

stronger together
poorer apart



The Liberal Democrat Manifesto
for the 2009 Elections to the European Parliament

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LIBERAL DEMOCRATS

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foreword



Nick Clegg MP
Leader of the Liberal Democrats

Times are tough in Britain. The recession is hitting people and families hard: tens of thousands losing their jobs, businesses going to the wall, and every week hundreds losing their homes.

Gordon Brown was complacent about Britain's economy. He lectured other countries about how he had ended "boom and bust" but he encouraged the debt boom and let our economy go bust. We need to get help to people who are struggling and build a different kind of economy for the future – strong, stable and green.

We can't do that on our own. It's now clearer than ever that our fate is closely tied to what happens in other countries. Labour policies set us up for this recession, but it's part of a global crisis which needs international action. And on top of the global economic crisis, there's international crime, climate change, people-trafficking and terrorism, all of which cross borders.

"We will get a better deal for British families by working hard in the European Union."

You can't tackle these things without working with other countries, and that's what Liberal Democrats will do. It's how to make Britain strong again.

This election is a big choice for Britain. We can turn away from our friends in Europe and face the economic storm, climate change, rising crime and terrorism alone. Or we can choose to work with our allies for a safer, stronger world. For Liberal Democrats the decision is simple. Britain should lead in Europe, making our country stronger and more prosperous, championing a brighter, safer future at home and abroad.

Conservatives and Labour have messed up Britain's relationship with other European countries. Labour has been arrogant, refusing to engage. The Conservatives and UKIP just hate the idea of co-operating with people from other countries, even though that makes life harder for people in Britain. David Cameron has already isolated himself in Europe by pledging to stop co-operating in the European Parliament with the parties of German Chancellor Angela Merkel and French President Nicholas Sarkozy. Imagine how bad it would get if he was in charge of all Britain's European relationships.

Liberal Democrats believe in European co-operation. We will get a better deal for British families, working hard in the European Union to deliver practical help to ease the burden on people at home. By using our influence we can reduce telephone and heating bills. We can pioneer projects that generate green jobs - like building renewable energy networks and low carbon homes. And we can guarantee a fair deal for our businesses and industries, not least farming and fishing, so that they survive this downturn.

Rebuilding the economy and protecting the environment aren't the only tests we're facing. Liberal Democrats will work in Europe to help protect Britain from terrorists and criminals who operate across national borders. And we'll use our influence as a part of the European Union to help build a more stable, peaceful world.

Of course the EU needs to change. A lot of money is wasted on out-of-date policies and structures. The EU should concentrate on big issues and not get involved when national or regional action would be more effective. Liberal Democrats support the Lisbon Treaty because it will help do that, making the EU more efficient and accountable. But Britain will only win the case in Brussels for a flexible, democratic Europe if we settle our arguments at home on whether we should be part of the EU or not. That is why Liberal Democrats have argued for a referendum on whether Britain stays in or leaves the EU. We are clear where we stand – you have to be in it to win it.

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Britain has always been an outward-looking nation. Turning inwards, away from Europe at this crucial time would only make matters worse. This is our chance to build a liberal Europe with Britain at its heart – providing jobs for people in Britain, security against international crime, and a greener economy for the future.

The European Union remains our best bet: safety in numbers in an unsafe world. It's our best bet to push forward the international institutions needed to regulate global capitalism; our best bet to promote peace, democracy and human rights across the world; our best bet to secure global agreements to stop dangerous climate change. Britain can only be strong in the world if we are strong in Europe

That's what Liberal Democrat MEPs are fighting for, day by day, on our behalf. That is what the Liberal Democrat MEPs you elect on 4th June will work to achieve - a stronger, confident and liberal Europe, delivering real benefits for the people of Britain.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Nick Clegg". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long horizontal stroke at the end.

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Applicability:

This document contains Federal Liberal Democrat policy. There may be some issues on which policy of the Scottish and Welsh Liberal Democrats applies.

Published by the Liberal Democrats, 4 Cowley Street, London SW1P 3NB

ISBN 978-1-907046-04-9 © May 2009

Printed by Contract Printing, Unit 11, Whittle Road, Corby, Northants NN17 5DX

Cover and design by Greg Simpson

executive summary



We can't tackle all of Britain's problems alone. It's clearer than ever that our fate is closely tied to what happens in other countries. In addition to the global economic crisis, there's climate change, international crime, people-trafficking and terrorism, all of which cross borders.

The recession is taking its toll on businesses, people and families throughout Britain. Many people face losing their jobs, their livelihoods and their homes.

The health of our economy is linked as never before to the health of those we trade with in Europe and beyond. It is essential that we work urgently with other European countries to help us all pull through recession.

**“catch criminals,
more jobs,
stop climate change.”**

Conservatives and Labour when in government have messed up Britain's relationship with other European countries. Labour has been arrogant, refusing to engage with other European countries because Gordon Brown thought he had all the answers himself. The Conservatives and UKIP just hate the idea of co-operating with people from other countries. They'd rather we were isolated, even though that makes life harder for people in Britain.

This election is a big choice for Britain. We can turn away from our friends in Europe and face the economic storm, climate change, rising crime and the threat of terrorism alone. Or we can choose to work together with our allies for a safer, stronger world, from which we will all benefit.

For Liberal Democrats the decision is simple. Britain can and should lead in Europe, making our country stronger and more prosperous, championing a brighter, safer future both at home and abroad. It's how to make Britain strong again.

The Liberal Democrats will work through the European Union to ensure:

- **A stronger economy, more jobs and more opportunity for businesses;**
- **More action to stop climate change and protect the environment;**
- **More criminals are caught, such as terrorists, gangsters and paedophiles, and our civil liberties are upheld.**

Britain's Liberal Democrat MEPs play a leading role in the wider group of the Alliance of Liberals and Democrats for Europe (ALDE) which is the powerful third force in the Parliament, often casting decisive votes.

