



GENERAL ELECTION 2019

THE LIBERAL PARTY MANIFESTO

PUT TRUST IN THE PEOPLE



INTRODUCTION

I am delighted to be writing the introduction to this manifesto. Through it I hope you will come to understand more about the Liberal Party's vision and beliefs, and that you will feel able to support Liberal Party Candidates.

It is an old principle of Liberalism that governments should 'put trust in the people'. The 2016 European Referendum result and how we go about leaving the EU is plainly one of the principle issues in this General Election. The Liberal Party does not want to re-fight old battles and open-up old wounds. We believe that the nation needs to come together, with everyone working towards making "Brexit" a success. Some parties will peddle the line that those who voted to leave the EU were too old or too stupid to have their votes count. The Liberal Party acknowledges that the people have spoken, the rules of the referendum were clear – we must put trust in the people.

To put trust in the people goes way beyond our future outside of the EU. We want to allow people to keep as much of their earned income as possible, trusting that they know what is best for themselves and their families. We are campaigning for a system of Universal Inheritance - trusting people to use it to give them the best start to their adult life.

The Liberal Party believes in increased training and vocational education, giving British people the skills necessary to take the Country forward.

I hope you find this manifesto informative and I trust we can win your support.

Cllr STEVE RADFORD
President of the Liberal Party

KEY LIBERAL PARTY POLICIES

- Respect the EU Referendum result and work towards making 'Brexit' a success.
- Guarantee the rights of EU citizens already working in the UK, simplifying residency qualification rights, thereby ensuring that key skills stay in the UK economy.
- Increase skills training and vocational education and lessen the need for immigrant workers.
- Leverage preventive healthcare and public promotion to avoid long term costs to the NHS and restore democratic accountability to the NHS.
- Move from a punitive to a harm reducing approach to drug legislation.
- Simplify the tax system by raising personal allowances, taking more of the low paid out of taxation altogether and allowing those who are moderately paid to keep more of their earned income.
- Radical reform of inheritance tax. Reduce the level of taxation but abolish the extensive exemptions and allowances which mean the wealthiest pay little by way of inheritance tax. Provide for a 'Universal Inheritance' to give everyone a tax free lump sum at the age of 25, which can be used to pay university tuition fees or towards a business start-up.
- Encourage growth by reducing the huge regulatory and bureaucratic burdens on the small business sector.
- Encourage local authorities to build and maintain more affordable homes for rent and give them greater powers to combat derelict houses and waste land sites.
- Increase defence spending to pre-2010 levels to increase the manpower and equipment of UK forces. British forces deserve the best. This can be funded by scrapping Britain's nuclear weapons immediately.
- Restore Police funding to pre-2010 levels adjusted in line with population growth, whilst tackling the problems associated with criminal reoffending and overcrowded prisons.

BRITAIN AND BREXIT

Liberals call for the referendum vote to be respected and for all to work to make Brexit a success.

We would guarantee the rights of EU nationals already working in the UK. These workers need certainty in their lives and the UK would benefit by their skills remaining in the British economy.

We want to see the processes and procedures for applying for settled status to be simplified and made accessible.

We want to see access to the EU Single Market to be as free as is possible, but within the context of the UK negotiating trade deals with other countries.

We want to see a fairer deal for countries of the Commonwealth, both in terms of immigration and trade.

For future immigration needs we would introduce a preference in favour of candidates from former Commonwealth countries, who have shared our culture, language, customs and who have long established communities in the UK to encourage integration.

THE ENVIRONMENT

The Liberal Party would end 'fracking' now. We believe that the risks of fracking are not yet fully researched or understood and the potential for damage to the environment is enormous.

We believe that still further reductions can be made in the amount of 'landfill' waste by making greater use of local authority administered recycling schemes.

We call for greater investment in environmentally friendly technology and sustainable energy generation. We want Britain to become a world leader in sustainable and renewable technology.

