

Mensdorf - Roodt/Syre - Olingen - Betzdorf - Berg

## **Election program**

**To live comfortably in BETZDORF  
Today and tomorrow**

Council elections  
8<sup>th</sup> of October 2017

**For children, the youth and families**

**Better housing and improving mobility**

**Better services**

**Jean-François Wirtz  
& his team**

**Dear fellow citizens,**

On October 8, you will be called to elect a new Municipal Council that will preside over the destiny of our municipality for the next six years. I introduce myself to you as the leading candidate of the LSAP, with the ambition of participating in the majority within the next city council.

We are fully aware of our future responsibilities. The challenges are daunting. Like many other municipalities in the country, Betzdorf continues its demographic development. From the time I was an alderman, between 2000 and 2011, I always took my responsibilities and we made many decisions at that time with a view to bringing a better quality of life to all inhabitants of the commune: the school campus, the after-school care centre, the cultural and sports infrastructures, as well as many initiatives designed to guarantee a healthy and pleasant environment. All these decisions have been welcomed by the population and have profoundly modified our living environment. We intend to continue in this direction in order to adapt our infrastructures to meet the needs of the population and not to respond to requests, as we know that the time between taking a decision and carrying out the work is long. We intend to invest more particularly in the quality of the care taking and guidance of children and young people, which is our first priority.

Given the increase in population and the proximity of Betzdorf to the city of Luxembourg, the pressure of real estate is accompanied by rising house prices. Many families as well as young people involved in the life and activities of our commune are no longer able to find affordable housing to continue their life among us. Although initiatives have been taken in the course of the final legislature to provide some housing at lower prices, this worrying situation has unfortunately continued to deteriorate. We commit ourselves to pursue all-round efforts to steadily and systematically increase the rental stock of communal housing and to be creative in allowing preferential access according to specific criteria to certain categories of the population: rent-saving housing, lease-to-own, flat sharing, social housing, etc. Putting all the possibilities of the municipal authorities to offer housing at affordable prices is our second priority.

The third axis of our program concerns the adaptation of the supply of existing services, in particular in the field of mobility and the development of new services for the elderly through a network of home services, support for cultural activities, encouraging the offer of new sports activities or the creation of infrastructures in the municipality; without forgetting the projects we intend to implement to improve the integration of all: additional support for learning languages and especially Luxembourgish, creating an exchange fair for internships and first experiences in professional life, courses on new electronic devices and new technologies (smartphone, tablet, social networks, etc.). For us, solidarity is not a meaningless slogan, it is an essential value that we intend to combine in an intergenerational, intercultural and socially barrier less way.

To meet the challenges facing our municipality, I have gathered around myself a team of diverse skills, particularly motivated and committed, which is ready to mobilize so that everyone can LIVE COMFORTABLY IN BETZDORF, today and tomorrow.

Jean-François Wirtz

## Priority 1: Children, Youth and Families

The population of our commune has a significant proportion of children and adolescents (28% of the population is under 19 years of age).

Families (couples with children and single-parent families) account for 54% of all households.

It is with this reality in mind that the LSAP makes children, young people and families their first priority.

### After-school care centres

Each parent has the right to expect care and support structures of quality adapted to the psycho-social development of their children:

- We will not wait until the end of the next legislature to undertake the necessary transformations and improvements to improve the conditions of the children who attend the after-school care centres.
- We undertake to fully assume the role of the municipal authorities and in particular to review and evaluate regularly the situation of the after-school care centres with the service provider.

Our proposals:

- A quality survey of children and parents whose results will guide our policy within the after-school care centres.
- An improvement in the quality of the children's lunch break: creation of a refectory adapted for children to eat together in an appropriate environment, noise reduction, quality food and meals (regional, organic and/or fair-trade ingredients), menus prepared with the participation of parents and children, development of areas to withdraw and be calm.
- A proactive evaluation of the number of places required in the light of demographic change and planning of expansion works if necessary.
- On-going training for all educational staff and adapting the numbers to the needs of the children.
- The creation of a new platform to improve and promote regular exchanges between all actors: parents (parents' association and parents' representatives), after-school care centres, the school and the city council to coordinate more effectively the different interactions. We will undertake to regularly invite the persons in charge of the after-school care centres to meetings of the council education committee, as the 2009 School Act provides.

### Elementary school

We commit ourselves to give all the possible support to the teachers. Particular emphasis will be placed on the supervision, surveillance and safety of children during playtime.

Our proposals:

- Appropriate pedagogical measures to reduce inappropriate behaviour in children, especially during recess.
- Strengthening security by adapting access to school during school hours.
- Strengthening of pedagogical support for pupils with academic difficulties in order to enhance equal chances.
- Creation of a transport service for children's extra-curricular activities (eg music theory, football, ...).

