

Liberal Democrats target previously safe seats as election confidence grows

Nick Clegg gets ready to campaign in areas once thought unwinnable as Liberal Democrat confidence grows

Toby Helm and Nicky Woolf
The Observer, Sunday 2 May 2010



Liberal Democrat leader, Nick Clegg, has said that reform is his priority. Photograph: Gareth Fuller/AP

Nick Clegg is to widen the Liberal Democrats' campaign to include Tory and Labour seats previously regarded as unwinnable, amid growing confidence that his party can make shock gains in Thursday's election.

Private polling has indicated that several seats not previously on its hit list are now within the Lib Dems' grasp. Examples include the Labour-held stronghold of Redcar in north Yorkshire, Labour-held Colne Valley in west Yorkshire and the Tory-held seat of Wells in Somerset.

Party strategists claimed their policy of "tax fairness" – under which the first £10,000 of earnings would be exempted from income tax – was swaying an increasing number of floating voters.

In Redcar, where 1,600 workers are set to lose their jobs as a result of the decommissioning of the Corus steel plant, the Lib Dems came second in 2005 and would need to overturn an impressive 12,116 Labour majority.

"In these seats we now think we can win," said a senior party official. "We have pulled off shocks before, and we now believe we have a chance to do so in a number of others that we had not until recently regarded as our targets."

Campaigning in Somerset yesterday, Clegg, whose party held 63 seats prior to the election campaign, refused to put a figure on his aspirations, merely declaring that "the sky's the limit".

As he sought to portray the election as a two-horse race between his party and the Tories, he insisted the choice was between "fake change" under the Tories or "real change" under the Lib Dems.

Clegg welcomed the *Guardian's* and *Observer's* decision to back the party as a "significant moment in history".

He argued that the reasons for the newspapers' support reflected what a lot of people who used to invest a hope in Labour now felt. "They feel very let down after 13 years. They kind of feel that on the hope for political reform, on the hope for progress on civil liberties, on the hope for greater fairness in the tax system, a new approach to foreign affairs, they are now looking to the Liberal Democrats."

Lord Mandelson said the loss of the *Guardian's* support was not a blow to Labour and tore into the Lib Dems' policy programme. The business secretary added: "They [the Lib Dems] share some of the same values as Labour. But their policies are a joke. They aren't serious. Their policies are almost unfathomable and certainly unaffordable."

When he became Lib Dem leader in December 2007, Clegg set himself the target of increasing his party's number of Commons seats to 150 by the end of the next parliament – giving him two elections to deliver.

Last night polls suggested the party will be battling it out for second place in the national vote with Labour – and could win close to 100 seats in his first attempt on Thursday.

A YouGov poll conducted for the Sunday Times put the Tories on 35%, the Lib Dems on 28% and Labour on 27%. Other surveys had the Lib Dems in third position.

A retired American political science professor told Clegg yesterday he was an enthusiastic supporter of the Liberal Democrats – without realising he was chatting to the party's leader. Charles Hauss, who watched all three televised debates, assumed Clegg was part of the entourage travelling with the Lib Dem leader in a standard-class carriage on a train from London to Taunton. The academic asked: "What are you doing for Clegg?", to which the Lib Dem leader replied simply: "But I am Clegg."

Afterwards Hauss, 62, said: "I blushed immediately when I realised. He was younger than I thought a prime ministerial candidate would be."

The Lib Dems are also poised to swing a number of key university seats. A survey released last week by Opinionpanel showed that the percentage of students planning to vote Lib Dem had almost doubled over the course of the campaign to 50%.

Since Clegg's performance in the first televised leaders' debate, the party's national student organisation, Liberal Youth, has reported "tenfold" increases in volunteering and pledges of support.

Seats that the party could win off the back of student support include York Outer and Oxford East. Leicester South and City of Durham also now seem to be within Clegg's grasp.

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Berlinslacker

2 May 2010, 12:37AM

Yee Hah! Ride 'em Cleggy!

But beware that 'Kinnock moment'

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Archnemesis

2 May 2010, 12:38AM

Good luck!

