

UKIP candidates and policy positions in the 2013 local elections

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Introduction

In early spring 2013, members of the United Kingdom Independence Party (UKIP) received a letter from William Legge, the 10th Earl of Dartmouth and one of the party's MEP's for the South West region. This letter amounted to a 'call to arms', a request for volunteers to come forward and stand as candidates (even, if only as 'paper' candidates) for the forthcoming county and unitary council elections. The appeal was so successful that when the nominations closed UKIP had come within a hairsbreadth of contesting more seats than the Liberal Democrats.

In the weeks prior to voting the party's national poll ratings ranged between 9-16% with pollsters undecided whether UKIP had overtaken the Liberal Democrats. In the event UKIP exceeded its national polling, capturing one in five votes cast across the English shires. The Sunday Times' national equivalent vote published the following week saw UKIP placed on 22%, only four points lower than the Conservative estimate but nine points higher than that for the Liberal Democrats. Labour failed to mobilise much of the anti-coalition sentiment, its own performance less than it might have expected at this stage of the parliament.

The UKIP performance, both the successful candidate recruitment drive and the battle for votes and seats, proved a great surprise; this even extended to some of the party's own candidates who had not expected to be elected! During the local campaign the national party was forced to disown some candidates (although too late to remove them from the nomination lists), mostly for publically declaring some rather unsavoury political opinions. During July 2013 the Crown Prosecution Service announced it was charging one of its candidates with falsifying details on his nomination forms.

Of course, UKIP is not alone in recruiting candidates whose views, when more widely circulated, embarrass the national leadership. But, what makes the UKIP performance noteworthy is that in May 2013, a party with little track record of competing for local votes, somehow succeeded in recruiting large numbers of people to stand (many of whom had little or no previous electoral experience), campaign attract votes and in more than a hundred cases, win seats.

The aim here is to shed light on those that responded to the party's call for candidates. What types of people answered the appeal and how do they compare to the types of people that contest on behalf of the established parties? Political scientists have tried to unlock the puzzle of UKIP, generally regarding it as a right-wing party in terms of both its outlook and its electoral strategy (Abedi and Lundberg 2009; John and Margetts 2009; Lynch, Whittaker and Loomes 2012;). A series of papers examining the party's performance at particular elections (Borisjuk, Rallings, Thrasher and van der Kolk 2007, Ford, Goodwin and Cutts 2012; Hayton 2010; Margetts, John and Weir 2004) have also cast light on the types of electoral situations that favour the party but generalising from such studies has proved difficult.

Two types of data are used to describe UKIP's impact on the local elections. First, aggregate election results describe the nature and scale of UKIP's success. Following this, we use individual-level data obtained from a census of candidates that stood in 2013 to compare and contrast UKIP candidates with those that were selected by the three main parties. On the weekend after the results were announced the UKIP leader, Nigel Farage, believed his party had delivered a heavy blow against the party political establishment. It is certainly true that UKIP took every advantage of an electoral mood

that suggested voters were turning against the party mainstream. It is also true that his candidates were notably different from those they were facing.

Counting the votes

Table 1 shows that UKIP fielded 1,742 candidates (72.8%). The party won 147 seats (6.1%) after receiving 19.9% of votes across 27 English shire counties, 7 unitary councils and a single council in Wales. Not only was UKIP easily the most successful of the minor parties and won more votes and seats than Independents its popular vote was six-points higher than that received by the Liberal Democrats. However, its vote distribution was highly inefficient, resulting in a poor translation of votes into seats (a ratio of just 0.3), recalling the early forays of the Liberal/Social Democratic Party Alliance in the early 1980s; the 1985 county elections saw the Alliance parties with 28% of vote share but only 20% of seats). Structural changes to the composition of local authorities and boundary changes affecting others, make it difficult to make direct comparisons between the 2013 elections and those held four years previously but in 2009 UKIP won only 8 seats (0.3%) and received the same percentage of votes (4.6%) as did the Green party.

Table 1: Summary data for the 2013 local elections

	Vote %	Candidates N=	Contested Seats (%)	Seats won N=	%	Seats /votes
Conservative	34.4	2,274	95.1	1,117	46.7	1.4
Labour	21.2	2,191	91.6	541	22.6	1.1
LD	13.9	1,761	73.6	353	14.8	1.1
Green	3.5	890	37.2	22	0.9	0.3
BNP	0.2	100	4.2	0	0.0	0.0
UKIP	19.9	1,742	72.8	147	6.1	0.3
PC	0.2	26	1.1	12	0.5	2.5
Ind	4.6	516	21.6	155	6.5	1.4
Other	2.1	357	14.9	45	1.9	0.9

The increase in the number of UKIP candidates meant that some voters in the shires were being given a first opportunity to cast a local vote for a party whose policy platform of withdrawal from the EU and stronger control over immigration appeared to have little to do with the concerns of local government. But many of these voters had also previously supported the Liberal Democrats and as the 2011 shire district elections had demonstrated that party's support had declined considerably after it joined the coalition government. There was too a sizeable decline in support for the Conservative party and although the Labour party had improved its position from 2009 it certainly could not claim to be the obvious choice for disaffected Conservative/Liberal Democrat voters.

