BRINGING BRITAIN TOGETHER
Our first five years and future agenda
Voters’ real views on immigration would surprise all party leaders. Call for US-style citizenship guru at City Hall. Debate must be about future immigration policy. No more Mondeo Man: parties need to widen appeal for diverse voters. EU nationals living in the UK ‘should get residence’. First-time voters want Britain to remain a haven for refugees. Thousands #WalkTogether in memory of the July 7 victims. Immigration attitudes are more nuanced. We don’t want EU all to leave. We DO NOT WANT EU TO LEAVE. More than one million Muslims will wear poppy. ARE YOU THE VOICE OF A GENERATION? Refugees’ dream to repay country that saved his life. English ‘too nervous’ to celebrate St George’s Day. One goal: A United England.
ABOUT British Future

British Future is an independent, non-partisan thinktank and registered charity engaging people’s hopes and fears about integration and immigration, opportunity and identity.

These debates, from EU immigration and refugee protection to integration of people from different faiths and backgrounds, remain noisy and polarised. But since British Future’s founding in 2012, we have developed a unique understanding and expertise on public attitudes to these issues in the UK, through in-depth qualitative and quantitative research. We have found that there is a surprising amount of common ground among the public on which they can agree.

Our Theory of Change recognises that securing political consent for policy change on these issues requires public support – and that it is possible to build this support with the right approach:

- We develop and test messages to find arguments that are persuasive to the public, particularly what we call the ‘Anxious Middle’ – the majority of the British public, who are neither wholly pro- nor anti-immigration.
- We work with immigration and refugee advocates to help them to be more persuasive. We also identify new messengers – like the army, business and faith leaders – to build broader coalitions that can reach this persuadable Anxious Middle group.
- We project our findings publicly to inform national debate, contributing to discussions on issues such as EU migration, integration, refugee protection, the status of EU nationals in the UK after Brexit, combating racism and xenophobia, international student migration and national identities.

British Future engages people’s legitimate concerns and offers constructive solutions in response. We believe we can build a broad consensus among the public and opinion-formers for reforms to immigration and integration policy that work for everyone.

Our long-term aim is a country where we are no longer ‘Them’ and ‘Us’ but rather a confident and welcoming Britain, inclusive and fair to all.
2012

LAUNCH EVENT AND HOPES AND FEARS REPORT
British Future launched in January 2012 with a report exploring the hopes and fears of a nation that was anxious about the economy, but quietly optimistic that Britain would pull through, in a year of the Queen’s Diamond Jubilee and the London Olympics.

REFUGEE JUBILEE STREET PARTY
Together with the Refugee Council, we brought together refugees who came to Britain during the Queen’s reign to celebrate the Jubilee and thank the country that gave them sanctuary. Analysis of how ITV News coverage of the event affected attitudes to refugees showed that the video shifted people’s opinion positively by up to 15 points, even among sceptical viewers.

MELTING POT GENERATION REPORT
New polling in The Melting Pot Generation examined changing attitudes to race in Britain. It revealed falling concern about mixed race relationships, with almost two-thirds of Britons comfortable with their children marrying someone of a different ethnic background.

2013

DO MENTION THE WAR
How we understand our history plays a big part in shaping our identity in Britain. British Future’s analysis of public attitudes to the First World War, ahead of the 2014 WWI centenary, positioned us a voice on the contemporary significance of the centenary and laid the groundwork for bigger interventions in the following years.

TRAGEDY IN WOOLWICH
The murder of Fusilier Lee Rigby in Woolwich on 22 May 2013 shocked the UK. British Future brought together local community members, faith leaders and MPs at the Greenwich Islamic Centre to show that the community would remain united, before taking a message of peace to the Woolwich Barracks.

INTERNATIONAL STUDENTS AND THE UK IMMIGRATION DEBATE
Research by British Future and Universities UK found that that most of the public feels positively towards international students in the UK and is baffled that they are included in immigration statistics. The report, backed by Conservatives Lord Heseltine and Mark Field MP, called for students to be taken out of the net migration target.

