



# Black Asian & Minority Ethnic Manifesto

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Tackling racial discrimination and  
boosting equal opportunities for  
Britain's BAME communities  
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## Foreword

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Liberal Democrats believe that no matter who you are, where you come from and whatever your circumstances, you should have the opportunity to fulfil your potential.

I am proud that Britain today is an open, tolerant country. Our culture and economy is stronger as a result of the diverse range of people who have chosen to make their home here.

Yet Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic people still face significant inequalities in health, education and justice.

By giving everyone the opportunity to get on in life, we can ensure a competitive economy and fair society that draws on everyone's talents.

Thanks to Liberal Democrats in Coalition Government, there have been key advances in tackling inequality and improving the lives of Britain's ethnic minorities.

We have raised the personal allowance to £10,600, delivering a tax cut of more than £800 for millions of low and middle-income taxpayers and lifting more than three million out of Income Tax altogether.

We have supported BAME entrepreneurs, who have made up a third of those accessing the Start-Up Loans initiative in the past 12

months.

We have supported disadvantaged ethnic minority pupils to close the gap with their peers through our £2.5bn Pupil Premium, providing targeted funding for pupils who need the most help.

We will improve safeguards in police stop and search powers and conduct a review of the causes of the overrepresentation of BAME individuals in the criminal justice system.

And we are proud to have stood up to the divisive and nationalistic politics of UKIP, which threaten the wellbeing of new migrant communities and well-established BAME communities alike.

But the fight to tackle prejudice and inequality must go on.

In Government again, the Liberal Democrats will ensure that our liberal commitment to equality runs through every policy area.

We will rebuild trust in the immigration system, and stand up to those who make ugly attempts to blame migrants for society's problems.

And we will continue to make sure everyone gets the opportunity to fulfil their potential by protecting the schools budget, increasing the pupil premium and building on the more than 160,000 BAME apprentices under this Coalition Government.

Only the Liberal Democrats will keep Britain anchored in the centre ground, building a stronger economy and a fairer society. Labour will borrow too much, risking the economy. The Tories will cut too much, threatening public services and sacrificing the least well off.

As Liberal Democrats, we will guarantee equality is at the heart of the Government's agenda, and ensure the recovery benefits all. We will work every day for a fairer society, where every person is enabled to get on in life, regardless of background or ethnicity.



Nick Clegg  
**Leader of the  
Liberal Democrats**

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## Protecting Liberty and Equality

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A fair society should treat its citizens equally and with dignity. We must continue our work to fight prejudice based on race, age, religion, sex, sexuality, belief and disability. We will:

- ◆ Continue to defend both the Equality Act and the European Convention on Human Rights, legally protecting people from discrimination in the workplace and in wider society.
- ◆ Enact the remaining unimplemented clauses of the Equality Act 2010, including the outlawing of caste discrimination.
- ◆ End Female Genital Mutilation (FGM) within a generation. In the UK, FGM tends to occur in areas with large populations of FGM practising communities. The Home Office has identified girls from the Somali, Kenyan, Sudanese, Sierra Leonean, Egyptian, Nigerian, Eritrean, Yemeni, Kurdish and Indonesian communities as most at risk of FGM.
- ◆ Pass a new Freedoms Act, to protect citizens from excessive state powers, defend free speech and improve rights of access to information.
- ◆ Pass a Digital Bill of Rights, to define and enshrine the digital rights of the citizen.

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## Tax

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During this Parliament we have gone even further than our last manifesto's pledge, to raise the Income Tax Personal Allowance to £10,000 per year. This April's increase to £10,600 has delivered a tax cut of more than £800 for millions of low and middle income taxpayers, lifting more than three million out of Income Tax altogether. Many BAME workers who work part time or on low to middle incomes have benefitted from this change. In the next Parliament we want to go even further. We will:

- ◆ Raise the tax free personal allowance to at least £12,500 by the end of the next Parliament. This would put around £400 more back in the pockets of over 30 million working people. A further 950,000 people will be taken out of Income Tax altogether. This tax cut will be fully funded by tackling tax avoidance and ensuring the wealthiest pay their fair share.



