

# The Liberal Democrat Manifesto!

A never-ending cycle of red-blue, blue-red government has got us into the current economic crisis and political malaise. It is time for a fresh start.

**The Economy:** After years of boom and bust under the Conservatives, Labour has done the same. We have a tax system that lets big business and the super rich treat tax as if it is optional and the rest of us end up paying more. The Liberal Democrats believe in cutting income tax for people on low and middle incomes. With the economy as it is there are very high rates of unemployment so there is a high chance that school leavers will be not be able to get employed. The Liberal Democrats wish to tackle this issue so there will be jobs available for everyone.



**Business and Enterprise:** The Liberal Democrats will set business free. We will cut red tape, which will benefit small businesses in particular. We believe in fair trade - rich countries still operate subsidies and tariff barriers that hit the poorest countries. We seek to break down these barriers and promote trade and investment in developing countries.

**Environment, Energy and Climate Change:** The Liberal Democrats have received three green lights by offering the strongest set of policies on climate change, green taxation and green living. Climate change is getting worse. Both Labour and Conservatives support the construction of new nuclear power stations. More nuclear power will hinder development of Britain's vast renewable resources. Nuclear has a dirty legacy and increases global security risks. We oppose construction of further nuclear power stations. We will drive a massive programme of investment in renewable energy therefore providing hundreds of thousands of new and better jobs.

**Transport:** Transport system is a mess. Too much traffic, trains are expensive and overcrowded and busses are few and far between. Buses and trains should be affordable and this will cut pollution through less car usage. We will open new railway stations and new lines such as we wish to reopen the Ellon railway line to make the journey to Aberdeen easier. We will cut the number of lorries on the road to reduce congestion and exhaust fumes and will set a zero emissions target for all new cars by 2040.

**Health:** The NHS represents values, which unite the UK - a comprehensive health service, which treats all people equally, and is free when we need it. Doctors and nurses spend too much time trying to meet government targets rather than caring for patients. The Liberal Democrats believe patients must come first and will scrap targets and guarantee treatment on time. We will end the inequality in NHS funding so that each part of the country receives its fair share. We face huge public health problems - obesity, alcohol abuse and smoking, the biggest cause of preventable deaths. We will give clear messages before lecturing and blaming, we will promote transport schemes that encourage walking, we will make sure all food labelling uses the traffic light system and set a minimum price for alcohol. Also we strongly promote a minimum time spent doing PE lessons a week.

**Government and Civil Liberties:** We will involve the people in producing a **written constitution**, which would reform and reinvigorate the democratic process, putting individuals back in control. We will **lower the voting age to 16**. We will **establish a fair, proportional voting system** for elections. The House of Lords would be replaced with an elected second chamber. We will further devolve power to town and community councils so local people are making decisions that will affect their communities. We will operate **transparent and open government** with strong Freedom of Information legislation. The Data Protection Act will be reformed to accurately reflect the nature of today's surveillance society. The Liberal Democrats will **stop government interference**. Introducing legislation to protect our most important liberties, we will remove the right of the state to retain DNA records of people who do not have a criminal record and will scrap ID cards to use the money for more police.

**Law and Order:** People don't feel safe in their own homes or neighbourhoods. Liberal Democrats believe tackling crime is about catching criminals and making them pay. We will put **10,000 more police on the streets, give victims and local communities a major say in punishing offenders and make prisoners work and pay into a Victims Compensation Fund**. We will reform our courts to **prosecute terror suspects more effectively**. We will set up a 24hour border force at all UK ports to decrease gun presence on our streets. We want to be able to tackle causes of crime by introducing better rehabilitation facilities.

**International Affairs and Defence:** We will always put the country's security first, but national interests demands we work with allies, stand up for human rights and help people in the poorest parts of the world. We ask a huge amount of our armed forces, but they have never been properly rewarded with the pay and conditions they deserve. We will make the **welfare of those in the armed forces a priority**. The Liberal Democrats were the only political party **unanimously against the Iraq war**. We believe in the **eradication of nuclear weapons** and so would halve the UK's stockpile to kick start multilateral disarmament. The Liberal Democrats are pro EU. We are committed to creating a world free from poverty. In order to achieve the UN Millennium Development Goals by 2015 which includes eradicating extreme poverty and hunger, providing universal primary education and combating HIV/AIDS the UK needs to provide effective international assistance. Liberal Democrats will **increase aid spending to the recommended 0.7% of gross national income**. We realise that our armed forces need to be recognised like heroes.



# Vote Liberal Democrat