

7 things the Lib Dems have done for the LGBT+ community

June is LGBT+ Pride Month!

LGBT+ Pride events are being held across the country to recognise the impact LGBT+ people have had in the world and the struggle they still face for equal recognition. The Liberal Democrats have always championed the rights of the LGBT+ community. Here are 7 things that we have done:

1. Opposed section 28

Sorry, Jeremy – Section 28 was repealed by the Lib Dems, who tabled the motion to abolish it. A motion which you abstained on.

<https://t.co/XfZwMY7RiB>

– Young Liberals (@YoungLiberalsUK) [25 May 2019](#)

In the 1980s the Liberal Democrats were the first party to openly oppose Section 28 – an act which prohibited the so-called promotion of homosexuality. In 2003, the Lib Dems were the first to introduce legislation to repeal the act. After over 20 years since the act was introduced, parliament finally voted to abolish it!

2. Supported lowering the age of consent to 16 for same-sex relationships

In 1998 Theresa May voted against lower the age of consent for gay relationships to 16, in 2002 she voted no to allowing homosexual couples to adopt, in 2003 was absent for vote on the repeal of section 28, saying “most parents want the comfort of knowing Section 28 is there”.

<https://t.co/uhhQZgjxIT>

– Dr Fern Riddell (@FernRiddell) [17 May 2019](#)

In 1994, the Lib Dems unanimously supported amendments to the Criminal Justice and Public Order Bill to reduce the age of consent for homosexual sex to 16, bringing it in line with heterosexual sex.

3. Supported Same-Sex Couples adopting children



by Bénédicte Barrett

The Liberal Democrats supported amendments to the Adoption and Children Act 2002 to allow adoption by unmarried couples, including same-sex couples. We unanimously opposed Conservative attempts in the Lords to reject these amendments.

4. Led on Trans Rights

TRANS RIGHTS ARE HUMAN RIGHTS

Allowing trans people to change the gender on their birth certificate had been Liberal Democrat party policy since 1998. It was six years until the Gender Recognition Act came along, and it was wholeheartedly supported by the Lib Dems. The Tories in the House of Lords tried to destroy the legislation but were successfully opposed by Liberal Democrat peers.

5. Introduced the equal marriage bill



In 2013, the Same Sex Marriage Act was introduced because of the hard work of our MP Lynne Featherstone in coalition government. Since then, thousands of same sex couples have been able to get married.

6. Campaigned for blood donation rules to be based on science not sexuality

<https://giant.gfycat.com/DimwittedFlawedBantamrooster.webm>

Currently gay and bi men are excluded from donating blood. In light of this, we adopted a policy in 2011 for Britain's blood donation rules to be based on the risk of the individual, not on sexuality.

7. Campaigned for LGBT inclusive workplaces



We are fighting for businesses with more than 250+ employees to be made to monitor and publish data on BAME and LGBT employees, not just gender. We hope that this will end unfair discrimination against LGBT employees at work.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

5 weeks to get Jane Dodds into Parliament

We have a date for the Brecon and Radnorshire by-election!

After days of delay, the Conservatives finally caved this morning and moved the writ to allow the by-election to go ahead. It'll be held on **Thursday 1st August – exactly 5 weeks from today.**

It's going to be a brilliant campaign – I'm looking forward to seeing as many people there as possible. **The weather's lovely and the views speak for themselves!**



This is the Begwyns above Clyro in Radnorshire – it's a really beautiful part of the world.

This is our opportunity to show that the Liberal Democrats are winning on all levels again. We demand better than a Conservative MP who was convicted of submitting false expense claims. **The people of Brecon and Radnorshire deserve an MP who understands local issues and will stand up for communities in Parliament.**

There's a lot of work to do to make that happen, though. **Can you get to Brecon and help us out?**

There's a wide variety of things to do – from phoning and leafleting to clerical work inside the office. Everything you do helps us win! If you're interested – just sign up using the link below.

[Check out events](#)

But if you can't make it – don't worry! **The easiest way to help us is to donate to the campaign.** Just £25 could help us reach up to 5000 voters online – everything you can give makes a difference.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

Windrush Day

Please be advised that this article contains language that some may find offensive

As a child of the Windrush generation, Windrush Day is hugely important to me. I'm so glad that we, as a society, are marking it.

