

Restoring links with Europe for young people

Liberal Democrats want to fix our broken relationship with Europe. **Giving young people the opportunity to live, study and work in Europe is a vital first step.**

The former Conservative Government's botched deal with the EU has been a disaster for young people. And the new Labour Government has repeatedly ruled out key steps to rebuilding our relationship with Europe such as joining Erasmus.

For young people, studying, living, and working abroad in EU countries has become harder and more expensive. Even something as simple as a holiday now comes with the burden of soaring roaming charges and frustrating border delays on both sides of the Channel.

But it doesn't have to be this way. Liberal Democrats want to tear down red tape, bring down roaming charges and reduce delays at the border.

The UK already has a Youth Mobility Scheme with Japan, South Korea and Australia. Expanding the scheme to include the EU would give young people from the UK greater opportunities and boost the UK economy, especially the hospitality sector.

Our new policy, passed today, would restore vital links with Europe for young people and cut red tape for people travelling to EU countries:

- Opening negotiations with the EU to **extend the Youth Mobility Scheme** on a reciprocal basis to EU countries, **including increasing the age limit from 30 to 35.**
- Expanding **opportunities for young people to study, teach and volunteer abroad** by returning to the Erasmus Plus programme as an associated country.
- **Taking action on excessive roaming charges** – opening discussions with the EU, and **opening a consultation on UK phone company charges**, including the possibility of abolishing them.
- Taking steps to **negotiate passport and visa-free school trips between UK and EU member states**, on a reciprocal basis.

Opening discussions with the EU to reach a **reciprocal exemption** from **electronic travel authorisation schemes** to reduce delays and costs for holiday-makers.

Read the motion in full

Liberal Democrats are committed to fixing the UK's broken relationship with Europe so everyone can benefit from closer cultural and economic ties with our nearest neighbours.

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Author:

We can make the UK the safest place in the world to have a baby

Bringing a new life into the world should be one of the most joyful experiences a person can have. Yet, **in the UK, too many families face the heartbreak of baby loss**, whether through miscarriage, stillbirth, or traumatic birth experiences.

The national ambition set in 2010 to reduce stillbirths, neonatal, and maternal deaths by 50% by 2025 is nearing its expiry, but we are not on track to meet the target. **The UK Government should renew the national maternity ambitions** beyond 2025, to include the four nations, and to enhance them with a clear baseline to measure progress against.

The true scale of miscarriage in the UK is still unknown because no official record of miscarriages is held. **We must do all we can to ensure that every single preventable baby loss is avoided**. And for those who do experience baby loss, we want to ensure that proper support is in place – including support and referral being available for every miscarriage, rather than after three.

Black women are at almost four times greater risk of maternal mortality than White women. Black babies are nearly twice as likely, and Asian babies are nearly 1.5 times more likely, to die during the first 28 days compared to White babies. Infant mortality rates in the most deprived neighbourhoods are double those in the least deprived areas. **The UK must work towards ending discrimination towards diverse parents during pregnancy**.

We believe it is time for change and our goal is clear; to make the UK the safest country in the world to have a baby. That's why today, Liberal Democrats have passed new policy to transform and improve care through pregnancy and the neonatal period.

- Making support and referral are available after every miscarriage, not just after three.
- Ensuring best-practice care is accessible 24/7 for anyone experiencing miscarriage, ensuring that no one is left to suffer alone.
- All miscarriages should be recorded, bringing transparency to this hidden problem. Setting national targets to reduce miscarriage rates and

improve outcomes.

- Backing the commitments made in the NHS Workforce Plan with sufficient funding; this includes the expansion of the wider maternity and neonatal workforce, ensuring that every expectant parent receives the care they deserve.
- Improving the coding of ethnicity and data – including surveys avoiding overusing ‘other’ as a category.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment for everyone receiving maternity or perinatal care, including trans and nonbinary people.

Read our new policy in full

The Liberal Democrats are committed to transforming maternal and neonatal care and ensuring inclusive care for all, so we can create a safer, more compassionate healthcare system for everyone.

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Author:

Giving communities more power over their local economies

Liberal Democrats believe in giving communities, businesses and individuals choice and freedom and that should include the right to have a say over Sunday trading hours in their local area.

