

FRIDAY 22 FEBRUARY - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Mid Sussex Lib Dems Prepare to Fight 'BLUKIP' Entryists in May Local Elections**

**The defection of three Conservative MPs to The Independent Group has cast a light on an organised campaign to deselect Mid Sussex MP Sir Nicholas Soames.**

Mid Sussex Liberal Democrats have pledged to fight a wave of right-wing Conservative 'entryists' in this May's local elections. Anna Soubry, one of the MPs who left the Conservative Party on Wednesday 20 February, highlighted in her resignation speech that Mid Sussex is one of many local Conservative Associations being transformed by Brexit extremists.

LEAVE.EU is running a campaign urging former UKIPPERS to join the Conservative Party with the aim of deselecting sitting MPs and turning the party into a hard-right organisation. Leave.EU claims on its website that 25,000<sup>2</sup> people have joined the Conservative Party as a result of this campaign. If true, it would mean that 1 in 5 members<sup>3</sup> of the Conservative Party are now what are being called 'BLUKIPPERS'.

Ms Soubry named Mid Sussex MP Sir Nicholas Soames as one of their potential targets. She said: "Overwhelmingly the majority of associations are being infiltrated by nationally orchestrated entryism, blatantly designed to remove rebel MPs who they label traitors. Conservatives with the stature, the service and loyalty of Sir Nicholas Soames, Sir Oliver Letwin, the former party chairman Dame Caroline Spelman, are being hounded and they are being pilloried."<sup>1</sup>

Robert Eggleston, Liberal Democrat Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Mid Sussex said, "I am alarmed at what is happening to the Conservative Party. It is no longer a party of moderate 'small c' conservatives, but a party of zealots. With local elections to Mid Sussex District Council two months away, the Lib Dems are urging voters to look very carefully at the biographies of the Conservative candidates standing for election. This is especially true where sitting councillors are standing down and new candidates are seeking to be elected for the first time."

Alison Bennett, the Arundel and South Downs Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for the Lib Dems added, "In the same way that we have seen Momentum take over the Labour Party, this 'Purple Momentum' is just as dangerous. The Liberal Democrats welcome the decision of moderate Labour and Conservative MPs who this week have said 'enough', and left their parties to sit as MPs in 'The Independent Group'. It is a brave decision, and we wish them well."

---

**ENDS**

**FOR MORE INFORMATION PLEASE CONTACT:**

**Alison Bennett, Prospective Parliamentary Candidate for Arundel and South Downs**

Mobile – 07740 648956, Email – AlisonBennettLD@gmail.com

**NOTES TO EDITOR:**

1. <https://www.telegraph.co.uk/politics/2019/02/20/tory-grassroots-deny-blukip-infiltration-mp-defectors-accuse/>

Mid Sussex

2. <https://leave.eu/deselect-these-shameful-tory-mps/>
3. The Conservative Party does not release its membership statistics. However, it was reported to be 124,000 people in April 2018.  
<https://researchbriefings.parliament.uk/ResearchBriefing/Summary/SN05125>  
 $25,000/124,000 = 1 \text{ in } 5$