

THE COVENTRY COVENANT

OUR PLAN FOR COVENTRY



Vote Conservative on 7 May 2026

A PERSONAL MESSAGE FROM THE LEADER OF THE COVENTRY CONSERVATIVE GROUP

Dear Resident,

The Coventry Covenant is not just a plan, it is a promise. It is a new settlement between you, the taxpayer, and the city you call home.

For too long, local politics has felt like something done to you, rather than with you. That ends now. I am not just asking for your vote I am inviting you to help us run this city.

For 16 years under this Labour council you have done your part, but they have failed to do theirs. They have asked for more while delivering less. They have squandered your hard-earned money on failed investments like Coombe Abbey Hotel and Tom White Waste. They have operated in the shadows, attempting to shield their decisions from the very people who pay for them.

The Coventry Covenant is our commitment to a different path. It's our five-year roadmap to make Coventry a city where people choose to live, work and invest.

The current administration has had their time; now it's time for yours. I am more determined than ever to deliver the change we so desperately need.

The Covenant is ready. Will you join us?

Gary Ridley



Councillor Gary Ridley

OUR FIVE PLEDGES TO YOU:

- **LOWER COUNCIL TAX**
- **BETTER PAVEMENTS**
- **A PURGE ON POTHOLES**
- **TACKLE FLY TIPPING**
- **CREATE TWO NEW NATURE RESERVES**

LOWER TAX FOR COVENTRY

CONSERVATIVES WILL DELIVER IMPROVED FINANCES:

- Deliver lower council tax
- Replace the One Coventry Plan with the Coventry Covenant
- Deliver efficiencies of more than £5m and review failing investments
- Reduce the amount of money paid out in councillors' allowances
- Oppose a 'tourist tax' on Coventry

A Conservative administration will deliver lower taxes, because that's the best way to help people during these difficult times. It's our number one priority, and we have identified the efficiencies and wasteful spending necessary to deliver lower taxes.

Earlier this year we set out plans to deliver a real-terms freeze in council tax. But Labour, Reform UK and Green Councillors worked together to defeat us. This shows only the Conservatives can be trusted to keep council tax low.

We won't cut services for the sake of it, but we believe the council should not be taking one penny more than is needed. So we will seek out efficiencies where possible and cut out wasteful spending.

Labour's 'One Coventry Plan' was a vision for the council; the 'Coventry Covenant' is a promise to the citizens.

It will set out how we will transform the city's services and root out waste. We have already identified savings of £5m and on day one we will review failing investments like Coombe Abbey Hotel and Tom White Waste which have lost millions.

Improvements in technology also offer the prospect of improved and more efficient services. Innovation must be at the heart of our improvement programme, so we will commission an 'AI' taskforce as

part of the Coventry Covenant.

Councillors will not be immune, and we will reduce the members allowances bill too. We will achieve this by reducing the size of the Cabinet and abolishing do nothing deputy cabinet members.

Their legacy is one of waste and failure with a lack of transparency. If we are to learn from this, they must be held to account for decisions like 'loaning' a £1m to the City of Culture Trust just before it went bankrupt.

So as part of the Coventry Covenant, we will instigate a Labour legacy waste audit with a clear remit and timescale for reporting.

We will also begin to tackle the council's debt mountain by instigating a two year debt reset. This will introduce a freeze on all non-essential borrowing to stabilise our finances.

Under Labour everyone is paying more tax, and getting less in return. Now they're exploring a tourist tax –and the revenue might not even be spent in Coventry.

Reform UK have already given their support to the idea of a tourist tax, leaving the Conservatives as the only party to oppose it.

IMPROVED PAVEMENTS AND HIGHWAYS

HOW WE'LL GET COVENTRY MOVING:

- Boost spending on highways and pavements
- Emergency audit of highways and pavements
- Roll out more average speed-cameras and flashing signs
- Pursue improved rail services to the CBS Arena

Every day residents tell us they are worried about the state of pavements on their street and potholes on our roads.

Quality road surfaces are important for everyone. But after 16 years of underinvestment by this failing Labour administration they are looking worse for wear.

Although our councillors campaign hard for improvements, we need a bigger budget to tackle the pothole pandemic. Our 'alternative budget' earlier this year set out how we would prioritise these improvements, and where we would find additional resources to fund this.

However, because of the transformation we will achieve through the Coventry Covenant, we will have further resources to allocate to this.

However, it's not just about investment, it's about working efficiently. Research commissioned by the private sector recently found it costs the council more than £600 per pot hole repair.

We will undertake an immediate emergency audit of the city's roads. This data-driven approach will give us the information we need to diagnose the problem and put together a proper repair programme on a worst first basis.

We are also keen to explore a highways sponsorship programme to raise extra cash for their upkeep. It's been successful on the city's roundabouts so why not extend the scheme?

Keeping people safe on our network is also important so we will continue to roll-out average speed cameras where necessary. We will also lobby the Government to allow local authorities to keep the revenue raised so it can be reinvested in highway safety.

Pavements in our city are also in a terrible state making it difficult for anyone trying to get around, but especially for the elderly and those with mobility issues. As well as boosting investment in pavements we will undertake a street audit to remove barriers to walking, helping to make active travel the natural choice for everyone.

In short, we will get a grip on pavements and purge potholes. We will set out a five-year plan to achieve this as part of the Coventry Covenant. Our legacy will be a road network fit for the 21st Century.

We will also work with partners to improve public transport in the city. Our number one priority is to improve rail services to the CBS Arena. Coventry City FC is the pride of our community and good transport links are vital.

DELIVER TWO

NATURE RESERVES

HOW WE'LL MAKE COVENTRY GREENER:

- We'll designate Coundon Wedge and Baginton Fiels as nature reserves
- Create a fly-tipping task force and Introduce drones
- Review brown bin charges and introduce a plastic bottle recycling scheme
- Make it easier to access the 'tip'

Despite our best efforts Labour has needlessly decimated our greenbelt. However speculation continues to surround the future of Coundon Wedge and Baginton Fields.

We believe it's time to end that speculation, so we will transform these areas into nature reserves. This enhanced level of protection would be a permanent safeguard, regardless of who ran the council.

We will consult with residents on the best way to do this. And we will pay for it using 'Net Biodiversity Gain Credits' which developers are required to buy to offset their carbon footprint.

There are other sites around the city which could be suitable as well and we will explore the feasibility of rolling out the programme across the city.

Where a site is not suitable to be a nature reserve, we will make it easier for residents to lodge an application for 'village green' status.

We must also do more to keep our city clean. On the ground, Conservative councillors have organised and supported resident-led litter picks but we need a new approach to fly-tipping. Which has become a major problem.

Last year alone the city set aside £0.5million to manage fly-tipping, and it's blighting our communities.

It's time to get serious, so a Conservative administration will introduce a new drone capability to take the fight to those responsible.

These will help to identify waste and gather evidence to prosecute those responsible, They will be especially useful in rural parts of the city which are less accessible for traditional enforcement methods.

However, we recognise the need for a multi agency response. So we will set up a fly-tipping task force as part of the Coventry Covenant. This will bring together social housing landlords, West Midlands Police and other key partners.

We will review access arrangements to the 'tip' to encourage residents to dispose of their waste responsibly. We will look at which vehicles are able to use the facility, and we will trial one day a week without a booking system.

We want to see residents recycling more, but this must be encouraged in partnership rather than imposed. So we will review the charge on brown bins to understand what, if any, impact this has had on fly-tipping. We will also consult the public on the introduction of a plastic bottle recycling scheme.

We will also seek to improve education about the environment. Working with schools, we will teach children about the importance of Keeping Britain Tidy.

CREATING JOBS AND ECONOMIC GROWTH

HOW WE'LL SHAPE COVENTRY'S FUTURE:

- Bring together business and community leaders to tackle youth unemployment
- Keep Coventry Airport open
- We will consult smaller retailers on a turnover-based rent scheme
- Set up a taskforce to examine hydrogen technology
- Set up a high street challenge fund
- Provide free late night parking in the city centre

Unemployment, especially youth unemployment remains a serious problem and a tragedy for those involved. So we will bring together business leaders, community leaders and the public sector to identify solutions as part of the Coventry Covenant.

Sadly it's becoming clear that Labour has no such plan to deliver the jobs and growth we need. The so-called 'Gigafactory' and thousands of jobs promised, looks unlikely. The incoming Conservative administration will immediately enter discussions with the owners of Coventry Airport and the Civil Aviation Authority to keep Coventry Airport open.

With no realistic prospect of a gigafactory, we believe it makes no sense to lose this major strategic asset and the businesses based there. A Conservative administration will work to ensure that the airport becomes an attractive vibrant employment hub.

We will provide support to help our beleaguered city centre. These measures include consulting traders on turnover based rents and enticing more shoppers in by providing free late night parking. We'll also stick with plans to re-open the River Sherbourne and improve the public realm.

We still believe there is an opportunity to make Coventry the number one

destination for start-up IT companies in the UK. Our aim is to build the next Silicon Valley, creating jobs and wealth and we will make space available within Friargate for this purpose. We will also set up a task force to examine the opportunities offered by hydrogen technology.

Our district centres are important too, so we will also set up our own High Street Challenge Fund which will allow district shopping centres to bid for match funding.

These grants will fund a range of improvements to the high street and could include anything from flower tubs to Christmas and Diwali decorations.

When decisions are made by the council they are required to consider the impact on a range of factors, such as climate change. We will introduce a new duty to consider how a decision contributes to economic growth and job creation. This will need to be set out in every report to councillors.

We will work with government and the West Midlands Combined Authority to create a transport system that promotes prosperity. And we will veto any policies that are harmful to work, such as additional taxes on those who drive to work or a congestion zone charge.

Finally, a good internet connection is vital so we'll work with telecoms providers to ensure the smooth roll out of high speed broadband on new estates.

CREATING STRONGER COMMUNITIES

HOW WE'LL SHAPE COVENTRY'S FUTURE:

- Review the Earlsdon Conservation Area
- Establish a small grants scheme for local charities
- Seek a city-wide injunction to move on illegal traveller encampments
- Establish an annual St George's Day event in the city centre
- Consult residents on the future of the Godiva Festival

Every day people in Coventry work hard and contribute to the well-being of our city. But the law-abiding majority are frustrated that the authorities do not always stand up to those who break the rules.

That frustration is visible on Earlsdon Street where a heritage building was illegally demolished in 2024.

The response of authorities has been slow and ineffective and the 'Earlsdon Conservative Area' did nothing to protect it. So we will review this policy to ensure it is fit for purpose, along with broader conservation policies across the city.

Illegal traveller camps are another issue which have blighted our city. So we will seek a city-wide injunction so illegal encampments can be moved on swiftly.

Abandoned vehicles are a growing issue of concern. Although the DVLA has granted the council the power to remove untaxed vehicles this process needs to be simplified. So we'll lobby the Government to change the rules on enforcement.

We will pursue a policy of agile intervention against graffiti, establishing a multi-agency task force as part of the Coventry Covenant. Our aim is to ensure a friction-less gateway for reporting with a quicker reporting to remediation pipeline.

But there is a lot to be proud of, and we will provide support to the people that

make Coventry special. So in our first budget, we will create a new grant scheme for small charities operating within the city. Many of these groups do tremendous work, taking pressure off the council.

We would also like to see the city do more to celebrate our heritage, including George, our patron saint. So we will establish an annual St George's Day event in our city centre and fly our flag with pride.

Earlier this year the council announced the cancellation of the Godiva Festival following their total inability to control costs.

Once the UK's largest free festival, attendees have been asked to pay higher and higher ticket prices whilst we continue to subsidise it through council tax. Sadly this successful family festival aspired to be a much bigger music festival and has failed at both.

Moving forward, we will launch a genuine consultation with the people of Coventry about the future of Godiva Festival. It either returns to being a free family festival, or it can try to become something bigger with bigger acts. Either way we believe it must be able to cover its own costs.

Finally, Coventry is a multicultural city. And we will work with partners to improve bereavement services. Especially for those communities who have specific requirements around burial times.

THE CHOICE AT THIS ELECTION



CONSERVATIVES

LABOUR

Have already put forward plans for lower council tax, equivalent to a real-terms freeze.

Brought forward an inflation-busting increase in council tax of 3.95%.

Will reduce the wage bill for councillors. We'll achieve this by shrinking the size of the Cabinet and axing 'do-nothing' deputy cabinet members altogether.

Ignored the findings of an independent pay review. They reduced recommended allowances for some Conservative members and increased it for other Labour members.

Will protect Coundon Wedge and Baginton Fields, designating them as nature reserves.

Enthusiastically approved development on huge areas of greenbelt in Coventry.

Will bring together the greatest minds to create jobs through the Coventry Covenant. We will keep Coventry Airport open as a strategic asset for the city.

Has presided over rising unemployment thanks to the 'jobs tax' imposed by central government.

Will seek a city-wide injunction to disperse illegal traveller incursions quickly.

Has failed to adequately tackle this issue with problem sites targeted year on year.

Will invest more in our highways and pavements, and improve the efficiency of our operations.

Are spending £600 per pot hole repair according to research undertaken by Citroen.

Will get on top of fly-tipping, rolling out drones to help the clean up of sites and gather evidence for prosecution.

Has presided over an increase in fly-tipping and litter during 16 years of mismanagement. This cost more than £0.5m last year alone.

Will protect our city's heritage by reviewing the measures in place to protect valued buildings.

Were unable to stop developer's illegally demolishing buildings on Earlsdon Street.

OUR FIRST 100 DAYS IN CONTROL

- Replace the 'One Coventry Plan' with the Coventry Covenant.
- Commission a review into failing assets like Coombe Abbey Hotel.
- Abolish do nothing Deputy Cabinet Members and reduce councillors pay bill.
- Review Brown bin charges and improve access to the Whitley tip.
- Consult residents on the future of the Godiva Festival.