



Liberal Democrats for Seekers of Sanctuary

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President Lord Roger Roberts of Llandudno

POST AUTUMN CONFERENCE NEWSLETTER 2017

CONFERENCE

Our **motion on “Learning to Communicate in English”** moved by Wera Hobhouse MP was very well received at Conference and is now Party policy. There is a write up with more information [on our website](#) . Please do spread the word around.



We held our **AGM** and agreed members of the LD4SOS Council, officers, President and Vice Presidents, and our updated constitution (all will be in a newsletter, soon). We then had time to discuss the issues that asylum seekers are facing in the UK. We had a moving account from Janet King of some of the people she was working with; and words of encouragement and support from Lords Brian Paddick, Roger Roberts, and Baroness Shas Sheehan. After some discussion around the issues, Roger told us about the inspiring story of the “Refugees of the World” Choir that he had initiated.

Our **fringe meeting, “The European refugee ‘crisis’ and the UK’s responsibility”** had an excellent presentation by Professor Brad Blitz, followed by Dr Ruvy Ziegler and contributions from the floor. There will be a write up of this on Liberal Democrat Voice, if you watch out for that being published, and we will give a link in our next newsletter. We also had a surprise visitor in the High Commissioner for Bangladesh, Md. Nazmul Quanine, who was invited onto the platform to speak and answer questions.



We had a **stall in the exhibition area** with lots of good and updated information for people to be able to take away, and we are pleased to say that a lot of people came to have a look, take information, ask questions and tell their stories.

ACTION IN PARLIAMENT

Little has happened since the last newsletter but Lord Roger Roberts [continues to question the Government](#) on the numbers of refugee children taken in by the UK. The answers attempt to mask the fact that they have only taken in 200 under the “Dubs amendment” (we all talk about the Dubs amendment, nobody mentions it was seconded by Roger!) There is yet another [appalling report](#) that the Dubs scheme is not working and thousands of children are left stranded.

DETENTION

The UK is shown up yet again on its policy on indefinite detention & child detention in a report to the [Human Rights Council](#).

Our last newsletter reported on the scandal of treatment by G4S staff at Brook House. Whilst it is good news about [sackings and resignations](#), and [prosecution is needed](#), we must not take our eye off ending detention for all vulnerable people and having a 28 day maximum period for immigration detention. As Detention Forum say ""No more reviews. No more reports. We want to see some real change."

DISOBEYING THE COURTS

Powerful article [here](#) on the need for the Home Secretary to obey the law, and for the Lord Chancellor to insist she does. We are so thankful, that Samim is returned here safely now, but what trauma he has had to go through needlessly. There has been no such trauma for ministers, and people have been deported for less.

FIX THE LAW THAT IS KEEPING FAMILIES APART

The UK refugee law that is keeping families apart needs to be changed. Right now, the UK Government doesn't recognise this.

Our current refugee family reunion law only recognises parents as family, not brothers or grandmas or anyone else. Please [sign this petition](#) to get Amber Rudd to change the law.

SANCTUARY IN PARLIAMENT

If anyone is going to this event on 28th November, please do get in touch with Suzanne Fletcher on fletcher.suzanne005@gmail.com so we can co-ordinate some things.

STANDING UP FOR JUSTICE IN THE EU PARLIAMENT

The brilliant and passionate Guy Verhofstadt [speaking on the State of the EU](#) address to the EU Parliament including "need legal migration so people no longer die on shores, every dead body is a scandal"

INFORMATION

Information documents, ranging from 20 Top Facts to Detention and conditions for asylumseekers in the UK are all updated and available [on our website](#).

EVENTS.

For those living in **London**, "Dear Home Office, still pending" is a play to watch about unaccompanied children coming to the UK & what happens. There are discounts for refugees.

For those in **Manchester** there is a [Refugees Women conference](#) on October 4th with speakers and action planning that we are invited to attend.



VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

[Avid](#) (Association of Visitors to Immigration Detainees) is looking for both more volunteers and Trustees to join its Board. Could it be you? More details [here](#).

GOOD AND BEAUTIFUL

After all the problems and angst you have read about, time for some good news and a relax. [This is a beautiful story](#) of a Syrian Refugee and his violin, ending with him playing at the Royal Albert Hall, and you can buy (profit to Red Cross) his music [here](#). It really is an ode to joy to listen to.