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ResoluteSteve

2 May 2010, 12:48AM

this country has a chance.

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NoeticCC

2 May 2010, 1:15AM

I live in the Colne Valley area and I must say that Nick's visit to Marsden near Huddersfield was planned BEFORE this announcement was made. Our local candidate, the fab Nicola Turner, first mentioned it in a web chat with the Huddersfield Examiner on Wednesday :)

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wellyeahokbut

2 May 2010, 1:17AM

I live in a seat which has previously been a Con/Lab marginal but which has seen the Libs picking up votes at each election. In 2005 they were 16% behind the Lab winner and 6% behind the Tories in 2nd.

I've been surprised at how little campaigning the Tories and Labour seem to be doing here. I think perhaps Labour have abandoned it as lost and the Tories are expecting to clean up with no effort. The main presence here is those very negative Tory billboard ads (which might bash brown but don't have anything very positive to say about Cameron), and constant (annoying) mailshots from Cameron and Osborne which go straight in the bin.

By comparison, the Libdems are out on the doorsteps, talking to people. They have posters in lots of houses (the ratio must be 10:1 compared to the other parties) and their candidate has a strong local presence. I still can't remember the Tory challenger's name. Lest this seem like a big Libdem brownnose post: I'm not a libdem supporter and I won't be voting for them. But I have the feeling they could come from 3rd place here to win next week.

If this is typical of what's going on in other marginals, I think they could do even better

than expected.

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JMElliott

2 May 2010, 1:17AM

Nice to hear Lord Mandelson not sounding intensely relaxed

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John151079

2 May 2010, 1:22AM

Good to know so many people are as excited by Lib Dem policies as I am.

On a superficial note, just imagine the hangover feeling across the country if the Tories or Brown win power. Now imagine the excitement if it is Clegg who arrives at number 10. The country needs a boost and Mr clegg is the only one who can offer it.

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Jdaven101

2 May 2010, 1:44AM

Are those 'strongholds' mentioned really strongholds? The media has had a tendency in recent years to play up Labour's representation in certain seats, that gives a greater sense of catastrophe when Labour falls (most particularly, at by-elections). I remember Crewe being sold as a Labour stronghold, etc. but the reality to any politically astute observer on the ground was that this was a predominantly Tory seat. Gwenyth Dunwoody's formidable presence in the constituency had suppressed the centre right instincts of the populace, but it never removed them and really the result was never in doubt. The media knew it, but never let on.

Here again, talking about strongholds - are they really that secure? I think Nick Clegg is focusing on seats he thinks he has a realistic chance of gaining. If he started to talk about seats like Sedgfield or Preston, then yes alarm bells for Labour would ring. In reality, for all we know, these seats mentioned could easily have been the original target seats for the Lib Dems anyway.

The first casualty of war is the truth, and politics is war (as it should be fought - with no bloodshed)

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MajorPlonquer

2 May 2010, 3:23AM

Wowie! He has the backing of BOTH the Guardian and the Observer. That will assure him of at least 9 votes, will it?

Imagine what he could achieve if he had the backing of a **profitable** newspaper. Any profitable newspaper.

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rednorth

2 May 2010, 3:37AM

This comment has been removed by a moderator. Replies may also be deleted.



msmlee

2 May 2010, 5:41AM

For those of you not so long ago advocating tactical voting to keep the Tories out. Wake up. Vote Lib Dems to keep the Tories out. A vote for NuLab is a wasted vote. Are you serious about not letting this country run by the Tories? Then put aside your tribal loyalty for Labour (New Labour has long long long ago deserted you, you just refuse to admit it) and vote for the only centre-left party presenting a credible challenge preventing the Tories from gaining a majority.

All the polls at the moment are showing that we have an over 50% chance of gaining a hung parliament, versus a 30 something % chance of a Conservative majority government. Labour has a 5% chance of majority government.

