



Nigel Jones

Liberal Democrat policies for Education, Health and Social Care and Housing

Education

We work for improved quality of experience for teachers and learners as well as more funding. Evidence supports our opposition to selective schools, but we also oppose those who think children should be taught the same. Schools in our area are already cutting staff. We need an extra £7bn

- So that a fairer funding formula can be introduced without any school's funds being cut as a result
- Protecting per pupil funding to keep pace with increasing costs
- Triple the pupil premium for early years
- Increase the continuous professional development of teachers
- More funds for FE colleges



It is not practical to abandon tuition fees at the present time and there is no evidence that these deter young people from disadvantaged backgrounds. What they do in early years and in school is more important. There is evidence that what goes on in their homes and communities affects achievement in school, so that improved local services are needed to support them; the schools cannot do it on their own.

Health and Social Care



Staffordshire and Stoke NHS Partnership predicts a £542m shortfall in a few years. There will be a 22% increase in the number of people aged 85+ in our area by 2019.

- Extra funds are needed now; hence our £6bn proposal through a small increase in income tax for mental health, social care, primary care and public health
- More personal budgets and integration of social care with NHS and a cap on cost of social care to individuals

Liberal Democrats have found research showing that for every £1 spent by local authorities on public health initiatives (such as obesity), £14 is saved on all public services and costs to businesses. There is a need for community hospitals and care homes for those for whom living at home is not suitable.

Housing

The housing market is broken; people struggle with rents and mortgages. 40% of gross incomes go on housing costs; 10% of working people skip meals to pay rent. Liberal Democrats have a plan:

- Build 300,000 houses a year by 2020, many of these social housing and affordable
- Set up a Housing and Infrastructure Development Bank and lift the borrowing cap for local authorities and social landlords to build more
- Start new garden cities with zero carbon homes
- New help to rent scheme and rent-to-own scheme for younger people

Newcastle has over 1000 on the housing waiting list and 400 empty homes, but also a predicted need for at least 4000 houses over the next 9 years.

Nigel looking at a site in Newcastle crying out for house building.



All these Liberal Democrat policies are fully costed, compare really well with the tiny and meagre plans of the Conservatives and are more readily applicable than Labour's plans. Since many of our plans are for investment, the return on this will eventually help bring the deficit to zero.