

Parents must be given vouchers instead of woefully inadequate food parcels

It is completely unacceptable that parents have received woefully inadequate food parcels in place of free school meals.

The Secretary of State must urgently investigate this situation.

The amount of food parents have received to feed their children is not anything like enough to provide an adequate, nutritious lunch every day.

Nor do they appear to represent value for money, given what the parcels should theoretically be worth.

It is unacceptable that parents have received woefully inadequate food parcels in place of free school meals.

Our Education Spokesperson [@libdemdaisy](#) has written to the Secretary of State urging him to investigate the situation & replace these abysmal hampers with food vouchers.
pic.twitter.com/GfTdf5Ww40

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [January 13, 2021](#)

These abysmal hampers must be urgently replaced with food vouchers.

I have written to the Secretary of State asking him to investigate the situation urgently and replace these abysmal hampers with food vouchers.

Time and time again, this Government has let children and families down on the issue of free school meals, which are critical to the education and future of so many children.

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Author:

11 Lib Dem bills the Tories are

[killing today](#)

Over the past year, Liberal Democrat MPs have tabled a number of Private Members' Bills that would make important changes to help **build a fairer country, tackle deep-rooted inequalities and ensure a more effective response to the Covid pandemic.**

Eleven key Liberal Democrat Bills were due to have "Second Reading" – the next stage of their progress through Parliament – over the next three months.

Some have been waiting for over nine months. But today, **Jacob Rees-Mogg** is pushing through a government motion in the House of Commons that will end any chance of them becoming law in this parliamentary session.

Here are the **eleven crucial new laws** that the Conservatives are blocking today:

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Author:

[Daisy, diversity & deliveries](#)

Last month's Federal Communications and Elections Committee (FCEC) kicked off with a productive Q&A with **deputy Leader [Daisy Cooper](#)**. Daisy's approach to collaborative working across parts of the party was warmly welcomed and FCEC expressed its support, and desire to assist, Daisy's ongoing work to support a diverse range of candidates to stand.

We were pleased to note the progress made by the State Parties on the approval process for parliamentary candidates, which has needed to adapt to the online-only world in which we are currently living. The Thornhill Review specifically pointed to the need to select strong candidates early in a Parliament, to maximise their chances to campaign, and we wish to **thank the unsung heroes doing the behind the scenes work to make it all possible.**

Looking ahead, we considered the latest analysis of our prospects in the next few General Elections. It remains vital to take a wholistic view, which means planning not just for 2024, but 2028 and beyond. This is not the space for a full explanation, but the party must remain realistic about what can be achieved in a single election and watchful of developments to the [Fixed-Term Parliaments Act](#).

Encouragingly, progress on our communications strategy continues apace. **To win elections, we need to be heard by the public, more importantly we need**

the public to hear how our values relate to solving the problems that matter most to them.

We meet again on the 27th, our first meeting since the country returned to lockdown. [Ed's response](#) to the government's shocking failure to act sooner has set the groundwork for a Lib Dem vision for a fairer, safer, and economically more sensible approach to the crisis. For activists, **please read [our latest advice on campaigning](#)**; for everyone, stay safe!

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Author:

[The Government must catch up with cancer](#)

In the early months of this pandemic, the Government's messaging was clear. **'Stay at home. Protect the NHS. Save lives.'** And so it is once again. Monday's lockdown announcement, although belated, was absolutely right.

But why must we protect the NHS? So that it can continue to tackle COVID, but also, equally, so that the NHS can carry on its life-saving work in every other area.

We must protect the NHS to tackle COVID and help the NHS carry on its life-saving work in every other area

Cancer research UK report that **we will see 35,000 excess cancer deaths because of the Coronavirus pandemic**. For every 2 people who have so far lost their lives due to COVID, another will unnecessarily lose their battle with cancer.

Screenings and treatments are being cancelled, delayed and disrupted until it is too late. Usually, we see a 70:30 split between curative and palliative care. This year, it's 50:50.

The answer is not to exhort our heroic frontline staff to work harder.