Although the 2013 local elections covered a relatively small number of 35 authorities it is possible to aggregate the local ward/division voting data to the district authority level; this makes more than 200 cases available for examination. Figure 1 shows the rank order of districts by UKIP vote share achieved at the 2013 election. The bars marked in blue are authorities where at least one UKIP candidate stood in 2009 while the red bars refer to authorities where none had stood in 2009 but did so in 2013.

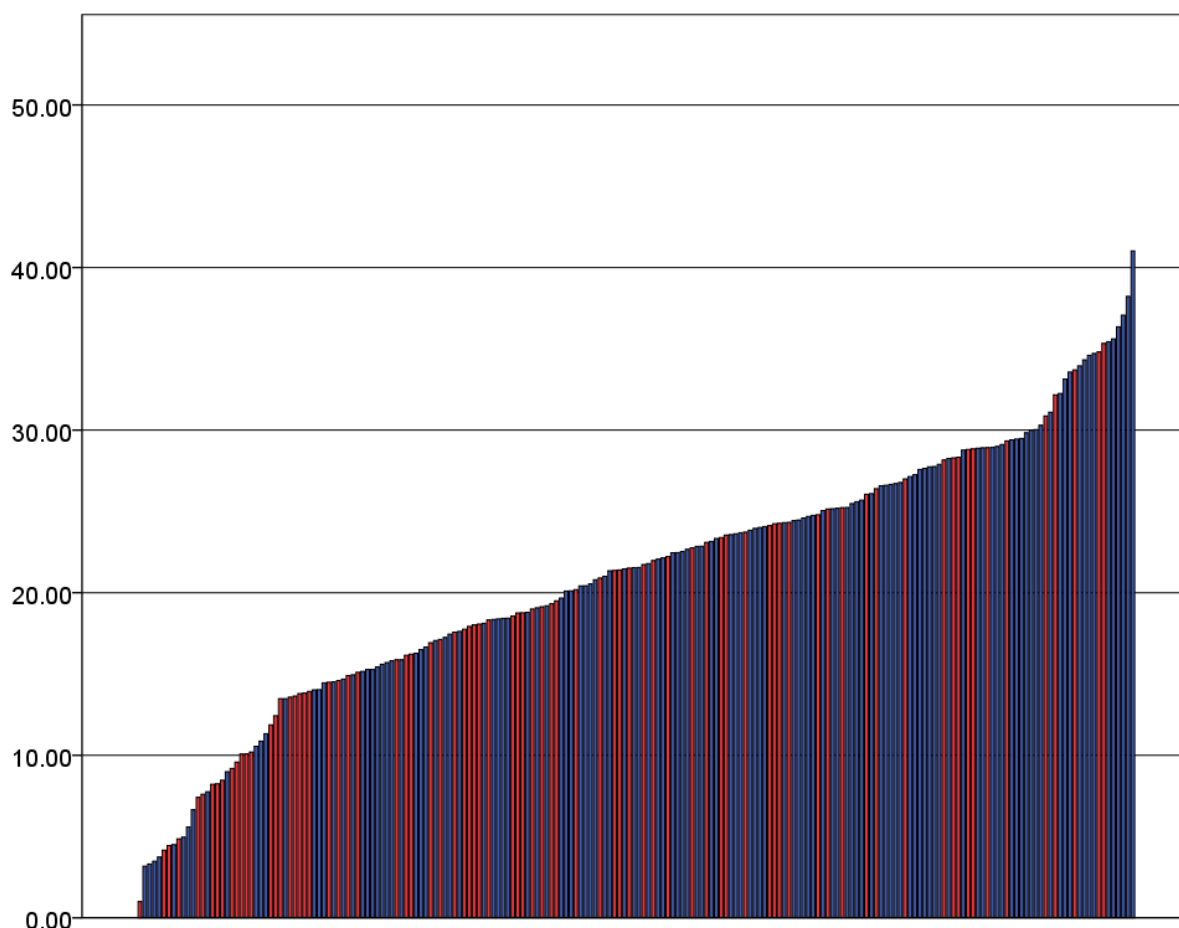


Figure 1: Rank order vote share for UKIP by local authority district level

Although there is a clustering of red bars towards the lower end of the distribution (below 15% vote share) there are 5 authorities among the 21 authorities where the party captured more than 30% of the overall district-level vote and a further 13 authorities among the 44 cases where UKIP obtained between 25-30% of the total vote.

The ability of the party's candidates to record a relatively high level of support having previously had no presence at this particular set of local elections is illustrated by Figure 2. This again shows district level data but now shows the percentage change in UKIP vote share 2009-2013 with red bars highlighting areas where the party went from zero votes in 2009. There are 66 authorities where the UKIP percentage change in share was 20-points or more.

