

VOLT'S VISION FOR THE CITY OF OLDENBURG

LOCAL ELECTION MANIFESTO 2026

VOLT OLDENBURG

AI-TRANSLATED VERSION

Volt

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WE ARE ALL MAYORS

Oldenburg is a city sustained by the people who live, work, study and contribute here. It thrives on neighbourhoods, initiatives, associations, businesses, social service providers and all those who, largely unseen, help every day to keep this city running and moving forward. Local politics directly affects our daily lives: housing, mobility, education, climate action, administration and how we live together in our neighbourhoods. That is precisely why shaping our city is not the responsibility of a handful of council members, but of all of us!

Volt Oldenburg is contesting the forthcoming local elections on 13 September 2026 with the aim of bringing politics closer to people again and shaping it together with them. Far too many people today experience politics as something remote: slow, hard to access, opaque and often out of touch with the realities of people's lives. Volt Oldenburg stands for politics that listens to people, takes them seriously, explains decisions and works with them to find solutions. This means more participation, more transparency and greater accountability. It also means a more open culture around mistakes: an approach that does not gloss over problems, but names them openly and has the courage to learn from constructive criticism and errors.

We are not professional politicians. We are standing for election to the next Oldenburg City Council as people rooted in the everyday life of this city. We know Oldenburg's challenges not from afar, but from our own experience - whether in finding a home, travelling around the city, dealing with the administration, in classrooms and nurseries, or in our daily interactions. That is precisely why Volt Oldenburg does not simply want to comment on local politics from the sidelines, but to make visible improvements, develop our city further and consistently put plans into action for everyone.

At the same time, we are candid about the fact that we do not have a ready-made answer to every question either. Nor can we always reinvent the wheel. But in many cases, that is not necessary. We adopt good ideas and proven solutions from other cities and European projects wherever they are suitable, and adapt them to our local circumstances.

Oldenburg already has many strong ideas, sound concepts, committed people and enormous potential. This city can be open, fair, climate-neutral, accessible, diverse and vibrant. Our manifesto sets out what we stand for and what we want to advance in the years ahead. It combines our fundamental values with concrete goals for Oldenburg. At its heart is one simple idea:

EVERYONE SHOULD BE A MAYOR

PROMOTING DEMOCRACY

Our democracy concerns us all. That is why we are committed to strengthening democracy. This deepens understanding of democratic processes, enables participation in society and builds trust in political decisions. Our aim is to involve people from every section of society and every age group actively in shaping how we live together locally, and to foster democratic skills for the long term. The following points are particularly important to us:

- **Experience democracy from childhood:** We will enable children and young people to participate in decisions from an early age, for example through children's and youth parliaments. We want to make civic education in schools and the local community tangible and engaging.
- **Support civil society and democratic engagement:** We want to safeguard democracy projects, associations and initiatives through reliable municipal structures.
- **Democratic participation for all:** Information and educational provision should become permanent so that more people can take part in democracy projects.
- **Establish citizens' assemblies:** Greater transparency and regular dialogue formats for citizens' assemblies should give Oldenburg residents more opportunities to share in decision-making.
- **Maintain and expand places to meet:** We want to support schools, neighbourhood centres, libraries and other public or freely accessible spaces in order to strengthen social cohesion and encourage exchange among Oldenburg residents.

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Democracy in childhood and youth

Democracy takes root where participation is real, binding and effective. Local civic education builds knowledge of democratic procedures, the ability to participate in decisions, and the capacity for dialogue and conflict resolution. It strengthens a vibrant civil society and supports commitment to diversity, non-violence and human rights. When children and young people are genuinely included, they develop responsibility, a sense of agency and trust in democratic processes.

- **Strengthen age-appropriate participation:** We will strengthen children's rights to help shape decisions, for example through children's conferences and involvement in all-day provision, break-time spaces and school menus.
- **Promote children's and youth parliaments:** We support children's and youth parliaments as elected municipal bodies.

Best Practice: Youth parliaments linked to committees

In many German local authorities, youth parliaments have advisory seats on city council committees or specialist committees. This makes young people's perspectives visible and allows them to feed directly into political decisions.

- **Link schools and the local authority closely:** The Oldenburg simulation and planning exercises OLMUN and SimEP should continue to take place and receive municipal funding. They are examples of effective work to strengthen democracy. We also support workshops, guided tours of the town hall and visits to committee meetings for young people in order to intensify cooperation between schools and the local authority.

Best Practice: Oldenburg Model United Nations

This United Nations simulation allows pupils to put forward, discuss and vote on ideas. Evaluations show a marked increase in their sense of agency. The model is used in many cities across Germany and can also be applied to municipal participation processes.

- **Establish municipal funding budgets:** These budgets will support work to strengthen democracy and be permanently embedded in the municipal budget, safeguarding initiatives and associations such as "Partnerschaften für Demokratie Oldenburg" and the "Demokratiewerkstatt" in future. The argumentation training provided by IBIS e.V. should also be highlighted as a positive example.

- **Allocate funding transparently:** Funding will be allocated transparently and with the active involvement of young people.
- **Provide democracy education:** People who have recently moved here will be offered courses on democratic principles and Germany's electoral system.

Citizen participation in Oldenburg

Democracy depends on participation. Cities and local communities become stronger, fairer and better places to live when local people can contribute their ideas and concerns. That is why we will consistently involve citizens in local decision-making. We stand for vibrant, open and forward-looking local politics that does not merely listen to citizens, but actively involves them. Together, we will shape our city into the place where we want to live.

- **Create more civic dialogue and transparency:** We will make political decisions transparent and easy to understand. To this end, we will introduce regular citizens' meetings, neighbourhood conferences and digital civic dialogues. We support the digital recording, reliable live streaming and archiving of council and committee meetings.
- **Introduce citizens' assemblies:** We will promote permanently established, randomly selected citizens' assemblies that are empowered to make political recommendations and complement decision-making in local government.

Best Practice: CITIZENS' ASSEMBLIES IN AACHEN

Aachen is one of Germany's pioneers in establishing permanent citizens' assemblies at municipal level. Randomly selected citizens deliberate on topics proposed by the public and draw up recommendations that feed into political processes.

- **Let citizens help decide on projects:** We will enable neighbourhood-based participatory budgeting and local referendums on important issues. A municipal participation budget and the expansion of the "Gemeinsam Oldenburg" platform to include online voting will create new ways for people to help shape their city. This will allow parks, meeting places and cultural projects to emerge from the community itself.
- **Give people a voice throughout life:** We support inclusive, permanent and intergenerational opportunities for participation that endure and make a meaningful difference.
- **Strengthen community hubs:** We will create more open, centrally located 'third places', such as ViertelRaum e.V. and CORE, where citizens' assemblies, initiatives, dialogue formats and opportunities to meet come together. These will be complemented by hybrid or digital participation formats. The "Gemeinsam Oldenburg" platform provides a strong foundation and will be expanded further.

Best Practice: CITIZENS' LAB IN MADRID

The public citizens' lab "Medialab Matadero" is a meeting place for the collaborative development of open cultural projects, with democracy and citizen participation as its central pillars.

- **Expand municipal democracy infrastructure:** Schools, neighbourhood centres, libraries and spaces dedicated to democracy will be connected so that people can experience participation close to home and without unnecessary barriers.

MOBILITY

Every day, we travel around Oldenburg - whether to nursery, work, school, home, the sports club or the bakery around the corner. Mobility affects us all. But how can we bring about a transport transition that is fair, improves our quality of life and ensures better access for everyone in Oldenburg? At Volt Oldenburg, the following points are particularly important to us in achieving a fair and sustainable mobility transition:

- **Create a low-traffic city centre:** We believe that fewer cars in the centre will make travelling around the city more pleasant. To achieve this, we want more parking spaces and park-and-ride sites on the edge of the city, support for car-sharing services, neighbourhood multi-storey car parks and a default speed limit of 30 km/h throughout the city.
- **Create a pedestrian-friendly city:** Safe, accessible and well-designed pavements will make it easy for everyone travelling on foot to get from A to B.
- **Strengthen public transport:** More frequent services, longer operating hours, better connections, digital services and making the bus network fully accessible will increase its appeal.
- **Create a cycle-friendly city:** Physically separated cycleways, more cycle superhighways, priority at traffic lights and more cycle parking will make cycling in Oldenburg safer. The aim is for every important destination to be reachable within 15 minutes.
- **Promote sustainable mobility:** We therefore support a city of short distances, where mobility is organised in a more climate-friendly, safer and fairer way.

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Low-traffic city centre

For decades, steadily increasing car traffic has dominated parts of Oldenburg city centre. The result is noise, emissions and a poorer-quality public realm. At the same time, high traffic volumes also create significant problems for drivers themselves, through congestion, delays and the difficulty of finding a parking space. So that our city belongs to people once again rather than to traffic, we will use intelligent transport policy to improve quality of life for everyone.

- **Create attractive parking outside the city centre:** We will support parking facilities outside the city centre and repurpose free parking spaces in order to reduce the amount of space taken up by vehicles. Residents will be given priority access to spaces in multi-storey car parks on favourable terms. Businesses will continue to be permitted to make deliveries by vehicle.
- **Make park and ride more attractive:** We will close park-and-ride sites close to the city centre and strengthen or build new ones in the surrounding area. Following Groningen's example, a free shuttle bus from the outskirts will be available at weekends.

Best Practice: PARK AND RIDE IN GRONINGEN

The city of Groningen uses park-and-ride sites on its main transport corridors and combines them with frequent public transport services.

