

The politics of this week is about beating Tory corrupt...

Published: January 13, 2026, 6:52 pm

Many people will be voting in the UK this week in widespread local elections that will, unfortunately, be passing my community by. These elections will provide a significant indication of the current state of political play. But what is it that is being tested?

Conventionally UK elections are seen as a test of right v left (of a sort) politics. I do, however, have a growing sense that this may not be appropriate framing. I offer three alternatives.

One that is linked to the right v left narrative, but which is more obvious to many now is that of individualism v collectivism. Forty years of neoliberal individualism is running out of road. Healthcare, education, law and order, social care and more are all failing because the collective responsibility we have to each other is being sacrificed. But not only is it being sacrificed to individualism, it is being so to particular interests. In other words, the conflict is between collectivism and clientelism. When the options available are collective benefit or no benefit at all whilst watching others take advantage of the state, which is what is happening, the neoliberal narrative is failing. Collectivism suddenly appears a lot more attractive.

Second, this is a choice between corruption and decency. This is not the same as the previous argument: the corruption is personal within politics. Whether it is failure to comply with or uphold the law, or whether it's about watching porn in parliament, or about being deeply misogynistic, or whether its about cronyism, or being an agent for Russia, the argument comes to much the same thing, which is a total absence of any morality. That is what the Tories have to offer, and it stinks.

Third, there is inability. You could link this to the previous two and say this is about a failure of individualism linked to a lack of morality, but there is more to this than that. Even if individualism was an appropriate policy, and it was moral, we have a government that seems entirely unable what to do to deliver on policy promises. There is no idea how to create coherent policy beyond the failure of the underlying principles themselves, bankrupt as they also happen to be.

Put this together and we have a failed government. It's not just corrupt, it is directionless, and it is not delivering. There is no answer that the government can supply to these suggestions. In that case it has failed.

There are of course policy discussions at theoretical and practical levels to be had, but the simple fact is that the choice this week is not between left or right. It is between issues more apparent than that to most people.

Politics is getting raw. It needs to. And the choice has to be ABC - Anything But Conservative.

The politics of this week is about beating their corruption, political, moral and personal.