

Assembly News, 2017.

The Assembly is the policy making forum of the Liberal Party.

With a view to refreshing our policy platform the NEC has chosen to hold Spring & Summer Special Assemblies to allow for further opportunities to pass Party policy in addition to the Annual Assembly held in the Autumn.

The first of these events was held on the afternoon of Saturday 25th February.

The Spring Assembly in Birmingham caused some spirited debate on the need to reduce the prison population and re-offending rates by using more education and skillstraining and alcohol/ drug treatment programmes.

A lengthy debate was had on how RIPA legislation, governing the use of CCTV, should be made more flexible to enable communities to request CCTV to monitor fly-tipping grot-spots.

Re-nationalisation of Water Companies was supported and the need to prosecute Directors and Managers responsible for serious incidents of water pollution due to negligence, such as the recent case concerning Thames Water. The final debate concerned the Liberal call for Trident to be scrapped and the funds freed up to be used to re-equip our conventional armed forces which are in a serious state of neglect following years of significant budget cuts.

Summer Special Assembly.

Can we urge all members considering tabling motions to have final drafts in by the middle of May. Email Motions to Paul Bradshaw at bradshawpanda@yahoo.co.uk.

Summer Assembly, Saturday 24th June 12.-3.00 at The Briar Rose Hotel, Bennetts Hill, Birmingham, B2 5RE. Put the date in your diary and please come along. Contact Details at the bottoms of the page.

At present we have motions being worked on for possible debate covering these subjects:

1) Education. 2) Support for Small and Medium Businesses. 3) Climate Change.

If you think we need to add to this list or have other ideas please get in touch.

Proposed: Climate Change Motion: By Liverpool Liberal Association.

1. That achieving a significant reduction in CO2 emissions is a key aim of the Climate Change Act(2008) and the Paris Climate Agreement (2015) 2. That Britain's urban areas regularly breach EU limits for CO2 which has a severe effect on health. That action to combat climate change must occur at an; international, national and local level in order to be effective. Assembly condemns: The Government cutting subsidies to the renewable energy sector, whilst simultaneously safeguarding subsidies for the fossil fuel industries. The Government's failure to invest sufficiently into energy efficiency measures to help consumers reduce their energy consumption and household bills. Assembly therefore urges the Government to: End all subsidies (estimated to be £26 billion by the International Monetary Fund in 2015) to the fossil fuel industry.

2. Commission an independent report into the effects of a tax on carbon emissions on consumers and the environment, based on the Finnish model.

3. Engage in an afforestation/reforestation programme on current wasteland with the aim of soil and wildlife preservation, and carbon sequestration.

4. Provide grants to families and small businesses to invest in energy efficiency measures, such as loft insulation and double glazing, with the aim of reducing energy consumption and energy bills. / That these grants be administered without claw back of capital and minimal red tape

5. Introduce stricter penalties for individuals and businesses found to be contravening environmental regulations in the form of heavier fines. At a local level, authorities should be empowered to issue on-the-spot fines of up to £600 to anyone found dumping, rather than the current maximum of £400.

6. Mandate that local authorities create and implement a carbon reduction framework, elucidating how, on a local level, they intend to reduce CO2 emissions.

We always want to hear from Liberals around the country so feel free to send us your articles, letters or news items. Liberal News is your forum to reach every other member of the Party. Liberal News can be contacted at: northwestliberalparty@hotmail.co.uk. By mail at Liberal Party, 41 Sutton Street, Liverpool, L13 7EG.



The way ahead & why we are needed.

Liberal
News.



Spring, 2017.

After being chosen for another two year term as Liberal Party President Steve Radford reflects on his hopes and aims for the coming years.



In the aftermath of the EU referendum there is a need for a progressive political party which respects the referendum result and understands that this does not mean the end of European co-operation; **The Liberal Party wants to create a better and more flexible working relationship with both the EU and the wider world community.**

We need a party which has a sense of social justice while seeking to increase the wealth of this country by stimulating growth and making sure that the benefits are widespread.

We need a political force wanting to enable people to live their lives without being hostage to endless bureaucracy and form-filling.

We need a **simplified tax system** which lifts millions of the low paid out of the benefits trap by raising tax income thresholds.