To make sure that the Conservative momentum be stopped, switch your votes to Lib Dems. It is the only way to ensure we could stop the Tories AND ensure electoral reform so that in future we -- and our children and grandchildren -- would have every one of our votes count equally and no longer need to hold our noses again to do this sort of tactical voting because under PR-STV there will be NO SAFE SEATS and no tactical voting needed

(<http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/article.php?id=48>).

Go on. To paraphrase Polly Toynbee, vote with your head and go with the Lib Dems to keep the Tories out, even if your heart cries out for Brown.

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althebald

2 May 2010, 5:50AM

@rednorth

The Lib-Dems are not third in "all but one of the polls". UK Polling Report [cites five polls](#), and the Lib-Dems are second in three of them.

YouGov/Sunday Times (30th Apr-1st May) CON 35%(+1), LAB 27%(-1), LDEM 28%(nc)

ComRes/S.Mirror/S.Indy (30th Apr-1st May) CON 38%(+2), LAB 28%(-1), LDEM 25%(-1)

ICM/Sunday Telegraph (30th April) CON 36%(+3), LAB 29%(+1), LDEM 27%(-3)

BPIX/Mail on Sunday (30th Apr-1st May) CON 34%(nc), LAB 27%(+1), LDEM 30%(nc)

Angus Reid/Sunday Express (TBC) CON 35%(+2), LAB 23%(nc), LDEM 29%(-1)

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fortyner

2 May 2010, 5:55AM

This election has become impossible to call. No party can predict the result with any certainty. The Lib Dem flair for local campaigning will deliver a few surprises in the seemingly most unlikely places.

The main feature of the campaign all along has been the confused and lacklustre performance of the so-called "big two". With Labour being so hopeless, Cameron and co should have walked it but have struggled to gain any momentum.

Multi-party politics has arrived. We need some form of proportional representation to

reflect that. The one certainty on the Thursday is that the result will NOT represent in any true sense, the will of the voters in terms of the distribution of seats. That must change or our politics will continue to lack all credibility.

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[OurPlanet](#)

2 May 2010, 6:49AM

As fortyner mentions the result will not reflect the amount of votes cast for each party. People in this country must really open their eyes and start to calculate how perverse and undemocratic our system is. If after 13 years of New Labour and their lying about reforming our system of voting, you can absolutely bet on it that even with a minority government the Tories won't even be dragged "kicking and screaming" to change the 2 party dictatorship of this country. If the LibDems have a pivotal role in the next government they must NOT compromise their standing on electoral reform, even if it means calling for new elections. I believe if people who have felt disenfranchised up to now have a fair voting system, it will create solidarity in getting through our difficulties.

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[FrankLittle](#)

2 May 2010, 7:19AM

msmlee

.
Wake up. Vote Lib Dems to keep the Tories out.

What a strange thing to say when Clegg would rather join up with Cameron than Brown.

Wouldn't it be more correct to say vote Lib Dem to get the Tories in.

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[x7starsx](#)

2 May 2010, 7:42AM

I've voted labour all my life as did my parents and all my family but nulabour has severely strained my adherence. Despite the good things it has done, Iraq, civil liberties plus getting into bed slavishly with the most right wing and incompetent US president are things I find impossible to just take in my stride.

I would be tempted to vote libdem but live in Islington so have direct experience of a pretty unpleasant local libdem regime that once included their current, rather frightful, parliamentary candidate. The 'Islington Labour' (as she styles herself) sitting MP, Emily Thornborough is a decent local MP who doesn't toe the nulabour line on a number of issues (Trident, Iraq) & works hard for her constituents. She is also sitting on a majority of a few hundred votes.

So which way to go? The Guardian/Ob wants me to abandon Emily for the 'greater' cause of keeping out the Tories (and it is a great cause) but I viscerally am having problems even imagining voting for this libdem candidate.

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shallowasapuddle

2 May 2010, 7:56AM

Labour and the Lib-Dems will be on much more common ground if the vote holds up. This will be our best opportunity to secure reform of the voting system in a generation. The thought of Gideon Osbourn in charge of the exchequer and that slimy wanker Michael Gove in charge of our education policy fills me with dread and so if a tactical vote keeps out a Tory then it should and has to be done.

