

# MANIFESTO

**General Election 2015**

**National Liberal Party**  
SELF-DETERMINATION FOR ALL  
[www.nationalliberal.org](http://www.nationalliberal.org)



# Manifesto

The National Liberal Party believes in the universal principle of Self-Determination, both National and Political, which is essentially about giving people control of their affairs - locally, regionally and nationally. Government for the benefit of the people, by the people!

Firstly, National Self-Determination. This includes the following key points:

- We will work to make a truly federal United Kingdom, instead of a centralised government where everything is decided at Westminster.
- We will create a parliament for England.
- We will support the right of independence for all the world's stateless nations.
- We will work for the preservation of the United Kingdom's independence within Europe.
- We will devolve appropriate power to the constituent nations of the United Kingdom.

Secondly, Political Self-Determination. This includes the following key points:

- Direct Democracy through the use of Referendums.
- Proportional Representation.
- Voter Recall of elected politicians.
- A "None of the Above" (NOTA) box on the ballot papers.
- Decentralise all decision-making to the most local practical level.

# Constitution & Political Reform

## NOTA (“none of the above”)

- We will implement a NOTA option on election ballots.

NOTA (“none of the above”) is the idea that a voter can cast their vote to reject all candidates, potentially triggering a by-election at a later date if NOTA votes beat the leading “live” candidate. This will organically send a message to candidates that they need to respond to voter interests rather than party interests (or worse, lobbyist interests). It will result, over time, in a higher-quality selection of candidates. Having candidates who have a vested interest in responding to voter interests can only be good for representative democracy!

## Government by Referendum

- Major national decisions will be decided by public debate and referendum.

We plan to make consultations with the public about major decisions a routine part of the governmental process. Popular and ongoing participation is essential to a healthy democracy.

## Proportional Representation

- We are committed to establishing Proportional Representation.

The current "First Past The Post" system of voting is totally undemocratic. It is possible for a party to get elected with a minority of the overall votes cast! This disenfranchises the majority of voters.

Proportional Representation (PR) is more democratic in that it actually reflects real voting patterns. Voters are able to elect representatives in proportion to their number. Under PR, all votes count, thus giving voters greater motivation to become involved in the decision making process.

## Voter Recall

- We are committed to establishing a means by which the people of a constituency can initiate the recall of their representatives in Parliament (“Voter Recall”).

We want a “strong” voter recall that is initiated and confirmed exclusively by the public. The voters should be able to remove their MP for any reason, or for no reason. It should not be possible for MPs, who merely represent the voters, to veto a valid voter recall petition.

## Devolution

- We will work to create a federal United Kingdom with constituent parliaments for each nation (including England). We will support decentralisation to the most local practical level.

We are decentralists and believe in equality, popular sovereignty and national self-determination. We are very much in support of the individual against the might of the state. Thus we oppose centralism - which can be dogmatic, undemocratic and totalitarian in nature.

## Rights and Constitution

- The National Liberal Party will institute a formal constitution and bill of rights.

There will be a civil rights watchdog to protect the people’s ability to make use of those rights.

# Foreign Policy

## Self-Determination

- We support self-determination for all nations and cultures across the world.

We consider it our duty to support oppressed minorities throughout the world. This would be done via economic, cultural and political means.

## Economic Sanctions

- We will apply sanctions against those states that routinely oppress dissent, especially of self-determinists.

Sanctions may range in scale from travel restrictions being placed on senior politicians of oppressive regimes to a total trade block.

## European Union

- We will renegotiate a meaningful reform of our membership in the EU, and thereafter conduct a referendum on membership. While we remain in the EU, we will fight for UK interests within the EU parliament.

We oppose the way the EU seems to be heading - effectively a strong centralised state controlling all of human behaviour, social, political, economic. We prefer a 'looser' arrangement whereby nation states can 'opt in' or 'opt out' of various Europe-wide schemes.

## Military Stance

- We will adopt a position of armed neutrality, and resist becoming embroiled in external wars.

We have already wasted too many lives fighting in wars that are not our concern. Our armed forces should be protecting our country's borders, not crossing over into another's.

## Nuclear Deterrent

- We will conduct a referendum on whether to renew or replace Trident, our nuclear deterrent.

We recognise that Trident relies on the tacit agreement of the USA for it to function.

There is considerable disagreement over what form our nuclear deterrent, if any, should take. We would put this forward for a national debate and referendum.

## Overseas Aid

- We will re-focus overseas aid to developing small businesses and co-ops to reduce welfare dependency and poverty and demand government reforms.

Allegations that some foreign aid doesn't reach its intended targets concerns us. We favour working directly with those aid workers 'on the ground' so that money could be spent where it is needed most.

# The Environment

## Solar Panels on Houses

- All new housing must have solar panelling.

Recent advances in low cost solar panel tile technology should be fully utilised.

## Renewables

- We will increase investment into renewable energy.

We would like to see various forms of renewable energy - such as solar, wind, tidal, and pumped-storage become the norm.

## Green Spaces

- We will protect our green spaces.

We will oppose policies that increase our population beyond sustainable levels. We will release run-down housing stock, long-term empty properties, and available brownfield land.

## Fracking

- We will end subsidies for the fracking industry. Companies wishing to conduct fracking will need permission from all landowners within one mile of the fracking site.

We favour safe forms of renewable energy. We are not convinced about the safety or desirability of fracking. We would remove market incentives that presently favour fracking.

# Transport

## The HS2 Project

- We will cancel further government investment in HS2.

This money will be invested in local transport schemes that benefit workers living in the same county as their workplace.

# The Economy

## Government Lending Direct to the Public

- We will establish a state bank offering interest-free (for a one-off admin fee) loans.

Britain's current debt-based banking system is immoral. Here private banks just create 'credit' out of nothing and then charges interest on this. Thus customers pay much more back to the bank than they borrow from them.

A sustainable and healthy economy can only be achieved by a stable interest-free money supply. A national bank will spend - and not lend - money directly into the economy. This will ensure that Britain's broken infrastructure - hospitals, schools, sports facilities etc. - can be fixed.

## Living Wage

- We will ensure the national minimum wage is a 'living wage' rate.

A person working full time with no dependents should not expect to need additional financial support from the state.



## Zero-Hour Contracts

- We will restrict zero-hour contracts.

Zero-Hour Contracts originally existed for professions such as lawyers and accountants who were typically paid lucratively and by the hour, rather than by the job.

In order to protect this niche and simultaneously remove the abuse that exists for current zero-hour contracts, the minimum wage for a zero-hour contract should be set at three times the minimum wage for a contract with 8+ hours per week.

## Unions

- The right of a worker to join a union shall be protected.

We believe that Trade Unions are vital in terms of ensuring better pay and working conditions, workplace issues, health and safety and various 'fringe benefits'.

## Employee Rights

- We will restore workers' rights to the levels they were at in 2010.

The changes in employee legislation imposed by the Conservative-Liberal Democrat coalition have damaged employee rights to the extent that they no longer serve to protect workers. As such, those changes must be reversed.

## TTIP

- We are opposed to the TTIP negotiations.

The current TTIP negotiations have taken place entirely outside the public eye. Something this fundamental to the way we run our society should receive a public debate before any decision.

# Taxation

## Stamp Duty

- We will remove stamp duty for properties under £150k.

The threshold for paying Stamp Duty - the tax paid on purchasing a home - should be raised to reflect the rising trend in house prices.

## Close Tax Loopholes

- We will work to close tax loopholes so that everyone pays their fair share of the tax burden.

We feel that it is completely immoral that the 'poorest of the poor' are punished with cuts whilst the 'richest of the rich' effectively get tax breaks via tax loopholes.

## Tax the Bonuses

- We would introduce a 50% tax on one off and staggered bonuses and 'golden handshakes' over £150k.

The vast majority of ordinary working folks work for a set salary plus, in some cases, overtime. They do not receive bonuses for simply doing their job. Our proposed tax will also relate to 'Golden Handshakes.'

## Income Tax Threshold

- Raise the tax threshold for an individual to £14k per annum.

We believe that the Income Tax Threshold - the level of income at which a person starts paying income tax - should be pinned at 50% of the average wage.

## Bedroom Tax

- We will scrap the “bedroom tax”.

We feel that it is unfair that Council tenants who have a spare bedroom are punished whilst those who live in Mansions go unaffected. This is morally wrong.

## HGV Road Tax

- Introduce a voluntary ‘night time’ road tax for hauliers at a rate of 25% of daytime rates but the vehicle could only be used on a road between the hours of 2000 hours and 0800 hours.

