Conference Daily

Sunday 23 March 2025
Spring Conference Harrogate

Liberal Democrats

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Information from the Federal Conference Committee for Saturday 23 March. Please read in conjunction with the ***Agenda & Directory*** and ***Conference Extra***.

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Timetable for Sunday 23 March

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11.30–11.45	F26	Party awards	
11.45–13.00	F27	Speech: Ed Davey MP, Leader of the Liberal Democrats	
13.00		Close of Conference	

Report back for Saturday 22 March

F2	Report: Federal Conference Committee	Approved
F3	Report: Federal Policy Committee	Approved
F4	Policy Motion: Science, Innovation and Technology	Passed (Amendments One, Two and Three passed)
F6	Parliamentary Party Reports	Received
F9	Policy Motion: Free to be Who You Are	Passed (Amendment One withdrawn Amendment Two passed, Amendment Three passed, lines 111-113 retained)
F10	Constitutional Amendment Implementing the Lessons of the General Election Review	Passed (Amendments One and Two passed)
F11	Constitutional Amendment: Federal Board	Defeated
F12	Constitutional Amendment: Federal Policy Committee	Defeated
F14	Policy motion: The UK's Response to Trump	Passed (Amendments One, Two and Three passed)
F15	Report of Federal Board	Approved
F16	Electoral Regulations	Ratified
F17	Constitutional Amendment: Liberal Democrats Ltd	Passed
F18	Report of Federal Communications and Elections Committee	Approved
F19	Report of Campaign for Gender Balance	Approved
F20	Report of Federal International Relations Committee	Approved
F21	Report of Federal Council	Approved

Live Stream

The conference will be streamed live. In case you miss any sessions or want to watch again, go to www.libdems.org.uk/conference-live

Sunday 23 March

F22 Emergency Motion: Restoring International Development Assistance

Green Liberal Democrats
Mover: Monica Harding MP (Spokesperson for International Development)
Summation: Laura Gordon

Conference notes:

i) The Liberal Democrats were the first UK political party to commit to meeting the OECD target of spending 0.7% of Gross National Income (GNI) on Official Development Assistance (ODA), and enshrined this target in law whilst in government.

ii) On November 25th, 2020, Rishi Sunak announced a 'temporary' cut to 0.5%; this resulted in thousands of preventable deaths and cuts to vital programmes.

iii) The current Labour Government's manifesto committed to restoring development spending at the level of 0.7% of GNI "as soon as fiscal circumstances allow"; despite this, on 25th February 2025 Keir Starmer announced an immediate cut from 0.5% to 0.3% of GNI.

iv) The international development budget has been further eroded by the large increase of in-donor refugee costs due to the decision of the previous Conservative government to pause asylum approvals - as well as leaving thousands of people trapped in limbo, these costs have occupied an increasingly large share of ODA.

Conference believes that:

a) While there is an acute need to increase defence spending to support Ukraine and ensure the UK's future security, this can be met through fair measures such as a digital sales tax and does not require yet another cut to ODA.

b) The Government's cuts to ODA will cost lives and are completely unjustified – UK aid provides desperately needed support to the most vulnerable people in the world, particularly in fragile and conflict affected states, and is a key tool in meeting our climate commitments.

c) The UK's commitment to development has been one of our most effective foreign policy tools in recent decades and is a key pillar in ensuring our future security.

d) Sudden cuts to ODA fall disproportionately on the most vulnerable –

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those affected by humanitarian crisis – due to annualised budget cycles being easier to cut.

Conference calls for:

1. The immediate restoration of UK aid spending at 0.5% of GNI and a roadmap to restore 0.7% of GNI as soon as possible within this parliament.
2. A halt to the charging of asylum hosting costs to the ODA budget, freeing up billions for global poverty reduction, climate action and humanitarian response.
3. The Government to increase defence spending to 2.5% of GDP as soon as possible - based on funding plans outlined by the Liberal Democrats - and to hold cross-party talks to agree a consensus on how to reach 3%.

Applicability: Federal

Background briefing:

This motion updates party policy on International Development Assistance in light of recent cuts announced by the Government.

It builds on existing policy as set out in the 2024 General Election Manifesto, *For a Fair Deal*, and Policy Paper 157, *Liberal Values in a Dangerous World* (2024).

F23 Animal Welfare in the Food System

Amendment One

10 members
Mover: Baroness Grender (Lords Spokesperson on Environment, Food and Rural Affairs)
Summation: To be announced

After line 48, insert new 4.:

4. Its commitment to implement new targets to ensure 50% of food supplied to the public sector is produced by British farmers or certified to higher animal welfare and environmental standards.

After line 116, insert new b) and c):

b) An annual report on the level of high welfare food supplied to the

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public sector is laid before Parliament.

c) The Government Buying Standards for Food and Catering Services (GBSF) are properly monitored and enforced.

