

Autumn Conference Update – back in-person!

Since Spring Conference, most members will have been focused on the Local Elections which took place in many parts of the country – and rightly so: the hard work has paid off, with some truly fantastic gains made from both the Conservatives and Labour. Particular mention should go to **our amazing Chief Steward at Conference, Mike Ross, who is now the Leader of Hull Council!** Massive congratulations to Mike and the whole team.

Yet, while the focus has of course been on the Locals, your Committee has also been hard at work reviewing member feedback from Spring Conference and planning for the Autumn.

I know so many of us are really looking forward to our **first in-person conference since 2019**. It's been three long years, and we've all been through the mill. The absence of the conference bar has been keenly felt, I know – and for some, so has the absence of Glee Club, the conference quiz, Alistair's whisky tastings (although the virtual ones during lockdown were also excellent)... the list goes on and on. For me and many other members of FCC first elected late in 2019, this will be the first in-person conference as a member of the Committee!

Yet, however much we all miss gathering every autumn at what is usually a south coast venue, one thing we have learnt during lockdown is that virtual conferences work. As a result, FCC was adamant that we had to provide **some form of hybrid attendance at this Autumn Conference**. Now, I'm not going to promise all bells and whistles: there are a large number of factors the Committee needs to consider, but one thing we are all united on is the desire to make sure as many people as possible can participate in our Conference.

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Author:

Lib Dems pick Sarah Dyke for Somerton and Frome

The Liberal Democrats have selected Cllr Sarah Dyke as their candidate for the Somerton and Frome constituency.

Sarah lives in the constituency and is from a Somerset farming family which can be traced back over 250 years to the local area. Sarah worked in the

agricultural industry and is Portfolio Holder for the Environment on South Somerset District Council where she is spearheading rewilding programmes, investment in electric vehicle charging points and the council's zero-carbon targets.

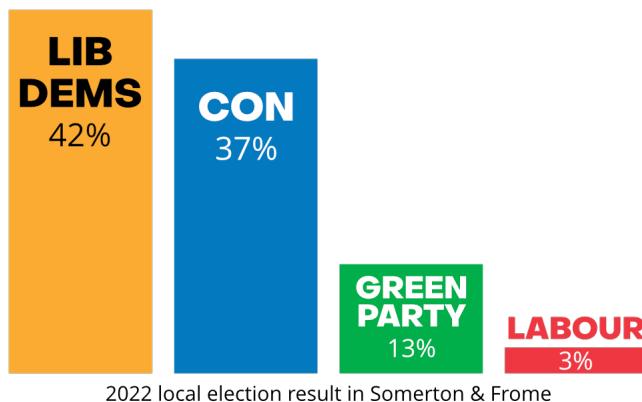
Last week Sarah was elected to Somerset County Council to represent Blackmoor Vale, beating the head of the Conservatives' dedicated anti-Lib Dem unit.

In Somerset, the head of the 'Lib Dem unit' at CCHQ has been defeated by, er, the Lib Dems <https://t.co/mKiTswrQLl>

– James Heale (@JAHeale) [May 6, 2022](#)

The Somerton and Frome election will be a **close two horse race** after the Liberal Democrats finished in a clear second in the seat at the last general election and this month gained control of Somerset County Council from the Conservatives.

The impressive results during the local elections saw the Liberal Democrats win 61 council seats across Somerset, almost double the number of Conservatives seats and with Labour in a distant third with just five seats. **The Liberal Democrats also won the popular vote in the Somerton and Frome constituency.**



Leader of the Liberal Democrats Ed Davey MP said:

"Sarah is a passionate campaigner who is determined to fight for a fair deal for communities across Somerton and Frome, who have been badly let down by the Conservative party.

"Sarah's track record of protecting the local environment and standing up for local farmers shows she would make an excellent MP.

"I have heard loud and clear from local people that they are fed up with being taken for granted by Boris Johnson's Conservative Government. There is real anger in Somerset at a Conservative Prime Minister who is hiking taxes on hard-working families and let GP waiting times spiral out of control.

"At the next election it will be a two horse race between Boris Johnson's

Conservative party and a committed local champion in Sarah Dyke.”

Liberal Democrat parliamentary candidate for Somerton and Frome Sarah Dyke said:

“I am delighted to have been selected and will fight for a fair deal for communities who have been ignored for too long by Conservative politicians.

“Villages and towns across Somerton and Frome have been taken for granted by the Conservative party. Our communities suffer from dangerously long waiting times to see a GP or NHS Dentist and disgusting sewage being dumped in our rivers.

“As someone from a farming family I understand the outrage at botched trade deals and the shambles over essential payments. I will stand up for our farmers who deserve a strong voice for them in Westminster.

“Local people voted for change when the Conservatives were ousted from Somerset County Council and it will be a two horse race to win Somerton and Frome at the next election.”

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Author:

Lib Dems win in local elections

Liberal Democrats won right across the country in May’s local elections with successes from the Scottish Highlands to Somerset, from Kingston-Upon-Thames to Kingston-Upon-Hull, from Powys to St Albans.

Liberal Democrats elected 868 Councillors, a net gain of 224!

We are winning again because we are listening to people. Because we hear their concerns and their frustration. Because we are standing up for our values, standing up for our communities, and fighting for a fair deal.

The great British people deserve so much better than this law-breaking Prime Minister and his out-of-touch Conservative Government.

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Author:

A brilliant set of election results

We're winning

What an amazing outcome from this May's local elections:

- **Three more Liberal Democrat majority councils**, taking us back to where we were before going into Coalition in 2010;
- A **net gain of 224 councillors**, making this the fourth set of net gains in a row, something we've not achieved since the Iraq war;
- **19% vote share** (the national equivalent vote share, i.e. what it would have been if there were elections everywhere); and
- The lovely bonus of seeing our sister party in Northern Ireland, Alliance, **gaining seats and votes** to move up to such an impressive third place.

Our successes weren't just handed to us. They happened because of a huge amount of hard work, smart campaigning and dedication over a long period of time. **Thank you to everyone who made that happen** – and to their families and friends for supporting them through it.

Before going into the details, thanks and sympathies for those who weren't successful this time. Missing out on winning never feels great, but it can be even tougher when others around you are celebrating. So thank you to everyone who tried and didn't make it this time. I hope that our successes elsewhere help give you confidence that we can bounce back in your patch too.

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Author:

Federal Board, ask us anything

The Federal Board will be holding another surgery, a chance to come along and ask us your questions, on Monday 16th of May. [You can register to join us here!](#)

Interested in our plans for Tiverton and Honiton? Want to know drove success in the Local Elections? Have an idea for how we can improve? This is an opportunity to talk to us.

The surgery will run from 19:30-20:30, May 16th, don't forget to [register](#).

If you can't make it, or would rather get in touch privately, please let me know by [contacting me at president@libdems.org.uk](mailto:president@libdems.org.uk).

And in the meantime, why not check out [ways to get involved](#) in our campaigns.

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Author: