

LIBERALISM

THE HUDDERSFIELD E

Conventional wisdom suggests that the break between Liberals and Liberal Nationals was never healed, with the latter drifting inexorably towards absorption in the Conservative Party. But in specific locations such as London and Burnley the two groups did come together in the wake of the 1945 general election. In this article **David Dutton** considers the process of fusion in Huddersfield and argues that this helped ensure the survival of an outpost of Liberalism during the party's darkest days.

Whatever its existing problems, the events of 1931–32 removed any immediate or short-term prospect of a recovery in the fortunes of the British Liberal Party. From differing assessments of the performance of the outgoing Labour administration and differing attitudes towards the National Government which took its place, there emerged in effect two Liberal parties, along with a small and increasingly isolated third grouping under David Lloyd George.

In the wake of the general election of October 1931 almost three dozen Liberal MPs coalesced around the leadership of Sir John Simon to form the so-called Liberal National group, pledged to give unqualified support to the government whatever policies it took to meet the current economic emergency, including the introduction of tariffs. Though neither side seemed keen to admit the fact openly, the Simonite group rapidly assumed the functions and attributes of a separate party and, while both sides hinted at eventual reunion, the split turned out to be permanent.

The participation of both Liberal factions within Churchill's wartime coalition again muddied the dividing lines between them and there were talks on the possibility of reconciliation in the latter stages of the conflict. These, however, broke down, less over issues of policy than the determination of the mainstream party to contest the forthcoming general election as a fully independent movement.

As has been well described, a final attempt to repair the breach was made in 1946. Talks began following an initiative in May by Ernest Brown, a former leader of the Liberal Nationals, but had ground to a halt by the autumn, largely because the Liberal Nationals would not consider anything other than a reunited party taking its place alongside the Conservatives in a broad anti-socialist alliance. The Liberals, by contrast, were still insistent that any reunified party must be a completely independent political force beholden neither to Tories nor Labour.¹ But in specific locations the process of merger was brought to success. On 1 July 1946 *The Times* announced that the London Liberal National Party and the London Liberal Party had

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decided to unite and that a new organisation would begin a campaign to ensure representation in parliamentary and local government elections in Greater London. The impact on the fortunes of Liberalism in the capital was, however, at best marginal; neither component in the reunion had much to offer in terms of residual strength in London. But the development of events in the West Riding town of Huddersfield was of considerably greater significance and arguably contributed to the survival of an outpost of Liberal strength during the darkest decade in the party's long history.

Divisions in the Huddersfield Liberal Party were slow to appear after 1931, not because of the absence of a Liberal National splinter group but because of the success of the town's Liberal MP, William Mabane, in taking the local Liberal Association with him into the embrace of the Liberal National Party, almost without the association being aware of what was happening to it.² As late as 1939 the Association kept up its affiliation to the Liberal Party Organisation, while only sending observers to meetings of the Simonite Liberal Nationals. Meanwhile, Mabane

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himself held office in both the Yorkshire Liberal Party and the Yorkshire Liberal National Party. As a result, it was not until shortly before the outbreak of the Second World War that the mainstream Liberal Party in Huddersfield finally began to reassert itself.

Mabane easily overcame the surprised reaction of the staunchly free-trade Huddersfield Liberal Association (HLA) when he first became a member of the Liberal National group late in 1931 by arguing that he could act as a bridge between it and the mainstream party. He faced more serious opposition after his decision not to accompany Herbert Samuel and his followers when, somewhat belatedly, they crossed the floor of the House of Commons to rejoin the ranks of the opposition in the autumn of 1933. But again, the majority of the HLA accepted Mabane's explanation that Samuel should have taken this step immediately after the conclusion of the Ottawa agreements in August 1932 or not at all. Sixteen members voted against him at the HLA's annual general meeting in March 1934 and a small number resigned from the association in protest. But this did not stop

Mabane from being readopted as the Liberal candidate for Huddersfield in the general election of November 1935, and, in the absence of a rival Liberal candidate and with full Conservative support, he was easily able to retain his seat.

The first sign of truly independent Liberal action came from a small group of disgruntled women in the local party. Six members of the Huddersfield Women's Liberal Association resigned on 12 January 1938 when that body, in advance of its male counterpart, decided formally to affiliate to the Liberal National Party. With six others the rebels then formed the Huddersfield Borough Women's Liberal Association.³ But it would be more than a year before their menfolk followed suit. Finally, in the spring of 1939, the forces of independent Liberalism managed to reassert themselves. Under the guidance of three prominent local activists, Ashley Mitchell, Ernest Woodhead and Elliott Dodds, all of whom had stood unsuccessfully as Liberal candidates in earlier general elections, a rival Liberal Association was set up with the full backing of the Liberal Party Organisation in London.⁴ As the Liberal

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Nationals clung tenaciously to the title of HLA, the new body was christened the Huddersfield Borough Liberal Association.⁵

Mabane refused to be discouraged. The HLA was, he declared, an even more united body than it had been a year earlier. It was true that 'the smallest possible minority of people' had given the appearance of disunity, but this was not the reality. It was, he insisted, 'an arrogant assertion' to suggest that all who supported the National Government must forgo their right to describe themselves as Liberals, and he sought further to blur the distinction between Liberals and Liberal Nationals by reminding his audience that, notwithstanding the opposition of Archibald Sinclair and the party leadership, many distinguished Liberals, including the party's former leader Lord Samuel, had backed the government over the recent Munich settlement.⁶

Such internal wrangling was largely put on hold with the coming of European war in September 1939. Meanwhile, Mabane's personal career began to prosper. Appointed Assistant Postmaster-General in June 1939, he later served in junior posts at the Ministries of Home Security and Food before rising in May 1945 to the rank of Minister of State at the Foreign Office in Churchill's short-lived caretaker government, an administration in which Liberals declined to participate. But as the military tide finally turned and minds moved again to the issues of domestic politics, it was evident that the Borough Liberals had not gone away. Indeed, they decided to contest the forthcoming general election and secured the services of a promising candidate in the person of Roy Harrod, a committed free trader, academic economist and future biographer of John Maynard Keynes.

Mabane, standing now as an unequivocal Liberal National with Conservative support and as the only candidate favouring

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the continuation of Churchill's government, conducted a vigorous and confident campaign. But Huddersfield had been transformed by the migration of around 17,000 industrial workers into the town during the course of the war. On a massive swing J. P. W. Mallalieu, whose pedigree as the son of a former Liberal MP may have enhanced his appeal, took the seat for Labour with a majority of nearly 9,000 over Mabane, leaving Harrod, despite the support of the *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, a further 13,000 votes behind.⁷ To no avail, the newspaper, which was controlled by the Woodhead family and edited by Elliott Dodds, insisted that Harrod was the only Liberal candidate in the field.

Set in a national context, Harrod's performance – 16 per cent of the poll – was almost respectable. The party of Gladstone and Asquith was now reduced to a parliamentary representation of just twelve MPs. Nearly 85 per cent of the party's candidates had come third. Its leader, Sir Archibald Sinclair, and chief whip, Percy Harris, were among those who had gone down to defeat. In the face of disaster on such a scale, Liberals had to consider the full range of options open to them. Inevitably, the question of reunion with the Liberal Nationals forced its way on to the political agenda. In Huddersfield it was clear that the Borough Liberals were determined to carry on. But the outlook for the Liberal Nationals was far from rosy. Organisation had decayed and membership substantially declined during the years of war. Mabane's agent, Stanley Hickman, presented a gloomy prognosis. The Borough Liberals had:

... plenty of keen, able people of the type who enjoy politics, and as the election figures show have attracted the average Liberal. So long as there was no Sinclair Liberal candidate we got their votes, if not their

enthusiastic support. Now we are looked upon as Tories, and they are in great disfavour at present. Unless redistribution helps, we shall never beat Labour in a three-cornered fight. We have few leading men and women and we have no appeal to enthuse the masses.⁸

One hopeful indicator of the prospects of reunion was that many local activists in Huddersfield seemed more concerned with propagating the gospel of Liberalism than with the precise party label under which they campaigned. Mrs Potts, the Chairman of the Borough Women's Liberal Association, reported that during the general election campaign she had been invited to speak to the Milnsbridge branch of the Huddersfield Women's Liberal National Association. In so doing she had received the promise of several women to join the Borough Liberal Association.⁹ But for real progress to be made, one side or the other had to take the initiative. Some months before negotiations began at a national level, the Executive Committee of the Borough Liberals authorised their president to get in touch with his opposite number in the Huddersfield Liberal Association to consider the possibility of exploratory talks on the theme of reunion.¹⁰ 'I have to enquire', wrote H. V. Wood of the Borough Liberals,

... whether, in your judgement and considered opinion, the time is opportune for a small delegation of three or four of the principal honorary executive Officers of your Association to meet a like number of Officers of my Association for the purpose of exploring the present political position, particularly in Huddersfield, and to ascertain what are the points of difference in policy and/or otherwise which still separate our two Associations. Those delegates would enquire as to whether such differences could

be resolved and as to whether reunion is practicable or not.¹¹

For the Liberal Nationals, J. D. Eaton Smith reacted cautiously. His first loyalty was to Mabane, who had already been re-adopted as the Huddersfield Liberal Association's candidate for the next general election. But the officers of the HLA, without disclosing the approach to their full Executive Committee, eventually agreed that Eaton Smith should meet Wood and, if he considered that a further meeting would be useful, that a Liberal National delegation, to include both Eaton Smith and Mabane, should be constituted.¹² The meeting between the two presidents took place on 9 January 1946. Eaton Smith stressed that the HLA was more concerned with fighting socialism than with party labels and argued that in two years' time, when the reality of Labour government had become apparent, all Liberals would be compelled to unite against the common menace. But the two men parted with a feeling that the Borough Liberals' approach had been premature.¹³ The Borough Liberals' own interpretation of what had happened was that their initiative had been rebuffed. Their task now was 'to go forward without any hesitation'.¹⁴ Indeed, the Borough Liberals proceeded to adopt a number of candidates for the November municipal elections – something they had decided against in 1945 in the light of the possibility of reunion.¹⁵

The opening of discussions on a national level inevitably breathed new life into the process in Huddersfield. In line with the Liberal Nationals' stance in the national negotiations, Mabane stressed that there was no future for Liberalism except as part of an anti-socialist coalition:

I am quite sure that unless we merely wish the Liberal Party to be a propagandist body and not a body which seeks to have

a direct influence on affairs through parliamentary representation, there is no future in working as an independent party. Our objective must be to secure as great a degree of unity as we can as a first step ... to a larger association with all who feel that Socialism is a real danger.¹⁶

But the Borough Liberals were not to be thwarted and Elliott Dodds – 'determined to make as much trouble as he can'¹⁷ – took steps to publicise the secret approach made at the end of 1945. The balance of advantage between the two groups began rapidly to change. The problem for the Liberal Nationals was that their position was visibly crumbling. Amid evidence that the local Conservative Party was becoming restive at the continuing subordination of its electoral aspirations to a pact designed to support a government which no longer existed, the Liberal Nationals' own organisation was beginning to collapse. Hickman wrote to warn Mabane who, ensconced in London, was losing touch with the reality of the situation in Huddersfield:

The position here is becoming increasingly difficult and Mr Eaton Smith and I are having a struggle to keep any interest alive. Apart from a faithful handful, there is no enthusiasm and without the W[omen's] L[iberal] A[ssociation] the whole structure would collapse.¹⁸

This dismal picture was in line with that which existed in many other constituencies, such as Denbigh and Bradford South, where the Liberal Nationals had once been strong. Preparing for a meeting with Lord Teviot, chairman of the Liberal National Organisation, Anthony Eden had been advised that 'in a number of constituencies now represented by Liberal National Members, it is not an exaggeration to say that they are

returned almost entirely through the efforts of the Conservative organisation, and that there is practically no Liberal National organisation, as such, in those constituencies'.¹⁹

In Huddersfield 'the one bright spot' was the municipal elections. But, stressed Hickman, this was only because of collaboration with the Borough Liberals. Despite the latter's earlier decision to run candidates of their own in 1946, the Liberal National Alderman Joseph Barlow had successfully united the two groups into a single fighting force, convinced that 'we must get together or go out'.²⁰ Three Borough Liberals were among the candidates put forward. It was a situation which Mabane had some difficulty in understanding. 'It is rather confusing to me', he confessed. 'It appears – am I wrong – that while the Borough Liberals refuse to consort with the Conservatives for any Parliamentary purposes, yet for municipal purposes, in effect, ourselves, the Conservatives and the Borough Liberals make a solid block.'²¹ Others interpreted this situation more positively, especially when the Liberals 'fighting as a united team, held every one of their seats and came within an ace of capturing a seat from Labour', while the Conservatives lost three out of the four seats which they were contesting.²² According to Harrod the results showed that it was 'only through Liberalism that Huddersfield could succeed in displacing the Socialist Member of Parliament'.²³

Several prominent Borough Liberals were becoming impatient at the lack of progress towards reunion and objected to any new approach until there was evidence that it would be sympathetically received.²⁴ But the situation was transformed when, at the beginning of 1947, the local Conservative Party decided to nominate a candidate of its own for the next general election. Mabane now had no realistic prospect of recovering

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his parliamentary seat. As the *Examiner* put it, 'the Tories themselves had kicked away the trestle on which the Liberal National platform has rested'.²⁵ Quietly, Mabane resigned his membership of the Huddersfield Liberal Club, a gesture which indicated that he did not wish to stand again in the constituency. The small band of supporters upon whom his position had rested now decided that the game was up. Hickman resigned to take on the position of Conservative agent in the neighbouring constituency of Elland, while Eaton Smith gave up the presidency of the Huddersfield Liberal Association, to be succeeded by Alderman Barlow.

Progress towards reunion was now rapid. A key meeting between delegations from the two groups took place on 10 March 1947. At this meeting the relative negotiating strengths of the two delegations was immediately apparent. For the Borough Liberals Wood stressed that they were affiliated to the mainstream Liberal Party and would remain so, a point immediately conceded by the representatives of the Huddersfield Liberal Association.²⁶ Mabane's absence from the Liberal National delegation was critical since, as someone who had been closely involved in the recently stalled national negotiations in which the Liberal Nationals had insisted upon a broad coalition with the Conservatives as the *sine qua non* of reunion, he would have found it impossible to adopt a different stance at the local level.

Agreement on policy posed no problems and at a second meeting the two delegations agreed upon a five-point statement to be submitted for the approval of their respective associations. The key point was that the Huddersfield Liberal Association and the Huddersfield Borough Liberal Association must both dissolve, that a new body would then be created out of the joint membership and that this new Association must

affiliate to the Liberal Party Organisation – a clear indication that in future Huddersfield Liberalism would be fully committed to the mainstream party. The Borough Liberals were able to sweeten the pill by announcing that Roy Harrod, their candidate in 1945 whom they had already readopted, was willing to follow Mabane's example and stand down so that the new joint Association could begin afresh the process of selecting a parliamentary candidate.²⁷

Several prominent Borough Liberals could scarcely believe that the process of reunion could be achieved so easily and so clearly on their terms and sought assurances, which were given, that 'a full Liberal programme was implied for the new Association'.²⁸ In an atmosphere of 'extreme cordiality' and a determination to 'let bygones be bygones' the two Associations met together on 25 June to make Liberal reunion in Huddersfield a reality. The resolution that a new Huddersfield Liberal Association be formed and that it be affiliated to the Liberal Party Organisation was carried by an overwhelming majority.²⁹

