



GUIDE TO THE

2025

**COUNCIL
ELECTIONS**

ADAM GRAY



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Summary

Council	seats	votes	seats	votes	seats	votes	seats	votes	seats	votes	2013	Maj
Buckinghamshire	113	40.9	4	15.1	15	19.2	1	11.4	14	13.5	26.8	79
Cambridgeshire	28	38.5	9	19.4	20	28.5	0	9.2	4	4.1	20.2	NOC
Cornwall	47	37.3	5	11.0	13	19.8	1	9.1	21	22.8	15.4	7
Derbyshire	45	47.4	14	32.4	4	9.5	1	8.0	0	2.7	18.9	26
Devon	39	42.1	7	15.6	9	18.4	2	11.5	3	12.4	23.2	18
Doncaster	11	30.8	40	40.1	0	2.3	0	3.0	4	13.8	32.0	25
County Durham	24	26.9	53	33.3	17	12.2	1	3.8	31	23.8	6.7	NOC
Gloucestershire	28	43.9	5	16.6	16	23.6	4	6.0	0	2.9	15.5	3
Hertfordshire	46	43.9	7	21.5	23	26.2	1	12.9	1	0.7	18.0	14
Isles of Scilly									16	100		*
Kent	63	49.1	7	19.7	5	11.8	4	13.7	2	5.4	26.4	45
Lancashire	48	43.6	32	35.3	2	8.7	2	6.4	0	5.9	14.7	12
Leicestershire	42	50.9	4	21.1	9	18.2	0	8.4	0	1.4	14.7	29
Lincolnshire	54	55.5	4	17.6	3	5.2	0	2.5	9	19.3	24.4	38
North Northants	60	42.4	14	27.5	0	11.3	0	12.6	4	6.2	6.0	42
Northumberland	34	45.3	21	30.5	3	8.4	2	5.3	7	10.5	6.0	1
Nottinghamshire	37	42.4	15	29.3	1	5.8	0	5.8	13	16.7	18.1	8
Oxfordshire	21	36.0	16	21.8	21	25.6	3	12.6	2	4.1	15.8	NOC
Shropshire	43	43.6	9	17.0	14	23.8	4	9.8	4	5.6	12.8	12
Staffordshire	57	56.7	4	26.4	0	2.8	0	6.6	1	6.7	24.0	53
Warwickshire	42	48.7	6	21.3	5	15.3	3	12.7	1	2.0	8.4	27
West Northants	66	41.1	20	25.4	5	18.2	2	8.5	0	6.8	6.0	39
Wiltshire	61	46.9	3	8.1	27	27.9	0	8.0	7	8.8	14.3	24
Worcestershire	45	48.7	3	18.9	4	10.9	3	8.1	2	10.2	19.7	33

Note: majorities are those won in 2021, not as of this year

Buckinghamshire

The only county council in which the Conservatives kept a majority after their disastrous 1993 elections, Buckinghamshire, epitomises the even bigger mess that party is facing in 2025.

The Tories go into these elections seemingly impregnable: they won a majority of 79 seats in 2021.

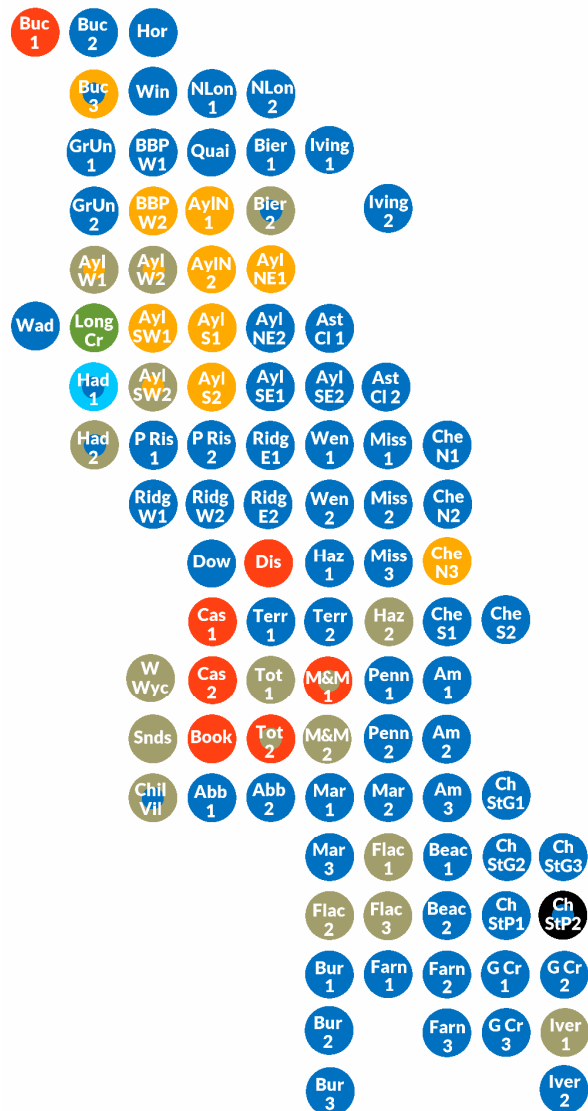
But the 2024 general election exposed significant Tory vulnerabilities. Labour gained three constituencies in the county: Aylesbury, Buckingham & Bletchley (shared with Milton Keynes) and Wycombe, while the Lib Dems held their by-election gain of Chesham and Amersham. That left the Tories with Mid Buckinghamshire and Beaconsfield: just two out of five-and-a-half constituencies.

That the Conservatives sustained this damage at the general election was as much to do with the debut of Reform UK as it was a positive surge towards the opposition parties.

Labour barely scraped 30% in Aylesbury for example: Reform took 6,746 votes and Labour's majority was just 630. Reform took between 4,700 and 7,500 votes in each of the six constituencies: nowhere near enough to challenge for the seats but more than enough to hurt the Conservatives in a low-turnout general election.



notional result | boundary and council size changes | one vacancy



It would normally be that the Tories, having been routed in 2024, and with Labour now facing the slings and arrows of outrageous power, would be staging a comeback at the first big electoral test since.

After all, that is what happened in 1997. On the same day the Conservatives were getting smashed in an even larger general election defeat by Tony Blair's Labour, they regained control of several county councils. And they did even better in the 1998 local elections.

That is a beguiling but likely false comparison this time.

The Conservative recovery in the 1997 county council elections was benchmarked against their dreadful 1993 result, not the 1992 general election. The seats the Tories are defending this year last elected in 2021: among the best Tory results ever. So whereas the party could hardly do other than to recover in 1997, they can hardly do other than to lose ground in 2025. That would be true even if they'd begun to recover from last year's general election. But they're polling lower. A few low turnout by-elections aside, there is little evidence yet that the electorate is starting to forgive the Conservative record in government,

Following boundary change the ludicrous 2021 council size of 147 seats (larger than Birmingham council) has been trimmed to a still too large 97.

Of these fifty fewer seats, and taking into account by-election losses, the Conservatives are likely to have gone into these elections notionally holding 67, the Lib Dems 13, Independents 11, with 5 Labour and 1 Green. That's still a two-to-one advantage, but before a single

vote has been cast the Conservative majority has been culled from 79 seats to 37. And that was before the arrival on the scene of Reform UK.

Buckinghamshire isn't one of the better counties for Reform. Being a home county (therefore with more London-based, EU-reliant workers more culturally similar to the heavily-pro EU capital) there was a stronger Remain vote in the 2016 EU referendum than more provincial counties (Bucks was almost a perfect mirror of the overall result, Remain winning 51%-49%). Here are lots of commuter dormitories for affluent, university-educated, progressives for whom Reform simply isn't a choice they will ever opt for. Chesham is on the London underground network: a relatively easy commute.

Reform UK vote in Buckinghamshire constituencies at 2024 general election

Constituency	vote	%vote
Buckingham and Bletchley	7,468	15.7
Aylesbury	6,746	13.5
Mid Buckinghamshire	6,926	12.8
Beaconsfield	6,055	12.7
Wycombe	4,769	10.7
Chesham and Amersham	5,310	9.8

But Reform will be very strong in specific parts of the county - especially those parts further away from London; more provincial, filled with voters less likely to hold very well-paid jobs, more self-employed, more retirees and far less prone to liberal sentiments on tax, diversity and other metropolitan concerns.



Someone appalled by the damage and cost of HS2 (which has harmed this county especially), and still blaming the Tories for it all, may well protest against it by voting Lib Dem in Chalfont or Chesham (even though the Lib Dems are pro-HS2 everywhere they aren't against it) but by voting Reform in Great Missenden or Princes Risborough.

In the 2013 council elections, UKIP polled strongly in Aylesbury, winning seats in the town's East and North West wards, plus adjoining Stoke Mandeville, in Great Missenden, and the antecedent to Haddenham and Stone. They also polled over 30% in Aston Clinton, two further Aylesbury town wards, both Chalfonts, Burnham Beeches, Grendon Underwood, Hazlemere, what is now Newton Longville, and Ridgeway East.

Some of that UKIP strength was due to the collapse of Lib Dem support in 2013, when they were part of the coalition government with the Conservatives and lost their USP as an non-ideological party of protest. It is unlikely that Reform will emulate UKIP's success in the Chesham and Amersham corner now that the Lib Dems are back as the main anti-Conservative force there. But Reform, being far more popular today, and over a wider range of issues than just Europe than UKIP were in 2013, should be even stronger in those parts of Bucks where the Lib Dem challenge is fading.

The Conservatives' problems in Bucks are that they face a different opponent in different parts of the county, but also that Reform - if it has the same characteristics as UKIP - will poll fairly evenly across the board, with most of that vote coming from the Conservative pile. So the Reform challenge will sap the

Tories everywhere, bringing them within range of defeat in divisions they might otherwise expect to hold, while only being strong enough to win in a handful.

Divisions in which UKIP polled in excess of 30% in 2013 council elections

Division	%vote
Aylesbury North West	44.8
The Missendens	40.7
Burnham	38.5
Ridgeway East	38.2
Newton Longville	37.7
Chalfont St Giles and Little Chalfont	37.6
Hazlemere	36.9
Aston Clinton and Weston Turville	36.4
Wendover, Halton and Stoke Mandeville	36.3
Aylesbury East	35.6
Aylesbury South West	35.1
Grendon Underwood and the Claydons	33.1
Chalfont St Peter	32.0
Aylesbury West	31.7
Farnhams and Stoke Poges	30.6

It is not just the Conservatives under threat. The Lib Dems usually win most of the council seats in Aylesbury. But now Labour has become the main non-Conservative choice there, and with that historic UKIP strength, at least some of their seats must be at risk.

Thirteen of the fifteen Buckinghamshire Lib Dem councillors elected last time sit for Aylesbury. If the general election result represents a decisive shift in

local politics there could be a mass switch away from them here. Alternatively, the pavement politics approach the party epitomises might enable them to hold on with very low winning percentages, depending on the impact Reform has on the town.

Five of these Aylesbury Lib Dem councillors resigned their party whip in January 2025, possibly recognising the Labour threat to their tenure and perhaps believing they stood a better chance withstanding a pending Labour surge free of party affiliation. It's not clear that will work because there was not a huge Lib Dem collapse to Labour in Aylesbury constituency at the general election: their vote was down just one percentage point. So it doesn't seem that there is much of a waning of support for the centre party: rather there was just a great desire to kick the Conservatives out and a Labour vote was judged the most effective way to do that here.

A Green won a seat in the Bernwood division last time. Was his win related at all to the fact the winning councillor's name was Greg Smith: the same as the Tory MP for the area? The Lib Dems took a second Bernwood seat off the Conservatives in a 2022 by-election. That division has now been split between single-member **Long Crendon** and two-councillor **Haddenham & Stone**.

In Wycombe (and to a lesser extent Aylesbury) where there is a sizeable, concentrated Muslim population, independents are a threat to Labour depending on how many stand and how strong antipathy over Labour's stance on Gaza (and perhaps wider issues) continues to be in that community.

The Independent divisions in the Wycombe area which Labour have a shot at are **Marsh & Micklefield** (2 member) and **Totteridge & Bowerdean** (also 2). Both these are in the east of High Wycombe and Labour has won them in the past so can't be ruled out.

West Wycombe was a 3-councillor ward and split 2 independent to 1 Conservative last time, but it's been reduced to a single councillor ward (much of it being moved to the new **Sands** ward - also single member). Labour would exceed their general election performance if they won in either - though Sands may just be within their grasp.

Labour won only four council seats in 2021 - and all bar one (Buckingham West) were in High Wycombe.

The Wycombe wards have been fairly comprehensively mashed up and as the three Labour councillors all serve divisions that split representation last time it's not clear which they'd have won on the new boundaries.

However, given they now hold the parliamentary seat, Labour will hope to win both **Downley** and the re-created **Disraeli** division in the north of the town, plus single-member **Booker & Cressex** and 2-member **Castlefield & Oakridge**, in the south.

There is also 2-member **Abbey** immediately to the east, which Labour hasn't won since 1981 but where they were only about ten percentage points behind in 2021.

Labour may find it harder in that fourth seat it won last time: up in **Buckingham**. The two old Buckingham wards: east and west, have been amalgamated. When

this happens it's often good news for a predominantly urban party like Labour as it means lots of outlying rural areas have been sloughed off leaving a more winnable core.

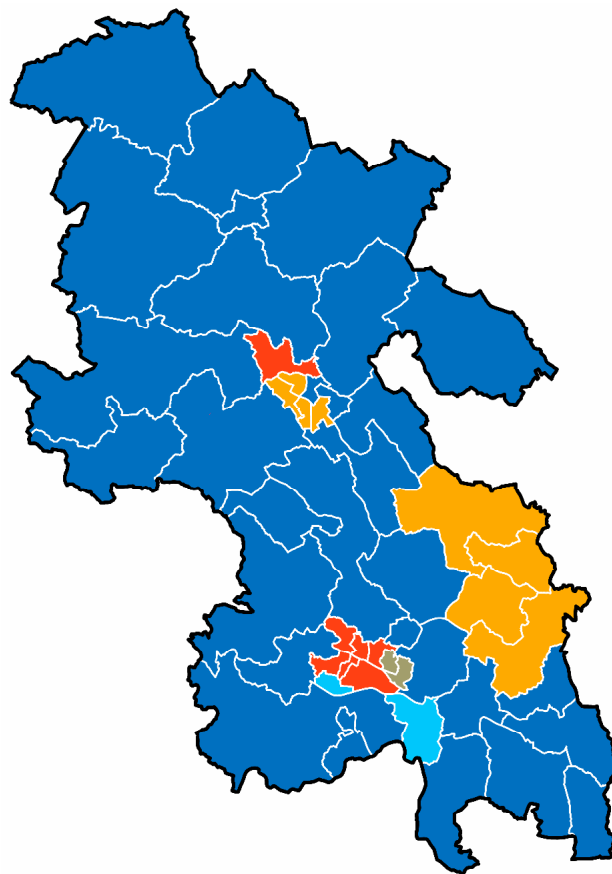
Some of that has definitely occurred: whereas the two outgoing Buckingham wards had a combined electorate of 16,000, the new unified one has just 5,000. The problem Labour has is that they were more than thirty points adrift in Buckingham East, and only the personal vote of bandana-wearing Labour councillor Robin Stuchbury won them that seat in West: he was almost a thousand ahead of his running mates. But he is seeking re-election and must have a decent chance of winning.

To complicate things further, the Lib Dems gained a seat in Buckingham East in a November 2023 by-election, so anything could happen here - even a Conservative hold.

Most of the Labour vote in Buckingham and Bletchley constituency comes from the Milton Keynes side and Buckingham is the only division the party can win, but with no elections in MK this year Labour will be able to focus all their effort on this one division.

There may not be a single division the Conservatives can be completely sure about; maybe not a single division any party can be completely sure about given how hard anyone other than the Tories has found winning representation in Bucks historically.

On the other hand the Electoral Calculus MRP (illustrated above) has the Conservatives retaining Buckinghamshire with a comfortable majority - mainly



Indicative map of Electoral Calculus MRP, March 2025

because it forecasts only two Reform breakthroughs: one in Wycombe's **Booker & Cressex** (which would actually be a gain from Labour) and the other in **Flackwell Heath & The Wooburns**, currently held by Independent councillors. If the Conservatives can, in reality, survive no losses to Reform then the MRP will be correct. But that would be remarkable.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	O
2021 council election	113	4	15	15
2022 - defection: Andrea Baughan, Ryemead and Mickleford, Ind to Lab	112	5	16	14
2022 - defection: Steve Guy, Totteridge and Bowerdean, Ind to Lab	112	6	16	13
2022 - by-election: Bernwood, LD gain	112	4	16	15
2023 - by-election: Buckingham East, LD gain	111	6	17	13
2024 - defection: Jonathan Walters, Penn Wood & Old Amersham, Con to LD	110	6	18	13
2024 - defection: Diana Blamires, Wing: Con to Ind	109	6	18	14
2025 - defection: Paul Irwin, Stone & Waddesdon, Con to Ind	108	6	18	15
2025 - defection: Mark Turner, Chiltern Villages - Con to Ind	107	6	18	16
2025 - defection: Anders Christensen, Aylesbury North West, LD to Ind	107	6	17	17
2025 - defection: Mary Baldwin, Aylesbury South West, LD to Ind	107	6	16	18
2025 - defection: Sarah James, Aylesbury West, LD to Ind	107	6	15	19
2025 - defection: Steven Lambert, Aylesbury West, LD to Ind	107	6	14	20
2025 - defection: Adam Poland Goodyer, Aylesbury West LD to Ind	107	6	13	21
2025 - defection: Paul Irwin, Stone & Waddesdon Con to Ref	106	6	13	22
2025 - unfilled vacancy, death of Jonathan Rush, Chalfont St Peter	105	6	13	22
Current	105	6	13	22

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Birtton, Kingsbrook and Wing (Ind defector)
- ▶ Buckingham (1 Lab, 1 LD)
- ▶ Chiltern Villages (Ind defector)
- ▶ Haddenham and Stone (LD defector)
- ▶ Iver (1 Ind)
- ▶ Long Crendon (Grn)
- ▶ West Wycombe (Ind)



Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ Amersham and Chesham Bois
- ▶ Buckingham
- ▶ Chalfont St Giles and Little Chalfont
- ▶ Chalfont St Peter
- ▶ Chesham North
- ▶ Chesham South
- ▶ Long Crendon
- ▶ Terriers and Amersham Hill



Labour targets

- ▶ Abbey (Con)
- ▶ Aylesbury North (LD)
- ▶ Aylesbury North West (LD)
- ▶ Aylesbury South East (LD)
- ▶ Aylesbury West (LD)
- ▶ Berryfields, Buckingham Park and Watermead (1 Con, 1 LD)
- ▶ Buckingham (1 Con, 1 LD)
- ▶ Castlefield and Oakridge
- ▶ Downley
- ▶ Marsh and Micklefield (Ind)
- ▶ Sands (Ind)
- ▶ Terriers and Amersham Hill
- ▶ Totteridge and Bowerdean (Ind)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Aston Clinton and Weston Turville
- ▶ Aylesbury East
- ▶ Aylesbury North West
- ▶ Aylesbury South West
- ▶ Booker and Cressex
- ▶ Burnham
- ▶ Flackwell Heath and the Wooburns
- ▶ Grendon Underwood and the Claydons
- ▶ Hazlemere
- ▶ Newton Longville
- ▶ Ridgeway East
- ▶ The Missendens
- ▶ Wendover, Halton and Stoke Mandeville
- ▶ Winslow



FOCUS

On Wendover, Milton and Stoke Mandeville ward, including neighbouring villages.

Feb/March 2025 edition

Liberal Democrats

Lib Dems expose HS2 traffic nightmares!

Local UK Lib Dem candidates have held a series of meetings and events to ensure that residents of Wendover and Stoke Mandeville are aware of the potential impact of HS2 on their communities.

Over a decade of the HS2 project has shown that the impact on local communities is far greater than anticipated. The project has caused significant disruption to local businesses and residents, and has led to a significant increase in traffic on the roads.

The Liberal Democrats are committed to ensuring that the HS2 project is managed in a way that minimises the impact on local communities. We are working with the government to ensure that the project is completed as quickly as possible, and that the impact on local communities is kept to a minimum.

Liberal Democrat candidates in the area are working to ensure that the HS2 project is managed in a way that minimises the impact on local communities. We are working with the government to ensure that the project is completed as quickly as possible, and that the impact on local communities is kept to a minimum.

Wendover parking misery.

Wendover residents are facing a parking crisis as the town's roads are increasingly congested with cars. The Liberal Democrats are working to ensure that the town's roads are kept clear of cars, and that parking is managed in a way that minimises the impact on residents.

INDEPENDENTS 4 ABBEY

AATIF MASOOD KAYANI & RANI CHANDA SARAH
PEOPLE BEFORE POLITICS

Discover the Independent vision for a better future by Abbey Ward. Together, we can remove party politics from Buckinghamshire Council and create lasting, positive change.

You have 2 votes
Can you help our campaign? Please call or email us

INDEPENDENTS 4 ABBEY

Abbey Ward is a beautiful area with a rich history. We are committed to ensuring that the ward is managed in a way that minimises the impact on residents, and that the ward is kept as a beautiful and safe place to live.

We are working to ensure that the ward is managed in a way that minimises the impact on residents, and that the ward is kept as a beautiful and safe place to live.

DIANA BLAMIERES

Independent Voice for Winslow

Get in touch!

- Diana Blamieres
- diana.blamieres@gmail.com
- 0748937884
- www.dianablamieres.co.uk

VOTE FOR CHANGE

Karen DICKSON

VOTE INDEPENDENT

Anne-Marie VLADAR

ELECTION
Thursday 1st May 2025
CHALFONT ST PETER PARISH COUNCIL
BUCKINGHAMSHIRE COUNCIL

Vote for your INDEPENDENT Candidates for CHALFONT ST PETER

OUR PRIORITIES AND FOCUS

- BETTER TRANSPARENCY & HONEST GOVERNANCE
- PRIORITISE LOCAL NEEDS OVER POLITICAL AGENDAS
- HELP PROTECT OUR GREEN BELT & ENVIRONMENT
- IMPROVE OUR ROADS & INFRASTRUCTURE
- PROMOTE LOCAL YOUTH & COMMUNITY PROJECTS
- REDUCE FLOODING IMPACT TO OUR VILLAGE
- STAND AGAINST OVER-DEVELOPMENT IN OUR AREA

We have a track record of DELIVERY & committed to doing MORE

VOTE ADAM WILLIAMS

SOCIAL DEMOCRATIC PARTY CANDIDATE
TOTTERIDGE & BOWERDEAN

I am an administrator and a historian by background. My partner and I live in Totteridge & Bowerdean. I am standing for Buckinghamshire Council to make a local government work for you. I promise to be a relentless advocate for policies that benefit the community and provide meaningful improvements to council services.

My Pledges for Totteridge & Bowerdean

- Advocate for a cleaner environment
- Fix potholes and improve roads
- Property repairs for Red Kite

adam.williams@sdp.org

FOCUS

Liberal Democrats
Special local election issue, Spring 2025.

Ian Churchill & Audoen Healy

The Lib Dem candidates fighting for Princes Risborough ward including: Princes Risborough, Monks Risborough, Longwick and surrounding villages.

A promise of action, not broken Conservative promises

Ian Churchill and Audoen Healy are dedicated local campaigners committed to making a real difference in our communities.

Ian Churchill and Audoen Healy are standing up for the people of Princes Risborough. They are committed to making a real difference in our communities, and to ensuring that the ward is managed in a way that minimises the impact on residents.

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Your INDEPENDENT Candidate for Bucks and Beaconsfield

Wheelhouse for Beaconsfield

Bucks Council
Town Council

Thank-you for electing me as your Independent Councillor in 2021. We go to the polls again on 1st May. The next 4 years will be crucial for Beaconsfield because Bucks Council is preparing a new Local Plan which will be grappling to find room for c.30,000 new homes across Bucks. This will represent a major planning review which will have the potential to threaten our Green Belt. This will require us to look at major planning issues for Beaconsfield. Remember the "daff" Local Plan (rejected 2019), the "bad Neighbourhood Plan" (rejected 2024), inappropriate Green Belt developments which have been refused, and erosion of community benefits at Wilton Park? More will follow.

Residents' needs must be put ahead of Party Politics. We deserve higher standards from our Councillors. Candidates should be selected on what they have actually delivered, not on empty political promises. Council decisions should be properly scrutinised (I was the only Councillor to vote against the Town Council's increased budget - it's YOUR money they are spending!).

How have I done? Here are some of my achievements and I hope you will conclude that I will represent you strongly.

PLANNING & GREEN BELT

I have expert knowledge of planning policy by virtue of my professional background as a property & planning solicitor. This has enabled me to bring national & local planning policy which is bringing more homes to bear on our Green Belt. Biodiversity and natural resources, and enable me to oppose inappropriate development and on relevant planning applications.

I have secured maximum Biodiversity Net Gains are made on all planning applications.

I have secured a planning enforcement case and published a booklet used by residents to successfully oppose the bad Neighbourhood Plan and proposed planning applications.

ROADS

- Initiated the upgrade of Broad Lane/A40 junction to stop lorry parking and alleviate flooding
- Arranged CCTV and attended meetings with Bucks' HS2 officer to prevent HS2 lorries driving through the Old Town alleviating traffic and protecting air quality.
- Successfully lobbied and gained approval for speed reduction on Penn Rd to aid safety and air quality (to be implemented).
- Requested and obtained a new pavement and crossing refuge at Ladbrough/A355 junction from HS2 safety fund.
- Pointed out road resurfacing where most needed.
- Attended regular meetings with highways department to get defects fixed.
- Lobbied for successful completion of the Road to Nowhere.

YOUR OTHER PRIORITIES

- Hold Bucks and Beaconsfield Council budgets to account - it's your money.
- Reported bad smells and fires from Springfield Farm landfill to the Environment Agency.
- Chaired the Health and Wellbeing Community Board Action Group, allocating funding to many local community initiatives.
- Arranged with Officers to resolve missed bin collections and the removal of fly-tipping.
- Helped residents with accessibility issues gain access to the correct services.
- Arranged with Officers to get blocked drain cleared.
- Campanile to keep Searles House open (our nearest Adult Social Care centre).
- Lobbied for and gained a street cleaning operator for the town services.

5bcbcf@gmail.com

REFORMUK

VOTE THURSDAY 1ST MAY

David McConnell

The Member's Liberal Democrat
YOUR REFORM UK CANDIDATE

McConnell, David
Reform UK

I've lived in Buckinghamshire for most of my life. I'm standing for election to provide us all with the real opportunity to vote for a tangible difference to the torrent of big talk constantly flouted by the other Parties. I'm a passionate volunteer for social care in our communities and champion support for our local businesses.

David McConnell
Reform UK Councillor Candidate

DO YOU SUPPORT REFORM UK?

Scan the QR code or visit reformparty.uk/support

'No Plan' Conservatives put Risborough area at risk.

The Conservatives have to deliver a sensible housing plan for the town of Risborough. The town is at risk of becoming a dormitory town for London, and the Conservatives have to ensure that the town is managed in a way that minimises the impact on residents.

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Wheelhouse4Beaconsfield

5bcbcf@gmail.com

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Cambridgeshire

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Cambridgeshire is unique in being a county starkly divided into two halves with very different, conflicting political identities.

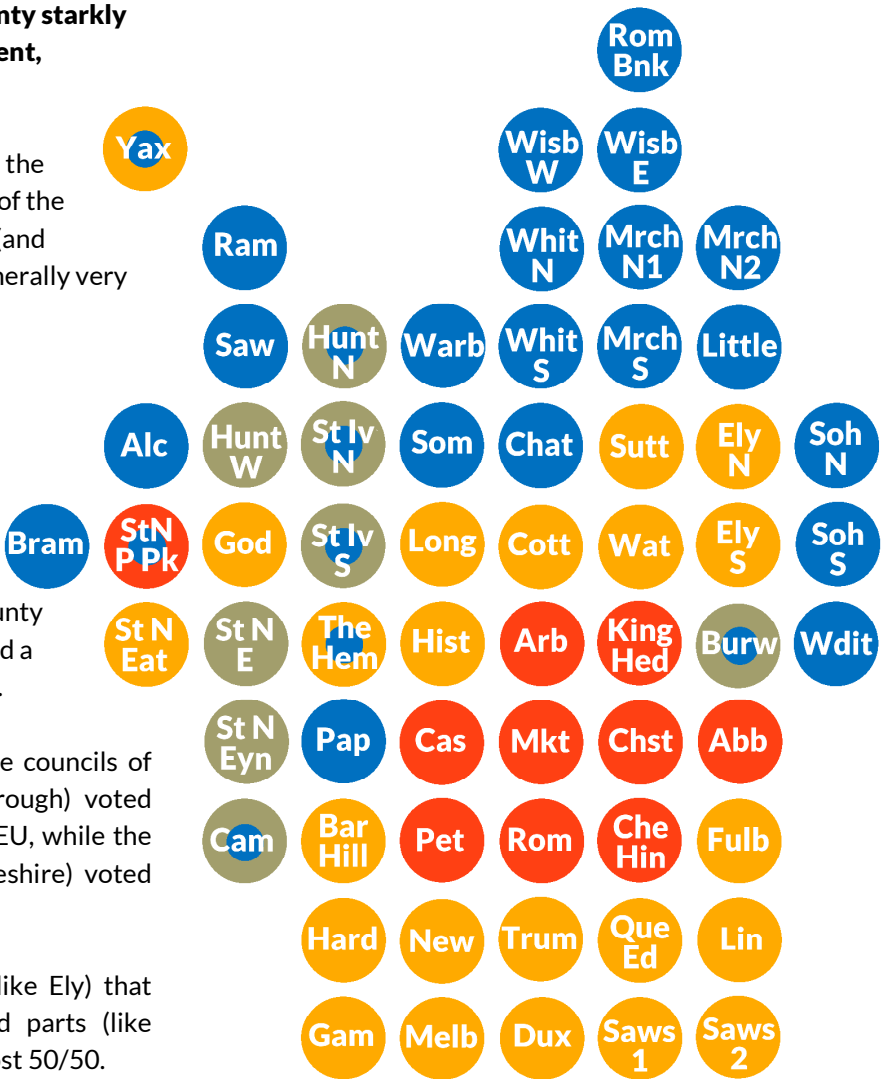
The south, around Cambridge, epitomises the ivory towers outlook you'd expect of one of the two pre-eminent university cities: liberal (and Liberal), progressive, strongly pro-EU, generally very affluent and growing rapidly.

The north, around Peterborough, is the diametric opposite. The division of Ramsey elected Britain's first UKIP county councillors: it became their safest enclave (69% UKIP in 2013).

Fenland district - the north east of the county around Wisbech and Whittlesey, produced a 71% vote for Leave in the EU referendum.

Overall, north Cambridgeshire (the three councils of Fenland, Huntingdonshire and Peterborough) voted 144,985 to 94,960 (60/40) to leave the EU, while the south (Cambridge and South Cambridgeshire) voted 98,810 to 52,178 (65/35) to remain.

East Cambridgeshire, which has parts (like Ely) that vote like the south of the county and parts (like Soham) that vote like the north, split almost 50/50.



This just about made Cambridgeshire a Remain-voting county but a very polarised one.

EU referendum choice tends to also reflect wider sets of political values which is why 2016 remains of psephological relevance nearly a decade after that seismic vote. Remain voters tend to be younger, more affluent, university educated and with a more liberal, permissive, internationalist outlook. Leave voters tend to the opposite view.

In the 2021 county council elections, the Conservatives repeated (in some cases exceeded) their 2019 general election progress in Leave-voting areas, especially traditionally Labour-supporting ones like Derbyshire, Durham, Nottinghamshire and Northumberland. But in Remain-voting areas the Conservatives performed very poorly: counties like Oxfordshire, Surrey and the south of Cambridgeshire.

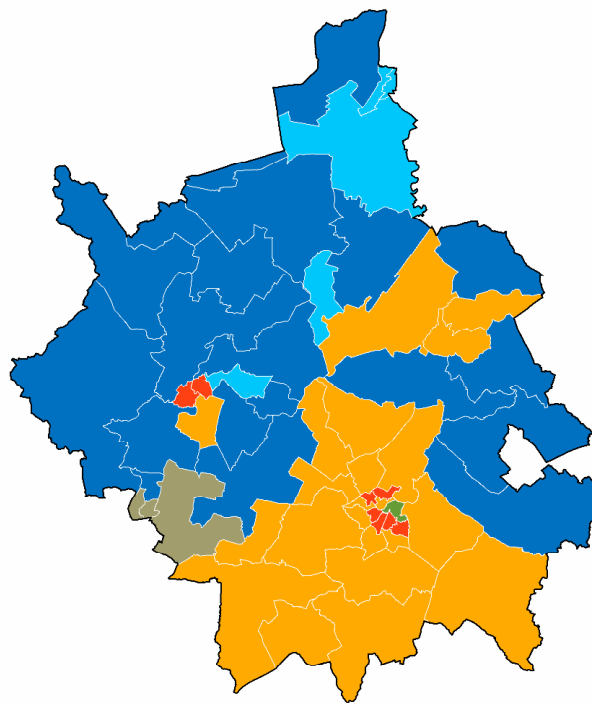
In fact their losses to the Lib Dems in the south of this county cost the Conservatives overall control of Cambridgeshire in 2021 and because the divisions exposed by the referendum have, if anything, deepened since there is no realistic prospect of them regaining power this time around. They would need to make substantial gains from the Lib Dems whilst warding off the serious Reform threat in the north of the county.

The Conservatives have hardly fared well over the 2021-25 term, losing seven divisions: one to the Lib Dems in a by-election, one to the Lib Dems through defection, one to Labour through defection and four to defection to independent. Those losses mean the

Tories are no longer even the largest party on the county council: the Lib Dems now hold two seats more (they also gained a by-election seat off the St Neots Independents).

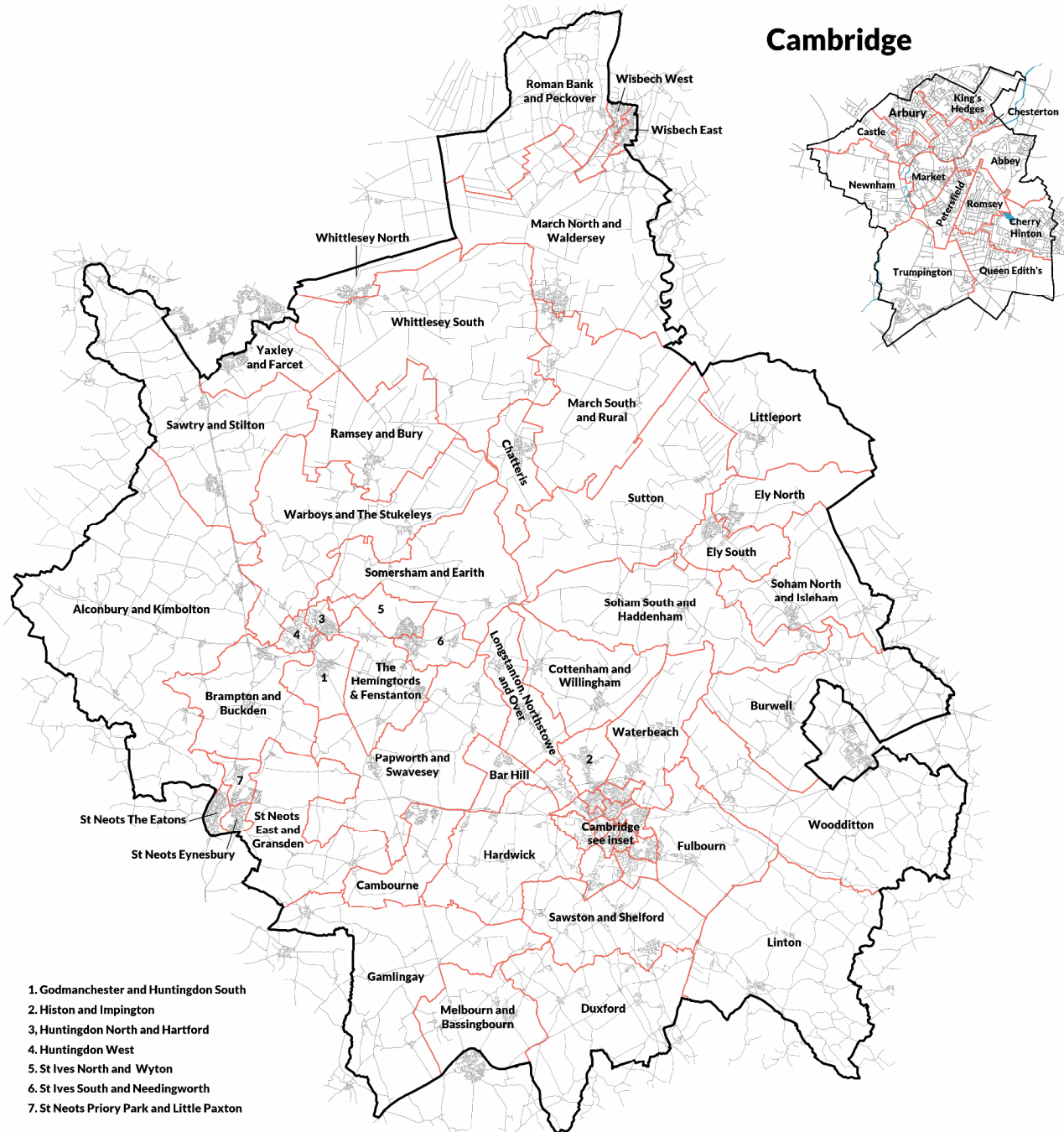
And yet these twenty one Conservative county councillors may turn out to be a bumper crop after May 1st because they are about to smash headlong into the electoral threat from Reform UK.

Reform will probably pose the biggest challenge in what has been the very strongest Conservative corner of the county: Fenland, which includes Wisbech and Whittlesey.



Indicative map of March '25 Electoral Calculus local election MRP

Cambridge



The divisions the Conservatives retained in 2021 aligned closely with the Leave-voting areas in the EU referendum and, while the EU is not a salient issue anymore, the wider gamut of issues that Leave voters tend to identify with now suggest a Reform voter as much as a Conservative one.

In 2013, UKIP won thirteen seats in Cambridgeshire, all of them north of a line stretching from St Neots in the west to Ely in the east.

Constituency	vote	%vote
North East Cambridgeshire	9,057	23.1
North West Cambridgeshire (pt)	8,741	19.7
Huntingdon	8,039	15.4
Ely and East Cambridgeshire	6,443	12.3
St Neots & Mid Cambridgeshire	5,673	10.7
South Cambridgeshire	4,897	8.9
Cambridge	-	-

Reform UK vote in Cambridgeshire at 2024 general election

Reform should be able to win these former UKIP divisions (though the Electoral Calculus MRP shows them getting nowhere in Huntingdonshire which is a little odd given that it contains **Ramsey & Bury**). They will encroach further in the north-east of the county: the more rural wards in Fenland and East Cambridgeshire, Soham and maybe even St Neots and Godmanchester.

There are strong, organised independents in St Neots and Godmanchester is a rapidly growing commuter town increasingly resembling the south of the county

politically. Almost all of these places currently have Conservative county councillors.

It is plausible that the party could end up behind Reform in terms of seats after this election: in excess of fourteen losses would likely result in this outcome.

There are some divisions the Conservatives lost to the Lib Dems quite narrowly in 2021: **Hardwick**, between Cambridge and Ely, by just five votes for example. **Bar Hill, Duxford, Ely North, Gamlingay** and **Linton** were also close last time.

Divisions in which UKIP polled in excess of 30% in the 2013 council elections

Division	%vote
Ramsey and Bury	66.7
Sawtry and Stilton	49.1
Warboys and the Stukeleys	47.0
Roman Bank and Peckover	41.2
Wisbech East	40.3
Yaxley and Farcet	39.3
Wisbech West	38.2
St Ives North and Wyton	37.0
Huntingdon North and Hartford	36.3
Littleport	35.8
Chatteris	34.8
March South and Rural	33.1
The Hemmingfords and Fenstanton	33.1
Soham North and Isleham	31.1
March North and Waldersey	30.9

But those results were absent Reform and prior to the 2024 general election which installed Lib Dem MPs in Ely & East Cambs, St Neots & Mid Cambs and South Cambs. The Tories were roundly thrashed by the Lib Dems (according to notional results from Britain Elects) in the principal district ward within the county divisions in the general election, except in Bar Hill and Hardwick.

Reform is unlikely be a threat in any of these southern divisions but more of the votes they gain will come from last time's Conservative pile, pulling that party away from the winning line. The Tories are not going to offset these losses and then some by taking Lib Dem votes: they aren't recovered from their general election drubbing relative to the Lib Dems.

Thirty-one seats are required to win a majority on the county council and the Lib Dems, with 22 seats since gaining two in by-elections, will be looking hard at whether they can reach that number. But it's incredibly hard because they already hold almost everything in the areas they are strong.

While Reform aren't a direct threat to the Lib Dems in their held divisions, they will act as a block to the centre party advancing in areas they do not represent. Reform may even be favourites in one of the Lib Dem by-election gains: **Yaxley & Farcet**, just south of Peterborough, as well as in the East Cambridgeshire divisions of **Sutton** and maybe **Ely North**, and in **Godmanchester & Huntingdon South**. **St Neots The Eatons** - their other by-election gain - will be tough to hold as well, though as they now hold the parliamentary seat it may be easier.

We have yet to mention Labour and that is principally because they are a minor player on the county council: politically landlocked within the City of Cambridge. This despite the party snatching, for the first time, the North West Cambridgeshire parliamentary seat at the 2024 general election.

But Labour's votes there overwhelmingly came from Peterborough (this constituency is basically Peterborough West) which, being a unitary authority, does not elect to the county council. Beyond the two principal Huntingdon divisions - and it's challenging for them even to win there given their low national poll shares now - there are no credible Labour targets.

In fact, Labour may well struggle to hold its divisions in Cambridge. The Greens, for example, have staged something of a resurgence in **Abbey** ward on the city council, defeating Labour there last year 52% to 29%. They once won the county division of the same name (but not, quite, the same boundaries) and should be favourites there this time.

The Greens may also be a threat in the Lib Dem-held **Newnham** division, an area (again on different boundaries) they also represent on the city council. A chunk of the city version of Newnham is in the county division of **Castle** in which Labour is also vulnerable. They won by just over 200 in 2021 over the Lib Dems.

The third Labour vulnerability is the central **Market** division which they won for the first time in 2021 off the Lib Dems. They haven't quite been able to lock-down the city council Market ward and the Lib Dems were only ninety votes short there last time.

Then there is **Chesterton** in the north east of the city, which Labour won by 134 votes in 2021, only the second time they have held this suburban division. Just as any Conservative seepage to Reform may cost the Tories seats, any Labour seepage to Green (or other "progressive" candidates) will oust them here. There are also by-elections in both East Chesterton and West Chesterton city council wards on 1 May: both Labour resignations.

While the Conservatives have long been uncompetitive in Cambridge they pulled off a shock by-election win in 2023 in **King's Hedges**: the northern suburbs of the city. This was in no small part a rebellion against the county and city councils' push for a 15-minute city scheme: the idea that places can be divided into segments where most services and facilities can be accessed within a 15 minute walk of

home, supposedly negating the need for any local resident to drive anywhere. The authorities then levy punitive charges for drivers who travel beyond and between these zones - essentially juiced-up Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs).

After losing that by-election the city council swiftly dumped this idea but the county council is at least equally as responsible for traffic management as the city. The Tories could not repeat that by-election win in last year's elections though they still boosted their vote share by over sixteen percentage points and also did well in Coleridge (the inner suburbs to the south).

Coleridge does not exist as a county division: it's split all over the place, so it's improbable that the Tory strength here, such as it is, will transfer.

Council changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	28	9	20	4
2023 - by-election: St Neots The Eatons, LD gain from Ind	28	9	21	3
2023 - defection: Josh Schumann, Burwell - Con to Ind	27	9	21	4
2023 - defection: Steve Dew, The Hemingfords & Fenstanton - Con to LD	26	9	22	4
2024 - defection: Ryan Fuller, St Ives North & Wyton - Con to Ind	25	9	22	5
2024 - defection: Jonas King, Huntingdon North & Hartford - Con to Ind	24	9	22	6
2024 - by-election: Yaxley and Farcet, LD gain from Con	23	9	23	6
2024 - defection: Keith Prentice, St Neots Priory Park - Con to Lab	22	10	23	6
2025 - defection: Kevin Reynolds, St Ives South & Needingworth - Con to Ind	21	10	23	7
2025 - defection: Mark Howell, Camborne - Con to Ind	20	10	23	8
Current	20	10	23	8

Key seats

Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ Cambourne
- ▶ Castle
- ▶ Chesterton
- ▶ Market
- ▶ Papworth and Swavesey
- ▶ St Neots East and Gransden
- ▶ Sawston and Shelford



Conservative targets

- ▶ Bar Hill
- ▶ Burwell (from Ind defector)
- ▶ Hardwick
- ▶ Huntingdon North and Hartford (from Ind defector)
- ▶ King's Hedges
- ▶ St Ives North and Wyton (from Ind defector)
- ▶ St Ives South and Needingworth (from Ind defector)
- ▶ St Neots Eynesbury
- ▶ St Neots Priory Park (from Lab defector)
- ▶ St Neots The Eatons
- ▶ The Hemmingfords & Fenstanton (from LD defector)
- ▶ Yaxley and Farcet (from by-election loss)



Labour targets

- ▶ Huntingdon North and Hartford
- ▶ Huntingdon West
- ▶ Newnham
- ▶ Trumpington



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Alconbury and Kimbolton
- ▶ Bampton and Buckden
- ▶ Chatteris
- ▶ Godmanchester and Huntingdon South
- ▶ Littleport
- ▶ March North and Waldersey
- ▶ March South and Rural
- ▶ Ramsey and Bury
- ▶ Roman Bank and Peckover
- ▶ St Ives North and Wyton
- ▶ St Ives South and Needingworth
- ▶ Sawtry and Stilton
- ▶ Soham North and Isleham
- ▶ Soham South and Haddenham
- ▶ Somersham and Earith
- ▶ The Hemmingfords and Fenstanton
- ▶ Warboys and The Stukeleys
- ▶ Whittlesey North
- ▶ Whittlesey South
- ▶ Wisbech East
- ▶ Wisbech West
- ▶ Yaxley and Farcet



Green targets

- ▶ Abbey
- ▶ Castle
- ▶ Newnham



JO HARVEY

FOR

HUNTINGDON NORTH AND HARTFORD

- EXPERIENCED DISTRICT COUNCILLOR
- MENTAL HEALTH CAMPAIGNER
- CONEYGEAR CENTRE VOLUNTEER
- LIVES IN AND FIGHTS FOR HARTFORD

VOTE LIB DEM ON THE 1ST MAY

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A personal message from your local Conservatives - Ross Martin

Dear Neighbour

Dedication to our community, passionate about making a positive impact, and ensuring our neighbourhood thrives. This commitment is what drives me to stand for you in the upcoming elections.

I have a proven track record of delivering results for our area. I don't just talk - I take action and get things done. Your year's elections are more crucial than ever. Your new councillor this year will need to address the challenges of our roads, the quality of our schools - they will also play a key role in shaping the future of our local government.

I began my career working in education, teaching and supporting our young people, before running a couple of my own businesses. Now, as a young person, before running a couple of my own businesses. Now, as a young person, before running a couple of my own businesses. Now, as a young person, before running a couple of my own businesses.

Like many of you, I have watched the current Lib Dem, Labour, and Independent-run council allow SEND standards to decline and our roads to become overgrown with weeds - as a result of poor decision-making.

Now more than ever, we need a strong and experienced Conservative voice to get our area back on track and deliver on your priorities. My plan for the Warboys and Stukeleys Division is clear, ambitious, and achievable if we work together. We must start today.

On 1st May, vote for the strong local choice - vote Ross Martin.

Kind regards
Ross Martin

Contact your Conservative Candidate for Warboys and Stukeleys Division

- ✉ ClrRossMartin@outlook.com
- 📞 [01455555555](tel:01455555555)
- 🌐 conservatives.com

ROSS MARTIN

A strong local voice, fighting for our community.

Local Community Leader Delivering No Regrets

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Vote Conservative

DAVID WORICKER CAN WIN HERE

2024 was the Green Party's most successful year at District and we are looking to build on that success with the first ever Green Party councillor in East Cambridgeshire.

People are fed up of the reaction and broken promises of the big 3 parties and are ready for a new kind of politics, one that puts the values first and does what they say they will do.

WHAT DOES COUNTY COUNCIL DO?

Health, education, public transport, social care and housing are all responsibilities of the county council. There's a strong case to say that the council has been at the back of the line when it comes to delivering on these issues.

David will work across all of these areas to ensure that we are a priority for the council. He will work on roads, parks, leisure, schools and training facilities. He will also work on the environment, social care, and housing.

YOUR CHOICE AT THE COUNCIL ELECTION

DAVID WORICKER - YEAR-ROUND HARD WORKER

ANOTHER CONSERVATIVE - ONLY SEEN AT ELECTION TIME

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET INVOLVED?

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Cornwall

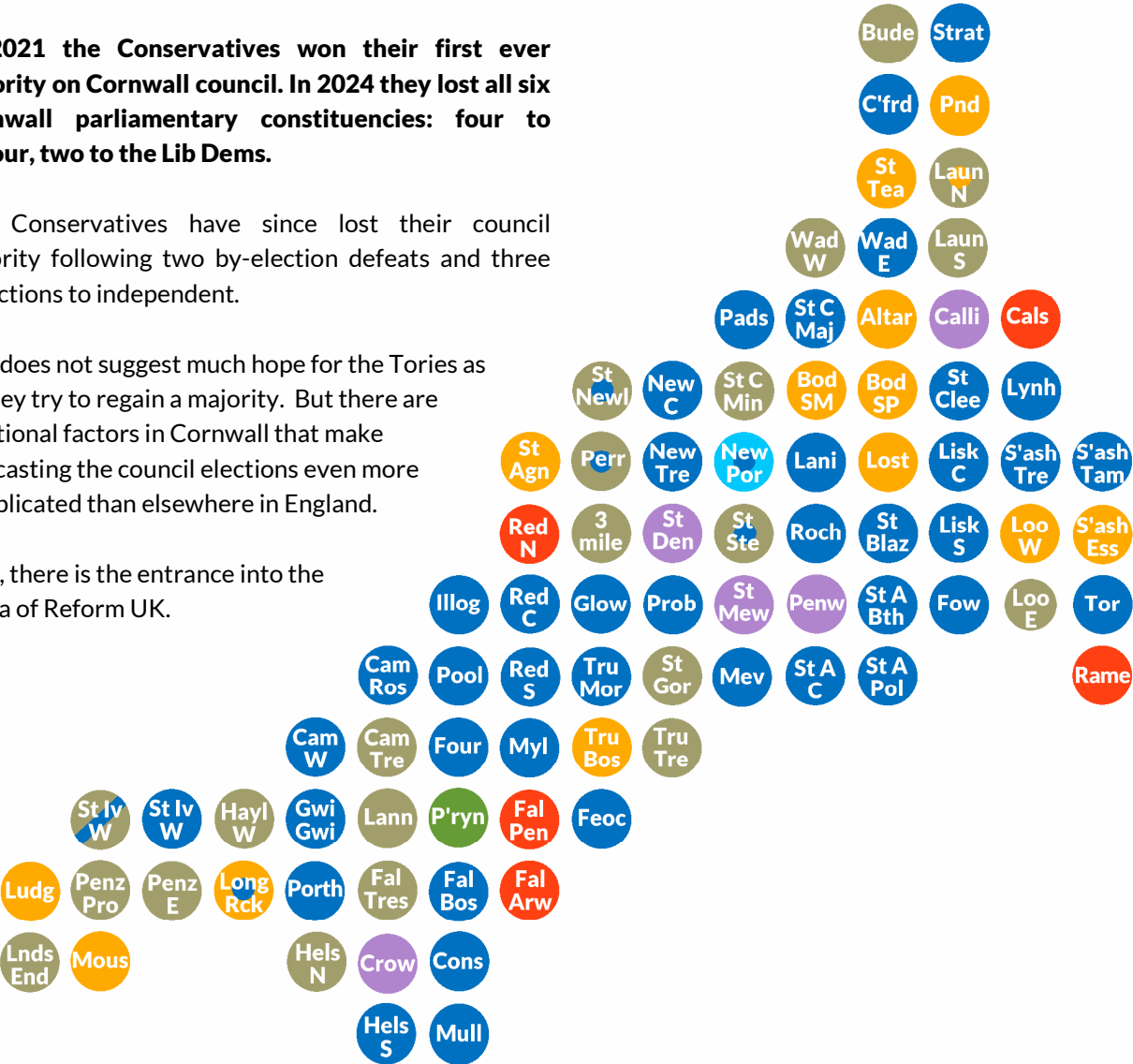


In 2021 the Conservatives won their first ever majority on Cornwall council. In 2024 they lost all six Cornwall parliamentary constituencies: four to Labour, two to the Lib Dems.

The Conservatives have since lost their council majority following two by-election defeats and three defections to independent.

This does not suggest much hope for the Tories as as they try to regain a majority. But there are additional factors in Cornwall that make forecasting the council elections even more complicated than elsewhere in England.

First, there is the entrance into the arena of Reform UK.



Despite Cornwall being a strongly Leave-voting county, beyond the relatively deprived, relatively elderly twin towns of Camborne and Redruth the party didn't poll especially well here in 2013: just 5% (though in part that low share was because they didn't contest a third of the divisions).

In the 2024 general election, Reform polled between twelve and twenty percent in each Cornish constituency. That vote was more than enough to oust the Conservatives in all six but not close to challenging for the seats.

Constituency	vote	%vote
St Austell and Newquay	9,212	19.7
South East Cornwall	9,311	18.9
Camborne and Redruth	8,952	18.7
North Cornwall	8,444	16.2
St Ives	6,492	13.5
Truro and Falmouth	6,163	12.3

This was an underperformance by Reform. Cornwall voted to leave the EU by 57% to 43% and UKIP won six divisions in 2013: three in the Camborne-Redruth conurbation, one in Newquay, Perranaworthal just beyond Falmouth, plus Lynher, a few miles north east of Liskeard. These were won on fairly low vote shares but there were others UKIP lost with larger vote shares.

Yet even today with polls showing Reform surging, Electoral Calculus extrapolations show no breakthrough in the west of the county, though a surge in parts of St Austell and Newquay and in the town of Saltash on the Tamar.

Divisions in which UKIP polled in excess of 30% in 2013 council elections

Division	%vote
Porthleven, Breage and Germoe	44.9
Long Rock, Marazion and St Erth	37.1
Ludgvan, Madron, Gulval and Heamoor	35.9
Lynher	35.0
Lanivet, Blisland and Bodmin St Lawrence	34.7
Redruth Central, Carharrack and St Day	34.6
St Stephen-in-Brannel	34.2
Liskeard South and Dobwalls	32.0
Camborne Trelowarren	31.8
Newquay Port and Tretherras	31.7
St Cleer and Menheniot	31.2

It's possible, of course, that Reform isn't (or hasn't so far been) quite as popular in Cornwall as UKIP. It could be that the diminution in importance of the EU has sapped motivation to back Reform as UKIP's heir. Or it could even be that Cornwall, a singular county, is simply ploughing a different path to most other Leave-voting areas. But more likely it's that forecasting elections is harder in a county with complex voting patterns. These include especially strong independents but also the Cornish nationalist party Mebyon Kernow.

Nonetheless it is a little odd that Reform is polling much more strongly nationally than UKIP ever did and yet seems to be having somewhat less impact in Cornwall. It seems especially strange that there is no sign of Reform strength in the less affluent parts of the county like Redruth with their older and relatively socially

conservative profile. But let's see what real votes in real ballot boxes produce.

Cornwall has an extra dynamic: that of Labour rising at the expense of the Liberal Democrats - just over a century after the same thing happened in most of the rest of the country.

Cornwall has historically been Labour's weakest county (and by quite some margin their worst). Only in Wiltshire (where the party had similar difficulties finding candidates) did Labour poll lower in the 2021 local elections; and until 2017 the party often lost its deposit in general elections: 3.9% in North Cornwall, 4.6% in Truro and 4.9% in South East Cornwall in 1983, for example.

In part that was down to very effective squeezing of the Labour vote by the Liberals - but only part. Until last year Labour had never won any Cornish constituencies other than the former Falmouth and Camborne. Now they have four: Camborne & Redruth; Truro & Falmouth (in which they suddenly became competitive in the Jeremy Corbyn "almost" year of 2017) and, more surprisingly, St Austell & Newquay and South East Cornwall.

There are no Labour councillors in St Austell and Newquay and just two (**Rame Peninsula** and **Calstock**) in South East. This will need to change if the general election results are to be interpreted as anything other than a one-off freak result to oust the Conservatives from government.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	47	5	13	22
2021 - defection: Peter la Broy, Bude, LD to Ind	47	5	12	23
2023 - by-election: Long Rock, Marazion & St Erth, LD gain	46	5	13	23
2023 - defection: Steve Arthur, Perranporth - Con to Ind	45	5	13	24
2024 - defection: Adrian Harvey, St Newlyn East - Con to Ind	44	5	13	25
2024 - defection: John Conway, Launceston South - Con to Ind	43	5	13	26
2025 - defection: Mike McLening, St Stephen-in-Brannell, Con to Ind	42	5	13	27
2025 - defection: Kevin Towill, Newquay Porth & Tretherras, Con to Ref	41	5	13	28
Current	41	5	13	28

The size of big unitary councils like Cornwall is a factor in the elections: wherever there are close to a hundred seats up for election it can be a real challenge for parties weak across the county to field full slates of candidates. In 2021, for example, Labour fielded 57 candidate for 83 seats - and that while the party was still benefiting from the huge surge in membership under Jeremy Corbyn. In 2013 they barely contested 50% - though the council back then had 123 members.

Only a tiny proportion of people who join political parties become activists, and while it is easy enough for a big party to find six parliamentary candidates who can be drawn from the whole of Great Britain it is much harder to find a full slate of council candidates across 91 miles for 87 seats - people who ideally live in or near the division they are seeking election for.

There was a tempting prize for Labour to try hard this time though: one that hasn't existed before. Totting up the notional general election results in each council division, Labour appears to have "won" 46: a majority.

It is highly, highly improbable that this will be the actual outcome of the council election on 1st May - or anything like. But it is tempting, and shows the sort of surprising results that can occur in five-, six- or even seven-way elections.

Of those 46 divisions in which Labour appears to have led at the general election they are estimated to have won with 40% or less in 27. In three they polled less than 30% but still had the lead.

This shows both how Labour can pull off wins, but also that their electoral position remains quite weak: that they cannot afford any erosion in the support they won last year. And, whilst Labour can gain seats here on very low percentage shares, so too can everyone else.

We're also getting way ahead of political reality. If Labour could only field candidates for 69% of the seats here when their membership was near its peak, they weren't likely to field a full slate after years of membership decline, even after their triumphant general election. And they did not: 63 Labour candidates are contesting 87 seats: 72%.

In some ways that's okay because, last year's general election aside, Labour support in Cornwall is heavily focussed in specific wards: in Redruth and Camborne and Falmouth and Calstock and maybe Penzance from time to time. They aren't really likely to expand their electoral base, at least in council elections, beyond these places, especially as they have lost a chunk of support since the general election.

If they target the (principally urban) wards they can win, then not contesting the wards they can't isn't great but it should still result in a much larger councillor group than the five they currently have. These are two in Falmouth, and one apiece in Redruth, Calstock and the Rame Peninsula - the area surrounding Torpoint.

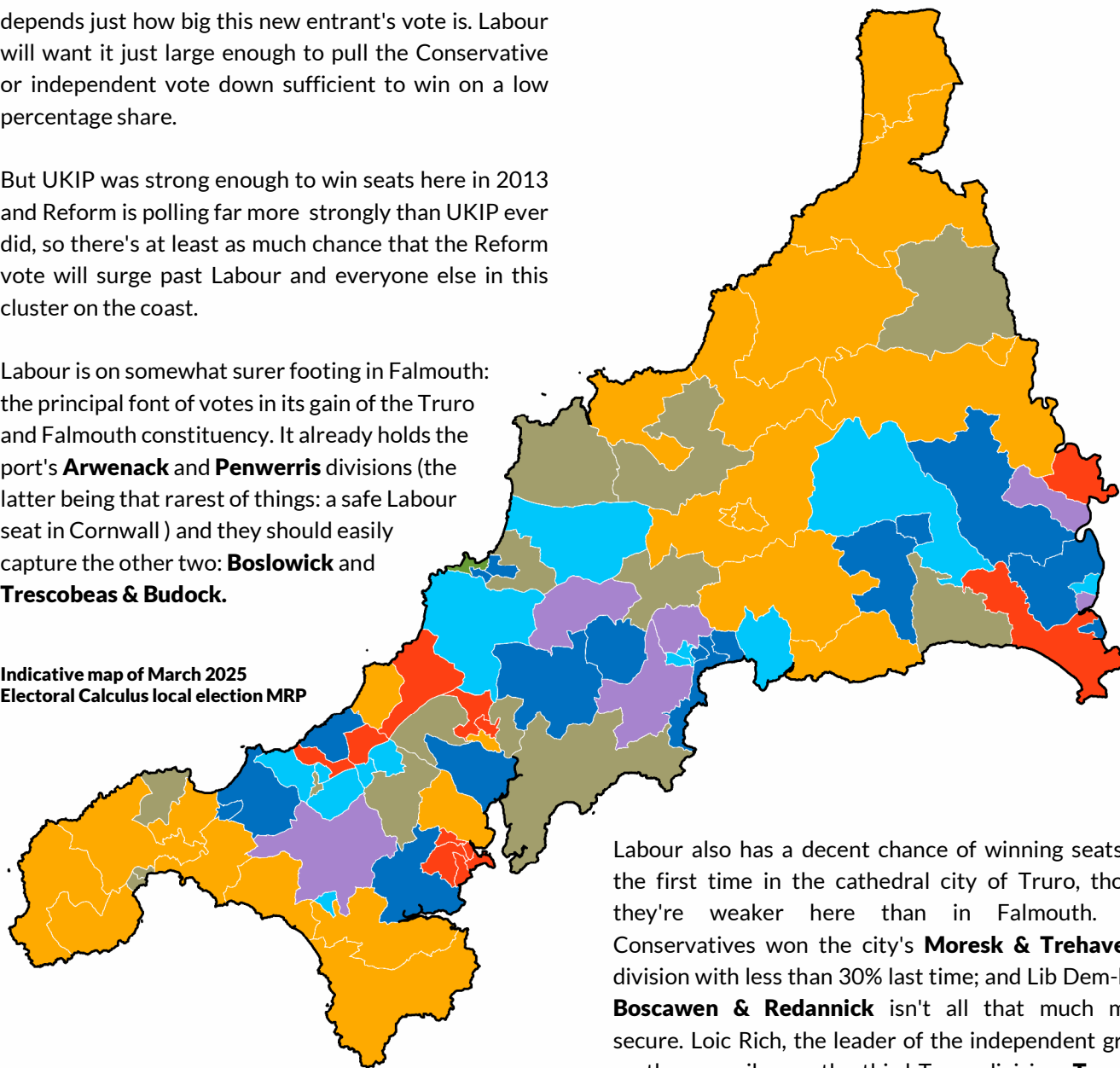
Labour should be able to win more seats in the Redruth-Camborne conurbation: perhaps **Camborne Roskear & Tuckingmill**, perhaps **Camborne West & Treswithian**; maybe **Four Lanes**, **Beacon & Troon** and maybe **Redruth South**.

These are all divisions Reform will be after too so it depends just how big this new entrant's vote is. Labour will want it just large enough to pull the Conservative or independent vote down sufficient to win on a low percentage share.

But UKIP was strong enough to win seats here in 2013 and Reform is polling far more strongly than UKIP ever did, so there's at least as much chance that the Reform vote will surge past Labour and everyone else in this cluster on the coast.

Labour is on somewhat surer footing in Falmouth: the principal font of votes in its gain of the Truro and Falmouth constituency. It already holds the port's **Arwenack** and **Penwerris** divisions (the latter being that rarest of things: a safe Labour seat in Cornwall) and they should easily capture the other two: **Boslowick** and **Trescobeas & Budock**.

Indicative map of March 2025
Electoral Calculus local election MRP



Labour also has a decent chance of winning seats for the first time in the cathedral city of Truro, though they're weaker here than in Falmouth. The Conservatives won the city's **Moresk & Trehaverne** division with less than 30% last time; and Lib Dem-held **Boscawen & Redannick** isn't all that much more secure. Loic Rich, the leader of the independent group on the council, won the third Truro division, **Tregolls**,

with almost three quarters of the vote, so that one looks beyond Labour's grasp.

It is far less clear where Labour might advance in the two other constituencies it gained last year: St Austell and Newquay and South East Cornwall. The party won no council seats in the former and has just **Calstock** and **Rame Peninsula & St Germans** in the latter.

A large part of how they'll fare this time round depends on what happens to Lib Dem and independent votes. Labour might be able to win **Torpoint** and maybe two of the Saltash divisions (**Essa** and **Tamar**), but they'd need a huge collapse in Lib Dem support to surge from last place to first in each. And, again, Reform look more likely to challenge in these divisions right now.

Labour finished similarly poorly in Newquay in 2021; they didn't even contest the town's **Central & Pentire** division; and it's the same story in St Austell, though they have an outside chance in **St Blazey**, next door to the larger town; and in **Liskeard Central**.

Elsewhere in the county, in the two constituencies the Lib Dems gained last year, Labour only has a history in Penzance, but were a long way off in both of that town's divisions last time. Many Labour supporters here are used to voting tactically Lib Dem to keep the Tories out.

The Lib Dems will want to regain some of the huge amount of ground they lost in 2021 (when they dropped two thirds of their council seats). Their problem is that their principal opponents in the parliamentary constituencies they hold at either end of

the county: North Cornwall and St Ives, tend to be as often independents as Conservatives. Independents are harder to oust.

In this sense, the Lib Dem battleground is somewhat different to Labour's, in that the divisions in which Labour led at the general election, and which they may or may not be competitive this year, are against all comers.

The Lib Dems' best shots will be against Conservative incumbents - and specifically only in those two constituencies they hold - which seriously cramps their style. For example, the Electoral Calculus MRP shows the Lib Dems winning every division in St Ives. Yet they currently they hold just two (one of which is represented by the St Ives MP Andrew George). Most of the rest are held by independents - not Conservatives. That will make it much harder to turn them yellow despite the Lib Dems winning St Ives last year by nearly 14,000 votes.

Cornwall has a long history of electing independent councillors. Before the unitary council was created, all of the county's five districts were controlled by independents and, even though their vote is in long-term decline they polled over 30% across Cornwall last time and won only sixteen seats fewer than the Conservatives.

Cornwall's divisions are relatively small: around 5,000 electors, and all are single member, meaning hard-working, high-profile councillors can build up big personal votes. In the cases of independents, seats often only switch hands if or when the incumbent

stands down (though that's not always the case, and when wards get redrawn, as happened last time, they can end up with large numbers of new constituents who they don't know).

The Liberal tradition in counties like Cornwall is very different to that of, say, Bath or Richmond or Harrogate. Here, people who vote Lib Dem may well have a political outlook far closer to that of Nigel Farage than Ed Davey yet still vote for the centre party.

They stay loyal to the Lib Dems for the same reason voters in former mining communities stayed loyal to Labour until 2019: because of their non-conformist roots and the history of liberalism in the Celtic fringe.

The other side of that Liberal loyalty is an embedded anti-Conservatism among a significant section of Cornish society, dating back to the time when the tin and gold mine owners were strong backers of the Tories, while the miners backed the Liberals. Labour's more industrial, trade union movement roots never proved especially attractive, even though there is not all that different between a coal miner and a tin miner.

As for the Conservatives, their best hope probably lies in the electoral system saving them a handful of seats on low percentages. There are three independents who defected from the Conservatives: in **Launceston, St Newlyn** and **Perranporth**, and they might have a shot at regaining their seats.

The Conservatives also lost one seat to the Lib Dems: **Long Rock, Marazion & St Erth** (which includes St Michael's Mount, across the bay from Penzance). This

will be harder for them to regain given how big the Lib Dem wave was in this constituency.

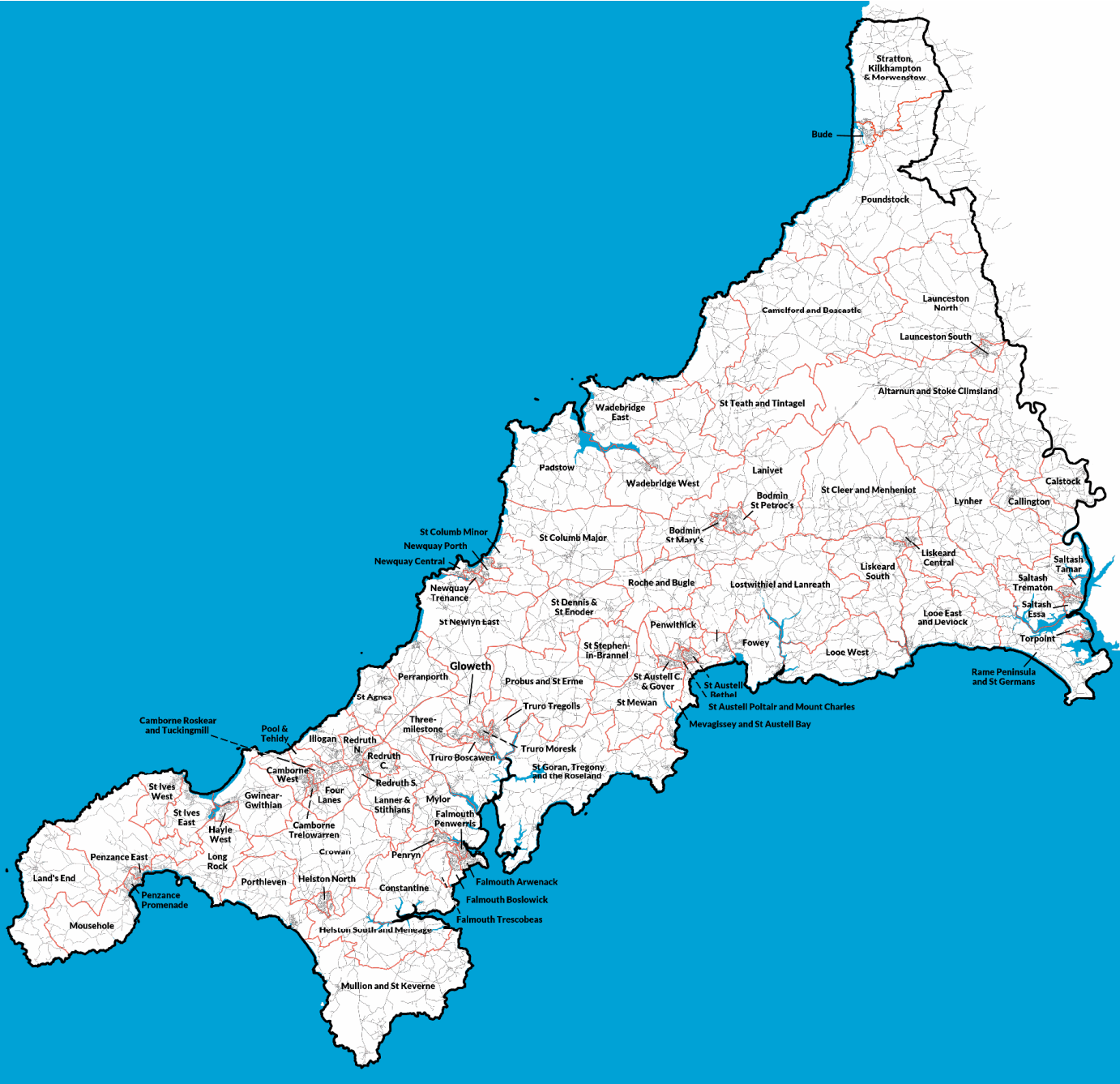
The Conservatives are highly unlikely to regain their council majority but they might still be able to govern depending on how many Reform UK and independent councillors are returned.

It is equally hard to see another party winning a majority here: the Lib Dems simply aren't strong across enough of the entire county anymore and, as we've looked at in some detail, Labour is highly unlikely to be able to contest enough divisions, let alone to win them.

But, given their sudden parliamentary dominance in Cornwall, Labour should be pushing to become at least the second party on the council - even if that in itself is difficult enough given the miniscule group it starts with.

If they fail in that quest it will not mean their ability to retain some, if not all, their parliamentary seats at the next general election is doomed but it will hardly make their new MPs feel secure. Labour is fishing for the same target seats as Reform: a factor that may knock both parties out of contention and lead to some unexpected holds for incumbents.

Reform has more glittering prizes elsewhere and will not necessarily feel hard done by if Cornwall doesn't deliver a huge haul of wins. But if they can establish themselves here, along with big gains in counties like Durham and Nottinghamshire, Kent and Staffordshire, it will be able to proclaim itself as a truly national party - something UKIP never could and the Brexit Party wasn't around long enough to.



Key seats

Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ Bude (from Ind defector)
- ▶ Helston South and Meneage
- ▶ Lanivet, Blisland and Bodmin St Leonards
- ▶ Launceston South
- ▶ Porthleven, Breage and Germoe
- ▶ St Ives East, Lelant and Carbis Bay
- ▶ Stratton, Kilkhampton & Morwenstow
- ▶ Threemilestone and Chacewater (Ind)
- ▶ Wadebridge East and St Minver



Labour targets

- ▶ Camborne Trelowarren (Ind)
- ▶ Camborne Roskear & Tuckingmill
- ▶ Camborne West and Treswithian
- ▶ Falmouth Boslowick
- ▶ Falmouth Trescobeas and Budock (LD)
- ▶ Four Lanes, Beacon and Troon
- ▶ Liskeard Central
- ▶ Newquay Central and Pentire
- ▶ Newquay Trenance
- ▶ Pool and Tehidy
- ▶ Redruth Central, Carharrack & St Day
- ▶ Redruth South
- ▶ Truro Boscawen and Redannick (LD)
- ▶ Truro Moresk and Trehaverne



Conservative targets

- ▶ Launceston South (Ind)
- ▶ Long Rock, Marazion & St Erth (LD by-election loss)
- ▶ Newquay Porth & Tretherras (Ref defector)
- ▶ Perranporth (from Ind defector)
- ▶ St Newlyn East, Cubert & Goonhavern (Ind defector)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Altarnun and Stoke Climsland (LD)
- ▶ Callington and St Dominic (Meb Ker)
- ▶ Camborne Roskear and Tuckingmill
- ▶ Camborne Trelowarren (Ind)
- ▶ Camborne West and Treswithian
- ▶ Four Lanes, Beacon and Troon
- ▶ Looe East and Deviock (Ind)
- ▶ Penwithick and Boscoppa
- ▶ Pool and Tehidy
- ▶ Redruth Central, Carharrack & St Day
- ▶ Redruth South
- ▶ Roche and Bugle
- ▶ St Austell Central and Gover
- ▶ St Austell Poltair and Mount Charles
- ▶ St Cleer and Menheniot
- ▶ St Columb Minor and Colan (Ind)
- ▶ St Dennis and St Enoder (Meb Ker)
- ▶ St Mewan and Grampound (Meb Ker)
- ▶ St Stephen-in-Brannel
- ▶ Saltash Essa (LD)
- ▶ Saltash Tamar



ELECT A NEW COUNCILLOR FOR FALMOUTH TOWN AND CORNWALL COUNCILS—THURSDAY 1ST MAY

RICHARD CUNNINGHAM

Selected by local people for a fresh view on local issues

Offering You Positive Solutions in Falmouth Smithick




Wendy and David Frost - Proprietors of Roses News on Killigrew Street.

Richard has real solutions to the problems we face in our area. We have spent a long time enduring issues and have heard a lot of talk about what our problems are, but no real solutions have been offered. Richard has a fresh approach and good ideas on how to make our area a better place to live, work and grow up in. We would love to see him given the chance to put his plans into action as our local councillor.

Adrian Mercuri - Bar Manager of Falmouth Rugby Club

Richard is highly motivated and very interactive within the club's community. He is well liked by all and always brings with him a positive upbeat personality. Richard is very conscious of the problems faced by our community and is very good at problem solving. He is the type of person that won't rest until he has an answer. He would make an excellent local councillor and would serve the public well.



YOUR MEBYON KERNOW CANDIDATE FOR

Cornwall Council

Constantine, Mabe, & Mawnan

MAEL GARREC

✉ mael.garrec@gmail.com
☎ 07569241222
f cllr Mael Garrec - Mebyon Kernow Penryn

VOTE MEBYON KERNOW 1ST MAY

Presented by Mebyon Kernow - The Party for Cornwall
(Constantine, Penryn, Mabe, Mawnan, St Austell, St Ives, Truro)




ABOUT ME

Mael is standing for Mebyon Kernow, a political party based here in Cornwall. We want to win a better deal for all the people. MK has no political masters in Westminster to please and we believe that local people know what is best for Cornwall.

Mael is a senior transport planner and father of one, who has lived for a decade in Cornwall. He has also more than a decade of experience working for local councils (including Cornwall Council Transport service), the maritime industry and private engineering firms.

Mael is committed or leading in various community projects and currently serving as a Penryn Town Councillor.

"As a Cornwall Councillor I will listen to you and voice your concerns and asks at the Council. I am deeply committed to keep Cornwall whole, out of any 'Devonwall' project that would drown your voice. I strive to bring back power and funding to our community, so Cornwall can decide for itself. Onen hag Oil!"



FOCUS ON ST TEATH & TINTAGEL

From David Garrigan, Cllr Dominic Fairman & Ben Maguire MP

'BACK DAVID'

Dominic Fairman is a hard act to follow as our local councillor. He is standing down from Cornwall Council in May and hopes David Garrigan will take over. They have been out meeting residents and taking up local issues.

"Road safety is an important issue for many residents" says David, "people want drivers to slow down in villages, there is little point having 20mph zones in Desable and Tintagel if they are not being enforced, in dangerous areas."

"I am also keen we look at the A39, the poor surface water after heavy rain is a real issue."

Local campaigner David Garrigan and Councillor Dominic Fairman are working hard for our area.

David lives in the heart of the area and cares deeply about local issues. His career in the public sector and the NHS gives him a good understanding of the issues and he is well qualified for the challenges at New County H.

