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AV worked for him...



**...why doesn't he want it
working for everyone else?**

David Cameron was elected Conservative Leader using AV

What Fairer Votes means



It's ridiculous that most MPs are elected with more of their constituents voting against them than supporting them.

It's no wonder that so many people are sick of politics and feel like giving up on the whole thing!

All that can change with a simple Yes vote on May 5th.

A small change to our voting system will put an end to the safe seats for life. An end to some MPs getting out of touch and complacent because they do not have to listen to the voters to stay elected.

We Liberal Democrats have a well earned reputation for listening, working hard and keeping in touch with the people we represent.

We know that where this happens, people get involved. We know that where communities work with their politicians it makes life better for everyone.

The Fairer Votes Referendum is a once in a lifetime opportunity to restore faith in politics and make everyone feel their vote will count and their voice will be heard.

With AV MPs will need to work hard to get and keep the votes of a wider range of their constituents. With AV there will be many less safe seats for life.

With AV everyone's vote will count for more.

This booklet takes you through some of the key reasons for voting Yes and some of the things you can do to make sure this vital vote is won.

Please do everything you can to make sure we do not waste this once in a lifetime opportunity for change.

*With Gem wishes
Tim Farron*

Tim Farron - President of the Liberal Democrats

What happened in May 2010

464,990
votes
counted

29million
votes
didn't

Only 464,990 votes decided the 2010 General Election

Politics isn't working



In 2010, just 464,990 voters decided the outcome of the General Election. The other 29 million voters didn't¹.

First Past the Post is unfair, and voters know it.

Voting 'Yes' for Fairer Votes will mean that everyone's vote is counted - a strong message to take to the country over the next few weeks.

Under First Past The Post:

- Fewer than 1 in 3 MPs are elected by more than half the voters.
- Half of all seats in the UK have not changed hands in over 40 years.
- Over half the voters in 'Safe Seats' think their vote does not count.

The 'No Campaign' are defending a system in which the Conservatives got 47% of MPs but only 36% of the votes.

They're defending a system that let many MPs get away with cheating their expenses.

They're defending a system that lets many MPs ignore many of their voters because their votes just don't count.

They're defending a system in which most MPs are elected with more of their constituents voting against them than supporting them.

It's time for a change. It's time for fairer votes.

"Unless FPTP is reformed the UK will be left in the 'worst of both worlds'"

- ¹Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011

Why back fairer votes?



For most people there are three simple reasons why they are backing fairer votes.

All the research shows that most supporters do not back fairer votes because they are obsessed with the mechanics of voting systems. They are interested in the benefits a more modern system can bring:

Make all MPs work hard

Every MP would have to work hard to earn and keep the support of electors. That's because each MP will need more than half of the vote to win - at present they can get in with just one vote in three.

A stronger voice for you

Ranking candidates in order of preference (1,2,3...) gives you more say - in who wins and who doesn't. If your favourite candidate doesn't win, you can still have a say.

Tackle 'jobs for life' for MPs

Too many MPs have their 'safe seats' for life. Fairer votes will force complacent politicians to sit up and listen, and reach out to the communities they seek to represent.

"Unless FPTP is reformed the UK will be left in the 'worst of both worlds'"

- Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011

Watch Floella take us back to her Playschool days...



<http://bit.ly/gbQV5V>

... to explain just how simple voting with AV is.

So how's AV work?



It's simple. The small change to AV just means swapping the 'X' on your ballot paper for numbers.

You can rate the candidates how you see fit, and so if your favourite doesn't win, you can still have a say.

It's as easy as 1, 2, 3...

So what's the point?

The principle behind AV is just as simple.

An election winner should need the support of a majority of the people.

So if no candidate commands 50% support, the last placed candidate drops out and their voters' second preferences come into play. This continues until one candidate has majority support.

Under First Past the Post ('FPTP') you get just one choice.

And that has meant that most MPs – 2 out of 3 of those elected in 2010 - get to Parliament with less than half of voters on their side.

With AV, candidates have to do more to secure majority support.

When most employers are selecting a new employee they tend to whittle a long list of candidates down to a final two and then make their choice. AV replicates this approach with our employees in Parliament.

"Unless FPTP is reformed the UK will be left in the 'worst of both worlds'"

- Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011

**The 'No' camp's
been caught fibbing...**

A person wearing a dark blue or black suit jacket is shown from the back. Their right hand is behind their back, with the index finger pointing towards the left. The person's face and the front of their suit are not visible.

Don't let them get away with it!

Exposing 'No's' fibs



Fib 1) AV will cost us £250 million

The only piece of equipment you need to vote with AV is a pencil.

