



Liberal Democrats North West

Autumn 2024 Conference Agenda

Conference Agenda

Time	Main Hall	Upstairs	Bar Area
10 00	Welcome Jackie Pearcey, Chair North West Liberal Democrats		
10 10	Morning Speaker: Lord Goddard reports on work in the House of Lords		
10 40	All Eyes on Lancashire: The County Council Elections are the only local elections in 2025.		
11 10	Policy Motion: Demanding Better for the Trans Community	11.00 Keeping Your Finances Legal - for current and incoming Treasurers & Chairs. Trainer: John Skipworth	
11 30	Policy Motion: Rural Public Transport		
11 50	Green Campaigning with Keith Melton, Green Liberal Democrats		
12 10	Young Liberals: speakers Eleanor Kelly, Tom Sutton		<i>Bar open from 12 noon</i>
12 30	Annual General Meeting		
1 00	<i>Lunch</i>		
2 00	The Viv Bingham Memorial Lecture: Speaker: Stan Collins	2.00 Training: Dealing with Labour. Trainer: Jake Perkins	
2 35	Regional Lottery Draw: John Skipworth		
2 45	Policy Motion: Tackling Poverty		
3 10	President's Awards	3.10 Training: Campaigning for Beginners Trainer: Jake Perkins	
3 30	Afternoon Speaker: Baroness Pinnock, spokesperson on Housing, Communities and Local Government		
4 00	Federal Policy Consultation: Our major policy review in a changed political landscape. Speaker: Chris French		
4 30	Closing Remarks: Jackie Pearcey, Regional Chair		

Welcome to Conference



Welcome back to Conference.

Over the last few weeks our Regional Executive team have been working hard to assemble this event, and we have a great programme to look forward to as a result.

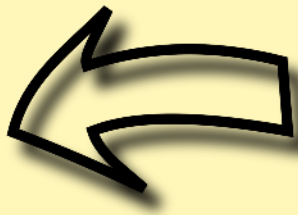
It's our first conference after a General Election which makes me think of February 2020, last time we met under similar circumstances.

We had just lost our leader's seat in a General Election where we had elected just a handful of MPs for the third time in a row, and were faced with a huge Conservative majority. Most commentators were sure Labour were out of power for at least a decade, and Johnson would be Prime Minister as long as he pleased.

Today we have some 72 MPs, the largest third party in Parliament in over a century. What a turn around from last time it is!

Have a great day!

Jackie Pearcey
Chair
Liberal Democrats North West



Donate and help us help out where it is needed in byelections across the region!

Scan the QR code with your phone.

Guest Speakers



Baroness Pinnock

Spokesperson for Housing, Communities and Local Government

Kath has been a member of Liberal Party and then the Liberal Democrats for 40 years and last joined us for an online conference in February 2022.

As Leader of Kirklees Council, she introduced the Warm Zone scheme which provided free loft and cavity wall insulation to every household (200,000) in Kirklees. As a consequence, nearly 100,000 homes were treated and fuel poverty reduced as well as carbon emissions. The scheme achieved national recognition and awards.

She became a member of the House of Lords in 2014 and was soon appointed Liberal Democrat Spokesperson for Children.

In October 2016 she was appointed our spokesperson for Communities and Local Government, the ministry for which had Housing added to its name in July 2024..



Lord Goddard of Stockport

David Goddard, Baron Goddard of Stockport was made a Lib Dem peer in September 2014.

He had been a Stockport councillor from 1990 to 2012, losing his seat to Labour by just 45 votes. After two years off the council he regained his seat a few months before being appointed to the Lords.

From 2007 to 2012 he was leader of the council, following on from Brian Millard and later succeeded by Sue Derbyshire - both also Lib Dems.

Guest Speakers

Stan Collins

Stan will present the annual Viv Bingham Memorial Lecture.

Stan is former Chair of the English Liberal Democrat Party (2004-2007) and was a councillor on both Cumbria County Council and South Lakeland.

He stood for the seat of Westmorland & Lonsdale three times - 1987, 1992 and 1997 - seeing the Tory majority fall from around 15,000 to 4,500.

Viv Bingham (1932-2012) was a leading figure in the Liberal Party for many years, including as national President at the start of the 1980s when the SDP formed and the Liberal-SDP Alliance developed.

He was an advocate for the co-operative movement, and stood for parliament variously in Heywood, Hazel Grove, and finally in Stalybridge & Hyde in 2005.

Chris French



The Federal Policy Committee has set up a new working group to develop a strategic, focused and ambitious programme for renewing our policy in the years ahead, so that we can carry on winning against a Labour government.

We are gathering the views of members at regional conferences, and will be publishing a consultation paper in the new year. We also have a short typeform on the website which you can

find here:

<https://www.libdems.org.uk/members/make-policy/policy-consultations>

Our session will be led by Chris French, Parliamentary Spokesperson - Vauxhall & Camberwell Green and Chair of the Lib Dem Racial Diversity Campaign.

Policy Motions

Policy Motion 1: Demanding better for the trans community

Proposer: Kobe Bibbon

Summator: Kobe Bibbon

- 1 **Conference stands by** the longstanding commitment of the Liberal Democrats to stand up for and represent
2 the LGBT+ community, as reflected in our then leader proposing the House of Commons motion to abolish
3 section 28 of the 1998 Local Government Act. We note within our region ensuring that places such as
4 Manchester see their first openly trans politicians being elected and the petition against the ban on puberty
5 blockers organised by Liverpool Liberal Democrats.
- 6 **Conference reaffirms** its core liberal values that everybody should be free to be who they truly are, openly,
7 without living in fear together with its support for Policy Paper 142 “What Liberals Believe”, in particular; “the
8 right of everyone to be treated equally and with equal respect whatever their personal characteristics including
9 race gender nationality way of life, beliefs or sexuality” and that “in a liberal society everyone is free to pursue
10 their dreams, to make the most of their talents and to live their lives as they wish.
- 11 **Conference also reaffirms** its support for our Autumn 2020 motion Supporting the Rights of Trans- and Non-
12 Binary People within the Liberal Democrats noting in particular that:
- 13 i) Trans women are women, trans men are men and non-binary people are non-binary.
14 ii) People are free to define their gender as they choose and that choice should be respected
- 15 **Conference recognises** that trans people have always existed and always will and expresses its regret that our
16 beliefs and values are not as yet fully accepted in wider society. We note in particular:
- 17 a) That the trans community is one of the most marginalised communities in Britain today.
18 b) The figures from Statista which show that the number of hate crimes committed against transgender
19 people in England and Wales has increased in recent years, reaching 4,732 offences in 2022/23
20 compared with just 313 such offences in 2011/12.
21 c) That trans people fought against section 28 and stood up for others in the community when they were
22 under attack but face the same discrimination and hostility that lesbian, gay and bisexual people
23 endured when Section 28 was in force
24 d) That not only is the threat to the trans community horrifically high currently but we are concerned that
25 if society does not change this is likely only to get worse meaning that more and more trans people will
26 suffer in so many ways.
- 27 **Conference believes:**
- 28 1. Transphobia to be a poison within our society that must be defeated
29 2. There to be no fundamental conflict between trans rights and women's rights.
- 30 **Conference condemns:**
- 31 A. Those primarily on the right of politics, within sections of the mainstream media and among exploiters
32 of social media who seek to fan the flames of division and fear undermining opportunities to achieve
33 congruence between women's rights and trans rights
34 B. The actions and rhetoric of past and current governments. Whether it was the transphobic language
35 from the then Conservative prime minister or the regrettable decision by the new Labour health
36 Secretary to obstruct vital trans healthcare by banning puberty blockers for people under 18.
37 C. The lack of resources for the provision of healthcare to support transitioning within the NHS including
38 investment in research and in the training of healthcare professionals.

Policy Motions

39 **Conference calls for:**

- 40 1) Continued campaigning to improve the lives of trans people across our region to ensure that they can
41 reach their full potential in spite of the hostility that exists, fighting hard to defeat the evil of
42 transphobia across our region and wider society and to committing to always call out transphobia for
43 what it is: wrong.
- 44 2) Our parliamentarians in this region and nationally to reaffirm their strong support for trans rights, to
45 show the community that we stand shoulder to shoulder with trans people all the way, and in
46 parliament, to call on the Labour government to stop their attacks on trans people and the gender
47 affirming healthcare that they need.
- 48 3) The Health Secretary to reverse their ban on puberty blockers for under 18s to refer decisions on
49 treatment back to individual doctors and their patients and to widen access to better healthcare
50 supporting the process of transition including improved training and research that would enhance the
51 expertise of healthcare professionals.

Policy Motions

Policy Motion 2: Rural Public Transport

Proposer: Paul Roberts

Summator: Paul Roberts

1 **Conference reaffirms** its support for the Federal Policy Motion “Connecting Communities-Building a Transport
2 Network Fit for the 21st Century” adopted at the 2023 Autumn Conference and welcomes the fact that, as
3 proposed in this motion, the Government has decided to give all Councils powers to operate and commission
4 bus services.

5 **Conference notes with concern** that the funding implications addressed in the above motion have not been
6 taken on board by Government and regret that many local authorities, especially those serving the more rural
7 populations, will face resourcing issues which threaten their capacity to take advantage of new powers.

8 **Conference believes** that it is important that local public transport is supported to reduce social exclusion and
9 improve access to public services. We endorse the commitment in the above Federal Party motion to “support
10 rural bus services and encourage alternatives to conventional bus services where they are not viable”.

11 We note the vital importance to local communities of threatened rural bus services across the North West and
12 in particular;

13 i) We urge Cheshire East Council to ensure that bus services covering the villages of Audlem, Bunbury and
14 Wrenbury continue to operate, at least until practical alternatives are established

15 **Conference condemns** the Government decision to withdraw funding for the potential reopening of previously
16 abandoned railway lines and stations including those where there is evidence to suggest that the business case
17 and community value could prove compelling.

18 In particular conference calls on;

19 a) Cheshire East, Cheshire West and Chester Councils plus MPs representing central Cheshire
20 constituencies, to urge the new Government to support the reopening of Beeston/Tarporley station
21 (on the main rail line, mid-way between Crewe and Chester) as this would improve accessibility to the
22 rail network for around 20,000 people, with significant environmental and other community benefits.

23 **Conference urges** local parties within the region to review local transport issues, campaigning priorities and the
24 opportunities which new legislation may provide.

25 **Conference also notes** that local authorities, especially outside the most densely populated urban areas, are
26 likely to lack the experience and expertise necessary to take full advantage of new opportunities now, or to
27 formulate strategies ready for implementation when resources permit.

28 **We therefore call** on Government to provide online resources to help equip officers and elected members
29 seeking to develop strategies for implementing newly acquired powers.

30 **We also call** on local authorities in the North West to network and collaborate actively in order to share
31 experiences and expertise for equitable mutual benefit.

Policy Motions

Policy Motion 3: Tackling Poverty

Proposer: Paul Roberts

Summator: Paul Roberts

1 Conference notes:

- 2 i) The Joseph Rowntree Foundation highlighted that the poverty rate across the North West is 23%.
- 3 ii) The two-child limit is affecting families across the North West, with research by the End Child Poverty
4 Coalition finding that "half of the 20 UK local authority areas with the highest percentage of affected
5 families are in the North West region".
- 6 iii) Further analysis by Policy in Practice estimates that "over 850,000 older people are eligible for but not
7 claiming Pension Credit", meaning they will miss out on Winter Fuel Payments under current govern-
8 ment plans, and "an estimated 130,000 older people miss out because they are just £500 over the in-
9 come threshold to claim Pension Credit. They could be better off by having lower income and claiming
10 Pension Credit and the Winter Fuel Payment Analysis by Policy in Practice estimates that £23bn in
11 benefits goes unclaimed each year.
- 12 iv) Research by The King's Fund which found that "people living in poverty find it harder to live a healthy
13 life, live with greater illness, face barriers to accessing timely treatment, and die earlier than the rest of
14 the population".
- 15 v) The impact of poverty is greater on single parent families, households where at least one member is
16 living with a disability, and families with an ethnic minority background.
- 17 vi) The North West is significantly impacted by poverty, with Knowsley being the second most deprived
18 borough in the country and Liverpool Riverside being the most deprived constituency in the country.
- 19 vii) The organisation MoneySavingExpert, established by Martin Lewis, states that "thanks to Martin's
20 campaigning, financial education is now being taught in secondary schools using a textbook he funded.
21 Yet it still isn't on primary school curriculums. And many adults have never had any form of financial
22 education whatsoever."

