

# *What works in candidate selection?*

*A discussion paper for the party conferences 2011*

## **What this paper addresses:**

- The effectiveness of different processes for selecting parliamentary candidates at increasing the diversity of MPs, enhancing public participation, ensuring that candidates have the requisite skills, and avoiding party disunity.
- How parties can improve their selection processes in time for the next election.

## **Provisional recommendations:**

- Parties should use 'hybrid systems', where different groups (party leaders, members, and the wider public) are involved at different stages of the selection process.
- Parties should make selection processes more transparent, and provide more information to party members and the public about how the processes work.
- Parties should focus on increasing the supply of aspirant candidates from under-represented groups in the House of Commons, rather than relying solely on top-down mechanisms such as All-Women-Shortlists to increase diversity.
- Strategies for increasing diversity should take account of representation in terms of socioeconomic and professional background, as well as gender and ethnicity.
- Public funding for aspirant candidates from under-represented groups should be considered.
- Public funding for selection mechanisms that widen participation to the general public should also be considered.

This paper presents a summary of provisional conclusions from an Institute for Government project, kindly supported by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust and in collaboration with CenteForum, Policy Exchange, IPPR and Progress, on the selection of parliamentary candidates in the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties.

Further information about this project can be found at:

[www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/our-work/c5/40/Innovations+in+candidate+selection](http://www.instituteforgovernment.org.uk/our-work/c5/40/Innovations+in+candidate+selection)

The Institute for Government is contributing to discussions at all three party conferences on this topic and will publish a final report in October 2011. Should you wish to comment on this paper, please email [rhys.williams@instituteforgovernment.org.uk](mailto:rhys.williams@instituteforgovernment.org.uk) or [akash.paun@instituteforgovernment.org.uk](mailto:akash.paun@instituteforgovernment.org.uk)

# What works in candidate selection?

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This paper presents a summary of the provisional conclusions from an Institute for Government project, kindly supported by the Joseph Rowntree Reform Trust, on how the three major political parties select their parliamentary candidates. Our final conclusions and recommendations will be published as part of a longer report due for publication in October 2011, which will also contain separate chapters on the history of candidate selection reform in the Conservative, Labour and Liberal Democrat parties.

The purpose of the project has been to review recent reforms to candidate selection processes and to assess the effectiveness of different innovations in achieving the stated and implicit goals of the three parties. Broadly speaking, in designing their selection processes, each of the parties has sought to achieve some combination of the following goals:

- increasing the diversity of parliamentary candidates;
- ensuring that candidates have the requisite skills and competencies;
- increasing public participation and engagement in politics;
- while minimising party disunity and conflict.

Our research has focussed on the following mechanisms:

- All-women-shortlists, where Labour's National Executive Committee mandates that local parties in specified seats can choose only women candidates.
- The 'A-List', a preferred list of candidates compiled by Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ), balanced to be representative of the UK population. In certain winnable seats, local associations were required to select an A-List candidate.
- Primary meetings, akin to caucuses in the USA in which members of the public were invited to attend and vote for the candidate (used extensively in the Conservative Party).
- Postal primaries, used by the Conservatives in two seats, where all registered voters in a constituency were able to participate in voting for their preferred candidate by postal ballot.
- Shortlist quotas, used in some form by all three parties, and enshrined in the Liberal Democrat constitution. These specify that a certain proportion of local candidate shortlists must be from a certain group, such as women.
- We also look at the development in all parties of more professionalised assessment procedures for the approval of aspirant parliamentary candidates.

We have found that no candidate selection process at present achieves all of the desired goals simultaneously, partly because the different selectorates involved in choosing parliamentary candidates (PPCs) often have divergent priorities. Consequently the goals have so far proved difficult to reconcile. We believe that to better manage the tradeoffs, the parties need to address underlying causes of unrepresentativeness of candidates and low public participation, and also to develop hybrid systems where party leaders, party members and the public each have a say at different stages of the selection process.

We make eleven overall conclusions:

**1. There is no perfect candidate selection system; there are often tradeoffs between the different objectives that selection processes are designed to deliver.**

No single candidate selection system can deliver it all: a more representative set of candidates, increased public participation, candidates with the requisite skills, and harmonious relations within the party. For instance:

- Strong control by central leaderships can be an effective way to increase diversity. Controlling and imposing candidate lists as the Conservatives did through the 'A-List' or mandating the selection of candidates with particular characteristics, as Labour has done through all-women-shortlists delivered results in terms of a more representative pool of candidates. However, these mechanisms worked by restricting the autonomy of local party members to choose their own candidates and consequently caused a degree of internal party discord.
- Selection processes that are open to the public can successfully promote wider participation in candidate selection but do not necessarily promote diversity. The primary meetings used by the Conservatives resulted in women candidates being selected in only 15% of cases in the absence of other equality promotion measures.
- Toughening up assessment processes for aspirant candidates can improve the quality of candidates but may come at the expense of widening diversity. These processes do not discriminate against candidates in terms of gender or ethnicity but they may limit the likelihood of people with fewer educational qualifications and from a broader range of professions being accepted.

**2. Different selectorates have different priorities in the selection of candidates.**

In designing a party's candidate selection system, one challenge is that the various 'selectorates' that can be involved – party leaders, party members, and the wider public – each appear to look for different qualities in prospective MPs. Party leaders seek candidates with the potential to become effective ministers and spokespeople for their party. They are also likely to prefer candidates with whom they have a personal relationship, and those whose ideological position is similar to their own. Since leaders must take a view of the electability of the party as a whole, they are also more likely to take diversity into account. Consequently, leaders in recent years have combined more centralised and/or professionalised assessment processes with positive action mechanisms, such as all-women-shortlists and the A-List, which give advantages to candidates from groups currently under-represented in the House of Commons.<sup>i</sup>

Local party associations, on the other hand, often emphasise the importance of finding candidates with a connection to their constituency and a proven record of party service. But in practice, and especially in safe seats, the desire for local candidates is often overridden, with party activists likely to pick candidates they believe have the potential to hold ministerial office. This appears to be particularly true for the Conservative Party, where in 2005 only 18% of PPCs had a direct connection to their local constituency, compared to 56% of Labour PPCs and 69% of Liberal Democrat MPs.<sup>ii</sup>

The wider electorate meanwhile, when involved in candidate selection through primary elections, appear strongly to favour local candidates and have little interest in candidates' previous party service or ideological viewpoints. The available evidence also suggests that few voters discriminate according to gender or ethnicity. For instance, a 2008 poll found that three quarters of the electorate would vote for local candidates of the opposite sex rather than non-local candidates of the same sex.<sup>iii</sup> The postal primaries held in Totnes and Gosport, where two local women candidates were selected, further illustrate this. In Totnes, Sarah Wollaston won despite lacking the political

experience of her rivals and, in Gosport, Caroline Dinéage triumphed over three non-local candidates.<sup>iv</sup>

### **3. Strong action by party leaders can increase the diversity of candidates and MPs**

The most common objective of candidate selection reforms in recent years has been to increase the diversity of candidates and ultimately of MPs. The general lesson from these innovations is that strong action by the party leadership is the surest way to deliver a quick win in terms of diversity. Much of the recent rise in women and ethnic minority MPs in the Labour and Conservative parties is down to strong and concerted action by party leaders and other senior figures. The increasing role of central parties in shaping candidates' lists and the introduction of rules limiting the choices available to local associations have counteracted the natural tendency of local members to pick their preferred candidate irrespective of concerns about diversity across the party as a whole.

The introduction of all-women-shortlists in the Labour Party following the 1992 General Election has had a dramatic impact on the number of women MPs and on the gender balance within the Labour Party. Since 1992, 87 women have become MPs after being selected through all-women-shortlists. In 1992 only 14% of Labour MPs were women; in 1997 this jumped to 24%, and following the 2010 General Election women MPs now account for 31% of the Parliamentary Labour Party. The A-List of preferred candidates also resulted in a rise in women and Black, Asian and Mixed Ethnicity (BAME) MPs in the Conservative Party. Before the 2010 General Election the Conservative Party had only two BAME MPs, however a further nine were elected in 2010, five of whom were A-Listers.

However, whilst recent reforms have succeeded in improving the gender balance and ethnic diversity of the House of Commons they have done little to increase the diversity of MPs in terms of socioeconomic and educational background. This is partly because all-women-shortlists, the A-List and other positive action mechanisms can be targeted at clearly identifiable demographic groups such as women, but cannot be so easily applied towards broad and ill-defined socio-economic groups.

### **4. In the two *postal* primaries held in 2010 public participation was high. However, the use of primary *meetings* had only a limited impact on public participation in candidate selection and a negative impact on the diversity of parliamentary candidates.**

Primary meetings appear to have had only a negligible impact on public participation: In general, Conservatives' primary meetings were attended by between 100 and 500 people (representing 0.5% of the local electorate at most) of which around half were party members. The available evidence also suggests that primary meetings, used by the Conservatives in over 100 constituencies, resulted in less diverse candidates being selected. Out of the first 70 primary meetings that were held, where the A-List rules were not enforced, only 15% of candidates selected were women<sup>v</sup>. This is a trend consistent with outcomes in other countries where primaries have been used<sup>vi</sup>. By contrast the two postal primaries held in Totnes and Gosport saw participation by 25% and 18% of the constituency electorate respectively, indicating that participation reached well beyond the local party membership.

Whilst it is difficult, given such a small sample, to make any broad claims about the impact postal primaries would have if they were used nationwide it does appear that they have the potential to engage a far larger section of the electorate in candidate selection than primary meetings. This is partly because participation is so much easier in the former than the latter, with voters needing only to return a ballot in a pre-paid envelope rather than attend a selection meeting.

Primary meetings and postal primaries in the UK however need not represent a barrier to diverse candidates being selected: women candidates were selected in 43% of the first 21 primaries where the A-List was imposed<sup>vii</sup>. Combining equality promotion mechanisms like the A-List with procedures

that encourage public participation may help to produce positive outcomes against both these goals. Therefore we recommend the use of 'hybrid' systems like this, as we cover in more detail at the end of this report. Whether or not either type of primary will result in more diverse candidates being selected depends on the shortlist of candidates, chosen by the local party officials, presented for the public vote. In the primary meetings discussed above local candidates, who were more likely to be white and male, were favoured. By contrast, in Totnes two of the three candidates presented to the public were women, and in Gosport two out of four were women after the local association was encouraged by Conservative Campaign Headquarters to select the most diverse candidates possible. The lesson is that where well-regarded local women candidates were on the shortlist they were successful, however across all three parties too few local candidates, (indeed too few candidates overall) are women, BAME or from a diverse range of professional and educational backgrounds (a subject we return to below).

Parties however should not over-estimate the extent to which primaries can encourage participation among politically disengaged voters: Those who participated in both types of primary were unrepresentative of the electorate as a whole, typically much older and more politically active. Opening up candidate selection through the use of primaries may be a necessary step to encourage greater public participation. However on their own they may not be sufficient to bring new voters into party politics or increase the number of active local party members. One further problem with primaries may be that many candidates are put off from participating in one; postal primaries appear to be more demanding, since candidates must take their case to the electorate at large, in terms of time and costs than any other selection process.<sup>viii</sup>

The biggest drawback to the use of primaries in the future however is their significant cost. Primary meetings are estimated to have cost £10,000 each, while postal primaries were around four times more expensive still.<sup>ix</sup> These high costs make it highly unlikely that the parties will adopt and expand the use of primary selections further without public funding. In the Programme for Government the Coalition proposed to do just this, committing to fund two hundred postal primaries. There is a case for public funding for processes that enhance public involvement, but rather than the government prescribing precisely the type of selection process that parties should adopt, funding should perhaps be offered for any selection processes designed with the objective of increasing public participation, subject to Electoral Commission regulation.

**5. All parties have introduced more professionalised and/or centrally controlled assessment processes to improve the quality and diversity of PPCs; available evidence suggests that they operate in an objective and non-discriminatory way.**

Increasing control over candidate approval procedures by the central party organisations has led to the introduction of standardised, competency-based, assessment processes, to replace more informal and variable approaches in local parties that were more prone to patronage and bias. Research into the Conservative Party assessment centre process (the Parliamentary Assessment Board or PAB) suggests that discrimination is not present at this stage of the process, where the number of women passing the PAB is roughly in proportion to the number applying<sup>x</sup>. Equally, A-List candidates, who had to pass a PAB to reach the final list, also succeeded in many constituencies over local candidates partly as a result of their performance at local selection meetings, suggesting that the perceived quality of these candidates was enough to ensure their success over local or non-A-List candidates that local parties may have been inclined to prefer.

**6. Central control over selection mechanisms can come at the expense of the health of local parties, which may undermine public engagement in the political system further.**

The downside of centralised control of selection processes is the risk of demotivating current party members. Many recent centralising reforms have been resisted by party members. At the extreme,

this led to the resignation of a small minority of local Conservative Party members in East Surrey following the imposition by CCHQ of a candidate shortlist in 2010, and in Blaenau Gwent in 2005 after the Labour Party imposed an All-Women-Shortlist on the local party. Centralisation can also put off prospective new members, since one major reason why people choose not to participate is the belief that their involvement will have little impact.<sup>xi</sup> Centralisation of selection processes therefore risks undermining the health of political parties as locally-rooted membership organisations. Without the presence of strong local parties able to build networks and connections with local communities, the public may become further disengaged from the political process. As the Speaker's Conference on Parliamentary Representation concluded; "The absence of a visible party presence in many areas tends to reinforce perceptions that the political parties nationally are irrelevant, or not listening."<sup>xii</sup>

**7. More can be done to ensure that these new assessment procedures are understood, trusted and supported by party members. To achieve this greater transparency will be needed.**

Parties should make their selection procedures more transparent: the perceived secrecy of candidate selection has contributed to party members' doubts and fuelled suspicions that candidates have been approved for political reasons rather than on merit. In future a greater degree of information about how candidates come to be on candidates lists should help to improve understanding among party members. This should also encourage a wider range of potential candidates to put themselves forward: a lack of knowledge about how to become an MP remains a key barrier that deters people from pursuing politics as a career.<sup>xiii</sup>

Additionally, many party members are sceptical about new assessment processes, especially where they are centralised, suggesting the parties need to do more to make these selection processes more transparent, and to educate and consult with members about the process and criteria to be used. Reflecting on the performance of the Parliamentary Assessment Board in 2005 the former Director of Candidates, Christina Dykes wrote that "As yet there has been no systematic effort to marry the findings of the assessment centre to the selection process of the wider party"<sup>xiv</sup>, and it would seem that there continues to be a disconnect between the skills and competencies assessors are looking for in the Parliamentary Assessment Board, and the attributes sought by local party selectorates in PPCs. These disconnects between national assessments and local selections partly explain the level of distrust party members have towards candidates' lists. In some cases the gulf in opinion between members of different selectorates may be too large to overcome. But we believe that a greater degree of consultation and transparency within the parties about how candidates are approved and selected will help parties to reconcile the priorities of the selectorates in most instances, resulting in a more coherent selection process.

The Liberal Democrats have taken the biggest steps to link the central assessment criteria to the local selection process; a consultation involving party members was used initially to determine the criteria the assessment centre would test and regional and federal conferences were used to explain and train party members in the process. Selection committees are also now required to designate their own criteria and create a marking system to assess candidate's performance against them when approving or rejecting applicants. Whilst it is too early to draw firm conclusions, it would seem that the closer linking of these processes is helping the Liberal Democrats to avoid the level of contention that surrounds these procedures in the Labour and the Conservative Party.

