

Conference in 2022

The Federal Conference Committee recently met to discuss the Conference format for 2022.

We considered a number of options for next year's conferences and **took the difficult decision to hold Spring Conference as an online conference and only returning to an in-person event for Autumn Conference**. The dates of **Spring Conference will be 11-13 March 2022** and we will announce the dates and venue for Autumn Conference in due course.

The Committee discussed several options with regards to the format of Spring Conference and, whilst there was a strong desire within the Committee to return to in person meetings and events as soon as possible, our challenge was that the COVID situation remains uncertain and therefore still causes significant concern. While we are seeing more in person events happening, we have also seen the Welsh Labour conference in November cancelled due to COVID concerns.

If we had taken the decision to hold an in person Spring Conference, this would have taken place in York – a venue which we usually operate at full capacity. Enforcing social distancing and COVID measures would therefore have been extremely difficult with the potential number of attendees. Furthermore, the danger that a large number of people may not have felt safe attending a crowded in person event meant there was a significant risk of a drop in the number of members attending Conference.

As a party we are very reliant on revenue from registrations to make Spring Conference financially viable. The risk of a significant shortfall in revenue, coupled with the potential loss had we been we forced to cancel the event at a later date, meant the committee had to take the very hard decision to continue with an online conference format for Spring 2022.

That said, the **Committee strongly felt that this should be the final online-only conference**, if at all possible. For that reason, the Committee **strongly endorsed holding an Autumn Conference in person next year**.

We have also **established a Hybrid Working Group to look at the options for hybridisation of Conference** and to take forward some of the better elements from an online conference, including greater accessibility and wider participation for people who would not normally be able to attend conference. While we were not confident this could be implemented in time for Spring Conference, **we are committed to finding a solution which works for Autumn Conference 2022 and beyond**.

Finally, **we strongly welcome any local or regional parties who might be interested in organising in-person events in their areas to coincide with Spring Conference**. There were a number of successful in-person events which took place on the fringe of this year's Autumn Conference and the Committee would welcome this being replicated and expanded for Spring Conference 2022.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

[Federal Board Surgery](#)

On **Monday 18th of October** the Board will be hosting a surgery for all Party members.

This is an open invitation to everyone, whether you have a burning question for us, would just like to get to know the Board a bit better, or have an issue you'd like to raise. **We are all ears.**

The session will run from **18:00-19:00**, please feel free to drop in and out as best fits your day, and [you can register here](#).

There will also be a breakout room facility, if you would like to have a more private chat with one of us.

Joining me on the day will be Board Colleagues Caron Lindsay from Scotland and Bill Powell from Wales. If this trial is a success more colleagues from the Board will be taking part in future events.

In the meantime, if you ever have any questions for me please feel free to reach out at president@libdems.org.uk.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

[Brand new: candidate letterhead bulk buy](#)

As seats begin to elect new Parliamentary election candidates, now's the time to get your stationary stocked up.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

Vice Presidential Election 2021!

This Autumn, we say **goodbye to Isabelle Parasram**, our Vice President responsible for working with ethnic minority communities.

Isabelle has been a tremendous advocate, leader and example in the Party and she will be greatly missed. We wish her all the best in her new role as Chief Executive of Social Value UK, which has led to her making the difficult decision to step back from the demands of the Vice Presidential role.

What comes next?

Autumn Conference passed a business [motion](#) finalising arrangements for the direct election of this Vice President role, and we are delighted to be firing the starting gun next week.

The **timetable for the election is below**, the rules are available in [our Constitution](#) and the Returning Officer's team will issue more detailed instructions to anyone expressing an interest in the role. With nominations opening next week, **why not consider encouraging someone to put their name forward?**

Anyone interested in running to be Vice President should submit their consent to [nomination here](#) (that link will become usable from Monday October 11th). Anyone who signals their consent to nomination will be contacted by the Returning Officer's team and provided with further information about the election process.

Candidates require the nomination of no fewer than 200 members across no fewer than 20 local parties (for this purpose including the Young Liberals). Members wishing to nominate require a nomination code, [available on request here](#) (that link will become usable from Monday October 11th) Anyone wishing to send a paper nomination should contact elections@libdems.org.uk.

Will there be hustings?

Yes! Hustings are being coordinated centrally by the Returning Officer's team and a full slate of events will be publicised by the close of nominations. Candidates will only be required to attend the eight official hustings sanctioned but other events will also be taking place.

If you would like to **organise an official hustings**, please [make your application here](#), and the Returning Officer's team will consider it. We cannot guarantee that your application will be selected as we expect high demand.

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

[Latest from our Campaigns and Elections Committee](#)

The Federal Communications and Elections Committee met this week to discuss some key challenges and opportunities ahead for the Party.

Campaign innovation

The Campaign Innovation Fund team, supported by ALDC and others, presented to us on the results of a set of experiments conducted to **test what does, and doesn't, help us win campaigns.**

The work is impressive and, alongside the wider literature, feedback from activists, and experience of our committee members, serves to help us make **evidence-based campaign decisions.**

A few highlights we should all note:

- When we mail out surveys the data suggests that there is a noticeable increase in returns where the accompanying letter is handwritten to where it is mail merged. The extra effort of writing the letter can therefore boost our data collection;
- Where we haven't the capacity to knock on doors to recruit postal voters letters alone have a limited effect, but when combined with a follow-up letter they really do seem to drive recruitment;
- Facebook ads with well designed graphics can be more effective at driving engagement than ones with group photos.

The fund will be continuing its work next year and we look forward to its findings.

By-elections

We never get tired of talking about our **amazing win in Chesham and Amersham**, but the Committee is also attentive to the lessons that can be learned from all of our by-election experiences.

With Dave McCobb, Director of Field, presenting we discussed a range of issues, including how we communicate our objectives in such elections and how we effectively work across teams.

Of particular importance to the Party is making sure we have skilled Election Agents. **Being an election agent is an important and rewarding role and we need great agents if our candidates are to win.** If you're interested in

getting more involved in elections, [why not find out if this is a role for you?](#)

[Go to Source](#)

Author: