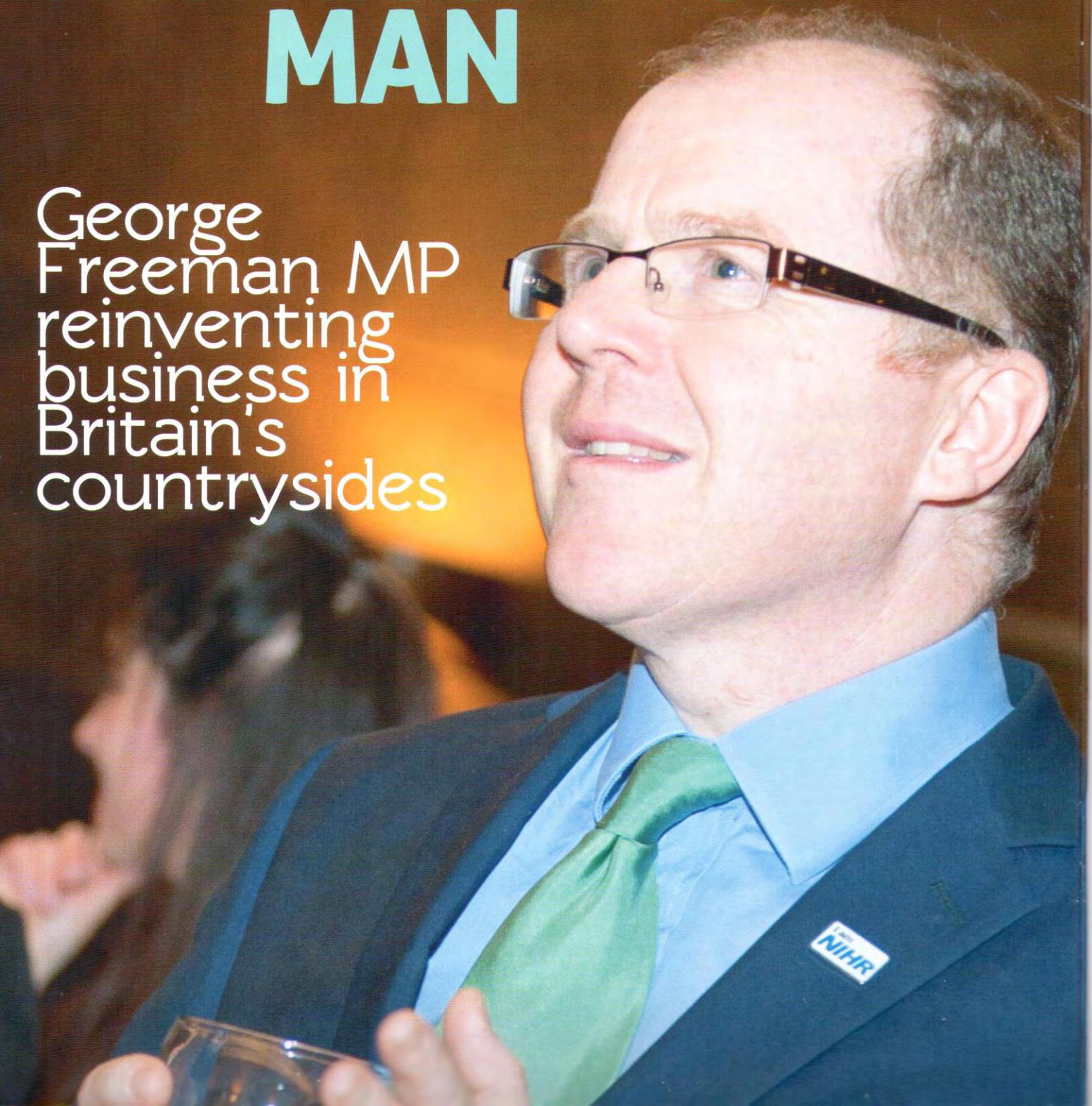


Grassroot Diplomat Initiative Award
Winners Spotlight

RENAISSANCE MAN

George
Freeman MP
reinventing
business in
Britain's
countrysides



George Freeman, descendent of Prime Minister Gladstone and winner of the Grassroot Diplomat Business Driver award, shot to the forefront of attention by championing a new mode of grassroots politics.

Seeking to revolutionise mainstream politics, Mr Freeman gave up his business career to challenge politics and return power to the people. Up until recently, Mr Freeman was the Minister for Life Sciences at the Department of Business, Innovation and Skills where his campaign for 'rural renaissance' was brought to life within Norfolk and across the nation.

Values are important attributes for the MP who has a staunch belief in the growing dissipation of power away from elected representatives. His aim since being elected Member of Parliament in 2010 has been to penetrate the "complex and unaccountable agencies" which he describes as "controlling lives whilst leaving them feeling powerless, betrayed and disillusioned". By championing a model of politics based on "the grassroots and wider civic renewal", his simple aim is to empower communities to take control of their own land by creating a self-reliant economy that retains talent and skills in Britain's most undernourished country sides.

Pursuing a system of "rural renaissance", he highlights the importance of maintaining traditional heritage whilst encouraging burgeoning businesses and local entrepreneurs.

His most successful project, the Norfolk Way, was created to inspire entrepreneurial activity in an area often dismissed by Whitehall as a 'rural backwater'. The campaign encourages a culture of innovation

and opportunities for young people by connecting "those who have succeeded with those still treading the path to success".

At the heart of The Norfolk Way is a new vision for rural planning showing that with small businesses and smaller pockets of housing in villages and towns, it is possible to build new houses, and maintain our heritage, making Norfolk a vibrant hub of enterprise and opportunity. Recently, Mr Freeman hosted the first ever Norfolk Innovation Awards and launched the first round of Rural Enterprise Bursaries provided to young entrepreneurs.

"This is all about a new model for the rural economy," he explains, "making sure we have the infrastructure we need to be a hub of new businesses and enterprise, while also preserving our wonderful heritage with fast broadband, rail and road links." Mr Freeman seeks to re-implement what he believes is a "set of values and standards which were the hallmark of the country and are now systematically neglected by a new unaccountable elite of people in real power".

Winning the Grassroot Diplomat Initiative Award has already proven that Mr Freeman's grassroots philosophy for championing grassroots campaigns is the first step or many in the right direction for a new model of politics. If he continues on this path, we can anticipate a hub of great entrepreneurial spirit in many of Britain's rustic country sides.