

# Scrap the new Cumbrian coal mine

The Liberal Democrats have long called for a rethink on plans on for a new coal mine in Cumbria and I am delighted that's exactly what has happened.

If Boris Johnson is serious about climate action he will call on Cumbria county council to scrap the mine

Cumbria County Council now need to do the right thing and throw these plans out, or the Prime Minister must intervene to make sure the coal mine is scrapped.

**It's astonishing that a new coal mine in Britain is even being considered – particularly the year we are hosting the vital COP26 conference.**

If Boris Johnson is serious about climate action he will call on Cumbria county council to scrap the mine.

The Government needs to transform its attitude to the climate emergency. That is why I have proposed a £150 billion green coronavirus recovery plan, reshaping our economy to protect the future of our country and our planet.

**This is a once in a lifetime chance to solve the massive crisis we are in, we can't afford to miss it.**

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## General Election review update

We published the 2019 Election Review as the pandemic swept the UK and, sadly, I write this update during an even harder third wave. We are reminded every day of the failures of this government and the pressing need for convincing alternatives.

I am encouraged by the steps that have already been taken within the party and the plans ahead for reform. **In terrible circumstances, activists, volunteers and staff have stepped up to the challenge my review posed.** We identified three overarching themes in the review, all of which needed profound improvement: re-building campaigning excellence, clarity of leadership and decision making, and vision and purpose.

**Our campaigning team is now as well-resourced as it ever has been at this**

**stage in a Parliament** and we should commend local leaders, staff and ALDC for the innovation shown to balance campaigning with protecting public health.

The **party is working with more internal clarity**, and I note in particular the closer cooperation between HQ and ALDC, as well as the work, some of which is coming to Spring Conference, to define leadership roles and responsibilities as highlights.

I am not naïve, however, and there are vital areas where change has been slow. I also **do not underestimate the challenges of maintaining party energy while so many of us are struggling with family sickness, isolation, home-schooling and the like.**

We have made less progress on defining and confidently asserting our party's vision and purpose. Green shoots, for instance the carers campaign and the start of a change in approach to voter research, are springing up, but the truth is many voters remain, at best, ambivalent to us.

Also, as this Parliament wears on we face the challenge of shifting our mindset from borderline single-issue campaigning back to the kitchen-table politics of people's day-to-day lives required to win elections. In the introduction of my review, I said, "If it is at least recognised that this one hits the key issues, starts the process of making much needed changes in the party and points the way to success in the future then the time spent by the diligent and deeply committed panel will not have been in vain".

To end on a positive note, then, I can say that I believe the review has been recognised, that the process of making changes has started, and that the path to success is starting to emerge.

To the members reading this, I hope that as you show patience while the work is done. We must all expect, demand and support the party to be a winning machine again.

In the meantime, **all energy into May's elections!**

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## [Winning the postal vote](#)

Voting by post is the easiest and safest way for people to have their say.

With elections going ahead this May, **winning the postal vote will be more important than ever.**

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## [\*\*Bin the Referendum Bill – Facebook Ads Bulk Buy\*\*](#)

We all know how tough it has been over the last year. Thousands of lives have been lost, even more jobs have gone and we haven't been able to see our loved ones.

We need to **put the recovery first** with a needle-sharp focus on creating jobs for young people, cutting NHS waiting times, making our education the best again and tackling the climate crisis.

We cannot let independence distract us from putting the recovery first, but that's exactly what the SNP are doing.

The Liberal Democrats have launched a campaign to bin the referendum bill and all planning for a referendum – we need to put the recovery first, not divide our country even further.

That's why we're offering a **new bulk-buy deal on digital advertising**.

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## [\*\*Government must take action on the cancer backlog\*\*](#)

**Cancer has very sadly touched the lives of many in our community.**

With millions suffering from the disease across the nation and countless families concerned about a loved one, the impact of a diagnosis is huge.

The pandemic has caused critical delays in diagnosing cancers

**Coronavirus has caused immense worry for those living with cancer.** Isolated from friends, family, and community, the mental health impact cannot be

underestimated. Worse still, the pandemic has caused critical delays in diagnosing cancers, and leaves people at risk of suffering the worst effects of this disease.

**This World Cancer Day, I would like to commend the bravery of those people living with cancer through this extraordinary period, and pay tribute to all the NHS and care staff consistently helping our loved ones through even the most trying of times.**

**It is vital the Government now delivers a strategy to ensure all those who have been left behind as a result of the pandemic are offered timely cancer diagnosis and treatment.**

They must also push efforts to ensure research keeps moving forward, with the aim of finding a cure.

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