

## Britain in 2030 Competition – Our Party’s Vision Statement

This document presents the winning, shortlisted and commended entries to Your Liberal Britain’s essay competition, Britain in 2030. Based on the ideas submitted by nearly 7,000 people in our 2016 consultation, the competition invited any member of the party to write their own proposed vision statement for the Liberal Democrats.

Why do we need a vision statement? As a party we struggle at times to explain what we stand for: our values mean the world to us, but they can be hard to communicate. Tim Farron is energetically rebuilding the party as a social movement with a common purpose, and our determined stance on Brexit is building support and momentum both.

At the same time, our opposition to Brexit does not in itself explain who we are or what we want to achieve more broadly – nor will it continue to be the defining issue in politics indefinitely.

To support Tim’s work, we need a party-wide conversation about what we stand for. Your Liberal Britain has worked to provide that conversation, hearing from more than 7,000 people and running 67 events up and down the country.

Our approach is simple: to best explain what we stand for, we should describe how Britain could be different if we Lib Dems had our way.

**Blair and Thatcher each had more than a decade in government to remake Britain. We can still feel the consequences today. What would the UK be like after a decade of Lib Dem government?**

To do it, we need a short, simple, inspirational description of how life in Britain would be better if the Lib Dems had their way. Your Liberal Britain’s ‘Britain in 2030’ competition is our effort to write that vision statement.

**If we do our jobs well, this document could guide our policy making, inform our campaigns and communications, inspire our members, and support our candidates and elected representatives.**

The authors of the winning and runner-up entries will now form a writing group, along with four established writers in the party who we’ve invited ahead of time. Working from the winning entry, these seven writers will collaborate to produce a vision statement that the whole party can get behind.

We’ll start work in mid-February, and take as long as we need to get it right.

If you have any questions or suggestions, please contact Jim Williams, founder of Your Liberal Britain, on [jim.williams@liberalbritain.org](mailto:jim.williams@liberalbritain.org).

**Winner:** Lee Howgate

Open, connected, united. That's the liberal Britain of the future. A place where hope and opportunity allow each of us to succeed. Where barriers of discrimination are no more. Where prosperity is enjoyed by the many, not the few. And where there is a line below which we allow no-one to fall.

An open Britain: open not just for business, but to bold ideas and radical innovation. Open to talent from whatever place or background, open to new tools and technologies to embrace the challenges of the digital future. Open to new ways of running our economy and public services so that the citizen comes first, not the speculator.

We live connected like never before. Whether it be social networks, online shopping, or life-saving treatment in the NHS, technology links each of us to a world of opportunities. This is a world where connection is essential to success, and to attracting inward investment. And where fairness means we ensure no-one, and no community, is left behind.

The strength of the nation depends upon a wide diffusion of prosperity and opportunity. A liberal Britain means progressive measures to tackle failures of private enterprise, such as the housing market, transport and social care. Sectors where the state must have a leading role if we are to live in a fair and strong society. A liberal Britain means a globally connected nation playing a leading role in the defence of freedom. A successful NATO remains our strongest pillar of defence, and ultimate deterrent. And we should also lead on strengthening the global economy through measures to combat tax evasion, fraud and cybercrime. Britain will not be alone. We will have one of the biggest economies in Europe, and play a key role in European affairs. With our allies and partners, we can create a force for good, increasing the wealth of our nation and contributing to peace and international co-operation.

Our Britain is a nation united against intolerance, and the doctrines of hate and fear. United in the belief that the nation prospers when individual success contributes to the common good. Where there is fair deal for all, especially for those trying to find a job, a home, or a decent way to raise a family.

A place where no-one is attacked for daring to be different. A place where we encourage responsibility and celebrate compassion. Where the state makes sure the homeless are housed, the sick treated, the young well-educated, and the unemployed re-skilled. Not out of pity, but out of the conviction we are stronger in a fairer society. Richer when all talents are encouraged. Safer when we welcome our neighbours and fellow citizens, rather than hide behind our curtains and live in solitary fear.

A liberal Britain means a competitive economy, and an open, decent society. The one requires the other- a point some parties seem to have forgotten. It's a place that values your voice, not just your vote. Your land of opportunity.

## **Runner-Up: Scott Smith**

If recent events have taught Liberal Democrats anything, it is that the change we want for our country cannot be taken for granted. If Britain is to be transformed by 2030, we must work every day to make our vision – of freedom and opportunity for everyone – a reality. That vision, rooted in the principles our party and its forebears have held firm for more than a century, can support every child born in 2030 to enjoy their best future.

In a liberal Britain, every child, regardless of their background, will enter education on an equal footing: where they have come from will not determine their destination. Their innate curiosity and creativity will be nurtured, not diminished, by flexible schooling which works for pupils, parents and teachers alike. World-class education for all – both academic and vocational – will be the cornerstone of a better Britain, where nothing is a barrier to opportunity.

Every citizen in our better Britain will be equipped to forge their way in the world. They will be empowered to shape their communities; not only through a renewed, representative ballot box, but through mutual responsibility: the young for the old; the healthy for the sick; every one of us for our precious, fragile environment. It will be easier for citizens – with the help of ethical lenders – to fund the businesses, green spaces and projects on which their community will rely and thrive. This responsibility will extend out into the world: a better Britain will not tolerate in far-off lands that which it would not tolerate for itself.

The government of a better Britain will stand resolute in its support of those it is elected to serve. When times are good, it will spend responsibly: funding vital infrastructure on which our economy depends; revitalising our National Health Service; building homes so that no citizen is without shelter. When times are hard, our government will sustain – not slash – the safety net of which our party is right to be so proud; as our economy transforms, it will invest to reinvigorate in the best traditions of those who have gone before. In our better Britain, no one will go cold or hungry; those who work hard will at last reap the rewards.

Freedom will be at the very heart of a better Britain: the fundamental human rights for which so many have fought and died will never be taken for granted. LGBT+ people will marry, adopt and raise families without fear of discrimination. Children from disadvantaged backgrounds will be supported to break the cycle and achieve their dreams. Young girls will be sure in the knowledge that their ambition requires no limits. We will be proud to reach out a hand of friendship towards those, from wherever they come, who are less fortunate than ourselves.

A better, liberal, Britain will embrace and celebrate its diversity as a source not of suspicion, but of immeasurable strength: it is the foundation upon which we will build our future, together. Let's start, together, today.

## **Runner-Up:** Rory Freckleton

The last year has been a good one for our village. The parish council is beginning to make full use of its new devolved powers. Thanks to the new local income tax, we have a real say in just how much we want to spend and what we want to spend it on. For example, we have been able to employ a local lad to maintain the ditches and keep the hedges trimmed and also provide a part-time post for someone to maintain the local footpaths and liaise with the County Council, local farmers and users – a much better arrangement than when the work was contracted out. We've also been able to support the community shop financially which has allowed it to expand its facilities.

The Council contains a wide range of views, due to the STV system of proportional representation. Surprisingly, they can often be very united on specific projects that benefit the community. For example, the project to build half a dozen new homes for rent by locals got unanimous support.

It's great to see a number of small businesses starting up. Thanks to a push to keep the national infrastructure up to date, we have hyperfast broadband. Also, thank goodness all that Brexit nonsense is behind us. Our business community are trading in Europe and our cultural lives are so enriched by our twinning contacts with similar villages in France and Italy. We have made good friends in these countries and we are so glad that we can travel freely to see them.

It's also great to see the theatre opening up again in our local town. Money for this came from new tax arrangements that penalise companies who cut down too much on their labour force.

We are very proud of our solar array, which provides electricity for the whole village. The country is now getting 80% of its electricity from renewables. Along with the tax advantages for having an electric car, the air has never been cleaner. My GP said that the incidence of asthma had dropped significantly in the past few years.

There's an election next year. The Lib Dems have been in power for five years, so it is perhaps unlikely that they will get the 45% they need under the STV system to get a small overall majority, but they could well form a coalition with the greens and some of the independent social democrats. The House of Lords is now thankfully a thing of the past. The Second chamber is elected at a time not coincident with the General Election and is elected on a regional democratic basis.

I'm very pleased that my children seem happy at school. My eldest daughter is not the most academic child but is pleased that now she is in year 10 she has the opportunity to do a part-time engineering apprenticeship alongside a slimmed down GCSE curriculum which we've been able to help her choose.

**Shortlisted:** Helen Holdsworth

Home.

That is where Liberal Britain begins. For without a home we have nowhere to live and no starting point for a life worth living. We will provide a home for those who are unable to provide one for themselves. And we will give every possible assistance to those who wish to buy a home of their own.

Having a proper home is a prerequisite for a healthy life. So that is also our starting point for healthcare. We are determined to move forward from decades of a firefighting approach to the management of healthcare. A healthy nation can only derive from an educated nation. That does not mean a nation of graduates; it means a nation of people who are able to care for themselves and to support themselves; a nation of people with self-respect and respect for others. In Liberal Britain the people who deliver our food are as important as those who deliver our babies and run our country. No one was ever more valuable than a plumber on the winter morning when one woke up to a burst mains riser! Every child born into Liberal Britain will be born into a land of opportunity. No nation can function without a full range of skills and roles. In Liberal Britain there is a place for everyone and a role for everyone. Along with educational opportunity for the fulfilment of individual ability. We are all different, and our needs and abilities differ hugely. Liberal Britain is about people: about all people whoever they are, whatever they are and wherever they came from. If you have no feet we will provide your wheelchair. If you have two left feet we won't demand that you dance! Education is a right. But not one without responsibility. We will provide schools of a high standard and with a comprehensive curriculum in every community. There should be no need for any child to travel far to attend a good school. Schools are critical hubs within communities. They provide both place and opportunity for communities to function and to bond. But schools, like every other establishment, can only function if they have committed staff. The staff will only remain committed with respect. In Liberal Britain there is a duty of respect from each and every one of us.

