



RESEARCH PAPER 99/95
29 NOVEMBER 1999

By-elections since the 1997 general election

This paper gives the results of by-elections held since the 1997 general election. It updates and replaces Research Paper 99/82.

Similar information for earlier by-elections is available in House of Commons Information Office Factsheets 16 (1979 to 1983), 27 (1983 to 1987), 58 (1987 to 1992) and 64 (1992 to 1997). Further information is available in FWS Craig Chronology of British Parliamentary By-elections, 1833-1987 (Parliamentary Research Services 1987).

For readers with access to the Parliamentary Intranet future by-election results will be made available on the Library's intranet pages. A printed version of this paper will be updated annually.

Joanna Champion & Bryn Morgan

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Notes: 'turnout' is calculated as the number of valid votes cast (excludes spoilt ballots) as a percentage of the electorate.

'swing' is defined as the average of one party's gain and another's loss in the share of the vote between the 1997 general election and the by- election.

Key: * indicates a lost deposit (the threshold below which a deposit is lost was reduced from 12½ per cent to 5 per cent of the total votes cast from 10 October 1985)

+ indicates a woman candidate

Sources: General election results — C Rallings and M Thrasher *Britain Votes 6*

By-election results — returning officers

Table 1 – Summary of by-election results since 1997

There have been nine by-elections since the 1997 General Election. The results are summarised below with full results given in the following pages.

By-election winner, change in share of the vote and swing since 1997 general election

	Control	Winner	Swing		<i>change in share of vote:</i>				Turnout
					Con	Lab	LDem	SNP/PC	
Uxbridge	Con hold	J Randall	6.4%	LDem to Con	+7.6%	-2.5%	-5.3%		55.5%
Paisley South	Lab hold	D Alexander	11.2%	Lab to SNP	-1.7%	-13.4%	+1.6%	+9.1%	42.9%
Beckenham	Con hold	J Lait +	2.6%	Con to Lab	-1.2%	+4.0%	+0.2%		43.6%
Winchester	LD hold **	M Oaten	19.8%	Con to LDem	-13.6%	-8.8%	+26.0%		68.7%
Leeds Central	Lab hold	H Benn	20.5%	Lab to LDem	-1.4%	-21.4%	+19.6%		19.6%
Eddisbury	Con hold	S O'Brien	1.2%	Lab to Con	+2.3%	+0.0%	+0.6%		51.4%
Hamilton South	Lab hold	B Tynan	22.6%	Lab to SNP	-1.4%	-28.7%	-1.9%	+16.4%	41.3%
Wigan	Lab hold	N Turner	6.2%	Lab to LDem	+1.1%	-9.0%	+3.3%		25.0%
Kensington and Chelsea	Con hold	M Portillo	3.0%	Lab to Con	+0.2%	-5.9%	-5.9%		29.7%

** general election result (LDem gain from Con) successfully challenged and election re-run.

Percentages may not sum to zero because of candidates from other parties.

The figures given for swing should be used with care as they do not take account of the often complex flows of votes between the parties (swing is defined as the average of one party's gain and another's loss in shares of vote between the 1997 general election and the by-election)

So far, there have been no changes in the party winning at any of the by-elections in this Parliament. Across all nine constituencies, the Labour share of the vote is 11.7 percentage points below that in the same constituencies at the General Election. The Conservative share is an average 0.3 percentage points higher while that of the Liberal Democrats has increased by 8.0 percentage points. In the two by-elections in Scotland, the Scottish National Party's share has increased by an average of 12.5 percentage points.

The average turnout in by-elections in this Parliament has been 42.4% compared with 68.6% in the same constituencies at the General Election. The highest turnout was 68.7% in Winchester with the lowest 19.6% in Leeds Central.

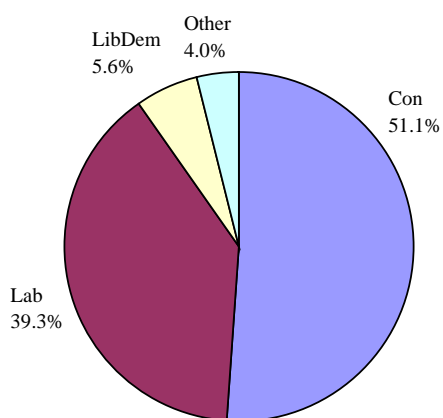
1. Uxbridge - 31 July 1997

(death of Sir Michael Shersby on 8 May 1997)

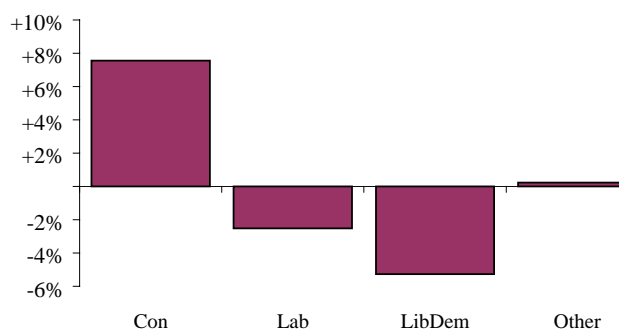
Conservative hold

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
J Randall	Conservative	16,288	51.1%	18,095	43.6%	+7.6%
A Slaughter	Labour	12,522	39.3%	17,371	41.8%	-2.5%
K Kerr	Liberal Democrat	1,792	5.6%	4,528	10.9%	-5.3%
Other (8 candidates - see below)		1,265	4.0%	1,551	3.7%	+0.2%
Majority of winning candidate		3,766	11.8%	724	1.7%	
Total poll		31,867		41,545		
Electorate		57,446		57,414		
Turnout		55.5%		72.4%		
Other candidates						
D Sutch	Official Monster Raving Loony Party	396	1.2%			
J Leonard +	Socialist Party	259	0.8%			
F Taylor +	British National Party	205	0.6%			
I Anderson	National Democrat	157	0.5%			
J McAuley	National Front	110	0.3%			
H Middleton	Original Liberal Party	69	0.2%			
J Feisenberger	United Kingdom Independence Party	39	0.1%			
R Carroll	Emerald Rainbow Islands Dream Ticket Party	30	0.1%			

Votes by party



Change in share of vote between General Election and by-election (percentage points)



+ indicates a woman candidate

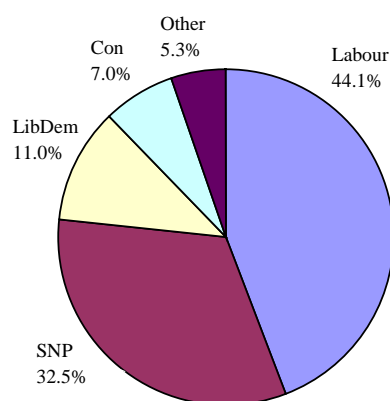
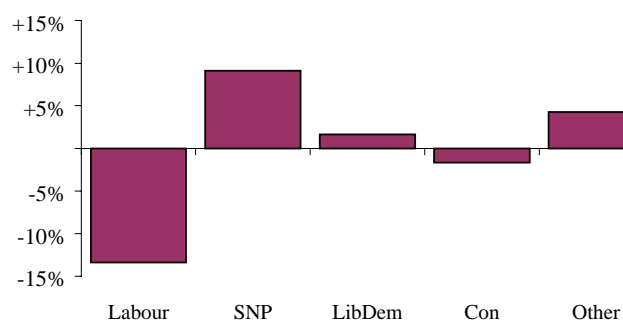
* indicates a lost deposit

2. Paisley South - 6 November 1997

(death of Mr Gordon McMaster on 28 July 1997)

Labour hold

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
D Alexander	Labour	10,346	44.1%	21,482	57.5%	-13.4%
I Blackford	Scottish National	7,615	32.5%	8,732	23.4%	+9.1%
E McCartin +	Liberal Democrat	2,582	11.0%	3,500	9.4%	+1.6%
S Laidlaw +	Conservative	1,643	7.0%	3,237	8.7%	-1.7%
Other (5 candidates - see below)		1,249 *	5.3%	400 *	1.1%	+4.3%
Majority of winning candidate		2,731	11.7%	12,750	34.1%	
Total poll		23,435		37,351		
Electorate		54,573		54,040		
Turnout		42.9%		69.1%		
Other candidates						
J Deighan	Pro Life Alliance	578	2.5%			
F Curran +	Scottish Socialist Alliance - Fighting Corruption	306	1.3%			
C McLauchlan	Scottish Independent Labour - Justified and Ancient	155	0.7%			
C Herriot	Socialist Labour Party	153	0.7%			
K Blair	Natural Law Party	57	0.2%			

Votes by party**Change in share of vote between General Election and by-election (percentage points)**

+ indicates a woman candidate

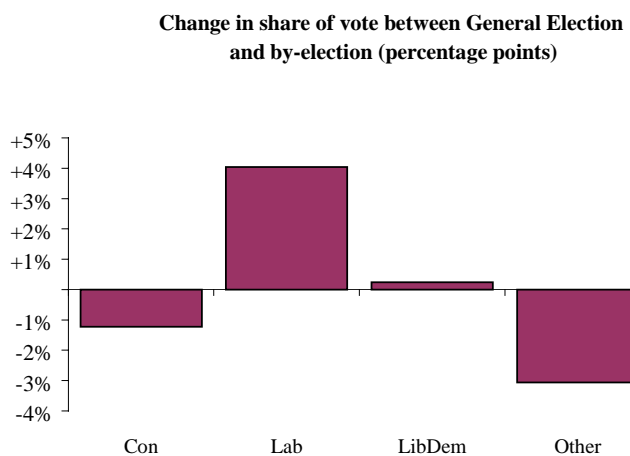
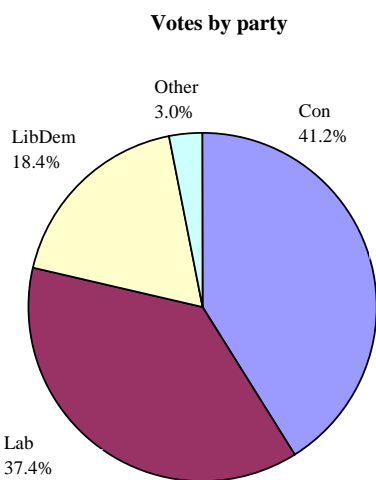
* indicates a lost deposit

3. Beckenham - 20 November 1997

Conservative hold

(resignation of Mr Piers Merchant on 21 October 1997)

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
J Lait +	Conservative	13,162	41.2%	23,084	42.5%	-1.2%
R Hughes	Labour	11,935	37.4%	18,131	33.4%	+4.0%
R Vetterlein +	Liberal Democrat	5,864	18.4%	9,858	18.1%	+0.2%
Other (5 candidates - see below)		947 *	3.0%	3,277	6.0%	-3.1%
Majority of winning candidate		1,227	3.8%	4,953	9.1%	
Total poll		31,908		54,350		
Electorate		73,127		73,126		
Turnout		43.6%		74.3%		
Other candidates						
P Rimmer	Liberal Party	330	1.0%			
J McAuley	National Front	267	0.8%			
L Mead	New Britain, Referendum	237	0.7%			
T Campion	Social Foundation Party	69	0.2%			
J Small	Natural Law Party	44	0.1%			



+ indicates a woman candidate

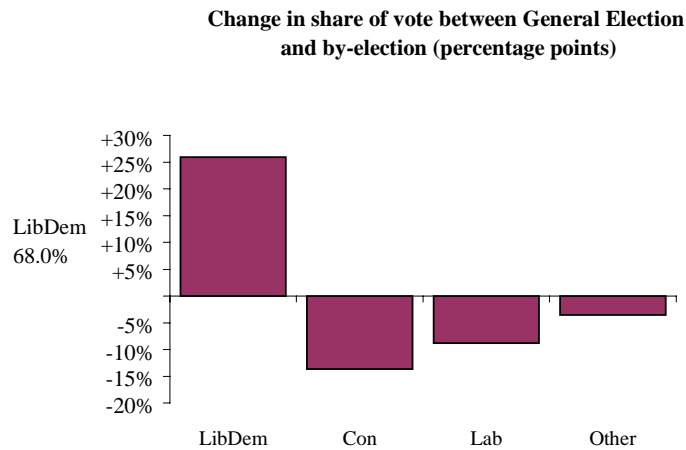
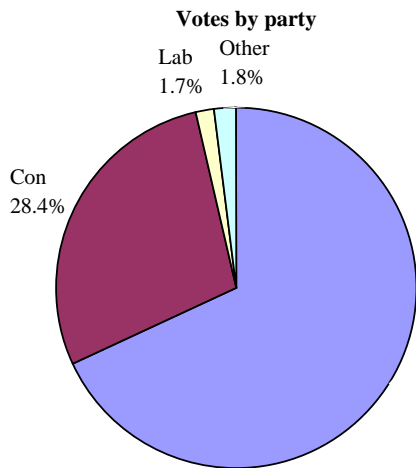
* indicates a lost deposit

4. Winchester - 20 November 1997

Liberal Democrat hold

(General Election result challenged, Election Petition, writ moved on 28 October 1997)

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
M Oaten	Liberal Democrat	37,006	68.0%	26,100	42.1%	+26.0%
G Malone	Conservative	15,450	28.4%	26,098	42.1%	-13.6%
P Davies	Labour	944 *	1.7%	6,528	10.5%	-8.8%
Other (5 candidates - see below)		984 *	1.8%	3,328 *	5.4%	-3.6%
Majority of winning candidate						
		21,556	39.6%	2	0.0%	
Total poll		54,384		62,054		
Electorate		79,116		79,272		
Turnout		68.7%		78.3%		
Other candidates						
R Page	Referendum/UK Independence Alliance	521	1.0%			
D Sutch	Official Monster Raving Loony Party	316	0.6%			
R Huggett	Literal Democrat Mark Here To Win	59	0.1%			
R Barry +	Natural Law Party	48	0.1%			
R Everest	Euro Conservative	40	0.1%			



+ indicates a woman candidate

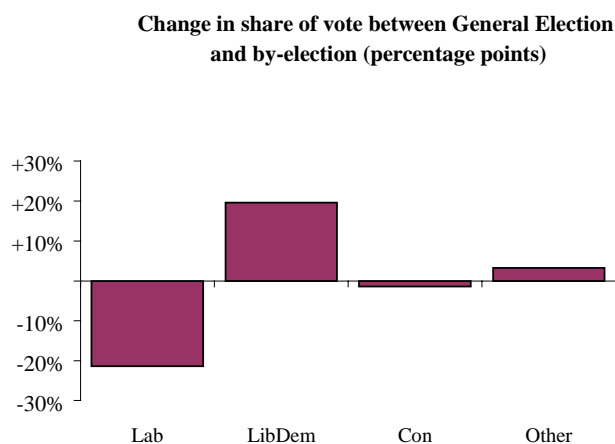
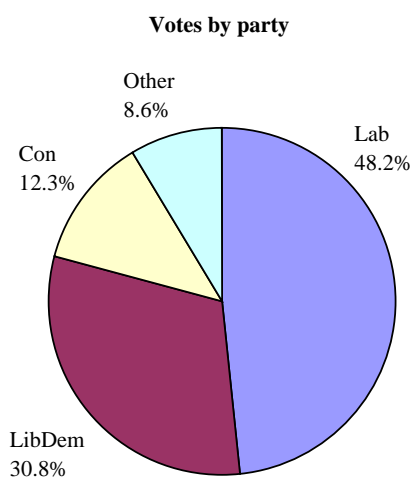
* indicates a lost deposit

5. Leeds Central - 10 June 1999

(death of Derek Fatchett on 9 May 1999)

Labour hold

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
H Benn	Labour	6,361	48.2%	25,766	69.6%	-21.4%
P Wild	Liberal Democrat	4,068	30.8%	4,164	11.3%	+19.6%
E Wild	Conservative	1,618	12.3%	5,077	13.7%	-1.4%
Other (4 candidates - see below)		1,140 *	8.6%	2,002 *	5.4%	+3.2%
Majority of winning candidate		2,293	17.4%	20,689	55.9%	
Total poll		13,187		37,009		
Electorate		67,280		68,309		
Turnout		19.6%		54.2%		
Other candidates						
D Blackburn	Green Party	478	3.6%			
R Northgreaves	UK Independence Party	353	2.7%			
C Hill	Left Alliance	258	2.0%			
J Fitzgerald	Equal Parenting Campaign	51	0.4%			



+ indicates a woman candidate

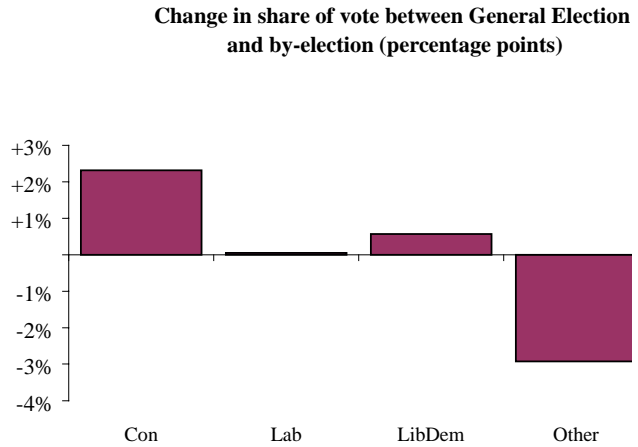
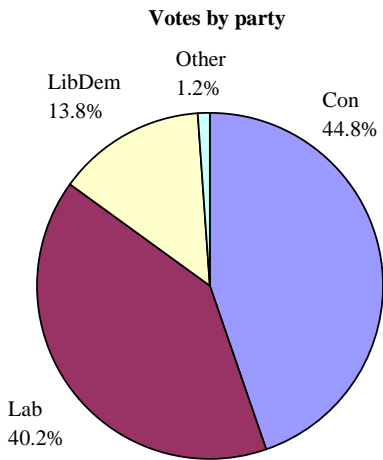
* indicates a lost deposit

6. Eddisbury - 22 July 1999

(resignation of Alastair Goodlad)

Conservative hold

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
S O'Brien	Conservative	15,465	44.8%	21,027	42.5%	+2.3%
M Hanson +	Labour	13,859	40.2%	19,842	40.1%	+0.0%
P Roberts	Liberal Democrat	4,757	13.8%	6,540	13.2%	+0.6%
Other (3 candidates - see below 3)		416 *	1.2%	2,041	4.1%	-2.9%
Majority of winning candidate		1,606	4.7%	1,185	2.4%	
Total poll		34,497		49,450		
Electorate		67,086		65,394		
Turnout		51.4%		75.6%		
Other candidates						
A Hope	Official Monster Raving Loony Party	238	0.7%			
D Grace +	Natural Law Party	98	0.3%			
R Everest	Euro Conservative	80	0.2%			



+ indicates a woman candidate

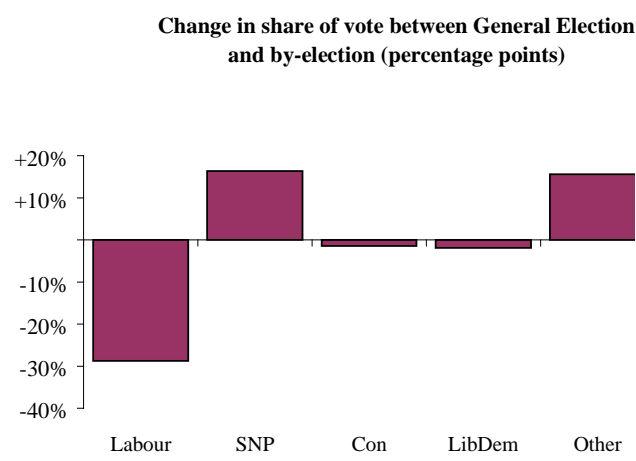
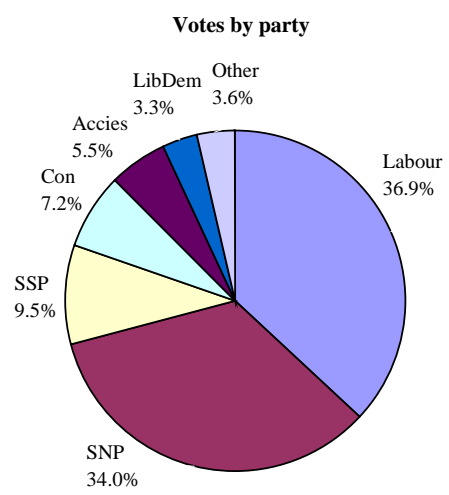
* indicates a lost deposit

