



LONDON Elections

A SPECIAL BRIEFING FROM LONDON COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY – 10 MAY 2010

- Most unexpected results in borough elections in decades
- One in three councils (11) in London see change in control
- Labour has a huge night as they win 10 boroughs and now control 17
- Cons have a poor night, now controlling only 11
- Lib Dems do even worse losing one in four seats and now only run two councils
- Only two boroughs now NOC, down from eight

The ongoing national uncertainty remains the main focus this weekend, understandably, but **something pretty amazing** happened in the London local elections on Thursday, too. The very first sign of this was when Enfield, the first borough to declare, returned a Labour council against all expectations.

By midnight on Friday, of London's 32 boroughs, no fewer than **11 had seen change in political control**.

Much of this was driven by a **resurgent London Labour party** which swept back to power in boroughs like Brent, Camden, Islington and Southwark, but also won back outer boroughs like Ealing, Enfield, Hounslow and Waltham Forest. It really was a remarkable night with the number of Labour councillors up around 194 from 684 in 2006 to 878. They now control 17 of London's 32 boroughs.

The Conservatives by contrast had a poor night. I recall two Conservative leaders saying privately in February they felt the **Tories had reached their local zenith in 2006**. How right they were. The Conservatives have lost Ealing, Enfield and Harrow to Labour, have failed to take full control of Merton and have lost shared control of Brent, Camden and Southwark. The one bright spot was Richmond, won back from the Lib Dems. In total they have 713 councillors - down 72 from 2006 and run 11 Councils.

But this was nothing compared to the **poor performance of the Lib Dems**. The so-called Clegg surge, which appeared to hold up in the national polls until the final week, completely collapsed in London. Whilst they held Kingston and Sutton and increased their leads over the Conservatives in both, they lost Richmond to the Tories and Islington to Labour. The former Lib Dem-Conservative coalitions in Brent, Camden and Southwark have all gone, after just one term – with all three councils now Labour. With only 242 councillors, the Lib Dems lost 89 from 2006. The result demonstrated yet again that the two party dominance in London simply cannot be broken and reinforced how poorly the Lib Dems did in the GLA elections in 2008.



The smaller parties fared even worse. On a positive note, the BNP was completely wiped out, losing all their 12 seats in Barking & Dagenham and their seats in Havering and Redbridge. “Other” parties which held 72 seats in 2006, now only hold 20. The Greens did very poorly, now only holding two seats.

For those who work with the boroughs, one major change is the **significant reduction in Councils that previously had No Overall Control.** Before Thursday there were eight; now there are only two – Merton and Redbridge.

So what does this all mean?

- First and foremost, the **fragmentation of London politics into smaller groups has been halted dramatically.** No less than half the boroughs are either one party states (Barking and Dagenham and Newham) or two party states (14). The 20 seats for other parties is the lowest total since 1964 – since the GLC was created in fact.
- Second, this would appear to be **very good news for Ken Livingstone and any other Labour politicians interested in running for Mayor in 2012.** Simon Fletcher, Ken’s former chief of staff who ran the London end of the Labour campaign, will be very pleased with the party’s efforts.
- Third, it shows that **split voting has happened,** significantly in some places. In Ealing, Enfield, Harrow and Hounslow the Conservatives won seats from Labour in the general election, yet all four boroughs went Labour.
- Fourth, there was a **massively increased turnout** on 2006, which appears to have helped Labour much more than other parties.
- Fifth, there will be a **change in political leadership at London Councils** now that Labour control 17 of the 32 boroughs.
- Sixth, **West London now has four Labour boroughs,** which strikes an odd tone when one considers that nationally Labour is the only party which is pro a third runway at Heathrow.

London’s results, perhaps most importantly, send an **interesting signal to the Conservative party** – Lib Dem-Conservative coalitions in three boroughs were swept away in London after only one term. A foretaste of what is to come perhaps?

	2010	2006	2002	1998
Labour	17	7	15	18
Conservatives	11	14	8	4
Lib Dems	2	3	3	2
NOC	2	8	3	8

In share of vote, our provisional calculation is that Labour’s, which was around 28% in 2006, is up some 10% to 37/38%, the Conservatives static at around 35-36%, the Lib Dems down from 20% in 2006 probably 4% to 16-17% and “other” parties down from 17% by 6% to around 11-12%.

Please turn to pages three-six overleaf for the borough by borough results and commentary.