I know David will be a strong voice for our area and I hope he gets the same support I have over the years."

CORNWALL COUNCIL MULLION AND ST KEVERNE DIVISION
Thursday 1st May 2025

Please support

DICKY MINT

MEBYON KERNOW - THE PARTY FOR CORNWALL



1st Vote for...

ANDREW BROWN



CALSTOCK

I Will:

- Support Calstock Arts Environment series and their nature and environment library.
- Open and restore the public footpath from Metherell to Newton.

I will support:

- Tracy Ledger's work with the Harrowbarrow community shop and her work with Devon and Cornwall food action.
- A scheme to intermittently open the viaduct from Calstock to the Bere Peninsula for foot and bicycle access as well as train access.
- A scheme to open the railway track from Bere Alston to Tavistock as a bicycle track and footpath.
- A Town Farm Field plan.
- A bid for a Calstock Wetlands bird hide.

A CLEAR CHOICE ON THURSDAY

Liberal Democrats Core Values:

- Liberty
- Equality
- Democracy
- Community
- Human Rights
- Internationalism
- Environmentalism



REFORMUK

VOTE THURSDAY 1ST MAY

Bruce Craze

Four Local, Regional & Town / Local Election
YOUR REFORM UK CANDIDATE

Craze, Bruce
Reform UK

A proud Cornishman, I've spent my life in the Redruth area. I've worked in hospitality for the majority of my adult life but now work in a local pharmacy. Having just become a father I want to help Cornwall become a place where we are proud to live, but also affordable whilst delivering great services.

Bruce Craze
Reform UK Councillor Candidate

DO YOU SUPPORT REFORM UK?

I'm proud to be voting for A STRONGER BRITAIN

I'm proud to be VOTING CONSERVATIVE

VOTE CONSERVATIVE



Derbyshire

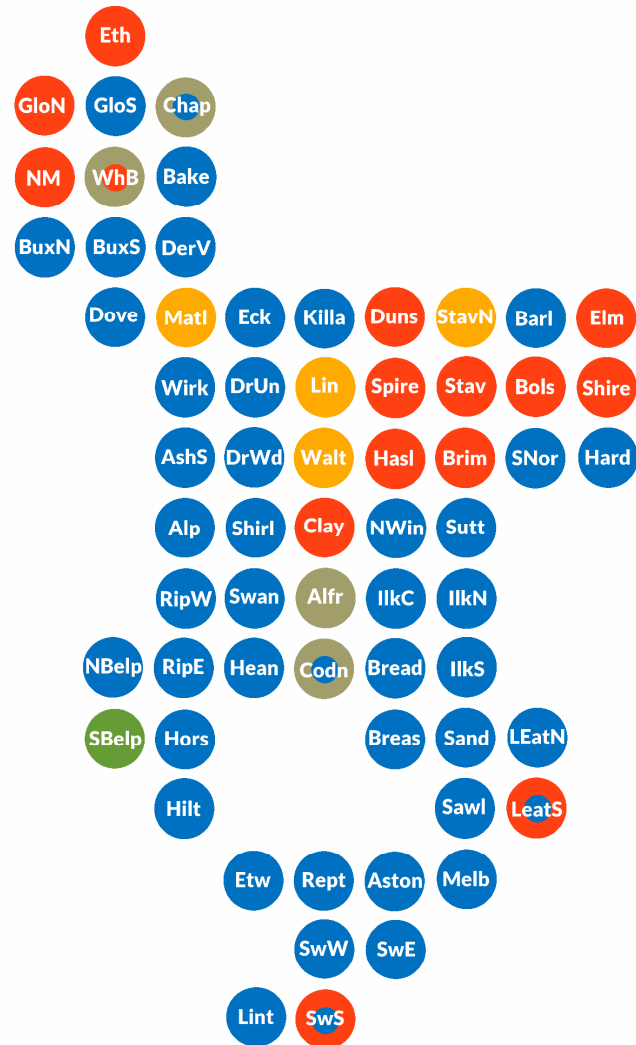


The first of the so-called "red wall" counties may not offer the Conservatives any more salvation from a poor electoral showing than will the more traditionally Conservative counties to the south.

Before last year's general election, the Tories held all bar Chesterfield of the nine constituencies within the Derbyshire county council area. Today they hold none. Long gone the heady days of 2019 for the Conservatives, when they ousted Dennis Skinner in Bolsover, won the former mining constituency of North East Derbyshire by nearly 13,000, and key marginal Amber Valley by almost 17,000.

Two years later, in the 2021 county council elections, the Conservatives turned a narrow majority of eight seats into one of twenty-six as Labour lost ten, mostly in those three once solid constituencies. No Labour county councillors were returned from the constituencies of Amber Valley, Derbyshire Dales, Erewash, Mid Derbyshire and South Derbyshire. Just one was elected in North East Derbyshire.

Vast swings turned divisions away from Labour that had never before voted Conservative: 17% in Clay Cross North, 19% in Barlborough and Clowne, 14% in Sutton. These were the best Conservative results since the county council was created in 1973.



But even on this excellent local election night, the results were not uniformly good for the Tories. They lost two seats to Labour in High Peak: one in 2-member Glossop & Charlesworth and one in Whaley Bridge (possibly due to Ruth George, the MP for that constituency until 2019, with her high name recognition and potential personal vote, being their candidate). Labour took a third High Peak division: New Mills, off the Lib Dems.

The Tories suffered some big adverse swings in Derbyshire Dales, and in the traditional marginals of Erewash and South Derbyshire things were much more competitive. But in no way could Labour take consolation from a result in a county they ran, with huge majorities, unbroken from 1981 to 2009, and from 2013 to 2017.

Just as all the parliamentary constituencies in Derbyshire are insecure, at least in the very poorest year for any given party, nor are there many absolutely bulletproof county council divisions. This means that large numbers of seats can change hands at once, and this is likely what will happen this year.

There have been boundary changes since the last county council elections. These aren't especially radical but, because Chesterfield loses a division (which was Labour) and South Derbyshire gains one (which would have been Conservative in 2021) the notional Tory majority is two seats larger than it actually was. That modest improvement is unlikely to be enough to save the Conservatives from what is heading their way.

The Conservatives have also lost two seats to Labour in by-elections (Long Eaton - now **Long Eaton South**, in Erewash) and **Swadlincote South** in South Derbyshire. They've also lost three to defections: one in High Peak's **Chapel & Hope Valley**, and two divisions in Amber Valley - though all three occurred after the councillors were suspended from the Tories for misbehaviour.

The Amber Valley two originally switched to Reform, giving the party its first ever county councillors (as well as some town council representation in Ripley), but they fell out with Nigel Farage and they switched to independent in January 2025.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Amber Valley	12,192	28.7
Bolsover	9,131	21.5
Erewash	9,162	21.3
South Derbyshire	8,979	19.6
Chesterfield	7,897	19.0
Mid Derbyshire	8,356	17.6
North East Derbyshire	7,899	17.2
Derbyshire Dales	7,728	15.1
High Peak	6,959	14.1

Amber Valley will continue to be the epicentre of the political action in Derbyshire this year. In 2013, UKIP failed to win any seats in Derbyshire but Reform is likely to do a lot better, and their top targets are going to be in this central Derbyshire district with so many marginals.

Reform should be front-runners in every Amber Valley division except rural **Alport and Duffield** down the edge of the Dales, and **South Belper and Holbrook**, which will be a Conservative-Green battleground.

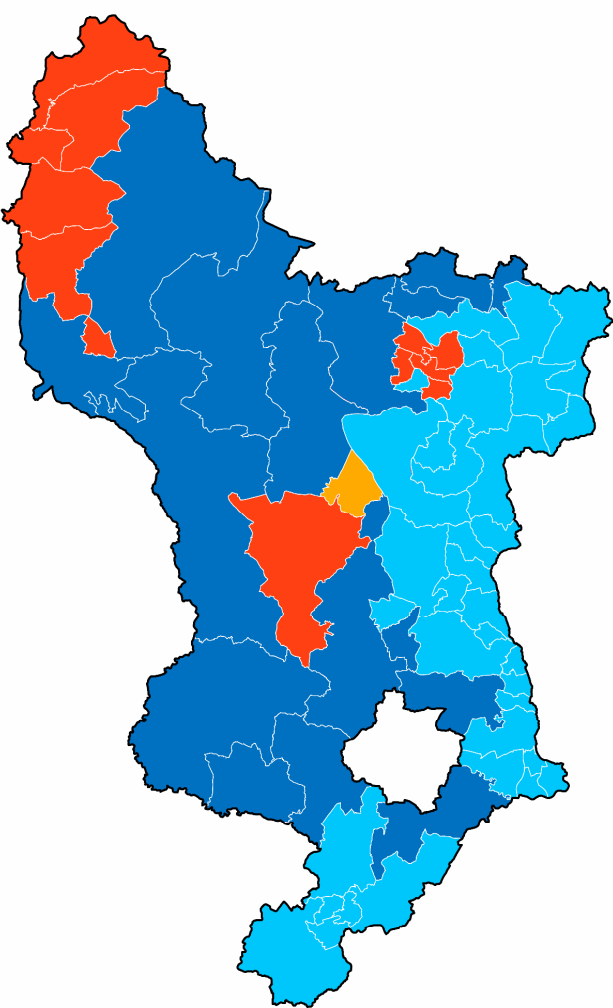
But the Reform wave isn't confined to Amber Valley: it extends almost the entire length of the eastern side of Derbyshire running through the former coal seam communities of Bolsover, Chesterfield, Clay Cross, South Normanton, and then down through the iron ore communities of Ilkeston and Long Eaton, and through to Swadlincote and Linton in the south.

Divisions in which UKIP polled in excess of 30% in 2013 council elections

Division	%vote
Ilkeston South and Kirk Hallam	33.1
Aston	32.5
Dronfield Woodhouse	31.0

Reform could well win all six divisions in Bolsover; three from the Tories, three from Labour. North East Derbyshire, which wraps around Chesterfield, is split between a Conservative north around Dronfield and a Reform south around Clay Cross.

If the Electoral Calculus MRP is correct, and in North East Derbyshire it feels like it could be, four Reform county councillors would be elected to three Conservatives. The Tories could hold **Shirland & Wingerworth South** (in which Reform are favoured) while Reform could well edge **Killamarsh**, south of Sheffield (where EC has the Tories ahead).



Indicative map of March '25 Electoral Calculus local election MRP

Then there is Chesterfield, nowadays Labour's most reliable Derbyshire constituency other than Derby South. Here the Lib Dems have been Labour's main opponent since the 1984 by-election when Tony Benn returned to the Commons. But Reform look set to take

two of their three Chesterfield divisions, with Labour winning the third. Reform may also pick up a Labour division here in **Staveley**.

Further south in Erewash: the district founded on Ilkeston, Reform are forecast to win eight of the nine divisions, with the Tories taking the more rural **Breadsall & West Hallam**: essentially commuter satellite villages just north of Derby. Labour's **Long Eaton** by-election victory in 2022 may be short-lived.

The same fate seems likely to befall Labour's by-election victor in South Derbyshire's **Swadlincote South**. This division, plus the other two in that town and three outlying seats: **Linton, Melbourne** and the new **Repton & Stenson** are heading towards Reform. Three South Derbyshire divisions are forecast to stay Conservative.

This is where Reform's potential probably peters out. The more traditionally Conservative western side of the county: the peak district and the Dales, is not as promising territory for Reform, though they may fancy their chances in and around Matlock.

But just because Reform is unlikely to rack up many wins on this side of the county does not mean it is going to be bereft of interest.

High Peak in particular contains several competitive races. In **Whaley Bridge** division, Ruth George - who was regarded as one of the more left-wing of Labour's 2017 intake of MPs - left the party in March 2025 after some comments deemed anti-Semitic and announced her intention to run as an independent. She

gained her county council election seat, defeating former Conservative minister Edwina Currie, with a comfortably majority of over 700 but if she splits the Labour vote the Tories could conceivably regain Whaley Bridge.

High Peak, sandwiched between Manchester to the west and Sheffield to the east, is a popular commuter hub for affluent professionals who want a countryside lifestyle within easy commute of these big metropolitan hubs. They have increasingly skewed the constituency leftward.

Despite UKIP not being a significant factor in Derbyshire, the county went strongly for Leave in 2016: 60% to 40%. But High Peak almost bucked that trend voting in line with the UK overall: 51-49 Leave.

Since then it has continued to trend to the left. In Boris Johnson's 2019 near-landslide, the Tories only added half a percentage point to their vote share in the constituency, regaining it by just 590 votes. Then there were those three against-the-grain Labour gains in the 2021 county council elections. And last year Jon Pearce won it back (its fifth change of MP since 2005) by almost 8,000 - the largest Labour majority ever.

So Conservative gains here are going to be challenging. But not impossible. The two-councillor Glossop and Charlesworth division has this time been split into two: Glossop North and Glossop South.

Glossop is the primary driver of High Peak's slow shunt leftwards being the largest of the constituency's towns and the nearest to the metropolises across the

boundaries. But **Glossop North** contains a lot of rural Peak District territory (mostly in St John's ward - always Conservative until Labour gained it in 2023 in a two-way fight, 55-45), while **Glossop South** contains the best Conservative ward in the town: Dinting. Neither can be regarded as securely Labour now they are in government, markedly less popular than at the general election and struggling to mobilise their core vote, but North is probably their weaker division.

Labour may also not be helped by Jon Pearce's call for High Peak to be split from Derbyshire in any future local government reorganisation and bunged in with Greater Manchester's Tameside district (just coincidentally a fairly safe Labour fief, at least before Reform showed up there).

The local newspaper vox-popped residents in Buxton who, to say the least, weren't keen - albeit an unscientific measure. Challenging voters' sense of identity is a very risky business, especially weeks before an election.

So, in addition to having a decent shop at both Glossop North and South and Whaley Bridge, the Tories might be able to hold onto the two **Buxton** divisions they barely edged four years ago.

Meanwhile they face a Green challenge in the huge rural **Chapel and Hope Valley** division, where their councillor Nigel Gourlay is now an independent after voting against care home cuts.

Council changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	45	14	4	1
2022 - defection: Philip Rose, Alfreton and Somercotes - Con to Ref	44	14	4	2
2022 - by-election: Long Eaton - Lab gain	43	15	4	2
2023 - by-election: Swadlincote South - Lab gain	42	16	4	2
2023 - defection: Alex Stevenson, Greater Heanor - Con to Ref	41	16	4	3
2024 - defection: Nigel Gourlay, Chapel and Hope Valley - Con to Ind	40	16	4	4
2025 - defection: Philip Rose, Alfreton and Somercotes - Ref to Ind	40	16	4	4
2025 - defection: Alex Stevenson, Greater Heanor - Ref to Ind	40	16	4	4
2025 - defection: Ruth George, Whalley Bridge - Lab to Ind	40	15	4	5
Current	40	15	4	5

Gourlay has been allowed to defend his seat as a Conservative despite still being listed as independent on the council website. While the Greens hold the Hope Valley district ward quite narrowly, they are nowhere in the town of Chapel or the other rural district ward: Limestone Peak, and so the Conservatives should start as favourites there.

Finally there is Derbyshire Dales, forecast by Electoral Calculus to provide the bulk of the Conservative county councillors returned this year. The largest of Derbyshire's constituencies was one of Labour's narrowest wins: John Whitby edging it by just 350 votes while Reform won twenty-two times that number of votes. This is not usual Labour territory: they did not come close here in 1997 and there are no large towns from which the party can found a base.

Labour must have won **Matlock** at the general election by a mile to have pulled off the result they did, but on the county council it is the most secure (possibly only, after 1 May) Lib Dem division - they won with 58% in 2021 (and that was over the Conservatives - Labour got just 16%). Labour also has a presence in Wirksworth, south of Matlock, which is a long-term marginal that the Conservatives gained last time by 167 votes.

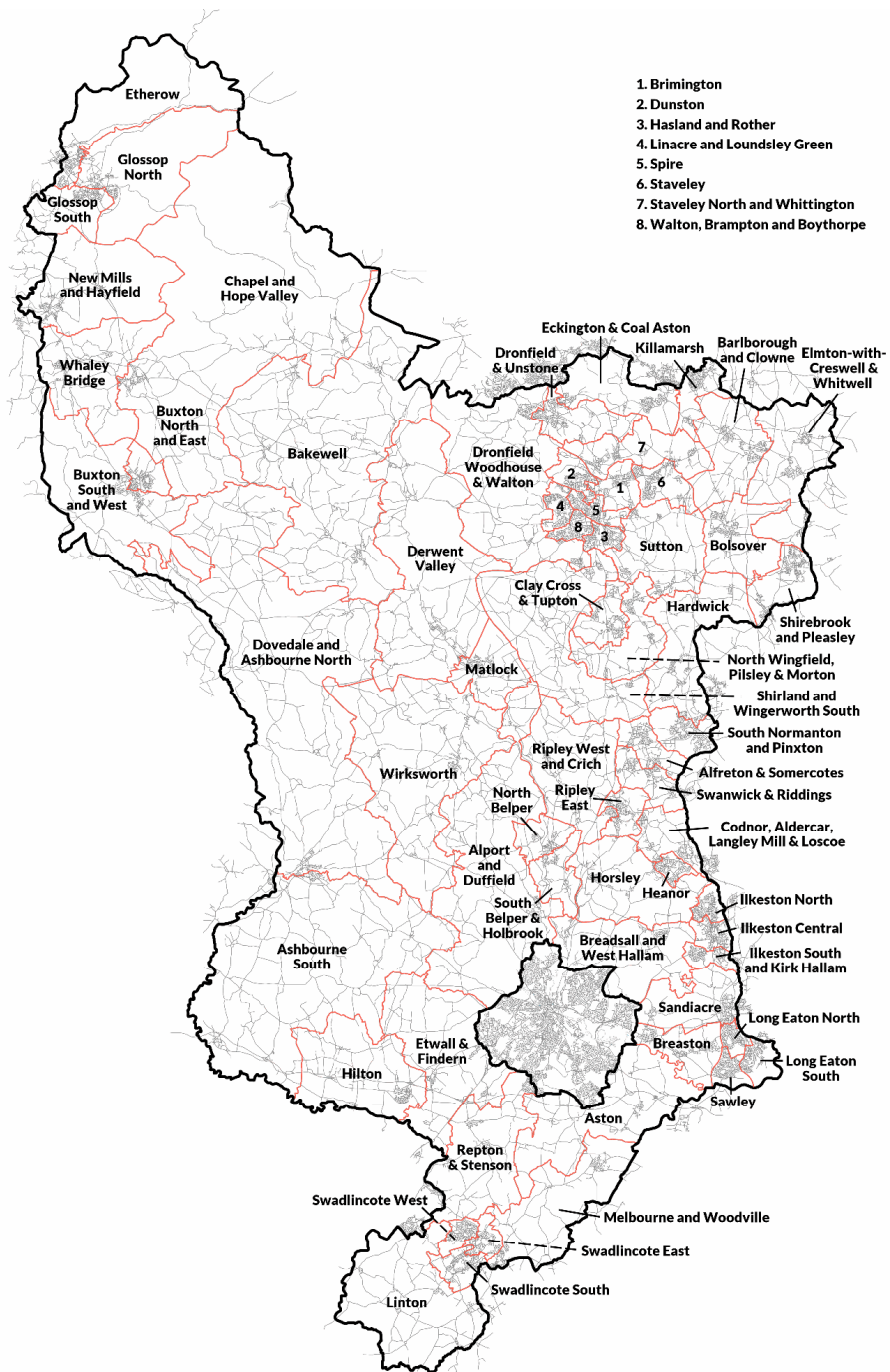
The Greens achieved a big advance in **Dovedale & Ashbourne North** last time - a vast division stretching down the western county boundary with Staffordshire, but they were still twenty percentage points short last time, and that was with all the other parties giving them a clear run at the Tories. But the

other progressive parties aren't standing aside this year so even if Reform takes a chunk out of the Conservative share the Greens will struggle to win. In any event, now Labour holds the parliamentary seat they really don't have the luxury of gifting other parties wins by failing to stand everywhere.

And then there is **Derwent Valley**, a sprawling ward that includes Darley Dale, a narrowly Lib Dem ward at district level, but where UKIP polled a decent 25% in 2013. Depending on how well Reform poll in these more liberal, more affluent climes, Derwent Valley could be a toss up this time.

The March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP forecast 34 Reform councillors, 17 Conservatives, 12 Labour and one Lib Dem; whereas extrapolating general election notional results from the principal wards comprising the county divisions, Labour would have won 53 and the Tories 11 - no others. Those two theoretical exercises compare to the real votes in real ballot boxes back in 2021: 45 Conservatives, 14 Labour, 4 Lib Dems, 1 Green.

This range shows both how volatile Derbyshire is in electoral terms but also how the parties' fortunes have fluctuated over this concluding term of office. Derbyshire could be a spectacular Reform gain or they could fall short - possibly well short if the polls surpass their organisational capacity. But the least likely outcome is Labour regaining the council which, after their big win last year, will be a massive setback for the party in government.



Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Glossop North (Lab)
- ▶ Glossop South (Lab)
- ▶ South Belper and Holbrook (Grn)
- ▶ Whaley Bridge (Ind elected as Lab)



Labour targets

- ▶ Buxton North and East
- ▶ Buxton South and West
- ▶ Glossop South
- ▶ Hardwick
- ▶ Ilkeston Central
- ▶ Ilkeston North
- ▶ Ilkeston South and Kirk Hallam
- ▶ Linacre and Loundsley Green (LD)
- ▶ Matlock (LD)
- ▶ North Belper
- ▶ North Wingfield, Pilsley and Morton
- ▶ Staveley North and Whittington (LD)
- ▶ Sutton
- ▶ Swadlincote East
- ▶ Swadlincote West
- ▶ Wirksworth



Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ New Mills and Hayfield (Lab)



Green targets

- ▶ Chapel and Hope Valley (Ind elected as Cor)
- ▶ Dovedale and Ashbourne North

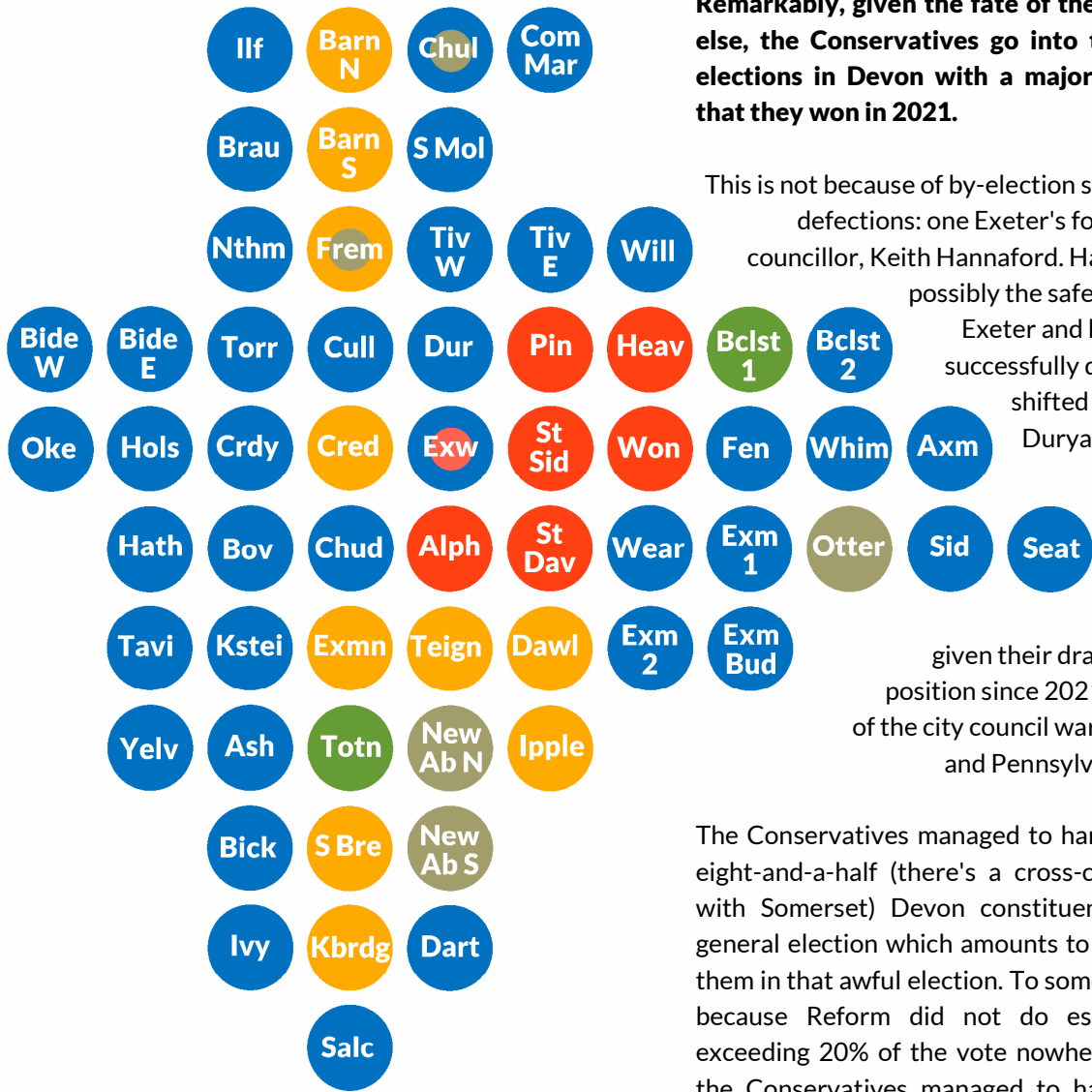


Reform UK targets

- ▶ Alfreton and Somercotes (Ind)
- ▶ Barlborough and Clowne
- ▶ Bolsover (Lab)
- ▶ Breadsall and West Hallam
- ▶ Clay Cross and Tupton (Lab)
- ▶ Codnor, Aldercar, Langley Mill and Loscoe (Ind)
- ▶ Elmlton-with-Creswell and Whitwell
- ▶ Hardwick
- ▶ Horsley
- ▶ Ilkeston Central
- ▶ Ilkeston North
- ▶ Ilkeston South and Kirk Hallam
- ▶ Killamarsh
- ▶ Linacre and Loundsley Green (LD)
- ▶ Linton
- ▶ Long Eaton North
- ▶ Long Eaton South (Lab)
- ▶ Melbourne and Woodville
- ▶ Ripley East
- ▶ Sandiacre
- ▶ Sawley
- ▶ Shirland and Wingerworth South
- ▶ South Normanton and Pinxton
- ▶ Staveley (Lab)
- ▶ Staveley North and Whittington (LD)
- ▶ Sutton
- ▶ Swadlincote East
- ▶ Swadlincote South (Lab)
- ▶ Swadlincote West
- ▶ Walton, Brampton and Boythorpe (LD)



Devon



Remarkably, given the fate of the party everywhere else, the Conservatives go into the county council elections in Devon with a majority increased from that they won in 2021.

This is not because of by-election success but from two defections: one Exeter's former Labour county councillor, Keith Hannaford. Hannaford represents possibly the safest Labour division in Exeter and had zero prospect of successfully defending it, but he's shifted to stand in the city's Duryard and Pennsylvania division - currently Tory-held but a challenge to retain against Labour given their dramatically weakened position since 2021. Labour holds both of the city council wards that the Duryard and Pennsylvania division covers.

The Conservatives managed to hang on to four of the eight-and-a-half (there's a cross-county constituency with Somerset) Devon constituencies at last year's general election which amounts to relative success for them in that awful election. To some degree they did so because Reform did not do especially well here, exceeding 20% of the vote nowhere. In other words, the Conservatives managed to hang onto seats like

Central Devon (majority 61) because Reform "only" polled 14.6% (7,784) there. But they still suffered major setbacks: losing all the seats they'd managed to claw back from the Lib Dems election by election: North Devon, Newton Abbot and Torbay (though, being a unitary, Torbay doesn't elect to Devon county council).

2024 Reform votes in Devon constituencies

Constituency	vote	%vote
Torridge and Tavistock	9,152	18.0
South West Devon (pt)	9,361	17.9
Newton Abbot	8,494	17.7
Tiverton and Minehead (pt)	7,787	16.4
North Devon	8,137	15.8
Central Devon	7,784	14.6
Exmouth and Exeter East	7,085	13.8
South Devon	6,363	13.0
Honiton and Sidmouth	6,289	12.4
Exeter	4,914	12.2

In addition they managed to lose South Devon - the renamed Totnes; Honiton & Sidmouth (which went Lib Dem in the 2022 by-election following the admission by the former Conservative MP Neil Parish that he'd been watching porn in the House of Commons chamber); and Tiverton & Minehead, a new constituency. The predecessor constituencies to these three were held by the Conservatives in the last Labour landslides of 1997 and 2001. So things weren't as dreadful as they might have been for the Tories but nor were they all that great either.

Nonetheless, the fact that they continue to represent half of Devon at parliamentary level, have pockets of strength in the areas they lost last year, and that Reform isn't as strong in the west of England as in the east means that their chances of retaining a majority on this county council are decent. That's not a given, even defending a two-to-one majority of 20, and should they succeed it'll be by a much tighter margin than last time. But it's doable.

With Labour not an electoral threat in Devon beyond their landlocked Exeter wards (even after their dramatic improvements in Central Devon and South West Devon) the Conservatives' survival will be determined by how many divisions the Lib Dems can gain on the Tories' left, and how many Reform can gain on their right.

Just because Devon is not Reform's most promising county does not mean they are without prospects here. Devon voted Leave 53-47 but within that overall figure Torridge district vote 63-37 Leave and North Devon 57-43. Only Exeter and South Hams (the district including bohemian Totnes) cast majorities for Remain.

In the 2013 county council elections UKIP polled above 30% in nine divisions and won four: two in Bideford, one in Exmouth and one in Kingsteignton. They polled especially strongly, without winning, in two other Torridge divisions: Holsworthy Rural and Northam, and might also have won Sidmouth had there been a more divided field.

Divisions in which UKIP polled in excess of 30% in the 2013 county council elections in Devon

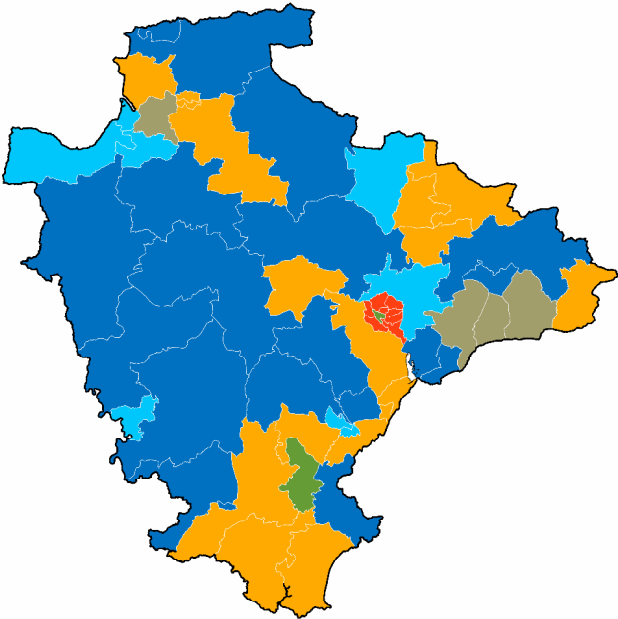
Division	%vote
Holsworthy Rural	38.1
Northam	37.1
Sidmouth	36.9
Kingsteignton and Teign Estuary	36.6
Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton	33.3
Okehampton Rural	32.2
Bideford West and Hartland	31.1
Bideford East	30.6
Dawlish	30.4

Clearly Torridge, and then West Devon (keep an eye on the only semi-urban division here: **Tavistock**) will again offer the best prospects for Reform, thereafter followed by some of the coastal towns towards the east of the county: Exmouth, Sidmouth and possibly Dawlish.

The Conservatives hold five of the eight divisions in North Devon and they may retain most of them despite losing the constituency by nearly 8,000 last year because the Lib Dem vote is heavily stacked up in Barnstaple. The most vulnerable Tory division here is probably **Ilfracombe** but the principal challenge locally comes from the Greens - and they were more than 600 votes adrift.

Combe Martin elected Liberal Democrat councillors most years until 2009 but in 2021 the Tories won with 63.5% and this doesn't look under threat on paper. That said, last year's general election saw plenty of

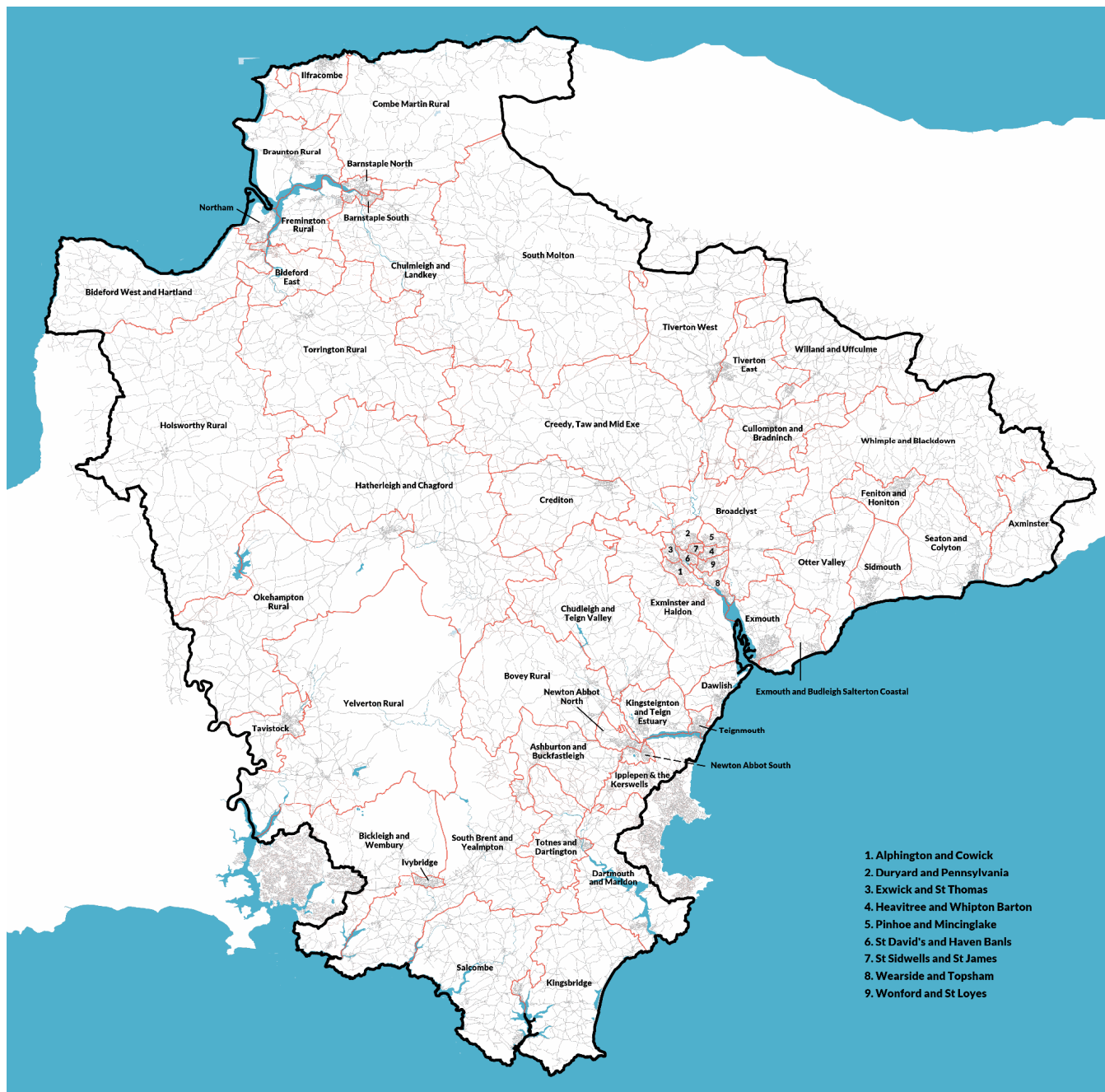
Conservative MPs in seats they had won with similar large vote shares crash to defeat as Reform took huge chunks out of them.



Indicative map of March 2025 Electoral Calculus local election MRP

The Lib Dems may do better at the southern end of the county where there are a few more marginal divisions. They hold neither of the **Newton Abbot** divisions, for example, having lost both in 2021 - **North** to the Tories and **South** to an independent. If they can't win these back with some ease they aren't going to be challenging the Conservative majority on the county council.

Adjoining Newton Abbot is one of the most marginal Conservative-held divisions, **Ashburton & Buckfast-leigh** which they won with a majority of just 297.



But the Lib Dems have won this division only once: back in 1997 so they may again need Reform's help in sucking away Tory votes to get over the line.

Across the river Teign from Newton Abbot is **Kingsteignton** which, like Combe Martin, the Conservatives have a firm grip on but which was one of those UKIP gains back in 2013. The incumbent, Ron Peart, is standing again.

The Lib Dems gained **Dawlish** last time by just over a hundred votes and this was another of the divisions in which UKIP polled strongly in 2013. Depending on how strongly Reform can compete, the Lib Dems will either benefit from their presence or lose to them but the least likely outcome here is a Conservative regain.

South Devon will prove somewhat harder for the Lib Dems to advance in as they already hold two of the five divisions, aren't going to gain **Totnes** off the Greens and **Dartmouth** and **Salcombe** have no history of electing Liberal county councillors.

East Devon is potentially highly competitive because, in addition to the four largest parties all having strength here there has been a strong organised independent presence that has threatened but never quite broken through: the East Devon Independent Alliance (EDIA). They have now imploded but six independents are standing and they hold one of the divisions: **Otter Valley**.

Electoral Calculus has independents gaining **Sidmouth** (impressive as there aren't any independent candidates standing here!) and neighbouring Seaton too. But

these were seats EDIA came close in last time: 2021 cannot be taken as a basis for what might happen this time around.

Given the Lib Dems have won a high profile parliamentary by-election and then defended their win in this corner of the county since the 2021 elections, they should be a threat to the Tories. Electoral Calculus has them winning **Axminster** in a general election based on current polling but **Feniton & Honiton** should be their easiest pickup - even though Labour were runners-up here in 2021.

There are a couple of two-councillor divisions in East Devon: **Sidmouth** and **Broadclyst**. Of these, Sidmouth returned two Conservatives last time but one seat in Broadclyst was gained by a Green, who's defending his seat. Broadclyst wraps around the eastern side of Exeter but Electoral Calculus has this division being gained by Reform. This again seems unlikely (though not as unlikely as their forecast for Sidmouth!) The Greens only fielded one candidate here last time and are going with two this year.

Labour is very much limited to whatever it can win in Exeter. Electoral Calculus, looking at what Labour might win, or might have won in a general election, has the party prevailing in two or three Central Devon divisions - notably **Crediton**, but this is Lib Dem-held on the county council and it's unlikely to change.

The only seats on the county council as it's currently drawn beyond Exeter Labour has ever won are in Newton Abbot and the Lib Dems have supplanted them there too. But there are two divisions in Exeter that the

Conservatives won last time and which are far from secure. I mentioned at the start of this preview **Duryard & Pennsylvania** - the northern suburbs of the city, where Labour to Conservative defector Keith Hannaford is standing. The Conservatives were only 169 votes ahead of Labour here in 2021.

At the other end of the city - in fact not all that much part of the city, is **Wearside & Topsham** which looks much safer for the Conservatives: they won by 838 (17.4%) last time. But since then Labour has won the Topsham city council ward three times - though whether this was just a reaction to an increasingly unpopular Conservative government or because this bucolic village is becoming more Labour as Londoners flee the capital for a more sedate lifestyle in a progressive corner of the world will be tested in a by-election on 1st May.

A little oddly the city ward the Tories do still manage to win in Exeter: St Loyes, is mostly within a Labour-held

county division: **Wonford & St Loyes**. The Conservatives nearly snatched this one in 2021: they fell just twenty votes short and it'll be their top target.

But across Exeter the Conservatives are a much diminished force - on the decline since they lost Exeter in the 1997 Blair landslide and with no realistic chance of a way back. This progressive city with its large student population is showing signs of waning Labour support but it is Greens and independents that are benefiting.

The Greens hold the central wards of St David's and Newtown & St Leonard's and are serious challengers in the county division of **St David's & Haven Banks**. They were 176 short of Labour last time and should be favourites this time around. If there's a big swing against Labour they may be able to snatch neighbouring **St Sidwell's & St James** though Labour's grip on this one is much tighter: they were over a thousand votes ahead last time.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	39	7	9	5
2023 - defection: Paul Henderson, Chulmleigh & Landkey - Con to Ind	38	7	9	6
2024 - defection: Rob Hannaford, Exwick & St Thomas - Lab to Ind	38	6	9	7
2024 - defection: Janet Bradford, Newton Abbot South - S Dev All to Ind	38	6	9	7
2025 - defection: Frank Biederman, Fremington Rural - Ind to LD	38	6	10	6
2025 - defection: Paul Henderson, Chulmleigh & Landkey - Ind to Con	39	6	10	5
2025 - defection: Rob Hannaford, Exwick & St Thomas - Ind to Con	40	6	10	4
Current	40	5	10	4

Key seats

Liberal Democrat targets



- ▶ Ashburton and Buckfastleigh
- ▶ Braunton Rural
- ▶ Chudleigh and Teign Valley
- ▶ Ilfracombe
- ▶ Newton Abbot North
- ▶ Newton Abbot South (Ind)
- ▶ Tiverton East
- ▶ Tiverton West
- ▶ Wadebridge East and St Minver

Labour targets



- ▶ Duryard and Pennsylvania
- ▶ Exwick and St Thomas (Con defection)
- ▶ Wearside and Topsham

Green targets



- ▶ Broadclyst (1 Con)
- ▶ St David's and Haven Banks (Lab)
- ▶ St Sidwell's and St James' (Lab)

Conservative targets



- ▶ Broadclyst (1 Grn)
- ▶ Crediton (LD)
- ▶ Dawlish (LD)
- ▶ Ipplepen and The Kerswells (LD)
- ▶ Kingsbridge (LD)
- ▶ South Brent and Yealmpton (LD)
- ▶ Teignmouth (LD)
- ▶ Wonford and St Loyes (Lab)

Reform UK targets



- ▶ Bideford East
- ▶ Bideford West and Hartland
- ▶ Exmouth (2 Con)
- ▶ Exmouth and Budleigh Salterton Coastal
- ▶ Holsworthy Rural
- ▶ Ivybridge
- ▶ Kingsteignton and Teign Estuary
- ▶ Northam
- ▶ Okehampton Rural
- ▶ Salcombe
- ▶ Sidmouth
- ▶ Tavistock

RE-ELECT HENRY GENT
1 MAY 2025

HENRY GENT: ACTION TAKEN IN TITHEBARN

Since I was elected 4 years ago, I have helped make Titebarn a better place to live in by:

- Running a successful campaign to stop the rail run through Langton Lane. It is now a quiet green lane with new solar powered lighting.
- Pushing to get the traffic lights on the junction of Titebarn Way and Honiton Road. Now it is a safer and better junction.
- Instigating meetings with developers, planners, and elected councillors, to sort out the problems, get the roads adopted, get the parks, play and games areas properly finished.
- Campaigning to get the primary school that we need at Titebarn as soon as possible.

I am the only county councillor standing for re-election here. I know the problems. I want to keep working for Titebarn.

DENISE BICKLEY AND THE LOCAL LIB DEMS

Working for you all year round



On 11 May you have a chance to have your voice heard in the elections for Devon County Council. I believe it's long overdue that the residents of Sidmouth have a new voice who will stand up for what genuinely matters to local people. That's why I am standing to be your County Councillor.

I live in Sidmouth with my husband and two sons, and work in the office of our local primary school. I have had a varied career, from accountant to graphic designer, running my own business for eight years, and am a keen advocate for the environment. I started and continue to run Sidmouth Plastic Warriors, running regular beach and town cleans.

I have also had the privilege of serving as a Town and District Councillor, working to deliver on local priorities like redesigning the town play park and improving our local recycling service.

MY PRIORITIES FOR OUR AREA

Fixing our appalling roads

Devon is the pothole capital of England. It's time Devon County Council took back control of highway maintenance, and invest in what matters to local people: fixing potholes properly, and improving our roads.

Protecting Devon's children

The Lib Dems will end this Carson administration's neglect of children, which Ofsted have found inadequate requiring improvement for over

Cutting Conservative waste

Devon County Council has overspent by more than £160 million on just one of its budgets, leaving it precariously close to bankruptcy.

I want to help transform Devon County Council into a robust, reliable organisation that makes a positive difference to our lives.

Find out more about Denise on Facebook @DeniseforDevon, or get in touch at denise.bickley@libdemsparties.org.uk

Devon County Council 'failing our children'

Dozens of children with special educational needs disabilities say their children have been failed by County Council. Speaking to local parents and teachers, I am by the Devon County Council's failure to support their children's needs, and the impact on their families.



Neglect of our roads has reached dangerous levels - we need real action

One of the biggest issues I hear on the doorsteps of Sidmouth is the state of our roads - despite our current County Councillor being in charge of highways. I will work tirelessly to help overhaul the management of our roads, away from the current 'tick-box' approach of expensive external contractors or well-meaning volunteer groups or works by utility companies. I will ensure the drains to ensure to avoid standing water enhance.

Please allow me to introduce myself

Paul Hayward | Independent Candidate

Hello, I'm Paul, your Independent candidate standing in the County Council elections on May 1st. I have already met and helped people from all walks of life in our area but I'm keen to get to know many more of you over the coming weeks.

I've lived in Axminster for nearly 2 decades. For 14 of those years, I've served our community, first as a Town Councillor for 8 years (proudly representing Axminster as the Mayor from 2014 to 2017), then as the Clerk for 2 local Parish Councils and now the Town Council. I have also represented our area as a District Councillor since 2019. If you place your trust in me, I am certain I can do a great deal more good at County Hall.

I do not believe that party politics has any place in local government. I will leave petty political squabbling to other candidates representing political parties. They too will be seeking your vote. Sadly, they will promise you the earth, but will be constrained by what their party wants. Their political party will tell them how to think, what to say and how to vote! I do not share this. I will represent you, not a party.

(That said, if I see other candidates who are half truths, I won't hesitate in setting them straight.)

I will be writing to you about the challenges and uncomplicated implementation to it.

In the meantime, I will be writing to you about the challenges and uncomplicated implementation to it.

You can reach me on 01297 555555 or email paul.hayward@independent.org.uk

I look forward to meeting you.

Paul Hayward | Independent Candidate

Sally Morgan
A dedicated & experienced campaigner to work for us

Dear Fellow Residents

Thank you for taking the time to read this. The past year has brought unprecedented challenges, and I believe we all share a deep fatigue from the constant cycle of election, protest, and hardship. As I stand for election, I want you to know that I won't overburden you with political issues or negative campaigns. Although I am a member of the Liberal Democrats, my primary commitment is to you and our community.

I am dedicated to lifting up my voice and working tirelessly for our area. My meaningful change that enhances our quality of life. With years of experience in community work, alongside a small business owner and employee, I bring a wealth of knowledge and passion to the table.

I am determined to use my skills to advocate for issues that truly matter, from protecting our precious environment to ensuring real, quality education for our children.

In the upcoming County Council elections, I ask for your support, and I promise to ensure people and services above all else, placing empty politics last.

Sally Morgan gets things done!

Residents in wealthfield were having problems getting just overgrown bushes on a footpath. This had been a problem for months, with no-one taking responsibility. Sally Morgan (and her husband) got it cleared within an hour!

Sally Morgan
Before

After

Sally Morgan

Register now for a postal vote!

Register now for a postal vote!

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Register now for a postal vote!

Iain Chubb

A strong voice for Whimble and Blackdown

DEVON COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTION THURSDAY 1ST MAY

Dear Resident

My name is Iain Chubb and I am standing once again to be your County Councillor for Whimble and Blackdown.

Over the last eight years, I have worked hard to improve our area. I have been successful in supporting many schemes, including improved access to the coast, improved outcomes on education and for our communities, backing the local economy and supporting village shops.

I hope that you will lend me your support on Thursday 1st May, so that I can continue standing up for you at County Hall.

Yours sincerely,

Iain Chubb
Iain Chubb
Your local Conservative Candidate for Whimble and Blackdown

My pledge to the residents of Whimble and Blackdown...

☒ I will continue getting potholes filled and improving our roads

☒ I will support all our farmers and rural communities

☒ I will serve all of the parishes within the Whimble and Blackdown division

Iain Chubb
for your local councillor

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Vote Conservative

Chudleigh & Teign Valley Deserves Better It's Time for Action!

I am Terry Tume, a candidate in the upcoming election for Chudleigh & Teign Valley on 1st May. Having lived and worked in our community for nearly 30 years, I understand our issues from roads to transport links to education. I am sure you agree that quite frankly the county council needs to do better. With my wife Wendy and 2 sons we love the area. I served in the Royal Navy and an aircraft engineer. I've been a school governor, parish councillor, and District Councillor, always supporting local groups. Currently I volunteer as a Training officer for the Devon Universities Royal Navy Unit, aiding students Exeter & Plymouth Universities.

Got an issue? Let's talk.
01424 370853
https://www.facebook.com/terrytume.3
Terry.Tume@central-devon-reform-uk.org.uk

Vote Terry Tume
for Chudleigh & Teign Valley on 1st May

We want our Country and Councils back

My Priorities - Delivering Real Change

- Fix Our Roads** - No more patch-up jobs. I will push for proper resurfacing, safer rural roads, and fair funding.
- Protect Our Countryside** - Overdevelopment is putting pressure on services. I will fight for responsible planning that protects green spaces and priorities local people.
- Improve Public Transport** - Rural communities need better transport links. I will campaign for more reliable bus services and stop route cuts.
- Tackle Healthcare Access** - Many struggle to get GP appointments or travel for care. I will push for better local health services and improved transport to hospitals.
- Support Farmers & Rural Businesses** - Farming is the backbone of our economy. I will fight to cut red tape, support local food production, and protect livelihoods.
- Stronger Policing** - Rural crime is rising, but action is slow. I will push for more visible patrols and tougher enforcement on theft, vandalism, and fly-tipping.

A Strong Voice for Chudleigh & Teign Valley

- Hold councils accountable** - No more rural neglect.
- Secure fairer funding** - Roads, transport, policing, and services must improve.
- Engage with residents** - Your voice will be heard, and I will fight for you.

Register now for a postal vote!

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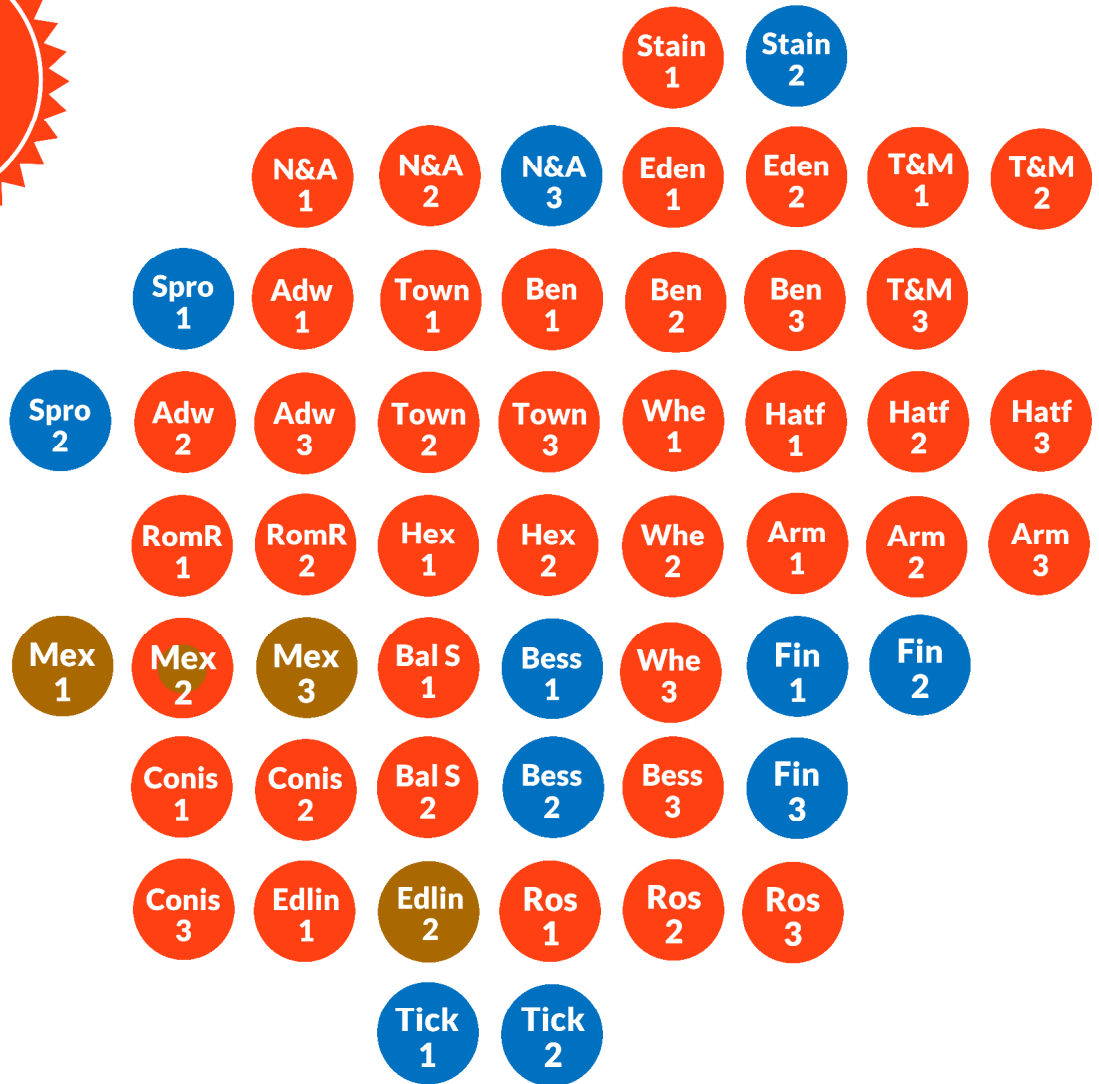
Register now for a postal vote!

Register now for a postal vote!

Register now for a postal vote!

Doncaster

41 11 3



Mayoral candidates

David Bettney	SDP
Julie Buckley	Green Party
Frank Calladine	British Democrats
Nick Fletcher	Conservative
Andy Hiles	TUSC
Ahsan Jamil	Workers Party
Alexander Jones	Reform
Ros Jones	Labour
Mihai Melenciuc	Liberal Democrats
Richie Vallance	Independent
Andrew Walmsley	Yorkshire Party
Doug Wright	No description

With the postponement of elections in Thurrock, the very best Reform prospect in May was taken off the table. But in Doncaster they have almost as good an opportunity - two, in fact, as this council has a directly-elected mayor as well as the whole council up for grabs.

While Doncaster has a long Labour tradition, it has not exactly been a cloudless socialist vista. Doncaster Central has often been a fairly marginal constituency throughout its existence and in 2019 the Conservatives captured Don Valley fairly comfortably from Labour moderate Caroline Flint, while running Ed Miliband close in Doncaster North.

The successor to Don Valley, the mouthful that is Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme, should've been an even better Conservative prospect but last year's Labour landslide swept that one up.

Labour has also experienced serious problems with the local council, though these seemed to be fading into the past. Twenty-one councillors were convicted of fraud in the so-called Donnygate scandal of 2000, which the Guardian described as *"the worst local government scandal since Poulson"*.

That scandal led to the council switching to a directly-elected mayor: one of the very first authorities to move to this model. Labour was strong enough even after Donnygate to win the mayoralty: Martin Winter topping the inaugural election in 2002 with 67% of the vote, and getting re-elected in 2005 with 55%.

But the problems were not behind Labour. In 2009 the government ordered an investigation into Doncaster social services following the deaths of seven children and the failure of social workers to intervene despite the children being known to be at risk. Councillors demanded Winter take responsibility for these massive failings and, after he refused to resign, Labour expelled him.

Enough voters were willing to overlook a graft scandal for Labour but not one where children died in no small part from the failings of their elected representatives. In the 2009 mayoral election, something remarkable happened. Labour finished third with just 22% of the vote in the first round of the supplementary vote election. A BNP candidate polled 11%.

Under this system second preference votes of all those who backed candidates who didn't come first or second if one of the top two failed to win at least half the votes.

The second round was a battle between independent Michael Maye (backed by the Lib Dems and Greens), who won 22.8% of first preferences and English Democrat Peter Davies with 22.5%. But after second preferences were reallocated it was the English Democrat who ended up the winner, 50.4 to 49.6%.

Davies was a lightning-rod mayor striking controversial populist positions that he could often not deliver on. He faced a council without any party in the majority but where Labour remained, by far, the largest. Davies struggled to get his budgets through and faced censure motions passed by the council.

In 2013, just before attempting re-election as mayor, Davies resigned from the English Democrats claiming the party had been infiltrated by the BNP. Running as an independent he lost to Labour's Ros Jones by a near mirror of the amount he'd won by four years earlier: 50.6% to 49.4%.

Would politics as usual reassert themselves with a new and quite different Labour mayor in post? Well, yes and no. Ros Jones won re-election easily enough in 2017 and 2021, and the council has had a Labour majority since 2011.

But Doncaster voted hugely for Leave in the 2016 EU referendum, 69% to 31%, despite its three Labour MPs campaigning for Remain. The gulf between the instincts

and values of Labour's representatives and the town's voters were exposed again.

In the 2019 general election, as well as capturing Don Valley, the Conservatives achieved a 9% swing against Rosie Winterton in Doncaster Central and a near 14% swing against Ed Miliband in Doncaster North, cutting the majority in both to barely 2,000. I say the Tories achieved these swings but their vote barely increased in all three seats. Rather Labour collapsed with the Brexit Party polling 20% in Doncaster North.

Reform improved somewhat on these results in last year's general election but there was no breakthrough: the composition of their vote simply adjusted to contain far more disillusioned Conservative voters than Labour ones. Reform failed to even contest Doncaster North.

2024 general election Reform vote shares

Constituency	vote	%vote
Rawmarsh and Conisbrough	9,704	28.6
Doncaster East and Axholme	8,487	21.7
Doncaster Central	7,886	20.8
Doncaster North	0	0.0

Again, the question could be asked after the 2024 general election whether Labour had sorted out its local difficulties.

After all, Labour notionally won every Doncaster ward in the general election, gained Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme, added substantially to their majorities across Doncaster, and continued to exercise full

control of local government: the mayor and the council. But again, the answer is no, they are actually in the most serious trouble they have ever faced in this corner of South Yorkshire.

Division	%vote
Bentley	42.6
Conisbrough	40.0
Roman Ridge	39.7
Hatfield	39.3
Stainforth and Barnby Dun	39.1
Edenthorpe and Kirk Sandall	36.7
Wheatley Hills and Intake	32.9
Finningley	31.8

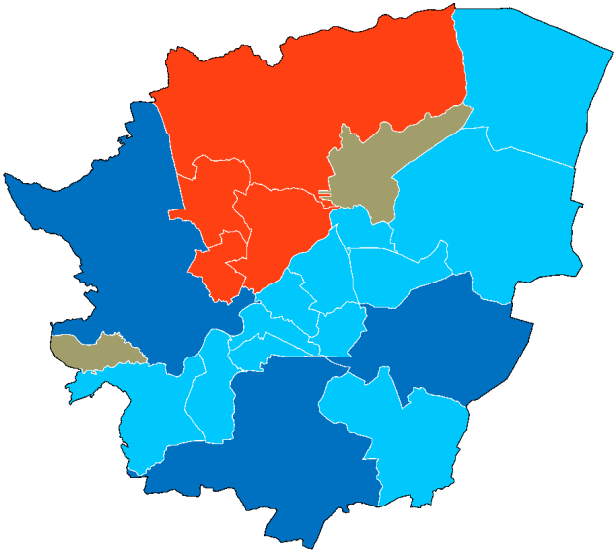
Take a look at how the forecasting website Electoral Calculus is indicating Doncaster would vote in a general election and you will find that every single ward in Doncaster Central, Doncaster East, and Rawmarsh & Conisbrough is projected to vote Reform UK.

The only reason it does not show the same for Doncaster North is that Reform didn't stand there at last year's general election: its algorithm cannot project results from a vote of zero. But given how other demographically identical wards elsewhere in Doncaster are being projected, Ed Miliband would not be saved as the polls currently look.

Indeed, UKIP polled most strongly back in 2014 (there were no elections in Doncaster in 2013; the year we use to benchmark the party's performance in the county councils) in wards within Doncaster North: Roman Ridge, Stainforth and Barnby Dun, Edenthorpe

and Kirk Sendall. Labour's vote is far weaker today than it was eleven years ago, before the EU referendum.

The local elections MRP that same website conducted in March 2025 was slightly less positive for Reform - but only by degrees. Their poll still gave them a majority of council seats and, again, was slightly warped by Reform not contesting Doncaster North at the general election. It is by no means certain that Labour will hold the four wards shown below, nor gain Sprotborough off the Conservatives.



Indicative map of March '25 Electoral Calculus local election MRP

And so the stage is set for evidence: real votes in real ballot boxes, of the much vaunted Reform UK surge claimed by opinion polls being a reality.

They will be enormously helped by the change in the electoral system for directly elected mayors to First Past The Post.

Reform now just needs to finish one vote ahead of Labour, on whatever vote share they can manage, to win the mayoralty. If the media hype surrounding Reform is an electoral reality, that should be much more easily achievable than winning a council majority - though that is not beyond the realm of possibilities either.

The final week poll of regional mayor contests (so excluding Doncaster's) included the race in Hull and East Yorkshire and gave Reform's Luke Campbell a comfortable lead. Hull is a city of similar size and not too dissimilar demographics to Doncaster, so if Reform are doing that well there, they're probably in the lead here too.

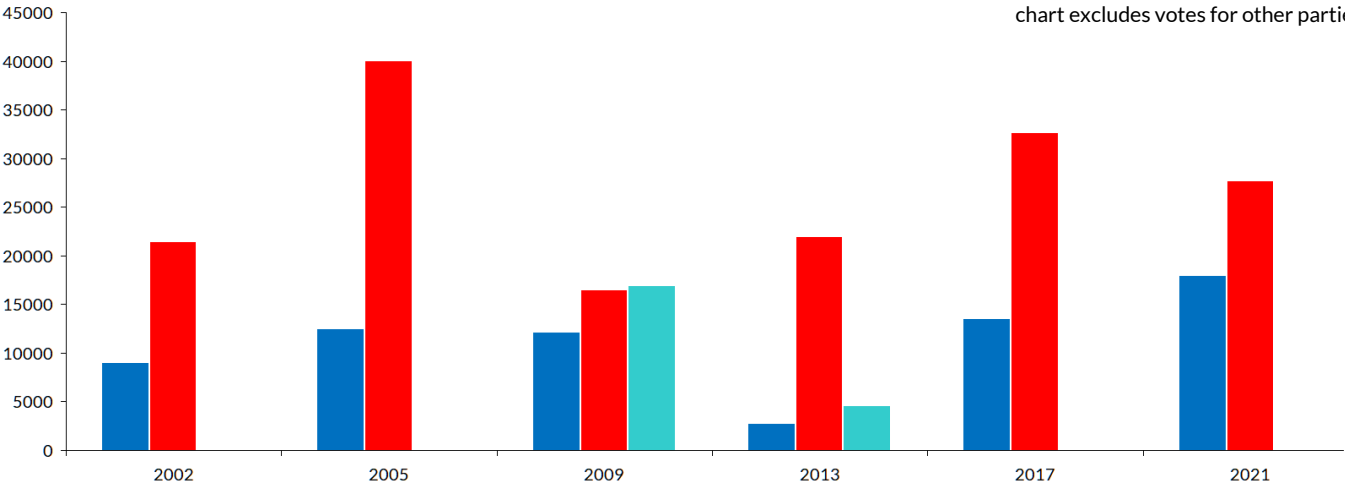
The decent but hardly spectacular 2019 general election result was not a harbinger of Conservative breakthrough in Doncaster, as their failure to win the new East and Isle of Axholme showed.

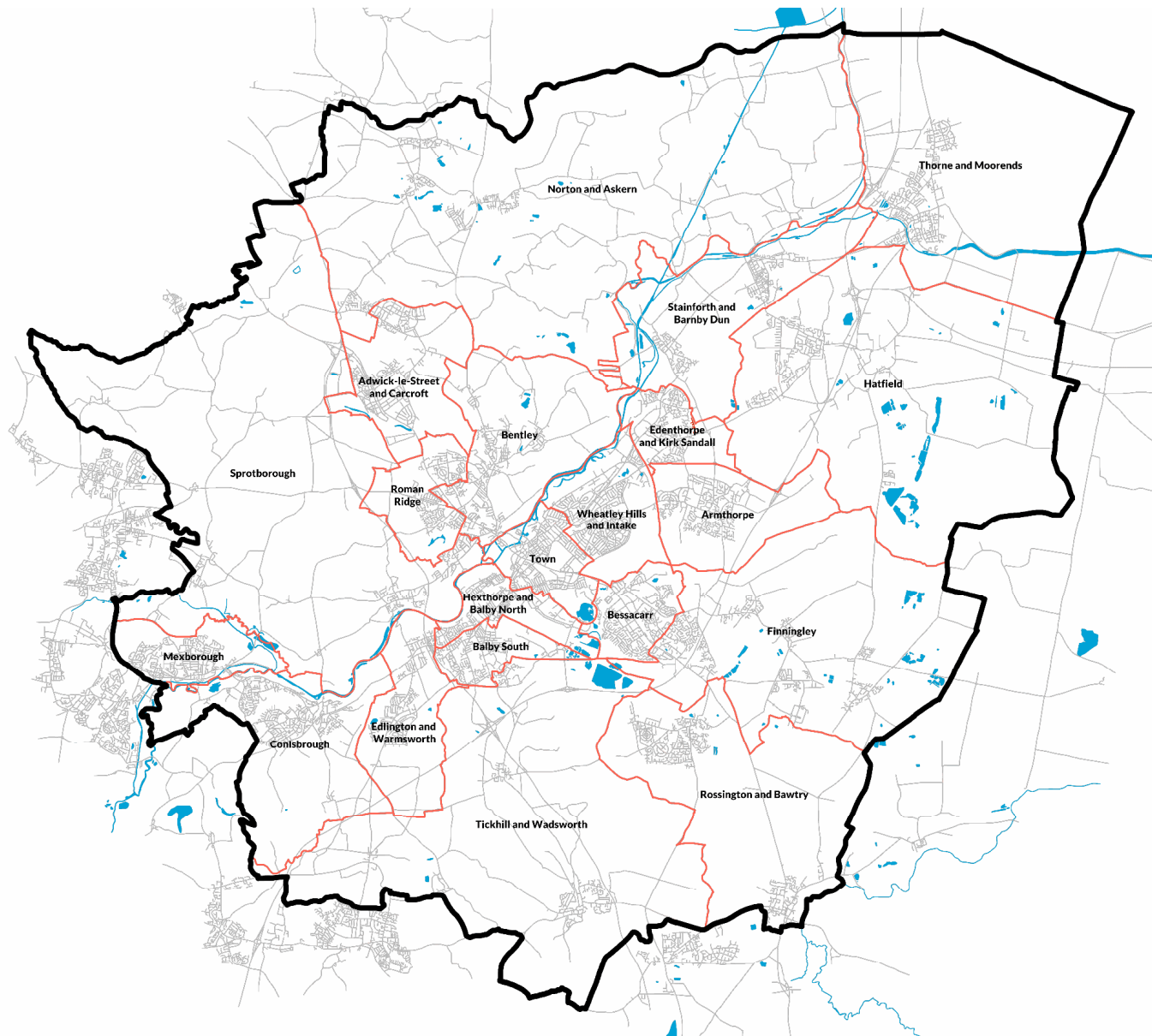
There are 54 seats on Doncaster council so 28 are needed for a majority. A majority on a council with a directly elected mayor is dramatically less important though, without one, as that English Democrat mayor Peter Davies discovered, it's much harder to drive an agenda through.

Conservatism hasn't really taken root in Doncaster. There are enclaves beyond the town that are affluent and normally return Conservative councillors but, even in those really awful low points for Labour, the borough never turned to the Tories.

Doncaster mayoral elections 2002-2021

Teal = English Democrats
chart excludes votes for other parties





Both the Britain Elects ward estimates from last year's general election and the Electoral Calculus projections indicate that the Conservatives can probably rely on the outlying rural ward of **Finningley** and beyond that nothing much at all. That'd represent nine losses.

The former Conservative MP for Don Valley, Nick Fletcher, is running to be mayor of Doncaster but the Tories have no chance of finishing second, let alone first. His presence on the ballot might keep some votes off the Reform pile but almost certainly not enough to keep the mayoralty Labour.

The brief Conservative interregnum, such as it was, should perhaps be viewed in the context of a large and growing blob of voters alienated by Labour's almost endless grip in Doncaster, the scandals, the increasing divide in values between metropolitan liberalism and bluff no-nonsense Yorkshire social conservatism, and the increasing feeling that whoever they vote in very little seems to change. Labour cannot credibly make the case that the malaise people tell reporters visiting Doncaster is nothing to do with them: it will not work.

In some ways, this is the same type of cloud of voters that has existed for decades in the completely different climbs of Worthing, where there a large anti-

Conservative vote has existed at least since the 1990s at local level. There, it manifested in a big Lib Dem vote which then transferred to UKIP and then surged to Labour (though there have been a couple of by-elections there since the general election which suggest the tide may be turning again there).

Reform UK targets



- ▶ Directly elected mayor (Lab)
- ▶ Bentley (3 Lab)
- ▶ Edenthorpe and Kirk Sandall (2 Lab)
- ▶ Hatfield (3 Lab)
- ▶ Mexborough (3 First)
- ▶ Norton and Askern (2 Lab, 1 Con)
- ▶ Rossington and Bawtry (3 Lab)
- ▶ Stainforth and Barnby Dun (1 Lab, 1 Con)
- ▶ Thorne and Moorends (3 Lab)
- ▶ Wheatley Hills and Intake (3 Lab)

Labour claims that it is taking the Reform threat in places like Doncaster seriously. Morgan McSweeney, Sir Keir Starmer's Chief of Staff in Downing Street, has been cited as claiming, having studied how populist parties around the world, that the antidote to Reform is "delivery". That may be proved correct, but probably not soon enough to save Labour in Donny.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	11	40	0	4
2023 - defection: Bev Chapman, Mexborough - Mex First to Lab	11	41	0	3
Current	11	41	0	3

David Bettney

Born in Macclesbury in 1970 - Former Regimental Sergeant Major, with many operational tours, including Bosnia, Iraq, and Afghanistan - Last 15 years he has been building and running successful businesses across the Middle East.

David has purposely not fielded any local candidates, as independents and minor parties "MUST" have the chance to elect this council, and send a clear message to Westminster that the old two party system no longer serves us!

What David is for:

- Massively rebuilding British industry, and Nationalising our Steel production. We can't lower make a better anyone, never mind a Tank!
- I will carry out a 100% financial audit on the council and its spending over the last 25 years, and every penny will be accounted for! I shall assemble an Eton Maths elite team, to immediately cut any waste from the system. I will send any rebates straight to pensioners to assist them with their "Winter Fuel Payments", now they have been abandoned by this government we WILL look after our elderly!
- I will personally go on police patrols, and will tackle knife-crime, and anti-social behavior head on...I will not tolerate our streets being dangerous for our children.

What David is against:

- The WEF, WHO, Net Zero, 15 minute cities, and uncontrolled mass immigration.

Go to the SDP website www.sdp.org.uk and see David's full list of policies and plans to put Doncaster on the right track

Ben Habib

Ben Habib, former Brexit Party MEP, and Deputy Leader of Reform, and current British PAC Chairman, is backing the SDP's David Bettney

"I'm backing David, because he's 100% the right man for the job. This is not about which team colour you normally vote for. It's about getting the best possible Mayor who has local knowledge with international experience, so that we can get our country thriving again. If you want real change, then you have to change how you vote."

Ben Habib

ZERO TOLERANCE

If I hear of any grooming gangs, I'll suspend my salary and donate everything to local charities until our children are safe. Grooming gangs will not operate on my watch in Doncaster.

SDP Social Democratic Party

Family SDP Industry SDP Nation SDP

sdp.org.uk

VOTE FRANK CALLADINE BRITISH DEMOCRATS

Dear Doncaster Residents,

I have lived and worked in Doncaster my entire life. This city is not just my home but my heart and soul.

A deep-seated belief in the need for change and accountability in Doncaster drives my candidacy for Mayor. I pledge to always act in the best interests of our city and its surrounding areas.

Like many of you, I am tired of the broken promises from politicians! I will always put the interests of the people of Doncaster first. I am determined to be a strong voice for Doncaster, particularly on crucial issues such as protecting our green spaces and opposing mass immigration. I will fight to stop the excessive spending of our taxpayer money on housing economic migrants in hotels!

If you want real change, please vote for me in this election. Together, we can make Doncaster a better place to live.

Campaigning on my behalf, Frank Calladine

Frank Calladine British Democrats

Published and promoted by the candidate & agent Frank Calladine, all of 75 Sprothorough Road, Sprothorough, Doncaster, DN5 8BW

MY PLEDGES TO YOU!

HOUSING

Local housing will be allocated to Doncaster people and our veterans first. Say NO to building on the Green Belt and flood plains. Let's protect our towns and villages from overdevelopment.

PROTECT OUR CHILDREN

I will push for a full independent public inquiry into grooming gangs.

VALUE FOR MONEY

Keep Council Tax as low as possible. Utilise available grants effectively, ensuring each area benefits. Stop outsourcing and privatisation of council services, and gradually reinstate them in-house.

ENVIRONMENT

Say NO to solar panel farms at Conisburgh and Moss near the town of Adlestree and NO to battery storage at Thorpe Marsh. Encourage dredging of rivers and have regular clearing of culverts and drains.

CRIME

More investment in policing and increased police visibility to combat crime and anti-social behaviour.

DEMOCRACY

Choose a Mayor's cabinet from all the available talent to ensure balanced and unbiased perspectives. This will be transparent, and I will reduce the cabinet from nine to five members. The reduction would provide Doncaster taxpayers with better value for money.

After two years of my four-year term, I will hold a referendum on the mayoral system. This will allow us to evaluate the system's effectiveness and make any necessary adjustments.

CONTACT US

Email: contact@britishdemocrats.co.uk

Call: 01509 447 478 Website: britishdemocrats.co.uk

VOTE SOCIALIST TUSC AGAINST CUTS

ON 1 MAY

FOR JOBS, HOMES & SERVICES - AGAINST RACIST DIVISION

Andy Hiles, a painter & decorator, a trade unionist and now a benefits advice buddy, says:

"Labour aren't Labour anymore. Reform are more Tory than the Tories. We need a new workers' party to represent us. Fund Welfare not Warfare. Tax the Super-Rich. I'll be a working-class voice and socialist alternative for the people of Doncaster."

ANDY HILES FOR MAYOR Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

TUSC AGAINST CUTS

Published by Alastair Fox (TUSC agent) to promote Andy Hiles, both at 10 Cedric Avenue, Conisburgh, DN1 3PZ

IF ELECTED, I WILL

- Restore Winter Fuel Allowance and disability benefits by using Household Support Funds and other council reserves
- Demand full government funding to repair and re-build Doncaster Royal Infirmary
- Refuse to implement any more government cuts. Set a council budget based on what Doncaster needs and rally the townspeople to fight the government for the funding needed to increase jobs and services.
- Launch a mass council house-building programme
- Give young people a future by stopping unnecessary school exclusions, introducing an educational maintenance allowance and creating proper council apprenticeships and decent jobs at the end of training.

TUSC ELECTION PUBLIC MEETING

Tuesday 22 April at 7pm at C-View centre, Church View, DN1 1AF

Speakers: Andy Hiles, Dave Neilson, former workers' MP on a workers' wage; Tosh McDonald, former train drivers union president and ex-Labour councillor

TO SUPPORT ANDY

TUSC - Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition

07706710041

TUSC agent: electservice@yahoo.co.uk

TUSC: www.tusc.org.uk Socialist Party: www.socialistparty.org.uk

SCAN FOR TUSC

#JULIEBUCKLEY4GREENMAYOR

JULIE BUCKLEY GREEN PARTY

"I'll work hard for Doncaster - putting people before party politics and fighting for a fair deal for our communities"

Lower Bills and Community-Owned Energy

Like many residents, I'm worried about plans for huge solar farms on our greenbelt. Instead, I'll back local, community-owned energy, like rooftop solar, wind turbines, and hydro power - projects that we control and benefit from. This means:

- Lower energy bills for households
- Good local jobs and investment in Doncaster
- A cleaner, greener future led by our communities

An Economy That Works for Doncaster

Too much money is leaving our community. I'll work to change that. By backing local people, traders and businesses, not big corporations, I'll help keep wealth here in Doncaster, where it belongs.

I'll support our market traders

I'll introduce a new approach called the Preston Model, which puts people first and keeps more public money circulating in our local economy.

Right Homes, Right Place, Right Price

I'll deliver genuinely affordable homes that:

- Protect our local green spaces for future generations
- Are kinder to our environment
- Tackle fuel poverty

Lower Energy Bills, Warmer Homes.

Our energy bills are too high because our homes lose heat. I'll roll out a home insulation programme to bring down bills and keep homes warm.

Building the Right Way

New developments must come with proper investment in local services, like GPs, buses and schools.

Future - Proof Housing

New homes will meet the highest energy standards, with solar panels and heat pumps where possible - cutting costs and carbon for the long term.

NICK FLETCHER FOR DONCASTER MAYOR

Doncaster needs change. Desperately. I am asking for your vote because I am the only credible candidate to stop this decline. I have the necessary experience in life, business, and politics to make things happen. Real change.

This isn't about party politics. No Mayor can stop the boats. I wish they could. This election is about saying that it's unacceptable to have beggars on our streets. I will deal with them. Zero tolerance. It's unacceptable to have a town centre where people feel unsafe. It's unacceptable to watch our airport close, our market dwindle, and let the decline continue. Doncaster not only needs a mayor

with the necessary experience but also with the energy and determination to make the changes that are so obviously needed. I am 52. I have been successful in business and as an MP. I have the drive and the determination to make change happen.

