#WinningWithWilliams

Founding Principles

What I believe, the principles that would guide me as leader, and the country I think we can build.

Adam Williams
for Leader of the Social Democratic Party

OCTOBER 2026

#WinningWithWilliams

Contents

	Meet Adam	3
	Preamble	4
01	The Nation	5
02	The State	6
03	The Economy	7
04	The Environment	8
05	The World	9
	The Promise	10
	Get involved	11

A revolutionary moment in the world's history is a time for revolutions, not for patching.

William Beveridge, *Social Insurance and Allied Services*, 1942

INTRODUCING

Meet Adam



I was born in 1997, a couple of months after Tony Blair walked into Downing Street. Everything I have known has been shaped by that election, so who better to lead us into a post-1997 Britain than someone born that year?

I've been hooked on politics for as long as I can remember. I argued about it with anyone who'd listen at school, and my year book voted me most likely to become Prime Minister, though I'm fairly sure it was a joke.

My road here hasn't been a straight one. After studying Medieval and Early Modern History at Bangor, I spent a year behind a bar waiting to join the RAF, only to be turned away over eczema I'd had at fourteen. I started again as an apprentice administrator at Warwickshire County Council, moved into the museum service, then took a Masters in Crusader Studies (yes, really). Crusader history doesn't pay the bills, so I joined the Missionary Society of St Columban as an organiser and fundraiser, and I owe them a great deal for the sense of service they gave me.

In 2024 I was looking for someone to vote for. I found the SDP, read the New Declaration and joined. Within a year I was elected Chair of the Young Social Democrats, representing the under 30s on the NCC. Together we've built regular meetings, a student society at Warwick, a real say on policy and a presence at every major campaign. The party then took me on full time, first as Campaigns Organiser and now as Communications and Engagement Lead.

I've done the work people see and the work that keeps a party standing: running the campaign in Earlsdon, backing our candidates in Leeds, supporting our major publications, tidying membership data, setting up our phone system, organising volunteers and putting safeguarding in place for our young members. I know where our strengths are, and what we need to build.

Now I want to bring that energy to leading the whole party. We're in this to win, not just to talk.

Join me, and let's have some fun doing it.

Adam Williams

INTRODUCTION

Preamble

This is the founding document of **#WinningWithWilliams**. It is not a manifesto, and it does not set out policy. What it does is set out what I believe, the principles that would guide me as leader, so that by the end of it you know exactly what you are getting if you vote for me.

For the last four decades, we have sold off or given away almost everything that mattered (our assets, our industries and our say over our own future) to foreign and private interests. The United Kingdom is our home, not a marketplace where everything goes to whoever offers the best price. Yet both the left and the right have treated it as one, where belonging is boiled down to a list of "values", and it does not matter if life gets worse, so long as "growth" keeps going up.

I disagree with that approach. I am a social democrat and a patriot. I believe in the common good, where everyone pays their fair share and nobody is left behind, where markets are a tool to be used, not an idol to be worshipped, and where the state is held accountable to the nation, competent at what it does and strong in what it should be delivering.

I am a social democrat because I believe a nation is something we share, not something we each own a piece of. Social, because we owe each other more than a transaction: the strong look after the weak, those in work pay into a system that looks after them in turn, and every generation hands on more than it inherited. Democracy, because power, whether in Whitehall or the boardroom, must answer to the people it affects. That is the tradition of Beveridge and Attlee, who built the NHS and the welfare state out of the same national solidarity that won the war. It was never a cosmopolitan idea, it was patriotic.

What follows are five principles: the Nation, the State, the Economy, the Environment and the World. Together they are the foundation for everything **#WinningWithWilliams** stands for.

PRINCIPLE ONE

The Nation

01

We are a nation with a shared home, history and future, not a marketplace or a piece of paper.

A nation is a people, bound together by history, culture, language and a home of its own, built up over many centuries rather than written into being.

The people of these islands form a nation in exactly that sense, just as others are nations in their own homelands. Yet for too long ours has been treated as a piece of paper, rather than the living, breathing thing it is.

Others can join a nation, but it takes more than receiving a passport. Adoption comes through hard work, sacrifice and time, and it only works when people arrive in numbers the country can manage, and when there is a confident nation there for them to become part of. When we carve out exceptions in our laws and run down our own identity, we sow the seeds of division.

