

# China FOCUS



An editorial on China and Hong Kong from the Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong

◆ Empowerment ◆ Justice ◆ Rights

Spring 2024

Liberal Democrats  
Friends of Hong Kong

## Can the UK have a Fair Climate Change Policy, Economic and Strategic Resilience and Liberal Trade? - A Panel Discussion

Spring Conference Fringe - Sat 13-00-1400 | Novotel York Room 6

- Modern Slavery / Forced Labour in the supply chain: **Given we are driving a new supply chain, we should take the opportunity to form better resilient networks which creates jobs and national security** while maintaining sustainable targets. Adding further nuance, what are the environmental cost and emissions associated with sourcing solar panels from the PRC?
- **Are there opportunities for Chinese businesses who may want stability and opportunities for their investments in free an open societies?** Can it conform with a resilient UK industrial strategy?
- Supply chains dependencies, **what is de-risking and how these dependencies have been successfully lessened** by comparable states.



Isabelle Hilton

Isabel writes on geopolitics, climate change and China. In 2006, she founded *China Dialogue*, an independent newsroom with topics on China and climate change. Her documentaries include *The Uses of History in China*, *The Shadow of the Emperor*.

Hilton holds two honorary doctorates and was awarded the OBE for her work in raising environmental awareness in China.



Irina Von Wiese

Irina is the Liberal Democrats Councillor for Borough & Bankside and a former member of the European Parliament. A civil rights advocate and lawyer, she also leads the organisation's overall compliance function, including anti-corruption, corporate governance and trade sanctions. As reports emerged on mass Uyghur labour camps in Xinjiang, Ursula proposed in the EU Parliament a ban on products made by forced labour; alongside far-reaching obligations on companies in all sectors to clean up their supply chains. The new rules mark a fundamental shift in the way businesses will be held accountable for breaches of human rights that may be happening at the other end of the globe, and unbeknown to us in Europe. And this concerns, just like data protection, not just EU firms but all companies globally doing business in the world's largest single market.

Campaigner in your Local Party?  
The LibDemsHK have a Campaign Drive

**FOR A FAIR DEAL**

For HK communities. Get in touch with [info@friendsofhongkong.org.uk](mailto:info@friendsofhongkong.org.uk)

### Looking forward to your support!

- Thanks for all the support to our motion submission - A Fair Deal for pro-democracy campaigners. Because of time constraints and our motion goes in line with the party's policy paper on international security, it was not selected. **We'd be submitting amendments and supporting the policy paper.**
- **Be sure to come and join the International Security motion - Saturday 11:10am**  
**F7 Liberal Values in a Dangerous World (International Security Policy Paper)**

Federal Policy Committee

Mover: Richard Foord MP (Spokesperson for Defence).

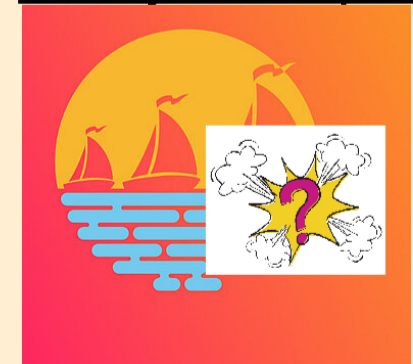
Summation: Dr Christine Cheng (Chair of the Policy Working Group).

Saturday

## We need your help



### Can you help with Fleet?



Can you give the Libdems HK team a hand in getting our website up and running on Fleet?

If you can help out, please give a call to [Larry Ngan](tel:07801736676)

email; [larrynganlibdems@gmail.com](mailto:larrynganlibdems@gmail.com)

Mobile: 07801 736676



## Civil Liberties is the Foundation of Hong Kong's Uniqueness and Identity

Yet Article 23 and the National Security Law are killing it

Stephen Roach published an article in the Financial Times - [It pains me to say Hong Kong is over](#) on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2024. He tried to explain that domestic politics, factors in China, and global development caused the city 'mired in the trap made in China', and pessimistic declared the city 'now it's over'.

As someone born and bred in Hong Kong, it is a bitter pill to swallow. **But as a trained historian of Hong Kong history, we understood the city was a 'borrowed place in a borrowed time'. What made Hong Kong unique since the beginning of the 20<sup>th</sup> century was its position in global geopolitics and the legacy of British colonial rule.** It was the British colonial rule which made the city remain unscathed from the trauma of the chaos under Communist China, and the government provided law and order, and civil liberties (even though it was not guaranteed till the 1970s), the citizens brought in its unique culture, from its food, mentality, to their own identity.

The imposing of the National Security Law (NSL) and the side effects of its enforcement have already negatively affected the status of the city as the global financial hub. **The recent legislation of Basic Law Article 23 would officially define treason and subversion activities in the Hong Kong legal system,** and as David Cameron correctly pointed out, it would adversely impact the civil liberties of its citizens.

As for businesses, they heavily rely on information and data to correctly set their business objective and allocation of their financial resources. They need a fair legal system to arbitrate any business disputes. Unfortunately, **the legislation of Article 23, defining the subversion activities made data collection very risky in Hong Kong.** Altogether with the negative impact of the NSL and China's effort to undermine the independence of the legal system, foreign companies were already forced to reconsider their business positions in the city.

Since 2021, a several US consultancies and companies already downscaled their operations in Hong Kong or withdrew from Hong Kong altogether. Most recently, Latham & Watkins, the world's second-highest-grossing law firm, cut off its Hong Kong lawyers from international databases, since 'US firms grow wary over Beijing's closer control of the territory.'

There is no short-term solution to the decline of the city. The key issue is the China factor. Yet in David Cameron's statement, he squarely placed the blame on the Hong Kong government. It is an ill-advised judgement, and I am concerned with the government's approach on its China strategy and the focus on Hong Kong.

### Larry is a directly elected member of the **FIRC** and Chair of the Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong

Born in Hong Kong, Larry studied History (Bachelor and Master Degrees) in Chinese University of Hong Kong, and moved to the UK in 2004. He worked in the financial sector since then and specialised in insurance markets in APAC region.

Larry joined the party in 2019 after the Brexit referendum, and have been candidates in the 2018 and 2022 local elections. He is also a frequent contributor to Interlib, the magazine for Liberal International British Group, and published several articles and book reviews on China and Hong Kong affairs.

He is an elected FIRC member since 2023. [@Larryngan1](#)

## Our Party Stands with the People of Hong Kong and successfully campaigns for civil liberties and human rights



**2021 - New visas introduced to allow people from Hong Kong to come and live in the UK**  
The British National Overseas (BNO) visa grants Hong Kongers the right to live, work and study in the UK. Since the new visa programme launched, over 120,000 Hong Kongers have applied to move to Britain. **Liberal Democrat MP Alistair Carmichael led the charge to introduce the new visa programme through his Hong Kong Bill.**

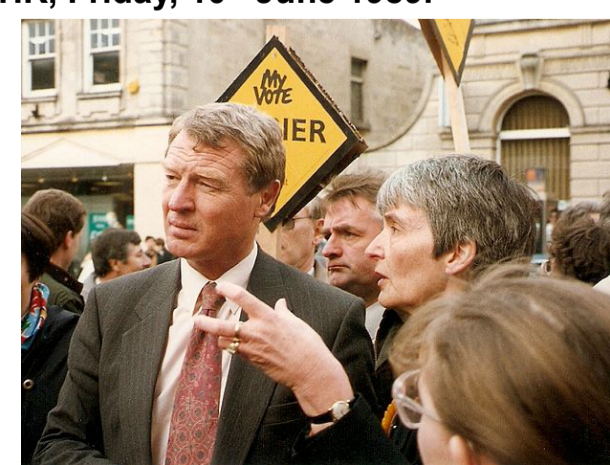
*"I spoke to a girl there who had been in Tiananmen Square and told me terrible stories about what had happened. The sense of anger from the Chinese here is extraordinary. They told me a million people had turned up at Happy Valley and not a bottle was broken. I did a brief interview in Mandarin and signed the book of condolence in Chinese" - Paddy Ashdown's visit to HK, Friday, 10<sup>th</sup> June 1989.*

At this difficult time, Britain needs to stand up on the world stage for those vital liberal values which are the cornerstone of our society: democracy, liberty, human rights and the rule of law. **The UK should be supporting democracies around the world – such as Taiwan – and standing up to states like China and Russia who wish to undermine our democratic values to their own end.**



**'It is time to do what we should have done during the handover: give the people of Hong Kong the guarantees they need by providing their right to live in the UK.'**  
Alistair Carmichael

Red Box THE SUNDAY TIMES





## Ending Impunity for Crimes Against Humanity

### A new workgroup towards policy paper

Liberal values live in very challenging times. What must be done through governing policies to strengthen the advocacy of pro-democracy campaigners? And also, what should governing attitudes be as it is clear the Conservatives since 2015 had undermine the work of pro-democracy advocates?

**Individuals and organisations involved in human rights violations must be told that their crimes come at a cost.**

The UK made valuable contributions to the Rule of Law and the Rules-based international order to promote stability and respect among nations. I shall describe this as one of the best British export. We can do more and lead in ending impunity for crimes against humanity. Further, on forced labour and killing of political opponents and journalists, the UK government should work with allies to initiate, promote and fund tribunals under the International Criminal Court to end impunity.

Why the International Criminal Court you may ask?

It is an international institution we should protect and empower which is built on the remits to end impunity for human rights crimes. Also, The current system to bring civil cases through domestic courts around the world is costly, if at all possible as limited by jurisdiction or ability to prosecute. For example, only US States allow for class-action suits but gathering a group of claimants and having the reward go only to the identified claimants is not the best remedy for justice and does not end impunity. Both UK and US law will also restrict cases against corporations based on jurisdiction or restrict cases against individuals who will not travel to our shores for trial. **Using the ICC as the foundation and enabling it to deal with more cases can be a powerful way to send a clear message to entities that sanction human rights abuses.**



**There is also the case for targeted sanctions. But how will sanctions be considered as fair? As importantly, how are sanctions accepted to be fair in a liberal world?**

Sanction regimes vary across nations. Yet, open and free states must work together to form resilient networks when engaging with challenging regimes. Also, the argument may be that certain sanction engaged in one nation is mere politically inspired. This then degrades the political will of other countries to follow suit. Although following suit is the right approach. Campaigners find it harder to persuade when there is a lack of political will. In the end, the lack of a comprehensive sanction regime lacked the teeth required.

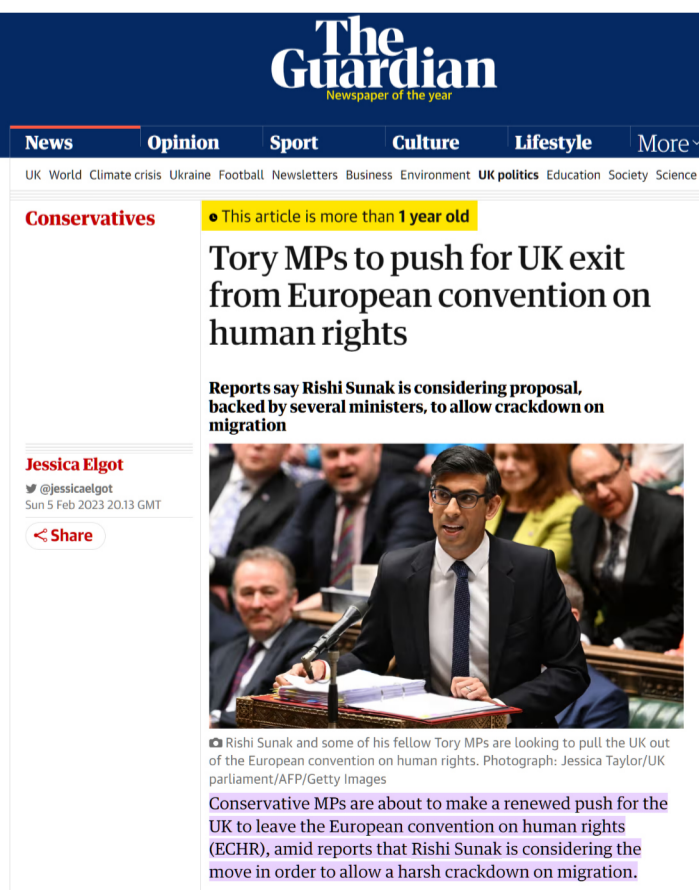
An international tribunal can be a recourse to adjudicate all evidence, including the work from academics – for example, the work done by Yale University CELI List of Companies Leaving and Staying Russia, and if agreed by the tribunal, to support all signatory to take actions. A strong network is then formed against the culprits of crimes against humanity.