We need an inheritance tax which tackles the obscenity of the richest 1% passing on unimaginable wealth without paying a penny in taxation. We should withdraw inheritance tax exemptions to enable the inherited wealth of one generation to fund investment in people such as University tuition fees, small businesses and home start up grants for the next generation. We need a more balanced legal system that **stimulates small businesses** formation and a framework for employment rights that does not threaten risk taking or job creation.

We need to **shift defence spending to improve our conventional forces.** Our service men and women are some of the best in the world but further budget cuts will seriously undermine our military capability. Given the many dangers in the world our defence priorities should be focused on conflict prevention and flexible forces able to deal with the uncertain landscape of our times. WMD in the form of a new generation of the Trident system diverts funding from the real needs of our Armed Services especially the Navy.

We need a party committed to a publicly funded and owned NHS which prevents illness, promotes well being, as well as assisting those with ill health. This needs to be democratically accountable at a local and regional level, not just responding to the dictates of Whitehall/Westminster.

We need an education system that brings communities together to share British values of diversity and tolerance. A system that enriches the lives of pupils and provides employment skills. The value of professional teachers should not be undermined by the burden of inspections and statistics taking them away from working with those in need of encouragement and nurture. A fundamental shift is needed away from centralism and prescription.

With a Lib Dem Party preaching that the public are too old or uneducated to make significant decisions about the future of the country and a Labour Party stumbling from one failed coup to another, we need a progressive movement that wants to empower people. **A political force committed to opening up opportunity, strengthening communities** by allowing more locally based decision making and with a faith in the idea that popular democracy is a force for good not just a tool in the hands of populist demagogues.

Or as Gladstone put it **"Liberalism is trust of the people"**.

Liberal Opinion: From Richard Stokes of Slough. Heathrow Expansion - Ill Thought Out

The foreign owned companies who have lobbied so persistently and dishonestly for the expansion of Heathrow have ignored or seriously underestimated all the major environmental objections, especially air pollution, noise pollution, traffic congestion, expansion of the M4 and M25, and the demolition of hundreds of homes. The report ignores many environmental concerns because they are regarded "as of minor significance". For example, the Lakeside Energy plant near Colnbrook will be demolished if the plan is implemented. This plant was approved as a "recycling plant designed to obviate the need to send waste to land fill". There is no proposal to relocate Lakeside Energy.

What motivates government to pander to these business interests above all else? There must be a reason!

Inequality needs to be on the public policy agenda.



Dane Clouston sets out Liberal solutions to the persistent inequality that is a feature of our society and economy.

The Liberal Party is extremely concerned about the dangerously growing extreme inequality of opportunity in health, education, and the inheritance of wealth. To tackle this we propose VAT on private health bills, VAT on private school fees and an inheritance tax progressively linked more to amounts received than to amounts given, with abolition of unlimited exemptions for land and businesses, thereby encouraging the wider spread of giving. The revenues from these taxes would be directed to the NHS, State schools and UK Universal Inheritance respectively.

Equality of opportunity will be greater when VAT means that fewer people can afford to buy private health and private education for their children while the majority benefit from revenue from the VAT improving the NHS and State schools, including sporting facilities.

Equality of opportunity will also be greater when heirs of extremely rich UK citizens inherit less, so that every 25 year old UK citizen with a UK citizen parent can inherit a basic Citizens Inheritance, starting at £1,000 and increasing annually by that amount up to £10,000 or more, subject to available revenue from, and clawed back from more fortunate heirs by, the progressive inheritance tax. No longer will some inherit billions while others inherit nothing.

After Brexit, the European Court of Justice and the EU will no longer be able to prevent this proposal on grounds of discrimination against 25 year old UK citizens with only other EU and world-wide citizen parents. Such discrimination is necessary in order to prevent it from being an unjustified immigration draw. Extreme inequalities of opportunity in health, education and the inheritance of wealth are a blight on our country. We want to reform Liberal capitalism in the interests of a genuine UK Opportunity Society, in line with the Party's traditional constitution calling for Liberty, Property and Security for all.

Why We Chose to Serve on the Liberal Party NEC. Paul & Anne Bradshaw.

