

In order to attend conference you must register in advance. Use the registration link at EastLibDems.org.uk/Conference.

We will use the Zoom video conference service with which many people are familiar. Click on [this link](#) after 9.45am to join the conference. You will be placed in a waiting room and admitted shortly before the formal start at 10am.

Zoom link:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81955407464?pwd=VjVsa3Fza2hMTzBkZTVqSTNCaE8xdz09>

1000 Welcome to conference

**Victor Scrivens (Chair of Conference Committee)
will welcome members to conference.**

Please keep your device on mute unless you are speaking.

Please use the chat box if you wish to ask a question. The chair or chair's aide may invite you to unmute and ask your question, or may read out your question on your behalf. In some sessions you may also be used to use the Raise Hand function to indicate you wish to speak.

Standing Orders

Standing Orders (www.EastLibDems.org.uk/standing-orders) are the rules which govern the conduct of conference. Last year conference approved the following interpretations of Standing Orders for any conferences that take place online using Zoom.

Voting (Standing Order 7)

Members will vote using Zoom's polling function. Zoom keeps a record of each vote, which may be accessed and examined subsequently in the event of any dispute about the correct result.

The decision of the Conference Chair is final on whether the displayed result is so close that there is genuine doubt, and on the action to be taken.

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Suspension of Standing Orders (Standing Order 8)

If a Member wishes to request a suspension of Standing Orders, they should type SUSPEND in the Zoom chat. The Chair will then call for a Zoom poll. The request will be debated if at least 35 people vote in the poll for it to take place.

Points of Order (Standing Order 4)

If a Member wishes to raise a point of order, they should type POINT OF ORDER in the Zoom chat, with the reason.

1010 Regional Officers' reports

Lucy Nethsingha (Chair, East of England Liberal Democrats)

Sally Symington (Treasurer, East of England Liberal Democrats)

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

Lucy Nethsingha will report to members on the activities of the regional party and the regional executive. Sally Symington will report on financial affairs.

Members will be asked to vote to receive these reports and the 2020 accounts.

Regional Chair's report

Having become Chair of the East of England region of the Liberal Democrats in January I took over after what have been several very tough years for our party.

The extraordinary political rollercoaster that was 2019 took us from the high of the European elections when we sent 16 MEPs (including me) to Brussels to fight for our place in the European Union, to the low point of the 2019 general election, where we saw so many brilliant Lib Dem MPs lose their seats, including the loss of North Norfolk where Norman Lamb stood down, and the loss of Jo Swinson's seat.

Rebuilding our party after the devastation of that defeat has been made much more difficult as a result of the pandemic, which prevented almost all political activity in 2020 and for the first part of 2021.



For many the extent of the restrictions on political activity in the run up to the huge set of local council elections this spring looked like a deliberate policy from the Conservatives. As the party controlling almost all media coverage, preventing other parties from getting out and talking to voters was clearly in the Conservatives interest. This, combined with the "vaccine bounce" meant that across the East of England the election results this spring were not as good as we might have hoped.

That said there were certainly some very significant green shoots of recovery, and not least in my own area. The gain of five seats on Cambridgeshire County Council, along with gains made by Independent and Labour has deprived the Conservatives of control of our Council. As a result I am now in the exciting position of leading a coalition of Lib Dems, Labour and Independent Councillors as a Joint Administration on Cambridgeshire County Council.

I am working closely with Liz Leffman, and Amanda Hopgood, Lib Dem Leaders of coalition councils in Oxfordshire and Durham. These are big institutions and we are showing that Lib Dem led councils can make a big difference in the fight against child poverty and in tackling climate change.

Across the rest of the region the results in May were also mixed, with small progress in most areas, but not the scale of gains we might have hoped to make had campaigning been less constrained by lock-down. We had Police and Crime Commissioner candidates in all areas, and didn't lose our deposit in any, which is also progress.

The Regional Executive is very aware of the need to continue to support local parties across the whole region, building on the strength in some areas, and growing our numbers across the smaller local parties as well. We saw a huge growth in membership for the party during 2017-19 as we campaigned to stop Brexit. The past 18 months has seen party politics take a back-seat, as the whole county focused on fighting the pandemic, which has led to a drop in our membership. As we return to a more normal lifestyle we need to re-engage with citizens across our region. The current Conservative government is the most corrupt and self-serving of any government in my life-time. They are a disgrace. We need to show people that not all politicians are self-serving liars, and that there is a better, greener, kinder future, which we can achieve if we are willing to work for it.

Getting more people to believe in that possibility and believe that they can help make it happen is the first step. My goal for this coming year is that we will have increased our membership across the region, please help if you can!



Treasurer's report

The 2020 Statement of Accounts was signed and submitted to LDHQ's Compliance Department in March 2021 as required by the Political Parties, Elections and Referendums Act 2000 (PPERA).

2020 FIGURES

The income received by the region in 2020 was £100,936 compared with £150,009 in 2019. The significant decline was a result of the one-off nature of the income from donations and appeals raised for the 2019 Euro and general elections and the Euro levy paid by the local parties. 2020 also saw the membership rebate decline by 10% as membership numbers peaked and began to fall away. Reimbursement from local parties to cover the costs of the regional newsletter made a positive contribution to the income.

Income and expenditure account

	2020	2019
Income	£	£
Membership	62,684	69,726
Donations	7,566	42,498
Fundraising	558	6,385
Investments	37	22
Transfers in	4,500	25,882
Miscellaneous	25,592	5,493
	100,936	150,009
Expenditure	£	£
Premises	0	280
Office costs	863	3,121
Staff costs	29,776	19,517
Transfers out	4,700	29,389
Campaigning	290	142,194
Fundraising	0	1,744
Financing	106	370
Miscellaneous	31,287	17,567
	67,022	214,182
(Deficit) / Surplus	33,914	(64,173)

Balance sheet

	2020	2019
Fixed assets	£	£
	-	-
Current assets		
Cash in hand and at bank	87,966	53,565
Total assets	87,966	53,565
Liabilities	£	£
Creditors and accruals	487	0
	487	0
Total (net) assets	87,479	53,565
Reserves		
Accumulated fund at the start of the year	53,565	117,738
(Deficit) / Surplus	33,914	(64,173)
Accumulated fund at the end of the year	87,479	53,565
Total reserves	87,479	53,565



Expenditure reduced significantly in 2020. Without the campaign costs for the 2019 Euro elections and the grants to local parties for the 2019 General Election, expenditure fell from £214,182 in 2019 to £67,022 in 2020. Staff costs increased as the arrangement with the federal party to co-fund two campaign managers and a development officer commenced in September 2020 and an investment was made in additional part-time administration support.

The surplus for the year increased reserves by £33,914 to £87,966.

Outline budget

	2021 budget	2021 YTD	2022 budget
Income	£	£	
Donations and appeals	7,000	5,051	5,000
Fundraising	1,000	111	500
Membership rebate	53,879	37,249	37,724
Newsletter income	19,760	5,662	23,860
Regional conference	3,000	233	3,500
Miscellaneous	0	15,061	0
English party staff allowance	10,800	9,050	0
	95,439	72,417	70,584
Expenditure	£	£	
Development	0	0	4,000
Campaigning	2,000	122	0
Fundraising	500	0	0
Grants to local parties	17,000	12,889	0
Miscellaneous	2,000	25,000	1,000
Newsletter costs	24,300	14,715	17,000
Office and admin	2,000	728	500
Regional conference	3,000	0	3,500
Staff costs	6,000	7,700	2,700
Federal party staff cost sharing	52,440	36,598	42,521
Training	1,000	0	18,100
Contingency / local parties loans	2,000	0	8,000
Financing costs	400	25	200
	112,640	97,777	97,521
Surplus / (Deficit)	(17,201)	(25,360)	(26,937)

2021

Membership continued to fall this year as anticipated and the membership rebate for the year is in line with the forecast drop of 15% and projected to be close to £53,000 for the full year. Donations continue to decline as those supporting the region to fund campaigns for Euro elections have ceased contributing. Newsletter receipts remain low as local parties are also finding cash flows are tight.

