

*1 Policy Debates

Speakers cards will be available at the registration desk, please complete if you wish to speak and indicate which debate you wish to speak in and whether you will be speaking for or against the motion. Completed speakers cards should be dropped in the box provided. We cannot guarantee that you will speak.

The Policy motions are:

1. Additional options to the Blue Badge Scheme: Anyone regrettably immobilised/restricted in their movements by an accident, operation or illness on a temporary basis is not eligible under the current scheme to a Blue Badge. If it's a short term situation then people accept the difficulty but if it's a situation expected to last for a year what can be done? Well under the current rules nothing! One of my constituents was, as a result of major surgery to his legs virtually immobilised. His surgeon said the condition would last for a year after which mobility would return but for that year he was wheelchair dependant. During that year he applied for a badge and, having been honest enough to explain the fact that the disability was expected to last for just a year he was refused. His wife struggled to park the car in wheelchair friendly spaces, found difficulty in coping. From my investigations he is one of many. Why not look at introducing a one year, non-renewable badge for people finding themselves in such situations? It could be charged at a suggested minimum fee of £35 to cover the administration. If the condition then became permanent the person would need to apply for a permanent badge. **"Moved that Conference supports the call for the additional facility of a one year, non-renewable Blue Badge and calls for an urgent review by the Secretary of State to investigate this"**
2. Insurance costs and road accident figures are an on-going concern and subject for debate. We as a party should consider the introduction of a P plate 'Probation' scheme for new drivers. It would be almost a graduated licence scheme similar to that already in existence in New Zealand and Australia. Restrictions could be placed on the cc of the vehicle the new driver could drive in their first year of driving, a maximum number of passengers permissible in a vehicle driven by a 'P' plated driver could be stipulated and consideration given to a maximum speed for 'P' plated drivers on the motorways. The East Midlands is 'home' to large sections of the motorway network along with many major routes and based upon information to hand that One in four people killed or seriously injured in road crashes is either a young driver or a passenger in a vehicle driven by a young driver.
"Conference calls on the Secretary of State to instigate a review of the situation and consider the introduction of a mandatory national P Plate scheme".
3. The subject of opt in/opt out on donor organs is a cause of much debate. The importance of donor organs cannot be underestimated. Many persons carry donor cards but for others it is a subject that has either not been considered/discussed. As the NHS sees pressure growing and acknowledges that the need for organ donation is growing.
" Conference calls for a presumption of opting in to the donation process unless otherwise stated by the individual and that the Secretary of State be called upon to consider the matter and the steps required to bring forward such a scheme."
4. 'Ethical food labelling'. It seems there is currently no requirement for food producers, suppliers, wholesalers etc to put on their items whether their food is suitable for vegans or vegetarians, making it difficult for people to make informed choices. Indications are that there is additionally some demand for people wanting to know how food is sourced and what conditions it was farmed, laboured in etc.
"Conference calls on the Government to make it compulsory that food product packaging includes additional information (alongside nutrition information etc.) relating to social and environmental issues. Labels such as "Fair Trade" and "Free Range" exist for food products that meet certain criteria, however the majority of food product packaging does not include information relating to these issues".

Note for your Diary:

Your next East Midlands Regional Conference is also the AGM.

Speaker, Tim Farron, MP, President, Liberal Democrats.

It will be held at:

Agricultural Business Centre, Agricultural Way, Bakewell, Derbys, DE45 1AH

Saturday 3rd November 2012.