

Reports to Conference

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Author:

Bulk buy deal – FAQs

The LDHQ Campaigns & Elections Team are running a rolling programme of bulk-buy deals on literature and Royal Mail door-to-door delivery.

Here's info below about the new phase we're offering.

Why opt in to the bulk-buy deal?

- It's a process that you're hand-held throughout – meaning you do not have to deal directly with Royal Mail or the Printers
- It's often (though not always) cheaper as we're ordering in bulk
- As we offer door-to-door postage, it allows a greater degree of flexibility for seats without deliverers in the current climate

If you would like to take advantage of this phase of the bulk buy print deal or the Royal Mail paid delivery option, you need to obtain permission from your Local Party Treasurer and complete [this form](#) by 5pm, Tuesday 8th September.

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Making Votes Matter

When I ran to be the Liberal Democrat candidate for North East Fife, I knew what I was getting into. In the 2017 election, my party had missed out on winning the seat by just two votes, making this quiet, rural, coastal constituency the most marginal in the country. While I wasn't necessarily expecting another election to come along as soon as 2019, I was expecting a very competitive race.

First past the post is not fit for purpose

And that made North East Fife matter. To the media, to the competing parties and to pollsters. It became clear that two votes is all it takes to take some 60,000 voters you may never have heard of and make them nationally important.

This realisation was, to put it mildly, disappointing. **Didn't these voters matter before?** Do people only matter once their seat becomes marginal? What about those people in so-called 'safe seats', where parties pile up votes election to election and will likely never face a competitive race?

Overall, in the 2019 general election 22.6 million votes went to waste. They were either cast for a candidate who lost or were over and above the number of votes the successful candidate needed to win. 22.6 million people's voices went unheard. And the system is so established that we don't find that remarkable. It's a disgrace.

On 43.6% of the votes, the Conservatives have 56.2% of the seats. The Conservatives got one seat for every 38,264 votes, while Labour got one seat for every 50,837 votes. It took many more votes to elect a Lib Dem (336,038) and Green MP (866,435), but far fewer to elect an SNP MP (25,883). The reality is that it is not the number of votes that determine whether a party wins or loses overall, but the voting system that does not value every vote equally.

First Past the Post is not fit for purpose. **Politicians are supposed to represent the people, yet we have a government that the majority of the country didn't vote for.** 56.4% of voters in 2019 backed parties other than the Conservatives.

That's not even considering that nearly a third of registered voters didn't vote at all. And who can blame them? In a system where you're often forced to vote for the 'least-worst' option to keep another party out of power, it's no wonder people aren't inspired to cast their ballot.

I won't pretend I'm immune to this. I won my seat on less than a majority of the votes. Try as I might to represent everyone in North East Fife, the fact remains that a majority of my constituents preferred other candidates at the election. How is it fair to them that I still became their representative?

First Past the Post cheats voters of real, meaningful representation. It favours the two major parties and concentrates politicians' attention on the tiny minority of seats which may change hands in any given election. It allows huge swathes of the country to be ignored and silenced by a political system which is supposed to represent them.

It's clear we need radical change. That's why I'm supporting Make Votes Matter in their national day of action as they push for a system of proportional representation. Whichever system of Proportional Representation is used, all of them have an emphasis on translating all votes into true democratic representation.

We owe it to the people of this country to deliver a system which really works for them

The fight for a fairer voting system isn't about political point scoring. It's about finding a way to make everyone's voice heard. It's about healing the divides which threaten to tear our country apart. It's about adopting a more collaborative way to do politics and taking the UK forward together. It's about holding elected representatives to account, ensuring that constituents have their say properly and their representatives must work for their trust and their vote.

We owe it to the people of this country to deliver a system which really works for them. One where everyone's vote matters – not just those in marginal constituencies. No one party can do it alone. Working across party divides and supporting causes like Make Votes Matter is the only way we can fix our broken electoral system.

I couldn't be prouder to represent North East Fife. But at the next election I don't want my constituents' votes to matter more than anyone else's. I want the people of our country to be heard whether their constituency has a two-vote margin or a twenty thousand vote margin. As representatives of the people, it's our duty as politicians to make votes matter – even if we need to put aside our party differences to do it

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Just imagine for a second

One of the biggest lessons of our election review is that people don't know what the Liberal Democrats stand for. For too long, we've not had a platform that appeals to the average voter on the issues that they care about.

That's why I've been laser-focused this campaign on talking about my [vision for a fairer, greener and more caring society](#).

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[PolicyLab users vote for their top 50 policy ideas](#)

As Liberal Democrats, we've always looked to the future with hope to build a better world. **When looking past the direct impact of the Coronavirus crisis, we should welcome the unprecedented opportunity to change society radically for the future.**

That's exactly what PolicyLab users have done since the launch of our new member engagement forum.

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