However, 2021 has been a big year for local elections with many, such as the Police and Crime Commissioner elections, held over from 2020. In line with last year's budget, the region agreed grants of £16,100 to support many local parties, candidates from diverse backgrounds, younger candidates and candidates with disabilities. Region also made five loans of £5,000 for the PCC and Mayoral Election deposits; three of these have been repaid and two are outstanding, with repayment due by the end of November. Reminders to local parties for the 2020 regional newsletter payments have been sent and the invoices for the 2021 newsletters will be issued following the fourth edition in December.



TREASURER'S REPORT

2022 BUDGET

The English Party figures forecast the membership rebate to the region to fall in value by 29% next year. This comprises a projected further 20% drop in membership and a reduction in the percentage share rebated from 15% to 12%. Donations are also forecast to decline but to lesser extent than membership. However, the region has strong reserves and the 2022 budget sees continued investment in staff and training.

The region entered into an agreement with the federal party 15 months ago to co-fund campaign managers and a regional development officer. A further grant from the English Party enabled region to fund an additional part-time field officer. Although this grant is not being renewed for 2022, the region will continue to fund the role from reserves for a further three-month period. The three co-funded staff support local parties with campaigning, training and administration enabling region to build longer-term capacity and invest for future election success.

A contingency has been set aside for use in the event of general election late in 2022.

FINALLY

Thank you to the many volunteer treasurers in local parties and branches. The Electoral Commission reporting requirements are onerous and a big debt of gratitude goes to those who facilitate the smooth running of the finances and ensure the essential compliance requirements are met.

Conference is requested to

1. Receive the Treasurer's Report and 2020 accounts.
2. Approve the 2022 outline budget
3. Appoint Louisa Noel as Independent Examiner

Regional Strategy update

John Shreeve (Vice-Chair, East of England Liberal Democrats)

John Shreeve will update members on the work being carried out by the Regional Executive to refresh the regional party's strategy



1050 Topical motion 1: Rail freight in our region

Chair: Councillor Jake Sampson

Proposer: Peter Chivall

Secunder: Beki Sellick

This Conference recognises the contribution made by rail freight to the movement of goods around the country, in particular the climate saving of rail freight by its low CO2 compared to road travel.

Rail freight is also more efficient in only needing one driver to guide a train of 80 containers at a time of shortage of HGV drivers.

However, the largest and busiest container port, Felixstowe, in our region, has problems dealing with the demands for rail freight because of restrictions on the track from Felixstowe to Peterborough, especially the Single Track sections from the port to Ipswich and from Bury St. Edmunds to the junction at Ely.

A) East of England Liberal Democrats demand that Great British Railways as soon as it is established gives top priority to the full doubling of this track throughout its length. Network Rail have already created a “dive under” at Werrington to take freight traffic off the East Coast Main Line going north to Doncaster. Now let them complete the job without more delay.

B) With the Government seeking to remove all diesel locomotives from the system and alternatives like hydrogen or battery power unsuitable for heavy freight trains there must be high priority for electrification of this line which only has electric overhead wires for part of its length.

Topical motion 2: Insulate our older homes

Chair: Councillor Jake Sampson

The Government has called on us to scrap gas boilers to save the output of CO2. However, their alternative source of heat, ground or air sourced heat pumps, could cost the average home between £10,000 and £15,000 to install.



