

Community Champions Hall of Fame

The last weeks and months have been a difficult time for all of us – but it's also been a time when a huge number of people across the country have stepped up as active citizens in their communities. And Liberal Democrats have been at the heart of community responses.

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Author:

How should we react to the removal of the Edward Colston statue?

It's no surprise that reactions to protesters' removal of Edward Colston's statue in Bristol have included liberals worrying about the rule of law. The outrage, not at the statue honouring a slave trader, but at its removal by a 'mob' rather than by democratic means without visible legal ramifications, has been notable.

What is vital is the equal application of fair laws.

The rule of law, after all, is central to liberalism. Right?

Not quite. What is vital is the *equal* application of *fair* laws. And these protests were born out of anger that **the law and police treatment have not been equally and fairly applied to many black people and communities of colour.**

Since 1990, there have been [1,741 deaths following contact with the police](#) in the UK. This, of course, is a problem in itself. But when paired with the fact that [black people are twice as likely as white people to die in police custody](#), **the very unsettling reality of the unequal policing of black people is hard to ignore.**

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Of course, not all of these deaths will have involved wrongful or illegal behaviour by police officers. But even if you assume that a very low proportion of those 1,741 deaths were in some way caused by police

misconduct, you would expect a fair number of cases to have resulted in the successful criminal prosecution of an officer.

So how many officers have been prosecuted following the investigation over 1,741 deaths?

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Author:

[Our Bill to Extend the Brexit Transition Period](#)

This week we should have had the second reading of the Liberal Democrats' Bill to guarantee an extension to the Brexit transition period.

Instead the government have ensured that this bill will not progress until after the extension deadline

The British people deserve better than needlessly risking No Deal

With just over two weeks to go until the deadline for extending the transition period, the timings were already incredibly tight. Those who voted Leave and Remain alike have called for the transition period to be extended. It makes no sense to anyone for us to crash out of the EU without a deal in place, especially as we deal with the terrible human cost and economic toll of COVID-19.

The stakes couldn't be higher.

Just this week, the pharmaceutical industry warned that some stockpiles of medical supplies have been "used up entirely" by the virus. Building these stockpiles back up without a deal with the E.U., and as our healthcare sector faces the winter flu season, will be incredibly difficult.

At the same time, coronavirus is wreaking terrible damage to our economy.

The economic damage caused by this disease will hit those on lower incomes the hardest. As millions of people across the country have felt anxiety caused by being furloughed, losing business, or being made redundant, the last thing they need is a government willing to risk a chaotic No Deal crash out of the E.U.

Not enough progress has been made on Brexit negotiations.

We are now dangerously close to the extension deadline. It is time to do the right thing for our NHS, economy, and vital supplies of food and medicines – it is time to extend the Brexit transition period. pic.twitter.com/wb201zFL5b

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [June 6, 2020](#)

The government's stubbornness on this issue, and their willingness to put party ideology over the national interest, could cost lives and livelihoods.

The British people have gone through enough in 2020 – they deserve better than needlessly risking a No Deal Brexit.

Liberal Democrats will continue to urge the government to extend the transition period for the maximum time available so that our economy, healthcare sector, and supplies of food and medicines have the time and bandwidth to cope with Covid-19.

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Author:

To remain silent is to remain complicit.

The Prime Minister must condemn President Trump's behaviour

British foreign policy must always promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law all over the world. The USA is no exception.

The UK has a moral duty to speak out when the freedoms and rights of the people of the US are under attack.

As one of the United States' closest allies, the UK has a moral duty to speak out when the freedoms and rights of the people of the US are under attack. Today is the 9th day of protests following the murder of George Floyd, yet Boris Johnson and his Ministers remain silent.

The UK Government's refusal to condemn the behaviour of the President of the United States is shameful.

Since the murder of George Floyd, President Donald Trump has used

increasingly violent rhetoric in response to protests over racial injustice and police brutality.

On top of this, we have seen peaceful protestors and journalists beaten and attacked by those whose duty is supposedly to serve and protect the public.

When questioned on this last weekend, the Foreign Secretary refused to denounce such behaviour.

The UK must use its Special Relationship to condemn this language and the use of military action to quell protests. British foreign policy must promote human rights, democracy, and the rule of law all over the world. The USA is no exception.

We are therefore urging the Prime Minister to make a clear public statement condemning in the strongest possible terms the language and actions of the US President in relation to protestors and journalists.

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[1/4] To remain silent is to remain complicit.

As one of the United States' closest allies, the UK has a moral duty to speak out when the freedoms and rights of the people of the US are under attack. [#BlackLivesMatter](https://t.co/1mBZbo0eXh) <https://t.co/1mBZbo0eXh>

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [June 4, 2020](#)

Tackling BAME inequalities in the UK

However, we cannot ignore the systemic racism and inequality in our own society. The situation in the US is also a stark reminder of the systemic racism here in the UK.

The UK has a moral duty to speak out when the freedoms and rights of the people of the US are under attack.

We are therefore also urging the Prime Minister to set out the steps his government are taking to prevent deaths like George Floyd's happening in the UK and how the government will enforce change throughout the UK police and justice system to ensure that BAME and white individuals are treated equally at all stages.

Just yesterday Public Health England published a report into the disproportionate impact of coronavirus, yet it failed to put forward any recommendations which would help tackle the disproportionate number of BAME people losing their lives to the virus.

A government-wide plan to tackle BAME inequalities must be developed, with a review by the Equality and Human Rights Commission to determine whether its

funding is adequate.

We must see more action from this Government if we are to tackle the injustice and inequality in our society.

Now the government's report has been published, they must take immediate action to support BAME communities through this crisis and beyond. [@IsabelleParasra](https://t.co/rxskc0km3R) explains <https://t.co/rxskc0km3R>

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [June 2, 2020](#)

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Author:

[I stand in full solidarity with everyone protesting in London](#)

The murder of George Floyd has led to a global outpouring of anger and grief.

From Windrush to Grenfell, from Stephen Lawrence to Mark Duggan, we are not short of our own examples of institutionalised, deep-rooted injustices that shame us all

Racism has been exposed in the most shocking and tragic of ways in Minneapolis **but make no mistake – it exists in Britain too.**

In London, thousands of protestors are expected to gather in Hyde Park in possibly the biggest Black Lives Matter demonstration the capital has ever seen.

From Windrush to Grenfell, from Stephen Lawrence to Mark Duggan, we are not short of our own examples of institutionalised, deep-rooted injustices that shame us all. From the white-washed curriculum that is still taught in British schools to the indiscriminate use of stop and search and racial profiling in our cities, **racism permeates our society at all levels.**

Even today, **with the indisputable evidence before us that black and minority ethnic people are more at risk from Covid-19, we are failing to put in place adequate protections or to try and understand why.** Racism in the UK is a public health crisis which requires broad, sustained and urgent action.

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As a member of the Liberal Democrats, a political party that proudly states its opposition to entrenched privilege and inequality, rejects prejudice and discrimination and seeks to build a fair, free and open society, I'm acutely aware of how deeply we have failed too.

It's time for us and for all organisations that can affect change, to stop hiding behind correct but hollow words. It's time for us to listen. Time for us to get educated. Time for us to work in partnership with black people to bring about real change.

I know that as a white woman I can never fully understand this struggle. But, as the London mayoral candidate, I can use the platform of my campaign to amplify voices that don't have my privileges and to be the best ally I can be.

For today, I stand in full solidarity with everyone protesting in London. Stay safe.

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Author: