



UPDATE – 6 JUNE

LONDON Elections

A SPECIAL BRIEFING FROM LONDON COMMUNICATIONS AGENCY – 4 MAY 2006

- **A dramatic 14 out of 32 boroughs see a change in control**
- **The capital swings to the Tories who now have 14 boroughs – as LCA predicted**
- **Labour down to their smallest number of boroughs since 1968 – and more than LCA predicted**
- **The Lib Dems hold only three councils – no change**
- **Nearly one third of councils are now NOC**
- **In summary, LCA predictions were in the right direction but simply not far enough...St Mungo's get a cheque for £2,500!**

Well, what a night! London has simply not seen such dramatic political change for 30 years.

According to our man in the pub, Robert (up all night at the Counting House in the City, appearing on the BBC Election special), the experience of watching the results as they actually came in was extraordinary.

All the boroughs LCA said MIGHT change control, DID, and two besides – 14 in total have seen a change, nearly half of London's 32 boroughs.

The biggest surprises were: Lewisham, where Labour lost a whopping 28-seat majority to see it go to No Overall Control (NOC); Islington, which has been lost by the Liberals and is now NOC; and Ealing, where Labour's majority was 27 and the Conservatives have taken outright control. Ealing, of course, is the bellwether borough which has foreshadowed the general election result on every occasion bar one since 1968.

- As we predicted, the Conservatives are now the largest party among London's boroughs, with 14 in outright control. They also now run Merton as a minority administration and Hounslow in a coalition with a local residents' group meaning that HALF of the boroughs are now under Conservative control.
- We also predicted that the Liberal Democrats would struggle to make a big impact – we were right: they remain with three boroughs in outright control.
- As for Labour, we predicted back in February that they would lose five, so losing nine boroughs, despite gaining Lambeth, is a major problem. No doubt the 3-4 weeks before the election had a significant impact.
- And we suggested that the NOC boroughs could rise to 10 and they nearly did – now eight.

So here are the headlines

- Labour 7 (-8)
- Conservative 14 (+6)
- Liberal Democrats 3 (no change)
- NOC 8 (+2)

See overleaf for an alphabetical snapshot of each borough as well as updated details on the situation in the NOC boroughs. There is also a page of interesting facts from the election.

Robert Gordon Clark and Chris Madel



LONDON ELECTIONS – INTERESTING FACTS

- 14 boroughs saw some form of change in political control, the most since the 1971 elections
- The Conservatives returned 787 councillors in London compared with 653 in 2002, Labour have 684, down from 866 in 2002, and the Lib Dems won 317 seats, up from 309 in 2002
- Minor parties won a total of 73 seats in London (33 in 2002). Of these the Green Party won 12 seats in 6 boroughs (Camden, Hackney, Islington, Lambeth, Lewisham, Southwark) while the BNP won 13 seats across Barking & Dagenham, Havering and Redbridge
- Conservative-free boroughs – Islington, Haringey and Newham (3)
- Labour-free boroughs – Richmond and Sutton (2)
- Liberal Democrat-free boroughs – Barking & Dagenham, Bexley, Croydon, Enfield, Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, Merton, Wandsworth, Westminster (9). The Lib Dems also have only 1 councillor in Harrow and Havering, 3 in Ealing and 4 in Greenwich and overall lost seats in twice as many boroughs that they made gains in.
- West London is now a Labour-free zone with the party losing every borough they controlled - Hounslow, Ealing, Brent and Hammersmith & Fulham. The Conservatives now control 4 (Ealing, H&F, Harrow, Hillingdon) while the other 2 West London boroughs are NOC (Brent, Hounslow)
- Bexley is now the borough with the largest Conservative majority, overtaking both Wandsworth, Kensington & Chelsea and Westminster following gains of 23 seats for the party
- “Pocket Pluralism” – 21 out of 32 boroughs have councillors from 3 parties but 8 of these have councillors from only 2 parties. London can nonetheless still be regarded as a pluralist city.
- Havering had the most number of parties winning seats in the borough - 6; Labour, Conservatives, Liberal Democrats, Residents’ Group, Rainham and Wennington Residents’ Independent Association and the BNP
- Three boroughs are now No Overall Control for the first time – Camden, Hounslow and Lewisham
- A number of high-profile names lost their seats - Labour leader Raj Chada lost his seat in Camden along with environment cabinet member John Thane. Fellow Labour leaders Leo Thomson (Ealing), Stephen Burke (Hammersmith & Fulham) and Michael Keith (Tower Hamlets) were all defeated as was Islington Liberal Democrat leader Steve Hitchens. Hillingdon Lib Dem group leader Steve Carey lost out and Piers Wauchope, the Camden Conservatives chief was also surprisingly defeated.

