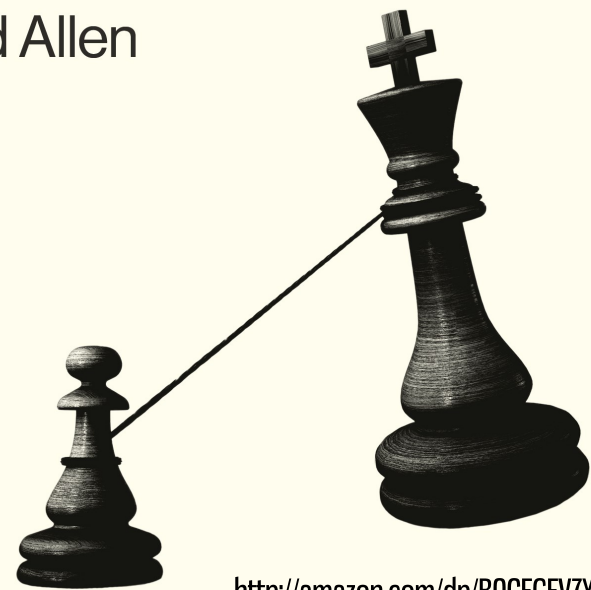


THE LIVING VOTE

Voting reform is the biggest issue of our time. Get that and everything changes.

David Allen



http://amazon.com/dp/BOCFGV7Y5
http://barnesandnoble.com/s/9781803413150

MAKE YOUR VOTE COUNT

In the 2019 election 44,598 votes, which includes 21,336 Conservative votes, would have been of greater benefit to you had you thrown them on the fire instead of putting them in the ballot box. Not one of them counted for anything.

This is the degree of under representation that exists in our current system. You can use this election as a referendum on your feelings for a more representative electoral mechanism without affecting the result of this election. It's effectively a 'Free Shot'.

The Conservative party will win and everybody else will lose, in this election and every election for ever more until we change the way our votes count. By voting for the Fairer Voting Party, you aren't voting for the candidate, but for an idea, and it can only happen through the weight of your votes, because the existing system suits the two main parties to the detriment of the people. If you support Labour, Liberal Democrat, Green or AN Other, you can only benefit by voting for us. If you support more representative voting and are a Conservative voter, be assured, they don't need your vote and you can safely send a message.

A Parliament for All

- Far greater proportionality
- No wasted votes
- Red Wall/North South divide eliminated
- Limitations on government power
- A democratic solution for the future



VOTERS CHECKLIST

Tick the boxes and then add them up

- I think our voting system is grossly unfair and most votes don't count
- If we don't change it we will forever be stuck with just two parties
- I would like to see more votes actually counting in decision making
- Constituencies would benefit from representatives with different views
- Governments wield too much power with no restraint
- I still want us to be able to sack our government as we can now

TOTALS

Agree VOTE Fairer Voting

Disagree VOTE as usual

☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐
☐	☐

THE FAIRER VOTING PARTY

fairervotingparty.org Folkestone and Hythe GENERAL ELECTION EDITION

A BETTER POLITICS
A BETTER PARLIAMENT
A BETTER DEMOCRACY

IF YOU WANT CHANGE THEN YOU MUST VOTE FOR IT

Is there nobody to vote for, nobody representing your views? Will you even bother to vote? After all, they're all the same. Well, now you have a real choice, so make your vote count!

We are not standing in this election to win this seat, we can't do that, nobody can except the Conservatives, but you can show your support for a real change to our political system and how we elect our MPs, by voting for the Fairer Voting Party. A vote for a new politics, detailed in the book 'The Living Vote'. Our manifesto.

There are only two ways to change our electoral system and House of Commons structure.

Either a sitting government will change it, or the people's voice will, by referendum.

If the government make any changes whom do you think they would benefit? If the people decide then we could force a system that benefited us rather than the politicians.

This election is the first step. We may be standing in one or half a dozen constituencies, but it is the weight of votes that counts, not winning seats.

If the support for real change is large enough, even in just one constituency, then it will draw support from all corners and in the next election we'll be contesting, not one, not half a dozen, but hundreds of them.

We want a Referendum

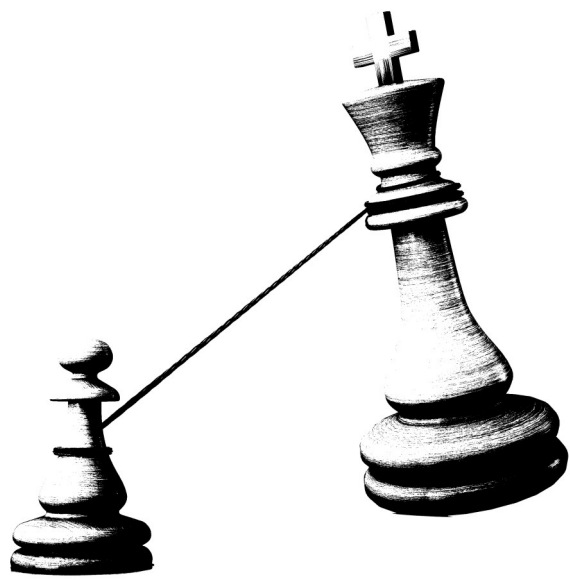
With the threat of so many votes supporting change and not voting for existing parties the government will concede the referendum. Why?

Because governments always win referendums, except when they don't.

Election Communication Fairer Voting Party David Allen, Candidate, Folkestone and Hythe Constituency. Printed by Mortons, Media Centre, Morton Way Boston Road Industrial Centre. Horncastle. LN9 6JR Promoted by David Allen, 3, Marine Crescent Folkestone CT20 1PS.

HOW IT WORKS

In a Nutshell



Structure

- Parliament will be made up of 75% political party members and 25% independent members.
- When you vote you will have two ballot papers. One for political parties and one for independents.

Constituencies

- There will be approximately 256 party constituencies covering the whole country.
- There will be approximately 64 independents constituencies covering the whole country.
- Each independent constituency will cover approximately 4 party constituencies.
- Each constituency, both party constituencies and independent constituencies, will return two MPs.

Voting

- You select one candidate on the party ballot paper and one candidate on the independents ballot paper.
- The first placed and second placed candidates in each constituency are elected, based on a simple count, as now.

The living vote

- When your MP votes, they will cast the number of votes they received in the election.
- Every time they vote, your vote is used. It lives for the entire parliament, hence The Living Vote.

Structure

There are two major characteristics that we need to get away from to get better government. One is the persistent opposition of the opposition for political party advantage and the second is the absolute power the government can wield.

This extraordinary juxtaposition of absolute power versus zero power simply doesn't work well enough or for the benefit of the people.

The spoils are so high, so absolute, that winning comes before everything else and contributes to the lying, the artificial political points scoring, and the low calibre of our leaders.

In the new system, the government will still operate as now, more or less. The party with the largest number of votes will form a government. However, it is highly unlikely that any party would again have an absolute majority in parliament and to pass legislation they would need to get the support of a proportion of the Independents, by virtue of argument and not bribery, loyalty, or punishment.

In this scenario the Independents will be much more difficult to sway by improper means because of the restrictions and limitations

on them receiving money, or getting ministerial positions, or honours.

I'll explain more later.

Constituencies

The number of constituencies is a detail to be established in the implementation plan. However, because the voting system makes constituency sizes much less critical, it might be possible to align many of them with other administrative boundaries, such as counties, county councils, borough councils or unitary authorities.

In effect each new party constituency, which will be about two and a quarter the size of current constituencies will have four MPs. The two party MPs elected plus two Independent MPs who will be shared, if that's the appropriate term, with a number of other party constituencies.

The role and responsibilities of the Independents will be the same as any other MP, but they will have a state provided office to add a bit of professionalism to their role. No more wives and the like on the payroll eh?

Voting

The voting mechanism is the same for both the party candidate and the independent candidates.

Basically the votes are simply added up and the winner and second place are elected.

The system was designed to be as easily understandable as possible, but remarkably it throws up so many other benefits as well. The paper written by David Allen in 2015, which just covered the voting system (F2PTP) First Two Past the Post, was applied to real votes in the 2010 and 2015 general elections and the outcome of this work showed clearly that many more people would have got the MP they voted for. This was evident, even with votes that had already been cast and where voters knew that only the winner would be elected. In a situation where second place would also be elected the likelihood is that where people chose to vote for, or against one of the two main parties, their real choice under the new system would stand a much better chance,

Imagine a Liberal Democrat voter, or a Green voter in a constituency where they could not possibly win under the present system. Where would their vote go, or would they even vote at all? Would they be one of the 30% that simply don't bother?

Now imagine that F2PTP is in play and second place counts? The chances of being elected have just risen substantially and that

will increase the vote share of minority parties across the board.

Similarly, the opposites effect will come into play also.

In most constituencies either the Conservative party win of the Labour party win. They are opposite sides of the political spectrum as far as electioneering is concerned and in the South East it is virtually wholly blue and in the North West, for example, virtually wholly red.

However, under F2PTP constituencies will have one MP from each camp. If first and second are Labour and Conservative, then they are both elected. If it is Lib Dem and Conservative, likewise they are both elected.

The Red Wall/North South divide disappears forever.

The fact that MPs have different degrees of support is balanced by the fact that instead of all MPs votes being equal (a ridiculous concept) they always cast the number of votes they received.

The Living Vote

When an election under FPTP (First Past the Post) is over, your vote is history. Whether it counted or not it is discarded.

However, under F2PTP, your vote is used every time your MP votes

The combination of the voting system F2PTP, with the election of the independents is called:

F2PTP-IND

WHAT'S SO WRONG NOW?



Never have so few been despised by so many

Our parliamentarians aren't regarded as particularly upstanding and honest people at the best of times, but in recent years our democracy has sunk to a new low

Corruption is endemic within our political system and exacerbated by the incentives created by our electoral processes. In this case I'm not talking about theft, or

direct bribery, though there are instances coming very close to that, neither am I talking about the use of high office for deliberate personal enrichment, though once again some activities are perilously close. I refer to the exercise of patronage, imposition of loyalty demands, large monetary gifts for parties and individual politicians securing post-office directorships etc.