- **Strengthen car-sharing services:** The planned car-sharing provision will also be expanded by 2030 as intended. This will reduce the number of private vehicles and free up more public space for uses such as community meeting places.
- **Establish neighbourhood car parks:** These will give residents space-efficient places to keep their cars. Surface parking spaces can then be converted into green spaces, wider pavements or safe cycleways.
- **Achieve zero road deaths:** Helsinki's example shows that speed limits make a major contribution to reducing road deaths to zero. We will therefore introduce a default speed limit of 30 km/h throughout the city, except on certain access roads, to reduce noise, exhaust fumes and the risk of collisions. The current patchwork of rules causes uncertainty and increases the risk of drivers travelling at inappropriate speeds.

Best Practice: JUNGFERNSTIEG IN HAMBURG

When Jungfernstieg was redesigned, separate cycleways and footways were created, a one-way street was introduced for cars, and spaces for cafés and restaurants were upgraded.

→ **Expand charging facilities:** We will expand charging infrastructure on public land to make it easier for local people to switch to an electric car.

Pedestrian-friendly city

We will make Oldenburg a city where everything is within easy reach and improve quality of life in our neighbourhoods. Walking must be safe, accessible and attractive - for children, older people and people with limited mobility alike.

- **Consistently improve and protect pavements:** Wide, even pavements are the basic requirement for safe mobility. We are committed to systematically repairing pavements and widening them wherever possible.
- **Keep routes clear:** Parking on pavements severely obstructs pedestrians. We will consistently prohibit it and carry out regular checks to ensure that pavements remain reserved for their intended purpose.
- **Accessibility:** By lowering kerbs and removing trip hazards, we will create infrastructure that excludes no one.
- **Cross roads safely:** Safe crossings must not be a privilege. Particularly at sensitive locations such as nurseries, schools and care homes, people must be able to complete their journeys without fear or long waits. We therefore call for more zebra crossings combined with a 30 km/h speed limit. These are often more effective and less expensive than traffic lights, and clearly signal to motorists that pedestrians have priority.
- **Visibility:** We will ensure clear sightlines at all crossings to prevent accidents.
- **Traffic calming through design:** Instead of relying solely on prohibitory signs, we will use physical measures such as carriageway narrowing, planted traffic islands and paving that intuitively encourage lower speeds.
- **Vibrant neighbourhoods:** We will promote the redesign of streets as genuine play streets or traffic-calmed areas. More urban greenery and seating in neighbourhoods will create inviting places to spend time and cool the city on hot days.
- **Strengthen pedestrian zones:** Specifically, we will open Schlossplatz to pedestrians and cyclists, with clearly separated lanes, and redesign the Wallring with green pedestrian areas as places for people to meet. At the same time, we will engage with residents to identify further streets for redesign and improve the quality of public spaces throughout Oldenburg.

Best Practice: WALKING IN PONTEVEDRA

Since the centre of this Spanish city became largely car-free and pedestrians were given priority, the number of serious road accidents has fallen to almost zero. At the same time, retail is thriving and CO₂ emissions in the city centre have been reduced by more than 70%.

Strengthening public transport

Climate change means that Oldenburg, too, urgently needs to rethink transport. Future-proof mobility must therefore have a clear focus on public transport that is convenient to use everywhere, both in the city and in rural areas. Only if buses, trains and flexible sharing services are reliable, affordable and accessible across the entire area can we effectively reduce emissions while strengthening social participation.

- **Free travel on Saturdays:** We will retain and expand free bus travel on Saturdays and Sunday shopping days.

Best Practice: TICKETS FOR SCHOOL PUPILS IN HAMBURG

The city provides school pupils with a free Deutschlandticket and apprentices with a subsidy of €23.20. The HVV Switch app also provides information on on-demand transport, public transport, hire bikes and e-scooters.

- **Expand and stabilise local public transport:** We will increase service frequency to every 7.5 minutes at peak times, extend operating hours and improve cross-city connections. At the same time, we will make local public transport more reliable by driving forward the measures set out in the 2035 Mobility Plan.
- **Make VWG an attractive employer:** A successful transition to sustainable transport requires more consistent and fairer working conditions at VWG, ensuring that all employees are better off.
- **Drive forward the digitalisation of local public transport:** We will advance the digitalisation of local public transport by introducing digital information displays and contactless payment throughout the network.

Best Practice: PREPAID CARDS IN THE NETHERLANDS

Prepaid cards and tap-to-pay are available on all public transport nationwide (OVpay/OV-Chipkaart). Passengers can choose between a credit-based or subscription model, depending on their preference.

- **Expand infrastructure:** We support feasibility studies into climate-friendly and efficient mobility solutions, such as a tram system. We also call for additional local railway stations.
- **Continuous bus lane:** We will implement as quickly as possible the continuous bus lane around the Wallring proposed in the 2030 Mobility Plan, which is intended, among other things, to make local public transport more reliable.
- **Improve connections across district boundaries:** By introducing new bus routes to neighbouring districts, we will connect rural areas more effectively to public transport and create new commuting options. We will also seek to establish an integrated transport network with the districts of Ammerland, Oldenburg and Wesermarsch in order to standardise fares and reduce them overall.
- **Improve accessibility:** Making stops more accessible will open up bus travel to everyone.
- **Decriminalise fare evasion:** Travelling without a ticket is a criminal offence under Section 265a of the German Criminal Code (StGB). Transport operators must make a formal request for prosecution; without such a request, no prosecution takes place. Following Bremen's example, we will urge our transport operators to refrain from submitting such requests.

Cycle-friendly city

Oldenburg needs safe and attractive routes for cycling. Cars still dominate many streets, while people cycling often do not have enough space. Yet cycling offers a real opportunity: it is quiet and climate-friendly, and it strengthens both health and community. Travelling by bike lets people experience the city.

- **Implement the 15-minute city:** All important places in Oldenburg - such as home, work, shops and medical facilities - should be reachable within 15 minutes on foot or by bike.
- **Physically separate roads and cycleways:** Physical separation reduces the risk of collisions between bicycles and motor vehicles. This will allow more people to switch safely to cycling.

Best Practice: CYCLING CITY OF COPENHAGEN

Many locations in the city have been redesigned to separate different road users. Measures include dedicated cycle waiting lanes ahead of junctions, cycle bridges and tunnels, and staggered traffic-light phases.

- **Expand and maintain continuous cycle superhighways:** Expanding continuous cycle superhighways and rapidly repairing damage to cycle routes will make cycling more attractive.

Best Practice: CYCLING INFRASTRUCTURE IN NORDHORN

The city has repeatedly been certified as a 'Cycle-Friendly Municipality in Lower Saxony'. This reflects its well-developed cycling infrastructure, which includes a dense network of cycle routes, secure parking facilities and transport planning that gives cycling equal consideration.

- **Priority at traffic lights:** Giving cyclists - and pedestrians - priority at traffic lights will make cycling smoother and reduce waiting times.
- **Improve permeability for active travel:** Since January, a bridge between Neu-Donnerschwee and Donnerschwee has provided a new connection for pedestrians and cyclists. We will work to restore a connection between Babenend and Nedderend. We also support the Fleiweg underpass between Philosophenweg and the Fleiwa site, as well as a better connection between Kreyenbrück and Krusenbusch.

- **Bicycle parking in multi-storey car parks:** Even at peak times, some space in multi-storey car parks remains unused. We will make this available for bicycles, providing covered, weather-protected parking. There will also be charging points for e-bikes.
- **Improve safety at junctions:** Junctions require particular attention. Cyclists and pedestrians will be given priority so that people cycling can cross the road safely.
- **Explore a bike-sharing scheme:** A bike-sharing scheme makes it quick and easy to use a bicycle. Following the previous failed attempt in Oldenburg, we will assess the reasons for its failure and explore relaunching the service.

SUSTAINABILITY AND URBAN PLANNING

Sustainable urban planning is complex and must be considered comprehensively. It covers the full spectrum - from waste management, energy and food, heat planning and the economy through to future-proof construction planning. The following chapter is the most extensive in this manifesto and begins with the most important point:

Climate action

Climate action concerns us all - across the world and very tangibly here in Oldenburg, close to the North Sea. At the same time, our actions affect the climate everywhere in the world. Investment in climate action creates major economic opportunities by fostering innovation, creating future-proof jobs and strengthening regional value creation. In this way, the transition to greater sustainability also becomes a driver of economic development.

The following principles will guide us:

- **Climate impact check for every decision:** In future, every council decision will undergo a rigorous assessment of its impact on the climate.
- **Pursue an ambitious climate target:** Oldenburg has set itself the goal of becoming climate-neutral by 2035. We will pursue this goal consistently and ambitiously.
- **Join Climate Alliance:** Joining Climate Alliance will connect Oldenburg with more than 2,000 municipalities across Europe and enable the exchange of proven climate action measures.

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Heat action planning

The climate crisis is also causing heatwaves in Oldenburg to become more frequent and intense, posing a growing threat to public health. Older people, people who are ill and people facing social disadvantage are particularly affected. Heat-related deaths are increasing, while municipal infrastructure such as emergency services, care facilities and healthcare services is coming under additional strain. To respond effectively to these challenges, a heat action plan is indispensable as part of the council's public services. Oldenburg already has detailed heat action plans. In addition, the following points must be ensured:

- **Treat climate adaptation as a shared responsibility:** Heat protection will be incorporated into development plans from the outset when built-up areas are planned or redesigned.
- **Digitalise heat maps:** Maps identifying heat hotspots will be made available digitally. This will allow affected people to obtain information early and take action when a heatwave is approaching.

Best Practice: HEAT PROTECTION IN THE CITY OF LAATZEN

The city has already developed a detailed heat action plan. It includes public information campaigns, drinking-water provision, the identification of heat hotspots and, for example, emergency response procedures.

- **Green buildings:** Evaporation from plants cools greened buildings in summer and reduces street noise for residents. Their filtering properties also capture pollutants. The City of Oldenburg supports the greening of buildings and has produced a green-roof potential register. We call for municipal properties to be greened as well, setting a positive example.
- **Create more cooling centres:** These public, air-conditioned spaces should give older people, people in poor health, children and people experiencing homelessness an opportunity to escape the summer heat, thereby easing pressure on the healthcare system. The City of Oldenburg's digital CoOLer city map already shows where cool spaces can be found. However, more cooling centres are needed, particularly in the city centre, to offer people places where they can escape the heat.

heat. Free drinking-water points are also marked on the map. These places must be easy to find without a digital map, for example through signs.

