

Break the Bias

I'm proud of the strides our country has made towards gender equality, and of the role Liberal Democrats have played in delivering that progress. **Yet there is still so much more to do.**

Far too many women still face violence, sexism and discrimination – a reality that has been brought into sharp focus by the pandemic and Sarah Everard's murder last year.

Liberal Democrats continue to fight for true gender equality. We are campaigning to make misogyny a hate crime, establish a royal commission on violence against women and girls, and reverse the cuts to international aid.

This year, **International Women's Day is focused on breaking the bias** – because whether conscious or unconscious, bias makes it difficult for women to move ahead in our society. And simply acknowledging this isn't enough. We need to take far more action to level the playing field.

This starts with representation in our politics. That's why Liberal Democrat initiatives like the Campaign for Gender Balance are so important for encouraging and supporting women who want to stand as candidates.

Now, **for the first time ever, women make up the majority of our parliamentary party.** I was delighted to be joined by two more brilliant women in the House of Commons last year – Sarah Green, the new Liberal Democrat MP for Chesham and Amersham, and Helen Morgan, the new Liberal Democrat MP for North Shropshire.

In the House of Commons, nine of the Liberal Democrats' thirteen MPs are women.

This year for [#InternationalWomensDay2022](#), our MPs are proposing nine new Bills which embody the principles at the heart of our party.

Check them all out below ▶ <https://t.co/I0oT7BZGKd>

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [March 8, 2022](#)

And they are doing fantastic work. Today, my colleagues have proposed nine new Bills to celebrate International Women's Day, which you can read about here. From ending the pay gap once and for all, to addressing maternal health for Black and Asian women, these Bills tackle problems affecting women and girls in the UK and beyond.

So this International Women's Day, I will be celebrating so many incredible women – who have brought us this far; who work tirelessly for equality; and who are helping us all to finally break the bias.

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[9 New Laws proposed for International Women's Day](#)

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[The importance of liberal internationalism](#)

It was a shocking and sobering sight just a few days ago to wake up and see a photo of Kira Rudyk, the leader of a sister liberal party of ours in Ukraine holding a gun and preparing to fight.

It was also a reminder of the importance of our liberal values – and the need for internationalism to support fellow humans, rather than to try to hide away within our own borders as if the rest of the world doesn't exist.

Viruses, climate change and dictators don't stop at borders, and nor should our compassion for other people.

The wave of sanctions, both mandatory from governments and voluntary as others too have ceased trade, cancelled events and ended Russian participation, is a reminder of just how much integration there was – economically, socially and culturally – between Russia and the rest of the world.

A frequent hope of liberals is that such extensive links can bring people together and reduce the risk of conflict. What the invasion of Ukraine has shown, however, is that such hope is not enough. We also **need strong multinational institutions with the necessary powers to enforce their decisions when required.**

Getting that right will help avoid future Ukraines, but we also have to work

with where we are in the present. Which is why **we're pressing the government so hard to take effective action against the Russian oligarchs** who have secreted so much wealth in London and spent so heavily on British politics, British legal services and British financial services.

Events in Ukraine will come up in multiple ways at our online federal spring conference 11-13 March. You can still [register for the event here](#) (and it only costs £5 if you have not come to conference before).

In the light of both the tragedy in Ukraine and the controversies over the Chinese use of money to influence British politics, we've been reviewing our rules for checking the international aspects of potential donations to confirm that they have the right safeguards in them.

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'The Battle for Liberal Britain' – Available now

Around the world, populism and nationalism are on the rise. There is a battle for Liberal Britain and to win it, Liberal Democrats must offer a clear vision for the future of our country.

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We can't turn our back on those fleeing Ukraine.

These are families desperately fleeing war with their children. Let them in.

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