The No camp's sums, like their arguments, simply don't add up. Electronic counting machines aren't an issue in this referendum. This has been confirmed by the Electoral Commission.

Fib 2) AV is too confusing

Few people would be confused by this. Voters put a '1' by their first choice, a '2' by their second, a '3' by their third until there's none left you want to vote for.

The logic's familiar enough to anyone who's ever asked for a coke and said, "If they're out of that I'll have a lemonade."

Fib 3) AV helps the BNP

The BNP have already called on their supporters to back a 'No' vote. Currently because MPs can get elected with support from less than 1 in 3 voters, there is always a risk that extremists can get in.

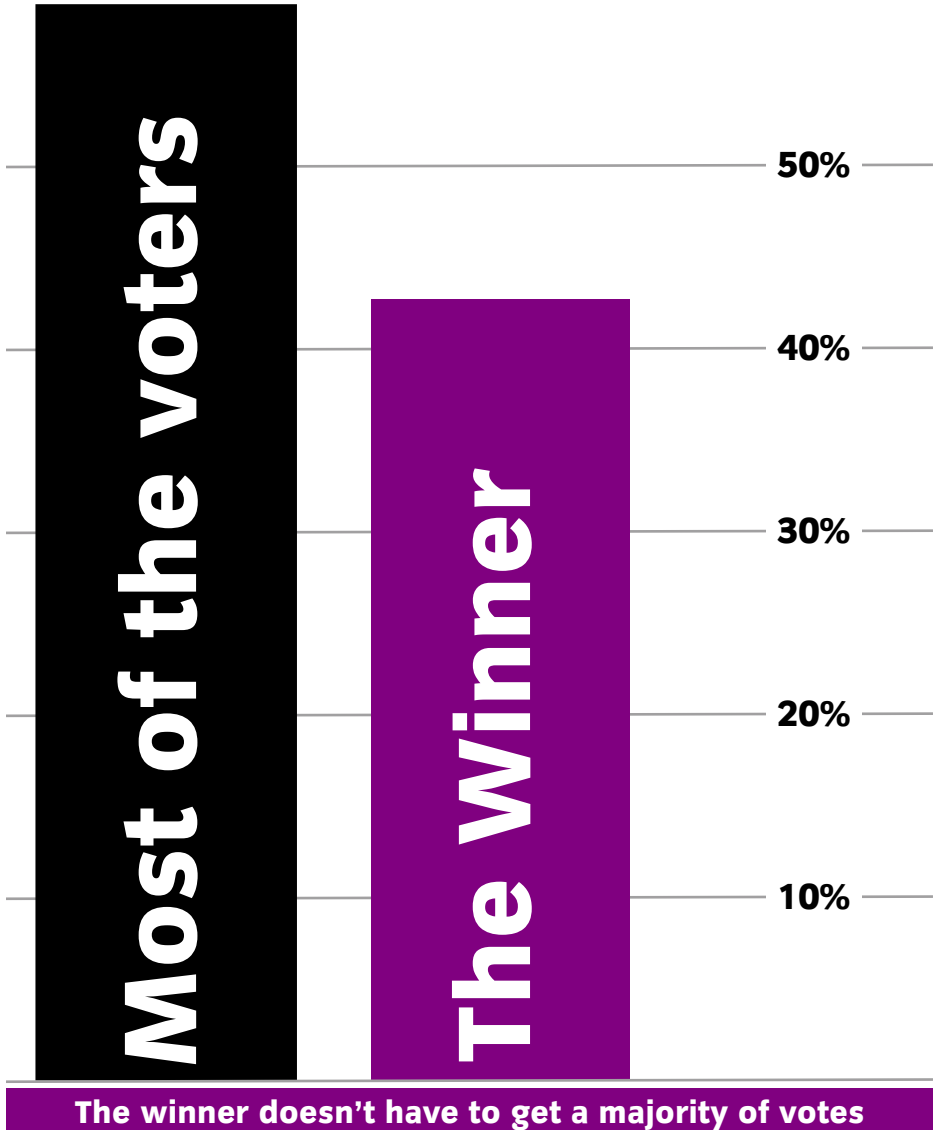
The BNP have learnt this lesson, and have used it to scrape wins in town halls across Britain. With AV, no-one can get elected unless most people back them. Therefore the risk of extremist parties getting in by the back door is eliminated.

Fib 4) No one uses AV

AV is a tried and tested system. In Britain millions of people in businesses, charities, and trade unions already use it. Political parties use it to elect their leaders - David Cameron was elected using AV.

When you need a real winner who needs to speak for the majority, AV is the go-to system.