Creating an optional version of road tax for HGVs will encourage them to use roads during off-peak hours, easing the general flow of traffic through major cities.

## Austerity

- We will end the “austerity” regime imposed by the Conservative and Liberal Democrat parties.

The establishment of a national bank - which spends money into circulation - will mean that we can scrap all Austerity measures.

## Property Taxes (Mansion Tax, Council Tax)

- We will create new tiers of council tax, to ensure that extremely high-value properties are taxed appropriately.

We favour the introduction of a series of additional council tax bands designed to ensure that high-price properties are taxed fairly in relation to their value. The cost of housing in London, for example, has resulted in council tax becoming effectively a “poll tax” for all but the worst-quality housing.

We also favour “deferment” options, where anyone in a home that enters a higher tax bracket may apply to continue paying at the old rate. The debt for the raised council tax would accrue, and would be collected either when the property is sold or the property owner passes away. It is expected that for properties where this would apply, the accumulated years of underpaid council tax would still be far less than the sale value of the property.

## Welfare and Social Security

### Benefit Sanctions

- We will end the benefit sanctions that are threatening to cause a humanitarian crisis.

We believe that Benefits are effectively the least a person needs to survive as is. A sanction sends the message of “you don’t deserve to live.” It is morally wrong.

We favour investigating the possibility of using coupons to enable those on benefits buy various essential items.

### Pensions

- We would index link pensions to the retail price index.

Pensions - alongside all other forms of benefits - should be index linked so that those in receipt can buy essential items.

### Healthcare ‘Tourism’

- We will take measures to end “healthcare tourism” paid for by the NHS.

We will introduce a scheme where non-nationals would have to have worked in Britain for two years or more and paid tax for that period before they get ‘free’ at point of entry NHS treatment (A&E excepted).

# Law and Order

## Youth Crime

- We will introduce a national civic service for those youths who are between 16-18 years and convicted of a custodial offence.

Youngsters who haven't committed crimes have the option of taking up university or apprenticeships - something which is denied to those who may be in custody.

Any National Civic Service Scheme would not be organised along military grounds but will be used for social schemes dependent upon their skills/aptitudes of the young offender.

## Police Cameras

- Uniformed police officers will be wired up to a recorder and camera to ensure objective evidence is available in any interaction between police and members of the public.

We believe that technological advances make this possible. We feel that such cameras have the capacity to be used to defend the civil and religious liberties of all.

## Parental Responsibility for Children

- We would introduce a system whereby if a 'child' under 14 years of age is arrested and cautioned or convicted of a charge, the child's parents must attend an educational parenting course. We need to encourage civility teaching within the family unit.

Whilst we are opposed to too much state involvement in the running of individual's lives, we recognise the need for some state involvement and functions. Parental responsibility for children is one such case.

Our intention is to strengthen the family unit by making government care a last resort rather than immediate action.

## Legal Aid

- We will restore legal aid to the level it was before 2010.

Access to our legal system should be a right, not a privilege for the wealthy.

# Immigration

## Illegal Immigration

- We will ensure that immigrants do not overstay on their visas.

A large part of illegal immigration consists of people entering the UK legally on a visa, and then overstaying once that visa expires. We will ensure that our immigration authorities have the means to police expired visas.

## Employment Visa Sponsorship

- A company wishing to sponsor a visa for a migrant worker must ensure that the job will pay at least 75% of the national average per month.

This policy ensures that where migrant workers take a job, they are not hurting the poorest members of society by competing for jobs at the lowest tier.

We recognise that skilled immigrants do bring much-needed skills to the workplace. We also recognise that unlimited immigration will strain our social support infrastructure. We aim to strike a balance between these two needs.

## Political Refugees

- We will ensure that refugees can continue to seek safe haven in the UK.

We believe that there is a huge difference between those who are genuinely oppressed in their native lands and those who are merely ‘economic migrants.’

## Domestic Policy

### Official Statistics

- We will record self-identified national or regional identity in addition to official or “passport” nationality in government statistics.

National minorities from within foreign countries should be recorded as an additional statistic in the census and other government statistics, in addition to existing ‘similar’ sections (such as legal nationality, ethnic origin, and religious affiliation). This would allow, for example, the Kashmiri diaspora to be identified as distinct from the more general Indian immigration.

### Build for Britain

- We will “Build for Britain”.