The term 'the Windrush Generation' stems from the arrival, on June 22, 1948, of the ship The Empire Windrush at Tilbury Docks, just east of London, bringing with it the first immigrants from the Caribbean.

It denotes the large-scale influx of Caribbean immigrants during the years that followed.

There's been a lot of press about the terrible treatment of people who came here from the Caribbean in the late 1940s and onwards, who now find that their very official existence has been denied.

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There's also much discussion about the poor treatment of those Caribbean immigrants upon their arrival in the UK to date.

But there are also some positive stories and memories mixed in with those experiences.

I've recorded an 8-minute audio interview with someone who came to this country in 1962. She shared with me some of her memories and they were both good and bad.

The memories they shared included these:

'I came to the UK after a one month journey from Trinidad by ship with my young stepson and my new baby boy. When we arrived it was the coldest winter they'd had in a long time and we only had summer clothes.'

'I remember having no furniture, no heating, no washing machine, no fridge, no winter clothes. We had to try to stay warm in one room using a paraffin burner. Then, on Christmas Day, someone gave us a bed for my stepson. I was so happy!'

Since 2018, we've celebrated Windrush Day to honour the British Caribbean community.

'It was hard to find a job because no black people were allowed. The British people didn't want immigrants – "...no black people", they said.'

'I remember a bus driver saying to the passengers that '...all these Pakis had come over here to go on the dole. I pointed out to him that not everyone with Asian skin was from Pakistan and that we were all desperate to work.'

'We had so little money for food that I had to work at a sweet factory in the evenings just so we could eat. I know it was illegal, but I left my young stepson in charge of my toddler and my baby and, one day, I came home to find the baby under the kitchen table. But I had no choice.'

'Eventually, I got a job in local Government. I was the only black woman working in my department for the Council. They treated me well and helped me to get promotions.'

And so, the stories continue.

Since 2018, we've celebrated Windrush Day to honour the British Caribbean community.

Listening to the person I interviewed who spoke about how hard it was to find work, it's ironic to note that, following the losses of World War II, Britain was in dire need of labourers. This prompted a campaign to entice people from the countries of the British Empire and Commonwealth to immigrate to the UK.

Yet, when they arrived, it seems that they weren't exactly welcomed.

I've read the 'official lines' that state, for posterity that '...the Windrush Generation and their descendants are honoured for their immense contributions to British society following the trauma of the Second World War'. However, this does not entirely reflect the British Caribbean community's experience –

certainly not those with whom I've come into contact.

When Caribbean immigrants first arrived, there were met with extreme intolerance from large parts of the white population.

Having initially been encouraged to settle in the UK and take up employment to revive the labour market, many early immigrants were denied access to private employment and accommodation on account of their skin colour. Afro-Caribbean and Indo-Caribbean people were also banished from many pubs, clubs, and even churches.

From today's perspective, the arrival of The Empire Windrush is considered a major landmark not only for the country's recovery from the turmoil of war but also for the establishment of modern British multicultural society.

As Liberal Democrats, we must continue to fight for justice for those members of the Windrush Generation whose paperwork – destroyed by The Home Office – means that they have to face a costly, lengthy and sometimes unwinnable battle to establish their right to remain in the UK

Windrush Day is a way of encouraging communities across the country to celebrate the contribution of the Windrush Generation and their descendants –
I guess that would include me!

But, it also serves as a reminder that, as Liberal Democrats, we must continue to fight for justice for those members of the the Windrush Generation whose paperwork – destroyed by The Home Office – means that they have to face a costly, lengthy and sometimes unwinnable battle to establish their right to remain in the UK, even if this is the only home they've ever known.

So, join me on Tuesday 25th June 2019 at an event organised by 'The Hackney Heroine', Pauline Pearce, the driving force behind Motion F5 from last Autumn's Conference 'Righting Wrongs: Restoring the Rights of the Windrush Generation'.

Alongside former Legal Aid Lawyer of the Year, Kaweh Beheshtizadeh and Professor Paul Reynolds (both key figures within the Liberal Democrats), I will be discussing the issues surrounding the Windrush Scandal and what we, as Liberal Democrats, can do about it.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

Ed Davey: our leadership contest could not be more significant

Brexit is the most serious threat to our country in my lifetime.

Yet the Conservative Party leadership contest shows they still haven't got it – and are even willing to make things worse. Enthusiastic talk of a No Deal Brexit? Of sending MPs home – proroguing Parliament – so MPs can't stop a No Deal? By people who want to be our country's Prime Minister? Whoever wins that leadership contest has to be stopped.

