



HSLD MEMBER CANDIDATES – 2012 FEDERAL ELECTIONS

All HSLD members who are candidates in the 2012 elections to the following bodies have been invited to submit statements of up to 200 words in support of their candidacy:

**Federal Executive Committee (FEC)
Federal Policy Committee (FPC)
Federal Conference Committee (FCC)
ELDR Delegation (ELDR)
International Relations Committee (IRC)**

All the candidates listed below are happy for us to disclose their membership of HSLD.

JON BALL (Federal Conference Committee)

I am an HSLD member and a member of the BHA.

Conference must remain the sovereign policy-making body of the Party, unafraid to debate any issue. This includes religious and ethical issues and issues that relate to the relationship between church and state.

While the role of FCC is to choose motions and amendments that are best for debate rather than those which FCC members personally favour, I think that FCC members coming from a religious perspective sometimes underestimate the importance of some of these issues or don't feel it is appropriate for the Party to have policy on them. I have a proud record on FCC of voting to debate these issues, sometimes successfully as in the case of the assisted dying motion and sometimes not as in the case of the HSLD amendment to end reserved places for bishops in a reformed House of Lords. If re-elected, I will continue to take this stance.

If you have any questions, please feel free to email me at jonball@cix.co.uk, call me on 07860 247589 or send a tweet to me @jonball.

GEORGE DUNK (ELDR Delegation; International Relations Committee)

Dear Colleague and Friend,

I have recently become a member of the Liberal Democrat Humanist and Secularist Group. My position has always been that a truly Liberal society should be one where people of faith and those with none should be treated equally by the State.

There has to be a VERY firm line between Religion and the State both here in the UK and in the EU.

For the past two years I have sat as a Council member of the European Liberal Democrat & Reform Group (ELDR). I have attended every meeting.

Voting will end at 12 Noon on Wednesday 7th November. If you are a registered Conference delegate or know someone in your local Party who is.....I should like to ask if you would be kind enough to give me (or to ask your

friends to give me) their first preference vote for the International Relations Committee (IRC) and for the ELDR Council.

I do hope that you will feel able to assist.....I seems I will need about 200 first preferences to win.

Very Best wishes

George Dunk

HELEN FLYNN (Federal Policy Committee)

I am standing for FPC this time and believe that my consistent championing of evidence-based policy, grounded in fairness, will assist me in my role, should I be successful. I am a council member of the Social Liberal Forum and have recently written a paper on behalf of the SLF where I attempt to outline the parameters for re-drawing a Lib Dem evidence-based and progressive education policy: <http://socialliberal.net/slf-publications/re-framing-education-policy-developing-a-coherent-progressive-and-sustainable-education-policy/>.

My three main reasons for standing are:

1. I want to see evidence play a greater role in policy making, as it should make for more sustainable policy that can have a lasting and positive impact on people's lives.
2. I think education, in particular, needs a stronger policy focus by the Lib Dems to create the kind of distinctive, progressive policy that will lead us into the next General Election in 2015. Education is my number one area of expertise and interest, and I am an Executive member of the Lib Dem Education Association.
3. I think we need more new people and with real life experience on these committees rather than the "usual suspects", people who can present different perspectives, and who are not unduly swayed by the leadership.

ARNIE GIBBONS (Federal Conference Committee)

I have been active as a member of the Humanist & Secularist Liberal Democrats for the last six years, including three as Chair (2007-10); I am currently the group's treasurer.

As an experienced member of FCC I have been able to assist in ensuring that matters important to humanists and secularists have been debated at party conference. These include faith schools, the ability of humanist celebrants to perform marriages, 'dignity in dying' and removal of bishops from the House of Lords. I moved the amendment to the Lords reform motion proposing the last of these (Autumn 2011).

Conference belongs to its members and FCC must act as its guardian, ensuring that members continue to decide policy and hold the party to account at conference. FCC must not succumb to the desire of leadership for a more tightly managed conference.

Last time I was elected at the 27th and final stage - so make your first preference really count.

You can contact me at arnie_gibbons2004@yahoo.co.uk

SARAH GREEN (Federal Executive Committee)

This is just a quick message to say I hope you will consider lending me your vote for the Federal Executive. I feel it is important for all views and perspectives to be represented on the various party committees - including those of the HSLD membership.

EVAN HARRIS (Federal Policy Committee)

If you want to support my work on secularism then DON'T VOTE FOR ME! I should be OK, but instead please take the following advice to give me the support I need on the key committees.

On Federal Conference Committee (FCC) – please support Arnie Gibbons (HSLD executive), Sandra Gidley, Kelly–Marie Blundell, Charles West and Janice Turner. These candidates will, I am sure promote our interests.

On Federal Policy Committee (FPC) - please give your highest preferences to fellow secularists Prateek Buch and Gareth Epps as well as Helen Flynn, Lucy Care and Linda Jack. I know that all these candidates who need every preference they can get will help me ensure the party retains and develops our secularist policies.

