

# Ed Davey's conference speech – in full

**Conference, our country needs us.**

Our country needs the Liberal Democrats, fighting harder for a better future and a fair deal.

Because after five years of Brexit division and disruption –

And eighteen months of this awful pandemic –

**Boris Johnson's Conservative Government is steering us all into another terrible crisis.**

Shoppers greeted by empty shelves in the supermarket.

House building stopped for a lack of materials.

Pubs running dry.

Fears that there won't even be enough toys or turkeys for Christmas.

It's enough to make you need to go and lie down – **but we're even facing a shortage of mattresses!**

The reasons are clear. There aren't enough lorry drivers.

Or enough people to work on our farms and provide our food.

Thanks to the Conservatives our country is hurtling towards a cliff edge, with a Prime Minister asleep at the wheel. Again.

Not enough staff for our pubs, restaurants and hotels as they try to recover from the pandemic.

From farms to factories, from an energy crisis to a food crisis.

Thanks to the Conservatives our country is hurtling towards a cliff edge, with a Prime Minister asleep at the wheel. Again.

**The Conservatives ignored all the warnings – from us and from the experts.**

They blundered ahead with their dreadful EU trade deal and their disastrous new immigration rules –

Hitting British businesses with extra costs. Strangling our economy with red tape – right in the middle of a pandemic!

And having ignored all the warnings, they are in total denial.

Well now, the Government's chickens are coming home to roost. Or they would

be if they could only get the visas!

To be fair, this is one time Boris Johnson has actually delivered...

He said he wanted to “F- business”, and he has well and truly F-ed them.

Of course, the last few months haven’t been all bad.

There was England’s incredible journey to that final at Wembley, with the whole nation behind them.

Team GB winning a phenomenal 189 medals in Tokyo.

The fantastic Emma Raducanu, becoming the first-ever qualifier to win a Grand Slam singles final, just weeks after getting her A-Level results.

**And, of course, our remarkable by-election victory in Chesham and Amersham!**

People are not convinced the Prime Minister is competent – or worse still, decent.

From the start of that campaign, right through until polling day, the Tories kept telling us we didn’t stand a chance.

No matter how well we’d done in the local elections just a month before, no matter what people were telling us on the doorsteps –

Tory high command took the people of Chesham and Amersham for granted.

**They even sent Boris Johnson for a victory photo op with their candidate... ten days before polls opened.**

That’s how convinced the Conservatives were that no one could beat them in Blue-Wall Buckinghamshire.

But they hadn’t counted on our brilliant candidate –

A determined campaigner and a powerful voice for her constituents –

Now the Member of Parliament for Chesham and Amersham –

Sarah Green.

And the Tories hadn’t counted on the incredible skill and determination of our campaign team.

They hadn’t counted on all of you.

The way so many hundreds of you came to Chesham and Amersham to make sure local people knew they had a real choice:

That they didn’t have to settle for being just another brick in the Blue Wall.

They could have a Liberal Democrat who would listen to them, work hard for them, and be their local champion. And all they needed to do was vote for her.

And they did.

And together with us, the people of Chesham and Amersham may have achieved what we said they could: the withdrawal of Conservative plans to silence communities over planning and development.

But there was one more crucial ingredient that the Tories missed in Chesham and Amersham.

An ingredient that made our defeat of the planning reforms and Sarah's historic victory possible.

**And that's the groundswell of frustration and discontent from people who feel ignored and taken for granted by this Conservative Government.**

We heard it loud and clear on the doorsteps. In the high streets. In the cafés. From people who had voted Conservative all their lives, but now feel completely let down. Betrayed.

We work hard and pay our fair share in taxes, they said. We play our part in the community. Do our bit for the environment.

So why can't we afford decent childcare?

**Why are our roads still full of potholes?**

Why do our parents face exorbitant care bills and still not get the care they need?

It's the same frustration I've been hearing for months now from families and businesses across the UK, but especially from traditionally Conservative voters along the Blue Wall.

They just don't feel that Boris Johnson represents them. Or shares their values. They're not convinced the Prime Minister is competent – or worse still, decent.

"A person's true nature is revealed at times of the greatest adversity", the saying goes.