Who loses out under FPTP





Fib 5) AV means some people get two votes

No. With AV everyone gets one vote. The difference is that AV gives you a vote that really counts and more of a say on who your local MP is. If your first choice gets knocked out your vote is transferred to your second preference.

If you go to the chip shop, and order cod and chips but they are out of cod, and you pick pie and chips instead, you have still only had one meal.

Fib 6) AV means more hung parliaments

No. Hung parliaments are no more likely with AV.

Britain has experienced hung parliaments in the 1920s, 1970s and in 2010, and had periods in the 1950s, 1960s and 1990s where a single party was unable to effectively govern alone. Canada, which uses First Past the Post, has permanent hung parliaments. Australia uses AV, and has returned its first hung parliament in 38 elections.

Hung parliaments occur if enough voters support a third party. AV gives voters a greater say over candidates in their constituency. How they vote is up to them.

Fib 7) AV weakens the constituency link

No. AV keeps the link and makes it stronger. AV strengthens the link by giving people the MPs they actually voted for. AV forces complacent MPs to take heed of the interests of their constituents because their jobs depend on it.

Many MPs currently have a pretty dodgy link to their constituents. Barely 1 in 3 MPs can currently speak for the majority of their voters.

Fib 8) AV forces you to give a second preference

No. You can vote for as few or as many candidates as you like. AV gives you the freedom to vote sincerely for any number of candidates you feel are up to the job.

You aren't forced to vote for any candidate you don't want. If you only want to support one candidate you just mark an 'X' as you did before.

Real people telling their story

Dear neighbour,

I don't know about you but I was pretty hacked off with our MPs after all those expenses stories last year. Duck houses, moat cleaning and downright fraud. I felt powerless to change things.

The truth is that most of our MPs have jobs for life – and usually with more people voting against them than for them!

That's ridiculous. My first reaction was never to vote again and I know lots of other people felt the same.

I am writing because there is a vote on May 5th that can actually stop all that. It really matters.

Please join me in voting Yes to change the way we choose our MPs. A simple change will give us all more say. It will make sure every MP has to listen and work harder to win our votes whatever party we support. Put simply, they won't be able to get away with ignoring most of us any longer - because they will need more of our votes to win their seats.

If you are hacked off with politicians promises and lies, please don't just switch off and let the abuse go on. Join me in taking this chance to change things by voting Yes on May 5th.

Surely it's got to be worth a short walk to the polling station!

With best wishes,

How we can win



Lib Dems know how to win in many areas. We need to use our skills to win the Fairer Votes referendum.

We need to do all the same things we do to win elections, to win this referendum:

- Raising profile
- Knocking on doors
- Delivering literature
- Using the local media

Lots of people are active across the country. Many members who will not normally come out and help are now out delivering leaflets and talking to voters.

We need to increase our level of activity over the last few weeks to make sure we win - asking members and supporters to get involved is key to getting the help we need. There's five key areas for action:

- Make sure there are high visibility street stalls in our areas
- Deliver 'Yes' literature with your own, or included some 'Yes' drop-in artwork in your leaflets
- Get canvassing and ask people about the 'Yes' referendum
- Get positive 'Yes' photos and letters to the editor into the local newspapers and onto local TV and radio news
- Get Out The Vote in your local area - if you've got them, use other elections in your area to get out the 'Yes' vote and vice versa - many people will turn out for a 'Yes' if we ask.

And don't forget your postal voters.

"Unless FPTP is reformed the UK will be left in the 'worst of both worlds'"

- Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011

Say 'Yes' to Fairer Votes

Say 'Yes' to MPs working harder, a stronger voice & no more MPs' jobs for life

If/ve the undersigned will be voting 'Yes' to fairer votes on 5th May to make MPs work harder and give us a stronger voice.

NAME	ADDRESS	SIGNATURE	PHONE/EMAIL
			Phone: Email:
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The Liberal Democrats and their elected representatives may use the information you provide to contact you from time to time about issues that may be of interest to you. Some of these contacts may be automated. You can opt-out of any of



Street Stalls - raising profile



Plan to hold at least one street stall in the final few weeks of the campaign to raise the profile of 'Yes'.

Choose a prominent location and good time to catch lots of voters. Busy shopping streets, bus or train stations or outside popular locations in the area can all work well.

There are three reasons to hold a street stall:

- Raising the profile of the 'Yes campaign' in your area.
- Talk to people about why we need fairer votes
- Collect the details of supporters and recruit new volunteers

The 'Yes campaign' has got many people active in politics who have never been active before - use street stalls as a chance to introduce people to talking to voters about an issue.

Where can you get street stall materials?