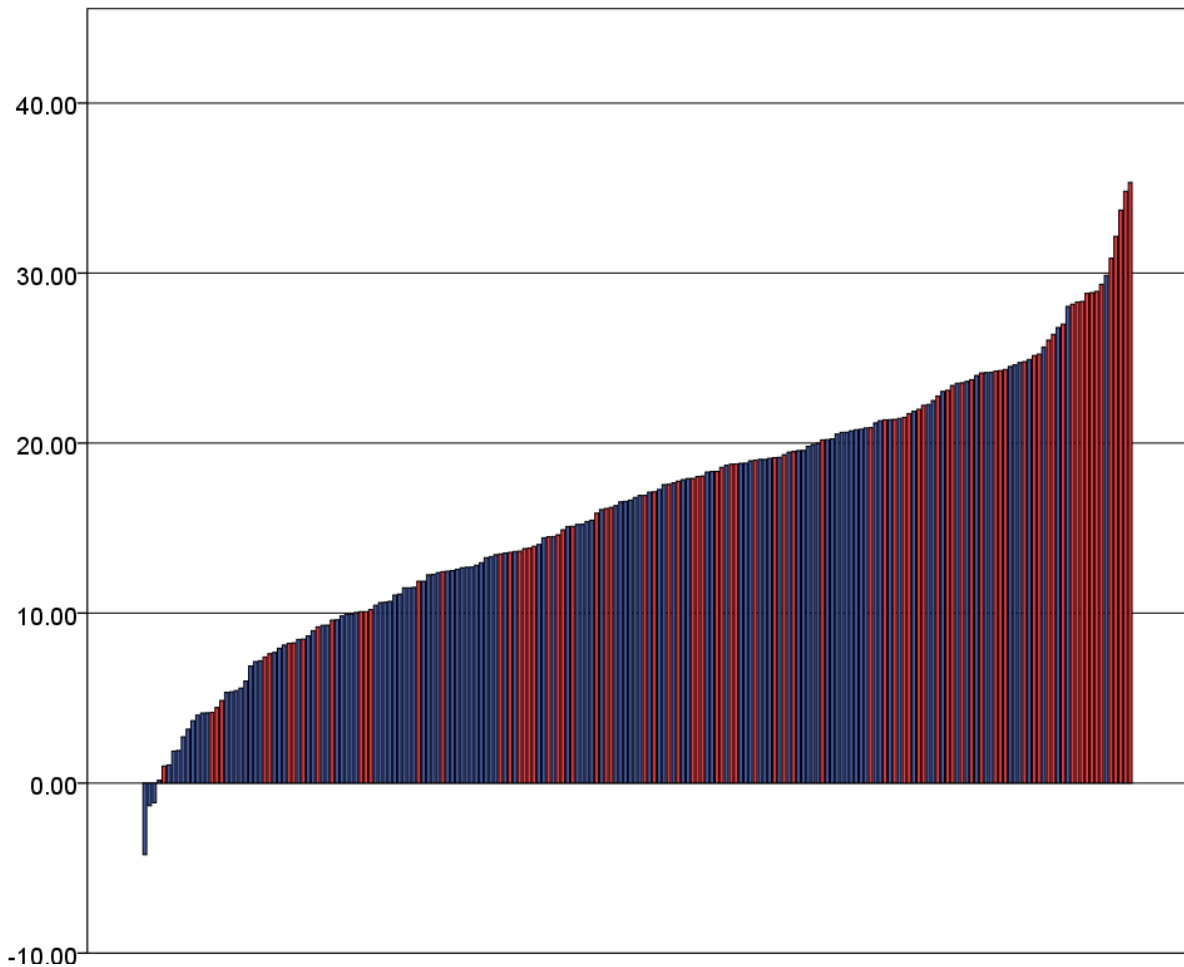


Figure 2: Rank order vote share change (2009-2013) for UKIP by local authority district level

The outcome of these elections in terms of UKIP progress must be regarded as spectacular by any yardstick. Compared to its 2009 performance (where UKIP was benefitting from the elections to the European parliament held on the same day as the local elections) the party fielded many more candidates, won much more support at the ballot box and although it perhaps failed to harness that vote in terms of an effective translation into seats it nevertheless announced that it could compete with the established parties. We turn now to examine the candidates that achieved this feat.

The 2013 Census of Local Candidates

Details regarding UKIP's candidates are provided by data from a census of candidates that contested the 2013 local council elections. The Elections Centre has surveyed local candidates since 2006. Normally a random probability sample is used to select a sufficient number of participants with the aim of receiving approximately a thousand responses. The names and addresses of candidates are obtained from the nomination lists published by local authorities. Each selected candidate is sent a letter to their home address which explains the

nature and purpose of the survey. The letter is timed to arrive on the days immediately following polling day.

Between 2006-2010 the survey was conducted using postal questionnaires. Since 2011 it has been conducted as an online survey with the letter providing each candidate with their own code number and a web address where the questionnaire can be found. The response rate fell from above 30% using postal methods to approximately 20% using the online approach. Anticipating this lower response rate we increased the frequency of the sampling procedure, thereby maintaining the total number of responses received.

Because the 2013 local electoral cycle involved only the remaining 27 English shire counties and some former counties that had become unitary councils, the number of candidates contesting is relatively small. The added interest in surveying UKIP candidates prompted the Centre to conduct a census in 2013 rather than sampling. Letters were sent to the almost ten thousand candidates. A total of 1,989 candidates responded, a response rate of 20%. Following examination of these responses the data are weighted by party (after comparison with the actual number of candidates contesting) and by the response rate for each local authority.

