London Liberal Democrats

Toolkit for helping
local parties increase
their diversity & inclusion

What's in the toolkit

What's this toolkit for?

This toolkit has been written to complement our earlier publication '*A Guide to increasing diversity and inclusion for local parties*' which is available on the London Liberal Democrat website.

Both publications are designed to help local Lib Dem parties increase the diversity of their membership, and of the people who vote for them.

Here you'll find clear examples of the activities and strategies that you can use to ensure that your local party is actively and effectively reaching out to the diversity populations that make up our amazing city.

Top Tips

1. **Create a 'Diversity Action – Plan' -** like your campaign plan, with SMART objectives and key milestones for achievement.
2. **Create Diversity Lead on your Exec** – empower someone on your Exec to take action… but don't leave it just to them to do it all.
3. **Survey your membership** – as local parties grow in size it's hard to know everyone, so do an annual membership survey… ask people about themselves, and what they want to do for your party.
4. **Make your Exec 'diversity aware'** – unconscious bias too often plays a role in our selection processes, for internal elections and candidate selections. Use the ALDC's (https://www.aldc.org/) guides and templates for organising any selection processes, and ensure your panels are as diverse as your population.
5. **Reach out to all of your members from diverse backgrounds** – make sure that you're engaging with all of your members. And if you find some groups are under-represented, create opportunities aimed specifically at them, e.g. training sessions for BME women.
6. **Map your local communities** – create a locality map so that you know all the different communities and groups in the areas your local party covers, including faith and special interest groups.
7. **Get out!** – Encourage your members to link with the community groups across your patch, and engage with them as Lib Dems.
8. **Look like your potential voters –** make sure your public profile is as diverse as you want your party to be. Photographs in leaflets, Focuses, newsletters and webpages should display as wide a range of people as possible.

Creating an action plan

A Diversity Action Plan is the first and most important thing all local parties need to do, but creating it shouldn't become a bureaucratic challenge.

Here are some key points to cover:

What should be in it?

- Everything you're going to do to improve diversity and inclusion across your party: activities, publications, events.

- Timescales for when you're going to do things, including 'milestones', i.e. dates for when they'll be completed.

- Identified leads or groups for making things happen, e.g. your diversity lead, your chair, your diversity task group.

- Success measures, so that you'll know whether you've achieved what you intended to, and if you don't to help you decide what to do next.

How long should it run for?

Ideally it should run for as long as it's going to take, which will only become clear when you start to plan. However, as local party Exec Officers are elected on an annual basis you need to create a plan that takes into account 'annual turnover'.

One way to resolve these two pressures is to create a plan that fits the timeframe you need to span, say three years, but that builds in annual review points to connect with your Exec election timeframe, for example the first meeting of each new Exec.

You should also make sure that everyone in your local party is aware of what you're doing, and what their role is. You can do this by including the plan, and updates on how it's going, in your regular member communications, e.g. member newsletters or communications from the Chair. This will also mean that anyone standing of election to your Exec will already be aware of the Diversity Action Plan, and its importance to your overall goal of getting Lib Dems elected.

More information

We've included a very basic template at the end of this guide. The most important thing is to make is simple to follow, and that it is seen as a living document, to be updated as you realise each objective.

Mapping your membership

One of the most important things on your plan should be a membership survey. Members are the life-blood of our party, and vital to our succeeding on our key aim, of getting Lib Dem elected into office.

But unless we know what our membership looks like it's hard to know how well we're doing to reflect the diversity of London's population. Member surveys are also a great way to find out what motivates your members politically, and what activities and events will get them engaged and campaigning with you.

What should you be asking?

Many people are uncomfortable with providing specific demographic information, so the best way to find out what your membership looks like is to ask in general terms where you can.

The most important things for our purposes are the protected characteristics:

- *Age* – use broad categories:

    18   18 – 24   25 – 34   35 – 44   45 – 54   55 – 64   65 – 74   75+

- *Gender* – try to be inclusive, and do allow people the choice about responding:

Female   Male   Non-binary/ third gender   Prefer to self-describe   Prefer not to say

- *Ethnicity* – asking for people's ethnic origins can be quite a sensitive issue, and so any question must explain why you're asking, i.e. to ensure the local party fully understands the make-up of its membership, and is able to ensure it represents everyone fully and equitably in its activities and opportunities.

    The list of possible ethnic groups can be huge, and you may wish to amend it to reflect any specific communities you know exist in your areas. However, a basic list should include the following:

    ✓ Black African
    ✓ Black British
    ✓ Black Caribbean
    ✓ Black - other
    ✓ Mixed white/black African
    ✓ Mixed white/black Caribbean
    ✓ Indian
    ✓ Pakistani
    ✓ Bangladeshi
    ✓ Chinese
    ✓ Any other Asian background
    ✓ Mixed white/Asian
    ✓ Mixed black/Asian
    ✓ White British
    ✓ White European
    ✓ Any other white background
    ✓ Any other mixed background
    ✓ Any other ethnicity
    ✓ Prefer not to say

- *Sexual Orientation* – this is different from gender identity, the key categories being:

  ✓ Heterosexual or straight

  ✓ Gay

  ✓ Lesbian

  ✓ Bisexual

  You should also allow people to provide their own category, as with gender.

- *Disability and long-term health conditions* – this can be as simple as asking people if they have a disability, long-term illness or health condition, and is very helpful to ensuring that you take account of the access needs of your members when planning events and activities.

You can also ask about religious beliefs or affiliations, although this is not a key monitoring question.

How should you be asking?

There are lots of ways to survey your members. The most obvious is a paper survey, sent to everyone on your membership list. This is an expensive way of collecting information though, and so is probably reserved for members you don't have emails for, or who aren't able to complete things on-line. ***You'll find an example of a Federal diversity questionnaire as an appendix.***

You could also use *Connect* to set-up a phone bank if you want to run your survey as a member interaction activity. You can set-up a questionnaire via Connect and create a Virtual Phone Bank (VPB) which can then be used to call your members and record their responses.

This method is less expensive that a paper survey, and has the added bonus of creating an opportunity to actually speak to members. The downsides are the numbers of people you need to make the calls within a fixed timeframe, and time it can take to actually contact members, so if you choose this option you should make sure you plan with well. Contact our London Campaigns officer, Marcus Foster at Marcus.Foster@libdems.org.uk for more information and help with set-up.

Perhaps one of the best ways is 'on-line', using software such as *Survey Monkey* (https://www.surveymonkey.co.uk), *TypeForm* (http://www.typeform.com) or *Googleforms* (https://www.google.co.uk/forms/about/). They each have their own pluses and minuses, so it's very much up to personal preference as to which product you use.

And don't forget, if you use have a *NationBuilder* website you can use its survey function to create a survey that you can send out via a Blast to your members. More information on that is here http://nationbuilder.com/how_to_create_a_survey

What else can you ask?

Never waste an opportunity to ask members what they can do for your party.

- *Events & Activities*: ask them about what kind of activities and events they would like your party to hold, and if there are any locations they think would be good to use.
- *Skills & Experience*: ask them about what skills, knowledge, and experience they have that they'd like to offer to your local party.
- *Interests*: ask them about things that interest them other than politics. This kind of information can be really helpful to ensuring you understand the types of issues that might motivate your members to become more involved.

What should you do with the information?

Collecting this information shouldn't be an end in itself.

- *Plan with your strengths:* look at the diversity of people, skills, knowledge, and experience and experience that you have in your local party, and plan activities and events that make good use of them.
  - o Do you have lots of members from one community or ethnic group? Are they fully represented on your Exec and in your campaigning activities?
  - o Do you have members who are leading lights on specific issues or topics, such as LGBTQ or disability rights? Are you giving the they support they need to advance their activities, and does your local community know that they're a Lib Dem?
- *Address your gaps:* look at any gaps you have, and develop plans for how you to tackle them.
  - o Is there a large community from one country or ethnicity in your patch that you don't have any engagement with? Are you 'talking to them' with them with your activities and literature? Could you do some leaflets in other languages?
  - o Are you missing out on community activities or festivals that could be used to promote Lib Dem messaging on key issues or policies?
  - o Are your campaigning activities reflecting the full range of issues that your members are interested in?

> Your membership survey should be a regular event, but it shouldn't become a 'zombie' exercise. The data is time sensitive, so it's vital that you review and act upon the information as soon as you can after the survey closes.

Making your Exec diverse & diversity aware

Ensuring your Exec understands the importance of diversity is vital to enabling your local party to engage as fully as possible with the communities you want to serve, and win their support and their votes.

Here are some the ways you can meet this challenge:

- **Have a Diversity Officer on your Exec:** having someone taking the lead on diversity and inclusion can help to ensure that things like your membership survey and membership mapping take place. But remember, it shouldn't just be down to them!

- **Design out selection bias:** it's a common and easy failing to choose people who are like us. The way we write adverts, the way we interview people, the things we look for in candidates, can all be subject to unconscious biases that tend to favour the status quo. ALDC (https://www.aldc.org/) provide guidance and templates for running selection processes, including adverts, forms and letters that you can use to communicate with potential candidates.

- **Ensure your Exec reflects your communities:** make sure your Exec is open to everyone who wants to serve. If you don't have sufficient people coming forward voluntarily, reach out to people and encourage them to get involved. And don't forget you can use your co-option seats to give people an opportunity to serve on the Exec for specific roles and activities.

- **Get the data about your area:** knowing what your local population looks like is vital to planning how to engage with them. There are lots of places where you can find demographic data about the make-up of your area, but here are some of the most useful:
  - GLA data:
    https://data.london.gov.uk/dataset/london-parliamentary-constituency-profiles
  - Parliamentary data from 2011 census:
    http://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/RP14-10
  - Durham/ERSC Constituency explorer:
    http://www.constituencyexplorer.org.uk/

- **Make sure your meetings, events and activities are diversity aware:** It's easy to undo all of your good work if you don't engage effectively with your communities.
  - Make sure your events and meetings have good access for people with disabilities.
  - Change meeting venues on a regular basis, so that your meetings and events cover all of your patch, and reach out to different communities.

Looking beyond your core team

Having a diversity aware and engaged Exec is a great step forward, but without a supportive membership it can be a hard struggle to maintain the progress. To do that you need to make sure all of your members are on board and that everyone has the opportunity to be involved, and contribute.

- **Share your Diversity Action Plan**: once you've agreed what you're going to do, share it with your members. Make sure they understand it's a sensitive document, and ask them if and how they'd like to contribute.

- **Encourage members from under-represented group to attend training and development events**: the region runs regular campaign training and development activities (email our London Campaigns officer, Marcus Foster at Marcus.Foster@libdems.org.uk for details), so make sure everyone is aware, and encouraged to attend. *You might even want to consider setting up a bursary scheme to help those members who can't afford to cover all of the costs themselves.*

  ALDC also runs it's Kickstart weekends twice a year, which are a great opportunity for members who want to develop their campaigning skills and knowledge.

- **Run non-member events**: a lot of our activities can be very internally focused, and yet what we're trying to do is get non-members to vote for us. Many people only see Lib Dems on TV (and often only for a brief time), so a well-publicised local event is an opportunity to engage with local communities, and possibly even to recruit new members.

  And if you think a high-profile name, such as one of our Peers, might help attract people, contact Marcus who can connect you to our Parliamentary team.

Your public profile

How people see is as important as what we say, and every picture tells a story. Make sure the pictures and photographs you use don't let you down!

Every local party should have a website, and be producing regular publications, both for members and potential voters. And *every photograph* in them should reflect the diversity of your local party, and especially in relation to age, ethnicity, and gender.

Remember, the only time that many potential supporters and voters will 'meet you' will be through these routes, so make sure the get the right impression.

Some key terms and further contacts

Terms acronyms applicable to diversity and inclusion

BME	Black & Minority Ethnic	May also appear as 'ME'
LGBT+	Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender	May also be 'LGB'
BHM	Black History Month	Takes place every October
LGBTHM	LGBT History Month	Takes place every February

Further contacts

Chinese Liberal Democrats - CLD was formed to promote closer links between the Party and the Chinese and South East Asian community in the UK.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/cld

Liberal Democrat Disability Association - campaigns within the party to ensure that disability is thought about rather than being an afterthought.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/liberal_democrat_disability_association

Ethnic Minority Liberal Democrats –exists to promote minority ethnic representation within the party, to represent all ethnic minority members and to advance policies that address issues which disproportionately impact on those communities.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/emld

LGBT+ Lib Dems - is the Liberal Democrats' party organisation committed to promoting the policies of sexual and gender minorities - including gay men, lesbians, bisexuals and transgender people - and to ensuring that the party's policies address their needs.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/lgbt

Liberal Democrat Women – the Women's Organisation of the Liberal Democrats, working to eliminate all discrimination based on gender.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/ldw

Young Liberals - the youth and student wing of the Lib Dems. It operates independently from the party with its own policy platform, events, training and campaigns.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/liberal_youth

Federal Party Diversity Team - the staff team for supporting and delivering diversity and inclusion work across the Federal Party.
See: http://www.libdems.org.uk/diversity

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Appendix 1 – Basic Action Plan Template

Action	Lead	Timescale / Milestones	Outputs	Details
Member Survey	Membership Officer	- Launch Jan - Runs Jan – Feb (1 mth) - Report at March Exec mtg	- Survey (via email/web) - Report to Exec - Action Plan	Annual member survey – including demographic data requests & skills / interests' information
Locality Mapping	Diversity Officer (supported by Diversity task group)	- Jan – May (5 mth) - Reports at June Exec mtg	- Key communities map of constituency - Identification of community groups and centres - Meeting / engagement plan	Review of all key communities in the constituency, including BME, faith, LGBT, disability
Events Calendar	Comms Lead Events Lead	- Jan – Feb (1 mth) - Website updated (Feb) - Rolling plan of events and activities	- Calendar of key diversity dates & events on the local party website - Creation of events or activity programme to reflect important community dates, e.g. Black History Month, Int Disability Awareness Day, LGBT History Month	Mapping exercise to provide content for local party website, voter communications, and events Needs to be updated regularly to ensure kept up to date. Can also link to regional and national party activities and events, e.g. Pride.
Selection Training	Chair Selection task group	Attend regional training (June)	Trained group of members able to undertake selection	Ensure everyone selecting for elections is trained on U/B.

Appendix 2 – Federal Party Diversity Monitoring Form

The Liberal Democrats are committed to providing equal opportunities and fair treatment for all members. We are asking you to complete this form in order to ensure that we are attracting a representative group of potential candidates and addressing the needs of all members in our recruitment process.

The information given on this form will be held in accordance with the Party's Data Protection policy.

If you would like the form in an alternative format or would like help in completing the form, please contact the Diversity office - diversity@libdems.org.uk

Name: Click here to enter text.

Date of birth: Click here to enter text.   Rather not say ☐

Gender

☐Male	☐Female
☐Other	☐Rather not say

Is your gender identity the same as the gender you were assigned at birth?

☐Yes	☐No
☐Rather not say	

Disability

The Equality Act 2010 defines a person as disabled if they have a physical or mental impairment that has a substantial and long term (i.e. has lasted or is expected to last at least 12 months) adverse effect on one's ability to carry out normal day-to-day activities. The definition includes conditions such as HIV, mental illnesses and developmental impairments such as dyslexia. Do you consider yourself to have a disability according to the above definition?

☐Yes	☐No
☐Rather not say	

(If yes, please feel free to say more about the nature and extent of your disability. If necessary, please refer to the reasonable adjustment policy as outlined in the approval application pack)

Click here to enter text.

Race / Ethnicity
Please state what you consider your ethnic origin to be. Ethnicity is distinct from nationality and the categories below are based on the 2011 Census.

Asian / Asian British	Black / African / Caribbean / Black British	Other ethnic group
☐Indian ☐Pakistani ☐Bangladeshi ☐Chinese ☐Any other Asian background (please specify)	☐Caribbean ☐African ☐Any other Black background (please specify)	☐Arab ☐Any other ethnic group (please specify)
Mixed / multiple ethnic groups ☐White and Black Caribbean ☐White and Black African ☐White and Asian ☐Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background (please specify)	**White** ☐English/Scottish/ Welsh/Irish ☐Gypsy/Irish Traveller ☐Any other white background (please specify)	☐Rather not say

Belief or religion

Which group below do you most identify with?

☐No religion	☐Baha'i	☐Buddhist
☐Christian	☐Hindu	☐Humanist
☐Jain	☐Jewish	☐Muslim
☐Sikh	☐Other (specify)	☐Rather not say

Sexual Orientation

How would you describe your sexual identity?

☐Bisexual	☐Gay / Lesbian	☐Heterosexual
☐Other	☐Rather not say	

Thank you for completing this form.