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The problem is that installing heat pumps without improving our home insulation is like trying to fill a bath without putting in the bathplug. We must first improve the insulation of our homes. Most of us have loft insulation and double glazing and most houses built since WW2 have cavity walls. All these are relatively inexpensive to upgrade.

However, the older parts of our towns and villages in the region have houses built before 1935 which have solid walls. These have relatively poor insulation, but they are easy to improve with external wall insulation which can save significant amounts of CO2 emissions for between £5,000 and £8,000 for the average house. They are easy to install with semi-skilled workforce but the problem is there are not enough workers trained in effective installation.

The Government realised this when they tried implementing a grant scheme in early 2021. The shortage of trained workers left contractors unable to take on the work. The Government had to cancel the scheme and leave thousands of homes uninsulated. There are no plans for training the workforce. Workers must pay for their own training.

Liberal Democrats demand that the Government assess the number of houses that need insulation and finance the training of a workforce adequate to insulate all pre-1935 homes within 10 years. Only when all our homes are adequately insulated should Government start to demand that we upgrade our fossil fuelled heating systems.

1130 Keynote speech

Chair: Councillor Lucy Nethsingha (Chair, East of England Liberal Democrats)

Sarah Olney MP

Sarah Olney MP is Liberal Democrat MP for Richmond Park and spokesperson for Business, Energy, Industrial Strategy and Transport



1215 Training sessions

Main Zoom session <i>ALDC training</i>	Breakout 1 <i>ALDC training</i>	Breakout 2 <i>Compliance training</i>
<p>Winning in 2022</p> <p>What's at stake in the next round of elections in May 2022 and how to prepare.</p>	<p>Inclusive Local Parties</p> <p>We want the Liberal Democrats to reflect the diversity of the communities we serve. Learn more about how to make members feel included and welcome</p>	<p>Data Protection</p> <p>Learn more about what local party officers and campaigners need to do to say on the right side of the law</p> <p><i>With Esther McGee, Data Protection, Lib Dem HQ</i></p>

1300 LUNCH BREAK

Members may use the chat function in Zoom to network with other members.

1340 Parliamentary Report

Daisy Cooper MP (video)
Don Foster

Hear about the work of Liberal Democrats in the House of Commons and House of Lords and ask questions.

1400 Housing Forum / Training

Main Zoom session <i>Panel debate</i>	Breakout 1 <i>ALDC training</i>	Breakout 2 <i>ALDC training</i>
<p>Housing Forum</p> <p>See below</p>	<p>Surveying best practice</p> <p>Asking local residents their views and taking action on the results is at the heart of Liberal Democrat community campaigning. Find out how to get the most out of surveying.</p> <p>Until 1445</p>	<p>Introduction to being an agent</p> <p>Learn more about what being a local election agent involves and what election law requires</p> <p>Until 1515</p>

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1400 Housing Forum 1: finding homes for people

Chair Don Foster (President, East of England Liberal Democrats)

Introduced by: Jake Sampson (Young Liberals)

Matthew Taylor (Lord Taylor of Goss Moor, Visiting Senior Fellow Cambridge University Planning School, former Liberal Democrat MP)

Dorothy Thornhill (Liberal Democrat Housing Spokesperson in the House of Lords, former Mayor of Watford)

Councillor Gerald Vernon-Jackson (Leader of Portsmouth Council)

1440 Housing Forum 2: housing standards new and old

Councillor Pippa Heylings (Chair, South Cambridgeshire Planning Committee)

John Lefever (formerly Hastoe Housing Association)

Adam White (Environment Consultant, WSP)

1515 President's speech

Mark Pack

Mark Pack is President of the Liberal Democrats. As such he chairs the party's Federal Board. His books include *101 Ways To Win An Election* and *Bad News* and he also host the Never Mind The Bar Charts podcast.

Mark also helped found and was co-editor of Liberal Democrat Voice and now edits Liberal Democrat Newswire, the monthly email newsletter.

Closing remarks

Victor Scrivens, Chair of Conference Committee

