

# [Opposing the Protest Crackdown Law](#)

As you may have noticed, **this Conservative Government doesn't like to be challenged.**

Just look at how angry and red-faced Boris Johnson gets at Prime Minister's Questions every week. Just listen to how often Ministers rail against lawyers and the courts, because judges sometimes rule against them. Just remember how they refused to do interviews with journalists who might dare to ask difficult questions.

MPs vote today on Priti Patel's Protest Crackdown Law

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# [The Chancellor must fix the black hole in business support](#)

Why support them for this long and then not see them through to the end?

**Furlough is beginning to taper away and the business rates holiday is also coming to an end on July 1st. However, restrictions are set to remain in place until 19th July.**

This Government seems incapable of hearing the many voices telling them loudly and clearly how desperately small businesses need support to help them cope with the extra period of restrictions, and beyond.

It is completely incomprehensible that the Chancellor is prepared to end so many of the support mechanisms before firms even have a chance to open their doors and start trading.

The Chancellor has taken his eye off the ball and needs to come up with a long term plan before it is too late.

**Why support them for this long and then not see them through to the end?**

The black-hole in business support they have created is particularly unfair to the night-time economy, which is being forced to set aside thousands of pounds before able to welcome a single customer.

The Chancellor has taken his eye off the ball and needs to come up with a long term plan before it is too late.

**Thousands of closures and job losses are at stake.**

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## **Recruitment Mailing bulk-buy deals**

Right now, with the party riding high and the summer months ahead, is the perfect time to be recruiting new members to help build your teams ahead of the next elections.

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## **An amazing campaign**

### **Chesham and Amersham**

**What a brilliant result!** We had the best candidate in Sarah Green, ran the best campaign under James Lillis's direction and had an awesome amount of help from people all around the country.

That would all be impressive even in normal times, but coming off the back of the huge May elections and while we're all still dealing with coronavirus and lockdowns, that's been an amazing achievement.

It's also an achievement that sets us up for more success in the future – as the acres of media coverage demonstrate.

### **Westminster selections are up and running**

New Parliament, new name: this time around we are 'tiering' our seats, so the

most winnable seats (aka target seats, aka key seats) are now called Tier 1 seats. Selections have started up, with advertisements going out to people on the approved list and appearing on the members-only section of the main party website.

**It's important that we all encourage talented people we know to think about applying**, and for many seats there will still be time to go through the approval process.

As a recent internal survey suggested, vanishingly few people are asked to run by fellow party members, particularly potential candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds. **There is power in asking!**

A lot of effort is going into ensuring we continue the very welcome improvements in the diversity of our Parliamentary Party secured at the 2019 election. We need to do that to properly live our values – and it's a handy bonus that the evidence shows that more diverse teams make for more effective teams too.

One of the new things for this Parliament is Project Stellar: **a support package for our top candidates from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds**. Anyone selected in a Tier 1 seat from such a background can automatically qualify for this support, and depending on the numbers, we may also be able support candidates in Tier 2 seats in this way too.

The exact details of the programme are currently being developed, ready for it to be launched later in the year as the first selections start coming through.

If you are interested in playing a hands-on role in making our party overall more diverse, inclusive and equitable, please do consider [volunteering for our new working group on these issues](#).

## **Learning the right lessons from the May elections**

There's much we need to learn from both what went well and what didn't in the May elections. That's the way to continue to improve and to extend a run of what is now **three years in a row of making net gains in council elections**. With local elections right across Scotland and Wales next year, as well as many in England too, we really need that three years in a row to become four.

So I'm glad to report that the Federal Communications and Elections Committee (FCEC), chaired by Cllr Lisa Smart, met earlier this month and agreed a series of mini-projects to dig into particular areas of success and concern.

Part of that involves listening carefully to the wonder band of 178 people we've identified who did the most canvassing for the party in the May elections – **speaking to an average of 1,000 people each in the six weeks up to polling day! Thank you to each and every one of those 178**. That's a group of people with invaluable collective insight into what did and didn't work, both in terms of political messaging and organisation. Those are the sorts of grassroots voices that the Thornhill Review into the 2019 election rightly

concluded we need to listen to more.

## New committee chairs

Federal Conference Committee has a new chair, Nick Da Costa. He was elected by FCC members following [Geoff Payne standing down earlier this year](#).

The Federal International Relations Committee (FIRC) has a new chair too, with Phil Bennion replacing Jonathan Fryer, who sadly died [earlier this year](#).

Meanwhile, Bess Mayhew, chair of the Federal People Development Committee (FPDC), will be taking maternity leave and so the committee has elected Mary Regnier-Wilson to fill that gap.

Congratulations to Phil, Mary Nick, and double congratulations to Bess.

One other face will be changing later this year. Isabelle Parasram has a new job which means she will need to stand down as [Vice President responsible for working with ethnic minority communities](#). A by-election will be held later this year to fill her post.

## June Federal Board

Our latest meeting should have happened the Saturday before polling day, but the Board decided to postpone it until after [Chesham and Amersham](#) in order to free up more time for campaigning.

When we did meet, it was for a very full day-long agenda, including reviewing progress on the party's strategy, discussing the party's finances and hearing from Dorothy Thornhill on how she thinks things are going with implementing the [2019 election review](#) which she chaired. This continued involvement of Dorothy is important to **ensure we break the pattern of so many previous election reviews not getting the follow-up they needed**. As part of our strategy discussion, we finalised our plans to submit a conference motion for this autumn.

We also reviewed progress on the Steering Group pilot one year on. We decided to make some changes to how the pilot works, such as improving the flow of information from the Steering Group meetings to the full Board. We agreed to ask Autumn Conference to approve a **plan to consult with stakeholders about the future structure of the Federal Board** and bring plans to Spring Conference next year, continuing the Steering Group pilot in the meantime.

One reason for picking spring next year is to give enough time to properly explore variations and put a considered set of plans to conference. The other is that we have a very large volume of other business to put to this conference. The items the Board agreed to go ahead with submitting include enacting the changes proposed by the [Party Body Review Group](#), proposals to improve the complaints system, a request from Young Liberals to change their age limit and election regulations for the post of Vice President responsible for working with ethnic minority communities.

Questions are as ever very welcome via [president@libdems.org.uk](mailto:president@libdems.org.uk) and you can find all the Board members [listed on the party website](#).

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## [Let's make an amazing campaign into a winning campaign](#)

### **Chesham and Amersham**

I'm writing this month's report before we know the result. But we do already know that we've had the best candidate in Sarah Green, run the best campaign and had an awesome amount of help from people all around the country.

That would all be impressive even in normal times, but coming off the back of the huge May elections and while we're all still dealing with coronavirus and lockdowns, that's been an amazing achievement.

And there's still time to make it into a winning achievement. [Here's how to help](#).

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We will also be reviewing progress on the Steering Group pilot one year on, and decide what to do next. We'll also be looking at business to submit to the autumn party conference, such as a request from Young Liberals to change their age limit rules and changes to the party's complaints process. Also in the mix are plans to implement the Party Body Review Group report. It set out an exciting set of changes to better support and involve party bodies.

I'll update this report with our decisions once the Board has met. In the meantime, questions are as ever very welcome via [president@libdems.org.uk](mailto:president@libdems.org.uk).

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