Despite the fact that the majority of Liberal members on the Borough Council had been loyal supporters of Mabane as the town's MP, it seemed that the Liberal National heresy in Huddersfield had now been extirpated. Yet Liberal National influence continued to be felt in one important respect. Since 1931 there had been no contests between Conservatives and the representatives of the Huddersfield Liberal Association in annual elections to the borough council. Only in by-elections did the two parties oppose one another in order to determine which of them should compete with Labour thereafter. The advantages which this arrangement to avoid three-cornered contests had brought about – in effect Liberal control of the local council – were not lightly to be abandoned and an informal

electoral pact between Conservatives and the new Liberal Association was maintained until 1961. When, in 1956, the Conservatives began to grow restless, claiming that the Liberals had broken a written agreement on the selection of candidates to represent certain wards – 'we have sacrificed much to preserve and maintain an anti-Socialist front and to avoid three-cornered contests; we have received no reciprocal sacrifice of the interests of the Liberal group' – the pact was formalised by the division of the town into spheres of influence.³⁰

Huddersfield Liberals thus really did have their cake and eat it. The party's institutional independence was preserved at a time when the Liberal Nationals, for all practical purposes, finally sacrificed theirs by entering into the Woolton–Teviot Agreement of 1947. But at the same time Huddersfield Liberals enjoyed the electoral advantages of collaboration with the Conservatives, something which had been at the heart of the Liberal Nationals' political strategy throughout their existence. The result of this policy in terms of maintaining a beacon of Liberalism during a time when the party had almost disappeared as a live force in English local government is only too apparent. After the municipal elections of 1953 Huddersfield was one of just two boroughs across the country in which Liberals remained the largest single group.³¹ Not until 1962 did they lose this position in Huddersfield.

What happened in Huddersfield needs to be set in a broader context. In many areas a tradition of Liberal–Conservative cooperation predated the Liberal National schism of 1931–32 and continued into the post-war era. It tended to depend upon a right-leaning local Liberal Party which saw socialism as the ultimate challenge to its core principles and values. Even before 1914 there were towns in which Liberals were starting to join forces

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with the Conservatives in an anti-Labour front for local elections. By the inter-war period a Liberal presence was only maintained on many councils as a result of anti-socialist municipal alliances with the Tories. Even in Manchester, with its long radical tradition, Liberals effectively gave up their independence when, in 1931, they joined the Conservatives in an anti-Labour pact. Politics in Bristol followed a similar pattern. After the Second World War the Conservative Party found it possible tacitly to support, or at least not oppose, right-leaning Liberal MPs, such as Sir Rhys Hopkin Morris in Carmarthen. In Cardiganshire in 1948 the local Tories initiated negotiations with their Liberal counterparts about the possibility of a jointly supported candidate to oppose Labour.³²

West Riding towns such as Huddersfield, where Liberalism had always been individualist and anti-Labour in orientation, with the economic liberalism of local mill-owning families to the fore, offered fertile ground for this sort of strategy. The challenge to Mabane from the Borough Liberal Association had never really been a challenge from the Liberal left. Indeed, at a meeting of the Yorkshire Liberal Federation in July 1943 delegates had debated a motion proposed by Ashley Mitchell in which the author of the Beveridge Report was described as a socialist.³³ Thus, while many Liberals had no hesitation in denouncing the Liberal Nationals, they often did so from a standpoint that had much in common with them.

Nor was the strategy of continuing inter-party cooperation in Huddersfield restricted to municipal politics. The constituency was divided into two seats, East and West, soon after the general election of 1945, opening up fruitful scope for a mutually advantageous arrangement. It was Elliott Dodds who first took up the issue in the pages of the *Examiner*, arguing that although fundamental differences between

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Liberals and Conservatives ruled out a national alliance, these did not preclude a local parliamentary agreement.³⁴ The town's group of Liberal councillors, where residual Liberal National influence remained strong, was of like mind. 'The only matter upon which there was full agreement was that three-cornered elections were most undesirable and that the probable result of such elections would be the return to Parliament of Labour Members.'³⁵ Indeed, the councillors reacted strongly when it was suggested that the HLA had decided to nominate a candidate for the East Division and they called upon the association to reaffirm its previous announcement that it would energetically promote a Liberal candidature in the West Division, but not cause a three-cornered fight in the East.³⁶