Since the analysis in this paper seeks to compare UKIP candidates with those standing for one of the three main parties the responses from candidates standing as Independents or for one of the smaller parties are excluded. This reduces the number of available cases to 1,588 (Conservatives comprise 454 respondents or 29%, Labour 438/28%, Liberal Democrats 350/22% and UKIP 346/22%).

Who answered the UKIP call to arms?

When the process of nominating candidates opened in early April it became clear that the appeal for volunteers among UKIP members had been successful. Were these volunteers seasoned veterans, possibly former Conservative candidates for whom the European issue had convinced them to switch allegiance? Or were these candidates rank and file members who felt that this was an ideal opportunity to broaden the base of what is widely regarded as a one-issue party?

Survey respondents are allocated to one of four categories that describes their experience as candidates. First-time candidates are those that have not stood for election to any principal local authority (i.e. excluding parish and town council contests) before the current election. Incumbents are former councillors seeking re-election although not necessarily for the same ward/division. A separate category identifies candidates that have previously been elected but were not incumbents at the time of the 2013 election. Finally, the term 'serial' is used to describe those candidates standing at more than one election but who have never been elected.

Table 2 shows that six in ten UKIP candidates were standing for the first time. A further 30% of the UKIP numbers comprise the committed – previously flying the party’s colours regardless of whether elected or not. The contrast with the three other parties is immediate in respect of novice candidates; for only a third and a fifth of these does May 2013 represent their initiation as a local election candidate. Unsurprisingly, given the traditional Conservative dominance across the English shires and the specific context of the 2009 elections, almost half of their candidates were incumbents with a further 19% standing in areas controlled by other parties. On paper, therefore, this should have been an unequal battle for votes, with UKIP candidates inexperienced in mounting and fighting a campaign against largely Conservative incumbents sufficiently committed to want to stand for re-election.

Table 2: Prior electoral experience of candidates that stood at 2013 local elections by party (%)

Experience	UKIP	Con	Lab	LD	Total
First-time candidate	61	28	32	20	35
Incumbent	3	48	13	23	23
Former councillor, non-incumbent	5	5	16	20	12
Serial candidate	30	19	39	37	31

Apart from the dearth of prior experience are there other characteristics that set UKIP candidates apart from those standing for the established parties? Table 3 shows that in terms of women’s recruitment UKIP numbers are closest to the Conservative party but are considerably lower than that for the Liberal Democrats and especially Labour (Rallings and Thrasher 2013). We neither know whether this pattern reflects the pattern of membership within UKIP nor whether the party took any steps to establish quotas for women candidates, although given the nature of the recruitment drive there was very little time in any case. A preliminary analysis of the aggregate-level data reveals a rather interesting observation. For each woman candidate that stood at the 2013 election we coded her as ‘1’ if there was a male candidate with the same surname also standing within the same district (i.e. shire district level) and for the same party, otherwise zero. Among the UKIP women candidates some 12% are coded 1, compared with 4% Conservative, 6% Labour and 5% Liberal Democrats. Although this does not demonstrate that UKIP’s recruitment saw a greater proportion of married couples standing it is certainly of interest and worthy of further investigation.

Table 3: Characteristics of candidates that stood in 2012 local elections by party (%)

		UKIP	Con	Lab	LD	Total
Sex*	<i>male</i>	82	76	67	70	73
	<i>female</i>	19	24	33	30	27
Age	<i><=45 years</i>	14	21	20	20	19
	<i>46-55 years</i>	17	18	19	18	18
	<i>56-65 years</i>	28	34	39	34	34
	<i>>=66 years</i>	41	28	22	28	29
Ethnic origin	<i>White</i>	98	99	98	99	98
	<i>BAME</i>	2	1	2	1	2
Education	<i>No qualification</i>	12	4	4	1	5
	<i>GCSE/A level</i>	43	44	25	23	34
	<i>Degree</i>	45	52	71	75	61
Occupational status	<i>Professional</i>	42	56	52	55	51
	<i>Managerial/technical</i>	33	28	25	29	29
	<i>Other</i>	25	16	22	16	20
Employment status	<i>Full/Part-time</i>	26	26	36	31	30
	<i>Self employed</i>	23	22	13	20	19
	<i>Retired</i>	43	40	38	37	39
	<i>Other</i>	9	13	13	12	12

- Data on candidate sex is taken from the election returns

These candidates were also older, with 41% aged 66 years or more compared to below 30% for this age category for the other parties. While a fifth of those contesting for the main parties are in the youngest age category, only 14% of UKIP candidates are found there. None of the parties recruited candidates from among non-white ethnic groups.

Although it is true a majority of candidates that stand for local election possesses a university degree qualification there are some differences that emerge from the survey evidence. Three-quarters of Liberal Democrat candidates hold a degree, closely followed by Labour but just over half of the Conservatives and 45% of UKIP candidates do so. One in eight of the UKIP candidates has no formal educational qualification. It is, perhaps, unsurprising that fewer UKIP candidates are to be found among the professional occupations although they are just as likely to be encountered among those describing themselves as having a managerial or technical occupation.

Finally, and despite the older age profile among UKIP candidates, it is interesting to discover that the stereotype of white-haired older, retired men with no previous electoral experience but time on their hands is not entirely true. Admittedly, the largest category among UKIP is the retired but 43% compares with a range of 37-40% for the other parties. In other respects the similarity with the Conservative party candidates is worth noting.