Doncaster is my home. I was born here. I was raised here. I did my apprenticeship here. I set up my business here. I raised my family here. I have trained scores of apprentices here. I was elected as the first Conservative MP for 60 years here. I am now standing for Mayor here. Why? So, your family and my family can raise their families here. Raise them in a place of opportunity and in a place they can be proud to call home.

We have had decades of decline. It's time for change, time to stop the rot. Stop the party politics. Time to put Doncaster and its people first. With your vote and your support, I can, we can, it is time to make Doncaster safe again and great again.

Vote for me, give me the chance to prove it, watch Doncaster and its people truly fly.

Nick Fletcher

MAKE DONCASTER GREAT AGAIN

TWELVE CORE PLEDGES

- Create a thriving Doncaster, starting with free parking
- Support Doncaster Airport
- Fight for a new Hospital for Doncaster
- Bring investment and new jobs to Doncaster
- Stop Doncaster money from being spent in Sheffield
- Work with community groups, churches, and businesses to help support our families. (When families win, children win, we all win)
- Work with families to help our young people end up on the right path
- Work with our youth to create 10 new youth clubs
- Make sure our city, towns and villages are safe
- Stop the building of cycle paths that will never be used
- Fix potholes and stop any further anti-car measures
- Create a Doncaster Day on St. George's Day

WORKERS PARTY

"Lend me your vote, and send the elite a clear message that we have had enough."

VOTE LEADER GEORGE GALLOWAY

AHSAN JAMIL FOR DONCASTER

"Britain wastes £12,000 a minute on weapons. The Labour government is backing a genocide in Palestine and taking us to war with Russia. The money should be spent on the NHS and British public services."

LIKE ME, HAVE YOU HAD ENOUGH OF:

- Filthy streets, anti-social behaviour and drugs?
- Poor housing, lack of investment and stagnation?
- Labour politicians wrecking the economy?
- Reform: just like Labour, committed to the backdoor privatisation & gutting of our NHS?
- The main parties allowing unrestricted immigration and excess of our industry?

"Use this opportunity to vote for an honest man. Vote Workers Party - Vote Ahsan Jamil."

AHSAN JAMIL for Mayor of Doncaster



Please vote to
re-elect me on **Thursday 1 May**

I will:

-  **REOPEN OUR AIRPORT**
and deliver over 5,000 jobs
-  **TACKLE TROUBLEMAKERS**
to make our streets safer
-  **REPAIR DONCASTER'S ROADS** WITH £7 MILLION and investment in flood defences
-  **BRING THOUSANDS MORE JOBS TO DONCASTER** and regenerate our streets and markets
-  **CHAMPION DONCASTER AND SUPPORT OUR VETERANS**

Being your Mayor has been the greatest privilege of my life. I was born in Askrain and still live nearby in Norton, I know that Doncaster is a special place and that it deserves an experienced Mayor who will deliver for local people.

Under my leadership, we have:

- Kept council tax the lowest in Yorkshire.
- Secured a deal to reopen our airport.
- Brought millions of pounds of investment to our city.
- Improved educational outcomes for our young people.

Only I have a trusted track record of delivering for Doncaster.

"We've achieved so much together, but there is still work to be done. At this election, only a Labour Mayor can give Doncaster a seat at the table."



Ross at Doncaster Market



Ross with local hero and veteran Ben Parkinson MBE

Vote Labour

<p>What's Gone Wrong in Doncaster</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Corruption buried under bureaucracy • Youth ignored, services gutted • Public spaces neglected, heritage sold • Developers first, people last • Hospitals overwhelmed, staff underpaid • Market culture dying, town centre crumbling • Community voices silenced 	<p>My Plan to Make Doncaster, Doncaster:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build a new hospital with Free state parking • Reconnect communities • Tram/monorail & pedestrian zones • Revive the town centre • Clean, green, creative • Support our youth • More skateparks, centres, events • Ban the land vultures • Stop the sell-off of Doncaster • Cut council fat cats • Fund frontline workers • Freeze council tax • Boost small business rates • Real ASB control 	<p>This is for the Doncastrians</p> <p>The mums working two jobs. The kids who went hungry. The friends we lost The voices never heard.</p> <p>I'm Richie Vallance – independent, unbought, and unbossed.</p> <p>If you've had enough of the Quockerwodgers, the party stooges, the sellouts, and the silencers... vote for something real.</p> <p>Vote Richie Vallance. Let's Make Doncaster, Doncaster.</p>
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Vote **Doug Wright** for Mayor

Fighting for Health and social care

Since my early days as a trade unionist and campaigner, public services have always been at the heart of both my politics and my principles.

I've always believed people are equal and should share equally in the country's wealth that we should help those who can't help themselves, and that we can achieve more as a community than we can as individuals.

This election is important and its timing is crucial!

We need a bold and radical plan that delivers real change for the people of Doncaster. It should offer a new way of serving the public – one that puts people back at the heart of everything we do.

To do that we need ambition, radicalism and someone who will work tirelessly to serve our community, and drive bigger and better solutions and support for the people of Doncaster. I will do that.

Because of the challenges we face by austerity, underinvestment and political indifference to our city, I could not stand on the sidelines.

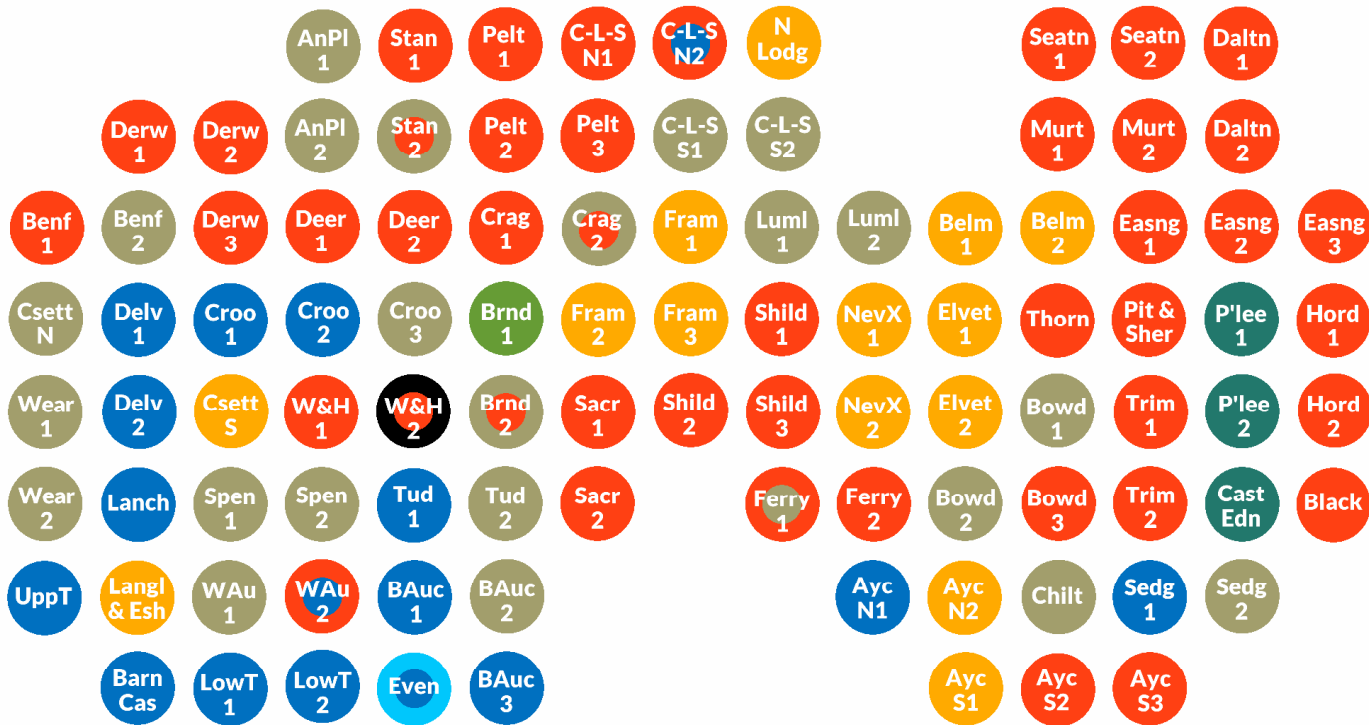
That is why I am standing to be your Mayor and why I'm asking for support on May Day (1st May 2025).

If elected as your mayor, I will fight to deliver:

- Socialist Public Services** – return local people back into the heart of public services that councils provide.
- Health and Social Care** – both equally available when needed, to everyone, free at the point of use, as intended in 1948 and not an **American style** health insurance scheme.
- Wider Determinants of Health** – Councils provide Public Health, Social Care and many other public services that affect people's health such as housing, transport, environment, pollution, access to public spaces etc.
- Energy efficient council housing** – a cleaner, greener, healthier Doncaster
- A 21st Century Workforce** – decent incomes and employment with decent education and opportunities for all our children, including those with special educational needs.
- Fair Transport** – improve transport by operating in the same way as **Manchester and London**, so Doncaster will have free local public transport for those 60 and over and for our children, and students up to 21.
- Justice and Equality** – tackling injustice and inequality – wherever I see it, and **making sure** that our city supports the many not the few.

Fighting for Health and social care

Durham



Labour lost their majority in the only (unitary) council they controlled four years ago, and which they had never, ever, before lost: County Durham.

This was expected following the 2019 general election when, again for the first time ever, the Conservatives had won three Durham constituencies: Bishop Auckland, North West Durham and Sedgefield (plus

Darlington: in the county of Durham but a separate unitary council in its own right). Still, there's a big difference between an expectation of defeat and the reality of it, so it was still a shock to see this of all counties fall from Labour's grasp.

Despite this loss, Labour remained - by far - the largest party on the council though locked out of

power by a coalition of pretty much all the other parties. The Conservatives underperformed in 2021 compared to their 2019 general election breakthrough, in part because they that struggle to field a full slate of candidates on this huge council (managing 110 of 126; a big improvement on 2017 when they contested only 76). This year they've slid back to 73: fewer even than the Lib Dems (76) and far behind Reform which was short by just one: 97 candidates for 98 seats. Labour, as you'd expect in this county, is contesting all 98.

Because Labour has enjoyed such complete dominance here for so long, the principal route for non-Labour voters to express themselves has been via independents and, just as in Cornwall, these independents are well-established - especially in the north of the county around Consett and Stanley.

It's probably also true that many of those who plumped for Boris Johnson's Conservatives at the 2019 general election for the first time in their lives are more comfortable choosing independents ahead of Tories in council elections, especially where indies have a real chance of winning.

Following their general election landslide, Labour will have been somewhat optimistic of regaining control of County Durham in May by a comfortable margin.

They had, after all, reversed all the Conservatives' general election gains from 2019, as well as regaining three council seats in by-elections. Several Conservative councillors, seeing the writing on the wall for their party, defected to Reform.

Today there are seventeen in the Conservative group at Durham's brutalist county hall: there were twenty-four elected in 2021 so the party has lost almost a third of its strength through by-elections and defections. Extensive boundary and council size changes will notionally have reduce this strength to just fourteen and every forecast of how things have gone for the Conservatives since last year's general election suggest they may end up with no more than five councillors - and that's the top end of the range.

But Labour's expectations of a return to power now look imperilled. It was initially easy to mistake the substantial vote Reform won at last year's general election as solely a threat to the Conservatives. That Labour reclaimed all its lost seats with ease could hardly be viewed as failure, after all. The split in the right between Reform and Conservatives was all Labour needed to win - and go on winning, even with its own support dramatically lower.

In five of the six County Durham constituencies, Reform polled well over 20% of the vote, surpassing 10,000 votes in Easington, North Durham and Blaydon & Consett - well over 50,000 across the county. If the polls are accurate Reform has since added at least ten points to its general election vote share. That gain is more likely to be larger in counties like Durham and smaller in, say, Oxfordshire or Surrey. And there isn't going to be a big split in the right of centre vote in Durham because all the indicators are the Tory vote here has evaporated. Suddenly, therefore, Reform becomes a very serious threat to Labour in its truest heartland.

2024 general election Reform vote shares

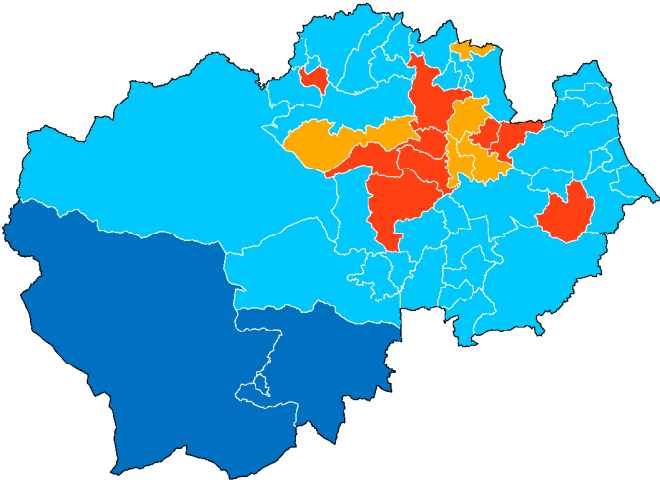
Constituency	vote	%vote
Easington	10,232	29.8
North Durham	10,689	25.7
Newton Aycliffe	9,555	24.0
Blaydon & Consett (part)	10,007	23.7
Bishop Auckland	9,466	23.4
City of Durham	7,374	18.2

As polls stood at the end of February, Electoral Calculus extrapolated that Reform would win every division within the North Durham constituency, nine of the ten in Easington (a seat the Tories didn't get especially close to winning in 2019), nine of eleven in Bishop Auckland, four of the five divisions that comprise the Consett half of Blaydon & Consett and six out of eight in Newton Aycliffe & Spennymoor.

The only constituency in which Reform's writ doesn't quite run is the quite different City of Durham and, even here, they are projected to be only seven percentage points behind Labour. Remember that this constituency extends far beyond just the university city: there is plenty of rural acreage much more friendly to Reform.

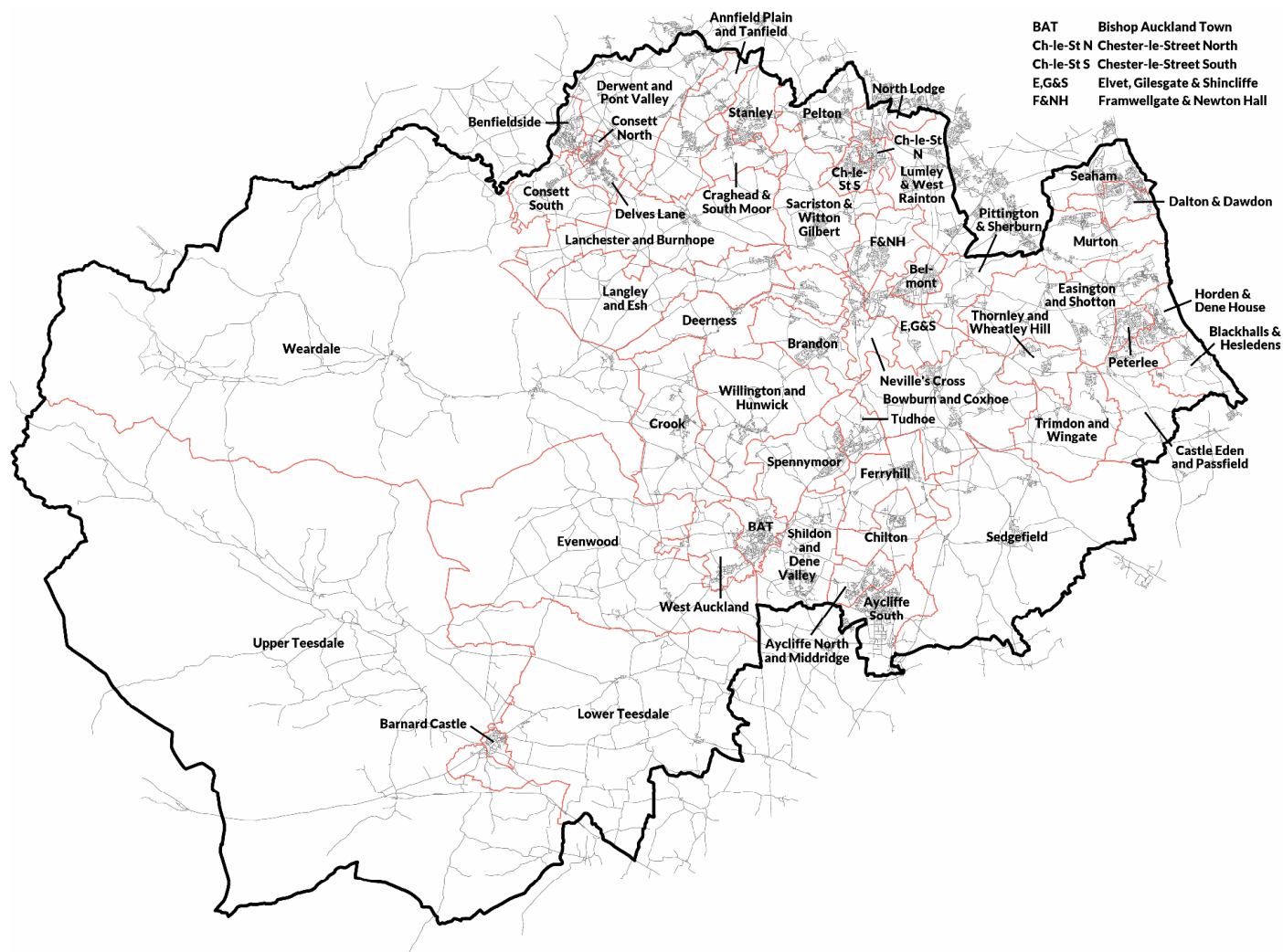
This projection, albeit of voting intentions for a general rather than council election, would clearly give Reform a big notional overall majority on Durham County Council. It is highly unlikely that Reform will achieve that. And yet that same website's council election MRP in March suggested a not all that dissimilar result, with the Conservatives banished to

the rural fringe around Barnard's Castle and Labour left fighting it out to come a distant second with the Lib Dems in the seats in the City of Durham and its immediate surrounds.



Even if things don't turn out quite as good as this for Reform - and they won't, not least because the independents are too well embedded - becoming the largest party in this corner of the world would be a massive earthquake. County Durham is as central to Labour's romanticised identity of struggle and sacrifice, pride and patriotism, the trade unionism of rallies and brass bands and working class solidarity as it is possible to get.

UKIP did not make the slightest dent here at its peak, despite the county being strongly Leave (58-42), though they did poll some respectable vote shares in the minority of wards where they were able to field candidates.



The difference between Reform today and UKIP in 2013 isn't just the wider range of grievances a certain demographic of voter concentrated in this county now hold against mainstream politics of all stripes.

Nor is it the fact Labour is now in government rather than an opposition party that could still attract protest

votes against the incumbent Tories It is also that back in 2013 the Labour vote was not just larger but much more solid. Today voters, including frustrated Labour voters, want change.

They won't get it voting Labour any more, they believe.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	24	53	17	32
2022 - by-election: Ferryhill, Lab gain from Ind	24	54	17	31
2022 - defection: Karen Hawley, Passfield, NEP to Ind	24	54	17	31
2022 - defection: Diane Howarth, Peterlee East, NEP to Ind	24	54	17	31
2022 - by-election: West Auckland - Lab gain from Con	23	55	17	31
2023 - by-election: Chester-le-Street East - Lab gain from Con	22	56	17	31
2024 - defection: Mike McGaun, Lanchester - Con to Ind	21	56	17	32
2024 - defection: Neville Jones, Aycliffe East - LD to Ind	21	56	16	33
2024 - defection: Angela Hanson, Stanley - Lab to Ind	21	55	16	34
2024 - defection: Sam McMahon, Craghead and Southmoor - Lab to Ind	21	54	16	35
2024 - defection: Robert Potts, Evenwood - Con to Ref	20	54	16	36
2024 - defection: Paul Taylor, Brandon - Lab to Ind	20	53	16	37
2025 - defection: Cathy Hunt, Woodhouse Close - Con to Ref	19	53	16	38
2025 - defection: Joe Quinn, Ferryhill - Con to Ref	18	53	16	39
2025 - defection: Joanne Howey, Woodhouse Close - Con to Ind	17	53	16	40
2025 - defection: Mike McGaun, Lanchester - Ind to Ref	17	53	16	40
2025 - vacancy: Fraser Tinsley, Willington & Hunwick - resigned, Lab	17	52	16	40
Current	17	52	16	40

A UKIP candidate - indeed, any non-Labour candidate - came up against a very much larger stock of voters that back then had never even considered voting anything other than Labour. The party was far harder to overcome twelve years ago.

Today, political loyalties have weakened dramatically, much of the traditional Labour vote is at best disaffected and maybe even alienated, Reform appear to be talking to their concerns and plenty of people have got more comfortable with breaking the habits of a lifetime and voting against Labour - with the expectation their vote will actually defeat them.

This is reflected in a steady increase in the number of parties and candidates willing to take on Labour. 360 people contested the 2013 elections; 384 stood in 2017, 408 in 2021 and 449 are competing this time. Of course, standing doesn't guarantee winning but half of Labour's dominance in the old days was that they barely faced an opposition and even more rarely a variety of choice.

Reform is so much stronger than UKIP was in the north, better resourced and more organised that comparisons with 2013 are almost meaningless.

Reform isn't just an existential threat to the Conservatives, and a serious threat to Labour- they also look set to push the Lib Dems back to their City of Durham redoubt. At present, as well as controlling

nine of the ten seats in the city, Lib Dems represent seats as far flung as Consett, North Lodge just above Chester-le-Street, and Newton Aycliffe.

There is also a Green councillor in Brandon, on the south-western edge of the City of Durham, who is re-standing (as his wife, hoping to win the Labour-held seat in that division) and the North East Party holds Peterlee and adjoining Castle Eden & Passfield in the east of the county.

Whether any of these diverse parties survive depends on the true scale of the Reform wave and from whence it is drawn. If it is principally a realignment of votes that weren't Labour in 2021 they will be toast. If the blend contains a lot of disaffected Labour voters from 2021, the field could be split in such a way that they hang on.

Perverse results could even manifest, such as gains for the Seaham Community Party in the north-eastern corner of the county. But more likely than not, in most instances, Reform looks like it is mopping up both non-Labour and ex-Labour votes, which is a recipe for an unprecedented repudiation that will probably make the 2021 result look relatively decent. But then the real test for Reform will commence: a one-off flash-in-the-pan or a long-term realignment of Labour England to the right?

Key seats

Reform UK targets

- ▶ Aycliffe North and Middridge
- ▶ Aycliffe South
- ▶ Barnard Castle
- ▶ Bishop Auckland
- ▶ Blackhalls and Hesledens
- ▶ Bowburn and Coxhoe
- ▶ Castle Eden and Passfield
- ▶ Chilton (Ind)
- ▶ Consett North
- ▶ Consett South
- ▶ Craghead and South Moor
- ▶ Crook
- ▶ Dalton and Dawdon
- ▶ Derwent and Pont Valley
- ▶ Easington and Shotton
- ▶ Evenwood
- ▶ Ferryhill
- ▶ Lanchester and Burnhope
- ▶ Langley and Esh
- ▶ Lower Teesdale
- ▶ Lumley and West Rainton
- ▶ Murton
- ▶ Pelton
- ▶ Sacriston and Witton Gilbert
- ▶ Seaham
- ▶ Sedgefield
- ▶ Shildon and Dene Valley
- ▶ Spennymoor
- ▶ Tudhoe
- ▶ Upper Teesdale
- ▶ Weardale
- ▶ West Auckland
- ▶ Willington and Hunwick



Labour targets

- ▶ Annfield Plain
- ▶ Aycliffe North and Middridge
- ▶ Aycliffe South
- ▶ Belmont
- ▶ Bishop Auckland Town
- ▶ Brandon
- ▶ Castle Eden and Passfield
- ▶ Chilton
- ▶ Crook
- ▶ Delves Lane
- ▶ Elvet and Gilesgate
- ▶ Peterlee
- ▶ Sedgefield
- ▶ West Auckland
- ▶ Woodhouse Close



Conservative targets

- ▶ Tudhoe
- ▶ Weardale



Green target

- ▶ Brandon (1 Lab)



VOTE INDEPENDENT VOTE FRED LANGLEY

I'm Fred, a product of Prefabs, 3 Coronation Avenue and 3 Shildon schools. I subsequently obtained an MSc, following 20 years in education in Africa and 10 years with Billy Elliot. I returned to Shildon, and became involved with four voluntary groups. My focus is ringfencing professionalism and accountability for elected representatives.



CURRENT ACTIVITIES

- Council Tax
- Family Hub
- Transport
- Mining Memorial
- Music Bands

our County Councillor, I will ensure that serious attention is given to all concerns. I guarantee regular surgeries and strict adoption of the POLAN PRINCIPLES.

CONCERN INCLUDE
ng - Antisocial - Transport - Youth - Family - Health - Council Tax

DEPENDENTS LISTEN TO YOU
AND NOT TO PARTY WHIPS

flangley@hotmail.co.uk
Perated by Creative Graphics - 12 Pier St, Bishopscote, Macclesfield, Cheshire, SK10 5JL

FREE



NC
NORTH CAROLINA

THE TORRES AND LABARCA
HAVE BORNEN DISMAY

29%
29%

WIN
LOSERS
TORRES
CAVIT

NATIONAL POLLS AND HEADLINES

10

REFORM

...putting back
...round tax, safer
...up, unlike other
...party policies,
...change wasteful
...ine, and restore
...government.

**DURHAM IS BROKEN
REFORM WILL FIX IT**

- X** DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL IS SHIP HELD IN COURT
- X** EEE HELD IN COURT PROPOSED TO HOLD BUREAU
- X** DURHAM SUFFERS DANGEROUS
...AND RISK OF THE WORST
...RESULTS IN NORTH EAST



Black Gary
White II

OK

REFORM

upport us?
...ask or visit
...support

1st 2025

DURHAM COUNTY COUNCIL
LOCAL ELECTIONS

Produced by Gary Barker, on behalf of the candidates, at 141 City Road,
Durham, DH1 1TA

REFORMER

Produced by Reform UK, on behalf of Reform UK, at 141 City Road,
Durham, DH1 1TA

**HOW DURHAM COUNCIL
WASTES YOUR MONEY**

- YOUR COUNCIL TAX HAS GONE UP BY 27% IN JUST FIVE YEARS •
- The Chief Executive wants over £13,000 per year, which is £48,000 more than the Prime Minister

- Over £40,000 spent to send 4 executive staff to the South of France
- Over £206,000 paid to a recruitment company for finding 19 new employees
- In last 2 years, over £160,000 was spent on transition costs
- Over £75.9 million spent on volunteer training and consultants in 2015
- Over £100,000 spent on less than a mile of cycle lane bollards

AND

£409 MILLION IN DEBT

By Alexander
and we've had it.

 Yes, making

 decisions easier,
publicly.

 or who? Together,
people, not IT.

 members.

Labour's Pledges:



Safer Streets

We'll tackle crime and antisocial behaviour – deploying more neighbourhood officers to create CCTV systems with communities and monitor, supporting high streets and businesses.



Good, Local Jobs

We'll work with the Labour Mayor to generate investment thousands of quality well-paid and local – new – jobs.



Make Housing Work for Communities

We'll crack down on dodgy landlords, and local system abuse and generate thousands of empty buildings for sale. We'll build local homes for local people, so everyone has somewhere to live.



Fix Our Roads

We'll repair the potholes that make driving around our county high on impossible. The Coalition failed to get a grip of the issue, leaving our roads in a dire state – we will not let it continue.



Better Transport

We'll get towns and villages at the heart of our transport network. With our 'Access' plan to bring buses into public ownership, we want you to tell us the routes required to get to work, school or shops, fitting people before profits.



Vibrant High Streets

Labour will help breathe new life into our towns and villages, using new powers and securing investment to regenerate our high streets.



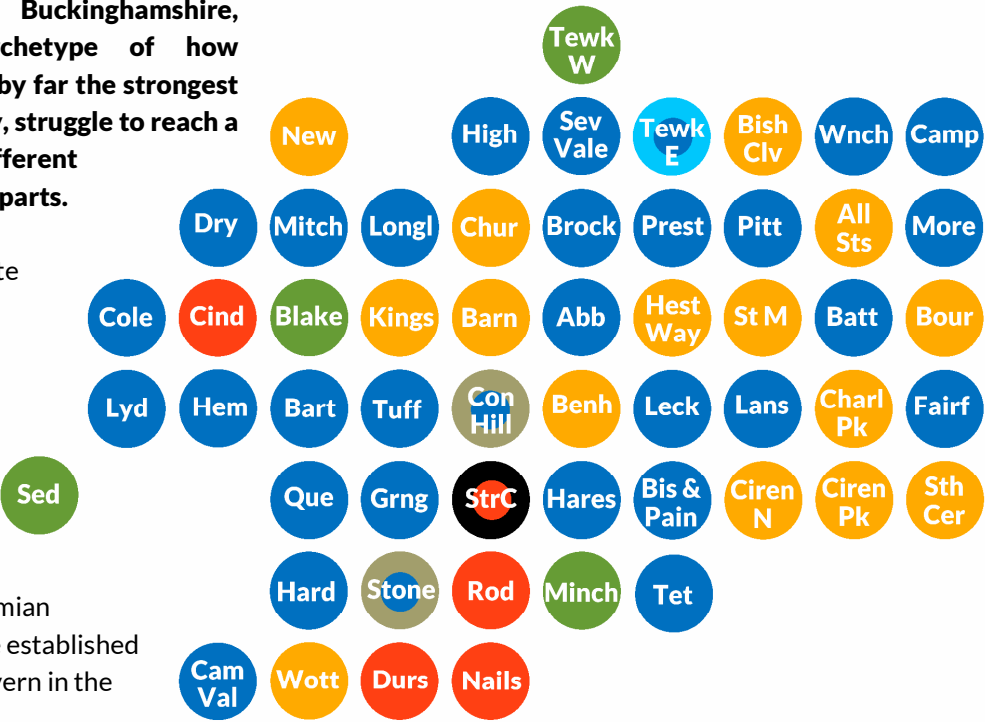
Gloucestershire



1 vacancy (Lab held)

Even more so than Buckinghamshire, Gloucestershire is an archetype of how Conservatives, despite being by far the strongest party across the entire county, struggle to reach a majority because they face different strong opponents in different parts.

The Liberal Democrats dominate Cheltenham and in parts of the rural county to the east around Cirencester. They have also made more recent strides in the suburbs of Gloucester and satellite towns of Churchdown and Brockworth. The Greens have long been strong in somewhat bohemian Stroud, and more recently have established themselves across the river Severn in the Forest of Dean.



That corner of the county will be a four-way tussle between the Tories, Labour, Greens and Reform. Labour were able to win the parliamentary seats of Gloucester, Stroud and Forest of Dean at last year's general election but those gains ran counter to remarkably unimpressive council election showings, especially in Gloucester and the Forest.

These competing threats make it increasingly difficult for the Conservatives to win a majority on Gloucestershire county council nowadays. They scraped a three seat majority in 2021 - one of their best ever election years nationally - after losing three seats net (and that despite gaining four to offset the seven they lost).

That majority was erased by suspensions and defections, though one of the Tory councillors, having switched to the Greens, returned after a few months and is defending her rural division to the north of Stroud, this year.

One Conservative in **Tewkesbury East** (which is actually a rural division with only a small portion of the town within in) has defected to Reform; two others were suspended from the party (one in Gloucester, one in Stroud) and both of them are contesting their seats as independents against new Conservative candidates.

However, notionally the Conservatives have got their majority back because the size of the county council has increased by two seats to 55, and the new divisions, both of them around or alongside the river Severn, would have elected Tories in 2021 had they existed. Nonetheless, there is no realistic prospect of the Conservatives regaining their majority this year. Indeed, they will be doing very well to remain the largest party.

There are significant Tory vulnerabilities right across the county. This may be especially true in what are likely to be highly divided, divisive results in Forest of Dean, where winners will probably be elected on low percentage shares and anything could happen.

There are three Conservative divisions in Cheltenham that look highly vulnerable: **Leckhampton & Warden Hill** (majority 104), **Battledown & Charlton Kings** (221), **Lansdown & Park** (465) and. They hold a fourth, the outlying **Prestbury & Swindon Village** which they gained last time after the incumbent "People Against

Bureaucracy" councillor retired and which has been heavily redrawn (it was Pittville & Prestbury).

But in last year's all-out Cheltenham elections, the Conservatives won no seats at all. PAB and a Green split Prestbury; while the Lib Dems thrashed the Tories 53-17 in Swindon Village. So the Conservatives could even lose this one despite being almost 1,200 ahead in 2021.

They may also have some vulnerabilities in Cotswold district even though the Lib Dems hold half the divisions here already.

The Greens have an outside shot at gaining **Tetbury** in the far south-west of the district. But they might be stymied as the Lib Dems are contesting Tetbury this year. In 2021 they gave the Greens a pass and Labour is too weak here to influence things so it was effectively a two-horse race. Much will hinge on how many Conservative votes Reform takes.

Amusingly, the reverse is true in the redrawn **Moreton, Stow & the Rissingtons** division. Here the Greens stood aside last time and are contesting it this year. The Lib Dems were 492 votes adrift there in 2021.

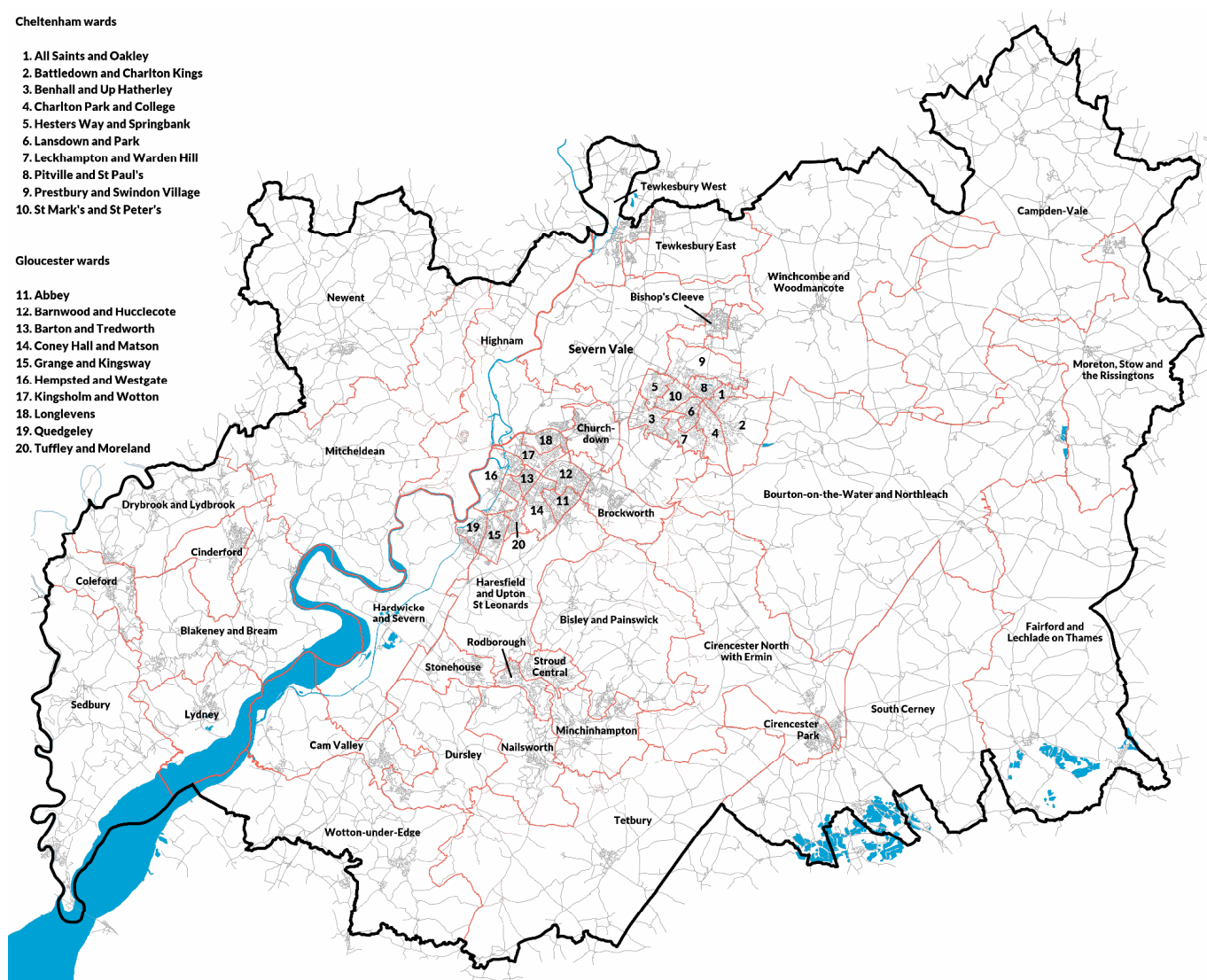
In Stroud, the number one battleground does not feature the Conservatives. **Stroud Central** was a battle royal in 2021 when former Stroud Labour MP David Drew went up against former Green MEP for the South West region Molly Scott-Cato. Drew won, gaining the seat from the Greens who'd held it for the preceding twelve years.

Cheltenham wards

1. All Saints and Oakley
2. Battledown and Charlton Kings
3. Benhall and Up Hatherley
4. Charlton Park and College
5. Hesters Way and Springbank
6. Lansdown and Park
7. Leckhampton and Warden Hill
8. Pitville and St Paul's
9. Prestbury and Swindon Village
10. St Mark's and St Peter's

Gloucester wards

11. Abbey
12. Barnwood and Hucclecote
13. Barton and Tredworth
14. Coney Hall and Matson
15. Grange and Kingsway
16. Hempsted and Westgate
17. Kingsholm and Wotton
18. Longlevens
19. Quedgeley
20. Tuffley and Moreland



But Drew resigned his seat in early 2025 in opposition to the Labour government's reorganisation plans for Gloucestershire (and possibly other central party interventions in Stroud Labour party) and the Greens now have an excellent chance to get it back.

But there are at least two at risk Conservative divisions. One reason Susan Williams in **Bisley & Painswick** may have defected to the Greens for a brief period was that they were only 385 votes behind her in 2021. 2021 was the first time ever the Conservatives won **Stonehouse** division and, while Labour absolutely tanked there, losing on a near 15% swing, the fact the incumbent is standing as an independent coupled to a Reform presence make for a tough fight for the Tories.

The Conservatives will be looking closely at **Dursley** division, which Labour won off them in 2021 by just 37 votes, and at adjoining **Nailsworth**, which they also lost to Labour four years earlier. Here Labour's majority is much larger: 850, but the Greens didn't contest the ward last time and are this. In last year's Stroud district elections a Green won Nailsworth (alongside two Labour councillors) polling 985 - so Labour's majority could be erased just by them fielding a candidate.

In Labour's 1993 county council landslide, the party won seven of Gloucester's twelve divisions, with the Lib Dems holding four and the Conservatives just one. Today Labour hold none - and just seven of the thirty nine city council seats.

Despite this, the Conservatives were unpopular enough last year to lose one of their most reliable not especially affluent city constituencies, albeit with

Labour polling just 36%: an increase over 2019 of 0.9 of a percent.

The Conservative vote virtually halved: down twenty-six points to 29%. Because they have lost further vote share nationally since the general election the eight Conservative-held divisions in Gloucester are highly vulnerable. **Longlevens**: the northern suburbs of the city will be the Lib Dems' top target but they also have city councillors in **Hempsted & Westgate**, a large portion of which is floodplain for the Severn.

Labour's now very limited presence on the city council is confined to the inner wards of Coney Hill & Moreland, one seat of three in Matson & Robinswood, and the suburban ward of Kingsway. Unfortunately for them, these district wards are all merged with non-Labour wards and that makes it much harder for them to regain a county council footing in the city.

Labour's best shots are **Coney Hall & Matson, Barton & Tredworth** and **Tuffley & Moreland**. If Reform manages to damage the Conservative vote even more than they did last year (and only about 40% of the Tory drop was due to Reform) then Labour might pinch **Grange and Kingsway**, and if the Tories have a complete meltdown **Quedgeley** might fall.

UKIP in the 2013 county council elections performed more strongly in Gloucester than Reform did in last year's general election, polling 22.4% on average across the eight divisions the party contested.

UKIP did best in Coney Hall and Matson, winning 29.6%, with strong performances also in Tuffley and

Grange & Kingsway: in other words the very same divisions Labour aspire to win back. Reform are contesting every Gloucestershire division and could win any of these three plus - perhaps - multiracial Barton and Tredworth.

2024 general election Reform vote in Gloucestershire

Constituency	vote	%vote
Forest of Dean	8,194	17.0
Gloucester	7,307	16.0
North Cotswolds	6,502	12.9
Tewkesbury	6,000	12.4
Stroud	6,329	11.5
Cheltenham	-	-

But it is the Forest of Dean that carries the highest hopes for Reform. UKIP won three divisions here in 2013: **Blakeney & Bream** (35.5%), **Drybrook & Lydbrook** (29.3%) and **Lydney** (41.9%). In that election the Green Party was not a presence in Forest of Dean but they have grown to be almost as strong here as in Stroud, and now run the district council in the minority.

But the Forest isn't the archetypal Green district: it does not contain loads of affluent, university-educated professionals and managers with the sort of liberal values you find much in larger numbers in Stroud.

Rather, the Greens have gained ground by aping the Lib Dems' pavement politics approach of being good ward councillors, winning a ward, bedding in and then expanding to an adjacent ward.

Much of the Forest is former mining territory (hence the names of its principal towns; Coleford and Cinderford) and that is where Labour's strength is.

But just as the pits have faded, so has Labour's strength. They did even less well in the general election here than in Gloucester, winning 34% and scraping a majority of just 278 (though overturning a much larger Conservative majority of nearly 16,000).

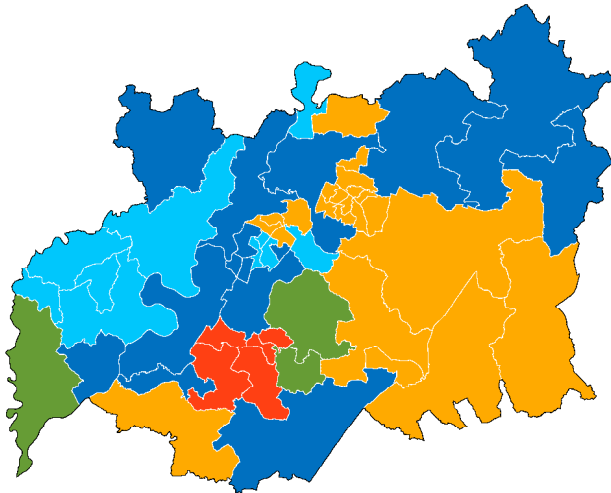
Today Labour holds just Cinderford of the eight Forest of Dean divisions - though that looks safe enough for them, at least based on the 2021 result. They are 500 adrift in Coleford and have lost three of the last four county council elections there. In Lydney they're nearly a thousand adrift.

Things are much tighter in **Drybrook & Lydford** but only because the vote fragmented with the presence of an independent who won 25% - Labour came in third. This is probably Reform's best shot at winning as the independent is again standing. This could be a division won with less than 25% of the vote in May. But Reform will hope to win by far more than that.

The somewhat controversial Electoral Calculus Local Election MRP has Reform sweeping the Forest, winning **Drybrook & Lydford, Cinderford, Coleford, Blakeney & Bream** plus the vast, rural **Mitcheldean** division which has a long independent history but went Conservative fairly comfortably in 2017 and 2021.

The Conservatives will want to regain **Newent & Taynton**, which the Lib Dems gained last time in a straight two-way fight by just seventy-two votes. Last

time's Lib Dem winner isn't seeking re-election and this time it's a four way contest: there's no Reform candidate (the only division they've failed to stand in) so one might expect the presence of Labour and Green candidates to sap the Lib Dem strength enough for the Tories to pick it up.



Indicative map of March '25 Electoral Calculus local election MRP

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	O
2021 council election	28	5	16	4
2024 - defection: Susan Williams, Bisley and Painswick - Con to Grn	27	5	16	5
2024 - suspension: Nick Housden, Stonehouse - Con to Ind	26	5	16	6
2024 - defection: Alastair Chambers, Coney Hill and Matson - Con to Ind	25	5	16	7
2025 - defection: Susan Williams, Bisley and Painswick - Grn to Con	26	5	16	6
2025 - defection: Vernon Smith, Tewkesbury East - Con to Ref	25	5	16	7
2025 - vacancy, resignation of David Drew, Stroud Central, Lab	25	4	16	7
Current	25	4	16	7

If Reform do as well as forecast in the Forest, the Tories will be net down two and Labour, Greens and Lib Dems will each lose one. But bear in mind that the MRP has the Tories holding Lydney - one of the three UKIP seats; and Sedbury isn't a complete lock for the Greens either.

Finally, one of the oddities of that Electoral Calculus March MRP is that they have Reform winning what is now Tewkesbury West (the former Tewkesbury) which is currently Green, while Tewkesbury East - the ward Reform actually hold through the defection of Cllr Vernon Smith - they have going Lib Dem. Smith is contesting the division for Reform so let's see how that goes. Reform are also forecast by EC to win **Brockworth**, part of the narrow strip of the county that serves as commuterville for both Cheltenham and Gloucester.

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Blakeney and Bream (Grn)
- ▶ Bishop's Cleeve (LD)
- ▶ Dursley (Lab)
- ▶ Newent (LD)
- ▶ Rodborough (Lab)
- ▶ South Cerney (LD)
- ▶ Tewkesbury West (Grn)
- ▶ Wotton-under-Edge (LD)



Labour targets

- ▶ Barton and Tredworth (Con)
- ▶ Cam Valley (Con)
- ▶ Coleford (Con)
- ▶ Coney Hall and Matson (Con)
- ▶ Grange and Kingsway (Con)
- ▶ Nailsworth (Con)
- ▶ Stonehouse (Con)
- ▶ Tuffley and Moreland (Con)



Green targets

- ▶ Bisley and Painswick (Con)
- ▶ Stroud Central (Lab)
- ▶ Tetbury (Con)



Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ Battledown and Charlton Kings (Con)
- ▶ Bourton-on-the-Water and Northleach (Con)
- ▶ Brockworth (Con)
- ▶ Hempsted and Westgate (Con)
- ▶ Lansdown and Park (Con)
- ▶ Leckhampton and Warden Hill (Con)
- ▶ Longlevens (Con)
- ▶ Morton, Stow and the Rissingtons (Con)
- ▶ Pittville and St Paul's (Con)
- ▶ Tewkesbury East (Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Barton and Tredworth (Con)
- ▶ Blakeney and Bream (Grn)
- ▶ Brockworth (Con)
- ▶ Cinderford (Lab)
- ▶ Coleford (Con)
- ▶ Coney Hall and Matson (Con)
- ▶ Drybrook and Lydbrook (Con)
- ▶ Grange and Kingsway (Con)
- ▶ Lydney (Con)
- ▶ Mitcheldean (Con)
- ▶ Quedgeley (Con)
- ▶ Sedbury (Grn)
- ▶ Tewkesbury West (Con)
- ▶ Tuffley and Moreland (Con)



My priorities are simple:
 Fix and clean up our roads!
 anti-social

SUPPORTING OUR COMMUNITY

Paul has secured funding for many local groups, including Northcote Swimming Pool, Men in Sheds, Chesham Outdoor Gym, and jubilee events in the town.

He presents a show on the volunteer radio station Cotswolds Radio, with local guests, news and information.

OUR LOCAL

Paul has fought consistently for protected and expanded in M Cheltenham. These hospitals are in the Cotswolds and Paul the town to be used more.

He has repeatedly highlighted ambulance response times has campaigned to improve playing field between the towns.

Recently he has supported first responders in the ambulance times and so that rural patients can before an ambulance arrives.

Paul has also lobbied available to those who significant shortages

Craig Hogg
Craig Hogg

Public services
Lib Dem

Cheltenham. I believe
is possible. I hope
y. — *Marcia* —

Save our green spaces! We need to
stop letting big property developers
pour concrete all over Cheltenham!

LABOUR

GREEN PARTY
RESULTS MAY 2015

CRAIG'S WIN

60%
17%

VOTE FOR
CRAIG HORROCKS
IN RODDHOUGH, CANNICROSS & CADNES GREEN ON
1ST MAY

✓ Greens can win

Hertfordshire

42

22

6

5

1

1

When Hertfordshire last fell to no overall control in the Tories' calamitous 1993 county council elections, Labour won 30 seats, the Conservatives 27 and the Lib Dems 19. Today Labour is down to six and, while they will almost certainly improve on that number this year, their eclipse by the Lib Dems in this (small pockets aside) very not liberal home county is one of the minor stories of England's politics of local government.



Labour's expectation of a much better performance - compared to 2021 at least - is founded on the fact that they now hold a clutch of Hertfordshire constituencies: Hertford and Stortford, Hemel Hempstead, Hitchin, North East Herts, Watford and Welwyn-Hatfield. These are stuffed full of divisions Labour used to be able to win but mostly don't anymore. Their problem is that the Lib Dems - in local government terms - have

superseded them in many of these places: Watford, Hemel Hempstead and Welwyn-Hatfield especially. Labour could, once upon a time, win seats in St Albans. Those days are probably over as the Lib Dem lock on that constituency and district looks unbreakable for the time being: they are more likely to lose a division to the Greens than Labour.

Labour did so atrociously in 2021 that it is impossible for them not to recover. For example there is just one Labour county councillor at the moment in Stevenage district, against five Conservatives. Labour wins nearly every ward in Stevenage district even when they can't get close to winning the parliamentary seat so there are five low-hanging fruit so ripe Labour just has to hold out its hands and they will fall into them.

There are no Labour county councillors in Welwyn-Hatfield and, while the party's grip on this constituency is always tenuous when they win it, they should win two, four or even six divisions here - though the higher end is very very difficult and they almost certainly won't. **Welwyn Garden City South, Haldens and Hatfield East** are their best shots plus **Handside & Peartree** if they can persuade voters to abandon the Lib Dems who are the roadblock to beating the Tories there.

There are six divisions in Hemel Hempstead, of which Labour again holds none but should be able to win one or two - starting with the New Town's **St Paul's and Town** divisions; maybe **East** if they're doing very well. But Hemel is another place Labour has been supplanted, at local government level, by the Lib Dems - and there will likely be a strong Reform attack too: they

could win Hemel South East and maybe one or two others depending on how split the votes are.

Given Labour's surprise gain of Hertford and Stortford (they didn't win here in 1997) it'd be helpful for their MP to have one or two county councillors behind him as he seeks re-election. **Bishop's Stortford West and Hertford St Andrew's** are the only two divisions they're likely to win, unless they can oust the Greens in **Hertford All Saints**.

They might be able to pick up **Baldock & Letchworth East** in North Hertfordshire - and **Royston East & Rural** if they're doing astoundingly well but this seems very unlikely, especially as Reform could body check them in this sort of division. Neither of these have a Labour history but North Hertfordshire is one of those districts that has soured on the Conservatives more viscerally in the past decade and that has opened the door for Labour (and Lib Dem) progress.

Then there is the isolated council estate division beyond Watford of **South Oxhey & Eastbury**: once solidly Labour but increasingly estranged from that party. South Oxhey elected a BNP county councillor in 2009 and went Conservative in 2021 for the first time ever. Labour might win it back but Reform are more likely to triumph here.

Labour faces a bit of a tussle in the two Borehamwood divisions in Hertsmere district, both of which they gained from the Conservatives in 2021. Their councillor in Borehamwood North, Michelle Vince, resigned from the party in 2024 and is contesting her seat as an independent.

CH&M Colney Heath and Marshalswick
H&P Handside and Peartree
HHE Hemel Hempstead East
HHNE Hemel Hempstead North East
HHNW Hemel Hempstead North West
HHSE Hemel Hempstead South East
HHSP Hemel Hempstead St Paul's
HHT Hemel Hempstead Town
SAC St Albans Central
SAE St Albans East
SAS St Albans South
WGCS Welwyn Garden City South
WW West Watford



She won as Labour with a majority of 442 which you'd imagine the party could defend unless she carves a huge personal vote out. But Borehamwood South is much more marginal: Labour won this one by just 170 and, while both these divisions have a history of backing the party the Conservatives have won four of the past five contests in South.

Labour should emerge from these elections with a group in the teens - three or maybe four times what they hold now but still only half what they managed in 1993 ahead of their last landslide general election win.

The Lib Dems look set for a potentially frustrating election having held some expectations of becoming the largest party on the County Council - at the very least pushing the Conservatives, who currently only have a majority of seven, so far below the winning line that they have no prospect of continuing in power.

There are obvious Lib Dem opportunities - for example there are four Conservative divisions in St Albans district right now: **Harpenden South West, Harpenden Rural, St Stephens** and **London Colney**. All are vulnerable; plus the meandering **Bridgewater** division in Dacorum that stretches almost from Tring to Harpenden.

But there are Lib Dem frailties too. We simply don't know how much of the vote that switched to Labour in the general election will stay with them instead of returning to the Lib Dems locally. If Labour retains most of it there will be Lib Dem losses in Watford, Hemel and Welwyn-Hatfield.

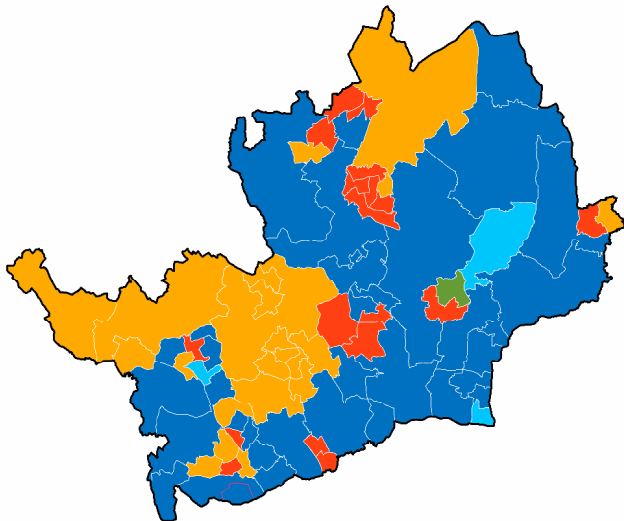
We also don't quite know what proportion of the Lib Dem vote in council elections is positive: i.e. a vote because people actively believe Lib Dem councillors are the best choice at the local level; and how much is simply a "neither of the big parties" vote. This latter tranche is very susceptible to a Reform pitch this time around (just as it was for UKIP when the Lib Dems were deeply unpopular members of the coalition government in 2013).

Irrespective of how much of the Lib Dem vote might go Reform, they are already experiencing difficulties in Three Rivers - South West Hertfordshire - having lost two by-elections to the Tories recently and with them their majority on that district.

One of the by-elections was caused by their former leader, Sara Bedford, resigning from the party and her district seat. She remains county councillor for **Abbots Langley** division and is contesting it as an independent; a move that has prompted long-serving Watford Lib Dem councillor Stephen Giles Medhurst to surrender his safe seat to take her on. This bust-up could see either of these former colleagues win but, given the Conservative gains at district level, could let them in too. Neighbouring **Three Rivers Rural** division is also at risk to the Conservatives.

The council election MRP Electoral Calculus conducted in March 2025 threw up some strange outcomes in Lib Dem-run Watford as well: Conservatives apparently on track to gain two divisions there (they hold none at the moment). This could be because a Labour resurgence at Lib Dem expense may let the Tories win through the middle; or because voters are wearying of a very long

spell of Lib Dems running their council, but it would be fairly surprising if the Conservatives do emerge holding either **Woodside-Stanborough** or **Meriden-Tudor**.



Electoral Calculus also has the Tories regaining **Bushey North** from the Lib Dems in Hertsmere district. All in all, the Lib Dems may end up with a couple of seats more or less but are essentially seem to be heading for a standstill election.

Which brings us to Reform. Hertfordshire is not a great county for this party partly because, bordering London, it contains a lot of Remain-voters who commute into the metropolis. The county as a whole mirrored the country in the 2016 EU referendum: 52-48 Leave. But there were big variations within Hertfordshire. St Albans voted Remain 62-38 and North Herts (Hitchin, Letchworth, Baldock and Royston) by 54 to 46.

Reform votes at the 2024 general election in Hertfordshire

Constituency	vote	%vote
Broxbourne	8,782	20.4
Stevenage	7,667	17.9
North East Hertfordshire	8,462	16.1
Hertford and Stortford	8,325	15.4
South West Hertfordshire	6,790	14.1
Hertsmere	6,584	13.7
Welwyn-Hatfield	6,397	13.2
Hitchin (part)	6,760	13.1
Watford	4,930	11.1
St Albans	4,336	8.4
Harpenden and Berkhamsted	4,245	7.8

At the other end of the scale, Broxbourne went Leave by 66 to 34 and Stevenage by 59 to 41. The other Hertfordshire districts all voted Leave but by fairly close margins. Again, the lingering relevance of that decade-old vote is simply that one's voting preference over the EU tracks a number of key values positions that remain relevant today: on nationalism vs internationalism, immigration, cultural values, defence, law and justice and so on.

Reform will perform poorly in St Albans (at least St Albans itself - it may do okay in the rural parts and Harpenden) not because the residents are obsessing about leaving the EU but because they do not align with the cultural values and populist abrasiveness of Nigel Farage's party. Reform will perform strongly in Broxbourne - though whether it can overcome massive

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	O
2021 council election	46	7	23	2
2023 - by-election: Harpenden Rural - LD gain from Con	45	7	24	2
2024 - defection: Michelle Vince, Borehamwood North - Lab to Ind	45	6	24	3
2024 - defection: Sara Bedford, Abbots Langley - LD to Ind	45	6	23	4
2025 - defection: Sunny Thusu, Haldens - Con to Ind	44	6	23	5
2025 - defection: Ron Tindall, Hemel Hempstead St Pauls - LD to Ind	44	6	22	6
2025 - defection: Graham McAndrew, Bishop's Stortford Rural - Con to Ref	43	6	22	7
2025 - vacancy, death of James Bond, Hatfield North - Con	42	6	22	7
Current	42	6	22	7

Conservative majorities there is questionable - not because its residents celebrate leaving the EU every morning but because those voters are much more closely aligned with the gamut of Reform positions.

If Reform can win seats in Hertfordshire their best bets will be in Broxbourne: a phenomenally safe Conservative district and along the Essex border. Reform already have one county councillor in **Bishop's Stortford Rural** who defected from the Tories at the start of 2025 (though he isn't seeking re-election) and this is a division they could hold, with or without an incumbent.

UKIP managed to win **Hoddesdon South in 2013** and both divisions in that town are probably Reform's best opportunities this year. But if they break through there, Broxbourne has a ribbon of not that dissimilar wards along the river Lea. They could also win **Cheshunt Central** and the one potential Labour target: **Waltham Cross**.

Electoral Calculus also has Reform polling strongly in **Ware North** - though despite this division containing a fair bit of rural East Herts this seems more likely to lean towards Labour and the Greens hold all three of the Ware district council wards.

It's likely that Reform will supplant the Conservatives as the principal challengers to Labour in Watford, and supplant Labour as the principal challengers to the Conservatives in one or two of the urban Welwyn-Hatfield and Hemel Hempstead divisions.

As mentioned above, South Oxhey is almost custom-built to elect Reform councillors in the current climate and, while they probably aren't strong enough to win in Watford, they could upset the apple cart and throw some results in unexpected directions there.

It would be a major surprise if Reform end up with as many as ten seats, and they may struggle to gain five: this probably won't be a county Farage will be

travelling to in celebration of his party's breakthrough on Friday 2 May.

There are few Green opportunities: at least measured against 2021. But that was a different world: at the time, for example, the Conservatives held almost every seat on East Hertfordshire district. Today that district is led by the Green Party who hold nineteen seats to the Tories' sixteen.

Most of these are in and around Hertford and Ware and so they can't be discounted in any of the Conservative-held divisions in the vicinity - and perhaps even one or two more further-flung divisions either. The Greens already hold **Hertford All Saints** but could add **Ware North, Ware South** and - much less likely - **Hertford Rural** and **Buntingford**. The party held **North Watford** for a couple of terms last time Labour was in government nationally but their vote has almost completely evaporated there.

In Three Rivers the Greens have taken a firm grip on the **Croxley** ward of Dickinsons (though not its neighbour Durrants, at least not yet) so while the unified division looks securely Lib Dem expect a very much closer battle there this time.

Likewise, the Greens are bedding down in two wards in the middle of St Albans: Clarence and St Peter's. Neither of these exactly fits but the county council division that covers most of these Green wards is **St Albans Central**. The Lib Dems won with over 62% here in 2021 so, again, any upset would be huge and is not probable. But it's not completely impossible - especially as the Greens specialise in vast surges that gain them wards unexpectedly.

So, can the Conservatives retain Hertfordshire? It's highly unlikely given their small majority and, in particular, the patchy, splashy recovery Labour is likely to make in parts of the county. But they should remain the largest party - and by a fair margin too if they can start taking seats off the Lib Dems in the south west.

All therefore depends on how much larger the Conservative group is - because the Lib Dems will coalesce with Labour and Greens if they can make the maths work. Across the council chamber, Conservatives just short of the winning line may be able to do a deal with Reform to stay in power depending on the size of that group.

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Abbots Langley and Bedmond (Ind)
- ▶ Borehamwood South (Lab)
- ▶ Bushey North (LD)
- ▶ Letchworth North (Lab)
- ▶ Meriden Tudor (LD)
- ▶ Three Rivers Rural (LD)



Labour targets

- ▶ Baldock and Letchworth East (Con)
- ▶ Bishop's Stortford West (Con)
- ▶ Broadwater (Con)
- ▶ Haldens (Con)
- ▶ Handside and Peartree (Con)
- ▶ Hatfield East (Con)
- ▶ Hatfield North (Con)
- ▶ Hatfield South (LD)
- ▶ Hemel Hempstead North East (Con)
- ▶ Hemel Hempstead St Paul's (LD)
- ▶ Hertford St Andrew's (Con)
- ▶ Old Stevenage (Con)
- ▶ St Nicholas (Con)
- ▶ Shephall (Con)
- ▶ South Oxhey and Eastbury (Con)
- ▶ Waltham Cross (Con)
- ▶ Welwyn Garden City South (Con)



Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ Bridgwater (Con)
- ▶ Handside and Peartree (Con)
- ▶ Harpenden Rural (Con)
- ▶ Harpenden South West (Con)
- ▶ London Colney (Con)
- ▶ St Stephen's (Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Bishop's Stortford Rural (Con)
- ▶ Bishop's Stortford West (Con)
- ▶ Cheshunt Central (Con)
- ▶ Flamstead End and Turnford (Con)
- ▶ Hemel Hempstead East (Con)
- ▶ Hemel Hempstead South East (Con)
- ▶ Hoddesdon North (Con)
- ▶ Hoddesdon South (Con)
- ▶ Royston East and Ermine (Con)
- ▶ Sawbridgeworth (Con)
- ▶ South Oxhey and Eastbury (Con)
- ▶ Waltham Cross (Con)
- ▶ Ware North (Con)



Green targets

- ▶ Buntingford (Con)
- ▶ Hertford Rural (Con)
- ▶ St Albans Central (LD)
- ▶ Ware North (Con)
- ▶ Ware South (Con)



The Lib Dem plan for Herts:

Tushar Kumar
The time to Heart Herts

Hi there!

Hi there!

Your postal vote will be arriving any day now — and with it comes an important choice for the future of Potters Bar East.

Politics. It's about whether we continue to be neglected by a council that has no connection with our community, or whether we

...a fresh start with **Labour**.

It's my home too, and it's been painful to watch local services go to breaking point, and public services cut back, while those in charge at the top come up with excuses. They're not listening — and we're paying the price. Enough of pothole-ridden roads. Enough of the

...and to be your County Councillor — to be a voice that speaks up for our
more importantly, acts for it.

Developments work for our town, not against it.
I am available for consultation with you at

y with residents to ensure new developments work for our town, not against it. I more importantly, acts for it.

make empty promises. I'm here to fight for what matters to us – for safer transport, stronger local services, and a fairer deal for Potters Bar East. When postal vote arrives, please take a moment to use it – and please consider voting for the future of our community.

support, we can turn the page and start building a better future for our
regards.

Fr

78 ✓


mar
candidate for Potters Bar East

ter Labour

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455

A FAIR

ABBO

» Fixing our

- » Protecting
- » Campaign

secondary

IMPROVING

MORE LOCAL NEWS

100

CONSERVATIVES
FOR THE
REAL TEAM

News from Harpenden and Berkhamsted Conservatives

touch

Conservatives

February 2025

YOU WILL PAY FOR LIB DEM FAILURE

Liberal Democrats at St Albans and District Council remain determined to impose unfair taxes including parking charges for parking in local High Streets across local trade.

After nearly 30 years in power, the Liberal Democrats are becoming ever increasing a successful party government.

Following a successful party government, they managed to bring in a class EGM car park overrun on the Jubilee Square development in St Albans and failure to achieve planned income.

The Harpenden Public Hub, a game development project with left leaning for years and now been said. The Council refuse to say what loss they have made on the prime development site compared

with retail forecasts.

At the same time, their shocking financial management of the Council was made clear by the auditors who said there is significant weaknesses in arrangements to make efficient decisions using timely and accurate financial information to support statutory financial reporting requirements.

This profligate and incompetence and their confidence means more money, growing local economies, they tax to say, parking, our high Street economy.

City Matt Cresswell asks 'Why are we not doing more to improve the park in our own High Street'.

City Teresa Harwood points out the need for development opportunities.

LOSING OUR PRECIOUS GREENBELT

Liberal Democrat led in putting forward a Local Plan means that as well as the thousands of new homes they plan for Harpenden and the villages, we may be forced to plan even more due to the Liberal Government's edict to build more homes.

As we are brazened sales left, so we will be brazened sales left. Green Belt around our towns and villages, will be targeted by local farmers having to sell to Big City's death taxes.

Lib Dem plan has no new roads, how fast already crowded roads cope?

City Councillor Nicky Hewson says 'Will our children have a better future?'

How will this significant growth in population impact our brilliant local schools?

GIVE CHILDREN THE BEST START IN LIFE

Conservatives run Hertfordshire County Council paid children at the heart of everything.

Our share for excellence in schools means that 92% of schools in Hertfordshire are 'Good' or outstanding. We're also home special needs children, having made 84 new special needs school places.

Devoted from 'Good' to 'Outstanding', we provide some wonderful children get the support they need.

Caring and Campaigning for our Community

Find out more at www.harpendedenandberkhamstedconservatives.org.uk

Your local champion

**Stephen
Giles-Medhurst**

Liberal
Democrats



**A FAIR DEAL FOR
ABBOTS LANGLEY:**

- » *Fixing our roads and pavements*
- » *Protecting our local environment*
- » *Campaigning for a new secondary school*

IMPROVING OUR COMMUNITY

MORE LOCAL NEWS INSIDE: _____

Isles of Scilly

16

The smallest of the unitary councils up for election this year with just sixteen councillors, this is also the last such council in England with a monopoly of independents. Established parties don't typically even stand for election here.

Scilly is dominated by St Mary's which returns twelve of the council's sixteen councillors and contains 77% of the resident population, mostly in Hugh Town. One apiece represent Bryher (92 residents according to the 2021 census), St Agnes (73), St Martin's (142) and Tresco (180).

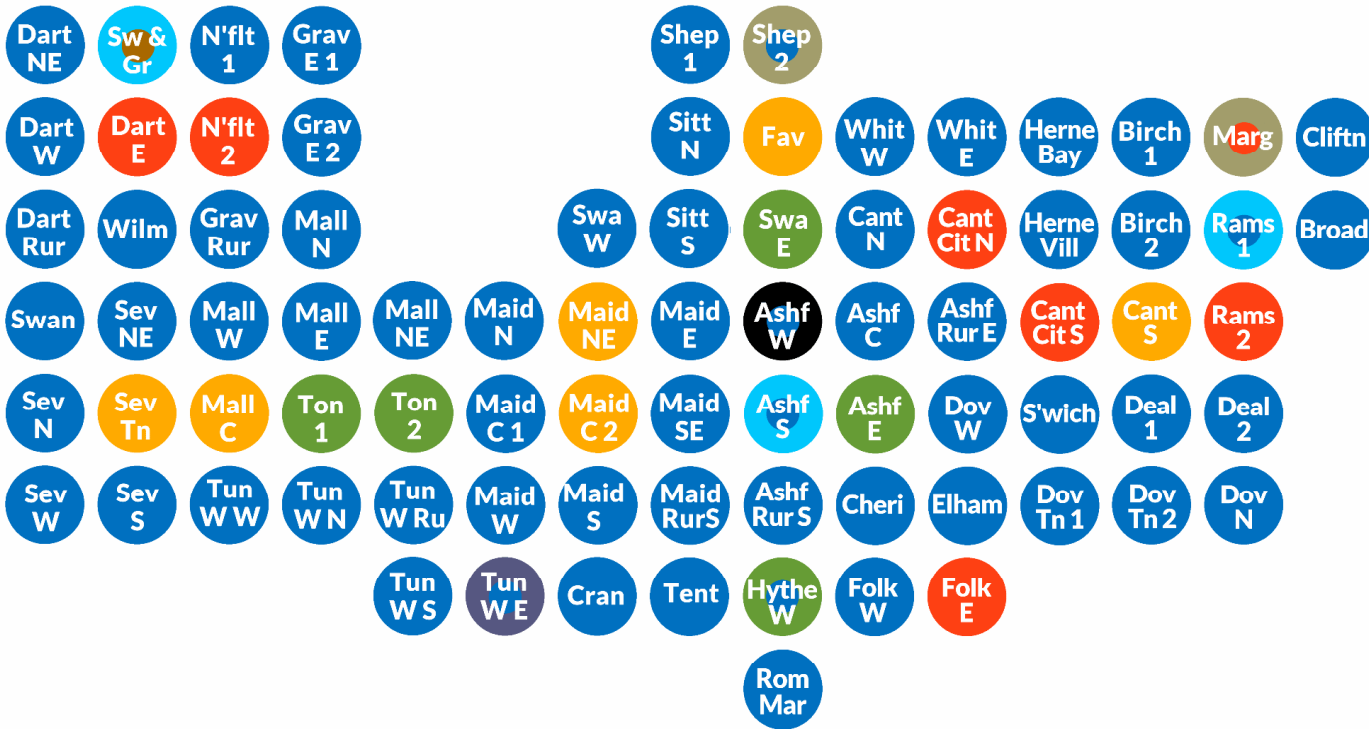
There are seventeen candidates standing though so there will only be one election happening here on 1st May: in St Martin's, where two candidates are chasing one seat. If all of the 142 residents are electors, they all vote and each candidate polls 71 (none of these will happen!) there could be the excitement of a drawing of lots.



Kent



1 vacancy



One of the long-term significant realignments that the 1997 general election heralded was the swing away from the Conservatives of coastal resort towns that had either been staunchly Tory forever, or only winnable by Labour at their very peak of popularity.

Morecambe, Blackpool, Brighton, Hove, Falmouth, Crosby, Scarborough, Yarmouth, Lowestoft, Hastings & Rye, Harwich-Clacton, Weymouth & Portland [Dorset

South], Margate, Broadstairs and Sandwich [Thanet South] are all examples.

These gains were buttressed by non-resort constituencies along the Thames estuary like Canvey Island [Castle Point], Sittingbourne & Sheppey, Rochester & Strood [Medway], Chatham, Gillingham, Gravesend, Dartford and Dover.

The Conservatives gradually regained most of these seats (Brighton being the stand-out hold-out) and built back big majorities in many of them, especially in counties like Kent.

Then they contrived to lose them all over again and then some: Canterbury having gone Labour against the tide in 2017 and then Ashford and Folkestone & Hythe also electing Labour for the first time in 2024. The Lib Dems also managed to take Tunbridge Wells after a relatively long-drawn out collapse in Conservative support following some controversial and costly errors by the district council there. Putative Tory MP candidate Iain Dale telling voters how much he disliked the place won't have shored his party up, either.

Therefore, even though the Conservatives have a very cosy majority of 32 seats (and that down from 43 at the

2021 general election through defections and a by-election loss) they are highly vulnerable. In fact, at the very least, losing their majority is a probability. What is unclear is whether another party could win a majority themselves.

That party will not be Labour.

Even in 1993, the prequel to the much more enthusiastic Labour landslide of 1997, the best the party could achieve in Kent was 30 county councillors to the Tories' 41 and Lib Dems' 28 - enough to put them, just, at the head of a coalition before the Conservatives returned to power in 1997. Labour will vastly exceed expectations this time around if they manage to reach twenty seats, let alone thirty. And standstill somewhere around ten will be unsurprising. The March Electoral Calculus MRP gives them just 3.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	O
2021 council election	62	7	6	6
2023 - by-election: Hythe West - Green gain from Con	61	7	6	7
2024 - by-election: Swanscombe and Greenhithe: Ref gain from Res Assoc.	61	7	6	7
2024 - defection: Mike Whiting, Sheppey - Con to Ind	60	7	6	8
2024 - defection: Trevor Shonk, Ramsgate: Con to Ind	59	7	6	9
2025 - defection: Dirk Ross, Ashford South: Con to Ind	58	7	6	10
2025 - defection: Dirk Ross, Ashford South: Ind to Ref	58	7	6	10
2025 - defection: Barry Lewis, Margate: Lab to Ind	58	6	6	11
2025 - defection: Trevor Shonk, Ramsgate: Ind to Ref	58	6	6	11
2025 - defection: Becki Bruneau, Tunbridge Wells South - Con to Heritage	57	6	6	12
2025 - vacancy, death of James Bond, Ashfield Rural West - Con	56	6	6	12
Current	56	6	6	12

This is because Reform have appropriated the sort of votes that unenthusiastically went Labour in the general election. The Electoral Calculus MRP in March probably hasn't mapped Reform's surge in Kent accurately but what it does show - correctly - is that Reform is likely to win an awful lot of divisions right the way around the coast.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Sittingbourne and Sheppey	10,512	25.6
Folkestone and Hythe	10,385	24.7
Dover and Deal	11,355	23.8
Herne Bay and Sandwich	10,602	21.7
Ashford	10,141	21.6
Dartford	9,523	21.4
Faversham and Mid Kent	9,884	21.2
Gravesham	8,910	20.6
Weald of Kent	10,208	20.1
Maidstone and Maidstone	9,316	20.1
East Thanet	8,591	20.1
Sevenoaks	9,341	18.7
Tonbridge	7,548	15.0
Canterbury	6,805	14.4
Tunbridge Wells	6,484	12.0

From Thames-side Dartford through Northfleet, the Isle of Sheppey and Sittingbourne; and then onto the more resort and retirement coast: Whitstable, Herne Bay, Margate, Broadstairs and Sandwich, then grittier Deal, Dover and Folkestone and onto Romney Marsh, divisions that voted Labour, recalcitrantly, in the general election to turf the Tories out are, seemingly, about to go Reform in sizeable amounts.

Guide to the 2025 Council Elections

Even though they failed to break through in any constituencies in Kent last July, Reform polled at least one vote in five in every constituency within the county council bar two; and one in four in Sittingbourne and Folkestone.

Nor was the Reform vote unprecedented. In the 2013 county council elections, UKIP won seventeen seats: seven in Thanet district, four in what was then Shepway (Folkestone and Hythe), three in Swale, two in Canterbury (Herne Bay) and even one in Tunbridge Wells - it is not true that this district is solely an incubator of liberalism.

UKIP polled more than 30% of the vote in 22 divisions: but were disadvantaged by the electoral playing field being less fractured twelve years ago, thus facing a much larger Conservative vote even these relatively impressive vote shares could not overcome.

The big question these elections on May 1 will answer is: if UKIP could do this well while polling around 15% nationally in April 2013, how much better will Reform do in an election where they're polling at least ten percentage points better?

In many of these divisions, Reform is absolute catnip to the sort of demographics that live here. Reform's rise will not have been even: they will have picked up a lot more support in Ramsgate than Richmond-upon-Thames, for example.

This is not purely speculation. Already two Conservative county councillors - both in divisions Reform has a strong shot at winning - have defected to

them and in autumn last year the party won a by-election in Dartford's Swanscombe and Greenhithe division off the local residents' association there.