The net effect is that elected representatives often vote for things they do not agree with, and

this enables a gradual moving away from the rights and freedoms we have come to regard as sacrosanct, toward an alternative which is increasingly authoritarian and elitist.

The Democratic Illusion

Our parliament gives the illusion of democracy, but in reality, government policy is dictated by one person, the Prime Minister, and opposition policy is dictated by the leader of His Majesty's Official Opposition. I don't mean

that these individuals design all the policy, far from it, but nothing will happen if they don't agree. An absolute veto is a dictatorship by any other name. It may be that colleagues will apply pressure in one way or another, but the dictatorship still exists.

As MPs are fed by the state, their narcissistic tendencies massaged by the media, and their safety, ensured by toeing the line, means true opposition is hard to come by.

When people have too much power, they behave badly

Dysfunctional from the off

There is no balance in our parliament, it's either total power or no power at all. Everything is to play for so the stakes are very high, which is why so much effort and money is put into winning at any cost. It is why we have the pantomime of PMQs when it should be a period of accountability. Leaders play to their gallery and lie to the other gallery, whilst national problems are fiddled with rather than being



resolved.

The Living Vote describes a parliament that has a single party government, yet the body of independents would be a tempering force and will go some way to ensure that legislation is properly thought out and poor law should no longer be forced through for electoral advantage.

The polarisation artificially generated by our governmental structure makes meaningful change impossible to achieve. Progressively governments are forced out to the perimeters of policy, completely unable to address fundamental issues. The electoral fall-out from touching a political sacred cow would be

We can do better.

fanned incessantly by the opposition for electoral advantage. Add to that the nature of the assembly, being made up of people who are 'reliable chaps and chaperesses', and the end result is almost permanently sterile governance.

There is a better way.



The Untouchables

By creating a body of independent MPs, with no affiliation to a party and barred from receiving donations, gifts, posh jobs, honours etc, as well as being better known to you than any party MP through a revolutionally campaigning strategy, we can get as close as possible to the 'Untouchables'.

By making the goal of winning less essential than it was, and by creating effective opposition, as opposed to the awful point scoring that goes on, and by reflecting the wishes of so many more people we can create a legislature that is better balanced.

Better balance, greater representation and effective opposition are all things lacking in our present system and The Living Vote redresses those failings.

Remember, if government needs to get a proportion of the Independent MPs to side with it's legislation, then the opposition also has the same opportunity to oppose it, with a real chance of success.

Such change will lead to better government.

A VERY POOR VOTING SYSTEM INDEED

What Does Your Vote Do

The current voting system FPTP disenfranchises so many people that voting, particularly in constituencies where the result is a foregone conclusion, is truly an honourable but pointless discharge of duty.

The second, and quite bizarre and archaic feature of our parliamentary system is that every MP has one vote. Once elected they all have the same voting power despite their levels of support in the election. More proportional PR systems, still lead to the establishment of a parliamentary dictatorship and none of these systems (except the F2PTP solution), addresses parliamentary inequality. Why should the votes of the voters in the Western Isles (Na h-Eileanan An Iar) be 5 times more valuable than the votes of the voters in Knowsley or Bristol West. Angus MacNeil was elected for the constituency of Na-h-Eileanan An Iar with 6013 votes in 2017, whereas George Howarth was elected for Knowsley with 47,351. When these MPs walk into a lobby their votes count as equal. This is utter nonsense, an inequality of breath-taking proportions. Even in this most peculiar election for UKIP in 2017, Tim Aker, a UKIP candidate, got 10,112 votes to



Angus MacNeil's 6,013, yet MacNeil is the MP.

Whilst this is an extreme example, a wide disparity in support is commonplace between MPs. It is simply undemocratic to halve or quarter the value of people's votes as it is to multiply the value of others.

A principle of democracy is that, not only should we have an entitlement to one vote, my vote, should count as equal to your vote, or anyone else's. This is not the case.

The whole range of F2PTP benefits are explained in the centre pages, but on this issue alone imagine how much fairer, how much more proportional it

VOTE

FAIRER VOTING PARTY

Where are we now?

Disappointingly, I think the short answer to the question is, still in the same place we have been for some time.

There are some Labour MPs and some Conservative MPs, who support, or say they support voting reform. There are a number of organisations that have campaigned for years to bring such change about, but in reality, we are where we have always been. Nowhere.

We, and I mean all those who support voting reform, are no further forward in this quest and there are many reasons for that. It's not easy to draw people together on this, which is why, for example we have multiple organisations supportive of electoral reform, and multiple parties who include the concept in manifestos, but in reality just as an afterthought.

Splitting the vote under FPTP achieves nothing. Different organisations form different views and unsurprisingly are reluctant to change their position. The phenomenon is often referred to as the 'not invented here syndrome', and effectively blocks any progress.

