

Celebrating 50 Years of Pride in the UK

Today, 1st of July, we are marking an incredible 50 years since the first Pride rally took place in the UK.

We have made incredible strides when it comes to protecting the fundamental human rights of those with LGBT+ identities. **I am proud that our party has supported LGBT+ rights since its very conception.**

We opposed Section 28 in the same year that we formed and were unafraid to call to “Guarantee equal rights for gay men and lesbians through changes to criminal law, anti-discrimination legislation and police practices” in the following General Election.

Pride is a celebration of how far we’ve come so I’d be remiss not to mention Lynne Featherstone’s unparalleled work legalising same-sex marriage in 2012.

But **we still have so much work to do.** In this country, the rights of LGBT+ people are still increasingly under attack. The Home Office has said that hate crimes based on sexuality have **doubled in four years.** This is simply unacceptable in a modern society.

As Liberal Democrats, we need to not only fight against discrimination wherever we see it, but to create a society in which this persecution cannot exist. We will always uphold the values of individual and social justice, reject all prejudice and discrimination, and oppose all forms of entrenched privilege and inequality.

LGBT rights are human rights. We will continue to stand up to protect them against the Conservatives.

Thank you to the trailblazers who marched to show the true meaning of LGBT+ joy 50 years ago. **Wishing you all a happy and meaningful Pride!**

Note: If you attended the first UK Pride March in 1972, please do send your photos to sarah.dobson@libdems.org.uk

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Author:

Tiverton & Honiton

We saw last year what a huge boost it gave to the party getting two new

excellent MPs elected in Parliamentary by-elections. It's good for their constituents and also good for the party's prospects across the whole country.

We've also seen this month how Conservative MPs have failed to do what our country needs – to remove Boris Johnson from 10 Downing Street.

Which is why the latest contest in Tiverton and Honiton is so important for us all again. The single most effective thing you can do in the next few weeks to help bring about his demise – and to help the party win in your own patch – is to [help Richard Foord get elected on 23 June](#).

Many of the team have gone straight into this campaign from the May local elections, without the chance to pause for the hoped for break after those. Thank you hugely to everyone who is stretching themselves to give Richard the best of chances of winning.

Thank you too to Jamie Needle and the team in Wakefield, fighting a carefully targeted campaign there which I'm sure will help the continued growth of our council group on Wakefield Council.

Treating our staff well

Some good news to report on party staff: the federal party has been awarded the ['excellence' status by the Good Work Standard](#) for how we go beyond legal minimum requirements in looking after staff.

With the amount of change since the 2019 election plus all the strains of lockdowns, it's been a particularly tough few years for our staff. But standards such as this show how we're taking seriously making the party a good and happy place to work.

Welcome to Cllr Mike Cox and Chris French

Chartered accountant, local councillor and former Parliamentary candidate Mike Cox has been appointed by the Federal Board as the new chair of our Federal Finances and Resources Committee (FFRC). Mike takes over from Tony Harris, who has stood down as a new academic career has unexpectedly opened up for him.

When Tony took up the post, the party's finances faced many difficult challenges. Tony has steered us through them and left a clear financial plan through to the next Westminster general election. At the heart of that has been much greater and earlier investment in this Parliament in our support for grassroots campaigning across the country – something we saw the benefits of in this May's elections.

Thank you to Tony and best of luck to Mike.

Thank you also to Shelley Snelson, who served as Tony's deputy, a pilot new post the FFRC has been trying out. Due to a change in her job, she is also standing down, and the FFRC will discuss later this year whether to continue,

modify or wrap up the pilot.

Welcome also to Chris French, newly elected by the Board as one of the Vice Chairs of the [Racial Diversity Campaign \(RDC\)](#). Chris founded an LGBTQ+ charity and chairs a national one, as well as running a social enterprise consultancy. Best of luck Chris, and thank you for taking on the role.

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Author:

[Our Carers Deserve Better](#)

It's Carers Week – a chance to recognise, celebrate and, most of all, listen to the stories of unpaid carers.

People looking after their loved ones are doing a remarkable job in difficult circumstances. As a carer for most of my life – first for my mum, then for my gran, and now for my disabled son, John – this is something I know all too well.

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Author:

[Celebrating Her Majesty The Queen's Platinum Jubilee](#)

We all have our own special memories of the Queen's Jubilees. For me, they have spanned my entire life. So it is with great pleasure that I will join the entire nation in celebrating seventy years of Her Majesty's reign – on this Platinum Jubilee bank holiday weekend.

In her coronation speech, the Queen said: "Throughout all my life, and with all my heart, I shall strive to be worthy of your trust." I think the whole country will agree that our Queen has more than fulfilled her promises made to our nation.

Her service; her sense of selflessness; her steadfast commitment to the nation. These values and her service have defined Her Majesty's seven decade reign, and will continue to define her.

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That unwavering nature of service is made all the more remarkable by the length of Her Majesty's reign. She is the longest-reigning female monarch in history – not just of this country, but of anywhere in the world. **Ever.**

The Queen's gentle but strong presence throughout those years has been ever-constant. In challenging times, she is always a source of calm and comfort. Her Majesty movingly described the Duke of Edinburgh – whose presence will be greatly missed at these Jubilee celebrations – as her “strength and stay.” But truly, Her Majesty is the strength and stay of our nation.