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exiledlondoner

2 May 2010, 8:36AM

While it might seem easier to the Lib Dems to target Labour seats, it's very important that they continue to draw support from the Tories. In terms of influence 80 seats in a hung Parliament would be worth more than 120 in a Tory majority.

If the Lib Dems and Labour get 55% of the vote between them, the Tories will not win.

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exiledlondoner

2 May 2010, 8:47AM

x7Starsx

So which way to go? The Guardian/Ob wants me to abandon Emily for the 'greater' cause of keeping out the Tories (and it is a great cause) but I viscerally am having problems even imagining voting for this libdem candidate.

Vote for who you want to win - you won't let the Tories in.

Islington South is a Labour Lib Dem marginal, and isn't in any danger of falling to the Tories.

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7chippy

2 May 2010, 8:52AM

Vote Brown get Cameron in Surrey. In Guildford, Woking and Esher and Walton the Labour vote was more than the Tory majority in 2005. If you want to restrict the Tory number of seats vote Lib Dem.

Imagine if you wake up on Friday morning and the Tories have a majority of 3.....

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LDAndrew

2 May 2010, 8:55AM

Despite Iraq, despite tuition fees, despite trying to imprison people for three months without a trial, so many of my Labour friends have "pinched their nose and voted Labour" up to now. This time a lot of them are moving to the LibDems.

The tribal grip that the Labour party holds on it's supporters is incredible to behold

from the outside but finally I think it might be slipping in favour of genuine progressive politics.

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[vercol](#)

2 May 2010, 8:55AM

I tipped Redcar for a surprise on CIF before the election began. Vera Baird is unpopular and is no Mo Mowlam, the Government let Teesside down over Corus and the Lib Dems have a majority of the Council seats in the constituency, but not Council.

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[Styxdweller](#)

2 May 2010, 9:20AM

Current Betfair prediction:

Tory majority 53.4%

Hung parliament 44.2%

Labour 2% (wow, that's high!)

Any other 0.7% (what can this mean?)

So chances of any LibDem pact with Labour is contained within that 44.2%, and only really if Labour has more seats than the Tories. Who's seen a prediction of that? And what likelihood is there of a Labour recovery in the next 4 days? This the chances of Cameron by himself is 53.4% and in an arrangement with Clegg around 40%. We'll leave the 4.2% perhaps as the chance that Brown might squeak in on Clegg's coattails.

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[wildejamey](#)

2 May 2010, 9:21AM

Hope the LibDems do well but I fear that just as the Cons may have lost their overall majority by Grayling's lifting the lid on the homophobia and discrimination just beneath the surface of his party (and what happened to him over the last 3 weeks - sent to Siberia?), so Clegg may have blown it by getting too out of step with mainstream popular views on immigration, leaving him vulnerable to the dishonest but unfortunately effective attacks of both Brown and Cameron on this subject.

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[Millerntor](#)

2 May 2010, 9:26AM

My ex-pat vote winged its way from Germany and for the first time in my life I voted Lib Dem. Not sure if I am allowed to vote but I still seem to be registered at my parents address - I haven't lived there for 12 years. Maybe the Tories could claim this is electoral fraud!

KEEP THE TORIES OUT!

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Styxdweller

2 May 2010, 9:33AM

John151079

2 May 2010, 1:22AM

Good to know so many people are as excited by Lib Dem policies as I am..... Now imagine the excitement if it is Clegg who arrives at number 10. The country needs a boost and Mr clegg is the only one who can offer it.

Their manifesto is weak and populist except in places where its barmy, like amnesties, the Euro and the EU, and destroying Britain's already very diminished military capacity. It was never written with a presumption that it would ever have to be implemented, as indeed it won't. The LibDems won't get more than 100 seats, probably only 80, but that is still a fantastic outcome. Before the 1st debate, it was projected at around 50. So, it won't be Clegg at Number 10. That's essentially impossible. However, while a small Tory majority is the most likely outcome, there is, admittedly, an almost equal chance of a hung parliament in which concessions to Clegg will have to be made. Actually if Clegg became PM, he couldn't find 20 cabinet calibre people anyway. Labour find it hard enough, now that I think of it. It's not a problem for the Tories as they have more higher professionals, ie not teachers or trade unionists.