Best Practice: DRINKING FOUNTAINS IN KARLSRUHE

Public drinking fountains have been installed to provide fresh water in central locations during the summer.

- **Create Tiny Forests:** Tiny Forests will be established at carefully chosen locations in Oldenburg, for example in Heiligengeistpark, along the Wallanlagen, at Herbartplatz or at Cäcilienplatz. They cool their surroundings, store CO₂, promote biodiversity and bring accessible nature directly into residential areas. This creates a cooler urban environment with greater biodiversity.

Sponge city

The natural water cycle has been disrupted. As the climate crisis progresses, heat, drought and heavy-rainfall events are becoming more extreme. Cities and urban areas are particularly affected because of their high proportion of sealed surfaces. In future, large volumes of rainfall must be captured in order to store water for dry periods and mitigate flooding. Drinking water is already a scarce resource. We must think for the long term now and will therefore implement the sponge-city concept. It is also more cost-effective to invest in the sponge-city concept now than to renew the sewer system so that it can cope with increased volumes of water. To achieve this, we will implement the following flood-protection and disaster-preparedness measures:

- **Use water-permeable road surfaces:** These allow rainwater to soak into the ground. Depending on requirements and location, options include paving blocks, grass grids or gravel turf.

Best Practice: WATER SQUARE IN ROTTERDAM

A square in the city was redesigned as a 'Water Square' to retain rainwater temporarily during heavy rainfall and prevent the sewer system from becoming overloaded. In dry weather, the tiered square is used as a public space for leisure activities.

- **Use utility trenches:** These can store rainwater for watering green spaces and urban trees.
- **Review urban development plans:** Every construction project will be assessed to determine whether it is compatible with the sponge-city concept.
- **Treat rainwater as a resource:** Rainwater will be collected locally and used for suitable purposes.

Best Practice: RAINWATER USE IN FREIBURG

In the Vauban district, rainwater was separated from wastewater, among other measures, and channelled along the tram route into an infiltration field where it can soak into the ground.

- **Raise awareness and run campaigns:** The public needs to become more familiar with the sponge-city concept. We will therefore use information campaigns to explain the measures to residents.

Reducing soil sealing

In Lower Saxony, 4.9 hectares of land are sealed every day through the construction of roads and buildings. Once sealed, this land can no longer store CO₂ or absorb water, and that loss is irreversible. Oldenburg already has the MusterFestsetzungskatalog, a model catalogue specifying how climate-compatible provisions must be incorporated into development plans. Compliance must be monitored and followed up. The following points must also be taken into account and incorporated into land-use planning:

- **Limit soil sealing:** Land must be preserved as a store for CO₂ and water. To achieve net-zero soil sealing, we will ensure that every instance of unavoidable sealing is offset by unsealing land elsewhere. To support homeowners in unsealing their properties, we will extend funding programmes such as 'Starkregen Ofenerdiek' across the city.
- **Restore water bodies and green spaces:** Rivers, floodplains and peatlands can retain large volumes of water during floods, thereby preventing damage in built-up areas. They also provide a safe habitat for a variety of animal and plant species. Wherever possible in Oldenburg - for example in the Fliegerhorst district - these areas will be preserved or restored.
- **Preserve and expand parks and green spaces:** These serve as local recreation areas for residents.

Best Practice: URBAN GREENING IN MELLE

Municipal open spaces in the Melle-Mitte area were unsealed and planted with trees, shrubs and perennials.

- **Make full use of existing potential:** Existing buildings will continue to be used for residential or commercial purposes.

Nature conservation and biodiversity

Protecting the natural foundations of life is a central task of local government. Rich biodiversity strengthens not only ecological stability but also quality of life for everyone in Oldenburg. Especially in this era of climate change, we will therefore preserve and enhance existing natural areas and connect them more effectively. We regard nature conservation as a shared responsibility of politicians, public administration and society. We therefore support the following concrete measures to protect nature and biodiversity and develop our city sustainably:

- **Protect more natural areas:** So far, only 5% of Oldenburg's land area is protected for nature conservation. We will work to designate additional nature reserves and will also cooperate with the surrounding districts to achieve this.
- **Allow trees to grow old:** A tree takes years or decades to reach maturity. We support the tree protection by-law adopted in Oldenburg and will promote its consistent enforcement and ambitious further development. We will also implement Oldenburg's Tree Preservation and Development Strategy.
- **Revitalise municipal green spaces:** Public green spaces will be specifically enhanced ecologically to provide valuable habitats for insects and small animals. By planting in harmony with nature, avoiding intensive maintenance and creating structurally diverse areas such as wildflower meadows, hedges and deadwood habitats, we will promote biodiversity throughout the city. This will create vibrant refuges for wildlife as well as attractive natural spaces that the people of Oldenburg can experience and enjoy.
- **Take soil and water samples:** We call on the administration to take soil and water samples from land designated for new development and have them professionally analysed. All findings from this sampling must be made accessible to residents.
- **Remediate contaminated land:** Once legacy contamination has been identified, the soil must be professionally remediated. In our view, cordoning off contaminated land is not sufficient, as pollutants can enter the air and water.
- **Fliegerhorststraße:** The planned route of Fliegerhorststraße runs through an area of conservation value that is of 'very high importance for the protection of animal and plant species'. We oppose the construction of Fliegerhorststraße because local residents already have adequate transport connections.

Energy

The transition to clean energy is also taking place in Oldenburg. It must be decentralised, renewable and socially just. Citizens can benefit from the local production, use and storage of renewable energy. This can link regional value creation with social participation. We seek a fully renewable energy supply that protects the climate and people, and makes our municipalities resilient.

- **Use space for solar and wind power:** Already sealed surfaces, such as the roofs of public buildings, are suitable for photovoltaic systems and wind turbines designed for rooftop installation. The Oldenburg solar roof potential register already identifies considerable potential for photovoltaic installations.
- **Use renewable heat:** 95% of the heat generated in Oldenburg is based on fossil fuels. Expanding renewable energy sources - for example through heat pumps and heat networks - is essential if Oldenburg is to achieve climate neutrality. We therefore support concrete implementation of Oldenburg's existing heat plan and want to support community energy cooperatives.
- **Modernise energy networks and infrastructure:** Local networks will be digitalised and adapted to the new requirements of the energy transition.

Best Practice: ENERGY SUPPLY IN TREUENBRIETZEN

In Feldheim, a district of Treuenbrietzen in Brandenburg, a comprehensive concept for a decentralised renewable energy supply serving businesses, private households and the municipality has been implemented. This has created a self-sufficient energy supply.

- **Provide advice and information campaigns:** We support the City of Oldenburg's existing energy advice services and will make these services permanent, helping residents to convert their energy systems.
- **Resume funding programmes:** We will work to reinstate funding for photovoltaic installations in order to accelerate Oldenburg's energy transition.

Infill development

New land for housing is scarce, so we need smart approaches to infill development in existing residential neighbourhoods without sealing additional land. Our aim is to create more homes without compromising quality of life. This requires urban development that is environmentally sound, fair and sustainable. We take residents' concerns seriously and are committed to transparency, participation and shaping the city together. In this way, we can create a city that grows together and leaves no one behind.

- **Prioritise infill development:** It will generally take precedence over new construction, as it does not seal any new, undeveloped land.
- **Prioritise refurbishment:** In municipal construction projects, we will favour refurbishing existing buildings over demolition and rebuilding in order to conserve resources such as concrete, steel and glass.
- **Add storeys to existing commercial buildings:** To create usable space without sealing new land, we will favour adding storeys to existing commercial buildings. This also makes use of existing infrastructure such as utility lines.
- **Develop existing neighbourhoods:** We will focus on further developing what is already there instead of building on greenfield sites. This will enable Oldenburg to maintain net-zero land take.
- **Convert vacant commercial properties into homes:** This can create more affordable housing. Approval procedures for these conversions will be accelerated and made flexible and straightforward, keeping costs low and delivery times short.

Best Practice: INFILL DEVELOPMENT IN HANOVER

In the Südvorstadt district, infill development was achieved by converting the site of a former accident hospital and nurses' residence into accommodation for students and refugees.

Sustainable waste management

We favour a circular economy over a throwaway society. We will rethink waste management with a progressive, transparent and sustainable approach.

Preserving the natural foundations of our lives requires a radical change of course in waste policy. We are committed to an intelligent circular economy that conserves resources, promotes social justice and prevents waste.

- **Dispose of bulky waste free of charge:** We will campaign for households to be able to dispose of up to two cubic metres of bulky waste per year free of charge at recycling centres, helping to prevent illegal dumping.
- **Develop a waste-prevention strategy:** We will draw up a comprehensive municipal waste-prevention strategy to make our city a pioneer in environmental protection.
- **Favour reusable packaging:** Reusable rather than single-use packaging will be used at public events. We will also support local hospitality businesses in switching to standardised reusable systems.
- **Strengthen sustainable procurement:** The city administration will lead by example by increasingly choosing recycled, repairable and durable products when procuring goods and services.
- **Reuse and repair:** We will establish and support repair cafés, second-hand shops and platforms for exchanging used goods in order to extend the life of products. This will not only strengthen the local economy through new services, but also reduce demand for new products and thereby conserve resources.
- **Bicycle repair stations:** Volt will also support the installation of bicycle repair stations like the one already available for everyone to use on 91er-Straße.
- **Make deposit collection easier:** We will make it easier to collect deposit bottles and cans by installing bottle racks on public litter bins, as has already been done at Schlossplatz, for example. This protects the dignity of those who collect them and prevents valuable raw materials from ending up in residual waste.
- **Support information campaigns:** We will support information campaigns in schools and nurseries to raise awareness of the value of resources from an early age.

