

## Richmond (Yorks) Liberal Democrats Newsletter



### A note from the Chair

My name is Christopher Pearson. I was elected Chair of the constituency Executive Committee at the AGM in November. I joined the Liberal Democrats in 2015 and this is my first experience of serving as an officer in the local party. I am a retired priest in the Church of England with quite a lot of experience in the voluntary sector. I have spent time in the commercial world and in overseas development charities if you go back a bit further.

### Why am I a Liberal Democrat?

The world is going through a phase of political upheaval. Back in 2015 it felt to me as if we had just elected a government with an unhealthy determination to shrink the state and create a fragmented society where those who could pay for life's necessities were favoured and those who struggled to afford them were regarded as an unwelcome burden on society. The needy were seen as a "problem" which should be efficiently managed at the lowest possible cost. That got me angry enough to join a political party for the first time - and that was before the dark days of Brexit! When Mr Trump was elected I was convinced even more of the need to stand up for values of tolerance, collaboration and unity across society and between nations.

Those are Liberal Democrat values.

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### What Lies Ahead?

March 2019 is fast approaching and no-one knows what life will be like if we end up leaving the EU. Between now and then all sorts of dramatic events may still take place which could change the situation yet again. One thing is certain, life is going to be eventful! As a local party we need to be alert for all the challenges and the opportunities for action that might come our way. They could be big and they could emerge very quickly.

### Putting a Plan Together

Despite the volatile circumstances the Constituency Executive is working on a Development Plan which will identify the key things we need to do to be as effective as we can be with our finite resources. I am hoping that there will be more to share on this in coming months. I welcome any thought and contributions that members might want to make. Please drop me a line at [chair@rylibdems.org.uk](mailto:chair@rylibdems.org.uk)



### 1p on Income Tax meeting update

Richmondshire Branch recently held a Public Meeting about how the LibDems 1p on Income Tax could help the NHS locally.

One of the speakers, Mr Matthew Clarke, consultant surgeon at The Friarage, explained that it is difficult to persuade new doctors to spend any of their undergraduate or postgraduate training far away from London. This is one of the main problems in retaining services in local hospitals.

A lively Q&A followed. Gerald Hodgson managed to get his press release taken up by *The Northern Echo* and *Darlington & Stockton Times* and it was the most read article on their website for a few days. Read more at

<http://rylibdems.org.uk/1p-on-income-tax>

### Help our neighbours

Our friends in Harrogate and Knaresborough have a District Council by-election on Thursday 16th August. In the local elections they lost by 32 votes so we need to try really hard to help them win.

A few of us are going down on Saturday 11th August to help with leaflets and canvassing.

If you can help drop an email to [info@rylibdems.org.uk](mailto:info@rylibdems.org.uk).

### Brexit can be stopped



So said Lord Richard Newby, leader of the Liberal Democrats in the Lords, to Richmond (Yorks) constituency Liberal Democrats on Friday July 6. He said that the government had recently made a limited commitment for more money for the NHS but still with no idea of where the money would come from. The "Brexit dividend" was a fantasy. He went on to say that what Teresa May wants is unworkable and will inevitably be rejected by the EU.

Lord Newby said it was perfectly feasible to envisage the situation where a cross party coalition of Members of Parliament voted for the public to have a referendum on the deal negotiated by the government, rejection of which would mean the UK remaining in the EU. Far from being undemocratic, as Brexiteers would claim, this would give voters the chance to vote on the deal rather than the misleading fantasies they had been led to believe before the referendum two years ago.

Read more at <http://rylibdems.org.uk/stop-brexit>

### Marches, Brexit-o-meters and Action Days

Local members have been really active over the last few months.

Benedicte Windle and Allen Nixon joined over 100,000 others to march in London on June 23rd. Meanwhile, Philip Knowles, Philip Wicks and John Harris had a Brexit-o-meter in Richmond Market Place.

Benedicte and Michael Newton also held an anti-Brexit Action Day in Northallerton in July.

There's a North Yorkshire for Europe Day in Richmond on 11th August and there's also a People's Vote march in Newcastle on Saturday August 25th. Drop an email to [info@rylibdems.org.uk](mailto:info@rylibdems.org.uk) if you want to march.

### Local Elections

In May next year both Hambleton and Richmond District Councils have their elections.

#### Hambleton

Last time out, after a boundary change, we lost all our Councillors and it ended up with a 27 Tory and 1 UKIP Council.

We need your help to change that and get some LibDems elected. If you are prepared to stand as a Councillor, help deliver leaflets, display posters, campaign, canvass or just offer moral support we need to hear from you. Email us at [hambleton@rylibdems.org.uk](mailto:hambleton@rylibdems.org.uk).

#### Richmondshire

Last time out we won 2 seats but lost one of those when John Robinson unfortunately passed away. We've come close in by-elections losing with 32 and 25 vote margins. Richmondshire is having a boundary change this time round with the seats being reduced to 24.

We've already selected 5 candidates but are still looking for volunteers willing to stand in places like *Catterick Village* and *Brompton-on-Swale* which is a 3 Councillor ward.

Again, if you can help in any way please email us at [richmondshire@rylibdems.org.uk](mailto:richmondshire@rylibdems.org.uk).

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