



**LIBERAL
DEMOCRATS**

A Vote for Real Change

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A Foreword by the Leader of the Liberal Democrats, Harry Saxon



“For too long we’ve seen the status quo, Labour and the Conservatives, the same policies and the same failures. It is time to choose an alternative. It is time to choose something better”

Dear Reader,

For the first time in a generation you have a unique opportunity to vote for change in an election that really matters.

This election is one that could change British politics forever. We have a Labour Government that is old, tired and been in power for far too long, a weak Conservative Party that has gone through failure after failure. Does it make you angry that the status quo make the same mistakes and the same failures over and over again? Do you grow tired of the same two parties, fighting it out with each other and offering no real solution?

Don't you wish you could vote for a party that can offer change, a vibrant approach to tackling this country's problems?

It is time for stability

Over the last parliament we have seen both Labour and the Conservatives divided. Labour under the leadership of Diana Edwards has faced fierce and frequent criticism from within her own party, we saw more recently the break off of several Labour MPs to form a protest party against Labour. The Conservatives, three general elections later and now on their fifth leader, Hague, Duncan-Smith, Howard, Rackham all failed to rejuvenate the Conservatives. From the days of Rackham in which we saw the party in civil war to their latest leader, Emily Greenwood, the Conservatives have failed to speak up for the British people and be an effective opposition to this reckless government.

The Liberal Democrats are the **only** party out of the three main parties **to remain united**.

It is time for change

At this election only you can make the difference. The Liberal Democrats over the last parliament have proven we can get things done. Against all odds, it was the Liberal Democrats who passed the Iraq Inquiry Bill, we forced the government to listen and to respect the will of the British people, the job that you elected us to do. Against all odds, it was the Liberal Democrats who made the government think again over the basic state pension, ensuring millions of Britons got a respectable amount in retirement. This is just the beginning of what the Liberal Democrats can achieve.

It is time to make a stand. Don't accept broken promises, your vote is important, make it count.

When it comes to political parties, Liberal Democrats are different. We are the only party that can offer real change to Britain, not broken promises from red and blue. The Liberal Democrats have been your voice in parliament and will be your voice in Government. Only the Liberal Democrats will make the tax system fairer and simpler. The Liberal Democrats will withdraw our forces from Iraq through a phased withdrawal and bring in UN peacekeepers. The Liberal Democrats will ensure this country has a NHS it can be proud of, more beds, more doctors and nurses, waiting times down. The Liberal Democrats will rebuild our education system to ensure every child can read and write, regardless of their background. The Liberal Democrats will ensure our citizens are safe through effective policing and launch a crackdown on crime.

Other parties have dismissed the Liberal Democrats as not important enough to form the next Government or run the country, Together, we can prove them wrong.

Together, we can make a difference.

Yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink on a white rectangular background. The signature reads "Harry Saxon" in a cursive, slightly slanted script.

Harry Saxon
Leader of the Liberal Democrats

Economy

Investment and Financial Responsibility



“The Liberal Democrats are the only party taking financial responsibility seriously... while still investing in public services, making pensions and benefits fairer for all, and reforming and lowering local taxes”

Simranjit Singh Jhandai, Liberal Democrat Shadow Chancellor

Investing for the future, not leaving debt for the future

When Labour came to power in 1997, in order to rebuild the economic credibility they had lost in the 70s and 80s, Gordon Brown instituted a set of Golden Rules. One of these rules was that the National Debt should never be greater than 40% of GDP. The country has to pay interest on the national debt, just like any other debt, so it's important to follow this Golden Rule to make sure the doesn't reach dangerous levels that we can't afford. Whatever we don't pay for today is just debt being passed down for our children to pay instead.

It's no good passing down a healthy economy to our children if we have nothing to show for it, however. We must invest in our schools, hospital and other public services so that they can continue to serve Britain for years to come.

What Labour says

Labour cut the maintenance budgets for schools and the NHS, meaning children will be trying to learn in sub-standard buildings and patients may be unable to get treatment because the equipment isn't working. Under Labour, the country's finances are on track to break Gordon Brown's Golden Rules, as the national debt will breach 40% of GDP by 2010.

What the Conservatives say

Under Conservative plans, the national debt would still break to 40% of GDP ceiling by 2010. Despite this, they planned to create only a handful of new schools and barely any additional NHS capacity.

What WE say

The Liberal Democrats will give above inflation increases in the budgets of schools and the NHS, so that they can continue to build for the future. We will continue with Liberal Democrats plans reduce the deficit in order to avoid the National Debt crashing into the 40% barrier as under the other parties' plans.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Institute a 50% Top Rate of income tax in incomes over £100,000 per year. This will affect only the top 1% of taxpayers, and will help the country to make the investments it needs and to keep the debt down.
- Make no other increases to Income Tax, National Insurance or VAT
- Protect the maintenance budgets for schools and hospitals from Labour's cuts
- Increase rail capital spending to restore key upgrades previously postponed or cancelled by Labour
- Oppose further expansion of airports in the South East of England
- End the waste and inefficiency at the Department of Trade and Industry by scrapping the department. This will stop interference in the economy and subsidises failing companies at taxpayers' expense and allow us to invest into other programs to truly help our economy.

Unemployment and Poverty Reduction



“With unemployment and inflation both on the rise, life's getting tougher for people out of work. Under Labour, things are only getting tougher still, as the unemployed are shafted with an unnecessary cut. Things don't have to be this way. The Liberal Democrats will protect Unemployment Benefit.”

Simranjit Singh Jhandai, Liberal Democrat Shadow Chancellor

Fairness in social security

A functioning social safety net to help those in trouble is vital to a strong democracy. This means giving the unemployed help up as they look to get back into work, or looking after parents so that they can look after their children. With rising unemployment putting more people out of work, and rising inflation damaging the value of fixed or limited incomes, the need for that protection is felt most keenly now.

What Labour says

Labour's cuts to Unemployment Benefit will put thousands of people into poverty. With unemployment rates rising, it is of even greater importance that people out of work receive our support to get back into work.

What the Conservatives say

The Conservatives used their plans to prioritise Capital Gains Tax cuts for the wealthy instead of putting more money into our social security system.

What WE say

The Liberal Democrats believe in a social security system providing a strong safety net for those in need. We won't follow Labour's savage cut to Unemployment Benefit, because we understand people need that helping hand while they're getting back into work.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Simplify the over-complicated patchwork of tax credits and means-tested benefits, making it easier for people to get the help they need while making it harder for people to scam the system
- Protect the payment of Child Benefit for every child.
- Focus social security where it will have the greatest benefit.
- Encourage and support Small and Medium-sized Enterprises, because they are the jobs engines of our economy.

Fair Pensions for Everyone



“When the House of Commons, including Labour backbenchers, defeated the Government to endorse the Liberal Democrats pensions policy, the Labour Government failed to take notice. Now you can use your voice and your vote to secure a fair and valuable pension for all”
Simranjit Singh Jhandai, Liberal Democrat Shadow Chancellor

Protecting the value of the Basic State Pension

Over the last 25 years, under both Conservative and Labour governments, the value of the Basic State Pension has been progressively eroding. Compared to rising wages, the Basic State Pension is now at its lowest value for many decades.

What Labour says

In this year's Budget, Labour froze the Basic State Pension. By comparison, wages grew by more than 2% in real terms, causing pensions to fall even further behind in value.

What the Conservatives say

In their budgetary plans, the Conservative's plans would freeze the Basic State Pension. By comparison, wages grew by more than 2% in real terms, causing pensions to fall even further behind.

What WE say

The Basic State Pension should never grow more slowly than wages. The Liberal Democrats will increase the Basic State Pension by at least wage growth or inflation, whichever is higher. If Labour has obeyed Parliament and followed our policy, there would now be 100,000 fewer pensioners in poverty.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Restore the link between pensions and earnings.
- Continue to increase the Second State Pension and Pension Credit
- Give additional boost to pensions whenever possible, in order to begin to counteract the value it has lost over decades of Labour and Conservative government.

Scrapping the Unfair Council Tax



“Labour's decisions in the Budget will leave every local council in the country worse off. By contrast, the Liberal Democrats Shadow Budget will ensure no council services are compromised whilst we also deliver fairer, lower local taxes that continue to work for local councils.”

Simranjit Singh Jhandai, Liberal Democrat Shadow Chancellor

Extraordinary unfairness

Council Tax is an unfair and regressive tax, which takes no regard for someone's ability to pay. The poorest households pay more than three times as much of their income in Council Tax as the richest do. The poorest pensioners pay more than six times as much of their income as the richest non-pensioners. That is unfairness on an extraordinary scale.

What Labour says

Labour continue to defend the unfair Council Tax, whilst cutting £500 million out of council budgets for next year, forcing councils to make cuts to frontline public services.

What the Conservatives say

The Conservatives continue to defend the unfair Council Tax.

What WE say

The Liberal Democrats will replace Council Tax with a Local Income Tax. Your local taxes will be reformed so that your taxes are based on your ability to pay, not on the type of property you live in. This will save the average person hundreds of pounds a year.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Protect local authority budgets from Labour's cuts.
- Increase the grant given to local councils, so that local taxes can be cut.

Immigration and Asylum



“Coming to Britain as a refugee myself, I know the fantastic impact that immigrant communities have had on Britain. The Liberal Democrats are committed to ensuring that Britain continues to benefit from managed migration, and to provide a welcoming haven for those fleeing persecution.”
Simranjit Singh Jhandai, Liberal Democrat Shadow Home Secretary

Reform of Britain’s immigration system

Economic migrants have enriched Britain, both economically and culturally. Immigration provides a significant benefit to Britain by providing the workers and the types of skills that are in short supply in our economy. However, it is necessary to control immigration to ensure the performance of our public services and our jobs market.

What Labour says

Immigration is not a priority for Labour, as it did not feature in their plans during the year and a half since the last election.

What the Conservatives say

Despite obsessing over defining what the precise level of immigration ought to be, the Conservatives' economic plans include freezing the budgets of immigration and border control agencies, hampering their ability to make the reforms that are needed.

What WE say

The Liberal Democrats will introduce a regional-based system for immigration. This will ensure that migrants are directed to the parts of the country where these workers and their skills are needed, and where public services are able to cope with the increased population.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Secure Britain's borders by establishing a National Border Force with police powers.
- Crackdown on rogue employers who profit from illegal labour by exploiting immigrants and undercutting British workers

Britain's duty to refugees

Unlike economic migrants moving to Britain for a better life, refugees are fleeing war or persecution in their home country. These people deserve a fair and fast assessment of their asylum application so they can try to begin living a stable, normal life as quickly as possible. Instead, applications can take months to be processed. One fifth of rejections are overturned on appeal, adding delay and worry to an already stressful situation. Throughout the time that an application is being considered, asylum seekers are forbidden from

The Liberal Democrats will

- Transfer the assessment of asylum claims to a dedicated, independent tribunal, as has been successful in Canada
- Work with our European allies to create a co-ordinated, EU-wide asylum system, which will ensure that the responsibility for refugees is shared fairly between member states.

- Allow asylum seekers to work while their application is pending, saving taxpayers' money and while helping them toward the normal life they are searching for.

Crime



“The Liberal Democrats stopped Labour’s ID card scheme, saving hundreds of millions of pounds a year, which would be much better spent employing more front-line police officers or investing in prison education. That’s how you stop and prevent crime, not by curtailing civil liberties”
Simranjit Singh Jhandai, Liberal Democrat Shadow Home Secretary

Stopping and preventing crime

With crime continuing to rise and an already overcrowded prisons system, Britain needs a comprehensive policy to tackle the problem. Action is needed both to catch criminals to stop crime and to prevent crime by reducing reoffending.

What Labour says

Labour only abandoned the disastrous ID card policy following pressure from the Liberal Democrats. Despite this, they still enacted many other draconian laws since 1997, which did far more to restrict our civil liberties than to reduce crime.

What the Conservatives say

Conservative plans would freeze police pay, freeze spending on rehabilitation and allow prison overcrowding to remain out of control

What WE say

To stop crime, the Liberal Democrats will hire thousands more frontline police officers during the next Parliament. To cut crime, the Liberal Democrats will invest in increased resources for prison education, which is proven to reduce reoffending by ensuring prisoners don't need to return to crime after their sentence.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Oppose ID card schemes in exchange for hiring more police officers.
- Focus on catching drug dealers to stop the supply of illegal drugs, instead of wasting time chasing individual drug users.
- Enable hospitals to share details of gun and knife incidents with police so they can crack down on those crimes.
- Encourage courts to give non-violent offenders with short sentences a strictly enforced community sentence instead, which are better at cutting reoffending and will free up prison for the violent criminals who need to be off our streets.

Foreign Policy



“It is time we took action to get our troops home. Therefore the Liberal Democrats will be announcing a comprehensive phased Iraq withdrawal timetable in the coming days. Its aim: to have every one of our troops out of Iraq by the end of 2007”

Liberal Democrat Leader Harry Saxon - at the Cardiff protest against the latest deployment of troops to Iraq

A plan for a phased Iraq withdrawal

Iraq was a war that should never have happened. Whilst the damage has been done, Iraq now has a government and it is time for our troops to start withdrawing.

What Labour says

Labour says specifying an “arbitrary timetable” is wrong. Labour initially opted for a phased withdrawal, but now to quote Diana Edwards, our troops are staying “until the job is done”

What the Conservatives say

Flip-flopped over Iraq. Under Rackham, troops would be out by 2010, then it was 2011 after that newsnight interview. Under Emily Greenwood, they’ve now adopted the same line as labour.

What WE say

- A phased withdrawal by the end of 2007. Under the Liberal Democrats, the first allocation of troops would start withdrawing after the general election, with additional troops withdrawing in the months ahead.
- The Liberal Democrats would work with the United Nations and the Security Council to ensure UN peacekeepers are sent to the region to monitor the situation and keep the peace.

The Liberal Democrats will:

- Co-ordinate a plan to withdraw from Afghanistan. The Liberal Democrats will explore a withdrawal from Afghanistan, which neither labour or the Tories have a plan for.
- Continue to put Britain at the heart of Europe. Ensuring that Britain has the best opportunities, prosperity and security.
- Continue to support Europe in its aim for reform. Whilst we recognise the result of the referendum, we will continue our work with Europe as a member state to ensure the organisation continues to improve.
- Work with our neighbours to create new jobs, eliminating trade barriers.
- Ensure the European Union uses its influence in other areas of foreign policy. As part of Europe, Britain has a stronger voice as part of an organisation and build relations with world leaders such as Russia and China.
- The continuation to find a peaceful solution to the Israeli-Palestinian conflict.

NHS



“Taxpayer’s money has been invested into the NHS by a tired Labour Government, and yet people are still waiting for treatment, waiting times are still increasing and people just aren’t getting the care they need. It’s time to change that.”

Liberal Democrat Leader Harry Saxon

A plan for the NHS

The NHS was conceived by William Beveridge, a Liberal, and bought in by a Labour Government. A Government that was vastly different from the one we have today. It is important the NHS focuses on the patient, the care, ensuring the highest possible quality. Let’s focus on the patients.

What Labour says

A major unfair increase to the prescription charge, justified by the PM herself that tough decisions needed to be made. More money into the NHS, but still refuses to publish waiting time targets.

What the Conservatives say

Under-hiring of NHS staff very desperately needed, increasing waiting times and overcrowding. Another plan destined to fail.

What WE say

Reverse the unfair increase to the prescription charge, more hospitals, more beds, more staff. Let's lower the waiting times and make the NHS a system Britain can be proud of.

The Liberal Democrats will

- As part of our plan to hire 38,000 doctors, nurses, support, and admin by 2008, we will add nearly 9,500 members of staff to the NHS this year, a whopping eighteen times the amount compared to the Tories.
- a 4.5% pay raise from the previous year for the people who look after our patients - higher than the Conservatives.
- Reduce overcrowding, with 17,000 new hospital beds into our clinics and medical centers and in conjunction with more staff working will cut down the average wait time by a whole day, as well as bring the overcrowding index down
- Free eye and dental health checkups, reducing the risk of illness going undetected.
- Prevention is as important as care - giving people the information they need to stay healthy, public health campaigns.
- Fight hikes in prescription charges that hit people who just need their medications.
- Publish waiting times for tests and scans – figures which the Labour Government has refused to make public.
- Sharply reducing centralised targets and bureaucracy, replacing them with entitlements guaranteeing that patients get diagnosis and treatment on time. If they do not, the NHS will pay for the treatment to be provided privately.

Education



“The Liberal Democrats have a plan to scrap tuition fees and top-fees in their entirety. Under this policy no one will be denied the opportunity of a university education because of fear of debt. We’re fighting for our students by championing free education, not fee education.”

Dr. Thomas Chapman, Liberal Democrat Education Spokesman

Supporting Free Education, Not Fee Education

Since implementation under Blair, tuition fees have hit our students hard. Failing to solve the issue of increasing costs in education, fees have increased at an exponential rate that has been deterring more and more students from higher education.

What Labour says

Diana Edwards has continued in the footsteps of Blair’s broken promises in upholding the policy of tuition fees as well of top-up fees.

What the Conservatives say

The Conservatives, in light of their previous promise to scrap tuition fees, offered support for tuition fees within a year of their previous pledge.

What WE say

Scrap tuition and top-up fees in higher education to prevent the burden of excessive debt and ensure that no student is denied a university education due to costs. We will work to solve the issue of university funding by guaranteeing the amounts they need, paid for from part of our 50% rate on incomes over £100,000 because they can afford it.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Increase the number of hours in free nursery education for children 0 to 5.
- Tackle overtesting and stagnant test scores by reforming our testing system by
- Directly invest in our education system now by scrapping the Child Trust Fund, a one-off cash windfall which won't payout until 2020, and instead cut down on class sizes and hire more teachers to address the recruitment crisis.
- Hire over 17,000 teachers and staff to tackle the recruitment crisis that our primary and secondary schools are facing.
- Grant teachers a 4.5% pay raise to encourage more careers in education.
- Combine GCSE, A-level and vocational programmes of study to allow students to combine vocational and academic learning.
- Pass the Education Freedom Act, which will ban politicians from becoming involved in the day-to-day running of schools.
- Establish a fully independent Educational Standards Authority (ESA) with real powers to stand up to ministers and restore confidence in standards.
- Replace wasteful quangos (the Skills Funding Agency and the Higher Education Funding Council for England) with a single Council for Adult Skills and Higher Education.
- Maintain the right of children to free transport within two miles of their primary school and three miles of their secondary school.
- Fund 15,000 new places on Foundation Degree courses and fully fund the off-the-job costs of adult apprenticeships, which currently have to be met by employers, for one year.

Constitutional Affairs



Electoral Reform - Change the way Parliament is elected

Parliament is currently elected by the First Past the Post System, which is unfair and doesn't fully represent the wider public vote. First Past the Post has shown to favour the bigger two parties, Labour and the Conservatives.

What Labour say

Commissioned a review, which recommended changing the electoral system, but have done nothing about it in the 8 years since.

What the Conservatives say

The Conservatives are fully opposed to changing the electoral system for parliament and will uphold First Past the Post which results in wasted votes.

What WE say

The Liberal Democrats will present a referendum on changing the electoral system from FPTP to the Single Transferable Vote. STV gives voters more choice than any other system and fewer votes are wasted, like they are on FPTP

The Liberal Democrats will

- Support a directly elected House of Lords.
- Ensure a War Powers bill is presented to Parliament. This would mean the Government would have to get the approval of Parliament before conducting military action in the future.
- Strengthen the powers of Parliament to scrutinise the government through select committees.
- Introduce a Civil Service Act to provide a barrier to politicisation of the civil service.
- Cut back on excessive Whitehall departments, bureaucracy, and quangos while promoting local offices to increase efficiency.
- Include local, regional, and European elections in our implementation of STV, so that officials at all levels truly represent their constituents.

Defence



“The Liberal Democrats fundamentally believe in multilateral nuclear disarmament, but we also believe that Trident can be scaled down from four to three nuclear submarines, thereby maintaining a deterrent but leading the way on nuclear non-proliferation”

Harry Saxon, Leader of the Liberal Democrats

Trident - The nuclear deterrent

Trident is the United Kingdom’s nuclear deterrent to protect the nation from a potential attack. In reality and to this day, it has never been used and there is no longer a need to have such a deterrent.

What Labour says

Labour says that Trident is here to stay. They are adamant that Trident should remain and resist attempts to change that. Savings from one nuclear submarine is not going to make a difference to the capability of the deterrent.

What the Conservatives say

The Conservatives are adamant that Trident should remain and resists any attempts to change that, just like labour. Again, savings from one nuclear submarine is not going to make a difference to the capability of the deterrent.

What WE say

- Stand by our commitment to scrap one Trident submarine, meaning three Trident submarines would form the deterrent and not four. This would save money in the long run which can then be spent on other priorities.
- Scrap the two aircraft carriers commissioned by Labour. These aircraft carriers are a waste of money and this money can be spent on other priorities.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Hold a full Strategic Defence and Security Review (SDSR) to establish the best alternative for Britain's overall security.
- Give a pay rise to the lower ranks of the armed forces.
- Push for multilateral nuclear disarmament, starting with engaging with other countries on arms reduction talks
- Continue to work with Allies such as the EU and NATO on national defence.
- Hold an immediate Strategic Security and Defence Review (SSDR) to ensure that Britain deploys its resources to face the most serious threats to its citizens' security and well-being.

Housing



“Labour’s plan for housing is flawed. They just aren’t doing enough for the housing market.”

Harry Saxon, Leader of the Liberal Democrats.

The housing Crisis - what needs to be done.

Affordable housing just simply isn't affordable under this Government. It makes a mockery of the name. It is time someone did something about it.

What Labour says

Taken little action to solve the affordable housing crisis. Some amendments to stamp duty but little real action has been taken.

What the Conservatives say

Have attacked labour for letting house prices go out of control, but have failed to deliver a plan.

What WE say

The Liberal Democrats will make available public sector land currently owned by the Ministry of Defence, the Department of Health and English Partnerships. This will make 100,000 more homes available for rent and affordable purchase through shared ownership schemes for local people.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Reuse empty buildings and brownfield sites, protecting greenfield areas and damaging the countryside.
- Continue to raise the stamp duty threshold, improving on our action in our shadow budget, taking many home buyers out of paying altogether.
- Second home buyers will be required to obtain planning permission before turning another full-time home into a holiday home.
- Make sure that repossession is always the last resort by changing the powers of the courts.
- Make sure every new home is fully energy efficient by improving building regulations.
- Begin a national programme to insulate more homes paid for by the savings from lower energy bills.

Environment



“Our Environment is important. It is our way of life, the air we breathe. It is vital that we don't jeopardise our environment. The Liberal Democrats have a plan to ensure a cleaner and a healthier environment.

Harry Saxon, Leader of the Liberal Democrats

Tackling climate change

Climate Change is a major issue that is being neglected, it's time someone stood up to tackle it.

What Labour says

Whilst Labour have pledged to meet the target, their performance has been patchy. The 'passenger patronage' on Britain's trains increased by only 5% before the last election and not much has been done in this Parliament for the environment.

What the Conservatives say

Have not said much at all on the environment, and has the lowest funding for the Department of the Environment than any other party.

What WE say

We will ensure we meet our targets set. The Liberal Democrats will ensure 20% of UK electricity generated from renewable sources by 2020 and aiming for a global goal of 60% reduction in carbon dioxide emissions by 2050.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Explore greener renewable sources of energy.
- Meet national targets outlined in the Kyoto Protocol
- Change the Climate Change Levy into a Carbon Tax, making it more effective at discouraging the use of the polluting fuels and harmful energy sources.
- Cut pollution by reducing domestic waste and promoting recycling.
- Agree to not replace existing nuclear power stations nearing the end of their safe and economic operating lives to instead promote renewable alternates.
- Unite those areas of government with the biggest impact on the environment in a single Environment, Transport and Energy department.
- Support the right of communities to create GM-free zones.
- Establish an Animal Protection Commission, bringing all animal welfare matters under the responsibility of a dedicated, expert body.

Transport



“It is time we got Britain moving. The Conservatives completely ruined our railways through privatisation, and Labour are just failing to deliver. Services have been cut and delays have doubled across our railways. What we need is change, and the Liberal Democrats will deliver it.”

Harry Saxon, Leader of the Liberal Democrats

Modernising our Railway

Labour have failed to fix the problems left by the Conservatives, it is time our transport system is revolutionised, ensuring commuters can get to work and home with very little inconvenience.

What Labour says

Have examined how to improve our rail system, but has done little to solve the problems introduced by the Conservatives.

What the Conservatives say

Privatisation of rail has been tried and tested, and has failed, leaving us with the many problems we have today.

What WE say

Streamline the system. Fewer, larger franchises and longer contracts for more investment and better services. Prioritise safety at stations and restore key rail upgrades that have been neglected by Labour.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Oppose airport expansion to current airports in the South East.
- Provide an incentive for owners of cars that pollute less.
- Car scrappage scheme to scrap older vehicles, to kick start the car market and encourage drivers to use greener, newer vehicles.
- Investment in our public transport system throughout towns and cities.

Equality



"I believe we should have a country where anyone can get married, regardless of sexuality. Why is it that homosexual couples can't?"

Liberal Democrat Leader Harry Saxon

Gay Marriage - It's time to adopt it

Long before civil partnerships were introduced, many have called for homosexual couples to be allowed to get married. Those calls have been going unheard, it's time to change that.

What Labour says

labour Support the idea of Gay Marriage but have yet to make this law themselves.

What the Conservatives say

Opposed to a proposal by Labour in the last Parliament to adopt it.

What WE say

We fully support Gay Marriage and will allow homosexual couples to get married.

The Liberal Democrats will

- Introduce a Single Equality Act to outlaw all unfair discrimination, (including on the grounds of race, gender, religion or belief, sexual orientation, disability, age or gender identity), thus giving equal protection for all.
- Clamp down on hate crime, particularly those involving sexuality
- Introduce a British Bill of Rights
- Close the gender pay gap, ensuring equality across the pay scale by gender.
- Introduce a comprehensive new Equality Act to bring all discrimination law together into a single, consistent framework.