Key and core to Liberal Britain is the self-determination of every community. All decision making should be done at the most local level possible. Thus everything must exist within the locality. That includes employment opportunities, clinics and hospitals, leisure facilities and educational establishments.

When life lets you down, or you let yourself down, it will not be the end of the road. In Liberal Britain there is no road that ends in a dead end. Help is always at hand. Over and above all, Liberal Britain is a nation in which the roads are paved with hope.

**Shortlisted:** Gareth Warrington

There's a sickness in Britain today. A sickness that's been driven by years of Tory austerity and a Labour Party that's fallen out of touch with the British people. Britain lacks direction and, above all else, lacks heart. British people want change from the Tory/Labour blame game and their endless broken promises. It's time for a truly Liberal revolution! The British people are progressive, and Britain needs progressive politics now more than ever. The Lib Dems represent tolerance, decency, respect, and fairness. These are inherently British values, but in recent years they have been on the decline in Britain. It's time to restore them. It's time for a truly Liberal Britain! The Brexit result was a massive shock to the country and there will be difficult times ahead, but only the Lib Dem's can ensure the best deal for the whole country. The major battle ahead is deciding what kind of country we want to be. We mustn't turn back the clock and dismantle human rights and workers' rights. We mustn't partake of a blame-game in which migrants are continuously blamed for all the woes of the country. We must not allow ourselves to look inwards. Britain must champion openness, tolerance of others, and look outwards as we engage with the rest of the world. As Liberals, we must stand by these values.

A government that doesn't listen to the problems of its people will eventually fall. A future Liberal government must listen to the people and address their concerns about their daily lives. The Liberal's should openly care about the overall health and well-being of the people. We must deliver wages that match the cost of living; create better protected pensions; develop more affordable homes; and tackle child poverty. The Lib Dems' should seek to create opportunities for all through better education and modern apprenticeships. We should abandon unnecessary exams for children and let teachers' get on and teach. Young people should be helped towards a brighter future and see a country that works for them, not against them. We must champion human rights and establish them at the centre of a civilised and progressive Liberal society. We must believe in the benefits of work whilst being compassionate towards those who cannot work. Prisoners should receive more skills training and be guided towards jobs upon their release. We must encourage entrepreneurial spirit, but not be afraid to ask those at the top to contribute more through taxation. Fairness must be at the heart of everything that we do. It's fair to ask those with more to contribute more. The Liberal's should promote renewable energy and support a green economy with real jobs from green energy production. We must support an NHS that's free at the point of need and delivers the very best care in the world, and to do this we must be prepared to raise taxes. In short, we need to be what Labour and the Tories are not. We must be progressive, dynamic and forward thinking!

**Shortlisted:** Sally Haworth

Liberal Britain 2030 stands unique in the world as a partnership of equal people working together for the benefit of all.

It has become the United Kingdom in fact not just words.

Its key values are: Respect for one another Mutual responsibility Worthwhile endeavour for all its 'partners' who take pleasure in helping others find and develop their skills and become productive members of society.

Those in executive positions regularly spend time on the 'shop floor' familiarising themselves with the every day realities and there is a culture of honouring and helping one another succeed.

The sea change came after the turbulent years of 2016-20 when people lost faith in politics and a new heart for truth emerged.

Untruthful political propaganda became unlawful; there was a shift in the media from bending the truth for sensational headlines, to working for the common good.

With the introduction of partnership workshops in schools and places of work, people came to value one another's insights and draw on each others strengths.

Despite many challenges confidence grew and national pride and self respect returned.

There are now strong regional centres which serve to connect local endeavours.

Most people are involved in some form of voluntary community service, receiving training and support from local police, health and community services, and each region is becoming valued as part of the whole for its particular strengths.

Over a million new homes have been built in the past 5 years, largely through the redevelopment of brownfield sites.

Homelessness is largely a thing of the past.

In 2030 unemployment is at an all time low, immigration is both controlled and welcomed, prisons are places of rehabilitation, single mothers and other isolated groups have found value and support because of an awareness and openness that has grown in local communities.

One of the biggest transformations has been in the NHS where patients/doctors and all involved see themselves as partners working together for the patient's well being. 'I no longer feel intimidated by the consultant' one patient was heard to say; 'I do spend a fair amount of time researching my condition and bring this to the table when we meet'.

'I am involved in my local patient's group.....' I am old now.

I have seen the world change in ways I could never have imagined.

