

Young Liberals Policy Register

Edition 1

Summer 2016 - Bristol
Young Liberals
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This document records the full text of all policy motions passed by Young Liberal Conferences (as amended) up to and including the indicated conference. It is therefore the definitive record of Young Liberals policy in case of conflict with the Young Liberals Policy Book and other records. This document supersedes all previous versions of the Policy Register. As a result of the constitutional change enacted after the close of the Spring 2016 Conference in Edinburgh, our name is now Young Liberals. Any references to the previous name of Liberal Youth should be disregarded in favour of Young Liberals.

- Policy Committee

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Business, Innovation and Skills

Digital Britain

Conference Notes:

1. *The Report "Digital Britain", released in full on 16th June 2009 by Lord Carter, minister for communications, technology and broadcasting*
2. *That Digital Britain sectors account for nearly 10% GDP¹*
3. *The increasing efforts of the Music Industry to combat piracy with projects such as Spotify*
4. *Sales of music sales have fallen dramatically- by 50% from 1999 to 2004 for example²*
5. *Digital Rights Management (DRM) has annoyed many purchasers of legitimate electronic files*
6. *The current term of Copyright for Sound Recordings is 50 years*
7. *66% of young people do not see illegally downloading free music as morally objectionable³*
8. *The software industry is rapidly changing and demands a high level of flexibility*
9. *That there remains some ambiguity over software copyright, and that some software becomes dormant but still protected by copyright.*
10. *The introduction of the 15a classification in Irish Cinemas*

Conference Believes That

1. *The report "Digital Britain" lays out some of the necessary steps in modernising this country, and preparing the economy for a more technology orientated world.*
2. *Access to broadband should become a right, not a privilege, and therefore needs funding and planning for universal access*
3. *The money raised by the 50p Landline tax is highly unlikely to raise sufficient revenue for nationwide access to broadband, particularly in rural areas*
4. *Internet piracy represents a threat to many creative arts industries, particularly music and film*
5. *The threat of disconnecting piracy offenders is, however, excessive.*
6. *The current copyright time frame for sound recordings should not be modified*

¹ As reported on BBC website, 16th June 2009

² As reported by IFPI

³ As reported by the BBC

7. *Switching off analogue radio services by 2015 is a necessity, but one which must be carefully carried out to ensure that support is available for those people who struggle to switch, particularly for financial reasons.*
8. *The proposals on the age rating of video games do not tackle the fundamental problem that they are subjective and unnecessarily proscriptive*

Conference Therefore Proposes

1. *A more effective approach to internet piracy would be a government instituted scheme of fines, perhaps linked to a proportion of the monetary value of the illegal goods, up to a maximum amount. This must be linked with the removal of DRM from legitimately purchased goods to provide people with the flexibility they deserve.*
2. *To strongly oppose disconnection as a disproportionate punishment and to seek to ensure that civil suits no longer result in damages greater than the fines imposed.*
3. *However, where there is reasonable doubt as to the offender on a particular network, or where children may be involved, steps must be taken to ensure that innocent people are not fined, and that children understand fully the nature of piracy.*
4. *Children of secondary school age should therefore be educated and debate the issues surrounding and the legal aspects of piracy as part of the citizenship curriculum*
5. *Further areas of funding need to be found to make the roll-out of universal broadband credible.*
6. *That an internet speed promise of 2Mbps must be matched by careful observation to ensure this is achieved. Many broadband companies have offered very fast speeds but subsequently found themselves unable to deliver on these promises at any but the quietest times.*
7. *To reject the EU proposals that would increase the term of copyright for sound recordings to 99 years plus the life of artist. The length of copyright for motion pictures should be lowered to 50 years, and software be placed at 25.*
8. *Software which has been copyrighted and used for commercial purposes but is no longer used on an active commercial basis be exempted from copyright provision*
9. *That 15a and possibly even 18a be considered as viable age ratings for films shown in licensed cinemas. Both of these require the young person to be older than the previous category, i.e. for a 15a you must be at least 12, and for an 18a you must be at least 15.*

10. That a more effective method of age ratings for Video games would be to enforce the PEGI ratings (currently advisory), and not require restricted games to have two separate ratings.

11. That while labelling of films is under review, we should push for Epilepsy warnings on DVD boxes and film trailers, if appropriate to the content

Conference Therefore Resolves That

- 1. These proposals be submitted to any relevant consultation on the report*
- 2. These proposals be submitted to Liberal Democrat Spring 2010 Conference for consideration by the Federal Party*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Extension of Sunday Trading

Conference Notes:

1. That since 1994 large shops (those with over 280 square metres of floor space) have been allowed to open for up to six hours between 10 AM and 6 PM on Sundays.
2. That some large shops, such as off-licenses, service stations and garages are exempt from this restriction.
3. That small shops (those with less than 280 square metres of floor space) are also exempt from this restriction.
4. That primary resistance to past attempts to increase the freedom to trade on Sundays has come from The Church and trade unions.
5. That Scotland has never had any legal restriction on opening hours on a Sunday.
6. That Sunday trading restrictions were suspended by the government for eight weekends around the Olympics in 2012.

Conference further notes:

1. That those working in sales and customer service are among the poorest in society, earning only around 58% of the average national wage.
2. That 26% of people in sales and customer service work less than 16 hours per week and 61% less than 30 hours per week.
3. That 39% of people in sales and customer service are 16-24 years old.
4. That there are 2.52 million people unemployed, including 0.96 million young people.
5. That only 59% of citizens in the 2011 census indicated that they were Christian, 25% of the population reported they had no religion.
6. That the National Minimum Wage came into effect in 1999 and has since dramatically increased wages in the retail sector.
7. That there are legal protections to ensure stores do not compel their employees to work on Sundays.

Conference believes:

1. That allowing only small shops to open is inconvenient to many, especially to those reliant on public transport.
2. That restricting opening hours to late-morning/early-afternoon is unfair on those who work unsociable hours or those with irregular sleeping patterns.
3. That extending opening hours will increase employment opportunities, including for young people.

4. *That Scotland's past experience shows that there is little to no harm caused by allowing further Sunday trading.*

Conference resolves:

1. *That Liberal Youth should lobby Liberal Democrat ministers in government for the abolition of Sunday trading restrictions.*

Passed: Summer 2013

Lapses: July 2021

Living Wage

Conference Initially Notes

1. *It is more expensive to live, work, and study in certain places than in others; for example, the difference between studying in the South and the North-East is huge, but the support available to all is the same.*
2. *A "regional top-up" is available in London to support the high cost of living but that no other such arrangements suited to local conditions apply in other parts of the country such as Oxford or Bristol.*
3. *The operations of Living Wage units in Manchester and London, performing similar reviews to the National Low Pay Commission on a local level and supporting an opt-in scheme for local businesses to pledge a wage that enables those to live fairly and free from poverty.*
4. *That the Liberal Democrats supported arrangements like this for a national minimum wage (NMW) scheme after the 1992 recession, and reaffirmed the basic principle of a devolved NMW in the 2003 paper Setting Business Free.*
5. *That the Liberal Democrats proposed a minimum income standard for all - youth and students, pensioners to postmen - in the 2001 manifesto Freedom, Justice, Honesty and continue to see it as a long-term goal.*
6. *The excellent support for young people in the party's 2010 Youth policy paper.*

Conference Initially Believes

1. *If it can realistically be decided how much more London deserves, and if Living Wage units in London and Manchester can determine how much support every person should get based on living costs, then it is feasible to devolve the levels of student support and the NMW across the country on a council-by-council basis.*
2. *That in the Low Pay Commission's 1998 initial report, the "substantial variation within individual regions" in respect to living costs could be addressed by a devolved minimum wage.*
3. *That in the same report, a lower "Development Rate" for under 21s was recommended on the express understanding that government and employers would work to implement effective strategies for training and education opportunities; and that this no longer happens for a number of reasons.*

Conference Subsequently Notes

1. *The National Union of Students continue to support the Government's position on student finance while accepting that drop-out rates are dramatically rising, salaries to*

pay off debts are falling, and that students are spending too much time working in part-time jobs when they are full-time students.

- 2. That devolving the minimum wage would necessarily mean a lower 'absolute floor' at a federal level.*

Conference Subsequently Believes

- 1. That the present system of providing students finance is fundamentally flawed.*
- 2. That adequately funded students benefit the economy in all sorts of ways, from relieving burden on their parents and family to stimulating demand in their place of study, and in being able to enter ladder systems such as the housing market without a significant debt burden.*
- 3. That student debt cannot be counted as a reliable source for future government income and is fiscally irresponsible for all parties.*
- 4. That the present system of the national minimum wage is not working for young people and falls in its key aim to move people, from welfare or dependency, into working.*
- 5. That the benefits to individuals and communities across the country from a minimum wage that is more responsive to needs and costs would outweigh the concerns of a lower federal rate.*
- 6. That student finance and the NMW can and must be reformed into working.*

Conference Resolves

- 1. To work towards ambitiously liberal reforms of how student maintenance grants are allocated, and to provide young people with the support needed to succeed in life, by the following proposals:*
- 2. Take into account local factors and costs when allocating student maintenance, revised on a yearly basis.*
- 3. Consequently, advocating the return of administering student finance back to local authorities, and avoiding centralised incompetence from dealings with Student Finance Direct and its successors.*
- 4. Ensure equality in living conditions by making sure students receive living 'wages' based on these local factors, enough to pay for their bills without needing to resort to commercial debt or loan sharks.*
- 5. Recommend that the model and practices behind the valuation of living costs in Manchester and London be piloted in several other conurbations, with a view to extending it into rural areas, towns, and cities across the country.*

6. *Recommend that the national minimum wage is frozen for two years while local areas gather sufficient information to implement these methods and train their staff.*
7. *Encourage students to take an active role in their welfare by creating regional bargaining structures involving councils, students' unions, and participatory budgeting.*
8. *Continue the existing campaign to equalise the National Minimum Wage for 16-21 year olds, and look into decentralising it along the same lines as the above maintenance proposals.*
9. *Recommend that as this policy is aimed at reducing welfare dependency that money is diverted from the overall welfare budget to pay for some of the costs of setting these schemes up, again liaising with the Living Wage units in London and Manchester for best practice.*
10. *Recommend that an independent commission looking at seeing these arrangements as a holistic whole for young people and students be set up, to work in conjunction with the Low Pay Commission.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Towards a radical liberal economic policy: mutuals, co-operatives and worker involvement in industry

Conference notes the longstanding commitment of the Liberal Democrats and its predecessor parties to mutuals and co-operatives, and more broadly to the principle of worker involvement in industry.

Conference further notes:

- a) That many existing mutuals and partnerships, such as the John Lewis Partnership, have proved to be some of our most successful businesses; and that works councils in Germany have made a positive contribution to that country's economic success.*
- b) That the number of companies affiliating to the EOA, the trade organisation for employee ownership, has doubled in the past year, reflecting the buoyancy of the sector in the UK.*
- c) The work of Liberal Democrat ministers in government to encourage employee ownership, by introducing a £75m tax break and the part-mutualisation of the Royal Mail.*
- d) The recent financial difficulties of the Co-Operative Group, and the troubling revelations concerning the inadequacy of its corporate governance.*

Conference believes:

- a) That co-operatives and mutuals must play a central role in a diverse, successful economy, and that government has a role to play to encourage their development.*
- b) That it is a liberal principle that individuals should have as much control over their lives as possible, and that this extends to their roles as workers and consumers.*
- c) That employee ownership is a non-socialist and non-statist means of achieving a fairer and more equal distribution of wealth and power, and is a non-protectionist way of guarding against outsourcing and capital flight in a globalised economy.*
- d) Employee ownership can and should work alongside a strong and independent trade union movement; further, that employment rights are inalienable, and that George Osborne's 'rights for shares' proposals are contrary to the spirit of mutualism.*

Conference resolves:

- a) HMG should increase tax reliefs for employee owned companies, possibly including negative rates of Capital Gains Tax and Inheritance Tax for shares deposited in an employee ownership trust (EOT).*

- b) A statutory requirement should be introduced for every public listed company to have at least one non-voting representative for workers on its board, appointed by employees.*
- c) The Business Bank should lend preferentially to worthy SMEs where at least 25% of shares are held or are to be transferred to an EOT.*
- d) A Royal Commission on Mutuals and Co-operatives should be established, with a special mandate to investigate the governance of both sectors.*
- e) Public-sector mutuals should be introduced in sectors where this is practical and compatible with the public interest; and, where this is not feasible, the introduction of authentic worker representation at all levels.*
- f) Liberal Youth and its members shall be actively involved in campaigning for a shift of power and capital into the hands of workers and consumers as part of the development of a distinctive, radical liberal economic policy.*

Passed: Spring 2014

Lapses: July 2021

Trade Unions

Conference Notes:

1. *The possibility of other Unions disaffiliating from Labour in the near future as reported on the 7th February, before being ejected;*
2. *That already, the first to be thrown out by Labour, the RMT, in the last few years reduced its contributions from £112,000 a year to just £12,500;*
3. *That the government wants to invest some £10m of tax payers money into the unions for modernisation;*
4. *That some of our ideals are compatible:*
5. *Our belief in equal rights for all and our existing policy on the national minimum wage and part time workers;*
6. *Our existing commitment to end the inequality in the minimum wage for young workers;*
7. *That with increasing student debt young people are having to work more at a younger age;*
8. *Changes in the work force as a whole mean that people are changing jobs more often;*
9. *That as part-time or trainee workers that young people are more at risk of disciplinary action;*
10. *That often they are the least able to defend themselves and thus the role of the trade unions.*

Conference Believes:

1. *That the party should work more actively with the Unions, especially in light of our recent relations with them and Labours decision to ignore one of their largest supporters;*
2. *That Union supporters should be given the opportunity to actively work, as a Union, with parties other than Labour;*
3. *That in some cases membership of a trade union can provide invaluable support in the unfortunate cases of disciplinary actions etc;*
4. *That the trade unions also play a valuable role in protecting the rights of their members;*
5. *That whilst we support the work of the Unions we cannot condone the use of public funds in the group which provides a large proportion of the funding for the same party which is in government;*
6. *That young people in work should be afforded all of the same rights and benefits experienced by older colleagues. Regardless of whether part time or full time;*

7. *That whilst this should all be encouraged, caution should be taken, as with any large group or donor, that we maintain our independence as Liberal Democrats.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *That we encourage the Unions to actively move to disaffiliate from Labour, even if they do not face expulsion as was the case with the RMT;*
2. *That we support and encourage the work of the Liberal Democrats both with and within the trade unions;*
3. *That where it is relevant we encourage membership of unions to help protect the rights of individuals;*
4. *That as Liberal Youth we work to engage working youths within the Unions in the same way that we currently work to engage students through the NUS;*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Tuition Fees

Conference notes:

1. *Previous Liberal Youth policy on funding for higher education.*
2. *The increase in tuition fees brought in by the coalition government.*
3. *The loss of support for the Liberal Democrats after breaking “the pledge”.*
4. *The increase in students from poorer backgrounds now attending university in*
5. *England since 2010 has been far greater than has been the case in Scotland.*
6. *Scottish students attending university in Scotland, who do not pay fees, repay more if they come from a poor family than if they come from a wealthy family because of the system of maintenance loans.*
7. *Scottish students attending university in Scotland, who take the full maintenance*
8. *loan, repay more than an English student attending an English university if they earn a yearly average of less than £25,800 over the repayment period.*

Conference believes:

1. *Liberal Democrats need a coherent new approach to higher education funding.*
2. *Access to higher education should be based on ability to learn, not ability to pay.*
3. *Tuition paid for entirely from general taxation is effectively a giveaway to the middle class.*
4. *As the primary beneficiaries of higher education are graduates, they should directly shoulder some of the financial burden.*
5. *The tuition fee structure implemented in the coalition made it easier for those from low income families to access university than the previous fee structure.*
6. *The scrapping of maintenance grants in favour of loans by the Conservative government was a regressive step.*
7. *Maintenance costs are a much greater barrier to learning than tuition fees, and grants for maintenance costs should be reinstated and increased from their previous levels.*
8. *Another alternative to fees, the so-called “graduate tax”, is impractical as it cannot be levied on graduates who leave the country.*

Conference therefore resolves to:

- A. *Repeal previous Liberal Youth policy motions calling for higher education to be paid for entirely from general taxation, and replace with support for some form of tuition fees.*
- B. *Call on the UK government to reinstate, and increase from their previous levels, means-tested grants to fund maintenance costs for poorer students.*
- C. *Work with Liberal Youth Scotland and IR Cymru to promote fair access to higher education across the United Kingdom.*

Passed: Spring 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Welfare

Supporting Disadvantaged Young People

Conference notes that following the election of a Conservative majority at the General Election the following policies have been announced by the government:

- 1) A national "living wage" for those aged over 25.*
- 2) The removal of housing benefit for young adults aged 21 and under.*
- 3) Significant cuts to tax credits, including on those below the age of the new "living wage".*
- 4) The removal of maintenance grants from students from low income backgrounds.*
- 5) A "youth obligation" that those aged between 18-21 must be earning or learning.*

Conference also notes that these policies have been implemented in an already challenging context for young adults with:

- a) Youth unemployment currently at 13.7%, more than double the UK average of 5.5%*
- b) The highest rates of adults living in poverty being in the 16-19 (33.6%) and 20-24 (29.3%) age groups based on the most recent published figures (2012/3) and that these figures were rising.*
- c) Research by KPMG showing that first time buyers need on average salary of £40,553 to get on the housing ladder, leading to what has been known as "Generation Rent"*
- d) Student maintenance support having fallen significantly in real terms over the last parliament*

Conference believes that young people are in need of more, not less, support and that these outrageous measures will be deeply damaging to both the opportunities and outcomes for young people.

Specifically, Conference believes that:

- i) That the Government should instead be investing in creating opportunities for young people so they may fulfil their potential and contribute to our economy and society.*
- ii) High youth unemployment and the economic challenges the country faces are not the fault of young adults and measures which single out unemployed young adults as being more responsible for their situation are unfair.*

iii) Cuts to tax credits without the new "living wage" to mitigate the impact will add to hardship for under 25s, especially young parents.

iv) High levels of student debt and lack of financial maintenance support can have a deterring effect on attendance of higher education by the disadvantaged young people.

v) Removal of housing benefit for under 21s combined with high rents will both prevent many young people from leaving home inhibiting their start in adult life and will be devastating on those young people who do not have a family supporting them.

vi) While the previous government made significant ground tackling pensioner poverty, there has been an insufficient emphasis on poverty for young people and that this needs to change.

Conference therefore calls upon Liberal Youth and the Liberal Democrat party to oppose these measures by the Conservative government and argue for alternative solutions that improve the support to disadvantaged young people.

Passed: August 2015

Lapses: July 2021

A Liberal Welfare State

Conference notes:

1. The UK budget approved on the 22nd of March 2016 and its contents - especially the initial, but subsequently withdrawn, proposals to cut Personal Independence Payments (PIP) for disabled people.
2. That cuts of around £30 a week to Employment and Support Allowance (ESA), which is paid to those found too sick or disabled to work, are still planned to go ahead.
3. That the Conservative party manifesto at the 2015 general election included a pledge to cut £12 billion from the working age welfare budget.
4. The Liberal Reforms and the Beveridge Report which laid the foundations for the British welfare state.
5. That the party's Federal Policy Committee has set up a Social Security Working Group to produce a policy paper on working age welfare which will be debated at autumn federal conference.
6. That the Liberal Democrats have supported a Citizens Income policy in the past.
7. The concept of a Negative Income Tax and its advocacy both by Milton Friedman and by Liberal MP Juliet Rhys-Williams (as an alternative recommendation for the Beveridge Report).

Conference believes that:

- A. The test of a civilised society is the social safety net provided to its citizens and that the UK is failing this test.
- B. The welfare state is under existential threat from the Conservative government.
- C. The test of a welfare system is its ability to protect individuals from levels of poverty that deprive them of their liberty and of the opportunity to fulfil their potential.
- D. A radical, Liberal alternative model for a welfare state is needed and that Liberal Youth should lead the way in developing this alternative.
- E. It is immoral to have a welfare system, such as the current model, where those who do not comply with certain conditions can have support withdrawn to such an extent that they do not have the basic means to live.
- F. A new model for the welfare system should draw on the concepts of Citizens Income and Negative Income Tax and focus on providing a minimum safety net at standard of living for all citizens on the basis of their need.
- G. An increase in taxation may be necessary in order to fund an adequate social safety

Conference calls for:

- I. Liberal Democrats and Liberal Youth to oppose the Conservative cuts to working age welfare spending.
- II. The creation of a New Social Contract and a new model for the welfare state to replace all current child and working age benefits and tax credits (excluding disability, carer and sickness benefits) with a new, single entitlement whose features should include:

- a. *The use of the existing Universal Credit infrastructure for administration in order to allow a single registration process and linkage with real time information on individuals' earnings.*
 - b. *A core concept based on Negative Income Tax whereby a household is entitled to a weekly payment which is equivalent to the minimum needed for a basic standard of living and which is reduced by a fixed amount in the pound for every pound they earn.*
 - c. *Variation in the entitlement depending on household composition such as with a fixed amount per adult and per child in a household as well as an amount to account for housing costs in the area the household is located in.*
 - d. *Universal enrolment for all citizens into the new system upon adulthood in order to ensure that all individuals receive a direct and visible financial benefit from the social safety net regardless of their income level.*
 - e. *An absence of sanctions or other punishments for failure to behave in a certain way, instead favouring positive incentives to encourage desirable behaviour.*
 - f. *The repurposing of Job Centre Plus as an organisation into one dedicated to providing career support and assistance in order to help individuals move into employment and/or better paid work.*
- III. *The replacement of disability, carer and sickness benefits with a single payment, based on need, to cover the additional costs caused by disability or sickness.*
 - IV. *Taxation reform, including the abolition of personal tax allowances, to help fund the new social safety net.*
 - V. *Liberal Youth to advocate the principles and details of such a policy within the Liberal Democrats as a whole and to push for their inclusion in the party's social security policy.*
 - VI. *The Liberal Youth executive to make a formal submission to the party's Social Security Working Group which advocated the principles of this motion.*

Passed: Spring 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Communities and Local Government

A fair deal for Pubs

Conference notes:

1. The figures released on 22 July 2009 by the British Beer & Pub Association, showing a greatly-increased figure of 39 pubs closing each week in the United Kingdom, resulting in the loss of over 20,000 jobs in the last year.
2. The Government announcement on 29 July 2009 of a consultation on revoking the Land Agreements Exclusion Order 2004, a measure blamed for allowing anti-competitive practices run by many large pub management companies (pubcos).
3. The submission on 24 July 2009 by the Campaign for Real Ale (CAMRA) of a consumer 'super-complaint' to require the Office of Fair Trading (OFT) to fast-track consideration of anti-competitive practices in the UK pub market which are resulting in high prices in pubs, lower amenity, restricted choice and pub closures.
4. Pubcos resulted in a 1986 decision by the then Conservative government to limit the number of holdings which could be owned by breweries.
5. Pubcos are mainly backed by venture capitalists which during the economic recession are less able to maintain funding marginal establishments and are forced to close loss making establishments or raise the rents on establishments.
6. The number of pub premises available has increased for sale or lease since the beginning of the economic recession.
7. A common practice by pubcos and breweries is the use of beer-ties in contracts, where some or all of the licensed intoxicating liquor sold are bought from the landlord, this is also known as a tied-tenancy.
8. 84% of rural villagers believe the local pub to be as essential as the local post office for community relations and the continuation of village life.¹
9. The CAMRA campaign to support microbreweries and the Local Ale campaign for locally sourced Real Ale and Bitter.
10. The formation of the new Independent Pub Confederation on 14 October 2009
11. The increased availability of non-alcoholic versions of beers and ales available in pubs and notes the continued improvement in quality and taste.

Conference deploras:

1. The market dominance of the largest pubcos and the way some of them, along with some large breweries, have skewed the tied system so hugely in favour of the

property owning company and against the small business operators actually operating the business.

- 2. The manner in which the tied tenancy mode, in particular the “beer tie” is being operated by the large pubcos, specifically the manner in which the pubcos secure huge discounts from breweries but fail to pass these on to the lease holders.*
- 3. Restrictive covenants which prevent future purchasers from using the building as a public house deprive a community of a valuable resource.*
- 4. The restrictive levels of rent which often restrict the ability of tenants to earn a living from the operation of the premises often imposed as a penalty on success, by increasing charges proportionally based on turnover.*
- 5. The lack of access and barriers to market entry for smaller and more local breweries, including microbreweries restricts customer choice.*
- 6. The weak position of pubs in current planning law being classified as any other business with no provision for their status as community facilities.*

Conference therefore calls for:

- 1. A limit of 2000 as the number of pubs owned by a pubco, the same maximum applied to breweries in 1986.*
- 2. The number of pubs owned by a pubcos not be geographically concentrated preventing local and regional monopolies. This shall be regulated by new powers for the OFT and Competition Commission.*
- 3. Tenants to be offered the opportunity to choose between a tied tenancy and a rental tenancy by seeing the two proposals, including figures, side by side.*
- 4. Action to be taken to give publicans choice to avoid the inflated prices that pubcos can charge for their product to tied tenants, by legal protection to be able to buy supplies free of tie.*
- 5. The support of micro-breweries and the Local Ale campaign.*
- 6. The continued increase in the number of non-alcoholic lines of beer and ale available and the continued improvement in quality and taste.*
- 7. A mandatory statutory code of practice that creates transparency, a register of rental values and an agreed form of profits-based valuation that takes account of the real costs incurred by tenants.*
- 8. The use of restrictive covenants, that prevent pubs being sold prohibiting their future use as pubs to be outlawed immediately.*

9. *Existing lease holders are given the right to buy the freehold of their pub if the owner puts the premises up for sale, at a value to be determined by an independent mediator.*
10. *A separate planning use class for rural pubs to be created, with planning guidance recognising the role of rural pubs as community facilities and requiring planning permission for demolition of a rural pub.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Fair Deal for Students and young people: Houses of Multiple Occupation

Conference notes

1. *That there are approx 7.5 million FE and HE students in the UK*
2. *That HMOs are not solely occupied by students, many other sections of the community, such as young professionals, low income workers, migrant workers and single people choose this type of accommodation.*
3. *That the call of a minority of local parties for the Federal Liberal Democrat Party to support Labour's EDM on HMO's, and the actions of the Bristol Local Party have severely damaged the parties reputation amongst young people and students.*
4. *The last NUS housing survey, which showed that 23% of students live with rats, 75% live with damp, and before the introduction of the Tenancy Deposit Scheme 33% experienced difficulties getting their deposit back. Burglary rates in some student areas are as high as 1 in 10 student properties.*
5. *That residential area's with a high student population face many different challenges to other areas.*
6. *That a high student population is often beneficial to the local economy and that students contribute a high number of volunteer hours nationally.*
7. *That most Student Union's run schemes to promote community cohesion.*
8. *The UUK Studentification report*
9. *EDM 1488 set down by Roberta Blackman-Woods,*
 - a. *"That this House supports moves to unify the definition of houses of multiple occupation; calls for the Government to bring forward proposals to amend the Housing Act 2004 so that all student properties are subject to licence and measures are introduced to control saturation in defined areas; urges local authorities to use the planning system to encourage the establishment of harmonious balanced communities throughout all areas of towns and cities; and welcomes the establishment of the All-Party Parliamentary Group on Balanced and Sustainable Communities as a forum of discussion for these issues."*
10. *The 2004 Housing Act*

Conference resolves

1. *To deplore Labour's EDM on HMO's.*
2. *To maintain the drive for better housing set in motion by the Housing Act 2004, and calls for stronger action, and greater resources to ensure that this legislation can be fully implemented.*

3. *To call for the enforcement of minimum legal standards on all HMOs including those which are not currently licensable.*
4. *To support the use of successful housing accreditation schemes as a voluntary means of improving standards.*
5. *To call for councils to be given improved resources to tackle problems of poor housing, and to resolve the issues of studentification.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

House Building

Conference notes:

1. *High rents and high house prices have become a worry for many ordinary people, especially people in private rented housing who face rising rents.*
2. *Housing costs as a proportion of income have risen substantially in recent years for the poorest fifth and for people under 25.*
3. *Only 9% of UK land is developed, of which only 1% is taken up by housing.*
4. *Green belts cover 13% of UK land, and of that land, more than a third is devoted to intensive agriculture, which has a net environmental cost through the use of pesticides and herbicides.*
5. *Living near green spaces is beneficial to residents' health and happiness, and the positive effects of natural areas drop off sharply for people who live further away from them.*
6. *Policies of urban containment pursued through protection of green belts constrain development and therefore puts upward pressure on land prices and rents.*
7. *Urban containment inevitably leads to urban densification, which results in a lower quality of life as house prices and rents rise, people have to live in smaller houses.*
8. *Urban containment forces commuters to live further away from their workplaces, increasing commute time and hence the environmental impact of commutes.*
9. *Urban containment has negative implications for businesses, which are affected by high rents and costs of premises, as well as facing constraints on potential expansion.*
10. *Current Liberal Democrat policy, which includes a commitment to building 300,000 houses a year, and the creation of a Housing Investment Bank.*

Conference believes that:

1. *Green belts chiefly benefit those who live on or near them, while worsening urban quality of life.*
2. *Ensuring that there are adequate green spaces within urban areas should be a priority.*
3. *With rising rents and house prices in cities, expansion in the supply of housing is necessary to bring housing costs down to affordable levels.*

Conference calls upon:

1. *Liberal Youth to call upon the Liberal Democrats to oppose policies of urban containment.*

2. *Liberal Youth to call on the Liberal Democrats to support building on green belts in cases where there is a clear need for additional local housing which cannot feasibly be met through the development of brownfield sites.*
3. *Liberal Youth to call upon the Liberal Democrats to support local planning which allows for liveable, affordable cities, where green spaces are dispersed throughout built-up areas, not concentrated on the outskirts.*
4. *Liberal Youth to call upon the Liberal Democrats to remove Green Belt designation from intensely farmed land.*

Passed: March 2015

Lapses: July 2021

Culture, Media and Sport

Save the BBC - safeguarding the future of the British Broadcasting Corporation

Conference notes that the future of the BBC in its present form is highly uncertain at the moment as:

- i) the BBC has been facing a funding shortfall for several years now, which looks set to worsen over the current Parliament;*
- ii) the BBC is at risk of increased government supervision over its choice of programme content; and*
- iii) there have been proposals from the commercial media sector and the current Culture Secretary, John Whittingdale MP, to reduce the size and remit of the BBC.*

Conference believes the BBC is an world-class, independent media institution that must be protected and safeguarded. The BBC not only provides high quality television, news and radio services at a relatively low cost, but it is also an important media export and major contributor to Britain's international "soft power".

Conference calls for Liberal Youth and for the wider Liberal Democrat party to support the "Save the BBC" campaign.

Conference also calls on the Government to:

- i) retain the BBC in its present form - BBC Television and Radio, BBC News Online and BBC iPlayer;*
- ii) protect the BBC from interference from both the government and the commercial media sector; and*
- iii) secure medium- and long-term public funding for the BBC by exploring all funding options, from retention of the license fee to alternative streams of non-commercial revenue from the public sector or from users of the BBC.*

Passed: August 2015

Lapses: July 2021

Defence

Trident

Conference Notes:

1. *Britain's Trident nuclear submarines will begin to be decommissioned in 2024.*
2. *Since the end of the Cold War, the policy of MAD (Mutually Assured Destruction) is no longer relevant to British defence policy.*
3. *Britain currently needs to use American satellites to fire a nuclear weapon, and so does not have a genuinely independent nuclear deterrent. To develop an independent nuclear weapons capability would increase the cost dramatically.*
4. *It costs £1.5 Billion per year to maintain Britain's Trident system and nuclear weapon Research and Development facilities: more than it would cost to scrap student fees.*
5. *Under the terms of the NPT (Non-Proliferation Treaty), Britain has promised to decommission all its nuclear weapons.*

Conference believes:

1. *That the indiscriminate slaughter of citizens is not liberal.*
2. *That no nuclear weapons system is foolproof, and the fewer nuclear weapons there are in the world, the less likely they fall into the hands of someone willing to use them.*
3. *That if we are to have a nuclear deterrent we should have an independent one.*
4. *That the financial, human, intellectual and material resources spent on nuclear weapons could be better spent on other projects.*

Conference calls for:

1. *An end to Britain's nuclear weapon capability once Trident is decommissioned.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Education

A Future Beyond Educational Maintenance Allowance

Conference notes:

1. *That Educational Maintenance Allowance was scrapped in the early years of the Coalition Government to be replaced by a discretionary support scheme.*
2. *That the Government said that 9 out of 10 students on EMA would remain in Further Education without it.*
3. *That the National Union of Students has recently moved away from trying to bring EMA back to getting the best out of its replacement.*
4. *That in 2015 the compulsory education leaving age is set to rise to 18.*

Conference believes:

1. *That whilst supporting over half of recipients effectively, Educational Maintenance Allowance was given to some students who did not need it.*
2. *EMA did change the lives of many students, supporting them financially so that they could stay on in education.*
3. *That the Government statistic of 9 out of 10 students on EMA being able to stay on in education came from poor sampling – on the whole white, middle class males who had not yet reached Further Education.*
4. *That the National Union of Students is right to move away from bringing EMA back to ensuring its replacement works, although they have been slow in changing their stance.*
5. *That the replacement for EMA isn't perfect either, and the rise in education leaving age will put extreme pressure on colleges to distribute the money fairly*

Conference Resolves:

1. *To support the National Union of Students in relevant campaigning.*
2. *To put pressure on the Department for Education to ensure that EMA's replacement is improved in line with the rise in education leaving age.*
3. *To ask that any research the Department for Education uses to back up its*

arguments on this issue don't come from biased research.

- 4. To force the Liberal Youth executive to keep every Liberal Youth Conference updated on work done on Further Education policy & engagement.*

Passed: Summer 2013

Lapses: July 2021

Nationalisation of Exam Boards

Conference Notes

1. *The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority (QCA) is funded by the Department for Education and Skills (DfES), and is governed by a board appointed by Secretary of State for Education. QCA maintains and develops the National Curriculum, assessments and has overall responsibility for regulating the public examination system.*
2. *The National Assessment Agency (NAA) is a subsidiary of the QCA, and is now directly in charge of public examinations.*
3. *All major examination boards enjoy charitable status, and do not come under the control of the QCA, NAA, nor the DfES.*
4. *Exam Boards charge schools and colleges varying fees for providing examinations and marking.*
5. *The recent history of various 'gaffes' by the exam boards.*
6. *QCA consultation with a selection of teachers revealed a desire for 'a body publicly taking responsibility for the conduct and performance of the exam boards.'*

Conference Believes

1. *It is an important goal for schools to offer a broad, challenging and balanced education, providing opportunities for students to enjoy all aspects of the curriculum: academic, physical and vocational.*
2. *This goal is undermined by the effects of the current system of competition between exam boards:*
 - a. *Exam boards only provide exams in subjects which are commercially viable.*
 - b. *The current educational climate means exam results are crucially important to schools, therefore they choose what they perceive to be the easiest exam syllabus, and exam boards try to create the easiest possible syllabuses.*
 - c. *Competition between exam boards could therefore be responsible for allegations about 'dumbing-down'.*
3. *The Government should have indirect control of an essential accessory to the education system - the exam system.*
4. *In particular, since the Government wishes all final year secondary students to take compulsory exams, and is trying to increase the popularity of vocational subjects,*

it should indirectly decide the content, implementation, and marking procedures for these exams.

Conference therefore calls for

- 1. In the interests of simplicity and clarity, financial efficiency, control over educational standards, and an enhanced ability to achieve its aims the Government should take indirect control of providing examinations, by empowering, and compelling the QCA or NAA to set its own syllabuses.*
- 2. QCA/ NAA to determine how many different syllabuses to offer per subject, taking account of the demand, justifying themselves to the Secretary of state for Education if necessary.*
- 3. State educational institutions to be obliged to use the new syllabuses provided by QCA/ NAA.*
- 4. QCA/ NAA to determine an appropriate fee to charge, for each examination taken. It would be up to each educational institution to decide whether or not to pass this fee onto the candidate.*
- 5. State educational institutions to continue to receive funding for exam fees, under the existing model.*
- 6. QCA to stop its existing function of accrediting and regulating the standard of qualifications offered by the existing exam boards.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

School Attendance

Conferences notes

1. *Government proposals announced in the Queen's Speech on truancy, including the power to prosecute parents of truant children.*
2. *Over 1 billion hours of teaching were missed during 2002/03 by children in England alone.*
3. *The current government has set targets for reduction of unauthorised absences ('truancy').*
4. *Studies highlighting that many schools consider parentally condoned absence to be a more widespread problem than truancy¹*
5. *The Audit Commission recommendation that LEA's focus on all school absences, not just 'truancy'.*
6. *Research indicating a link between poverty and poor school attendance.*
7. *Recent government moves to impose fines upon parents for holiday absences.*
8. *National and international research indicates that parental prosecution, benefit sanctions and truancy sweeps have statistically insignificant impacts upon school attendance levels.*

Conference believes

1. *That a good education for all is a cornerstone of a functioning liberal democracy*
2. *That poor school attendance reduces a child's chances of receiving a good education*
3. *That the causal link between attendance and attainment runs in both directions*
4. *That many children in the UK have been lost without trace from school rolls.*
5. *The current government's moves to promote parental prosecutions for non attendance has led to some Education Welfare Services moving away from crucial work dealing with the welfare of children.*
6. *The setting of targets to reduce exclusions can lead to a rise in tolerated absence or 'backdoor exclusions'*
7. *That setting targets for 'truancy' can lead to a rise in authorised absence.*
8. *The police service and courts have more important work to do than deal with absent school children.*
9. *That prosecuting or fining parents for their child's absence is often a costly and ineffective means of improving a child's attendance.*

Conference therefore resolves

1. *To focus on all absence from school as opposed to just unauthorised absence or other manipulable statistics*

2. *To promote greater co-operation between Local Education Authorities and other agencies dealing with young people to ensure no child becomes 'lost' from school rolls.*
3. *To provide more support for children returning to school after periods of absence in order to break the cycle of non-attendance*
4. *To promote greater use of an alternative and more relevant curriculum for those children with little interest in or use for 'academic' subjects.*
5. *To end reliance upon truancy sweeps and replace them with systems of targeted first day contact with absent children and their parents.*
6. *To end reliance upon parental prosecution for non-attendance in all but the most extreme cases and use the funds saved to invest in welfare support for absent children.*
7. *To abolish fines for term time holidays and work with the travel industry to reduce the cost of non-term time holidays for parents of school age children.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Extending Sex and Relationship Education

Conference notes:

1. Sex education is compulsory from the age of 11 onwards
2. Under the current policy only reproduction, sexuality and sexual health must be covered
3. Parents have the right to withdraw their child from any part of sex and relationship (SRE) education – apart from those covered by the national curriculum for science.
4. The 2013 Ofsted report assessing PSHE and SRE to be “not yet good enough”
5. The Government’s SRE Guidance has not been updated since July 2000 (although a more recent supplementary guide has been provided)
6. The exemptions granted to free schools, academies and faith schools with potential to cause harm
7. The House of Commons vote against the Clause 20 amendment to the Children and Families Bill June 2013

Conference believes:

1. Children and young people have a right to good quality education, as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child
2. PSHE and SRE are core aspects of this and should be included
3. The curriculum on sex education should cover the following in addition to the current policy:
 1. consent - defined as a clear and unpressurised yes rather than the absence of a no - including issues surrounding alcohol and drugs
 2. sexuality, gender identity and orientation
 3. healthy relationships
 4. raise awareness of safe sex practices other than PIV
4. Students questioning their sexuality should be able to do so safely and without facing prejudice - especially from those in roles of responsibility. Therefore any SRE should be inclusive of LGBT+ individuals.
5. The needs of students and young people who have been victims of sexual offences should be considered. There must be a clear and well publicised policy dealing with

providing SRE in a way that keeps known survivors safe (which may include allowing them to leave the class)

6. Students safety must be a priority so no-one should be put in a situation where they have to out themselves as LGBT+ or as a victim of sexual assault

Conference calls for:

1. Liberal Youth to support motions at conference further improvements to PSHE and SRE education to include consent and LGBT+ issues

2. Liberal Youth to support cross party campaigns that share the beliefs outlined in this motion regarding PSHE and SRE

3. Liberal Youth to lobby Liberal Democrat MPs and peers to support or amend relevant legislation

4. Liberal Youth to encourage the creation of funds allowing schools to invite expert speakers into schools (such as those from THT, Brook, Marie Stopes and EACH) to ensure young people are not hampered by a lack of knowledge in teaching staff of SRE issues.

Passed: August 2015

Lapses: July 2021

Energy and Climate Change

Freedom for Nuclear Power

Conference Notes:

1. *The weight of scientific evidence behind the link between rising global temperatures and the amount of atmospheric CO₂.*
2. *Nuclear power is a large-scale carbon neutral fuel.*
3. *Current scientific evidence suggests that new IV generation reactors are dramatically safer than previous models.*
4. *97% of nuclear waste from advanced reactors, given adequate facilities, can be reprocessed into nuclear fuel, leaving 3m³ of high-grade nuclear waste per gigawatt-year.*
5. *Raw nuclear fuel is easily and safely obtainable from 'secure' nations (such as Canada), and thus benefits from security of supply, unlike oil or natural gas.*
6. *That renewable energy sources currently produce a small percentage of the UK's energy and that the Government's projected level of growth in this percentage is insufficient to replace fossil-fuel generated power in the foreseeable future.*

Conference Believes:

1. *The only realistic way Britain will generate 100% of its electricity through carbon-neutral means is by endorsing nuclear reactors for civil power generation.*
2. *That, in the long-term, renewable and fusion power should be the preferred methods of energy generation.*
3. *Given adequate reprocessing facilities, nuclear fission represents no significant threat to Britain's environment or national security.*
4. *Standardising any reactors build would significantly reduce constructional and running costs.*
5. *That inadequate funds have been laid aside for research into viable nuclear fusion reactors.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *Nuclear power stations should be exempt from the Climate Change Levy (2001) due to its carbon-neutrality.*

2. *That all of Britain's 12 nuclear reactors designated for decommissioning should be replaced with IVth Generation nuclear reactors.*
3. *That reprocessing facilities similar to Sellafield should be constructed to adequately handle and reprocess nuclear waste produced.*
4. *The remaining waste should be vitrified into borosilicate glass and stored in suitable facilities above ground for 50 years to allow the material to decay to reduce its activity, before being buried in suitable geological strata.*
5. *That adequate funding should be made available for research into viable nuclear fusion reactors.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Environment, Food and Rural Affairs

Animal Welfare

Conference Notes:

1. That in 2000 (the last year statistics were available for) over 2.71 million experiments were performed on animals in the United Kingdom
2. Recent developments in alternatives to animal testing, including the announcement in March 2002 that Xgene Corporation had succeeded in developing novel skin development technology
3. That two key European Union (EU) animal protection measures - the ban on the import of furs from countries using the leghold trap and the prohibition on the marketing of cosmetics tested on animals - have been unravelled as a result of fears by the EU that they could not survive World Trade Organisation (WTO) challenges
4. In 2000 a Medical Research Council (MRC)/MORI poll found that 58% of those questioned supported the statement that animal experimentation for medical research purposes should only be conducted for life threatening diseases

Conference welcomes the vote by the European Parliament on April 10 2001 to ban the sale of all cosmetics tested on animals within five years and the announcement made on 3 January 2002 by the Department for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) of the launch of a consultation to review out-dated laws on animal welfare.

Conference believes:

1. That animal suffering, except where a significant benefit to human kind is sufficiently likely to justify it, is totally unacceptable
2. That basic scientific research, on invertebrates meets this standard and should continue
3. That circuses and zoos cannot sufficiently recreate natural environments for their animals
4. That the World Trade Organisation's (WTO) rules must be reformed to allow the European Union (and other WTO members) to introduce trade-related measures which are genuinely aimed at securing improved standards of animal welfare

Conference expresses its concern for the welfare of all animals, in whatever environment they may be and calls for:

1. The compulsory publication of all results from experiments on vertebrates (to prevent unnecessary repetition of testing)

2. *The government to offer support, and incentives, for research into alternatives to animal testing*
3. *A ban on the use of wild animals in circuses and regulation to govern the use of domestic animals*
4. *An immediate end to the use of animals in the development and testing of household goods, tobacco and weapons tests.*
5. *An end to all tests on animals once a suitable scientific alternative to animal testing has been found*
6. *Animal welfare considerations to be a valid factor within the rules of the World Trade Organisation*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Pollinators

Conference notes:

1. *The decline in the bee population is of high concern to the British public*
2. *The previous coalition government's National Pollinator Strategy*
3. *The European Union bans relating to neonicotinoid pesticides*

Conference welcomes:

- a. *The commitment in the 2015 Liberal Democrat manifesto to "bring forward a package of measures to protect bees and other pollinators, including legal protection for bumblebee nests."*
- b. *The pledge by Devon County Council to protect bees from harmful pesticides on council land*
- c. *Pesticide restrictions which are becoming more commonplace in urban areas around the world - such as Paris, Seattle, and Tokyo*

Conference believes:

- I. *Bees and other pollinators are essential to the conservation of our ecosystems and reversing their decline is of utmost importance*
- II. *The National Pollinator Strategy is insufficient for reversing the decline in pollinator populations*
- III. *The Weeds Act 1959 and Ragwort Control Act 2003 are damaging to natural ecosystems and damage biodiversity*
- IV. *Due to the rich biodiversity of the country, different areas are likely to face different challenges in tackling pollinator decline*

Conference resolves for Liberal Youth to:

- i. *Call on the government to continue with the National Pollinator Strategy, with an additional commitment to the pledges made in the 2015 Liberal Democrat manifesto*
- ii. *Call for a full, thorough assessment of the environmental risks posed by neonicotinoid and other pesticides, with particular focus on the effect on pollinator populations and activity*
- iii. *Call for a repeal of the The Weeds Act 1959 and Ragwort Control Act 2003*
- iv. *Call upon local authorities to develop their own pollinator action plans to match the needs of the local area*
- v. *Support the proposal of a Nature & Wellbeing Act as set out by The Wildlife Trusts, RSPB, and other partner organisations*
- vi. *Transpose all relevant ecological EU directives and legislation into UK law*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Foreign Affairs

Israel and Palestine

Conference deplors the devastation caused by the Israeli Defence Force's Operation Protective Edge, and urges Her Majesty's Government to take a stronger stance.

Conference notes:

- a) Following her efforts to scotch a reconciliation between the Fatah-led Palestinian Authority and the government in the Gaza Strip, Israel launched Operation Protective Edge, a series of air strikes and ground invasions attempted to destroy Hamas' military capacity, on 8th July 2014.*
- b) According to the United Nations Office for the Co-Ordination of Humanitarian Affairs, 1,975 Gazans have died during this conflict, of which 72% were civilians.*
- c) The Business Secretary recently declared that an arms embargo would be placed upon Israel if the ceasefire currently in place were broken.*
- d) Her Majesty's Government prohibits British arms exports to the Islamic militant group Hamas, who have fired rockets at Israeli civilians.*

Conference believes:

- a) By attacking densely populated civilian areas with the sure knowledge that great numbers of civilian casualties would ensue, Israel has acted in a manner unbefitting a modern liberal democracy.*
- b) The Business Secretary's announcement reflects an uneasy compromise between his party and the broadly pro-Israeli Conservative Party; the current misery stemming from Israel's actions, however, is surely reason enough to act.*

Conference resolves:

- a) Arms exports to Israel should be prohibited.*
- b) To condemn the acts of Israel and Hamas which have endangered civilians and directly resulted in civilian casualties, who have been overwhelmingly Palestinian.*
- c) Liberal Youth should argue for a two-state solution through which a free, and politically united, Palestine can co-exist with Israel.*

Passed: August 2013

Lapses: July 2021

LGBT+ in Russia

Conference notes with concern

1. *the prohibitions of literature ‘promoting sodomy, lesbianism, bisexuality, and transgenderism to minors’ being passed into law in several regions of Russia including Ryazan in 2006, Arkhangelsk in 2011, and Kostroma and Saint Petersburg in 2012.*
2. *that the term ‘propaganda’ is rarely defined and that media outlets have censored themselves, and individuals have been intimidated to the point of fearing expressing their opinion, and associations and companies using gay-friendly symbols have been censored.*
3. *the ban on gay pride marches in Moscow.*
4. *the refusal of the organisers of the Sochi 2014 Winter Olympics to register the Pride House.*
5. *the claims of Vitaly Milonov, that homosexuality is an illness “easily treated by [...] praying.”*
6. *the abandonment of LGBT film festivals in Kemerovo and Novosibirsk, in the face of intimidation, obstruction by the authorities, and refusal by the police of protection.*
7. *the attacks on an LGBT club in Moscow by nationalists on October 11th 2012.*

Conference believes

1. *that sexual orientation and gender identity are parts of the identity of every individual.*
2. *that all individuals are born free and equal in dignity and rights.*
3. *that all people, regardless of sexual orientation, have the right to live in peace and security.*
4. *that homophobia and transphobia have particularly serious consequences for young LGBT people, who can face bullying, unsympathetic teachers, and curricula which ignore LGBT issues or perpetuate discrimination, which can result in harm to mental health.*
5. *that all individuals have rights to freedom of assembly and expression.*
6. *that governmental authorities cannot dictate whom one may love.*
7. *these actions by the Russian establishment are an infringement on the freedom and equality of LGBT individuals and serve to create a culture of taboo, fear and*

discrimination, with can only legitimise homophobia and lead to an increase in homophobic attacks.

Conference resolves

- 1. to condemn any discrimination on the basis of sexual orientation and gender identity.*
- 2. to condemn hate speech and discriminatory statements*
- 3. to support member parties and affiliated organisations in their continuing efforts to protect LGBT individuals from discrimination.*

Conference calls for

- 1. Liberal Youth to continue working for LGBT rights in all contexts.*
- 2. the Liberal Youth International committee to work with partners in IFLRY and LYMEC to support LGBT equality movements in Russia and worldwide.*
- 3. Liberal Youth to work with Liberal Democrat parliamentarians of all levels to further the cause of LGBT rights abroad.*
- 4. Russia to ensure the fundamental rights of LGBT individuals, including the freedoms of expression, assembly and association.*
- 5. Russia to adopt and implement anti-discrimination legislation to protect LGBT individuals.*
- 6. Russia to revoke legislation which does not conform to the case law of the European Court of Human Rights.*
- 7. the EU to utilise the conditionality inherent in EU-Russian agreements to ensure this.*

Passed: Autumn 2012

Lapses: July 2021

The Arab Spring

Conference welcomes:

1. *The recent popular movements in pursuit of liberal democracies in countries across the Middle East and North Africa, and the progress that has since been made in some of these countries towards democratisation and constitutional reform.*
2. *The humanitarian assistance to the people of Libya as a result of UN Security Council resolution 1973.*
3. *The joint statement signed by the Network of Arab Liberals, Liberal International, the European Liberal Democrats and the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats in regard of supporting freedom, popular uprisings in the Arab World and strengthening fora and tools for future cooperation, signed on the 7th May 2011.*
4. *The Federal Conference motion, Arab Awakening including it's recognition of young protesters, and the encouragement in the debate for Liberal Youth to work with liberal youth organisations in these countries.*

Conference recognises

1. *in particular the role played by young people and women in these popular movements.*

Conference regrets:

1. *The past links between the government of the UK and regimes in the Middle East and North Africa*
2. *The sale of arms to repressive regimes across the Middle East and North Africa by British arms traders, and the continued promotion of the British arms trade to transitional countries and governments.*

Conference condemns

1. *repression of human rights such as democracy, freedom of expression, freedom of association, and self-determination wherever it may occur, and therefore condemns the violent repression of these rights in Bahrain, Syria, Libya and Yemen.*

Conference calls for:

1. *Governments in the region to respect human rights and freedoms, and to respond peacefully to any further popular uprisings.*

2. *The international community to increase its support for democratic processes in countries in the area currently undergoing political and economic transition.*
3. *Cooperation with sister parties in the region, including the umbrella organisation for liberal youth in Africa, OALY-LEAD, to promote the inclusion of young people in the development of liberal democracies.*
4. *The \$20 billion promised to Egypt and Tunisia to be delivered under the Deauville partnership.*
5. *For a portion of this \$20 billion to be set aside for youth projects to encourage the involvement and participation of young people in the political process, as well as the collaboration of those from different groups in society.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

The Arms Trade

Conference notes:

1. *Earlier this year, the United Nations General Assembly voted for the Arms Trade Treaty and that the UK has played a leading role in drafting the Treaty and building an international consensus to drive it forwards.*
2. *The annual turnover of the UK's defence and security sector was £22 billion in 2012, and the sector directly employed 155,000 people in the UK in that year, according to Securing Prosperity from HMG. Further, this sector received around £700 million of subsidies in 2009/2010 from a variety of government departments and programmes, according to 2011 research by the Campaign Against the Arms Trade.*
3. *That the British government includes a number of agencies and programmes specifically designed to promote the sale of defence equipment to overseas buyers, such as the Defence Export Services Organisation (DESO) and the Credit Exports Guarantee Department (CEGD).*
4. *A large defence industrial sector both secures highly skilled jobs in the UK and grants security of equipment supply to the Armed Forces.*
5. *Subsidising such a sector also raises pressing moral and political issues around the sale of arms to undemocratic and repressive regimes, or actors whose actions and interests may well threaten Britain's interests.*

Conference believes:

1. *States should seek "to practice tolerance and live together in peace as good neighbours" in accordance with the values of the UN Charter and so settle their disputes first and foremost through peaceful means. Retaining a substantial and comprehensive subsidy package available to the defence sector as that offered by the UK government may be inimical to this goal.*
2. *There is an inherent tension between the UK supporting tighter restrictions on the sale of arms between countries and continuing to provide substantial financial incentives to its own defence sector to export arms around the world. This tension between the two aims weakens the clarity with which we can stand against dangerous transfers of weapons or military technology.*

3. *The Coalition governments' wider programme of measures to promote British manufacturing must not come at the expense of either the human rights of citizens of other states or Britain's current and future political interests.*

Conference calls for:

1. *A comprehensive review of the role of other departments and programmes in the sale of UK defence equipment to overseas buyers, which should include the option of closing or substantially downsizing bodies such as the DESO.*
2. *The government to commit to ratifying the Arms Trade Treaty as soon as possible, and to lobby other governments to speed up their ratification of the Treaty, particularly other major defence suppliers such as the United States and France*
3. *Liberal Youth to press for the implementation of the Liberal Democrats' 2010 manifesto pledge to block UK defence sales to states that would use them to repress their own people.*
4. *The Coalition Government to build upon its commitment in the Coalition Agreement to use the CEGD to promote green industries by restricting CEGD support for the defence sector to those states with strong democratic credentials.*
5. *The defence sector to demonstrate a heightened awareness of and commitment to the best examples of corporate transparency and behaviour, and to act in accordance with these values.*

Passed: Autumn 2013

Lapses: July 2021

The Future of Europe

Conference notes:

1. *Existing Liberal Democrat and Liberal Youth policy regarding the European Union.*
2. *The contributions of the EU to world peace and European peace - as exemplified by the Nobel Peace Prize awarded to the EU in 2012.*
3. *The historic and current contributions by the EU to human rights and democracy in the world.*
4. *That the population of the EU is 522 million people.*
5. *That the EU's collective economy is the largest in the world, representing 20% of global GDP.*
6. *That the national armed forces of EU member states combined represent 1.7 million active personnel.*

Conference believes:

1. *That the model of independent nation states is no longer sufficient to protect the interests, freedoms and liberty of individuals in a globalised world.*
2. *That liberal internationalism represents the best tool for dealing with the challenges of the 21st century.*
3. *That Europeans share a common history, culture and civilisation despite various national and local differences.*
4. *That the interests of Europe and of the United Kingdom as a whole are best served by the pooling of some national sovereignty and powers in specific areas for greater combined effect.*
5. *That federalism, with the explicit distinction between the different powers and responsibilities of separate tiers of government, represents the best model for the evolution of the European Union and the nations of Europe.*

Conference therefore calls for:

1. *The direct election of the Commission by the European Parliament.*
2. *The EU-wide standardisation of electoral systems and regulations for European Parliament elections.*
3. *The UK to join the Schengen Zone.*
4. *An end to the commitment to "ever closer union" and a return to the principles of subsidiarity and devolution of power to the most local level possible.*

5. *Reform of the European Parliament to allow it to propose legislation and to choose its own location.*
6. *For the abolition of the grant system for EU funding and for the European institutions to be given their own sources of funding independent of member nations, particularly through direct tax raising powers*
7. *Greater cooperation and integration on a European level of defence and procurement*
8. *For European institutions to take a greater role in directing investment on a European level.*
9. *For the UK government to be a vocal advocate for this process and to play a key role in the reform of the European Union*

Conference therefore resolves to work towards these goals.

Passed: Summer 2013

Lapses: July 2021

Tibet

Conference notes that:

1. *The Peoples Republic of China invaded the independent sovereign nation of Tibet in October 1950.*
2. *Around 1-1.2 million Tibetans have died as a direct result of the occupation.*
3. *Amongst others the fundamental freedoms of speech, expression, and worship have severely been curtailed by the occupiers despite the protection offered to the latter freedom under the 1982 Constitution of the Peoples Republic of China.*
4. *The traditional nomadic Tibetan way of life is threatened by the occupiers through mineral extraction, de-forestation and the large scale settlement by Chinese colonists.*

Conference believes that:

1. *The Peoples Republic of China should withdraw its forces and civilian employees from Tibet and grant it recognition as an independent sovereign nation.*
2. *In the event of withdrawal China should not fund/train any groups whose aim it is to destabilize Tibet outside of the democratic process.*
3. *Any new Tibetan Government should legislate to produce a codified Bill of Rights to ensure; freedom of speech, freedom of conscience, freedom of worship, freedom of expression and freedom of movement for both native Tibetans and any ethnic Chinese who should choose to remain in an independent Tibet.*
4. *The United Nations should review its decision taken on November 13th 1950, in which it rendered the Tibetan application to join the organisation as 'a communication from a non-governmental organisation'.*

Conference resolves to:

1. *Write to all 55 Liberal Democrat MPs to urge both personal and Parliamentary support for the above statements and beliefs.*
2. *Write to the Chinese Ambassador to condemn his country's occupation of Tibet.*
3. *Actively encourage and support, wherever possible, the Free Tibet Campaign and other such Tibet orientated organisations who promote the peaceful attainment of an independent Tibet.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Turkey

Conference Notes:

1. That in 2005 Turkey began accession procedures to join the EU
2. Turkey held a referendum in 2010 which amended their constitution to abolish the death penalty and give more rights to the Kurdish community
3. The UK, Denmark, Spain, Portugal and the Netherlands are in favour of Turkey joining the EU
4. Turkey have completed, or nearly completed, 8 of 35 accession chapters laid out in the agreement to start the process of joining
5. Turkey is an important arbiter of the Middle East
6. Turkey had the 15th largest GDP and is a founding member of the OECD and a member of the G20.

Conference Believes:

1. Europe's hopes of joining the 'G3' alongside China and America will increase with Turkey onside
2. The EU could play an important part in the territorial dispute of the Turkish Republic of Northern Cyprus
3. Turkey has vastly improved Human Rights in the country and is moving towards a position the ECHR is content with
4. Turkey's geographical position is not an important factor in accepting Turkey into the EU
5. Standard of living in Turkey will improve if Turkey joins the EU

Conference Resolves:

1. To support Turkish accession to the EU on completion of the 35 chapters set out in the accession agreement
2. To continue supporting the enlargement and advancement of the EU
3. To continue supporting the ideal of a Federal Europe
4. To make contact with young Turkish Liberals, through IFLRY and the International Officers

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Ukraine

Conference notes:

1. *The Ukrainian revolution of February 2014 and the subsequent victory of pro-European Union (EU) parties and individuals in free and fair elections in that country, indicating the desire of the Ukrainian people to move into a closer relationship with the EU, but not a desire for armed confrontation with Russia.*
2. *Russia's invasion and subsequent annexation of Crimea through the use of armed force and a fraudulent referendum, in clear violation of international law.*
3. *Ongoing support for armed groups in eastern Ukraine by Russia, through the provision of equipment, vehicles and even indirect fire from over the international border into Ukrainian territory.*
4. *The threat that the ongoing violence in eastern Ukraine poses to the lives of the people of that region, as well as the sovereignty and integrity of the Ukrainian state, and its ability to fulfil the wishes of its population for a closer alignment with the EU.*
5. *Frequent provocative incursions into NATO airspace by Russian aircraft, as well as large-scale military exercises and concentrations by Russia along its common border with Ukraine.*

Conference believes:

1. *Relations between states must be founded on respect for basic norms of behaviour, including refraining "from the threat or use of force against the territorial integrity or political independence of any state" and settling "their international disputes by peaceful means in such a manner that international peace and security, and justice, are not endangered."*
2. *That the United Kingdom, as a permanent member of the UN Security Council, as a leading member of the EU and as a major economic, military and diplomatic power, has a responsibility to help ensure that these basic norms of behaviour are complied with by all states.*
3. *Liberals, as internationalists, should be at the forefront of the argument for ensuring that all states respect not only each other, but also each other's peoples and their expressed wishes through free and democratic institutions. An international society ordered through commonly agreed rules and institutions*

represents a far brighter world for humankind and Liberalism than one organised simply by the raw destructive power of the mightiest actors.

Conference calls for:

- 1. Liberal Youth to lobby the Liberal Democrats to press for a firmer line in response to repeated Russian violations of international law, including (but not limited to) tougher sanctions aimed at individuals and companies close to the Putin Presidency, until such time as the Russian state withdraws from its occupation of Crimea, ceases all military involvement in the fighting in eastern Ukraine and respects the wishes of the Ukrainian people with regards to the future of their country.*
- 2. Liberal Youth to press the Liberal Democrats to affirm a commitment to NATO as the best defensive framework to respond to ongoing Russian aggression in Eastern Europe, and as the best institution to build common bonds to resist attempts by Russia to pry apart European states, and to separate Europe and the US on key issues confronting them.*
- 3. Liberal Youth to build co-operation with similar groups in Ukraine, to nurture and grow the bonds of pan-European friendship that will help that country become a full member of the EU, through such bodies as IFLRY.*
- 4. Liberal Youth to campaign to keep the plight of the people of eastern Ukraine and Crimea prominent in the public eye.*

Passed: March 2015

Lapses: July 2021

Response to the European Union Referendum

Conference notes:

1. *The United Kingdom European Union Referendum of June 2016 resulted in a victory for the Leave campaign;*
2. *That Norway, Switzerland and Iceland are all members of the Schengen Area and, asides from Switzerland the European Free Trade Area, but not members of the European Union;*
3. *That if Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty is used, this will mean the United Kingdom will leave the European Union in 2 years.*

Conference believes that:

1. *If Article 50 is used, the Liberal Democrats should aim to advance a liberal vision of Britain's future outside of the European Union;*
2. *Through continued membership of the European Free Trade Area and by joining the Schengen Area, Britain can continue to get considerable benefits from free trade and free movement of people, whilst maintaining a close relationship with its European neighbours.*

Conference resolves to:

1. *If Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty is triggered by the British government, call on the government to continue Britain's membership of the European Free Trade Area;*
2. *If Article 50 of the Lisbon Treaty is triggered by the British government, call on the government to work towards the goal of Britain joining the Schengen Area in a capacity similar to Iceland, Norway or Switzerland.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Britain Stronger In Europe: Take Back Control

Conference notes:

1. *The Schuman Declaration of 1950, and its aim to ensure that “war between France and Germany becomes not merely unthinkable, but materially impossible”;*
2. *The Treaty on European Union of 1992, which states, “The Union shall offer its citizens an area of freedom, security and justice without internal frontiers, in which the free movement of persons is ensured in conjunction with appropriate measures with respect to external border controls, asylum, immigration and the prevention and combating of crime”;*
3. *The record of the Liberal Democrats and of the Liberal Youth as consistent advocates of European cooperation and of the European Union;*
4. *The result of the referendum held on 23 June 2016, in which 51.9% of voters voted to leave the European Union;*
5. *That polling indicates that young people are overwhelmingly in favour of Britain’s continued membership of the European Union;*
6. *That the majority of voters in London, Scotland and Northern Ireland voted to remain in the European Union;*
7. *Calls for a second referendum on Scottish independence;*
8. *The subsequent downgrading of Britain’s credit rating by S&P and Fitch, and the negative warning from Moody’s;*
9. *The sharp decline in the value of sterling following the results;*
10. *Reports of a sharp rise in hates crimes against EU citizens and others following the results;*
11. *Tim Farron’s announcement that the Liberal Democrats will fight the next General Election on a platform of support for Britain’s renewed membership of the European Union;*
12. *The surge in Liberal Democrat recruitment following the party’s stance being announced;*
13. *Calls from some for a second referendum on Scottish independence.*

Conference believes:

1. *That the European Union has helped secure an unprecedented period of peace in Europe;*
2. *That Britain’s membership of the European Union has been of immense benefit to people of all ages, but especially to young people and students;*
3. *That the Erasmus scheme in particular illustrates that the value of the European Union to young people extends far beyond economics;*

4. *That the adverse economic consequences of departure from the European Union for young people and others will be severe;*
5. *That Britain's departure from the European will disproportionately harm young people;*
6. *That withdrawal from the European Union is a serious setback for the liberal values of internationalism and openness;*
7. *That there is a danger that withdrawal from the European Union will result in economic isolation and protectionism.*

Conference further believes:

1. *That liberals have a duty to advance the values of openness and internationalism in politics;*
2. *That that duty requires that we advocate for the free movement of goods, of services and of people;*
3. *That the European Union offers the best hope of achieving those aims, both within Europe and in the world at large;*
4. *That Britain's departure from the European Union against the wishes of young people will increase already unacceptable intergenerational injustice in Britain;*
5. *That the referendum result nevertheless represents a democratic mandate that must be respected unless a fresh democratic mandate is obtained to reverse it;*
6. *That in the interim liberals should support efforts to retain as many as possible of the benefits of European Union membership, including (but not limited to) free trade and free movement.*

Conference therefore resolves:

1. *To reaffirm the commitment of Liberal Youth to Britain's membership of the European Union;*
2. *To support the declaration by Tim Farron that the Liberal Democrats will fight the next general election on a platform of support for membership of the European Union;*
3. *To call upon the Executive to run a campaign on Britain's membership of the European Union as the priority campaign for Freshers 2016;*
4. *To reaffirm the commitment of the Liberal Youth to an active international presence, both through bilateral cooperation and through LYMEC and IFLRY;*
5. *To call upon Liberal Youth Scotland to clarify their position on a second Scottish independence referendum, and to support their stance, whilst expressing the hope that Scotland would vote to remain in the United Kingdom.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Health

Early Intervention

Conference notes:

1. *that nearly 1 in 4 people in the UK say they feel unhappy about their bodies, and that the prevalence of eating disorders amongst young people doubled between 1996 and 2011.*
2. *1.6 million suffer with some form of eating disorder (2004 NICE).*
3. *Despite this, there are only 226 NHS inpatient units in the UK dedicated to treat eating disorders, and a further 221 private units.*
4. *Sufferers encounter lengthy waiting lists (sometimes up to 6 months) before receiving any support. There is very little treatment for bulimia nervosa, EDNOS and binge-eating disorder.*
5. *the Campaign for Body Confidence, founded in Parliament by Liberal Democrats Jo Swinson and Lynne Featherstone, is considered by ministers to be “at the core of the [Coalition] government’s message on health and well-being”.*

Conference believes:

1. *That mental health should be subject to the same waiting times (18 weeks) that the Department of Health has committed to. Early intervention is key to long term recovery in all mental health, and particularly eating disorders.*
2. *That funding into further specialised units countrywide is vital to support all eating disorders.*
3. *That funding for research is required in order to improve current treatment trends to aid support and recovery.*
4. *that early intervention is crucial in treatment for eating disorders. In most cases this is not possible due to the lack of services.*

Conference resolves:

1. *To encourage the Department of Health to commit to an 18 week waiting time for all mental health services*
2. *To campaign for specialist services that serve all eating disorders.*

3. *To campaign for better aftercare for patients who have undergone inpatient treatment.*
4. *That Liberal Youth should support other parts of the Liberal Democrats in promoting the Campaign for Body Confidence, including support for related activities and drop-in articles for leaflets and newspapers.*

Passed: Autumn 2012

Lapses: July 2021

Free Contraception for All

Conference notes

- 1. The Government's continuing underfunding of the NHS.*
- 2. The recent announcement of an increase in prescription charges as of April.*
- 3. Many people rely on free contraceptives from family planning clinics and GPs.*
- 4. The Government's recent proposals to put all free contraception into prescription.*

Conference believes

- 1. Free contraception should be available to all regardless of age, sex and income.*
- 2. The removal of free contraception will increase the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases including HIV.*
- 3. The removal of free contraception will also increase the number of unwanted pregnancies.*

Conference resolves

- 1. To draw this matter to the attention of the student community.*
- 2. To promote the campaign through the StAR network and Free Radical.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

HIV and Rights

Conference notes that

1. *HIV disease (infection with HIV with or without symptoms) is a world-wide epidemic affecting every country.*
2. *HIV disease is not contagious. Casual contact presents no risk of infection.*

Conference believes that

1. *All governments and all national health organisations should treat HIV disease positively and rigorously as a chronic, manageable condition. Ensuring access and availability of treatment must be part of the social and moral obligation of governments to their citizens.*

Conference demands

1. *An international charter of rights to acknowledge and preserve the humanity of people with HIV disease. The Charter must include:*
 - a. *anti-discrimination legislation protecting the jobs, housing and access to services to people with HIV disease*
 - b. *the right to active involvement in the affected communities of people with HIV in decision-making that may affect them*
 - c. *access to anonymous and absolutely confidential HIV antibody testing. Pre- and post- test counselling must be available*
 - d. *the right to medically appropriate housing*
 - e. *no restriction on the international movement and/or immigration of people with the HIV disease*
 - f. *full recognition of lesbian and gay relationships*
 - g. *no mandatory testing under any circumstances*
 - h. *no quarantine under any circumstances*
 - i. *special attention to the unique needs and problems of intravenous drug users, including the provision of clean needles on demand*
 - j. *special attention to the unique needs and problems of the prisoners with HIV disease and guarantees that they receive the same standard of care and treatment as the general population, including the provision of free condoms*
 - k. *the provision of reasonable accommodation in services and facilities for disabled people*

2. *Criteria for the approval of drugs and treatment should be standardised on an international basis so as to facilitate world-wide access to new drugs and treatment.*
3. *International education programs outlining comprehensive sex education, supportive of all sexual orientations in culturally-sensitive ways and describing safer sex and needle practices and other means of preventing HIV transmission must be made available, recognising and combating the unequal social position of women in many countries which may affect their access to such information.*

Conference instructs the Executive

1. *To produce a leaflet based on this motion.*
2. *To submit this motion in an appropriate format to the Federal Conference of the Liberal Democrats.*
3. *To publicise this motion widely, using as many different forms of media as possible.*
4. *To write to ACT-UP branches in the UK to inform them of our stance, subscribe to their newsletter and ask to be kept informed of their activities.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Mental Health Provision

Conference notes:

- *One in four will experience mental health difficulty in the course of a year.*
- *Despite funding for mental health services increasing, those experiencing mental health problems continue to suffer unacceptable discrimination in terms of access to services and treatment.*
- *That the current treatment of mental ill health is ineffective, and results in high readmission rates.*
- *Poor mental health severely impacts upon educational attainment, and poor mental health at a young age can result in increased risk of acute infections, illness, increased self-harming behaviours, suicidal ideation, and suicide.*
- *the work of the Liberal Democrats in Coalition Government in England has resulted in new access and waiting time standards to be introduced in 2015, age appropriate and effective co-ordination between services, and support for employers and employees in ensuring provisions to support individuals with mental health difficulties, ensuring an active working lifestyle.*

Conference believes that:

- *there currently exists an inequity in treatment between patients with physical health needs and those with mental health needs.*
- *there is a shortage of psychological therapists, which results in the common use of drugs to treat mental ill health; as a result the notion of patient choice does not in effect extend to mental health services.*
- *support for employees in returning to work and students returning to education should become the norm with employers and education providers. Mental health training and provision should first start in the workplace or educational institution.*
- *the stigma and discrimination of poor mental health often has a negative impact as great as that of the illness itself.*
- *that Health and Wellbeing Boards should publish readmission statistics, to help inform trends that currently exist in the patient discharging system.*
- *that waiting times for mental health treatment should be the same as all other treatment.*

Conference calls upon;

- *Liberal Youth to call on the Liberal Democrats to deliver a mental health strategy to radically improve treatment and access to mental health services, including tackling waiting times across the UK through a rigorous review of all Health and Wellbeing Board provision.*
- *Liberal Youth to call on the Liberal Democrats to outline a national framework to ensure continuity of treatment for young people transitioning from adolescent to adult services, including a streamlined information sharing system between providers.*
- *Liberal Youth to call on the Liberal Democrats to develop a strategy for the provision of mental health services in local communities, and development of a programme for rolling out mental health support in the workplace, similar to that used to monitor physical health such as blood cholesterol, weight, and blood sugar levels.*
- *Liberal Youth to call on the Liberal Democrats to ensure provision of extra capacity in mental health intensive care and forensic units to divert people in need of treatment away from prison and to assist those already in prison.*
- *Liberal Youth calls upon the Liberal Democrats to ensure provision capacity and understanding at all levels of society in order to ensure those with mental health needs are not automatically punished in the traditional manner without due regard or appropriate treatment for their mental health issues, with specific regard to those with PTSD [Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder].*

Passed: Spring 2014

Lapses: July 2021

Home Affairs, Justice and Equalities

A Free and Uncensored Internet

Conference Notes:

1. *That attempts have been made as part of the Communications and Data Bill 2013 to expand the ability to record and observe digital communications.*
2. *The work put in by the Liberal Democrats, including Nick Clegg and Julian Huppert which resulted in the vetoing of the bill.*
3. *The increased availability of pornographic material as a result of the growth of the internet.*
4. *The attempts by members of the Conservative party to try and implement an opt-out porn filtering system in the United Kingdom*
5. *That attempts to make the implementation of a porn filter Liberal Democrat policy at Autumn Conference 2013 failed.*

Conference Believes:

1. *That the internet should be free from censorship of any sort due to its role in aiding the ability of individuals to make fuller use of their human rights.*
2. *That police and security services should have the necessary and proportional powers to fulfil their duties and ensure that the law is upheld.*
3. *That digital communications pose a new challenge to the Security services, but one that can be overcome with existing surveillance powers.*
4. *That internet filters are not an appropriate way to deal with any negative effects that pornography may have and that effective sex education which covers subjects such as relationships, and consent is a better way to limit any negative impacts that pornography has.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *For Liberal Youth to campaign for a free and uncensored internet and to oppose legislation which would limit the ability of the British people to make full and proper use of the internet*
2. *For Liberal Youth to campaign for the Liberal Democrats to adopt a zero-base review of policing powers and anti-terror legislation with the aim of developing powers that are both effective and proportional to the threats that Britain faces.*

3. *For Liberal Youth to campaign with LYMEC and other organisations to get access to a free and uncensored internet added to the ECHR as a fundamental human right.*
4. *For Liberal Youth to campaign for the addition of a free and uncensored internet to be added to the Human Rights Act 1998.5. For Liberal Youth to campaign for the Liberal Democrats to include a radically rethought sex education based around consent, relationships and sexual biology with the aim of ensuring that all young people leave education with an accurate portrayal of what a healthy relationship consists of.*

Passed: Autumn 2013

Lapses: July 2021

Abortion (Northern Ireland)

Conference notes:

1. *That women in Northern Ireland have no automatic right to an abortion*
2. *This includes women who have been raped, victims of incest and women whose baby has been diagnosed as profoundly disabled or will not live at birth.*
3. *Women in England, Scotland and Wales are entitled to a legal, safe abortion on the NHS and have been for the last 40 years.*
4. *Women from Northern Ireland who do not feel that they can continue their pregnancy have to travel to the rest of the United Kingdom, where they organise and pay for their own abortion. This option is only available to those women who are able to raise the money to pay for their procedure within the legal time limits, as well as the costs of their travel and accommodation, which can add up to thousands of pounds.*

Conference believes:

1. *That all women have a right to exercise control, freedom and choice in their sexual and reproductive lives*
2. *That every woman has a right to choose to have an abortion, and that access to abortion services should be free and fair to all who choose to use them*
3. *No woman should be forced to carry on a pregnancy against their will*
4. *No woman's health or life should be put at risk by unsafe abortion practices*
5. *No woman's life or health should be put at risk as a consequence of being denied medical treatment when faced with an unplanned pregnancy*
6. *No woman should be deterred from seeking medical care for fear of being reported to the police by medical professionals who suspect unlawful behaviour*
7. *All women in Northern Ireland should have the right to abortion services based on need, rather than personal conscience and religion*

Conference resolves:

1. *To support the Family Planning Association's campaign, "Time for Change"*
2. *To take a motion to Federal Conference in Birmingham calling on the Federal Party to support the campaign.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Asylum Seekers Right to Work

Conference Notes:

1. *Asylum seekers who have been refused asylum but for some reason cannot be immediately returned to their country of origin, or those awaiting a hearing are not allowed to work to support themselves and their families*
2. *The European Convention on Human Rights says asylum seekers have the right to work*
3. *If Asylum seekers receive just 75% of normal income support – around £40 a week, this is well below the poverty line (£58 per single adult with no dependants after housing has been deducted)*
4. *The Still Human Still Here campaign is dedicated to highlighting the plight of tens of thousands of refused asylum seekers who are destitute in the UK. Supporters of the campaign believe that the denial of any means of subsistence to refused asylum seekers as a matter of government policy is both inhumane and ineffective.*
5. *Still Human Still Here is a coalition of 43 charities*
6. *In the Liberal Democrat constitution it states, “allow asylum seekers to work, saving taxpayers’ money and allowing them dignity earning their living instead of having to depend on hand-outs”*
7. *The British Red Cross had to assist more than 11,600 destitute asylum seekers in need of emergency assistance last year.*

Conference Believes:

1. *Removal of people’s ability to support themselves, through with work or benefits does little to encourage failed asylum seekers to leave voluntarily (Centre for Social Justice)*
2. *Forced destitution will not encourage people to leave voluntarily*
3. *There is a backlog of 280,000 failed applications which could take 20 years to clear. (Centre for Social Justice) The economy is suffering by these people being refused permission to work.*
4. *Without being able to work, asylum seekers are unable to adapt into the community and so they are being segregated against and it is fuelling discrimination.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *To campaign To remind the Liberal Democrats of our manifesto promises*
2. *To support the Still Human Still Here campaign*
3. *To lobby our Ministers and MPs to support permission to work for asylum seekers left in limbo*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Equal Civil Partnerships

Conference notes:

1. *The existence of civil partnerships.*
2. *That civil partnerships grant the civil partners the same rights and responsibilities as civil marriage.*
3. *That civil partnerships are only available to same-sex couples.*
4. *That under the 2004 Gender recognition act a transgender individual who wishes to change their legal gender must first dissolve any civil partnership or marriage that they are in and then can only enter into the alternative union with their partner after the legal gender change is completed.*
5. *That civil partnerships lack the religious connotation of civil marriage.*
6. *That the introduction of civil partnerships was a fundamental step towards marriage equality for homosexual couples but that equal marriage should still be campaigned for.*

Conference believes:

1. *That civil partnerships should be legally available to all couples over the age of consent, regardless of the gender or sex of any person in the couple.*
2. *That civil partnerships should remain an option of legal commitment between a couple after the equalisation of civil marriage.*

Conference resolves:

1. *To campaign for equal civil partnerships alongside equal marriage.*
2. *To campaign to retain civil partnerships as a legal union between a couple after the introduction of equal marriage.*
3. *To call for Liberal Democrat members in both the House of Commons and House of Lords to push for equal civil partnerships to be adopted alongside equal marriage before the next general election.*

Passed: Autumn 2012

Lapses: July 2021

International Students

Conference notes

1. *The speech given to the House of Commons Theresa May on 22 March 2011 which outlined proposals to reduce the number of student visas issued and to scrap the post study work visa.*
2. *The Tier 1 post study work visa allows international university graduates to get up to two years work experience after completing their degree*
3. *The 2010 CBI Education and skills survey: businesses identified graduates' foreign language skills and international cultural awareness amongst the four skills with which they are least satisfied.*
4. *The report by CentreForum that said moves to tighten the restrictions on overseas students will risk nearly 12,000 jobs in education and another 12,000 in the wider economy*
5. *That access to pre-degree level courses will be severely restricted for international students under the proposed changes*
6. *That in a survey run by the University of Manchester Students' Union and filled by over 1000 international students, 71.3% said they wouldn't have chosen to study in the UK without the post study work visa as the opportunity to gain experience and give back made the UK very attractive.*
7. *International students are the group least likely to settle in the UK. Just 1 per cent of migrants granted settlement in the UK in 2009 progressed directly from the study route.*

Conference believes

1. *International students provide Universities with a large amount of revenue that will be increasingly important in light of on-going cuts to Higher Education.*
2. *International students are vital to the research capabilities of the United Kingdom.*
3. *The Tier 1 post study work visa improves the attractiveness of studying in the UK and that many businesses and charities also benefit from the international competencies and exposure of these graduates. Therefore, closing this route is disadvantageous to both the appeal of studying in the UK and global competitiveness of businesses all over the country.*
4. *That through exposure to different cultures we all gain cultural awareness and key competitive skills.*
5. *That restricting the ability of students to bring dependents to the UK and the ability for the dependents to work will be detrimental to international mature*

students, as they would be forced to choose between studying in the UK and their family. Many also rely on income from a partner to cover household expenses.

- 6. That there is no conclusive evidence supporting the view that the Post Study Work Visa must be closed as it leads to large numbers of students permanently staying on in the UK. Nor is there any evidence of displacement of UK graduates.*
- 7. The effect of these proposals would, overall, be negative on the ability of the UK to compete globally for the best and brightest. While we welcome weeding out abuse in the system, we believe these proposals are not effective in doing so. They would penalise legitimate students, reduce the attractiveness and ability of the UK to compete in the global market without necessarily reducing the risk of abuse in the system.*

Conference resolves to call on the Government to

- 1. Retain the option for international students to remain in the UK to work for up to two years after completion of their studies.*
- 2. Continue to allow international students studying for a period of six months or more to bring with them their dependants to the UK.*
- 3. Provide support to the Home Office in eradicating abuse of the current system by finding and closing “bogus colleges”.*
- 4. Defend international students and encourage recruitment of the best and brightest from the around the world to UK institutions*
- 5. Support regions in campaign against identified “bogus colleges” using any methods thought fit to bring about their closure legal under the common & civil laws of the relevant jurisdiction, including picketing, letter-writing, and occupation.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Legalisation of Cannabis

Conference Notes:

1. That the “War on Drugs” and the policies employed to “fight the battle” are widely acknowledged to have failed to achieve their stated aims of the eradication of drug taking and addiction, drug offences have tripled in the last 10 years threatening the working of the criminal justice system and the very legitimacy of the state.
2. That Drug Tsar, Keith Halliwell admitted that his anti-drugs strategy had ended its first year with a 13% rise in drug convictions in England and Wales.
3. Each year around one in ten people aged between 16 and 59 use drugs; the majority take cannabis and do so on a recreational basis; 2,000 addicts account for most of the £4 billion worth of drug related crime in Britain.
4. That cannabis is an intoxicating drug and that driving while intoxicated is a danger to others.

Conference Welcomes:

1. **Mo Mowlam MP and Matthew Taylor MP’s** recent admissions to using cannabis when they were younger.
2. The report of the Police Foundation Inquiry into drugs, which called for the downgrading of offences for individuals caught in possession of cannabis and other soft drugs.
3. The increasing realisation of those in authority that legalisation and regulation of drugs should be considered as a solution to the “war on drugs”.
4. The proposed amendment to the Misuse of Drugs Act that would allow for the use of cannabis to alleviate pain under medical supervision.
5. Recently sponsored Government research into using cannabis as a tool for alleviating pain, in similar ways that morphine is utilised.

Conference Resolves:

1. In the short term
 - a. to legalise the use, possession and sale of cannabis, including the distribution of information, seed for home growing and cannabis itself through government regulated centres;
 - b. to decriminalise the use and possession of LSD and ecstasy;
 - c. to target the resources of the Police and Customs & Excise on tackling the suppliers of more dangerous drugs.
2. In the medium term, to establish a Federal Commission to investigate all issues around the balance of harm caused by, and laws surrounding, recreational drugs.

3. *To encourage and support research in the use of cannabis in the fight of diseases for example, MS and Epilepsy.*
4. *To encourage schools and youth organisations to offer advice and guidance to young people concerning the misuse of drugs.*
5. *To tax cannabis at similar levels to the taxes on tobacco where cannabis is sold to be smoked, and at a lower rate where cannabis is to be ingested in less harmful ways; to use part of the revenue raised through this taxation to alleviate the deprivation and social marginalisation that has led to disproportionate levels of drug addiction.*
6. *To call for the commissioning of research into the intoxicating effects of cannabis and the development of a simple test for the drug in the body which can be administered by police officers. When this is complete, legislation akin to the drink-driving laws should be introduced.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Non-Lethal Weapons

Conference notes

1. *Non-lethal weapons are increasingly used in civil and military applications to incapacitate, but not kill, a target*
2. *The rate of fatality, serious injury or long-term damage from non-lethal weapons is unacceptably high, for instance, traditional 'pepper spray' contains oleoresin capsicum which is proven to cause considerable long term damage*
3. *The increased use, or threat of use, of non-lethal weapons including but not limited to mosquito devices, sound canons, rubber bullets, PVPA spray and Tasers™.*
2. *The Freedom Bill which includes the elimination of Mosquito Devices*
3. *The lack of legislation concerning the correct deployment of non-lethal weapons*
4. *The perceived lack of public harm from such devices*
5. *Introduction of gaseous incapacitating agents into the eyes, nose or throat with the deliberate intention of causing harm is a violation of the 1984 UN Convention on Torture*

Conference believes

1. *non-lethal weapons require more legislation regarding their deployment*
2. *non-lethal weapons are capable of causing serious injury to many people, and should not be used in a large proportion of cases*
3. *certain non-lethal weapons are discriminatory against young people, such as mosquito devices and certain versions of sound canons.*
4. *PVPA spray and Tasers can cause more damage to young people than fully grown adults.*
5. *Non-lethal weapons, or any form of premeditated force, used for law and order means should not be undertaken lightly*
6. *Certain media outlets call for the deployment of non-lethal weapons without full understanding their implications*
7. *Non-lethal weapons are preferable to lethal weapons*
6. *Non-lethal weapons should not be used as a means of disrupting peaceful protest*
7. *Our right to peaceful protest should be upheld*
8. *Gaseous incapacitating agents should be legalised for use depending on their inability to cause long term damage in the majority of cases.*

Conference Resolves

1. *To call on Liberal Democrats in Government to call for restrictions on the use of non-lethal weapons*

2. *To call on Liberal Democrats in Government to ensure those harmed by PVPA spray are monitored afterwards to ensure effective breathing*
3. *To campaign for increased awareness of the damage non-lethal weapons are capable of*
4. *To defend our right to peaceful protest*
5. *To call on Liberal Democrats in Government to campaign for the police to use, where appropriate, non-lethal weapons rather than guns.*
6. *To call on Liberal Democrats in government to restrict the public's ability to purchase Tasers and PVPA spray without a licence.*

Passed: Spring 2012

Lapses: July 2021

Policing in Football

Conference Notes:

- I. *Section 27 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 allows a police officer to require any football supporter they think is contributing or may contribute to alcohol-related disorder to leave the area they are in by a route potentially specified by the officer for a period not exceeding 48 hours. Anyone not complying can be subject to arrest.*
- II. *An example of this order being commenced occurred on November 15 2008, where 80 Stoke supporters were compulsorily detained in a pub and issued with a written notice under Section 27 of the Act, this was despite the landlord giving a police statement saying that the fans were orderly, not even singing and that they would be welcomed back into the pub.*
- III. *The Violent Crimes and Reduction Act has also allowed the creation of Category C football more widely known as 'bubble matches'.*
- IV. *In these games, supporters of an away team are not allowed to travel on their personal preferred route. They must meet at a police-designated pick-up point, get on a coach which is monitored by police to ensure that they are not getting intoxicated before they arrive at the ground. After the game they are dropped off again at a police designated point.*
- V. *From 2006-2014 there were over 50 matches put into this category.*
- VI. *The Football Supporters Federation set up the Watching Football is Not a Crime campaign in reaction to the passing of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006.*

Conference Believes:

- I. *That these restrictions are a severe infringement on the Civil Liberties of football supporters.*
- II. *That in many cases the impositions of these restrictions were not justified and were decided without consultation with supporters.*
- III. *That police should engage and co-operate with supporter groups over policing arrangements at football matches.*
- IV. *That Liberal Youth and the Liberal Democrats should always fight the infringement of an individual or group's civil liberties.*

Conference resolves:

- I. *That Liberal Youth should support the Watching Football is Not a Crime campaign.*
- II. *That Section 27 of the Violent Crime Reduction Act 2006 should be abolished.*
- III. *That dialogue and co-operation between the police and football supporter's groups should be encouraged.*

Passed: Spring 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Pornography in the Internet Age

Conference notes:

1. *That most pornographic material is no longer produced solely for heterosexual men, but encompasses a much wider audience.*
2. *The proliferation of pornography in line with the growth of the World Wide Web and the proliferation of adult content broadcast channels in line with increased consumer demand.*
3. *The recent minor relaxation in censorship of magazines, films and television programmes regarding acceptable sexual content.*
4. *The government's white paper "A New Future For Communications", and its calls for changes to the film classification system, with responsibility for video classification being taken from the British Board of Film Classification and handed to OFCOM.*
5. *Events in the past few months which have led to increased censorship on the web; with companies such as e-bay and yahoo introducing blanket bans.*
6. *The abnormalities and contradictions that currently exist within UK law on pornography.*
7. *That the content of much of the pornography in the United Kingdom is influenced by our current indecency laws. Laws that have recently been ruled as unfair by the European Court of Human Rights (ECHR).*
8. *That R rated films can only be distributed on video and sold in licensed sex shops.*

Conference Believes:

1. *That the consensual viewing of pornography that portrays all forms of sexuality involving consenting adults is acceptable in today's society.*
2. *That pornography portraying sexual acts with un-consenting adults, those illegal as outlined by law or those involving persons under the age of consent is always unacceptable.*
3. *Pornography should be available to buy from, safe reliable sources, giving a 'fair deal' to all involved.*
4. *People should be given detailed information about the contents of programmes, videos and movies so that they can make appropriate choices about what they watch.*

Conference therefore calls for:

1. *Relaxation of censorship laws so that all pornography depicting consensual sexual activity is available to adults over the age of 16 who wish to purchase it, and in so doing remove contradictions in the current laws surrounding pornography.*
2. *Revision of the R18 rating to R16, whilst maintaining the tight and responsible enforced licensing of sex shops.*
3. *Reductions in the cost of licensing a sex shop, discouraging people from buying less reliably sourced material over the internet; and moves towards future regulation and licensing of on-line sex shops.*
4. *Work with our European Union partners to initiate similar regulation of cross-border trade in pornographic material.*
5. *OFCOM also to be given powers to regulate all stages of the production of pornographic materials within the United Kingdom so as to ensure good working conditions and the protection of human rights. This would include ensuring fair pay and high standards of health and safety, that all contractual arrangements are fair and freely entered into, that those involved have not in anyway been coerced, and the prevention of public nuisance.*
6. *The effects of ECHR rulings on UK indecency laws should be incorporated into law as soon as possible.*
7. *That all broadcasters be required to display standard information prior to a screening of a programme that may offend or distress or that contains sexually explicit material.*
8. *That, provided they operate appropriate safeguards, digital or terrestrial television should be allowed to show material currently rated as R18 on a pay per view basis.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Prostitution

Conference notes:

1. *The rise in the illegal forced trafficking of women for the sex trade, and the atrocious conditions in which trafficked women are often kept*
2. *That a large amount of police time and resources is spent attempting to tackle prostitution*
3. *The success of Edinburgh's non-residential informal prostitution tolerance zone in reducing the number of street prostitutes; reducing violence, exploitation and drug abuse; and providing advice and assistance for prostitutes on health and safety issues, and on exiting the profession*
4. *The decision by Liverpool city council in 2005 to make a formal request to Government for an official tolerance zone*

Conference believes:

1. *That licensing prostitution, and criminalizing unlicensed prostitution, would create an incentive against forced prostitution*
2. *That prostitutes in countries where voluntary prostitution is tolerated and regulated are less likely to engage in unsafe practices such as unprotected sex, more likely to receive proper health attention, less likely to be kept forcibly in prostitution, and less likely to suffer physical abuse*
3. *That legalising voluntary prostitution in the UK would thus lead to an improvement in the lives and working conditions of prostitutes*
4. *That police resources would be better spent tackling forced prostitution, and trafficking in women for prostitution, than on enforcing current prostitution laws.*
5. *That though some object to prostitution on moral and religious grounds, liberal principle should uphold the right to such activities where the participants are consensual and do not cause harm to other people.*

Conference therefore resolves:

1. *To call for the legalisation of voluntary adult prostitution, male and female, with the following provisos*
 - i) *Designated zones for street prostitutes/brothels*
 - ii) *Facilities to assist prostitutes with such issues as personal safety and drug addiction; and to facilitate exit routes*
 - iii) *Safeguards against people being forced into prostitution, for example as an alternative to losing job seeker's allowance*

- iv) *New criminal offences of having sex with an unlicensed prostitute, being an unlicensed prostitute, and living off the earnings of unlicensed prostitutes*
 - v) *Tougher penalties for those who force people into prostitution*
- 2. *To call for greater resources to be devoted to tackling forced trafficking and prostitution, funded as far as possible by shifting current resources directed against voluntary prostitution*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Reclaiming our Liberty

Conference Notes:

1. Conference regrets that the previous Labour Government have done so much damage to our Civil Liberties.
2. Conference notes that Liberal Youth have a strong record standing up for Civil Liberties

Conference Believes:

1. Conference believes our data must be protected.
2. Conference further believes that civil liberties are a right not a privilege
3. Conference reaffirms the commitment in the Preamble to the Constitution to build a fair, free and open society, where people of all ages are freed from poverty, ignorance and the obligation to conform.
4. Conference notes the European Court of Human Rights has rejected the British government's final appeal over section 44 stop and search powers.

Conference Resolves:

Proposals for databanks, including:

1. The reduction in use of the Prum Framework for all but the most serious crimes. The option of using this system should not be predetermined.
The abolition of the ONSET profiling database. Our children cannot and must not be profiled as potential offenders. We believe such profiling is socially destructive and may infringe the Human Rights Act. Probability is not the same as guilt.
Removing the 500,000 innocent people from the National DNA Database, and removing the 39,000 under eighteens on said database for all but the most serious crimes
2. Scrap the Communications Database. The internet was not invented to be used against us.
3. Prevent the NHS Detailed Care Record. Too many people have too much access.
4. Abolish any form of National Identity Register
5. Restricting the Audit Commission National Fraud Initiative as its use is a violation of the Data Protection Act
6. Not replacing the ContactPoint database in any way, shape or form, and not bowing down to pressure to do so
7. The Common Assessment Framework should be scrapped with immediate effect
8. Proposals to strengthen young people's civil liberties, including:

9. *the abolition of Mosquito Devices, by not differentiating between criminals and other young people, these devices are discriminatory against young people in our society. It has also not been proven that they do not cause long term damage.*
10. *End the curfews police can impose on under sixteen year olds after 9pm*
11. *Preventing Connexions sharing personal data with Local Government Authorities and agencies and the Government*
12. *Abolish the national identity number given to children under plans from the children's green paper. This will prevent a database will be built up about them and shared amongst authorities and agencies.*
13. *Any Identification, Referral and Tracking (IRT) systems should be abolished with immediate effect*

Proposals on policing and crime

1. *Increased regulation on CCTV and especially 'smart CCTV' to prevent the current uncontrolled invasion into our privacy*
2. *Stand in absolute opposition to Control Orders, Guilt is a binary state, Control orders force a grey area to emerge.*
3. *Pre-charge detentions reduced dramatically to seven days, with the option for individual cases to be extended by a Judge in the event of exceptional circumstances.*
4. *Allowing peaceful protests*
5. *Changing the legislation to ensure that membership of a non-violent political protest organisation is never a criminal offence*
6. *Amend Section 44 to ensure the system cannot be abused any longer. There are dramatic failings in the current system and the potential for abuse is large.*
7. *Adjust Antisocial Behaviour Order legislation to ensure only illegal activities are in breach them; that children will not receive prison sentences for committing legal activities whilst under the Order.*
8. *Ensure that this Government and any future Government of the United Kingdom is not complicit in the torture of suspects here or abroad. Where this is breached; individual complicit members of the Government and agencies will be held to full account in a court of law.*

Proposals for Extraditions

1. *No fast-track extradition to any country*
2. *No extradition without evidence which would stand in a British Court*
3. *No extradition to countries/states who have been found complicit in torture*
4. *No extradition to countries where a fair trial cannot be guaranteed.*

Conference encourages Liberal Democrats in Government to include all the above in the Freedom Bill

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Violent Crime (attacks with glass bottles)

Conference Notes

- 1. The figures released by the Home Office on 27 February 2010 showing, over 6500 citizens were the victims of attacks by Glass.*
- 2. The Golding family campaign to ban Glass in city pubs and clubs.*

Conference Notes

- 1. The Labour Government has been totally negligent at letting so many youths and students be scarred for life*
- 2. The Conservative party policy is inept on the issue and would do nothing on this issue.*

Conference Resolves

- 1. Liberal Youth to sign up and release a press release announcing the signing up to the Golding Campaign*
- 2. Demand all Liberal Democrats MPs to sign the Early Day Motion supporting the Golding Campaign*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Voluntary Euthanasia and Assisted Suicide

Conference Notes:

1. *That polling has repeatedly found widespread public support for the principle of voluntary euthanasia.*
2. *The right to religious freedom and individual conscience enshrined in the preamble to the Constitution of the Liberal Democrats and the Human Rights Act 1998.*
3. *The current unwillingness of the legal system to enforce the current law regarding assisted suicide.*

Conference Believes:

1. *That, as a point of principle, the individual should have power over their own life, including power over the manner of their death if they so wish.*
2. *That the participation of any and all parties in the process of euthanasia must be wholly voluntary.*
3. *That the role of the state in the regulation of decisions leading to death should be protecting the vulnerable, not enforcing any specific group's moral code.*
4. *That the current law is not only an abuse of personal liberty but also fails to protect vulnerable persons.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *That the law should be amended so as to allow voluntary euthanasia and medical assisted suicide.*
2. *That the amending legislation should contain safeguards that would protect the principle that all parties should be consenting, at a minimum:*
 - a) *That all parties are fully kept fully informed of their rights and the course of action that is to be followed at all times.*
 - b) *That there is no element of coercion by or of any party involved, including medical staff.*
 - c) *That the patient is mentally competent to make such a decision and has been made fully aware of all their options, for example palliative care.*
3. *In cases of dispute the presumption shall be of a lack of consent.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Protecting the right to a private life

Conference notes:

- 1) *The right to privacy is a non-negotiable condition and prerequisite for a fair and socially just society*
- 2) *The invasion of one's privacy is a harmful and damaging violation of the individual, and one that cannot be easily rectified*
- 3) *Any encroachment by the state on a citizen's privacy must have been approved by just and proper channels*
- 4) *The Investigatory Powers Bill does not meet these requirements, treats all citizens as potential criminals, and is a gross violation of individual liberty*
- 5) *This damaging power imbalance between the small individual and the large state sets a damaging precedent and paves the way for further erosion of the civil rights of the British public*
- 6) *Any handling of confidential personal information must be done so under the strictest of conditions, with access to it limited to those strictly involved in the investigation of crime, and strong penalties for those that deliberately mishandle this information or access it without clearance*
- 7) *That the rights to free speech and free association are dependent on the right to privacy, and the violation of privacy constitutes an act of mass censorship*

Conference believes:

- a) *The mass data collection and surveillance of online data is a violation of our civil rights and goes against the principle of an open and free society*
- b) *The Liberal Democrat commitment that no one should be enslaved by conformity, and that this is not possible without the right to privacy*
- c) *That the safeguarding of individual privacy is the duty of the Liberal Democrats, as both the Conservative Party and the Labour Party have no interest in fighting the Investigatory Powers Bill*

Conference resolves:

- i) *To oppose the implementation of the Investigatory Powers Bill*
- ii) *To promote methods of resistance of state surveillance, such as the use of encrypted communications*
- iii) *To support all organisations that are willing to fight back against mass, unjustified data collection*

- iv) To call for the destruction of all data that has been collected as a result of the Investigatory Powers Bill*
- v) To demand no individual has their communications monitored without a warrant or without reasonable suspicion that they are engaging in criminal activity*
- vi) To call for clear legislation setting out our digital civil rights, including the right to encrypt communications and to access the deep web*
- vii) To demand clear and accessible channels through which to hold state intelligence agencies to account for the spying on of everyday citizens*
- viii) To give individuals ownership of their own communications and metadata unless this is clearly waived through the terms of service of an online communications provider*
- ix) To penalise companies who provide foreign intelligence agencies with the confidential communications of British citizens*
- x) To end all reciprocal agreements with friendly powers whereby one state's intelligence agencies monitor the civilians of another*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Political Reform

The Role of Church and State

Conference notes:

1. *That the legislative arm of the UK government includes members of the Church of England.*
2. *That this Church suffers from falling affiliation amongst the UK's population and fails to represent ethnic and religious diversity of the people of the UK.*
3. *That many countries around the world have constitutionally separated the role of churches from that of the state.*
4. *The clauses relating to freedom of conscience in the UN's Declaration of Human Rights and the European Convention on Human Rights (ECHR) and the opt-outs obtained by the government for this Church on specific issues.*
5. *That a liberal, democratic society cannot function properly without a widely accepted moral framework.*

Conference believes

1. *That the freedom of conscience is a fundamental human right and should be enshrined in the constitutional arrangements for the UK.*
2. *That the inclusion of religious organisations in government goes against the spirit of protecting this freedom.*
3. *That whilst most religions contribute toward generating and supporting a moral framework, this Church wields undue influence due to the existence of state sponsored religion.*
4. *That in creating a moral framework members of all religions and none should be invited to contribute.*
5. *Creating a moral framework should be achieved through the teaching and nurturing of basic moral standards in schools and communities.*
6. *That the opt-outs obtained for churches by the government from specific provisions of the ECHR diminishes their authority as moral guardians.*
7. *That the piecemeal approach adopted by the present government toward reform of the House of Lords does not serve the aim of separating the functions of churches and the state.*
8. *That disestablishment will give the Church freedom to flourish on a 'level playing field' with all other religions.*

Conference calls for

1. *The existing representatives of the Church in the House of Lords to have their legislative rights removed.*
2. *All persons appointed or elected to the House of Lords, whether from a predominantly religious or secular background, should be on individual merit.*
3. *The separation of church and state to be a integral part of constitutional reform in the UK.*
4. *The government to reconfirm their commitment to supporting a widely accepted moral framework through the teaching and nurturing of basic moral standards in schools and communities.*
5. *The full application of the ECHR, incorporated in Human Rights Act 1999, to all places of religious worship in the UK.*
6. *The repeal of the 1701 Act of Settlement.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Towards A Democratic Head of State

Conference believes that in a year that saw many changes affecting the Royal Family, the constitutional position of our head of state needs clarification. In particular, Conference reiterates its belief that no one may be born into a position of power over others, but that such a position can only be given through a democratic mandate from the people.

Conference notes:

- 2. The stability given to our political system by the long reign of our current monarch*
- 3. The likelihood that our current monarch's successor will not have as long a reign and the possibility that this will bring less stability.*
- 4. The additional legitimacy given to our representatives by having a democratic mandate.*
- 5. Liberal Democrat policy to remove the principle of heredity as a qualification for Parliament.*
- 6. The use of the royal prerogative, to bypass parliamentary scrutiny*

Conference calls for:

- 1. A referendum on the future form of the head of state of the United Kingdom to be held as soon as is practicable.*
- 2. The referendum question(s) and voting system to be decided by a balanced and consultative process, but with the provision that it must offer a choice between the status quo and a democratic method(s) of selecting our head of state.*
- 3. The Liberal Democrats to propose, as part of this process, that:*
 - a) Our Head of State be elected for a fixed term, the length of which to be decided by a balanced and consultative process*
 - b) If there are to be more than two options on the referendum ballot, the Alternative Vote (AV) method of polling should be used.*
 - c) Members of the current monarch's family not be disbarred from standing for election.*
- 4. The removal of the ban on Parliament discussing the nature of the United Kingdom's Head of State.*
- 5. The crown prerogative to be put under the scrutiny of Parliament*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Voting System (Referendum)

Conference Notes:

1. *There are currently many different types of voting systems used in the United Kingdom to elect representatives:*
 - a. *Northern Ireland Assembly: Single Transferable Vote*
 - b. *Welsh Assembly: Top-up lists*
 - c. *Mayor of London: Instant run-off final round preference voting*
 - d. *House of Commons : First Past the Post*
 - e. *European Parliament: Closed party lists*
2. *The First past the post system is the only system currently used which does not give any degree of proportionality whereas all of the other voting system gives some degree of proportionality.*
3. *The Parliamentary Voting System and Constituencies Act 2011, allowing for a referendum on changing from First Past the Post to the Alternative Vote for House of Commons elections.*
4. *The Alternative Vote is a fairer system requiring all MP to gain at least 50% support to get elected.*

Conference Believes:

1. *The Fairer Votes referendum is the first step towards full proportional representation in the United Kingdom.*
2. *The British public are already familiar with the concept of proportional voting systems as they are regularly used in elections throughout the United Kingdom.*
3. *The opponents of Fairer Votes are either misguided ideologues wanting full Proportional Representation now or draconian dinosaurs protecting their own limited self-interest.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *To support the Fairer Votes campaign in the referendum.*
2. *To campaign for further proportionality in elections to be introduced in the United Kingdom.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

The Monarchy

Conference Notes:

1. *Previous policy laid out in the motion 'Towards A Democratic Head of State'*
2. *The aforementioned motion called for a referendum on the future of the United Kingdom's Head of State to be held as soon as practicable and for the Liberal Democrats to propose that 'Our Head of State be elected for a fixed term'*
3. *Currently there is a significant proportion of party members and supporters favour the status quo in regards to our Head of State*
4. *That there is currently little demand for a referendum on the Head of State among the general public, in part due to the overwhelming support for the Monarchy*

Conference Believes:

1. *That having a referendum on the future of our Head of State is something that may be necessary in the future to ensure the continued legitimacy of our Head of State*
2. *Holding referendums when there is little demand for one and where the result is already almost certain is both wasteful and unnecessary*
3. *The current lack of demand for such a referendum means that this should not be done as soon as is practicable, but rather when significant demand for it emerges from the general public*
4. *When a referendum on the issue is called the Liberal Democrats should seek to ensure it is conducted in the fairest possible way in order to get the most accurate picture of the public's opinion possible*
5. *That, given the considerable diversity of opinion within the Liberal Democrats regarding the future of our Head of State, the Party should maintain a position of neutrality on the issue until a vote at Party Conference directs it to do otherwise*

Conference Calls For:

1. *A referendum to be held on the future of our Head of State only once there is sufficient demand for one from the public*
2. *Said referendum to include, but not necessarily be limited to, options for maintenance of the status quo and switching to a democratic method of selecting the Head of State*
3. *A system of preferential voting to be used if more than two options offered to the electorate to ensure the result represents the opinions of the public as accurately as possible*

4. *The Liberal Democrats to take a position on the issue that reflects the opinions of the membership*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Transport

Public Transport

Conference notes:

1. *That Liberal Youth Conference in Cambridge held a consultative session on public transport policy in November 2003.*
2. *The paper 'Young People and Public Transport' was the product of this discussion.*

Conference calls for more reliable public transport through:

1. *The establishment of a Sustainable Transport Authority to regulate bus and train services to create a better integrated, more reliable and safer transport system.*
2. *Improved information to be provided through a National Public Transport Information System and electronic timetables at bus stops*
3. *Greater powers to be given to local authorities to improve local public transport including renegotiations with private bus companies*
4. *The Creation of a Rural Transport Regeneration Fund to improve access to public transport.*

Conference calls for fairer fares through:

1. *Giving local authorities a greater say over bus fares by reforming contracts between bus providers and councils.*
2. *Encouraging the use of ID travelcards recognised by more than one transport provider and regulated by the local authority.*
3. *Providing funds to extend off peak travel on buses to those with disabilities and introduce reduced fares for students.*
4. *Provide funds for local authorities to subsidise rural services and night buses where necessary.*
5. *Encourage the use of innovative ticket distribution systems such as availability of bus tickets in bars and clubs.*

Conference calls for safer public transport through:

1. *Creating and providing funding for 'Home Zones' and 'Quiet Zones' where pedestrians and cyclists have legal priority, and cars are limited to very low speeds.*
2. *Guaranteeing funding for local transport packages including safe routes to schools, traffic calming, and cycle and bus lanes, paid for from car parking charges, traffic fines, and urban road pricing.*

3. *Encouraging use of bus conductors on services in cities, providing a speedier, safer and cleaner bus service.*
4. *Require local authorities with responsibility for school transport to have a 'Travel to School' officer*
5. *Requiring Schools to have safe routes to school policy and plans, which will be distributed to parents.*
6. *Encourage replacement of old brick bus shelters with glass shelters, and ensure that they are placed in the most visible areas where possible.*

Conference calls for making transport to school easier through:

1. *Encouraging development and take up of low cost solutions such as 'walking buses'.*
2. *Provide funding for local authorities to pilot new schemes such as American style 'Yellow School Buses'.*
3. *Where dedicated school buses exist, encourage teachers to make use of them, improving behaviour of pupils on buses.*

Conference further calls for:

1. *Making complaints procedures more open and accessible by ensuring that complaint numbers and emails are printed on tickets, timetables and at shelters and procedures as simple as possible.*
2. *Setting of locally determined targets for train and bus operators to reduce number of complaints received for unclean buses/trains.*
3. *Encouraging young people to drive less polluting cars by reducing car tax on the least polluting and most fuel-efficient cars and motorcycles, abolishing it all together for some. We would increase the tax differential between normal and low-sulphur diesel.*
4. *Tie fuel duty rebates for bus operators to those running the most environmentally friendly vehicles, particularly those using alternative fuels.*
5. *Promote car share schemes through local authorities along the lines of shareajourney.com, with taxi replacements if lift can't make it.*
6. *Public authorities to include 'bike allowance' in expenses schemes for claimable journeys made by bicycle, and encourage employers to do the same.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Public Transport for Students and Young People

Conference Notes:

- *that due to the current economic climate that bus companies need to make some spending cuts to their services, and companies are restructuring their local transport services in order to make the services they provide financial viable.*
- *that companies, due to the current economic climate, are attempting to do more for less.*

Conference Further Notes:

- *that some local bus services are not always financially viable and some services need to be altered.*

Conference Believes:

- *that 16-18 year olds and students are unfairly hit by raises in public transport fares, and as they are classed as adults are forced to pay higher fares when they are highly reliant on public transport and low fares.*
- *that whilst high raises in fares are unfair to 16-24 year olds are unfair, that the most important fact is the need for reliable and accessible public transport services.*

Conference Resolves:

- *that local councils should encourage local bus services to introduce a young persons' rate for 16-18 year olds and students to assist with studies, employment, and training.*
- *that where private companies are used as a replacement for public services, that councils ensure that there is communication between private and public provision is regulated to provide reliable transport provision.*
- *that those pensions where their free bus pass is not essential are given an opt out option, where the money saved is used to give 16-18 year old cheaper bus travel with the ultimate aim of Free Bus travel for this age range.*

Passed: Autumn 2012

Lapses: July 2021

Increasing voter turnout.

Conference notes with concern:

- A. *The lack of attention paid by recent governments to improve voter turnout. This is demonstrated as turnout for the 2015 general election was lower than every election between 1922 and 1997.*
- B. *The particularly low voter turnout in the 2015 general election among 18-24 year olds, who registered an estimated 43 percent turnout.*
- C. *The comparably low voter turnout by younger age groups in the EU referendum contributing to an exit from the European Union, something an estimated 75 percent of 16-24 year olds voted against.*
- D. *The even lower turnout in local elections including the Welsh assembly elections which registered a 44 percent turnout in 2016.*
- E. *Various schools, particularly academies, leave out political based lessons/modules from their timetables. Particularly between the ages of 14 and 16.*

Conference believes that:

- i. *Secondary schools need to have more education on politics and go further in engaging young people in politics and the importance of voting.*
- ii. *The process of registering to vote deters many potential voters.*
- iii. *An online system would result in greater turnout for the electorate as a whole, especially among younger voters and those outside the country at the time of an election.*
- iv. *Citizens, especially the young, should have the knowledge to make an informed decision at elections.*

Conference reasserts the liberal democrat commitment to:

- A. *Lower the voting age to 16.*
- B. *Provide fair outcomes for everyone in society, including the youth.*

Conference calls for:

1. *Our MP's, representatives within the House of Lords and education spokespeople to fight for increased compulsory education on politics within schools. This should include education on political processes, the ideologies of the main parties, structures of government and the inter-relationship between politics and matters of daily life such as the economy, the environment, security and our place in the world.*
2. *A commitment to do all we can to press the government to automatically register everyone to vote who is eligible to do so.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Treasury

Bank Shares

Conference Notes:

1. *The policy, determined by Portman Capital and the Lib Dems' Treasury Parliamentary Committee, that would see shares in Government-owned banks distributed among citizens of the UK.*
2. *That this policy has been backed by Deputy Prime Minister Nick Clegg.*
3. *That the shares would be distributed to "all adults on the electoral roll".*

Conference Believes:

1. *That this policy is a positive way to repay the public for bailing out the banks.*
2. *That any such policy should include a way to distribute shares to young people, whose futures were gambled with when the banks were bailed out.*
3. *That any such policy should inherently take account of intergenerational fairness.*

Conference Resolves:

1. *To lobby Liberal Democrat MPs to ensure that if this policy does become fully formulated, it includes intergenerational fairness at its core.*
2. *That no UK citizens are left out of this payback scheme.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Land Value Taxation

Conference notes:

- 1. That the UK currently has no system for taxing land values.*
- 2. That since May 1997, house prices have almost trebled.*
- 3. That there is a long-standing Liberal tradition of support for Land Value Tax.*
- 4. That at the previous general election, the Liberal Democrats proposed replacing the council tax with local income tax.*

Conference believes:

- 1. That the introduction of a land value tax would contribute to a more progressive tax system.*
- 2. That a land value tax would increase the supply of affordable housing.*
- 3. That land is a fixed asset and that as a consequence a tax on it is hard to evade.*
- 4. That a tax on land does not reduce incentives to work, save or invest.*
- 5. That Lib Dem policy on local government finance at the last election was an area of weakness rather than strength.*

Conference resolves:

- 1. To make it Liberal Youth policy to support the financing of local government through a land value tax rather than council tax or a local income tax.*
- 2. That a member of the executive will write to the Liberal Democrat's Shadow Chancellor and Local Government spokesman expressing Liberal Youth's support for land value taxation.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Global Free Trade and Tariff Wars

Conference notes that:

- I. *There has been significant public concern of late over the British Steel industry as Tata Steel has decided to shut down its British operations. This includes the closure of their main plant in Port Talbot, which will lead to roughly 4,300 job losses.*
- II. *The mass production of steel in China has led to falling prices, which has made steel production in this country unprofitable. British steelmakers also suffer from other difficulties, such as high energy costs and climate change levies, which make them less competitive than their counterparts around the world.*
- III. *Many of the options being considered involve protecting British steel and artificially extending the life of the steel industry using government intervention through tariffs or nationalisation.*
- IV. *The British steel industry is economically unviable and it does not appear that it will be able to produce steel at a competitive cost now or at any point in the near future.*

Conference believes that:

- I. *Free trade is a core liberal principle and the Liberal tradition of support for free trade dates back to the repealing of the Corn Laws.*
- II. *Responding to fluctuations in the global market with tariffs erodes the principle of free trade and is thus contrary to a core liberal principle*
- III. *Any imposition of tariffs on Chinese steel is likely to lead to a tariff war which would inevitably lead to escalations in economic disputes, fraying diplomatic relations and result in a less liberal global exchange of goods.*
- IV. *It is far more effective in the long run to assist in the creation of strong industries than to subsidise unprofitable, unsustainable ones.*
- V. *In order to mitigate the unfortunate consequences of the closure of Tata Steel, the state should assist workers displaced from financially unviable industries to retrain and find work in other sectors.*

Conference resolves to:

- I. *Oppose the implementation of tariffs which would distort the market and to continue to support free trade.*

- II. *Encourage the Liberal Democrats to oppose the imposition of tariffs on Chinese steel.*
- III. *Advocate investment in extensive training programmes for those affected by the closure of the steel plants and the decline of other industries, in Port Talbot and elsewhere.*
- IV. *Lobby the Federal Party to encourage the creation of more sustainable industries through investment in associated transport and infrastructure, especially in regions affected by closures.*

Passed: Spring 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Against Minimum Alcohol Pricing

Conference notes:

1. *Since 2004, Britain has experienced the most dramatic and sustained decline in alcohol consumption since the Second World War, and is ranked near the middle of the European tables on average alcohol consumption*
2. *Low income households spend on average 42p per unit compared to 51p for households earning above £60,000, making MUP a policy which disproportionately impacts lower income households*

Conference believes that:

1. *Minimum alcohol pricing is a policy conceived to deal with a problem with very little evidence in support of its existence*
2. *Students and young people, as well as low income households would be hit the hardest by MUP, and as such are limited in their choices as individuals as a consequence of such a policy's introduction*
3. *MUP effectively takes money from low income households, students and young people, and gives it to the alcohol industry*
4. *A liberal party ought to be concerned not only with whether evidence supports a particular policy, but whether a policy is respectful of an individual's liberty and choices so far as they are self-regarding*
5. *Individuals, not government, have the primary responsibility for health-related lifestyle choices*

Conference calls upon:

1. *Liberal Youth to oppose the introduction of the minimum pricing of alcohol*

Passed: August 2015

Lapses: July 2021

No to sugar taxes, yes to meaningful reform

Conference notes:

- a) *The Liberal Democrat belief that none should be enslaved by poverty or ignorance*
- b) *That the personal consumption tax on sugar will hit the poorest households the hardest*
- c) *That the evidence that this will reduce childhood obesity rates is spurious at best*
- d) *That reform of school dinners in the mid-2000s was utterly ineffective at slowing childhood obesity rates*
- e) *That those hit hardest by consumption taxes are the poor*

Conference believes:

- i) *That the National Health Service was set up in order to provide quality health care to all citizens and residents of the United Kingdom equally*
- ii) *That the National Health Service is funded through personal taxation*
- iii) *That levying a further charge on individuals based on their life choices violates the liberal principle of equality before the law as it introduces further conditions for individuals to access what should be an equally-available public service*
- iv) *That the problems the NHS faces cannot be solved simply by adopting a nudge theory approach or throwing more money at it*
- v) *That if we want to see real improvement in the provision of health care in the United Kingdom, we should propose structural reform, rather than the collection of piecemeal additional funding through regressive consumption taxes*

Conference resolves to:

- 1) *Oppose the implementation of the sugar tax and call for its repeal*
- 2) *Oppose all further personal consumption charges where the motivation is health service funding*

3) Call for meaningful, structural reform of the NHS, through straightforward and consistent forms of public funding

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Miscellaneous

Emergency Motion on Chris Rennard

Conference notes:

1. *The recent end of the internal party investigation relating to allegations of sexual harassment against Chris Rennard.*
2. *That it was announced on the 19th of August 2014 that the result of the investigation was the reinstatement of Chris Rennard's membership of the Liberal Democrats and no further action being taken.*
3. *That Alistair Webster QC, who conducted an earlier investigation into the allegations on behalf of the party, made a statement saying "Let me be clear from the outset that the evidence suggests that Lord Rennard's behaviour has caused distress to a number of women, so much so that they came forward several years after the events in question."*
4. *The findings and recommendations of the Independent Morrissey Inquiry into allegations that the Liberal Democrats had failed to adequately respond to complaints and warning of sexual harassment.*
5. *The statement issued on behalf of Lord Chris Rennard on the 20th of August 2014 stating that the allegations had been investigated and the matter closed and additionally that "We must advise anyone against publishing or broadcasting defamatory remarks. Accusations that were rejected by both the Metropolitan Police and an independent QC would be treated as such."*

Conference believes:

- A. *That, while recognising no further action is being taken against Chris Rennard following the ending of the allegations, he has acted in a manner which has caused harm to party members and brought the party into disrepute.*
- B. *That, in particular, Chris Rennard's reactions and statements in relation to the allegations and the associated investigations have demonstrated values incompatible with the fundamental values of the party.*

- C. That Chris Rennard is unsuitable to hold office within the Liberal Democrats and to be involved in any level with the direction of campaigns or other party activities.*
- D. That the intention of a perpetrator does not lessen the trauma of the victim and nor does an apology.*
- E. That where there is little or no debate of the facts of the matter but only of the intention the needs of the victim should always be paramount.*
- F. That further steps need to be taken by the Liberal Democrats to prevent any recurrence of the alleged cover-up.*

Conference calls for:

- i. Chris Rennard to be banned from any and all Liberal Youth events.*
- ii. Liberal Youth as an organisation to publicly demonstrate its beliefs in relation to Chris Rennard and that his behaviour is incompatible with the values of the Liberal Democrats.*
- iii. Liberal Youth to work with the Liberal Democrat Women's campaign, and any other campaigns/groups as they deem necessary, to submit a motion to the next available federal conference broadly including provisions to ensure that:*
 - a. There is no place within the Liberal Democrats for perpetrators of sexual misconduct.*
 - b. If such a member is readmitted any party or staff member or volunteer may refuse to work with them without fear of disciplinary action.*
 - c. No disciplinary procedures concerning sexual misconduct (even tangentially) should be dropped without a full and public explanation as to why this has occurred.*

Passed: Spring 2014

Lapses: July 2021

Leaving Care Motion

Conference notes that:

1. According to the Who Cares Trust 40% of prisoners under-25 have been in care at some point during their childhood. A quarter of young people leaving care are pregnant or already mothers; and that nearly half become mothers by the age of 24. Only 6% of care leavers go to university and one third of care leavers are not in education, employment or training.
2. Care leavers are often placed in Homeless Shelters or other forms of shared accommodation alongside drug addicts, juvenile delinquents and other dangerous individuals.
3. There's an unrealistic expectation that care leavers will be able to look after themselves at the age of 16 despite care leavers often being ill-prepared for independent life.
4. That all support for care leavers ceases at the age of 21, 25 for those in full-time education.
5. That, according to Shelter UK, care leavers are more likely to fall into financial hardship and become homeless than other young people.

Conference believes:

1. That a stable, supportive environment is key to keeping young people out of prison, to stopping pregnancy and keeping them in education or work.
2. That 16 is too young an age to expect vulnerable care leavers to live independently.
3. That care leavers fall more often than other young people, and due to their challenging backgrounds they should be given additional help, not punished.
4. That the state, acting as a young person's guardian, has a responsibility to financially and emotionally support them, and to give them accommodation should they need it beyond the age of 18.

Conference calls for Liberal Youth to campaign for:

1. The continuation of foster care placements for all young people up until the age of 18, and beyond should they be in full-time, non-advanced education.
2. Respite placements with foster carers to be offered to all care leavers under 25, whether or not they're in education, in order to ease the transition into adult life.

3. *An end to the practice of placing vulnerable young people in homeless shelters or shared houses, with a preference for keeping them in care if they are unable to live independently.*
4. *A continuation of Social Services support until the age of 35, including emergency accommodation and financial assistance.*
5. *Compulsory education in personal finances, cookery, bill-paying, home maintenance, cleaning, social interaction and other relevant life skills to be completed by all young people prior to leaving care.*
6. *Social Workers to take the initiative in providing care leavers with contraception (including long-term methods), and encouraging their use.*
6. *The costs of all below-degree level courses to be covered by Social Services if the young person does not have a qualification at the equivalent level, regardless of how many failed attempts have been made previously.*

Passed: Autumn 2013

Lapses: July 2021

No to No-Platform

Conference believes:

- I. *Free speech is a fundamental liberal value at the heart of any healthy democracy*
- II. *The ability to voice one's own opinion is at the core of any principled defence of civil, political, or personal freedom*
- III. *Alongside this are the abilities to seek and receive whatever views and theories one wishes to hear*
- IV. *Without these three fundamental freedoms; to seek, receive, and voice our views, we cannot be considered free people, we cannot grow as individuals, and we remain entirely at the mercy of the status quo.*

Conference notes with concern that:

- I. *In recent years, the expansion of No-Platform has prevented students from seeking out challenging viewpoints under the guise of providing them mental security, or the 'protection' from harmful viewpoints*
- II. *The claim that lecture halls fall under the category of 'domestic spaces' has been used to prevent controversial speakers from appearing on university campuses*
- III. *This behaviour has contributed to a nationwide erosion of support for free speech, and has led to an approach where censorship and paternalism have replaced free and open dialogue*
- IV. *Calls for mental 'security' have replaced calls for common decency, and yet serve the same purpose; to prevent the voicing of ideas and opinions that are at odds with prevailing opinion, and to prevent open exchange across the country*
- V. *No-Platforming is the presumption that an institution will not grant a public platform or audience to an individual or group on the basis of their political positions, or other views which may inform their political positions.*

Conference further believes:

- I. *The policing and censorship of 'harmful' views fundamentally contradicts the Liberal Democrat value that nobody should be enslaved by conformity*
- II. *The closing of discussion and dialogue at the academy does nothing other than privilege the entrenched views in our society, and prevents honest and principled enquiry and reform*
- III. *As liberals, we should view this trend as an affront to the fundamental liberties to express oneself and to freely and earnestly seek out new information*
- IV. *No person has the right to prevent anyone from hearing another speak*

Conference calls for:

- I. *Liberal Youth to adopt a formal No To No-Platform stance*
- II. *Liberal Democrat College and University societies to resist the implementation of blanket NoPlatform policies at their institutions*
- III. *Liberal Youth to retain the right to dis-invite speakers and from its own events, if there is a reasonable belief that the actions of these individuals may lead to the physical harm, harassment, or intimidation of attendees.*

Passed: Spring 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Opposing Housing Benefit Changes

Conference notes that:

- a) *Housing Benefit is a payment to help with rental costs that is available to the unemployed and also employed people that struggle with accommodation costs*
- b) *The coalition government has committed itself to making work pay and that cutting benefits to those that are trying to get into work is counterproductive*
- c) *Three cabinet ministers: David Cameron, Iain Duncan-Smith and George Osborne have all signalled, at Conservative Party Conference or elsewhere, that they are in favour of cutting Housing Benefit to Under 25s as part of an effort to save a further £10bn*
- d) *Nick Clegg has not been sufficiently clear that he will oppose these plans*

Conference further notes that:

- a) *Any attempt to cut benefits to young people based on age rather than need, goes against liberal principles.*
- b) *Spending cuts are necessary but have so far been harsh on young people*
- c) *Spending cuts so far have mostly spared pensioners*
- d) *Neither a Mansion Tax nor a Land Value Tax has been introduced yet*
- e) *Young people have the right to equality, property, life and liberty.*

Conference resolves to oppose cutting House Benefit to under 25s and calls for:

1. *The leadership of the Liberal Democrats to oppose any cut which is based on age and not need.*
2. *For our Parliamentary Party to block any further moves that disproportionately hurt young people*
3. *For Nick Clegg and the Parliamentary Party to continue to call for:*
 - i. *means Testing for pension benefits and*
 - ii. *a Mansion Tax to continue to make a concerted effort to tackle the deficit and to ensure that the pain of spending cuts is fairly distributed.*

Passed: Autumn 2012

Lapses: July 2021

Student Health and Housing

Conference Notes

1. That there are a large number of unscrupulous landlords who are abler to jeopardise students' lives both health-wise and financially.
2. That one major problem is an unfair refusal to return deposits. This puts the onus on the student to sue the landlord thus incurring further cost.
3. That some student unions in cities like Oxford, Leeds and Belfast have joined with local Councils and housing rights groups to produce a Register of Landlords to ensure that students cannot be exploited.
4. That some have introduces a central deposit-holding fund. If landlords wish to dock dome of the deposit, they must convince the organisers of the fund (usually the Local Council) that it is for good reason, otherwise the money gets refunded to the tenant. This prevents landlords profiteering from students' deposit cash.

Conference Further Notes

1. That the Tory Government abolished free eye and dental checks, which has had a highly detrimental effect on student health. The Labour Government has done nothing to change this.
2. That the formula for calculating eligibility for free prescriptions is harsher than it was, ensuring that fewer students are eligible.

Conference Resolves

1. To support the creation of local landlord registers and the establishment, with local councils and housing rights groups, a deposit fund.
2. To re-affirm Liberal Youth' commitment to the restoration of free eye and dental checks and encourage students to use HC1 forms.
3. To campaign for a relaxation of the rules on eligibility for free prescriptions and, in particular, abolish the ridiculous rule that loans count as income even if one is not taken.
4. To push for all multiple occupancy student accommodation, including University Halls of Residence, to be brought under existing legislation on HMOs.
5. To campaign for Government to release money in the form of grants to invest in Houses of Multiple Occupancy.

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Ambitious Liberalism

Conference notes that the upcoming General Election looks set to be one of the most unpredictable in recent times.

Conference believes:

1. That the next Parliament will require a strong, confident liberal voice;
2. That the Liberal Democrats are the only party that can or will deliver this;
3. That liberals must nevertheless never be complacent, and must constantly renew our commitment.

Conference further believes:

1. That the overall objective of public policy should be to maximise the ability of every individual to take control of their life;
2. That long-standing Liberal Democrat commitments to political reform and civil liberties form a key part of this agenda, and must be deepened, but are not in themselves sufficient;
3. That the Liberal Democrats must commit to secure and expand the economic liberty of every individual, including respect for private property as the guarantor of personal autonomy and a commitment to markets that serve consumers rather than monopolistic producer interests;
4. That the social liberal commitment to expanding liberty through active intervention that unites all Liberal Democrats is an indispensable part of a modern liberal approach.

Conference therefore calls for:

1. Action aimed at political renewal, including:
 - a. A renewed commitment to Community Politics, as an ideology rather than an electoral tactic, as part of a programme of putting power back in the hands of individuals and communities;
 - b. The replacement of the House of Lords with a democratic Senate elected under a proportional voting system;
 - c. Effective devolution within England, as the only reasonable answer to the West Lothian Question;
 - d. The introduction of the Single Transferable Vote for local government and for the House of Commons;

- e. *A conscious effort to address the shamefully low levels of public debate and awareness of European issues, and to work across borders to increase the public accountability of European and International institutions.*
2. *Action to secure, restore and expand civil liberties, including:*
- a. *A ban on blanket surveillance of communications by the police and security services, whilst recognising that targeted surveillance is a legitimate part of counter-terrorism work;*
 - b. *The abolition of Closed Material Proceedings, in which some evidence provided by the state cannot be seen or challenged by the plaintiff, as a threat to the integrity of the justice system;*
 - c. *Reversing the unnecessary extension of the film censor system to video-on-demand services, and establishing a new system of film classification that provides information without seeking to restrict the activities of consenting adults;*
 - d. *An overhaul of drug laws including the legalisation of possession of drugs for private use, combined with a focus on treating addiction as a medical problem.*
3. *Action to promote economic liberty, including:*
- a. *The completion and perfection of the European Single Market, including the free movement of people, and the expansion of free trade globally through bilateral and multilateral negotiation;*
 - b. *Shifting the burden of tax away from productivity and towards accumulations of wealth; including through the introduction of a system of Land Value Taxation;*
 - c. *Reform to the planning system to give local communities a clear stake in the development of their local areas, both for its own sake and to facilitate the required expansion of housebuilding;*
 - d. *The repeal of Sunday trading laws, as trialled during the 2012 Olympics.*
4. *Action to ensure that nobody is left behind, including:*
- a. *An end to attempts to demonise people who claim benefits, whilst recognising that the welfare system does not currently do enough to tackle certain issues such as long-term unemployment;*

- b. Reform of the so-called Bedroom Tax to ensure that nobody is penalised for circumstances beyond their control, whether because of factors such as disability or because of the lack of available alternative accommodation;*
- c. The prioritisation of education as the most effective means to promoting opportunity, including the development of an enhanced system of continuing professional development for teachers;*
- d. Reform to benefits for better-off pensions to free up resources to help young people travel to access educational and other opportunities.*

Conference calls upon the Executive and the Policy Committee to work to strengthen and shape the policy agenda of the Liberal Democrats along the above lines.

Passed: March 2015

Lapses: July 2021

Business Motions

Encouraging female participation

Conference notes

- 1. Currently only 125 of 650 MPs are women, equating to 19%, less than 1 in 5.*
- 2. There are only 7 female Liberal Democrat MPs.*
- 3. 5 out of 8 General Executive Members elected in the last Liberal Youth election were female.*

Conference believes

- 1. The way to improve the number of female MPs is not by the Liberal Democrats introducing quotas or all female shortlists.*
- 2. Liberal Youth can play a vital role in getting more women to take up key positions within the party.*
- 3. Women who wish to be involved in Liberal Democrat politics should be easily able access training that will help develop their skills and careers from a young age.*

Conference resolves

- 1. The Liberal Youth Executive will formulate training specifically designed for new female members.*
- 2. The Liberal Youth Executive will engage with Women Liberal Democrats, the Campaign for Gender Balance, and similar non- partisan organisations to encourage more female activists.*
- 3. The Liberal Youth Executive will vote against any proposals for all female shortlists, or the introduction of quotas, that maybe put to future Liberal Democrat Federal Conferences, and will lobby against such policies.*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Encouraging Youth Participation

Conference notes

1. *The age of candidacy for Members of Parliament and councillors was lowered to 18 by the Electoral Administration Act 2006.*
2. *There are only 8 Liberal Democrat MPs aged under 40, and none aged under 30.*
3. *Only 3.5 per cent of councillors are under 30, even though one third of the country's total population is in this age group.*

Conference believes

1. *Young people are best placed to represent the interests of young people.*
2. *Liberal Youth can play a vital role in getting young people to stand for elected office.*
3. *Young people who wish to stand for elected office as Liberal Democrats should be easily able access training that will help develop their skills and careers.*
4. *that running for office is not the only way young people can engage with politics*

Conference resolves

1. *The Liberal Youth Executive will deliver training specifically designed for members wishing*

to stand for elected office.

2. *That Liberal Youth should work with the party at all levels to help young people to engage with politics and with the party, whether by shaping policy, by standing for election, or by other forms of political participation.*
3. *that Liberal Youth, especially its Membership Development Officer, will run training on campaigning & recruiting in each region in the run up to the 2015 General Election at least annually*
4. *that Liberal Youth shall support not only those wishing to stand for elected office, but any and all our members interested in developing their campaigning skills that Liberal Youth should move away from the 'Party within a Party' mentality and become a campaigning operation, supporting candidates in target seats across the UK.*
5. *Liberal Youth should formalise and collate information about Youth and Student Representatives at a local party level. This should include issuing local parties with a guide as to how to attract young people to get involved with the local party.*
6. *As well as pushing the Federal party to formalise the Youth and Student Representative role as a Local Party Officer (it currently isn't recognised as such under some local party constitutions).*

7. *Liberal Youth should push the Federal Party for a full voting representative on all of the Federal Parties senior committees (such as FCC, FPC and FE).*

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

National Union of Students

Conference notes that NUS is the largest body representing students in Higher and Further Education in the UK.

Conference Believes:

1. That politics within NUS has long been exclusive, deeply factional, inflexible, and often illiberal and thus alienates many of its members.
2. That making NUS more effective is vital to increasing the influence students have in British politics.
3. That Liberal Youth members - and Liberal Youth itself - have a valuable role in working to make NUS more open, plural, inclusive, campaign-oriented, transparent and democratic.

Conference Resolves:

1. To campaign with NUS and Student Unions where their aims and policies are in keeping with those of Liberal Youth.
2. To urge student members and branches to be active within their Unions.
3. To encourage Liberal Youth members to stand for NUS committees at all levels and attend NUS Conference.
4. To support the NUS Liberation Campaigns in their fight against oppression, discrimination and prejudice.
5. To campaign for Liberal Youth policies to be adopted by the NUS.
6. To advocate membership of and involvement in Liberal Youth and NUS as an effective way of campaigning on issues of interest to students, including education funding, student welfare and fighting discrimination in society.

Conference further resolves that to achieve these aims, the objects of Liberal Youth organisation within NUS shall be:

1. To incrementally increase the number of official Liberal Democrat candidates on NUS Committees at all levels and to campaign vigorously, each year, to elect a Liberal Youth member to the NEC.
2. To maximise the number of student members attending NUS Conference as delegates of their Students' Unions and to keep these student members updated with details of candidates and Liberal Youth activity.
3. To raise Liberal Youth and the Liberal Democrats' profile within NUS, particularly at NUS Conference, but balancing this effort with the negative effects that can come from being seen as 'just another faction'

4. *To campaign to get Liberal Youth policy passed and acted upon within NUS at all levels.*

That Liberal Youth should work to ensure maximum participation of all students at all levels of NUS, with particular attention to further education students.

Passed: July 2016

Lapses: July 2021

Sexism

Conference Notes:

1. *The 2013 governmental report An Overview of Sexual Offending in England and Wales which showed:*
 - a. *That 85,000 women, on average, are raped each year*
 - b. *That 404,000 women and 72,000 men are sexually assaulted each Year*
 - c. *That 1 in 5 women aged 16 to 59 has experienced some sort of sexual violence since age 16*
2. *The Liberal Youth campaign to end rape culture.*
3. *The peer-reviewed study The Effect of Sexist Humor and Type of Rape on Men's Self-Reported Rape Proclivity and Rape Blame which demonstrated that appreciation as well as simply being exposed to sexist jokes led to subjects demonstrating increased blame of victims of rape, increased acceptance of desire to rape, a decreased desire to 'punish' rapists and a decreased view of rape as a problem.*
4. *The peer reviewed paper Repeat Rape and Multiple Offending Among Undetected Rapists which found that 6% of American male college students surveyed admitted to actions classed as rape and that 63% of this group had committed an average of 5.8 rapes each.*
5. *The peer-reviewed study Science in faculty's subtle gender biases favor male students which showed that when presented with identical CVs, scientists rated those with female names as showing significantly lower in competence and hireability than those with male names and that the average starting salaries recommended for the CVs with female names were \$3,730 lower than for those with male names.*
6. *That it has been estimated that 100 women worldwide are missing from the population as a result of sex selective infanticide, anti-female violence and other social and health inequalities which disproportionately affect and harm women.*
7. *The gender composition of parliament, the judiciary and big businesses.*
8. *That the gender pay gap between men and women in the UK was 9.6%.*
9. *The work of the Every Day Sexism project in highlighting 'routine' sexism experienced in everyday life by thousands of women and girls.*
10. *That the biggest cause of death for young men in the UK is suicide according to the ONS and that men have higher suicide rates than women.*
11. *The Universal Declaration of Human Rights and UK legislation guaranteeing legal equality for men and women.*

Conference Believes

- 1. That despite welcome improvements in legal equality over the past century, sexism, along with other forms of prejudice, remains entrenched in our society resulting in systemic discrimination against women.*
- 2. That the level of systemic discrimination and prejudice in our society is incompatible with our goal of a liberal society.*
- 3. That a commitment to the liberal values of freedom, opportunity and equality cannot be realised while half the population continue to experience prejudice and discrimination on a systemic basis.*
- 4. That sexist attitudes and systemic sexist discrimination within our society must be actively opposed in order to obtain freedom for all.*
- 5. That behaviour which reinforces systemic sexism and harmful attitudes towards women and other groups affected by discrimination is incompatible with liberal values and is morally wrong.*
- 6. That feminist liberalism is a vital fundamental strand of the liberal values which Liberal Youth stands for.*

Conference Resolves

- 1. To call on the Executive to write and to adopt a no-tolerance policy towards rape jokes & sexism within Liberal Youth.*
- 2. To actively campaign against sexism and sexist attitudes in society.*
- 3. To promote better understanding within Liberal Youth, the Liberal Democrats and society as a whole of the realities of sexism within our society and of the need to combat it.*

Passed: Autumn 2013

Lapses: July 2021