**8. The parties have made gender and ethnic representation a higher priority than diversity in terms of socioeconomic and professional background. The parties need to cast their net wider in their search for suitable candidates if they intend to diversify the skills and experience base of MPs.**

Whilst centralised assessment procedures and diversity mechanisms have helped to deliver improvements in diversity and quality, they have also had the effect of narrowing the pathways into

parliament. One factor is that centralisation of candidate selection is likely to benefit candidates with strong connections and networks in Westminster, rather than a strong local presence. Aspirant candidates therefore need to develop relationships in and around party HQ and Westminster to stand the greatest chance of advancement. The characteristics of Conservative A-List candidates appears to confirm this, with a majority (61%) coming from the South of England, and an even higher proportion (89%) having worked for the party or stood as a PPC in 2005.<sup>xv</sup> Our own analysis based on the 162 A-Listers identified by ConservativeHome shows that 100 (61%) were PPCs in 2005.<sup>xvi</sup> In the Labour Party too, a similar trend is evident, with 34% of new MPs in 2010 having worked previously in national politics, many as advisers or researchers for Labour MPs and Ministers.<sup>xvii</sup>

More rigorous assessment procedures and professionalised recruitment interviews may also accelerate the rise of the career politician class by favouring those with certain types of professional background more to succeed in psychometric and written tests, “in-tray” and group exercises. Parties also increasingly expect candidates to have political experience and a university degree as a prerequisite, which significantly narrows the field from which candidates are drawn. Indeed, only 6% of MPs newly elected in 2010 do not have an undergraduate degree.<sup>xviii</sup>

The parties have made little effort to address the fact that few people from lower socio-economic backgrounds are involved in party politics or try to become MPs. The Hansard Society found that a majority of MPs newly elected in 2010 took a paycut in becoming MPs (who earn £65,738 per annum), and that just 13% previously earned less than the London average wage of £33,380.<sup>xix</sup>

Part of the problem is the contested nature of the goals the parties are seeking to achieve. Many of the competences tested in the parties’ assessment centres (communication and intellectual skills, for example) are undoubtedly those one would wish for MPs to have. However, it can be argued that being an MP is *not* a profession like any other and that Parliament ought in fact to comprise individuals with a variety of experiences and backgrounds, in order that the widest range of perspectives are brought to bear on matters of public debate. In designing or reforming selection processes, parties must therefore consider more carefully how to balance these different objectives, and look for new ways to offset negative side-effects.

**9. The lack of diversity in the *supply* of aspiring parliamentary candidates remains a significant problem. Without improvement, ongoing central control will be needed to maintain the trend towards a more representative House of Commons.**

All three parties have made progress in recent decades with the number of women and BAME candidates standing for Parliament rising gradually. This is partly the result of broader societal changes as well as concerted efforts by party leaders to make their parties more accepting of women and BAME candidates. However despite these efforts women still only accounted for a quarter of the three main parties’ PPCs at the 2010 general election<sup>xx</sup>, and the rise in the number women candidates has slowed, increasing by just 7% since 1992. The problem is increasingly not overt or covert discrimination within political parties, but a lack of women applying to become candidates in the first place. The same is true for people from other under-represented groups.

As noted, centralising measures such as all-women-shortlists and the A-List can succeed in increasing the selection of women and BAME candidates, but they work by imposing restrictions on local party autonomy, and do not increase the diversity of the pool of candidates overall. As Nick Clegg put it to the Speaker’s Conference on Parliamentary Representation, strong action by party leaders can provide a “temporary, one-off shot in the arm” but will not provide a sustainable solution to the problem of an unrepresentative Parliament unless action is also taken to address the lack of supply of candidates from non-traditional backgrounds.<sup>xxi</sup>

Without a more balanced supply of candidates, only continuing central control of selection processes will maintain momentum towards a fully representative House of Commons. These mechanisms are likely to continue to cause friction within the political parties due to many members' perception that artificial barriers have been placed in the path of more traditional candidates, in particular white men. In the long-run parties will therefore need to do more to encourage greater participation within the political process by people from under-represented groups.

