

Coronavirus Community Taskforce

I'm so proud of our movement.

On Monday, I emailed asking members to pause their normal campaigning and prioritise community action to help those affected by coronavirus. Since then I've been overwhelmed by the response.

Day in, day out, Liberal Democrats all over the country do all they can for their communities. **But now, when it counts more than ever, you're stepping up to protect the most vulnerable in our society. I couldn't be prouder to be a Liberal Democrat today.**

Our team has put together a resource kit to help you help your community. We'll be adding to this kit all the time – please share it widely.

[View resources](#)

But as this outbreak worsens, there's more we need to do. This coming weekend should have been our huge National Action Weekend for the elections this spring. In light of the cancellation of those elections, we need to turn our people power and resources to the matter at hand.

That's why I have launched a Coronavirus Community Taskforce.

It's time to do what Liberal Democrats do best. We're campaigners and community champions. We know what works, and our members are fizzing with new and innovative ideas. We need to use our knowledge, resources, and true care for our communities for support for the most vulnerable.

To find out how to get started with the Taskforce, click here:
www.libdems.org.uk/coronavirus.

I've asked Sir Stuart Etherington, who has been the Chief Executive of the National Council for Voluntary Organisations since 1994, to Chair our group.

We also recognise that this is a difficult time for all of you. It's completely normal to be feeling anxious or worried, especially if you or someone you know is vulnerable.

We're in the process of putting together mental health resources for our members. In the meantime, I've found this advice from Mind really useful – www.mind.org.uk/information-support/coronavirus-and-your-wellbeing.

Each and every one of us needs to do what we can during this difficult time. I'm so proud of everything you've already done, and I know you'll step up to do whatever more you can.

Please take care of yourselves, your families, and your communities.

If you have questions about party activities, you can always find the latest

advice here: www.libdems.org.uk/covid19. This advice will be updated on a rolling basis.

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Author:

[The Liberal Democrat response to coronavirus](#)

As the coronavirus crisis continues, people are understandably becoming increasingly worried.

This is likely to be a tough and frightening time for many people. **It is vital we all take this incredibly seriously, follow the advice being given, and pull together as a country during this difficult period.**

As a responsible opposition, we will continue to hold the Government to account on the measures they are taking.

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The priority must be protecting the most vulnerable in our society, and a number of these most vulnerable live in care homes.

Given the fact that the NHS has to face this coronavirus crisis with a record shortage of nurses, **we must get front-line health and social care staff back to work as soon as possible if they do fall ill.** Testing must be provided for these key workers.

[.@munirawilson](#) pushes Matt Hancock for clarification on coronavirus testing for those on the frontline of our healthcare and social care services. [#CoronavirusOutbreak pic.twitter.com/FFH8B2fFW](https://twitter.com/FFH8B2fFW)

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [March 16, 2020](#)

We will fight to make sure the government provides the maximum level of support for businesses, employees and public sector workers.

People are afraid for their health, but also for their livelihoods. They want

to know that – in the face of this extraordinary crisis – their livelihoods and businesses are secure.

Liberal Democrats will fight to make sure the government provides the maximum level of support for businesses, employees and public sector workers, including the self-employed and those in the least protected positions in our society.

We have called on the government to:

- guarantee that anyone who is laid off receives at least 20 days of full pay;
- provide full council tax relief for bands A to E for at least six months, with councils fully compensated for this loss of income;
- turn day one universal credit loans into grants immediately;
- take action to ensure no renter is evicted in the coming months as a result of this crisis.

The Liberal Democrats have full confidence in the Chief Medical Officer and his team, but it is vital the Government continues to be open and transparent with the public about the steps it is taking to ensure it maintains public confidence in its approach to tackling the crisis.

We will continue to update our best practice guidelines [here](#) as things develop further.

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Author:

[Homeless people have nowhere to self-isolate – so let's set them up in empty offices](#)

Being told to stay home is all well and good. **But what about those who don't have a roof over their heads to self-isolate under?**

These are vulnerable people. Many homeless people struggle with mental health or addiction issues

There's no doubt that this is a deeply concerning time. **I support all evidence-led efforts to minimise the impact of COVID-19.** The models released this week make clear that self-isolation is a key intervention, but not everyone can self-isolate. There are reports that the police might get the

power to arrest anyone with the virus found outside. **I'm really worried as to what this would mean to people who have nowhere else to go – Britain's homeless.**

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Author:

Cancelling our Spring Conference

Following careful consideration of the latest health advice and risks, the Federal Board has tonight decided to cancel our federal conference this weekend.

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Author:

End abortion clinic harassment

Over the last week, Liberal Democrat MPs have been introducing seven Bills that tackle challenges facing women and girls in the UK and beyond.

Today I'm tabling my Bill, which would **prohibit anti-abortion protests within 150 metres of abortion clinics:**

My Bill will protect all women, all over the country, from harassment and intimidation.

Protest (Abortion Clinics) Bill

A Bill to prohibit anti-abortion protests within 150 metres of abortion clinics; and for connected purposes.

In no decent, caring society should the steps of an abortion clinic have become the place for debate.

Women should not be subjected to harassment for seeking legitimate health care.

Last year, following increased intimidation outside a BPAS (British Pregnancy

Advisory Service) clinic in my Ward in Richmond Park, I led the council in implementing a exclusion zone outside the clinic.

Now, it's time for the Government to step in and ensure buffer zones are extended right across the country.

Women should not be subjected to harassment for seeking legitimate health care.

Protesting at abortion centres is nothing more than bullying. The Bill [@sarahjolney1](#) is tabling today will protect all women, all over the country, from harassment and intimidation.
pic.twitter.com/96ZBiQmCMt

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [March 11, 2020](#)

This form of protest is nothing more than bullying women when often they are at their most vulnerable.

The current method of introducing 'safe zones' is not a long-term solution; it creates a postcode lottery while the costs for implementing and upholding them uses up precious local government resources.

The law is failing women. My Bill, which has cross-party support, will protect all women, all over the country, from harassment and intimidation.

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Author: