



East of England
Liberal Democrats

Annual Conference

Saturday 20 October 2018
Watersmeet, Rickmansworth

AGENDA

CONFERENCE INFORMATION

Welcome to our Regional Conference.

This agenda contains the information you need to get the most out of the day. Please read carefully and talk to a steward or a member of the regional team if you have any queries.

REGISTRATION

Register online before Thursday 18 October at www.eastlibdems.org.uk/conference. The registration fee includes lunch. Registration on the day costs £38 instead of £32 in advance.

Collect your badge and agenda from the registration desk near the main door when you arrive.

Please wear your badge while in the conference centre, and return the plastic holder when conference ends.

DISABILITY ACCESS

The centre has disabled access. There is a lift from the lower foyer to the main foyer and level access from the main foyer to the auditorium and Colne Room, where lunch will be served.

Parking for blue badge holders is located opposite the main entrance to Watersmeet.

The training rooms are in the Three Rivers council building adjacent to Watersmeet. There is level access to the building and a lift to the first floor. See diagram on page 7.

ELECTIONS

Nominations are open for regional officers, regional committees and 17 English Council members. You can find details at www.eastlibdems.org.uk/elections.

Nomination papers are available at conference and should be submitted to the Returning Officer Dave Raval before 2pm.

Dave can also be contacted at daveraval@zoho.eu or 74 Amhurst Road London E8 1JH.

EMERGENCIES AND FIRST AID

In case of emergency please report to the registration desk or contact a steward. The contact number on the day is 07854 851628.

REFRESHMENTS

Lunch will be served from 12.40pm in the Colne Room and is included in the cost of your registration. Please do not take food into the main auditorium.

SPEAKING AND QUESTIONS

If you wish to speak in a debate or ask a question please complete a speaker's card and hand it to the steward in the main hall. Speaker's cards can be picked up from the registration desk or the steward in the main hall.

You can also submit questions in advance by emailing conference@eastlibdems.org.uk before 5pm on Friday 19 October.

STANDING ORDERS

Standing orders are the rules which govern the conduct of conference. You can download a copy at www.eastlibdems.org.uk/standing-orders. Copies are also available at the registration desk.

TRAINING AND FRINGE SESSIONS

Training and fringe sessions will take place on the first floor of Three Rivers House, a minute's walk from the entrance of Watersmeet (turn right out of the main entrance – see diagram on page 7).

The WiFi code for Three Rivers House is 8qW11VR8CQfj

WHO IS WHO?

Officers

Chair

Jo Hayes

Vice-Chair

Stuart Beadle

Acting Secretary

Lorraine Flawn

Treasurer

Tony Mason

Committee Chairs

Campaigns Committee

Lucy Nethsingha

Candidates' Committee

Paul Clark

Conference Committee

Victor Scrivens

Development Committee

Stuart Beadle

Policy Committee

Dan Norton

Staff

Development Officer

Jon Whitehouse

Newsletter editor

Lorna Dupré



0930 Doors open

1000 Welcome to Conference
Parliamentary report

Session Chair: Victor Scrivens (Acting Chair, Conference Committee)

Session Aide: Lorraine Flawn (Acting Secretary)

Baroness Dorothy Thornhill

Dorothy Thornhill is a member of Parliament's Intergenerational Fairness and Provision Committee and was formerly Spokesperson for Communities and Local Government in the House of Lords. She served four terms as elected Mayor of Watford and was the first female elected Mayor in the UK.

Dorothy will report to members about the work of Liberal Democrats in Parliament and take questions.

1030 Keynote speech

Session Chair: Belinda Brooks-Gordon

Layla Moran MP

Layla was elected as MP for Oxford West and Abingdon in 2017. She is the Liberal Democrats' Education Spokesperson and serves on the influential Public Accounts Committee.

Before entering Parliament Layla was a physics teacher.

Layla will take questions after her speech.

1120 Break

1150 Fringe meetings (until 1300)

Penn Chamber (room 1): You Can Stop Brexit with Liberal Britain

Dickenson Room (room 2): Trams, trains and new technology

1150 Campaigns presentation

Cllr Lucy Nethsingha (Chair, Campaigns Committee)

Scott Lansdell-Hill (Liberal Democrats Campaigns and Elections team)

1210 Regional Officers' reports

Jo Hayes (Chair, East of England Liberal Democrats)

Tony Mason (Treasurer, East of England Liberal Democrats)

See reports on pages 8 – 10.

Every two years members elect regional officers and an executive committee to oversee and carry out the functions of the regional party.

Jo Hayes will report to members on the activities of the regional party, the regional executive and representatives elected by Conference.

Tony Mason will report on the financial affairs of the regional party.

Members will be asked to vote to receive these reports and approve the 2017 accounts.

Submit a question to conference@eastlibdems.org.uk by 5pm on Friday 19 October or fill in a speaker's card on the day.

1240 LUNCH

Lunch will be served in the Colne Room

1330 Training sessions (until 1445)

Penn Chamber (room 1): Making sure your campaign plan is fit for purpose

Dickenson Room (room 2): How to deal with GDPR

1345 Climate Change and the Low Carbon Economy

Dan Norton (Chair, East of England Policy Committee)

Paul Burall (Member, Climate Change & Low Carbon Economy Working Group)

The Federal policy Committee has set up a Climate Change and the Low Carbon Economy working group to develop policy which will be presented to a future federal conference for debate. The working group is carrying out a consultation, including this session.

Dan and Paul will lead a structured discussion and invite contributions and responses from members.

The deadline for comments is Friday 26th October 2018. You can download the full consultation paper at www.libdems.org.uk/autumn-18-consultation-paper-135.



1430 Motion: Moving from the new timetable fiasco to an integrated East of England railway infrastructure

Session Chair: Joye Rosenstiel

Session Aide: Lorraine Flawn (Acting Secretary)

Mover: Dan Norton

Conference notes with concern:

A: Significant delays caused by the introduction of the new timetable across the Govia Thameslink network in May, which is now not expected to be fully delivered before December

B: The impact of the delay and uncertainty on people's work and home lives, including their ability to get to work on time and make childcare arrangements

C: The removal of peak time intercity trains to Bedford and Luton by East Midlands Trains and introduction of replacement bus service to stations north of Bedford, compounding the insult of the poor Thameslink service on commuters

D: The government's decision to remove the requirement for Bedford to be served by intercity trains in the tender for the new East Midlands rail franchise

E: That work on Phase 2 of the Western Section of East West Rail between Oxford and Bedford is underway, but uncertainty remains on the route and timeline for delivery of the Central Section to Cambridge

F: The need for the infrastructure upgrades to deliver the Eastern Sections to fully realise the potential of connections through to Ipswich and Norwich

Conference reaffirms the Liberal Democrat commitment to:

(i) Implementing 'Zero Carbon Britain' by 2050 - requiring a significant upgrade in public transport infrastructure and capacity, including the electrification of railways

(ii) Improving rail connectivity across the East of England region to support new jobs and housing and be a catalyst for regeneration of towns along the route

(iii) Building critical infrastructure ahead of demand, to support the increase in housebuilding expected across the region

Conference calls for:

1. The Transport Secretary to resign, taking responsibility for his department and Network Rail's failings in the introduction of the Govia Thameslink timetable
2. Immediate resumption of peak intercity services on East Midland Trains calling at Luton and Bedford which would partially mitigate the impact of the botched timetable implementation
3. Protection of a full intercity service at Bedford (Midland) in future franchises, as a key interchange with East West Rail and Thameslink
4. Full electrification of the Midland Mainline north of Kettering to avoid wasted investment in hybrid trains
5. Commitment to the Central section of East West Rail to be made soon, to give businesses and the public certainty and enable delivery by the mid-2020s

This policy builds on the 'East West Rail' motion passed at 2015 regional conference in support of the scheme (<https://eastlibdems.org.uk/en/document/regional-conferences/regional-conference-2015/regional-conference-2015-final-agenda.pdf>). No amendments were submitted.

The mover of the motion has up to five minutes to speak. All other speakers have up to three minutes. If you wish to speak please submit a speaker's card to the hall steward.

1450 Elections announcement

Dave Raval, Returning Officer

The Returning Officer will announce the results of any uncontested elections and explain which posts require a ballot of members.

1455 Party strategy

Session Chair: Victor Scrivens (Acting Chair, East of England Conference Committee)

Simon McGrath, Federal Board

Simon is the English Party representative on the Federal Board, which oversees the party's finances and strategy. He is also Secretary of London Region Liberal Democrats and was elected to Merton Council in May.

Simon will update members and answer questions on the Federal Board's activities including the recent consultation on the proposed registered supporter scheme.



1515 Panel discussion

Session Chair: Lorraine Flawn (Acting Secretary)

Cllr Sarah Butikofer (Group Leader, North Norfolk DC)

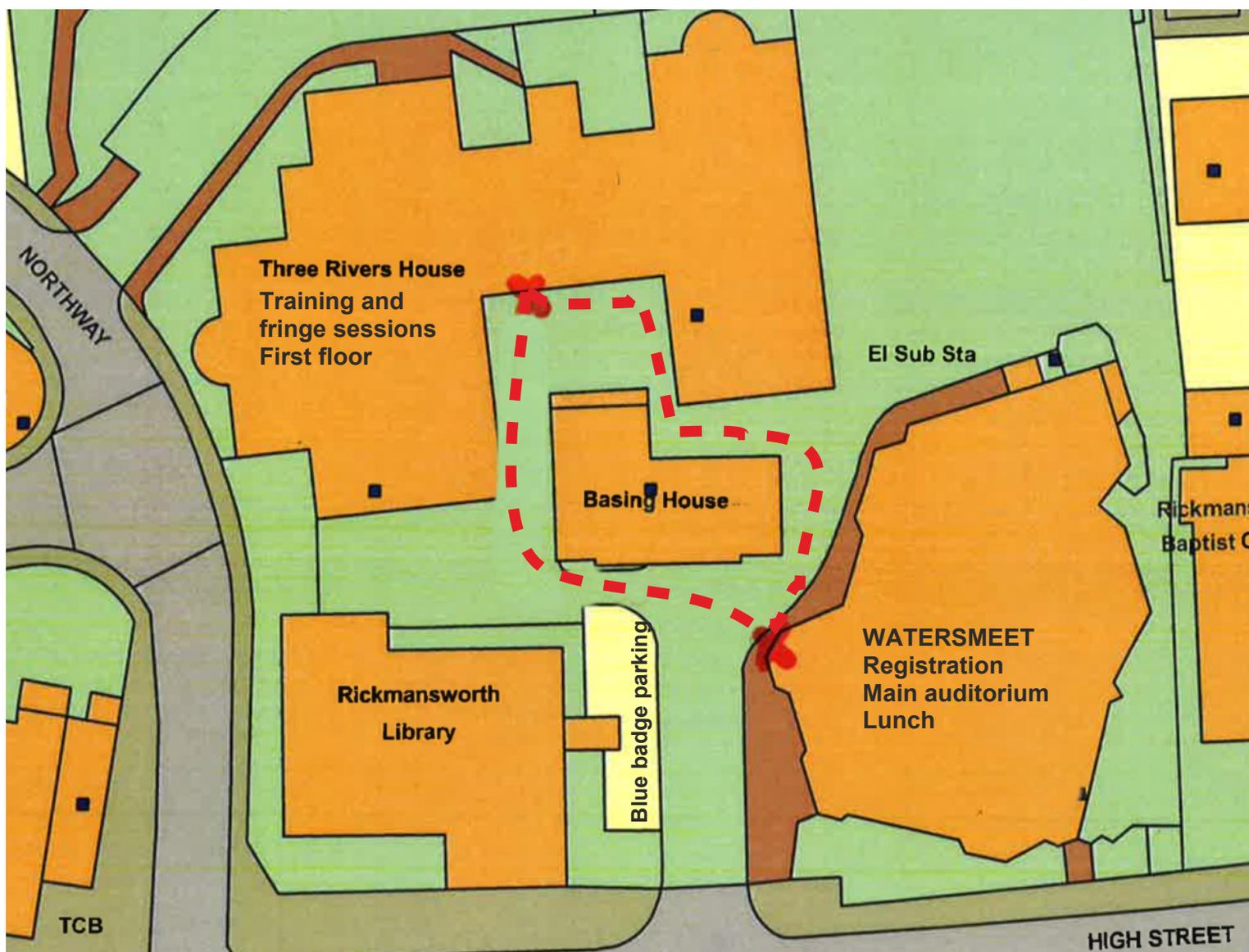
Cllr Ian Stotesbury (Watford Parliamentary Candidate 2017)

Beki Sellick (Peterborough Parliamentary Candidate)

The Liberal Democrats rely on our members and supporters in order to survive and thrive. The panel will draw on its experience and that of audience members to discuss how to ensure members are engaged and at the heart of our campaigns and activity.

1555 Closing announcements

1600 Close of Conference



CHAIR'S REPORT TO CONFERENCE – JO HAYES

I want to begin by thanking everyone who has generously contributed to the work of the regional party since last year's Regional Conference. Most of us are volunteers, and it would be invidious to single individuals out. But I must mention one: the late Gill Collings, who died in August after a period of worsening ill health. Gill was regional secretary since 2013. She did a huge amount for the regional party behind the scenes, essential things of an administrative nature. Her loss was a heavy blow and she is much missed.

Our employed staff have worked with tremendous commitment. Cllr Jon Whitehouse, our Regional Development Officer, has been helping local parties to develop the skills we need to succeed. He has also worked hard with the Regional Conference Committee to make this conference happen.

Cllr Lorna Dupré has continued to deliver the local party newsletter service reliably and to a high standard. We are sorry that Lorna will be giving up this role at the end of 2018, to devote more time to increased other commitments. We thank both of them for their invaluable work.

In this region the party has had several very difficult years. We continue to be very weak in some areas. In others there are signs of revival. The regional executive's revised strategic plan is being implemented as all local parties are being encouraged to be active and to use the training and other help on offer. Through our local party officers and executives, we seek to engage with the members who, when active, are our strength.

Our membership in the region continues to increase: we had 10,756 as of the middle of September compared with 8,444 at the start of 2017.

The local elections in May included the party's best result in the country: the gain of control of South Cambridgeshire District Council. The ability, enthusiasm and energy of local active members were key. In Watford we held on to the mayoralty. In Three Rivers the party briefly lost, then regained control. We have had stunning council by-election wins and some very good second places.

Elsewhere was a mixed picture, in some areas winning in new wards and elsewhere losing seats. The resurgent Labour Party is a factor. I would like to thank in particular everyone who stood as candidates, whether they won or lost – especially those who had the disappointment of losing. Standing as a candidate tells the voters we are not going away, we exist in their area and they have the choice to vote Liberal Democrat. These things are vital.

Campaign teams across the region are working towards next year's local elections. We are working with field campaign officers from both party HQ and ALDC. At the same time, we are campaigning to stop Brexit. In addition to working with the cross-party groups, we have set aside a fund for literature which we are delivering to selected areas, seeking to cast doubt on Brexit and to get a referendum on the final deal, with an option to remain in the EU. By the time of the conference we will know the outcome of the EU leaders' summit. We are also making contingency plans in case of another referendum, another snap general election or an unexpected European Parliamentary election.

Jo Hayes

Regional Chair

chair@eastlibdems.org.uk

www.eastlibdems.org.uk

www.facebook.com/eastofenglandlibdems



CHAIR OF CAMPAIGNS COMMITTEE REPORT – LUCY NETHSINGHA

It has been a good year electorally in the East of England, with steady progress in many local councils across the region in the elections in May and a couple of spectacularly good results.

Most councils made progress. Lib Dems regained their majority on Three Rivers Council, (huge congratulations to all for their hard work: holding control of a council after many years is a rare and difficult achievement!) and retained control of Watford. There were good solid results in many other councils and a spectacular success in South Cambridgeshire, where the Lib Dems overturned a large Conservative majority to take majority control of the Council. Hooray!

Since May we have seen some excellent local by-election results. The highlights were victories in Southwold and Reydon (Waveney) and Watton at Stone (East Hertfordshire). In both cases our candidates won overwhelmingly and broke through onto councils where we previously had no representatives.

These local results are critical to the national party (more councillors means more tithe income, and more campaigning capacity for other elections) and also for our national messages. Liberal Democrat success in South Cambridgeshire, a strong Remain area, was not missed by national Conservatives, or the local Remain Conservative MP Heidi Allen, whose remain stance has been bolstered by a strong Lib Dem vote in her area. Brexit is a local as well as national issue.

Keep in touch on Facebook by liking the East of England Facebook page at [Facebook.com/EastOfEnglandLibDems](https://www.facebook.com/EastOfEnglandLibDems).

Message us to join the private East of England Lib Dem campaigners group, or one of the private county discussion groups.

Find us on 

The Campaigns Committee, with help from ALDC, supported local parties with social media during the campaign, engaging with a number of local parties to support Facebook advertising. We are keen to help further in this area, so do get in touch if you would like training or financial support.

The other big programme begun this year has been a scheme to offer financial support from the region for local parties fighting local elections. Over the summer bids were invited from local parties wanting support for the large number of local elections in May 2019. I am delighted to say that all those who bid for help have been successful. We will open another round of bidding in November. The process of bidding means an area must produce a campaign plan, and that process in itself is a crucial step to a successful election campaign.

The coming year is likely to be an interesting one, with the possibility of several different types of election! The ones we know for certain will take place are a huge number of district council elections, and making sure we are well prepared for those is the best possible preparation for any other possible elections.

I know there are a number of areas with well developed local election plans, candidates in place, targets selected and literature going out. Over the coming months I hope many more areas will pick an area to fight, and make the plans needed to win a council seat. Getting one more councillor for every local party where we have less than four would make a massive difference to the chances for the national party in a general election, whenever it might be.

Please pick a ward and win it, and in doing so make sure we do better in the next GE, get a higher vote share, and get more media attention.

Local elections really do matter a lot for Brexit, for Westminster and for all of our hopes for the future!

Cllr Lucy Nethsingha

STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER 2017

Registered address: 8-10 Great George Street, London, SW1P 3AE.

The responsible Officers for the purposes of the Political Parties Elections Referendums Act 2000 were Jo Hayes (Chair) and Tony Mason (Treasurer).

Membership of the region in 2017: 10,806 (8,279 in 2016)

The financial statements have been prepared in accordance with applicable standards and guidance issued by the Electoral Commission.

Income & Expenditure Account			Balance Sheet		
	2017	2016		2017	2016
Income			Fixed assets		
Membership	41,985	23,311		-	-
Donations	6,122	14,232	Current assets		
Fundraising income	883	531	Cash in hand and at the bank	62,363	53,540
Investment income	15	32	Debtors and prepayments	4,810	7,945
Transfers in	578	3,140	Total current assets	67,173	61,485
Miscellaneous	21,147	38,172	Liabilities		
	70,730	79,418	Creditors and accruals	7,460	13,358
Expenditure			Loans	-	-
Office costs	320	1,214		7,460	13,358
Staff costs	17,230	17,758	Net assets	59,713	48,127
Transfers out	25,938		Reserves		
Campaigning costs	305	10,757	Accumulated fund as at start of the year	48,127	14,052
Fundraising costs	316	77	Surplus	11,586	34,075
Financing charges	206.81	330	Accumulated fund as at end of the year	59,713	48,127
Miscellaneous	14,829	15,207	Total reserves	59,713	48,127
	59,145	45,343			
Surplus	11,585	34,075			

RETURNING OFFICER VACANCIES

Volunteer Returning Officers oversee parliamentary selections, ensuring rules are followed and candidates and members are treated fairly.

We are looking to train new Returning Officers in advance of the next round of candidate selections. Please contact candidates@eastlibdems.org.uk.