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## Families and childcare

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BAME households are more likely to include children than the population as a whole. We have cut the cost of childcare with more free hours for 3 and 4 year olds and help for disadvantaged 2 year olds too. We have helped people balance work and family life with Shared Parental Leave and the Right to Request flexible working for all.

We will:

- ◆ Expand shared parental leave with an additional ‘use-it-or-lose-it’ month to encourage one of the parents to take further time off with young children.
- ◆ Commit to an ambitious goal of 20 hours of free childcare a week available for all parents with children aged from two to four, and all working parents from the end of paid parental leave (9 months) to two years. This will not only help parents afford to work, it will help all children start school confident, happy and ready to learn.
- ◆ Complete the introduction of tax-free childcare which will provide support to parents of up to £2,000 for each child and include childcare support in Universal Credit, refunding 85% of childcare costs to make sure work pays for low earners.

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## Housing

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For decades under Labour and Conservative, not enough houses were built. This particularly affected BAME households, who are over-represented among the homeless population. We are working to tackle Britain's housing shortage, and have introduced the option of Sharia-compliant Help to Buy mortgages, ensuring that more people have the opportunity of buying their own homes through faith sensitive financing. But much more needs to be done. We will

- ◆ Set an ambitious target of increasing the rate of house building to 300,000 a year. Within the first year of the next Parliament, we will publish a long-term plan that sets out how this goal will be achieved.
- ◆ Directly commission homes for sale and rent to fill the gap if the market alone fails to deliver sufficient numbers.
- ◆ Introduce a new Rent to Own model where monthly payments steadily accrue the tenant a percentage stake in the property, owning it outright after 30 years.

More and more people – including families – are renting in the private sector for the long term. More needs to be done to help people making a home in rented property. We will:

- ◆ Improve protections against rogue landlords and encourage new multi-year family-friendly tenancies.
- ◆ Introduce a new Help to Rent scheme to provide government-backed tenancy deposit loans for all first-time renters under 30.
- ◆ Ban letting agent fees to tenants if the transparency requirements we have introduced are not successful in bringing fees down to an affordable level by the end of 2016.

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## Education

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Making sure young people regardless of their background have the skills they need to get on in life is one of the Liberal Democrats' key priorities. We have put education at the heart of our agenda for a generation.

With our £2.5bn Pupil Premium we have put more money in schools targeting those pupils who need the most help. We have given free schools meals to all infants saving families around £437 per child per year. Free early education for 3-4 year olds and 40% of two year olds means no child will fall through the gaps. And we plan to do even more.



On tuition fees, when we couldn't deliver the policy we wanted we fought hard to get the best policy we could. University students pay nothing up front and won't pay a penny back until they are earning over £21,000. The new system hasn't put students off going to university. In 2013 496,000 students went to university, the highest figure ever recorded. Young people from disadvantaged backgrounds are now 70% more likely to go to university that they were ten years ago.

We're the only party committed to investing every penny we can in education and protecting funding for nursery, school, apprenticeships and college from damaging cuts. We will:

- ◆ Increase our Early Years Pupil Premium – which gives early years settings extra money to help children from disadvantaged backgrounds – to £1,000 per pupil per year.
- ◆ Continue to support Local Authorities in providing Children's Centres, especially in areas of high need, encouraging integration with other community services like health visitors, and in particular reviewing the support and advice available for parents on early child nutrition and breastfeeding.
- ◆ Set a clear ambition that all children should grasp the basics of Maths and English aiming to eradicate child illiteracy and innumeracy by 2025. We will set an interim goal that all children should start school with good language skills by 2020.

