

SCOTTISH LOCAL GOVERNMENT ELECTIONS INQUIRY

Review of Options for Improving Voter Representation

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EPOP 2013

Scottish Local Government Elections 2012

- **STV-PR Scottish Regulations (WIGM)**
- **Ward size**
3-members: 189 4-members: 164
- **Election day: 3 May 2012**
2,496 candidates: 585 women (23.4%)
1,223 councillors: 297 women (24.3%)

Scottish Local Government Elections 2012

- **Scottish Parliament Local Government & Regeneration Committee**
 - Round Table: SG, EC, EMBS, AEA, SOLAR, Logica UK (June 2012)
 - Oral evidence: Electoral Commission, Election Management Board for Scotland and Dr Alistair Clark (November 2012)
 - Inquiry: Call for written evidence (February 2013)

Scottish Parliament Local Government & Regeneration Committee Inquiry

- **Voter turnout and how this can be increased**
- **Reasons why people do not vote**
- **Voter registration and how can this be increased**
- **Proxy voting including postal voting**
- **Terminology used in and around elections**

Scottish Parliament Local Government & Regeneration Committee Inquiry

- Robson Rotation in respect of ordering of the ballot paper
- Diversity among voters and elected representatives including any matters associated with eligibility to stand, donations and the nomination process
- Timing of future elections with a view to minimising clashes

Scottish Parliament Local Government & Regeneration Committee Inquiry

- Only 16 submissions received
- No submission from any political party despite specific invitations and reminders
- Two MSPs appointed as Reporters
- Meetings separately with: SG, EC, EMBS, Dr Alistair Clark and Dr James Gilmour
- Report published 17 June 2013
- Progress to be reviewed in autumn 2014

LGR Committee Report Diversity

- Gender balance among candidates
- Ethnic background influencing voting
- Voters with disabilities

LGR Committee Report Diversity – Gender Balance

Scottish Local Government Elections			
Year	2003	2007	2012
Voting system	FPTP	STV-PR	STV-PR
Candidates	27.7%	22.8%	23.4%
Councillors	21.8%	21.8%	24.3%

LGR Committee Report

Diversity – Political Representation

Edinburgh City Centre Ward 2007 (3)		
Party	FP Votes	% FP Votes
SNP	1,630	20.4
Conservative	1,614	20.2
Lib Dem	1,587	19.9
Labour	1,437	18.0
Green	1,352	17.0
SSP	142	1.8
Independent	130	1.6
Liberal	83	1.0

LGR Committee Report

Diversity

- **Gender balance**
- **Political representation**

Effect of ward size? – one small footnote

- **Larger teams of candidates – incentive for more balanced teams**
- **More diverse political representation**
- **More flexible ward schemes – avoid artificial division of recognised communities**

LGR Committee Report

Ordering of the Ballot Paper

'Alphabetical' voting – list order effect

Candidate with the more First Preference Votes in Wards where Parties nominated 2 Candidates		
Election	2007	2012
Higher placed	277	331
Lower placed	50	82
Probability of such result by chance	$7.7 * 10^{-36}$	$3.0 * 10^{-34}$

LGR Committee Report

Ordering of the Ballot Paper

Overcoming the list order effect

- Robson rotation
 - superceded technology
- Full randomisation of every ballot paper
 - confusion? – disability discrimination?
- One randomisation for each ward
 - recommended in Gould Report (2007 elections)
 - only a partial solution: removes 'alphabetical' effect but not list order effect

By-Elections to fill Casual Vacancies

Dundee City Maryfield Ward By-election 12 March 2009					
	2007 Election 3 vacancies		2009 By-election 1 vacancy		Effect
	% FV Votes	Seats	% FP Votes	Seats	Seats
SNP	44%	2	48%	1	3
Labour	31%	1	31%	0	0
Others	25%	0	21%	0	0

Voter Education – Use of Preferences

An Issue Not Addressed

Electoral Commission leaflet issued April 2012

How do I fill in the ballot paper?

For this election you will need to vote using numbers. Your ballot paper will list all the candidates standing to be councillors in your ward.

You will be asked to number the candidates in order of your choice using **1, 2, 3** and **SO ON**.

You can make as many or as few choices as you wish.

You don't have to number every candidate. As long as you number at least one, your vote will be counted. If you make a mistake on your ballot paper, you can ask for a new one.

Put the number **1** in the voting box next to your **first** choice.

Put the number **2** in the voting box next to your **second** choice.

Put the number **3** in the voting box next to your **third** choice.

And so on.

Voter Education – Use of Preferences

An Issue Not Addressed

Electoral Commission leaflet issued April 2012

How do I fill in the ballot paper?