7. Hamilton South - 23 September 1999

(elevation to peerage of George Robertson)

Labour hold

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
B Tynan	Labour	7,172	36.9%	21,709	65.6%	-28.7%
A Ewing +	Scottish National	6,616	34.0%	5,831	17.6%	+16.4%
S Blackall +	Scottish Socialist Party	1,847	9.5%			+9.5%
C Ferguson	Conservative	1,406	7.2%	2,858	8.6%	-1.4%
S Mungall	Hamilton Accies Home Watson Away	1,075 *	5.5%			+5.5%
M MacLaren +	Liberal Democrat	634	3.3%	1,693	5.1%	-1.9%
Other (6 candidates - see below)		704 *	3.6%	1,000 *	3.0%	+0.6%
Majority of winning candidate		556	2.9%	15,878	48.0%	
Total poll		19,454		33,091		
Electorate		47,081		46,562		
Turnout		41.3%		71.1%		
Other candidates						
M Burns +	Pro Life Alliance	257	1.3%			
T Dewar	Socialist Labour Party	238	1.2%			
J Reid	Scottish Unionist Party	113	0.6%			
A McConnachie	UK Independence Party	61	0.3%			
G Stidolph	Natural Law Party	18	0.1%			
J Moray	Status Quo	17	0.1%			



Others includes SSP and Accies as they did not stand in the 1997 election.

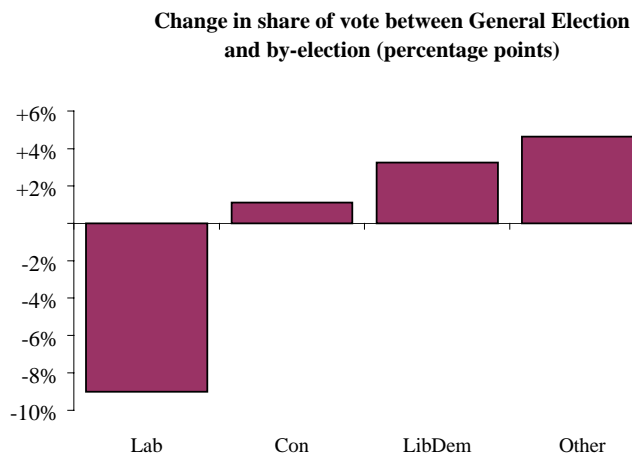
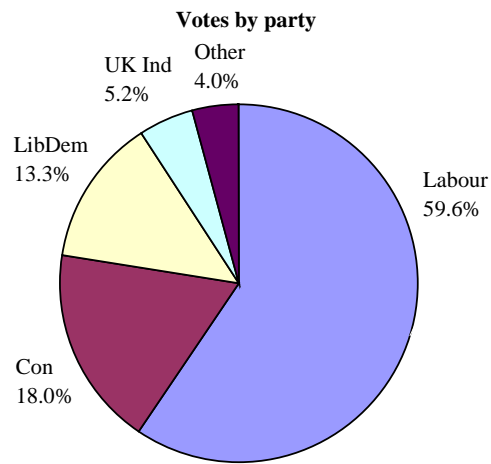
+ indicates a woman candidate
* indicates a lost deposit

8. Wigan - 23 September 1999

(death of Roger Stott on 8 August 1999)

