



**Independent (UK)
Constitutionalists**

At a Glance – the ICUK Declaration of Purpose



**Democracy is the art of thinking
independently together**



Who are we?

The **Independent Constitutionalists UK** started as a group of open-minded people, from a wide variety of backgrounds and occupations, convinced that a **national conversation** about new ways of doing politics and managing the economy in the UK and beyond was long overdue. We try not to be ideological. We certainly don't want to become a political party. We simply believe that our country, our species and our planet deserve a better deal than they are getting (or likely to get) from the current unsustainable, growth-based system. Our resulting **Declaration of Purpose** sets out how that better deal might be achieved.

What are we trying to do?

Our Declaration is designed to get that conversation started in earnest. Using the theoretical and technical knowledge already available and plain commonsense, we'll be attempting to create with others a unifying story about how to do things better. No, absolutely not a revolution, but gradual, painstaking and radical reform of the existing system, a process that encourages everybody to become involved! Time to kiss goodbye to the old left-right ideological divisions, and to realize that systemic reform of our Political-economy is not just about **the many getting a bigger slice of a cake being baked to the recipe of the few**, but about producing a rather different cake and changing the way we bake it. In a word, we need a new recipe, fresh ingredients and a baking process that involves and belongs to all of us.

Where might we begin?

Using the ICUK Declaration of Purpose as a focus for emerging consensus:

- **Encourage** all progressive-activist groups to come together to talk about a unifying, comprehensive vision for the future.
- **Foster the creation of:**
 1. Local, regional and national citizen assemblies, juries and so forth to establish over



time a country-wide **culture and practice of deliberative participation**; and

2. Self-organising Local Groups (SLGs) within constituencies, which come together in local Constituency Committees to select and support Independent candidate MPs who, by accepting a code of ethical principles, can restore dignity and integrity to Parliament. Their contributions to Select Committees and House debates will enjoy additional weight as voiced by people who represent their constituents rather than the dictates of Party Whips.

- **Promote the citizen framing of a Codified and Living Constitution.**

And with what recipe and ingredients?

We believe they must include:

- **The Democracy our country both needs and desires** Our current 5-year, first-past-the-post, winner-takes-all, electoral democracy must be replaced by **participative-representative democracy**.
- **Devolution & Subsidiarity** All sovereign power stems from the people and must remain with the people. To be meaningful, politics (and the economic management to which they give rise) must be **bottom-up** and returned to the localities and regions across the country where life is actually lived.
- **Meaningful Participation** Power “**with**” must replace power “**over**”. People must be given a meaningful part to play in the decision-making processes that affect their lives. **People empowerment** will mean putting in place and protecting institutions where **genuine deliberation** (not merely adversarial statements of preference or self-interest) and **collective intelligence** become possible; where people have the time and opportunity to listen and learn, and crucially to discover why others hold the opinions they do hold.
- **Genuine Representation** Representatives at whatever level, whether selected or elected, must be primarily answerable to their constituents by whom they are mandated and to whom, on pain of recall, they must remain accountable.
- **Economic Sanity** Promotion of a political-economy that is distributive and regenerative



by design, integrating Markets, Households, the Commons and the State and involving people as actors not just consumers. Fostering inclusive “green” alternatives: the Circular Economy, devolution of the production of renewable energy, etc

- **A Political-economy for People and Planet** The moral and social purposes we collectively set ourselves must come before the economic means we choose for achieving them – politics and economics are inextricably linked. Our species has become a major force in shaping its own existence. Our future survival is dependent on that of other living species and our sustainable use of finite planetary resources. As custodians of Planetary Welfare, we have a grave responsibility to future generations. **To save our Planet is to save Ourselves.**
- **A Confederation of the peoples of the British Isles** It is now becoming increasingly likely that, at some future date, the peoples of the British Isles may wish to confederate. The latter should be a **voluntary and functional coming-together of sovereign equals.**
- **A codified & Living Constitution** A readable and readily accessible codified constitution prepared by the people that entrenches replacement of Parliamentary Sovereignty by People Sovereignty, establishes a principle of Constitutional Supremacy and a Constitutional Council, and that, when finalized, is presented for adoption through a fully-informed referendum and subsequent enactment into law by Act of Parliament.
- **Fair political funding** A just procedure for funding the nation’s political processes that prevents the unfair use of personal and institutional wealth to leverage public opinion.
- **Citizen Assemblies** Constitutionally established, publicly funded spaces for people deliberation at all levels of the political process, with agreed procedures for selection by **sortition**, etc to provide for all-essential diversity of opinion and with moderation provided by trained, neutral **facilitators.**
- **Education** For all in constitutional literacy and democratic practice so that the people can participate meaningfully in decision-making processes and make informed choices when voting.
- **The Commons** Preventing the further private ownership and commodification of the spaces, resources and institutions that belong to us all. Thus preserving them for the benefit of the communities that with their **user expertise** share in their stewardship and



management. There must be constitutional identification of Commons-user responsibilities and rights. In parallel with the promotion of Commons regimes, **households** must be ensured a meaningful livelihood and a safe private space in which to have a home.

- **Land location value** It must be understood that land (and the natural resources in and on it) are not commodities but a common birthright. Unearned income derived from private use of land (with its community-created location value) or of Commons amenities (frequency spectrum, etc) must be subject respectively to a **Location Value and Amenities User Fee**.
- **Reform the monetary system & finance by**
 - Increasing public understanding of money as a “social good” and means of exchange, and ensuring public oversight of its functioning.
 - Discouraging the commodification of money for use as a speculative asset.
 - Investigating if society would benefit from the adoption of local complementary currencies and crypto currencies, and enacting legal changes as appropriate.
- **Reform the tax system by**
 - Increasing public awareness of how the state obtains its revenue and of the punitive and unjust nature of taxing productive effort (Income Tax, VAT, etc).
 - Introducing **Location Value and an Amenities User Fee** on unearned income derived from private use of land, Commons amenities and natural resources.
 - Preventing the use of asset off-shoring for tax avoidance purposes by multinational corporations and individuals.
 - Ensuring balanced regional funding of social services and devolving their management to regional authorities.
- **Deliberation on Monetary and Tax reform** A national conversation to investigate the desirability (singly or in combination) of:
 - **Universal Basic Income (UBI)** A regular cash payment delivered to all on a universal



basis, without means test or work requirement.

- **Universal Basic Services (UBS)** An adequately funded system of basic services to include Health Care, Education, Democracy, Legal Services, Shelter, Food, Transport and Information
- A **Social or Citizen Dividend** (as a return to the public purse on the land location value that citizens help to create) funded from Location Value and an Amenities User Fee.
- **Sovereign Money or People's QE** Debt-free creation of money for gradual release into the productive economy, subject to stringent democratic oversight.
- **The Media & Public Institutions** Require the latter to publish their own Charters as statements of their public-service remits, and companies to publicize their Public-Benefit Purpose as a statement of their eco-responsibilities. Call for a nation-wide debate on how best to protect the freedoms and public-status of democratically vital sections of the Media from undemocratic wealth-leveraged encroachment.
- **Technology and Big Data** The dehumanizing, destructive grip of techno-capitalism needs to be loosened and our grasp of technology tightened, brought within democratic moral reach. Our future depends not on technological fixes but on our intelligent and democratically agreed use of accelerating technological development and virtual connectivity for the good of people and planet. Civic spaces must remain crucibles for co-creative communication free from algorithm-based manipulation.
- **Resulture** Testing, by public scrutiny of results, the cost and benefit of all policies and legislation.

We'll need a national conversation via Citizen Assemblies, Panels and Juries about all of the above.

With your help, we aim to use the Westminster system to change that system and recover trust in British Politics