

Preliminary Agenda

Liberal Democrat Autumn Conference

15th - 20th September 2007

Brighton



Promote your organisation at conference

You can promote your organisation and message to thousands of conference attendees by placing an advert, taking an exhibition stand, organising a fringe event, or through sponsorship.

Advertising: Place an advertisement in one of the conference publications, including the *Daily Announcements*.



Exhibition: The diverse and vibrant exhibition at conference gives stand-holders an opportunity to display their products and services and to talk to a broad cross-section of visitors.

Fringe: Our conference fringe programme offers a dynamic line-up of events. We have a wide selection of rooms to choose from, with capacities between 15 and over 400.



Sponsorship: Conference features a wide range of opportunities to promote your organisation; we can tailor a package to your specific needs.

For information about advertising, exhibition and sponsorship, contact Carol Caruana on 020 7227 1323 or email c.caruana@libdems.org.uk.

For conference fringe, contact Jane Stainer on 020 7227 1348 or email j.stainer@libdems.org.uk.

Advertise in *Advance Notice* and *Daily Announcements*

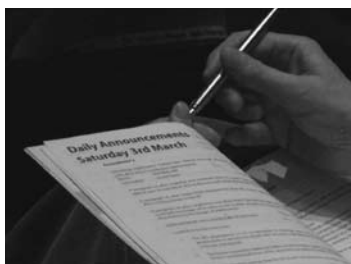
Advance Notice, issued to attendees on the Sunday of Conference, and *Daily Announcements*, issued Monday to Thursday, are the ideal vehicles for circulating up-to-the minute information to conference-goers.

Advertising rates are:

10cm deep x 9 cm wide £115 or 18 cm wide £220
5 cm deep x 9 cm wide £70 or 18 cm wide £115

Artwork should be supplied as a pdf file or as text in a Word file (20% surcharge). For *Advance Notice* artwork must be received no later than Monday 10th September; and for *Daily Announcements* by 10.00 am of the day before distribution.

For information and bookings, contact Carol Caruana on c.caruana@libdems.org.uk, or in the Exhibitors' Office or via a Conference steward at Brighton.



Paperless conference

If you would like to be added to the circulation list for conference emails, please send an email to conferences@libdems.org.uk with 'Email Address' in the subject box. We will not release your contact details to any third parties.

In an effort to make conference more environmentally friendly, we offer a paperless option for conference, which enables you to receive online versions of all the consultation and policy papers rather than the hard-copy format. Please be sure to tick the paperless registration box on the registration form if you would like to opt for the online format.

Introduction

By Duncan Brack

After the success of last year's autumn conference, we are thrilled to be heading back to Brighton this September. Another busy week beckons, full of keynote speeches, debates, fringe meetings, exhibition, socialising with Lib Dem friends and – we hope! – a repeat of last year's weather.

New for 2007 is the set-up of the conference and fringe hotels. With larger-than-ever fringe and training programmes and the vast conference social scene, we'll be spreading out across no less than five of the major Brighton seafront hotels: The Grand, Holiday Inn Brighton Seafront, Quality, Old Ship and Thistle.

This change will offer conference reps a greater choice of easily accessible places to get hot and cold lunchtime snacks (particularly at the Thistle and the Grand), as well as providing more of the much-needed bar and restaurant facilities for conference evenings. We hope you will make the most of this development!

All the information about registration, accommodation, the crèche and disability access that you will need is included in this Preliminary Agenda. Alternatively, you can give the Conference Office a call and they will help you with any queries.

See you in Brighton!



Duncan Brack is Chair of Federal Conference Committee

Copies of the Preliminary Agenda and policy papers are available electronically in text and pdf format: email emma.harris@libdems.org.uk or go to www.libdems.org.uk/conference.



Contents

Changing times <i>by Simon Hughes MP</i>	2
Information	
Diary	3
Venues	4
Getting to Brighton	4
Accommodation	5
Disability access	5
Crèche	6
Registration	6
Submission of motions	7
Policy motions	9
Business motions	27
Consultative sessions	28
Pullout form for registration and accommodation	13–16
Map of Brighton city centre	Back cover

Enclosures

If you are already registered for the Brighton 2007 Conference, you will be sent three policy papers with this agenda:

- *The Power to be Different: Policies for local and regional governance in England*
- *Freedom from Poverty, Opportunity for All: Policies for a fairer Britain*
- *Reducing the Burden: Policies for tax reform*

Copies can be accessed on: www.libdems.org.uk/conference, and will also be available at conference for those who haven't already registered.

This Preliminary Agenda lists the motions from which the Final Agenda will be selected, as well as other relevant information. Not all of the motions listed will necessarily be included in the Final Agenda. The items listed are open to amendment – see deadlines on page 3.

For conference details and registration online, please see www.libdems.org.uk/conference.



Printed on recycled paper

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Changing times

By Simon Hughes MP

Our conference this September will be particularly important, taking place in a changed political context – with a new Prime Minister and a Conservative Party finally beginning to reveal what it really stands for. Our debates and discussions will be crucial in determining how the Liberal Democrats emerge from this new political situation.

And we have a good range of issues lined up for you to discuss. The Federal Policy Committee will be presenting major policy papers on climate change, poverty and inequality, taxation, local government and better governance – all crucial to stressing the Liberal Democrat commitment to making Britain free, fair and green. All of these will of course be open to amendment – unlike the other two main parties, the Liberal Democrats remains a democratic party, true to its principles, where the members really do have influence over what we do and say.

This Preliminary Agenda lists other motions submitted for debate. In addition to these, there will also be topical motions, and Conference Committee is also inviting the submission of motions under four broad 'reserved subjects' headings: Education, Environment, Foreign Affairs and Home Affairs. I particularly encourage you to submit motions on environmental issues, as we aim to make this one of the main themes of the conference.

But conference is about much more than policy debates, vital though those are in determining the stance of the party. Conference Committee is putting together a very diverse agenda, featuring opportunities for you to discuss and question party spokespeople and outside commentators on key political issues.

The agenda will include presentations from Liberal Democrats in power in one of our local councils, Stockport, and from

our colleagues in the Alliance Party of Northern Ireland. We will have a wide-ranging discussion on citizenship and identity. There will be Q&A sessions on climate change and on underachievement amongst school pupils. And there will be the normal Q&A session with our Leader, Menzies Campbell. Want to ask him a question about party strategy or policy? Now's your chance.

We will also hear speeches from leading party spokespeople, and from a distinguished guest – José Manuel Barroso, President of the European Commission. And of course, there will be the normal reports from party committees – your chance to hold the party establishment to account.

I hope you and colleagues from your local party will be able to come to Brighton and participate in these debates and discussions. I encourage every local party to send its full complement of elected conference reps. But any party member can speak in debates, whether or not they're an elected rep, as long as they register for the whole conference. And if you just want to get a taster of conference, for a day, come along as a day visitor.

Brighton promises to be not only an important conference, but an exciting and enjoyable one too. See you there!



**Simon Hughes MP
is President of the
Liberal Democrats**



Diary

Diary of operations: key deadlines

Draft motions and amendments for drafting advice (see page 8)	Wednesday 27th June
Amendments and topical motions, reserved subjects motions (see page 8), appeals against non-acceptance of motions	Wednesday 11th July (noon)
Fringe and exhibition listings, advertising in Conference Directory	Friday 20th July
Conference registration to ensure mailing of conference papers	Wednesday 1st August
Dispatch of Final Agenda	Thursday 16th August
Notification of substitutes	Monday 3rd September
Nomination of subjects for 'urgent issues' debates, amendments to topical motions, emergency motions, appeals against non-acceptance of amendments/ topical motions, questions to reports	Wednesday 12th September (noon)

Outline conference timetable

Saturday 15th September	Training sessions	09.15 – 17.30
Sunday 16th September	Consultative sessions	10.00 – 12.15
	Full conference session	14.15 – 18.00
Monday 17th September	Full conference session	10.30 – 18.00
Tuesday 18th September	Full conference session	09.00 – 18.00
Wednesday 19th September	Full conference session	09.00 – 18.00
Thursday 20th September	Full conference session	09.00 – 13.00



Venues



Conference Centre

The Brighton Centre
King's Road, Brighton, BN1 2GR
Tel: 01273 290131



Conference and fringe hotels

The Grand
King's Road, Brighton, BN1 2FW
Tel: 01273 224300

Holiday Inn Brighton Seafront
King's Road, Brighton, BN1 2JF
Tel: 01273 828250

Old Ship Hotel
King's Road, Brighton, BN1 1NR
Tel: 01273 766100

Quality Hotel
West Street, Brighton, BN1 2RQ
Tel: 01273 220033

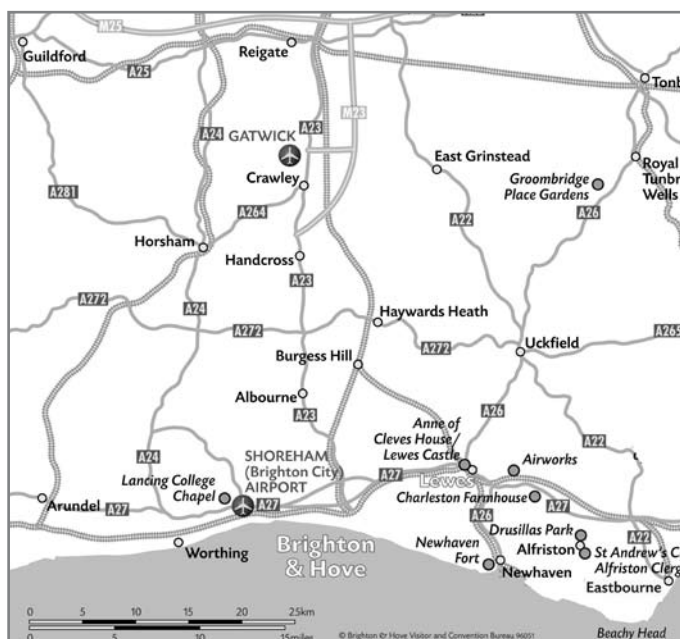
Thistle Hotel
King's Road, Brighton, BN1 2GS
Tel: 01273 206700

See map of Brighton city centre on **back cover**.

Getting to Brighton

By train

Brighton is just under an hour from London Victoria station with two services per hour. There are regular services to Brighton from Bedford, London Kings Cross and London Bridge, and direct services from Scotland, North West, Midlands, South West, Wales and Ashford (Eurostar). Contact National Rail enquiries on 08457 484950 (local rate call, 24 hours) or www.nationalrail.co.uk. Trains can be booked through the party's affinity scheme at www.libdems.org/conference.



By car

45 minutes from the M25 London orbital motorway. From the M25, take the M23/A23 to Brighton. The coastal route A27 links the city east and west. **Parking in Brighton is not cheap**. Reduce congestion and pollution by using public transport or car-sharing where possible. For the Liberal Democrats Conference car-share scheme, see www.libdems.org/conference.

By air

30 minutes by road or rail from London Gatwick International Airport. 90 minutes by road from London Heathrow International Airport. For all flight and airport information see www.baa.co.uk. There are fast coach links between Heathrow, Gatwick and Brighton.



Accommodation

The party's Conference Office is responsible for organising accommodation in the conference hotel, the Grand.

Rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis by sending in the accommodation form with this Preliminary Agenda. Additional forms are available at: www.libdems.org.uk/conference/booking/accommodation.html.

At the time of printing there are a limited number of rooms available, from £130 per night for a standard room.

For help with all other accommodation, please go to Brighton's Conference Delegate Accommodation Bureau at www.conferencebookings.co.uk/delegate/BTNLIBDEMS07 or call 01273 292626.

Disability access

Using a wheelchair or a scooter is no barrier to coming to conference and participating fully in its activities. That's the message from the Conference Access Group – and from the fact that at every conference there are several people who use wheelchairs or have other mobility impairments or disabilities, and many come back time after time.

In the main conference auditorium, there is always full access for anyone in a scooter or wheelchair. There is wheelchair access to the stage, and the podium is height-adjustable.

All debates and speeches are simultaneously translated into sign language, there is an induction loop system, and for blind conference reps, papers can be made available in different formats including electronic.

Outside the conference hall, all fringe meetings booked through the Conference Office are now in wheelchair-accessible rooms. We insist that any organisation booking a room independently confirms it is fully accessible before it is listed in the fringe directory.

This year, we have introduced a new scheme which we hope will do even more to encourage wheelchair users to come to conference.

Four wheelchair-using conference reps will be offered financial assistance in recognition of the significant extra cost of staying in the specially adapted accessible rooms in the larger hotels, to bring their conference costs in line with those of a party member staying in a cheaper bed-and-breakfast establishment.

The scheme is funded by a £1 levy on all conference registration fees. We hope it will not only encourage more wheelchair users to come, but also raise the profile of the importance of tackling disability issues.

For those who have carers, conference registration for carers is free.

Brighton Disability Advice Centre provides a range of advice on getting to and from Brighton, and getting around while there, and a factsheet is available from them with plenty of other information.

More information

For more information please contact:

The Conference Office, 4 Cowley Street, London SW1P 3NB. Tel: 020 7227 1350 or email: emma.harris@libdems.org.uk.

Robert Littlehales, the conference steward in charge of disability access. Tel: 07712 667702 or email: rlittlehales@aol.com.

Brighton Disability Advice Centre, 6 Hove Manor, Hove Street, Hove BN3 2DF. Tel/Minicom: 01273 203016, email: disabilityadvice@bhfederation.co.uk, www.bhfederation.co.uk.

For information on the work of the Conference Access Group, contact:

Catherine Bearder, email: cbearder@cix.co.uk

The Federal Conference Committee (FCC) wants to encourage as many party members as possible to come – whether they have a disability or not. Coming to conference is not only every party member's opportunity to play a part in making our party's policy, it is also a great week of fringe meetings, training and networking. Deciding whether to come to conference or not is a decision for every party member – but no one should think they can't come to conference because of a disability.

Crèche

A crèche, run by qualified staff, will be available in the **Hilton Brighton Metropole** during the following times

Sunday	16th September	13:00 – 18:30
Monday	17th September	08:30 – 18:30
Tuesday	18th September	08:30 – 18:30
Wednesday	19th September	08:30 – 18:30
Thursday	20th September	08:30 – 13:30

Lunch must be ordered and paid for daily. There will be a registration fee of £25 per child. For unwaged parents the fee is £10 per child. This covers the whole week from Sunday until the end of conference.

Registrations must reach the Conference Office no later than **Thursday 16th August**. Please apply for a place in

the crèche by going online to **www.libdems.org.uk/conference/booking** for a crèche registration form.

As we are required, by law, to ensure that there are sufficient people to staff the crèche, late registration will be difficult to accommodate.

For further information contact:

The Conference Office,
Liberal Democrat Headquarters,
4 Cowley Street, London, SW1P 3NB.
Tel: 020 7227 1348.
email: jane.stainer@libdems.org.uk.

Registration

Registration fees for the Brighton conference, **for both voting representatives and non-voting members**, are:

	Waged	Claimants
Registration fee paid on or before Friday 29th June	£74	£18
Registration fee paid on or before Wednesday 1st August	£86	£18
Late registration after Wednesday 1st August and at conference	£112	£31

A registration form is provided with this Preliminary Agenda. Additional copies can be obtained from the registration section of the website: **www.libdems.org.uk/conference/booking**.

Registrations can also be made online at **www.libdems.org.uk/conference/conference-registration.html**.



All claimants etc. (i.e. those who are unemployed, the dependent spouse of an unemployed person, a student or a school student, or those whose only income is the state pension) may register at the reduced rates. Current proof of status should be included with the registration form (e.g. photocopy of ES40, student ID card, letter from a school/college or other relevant documentation).

We aim to acknowledge all registrations received before 1st August within one week of receiving them.

Registration must be sent in before **1st August** to ensure that the final conference agenda papers can be mailed to you on 16th August. If your registration is received after 1st August, you will have to pick up your papers at conference.

We will send out photopasses for all registrations received before 10th August. For those received after this date, we will do our best to send the pass to you, but cannot guarantee to do so. Where photopasses are not sent in advance, they will be available for collection at the **Registration Desk** at conference.

Please try to avoid the last-minute rush and lengthy queues by registering early!

First-time attendees

As an incentive to encourage new conference-goers, a special rate of £58 is now available to those attending Brighton as their first Liberal Democrat conference. This is not cumulative with any other discount and is subject to confirmation of first-timer status.

Registration continued



You will only be able to register as a voting representative if:

- 1) The Membership Department has already received **in writing** notification from the Returning Officer of your Local Party that you have been elected as a voting representative*; or
- 2) You are a substitute elected by your Local Party Executive after a voting representative has indicated to them that s/he is unable to attend, and the Membership Department has received **in writing** notification of your election from the Local Party*; or
- 3) The Membership Department receives at the Conference **written notification** from the Returning Officer of your Local Party that you have been elected as a voting representative or as a substitute.

* To ensure that a voting badge is sent out before conference this information must be received by **10th August**. Otherwise a non-voting badge will be sent to you if you are registered, which you will be able to change at the **Registration Desk** at conference, providing information has been subsequently sent in or is available at conference, as in 3 above.

Please note that names of representatives and substitutes **cannot** be accepted by telephone.

Representation

Local party and Youth and Student representation is as follows (Article 6.2 of the constitution):

Submission of motions

Submission of motions and amendments

The following are entitled, under the constitution, to submit policy motions, business motions, and secondary amendments to constitutional and standing order amendments:

- Local parties
- Regional parties in England

Membership	Representatives
30 – 50	2
51 – 75	3
76 – 100	4
101 – 150	5
151 – 200	6
201 – 250	7
251 – 300	8
301 – 350	9
351 – 400	10
401 – 450	11

together with a further representative for every 100 members (or part thereof) in excess of 450.

Non-voting members

Party members who are not elected representatives are entitled to attend all sessions of conference as non-voting members.

Non-voting members who have paid the full registration fee are eligible to submit a speaker's card (but not vote).

Non-voting members can also attend conference sessions as day visitors, for a fee of £24 per day. Day visitors are not entitled to speak in conference sessions, other than consultative sessions.

Deadline for postage of Final Agenda

To ensure receipt of the Final Agenda prior to conference, which will be sent out on 16th August, please send your registration form (enclosed with this Preliminary Agenda) payment and photograph (if necessary) to arrive in Cowley Street no later than **1st August**.

Registrations received after that date will be treated as registrations received at conference and relevant papers will be available for collection in Brighton.

- State parties
- Federal SAOs
- Ten conference representatives
- Federal Policy Committee

The deadline for amendments, topical motions and reserved subjects motions is **12 noon Wednesday 11th July**. (See **page 3** for all deadlines.)

Submission of motions continued

The deadline for motions and business motions was 23rd May. **Topical motions must refer to some development since that date.**

A standard form for submission of amendments and motions is enclosed at the **centre pages** of this Preliminary Agenda.

Where possible, the Policy Projects Team prefers to receive motions and amendments via email. To make this easier we have a dedicated email address: **motions@libdems.org.uk**, to which all motions should be sent. To avoid confusion, motions emailed to any other address cannot be accepted. If you experience any problems with this address, or have any questions, please call 020 7219 2576.

Motions and amendments must be authorised by an officer of the submitting organisation (eg. Chair or Secretary) or another person empowered to do so by that organisation's internal rules. Ideally the person authorising a motion should email that motion to motions@libdems.org.uk from their own email account.

If this is not possible, a contact name, telephone number and party membership number for the person authorising the motion must be included with the emailed motion.

If you do not have access to email then forms can be posted to the Policy Projects Team, 4 Cowley Street, London, SW1P 3NB, or faxed to 020 7799 2170.

Submission of motions by ten conference representatives

If you are submitting a motion in the name of ten+ conference representatives, the following procedure applies:

- A coordinator should be responsible for collecting all signatures and submitting them in one email to **motions@libdems.org.uk**.
- The signatures should include the person's name, email address, constituency/SAO, and membership



8 Liberal Democrat Conference Autumn 2007

number. Signatures submitted by people other than the coordinator will not be accepted.

- If you are submitting a motion in the name of ten+ conference representatives by post or fax, all signatures and accompanying details (email not required) should be submitted together.

If you have any questions, please email **motions@libdems.org.uk** or call 020 7219 2576.

Appeals

Appeals against non-acceptance of motions should be written on one side of A4, giving a contact address, telephone number and email if available, and should include the text of the original motion submitted together with the justification for appealing.

Appeals should be sent to the Policy Projects Team, preferably by email to **motions@libdems.org.uk**, by **12 noon on Wednesday 11th July**.

Drafting advice

All submitters of motions and amendments are encouraged to use the drafting advisory service, through which the Policy Projects Team will provide comments on draft motions and amendments, as long as they are submitted no later than **Wednesday 27th June**; and sent to **motionsadvice@libdems.org.uk**.

Accepting the advice does not guarantee that Federal Conference Committee (FCC) will accept the final version for the agenda, but previous experience shows that it will improve your chances.

Reserved subjects

To widen the opportunity to submit motions the FCC has decided to use its powers under Standing Orders to specify certain subjects on which it will be possible to submit motions by the July 11th topical deadline, **in addition to normal topical motions on any subject** (ie. motions referring to a development since May 23rd).

FCC will in general prefer motions written around specific items within these broad headings, rather than wide-ranging attempts to cover every issue within them; and which are different from those already on the Preliminary Agenda.

The subjects are:

- Environment
- Home Affairs
- Foreign Affairs
- Education.

Policy motions

FP1 Better Governance Policy Paper

Federal Policy Committee

Conference endorses Policy Paper 83, *Better Governance*, as a statement of the party's policies for reforming governance in the UK.

Note: this is a holding motion only. A full motion will appear on the Final Agenda, and the deadline for amendments will accordingly be Wednesday 12th September. The Policy Paper will also be circulated with the Final Agenda.

FP2 Climate Change Policy Paper

Federal Policy Committee

Conference endorses Policy Paper 82, *Climate Change*, as a statement of the party's policies for tackling climate change.

Note: this is a holding motion only. A full motion will appear on the Final Agenda, and the deadline for amendments will accordingly be Wednesday 12th September. The Policy Paper will also be circulated with the Final Agenda.

FP3 Dentistry

North Norfolk

Conference believes that despite the promise that everyone would have access to an NHS dentist by 2001, NHS dentistry is now in crisis, with less than half of British adults registered with an NHS dentist before the introduction of the new contract in April 2006.

Conference deplores the fact that one year after its introduction, the new NHS dental contract has failed on its stated aims of improving access to NHS dentistry, improving oral health and raising the quality of dental care, in particular noting that:

- a) Two million people who wanted to gain access to an NHS dentist before the new contract were still unable to do so after its implementation.
- b) 85% of dentists responding to a BDA survey said that the new contract had not improved access to NHS dental services for patients.
- c) Only a third of practices across England are taking on new NHS patients, with large regional variations.
- d) Preventive care does not have a contractual value, meaning that dentists who are under pressure to meet their contractual targets are unable to prioritise this vital service.
- e) More than 1500 dentists opted out of the NHS just three months after the new contract was introduced in April 2006, representing an 8% decline.
- f) The reliance of Primary Care Trusts upon patient charge revenue has left many trusts with a shortfall in their budget for commissioning dentistry.

Conference calls for urgent action to enable dentists to take on more NHS work, including:

1. Building more flexibility into the new dental system by having a higher Unit of Dental Activity value for patients in greatest need, such as children and new patients, and giving preventive care a UDA value.
2. Ensuring that NHS dentistry promotes preventive oral health by scrapping the charge for dental check-ups and developing Personal Dental Plans which will set out how frequently people should have a check-up, and how better to look after their teeth.

Policy motions

3. Reforming the current system for monitoring dentists' performance so that services more readily meet patients' needs.
4. Having a minimum standard of service guaranteed to patients by each Primary Care Trust.
5. Future changes to the dental system to be made in conjunction with professionals and patient groups, ending the acrimony that results from having many dentists working within the NHS 'under dispute'.
6. The establishment of a commission to examine how effective the current dental system is at delivering high quality dental care for the most vulnerable groups and to come up with proposals to secure high quality dental care for all.

Applicability: England.

*Drafting contact: Marianne Sladowsky, tel 020 7219 5717, email sladowskym@parliament.uk
c/o Liberal Democrat Whips Office, House of Commons, London, SW1A 0AA*

*FCC contact: Robert Adamson, tel 01845 501058, email robert@robertadamson.info
Asgard, Sessay, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO7 3BE*

FP4 End Elder Abuse

12 conference representatives

Conference notes with concern that:

- i) By 2025 there will be 1.2 billion people aged 60 and over in the world, and as many as 10 percent of people over 60 may experience some form of abuse.
- ii) 39 per cent of the British public are not aware of the abuse of older people as a social problem.
- iii) One third of abuse cases are perpetrated against older people with a learning disability.
- iv) Both older men and women can be at risk of being abused, and the abuser is usually well known to the victim.
- v) In many countries of the EU, human rights legislation designed to protect vulnerable people does not cover the millions who live in privately-owned care homes.
- vi) The definition of a 'vulnerable adult' in the UK varies, depending upon the legislation.
- vii) The processes and systems to protect older people in many Member States, including the UK, are based on guidance and lack the resources and drive needed to ensure comprehensive protection.
- viii) The European Union's Daphne Programme does not currently include older people and has a limited budget of €50 million for 2004 to 2008.

Conference believes that:

- a) Liberal Democrats must take a lead in highlighting and tackling the abuse of older people in society.
- b) The UK Government and most other EU Member States have failed to acknowledge the scale of the problem, let alone take effective steps to deal with it.
- c) In the UK, Adult Protection Teams are under-funded, under-resourced, and under-staffed.
- d) In many other EU Member States, as in the UK, much abuse is not addressed because of gaps in current legislation, so abused people receive neither help nor redress.
- e) There is a need for separate approaches towards malicious abuse caused by inadequate support for professional and informal carers, and to abuse which follows family and relationship breakdown.

Conference calls for:

Policy motions

1. New legislation to give the protection of vulnerable adults the same status as that afforded to children.
2. Member States of the European Union and the European Commission to launch a campaign to raise awareness of the nature and scale of elder abuse and the support available.
3. The European Commission to include older people in the Daphne programme as well as increasing funding.
4. More studies to assess the level of abuse of older people in society and its causes.
5. Increased identification and exchange of good practice among EU Member States, in particular to implement preventive measures and improve assistance to victims.
6. Measures to ensure that in all EU Member States human rights legislation covers all older people, regardless of their living arrangements.
7. Health professionals, the voluntary sector and local authorities to be encouraged to work together to uncover abuse, support the victims and deal with the abusers.

Applicability: Federal, except 1, which is England only.

*Drafting contact: Ben Jephcott, tel 07966 514982, email bjephcott@yahoo.co.uk
4 Camross Drive, Shrewsbury, SY1 3XH*

*FCC contact: Robert Adamson, tel 01845 501058, email robert@robertadamson.info
Asgard, Sessay, Thirsk, North Yorkshire, YO7 3BE*

FP5 Freedom from Poverty, Opportunity for All (Poverty and inequality Policy Paper)

Federal Policy Committee

Conference believes that:

- A. Poverty and lack of opportunity restrict freedom.
- B. Creating a fair society, in which everyone has the opportunity to fulfil their potential, free from the barriers imposed by poverty and inequality, is a core Liberal Democrat principle.
- C. The state should encourage opportunity and independence for all.

Conference further believes that our priorities in tackling poverty and inequality should be:

- I. Removing up to 5 million people from relative poverty by 2020 - including signing up to the 2020 targets of ending child poverty.
- II. Reducing means-testing for over 5 million people by 2020.
- III. Supporting 2 million more people into employment by 2020.
- IV. Delivering a million more affordable homes by 2020.
- V. Targeting resources to improve education for up to 1.5 million disadvantaged children.

Conference therefore endorses Policy Paper 80, *Freedom from Poverty, Opportunity for All*, as a statement of the party's key policies for reducing poverty and inequality, providing equal access to opportunity and improving social mobility. Conference particularly welcomes:

1. Proposals to improve opportunity in education, including:
 - a) Extending access to early years education to children living in workless households.
 - b) Allocating additional funds to invest in the training of early years teachers and staff.
 - c) Introducing an extra £1.5 billion for a Pupil Premium to raise significantly funding for pupils from deprived backgrounds.

Policy motions

2. Proposals to provide better access to high-quality housing and end the geographical concentration of deprivation, including:
 - a) Giving local communities greater freedom and incentives to allow housing development by freeing up the planning system and devolving control to local government.
 - b) Enabling public authorities to make suitable surplus land available for development for affordable housing.
 - c) Requiring local authorities to maintain an accessible housing register to improve access to appropriate housing for the disabled.
 - d) Facilitating the selling-off of housing on large estates, with the proceeds being reinvested in new social housing in diversified areas.
 - e) Encouraging the use of introductory tenancies for all social housing to combat anti-social behaviour.
 - f) Encouraging reinvestment in the existing housing stock by cutting VAT on renovation and repair.
 - g) Abolishing the Single Room Rent which means that many younger people have to live in unsuitable accommodation or face large rent shortfalls.

3. Proposals to tackle rural poverty, including:
 - a) Rural proofing all anti-poverty policies.
 - b) Requiring service providers to extend the provision of outreach services.
 - c) Encouraging and supporting action to sustain rural services, particularly the post office network.

4. Proposals to improve opportunities to work and remove barriers to employment, including:
 - a) Establishing a new 'First Steps' agency as a one-stop shop for all benefits claims and in order to identify the help needed to get people into work.
 - b) Building on the existing role of the third sector by engaging the private and voluntary sector to provide high-quality, tailored, back-to-work support.
 - c) Introducing a new single Working Age Benefit to replace Job Seekers Allowance and Incapacity Benefit.
 - d) Allowing 'spend-to-save' funding of welfare-to-work, including targeting extra help to those with mental health conditions.
 - e) Allowing benefits to run on for two weeks after entering employment to support people back into work.
 - f) Ensuring that work pays for those on lower incomes by:

Either

Option A:

uprating the minimum wage each year in line with the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission, including accepting their existing recommendation that the Adult Rate of the minimum wage be extended to those aged 21 and over.

Or

Option B:

uprating the minimum wage each year in line with the recommendations of the Low Pay Commission, and extending the Adult Rate of the minimum wage to all those aged 16 and above.

Members' Registration form

**BRIGHTON CONFERENCE
15TH - 20TH SEPTEMBER 2007**



LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

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Title

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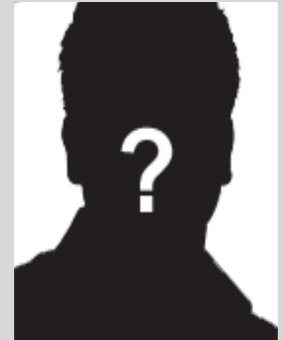
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Please attach a colour passport size photograph if you have not provided one to conference office in the past 3 years.

Please print your name clearly on the reverse of the photograph

Care for the environment!

I understand the Directory, Agenda and Reports to Conference will be sent to me by post. I wish to receive all other policy and consultation papers by email.

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**Please indicate your order of preference by entering a number in the relevant box:
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Disability bedrooms are available on request.

Arrival date

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Departure date

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PAYMENT BY DEBIT/CREDIT CARD

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The CSC is the last 3 digits of the number on the signature strip on the back of the card

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Please note that debit cards are the preferred method of payment as they cut our costs by 2.5%

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I agree that the full hotel accommodation costs will be deducted from my credit/debit card by the party and that if I cancel after the 1st August 2007, I will be liable for a cancellation fee of 50% of the total cost and that if I cancel after 1st September 2007, I will be liable for 100% of the charges.

Date ddmmyy

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Policy motions

5. Proposals to simplify the benefits system and improve support for families, pensioners and the disabled, including:
 - a) Raising the level of child benefit by up to £5 for every family.
 - b) Reforming the Child Support Agency to ensure maintenance payments reach low-income families.
 - c) Reforming tax credits by:
 - i) Better targeting of tax credits to those on low incomes, by increasing the taper rate.
 - ii) Stopping the penalising of couples through the tax credit system.
 - iii) Returning to stable, six-monthly, awards.
 - iv) Simplifying the awards notice.
 - v) Reversing the burden of proof in cases of overpayment, and introducing a right of appeal to an independent tribunal.
 - d) Reviewing the level of Carer's Allowance.
 - e) Extending the Winter Heating Allowance to individuals in receipt of higher rate disability living allowance.
 - f) Immediately restoring the link between the basic state pension and earnings.
 - g) Aiming to introduce the Citizen's Pension within two parliaments.
 - h) Establishing a benefits commission to radically simplify the benefits system.
 - i) Establishing an independent commission to review public sector pensions, with any savings being reinvested in a higher state pension.

6. Proposals to cut the 'Poverty Premium' and tackle debt, including:
 - a) Preventing energy utility companies from penalising the poor by ending differential pricing.
 - b) Improving household energy efficiency by offering a subsidy towards the cost of installing 'WarmHomes' packages, with priority given to those on low incomes.
 - c) Ensuring that financial services providers help to fund the deliver of free, generic, independent financial advice to those on low incomes.
 - d) Strengthening consumer protection against institutions that aggressively sell or mis-sell financial products, and taking action to clamp down on irresponsible lending practices.
 - e) Working to develop access to financial services through the post office network.

Applicability: Federal, except for 1, 2 a) – 2 e), 3 b) and 6 b), which are England only.

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FP6 Giving Young Carers the Support they Need

North Southwark and Bermondsey

Conference notes:

- i) That there are an estimated 175,000 young carers in the UK, 13,000 of whom care for more than 50 hours a week.
- ii) That the average age of a young carer is 12 and more than half live in one-parent families and almost a third care for someone with mental health problems.
- iii) The impact on a child of having to care for someone while still at school can result in poor attendance and punctuality, tiredness, behavioural problems, lack of homework and non-

Policy motions

attendance of parents at open evenings, so that young carers can effectively have their childhood stolen from them.

- iv) That young carers are often reluctant to admit to their extra responsibilities, so it is essential that they are identified and support is targeted towards them.
- v) The unnecessary, tragic death of 13-year-old carer Deanne Asamoah from an overdose of morphine tablets prescribed for her mother.

Conference believes that:

- a) Thousands of vulnerable children who have to care for a family member are being let down by the government as key measures to keep them safe and healthy are not being implemented.
- b) Young carers are some of the most vulnerable children in society.
- c) The Carer's Grant and Children's Fund are crucial means to support families and carers and should be retained by the government.
- d) Young carers should not be acting as nurses and dispensing medication to their disabled or chronically ill parents.

Conference calls for:

1. A full review of the Government's Carers Strategy, to include the role of young carers and the support that local authorities, the third sector and government can provide to ensure that the thousands of young carers are given the support they and their families need.
2. Better joined-up support from local authorities for disabled and chronically ill parents so that the number of young carers is reduced.
3. Local authorities to address the needs of young carers in their Children and Young People's Plans, to make sure every child is being properly looked after and receiving all the support they deserve.
4. A proper funding package from government to local authorities fully to support schools, children's and adult services and the third sector in the identification of and support to young carers and their families.
5. The expansion of the remit of community matrons in relation to dispensing medication to disabled people and those living with chronic medical conditions.

Applicability: England.

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FP7 Making Planning Local, Rewarding Community Housing

Ten conference representatives

Conference notes that:

- a) Since Labour were elected in 1997, house prices in Britain have tripled, leaving millions unable to afford a decent home of their own.
- b) Both Labour and Tories support a planning system based on illiberal top-down targets that can force unpopular development on to local communities.
- c) Land values rise by around £3m per hectare when planning permission is granted.

Policy motions

Conference believes that a more locally-based planning system could unlock the rise in land values for the benefit of the community, whilst encouraging local authorities and communities to provide affordable housing in places people want to live.

Conference therefore calls on the Government to abolish the current outdated, ineffective and unpopular top-down planning regime and replace it with a locally-based system of community planning auctions in which:

1. All individual landowners have the right to nominate some or all of their land for development, and to set the price at which they are prepared to sell it.
2. Councils grant outline planning permission for any land they are offered if the local community is prepared to see that land developed, and if they believe the price offered is reasonable.
3. Councils can then auction the land to developers, with that outline planning permission, receiving the difference between the amount paid by developers and the amount set by the original land owner, thus obtaining major financial benefit for the community.
4. Councils are free to use any money to reduce local taxes and/or improve local services, ensuring local communities can gain significantly from local developments.
5. Existing protections such as Sites of Special Scientific Interest should remain.

Conference notes that, as a rule of thumb, a local authority that allowed development equal to 1% of the current housing stock in the area would be able to reduce council tax by £800.

Conference notes that this will give local authorities an incentive to allow development in their area, allowing the total abolition of all top-down housing and the current planning regime.

Applicability: England.

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FP8 Reducing the Burden (Taxation Policy Paper)

Federal Policy Committee

Conference regrets that after ten years of the current Labour Government:

- i) The tax system remains unfair, with the bottom 20% of households paying a higher proportion of their income in taxes than the top 20% of households.
- ii) Wealth inequality is worse than at any time under Margaret Thatcher.
- iii) The tax system has also become incredibly complex under Labour, with the tax code doubling in length.
- iv) Green taxes have fallen from 3.6 per cent of GDP in 2000 to just 2.9 per cent of GDP today.

Conference believes that the tax system should be reformed to make it:

- a) Fairer – with tax cuts for those on lower incomes paid for by removing loopholes exploited by the rich.
- b) Simpler and easier to understand - especially for pensioners and small businesses.
- c) More decentralised – so that there is a clearer link between local services and local accountability.
- d) Greener – giving incentives for responsible use of resources.

Policy motions

Conference asserts that it is feasible and right both to change environmentally damaging behaviour and raise revenue through the tax system.

Conference welcomes the fact that Liberal Democrats are the only party that has firm plans for fairer and greener, but not higher, taxes.

Conference therefore endorses Policy Paper 81, *Reducing the Burden*, as a statement of the party's policies on reform of the tax system, building on and updating Policy Paper 75, *Fairer, Simpler, Greener*. Conference in particular welcomes proposals to:

1. Cut the basic rate of national income tax by 4p – this will mean that even after Council Tax is abolished and replaced by Local Income Tax, the vast majority of people (88%) will be paying a lower rate of income tax overall.
2. Abolish the unfair Council Tax and replace it with a tax based on the ability to pay – Local Income Tax is a fairer way to raise local government revenue, as acknowledged by Sir Michael Lyons in his review of local government.
3. Increase environmental taxes, particularly by reforming Air Passenger Duty into an Aircraft Tax and more sharply graduating VED by emissions on new cars.
4. End taper relief for Capital Gains Tax.
5. Limit tax relief on pension contributions to the basic rate.
6. Return the Business Rate to local control, and place it on a site value basis within one Parliament.
7. Reform residential stamp duty, ending the current regressive 'slab' structure, with the long-term objective of ensuring all those buying properties up to £500,000 in value pay less than at present.
8. Reform Inheritance Tax by raising the threshold at which estates start to pay IHT, with a medium-term objective of raising the starting threshold to £500,000, and limiting the exemption on lifetime gifts to those made 15 years before death.
9. Radically simplify the tax code, removing hundreds of pages of regulations.
10. Introduce a simplified 'postcard' style tax return form, which would release over 6 million taxpayers from the need to fill in a full tax return.
11. Introduce a simple statutory definition of residence for tax purposes to make the rules clearer and reduce compliance costs.
12. Bring gains made by non-residents on property situated in the UK within Capital Gains Tax.

Applicability: Federal, except 6, which is England only.

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Policy motions

FP9 *The Power to be Different* (Local and regional governance in England Policy Paper)

Federal Policy Committee

Conference regrets the twenty-year assault under successive Labour and Conservative governments on the independence of English councils. This has restricted the ability of local authorities to address the challenges facing their communities in the 21st century, such as global warming and increased globalisation.

Conference believes that:

- i) Increasing centralisation, with a one-size-fits-all approach to problems in places as diverse as Cornwall, Cambridge and Camden, has not improved quality of life in English communities.
- ii) At the core of Liberal Democracy is a belief that individuals and communities, not central government, know what is best for themselves; and that therefore individuals and communities should be able to wield real political power on their own behalf.
- iii) Individuals and communities should have the freedom to make local decisions about local needs and priorities, thereby providing the services they need and want.

Conference notes that local authorities have been leading the way in addressing the issues facing their communities, in particular the examples of good practice from Liberal Democrat-run councils such as:

- A. Liverpool improving its waste collection service, which repairs and re-uses furniture for use by homeless and low-income families, rather than putting it in landfill.
- B. Kingston-upon-Thames giving any group of a hundred citizens the right to call in any decision of the council.
- C. Chesterfield powering a leisure centre and coach station with photovoltaic cells, and other public buildings through geothermal heating.
- D. Somerset County Council establishing community justice panels to tackle anti-social behaviour and minor misdemeanours.

Conference therefore calls for a renaissance in local and regional government in England, as outlined in Policy Paper 79, *The Power to be Different*, through a radical devolution of power, responsibilities and finance from Whitehall to democratically elected local and regional government, and in particular welcomes the following policies:

1. A new relationship between central and local government based on an agreement, or covenant, incorporating the provisions of the European Charter of Local Self-Government, and which scraps nationally set targets for local government.
2. The greater involvement of residents in local decision-making and in the running of local services by:
 - a) The devolution of greater powers to parish, town and community councils so they are making decisions about local services, rather than bureaucrats in Whitehall.
 - b) The creation of a single principal tier of local government across the country, subject to community approval.
 - c) The establishment of local governing boards to run local services, made up of people who use local services, working with their councils to make decisions over the management of those services.
 - d) The introduction of a fair voting system for local elections, using the single transferable vote.

Policy motions

3. Setting councils free by giving them greater financial independence and autonomy, to be achieved by increasing the amount of money councils spend which is raised locally; in the longer term 75% (rather than the current 25%) of total revenue should be raised locally.
4. The devolution of power from Westminster and the regions to councils, with quangos made accountable to local government or regional assemblies.
5. The promotion of stronger and better local leadership by removing the requirement on councils to have an executive/scrutiny split in decision-making, and by restoring the requirement to hold a referendum before creating the post of directly elected mayor.
6. Reducing the barriers that dissuade people from standing as councillors to encourage more good-quality local representatives.
7. The establishment of directly-elected regional government in those regions that want it, taking powers and functions from central government; outside those areas the existing regional chambers should be reformed, making them more democratic and accountable to the people they serve.

Applicability: England.

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FP10 The Surveillance Society

Fourteen conference representatives

Conference notes:

- i) The statement of the Information Commissioner Richard Thomas in November 2006 that “we are waking up to a surveillance society”.
- ii) That an increasing amount of personal information is being held on individuals by public bodies, businesses and third-sector organisations.
- iii) Concerns raised over the Passenger Name Records agreement between the EU and US.
- iv) Widespread breaches in public and private sector database security in the UK and abroad.
- v) The Identity Cards Act 2006, the creation of a National Identity Register, and proposals for wide-ranging data-sharing powers within government.
- vi) That the cost of the ID cards project continues to increase and that independent estimates show that the likely total cost could be as high as £19bn.
- vii) The existence of the UK’s National DNA database, the largest in the world, which includes data on over 140,000 innocent people, a disproportionate number of whom are from ethnic minorities.
- viii) That thousands of schools are collecting biometric information such as fingerprints from pupils, often without parental consent.
- ix) That CCTV is inadequately regulated, even though British people are currently the most watched on the planet, with a CCTV camera for approximately every 16 people.
- x) That between 1 January 2005 and 31 March 2006, 439,000 requests for communications traffic data were made and 2,243 intercept warrants were issued and that the UK is alone amongst democratic countries in having warrants issued by ministers.

Policy motions

- xi) That the Information Commissioner has no power to restrict data-mining and data-processing requests from government, reports to ministers rather than parliament, has fewer powers than his European counterparts and has inadequate resources for investigation.

Conference believes that:

- A. Appropriately regulated databases bring many benefits to modern society, including providing quicker personalised services, quicker crime detection, and elimination of bureaucracy.
- B. Emerging technologies can, and should, be used to enhance rather than compromise personal privacy both in the public and the private sector.
- C. The National DNA database is a powerful tool for combating crime but only those guilty of a criminal offence should have their DNA permanently recorded on it.
- D. Government data should be stored in decentralised databases that can communicate with each other on a need-to-know basis, not in shared data warehouses.
- E. Citizens should have access to all data held about them, and see a complete log of access to that data by public servants, except where this would compromise national security or criminal investigations.
- F. Citizens should be able to opt out of data-sharing schemes such as the NHS 'spine' IT system.
- G. Informed consent, from parents in the case of children, should be given before biometric data is taken outside the context of the immigration and criminal justice systems.

Conference therefore calls for:

- 1. Immediate repeal of the Identity Cards Act 2006.
- 2. Destruction of all DNA samples taken from those not charged or convicted of an offence.
- 3. The Data Protection Act to be updated and amended to reflect the nature of the modern surveillance society:
 - a) To ensure that all CCTV is subject to appropriate regulation.
 - b) To allow individuals to see any information held on them by public and private sector bodies and correct any errors they find.
 - c) To require public and private bodies promptly to inform individuals and the Information Commissioner's Office when personal information is either lost or unlawfully disclosed to third parties and to explain to the Information Commissioner what steps they are taking to prevent a reoccurrence, and to give the Information Commissioner the power to levy financial penalties if there are repeated breaches of database security.
 - d) To require government to give the Information Commissioner's Office notification in advance of data-processing and data-mining procedures, to give clear justifications for such processes and to give the Information Commissioner's Office the power to block such processes in exceptional circumstances.
- 4. A review of the funding of the Information Commissioner's Office with increased powers of audit, the ability to 'name and shame' data controllers who breach the Act and in serious cases to fine data controllers.
- 5. The Information Commissioner to report to a newly created Joint Privacy Committee of both Houses of Parliament, based on the model of the National Audit Office and the Public Accounts Committee, which should also have the power to issue reports on the impact on privacy of all new bills.
- 6. Intercept warrants to be granted only after independent judicial authorisation.
- 7. Privacy impact statements to accompany all new bills and all changes to government data collection practices and IT systems.
- 8. The government to guarantee that any information it shares with other countries will be held in accordance with the law in the United Kingdom.

Policy motions

Applicability: Federal.

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FP11 Support for Children and Young People in Need

Eleven conference representatives

Conference notes with concern that:

- i) The new Children's Services initiative has yet to respond fully to the children and young people with the most complex needs.
- ii) The six-month target for completion of assessments for special educational needs (SEN) statements is often too long to meet the needs of young people and is frequently not being met.
- iii) There is no statutory funding for children and young people on 'Action' and 'Action Plus' on the SEN Code of Practice.
- iv) Too many children and young people with special educational needs placed in mainstream schools do not necessarily have an appropriate support package provided for them and could better achieve access to the curriculum in a special school or a school with more specialist facilities.
- v) 87% of primary school children and 60% of secondary school children who are excluded from school have autism, behavioural, emotional or other special educational needs.
- vii) There is insufficient teacher training covering special educational needs for both new and existing teachers.

Conference therefore calls on the Government to:

- a) Separate funding from assessment, and develop a multi-agency professional assessment framework which is statutorily funded and operates independently of the commissioning process; this assessment will specify the services that will then be costed and provided for that individual pupil's education.
- b) Ensure that every child's special educational needs are identified at the earliest possible time.
- c) Specify that the assessment framework be used to determine provision in as short a time as possible, working towards achieving and then reducing the present six-month target.
- d) To ensure the needs of SEN students are included within its plans to raise the school leaving age.
- e) Ensure the inclusion in initial teacher training courses, other routes to teaching qualification, and through continuous professional development of existing teachers and support staff, of comprehensive training in all types of special educational, social and health needs, difficulties and disabilities of children and young people.

Policy motions

Conference further calls for local government to:

1. Make the target of full inter-agency working in schools a reality by bringing together school-based social workers, mental health nurse practitioners, community police officers and youth offending teams (YOTs) in addition to existing provision.
2. Ensure that the development of children's services takes into account the inclusion needs of the children and young people most in need and with the most complex difficulties and disabilities.
3. Develop local alternatives to Pupil Referral Units under school regulations to enable those children and young people with misdiagnosed and/or undiagnosed needs, difficulties and disabilities to be supported in environments free from the stigma of failure caused by permanent exclusion from school.

Applicability: England.

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FP12 Tourism

Ten conference representatives

Conference notes:

- i) That a thriving tourism industry is an integral part of the economic and social well-being of Britain, through the provision of employment, investment, and tax revenue, for urban and rural areas.
- ii) The enormous value of tourism to the UK, as the seventh largest sector, with an annual direct visitor expenditure of £85bn, and an estimated employment force of 2.2 million people or 7.7% of the working population.

Conference regrets:

- A. The existence of a 'tourism deficit' which over the last 10 years has risen from £4.7bn to £18.0bn per annum.
- B. That Britain's global share of the tourism market has fallen by 16% over the last twenty years.
- C. The government's failure over the last ten years to provide additional funding for VisitBritain's overseas marketing budget, resulting in the recent loss of almost a fifth of its staff.

Conference reaffirms its commitment to the previous policy motion, 'Valuing Tourism and Tourists', and in particular the need to:

- I. Establish an English Tourist Board (VisitEngland) with similar responsibilities to those of Scotland and Wales.
- II. Uphold VisitBritain's role in promoting Britain overseas, while transferring the marketing of England to VisitEngland.

To improve the position of tourism, Conference believes that the following measures are necessary:

1. Reforming the structure of the bodies currently dealing with tourism by:

Policy motions

- a) Establishing a permanent Cabinet sub-committee on tourism.
 - b) Seeking to develop and strengthen the Tourism Alliance as an effective national trade association for operators in the tourism industry.
 - c) Encouraging the development of Local Destination Management Groups to form partnerships between local authorities, local businesses involved in the visitor economy, and education.
 - d) Encouraging regional tourist organisations to develop regional strategies.
2. Making sure that sustainability and the environment are important considerations in tourism by:
- a) Improving transport facilities to take account of climate change, damage to the environment attributable to tourism and service to the customer.
 - b) Encouraging the adoption of rigorous energy efficiency standards for accommodation services through 'WarmHomes' packages.
 - c) Improving the quality of public and private facilities to create a 'virtuous circle' in order for the visitor economy to benefit local communities and encourage sustainable tourism.
 - d) Encouraging more efficient use of scarce resources through improved cohesion and coordination in their use; this can be achieved by improving public/private partnerships at all levels and by the sharing of 'best' practice through Local Destination Management Groups.
3. Improving the quality of tourism by:
- a) Ensuring the adoption of a unified grading scheme for accommodation by means of a benefits scheme.
 - b) Improving the relevance, accuracy, consistency and timeliness of local, national, and international data.

Applicability: Federal, except for 1, 1 b), 1 c), 1 d), 2 b), 2 d) and 3 a), which are England only.

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FP13 Women in Prison

Women Liberal Democrats

Conference notes with concern that:

- a) The number of women in prison has more than doubled during the past decade, although there has been no corresponding rise in the number of women committing more serious crime.
- b) Nine out of ten are convicted of non-violent offences.
- c) 66 per cent of women prisoners are mothers, and each year it is estimated that nearly 18,000 children are separated from their mothers by imprisonment.
- d) The fact that as women are a small minority of the overall prison population, their particular circumstances and needs are often overlooked.
- e) Alternatives to prison are both more economical and have been proven to be more effective at cutting the reoffending rate.

Policy motions

Conference welcomes Baroness Corston's report of her review of women with particular vulnerabilities in the criminal justice system, published in March 2007.

Conference calls on the government urgently to implement Baroness Corston's findings, specifically:

1. That repeat crime can be cut substantially by supporting women to overcome addictions and mental health problems and also by encouraging support mechanisms that help to keep women away from crime.
2. Ensuring that there is a strong, consistent message from the top of government, with full reasons, in support of its stated policy that prison is not the right place for women offenders who pose no risk to the public.
3. Providing a high-level champion for women to ensure that the needs of women offenders and those at risk of offending are met.
4. Setting up an inter-departmental ministerial group to steer change for women who offend or are at risk of offending.
5. Accelerating preparations by all criminal justice agencies to implement the new gender equality duty and radically transform the way they deliver services for women.
6. Extending the Together Women Programme to establish a much larger network of women's community centres, some with residential provision, and committing within six months to a 10-year programme to replace existing women's prisons with small local custodial units.
7. Ending routine strip searching in women's prisons.
8. Improving sanitation conditions in women's prisons, as called for by the Chief Inspector of Prisons, as a matter of urgency.
9. Urgently to review the cross-agency support currently provided for recently released women prisoners.

Applicability: England.

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Business motions

FB1 2008 Membership Subscriptions

Federal Executive

Conference notes that:

- a) Last year Conference created a new concessionary subscription rate for those in receipt of (or entitled to) state benefits other than child benefit and the state pension.
- b) By creating this new subscription rate, the party can move the minimum subscription towards the amount that covers the annual cost of servicing members and supporting the basic membership structure without excluding from membership people unable to afford this amount.
- c) In the English Party, which applies the subscription levels set by the Federal Conference, the annual cost of servicing members and supporting the basic membership structure of the Party is £806,345 or £13.12 per member (2006 English Party Budget).

Business motions

- d) The current subscription rates are:
- i) Concessionary and LDYS – £6.
 - ii) Special Freshers' Fair Events – £1.
 - iii) Minimum – £9.
 - iv) Recommended – £45.

Conference resolves that:

1. The recommended subscription rate shall be £48.
2. The minimum subscription rate shall be £10.
3. The concessionary subscription rate for those who are, or entitled to be, in receipt of state benefits other than child benefit or state pension shall remain unchanged at £6.
4. Those paying their subscription through the Youth and Student SAO shall pay a minimum of £6 or, where a new member joins at a Freshers Fair event, a special introductory rate of £1 (both unchanged).
5. Nothing in these motions prevents a State Party from setting a recommended rate or rates of subscription by its internal procedures which is higher than that agreed by the Federal Conference.

Conference further resolves that the Federal Levy on new members shall be 0% of the subscription paid and the Federal Levy on renewal subscriptions shall be 42%.

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Consultative sessions

Consultative sessions provide a less formal mechanism than the full-scale conference debates for conference representatives and other party members to participate in the party's policy-making process. Each session examines a particular topic, and may hear contributions from invited outside speakers and party members. The consultative sessions will take place on the Sunday morning of conference. It is intended that any background consultation papers for the sessions will be circulated with the Final Agenda.

It is currently planned to hold consultative sessions on the subjects of:

- Europe
- Further and Higher Education
- Private Finance Initiative
- Housing

Conference representatives and other party members are invited to attend these sessions.

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Brighton city centre



Main conference venues

- 1 Brighton Centre**
- 2 Registration (Brighton Centre)**
Russel Road entrance
- 3 The Grand**
- 4 Holiday Inn Brighton Seafront**
- 5 Old Ship Hotel**
- 6 Quality Hotel**
- 7 Thistle Hotel**
- 8 Hilton Brighton Metropole**

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