- ◆ Extend free school meals to all children in primary education as resources allow and following a full evaluation of free meals for infants.
- ◆ Guarantee all teachers in state funded schools will be fully qualified or working towards Qualified Teacher Status (QTS).
- ◆ Implement the Children’s Commissioner’s report *They Go The Extra Mile* into the prevention of and positive alternatives to exclusion, and strengthen appeals panels.
- ◆ Ensure that all universities work to widen participation across the higher education sector, and require universities to be transparent about their selection criteria.

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## Skills and Opportunities

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We want young people from every background to face the future with optimism and confidence. Whether it’s supporting people with the costs of travel to college or apprenticeships, promoting positive images of young people by celebrating their successes, or improving careers advice and mentoring so people can find their own path in life: Liberal Democrats are on the side of young people and a culture of lifelong learning. We will:

- ◆ Build on one of our proudest achievements of enabling more people to start an apprenticeship in this Parliament than ever before –over 160,000 of these from BAME backgrounds – by doubling the number of employers offering apprenticeships.
- ◆ Continue to target the work of the Apprenticeship Advisory Group





to increase the number of apprentices from BAME backgrounds, and specifically to ensure the recruitment of ethnic minority apprentices into sectors where they have traditionally being under represented.

- ◆ Assist older pupils and young adults by improving careers advice and links between employers and schools, encouraging all schools to participate in mentoring schemes and programmes that seek to raise aspiration like Speakers for Schools and Inspiring the Future.
- ◆ Maintain funding to develop English language skills for those who don't currently speak English.
- ◆ Introduce a new Young Person's Discount Card, for young people aged 16-21, giving a 2/3rds discount on bus travel as resources allow.

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## Health

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The NHS is our most treasured public service. Liberal Democrats in Government have increased its budget every year in real terms, funding 10,000 more doctors and 7000 more nurses.

We are the only party with a credible plan to deliver the £8 billion extra that NHS leaders know our health service in England needs by 2020, with the appropriate boost to funding for Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland too. We will:

- ◆ Set ambitious goals to improve outcomes for the most serious life-threatening diseases like cancer and long-term conditions like dementia.
- ◆ Set clear goals for earlier diagnosis and improved aftercare for conditions like cancer and heart disease.
- ◆ Promote evidence-based 'social prescribing' of sport, arts and other activity to help tackle obesity, mental health problems and other health conditions.
- ◆ Continue to introduce evidence-based screening programmes, encouraging increased participation with informed consent.
- ◆ Ensure easier access to GPs, expanding evening and weekend opening, encouraging phone and Skype appointments, encouraging GPs to work together in federations, and allowing people more choice.
- ◆ Encourage GPs and other community clinicians to work in disadvantaged areas through our Patient Premium.
- ◆ Improve support for groups that often face lower standards of care.

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## Mental Health

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One in four of us will experience mental health problems, but for decades mental health has been the last in the queue for funding and attention. Not only that, people from BAME groups are more likely to be detained compulsorily under mental health legislation or put in seclusion.

In 2012, we wrote equality for mental health into law. We are now making real progress, invested £400m in a range of services, and introducing the first ever waiting time standards in mental health, with no more than six weeks for therapy for depression or anxiety. Liberal Democrats in government have also worked to drive down the use of restraint in mental health settings, and produced new crisis standards for mental health care.

We will:

- ◆ Spend £3.5bn more on mental health care in England over the next Parliament.
- ◆ Radically transform mental health services, extending the use of personal budgets, integrating care more fully with the rest of the NHS, introducing rigorous inspection and high quality standards, comprehensive collection of data to monitor outcomes and waiting times and changing the way services are funded so they do not lose out in funding decisions in future.
- ◆ Revolutionise children's mental health services. We will continue to roll out access and waiting time standards for children, young people and adults. This will include a waiting time standard from referral of no more than six weeks for therapy for depression or anxiety and a two-week wait standard for all young people experiencing a first episode of psychosis.
- ◆ Ensure no one in crisis is turned away, with new waiting time standards and better crisis care in Accident and Emergency (A&E) departments, in the community and via phone lines. This will enable us to end the use of police cells for people facing a mental health crisis.