23 **Conference reaffirms** its support for the 2024 Autumn Federal Conference Policy Motion F41 'Tackling Child Poverty'
24 which rejects the two-child limit. We applaud our Parliamentary opposition to cuts to the Winter Fuel Allowance and
25 condemn the Government's persistence in the pursuit of these policies.

26 Conference commends:

- 27 a) The proposed measures within the Liberal Democrat 'For A Fair Deal' Manifesto 2024, including but not
28 exclusive to: 'cutting energy bills through an emergency Home Energy Upgrade programme', 'extend free
29 school meals to all children in poverty', 'tackle child poverty by removing the two-child limit and the benefit
30 cap' and 'set a target of ending deep poverty within a decade'.
- 31 b) The efforts of Liberal Democrat Councillors in Liverpool to improve anti-poverty efforts across the city, in-
32 cluding calling for extraordinary meetings on homelessness and the closure of St John's Market, and propos-
33 ing a budget amendment calling for an additional £100,000 to be spent on benefit maximisation activities.
- 34 c) The approach taken by Liberal Democrat-led Stockport Council in the North West, adopting multi-year
35 anti-poverty objectives to embed a strategic approach to tackling poverty.

Policy Motions

36 Conference calls for:

- 37 1) Local authorities and combined authorities across the North West to create and implement anti-poverty
38 strategies in partnership with local partners and communities.
- 39 2) Adoption of the socio-economic duty by local authorities, combined authorities and public bodies across the
40 North West, as well as national implementation of the duty.
- 41 3) Anti-poverty networks to be established and/or maintained in communities across the North West, to foster
42 collaboration on evidence-led anti-poverty interventions.
- 43 4) The voices of people and communities affected by poverty to be meaningfully involved in anti-poverty
44 decision-making structures and systems.
- 45 5) Co-ordinated action locally, regionally and nationally to increase benefit uptake and increase household
46 incomes.
- 47 6) The National Curriculum to have an increased focus on financial education, providing young people with
48 core financial skills.
- 49 7) The UK Government to replace the existing Household Support Fund with a multi-year settlement to enable
50 local authorities to plan long-term support for people and communities.
- 51 8) The UK Government to recognise the link between poverty and health, and to increase investment in local
52 authority public health.

Annual General Meeting

Liberal Democrats North West Annual General Meeting 2024 Agenda

To be held at 12.30pm on 23 November 2024 as part of the Regional Conference

In person at the Guildhall, Stockport.

- Welcome
- Chair's Report
- Treasurer's Report including PPERA
- Appointment of Independent Inspector of Accounts
- Constitutional Business: It is proposed to amend the constitution from the current issue 1.7 to 1.8. You can compare the two using a tool like draftable.com/compare
- Elections of the 2023 Executive
- Any Other Notified Business

Minutes of 2023 AGM - held at Stockport Guildhall, 21 October

Chair's Report

Jackie Pearcey welcomed all and her written report was accepted, along with verbal remarks reflecting today's event and the roles all in the region can play in a General Election expected in the next 12 months. No questions put.

Treasurer's Report

John Skipworth presented the PPERA Accounts for 2022, as filed with the Electoral Commission. These were noted. We have benefited from employing a Regional Development Officer and donations to enable this to continue are strongly encouraged. The report also put the proposed budget for 2024. End of 2024 currently projected for a deficit and new income sources needed. No questions put.

Other Reports

These were formally accepted.

Inspector of Accounts

David Birley was proposed as our Independent Examiner. Prop John Skipworth, Second Jackie Pearcey. Agreed.

Executive Elections and other internal elections for 2024

Nominations close at 4.30pm for the 2024 executive, giving support where needed across the region. We will have 11 representatives on English Council, a number which is proportional to membership as a share of membership across the whole of England. Forms and box are at the reception desk, and nominations by email and post to the Returning Officer have been accepted

AONB

No other business having been notified the meeting closed.

Conference: Speaker Card Tips

Debates are the heart of conference: they're where the party sets its policy and decides its future direction.

Any member of the North West Liberal Democrats who is registered to attend conference is entitled to speak in debates. All you need to do is fill in and submit a speaker's card and wait to see if you're called in the debate. At conference, speaker's cards are included in your welcome pack. They can also be collected from the Registration Desk.

There are three key points to remember to maximise your chances of being called:

1 Submit your card well in advance

If you hand your card in late, in a popular debate you're virtually guaranteeing you won't be called. The chair and aide team for the debate always meet in advance to plan the debate.

2 Fill in your card completely

The second major mistake potential speakers make is not to fill in their card completely. As well as the information on the front of the card (name, local party, for or against the motion, etc.), there are two sections on the back, for relevant background (professional or consumer experience, party background, etc.) and for a brief outline of what your speech is going to be about.

These sections are needed for the chair and aide to balance the debate – to make sure that people with relevant experience are called (not necessarily to the exclusion of others, but professional or user backgrounds are always valuable), and to make sure that they don't call a whole string of people who'll make the same point.

3 Make sure it's readable!

Don't take this as an invitation to fill every square centimetre of the card; and don't write illegibly, or in very small letters, or in green ink ... the easier you make it for the chair and aide to read your card the more likely you will be to be called.

How to fill in your speaker's card

The right way to fill in a speaker's card: clear, concise, to the point, and probably different from anyone else's

The wrong way to fill in a speaker's card (1): no useful information

Why should you be called to speak? What expertise do you have on this topic?

Good knowledge of many aspects of climate change issue

What do you want to say that will make a difference to the debate?

Will speak generally in support of the motion but with some reservations

FOR HELP WITH FILLING IN THIS CARD, SEE THE SECTION ON 'SPEAKING IN CONFERENCE DEBATES' IN YOUR AGENDA.

The wrong way to fill in a speaker's card (2): too much information, but mostly neither helpful nor easily readable!

Why should you be called to speak? What expertise do you have on this topic?

Member of GreenLib Poles Campaigner of green issues locally. worked on 'Incommunal' truth. Spoke at conference environmental issues

this I feel I am the most knowledgeable person as I have undertaken so many jobs taking about these issues at great length

What do you want to say that will make a difference to the debate?

I am a real environmental campaigner. I often speak at council on these issues. The problem with the environment is that lots of people speak about it but no one really knows what they can actually do to help the environment. Real people need real advice on what they can do to help out. I hear people really do not believe that even the slow by button costs them money

FOR HELP WITH FILLING IN THIS CARD, SEE THE SECTION ON 'SPEAKING IN CONFERENCE DEBATES' IN YOUR AGENDA.

The right way to fill in a speaker's card: clear, concise, to the point, and probably different from anyone else's

Why should you be called to speak? What expertise do you have on this topic?

Worked for energy company for the last 5 years, advising small businesses on energy saving options. Co. chair of campaign to persuade local council to improve its environmental performance. PPC for local constituency, have received good response on the doorstep to Lib Dem environmental policies.

What do you want to say that will make a difference to the debate?

Want to support the motion and oppose amendment 1. Would particularly like to speak on lines 25-27 getting the right mix of incentives, regulation and advice is crucial to ensure (particularly small business) make environmental investments. Also want to stress the role of the local authority and propose coordinated approach by Lib Dems in power locally.

FOR HELP WITH FILLING IN THIS CARD, SEE THE SECTION ON 'SPEAKING IN CONFERENCE DEBATES' IN YOUR AGENDA.