No wonder nothing changes.

Nothing has moved forward with respect to voting or electoral reform. Activity appears to be the objective, not results. As the grandly sounding Electoral Reform Society was founded in 1884 and we still have the FPTP system in 2024, perhaps we shouldn't hold our collective breath.

Only for unimportant stuff

One could claim that some movement has taken place but that's only for recent elections, new political bodies like the Scottish Parliament, Welsh Assembly, London assembly, and the former EU elections when we were still members, but the important stuff hasn't changed. In reality, all the elections that don't count have been allowed to be proportional. However, even in these quasi-proportional elections exactly the same thing results. Instead of outright majority that FPTP tend to produce, we have a majority built from coalition. Small parties with little electoral support get to wield excess influence, which detracts somewhat from the restraining nature of one's coalition partners. From a governance perspective, all the real power is in parliament and local authorities. Both these elections are held under FPTP.

Protests change nothing, petitions change nothing, votes change everything.

What you can do.

If you want something you have to vote for it, however too often your vote doesn't count.

In this election and if you support fairer voting, every vote for the Fairer Voting Party will count, because it has an entirely different purpose.

In many constituencies your vote really doesn't matter whoever you vote for.

In Folkestone and Hythe the Conservative party will win as it always does, whether you vote for it or not. There will always be a substantial majority of people who will ensure their victory.

If you vote Labour, Lib Dem, Green, or any other flavour, you know now, well before the election, that the Conservative party will win.

You also know that without voting reform, this will always be the case.

RISK IS:
TO BE
AVOIDED
NECESSARY FOR
CHANGE



However, if you vote for the Fairer Voting Party, and enough of you vote for the Fairer Voting Party, you will send a message.

If enough people vote for the Fairer Voting Party in any constituency for a candidates to actually win, then the world will change overnight. That, though won't happen.

So what will the message do?

The message, if repeated in enough constituencies over time the government of the day will hold a national referendum on the electoral system based on David

At last a meaningful vote!

Despite the fact that our candidate in this election cannot win, a vote for them is probably the only way your vote will actually count.

As a species we are nothing if not optimistic. Around the country, candidates stand in elections they cannot possibly win and they do this knowing they cannot possibly win. They forfeit deposits, spend their own money, traipse round streets for weeks on end, take a chunk out of their lives and endure the inevitable defeat.

What's worse is that all this effort counts for nothing at all. Why do we do it, for which the only answer is, because we believe? It's a kind of duty, something that has to be done.

That in itself isn't surprising, what would be surprising is not voting for something where your vote would actually count and ensure that many more votes would continue to count forevermore.

The Fairer Voting Party candidate in this election cannot win, but the objective isn't to win. It is to send an electoral message. It is to demand a referendum on F2PTP-IND

No other action can do this. Not protest, not petitions, and certainly not believing the politician's electoral promises. The weight of votes for the Fairer Voting Party, is a vote for a fairer

voting system and parties will take note.

Votes for the Fairer Voting Party are, by definition, not votes for any other party. Not getting votes is a worry for political parties and if the votes they aren't getting are a substantial number because people chose to exercise their power through their vote for something they collectively want, then the number of votes they won't get will also be significant.

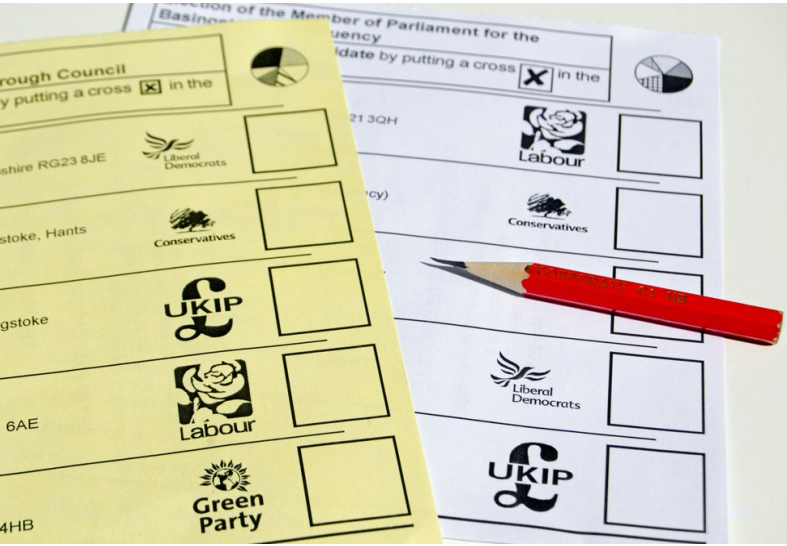
Why a referendum?

Because it is the go to option.

One has to remember that governments are sure they will always win referendums.

David Cameron offered the Brexit referendum because of the weight of UKIP votes. He saw this as a simple choice, because the state always wins. They have superior power and money and sometimes a good argument. That Brexit broke this rule was simply testament to the 'political' bubble our leaders reside in most of the time.