Best Practice: ZERO WASTE BERLIN INITIATIVE

The Zero Waste Berlin initiative aims to provide residents with comprehensive information on how to separate waste correctly and to work with neighbourhood management teams and local residents to advance waste prevention.

- **Install more litter bins:** We all want to live in a clean Oldenburg, so we will provide more public litter bins in the city centre and in busy places.
- **Promote citizen participation:** We will engage in more dialogue with citizens about the circular economy, encouraging them to participate actively in shaping the waste-prevention strategy. We will also support the further development of the AWB waste app.

Food

On 26 April 2021, the city council resolved that Oldenburg should become climate-neutral by 2035. In 2022, Oldenburg therefore became the first German city to sign the Glasgow Declaration on Food and Climate. Yet it has still not been implemented consistently. Our food system accounts for up to 37% of greenhouse gas emissions and is a key lever for climate action, health and social justice. In February 2025, the City of Oldenburg adopted a food strategy through a participatory process. We are committed to implementing it consistently and strengthening the Food Council as the central link between civil society, politics and business.

- **Provide reliable funding for the Food Council:** To safeguard the Food Council's long-term work, we will reverse the funding cut and increase its funding. Its work focuses on preventing food waste and developing regional supply structures. It drives engagement with the public through activities such as "Schnippeldiskos", which also strengthen the community.
- **Implement the food strategy with binding commitments:** We will set clear targets and timetables and establish transparent monitoring. A resilient local food system makes us less dependent on global supply chains.
- **Strengthen the regional economy:** We will connect agriculture, food processing and demand in a resilient supply network. Following a concentric-ring approach, the public sector will source food as locally as possible and only look to areas farther afield when necessary. This minimises transport distances, safeguards supplies during crises and strengthens the local economy. By developing infrastructure with a growing share of plant-based food, we will create new jobs and provide targeted support for sustainable start-ups.
- **Grow food in the city:** We will bring food production back to Oldenburg. Alongside community gardens, we will support modern solutions such as vertical farming. This allows healthy vegetables to be grown efficiently and directly in the city, for example in vacant buildings, on the former tax office site or on old industrial land. It enables fresh harvests all year round, right on our doorstep.
- **Make sustainable procurement mandatory:** Public institutions will give preference to regional, seasonal and plant-based products. Healthy food must be accessible to everyone, regardless of income.

- **Establish a centre of expertise for institutional catering:** Following the example of “Kantine Zukunft”, we will support canteens and institutional kitchens, including those in nurseries, through hands-on coaching in their own kitchens. The aim is to help chefs prepare regional, plant-forward food without increasing costs.
- **Promote accessible cookery courses for everyone:** We will support easy-to-access cookery courses for citizens that teach practical, healthy and sustainable everyday eating. These courses strengthen social participation and create spaces for exchange and community across cultures and generations.
- **Reduce food waste:** We will develop binding measures to combat waste in public institutions. The city will actively support initiatives such as Foodsharing.
- **Plant Based Treaty:** We aim to join the Plant Based Treaty in order to systematically establish food as a lever for climate action and public health. Our approach follows the “Plants first” principle: a wider choice and appealing options make the sustainable choice the easiest one. A high-quality plant-based option will therefore be standard every day in nurseries, schools, hospitals and the city administration.

Best Practice: PLANT-BASED MEALS IN NEW YORK

By making plant-based meals the default in municipal hospitals, New York reduced food-related CO₂ emissions there by 36% per meal. At the same time, it saved \$0.59 per meal.

Animal welfare

We see animal welfare as a cross-cutting responsibility: like climate action, it should be taken into account in every policy area. Animal welfare is a logical extension of our understanding of justice. If we want all people to live free from exploitation and suffering, it follows that we should extend this principle to animals as well. At the same time, protecting animals always protects people too: it contributes to our health, helps prevent disease and supports a functioning ecosystem, making it a vital foundation for our own well-being.

- **Managed pigeon lofts:** We are committed to treating urban pigeons humanely. To this end, we will further expand Oldenburg's network of managed pigeon lofts. There are currently two sites, with more to follow so that the population can be managed sustainably and humanely.

Best Practice: PIGEON MANAGEMENT IN AUGSBURG

The "Augsburg Model" demonstrates effective pigeon management in practice: 12 managed lofts care for around 63% of the city's pigeon population. Thousands of eggs are replaced with dummy eggs each year, humanely reducing the population. There is also a major benefit for cleanliness: every year, around 5,000 kg of droppings are collected in these lofts and disposed of properly instead of soiling the city's façades and pavements.

- **Protect nocturnal animals:** Many animals, including hedgehogs, bats and insects, are nocturnal and suffer from increasing light pollution and disturbance at night. Brightly lit gardens, permanent lighting and night-time noise deprive them of vital habitats and interfere with their navigation and search for food. We will therefore convert all public lighting to wildlife-friendly warm light.
- **Ban robotic lawnmowers at night:** Robotic lawnmowers pose an acute threat to the lives of animals such as hedgehogs, particularly at night. We will introduce a night-time ban to protect nocturnal animals effectively.
- **Protect sheep grazing on dykes:** Sheep begin to experience heat stress at around 25°C, which can place a considerable strain on their circulatory systems. In the summer of 2025, many citizens in Oldenburg documented alarming conditions, including severely elevated breathing rates, crowding around the few available watering points and sunburn among recently shorn animals. We will therefore work to improve protection for sheep grazing on dykes in hot weather..

include assessing suitable measures that do not compromise dyke protection, such as additional watering points and temporary shade structures.

- **Manage rat populations humanely:** We are committed to sustainable, humane rat management. Rather than relying on poison, we will systematically reduce food sources through better waste strategies, sealed waste systems and greater public awareness.
- **Support the Oldenburg animal shelter:** The shelter provides professional care for animals in need. We will introduce reliable financial support from the city to safeguard its specialist staff.

Creating affordable housing - because everyone deserves a home

Housing is a human right, not an object of speculation. We therefore need effective tools to keep homes available and rents affordable. This is how we will shape a vibrant Oldenburg where everyone can find a good home.

- **Strengthen municipal housing:** Municipal housing companies and housing co-operatives will be strengthened. They create homes that remain affordable over the long term and serve the common good.

Best Practice: MUNICIPAL HOUSING IN VIENNA

Half of Vienna's residents live in municipal or municipally subsidised housing. This keeps rents affordable over the long term.

- **Pursue an active land policy:** Through leasehold rights, rights of first refusal and municipal land purchases, we will secure land for affordable housing and prevent land speculation. Land reserves will be used strategically for projects that serve the common good.
- **Advance socially just construction:** In every public housing project, at least 40% of homes will be built as social housing or rent-controlled housing. This will keep housing affordable for people on middle and low incomes.
- **Make better use of existing potential:** Rigorous vacancy management, with mandatory reporting and possible penalties, will quickly make residential, office and commercial space available. Vacant offices and commercial premises will be eligible for conversion into housing. Holiday-letting platforms such as Airbnb will be restricted through strict regulations against the misuse of residential property.
- **Make full use of housing sites:** Local parking regulations will be made more flexible. This will reduce the number of mandatory parking spaces per home in places with good transport options, allowing more homes to be built on the same area of land and at lower cost.
- **Build efficiently on limited land:** We will prioritise infill development, add storeys to existing buildings and reuse vacant city sites, including former industrial land. This creates housing without using more land.

- **Work with strong partners:** Co-operatives, church organisations, foundations and citizen-led projects will be actively involved in housing developments. After all, housing is a shared endeavour.
- **Build better instead of selling to the highest bidder:** Municipal land should go not to the highest bidder, but to those with the best social and environmental proposals. This will create vibrant, affordable and sustainable housing.
- **Implement a Housing First strategy:** To combat homelessness, people in need will first be provided with a home of their own. This will give them sustained support in returning to a stable, independent life.

Best Practice: HOUSING FIRST STRATEGY IN FINLAND

Finland has been implementing its Housing First strategy under a unified plan since 2008. By 2022, it had reduced long-term homelessness by 68% and saved at least €15,000 per person each year in associated costs.

Age-friendly and accessible urban planning

In an ageing society, the way we design our cities determines whether everyone can continue to participate, live independently and retain their dignity into old age or while living with a disability. Accessible routes, easy-to-reach services and safe public spaces benefit not only older and disabled people, but also strengthen social cohesion as a whole.

- **Gender-equitable and accessible urban planning:** We are committed to well-lit streets and public spaces and will improve both the availability and accessibility of local public transport so that everyone in Oldenburg can get around safely.
- **Expand age-friendly housing:** We will ensure that development plans give greater consideration to age-friendly housing.
- **Promote age-friendly housing and vibrant neighbourhoods:** Supporting accessible, affordable homes and multigenerational housing will enable more people to live independently in their own homes. Neighbourhood management teams will co-ordinate local social, care and medical services and create places where people can meet.
- **Make public spaces age-friendly:** We are committed to audio and visual guidance systems for disabled people. Signage should also be easy to read.
- **Assess city council decisions:** As a matter of principle, decisions will be assessed for their impact on accessibility, particularly in public construction projects and in transport and infrastructure planning.

Economy and finance¹

As a university city, Oldenburg offers a rich pool of experts and talent. Our chambers and businesses provide a highly trained skilled workforce. The city is large enough to maintain expertise in a great many fields, yet compact enough for people to forge personal connections across different areas of business and academia. For us, economic development must build on Oldenburg's strengths and aim to create leading clusters. We want a city that brings people together, where economic stakeholders exchange ideas and support one another.

