



Defence

We ask so much of our Armed Forces. But they have never been rewarded with the fair pay and conditions they deserve. They are sent into conflict without proper equipment, have to put up with sub-standard housing and have been stretched to the limit by two wars. Too much money is wasted through poor decisions and waste. The brave men and women of our armed forces are the most precious military asset we have. They must be treated fairly, with pay and conditions that reflect their amazing commitment to this country. They must get the right equipment to do their jobs properly and as securely as possible. Liberal Democrats would put the welfare of our forces first. We would ensure that no serviceman or woman was sent into harm's way on less basic pay than the starting salary of a police constable. We would spend taxpayers' money more effectively on equipping our forces for the tasks of the future, not old Cold War threats.

A pay raise for the lower ranks. Our brave troops put their lives on the line for this country. But too many of them are paid a pittance in reward. Liberal Democrats will give lower ranks a pay rise, so that their pay is brought into line with the starting salary of police constables. We will also reduce the number of civil servants in the Ministry of Defence and senior officer in the Armed Forces.

Homes for heroes. Too many armed forces' families live in shoddy housing. The least our heroes and their families deserve is a decent home. We would double the rate of modernisation of forces' family homes.

No to like-for-like Trident. Full-scale Trident is a Cold War system intended for a by-gone age. It is unnecessary and, at £100bn over a lifetime, it is unaffordable. We will hold a full defence review to establish the best alternative for Britain's future security.