Robert Gordon Clark
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Borough	New Political Control (Majority) Result	Number of Seats	LCA Commentary
Barking & Dagenham No ward below 57%	Labour (51) Lab hold	L 51 (+19)	Perhaps the most staggering result of the night as all other parties were swept away as Labour won every seat. Most significantly and welcome, the BNP lost all 12 seats. Two lots of Independent councillors lost too, and the two Cons seats. Margaret Hodge was right when she told the BNP to “leave B&D for good” but the council really needs to deliver for the white working class now.
Barnet	Cons (15) Cons hold	C 39 (+3) L 21 (+1) LD 3 (-3)	The Cons actually strengthened here by picking up three seats from the Lib Dems. The residents’ attempts to win seats failed.
Bexley 69.9%	Cons (41) Cons hold	C 52 (-2) L 11 (+3)	The Cons lost two seats and one Independent went too, as Labour picked up three seats. Otherwise remained solid Cons. The first of now 14 two-party boroughs in London
Brent No ward below 52%	Labour (17) Lab win from NOC	L 40 (+21) LD 17 (-10) C 6 (-9)	A classic Labour borough is now back under their control from a Lib Dem/Cons coalition – one of three of these that are now no more. Labour picked up a staggering 21 seats, 10 from the Lib Dems and 11 from the Cons. Yet, at national level Dawn Butler lost to Sarah Teather, which suggests some split voting went on here.
Bromley No ward below 58.94%	Cons (46) Cons hold	C 53 (+3) L 4 (+1) LD 3 (-4)	A council where the Cons actually strengthened their lead by picking up four seats from the Lib Dems. One bright spot on an otherwise poor night for the Tories.
Camden No ward below 53.42%	Labour (9) Labour win from NOC	L 30 (+15) C 10 (-2) LD 10 (-12) Green 1 (-2)	In 2006 Camden’s move to NOC was seen as one of the most totemic moments as London moved more to the right. However the Lib Dem/Cons coalition only lasted one term, as Labour doubled its seats to 30. The Lib Dems were the big losers seeing 12 seats go. The 25 May by-election in Haverstock ward for the final three seats will make no difference now.
Croydon 64%	Cons (4) Cons hold	C 37 (-5) L 33 (+8)	Yet another borough sees Independent councillors go, leaving this a two party council. The Cons majority of 12 has been trimmed to only four, despite winning the Croydon Central seat.
Ealing 62.24%	Labour (11) Lab win from Cons	L 40 (+17) C 24 (-19) LD 5 (+2)	Well we have always said that Ealing is the bell-whether borough of London and its result predicts the next general election. The Tories did not win nationally, and they lost Ealing, but not to NOC. Instead Labour came storming back, winning 17 seats. The Lib Dems picked up two seats as Tory leader Jason Stacey’s project ended.

Borough % Turn out (where available)	New Political Control (Majority) Result	Number of Seats	LCA Commentary
Enfield	Labour (9) Lab win from Cons	L 36 (+9) C 27 (-7)	Enfield was the first borough to declare at lunch time on Friday and we realised then that something strange might be happening. Whilst it was the only Cons held borough to lose seats in 2006 and still remained blue, not many saw this result coming, especially as the Enfield North seat went Tory. The two single issue councillors (Save Chase Farm hospital) lost here too making this the third two party state.
Greenwich No ward below 54.1%	Labour (33) Lab hold	L 42 (+6) C 9 (-4)	Rumours of nervous Labour councillors in Greenwich were clearly misplaced, as Labour won six more seats and the Lib Dems lost their two seats too. The fourth two party state in London sees Labour now hold a 33 majority .
Hackney 58%	Labour (43) Lab hold	L 50 (+5) C 4 (-5) LD 3 (+1)	Like Greenwich, B&D and Haringey this is another Labour stronghold where they actually increased their majority, picking up five more seats. The one Green seat went too. Mayor Jules Pipe was re-elected.
Hammersmith & Fulham No ward below 58%	Cons (16) Cons hold	C 31 (-2) L 15 (+2)	The Tories had a poor night in London, but holding H&F comfortably and winning Richmond were the two main bright spots. They did though lose two seats when some thought they would win a few more. Remains a two party state.
Haringey No ward below 49.2%	Labour (11) Lab hold	L 34 (+5) LD 23 (-3)	If there was one borough where change was likely it was Haringey. Instead the Lib Dems lost three seats and the Labour lead is now 11. The one Cons and one Independent lost here too making this our sixth two party borough.
Harrow 65.16%	Labour (5) Lab win from Cons	L 34 (+10) C 27 (-11) LD 1 (nc) Ind 1 (+1)	A Conservative majority of seven in Harrow became a Labour one of five, despite the defeat of Labour MP Tony McNulty in the Harrow East seat. One of only four boroughs now with more than three parties represented.
Havering No ward below 56.5%	Cons (tbc) Cons hold	C 33 (+1) RA 12 (nc) L 5 (+3) ILR 4 (+2)	Havering's seven party state before the election is down to just four. The Conservatives added one to their 32 seat position, the Lib Dems lost their two seats, one residents' association lost two seats with the BNP and an Independent losing one seat each.
Hillingdon No ward below 52.21%	Cons (27) Cons hold	C 46 (+3) L 19 (-2)	Another borough where what Lib Dem representation existed is now no more. Also the Independent councillors here lost out too. The Cons majority has increased here by six as another council becomes a two party state.