JO HAYES (Federal Policy Committee; ELDR Delegation)

Dear HSLD member or supporter,

I have served on the FPC for a number of years, but we have an especially crowded field this time. I would therefore be very grateful for your first preference vote.

The crowded field reflects the fact that we will need to draw up manifestos for the European and General Elections at this vital time when we are under great scrutiny in Government

During my service on FPC I have contributed to the formulation of our manifestos for three general elections and two European elections, emphasising evidence-based policies which illustrate clearly where the Liberal Democrats stand, such as the pupil premium, raising the basic rate income tax threshold and introducing a mansion tax. On many issues including energy policy I was ahead of most in spotting their importance. I hope therefore to be able to contribute strongly and constructively to FPC in this critical period.

I have throughout supported the secularist position, e.g. opposing state subsidy of faith schools and creationism being taught in schools and supporting legalisation of assisted dying.

I am glad to have the endorsement of Lindsay, Baroness Northover, who has strongly encouraged me to stand again.

Kind regards

Jo Hayes

GORDON LISHMAN (Federal Executive Committee; Federal Policy Committee; International Relations Committee; ELDR Delegation)

I have a strong background in campaigning on humanist issues, not least on the Steering Committee to establish the Equality & Human Rights Commission, where I fought alongside the British Humanist Association to get recognition that religious discrimination against non-believers is a significant challenge in employment.

As part of the FPC Working Group on political and constitutional reform, I am opposing the ludicrous idea of bishops in the Lords.

As Chair of the Liberal International Human Rights Committee, in ELDR and in UN Human Rights bodies, I have advocated humanist causes.

I agree with HSLD on the principle of the right to die. I have reservations about the practice. It isn't good enough to say "we are in favour of good end-of-life services", if you fail to address the fact that the NHS and social care services are appallingly bad at dealing with issues around mental health, including depression; effective nutrition and hydration; high-quality social care; pain relief at home; support after diagnosis, support of family carers, etc.

I chair the FE Committee which supports AOs like HSLD.

I'm happy to answer any other questions from HSLD colleagues: gordon@lishman.co.uk

ZOE O'CONNELL (Federal Conference Committee)

As an ardent secularist and someone standing for Federal Conference Committee, it may not be immediately obvious how the two would interact. After all, I'm standing largely because I oppose accreditation and there have been no major controversies over badly chosen religious content in recent conference motions or amendments recently.

However, the lack of such problems to date does not mean there will not be any in future. Through my work on the LGBT+ Liberal Democrats executive, I have been involved in campaigning for Equal Marriage and pro-polyamory work, to name but two. Given opposition to these is invariably on religious grounds, there are very obvious and often worrying implications for secularists. A first preference vote for FCC would help keep these and similar issues on the agenda for years to come.

TURHAN OZEN (ELDR Delegation; International Relations Committee)

I am running for the IRC and the ELDR Delegation. I am also shortlisted for the 2014 Euro elections which will be finalised this November. I would be most grateful for your support in these elections. I am a British Muslim of Turkish and Kurdish origin. I recently joined the Humanist & Secularist LibDems because I believe that religions and ideologies can be useful in a person's life but they should not lead to dogma and intolerance. True liberals oppose all forms of oppression and want everybody be themselves without any fear of prejudice. Only then the society can be happy and peaceful. And such societies benefit from a variety of experiences resulting from different ways of life and perspectives. We should all learn how to compromise and enjoy each other's differences. I decided to run for these offices because I believe my background and experience will be an important addition. I run in the 2010 local elections and took part in the campaign for the Islington South target seat. I made an important contribution with my enthusiasm, energy and stamina and with the support that I received from the local communities.

JOE OTTEN (Federal Executive Committee)

I am standing for the Federal Executive with the aim of keeping the party connected to campaigning on the ground. I am an active councillor and campaigner in Sheffield Hallam and have been chair of the local party for the last three years. I was, before becoming active in the Liberal Democrats, an active member of Sheffield Humanist society.

I am keen to see the party make full use of the opportunity in the European elections of 2014 to be confident and outspoken with a realist position on Europe - that trade with and membership of the EU is vital for our economy, and bring benefits to crime fighting and the environment. While I continue to support the coalition, I am eager to show how weak the Conservatives are in these areas.

I'm also a long-suffering user of the Connect database system, and, with a background in IT, I have a good understanding of what the system needs. Better leadership, connected to users on the ground, is vital.

So please give me your support with a 1 or high preference for Joe Otten in the Federal Executive election. Thankyou.

SUE VINCENT

Sue has not been able to provide a statement in the brief time available, but is happy for her name to be circulated as an HSLD member.

JENNY WOODS

Jenny has not been able to provide a statement in the brief time available, but is happy for her name to be circulated as an HSLD member.