The Conservatives responded positively. After all, the local Tory organisation was not well placed to fight two constituencies after twenty years of relative electoral inactivity. Recognising that, if Liberals stood in both constituencies, a Conservative victory in either would be unlikely, and conscious that every single seat won might be important in the drive to remove Attlee's Labour government from office, the Executive of the Huddersfield Conservative Association recommended on 4 January 1950 the withdrawal of their candidate in the West Division in favour of a Liberal, providing that, in the event of the Liberals holding the balance after the election, the latter pledged himself to oppose a Labour administration committed to further socialism in any vote of confidence in the House of Commons.³⁷

Donald Wade, the Liberal candidate, sought to avoid the appearance of a formal pact, but was happy to announce that this was the sort of pledge he would willingly give to an enquiring elector.³⁸ On this basis Wade found himself elected to parlia-

ment for Huddersfield West, a seat he held until the general election of 1964. In parallel with the arrangement in local government, this Conservative-Liberal pact allowed for the presence of a Liberal MP at a time when the parliamentary party seemed in danger of disappearing altogether. Indeed, Huddersfield West and Bolton West – where, after 1951, Liberals enjoyed the benefits of a similar but more formal pact – were the only two English constituencies which consistently returned Liberal Members through the 1950s.³⁹

History would show that a right-leaning anti-socialist front did not offer the Liberal Party the road to salvation which it sought. Indeed, by the time that the Huddersfield pact was dissolved in the early 1960s, Jo Grimond was tentatively leading his party towards realignment with non-ideological Labour. Nonetheless, the survival of Liberalism as a potent force in Huddersfield in the immediate post-war era helped lend credibility to the party's claim to remain a viable political force at a time when that claim was in danger of being forfeited.

David Dutton is Professor of Modern History at the University of Liverpool. His forthcoming study of the National Liberal Party, Liberals in Schism, will be published by I.B. Tauris.

- 1 I. Hunter, 'The final quest for Liberal reunion 1943–46', *Journal of Liberal Democrat History* 32 (2001), pp. 12–16.
- 2 I have explored these issues more fully in 'William Mabane and Huddersfield Politics, 1931–47: By any other name a Liberal', *Northern History*, XLIII, 1 (2006), pp. 137–53.
- 3 Kirklees District Archives (K.D.A.), WYK 1146/1/2/1, Borough Women's Liberal Association Question and Answer Session 30 July 1942. I am grateful to Kirklees District Archives for permission to quote from unpublished material in their care.
- 4 Mitchell contested Scarborough and Whitby in 1923 and 1924, Penistone

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in 1929, Halifax in 1935 and Batley & Morley in 1945. Woodhead stood in Huddersfield in 1918, in Sheffield Hillsborough in 1923 and in Pudsey & Otley in 1924. Dodds was Liberal candidate in York in 1922 and 1923, in Halifax in 1929 and in Rochdale in 1931 and 1935. Granted their collective lack of electoral success, Mabane ridiculed the aspirations of his opponents. 'Although they have been given the pick of Liberal candidatures throughout the North of England, they have contrived not merely to reduce the Liberal vote but to put themselves very safely and successfully at the bottom of the poll.' *Huddersfield Weekly Examiner*, 1 April 1939.

5 *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 5 April 1939.

6 *Ibid.*, 17 July 1939.

7 The figures were Mallalieu 33,362, Mabane 24,496 and Harrod 11,199.

8 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Hickman to Mabane 20 August 1945. Every effort has been made, but without success, to trace the holder of the copyright in the Mabane papers. If the holder would care to contact the author,

appropriate acknowledgement will be made in any future publications.

