

[Stopping Hate Crime](#)

Recorded **hate crimes are up 17% from last year**, and have **more than doubled in the last 4 years**.

Racial hate crimes have increased 14% year on year, while those based on sexual orientation have risen a terrible 27%. Attacks on people based on religion, disability and transgender people have also risen year on year.

We must redouble our efforts to prevent hate crime, because its effects go well beyond physical harm to victims. It can inflict lasting psychological damage, divide communities and beget further violence.

The Liberal Democrats are therefore calling for the definition of 'aggravated offences' to be extended, so that it covers hate crimes motivated not only by racial or religious hatred, but also by hostility based on gender, sexual orientation and disability. That would send a clear message that **no form of hate crime can be tolerated** and ensure that all victims are properly protected.

This is not the Britain we believe in. Liberal Democrats will continue to fight against prejudice and discrimination, and ensure full equality and protection for people of all backgrounds and beliefs.

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[Come to Kickstart!](#)

Kickstart is the name of the Association of Liberal Democrat Campaigners and Councillors (ALDC) residential campaign training weekend. It runs twice a year – in the summer and autumn.

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What's it like being at the centre of a By-Election?

Q – I'm sure being at the centre of a parliamentary by-election is impossibly exciting, but also busy, exhausting and overwhelming, with huge highs and lows. What stands out the most for you from the campaign?

A – It really was! But incredibly exciting at the same time. I had seen Liberal Democrats gear up for a by-election before, but until you are at the centre of it you really can't appreciate the extent of the support, the enthusiasm and sheer hard work we do as a team to have these great results at by-election. Seeing Lib Dems come together and campaign together – that is definitely what stands out for me.

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Demanding Better for Civil Liberties

The Government's Counter Terrorism Bill has now moved to debate in the House of Lords. The Liberal Democrats opposed the bill in the House of Commons for a simple reason: **this bill does little to keep us safe, but a lot to erode the individual freedoms of people in the UK.**

In the future we might have a Government who are prepared to ride roughshod over our freedoms as citizens.

Parliament's Joint Committee on Human Rights, and the human rights group Liberty have both said that this bill is wrong in balancing security and individual freedoms.

It's a huge authoritarian overreach. This is a bill that seeks to:

- Create a **new offence of "entering or remaining in" areas outside the UK** designated by the Home Secretary punishable by up to ten years in prison
- **Make it illegal to view online material** that is "likely to be useful to a person committing or preparing an act of terrorism", with those convicted facing up to 15 years in prison
- **Expand existing powers to detain people** at ports and airports and for the police to **retain innocent people's DNA.**

During the debate Lib Dem peer Jonathan Marks said:

“We must balance the security imperatives to protect the public and to combat terrorism against the liberal imperative to safeguard our freedoms as citizens in a democratic society.”

“While our Government struggle to improve domestic counter terrorist legislation, they nevertheless risk through Brexit abandoning most of the UK’s international work in this area over decades.”

The solution is not this dramatic overreach by the Conservative Government, **running roughshod over civil liberties** in the process.

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[We’re standing up for civil liberties](#)

The Government’s laws do nothing to address the real challenge of fighting terrorism. Instead, the bill contains worrying and wrongheaded measures that are unnecessary and attack individual freedoms.

- criminalise “reckless” speech
- make it a crime just to travel to certain places
- criminalise what you read on the internet
- allow police to hold innocent people’s DNA for longer
- give officers more power to detain people at airports without suspicion.

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