OUR STORY SO FAR
**2014**

**HOW TO TALK ABOUT IMMIGRATION**
An evidenced guide with advice for all those engaged in the immigration debate, based on extensive attitudes research. *How to talk about immigration* was welcomed and utilised by pro-migration advocates in the charity and business sectors and across political parties. It was covered extensively in the media, from BBC Newsnight and the Guardian to the Times and Telegraph.

**POPPY HIJAB**
80% of the public agrees that knowing more about Commonwealth soldiers in WW1 would help integration. The ‘Poppy Hijab’, launched with the Islamic Society of Britain and Muslim designer Tabinda-Kauser Ishaq, sought to raise awareness of 400,000 Muslim soldiers who fought for Britain and shared multi-ethnic history. It had media attention from the BBC, Al-Jazeera, the Telegraph, Daily Mail and Daily Star.

**VOICE OF A GENERATION**
A joint project with The Daily Mirror recruited 18-year-old Helen Whitehouse to report for the paper on the concerns of young people in Britain throughout the 12 months leading to the 2015 General Election.

**2015**

**#WALKTOGETHER**
British Future brought Muslim and non-Muslim stakeholders together to agree a shared activity to mark the 10th anniversary of the 7/7 London bombings. The #WalkTogether project provided a positive message of inclusiveness and unity and asked the public to walk the last stop of their journey to work and share a picture. There were over 390 news items about the project across all national news media. The #WalkTogether hashtag trended at No. 1 in the UK and No. 2 worldwide.

**DOUGLAS CARSWELL MP ‘WHY ENOCHE WAS WRONG’**
British Future’s platforming of UKIP’s Douglas Carswell on ‘Why Enoch was Wrong’ reinforced anti-racism norms across all political parties. A Lib Dem identity and immigration hustings platformed leadership candidates Tim Farron and Norman Lamb.

**THINK TANK OF THE YEAR ‘ONE TO WATCH’**
British Future won the ‘One to Watch’ award at the Prospect Think Tank of the Year awards. The judges commented that the thinktank was growing in influence, with our approach gaining attention at both ends of the political spectrum.
CALL FOR OFFICE OF INTEGRATION
Our call on candidates in London’s mayoral debate to support a GLA ‘Office for Citizenship and Integration’, in partnership with UK Citizens, led to Mayor Sadiq Khan subsequently appointing a Deputy Mayor for Integration.

WE ARE ALL ENGLAND
Unknown & Untold brought the story of Britain’s WW1 Muslim soldiers to Muslim and non-Muslim audiences across the country, including at our ‘A Very English Islam’ garden party. #WeAreAllEngland used the Euro 2016 football tournament to project an inclusive English identity.

RESPONDING TO THE EU REFERENDUM
Ahead of the referendum, How (not) to talk about Europe offered evidenced advice to both campaigns on how to engage undecided voters on key issues. What next after Brexit used post-referendum polling to counter assumptions about attitudes on immigration and the meaning of the Brexit decision; and Britain’s immigration offer to Europe set out a proposal for a post-referendum deal on immigration for the Brexit talks.

BREXIT TOGETHER MANIFESTO
In January British Future brought together voices from across EU referendum and party political divides to set out a shared ‘Brexit Together’ vision that could work for Leave and Remain voters alike, covering issues of immigration, the economy and market access, security and sovereignty.

NATIONAL CONVERSATION ON IMMIGRATION
The ‘National Conversation on immigration’ will visit 60 towns and cities across the UK in 2017, feeding the public’s views into a Home Affairs Committee Inquiry. It held its first ‘Citizens Panel’ in Bradford in February 2017.

PROTECTING THE RIGHTS OF EU NATIONALS
Our EU Nationals Inquiry brought together influential voices across Leave and Remain to agree recommendations on how to fairly secure the rights of EU nationals in the UK. The inquiry’s findings were presented to the Commons Select Committee on Exiting the EU, who adopted many of its recommendations in their report, as well as to the Scottish Assembly and the GLA Assembly inquiry hearings on post-Brexit immigration policy.
FORWARD AGENDA
Current activities and future programme

1. IMMIGRATION AFTER BREXIT

The National Conversation on Immigration
Immigration policy will change after Brexit – and securing public consent for a new system will mean engaging people in debates about what these changes should be. Working alongside the Home Affairs Committee, the National Conversation on Immigration sees British Future and Hope not Hate hosting 120 events in 60 towns and cities in every region and nation of the UK.

