

CHRISTMAS GREETINGS AND BEST WISHES FOR THE NEW YEAR from the LDEA, 2019.

First of all, thank you for subscribing to the Liberal Democrat Education Association. It enables us to organise fringe meetings at conferences, liaise with our parliamentary education team and so on.

We helped prepare the motion for the September conference, which was mainly about Life-Long Learning and hailed by the Association of Colleges as an excellent proposal. It came out of the Commission that Sir Vince Cable had set up the previous year.

We had two good fringe meetings at the September conference; one on life-long learning in which we had excellent speakers. These were chief executives of the Association of Colleges, City Lit, Association of Employment & Learning Providers, together with our own Baroness Margaret Sharp, who is now LDEA President.

The other fringe was led by Sir Jon Coles, chief of the United Learning multi-academy trust, but we also had our own Amy Haldane from Sutton Council; she told us about how they were experimenting with bringing all schools to communicate together with the local authority. This issue remains one of concern to us; there is something missing at a local level in our education system at the moment.

I expect, like me, you are thinking how we move forward as a party in the current situation. We are working with the National Education Union on a joint fringe meeting at Spring conference and considering a broad discussion around purposes of education and the key issues on which we need to challenge the government. We will also be holding our AGM, so please consider joining our committee; we are looking for a membership secretary in particular to help communicate with people such as yourself.

I think we can be proud of the manifesto in the general election, but more thinking to be done and we need to get our messages to more teachers, parents and the general public.

May I also recommend reading the attached piece from a speech by Layla Moran, with its simple message that improving education is not only about more funding.

So let me extend best wishes for the end of the Christmas season and a joyous and worthwhile New Year.

Nigel Jones
Chair, LDEA