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## Business and Jobs

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We've made huge progress in securing Britain's economic recovery and helping businesses to grow. We've halved the budget deficit, helping business create some two million jobs and delivering over two million new apprenticeships. Employment is at a record high, we have bought back confidence to the UK and the economy is now larger than its pre-recession peak in 2008. Self-employment



and the small business sector is especially important for BAME communities. In the past 12 months a third of all new businesses set-up through the Start-Up Loans initiative have been by BAME entrepreneurs. There is still there is more to be done to help under-represented groups reach their goals. We will:

- ◆ Build on the Coalition’s BME Access to Finance report to identify ways to encourage more BAME applicants to apply for finance and set up small business.
- ◆ Publish diversity data for those receiving support from government entrepreneurship programmes and seek to achieve fair representation of BAME communities.
- ◆ Encourage businesses to ensure at least one place on their board is filled by a BAME candidate.
- ◆ Monitor and tackle the BAME pay gap.

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## Justice and crime

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BAME individuals and communities have frequently experienced discrimination in the criminal justice system. For example, in some areas black people have been found to be 29 times more likely to be stopped and searched. To challenge this we will:

- ◆ Improve the safeguards in police stop and search powers in England and Wales with tighter guidance and requiring police to wear body cameras in Section 60 areas, the establishment of which will require judicial sanction.
- ◆ Boost police recruitment from Black and Minority Ethnic groups.
- ◆ Conduct a full review of the causes of the overrepresentation of BAME individuals in the criminal justice system.

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## Fighting religious discrimination

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To tackle religious discrimination and support faith and belief communities in working together we will:

- ◆ Continue support for the Interfaith Network to promote strong and sustainable relations between different faith communities.
- ◆ Support projects aimed at tackling intolerance such as Show Racism the Red Card and the Anne Frank Trust UK.
- ◆ Work closely with faith and community organisations, such as the Community Security Trust (which works to protect the Jewish community against antisemitic attacks) and the Muslim Council of Britain, to prevent hate crime, including at places of worship like synagogues and mosques. We are determined to combat antisemitism and anti-Muslim hate in the UK and internationally.

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## Fairness in the public sector

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To ensure the public sector and public services uphold the highest standards of non-discrimination we will:

- ◆ Maintain the Public Sector Equality Duty, while working to encourage external providers to the public sector to follow best practice in terms of diversity.
- ◆ Move to ‘name blank’ recruitment wherever possible in the public sector so that people are judged on their true abilities to do a job.
- ◆ Replicate the civil service accelerated programme for under-represented groups across the public sector.
- ◆ Require diversity in Public Appointments. We will introduce a presumption that every shortlist should include a BAME candidate. We will establish an independent committee that will monitor the drive for greater diversity in public appointments and verify the independence of the appointment process to public bodies, boards and institutions

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## Immigration

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Liberal Democrats are proud that Britain is an open, welcoming country. Highly-skilled migrants have brought many economic and social benefits to us over the years. We absolutely reject the divisive and irresponsible politics propagated by UKIP. We are working to make the immigration control system fairer. We want to rebuild trust in the migration control system, protect migrants from scapegoating and put in place robust measures that can give confidence to both the host community and those who come here that their concerns are being heard and their interests safeguarded.

We will:

- ◆ Complete the restoration of full entry and exit checks at our borders, to rebuild confidence in immigration control, and allow targeting of resources at those who overstay their visas.
- ◆ Speed up the processing of asylum claims, reducing the time genuine refugees have to wait before they can settle into life in the UK and making it easier to remove those who do not have a right to be here. We will require working-age asylum seekers who have waited more than six months for their claim to be processed to seek work like other benefit claimants, and only to receive benefits if they are unable to do so. We will end the use of the 'Azure Card' for administering benefits in the asylum system.
- ◆ Present to Parliament an annual assessment of skill and labour market shortfalls and surpluses and their impact on the economy, public services and local communities, together with an audit report on the migration control system, allowing full Parliamentary oversight of Britain's migration policies.



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