

# Ben Dempsey



✦ FOR MAYOR OF SUSSEX

**For a positive and hopeful future for our communities  
choose an experienced environmental expert as your Lib Dem candidate**



## Lifelong Sussex Liberal

The Mayor of Sussex needs to know and love our county. I grew up in Haywards Heath and have lived in Sussex for most of my life. I went to Oxford University then lived in London, before moving back to Sussex in 2010. I now live in Ditchling with my wife and our three children. I have been a Liberal Democrat for nearly 30 years.

## Experienced Leader & Campaigner

I have the experience to build and lead a team across Sussex to win. I have been a senior leader in the charity sector, and in 2024 I was parliamentary candidate for the new constituency of East Grinstead & Uckfield.

We built a strong campaign team from scratch across three Districts, coming second to the Conservatives in a non-target seat. I routinely support other teams in elections across Sussex, for example in Lewes, Wealden, Mid Sussex and Hove. I was District Councillor for Hassocks from 2019-23, and secured a £100,000 reserve for sustainability projects in the Conservative budget.

## Media Performer

To win the Mayoral election, we must communicate a clear and inspiring vision. I have extensive experience in the media and have appeared on the Today Programme, BBC News, Radio 5Live, Channel 4 News and Al Jazeera.

In the general election I represented the party on BBC Politics South East and in TV debate against candidates including Sian Berry for the Greens and Maria Caulfield for the Conservatives. I was asked by the Lib Dem national press office to host a visit to Sussex by Polly Toynbee for a *Guardian* article.

## Policy Expert

I have 25 years' professional experience in policy, advocacy and media in the humanitarian and environment sectors. I have a PhD in nature conservation from the University of Sussex, and currently work for a large wildlife NGO. I have worked for Save the Children and other humanitarian organisations in countries including Myanmar, Haiti and the occupied Palestinian territories.

I believe I have the breadth of knowledge and experience necessary to be a winning candidate and a strong, principled, Liberal Mayor of Sussex.

## A VISION FOR SUSSEX

I want Sussex to be a beacon of hope for Britain – tolerant, fair, green, and delivering for our communities with:

- A planning and housing strategy that meets the needs of communities – especially with social housing
- An integrated transport system, including better bus networks and joined up cycle routes
- Putting nature at the heart of our communities, delivering the best Local Nature Recovery Strategy in England

For a positive, Liberal vision for Sussex, please vote for me to be your Lib Dem candidate.

**If you would like to get in touch, please contact me:**

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Ben Dempsey ✦ FOR MAYOR



## MY VISION FOR SUSSEX

Sussex is an extraordinary county. From the coast, across the Downs and throughout the Weald we are a strong, caring and proud community.

Like other parts of the country, though, people are disillusioned with politics. We are up against right-wing, authoritarian political forces that want to divide us.

I will counter that with a positive and inspiring message. The creation of a Mayor of Sussex is a chance to harness the power of our communities behind a vision of hope, tolerance and unity.

### Vote for Hope

I want Sussex to be a beacon of hope – where we deliver the homes people need without destroying our environment; where people receive the health, education, care, transport and policing services they deserve; and where nature is woven into the fabric of our society. I will prioritise:

#### A new deal for housing

The current planning system doesn't work for anyone. Young people and those on low incomes often can't afford a home, but at the same time communities feel under huge pressure from new housing developments.

To fix that, we need a planning strategy that prioritises the housing our communities actually need – especially more social housing. The Labour government has ambitious targets for house-building. As Mayor I would push for a new deal on housing in Sussex – supporting development where it includes vital services, protects the environment, and places community need over developer profit.

#### An integrated transport strategy

As part of a new deal, we need a transport system that works for everyone, from our cities to our most rural communities. I would prioritise an expanded bus network with affordable fares, and joined up cycle routes alongside maintaining our roads. That would support our businesses and economy, connect our communities and help improve our environment.

#### Supporting essential services

Our essential services are under extreme pressure. As Mayor, I would draw on my track record of working across party lines. I will work with local authorities to deliver vital services including education and SEND provision, social care, healthcare and policing. As new housing is built, I will use the position of Mayor to ensure Sussex has the resources we need to support our communities.

#### Nature woven into our landscape

As we deliver better infrastructure, we must also protect and restore nature. We have extraordinary nature in Sussex. It is vital for our happiness and wellbeing, and for our farms and rural businesses.

The Mayor will be responsible for delivering the Sussex Local Nature Recovery Strategy. I would make that strategy central to decision-making on housing, transport and other infrastructure. My PhD was focused on nature conservation in Sussex, and in my current job I lead nature restoration work at a national level. I want to see our towns, countryside, rivers and sea bursting with life. As Mayor, nature would be at the heart of my vision for Sussex.

