



WHAT THE LIBERAL DEMOCRATS BELIEVE

HISTORY

ONE REVOLUTION AND TWO MERGERS

1688

GLORIOUS REVOLUTION

The **WHIGS** saw this as ousting a despotic King to ensure **PARLIAMENT WAS SUPREME**. It created their political tradition of **OPPOSING ABSOLUTE POWER** and **SUPPORTING RELIGIOUS TOLERATION**.

From this later came support for **THE RULE OF LAW** and **EQUALITY BEFORE THE LAW**.



1859

WILLIS ROOMS MEETING

WHIGS, RADICALS AND PEELITES (followers of the former Conservative PM) met in London and **COMBINED TO FORM THE LIBERAL PARTY**.



1988

THE MERGER

SDP (formed mainly by ex-Labour figures) and **LIBERAL PARTY** merged to form the **LIBERAL DEMOCRATS**.



PRIORITIES THROUGH THE AGES

MID 19TH CENTURY

THE HARM PRINCIPLE

"The only purpose for which power can be rightfully exercised over any member of a civilized community, against his will, is to **PREVENT HARM TO OTHERS**"
John Stuart Mill & Harriet Taylor in *On Liberty*



LATE 19TH CENTURY

"PEACE, RETRENCHMENT AND REFORM"

William Gladstone's popular trio meant **PEACE** overseas, **ECONOMY** in public spending and political **REFORM**.



EARLY 20TH CENTURY

"WE CAN CONQUER UNEMPLOYMENT"

David Lloyd George's famous slogan was part of a Liberal shift to supporting **GREATER PUBLIC SPENDING** to help the economy and fund a welfare state.



MID 20TH CENTURY

COMMUNITY POLITICS DEVELOPED

A growing emphasis on **WINNING LOCAL ELECTIONS** and **PAVEMENT POLITICS** led to a new political theory about helping people secure power over their own lives.



PARTY'S PHILOSOPHY IN A SENTENCE...

FROM THE PREAMBLE TO THE PARTY'S CONSTITUTION

"NO ONE SHALL BE ENSLAVED BY POVERTY, IGNORANCE OR CONFORMITY"

2015 MANIFESTO

FROM THE GENERAL ELECTION MANIFESTO...

PROSPERITY FOR ALL

BALANCE THE BUDGET FAIRLY AND INVEST TO BUILD A HIGH-SKILL, LOW CARBON ECONOMY



FAIR TAXES

CUT YOUR TAXES BY AROUND A FURTHER £400 BY RAISING THE PERSONAL ALLOWANCE TO £12,500



QUALITY HEALTH CARE FOR ALL

INVEST THE MONEY NEEDED TO IMPROVE OUR NHS AND GUARANTEE EQUAL CARE FOR MENTAL HEALTH



OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERY CHILD

GUARANTEE EDUCATION FUNDING FROM NURSERY TO 19, AND QUALIFIED TEACHERS IN EVERY CLASS



OUR ENVIRONMENT PROTECTED

PROTECT NATURE AND FIGHT CLIMATE CHANGE WITH FIVE GREEN LAWS



A STRONGER SCOTLAND & WALES

DEVOLVE MORE POWER AWAY FROM LONDON



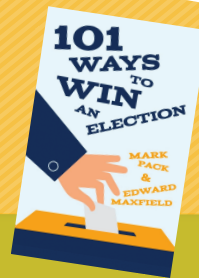
2015 ELECTION SLOGAN

STRONGER ECONOMY.
FAIRER SOCIETY.
OPPORTUNITY FOR EVERYONE.

Want to find out how to turn beliefs into political power?
GET THE BOOK!

101 WAYS TO WIN AN ELECTION

by Ed Maxfield and Mark Pack
(Biteback, 2012)



SOCIAL & ECONOMIC LIBERALS

Many see **SOCIAL LIBERALS** vs **ECONOMIC LIBERALS** as the party's biggest **IDEOLOGICAL DIVIDE** today, although with numerous beliefs in common, many members say they are both.



INEQUALITY

SOCIAL LIBERALS

Tend to be most concerned about **INEQUALITY** and promote **DEMOCRACY** to give people more power.

ECONOMIC LIBERALS

Tend to be most concerned about an **OVERBEARING STATE** and promote **FREE MARKETS** to give people more power.



OVERBEARING STATE

All **POWER** (be it government, business or other people) can both **PROTECT** and **THREATEN LIBERTY**. Economic and Social Liberals put different emphasis on the **BEST DEFENCES** and the **BIGGEST BULLIES**.

CENTRE PARTY OR NOT?

Some see the party as being in the **CENTRE ON A LEFT/RIGHT SPECTRUM**, with Labour and Tories at each end of it.



LIBERAL

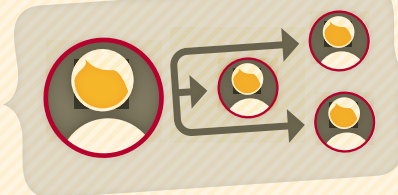
Authoritarian

Others reject this spectrum, and instead see the party at the **LIBERAL END OF A LIBERAL/AUTHORITARIAN SPECTRUM**, with both Labour and Tories at the other end of it.

THE ECONOMIC DILEMMA

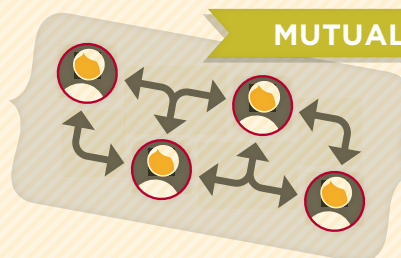
BOSSES VERSUS WORKERS

Gives Labour and Tories a **CENTRAL ORGANISING ECONOMIC IDEA**.



MUTUALS & COOPERATIVES

Lib Dems often struggle to find their own distinctive one, looking to **MUTUALS AND COOPERATIVES** to break that struggle.



PUTTING NEW IDEAS ON THE AGENDA

"I AM A LIBERAL AND I AM AGAINST THIS SORT OF THING"

HARRY WILLCOCK



Over the years the party has been central to popularising some previously fringe beliefs which then became mainstream - especially **CIVIL LIBERTIES**, **PRO-EUROPEANISM**, **ENVIRONMENTALISM** and **CONSTITUTIONAL REFORM**.

Most famously, Harry Willcock triggered the abolition of ID cards with an act of civil disobedience in 1950.