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thetoulosan

2 May 2010, 9:46AM

I am unsure if everyone is aware that the polls are somewhat misleading. There are rules they follow but the first thing I found strange, when I looked at the details published by every poll group, were the questions.

I think we assume you are contacted to disclose which party you will vote for and how decided you are to vote. It's not as simple as that. There are other questions asked and it becomes obvious to understand that these additional questions are taken into account to distort the overall picture. Some poll groups will even pay you for your answers ! You don't believe me....look yourself !

Fact ! 46% of voters are undecided...we are not told that on the telly or in the papers when they report the latest polls.

This Sunday morning we are being told that the Tories are edging ahead, Labour and Lib Dems are fading. This isn't the real picture. Nearly half of voters have not yet decided. It needs to be stressed !

Don't be swayed by the apparent "swing" to Conservative. LibDem supporters must cast their vote in either their "safe" or marginal seats.

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freewessex

2 May 2010, 9:51AM

West Dorset and Oliver Letwin are well within the Lib Dems grasp.

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zsmith

2 May 2010, 10:03AM

Although not a Lib Dem supporter, I have to admit that Clegg's 10k tax exemption is the single most attractive policy from any party available. In fact, I think it should be raised to perhaps 15k or so if it's coupled with a gradual withdrawal of benefits so that people are incentivised to go back to work and contribute to society.

I can very much live with a Lib Con coalition.

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OldeJanner

2 May 2010, 10:05AM

I am truly amazed at how gullible you, supposed, Liberal voters truly are!

His policies didn't appeal before the TV debates & according to polls I have just seen on other news sites, they still don't!

So you are voting for a persona, an individual who is going to do things to you & your finances, that you will hate!

Very clever.

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dh48

2 May 2010, 10:28AM

"Lord Mandelson said the loss of the Guardian's support was not a blow to Labour"

The second case of Labour kicking it's core support in the teeth in the last week.

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Caersalem

2 May 2010, 10:33AM

Funny how the Lieberal Dems have slipped in the polls just at the Grauniad comes out for them.

Clegg has looked too cocky and nowhere near statesmanlike during the past few days, and he is very much a one man band.

Go back to your constituencies and prepare for... disappointment.

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exiledlondoner

2 May 2010, 10:37AM

The highly dubious poll results showing the Tories gaining ground might be just the thing to galvanise the anti-Tory vote.

The election campaign started with kicking out New Labour as the dominant theme for many, but now that's in the bag people's minds will turn to the second priority - stopping the Tories getting a majority.

I don't think there's any place for a tacit agreement between Labour and the Lib Dems

to switch their attack to the Tories - voters don't like that sort of thing - but it would be in both party's interests to stop kicking lumps out of each other.

Go for Osborne, and for the prize Murdoch has been promised for his support. Osborne scares the shit out of voters (which is why he's been hidden), and if people knew what Murdoch has been promised (the break up of the BBC, and the right to launch Fox-style news in the UK), many natural Tories would have second thoughts.

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x7starsx

2 May 2010, 10:38AM

I've lived under two LibDem councils - Tower hamlets and now islington and both of them were worse than the rather gruesome labour councils they replaced - best thing about this situation was that local labour had to sort itself out a bit and get rid of some of the tammany hall types that were in place.

Only to be replaced in some cases by a load of nulab types.....groan

So I find it hard to envision any kind of quality LibDem govt despite that nice young Mr Clegg and wise old Mr Cable.

Hmm...having said that no Tory government is good, ever, period! Saw the dreadful shadow minister for education on the tele on Thursday - as a teacher all i can say is - Yikes & gawd help us all, esp our kids!

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exiledlondoner

2 May 2010, 10:43AM

Caersalem,

Funny how the Lieberal Dems have slipped in the polls just at the Grauniad comes out for them.

