment works at Southend and for the main outfall to be extended well out into the river - now our beaches have Blue Flags!
- Helped stop the Tory Council from allowing a super casino & three tower blocks of luxury flats to be built on the foreshore
- Located EU fisheries grants to be used for the industry
- Fought to save Strand Wharf from developers

Peter Wexham says ... **PROTECT OUR FISHING INDUSTRY**

OUR fishing industry is dealing with many challenges, including post-Brexit bureaucracy blocking exports of fresh produce.

Now a new threat could take the fishing and cockle boats away from Leigh. Conservatives who represent Leigh or West Leigh have been in the local press to promote plans for a big new marina at Shoebury, for giant yachts and commercial fishing boats, that they hope will be backed by money from Qatar.

This big business development would pull the heart and the industries away from Leigh Old Town and allow the Port of Leigh to silt up. It would make Old Leigh nothing but a pub drinking area instead of the living, working village that we still have.

Don't let Tories who say they want to represent Leigh lead it to a slow death while they focus on Shoebury.

The Liberal Democrats, locally and nationally, may use any information you have provided, including your political views to further our objectives, share it with our elected representatives and/or contact you in future using any of the means provided. Some contacts may be automated. You may opt out of some or all contacts or exercise your other legal rights by contacting us. Further details are in our Privacy Policy at www.libdems.org.uk/privacy.

This leaflet was paid for by Leigh Liberal Democrats and delivered by volunteers and supporters, complying with all Covid protocols. Some letters to individual households were delivered by a professional delivery company (as allowed by the Government Guidelines) with the cost covered by our own fundraising.

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