Download a complete copy of the 2017 statement of accounts, including notes, at www.eastlibdems.org.uk/accounts17.

A limited number of paper copies are available at the registration desk.



TRAINING AND FRINGE SESSIONS

Penn Chamber (room 1)

1150 – 1300

YOU CAN STOP BREXIT

Are you wondering what you can do to stop Brexit? We all need to take responsibility for our country's future. Come along to find out how you can lobby your MP and help keep Britain firmly in the EU

Presented by
Your Liberal Britain



Dickenson Room (room 2)

1215 – 1300

TRAMS, TRAINS AND NEW TECHNOLOGY

Transport is a big issue across the East of England. Join a discussion and contribute your ideas about the future of transport policy.

with Paul Burall, policy committee member and author specialising in the links between business, the environment and design, including spatial planning

1330 – 1445

MAKING SURE YOUR CAMPAIGN PLAN IS FIT FOR PURPOSE

Good campaign results and good election results are based on good plans. Find out more about how to plan your campaigns effectively

Scott Lansdell-Hill is a member of the Liberal Democrat Campaigns and Elections team and has been closely involved in many successful campaigns

1330 – 1445

HOW TO DEAL WITH GDPR

Five months on from the introduction of GDPR we now know a lot more about implementing these important legal responsibilities. Get up to date with the latest advice and information.

Darren Briddock is Liberal Democrat Compliance Officer based at party HQ

1500 – 1600

GETTING YOUR MESSAGE RIGHT

Hard work is not enough: voters need to know what you stand for and why they should vote for you. Find out more about honing a message that will work for your campaign

Scott Lansdell-Hill is a member of the Liberal Democrat Campaigns and Elections team and has been closely involved in many successful campaigns

1500 – 1600

INTRODUCTION TO AGENTING

Agents play a crucial role in making sure election campaigns run smoothly. Find out more about the role and get your questions answered by one of the party's experts

Darren Briddock is Liberal Democrat Compliance Officer based at party HQ

Future training events include...

Saturday 4 November

AGENTS TRAINING, NORWICH

Essential training for first-time agents and those who need to get up to date with current law and practice. Basic session in the morning and more advanced in the afternoon

Contact events@eastlibems.org.uk for details

Saturday 17 November

PAGEPLUS, ST ALBANS

Make the most of PagePlus when preparing literature for the 2019 local election campaign. Participants should have a basic knowledge of Windows software. All day event.

Apply to events@eastlibems.org.uk

CONFERENCE TIMETABLE AT A GLANCE

	Main Auditorium	Penn Chamber	Dickenson Room
0930	Registration opens		
1000	Welcome to Conference Parliamentary Report Baroness Dorothy Thornhill		
1030	Keynote speech Layla Moran MP		
1120	Break		
1150	Campaigns presentation Scott Lansdell-Hill	1150-1300 You Can Stop Brexit Liberal Britain	
1210	Regional officers' report Jo Hayes (Chair) Tony Mason (Treasurer)	Are you wondering what you can do to stop Brexit? Come along to find out how you can lobby your MP and help keep Britain firmly in the EU.	1215-1300 Trams, trains and new technology Join a discussion on the future of transport policy with Paul Burall
1240	LUNCH		
1330			
1345	Climate change and the Low Carbon Economy	1330-1445 Making sure your campaign plan is fit for purpose with Scott Lansdell-Hill of the Liberal Democrat Campaigns and Elections team	1330-1445 How to deal with GDPR with Darren Briddock, Liberal Democrat Compliance Officer
1430	Motion: Moving from the new timetable fiasco to an integrated East of England railway infrastructure		
1450	Regional elections Dave Raval, Returning Officer		
1455	Party Strategy Simon McGrath, Federal Board	1400-1500 Getting your campaign message right with Scott Lansdell-Hill of the Liberal Democrat Campaigns and Elections team	1400-1500 Introduction to being an Agent with Darren Briddock, Liberal Democrat Compliance Officer
1515	Making the most of our members and supporters		
1600	Conference closes. Safe journey home.		

