

## The Greens: a new force in British politics

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I admit that I had no idea what to expect when I woke this morning, knowing that I would very shortly discover the news about the Gordon and Denton by-election.

I had read all the reports about the Greens, Reform, and Labour running neck-and-neck, with the Tories, Liberal Democrats, and everyone else running so far behind that this was most definitely a three-horse race at best.

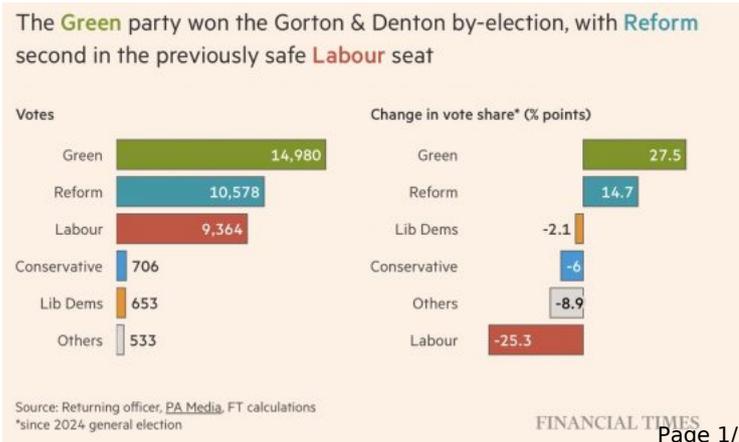
But now we know: this is the result:

 **Britain Elects**  @BritainElects · 2h  
Gorton and Denton by-election result:

GRN: 40.7% (+27.5)  
REF: 28.7% (+14.7)  
LAB: 25.4% (-25.3)  
CON: 1.9% (-6.0)  
LDEM: 1.8% (-2.1)

Green GAIN from Labour.

Looked at another way, this is it:



Of course, I am delighted. A green victory was the best possible outcome.

So, what is all this about?

Firstly, let's talk about the Greens. Whatever else there might be to note, the first thing to say is that they have produced a by-election performance that is massively better than they have ever done before. They have never got more than 11% of the voter share in a by-election before. Here, they took more than 40%. This is a seismic shift. This does, quite literally, rewrite the electoral landscape.

By a very long way, they are in political terms the winners of this by-election because they have shown themselves to be a real political force, capable of challenging Labour from the left in what was always a safe Labour seat. I will get to Labour in a moment; for now, all that needs to be said is that they have been utterly humiliated, coming third in a seat they had held for more than a century.

The direction of travel is very apparent. Whatever other conclusions can be drawn from this particular result, and by-elections should never be relied upon as particular indicators, but only as indicators of trends, then the message that Gorton and Denton have sent is that the Greens are now serious political players in the English scene.

Outside the south-west of England, where the LibDems are likely to still take the lead, and maybe some other rural communities like the one I live in, and of course, Wales and Scotland where politics is very different, although the English are generally reluctant to admit it, the Greens are not just a party for a protest vote against Labour, but are very definitely now the alternative future for everybody who thinks that we can do better than we are. They are the closest thing we have to an embodiment of a politics of care and an economics of hope. The result shows that people want that.

Nothing will be able to change my belief about that this morning. And ignoring the specifics of the note, I note this generality: a new force has arrived in British politics, and this is now apparent.

Secondly, Labour's position looks to be deeply uncomfortable, to the point of being ghastly. A safe seat held by Labour for more than a century in a city that has the habit of always returning massive Labour majorities has now fallen. People are now questioning why they should want a Labour member of Parliament, and rightly so. Labour:

- \* Is not the party it once was
- \* Has moved far to the right
- \* Has revealed its corruption
- \* Is failing badly in office, revealing it is clueless as to what to do

- \* Has nothing to say to people in Gorton and Denton, or anywhere much else either
- \* Has expelled anyone with anything to say from its ranks and is now being expelled from office as a result.

The outcome is this by-election result. In the past, this seat would never have been in serious doubt, however uncomfortable Labour might have been in office. It was one of those pin-a-red-rosette-on-a-donkey seats, and the donkey would get elected. Very obviously, that is no longer true. Labour is in deep trouble, and again, ignoring the detail, this is glaringly obvious. Do not doubt that the Labour Party's days are over. Gordon and Denton are saying so. From the high point of July 2024, this is the new low, and the new reality is that the party is, quite literally, over for Labour.

Then, unfortunately, I have to note Reform's results. Once more, I will ignore the specifics and everything to do with their vile campaign, their toxic candidate, what was said by him and the party during the campaign, and the policies that they propose. The miserable truth is that despite all these things, Reform came from nowhere to come second in this constituency. Do not doubt the significance of that. The Greens may well have won, and easily, and this is a "red wall" seat. But Reform still did uncomfortably well in a seat where around 28% of the population are Muslim, and more are from ethnic minorities. The divisions of hate are real in the country, and Reform, Restore and others require relentless exposure if their toxicity is to be made clear and people are to be made aware of just how much they hate most people, most of the white population included, in the UK.

As for the Tories and LibDems, there is not a lot to say. We already knew that the Tories were heading for oblivion. They clearly are. And we also knew the LibDems had no hope here. They proved it. Why didn't they just say "vove Green"? That might be the only question that needs to be asked.

But, standing back, have no doubt: this was historic.

The Greens are now major political players, with a massive charismatic new MP and a leader not yet in parliament, whilst Reform has been proven unable to take a northern Red Wall seat from Labour and Labour itself is looking into a very bleak future. Maybe a new era is being born. We need it.