It isn't funny at all - polls are not neutral snapshots of opinion, but paid for campaigning tools. If you wanted a poll saying that the Greens were on 40% nationally, you could buy one.

The parties will be doing private polling - aimed at finding out the real position - but public polls are skewed to reflect the wishes of who commissions them. Even with this, several newspapers have still been caught out manipulating poll figures. Look at the results - the figures reflect the position of the paper.

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dh48

2 May 2010, 10:43AM

I am horrified that the media generally, and the Grauniad in particular is spending so much time discussing the possibilities of a hung parliament, and tactical voting.

FORGET tactical voting, just go out and vote for the candidate in whom you have the most trust to do the right thing.

You may just find that by doing that, your dreams come true anyway.

In 1997 I lived in Shrewsbury and Atcham. Labour came from a poor third place to win, unseating the Tory M.P., Derek Conway. The first time in the twentieth century that they had won the seat.

Had Liberals and LibDems not voted tactically en masse in the past, they would probably have been in power twenty or thirty years ago.

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[SteveGezzer](#)

2 May 2010, 10:51AM

i was a paid up labour member the wife was a paid up conservative member both only offer the same old, same old.

we are both now paid up liberal democrat members they stand a better chance then most people think ...

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[BertieFox](#)

2 May 2010, 10:57AM

Er, wasn't Colne Valley a Liberal seat for most of the 1960s and 1970s held by the excellent Richard Wainwright?

If it goes back to the Lib Dem fold I wouldn't see that as much of an earthquake.

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[M4LTT](#)

2 May 2010, 11:13AM

msmlee

2 May 2010, 5:41AM

For those of you not so long ago advocating tactical voting to keep the Tories out.

Wake up. Vote Lib Dems to keep the Tories out. A vote for NuLab is a wasted vote.

Are you serious about not letting this country run by the Tories? Then put aside your tribal loyalty for Labour (New Labour has long long long ago deserted you, you just refuse to admit it) and vote for the only centre-left party presenting a credible challenge preventing the Tories from gaining a majority.

All the polls at the moment are showing that we have an over 50% chance of gaining a hung parliament, versus a 30 something % chance of a Conservative majority government. Labour has a 5% chance of majority government.

To make sure that the Conservative momentum be stopped, switch your votes to Lib Dems. It is the only way to ensure we could stop the Tories AND ensure electoral reform so that in future we -- and our children and grandchildren -- would have every one of our votes count equally and no longer need to hold our noses again to do this sort of tactical voting because under PR-STV there will be NO SAFE SEATS and no tactical voting needed

(<http://www.electoral-reform.org.uk/article.php?id=48>).

Go on. To paraphrase Polly Toynbee, vote with your head and go with the Lib Dems to keep the Tories out, even if your heart cries out for Brown.

Follow this suggestion and welcome to chaos now and forever.

regards malc

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[Scanman](#)

2 May 2010, 11:19AM

I find it intriguing that Clegg is taking his X Factor fame so seriously. His policies simply do not stack up.

Do we need an amnesty for over 1 million illegals - Just a variation of Labours vote buying tactics.

If they are illegals they are under the radar and will not show themselves as they are either not working or if they are they will not pay any tax as they are more than likely working for less than 10'000 a year.

The persons or people employing them are also under the radar and will simply stop employing them so will cease their employment forcing them onto the benefits which we cannot afford.

Do you want to share the same values as Labour - I don't think so

Policies are not serious enough for me.

Don't get me wrong Clegg is a nice guy but he has struck gold with the debates but regrettably he has changed his policies about 5 or 6 times every time he has been challenged.

Examples include The Euro and Full Integration in the EU, the amnesty etc.

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hybridartifacts

2 May 2010, 11:25AM

@Scanman

The amnesty the Lib Dems are looking has actually been done by both Labour and Conservative governments before - the only real difference being that the Lib Dems are actually telling you they will do it.

All three parties regard it as occasionally essential to offer such amnesties, but only one will tell you that to your face - now what does that tell you about the other two?

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hybridartifacts

2 May 2010, 11:27AM

I live in a 'safe' Conservative seat and we are being bombarded with leaflets (almost to the point of their being a bit counter-productive as its starting to get a bit annoying).

