

## A Passover like no other

Tonight, at sundown, **Jewish communities across the globe will mark the beginning of Pesach/Passover.** Over the next eight days, in the UK and around the world, Jewish people will commemorate the liberation of their ancestors from slavery in ancient Egypt.

The story of Passover teaches that freedom is coming, our current situation will not last forever, and out of our trauma grows new strength

However, this year's Passover will be like no other in recent memory.

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## Lib Dems lead cross-party call for improved mental health support amidst Covid-19 crisis

Social distancing means millions are now home alone, facing the prospect of only the most minimal contact with another soul for months. This isolation is likely to have a **grave impact on their mental health.**

Millions more, without being completely isolated, will still be struggling with the rapid changes the coronavirus has wrought upon our way of life. People's anxiety will be further fueled by **concern for the health of loved ones**, or stress resulting from the impact of the pandemic on **jobs and livelihoods.**

Given the unprecedented events we are living through, the need for mental health support could not be clearer. That's why the government must **signpost the appropriate support services to every household**, and **adequately fund the charities** that provide those services.

Isolation is likely to have a grave impact on the mental health of millions across the country – the government must boost mental health support to help those hardest hit by social distancing <https://t.co/ywHkAY8WKY>

– Liberal Democrats (@LibDems) [April 5, 2020](#)

Writing to the Secretary of Health, **Munira Wilson MP** and a cross-party group of Parliamentarians have expressed fears that government advice to stay at home will leave people **“worried about coronavirus, their jobs, housing”** and **“anxious about their family’s health and their own.”**

**Over 40 MPs from across the political spectrum** have signed the letter highlighting the “inextricable link” between mental and physical health and urging the Government to:

- **launch a publicity campaign** signposting the mental health support available during the coronavirus crisis.
- **send public health leaflets**, which include advice on looking after mental health and signposts to organisations that can offer mental health support during the crisis, to all homes.
- **increase the level of funding for mental health charities** offering support during the coronavirus crisis, **to reduce pressure on the NHS.**



The Mental Health Foundation and Campaigns at Young Minds have both supported the cross-party efforts.

**Mark Rowland, Chief Executive of the Mental Health Foundation, said:**

*“Supporting and protecting people’s mental health will be **critical** for people to endure and recover from this pandemic. Peer support approaches and prominent advice should be **central** to the government’s plan, with a **particular focus on reaching those most at risk.**”*

**Tom Madders, Director of Communications and Campaigns at Young Minds said:**

***"It is crucial that young people are able to access support at this time and know where to find good quality information and resources on how they can look after their mental health at home.***

***Now is the time for us all to work together and support those most at risk in our society.***

*The Government must fully recognise the growing mental health impact that COVID-19 will continue to have on children and young people, and ensure that those professionals and organisations providing mental health support **are well enough resourced and supported to do so."***

For more information about how you can take care of your mental health during the coronavirus outbreak, the mental health charity Mind **has some useful guidance** [here](#).



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[\*\*Need something to read? Lib Dem Image has you covered\*\*](#)

I'm sure many of us have said that we're going to use lockdown as an

opportunity to catch up on some reading. **Well, we've got the perfect thing!**

A good book or two provides a wonderful escape from these uncertain times

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## **Plans for Autumn Conference on hold**

**Plans for Liberal Democrat autumn conference on hold, online options to be explored instead**

In the light of the coronavirus epidemic, the Federal Board has decided to put on hold plans for the preparation of a traditional party conference in the autumn and will make a final decision on whether to cancel the event in May.

In the meantime, the Federal Conference Committee will consider the feasibility of an online event, which might include some elements of a formal conference.

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Author:

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## **Postponing our Leadership Election**

Not only are we going through what could become the country's biggest crisis since 1945, but we're also entering a very new world that will persist once the immediate crisis is over.

I'm proud of what we have achieved so far by championing NHS workers and pressing the Government on issues such as offering a better deal to the self-employed.

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