

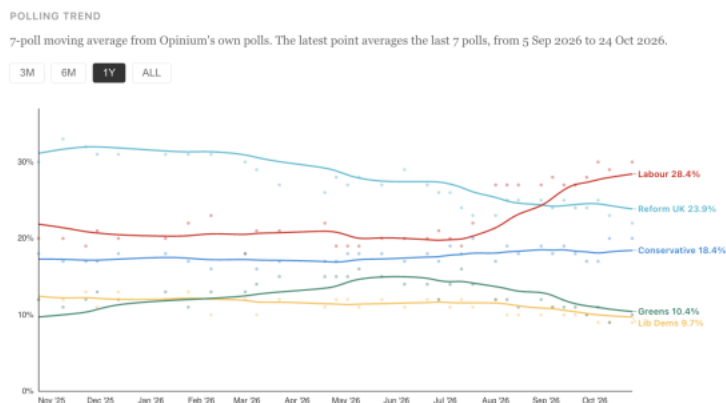
Will Burnham go to the polls?

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Over the weekend, the latest opinion polls suggested Labour might now have 30% electoral support, with Reform enjoying 22%, the Conservatives at 20%, the Greens at 10%, and the Liberal Democrats at 9%.

This polling came from [Opinium](#).

The [PollCheck rolling average](#) of the last seven polls that they monitor suggested that the current state of the parties is as follows:



That there has been a Burnham bounce is undoubtedly true. How this will survive a Budget this week is unclear, but with Labour having a very clear lead over the Tories at present, and all other parties showing downward trends in support (excepting the SNP and Plaid Cymru, which are not shown on this chart, but with the support for both damaging Labour's prospects), all of this data suggests that my suspicion that Andy Burnham might still go to the country this year remains a prospect we have to consider.

An unambitious budget, with one or two headline giveaways this week, will be the sign that this is his plan.

Remember, Burnham was part of Gordon Brown's government when Brown failed to

exploit the opportunity he had when he was chosen as Labour leader to replace Tony Blair by calling an early election. As a result, Andy Burnham spent 16 years outside government. I do not think he is going to risk that again.

I could, of course, be wrong, but I still think he might go to the country very soon, even if Labour loses a significant number of seats as a consequence, because every agenda that he is now talking about suggests that a Labour-Liberal Democrat coalition would suit him very well indeed.