The recruitment and selection process

Many of the people that volunteered to stand for UKIP were experiencing a local election for the first time and were doing so at a relatively old age. Had these soon-to-be candidates been regular fixtures within their local party organisations, building and maintaining an infrastructure but leaving the battle for votes to other more confident and committed members? Or was this volunteer army hastily assembled by a party scrabbling to find any name to put on the ballot paper?

The answer would appear to lie closer to the second than the first of these questions. On each survey we ask questions about a person's place of residence and whether it is located within the electoral district that they are contesting. This provides a sense of whether a party is preferring to draft in 'outsiders' to fill vacancies, leaving itself vulnerable to the accusation that it is not picking locals. Although all candidates are invariably party members, because party rules largely preclude the selection of non-members, what can be revealing is both the duration of that membership and the extent to which the individual has perhaps become socialised within the party by holding some official responsibility. Finally, in order to gauge a sense of the level of internal party activity, candidates are asked if they faced competition for the nomination and whether they personally had sought the nomination for more than one seat.

Table 4: Candidate recruitment by party (%)

		UKIP	Con	Lab	LD	Total
Ward resident	<i>Yes</i>	56	59	55	59	57
	<i>No</i>	44	41	45	41	43
Previous resident	<i>Yes</i>	17	19	22	17	19
	<i>No</i>	83	81	78	83	81
Party member	<i>> 5 years</i>	38	74	79	80	69
	<i>> 1 year</i>	33	21	20	16	22
	<i>< 1 year</i>	29	3	2	4	8
	<i>Not a member</i>	0	1	0	0	0
Local office	<i>No</i>	16	5	8	5	7
	<i>Yes</i>	84	95	92	95	93
Competition for selection	<i>Yes</i>	12	43	25	12	24
	<i>No</i>	88	57	75	88	76
Competed for other nomination	<i>Yes</i>	3	11	8	4	7
	<i>No</i>	97	89	92	96	93

Table 4 confirms strongly that the profile of UKIP candidates fits the story that having appealed for volunteers the party then went about dragooning recent members (and most likely signing up new members in the months prior to May but after the letter was sent) in a successful effort to provide local voters with an opportunity to turn away from the established party system. Three in ten UKIP respondents had been party members for less than a year at the time of the election. A further third had been members for fewer than five years. This evidence suggests that almost two-thirds of the UKIP candidates that stood in May 2013 had joined the party after 2008. By contrast, three quarters or more of candidates that contested for one of the established parties had joined before 2008. Interestingly, while the UKIP members were only recently recruited it appears that 86% had been persuaded to accept (immediately) some responsibility within the party upon joining.

Only one in eight of our UKIP candidates had faced an opponent when seeking the nomination, the same proportion found among the Liberal Democrat respondents. Some 43% of Conservative candidates emerged only after passing through a competitive selection process. A large majority of candidates across all parties did not apply for more than one nomination.

Overall, the evidence demonstrates a relatively rushed recruitment process within UKIP, certainly of candidates and probably of new members also. There was little time to draw up a list of people seeking the same nomination; rather the opposite picture of finding anyone to

stand is nearer the mark. But we know, both from previous surveys and the evidence of local election results, that many of those that do stand are doing so not from any expectation of winning but rather because they feel that it is important for their party to appear on the ballot paper.

Table 5: Criteria selected to explain candidate’s selection by party

	UKIP	Con	Lab	LD	Total
Incumbent	2	26	5	10	11
Previous councillor	10	44	26	36	30
Local resident	54	57	47	51	52
Likely to win	16	51	21	24	29
Reputation	49	81	59	61	63
Only volunteer	36	18	36	40	32
Paper candidate	51	19	43	45	38

Note: candidates may select as many criteria as applied to them

Respondents to the candidate survey are presented with a list of factors that they feel applied in their own selection. They are free to choose as many of these as they wish. The findings are reported in Table 5 and reveal a complex picture rather than the simple dichotomy between UKIP and other party candidates found in responses to other questions examined thus far. Unsurprisingly very few UKIP candidates were selected because they were the incumbent or were previously a councillor. But the proportions citing local residence as a selection factor are the same across all parties. Just under half of UKIP respondents felt a good reputation was part of the explanation, a full ten points lower than the figure encountered among Labour and Liberal Democrats but thirty points adrift of the Conservatives. Of course, there is a very high correlation between past council service and the sense of reputation that explains much of this difference but it is significant perhaps that half of UKIP candidates did not regard themselves as ‘local notables’ and suited to this role of appealing for votes from within their communities.

Although it does not paint a picture of a strong and vibrant system of local democracy it is fair to say that the annual surveys frequently reveal that many candidates stand because they are either the only volunteer and/or are prepared to have their name appear on the ballot paper as a ‘paper’ candidate. One in three UKIP candidates reference their personal selection to the factor of being the only volunteer – the same proportion found amongst Labour and Liberal Democrats. And while it is noteworthy that half the UKIP volunteers saw themselves as names on the ballot the proportion is not dissimilar to the other parties struggling to compete for votes in the Tory-dominated shires.

