

Whoever you are, the Liberal Democrats will stand up for you.

The Liberal Democrats are working hard to tackle the big issues that people are facing across the UK.

- ✓ Ensuring a properly resourced NHS, to provide the highest quality care for our loved ones
- ✓ Fighting to reverse police cuts, to protect our communities from violent crime
- ✓ Protecting our environment. We've already done more to fight the climate emergency than any other party
- ✓ Building high-quality, reliable public transport links across the UK
- ✓ Investing in world-class education, to give our children the best start possible in life

We want to see an open, inclusive, outward-looking and optimistic United Kingdom.

That's who we are. That is what we will be. And that is the future we will build.

If those are your values too, **why not join us today?**

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Author:

Taking the 'Time to Change' pledge

The first time you go canvassing can feel daunting. For many people, going up to a stranger's door, knocking, and starting a conversation isn't something they do every day. They don't often ask people about how they want things to change, in their neighbourhood or across the country as a whole.

More than 1 in 4 of us will experience depression, anxiety or stress this year. Almost every family will be affected.

But with practice and repetition, what may have initially seemed like an odd thing to do begins to feel natural. And even fun. It turns out that many people like being asked about their opinions, especially by someone who clearly cares, is open to listening and taking them seriously.

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Getting our finances right – report back from February board meeting

At our latest meeting, the Federal Board welcomed our newest member, [Lisa Smart](#), who has been elected the new chair of the Federal Communications and Elections Committee (FCEC), taking over from James Gurling. **Welcome on board, Lisa!**

We also welcomed back to the Board Tony Harris as Registered Treasurer and chair of the Federal Finance and Resources Committee (FFRC) and Mike German as Federal Treasurer.

Details of the outcome of elections for other key posts around the party are available [on the party website](#). **Congratulations to everyone elected** and thank you also to everyone else who applied, helping to give us a strong set of names to choose from.

After our [January Board meeting](#) agreed the timings and got the ball rolling on key elements for our success this year, such as an [independent elections review](#) and our leadership election, the Board concentrated this time in particular on the Federal Party's budget.

We're rightly focused on ensuring we improve how we operate on your behalf

To give some context, **overall our income in 2020 will be around £6.5 million**, which compares with £34 million for the Conservatives and £46 million for Labour in 2018.

After the surge in spending and staffing in the immediate run-up to the general election, the Board agreed that this year **we need to return to a long-term sustainable level of staffing and expenditure**. This means day-to-

day spending matching income from members, donors and grants, with any surplus from last year ring-fenced to allow us to implement recommendations from the independent elections review and for one-off projects focused on transforming our capabilities.

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[Our letter to Boris Johnson calling for an end to BBC attacks](#)

Today, Ed Davey and I have written to the Prime Minister, calling for him to reverse plans to scrap the BBC licence fee.

The British Press is by no means without criticism, but at its best, the BBC remains a beacon of independent journalism as well as high-quality entertainment. That's why Liberal Democrats will fight tooth and nail to save it. Read our letter in full below:

Dear Boris,

We were dismayed to see on Sunday morning your government make yet another attack on the BBC with the **reported plans to scrap the TV licence and make the British public pay a TV subscription fee instead.**

This was not in your manifesto and appears to be yet another thinly veiled step in your government's efforts to undermine and thereby dismantle the BBC.

Dominic Cummings has previously described the BBC as the "mortal enemy" of the Conservative Party.

The fact that Ministers are already consulting on plans to decriminalise non-payment of the licence fee from 2022, having so recently dismissed this option in a government review just 5 years ago, is yet more evidence that these plans are not sensible, considered reforms, but a deliberate and sustained attack led by one of your closest advisors, Dominic Cummings.

Mr Cummings has previously described the BBC as the "mortal enemy" of the Conservative Party. Of course, the BBC is not perfect, and all political parties have their gripes with the broadcaster. However, this does not justify the sustained attempts to undermine and hamper the BBC as we see your government doing time and again.

Whatever its faults, **the BBC strives to provide impartial journalism and a**

platform for different views. In depriving them of funds your government is not only obstructing their ability to invest in British talent, but risking putting TV content into the hands of US corporates. The BBC is one of the four most internationally recognised British brands and is incredibly important as an influential tool abroad.

Under the Tories' plans, the fee for viewing the BBC could at least double compared to the cost of the licence fee.

That is why these announced plans are so alarming. Any civil system will mean a higher cost of collection and will also likely lead to higher evasion rates and higher penalties. These plans will cost the BBC hundreds of millions of pounds and if you pursue the subscription model, **the fee for viewing the BBC could at least double compared to the cost of the licence fee. The losers will be the British public.**

We believe that the TV licence fee should be set independently so the BBC can be truly independent of politicians of all colours and should be structured so those less able to pay are treated fairly.

The plans you have set out were not in your manifesto and therefore you have no mandate to pursue them. We write in the hope you will consider our concerns and act accordingly in keeping the BBC licence fee.

We look forward to a swift response.

Your sincerely,

Ed Davey and Daisy Cooper

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Meet your Election Review Team

Last month, the Chair of the Election Review, Dorothy Thornhill, was announced. Now, we're pleased to be able to announce the full review team.

They bring a wide range of skills and experience, in the party and outside to the review and will help the Chair ensure the review that is conducted is thorough.

Meet the team:

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