

LibDems announce their European candidates

Launch of Scottish Liberal Democrats European candidates list

Scottish Liberal Democrat Leader Willie Rennie today unveiled his party's candidate list for the European elections on 23^r May. He stressed that every vote for a Lib Dem MEP will help stop the division and damage imposed by Brexit.

Willie Rennie said the list includes a partner in an Aberdeen law firm who has spent 20 years supporting start-up businesses and entrepreneurs in the North East, the former Chief Campaign Spokesperson for Scotland Stronger In Europe, and an EU citizen who represents the hundreds of thousands of people who have made their home in Scotland but whose futures are put at risk by Brexit.

The Scottish Liberal Democrat candidate list is as follows:

1. Sheila Ritchie
2. Fred Mackintosh
3. Catriona Bhatia
4. Vita Zaporozcenko
5. John Edward
6. Clive Sneddon

Scottish Liberal Democrat Leader Willie Rennie commented:

"I am delighted to announce our list of candidates for the European elections. We have a strong group of people who are committed to protecting our place in Europe.

"This election gives voters an opportunity to demand an end to

the constitutional chaos we've endured for years. People are fed up with Brexit and listening to all the arguments. It has divided our country and damaged our economy for long enough.

"A vote for Scottish Liberal Democrats is a vote to stop Brexit and will send a message to the SNP on their unwanted independence plans. Every MEP we gain in Scotland will help make the division and damage stop."

Lead candidate Sheila Ritchie added:

"I am thrilled to be leading the fight to secure Lib Dem seats in Brussels and a chance to stop the chaos of Brexit dead in its tracks. This election provides us with a tremendous opportunity.

"Brexit is bad for the NHS, for our universities and for our farming communities. People across the country have been wracked with worry over Brexit uncertainty and this is a way to make it stop.

"Liberal Democrats want close ties with our neighbours, not new barriers and broken partnerships. We passionately believe in a Britain that's open, tolerant and international in outlook and we want the public to have the final say on Brexit."

The Edinburgh based candidates include Fred Mackintosh who is a busy and well regarded Scottish human rights lawyer and Advocate. After a number of years away from front line politics he has returned to campaigning.

In 2010 he was the Liberal Democrat Parliamentary Candidate for Edinburgh South where after a high-profile campaign where he cut the Labour majority to 316. From 1999 to 2007 he was a City of Edinburgh Councillor and in 2012 was a member of the Campbell Commission that developed the party platform of calling for home rule for Scotland within a Federal United Kingdom and as a member of the European Union.

He lives in southern Edinburgh with Angela and their three children.

Originally from Latvia, 28 year-old Vita Zaporozcenko first moved to Scotland in 2009. She attended University of Aberdeen, graduating with MA (Hons) in Politics and International Relations in 2013. Whilst at university, she was actively involved in the Students' Association, focusing on equality issues.

She currently works for Alex Cole-Hamilton MSP as his casework manager and volunteers with Leith Conversation Café. Her policy interests include housing, mental health and animal welfare. An avid reader, she is fluent in three languages.