Oldenburg is regarded as a start-up-friendly city. The Technologie- und Gründerzentrum Oldenburg (TGO) and the university's support under the "Gründung findet Stadt" (GiS) project create strong links between academia and practice. To strengthen innovation and start-ups in the region, we will implement the following measures:

- **Support founders:** We will create dedicated space for spin-outs and for businesses graduating from the TGO, attract venture capital and experienced entrepreneurs to Oldenburg, and strengthen the local innovation ecosystem by actively recruiting angel investors to the city.
- **Address the shortage of land and premises:** Suitable sites for founders, skilled-trade businesses and manufacturing companies will be identified and secured to counter shortages and rising prices. We will develop new commercial areas, bring brownfield sites back into use and convert existing buildings.

Best Practice: GRAFTON CENTRE IN CAMBRIDGE

The declining inner-city Grafton Centre, once home to Mothercare, Debenhams and a cinema, is making way for laboratory space, offices and a new hotel, with only a smaller retail offering remaining.

- **Provide modern infrastructure:** This includes workshops, offices and shared spaces that meet current needs. It will enable businesses to reduce their operating costs and benefit from shared resources.

¹ See also the chapter "Oldenburg with Sound Finances"

- **Promote innovation and networks:** We will turn vacant premises in the city centre into maker spaces, start-up laboratories and innovation centres to foster exchange, co-operation and the development of new ideas and products in the skilled trades. Such spaces will also support careers guidance and the recruitment of young talent.
- **Build in sustainability:** When developing commercial sites, we will incorporate environmentally friendly technologies and concepts such as solar power, electric vehicle charging points and rainwater harvesting. This contributes to climate action and promotes sustainable urban development.
- **Provide attractive commercial space:** We will provide attractive, modern and sustainable commercial space. This includes well-equipped premises with forward-looking infrastructure and flexible rental models, such as scalable space, short-term contracts and shared facilities. This will help us attract and retain both new and established skilled-trade businesses. It will also make local companies more attractive to skilled workers and apprentices, helping us counter the shortage of skilled labour in the trades.

Best Practice: BUSINESS HUB IN VIENNA (ASPERN)

Seestadt Aspern provides a business hub for skilled trades, manufacturing and production-related services. It features flexible rental space, a robust setting and well-designed logistics solutions, supporting urban production.

- **Review funding programmes:** By reviewing and adjusting the City of Oldenburg's current funding schemes, we will achieve savings and boost economic dynamism.

DIGITALISATION AND ADMINISTRATION

Volt Oldenburg wants to develop Oldenburg into an even smarter, more modern city, where digital solutions not only make administrative processes more efficient but also improve residents' everyday lives. Our vision for a digital Oldenburg is reflected in the following priorities:

- **Smart City Oldenburg:** Smart technology will make the city more energy-efficient and practical for everyday life, including in lighting, traffic management and waste management.
- **The Oldenburg app:** Administrative services will be systematically digitalised and brought together on a central platform or app, while continuing to provide non-digital access.
- **Digitalise the administration:** More efficient processes, additional staffing and a strengthened Office for Digitalisation and Transformation will make the administration better able to deliver.
- **Harness open-source opportunities:** Greater openness, open data, open source and standardisation will promote digital sovereignty, transparency and collaboration.
- **Ensure reliable school IT:** Digital services, better IT equipment and training will also provide stronger support for public participation, schools and education.

Volt

Smart City Oldenburg

Our vision for Oldenburg is a smart, digital city where technology and innovation improve residents' quality of life. We will promote digital infrastructure and innovative solutions to the challenges facing the city and the region, while ensuring that residents are more closely involved.

- **Introduce smart lighting for buildings and routes:** Public streets, paths, squares and buildings will be lit using motion sensors and dimmable LEDs. This will save energy and reduce light pollution without compromising safety.
- **Install induction loops on cycle paths:** Dynamic traffic lights for people cycling, such as those on Ammerländer Heerstraße, will be introduced in more locations. Sensors detect cyclists early and activate or extend the green phase at traffic lights as appropriate. This will improve traffic flow, reduce waiting times and make cycling more attractive.
- **Introduce bin identification:** Chipping waste bins will help the AWB improve service, manage collections and keep track of its bin stock.

Best Practice: SMART WASTE COLLECTION IN OSNABRÜCK

In 2024, the City of Osnabrück introduced a chip-based bin identification system for waste bins across the city. This enables the waste management service to manage bins digitally and also benefits residents by providing better information about bin collections.

- **The Oldenburg app:** The city will make all information and services available to residents in one app. Volt advocates bringing together the AWBApp, the council information system and other key information on cultural activities, political participation processes and construction projects in a single digital portal.

Best Practice: SMART VILLAGE APP IN BAD BELZIG

Using the 'Smart Village App', Bad Belzig has provided its residents with a wide range of local information, news and services since 2019.

- **Enable digital public participation:** The app will also incorporate and further develop the 'Gemeinsam Oldenburg' portal. This will allow residents to represent their interests and needs more effectively and enable the administration to align its decisions accordingly.

Digitising Oldenburg

The digital transformation of the City of Oldenburg is a key task for the future. Despite the shortage of skilled workers, demographic change and growing societal challenges, Oldenburg's administration needs to work better for our residents:

- **Digital public services:** Many procedures in Oldenburg, such as online applications to register a business or a place of residence, have already been digitalised. Volt advocates making every interaction with public authorities available as a fully digital service. In line with the OZG Amendment Act, we will use the online ID function for identification across all public services. At the same time, no one should be excluded, so non-digital access options will remain available.
- **Strengthen the Office for Digitalisation and Transformation:** We will accelerate digital change within the city administration so that, by 2030, digital technologies provide comprehensive support across all areas of municipal work. Representatives of public authorities and democratic parties should strengthen the Office for Digitalisation and Transformation, established in 2026, to secure a long-term commitment.
- **Optimise processes:** The City of Oldenburg has already begun analysing administrative processes and making them more efficient before digitalising them. Volt strongly supports this approach and calls for these efforts to be systematically expanded and backed by sufficient resources and staff.

Best Practice: DIGITALISATION IN FRANKFURT AM MAIN

In 2024, Frankfurt am Main City Council adopted the 'Rahmenstrategie Digitalisierung' (Digitalisation Framework Strategy), establishing a clear direction for the city's digitalisation. The strategy envisages accelerating digital change within the city administration. By 2030, digital technologies are to provide comprehensive support across all areas of municipal work.

- **Open data and transparency:** A transparent administration is crucial to residents' trust. We advocate making more city administration data and information publicly accessible. Volt supports signing the 'Open Data Charter'.

- **Use open source:** Specialist administrative applications must also become digitally sovereign. Using open-source software and solutions developed according to the 'One for All' (Einer für Alle) principle will help achieve this. When new open-source solutions are introduced, Volt advocates choosing European software.
- **Strengthen cooperation and standardisation:** The digitalisation of public administration can succeed only through nationwide cooperation. We support initiatives such as Komm2IT, which brings together municipal IT service providers in Lower Saxony to eliminate duplicated structures and create standardised, reliable solutions for all municipalities. We also call on Oldenburg to play an active role in developing the Deutschland-Stack: an open, modular infrastructure that enables scalability, automation and the involvement of start-ups.
- **Harness AI and innovation:** Digital sovereignty also requires the use of AI to speed up administrative processes, for example in approval procedures or document analysis. We want Oldenburg to become a pioneer in the use of open-source AI tools, retaining transparency and control over its own systems. Flagship projects such as the EUDI-Wallet must be implemented swiftly to deliver tangible benefits for residents and businesses.
- **Overhaul the council information system:** We will improve the accessibility of the council information system, making it easier to search and thereby increasing its transparency and usability for the administration, council members and residents, for example when researching previous motions, decisions and entries in meeting minutes.
- **Introduce Wero as a payment method:** We will introduce Wero, the sovereign payment solution provided by European banks, as a payment method within the City of Oldenburg's administration.

Best Practice: DIGITALISATION IN LÜBECK

The Hanseatic City of Lübeck made the draft update of its Digital Strategy for the Urban Community publicly available so that its content could be developed collaboratively. This allowed residents to contribute ideas to policymakers and the administration and to play an active part in shaping the decision-making process. The aim is to promote dialogue, make the digital transformation easier to understand and involve every group in society.

Ensuring reliable school IT

Reliable IT equipment is an essential requirement for modern school operations.

- **Develop pupils' IT skills:** We will establish an IT support working group within the Office for Digitalisation and Transformation. Under expert guidance, pupils will assist with their school's IT operations, allowing them to develop their IT skills.
- **Prepare funding applications:** We will hire additional staff to support educational institutions in preparing funding applications. This will allow them to make full use of existing state, federal and EU funding, such as the Digital Pact for Schools (DigitalPakt Schule).
- **Organise IT training for teachers:** Within the Oldenburg Education Region, we will organise training for teachers and ensure that digital services can be used to their full potential.

Best Practice: SUPPORT TEAM IN THE VECHTA DISTRICT

The School IT Support Team at the Vechta Media Competence Centre ensures the reliable operation of the IT infrastructure at the 56 publicly maintained primary and secondary schools.

CULTURE AND SPORT

Volt Oldenburg regards culture and sport as vital foundations of a vibrant, diverse and community-minded city. We therefore want to develop access to culture, volunteering and sports provision so that as many people in Oldenburg as possible can benefit, while preserving and strengthening the city as an open, sustainable and democratic place to live.

- **Support culture:** We want public funding to be disclosed and secured for the long term so that local cultural projects can receive reliable support. We also advocate making vacant properties available to cultural start-ups, associations and social projects in order to develop creative neighbourhoods.
- **Support volunteering:** Volunteer centres, digital volunteering platforms, recognition schemes and youth support will be made more visible and attractive.
- **Take a European approach to cultural participation:** We want to establish a Europe House, strengthen partnerships with European cities and make greater use of EU funding for cultural exchange.
- **Physical activity, social connection and quality of life for all:** We will expand sports facilities, swimming provision, club sports, accessible and inclusive activities, and urban planning that encourages physical activity in order to promote the health, social connection and participation of everyone in Oldenburg.
- **Scrutinise major projects:** We oppose building a new stadium with taxpayers' money. We want consistent public participation in major construction projects.