Well – these last eighteen months have been full of adversity for us all. From families separated to businesses closed. From education stalled to loved ones lost.

**And the British people have shown their true nature in the face of this adversity – in their courage and their kindness.**

The British people have shown their true nature in the face of this adversity – in their courage and their kindness.

The bravery of NHS and care workers. The resilience of frontline workers.

Everyone who kept to the rules and made enormous personal sacrifices – to protect others, to look after their kids and to save their businesses.

So many people fighting back against Covid. **You all make me so proud of our country.**

But then there's the Prime Minister. And his Cabinet.

Revealing their true nature in this time of great adversity.

You know, I honestly wanted to be surprised. With the enormity of the challenge facing our country, I hoped against hope that Boris Johnson would show he cared about other people after all.

That – unlikely though it seemed – he would step up and lead us responsibly through the crisis.

I offered our help, working constructively across parties to support decisions based on scientific evidence and expert advice.

But sadly, the terrible adversity of this pandemic has indeed revealed this Government's true nature. And it is not a pretty picture.

Just look around the freshly-reshuffled Cabinet table...

The Chancellor. **Who is cruelly cutting the incomes of millions of low-paid workers by slashing Universal Credit.**

The terrible adversity of this pandemic has indeed revealed this Government's true nature. And it is not a pretty picture.

Who used Covid as an excuse to slash four billion pounds from the help we give to the world's poorest people, during a global pandemic.

And a Chancellor who refused to help our children recover their lost learning – refusing them the catch-up funding they and their schools need. **Giving them just one tenth – one tenth – of what the Government's own adviser said our children need.**

And it gets worse.

Priti Patel. Somehow still the Home Secretary.

You know, she's had the Border Force on high alert all week. Apparently, she heard reports of a half-Romanian, half-Chinese immigrant – with a dangerous serve – trying to get back into the country.

**Priti Patel thinks it's OK to turn her back on refugees, against our country's proud tradition of providing sanctuary to people in need.**

OK to press ahead with her draconian plans to crackdown on the fundamental British right to peaceful assembly and protest.

**And Priti Patel thinks it's OK to give a real-terms pay cut to tens of thousands of brave police officers.**

A Tory pay cut for officers on the frontline of the fight against Covid, who've been putting themselves at risk to keep us safe. What a disgrace.

And then there's Dominic Raab.

Who did such a wonderful job as Foreign Secretary that Boris Johnson has promoted him to Deputy Prime Minister, Lord Chancellor and Secretary of State for Justice.

I understand Raab accepted on the basis that three jobs would come with three times the holiday entitlement.

Dominic Raab sat on the beach while Afghanistan fell to the Taliban.

Dominic Raab sat on the beach while Afghanistan fell to the Taliban. **He wouldn't even pick up the phone to get interpreters to safety.**

Afghan nationals who had served so bravely alongside our troops for the last twenty years, let down and left behind so Dominic Raab could work on his tan.

Wherever you look in this shocking Government, the truth is, that over the last few years **Boris Johnson has remade the Conservative Party in his own image. And it is an ugly, ugly sight.**

Behaviour that would get most people fired from their jobs... In Boris Johnson's Government, it makes you Employee of the Month.

His casual disregard for facts or truth.

His trail of broken promises, from "No border in the Irish Sea" to "No tax rise".

His kneejerk response of "say anything, do nothing, and take absolutely no responsibility whatsoever".

And his total lack of shame or decency.

Boris Johnson has remade the Conservative Party in his own image. And it is an ugly, ugly sight.

Boris Johnson is not a Prime Minister worthy of our great United Kingdom.

**His Conservatives are not a Government worthy of the British people.**

This Prime Minister and these Conservatives have got to go.

Now, I hear Boris Johnson wants to bring back imperial measurements.

**Well, I don't care if Boris Johnson is a million kilometres away from Downing Street or a million miles away. We just need him out.**

So how do we do it?

My first job in our party was working for our dear friend Paddy Ashdown. Our much-missed former leader.

I'd like to tell you what he'd be saying now about Boris Johnson – although I don't think I'm allowed to use those words on daytime TV.

