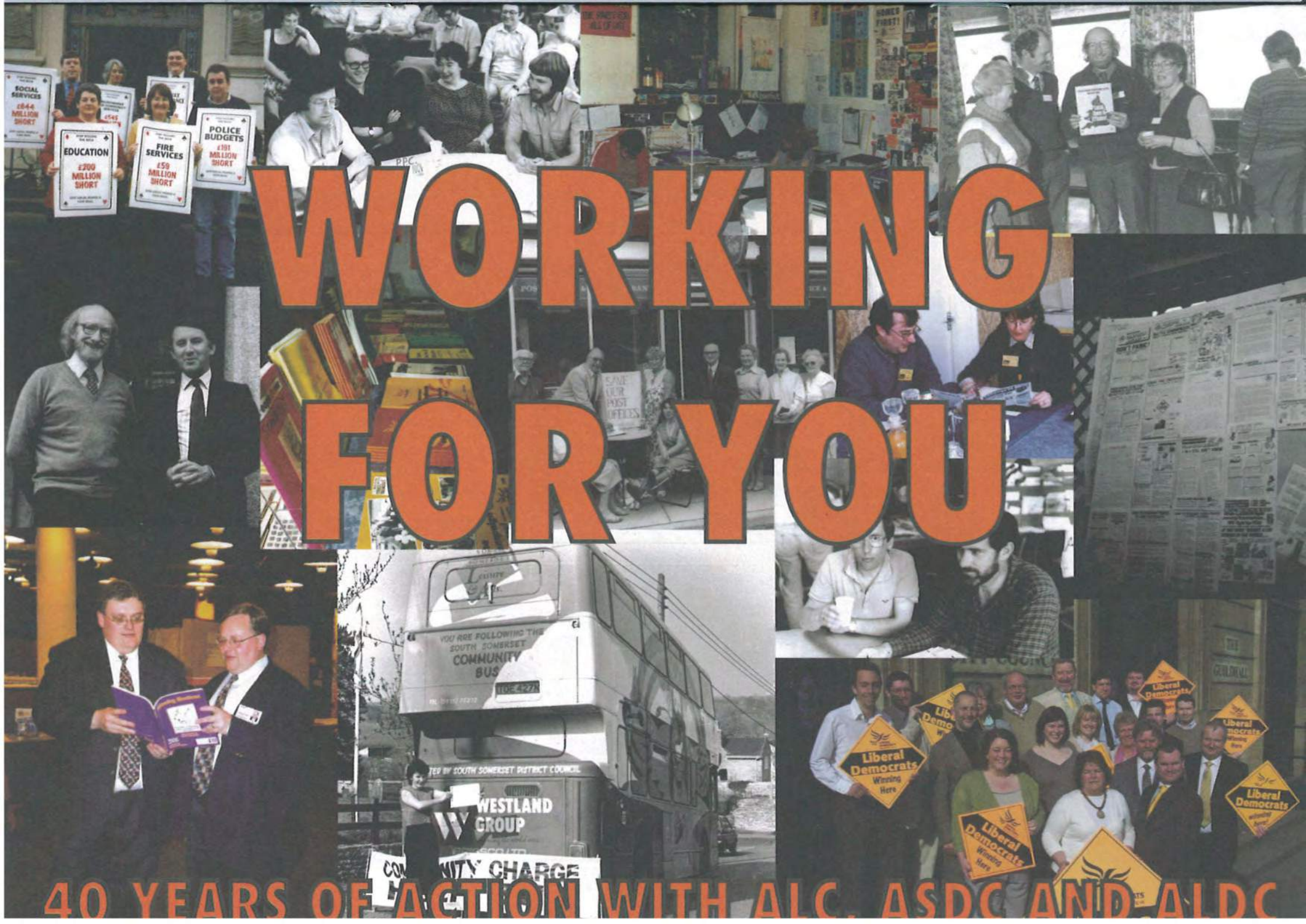


# WORKING FOR YOU



40 YEARS OF ACTION WITH ALC, ASDC AND ALDC



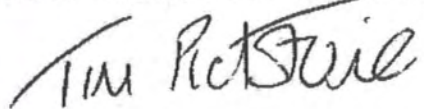
“This is not a formal history of ALC”. So wrote Phoebe Winch in her chronicle of ALC’s first ten years at the Birchcliffe Centre.