How may consumers also be involved in building a resilient supply chain?

There can be a blacklist of companies which should be avoided, and a 'clear list' of those companies which has Chinese investment but were 'ringfenced' from national security threats or investment/management from those individuals who were under sanctions. And if so, what should this list be?

**We're looking for legal expertise, pro-democracy advocates and caseworkers to develop a policy paper with the team.** If you are interested, please contact Nicholas Chan by e-mail at [libdems@nicholaschan.co.uk](mailto:libdems@nicholaschan.co.uk)

Nicholas's on-line links: [https://linktr.ee/nicholas\\_chan](https://linktr.ee/nicholas_chan)



Missed our discussions or panel discussions like this one below? Don't worry. E-mail us for a link to the video. E-mail our team at [info@friendsofhongkong.org.uk](mailto:info@friendsofhongkong.org.uk). If you're good at IT, we need your help too setting up a sharing infrastructure.

## Hong Kong: A city of Empty Chairs and Empty Tables

### What can be done to attract HK teachers to the UK & the support they need & Lib Dems HK AGM

Friday, 15 Mar 2024, 1900hrs, Hybrid & at York Crementhorpe Community Centre

Special Guest: Callum Robertson | Incoming head of Sixth Form | Education Policy



Student activists has always been a pillar of HK's democratic movement. From Martin Lee who helped grow Hong Kong's student movement for more democracy and freedom in China, to student led vigils for Tiananmen victims and to the 2014 & 2019 city-wide protests, **HK youths actively participated in politics. This surely is influenced by the many hard-working teachers in HK. Since Beijing imposed the National Security Legislation, many teachers have left the sector.**

Liberal Democrats long championed a policy to provide safe harbour for the people of Hong Kong. Since the BN(O) visa scheme which we supported, teachers and education specialist have come to live in the UK. What can we do to attract these bright talents to nurture our UK youths? HK ranks one of the highest in academic achievements. These teachers from HK have a passion for our future generation. **Join our AGM on Friday night, 15 March (held hybrid), and hear more from Callum & LibDemsHK.**



Image credits: The Guardian, 5 Feb 2023, news article from <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2023/feb/05/tory-mps-to-push-for-uk-exit-from-european-convention-of-human-rights>

# Building liberal and free resilient networks

## Recognising China Written by [Nicholas Chan](#)

We believe in the spreading of liberal values, institutionalising democracy and the rule of law. We are pursuing 'Global Britain' with the UK belonging to a resilient network of free and open states. We want to promote a secure supply chain for national security, but there is also no national security if our strategies are detrimental to the resilience of our allies. It is also about **strengthening free and open states, to prevent them enticed by China, which will persuade them to slide further into autocracy.**

We seek to empower the citizens. **Sure, the Chinese have a rich, distinctive history. But what are the caveats to this admiration?**

I realise the Tang Dynasty was an enlightenment age with arts and poetry and a thought for liberal arts a century before the Magna Carta was codified. Officials from Japan learned from Chinese scholars and brought back books to develop their governance system.

Even further back, Lady Zhen, the first wife of Emperor Cao Pi during the Three Kingdoms period, was a talented lady who was well-read by the age of 9. As a child, she was recorded when her brother says, 「汝當習女工。用書為學，當女博士邪。」 She answered, 「聞古者賢女，未有不學前世成敗，以為己誡。不知書，何由見之？」 - *Her brother exclaimed sarcastically, "You are well rehearsed in skills and books, like any scholar." To which the young Lady Zhen replied, All virtuous women must learn from history to survive in noble households, if I could not read the scriptures, how can I reflect to be a noble lady for the family?*

Of course, we have to add some nuance. The enlightenment from the Tang Dynasty failed in corruption and, without institutionalising governance, procrastination among emperors brought decline. Lady Zhen was asked to commit suicide and died a terrible death. The rights of women saw no progress till the 1900s even though great scriptures are recording the likes of Lü Zhi, Wei Zi Fu, Lady Zhen, Wu Zetian to Qiu Jin.

**Similarly, we have to realise it is the political power in Beijing who have born no good faith** in keeping with the rules-based international order, cracked down on its citizens by brutal and oppressive means and initiated forced labour camps across Xinjiang targeting Uyghur Muslim minorities. **We must have a clear voice to call out these oppressions and human rights violations to give a voice to the people.**



### What do the protesters want?

Electoral freedom is the main demand. This is a perennial concern in Hong Kong, and it has again come to a head after China announced that Beijing would vet candidates to run in the 2017 elections, thus regulating the race to be Hong Kong chief executive. Protesters see the new rules as a sign that China may be seeking to erode the "one country, two systems" rubric in place in Hong Kong since 1997, when it reverted from British to Chinese control.

Hong Kong



Tom McCarthy

@TeemcSee  
Mon 29 Sep 2014 18:30 BST

High-school demonstrators hold signs during a protest outside the headquarters of Legislative Council in Hong Kong. Photograph: Xaume Olleros/AFP/Getty Images

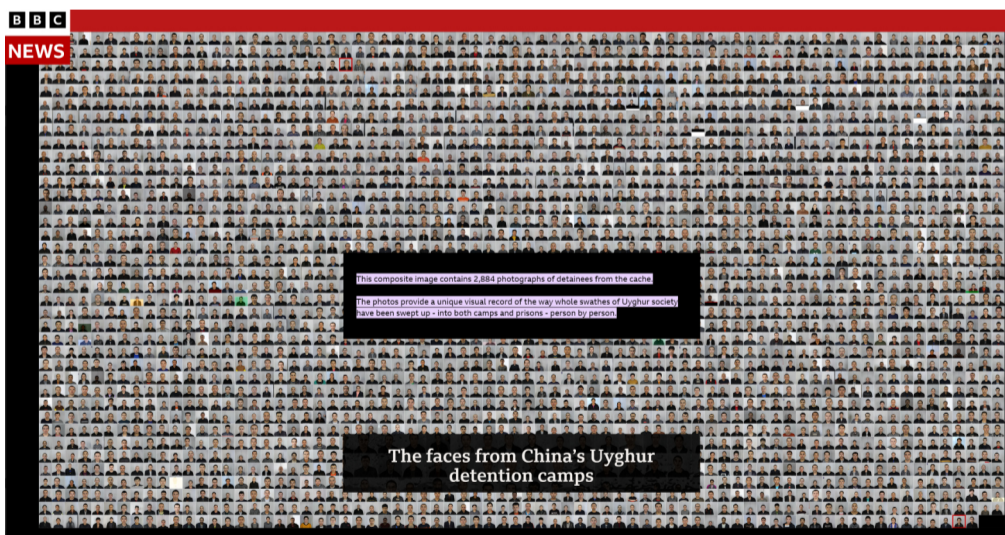
News article credits: Under the umbrellas: what do Hong Kong's protesters want from China?, The Guardian, available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/sep/29/hong-kong-democracy-protests-china-umbrellas-police>

The many citizen-led protests in Hong Kong since the handover in 1997 were Hong Kong-inspired and HongKongers-led. I will proudly put on a 'Made in Hong Kong' sticker to these citizen's democracy. My family are close friends with Hang-tung CHOW, the barrister who led many Tiananmen vigils in Hong Kong and is a strong campaigner for better work rights in China. She was already vocal in 2010, bringing attention to the working conditions and suicides in Foxconn, which produces many of the Apple products that we use.

**I frequently attend the Tiananmen vigils in Victoria Park and the protest rallies in the city. At the end of these events, we clear up and begin another day of policy-making for better social justice and fairness in society in any way we can think of. Not a single glass is shattered; not a single "foreign force that Peking so profoundly perpetuates" could ever be needed to motivate us in search of liberal democracy.**



**WE have moved policies in the Liberal Democrats like [Hong Kong's Future \(Autumn Conference 2020\)](#) and [The Uyghur Genocide \(Autumn Conference 2021\)](#).** These motions were passed without amendments. Thank you for flying the liberal flag.

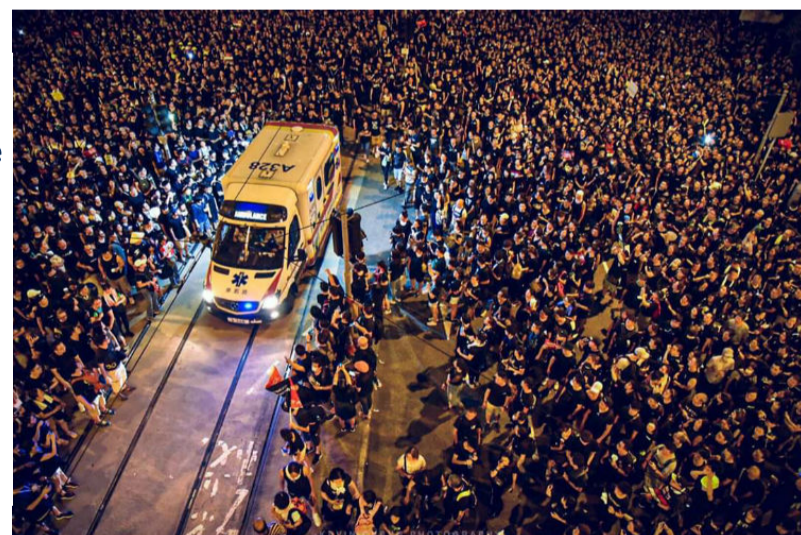


This composite image contains 2,884 photographs of detainees from the camps. The photos provide a unique visual record of the way whole swathes of Uyghur society have been swept up - into both camps and prisons - person by person.

The faces from China's Uyghur detention camps

News article credits (left): BBC News The faces from China's Uyghur camps reported by John Sudworth, news available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/extra/85qihtw6e/the-faces-from-chinas-uyghur-detention-camps>

(Right) In a protest attended by almost 2 million, protesters make way to allow an ambulance through.



**And the next step? We are focusing on developing papers and supporting campaigns in calling for the UK Government to:**

- 1) Restore the UK's reputation as an international development superpower,
  - a) **by reinstating the 0.7% of national income target on aid.** Help nations build resilient networks.
  - b) **supporting and funding international institutions so that they can expand their ability to end impunity for crimes against humanity,** and actively investigate individuals who support statesponsored human rights violations.
- 2) **Align with the European Union to speak out in support of universal values and stand firm against the CCP-led challenge to the world liberal democratic order and human rights.** This should include sanctions on abusers of human rights in China, especially in Xinjiang, Tibet and Hong Kong.
- 3) **Act on the dangers posed by the Chinese Intelligence Services (ChIS)** as reported in the Intelligence and Security Committee of Parliament on China [report](#). The ChIS is a Party apparatus, not state, and that it is well funded to carry out abduction and physical intimidation and more - activities that go beyond the norms practiced by other such *intelligence agency*.

## Please support my campaigns with the Medway Liberal Democrats team

Follow Nicholas Chan on Twitter  @nicholas\_yhchan |

### Liberal Democrats Parliamentary Candidate for Chatham and Aylesford

I don't have super-rich donors to call on to support my campaigns. Instead, the team and I rely on small donations from party members and supporters like you.