I have felt despair, hopelessness and shock at the way people and nations abuse one another.

But I see now a new hope, much in its infancy that we can build a better world: we have woken up from the selfishness that has ruled our society like a heavy blanket cloaking everything that is good, hindering growth.

Because so many of us said 'I want a better Britain and I believe we can do it together' the green shoots of survival have started to appear.

This is a better Britain for our children's children.

**Shortlisted:** Shan Chang

In Liberal Britain, everyone has the opportunity to live a fulfilled life regardless of their race, age, gender, sexuality, and the wealth of the family they're born into.

It has an education system designed based upon evidence rather than ideology, and additional support is targeted at the most disadvantaged students right through from school to tertiary study, so that anyone can succeed regardless of their financial means.

It is in a race to the top, with a high-wage, high-skill economy, and the benefits of growth are distributed fairly. All workers earn enough to afford a decent standard of living, and they are protected from exploitation whether or not they are unionised or work in the 'gig economy'. Tax evasion is properly prosecuted and loopholes closed so big business and the wealthiest contribute their share. When people lose their jobs, they turn to a welfare system which is supportive rather than punitive. And when they fall ill or become disabled, they can rely on an NHS which is properly funded and protected from ideological meddling, and in which social care, mental health, and public health are accorded the attention they deserve.

Citizens, both individually and in communities, have say in how their affairs are run. Local government is empowered by greater devolution of powers and control over its revenues. A proportional representation voting system produces parliaments that reflect the preferences of the electorate, and the House of Lords is no longer unelected and unaccountable.

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Liberal Britain does not shirk its responsibilities as a nation: It shows compassion to refugees driven from their homes by the threat of violence and persecution.

It leads the way on nuclear disarmament, taking continuous steps towards the total elimination of its arsenal and engaging in diplomacy to encourage other countries to do the same.

It takes the threat of climate change seriously, pushing for ambitious agreements to reduce emissions abroad and investing in the green economy at home.

It does not subordinate its commitment to liberal democracy to narrow political or economic interests by turning a blind eye when its trading partners commit abuses.

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Liberal Britain doesn't seek simplistic, divisive solutions to complex problems: Instead of scapegoating entire religions, it recognises that faith communities are allies against the extremism and intolerance that threatens all our way of life. It offers robust legal protections against discrimination and all forms of hate crime, and pursues a counter-extremism strategy that engages with rather than alienates these communities.

Instead of scapegoating Europe and the EU, it seeks the closest possible ties with our neighbours, recognising that it cannot succeed isolated and alone. This means

membership of European security networks, joint research, education, and cultural programs, cooperation with our European partners on matters of foreign policy and defence, and giving British businesses access to the Single Market.

Instead of scapegoating immigrants and chasing arbitrary and damaging targets, it values the contributions they make, not only economically, but also socially and culturally, taking pride in its diversity and cosmopolitanism.

**Shortlisted:** Steph Pollard

Our Great Britain is a good Britain – proud, strong and brave. We learn from our past – our achievements and mistakes; we live by our principles – we are fair and we are firm; and we are excited by our future – our ambitions and commitments.

Government is decisive. We always ask is it fair, is it compassionate, is it effective, will it work? We don't take easy options for short-term political gain. We work together to sustain a strong economy and a society where justice, freedom, opportunity and security are everyday life for all. We implement new ideas. We strive to be efficient. We reduce waste. We are better by design. We don't invest in vanity projects or replace old systems with similar new systems at great cost. We are safe, strong and successful.

We work at home and abroad to guard our people and all people against danger. No one within our own care is afraid. We are committed to future generations and their planet. We work hard. We enjoy life. Our people are creative, collaborative and caring.

Public service is the backbone of our society. It is valued and well-managed. Taxes are paid. The NHS and social care services are fully-funded and well-run. Digital technology and scientific innovations are, with rigorous scrutiny, more quickly embraced by Government to save money and improve services. A creaky government which takes years to adopt improvements is no longer a source of exasperation. Welfare services are intelligent, robust and delivered without condescension - to those in need of long-term support and those in need of short-term support to overcome troubles. Self respect and a sense of having a stake in our society is nurtured. Individuals are more secure. Society is more secure.

Business thrives, creating economic stability for the country and individuals. We ensure, through the law, that people and the planet are always before profit, and so profit is a good thing – an excellent thing. If business people carry out illegal practices, Government ensures they face the full consequence of the law. Good terms of employment and a work-life balanced culture is the norm. Both society and business benefit.

Politics is no longer the play thing of the posh – always to the potential peril of the poor. Citizenship is a key tenet of our education. Every student understands how the country works - government, law, media and finance. They appreciate their own rights, responsibilities and opportunities – and those of others. Citizens' Service has been introduced along the lines of jury service as a device to help engage more people in local government. Education is the bedrock of society. All schoolchildren become literate, numerate and knowledgeable about their world, their history and themselves.

