

I vote for tax

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I have written a lot about this general election campaign, and this is a blog that is on tax.

But then tax, voting and democracy are inextricably linked in my opinion. Indeed, one of the five reasons for tax that I argue exist is to raise representation in a democracy. The fact is that when people know they pay tax - and in this respect it really is income tax that matters - the chance that they will vote increases, considerably. And I think that is a good thing.

I have made no recommendation as to who to vote for although I have been asked to do so. That's not my job, and as I have admitted, who I might vote for might depend on where I am and who is standing. That's because voting is about making choices and there may not be a single universal answer to the choice that is to be made, especially within the electoral system that the UK currently has.

What I will ask is that you vote about tax.

Many people will for purely personal, and even selfish reasons. In my opinion that misses the whole point of voting and of tax. Voting and paying tax is (or at least should be) an exercise in showing that you love your neighbour as yourself.

Tax and voting are exercises in showing that you care. In showing that you will not walk on the other side from those in need.

Voting for tax is about voting for a vision of the society that we want.

A society that cares.

Where care is a verb, and not a noun, which means that caring is about action.

Where we provide healthcare for all who need it from cradle to grave.

Where we build a society where each person, whatever their background and with

whatever ability they have can achieve their potential and afford to live and provide for those who depend upon them.

Where we ensure each person can have the home they need and live in it with security.

Where we build prosperity on the basis of both individual and communal effort and ensure that both are recognised and rewarded.

Where we value the freedoms markets bring, but stop their excesses and correct their imperfections, including in the allocation of wealth and rewards.

Where we protect the vulnerable from all forms of abuse, including the often forgotten economic abuse that is too commonplace.

Where we want to hand on to future generations the hope that they can live as well, or better, than we did, that means preserving what is good, protecting what is irreplaceable and investing in the ability to do better.

Most of all, it is about building compassion on the basis of empathy, and working out how that is best expressed.

That is what tax should empower.

That is what I think we should vote for.

That is the basis on which tax can transform lives in ways that nothing else can.

That's why I believe in tax.

That's why I campaign on it.

That's what I would ask you to think about when you vote today.

Please do vote.

And thank you.