And we are doing good for residents in Medway Towns. For too long, residents have to struggle with neglect from the Medway Conservatives or over-ruled by Medway Labour. Just this month, **Medway Labour announced they'll increase a family swim by 78%! Indeed, this is in-part due to the financial blackhole left by the Conservatives.**

### But Medway Deserves Better!

Liberal Democrats councillors in Mid-Devon have shown how the budget can be balanced and paddling pools staying opened. **Medway Liberal Democrats started a petition calling to scrap free swimming and it attracted BBC and local news attention. The towns are speaking about it!** Now even the Tories MPs are splashing big on Facebook ads and call for free swimming.

With your help, we can run a sustained campaign for a fair deal in Medway; because we're always out there to listen at the door. We're a strong second in our target wards with increasing vote share. **I'll use this GE to develop our target wards and return LD councillors to Medway. BUT OUR RESERVES ARE RUNNING LOW.**

### Please support me & my team by making a one-off donation

To make a [donation to the Medway Liberal Democrats](#) for

Nicholas's campaign, you may

Scan the QR code or email Nicholas

 [libdems@nicholaschan.co.uk](mailto:libdems@nicholaschan.co.uk)

for Medway LD's bank account details.



**BBC**

**NEWS**

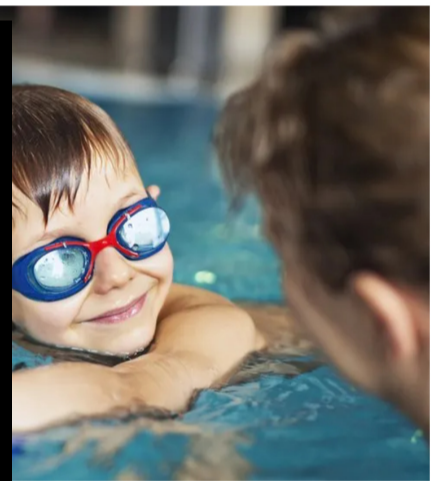
Home | Israel-Gaza war | Cost of Living | War in Ukraine | Climate | UK | World | Business | Politics | Culture

England | Local News | Regions | Kent

### Medway Council: Lib Dems fight plans to scrap free swimming

Source Credits: BBC News, 24 February 2024

Available at <https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-kent-68373434>



## A New Round of Repression, and to the Ends of the Earth

Written by: Arthur Wu

 [@ArthurWu2021](#)



In Orwell's dystopian world, the law does exist. But, it is an oppression without borders where law-making falls under no scrutiny. This is becoming Hong Kong, though promised that Hong Kong people would have now governed Hong Kong.

The way Beijing imposed the National Security Law. It then changed the electoral system to fit in a "patriotic-only" legislature to pass Article 23 - more draconian security powers to re-write the common law. This reflects Beijing's expansionist views. **Beijing's mouthpieces will tell you there's American expansionism and CIA conspiracy theories. However, the Chinese Intelligence Service acts beyond what is performed by other national intelligence services. Which other free and open states have placed bounties on overseas dissidents and abducted them to sentence them to the death penalty? None!**

But I'm proud of the Liberal Democrats and **I stand as a team in defiance.**

At the Young Liberals Conference, we unanimously called for the **freeing of all political prisoners** and that liberal parties will work

together to **prevent free and open states from being enticed by China and sliding further into autocracy.**

Hong Kong is a grave threat to HongKonger's liberty and freedom. But if these repressions are left unchecked by the free world, they will transcend into our British democracy. Beijing is determined to bring free and open states into its fold by any means necessary and breeding a new illiberal order. We must stand firm in defiance and support each other. As an Affiliated Organisation of the Party, Liberal Democrats Friends of Hong Kong stands firm in its commitment to defending human rights and advocating for the protection of individuals at risk. We urge governments, civil society organizations, and individuals to join us in this important fight and stand up against tyranny and oppression wherever it may occur. Only by working together can we ensure a world where freedom and democracy prevail.



