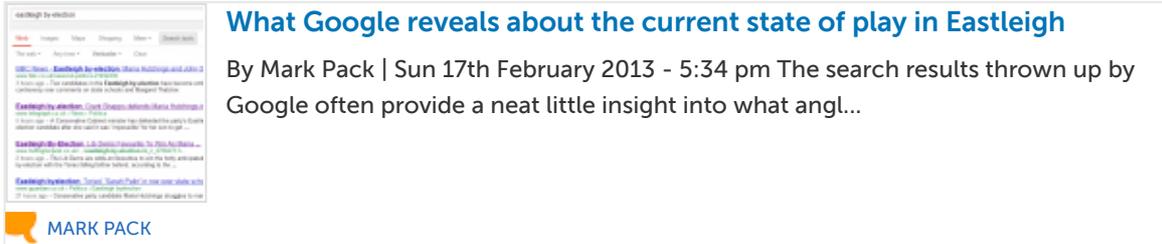


by Mark Pack 5 years ago

# Eastleigh by-election: 17 February

The latest from Eastleigh constituency as Mike Thornton, Maria Hutchings, John O'Farrell and the other candidates battle it out.

It's understandable if some readers are a little sceptical about the number of 'Maria Hutchings messes up' stories I've included in previous round-ups. Is the Conservative candidate in the Eastleigh by-election really that bad? Well, don't take my word for it. Look what Google has to say:

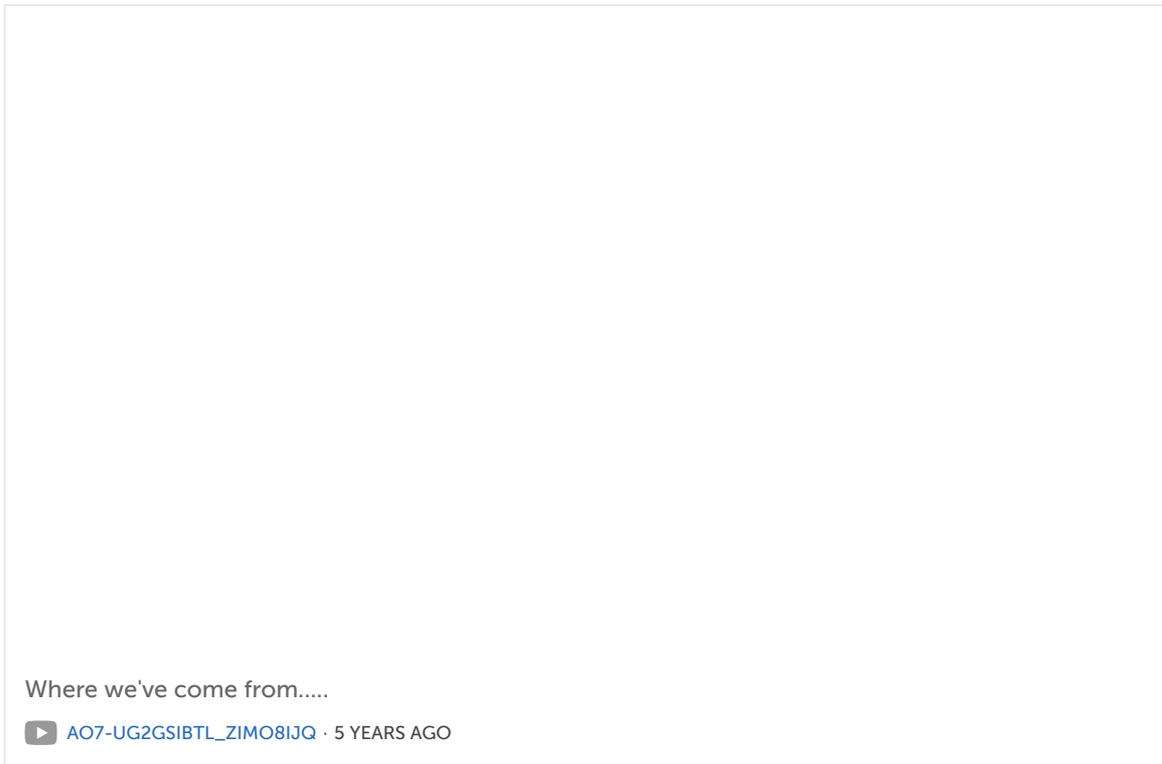


**What Google reveals about the current state of play in Eastleigh**

By Mark Pack | Sun 17th February 2013 - 5:34 pm The search results thrown up by Google often provide a neat little insight into what angl...