They learn to be independent thinkers; to challenge, investigate, organise and communicate. Students go on to develop their talents and interests as they want, whether they decide to be artists, builders or doctors; work in customer service, manufacture or beauty. It is recognised that a good education enriches all our lives, develops our personal potential and protects us from ignorance, apathy, prejudice and abuse.

**Shortlisted:** Tam Langley

In a Liberal Britain, those in power listen to ordinary people first, rather than vested interests.

Because experience shows people succeed when they can make their own decisions.

So we will make sure people have real choice and control over their lives.

We believe that everyone should have the opportunity to pursue their ambitions.

No matter your age, gender, disability, sexual preference or religion.

So a Liberal Britain challenges prejudice, wherever we find it.

A Liberal Britain means everyone having a good education, a safe warm home and NHS care and support when they need it.

These are the foundations for the strong economy we will build, with rewarding jobs, so people can live independently and support their families.

We believe that if we respect one another, and take care of our environment, we can avoid repeating mistakes of the past - wars, social division and environmental damage.

So join us in our mission to build a Liberal Britain.

Because there is more that unites us, than divides us.

Join us in standing up for ambition!

**Commended:** Mike Sole

**Life in Britain in 2030** In a Liberal Britain, every child born will have the opportunity to live a meaningful and happy life that enhances everyone around them; their immediate family, friends, community, nation and world.

A child born in 2030 will start their life in a well-funded, modern and free NHS hospital. They will know that their parents have been given the financial and practical support they needed to start a family.

As they grow older they will have access to high quality nursery care, giving their parents the choice of how to balance parenting with their own career aspirations.

No matter their background, ethnicity, location or wealth, their parents will be able to ensure that this child has every opportunity reach their full potential by attending excellent primary and secondary schools where they are taught by qualified, motivated and appreciated teachers.

As they move through the education system they will notice that their parents receive high quality health care when they need it and that their ageing grandparents will receive dignified and professional care, no matter their income, with a cap on any contributions that they might have to make.

In 2046 as this child reaches 16 they will be able to fully engage in democracy, casting votes in fair elections, in a system where every vote counts. As they explore their own sexuality and religious beliefs they will know that they will be treated no differently to anyone else.

Higher education awaits, in a university and college system that equips the next working generation with the practical and academic skills to grow, not only themselves, but also their country.

This child will live in and clean and healthy environment as fossil fuels will be confined to history.

The countryside will flourish, the seas, rivers and air clean.

As they embark on a career they will know that they share the responsibility for the continuing improvements to the lives of others, both at home and abroad. They will understand why they pay their taxes and what they are spent on. They will also know that large corporations of the world pay their fair share of taxes in the countries where that income is earned. Such taxes being used to ensure affordable public transport and safe communities.

Being outward looking they will do what they can to help those across the work share in the prosperity of their country through free trade and development aid.

Affordable, sustainable housing will be available as they look to themselves settle down and perhaps start their own family. As they go through life they will know that they can expect help should they experience hard times.

Living life in a Liberal Britain, they will know that everyone will have a fair chance at a happy and fulfilled life.

They can be themselves, and when they wish to make their views known they will know that they have a voice that will be heard, and they need not fear it being heard.

## **Commended:** Clive Parish

Our Liberal Britain: the Vision    Liberal Democrats have a vision – a blueprint for our country in the year 2030. We call it 'Our Liberal Britain'. We see a political landscape transformed, one founded on a more caring and equal society, a stronger and greener economy, and the greatest expansion of democracy since the suffragettes. We see a country where power and wealth is dispersed to the four nations and the regions and to the heart of our communities. We see a country where all people have a fair chance to succeed, whatever their background, and where individuals feel they have a stake in their future and a voice that's heard.

In Our Liberal Britain, we see a revitalised economy equipped for the 21st century, where individuals enjoy secure and well-paid jobs, thriving public services, and affordable homes. One where we invest in people, and in infrastructure and innovation, to create a technology-led, high-skill, high-wage economy able to compete on the global stage and to grasp the opportunities arising in the resource-efficient, environmentally sensitive, zero-carbon industries of the future.

In Our Liberal Britain, education guarantees everyone a fair start in life, by focusing resource where it matters most – on the very young and on pupils falling into the attainment gap. For older students, a wider curriculum offers more opportunities to realise their potential, including non-academic options and well-structured apprenticeships. And life-long learning lets individuals train or retrain at any stage – and to lead richer, more fulfilling lives that contribute to a stronger economy and a more equal society.

In Our Liberal Britain, power is spread as widely as possible, in favour of individuals and communities. Political and economic decision-making is dispersed away from London, to the north and the regions, to our towns and cities and villages, to those communities best placed to meet people's needs. Employees are encouraged to own a stake in their workplace, rural communities to take responsibility for protecting the environment, and tenants to manage their own social housing. And in politics, a more democratic electoral system, liberated from domination by big money donors and entrenched interests, guarantees every citizen an equal say and a vote that counts.

