

It showed that party policy on immigration and the 'you can't win' argument were the two main reasons for people not to support the Lib Dems; the talk about what Clegg would do in a hung parliament also turned out to be a negative for the party. In addition, the Liberal Democrats lacked a strong closing message in the last few days of the campaign and below-the-radar scare tactics from Labour in urban areas helped them hang on in many key seats.

James Gurling also agreed with Denis Kavanagh that the form of campaigning changed in 2010, with party election broadcasts largely forgotten during the campaign, being overshadowed by the TV debates. Posters too appear to be on the way out, helped by the rapid spoofing of posters online.

Furthermore, the days of simply sticking your message on a piece of paper and putting it through the letterbox are gone. Technology is moving campaigns on

from blanket leafleting. One example of change he gave was the traditional Liberal Democrat handwritten letter. This used to be seen as a powerful way of direct, personal contact with voters. Now, compared with direct personalised online communication, it looks like just another blunt form of mass contact.

What was notable across all three contributions was how many of the issues they discussed will almost certainly feel like old history by the time of the next general

election. The formation of a coalition government is reshaping British politics in unpredictable ways. While the lessons from previous elections were often very applicable to the next, in 2010 that is much less likely to be the case.

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LIBERAL HISTORY QUIZ 2010

This year's Liberal history quiz attracted a record level of entries at the History Group's exhibition stand at the Liberal Democrat conference in Liverpool in September. The winner was Michael Mullaney, with an impressive 18½ marks out of 20; as Michael was last year's winner too, we may consider barring him from future contests! Below we reprint the questions – the answers are on page 36.

1. Who was voted the greatest-ever Liberal in the poll run by the Lib Dem History Group in 2007?
2. Who holds the record as the shortest-serving Liberal Prime Minister since the party was founded in 1859?
3. Which constituency did Liberal leader Jeremy Thorpe represent from 1959 to 1979?
4. Who, on being elected to Liverpool City Council in 1972 at the age of 21, became the youngest sitting councillor in Britain?
5. Who wrote the book *The Strange Death of Liberal England*, the classic study of the decline of Liberalism, first published in 1935?
6. On 26 July 1973, the Liberal Party won two by-elections from the Conservatives; in which constituencies?
7. Who served as President of the Liberal Democrats from 1998 to 2000?
8. The Liberal Democrat History Group has raised enough money to have a plaque installed on the building which is now the site of Willis's Rooms, where the Liberal Party was founded in 1859. Where is the building?
9. Who was elected Liberal MP for Finsbury Central in 1892, becoming the first non-white member of the House of Commons?
10. In which English city was William Ewart Gladstone born on 29 December 1809?
11. Who, as President of the Liberal Party in 1947–48, presented a copy of Milton's *Areopagitica* to his successor, inaugurating the tradition of handing on the book as a symbol of the office of President?
12. Who was the SDP/Alliance candidate in the Peckham by-election of 28 October 1982?
13. Who was Gladstone's Chancellor of the Exchequer in his short-lived administration of February–July 1886?
14. Who served as principal private secretary to David Lloyd George from 1923 to 1945?
15. Whose memoirs, published in 2009, were entitled *Free Radical*?
16. Who was President of the Liberal Party in 1986–87 and went on to be the party's Campaign Director during the 1987 general election?
17. Which historian and thinker was the MP for Carlisle 1859–65 and for Bridgnorth 1865–66?
18. What was the name of the SDP think tank founded in 1982 by Lord Young of Dartington and wound up after the merger of the SDP with the Liberal Party?
19. Which Liberal cabinet minister had his career ruined by the Crawford divorce scandal of 1885?
20. Who became the first ever female Liberal minister?