Swanscombe and Greenhithe				
Kent County Council				
caused by the death of Cllr Peter Harman, Res				
Electorate %Turnout				
15,598 15.4				
GAIN				
Thomas Mallon	Ref	695	29.1	
Victoria Akintomide-Akinwamide	Lab	588	24.6	- 7.5
Dawn M. Johnson	Res	395	16.5	- 25.5
Carol M. Gale	Con	374	15.6	- 10.3
Laura H.K. Edie	Grn	296	12.4	
James M. Willis	LD	44	1.8	

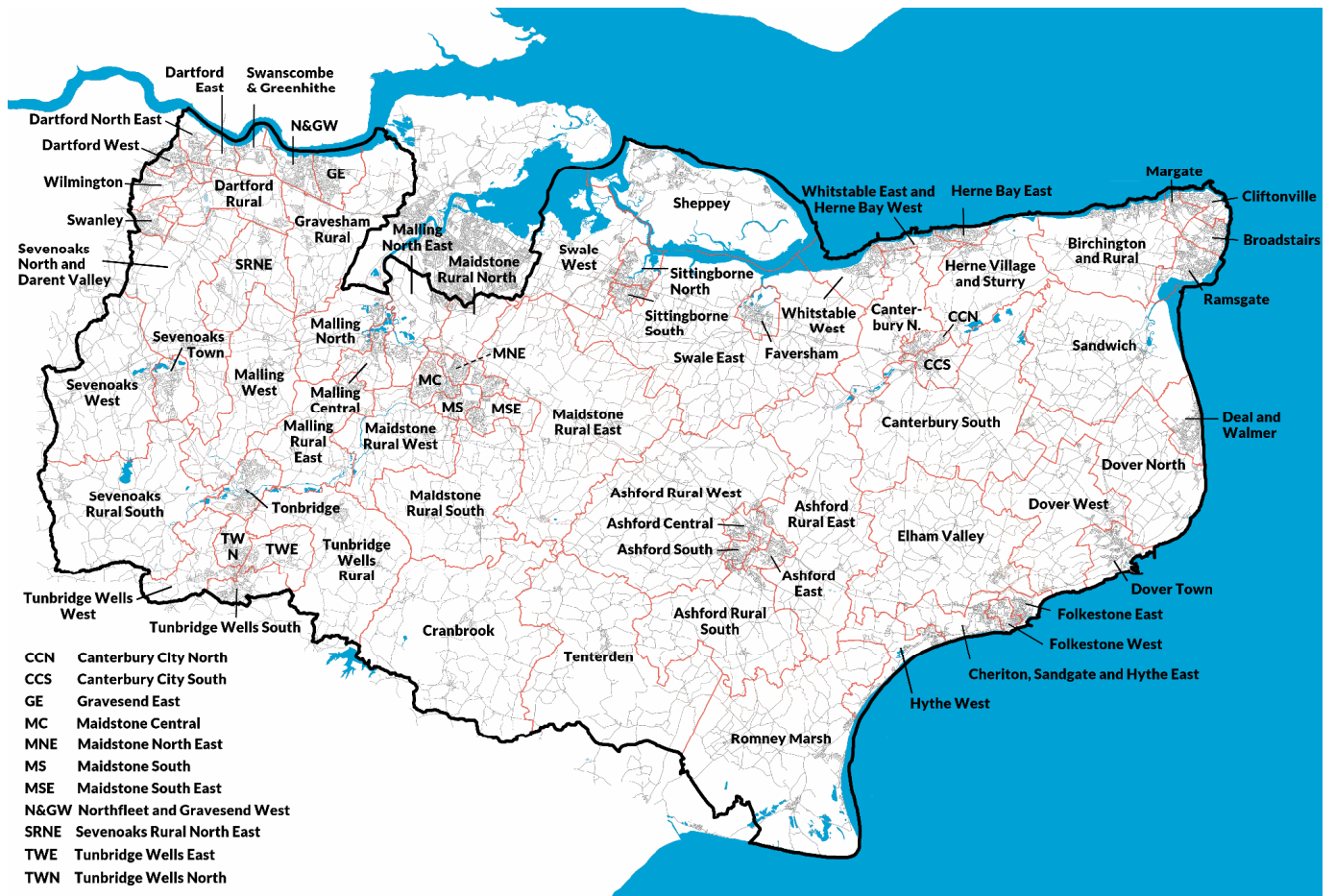
There are plenty of reasons to be a bit cautious about this result given the atypical strength of the Northfleet and Greenhithe Residents' Association and the dreadful 15% turnout, but this does highlight two or three of the likely features of the elections on May 1st.

First, Reform is very much more likely to win seats on relatively unimpressive vote shares than UKIP was able to in 2013. Second, Reform took almost as many Labour votes as Conservative: this election will not just be a rerun of the 2024 general election where Labour hardly had to add any support while Reform destroyed the Conservatives.

Kent divisions in which UKIP polled above 30% in the 2013 county council elections

	%vote
Swale West	51.4
Birchington and Villages	46.7
Sheppey	44.3
Romney Marsh	39.0
Ramsgate	38.4
Broadstairs	37.7
Margate	36.3
Tunbridge Wells Rural	35.7
Dover West	35.6
Tunbridge Wells West	33.4
Folkestone West	33.2
Cliftonville	33.1
Ashford Rural South	32.2
Herne Bay East	32.1
Sittingbourne North	32.1
Malling Rural East	32.0
Maidstone Rural West	31.0
Herne Village and Sturry	30.9
Maidstone Rural North	30.8
Whitstable West	30.8
Sevenoaks North East	30.6
Tunbridge Wells East	30.6

Note also that the Swanscombe and Greenhithe result came before the big surge in Reform support nationally: that occurred in the new year of 2025. This division gave UKIP a 20.1% vote share in 2013 which, while



decent, doesn't put it close to the party's best showings in Kent (in part, no doubt, because many of the Residents' Association voters might have otherwise backed UKIP or Reform). If we combine the Reform and Residents Association vote in the by-election (and that's not unreasonable given if they'd wanted to vote Conservative or Labour they would have) it's 45%.

The Electoral Calculus MRP, if borne out in real votes in real ballot boxes, will be devastating for Labour: the party that holds eight (and a half - the Aylesford portion of the Chatham constituency) of the thirteen constituencies Kent county council covers.

The party goes into these elections with just six seats - a dire number already - and, according to the MRP, will end up with half that number: all from atypical, liberal,

studenty, affluent Canterbury. Those are the two Canterbury city divisions plus Whitsable West. The seats it could lose are (one in) **Ramsgate**, (one in) **Northfleet & Gravesend West**, **Dartford East** and **Folkestone East**; plus one they've already lost to a defection to independent in **Margate**.

Where should Labour be expecting to win? It's too simple just to answer "in all the divisions Reform are challenging in". In Thanet, for example, Labour has never been competitive in the rural **Birchington and Villages** division. **Broadstairs** has never elected Labour county councillors either, and **Cliftonville** only twice. But Labour is competitive in, for example, **Tunbridge Wells North** (Southborough) where Reform almost certainly won't do very well.

The problem is that Labour performed so poorly in 2021 that there aren't that many divisions it narrowly missed, let alone won. There are just twelve, and this list includes Swanscombe & Greenhithe where, as we've already seen, Reform has leapfrogged them.

Tunbridge Wells North is Labour's best chance of a gain: they were just eighty votes short (1.3%). In district elections Tunbridge Wells voters have been astute in working out which party has had the best shot at ousting a deeply unpopular Conservative council and herding behind it. Labour is pretty strong in the Southborough area though boundary changes last year somewhat weakened them on the district council. Nonetheless, Tunbridge Wells North, despite not sounding much like somewhere Labour can win, is.

Then comes 2-councillor **Northfleet & Gravesend West**, which they split with the Conservatives last time. The Tory majority was 206 or 2.5%. Neighbouring **Gravesend East** is also a 2-councillor division and the second-placed Tory won by 478 or 5.8%.

There are no easy Labour targets in Dartford; nor is **Swanley**, just across the boundary in Sevenoaks district and nestled against the edge of London, winnable for Labour anymore. We also have to pass through Swale: Sittingbourne, Sheppey and Faversham as this does not look like fruitful ground for Labour either, at least based on recent county elections.

But, while we're in Swale, the Conservatives would like three more divisions there: **Faversham** is Lib Dem and they lead by a healthy 868 (14%); **Swale East** is Green by 624 (10.5%) and an independent holds **Swale West** by 651 (12%). The Tories may like them but probably won't get them. Any of them.

Whitstable West - the one division Electoral Calculus has Labour gaining - which is in Canterbury district despite being some distance from the city - had a Conservative majority of just 186 votes (3.3%).

Labour held, but has lost because their councillor left the party, **Margate** and they'll want it back. But they only scraped in by 84 votes last time: it's not secure. Elsewhere in Thanet **Ramsgate** is Labour's only possible gain. Another 2-councillor division, Ramsgate elected one Conservative and one Labour, but a Green took the first runner-up spot in a close three-way race. The Tory majority over Labour is 889 or 10.5%.

South into Dover district and Labour has two top prospects, both 2-councillor divisions. The first is **Dover Town**, where the Tories were ahead by just 352 or 5.3%; then **Deal & Walmer**: 900 or 10.2%.

In next-door Folkestone & Hythe, Labour holds **Folkestone East** (though not by much: 192 or 5.5%) and would like to at least add **Folkestone West** (313 - 6.4%) to their stack. The Greens have already gained, in a by-election, their top target here of **Hythe West** and would like to add **Elham Valley**, a more rural division on the way north to Ashford. They were 474 or 13.1% adrift here last time.

Labour should also really have a foothold in Ashford given they represent the constituency for the first time ever. As the town has grown rapidly it has shed plenty of its rural, mainly Conservative-voting surrounds (much of what is now the Weald of Kent constituency originates from Ashford).

Labour won nothing in Ashford last time, but only narrowly lost **Ashford South** by 88 votes (2.7%). The Greens won **Ashford East** with the Conservatives second, and if a large chunk of that Green vote was an anti-main parties protest vote that could switch to Reform, the Tories might fancy their chances there: they missed by 426 (10.2%).

The Conservatives will also be eyeing a couple of divisions in Maidstone, a town which likes voting Lib Dem in district elections but where they struggle a lot more in county and parliamentary elections.

Two-councillor **Maidstone Central** split 1 Conservative, 1 Lib Dem last time, and the Greens and Reform all have decent bases of support in this large division. The Tory councillor won by 1,277 (14.8%) last time but the Lib Dem only just edged in, by 318 or 3.7%.

The Lib Dem grip is even shakier in next door **Maidstone North East**: 115 or 2.5%. But, on the other side of the ledger, the Tories are only ahead in **Maidstone South** by 310 or 7.4%. This division contains Shepway and Park Wood which were great neighbourhoods for UKIP and should be far better hunting ground for Reform than the Lib Dems.

The Lib Dems gained **Sevenoaks Town** by just 179 or 2.8% last time and this is the only competitive division in Sevenoaks district.

The Greens got a massive vote in 2-member **Tonbridge**: their top candidate won over 6,346 votes here last time, but in part this is because it is a huge division with 28,000 electors. The Conservatives polled 4,608 so the second Green councillor was only seven percentage points ahead. It's highly unlikely the Tories will regain Tonbridge but it's not a shockproof majority.

The Electoral Calculus MRP had Reform winning 41 seats in Kent, the Conservatives 24, Lib Dems 9, Labour 3, the Greens 2 and 1 independent. That would give Reform a 2-seat majority on one of the largest councils in England. It would, of course be a seismic realignment of politics and give both main parties a lot to fear: no longer notional fear but actual evidence of the threat Reform poses to both. But let's see if Reform can actually achieve such a result first.

Key seats

Labour targets



- ▶ Ashford South (Con)
- ▶ Deal & Walmer (2 Con)
- ▶ Dover Town (2 Con)
- ▶ Folkestone West (Con)
- ▶ Gravesend East (2 Con)
- ▶ Northfleet & Gravesend W. (1 Con)
- ▶ Ramsgate (1 Con)
- ▶ Swanscombe & Greenhithe (Ref)
- ▶ Tunbridge Wells North (Con)
- ▶ Whitstable West (Con)

Lib Dem targets



- ▶ Maidstone Central (1 Con)
- ▶ Tunbridge Wells East (Heritage)
- ▶ Tunbridge Wells Rural (Con)
- ▶ Tunbridge Wells South (Con)
- ▶ Tunbridge Wells West (Con)
- ▶ Maidstone Central (1 Con)

Green targets



- ▶ Elham Valley (Con)
- ▶ Maidstone Central (1 Con, 1 LD)
- ▶ Ramsgate (1 Con, 1 Lab)

Reform UK targets

- ▶ Ashford Central (Con)
- ▶ Ashford East (Con)
- ▶ Ashford Rural South (Con)
- ▶ Birchington and Rural (2 Con)
- ▶ Broadstairs (Con)
- ▶ Cheriton, Sandgate and Hythe East (Con)
- ▶ Cliftonville (Con)
- ▶ Dartford East (Con)
- ▶ Dartford North East (Con)
- ▶ Maidstone Rural South (Con)
- ▶ Dartford West (Con)
- ▶ Dover North (Con)
- ▶ Dover Town (2 Con)
- ▶ Dover West (Con)
- ▶ Deal and Walmer (2 Con)
- ▶ Elham Valley (Con)
- ▶ Folkestone East (Lab)
- ▶ Folkestone West (Con)

Conservative targets

- ▶ Ashford East (Grn)
- ▶ Dartford North East (Lab)
- ▶ Faversham (LD)
- ▶ Folkestone East (Lab)
- ▶ Maidstone Central (1 LD)
- ▶ Maidstone North East (LD)
- ▶ Margate (Ind elected as Lab)

- ▶ Gravesend East (2 Con)
- ▶ Herne Bay East (Con)
- ▶ Hythe West (Con)
- ▶ Romney Marsh (Con)
- ▶ Maidstone North East (Con)
- ▶ Maidstone Rural South (Con)
- ▶ Maidstone South (Con)
- ▶ Margate (Con)
- ▶ Northfleet and Gravesend West (1 Con, 1 Lab)
- ▶ Ramsgate (2 Con)
- ▶ Sheppey (1 Con, 1 Ind)
- ▶ Sittingbourne North (Con)
- ▶ Sittingbourne South (Con)
- ▶ Swale East (Grn)
- ▶ Swale West (Ind)
- ▶ Swanley (Con)
- ▶ Tunbridge Wells Rural (Con)
- ▶ Whitstable West (Con)



Lancashire

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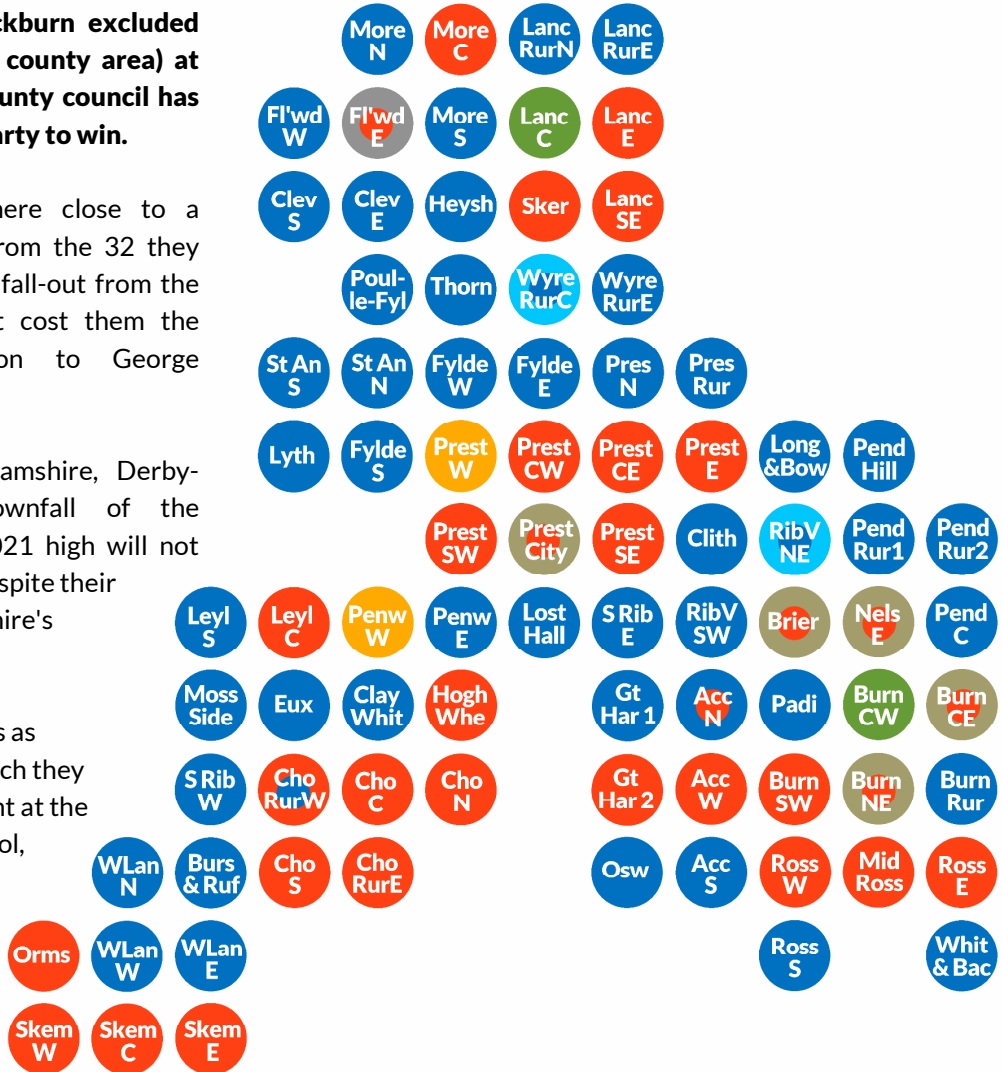
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For a county in which Labour holds every constituency bar two (Blackburn excluded because it's not within the county area) at the moment, Lancashire county council has proved very tricky for the party to win.

Right now they are nowhere close to a majority: in fact down six from the 32 they won in 2021 because of the fall-out from the anti-Semitism debacle that cost them the 2024 Rochdale by-election to George Galloway.

As with Durham, Nottinghamshire, Derbyshire and Kent the downfall of the Conservatives from their 2021 high will not necessarily benefit Labour despite their sudden dominance of Lancashire's constituencies.

Labour can regard themselves as fortunate that Blackburn, which they lost to a pro-Gaza independent at the general election; and Blackpool, emerging as one of Reform's strongest areas, don't elect to the county council being unitary authorities, and so won't vote on 1st May.



Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	O
2021 council election	48	32	2	2
2022 - defection: Loraine Hall, Accrington North - Lab to Con	49	31	2	2
2023 - by-election: Chorley Rural West - Lab gain from Con	48	32	2	2
2023 - suspension: Azhar Ali, Nelson East - Lab to Ind	48	31	2	3
2023 - defection: Usman Arif, Burnley North East - Lab to Ind	48	30	2	4
2023 - defection: Mohammed Iqbal, Brierfield and Nelson West - Lab to Ind	48	29	2	5
2023 - defection: Yousuf Motala, Preston City - Lab to Ind	48	28	2	6
2023 - defection: Sobia Malik, Burnley Central East - Lab to Ind	48	27	2	7
2025 - defection: Ged Mirfin, Ribble Valley North East - Con to Ref	47	27	2	8
2025 - defection: Matthew Salter, Wyre Rural Central - Con to Ref	46	27	2	9
2025 - vacancy, Lorraine Beavers MP, Fleetwood East, Lab	46	26	2	9
Current	46	26	2	9

But both of these interests: one on Labour's left and the other to its right [far right if Labour's spin is to be believed] have plenty of other opportunities in these elections. Independents have already proved in last year's district elections that they can win seats in the heavily-Muslim wards of Burnley and Nelson.

Azhar Ali himself, the former Labour leader in Lancashire and Rochdale by-election candidate, represents Nelson and is defending his seat as an independent. Labour seats in central Preston especially may also be at risk from pro-Gaza independents, some of whom have left Labour over the issue.

Meanwhile Reform poses a risk across the south of the county especially, in districts like Rossendale and Hyndburn; the whiter wards in Burnley, and maybe in

parts of Chorley where the Conservative challenge has rapidly diminished in recent years. If Reform are doing really serious damage to Labour then even their rock-solid seats in the deprived new town of Skelmersdale might be in jeopardy, especially if the party in government struggles to turn what it believes is still its vote out.

The Conservatives too will be harmed by Reform, especially in heavily-Leave voting areas like Fleetwood, Cleveleys, perhaps Lytham and St Annes, in rural Ribble Valley and Pendle, and through to West Lancashire.

Lancashire is the most northerly of the super-counties: those with around a million voters (over a million with Blackburn, Darwen and Blackpool), and it's certainly one of the most diverse, running from the fishing port of

Morecambe through the cities of Lancaster and Preston, the latter once a weaving Mecca and now a hub of the aerospace industry, across the river Ribble to Leyland, Chorley, Ormskirk and Skelmersdale, and then east up the side of the Pennines to Clitheroe, Nelson, Accrington and Burnley.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Blackpool N. & Fleetwood (pt)	9,913	23.7
Rossendale and Darwen (pt)	9,695	21.7
Hyndburn	7,541	20.7
Burnley	7,755	19.5
South Ribble	8,995	19.3
West Lancashire	7,909	17.9
Pendle and Clitheroe	8,171	17.5
Fylde	8,295	17.3
Ribble Valley	8,524	16.4
Southport (pt)	7,395	16.4
Morecambe and Lunesdale	7,810	16.3
Lancaster and Wyre	6,866	16.0
Preston	5,738	14.3
Chorley	-	-

Morecambe and Lancaster have little in common with Ormskirk and Skelmersdale; Lytham and St Annes no connection with Brierfield or Oswaldtwistle. Morecambe relies on fishing, the Ribble Valley on farming, Lancaster on its university, the Pennine towns came to affluence through their dark satanic mills and then decline as they closed. Cleveleys, Poulton and Lytham are more affluent suburbs of Blackpool beyond the city.

There are significant Muslim populations in the south of the county while the north is overwhelmingly white. All this is a long-winded way of saying that there are all sorts of political cross-currents in Lancashire: it does not necessarily vote one way all at once. These county elections will probably emphasise this electoral reality more emphatically than ever.

We have no hard data on Reform's strength in council elections so we cannot analyse the divisions they are challenging in the way we can Conservative, Labour, Lib Dem and Green. So, again, we need to rely on somewhat less reliable indicators: the party's performance in last year's general election, the local election MRP that has been conducted by Electoral Calculus, how these areas voted in the 2016 EU referendum and, before that, how UKIP performed in the 2013 county council elections.

Reform's weakest area is almost certain to be the district of Lancaster: a vastly larger district than just the county town itself. Other than Preston, the two constituencies here: Morecambe and Lunesdale and Lancaster & Wyre, gave Reform fewest votes in the county in the general election. Surprisingly, given that the two are somewhat different demographically, there was very little difference in how many votes Reform took in each. But if there are any possibilities for the party in the far north of Lancashire they will be in Morecambe, not Lancaster.

The two are separated, more or less, by the river Lune, but they form a broadly contiguous urban area from the quite isolated Heysham peninsula, north to Morecambe, then east to Skerton and across the river into Lancaster and Scotforth, where the university campus is.

There are four marginal divisions in these two towns. The Liberal Democrats, from essentially nowhere, came within three votes of ousting Labour in **Morecambe Central** on a 23% swing last time. There is no modern day liberal tradition in Morecambe and, although the Lib Dems then went on to win Poulton ward in the 2023 district elections, most of it is in Morecambe South, not Central. The district wards within this division: West End and Westgate, stayed Labour in 2023 and Electoral Calculus has them retaining this division. But tenacious Lib Dem campaigning, now with a councillor base in the town, could easily buck that forecast.

Reform may have a shot at all three Morecambe divisions. The constituency as a whole voted 58% Leave in the EU referendum and the town may have been somewhat more strongly for withdrawal. UKIP almost won the former Morecambe West division (which is now South) in 2013, taking 35% - they polled 22% in South (now Central) and didn't contest North. The Electoral Calculus MRP suggests their best shot is **Morecambe South** - which bears out that strong UKIP showing in West twelve years ago.

Labour will also want to win Conservative-held **Morecambe South**, where they were 376 (10.6%) short last time. If the Conservatives were ahead by ten points in the 2021 county elections nationally and Labour is perhaps two points ahead of them now, that's a six point swing which would make Morecambe South winnable.

But that's without factoring in the entrance of Reform and we need to recall that sizeable UKIP vote from 2013. If the Reform vote is not too great, they will presumably pull more votes off the Conservative stack

and help Labour; but if it is around or exceeds 35% that could well be enough to beat both main parties. On the same theme, if the Lib Dems remain strong in Central splitting the left-of-centre vote, that's how Reform could win there too.

Heysham is theoretically Labour's top target in the county: the Conservatives won here by just 140 votes (4.0%). But it's not an easy division for them to win: they only tend to do so in landslide years. 2025 doesn't look like it's going to be one of those, and the result last time was so close because an independent took 19%, almost entirely off the Conservative stack of votes. He's not standing this time, though Reform of course is, but that tiny lead is a little misleading: it's a better prospect for the Tories than it appears.

The fourth seat that looks dodgy is **Lancaster East**. Here the incumbents are Labour and the challengers the Greens. Greens already hold Lancaster Central - have done since 2001 making this (I think) their longest-held county division in England. They were 228 or 5.7% behind four years ago and hold both the district wards: Bulk, and John O'Gaunt, that contribute to this county division, so are clear favourites here this time.

The Conservatives absolutely tanked in Lancaster in the 2023 district elections winning just five seats and, if they haven't recovered a fair bit from that debacle then the three rural, outlying divisions they hold will fall, even though they look plenty safe on the 2021 numbers. **Lancaster Rural East** has a Tory majority of 860 (19.2%), **Lancaster Rural North** 1,166 (29.2%) and **Morecambe North** which extends far beyond the town, 1,187 (30.5%). Labour was second in all three last time

but, if change is a-coming, it'll most likely be the Greens challenging in Rural North and Morecambe North and the Lib Dems in Rural East.

South of Lancaster is Wyre district, named after the river that twines through its midst, and no relation at all to Wyre Forest in Worcestershire. There are three distinct parts to Wyre: isolated Fleetwood north of Blackpool and across the Wyre estuary from the rest of the district, Cleveleys: the relatively affluent Blackpool suburb, then sparsely-populated rural Wyre around Garstang.

Fleetwood is usually a Labour town though they have been misfiring a bit since 2010. This area was heavily Leave like Blackpool and, while UKIP couldn't win here in 2013, they did in the 2019 districts before swinging to the Conservatives in 2021.

Neither Fleetwood division looks particularly at risk: new Blackpool North Labour MP Lorraine Beavers won **Fleetwood East** last time by 871 or 26.9% (Reform stood here in 2021 and took just 3.2%, back when it was little more than an anti-Lockdown, anti-vaccine crank outfit). **Fleetwood West & Cleveleys West**, meanwhile, was Conservative by the closer, but hardly close, margin of 740 (19.8%). But Reform are forecast to take both plus **Cleveleys East** which elected the Conservatives with 69% of the vote last time. It'd be a massive collapse for the Tories to lose here. The three rural Wyre divisions are all forecast to stay Conservative.

Wyre covers the area north and north east of Blackpool, while Fylde covers the peninsula south and south east of it. In the sense that both are innately Conservative

they behave similarly but Fylde - Lytham, St Annes and the countryside west of Preston - has a much stronger, enduring independent tradition.

The Conservatives hold all six divisions in Fylde and Reform may poll well in Lytham and St Annes. But last time it was independents who threatened to win in two. The Tories held **Lytham** by just 181 (3.9%) which suggests there is a big non-Conservative vote for Reform to target there; and **Fylde East** by 150 (4.0%). Electoral Calculus forecasts an independent gain in this division but the Conservatives have won two Fylde district wards in by-elections since the general election, so maybe not. What is certain is that Labour, Lib Dems and Greens will not be challenging in any of these.

Completing the authorities covering this normally deeply blue mid-Lancashire countryside is geographically huge, sparsely populated Ribble Valley, centred on the market town of Clitheroe. Labour gained Ribble Valley in last year's general election after the Conservative vote collapsed by 26.5 percentage points. Labour was helped, somewhat, by the constituency boundaries being redrawn significantly to include a chunk of Preston but even so, the Tories should not have come anywhere close to losing what used to be one of their safest seats.

That said, Ribble Valley has a little bit of a record of political upsets: in 1991 when John Major sent the seat's Tory MP David Waddington, off to the Lords creating a by-election, Ribble Valley elected a Lib Dem MP on a 25% swing. The losing Conservative then, as in 2024 was Nigel Evans. Labour polled just 8% in that by-election.

Of Ribble Valley's four county divisions the Conservatives really should only need to fret about **Clitheroe** - almost certainly a write-off for them. Last time the Lib Dems came just twelve votes short but Labour should be winning here: they were 577 behind (13.1%). The Tories won with just 29.8% last time and, with Reform's arrival on the scene the winner - which could well be them - may well get across the line with even fewer votes and a much lower share.

The remaining three divisions: **Longridge & Bowland** (1,624 - 43.9%), **Ribble Valley North East** (1,686 - 35.0%), where their incumbent has defected to Reform UK, and **Ribble Valley South West** (2,241 - 50.4%) all look secure for the Tories.

The Electoral Calculus MRP went slightly loopy when analysing what might happen in Preston this election. It forecast Reform winning six of the nine and Labour left with just **Preston City** and **Preston Central West**. This is likely to be wrong both in terms of the Reform sweep and the seats Labour may hold because Preston's politics, with its sizeable Muslim population, has been affected by the Gaza conflict and the fallout from the expulsion of Labour's Lancashire leader, Azhar Ali.

The majority of long-time Preston Labour MP Sir Mark Hendrick crashed to just 5,291 at the general election with a 22-point drop in Labour share as part of the trend across constituencies with large Muslim electorates.

Although Ali represents a division in Pendle not Preston Yousuf Motala, the county councillor for Preston City, resigned from the party branding it racist and of

condoning a genocide in Gaza. He is contesting his division as an independent. Independents are standing in four others, so what is typically going to be a 5-way fight in most of Lancashire is a 6-way fight in much of the city. The prospect of even more fragmented results in the part of the county that is usually massively safe for Labour is high but Preston, because it has several divisions, will be one of the best measures of how potent the Muslim backlash against the party remains a year on from the general election.

Clearly if Labour loses twenty two points of support across the board in Preston, as they did in the general election (they won't), then depending where that vote goes, most of its safe Labour seats become vulnerable. Only **Preston Central East**, which then won with 76% last time, City - Motala's ward - and **Preston South East** would be safe.

But the presence of independents, even where they don't really have a chance of prevailing, could have knock-on effects. Independents won't win **Preston North**, for example, but Labour has been making inroads at district level into these northern suburban wards. The party was 880 votes (19.4%) short in Preston North last time - a lot but not impossible given that they have been winning Garrison consistently since 2018, Sharoe Green in 2023 and the Lib Dems have taken Garrison off the Tories: all district wards that contribute to Preston North.

The expectation would have been that Reform would pull the Conservatives close to defeat and a swing back to Labour would do the rest, but if independents take

out a large block of Labour's vote an 880 majority may be enough for the Tories to hold on.

Likewise, the Conservatives were not all that far behind Labour (359, 12.9%) in **Preston East**, a division that only once hasn't elected Labour. There isn't an independent challenge in East but both the Lib Dems and TUSC could become receptacles of disillusioned Labour votes - maybe even Reform among a different set of unhappy Labour voters.

The Conservatives got close to the Lib Dems in **Preston West** (136, 3.7%) last time but they're almost certainly too weak now to overturn the majority here. But they should hold **Preston Rural** - if they don't they're going to have a very, very small group indeed.

The river Ribble divides north Lancashire from south: the south is far more populous, more built-up and usually the much more competitive end of the county.

South Ribble district, shaped like a baby dragon [it is - go look at it - ed], contains the Preston suburbs south of the river - affluent areas like Penwortham, and then a band of neighbourhoods that continue south through Leyland all the way to Chorley.

This patch contains a stack of marginals, mostly Labour targets because the party did so poorly here last time. For starters there is Leyland South, a town synonymous with poorly-run, strike-bound, failing nationalised industries producing products that were poor quality and undesirable. Decades have elapsed since the era of British Leyland embarrassments but Leyland remains a working class industrial town, specialising in churning

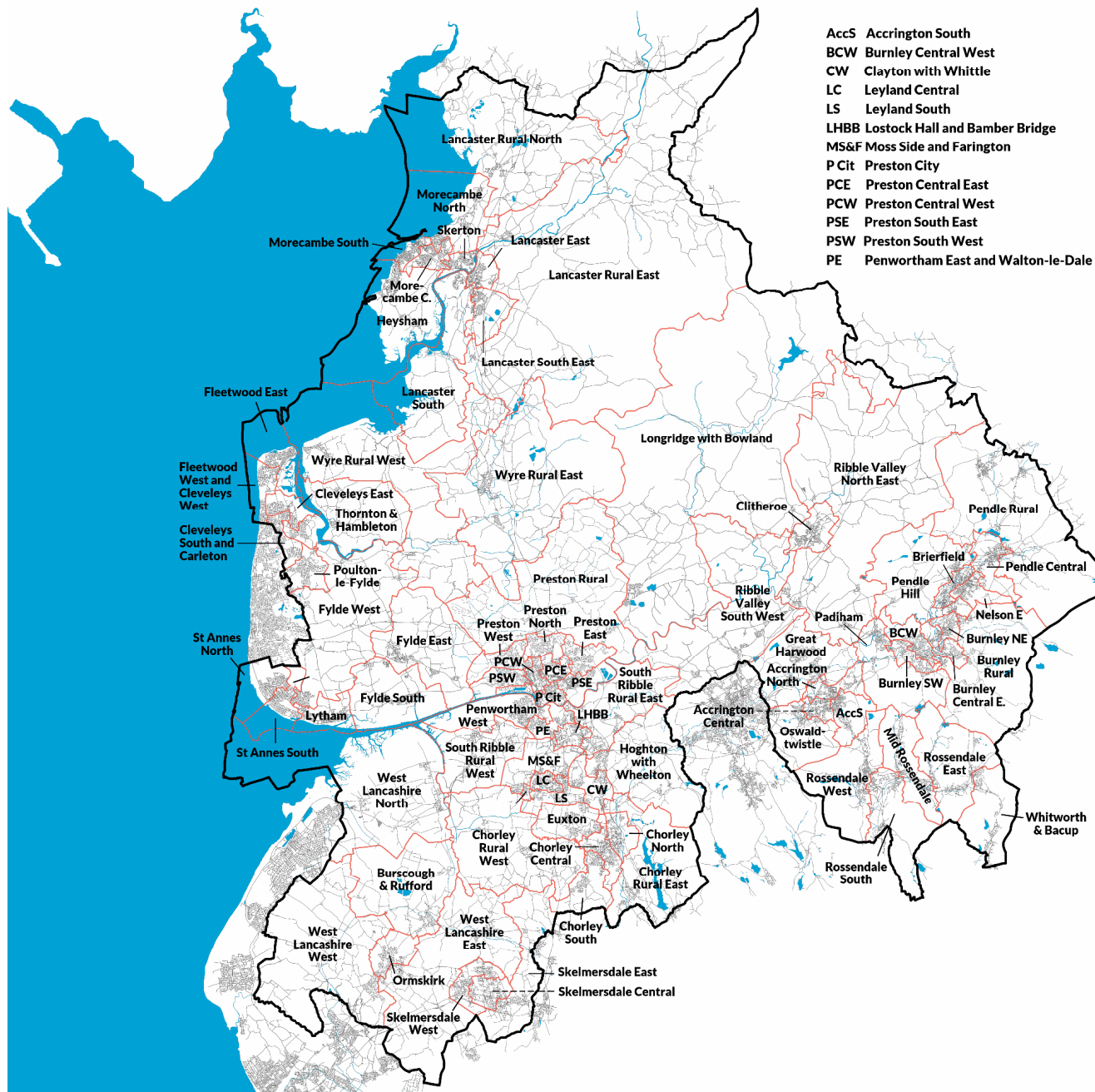
out Dr Oetker pizzas and infrastructure maintenance companies.

The Conservatives just edged **Leyland South**, which always voted Labour until 2009 and hasn't since. Their majority is 250 (6.8%). Of similar scale of vulnerability, but with a slightly better recent history of Labour winning, is **Lostock Hall & Bamber Bridge**: Tory majority 274 or 7.5%. Then comes the division immediately to the north: **Penwortham East & Walton-le-Dale**, which has a 390 (10.5%) Conservative lead.

The three remaining Conservative-held divisions: **Moss Side & Farington**, **South Ribble East** and **South Ribble West**, all should be safe, as should be the Lib Dem division of **Penwortham West**, and the sole Labour division of **Leyland Central** - though Reform might fancy a go here.

Just over the border in Chorley, the constituency of the Commons Speaker Sir Lindsay Hoyle, are three more vulnerable Conservative divisions. They won **Clayton with Whittle** by 218 (5.1%), **Chorley Rural West** by 350 or 7.5% and **Hoghton & Wheelton** by 404 (10.2%).

This once Conservative-leaning district and constituency has so moved from the party that even **Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley**, where they had an 843 majority (17.7%) in 2021 may not be secure, though they are at least still competitive here in district council elections. Electoral Calculus has Labour gaining Euxton, Clayton and Hoghton but Reform winning Rural West, wiping the Conservatives out in Chorley district at county level.



The somewhat misnamed district of West Lancashire (South West Lancashire, surely: West Lancs is Blackpool and Fylde) is traditionally a battle between overwhelmingly Labour Skelmersdale and the rest of the district, centred on Ormskirk. Labour still dominates Skelmersdale but Ormskirk has swung strongly from the Conservatives in the past quarter century and now has a Labour county councillor. Because the area is so polarised there is only one Labour target here: **Burscough & Rufford**, just north of Ormskirk, where the Tories defend a 352 (8.4%) majority.

The Tories may have hoped to flip **Skelmersdale East** which, though it contains a chunk of this deprived new town, winds up the eastern side of the district where the Conservatives do a lot better. Labour won here by 367 (9.7%) last time.

But there is another force in West Lancashire: the localist Our West Lancashire (OWL). They hold a few seats in and around Ormskirk on the district council and are faint challengers in two county divisions: Conservative-held **West Lancashire East** (431, 10.0%) and Labour-held **Ormskirk** (602, 13.7%).

Localist parties (and Greens and Lib Dems) tend to do better in district elections, partly because wards are smaller than divisions, the services are closer to the people (and arguably less substantial than, say, education and social care - though tell the people of Birmingham that refuse collection isn't a substantial issue). So it's harder for OWL to break through.

They still could, especially in the Conservative division given their drop in popularity since 2021, but it'll be a big fight for them to break onto the county council.

We are left with four districts in south east Lancs: Pendle, Hyndburn, Burnley and Rossendale. There are big bust-ups a plenty in this corner. It is also the part of the county in which Reform should do best.

Hyndburn, based on Accrington, is one of the classic long-term marginals in British politics, albeit a Labour-leaning one. Right now Labour holds just two of the six county seats, having lost **Accrington North** to a defection to the Conservatives. The defector isn't defending her seat and Labour won with 54% last time. This might have been a Labour vulnerability had a pro-Gaza independent stood, but it's a four-way contest and Labour should get their seat back.

Accrington South was a Conservative gain last time: the first time they'd won here since 1977. But it's very vulnerable: their majority is 213 (6.1%). Former Hyndburn MP Graham Jones, who was suspended from the party when he got caught up in the Rochdale by-election Anti-Semitism furore, and was prevented from trying to win Hyndburn back last year, is the Labour candidate in this division.

Even closer is the 2-councillor division of **Great Harwood, Rishton & Clayton** which elected one Conservative, one Labour last time. Both councillors have majorities of similar size: 310 and 316.

Labour holds the mouthful that is **Accrington West & Oswaldtwistle Central** by 200 (4.6%). And

Oswaldtwistle, held by Peter Britcliffe, the father of former Hyndburn Tory MP Sarah Britcliffe, was won by 668 or 18.8%. Mr Britcliffe lost his district council seat in this areas last year to Labour. The Electoral Calculus MRP has every single Hyndburn division going to Reform UK.

This too is predicted to be the fate of every incumbent county councillor in neighbouring Rossendale: surely the most marginal district council in England?

There are five county divisions in Rossendale of which Labour holds three and the Conservatives two. All are far from secure, as both that MRP and the results last time show. The Conservatives held **Whitworth & Bacup**: the far south eastern corner of Lancashire, by just 60 votes or 2% over a Community First candidate.

Labour gained three Rossendale divisions in 2021. **Rossendale East** looks fairly comfortably Labour: they won by 535 (15.4%), until you notice that the former Conservative councillor there, Jimmy Eaton, stood against his former party splitting their vote evenly. Combined, the Conservative-Independent vote of 1,801 easily exceeded Labour's 1,445. Labour gained **Rossendale West** by a much more typical (for this district 77 (1.9%) and **Mid Rossendale** by just 60 (1.4%). Finally **Rossendale South** went Conservative by 334 (9.0%) - a comparative landslide.

Finally we move to Burnley and Pendle, where the politics of Gaza return with a vengeance.

Burnley is a turbulent district and constituency, electing Labour, Lib Dem and Conservative MPs in recent times,

as well as having a sizeable BNP group on the local council. **Padiham & Burnley West** division even elected a BNP county councillor in 2009 and UKIP's only county councillor in England in 2017.

Burnley has four central district wards that have a substantial Muslim majority within them, and pro-Gaza independents took three off Labour at last year's district elections. Fortunately for Labour, there was no pro-Gaza independent or Workers Party (George Galloway's latest party) candidate in the general election, else they might not have regained the constituency (their MP has since been suspended as part of the Andrew Gwynne WhatsApp scandal).

It's also fortunate for Labour that all three of these now-independent district wards are packed into one county division: **Burnley Central East**, whose councillor, Sobia Malik was one of those who left the party after the Azhar Ali Rochdale controversy. She is not contesting the ward against Labour however; and not only is the Workers Party standing but so too are two Muslim independents. They may split the anti-Labour vote to help Labour cling onto what should be a safe division but probably won't look it after 1st May.

Labour may be vulnerable in the adjoining **Burnley North East** division. The district wards here include Lanehead, the fourth of those Muslim-majority wards which Labour held - but only by three votes last year. The incumbent county councillor Usman Arif also defected from Labour and is contesting this ward as an independent - without any other candidates competing with him for the same bloc of votes.

The Greens gained **Burnley Central West** last time after a huge surge in support (up twenty-one points), with Labour's incumbent county councillor crashing to fourth place with just 15.5%. The Conservatives were the runners up in 2021 251 votes (7.3%) behind the Green, Andy Fewings. The Greens defended this seat in a 2023 by-election, winning 630 with Labour recovering to take 583 and the Conservatives on 574: but clearly this division is far from secure.

The Greens will also be having a go at **Burnley Rural** which Conservative Cosima Towneley holds by 606 or 14.8%. Former Lib Dem Burnley MP Gordon Birtwistle is standing here for his party and this division was Lib Dem a couple of times before the Tories nabbed it in 2017, but the party only polled 19% here in 2021 and are unlikely to revive.

And the marginals here keep coming. **Burnley South West** was a three-way battle last time with Labour gaining the seat off the Lib Dems but with just 24.8% and by only five votes. The ousted Lib Dem incumbent, Jeff Sumner took 24.6% and the Conservative was only 58 votes behind Labour on 23.1%. Sumner is standing again for the Lib Dems and Neil Mottershead, who stood as an independent last time winning 22.8%, is standing for the Conservatives this. There is a new Labour candidate.

Finally for Burnley there is the most turbulent of all this district's wards: **Padiham & Burnley West**. The UKIP county councillor who won in 2017 defected to the Conservatives and won the ward under his new colours with over 62% last time. He has not chosen to switch to Reform and is again defending his seat, which looks in

theory safe enough given his huge percentage last time. But Reform's Thomas Pickup will be hoping to pick up this division and, given its history of voting for populist and far right parties, nothing can be assumed.

The Electoral Calculus MRP has the Tories holding on here, but it'll have been influenced by the atypical Conservative share last time and will have paid no heed to its UKIP and BNP history.

Central Burnley forms part of a contiguous urban area that moves north into Brierfield and Nelson which are in the Pendle district (though now in the Burnley constituency). This is Azhar Ali's heartland: he represents Nelson East and is defending his seat against Labour.

In last year's Pendle district elections there were shenanigans where a slate of selected Labour candidates suddenly withdrew their nominations at the last minute, leaving the party no chance of replacing them. Mainly as a result Labour won zero seats in Pendle in 2024 (there were still Labour candidates but they were in unwinnable wards) and pro Gaza independents won five, all in the Brierfield-Nelson corridor.

We can't therefore tell how independents would have fared against Labour because there were no head-to-head fights but both Ali in **Nelson East**, and Mohammed Iqbal, defending **Brierfield & Nelson West** are going to be very hard to beat. As with its predictions in Preston the Electoral Calculus MRP is calling both divisions for Reform, possibly because on a heavily split vote they

could win. But, while other parts of Pendle are vote-traps for Reform, these two are much less so.

The Lib Dems have a good shot of winning at least one seat in 2-member **Pendle Rural**, where they were only 251 votes (3.1%) behind the lower Conservative winner. But they have also won a recent by-election off the Tories in the Vivary Bridge district ward (there's a second by-election there on 1 May) which is in **Pendle Central**. The Conservative majority is much larger here: 767 (22.9%) but Reform's entry and the general state of collapse of the Tories could throw this one up in the air. The Conservatives should be able to hold **Pendle Hill**: the rural west of the district.

Because Lancashire was, even before the advent of Reform as a serious party capable of challenging for power, a highly competitive county with lots of marginal seats, it has always been psephologically interesting. Reform, with its particular appeal in the south east of Lancashire, but stretching as far north as, perhaps, Fleetwood and Morecambe, is likely to show it can reach areas UKIP never could, and will certainly end up with seats in County Hall.

Labour, which in normal times could have capitalised on Conservative disarray after a record general election defeat is being stymied by Reform's rise to its right and the anger of Muslim communities over its position on

Gaza on the left. There are further opportunities for Lib Dems and Greens, and the highly competitive battleground, with four, five, six or even seven potentially strong candidates in some divisions likely to produce surprising results.

For what it's worth, and it's going to be out some way because of its mis-analysis of Preston and Burnley, the Electoral Calculus MRP forecast 34 Reform councillors, 25 Conservatives, 25 Labour, 2 Greens, an independent and a Liberal Democrat.

As with Northumberland later on in this preview, that is clearly a big loss for the Conservatives, going from a majority of ten to less than 30% of the seats. But looked at in terms of the overall right-left balance on the council it is a huge increase for the right of centre, who'll hold two thirds of the county's seats.

If Reform do emerge as the largest party in Lancashire they'll have, on these numbers, options for whom to coalesce with - or to go it alone and defy the Conservatives to vote them down. For all Nigel Farage's claims that, on councils they'll work with anyone it doesn't seem remotely plausible that Labour would be willing to support them in any form. But let's await the actual results before thinking too hard about how these counties will be governed after 1st May.

Key seats

Conservative targets



- ▶ Accrington West & Oswaldtwistle Central (Lab)
- ▶ Burnley Central East (Lab)
- ▶ Burnley Central West (Lab)
- ▶ Great Harwood, Rishton & Clayton (1 Lab)
- ▶ Mid Rossendale (Lab)
- ▶ Preston West (LD)
- ▶ Ribble Valley North East (Ref elected as Con)
- ▶ Skelmersdale East (Lab)
- ▶ Wyre Rural Central (Ref)

Lib Dem targets



- ▶ Burnley South West (Con)
- ▶ Clitheroe (Con)
- ▶ Morecambe Central (Lab)
- ▶ Pendle Rural (Con)

Green targets



- ▶ Burnley Rural (Con)
- ▶ Lancaster East (Lab)

Others targets



- ▶ Ormskirk (Lab)
- ▶ West Lancashire East (Con)
- ▶ Whitworth & Bacup (Con)

Labour targets



- ▶ Brierfield & Nelson West (Ind elected as Lab)
- ▶ Burnley Central East (Ind elected as Lab)
- ▶ Burnley North East (Ind elected as Lab)
- ▶ Clitheroe (Con)
- ▶ Euxton, Buckshaw & Astley (Con)
- ▶ Great Harwood, Rishton & Clayton (1 Con)
- ▶ Heysham (Con)
- ▶ Hoghton & Wheelton (Con)
- ▶ Leyland South (Con)
- ▶ Moss Side (Con)
- ▶ Nelson East (Ind elected as Lab)
- ▶ Penwortham East (Con)
- ▶ Preston City (Ind elected as Lab)
- ▶ South Ribble East (Con)
- ▶ Whitworth & Bacup (Con)

Independent targets



- ▶ Fylde East (Con)
- ▶ Lytham (Con)

Gaza Ind targets



- ▶ Burnley Central East (Grn)
- ▶ Chorley North (Lab)
- ▶ Preston East (Lab)


Reform UK targets



- ▶ Accrington North (Lab)
- ▶ Accrington South (Con)
- ▶ Accrington West (Lab)
- ▶ Burscough and Rufford (Con)
- ▶ Chorley Rural West (Con)
- ▶ Cleveleys East (Con)
- ▶ Cleveleys West (Con)
- ▶ Clitheroe (Con)
- ▶ Fleetwood East (Lab)
- ▶ Fleetwood West (Con)
- ▶ Great Harwood (Lab)
- ▶ Lytham (Con)
- ▶ Mid Rossendale (Lab)
- ▶ Morecambe Central (Lab)
- ▶ Ormskirk (Lab)
- ▶ Oswaldtwistle (Con)
- ▶ Padiham & Burnley West (Con)
- ▶ Poulton-le-Fylde (Con)
- ▶ Preston North (Con)
- ▶ Preston South East (Lab)
- ▶ Preston South West (Lab)
- ▶ Preston West (Lab)
- ▶ Rossendale East (Lab)
- ▶ Rossendale South (Con)
- ▶ Rossendale West (Lab)
- ▶ Skelmersdale East (Lab)
- ▶ West Lancashire East (Con)
- ▶ West Lancashire West (Con)
- ▶ Whitworth and Bacup (Con)

YOUR LABOUR COUNTY COUNCIL CANDIDATE FOR
Longridge with Bowland

KIEREN SPENCER



A FRESH VOICE FOR THE Town, Villages & Countryside

Get in touch
07777673243
hello@kierenspencer.com
Cllr Kieren Spencer

Hi I'm Kieren
I feel incredibly fortunate to have grown up in Longridge with Bowland, surrounded by beautiful countryside and lovely people. I've always had a deep passion for the place I'm lucky enough to call home. Even back in school, as a member of the Ribbles Valley Youth Council. Since then, he's been honoured to serve as both a Town Councillor and Borough Councillor, advocating for the needs of our community. With the county elections approaching, I'd be delighted to represent you and your families at Lancashire County Council. I want to be a voice for our town, villages, and countryside, working to ensure that our corner of the world continues to be a wonderful place to live, work, and enjoy for generations to come.

Tell me what matters to you

In the short time that Kieren has been a Councillor he has shown how Longridge and Longridge folk matter to him. I have no hesitation whatsoever in recommending him to represent Longridge with Bowland on Lancashire County Council.
Irene Reid MBE

...Why WE'RE BACKING Kieren...
Kieren is a well-respected local leader with a strong record of community service, from charity work to council roles. Hardworking and principled, he stands up for important issues and gets things done. He has the experience to represent Longridge with Bowland.
Dr Harry Gee

Vote Labour THURSDAY 1 MAY

INDEPENDENT

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USMAN ARIF

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Using my skills and knowledge as a Solicitor and my awareness of local issues, I have worked tirelessly to represent our entire community. Always putting residents first, staying proactive and fighting for what's best for our area.

I am proud to be your truly INDEPENDENT voice, FREE FROM PARTY POLITICS, focused on serving the people of Queensgate, Lanehead and Bank Hall.

I hope I have earned your trust, and I ask for your support once again so that I can continue the good work."

Burnley North East Division
(QUEENSGATE / LANEHEAD / UPPER BANK HALL / THURSBY / HEASANDFORD / TOP OF TOWN)

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VOTE SOHAIL ASGHAR

Sohail Asghar or one of his volunteers called today ahead of the COUNTY COUNCIL ELECTIONS 1ST MAY 2024. Please get in touch if you have any questions or would like a poster.

SOHAIL ASGHAR
Green Party Candidate for Accrington West and Oswaldtwistle Central
07593131524
hyndburngreenparty0@gmail.com
www.facebook.com/GreenPartyAccrington

Green Party

Produced by Alan Wood, Lyndale Rd, Blackburn Rd, Great Harwood, Lancashire, BB9 7JH on behalf of Sohail Asghar, 10 Clarendon St, Accrington, BB1 9RZ, Preston, Lancashire, BB1 1SW. PLEASE RECYCLE THIS CARD.

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BE INDEPENDENT ON 1ST MAY 2025

Robert Walker

Robert Walker – a voice for Longridge & Bowland
I'm here to represent you at Lancashire County Council, not a political party or their interests. No Party whip, no national agendas, just common sense action on issues like better roads and public transport, stronger support for small businesses and protecting Lancashire's green spaces.

Vote for Robert Walker not Party Politics on 1st May 2025

About Me
I was brought up in Longridge, and have lived in Chipping with my wife and four children for the last 18 years. Having run a small printing business in Longridge for 15 years I understand the challenges that businesses have faced over the last few years and continue to face.

Both mine and my wife's family live or work in Longridge, Ribchester and the surrounding area which means I'm passionate about investing time and energy in the community. Our children have all attended local schools and colleges, this has given me a wealth of knowledge about the education system.

I see how my elderly relatives benefit from community groups and I understand the importance of keeping and creating spaces for people of all ages for their physical and mental well-being.

I've been a Councillor for Longridge Town Council Derby Ward since 2022 and currently sit on the Budget and Finance Committee (as Chair), Staffing Committee (as Chair), Planning (as Lead) and Estates Committee (as Chair).

I have been a Councillor for Longridge Town Council Derby Ward since 2022 and currently sit on the Budget and Finance Committee (as Chair), Staffing Committee (as Chair), Planning (as Lead) and Estates Committee (as Chair).

My input into the redevelopment of Townley plot of land to develop into a Longridge branch of the Men's Shed (a men's mental health group).

t: 07531 558 588
for Longridge with Bowland Council elections
Street, Longridge, BB1 3BB on behalf of Robert Walker

VOTE JOHN METCALFE

Pendle Hill 1st May

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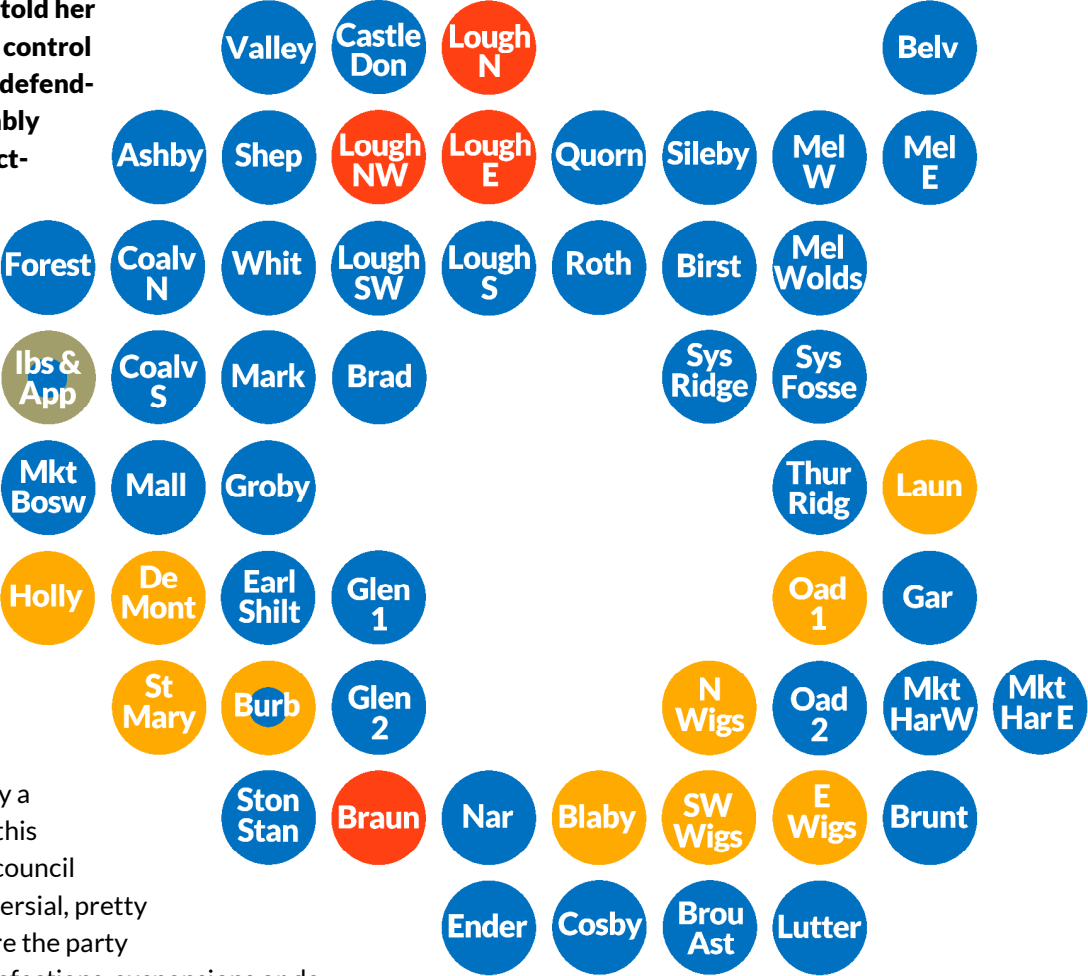
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When Kemi Badenoch told her party that it could lose control of every council it was defending on 1 May she probably doubted that her expectation management would turn out to be quite that bad in reality.

The Conservatives would have to stage a phenomenal collapse to lose Leicestershire - especially as this is likely to be one of the counties where Reform UK is a bit weaker.

The Conservatives enjoy a majority of 25 seats on this relatively small county council and this is an uncontroversial, pretty well-run authority where the party has not been beset by defections, suspensions or deselections, and has sustained only one by-election loss.



They hold five-and-a-bit of the seven-and-a-bit constituencies here (Hinckley & Bosworth; Melton and Syston; Harborough, Oadby & Wigston; Mid Leicestershire and South Leicestershire - the bit being a small section still joined to Rutland, which is now twinned with the Lincolnshire town of Stamford), even after their general election debacle.

Even in the two seats they lost: Loughborough and North West Leicestershire, the Labour vote is highly concentrated in intense pockets (Loughborough itself in the former, small towns like Coalville, Ashby-de-la Zouch and Snibston in the latter) with the Conservatives still able to win more suburban and rural parts of these constituencies.

With Leicester removed from Leicestershire, Labour has no prospect of building a group capable of challenging (though the party is in a fair bit of electoral trouble there too at the moment, losing control of the council in 2023 and two of the three parliamentary constituencies in last year's general election).

Labour's targets here can be counted on the figures of one hand. They already hold three divisions in Loughborough and **Braunstone**, a satellite suburb of Leicester. To these they should be able to add a fourth Loughborough division: **Loughborough South** (235, 8.6%) and, if Reform zaps the Conservative vote to a larger degree than it does Labour's, the party might just take a fifth: **Loughborough South West**.

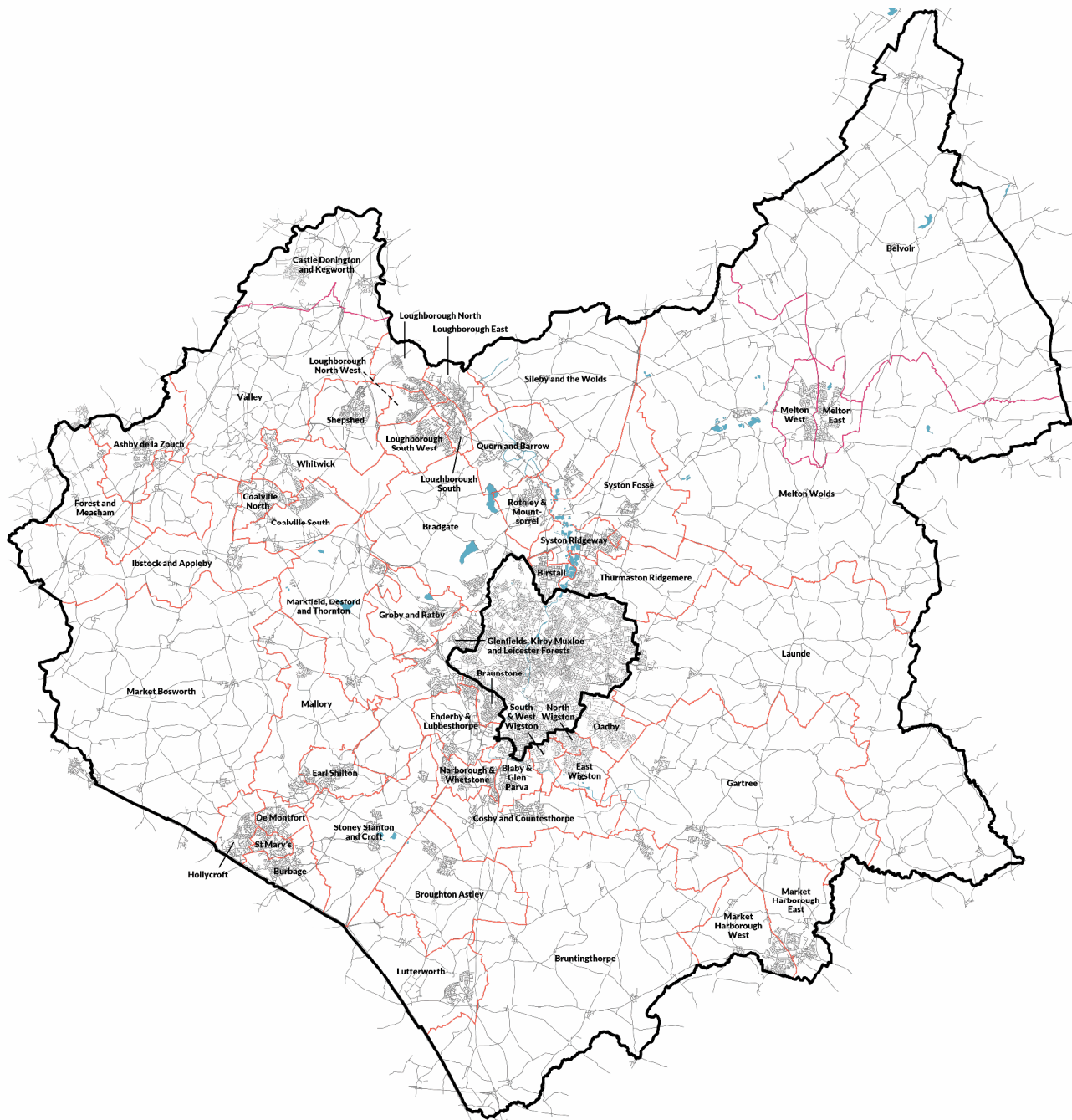
But that one has never elected a Labour county councillor and the Tories were 900 votes ahead in 2021.

Labour can then look to winning back some ground in North West Leicestershire but this is a constituency the party can only win in landslide years, was very strongly Leave (61/39) and Labour only just scraped a win here last year (35% to 33%).

A large chunk of the voters that ousted the Tories here seem to be swinging to Reform, not staying with Labour.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	O
2021 council election	42	4	9	
2024 - by-election: Burbage - LD gain from Con	41	4	10	
2024 - defection: Mark Frisby, Melton West - Con to Ind	40	4	10	1
2024 - defection: Mark Frisby, Melton West - Ind to Con	41	4	10	
2025 - defection: Dan Harrison, Ibstock and Appleby - Con to Ind	40	4	10	1
Current	40	4	10	1



Nonetheless, Labour will hope they can grab **Coalville North** (228, 9.1%), which went Conservative for the first time ever in 2021. **Coalville South** (896, 24.5% over Lab) was once as promising for Labour as its northern twin but then the Lib Dems gained it and held it twice before the Tories ousted them last time. With the Lib Dems out of the picture, perhaps Labour can convince voters they are the Tories' challenger here.

Forest & Measham (506, 16.5%) and then **Ashby-de-la-Zouch** (774, 19.5%) are incrementally harder but the former was Labour until 2021. The party hasn't won Ashby since 2001 but on a fairly evenly-divided battleground Labour might edge in here. Beyond these five divisions Labour's chances fade dramatically. They have a shot at **Birstall** (479, 13.9%), traditionally a Lib Dem target on the northern edge of Leicester, which Labour advanced significantly in last time around. But the Conservatives improved there too.

What about the Lib Dems? They have two main pockets of support in Leicestershire: the town of Hinckley on the edge of Warwickshire with three safe Lib Dem divisions, and the south-eastern Leicester suburbs of Oadby and Wigston (one of Britain's tiniest district councils) with the adjoining **Blaby & Glen Parva** (464, 15.2%) and **Launde** (190, 4.3%) divisions either side. They gained the division of **Burbage** (Con maj 270, 6.6% in 2021) which adjoins their three Hinckley seats, in a 2024 by-election.

Because they won there, and only narrowly missed out on the nearby division of **Mallory** (68, 2.0%) in 2021, they will fancy their chances there too. But Hinckley and Bosworth has a young, dynamic Conservative MP

who has built a following on TikTok explaining the minutiae of his job, and so Lib Dem progress there might be hard work. Mallory is also a rural division so the electoral dynamics of winning it are different to an urban or suburban seat where campaign momentum can be easier to build. For what it's worth (not much), Electoral Calculus has the Lib Dems losing both Burbage and Mallory.

The Lib Dems only narrowly lost **Market Harborough East** (175, 3.9%) in 2021: the first time they had been beaten by the Conservatives there since 1981. And they also lost a seat in two-councillor **Oadby** by just twenty-five votes. But the Electoral Calculus MRP suggests something strange might be happening in Oadby and Wigston because it indicates the Conservatives could win all the county divisions there this year.

That's surprising given the very long-lasting grip the Lib Dems have had on this district: they've held a majority since 1991. But these things sometimes happen to Liberal Democrat-run councils: voters simply tire of them and they collapse. It might be that the Conservative resurgence in Leicester has spilt across into these suburban satellites. It could just be that Reform's entry into the arena creates some perverse outcomes. Or it could be wrong.

If the Lib Dems do lose ground in Oadby and Wigston to the Conservatives there is absolutely zero chance of the Tories losing their council majority; and there are no other realistic shots for the Lib Dems to offset that loss: Market Harborough East and Mallory are it. So let's turn to Reform.

Leicestershire was a comfortably Leave-voting county in 2016: 57% to 43%. And pockets of the county: especially North West Leicestershire were even more so. But UKIP only managed to win two divisions in the 2013 County Council elections: rural **Markfield, Desford & Thornton** and the western Leicester suburb of **Glenfields**, now part of a much larger division just south of Markfield.

Constituency	vote	%vote
South Leicestershire	10,235	19.9
North West Leicestershire	9,678	19.9
Melton and Syston	8,945	19.5
Mid Leicestershire	8,923	18.6
Hinckley and Bosworth	8,817	18.4
Loughborough	7,204	17.0
Harborough, Oadby & Wigston	6,332	12.6

The party only exceeded 30% in four divisions. But, as we've looked at elsewhere, the 2013 contests tended to put UKIP up against much stronger principal opponents. For example, in Coalville - one of the top Reform targets this year, Labour polled 45% to win, compared to UKIP's 29%. I suspect Labour will not poll anything close to 45% in either Coalville division on May 1st, the Conservatives (who only polled 16% in 2013) are now the incumbents and because the battleground is more fragmented winners need a much lower vote to get over the line.

Reform's targets are also somewhat different to UKIP. The four divisions in which the party exceeded 30% of the vote were clustered together in a band south west

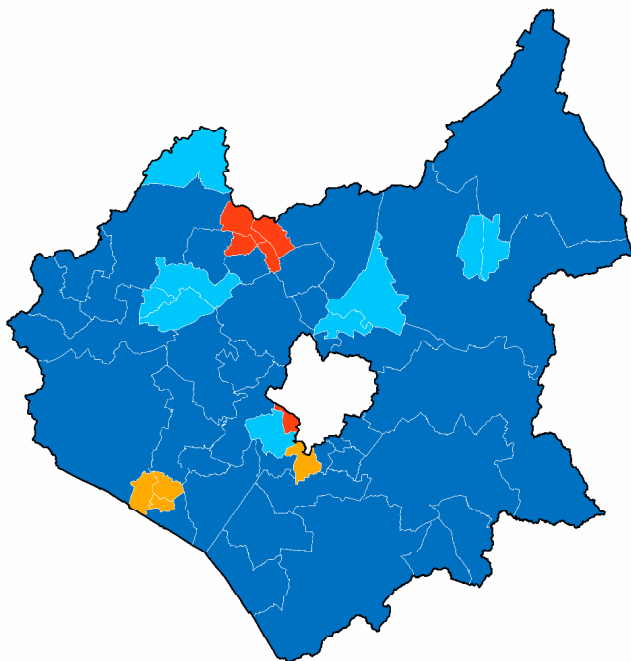
of Leicester and they might do well there, but Electoral Calculus has the Conservatives holding all four.

Reform looks like it could potentially do best in North West Leicestershire from **Castle Donington & Kegworth** in the north to Coalville in the south - in fact it wouldn't be completely shocking if they won the majority of divisions in this constituency. But they also have prospects right across the other side of the county in the market town of Melton where they could do the double, winning **Melton East** and **Melton West**.

Division	%vote
Markfield, Desford and Thornton	36.0
Glenfields, Kirkby Muxloe & Leics Forests	35.2
Mallory	31.0
Forest and Measham	30.5

Loughborough was the least pro-Leave district in Leicestershire and Reform will struggle to breakthrough there, but they could do well in neighbouring **Shepherd**, and depending on where the votes it does amass in Loughborough come from create all sorts of mischief for Labour and the Conservatives.

After all, Labour scraped **Loughborough North** by just sixteen votes over the Conservatives last time and their long-standing councillor, Betty Newton, is stepping down this year. UKIP didn't even contest any of the Loughborough divisions in 2013 so we have no data on where Reform may peak, but even if they take fractionally more votes from Labour than Conservatives there could be tears down red rosettes at the count.



Illustrative map of the March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP

The Conservatives' twenty-five seat majority, while large, would disappear with thirteen losses.

If they were solely on the defensive - and, given how well they did in 2021 here, they should be - that could perhaps just be within reach of being lost if each of the

opposition parties maximise their opportunities. But as we've seen there are some offensive targets for the Tories too.

As well as those Lib Dem seats in Oadby and Wigston and, perhaps, Loughborough North, they were only 129 votes behind Labour in **Braunstone** last time and 190 behind in rural **Launde**, east of Leicester. The Conservatives probably won't win these divisions but they're not completely out of reach given we have no real clue how Reform will realign the battleground.

But even if the Tories did lose their majority it would not follow that they would lose power, because the only conceivable alternative would be a Lib-Lab-Reform coalition, and if that happened Reform would lose any credibility it has with its voter base.

As there is virtually no prospect of the Conservatives being supplanted as the largest party (and probably by some margin) the only possibilities would then be a Tory-Reform coalition or a Conservative minority that, more often than not would get Reform votes. It all depends on how hungry for political power the new Reform councillors are.

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Braunstone (Lab)
- ▶ Burbage (LD by-election gain)
- ▶ East Wigston (LD)
- ▶ Ibstock and Appleby (Ind elected as Con)
- ▶ Oadby (1 LD)
- ▶ Launde (LD)
- ▶ North Wigston (LD)
- ▶ South and West Wigston (LD)



Labour targets

- ▶ Coalville North (Con)
- ▶ Coalville South (Con)
- ▶ Forest and Measham (Con)
- ▶ Loughborough South (Con)



Lib Dem targets

- ▶ Mallory (Con)
- ▶ Market Harborough East (Con)
- ▶ Oadby (1 Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Ashby-de-la-Zouch (Con)
- ▶ Castle Donington and Kegworth (Con)
- ▶ Coalville North (Con)
- ▶ Coalville South (Con)
- ▶ Enderby and Lubbethorpe (Con)
- ▶ Forest and Measham (Con)
- ▶ Melton East (Con)
- ▶ Melton West (Con)
- ▶ Shepshed (Con)
- ▶ Syston Fosse (Con)
- ▶ Whitwick (Con)



Green targets

- ▶ Syston Ridgeway (Con)



Polling Day: Thursday 1st May

Hello,

I am Harry Davies-Slater, and so excited to be the Conservative candidate for the County Council elections on Thursday 1st May.

I have called Loughborough home for the past five years, having studied here at Loughborough University and now living with my partner and our little sausage dog. This town has become a place of roots, community, and family, and I am proud to be part of it.

Together we can create #OneLoughborough Community. A place we can grow together as one community

I am standing to be your County Councillor because I want to see our council work for all of us. As someone who lives, works, and is deeply invested in the future of Loughborough, I am committed to making sure our council is the best it can be, putting the needs of our community first and ensuring we have the services and support that make this town a great place to live.

My Pledges

- I will be accessible for our community, so you can raise your concerns and receive advice.
- I will work to build relationships between students and locals to establish #OneLoughborough.
- Labour want to take your voice away and have one unitary authority. I will ensure your voice is heard through the process, keeping you up to date. It's important your voice is heard and by electing me I will ensure that happens.
- Let's get fighting potholes, traffic and inconsiderate parking. I'll ensure we work with Loughborough Schools Foundation to restrict parking during pick up and drop offs.

My Focus

Traffic Potholes Education Parking Town and gov

Loughborough South Conservatives Loughborough South

REFORMUK

SHEPshed Election
Vote Reform UK on 1st May

Introducing HELEN BUTLER

Your Reform UK candidate for SHEPshed

BUTLER, HELEN
Reform UK

I'm Helen from accounts. A fresh face with a fresh vision for Shepshed with determination and drive for change. Having established family in Shepshed, we moved here in 2023 to raise a new family. I've served 7 years in the British military and now I'm asking you for the

Do you support us?

QR code

Local Voice for Local Matters

I'm a Loughborough resident, and a local teacher in Further Education.

To improve things in our area, we need a local voice on the County Council and someone who has the knowledge and experience to get things done.

I'm standing to be your County Councillor to listen to you and prioritise the things that you care about.

MY PLEDGES TO YOU

I will be a strong, local voice for the things you care about in Loughborough South.

- BE DEPENDABLE** Always there to support you, no matter what the issue.
- FIX OUR ROADS** Improve road safety and tackle inconsiderate parking.
- IMPROVE TRANSPORT** Fight for more reliable bus routes and for safer walking and cycling networks.
- INVEST IN EDUCATION AND YOUNG PEOPLE** Press for new developments to have the schools they need, and for investment in the skills training that young people deserve.
- TACKLE THE COST OF LIVING CRISIS** Help residents to access the Household Support Fund. Ensure Council services give value for money.

Labour

Leicestershire County Council Elections Thursday 1st May 2025

A Great Choice for a Great Community.

NIGEL GRUNDY
Your Conservative Candidate for NARBOROUGH & WHETSTONE Division.

Vote Conservative

Dear Resident

I am standing to be your County Councillor at the forthcoming elections as I believe strongly in community values and supporting local communities. I am already a hard working Blaby District Councillor but feel I could achieve so much more for my residents if you vote for me to be your County Councillor on May 1st 2025.

Over the years I have undertaken many voluntary roles. I have served as a Special Police Constable and more recently a School Governor and Chair of Governors at Greyfriars primary school in NARBOROUGH where my daughter attended.

During the pandemic I started to cook hot meals for my elderly neighbours. I realised that it wasn't just a home cooked meal they liked but equally to feel cared for and appreciated. This tradition hasn't stopped and I now cook and deliver various meals a week. Being a councillor isn't just about knowing how to 'get things done' it's more about having the time, compassion and empathy to understand my residents' needs even if it is just a shepherd's pie and a conversation.

I support the local 'Wombles' in helping keep our area free of litter as it is fantastic to 'winkle' along and share the sense of supporting the community with like minded volunteers.

My appetite for being a councillor in the community that I call home, started by being a member of the Parish Council over ten years ago and then a District Councillor since 2019. Both roles have allowed me to help and support residents on various issues from simple complaining benches to complex flooding issues.

Earlier this year I unfortunately had to help deliver sandbags through the night to residents in a hot to defend their homes from surface flooding. Even more ongoing was the clean up I supported over the following days. This involved making my bed in the reflective agent that exists strongly in our community and also helped me understand the collective dangers that extreme weather has on where we live.

I am looking forward to representing residents of NARBOROUGH & WHETSTONE as your County Councillor should I be fortunate enough to have your vote.

Robinson & Whetstone Division.
NARBOROUGH & WHETSTONE Division.
es
andWhetstone@southleicestershire.org
leicestershire.org
3594

MARKET HARBOROUGH WEST AND FOXTON

MARKET HARBOROUGH WEST AND FOXTON

VOTE COMMUNIST ON MAY 1ST

COMMUNIST PARTY

COMMUNIST PARTY.ORG.UK

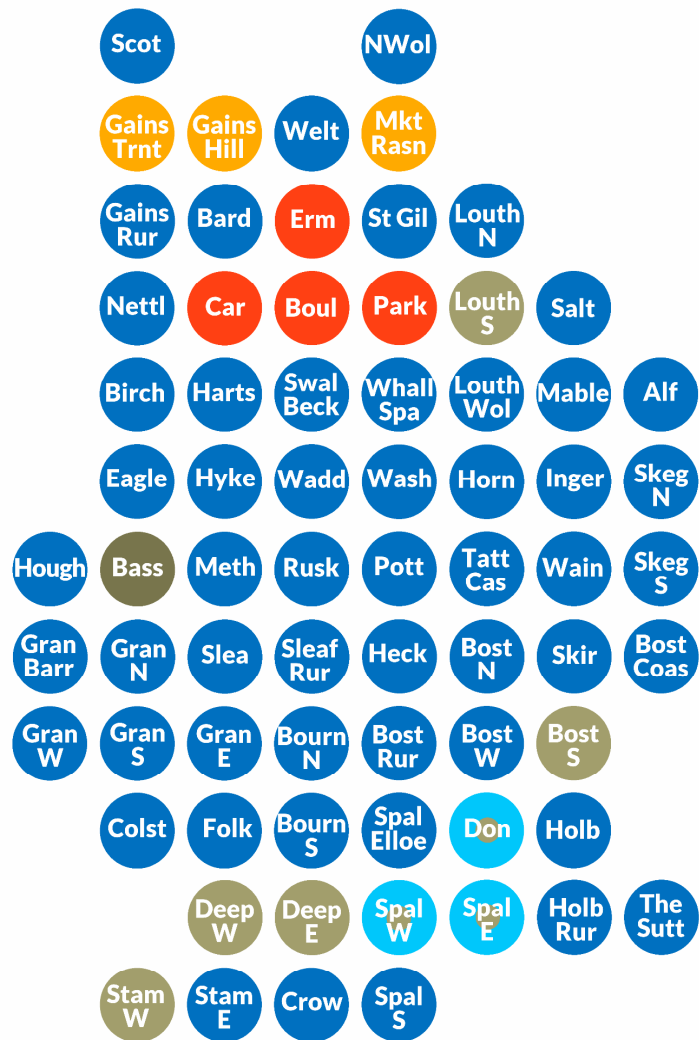
Lincolnshire



Lincolnshire was the UKIP success story of the 2013 county council elections. The party won sixteen councillors - a number only exceeded in Kent (which has a much larger council) and polled higher than 30% in nineteen divisions, with a top share of 53% in Wainfleet, just beyond Skegness. Those gains, coupled with eight for Labour and a net three for the independents, cost the Conservatives control of Lincolnshire.

Three years later, Lincolnshire voted a landslide 65% to 35% to leave the EU in that year's referendum, with Boston district voting 76% Leave, South Holland 74% Leave and East Lindsey (Louth, Skegness and Horncastle) 71%. The closest Remain came to winning anywhere in the county was in Lincoln, and even there they Leave won 57% to 43%.

