

Why does dissent protect democracy?

Because....

- Dissent – or at least the willingness to engage in some form of dissent – is required to challenge injustice and powerful interests and to push for alternatives
- Those with power over our lives are not always to be trusted, so we need to challenge wrong-doing and keep them on the side of justice
- Dissent is particularly required when consensus, collaboration and negotiation has failed and where the stakes are high for individuals and communities
- The current climate does not value dissent, and in many ways, stifles dissent
- We're a plural society, filled with different and competing points of view. Finding our way through, disagreeing, resolving, accommodating, concluding and living alongside these difference is what healthy democracies do
- Disagreeing is a way to express our different viewpoints in a plural society
- Disagreeing is a form of voting: to express our views to those in and with power, as well as with each other
- Disagreeing can create new ways of seeing things, which can be good for us all
- Dissent encourages doubt and challenges certainty
- Stifling dissent leads to violence, depression, hopelessness and apathy
- Without dissent, the democratic role of voluntary action and civil society is fundamentally undermined.

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