In Our Liberal Britain, we live in an open and tolerant society, where we are respected as individuals and are free to be ourselves, without fear or prejudice. Here people are measured by their contribution to society and not their gender, colour or creed. Here we care for the young and old, the sick and disabled, and seek to liberate those trapped in unemployment, mental illness or a life of crime. Here individuals take responsibility for their lives and their families, encouraged to achieve their best in the good times and supported through the hard.

In Our Liberal Britain, the nations of the United Kingdom speak with a single powerful voice, welcome and heard on the world stage for our values of fairness, tolerance and co-operation, and ready to work with allies and neighbours to promote peace, champion sustainable development and limit climate change.

**Commended:** Martin Walker

Britain is a country which is at ease with itself. It looks forwards, not backwards, and does so with confidence.

Britain is a tolerant country. Not only does the state not interfere in people's lives where they are doing no harm to others, it overtly and explicitly welcomes diversity.

Civil liberties are valued, not eroded, and human rights are cherished, not ridiculed.

Britain has a world class, comprehensive education system that values all children and young people, and the skills they have to offer, so that they can fulfil their potential. The improved outcomes of the education system are strengthened by the Government's drive to tackle child poverty, and vice versa.

The Government is not frightened to take brave, long term decisions. Investment decisions are made for the long term benefit of the whole country. This includes investment in infrastructure, economic growth, and housing growth. It also includes long term investment to address the changing needs of the country, such as an energy policy which protects the environment, and integrated health and social care policies which see an ageing population as something to be valued, not a hindrance.

Britain's foreign policy is internationalist, and underpinned by its commitments to human rights and human dignity, which are universally applied. Britain is not frightened to intervene to help resolve crises elsewhere in the world, where people face genocide, starvation, or human rights abuses, but it does so from its position at the heart of Europe, and recognises that non-military interventions are preferable to military interventions.

No part of the country is left behind. An active regional policy is in place, which seeks to ensure that the country's economic growth is balanced, with the benefits shared across regions, and across all classes.

Government sees its role as being to empower people, not to tell them what to do, or to leave them to fend for themselves. This is reflected in Britain's modernised constitution, which has included the adoption of a fair voting system, an elected revising second chamber, the devolution of powers to local communities wherever possible, and a culture of open Government.

In summary, the role of Government in Liberal Britain is not to prioritise the interests of 'labour' or 'capital', but to put people and communities first. Social justice and individual success are seen as complementary, not conflicting goals. The country's recognition of the rights of its people is matched by an acceptance of our responsibilities to each other.

**Commended:** Charlie Chichester

Thursday 3rd May, 2030. Winston, a 70-year-old ex-cabbie, is on his way to the ballot box. It's the first time he's voted since 23rd June 2016. Back then, he voted to take back control from Brussels, only to see the pound fall, politicians dither, and the country divided.

When it became clear Brexit didn't mean Brexit, Winston turned his back on politics - for good.

While his back was turned, Britain changed.

Winston first glimpsed this in the opportunities given to his grandchildren. Thanks to free school meals and the pupil premium, his granddaughter Lizzy was given a start in life that has led to her working for Google, whose taxes build Winston's roads. Grandson Tom, meanwhile, is self-employed in the gig economy as a florist, but he gets by just fine thanks to a high income tax threshold.

When he considers his own circumstances, Winston sees that in retirement he leads a financially secure life drawing on his triple-locked pension. Living in social housing run by the tenants – and for the tenants - he has become actively involved in his local community, and is currently running workshops with new refugees facilitated by the local council. This has changed his view of the world and Britain's place in it. Now he believes in committed investment in international development as well as defence. Thankfully, greater coordination with our partners in the EU and NATO means Europe is safer from all kinds of attack, including cyber-attack.

With complete integration of health and social care, Winston's 94-year-old mother Tilly is guaranteed a bed in a local care home with instant access to high-quality, locally commissioned healthcare suited to her needs. In addition, the NHS treats mental health equally alongside physical health. Without access to local specialist care for schizophrenia, Winston's son Harry – Lizzy's and Tom's dad - might have ended up in a clinic hundreds of miles from home.

Every weekend, Winston and his family are able to visit Tilly in her home thanks to improved rail links and regular bus provision, made possible by renewed investment in regional infrastructure. With greater tax receipts and legislative power in areas such as transport, schools and healthcare, local authorities and city mayoralities can provide communities with everything they need, including the local park where Winston and his mother can enjoy clean air.

All the changes in Winston's life come from electoral reform and the adoption of Proportional Representation. These days everybody, regardless of who they are or where they live, can be heard at the ballot box, and hold the politicians they've elected to account.