The only potential failure is a government that offers to implement PR, or something like PR, which will be a system they can win under. That is why your vote for us isn't just a vote for fairer representation it is a vote for The Living Vote (F2PTP-IND)



Allen's book, The Living Vote.

Even if, in this election, this is the only constituency with a fairer Voting Candidate, a substantial vote will do two things.

Firstly, it will draw massive support. In the election following, there will be hundreds of constituencies with a Fairer Voting Party candidate, and the government of the day will be terrified of the votes they will lose to your desire for constitutional change.

Secondly, by voting for an already defined voting system and House of Commons structure, the people will have determined what it is that will be voted on in the referendum, leaving no room for the government to decide, as happened in 2011, to choose a system they could easily defeat.

How quickly can we do this?

It's a medium to long term strategy, so it might take a bit of time. Maybe five years, maybe ten, but if people want a more representative government, the

DON'T CHANGE
A THING
CHANGE
EVERYTHING



only way they will get it is by voting for it.

Take this opportunity now and vote for what you want.

YOUR FAIRER VOTING PARTY CANDIDATE
AND PARTY LEADER: DAVID ALLEN



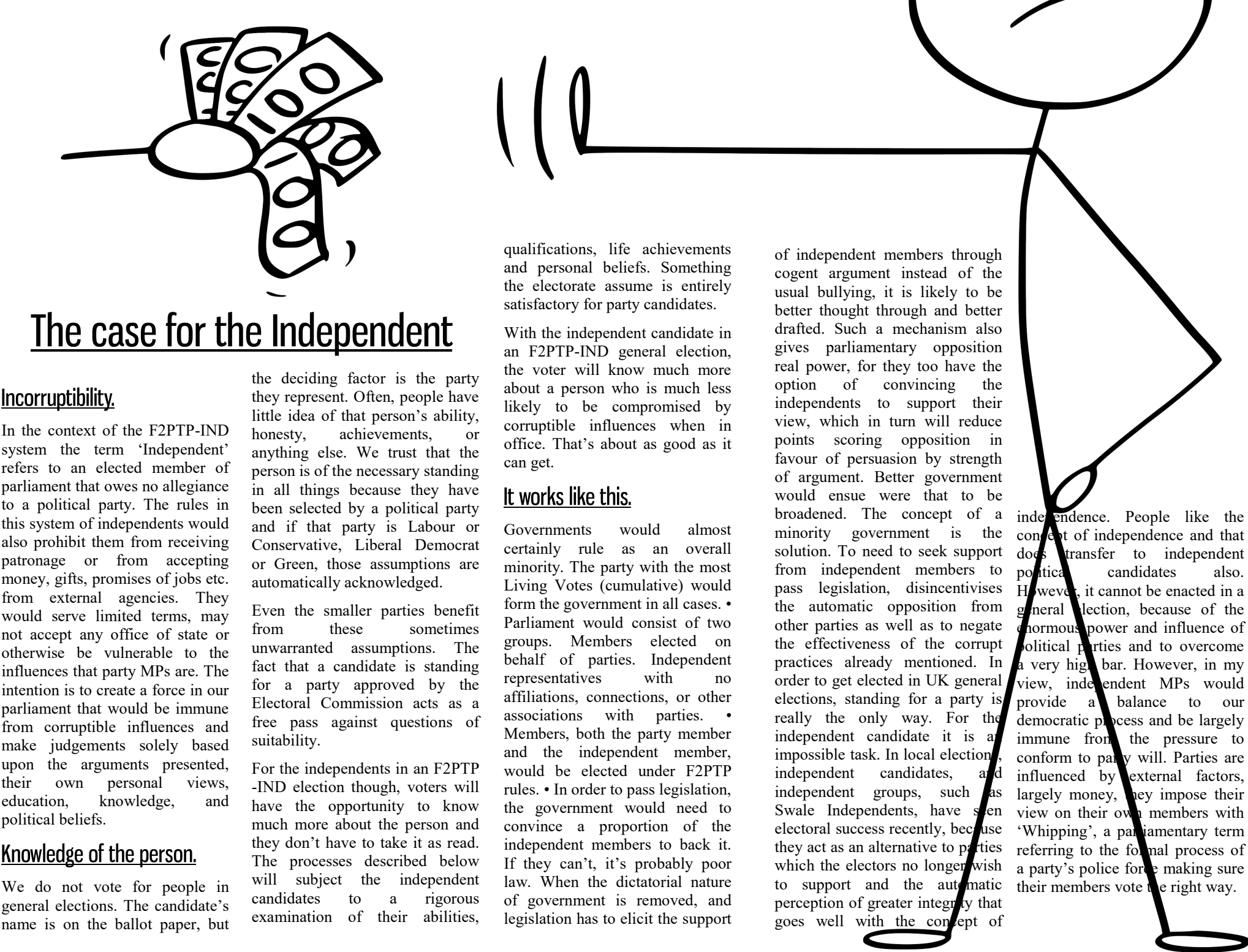
A short personal message

This party, The Fairer Voting Party, is for us all. It is neutral in the political quagmire and has only one objective, which is to improve our governance, our politics and our democracy, for the benefit of all.