There must be no more production for production's sake, no more "planned obsolescence". We would implement a policy which supports producing only what we need and that such products should be as durable, repairable, and of as good a quality as is possible, designed with recycling and reduction of pollution during manufacture and disposal in mind.

EDUCATION

We want to create a country which is proud of its state education system. We want to see proper state school provision where the most able are stretched and challenged in order that they develop to their maximum ability, but equally no child should be considered a failure or 'left behind' all children should be encouraged to aspire to achieve their very best and fulfil their maximum potential. To this end we would seek to ensure all teachers are well trained, well qualified and well-motivated to educate and train young people.

We want all children to be given a fair opportunity to succeed. We would oppose further expansion of grammar schools and we would ensure a fair and consistent funding formula and tax application across state, free and private schools. We would oppose plans to ban private schools which provide people with choice and diversity, which can provide vital lessons to state schools. School inspections would be carried out across all schools which receive public funding.

We would seek to restore the principle of free Education. Tuition fees need to be abolished; this could be funded by a modest charge against funds raised from inheritance tax (excluding the main family home which nil-band rated to ensure direct descendants can inherit without fear of tax burden). Let the capital of one generation fund the human investment of the next generation.

A comprehensive network of children's centres is an essential investment to encourage children to have a good start in both education and health.

We need to establish and fund an independent Council for Voluntary Youth Services to strengthen the partnership between youth services, the community voluntary and faith sectors, and local authorities.

We would plough investment into skills training and vocational education so that the UK is equipped to develop a high tech - high skills economy. To this end we will seek to foster a culture where vocational training is seen to be given the same status and esteem as purely academic qualifications.

These reforms would be partly funded by applying VAT to 'private' school fees.

HEALTH AND SOCIAL CARE

Liberals would help save money within the NHS in the long term by greatly increasing public health promotion, particularly by local councils and by increasing focus on preventive health measures.

We would restore democratic accountability to NHS supervision 'watchdogs'.

The Liberal Party also calls for the abolition of social care charges for disabled people.

We would increase the lower threshold at which the elderly are required to pay for social care to £25,000 in capital and savings by 2020.

On the principle of free education for all, we would reintroduce nursing bursaries and introduce vocational training schemes for student nurses, compassionate care is as vital to the nursing profession as academic ability.

These reforms would be partly financed by abolishing VAT exemption for private healthcare providers.

DRUG USE

The party advocates replacing the Misuse of Drugs Act 1971 and ancillary legislation with an act which provides for an effective strategy of legalisation, regulation and control.

We call for a less punitive and more 'harm reducing' approach to drugs use. Criminalisation of those afflicted with drugs dependency can have a detrimental impact, alienating people from contributing to society.

We call for the establishment of an independent multi-agency co-ordinating body to oversee policy development and implementation in relation to the supply and control of drugs.

We support the taxation of drugs and redirection of criminal justice expenditure to education and treatment services and the dissemination of accurate and truthful information to minimise substance-related harm to individuals and communities.

We believe that these measures will eliminate the criminal marketplace and cause a reduction in drugs related crime and violence whilst aiding those most in need of rehabilitation.

TAXATION

Liberals want to see a simplified tax system which allows the low paid and moderately paid to keep as much of their earned income as possible.

We believe that government should tackle the gross inequalities of earnings and wealth. Income Tax and National Insurance thresholds should be raised to remove the low paid from the tax and benefits trap and improve disposable incomes of the working poor and low paid pensioners.

We propose radical reform of the inheritance tax system. We would reduce the rate of inheritance tax to 10% but would abolish the large number of allowances and exemptions which allow the very wealthy to pay little or no inheritance tax. This would be used to provide a tax free lump sum to every UK citizen at the age of 25, which can be used to pay university tuition fees or provide money for a business start-up.

BUSINESS

We would encourage small business start-ups by making money from a 'Universal Inheritance' available before the age of 25 for those who wanted to start their own business.