Volt

Supporting culture and volunteering

Sport and culture are central pillars of our urban community. They promote cohesion, integration and quality of life. Volt Oldenburg stands for a forward-looking sports and cultural policy that provides equal access for all residents, is designed sustainably and strengthens our city's European dimension. We want to establish Oldenburg as a beacon of European cultural diversity.

Oldenburg's sports clubs alone have 43,000 members. To preserve and expand this thriving club culture, we need a modern, future-proof strategy for culture and volunteering.

- **Expand transparent cultural funding:** Transparent, fair funding programmes secured for the long term will enable local cultural projects such as 'Rock gegen Rechts' and the Kultursommer. We will ensure that all public-sector funding bodies, municipal companies and entities whose shareholder meetings or supervisory boards include municipal representatives disclose the amounts of funding they provide.
- **Scholarships for artists:** The city will offer scholarships to young artists and actors from renowned German or European higher education institutions, such as drama schools and art schools.
- **Strengthen and digitally connect volunteering:** Municipal volunteer centres, digital volunteering platforms and recognition programmes such as volunteer cards and volunteering festivals make civic engagement visible and attractive. We expressly support these measures and want to secure and expand them over the long term.
- **Encourage young volunteers:** Youth budgets, mentoring projects and targeted support for youth organisations and cultural initiatives will strengthen volunteering by young people.
- **Create spaces for creativity:** We will make vacant buildings available to cultural start-ups, associations and social projects, and develop creative districts with businesses, the administration and civil society.

Best Practice: CULTURAL CENTRE IN WÜRZBURG

The former Bürgerbräu site is now used as a cultural and creative centre.

- **Compensate volunteers:** The city will recognise direct voluntary work through the tax-free volunteering allowance or vouchers, paid either directly or via grants.

Best Practice: LOWER SAXONY

A volunteer card provides discounts and benefits for people who volunteer.

- **Establish a Europe House:** We advocate creating a meeting centre for European cultural exchange modelled on the Groninger Forum: a venue for exhibitions, discussions, language cafés and international cultural events.
- **Cultural participation for all ages:** We advocate easily accessible cultural activities, from creative workshops for children and young people and family-friendly events to intergenerational projects that bring younger and older people together.
- **Strengthen links with twin cities:** We want to maintain strong cultural partnerships with Groningen and other European twin cities through regular cultural exchange programmes, joint festivals and artist residencies.
- **Use European funding:** We will proactively apply for EU-level cultural funding, such as Creative Europe, for innovative cultural projects.

Physical activity, social connection and quality of life for all

We want everyone in Oldenburg to have the chance and the means to find a sport that suits them. Sport is not just exercise: it is also about meeting people, learning and participation. Investment in our municipal sports and leisure provision therefore has a direct impact on quality of life, health and social cohesion in Oldenburg. We will consistently take environmental considerations and accessibility into account and create a diverse range of sustainable leisure opportunities for everyone.

- **Renovate and expand sports and leisure facilities:** Municipal sports grounds, kickabout areas, skateparks and recreational spaces will be preserved and systematically modernised.

Best Practice: OUTDOOR FITNESS IN REGENSBURG

Outdoor gyms, senior exercise trails and a Donaupark skatepark provide varied ways to stay active.

- **Swimming for everyone:** We will expand swimming provision for schools and clubs and enable swimming lessons for all sections of the population. All non-profit clubs and their divisions will be able to use swimming lanes and provide instruction at a reduced lane rate.
- **Strengthen club sport:** We will give financial and organisational support to clubs working with children and young people or promoting integration.
- **Promote everyday activity and health:** Our goal is activity-friendly urban planning that prioritises active mobility. In all new construction and redevelopment projects, we will incorporate spaces for physical activity and establish easily accessible options in public spaces, such as fitness trails, outdoor exercise equipment, exercise circuits and temporary play streets.
- **Make sport accessible to everyone:** Accessible sports activities for disabled people, integration projects for refugees and intergenerational leisure activities create places for people to meet and strengthen social cohesion. We will provide targeted support for these initiatives.

Best Practice: URBAN OPEN SPACE IN COPENHAGEN

Superkilen Park was created as an urban open space offering sports, play and cultural activities for a multi-ethnic neighbourhood.

- **Build partnerships with schools and childcare centres:** Partnerships and joint sports and holiday activities will improve the use of municipal sports halls and facilities.
- **Use digital technology:** We will support digital sports activities, online booking systems for sports facilities, digital meeting spaces and live streaming of local sporting events.
- **Volt Oldenburg opposes building a new stadium:** We draw a clear line between municipal public services and support for professional football as a private-sector activity. (See our position paper on a stadium for third-tier football.)² As a general principle, Volt Oldenburg supports consulting residents on major projects.

² <https://voltdeutschland.org/oldenburg/neuigkeiten/volt-oldenburg-spricht-sich-gegen-stadionneubau-aus-positionspapier-erarbeitet>

EDUCATION

Education is the key to social participation, personal development and a city that is fit for the future. Our goal is to create a connected, modern and inclusive education system in Oldenburg that supports people of all ages and provides equal opportunities regardless of origin, place of residence or social background. The following priorities are particularly important to us:

- **A connected education landscape:** We will connect childcare centres, schools, higher education institutions, associations, businesses and the administration to make educational opportunities more transparent and actively involve residents in shaping education in Oldenburg.
- **School social work for every child:** By expanding school social work, strengthening collaboration between professionals and involving non-profit organisations, we will provide reliable support throughout every stage of a person's education. This will ensure that no child is left behind on their educational journey.
- **Modern, sustainable places of learning:** We will invest in renovating schools and childcare centres, promote digital infrastructure and develop local places for education and community life. In Oldenburg, education should not be confined to the classroom but should form a vibrant, sustainable part of life across the city.
- **Enable flexible, real-world learning:** All-day provision, self-directed learning and partnerships with associations and cultural and educational institutions will create a wide range of learning opportunities.
- **Strengthen libraries and adult education as places of learning:** We will develop the city library and the adult education centre as key places for lifelong learning. Easy access to knowledge, media and continuing education will improve educational opportunities for people of all generations.
- **Make Oldenburg child-friendly:** Through high-quality early years provision, targeted support for families and preventive measures against child poverty, we will strengthen equal opportunities from the very first years of life. This will lay the foundation for successful educational journeys.

Volt

Connected education

An education policy fit for the future needs a strong network rather than isolated solutions. Childcare centres, schools, higher education institutions, businesses and public bodies will be connected through a central platform. This will create transparency, promote collaboration and enable genuine participation. The aim is practical education that strengthens democracy, is open to everyone and takes regional characteristics into account.

- **Build a central and regional education platform:** We will create a local education platform connecting childcare centres, schools, higher education institutions, businesses, the administration, associations and residents.
- **Hold networking events:** Within the Oldenburg Education Region, we will hold public events on educational topics such as school facilities, expanding childcare provision, all-day education, digitalisation and inclusion. These events will facilitate regular dialogue between teachers, education professionals and education providers in order to develop learning concepts further.

Best Practice: LIPPE EDUCATION NETWORK

Bildungskompass Lippe shows how regional education networks can create transparency and cooperation.

- **Use funding programmes:** We will apply to join the Bildungskommune ('Education Municipality') programme and link it to the existing Oldenburg Education Region. The Education Office will collect data to support education management and help further develop educational approaches in Oldenburg's educational institutions.
- **Make access to educational opportunities transparent:** Projects, funding opportunities and proven examples of best practice will be clearly accessible to everyone involved.
- **Create opportunities to participate:** Residents can contribute through the 'Gemeinsam Oldenburg' platform by offering tutoring, mentoring, language or music activities, or volunteering in an association.

Best Practice: EUROPE AND ERASMUS+

Numerous European education networks promote exchange and participation, including through Erasmus+ programmes.

School social work for every child

Good education requires reliable guidance, early intervention and support throughout the system. We will therefore strengthen school social work, draw on the expertise of non-profit organisations and provide continuous support throughout each child's educational journey. Our goal is to ensure that no child is left behind, regardless of their background, where they live or their socio-economic circumstances.

- **Ensure access to school social work:** Every school and early years centre should have at least one school social worker, regardless of type or size. Volt Oldenburg believes that the state government should cover the cost of school social work to ensure consistent education and support services throughout the state.

Best Practice: SECURING SCHOOL SUCCESS AS IN SAXONY-ANHALT

The state-wide 'Schulerfolg sichern' programme shows that systematically expanding school social work across many locations not only increases the support available, but also creates networks linking schools, youth welfare services and social work, improving the school environment and helping to prevent pupils from dropping out. The accompanying academic evaluation identifies measurable successes in school social work and emphasises its value in promoting educational achievement.

- **Recruit skilled professionals strategically:** As a municipal early years provider, we will actively recruit professionals with foreign-language skills. This will improve communication with parents and support integration, particularly through parental engagement and intercultural mediation.
- **Involve non-profit organisations:** Systematically involving non-profit organisations will bring proven, evidence-based education, support and prevention programmes into the system.
- **Establish a municipal education contact:** The Education Office will link nurseries, schools and non-profit education providers.
- **Identify support needs early:** To achieve this, cooperation between teachers, school social workers, educational psychologists and other specialist services will be improved.

Best Practice: DIGITALISATION IN ESTONIA

Estonia uses digital data on education and learners to ease transitions between educational institutions and enable personalised support. Teachers, other professionals and schools use these data to access learners' educational histories and provide targeted support throughout their learning journeys.

