

[Tomi Banwo – My First Ever Party Conference](#)

On Tuesday 18th September 2018, I attended for the first time a party conference in Brighton with the Liberal Democrats. This is all thanks to an initiative set by the Patchwork Foundation which **encourages and funds young Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME), politically-minded people to attend party conferences** and encourages them to be engaged in political affairs.

It was amazing to see women in such a high position making an impact.

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Author:

[Sal Speaks: September 2018](#)

Party Conference is over, and we have left Brighton after an excellent four days. Over the Conference we have listened, spoken, debated matters fiercely, and voted on party policy.

Over 300 members attended Conference for the first time, and many of them made their first speech in debates on the stage too, making excellent contributions. The Exhibition and Fringes were brilliant too.

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Author:

[Desperate displays of deluded defiance will only end in disaster](#)

The more Theresa May tries to sound defiant, the more desperate she seems.

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Conference – Monday Highlights

Gina Miller's Speech

Gina Miller delivered an impassioned speech on the need to continue with a unified fight against Brexit.

Let's be clear, in the debate we had in 2016 about Europe, there was scant idealism. Lies were told.

Miller called on people to put the national interest ahead of political divisions:

"Even though I am now politically independent, **I am here to cheer you on**, and to walk side by side with you all as Liberal Democrats seeking to stop the decay in our democracy, to stop the politics of division, **to unite rather than to divide**, to offer hope and to recognise that we must defend liberal values founded on equality of opportunity, tolerance, respect and humanity. Above all things, humanity."

The Liberal Democrats are proud to have fought Brexit since the referendum, and we will continue to fight for an exit from Brexit.

Jane Dodds' Speech

Leader of the Welsh Liberal Democrats Jane Dodds took to the stage today.

We demand a Wales free from discrimination and bigotry.

Dodds took aim at divisive identity politics running rife across Wales:

"Too much of our politics attempts to divide our identities, as if having more than one identity is a betrayal of all of them."

More broadly, the Welsh Lib Dem Leader called for new reforms across the NHS, and developing a new green economy in the UK.

"There is huge potential to build an innovative green economy that provides clean, affordable and reliable energy for generations to come. However, the UK Government neglected this fact yet again and cancelled the Swansea Tidal Lagoon project."



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[Conference – Sunday Highlights](#)

Jo Swinson's Speech

In her keynote speech Jo Swinson declared that the Liberal Democrats are the only party who will put people at the heart of the Fourth Industrial Revolution.

When society demanded better, it was liberals who delivered. The Fourth Industrial Revolution gives us the same opportunity, and Conference – we must deliver again.

The Deputy Leader explored how the fundamental basis of the social contract has been broken in the U.K. People are struggling to make ends meet while the rich and powerful play by a different set of rules.

On the topic of Brexit, **she had a clear message for Jeremy Corbyn: “grow a backbone, stand up for the millions of people who voted for you and help us stop Brexit.”**

As for the SNP, the MP from East Dunbartonshire had this to say “The reality is that Scottish nationalists have a one-track mind. While the country edges

closer to the precipice, they're manoeuvring to turn Brexit into the breakup of the UK."

But there is hope. Swinson explained how the revolutionary technological impact of the Fourth Industrial Revolution could be harnessed with true liberal leadership.

Sal Brinton's Speech

The President of the Liberal Democrats addressed Conference with a rallying cry to keep fighting Brexit:

"A year ago at Conference in Bournemouth I urged you to hold firm for our demand for a vote on the final Brexit deal, and that as a party we would still fight for our place in the EU because we knew – and still know – that it is best for Britain, and also best for the European Union."

Looking ahead, the President asked members to think to local elections next year and to retain an open mind towards Vince Cable's party reform proposals, **building off the amazing local election results from earlier this year.**

Check out Sal Brinton speaking on Brexit here:

Vince Cable Q&A

The Leader of the Liberal Democrats took questions from members this afternoon in the main auditorium. The topics were wide-ranging, but one interesting question cropped up – **are the Liberal Democrats being too nice?**

Find out below:

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