LONDON LOCAL ELECTIONS RESULTS – 4 MAY 2006

| Borough | New Political Control | Number of Seats | LCA Commentary | LCA Prediction |
|--------------------|--|---|--|---|
| Barking & Dagenham | Lab (Hold) Majority: 27 | Lab - 39 (-4) Other - 11 (+9) Con - 1 (-2) LD - 0 (-3) Total: 51 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus for media attention during the campaign, B&D now has 11 BNP councillors, a worrying position for the borough. • Lab comfortably held the borough but all three main parties lost seats and the Lib Dems failed to return a councillor at a borough election for the first time in 24 years. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |
| Barnet | Con (Hold) Maj: 11 | Con - 37 (+5) Lab - 20 (-4) LD - 6 (-1) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Despite not having an overall majority since Christmas and being under local pressure, the ruling Cons added to their majority winning a further five seats. • Lab and the Lib Dems will be disappointed that they both lost seats (Lab down 4, Lib Dems down 1) after agreeing to form a coalition if the borough went NOC. • Mike Freer is the new Conservative leader of the Council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |
| Bexley | Con (Gain) Maj: 45 | Con - 54 (+23) Lab - 9 (-23) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As expected, the Cons won the borough overturning a one seat deficit and taking 23 seats off Lab. • This is now the safest Con boroughs in the capital with new leader Ian Clement enjoying a 45 seat majority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |
| Brent | Move to NOC | LD - 27 (+18) Lab - 21 (-14) Con - 15 (-4) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Lib Dems campaigned strongly in Brent but despite winning 18 seats failed to take overall control. • Lab lost 13 seats here and are down to their lowest number of councillors since 1968 while the Cons lost four councillors when they were expected to make gains. • As at 6 June political control of the borough was still yet to be agreed between the three parties, although the Lib Dems have failed to gain control of key committees. • Political control is still likely to end up with a Lib Dem minority administration although this will make for difficult politics in the next few years. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |

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| Bromley | Con (Hold) Maj: 38 | Con - 49 (+9) LD - 7 (-6) Lab - 4 (-2) Others - 0 (-1) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Bromley remains in Con control with the party posting its best local election for 38 years. The Lib Dems surprisingly lost 6 seats in a borough where they were hoping to make gains. With the Cons strong showing in the borough elections, we expect the party's parliamentary candidate Bob Neill to hold the Bromley & Chislehurst seat in the by-election on 29 June following the death of Eric Forth. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Camden | Move to NOC | LD - 20 (+13) Lab - 18 (-18) Con - 14 (+3) Green - 2 (+2) Total: 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lab losing the most profiled London borough in recent weeks and one which they have controlled since 1968 was a huge blow for the party. The party lost overall control of the council for only the second time in its history, leader Raj Chada lost his seat, and the Cons and Lib Dems made substantial gains. Since the election, Keith Moffitt (Lib Dem) has been made the new Leader of the Council and a Lib Dem/Con coalition executive agreed. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted Lab hold just) |
| Croydon | Con (Gain) Maj: 16 | Con - 43 (+12) Lab - 27 (-10) LD - 0 (-2) Total: 70 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cons continued their good form in the borough with a victory here following the Croydon Central gain at last year's General Election. Mike Fisher becomes the first Con leader of the Council since 1990. The Lib Dems surprisingly lost both their seats on the council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Ealing | Con (Gain) Maj: 5 | Con - 37 (+20) Lab - 29 (-19) LD - 3 (-1) Total: 69 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Con victory here was one of the major highlights for the party with 20 seats gained and overall control of the council for the first time since 1990. Labour's loss of 19 seats is their worst result here since 1978 and they will be wary that apart from one occasion in the last 42 years the result here is the same as the next General Election. Jason Stacey is the new Conservative leader of the council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted Lab hold) |
| Enfield | Con (Hold) Maj: 7 | Con - 34 (-5) Lab - 27 (+3) Other - 2 (+2) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> A hold for the Cons but the loss of 5 seats and Labour winning 3 was unexpected. The Lib Dems failed to make an impact but the independent group, Save Chase Farm Hospital picked up two seats. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Greenwich | Lab (Hold) Maj: 21 | Lab - 36 (-2) Con - 13 (+4) LD - 2 (-2) Total: 51 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite defeats in neighbouring boroughs, Lab held on in Greenwich, a borough which they have controlled comfortably since 1971. For the Cons this was the best result since 1982 while the Lib Dems failed again to make a significant impact in the borough. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |

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| Hackney | Lab (Hold) Maj: 31 | Lab - 44 (+/-0) Con - 9 (-1) LD - 3 (+/-0) Green - 1 (+1) Total: 57 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Given the results elsewhere in the capital, this was a good hold for Labour who retain the majority they had held for the past 4 years. Surprisingly the Lib Dems and Cons failed to make any gains but the Greens picked up one seat in the Clisshold ward. Labour Mayor Jules Pipe retained his role in the borough with a comfortable majority. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Hammersmith & Fulham | Con (Gain) Maj: 20 | Con - 33 (+16) Lab - 13 (-16) Total: 46 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Cons won their key London target overturning a 12 seat Labour majority and gaining overall control of the council for only the second time in the borough's history. Stephen Greenlough is the new Conservative leader. Lab is now the opposition party for the first time since 1968. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Haringey | Lab (Hold) Maj: 3 | Lab - 30 (-11) LD - 27 (+11) Total: 57 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Considering the other results in the capital, the Lib Dems will be disappointed that they couldn't take control of a council that they had dedicated a significant election resource to winning. Keeping Haringey was one of only a few highlights for Labour despite the party losing 11 seats and now holding a fragile majority of 3. Veteran Lab councillor George Meehan returns as leader having headed the Council between 1983 & 1985 and 1999 & 2004. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Harrow | Con (Gain) Maj: 13 | Con - 38 (+10) Lab - 24 (-6) LD - 1 (-2) Others - 0 (-2) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Winning Harrow was another highlight for the Cons in London. The party won 38 seats and overall control in a council that was widely predicted to stay NOC. Chris Mote is the new leader. The Lib Dems, who won only 3 seats in 2002 due to problems with ballot papers, won just 1 seat this time, while Labour lost 6 councillors having been the largest party since 1998. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted stay NOC) |
| Havering | Con (Gain) Maj: 14 | Con - 34 (+14) Other - 17 (-6) Lab - 2 (-9) LD - 1 (+1) Total: 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Con victory in Havering was reflective of the party's strong performance in outer London boroughs with them gaining a significant number of seats and winning overall control of the council for the first time since 1982. Labour narrowly avoided losing all their councillors in the borough but with only 2 seats, this was their worst election performance in the council's history. The 17 other councillors are made up of 13 representatives from the Local Residents' Group, 3 from the Rainham and Wennington Residents' Independent Association, and 1 from the BNP. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted stay NOC) |