Protecting the rights of EU nationals in Britain
The 3 million EU nationals in Britain need more than a secure guarantee of their right to stay and settle. British Future is working with migration advocates and businesses to press for the fair reforms needed to carry out the biggest administrative task in the Home Office’s history.

How do business voices win public consent for migration?
Advocates of the economic gains of migration do not have the public and political support they need. British Future is working closely with employers to develop public messages, policy agendas and broader coalitions to engage concerns effectively by proposing constructive solutions.

2. REFUGEES WELCOME – MAINTAINING BRITAIN’S PROUD TRADITION

How can charities make the case for refugee protection to those who are sceptical about the asylum system and whether Britain can cope with the scale of the crisis? British Future is disseminating new research, into public attitudes and messages that resonate with persuadable sceptics, to help organisations working on refugee protection communicate more effectively.

3. INTEGRATION: FROM ‘THEM AND US’ TO THE ‘NEW US’?

An Integration strategy for Britain
Britain’s approach to integration so far has been piecemeal. British Future advocates for a coherent, proactive strategy that bridges community divides, from English language learning and celebrating new citizens to increasing contact between people from different backgrounds.

Getting local integration right
Integration challenges differ across the country. We are working to institutionalise effective city-region strategies across the UK, building on our successful advocacy for a Deputy Mayor for Social Integration in London, and promoting constructive partnerships so businesses, universities, faith and civic voices can do more to reduce social divisions at local level.

Voices for the Common Ground
Small and medium-sized organisations working to promote integration and to combat xenophobia and prejudice can be isolated and unsupported, lacking the capacity and research to make their communications more effective. British Future is building networks of civic society actors working on integration, anti-xenophobia and Muslim integration, providing them with evidenced, tested messages that resonate with majority audiences.

3. SHARING THE LESSONS FROM POPULISM

Britain is not alone in facing the challenge of populist politics. We are sharing the lessons of British Future’s UK-based work with organisations across Europe, informing common responses to challenges from the divisive rhetoric of President Trump to the fear and prejudice being sown by some in response to Europe’s refugee crisis.

Shared history, shared future
Working with the Heritage Lottery Foundation, our Unknown & Untold project engages the First World War centenary commemorations to raise awareness among both Muslim and non-Muslim audiences of the shared history of Muslim contribution to Britain.
A more confident, welcoming and inclusive Britain – the mission at the heart of British Future’s agenda – resonates precisely because most of us are aware that is not the country that we live in today.

After five years, British Future is no longer an ambitious start-up. It has a strong presence as a thought leader on identity, immigration and integration – engaging people seriously in how we handle the issues that can divide our society.

The stakes are now higher than ever. Britain is embarking on the most important political change in half a century at a time when our country is more anxious and fractured than any of us would want.

The referendum vote of 2016 illuminated long-standing divisions – between the capital and the regions; between generations and social classes, minorities and majorities. It also presented new challenges: not only the complex policy and diplomatic issues of Brexit but also broader issues of rising hate crime and democratic mistrust.

How to respond? A strong liberal instinct is to fight back and mobilise ‘our tribe against theirs’: if somebody wants to start a culture war, then surely we need to fight and win it. Yet such a battle between two opposing minorities will generate much heat and little light. A glance across the Atlantic to the dystopian mood of Donald Trump’s divided America warns that a cycle of mutual polarisation, in which both the volume and temperature of the angriest public debates is ratcheted up ever higher, will never unite us around inclusive values. That cannot be where we want Britain to be five or ten years from now.

So this must be a time for the staunch defence of the values that make us the country we are. But those values must be defended effectively – not polarising between ‘open’ and ‘closed’, but accepting the challenge to defend liberal values in a way that makes sense to the majority of our fellow citizens. That will mean showing how the gains of being an open society can be more widely shared.

Some will recognise this as a moment of challenge and danger, so will seek to ‘limit the damage’. But we will also need a more ambitious mindset for this ‘reset’ moment, if we are to seize the opportunity to set out a broader vision that brings people together.

What is unusual about British Future’s work is not the widely shared aspiration for a more confident and inclusive society, but the distinctive way in which we work towards it.

Understanding our audiences
We are a thinktank which understands that policy expertise alone cannot shift highly salient and polarised debates. It also requires a deep understanding of how people think and how politicians, business and civic leaders need to communicate if they want to shape debates about the issues that matter most to people.

Engaging anxieties
Our journey to build a common future must begin with a serious engagement with the anxieties that most people feel, so that we do not find ourselves only talking to those who are already confident about our future.

Proposing solutions
We understand that, as advocates for a more confident and welcoming Britain, we succeed in getting a hearing – whether from decision-makers or at the school-gate – when we are much more
than voices of critique and complaint, by advancing constructive solutions to the big questions of the age.

**Being strategic and responsive**
Effective advocacy must be capable of navigating this era of dizzying volatility, when a referendum at home and elections abroad, tragedy in the Mediterranean or a terrorist atrocity in Europe might each transform the public agenda. That requires the ability to anticipate and respond in real-time, so as to be relevant to public conversations that we need to influence. It also requires a robust theory of change to ensure that we and others are responding strategically.

**Getting the message heard**
It takes creative flair to communicate that positive vision to the public in compelling new ways. That includes linking up unusual allies and long-standing supporters in ways that reach into conversations in living rooms and around kitchen tables across the country.

**So we must now show that we do have viable responses to the challenges of the Brexit era. Our three core priorities will be:**

- Securing a post-Brexit immigration approach that rebuilds public confidence and political consent, while meeting the needs of the economy, public services and our global obligations. That will need a much deeper level of public involvement, to address people’s anxieties and respond with a system that manages the pressures and secures the gains of immigration.
- Changing the way we think about integration. That means refusing to divide people into ‘Them and Us’—whether that’s about migrants, ethnic minorities or British Muslims—by proposing concrete ideas to make integration an ‘everybody’ issue, shaping a ‘New Us’ that we can all feel part of.
- Developing winning coalitions broad enough to make change happen. It will take unusual alliances to find the common ground—across the political and referendum divides and in local communities too. So British Future is deepening our own local engagement in ways that can bring new voices into our national immigration and integration debates.

British Future launched in 2012 to address the fractures in our society. Yet it did so in an Olympic and Jubilee year which provided important glimpses of how Britain is at its best when people come together. If we fear those divisions widening today, the task of finding common ground is more urgent still. It is now time to work together for the shared future we want.

*Sunder Katwala*  
Director of British Future
Britain’s public and political debates on immigration and integration can often seem noisy and divisive.

I’ve followed them closely over the years as Executive Editor of the country’s biggest Asian publishing house, chronicling the progress of our Asian community in publications like Eastern Eye and The Asian Rich List.

I joined British Future’s Board of Trustees last year as it seemed to be one of the few organisations seeking to bridge these divides and bring people together to find common ground.

Five years since its launch, British Future has already established itself as leading voice on immigration and integration. It uniquely offers in-depth understanding of public attitudes on these issues, which will dominate our politics during the Brexit negotiations and beyond.

It provides impartial political analysis, policy expertise and maintains a broad range of relationships spanning political and referendum divides, including with charities, corporates, faith and community groups.

So I’d like to invite you today to join us and offer your support.

I’m asking you to join me today as a member of the British Future Giving Circle. As well as offering important support to the charity, members enjoy a range of benefits including private advice, analysis and interpretation of policy issues, written briefings, exclusive events and previews of new publications.

As you’ve read here, we have an ambitious agenda for the years to come. We now need your help to make that a reality.

Contact British Future’s Director, Sunder Katwala, for more information at: sunder@britishfuture.org

Shailesh Solanki
Trustee of British Future
Our offer to BUSINESS in the immigration debate

The referendum vote is likely to lead to the most significant period of change in British immigration policy for a generation. This presents a challenge for business voices advocating for immigration, who have struggled to persuade either policy-makers or the public of the merits of their cause.

To help economic advocates navigate the shifting public and political debates on immigration, British Future has expanded its offer to corporate partners.

