

# The EU reminds us what staying would be like

Two recent decisions of the EU should act as a warning of the damage the EU could do if we stay in under the Withdrawal Agreement or by some other device to thwart the result of the People's vote.

Fishermen and women are concerned at the new rules of the Common Fishing policy. Whilst the EU has at last recognised that throwing dead fish back into the sea is bad for the fish, bad for the fishing industry, and bad for the environment, their remedy threatens to bankrupt some small boat businesses by stopping them fishing altogether if they catch too much bi catch. The UK needs to take back control and put in a policy which allows our businesses to earn a living whilst reducing the amount of fish taken by large industrial trawlers from abroad. Landing all fish caught should be central to this policy, with a days at sea regime to regulate total fish volumes.

There is a recent European Court judgement which says that UK payments to secure sufficient electrical power under the capacity scheme are illegal subsidies. The UK had to go this route to comply with all the other power generation and environmental laws from the EU . If you build a system around wind and solar you need stand by for when the weather cuts off your electricity. Keeping dear to build alternative plants available for occasional use is expensive, so you have to pay the supplier.

The sooner we can put in place policies to generate enough clean power at the cheapest price the better. The EU makes this very difficult.

How many more UK businesses and industries could the EU disrupt if we let them by granting them continuing power over us?

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## I do oppose the Withdrawal Agreement

I see some are wrongly suggesting I am wobbling over voting against the Withdrawal Agreement. They are mischief making and should read this website to understand why I oppose it. They would then see I have several fundamental objections which cannot be fixed by tweaks or reassurances.

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# Happy New Year

"Pour me another, lets toast the new year  
Here's to a better, put fizz in our cheer"

Tonight's not for sorrows, no mulling old wounds  
Come banish our troubles, lets sing some new tunes

Caught in the present is a moment to choose  
To look forwards or backwards, to win or to lose

If you comfort yourself holding what's past  
This precious moment of hope will not last

Grasping the future and its unknown way  
Could bring success and many a wonderful day

The past is well trodden where we know the ending  
The future is for moulding, for shaping, for bending

As last year expires, with past hope and promise broken  
Change things this time, leaving resolutions unspoken

So pour me another, lets toast the new year

here's to a better, put fizz in our cheer

If your life is a drama you can change the plot  
If your friends are the actors you can recast the lot

If people around you are holding you back  
Tell them you're changing, cast aside their rack

Lets seize the chance, lets decide to advance  
Grab the year by the throat and push out the boat

Lets hold on to new clichés that drive us to more  
Lets venture out from behind that closed door

We can stretch for the stars and strive for the sun  
We can soar with the wind making life more fun

You are only out of the game when you give up the play  
So write some new words so you have a new say

Aim for something better, embrace the best  
You may fall short of target but gain from the quest

If new year's eve is but routine,  
only to be drunk away in sorrow  
Nothing will change, nothing will improve,  
You'll just have a hangover tomorrow

So cast off the old  
Live a new dream  
Grab the future foretold  
Mine a new seam

So pour me another, lets toast the new year  
Here's to a better, put fizz in our cheer

I know tomorrow can be better than today  
Let the future empower us with new sway

The future is only ours, my friend, if we want to race it  
Tonight is the night to embrace it

So pour me another, lets toast the new year  
Here's to a better, put fizz in our cheer

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## New Year message

I wish you all a successful and prosperous 2019. I expect to see improvements locally and nationally, as we continue to enjoy record levels of employment and as pay goes up by more than prices. We enjoy one of the lowest levels of unemployment of anywhere in the country, and see many flourishing businesses investing in the future and confident about the outlook.

I am well aware of the things that people want us to sort out. Parliament and government needs to agree a way forward to implement the referendum result without damaging jobs and the economy. Locally there is work to be done in making it easier to get to work and to take the children to school, with better transport arrangements of all kinds. There needs to be a better balance between building more homes, and looking after the quality of life of all of us who already live here.

The Wokingham constituency had a good end to 2018. I was pleased that the government listened to my pleas for more money for our local Councils for 2019-20. Wokingham Borough got one of the largest increases in spending power, with a gain of 6.3%, and West Berkshire was well above average at 4.2%. This means our Councillors can now make service improvements, and give local taxpayers a better deal next year.

Wokingham Town Centre came back to life after long lasting works for a facelift. Shoppers have already taken to the new stores that have opened and we look forward to more to come in 2019. Let's ensure people can get into the centre easily, and can park without high fees or penalties when they want

time to shop or visit a café or restaurant. There are good ways to spend time and money in our town centres. Pothole money and more cash for social services which I have pressed for will also help provide better local services next year.

I have been busy telling Network Rail we are against the train whistles, seeking a better answer on plane noise, helping constituents put the case on Post Office services in Wokingham, assisting the Councils where they need government help, arguing for better answers to problems of poverty and homelessness and encouraging more investment in our public services and utility networks.

I am optimistic about our prospects for 2019, though I am concerned about the impact of tax rises on car and homebuyers and the very tough stance of the Bank of England which is slowing the economy. I am urging the government to cut taxes a bit more particularly where they are doing harm and reducing the revenue, and to spend a bit more on our priorities, as they can afford to do.

Thank you to all who have worked hard to make our community successful. I hope you have had a good break over the holiday period.

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## 2019. A year of opportunity

2019 should be a great year for all who believe in UK democracy. It is the year when Parliament should implement the decision of the People's vote in 2016.

March 30 th should be Independence Day. From that day onwards we need to be in control of our money, our laws and our borders.

I have set out in a recent post how we can take advantage of the money we save and the freedoms we gain to give a boost to our economy and an improvement to our society.

That day should also be the day government strives harder to unite us in the belief that we can both make our own decisions and be good friends, trading partners and neighbours with the continent. Most Leave voters are not anti Europeans but people who want the UK to be a self governing good friend of our continental allies and trading partners.

The EU has always said it is only willing to discuss a Free Trade deal after we have left, so the sooner we leave the sooner we can discuss that. It is clear from recent No Deal planning on the continent that they do not wish to lose their export trade to us and recognise the need to ensure smooth functioning of borders after we have left.

The article by an anonymous civil servant in the Telegraph on Saturday was an important statement. She made it clear, as I have done, that much planning

for just leaving has gone on in Whitehall over the two and a half years since the decision in the People's vote. The UK has plans to keep its borders open for trade, to continue to import the food and medicines it needs, and to grant continuing rights to EU citizens living in the UK currently. Project Fear sounds increasingly desperate, repeating the same old stories with more lurid language.

As she pointed out, the Remain politicians with their civil service and business allies had failed to make a positive case for EU membership over the 45 years they had their way and we were members. Worse still, throughout our period in it and during the referendum itself most of them denied there was significant power passing to the EU. They agreed to keep us out of several important parts of the journey to full economic, monetary and political union. It led many people to think we have been holding up the progress the continent wishes to make to a full union. There were an increasing number of occasions when the UK had to be excluded from deliberations in the EU because we were not part of the Euro and not wanting to enhance and develop the wider budget a currency union needs. We will be good Europeans by freeing the continent to speed on to its goal of deeper integration, and will end those rows that were all too common about just how much power the EU would have over us.