This isn’t such a formal history either! Though we would echo Pheobe’s sentiments that one should be written before memories fade.

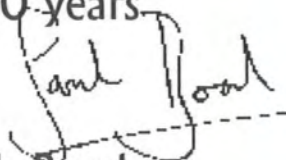
If there is a precise date for when the party first had a local government unit it has been lost over time. It would appear to be some time between 1965 and 1969. For the purposes of looking back at the work and achievements of ALC and ALDC, we’ve taken the average date.

We hope that these photos and brief notes bring back some memories. If you have any comments about any of the photos in this booklet please add them on [www.flickr.com/photos/aldc](http://www.flickr.com/photos/aldc)

Best wishes for the next 40 years



Tim Pickstone  
Chief Executive



Sarah Boad  
Chair



**1969**...ALC becomes a “recognised body” in the new Liberal Party constitution... **1970**...Community politics resolution passed by Liberal Assembly in Eastbourne... **1971**...Trevor Jones writes to Jeremy Thorpe after a Liverpool Council by-election is won on a 41% swing, “You may not be ready for the methods, but you may be ready for the results!”







# ALC BULLETIN



## WAITING FOR ACTION

Ever since the disaster of last May's County Council elections, the ALC has been attempting to get some action at national level to try and prevent another debacle next May. It will not be easy to reverse our electoral decline, but there are some things which could and should be done by the Party. They have not so far been done, and they will almost certainly not now be done in time, if at all.

Two papers from the ALC have been presented to the National Executive, with suggestions for practical things to be done by various sections of the Party. These papers have received scant consideration, being deferred from one meeting to another. The National Executive of the Party is a shambles and disgrace. It has done nothing at all since last May of any use to Councillors, or to the people fighting elections. The meetings consist of people riding hobby horses and of aimless chatter. It is a useless and pathetic body.

Attempts have also been made, principally at the Assembly, to alert the Leadership of the Party to the reality of our electoral decline and to the need for clear guidance from then as to when we might be able to attract votes and how we might be able to attract them. We are still waiting.

The ALC will continue to expand its services to Councillors, and to activists and candidates. But we could do so much more, and be so much more effective, if the party at national level was prepared, willing and able to take the action necessary if the decline of this party is to be halted.

Chairman and NEC Representative  
Association of Liberal Councillors



Having won, what then? That is what we have been increasingly turning our minds to since the splendid results of last May signalled the start of another Liberal upsurge. Over recent months we have been planning, dreaming and scheming, about extending our activities to cover not only how to win elections, but what to do when you have won. We are determined to do all we can to provide the necessary guidance and assistance to stop Liberal Councillors from being sucked into the Town Hall Club and assimilated into ineffectiveness. We also, of course, want to stimulate Councillors and Council Groups into battling far Liberalism week in week out in Council and in Committee.

This is a major new step forward for the ALC and it is intended to provide us with the wherewithal to enable the party to take full advantage of the advances that we expect to make at the polls this year and next. Over the lifetime of this Parliament we are likely to gain hundreds of Councillors to be exercising their powers in Council and in Committee.

## ALC BULLETIN 1980 NUMBER 4

### TIME TO DEVELOP POLICY

ALC are responding to the growing and persistent demand from Liberal Councillors and ALC members for help with local policy. People want to know how Liberal policies and values can be applied at local level - to those areas where Councils have the power to do something about them.

Hence GRAPEVINE (see page 2), hence NOT NO POLICY? (see page 2), and hence the decision to produce a national ACTION PROGRAMME FOR THE COUNTIES - an action oriented 'manifesto' for next May's polls.

**1978...**Second member of staff appointed. Local elections "the best for four years" - though with 18 net losses that wasn't saying a lot.. **1979...**First combined General and local elections; results much better than feared... **1980...**ALC first develops support for councillors in control or influence "we are determined to do all we can to provide the necessary guidance and assistance to stop Liberal Councillors from being sucked into the Town Hall Club and assimilated into ineffectiveness"... **1981...**Launch of the SDP and formation of the Alliance... First SDP Councillors...

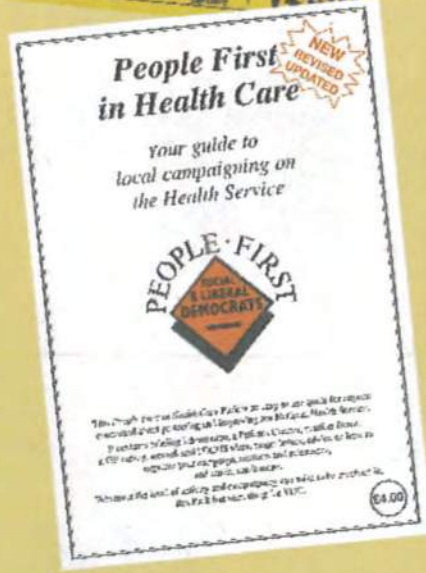




**1982...**ALC now employing five staff – including Tony Greaves, Maggie Clay, David Vasmer and Jeremy Shaw. Andrew Stunell also working as an ad-hoc advisor to groups. Annual income now £48,500...

**1983...**Liberal/SDP Alliance councillors number over 2100 – over 1000 more than in 1977. Six councils under Alliance control with balance of power on 20 more. ALC conference passes “The Worthing Declaration” – an official statement of policy and strategy... **1984...**ALC briefings include NHS cuts, Freedom of Information and VAT on fish & chips... **1985...**Creation of Hebden Royd Publications Ltd which takes over the publication of Liberal Party materials. 1985 Local Gov (Access to Information) Act introduced after a number of (liberal) court cases. Maggie Clay takes over from Tony Greaves as Organising Secretary/Political Secretary... **1986...**The first development of integrated campaigning with “Parliamentary Mailing” being produced by the Whips Office and sent out by ALC... **1987...**General Election, start of the “difficult” merger.





**1988**....Merger problems continue though ALC/ASDC achieve pain-free merger. Maggie Clay leaves the now renamed ASLDC – replaced by Bill le Breton and then Andrew Stunell as head of the organisation. ALC publishes “Winning Local Elections” by Chris Rennard at Blackpool special assembly... **1989**....People First campaign. “Saving the party” County Council elections... **1989**....Local Government Act introduces major changes for smaller groups on committee proportionality... **1990**....Poll Tax elections year. Party’s first integrated environment campaigns...





**1991**...First gains in local elections since Merger – the party now has over 3600 councillors and overall control of 25 councils... **1992**... ALDC rallies party after disappointment of the 1992 general election... **1993**...GoldMine relaunched to reflect increasing links between Parliamentary and local campaigning... **1994**...First of three Tory wipeout years, bringing a large increase in number of Lib Dem councillors. **1995**...Record number of councillors elected. ALDC membership reaches over 3000... **1996**...Artwork pack for local elections produced in electronic format (Pagemaker 4). Grassroots Campaigner introduced as ALDC's flagship members mailing... **1997**...Blair landslide, three current (Andrew Stunell, Paul Burstow, Jackie Ballard) and one former (Adrian Sanders) members of ALDC of staff elected as MPs... Howard Sykes takes over as Chief Executive...





**1998...**First weekend long Kickstart training event... **1999...**New campaign guide, “Winning Elections” produced. Distributed to all campaign teams to prepare for 1999 elections. First ALDC website launched... **2000...**Major changes to local government law. New Local Government Act introduces elected Mayors and Council Cabinets... **2001...**New Code of Conduct comes into effect for local government... **2002...**Serious allegations of postal voting fraud arise at local elections... **2003...**ALDC issues detailed advice on tackling the rising BNP... **2004...**Major changes to local election law with all postal elections in four regions... **2005...**Kickstart expanded to three events, one weekend and two one-day events... **2006...**Party now has 4,700 councillors with majority control of 35 councils... Tim Pickstone takes over as Chief Executive... GoldMine available online... **2007...**First mainland UK local elections by STV in Scotland...