Borough	New Political Control (Majority) Result	Number of Seats	LCA Commentary
Hounslow No ward below 54%	Labour (10) Lab win from NOC	L 35 (+12) C 25 (+1)	Moves from a Cons/community coalition to Labour control. The Tories actually picked up one more seat, but the Lib Dems and all the community councillors (eight) are wiped out as Labour picks up 13 seats. The council has moved from a six party to two party state.
Islington No ward below 55.57%	Labour (22) Lab win from LD	L 35 (+12) LD 13 (-11)	For months we had been predicting a Labour win in Islington as the resurgent local party canvassed hard. The national Lib Dem surge made us think again, but Labour have delivered and in spades, winning 12 seats. The one Green has gone here too making it another two party state.
Kensington & Chelsea	Cons (30) Cons hold	C 42 (-3) L 10 (+2) LD 2 (+1)	Cons drop three seats here but remain comfortably in control. The Lib Dems hold two seats on the council bucking the London trend.
Kingston upon Thames 64%	Lib Dem (6) Lib Dem hold	LD 27 (+2) C 21 (nc)	Another council where the number of parties represented has reduced, with Labour losing their two councillors. A rare bright spot for the Lib Dems, picking up two more council seats whilst the Conservatives will be disappointed not to win Kingston
Lambeth 58%	Labour (25) Lab hold	L 44 (+7) LD 15 (-3) C 4 (-3)	Labour increased its hold on Lambeth, winning a further seven seats and stretching the majority from 11 to 25. The Greens lost their one seat here.
Lewisham No ward below 49.7%	Labour (tbc) Lab win from NOC	L 38 (+12) LD 12 (-4) Green 1 (-5)	Labour won back outright control of Lewisham, taking 12 more seats, even though three wards are still to declare. The Cons lost their three seats here and the Lib Dems lost four. Steve Bullock was re-elected as Mayor.
Merton	NOC Stays NOC	L 28 (+1) C 27 (-2) Ind 3 (+2) LD 2 (+2)	One of only two boroughs that are now NOC in London. This was one council that the Cons really expected to take control of, needing to win only two seats. Instead they lost two. Only a Lab/Ind coalition can deliver a majority here.
Newham 50.37%	Labour (60) Lab hold	L 60 (+4)	Along with Barking and Dagenham, Newham is now a one party state as Respect and the Christian People's Alliance lost their seats. Sir Robin Wales was also re-elected as Mayor.
Redbridge 62.41%	NOC Stays NOC	C 30 (-1) L 26 (+12) LD 7 (-6)	Redbridge was Con controlled in 2006 but moved to NOC with defections in 2009. It has stayed NOC. The BNP lost its one seat and the Independent councillors were also defeated.
Richmond upon Thames	Cons (6) Cons win from LD	C 30 (+12) LD 24 (-11)	The see-saw that is Richmond continues. The Lib Dems not only lost the Richmond Park seat but also 11 council seats as the council alternates again between these two parties. The Goldsmith Z-Factor clearly had a strong effect.

Borough	New Political Control (Majority) Result	Number of Seats	LCA Commentary
Southwark No ward below 50.8%	Labour (8) Lab win from NOC	L 34 (+6) LD 23 (-5) C 3 (-2)	Labour has picked up six seats, which was enough to move Southwark from another Lib Dem/Cons coalition to Labour control. The one Green went here too.
Sutton 69.8%	Lib Dem (32) Lib Dem hold	LD 43 (+11) C 11 (-9)	One significant bright spot for the Lib Dems was holding Sutton and also increasing their majority from 10 to 32. The Tories lost nine seats having previously been confident about taking the council as well as the two parliamentary seats which they also failed to gain. London's only UKIP councillor lost out here too.
Tower Hamlets 56.5%	Labour (31) Lab hold	L 41 (+11) C 8 (-1) LD 1 (-3) Respect 1 (-7)	A borough that was rumoured to go NOC, with problems around the election system, a majority of nine is now 31 for Labour. Respect were the big losers here, and saw seven councillors lose their seats.
Wandsworth 63%	Cons (34) Cons hold	C 47 (-3) L 13 (+4)	The Cons majority is down two in Wandsworth as Labour unexpectedly picked up four seats.
Waltham Forest 60%	Labour (14) Lab win from NOC	L 37 (+13) C 18 (+3) LD 5 (-16)	The Labour/Lib Dem coalition has been replaced by a Labour majority as the Lib Dems lost 16 seats to both of the other parties.
Westminster	Cons (36) Cons hold	C 48 (-1) L 12 (+1)	The only borough in the whole of London where there was no change compared with the 2006 local election result.

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