MARK PACK

It's not hard to tell that several of the key Lib Dem Eastleigh by-election organisers were in America for the 2012 presidential election, for there's a real Obama campaign style feel to many of the emails and videos being produced to encourage people to come and help:



Where we've come from.....

▶ AO7-UG2GSIBTL\_ZIMO8IJQ · 5 YEARS AGO

There was also a rather nifty use of the Eastleigh Lib Dems Twitter account this morning:

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
 Eastleigh LibDems @EastleighLibDem

We'll be live tweeting the first #eastleigh election hustings from St Thomas' Church. Hustings due to start at 11am.

 5 YEARS AGO

With little other live online coverage of the hustings, this Twitter account was able to lap up the bulk of the online audience for the event. The coverage of course had a Lib Dem slant but was broad enough to capture a wider audience too, such as when talking about the UKIP candidate:

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
 Eastleigh LibDems @EastleighLibDem

James say unless we pull out of EU, problems we face will not go away. Fails to mention huge benefits of EU membership #eastleigh #hustings

 5 YEARS AGO

One question many people have been wondering is how the Liberal Democrats will approach being in government versus the party's local record in Eastleigh. Which will work best for winning votes? A judicious mix of the two is the approach being used:

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
 Eastleigh LibDems @EastleighLibDem

Thornton up now. Pays tribute to school, where his daughter attended. #eastleigh #hustings

 5 YEARS AGO

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
 Eastleigh LibDems @EastleighLibDem

Thornton highlights LD wins in government on tax, pensions and pupil premium. Says they never would have happened without LD #eastleigh

 5 YEARS AGO

By contrast, Labour is very much not playing the local angles:

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
 Eastleigh LibDems @EastleighLibDem

Lab candidate Jon O'Farrell admits he is 'not from Eastleigh' but again doesn't see it as a problem either! #eastleigh #hustings

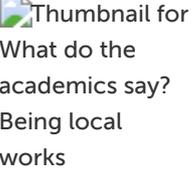
 5 YEARS AGO

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
Eastleigh LibDem

O'Farrell says we need houses. Says he doesn't understand why literature is about local issues.  
[#eastleigh](#) [#hustings](#)

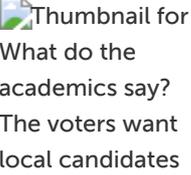
 5 YEARS AGO

Why is all this talk about local relevant? Because it's what voters want:

 **What do the academics say? Being local works**

Welcome to the latest in our occasional series highlighting interesting findings from academic research. Today - it's the effect of being...



 **What do the academics say? The voters want local candidates**

Welcome to the latest in our occasional series highlighting interesting findings from academic research. Today - the repeated finding tha...



Of course, no Eastleigh round-up would be complete without another Maria Hutchings quote or two these days:

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
Eastleigh LibDem

Maria Hutchings just referred to Labour leader as 'David Miliband.' Oops.... [#eastleigh](#)  
[#hustings](#)

 5 YEARS AGO

 **Eastleigh LibDems**  
Eastleigh LibDem

Tory claims she was the 'first' to oppose gravel pit. Here's our leaflet from 2006, when she still lived in Essex. [ow.ly/i/1xoyA](http://ow.ly/i/1xoyA)

 5 YEARS AGO

All of which helps explain why the Lib Dem campaign seems much more upbeat than the Conservative one at the moment:

 **Mark Pack**  
markpackmarkpack

So from what each camp is saying online, it looks as if for everyone 1 Tory helper in [#Eastleigh](#) today there are 3.2 Lib Dems

 5 YEARS AGO

 **Clegg upbeat on Eastleigh visit**

Lib Dem leader Nick Clegg has visited Eastleigh to show support for his candidate, Mike Thornton, ahead of the 28 February by-election.

 BBC

Similarly compare and contrast two different uses of the internet over the weekend by the main campaigns.

Brilliant idea, great execution from Liberal Youth:

 **Today I Made A Difference**

Showing the difference Liberal Youth members can make!

 TODAYIMADEADIFFERENCE

But in less successful and not so smart use of the internet...

 **Tory MPs send identical tweets in scripted attack on Lib Dem candidate**

First the Twitter account @byelection (which is allegedly Tory Eastleigh candidate Maria Hutchings - or more likely CCHQ tweeting on her ...

 LABOURLIST

That makes this photo of David Cameron and Maria Hutchings a rather appropriate note on which to end:



 GUIM · 5 YEARS AGO