

# Getting our technology and tools right: get in the know.

Campaign Technology is one of the most important things for the Liberal Democrats to get right.

Whether it's canvassing apps, websites or even data entry, **we can't campaign effectively without the right tools and the right data.**

Over the last 18 months, the LDHQ technology team has been reviewing our data, technology and tools. We've also been gathering feedback from the people who use them to help us understand where the problems are at the moment.

That process has identified a number of problems with our current setup, including:

- We aren't getting value for money from our campaigning technology
- Our data quality is low and it is scattered across multiple systems
- Our websites are expensive, hard to maintain and out of date
- We can't give volunteers easy and high-quality information on how their teams are doing and their campaigns are going
- Our tools aren't easy for activists to use

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## Vice Presidential Election 2021 Declaration

**Amna Ahmad has been elected and will take up the role of Vice President responsible for working with ethnic minority communities.**

Thank you to [Amna and all of the candidates](#) for taking part in the election. The [results can be found in full here](#).

As this was a by-election, **Amna's term will run until January 2023.**

### **More about Amna**

Amna was born in Lahore, Pakistan, and grew up on a council estate in London where she experienced the foster care system. She has a track record as a candidate for the Party, including a 2017 Westminster target seat campaign,

and was our Shadow Refugee Minister that year.

She is a regular contributor to BBC Asian Network and has appeared in The Guardian, the Evening Standard, ITV News, and the BBC, amongst others. Professionally she is a campaigner working in healthcare policy.

Her [manifesto for the election](#) was clear:

“Time and time again, we hear that the reality of what ethnic minorities face in our party and in our politics does not match up to the principles we hold, and, as a party committed to equality, it is vital that we apply our values and make a change. I will provide the positive vision and leadership we need to move forward and make that happen.

As a former Lib Dem Parliamentary candidate, I have seen prejudice close-up, within British politics and, sadly, within our party. And I know that I’m not the only one. My experience led me to take time to reflect and then, at Harvard, I learnt from world leaders on race equality, collaborative working, and leadership. I want to translate my experience and learning into change for our party in the UK. As a starting point, we must implement the Alderdice Review recommendations.”

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## [Why we need more council candidates](#)

When we debate party policy, strategy or election tactics, questions about what might attract or put off voters often – and rightly – come up. But there’s one sure-fire, 100% guaranteed, rock-solid way of repelling voters from us, and it’s one we use far too often. It’s not having a Liberal Democrat on the ballot paper. Zero votes for the party guaranteed.

Both Labour and the Conservatives, for example, get very close now to having a full slate of candidates in local elections. Despite improvements in recent years, we are still lagging a long way behind, and not yet back to where we used to be. **So we know we can do better – because we have.**

Even in wards where multiple seats are up for election and where we stand someone but not a full slate it is still a problem – as we’re still forcing people to vote for someone other than us.

With the important exception of STV elections in Scotland, of course, where the way the voting system works means standing 'too many' candidates harms our election chances in a way that doesn't happen under first past the post. So in Scotland, it's at least one candidate in each ward that's the equivalent of the full slates we should be aiming for elsewhere.

Of the council seats coming up in May, we fought 63% of them in England and Wales last time out, and we had at least one candidate in 73% of Scottish wards. Those numbers are on the up – but still short of where we want to be. Remember – every single voter gets a ballot paper, showing them whether we are standing or not.

**Standing candidates isn't only about credibility and relevance. It's also the way to get more people into the habit of regularly voting for the Liberal Democrats** – a crucial step in building the sort of larger core vote for the party that will help us succeed more often.

And you never quite know when putting up more candidates, or failing to do so, will turn out to be rather more important than you thought at that election.

That after all is just what happened in **North Shropshire**. Back in spring 2021, the **local party successfully put great effort into increasing its number of candidates**. Then when an unexpected Parliamentary by-election took place, that **boost in our local credibility – and the improved bar chart it provided – was vital for Helen Morgan's campaign**. A clear cut case of us making our own luck.

Where our candidate numbers have increased in the last few years, it's notable that this has happened across the board – from weaker local parties through to the strongest. So whatever your local situation, if you have elections coming up this May, let's all do our best to make it a record-breaking one for the number of candidates.

There's [a great video from Daisy Cooper about how to find candidates here](#) and there is also [Lighthouse training that shows you how to make use of its data to find more candidates](#) (scroll down to 'managing candidates & selections'). ALDC also has an [approval and selection toolkit](#) to help.

**Good luck with your candidate numbers and let's make this May a record-breaking one for the party.**

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# WATCH: Britain needs a party prepared to listen

Boris Johnson's failure to defend our children's education meant that his Government spent the same amount in one month on Eat Out To Help Out as in a whole year for our children's school catch-up.

Imagine a future where our children's education is a priority. Where schools raise their mental well-being and their maths grades. Where they can excel at English and find their talent for music or sport. Where they grow into happy, healthy, adults.

We all fear that in the end, it will be our children who have paid the price of this pandemic."

Ed Davey

The Liberal Democrats are calling for a £15 billion package of education catch-up funding, as recommended by the Government's former Education Recovery Commissioner, Sir Kevan Collins.

As part of this, the party is calling for a £5 billion programme of Catch-Up Vouchers for every school child, putting the money directly into parents' hands to spend on whatever their children need most: tutoring in reading, writing or maths; music lessons; swimming classes or other physical education.

We heard that loud and clear on the doorsteps of Chesham and Amersham and North Shropshire. They told us that too often this Government hasn't listened, has taken people for granted, has ignored the people who work hard, and pay taxes.

**When we won the Chesham and Amersham and North Shropshire by-elections, people told us Boris Johnson was taking them for granted. They told us they'd finally been listened to.** Britain needs a party prepared to listen.

It is time Boris Johnson's Conservatives stopped taking people for granted, time people got a fairer deal, time we guaranteed a better life for future generations.

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# [Spring Conference motion selection 2022](#)

The Federal Conference Committee (FCC) met on Saturday, 15th January to start its work on the **final agenda for Spring 2022 Conference**, which will be taking place virtually via the Hopin platform.

**If you haven't yet registered for Conference, I would recommend doing so [here](#).**

We've had a few departures from the FCC in the last few months and [welcomed two new members](#). Jennie Rigg ceased being the English Party's Representative to the FCC and Jenni Lang stepped down as the Scottish Party Representative after becoming the Convenor of the Scottish Liberal Democrats. I would like to place on record our thanks for their service to the FCC, they will be missed, and we would like to wish them all the very best for the future. We welcomed Matt McLaren as our new English Party Rep and Paul McGarry as our new Scottish Party Rep to the committee.

**The FCC wants to thank the Conference Office for the amazing work that they do.** We are always so grateful to them for their hard work.

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