It is not to carry on doing what we have always done, just doing it a little better. **This requires some new thinking.**

As Chair of the Radiotherapy APPG, I met with Matt Hancock in October and asked him to back both Catch Up with Cancer's 6-point plan to boost

radiotherapy services and the APPG's submission to the Comprehensive Spending Review.

Thousands of people could have their lives lengthened, their lives saved and their families spared of unspeakable grief if we act urgently to boost cancer services.

The Government must [#CatchUpWithCancer](#) and save lives.
pic.twitter.com/l0rhKwkJkZ

– Tim Farron (@timfarron) [December 2, 2020](#)

Radiotherapy is a clean form of cancer treatment.

It does not affect immunity or open up a patient to infection. It therefore holds **huge potential to boost cancer treatment services to 120% of pre-Covid capacity**, the levels required to clear the backlog within 2 years.

So, following the Spending Review on 25th November, there was a **collective gasp of disbelief** across the oncology and radiotherapy sector. It was baffling. There was no investment for, or no reference made to, COVID-safe radiotherapy treatment.

The Government must act urgently to catch up with cancer

Next week, I am meeting with the Under Secretary of State for Health, Jo Churchill, to remind her of the ever-increasing need for ring-fenced investment into radiotherapy services.

Thousands of people could have their lives lengthened, their lives saved, their families spared unspeakable grief, **if the Government acts urgently to catch up with cancer.**

But, most importantly, if you have even the slightest hint of a doubt that something might be wrong or unusual with any part of your body, the NHS is open to protect you.

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Author:

[Democracy and freedom can never be](#)

taken for granted

Like you, I watched **domestic terrorists and insurrectionists** storm the US Capitol last night with a sense of horror and shock.

I watched with a sense of horror and shock

A symbol of democracy worldwide was shown to be fragile, vulnerable.

It is a **stark reminder** that will remain etched in our memories.

Donald Trump failed to fulfil his oath to protect the US Constitution, inciting his supporters to engage in violence and attack elected officials in Congress, backed up by Congressmen, Congresswomen and Senators afraid of being deselected in primaries and willing to undermine faith in democracy to save their own skins.

There is new hope with the inauguration of Joe Biden on the 20th

An attack on democracy anywhere is an attack on democracy everywhere.

All I could think was: if this could happen there, this could also easily happen here.

We often see the US as a bastion of stability. To see how easily that was threatened and attacked should remind us that **democracy and freedom can never be taken for granted**. The Liberal Democrats can and will lead the fight to protect and defend them every single day.

That is my duty as an MP, and it is all our duties as citizens.

News that members of Trump's cabinet may be discussing invoking the 25th Amendment to the US Constitution, making Pence Acting President until 20 January, reaffirms what we already know: **Donald Trump is not and never has been fit to hold the office of President of the United States.**

Our way is plain: It is the way of democracy – of lawfulness, and of respect – respect for each other, and for our nation.

– Joe Biden (@JoeBiden) [January 6, 2021](#)

Frankly, the Tories should be ashamed of how they cosied up to Donald Trump and his administration. How they stood by as he flouted the international rules-based order. How they have mimicked his populist agenda.

While it comes too late to avoid the damage Trump has done in the US and

beyond, **there is new hope in the inauguration of Joe Biden on the 20th.**

In this moment of unrest, violence and anger, we must remember the words of Dr. King, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness: only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate: only love can do that." Let each of us try to be a light to see our country out of this dark moment.

– Senator-Elect Reverend Raphael Warnock (@ReverendWarnock) [January 6, 2021](#)

Liberal Democrats call on the Prime Minister to **end Britain's long walk towards isolation and to seize this opportunity to re-enter the world stage** as a strong ally in the fight to promote peace and end climate change and injustice.

Democrats must stand together against those who would seek to undermine and end our way of life, whether they are members of a violent mob or politicians in positions of responsibility.

As Senator Mitt Romney said on the Senate floor when Congress reconvened late last night:

"Today was heart-breaking.

And I was shaken to the core, as I thought about the people I met in China, and Russia, and Afghanistan and Iraq and other places who yearn for freedom, and who look to this building and these shores as a place of hope.

And I saw the images being broadcast around the world, and it breaks my heart."

I couldn't have put it better myself.

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