The political realignment following Brexit destroyed what few opportunities Labour had in Lincolnshire (and, beyond Lincoln, that wasn't many anyway). The Conservatives won Lincoln in 2015, lost Lincoln in 2017, won Lincoln in 2019 and lost Lincoln in 2024. It's just one of those constituencies. Reform won Boston and Skegness at the 2024 general election, Richard Tice winning by 2,000 after the Conservative vote crashed by 43 points.



Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	54	4	3	9
2025 - defection: Robert Gibson, Spalding East - Ind to Ref	54	4	3	9
2025 - defection: Manzur Hasan, Spalding West - Ind to Ref	54	4	3	9
2025 - defection: Jane King, Donington Rural - Ind to Ref	54	4	3	9
2025 - vacancy: resignation of Nicola Clarke, St Giles, Con	53	4	3	9
Current	53	4	3	9

But the Conservatives held, pretty comfortably, all their other Lincolnshire seats, albeit with almost as seismic collapses in their vote as in Boston and Skegness.

There is a possibility - maybe a probability - despite the Conservatives' 37-seat majority, that history will repeat itself in 2025 and they will lose to no overall control. Reform gaining control is not utterly for the birds but it's probably too much of an ask in one go, not least because the party is less strong away from its fortresses around The Wash.

Reform will certainly post multiple gains up and down the coast, and absolutely dominate in Boston district, maybe break into the suburbs of Lincoln and Hykeham Forum; possibly get as far inland as Horncastle and Spalding and Market Deeping (but probably not Stamford) and have a good go at Grantham.

But the problem UKIP came up against in 2013 remains for Reform in Lincolnshire in a way it does not elsewhere. There is no strong Labour or Lib Dem presence across most of the county (though

independents and the organised Lincolnshire Independents party still have some game here) so there will be far fewer wins on lower percentages where Reform candidates can get over the line more easily.

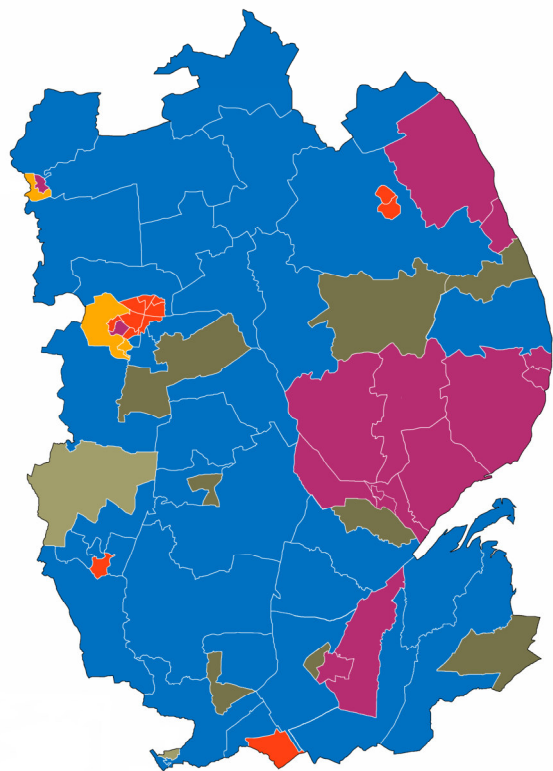
To beat Conservative incumbents they will need bigger piles of votes. They'll get them some places but they'll miss in more. That said, they'll still end up with a group larger than UKIP's sixteen from 2013. But how much bigger?

The Electoral Calculus MRP has Reform on around thirty seats. I suspect they might do slightly better, not least because the three councillors they already have here - all of them from former Independents and all in South Holland district - are defending their seats under their new affiliation and personal votes tend to matter more in this corner of the county.

Reform is set to sweep five of the six divisions in Boston, nine of twelve in East Lindsey, five of nine in South Holland, three in South Kesteven (including the Labour target of **Grantham South**); three or four in Lincoln - I say three, EC says four - but the Lib Dems are

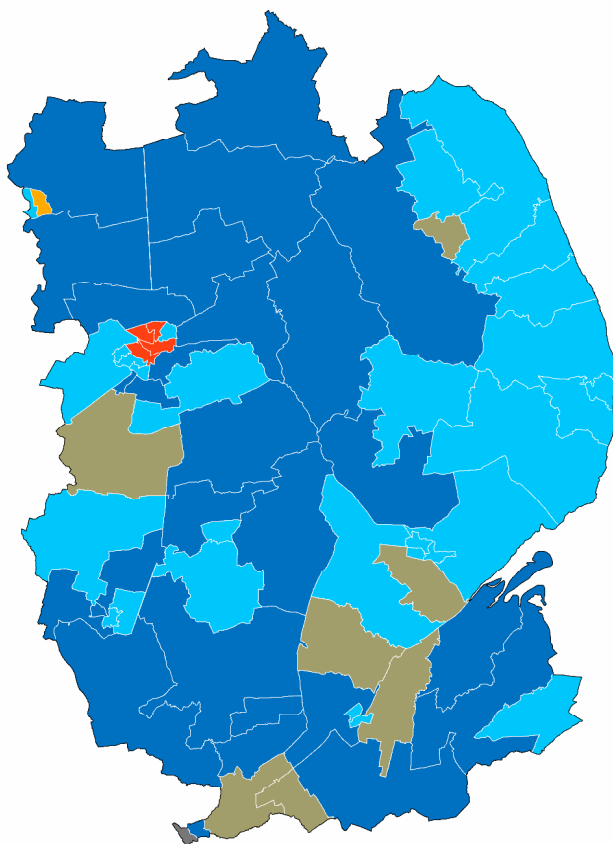
much more likely to take **St Giles** based on their performances in Lincoln district elections), two in North Kesteven: **Potterhanworth** and **Eagle & Hykeham West**, and then **Gainsborough Hill** in West Lindsey.

If Reform win Gainsborough Hill they should really take **Gainsborough Trent** as well as these are pretty similar demographically and, more importantly, quite deprived working class divisions where Reform should be a better fit ideologically than the Lib Dems who currently hold the two seats.



The 2013 county council result in Lincolnshire

	%vote
Wainfleet	52.9
Boston Coastal	45.8
Boston West	44.8
Tattershall Castle	44.4
Boston North West	43.7
Holbeach	42.0
Ruskington and Cranwell	41.4
Spilsby Fen	41.4
Skegness North	41.4
Boston Rural	41.2
Boston East	41.1
Spalding Elloe	39.3
Spalding East	38.5
Louth Wolds	38.3
Boston South	37.8
Billinghay	37.5
Sleaford Rural	37.5
Donington Rural	37.2
Spalding South	36.6
Gainsborough Hill	36.5
Holbeach Rural	36.3
Skegness South	35.6
Bracebridge Heath and Waddington	34.6
Crowland	34.6
Woodhall Spa and Wragby	34.3
Mablethorpe	33.6
Spalding West	33.3
Hartsholme	32.1
Colsterworth Rural	31.6



Illustrative map of the March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP

The Lib Dems could well be knocked off Lincolnshire council: they only hold three seats as it is: those two in Gainsborough plus the rural ward of **Market Rasen Wolds**. This they gained from the Conservatives in 2021 by just fourteen votes so all three of their seats are highly vulnerable.

To counter these losses though, there are Lib Dem opportunities in the city of Lincoln.

The Lib Dems have broken through in three wards on Lincoln district council: Abbey, Glebe and Park - all down the eastern side of the city. These three translate into the county divisions of **St Giles** (Conservative-held by 19 votes) and **Park** (Labour-held).

Park looks safely Labour, but then so was the district ward until the Lib Dems gained it in an April by-election on a massive swing. It's not obvious why Electoral Calculus believes Reform can win St Giles: they polled just 109 votes in Abbey in last year's local elections to the Lib Dems' 1,050.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Boston and Skegness	15,520	38.4
Louth and Horncastle	11,935	25.7
South Holland and the Deepings	10,606	23.1
Sleaford and North Hykeham	10,484	21.6
Gainsborough	9,916	21.2
Grantham and Bourne	9,393	20.4
Rutland and Stamford (part)	7,008	14.4

Reform votes in Lincolnshire, 2024 General Election

But they are on firmer ground in suggesting Reform gains in the south east of Lincoln near Hykeham Forum. UKIP won **Hartsholme** - the middle of the three southern divisions - in 2013, were 228 behind the Conservatives in what is now called **Swallow Beck & Witham**; and just 90 in **Birchwood**. If UKIP could do that well in the Lincoln suburbs, Reform should be able to do better. These are all Conservative-held right now, though Labour can win them, especially in district elections.

1. Birchwood
2. Boultham
3. Carholme
4. Ermine and Cathedral
5. Hartsholme
6. Park
7. St Giles
8. Swallow Beck & Witham



Labour can only rely on two divisions: **Boultham** and **Carholme**. **Ermine & Cathedral** looks safe enough based on last year's council elections in the district wards that comprise the division but Labour only won the county division by three votes in 2021 (albeit that was a gain from the Conservatives who triumphed there by sixteen votes in 2017!)

There's no reason why these demographically similar, neighbouring areas should be immune from this Lib Dem surge, especially as Labour has lost getting on for a third of its general election support in the year it has been in government according to poll averages.

Labour does have targets elsewhere in Lincolnshire: they've just been missing more often than hitting them in recent elections. They should be competitive in three divisions in Grantham: the already mentioned South (Conservative majority: 272), but also Barrowby and East, both of which they held routinely until 2009. But they are 845 votes adrift of the Tories now in **Grantham Barrowby** and in third place in **Grantham East**, 560 behind.

Labour consistently won **Louth South** (it rhymes!) until their councillor became independent before the 2021 county elections and defeated Labour crushingly (she only won by sixty votes but that was ahead of another independent - Labour trailed more than 400 votes behind). She is not defending her seat this year. It may revert to Labour but the indie runner-up last time is re-standing and Reform will pick up a bunch of votes too.

Labour also has some record of success along the coast, in isolated towns like **Mablethorpe** - they were only

211 behind the Tories there last time; but these are divisions Reform is almost locked-in to win this time around. Likewise **Skegness North**, **Boston North** and **Skirbeck** divisions have a decent Labour history but firmly in the past is any hope the party had of getting councillors elected in these places: they are all Reform strongholds now (or will be come 1 May).

There's an interesting dynamic in **Deepings East**. This has been won, off and on, for several years by Phil Dilks - elected in 2021 as an independent but formerly Labour (he worked as a press officer for Labour, so this isn't a case of his political ideals waxing and waning: just a calculation of whether standing under a party banner would help him or not). He used to stand as "Fair Deal Phil Dilks".

Labour gave him a free pass last time: it was a straight fight between him and the Conservative. But this time Labour is contesting the seat. It's unlikely Labour can win. But it does mean Dilks won't win by anything approaching the two thirds he managed in 2021; and with Reform and the Lib Dems contesting the division too this could be a bun-fight.

It's likely the Conservatives and Reform will end up with similar numbers of seats in Lincolnshire, but with a very small number of "others" elected alongside them it's possible one or other could have a tiny majority. If they fall short, those others - probably numbering no more than ten - will have to decide which right of centre party they want to keep in power: the somewhat more moderate Conservatives who've just lost a huge majority, or more Radical Reform with their dozens of councillors lacking any experience of running a council?

Key seats

Reform UK targets

- ▶ Alford and Sutton (Con)
- ▶ Birchwood (Con)
- ▶ Boston Coastal (Con)
- ▶ Boston North (Con)
- ▶ Boston Rural (Con)
- ▶ Boston West (Con)
- ▶ Boutham (Con)
- ▶ Eagle and Hykeham West (Con)
- ▶ Gainsborough Hill (LD)
- ▶ Gainsborough Trent (LD)
- ▶ Grantham East (Con)
- ▶ Grantham South (Con)
- ▶ Hartsholme (Con)
- ▶ Hough (Con)
- ▶ Ingoldmells Rural (Con)
- ▶ Horncastle and the Keals (Con)
- ▶ Louth North (Con)

Labour targets

- ▶ Birchwood (Con)
- ▶ Boutham (Con)
- ▶ Grantham South (Con)
- ▶ Louth South (Ind)
- ▶ Swallow Beck and Witham (Con)

- ▶ Louth Wolds (Con)
- ▶ Mablethorpe (Con)
- ▶ Potterhanworth and Coleby (Con)
- ▶ Saltfleet and the Cotes (Con)
- ▶ Skegness North (Con)
- ▶ Skegness South (Con)
- ▶ Skirbeck (Con)
- ▶ Sleaford (Con)
- ▶ Sleaford Rural (Con)
- ▶ Swallow Beck and Witham (Con)
- ▶ Spalding East (Con)
- ▶ Spalding West (Con)
- ▶ Tattershall Castle (Con)
- ▶ The Suttons (Con)
- ▶ Wainfleet (Con)

Conservative targets

- ▶ Ermine and Cathedral (Lab)
- ▶ Market Rasen Wolds (LD)

Lib Dem targets

- ▶ Park (Lab)
- ▶ Ermine and Cathedral (Lab)
- ▶ St Giles (Con)

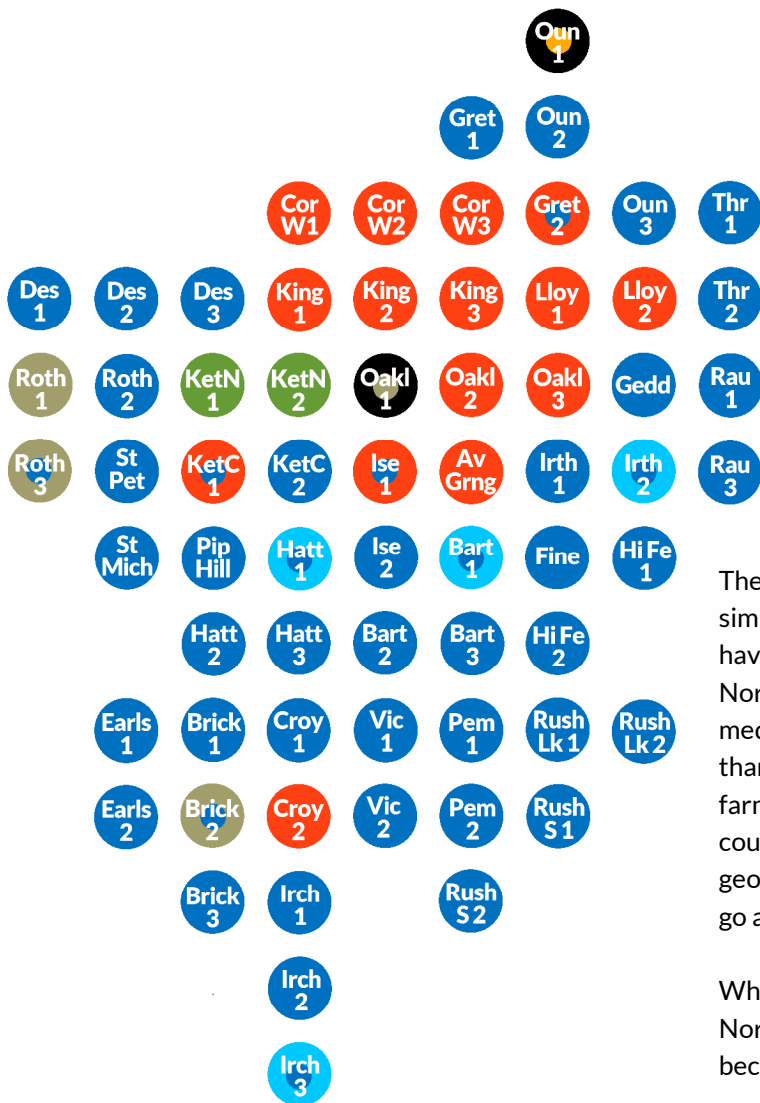


North Northamptonshire

Boundary and council size changes



2 vacancies



Northamptonshire county council has - had - the unenviable record of being the first British council to declare Section 114 "bankruptcy". As part of the rescue package, the county and seven districts were abolished and two unitary councils created.

North Northamptonshire comprises the former districts of Corby, East Northamptonshire, Kettering and Wellingborough. Of these, Labour is and was dominant only in the former steel town of Corby, but this was a tiny district, barely half of a constituency.

The two halves of Northamptonshire look superficially similar but are quite different. West Northants, while having a large rural hinterland, is dominated by Northampton. North Northamptonshire is a mix of medium-sized but growing towns, all very much smaller than Northampton, interspersed by large tracts of farmland. While the Conservatives won both unitary councils, comfortably, in their first contest in 2021, this geographical distinction matters in terms of how parties go about winning them.

While usually skewing comfortably Conservative, Northamptonshire can be competitive when they become unpopular - just like now, in fact. Labour won

the Wellingborough constituency in 1997 and 2001, and again in a 2023 by-election and the 2024 general election. They won Kettering in 1997 and 2024; and Corby was one of the most marginal constituencies in the country in the Thatcher years, before Labour won there too in 1997, 2001 and 2005 and a 2012 by-election.

Labour also managed to win knife-edge overall majorities on Northamptonshire county council in

1993, 1997 and 2001 before boundary changes and the party's loss of popularity by 2005 cost them power. They never challenged again.

The Conservatives won a thumping majority of 42 at the 2021 election: 60 Tories, 14 Labour, 3 Greens and an independent. But this has not been a happy, united Conservative group: it's been beset with splits and suspensions and departures and, when the voters have been given a say in a by-election, defeats .

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	60	14	0	4
2021 - defection: Martin Griffiths, Irchester - Con to Ind	59	14	0	5
2022 - by-election: Oundle - Lib Dem gain from Con	58	14	1	5
2023 - by-election: Northall - Lab gain from Con	57	15	1	5
2023 - defection: David Sims, Corby Rural - Con to Lab	56	16	1	5
2024 - defection: Joseph Smyth, Rothwell and Mawsley, Con to Ind	55	16	1	6
2024 - defection: Cedwien Brown, Rothwell and Mawsley, Con to Ind	54	16	1	7
2024 - defection: Elliot Prentice, Ise - Con to Lab	53	17	1	7
2024 - defection: Ken Harrington, Hatton Park - Con to Ref	52	17	1	8
2024 - defection: Martin Griffiths, Irchester - Ind to Ref	52	17	1	8
2024 - defection: Cedwien Brown, Rothwell and Mawsley, Ind to Con	53	17	1	7
2024 - suspension: Ross Armour, Oakley - Lab to Ind	53	16	1	8
2025 - suspension: Matt Brinley, Brickhill and Queensway - Con to Ind	52	16	1	9
2025 - defection: Jan O'Hara, Burton and Broughton - Con to Ref	51	16	1	10
2025 - defection: Kirk Harrington, Irthlingborough - Con to Ref	50	16	1	11
2025 - vacancy: resignation of Ross Armour, Oakley, Ind	50	16	1	10
2025 - vacancy: resignation of Charlie Best, Oundle, LD	50	16	0	10
Current	50	16	0	10

The 42 seat majority has been slashed to one of 26 at the time of writing: still substantial but substantially reduced nonetheless. Four Conservative councillors have defected to Reform, two to independent, two to Labour and there have been two by-election defeats: one in rural Oundle, which the Lib Dems gained, one in urban Kettering to Labour.

And all this before boundary changes, a reduction in council size and Reform has had a chance to fight every other candidate standing here.

Northamptonshire was a pretty strongly Leave-voting county in the 2016 EU referendum: 59-41, which is a little surprising, perhaps, as there are large numbers of London commuters here with their jobs dependent on globalisation and access to European markets. UKIP did win three county councillors in Northamptonshire in 2013 but all were on the western side.

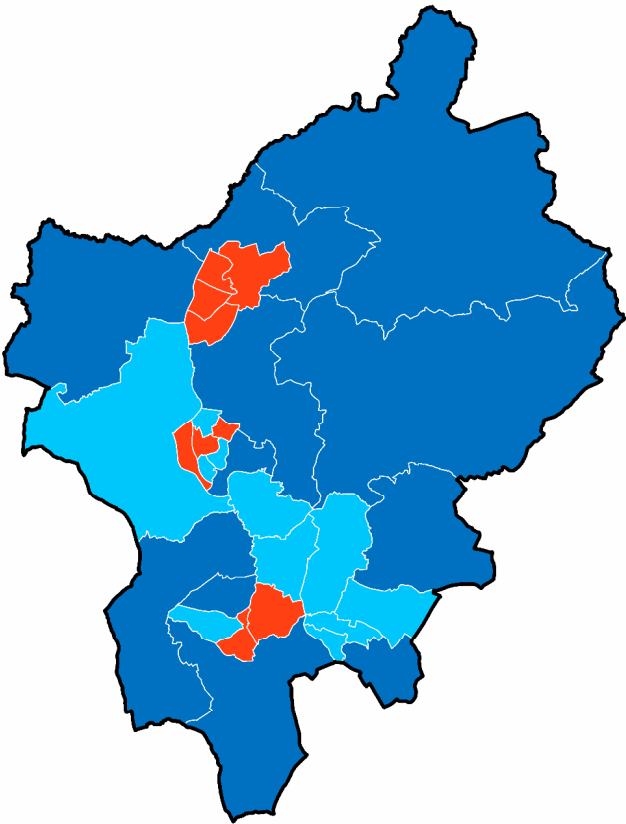
Constituency	vote	%vote
Wellingborough and Rushden	9,456	21.5
Corby & East Northamptonshire	8,760	17.7
Kettering	8,468	16.9

That doesn't mean North Northants was less Eurosceptic: Leave won Corby district with 64%, Wellingborough district with 62% and Kettering district with 61%; just that UKIP's vote was better distributed in the west.

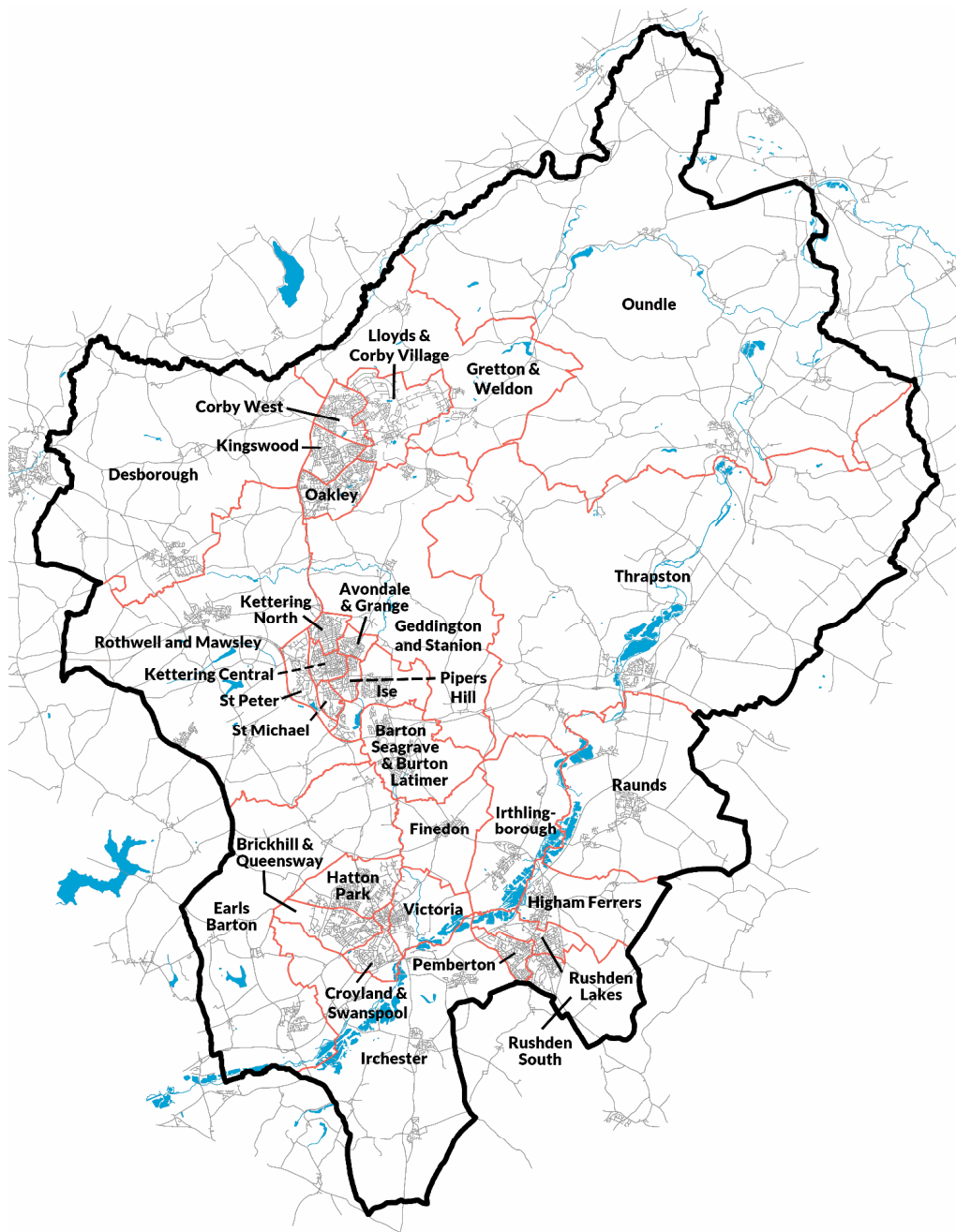
Reform polled higher than their national share at last year's general election: in Wellingborough and Rushden

over 21% and this should provide them with a springboard to win representation here on 1st May.

The Electoral Calculus MRP in March forecast a Reform surge in a belt of seats running from the north west of Kettering across to Rushden. Assuming the party won all the seats up in each of the wards the MRP forecast them to gain, they'd have 23 councillors.



Illustrative map of the March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP



But will Labour, forecast to retain all their council seats in Corby, actually do so given the 64% Leave vote there? That's a huge pool of voters whose loyalty to Labour on class and economics may well be trumped by their affinity to Reform on values and the direction of the country.

Even though they did poorly in 2021, Labour's fourteen seats could've been thirty if they'd won **Brickhill & Queensway, Corby Rural, Finedon** and **Northall**, then won the other two in split **Croyland & Swanspool** and **Windmill**. That'd have been four short of a majority on the council last time around. Instead, Labour stacked up votes in their four rock-solid Corby wards and lost most nearly all the marginals in Wellingborough and Kettering.

Northants has been a dismal county for the centre for pretty much ever. Even that one seat they gained in a 2022 by-election they managed to lose before the election after their councillor resigned in early 2025. No second by-election there because he resigned within six months of the election but had there been, the Conservatives would have had a strong chance of regaining it: **Oundle** is usually a very safe Tory ward which they hadn't lost since 1977.

The Greens gained three seats in Kettering's Clover Hill ward from nowhere last time. Most of Clover Hill is becoming **Kettering North** in these boundary changes and the ward loses a councillor but the redrawing may well put the Greens into contention in neighbouring **St Peter**, where that third seat has migrated to.

There are the independents in **Rothwell & Mawsley** to the west of Kettering. One was elected, one defected from the Conservatives and the Tories hold the third seat there. The elected independent is seeking re-election, as is the remaining Conservative but the defector is retiring. Rothwell was a reliably Labour ward until 2005 but not since. They polled just 13% in 2021 but with the MP now they might be able to rebound.

Labour almost certainly can't win rural **Desborough** ward in the north-west corner. They look closer there than they probably are because former Kettering Labour MP and long-term fixture in the constituency Phil Sawford was one of their candidates last time and ran over 400 votes ahead of his running-mates (one of the problems with using the top candidate to calculate the party shares). Sawford isn't standing this time so the gap with the Tories that looked, on some measures, to be about 450 votes is more like 900.

Likewise, with an MP in Wellingborough & Rushden Labour can surely do better than one solitary councillor. Rushden and **Higham Ferrers** remain very tough nuts for them to crack but there are four large wards covering Wellingborough, electing ten councillors. **Croyland & Swanspool**, the south side of the town, is their best opportunity as they already hold a seat there.

Victoria (Wellingborough East) is a new ward, basically formed from the south end of Finedon. **Finedon** was very close last time and Labour were unlucky not to win one of the seats: they were 110 short of the third Conservative. The Tories should be weaker in Victoria than Finedon even ignoring the Reform attack on their

voter base, so this should be an excellent opportunity to add to their ranks of Wellingborough councillors.

Brickhill & Queensway (Wellingborough West) is a bit more difficult: they are 188 votes off the third seat but the other two Conservative councillors have considerably larger - but not insurmountable - majorities. And finally **Hatton Park**: the northern suburbs, are the best Conservative enclave. Two of their councillors here polled over 60% of the vote.

It is also a bit simplistic to characterise Corby & East Northants as a battle purely between Labour Corby and Tory East Northants. The Tories win **Gretton & Weldon** (Corby Rural) in all but their very worst years - so could lose it this year. If they're doing that badly they'll be on track to lose power here.

And Labour is not all that far off in **Irthlingborough**, a town just across the river Nene from Higham Ferrers. A lot of the northern, presumably Tory acreage of the division has been moved into Thrapston which will narrow the gap further. Labour was about 500 adrift in Irthlingborough last time and one of the Tory councillors has defected to Reform. With the positive boundary changes here, might Labour pull off a win?

Let's bear in mind, though, that the Conservatives are ten councillors down on the number that were elected in 2021, and only two of these have been defeats inflicted by voters at by-elections. All those who went

independent and haven't subsequently joined Reform or other parties, are standing down. Two of the four Reform defectors are seeking re-election under their new colours but in pretty safe Conservative divisions. In fact all the defections are in seats the Tories would normally expect to win.

If we count those eight seats lost to defection as Conservative then the party is defending a 38-seat notional majority rather than one of just 24. Taking twenty seats off the Conservatives is much harder than winning thirteen. That may seem self-evident but it's more than just a larger number: it requires more resources to be spent across a wider area; and that's assuming the Conservatives can't pick up one or two seats they lost unexpectedly last time round.

North Northamptonshire, because it is the more rural half of the county, should be the better prospect for the Conservatives. Yet they find themselves holding none of the parliamentary constituencies here (Tory-held Daventry and South Northants cross into small corners but the whole constituencies are all now Labour).

But still, the innate preference for Conservatism in the much smaller towns (than Northampton) in North Northants makes it always very difficult for Labour and other parties to bed themselves in anywhere beyond Corby. The Tories are vulnerable - especially if Reform is able to break through in several wards, but they are more secure than their outgoing majority suggests.

Key seats

Conservative targets



- ▶ Barton Seagrave and Burton Latimer (1 Ref - defection)
- ▶ Greeton and Weldon (1 Lab - defection)
- ▶ Hatton Park (1 Ref - defection)
- ▶ Irthlingborough (1 Ref - defection)
- ▶ Ise (1 Lab)
- ▶ Kettering Central (1 Lab - by-election win)
- ▶ Kettering North (2 Grn)
- ▶ Oakley (3 Lab)
- ▶ Oundle (1 LD by-election)
- ▶ Rothwell and Mawsley (3 Ind)

Reform UK targets



- ▶ Barton Seagrave and Burton Latimer (2 Con)
- ▶ Brickhill and Queensway (3 Con)
- ▶ Finedon (1 Con)
- ▶ Higham Ferrers (2 Con)
- ▶ Irthlingborough (1 Con)
- ▶ Kettering North (2 Grn)
- ▶ Pemberton (2 Con)
- ▶ Piper's Hill (1 Con)
- ▶ Rothwell and Mawsley (3 Ind)
- ▶ Rushden Lakes (2 Con)
- ▶ St Michael's (1 Con)

Labour targets



- ▶ Brickhill and Queensway (3 Con)
- ▶ Croyland and Swanspool (2 Con)
- ▶ Desborough (3 Con)
- ▶ Finedon (1 Con)
- ▶ Greeton and Weldon (1 Con)
- ▶ Hatton Park (2 Con, 1 Ref)
- ▶ Irthlingborough (1 Con, 1 Ref)
- ▶ Kettering Central (1 Con)
- ▶ Ise (1 Con)
- ▶ Kettering Central (2 Con)

Lib Dem targets



- ▶ Oundle (2 Con, 1 LD vacancy)

Green targets



- ▶ St Peter (1 Con)

Our message to Rushden Lakes

Dear Resident,

Do you feel left behind? During the days of the East Northamptonshire Borough Council, Rushden was a big fish in a small pond. Now we have to compete with the likes of Corby, Kettering and Wellingborough for any funding. Thanks to Terry mismanagement of Northamptonshire County Council, the council went bankrupt twice.

We will listen to Rushden and ensure your voices are heard. The Labour government have been making real change since being elected last year increasing the number of district appointments, improving workers' rights, and improving residents' living standards amongst so much more good. A vote for Labour truly is a vote for change!

David and Steve

Your Labour Councillors

Vote Labour

Thursday 1 May

David Martin

Stevie Cassidy

I'M VOTING

Labour Candidate for Rushden Lakes

I'm proud to be a Labour candidate for the Rushden Lakes dedicated number of this community for 12 years as we Rushden and Higham my whole life. I understand the issues here.

If elected, I will use my expertise to drive forward the many services and enhance communication channels to an efficient and connected community.

David Martin

Rushden & Higham Labour Party

Vote Labour

2025 NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL ELECTIONS

VOTE

GORDON KERR
Independent

FOR NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL
RUSHDEN WARD

1 Working with all political parties to get what is best for Rushden & will ask questions other councillors prefer not to ask

2 Working to improve the quality of life for Rushden residents including restoring pensioners winter fuel allowance

3 Working with the community to resolve issues, raising community concerns, support the farming industry & maintaining our community all year round & not just election time.

Gordon Kerr is running as an Independent. We trusted the Conservative party and the public reaction was to change Parliament and vote in Labour but the manifesto to get elected has been ignored and now the economy is worse. It is time to vote for independent candidates. We will represent us, the people of England, not the same old parties.

Conservatives

North Northamptonshire Council Elections • Thursday 1st May 2025

St. Peter Ward

Introducing your local Conservative candidate: ANUP PANDEY

As a councillor for St. Peter's Ward, I have worked hard for four years to address local concerns, living here with my family. I understand the issues first-hand and remain accessible.

I held a PhD in Artificial Intelligence, lecture at a university, and serve as a public governor at Kettering General Hospital. During Covid, I led a support group and received the Rose of Northamptonshire Award.

I helped resolve the conference centre issue and have been part of the campaign to rebuild the artificial football pitch at Thurston Drive, working in partnership with other groups to secure substantial funding to support this project.

I am committed to improving footpath lighting, keeping our area clean and safe, and addressing community concerns.

Vote for your local Conservative candidate ANUP PANDEY on 1st May

SAFEGUARDING OUR CULTURAL ASSETS

FIGHTING AGAINST OVER DEVELOPMENT

INVESTING IN SPORT AND RECREATION

MY TOP 3 PRIORITIES FOR ST. PETER WARD

PANDEY, Anup
Conservatives

REFORM WILL FIX IT

HOW NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL WASTES YOUR MONEY

YOUR COUNCIL TAX HAS GONE UP BY 25% IN JUST FIVE YEARS

The Chief Executive is paid more than £176,000 a year. That is £3,000 more than the Prime Minister

Over £45,000 spent to compensate 17 individuals who made complaints about poor services in 2023/24

£1.5 million spent on a 4 year contract to set up a scheme to fund out their wages

£10,000 spent on translation services

Spent £1 million on a "Carbon neutral journey"

AND

£430 MILLION IN DEBT

DO YOU SUPPORT REFORM?
Scan the QR code or visit reformparty.uk/support

THE TORIES AND LABOUR HAVE BROKE NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE

Tories are top of the polls in Rushden

People need new Councils of British politicians

Reform will change North Northamptonshire Council, vote Reform on 1st May

We hope we can count on your support to be strong voices for our community.

Gavin Beales | Darren Rance | Jonathan Cavetto
Your Reform UK candidates for Rushden, St. Peter Ward

29% TORIES CAN'T WIN

25% LABOUR

18% TORIES

REFORM WILL FIX IT

BRITAIN NEEDS REFORM

Reform UK stands for real change, putting local people first. We fight for lower council tax, safer streets, and accountable leadership. Unlike others, we prioritise your concerns over party politics. On May 1st, vote Reform to challenge wasteful spending, support businesses, and restore common sense in local government.

Do you support us?
Scan the QR code or visit reformparty.uk/support

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE IS BROKEN

REFORM WILL FIX IT

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL
£430 MILLION IN DEBT

£10 MILLION IN JULY PROMISED TO YOUR SERVICES

£10 MILLION SPENT ON WINDMILL FARMING FORTIFICATION

Vote Reform UK candidates for Rushden & St. Peter

Gavin Beales | Darren Rance | Jonathan Cavetto

VOTE REFORM UK | MAY 1ST 2025

reformparty.uk

NORTH NORTHAMPTONSHIRE COUNCIL LOCAL ELECTIONS

REFORMUK

Northumberland

Boundary and council size changes

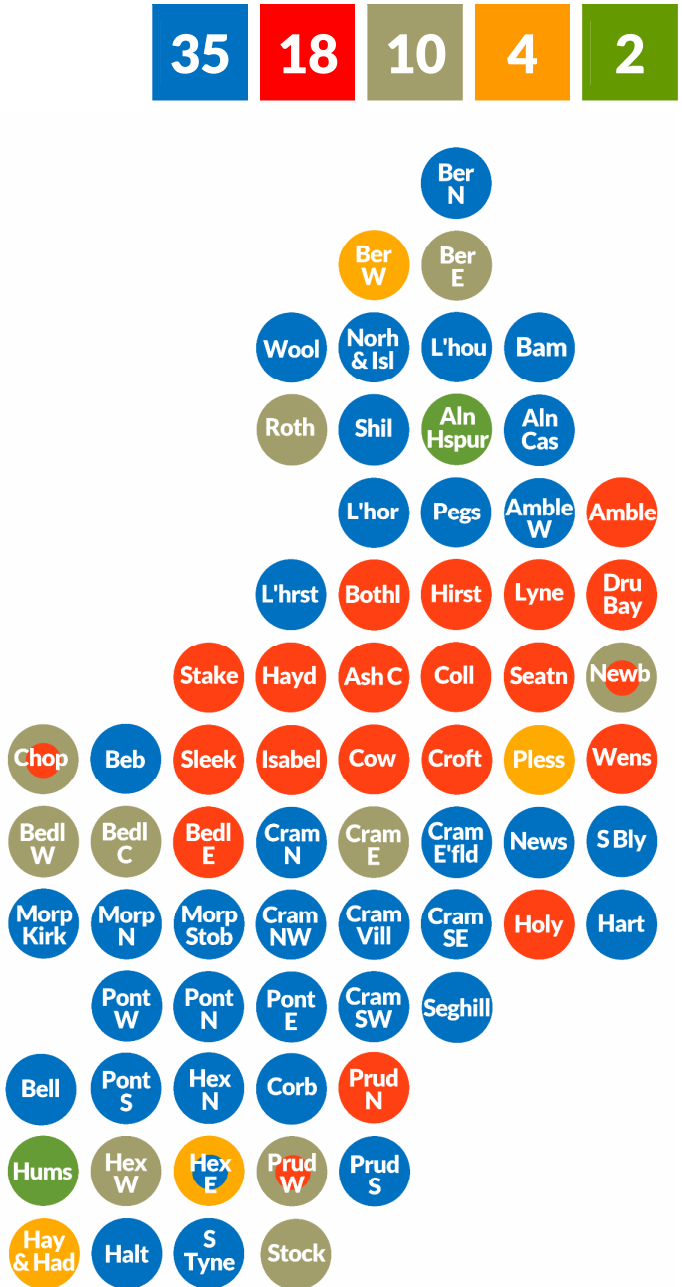
In the old days, Northumberland had two safe Labour constituencies (Blyth Valley and Wansbeck), one safe Conservative constituency (Hexham) and one Lib Dem constituency (Berwick-upon-Tweed) which Sir Alan Beith always held but rarely by big amounts.

When Beith retired in 2015 Berwick did what Lib Dem constituencies held by substantial personal votes for years tend to do and reverted to the party they won it from - in this case the Conservatives. Two-all.

Then Boris Johnson broke the so-called Red Wall in 2019 and Blyth Valley, never anything other than Labour, was the first of those brand of seats to fall to the Conservatives. Left-wing former miner Ian Lavery clung on to next-door Wansbeck by just 814 votes as the Brexit Party polled 3,141.

Then the pendulum swung the other way and in last year's general election the Conservatives lost both Hexham and North Northumberland (the successor to Berwick-upon-Tweed) to Labour. Blyth Valley was abolished but Cramlington: the core of the Tory vote in that constituency, went into a relatively safely Labour constituency traversing the Tyneside boundary.

The county unitary authority has become similarly "swingy" - and at the moment its headline numbers still



demonstrate the incursion the Conservatives made into Labour territory at their peak in 2021.

That was quite a strange election in Northumberland because the Conservatives gained a pile of seats off Labour in their heartlands on huge swings - enough for a working majority.

But they also lost a handful in the more affluent rest of the county: to Greens in Alnwick and Humshaugh, Lib Dems in Berwick (who regained Berwick West with Ord by one vote - one of two single-vote victories on election night), and even back to Labour in the small Tyneside town of Prudhoe.

That meant the Conservatives gained control of Northumberland by only one seat, which they lost almost immediately following a by-election in Hexham .

Nonetheless, the Conservatives remained the largest party by far in this vast county: they have essentially two councillors for every Labour councillor and it takes the three other parties plus all the independents to outvote them.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	34	21	3	9
2021 - by-election: Hexham East - Lib Dem gain from Con	33	21	4	9
2023 - suspension: Holly Waddell, Bywell - Lab to Ind	33	20	4	10
2024 - defection: Mary Murphy, Choppington - Lab to Ind	33	19	4	11
2024 - defection: Liz Simpson, Newbiggin Central and East - Lab to Ind	33	18	4	12
Current	33	18	4	12

But that will change again on 1st May.

Reform will almost certainly appropriate most, if not all, of the Conservative divisions in and around Blyth and Cramlington, and probably knock out a few of the surviving Labour ones too. Meanwhile Labour may make a bit of an advance in Hexham.

Given that the Conservatives have already lost overall control of Northumberland the media won't report this as a Tory loss but it will turn the county into a three-way hung council, with a handful of Lib Dems, Greens and independents taking breadcrumbs here and there.

There are, effectively, two Northumberlands with their own electoral dynamics.

The first is the densely-populated south-eastern corner which elects 38 councillors. Then there is the vast rural rest of the county which only elects 29 county councillors despite being at least fifteen times larger, geographically, than the Blyth-Cramlington-Bedlington-Ashington corner.

In the old days of not that long ago the south east was a Labour fortress with independents offering the principal resistance. There is still a bit of this skirmishing going on: all three Bedlington divisions are Labour-independent battlegrounds and one of Labour's losses in Cramlington was to an independent. In this sense, and because this corner of Northumberland has a similar mining pedigree, it resembles County Durham.

Rural Northumberland is the mirror of South East Northumberland. The Conservatives predominate as you might expect in vast countryside and farming divisions. But just as Labour has faded greatly in its strongholds, the Tories by no means get things uniformly their own way here.

Labour's ability to pick up a seat in Prudhoe, and the Lib Dems' in Hexham signalled the problems the Conservatives were to experience holding that seat in the general election. While Hexham's Conservatism is much more long-standing than that of Cramlington and Blyth, it is also of a different character.

Hexham for one thing voted to Remain in the EU in 2016 by 55 to 45; Blyth Valley voted Leave 61-39. When the Tories won their 2019 general election landslide Blyth Valley produced a 10% swing. Hexham mustered just a 1.5% swing towards Boris Johnson. Reform did not even field a candidate in Hexham last year.

Hexham Conservatism in this much more affluent area which serves as a commuter dormitory for Newcastle, Gateshead and Sunderland might be seen to be a lot more in the Rory Stewart vein, less enamoured with

brasher, heart-on-sleeve nationalistic populism that Boris and now Reform are purveyors of.

There is now a seam of non-Conservative council divisions running along the Tyne Valley from Prudhoe through Corbridge and Hexham to rural Haltwhistle. A variety of opponents defeat the Conservatives along this seam but the voters who elected them would have lined up behind Labour to oust the Tory MP Guy Opperman in July 2024.

Nonetheless, there remain deep reserves of Conservative strength here - not least the four Pontleand divisions where the Tories are doing poorly if they achieve less than 70% of the vote. Still, the dichotomy of the Conservatives simultaneously making gains in the Labour half of the county on massive swings while suffering defeats in "their" half was a somewhat odd spectacle of the last county elections.

Those elections left a spray of marginal contests - including those two 1-vote wins in **Berwick West with Ord** and **Hartley**. There are ten divisions the Conservatives might have fancied their chances in this year and nine Labour wanted back before being gate-crashed by Reform.

All the Labour targets bar two: **Berwick North** and **Hexham North**, are in their former mining heartland area, though perhaps they can pull off a surprise gain or two in that Prudhoe-to-Haltwhistle belt that won them the general election in Hexham. The Conservatives hold **Berwick North** by 122 (8.5%) and the renamed **Hexham North** by 184 (11.1%).

They'll badly want to regain **Hartley**: the coast south of Blyth and by a lot more than one vote this time, and **Newsham**, adjoining it to the north-west, which they lost by just 11 (1.0%). Then there's the renamed **Bebside & Kitty Brewster** division along the south bank of the river Blyth which the Conservatives gained with a majority of 107 (7.8%) and, completing this cluster of marginal Tory divisions around Blyth, **Seghill with Seaton Delaval**, with a 145 (9.0%) majority.

The sole independent councillor in this neck of the woods is in **Cramlington East & Double Row**, sitting on a majority of just 34 (3.5%).

Across the river Blyth there's another independent in **Bedlington Central** with a more substantial 204 (15.8%) majority. In this "Wansbeck" portion of Northumberland is also **Pegswood** which the Conservatives have won twice but, in the boundary changes that have occurred since the last election, loses a lot of its rural hinterland so should become a better Labour prospect (provided Reform don't leap-frog them: Electoral Calculus forecasts they won't and that Labour will regain it).

If Labour are to exceed expectations elsewhere in Northumberland then **Prudhoe South** could be on their little list: the Conservatives were ahead here by 354 (23.3%). There is also a new Prudhoe division: **Prudhoe West & Mickley**, which Labour should win but which we have no data on yet. Independent-held **Hexham West** is very safe, as should be **Corbridge** - the division immediately east of Hexham - for the Tories.

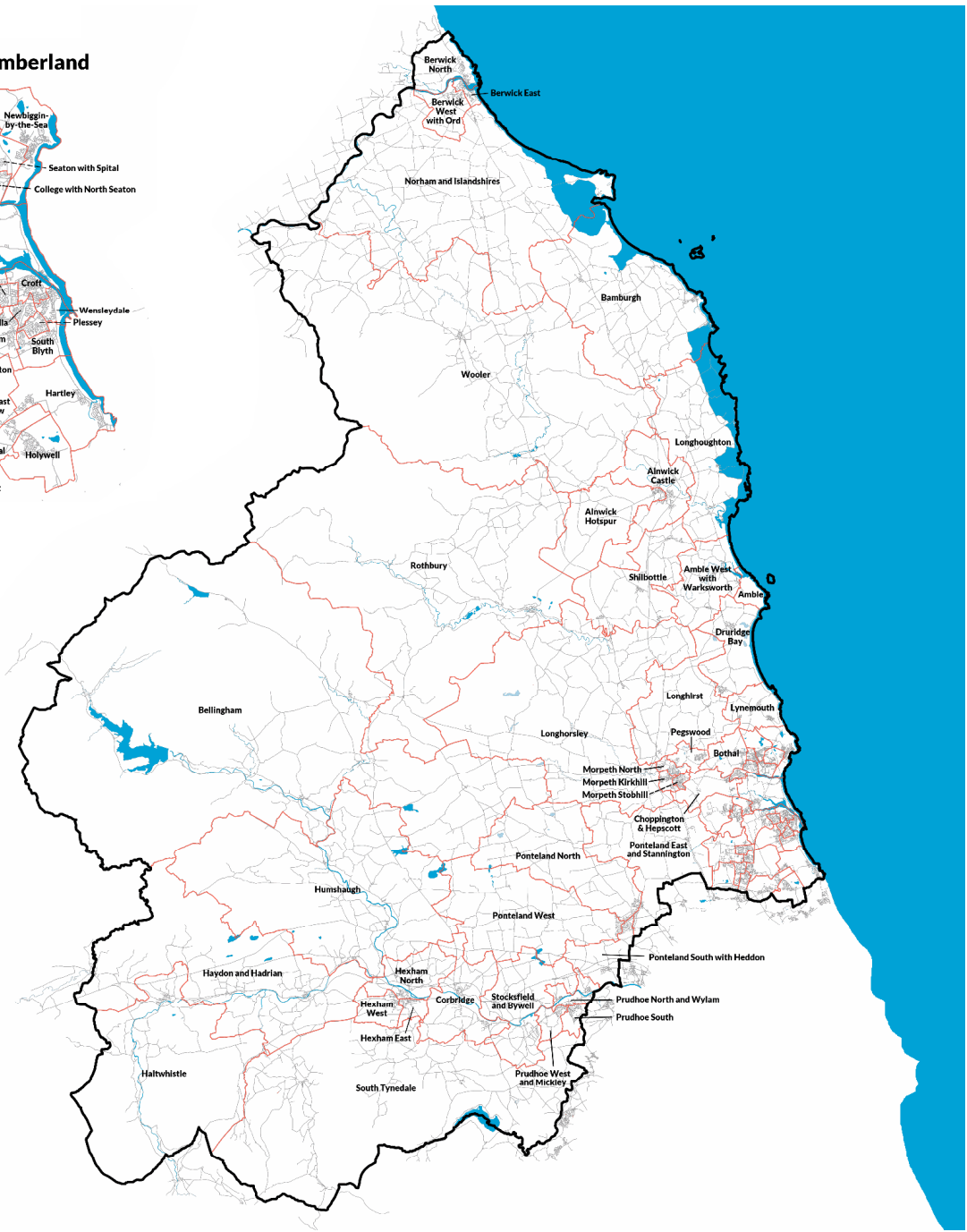
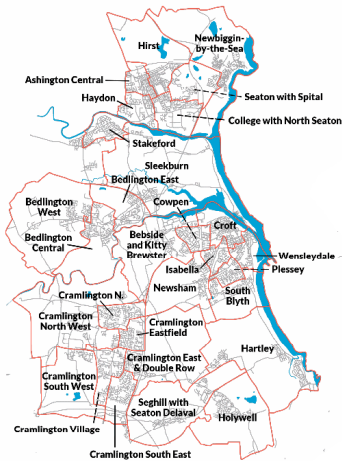
Is **South Tynedale** out of the question as a Labour gain? It should be, both because of its characteristics: a wholly rural, sprawling division along the southern boundary of the county, and its Tory majority: 587 (33.8%). But Labour achieved a 14% swing there last time: anything approaching that again and it becomes very close. Highly unlikely but because of how Hexham has trended worth paying a tiny bit of attention to.

Then there is the Conservative wish-list. If the sharp swing to the Tories in 2021 had continued they would be eyeing several seats in the Blyth area: for example **Cowpen** which they missed by just 20 (2.3%); **Plessey**: the only Lib Dem ward in this neighbourhood, 65 (5.4%) and **Wensleydale**: 169 (12.9%). To the north of the river Blyth come two more Conservative near misses: **Amble** (Labour by 95 or 7.6% last time); and **Stakeford** on the bank of the river Wansbeck: 114 (8.2%).

The in wider Northumberland, Labour only won **Prudhoe North** last time by 67 (3.9%) and there is the interesting redrawn division of **Stocksfield with Bywell**. An independent, Anne Dale, won the old Stocksfield & Broomhaugh in a landslide with 75% of the vote last time, but this division looks a lot more like the old Bywell than it does Stocksfield, and Bywell went Labour by just 57 votes (2.7%).

Dale is contesting this new division and may well have the prominence to hold onto it, but she won't have the name recognition in the Bywell section so it's a far more interesting contest than one in the old Stocksfield & Broomhaugh would've been.

South East Northumberland



The Conservatives will want to try to regain **Hexham East** from the Lib Dems but they lost by a fair whack in the by-election: 214 (17.3%) and given Hexham has swung away from them a lot, it's highly unlikely to return to the Tories.

The Greens snatched rural **Humshaugh**, north-west of Hexham, from the Conservatives last time on an 18% swing: the first time that division had ever fallen from the Tories' grasp. And they did it with both Labour and Lib Dems standing there too.

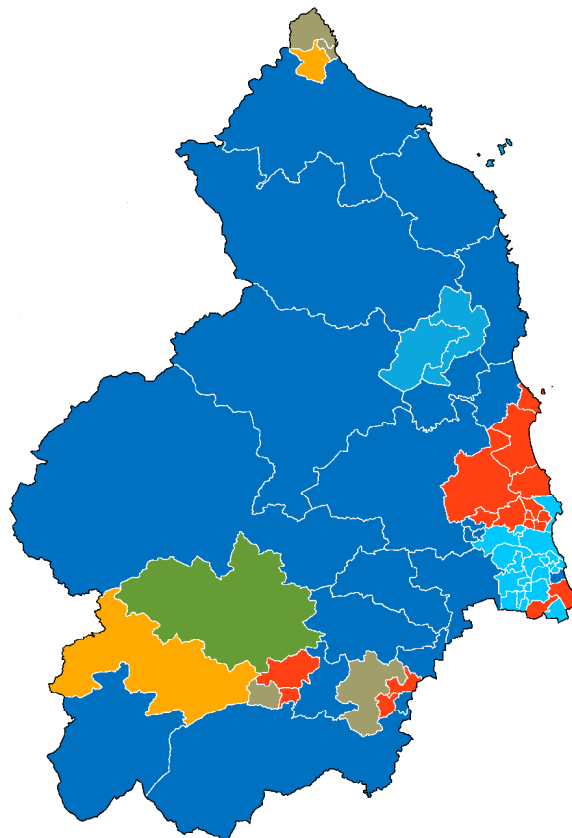
But they barely split the non-Tory vote: they mustered 110 votes (5.5%) between them while the Greens polled 1,046, defeating the Conservative by 197 (9.9%). That's a fair majority but not insurmountable, and if Labour do better because of their MP's incumbency the Greens could struggle to hold on.

Finally, the Conservatives will want to find those (at least) two extra votes to regain **Berwick West with Ord**. But this division has only elected a Tory once; Lib Dems have won six of the past seven elections here.

The Liberal Democrats will also hope to win the rural division immediately south of Berwick: the wonderfully-named **Norham & Islandshires** which includes Holy Island: Lindisfarne.

The March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP, illustrated opposite, forecasts that there will be 21 Conservatives, 21 Reform, 17 Labour, 4 Independent, 2 Lib Dem and 1 Green. But there will almost certainly be an independent returned for **Rothbury** given he won with 80% last time and is re-standing. The Greens are

forecast to lose their one seat in Alnwick to Reform. Alnwick has been split into two single-councillor divisions this time and it's not obvious to me which one is the better Green prospect but, as Reform are forecast to win both that might be a moot question.



Reform winning the same number of seats as the Tories is clearly a disaster for the Conservatives. But looked at in terms of right versus left it is a far bigger defeat for the so-called progressive parties who've gone from essential parity with the Conservatives last time to potentially holding less than a third of the seats.

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Alnwick Castle (Grn)
- ▶ Amble (Lab)
- ▶ Berwick West with Ord (LD)
- ▶ Bywell (Lab)
- ▶ Cowpen (Lab)
- ▶ Hexham East (LD by-election)
- ▶ Humshaugh (Grn)
- ▶ Plessey (LD)
- ▶ Prudhoe North (Lab)
- ▶ Stakeford (Lab)
- ▶ Wensleydale (Lab)



Labour targets

- ▶ Bebside and Kitty Brewster (Con)
- ▶ Bedlington Central (Ind)
- ▶ Berwick North (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington East and Double Row (Ind)
- ▶ Hartley (Con)
- ▶ Hexham East (LD by-election)
- ▶ Hexham North (Con)
- ▶ Hexham West (Con)
- ▶ Newsham (Con)
- ▶ Pegswood (Con)
- ▶ Seghill with Seaton Delaval (Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Alnwick Castle (Grn)
- ▶ Alnwick Hotspur (Con)
- ▶ Bebside and Kitty Brewster (Con)
- ▶ Bedlington Central (Ind)
- ▶ Bedlington East (Lab)
- ▶ Bedlington West (Ind)
- ▶ Cowpen (Lab)
- ▶ Cramlington South East (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington East and Double Row (Ind)
- ▶ Cramlington Eastfield (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington North (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington North West (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington South East (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington South West (Con)
- ▶ Cramlington Village (Con)
- ▶ Croft (Lab)
- ▶ Holywell (Lab)
- ▶ Isabella (Lab)
- ▶ Newbiggin-by-the-Sea (Lab)
- ▶ Newsham (Con)
- ▶ Plessey (LD)
- ▶ Sleekburn (Lab)
- ▶ Stakeford (Lab)
- ▶ Wensleydale (Lab)



Green target

- ▶ Alnwick Hotspur (1 Con)



Nottinghamshire

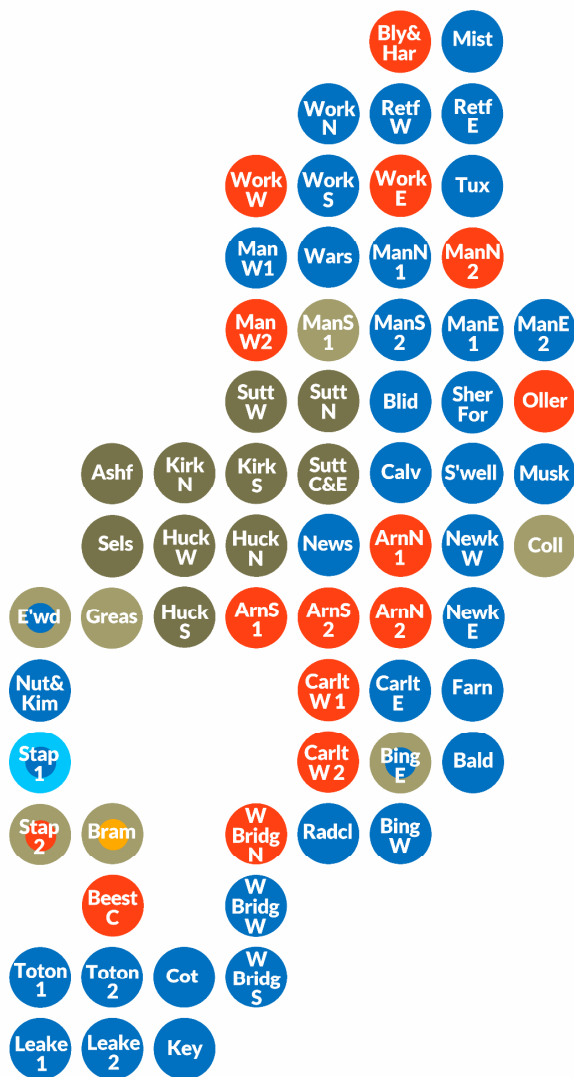
34

17

10

4

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Nottinghamshire has a political history very similar to neighbouring Derbyshire but fractionally more Labour-leaning.

Both counties contain a mix of once safe Labour-voting coalfield communities (in Derbyshire Bolsover and North East Derbyshire; in Notts Ashfield, Mansfield and smaller pit villages liked Ollerton); an affluent rural hinterland (Derbyshire has the peak district and the dales; Notts the Soar and Trent Valleys bordering Lincs); and typically marginal commuter districts for both Derby and Nottingham (Erewash and Swadlincote in Derbyshire; Broxtowe and Gedling in Notts).

These similarities have produced similar electoral outcomes. Between the founding of the county councils in 1973 and 2009, Labour only lost a majority in both once (1977). Since 2009, the Conservatives have won three out of the four elections in Derbyshire, and two of the four in Nottinghamshire (Labour scraping a majority of one seat in 2017).

One other similarity is that both counties contain conflicting trends. Working class, once utterly Labour constituencies have moved hugely away from the party to both the Conservatives and Reform. Meanwhile Labour has become competitive in the much more liberal, affluent commuter belts: Rushcliffe falling for the first time ever in Nottinghamshire; Derbyshire

Dales next door. High Peak in Derbyshire is still a marginal, but it has shunted to being a Labour-leaning marginal from a constituency the Conservatives usually won fairly easily.

Likewise Gedling: the suburbs of Carlton and Arnold east of Nottingham were once rock-solid Conservative. For different reasons to High Peak - notably upward and outward mobility of Nottingham's minority ethnic population, it has only been lost once by Labour in the quarter of a century since their 1997 landslide.

They are also roughly equally susceptible to the lure of Reform UK. One of the party's five (oops: four) MPs, Lee Anderson, represents Ashfield. There are scores of potentially Reform-friendly divisions running along the Nottinghamshire side of the coal seam from Worksop through Warsop, Mansfield and Ashfield - plus the pit villages scattered around the Sherwood Forest. There were once even mines in Rushcliffe (Cotgrave) - traditionally (though no longer) the safe Conservative south of the county.

The problem Labour has in counties like these is that there are more areas steadily and probably inexorably moving away from them than moving towards them. Their challenges are epitomised in Ashfield: the first red alert that the party was beginning to misfire in its heartland areas.

Go back to 1995 and Labour polled 75% in that year's Ashfield district elections. In 1999 they dropped fifteen percentage points, which could - and was - chalked up to the challenges of getting out the vote when the party was in government. In 2003 they lost a further twelve

percentage points - now down to 44% - with independents winning the same number of council seats as Labour. And in 2007 Labour collapsed to just 24%, barely ahead of surging Liberal Democrats. Those Lib Dems were led by Jason Zadrozny, evidently hugely electorally popular but someone whom quite serious, alarming, controversy seemed to stalk.

He was ousted from the Lib Dems after serious criminal misconduct was alleged, and for which charges were subsequently dropped. But allegations kept dogging him, even as voters stood by him as he founded the Ashfield Independents Party.

Ashfield Independents gained control of the district council in 2019 and won all bar three seats here in 2023. It was Zadrozny's strong vote, mostly drawn from Labour, in the 2019 general election that enabled Lee Anderson to gain Ashfield, then as a Conservative.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Ashfield	17,062	42.8
Sherwood Forest	11,320	23.3
Mansfield	9,385	22.8
Bassetlaw	9,751	21.7
Broxtowe	8,402	17.6
Gedling	8,211	16.9
Newark	8,280	15.5
Rushcliffe	6,353	11.0

But Ashfield Independents may now be eclipsed by an even more powerful populism than they mastered: Reform UK. Anderson polled 43% in Ashfield in last year's general election - over 17,000 votes. If sustained

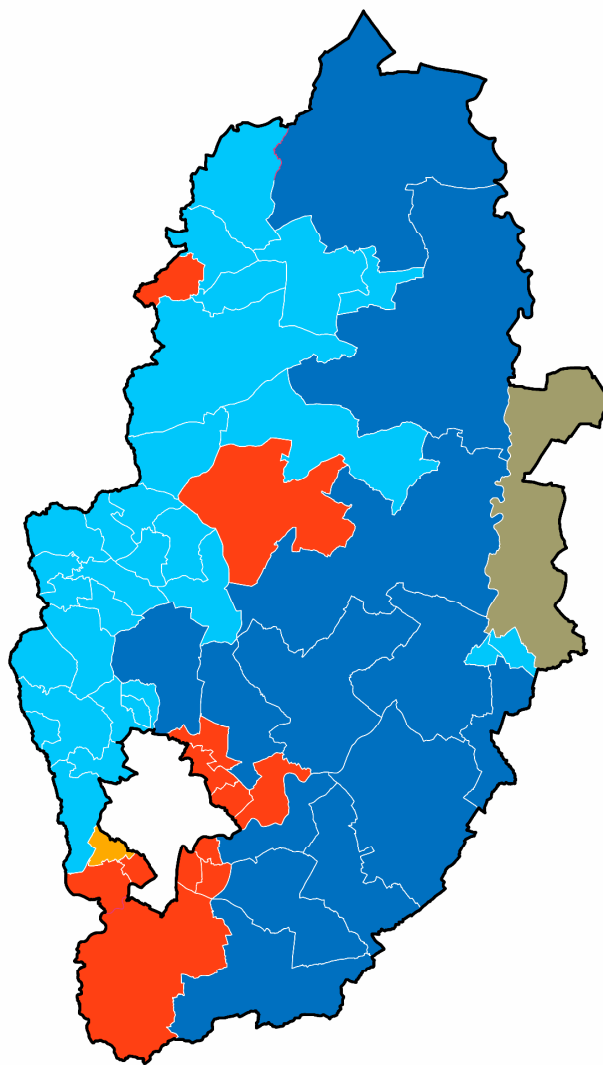
(and if Reform's growth since the general election is realised in actual votes) Reform can expect to win most, if not all the nine Ashfield county electoral divisions off the Independents (four in Sutton, two in Kirkby and three in outlying Hucknall) plus adjoining Eastwood, Greasley and Nuthall: all lying around the northern edge of Nottingham.

Reform fare less well the further you travel beyond Lee Anderson's patch, partly because neighbouring places like Mansfield had high profile Conservative MPs like Ben Bradley who, while losing their seats still probably kept even more voters from fleeing the tarnished Tory brand. But these areas are still demographically very similar to Ashfield so Reform has every opportunity to win up and down this western spine of the county.

As well as shifting towards the Conservatives, Mansfield has a pretty strong set of organised independents - powerful enough for them to win the directly-elected mayoralty of that town until 2023 (when Labour narrowly won it back). Their presence means is that, yet again, Reform (or anyone else) will be able to win on very low vote shares.

Mansfield town has four electoral divisions electing two councillors apiece - plus Warsop which is single-member. Double-sized electoral divisions mean huge electorates: 18,000 or so - and large divisions make it harder for independents and smaller, less well-organised parties to win. They also tend to split their tickets: **Mansfield North, South** and **West** all elected county councillors with different affiliations last time.

Opposite: illustrative map of the March '25 Electoral Calculus MRP



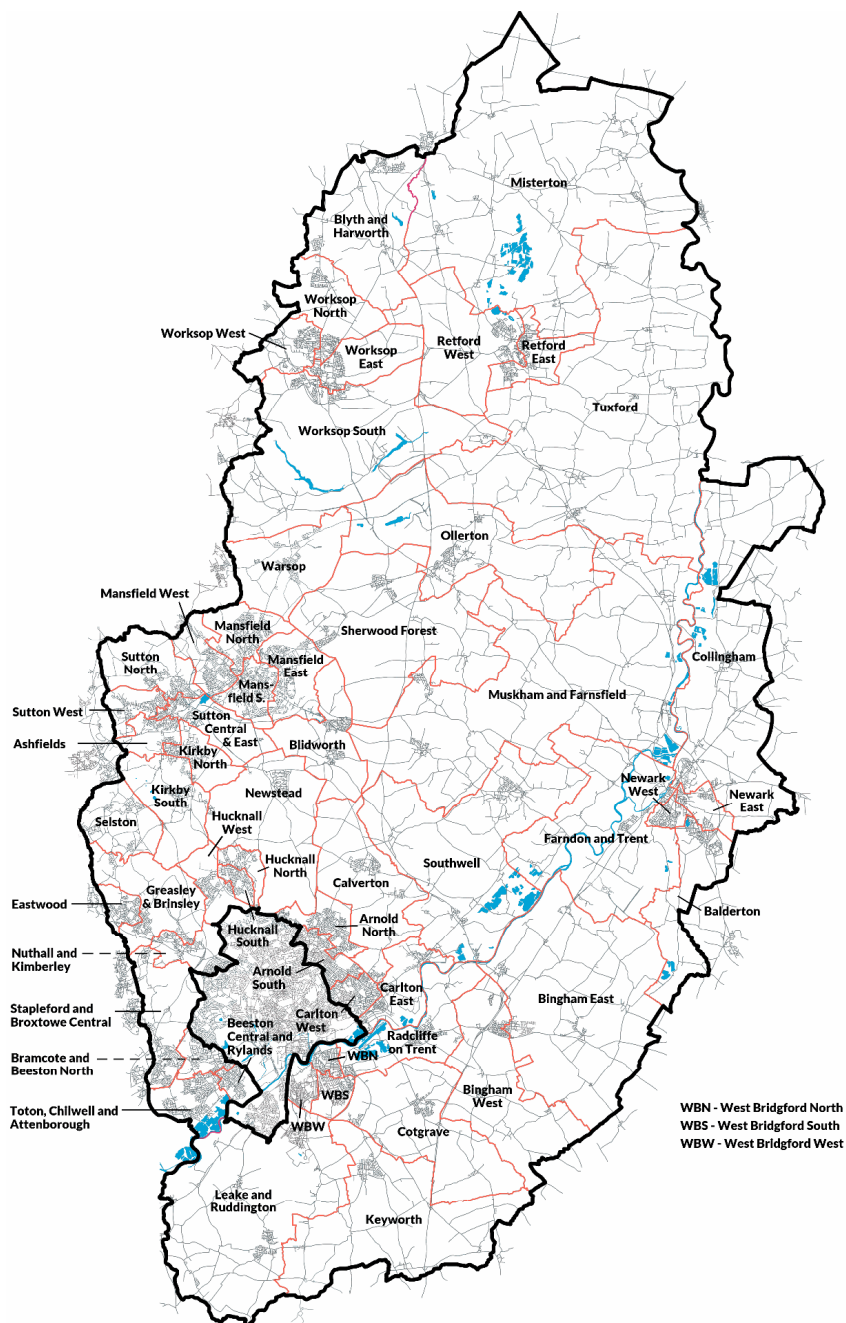
But if, as there appears to be, a Reform wave building in Nottinghamshire, they should be able to top the poll in all five Mansfield district divisions, and maybe all nine seats.

The election in Mansfield North has been countermanded following the death of a TUSC candidate so the final results in Mansfield and Nottinghamshire won't be known until mid June when the contest is rescheduled.

Reform's targets then move north into Bassetlaw district, where there are four divisions in Worksop, two in Retford, two rural divisions that should be safe for the Conservatives, plus Blyth and Harworth in the north western corner of the county. Labour holds just three of these Bassetlaw divisions right now, having lost Worksop North, and more rural Worksop South for the first time ever to the Tories last time.

The Electoral Calculus MRP suggests Reform will take three of the four Worksop divisions leaving Labour with just **Worksop West** plus **Blyth & Harworth**.

This could again be one of the features of these elections: Reform taking seats off the Conservatives - but freshmen Conservative seats that used to be dependably Labour. So while the raw figures obviously chalk these up as Conservative losses, they are actually further punches to Labour, further



boxing the party in when their expectation is still that they are the natural party of government in Nottinghamshire.

Reform rapidly run out of prospects once we move away from the western side of the county. They will almost certainly not win any seats in Gedling; nor Rushcliffe and their prospects in Broxtowe are limited to outlying wards in the north of the district. These three districts share one thing in common: they orbit Nottingham and are principally commuter enclaves for the city.

Broxtowe is to Nottingham what Erewash is to Derby but Reform are forecast to sweep Erewash while Broxtowe is politically more diverse and conflicting. Much more of Nottingham, a larger city than Derby anyhow, seeps across and into these outlying areas, gradually subsuming them, altering their demographics and electoral affiliations.

Reform might have a chance in Newark - the town, that is - not the wider constituency. There are two named Newark divisions though **Balderton** is effectively a third with a lot of countryside bolted on. Electoral Calculus has Reform winning **Newark East** and **Newark West** but not Balderton. Labour were not too far adrift of the Tories in Newark West last time.

As Reform's prospects suddenly ebb, Labour's suddenly flow. Nottinghamshire is not one uniform political entity and the political traction of Nottingham is the opposite of the gravitational pull in the wider county.

This manifested in Labour seizing Rushcliffe for the first time at last year's general election. While quite a few of Labour's now 403 MPs represent areas that they are going to find extremely difficult to hold next time, Rushcliffe may become easier because the demographics this side of Trent Bridge are flowing in their direction.

Labour already holds **West Bridgford North** and they are under no threat of losing it. **West Bridgford West** is the most vulnerable Conservative division: they were 385 or 8.1% ahead last time. **West Bridgford South** looks like it should be reasonably safe for the Tories: they won here by 1,014 (22.3%) but this one will be very close, with Labour slightly favoured to win.

Labour would have had to run up a big lead in West Bridgford to win Rushcliffe but that doesn't mean its their only prospect. The party is heavily targeting the large, 2-councillor **Leake & Ruddington** division immediately south of West Bridgford and Nottingham. They were 912 behind the second Conservative winner last time, which sounds a lot but was just 12.5% in this division of 17,000 voters.

If Labour is really continuing to build on its surge in Rushcliffe then, just possibly, **Radcliffe-on-Trent** comes into view. Labour were 803 behind here last time - numerically less than in Leake & Ruddington but in percentage terms much more adrift: 19.6%. Still, a 10% swing would do it - and they're working this division hard. Radcliffe has never been lost by the Conservatives.

Labour can then look to the south-western suburbs of Nottingham. There is another big 2-councillor division that hugs the northern banks of the Trent: **Toton, Chilwell & Attenborough** and the Conservatives were ahead here by just 260 votes - 2.9% last time.

Then there is Bramcote & Beeston North which the Lib Dems held fairly comfortably last time. But in the intervening four years the division's Lib Dem councillor, Steve Carr, has left the party and is standing for the Broxtowe Independent Group, with the Liberal Democrats fielding a candidate against him.

Broxtowe Independent Group is not to be confused with the Broxtowe Alliance which is the faction that split from Labour taking most of its borough councillors with it in opposition to Labour government policies like the cuts to Winter Fuel Allowance, and the reorganisation of local government.

While the Lib Dems won Bramcote easily enough, their vote is not large enough to survive a split between the official party candidate and the incumbent, so Carr will need the votes of Labour and Conservative supporters - who numbered over half the votes cast in 2021 - to hold on. It's not obvious he'll get enough, and that could tip all four Beeston-area seats to Labour.

So, while Labour may well lose its remaining footholds in Mansfield, Bassetlaw, Sherwood and the Stapleford end of Broxtowe they could entirely offset those losses in Rushcliffe and Beeston. And, if Reform don't break through on the scale they're threatening to, Labour might end up with a much larger group than anyone is expecting. It won't be large enough to regain a majority: they just aren't sufficiently competitive in enough of the county for that. But it might be sufficient for Labour to call it a win, even if they are a pale imitation of the party that once ruled the roost across this coal county.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	37	15	1	13
2021 - suspension: Francis Purdue-Horan, Bingham East - Con to Ind	36	15	1	14
2022 - by-election: Eastwood division - Ind gain from Con	35	15	1	15
2023 - defection: Steve Carr, Bramcote and Beeston North - LD to Ind	35	15	0	16
2024 - suspension: John Doddy, Stapleford & Broxtowe Central - Con to Ind	34	15	0	17
2025 - defection: John McGrath, Stapleford & Broxtowe Central - Lab to Ind	34	14	0	18
2024 - defection: John Doddy, Stapleford & Broxtowe Central - Ind to Ref	34	14	0	18
Current	34	14	0	18

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Collingham (Ind)
- ▶ Greasley and Brinsley (Ind)
- ▶ Mansfield North (1 Lab)
- ▶ Mansfield South (1 Ind)
- ▶ Mansfield West (1 Lab)
- ▶ Ollerton (Lab)
- ▶ Stapleford and Broxtowe Central (1 Lab)
- ▶ Worksop South (Lab)



Labour targets

- ▶ Blidworth (Con)
- ▶ Carlton East (Con)
- ▶ Eastwood (Ind)
- ▶ Leake and Ruddington (2 Con)
- ▶ Mansfield North (1 Con)
- ▶ Mansfield South (1 Con, 1 Ind)
- ▶ Mansfield West (1 Con)
- ▶ Radcliffe-on-Trent (Con)
- ▶ Retford East (Con)
- ▶ Retford West (Con)
- ▶ Sherwood Forest (Con)
- ▶ Stapleford and Broxtowe Central (1 Con)
- ▶ Toton, Chilwell and Attenborough (2 Con)
- ▶ Warsop (Con)
- ▶ West Bridgford South (Con)
- ▶ West Bridgford West (Con)
- ▶ Worksop North (Con)
- ▶ Worksop South (Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Ashfields (Ind)
- ▶ Blidworth (Con)
- ▶ Blyth and Harworth (Lab)
- ▶ Eastwood (Ind)
- ▶ Hucknall East (Ind)
- ▶ Hucknall South (Ind)
- ▶ Hucknall West (Ind)
- ▶ Kirkby North (Ind)
- ▶ Kirkby South (Ind)
- ▶ Mansfield East (2 Con)
- ▶ Mansfield North (1 Con, 1 Lab)
- ▶ Mansfield South (1 Con, 1 Ind)
- ▶ Mansfield West (1 Con, 1 Lab)
- ▶ Newark East (Con)
- ▶ Newark West (Con)
- ▶ Nuthall and Kimberley (Con)
- ▶ Ollerton (Lab)
- ▶ Retford East (Con)
- ▶ Retford West (Con)
- ▶ Selston (Ind)
- ▶ Sutton Central and East (Ind)
- ▶ Sutton North (Ind)
- ▶ Sutton West (Ind)
- ▶ Warsop (Con)
- ▶ Worksop East (Lab)
- ▶ Worksop North (Con)
- ▶ Worksop South (Con)
- ▶ Worksop West (Lab)





Oxfordshire



Of all the county councils (and unitary counties) electing this year, throughout their entire history, the Lib Dems have only won an overall majority on two - Cornwall and Devon - twice. But Oxfordshire gives them a shot at adding a third.

It's not a nailed-on certainty because the aggressive net-zero agenda the county has pursued since the Conservatives lost control here in 2021 has alienated a growing section of the electorate, and the Lib Dems need to win a fair few extra seats to get there.

Reform is not likely to impress in this county which may keep a few seats in the Conservative column that elsewhere would surely fall. But, on balance, there remains a lot more hostility to the Conservatives nationally than the so-called progressive coalition locally.

What we can almost certainly count on, whether the Lib Dems can haul themselves across the majority line or not, is that they will continue to be able to run Oxfordshire in coalition - whether just with the Greens or with Labour as well.

Here's the maths. Oxfordshire will elect 69 county councillors on 1st May, so 35 seats are needed to win a majority.



The Lib Dems notionally hold 23 right now (they in fact hold 20 on a 61 seat council) so need another twelve. Given there will be 46 non-Lib Dem seats to pluck, initially that doesn't sound too difficult. But it's tougher than it looks for two reasons.

First, there are only twenty two Conservative seats left (plus one Tory who's defected to Reform), so unless they can pick up some Labour or independent seats they actually need to halve the Conservative group.