Our market system should balance businesses' needs and the rights and freedoms of workers.

The current Sunday trading laws in England and Wales don't allow local authorities to decide Sunday opening hours in their local community.

Sunday trading laws were last reformed in 1994, moving from an outright ban to restricted opening hours. During the 2012 Olympics Sunday trading laws were suspended.

In Scotland, powers to regulate Sunday trading are devolved. Scotland has chosen to liberalise Sunday trading while protecting workers' rights.

Our new policy passed today would devolve power to regulate Sunday trading to local authorities in England and to the Welsh Government.

This would allow communities to decide for themselves the best regulations to suit people and businesses in their own areas. **Local areas know their own local economy better than anyone else and are best placed to decide their own rules.**

We would also introduce new measures to protect workers who do not want to work on Sundays.

Read the motion in full

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Author:

Hatred will never divide us

The last ten days have been immensely difficult for our country.

First, the horrific attack in Southport that claimed the lives of three innocent young girls.

Then, the far right extremists who exploited this tragedy to incite and commit appalling acts of violence. Violence that targeted Muslims, asylum seekers and communities of colour.

These thugs do not speak for Britain or our values. But how we respond does.

It is heartwarming to see so many people of all backgrounds and all walks of life standing peacefully together in solidarity against racism, Islamophobia and violence.

We are indebted to our brave police officers who put themselves in harm's way to keep our communities safe.

– Ed Davey ([@EdwardJDavey](#)) [August 8, 2024](#)

Already, we have witnessed some of the best of British values in action. Communities coming together to clean up the damage. Standing in solidarity

with their neighbours and friends who have been targeted.

Making it clear that hatred will never divide us, and unity will prevail.

[View video on Facebook](#)

Racism and Islamophobia have no place in our society. We must work together to consign this hatred to the history books – and I'm proud of what Liberal Democrats are already doing to make this a reality.

Like [calling on the government](#) to adopt a formal definition of Islamophobia, and immediately appoint a new independent adviser on Islamophobia.

There is much to be done to ensure that everybody can feel safe in their communities. But there's reason to be hopeful, too.

Last night, we witnessed thousands of people standing peacefully together in solidarity against racism, Islamophobia and violence.

It was proof that **the UK is the open, tolerant and compassionate country we all know and love**. That people from all backgrounds are welcome here. And that riots and racism will never triumph.

In our own Lib Dem family, I am proud of how we work together as one team with much diversity. So please check in with your friends, colleagues, neighbours. There are many in our communities right now who feel hugely vulnerable – and need to know that our party is standing with them in love and support.

We must keep this spirit alive. So we will keep working together – to support our communities and stamp out hatred, in all its forms.

For anyone in need of mental health support, all Liberal Democrat party members have unlimited access to the Health Assured Support Helpline at 0800 028 0199. You can find out more [here](#).

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Author:

[Lib Dems call for new laws on GP](#)

appointments and cancer care in King's Speech

New laws to end the crisis in health and care need to be at the heart of the King's Speech on Wednesday.

Over the past few weeks we heard thousands of heart-breaking stories on doorsteps about just how dire a state our NHS is in. Time and again we were told of people waiting hours for an ambulance, weeks for a GP appointment and months to start vital cancer treatment.

The Conservative Party brought our health and care services to the brink of collapse. After years of neglect, the top priority of the incoming Labour government should now be to save our health and care services.

That is why the Liberal Democrats want to see the NHS and care put at the heart of the King's Speech, including ending long delays for GP appointments and cancer treatment. Patients simply cannot wait any longer.



GPs

Since the Conservatives promised to hire 6,000 more GPs, the number has fallen by almost 500, leaving our GP services in crisis and people struggling to get an appointment.

Liberal Democrats want to see patients given a new legal right to see a GP within a week.



Cancer treatment

More than 100,000 patients in the last year waited longer than the NHS target of 62 days to start urgent cancer treatment.

Liberal Democrats want to see a cancer care guarantee with a statutory duty on the Government to ensure that every patient can start cancer treatment within 62 days of an urgent diagnosis.

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