Labour hold

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
N Turner	Labour	9,641	59.6%	30,043	68.6%	-9.0%
T Peet	Conservative	2,912	18.0%	7,400	16.9%	+1.1%
J Rule	Liberal Democrat	2,148	13.3%	4,390	10.0%	+3.3%
J Whittaker	UK Independence Party	834	5.2%			+5.2%
Other (5 candidates - see below)		652 *	4.0%	1,986 *	4.5%	-0.5%
Majority of winning candidate		6,729	41.6%	22,643	51.7%	
Total poll		16,187		43,819		
Electorate		64,775		64,689		
Turnout		25.0%		67.7%		
Other candidates						
W Kelly	Socialist Labour Party	240	1.5%			
C Maile	Green Party	190	1.2%			
S Ebbs	National Democratic Resistance	100	0.6%			
P Davis	Natural Law Party	64	0.4%			
D Braid	Reverend	58	0.4%			



'Others' includes UK Independence Party as they did not stand in the 1997 election.

+ indicates a woman candidate

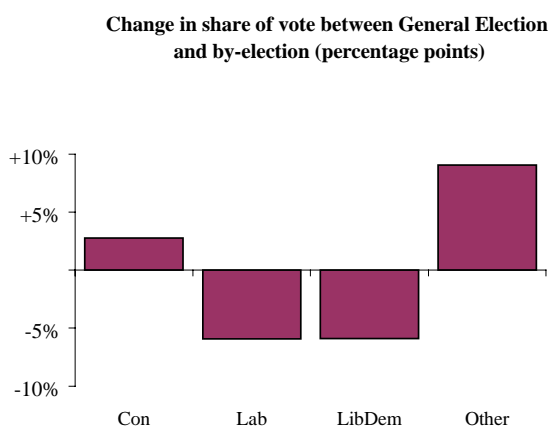
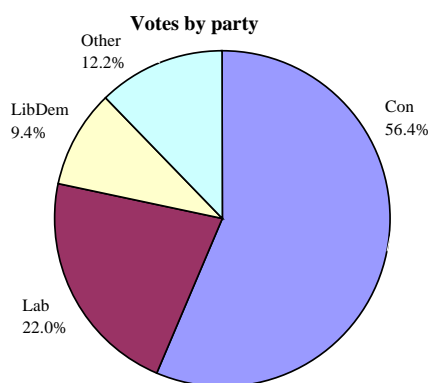
* indicates a lost deposit

9. Kensington and Chelsea - 25 November 1999

Conservative hold

(death of Alan Clark on 4 September 1999)

By-election candidate	Party	Votes at by-election		Votes at General Election		Change in share of vote (percentage points)
		Number	%	Number	%	
Main parties and candidates retaining deposit						
M Portillo	Conservative	11,004	56.4%	19,887	53.6%	+2.8%
R Atkinson	Labour	4,298	22.0%	10,368	28.0%	-5.9%
R Browne	Liberal Democrat	1,831	9.4%	5,668	15.3%	-5.9%
Other (8 candidates - see below)		2,380 *	12.2%	1,165 *	3.1%	+9.1%
Majority of winning candidate		6,706	34.4%	9,519	25.7%	
Total poll		19,513		37,088		
Electorate		65,806		67,786		
Turnout		29.7%		54.7%		
Other candidates						
J Stevens	Pro Euro Conservative Party	740	3.8%			
D Hockney	UK Independence Party	450	2.3%			
H Charlton	Green Party	446	2.3%			
C Burford	Democratic Party	182	0.9%			
C Paisley	Legalise Cannabis Alliance	141	0.7%			
M Irwin	Campaign for Living Will Legislation	97	0.5%			
G Oliver	UK Pensioners Party	75	0.4%			
S Scott-Fawcett	Referendum Party	57	0.3%			
L Hodges+	Daily and Sunday Sport Party	48	0.2%			
G Valente	Natural Law	35	0.2%			
L Lovebucket+	People's net dream ticket Party	26	0.1%			
J Davies	Independent Environmentalist	24	0.1%			
	Stop Climatic Change					
P May	Equal Parenting Party	24	0.1%			
A Hope	Official Monster Raving Loony Party	20	0.1%			
T Samuelson	Stop Tobacco Companies	15	0.1%			
	Farming Our Children					



+indicates a woman candidate

*indicates a lost deposit