And the second, linked reason why that's going to be tough is that ten of the Tories represent divisions in Cherwell - the northern, and least Lib Dem friendly - district in the county.

Cherwell was the only Oxfordshire district that voted to leave the EU. Only just: by 50.1 to 49.9, but that compares with a county-wide Remain vote of 57% to 43%, and a 70-30 Remain vote in the City of Oxford.

The Lib Dems can maybe flip two - maximum three - divisions in Cherwell, at its southern end around Bicester and Kidlington; though they may also be able to oust the Greens in **Kidlington East**. Whether that will sour coalition negotiations post-election remains to be seen.

But the majority of Cherwell is in the Banbury constituency which went Labour for the first time ever at last year's general election, and it's Labour that can do more damage. Three of Banbury town's new divisions are notionally Conservative and Labour will be aiming at a clean sweep of all five. **Banbury Hardwick** is closer than **Banbury Calthorpe** but they're not vastly different electorally and Labour probably won both to have been able to gain the constituency last year.

The remaining twelve Conservatives hold seats in much more favourable territory for the Lib Dems - but where the party has already made huge advances.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	21	16	21	5
2022 - defection: Hannah Banfield, Banbury Grimsbury & Castle - Lab to Ind	21	15	21	6
2022 - defection: Damian Haywood, Iffley Fields and St Mary's - Lab to Ind	21	14	21	7
2023 - defection: Sally Povolotsky, Hendreds and Harwell - LD to Ind	21	14	20	8
2024 - suspension: Kevin Bulmer, Goring - Con to Ind	20	14	20	9
2024 - defection: Jane Murphy, Didcot East and Hagbourne - Con to Ind	19	14	20	10
2025 - defection: Felix Bloomfield, Benson and Cholsey - Con to Ref	18	14	20	11
Current	18	14	20	11

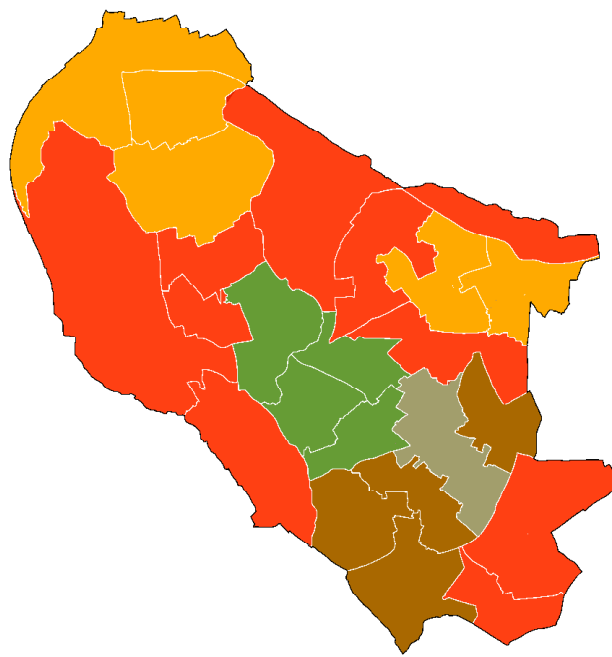
These pockets stand out in a sea of Lib Dem yellow but there's a reason they do so: they are different demographically and politically.

There is a Conservative councillor in **Witney West and Ducklington**, for example - but Labour is again the principal opponent of the Tories in that West Oxfordshire town, and the outgoing version of Witney West (paired with Bampton, not Ducklington) voted 58% Conservative and just 10% Lib Dem in 2021. Likewise **Didcot West** is more likely to fall to Labour than the Lib Dems, though it does look likely to fall.

Then there are what have been two-councillor divisions that have been split into single-member seats. Thame & Chinnor, for example, elected a Conservative and a Lib Dem in 2021. But the Lib Dems will have polled far more votes in **Thame** which makes more rural **Chinnor** a tougher prospect for them. It may be that they can still gain Chinnor (there are no Conservative district councillors left in the Henley & Thame constituency) but if they don't that's no change from 2021.

And so the Lib Dems have to look to divisions not held by the Conservatives to make up the shortfall. That basically means targeting Labour, and that means gaining seats in Oxford.

Of course, part of Oxford is within the currently very safe Oxford West and Abingdon constituency held by Layla Moran, but that's the minority of Oxford - four divisions, give or take - and they already hold two. The Greens hold a third, and the Labour-held fourth: **Jericho and Osney**, is pretty safe for the party with the Lib Dems third.

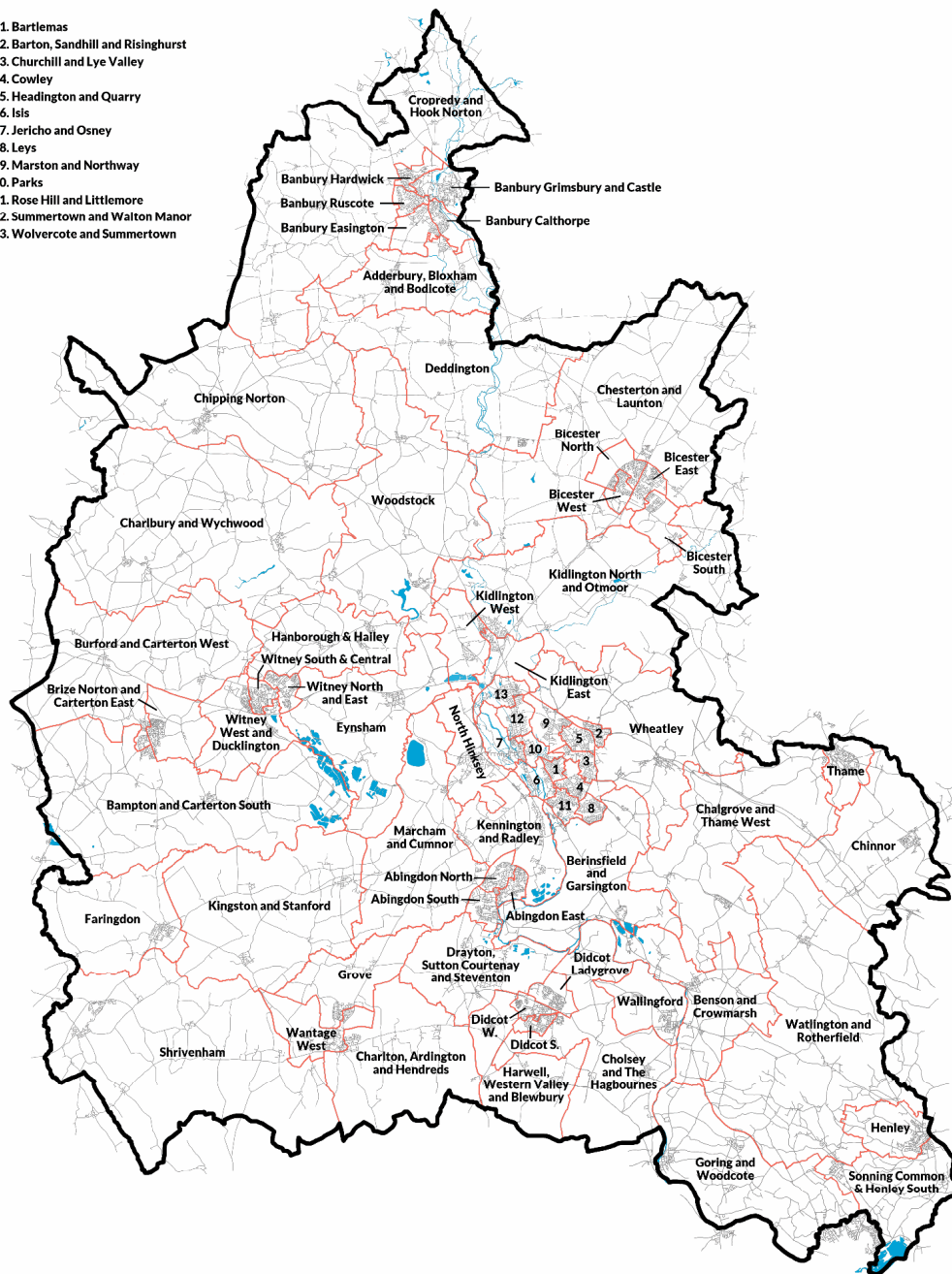


The 2024 city council election result in Oxford. Labour won just ten of the twenty four seats last year (brown: Oxford Independent Alliance, olive: independent)

The Greens have supplanted the Lib Dems as the principal opponents of Labour in the centre of Oxford: the university quarter, and where they have not, independents have emerged in recent years.

Temple Cowley was the first district ward to elect independents - they hold both seats there now and one of the city councillors is standing in the **Cowley** county division, in with a good shot. But since then, two other groups calling themselves independent have emerged.

1. Bartlemas
2. Barton, Sandhill and Risinghurst
3. Churchill and Lye Valley
4. Cowley
5. Headington and Quarry
6. Isis
7. Jericho and Osney
8. Leys
9. Marston and Northway
10. Parks
11. Rose Hill and Littlemore
12. Summertown and Walton Manor
13. Wolvercote and Summertown



From within the Labour group, several "Corbynite" councillors split from the party over Gaza and wider complaints about the direction in which Sir Keir Starmer has led Labour. These ex-Labour councillors have formed the Oxford Independent Socialists (OIS) but they are only contesting one county division (Barton, Sandhills & Risinghurst), leaving the bulk of the hard left challenge to Labour in Oxford to Trade Union & Socialist Coalition (TUSC) candidates.

From without emerged the Independent Oxford Alliance (IOA), principally to oppose the Low Traffic Neighbourhood - Fifteen Minute City plans of Labour.

The Alliance did pretty well at last year's Oxford City council elections taking four wards off Labour: Cowley, Littlemore, Lye Valley and Rose Hill & Iffley off the party. They also endured a narrow miss in Barton and Sandhills. The IOA is contesting five divisions across Oxford.

There is now a band of non Labour wards across the south-centre of Oxford and votes concentrated geographically like that are how minor parties can win under First Past The Post. In addition to Cowley, it would not be shocking were Labour to lose **Churchill & Lye Valley; Barton, Sandhill & Risinghurst; and Rose Hill & Littlemore.**

Last year the Greens also regained St Clement's after a gap of several years. In county elections, St Clement's has a brand new ward name: **Bartlemas**, and that's potentially another Labour loss in the city centre. And where the IOA, OIS or established independent district councillors aren't standing, there are other

independents contesting seats in Oxford. So, whereas in other counties Labour has to look over its shoulder at a Reform threat, in Oxford it has different opponents that tend to come from the same "progressive" side of politics they do.

Already unenthused Labour voters have had their disillusion with the party endorsed by their own MP, Anneliese Dodds, when she resigned from the government over cuts to the international development budget to fund extra defence spending. So potentially Labour could be in just as much trouble in this bastion of affluent, liberal, left-of-centre politics as it is in those areas more interested in the more aggressive populism of Reform in most of its other outposts.

But the long and short of Labour's potential woes in Oxford is that the Lib Dems aren't going to be beneficiaries, and so aren't getting any closer to that tantalising number of 35 they need for a majority. And we've now run out of seats they can gain. The Lib Dems have a chance of getting to around thirty, but getting beyond that is essentially impossible for them.

But another four years at the head of a coalition - as there is no question they will work with the other parties to lock the Conservatives out of power - is hardly a devastating outcome for the Lib Dems.

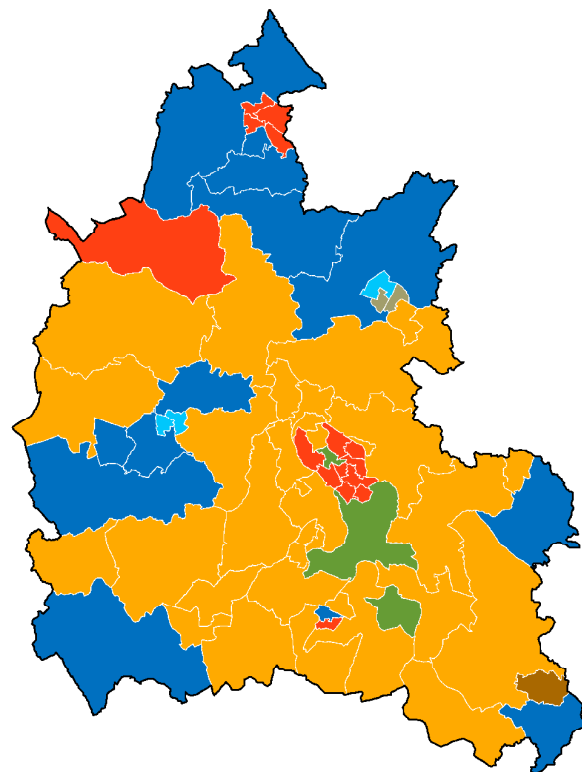
What of Reform? As already established, this was not a good county for UKIP and it won't be a great county for its successor either. It certainly wasn't in last year's general election when their very best result was a pretty poor 13% in Banbury. The party didn't even contest Oxford East.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Banbury	6,284	13.0
Witney	6,307	12.5
Didcot and Wantage	6,400	11.7
Bicester and Woodstock	5,408	10.8
Henley and Thame	5,213	9.8
Oxford West and Abingdon	4,164	9.1
Oxford East	-	-

But just as there are Conservative islands amidst the sea of Lib Dem yellow, so there were bubbles of UKIP intensity in the 2013 county elections. The party polled 28% in **Banbury Hardwick**, 27% in **Calthorpe** and 24% in **Ruscote**. And their best result was in **Witney South & Central**, where they won 31%. If Reform can better those scores then Labour may not get its clean-sweep of Banbury divisions and will cost Labour that Witney seat too.

UKIP polled 26% in **Bicester North**, around a quarter of the vote in both Carterton divisions and 23% in **Didcot East**. They even managed 28% in **Henley-on-Thames** where Olympic gold medallist rower James Cracknell is continuing his quest to be elected for the Conservatives somewhere.

UKIP also polled decent margins in some of the rural wards in the south too that are now either Lib Dem or in Lib Dem sights: 26% in what is now **Kingston & Stanford**; 29% in **Drayton, Sutton Courtenay & Steventon**; 22% in **Goring** and **Hanborough & Hailey**. Reform probably can't win any of these rural divisions but it could skew results in ways they would not go without their presence.



The Electoral Calculus MRP is predicting Reform seats in Oxfordshire: just three, though if they can win in Witney and Bicester they should win at least one in Banbury as well. That MRP gives the Lib Dems 33 seats, Labour 15, the Conservatives just 12, there are 3 Greens (so combined with the Lib Dems there's a majority), 2 independents and a residents' group will retain Henley.

Oxfordshire was once a quintessential Conservative county. Now it looks like one of their weakest parts of England - mostly because of Brexit and the ensuing culture wars. Remarkable!

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Chipping Norton (Lab)
- ▶ Didcot Ladygrove (LD)
- ▶ Eynsham (LD)
- ▶ Harwell, Western Valley and Blewbury (LD)
- ▶ Henley (Res)
- ▶ Kidlington North and Otmoor (LD)
- ▶ Thame (LD)
- ▶ Witney South and Central (Lab)
- ▶ Woodstock (LD)



Labour targets

- ▶ Banbury Calthorpe (Con)
- ▶ Banbury Easington (Con)
- ▶ Banbury Hardwick (Con)
- ▶ Didcot South (Con)
- ▶ Summertown and Walton Manor (LD)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Banbury Calthorpe (Con)
- ▶ Banbury Hardwick (Con)
- ▶ Banbury Ruscote (Lab)
- ▶ Bicester North (Con)
- ▶ Witney North and East (Lab)
- ▶ Witney South and Central (Lab)



Liberal Democrat targets

- ▶ Benson and Crowmarsh (Con)
- ▶ Bicester South (Con)
- ▶ Burford and Carterton West (Con)
- ▶ Chinnor (Con)
- ▶ Cholsey and the Hagbournes (Con)
- ▶ Goring and Woodcote (Con)
- ▶ Kidlington East (Grn)
- ▶ Kingston and Stanford (Con)



Green targets

- ▶ Bartlemas (Lab)
- ▶ Isis (Lab)
- ▶ Parks (Lab)
- ▶ Shrivenham (Con)



Independent targets

- ▶ Barton, Sandhills and Risinghurst (Lab)
- ▶ Cowley (Lab)
- ▶ Churchill and Lye Valley (Lab)
- ▶ Headington and Quarry (LD)
- ▶ Rose Hill and Littlemore (Lab)





**OXFORDSHIRE
DESERVES
BETTER**



County Council Elections - 1st May

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- Angry about the state of our public realm?

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BEER

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and create a brighter future for
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Mark Beer

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UPDATE FROM CONSERVATIVE
CANDIDATES

RICHARD NEWMAN & RICHARD RILEY

STOP HGVs DESTROYING WATFOLTON

Action needed to stop HGVs destroying our town and surrounding villages

Local Conservatives call for Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) and enforcement to hold those ignoring weight restrictions to account.

Council candidates Richard Newman and Richard Riley are committed to stopping HGVs ignoring the weight restrictions designed to protect the Watlington area. They will work with the Parish, District and County Councils and other relevant authorities to install ANPR at the weight restriction access points, ensuring violations are held accountable.


HGVs ignoring the weight restrictions cause congestion, pollution, road damage and put residents' safety at risk. Watlington's narrow streets were not designed to handle large HGVs, leading to HGV accidents and an increase in accidents. HGV emissions

reduce air quality and damage residents' health. Watlington's historic buildings and roads cannot withstand HGV vibrations which leads to costly damage. Excessive HGV traffic causes noise, vibrations and disruption. Reducing HGV traffic will improve quality of life in Watlington, making our town more peaceful and enjoyable for both residents and visitors alike.

Enforcing weight restrictions is crucial to protecting Watlington's environment, heritage and well being. By implementing ANPR, we will take immediate action to safeguard the area's future.

Working together for a better Watlington & Rotherfield

Vote Conservative on 1st May



**Serving Time
Cavalry since 2004**

VOTE Saj Malik

**Independent Candidate for Representative
District 10**

IT'S ONLY A MONTH WAIT. THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ARE MEETING ON THE 10TH OF THIS MONTH. YOU CAN GET YOUR SAY ONLY ONCE TO THE PEOPLE. VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE. CAVALRY.

INDEPENDENT

**STAYING IN THE HOT SEAT
WAS NO OPTION FOR ME**

**sajmalik07@gmail.com
07399 499 344**

Dear Residents,
I am pleased to announce that I am standing for election to the City Council of the City of London. I have been a member of the City Council since 2004 and have been involved in many projects and initiatives. I am committed to representing the people of the City and to working with the other members of the Council to improve the City for all.

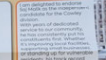
As a City Council member I would have to represent my neighbours, and will have to be held to account – when it comes to the way I spend the money that is raised through the City Council. I will have to be open and honest in my conversations on a daily basis about the decisions I make. I know what your issues are.

I've been living in the City since I finished school in 1990. My wife and I have three children, two of whom were born in the City. I have worked in the City since the family, and I have been a County Councillor – handling all election bills myself and managing my own team.

If I am elected, it is for your voice on the County Council. I know many people whose lives have been drastically impacted by the actions of the Council. I cannot but feel I have a responsibility to do so right thing, to try and do as many things as I can, to help the City a little more.

I have started that social politics group, which is a group of people who are interested in the City. I have started a group of people who are interested in the City. I have started a group of people who are interested in the City. I have started a group of people who are interested in the City.

Best wishes,
Saj Malik




**Independent Candidate for Representative
District 10**

IT'S ONLY A MONTH WAIT. THE COUNTY COMMISSIONERS ARE MEETING ON THE 10TH OF THIS MONTH. YOU CAN GET YOUR SAY ONLY ONCE TO THE PEOPLE. VOTE FOR THE PEOPLE. CAVALRY.

**Independent Candidate for Representative
District 10**

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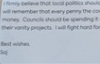
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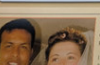
**Independent Candidate for Representative
District 10**



I met the Independent WMA Sir [Name] in the House of Commons, during the House of Commons. I met the Independent WMA Sir [Name] in the House of Commons, during the House of Commons. I met the Independent WMA Sir [Name] in the House of Commons, during the House of Commons.

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I am proud of the many achievements in the local community and in my charity work. This includes all the work that the Independent WMA Sir [Name] has done in the local community and in my charity work. This includes all the work that the Independent WMA Sir [Name] has done in the local community and in my charity work.

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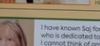
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We only get the chance to vote in the County Council elections once every four years. Over the last four years, we've put up with a situation where the mainstream party councillors have been ignoring us. This is your opportunity to tell the Council what you think.

Shropshire

Boundary changes



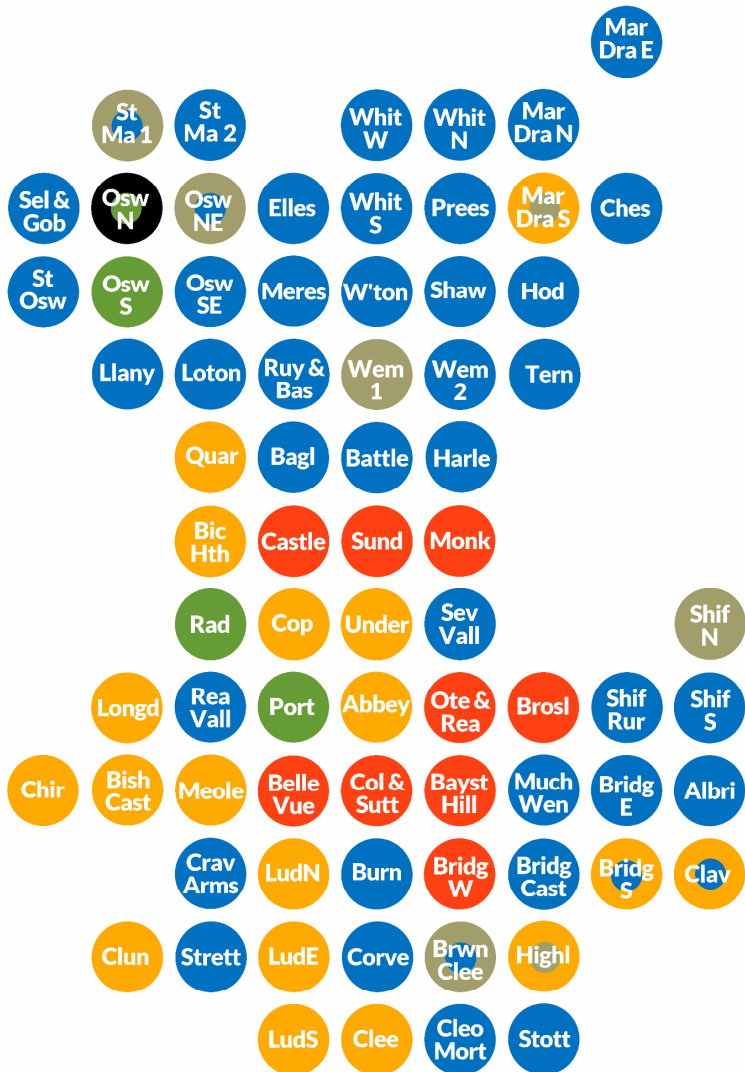
1 vacancy

The Conservatives have already managed to lose the overall majority of twelve they won in 2021 in Shropshire - but with both the constituencies of Shrewsbury and North Shropshire having been lost in last year's general election they could fall a lot further on 1 May.

The Tories have relatively little ground to lose in Shrewsbury because that constituency is highly polarised: within the town they only hold three divisions while the surrounding countryside is mostly safe for them. But the Lib Dems currently hold almost nothing in North Shropshire and that will surely change as a result of the Owen Patterson debacle that gifted an ultra-safe Conservative seat to the centre party back in 2021, in the autumn following their county council triumphs.

It's even possible - unlikely, but possible - that given the Lib Dem strength in the south west of the county they might find their way to a majority. But whether or not they do, there should be more than enough for a "progressive" coalition to administer Shropshire for the next four years. That hasn't been the case since the days of two-tier local government in Salop: 1993 in fact.

This is another of the big unitary authorities with both a huge council size (72 seats) and tiny electoral divisions: each has less than 4,000 voters.



If you assume a turnout of 30%, a candidate needs less - often a lot less - than 600 votes to win a seat.

Take all these factors into account: the relatively small amount of votes needed to win, the Lib Dem by-election success and much larger general election hold in North Shropshire, the Labour gain of Shrewsbury, and the emergence of Reform UK - and Shropshire is a bubbling cauldron of potentially big changes, none in the Conservatives favour.

From a straight read of the 2021 results there are not enough Lib Dem targets for them to win a majority. But we need to factor in their transformed position in the north of the county and the extra council seats it puts in play for them.

The party will still need to take a few divisions off others: the Greens in Oswestry and Labour in a couple of divisions in Shrewsbury (if that's possible), plus a couple of independent-held seats. There are also divisions in North Shropshire where Labour or Greens were runners up last time, so the Lib Dems will need to leap-frog them.

But taking all these factors into account it is, on paper at least, just possible for the Lib Dems to get to the winning line of 38 seats.

Let's start with the low-hanging fruit. There is **Bagley** in the north west of Shrewsbury with a Conservative majority of 18 (1.2%). A harder, Labour-held division in Shrewsbury for the Lib Dems to win is **Monkmoor**, but they were only 99 votes short there last time (9.1%).

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	43	9	14	8
2021 - defection: Robert Tindall, Brown Clee - Con to Ind	42	9	14	9
2022 - by-election: Highley - LD gain from Ind	42	9	15	8
2022 - by-election: Bridgnorth West and Tasley - Lab gain from Con	41	10	15	8
2023 - by-election: Worfield - LD gain from Con	40	10	16	8
2023 - by-election: Alveley and Claverley - LD gain from Con	39	10	17	8
2023 - defection: David Minnery, Market Drayton West - Ind to LD	39	10	18	7
2024 - defection: Steve Davenport, St Martin's - Con to Ind	38	10	18	8
2024 - defection: John Price, Oswestry East - Con to Ind	37	10	18	9
2025 - defection: Rachel Connolly, Bridgnorth West and Tasley - Lab to Ind	37	9	18	10
2025 - vacancy: resignation of Mike Isherwood, Oswestry West - Grn	37	9	18	9
Current	37	9	18	9

The Meres is the easiest North Shropshire division to win, with a Tory lead of just 23 (1.4%). And **Whittington**, east of Oswestry is barely harder: 34 (2.8%). Slightly more difficult is **Ruyton** [with its eleven towns] & **Baschurch** where they have a 90 vote (6.5%) deficit and **Llanymynech** - which sounds like it should be in Wales and almost is - 122 (9.8%).

Then we get to the former 2-councillor divisions. Whitchurch in the far north of the county was split into a 2-member Whitchurch North - and that now becomes **Whitchurch North** and **Whitchurch West** - and single councillor **Whitchurch South**. The Tories won South with a pretty big 242 (26.0%) majority but the Lib Dems won North Shropshire at the general election by 15,311 on a 40% swing. The larger North division was very much closer with the second Conservative winning by just 52 (2.9%). All three could go Lib Dem.

Then there is Market Drayton which again until this year had one 2-councillor division and a single member. The Lib Dems did not contest either Market Drayton division last time (but are this year) so we have no recent local election data - and this may be partly why Electoral Calculus is forecasting Reform to gain all three of the new seats, maybe erroneously.

The Conservatives won **Market Drayton East** last time fairly handily despite a 17% fall in their vote share (showing how safe that division has been for them). But the 2-councillor **Market Drayton West** split: one Tory, one Independent. That independent, who only just clung on by 42 votes, is standing in the new **Market Drayton South** while the incumbent Conservative is fighting the

slimmed down West. The Tories only polled 40% in the merged division and so of course they are vulnerable.

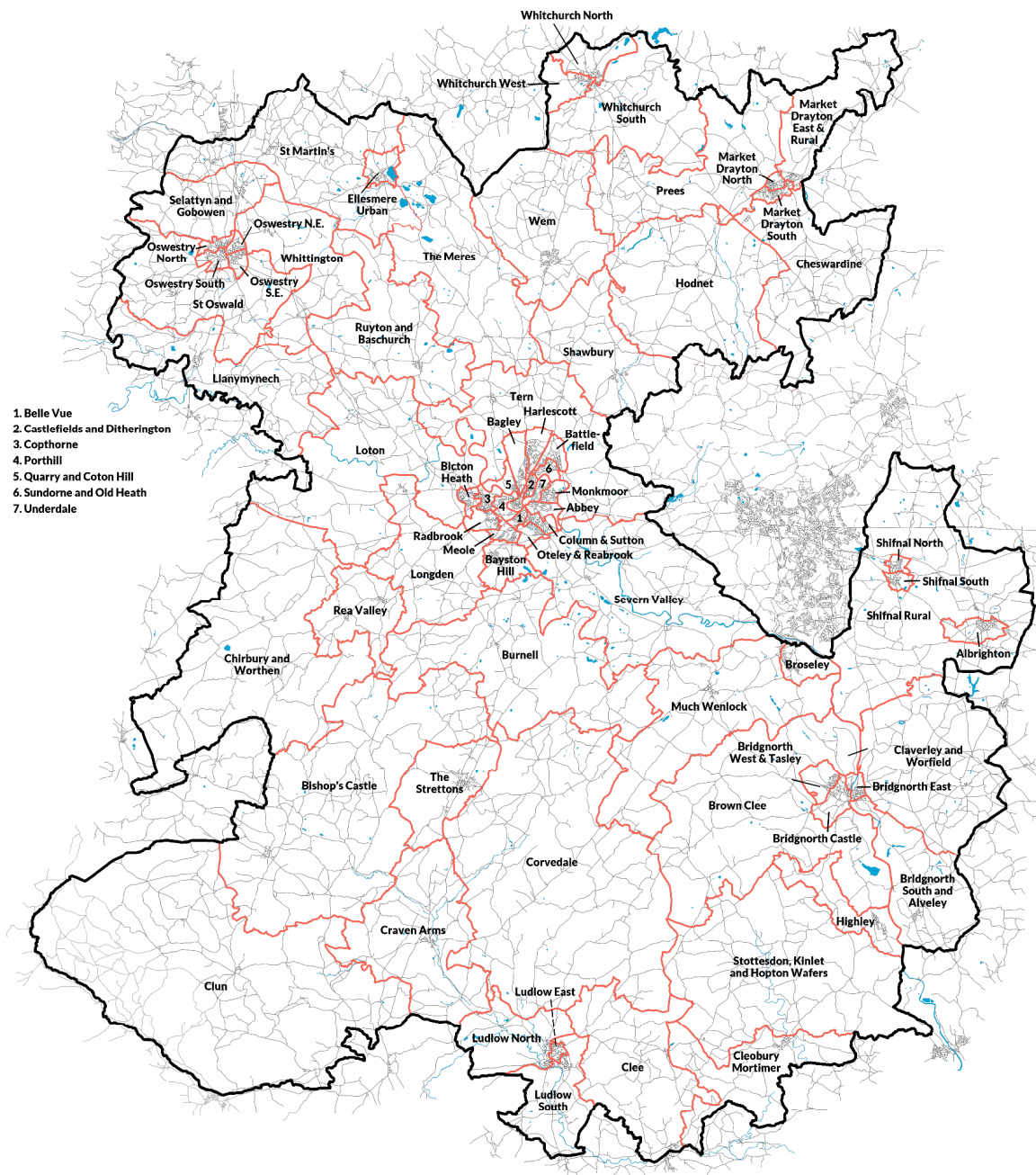
A 2-councillor division that has survived is **Wem**, and this too split in 2021: one Conservative, one independent. The independent is standing down so you might expect the best-placed opponent to be the Tories. But the Lib Dems were only 39 (1.4%) behind in third and they should pick up both seats here too.

The fourth 2-councillor division in North Shropshire was Oswestry East, with both seats held by the Conservatives. In addition there was Oswestry South and Oswestry West held by the Greens, which the Lib Dems did not contest last time, but are this. The Greens were the principal challengers in Oswestry East to the Tories with the Lib Dems last on just 4%.

East has now become **Oswestry North East** and **Oswestry South East**, and Oswestry West is now **Oswestry North**. The Greens may be strong enough in Oswestry to hold on against a much wider field of opponents this time (Shropshire First and Reform plus Labour, Conservative and Lib Dem), and maybe to gain the two new divisions which are notionally Conservative.

Before we look at the until-now ignored south of Shropshire, there are four further divisions in the north that need name-checking.

These are the four where the runners-up to the Conservatives last time were not the Liberal Democrats. Labour came second, 117 votes behind, in



Ellesmere Urban but have never won this seat. Labour was also second in yet another 2-councillor division which has again been reduced to a single member: **Selattyn & Gobowen**. They were 157 votes short of the lower Conservative winner last time.

Then there is **St Martin's**, wrapping around Ellesmere, where Labour was 198 votes adrift. Finally there is St Oswald, south and west of Oswestry, where the Greens were runners up, 221 behind the Conservatives. Can the Lib Dems leap in front in these, some of which they didn't contest last time? Yes, probably.

There are perhaps only three divisions the Conservatives could hold onto in the north of Shropshire: **Prees, Hodnet** and **Shawbury**, and two of these three are in The Wrekin constituency, not North Shropshire.

Traditionally, the Lib Dems have done a lot better in South Shropshire, where perhaps some of the long-term Lib Dem competitiveness in next door Brecon & Radnorshire has rubbed off. The Lib Dems even won the constituency of Ludlow in 2005 but couldn't hold it - their former MP tried again last year in renamed South Shropshire but didn't make it.

Another former 2-councillor division: **Church Stretton & Craven Arms**, has been split into its constituent parts and the Lib Dems might win both (though **Church Stretton** is the better bet). They were 192 (7.0%) behind the lower Conservative winner last time.

The Lib Dems have also won two neighbouring seats in by-elections in the south of Shropshire: Alveley &

Claverley and Worfield. Worfield has now been merged with Claverley while Alveley is in a new divisions that meanders to the edge of Bridgnorth. Those are already baked-in to the Lib Dem numbers going into the election so not winning either of the new divisions will count as a loss.

Things are harder for the Lib Dems in the south not because the ground is tougher but because they already hold nine divisions there and the pickings are much more scarce as a result.

The party also has some vulnerabilities in the south that may not be shielded by their surge in the north. The Conservatives were not far off in two divisions with great Saxon names: **Clee** (107 or 7.1%) and **Clun** (182 or 10.2%). There are two Lib Dem seats in Shrewsbury that are vulnerable to the Conservatives: **Meole**, where they are just 69 votes ahead (4.5%) and the slightly harder to get **Abbey** (154, 9.5%).

Then there is Shifnal, which has been completely redrawn by the boundary commission. There are now three little island divisions surrounded by large rural ones: **Shifnal North** and **Shifnal South**, and then **Albrighton**. Last time the geographically much larger Shifnal North elected an independent: he is standing in the now geographically tiny **Shifnal North**. That should probably reinforce his majority which was 206 (14.6%). There are four divisions in this area instead of the three-and-a-bit there have been; three should be Conservative.

Then there is Bridgnorth which is another redrawn, confusing mess. Labour gained a seat in 2-councillor

Bridgnorth West & Tasley last time, and then won the other one in a by-election. Then their by-election winner left the group and became independent. She is defending her seat as an independent while the one who won in 2021 is standing down.

Across town there was another 2-seater: Bridgnorth East & Astley Abbots in which the Conservatives won both but with Labour about 250 behind. There is now a new single member **Bridgnorth Castle** division - essentially Bridgnorth Central, which should be competitive, while **Bridgnorth East** becomes better for the Conservatives. Doesn't mean they'll hold on, but it'll be easier. But if Labour can gain Bridgnorth Castle that's still another Conservative loss from 2021.

There is also the isolated Labour island of **Broseley** which nestles just across the authority boundary from the outskirts of Telford.

Broseley has an unusual history in that it had an independent Labour councillor for four terms - beating the official Labour candidate - throughout the 80s and 90s. Then Labour won it and held it for four terms until 2017, when the Conservatives snatched it. Labour got it back in 2021 on a 19% swing with the Lib Dems passing on standing a candidate.

The ousted Conservative councillor, Simon Harris, is re-standing this time - but as a Shropshire First candidate. And Electoral Calculus is forecasting Reform will win here. That isn't quite in the realms of the absurd as there will be a much more fragmented contest this time, but Labour's winner from four years ago is defending her seat.

Finally, let's turn to Shrewsbury. There has been one major boundary change here: the 3-councillor Bayston Hill, Column and Sutton division has been split into three single divisions. This old division ran from just south of Shrewsbury town centre out into the countryside. Two of the three newcomers will be safely Labour: **Column & Sutton** and **Oteley & Reabrook**.

But **Bayston Hill**: the outlying, largely rural division may not be. Labour's third councillor was only 273 (7.0%) ahead of the Tories in 2021 and if their vote is heavily weighted towards the north end this could be a Conservative gain. They are so much less popular now than four years ago though that they could still fail here.

There are a couple of other Conservative chances in the suburbs of Shrewsbury but they're not really very promising. There is Lib Dem-held **Meole** (majority 69, 4.5%), which is south-west Shrewsbury and, above it, Green-held **Radbrook** with a 349 (17.5%) majority. The Greens gained Radbrook on a quite absurd 30% swing last time but without a Lib Dem challenger which there will be this. So the Green lead may not be quite as solid as the basic numbers suggest.

Shrewsbury has seventeen divisions and many of these are competitive. Labour will be looking to take **Harlescott** (Shrewsbury North) off the Conservatives who only held it by 23 (2.8%) last time.

Labour was just pushed into third in **Bagley** (North West) last time, and while the Tories were only 18 ahead of the Lib Dems they were only 47 ahead of Labour: no-one polled over 30% there.

If there is a massive Tory collapse then they may even have to worry about potentially aptly-named **Battlefield** (North East) though their majority of 275 (29.0%) should be safe enough.

In conclusion let's consider Reform's chances. This isn't one of their best counties: it's on the wrong side of the country for that. They didn't perform exceptionally well in last year's general election, partly because the Lib Dems are firmly established as the party to vote for if you want to kick the Conservatives.

Constituency	vote	%vote
South Shropshire	9,171	17.8
North Shropshire	7,687	15.5
Shrewsbury	7,524	14.6

Nor was UKIP especially successful here: they won no seats in their peak year of 2013. That said, they did poll quite strongly in a few divisions - most of them in North Shropshire - which Reform probably won't replicate because the Lib Dems are so much stronger here now.

	%vote
Whittington	43.4
Shifnal South	40.2
Prees	36.6
Llanymynech	32.6
Hodnet	32.4
Bridgnorth East	32.0
Bridgnorth West and Tasley	31.6
Market Drayton West	32.1

The Electoral Calculus MRP in March had Reform winning thirteen councillors, mostly in urban divisions like Ellesmere, Shifnal, Albrighton, Bridgnorth, Broseley, Market Drayton and Oswestry. I'm sceptical that Reform will win in North Shropshire but they may do better in the south - especially in those divisions that are part of The Wrekin where there is much less of a Lib Dem presence.

That MRP has the Lib Dems falling nine seats short of a majority but if we shunt the five seats Electoral Calculus thinks Reform will win in North Shropshire across (this is problematic but it's just for fun) the Lib Dems get to 34.

Electoral Calculus has the two Lib Dem by-election gains in the south down as Conservative, and if they can win both Church Stretton and Craven Arms from that former 2-councillor division that gets them to 37 - but that's the ceiling on the seats they can take off the Conservatives.

To get an overall majority they have to defeat Labour in at least one Shrewsbury ward. Shrewsbury looks like it has an east-west divide with the west Lib Dem and more populous east Labour. So Monmoor becomes a crucial division.

But, as I asserted at the beginning, whether the Lib Dems get across the line or not, there should be at least forty councillors returned who are neither Conservative or Reform. So the Lib Dems will either rule alone or at the head of a "progressive" coalition.

Key seats

Lib Dem targets



- ▶ Bagley (Con)
- ▶ Craven Arms (Con)
- ▶ Ellesmere Urban (Con)
- ▶ Llanymynech (Con)
- ▶ Market Drayton East & Rural (Con)
- ▶ Market Drayton North (Con)
- ▶ Monkmoor (Lab)
- ▶ Oswestry North (Grn)
- ▶ Oswestry North East (Con)
- ▶ Oswestry South (Grn)
- ▶ Oswestry South East (Con)
- ▶ Porthill (Grn)
- ▶ Ruyton and Baschurch (Con)
- ▶ St Martin's (Ind elected as Con)
- ▶ St Oswald (Con)
- ▶ Selattyn and Gobowen (Con)
- ▶ Shawbury (Con)
- ▶ The Meres (Con)
- ▶ The Strettons (Con)
- ▶ Wem (1 Con, 1 Ind)
- ▶ Whitchurch North (Con)
- ▶ Whitchurch South (Con)
- ▶ Whitchurch West (Con)
- ▶ Whittington (Con)

Labour targets



- ▶ Abbey (LD)
- ▶ Bagley (Con)
- ▶ Battlefield (Con)
- ▶ Bridgnorth West & Tasley (Con)
- ▶ Ellesmere Urban (Con)
- ▶ Harlescott (Con)
- ▶ Meole (LD)
- ▶ Underdale (LD)

Reform UK targets



- ▶ Albrighton (Con)
- ▶ Bridgnorth Castle (Lab)
- ▶ Bridgnorth East (Con)
- ▶ Bridgnorth West & Tasley (Con)
- ▶ Broseley (Con)
- ▶ Highley (LD)
- ▶ Market Drayton North (Con)
- ▶ Market Drayton South (Con)
- ▶ Shifnal North (Con)
- ▶ Shifnal South (Con)

Conservative targets



- ▶ Bayston Hill (Lab)
- ▶ Bickton Heath (LD)
- ▶ Bridgnorth South and Alveley (LD by-election gain)
- ▶ Brown Clee (Ind elected as Con)
- ▶ Clee (LD)
- ▶ Clun (LD)
- ▶ Market Drayton East (LD)
- ▶ Meole (LD)
- ▶ St Oswald (Ind elected as Con)
- ▶ Shifnal Rural (Ind)
- ▶ Wem (1 Ind)
- ▶ Claverley & Worfield (LD by-election gain)

Carreg Llwyd Ward

FOCUS

Newsletter from the Oswestry Lib Dem FOCUS Team

Oswestry needs CHANGE

Your local Liberal Democrat FOCUS Team want to work together to change things for the better at Oswestry Town Council



The Oswestry Liberal Democrat FOCUS team already work hard to help residents, but need your support to have an even bigger impact.

Since 2021, Helen Morgan MP has shown the impact that having a hard working member of the local Lib Dem FOCUS team can have for Oswestry.

This May, residents have a choice between expanding the hard working local Liberal Democrat FOCUS team right across Oswestry, or re-electing the same parties and individuals that have been in control of our Town Council for years.

Our Town Council needs to work to facilitate collaboration between partners to protect our local services cost-effectively, but with quality of provision at the forefront of decision making.

Mark Roberts says: "Our town needs hardworking local councillors who are embedded in the community, with up-to-date experience of our town and its issues.

Contacting your local councillor should bring about results, not generic responses, while issues continue to grow.

By backing the local FOCUS team on May 1st, Oswestry will be able to change for the better"

Working all year round – not just elections

Everyone in Oswestry knows someone that Helen Morgan MP or a local member of the FOCUS team has helped.

That's because Liberal Democrats are seen out and about in our community all year round. Many say that they only see the other parties at election time when they want your vote.

Rebekah Anderton said: "For me, it's about putting residents first, not party politics. I love being a part of Oswestry and want the best for it. Your FOCUS team is easily contactable if you have an issue."



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Mark Roberts
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David Walker
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Back your FOCUS TEAM on 1st May



Lib Dem Focus Team
Oswestry Liberal Democrats



Dear Residents,

Since 2021, your local Lib Dem FOCUS team have proven, via the fantastic work of Helen Morgan MP and our local town councillors, that we are willing to do the hard work ourselves, fight for residents and are not afraid of getting our hands dirty.

Here in Carreg Llwyd ward, your local FOCUS team are:

Mark Owen, who has previously been a town councillor for over 12 years, a borough councillor as well as town mayor in 2002-03. He was also a governor of both Beech Grove and Oswestry Infants schools before they became Holy Trinity, and worked at North Shropshire College for over 17 years.

David Walker, who is a local land surveyor and IT manager with years of experience in planning law. He has recently been Chair of a nearby parish council, and previously served on Shropshire County Council.

Mark Roberts, who is a qualified teacher with over 20 years of experience in SEND and education, specialising in providing accessible learning environments for all students. He also currently serves as a governor at North Shropshire College.

Rebekah Anderton, who was born and raised in Oswestry, attending Woodside School. She works locally as a manager in hospitality and has a particular interest in protecting and expanding support for SEND and mental health care.

Only the Liberal Democrat FOCUS team have candidates for every seat in Oswestry. This shows our commitment to ensure every area of our town can choose a hard-working local campaigner to represent them at the Town Council, and work to get the change that Oswestry needs over the next 4 years.

With best wishes,

Your local Lib Dem FOCUS team

P.S. Elections here will be a close contest between your hard working local Lib Dem FOCUS team and the same parties in control of Oswestry Town Council for years.

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ABOUT CRAIG EMERY

Community focused Craig has lived in our area all of his life and can be seen working hard in the community all year long. His long list of voluntary work includes:

- Chairman Gobowen Community Group
- Parent Governor Gobowen School
- Parish Councillor
- Speedwatch
- Neighbourhood Watch
- Gobowen Pantomime Group
- Independent Director Derswen College Consulting Ltd

IT'S CRAIG EMERY OR THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE HERE



- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ✓ Works hard all year round | ✗ Only seen at election time |
| ✓ Strong record of achievement here | ✗ No record of achievement here |
| ✓ Free to vote for the areas interest's | ✗ Told how to vote by Conservatives |

YOUR CHOICE: HARDWORKING CRAIG OR CONSERVATIVE

CLLR CRAIG EMERY OR MORE OF THE SAME



"Craig is a real ambassador for our area. He is involved in most community events and has made a big difference. Give him your vote and you won't be let down!"
Gwyneth Cliffe



"I only see the other candidates at election time – Craig is always approachable if I need anything, he will make a great hardworking councillor!"
Rich Eccleston

YOU DECIDE

This year your choice is between hardworking Councillor Craig Emery or the Conservative Councillor.

At the last election you had 2 votes. This time, your decision is even more important as you will only have 1 vote. It's Craig or Conservative who can win in Selattyn, Hengoed & Gobowen – votes for other parties are wasted here.

People across Selattyn, Hengoed, Pant Glas & Gobowen have told us they are impressed by Craig's hard work and dedication to the area and the work he does all year round.

On 1st May we know that it will be very close between Craig and the Conservative candidate, please use your vote to support your hard working local Councillor Craig Emery.

CRAIG EMERY



Green Party



VOTE FOR A HARD WORKING COUNCILLOR

REFORMUK

VOTE THURS 1st MAY



Mike Avery

Radbrook | Shrewsbury
YOUR REFORM UK CANDIDATE

Mike Avery
Reform UK



Shropshire Council pays over £35,000 a day, of our money, in interest payments to service its debts of £310 Million. I believe all current Councillors must take their fair share of blame for this mess and for the increase in our Council Tax.

I have built and saved businesses and I am featured in the Who's Who of Britain's Business Elite. I believe with my passion for your welfare and the environment I can fight for our schools, care services, open spaces and safeguard our environment and improve the efficiency of your Council. I've recently worked in the front line of the NHS and I believe we need more uniforms and fewer suits to provide better care and services for those who need it the most.



DO YOU SUPPORT REFORM UK?

Scan the QR code or visit

<https://qrhub.io/shrewsbury-reformparty.uk>

Promoted by Mike Avery - on behalf of themselves at 124 city rd London EC1V 2NX UK
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Staffordshire

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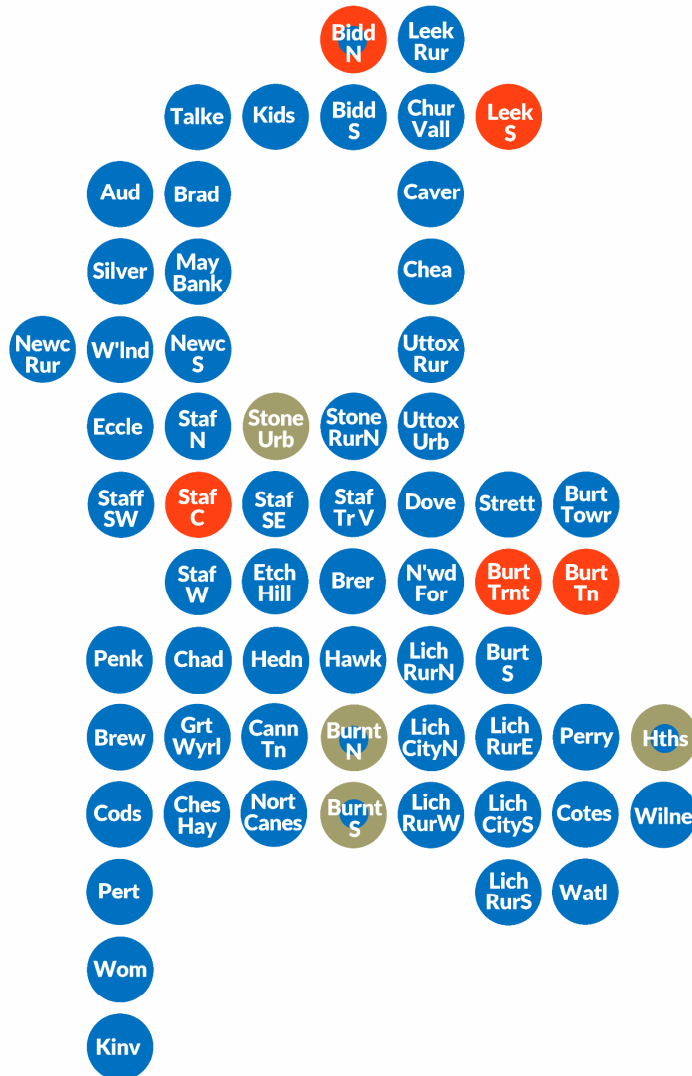
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Of all the "Red Wall" counties, Staffordshire has been the most catastrophic for Labour.

Consider this: until 2009 the Conservatives had only once (the deep mid-term election of 1977) won more seats on Staffordshire county council than Labour. Between 1973 and 2009 only once (1977 again) had Labour not had a majority on this county council (admittedly including Stoke-on-Trent then but Stoke today is hardly the Labour bastion it was either). In the four elections since 2009, Labour's county councillors have numbered 3, 24, 10 and 4.

Between 2001 and 2021, Labour's county-wide vote share has gone from 41% to 26%; the Conservatives' from 38% to 57%. This is not a passing phase of Labour unpopularity (as 1977 was); this is a sea change in the voting intentions of a Midlands county that, like Derbyshire and Nottinghamshire mixes former coal towns and affluent, growing commuter suburbs, Cathedral cities and vast council estates, sweeping rural vistas and sizeable towns.

And yet even here, Labour was able to perform well at the general election. They regained the once rock solid seats that had fallen from their grasp in 2017 and 2021: all three in Stoke, Newcastle-under-Lyme; won back marginals like Burton, Stafford, Tamworth and Cannock Chase; and even managed to take Lichfield - somewhere even the Blair landslide missed in 1997.



Some of this rebound was foretold in district elections. The Conservatives had, by 2021, managed to win a majority on Cannock Chase district for the first time ever. In last year's all-out council elections, Labour regained their majority there, albeit that their vote was actually down on 2023 when they fell short. But the Conservative vote collapsed to just 29%, down from 53% in 2021.

It was a similar story in Tamworth, where the Conservatives had already been beaten up in a parliamentary by-election in October 2023 following the resignation, in disgrace, of Tory MP Chris Pincher.

The Conservative vote was down from 57% in 2021 to 35%; Labour's up from 29% to 49%. In the 2023 local elections, Labour had won control of East Staffs (Burton & Uttoxeter) and removed the Conservative majority in Stafford and Staffs Moorlands (Leek).

By the general election, Staffordshire no longer looked quite the Labour wasteland it had three years earlier.

But looks can be deceiving. Staffordshire has, essentially, flipped: it is now a Conservative county where Labour can win in dire Tory years whereas, back in 1977, it was a Labour county the Conservatives could win at the depths of the Callaghan government's trough.

Look at the likely impact that Reform will have: threatening to take those same wards Labour has only just managed to claw back from the Conservatives. This is a phenomenon we've looked at again and again in this preview in other Midlands counties but also in those coastal districts in Kent that are about to elect scores of Reform councillors.

Labour's renaissance in Staffordshire (and the country) was driven more by a vast loss of Conservative support than a surge for Labour. Here, for every one point of support Labour gained, the Conservatives lost up to four. This is why it's been called the loveless landslide: voters were kicking the Tories out, not swooning to Sir Keir Starmer's lacklustre leadership.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	57	4	0	1
2022 - suspension: Tom Loughbrough-Rudd, Burntwood North - Con to Ind	56	4	0	2
2022 - by-election: Biddulph North - Lab gain from Con	55	5	0	2
2024 - defection: Thomas Jay, Amington - Con to Ind	54	5	0	3
2024 - defection: Mike Wilcox, Burntwood South - Con to Ind	53	5	0	4
Current	53	5	0	4

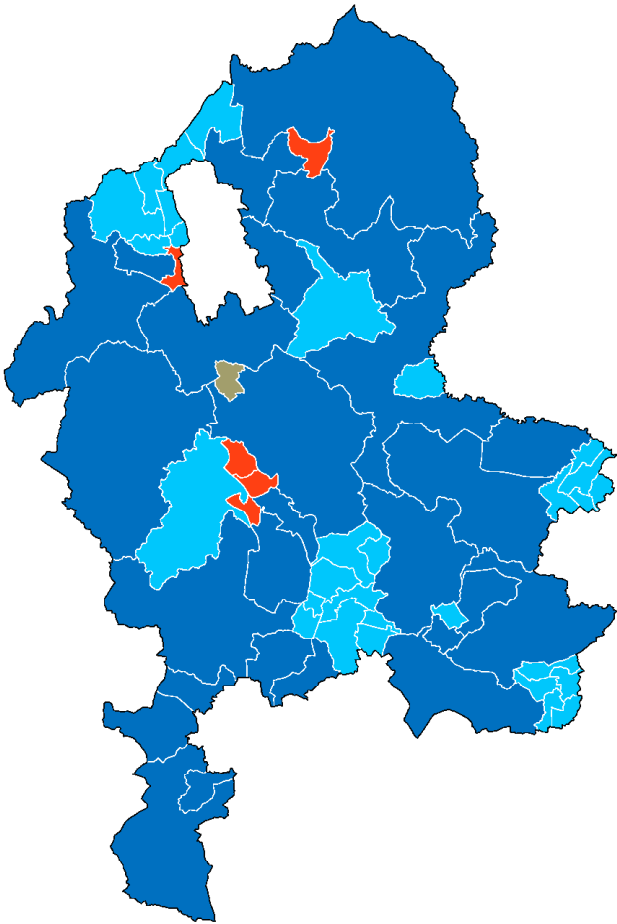
Vote share changes in Staffordshire constituencies at the 2024 general election

Constituency	Con	Lab
Cannock Chase	-39.1	+11.1
Tamworth	-34.8	+11.7
Kingswinford & South Staffs (pt)	-34.0	+9.5
Lichfield	-30.7	+14.1
Burton and Uttoxeter	- 30.1	+ 4.7
Stoke-on-Trent South (pt)	-29.3	+5.1
Staffordshire Moorlands	-28.7	+5.9
Stoke-on-Trent North (pt)	-27.8	+5.5
Stafford	- 27.6	+9.1
Newcastle-under-Lyme	-25.2	+5.0
Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	-22.0	+12.1

Labour's recovery in Staffordshire appears so transitory that the March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP forecasts that Labour will win exactly the same number of county divisions on May 1 that they won in 2021: just five. Remarkably, just two of those five are divisions Labour won four years ago: Stafford Central and Leek South.

Is this a credible forecast given that Labour now holds six of the eight-and-two-thirds constituencies (South Staffordshire being shared with Kingswinford in Dudley)? Some Labour backers say of course the party can't do as badly as 2021 this time.

There are huge problems with Electoral Calculus forecasts which are produced to grab headlines and thus employment for its products rather than to set a



Illustrative map of March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP

gold standard of psephological forecasting. And local election forecasting is far more complex than general elections because turnout is far lower, there are local parties and independents, and volatility is much higher. So there is a far higher margin of error, on top of a questionable, untested, algorithm.

This is because in Leave-voting, culturally conservative areas, which predominate in Staffordshire, Labour is no longer the natural choice. The ten points of support Labour has lost nationally have gone almost entirely to Reform in the ten months since the general election. That decline will be larger in these Labour-ambivalent areas that returned to them as the best chance to oust the Conservatives.

What do the areas Reform are doing exceptionally well in have in common (aside being constituencies with Labour MPs Leave by massive margins in 2016. whole produced a big 63%-37% knock Chase gave Leave 68%, and Staffordshire Moorlands 65%.

Only Stafford and Lichfield produced Leave votes below 60%.

And these areas have already produced big Reform votes at last year's general election. It's simple maths: if Reform is ten points or more up on its general election performance (a legitimate "if" given the polls overstated Reform by a lot then) and are probably going to be particularly up in the types of divisions that predominate in Staffordshire then they will be polling close to 40% in Cannock and Tamworth, and in the mid-30s across the rest of the county.

These are the sorts of shares that First Past The Post delivers wins with, especially in fragmented battlegrounds where lower shares are needed to get over the line.

Reform vote in Staffordshire constituencies, 2024 general election

Constituency	vote	%vote
Cannock Chase	11,570	26.9
Tamworth	11,004	25.1
Stoke-on-Trent North (pt)	8,824	24.4
Staffordshire Moorlands	10,065	23.2
Newcastle-under-Lyme	8,865	22.4
Kingswinford & South Staffs (pt)	9,928	22.0
Burton and Uttoxeter	9,611	21.1
Lichfield	9,734	19.8
Stafford	8,612	18.7
Stone, Great Wyrley & Penkridge	-	-

Stafford is one of the places Labour may well gain ground: adding **Stafford South West** (the old Stafford West) to **Stafford Central**. The other is Newcastle-under-Lyme, where the MRP has Labour regaining **Newcastle South**, presumably in an evenly-divided fight with Reform taking a big chunk from the Tories' 57% in 2021. But if that's the underpinning, Reform could win there too: may even be more likely to.

But let's analyse this county in Labour's terms for a moment. There are twelve - only twelve! - divisions that Labour finished twenty percentage points or less behind the Conservatives last time. Add to these twelve **Biddulph North**, which Labour gained in a by-election in 2022, though the MRP has Reform winning here.

The two top Labour targets are the Burntwood divisions: **Burntwood North** where the Tories won by just 35 votes (1.2%) and **Burntwood South** by 80 (2.7%).

Then there are three in Cannock Chase: **Chadsmoor**, where Labour lost by 161 (5.9%), the new single-member **Hednesford North** division where Labour is about fifteen points behind, but where a Community Party finished second last time, skewing the result; and the Rugeley division of **Brereton & Ravenhill**: 169 (6.2%).

There are four semi-marginal divisions in Newcastle-under-Lyme (and note that Newcastle South: the one Electoral Calculus suggests will go Labour isn't one of them): **May Bank & Wolstanton** (maj 316, 9.4%), **Talke**

& Red Street (357, 11.9%), **Bradwell & Porthill** (388, 12.6%) and **Audley & Chesterton** (434, 14.7%).

It's highly unlikely that Talke & Red Street will go Labour - this is part of the **Kidsgrove** conurbation that is going to produce a massive Reform vote (Kidsgrove gave UKIP a 41% vote back in the 2013 county elections; Talke 33%) but still, it's notionally a Labour target too.

Staffordshire divisions in which UKIP polled in excess of 30% in the 2013 council elections

	%vote
Kidsgrove	40.6
Keele, Knutton and Silverdale	38.4
Dove	36.3
Kinver	35.7
Lichfield Rural West	33.1
Burntwood South	32.8
Talke and Red Street	32.6
Womborne	32.2
Stafford Trent Valley	31.1
Leek South	30.8
Lichfield Rural South	30.4
Horninglow	30.1

The remainder of potential Labour gains are scattered across the county. There is the already-mentioned **Stafford South West** which the Conservatives won by 391 or 11.3%. There is **Lichfield City North** - 344 or 10.5%. The only Tamworth division that makes this list is **Perrycrofts** where the margin is large: 632 or 17.4%.

And there is **Uttoxeter Town**, where the Conservatives won by 346 or 10.5%. But the result here last time was skewed by an independent (the former Conservative county councillor) who came second with 22% and isn't standing this time. Labour polled just 21% and haven't won here since 2001.

It's possible Labour can put an extra division or two in play where they are even further adrift: maybe **Stafford North** (710, 22.6%); maybe **Stretton** in the outskirts of Burton (800, 24.7%) and of course **Newcastle South** (829, 23.9%); **The Heaths** in Tamworth (the old Amington division: 784, 26.0%); **Norton Canes, Heath Hayes & Wimblebury** (Cannock Villages: 719, 22.5%). But these are crumbs.

It is likely that only three parties will be represented on the county council after the election. Staffordshire is a barren county for the Liberal Democrats: they polled 2.8% here in 2021 and haven't won a seat since 2009. The Greens may win a seat in Cannock Chase (if they do it'll be **Hednesford North** or **Hawks Green, Rawsley & Cannock Wood** but the odds are long, even though they do well in district elections there). An independent will probably survive in Stone Urban.

If Reform meets or exceeds expectations they will gain enough seats to remove the (huge) Conservative majority of 44 seats, and if they block Labour in enough of their targets they'll be close to a majority. The Electoral Calculus MRP gives Reform 30 seats, Conservatives 26, Labour 5 and 1 Independent - two seats short of a majority for Reform. But it's more likely they'll fall a bit further short and Labour do somewhat better: just nowhere close to their halcyon days of yore.

Key seats

Reform UK targets

- ▶ Audley and Chesterton (Con)
- ▶ Biddulph North (Lab)
- ▶ Bradwell and Porthill (Con)
- ▶ Brereton and Ravenhill (Con)
- ▶ Burntwood North (Con)
- ▶ Burntwood South (Ind elected as Con)
- ▶ Burton South (Con)
- ▶ Burton Tower (Lab)
- ▶ Burton Town (Con)
- ▶ Burton Trent (Lab)
- ▶ Cannock Town (Con)
- ▶ Chadsmoor (Con)
- ▶ Cheadle and Checkley (Con)
- ▶ Etching Hill and the Heath (Con)
- ▶ Hawks Green, Rawnsley and Cannock Wood (Con)
- ▶ Hednesford North (Con)
- ▶ Kidsgrove (Con)
- ▶ Lichfield City North (Con)
- ▶ Lichfield City South (Con)
- ▶ May Bank and Wolstanton (Con)
- ▶ Newcastle South (Con)
- ▶ Norton Canes, Heath Hayes & Wimblebury (Con)
- ▶ Perrycrofts (Con)
- ▶ Silverdale and Knutton (Con)
- ▶ Stafford West (Con)
- ▶ Stretton (Con)
- ▶ Talke and Red Street (Con)
- ▶ The Cotes/Two Rivers (Con)
- ▶ The Heaths (Con)
- ▶ Uttoxeter Town (Con)
- ▶ Watling (Con)
- ▶ Wilnecote (Con)



Labour targets

- ▶ Brereton and Ravenhill (Con)
- ▶ Burntwood North (Con)
- ▶ Burntwood South (Con)
- ▶ Chadsmoor (Con)
- ▶ Hednesford North (Con)
- ▶ May Bank and Wolstanton (Con)
- ▶ Newcastle South (Con)
- ▶ Norton Canes, Heath Hayes and Wimblebury (Con)
- ▶ Silverdale and Knutton (Con)
- ▶ Stafford North (Con)
- ▶ Stafford South East (Con)
- ▶ Stafford South West (Con)
- ▶ The Heaths (Con)
- ▶ Watling (Con)
- ▶ Wilnecote (Con)





POLLING STATION

Green Party

On May 1st, vote to change Tamworth for the better

- Help Tamworth thrive once again
- A clean, Green and united Tamworth for people, nature and climate
- Public services that work for you
- Stop Reform's divisive politics and Labour's cruelty

VOTE GREEN

OWXN SMITH

Staffordshire County Council
1 May 2025

RE-ELECT

Janice SILVESTER-HALL

How your vote WILL make a difference for LICHFIELD CITY NORTH

- Listening to YOUR concerns and taking prompt action
- Working with all to deliver on: HIGHWAYS, EDUCATION & HEALTH
- Committed and experienced District and County Councillor

Vote Conservative

STC 37

REFORMUK

VOTE THURSDAY 1ST MAY

Jonathan Pyke
Burton Trent | Local Election
YOUR REFORM UK CANDIDATE

Pyke, Jonathan
Reform UK

A dedicated community advocate with 15 years leadership experience, my passion is making the Burton Trent District a better place to live & work. I am committed to addressing key local issues eg road infrastructure in Stapenhill. I enjoy spending time with my partner & our dogs & exploring local nature trails. I am ready to bring fresh ideas & energy to the council.

Jonathan Pyke
Reform UK Councillor Candidate

DO YOU SUPPORT REFORM UK?
Scan the QR code or visit reformparty.uk/support

VOTE ADAM GOODFELLOW

Put Working People First
Teach Labour a Lesson
Support Community Assets
Protect the Vulnerable

GOODFELLOW, Adam
Workers Party of Britain

YOUR VOTE WILL DECIDE

OR

LIB DEM
SAM HARPER-WALLIS
Local Champion working hard all year round

- FIXING POTHOLES
- DEFENDS GREEN SPACES
- FIGHTS FOR RESIDENTS

UNKNOWN TORY
Missing in action only appears at election time

- CRUMBLING ROADS
- GREEN SPACES DESTROYED
- IGNORES RESIDENTS

THE CONSERVATIVE CANDIDATE DOESN'T EVEN LIVE IN THE WARD...

IT'S A CLEAR CHOICE HERE: LIB DEM OR CONSERVATIVES

Labour and the others British in third and fourth here. A vote for them will just help the Conservatives win.

Vote Lib Dem on May 1st

CON 1st **LIB DEM 2nd**

SAM HARPER-WALLIS
LOCAL CHAMPION

BROKE BRITAIN

Warwickshire

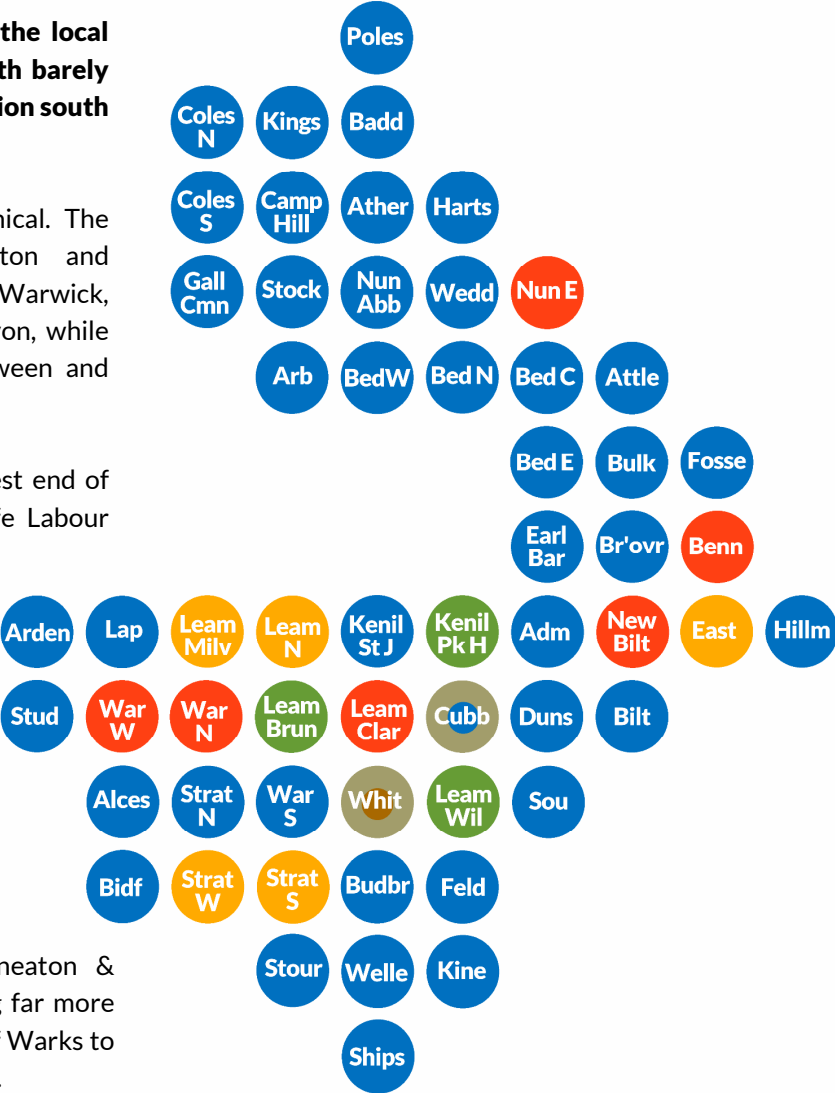


Warwickshire was hideously truncated in the local government reorganisation, leaving its north barely attached to the bulk of the county's population south of Coventry.

This truncation is more than just geographical. The politics of North Warwickshire, Nuneaton and Bedworth differ dramatically to those of Warwick, Leamington, Kenilworth and Stratford-on-Avon, while Rugby is a law unto itself, equidistant between and isolated from both halves of the county.

North Warwickshire was traditionally the best end of the county for Labour. Nuneaton was a safe Labour constituency until 1983, and it was the tonnage of Labour votes from Polesworth, Atherstone and Baddesley that made the Meriden constituency (when that was part of the county) a key marginal.

But the north of the county took strongly to Thatcherism and, while new Labour was able to claw back a lot of the ground the party surrendered in the 1980s, that was just an interregnum. Brexit and other cultural issues pulled both North Warwickshire and Nuneaton & Bedworth aggressively to the right, behaving far more like Staffordshire to the north than the rest of Warks to the south (which votes more like Oxfordshire).



Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	42	6	5	4
2025 - defection: Wallace Redford, Cubbington & Leek Wootton- Con to Ind	41	6	5	5
2025 - defection: Judy Falp, Whitnash - Res to Ind	41	6	5	5
Current	41	6	5	5

North Warwickshire voted Leave by 68% to 32%; Nuneaton and Bedworth 67-33. In the 2019 general election the Conservatives won these two supposedly marginal constituencies with majorities of 13,144 (Nuneaton) and 17,956 (North Warwickshire).

Yet even these vast stockpiles of votes weren't sufficient to save their Conservative MPs at the 2024 general election. Just don't mis-analyse the rank unpopularity of the Conservatives last year as a revival of Labour. You'd be wrong, and we don't want to make you look daft, do we?

Of course, the Conservatives were not just deeply unpopular in North Warwickshire. They were fairly likely to lose Rugby the moment Boris Johnson ordered Conservative MPs to block any censure of Owen Patterson in autumn 2021 then u-turned, leaving them high and dry, defending the indefensible.

That was the moment the Tory government lost its opinion poll lead, compounded by Partygate, Noncegate [Wakefield], Tractor-gate [Tiverton & Honiton], Grope-gate [Tamworth], Truss-gate, Peerage-gate [Dorries], Lightweight-Rishi-pledges-he-couldn't-even-deliver-gate and Betting-gate.

They even contrived to lose Stratford-on-Avon to the Lib Dems in last year's general election, and lost Warwick & Leamington back in 2017, shifting left for years as the constituency's liberal values and growing student electorate departed from a right-tilting Conservative Party. The Tories now hold just Kenilworth & Southam.

The north of Warwickshire turned against the Conservatives for not delivering the things it promised, while the south of the county turned against them for promising those sorts of policies, framed in the way the party since Cameron has framed them, in the first place.

You can see this divergence in the votes Reform won in last year's general election: 10,701 (26%) in North Warwickshire and Bedworth; just 5,154 (10.5%) in Warwick & Leamington. The stretch of farmland between Nuneaton and Rugby to the east of Coventry is a political and cultural no-mans-land, not just a physical one.

What all this means for the county council elections is that a still deeply unpopular Conservative Party is on track to lose lots of seats. But in the north it will be to Reform and in the south it will be to Lib Dems. Labour

may even get thrown a couple of breadcrumbs too, though their last outpost in the north: **Nuneaton Abbey** division, is at risk. The problem for the parties of the centre-left is that, by and large, they already hold the divisions they're likely to: picked up in 2017 and 2021.

Constituency	vote	%vote
N. Warwickshire and Bedworth	10,701	26.1
Nuneaton	9,059	22.0
Rugby	8,225	16.8
Stratford-on-Avon	7,753	14.6
Kenilworth and Southam	6,920	13.0
Warwick and Leamington	5,154	10.5

The Lib Dems can of course expand their base in Stratford-on-Avon. They already hold **Stratford South** and **Stratford West**; they missed **Stratford North** by just 115 votes - and only because the Conservative vote increased by the same amount as theirs following the departure of a Stratford First councillor.

Stratford is the foundation of the Lib Dem vote in this much larger, mostly rural constituency but it doesn't provide enough support for them to win. To buttress their councillors there they'll expect to add **Studley** (Conservative majority: 221, 7.8%), **Alcester** (288, 8.1%), and then the slightly harder targets of **Stour & the Vale** (506, 15.8%) and **Bidford & Welford** (681, 17.1%). If they're really on a roll they could maybe even snatch **Wellesbourne**, a division split with Kenilworth and Southam (but mostly in that constituency). They're 1,029 votes, or 28.6% behind there. That's a big leap, but not entirely beyond the realms of imagination.

Beyond their Stratford core, the Lib Dems should hold their two Leamington divisions plus **Eastlands** in the Rugby suburbs, and have a good chance of winning **Kenilworth St John's** - a division the Tories have never lost but where their majority is only 318 or 8.5%. If they win most of these the Lib Dems can just about scrape into double figures in the council chamber.

The Conservatives will be left holding onto rural divisions - fortunately there are a couple of dozen of these and, other than the ones the Lib Dems may win around Stratford, most should stay Conservative.

Labour has two realistic targets. One is **Admirals & Cawston**: the western suburbs of Rugby, but they have quite a big gap to close here: 612 votes (19.8%). The other is the northern suburbs of Rugby: **Brownsover & Coton Park**, which is a little easier for them: they are just 313 (11.6%) behind here.

Labour also probably won **Warwick South** in last year's general election but in the 2021 council elections the Greens were runners up, just 396 votes behind. A similar dynamic exists in **Warwick North**: Labour gained the seat in 2021 by exactly one hundred votes (3.5%) but the Greens, who didn't stand here in 2021, will fancy their chances again.

In a January district council by-election the Greens easily gained a seat in Warwick all Saints & Woodloes - part of Warwick North county division. Both Labour and the Conservatives had a nightmare: Labour down 25 percentage points and the Tories (who had some expectations of gaining it) down 16.

A detailed map of the Coventry City Council area, showing the boundaries of its 34 wards. The wards are labeled with their names, and the map includes major roads and geographical features like the River Sowe and the River Avon. The wards are: Alcester, Arden, Bidford and Welford, Blitton and Hillside, Brownsover and Coton Park, Earl Craven, Eastlands, Hillmorton, New Bliton and Owerslade, Dunsmore and Leam Valley, Leamington North, Leamington Clarendon, Leamington Willes, Whitnash, Southam, Stockton and Napton, Feldon, Kineton and Red Horse, Shipston, Stour and The Vale, Stratford North, Stratford East, Stratford South, Wellesbourne, Warwick West, Warwick South, Warwick North, Budbrooke and Bishop's Tachbrook, Leamington Milverton, Cubbington and Leek Wootton, Kenilworth Park Hill, Kenilworth St John's, Lapworth and West Kenilworth, Studley, and Arden.

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Weddington, immediately to the north, is the Green target in Nuneaton: they held it until last time, Keith Kondakor losing it by just ten votes with barely any change in vote shares.

Kondakor holds the equivalent seat on the district council and the Conservative winner last time isn't defending the seat, so he has a reasonable chance of winning it back. The Electoral Calculus MRP, though, says this one will go Reform. As it does all the remaining Nuneaton and Bedworth divisions: eleven Reform gains, potentially.

Continuing into North Warwickshire district, the Reform wave continues to ripple. These divisions are a far more rural than Nuneaton's and are often a straight fight between the Conservatives and Labour. In this area, Liberal Democrats are almost extinct. Reform's top targets here will be **Polesworth, Baddesley & Dordon, Atherstone** and **Hartshill & Mancetter** - possibly **Coleshill North & Water Orton** too. No point in providing majority figures here as Reform didn't contest them in 2021.

Some of these divisions illustrate the Labour collapse in the north of the county. They won Baddesley & Dordon at every county election until 2017; in 2021 the Conservatives won it with 73% of the vote. Atherstone was Labour every election bar 2009 until 2021, yet the Tories took 59% here last time, regaining the seat. It's a similar story in Hartshill & Mancetter: Tory with 66% in

2021. Only Polesworth was close last time: the Conservatives snatching that one by 180 votes.

Polesworth, then is Labour's one realistic shot of regaining a foothold in the north, but Reform look like beating them to it and locking them out for at least another four years. But probably for longer: the party simply doesn't speak to communities like this any more - to many it doesn't seem even to want to.

Given the Conservatives will lose up to ten seats in the south of the county to the "progressive" parties and their majority is twenty-five, if Reform win more than two seats the Tory majority falls. Reform will win far more than this: somewhere around fifteen is likely to be their floor and twenty their ceiling.

Maybe around thirty five of the 57 seats on the county council will still be held by parties of the right but given they are locked in a potentially existential battle and have no love for each other, that cannot necessarily mean business as usual.

Equally, there will be only around twenty councillors from parties other than Conservative and Reform - nowhere near enough to be able to cobble together an administration. This is what some wags call a "well-hung" council because no party is close to the winning line. No possible coalition here could exclude both Reform and the Conservatives though.

