

Vaccine passports give a false sense of security

Liberal Democrats have and always will support public health protections that work but the use of so called “vaccine passports” provides a **false sense of security**.

The Government has lost sight of why they put forward these measures in the first place – to reduce transmission of the virus. **The vaccines being given in the UK are highly effective at reducing the severity of Covid symptoms**, the likelihood of admission to hospital and against the risk of death. But even those who are fully vaccinated can still spread the virus.

The most effective way of reducing transmission is with testing combined with rigorous tracing and supported isolation. Testing allows the vaccinated and unvaccinated alike to know whether they have Covid. This can be done quickly and easily with lateral flow testing.

The Government should scrap its plans to record people’s vaccination status on Covid passes and pursue testing as a more effective form of infection control.

Lateral flow tests are highly accurate. Although they came under intense scrutiny at the beginning of the pandemic over concerns about their effectiveness, subsequent research has shown that this is not the case.

Researchers from UCL found LFTs were more than 80% effective at detecting any level of Covid-19 infection and likely to be more than 90% effective at detecting who is most infectious when they use the test.

The Scottish Government has introduced vaccine passports and yet Omicron is spreading fast through community transmission in Scotland. The UK Government has put forward no official evidence that vaccine passports significantly reduce transmission despite repeated requests.

Recent studies have also suggested that **vaccine passports might actually reduce some people’s willingness to get vaccinated** in the UK, particularly among certain groups, such as those who are hesitant.

The Government should scrap its plans to record people’s vaccination status on Covid passes and pursue testing as a more effective form of infection control.

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North Shropshire: it's on

I've often said history points to two routes for Liberal Democrat (and before that Liberal Party) revivals. One, which we'd much rather avoid, is a foreign disaster – Iraq, former Yugoslavia, Suez... The other is seizing electoral opportunities outside Westminster general elections to give us momentum, increased prominence and growing relevance.

After Sarah Green's brilliant win in Chesham and Amersham, we saw the boost that gave the party nationally with consistently higher poll ratings and greater media attention.

Now we've got a chance – a real chance – to pull off something even bigger in North Shropshire.

Some people are most moved by positive messages, others by negative messages, so let give you one of each: Helen Morgan and Boris Johnson.

Helen is a fantastic candidate and would make a brilliant MP. Other words apply to Boris Johnson... What a Christmas present for Helen winning would be, and what a Christmas headache for Johnson that would be too.

There's still time to make a difference to the result.

Please do help if you can. [Details of how to help are on Helen Morgan's website.](#)

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Why we're opposing Priti Patel's Anti-Refugee Bill

The scenes of people trying to cross the Channel demand urgent action. They also show that the Government's approach isn't working.

in her two years as Home Secretary, Priti Patel has only made the problem worse.”

These **crossings are incredibly dangerous** – as demonstrated so tragically by the deaths of 27 people when their dinghy sank two weeks ago. They line the pockets of the criminal gangs engaged in people smuggling and human

trafficking. And they undermine public confidence in our whole immigration system.

These crossings need to stop, but the Conservatives' Anti-Refugee Bill – officially the 'Nationality and Borders Bill' – will only make things worse.

Priti Patel likes to talk tough about this, and keeps putting forward ever more cruel and impractical proposals, from housing refugees on North Sea oil rigs to building a floating wall in the Channel. But in her two years as Home Secretary, she has only made the problem worse.

We know that **the best way to stop refugees taking dangerous and irregular journeys to the UK is by providing safe and legal routes to sanctuary instead.** Yet Priti Patel has closed them down.

Last year, she ended the scheme for resettling unaccompanied refugee children from elsewhere in Europe after bringing just 480 to the UK. This year, she closed the UK's three biggest resettlement schemes and replaced them with a single much smaller scheme. She has also changed the rules to make it harder for people to claim asylum in the UK – yet another example of this Conservative Government breaking international law.

The UK has a proud history of providing sanctuary”

The result? The dangerous Channel crossings have increased.

The Government's Anti-Refugee Bill, now before Parliament, doubles down on that failed approach.

It does nothing to expand safe and legal routes for refugees – despite amendments the Liberal Democrats tabled to require the Government to do so. It does nothing to tackle the huge backlog of asylum claims, but will actually create even more delays.

It does nothing to increase cooperation with other countries on combating the cross-border smuggling and trafficking gangs. And it does nothing to reverse the Conservative cuts to international aid that will only create more refugees.

Instead, the Bill would make it harder for refugees to claim asylum in the UK and give many of them fewer rights if they are successful. It reduces vital protections for victims of human trafficking and modern slavery, making them less likely to come forward and therefore allowing more criminals to get away with it. And it further undermines the UK's long-standing commitments under the 1951 UN Refugee Convention.

The UK has a proud history of providing sanctuary for people forced to flee their homes because of war or persecution. Priti Patel's Anti-Refugee Bill undermines that tradition. It is fundamentally un-British. And it wouldn't stop the dangerous Channel crossings. That's why Liberal Democrats are fiercely opposing it.

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Author:

[January bulk-buy deal](#)

The LDHQ Campaigns & Elections Team are running a rolling programme of bulk-buy deals.

This month's bulk-buy deal is on a tabloid.

By doing a tabloid in January you can make sure you start your campaigning in the new year quickly – as you cut down on any need to locally print and can have it sorted ahead of Christmas break.

In early December you will get the new electoral register for 2022, so prep to do an addressed survey to all households alongside the tabloid.

You can either opt in for a bespoke deal with Royal Mail Delivery or to just have your leaflets printed and delivered to you for hand delivery.

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[Your vote matters and is a Vote for Hope, Action and Transformation.](#)

When I arrived in London as a teenager, Sir John Major was Prime Minister. I felt a connection with the City. My political views formed, firstly at university, and later whilst living in Islington. I joined the Liberal Democrats.

I was honoured to be elected as the Lead London Regional Diversity Champion. I continuously help to increase participation and engagement within our inclusion and diversity teams. I am vocal within Liberal Democrats Members to help represent those underrepresented in the UK Politics. In 2020 I founded the national BLAC Liberal Democrats (Blac Lives Action Committee) with the mission to make heard the voice of Black members within the Party.

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