But I can remind you of what he said twenty-nine years ago, in the aftermath of a General Election that left another tired and divisive Conservative government in power.

Paddy gave us our mission:

**"Our role," he said, "is to be the catalyst, the gathering point for a broader movement dedicated to winning the battle of ideas which will give Britain an electable alternative to Conservative government."**

Friends – **Paddy was right.**

That was the role of the Liberal Democrats then. And it is the role of the Liberal Democrats today.

We must be the gathering point for everyone fed up with the indecency and incompetence of this Conservative government.

**Make no mistake: the electoral arithmetic is clear. These Conservatives can't be defeated next time unless we Liberal Democrats win Tory seats.**

Boris Johnson will stay in Downing Street unless we throw him out.

This is a heavy responsibility – but frankly it's all the motivation I need!

And I know it's all the motivation you need too.

It's why our victory in Chesham and Amersham was so important.

**We showed – against all the odds – that even in deepest, bluest Buckinghamshire the Tories can be beaten.**

**And we showed Liberal Democrats are the ones to do it.**

The electoral arithmetic is clear. These Conservatives can't be defeated next time unless we Liberal Democrats win Tory seats.

We did it by listening to people. By understanding their concerns. By showing that Sarah could be their champion in Westminster.

And yes, we worked quite hard too.

In fact, the Tory candidate complained that we worked too hard.

He said we won by throwing the kitchen sink at it. So Conference, before the next election we're stocking up on kitchen sinks!

Because we're going to do it again, right across the UK.

Knocking down the Blue Wall –

In Cambridgeshire and the Cotswolds –

Stockport and Surrey –

Hampshire and Hertfordshire –

**Everywhere the Conservatives have taken people for granted.**

Winning seats from Labour, where their councils have taken people for granted.

Winning in Wales, where Jane Dodds is a bold independent voice for jobs, environment and young people.

And not least in Scotland – where our liberal opposition to nationalism can make all the difference between the break-up of our country or its salvation.

And where we have a superb new leader in Alex Cole-Hamilton, picking up the baton from the brilliant Willie Rennie and breathing new hope into Scottish politics.

With nationalists in Government in Scotland and in England, getting more Liberal Democrats elected to stand up for our Union – for our family of nations – has never been more crucial.

And as we worked tirelessly to repeat victories like Chesham and Amersham, let's not forget Paddy's advice – to **focus on the battle of ideas**.

We must show people we have the new bold ideas our country needs.

We must rediscover the self-confidence of the Liberal giants who brought our country everything from the state pension to our brilliant NHS.

Liberals who shaped twentieth-century Britain, from Lloyd George to William Beveridge and Shirley Williams.

And before I come to those ideas let me just say a few words about our wonderful Shirley, one of the founders of our party and a giant of half a

century of British politics.

Shirley was at once a wonderful human being and an unstoppable force of nature.

As I'm sure so many of you experienced first-hand, it was always a joy to be around Shirley. whether she was offering wise counsel, persuading you with a forceful argument, or making you laugh with another of her captivating anecdotes.

I always loved campaigning with Shirley.

She connected to people – in a deep and personal way. She truly cared about their lives, and about making them better.

“Politics is for People” was the title of Shirley's first book.

And whether it was expanding education here in the UK or tirelessly campaigning for peace around the world, she never lost touch with the people and communities who drove her political fight.

For Shirley – and for all great Social Democrats, Liberals and Liberal Democrats – their winning ideas began with a focus on making people more powerful and holding the already powerful to account.

And that, my friends, remains the Liberal Democrat calling and purpose today.

**People don't expect Government to magically solve all of their problems.**

They don't want a free ride. They don't expect life always to be easy.

But what they do want – what they rightly expect – is a Government that empowers them.

A Government that enables them to take on the challenges they face.

In getting the best education for their children.

In growing their small business to create jobs and opportunity.

In getting the best possible care for their loved ones.

**Liberal Democrats believe in powerful citizens.**

Liberal Democrats believe in powerful citizens.

If you want to do your bit – for your family, your community or your country – we want to help you. To put meaningful power in your hands. To give you the control and opportunity you deserve.

And Liberal Democrats want to hold the already powerful properly to account.