Liberal Democrats will:

- **Put money in people's pockets with big, permanent tax cuts** for ordinary people and families, funded by closing loopholes and unfair exemptions that benefit big business and the wealthy. There is a growing problem of companies and banks using offshore financial centres and other means to avoid paying their fair share in tax. This can only be stopped if EU countries co-ordinate better and are stricter at cracking down on offshore centres.
- **Create more jobs and chart a green road out of recession.** The Liberal Democrats will work with our European neighbours to create thousands of new jobs by breaking down trade barriers across Europe and boosting support for green jobs. Liberal Democrats want to create new jobs in green industries, put money in people's pockets from saving energy, and build a transport network we can all be proud of. We will encourage other European countries to put in place similar investments to ensure we emerge from recession stronger and greener than before.

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- **Make banks work for us.** British banks are inextricably bound up with banking systems across Europe. We must work together to keep an eye on how banks are operating across Europe and get a grip on the behaviour of credit institutions. We want more co-operation in Europe between national financial services authorities and the European Central Bank.
- **Catch criminals, sex offenders and terrorists.** Our MEPs support greater co-operation between police forces such as the European Arrest Warrant that helps Britain swiftly bring back suspects to face justice in this country rather than wait for the old lengthy extradition procedures.
- **Protect privacy and human rights.** We need guaranteed privacy safeguards on access to databases by police and intelligence agencies, including when access is given to non-EU countries such as the US.
- **Ensure green, affordable and secure energy supplies.** Britain has the potential to lead the world in clean renewable energy particularly wave, tidal and wind power. Our goal is for Britain to source all energy needs from within the EU by 2030 and become a net exporter of energy by 2050. This will deliver secure supplies of cleaner energy - and lower bills.
- **Promote free and fair world trade.** The EU should promote a world trading system that is both free and fair. That means a liberal and open system that increases economic growth and jobs, but that takes account of environmental and social standards too. The EU has a key role to play in salvaging the Doha development round of the World Trade Organisation, including eliminating trade barriers and production subsidies in agriculture.
- **Get a fair deal for shoppers and holidaymakers.** We want to open markets in Europe and force down the costs of everything from medicines to mobile phone bills, meals and machinery. Liberal Democrats stood up for millions of British holidaymakers by slashing mobile phone roaming charges, blacklisting unsafe airlines, and introducing flight delay refunds. We will continue to fight for a better deal for Britain's consumers.
- **Replace the Common Agricultural Policy** with a new policy that strengthens agriculture ensures fair trade for farmers and delivers sustainable development of the countryside. This would help farmers to get a fair price for their produce, encourage home-grown food, conserve our countryside, help rural economies, help tackle climate change and ensure cleaner water and protect water supplies.

- **Reform the EU budget to get better value for money.** The EU budget is in urgent need of wholesale reform so that money is spent only on the things the EU really needs to do.
- **Boost military capabilities** to make a stronger European contribution to NATO and to give Europe the capability to act when it needs to. Liberal Democrats say no to a European army, but yes to European defence co-operation. We want a strong Europe within an effective NATO. We believe that NATO remains the bedrock of our collective security.

creating prosperity and jobs



The recession is hurting businesses and families throughout Britain. Many people are losing their jobs, their livelihoods and their homes. The health of our economy is linked as never before to the health of those we trade with in Europe and beyond. We must work urgently with other European countries to help us all pull through recession.

More than 3 million jobs in the UK are dependent on trade with other EU countries. Being part of the European Union allows our businesses, both big and small, to compete on equal terms in the largest single market in the world.

Other EU countries have invested almost £2 trillion in the UK and almost two-thirds of the goods made in UK factories – everything from food to fashion and chemicals to cars – goes to the rest of the EU.

But Gordon Brown was arrogant and complacent about Britain's economic

performance. He lectured other countries about how he thought he had brought an end to “boom and bust” but he encouraged the unsustainable boom in debt which has led to this recession. As a result, British consumers have the largest personal debts in the EU.

“Working together in Europe will help Britain beat recession and save jobs.”

Liberal Britain, Liberal Europe

The people and families of Britain are dealing with the harsh realities of recession day in, day out. People are losing their jobs, many are struggling to keep their homes and businesses are going bust. Across the country unemployment is rising, wages are falling and banks have cut lending.

In Britain, Liberal Democrats want to put money in people's pockets with big, permanent tax cuts for ordinary people and families, funded by closing loopholes and unfair exemptions that benefit big business and the wealthy.

Liberal Democrats want to ensure that Britain comes out of recession in a better state than we went in.

We would take this opportunity to help Britain's economy and help combat climate change with investment in green jobs, green technology, energy efficient homes and offices and public transport we can be proud of.

Over the last year our banking system almost collapsed. British banks are inextricably bound up with banking systems across Europe. We live in a world where money can be moved easily across borders, and banks rely on one another. European countries were right to take individual action aimed at getting credit flowing again.

For decades, Labour and the Conservatives have resisted tighter

regulation of the City of London and the banking system. This has led to record levels of debt and a recession. Liberal Democrats want the EU to help get a grip on the behaviour of credit institutions.

We want more co-operation at EU level between national financial services authorities and the European Central Bank in order to improve openness, ensure fair competition, and keep an eye on how banks are operating across Europe. We must work together to create a fair, secure and level playing-field in the banking sector.

There is a growing problem of companies and banks using offshore financial centres and other means to avoid paying their fair share in tax. This can only be stopped if EU countries co-ordinate better and are stricter at cracking down on offshore centres.

In particular, the EU can help us rebuild effective local banking in the UK which can support local businesses and local economies.

While banking regulation will help prevent a future financial crisis, it won't dig us out of the current one. We need national governments to co-operate through the EU to help our economies to recover and jobs to be created.

Once this recession is over, Europe must of course return to the tight fiscal rules that have supported the euro. The European Central Bank and the euro

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have been tried and tested over ten years providing a clearer picture of the benefits of membership of the single currency.

Working together with other European countries will help Britain beat recession and save jobs. If we become further isolated in Europe, Britain would have less say on the EU budget or on the rules and regulations of the single market. Isolation under the Conservatives and UKIP would mean there would be nobody in Brussels to stand up for British jobs, British consumers and British businesses.

Labour MEPs often fail to support British workers and businesses, for example by voting against their own government and backing damaging plans to scrap the UK's opt out of the 48 hour week limit in the Working Time Directive. Liberal Democrats have always supported the right for people to choose to earn overtime and opt out of the 48 hour week so long as this is a truly voluntary decision.

The EU can help to create lower and fairer prices for things like energy and phone calls and stop companies ripping people off by price fixing. Liberal Democrat MEPs have helped to open up markets, increase competition, and protect consumers. For instance:

- British people spend £19.3bn a year on travel to the rest of Europe. Our MEPs fight to get them a fair deal like forcing airlines to give

consumers a refund when they face unacceptable delays.

- Our MEPs work to increase competition in the mobile phone and telecoms market right across Europe so that British citizens get a fair deal wherever they are. Since 2000, the average cost of a three minute call has fallen by 65%.
- Our MEPs stand up for British travellers abroad, backing the EU Health Card, which gives British tourists the right to claim medical treatment abroad.

Through Europe, we can achieve more. Different EU countries have their own employment laws, but the EU has helped set basic rights that every person is entitled to.

Many of the new rights that help families to balance life and work, such as extended paid maternity leave are a result of EU action. The EU has also improved the rights of those facing redundancy, setting out minimum standards for consultation.

Despite opposition from Conservative MEPs and the Labour Government, Liberal Democrats have helped to deliver EU rules to ensure that no British employer can discriminate against people on the basis of age. Sexual orientation, disability and religion or belief were also covered in the same directive. Liberal Democrats have led a campaign to ensure these rules are

extended to cover access to goods and services, where age discrimination is not currently covered in the UK.

Complete the single market to create more jobs

Services make up a large part of the economies of European countries (almost 70% of both GDP and employment in the EU) and yet there is little trade in services (less than 5% of GDP). More trade in services across the EU would mean another £6bn a year for the UK and up to 80,000 new jobs. It would also improve competition to reduce prices.

Liberal Democrat MEPs will continue our campaign to extend the single market in the areas of energy, financial services and transport to so that British firms can provide services across the EU.

With unemployment rising, it is essential to help people find jobs at home and abroad. Liberal Democrats will make it easier to work abroad by making it easier to transfer personal pensions and mortgages between European countries.

Protect consumers and push down prices

Liberal Democrat MEPs fight for a good deal for British consumers in Europe. If we want to open markets and force down the costs of everything from medicines to mobile phone bills, meals and machinery, we need legislation that will help consumers.

We believe that British consumers abroad in other EU countries should expect the same standard of fair treatment as in the UK.

We will support action through the EU to make it easier and safer to shop on the Internet and on the high street, including compensation for faulty products and protection for major purchases like holiday timeshares.

Liberal Democrats support measure to further strengthen consumer protection and competition law. Liberal Democrats will ensure that the EU applies these more rigorously, so that local businesses can flourish, and people and communities can't be exploited by powerful private or state-owned companies.

Extend free trade to cut prices on the high street

Europe's single market has helped get new customers for British businesses and pushed down prices across Europe. That is why Liberal Democrats want to build on the single market in Europe as a step towards opening markets worldwide by developing a trans-Atlantic free trade area with North America.

As a recent study by the OECD found, reducing regulation, tariff barriers and restrictions on foreign direct investment between the EU and the US would increase the wealth of everyone by up to £800 a year.

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The euro

The euro has been more resilient than sterling in the financial crisis and has become a major reserve currency for many countries outside Europe. Liberal Democrats believe that it is in Britain's long-term interest to be part of the euro. Membership of the single currency would help Britain improve economic stability and boost trade and investment.

But Britain should join when the economic conditions are right, and with the present economic turbulence and volatility, they are not at the moment. If the government were to recommend joining the euro, Liberal Democrats believe this should only take place if that decision were supported by the people of Britain in a referendum.

putting europe's house in order



The European Union, with a combined population of half a billion people, has achieved a great deal in the last 50 years, but it now needs to adapt its focus to the changing world of the 21st Century.

The constant tinkering with the institutions of the EU over the last decades has resulted in new treaty after new treaty. This has created the appearance of an inward-looking Union which seems to many people to concentrate more on how it is structured than actually delivering for people.

Liberal Democrats believe this should change, with the European Union concentrating on delivering better policies that improve people lives – and national governments co-operating fully and being open with people on the benefits that European co-operation brings.

Rather than institutional change, the EU must now concentrate on issues like tackling climate change, taking on cross-border criminals and building economic prosperity for all Europeans.

“...over the last 12 years Labour has lost its way, leaving Britain without influence...”

Liberal Democrats don't believe in one-size-fits-all solutions. This is because Liberal Democrats believe that individual

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people, families and their communities know best about the things that affect them, so decisions should be taken by them, not by distant politicians and bureaucrats in Westminster or Brussels. That is why we insist that Europe does not act when national, regional or local action is more effective.

Liberal Democrats support the Lisbon Treaty as it adopts many of the institutional reforms we have been pressing for, including streamlining the EU institutions and giving the democratically elected European Parliament greater say.

The Treaty would help the EU face global challenges such as climate change and address the issues which matter most to citizens including economic stability, cross-border crime, asylum and immigration, international terrorism and energy security. The Treaty will not enter force unless it is ratified by all EU countries. If that doesn't happen, EU institutions should go on working under the rules of the current treaties, but an opportunity will have been lost to make the Union fit for purpose in the 21st century.

Liberal Britain, Liberal Europe

Despite a promise to put Britain at the heart of Europe, over the last 12 years Labour has lost its way, leaving Britain without much influence in many areas of EU business.

Too often Labour has used EU rules as an excuse to enact burdensome and centralising regulations. An independent analysis by the Federation for Small Business argued that too many regulations had been "over-implemented". Liberal Democrats would put an end to this so-called "gold-plating" of EU rules.

The Conservatives and UKIP would make things even worse by isolating Britain. Turning our backs on our partners will achieve nothing for Britain.

Liberal Democrat MEPs work hard in Brussels to get the best deal for British people. We are naturally sceptical of big, powerful institutions in both politics and business. We want government at every level to be open, transparent and held to account for its actions. We take the same strict approach in Brussels as we do to government in Westminster, Cardiff, Edinburgh, Belfast and in city and town halls up and down the country.

Liberal Democrats believe that shifting power away from central government towards local government, people and communities would be an effective way of delivering real improvements for local people.

The EU should not act when national or regional action would be more effective. The British Government should take the same approach, devolving more power to regional and local government.

Liberal Democrats have argued for a referendum on whether Britain stays in or leaves the EU.

We are the only party confident enough to put the pro-European case to the British people on the big issue facing us – and let the people decide. Britain will only win the case for a flexible, democratic Europe in Brussels if we settle our arguments at home on whether we should be part of the EU or not.

EU Money, Local Power

Although it is the EU and Westminster that legislate, it is often regional and local government that deliver the results on the ground.

Far greater co-ordination is needed between local and regional government and EU bodies to ensure better work planning. Around a third of the EU budget is spent on regional structural and cohesion funds. For example Cornwall has received £350m from the EU over the past 6 years helping to fund tourism sites such as the Eden Project.

We believe that local and regional authorities should have a greater say in the design and management of regional projects funded through the EU in order for local people to have a better say in how the money is spent. That is why we believe it is wrong for the Labour Government to block English regions bidding for extra funding.

Spend Better, Crack Down on Fraud

Liberal Democrats want to see tougher controls on EU countries and the EU itself for the management of EU money. Both countries and EU institutions should be named, shamed and fined for repeat offences – for example the Rural Payments Agency for England and Wales has a poor track record of using EU funds.

The EU must also end unnecessary spending on the organisation of the EU institutions themselves. Scrapping the European Parliament's monthly move to Strasbourg and basing it permanently in Brussels would save around ?200m a year.

We do not see the need, in the current context, for any significant growth in the budget's size, nor the abolition of the British rebate.

But the EU budget is in urgent need of wholesale reform so that money is spent only on the things the EU really needs to do and there is a more rational system for contributions by member states. This means in particular further reform of the Common Agricultural Policy.

More Democracy, Stronger Parliaments

We want those who are elected, such as MEPs and MPs, to have greater power so that EU institutions can be held properly to account. That is why we support the Lisbon Treaty which gives

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extra powers for national parliaments to scrutinise and object to EU proposals.

Because protecting our civil liberties is a priority for Liberal Democrats, we want the democratic European Parliament to have the power to scrutinise and amend EU justice and home affairs agreements such as on data protection, privacy and fundamental legal rights.

We also seek greater involvement for ministers from Scotland, Northern Ireland and Wales at European meetings where there are clear advantages, such as farming and fisheries policy.

Holding British Ministers to Account

We want the UK Parliament, the National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Assembly and the Scottish Parliament to hold Ministers to account for the positions they take in Europe. That is why we have argued strongly for opening up European meetings and clarity over the legislation that has been agreed at the EU.

In Westminster, the Prime Minister should explain his approach on issues in front of Parliament both before and after attending European Council meetings. There should be a regular European Affairs Question Time in Parliament so that MPs can question Ministers on the positions they take in Europe. The National Assembly for Wales, the Northern Ireland Assembly and Scottish Parliament should hold similar sessions.

We need to open up European meetings too. The Conservatives oppose the Lisbon treaty even though it would force the Council of Ministers to meet in public when it passes laws.

The UK Government uses EU rules as an excuse to enact burdensome and centralising regulations. We would put an end to this so-called "gold-plating of EU rules.

Holding MEPs to Account

Liberal Democrat MEPs have been at the forefront of the campaign to reform the European Parliament.

It was our MEPs who blew the whistle on the lack of openness and malpractice. Many of the reforms we have argued for will come into effect in July 2009.

Liberal Democrats expect the highest standards of public service and honesty from all our representatives. That is why all Liberal Democrat MEPs and candidates have signed a binding Code of Conduct on the use of their parliamentary allowances. This includes making public the names of all staff, including family members, and strict adherence to the letter and spirit of the European Parliament rules. We expect all other MEPs to do the same.

We will continue to work to reform MEPs expenses, ensure transparency and end the abuses that have undermined public confidence.

tackling crime, protecting liberty



The threat from crime and terrorism does not stop at our borders. Globalisation and mass migration have created a world where more and more crime happens across national borders, and our response must be international too.

Drug smugglers, human traffickers and other organised criminals operate internationally.

With the internet, keeping our children safe from paedophiles and other offenders means we have to co-operate with other countries. Similarly, keeping Britain safe from international terrorists means ensuring they have no place to hide, at home or abroad.

It makes sense for European countries to pull together to cut crime and tackle terrorism. The EU can succeed where individual countries acting alone cannot.

“the Conservatives have tried to block cross-border co-operation on crime, putting British citizens in danger.”

It will make Britain safer if the UK takes part in common European action to tackle cross-border crimes such as paedophile networks, cyber-crime, human trafficking, money laundering, and drug smuggling and gun-running. Britain should be in the vanguard of

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developing justice and home affairs policies in Europe. There should be a presumption that Britain will choose to take part and lead on such issues.

The EU has been at the forefront of extending the values of open, democratic and free societies across Europe, including protecting fundamental rights and civil liberties such as freedom of the press, thought, speech, liberty of association, religion, ownership and the right to privacy and dignity. The European Court of Justice ensures that people who suffer discrimination have somewhere to turn if their national government won't act or if the EU institutions blunder.

Millions of British citizens benefit every year from the freedom to travel across Europe for work, study or holidays within a secure framework of civil protection and police co-operation. Around two million British people live or work in other EU countries. Many are married to or have children with people from other EU countries. A large number of British people now own homes or businesses abroad. Liberal Democrats want to ensure their legal and civil rights are guaranteed. The only way to do that is to co-operate through the EU.

Liberal Britain, Liberal Europe

Liberal Democrats believe that fighting crime and terrorism, whether through action at home or in Brussels, does not mean we should give up our traditional

legal systems and civil liberties or create a surveillance state.

Labour has systematically undermined our cherished freedoms and has tried to get agreements in Europe to do the same things across the EU, for example agreements for mass databases and email and phone surveillance. They even mis-used European agreements on bio-metric passports to justify spending billions on identity cards.

In the UK, Liberal Democrats would introduce a Freedom Bill to restore and protect our most important liberties. We will scrap ID Cards, remove the right of the state to keep innocent people's DNA for life, restore the right to protest, and protect judges' independence. We will protect people's privacy, and stop unnecessary state intervention in our lives.

