

VINCE
CABLE



Ambitious for
our country;
**ambitious for
our party**

MY MANIFESTO



**I want to lead the Liberal Democrats
because I am ambitious about our future.**

I believe we are the only party that can represent the millions of liberal-minded people alarmed by the direction this country is taking: people, whether they voted remain or leave, who hate the intolerance, xenophobia and division that the Brexit vote unleashed.

I want the Liberal Democrats to be at the centre of political life: a credible, effective party of national and local government, and a voice of sanity on Europe.

To achieve this, we will have to fight for every vote and every seat. It can be done: we have a record membership and the enormous energy that thousands of new members have brought to the party. I believe I have the ability to give that energy a lead, to hit the headlines and to put our party at the centre of political debate.

Britain needs the Liberal Democrats

There is much to be patriotic about in Britain today. It is a more tolerant and inclusive place than when my late wife and I started an inter-racial family a generation ago. It has great resources of creativity and business talent, of learning and research. There is a real generosity of spirit and sense of community.



But there is also much that is wrong. There is a disfiguring inequality of wealth and opportunity. Last decade's financial crisis has left a long-term legacy of economic damage and depressed living standards which fuel much of today's political anger and frustration. The crisis exposed Britain's over-dependence on banking and property markets, its over-reliance on household debt rather than investment

and competitiveness. These issues were beginning to be addressed by the Coalition government, but Brexit – pursued by Theresa May with full support from Jeremy Corbyn – is now starting to inflict further economic damage.

There is a palpable sense, in parts of the country, that they have been left behind. Young people face a bleaker future than their parents. Many people feel powerless, neglected and excluded – as the Grenfell tower disaster has cruelly exposed.

The Liberal Democrats can take Britain off this path. Liberal values have not gone away, and many voters across the political spectrum are looking for reasons to support us. Our path back into government is to show them that we understand what it takes to build a better Britain – and that we can fight for it.

Ambitious for our country: my agenda

To build a better Britain we need to give people powers over the decisions which affect their lives, including Brexit. We need to build an economy which is successful and gives everyone a stake and everyone a chance. We need properly funded and effective public services, we need to hold out the hope of a better future for young people and we need to fix Britain's broken politics, to give everyone an equal say. **That is my agenda.**



AMBITIOUS FOR BRITAIN'S PLACE IN EUROPE

Brexit will dominate this Parliament. It has the power to ruin the economy and wreck political parties. Yet only now are politicians and the public beginning to face up to what it means.

It is imperative that the UK remains at the very heart of the EU, a member of the Single Market and the Customs Union. The opportunities and the prosperity this offers cannot be replaced. They are the bedrock

on which we can build a better Britain. We say this because it is best, not just for Britain's economy but for maintaining peace in Europe, for cooperating in the face of global threats such as climate change, for working together with our closest neighbours in research and education and culture. Liberal Democrats are the party of Europe because of what it says about the nation we want to be: open and generous to people, ideas and commerce.

The election should have been about Brexit: it wasn't. As reality increasingly hits home, our stance will become ever more popular. Public opinion is shifting. But Brexit was started by a public vote, and should end with a public vote: at the end of the negotiating process, there must be a referendum, and one which includes the option of remaining within the EU.



AMBITIOUS FOR BRITAIN'S ECONOMY

We need an entrepreneurial economy. The challenge of enterprise, in the public, private and voluntary sectors, is in many ways the great strength of the nation, the heart of its creativity.

It is time to reject the Tories' reliance on cuts to achieve fiscal discipline, and rebuild Britain's public services – funded by targeted tax increases, as we argued in our general election manifesto. It is time to invest in infrastructure and housing.

The economy of tomorrow will be complex; jobs will change, disappear and be created anew. We need a long-term approach to investment, innovation and skills. We can be the party that business looks to for a lead. We need to support innovation in education and training, helping to tackle

the challenges of low productivity and automation. We need to build industries that can compete in the new world markets opening up for low-carbon and resource-efficient products and technologies, creating jobs and prosperity across the country.

The industrial strategy I pioneered in Coalition is a starting point, but more needs to be done to break up monopoly power, to provide a banking system that meets the needs of business throughout the country, and to spread prosperity more widely and more sustainably.

AMBITIOUS FOR PUBLIC SERVICES

High-quality public services and an adequate welfare safety net for those in need are the hallmark of a civilised society. I want the party to champion public services. This means, first and foremost, investment in education: in schools, FE colleges, universities and lifelong learning. Education liberates people to live the lives they wish, developing their talents and capabilities and enabling them to make their voice heard in debates over the decisions which affect their lives.

We need an effective NHS which prioritises mental health. Services need to be designed around people's real needs, held to account by their users, and managed as close as possible to the people who need them. There is also a pervasive sense of insecurity which means that our police service and national defence must be properly funded.



AMBITIOUS FOR THE YOUNG

Young people face too many barriers to taking a stake in society: job insecurity, unaffordable housing, debt. We need to increase the rate of house-building to 300,000 houses a year, improve the private rented market and deliver support to young people starting off on the housing ladder.

The tuition fees system needs to be looked at again. We need a solution that keeps the benefits of the current system – relating contributions to income and protecting university funding – but is fairer across the board, including for the 60 per cent who never go to university, many of whom pursue vocational options instead. Further and higher education need to be embedded in a system of lifelong learning.



AMBITIOUS FOR BRITAIN'S POLITICS

Our political system is broken and no longer fit for purpose. The House of Commons is unrepresentative and tribal. The Lords are chosen by patronage, not the people. The party funding system gives wealthy people undue influence. English local

government has been nationalised, creating the most centralised system of government in the Western world. I want our party to be in the vanguard of demands for radical reform.



Ambitious for our party

This policy programme will set Britain on the path towards a future that is fair, free and open.

But if we want a chance to undertake this radical programme of national revival, we must first continue the rebuilding started by Tim Farron. I want the Liberal Democrats to be at the heart of a mass movement, securing electoral success at all levels of government and running successful campaigns between elections to make our country more liberal and more democratic.

We will achieve this by campaigning and acting in ways that reflect our values – from making our party more diverse through to making it easier for members to get involved. Excellent initiatives such as ‘Your Liberal Britain’ need multiplying.

I will particularly target membership growth; we should aim to overtake the Conservative Party in numbers.

Our campaigning has to be effective – and enjoyable. We need to go direct to our voters and membership with ever more sophisticated use of digital media and through our own leaflet delivery networks.

I welcome cooperation with other parties at the grassroots – as we already do with the Greens in some local areas – and in Parliament, provided always that the cooperation supports our values and aims.

Ambitious for the future: my record

I am ambitious
for Britain's future.

We, the Liberal
Democrats, can
build a country
that is fair, free
and open.

I believe that I am
the Leader to do it.



I have been active in the party for over 35 years. I have fought ten general elections. This June I was re-elected with the largest majority of any Liberal Democrat MP.

As Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills, I reformed the banks and created the world's first Green Investment Bank and the British Business Bank. I relaunched the apprenticeship

model of training, created the Catapult network of innovation centres, boosted the science budget, introduced shared parental leave and stronger protection against monopoly, launched a successful campaign to get more women on company boards, protected adult community learning – and much else.

But there is so much more to do. If you agree – if you share my ambition – I urge you to join with me. Be part of the movement that will build a better Britain.