This now includes:
- Strategic and policy advice
- Political analysis
- Research on public attitudes and effective messaging
- Media and communications advice and interventions
- Joint platforming opportunities and roundtable events

If you would like to know more about British Future’s offer to corporate partners, please contact: Jill Rutter, Director of Strategy and Relationships at jill@britishfuture.org

We would like to thank the following organisations for their support:

[Image of logos: EY, Fragomen Worldwide, Deloitte, PwC, TUC, Universities UK]
British Future was founded in 2012. Since then it has gone from strength to strength: achieving charitable status in 2014, establishing an evidence base and detailed understanding of public attitudes and carving out a significant profile in the media and in politics.

This has only been possible with the support of our founding funders The Barrow Cadbury Trust, Oak Foundation, Unbound Philanthropy, Diana Princess of Wales Memorial Fund, The Open Society Foundation and Trust for London.

We are also grateful for the project-based funding or in-kind support received from the Paul Hamlyn Foundation; Heritage Lottery Fund; Social Change Initiative; Sigrid Rausing Trust; J Leon Trust; Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation; Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust; Global Dialogue; Facebook; Save the Children; British Red Cross; European Commission in the UK; Commonwealth War Graves Commission; BBC; Department for Culture, Media and Sport; Citizens UK; Imperial War Museum; EY; Institute of Directors; PWC; TUC; Fragomen and Universities UK.

I would also like to personally thank the staff team, led by Director Sunder Katwala, for their hard work and endless enthusiasm for the British Future project; as well as my fellow trustees Wilf Weeks, Shamit Saggar, Howard Jackson, Ayesha Saran, Alasdair Murray, Imam Qari Muhammad Asim MBE, Andrea Als, Shailesh Solanki and to all other trustees and staff for their contribution over this first five years.

As our country and indeed our world looks increasingly divided, the mission of British Future, to bring people together around shared and inclusive values, is more relevant now than ever. We are grateful to those who have supported us so far on this journey – and hope you will join us as it continues.

Shirley Cramer
Chair of British Future Board of Trustees
As part of Refugee Week, British Future asked Afghan refugee and professional boxer AJ ‘The Dream’ Faizy if he would dedicate his fight on World Refugee Day to Britain, the country that gave him sanctuary. This positive story was covered on BBC and ITV television news.
“All in all, I believe the great success of the #WalkTogether initiative was due to your professionalism and the strength of catching or even pre-empting a city mood.”
Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism

“...a think tank that, in the judges’ view, is growing in stature and influence through its deep engagement with the immigration debate. British Future has a nuanced approach and is gaining attention at both ends of the political spectrum.”
Prospect ThinkTank of the year awards 2015 (winner, ‘One to watch’ award)

“We worked very successfully with British Future to develop our research and analysis on student migration issues and to inform our political strategy on immigration policy development. The team at British Future were very knowledge, politically astute, provided helpful challenge and were engaging throughout. We have since worked successfully with British Future on other issues of mutual interest and would highly recommend their expertise, impact and approach to partnership working.”
Alistair Jarvis, Deputy Chief Executive, Universities UK

“Some timely guidance on a better approach is at hand from the innovative thinktank British Future.”
Andrew Rawnsley, The Observer

“British Future is an excellent resource and guide to the opportunities and potential pitfalls of communicating around migration. My only frustration is that every country doesn’t have an equivalent.”
Brendan Cox, The Great Get Together

“As we began our campaign for the rights of EU citizens in the UK after Brexit the insight and support of British Future was invaluable.”
Nicolas Hatton, the3million
The Poppy Hijab that Defies the Extremists

Yorkshire residents asked to help shape post-Brexit immigration policy.

The ‘forgotten’ army of 400,000 Muslim soldiers who fought in Great War trenches for Britain.

Common Sense and Fair Play in ‘British Values’

Lord Heseltine: cut foreign students from figures to lower net migration.

Business can’t rely on government to fix an opportunity to fix immigration anxiety (in Britain, at least).

Over 80% of British people want EU migrants to remain in the UK after Brexit, poll suggests.

CELEBRATE ENGLISHNESS MORE’CALL

WHY TRUMP WON’T TEAR US APART

‘broke’ system

SCOTS SEEK GUARANTEES FOR EU CITIZENS STAYING

Lord Heseltine: cut foreign students from figures to lower net migration.

Immigration: Brexit

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