'Yes to Fairer Votes' posters, balloons, stickers and fliers are available from your regional 'Yes campaign' Community Hub. Find your nearest one at <http://www.yestofairervotes.org/index.php/pages/phonebanks>.

The Liberal Democrats will be sending Street Stall packs to some local parties to kick start their street stalls.

You will need to print your own petition forms so you can collect people's details - make sure you print plenty of the forms.

You can download many materials you can use on street stalls from the 'Yes to Fairer Votes' folder on Huddle at <http://bit.ly/h5CcuN>.



3 reasons to say YES!

- 1 MPs working harder - for you
- 2 Tackling 'Jobs for Life' in Westminster
- 3 Giving you a stronger voice

AV: as easy as 1, 2, 3...

Let's face it: the last few years have not been good for anyone who believes in politics.

Westminster politicians may believe they've fixed the expenses scandal but we still have a voting system in place which quite simply is not up to the job.

Too many MPs get in with only a very small number of people voting for them and too many MPs seem to have jobs for life.

No wonder they appear to sometimes be a law unto themselves and take voters for granted.

Our clapped-out voting system is simply not fit for purpose any more. It's time to put it out of its misery. In a world where people want, demand and expect real choice, we need something new.

It's time to change. It's time for a new, better system for electing our MPs.

In the referendum on voting reform being held on May 5th we can vote YES for that change.

The new Alternative Vote system is simple - you can just put the people you want to vote for in order of preference - 1, 2, 3 and so on. It's a small change that will make a big difference.

No one can win unless they receive more than half of the votes. It couldn't be fairer. Your vote will always count and every MP will have to work hard to get more people on side.

That can only be good for our democracy.

Together we can really change our politics. We have a one-time chance to take back power in our country.

Let's send a real message to our politicians on May 5th. Vote YES to show we will not accept their culture of complacency any more.



Yours sincerely,

Richard Wilson

PS If you want any more information about this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity please visit www.yestofairvotes.org

AV: a small change that makes a big difference

Photograph of Richard Wilson used by Cambridge Journals Production and provided by Willie Sullivan on behalf of Yes in May 2011 Ltd, Carmelite, 55 Victoria Embankment, London, EC4Y 0EE.
Printed by

'Yes Campaign' literature



The overall 'Yes Campaign' has produced a range of leaflets to deliver and hand out across the country.

Some of these leaflets you can download and print yourself. Others are available through your regional 'Yes to Fairer Votes' campaign manager. Find your local contact at <http://bit.ly/excl6O>.

You can use:

- A letter from well-known actor Richard Wilson
- Banner adverts to place in your literature (must be marked as an advert)
- Dedicated colour or two-colour leaflets

There is also a range of material produced by the Liberal Democrat Campaigns Department including:

- A voxpop leaflet
- A5 flyers
- A mailing to Ds&Ps
- A mailing to Postal Voters
- Posters

Please include some drop-in artwork in your leaflets, or double deliver with other leaflets.

Just like in any election, all campaign expenditure needs to be accounted for and reported. See the 'Compliance' section at the back of the booklet for more information.

If you have elections in your area, costs should be split across campaigns and reported appropriately.

"Unless FPTP is reformed the UK will be left in the 'worst of both worlds'"

- Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011



**EXPENSES SCANDAL.
MPs IN THE DOCK.
YOUR VOICE NOT
BEING HEARD.
THE SYSTEM ISN'T
WORKING.**

SAYING **YES!** ON 5TH MAY MEANS...

1 **MPs WORKING HARDER**
Your next MP would have to aim to get more than 50% of the vote to be sure of winning. At present they can be handed power with just one vote in three. They'll need to work harder to win - and keep - your support.

2 **A STRONGER VOICE**
Ranking candidates gives you more say - in who comes first and who comes last. If your favourite doesn't win, you can still have a say. It's as easy as 1,2,3...

3 **TACKLING 'JOBS FOR LIFE'**
Too many MPs have their 'safe seats' for life. Force complacent politicians to sit up and listen, and reach out to the communities they seek to represent.

www.yestofairervotes.org

Canvassing



We know that talking to people is one of the most effective ways of pushing up turnout.

Getting out on doorsteps over the final few weeks of the campaign and talking to people about fairer votes.

There is a simple question to ask:

Are you in favour of replacing Britain's current voting system with a new fairer system where every vote will count?

On your canvass cards you should be seeing the options of:

Yes, No or Maybe

for recording people's referendum voting intention.

Please record solid 'Yes' or 'No' people with those fields and other people as 'Maybe'.

EARS have added a special field to the recent versions of EARS for recording Fairer Votes voting intention.

