

Sleaford: no effective opposition to ineffective govern...

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Sleaford isn't often in the news. Yesterday's by election delivers it a brief moment of attention. And that is its probable significance. This is a constituency that is very different from Richmond Park. And it voted Conservative, heavily.

Although the government is not doing well on Brexit (I think that a kind interpretation), or just about anything else, more than 50% voted Tory.

UKIP, the LibDems and Labour were far behind, in that order.

For UKIP this was bad news: they are offering no hard Brexit alternative where many might want that. They lost votes.

For the LibDems this was quite OK: they were always 'also rans' in this contest. But they gained 5%. If I was in their HQ I would take courage from that.

Labour came a good second here in 1997. They came fourth yesterday and lost 7%. That is significant: there is no evidence, yet again, that people think Labour is providing effective opposition to an ineffective government.

The question is, when will they?