The global tech giants and big property developers. The fossil fuel companies and the investment banks.

We all have to play by the rules, and do what's right – so why don't they?

People are sick and tired of the Conservatives making the powerful even more powerful – rigging the game for their friends.

People are sick and tired of the Conservatives making the powerful even more powerful – rigging the game for their friends.

Creating special VIP-lanes for Tory donors to get juicy taxpayer-funded contracts – **while excluding three million self-employed people from basic Covid support.**

The Tories, taking millions in donations from property developers and writing new laws so those same developers could ignore you and your community.

Tory Ministers doing special favours for their mates, while dodging accountability for their own actions.

**And a Prime Minister who will do anything and say anything for a donation or a vote – except take responsibility for his industrial-scale deceptions.**

It's time this abuse of power was stopped.

It's time for a Government that's decent.

It's time these powerful people were held to account.

I've always believed a healthy democracy and prosperous economy was essentially a contract or a deal, between the government and the people.

A fair deal.

If you do your bit, if you play by the rules –

You should be able to afford a decent home in a safe, clean neighbourhood – with a comfortable retirement when the time comes.

Your children should be able to go to a good school, get a good job, and have real opportunities to fulfil their potential.

You should be able to know that if anyone in your family is ill, frail or disabled, they will get the high-quality health and social care they need.

A contract of fairness – where the rules are the same for everyone, no matter how wealthy or well-connected.

It's time for a Government that's decent.

Not one rule for you, and another rule for them.

But that deal – that fair deal – has been shattered by this Government. And by this Prime Minister.

The fair deal that should be a hallmark of a modern democracy is being torn up.

I want our party to restore the British fair deal – and to make it even better.

And I want us to start with families – with parents and children.

Parents never stop fighting for a fair deal for their children.

As we've seen through the pandemic, parents will sacrifice so much. Parents will pour endless love and devotion into the dreams they have for their children.

Even when the struggle is made much tougher – when a parent dies or a child has special needs and disabilities – believe me, parents never stop striving for opportunities for their children.

**And Liberal Democrats must be there. To help every parent. To help them help their children.**

Liberal Democrats must be there. To help every parent. To help them help their children.

Our party, the party of empowering people, must make supporting parents and children our top priority in the new fair deal we offer.

My thinking on this has developed due to Covid.

Pandemic parenting has been tough for so many of us. As I struggled to help my seven-year-old daughter with her writing, my respect for teachers grew and grew.

But reading with her and listening to her, I still felt more involved with her education than ever before.

And I believe Covid should mark a watershed in how we educate our children and young people.

And I'm not talking about online learning. I'm talking about parents' involvement with their children's education.

It's something we all know: children do better when their parents are interested in their education.

That's why I want to argue not just for a massive education catch-up fund – which our schools desperately need – but also for a radical new role for

parents.

A massive Covid education catch-up plan is urgent.

If we are to reverse children's lost learning and if we are to repair lockdowns' impact on children's mental health, Ministers should implement in full what their own catch-up expert recommended – with a Children's Catch Up Fund of at least fifteen billion pounds.

But we must start with two major reforms – so this Education Catch-Up Cash is well-spent and so it is used to fire up a fresh direction for education.

First, schools should be free to spend their Covid cash as they see best.

**Headteachers and teachers know their pupils better than Tory Ministers ever will. The Government must stop micromanaging schools and wasting money.**

Headteachers and teachers know their pupils better than Tory Ministers ever will. The Government must stop micromanaging schools and wasting money.

Liberal Democrats have been the party of education – and we must be the party of education again. And we must invest and trust in our nurseries, our schools, our colleges and our universities again.

And the second reform: **a third of the Education Catch-Up Fund should go to parents directly – in the most radical empowering of parents ever.**

Parents should get Catch-Up Vouchers to spend on what they want for their child's education.

Parents could choose to spend it with their child's own school – on an after-school homework club, on one-to-one tuition, on special extra-curricular activities from sports to music lessons, provided for that child by their school.

Or parents could choose to spend it on tuition they organise. Or with a music teacher they find. Or on therapy and counselling.

As long as it was supporting the education and well-being of their child, it would be the parents' choice.

A third of the Education Catch-Up Fund should go to parents directly – in the most radical empowering of parents ever.

Our idea of a three-year programme of education Catch-Up Vouchers would become the world's biggest-ever parent-listening exercise.

Where schools and Governments have to listen to parents.

Many schools already do a great job engaging with their parents, and will win their parents' vouchers easily.

But where schools haven't engaged, or where others offer a better deal for that child, then parents will have the power, will have the cash, to choose what's best for their child.

And let me make one more point on this idea because for many people like myself it is the most important.

There are children and young people who don't have a parent who cares for them. Who don't have a lifelong guardian or who don't live with a close, loving family member.

**As someone who lost both my parents as a child, I will never forget children and young people who don't have someone close.**

As someone who lost both my parents as a child, I will never forget children and young people who don't have someone close.

Now I was super lucky. Even though my parents died, I had an amazing, close family – especially my brothers and my Nanna and Grandad, so I wouldn't have needed special help.

But when I think of children and young people in care – when I think of children of parents who aren't able to care for them, for whatever reason – my heart goes out to them. And I'm sure yours does too.

Because as Liberal Democrats, we want the best for every child. They are all our concern.

So when I talk of a new Liberal Democrat parent revolution, for the education and opportunities of our children, with vouchers and choice, let me be crystal clear:

The extra support of our Catch-Up Vouchers would be doubled and in some cases tripled, for children in care, for disadvantaged children, and for those with special educational needs.

From the party that empowered children and schools with the Pupil Premium, our Catch-Up Vouchers would empower the most disadvantaged children now.

You know, conference, I didn't think it would be possible to find a worse Education Secretary than Michael Gove.

As Liberal Democrats, we want the best for every child. They are all our concern.

But somehow, Boris Johnson did.

As parents and schools have worked our socks off for children throughout the pandemic, what on earth was Gavin Williamson doing?

**Chaos has reigned. Last-minute changes have left schools and parents scratching their heads in disbelief.**

Disbelief that a Minister could be so hopeless – and disbelief that it took so long for him to be sacked.

Gavin Williamson and the Conservatives don't listen to parents. We must.

If parents want a fair deal for their children's education, and for the education of all children in our country –

From a political party that cares, has proven it cares, and has exciting new ideas for their children and their schools –

Let it be the Liberal Democrats they look to for the future of education.

**In my first speech as Leader, I promised to be the voice of carers.**

So as I sat in the House of Commons listening to Boris Johnson bluster away about his so-called social care plan –

Which amounts to little more than an unfair tax rise for workers and businesses –

I thought of the hundreds of carers I have spoken to over the last year.

I thought of the millions of people across the country who at that very moment were making big sacrifices, struggling to make ends meet, and feeling utterly exhausted as they do all they can to look after their loved ones.

I thought of my mum, my nanna and my son John – and all those who the Prime Minister has let down.

And I felt angry.

**Because as carers, we know that Johnson's claim to have fixed the crisis in social care is just another of his broken promises.**

Johnson's claim to have fixed the crisis in social care is just another of his broken promises.

We know his plan won't ensure our loved ones get the quality care they need.

We know it completely fails to tackle problem number one: the dangerous shortage of care staff.

**Care staff who the Home Secretary dismisses as "unskilled".**

Care staff who the Conservatives are hitting with their unfair National

Insurance tax hike, and their heartless Universal Credit cuts.

The Conservatives' social care plan is so perverse, it will actually make the shortage of carers worse.

So Conference, **let Liberal Democrats be the party that solves the care staff crisis.**

Let's offer a fair deal where everyone gets the quality care they need.

And a fair deal that empowers their carers.

By giving unpaid carers – and the people they care for – their own care budget.

Giving people control over the care they get.

Control over who is the carer.

Control over when they get the care.

And when the family carer gets a break.

Conference, it's obvious to everyone now: **Boris Johnson doesn't care.**

It's obvious to everyone now: Boris Johnson doesn't care.

**Let's show it's Liberal Democrats who do.**

Now to deliver our fair deal, we need to get our economy growing again – strongly and sustainably.

To create the jobs and opportunities people deserve, and to fund our ambitious policies.

