

High Peak Liberal Democrats

October 2016 Newsletter

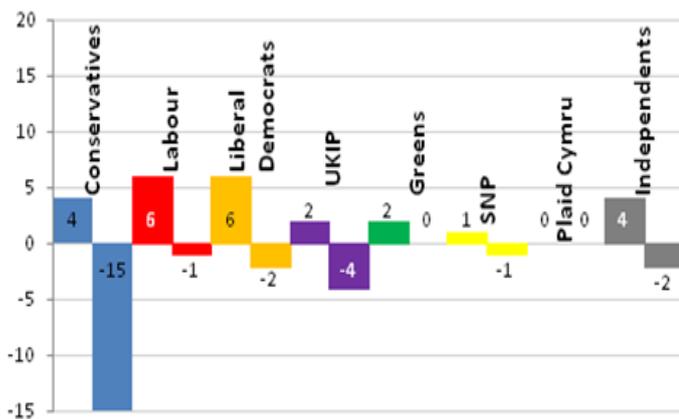
For Members and Supporters



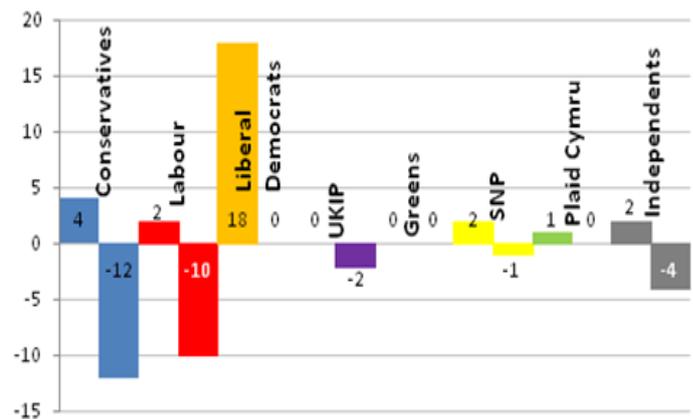
Confounding Expectations: Surge in LibDem membership and multiple council victories

On 23rd June, the UK narrowly voted to leave the EU. As a party that recognises the benefits that EU membership brings, and that fought hard to convince the public of those benefits, it might be expected that the referendum result would have damaged our position in UK politics. However, the reverse has happened; party membership has soared, with over 20,000 new members joining since the referendum. At the ballot box, LibDem candidates have recorded more wins in county and borough by-elections in the past three months alone than we have achieved in any whole year since 2009! The LibDem vote share is up and council seats have been taken from Conservatives, Labour, UKIP and Independents in wards across the country that would not have been considered remotely winnable before. Notable LibDem successes have occurred on the fringes of High Peak with stunning victories against Labour in Sheffield Mosborough and NE Derbyshire at Tupton, both of which had swings of over 20% to the LibDems. The tables below show the wins and losses for each party in 2016 county, borough and unitary authority wards/divisions that LibDems have contested (figures correct to 8 October 2016).

Pre-referendum wins & losses



Post-referendum wins & losses



Annual Conference Round-Up

The party recently held a very successful Annual Conference in Brighton and has emerged united and revitalised. Tim Farron concluded the conference with a rousing speech articulating the party's rationale for continuing to fight for Britain's place in Europe and stressing the importance of reaching out to those who feel disenfranchised and left behind in our communities. He also reminded us of the desperate plight of refugees, highlighted the threats faced by the NHS and recognised that we may have to pay more via taxes to be able to enjoy the Health and Care Service we seek. Tim also emphasised the vital role played by education and reminded us that a good education is something all children need, not just the lucky few who get into a grammar school. Above all, he made the case for Liberal Democrats to stand up for an open, united and tolerant Britain and to provide strong, effective opposition to the government. The full text of his speech is available at: <http://www.libdemvoice.org/in-full-tim-farrons-speech-to-liberal-democrat-conference-51915.html>.

High Peak LibDems make a difference

Since the dark days of May 2015, membership of the High Peak LibDems has roughly doubled to about 130. This is brilliant news and we extend a warm welcome to all new members. Membership is an important step, but to make a difference we need to convert members into activists. Already several local LibDems have been making their voice heard lately on a range of issues, both local and national.

Erasmus

In July LibDems campaigned in Buxton to protect the Erasmus student exchange scheme which is threatened by Brexit. Vince Cable was in town on that day and he lent his support to our efforts. If you want to join Vince in fighting to preserve the scheme, the petition is available at: <http://www.libdems.org.uk/erasmus>.

Stepping Hill Hospital

In August a series of campaign days were held in the west of the constituency to highlight the threat towards staff and services at Stepping Hill hospital. The petition has gathered over 1000 signatures. You can add your name at <http://highpeaklibdems.org.uk/en/article/2016/1179303/1-000-people-in-high-peak-sign-lib-dem-petition-to-save-stepping-hill>.

Castleton Parking Restrictions

Over on the other side of the constituency in the Hope Valley, Derbyshire County Council is trying to sneak through draconian parking restrictions. These will make life difficult for both residents and visitors. Charles Lawley, our County Councillor candidate for Chapel and Hope Valley has started a petition to fight this: <http://highpeaklibdems.org.uk/en/petition/stop-castleton-parking-restrictions>

New Mills School Sixth Form

Derbyshire County Council has announced a consultation process will begin to determine the future of New Mills School Sixth Form. It is likely that they will try to close this valuable facility, forcing sixth formers to travel to Marple, Glossop or Buxton. As defenders of education and local communities we will oppose any such closure plans.

Have your say in shaping what we say to High Peak voters

In May 2017 we will be fighting County Council wards across High Peak. Our sister constituencies across the UK have proven that LibDems can win virtually anywhere, but only if they have the support of an active, engaged local party. We need your help, in whatever way you can offer, so that we can make our presence felt. We need canvassers, campaigners, envelope-stuffers and leaflet deliverers. Above all we also need ears to the ground to let the leadership know what is happening locally: what are the issues that matter and what are other parties doing (or failing to do) about them? Although our main policies are set at a national level, we need to tailor our messages so that they resonate with local voters. We would like as many members of the local party to meet on 20th October to discuss and prioritise the issues that we will fight the May 2017 local elections on. Details of the location and timing will be distributed shortly. For some of you, this may be your first opportunity to get involved - don't be daunted, we are Liberal Democrats: open, united and tolerant. Above all we aren't scary.

LibDem Focus Team Coffee Morning

Come along for a coffee at the Mechanics' Institute Market Street, Whaley Bridge 9.30am-12 Noon on Saturday 22nd October. Tombola/Raffle Prizes and/or cakes welcomed. Call 01663 732334 for details.

Please contact any of the constituency officers listed below if you want to get more involved in making sure that the people of the High Peak know who the Liberal Democrats are and what we stand for.

.Current Constituency Officers			<i>www.highpeaklibdems.org.uk</i>		
Chair	Roy Lyon	01663 741776	Treasurer	Margaret Weaver	01663 733275
Vice Chair	David Lomax	01663 733191	President	Barrie Taylor	01663 732334
Secretary	Stephen Worrall	07411 950287	<i>stephen.worrall@highpeaklibdems.org.uk</i>		