It will make parliament more accountable, it will dilute the enormous power exercised by the Prime Minister and it will bring decision making closer to you than ever before.

I do not seek high office. I seek better governance for all. This is important and needs mass support. I could really do with your help to drive the change we so desperately need to a successful conclusion.

WHY INDEPENDENTS?



The case for the Independent

Incorruptibility.

In the context of the F2PTP-IND system the term 'Independent' refers to an elected member of parliament that owes no allegiance to a political party. The rules in this system of independents would also prohibit them from receiving patronage or from accepting money, gifts, promises of jobs etc. from external agencies. They would serve limited terms, may not accept any office of state or otherwise be vulnerable to the influences that party MPs are. The intention is to create a force in our parliament that would be immune from corruptible influences and make judgements solely based upon the arguments presented, their own personal views, education, knowledge, and political beliefs.

Knowledge of the person.

We do not vote for people in general elections. The candidate's name is on the ballot paper, but

qualifications, life achievements and personal beliefs. Something the electorate assume is entirely satisfactory for party candidates.

With the independent candidate in an F2PTP-IND general election, the voter will know much more about a person who is much less likely to be compromised by corruptible influences when in office. That's about as good as it can get.

It works like this.

Governments would almost certainly rule as an overall minority. The party with the most Living Votes (cumulative) would form the government in all cases. • Parliament would consist of two groups. Members elected on behalf of parties. Independent representatives with no affiliations, connections, or other associations with parties. • Members, both the party member and the independent member, would be elected under F2PTP rules. • In order to pass legislation, the government would need to convince a proportion of the independent members to back it. If they can't, it's probably poor law. When the dictatorial nature of government is removed, and legislation has to elicit the support

of independent members through cogent argument instead of the usual bullying, it is likely to be better thought through and better drafted. Such a mechanism also gives parliamentary opposition real power, for they too have the option of convincing the independents to support their view, which in turn will reduce points scoring opposition in favour of persuasion by strength of argument. Better government would ensue were that to be broadened. The concept of a minority government is the solution. To need to seek support from independent members to pass legislation, disincentivises the automatic opposition from other parties as well as to negate the effectiveness of the corrupt political parties and to overcome practices already mentioned. In order to get elected in UK general elections, standing for a party is really the only way. For the independent candidate it is an impossible task. In local elections, provide a balance to our democratic process and be largely immune from the pressure to conform to party will. Parties are independent candidates, and are influenced by external factors, independent groups, such as Swale Independents, have seen electoral success recently, because they act as an alternative to parties which the electors no longer wish to support and the automatic perception of greater integrity that goes well with the concept of

independence. People like the concept of independence and that does transfer to independent political candidates also. However, it cannot be enacted in a general election, because of the enormous power and influence of political parties and to overcome a very high bar. However, in my view, independent MPs would provide a balance to our democratic process and be largely immune from the pressure to conform to party will. Parties are influenced by external factors, largely money, they impose their view on their own members with 'Whipping', a parliamentary term referring to the formal process of a party's police force making sure their members vote the right way.

The F2PTP system is a voting system, and 'The Living Vote' shows the application of this methodology as applied to the 2010 and 2015 general elections. In other words, a perspective of what would have happened if the votes cast were distributed using the F2PTP methodology. The theoretical results, of course, don't represent entirely what would have happened had people known that second place counted. The system also provides a real opportunity to create parliamentary constituencies with rational and appropriate boundaries.

F2PTP-IND introduces the independent candidate into the mix. They would be a body of independently minded people with no allegiance to political parties, yet, like most of us, with political views and personal ideological beliefs. The book also shows how such a system would work in practice. Of course, the constituency boundaries would be different, but by sticking fairly closely to the constituencies we have now and combining them to create the size of constituencies the F2PTP-IND system needs, it's easier to show how things would work in practice. 'The Living Vote' kept as close as it could to what we have now, just to show the mechanisms in play.

WE NEED POLITICAL CHANGE

Get this and everything changes

THE BENEFITS OF THE

Simplicity of Operation

Nothing really changes from the voting mechanism we are used to. People receive a ballot paper and choose which candidate to vote for. The procedure is the same as before; choose the candidate you want. The result of the election is measured in exactly the same way as now, your votes are added up. The winner and second place candidates are declared elected. There is no switching of votes, no second choices, no artificial manipulation as with other PR systems. It is totally transparent.

Increased Representation

Under F2PTP, around one and a half times more people get the candidate they voted for. This is a hugely significant improvement, which is likely to be even greater when people know, before casting their vote, that second places are also elected. As we know the FPTP system deters people from voting in accordance with their preferred choices because the tactical aspect in a two-party state is huge. Knowing that your preferred candidate cannot win in your constituency, there is an incentive to either choose the lesser of two evils or decline to vote. Result declarations are the same as now, equally quickly determined as now, because the process is the same as now.

No wasted votes

In 2010, around five and a half million votes were wasted, and in 2015 around seven and a half million. Under F2PTP these numbers would be zero. A wasted vote is one cast in excess of the number of votes needed to elect the winner of an FPTP constituency contest and the sum of them is often referred to as a majority. For example, if the winner of a constituency election received 30,000 votes and the second placed candidate only 15,000 votes, the difference is referred to as the elected persons majority and is often used to suggest the relative safety of the parliamentary seat. Other than the inference that the bigger the majority the more difficult it would be to overturn the result and for the holder of a 15,000 majority to lose their seat, it is a completely worthless measure. In 2010, just over fifteen and a half million people voted for losing candidates, an ineffective vote, but certainly not wasted as the candidates that lost needed every vote they got, and more. In 2015 this number was just under fifteen and a half million votes. Under F2PTP, these numbers would have been nine million and eight million respectively. Between six and seven million more people would have got the person they voted for. It cannot be emphasised enough that this would have caused such a dramatic improvement in voter representation, even when people had no idea that second place would count. Imagine what might happen when they do know?

The ‘living vote’

The principle of parliamentary representation is based on one person one vote, but it doesn’t end up like that. Once a representative is elected, they have one vote in the chamber, regardless of how many people cast their votes for them in the election. The most extreme example in most previous elections is the one previously cited for the 2017 election results earlier, George Howarth received 47,351 votes, whilst Angus MacNeil got 6,013 votes, but in parliament they have one vote each. The votes of the voters in the Western Isles have almost eight times the value of the votes of each voter in Knowsley. That’s hardly upholding the one person one vote principle. Whilst this is the most extreme example the difference between votes cast and parliamentary power exercised such differences are extensive, and many wide disparities exist. This is not an isolated case. Whilst one can understand how such a system grew, it is no longer appropriate because we can easily use technology to do the awkward counting, to simplify and make more convenient the voting mechanisms in Parliament. This aspect of the F2PTP system, has more of an attraction than just repairing the equilibrium between voters and their representative’s power. Apart from the unfairness of having your vote discarded, unwanted and unused, even when the person you voted for was elected, the current system removes the voter from the equation. Your vote was cast, the votes counted, the result declared, and all votes then forgotten. With the F2PTP voting system, your vote lives on throughout the representative’s tenure and would be repeatedly cast every time they vote.

The ‘opposites’ effect. Strengthening constituency representation

F2PTP is truly a unique voting system with many benefits, but one is extraordinarily interesting and can only serve to improve the political landscape. This system removes stark geographical political division. The north/south divide, as well as the red wall and blue wall distinction. This alone would be a powerful reason to change, even if all the other benefits didn’t exist. Each constituency elects the first place and second placed candidates. The rules of the system prohibit parties from entering two candidates for the two vacant electoral positions, but such a rule wouldn’t be necessary in reality. It simply doesn’t make sense for a party to do this because they will split their own vote and probably not make first or second place. In an election the second-place candidate would typically hold a different political ideology to the winner. In most constituencies it would be either Conservative first, and Labour second, or the other way round. Red Walls and Blue Walls simply disappear because each constituency would have one Conservative and one Labour MP. Constituents in these larger constituencies would have representatives each with an opposing political ideology which would vary depending upon the constituency. Labour Party supporting constituents, or Liberal Democrats, have a better chance of raising issues with people who hold similar political views. Whole swathes of the country would have representation from a different perspective, in essence, a different kind of broader representation which is not provided by any other voting system.

Votes per seat become more equal

Votes per seat is a broad measure to show the disparity in fairness. For example, the Conservative and Labour parties, over the two elections reconstituted under the F2PTP system, typically needed between 30,000 and 40,000 votes per seat. Other parties fare much worse. In 2010 the Liberal Democrats and Others needed around 120,000 votes per seat, in 2015, UKIP’s figure was 3,876,674 votes per seat and the Greens 1,155,375 Votes per seat. Under F2PTP, these figures were much more even. In 2010, the Conservative Party, Labour Party and Liberal Democrats all had between 40,000 and 50,000 votes per seat with others at 98,000. In 2015 the lowest was 26,323 and the highest of the known parties 86,148, with only others over 200,000 and just 1 seat. The general spread was much more closely aligned. It is true to say that F2PTP over FPTP dramatically equalises the votes per seat and this represents an automatic improvement in representation.

F2P2P VOTING SYSTEM

No sectarian enclaves.

The most obvious one is in Scotland with the SNP. Despite the fact that this party enjoys total political domination with a minority of the popular vote in the Scottish Parliament elections, the process borders on the absurd in a UK general election, where a miserable 3.9% of the vote affords them 48 seats in the UK parliament. An odd outcome for a disastrous experiment in devolution, the most significant of which being just more politicians. This new system would end that bizarre disparity. The British system, the FPTP system, employs the ‘two wrongs make a right’ principle to nullify this seemingly excess presence in Parliament. The disproportional representation of the SNP in the UK parliament is countered effectively by the dictatorial outcome of our elections and the way majority government works. In reality the 48 seats of the SNP are as ineffective as the 203 Labour seats and the 11 Liberal Democrat seats, won in the 2019 election. Even added together they are totally impotent, because as has already been explained, a majority creates an effective dictatorship and nobody else has any power at all.