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Kenilworth Park Hill (Grn)
- ▶ New Bilton and Overslade (Lab)
- ▶ Nuneaton Abbey (Lab)
- ▶ Warwick North (Lab)



Labour targets

- ▶ Admirals and Cawston (Con)
- ▶ Bilton and Hillside (Con)
- ▶ Polesworth (Con)
- ▶ Warwick South (Con)



Lib Dem targets

- ▶ Alcester (Con)
- ▶ Bidford and Welford (Con)
- ▶ Bilton and Hillside (Con)
- ▶ Kenilworth St John's (Con)
- ▶ Stratford North (Con)
- ▶ Stour and the Vale (Con)
- ▶ Studley (Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Arbury (Con)
- ▶ Attleborough (Con)
- ▶ Baddesley and Dordon (Con)
- ▶ Bedworth Central (Con)
- ▶ Bedworth North (Con)
- ▶ Bedworth South (Con)
- ▶ Bedworth West (Con)
- ▶ Camp Hill (Con)
- ▶ Coleshill North and Water Orton (Con)
- ▶ Galley Common (Con)
- ▶ Hartshill and Mancetter (Con)
- ▶ Nuneaton Abbey (Lab)
- ▶ Polesworth (Con)
- ▶ Stockingford (Con)
- ▶ Weddington (Con)



Green targets

- ▶ Shipston (Con)
- ▶ Warwick South (Con)
- ▶ Weddington (Con)



Chris Knight's plan for a Fresh Start

- 1 Improve roads, pavements and cycle ways**
From Burntwood's bus routes, our roads are in need of repair. That's why the Labour Party is leading the way in improving roads, pavements and cycle ways.
- 2 Grow our local economy and invest in green projects**
We have some fantastic local businesses, but need more support from the County Council. I will set up a business support group to help the County Council grow our green economy.
- 3 Tackle antisocial behaviour and county line drugs**
Antisocial behaviour is a problem that needs to be tackled. I will work with the police, they should come, and come often. I will work with the police to tackle county line drugs and tackle antisocial behaviour.
- 4 Better buses and more EV charging points**
Labour will take our bus routes under public ownership, including that route 200, with £5.5 million extra funding. We will also invest more in charging points for EVs so we can have a better future.
- 5 Improve local SEND provision**
The Conservative County Council has created a SEND group in Burntwood. I will work to ensure that every child in our area has access to good high-quality education.

Remember You now need photo ID to vote in person

USE PHOTO ID TO VOTE

USE PHOTO ID TO VOTE

A FAILING CONSERVATIVE COUNCIL

Or Chris Knight - making a real difference

20 years of a Conservative County Council has failed Warwickshire. Our towns and villages need investment, everything has become more expensive and local services are falling local people.

- 30% OF WARWICKSHIRE'S ROADS ARE IN DISREPAIR
- LOCAL PEOPLE ARE £3500 A YEAR WORSE OFF
- 90% OF CRIMES ARE GOING UNNOTICED
- VITAL BUS ROUTES AND SERVICES HAVE BEEN CUT
- SEND CRISIS IN OUR SCHOOLS

Vote Labour

Chris Knight - making a real difference

Fly tipping - getting it cleared up
Fly tipping is a problem that needs to be tackled. I will work with the police, they should come, and come often. I will work with the police to tackle fly tipping and tackle antisocial behaviour.

Mini Kaur Mangat, Local Councillor
Chris will use his experience and dedication to represent the residents and stand up for them.

Preventing antisocial behaviour and keeping our community safe
I've been working with community safety officers and police to ensure that our community is safe and secure. I will continue to work with them to ensure that our community is safe and secure.

Thursday 1 May

FREEDOM ALLIANCE

We defend...

- healthy lifestyle choices
- financial anonymity
- free speech
- local businesses
- child safeguarding
- due democratic process

We believe in...

- privacy of personal info
- keeping cash
- self-sufficiency
- right to protest
- sex-based rights
- localism
- limiting power of the state
- inalienable rights

We oppose...

- corporate power over legislation
- CBDCs
- war
- State surveillance
- Climate alarmism
- globalist ideology

the above, please support the Freedom Alliance party by donating or standing as a candidate for us.

Owen Phillips

Your Labour candidate for Baddesley & Dordon

Dordon & Baddesley & Dordon

KEEP IN TOUCH
07700 226666
@owenphillips
owenphillips@gmail.com

Dear Gary and Rachel

I'm Owen Phillips and I'm standing for election because I believe in North Warwickshire - my home and yours. As a borough councillor in Wood End and Harley we worked hard for our local community and a proven track record of delivery. I know the pride we all feel for our home.

But let's be honest: our country is broken - nothing works, our towns desperately need investment and everything is getting more and more expensive.

It's time to unlock the full potential of Baddesley and Dordon.

The Labour government has already rolled up its sleeves and started fixing the essentials. We have launched a new border security command to tackle immigration and we've created a £10 billion to lower bills and create good jobs. Last month's budget protects the payrolls of working people, and delivers £20 billion for our NHS.

But we have still got so much to do. Here in Baddesley and Dordon we need a Labour-run County Council working with the Labour government to deliver real change.

I'm standing to be your Labour councillor, so that together we can deliver a fresh start for our community, if elected I will:

1. Fix the roads and sort the potholes
2. Invest in our local economy and support local business
3. Return law and order to the streets
4. Deliver affordable public transport that gets you where you need to go
5. Give our children every chance to succeed and improve SEND provision

Together, we can create a Baddesley & Dordon that reflects our values of fairness and respect. Vote for me, Gary and Rachel and let's fix our villages for good. It's time to stand up and make a change.

Best Wishes

Owen Phillips
Labour Candidate for Baddesley & Dordon

PS. I'm listening to local people about their concerns for our home. Scan the QR code to let me know yours. Or visit survey.labour.org.uk/warwickshire

A fresh start for Warwickshire

TUSC CANDIDATES FIGHT BACK!

The Trade Unionist and Socialist Coalition (TUSC) is an alliance of working-class fighters prepared to stand up to the establishment politicians at election time. Each candidate has their own independent record and views as trade unionists, community campaigners, anti-war protesters, pensioners hit by Labour's winter fuel allowance cut, or students fighting for free education.

But all candidates are pledged to the TUSC six guarantees, which voters should know that any councillor elected under the TUSC banner will do:

- * Oppose all cuts and closures to council services, jobs, pay and conditions; or privatisation or transfer to 'arms-length' organisations, which are the first steps to privatisation.
- * Reject council tax, rent and service charge increases for working-class people to make up for cuts in government funding.
- * Vote for councils to set no-cuts budgets and fight for the money needed from the government to make up any shortfall.
- * Refuse to co-operate with any commissioners or 'envoy' appointed by the Labour government to attempt to improve cuts on local services.
- * Support only democratically debated local climate create new employment, build flood defences, and quality and the local environment, while protecting pay and living standards of all workers.
- * Fight for united working-class struggle against sexism, and all forms of oppression. Back all workers against government policies making ordinary pay the crisis.

TUSC
AGAINST
CUTS

ON 1 MAY, VOTE TUSC
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Focus 266

The Miverton Liberal Democrat Team

South Warwickshire Local Plan
Govt says build 1,062 new homes every year

The Liberal Democrat team is pleased to announce that we have been successful in securing a place on the South Warwickshire Local Plan Committee. This is a significant step forward for our community and we are committed to ensuring that the plan reflects the needs and aspirations of the people of South Warwickshire.

The SW Local Plan Consultation
The consultation period for the South Warwickshire Local Plan is now open. We encourage all residents to participate in the consultation and share their views on the proposed plan. The consultation period will run until 15th May 2025.

Miverton News Weekly by Email
As your local councillors we produce a weekly email newsletter for residents. It gives details on all the news and events in the area. To receive this newsletter, please email info@mivertonliberal.org.uk

Chris MORRIS

Standing up for you in Bedworth West

WARWICKSHIRE NEEDS REFORM.

As your Councillor, I pledge to

- 1 INTRODUCTION FISCAL RESPONSIBILITY TO WARWICKSHIRE**
Since 2020, WCC has increased your Council Tax by 38.9% while allocating £400m on year to diversity initiatives. I will hold the Council to account, ensuring that every penny is well spent.
- 2 CLAMP DOWN ON CRIME & ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR**
Our streets are becoming more and more dangerous - our communities are becoming more and more fearful. I will work with the police to ensure that our streets are safe and secure for all.
- 3 SUPPORT OUR COMMUNITY**
I will work with the community to ensure that our streets are safe and secure for all. I will work with the community to ensure that our streets are safe and secure for all.

At these Warwickshire County Council Elections, we have the chance to make history. We have the chance to elect a Reform UK Council and change our community for the better. **On 1 May, Vote Chris Morris.**

MORRIS, Chris
Reform UK

Warwickshire Needs Reform.

chair.warwickshireandbedw.in/reformuk

[ReformUKWB](https://twitter.com/ReformUKWB)

[ReformUKWB](https://www.facebook.com/ReformUKWB)

West Northamptonshire

Boundary and council size changes



1 vacancy

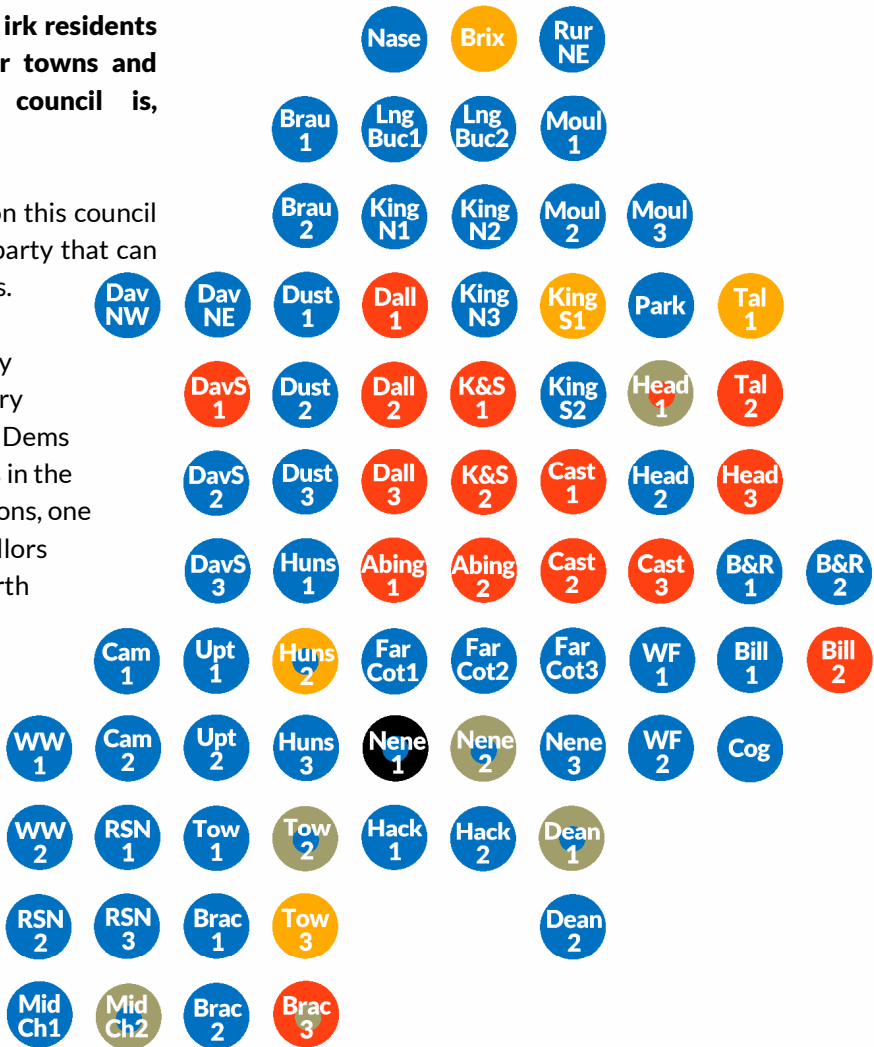
Although the term will almost certainly irk residents of Daventry, Brackley and the smaller towns and villages of West Northants, this council is, essentially, Greater Northampton.

Forty one of the now seventy five seats on this council lie in the county town meaning that any party that can sweep Northampton wins West Northants.

The problem is that Northampton is a fairly polarised, competitive town. There are very safe Labour divisions, two or three the Lib Dems can win and a clutch of Conservative seats in the suburbs. In the 2013 county council elections, one of UKIP's three Northamptonshire councillors was elected in the town's Kingsthorpe North division.

Because Labour cannot lock down Northampton (all bar one of their crop of councillors sit for the town; the other representing Daventry) the party cannot win West Northamptonshire. Not on its own.

In contrast, the Conservatives have to win the vast majority of the rural wards surrounding Northampton,



then just do respectably in the town and they have an almost baked-in majority. At least, they did before the dawn of Reform UK.

West Northants is probably not going to be one of Reform's best councils but they should emerge with some councillors. Their general election performance was not especially awesome, failing to exceed 20% of the vote anywhere. But they will be very much stronger in concentrated parts of West Northamptonshire.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Daventry (pt)	10,636	20.0
Northampton South	8,210	18.7
Northampton North	7,010	16.8
South Northamptonshire (pt)	8,962	16.7

The dominance of Northampton within this council also produces an interesting political dynamic, as parties - notably, but not limited to, the Liberal Democrats campaigning in provincial divisions to stop the town draining all the authority's resources. Presumably they aren't campaigning on the same message in their Northampton targets and therefore it is both shameless and at the same time entirely understandable.

West Northamptonshire's Conservative group has not experienced quite the same degree of fractiousness, bust-ups, suspensions, defections and by-election defeats as North Northamptonshire's has but today they nonetheless have seven fewer councillors than they started out with in 2021.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	66	20	5	2
2021 - defection: Ian McCord, Deanshanger - Con to Ind	65	20	5	3
2022 - defection: Paul Clark, Billing and Rectory Farm - Con to Ind	64	20	5	4
2024 - by-election: East Hunsbury and Shelfleys - LD gain from Con	63	20	6	4
2023 - defection: Jonathan Nunn, Nene Valley - Con to Ind	62	20	6	5
2024 - defection: Richard Solesbury-Timms, Middleton Cheney - Con to Ind	61	20	6	6
2024 - defection: Louisa Fowler, Towcester and Roade - Con to Ind	60	20	6	7
2024 - defection: Sue Sharps, Brackley - Ind to Lab	60	21	6	6
2025 - defection: Paul Joyce, Headlands - Lab to Ind	60	20	6	7
2025 - vacancy: resignation of Izzy Bowen, Nene Valley Con	59	20	6	7
Current	59	20	6	7

Only one of these - what is becoming **Hunsbury** - was a by-election defeat to the Lib Dems. This is a suburban division in the west of Northampton and may be difficult for the Lib Dems to defend: it's been Conservatives since its creation in 2001 and there are other longer-term Lib Dem wards in Northampton - notably **Kingsthorpe South** - that need defending. Do they have the resources?

It hasn't just been the Tories that have suffered defections here though. The independent councillor in **Brackley** defected to Labour - a brave choice as this South Northants town has never elected a Labour councillor (though it has gone Lib Dem and UKIP). She is defending her seat to her credit but won't start as favourite to succeed.

Only a few weeks after gaining that Brackley seat, Labour lost one in Northampton's **Headlands** ward after their sitting councillor was deselected and he resigned from the party. So Labour ends where it started: twenty councillors out of ninety-three.

West Northamptonshire was set up quickly after the implosion of the county council and the old county council electoral divisions were used for the inaugural contest in 2021, electing three councillors instead of one. As with North Northamptonshire, the Local Government Electoral Commission has now overhauled those boundaries, as well as the size of the council. Seventeen councillors have been axed though this will still be a huge council with 76 seats, and there will now be a mix of thirteen 3-councillor, fifteen 2-councillor and seven single-councillor wards.

This is a fairly radical redrawing. But the underlying electoral battleground does not change that much.

In Northampton, Labour should be able to count on ten councillors from Abington & Phippsville, Castle, Kingsley & Semilong (the renamed St George's) and Dallington-Spencer wards.

The Conservatives can only rely on the heavily-redrawn, single member **Parklands** ward, and the 2-councillor **Weston Favell & Abington Vale**, but should also be able to win **Duston** (3), **Nene Valley** (3), that Lib Dem target of **Hunsbury** (3), and **Upton** - a better version for them of the Sixfields ward (2).

That leaves seventeen Northampton seats up for grabs in what are currently split or highly marginal wards.

The Conservatives should benefit from boundary changes in the new **Billing** ward (split 2 Con, 1 Lab in 2021), while adjoining **Blackthorn & Rectory Farm** may be easier for Labour to gain. Both will elect two councillors.

Talavera was a three-time Lib Dem ward but Labour won two of the three seats here in 2021. The Lib Dem candidates experienced a wide degree of vote splitting: their winner polled 1,020 yet their third candidate attracted just 618 votes. This ward too loses a councillor in the boundary changes.

West of Talavera is the heavily redrawn Headlands ward which split two Labour, one Conservative last time. On the one hand, most of the best Conservative bits have been moved into **Parklands**, shifting the

centre of gravity towards the centre of Northampton and that should mean a Labour gain of one seat here. But that ousted councillor - Paul Joyce, plus his wife Mia: a former Mayor and Mayoress of Northampton, are standing as independents. Electoral Calculus has identified Headlands as one of the Reform targets as well, so whoever wins will probably do so with a very low percentage share.

The Conservatives just about clung on to all three seats in **Kingsthorpe North** last time, but only with just over a third of the vote. This was one of the UKIP wins back in 2013 and before that the Lib Dems were often the winners, but it was a Green who almost won here in 2021: just 155 votes behind. What this churn in winners and runners up shows is a pretty restless ward full of voters with no deep political allegiances and, therefore, it's probably Reform's top target.

Kingsthorpe South is almost as turbulent: last time it elected one Lib Dem, one Conservative and one Labour councillor. All three parties were again on just a third of the vote or thereabouts. Kingsthorpe South loses a seat and it'll probably be the Conservatives who miss out, even though Labour represents the third, abolished, seat.

Far Cotton, Delapre and Briar Hill (3) is the new name for the outgoing Delapre & Rushmere ward, just south west of the town centre. Like Kingsthorpe South it elected councillors with three different affiliations in 2021 (Con, Lab and Ind) and the Conservative and Independent councillors are defending their seats. This should be a ward Labour can gain - they must have won it fairly comfortably at the general election, but it may

well also be one where Labour voters are attracted to Reform in greater numbers than in other parts of Northamptonshire.

Then there are the wards beyond Northampton. The largest population centre beyond the county town is Daventry and there are five seats here: two in single member wards in the north of the town, and one big 3-member ward in the south. In theory, Labour should have a shot at all five, but realistically their top target is winning **Daventry South** outright. They currently have one councillor out of six in Daventry but this town was another of the UKIP wins back in 2013 and it's far more likely that there will be five Reform councillors returned than five Labour.

Unless Labour can hold its defector's seat in **Brackley** there really aren't any other prospects for the party in the countryside - and this is why Labour cannot realistically expect to ever win a majority on this council.

But there are hopes for Lib Dems, Reform and independents. The huge 3-councillor **Brixworth** ward running along the northern edge of the authority, which elected one Lib Dem and two Tories last time, has been chopped into three single councillor wards. The Lib Dems should easily win the slimmed-down Brixworth - now just the town with not much surrounding countryside, and their incumbent is standing here. The other two wards should become safely Conservative unless Reform pulls off a spectacular win.

Neighbouring **Braunton & Crick** also split last time in a similar fashion: 2 Conservatives, 1 Lib Dem. This one

hasn't been chopped up like Brixworth but it does lose a councillor. The Lib Dem is re-standing and should hold on, especially as Reform will probably draw off far more former Conservative voters.

The three big prizes - in terms of each having three councillors - are in the south-centre of the authority: previously discussed **Brackley** plus **Towcester** and the unimaginatively named **Rural South Northants** (the outgoing Silverstone). There is a Lib Dem councillor in the current Towcester & Roade ward but she is standing down.

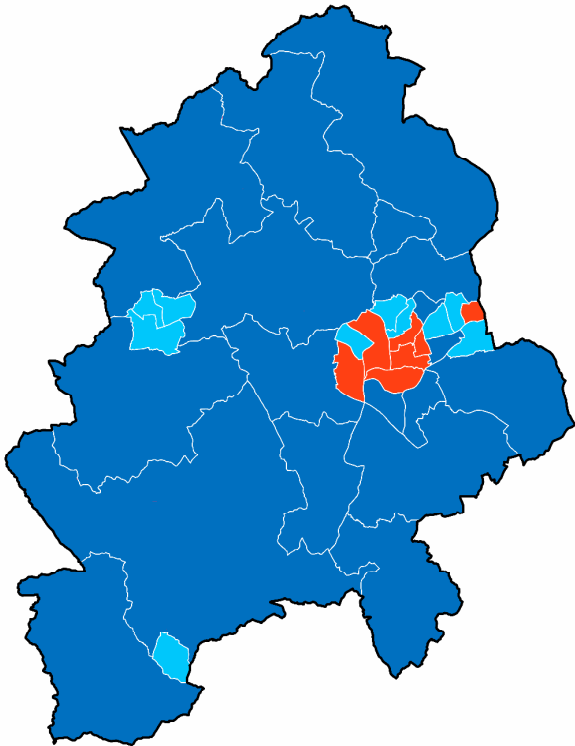
Wards in which UKIP polled more than 30% in 2013

	%vote
Hackleton and Grange Park	41.0
Brackley	38.7
Middleton Cheney	35.4
Daventry West	33.9
Kingsthorpe North	33.8
Moulton	32.4
Bugbrooke	32.0
Braunston and Crick	31.5

The Conservatives look fairly secure across South Northamptonshire - again with the caveat of Reform's entry creating some unexpected outcomes. UKIP didn't make much of a dent anywhere in rural Northants in 2013 beyond Brackley and Daventry towns and it'd be a little surprising if Reform does much better.

Their best chance may be **Hackleton and Roade**: UKIP polled 41% in this ward's predecessor in 2013 - that

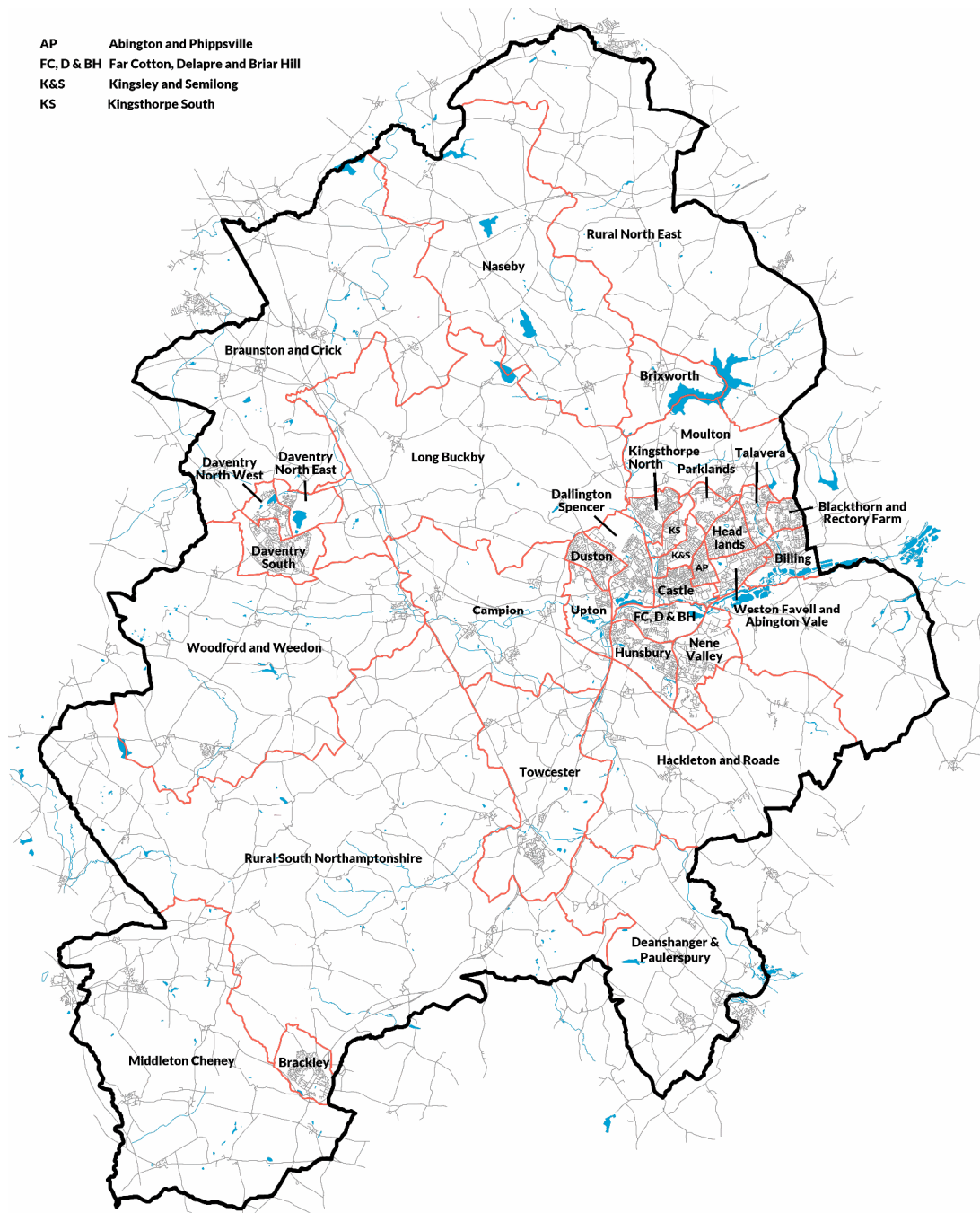
wasn't enough to win it back then but anything like that share this time should easily triumph. They may be able to win **Middleton Cheney** in the far south west, adjoining Brackley.



Illustrative map of the March 2025 Electoral Calculus MRP

But the Electoral Calculus MRP of March 2025 - which may well be wrong on specifics - strongly suggests that Reform's best prospects this time around are urban wards in Northampton and Daventry. They do not have Reform winning anywhere in the countryside apart from Brackley.

AP Abington and Phippsville
 FC, D & BH Far Cotton, Delapre and Briar Hill
 K&S Kingsley and Semilong
 KS Kingsthorpe South



Key seats

Conservative targets



- ▶ Billing (1 Lab)
- ▶ Blackthorn and Rectory Farm (2 Lab)
- ▶ Brackley (1 Lab elected as Ind)
- ▶ Braunston and Crick (1 Lab)
- ▶ Brixworth (1 LD)
- ▶ Daventry South (1 Lab)
- ▶ Far Cotton, Delapre and Briar Hill (1 Ind, 1 Lab)
- ▶ Headlands (2 Lab)
- ▶ Kingsthorpe South (1 LD)
- ▶ Towcester (1 LD)

Labour targets



- ▶ Billing (1 Con)
- ▶ Daventry South (2 Con)
- ▶ Duston (3 Con)
- ▶ Far Cotton, Delapre and Briar Hill (1 Ind, 1 Con)
- ▶ Headlands (1 Con, 1 Ind)
- ▶ Talavera (1 LD)
- ▶ Upton (2 Con)

Green targets



- ▶ Kingsthorpe North (3 Con)

Reform UK targets



- ▶ Billing (2 Con)
- ▶ Brackley (2 Con, 1 Lab)
- ▶ Daventry North East (1 Con)
- ▶ Daventry North West (1 Con)
- ▶ Daventry South (3 Con)
- ▶ Duston (3 Con)
- ▶ Hackleton and Roade (2 Con)
- ▶ Headlands (2 Con)
- ▶ Kingsthorpe North (2 Con)
- ▶ Kingsthorpe South (3 Con)
- ▶ Moulton (3 Con)
- ▶ Middleton Cheney (3 Con)

Lib Dem targets



- ▶ Braunston and Crick (1 Con)
- ▶ Kingsthorpe South (1 Con)
- ▶ Middleton Cheney (3 Con)
- ▶ Talavera (1 Lab)
- ▶ Towcester (2 Con)


 Your party preference: Con, Lab, Lib Dem, Reform, Green, **NONE**

To keep the party and person above honest

Ian McCORD
 INDEPENDENT
 

INDEPENDENT - for you not them



West Northamptonshire Council
Election Communication

FIRST TERM REPORT

You have **2 votes** in this election.

Use one for your party preference.

Use the second to keep that person and party honest by **voting Independent.**

Ian McCORD

Deanshanger & Paulerspury Ward

For the residents of Alderton, Cosgrove, Deanshanger, Grafton Regis, Heathencote, Old Stratford, Posenham, Paulerspury, Potterspury, Fyfe End, Wicken and Yardley Gobion

INDEPENDENT

INDEPENDENT - for you, not them

Liberal Democrats

Davenry North West
Cavending Aubrey Fields, Davenries, Davenry Park & Midson

FOCUS

ALAN KNAPE

ON 1ST MAY VOTE FOR LOCAL LIB DEM CHAMPION ALAN KNAPE

Liberal Democrats
Davenry North West
Cavending Aubrey Fields, Davenries, Davenry Park & Midson

Liberal Democrats
Davenry North West
Cavending Aubrey Fields, Davenries, Davenry Park & Midson

Alan and the local Lib Dems will always fight for you!

Alan lives and works in Davenry, he knows his area and wants to improve it for all of us.

Whether it is in the estates in Davenry North West, Aubrey Fields, Davenries, Davenry Park and Midson, Alan is committed to working with you to improve your area.

Alan and the Lib Dems have a record of finding solutions and working with other parties out there to improve your area.

They have started projects on issues that matter to you, people, but they need liability and protecting local green spaces.

Alan said I love Davenry, it's a great place to live but I believe we could make it even better. It often feels like we are neglected by West Northamptonshire Council, if get elected we will fight for improvements for our local area.

Alan has been working for you as a Davenry Town councillor for eight years and has a record of action in the office, if you elect him to West Northamptonshire Council, he will track the importance to do even more for our area.

Alan Knappe and a woman walking outdoors.

Contact Us

Alan Knappe
01570 588 423
alan.knappe@libdems.co.uk

DAVENRY LIB DEMS
2 Davenry Way, Davenry, NN11 9PD

Liberal Democrats

CON 1st

LIB DEM 2nd

Can't win here

Alan Knappe

Remember, only Alan and the Lib Dems can save the Conservatives here!

Wiltshire

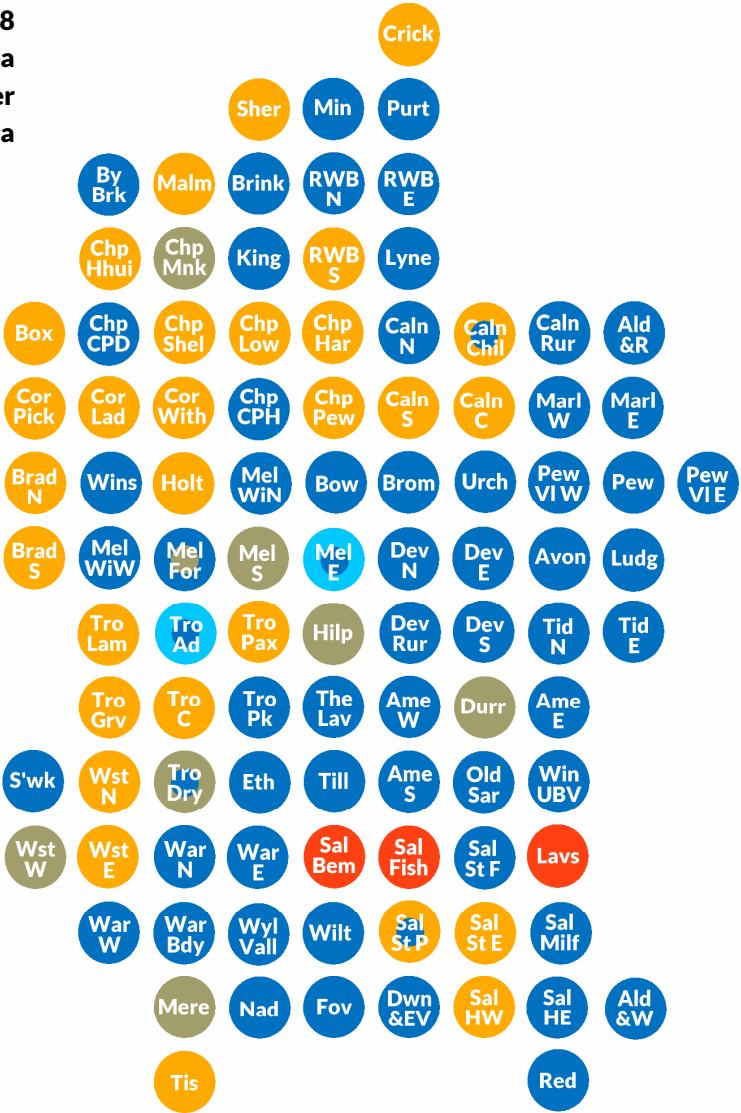


The last of the "super-size" unitaries with 98 councillors, Wiltshire has typically been a Conservative fortress. But this council too is under some threat of being lost - for a change not to a Reform UK surge but the Liberal Democrats.

Although the Conservatives have a two-to-one lead over the Lib Dems right now, overall their majority is just sixteen seats, down from twenty four following the 2021 elections.

The only slight hesitation in calling this as a certain Conservative loss is twofold. First, the Lib Dems hold the vast majority of wards within the three constituencies they won in last year's general election: Chippenham, Devizes & Melksham and South Cotswolds - so to win control they have to take seats in less favourable areas. The second is that Reform may not win any seats in Wiltshire and that will actually be a loss of two from right now, which they obtained through Conservative defections. If the Tories get those two back it'll be harder for the Lib Dems.

But even so, the Tories can only sustain seven losses and the Lib Dems have at least twice that number of targets. And that's before we even consider whether others, including relatively strong independents and relatively weak Labour, can inflict any damage on top. And will Reform really not break through anywhere? Unlikely.



Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	61	3	27	7
2022 - by-election: Salisbury St Paul's - LD gain from Con	60	3	28	7
2023 - defection: Jack Oatley, Melksham Forest - Ind to Con	61	3	28	6
2024 - by-election: Calne Chilvester and Abberd - LD gain from Con	60	3	29	6
2024 - defection: Edward Kirk, Trowbridge Adcroft - Con to Ind	59	3	29	7
2024 - defection: Mike Sankey, Melksham East - Con to Ind	58	3	29	8
2025 - defection: Mike Sankey, Melksham East - Ind to Ref	58	3	29	8
2024 - defection: Edward Kirk, Trowbridge Adcroft - Ind to Ref	58	3	29	8
2025 - defection: Antonio Piazza, Trowbridge Drynham - Con to Ind	57	3	29	9
Current	57	3	29	9

It's unlikely not because Reform impressed in Wiltshire at the general election. They did not. The highest Reform share was in South West Wilts: Warminster and Westbury, and that was a comparatively poor 17%.

Chippenham and the north Wiltshire parts of the new South Cotswolds constituency, with their active Lib Dem parties and their ideological orbit much closer to the liberalism of Bath and Cirencester, were much poorer: below the national share Reform managed.

Salisbury, which is estimated by Prof Chris Hanretty to have (just) voted Remain in the 2016 referendum, gave Reform just 10.4% of the vote.

Wiltshire was never the most passionately Leave county in England - it has that deep seam of liberalism and lots of commuters to towns and cities that were deep wells of Remain support. Overall Leave won 53-47%; only just fractionally more than the county.

Constituency	vote	%vote
South West Wiltshire	7,840	17.0
East Wiltshire	7,885	16.7
Melksham and Devizes	6,726	13.1
Chippenham	6,127	12.4
Salisbury	5,235	10.4
South Cotswolds (pt)	5,146	9.8

But UKIP showed that there are quite deep pockets of support for a populist, more aggressive right of centre party in Wiltshire. Although they only won one division here in their 2013 county elections peak (Melksham Central), they polled over 30% in eleven, and as high as 45% in Warminster Broadway (where the Conservatives still prevailed because it was a straight fight).

But it is also possible, because the Electoral Calculus MRP found broadly the same trend in Cornwall and

Devon, that Reform somewhat lacks the appeal UKIP and the Brexit Party had in the South West of England.

	%vote
Warminster Broadway	45.4
Bromham, Rowde and Potterne	44.5
Tisbury	39.5
Melksham Without South	38.4
Downton and Ebble Valley	37.9
Melksham Central	33.5
Urchfont and The Cannings	33.5
Amesbury West	32.3
Aldbury and Whiteparish	32.1
Somerham and Seend	31.7
Trowbridge Adcroft	30.7

It has been much analysed both in this preview and by others how much stronger Reform compared to UKIP in the Midlands and North of England; while both parties are/were strong in the East of England. It is entirely possible - likely even - that at least proportionate to their national strength Reform may well have less appeal in the south west of England.

This is also reflected in every general election MRP that has been undertaken since the Reform surge. If an election were to take place today, swathes of the east and the north are forecast to be won by Reform. Yet just eleven constituencies in the South West would join them, according to the most recent Electoral Calculus general election MRP (note: this isn't the one I've referred to throughout this preview).

Of course, eleven Reform seats is eleven more seats than UKIP won, or would have been forecast to win had MRPs existed that far back.

Wiltshire is another example of how council size can be a political issue. The council is so large and so Conservative that typically they are the only party that can field a full slate of candidates. Gray's First Rule of Elections? You cannot win if you do not stand. Even the Tories' principal opponents, the Lib Dems, have struggled to contest every division in recent elections - though they've managed it this year. In 2021 they fielded 90 candidates for 98 seats; in 2017 89; in 2013 during their period in coalition government just 60.

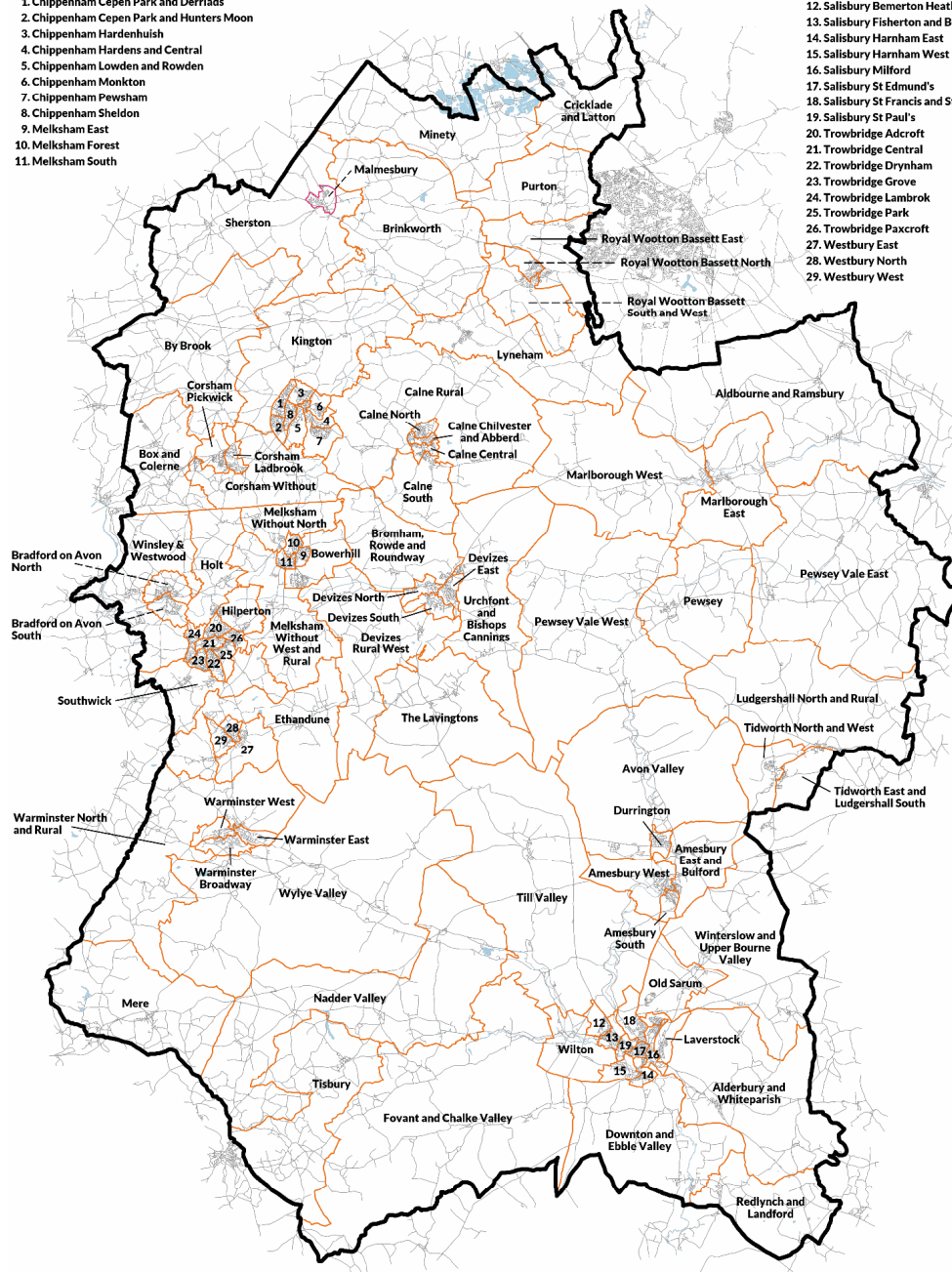
Labour, for whom Wiltshire is a thoroughly awful county beyond Swindon, have found it even tougher: 45 candidates standing this year, 54 in 2021, 72 in 2017 and 61 in 2013. To the extent that even if they had stood they wouldn't have won it doesn't matter much. But parties like giving voters the chance to vote for them, regardless of whether they actually do, and it's also important for their election analysts to see where their vote comes from.

There's always the possibility of a shock gain, especially in such small divisions (Wiltshire's are typically between 3,000 and 4,500 electors apiece) where a bit of hard work, local links and a grasp of the issues can build a personal vote.

The Conservatives don't win Wiltshire because of the council size - more often than not they were the largest party on the much smaller county council. They've won

1. Chippenham Cepen Park and Derriads
2. Chippenham Cepen Park and Hunters Moon
3. Chippenham Hardenhuish
4. Chippenham Hardens and Central
5. Chippenham Lowden and Rowden
6. Chippenham Monkton
7. Chippenham Pewsham
8. Chippenham Sheldon
9. Melksham East
10. Melksham Forest
11. Melksham South

12. Salisbury Bemerton Heath
13. Salisbury Fisherton and Bemerton
14. Salisbury Harnham East
15. Salisbury Harnham West
16. Salisbury Millford
17. Salisbury St Edmund's
18. Salisbury St Francis and Stratford
19. Salisbury St Paul's
20. Trowbridge Adcroft
21. Trowbridge Central
22. Trowbridge Drynham
23. Trowbridge Grove
24. Trowbridge Lambrook
25. Trowbridge Park
26. Trowbridge Paxcroft
27. Westbury East
28. Westbury North
29. Westbury West



in recent years because their vote has significantly surpassed that of their opponents. In 2021 the Tories were nineteen points ahead of the Lib Dems; in 2017 twenty five, and in 2013 twenty three.

But it hasn't always been quite such plain sailing for them; the former county council was hung as often as it was Conservative-controlled because the Tory vote was weaker: below 40% in four elections. In their poorest years the Lib Dems could get within a hair's breadth, though they haven't yet led the Conservatives in a county-wide election. Even in last year's general election the Tories outpolled the Lib Dems: 99,608 to 92,778 across the constituencies in Wiltshire (including South Cotswolds, which is split with Gloucestershire).

If this year's elections are anything like that closely fought - and they might be worse for the Conservatives given Reform is contesting every seat - it's reasonable to assume they will lose at least nine divisions and with them their overall majority.

The Lib Dems have already taken their top target from 2021: **Salisbury St Paul's**, in a by-election. They've also got a by-election pick-up from much further down the list: **Calne Chilvester & Abberd**.

Their new top target is rural **Brinkworth** in the north, which spans the countryside roughly from Malmesbury to Royal Wootton Bassett. The Conservatives were 121 votes (5.6%) ahead there last time. They also have a strong chance in **Royal Wootton Bassett North**, where the Tories were 192 (12.3%) ahead last time. The Lib Dems already hold this military town's South & West division.

Moving south towards the Marlborough-Devizes Line - an almost horizontal divide that has no physical presence but is significant within the county in separating the north from the south - to get a full set of Calne wards the Lib Dems need **Calne North**, in which the Conservatives were ahead by 94 votes or 8.5%.

The only three divisions within the town of Chippenham the Lib Dems do not hold are **Chippenham Monkton** - independent-held and utterly unwinnable - and two Tory seats in the western suburbs. **Chippenham Cepen Park & Deriads** has a 261 (16.8%) majority and **Chippenham Cepen Park & Hunters Moon** is even safer with a 407 (28.9%) Tory lead.

In Melksham the Lib Dems might regain **Melksham Forest**, which an independent - who has since joined the Conservatives - took off them in 2021. He was 122 (9.4%) ahead last time and is not defending his seat. The Conservatives also hold - or held (their councillor defected to Reform) **Melksham East**, ahead by 116 or 12.9%.

And in **Winsley & Westwood** to the west of Melksham, which wraps around Bradford-on-Avon, the Conservatives are 174 or 7.8% ahead.

There are two Lib Dem targets in the town of Trowbridge. **Trowbridge Drynham** (Trowbridge South) has a Conservative majority of 71 (6.5%) and **Trowbridge Adcroft** (South East) one of 166 (11.3%). Again, Adcroft has gone Reform since 2021 through the defection of its councillor.

Finally there are now two Lib Dem prospects in and around Salisbury after their by-election win St Paul's. The first is **Salisbury Milford**, which the Conservatives won by 226 (12.9%). The second is the outlying division of Wilton to the west, which is quite a bit tougher: they were 294 or 18.2% adrift there.

All of Labour's chances are in Salisbury but they are locked in a fight with the Lib Dems across the city and the three wards they hold aren't exactly secure themselves.

They can probably write-off any hope of winning Salisbury St Paul's now the Lib Dems have taken it, but Labour were only 149 votes behind in third. They may have a go at **Salisbury Harnham East**, which the Conservatives won with a fairly low vote share of 38.5% last time. But the opposition vote was split: Labour got 439, the Lib Dems 406 and as momentum here is with the Lib Dems Labour may struggle to align the non-Conservative vote behind them.

Just north of Salisbury is **Old Sarum & Lower Bourne Valley**, where Labour came up short by 239 (15.3%) last time. This is a tough one for Labour to win as it's more rural than suburban and they've never won it before, but they don't have much else to fight for.

And then they have to fend off the Conservatives in **Laverstoke**: the suburbs just beyond the eastern side of the city, where they were just 88 (4.3%) ahead last time; **Salisbury Fisherton & Bemerton Heath** (Salisbury Central North) where they're 66 (4.1%) ahead, and then their least insecure ward: **Salisbury Bemerton Heath** (Salisbury North West) which they

won by 99 (12.2%). They could lose all three without any offsetting gains.

It is harder in Wiltshire than other counties to forecast Reform gains, partly because the Electoral Calculus MRP, on which I've perhaps relied too heavily for lack of any concrete, tangible local election data for the party, suggests there won't be any. But let's assume that a closer fight between Conservatives and Lib Dems pulls the number of votes needed to win down; and that the fact Reform are standing everywhere gives them far more opportunities than UKIP had.

The most strongly-voting Leave part of Wiltshire was, South West Wiltshire - also the area UKIP polled its highest share and the constituency Reform performed least poorly in last year. Divisions in and around Warminster like **Warminster Broadway** may therefore be their best shots. They will have a go at retaining the two seats they have hold of through defections from the Conservatives: **Melksham East** and **Trowbridge Adcroft** but you probably wouldn't put these at the top of a list of Reform targets otherwise.

Reform may also do well in some rural divisions across the middle and south of Wiltshire - places UKIP did well like **Urchfont & the Cannings**, **Downton & Ebbel Vale**, **Alderbury & Whiteparish** and **Bromham & Roundway**. Keep an eye on one or two divisions in East Wiltshire too: in Amesbury, Ludgershall, Pewsey and Marlborough, perhaps.

The Conservatives will not, of course, just sit back and surrender seats without a fight. Nor are they without

prospects themselves, even though things are much tougher than the environment was in 2021.

Again though, with Reform entering the fray, as Tony Blair once said (about something completely unrelated, but which could define Reform's mission statement) *"The Kaleidoscope has been shaken. The pieces are in flux. Soon they will settle again. Before they do, let us re-order this world around us"*. Some pieces could fall to the Tories on much lower vote shares.

We've already looked at the three divisions Labour holds: all vulnerable to the Conservatives. The Tories may fancy some payback for their by-election loss to the Lib Dems in Salisbury St Paul's - but probably won't get it. **Salisbury Harnham West** is another Lib Dem marginal in this highly competitive city. They hold two marginal divisions in Trowbridge: **Trowbridge Grove** (Trowbridge South West) and **Trowbridge Paxcroft** (East); and finally **Sherston**: the countryside engulfing Malmesbury.

Let me add a note about independents, who are fairly strong in Wiltshire. I tend not to spend too much time analysing independents simply because these

individuals usually win on personal votes - there are very few divisions anywhere nowadays which are habitually independent, or ones we can easily predict independents to gain. This is why they are essentially impossible to preview - not because they are irrelevant; just because they are far less susceptible to the swing and arrows of outrageous elections.

The Conservatives retaining control of Wiltshire wouldn't be the most shocking outcome of election night and, if Reform do not break through that may well be why the Tories retain more seats than they will in other counties. Equally, even if Reform fail to show up in the council chamber they could zap enough Tory votes to help the Lib Dems win far more seats than I've previewed here.

The odds are that the Tories will lose Wiltshire but it is a little fanciful, as some have suggested, that the Lib Dems have enough momentum to win a majority themselves. They already hold loads of divisions within their best constituencies and they would need a huge number of gains in this mega-council to take overall control.

Key seats

Conservative targets



- ▶ Salisbury Bemerton Heath (Lab)
- ▶ Salisbury Fisherton & Bemerton Village (Lab)
- ▶ Salisbury Harnham West (LD)
- ▶ Sherston (LD)
- ▶ Trowbridge Grove (LD)
- ▶ Trowbridge Paxcroft (LD)

Reform UK targets



- ▶ Alderbury and Whiteparish (Con)
- ▶ Amesbury West (Con)
- ▶ Bromham, Rowde and Roundway (Con)
- ▶ Downton and Ebble Valley (Con)
- ▶ Melksham Forest (Con)
- ▶ Melksham Without West and Rural (Con)
- ▶ Tisbury (Con)
- ▶ Urchfont and the Cannings (Con)
- ▶ Warminster Broadway (Con)

Lib Dem targets



- ▶ Brinkworth (Con)
- ▶ Calne Chilvester & Abberd (Con)
- ▶ Calne North (Con)
- ▶ Chippenham Cepen Park & Deriads (Con)
- ▶ Chippenham Cepen Park & Hunters Moon (Con)
- ▶ Melksham East (Con)
- ▶ Melksham Forest (Ind)
- ▶ Royal Wootton Bassett North (Con)
- ▶ Salisbury Milford (Con)
- ▶ Salisbury St Paul's (Con)
- ▶ Till Valley (Con)
- ▶ Trowbridge Adcroft (Con)
- ▶ Trowbridge Drynham (Con)
- ▶ Wilton (Con)
- ▶ Winsley & Westwood (Con)

Labour targets



- ▶ Old Sarum & Lower Bourne Valley (Con)
- ▶ Salisbury Harnham East (Con)
- ▶ Salisbury St Paul's (LD by-election)

WILTSHIRE IS BROKEN REFORM WILL FIX IT



Dear Local Resident,

My name is Jon Leach, and I am standing for election in Wiltshire as your Reform UK candidate.

Like you, I am frustrated with the state of our local area. Our community deserves better than the broken promises, wasted money, and poor services that we've had to endure under the same old parties.

Reform UK is here to change that. We believe in putting local people first, delivering real results, not just empty words.

Three issues I believe are important to highlight are:

- SLASH COUNCIL WASTE
- HELP SMALL BUSINESSES
- FIX ALL POTHOLES

Wiltshire Council is broken, and it's clear that the same tired politicians won't fix it. Reform UK is the fresh alternative focused on common sense policies, cutting waste, and making sure your hard-earned money is spent wisely.

If you want real change in Wiltshire Council, vote Reform UK on 1st May. Together, we can take back control of our local area and make it work for the people, not the politicians.

I hope I can count on your support to be a strong voice for our community.

Best wishes,

Jon Leach
Reform UK Candidate for Melksham Without West and Rural

DO YOU SUPPORT REFORM?
Scan the QR code or visit www.reform.uk

The key question: WHO?

can stop the Conservatives winning in Amesbury this May

Find out inside..

WORKING TOGETHER WORKING WITH YOU

ELECTION NEWS FROM SAM BLACKWELL AND THE BOA NORTH LIBERAL DEMOCRAT FOCUS TEAM

www.boalibdems.org.uk • www.facebook.com/boalibdems

Sam Blackwell

is standing to be your next Wiltshire Councillor in the elections on May 1st. He is also standing again for the town council.

About Sam

Sam Blackwell has lived in Amesbury for over 10 years and has been a member of the town council since 2019. He is a former teacher and has worked in various roles in the community. He is a keen supporter of local sports and has been involved in many local projects. He is a member of the town council and has been a vocal advocate for the needs of the community. He is a former teacher and has worked in various roles in the community. He is a keen supporter of local sports and has been involved in many local projects. He is a member of the town council and has been a vocal advocate for the needs of the community.

Update on traffic

Local MP, Brian Binks is leading a new petition drive to get the road works on the A4301 stopped. The road works have been a major problem for the community for many years. The petition drive is aimed at getting the road works stopped so that the road can be used again. The petition drive is aimed at getting the road works stopped so that the road can be used again.

pedestrian bridge

Local MP, Brian Binks is leading a new petition drive to get the road works on the A4301 stopped. The road works have been a major problem for the community for many years. The petition drive is aimed at getting the road works stopped so that the road can be used again. The petition drive is aimed at getting the road works stopped so that the road can be used again.

THE CHOICE THIS MAY IS CLEAR:

Liberal Democrats

- ✓ Repair our broken roads and footpaths
- ✓ Fight for community led development
- ✓ Protect our environment

OR

Conservatives

- ✗ Have left our roads in a state of ruin
- ✗ Left Wiltshire open to development
- ✗ Neglected our precious environment

VOTING LABOUR JUST HELPS THE CONSERVATIVES

OUR PLAN FOR WILTSHIRE

- 1 Repair our roads**
A Liberal Democrat-led Council will prioritise fixing potholes and invest more money into repairing our vital roads and pavements.
- 2 Build homes for the future**
We believe your voice matters on house building, where affordable housing and proper infrastructure come first.
- 3 Save our environment**
Lib Dems will press the Government and Oxford to make water companies stop dumping sewage and take flooding seriously.

ONLY THE LIB DEMS CAN BEAT THE CONSERVATIVES

Waiting Labour just rides the Conservatives running Wiltshire for another four years. Only a vote for the Lib Dems can get the Fair Deal we need.

Con 57
Lib Dem 29
Ind 6

Ex-Con 3
Lab 2

Lib Dem 29
Conservative Party
as of February 2025

Published by Robert Beesley, candidate for the North Ward, Bradford on Avon, local elections 05.05.25
Contact details: 07737 002 957, 1amrobert.beesley@gmail.com

Introducing Me

My family & I have lived in Woolley St & Winsley Rd since 1999. Over the years I've been actively involved in our community working in education as a teacher, tutor, library assistant, attending church & local groups.

Now, I volunteer with Clean Up Bradford on Avon, am a Read Easy coach and a school governor.

I am not linked to any party or group, my only allegiance is to our community.

Why I'm a Good Choice for Councillor

- Community Representation:** Active listening to people's concerns and ideas, and collaborating with residents from all backgrounds to create real change, at the heart of my values.
- Practical Experience:** With background in education & charity/governance work, I know how to take action on the issues that matter.
- Time & Commitment:** Time and energy to work diligently on behalf of the North Ward are my strong assets.

Key Local Issues I'm Focused On

- Traffic & Safety:** Reducing large vehicle traffic, promoting safe cycling, and working with schools on traffic solutions.
- Accessibility & Environment:** Improving accessibility, planting more flowers & trees, increasing litter bins and their signage.
- Town Council Efficiency:** Training wardens, streamlining meetings, and supporting businesses with a Resilience Advisor.
- Community Pride:** Fostering a "Your Neighbourhood" spirit to boost local pride and engagement.

Strong local champion for...

Trowbridge Adcroft

SEE INSIDE:

JACOB JACONIAH 2025

Independent candidate for Amesbury East & Bulford

Dear residents

I am standing for election because I care deeply about the future of Amesbury & Bulford. I believe in action, not empty promises. As your Wiltshire Councillor, I will fight to make your voice heard and deliver real, practical solutions that improve everyday life.

I am currently serving as a Councillor on Amesbury Town Council. During my time on the Council, I have taken on leadership roles including Chairman of the Events Subcommittee and Vice-Chairman of the Amenities Committee.

I entered local politics with a genuine desire to make a positive impact and help improve the community I care deeply about. With nearly four years of experience in my role as a Town Councillor, I have gained a strong understanding of the issues our community faces and am fully committed to addressing them.

Over time, I've also developed a clear sense of what the residents of Amesbury—and nearby areas like Bulford—expect and deserve from their local councils. From roads and housing to health and well-being, I will be your strong and dedicated advocate on Wiltshire Council. My door will always be open.

Let us build a better, greener, fairer future for Amesbury & Bulford – together.

Contact Me:
Email: jacob.jaconiah@yahoo.com
Cells: +44 774 915 0024
Election Day: 5 May 2025

Vote Cllr JACOB JACONIAH (P&D) – Independent Candidate for Amesbury East & Bulford

Self-financed by Jacob Jaconiah, Printed by Solopress, 9 Stock Road, Southland-on-Sea, Essex, SS2 3QF

Worcestershire

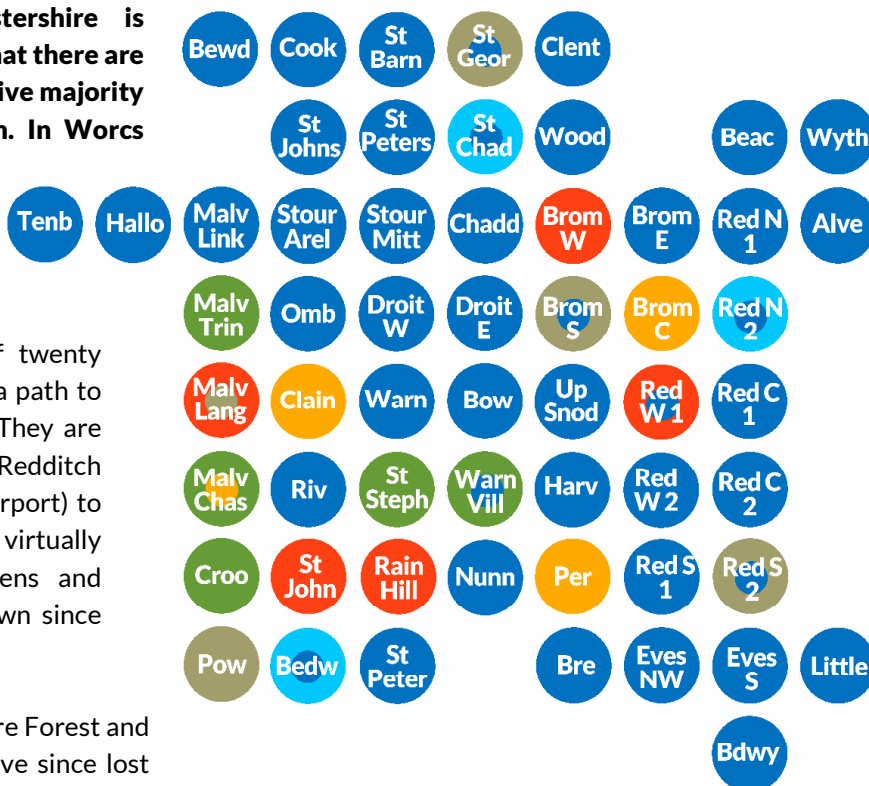


The electoral landscape of Worcestershire is somewhat like that of Leicestershire in that there are only two possible outcomes: a Conservative majority or a Conservative minority or coalition. In Worcs though the Conservatives are a few degrees weaker and Reform a few degrees stronger and that means a hung council is very much more likely.

The Tories currently hold a majority of twenty seats, and it is not at all difficult to chart a path to eleven Conservative losses on 1st May. They are especially vulnerable in the districts of Redditch and Wyre Forest (Kidderminster and Stourport) to Reform, but they also face some virtually impossible holds in Worcester to Greens and Labour, where they have been in meltdown since their excellent 2021 results.

The Conservatives hold all ten seats in Wyre Forest and won all eight in Redditch (though they have since lost two to defections and one in a by-election to Labour). They also hold six in Worcester. Those are twenty-one seats and the Tories could lose all of them.

And yet there is no politically credible alternative to the Conservatives on this council. Labour is not strong enough beyond Worcester and its support waxes and wanes quite dramatically there.



There may have been an era when the Liberal Democrats could have won enough seats in rural Worcestershire for them to govern in coalition with Labour: indeed they did exactly that between 1993 and 2001. But politics has realigned in the two decades since and the Lib Dems are nowhere near strong

enough these days to get the two parties anywhere close to a coalition that could run the council.

What that means, depending on exactly how many seats the Conservatives can hold onto - and how short of a majority they are - is that the only realistic paths to power either involve the Tories at the head, or a rainbow coalition of so many colours it can't put together a credible plan for administering Worcester.

Reform polled fairly evenly across Worcestershire at last year's general election, apart from in Worcester and West Worcestershire: the constituency based on Malvern Hills district to the south-west of Worcester. Malvern, somewhat like Stroud, has quite a bohemian reputation and elects Green and Lib Dem councillors at district and county level so Reform's weaker showing there isn't so surprising.

Constituency	vote	%vote
Wyre Forest	9,682	21.4
Redditch	8,516	20.1
Droitwich and Evesham	9,456	19.1
Bromsgrove	9,584	19.0
Worcester	6,723	14.6
West Worcestershire	7,902	14.4

UKIP won four county divisions in 2013: two in Redditch and two in Wyre Forest, though their highest vote share was nearly 40% in Evesham in the south of the county. But whereas the battle in Redditch and Wyre Forest was (at least) three-way; in Evesham Reform was just up against a towering Conservative vote and 38% wasn't enough to get them elected.

Nonetheless, they came within 70 votes of winning and Reform could well win both Evesham divisions this year.

	%vote
Evesham North West	38.4
Bowbrook	33.4
Redditch North	33.4
Droitwich West	32.2
Redditch East	31.5
Gorse Hill and Warndon	31.2
Ombersley	33.2
Redditch South	31.7

Despite Labour's 2021 result being so bad you wouldn't imagine they could do worse (and they won't in terms of overall councillors), because of where and how Reform is attracting voters from, there are still vulnerabilities.

The one Labour division in Bromsgrove: **Bromsgrove West**, is rumoured to be a close fight with Reform which is a little surprising given Labour polled over 60% there in 2021. But that doesn't necessarily mean much: the Conservatives gained **Bromsgrove South** from Labour last time on a 19% swing: Labour's vote fell 28 points. Labour also lost Bromsgrove West in 2009 (though otherwise it's always been won by the party) so their vote share may well be large but it could also be a bit soft.

Bromsgrove district shares a boundary with Labour-run Birmingham where the long-running refuse collector strike has made national headlines. **Wythall** Conservative councillor Adam Kent shared a photo of

the stark difference between either side of a street split across the local authority boundary, reminiscent of the ads the Conservatives used to run contrasting the difference in council tax (and other services) between Tory Wandsworth and Labour Lambeth.



The Birmingham side (left) of a road down the middle of which the boundary with Bromsgrove runs, showing the impact of the refuse strike on one while the Worcestershire side is clear

There's been no polling of the reputational damage the Birmingham strike has done to Labour, and of course county councils don't run refuse collections, but it cannot possibly be making people more likely to vote to put the party in charge of any local services.

As well as Bromsgrove West, Reform have a decent shot at winning the **Alvechurch** and **Beacon** divisions - both of which share that Birmingham border.

The Conservatives lost Bromsgrove Central to the Lib Dems in 2021 for the first time ever and by only 202 votes. This is another division that once was loyally Labour but the party lost this one back in 2005 and were down to just 14% there last time.

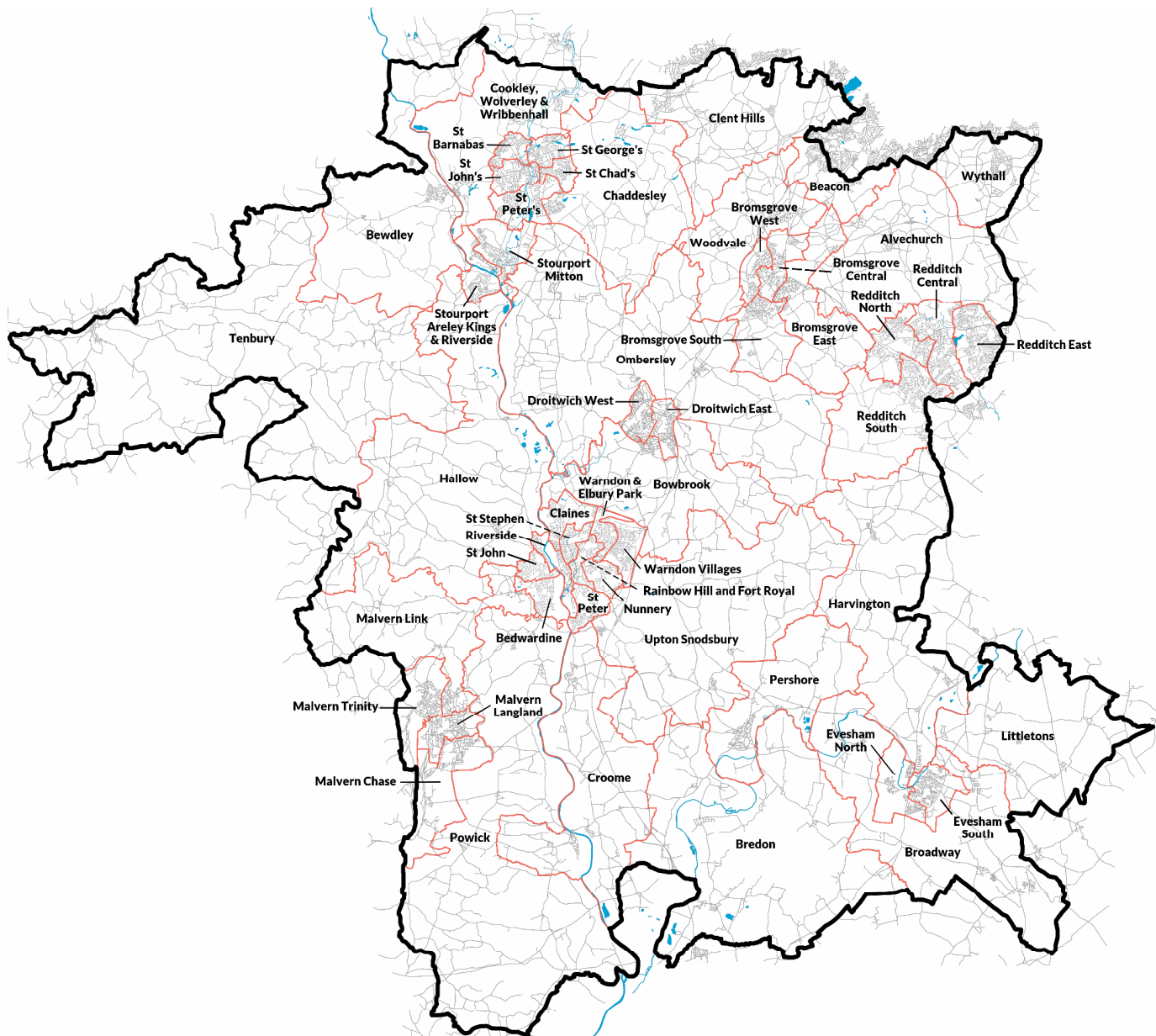
Bromsgrove is one of those dormitory towns to which voters migrate from large urban areas both to get a different, better quality of life but also to flee the demographic changes occurring in big towns and cities. Hence, once safe Conservative suburbs of Birmingham like Edgbaston swing gradually to Labour whilst places like Bromsgrove (once a marginal constituency on different boundaries) turn from them.

The Conservatives may be able to win **Bromsgrove Central** depending on what impact Reform makes, but if they (Reform) are surging in West, they're probably doing well in Central too.

This corner of Worcestershire closest to the West Midlands conurbation is going to be the best for Reform. To the west of Bromsgrove is Wyre Forest, which has a strong recent history of electing unconventional candidates. Dr Richard Taylor, the independent Kidderminster Hospital Health Concern candidate, won two general election campaigns in 2001 and 2005 after the last Labour government attempted to close it. KHHC candidates also won council seats, including splitting the Stourport-on-Severn county council division in 2013 with UKIP.

Stourport has been split into two single-member seats this time around: **Stourport Areley Kings & Riverside** and **Stourport Mitton**, and Reform could well win both as well as seats in neighbouring Kidderminster.

The Kidderminster town divisions are all named after saints. UKIP won St Mary's (which is now essentially **St Peter's** - Kidderminster South) in 2013 and were close in three of the other four seats.



St Chad's - Kidderminster East - might be interesting. For years going back to 1989 this division was held by the Liberals - not the Lib Dems but the continuity Liberal Party -in the form of Mike and Fran Oborski. Fran joined the Lib Dems and defended her seat for that party in 2017 but lost it to the Conservatives in 2021.

She recently rejoined the Liberal Party and is contesting it under that banner this time against a Lib Dem. This one could go any way but Reform is tipped in all five Kidderminster divisions and the Tory councillor here defected to Reform in 2024 and is defending his seat.

This is also the case in Redditch, a usually right-leaning new town that Labour regained at last year's general election. Labour has one county councillor here in Arrow Valley West - the renamed **Redditch Central** - following a by-election win.

Changes 2021-2025

	C	L	LD	Oth
2021 council election	45	3	4	5
2022 - by-election: Arrow Valley West - Lab gain from Con	44	4	4	5
2023 - by-election: Malvern Chase - Grn gain from LD	44	4	3	6
2023 - by-election: Warndon Parish - Grn gain from Con	43	4	3	7
2024 - defection: Bill Hopkins, St Chad's - Con to Ref	42	4	3	8
2024 - defection: Kyle Daisley, Bromsgrove South - Con to Ind	41	4	3	9
2024 - defection: Mike Rouse, Redditch South - Con to Ind	40	4	3	10
2024 - defection: Beverley Nielson, Malvern Langland - Ind to Lab	40	5	3	9
2024 - defection: Tony Muir, St George's and St Oswald - Con to Ind	39	5	3	10
2025 - defection: Alan Amos, Bedwardine - Con to Ind	38	5	3	11
2025 - defection: Jon Monk, Arrow Valley East - Con to Ref	37	5	3	12
Current	37	5	3	12

Three of the four Redditch divisions are very similar demographically and tend to vote much the same way: whoever wins one will win all three and, if that's the Conservatives, **Redditch South** too as this one leans quite a bit towards them because it is more rural. Labour will hope for more than one county councillor from eight but could well end up with none, again.

The news for Labour is better in Worcester, partly because the party did so badly here in 2021. The Conservatives hold six divisions in the city and are probably looking at a wipe-out here.

Labour should easily get back **Gorse Hill and Warndon**, which they lost in 2021. They are 194 votes adrift but won the city council ward on which it is based 46% to just 21% for the Tories last year - and the county division is actually better for Labour than the ward.

It's tougher but Labour should also win the long **Riverside** division that runs from the west edge of the district through the city centre and almost out to the south. On paper, Riverside looks pretty safe for the Tories: they were over 700 ahead last time and they've held it since 2005.

And yet in last year's district elections, Labour won Cathedral - the ward upon which this division is founded - 41% to 14%. Granted, the bits beyond Cathedral that are included in Riverside are much better for the Tories (though the western bit: St Clement, voted Green last year), but that 27 point gap is a lot.

Their third prospect is **Bedwardine** in the south of the city. Bedwardine for a long time has been represented by Alan Amos, the former Conservative MP for Hexham in Northumberland, who defected to Labour after standing down as an MP, and was elected to Worcester council in 2008.

In 2014, following elections that hung the council, Amos returned to the Tories to give them back their majority and, as his thirty pieces of silver were to become mayor of the city. Last year he was the only Conservative councillor elected in Worcester. Now he has left the Tories again and is seeking election in Bedwardine as a Reform UK candidate.

In what is surely a first, he is being opposed in this ward by former Worcester Conservative MP (and Health Secretary under John Major) Stephen Dorrell, now standing for the Liberal Democrats. Two former MPs standing against each other is rare enough but the fact

they are both now standing for parties other than the one they represented in parliament is probably unique.

Amos, as a Conservative, won Bedwardine in 2021 by 52% to 27% over Labour but the split this time makes it a toss-up. Perhaps voters here will finally tire of the shameless cynicism of their party-hopping councillor?

The Greens have been a rapidly growing force and hold just five fewer seats on the city council than Labour. They already hold the **St Stephen** county division in the centre-north of the city; and they will seem a nailed-on certainty to gain **St Peter** in the far south. They fell just 32 votes short last time and won both city council wards the division covers with nearly 70% last year.

Finally, for Worcester and for Worcester Conservatives, there is **Warndon Villages**: the semi-rural north-eastern corner of the city which the party won with over 61% of the vote last time. Safe enough? Well no. The Lib Dems won the city ward that covers the northern half of the division, St Nicholas, easily last year while the Greens took the southern half: Leopard Hill, with 62% to the Tories abysmal 22%.

Electoral Calculus has Labour winning this one and they did finish second, just, in 2021. But the Greens have the momentum here and, if the Conservatives are going to be wiped out in the city I'd suspect they're more likely to be the ones who do it, given Labour's drop in popularity since the general election. It's a big ask though: the Conservatives should win this semi-rural division. They just didn't last year.

The Green strength in Worcester, and in the town of Malvern, rubbed off on the meandering **Croome** division that stretches from the city all the way south to the edge of Tewkesbury. This was one of the "spectaculars" the Green Party managed to pull off in the end days of the deeply unpopular Conservative government: their vote sky-rocketed by 49 percentage points from just 5.8% in 2017 to oust the Conservatives. They may well be able to hold on but the Conservatives are working hard and Reform is giving this one a go too.

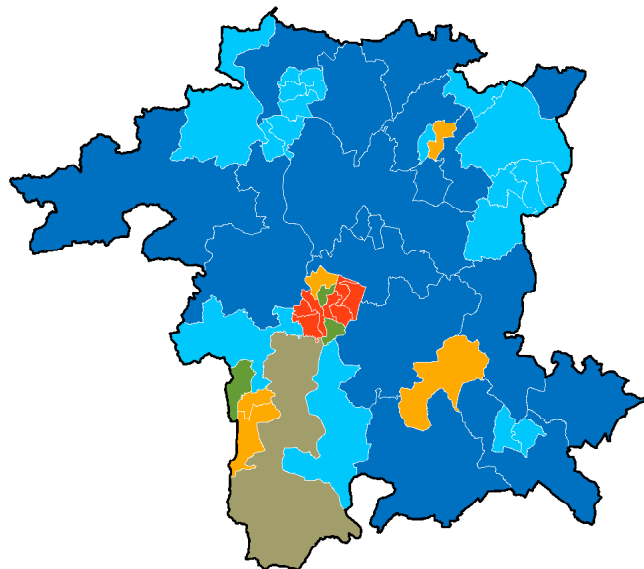
Elsewhere in Malvern Hills, the Greens gained **Malvern Chase** (Malvern South) from the Lib Dems in a 2023 by-election (unusual green on yellow blood-letting there) and should hold it, despite Electoral Calculus awarding it to the Lib Dems. Meanwhile the independent councillor for **Malvern Langland** (Malvern Central) defected to Labour in 2024 and she is defending her seat under her new colours.

Malvern has never elected a Labour councillor before and the party came fourth here in 2021 with just 14%, so she faces an uphill task. This division has a long Lib Dem history and they are probably favoured to take it back, but Cllr Langland had enough appeal to win it as an independent so who knows if she can make history for Labour here?

Reform also have a shot at Conservative-held **Malvern Link** which contains a small north-eastern section of the town but is largely rural.

Finally, there's the central district of Wychavon, running from Droitwich south to Evesham and the picture-postcard Cotswolds-edge village of Broadway.

This district is where most Conservative county councillors will be returned from, but they face tough Reform competition in both Evesham and Droitwich. **Droitwich West** is the more likely to upset the applecart though the Tories won both divisions easily in 2021.



The March Electoral Calculus MRP for Worcester is forecasting something like 23 Reform, 18 Conservatives, 7 Labour, 5 Lib Dems, 3 Greens and an independent in Powick. I think the Greens will do a bit better but the electoral maths is evident, even if the sizes of the two largest parties are some way out. There can either be a Conservative-Reform pact of whatever complexity, or the Conservatives could be kept in power by the others. Neither of those options will be palatable but things start looking different on the other side of an election, when the prospect of a share of power tempts.

