

# What do people want their candidates and MPs to do?

Some contributors here love running down politicians, pointing out their mistakes and inadequacies. Today you can lodge your papers to run yourself if you know how to do it better.

Many people are searching the perfect party or the faultless candidate. Realists accept the task of the voter is to choose from a range of candidates and parties who are fallible, or fall short of our ideal. Our democracy offers plenty of opportunity to lobby, criticise, brief and engage with those who get elected.

Opinion polls tell us of the current dislike of the Conservatives by an important bloc of former Conservative voters. I can understand their frustration at the long COVID lockdown, the Bank's inflationary money printing, the disruption of energy markets by war in Ukraine and the big expansion of the state to micro manage our lives and the economy as a result. It has meant taxes too high, state services losing productivity and quality, and too much borrowing.

What I also remember was Labour, SNP and Lib Dem wanting longer lockdowns, more handouts, and higher taxes. They wanted an economic policy driven by the Bank of England and the OBR who turned to austerity policies after their big inflationary mistake.

Labour and Lib Dem are short on detail on how to pay for their plans for expanding the NHS and social care. They are agreed on keeping the austerity framework of current economic policy. Neither talk about how they would get productivity back to 2019 levels in public services, let alone get on with raising it. Without an answer to this crucial question they could not deliver their improved services. They would spend and tax more with little to show for it.

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## D day

Imagine the fear and the adrenaline rush for those young men in 1944 as the landing craft beached and opened them to German fire for the first time. There were many who had to brave the privations and dangers of the soldiers life as the largest amphibious landing was underway against Germany's brutal fortress Europe. We owe them all so much, that for 79 years now many European peoples have been able to live in democracies freed from Nazi tyranny and mass murder.

The US and U.K. had to bring together a huge army, massive supplies, and a large seaborne force to ferry them. The airforces had to control the skies, drop troops behind enemy lines and bomb enemy defences. There were innovations including floating harbours, a pipeline under the ocean, adaptations of fighting vehicles to tackle mine strewn beaches. There was superior Intelligence and carefully placed disinformation to allow some surprise.

It should serve as a reminder that we need to keep strong defences and use diplomacy backed by lethal force to deter and prevent evil triumphing again in the way it did in 1940 s Europe. It is a worry that war stalks Europe again in Ukraine, with continuing tensions in countries near Russia's borders and in the Balkans. The foundations of NATO emerged from the Allied victory in 1945. With the emergence of a modern Italy and Germany pledged to democracy and Western values they too came to join the Alliance.

NATO was tested by the Cold War against the USSR. The Alliance allowed Russia to dominate countries like Czechoslovakia, Hungary and Poland that wished to revolt against Soviet rule, whilst preventing and deterring any further expansion of the USSR westwards. The tensions over Russian missiles going to Cuba with US missiles in Turkey brought war close, narrowly avoided by diplomatic exchanges.

The collapse of the Soviet Union and the Gorbachev reforms gave us the opportunity of a new and improved relationship between a Russia shedding reluctant USSR member states and a NATO with no territorial claims of its own. Unfortunately in recent years the opportunity has slipped away, with a mutual suspicion bringing back a new kind of Cold War. Mr Putin's wish to recreate a wider Russian zone of influence has spread to invasion creating challenges for NATO.

1944 can remind us that the resolve of the democracies, slow to rouse, can bring victory over tyrannies. It should make both sides to the current tensions and both combatants in the Ukraine war want to find a peaceful solution to the conflict.

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## Wokingham Conservatives select Lucy Demery as Parliamentary candidate

I attended the Wokingham Conservatives selection meeting on Friday 31 May. We interviewed three candidates proposed by CCHQ from their approved list. I agreed with the majority view that Lucy Demery was the best candidate for the vacancy.

Lucy Demery is a talented business woman with a good understanding of fin tech and the opportunities of the digital world. She is a confident speaker, a hard working community volunteer and willing to commit herself to public

service.

She has my support and best wishes.

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## So both main parties now want lower migration

I helped persuade the Sunak government to take action to cut legal migration last year. This January they took some steps to do so.

Now I read Labour too want to bring it down. They decline to tell us how or by how much. Meanwhile they have announced policies for an amnesty for illegal migrants already here and have stated their wish to set up more legal routes for people to use. That sounds like more migrants. The Lib Dems are always identifying groups and individuals who should be welcomed that current law restricts.

Some, along with many pro left wing broadcasters now rightly point out that Conservatives have promised lower migration but ended up with much higher. This is a major mistake by recent governments. All the time we were in the EU the open borders of the Treaty swelled numbers in ways government could not control. In the last four years University expansion, the invasion of Ukraine response, the Chinese changes to Hong Kong and the pressures from business to fill more vacancies from abroad have conspired to create a large migration surge.

Those of us who advised against were ignored. Over the last year we have won the arguments against importing more people to take low paid jobs, and against expansion of the University world putting quantity before quality. I do think Conservative Ministers have learned this lesson. They have also been genuine in wanting to stop illegal migration, but undermined in the courts showing more legal changes are needed. I do not think Labour are convinced we need much lower migration. They just want to win an election.

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## Net zero changes needed

The U.K. needs to go further than adopting a more realistic rhetoric about getting to net zero. It needs to keep recent policy changes and add additional ones

1 Policies to keep

It needs to extract more U.K. oil and gas in place of more LNG and oil imports

It needs to keep the delay to the ban on sales of new diesel and petrol cars

It needs to keep the delay on penalising new gas boilers for home heating

These could all be changed back if we have a change of government.

2. It needs to ditch the following policies

The tax on car manufacturers selling too many petrol and diesel cars

The grants to farmers to stop growing food

The high extra taxes on Domestic oil and gas production which makes us more import dependent

Further investment in electricity inter-connectors to an energy short Europe

3. Things it needs to do to keep the lights on

Commission more gas fired power stations as back up for unreliable renewables

Speed up order process for new smaller sized nuclear power stations

Control migration more successfully to limit demand growth