Amendment Two

10 members
Mover: Elliot Chapman-Jones
Summation: To be announced

At end of line 77, insert:

'..., including more funding for peer-to-peer learning to reward farmer networks for sharing knowledge and skills'.

After line 77, insert new b):

b) Ensuring that the Growth and Skills Levy takes into account the importance of agricultural skills to provide access to apprenticeships in the sector and support the next generation with expertise in animal welfare.

Background briefing

This motion updates and develops policy on food and farming.

It builds on existing policy proposals as set out in the 2024 General Election Manifesto, *For a Fair Deal*, Policy Paper 154, *Food and Farming* (2023), Policy Paper 147, *The Natural Environment* (2022), and Policy Paper 129, *A Rural Future: Time to Act* (2018).

F25 Ending the Crisis: A Fair Deal for Children with SEND

Hall Aide: Matthew Palmer

The FCC has agreed to make the following drafting amendment to the motion:

In IV (line 88), after 'local government', *insert:* 'and trade unions'.

Amendment One

17 members
Mover: Andy McGowan
Summation: Lee Dargue

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After line 33, insert new xii) and xiii):

xii) The lack of support for children with SEND, particularly during school holidays, has a significant impact on parent carers and siblings, including their health, wellbeing and opportunities.

xiii) Research by Carers Trust and the We Care campaign shows that parent carers do not have access to their statutory right to assessments and, if needed, support.

After line 96, add new VI.:

VI. Take measures to improve access to support for parent carers and siblings including through:

a) Working with local government to ensure that parent carers have access to Parent Carers' Needs Assessments and support in every local authority.

b) Ensuring that any future carers strategy or reforms to SEND specifically consider the needs of parent carers and siblings.

c) Making sure that Ofsted inspections of local authorities specifically assess how councils are identifying and supporting parent carers.

d) Including young carers as a priority group within any holiday activity programmes.

Amendment Two

Liberal Democrat Disability Association
Mover: Katharine Macy.
Summation: To be announced.

At end of V. (line 96), insert: '...,while ensuring quality of transport and education is not lowered'.

After line 96, add:

VI) Support Higher and Further education by allowing pre-16 diagnosis of disabilities such as neurodivergence like dyslexia, ADHD and autism to be accepted to access Disability Student Allowance and reasonable adjustments

Background briefing

This motion updates and develops policy on education and special

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educational needs.

It builds on existing policy as set out in the 2024 General Election Manifesto, *For a Fair Deal*, Policy Paper 152, *A Better Start in Life* (2023) and Policy Motion, *Investing in Our Children's Future* (2023).

We want to hear from you!

We will be sending round a feedback survey link soon.

Please let us know about your experience of Conference.

Spokespeople Q&A Sessions

There will be two Q&A sessions at conference where you can ask questions of our spokespeople. All sessions will take place in the Harrogate Convention Centre.

Foreign Affairs Q&A
Sunday 23 March 10.00-11.00 – Queen's Suite: Meeting Room 8 & 9
with Calum Miller MP; Chair Chris Maines.

Speaking and Voting at Conference

Applying to speak

To make a speech in a debate you must:

- complete a speaker's card, collected from and returned to the Speakers' Table at the front of the auditorium, an auditorium steward or the Information Desk; ***or***
- submit an electronic speaker's card, from Monday 17 March up to one hour before the start of the debate, online at:

www.libdems.org.uk/speakers-card

Completing a speaker's card

When completing a speaker's card, remember:

1 Submit your card well in advance.

The chair and aide team for the debate will meet well in advance to plan the debate – sometimes the previous day.

2 Fill in your card completely.

Complete the back of the card as well as the front. These sections are needed for the chair and aide to balance the debate, so they can call people with relevant experience and avoid a string of people making the same point.

3 Make sure it's readable!

Don't fill every square centimetre of the card, and write legibly – the easier you make it for the chair and aide to read the card the more likely you will be called.

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Left Luggage

Please leave it in your accommodation as there is no official left luggage and the HCC does not accept large bags or suitcases.

If you need to leave your luggage elsewhere please note that the Crowne Plaza Hotel takes part in a scheme for non residents where they can leave luggage here.
Book online: Stasher

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Conference App

Download our Conference App for Spring Conference, with great features such as:

- My Schedule (the easiest way to plan your conference)
- A searchable Fringe Guide and Agenda
- Conference Extra and Conference Daily as they are published

Download the official Liberal Democrat Conference App on the App Store and Google Play Store!

App Live: Early March

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Help us win big in May!

We stand on the edge of one of the most important political events since the General Election: the Local Elections taking place across England on 1st May.

This is our chance to make further gains and show the strength of our movement once again.

And whether you have elections in your area or not this year - the results have an impact on us all. Every Liberal Democrat win strengthens our ability to challenge at every level - from your local community to Westminster, Holyrood and the Senedd.

That's why we need you to get involved - your support will make a massive difference.

Thank you

www.LibDems.org.uk/appeal