

[Read the leadership candidate's election addresses](#)

Voting opens today for the Liberal Democrat Leadership Election!

You might get your ballot by either email or post and it might take some time on the 30th or 31st to be sent, as delivery is being staggered through the day. Postal deliveries may take longer, especially if you're overseas.

If you haven't had a ballot by 10am on Friday 31st July, please feel free to drop elections@libdems.org.uk an email. Votes have to be cast by 1pm on Wednesday 26th August 2020.

To help members make up their minds, each of the candidates has prepared an election address, which you can read here:

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Author:

[We're in a tough spot.](#)

Let's be honest with ourselves – we're in a tough spot. Our average polling figure currently stands at 8%, a far cry from the late teens or early 20s we previously enjoyed as recently as last year.

I won Oxford West & Abingdon from the ground up. Nobody knows the potential of Liberal Democrat activists like I do.

But this isn't just because of the coalition, or Brexit, or the 2019 election. A vast array of factors have led us to where we are now, and to turn things around we need change. Not only within the inner workings of the party as a whole, but in our public-facing approach, to ensure that our party can survive and then thrive in the years ahead.

Our country needs a strong liberal voice representing it in Parliament. And there's nobody who can deliver that better than us. I'm standing for leader because I can set us free from the past that's weighing us down. I want to send a clear signal to voters that we have learned from the mistakes of the last decade, and rebuild trust by listening.. I have a positive, inclusive vision – not just for our party, but for our country. We can only deliver it by winning again.

At our heart, we are an organisation that empowers people to make their own decisions in their community. There is a level of trust in the party to control councils in local government that just isn't apparent in the national picture.

We owe it to our country to elect a leader who can enact effective change

I won Oxford West & Abingdon from the ground up. Nobody knows the potential of Liberal Democrat activists like I do. Our team succeeded because we believed in our activists. We gave them the tools they needed to get the job done, and I want to bring that to my leadership.

We can't recover without reaching out to people who don't currently vote for us, too. That's why I went and knocked doors across from Cornwall to Wales, to Yorkshire after the 2019 election, before the pandemic hit. That's the approach I will take in my first year of being leader. I want to ask the electorate how we can win back their trust – rather than tell them. I wanted to listen to our grassroots members who give us so much, too – I've spoken with nearly 300 local parties and party bodies since the start of lockdown. We must learn from them.

I'll level with you. Success will take time. But we owe it to our country to elect a leader who represents a progressive change, who takes a lead on developing our incredible activists and builds a rapport with voters across the UK. I believe I'm the right person for the job – put your trust in me to lead our party, and let's move forward together.

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Author:

[Your Leadership Election Ballot](#)

Postal Votes

Postal votes have gone to print on the 27th July 2020. The initial run was around 5,000 voters. These will be sent to Royal Mail on the 29th July 2020.

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Author:

I want to beat the Conservatives

I want to beat the Conservatives. I want them out of office in 2024, and I want to kick Boris Johnson out of Downing Street.

Here are the facts. We are second in 91 seats, and in 80 of those we are second to the Conservatives. In places like Wimbledon, Hazel Grove, Esher & Walton, North Cornwall and Brecon & Radnorshire, we are the party who take seats from the Conservatives and deny them a majority in 2024.

Our passport to power is winning in Conservative facing seats, and to do that we need a laser-like focus on a core message that appeals to moderate Conservative voters and Labour tactical voters, and a leader with a track record of building winning teams to take on the Conservatives.

Ed Davey is that leader.

I backed Ed because I was so impressed by his focus on a [fairer, greener and more caring society](#).

Just imagine that a country like that would look like.

A [fairer country](#) where we tackle social injustice. Where we give parents universal childcare to help them with one of the biggest financial challenges they face, and a universal basic income that gives everyone the money they need.

A [greener country](#), where we invest £150bn into green jobs for our young people, green homes and a green energy network. As a trained economist and someone with a track record of delivering green jobs, I know Ed has got the experience to make sure that we make the recovery from Covid a green recovery.

A [more caring society](#), where we give the 10 million carers in our country a new deal, with a high carers allowance and more legal protection.