Whatever people's stated intention, it's important to get across the three key messages about what fairer votes deliverers:

- MPs being made to work hard
- Giving everyone a strong voice
- Tackling the 'jobs for life' that some MPs have.

All the reports are that these messages are getting an excellent reception on the doorstep and phone and people, are keen for a change to a new, fairer system.

"Unless FPTP is reformed the UK will be left in the 'worst of both worlds'"

- Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011

A banner drop by 'Yes to Fairer Votes'



Send your photo competition entries to voice@libdemvoice.org

Local Media



Use simple stunts and letters to the editor to get into the local media.

Lib Dem Voice is running a competition for the best 'Yes' campaign stunt photos - send yours to voice@libdemvoice.org.

There are a lot of photos on the Lib Dem Yes Facebook group already, and Lib Dem Voice have received many already too.

What can you come up with?

Be original and creative in your stunts and get other people involved.

Make sure you get a good picture and invite along the local press to report on it too.

Write to the editor

Get local members and supporters to write to the local paper or post on blogs about fairer votes.

Again, remember the three key messages:

- All MPs being made to work hard
- Giving everyone a strong voice
- Tackling the 'jobs for life' that some MPs have.

If you've got a Lib Dem MP, you could always get in a bit of praise for their hard work at the same time.



Coming Soon: Get Out The Vote material at <http://bit.ly/h5CcuN>

Get Out The Vote



It'll be more important than ever to get out the vote in both the referendum and other elections.

The two operations can even complement each other making it easier to get people out to vote than it might otherwise be.

In areas where there are not complementary elections getting out the vote will be even more important for the referendum.

Plan to spend a good amount of time on doorsteps in the final week - it makes a massive difference to turn out.

However, it's important to get the standard campaign right too.

This year the schedule will be a little different as the weekend before Polling Day includes the Royal Wedding on Friday and a Bank Holiday on the Monday.

People will switch off from politics as the nation takes part in the celebrations - but William and Kate will be saying 'Yes' and putting others in the mood to say 'Yes' too.

We need to be reaching out to people from the weekend onwards to encourage them out to vote on the day.

Postal Voters will have voted much earlier however, and they will make a massive difference in this campaign - do not forget to run a Postal Vote Polling Day.

Plan carefully as Easter and the Royal Wedding will affect when Postal Votes are sent out.

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Compliance



As in any election, there are strict rules and spending limits during the referendum campaign period.

The campaign period began when the Bill received Royal Assent on 16 February and will end on 5 May 2011.

All campaign expenditure incurred by the Liberal Democrats needs to be approved by the Party's Registered Treasurer.

In a similar way to the General Election, each Local Party has been given a pre-approved limit of £5,000 per constituency (please note the funds for any spending towards this limit will have to be raised locally). Any expenditure above this limit **MUST** be pre-approved in writing. Please contact David Allworthy at Cowley Street if you want to spend more than your pre-approved total.

Invoices for any expenditure must be received within 30 days of 5 May. Please ensure that all your suppliers are aware of this deadline as after this date you cannot pay them without a court order.

You must also pay all invoices within 60 days of 5 May. Remember that even if your Local Party prints its own leaflets the cost of paper, etc. must be included on the return. Other items given or lent to the Local Party for the campaign are donations in kind and must be from permissible sources, and if valued over £200 must be included on the expenditure return we will provide in due course.

Local Party Treasurers are responsible for this expenditure and have been written to setting out their responsibilities and how they will have to account for expenditure after the referendum.

If you have any questions please contact David Allworthy at Cowley Street on 020 7227 1339.

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- Institute for Public Policy Research, Jan 2011

Any item published during the referendum campaign must have the correct imprint.

If you do not have other elections in your area and produce include stories encouraging people to vote 'Yes' for Fairer Votes, you will need to put an imprint in the following form:

Published and promoted by [Local Treasurer] on behalf of the Liberal Democrats both at [Local Address]. Printed by [Name and address of printer].

The Local Treasurer is used in this instance as he or she is the person responsible for the accounting unit and will be required to ensure that the relevant financial return is made to the Party's Registered Treasurer following the referendum as mentioned in the Compliance section of this booklet.

Printed items you may receive from the overall 'Yes to Fairer Votes' campaign will already carry their imprint and will have been accounted for within the 'Yes campaign's' separate spending limits.

Similarly, printed items you receive from the Federal Party will already carry the correct imprint and will already have been accounted for within the Party's spending return.

**One day. One chance.
One hope to change
politics for good.**

YES!

Download
your poster from
<http://bit.ly/hrn4w3>

**Don't miss the
Fairer Votes Referendum
Thursday 5th May**