What will the future of the Liberal Democrats be??

I joined during the coalition years, one of the few to do so, there were a large number that chose to leave the party instead during this time.

I don’t know how you all feel about the party at the moment but it seems like the media dismiss us as a load of irrelevant sandal wearing old men - which is probably a pretty fair comment if you look at the lack of diversity within both local parties and further up the ladder.

I don’t know about you but this attitude angers me and I hope that it angers you to!!

Personally I’m tired of all the talk that we should give up and let a new central party come in and set the country to rights.

We do not need a new centrist party - we are the progressive centrist party that this country needs now.

After the highs of the Cleggmania days of 2010 and then being thoroughly whipped by the public in the elections that followed, it feels to me as a comparative newbie to the party that we have lost our path, our principles and our vision!

We seem happy to state that we are not Labour or the Tories yet aside from the 'Exit from Brexit' message we seem to have no other defining messages and we risk being seen as a one issue party vastly out of touch with the public.

I would argue that this time is the greatest opportunity we have to redefine ourselves, to ourselves and then to the wider public.

We are living in times of great economic and social turbulence.  Domestic violence is rife within our country; two women a week are currently killed by their partners!

We have record numbers of homeless, there are an increasing number of single parent families with children on the streets, the government is stopping paying PIP to many disabled people and some people are being so badly affected that they are choosing to kill themselves!

We are seeing the same with regard to mental health issues with the DWP cutting benefits and stating those claiming ESA are fit for work (even if their Doctor's say otherwise). Mental health is one of the biggest challenges to this country with more and more individuals struggling to cope under work pressures and individuals bring diagnosed with anxiety and depression every day, who are then pushed out of the workplace by uncaring employers into a benefit system that won’t support them.

Is it then any great surprise that more and more people are committing suicide ( in numbers that the DWP won’t disclose or doesn’t care about when benefits are cut).

I don’t know about you but this is not a country I feel proud to live in!

If we are going to change our Party’s near extinction and become a strong political force again we are going to have to rethink our aims and objectives.

Firstly we will need to capture the country’s attention and the voters imagination.

How do we do this..by being innovative, imaginative and radical with our thinking and the solutions we propose.

As the referendum showed voting is driven by feeling and emotion not by rational thinking and policies.

If we are going to step up we need to put the major social justice issues of our time at the very top of our agenda , we have to provide a space and a voice for the lost working class and we must provide a place for women because women’s issues are not just women’s issues alone but major issues that affect every one of us throughout our lives.

We will need to stand our ground and become the party of social justice.  Instead of being led, we will have to lead the protests and the marches, gives voices to the voiceless and become a strong voice of hope for the many people that are currently without hope.

In the public perception presently we are not seen as strong, they see us a bit ‘meh’ to wishy washy then to think what is the point in wasting their vote on us. If we are to change this we have to be bold in creating a new vision, not just for the party internally but a new vision as to what this country can be.

We need to put the great back into Britain and become the leading party by doing so.

Will this happen by the next election – no! We have to be realistic but can this happen in the near future - absolutely it can but we will need inside out change throughout the party at every level

Do we have the power to change the course of UK politics?  I believe we do but we will have to make changes swiftly.