In the European Parliament, Liberal Democrats MEPs have a proud record of standing up for civil liberties.

We have consistently fought for protection against discrimination in the workplace on the grounds of gender, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, age or disability. We are leading a campaign to ensure these rules are extended to cover access to goods and services, where age discrimination is not currently covered in the UK. We oppose allowing the US to have open access to European phone, travel and credit card records.

The Conservatives and UKIP have consistently sought to block measures that help European police forces and judicial authorities to co-operate in investigations into child abuse, human trafficking and cross border crime. They oppose the European Arrest Warrant that has been so useful in bringing suspects to trial.

The Conservatives' opposition to European co-operation against dangerous criminals is perhaps the worst example of them putting their prejudice against Europe over the interests of the British people. If Britain becomes isolated in Europe, or the Conservatives and UKIP succeed in blocking cross-border co-operation on crime and terrorism, they will put British citizens in danger.

Liberal Democrats in Westminster and Brussels support measures to help Europeans fight cross border crime together. We will also continue to stand up for civil liberties and human rights and oppose creating a surveillance state.

Catching Criminals and Terrorists

Our MEPs support action that helps greater co-operation between police forces such as the European Arrest Warrant and the European Criminal Records Information System (ECRIS) system.

The European Arrest Warrant helps Britain bring back suspects swiftly to

face justice in this country rather than wait for the old lengthy extradition procedures.

The aim of ECRIS is to share information so that British police can check as a matter of course whether someone they have arrested has criminal convictions elsewhere in the EU. Without the efficient exchange of records, criminals would be able to leave other EU countries for a clean slate in Britain.

We support greater action by Europol and Eurojust where justified. Liberal Democrats MEPs and MPs will continue to keep these systems under review to ensure that there is no abuse of innocent people and no curtailment of civil liberties.

Catching Sex Offenders

Cracking paedophile rings and freeing women who have been shipped to other countries and forced into prostitution, requires co-ordinated European action.

Liberal Democrats support successful pan-European police action such as Europol's operation in which police from 28 countries rescued over 20 young girls from the hands of abusers and arrested almost 100 sex offenders.

We want a Europe-wide missing child alert system based on the US-style 'Amber Alert' warning system. This would allow the whole of Europe to be put on alert when a child goes missing.

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We believe Britain should fully adopt European rules which allow women who have been trafficked into the EU for prostitution to remain so that they are safe and can help bring traffickers and pimps to justice.

Ensuring Fair Treatment Abroad

Attempts to get guaranteed rights across the EU for defendants have been stalled for over three years. We support action to establish common rights in criminal proceedings across the EU. This would ensure that if you are arrested in another European country you would have the right to a lawyer, legal aid and an interpreter. This has been a problem in cases like the British plane spotters arrested in Greece in 2001. It also means that if you are the victim of crime abroad you will get the standard of justice you would expect in the UK.

Protecting Privacy

Liberal Democrats want data protection to be a higher priority among European governments. We believe that EU countries should share information to help catch criminals and terrorists but we need guaranteed privacy safeguards on access to databases by police and intelligence agencies, including when

access is given to non-EU countries such as the US.

Co-operation on Asylum and Immigration

Liberal Democrats do not believe Britain should join the Schengen area of open borders in the foreseeable future.

We would maintain and strengthen Britain's borders with a new dedicated UK Border Force to ensure rigorous entry and exit checks.

While UK asylum and immigration decisions should remain the responsibility of the UK government, Liberal Democrats believe that the UK should play a more positive role in setting stronger EU policies and common standards to tackle illegal immigration, to ensure the asylum system is fair and not abused and to agree a coherent approach to legal immigration from outside the EU.

This will help Britain as well as the EU to protect its borders while creating an orderly immigration and asylum system in which EU countries fulfil their international refugee obligations and manage migration flows properly.

green europe



Dangerous climate change will destroy our way of life unless radical action is taken. We are running out of time to safeguard the future for our children and grandchildren. No individual country can tackle this problem alone. We have to work together to ensure that our way of life doesn't hurt the planet.

Pollution and climate change have no respect for national borders. It makes sense for European countries to pull together to save energy, cut pollution and preserve our natural resources. And it makes sense for all European countries to commit to the same goals, because on the environment if we don't all act, we all lose out.

The European Union has led the way with climate change and energy laws and ambitious targets to reduce emissions.

All EU members are now committed to reducing greenhouse gases and energy consumption by at least a fifth by 2020, and to getting 20% of European energy from renewable sources, with a UK target of 15% from renewable sources.

“We will ensure that Britain and Europe take this opportunity to go green.”

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Liberal Democrats want to see the commitment to cut CO₂ emissions increased to 30% as part of a wider global agreement.

The EU's commitment to tackling climate change and boosting research and development helps put European countries at the cutting edge of green technologies - like stopping carbon emissions escaping into the atmosphere from the dirty use of coal, and sustainable energy sources like solar, wave, tidal and wind power.

Our businesses are well placed to lead a new green revolution which will generate thousands of jobs. In Germany alone, 400,000 jobs have already been created thanks to investment in green technologies. The proposed offshore super-grid around the North Sea will create an estimated 200,000 jobs.

Europe's commitment to cut carbon emissions provides us with real opportunities.

Liberal Democrats will increase investment in science and technology. The EU's research and development programmes must help shape the low carbon economy of the future. That is the European route to green growth in Britain.

Protecting the environment isn't just about climate change. We believe that every citizen has the right to breathe clean air, drink fresh water and live on unpolluted land.

Our MEPs have fought hard to improve air purity by clamping down on emissions from planes and cars, raise water quality by cutting out poisonous chemicals, and guarantee chemical safety standards by making manufacturers prove that their products are safe.

Liberal Britain, Liberal Europe

In Britain, the Liberal Democrats are the only party that has a clear, long-term strategy for tackling climate change and reducing emissions to make the UK carbon neutral – where the country absorbs as much carbon as it emits – by the year 2050.

Our strategy sets out how Britain can tackle carbon emissions from all parts of the economy: transport, energy, housing, offices and factories.

It needs to be easier for people to go green, particularly in time of recession. Energy wasted heating draughty homes is bad for the environment and leads to high fuel bills. The poorest people, who tend to live in badly insulated homes, suffer most. An estimated 4.5 million British households are now in fuel poverty, according to Ofgem.

Labour pledged to end fuel poverty by 2010, yet instead it has increased, leaving millions with huge energy bills. Liberal Democrats would ensure the energy companies invest in a rolling programme to reduce bills and cut out waste by insulating homes and installing

smart meters to help people monitor how much fuel they are using. We would also require energy companies to expand discounts for vulnerable people struggling to pay fuel bills.

Our plans would create more jobs in the construction industry and lead to lower fuel bills for people and families. Liberal Democrats are determined to ensure Britain and Europe take the opportunity that going green offers.

Labour have let us down on the environment. They have no strategy for making all Britain's houses energy efficient. They make big promises in Brussels about cutting emissions, but then in Britain they back dirty coal-fired power stations, like Kingsnorth, and a new airport runway at Heathrow.

EU rules on air quality and noise limits aim to protect people from harmful pollution from things like factories, planes and cars.

The level of air pollution around Heathrow already breaks EU rules. Labour's decision to build a new runway at Heathrow will just make this worse. Liberal Democrats are fighting to stop Labour's third runway and protect the environment.

The Conservative commitment to green issues is only skin deep, prioritising photo opportunities over real policies to help Britain and Europe go green.

By opposing a common European energy policy, the Conservatives have shown they are not serious about the environment. Their attitude to Europe will just leave us isolated.

Britain can't afford to become isolated in Europe when decisions are being made to save our planet.

By opposing reforms in the Lisbon Treaty that would help the EU combat climate change, the Green Party too is part of the problem, not the answer.

Liberal Democrats will fight to ensure that all EU countries meet their targets for reducing emissions and using more renewable energy.

The Copenhagen summit in December is a real opportunity for Barack Obama's United States to join forces with Europe and create a new ambitious international treaty that includes all major industrial and developing countries.

The EU's carbon emissions trading scheme is at the heart of Europe's plans to reduce carbon dioxide and other emissions which harm the environment.

Liberal Democrats want the scheme extended to include other harmful greenhouse gases and more areas of business such as shipping. Improvements to the scheme will provide money to reduce taxes and invest in clean, green technologies.

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A Green Road to Recovery

The UK lags behind many other European countries in adopting green technology. Now is the time for big investment to create jobs and make Britain and Europe greener.

We need a green road out of the recession. This would mean new jobs in green industries, money in people's pockets from saving energy, and a transport network we can all be proud of. Many of our proposals for green investment would need to be delivered through local councils and local companies, putting money into local economies.

Green, Affordable and Secure Energy

Liberal Democrats want Britain to lead the drive for an open marketplace for energy in Europe to deliver secure supplies of cleaner energy and lower bills.

Linking up national electricity and gas grids and creating a European super-grid would also reduce every country's vulnerability to having energy supplies cut off - particularly from Russia. Britain has the potential to lead the world in clean renewable energy particularly wave, tidal and wind power.

Our goal is for Britain to source all energy needs from within the EU by 2030 and become a net exporter of energy by 2050. In order to meet this goal, a European Energy Agency should be established to bring together the

work of national energy regulators and coordinate much needed European research and development into technology that can tackle climate change.

No to Nuclear Power

The Liberal Democrats oppose the expansion of nuclear energy in Britain which both Labour and the Conservatives have championed.

We believe nuclear energy creates dangerous waste and leaves a lethal radioactive legacy for our children. The huge start-up and clean-up costs would be better spent supporting renewable energy and cutting waste.

Green Homes

Working through Europe will cut the cost of going green. Increasing the energy efficiency of our homes is the cheapest way of cutting harmful emissions and saving people money on bills.

Liberal Democrat MEPs are arguing for tighter energy efficiency standards for new and renovated buildings and for bringing all homes up to the best modern standards.

Liberal Democrats want the UK Government to take advantage of new European agreements and cut VAT on housing alterations, renovations and repairs. Our MEPs will work to extend this to products which help save energy and to other environmentally-friendly products and businesses.

Taken together, these measures would cut home renovation costs, help tackle fuel poverty, reduce carbon emissions, create thousands of jobs and boost Britain's struggling construction sector.

Sustainable Agriculture and Fishing

Although the Common Agricultural Policy (CAP) has been transformed over the last decade it still makes up over a third of the EU's budget.

It is inevitable that the proportion of the EU budget devoted to the CAP will decline further in future and Liberal Democrats will ensure that this process is managed to avoid risks to food production while at the same time providing a broader range of environmental and other benefits.

The CAP should be replaced gradually with a new European Sustainable Rural Development Policy. This would help farmers to get a fair price for their produce, encourage home grown food,

deliver an appropriate level of food security, enhance biodiversity through habitat management and conserve our countryside, support rural economies, help tackle climate change, ensure cleaner water and protect water supplies.

The reformed policy must allocate Rural Development Funds to member states on objective needs-based criteria, replacing the current arrangement that has left many parts of the UK, particularly Scotland and Wales, short-changed for decades.

Liberal Democrats believe that even more responsibility for implementing policy on conserving fish stocks should be worked out regionally. Decisions on fisheries management should be made on a regional basis, with more powers being given to fishermen, scientists and communities through Regional Management Councils.

stronger in the world



In the 20th century, European integration helped to bring peace to a continent divided by the Iron Curtain and by historic rivalries. With globalisation in the 21st century, Britain and Europe face a different set of threats, but many opportunities too.

Britain can no longer pretend that we can solve the problems of the world or keep this country safe by acting alone or slavishly supporting whatever the United States decides.

If we are to maintain influence in the world we must co-operate with our European partners to pursue shared objectives and values.

Those countries which form part of a larger group will be better able to defend and promote their interests.

“The unquestioning support by Labour and the Conservatives for President Bush and the invasion of Iraq left Britain isolated...”

By combining our economic power, as we have done through the single market, Europe gets better trade deals

around the world than if each country were to negotiate independently. The EU trade and partnership agreements with third countries, such as Israel and Russia, have the capacity to give the EU significant diplomatic influence in negotiations. These are not always fully exploited at present.

Europe acting together will be a credible ally and partner for Barack Obama's United States.

To become the partner America needs, European countries have got to take more responsibility for our own security. As well as military co-operation this will also mean working together to guarantee democracy, poverty reduction and sustainable development in other parts of the world.

Liberal Britain, Liberal Europe

Liberal Democrats believe that working together with other countries through international bodies such as the UN, NATO and the EU is the best way to ensure Britain's security.

We believe that a more united Europe will have more influence to implement shared values such as democracy, open markets, human rights, international development and the rule of law.

Britain isolated in Europe would have little chance to make a real difference in areas where conflict or instability can impact directly on our national interests

such as Africa, the Middle East or Russia.

The unquestioning support by Labour and the Conservatives for President Bush and the invasion of Iraq left Britain isolated and without having much say over what was decided in Washington. By turning its back on Europe, the Conservatives would speed up the relative decline in British power.

Liberal Democrats support the development of the EU's common foreign and security and defence policies which began under the previous Conservative government and have developed further under Labour. We support the changes proposed in the Lisbon Treaty, such as merging the external relations functions of the Council and Commission, which would enhance Europe's ability to deliver more co-ordinated foreign policy.

We believe Britain should retain its seat on a reformed and expanded UN Security Council and agree positions where possible with other European countries sitting on the Security Council.

Supporting Defence Co-operation

Liberal Democrats believe that NATO remains the bedrock of our collective security and do not believe in the need for a European army.

Britain should retain its veto on defence decisions including over the deployment of British troops.

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We want the EU to be able to undertake peace-keeping missions in agreement with NATO. We support closer defence co-operation in Europe and want British forces to play a leading role in EU peace keeping and humanitarian missions in places like Kosovo, Darfur or the Democratic Republic of Congo.

Defence co-operation in Europe will help increase military capabilities and improve the European contribution to NATO. We support the work of the European Defence Agency to help improve overall European defence capability for NATO and Europe and encourage more European countries to shoulder their full share of the burden.

All EU countries could save money and get better equipment for our armed forces if defence markets were opened up to competition. Britain is well placed with a strong defence industry to benefit from sales of equipment to fellow EU and NATO members.

Supporting Enlargement

Enlargement of the European Union has helped spread democracy, human rights and prosperity through the continent of Europe. The prospect of eventual membership is bringing about lasting change in the Balkans.

The EU is still adapting to its expansion to 27 member states, but Liberal Democrats welcome the prospect of further enlargement in due course and support future membership for Turkey.

We would also encourage countries such as Norway, Switzerland and Iceland to join the EU.

Engaging Russia

Europe needs to diminish its reliance on Russian energy resources. Relations with Russia present one of the greatest challenges for the European Union. European nations should not fall into the trap of allowing Russia to divide us in order to weaken us as it has tried to do over energy policy.

Liberal Democrats believe the EU should adopt a unified approach to Russia that enables Europe to have a positive but firm relationship with its largest neighbour.

World Trade

The best way for Britain to shape the way that world trade develops is to be a strong player inside the EU, working to keep Europe competitive and pressing for an increasingly open world economy.

Liberal Democrats want the EU to promote a world trading system that is both free and fair. That means a liberal and open system that increases growth and jobs, but that takes account of environmental and social standards too.

The EU has a key role to play in salvaging the Doha development round of the World Trade Organisation, including eliminating production subsidies in agriculture and trade barriers.

International Development

The UK lags behind some of our EU partners in overseas aid and development. Liberal Democrats are committed to increasing the UK's spending on overseas aid to reach the UN target of 0.7% of GNP and believe all EU states should work to the same target where they have not already achieved it.

EU development assistance should be targeted at reducing poverty and disease, and humanitarian aid must be allocated on the basis of need. Economic partnership agreements between the EU and developing countries should be flexible and include adequate transition periods to ensure that developing countries will be able to compete in world markets.

working for you: Liberal Democrat MEPs



ELSPETH ATTWOOLL (Scotland):

Elspeth specialises in the common fisheries policy and has worked specifically on achieving more stakeholder participation in the formulation of EU fisheries legislation and greater regional control over fisheries management.

Elspeth has cooperated closely with the Scottish Parliament, local authorities and NGOs to ensure that Scottish citizens get the best deal from Europe. In particular, she has fought to ensure that Scottish farmers are heard in Brussels, most recently voicing her concerns on electronic tagging of sheep and pesticides.

On regional development, Elspeth has worked for EU policies that reflect

Scotland's geographical needs and to engage local communities in the decision making process. Elspeth has also sought to build the social dimension of the single market and, in particular, the promotion of gender equality.

Elspeth is stepping down as an MEP at this election and strongly supports the campaign to elect George Lyon as Scotland's next Liberal Democrat representative in the European Parliament.

SHARON BOWLES (South East):

Sharon is the Liberal Democrats' economics spokesperson in Europe. Even before the economic crisis, Sharon led calls for smarter financial regulation across European markets: changes that are now mainstream thinking. Sharon

was instrumental to ensuring that deposit guarantees cover small businesses and also framed the Parliament's position on VAT fraud. In addition, she was prominent in the campaign to acquire equal recognition for civil partnerships across the EU.

In her constituency, Sharon has fought successfully to keep Eurostar services running from Ashford.

She has also been working hard to protect the media rights of small football clubs like Brighton & Hove Albion and Aldershot Town and has campaigned to introduce 'safe standing' areas at football stadiums.

CHRIS DAVIES (North West):

Chris is ALDE spokesperson on environment policy and has played a major part in toughening legislation to curb air and water pollution, and in improving the safety of potentially toxic chemicals. Recently, he played a key role in introducing a multi-billion euro financial mechanism to support the development of Carbon Capture and Storage.

He also introduced an EU level measure that has led to every packet of cigarettes sold in the UK displaying a graphic health warning and is happy to see that smoking in the North West - which is attributable to one in five deaths and costs the region's NHS £194 million every year - is now in decline.

Chris also speaks up for the Palestinian cause - and was the only British politician to enter Gaza during the Israeli attacks of January 2009. Chris has been in the forefront of the campaign to reform the Parliament's system of expenses.