Nicholas Soames is my (???) MP, and with a bit of luck he wont be much longer... the Lib Dem vote has been creeping up on him for some years now, and looks like it might actually be a real threat now.

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viriditan

2 May 2010, 11:44AM

x7starsx... Your visceral dislike of the Lib Dems confuses me. I moved to Islington (North) three years ago and I've been extremely impressed with the council, for example their commitment to assisting household recycling, composting, etc.

The irony is that, like you, I may end up voting against the Lib Dems.

I've never voted for Labour, never bought into Blair's snake-oil pitch, never been able to stomach their instinct to squash civil liberties wherever they find them. However, my MP is good old Jeremy Corbyn. Islington North isn't a battleground and the Lib Dems have clearly never intended to contest it.

Do I vote local or national? I'm still undecided. Maybe we should swap votes...

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[christopherhawtree](#)

2 May 2010, 12:14PM

A few weeks ago I remarked on a local blog that the LibDems had a chance of winning Hove if they had started earlier. Could be now that they gain votes from Tories and Labour. It is old-style mentality to think Hove is "natural" Tory.

The Tories are set to lose seats at next year's Local elections. Most of their councillors are uninformed filler, not decision makers.

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[Kupfernigk](#)

2 May 2010, 12:26PM

Lord Mandelson said the loss of the Guardian's support was not a blow to Labour I can assure him that the certain loss of power by Lord Mandelson is regarded with equanimity by almost everybody other than a few media owners.

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[x7starsx](#)

2 May 2010, 12:58PM

Viriditan

I agree the LibDem council in Iz has implemented some good things - viz your examples. However other things they have done have not been popular - especially 'rigging' the consultation on proposed traffic management in the borough, importation of parking mafia, perceived centralisation of power to the executive, poor facilities for local alienated youth, relocating council services out of the borough etc

This all resulted in Islington being the only council that had a large swing to labour in the last council elections so that the LibDems came within a whisker of being defeated. My visceral feelings particularly concern the current liberal candidate in Islington South who was one of the original LibDem cabal on the council and was booted off the council by the people of her ward, only to resurface as their parliamentary candidate. I am horrified to think that a good MP like Emily Thornborough might get swept aside in this Cleggmania and agenda for change but that's politics, eh! As a previous poster pointed out Lab/LibDem constituencies aren't the issue re keeping the tories out.

Jeremy Corbyn is a good guy who works hard for his constituents. We have been v lucky to have him, plus Chris Smith followed by Emily Thornborough, as the MPs for our borough and I very much hope it stays that way. The council I'm less concerned about. In re Blair - many of us lifetime labour supporters voted for him hoping that he wasn't going to be as full of spin and toryish as he seemed (we were also desperate for a labour govt after so long under Maggie & Major). We were wrong and he was worse than that in many respects. But good things also happened under him (e.g. civil partnerships and N Ireland, the NHS improved) so it wasn't all bad at all. Having good constituency MPs meant we could just about vote Lab last time round rather than desert to the Greens.

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Drewy

2 May 2010, 1:04PM

Screw coalitions and tactical voting, GO FOR GOLD. Yee-haa!

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toomuchcaffeine

2 May 2010, 1:04PM

Caersalem

Funny how the Lieberal Dems have slipped in the polls just at the Grauniad comes out for them.

Clegg has looked too cocky and nowhere near statesmanlike during the past few days, and he is very much a one man band.

Go back to your constituencies and prepare for... disappointment.

Something tells me from your post, perhaps it's the use of "Lieberal Democrats", that you are more a Daily Heil supporterer than a Guardian reader. Please, go back to your tabloid and prepare for.... humiliation

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MindYerBeak

2 May 2010, 1:12PM

I'm with Nick.

Electoral reform is the name of the game. It's a virtual impossibility that the Lib Dems will win the election. Only tactical voting will keep out the Tories.

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Greywater

2 May 2010, 1:32PM

'if your heart cries out for Brown'

-hahahahaha.

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