- 9 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/2/1, Borough Women's Liberal Association meeting 30 August 1945.
- 10 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/4/1, Borough Liberals meeting 30 October 1945.
- 11 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, H.V. Wood to J.D. Eaton Smith 6 November 1945.
- 12 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/1/5, Huddersfield Liberal Association Officers meeting 5 December 1945.
- 13 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Hickman to Mabane 10 January 1946.
- 14 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/4/1, Borough Liberals meeting 29 January 1946.
- 15 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/4/1, Borough Liberals meeting 27 May 1946.
- 16 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Mabane to Hickman 6 May 1946.
- 17 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Hickman to Mabane 8 July 1946.
- 18 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Hickman to Mabane 12 October 1946.
- 19 University of Birmingham, Avon MSS, AP 11/12/38, J.P.L. Thomas to A. Eden 29 May 1946. Thomas sent Eden a list of 'Liberal National constituencies' which included Huddersfield despite the fact that the seat had been lost in the 1945 general election.
- 20 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Hickman to Mabane 12 October 1946.
- 21 K.D.A., Mabane MSS, DD/WM/1/9, Mabane to Hickman 11 October 1946.
- 22 *Huddersfield Weekly Examiner*, 23 November 1946.
- 23 *Ibid.*, 14 December 1946.
- 24 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/4/1, Borough Liberal Association executive meeting 26 November 1946.
- 25 *Huddersfield Weekly Examiner*, 23 November 1946.
- 26 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/2/1, Borough Women's Liberal Association members meeting 27 March 1947.
- 27 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/4/1, meeting of delegates of Huddersfield Liberal Association and Borough Liberal Association 28 April 1947.
- 28 K.D.A., WYK 1146/1/4/1, Borough Liberal Association A.G.M. 21 May 1947.
- 29 Report of meeting held on 15 June 1947 in *Hylites*, the newsletter of the Huddersfield Young Liberals Association.
- 30 *The Times*, 6 April 1956.

- 31 V. Bogdanor (ed.), *Liberal Party Politics* (Oxford, 1983), p. 254.
- 32 National Library of Wales, Cardiganshire Liberal Association papers, file 24.
- 33 West Yorkshire Archives Service, WYL 456/3, Yorkshire Liberal Federation meeting 22 May 1943.
- 34 *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 7 Oct. 1947. See also B. J. Evans and A. J. Taylor, 'The Rise and Fall of Two-Party Electoral Co-operation', *Political Studies* XXXII (1984), pp. 257-72.
- 35 K.D.A., DD/CS/dp/13, meeting of Liberal councillors 6 April 1948.
- 36 K.D.A., DD/CS/dp/13, meeting of Liberal councillors 1 November 1949.
- 37 *Huddersfield Daily Examiner*, 5 January 1950.
- 38 *Ibid.*, 13 January 1950.
- 39 In Bolton a formal agreement was signed by the chairmen of the Liberal and Conservative Associations, allowing Arthur Holt a free run in Bolton West. This agreement lasted until Frank Byers contested a by-election for the Liberals in Bolton East in 1960.

British Liberal Political Studies Group Winter Conference 2007 Call for Paper Presenters

The British Political Liberal Studies Group winter conference will be held on the weekend of 19-21 January 2007 at Birmingham University's conference centre.

The conference is hosted by INLOGOV and is organised in conjunction with the Liberal Democrat History Group.

Panels

Proposed panels for papers include:

- The evolution of the Liberal Democrats and the current direction of the party
- Studies of local Liberal Democrat parties and campaigning
- Liberal Democrats in power and opposition

- The Liberal Democrats in the European Parliament
- The Liberal Democrats in local government
- Ideology of Liberalism and or policy creation
- The Liberal Democrats and issues of gender
- Liberal lessons from history
- Liberal leadership (particularly comparative)
- Liberal political figureheads or political trend-setters

Paper-givers are required to submit a 200-word summary of their paper to the Conference Convenor. If the paper is deemed of the required standard for the group then a space will be allocated for it on a relevant panel. Ideas for papers should be submitted as soon as possible, and the full papers by 13 October

2006. Please send ideas to the Conference Convenor, Dr Russell Deacon, who will then circulate them to the BLPSG executive.

Registration details

The registration fee for the conference, including accommodation, will be:

- Members of the British Liberal Political Studies Group or the Liberal Democrat History Group who are presenting papers: £148 for the weekend or £80 for a single night.
- Members of the British Liberal Political Studies Group or the Liberal Democrat History Group not presenting papers: £175 for the weekend or £85 for a single night.

- Non-members of the British Liberal Political Studies Group or the Liberal Democrat History Group: £198 for the weekend or £99 for a single night.

The Saturday night will also host a dinner with a guest speaker. Please contact Russell Deacon to receive a booking form. Due to limited space, bookings should be made early.

Conference Convenor

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