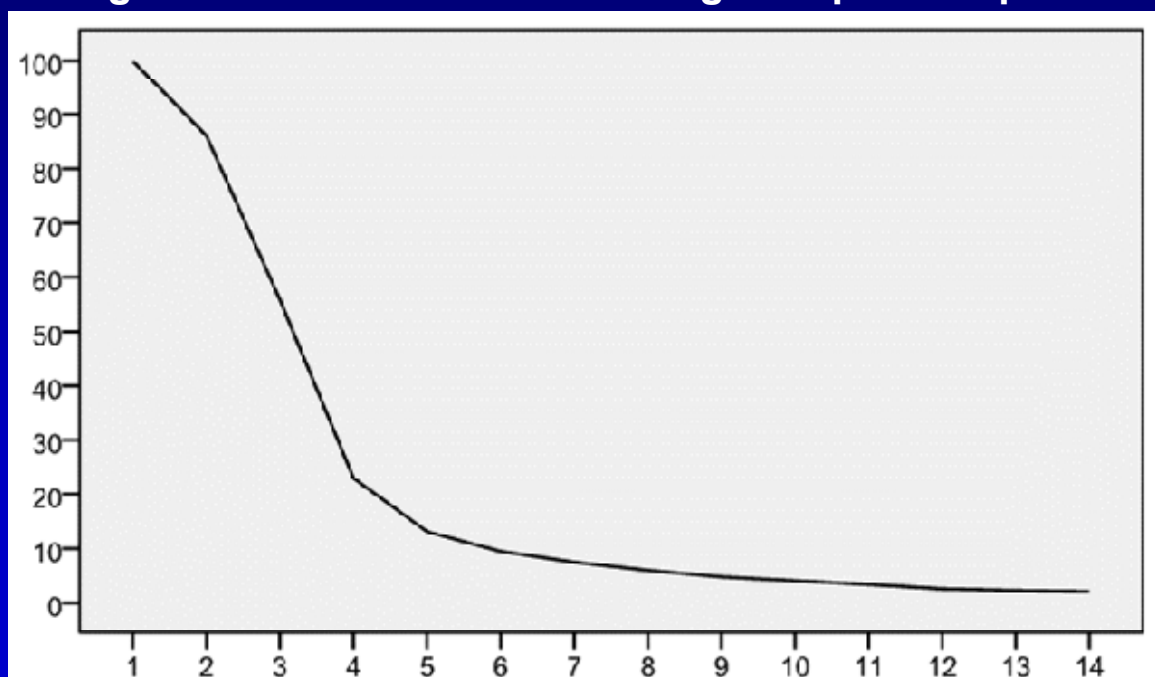
You will be asked to number the candidates in order of your choice using 1, 2, 3 and so on.

You can make as many or as few choices as you wish. **You don't have to number every candidate. As long as you number at least one, your vote will be counted.**

Voter Education – Use of Preferences

Use of Lower Preferences 2012 Elections

Percentage of voters able to do so using the specified preferences



Voter Education – Use of Preferences

An Issue Not Addressed

How do I fill in the ballot paper?

“The election uses a preferential system: you number the candidates in your preferred order, 1, 2, 3 etc. *For your vote to have maximum effect, number every candidate. Enjoy putting your least favourite candidate last as well as your best first!*”

Voter Education – Use of Preferences

An Issue Not Addressed

How do I fill in the ballot paper?

SPOKES

For your vote to have maximum effect, number every candidate. Enjoy putting your least favourite candidate last as well as your best first!

Electoral Commission

You don't have to number every candidate. As long as you number at least one, your vote will be counted.

Scottish Local Government Elections Inquiry: Review of Options for Improving Voter Representation

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Scottish Parliament Local Government and Regeneration Committee

Report on the 2012 Scottish Local Government Elections (published 17 June 2013)

HTML:

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/CurrentCommittees/64870.aspx>

PDF:

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Reports/lgR-13-08w.pdf

Written Evidence at Annex B (16 submissions)

Dr Alistair Clark

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Inquiries/13_Dr_Alistair_Clark.pdf

Dr James Gilmour: part 1 – Written evidence 1 March 2013

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Inquiries/14_Dr_James_Gilmour_part_1.pdf

Dr James Gilmour: part 2 – Unsolicited Briefing Note 22 November 2012

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Inquiries/15_Dr_James_Gilmour_part_2.pdf

Oral Evidence at LGRC meeting on 28 November 2012 (Official Report)

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=7963&mode=pdf>

Papers for meeting on 28 November 2012

including “Second Time Lucky?” paper by Dr Alistair Clark

http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Meeting%20Papers/LGR_Papers_20121128.pdf

Round-table Discussion at LGRC meeting on 13 June 2012

Official Report, from column 1113

<http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/parliamentarybusiness/28862.aspx?r=7307&mode=pdf>

Papers for meeting on 13 June 2012 (Agenda Item 2)

[http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Meeting%20Papers/LGR_Meeting_Papers_20120613\(1\).pdf](http://www.scottish.parliament.uk/S4_LocalGovernmentandRegenerationCommittee/Meeting%20Papers/LGR_Meeting_Papers_20120613(1).pdf)

Detailed Description of an STV Count in accordance with the Rules in the Scottish Local Government Elections Order 2011

<http://www.scotland.gov.uk/Topics/Government/Elections/guidance/TypesofElections/STVCOUNT>

http://www.edinburgh.gov.uk/downloads/file/7196/detailed_description_of_an_single_transferable_vote_stv_count

<http://www.glasgow.gov.uk/CHttpHandler.ashx?id=7224&p=0>

http://www.highland.gov.uk/NR/rdonlyres/6B78D6B7-6D27-443E-A52B-098B6D51ACDD/0/ScottishLocalGovernmentElections2012_DetailedDescriptionofSTVCount.pdf