

SCOTTISH LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

SUMMER NEWSLETTER

www.scotlibdems.org.uk



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WILLIE RENNIE:

“Easily the most impressive opposition leader at Holyrood”

Daily Telegraph

New Scottish Liberal Democrat Leader Willie Rennie has received plaudits for his performance in the early weeks of his leadership from political commentators at Holyrood.

The praise has come from some unexpected sources including from newspapers that have supported other political parties at previous elections.

Alan Cochrane from the Daily Telegraph declared that Willie is “easily the most impressive opposition leader at Holyrood.”

The Sun reported, “Commonsense and co-operation – words you don’t often see in the same sentence in politics. So credit to new Lib Dem Chief Willie Rennie.”

And the Scotsman stated, “Mr Rennie looks and sounds like a good Holyrood performer...”

SATURDAY 8TH OCTOBER SCOTTISH CONFERENCE!

The Vine Venue in Dunfermline is once again the location of our one day autumn conference. Keynote speeches will be from our Scottish leader Willie Rennie MSP and Secretary of State for Scotland Michael Moore MP.

Book before 23/9/2011 for the discounted rate.

To register please e-mail Linda Wilson on:
dunfermline2011@scotlibdems.org.uk
or call 0131 337 2314.

MORE INSIDE...

- News from Holyrood’s Liberal voices
- A report from Jo Swinson MP
- A word from Party President Tim Farron MP



HOLYROOD'S LIBERAL VOICES

Lib Dem MSPs in the Scottish Parliament have been active holding the SNP majority government to account.

Alison McInnes MSP (North East Scotland) led the charge on the Government's rushed and poorly thought out sectarianism bill. She told Ministers, "I think that the Government are naïve if they believe they can solve a centuries old problem by rushing through new legislation in the next fortnight." The Government eventually backed down and agreed to extend the consideration of the Bill.

Liam McArthur MSP (Orkney) expressed grave concern over a report on teacher numbers, which reveals that only 1 in 5 probationer teachers are in permanent, full-time jobs after qualifying in 2009-10.

He said, "These figures lay bare the human cost to the SNP's mismanagement of Scottish education."

Jim Hume MSP (South Scotland) condemned the SNP for their hypocrisy over the Dunoon to Gourock ferry service. Jim said, "In opposition they promised a ferry service to suit the needs of the people of Argyll and Bute but they have totally failed to deliver."

Tavish Scott MSP (Shetland) has called for an urgent review of Government cuts to the Air Discount Scheme (ADS) which will increase costs of flights to and from the Northern and Western Isles. "Many people across Shetland have raised with me their concerns about this cut to the ADS which the SNP imposed without consultation," Tavish said.



Last year, Lynne Featherstone MP and I launched the Campaign for Body Confidence.

Since then, we have been raising the profile of the urgent need to address increasing body dissatisfaction in the UK. Everyone should be able, whatever their size, shape, age or skin colour, to feel good about their body.

With the newly formed All-Party Parliamentary Group on Body Image and action from our campaign partners on all fronts to push forward the body confidence agenda, we are making inroads into our looks-obsessed culture. It's time to move toward a more realistic portrayal of bodies in the media.

If you'd like to find out more, visit our website at www.campaignforbodyconfidence.org.uk, and to find out more about our latest goings-on and opportunities to get involved, send 'subscribe' in the body of an email to info@campaignforbodyconfidence.org.uk.

Full copy of this article: <http://www.libdemvoice.org/jo-swinson-mp-writes-making-inroads-into-our-looksobsessed-culture-24795.html>

THANK YOU!

SOPHIE, KRISTIAN, GREGOR & ANTONY

Our Inverclyde by-election candidate has been praised for her efforts to fly the Lib Dem flag in a difficult election.

Sophie, a student at Glasgow University and President of LYS, stepped forward to put the case for a Liberal voice to represent the area in Parliament.

Thanks also go to Aberdeen Council by-election candidates Kristian Chapman and Gregor McAbery and in Highland Council, Tain by-election candidate Antony Gardner.



SCOTTISH WOMEN LIBERAL DEMOCRATS RELAUNCH



By Katy Gordon Convenor of Scottish Women Liberal Democrats (SWLD)
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Willie Rennie MSP & Jo Swinson MP both stressed their total commitment to improving diversity within our Scottish party at the SWLD discussion forum in Glasgow on 2nd July.

Ideas came thick and fast about how best to do this, from improving the structures in the party, challenging stereotypical attitudes and talent spotting our future female stars to getting serious about support for female candidates and embracing the federal party's new leadership programme.

We have a big opportunity to get more women involved this year because all the party committees are up for re-election soon. SWLD are on the hunt for women members who want to help run the party (Scottish Executive), propose policy (Policy Committee), organise conference (Conference Committee) or work on candidate support (Campaigns & Candidates Committee).

We also want to get networking, encouraging new female talent to join the party and bringing our future stars onto the party's radar. I've already started working with Sophie Bridger, President of Liberal Youth Scotland, to recruit and support younger members.

So join and support SWLD and help us top the party tables in 2016 for female MSPs.

For the full version of this article visit www.swld.org.uk

By Ross Stalker - VP Communications, LYS

On Saturday 18 June Liberal Youth Scotland held a summit with youth and student party members to discuss our campaigning priorities for the coming year.

Since its founding three years ago LYS have gained a reputation as a standard bearer of progressive policies, for instance re-examining the blanket ban on blood donations from MSM, equal marriage and a harm reduction approach to drug sentencing, all of which have featured in the Scottish Lib Dem manifesto.

Members told LYS that they are keen to continue pushing for implementation of these policies. Next year's campaigns will be built around equality, environment and student support.

HOLYROOD NEWS

Rennie supports minimum pricing on alcohol

Willie Rennie has indicated that the Lib Dems will back renewed SNP plans to impose a minimum price for alcohol. He said the proposal is necessary to fight Scotland's unhealthy relationship with drink.

Supreme Court tawdry language criticised

The First Minister and Justice Minister were criticised by Lib Dem Leader Willie Rennie for using tawdry language in their attacks on senior judges which threatened the independence of the judicial system.



Alex Salmond was accused of seeking to surrender power and influence by calling for Scottish human rights appeals to be heard by the European Court of Human Rights in Strasbourg instead of the UK Supreme Court. Willie Rennie expressed grave concern that no matter how much power and influence Scotland would lose because of this move, Alex Salmond's mantra will still be 'anywhere but London'.

Stay in touch

In the run-up to the Scottish Parliament election, Lib Dem chief of staff Matthew Clark kept candidates, MPs and MSPs up to date with regular short e-mails which set out the actions and points of view of our MSPs together with background information.

This service will now be rolled out to all interested members. Join the list by sending an e-mail to matthew.clark.holyrood@gmail.com

The full service will start when the Scottish Parliament resumes in September.





Let's start telling people about all the positive things we've achieved!

We all know that being in Government has been a tough new experience for the Liberal Democrats and we've taken some knocks along the way.

In May, some great Liberal Democrat councillors lost their seats as part of the fallout over the tough decisions needed to keep Britain out of the severe difficulties many European countries are facing.

But there's a big positive story too.

Liberal Democrats in Government means Liberal Democrat pledges becoming government policy.

We are in this Government because it was the right decision for Britain – and in this Government we are making policy fairer and greener.

Policies like shifting the income tax burden of the poorest paid to the capital gains of the well-off wouldn't have happened without the Liberal Democrats.

The same is true of the help that is going to the schools with pupils from the poorest backgrounds and a lot more besides.

Now there are plenty of our opponents out there who will talk about the bad news. We have to get the positive message out that, despite the pressures of the economic crisis, Liberal Democrats are making Government fairer and greener.

Normally we get a big fat 0% of our manifesto put into practice, now we have 75%.

Let's get out there and tell everyone about it.

Best wishes,

Tim Farron MP,
President of the Liberal Democrats

Liberal Democrat manifesto pledges – now being delivered in Government

- ✓ We have increased the income tax threshold by £1000, lifting 880,000 low earners out of tax. The threshold will increase in each year of the coalition, eventually lifting 3 million people out of tax altogether.
- ✓ We have restored the earnings link with state pensions and guaranteed that pensions will rise by at least 2.5% every year.
- ✓ In England, the Pupil Premium is delivering extra funding for the schools with the children who need it most.
- ✓ We have introduced a Green Investment Bank, a new Green Deal to help people make their property more energy efficient and introduced ambitious and legally binding targets to reduce the UK's carbon emissions.
- ✓ There will be no like for like replacement of Trident in this Parliament.
- ✓ And the changes to the UK Government's NHS reform plans that our members demanded at conference in March are now Government policy.