



Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary

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President Lord Roger Roberts of Llandudno

LD4SOS NEWSLETTER MAY 2019

OUR ROLE IN THE EURO ELECTIONS.

We are proud that 2 of our Council members, Ruvy Ziegler in the SE, and Clive Sneddon in Scotland, have been selected as candidates in the Euro election. The more people that vote for the Lib Dems, the more likely they are to get elected! LD4SOS have issued this statement of Lib Dem Policies relating to refugees and asylum seekers, relevant to the current European Parliamentary elections on 23rd May. It is [available on our website](#) for you to circulate as needed. You can see our updated for the Euro Election manifesto [here](#).

EU-wide principles

- We reiterate our commitment to the 1951 UN Refugee Convention and to the right of every person to seek and enjoy asylum.
- We support the creation of 'safe and legal routes to Europe' through the introduction of humanitarian visas.
- We endorse EU search and rescue operations and tackling criminal people-smuggling.
- We strongly oppose all forms of racism, division of societies and hatred against human beings.

We believe the UK should play an active part in Europe by:

- Implementing in full Section 67 of the Immigration Act 2016 welcoming unaccompanied refugee children, expanding the commitment to 10,000 children over the next 10 years
- Speeding up processes for taking unaccompanied children with established family links in the UK
- Offering safe and legal routes to the UK for at least 10,000 refugees a year by expanding the Syrian Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme to cover other conflict zones such as Myanmar
- Ending the travesty of the Calais camps by committing to properly assess applications of those with relevant links to the UK

DETENTION

ANOTHER PUSH TO END INDEFINITE DETENTION

Detention Forum are asking us to be part of a big push to end indefinite detention. There is an [amendment](#), that has cross-party support with not just Lib Dems but Conservative, DUP, TiG, Green, SNP and Plaid MPs already signed up. You can see which MPs have signed by clicking on the link below to the amendment. We don't know when this will come before Parliament, but it could be any time now, and it is essential that as many MPs as possible, from all parties are signed up to it.

Can you please send the message in italics below to your MP if they are not already signed up? There is an article on our website [here](#) and our policy paper [is here](#).

"We understand that your time in Parliament will be focused on other pressing matters but we hope you will consider supporting the amendments tabled to the Immigration Bill that would introduce a 28-day time limit on how long an individual can be held in immigration detention. [This link](#) takes you to the amendment.

Just recently the [Home Affairs Select Committee](#) released their report into immigration detention and 'found serious problems with almost every element of the immigration detention system' and reiterated the need for a 28-day time limit in immigration detention.

This follows the [Joint Committee on Human Rights](#) report earlier this year which also called for a 28-day time limit. "

MORE EVIDENCE ON NEED TO REFORM. There is a [damning report](#) on Colnbrook and the immigration detention system. How many more times do independent reports have to be published to get the message over to Government to bring in a time limit to detention, and radically reform the system?

HOME OFFICE SHOWN TO BE NOT FIT FOR PURPOSE YET AGAIN

These 2 shocking articles in The Guardian, [here](#) and [here](#), based on an inside view from a whistle blower, show up how yet again the Home Office is not fit for purpose. As our [policy paper details](#) there is need for a radical overhaul and better training.

TIME TO MOVE ON

One of our LD4SOS Council members has had a letter to The Guardian [published](#) on the need to give asylum seekers longer than 28 days to move out of their property after they get a decision on their claim from the Home Office. (Second one down the page, and the first letter about the Home Office and Windrush is very good too).

FAMILY REUNION

We are not giving up on the campaign for family reunion. Here is a [good question](#) from Tim Farron, but a bad answer from the Minister who keeps repeating "pull factor" and not recognising "human family factors".

PERSECUTION

Quite rightly there is concern by Government about the persecution of Christians worldwide, [as here](#), BUT we need to get own house in order, and take care how we treat those seeking sanctuary in UK.

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF CONGO

The plight of those being returned to DRC by the Government is highlighted in [this article](#) in the Guardian. The report referred to, Unsafe Return iii, is by Catherine Ramos. People arrive at the airport in Kinshasa, and are imprisoned in a terrible place, often tortured and beaten. But our Home Office is trying to persuade the Foreign Office that DRC is a safe place to return people to. We can forward copies of the report if you want to know more, and you can hear about [it here](#), 1 hour 10 minutes 55 seconds in, and then 2 hours 10 minutes in.