For the economy to grow we must encourage small businesses and social enterprises. However, the ever increasing 'red tape' on small business and community charities is strangling our ability to grow the economy. This burden needs to be removed for small businesses and social enterprises and made proportionate for medium size and larger organisations depending on their turnover value.

We would waive business rates/land value tax for the first year of any new small business.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT AND HOUSING

The Liberal Party would encourage (through planning and tax incentives among other measures) local authorities to build and maintain more affordable homes for rent.

We would give local authorities more powers to deal with derelict properties and waste land sites.

We would abolish Council Tax and Business Rates and introduce a system of Land Value Taxation.

CRIME AND COMMUNITY POLICING

The Liberal Party recognises the high level of crime on our streets and the correlation of increased crime with reduced police numbers. We would increase police numbers back to pre-2010 levels adjusted for increases in population.

Our jails are overcrowded and we have one of the worst re-offending rates for criminals in Europe.

We need a justice system which has those who commit crime working in the community to repay their debt as well as providing training to prevent reoffending rates. We would seek to commute none violent sentences of less than one year to community service, freeing up prison space and providing essential labour for community projects.

We need support for those with mental health problems that so often get caught up in crime because of their illness.

DEFENCE

The Liberal Party believes that the UK's armed forces have been cut to levels which are no longer consistent with national defence and our international obligations.

We therefore want to see the UK return to the equivalent of our pre-2010 defence spending to increase both the number of service personnel and the quality of their equipment.

Defence cuts have had a disastrous effect on the morale and effectiveness of all three services.

We believe that British forces deserve the best equipment available and we acknowledge recent years' neglect can only be corrected with substantial financial funding.

This proposed increase in funding could be financed on a long-term basis by scaling back on the UKs nuclear capability, by cancelling the Trident replacement programme, which the National Audit Office now forecasts will cost over £50 billion.

FOR FUTURE GENERATIONS

The Liberal Party believes that young people develop as citizens through their experiences at home, school, in their leisure time and at work. Vital to this development is an understanding of our society and the history of the British Islands and their relationship to the wider world.

The ability of future generations to have confidence in our democratic systems is paramount to the stability of our nation and the world. An understanding of The Commonwealth and organisations working for peace and reconciliation internationally needs to be embedded encouraged and fostered in our cultural services and educational system. Liberal values and respect for diversity and inclusion are at the heart of this.

DEVOLVED POWERS

The basis of Liberal policy on government is that power and service provision is devolved down to the lowest and most local decision making body consistent with the efficient use of resources. In this way, much of the power currently concentrated at Westminster and Whitehall could be devolved, leaving Parliament to manage the economy and international affairs.

We support further devolution of powers to the Scottish Parliament, the Welsh Assembly and call for a Cornish and English Regional Assemblies to be established.

SUPPORTING THE LIBERAL PARTY



Further details of our policies can be seen at: www.liberal.org.uk

Please remember that Liberal Party policy is decided by its members at our annual Assembly and at various Special Assemblies which are held throughout the year.

We are not funded by big business or the Trade Unions, so we have no vested interests and our only loyalty is to YOU - THE VOTERS.

We do not impose a system of whipping on our members and councillors, nor do we require them to 'toe the party line', so they are free to represent YOU and act in YOUR best interests.

Thank you for taking the time to read this Manifesto - we trust that having read it, we can rely on your support.

JOIN OUR JOURNEY

For more information, to join the Liberal Party, or to donate, please visit: www.liberal.org.uk ...or you can write to us at:

The Liberal Party,
5 Dunster Road, Southport
Merseyside
PR8 3AG

Your Name

Your Address

I would like to (Please tick):

- Receive more information about the Liberal Party
- Donate to the Liberal Party (I enclose a cheque for £_____)
- Join the Liberal Party (recommended fee £15 minimum fee £5 unwaged)

“The Liberal Party exists to create a liberal society, in which every citizen shall possess liberty, property and security, and none shall be enslaved by poverty, ignorance or conformity. Its chief care is for the rights and opportunities of the individual, and in all spheres, it sets freedom first.”