Table 6: Candidate motives for first standing by party (%)

		UKIP	Con	Lab	LD	Total
Original decision to stand	Own decision	44	44	48	36	43
	Asked to stand	56	56	52	64	57
Those deciding to stand	Career in politics	11	13	9	15	12
	Make a difference	71	69	58	64	65
	Volunteering reasons	16	15	31	19	21
	Council role model	1	3	2	3	2
Those asked to stand	Councillor	4	26	18	30	20
	Party member	94	67	79	68	76
	Someone else	2	8	3	2	4

Further light is cast on the recruitment drive following the analysis of responses to a question that asks candidates about the reasons that lay behind them standing for their first election. Of course, in the case of many UKIP respondents this would be the 2013 election. Table 6 shows that there is nothing unusual about what triggered UKIP candidates to stand with 44% making the decision independent of any outside influence and 56% standing after being asked to do so – virtually the same as the overall figure for all party candidates. It is Liberal Democrats that are the relative shrinking violets in presenting themselves for selection.

Again, amongst those citing it was their own decision, the range of answers that UKIP respondents provide are broadly similar to those received from candidates standing for the other parties. But there is a difference for those that were asked to stand. Understandably, given the rather small number of UKIP councillors prior to 2013, the approach from an existing councillor, which plays such a big role in candidate recruitment in the three main parties is obviously absent from the UKIP replies.

On the campaign trail

UKIP, in a very short time, swelled the ranks of its party members and received a heavy response to its appeal for volunteers to contest the 2013 elections. For most of these volunteers this was a completely new experience. Which begs the question – what sort of campaigns did they fight in the few weeks between signing their nomination papers and waiting for the ballots to be counted?

Some of the picture is revealed in Table 7. Two-thirds of UKIP candidates had a campaign leaflet to deliver if they were so inclined; this was the same proportion found amongst Liberal Democrats but certainly a smaller figure than that found amongst Conservative campaigners.

Almost half of UKIP's candidates made little or no contribution towards the leaflet's content with only a third of Conservatives being as inactive. However, among those candidates that did have a leaflet, a large proportion across all four parties then went on to deliver it.

Table 7: Campaigning by party (%)

		UKIP	Con	Lab	LD	Total
Campaign leaflet	<i>Yes</i>	65	92	76	66	76
	<i>No</i>	35	8	24	34	24
Personal input into leaflet	<i>0-50%</i>	48	34	40	31	38
	<i>51-89%</i>	26	46	38	35	38
	<i>90% and higher</i>	26	20	22	33	24
Deliver leaflets	<i>Yes</i>	90	94	92	93	92
	<i>No</i>	10	6	8	7	8
Campaigning hours per week	<i><= 9 hours</i>	37	20	47	37	34
	<i>10-17 hours</i>	27	29	30	33	30
	<i>18-30 hours</i>	15	24	12	13	17
	<i>>=31 hours</i>	20	27	11	17	19
	<i>Mean value</i>	14.7	18.7	12.2	14.5	15.4
Help delivering leaflets	<i>Yes</i>	83	95	94	96	93
	<i>No</i>	17	5	6	4	7
Assistance per week	<i><= 4 hours</i>	40	34	47	38	39
	<i>5-8 hours</i>	29	21	21	15	21
	<i>9-16 hours</i>	22	22	20	26	22
	<i>>=17 hours</i>	10	23	12	22	18
	<i>Mean value</i>	8.9	11.6	8.4	11.8	10.3
Delivered to all addresses	<i>Yes</i>	45	80	62	61	65
	<i>No</i>	55	20	38	39	35
Percentage households covered	<i>Mean value</i>	55.0	68.0	58.7	61.9	60.2
Campaign elsewhere	<i>Yes</i>	46	55	67	59	57
	<i>No</i>	54	45	33	41	43

How much time was spent on the campaign trail? Candidates are asked to estimate the average number of hours per week spent campaigning. The smallest input, up to nine hours per week, includes 37% of UKIP respondents – the same figure is obtained for Liberal Democrats but compares to 47% of Labour's candidates. A fifth of UKIP candidates fall within the most active category of campaigners, a figure bettered only by the Conservatives, many of whom would be incumbents anxious to be re-elected. By contrast, only one in ten of Labour's candidates claimed to have been campaigning at this level of intensity. The average weekly hours for UKIP, Labour and Liberal Democrats ranges between 12.2-14.7 hours, some way short of the average 18.7 hours claimed by Conservative candidates. It should be recalled that among the non-Conservatives a sizeable proportion admit to being paper candidates only and therefore differences in campaign time are perhaps understandable. For almost one in five UKIP candidates (17%) this time would have been spent as a solitary

activity – three times the number of candidates campaigning alone that stood for the main parties. Only Labour candidates reported receiving as little additional support as did UKIP contestants.

Eight in ten Conservatives delivered leaflets to every household while almost two-thirds of Labour and Liberal Democrats reported this level of blanket coverage. Fewer than half of the UKIP candidates succeeded in reaching the voters in this way. Among those that leafleted only a fraction of electors the UKIP coverage was again the lowest but the average of 55% of all households is quite similar to both Labour and the Liberal Democrats. One regular feature of local election campaigning is that many respondents assist with colleagues' campaigning efforts. While a majority of main party candidates did this only 46% of UKIP's candidates did so.