Tactical voting virtually eliminated

Tactical voting against.

The term tactical voting refers to two mechanisms. The first is the, probably widespread, tendency to vote against a party as opposed to voting for a party. The 2017 general election had two factors that encouraged people to vote Conservative. Firstly, The then Prime Minister, Theresa May had promised as vehemently as it was possible to do, to get Brexit done and in that election the Corbyn factor played a role, even more so in 2019. He more than adequately filled the role of ogre. UKIP, the drivers of Brexit tanked about as badly as they could have done. They still had huge support because in 2019 European elections over 5.2 million people voted for their alter ego, The Brexit Party.

Tactical voting, easing the path.

The other more recent gerrymandering strategy to alter election outcomes is a rather regular attempt by the Greens and the LIB Dems not to compete against each other. The idea being is that if the Lib Dems stood down then Lib Dem Voters would vote Green instead, and vice versa. I’ve never seen that work, by the way. However, in the 2019 election this tactic, exercised on a much bigger scale saw Nigel Farage stand down every Brexit Party candidate who would have stood against a Brexit supporting Conservative party candidate. Brexit party supporters, of whom there were in excess of five million, were asked instead to support Boris Johnson, who had supported Brexit through the referendum campaign, had been a significant influence in the referendum result and who had also promised faithfully to get Brexit done. There can be little doubt that this act of sabotage against one’s own party for a greater good, was instrumental in the Conservatives getting the size of majority they did. Of course, no Brexit Party future parliamentarians were to be lost because it would have been unlikely in the extreme for any of them to have actually won a seat. However, votes for the Brexit Party take votes from Conservative and Labour, and on the Brexit issue the Labour Party still supported remaining in the European Union. It is reasonable to assume that those who would have normally supported Labour would have supported The Brexit Party. However, having a Brexit supporting Conservative candidate and no Brexit party candidate to vote for, their votes would have, and did go to the Conservative party. Most votes that would have been lost were a Brexit party candidate been standing, would have been Conservative ones. It is also quite possible that people would have tactically voted for the Conservatives, as they did in the 2017 election, regardless of whether a Brexit Party candidate was standing. Nigel Farage is a very astute politician and I doubt that these possible outcomes would have escaped him. The point is though - do either of these tactical voting mechanisms actually work under F2PTP? The answer is not really, as any outcome is much less predictable, and votes are more likely to go the way of your first preference because their electoral chances are improved by F2PTP. Having two winners creates another problem for the potential tactical voter. If, from the candidates on the ballot paper, two will be elected, who do you vote against? If second place also counts, maybe the smaller party you support might make that lower bar, so why put your vote elsewhere? In a usual FPTP election, it’s often a foregone conclusion which two parties will be first and second, and smaller parties have no chance. Smaller parties standing down to aid other smaller parties makes sense in that scenario even though they achieve nothing. However, in F2PTP, second place is much more achievable and standing down might just be throwing away an opportunity. Those who would have voted Conservative or Labour, might well go for who they really want instead of the least-worst option. When opportunities open up to get elected, voter behaviour changes. The more representative elections are the less effect tactical voting has.

The height of the bar?

In FPTP elections the bar is set very high to win a seat. It depends also where the election is held, but for English parties, not nationalistic parties like the SNP or Plaid Cymr polling millions of votes gets no reward. The FPTP system sucks support toward the bilateral status quo. No other party has a chance of governing, therefore only a vote for one of the two that do, is worthwhile. Fully proportional elections as in Israel or Sweden create an additional set of problems though. In Sweden the bar is set at 4% of the vote. Ironically that system in the UK would see the SNP banished from parliament. That results in a multi-party parliament with no single party having a majority, therefore having to arrange coalitions with several partners to reach the dictatorial levels needed to pass legislation. This, however, comes at a cost. The tiny party needed to form a majority government, find themselves in a position of power which far exceeds their support, and from which results ministerial positions, and policy directions that the majority of citizens do not support.

Constituency boundaries become much less significant

The drawing of constituency boundaries is a complicated task. It needn’t be so, but the requirement that they should all be more or less the same size creates havoc. We have constituencies inside other constituencies and constituency boundaries crossing the middle of roads. Typically, Parliamentary boundaries do not match the local authority boundaries, let alone make use of other natural boundaries such as rivers. F2PTP eliminates the need for constituencies to be the same size. As parliamentarians vote with the number of votes that were cast for them, a larger constituency, with a larger winners and seconds vote, will have that directly represented in the voting power of their representatives. Huge disparities in size aren’t ideal, but with the greater flexibility that F2PTP affords, this wouldn’t happen, except in the national regions. The new constituency structure and the new boundaries under F2PTP, creates an opportunity to align parliamentary constituencies with those of local authorities and other statutory bodies. We would have the opportunity to create simplified and more aligned governmental structures and at the same time improve representation all round.