

Lib Dems table new law to compensate sewage sickness victims

The Liberal Democrats have tabled an amendment to the Victims and Prisoners Bill which would provide compensation to those who have suffered illness as a result of sewage in the waterways of England and Wales.

The new amendment comes in the wake of government statistics released on Friday, which found a sharp rise in the number of bathing water sites rated as "poor quality." The Bill comes before Parliament on Monday 4th December.

It would permit anyone who has suffered illness as a direct result of criminal conduct in relation to sewage to claim compensation. It would also ensure the government establishes a compensation scheme. It has been uncovered that water firms have discharged sewage illegally, including dry spills, where sewage is discharged despite no rainfall beforehand.

Conservative Ministers have let water firms get away with their destructive ways for far too long. There needs to be justice for victims of potential environmental crimes, especially swimmers and families simply wanting to enjoy beaches and lakes.



The amendment would cover the following, with the Liberal Democrats calling on water firms profits to fund the scheme:

- Provide for the payment of compensation to people who have become unwell as a result of bathing in water contaminated by sewage.
- Make provision in relation to the medical evidence required to support a claim for compensation under the regulations.

Water company CEOs are pocketing millions in bonuses whilst swimmers get sick. This cannot carry on. If someone is poisoned by sewage, they should be compensated for it.

With growing evidence of water firms committing illegal sewage spills and letting their sewage monitors remain broken, there is an overwhelming case to provide compensation for sickness.

The amendment follows a recent report by Surfers Against Sewage, which found between October 2022 and September 2023, a staggering 1,924 water users, including swimmers, reported getting ill after entering the water. This is triple the number reported in 2021/2022.

Water companies have dumped sewage for 7.5 million hours over the last three years, this including over 450,000 hours of dumps into England's designated bathing waters. Over the same period England's top water execs were paid £73 million, including £41 million in bonuses, benefits and incentives.

The Liberal Democrats have exposed the sewage scandal and will continue to stand up for the victims of this environmental catastrophe, this amendment will hold the Conservatives and water companies to account.

Stop Sewage Dumping

Tax water companies' huge profits and fix our sewage system.

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[Strip Johnson of allowance and bar him from future honours](#)

Boris Johnson was never fit to be Prime Minister. He should reap no benefits, in money or in honours, for the disgraceful way he behaved in office.

Rishi Sunak should strip Boris Johnson of his £115,000 a year ex-Prime Ministerial allowance and for the disgraced former PM to be barred from receiving future honours or a peerage.

Johnson's actions hampered our response to the pandemic and led to so much unnecessary suffering for so many. He will appear at the Covid inquiry next week.

I cannot imagine what it is like for the bereaved families to have to hear every day just how shambolic and callous Boris Johnson's government was during the pandemic."

Christine Jardine MP

The inquiry has already heard evidence that the response to the pandemic under Johnson's government was chaotic and filled with a callous disregard for the lives of the elderly.

Boris Johnson's former Chief of Staff, Lord Lister, told the inquiry that the ex-PM said "let the bodies pile high" when presented with the prospect of a circuit breaker lockdown in September 2020.

The least Rishi Sunak could do is strip Johnson of his six-figure yearly allowance and rule out rewarding him with an honour or peerage for his destructive time in Number 10."

Christine Jardine MP

General Election NOW

Join our calls for an immediate General Election.

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Government 25% below cancer treatment target as charity says 20,000 deaths a year avoidable

The latest NHS data has revealed that just 61.3% of cancer patients are starting treatment within 62-days. The government's target is 85%, which has not been met since 2015.

Cancer patients need to be seen as quickly as possible to give them the best chance of survival but the government's failure to meet this target is putting people's lives at risk.

The number of patients not beginning their treatment within 62-days has risen by nearly 1,000 to 17,166, up from 16,168 in the first quarter of the year. That represents a spike of over 6% of patients not starting their treatment within that time frame in just three months.



It comes as Cancer Research UK has said that at least 20,000 cancer deaths a year could be avoided in the UK with further action and the charity also said that the UK lags behind comparable countries for survival.

At every turn the Conservatives have pushed the NHS further into crisis: they've failed to recruit enough GPs, failed to recruit the cancer workforce we need and failed to ensure that everyone has access to the treatment they need.

The Liberal Democrats have set out proposals to invest an extra £4 billion in NHS cancer treatment over the next five years to deliver this plan and improve survival rates by the end of the next Parliament.

This plan includes a legal right to be given to all cancer patients to ensure they begin treatment within the 62-days, passing a Cancer Survival Act to ensure funding for research into the cancers with the lowest survival rates, and halting the closure of the National Cancer Research Institute.

Back Our Cancer Care Plan

Ed Davey has announced a new five-year plan to boost cancer survival rates.

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Author:

1 in 3 miss work while waiting for healthcare

A new poll, commissioned by the Liberal Democrats, has found that one in three working adults say they have missed work in the last year while waiting for a medical appointment or treatment on the NHS.

It's outrageous that so many patients have been left to suffer as a result of this Conservative Government's neglect. Thousands of people are waiting an appalling length of time to start treatment, with countless more desperately trying to get hold of their GP to no avail.

Over half of young adults say they've been forced to miss work in the past year due to soaring health waiting lists, including seeing GPs.

Rishi Sunak and Jeremy Hunt's failure to get a grip on the crisis in our NHS is having a detrimental effect on the entire country. Millions battling health conditions have been left in limbo and our economy is suffering as a result.

The impact of healthcare waits

The devastating poll reveals reasons for missing work in the past year include:

- One in five working adults say that they have been unable to go to work while waiting to see their GP.
- One in seven say they've had to take a significant length of time off work as they wait for NHS treatment or surgery for a health condition.
- Just over one in ten missed work while stuck waiting for an emergency dental appointment.

These treatment backlogs and an alarming shortage of GP appointments are damaging economic growth and will continue to impact both the economy and people's quality of life without a significant rescue package.

This Conservative Government cannot continue to turn a blind eye. It's clear that growth is not possible unless we first tackle the ever-growing NHS treatment and GP backlogs that are holding millions of people back and having a devastating impact on quality of life.



Liberal Democrats are calling on the Government to use the Autumn Statement to invest that extra £13bn into the NHS to deliver on a robust series of measures to support the health service through this winter and longer term.

This includes recruiting 8,000 more GPs, reversing Conservative cuts to vital public health services in local communities and funding 200 new radiotherapy machines.

Sunak removes NHS from top 5 pledges

Rishi Sunak has omitted the NHS from his newly-announced priorities.

By officially de-prioritising the NHS, Rishi Sunak has shown yet again just how out of touch he is.

The Prime Minister clearly doesn't care about the millions of people across the country on hospital waiting lists or the families and pensioners struggling to get appointments with a GP or dentist.

Shockingly, the Prime Minister doesn't even understand the link between a better health service and a stronger economy. Any strategy for economic growth must have a strategy for better healthcare, yet the Conservatives clearly don't understand that.

A GP guarantee

Back our plan make sure people can see their GP within a week, or within 24 hours if in urgent need.

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Transgender Day of Remembrance

Today is Trans Day of Remembrance – an important opportunity to remember those who have lost their lives to transphobia, and reflect on how we as a society can end this loss of life.

In decades past, the UK has led the world in advancing human equality for all LGBT+ people – with the Liberal Democrats playing a particularly key role in driving that forward.

But in recent years, progress has stalled and even gone backwards. I'm deeply concerned to see such a vulnerable group of people being dragged into a manufactured culture war.

We cannot forget the chilling impact this has on people's lives, either. Like the fact that last year, transphobic hate crimes in England and Wales hit a [record high](#). Or the heartbreaking [reality](#) that nine in ten young trans adults have had suicidal thoughts – a much higher proportion than the wider population.

Today, my thoughts are with everyone in the trans community who have already lost their lives. Like Brianna Ghey, a 16 year old trans girl who was tragically killed earlier this year. And Alice Litman, who had been waiting more than three years for gender-affirming healthcare when she passed.

Let me be clear – Liberal Democrats will always stand up for the rights of everyone in the LGBT+ community, including trans people.

There is still a long way to go to achieve true equality for the trans community, but Liberal Democrats will keep fighting. We owe it to Brianna, Alice and everyone else we have lost.

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