Although UKIP candidates were not as well-resourced during the campaign as the Conservatives, the dominant party of shire England, their efforts compare alongside those of both Labour and the Liberal Democrats. What they almost certainly did not possess to the same extent as the other parties was an appreciation of where supporters were located and campaign assistance to assist in voter mobilisation. But, this is unsurprising given the speed with which candidates were assembled to fight these elections.

Candidate attitudes

Having identified the type of person that stepped forward to sport UKIP's colours at the 2013 elections we now provide evidence about their political views and how these compare to candidates representing the party political mainstream. Candidates were asked to locate themselves on the standard left-right political spectrum on a scale that went from extreme left (zero) to extreme right (ten). The same scales were used to calibrate candidates on other policy-oriented issues although the scales were sometimes reversed in direction to maintain respondents' attention. In these cases (migration and tax/public expenditure) the data were re-coded so that the scales all run in the same direction, i.e. from left to right where a low value equates to a left-wing position and a high value corresponds to a viewpoint further to the right.

Table 8 reports for each party the mean score and standard deviation on the left/right dimension and five policy scales. In terms of the main left/right orientation UKIP candidates places themselves at 6.7, a virtually identical position to Conservatives. Liberal Democrats report a mean score of 4.1 (just left of centre) with Labour at 2.6.

In a sense the remaining questions serve as the explanation for these general ideological positions. For example, in respect of the scale for delivery of local services which runs from services should be the same everywhere to complete diversity there are no differences

between UKIP and the Conservative and Liberal Democrats. To be sure, Labour candidates scored an average of 4.5, suggestive of a rather narrow opinion range on this topic.

There is certainly less consensus among the candidates on two issues that tap into Europe and the economic impact of immigration respectively. We are not surprised to find UKIP candidates favouring withdrawal from the EU (9.8 on the 10 point scale with standard deviation of just 0.9) but the general Euroscepticism amongst Conservative candidates is relatively high also. Although not necessarily favouring further integration both Labour and Liberal Democrats cannot be distinguished apart in their generally positive attitudes towards the EU.

In respect of immigration the question asked candidates whether they regarded the influx of migrant workers to be generally good or bad for the British economy. UKIP candidates were more inclined than Conservatives to believe that migrant workers did not strengthen the economic situation but both these positions were quite distant to the more favourable view of the role of migrant workers to the economy that was expressed by Liberal Democrats and Labour candidates.

Table 8: Policy attitude scales for party candidates

	UKIP		Con		Lab		LD		Total	
	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>SD</i>
Left-Right	6.7	1.4	6.8	1.2	2.6	1.3	4.1	1.2	5.0	2.2
Local services - diversity or homogeneous	6.5	2.8	6.8	2.4	4.5	2.6	6.5	2.4	6.0	2.7
Migrants - good or bad for economy	6.9	2.1	5.1	2.1	2.9	1.9	3.2	2.0	4.5	2.5
Economy versus environment	6.0	2.3	6.2	1.9	4.8	1.9	4.5	1.8	5.4	2.1
European Union - more or less integration	9.8	0.9	7.7	1.7	3.8	2.2	4.0	2.2	6.2	3.1
Balance of current public expenditure	6.2	2.6	6.3	1.9	2.3	1.8	4.3	1.7	5.3	2.6

Identifying UKIP candidates

Having identified some similarities and differences between candidates that stood for UKIP and others representing the three established parties it should be feasible using a multivariate analysis to assess the relative weight of these factors in determining the profile of those that answered the call for volunteers. Table 9 shows the results of a series of logistic regression models where candidates are coded as 1 if UKIP, 0 otherwise. The basic model 1 contains only three predictor variables – a candidate's gender, age and highest educational qualification, which Table 2 suggested were characteristics that might be used to identify the likelihood of a candidate representing UKIP. Although each of the included explanatory variables makes a statistically significant contribution, this model does not fit the data particularly well (R^2 value of just 0.12). Only 8% of the UKIP candidates are correctly classified.

Model 2 adds to these demographic characteristics a set of variables that relate to the candidate's political/electoral experience and his/her effort expended on campaigning. Information about length of party membership is the single factor that helps to distinguish UKIP from other party candidates. The odds of locating a UKIP candidate increase dramatically as the length of party membership shortens; the odds of finding a UKIP candidate among those with less than 1 year party membership is almost 13 times the odds among those with party membership of more than 5 years. A similar although smaller effect is found when comparing the odds for the first-time candidates with those for candidates with prior experience of contesting local elections. Although we noted from Table 7 that the mean number of campaigning hours per week for UKIP candidates compares to the hours committed to by Labour and Liberal Democrats, Model 2 suggests that UKIP's lack of infrastructure, evidenced here by a reduced ability to contact voters on polling day and to help with the campaigning effort in other wards, sets their candidates apart from the more established parties. The addition of these experience/campaign variables certainly helps the model fit ($R^2 = 0.43$, correct classification of 45% of UKIP candidates).

It was clear from Table 8, however, that an extremely important distinguishing characteristic of UKIP candidates lies with their attitudes towards the European Union. For this purpose the responses to the question on EU membership were recoded as a binary variable, with those selecting 10 on the scale coded as wanting complete withdrawal, otherwise zero. The odds of locating UKIP candidates increase considerably when the comparison is made between those who prefer complete withdrawal with those who selected options short of withdrawal. Model 3 improves the fit ($R^2 = 0.84$, 93% correct classification of UKIP candidates) to the data considerably.

