

## BHA Manifesto Table – Election 2010

BHA Manifesto Issue	Conservatives	Labour	Liberal Democrats	Green Party
<a href="http://www.humanism.org.uk/uploads/documents/GeneralManifesto2010.pdf">http://www.humanism.org.uk/uploads/documents/GeneralManifesto2010.pdf</a>	<a href="http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Manifesto.aspx">http://www.conservatives.com/Policy/Manifesto.aspx</a> *	<a href="http://www2.labour.org.uk/uploads/TheLabourPartyManifesto-2010.pdf">http://www2.labour.org.uk/uploads/TheLabourPartyManifesto-2010.pdf</a> *	<a href="http://network.libdems.org.uk/manifesto2010/libdem_manifesto_2010.pdf">http://network.libdems.org.uk/manifesto2010/libdem_manifesto_2010.pdf</a> *	<a href="http://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/resources/Manifesto_web_file.pdf">http://www.greenparty.org.uk/assets/files/resources/Manifesto_web_file.pdf</a> *
<b>“We want a government that will protect the Human Rights Act (HRA)”</b>	They intend to replace the HRA with a British Bill of Rights, and will push for an opt-out of the European Charter of Fundamental Rights. <sup>1</sup>	Brought in the HRA and support it and will not repeal or resile from it.	Will protect the HRA.	Want to move towards a written constitution with a Bill of Rights.
<b>“We want an end to state maintained faith schools”</b>	No plans to scrap them, and will give more powers to parents to open schools of their choosing which could be religious in character. David Cameron has said he is a “big supporter” of faith schools. <sup>2</sup>	Since 1997 Labour have had a policy of increasing both the number of state-funded faith schools but also the type, with new Academy faith schools and also state-funded Muslim and Hindu schools being opened. <sup>3</sup>  Gordon Brown has said “We very much value the contribution faith schools make to education and the choice they provide for parents.” <sup>4</sup>	Allow parents to continue to choose faith-based schools within the state-funded sector and allow the establishment of new faith schools.  Will ensure that all faith schools develop an inclusive admissions policy and end unfair discrimination on grounds of faith when recruiting staff, except for those principally responsible for optional religious instruction.	Believe that no religious organisation should run a state funded school, and say that all private schools have to reflect the inclusive nature of British society. Also want to make sure that all schools fully “embrace multi-faith perspectives”. <sup>5</sup>

<sup>1</sup> David Cameron speech, November 2009. [http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/11/David\\_Cameron\\_A\\_Europe\\_policy\\_that\\_people\\_can\\_believe\\_in.aspx](http://www.conservatives.com/News/Speeches/2009/11/David_Cameron_A_Europe_policy_that_people_can_believe_in.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> David Cameron, interview in Catholic Herald, April 2010, <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/features/f0000552.shtml>

<sup>3</sup> DCSF, Faith in the System, 2007, <http://www.governornet.co.uk/linkAttachments/Faith%20in%20the%20System.pdf>

<sup>4</sup> Gordon Brown interview in the Jewish Chronicle, April 2010, <http://www.thejc.com/news/uk-news/30741/gordon-brown-his-jc-interview-full>

<sup>5</sup> Green Party policy, <http://policy.greenparty.org.uk/mfss/med.html#Faith>

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<b>“We want a society that is based on equality and respect for diversity, that does not privilege the religious over the non-religious...reflecting this in policy and legislation”</b>	Broadly supported the Government’s Equality Act, however attempted to change the definition of “religion and belief” in the Equality Bill, which could have meant that non-religious beliefs were not protected equally under the law. <sup>6</sup>	New legislation and the Equality and Human Rights Commission will ensure that people are not held back at work because of their gender, age, disability, race and religion or sexual orientation.  However, the Equality Act contains a number of exceptions for religious organisations to allow them to discriminate. <sup>7</sup>	Supported the Government’s Equality Act and tried to amend it to reduce exceptions for religious organisations.	Will work to ensure respect for everyone whatever their ethnicity, gender, age, religious belief or non-belief, sexual orientation, class, size, disability or other status.  Oppose all opt-outs from equality and antidiscrimination laws by religious organisations.
<b>“We want local government to stop religious privilege and allow all charity and voluntary groups to have a say on policy”</b>	Will give individuals and local government much more power and allow communities to take control of vital services.  David Cameron wants to see “a big growth in faith-based organisations and charities.” <sup>8</sup>	Continue to support religious organisations holding public service contracts, both financially and vocally. Have recently given £1million to religious organisations to help them lobby. <sup>9</sup>	Have made no announcements or policy initiatives on this issue.	Have made no announcements or policy initiatives on this issue.