In a way he can't quite grasp, Winston is proud of his country again. Challenges remain, but Britain is better prepared to meet them thanks to its pluralist party system, strong ties with international partners, and continued investment in the lives of every individual living here. Winston goes to the ballot box as a citizen of the United Kingdom; he will leave it as a citizen of the world.

**Commended:** Elisa Colton

In 2030 Britain we look back on 2016 as the year deep divisions became evident, not just between young and old, rural and urban, but between those who believed in progress and those who were fearful of the future. Rather than pulling up the drawbridge this galvanised progressive, liberal citizens to create a society of opportunity and hope.

By 2030 our education system sets the foundation for our tolerant and diverse society. British schools are equal in world rankings to Finland or South Korea. Intelligent, talented pupils from all backgrounds are supported through a school system that encourages creativity, group working, a questioning mind and intellectual rigour as well as vocational skills. Technical schools and colleges specialise in coding, in mathematics and science, to increase opportunities for young people entering a competitive, globalised workforce.

There's been significant investment in building projects so housing is now affordable to both rent and buy. We view our houses as homes not investments.

They are secure, carbon neutral and powered by co-operative renewable energy sources. By 2030 the UK has moved from reliance on fossil fuels to a fully renewable energy supply.

Commuting is easier thanks to infrastructure investment and changes in working practices, such as home working and shared office space. Flexible working and a shorter working week has led to an increased sense of freedom and fulfillment as well as productivity.

By 2030 men and women have achieved wage parity, with equal representation in civic and political life, as well as in boardrooms and workplaces. The state and private sector offer parental leave and quality subsidised childcare, so women can return to work and single parents can be supported. Everyone is given the opportunity and encouragement to be their best selves.

But in 2030 the concept of success is not just about earning money. It's about happiness, mental well being, health, citizenship, and personal responsibility. Employers grant paid leave to employees to carry out volunteer projects locally and abroad, encouraged by tax cuts as well as an understanding that civic duty is a fundamental part of British society. People living in 2030, whether they're pensioners or teenagers, are proud our taxes support welfare and a world class NHS. There are no second class citizens in 2030 Britain.

The UK is outward looking and tolerant. It's a source of pride that we can accommodate refugees with compassion and migrants with understanding. As citizens of the world we know we have a responsibility to work towards ending human suffering and combating global threats like climate change. These challenges are faced through membership of trans-national organisations like the European Union and the United Nations.

The future belongs to the young and by 2030 voting has been extended to 16 year olds. Parliament is much less adversarial, confrontational or tribal as a result of

proportional representation, which encourages collaboration on legislation to benefit all. Most of all 2030 is marked by a sense of hope, a belief in human decency and an optimism for the future.

## **Commended:** Philip Hall

In 2030, Liberal Britain is a haven where the divisions, suspicion and hatred of the past are gone, representing only warnings to focus us on the pursuit of rational discussion, inclusion and joint responsibility. Britain now prides herself on her equality: Equal pay for equal work, equal status and respect whether native or immigrant, equal opportunities and investment in north, south, east and west.

To her no-one is left behind, or forgotten. The richest contribute fairly, without deception, and her economy is built to their cost not to nature's. Those ill in body and mind are treated comprehensively and compassionately and the elderly are supported consistently wherever they reside and whatever their needs.

Britain is fair-minded and even-handed. Those that control companies do not get richer whilst the company fails. Companies pay tax based on where they make money not where their headquarters are based. Britain has closed all the havens it controls that allow people to avoid paying their fair share.

She stands on the foundation of a great economy. Her spending matches her revenues and, in hard times, society's future prosperity is protected by refusing to cut social or medical support. Investment in childcare, mental well-being and care for the elderly and is prioritised over investment in infrastructure to ensure everyone has the support at home to be productive at work. The minimum wage for all jobs represents the true amount that a person needs to live on.

Her greatest armament is education. Schools prepare children for the real world as well as the job they desire. Her education system teaches integration, tolerance and understanding of all cultures, faiths and orientations. In further education the fee to learn represents the cost to teach and financial incentives are given for people to train for the most important jobs to society.

She protects her people. The police are representative and tolerant of the people they serve. Intelligence services do not pry into private lives but co-ordinate closely with the rest of the world to identify and neutralise problems. The equipment and capabilities of her armed forces are matched to those who would do her harm should all rational discussions fail.

Britain is a liberal democracy. Her people are represented proportionally by her parliament whilst maintaining local links to her MPs. Her Lords are appointed from the best and brightest in society, proportionally to her parliament, and do not sit for life. Her countries and councils have greater freedom to spend money and with it a greater responsibility to their electors.

She is not shy. She speaks out against those in the world who promote or propagate violence and war. She stands with those in need that the rest of the world has ignored or forgotten. She is a leading light for her nearest neighbours, freely sharing and collaborating with them on trade, migration, human rights and tax for the enrichment of all.