Family and local community are the heart and soul of a nation, and the state should stand behind both, because they are the foundations everything else is built on.

The nation is also a promise between the generations, the social contract by which the old help the young and the young help the old. It is a two-way street, not one generation taking from the other. The NHS and the welfare state are part of that promise: you pay in when you can, and you are looked after when you can't. Society is an unwritten deal between the dead, the living and those yet to be born, and it is our duty to keep it.

> *"Society is indeed a contract... a partnership not only between those who are living, but between those who are dead, and those who are to be born."*
>
> **Edmund Burke**, *Reflections on the Revolution in France*, 1790

PRINCIPLE TWO

The State

02

The State is there to support and protect the Nation.

The State exists to serve the Nation. It holds control over our laws, our borders and how we stand in the world, and it answers to the Nation, something our political leaders seem to have forgotten. The Nation State is the highest authority there is, yet for years we have passed responsibility upwards and outwards, to international bodies, foreign courts and boardrooms abroad, and put other people's interests ahead of our own.

British politics argues endlessly over whether the State should be big or small, but that is the wrong question. The State should be competent, strong enough to do the things that keep the Nation safe, free and prosperous, and disciplined enough to leave law-abiding people alone. Its first test is whether the GP answers, the bus turns up and the school teaches.

Above all, people need to know who is responsible. Layer upon layer of quangos, regional mayors and outsourced contracts has let failure be passed around until nobody answers for it. There should be clear lines, with the parish for the most local matters, the county for services like bins, roads and buses, the devolved governments answerable for what they run in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland, and Westminster for the big picture, so that everyone knows who is accountable when things go wrong and can vote them out.

Government is not a game. It is a duty, and it is time we started treating it like the serious, difficult task it is.

> *"A family with the wrong members in control."*
>
> **George Orwell**, *The Lion and the Unicorn*, 1941

PRINCIPLE THREE

The Economy

03

The economy exists to give people a good life.

For too long the economy has served one purpose, making the GDP line go up. To keep it climbing we have relied on importing ever more people to make the headline figure bigger, while wages stood still, rents soared and life got worse for millions of our people. The economy should exist to give people a good life, and that is how it should be judged.

The fundamental problem is that we have stopped making the things that matter. We import cheap goods, cheap labour and almost everything else, and we export our best and brightest because they see no future here. The current economic settlement has failed workers, young people and the post-industrial towns that have had their hearts ripped out.

We must build an economy that makes things again, so that we stop relying on the goodwill of foreign powers and stop leaving ourselves exposed to every shock in the global market. That means the essentials owned for the people who rely on them, work that pays, a skilled trade respected as much as a degree, and homes young people can afford. It means a real living wage, workers with a seat on the boards of the companies they build, and trade unions treated as partners rather than enemies. Above all, it means getting the cost of living down, so that a full week's work pays for a decent life. It will be hard, and putting the public finances right will take real grit, but if it means giving up the headline growth figure the Treasury worships, that is a price worth paying.

> *"There is no wealth but life."*
>
> **John Ruskin**, *Unto This Last*, 1860

PRINCIPLE FOUR

The Environment

04

Leaving the world just a little bit better.

Environmentalism has come to mean chasing global targets on carbon emissions, and in the process we have set the countryside, our farmers, our food and our energy against one another, as if every gain for one must be a loss for another. The result is that all four are failing at once.

Our rivers are polluted while water companies have paid out dividends, our native species are in retreat, and too much of our countryside is given over to a single crop. Our farmers are squeezed between rising costs and falling returns, and kept going only by subsidy, all while good farmland disappears under solar panels and our food security grows weaker than any serious country should allow. And we have allowed our power to depend on gas bought from abroad, leaving families and industry with some of the highest energy bills in Europe.

None of these are trade-offs. Healthy soil grows better harvests, farmers paid to look after the land are its best stewards, and clean, reliable nuclear power cuts bills without covering a single field. If we protect the land that genuinely matters and build sensibly on the rest, the countryside, the farmer, the family and the factory all come out ahead.