And through it all, she has remained above the fray of politics – something which is so valuable.

Across our country, we will inevitably disagree on so many issues. There are, and should be, many shades of opinion. But because of Her Majesty, being patriotic and proud of your country is not about your political allegiance. It is not grounded in what the Government of the day may be doing – and I am very thankful it's not!

Because of the Queen, we can come together this long weekend and reflect on the many things we actually have in common. That sense of pride in our nation is something we can all celebrate and share.

One of the particular joys of any royal Jubilee is seeing how it brings people together.

Of course, there is no better occasion to celebrate than that of the Jubilee. In 1977, in 2002 and in 2012, we have been fortunate enough to celebrate jubilees – with street parties, commemorative mugs and, of course, the unforgettable sight of Brian May playing guitar on the roof of Buckingham Palace.

I was at school when we celebrated the Silver Jubilee – and to be honest, my strongest memory of that Jubilee is of the Queen's smile and personal delight as Virginia Wade won Wimbledon.

Then for the Golden Jubilee in 2002, I was honoured to meet Her Majesty and the Duke of Edinburgh when they visited my constituency, in the Royal Borough of Kingston. Back then, the Queen unveiled a stone commemorating the one thousand, one hundredth anniversary of the coronation of King Edward the Elder, crowned in Kingston – one of the great Anglo Saxon Kings.

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And of course, the highlight of the Diamond Jubilee in 2012 was watching the film when the Queen parachuted down to the opening ceremony of the Summer Olympics. **Her Majesty has always been central to our lives – and it is always a privilege to celebrate her reign at Jubilees.**

For the Platinum Jubilee, special memories are already being made. The other week, I channelled my inner Mary Berry while judging a Jubilee bake-off at Ellingham Primary School in my constituency. Amongst the mountains of the children's sponge cakes and strawberries, I was struck by two things in particular.

First, a huge temptation to cheat on my diet! But second was the palpable excitement and enthusiasm the young children had for the Queen and her Jubilee.

One of the particular joys of any royal Jubilee is seeing how it brings people together. In every corner of our country from Caithness to Cornwall, communities will be coming together this weekend – which will be extra special, given how we weren't able to gather during the pandemic.

So whether for a concert, street party or parade, I hope we can all share in the joy and festivities – together.

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Author:

[Richard Foord is our Tiverton and Honiton by-election candidate](#)

Richard Foord will be our Liberal Democrat candidate for the upcoming Tiverton & Honiton by-election.

I was proud to serve my country in the Armed Forces for ten years and now want to serve my community in Westminster.

Richard Foord

Richard lives in Uffculme with his wife and family. He grew up in the West Country and served for ten years in the army after graduating from Sandhurst, reaching the rank of Major and receiving three campaign medals for service in Iraq and the Balkans.

Living locally, **Richard is active across the community.** He volunteers at two scout groups in the area and has raised thousands of pounds for charities,

including running the London Marathon for the Royal British Legion.

Richard has pledged to be a strong local voice for Devon if elected, by fighting for urgent action on the cost of living, cutting ambulance and GP waiting times, and getting a fairer deal for Devon farmers.

This by-election will be a two-horse race between Boris Johnson's Conservatives and hard-working Liberal Democrat local champion, Richard Foord.

Ed Davey

In April, the Liberal Democrats won the Cullompton South by-election against the Conservatives. They have also been winning across the UK, gaining neighbouring Somerset Council at the local elections and winning two successful parliamentary by-elections against the Conservatives, including the rural constituency of North Shropshire.

Announcing his candidacy, **Richard said:**

"Boris Johnson's Conservatives are taking rural communities in Devon for granted. Towns and villages across the constituency are being hit hard by unfair tax hikes and receiving no help with spiralling energy bills and rising prices at the fuel pump.

"This Conservative Government has run our local health services into the ground. Ambulance waiting times across Devon are soaring, and thousands are left waiting for weeks in pain, for a GP or dentist appointment.

"I was proud to serve my country in the Armed Forces for ten years and now want to serve my community in Westminster. **We need politicians who listen to the needs of local people and work tirelessly to deliver for our area.**

"This by-election is a chance to send a message that it's time for a change. Towns and villages in our areas have been ignored for far too long. **If elected, I pledge to take no-one for granted and stand up for our local communities in Parliament."**

Commenting on the announcement Liberal Democrat Leader **Ed Davey said:**

"Richard is an incredible candidate, whose dedication to others has shone not only through his career, but also in his voluntary roles in the community.

"This by-election will be a two-horse race between Boris Johnson's Conservatives and hard-working Liberal Democrat local champion, Richard Foord. This Conservative government has taken Devon for granted with local health services being neglected and botched and with trade deals undercutting

farmers at every turn.

“The Liberal Democrats are the clear challengers to the Conservatives in Tiverton & Honiton. On 23rd June, you can elect a strong local champion who will stand up for our communities and help kick Boris Johnson out of Number 10.”

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Author: