

# The Bolton Plan 2009-2012

Delivering more for less

**We are doing our bit** - we have used fewer resources to produce the Bolton Plan 2009-2012, and more than halved the cost.

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**“We are determined to do more  
to make real improvements for  
local people”**

Photography has been limited to help further reduce the cost of this document.

# Message from the Leader and the Chief Executive

Welcome to the Bolton Plan 2009-12. Here you'll find out about the council's priorities for the next three years, and how we will work with our partners to improve the quality of life for everyone in the Bolton family.

We have made some huge achievements in the past year. We have narrowed the gap in life expectancy within Bolton by almost two years; educational attainment is improving, particularly at GCSE level; and more people than ever are receiving care services, which are tailored to their personal needs.

We have made our services more accessible and efficient. We have managed to save £7.37 million by changing the way we do things.

Our strong partnership working has continued to reap rewards. Our work to build 'homes for the future' has won us our fourth Beacon award for housing services in recent years, confirming that we are a national leader in this area. Despite the difficult economic circumstances, £152 million of investment is on schedule to come in to the town through the first phase of the Innovation Zone development. This will bring two new colleges, a town centre health, leisure and research complex, and new car parking facilities.

Our dedication to both improve the quality of life for local people and run the council better was recognised by the Audit Commission who named us as one of the top councils in the country. Our social care services for adults and children are also among the best in the country.

However, there is no room for complacency. We are in a difficult economic climate and we are determined to do more to make real improvements for local people, while providing value for money.

During the next three years, we will continue our ambitious change agenda to deliver significant savings while improving services. We also aim to make big improvements against our biggest challenges, such as:

- improving life expectancy
- improving educational attainment
- raising levels of skill
- reducing unemployment and helping more people on incapacity benefit get back in to work
- cutting burglary, vehicle crime and theft
- reducing our carbon footprint

The Bolton Plan 2009-12 sets out how we will rise to these challenges.



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Cliff Morris".

Councillor Cliff Morris  
Leader, Bolton Council



A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "S. R. Harriss".

Sean Harriss  
Chief Executive

# Delivering our vision

Delivering our vision for a better Bolton cannot be left to chance. Leadership, drive and commitment from everyone involved in the Bolton family are critical.

The Bolton Vision Partnership provides strategic leadership for the borough. It is made up of representatives from Bolton's public, private, voluntary, and community sectors.

The partnership's community strategy, Bolton: Our Vision 2007-17, paints a picture of Bolton that we, our partners and local people want to see in the future. A copy is available at: [www.boltonvision.org.uk](http://www.boltonvision.org.uk)

The community strategy sets out the twin aims of securing economic prosperity and maximising the local benefit while, at the same time, narrowing the gap across six priority themes:

- healthy
- achieving
- prosperous
- safe
- cleaner and greener
- strong and confident.

The targets that will allow us to meet these challenging goals are set out in the Community Strategy Three Year Plan.

Rather than include the full details of the strategy here, the Bolton Plan highlights the key projects that the council will deliver to achieve the main aims and priority themes.

The Bolton Plan also includes a third aim: transforming services. This is to make sure that our services continue to meet local needs and provide value for money during this challenging economic time.

We are confident that by continuing to work well with our partners through the Bolton Vision Partnership, we will be able to deliver real improvements to the quality of life for the people of Bolton.

**“Leadership, drive and commitment from everyone involved in the Bolton family are critical”**

# Economic prosperity

We have moved quickly to make sure that local people and businesses are supported during these difficult economic times.

That is why we've invested half a million pounds to help the local economy fight back against the recession. Business Bolton, our service for improving and encouraging business, is providing advice to local businesses on topics ranging from planning regulations to how to lessen the impact of the economic downturn. The work shop, which is our service for getting people back into work, is supporting people who have been made redundant to use their current skills to find new work.

In the short-term we must continue to focus on helping people who are unemployed, or claiming incapacity benefit, to get back in to work.

Despite economic uncertainty, we are ambitious for Bolton's future. We are continuing with our plans to bring significant investment into the local economy, which will create around 16,000 jobs during the next decade. We will support local people to benefit from these changes as they take shape.

We have already started to see cranes in the sky around Bolton as the £1.2 billion town centre makeover develops:

- work has started on the new Community and Sixth Form College campus on the site of the former Deane Road and Stanley Street Car Parks. The £90 million development is the biggest further education investment in the north west
- construction has started on new multi-storey car parks – one as part of the college campus development, and another off Topp Way
- planning permission has been granted for a town centre health, leisure and research complex featuring an eight lane swimming pool
- £48 million has been earmarked for a new public transport interchange on Newport Street and associated highway upgrades
- key projects, such as the £150 million Church Wharf investment, continue to make progress.

These long-term plans are critically important to Bolton's future prosperity.

# Narrowing the gap

We are proud of Bolton's diverse heritage. We want everyone in the Bolton family to have an improved quality of life and the confidence to achieve their ambitions.

No-one should be discriminated against on the basis of where they live, or on their background. To make this a reality, we must continue to tackle the causes of deprivation and inequality and narrow the gap both within the borough and between Bolton and the rest of the country.

We have made improvements around life expectancy and educational attainment, particularly at GCSE level. However, many challenges remain, particularly around health, the educational attainment of vulnerable young people, unemployment and acquisitive crime, which is burglary, vehicle crime and theft.

To make a real difference, we need to understand our customers' varied needs. That is why we place genuine importance on consultation with our diverse communities.

We also need to make sure all our partners continue to work together effectively as well as continuing to tailor our services and pool our resources to address local priorities, both now and in the future.

That is why we have put a new approach to neighbourhood renewal into practice. Each of our 11 most deprived areas now has a local partnership group and a Neighbourhood Action Plan, which has been developed in consultation with local people and identifies the main challenges for that area. The Neighbourhood Manager for each locality is working with our partners to bring together services that are specifically needed.

This is helping us to adapt our approach, and base it on local need; make best use of our resources; and provide genuine value for money for our residents.

The Community Strategy Three Year Plan sets out the specific outcomes and targets that we are focused on improving. A copy will soon be available at: [www.boltonvision.org.uk](http://www.boltonvision.org.uk)

**“Each of our 11 most deprived areas now has a local partnership group and a Neighbourhood Action Plan”**

Less printed copies and more online tools have reduced the cost of this document by over 50%.

# Transforming services

Our services are among the best in the country, but we still want to improve what we do and how we do it.

Providing value for money is more important now than ever before. We will continue our challenging change agenda and deliver significant savings of at least £30 million during the coming three years.

We will do this by reviewing and redesigning what we do, so that we can work more efficiently both across the council and with our partners.

Our work at the Orchards, in Farnworth, is a great example of how things are changing. The site brings together services including schools, a children's centre, a youth centre and a library in one place. This is not just a place where people can access services; we hope it will become a hub for the community, where people from all walks of life can meet and try new things.

We believe that pushing for greater innovation and value for money is the right thing to do. We want to minimise the impact that the current economic situation has on our work, while continuing to deliver top-quality services for the people of Bolton.

We will also continue to strengthen our approach to customer care to make sure that people receive the highest possible standard of service when they contact us. We will further improve access to our services to provide greater choice, convenience and independence; our move towards more online and neighbourhood-based services has already taken us a step in the right direction to achieve this.

We take our environmental responsibilities seriously. As we review our services, we will consider how we can reduce the environmental impact of what we do, and what we plan to do. For example, by reducing the energy and resources used. We aim to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by 33% by 2013, and our Carbon Management Plan is already being used to achieve this. We will continue to work with our partners to make sure that what we do in the borough is environmentally sustainable.

We will judge our success during the next three years by our rate of improvement against our key priorities, and the delivery of our challenging efficiency targets.

**“We will deliver significant savings of at least £30 million during the coming three years”**



# Healthy Bolton

We want everyone in the Bolton family to be healthy and have a good quality of life, and we took big steps to achieving this last year.

We supported people to improve their health through the Big Bolton Health Check, which gave a health MOT to 73,000 people without existing cardio-vascular disease or diabetes in the borough aged over 45.

Our Active Bolton campaign and free swimming for under 16s and over 60s also encourages people to get fit and our social care services have been recognised by independent inspectors as among the best in the country.

Overall, the gap in life expectancy between the least and most well off parts of Bolton has narrowed but it still stands at over 13 years.

There is still a big gap in life expectancy between Bolton and the rest of the country. More needs to be done to reduce drug and alcohol misuse and obesity, and to make sure even more people make use of personal budgets to support their independence.

## **We aim to:**

- reduce mortality rates
- tackle drug and alcohol misuse and the associated health impacts
- reduce obesity and support more people to lead healthier lives
- make sure that people who need care get support that fits their personal needs, quickly and respectfully
- invest early in preventative work, so people are less likely to need specialist support at an early age.

## **We will:**

- extend the Big Bolton Health Check to people aged between 40 and 45 while matching the 82% take up rate achieved in the first phase by March 2010
- raise awareness about safe alcohol limits and the dangers of using alcohol and cocaine in combination, by launching web-based self-help information in 2009
- take forward our 'Active Bolton' and 'Food and Health' strategies to prevent and reduce obesity
- reduce fuel poverty and associated health problems; by increasing referrals from vulnerable households to the Energy Saving Trust Advice Centre to 200 in 2009/10
- implement the smoke free homes programme, and develop an action plan to tackle illicit tobacco by March 2010
- implement world class commissioning within the next two years, to make sure that our services are of consistent high quality, provide value for money and are in line with council and our partners' strategies
- make sure that 50% of eligible people receive direct payments or self-directed support by 2012
- increase the number of carers receiving information, advice or specific carers services to 36% by 2012 (40% of our clients have carers).

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# Achieving Bolton

We have seen improvements in school attainment at all key stages; particularly in the number of pupils achieving five or more A\* - C grades at GCSE, including English and mathematics.

Our GCSE results showed the strongest improvement in the north west in 2008 and also narrowed the attainment gap between Bolton and the rest of the country.

We have redesigned the Schools Library Service to make it more efficient, and Bolton is one of only two north west authorities to be involved in the 'Find Your Talent' programme, which gives young people the chance to try out cultural and creative activities.

However, more needs to be done to make sure young people in the borough leave education with strong qualifications.

## **This is why we aim to:**

- continue improvements to educational attainment for all pupils, particularly for looked after children, and children from black and minority ethnic families
- reduce the number of young people not in education, employment or training.

## **We will:**

- raise standards by rebuilding, remodelling and refurbishing our schools over the next 10 years with £182 million from the Primary Building, Building Schools for the Future and Academy programmes
- continue to make improvements in leadership and teaching in schools so that 56% of Bolton's pupils achieve five or more GCSEs at grades A\* - C, including English and maths, by summer 2010
- further develop our tailored services, which meet the different needs of each neighbourhood, for example through 100% of schools offering access to extended services such as extra activities and support by September 2010
- deliver the £780,000 Family Pathfinder programme to improve outcomes for the 50 most vulnerable families in Bolton by 2011
- implement a third phase of new children's centres by April 2010
- develop a personal education plan for each looked after child and ensure they receive targeted responses to meet their needs.

**“Our GCSE results showed the strongest improvement in the north west in 2008”**

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# Prosperous Bolton

We have invested half a million pounds to help the local economy to fight the recession.

We are also supporting local businesses and residents through schemes at Business Bolton and The work shop has set up an additional 21 council apprenticeships for local young people.

Despite the economic climate, we are optimistic about Bolton's future. The redevelopment of the town centre is progressing well; we are still set to create around 16,000 new jobs across a range of sectors during the next decade. Driven by the council, this is a 'once in a generation' opportunity.

However, currently too many local people remain on out-of-work benefits. Local skill levels need to rise to allow residents to benefit from these new opportunities, and to narrow inequalities.

## **To achieve this we aim to:**

- reduce the proportion of working age residents in our most deprived wards on work-related benefits
- raise the amount of people achieving both NVQ level 2 and NVQ level 3 skills.

## **We will:**

- take employment, skills development and enterprise services to deprived communities using a mobile outreach unit in 2009 and establish a work shop in Farnworth by March 2010
- carry on with the implementation of Phase 1 of the Bolton Innovation Zone, involving a £200 million public investment programme to deliver the colleges development, the health, leisure and research centre, the transport interchange and associated highway infrastructure in the coming three years
- complete the Central Street development agreement in the next 12 months
- continue to work as part of the Greater Manchester Multi-Area Agreement towards city strategy targets, through schemes such as Working Neighbourhood Teams and the Future Job Fund initiative
- continue to use the Business Bolton brokerage model to support local businesses during the economic downturn through four 'Responding to the Recession' workshops and by delivering an intensive business support pilot project in 2009/10.

**“We have invested half a million pounds to help the local economy to fight the recession”**

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# Safe Bolton

Crime reduction has been a real success story for Bolton in recent years. Since 2007/08 criminal damage has decreased by 7% and violent offences have gone down by almost 10%.

Our work to tackle antisocial behaviour has been a huge success, with residents telling us that it is now less of a problem than it was in the past.

We have increased the visibility of our policing, and our Safer Neighbourhood Officers have engaged with local communities through community walks, consultation with vulnerable groups, and Bluetooth messaging.

However, the recession presents us with new challenges, particularly around the risk of rising domestic burglary and vehicle crime.

## **That is why we aim to:**

- reduce acquisitive crime levels, i.e. burglary, vehicle crime and theft
- reduce serious violent crime
- increase the number of offenders under probation in employment
- reduce the number of people killed and seriously injured on our roads.

## **We will:**

- reduce acquisitive crime by 7% by March 2011; for example, by raising awareness in vulnerable communities in 2009, and by delivering targeted security campaigns to vulnerable groups and in priority neighbourhoods by March 2010
- continue to deliver the Fuse project and the Prolific and Priority Offender scheme to break the cycle of crime among prolific vehicle crime and burglary offenders
- work with the Town Centre Management Group to further reduce crime by developing our town centre engagement and enforcement activity
- make sure at least 35% of ex-offenders are in employment of at least 16 hours per week at the end of their licence period
- educate young people about road safety through the delivery of the Step Outside training programme to 86% of primary schools by March 2010 and by providing educational resources to pre-school groups.

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# Cleaner and greener Bolton

Making the town cleaner and greener is a top priority for local people

Already more than 30% of waste collected in Bolton is sent for recycling. We have introduced recycling within council buildings and are working with the Carbon Trust to minimise carbon dioxide emissions from council activities.

Our streets are cleaner than ever, with particular improvements in our most deprived areas. Moses Gate and Moss Bank Parks have secured Green Flag status for the second year and more than £1 million has been invested into upgrading play areas for local children.

#### **To build on these successes, we aim to:**

- raise the percentage of household waste reused, recycled or composted
- sustain our current levels of cleanliness by getting people to change their habits
- reduce our carbon footprint.

#### **We will:**

- deliver a programme of high quality education and robust enforcement to improve our physical environment
- secure funding and begin improvements to Queens Park
- deliver nine upgraded play areas for local children by April 2010
- deliver our Carbon Management programme to reduce our carbon dioxide emissions by 33% by 2013
- develop a waste strategy for Bolton by January 2010
- increase our recycling rates, reduce contamination levels to five per cent, and avoid steep Landfill Allowance Trading scheme penalties
- conduct our green fleet review to identify ways to save resources and improve efficiency.

**“More than 30% of waste collected in Bolton is sent for recycling”**

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# Strong and confident Bolton

Strong and confident communities are at the heart of our work to tackle inequalities.

We have adopted a community cohesion strategy and set up a Faith Leaders' Forum to strengthen leadership on this issue. We are working with the voluntary sector to strengthen its contribution to local life.

Improvements to both Farnworth and Horwich Libraries have brought increases in visitor numbers, and Breightmet Library will be in a brand new building by September 2009.

In 2008/9, we spent £6.5 million to improve private sector housing and £27.6 million to improve public sector housing. Despite the recession, we are working hard to deliver between 4,000 and 6,000 new homes during the next 10-12 years. We aim to make half of these homes affordable.

We will continue to support people to live independently in their own, fit for purpose homes.

## **To build on this work we aim to:**

- raise participation in regular volunteering
- raise the number of residents who feel people from different backgrounds get on well together
- transform cultural and community-based services in the borough, and make sure we have the right services in the right places
- increase the supply of affordable homes for local people
- halve the number of homeless households in temporary accommodation.

## **We will:**

- develop the role of the Stronger Communities Partnership, to support and develop the work to create an even stronger Bolton
- deliver the One Bolton festival during the summer of 2009 and the Bolton Community Cohesion Project until 2011, to celebrate our diverse communities
- direct at least 240 people who want to do voluntary work to organisations seeking volunteers in 2009/10
- develop the role of the Strategic Cultural Network during 2009 and support people to contribute to Bolton's thriving cultural scene through innovative events programmes
- redevelop Bolton Museum's social history gallery to celebrate Bolton's cultural identity by March 2011
- continue with our strategy to deliver between 4,000 and 6,000 new homes during the next 10-12 years, including affordable housing.

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# Find out more

We have made some real achievements in the past year

- despite the difficult economic climate, plans are on track to redevelop Bolton town centre and to improve housing and jobs in the borough
- we are narrowing the gap around health, attainment and cleanliness
- we plan to deliver significant efficiency savings during the next three years, by transforming our services to deliver better value for money.

However, challenging times remain. The Bolton Plan 2009-12 sets out how we plan to meet these.

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To find out more please visit  
our website:  
[www.bolton.gov.uk/boltonplan](http://www.bolton.gov.uk/boltonplan)

Or email:  
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As part of Bolton's commitment to a sustainable future, this document is printed using vegetable based inks on 100% recycled paper.