ANDREW DUFF (East of England):

Andrew is the leader of the Liberal Democrat European Parliamentary Party. He has led the ALDE group in the on-going battles to reform and strengthen the European Union. He represented the Parliament in the negotiations that led up to the Treaty of Lisbon, and is a key figure in the campaign to bring the treaty into force, resulting in a more modern, efficient and democratic Europe capable of taking effective action at home and abroad.

Andrew also works to build up the security and defence dimension of the EU, and is much involved in the enlargement debate, particularly with regard to Turkey.

In his region, Andrew Duff is much involved in supporting research and innovation, hoping to turn the East of England into Europe's top cluster of science success.

FIONA HALL (North East):

Fiona is the first Liberal Democrat MEP for the North East and fights to get the best deal for her region. Recently, Fiona exposed the UK Government's

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shameful actions in blocking access to hundreds of millions of pounds in European funding that should have been used to boost the North East economy: she is pressing for a change of policy.

Fiona is committed to fighting climate change, and believes that energy efficiency and renewables are key to cutting carbon emissions, improving energy security and tackling fuel poverty.

She negotiated the EU's recent renewables strategy and is working closely with renewables sector companies across the North East - from electric vehicles and sustainable biofuels to offshore wind - to ensure that the region benefits from green growth.

Helping the world's poorest people is also a priority for Fiona. She has fought for development-friendly Economic Partnership Agreements, and won tougher EU action on illegal timber imports and arms exports. She has served as an election observer in Africa, and headed the EU's election mission to Togo.

SARAH LUDFORD (London):

Sarah is the deputy leader of the Liberal Democrat European Parliamentary Party.

She is strongly committed to London and uses her MEP role to make the capital a better place to live: securing European action to get the Thames cleaned up, working with fellow Liberal

Democrats under the lead of Susan Kramer MP to get EU air quality law respected and Heathrow expansion stopped, and supporting the European Arrest Warrant to catch suspects like Hussain Osman, a July 2005 bomber.

As a leading member of the European Parliament's justice committee, Sarah works hard to tackle international crime and strengthen security while upholding civil liberties.

A prominent campaigner for human rights, she played a key role in Parliament's inquiry into European collusion in illicit CIA rendition and torture and has campaigned hard to close Guantanamo Bay.

Sarah is an outspoken champion of equality and non-discrimination.

LIZ LYNNE (West Midlands):

Liz was dubbed the EU's 'equality rapporteur' after securing the call for a new law banning discrimination in accessing goods and services on the grounds of disability, age, religion or belief and sexual orientation.

Liz has been heavily involved in the revision of the Working Time Directive and has campaigned on many health care issues.

She is active in helping the farming community, most recently over sheep tagging, and maintains a lively interest in human rights issues, especially with regard to Gaza and Kashmir.

Liz has campaigned with the Retained Firefighters Union against Labour's attempt to limit voluntary overtime work, which threatens vital fire fighting services in counties like Shropshire and Warwickshire.

She also succeeded in winning millions of pounds in EU Solidarity Fund money to repair the Severn Valley Railway after the devastating floods of two years ago.

BILL NEWTON DUNN (East Midlands): Bill has lived in his region for over thirty years and is widely known for his hard work and his knowledge of the challenges facing the area. He supports open borders which benefit trade and citizens, but he campaigns against organised criminal gangs that take advantage of the single market to smuggle drugs, illegal immigrants, and faked goods.

He also works to tighten budgetary control in the EU, pressing for better cooperation by national governments, including that of the UK, who so far refuse to allow EU auditors to see how they spent the EU's money.

EMMA NICHOLSON (South East): Emma is a highly active member of the Parliament's Foreign Affairs Committee and Human Rights sub-committee. She is the first ever President of the Parliament's delegation for Iraq.

Emma's particular interest in the Islamic World and intercultural dialogue has influenced her work in the region

including being the Vice-Chairman of the Women's Rights Committee of the Euro-Mediterranean Parliamentary Assembly and a member of the Senate of the Euro-Mediterranean University.

She led, as Chief Observer, the European Union's Election Observation Mission to Yemen in 2006 breaking new ground through brokering the agreement of all political parties for electoral reform.

Most recently her strong and committed team have forced the nine-year scandal of the suffering of Roma families from lead poisoning in Northern Kosovo to the top of the agenda.

DIANA WALLIS (Yorkshire & Humber): Diana is a strong voice in Europe for Yorkshire and the Humber. When Hull and East Yorkshire were hit by flooding in 2007, Diana helped secure extra funding for the area.

She has been a consistent campaigner for victims of the collapse of the Equitable Life insurance company which affected thousands of constituents and many more citizens across Europe: she wrote a report on this for the European Parliament which highlighted the lack of proper financial regulation.

Diana currently serves as one of the European Parliament's Vice-Presidents. In that role she has pressed for a greater transparency of Members' expenses and for improving public access to documents.

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Diana leads for the ALDE group on legal affairs, where she has been responsible for improving access to justice for EU citizens and in the development of EU civil law. Diana has played a key role in increasing international awareness of the impact of climate change in the Arctic.

GRAHAM WATSON (South West and Gibraltar):

Graham swapped heather for heath when he became an MEP in the South West fifteen years ago. Since then he has been a strong advocate for local causes, supporting renewable energy projects, fighting for regional funding and, most recently, lobbying to ensure that local “cider brandy” is not renamed under arbitrary rules.

In the European Parliament, Graham has been Leader of the ALDE Group since 2002, working hard to see that Liberal values and policies achieve maximum influence. Graham has led the group in its battles to get trade that is free but fair, migration that is productive but coordinated, and anti-climate change measures that are tough but achievable.

He has edited or co-authored many pamphlets, most recently *Making the Green Energy Switch at a Time of Crisis*, which makes the case for a European supergrid. He is committed to finding the ideas that will help us to emerge from recession on the right side of the green energy curve.



Published by the Liberal Democrats
4 Cowley Street, London SW1P 3NB

ISBN 978-1-907046-04-9 © May 2009

Printed by Contract Printing, Unit 11, Whittle Road, Corby, Northants NN17 5DX

Cover Design by Greg Simpson