And that means supporting small businesses.

Like the brewery I visited in Sunderland, who have innovated their way through the pandemic pub closures –

Offering brewing masterclasses, giving virtual brewing tours –

Creating good jobs for young people in the North East –

And serving up a very drinkable Brown Ale too, I might add.

Like the zero-waste shop in Romsey –

Where I got to make my own peanut butter –

A shop run by young people, serving their community and helping to protect our planet too.

There are millions of small businesses across the UK –

Creating new jobs.

Generating new ideas.

Competing with the big multinationals and giving consumers real choice.

These are the businesses that are so fundamental to our local economies, our communities and our high streets.

Of course, **Liberal Democrats are their champions.**

So how do we empower these businesses and these entrepreneurs?

**With a radical fair deal for small businesses.**

**Where business rates are replaced with a land tax.**

**Where the tax-free allowance against employers' National Insurance Contributions is raised substantially.**

**And where the biggest businesses pay more tax.**

The world's richest bosses might be racing each other to go to Mars, but before lift-off, they can pay their taxes here on Planet Earth.

And speaking of Planet Earth...

I think you know where I'm going next, Conference...

Our planet is in danger. From biodiversity loss and from climate change.

And those currently in power just don't seem to recognise just how urgent this is – with Conservative MPs still arguing, unbelievably, about how quickly the UK should act. Or whether we should act at all.

Conference, **Liberal Democrats were the first political party in Britain to warn decades ago about these environmental threats.**

Liberal Democrats were the first political party in Britain to warn decades ago about these environmental threats.

And we have the best record of any party in Britain on taking action to stop pollution and tackle climate change.

**Under my leadership, we will take our proud history and record on the environment to even higher levels – because we must.**

The Government needs to do far, far more to make it easier for industry and people to play their part in tackling climate change.

But Conference, we know the truth. Even if we succeed in ultra-rapid charging

up of climate action here in the UK, we know we can only survive with global action too.

That's why this year's summit in Glasgow is so important – and why I'm so alarmed by the way Boris Johnson and the Conservatives are approaching it..

Just take their cuts to overseas aid.

Let's be clear: **cutting aid to the world's poorest at any time, but especially in a pandemic, is indecent, immoral and wrong.**

But as a way of winning friends and influencing governments, just before you host this most crucial of global climate summits, cutting aid is a disaster.

Instead, the UK should be leading the world on climate action, with a radical new approach. To move trillions of dollars, yen, euros and pounds out of fossil fuels and into renewables.

By properly holding to account the powerful fossil fuel firms and the powerful in the City of London.

Cutting aid to the world's poorest at any time, but especially in a pandemic, is indecent, immoral and wrong.

Banning new oil, gas and coal companies from the London Stock Exchange. Stopping the flow of money from your pension funds into the dirty industries of the past.

As we host the global climate talks in Glasgow, we should stop London hosting the world's fossil fuel investments.

Conference, this is a radical and ambitious agenda.

Where we renew the contract between government and the people – to give people the fair deal they deserve.

But there is one more set of reforms Liberal Democrats know are crucial – so Governments stop taking people for granted and people get the fair deal they deserve.

**Reforming politics itself.**

To put power where it belongs, in the hands of individuals and their communities.

That means **resisting Boris Johnson's authoritarian power grabs:**

**Stopping him from making it harder for people to vote –**

**Defending everyone's right to challenge governments in the courts and in the streets –**

**And protecting the Human Rights Act itself.**

But we have to go much further than just preventing the Tory damage.

**We need to strengthen our democracy so that everyone's voices are heard.**

We need to strengthen our democracy so that everyone's voices are heard.

Shifting more power out of Westminster, so local decisions are made by and for the people they affect.

A new kind of community politics that truly engages people who are too often left out.

**And a fair electoral system, so everyone's vote counts equally.**

That's what a fair deal looks like.

Conference, we can give people this fair deal. We can renew the contract between government and the people. And we can deliver a zero-carbon economy.

**Liberal Democrats can be the party of education, of caring and of business.**

I know we can do it.

