

[BREAKING: Government follows Lib Dems' calls for UK-wide approach to festive season](#)

Earlier this week, Liberal Democrat Leader Ed Davey [called on the four governments of the UK to work together](#) and agree on a set of unified guidelines that would work for families across the UK during the festive season.

We're glad to see that the UK leaders have listened to the Liberal Democrats' calls.

In a joint letter from Ed, Scottish Leader Willie Rennie, Welsh Leader Jane Dodds and Alliance Deputy Leader Stephen Farry MP, they warned that **“the interlinked nature of life in the United Kingdom means no one government can devise this guidance in isolation.”**

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[Local parties getting important extra data](#)

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[UK leaders must work together to keep families safe at Christmas](#)

Families across the UK have had an extremely difficult year being separated from their loved ones. **They deserve a Christmas that is as normal as possible.**

So far, Boris Johnson's government has been badly prepared and slow to act at every stage throughout the Covid-19 crisis. That can't happen again, especially for Christmas.

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[Learning from 2019 and packing a punch in target seats](#)

This committee knows that to get ourselves back to winning ways, we need to be ambitious going forwards and honest about the recent past.

In that vein, this month we discussed the internal investigation we commissioned into the Liberal Democrat response to the Unite to Remain campaign, and its structural and electoral implications for the Party.

The discussion was frank and robust, and it was agreed that we must ensure that lessons are learned and in particular that prior to any future negotiations we must have a clear objective together, with protocols established to protect the democratic, administrative and political interests of the party, and full administrative support for the negotiation team.

Speaking as the Chair of the FCEC, I am keen to highlight my, our, commitment to making sure that these recommendations translate into real action.

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[All Hong Kongers must be offered a pathway to UK citizenship](#)

If ever there was a time for us to act in support of Hong Kongers, it is now.

Many Hong Kongers have suffered grave persecution at the hands of the Chinese Regime.

With repeated reports of police brutality, the UK has a moral and legal duty to stand with Hong Kongers and ensure no one is left behind to suffer under the Chinese Communist Party.

My Bill to grant all Hong Kong Citizens a pathway to UK citizenship **was due to have its second reading today** but unfortunately we ran out of time. It has now been postponed to 15 January 2021 – just two weeks before the government's recently announced (but still not detailed) visa scheme is due to come into force.

This issue may have been postponed but it will not go away until we win justice for Hong Kongers with BNO Passports.

By expanding British National Overseas (BNO) status to all Hong Kongers, the Bill goes well beyond the Conservative Government's current citizenship commitments, which extend only to specific groups currently eligible to claim BNO status.

This clear route to citizenship for all Hong Kongers will strengthen the UK's historic bond with the people of Hong Kong and show our continued commitment to the Joint Declaration, **something that the Chinese regime has utterly betrayed.**

We also need to make sure that the citizenship offer is **affordable.**

The Home Office's claim that it will only cost £250 is deceptive given the upfront costs of the Immigration Health Surcharge.

The UK has a moral duty to act.

We urge the Conservatives to do the right thing for all of the people of Hong Kong and back this Bill.

In addition, we need to see measures to put in place an international lifeboat system as a matter of urgency, should the situation deteriorate further.

In recent months it has become politically fashionable to stand with the people of Hong Kong, but people fighting for their rights and for democracy need more than words. I was proud to introduce the Hong Kong Bill this year – time for the government to take it up and act. <https://t.co/CclzGyPpog>

– Alistair Carmichael (@amcarmichaelMP) [October 13, 2020](#)

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