That needs a government that treats the land, the farm and the power station as one national question, not four issues pulling against each other. It means a whole approach: bringing water back into public hands, restoring our rivers and wildlife, paying farmers fairly to feed the nation, and building the nuclear power that keeps the lights on and the bills down. Get that right, and we stop choosing between the countryside and the economy, and start building a country that can feed itself, power itself and be proud of the land it hands on.

> *"...a sort of national property, in which every man has a right and interest who has an eye to perceive and a heart to enjoy."*
>
> **William Wordsworth**, *Guide to the Lakes*, 1810

PRINCIPLE FIVE

The World

05

No permanent friends, only permanent interests.

The United Kingdom must stand on its own two feet. For too long, our national interest has slipped down the list while we put others first.

Nowhere is that clearer than in defence. Our industrial base has been hollowed out to the point where we cannot produce basics like artillery shells at the scale a real crisis would demand. Our armed forces have been cut to the bone, and even recruitment has been handed to private contractors. A country that cannot arm, staff and supply its own military is not truly sovereign. We must rebuild domestic munitions capacity and bring recruitment back where it belongs, under the control of the armed forces.

The same is true of trade. Too many of our deals favour the other side of the table over the people at home. Every agreement we sign should pass a simple test: does it protect British jobs and industry, or undercut them? No deal should undercut the pay, rights or standards of British workers. And we should invest in training our own workforce instead of relying on cheap labour from abroad.

When governments have followed others into wars abroad, our servicemen and women have paid a terrible price, too often for very little gain. Nor should foreign quarrels ever be imported here. No British street should ever be turned into the battleground for a foreign dispute.

What we need is a strong United Kingdom, armed and independent, with a robust defence and foreign policy and an economy that puts British workers first instead of penalising itself. We should be a good friend to those who share our interests, but nobody's pushover and nobody's servant.

The test of every decision we make abroad is a simple one: is it in the national interest?

> *"We've got to have the bloody Union Jack on top of it."*
>
> **Ernest Bevin**, 1946

CONCLUSION

The Promise

In 1942, William Beveridge named five giants standing in the way of a decent life: Want, Disease, Ignorance, Squalor and Idleness. The post-war generation took them on and built the NHS and the welfare state in doing so.

Our generation faces giants of its own: a cost of living that leaves working families further behind every year, an economy that no longer makes what it needs, and a politics that answers to everyone but the people it is meant to serve. These five principles are how we take them on:

> **The Nation.** *We are a nation with a shared home, history and future.*
>
> **The State.** *There to support and protect the nation.*
>
> **The Economy.** *There to give people a good life.*
>
> **The Environment.** *Leaving the world just a little bit better.*
>
> **The World.** *No permanent friends, only permanent interests.*

That is what you get if you vote for me: not another party that overpromises, but a plan with the urgency this moment demands, and the belief that this country can be put right.

JOIN THE CAMPAIGN

Get involved

This campaign is built by members, for members. If these principles speak to you, here's how you can help.

FIND OUT MORE	**winningwithwilliams.co.uk** Read Adam's story, his plan for the SDP and his policies.
VOLUNTEER	**getinvolved@winningwithwilliams.co.uk** Tell us where you are and how you'd like to help.
FOLLOW	**@WilliamsAdamUK** X @WilliamsAdamUK · Facebook WilliamsAdamSDP Instagram @adam_williams_sdp · YouTube @adamwilliamssdp
DONATE	**Every pound helps** Use the Donate button at winningwithwilliams.co.uk
VOTE	**Back Adam for leader** And tell a fellow member why you're backing him.

Every donation and every vote gets us #WinningWithWilliams

winningwithwilliams.co.uk



Every donation and every vote gets us #WinningWithWilliams

winningwithwilliams.co.uk

X @WilliamsAdamUK · Facebook WilliamsAdamSDP
Instagram @adam_williams_sdp · YouTube @adamwilliamssdp

Promoted by Mathew Wilkinson on behalf of Adam Williams, both at #WinningWithWilliams, Unit 174134, PO Box 6945, London, W1A 6US. Printed by Doxzoo Ltd, Lincoln Road, Cressex Business Park, High Wycombe, Buckinghamshire, HP12 3RQ.