Modern, digital, sustainable learning spaces

Good education requires spaces that foster learning, interaction and independence. In Oldenburg, too, there is a substantial backlog of school renovations, routes to school are often unsafe and digital infrastructure is inconsistent. At the same time, accessibility, mobility and social infrastructure determine whether education is genuinely accessible to everyone. We will therefore create learning venues close to home, safe routes, modern technology and open learning spaces for everyday use.

- **Establish local education hubs:** These will serve as decentralised places for learning and interaction for the whole community.
- **Renovate buildings:** We will systematically renovate early years and school buildings. Existing school buildings will also be repurposed and developed further as required.
- **Create flexible learning spaces:** Public buildings should provide project and group rooms, learning labs and multifunctional areas, as well as dedicated 'co-learning spaces'.

Best Practice: OPEN SCHOOL CONCEPTS IN BERLIN

Berlin uses open, modular school designs that support flexible teaching. Transparent planning, multi-use spaces and links to surrounding neighbourhoods extend learning beyond the classroom and strengthen schools' connection to society.

- **Expand community gardens:** We will make municipal land available to expand community gardens as intergenerational places for learning and interaction.

Best Practice: COMMUNITY GARDENS IN CANADA

Community-garden models in Canada and Europe show how shared green spaces can become inclusive places of learning. Children, young people and adults engage with issues such as sustainability, nutrition and cooperation through hands-on activities. These projects are easy to access, rooted in their local communities and strengthen social cohesion across generations.

- **Provide more attractive transport options:** To make travel to educational institutions more attractive, we will campaign for the introduction of a discounted Oldenburgticket for young people up to the age of 25.

- **Strengthen adult education:** We will strengthen the Oldenburg Adult Education Centre as the central institution for lifelong learning, continuing professional development, integration and participation in society.

Creating flexible education provision

Good education does not come from more classroom teaching, but from using learning time well. Full-day provision enables children and young people to learn independently, gain social experience and develop their own interests. At the same time, education does not end at the classroom door: external learning venues connect knowledge with the real world, making learning engaging, relevant and a tangible experience of democracy.

Through the Oldenburg Education Region and as a municipal provider, we will use new state-level flexibility to offer networking and professional development for early-years and school teams. Our vision:

- **Create spaces for self-directed learning:** Full-day provision will let pupils learn independently at their own pace. It will not include conventional lessons in primary or secondary schools.

Best Practice: ALEMANNENSCHULE IN WUTÖSCHINGEN

This school uses a self-directed learning model without conventional classrooms, timetables or teacher-led instruction. Learners choose their own content and pace, supported by digital tools. The concept received the Deutscher Schulpreis (German School Award) and demonstrates how personalised learning can be delivered successfully.

- **Advance partnerships with external organisations:** Through the Oldenburg Education Region, we will systematically integrate external learning venues into everyday education. We will also promote partnerships with local businesses, clubs, initiatives, and cultural and civil-society organisations.

Best Practice: THINK GLOBAL SCHOOL

Schools abroad, such as THINK Global School, and other project-based learning models regularly work on real-world issues with external partners, connecting learning to societal challenges and giving pupils richer, more meaningful learning experiences.

- **Establish a media centre in the City Library:** We will establish a municipal media centre in the City Library to provide schools and other educational institutions with digital media, technical equipment and expert advice on media literacy.

- **Reverse the City Library fee increase:** We will reverse the increase in the City Library fee to €24. An affordable City Library serving as a third place gives everyone access to media, knowledge and learning spaces.
- **Promote reading:** The City Library will receive additional resources to strengthen its role as a place of education, enabling it to actively support schools with reading programmes.

Child-friendly Oldenburg

Children and young people are not only the future of our city; they are also an important part of society today. Through targeted measures and creative forms of participation, we will create attractive places for young people and families to live:

- **Guarantee education and care for all:** Full-day care and modern schools will give every child equal opportunities, regardless of their background or family income. Early years education, digital equipment and free, healthy meals in early years settings and schools will improve prospects for everyone.
- **Expand specialist nurseries:** We will establish more specialist nurseries for children with additional needs to meet growing demand. We will also invest specifically in staffing to improve staff-to-child ratios.
- **Support professionals through municipal scholarships:** Municipal scholarships will support the training of professionals in early years education, full-day school provision and classroom support. This will secure qualified staff over the long term and make these important professions more attractive.
- **Make Oldenburg safe and child-friendly:** Low-traffic zones, safe walking and cycling routes, and modernised playgrounds and youth centres will give children and young people space to play, be physically active and gain independence. Free swimming and sports programmes, together with inclusive recreational areas, will help children and young people thrive.
- **Expand leisure, cultural and sports provision:** Open-access youth centres, creative workshops, theatre and holiday projects will strengthen confidence, community and participation. Youth cultural events, graffiti walls and self-managed spaces will foster creativity and youth engagement. We will secure and expand long-term funding for these activities.
- **Promote health and well-being:** Easily accessible advice centres, school social work and local prevention programmes will provide help at an early stage in cases of crisis, bullying and stress. Public exercise programmes and nutrition projects will support physical and mental health.
- **Prevent child poverty:** When a child is born, we will send parents information about support and training opportunities and offer a home visit from a social worker with a baby welcome pack, lowering the barrier to seeking support.

Best Practice: PREVENTION IN THE CITY OF DORMAGEN

For years, the City of Dormagen has addressed child poverty with effective preventive measures. These not only enjoy a high level of public acceptance, but also deliver measurable success and reduce long-term follow-on costs.

COMMUNITY AND EQUALITY

A strong community emerges when everyone has equal opportunities to participate, regardless of their origin, gender, disability, sexual orientation or socio-economic background. Our goal is an Oldenburg that sees diversity as a strength, removes barriers and actively promotes social cohesion. The following priorities are central to this:

- **Enable participation for all:** Oldenburg should become accessible step by step. Through a municipal action plan, inclusive education and advice services, and the expansion of accessible public spaces, we will create the conditions that enable people with disabilities to participate independently in social, professional and political life.
- **Promote integration:** Successful integration requires language skills, education, work and interaction. Through a binding integration strategy, targeted language support and support for places where people can meet, we will foster a community that sees diversity as an opportunity for Oldenburg and counters discrimination.
- **Protect LGBTQI+ diversity:** Queer people should be able to live safely, visibly and as equals in Oldenburg. Through strong networks, protection from discrimination and violence, and comprehensive education and awareness-raising, we will create a city where diversity is a matter of course.
- **Improve healthcare and health promotion:** Good healthcare improves quality of life and social security. We will therefore strengthen medical care structures, promote prevention and mental health, and make targeted investments in skilled professionals and innovative health services.
- **Advance equality for all genders:** Equality does not happen by itself. Through fair career opportunities, a better balance between family life and political engagement, gender-equitable urban planning and effective measures against domestic violence, we will create equal opportunities for people of all genders.
- **Strengthen safety and cohesion:** Everyone should be able to feel safe in Oldenburg. Through prevention, better protection for at-risk groups, modern crisis preparedness and determined action against hatred, discrimination and violence, we will foster respectful and mutually supportive coexistence.

Enabling participation for all

Inclusion is the foundation of a just society. People with disabilities have the right to participate as equals in every area of life. To make this a reality, we need concrete measures to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities consistently.

- **Action plan for an accessible Oldenburg:** Following Nuremberg's example, we will launch a comprehensive action plan to implement the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. It will define measurable goals and concrete measures across all areas of municipal responsibility.

Best Practice: ACTION PLAN IN NUREMBERG

In 2021, the city adopted a comprehensive action plan to implement the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities. With concrete goals for mobility, education, work, culture and political participation, Nuremberg is implementing inclusion systematically.

- **German Sign Language (DGS):** Council meetings and events relating to politics or the promotion of democracy will, as a rule, be interpreted into DGS or supplemented by technical solutions such as subtitles.
- **Establish an accessible advice service:** We will establish an accessible and inclusive advice service covering local politics, elections and municipal offices. People with disabilities will have easy access to information in Easy Read. This will strengthen democratic participation and political engagement.
- **Support access to employment and political office:** We will launch a targeted programme to help people with disabilities enter the labour market and take up political office. Through mentoring, training and proactive outreach to employers and political bodies, we will make participation tangible and visible.
- **Create accessible public spaces:** In line with the action plan, all public buildings, squares, parks and forms of transport will be made accessible step by step.
- **Expand inclusive culture, leisure and sports provision:** Sports clubs and leisure providers will receive advice and support in applying for funding to make their activities inclusive.
- **Raise awareness and understanding:** Training for public administration, politicians and the wider public will improve understanding of the needs of people with disabilities.

Promoting integration

Integration is a responsibility shared by society as a whole. Successful integration means equal participation in social, cultural, economic and political life, regardless of origin, language or residence status. As a municipality, we will promote integration in Oldenburg through easily accessible services, more culturally inclusive institutions, places where people can meet and determined action against discrimination.

- **Integration strategy:** We will develop a municipal integration strategy with measurable goals covering language, education, work, housing, health, culture and political participation. The strategy will be evaluated regularly and drafted in collaboration with non-profit organisations and civil-society stakeholders.

Best Practice: CARE SERVICE IN BARCELONA

Since the late 1990s, Barcelona has pursued an intercultural strategy for the local integration of migrants. The city established the Care Service for Immigrants, Emigrants and Refugees (SAIER), a municipal service that provides everyone living in Barcelona with information and advice on immigration, forced displacement, emigration and voluntary return.

- **Support language acquisition from the outset:** We will subsidise participation in language and integration courses offered by the Oldenburg Adult Education Centre and other education providers, including for people without secure residence status. We will also support easily accessible language meet-ups, tandem programmes and multilingual education in early years settings and schools.
- **Support labour-market integration:** Through a partnership programme, we will support bridging programmes and training and actively match employers with migrants. We will work closely with non-profit organisations in doing so.
- **Create places for people to meet:** We will support places where people from different backgrounds can come together, including neighbourhood centres, cultural institutions, sports clubs and community projects. We will support bottom-up initiatives by providing premises free of charge and straightforward funding.