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld200910/ldhansrd/text/100323-0003.htm>

<sup>7</sup> <http://www.humanism.org.uk/campaigns/equalities/equality-act-2010>

<sup>8</sup> Church Times, 16<sup>th</sup> April 2010

<sup>9</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/news/corporate/1507453>

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<b>“We believe in the rights of the terminally ill to choose assisted dying if they so wish, with an end to the prosecution of loved ones who aid the terminally ill in their choice”</b>	David Cameron is personally against a change in the law but also thinks it should be “subject to a free vote in parliament.” <sup>10</sup>	Gordon Brown has spoken out against legalising assisted dying <sup>11</sup> but also thinks it should be a free vote issue in parliament. <sup>12</sup>	Nick Clegg is “uneasy” about a change in the law and has said this issue “shouldn’t be determined by political leaders” and “has to be a free vote”. <sup>13</sup>	Believe the current laws are “arcane” and that it is wrong to prosecute family members in helping loved ones to die. Although, they stress safeguards must be in place. <sup>14</sup>
<b>“We believe in an end to the ritual killing of animals without stunning, on religious grounds”</b>	Have made no announcements, and make no mentions of the issue in their manifesto.	Have pledged to support animal rights, but have refused to ban ritual killing on religious grounds. <sup>15</sup>	Have made no announcements, and make no mention of the issue in their manifesto.	No policy on this specific issue, but are fundamentally opposed to all aspects of animal cruelty.

<sup>10</sup> David Cameron, Interview in Catholic Herald, April 2010 <http://www.catholicherald.co.uk/features/f0000552.shtml>

<sup>11</sup> Gordon Brown article in The Telegraph, <http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/newstopics/politics/lawandorder/7301399/Gordon-Brown-dont-legalise-assisted-suicide.html>  
<sup>12</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/society/2009/mar/20/gordon-brown-assisted-suicide>

<sup>13</sup> Nick Clegg, 6<sup>th</sup> April 2010, [http://www.politics.co.uk/audio-video/video/general-election-2010/video-nick-clegg-on-assisted-suicide-\\$1369373.htm](http://www.politics.co.uk/audio-video/video/general-election-2010/video-nick-clegg-on-assisted-suicide-$1369373.htm)

<sup>14</sup> <http://www.greenparty.org.uk/mediacentre/releases/greens-welcome-public-debate-on-assisted-suicide.html>

<sup>15</sup> <http://www.defra.gov.uk/foodfarm/farmanimal/welfare/slaughter/index.htm#religiousslaughter>

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<b>“We want to change RE, to teach objectively about religious and non-religious beliefs, and end religiously themed collective worship in state schools”</b>	Have planned a radical shake up of the education system, and loosening of the governments control over the curriculum, which could lead to greater disparity between what different schools teach. <sup>16</sup>	No plans to change RE or collective worship. Although, they have recently published new guidelines on the subject that include the necessity to teach secular and humanist beliefs. <sup>17</sup>	A fair and balanced approach to RE, teaching what people believe rather than what to believe. However, they will allow faith schools to continue to offer Religious Instruction. Also call for all collective worship and Religious Instruction to be covered by an opt-out for pupils who those who have sufficient ‘maturity’. <sup>18</sup>	Religious education, focusing on students’ ethical, moral and spiritual development, and celebrating religious and spiritual diversity, will be provided in all schools. Religious instruction in a particular faith will only take place outside of school hours. <sup>19</sup>
<b>“We want to remove the Bishops automatic right to sit in the House of Lords”</b>	Want a mainly-elected second chamber to replace the current House of Lords. Have wanted to retain a place for Bishops. <sup>20</sup>	Pledge to create an elected second chamber, although a Government document shows plans to retain places for Bishops. <sup>21</sup>	Want a fully elected House of Lords.	Reform the House of Lords to become a fully elected body.

<sup>16</sup> <http://www.ekklesia.co.uk/node/11793>

<sup>17</sup> [http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn\\_id=2010\\_0027](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/pns/DisplayPN.cgi?pn_id=2010_0027)

<sup>18</sup> Liberal Democrat policy, [http://www.libdems.org.uk/policy\\_motions\\_detail.aspx?title=Liberal Democrats back plans to cut primary class sizes to 15&pPK=78ba6751-741c-43cd-ab37-1fcf824b8a79](http://www.libdems.org.uk/policy_motions_detail.aspx?title=Liberal%20Democrats%20back%20plans%20to%20cut%20primary%20class%20sizes%20to%2015&pPK=78ba6751-741c-43cd-ab37-1fcf824b8a79)

<sup>19</sup> Green Party policy, <http://policy.greenparty.org.uk/policypointers/ppeducation.pdf>

<sup>20</sup> Government White Paper, <http://www.justice.gov.uk/publications/docs/elected-second-chamber.pdf>

<sup>21</sup> <http://www.guardian.co.uk/politics/2010/apr/19/house-of-lords-reform>

## BHA Manifesto Table – Election 2010

\*All party policies come from the respective Party manifestos unless specific reference is given.

The BHA is the national charity supporting and representing people who seek to live good lives without religious or superstitious beliefs. It is independent of any political party and does not support, fund or advocate any particular political party.

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