“Build for Britain” is a campaign to develop expertise in construction, which would then be a tradable asset when bidding for international construction contracts, strengthening the British economy at the same time as fixing the housing crisis.

## Religious Slaughter of Animals

- The provenance and method of slaughter of all meat products must be clearly indicated, so that customers can make an informed choice.

We believe in animal rights - but at the same time we must respect the freedom to express religion in private.

## Arts Council

- Reinstate arts council funding.

We believe that supporting all forms of the arts should be seen as a function of national government.

## Recreational Drugs

- We will organise a referendum on the decriminalisation of marijuana and other class A & B drugs. Re-invest savings into education and rehabilitation but stiffer sentences for those who might continue to push drugs.

Some believe that the current 'war against drugs' has been lost. Therefore we will respect the outcome of the proposed referendum.

If some form of decriminalisation is voted for, the drugs in question should be taxed, subject to government control and thus criminal free. All savings should go towards drugs awareness campaigns and rehabilitation.



## Equality and Human Rights

- We re-affirm our commitment to equality of opportunity and human rights. We stand by the 2010 Equality Act and the 1998 Human Rights Act.

We support civil and religious liberties for all. We believe in absolute free speech with very few exceptions to this rule - say for those who promote violence. Either we all have rights - or none of us has rights. We support civil and religious liberties for all.

## Bank Holidays

- We propose to make St. Georges Day a bank holiday in England, and St. David's Day a national holiday in Wales, just as St. Patrick's Day in Northern Ireland and St. Andrew's Day in Scotland are bank holidays.

Britain has the fewest public holidays in Europe. The least we can do is officially celebrate the days relating to the Patron Saints of the British family of nations.

# Education

## Secondary Education

- We will ensure education includes a heavy focus on good citizenship.

We feel that effectively showing respect for others will have a positive effect in reducing anti-social behaviour among youngsters.

## Faith Schools

- There will be no public funding of schools that refuse to teach a positive awareness all faiths and philosophies.

Any school (faith or not) should be able to receive full public funding, provided it maintains full freedom of religious expression for its students and teach about all religions equally. A 'faith' school could continue receiving government funding, provided all activities specific to their faith are optional.

## Higher Education

- We will give young people the choice of a university education or training in a practical trade.

Young people should be free to choose vocational training instead of a university-focused "A-level" route, and it should be presented as a viable option. Such courses should receive at least the same level of support that university education receives.

## University Bursaries for Poorer Students

- Bursaries will be available for gifted young people who wish to go to university.

Opportunity for all and privilege for none should extend to education.

## Apprenticeships

- We will introduce tax breaks to companies who offer apprenticeships, and further breaks for companies that offered a guaranteed minimum 12 months contract on the new 'living wage' at the end of that apprenticeship.

Apprenticeships - especially those that can also offer guaranteed work for a year - are literally the building blocks for future employment.

# Key Strategic Sectors

- Certain sectors of the economy are key industries that help the rest of the country function. Because they would cause the collapse of large portions of the economy if they fail, they should not be vulnerable to the whims of the free market.

The National Liberal Party will identify essential “key industries” (rail network, roads infrastructure, energy utilities, and healthcare) that should be managed carefully. At a bare minimum, ownership should be limited to UK citizens or companies 90% owned by UK citizens (by restricting sale of shares). Serious consideration should be made into either nationalisation, forming a co-op, or employee-customer management models. Usually, the “profit motive” does provide the best interests of the nation. But when taken to excess, or when deliberately abused, or when a company is asset-stripped in line with capitalist “rules,” it can be devastating for the nation and people. The USA and other countries carefully control ownership of key industries for a reason. We should be doing likewise.

## The NHS

- We will maintain and invest in the NHS and keep it in public hands. The NHS should not be judged as a profit making exercise, but as a public service.

We believe that the NHS should be available to provide medical care free at point-of-need to all.

## Gas, Electricity, and Water

- We will investigate alternative management options for the utility companies, such as employee-managed or customer-managed. Any profits from these utilities must be used to reinvest in the utilities.

We believe that gas, electricity and water supplies could be considered as essential “key industries” (as outlined in the section on Key Strategic Sectors) and should be treated accordingly.

## Railways

- We will re-nationalise the railways.

Rail should become a service again. Second class fares would be reduced and first class fares increased. We will investigate alternative management options for the rail companies, such as employee-managed or customer-managed. Any profits from these companies must be used to reinvest in the utilities.