

# YOU DID IT!

What a difference 24 hours can make! Yesterday, down here in Sussex, it was a gloomy day, punctuated by thunderstorms and heavy rain, matching the mood many of us were feeling. Could we really pull this off?

This morning the sun rose just before the final result was announced, but it was already apparent before dawn broke that the UK electorate had voted to leave the EU!

This was the day for which many of us have longed for years and may I, on behalf of the Campaign for an Independent Britain, thank you for the kind phone and e-mail messages we have received today.

However, we would be the first to acknowledge that the real heroes were the thousands of ordinary people who gave of their time and money so readily to distribute hundreds of thousands of leaflets and to canvass and campaign on the streets of our towns, cities and villages – in other words, we helped provide you with the resources and it has been a privilege to do so, but you as much as anyone deserve the credit for this great victory.

We do not intend to go into hibernation now we have seen the Brexit door finally swing open. Our country is blazing a pioneering trail. Article 50 has yet to be invoked and a lot will happen before we are finally and formally out of the EU. What will be our new arrangement with them? A lack of agreement about an exit strategy, as we pointed out, looked like it may have been the achilles heel of the “leave campaign.

Thankfully, this did not prove to be the case and we know that senior civil servants have been studying the Brexit options for some time. They will be the people who will largely determine our route out of the EU and it is possible that

talks with their EU counterparts may already have begun, even though the formal invocation of Article 50 may not take place until David Cameron's successor has been chosen.

The results laid bare the divisions in our country. Young people are predominantly europhile, with 72 per cent of 18 to 24 year-olds backing Remain. Those of us who took part in school or university debates can vouch for this! While Tim Farron, the Lib Dem leader, claimed that young people had seen their futures taken away from them by the Brexit vote, we have actually done them a favour by finally lancing the EU boil rather than bequeathing it to the next generation. However, only when the dust settles and they realise that many aspects of life, including the freedom to travel and study in mainland Europe, will be unaffected by Brexit, are they likely to appreciate that Brexit has been a benefit. After all, for them EU membership has been the norm. It is all they have ever known and from schooldays onwards, they have been taught that it is a good thing.

Scotland voted very differently to England and Wales, supporting remain by 62% to 38%. Not one Scottish local authority area supported leave. Nicola Sturgeon has stated that a second Scottish independence referendum was now "on the table". Those of us who went up to London to support Fishing for Leave last week could not fail to notice that the two big boats that led the procession under Tower Bridge were Scottish vessels and if Ms Sturgeon gets her way, her country's fishermen, who will be as glad to see the back of the Common Fisheries Policy as their English, Welsh and Northern Irish counterparts, could play a key role in keeping Scotland in the Union and out of the EU and – I am sure – would value our support.

There has been a petition launched in support of a second referendum as the margin of victory was less than 60% to 40%. It has already garnered the 100,000 signatures necessary for Parliament to consider it for debate. However, given how

exhausted not only we but our opponents must surely feel, there cannot be many people on either side of the debate with the stomach to go through these last four gruelling months again. Furthermore, David Cameron always insisted that the vote would be final. A pro-Brexit successor is unlikely to change this position. True, the margin of victory was only 52% to 48%, but to have won at all considering the full weight of the Government machinery was used against us before the “purdah” period, was an amazing achievement.

We expected some market turbulence in the wake of a Brexit vote and this has been exactly what has happened. However, the plunge in the FTSE-100 and the value of Sterling need not last long if both the UK government and the EU quickly offer some reassurance as to the likely shape of the future relationship between an independent UK and the EU. Clarity about the UK’s future access to the Single Market would be particularly welcome in the City.

Before too long, however, for all the threats and posturing by some senior politicians across the Channel and senior remain campaigners here, ultimately common sense must prevail. UK/EU trade, while declining in relative importance for us, is too important for both parties to be jeopardised by petty spite. As far back as 2013, Ambrose Evans-Pritchard wrote that, *“unless the events were grotesquely mishandled.... France and Germany would bend over backwards to find a workable formula.”*

Before the referendum, I was sent all manner of suggestions for referendum theme music. if I could have been able to make use of them all, there were enough songs and other pieces of music for a full-length if very varied concert. If you are feeling in a celebratory mood when you read this, may I offer a couple of suggestions of appropriate music for this wonderful day. Firstly *La Rejouissance* from Handel’s *Music for the Royal Fireworks* and the final duet and chorus from Purcell’s *Come ye sons of art away*. Turn up the volume and

enjoy yourself!

Finally, we will have our memories of this campaign. There were high spots and low spots for all of us, but it ended the right way. We will all look back and say that it was a privilege to have played our part, however small, in restoring our country's sovereignty and freedoms and to have laid the foundations for a new, vibrant independent UK.