### **For Youth**

We propose, in collaboration with the services existing at local, regional or national level:

- Implementation of tutoring for high school students (private lessons).
- The creation of a trade-fair for internships, first professional experiences and holidays in collaboration with the ADEM office in Wasserbillig, companies in the region and high schools frequented by our teenagers.
- Creation at the communal level of support for entry into working life (writing CV, active job search, etc.) in collaboration with the Youth House, CIGL, the Forum pour l'Emploi, ADEM and other employment initiatives.

We are convinced that the Youth House of our commune should be more actively involved in these projects and could play an exemplary role.

## Priority 2 : Better housing and mobility

### Access to housing and alternative housing projects

The municipality of Betzdorf is subject to a steady rise in the price of real estate, making access to adequate housing no more affordable for a whole range of citizens.

Young people from the commune often find it very difficult to settle and house themselves among us and to continue to live in and support our community.

We are also aware that many elderly people find it difficult to continue living in their homes, which have become too large and require too much maintenance, but who would still like to live in our community where they have their roots, their activities and their benchmarks. That is why we are committed to developing individual and adequate solutions to offer affordable housing that meets the specific needs of these people (eg, supervised housing).

As part of a systematic and regular action, we intend to increase significantly the stock of council housing for rental.

We intend to implement all existing opportunities and to be creative in favour of access to affordable housing for specific categories of people who will be selected on the basis of transparent criteria.

Our commitments are:

- The creation of housing accessible to the flat-sharing.
- Implementing housing accessible to the young people of the municipality on the principle of a lease-to-own. A working group will be set up to define the conditions for access to this initiative.
- Access to new solutions tailored to the needs of the elderly who wish to continue living in the community.
- The new residential subdivisions of the municipality will have to meet stricter criteria for the development of the territory (creation of collective infrastructures: playgrounds, vegetable garden, parking, etc.) and privileged access to housing for families under certain criteria (eg originating from the municipality, being younger than 35).
- The creation of communal garden areas.
- Revision of subsidies to promote energy efficient, energy-saving, renewable energy and water-saving facilities. A specific working group assisted by external experts will be set up.

### Mobility

Mobility, especially for young people who do not have a vehicle, is often problematic. That is why we are committed to expanding the range of public transport through flexible models and promoting soft mobility, another essential element of quality of life and road safety in our municipality.

Our proposals:

- Adapting and creating bike paths to reach the central points of the municipality: schools, train stations, cultural centers, shops and restaurants.
- The creation and adaptation of corridors or routes for cyclists on public roads.
- Improvement of access to Olingen, Mensdorf and Betzdorf.
- Creation of a driver's license grant (based on household income).
- The study of the implementation of a car sharing service.
- Conducting a study on the needs and the need to create a social taxi service accessible to all for an affordable price (eg € 0.5 / km).

### **Priority 3: Improving the supply of services**

Although the commitment of clubs and associations within the municipality of Betzdorf is exemplary, for many activities we have to go outside the municipality.

Our ambition is to review the subsidies and the infrastructures available to the associations of the commune.

Moreover, a number of services deserve to be developed or created in order to facilitate the lives of the inhabitants.

It is on the basis of these findings that we make the following commitments:

#### **Services for citizens**

- Development of a network of small home services: minor repairs, minor maintenance work that is not competitive with commercial companies (eg changing a bulb, carrying a defective appliance to the store for repair, watering plants during an absence, walking dogs, feeding cats, ...).
- Increased support for language learning, in particular Luxembourgish, through a series of initiatives such as a language café, conversation tables, language coaching, individual language courses or language support courses.
- Strengthen shuttle services for social, cultural and sports events in the municipality and improve the schedules of the Eventbus (eg the Schueberfouerbus will also run on the afternoons on weekends to allow families to go to the fun-fair).
- Extend the municipality's support to associations that would implement a new activity in the municipality, provided that this initiative is supported by a minimum number of inhabitants (eg for cultural or sports activities).
- Strengthening of cultural activities favouring the regional or national prestige of our municipality.

#### **Rescue services**

- Priority construction of a new Class II fire-station hall. It is evident that the current fire station in Mensdorf no longer meets the standards of an efficient municipal emergency service. Both the building which is too small and poorly arranged, and its location, on the crossroads, requires an urgent and priority investment. The LSAP commits to rapidly advance on the project of building new barracks to finally give the Mensdorf fire brigade the infrastructures they deserve.
- Increased public awareness of first aid, defibrillator use, risks related to domestic accidents, responses and actions to be taken in the event of natural disasters such as floods, severe weather, fires, etc.

#### **Shops and other activities**

- Continuing implementation of a seasonal market.
- Proposal of specific individual solutions adapted to the artists of the municipality (eg rehearsal rooms, creation workshops, art studios, exhibition halls).