

Rt Hon Sir Vince Cable MP

Leader of the Liberal Democrats, MP for Twickenham

Vince was born to a working class family in 1943. His father, Len, was a craftsman for Rowntree and his mother packed chocolates for Terry's. Vince read Natural Sciences and Economics at Cambridge University where he was President of the Union, followed by a PhD at Glasgow University.

Professional Career

From 1966 to 1968 he was Treasury Finance Officer for the Kenyan Government. After lecturing at Glasgow University in Economics he worked for the Foreign and Commonwealth Office as a First Secretary in the Diplomatic Service (1974-1976). He was then appointed Deputy Director of the Overseas Development Institute, which included a period working for the then Secretary of State for Trade and Industry, John Smith, as a Special Advisor. From 1983 to 1990, he was appointed Special Advisor on Economic Affairs for the Commonwealth Secretary General, Sir Sonny Ramphal. In 1990 he joined Shell International, taking up the post of Chief Economist in 1995. He has also been head of the Economics programme at Chatham House and is a former fellow of Nuffield College Oxford and the London School of Economics.

MP for Twickenham

In 1981 he joined the Social Democratic Party (now the Liberal Democrat Party) and has been a member ever since. He was first elected as the Member of Parliament for Twickenham in 1997 and as an MP has helped tens of thousands of local people. He led the fight for local hospitals including saving and rebuilding the West Middlesex; saving Teddington Memorial Hospital; and fighting threatened closures at Kingston. Vince has also led the fight against cuts to local schools and to improve social care. Vince has headed campaigns against Heathrow expansion, aircraft noise and night flights.

Coalition Minister

As Secretary of State for Business, Innovation and Skills from 2010 to 2015 Vince created a distinctive Liberal Democrat vision for the economy. This vision included a long-term industrial strategy, promotion of science and innovation, banking reform, the creation of the world's first-ever Green Investment Bank, support for young people through apprenticeships, and the promotion of socially responsible capitalism.

Vince's achievements in coalition include:

- Proper funding for science and innovation leading to substantial expansion at a number of research centres across the country.
- Two new state banks to support small business (the British Business Bank) and green investments (the Green Investment Bank).
- Significant expansion of apprenticeships and the establishment of higher level apprenticeships.
- Saving and modernising the Post Office Network.
- Increased funding for Further Education.
- Reform of banking, separating retail and "casino" investment banking.

- Legislating to protect pubs from pubcos and small suppliers from supermarket bullying.
- Enforcing tighter controls on executive pay awards.
- Introducing shared parental leave.
- Championing more women on company boards.

Leader of the Liberal Democrats

On 20th July, 2017 Vince Cable became the Leader of the Liberal Democrats. His top priorities are fighting to make sure the UK remains at the heart of the EU, increasing access to finance for small and medium-sized businesses, investing in high-quality public services. He aims to build a mass movement, growing and diversifying the party membership, to help win elections and make our country more liberal and more democratic.