When it comes to the next elections, whether that is to councils, city halls or Parliaments, I want people to go into the voting booth knowing exactly what a cross in our box will get them.

I want them to know that voting Liberal Democrat will get them that fairer, greener, more caring country.

But to build that country, we have to first beat the Tories and kick them out of office.

Ed has won his seat six times, including in 1997 when he wasn't even a target seat. He's built a team in Kingston that now runs the Council, and he fought the Tories every day in Government and helped triple renewable energy, an

environmental record we should be extremely proud of.

I've worked with Ed since I was first elected to Parliament in 2005, and I've seen up close the vision, experience and judgement that he has.

I know that is what the party needs now, and that's why I am backing him to be our next leader. I hope you'll join me when your ballot arrives this week.

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Author:

Boris Johnson's first year as Prime Minister has been a year of attacks on our liberal democracy.

In our Democracy the Prime Minister and Government are accountable to Parliament, not the other way round, and yet Boris Johnson has been systematically unpicking the vital checks and balances which moderate his powers. Without these, it is a slippery slope towards an elective dictatorship.

Boris Johnson's attempt to prorogue Parliament was ruled 'unlawful'.

In just a year he has:

- 1. Illegally prorogued Parliament:** The Supreme Court ruled unanimously that Boris Johnson's attempt to prorogue Parliament at the height of the Brexit crisis was unlawful and "had the effect of frustrating or preventing the ability of parliament to carry out its constitutional functions."
- 2. Attacked the Supreme Court:** After they ruled his decision to prorogue Parliament was unlawful, Boris Johnson attacked the Supreme Court and said they were wrong to have challenged his decision.
- 3. Giving Dominic Cummings direct oversight of all senior Government advisers:** Johnson has even undermined members of his own Government – by requiring special advisers who traditionally are appointed by, and work for, individual cabinet ministers – to sign new contracts which give Dominic Cummings responsibility for their conduct and discipline.
- 4. Attempted to silence dissenting voices within his own Party:** When Dr Julian Lewis MP won an election to become Chair of Parliament's Intelligence

and Security committee, beating Johnson's preferred candidate, Lewis immediately had the Conservative Whip withdrawn.

5. Allowed his Ministers and Advisers to continue to hold senior public office, despite evidence of serious misconduct: Boris Johnson refused to hold Dominic Cummings to account after he breached the Government's lockdown rules. Housing Secretary Robert Jenrick was shown to have approved a housing development by a billionaire Tory donor, against the advice of the planning inspector, but has kept his job.

Johnson refused to hold Cummings to account after he breached the Government's lockdown rules.

6. Attempted to suppress Russia report: Boris Johnson made repeated attempts to stop the publication of a report from Parliament's Intelligence and Security Committee, into Russian interference in British politics.

7. Routinely makes Government announcements at press conferences, rather than at the dispatch box: reducing the opportunity for proper Parliamentary scrutiny through questions from opposition MPs.

8. Forcing out independent senior civil servants: Since Johnson came into office, there have been multiple allegations that senior civil servants are being sidelined or stepping down altogether, after disagreements between them and Johnson's team.

9. Making political appointments to independent advisory roles: David Frost, a long-time adviser to the PM has been nominated as the new National Security Adviser – this has not historically been a politically appointed role, and Mr Frost does not have any background in security and intelligence.

10. Attempts to weaken the BBC as an independent public service broadcaster: Johnson's Government have refused to step in to protect the BBC, which is being undermined by budget cuts which will see reductions in its political programming and news coverage.

No one should be allowed to hold so much power, without proper scrutiny.

There are already more worrying proposals on the table for the coming year, which could see more powers consolidated with Johnson and Cummings; and further erosion of the vital mechanisms which hold the Prime Minister to account.

No one should be allowed to hold so much power, without proper scrutiny.

The Liberal Democrats will always stand up against attempts to undermine our

democracy – having a strong liberal voice in British politics is more important than ever.

We must fight these attempts by Boris Johnson to try and seize unchecked power for himself. **Will you join us?**

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Author: