

Liberal Democrats Green Policies

2022 F9: Action to Improve Air Quality

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f9-action-to-improve-air-quality>

Conference supports the introduction of Clean Air Zones in large towns and cities across the UK, including the Ultra Low Emission Zone in London and the Clean Air Zone in Liberal Democrat-controlled Portsmouth.

Conference calls on local authorities to:

1. Install more pollution sensors near major roads and at every urban school.
2. Publicise local air quality issues including publishing live pollution levels from their pollution sensors stating specific levels of pollutants using globally recognised units of measurement.
3. Work to improve air quality in their area.
4. Take into account likely differential air pollution changes in different roads when designing traffic schemes.
5. Consider implanting or extending Clean Air Zones.

Conference calls on the Government to:

1. Urgently bring forward statutory instruments under the Environment Act 2021 to introduce legally binding national limits for particulate matter and other pollutants at or below current WHO guidelines.
2. Introduce a fully-funded obligation for all local authorities to install and maintain pollution sensors in their areas.
3. Introduce a scrappage scheme for petrol and diesel vehicles to encourage their more rapid phasing out.
4. Introduce targeted funding to provide financial support for the operators of buses, taxis and private hire vehicles to switch to less polluting technologies.
5. Increase the Air Quality Grant Programme which provides funding to local authorities to tackle locally identified air pollution issues.
6. Increase the maximum penalty that local authorities can apply to drivers leaving their engines idling.

2022 F6: COP15 and the UK Government

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f6-cop15-uk-government>

Conference therefore calls on the UK government at COP15 to:

1. Take urgent diplomatic steps in support of measurable and specific biodiversity goals to begin to reverse the decline of biodiversity by 2030 and create a nature-positive economy by 2050.
2. Propose a declaration and action plan at COP15 to empower subnational actors in co-designing and delivering biodiversity restoration.

Conference also calls on the UK government to take steps urgently to increase its environmental credibility and effectiveness by:

1. Laying before Parliament a cross-Whitehall plan that stops the longterm decline in biodiversity by 2030 with specific and costed policy measures (including planning policy, fishing, agriculture and land use policies) that add up with a high degree of confidence to turning round the long-term decline in biodiversity.
2. Giving substance to its promise to protect 30% of land and sea for nature by strengthening and completing the network of protected wildlife sites in England, and reforming the powers, purposes, funding and duties for AONBs and National Parks to restore nature.
3. Implementing the recommendations of the Dasgupta Review at pace and ensuring that the environment is at the heart of all government policymaking by adopting a set of economic measures that go beyond GDP to take account of the natural world.
4. Committing to a shared fiscal and policy framework between central and local government to enable authorities to contribute effectively to solutions to an ecological emergency.
5. Reversing the recent cut to international development spending, restoring it to 0.7% of GNI, and increasing finance for developing countries to protect and restore their ecosystems.

Conference reaffirms pledges in motion International Trade and the DIT (September 2021) for minimum environmental and animal welfare standards for future trade agreements, where they can be negotiated, based on a UK Trade and Human Rights Policy, and a Trade and Development Policy, as a UK successor to the Cotonou agreement.

2022 F30: Tackling the Cost-of-Living Crisis

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f30-tackling-cost-of-living-crisis>

Conference reaffirms Liberal Democrat commitments to:

1. Insulate all Britain's homes by 2030, cutting emissions and fuel bills, and aim to end fuel poverty by 2025 by providing free energy retrofits for low-income homes.
2. Put 1p on the basic, higher and additional rates of Income Tax, with the proceeds ring-fenced for the NHS and social care.
3. Taxing income from capital more fairly compared to income from work by abolishing the separate Capital Gains Tax-free allowance and instead taxing capital gains and salaries through a single allowance.
4. Backing President Biden's proposal for a global minimum rate of corporation tax at 21%, and persuade other countries to do the same.
5. Explore the benefits of a Windfall Tax on the super-profits of large corporations that profited from public health restrictions during the pandemic.

Conference further calls on the Government to:

1. Scrap the unfair National Insurance hike which disproportionately impacts low earners.
2. End the unfair freeze of the Income Tax personal allowance, which is a stealth tax falling disproportionately on low earners.
3. Protect pensioners from rising prices, including the 1.5 million low income people on pension credit, by uprating pensions in line with the Bank of England's inflation forecast of 6%.
4. Reinstate the £1,000 boost to Universal Credit, to ensure that the most vulnerable households get proper support.
5. Implement the government's proposed permanent £10 increase in the Warm Home Discount to £150 and double it to £300 to help people with soaring gas prices this winter – and extended it to everyone on Pension Credit and Universal Credit.
6. Double the Winter Fuel Allowance payment paid to all pensioners for this year.
7. Introduce a year-long windfall tax on the record profits of gas producers and traders, to help fund the doubling of the Warm Home Discount and

Winter Fuel Allowance, an emergency home insulation programme, and to support small businesses in energy-intensive industries in order to protect jobs and keep consumer prices low.

8. Support low-income households on Universal Credit with rising mortgage costs by returning the Support for Mortgage Interest scheme to its pre-2018 format – turning it from an interest-bearing loan to a benefit payment; abolish the zero-earnings rule which excludes from the scheme people with income from work; and reduce the wait time for the first payment from 39 weeks to 13 weeks.
9. Reverse the 63% cut of the Corporation Tax Banking Surcharge, so that big banks contribute fairly towards the UK's economic recovery from the pandemic after a year of record banking profits.

F34: COP27 and Climate Empowerment for Local Government

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f34-cop27-local-government-climate-empowerment>

Conference therefore calls on the UK Government to:

1. Set a global example by providing the powers and resources necessary for enhanced climate action by local government in the Drive multilevel coordination by convening the Net Zero Forum. UK's updated NDC for COP27.
2. Drive multilevel coordination by convening the Net Zero Forum.
3. Develop a fiscal and policy framework establishing the roles and responsibilities of local and central government to deliver and report on net zero and climate adaptation priorities.
4. Engage local government in the drafting of the National Adaptation Plan (2023-2028), implementing recommendations from the National Committee on Climate Change).
5. Establish a plan ahead of the Spending Review for funding local authority climate action, simplifying and consolidating the number of local net zero funding streams so that councils can plan and attract investment longer-term.
6. Clarify what role DLUHC will play in supporting local authority climate action given that the Net Zero Strategy establishes BEIS as responsible for coordination.
7. Lead on climate empowerment (ACE), involving young people, local communities and non-governmental actors in climate decisionmaking, education programmes, and action.

F12: Tackling the Climate Emergency: Proposals for Carbon Pricing (Carbon Pricing Policy Paper)

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f12-carbon-pricing>

Conference therefore endorses the following principles on which the paper's proposals rest:

1. Carbon pricing policies which help deliver a just transition, which shares the burdens of decarbonisation equitably.
2. Carbon pricing policies to be used to target the biggest polluters and those activities where emissions can most swiftly be reduced, in a way that is fair to individuals and businesses.
3. Support and incentives to be offered to smaller emitters, such as households, to reduce emissions before applying carbon pricing to their energy bills.
4. Carbon pricing instruments to be combined with other approaches, including regulation, information and subsidy, in order to lead to better and faster outcomes than when used in isolation.
5. The UK to collaborate closely with the EU, cooperating in carbon pricing policies to maximise impact and minimise problems for business trading across the border.

Conference welcomes the paper's detailed proposals to:

1. Accelerate the decarbonisation of power and industry (alongside our existing proposals to support the development of renewable power and zero-carbon industrial processes) by:
 - a. Raising the price of allowances in the UK Emissions Trading System (ETS) by reducing their number and increasing the auction reserve price, thereby strengthening the incentives for large emitters to cut emissions.
 - b. Extending emissions trading to cover suppliers of fossil fuels currently outside the ETS.
 - c. Linking the UK ETS to the EU ETS, creating a larger market for trading allowances and thereby improving its effectiveness.
 - d. Introducing, in collaboration with the EU, a carbon border adjustment mechanism for high-emission products such as metals

or chemicals, protecting UK businesses from competition from imports not facing similar costs.

- e. Simplifying the existing system of energy taxes by abolishing the Carbon Support Price and the Climate Change Levy, which will be no longer needed once the UK ETS is more effective.
2. Accelerate the decarbonisation of housing (alongside our existing proposals to provide free home insulation to low-income home-owners, introduce a zero-carbon standard for new buildings and require landlords to raise the energy rating of their properties) by:
 - a. Widening the list of energy and emissions-saving products enjoying the 5 per cent rate of VAT, and extending this lower rate to all household solar PV and battery systems.
 - b. Allowing owners to offset spending on insulation, low-carbon heat sources, EV charging points and climate adaptation measures against their income tax bills.
 - c. Graduating Stamp Duty Land Tax by the energy rating of the property being sold, and offering refunds to house purchasers if they improve the rating within one year of purchase.
 - d. Working with mortgage providers to encourage them to support energy-saving and zero-carbon measures, including requiring them to report their lending for climate-related home investments, and requiring buyers and mortgage providers to be made aware of the extent to which the property falls below the target energy rating.
 - e. Protecting households from sudden price increases by delaying by ten years the extension of emissions trading to suppliers of fossil fuels to homes.
 - f. Keeping electricity bills stable by transferring some levy funding for renewables from electricity to gas bills and to general taxation.
 3. Accelerate the decarbonisation of transport (alongside our existing proposals to end the sale of new fossil fuel cars and small vans by 2030, promote cycling and walking, and invest in public transport) by:
 - a. Reinstating the indexation of road fuel duty, graduating VED by fuel efficiency and increasing rates for fossil fuel vehicles overall, reducing company car tax for electric vehicles and increasing it for fossil fuel vehicles.

- b. Replacing the limited electric vehicle purchase grant with a 5 per cent VAT rate (up to a ceiling), to be phased out as the market expands, and introducing a zero-emission-vehicle mandate for manufacturers.
 - c. Limit the growth in demand for flights by ensuring that no net increase in airport runways across the UK takes place and banning flights where direct rail transport is available for the same journey, up to 2.5 hours, unless planes are alternative-fuelled.
 - d. Limit demand for flying by reforming Air Passenger Duty to target the most frequent flyers, and introducing VAT on first-class and business travel.
 - e. Introducing a charge on airlines for each take-off, and on flights by private jets.
 - f. Collaborating with the EU in extending the UK ETS to non-EEA flights and in placing a specific excise tax on airline fuel.
 - g. Including shipping emissions in the UK ETS.
4. Put in place further measures to:
- a. Prioritise climate change mitigation in agricultural support systems, including measures to increase soil carbon, tree planting and woodland creation.
 - b. Work with farmers and manufacturers to support the development of zero-emissions technologies for agricultural machinery, after which red diesel can be included in the UK ETS.
 - c. Require a full climate impact assessment of proposed UK free trade agreements to be made public before the agreements are finalised.
 - d. Provide incentives for negative emissions strategies, including technological and nature-based solutions.
 - e. Boost confidence and stimulate private sector investment by introducing a government-supported Green Finance Guarantee Scheme to offer lenders the assurances they need to provide meaningful funding for renewable energy generation, energy efficiency and green infrastructure.

F11: The Climate Change Conference and the UK Government

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f11-the-climate-change-conference-and-the-uk-government>

Conference therefore calls on the UK government, as chair of CoP26, to:

1. Press all governments to raise their short-term targets for emissions reductions, and to adopt net zero targets, in line with the commitments they made under the Paris Agreement.
2. Propose the inclusion of a dedicated chapter for local governments in the official agreement reached at COP26, recognising the importance of subnational actors in co-designing and delivering climate action and seeking to ensure that local government is politically and financially empowered to meet that ambition.
3. Ensure that developed countries fulfil their pledge to deliver at least \$100 billion per year to help developing countries decarbonise their economies and protect against climate impacts.
4. Foster the formation of coalitions of like-minded countries to advance specific emission-cutting goals, such as phasing out coal or protecting forests.
5. Reach agreement on an international framework to protect poor nations against climate change impacts and compensate them for damages.
6. Develop mechanisms to shift investment from fossil fuel use into clean energy, including by aiming to reach international agreement on:
 1. Banning new listings of, and bond issuances for, fossil fuel companies producing, processing or distributing coal, oil or gas whose primary purpose is for energy or transport.
 2. Requiring such firms already listed to produce within two years coherent plans to reach net zero in line with the IEA's Net Zero Emissions by 2050 Scenario (NZE, 1.5°C) that notes no new investment is needed in any new coal, oil and gas, anywhere, as from now.
 3. Requiring fossil fuel company boards and their bankers to report on when they will cease investment in new fossil fuels, and for this to be put to an annual vote of shareholders.
7. and by introducing such measures in the UK.

Conference also calls on the UK government to take steps urgently to increase its credibility and effectiveness as chair of the conference by:

1. Announcing a comprehensive strategy to meet the UK's own net zero target, including in particular urgent action to reduce emissions from buildings, industry, aviation, surface transport and agriculture, food and land use, and also a wide-ranging strategy for adaptation to climate impacts.
2. Committing to empower local governments and municipal authorities through a shared fiscal and policy framework between central and local government to meet net zero targets and climate adaptation priorities.
3. Working together as closely as possible with the UK's neighbours in the EU, including adopting joint targets for greenhouse gas emissions reductions and cooperating in policy frameworks such as emissions trading schemes and border carbon adjustment mechanisms, thereby increasing the UK's weight in the international negotiations.

F24: A Fairer, Greener, More Caring Society (Themes Policy Paper)

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/f24-a-fairer-greener-more-caring-society>

Conference condemns the Conservative UK government's betrayal of the people of Britain, their needs and wishes by their:

1. Incompetent handling of the pandemic, which has seen one of the highest rates of Covid infection, serious illness and death of any country in the world.
2. Encouragement of a divided and profoundly unfair society, in which one set of rules applies to an extremely wealthy and privileged few with close connections to the government, while NHS workers are given a meagre 1% pay rise.
3. Lack of urgency and ambition in tackling the climate and nature emergency.
4. Institutionalisation within government of lying and corruption, willingness to break international law, including treaties they themselves negotiated and signed recently, and historic rupture with Britain's successful trading economy past, leaving the world's largest and most successful free-trade area.
5. Mishandling of the United Kingdom as a whole, with the place of Scotland and Northern Ireland in the UK now in question.

Conference therefore welcomes policy paper 143, A Fairer, Greener, More Caring Society, as a statement of Liberal Democrat policy priorities to make Britain:

1. A fair society in which all contribute their fair share, and every person can have a decent income and a secure home, and can rely on good public services, by:
 - a. Creating a properly funded commitment to free childcare from 9 months until the day a child starts school.
 - b. Making the £1000 pa uplift to Universal Credit permanent and extend it to all legacy benefits.
 - c. Scrapping the sanctions system.
 - d. Introducing a 20% higher minimum wage for people on zero-hour contracts, and a clearer 'dependent contractor' status with basic protections, between employment and self-employment.

- e. Introducing an equitably funded Universal Basic Income that will make household finances more resilient and help empower people to make their own choices about work and training.
2. A caring society in which everyone's health and care needs are met and we give carers the support they deserve, by:
 - a. Raising Carer's Allowance by £1,000 a year and funding regular breaks for every unpaid carer.
 - b. Building a broad and cross party agreement on a long term, sustainable system of social care that is at least as generous as that proposed by the Dilnot report.
 - c. Raising £7 billion a year in additional revenue by putting 1p on Income Tax, ringfenced for spending on the NHS (focusing on mental health services) and social care.
 3. A leader in the fight against the climate and nature emergencies, by:
 - a. Delivering a green recovery from the Covid-19 pandemic, spending £150 billion to kick-start programmes to retrofit all UK homes, generate 75% of electricity from renewables by 2030, decarbonise transport, and introduce a green jobs guarantee, offering a well-paying green job to anyone who wants one.
 - b. Protecting the natural environment, including supporting nature-friendly farming, ensuring that UK environmental and animal welfare standards are maintained, and setting legally binding targets for improving the quality of water, air, and soil and biodiversity.
 - c. Increasing the availability of housing and supporting sustainable communities, including opposing the Government's planning reforms and backing councils to build 380,000 new homes a year, including 150,000 for social rent.
 4. A beacon for individual rights, diversity and inclusion, by:
 - a. Ending violence by men against women and girls, including by making misogyny a hate crime, giving police, prosecutors and judges better training and more resources, and improving age-appropriate sex and relationship education in schools.

- b. Combating racial injustice, including by abolishing the Conservatives' Hostile Environment, ending the disproportionate use of Stop and Search, and implementing a new Race Equality Strategy.
 - c. Opposing the Conservatives' dangerous and draconian crackdown on protests, and defending the Human Rights Act, the European Convention on Human Rights and judicial review from Tory attacks.
 - d. Strengthening LGBT+ rights at home and abroad, including by banning conversion therapy, strengthening trans rights and healthcare services, improving inclusive education on LGBT+ issues in schools, and ending the current regime of dehumanising processes and deportations to instead provide support and welcome for LGBT+ people from around the world who seek sanctuary in the UK.
5. A modern, open, democratic state in which people can have real control over decisions which affect them and confidence in the integrity of politicians and institutions, by:
- a. Making every vote count through reforming the electoral system to make it more proportional, using the single transferable vote, for all public elections in the UK; and through votes at 16.
 - b. Giving power back to the people by strengthening local government in England.
 - c. Making the Ministerial Code legally enforceable.
6. The best place in the world to start and to grow a business, by:
- a. Quadrupling the Employment Allowance, massively reducing small businesses' national insurance contributions bills, and giving small businesses relief on their rent arrears.
 - b. Creating an Entrepreneur's Allowance to help people start new businesses.
7. A model of a truly world class education and skills system, by:
- a. Extending eligibility for Free School Meals to every primary school student and child living in poverty, providing food vouchers during school holidays and tackling the 'digital divide' by making household internet more affordable.

- b. Giving every adult the chance to access education and training opportunities throughout life by introducing Skills Wallets and providing training courses free to those not in work via a training guarantee scheme.
 - c. Delivering an ambitious, long-term plan to support young people's educational and emotional recovery from the pandemic.
- 8. A strong and responsible international partner for peace, democracy and prosperity, by:
 - a. Reversing cuts to development aid and ensuring the UK keeps its word by protecting existing aid projects.
 - b.** Creating the closest possible alignment between the UK and the EU, including rejoining the Customs Union, Single Market and other EU agencies and programmes as appropriate, and supporting a longer-term objective of UK membership of the EU.