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| Hillingdon | Con (Gain) Maj: 25 | Con - 45 (+15) Lab - 18 (-9) LD - 2 (-6) Total: 65 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As expected, the Cons turned minority control in Hillingdon to an overall majority for the first time since 1990. Labour and the Lib Dems lost 9 and 6 seats respectively while the National Front fortunately failed to make an impact. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Hounslow | Move to NOC | Lab - 24 (-7) Con - 23 (+9) LD - 4 (+/-0) Other - 9 (-2) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Labour's loss of overall control in Hounslow was partially based on the perceived performance of the council with local independent groups the Hounslow Independent Alliance and Isleworth Community Group winning 2 and 6 seats respectively. (The HIA have since picked up a further seat after a Lib Dem councillor was expelled from the party.) Coupled with this there was a strong Con performance, particularly in many of the generally less affluent western wards, with the party winning 9 seats and now just one behind Labour in number of councillors. The Cons have now formed an alliance coalition with the Community Group to lead the Council, made possible by the Lib Dems abstaining from the vote on the proposed executive and two HIA members voting for it at the first full council meeting in late May. Turnham Green councillor Peter Thompson (Con) is the new leader. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted stay NOC) |
| Islington | Move to NOC | LD - 24 (-12) Lab - 23 (+12) Green - 1 (+1) Con - 0 (-1) Total: 48 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Lib Dems losing overall control in Islington was one of the biggest upsets of the election and perhaps partly due to the shift of the party's resource to next-door Haringey. Lab will take heart from the result winning 12 seats, but the Cons will be disappointed losing their only seat in the borough. James Kenton has been selected as the new Lib Dem leader of the council and will head a minority executive. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted stay Lib Dem) |
| Kensington & Chelsea | Con (Hold) Maj: 36 | Con - 45 (+4) Lab - 9 (-3) LD - 0 (-1) Total: 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Another victory for the Cons in K&C who have always had outright control in the borough. Again, the Lib Dems will be disappointed with the result losing their only seat, whilst various independent candidates failed to win in targeted wards. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Kingston upon Thames | LD (Hold) Maj: 2 | LD - 25 (-5) Con - 21 (+6) Lab - 2 (-1) Total: 48 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite the Cons winning 6 seats, the Lib Dems just kept control of Kingston, the borough with the highest council tax in London. Labour surprisingly kept a presence here, losing just one councillor. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect –just (predicted Con win) |

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| Lambeth | Lab (Gain) Maj: 15 | Lab - 39 (+10) LD - 17 (-10) Con - 6 (-1) Green - 1 (+1) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Winning Lambeth was Lab's high point in the London elections with the party taking back one of its former strongholds. • The Lib Dems, who had led a coalition executive with the Cons for the past four years, were hoping to take outright control of the borough so this was a big blow. • Labour councillor Steve Reed is the new leader of the borough. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect (predicted stay NOC) |
| Lewisham | Move to NOC | Lab - 26 (-15) LD - 17 (+10) Green - 6 (+5) Con - 3 (+1) Other - 2 (-1) Total: 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The biggest shock of the night – Labour had controlled Lewisham comfortably for the last 42 years but losing 15 seats was a terrible result for the party • The Lib Dems were the biggest beneficiaries gaining 10 more seats while the Greens won 6 seats and now have more councillors than the Cons. • Despite Labour becoming a minority party on the Council, the party's mayoral candidate Steve Bullock won a second term. He has chosen an all-Labour cabinet but Labour will require support from one of the opposition parties. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect (predicted Lab hold) |
| Merton | Move to NOC | Con - 30 (+6) Lab - 27 (-5) Other - 3 (-1) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Labour was expected to lose control in Merton and the Cons will be disappointed that they couldn't quite win overall control despite now being the largest party on the council. They have now however formed a minority executive led by David Williams and are expected to oversee a number of changes in the borough. • As with several other boroughs, the Lib Dems failed to return a councillor but the local residents' group held three seats and now hold the ring. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Incorrect – just (predicted Con gain) |
| Newham | Lab (Hold) Maj: 48 | Lab - 54 (-2) Other - 6 (+3) Con - 0 (-1) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lab kept control of the Newham mayoralty with Sir Robin Wales winning a second term with a comfortable majority. • The Cons lost their only councillor in the borough and with the Lib Dems also failing to pick up any seats, the opposition will be provided by 3 Respect and 3 Christian People Alliance councillors. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |
| Redbridge | Con (Hold) Maj: 5 | Con - 34 (+/-0) Lab - 19 (+/-0) LD - 9 (-1) Other - 1 (+1) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The result in Redbridge was almost an exact replica of the 2002 result with Lab and the Cons repeating their borough performance of four years ago. • The only changes were the Lib Dems losing a seat and the BNP winning one, their first ever in the borough. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |

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| Richmond upon Thames | LD (Gain) Maj: 18 | LD - 36 (+21) Con - 18 (-21) Total: 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Richmond contained the biggest number of marginal wards (majorities of less than 200) prior to the election so the big turnaround that occurred was not unexpected. The victory for the Lib Dems turned out to be one of their only election plus points and increased their dominance in the south west of the capital. Ex-GLC member Serge Lourie is the new leader. This was a bad result for the Cons and the loss of 16 seats will be worrying in a borough where their dominance is now a distant memory. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Incorrect (predicted Con hold) |
| Southwark | Stay NOC | Lab - 28 (+2) LD - 28 (-1) Con - 6 (+/-0) Green - 1 (+1) Others - 0 (-2) Total: 63 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Southwark was one of the tightest fights in the capital and Lab and the Lib Dems now hold the same number of seats. It seems that even though the Lib Dems are no longer the largest party, they have kept control of the council executive by forming a coalition with the Cons which means that Nick Stanton remains as leader. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Sutton | LD (Hold) Maj: 10 | LD - 32 (-10) Con - 22 (+14) Lab - 0 (-3) Others - 0 (-1) Total: 54 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unsurprisingly, the Lib Dems kept control of Sutton but will be disappointed that they lost 10 seats to the Cons. Labour losing their 3 seats in the borough means it is the first time ever that the party has not had a toehold on the council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Tower Hamlets | Lab (Hold) Maj: 1 | Lab - 26 (-3) Respect - 12 (+11) Con - 7 (+6) LD - 6 (-9) Other - 0 (-5) Total: 51 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> As predicted, Tower Hamlets provided one of the most marginal results at the election with Lab holding on with a majority of just one. Despite Lab retaining control, Respect, who returned 12 councillors, will provide a difficult opposition for the party, while the Cons will be delighted that they managed to build on their by-election result 2 years ago, their first candidate ever to be elected as a councillor in the borough. Denise Jones is the new Lab leader after Michael Keith lost his seat. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |
| Wandsworth | Con (Hold) Maj: 42 | Con - 51 (+1) Lab - 9 (-1) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The borough with the lowest council tax in London was predictably a safe hold for the Cons. Wandsworth continues to be a Lib Dem free zone for the sixth straight election. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correct |

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|----------------|-------------------------------------|---|---|---|
| Waltham Forest | Stay NOC | Lab - 26 (-1) LD - 19 (+4) Con - 15 (-3) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little change here but the Lib Dems will be pleased they won a further 4 seats while the Cons will be disappointed that they lost 3. • However, despite remaining NOC, the dynamic of the Council may well change with the improvement in Lib Dem fortunes. This may mean that the Lab-Lib Dem coalition that ran the borough between 2002 & 2006, and looks set to continue, is noticeably different. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |
| Westminster | Con (Hold) Maj: 36 | Con - 48 (+/-0) Lab - 12 (+/-0) Total: 60 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The highest profile council in London rarely sees big changes in its political composition and this election was no exception - with the Cons holding their 48 seats and Lab remaining on 12. • As with several other boroughs the Lib Dems failed to make an impact and have still never won a seat on the council. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Correct |

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