#### **10. Barriers to participation across all selection mechanisms contribute to the lack of candidate diversity.**

All the parties have taken steps to seek to offset the barriers that deter candidates from under-represented groups. Support, training and mentoring is offered, for instance through groups such as women2win in the Conservatives, the Labour Women's Network and the Liberal Democrat Campaign for Gender Equality. All three parties have also started leadership programmes to provide training to the next generation of political leaders, with an emphasis on attracting BAME, women, disabled and candidates from lower socio-economic groups to participate. However many barriers continue to exist across all the selection mechanisms which contribute to the lack of candidates from under-represented groups.

First, the costs incurred by candidates are prohibitive; candidates' expenditure on completing the formal approval process is estimated at anything up to £1,000.<sup>xxii</sup> Campaigning for selection involves further costs in terms of accommodation, transportation and campaign material. When lost income is factored in, it is estimated that the average costs of being a PPC can run as high as £41,000 over a four-year period.<sup>xxiii</sup>

In Labour selections before the 2010 election there was no spending limit imposed on candidates on a shortlist vying to be selected (this has now changed). In safe seats, as a result, candidates vying for nomination in safe seats spent as much as £4,000 each. These high costs meant a large number of successful candidates had to rely on trade union support: in Labour-held seats in 2010, 71% of successful candidates received support (often financial) from unions.<sup>xxiv</sup>

Aside from cost, being a candidate entails a huge time commitment, estimated by the Liberal Democrats as 20 hours per week on average for their PPCs.<sup>xxv</sup> This can be a particular disincentive for women with family and childcare responsibilities, and those from lower incomes who find it more difficult to take time off work. Consequently, candidates with careers that are more flexible and accepting of political commitments or those who work in organisations linked to political parties have a distinct advantage. It may be that only financial support will create a level playing field, for example through mechanisms such as the "Democracy Diversity Fund" recommended by the Speaker's Conference<sup>xxvi</sup>. This would help local parties support and develop talented individuals from under-represented groups and provide bursaries for candidates for whom the costs of candidacy are prohibitive.

#### **11. Participation and representation are two sides of the same coin, with today's active participants becoming tomorrow's parliamentary candidates. Barriers to under-represented groups becoming PPCs also limit those groups' participation in politics in general.**

The small pool of aspirant candidates from under-represented groups is a reflection of the far bigger issue that relatively few people from these groups participate in mainstream politics at all. People from lower socio-economic groups, women, ethnic minorities and young people are all far less likely to participate in politics than are white, older, men from higher socio-economic groups, demonstrating that; "participation is unequal across different sections of society, reflecting the unequal distribution of power and resources in society."<sup>xxvii</sup> This is further reflected in the political



parties themselves, where members and activists are disproportionately white, middle-class, affluent and educated, similar in fact to the House of Commons itself. A further example of this can be seen by looking at the makeup of local government in the UK, one of the main training and recruiting grounds for future MPs: Only 31% of local councillors are women, 3% non-white and 13% aged under 45<sup>xxviii</sup>.

People from lower socioeconomic backgrounds and those with less education may also be put off by party structures and procedures, which are often complex and bureaucratic. Meanwhile local gatekeepers and elite networks may discourage others who feel they do not fit the mould, feeding a general perception of political participation as an elite activity.<sup>xxix</sup> This parallels closely many of the same barriers in candidate selection mechanisms, where potential aspirants are deterred by the complexity and opaqueness of the processes and the resource demands they place on participants.

Within the literature on public participation it appears that 'being asked' is one of the major reasons why people become involved in voluntary organisation, joining political parties and running for council<sup>xxx</sup>. Equally, it appears that 'being asked' was an important factor behind why the candidates we spoke to decided to stand. The problem remains that only those with connections to the political parties locally and nationally seem to be approached. At present however those who are asked tend already to be active participants in the political parties.

Ultimately, rebuilding party membership may be the only way to increase the supply of diverse candidates, assuming local associations can open up beyond their traditional networks. However the conundrum remains that if member's role and influence in party decisions such as candidate selections are increasingly being diminished many politically interested people will question whether joining a political party is the most worthwhile use of their time.

## **Conclusion**

### *Finding the Right Balance: 'Hybrid' Systems*

We believe that a better balance between the different goals of political parties and the different priorities of party selectorates can be struck through the use of hybrid systems in which party HQ, the local association and the wider public are all involved at different stages in the selection process.

The Totnes primary provides a good example: Conservative Campaign Headquarters (CCHQ) played an active role in encouraging the local association to include diverse and local candidates on their long-list. Local party officers and members were then able to select their preferred candidates to create the shortlist. Then the general public were given the opportunity to make the final choice in a postal ballot. The end result was that a local woman candidate, acceptable to all three selectorates, was chosen. Hybrid systems like these may enable party HQ to ensure diverse candidates are considered, whilst giving local parties enough choice to select a shortlist with which most party members are satisfied. Similarly much controversy over all-women-shortlists has dissipated because although local associations are only able to nominate a women candidate, they retain a high degree of autonomy over the rest of the selection process.

### *Candidate Selection and Beyond*

Parties should be careful not to over-estimate the potential benefits of candidate selection reform. The unrepresentativeness of Parliament and low public participation in the political process are symptomatic of broader societal problems for which there is no quick fix. Candidate selection reforms, however, may be more effective and less controversial if the parties can develop strategies to increase the supply of candidates from under-represented groups, instead of focussing their attentions on 'demand-side' restrictions, as well as taking greater effort to involve and consult party members in the reform process.

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- <sup>i</sup> See Judith Squires, 'The Implementation of Gender Quotas in Britain', available at: [www.quotaproject.org/CS/CS\\_Britain\\_Squires.pdf](http://www.quotaproject.org/CS/CS_Britain_Squires.pdf) for a discussion of the electoral incentives behind Labour's adoption of All-Women-Shortlists in 1993.
- <sup>ii</sup> Sarah Childs and Philip Cowley, 'The Politics of Local Presence: Is there a Case for Descriptive Representation?', *Political Studies*, Vol. 59, 2011, p. 6. Available at: <http://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/10.1111/j.1467-9248.2010.00846.x/pdf>
- <sup>iii</sup> Less than a tenth of those polled preferred the latter option. See Childs and Cowley, p. 5.
- <sup>iv</sup> One participating candidate stated that the most frequently asked question by voters was, 'Are you local?' see Dean McSweeney, 'Primary Elections in Britain', *The Political Quarterly*, Vol.81 No. 4, October-December 2010, pp. 540 for a more detailed look at the Totnes and Gosport primary process and campaign.
- <sup>v</sup> Thanks go to Robert McIlveen for this data.
- <sup>vi</sup> See Rahat and Hazan, 'Democracy and Political Parties: On the Uneasy Relationship between Participation, Competition and Representation', *Party Politics*, Vol. 14 No. 6, 2008, pp. 663-683 for a discussion about the impact of primaries on women's representation in Israel.
- <sup>vii</sup> Thanks go to Robert McIlveen for this data.
- <sup>viii</sup> One candidate we spoke to described the primary campaign process as "arduous, hellish".
- <sup>ix</sup> See Oonagh Gay and Stephen Jones, *Candidate Selection – Primaries*, House of Commons Library Parliamentary and Constitutional Centre and International Affairs and Defence Section SN/PC/05168, September 2009.
- <sup>x</sup> Jo Silvester and Christina Dykes, 'Selecting Political Candidates: A Longitudinal Study of Assessment Centre Performance and Political Success in the 2005 UK General Election', *Journal of Occupational and Organisational Psychology*, Vol. 80 No. 1, March 2007, pp. 11-25.
- <sup>xi</sup> Involve, 'Understanding participation: A Literature Review', December 2009, pp. 8, available at: [www.involve.org.uk/understanding-participation-a-literature-review](http://www.involve.org.uk/understanding-participation-a-literature-review)
- <sup>xii</sup> Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation): *Final Report*, House of Commons, HC 239-I, The Stationery Office Ltd, January 2010, p. 33.
- <sup>xiii</sup> See Speaker's Conference, *Final Report*, Chapter 2: Citizenship and Engagement, pp. 22-30.
- <sup>xiv</sup> Christina Dykes and Jo Silvester, 'Political Leadership: What is it and how do we find it?', Tory Reform Group, 2005, p.19
- <sup>xv</sup> See [www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/10\\_october/03/newspnight.shtml](http://www.bbc.co.uk/pressoffice/pressreleases/stories/2006/10_october/03/newspnight.shtml)
- <sup>xvi</sup> The lists of A-List candidates can be found at [http://conservativehome.blogs.com/goldlist/a\\_list](http://conservativehome.blogs.com/goldlist/a_list)
- <sup>xvii</sup> , Catherine Durose, Francesca Gains, Liz Richardson, Ryan Combs, Karl Broome and Christina Easons, Research Report 65: *Pathways to Politics*, Equality and Human Rights Commission, 2011, p. 33.
- <sup>xviii</sup> The Sutton Trust, *The Educational Backgrounds of Members of Parliament in 2010*, May 2010, p. 2, available at [www.suttontrust.com/research/the-educational-backgrounds-of-mps](http://www.suttontrust.com/research/the-educational-backgrounds-of-mps)
- <sup>xix</sup> Matt Korris, *A Year in the Life: From Member of Public to Member of Parliament*, Hansard Society, June 2011, available at: [www.hansardsociety.org.uk/files/folders/3085/download.aspx](http://www.hansardsociety.org.uk/files/folders/3085/download.aspx)
- <sup>xx</sup> Byron Criddle, 'More Diverse, Yet More Uniform', in Philip Cowley and Dennis Kavanagh (Eds.), *The British General Election of 2010*, p. 313.
- <sup>xxi</sup> Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation), *Examination of Witness* (Questions 460-469), House of Commons, HC 239-I, The Stationery Office Ltd, February 2010, available at: [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/spconf/239/9102004.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/spconf/239/9102004.htm)
- <sup>xxii</sup> Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation), *Final Report*, House of Commons, HC 239-I, The Stationery Office Ltd, January 2010, p. 46, available at: [www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/spconf/239/23902.htm](http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/spconf/239/23902.htm)
- <sup>xxiii</sup> Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation), *Final Report*, pp. 71-72.
- <sup>xxiv</sup> Will Straw and Feni Ajumogobia, 'Labour's selection process: a representative deficit?', 2009, available at: [www.scribd.com/doc/58161572/Labour-PPCs-Research-PDF](http://www.scribd.com/doc/58161572/Labour-PPCs-Research-PDF)
- <sup>xxv</sup> Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation), *First Special Report*, House of Commons, HC 239-I, The Stationery Office Ltd, January 2010, p. 46, available at: [www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/other-committees/speakers-conference-on-parliamentary-representation/publications](http://www.parliament.uk/business/committees/committees-a-z/other-committees/speakers-conference-on-parliamentary-representation/publications)
- <sup>xxvi</sup> Speaker's Conference (on Parliamentary Representation), *Final Report*, p. 74.
- <sup>xxvii</sup> Involve, 'Understanding participation: A Literature Review', December 2009, p. 27, available at: [www.involve.org.uk/understanding-participation-a-literature-review](http://www.involve.org.uk/understanding-participation-a-literature-review)
- <sup>xxviii</sup> Durose et al, *Pathways to Politics*, p. 50.
- <sup>xxix</sup> See Involve, 'Understanding participation', Chapter 4, pp. 21-33, for a full discussion of what factors encourage and discourage public participation.
- <sup>xxx</sup> Involve, 'Understanding participation', p. 29.