



Your Liberal Britain

Your Vision for Liberal Britain



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Foreword

by Sal Brinton, Party President

My heartfelt congratulations go to the 8,000 plus Liberal Democrats who helped create this excellent vision statement. Thousands of you shared your ideas your online. At least a thousand attended 65 events up and down the country. More than four hundred directly contributed to the final document itself, whether entering our essay competition or helping us review the mountain of entries!



It's been an incredible conversation, and such an important one for us to have. This vision statement helps us explain what our party stands for. It helps us to chart the road to this brighter future. And it will help us check that we're always heading in the right direction.

I commend it to you: please use it in your local parties, in your discussions online, and wherever else you think it will help us announce and celebrate our values.

I would like to thank my fellow judges for their hard work - Amna Ahmad, Caron Lindsay, Jonny Oates, Peter Price, Rumi Verjee and Ben Williams (representing first Tim Farron, then Vince Cable) - and to

extend my congratulations to our group of writers, who cheerfully tackled the gargantuan task of slimming the ideas of 7,000 Lib Dems down to 200 words! Elaine Bagshaw, Duncan Brack, Rory Freckleton, Lee Howgate, Maria Munir, Scott Smith, and Stephen Tall: thank you.

Kind thanks are also due to Ramesh Dewan, Chris Fox and Rumi Verjee without whose generous financial support this project could not have happened.

Finally, a big thank you to Jim Williams and the entire team at Your Liberal Britain for taking the initiative to lead this conversation so soon after joining the party.

The UK today

Britain could be a liberal country. We can make it happen – but only if we face up to the task ahead.

The Liberal Democrats were created to fight for a fair, free and open society. **We want to build a country that's proud of compassion, that's unashamed of success, and that gladly shows a welcoming face to the world.**

The UK today is moving in the opposite direction. Backward-looking politicians in both establishment parties want to bring back a less liberal past.

We live in a country where too many feel that they've lost control of their futures; where the economy might be growing, but not for the people who need it the most. All too often government today is not about

ambition and reform, but about avoiding headlines and keeping your head down – with horrible results. Inequality has run riot. People don't feel supported.

If the EU referendum result wasn't enough to show that difficult truth, then the awful tragedy of Grenfell Tower must be.

In this unfair society, the Leave vote was a cry for radical change – but Brexit is not the answer. The vibrant economy that funds our schools and hospitals; the vital protections of our civil liberties and the environment; our fundamental rights as citizens – our place at the heart of Europe upholds them all.

We do urgently need radical change, but instead of blaming Brussels, we have to tackle the crisis in Britain today. **We need to build a society that offers opportunity to all.**

Our vision: a country that works for you

Liberal Democrats pour their time into politics because they want to create a better society. We exist to build a world where everyone can lead the lives they want to live, hold the powerful to account, and change the world around them for the better.

We want to be in government to help Britain become a country where everyone – absolutely everyone – is guaranteed a fair chance at a rewarding life. Nothing about you should change that: not what you believe, whom you love or how you look.

We want to create a country that doesn't just leave people free to be themselves, but a country that backs people to be who they want to be, safe from prejudice and intolerance.

It would be a country that welcomes people to build a life here, and expects everyone to shoulder our shared responsibilities: to each

other, in Europe, and towards humanity and the planet as a whole.

We want a country where government stands up for the vulnerable, hard work yields fair rewards, and equal work means equal pay.

This is the Liberal Democrat vision for Britain.

Life may never be perfect, but we can do better than what we see around us today. We can be better than we are today.

No one is going to build this country for you: but you can help make it happen. It's up to you.

The challenge ahead

Make no mistake, it won't be easy: good things never are. We know that there are barriers in our path. The world is moving towards greater automation; the immigrants we need are met too often with hatred; the values of liberalism are in retreat.

If we want to see our vision enacted, we must solve these five key challenges:

1. We must **stay in the European Union**, through democratic means. Failing that, we must seek to retain as many benefits of membership as we can.
2. We have to build **a new economy that offers opportunity to all**, that invests in people and places too often overlooked, and that gives everyone a stake in growth.
3. We must **reinvent our education system**, to prepare our children for this new economy, wherever they are born, whatever circumstances they are born into.
4. We must **give our health and social care services** the support they so badly need to keep delivering world-leading care.
5. And we must radically **spread power away from Westminster**. We must overhaul our politics, re-design our election system, and give new powers to citizens and councils alike.

If we do this – if we face up to these challenges – we can build a truly Liberal Britain.
How will you play your part?

Your Liberal Britain

A members' volunteering initiative within the Liberal Democrats, Your Liberal Britain exists to help and encourage the party to become more of a social movement. We help party bodies find ways to challenge and empower Lib Dem members.

The consultation and competition we ran to produce this vision statement was our first major activity. We've also launched the Online Champions community, which gives members of the Liberal Democrats a way to campaign for our party online – and worked to great effect during the 2017 General Election.

More initiatives are coming down the pipeline. To find out more – and to get involved! – visit www.LiberalBritain.org



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