## Spotlight on Nicholas Chan

I'm Nicholas and its exciting to stand as a Liberal Democrats candidate outside London. It's prove our party is motivated to give a fair deal for all levels in the United Kingdom. I joined the party in 2019, two years after moving to the UK. Notwithstanding my firm believe in liberal democracy and to champion a just and balanced society, I share heritage with the Liberal Democrats. Paddy Ashdown radically and passionately campaigned to give the people of Hong Kong a UK Right of Abode. In the beginning, there was no support from other parties, but it certainly was the just policy and empowered citizens to fight for a free and open state. His year long campaign, led to the British Nationality (Hong Kong) Act 1990, which gave me British Citizenship and I took up the prospect of living in Britain in 2017.

You can imagine Chatham and Aylesford is not the most diverse constituency in the country. But a few searches on Connect, you'd be surprise at the patches of diverse local communities that were never reached out. I'm taking the opportunity to **knock on their doors**. It's sometimes also important to reach out in the constituent's mother tongue. Certain portions of my Focus are bilingual and I'm hoping to incorporate more languages as the team grows. Don't forget, do certainly **write letters!** Many of our diverse communities have jobs at irregular hours and are sometimes disfranchised with the opportunity to meet local candidates or the MP.

With the help of my Church, I'm **holding town hall forums** reaching out and building relationships. It's also an important pathway for locals to approach for casework and **putting my advocacy skills as a training solicitor to work**. Take social housing as an example, proactive advocacy ends the bureaucracy and avoids moving the matter at Courts. It's a fair deal for everyone.

It is challenging hard work. The last LibDems local Councillor was in 2015. But I'm pleased I've got a local party which actively presuades me to stand and support my campaign. We're the party for empowerment. It's about engaging and building a team. **If anything, these challenges is what drives me firmer to fight for seats for the Liberal Democrats.**



Nicholas frequently writes on Kent & Surrey Bylines on local politics and human rights advocacy. Follow Nicholas by scanning:



### Top Tip :

- ◆ Canvass ◆ Deliver ◆ Forum.

Knocking on doors is best. Nothing says the Lib Dems are the opposition like a visit from someone.



**Spotlight** is a monthly newsletter from the Diversity and Inclusion team at HQ. **Search 'Nicole Turner' in your e-mail account to locate them.** The LD Friends of HK team is very appreciative of our party's effort in diversity and would like to especially thank the D&I team in carrying out our party's beliefs founded on the idea of empowering people to live their lives in the way they want, giving them the opportunities and safety they need to flourish.



## Strenghtening Liberal Democracy

### Would you support our advocacy on human rights?

We seek to empower citizens both in the UK and aboard. In the past 5 months since the birth our new Affiliated Organisation (AO), we had held debates on *A China Strategy*, helped in the Local Elections and worked on amendments to the illiberal "Illegal Migration Bill". At every juncture, Liberals enter the arena to empower.

Through asylum casework, we also empower advocates for safe routes! No HK or Ukrainian had ever to travel on small boats. That's because of our liberal, compassionate policies granting safe harbour to all who needed it.

We shall continue our support in justice, promoting a way of life in a liberal democracy.

Last but not least, we support the powerful citizen, not the powerful state. Your contribution means every bit in our work on Empowerment, Justice & Rights.

Download our [Membership form \(by clicking\)](#) / scanning the QR code. Thank you for your support!

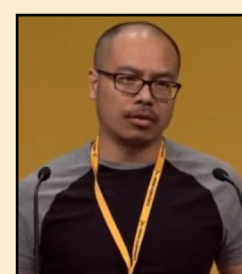


### The LibDemsHK team is ready to help local parties on HK BNOs



Nicholas Chan  
Twitter: [@nicholas\\_yhchan](#)

Email: [libdems@nicholaschan.co.uk](mailto:libdems@nicholaschan.co.uk)



Larry Ngan  
Twitter: [@LarryNgan1](#)

Email: [larrynganlibdems@gmail.com](mailto:larrynganlibdems@gmail.com)



Don't hesitate to drop us an email ◆