Best Practice: CONNECTION IN AMSTERDAM

Amsterdam defines integration as a two-way process between the host society and newcomers. The key word is 'connection'. The city provides an enabling legal framework for bottom-up initiatives, while the municipality's research department regularly publishes an integration report.

Protecting and promoting LGBTQI+ diversity

Lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, intersex and queer people (LGBTQI+) are part of our society. Yet they experience discrimination, violence and exclusion every day. Our goal is a city where everyone can live freely and safely, regardless of sexual orientation, gender identity or sex characteristics. As a municipality, we will actively foster protection, visibility and equal participation in Oldenburg for people who identify with the queer community.

- **Strengthen the queer network:** We strongly support Queeres Netzwerk Oldenburg and want to help strengthen and expand its work. To this end, we will establish a working group in which the city administration works with the network. Together, we will set up a central contact point for LGBTQI+ people, offering advice, networking, education and support with funding applications.
- **Municipal equality action plan:** Together with the queer network, we will draw up a municipal action plan with measurable goals covering protection from violence and discrimination, education and awareness-raising, health, family, work, culture and political participation. The action plan will be evaluated regularly.

Best Practice: COORDINATION OFFICE IN MUNICH

Munich has established a Coordination Office for LGBTQI+ Equality, which implements a comprehensive strategy. Its Equality Round Table is a municipal networking body, and the city has established a municipal foundation for LGBTQI+ equality and anti-discrimination, created by and for LGBTQI+ people.

- **Support safe spaces:** We will support non-profit organisations in the queer network and their projects both financially and by providing premises. Queer young people, LGBTQI+ refugees and older LGBTQI+ people in particular need protected places where they can meet, receive advice and access peer support.
- **Expand education and awareness-raising:** Education and awareness projects such as 'SCHLAU' will be systematically integrated into schools, youth facilities, sports clubs and workplaces. Public administration, the police, the public order office, healthcare services and the judiciary will receive training on LGBTQI+ issues and anti-discrimination.

- **Protect against violence and hate crime:** Following Hamburg's example, we will establish an independent advice and complaints office for protection from violence.
- **Recognise and counter far-right provocations:** We will train public-sector staff to recognise, report and combat subtle tactics used to target non-profit organisations working with queer communities.

Healthcare and staying healthy

Health is a public good. A well-designed care model ensures good, affordable healthcare for everyone - regardless of where they live, their age, background or income. Prevention programmes for physical and mental health directly improve people's quality of life, their ability to function and their safety, while also benefiting the city as a whole.

- **Future-proof hospitals and care services:** By modernising hospital structures, fostering cross-sector collaboration and expanding specialist day clinics, we will create a stable healthcare network that is flexible, efficient and close to the people it serves.

Best Practice: VIENNA HEALTHCARE GROUP

The Wiener Gesundheitsverbund (Vienna Healthcare Group) shows how hospitals can work together efficiently and in a patient-friendly way.

- **Promote awareness of healthy eating:** Our diet is a major contributor to premature deaths. A healthy diet can help prevent cardiovascular disease and, to some extent, cancer. Alongside nutrition education in schools delivered through the Food Council, we will provide additional information in public spaces, with a particular focus on sustainably improving the quality of food in municipal healthcare facilities.
- **Strengthen and retain healthcare staff:** We will increase staffing levels. Well-trained, motivated professionals are the backbone of good care. Regional training initiatives, fair working conditions, additional collectively agreed benefits and incentives such as staff accommodation and childcare places for medical staff will increase both the availability of skilled professionals and the quality of care.
- **Promote innovative care models:** We will strengthen Oldenburg as a centre for medical research and use its expertise to develop new models of care.
- **Strengthen mental health:** We will strengthen psychosocial counselling services and municipal suicide prevention.

Best Practice: LOWER SAXONY

The state of Lower Saxony supports health regions.

Equality for all genders

Equality must be actively shaped. Our goal is a city where everyone feels safe and can participate equally in social, professional and political life. As a local authority, we lead by example: as an employer, in urban planning and through targeted, effective projects and public education.

- **More women in leadership:** In view of the structural disadvantages women face at work, as well as the successes already achieved by the city administration, we will introduce binding rules for recruitment procedures. Anonymised applications and gender-equitable selection procedures will lay the foundations for women to hold at least 50% of leadership positions.
- **More men in care professions:** We will make care professions more attractive in municipal facilities and specifically encourage men to enter them. We will use every available means to improve pay - through allowances, supplements and higher pay grades. We will also improve opportunities for professional advancement, raise the profession's public standing through campaigns and increase pay during training by providing scholarships. People of all genders will benefit.
- **A family-friendly employer:** The City of Oldenburg has already achieved a great deal as a family-friendly employer. We will measure and evaluate the impact to date and use the findings to develop further measures.
- **Strengthen the Gender Equality Office and its work on men's issues:** We will clarify the role of the Officer for Men's Issues while strengthening the work of the Gender Equality Office as a whole. Both areas will receive sufficient resources to carry out their important work for gender equality effectively.
- **Make council duties compatible with family life:** A lack of support for families must not be a barrier to political engagement. We will introduce free childcare during council and committee meetings. Following the example of the Netherlands, we will also advocate appropriate pay for council duties, so that undertaking them as a second job is financially viable for parents.

Best Practice: ALLOWANCES IN THE NETHERLANDS

Local councillors receive an appropriate allowance, ensuring that council duties no longer impose a financial burden, particularly on parents.

- **Gender-responsive urban planning:** The perspectives of women and children will be systematically incorporated into every urban planning project. Safe routes, good lighting, barrier-free access and public spaces must not be designed solely from a male perspective.
- **Support and expand OLIP:** We actively support OLIP (Oldenburg Intervention Programme against Domestic Violence) and want to expand it. Perpetrators of domestic violence will also have a point of contact, because effective protection for victims requires work with perpetrators and prevention too.

Strengthening safety and social cohesion

Safety is a basic need. Everyone wants to feel comfortable and protected - on the way home, at a bus stop, at events or online. Their gender, background or circumstances should make no difference. Cities and municipalities have many opportunities to create a safe, welcoming environment and strong social cohesion.

- **Improve people's sense of safety:** Places where people feel unsafe will be identified and improved together with residents. Emergency call points, a more visible police presence in public spaces, security staff on public transport, alcohol bans in known trouble spots and good lighting schemes will help people feel safer.

Best Practice: NIGHT TAXI IN HANOVER

The night-taxi service creates safe spaces for FLINTA* people.

- **Better protection for at-risk groups:** Independent reporting centres will be established, including for sexual harassment and discrimination; night taxis will be supported; and passengers will be allowed to get off public transport between stops. Protected accommodation and emergency shelters for victims of violence will be expanded, organisations that have created safe spaces will receive funding, and Housing First projects for homeless people will be implemented in the city.

Best Practice: REPORTING CENTRE IN LEIPZIG

A digital reporting service provides a point of contact for people affected by catcalling and assaults.

- **Prepare thoroughly for crises and emergencies:** Emergency plans for different crises will be developed further or drawn up from scratch, responsibilities clearly assigned and response chains defined. Sirens, warning apps, digital information boards and public Wi-Fi with an integrated warning system will ensure communication with the public. Smart grids and emergency power systems will maintain essential services even in an emergency.
- **Ensure digital security:** Regular security updates will protect the city's IT. Clear, audited security standards and collaboration with IT security experts will ensure that all municipal systems are trustworthy and reliable.

- **Strengthen social cohesion:** We will establish a working group to combat hate crime. It will comprise representatives from the police, educational institutions and social services. It will support projects tackling racism, extremism and violence. Anti-discrimination training for public authorities will foster respectful interactions and strengthen trust in institutions.
- **Prevent crime:** Campaigns promoting civic courage on public transport and in public spaces will strengthen our shared sense of responsibility. Free drug-checking services and educational work save lives and open up channels of communication with support services.

OLDENBURG ON A SOUND FINANCIAL FOOTING

Municipalities in Germany are under severe financial pressure. Oldenburg also faces structural financial challenges: the federal and state governments assign tasks that the municipality is required to fulfil - its statutory duties. These account for a large proportion of the budget. At the same time, options for raising revenue are limited. The main sources, particularly trade tax and property tax, cannot simply be increased at will without placing an excessive burden on the local economy and residents.

For Volt Oldenburg, one thing is clear: managing municipal funds means handling Oldenburg residents' money responsibly. We aim to use it effectively, strategically and sustainably while continuing to fulfil all statutory duties.

Volt Oldenburg stands for a fiscal policy that creates room for manoeuvre instead of restricting it further. We pursue three core approaches:

- **Budget review:** We will establish a task force of experts from the city administration and local businesses to review the budget systematically. The aim is to identify expenditure that can be reduced without compromising quality of life in Oldenburg.
- **Best practice from Europe:** We will draw on studies and best practice from across Europe to develop new sources of revenue and strengthen existing ones. At the same time, we will make targeted investments to bolster the local economy and increase purchasing power in a socially responsible way.
- **Set priorities:** We will consistently direct available funds towards Oldenburg's future. We will prioritise investment particularly in infrastructure, environmental and climate protection, education and social participation.

In this way, we will lay the foundations for Oldenburg to shape a financially sound, sustainable and socially equitable future, with a clear sense of direction.

Volt

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LEGAL NOTICE

Volt Oldenburg - Local Election Manifesto 2026
<https://voltdeutschland.org/oldenburg>

Volt Deutschland - Lower Saxony State Association

Represented by the Executive Board:
Jannik Kronemeyer, Yvonne Dannemann,
Stefan Niemeier, Anna-Marie Herrmann and John Finder.

Emsteker Str. 33
49661 Cloppenburg

Volt