Yet we know Labour won't do it. Labour have aided and abetted the Tories every step of the way. Jeremy Corbyn demanded after the referendum that the Government should invoke Article 50 immediately and leave as soon as possible. Last week some Labour MPs even voted against a cross-party motion that could have enabled MPs to block a disastrous No Deal Brexit.

The Liberal Democrats are now the leaders of Remain.

Neither Labour nor the Conservatives can be trusted on Brexit.

Fortunately, the European Elections have heralded a dramatic realignment in British politics. Away from the Labour-Tory battles of the past, towards today's Remain-Leave battle. **And the Liberal Democrats are now the leaders of Remain.**

So our leadership contest – who is the Leader of the lead Remain Party – could not be more significant.

We need a Leader who understands the EU, who knows how to win and above all who is ready now to take on Boris Johnson, Nigel Farage and Jeremy Corbyn – and ready to become Prime Minister.

I have the CV for that task. And I'm ready for that task.

I have successfully negotiated in Government – indeed, across Europe, twice – on economic reform and on climate change. In fact, I've attended more EU Ministerial Councils in Brussels than any Liberal Democrat in history, during my 5 years as a Business Minister and Cabinet Minister.

My campaigning record over 20 years shows I know how to win – from winning my constituency when I wasn't even a target seat to my leading role in developing simple messages that connect with voters – from "Stop Brexit" to "a penny on income tax for education" [1991-2001] to "scrap council tax" [2003-05].

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stop Brexit, but stops the causes of Brexit.

And I have the ideas and vision to be a Prime Minister who doesn't just stop Brexit, but stops the causes of Brexit. From my detailed economic plan to invest in the communities left behind in the past – including massive investment in the regions and nations – to my proposals to tackle the Climate Emergency, we can have a substantial programme for Government.

The leadership to stop Brexit and renew our country is now down to the Liberal Democrats. I'm the Leader who can campaign so we win the right to perform that duty – and the person who is best placed to lead us in carrying out that historic task.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

Jo Swinson: a positive future for Britain

My number one priority as leader would be stopping Brexit. It should be the number one goal of everyone in our party.

It's why I've worked so hard as the leading Liberal Democrat in the People's Vote campaign to bring together a group of like-minded MPs who want to give the British people the final say.

It's why I work cross-party with MPs from all parties, and indeed none, to discuss how we can get the numbers in Parliament over the line.

It's why I campaigned up and down the country for local councillors and European candidates on a clear message to stop Brexit and was so proud of the excellent election results that you all worked so hard to deliver.

We have to give the people who have voted for us, many for the first time, because of our honest and principled Brexit stance, a reason to stick with us in the long-term.

But the question I also think the next leader of this party needs to answer is **when we've stopped Brexit, what next?** How do we take the energy, enthusiasm and support our Brexit stance has brought us and use it as a springboard to take us forward?

The cynics in the media constantly ask what will happen to our support when

Brexit is done. Will it simply evaporate and leave us back down at single digits in the polls? My answer is always the same. **We have to give the people who have voted for us, many for the first time, because of our honest and principled Brexit stance, a reason to stick with us in the long-term.**

And there are plenty of good reasons. **We only need to look at the other parties to see why a strong Liberal Democrat party is so vital.**

The man who is the favourite to be the next Prime Minister is the same man who compares Muslim women to letterboxes, and the leader of the opposition refuses to tackle vile, anti-semitic abuse in his own party. **There are millions of people who find those views abhorrent and are looking to us as the liberal voice in illiberal times.**

We only need to look at the other parties to see why a strong Liberal Democrat party is so vital.

I believe that our party can be the heart of a movement that says no to Brexit, but also paints a positive vision of the future beyond that fight.

A future where we take urgent action on the climate emergency, for example by investing much more in renewable energy and building zero-carbon homes; a future where we harness the technological revolution to make it work for us; and a future where we reshape our economic system so that it values wellbeing alongside GDP.

I want to lead the Liberal Democrats to stop Brexit. But movements are built not simply on being against something, but being for something as well. There is a huge opportunity at our fingertips to transform our society and our economy, and if we work together we can grasp it and take the party, and the country, forward. I hope you'll support me.

[Go to Source](#)

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