Finally, model 4 includes all variables that reached significance in the previous models and shows that overall 92% of UKIP and 96% of other parties' candidates could be correctly classified ($R^2 = 0.84$).

Table 9: Logistic Regression Models for UKIP candidate identity

	Model 1		Model 2		Model 3		Model 4	
	B (S.E.)	Exp(B)	B (S.E.)	Exp(B)	B (S.E.)	Exp(B)	B (S.E.)	Exp(B)
Constant	-4.02 (0.33)***		-5.34 (0.47)***		-11.67 (1.42)***		-11.12 (1.28)***	
Men	0.98 (0.17)***	2.661	1.14 (0.21)***	3.137	1.00 (0.38)**	2.728	-0.89 (0.35)**	2.431
...women (reference category)								
Age	0.03 (0.01)***	1.026	0.04 (0.01)***	1.042	0.05 (0.01)***	1.047	0.04 (0.01)***	1.043
Qualification	***		***					
No qualification	1.41 (0.24)***	4.076	1.54 (0.32)***	4.68	-0.55 (0.50)...	0.579		
GCSE or A-level	0.80 (0.13)***	2.214	0.78 (0.16)***	2.173	-0.12 (0.29)...	0.89		
...degree (reference category)								
Party membership			***		***		***	
Less than 1 year			2.46 (0.24)***	11.716	2.87 (0.46)***	17.541	2.69 (0.43)***	14.705
More than 1 year			1.10 (0.19)***	3.009	1.03 (0.33)***	2.787	0.70 (0.30)*..	2.006
...more than 5 years (reference category)								
First time candidate			0.71 (0.17)***	2.039	0.70 (0.30)*..	2.017	0.87 (0.28)**	2.389
...has been candidate before (reference category)								
Personal input into leaflet (0-100 scale)			-0.006 (0.003)*.	0.994	-0.005 (0.004).	0.995	-0.008 (0.003)*	0.992
Hours/week delivering leaflet			0.02 (0.01)*..	1.02	-0.01 (0.02). ..	0.988		
Contacted voters on polling day			-2.84 (0.39)***	0.059	-3.19 (0.51)***	0.041	-3.11 (0.47)***	0.045
...did not contact (reference category)								

Helped in another ward(s)			-0.63 (0.15)***	0.535	-0.21 (0.27)...	0.809		
...did not help (reference category)								
Complete withdrawal from EU					2.62 (0.50)***	13.748	2.63 (0.47)***	13.895
...not complete withdrawal (reference category)								
EU membership (from Integration to Withdrawal)					0.59 (0.15)***	1.804	0.51 (0.14)***	1.67
Migration from other countries (from Bad to Good)					-0.13 (0.06)*..	0.875	-0.15 (0.05)**.	0.86
Position on political spectrum (from Left to Right)					0.22 (0.08)**.	1.244	0.28 (0.07)***	1.325
N / R2 / Correct classification (%) for UKIP & Others	1805 / 0.12 / 8.0 & 98.5	1615 / 0.43 / 45.1 & 95.3			1615 / 0.84 / 93.1 & 96.5		1760 / 0.84 / 92.1 & 96.3	

Conclusions

There is no doubt that UKIP and its candidates performed remarkably well at the 2013 local elections. Although the party had succeeded in reaping the benefits of its anti-European stance at European Parliament elections it had failed hitherto at convincing significant numbers of local voters to support it. This changed following a major recruitment drive and it became commonplace for UKIP candidates to appear on the ballot paper alongside candidates standing for one of the three established parties. The combination of voters disaffected by the parties sharing coalition government at Westminster and a reluctance to regard Labour as the sole recipient of any protest vote led to UKIP capturing a fifth of the popular vote and slightly fewer than 150 seats.

The survey of these candidates that answered the request for volunteers shows them to be different to the other parties' candidates in some important respects. UKIP candidates are more likely to be men, more likely to be older and less likely to hold high levels of educational qualifications. And while they are less likely to be drawn from what might be termed the professional classes they are certainly not representative of the general population in terms of occupational status. But these differences are rather small when set alongside the biggest difference which relates to their relative political and electoral inexperience when compared alongside more seasoned campaigners for local votes that stood for the Conservatives especially as well as Labour and the Liberal Democrats.

But although they lacked experience they appeared to have set out on the campaign trail with a fair degree of enthusiasm and did not lack for effort. Putting to one side the understandable disadvantageous comparison with the Conservatives, the incumbent party of the English shires, UKIP's candidates, many of whom were fighting their first campaigns, sometimes eclipsed the efforts of the more seasoned Labour and Liberal Democrats. The evidence points to a hastily assembled collection of old and new party members who proved more than capable of taking the party's message to local voters despite the apparent lack of a well-organised party infrastructure.

It seems that this message, regardless of its relevance to the day to day responsibilities undertaken by these particular elected authorities, resonated with voters who appeared reluctant to embrace one or other of the three main parties. Only time will tell whether this performance marks the pinnacle of UKIP's achievement or instead a springboard into the 2014 European election campaign and beyond.

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