We both served as Liberal Party councillors in Slough, Berkshire. Anne on Berkshire County Council from 1985 until the County Council was devolved to a unitary authority in 1998 and Paul on Slough Borough Council from 1988 to 1992, after which we both continued to work with the Liberals until Paul accepted employment with a family placement overseas in 2001. When we returned to the UK in 2013 we setup home in Southport and re-engaged with the Liberal Party.

Rather than campaign in Southport which, as a Lib-Dem held seat would have been a long uphill struggle, we decided to offer our services to the Party nationally. We offered our support to the former NEC and as a result of that involvement accepted nominations to serve on the new NEC.

Our goals over the next two years will be to:

- 1, Drive growth in the membership of the Liberal Party to ensure long-term sustainability.
- 2, Improve communications through social media channels.
- 3, Create a greater awareness of the continued existence of the Liberal Party.
- 4, Support the update of existing Party policy to reflect agreed motions.
- 5, Promote Liberal Party policy by linking it to discussion topics on social media.
- 6, Support the election of councillors in currently active areas.
- 7, Seek to identify and establish new active areas.

Paul has accepted appointment to the NEC Policy & Assembly committee. Anne will serve as Party Treasurer.

We would encourage other Liberal members who feel a little isolated because they are not in a currently active area, to offer their services and support to the national organisation. The old principle of many hands make light work applies here too! **Paul & Anne – Southport.**



Why I Joined the Liberal Party.

Jack Horn, a new member to the Liberal cause, sets out his reasons for joining.

I left the Conservative party out of respect for people, I no longer felt the Conservatives were dedicated to serving people in a positive aspect.

I knew I wanted to be involved, so began searching for a new party to join, it wasn't easy looking over and trying to understand published party policies and trying to find one that fitted my beliefs. I found the Liberal Party UK, a true people's party,

a party that believes in freedom and delivering upon the wishes of the many. So I joined the Liberal Party where I feel certain I can follow my beliefs of putting people's interests as a top priority.

In joining the Liberal Party, I hope to setup a local organisation dedicated to achieving a fairer system for the people. I know I've not chosen the easiest path to serve the people, but an honest path where I can deliver upon the wishes of the people in harmony with my conscience. I want to both stand for election and to work to get others elected to Council.

I urge people in the Wellingborough and Rushden area to get involved, to help establish a caring Liberal Party group for the Wellingborough constituency.

***You can contact Jack and see his thought on various issues at:
<https://jackhorn1999.wixsite.com/jackhorn>***

Colin France explains why he has joined our Party and the National Executive.



I joined the Liberal Party because I used to be a member of the Liberal Democrats and I was a councillor for 4 years for the Nether Edge Ward in Sheffield. I got fed up with the way LibDems operated in Sheffield so I joined the Liberal Party. I applied for the NEC because I wanted to be able to make a difference and to help shape future policy. I would like to re-invigorate the Party as I believe it has a place in British politics, it just needs to be put forward to the public.

A little bit about me : I am 47 years old, married to Sara, we have two children called Cameron and Emily. I am a Training Manager at Westminster Home Care. I have a degree in politics. Some of my hobbies are distance running, I am trying to organise a running club and I also enjoy karate with my little girl Emily. I am looking at standing for election next year in the Sheffield local elections.

My goal is to grow the Liberal Party over the next few years, ensure the party is on the Internet and it appeals to British youth.

Election Helpers Needed. Local Elections :Thursday, May 4th.

Do you have a day free to help out in picturesque North Yorkshire?

Cllr John Clark is standing to defend his Pickering Division seat on North Yorkshire County Council. It promises to be a tough fight with the locally strong Tory Party. Get in touch to help, donate or anything else that comes to mind.

Email: JohnClark@RyedaleLiberals.org.uk. Tel: 01751 417131. Or Visit: www.thirskandmaltonliberals.org.uk.



London Calling? Liberal 'laissez-faire' by Laurence Williams. London's Need is a Liberal Lead. Time to get together for free thinking and debate about how Liberals can organise in London & the South East. The suggestion is a meeting of like-minds near the Westminster Bubble or something? Time & Place to be agreed.

Call or Email: williams24williams@gmail.com Tel: 07796 194 002