In Liberal Britain no-one fears their neighbour, no-one feels forgotten and everyone has endless potential for their future.

**Commended:** Patrick Smith

Liberal Britain is fair, it is tolerant and it is successful. It is a society that embodies compassion, embraces co-operation and engages with the challenges of building an ever better tomorrow.

In Liberal Britain the egalitarian ideal triumphs over the monopoly of the elite. A truly progressive tax system ensures that everyone pays their fair share, and that those who benefit the most from the structures of our society contribute in increasing proportion to their personal enrichment.

In Liberal Britain the vested interests of the powerful cannot trump the diverse interests of the community. As mutuals and employee ownership soar, companies will do more to ensure they serve stakeholders and shareholders in equal measure, driving investment whilst ensuring that the benefits are shared fairly among all who contribute.

In Liberal Britain equality overcomes discrimination. All individuals are respected for who they are and are ensured equal opportunity at every stage in life, regardless of gender identity, race, religion, age, sexual orientation or disability.

In Liberal Britain work works. Beveridge's safety net continues to protect the vulnerable whilst a genuine living wage tackles disincentives to work, because we are all better off when we all participate.

In Liberal Britain evidence exceeds ignorance. From drug addiction to sex work, public health to crime, policies that work solve our most pressing social problems, built not upon rhetoric and sentiment but decades of research and academic consensus.

This Liberal Britain isn't a dream for some far off future. It isn't a distant ideology. It isn't the disconnected politics of an isolated elite. It isn't a goal we can achieve or a finish line that we can cross.

This Liberal Britain is a spirit. It is a direction of travel, guided by the simple, honest principles of human decency. It's what we strive for. It is all the wrongs we wish to right. It is the beating heart of compassion made political reality.

Yet what most defines Liberal Britain, in 2030 and beyond, is that we'll still be fighting injustices. There will always be injustices. The prize of Liberal Britain won't be an end to injustice, but that we get to do battle with new injustices: injustices that we haven't even noticed yet; injustices that we are unable to conceive of as injustices at this time; injustices that can only arise through the course of a freer, fairer future.

This is the true nature of the liberal tradition; the constant search for the wrong not yet put to right. Like a work of art that can never be truly finished, Liberal Britain is the perpetual, unending fight to better ourselves and our society toward a future more just than we today can dream. Unified in our diversity we leave no problem unsolved, we balk at no challenge and we face down every oppression.

In Liberal Britain we know that together we are more than the sum of our individual parts; that through tolerance, respect and compassion we can aim higher, build better and dream bigger.

**Commended:** John Shoesmith

Anaya is black, from a working class background. The education system has nurtured her talent for engineering. She is now the Technical Director of a company in the North of England, developing technology to convert solar energy to synthetic fuel. This afternoon Anaya is interviewing on line for the new project in Mali, Africa. Eventually she selects Leila, a local woman, as Chief Engineer.

The UK has played its part in the development of Africa, funding and helping with the education of people like Leila. Extreme poverty has been eradicated from the world. Birth rates have fallen as health has improved and women have become better educated. There are no longer desperate migrants seeking entry into Europe.

Anaya has to sort out an urgent technical problem, so she cannot leave work until 6 o'clock. A driverless electric taxi whisks her to the primary school, with two other passengers who are dropped off on the way. There are fewer private cars these days, because it is faster and more convenient to use the electric taxis. There is less traffic and congestion because the taxis are normally shared.

Her 6 year old son Ed is having fun at his after-school club. Anaya appreciates the social skills that he learns there. The club also means that she is not tied to part time working.

She walks home with Ed. Walking is quiet, pollution free and safe.

Anaya's city is thriving, with well-paid work to build new homes, insulate old ones, and update the local train line. Much of the funding has resulted from international efforts to eliminate tax havens for the very rich.

A local councillor is seeking views on a new leisure centre, and Anaya responds on line. The councillor is not obliged to follow the popular view, but if she goes against it she will explain why. Everyone feels involved in politics.

Nick, Anaya's husband, works for a company that carries out specialised testing for rail companies across Europe. His company has grown because it has access to the full European market. He is away in France tonight.

Nick took the train to France. Electric train services are fast and have low carbon emissions. They form a part of the UK and European plans to achieve the Paris carbon reduction goals.

At the weekend the family go to see Anaya's mum. She is getting old, but lives in a new complex with great facilities, in accommodation designed to cut the risk of falls. Many older people have moved there, releasing family homes to young couples.

They talk about Anaya's young brother. He always struggled at school, but he has been helped at every stage. Now he works as an attendant on the electric taxis, to help old and disabled people. The job will build his self-esteem and provide a decent income.

Anaya feels proud of her country, which has been a world leader in creating a fair and sustainable future.