

# WHAT THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS BELIEVE

## PARTY'S PHILOSOPHY IN A SENTENCE...

FROM THE PREAMBLE TO THE PARTY'S CONSTITUTION

**"NO ONE SHALL BE ENSLAVED BY POVERTY, IGNORANCE OR CONFORMITY"**

## 2017 MANIFESTO TOP PRIORITIES

### OPEN, TOLERANT, UNITED

#### FIGHT TO KEEP BRITAIN AT THE HEART OF EUROPE



**BRITISH PEOPLE SHOULD HAVE THE FINAL SAY** on whether Theresa May's Brexit deal is right for them and their families in a referendum. If people don't like that deal, they should have the choice to remain in the European Union.

### CHANGE BRITAIN'S FUTURE

#### A HEALTH SERVICE THAT MEETS THE NEEDS OF EVERYONE



Increase the income tax rates by 1p to help **FUND THE NHS AND SOCIAL CARE**, including **BETTER MENTAL HEALTH PROVISION AND ENDING THE PAY FREEZE FOR NHS WORKERS**.

#### "EDUCATION IS MY TOP PRIORITY" - TIM FARRON



**EVERY CHILD DESERVES THE BEST START IN LIFE.** Invest extra in education, especially the Early Years Pupil Premium to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds, and oppose new grammar schools.

#### BUILD AN ECONOMY THAT WORKS FOR THE LONG TERM



Create a prosperous, green and fair economy, including **DOUBLING INNOVATION AND RESEARCH SPENDING** and only borrowing for investment, eliminating the day-to-day deficit.

## A PRO-EUROPEAN PARTY



The party combines a desire to **DEVOLVE POWER TO THE LOWEST LEVEL POSSIBLE** with a push for **INTERNATIONAL COOPERATION ON ISSUES THAT CROSS NATIONAL BOUNDARIES**.

Under Jo Grimond's leadership the Liberal Party was one of the **FIRST VOICES CALLING FOR BRITAIN TO JOIN THE COMMON MARKET** (the forerunner of the European Union) in the 1960s. Then in the European Referendum of 1975, many pro-European Labour figures cooperated with the Liberals, paving the way for the formation of the SDP and later merger to form the Liberal Democrats.

## PROTECTING OUR ENVIRONMENT

As far back as the "Yellow Book" in 1928, protecting the environment has been at the heart of the party's policies. The concern for future generations is enshrined in the party's constitution:

**"WE BELIEVE THAT EACH GENERATION IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE FATE OF OUR PLANET AND, BY SAFEGUARDING THE BALANCE OF NATURE AND THE ENVIRONMENT, FOR THE LONG TERM CONTINUITY OF LIFE IN ALL ITS FORMS."**



## SOCIAL & ECONOMIC LIBERALS

Balancing **SOCIAL LIBERALISM** and **ECONOMIC LIBERALISM** is at the heart of the party's approach.

### SOCIAL LIBERALS

Tend to be most concerned about **INEQUALITY** and promote **DEMOCRACY** to give people more power.



INEQUALITY

### ECONOMIC LIBERALS

Tend to be most concerned about an **OVERBEARING STATE** and promote **FREE MARKETS** to give people more power.



OVERBEARING STATE

All **POWER** (be it government, business or other people) can both **PROTECT** and **THREATEN LIBERTY**. Economic and Social Liberals put different emphasis on the **BEST DEFENCES** and the **BIGGEST BULLIES**, as well as on the relative importance of equality of opportunity versus equality of outcome.

## CENTRE PARTY OR NOT?

Some see the party as being in the **CENTRE ON A LEFT/ RIGHT SPECTRUM**, with Labour, Tories and Ukip at each end of it.

Others reject this spectrum, and instead see the party at the **LIBERAL END OF A LIBERAL/AUTHORITARIAN SPECTRUM**, with Labour, Tories and Ukip at the other end of it.



## THE ECONOMIC PERSPECTIVE

### BOSSSES VERSUS WORKERS

This viewpoint gives Labour and Tories a **CENTRAL ORGANISING ECONOMIC IDEA**.



### MUTUALS AND COOPERATIVES

Lib Dems reject this way of looking at the world, looking to **MUTUALS AND COOPERATIVES** to break that struggle.



## PUTTING NEW IDEAS ON THE AGENDA

**"I AM A LIBERAL AND I AM AGAINST THIS SORT OF THING"**



**HARRY WILLCOCK**

Over the years the party has been central to popularising some previously fringe beliefs which then became mainstream - especially **CIVIL LIBERTIES, PRO-EUROPEANISM, ENVIRONMENTALISM** and **CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM**.

Most famously, Harry Willcock triggered the abolition of ID cards with an act of civil disobedience in 1950.

WANT TO FIND OUT HOW TO TURN BELIEFS INTO POLITICAL POWER?

**GET THE BOOK!**  
**101 WAYS TO WIN AN ELECTION**

by Ed Maxfield and Mark Pack  
Biteback, 2nd edition 2016



## HISTORY

ONE REVOLUTION AND TWO MERGERS

### 1688 GLORIOUS REVOLUTION



The **WHIGS** saw this as ensuring **PARLIAMENT WAS SUPREME**. It created their political tradition of **OPPOSING ABSOLUTE POWER** and **SUPPORTING RELATIVE POWER**.

From this later came support for **THE RULE OF LAW** and **EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW**.

### 1859 WILLIS ROOMS MEETING



**WHIGS, RADICALS AND PEELITES** (followers of the former Conservative PM) met in London and **COMBINED TO FORM THE LIBERAL PARTY**.

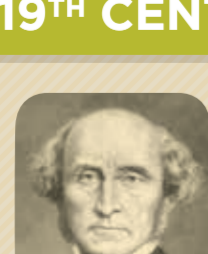
### 1988 THE MERGER



**SDP** (formed mainly by ex-Labour figures) and **LIBERAL PARTY** merged to form the **LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**.

## PRIORITIES THROUGH THE AGES

### MID 19TH CENTURY

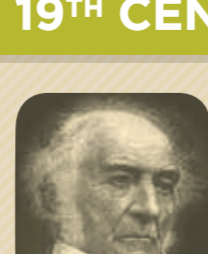


**THE HARM PRINCIPLE**

"The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to **PREVENT HARM TO OTHERS**"

John Stuart Mill and Harriet Taylor in *On Liberty*

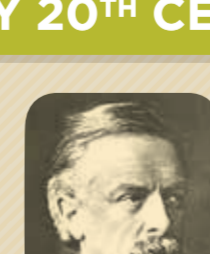
### LATE 19TH CENTURY



**"PEACE, REFORM AND REFORM"**

William Gladstone's popular trio meant **PEACE** overseas, **ECONOMY** in public spending and **REFORM**.

### EARLY 20TH CENTURY



**"WE CAN CONQUER UNEMPLOYMENT"**

David Lloyd George was part of a Liberal shift to supporting **GREATER PUBLIC SPENDING** to help the economy and fund a welfare state.

### MID 20TH CENTURY



**COMMUNITY POLITICS DEVELOPED**

A growing emphasis on **WINNING LOCAL ELECTIONS** and **PAVEMENT POLITICS** led to a new political theory about helping people secure power over their own lives.