Key seats

Conservative targets

- ▶ Bromsgrove Central (Lab)
- ▶ Bromsgrove East (LD)
- ▶ Croome (Grn)
- ▶ Pershore (LD)



Labour targets

- ▶ Beacon (Con)
- ▶ Bedwardine (Ref elected as Con)
- ▶ Nunnery (Con)
- ▶ Rainbow Hill and Fort Royal (Con)
- ▶ Riverside (Con)
- ▶ Warndon and Elbury Park (Con)
- ▶ Warndon Villages (Con)
- ▶ Talavera (1 LD)
- ▶ Upton (2 Con)



Green targets

- ▶ Evesham South (Con)
- ▶ Malvern Langland (Lab elected as Ind)
- ▶ Malvern Link (Con)
- ▶ St Peter (Con)
- ▶ Warndon Villages (Con)



Reform UK targets

- ▶ Bewdley (Con)
- ▶ Chaddesley (Con)
- ▶ Croome (Grn)
- ▶ Evesham North West (Con)
- ▶ Evesham South (Con)
- ▶ Malvern Link (Con)
- ▶ Redditch Central (2 Con)
- ▶ Redditch East (2 Con)
- ▶ Redditch North (2 Con)
- ▶ Redditch South (2 Con)
- ▶ St Barnabas (Con)
- ▶ St Chad's (Con)
- ▶ St George's (Con)
- ▶ St John's (Con)
- ▶ St Peter's (Con)
- ▶ Stourport Areley Kings and Severn (Con)
- ▶ Stourport Mitton (Con)

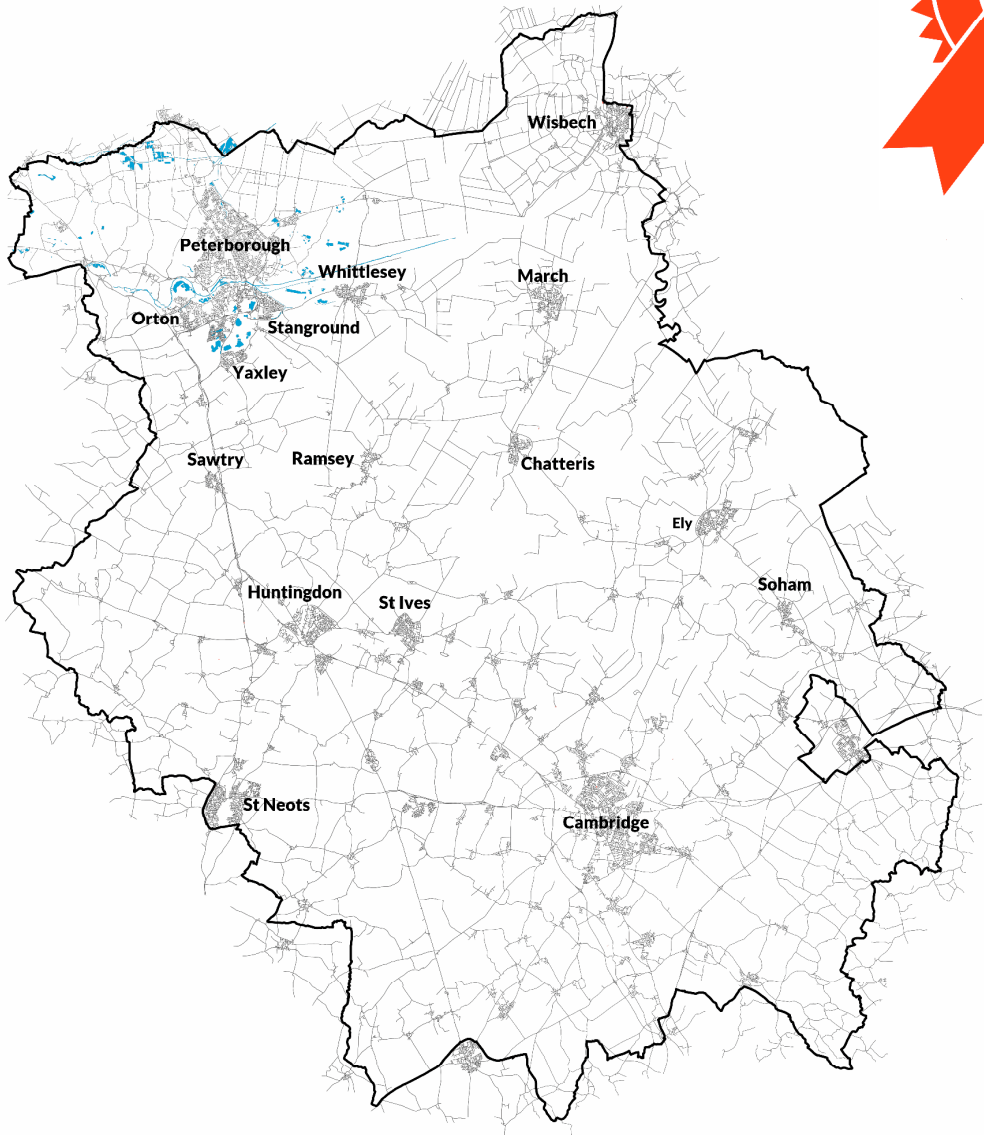


Lib Dem targets

- ▶ Malvern Chase (Grn by-election win)
- ▶ Malvern Langland (Lab elected as Ind)



Mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough



Candidates

● Paul Bristow	Conservative
● Ryan Coogan	Reform
● Lorna Dupre	Liberal Democrats
● Bob Enschede	Green Party
● Anna Smith	Labour

There may be one ray of light for the Conservatives in these almost certainly awful set of elections, coming in the form of the Cambridgeshire and Peterborough mayoral contest.

The last time this position was elected in 2021, the mayor was elected under the Supplementary Vote electoral system that gives voters a second preference. In that election, the Conservatives won a clear plurality of first round votes: 93,942 to Labour's 76,106 and the Lib Dems' 61,885.

But when the Lib Dem candidate was eliminated and his voters reallocated to their second choice - they went Labour by a margin of 3:1 - the Conservatives were beaten 51% to 49%.

The Conservative government replaced AV with First Past The Post for all mayoral elections after 2023 and Labour has not reversed that decision meaning that, if the Conservatives can eke out a county-wide lead of any size this time they'll regain this mayoralty.

While they will lose substantial numbers of votes to Reform, Labour is already faring worse than 2021 and

may well lose votes to the Lib Dems and Greens in Cambridge, and also to Reform in Peterborough.

The Conservative mayoral candidate this time is Paul Bristow, who was MP for Peterborough until last year's general election and who is a fierce campaigner.

Labour will hope that Reform, plus the fact Cambridgeshire has now experienced a Labour mayor (even though their incumbent, Nik Johnson, is standing down under a bit of a cloud not quite as serious as Dan Norris in the West of England), will more than erase that 17,000+ lead the Conservatives won last time.

2021 Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough first round votes by district

	Con	Lab	LD
Cambridge	6,284	19,585	12,787
East Cambridgeshire	10,408	5,323	7,779
Fenland	14,494	5,129	2,593
Huntingdonshire	21,824	15,142	9,199
Peterborough	22,465	18,889	5,776
South Cambridgeshire	18,467	12,038	23,751
Total	93,942	76,106	61,885

2017 Mayor of Cambridgeshire & Peterborough first round votes by district

	Con	Lab	LD
Cambridge	5,384	12,222	13,273
East Cambridgeshire	9,980	2,495	5,174
Fenland	10,513	2,602	1,494
Huntingdonshire	19,914	4,603	7,395
Peterborough	12,629	8,614	3,100
South Cambridgeshire	17,644	6,761	16,590
Total	76,064	37,297	47,026

**2024 Cambridgeshire Police and Crime Commissioner votes
by district**

	Con	Lab	LD
Cambridge	7,847	16,341	8,468
East Cambridgeshire	5,688	4,127	4,367
Fenland	7,044	3,861	2,280
Huntingdonshire	12,487	7,950	6,985
Peterborough	17,360	16,884	8,796
South Cambridgeshire	11,262	9,141	11,091
Total	61,688	53,304	41,984

But the Lib Dems will not cede mantle of the Conservatives' principal challenger to Labour in a county in which they hold three parliamentary constituencies to Labour's two, and where they - not Labour - were runners up in the 2017 mayoral vote.

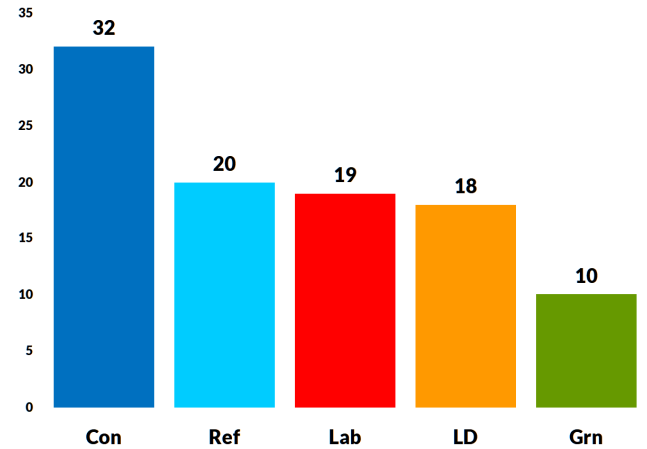
This is somewhere where there is as much aggression between the left of centre parties as there is between Conservative and Reform, and that bad blood may be enough to return this mayoralty to the Tories.

What makes this contest interesting is that Labour and the Lib Dems are both extremely weak in specific areas: Labour in East and South Cambridgeshire, the Lib Dems in Fenland and Peterborough. It's theoretically possible for the Conservatives to win without coming first in any of the county's local authorities provided they come a decent second everywhere.

Paul Bristow will of course want to do better than that: his predecessor, James Palmer (the first elected mayor of Cambridgeshire and Peterborough) "won" five of the six council areas in the first round in 2021 (losing Cambridge) before that huge second round transfer of votes from Lib Dem supporters to Labour.

Bristow will hope, in particular, to win his base of Peterborough by more than the 3,500 his party managed last time, and narrow the massive gap Labour held in Cambridge (even if the Lib Dems put in most of the heavy lifting pulling Labour down, there). If he can do that without losing too much ground to Reform in Fenland and Huntingdonshire, his chances are good.

Bristow may also benefit from the confusion Labour and Lib Dems are spreading, each asserting in every leaflet that *"we're the only ones who can defeat the Tories"*, with accompanying dubious bar charts.



The final week YouGov poll here forecast a rerun of the first preference contest in 2021 with the Conservatives way out in front. What is different is that Reform are in second - albeit just.

If Labour or the Lib Dems could establish themselves as most likely to beat the Tories then they might do so, but clearly from that YouGov poll they are abjectly failing so to do. As a result, prepare for one Conservative gain this year.

Mayor of Hull and East Yorkshire



Candidates

● Luke Campbell	Reform
● Rowan Halstead	Yorkshire Party
● Anne Handley	Conservative
● Kerry Harrison	Green Party
● Margaret Pinder	Labour
● Mike Ross	Liberal Democrats

Two new combined authorities elect their first mayor on May 1st, and both are strangely named. The first of these is Hull and East Yorkshire - strangely named because Hull is obviously part of East Yorkshire. This is a malfunction unique to Whitehall bureaucrats who seem to believe people think in terms of local authority boundaries rather than actual, real geography. Hence "Cambridgeshire AND PETERBOROUGH" instead of just Cambridgeshire and GREATER Lincolnshire when, in fact it's just Lincolnshire.

Anyhow, each of the four regional mayoralities up for election this year is highly competitive and each could produce a winner from a party other than that which would likely have won (or in the case of West of England and Cambridgeshire did win) four years ago.

Hull and East Yorkshire comprises two local authorities of broadly equal size (East Riding of Yorkshire being somewhat larger) but with utterly different voting patterns. Kingston-upon-Hull is a Labour-Lib Dem battleground city in which the Conservatives lost their

last councillor four years ago, despite coming close to winning two of its constituencies in Boris Johnson's 2019 near-landslide. The vast East Riding of Yorkshire, which surrounds Hull, is a Conservative fief returning three Tory MPs even in last year's meltdown. Though the Conservatives lost their majority on the council in 2023, they remain the largest party.

I talked in the Cambridgeshire mayoral preview about how a party that is a decent second across an entire area can win if their opponents are strong in parts but desperately weak in others. The Conservatives are desperately weak in Hull and Labour has just four councillors out of sixty seven on the East Riding council, whereas the Lib Dems are strong in Hull and a decent second in the East Riding (at least in local elections). So, could the first mayor of the combined authority be the Lib Dem Mike Ross (not the character from the US TV series Suits but the leader of Hull council)?

No. YouGov has the Lib Dems just second but they could finish fourth on May 1st. The winner is likely to come from Reform UK.

Reform has chosen a local celebrity as their candidate: the winner of an Olympic boxing gold medal from the London 2012 games, Luke Campbell MBE. He was born and raised in Hull, trained at the city's St Paul's boxing academy and lives in Hessle, the suburb the Humber Bridge soars over.

In terms of a back-story likely to appeal to voters of all political persuasions - especially in Hull - that's going to be hard to beat; and he comes - to date - without any of the polarising baggage of a Farage, Banks or Anderson.

Whether he is convincing in his first foray into politics (and what a job to apply for first time of asking!) remains to be seen.

The Conservatives have chosen the leader of the East Riding council, Anne Handley, who represents Goole and describes herself as an *"Egg packer, travel agent, lorry driver, business owner, lecturer"*

Labour has selected the candidate who came very close to winning Beverley and Holderness constituency at the general election: Margaret Pinder, who is a lawyer, and other candidates include Kerry Harrison of the Green Party and Rowan Halstead of the Yorkshire Party.

Because this is a new position, we have no historic election data for it. But just look at what happened in last May's Humberside Policing and Crime Commissioner election absent of a Reform candidate.

In the two authorities covered by this new combined authority (that is: excluding North Lincolnshire and North East Lincolnshire), just 4,115 votes separated the Conservatives, Labour and Lib Dems.

2024 Humberside Police and Crime Commissioner votes by district

	Con	Lab	LD
East Riding of Yorkshire	23,410	12,898	9,349
Kingston-upon-Hull	5,788	15,668	15,734
Total	29,198	28,566	25,083

Here you see why the Conservatives will probably struggle to win because, while they piled up a more

than 10,000 vote lead in the East Riding, they trailed by almost that amount to both Labour and the Lib Dems in Hull. Labour polled decently in East Riding and tied with the Lib Dems in Hull; while the Lib Dems finished last because they polled 3,500 fewer votes than Labour in the East Riding.

But then look at the general election results where Reform was a factor and we get an idea of why the Lib Dems are struggling.

2024 general election votes by constituency

	Con	Lab	Ref	LD
Beverley and Holderness	15,501	15,377	8,198	3,386
Bridlington and the Wolds	14,846	11,721	10,350	3,097
Goole and Pocklington	18,981	15,409	9,054	3,880
Hull East	2,715	13,047	9,127	3,252
Hull North and Cottingham	4,897	18,480	7,801	3,246
Hull West and Haltemprice	6,924	17,875	8,896	2,625
Total	63,864	91,909	53,426	19,486

Indeed, the home town attraction of Reform's Campbell may make the 9,000 votes Ed Davey's party managed across the three Hull seats look like a high water mark - just as they were squeezed out by Boris Johnson's Conservatives in 2019. The Tories also polled more votes than the Lib Dems in Hull in the 2024 general election despite their vote migrating en masse to Reform.

Go to the Electoral Calculus website and their algorithm forecasts that Reform is, on current polling, likely to win all three Hull constituencies, with Labour ahead in only six of the city's wards. And then check out the three Conservative-held constituencies. What do we find? Reform forecast on current polling to win

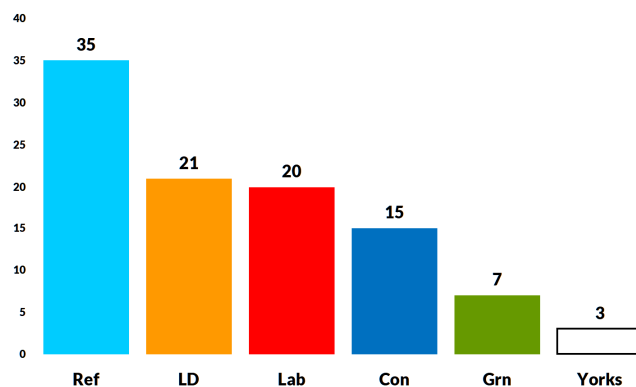
those three too - with the Tories ahead in just three of the riding's wards.

It's wise to take the Electoral Calculus algorithm with a tonne of salt but even if it is remotely on the money, and even if some poll respondents plan on voting differently in a general election to this contest, Reform are on track to win, and win comfortably.

Because we now have a first past the post electoral system for mayoral contests Reform do not have to worry about the potentially troublesome issue of needing to attract second preference votes from supporters of parties unlikely to switch their way: they just need to emerge ahead of everybody else on whatever share of the vote they can muster.

And while it's possible that Reform could achieve a blow-out win here, because Labour and the Conservatives have blocs of entrenched support they probably won't need a huge percentage share to win. As we saw in the PCC election, the Conservative winner polled just 35% in a 3-way contest. In a four-way, the winner could win with a sub-30% vote share.

But, according to the YouGov mayoral poll in the week before the election, Campbell is doing much better than that: 35% and 14 points ahead of the Lib Dem. Even under SV that would be a difficult lead to overturn, especially as you'd imagine most Conservatives and quite a few Labour voters in Hull would not put the Lib Dems second, and about a third of voters decline to cast a second preference anyway, rendering the claim that this system guarantees candidates win with at least half the vote utter nonsense.



Reform is currently flying high on the premise that they are the outsiders - the insurgents. Whereas a certain degree of credulity is needed to accept that a party led by millionaires like Nigel Farage and Richard Tice (as well as party chairman Zia Yusuf and persona-non-grata Rupert Lowe) is an outsider, no credulity is needed to see Luke Campbell in this light. Look at his TikTok feed: he's just a bluff, plain speaking local wanting change. In these times, and in what the elite call a "left-behind" area like Hull, that is a huge advantage unless voters don't believe he is sufficiently experienced to run a pretty large combined authority.

But reflect that voters have already elected H-Angus the Monkey - Stuart Drummond - as executive mayor of Hartlepool, and an inexperienced English Democrat: Peter Davies, as executive mayor of Doncaster. Personalities do appear to matter more than experience, especially when political experience is a liability.

Luke Campbell starts as favourite to win a new gold medal in a different type of pugilism.



WHY I'M STANDING FOR MAYOR:

As the Reform UK candidate, I'm committed to championing Hull and East Yorkshire like no one else. Born and raised here, this community shaped me, and supported me through my journey in boxing, and helped me achieve success. Now, it's my turn to give back and fight for a better future for us all.

WHY CHOOSE ME:

I'm not a career politician. I'm a fighter. I know what it takes to succeed, and I know how to get results. Since retiring from boxing, I have run several successful businesses, proving my ability to lead, make tough decisions, and deliver real results. I'll be a Mayor who works for you. This is our chance to take back control of our future and make Hull and East Yorkshire a place we can all be proud of.

MORE INFO:

Email: luke4mayor@reformparty.uk
Visit: luke4mayor.co.uk

Powered by Robin Hunter-Clarke of Barnston Old Hall, South Lane, Barnston, Driffield, YO25 8PG on behalf of Luke Campbell of address in East Riding of Yorkshire.

- 1** Cut out waste and improve accountability in council spending.
- 2** Take back control of our bus network and fix our broken transport system.
- 3** Push the Labour government for more investment money - we deserve more than £13.3m a year.

VOTE MAY 1ST



Powered by Robin Hunter-Clarke of Barnston Old Hall, South Lane, Barnston, Driffield, YO25 8PG on behalf of Luke Campbell of address in East Riding of Yorkshire.



THE YORKSHIRE PARTY'S CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF HULL AND EAST YORKSHIRE

STRONGER LOCAL POWERS & FAIRER FUNDING

I live in the East Riding with my family and work in Hull as an engineer. I've served in the military and know the importance of a disciplined approach, realistic planning and determination. I joined the Yorkshire Party because I believe in stronger local powers and fairer funding for our region.



Rowan Halstead

STOPPING UNFAIR COUNCIL TAX RISES

Reverse the Culture of 5% Council Tax Rises - I will fight to ensure we never incur another excessive 5% increase, promoting responsible financial management with smaller, manageable rises to ensure fairness for all.

EAST YORKSHIRE APPRENTICESHIP SCHEME

I will establish a local apprenticeship scheme, partnering with businesses and educational institutions to create job opportunities for all, fostering a cohesive, integrated strategy for workforce development.

INVEST IN PUBLIC TRANSPORT

I will fight to maximise Hull's potential as a transport hub, supported by a new Hull-Liverpool rail-link. I also support rail electrification, reopening the York-Beverley line and reviving rural bus services.

INVEST IN WORKING NEIGHBOURHOODS

I will prioritise the development of neighbourhoods that support work and family life, ensuring access to public transport, local healthcare, dentists, job opportunities, quality education, community policing, and affordable greener homes.

COMMITMENT TO TRANSPARENT PUBLIC FINANCES

I will champion open transparency in how public finances are managed, ensuring residents know exactly where their taxes are going, with opportunities for scrutiny and accountability at every level.

VOTE FOR ME, VOTE FOR THE YORKSHIRE PARTY AND I'LL FIGHT FOR YOUR FUTURE

Vote for me, vote for the Yorkshire Party and I'll fight for fair funding and stronger powers for the East Riding and Hull. Devolution is a unique opportunity to put Hull and East Yorkshire on the map and to leverage new investment. Normal politics does nothing - Get an engineer to fix it!

www.yorkshireparty.org.uk

[Yorkshire_Party](https://www.facebook.com/Yorkshire_Party) [voteyorkshire](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC7B8Q2)

Powered by Timothy Newman of 3 Shakespeare Road, Bridlington YO21 3BQ on behalf of Rowan Halstead, 14 Arundel Gate, Scarborough YO21 3BQ.



OUR REGION IS AMAZING, WE'VE GOT POWERFUL INDUSTRY ON THE HUMBLES, A BEAUTIFUL COASTLINE FOR LEISURE AND FISHING, FANTASTIC GREEN FIELDS PRODUCING GOOD FOOD AND WE'VE GOT A CITY, TOWNS AND VILLAGES PRIDE OF THEIR HERITAGE AND PAST.

I'm standing to be your mayor because I believe in this region and I want us to be proud of our future too, the best times are yet to come.

We need a mayor who will listen, act and deliver for all our communities, urban, rural and coastal.

We need a mayor who doesn't just talk, but who gets stuff done. With your support I'll be that mayor and I will do all I can to

also that's why I want to support local businesses, big and small. I was a college lecturer so I know how much potential our people of all ages have and that's why I want to ensure everyone has the opportunity to train to get the good jobs I'll bring to this area.

I've served our communities as a councillor, so I know how important our roads, our buses and our broadband and phone signal are to local people. That's why I will fix the roads, I will improve public transport and I will deliver decent phone signal and broadband for everyone, from our city to our most remote farm. I believe a local Mayor making decisions not civil servants in Westminster will make local people's lives better. Which is why I fought as Leader of East Riding Council to secure us this devolution deal. And why I have pledged to never offset a mayoral tax on hard working local people. This deal should put more money in your pocket, not take it out.

A vote for me is a vote for someone who loves our region, who has the experience and drive to serve it. And a mayor who will listen, act and deliver for all our communities, urban, rural and coastal.



Vote Anne Handley for Mayor

fb.com/CllrAHandley

Published by Leo Hammond of 18, Exchange Street, Driffield, YO25 6JL acting as Election Agent for Anne Handley of Woodside CofE, Woodside Road, Jemmy, Gorton, YO24 8JQ.



THE GREEN PARTY CANDIDATE FOR MAYOR OF HULL AND EAST YORKSHIRE

ABOUT KERRY
Kerry lives in Hessle, in the heart of the new authority, where until recently she ran a local media company. She now works at a special needs school in Anlaby, supporting young people with complex needs. Her experience of working with clients and in education, along with her coaching and counselling qualifications, has helped her develop and hone the listening skills vital for the new role. Kerry is also a trustee for a local car recall charity (Lenny's Car House) and is on the committee for the Barbur Community Centre on Redcliffe Road, Hull. She's hosted a pop-up cafe and has run women's circles. Her two sons are members of local grassroots football and rugby clubs.



GET IN TOUCH
kerry.harrison@hullandeastriding.greenparty.org.uk
[kerryharrison](https://www.facebook.com/kerryharrison)

DECENT HOMES FOR EVERYONE

There are homes standing empty when they could be warm, green places to live. Refurbishing old homes and creating new ones - in the right places - would provide quality jobs.

MORE GREEN JOBS

Green jobs are already vital in our area. We should be doing more. Further investment in green transport and housing will provide a massive increase in job opportunities.

BETTER LIVING

A Green Mayor can be counted on to put the environment first. I want to see increased investment in public spaces plus the development of community gardens and orchards to help reconnect people with our environment.

BETTER CONNECTIVITY

A Green Mayor will invest in accessible and affordable public transport. It is vital that the rail and bus fare and bring buses back into public ownership. I want safe walking and cycling for our communities.

NO TO SUBSIDIES

The Green Party opposes the Government's austerity plan. As well as investing in public infrastructure, as Mayor, I'd like us to trial a universal basic income and a four day working week. A basic income is an affordable, feasible and overwhelmingly popular policy. I want to see a pilot test in our communities. And we need to ask the very richest in society to pay a little bit more. We need to be the super rich fairly to help fund our overstrained public services.



Green Party
www.greenparty.org.uk

Powered by John Sullivan of 10 Oakdale Gardens, Driffield YO25 8JL on behalf of Kerry Harrison of 10 Oakdale Gardens, Driffield YO25 8JL.

Margaret Pinder

For Mayor of Hull and East Yorkshire

Our home, our future.

We need new leadership for our area. I'm not afraid to stand up and say what needs to be said, and fight for the best deal for our region. This is such a special place, and I'm proud to call it my home.

But for too long our part of the world has felt forgotten. I am not prepared to sit on the sidelines anymore.

I know the challenges that we face and I have a plan to deliver the best deal for us all from day one. It is time for a fresh start.

I am the only person who can deliver a fresh start for Hull and East Yorkshire. Standing up for our home, and our future.

MARGARET PINDER FOR MAYOR

Margaret's Plan.

- End the Barm scramble to see a doctor**
 - Total community health centres across Hull and East Yorkshire.
 - Bring back a named family doctor.
- Ban repeat offenders from our high streets**
 - Introduce Respect Orders across Hull and East Yorkshire.
 - Make our high streets hubs of the community again.
- Introduce a Mayoral Apprenticeship Scheme**
 - Give local people opportunity to access high-paid local jobs.
 - Set up Opportunity Hubs across Hull and East Yorkshire.
- Find and fill every pothole in a year**
 - Save motorists hundreds on car repairs.
 - Invest in our region's infrastructure.
- Free summer coastal travel**
 - Free travel on bus routes to the coast in school summer holidays.
 - Boost tourism and growth across our coast.

MIKE ROSS

- ✓ The right skills and experience for this job.
- ✓ A real plan for Hull and East Yorkshire.
- ✓ The best choice to be our Mayor.

Liberal Democrats

Improve our transport links:

Mike would make investment in more road repairs a top priority.

He will fight for better public transport and rail connections to our region.

Better access to healthcare:

Mike wants people in every community here to have access to the healthcare they need.

He would work to improve healthcare provision for Hull and East Yorkshire.

Bring new jobs to our region:

Mike will use the role of Mayor to drive investment and create new job opportunities.

For too long our region has been overlooked - Mike will change that.

MIKE ROSS

Liberal Democrat candidate for Mayor of Hull and East Yorkshire

Find out more at:
www.Mike4Mayor.org.uk

Do you want a strong local champion who will get things done for Hull and East Yorkshire?

I love our part of the world, I'm so proud to call it home. I live here with my family and I have dedicated my life to getting a fair deal for local people.

Now more than ever we need someone with the energy and experience to get people the fair deal they deserve. I'm the candidate who will do that.

Mike Ross

Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire



Candidates

● Sally Horscroft	Green Party
● Andrea Jenkyns	Reform
● Marianne Overton	Lincs Independent
● Jason Stockwood	Labour
● Rob Waltham	Conservative
● Trevor Young	Liberal Democrats

The inaugural election for the mayor of "Greater" Lincolnshire - or, as normal people know it: just Lincolnshire, should be a slam-dunk win for the Conservatives.

Lincolnshire is traditionally one of the deepest wells of Conservative support in the country. Labour wins the city of Lincoln and, though weakened there now, the steel town of Scunthorpe and the fishing port of Grimsby. There are also Labour wards in Grantham, Louth and Cleethorpes, but these are patchy.

Even in last year's terrible defeat, Lincolnshire returned six Conservative MPs. Labour won three in this wider definition of Lincolnshire - which includes the parts that were controversially shorn off to create the artificial county of Humberside: Great Grimsby & Cleethorpes, Scunthorpe and Lincoln (plus Axholme from the new cross-county Doncaster East and the Isle of Axholme, though Axholme itself votes Tory). And then Reform, in the shape of Richard Tice, easily won Boston and Skegness - arguably the most pro-Brexit constituency in the United Kingdom.

Across this area the Conservatives polled 34%, Labour 29%, Reform 23%, the Lib Dems 6% and the Greens 5% (Axholme is excluded from these numbers and Rutland included).

The Conservatives could still win this mayoralty on those figures, but the favourites are surely Reform. The party has picked former Conservative MP Dame Andrea Jenkyns as their candidate; certainly high profile but perhaps focussing too much on culture war issues that matter to her party's activists but have less salience among voters in rural Lincs.

Those promoting the interests of the Conservatives make the point that Reform is strong in Boston and Skegness but much weaker away from the coast. I would characterise the Lincolnshire hinterland as less strong for Reform rather than weak for them: they are hardly weak anywhere in this county.

In any event, we again need to talk about the electoral system. The winner of this contest now does not need to scrape into the top two and then stay ahead of the other candidate in second preferences: they simply need to win one more vote than anyone else.

In other words every Reform vote, whether in their strongholds of Boston and Skegness or their least propitious territory of inner Lincoln, counts. And, as with each of the other regional mayoralties this year, the winner is almost certainly going to get the job with a fairly low share of the vote. That will be as true here as it will be in the West of England and in Cambridgeshire.

That being so we need to consider whether Labour could pull off what would be a stunning win. The answer is almost certainly no, but if they can get anywhere close to that 29% they achieved last July that might be enough. But given Labour is polling at least ten points down on their general election performance, 29% looks impossible.

In Labour's favour are their pick of a fairly strong candidate: Grimsby Town football club co-owner Jason Stockwood, who is playing down his party affiliation and playing up his experience of running things - plus the government's intervention to keep the steelworks at Scunthorpe open.

Labour may well gain some political benefit from their action on the steelworks but they are even being "out-lefted" on this issue by Reform who have called for full renationalisation of British Steel; something even more popular among the workforce than the stopgap the government pushed through before Easter.

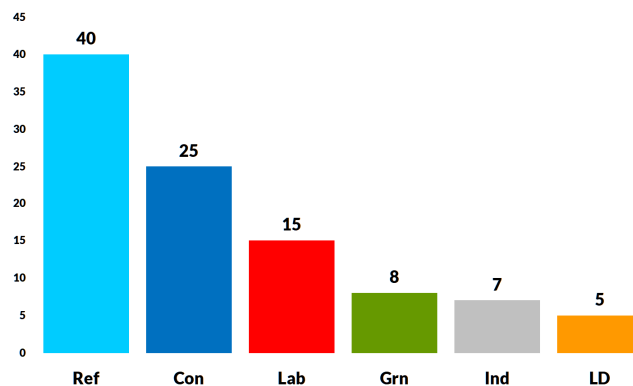
But Labour simply doesn't have deep enough support across the entire county, even if it can turn out every possible supporter in Scunthorpe, Grimsby and Lincoln. They didn't before Brexit - and Brexit has severely weakened Labour in places they used to be strong like Boston, Grimsby, Grantham and Gainsborough. Labour placing stronger than third would be very surprising.

No, this is a battle between Reform and Conservative: the only straight fight between the two in all the mayoral contests. The Conservative candidate, Rob Waltham, is the leader of North Lincolnshire, home of

Scunthorpe, but it doesn't really feel that there is much voltage in the Tory campaign.

Andrea Jenkyns is a bit like Nigel Farage in that she is either loved or loathed (to not quite the same extent as her name recognition is far lower) but in mayoral elections personalities matter more and administrative records perhaps less.

The YouGov mayoral poll in the week before the election confirmed this dynamic with Jenkins leading by a comfortable fifteen points. Even under the old electoral system that would probably have been a big enough lead, as few Labour, Green or Lib Dems would cast a second preference for the Conservatives.



Reform has a real chance of winning the three mayoralties of East Yorkshire, Doncaster and Lincolnshire. Perhaps the party needs to better manage expectations because it's starting to feel as though, if they fail to win all three they'll underachieve, whereas, from a standing start, this would be an electoral earthquake.

Green Party

SALLY HORSCROFT: PROUD OF OUR HOME

LIVED IN LINCOLNSHIRE SINCE I WAS A CHILD (WHEN MY FATHER WAS POSTED IN RAF WADSWORTH)

I am striving to be Lincolnshire's first Green Mayor so I can push for real change for ordinary people

- Creating a resilient, diverse and adaptable economy which works for us
- Building strong and sustainable communities
- Make Lincolnshire a centre for research, innovation and development
- and yes, the rubbish will get fixed too!

Sally

Green Party

REDUCING INEQUALITY

MAKING EVERY PENNY COUNT

The new Mayor will have a £26 million budget. This is how I will maximise our spending power and get you value for money...

- Tackling wealth inequality and reducing your bills through affordable travel and energy efficiency
- Only Sally will fight Westminster to demand our fair share of central government funding

Sally

Green Party

RESTORING DIGNITY AND RESPECT

BOOSTING YOUR QUALITY OF LIFE

I will support our communities, put people before profit, and ensure nobody is left behind

- I will open up every property, and reduce homelessness
- I will insulate homes - slashing bills and heating money
- I will clean up our waterways and enhance our green spaces
- I will provide spaces for sport, heritage, arts, culture and our communities

Sally

Green Party

WE'LL PUT YOU FIRST

SEND LONDON A MESSAGE

You will choose Greater Lincolnshire's first Mayor, and many of you are choosing my fresh approach...

- Anyone can win, this is a brand new role
- Only Sally can beat the established parties
- This campaign is entirely crowd-funded by the community and our members - not millionaire donors!
- Only Sally will demand an end to austerity

Sally

Green Party

CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITIES

UNLOCKING OUR POTENTIAL

I will reverse years of cuts to our communities by:

- Increasing bus routes to connect rural communities
- Improving rail links both inside and outside the county
- Delivering digital connectivity for all, especially rural homes
- Providing safe active travel routes, improving air quality and health

Sally

sallyformayor@eastmidlands.greenparty.org.uk
sallyhorscroft@greenpartylincolnshire.org.uk @sallyhorscroft

ANDREA FOR MAYOR

DAME ANDREA JENKYNs

A LEADER WHO FIGHTS FOR THE SILENT MAJORITY

COMMON SENSE MANIFESTO

GET LINCOLNSHIRE MOVING
Better Roads, Faster Transport, A County That Works

SKILLS FOR LINCOLNSHIRE
Building Skills, Boosting Jobs, Growing Lincolnshire's Economy

PRIORITISING LINCOLNSHIRE PEOPLE
Putting Lincolnshire First in Housing, Services and Support

DOGE LINCOLNSHIRE
Rooting Out Waste, Keeping Taxes Low, Running Efficiently

NO TO NET ZERO MADNESS
Protecting Jobs, Cutting Bills, Common-Sense Energy Policies

GROWTH LINCOLNSHIRE
Backing Local Businesses, Driving Innovation, Creating Jobs

SIGN MY PETITION
andrea4mayor.co.uk/solar-farm-petition

FOR MORE INFORMATION VISIT:
andrea4mayor.co.uk/np-plan

A strong, outspoken voice with a footprint throughout Greater Lincolnshire I am committed to delivering a once in a generational real change. Not tinkering at the edges, but leading with a word of common sense, that cuts through wastage, bureaucracy, this Climate Emergency narrative and the work from home culture that has gripped our councils and the civil service.

My 'Common-Sense Manifesto' for Greater Lincolnshire, includes how I will cut wasteful spending and ensure every penny of taxpayers' money is used wisely. This means no funding for unnecessary roles like Diversity Officers and a focus on practical priorities like fixing potholes. We also need to get workers back into the council offices rather than working from home.

My plan puts Lincolnshire people at the forefront of policy decisions, including a plan to turbo-charge our economy, boost jobs and get Lincolnshire moving with my transport and infrastructure plan. I am backing businesses with funding, driving high-tech innovation, and uniting local industries to create jobs and investment. I oppose Ed Milliband's unrealistic Net Zero targets and will instead protect our food defenses, strengthen food and energy security, and ensure our stunning countryside isn't marred by endless pylons.

Having been a Lincolnshire County Councillor for Boston North West, I have also seen the effects of migration on our towns. As an MP, I spoke up about the effects of illegal migration on our communities. We need to ensure Lincolnshire people are not at the back of the queue, but at the forefront of our policy decisions.

I am your strong, unapologetic voice that speaks up for the silent majority, that has had enough of governments of all colours not putting the British people at the heart of decisions and letting our country down. The time to rebuild begins here now in Lincolnshire.

Please Vote For **Marianne OVERTON** MBE
For Mayor on Thursday 1st May

Let's have the best for Greater Lincolnshire

EXPERIENCED | RELIABLE | EFFECTIVE

Please vote for proven commitment - Our Lincolnshire Independent Mayor for Greater Lincolnshire

Only a genuine Lincolnshire Independent Mayor committed to our communities can stand up fearlessly and fairly for every person in Greater Lincolnshire. Please vote to get the **Marianne Overton MBE**.

INDEPENDENT
"We are supporting Marianne Overton on Thursday 1st May"

Lincolnshire Independents

Lincolnshire Independents work for you in Greater Lincolnshire

"Together we have done a huge amount of a local level and nationally to successfully get more funds for local services. Fourteen years as leader of a growing force of elected independent Councillors and Vice Chair representing all local services across England and Wales, I also work cross-party to make a clear case for better funding and powers to serve everyone in every corner of Greater Lincolnshire. This election is not about who will win or lose, it is about who will best support you here in Lincolnshire. Please vote for Marianne."

Statement prepared by Charlotte Peter Overton for Marianne Overton, both of Lincolnshire Independents, 145949 Mary, Wadsworth, Lincoln, LN2 6JG

Please Vote For Marianne OVERTON MBE For Mayor on Thursday 1st May

Real Action, not just promises! We need a Mayor who champions Lincolnshire and brings people together to make Greater Lincolnshire a greater place.

- Leadership and Experience:** I work locally and nationally to deliver funding and support for our communities, and am committed to a more prosperous Greater Lincolnshire
- Independent Voice, National Impact:** Leading independents nationally, I bring people together across party lines to join powers and investment for our towns and localities
- Healthy Lives:** As Vice Chair of the Primary Care Trust, I helped protect Orkney from the threat of a health crisis and health care in Lincolnshire
- Skills and well-paid jobs:** I helped launch the University of Lincoln's engineering schools and a research and innovation network across Greater Lincolnshire creating better jobs
- Better Transport:** Building a public transport network that supports rural villages with Community Schemes offering access to rail services
- Stronger Communities:** As Chair of Seaside Lincolnshire, I expanded family services and built a research and innovation network across Greater Lincolnshire creating better jobs
- Solar on roofs, not farmland:** As Chair of our local action group and spokesman for local Government across Europe, I have campaigned to safeguard food and our rural landscapes

"Marianne, a Mayor who works with us, National Party candidates only undermining local efforts with service cuts and poor planning. Please vote for Marianne Overton MBE to champion our communities."

Alice Maynard, Vice Chair, Leader of South Kesteven District Council

Contact Marianne Overton MBE | 01420 273323 or 07920 238 344
marianne@lincolnshireindependents.org.uk | info@lincolnshireindependents.org

Rob Waltham for Mayor

The Local Choice

Rob Waltham is the only candidate with a proven track record of delivering for our area.

As the Leader of North Lincolnshire Council, he has kept Council Tax low while improving services, making it one of England's top performing councils.

Having secured the funding and powers offered by the mayor, Rob is ready to ensure the benefits reach local people right throughout Lincolnshire.

This new role could be game-changing but only if we elect the right person, with the right experience to get the job done.

A VOTE FOR ROB WILL DELIVER:

- Better Roads & Buses**
Secure funding to improve key transport routes, including the A46, A15, A16, and A17 for smoother, safer journeys across Lincolnshire
- More High-Quality Jobs**
Attract new businesses and investment, ensuring young people can find good jobs locally
- Protection of Local Industry**
Support British Steel and other key industries to protect jobs and economic stability
- Safeguards for Farmland**
Oppose Labour's plans for excessive pylons and solar farms that threaten our food security
- No New Taxes**
A firm commitment to keeping taxes low to help with the cost of living, unlike Labour-led areas where new mayor taxes have been introduced

facebook.com/robwalthamformayor

On Thursday 1st May, Greater Lincolnshire residents will elect our area's first-ever Mayor...

Let's keep making British Steel in Lincolnshire to protect jobs

Let's keep making British Steel in Lincolnshire to protect jobs

Together we can shape local services for the next 10 years with record investment

Fighting Labour's plans to build pylons and solar farms on precious farmland that feed our food security

Vote for Rob WALTHAM on Thursday 1st May for a Local Mayor and a stronger, more prosperous Greater Lincolnshire.

contact@robwaltham.uk
robwaltham.uk
fb.com/robwalthamformayor

Conservatives

TREVOR YOUNG

- The right skills and experience for the job**
- A real plan for Lincolnshire**
- The best choice to be our Mayor**

Liberal Democrats

Standing up for the county:

As a council leader, Trevor led the fight to save Scampton from the Home Office's asylum plan.

For too long our county has been overlooked - Trevor will change that.

Better access to healthcare:

Trevor wants people in every community here to have access to the healthcare they need.

He would work to improve healthcare provision for Lincolnshire.

Improve our transport links:

Trevor would make investment in more road repairs a top priority.

He will fight for better public transport and rail connections to our region.

Do you want a strong local champion who will get things done for Lincolnshire?

I love our part of the world, I'm so proud to call it home. I live here and I have dedicated my life to getting a better deal for local people.

Now more than ever we need someone with the experience and energy to get people the fair deal they deserve. I'm the candidate who will do that.

Trevor Young
Liberal Democrat candidate for Mayor of Greater Lincolnshire

Get involved at:
www.libdems.org.uk/volunteer

Mayor of North Tyneside



Candidates

John Appleby	Liberal Democrats
Liam Bones	Conservative
Karen Clarke	Labour
Cath Davies	Independent
John Falkenstein	Reform
Chloe-Louise Reilly	Green Party
Martin Uren	Independent

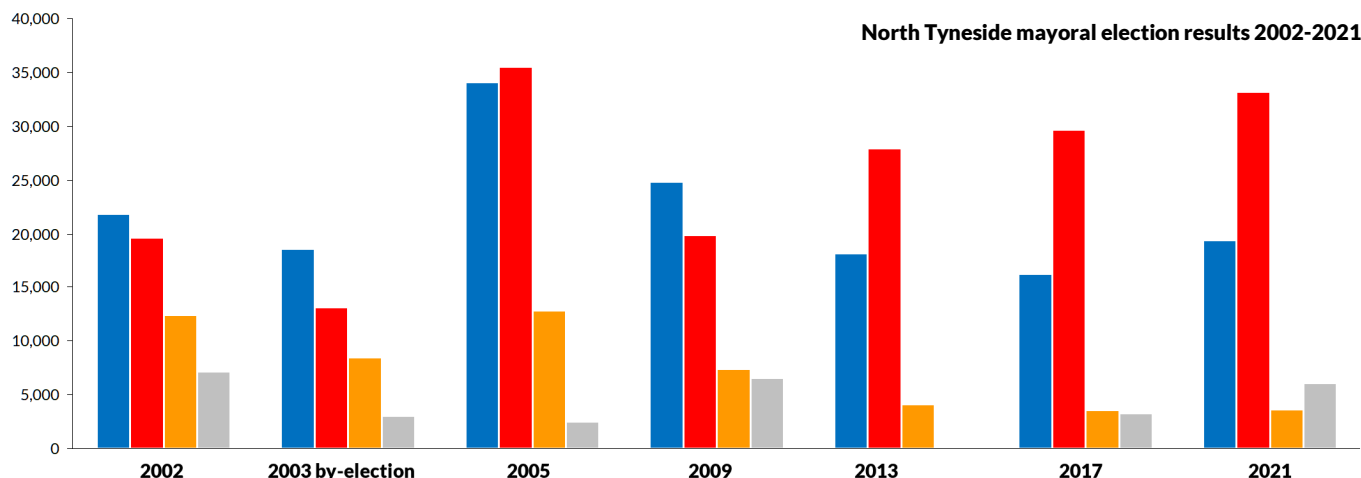
Despite hardly unreasonable public perception of Tyneside as a Labour fortress, and the fact that the Conservatives have only ever won a council majority here once, this is potentially a competitive election.

The Conservatives have actually won the mayoralty three times out of the seven it has been contested, and lost a fourth by less than 1,500 votes. That said, the

Conservative wins were early on when Labour was in government: they haven't won the job for two decades now. In those ensuing twenty years Labour has built a solid - not quite overwhelming but not far off - lead across North Tyneside. In the all-out council elections last year, Labour won 41 seats, the Conservatives just 8. In terms of votes Labour polled 46%, the Tories 20%.

But the Conservatives will argue that they can win when Labour is in power nationally, when they clearly have huge problems motivating supporters to vote, and that the dreadful vote share they managed last year was an aberration due to the specific unpopularity of Rishi Sunak's government. More typically the Conservatives polled closer to 30% throughout their years in power - when Labour was last in government they managed to poll around 40%.

Labour is again in government and is polling at levels that would be regarded as dire were it not for the fact that the Tories are also in the electoral doldrums.



The reason North Tyneside is not quite the unbreachable fortress it might be assumed to be is that half of this authority is Tynemouth: a constituency that includes the relatively affluent Whitley Bay resort and which Labour had never won until 1997. While it's stayed with them ever since - the MP is Labour Chief Whip Sir Alan Campbell - they've never (2024 aside) been able to surge out of sight.

Until the recent years of really deep Conservative unpopularity, the party could usually rely on a cluster of wards down the coastline: St Mary's, Cullercoats and Whitley Bay South, Tynemouth and Preston.

In good Conservative years they could also win Monkseaton, Whitley Bay North and maybe Forest Hall (the former Benton). And then there's New York and Murton - the former Collingwood, which has bucked the swing to Labour and elected three of the eight Conservatives last year in what used to be a pretty safe Labour ward.

The Conservatives weaken dramatically as one moves away from the coast: down the Tyne towards Newcastle. But even here there are wards that have often not supported Labour: both of the Wallsend divisions, Benton and Longbenton, Battle Hill.

These were all very comfortably in Labour's column last year but they could be very soft now. These are areas the Lib Dems and occasional independents have been able to win and might be - should be - the sort of territory Reform can reach which the Conservatives cannot.

In other words, if the Conservatives can rebuild in the east and Reform can attack in the west, Labour could be in trouble. But it would still be a surprise if, this early into their stint in government, the electorate are so annoyed with them to turf them out.

Labour will not be helped by the fact that their mayor since 2013, Norma Redfearn, is standing down this year. Seven candidates are competing to replace her: Labour's **Karen Clark** who is councillor for Benton and Longbenton; the Conservative **Liam Bones** who represents Preston with Preston Grange; for Reform **John Falkenstein**; **John Appleby** of the Lib Dems - a perennial candidate in these parts; and **Chloe-Louise Reilly**, who contested Tynemouth last year for the Greens. There are two independents: **Cath Davis** - a former Labour councillor, and **Martin Uren**.

A reasonable estimate of turnout is around 60,000 voters - that's been the average across the seven mayoral contests since 2002. Assuming that the top three, in whatever order: Labour, Conservative, Reform are relatively close and that the remaining four runners get some votes, between 16,000 and 20,000 votes could be enough to win.

This will be the first North Tyneside mayoral election conducted under First Past The Post. Norma Redfearn won with over half the votes (so there was no need to count second preferences under the former Supplementary Vote system) but typically the winner has not reached 50%.

JOHN APPLEBY

– your Liberal Democrat candidate 2025

Experience?

The Elected Mayor is responsible for a budget of £200 Million and the interests of 210,000 people. Our last Mayor was a Headteacher, but what experience have this year's candidates had?

Dr John Appleby has managed a large university department, with a budget of £11M and 1,000 staff and students. He chairs a local charity, has been a union branch president, and was a councillor in a deprived area. He's articulate, plain speaking and quick-thinking, and never commits to things he can't deliver.



Environment – is it really an emergency?

North Tyneside is a great place to live. We all want it to be as pleasant, safe and healthy as I can be. We also want it to go on being a great place for our children and grandchildren. So what's needed?

We need clear, safe pavements for healthy walking, especially for children, elderly and disabled. Cars are useful, but can't always take priority. Low Traffic Neighbourhoods have been controversial, but when carefully planned often become popular both for shoppers and by increasing business trades. Reduced traffic improves air quality, and reduces damage to pavements and roads.

It might not feel like a 'Climate Emergency', but if we don't get on with it, it will become an emergency! That includes Biodiversity, as insects and plants provide food as well as leisure. Meanwhile, you can see Climate Chaos on TV.

LET'S WORK TOGETHER FOR A GREAT ENVIRONMENT in North Tyneside – safe walking, safe cycling, clean air, better health, better activity, better Planet!

Consult, don't Insult

If difficult decisions have to be made, it's vital that we know what people think. Too often, consultation means a hasty survey where only the loudest voices get heard, or merely being asked to agree to a single plan with no options – that's an insult to the public. Democracy means letting people decide, and that means everyone, not just a few. I'd ensure that major decisions required a high level of responses from the public.

John chairs the Cedarwood Trust in North Shields – supporting, feeding and encouraging local residents. "We've been on TV (including in Finland)".

The Cost of Living crisis has hit this kind of area really hard, and crime and anti-social behaviour are often worse too in deprived areas.

John uses a 'Car-Club' instead of owning a car. "I like this 'hine by the scheme, as it saves money, and has less parking space, and reduces use of resources".

Value for Money?

North Tyneside is almost a 'One-Party State', with almost all Councillors from a single party. I'm sure they all mean well, but there's a real danger of lack of scrutiny – especially important when money is so tight. Past Governments have squeezed local finances very hard, and I don't think likely that things will improve for some time to come.

That makes it even more important to have cross-party working, and close scrutiny of major decisions – less likely if councillors are trying to keep their party looking good! Let's avoid false economies, and get best value for money for our area!

I'd also work with the Liberal Democrats nationally to reform Council Tax.

JohnApplebyLD@gmail.com
JohnApplebyLD.wordpress.com
@JohnApplebyLD

Vote for John APPLEBY

Prepared by David Nisbet, 43 Bideford Gdns, NE26 1QP

For 12 years, local Labour have run our estates into the ground. It's time for change.

I grew up here and I live here with my family. I know the issues that matter because I see them everyday too.

As your Mayor, I'll focus on: Fixing roads and pavements, tackling crime and anti-social behaviour and properly regenerating our town centres. My plan is fully costed and you can read all of it on my website of ntconservatives.co.uk/manifesto

And I'll stand up for our pensioners, fighting back against Labour's cruel cuts to the winter fuel allowance by introducing a local winter fuel payment. Local pensioners in our area were left in the cold this winter because of Keir Starmer's decision.


I'm not standing to be Mayor for the hushies or the pet projects. I'm the only candidate that has promised to get rid of the chauffeur-driven car on day one.

With your support this year, we can make this Council work for us again. It would be the honour of my life to be your Mayor and I won't take your vote for granted.

Kind regards,
Liam
07534 138047
Liam@NTconservatives.co.uk

Liam BONES
Local Conservative Candidate for Mayor

P.S. this election is a choice between me and another Labour Mayor. A vote for anyone other than me and another Labour Mayor, and we're all there more of the same.



Liam BONES
FOR REAL CHANGE

Scan here to read Liam's full plan for real change!

KAREN CLARK

The Labour Party Candidate

Together

I am standing to be your next elected Mayor, because I want to make North Tyneside a better place for my family and all the families and people of the Borough.

I was born and brought up in North Tyneside, raised my family here and my grandchildren attend our local schools.

We are an average hard working family wanting the best for our children and parents.

I am not a career politician. I am a wife, mother, grandparent, local councillor, and lifelong resident of North Tyneside who shares your aspirations and concerns.

Building on the successes of Norma Redfearn I want to work with you to continue our journey in making Your street, Your neighbourhood, Our North Tyneside an even better place to live.

I have the experience and proven Leadership qualities along with the enthusiasm and determination to take us forward to meet our coming challenges and continue to make North Tyneside a better place.

Karen Clark

To do so, and be successful, we must work together. So, my first commitment as Mayor is to YOU. I will ensure that North Tyneside Council serves the local community effectively. I will prioritise local interests, avoiding partisan politics, to provide the opportunities needed for making North Tyneside a better place for all ages.

I will maintain transparency about our finances and avoid creating division by treating all areas equally without political bias affecting jobs and services.

Karen Clark

Promoted by Eddie Darke on behalf of Karen Clark both at Ruby Court, Unit 1A, Benton Industrial Estate, NE12 9UP

Karen Clark has more than 40 years of experience working in community development. Everything she has done has had local people and local communities at the heart.

KAREN IS A TRUE COMMUNITY CHAMPION

Karen's record

Karen has been a councillor for the Longbenton and Benton area since 2015 and currently plays a leading role on Norma Redfearn's cabinet. As cabinet member responsible for Public Health and Wellbeing her role includes Chairing both the North Tyneside's Health and Well Being Board and Safer North Tyneside Partnership Board.

Karen is the co-founder and Chief Executive of Justice Prince CIC, a community interest company based in Longbenton and set up to address inequalities and social injustice across North Tyneside.

Under her leadership, Justice Prince developed "Working Roots", a full-time work-based education program for young people who are not in work or education.

The program is now in its twelfth year and supports vulnerable young people in gaining life skills and moving into paid employment.

businesses to provide training and jobs for our residents, including along the River Tyne.

Build a green, environmentally friendly Borough. With clean, safe and secure neighbourhoods. Continue investing in repairing our pavements and roads.

Make North Tyneside a better place for all ages. Work with Local people, Partners, and agencies to make North Tyneside a great place for the whole family to live, giving children and young people the best start in life.

Five things Karen will do:

Make North Tyneside Council work for you. Collaborate with and work with Local people to ensure the Council works for them and delivers the services they need.

Regenerate our Borough. Continue the regeneration of our Villages and Town Centres. Help tackle the housing crisis by building more affordable and social housing.

Develop more good quality jobs. Working with Local and Regional businesses.

Promoted by Eddie Darke on behalf of Karen Clark both at Ruby Court, Unit 1A, Benton Industrial Estate, NE12 9UP

JOHN FALKENSTEIN

Your REFORM UK Candidate for Mayor

A STRONG NORTH TYNESIDE - MY PLAN FOR REAL CHANGE:

Our Council Tax has increased by 4.99%. We now pay £444 more per annum than households in Central London. The Council is more than £403 million in debt, and we pay more than £50,000 in interest on that debt each day!

Labour cannot manage our finances, it has cut the workforce by 5%, and our services are in decline.

It is time for a new approach.

MY PLEDGES:

- ✓ To review all capital and revenue expenditure and eliminate waste.
- ✓ To review all public sector contracts to ensure value for money, and eliminate corruption, net pay and incompetence.
- ✓ To scrap Labour's vanity projects.
- ✓ To create a culture where all staff are doing worthwhile jobs and where staff want to work to serve their communities.
- ✓ To stop all non-essential expenditure on net zero programmes which are driving up energy costs, council tax bills and killing jobs.
- ✓ To set up an employer led 'Skills Board', and provide incentives to local businesses to offer apprenticeships and training opportunities to our young people on a scale not seen before locally.
- ✓ To ensure basic repairs to our roads are done quickly.



Reform UK

CHLOE-LOUISE REILLY

mayoral candidate for the

Green Party
North Tyneside

A Greener, Fairer North Tyneside

North Tyneside needs leadership that acts on behalf of people and our environment.

As mayor, I want a borough with increased equality and opportunities for everyone. I'll look at expanding local services through accessible hubs, targeting resources to those in need, and creating an economy that works for all.

I'll plan to establish a Youth Task Force - a team of professionals working alongside young people - finding creative solutions with them to the many challenges they face, while ensuring they have exciting opportunities in school and beyond.

I'll push for more ambitious net zero plans to reduce the borough's emissions faster, lower people's bills, and enhance our green spaces, clean our river and protect our coast.

I'll advocate for bringing public meetings into local spaces to improve participation, and donate 20% of the mayor's salary to YODA - North Tyneside's local support and advocacy organisation for grassroots initiatives.

www.northernorthern.greenparty.org.uk

Prepared by Ben Appleby at 110 Limes Road, Collieston, NE31 3EA, on behalf of Chloe Louise Reilly, North Tyneside.

CHLOE'S VISION FOR A GREEN NORTH TYNESIDE

STRENGTHEN OUR FOUNDATIONS

I'll promote security with a Universal Basic Income (UBI) pilot, expand council and affordable housing, introduce more skills training for all ages, and advocate for flexible working and a living wage campaign.

TAKE ACTION ON THE CLIMATE

I'll expand the council's net zero plans, make more homes energy efficient with a strong retrofit plan, move away from incineration, improve local transport links and make walking and cycling easier and safer to do.

PROTECT AND RESTORE NATURE

I'll phase out the damaging weedkiller, Glyphosate, restore biodiversity through better wildlife management, plant more trees, start sustainable urban drainage schemes, and protect green spaces from overdevelopment.

IMPROVE DEMOCRACY

I'll bring public meetings to local communities, hold citizen assemblies and support a referendum to scrap the mayor and move to a more democratic committee system.

Focus on the QR code with your phone's camera for our full manifesto

Vote Martin Henry Uren on 1 May 2025

Cath Davis
Your Independent candidate

I'm standing for change. I want to see residents take control of decisions making in North Tyneside. I want to see a good rather than a bad political class. I want to see a better future for our community.

I want to see the current Conservative and Labour governments replaced by a new government that will represent the people of North Tyneside. I want to see a referendum to scrap the Mayor and move to a more democratic committee system.

Martin Henry Uren
Independent
A New Voice for North Tyneside

I have been a local councillor for 12 years. I have seen the council's decline, followed by a complete collapse. I have seen the council's failure to represent the people of North Tyneside. I have seen the council's failure to provide a good standard of living for the people of North Tyneside. I have seen the council's failure to provide a good standard of living for the people of North Tyneside.

Proachy improving community and wellbeing

Proachy is a community improvement project that aims to improve the quality of life for the people of North Tyneside. It is a project that is run by the people of North Tyneside, for the people of North Tyneside.

Vote Martin for Mayor on 1 May 2025

www.martinfor mayor.co.uk

Mayor of the West of England



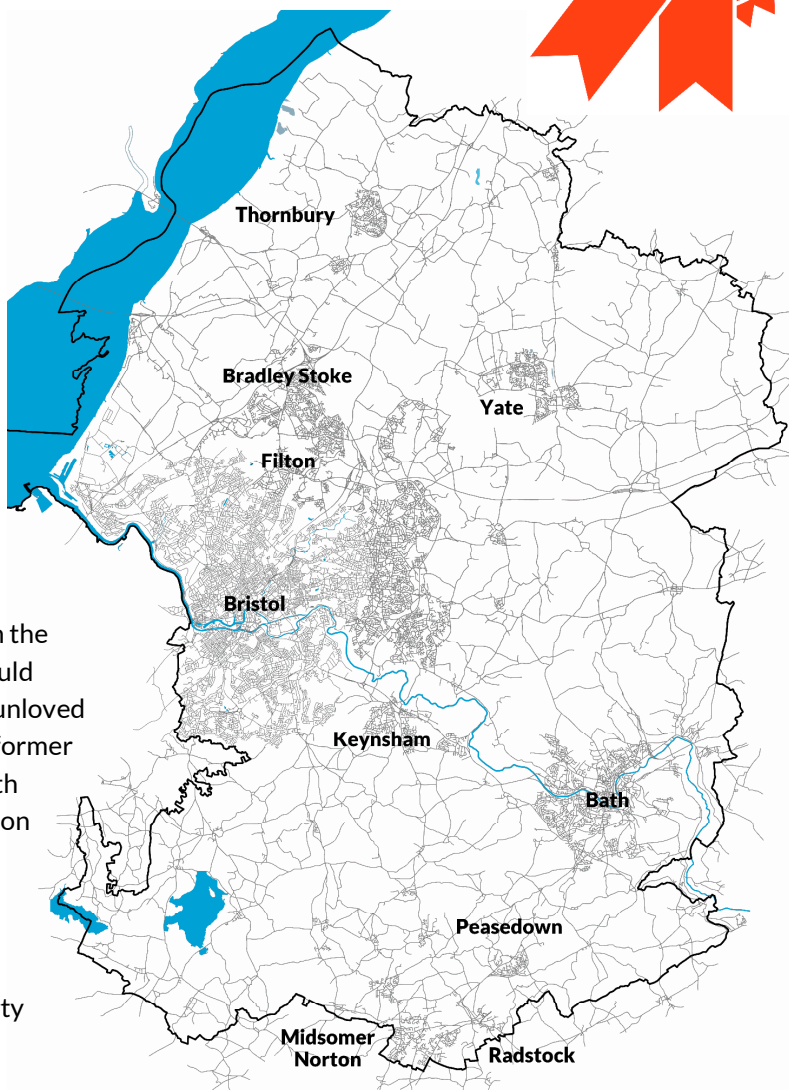
Candidates

● Arron Banks	Reform
● Helen Godwin	Labour
● Oli Henman	Liberal Democrats
● Mary Page	Green Party
● Ian Scott	Independent
● Steve Smith	Conservative

The West of England Combined Authority is another of these cobbled-together jurisdictions that have been named oddly.

What is "West England"? Most would think of a much larger area with millions of residents than the environs of the City of Bristol. But then they could hardly have resurrected the controversial and unloved title of Avon - of which this is almost all of that former concocted county. The final piece of Avon: North Somerset (Weston super Mare, Nailsea, Clevedon and Portishead), is negotiating to join.

This is, essentially, Bristol City region and, because the eponymous city is present, there is the prospect - not a certainty - of a Green Party win here.



Again, the abandonment of the Supplementary Vote system for electing mayors changes the dynamics of the race considerably.

In Cambridgeshire we have looked at how that change should benefit the Conservatives. In Hull and East Yorkshire it may well benefit Reform UK. Here, it may save Labour.

It isn't obvious that, were the Greens to have snatched second place under a two-round system supporters of the eliminated parties would have switched to them to defeat Labour but enough of them may well have.

Four parties can make a case that they could win this mayoralty but Labour, as incumbents and now holder of six of the nine parliamentary constituencies in this cluster, should start as favourites. This is not least because Labour polled (considerably) more votes in the five Bristol constituencies alone at last year's general election than the Conservatives across the entire cluster.

The Conservative case is somewhat similar to that Cambridgeshire: they might be able to win on a very low vote share by being the party that comes second everywhere given that Labour, Greens and Lib Dems have areas in which they are very weak as well as their strongholds.

The problem with this argument - theoretically possible - is that at the last general election they didn't even manage second in Bristol and Bath. And in last year's Policing and Crime Commissioner elections, despite voters tending to be more inclined to vote

Conservative for that job (even as the party lost its polling lead as the strongest party on law and order) the Greens just beat them to second place.

It is unlikely - highly unlikely - that with Reform likely to poll tens of thousands of votes in this election (they polled over 40,000 in the general election across this cluster) the Conservatives will come second, let alone in so even a way across the entire combined authority as to squeak through overall.

Nonetheless, the Tories won the first election to this mayoralty in 2017, finishing 10,000 ahead of Labour in the first round; and were almost 18,000 votes ahead of the Greens while losing to Labour in 2021. That is not an insubstantial lead. It just no longer exists.

The Liberal Democrats hold the remaining two constituencies in this cluster: Bath and Thornbury & Yate. Again, had SV still been the electoral system in use they may have been the beneficiaries if they could have finished second, benefiting from the second preferences of Conservatives and Greens.

But while the Lib Dems should again poll a significant stack of votes their fade out in Bristol and its suburbs across the boundary, and weakness in North East Somerset beyond Bath make it unlikely the Lib Dems will be competitive.

This cluster of constituencies does not represent a great hunting ground for Reform. Bristol and Bath are both very much not Reform-friendly cities being full of university-educated, affluent professionals tending to either a progressive or radical outlook.

2021 Mayor of the West of England first round votes by district

	Con	Lab	LD	Grn
Bath and North East Somerset	15,278	15,135	9,451	7,603
Bristol	28,444	50,131	20,053	38,510
South Gloucestershire	28,693	19,168	11,689	8,806
Total	72,415	84,434	41,193	54,919

2017 Mayor of the West of England first round votes by district

	Con	Lab	LD	Grn
Bath and North East Somerset	13,103	6,137	10,021	4,398
Bristol	18,146	29,676	20,675	13,857
South Gloucestershire	22,547	7,814	9,098	3,799
Total	53,796	43,627	39,794	22,054

2024 Avon and Somerset Police and Crime Commissioner votes by district (excluding North Somerset and Somerset Councils)

	Con	Lab	LD	Grn
Bath and North East Somerset	10,281	9,526	4,859	5,088
Bristol	19,788	47,220	10,412	37,375
South Gloucestershire	17,528	15,192	5,678	6,283
Total	47,597	71,938	20,949	48,746

There may be some Reform votes in the council estates of South Bristol, in Keynsham and the smaller towns and villages of rural north east Somerset but these areas are not populous enough to propel them towards a win.

Reform has nominated one of the "Bad Boys of Brexit" Arron Banks as its mayoral candidate and while he'll be able to fund a full campaign, having one of the most prominent Leave campaigners from 2016 in an area that voted 56% Remain is a liability.

And so we get to the Greens. Can they win this mayoralty? On the one hand they are the party most

capable of defeating Labour. The Greens nearly won an overall majority on Bristol Council last year, falling just a couple of seats short. For the first time ever they outpolled Labour across the city: 49,300 to 38,868.

They should be able to build on that lead by adding disgruntled general election Labour voters who have been dismayed at the first nine months of Sir Keir Starmer government. And they will hope that they haven't lost too many Green voters not best pleased by the Green track-record running Bristol council. They probably haven't. Not yet, at least.

The Labour winner of the mayoralty in 2021, Dan Norris, is now MP for North East Somerset and so isn't defending this position and has been embroiled in a number of very serious criminal allegations. His replacement is Bristol councillor Helen Godwin, who was a senior member of the last Labour administration in the city.

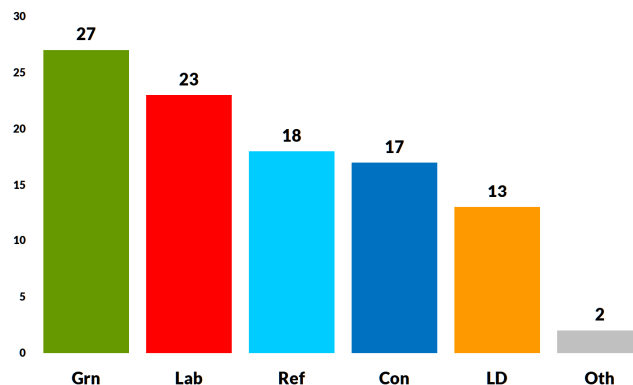
Labour's massive head start - be it their lead over the Greens from the last mayoral election of almost 30,000, or from last year's general election (almost 72,000 on a higher turnout) gives them a huge cushion to absorb the decline in their popularity since moving into government.

Labour was also able to win the Avon and Somerset PCC election last year, albeit when the Conservatives were still in government, and the fact they were able to triumph despite the whole of the county of Somerset (which becomes very much less Labour-inclined the further you move from this specific part of the county) getting a vote shows their 2021 mayoral win wasn't a fluke.

It's also worth noting that the Police Commissioner elections were held on the same day as the Bristol City elections and, while the Greens won those, Labour polled almost 10,000 more votes for PCC. That shows either that a fair chunk of the Green vote at council and general elections is tactical, or that even Green voters don't want Greens running local police services.


Greater Bristol isn't the sort of area disaffected Labour voters would switch to Reform in numbers and it might

be the case that the party's support is holding up better here than in red wall areas. But the strength - and therefore credibility - of the Greens and Lib Dems give voters who do want to give Labour a kick enough options to knock quite a lot of the stuffing out of that cushion.



The YouGov poll of mayoral elections in the week prior to polling gave the Greens a narrow 4-point lead over Labour, but with four parties within ten points of each other. Given the strength of the Lib Dems in Bath & North East Somerset, and South Gloucestershire fifth place will be disappointing, but no doubt there is a real squeeze going on.

Another feature of the poll was that, if only voters claiming to be 10 out of 10 certain to vote are counted, Reform wins. If you widen the sample to include those down to 7 out of 10 (still far more than will actually turn out) Reform comes fifth. It's that close.



BANKS FOR BRISTOL AND THE WEST OF ENGLAND

My plan is to hold the local councils accountable and demand they provide better services while cutting waste. I'm shocked but not surprised at the level of incompetence from all three local councils.

ARRON BANKS




A Strong West of England My Plan for Real Change

VOTE REFORM UK | MAY 1ST 2025


LOCAL ELECTIONS REFORMUK

MY PLEDGE IS

- To shut the Metro Mayor's Office and the fancy building, and to create a small focused team working on your priorities.
- To dismantle waste, cut bureaucracy, and improve the services you rely on.
- To commission a rolling independent audit to uncover waste, fraud, and mismanagement, ensuring full transparency.
- To donate the entire salary as West of England Mayor to a range of local charities.
- To demand the re-opening of Thornbury High Street to cars and work to restore life to the town.
- To deliver real services and common sense policies, not petty politics.



Oli Henman



Oli Henman is ready to lead the West of England into a fairer, greener and brighter future.

He is a local councillor in the ward of Bath & NE Somerset and has extensive expertise in sustainable development, including as a UK advisor. Oli brings both international experience and a deep connection to our communities.

"I'm committed to cutting waste in the Mayor's office and putting power back where it belongs: in the hands of local communities. The West of England Mayor has a key role to play in delivering affordable and accessible transport, sustainable housing and the jobs of the future."

I will champion the needs of all local residents in these challenging times, listening and working collaboratively with our local councils to ensure a fair deal for all. The Liberal Democrats have the broadest reach of any party in the region, reflecting our growing momentum. With a strong track record of action, we are the clear alternative to years of ineffective leadership."

Oli Henman

Residents across the West of England have been faced with a higher cost of living and loss of vital services due to years of mismanagement and central government cuts.

As Mayor, Oli will deliver a bold ambitious agenda for change. He will deliver reliable transport, affordable housing, and more jobs for the future.

Prepared by F. Ustankowski on behalf of Oli Henman, Liberal Democrat, at 31 James Street West, Bath, BA1 3JH

Liberal Democrats

BETTER TRANSPORT

- Take control of local bus services through franchising, ensuring reliability, guaranteeing and bringing back essential routes, and opening fares.
- Deliver cheaper, reliable bus services for children and young people to get to school, college and university.
- Invest in a single and transport network, including cycling infrastructure and developing a smart rapid transit system to connect towns, cities, and employment hubs.

BETTER HOUSING


- Build more affordable and sustainable housing, including new local homes, by working with local councils and ensuring proper planning compliance.
- Prevent land banking by freeing up space in underused townland sites.
- Support community engagement on housing development plans to ensure the right homes in the right places, while protecting and enhancing the environment through Biodiversity Net Gain.

BETTER ECONOMY AND JOBS

- Expand training and apprenticeships to help people re-enter the workforce, focusing on key industries like net zero construction, renewables, and technology innovation.
- Work with local businesses, start-ups, technology experts and engineering companies to create quality jobs and career opportunities in the industries of the future.
- Utilisation a £100 million West of England Investment Fund to support infrastructure and economic development.


BETTER LOCAL CONTROL

- Improve transparency in the Mayor's office to redirect resources towards frontline services and investments in local communities.
- Seek powers to control business rates and regulate short term lets, ensuring local investment benefits.
- Conserve community conservation areas from residents, community organisations, local authorities and businesses.
- Representatives in order to develop a purposeful and sustainable purpose on transport, housing and jobs.



Oli Henman

oli@olihenman.co.uk



HELEN GODWIN

Labour Candidate for the West of England Mayor

A NEW CHAPTER FOR THE WEST OF ENGLAND

Dear resident,

The West of England is my home, it's where I was born, grew up and now I'm raising my children here. I am standing to be your next Mayor because I have the experience and fresh ideas to deliver change across our region.

I've been a business leader and served as a council cabinet member, fighting to protect the essential services that we all rely on.

As your Mayor, I'll champion the West of England every day and focus on what matters most to you: building a reliable and connected public transport system, developing new homes with the services they need, protecting our precious environment and addressing the jobs of the future to our doorstep.

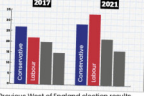
I will work with the Labour Government to deliver real results for everyone who lives in the West of England.

Vote Labour on Thursday 1 May.

Best wishes,

Helen

P.S. Elected in the West of England and always close between Labour and the Conservatives. For the only candidate who can lead the Conservatives and deliver change for our region.



Previous West of England election results

HELEN'S PLAN FOR THE WEST OF ENGLAND

- Work with the Labour government to unlock new funding for the region
- Deliver a reliable bus network with one ticket, one timetable
- Secure new railway stations including Ashton Gate, St Annes, Filton North (Brazon), Portishead, Seiford and Chardfield
- Build new homes with the schools, NHS services and transport links they need
- Link education and industry, creating new jobs for the region
- I want to hear your views. Email me at: helengodwin@labour.org.uk

Vote Labour THURSDAY 1 MAY

499, 20. Promoted by Ann Mitchell on behalf of Helen Godwin, both of Bath, Bristol, who worked at Bath, Bath, Bath.

VOTE FOR MARY PAGE

WEST OF ENGLAND MAYOR

1ST MAY



Dear neighbour,

The Green Party offers a New Green Deal. We have a plan which puts people and communities at the heart of our region.

After 15 years of cuts too many people and businesses are struggling. Instead of us being better off, it's just the multi-millionaires who have more money in the bank.

The only growth is how much we're paying in rent or our mortgages, how long we have to work, and how much time it takes to travel around the region. Some homes aren't fit to live in, too many jobs don't pay enough to live on, and our transport is in gridlock.

My Nature, Nurture and Needs plan will provide sustainable jobs, better homes and reliable transport in an environment where we can thrive.

Vote for me, **Mary Page** and **We Can** go together.

westofengland@southwest.greenparty.org.uk

Business Development Work Coach

Co-founder It's Our City Bristol Community Project Worker



MARY PAGE

NATURE: PROTECT OUR ENVIRONMENT AND EMPOWER COMMUNITIES

1st week: Boost support for community projects and funding bids
1st year: Build environmental protection into neighbourhood plans

NURTURE: GROW A THRIVING ECONOMY WITH SUSTAINABLE SKILLS

1st week: Begin review of sustainability outcomes for policy and process
1st year: Raise skill levels in adult English, maths, green and digital tech

NEEDS: RELIABLE REGULAR INTEGRATED TRANSPORT

1st week: Start process of bringing buses under public control
1st year: Deliver free/cheap travel with the Freedom Smart Card

Green Party

Promoted by Ann Mitchell on behalf of Mary Page Green Party at 17 Green Square, Bristol BS1 3JH

Speaking Truth to Power! IAN SCOTT

Standing up for Your Rights as a Local Independent Candidate!

GIVE US OUR MONEY BACK!

We need to Bridge the Gap again and work with North Somerset where the only Airport and Royal Portbury Docks are economic generators for the West of England. The Gateway to the World. The West of England is a Net Contributor to the British Economy but is not in the first franchise of Integrated Funding? Like West Yorkshire is!

West Yorkshire or West of England?

National Political Party or Local Independent? You have the Power

Being Old is not a Crime! Experience is a Good Thing!

MY EXPERIENCE

Grew up in St Anne's Park Bristol – Lived in Filton since 1988 – Home to the Aerospace Industry, MCO and the Post Office

Illustrating WE need International - National and Local Investment

Public Service & Political Activist for over 40 years

Current South Gloucestershire Council - 10 years
Chaired South Gloucestershire Council Health Strategy
Filton Councillor - 15 years
School Governor - 12 years - Primary and Secondary
West of England - European Structure Investment Fund Member - 3 years
Avon Fire Authority Member - 4 years
Bristol University Court Member - 6 years
GFA Football Association Committee Member - 2 years
Southwest Councils - RTSG Local Governance Level 4 - Assessor

Promoted by Ian Scott Independent Candidate 55 Chaborough Road Filton South Gloucestershire BS347QZ

IAN SCOTT

- Standing up for Your Rights as an Independent
- I will Speak Truth to Power and Support:

Better Health Services

New Franchise Community Hospital and Urgent Treatment Centre.

Improved Buses and Transport

Cheaper Bus Fares and Better Bus Routes and Train Services. New Local Train Stations - like St Anne's Park and Filton North. More Respect for Residents and Car Users in Consultations.

School House Waiting Lists Are Too Long!

More Council and Affordable Homes. Better Protection for Renters.

Skills Training that Supports New Industry Jobs and Housing

Seek Further International, European and National investment to modernise industry like Filton's Aerospace Industry and the jobs of the future in Green Energy and New Technology.

GIVE US OUR MONEY BACK!

We Pay too much of our Tax to National Government who need to give it back to us to Fund Local Services.

Educated Locally at St Anne's Park, St George and Bristol Colleges, TUC and the Bristol Business School (now UWE).

Over 40 years Work Experience

Post Office 19 years + (From the Age of 16)
South Gloucestershire Council and Bristol Council 11 years +
Education Trade Union Regional Officer 14 years +

Email: ianmick_scott@blueyonder.co.uk

Promoted by Ian Scott Independent Candidate 55 Chaborough Road Filton South Gloucestershire BS347QZ

WEST OF ENGLAND MAYORAL ELECTION THURSDAY 1ST MAY

STEVE SMITH

FOR WEST OF ENGLAND MAYOR

A common sense plan for our region

LET'S GET OUR REGION MOVING (AT LAST), WITH A MAYOR WHO WILL:

- End the war on the motorist
- Sort out our bus services
- Expand railway services
- Champion the Green Belt
- Grow our region's economy and jobs



Promoted by Ann Mitchell on behalf of Steve Smith, both of Bath, Bristol, who worked at Bath, Bath, Bath.

Steve Smith's practical business plan

to deliver for the WHOLE of the West of England

- END THE WAR ON THE MOTORIST**
stopping congestion-creating schemes like the A4 bus lane between Bath and Bristol.
- SORT OUT OUR BUS SERVICES**
expanding services, especially in rural areas, and keeping fares down.
- EXPAND THE RAILWAY NETWORK**
opening five new stations in two years and progressing another three.
- CHAMPION THE GREEN BELT**
by promoting a strong regional "brownfield first" policy and the investment to do it.
- BACK ECONOMIC AND JOB GROWTH**
supporting business and investment - like expanding the Rec in Bath.
- PROMOTE CITY AND TOWN REGENERATION**
get on with key regeneration schemes like Broadmead.

Conservatives

Promoted by Ann Mitchell on behalf of Steve Smith, both of Bath, Bristol, who worked at Bath, Bath, Bath.