Our Liberal Democrat threat has already forced government U-turns on everything from planning to ID cards. **So let's keep fighting – for parents, for carers and for small businesses.**

When you're knocking on doors and speaking to your neighbours, when they ask you what we stand for, tell them this:

**Liberal Democrats stand for a fair deal, to be delivered by politicians who are decent, and who truly care about you.**

Liberal Democrats stand for a fair deal, to be delivered by politicians who are decent, and who truly care about you.

A fair deal that puts power in your hands, so you can do your bit.

And that holds the powerful to account, to make sure they do theirs.

A fair deal for parents and children. For carers and their loved ones.

A fair deal for nurses and teachers, doctors and police.

A fair deal for businesses, workers and the self-employed.

And a fair deal on climate.

**But standing between the British people and our fair deal is a big Blue Wall.**

In Chesham and Amersham, we knocked out one blue brick.

Now it's up to us to tear it down.

From Cheadle to Cheltenham –

From Winchester to Wokingham –

From Stockport to Sutton –

From Hitchin to Harrogate –

From Westminster to Wimbledon –

And from Eastbourne to Esher and Walton –

**Let us bring the Blue Wall down.**

Let us rebuild our country.

Let us fight for a fair deal.

**We can do it. And we will.**

[Go to Source](#)

Author:

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## **Ed Davey's conference speech – highlights**

Lib Dem leader Ed Davey gave his keynote speech to conference today! We've pulled some of the highlights for you – but if you want to read the full speech you can find it [here](#).

Boris Johnson's Conservative Government is steering us all into another terrible crisis.

### **Ed started on the supply chain crisis**

“Boris Johnson's Conservative Government is steering us all into another terrible crisis.

Shoppers greeted by empty shelves in the supermarket.

House building stopped for a lack of materials.

Pubs running dry.

Fears that there won't even be enough toys or turkeys for Christmas.

It's enough to make you need to go and lie down – but we're even facing a shortage of mattresses!"

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## [F22 What Liberal Democrats Believe](#)

As Liberal Democrats, we believe in an equal, open, green society in which everybody has the chance to succeed. Whether giving power to local governments to lead the communities that they know best or fighting for a Britain that steps up to its international obligations, we want the UK to represent the people who live here – not just a small group of Westminster politicians and elites.

I'm proud that we affirmed these beliefs at conference today. As Liberal Democrats we are committed to:

- **Liberty.** Individuals have the right to make their own decisions as long as it causes no harm to others
- **Equality.** We cannot have true liberty without equality. This includes equality in education and access to public services, a welfare state safety net, equality before the law and opposition to all forms of discrimination
- **Democracy.** Citizens are empowered to make their voices heard and checks and balances exist for those in power.
- **Community.** We support a diverse range of organisations which encourage individuals to come together in pursuit of common goals and ideas.
- **Internationalism.** We want to promote a fairer, more tolerant and connected world through collaboration with other nations- including, ultimately in rejoining the EU- to guarantee peace and security. We believe this approach is the best way to tackle the climate change emergency, stand up to powerful multinational corporations and promote international prosperity.
- **Environmentalism:** Promoting a sustainable way of producing and consuming in society in harmony with nature.

These above principles are the fundamental beliefs for us as Liberal Democrats. You can read more at the link below:

[Explore our values](#)

These principles will create a fairer society and system of government which benefits every individual within it.

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## [A Framework for England in a Federal UK](#)

Our current constitution allows for too much of the power and decision making to take place in Westminster and Whitehall. This excludes entire regions of the UK especially in England from being able to make a contribution to decisions that affect them.

Communities feel unable to control what happens in their local areas. This leads to a **dangerous feeling of powerlessness and alienation**.

The Conservative government talks of “levelling up” the UK yet consistently hordes all the power down in Westminster. It fails to disperse decision making throughout the country.

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Author:

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## [Let's get a handle on healthcare data privacy](#)

**Healthcare data matters. But so too does privacy.** The collection and sharing of population health data is vital in advancing medical treatments and improving our nation's health. However, the public has a right to know exactly how their data is collected, stored, and shared.

**The Government has quite happily been collecting our healthcare data without paying much attention to privacy.** It's time that changed.

We should be able to trust our government to handle our information securely

and with total transparency.

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