

LOCAL ELECTION CANDIDATE SURVEY, 2007

We are conducting this survey to collect information from candidates to learn more about the people who stand at local elections, their experience of selection and their opinions of the process. All replies will be treated confidentially and anonymised for our analysis.

1. Firstly, we'd like to learn about your previous political and local community activity.

Prior to the 2007 election,

a) Had you ever been a candidate in metropolitan, district, unitary, London borough and / or county council elections?

Yes ☉₁ No ☉₀

If **'Yes'** how many times? and, when was the first time?

b) Had you ever been elected to metropolitan, district, unitary, London borough and / or county councils?

Yes ☉₁ No ☉₀

If **'Yes'**, how many times? and, when was the first time?

Please tick in the **'Yes'** column below for any of the activities that apply to you and also tick the **'before standing'** column if this occurred before you first stood as a local election candidate:

		Yes	Before standing
c)	Stood as a Parliamentary candidate		
d)	Held a local party office		
e)	Held office in a charitable organisation		
f)	Held office in a professional association		
g)	Held office in a trade union		
h)	Held office in women's organisation		
i)	Served on a local public body		
j)	Had a position of responsibility in a local pressure group		
k)	Had a position of responsibility in a local community group		
		tick, 1, blank, 0	tick, 1, blank, 0

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF BECOMING A CANDIDATE FOR THE FIRST TIME

2. Why did you first stand as a candidate in a local election? (Please rank the following reasons in order of importance.)

	1 st reason	2 nd reason	3 rd reason
I wanted to support my party			
I was asked to stand			
I thought I could win			
Dissatisfaction with previous councillor(s)			
I wanted to do something to improve this area for the residents			
I knew people on the council who encouraged me to stand			
I felt very strongly about particular issues / or a single issue and wanted to do something			
Response code	1	2	3

Other reasons, please specify

.....

3. Some people may receive encouragement from those around them when they decide to stand for public office, whilst others may experience indifference or disapproval. How positive or negative were the following people in encouraging you to become a candidate the **FIRST TIME** you stood for election? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Very Positive	Positive	Neutral	Negative	Very Negative	Not Applicable
Your spouse or partner						
Other family members						
Personal friends						
Community groups						
Business associates						
Party members						
Party agents						
Local Pressure Group						
Women's groups						
Trade unions						
Employers						
Others						
Response code	1	2	3	4	5	6

4. Thinking about your experience of standing for the first time, was the initial decision to put yourself forward for selection? ... (Please tick **ONE**)

a)	entirely your own		1
b)	consequence of being approached or encouraged by others		2

YOUR EXPERIENCE OF SELECTION

To be answered by candidates for registered political parties only.

If you stood in 2007 as a non-party or Independent candidate, please go to **Question 12**

5. Are you a party member?

Yes ₁ No ₀

If 'Yes' for approximately how many years have you been a member?

6. Before the 2007 election were there more people seeking selection for your party in this ward than there were available seats?

Yes ₁ No ₀

7. Did you apply for more than one seat in 2007?

Yes ₁ No ₀

8. In your opinion why were you selected to contest this particular seat?

	<i>1st reason</i>	<i>2nd reason</i>
Incumbent		
Previously a councillor		
Local resident		
Likely to win this seat		
Good reputation		
The only volunteer		
Prepared to stand as paper candidate		
Response code	1	2

Any other reasons?.....

9. To what extent do you think these factors contributed to your successful selection?
 (Please tick **ONE** box in each row)

	Very much	Quite a lot	Not very much	Not at all
Your previous political experience				
Your previous community involvement				
Being known to members of the selection committee				
Your gender				
Your ethnicity				
Your age				
Your current or previous employment				
Your reputation				
Response code	1	2	3	4

10. Are there any aspects of the selection procedure that you feel could be improved?

Yes ₁ No ₀

11. If 'Yes', please give details.....

.....
.....

To be answered by all candidates

12. When you stood for the 2007 election what was your estimation of the probability of winning this seat on a scale of 0 - 10? (Please circle the appropriate number.)

Highly improbable 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 Highly probable

13. Do you currently live in the ward for which you stood at the recent election?

Yes ₁ No ₀

14. Did you personally choose to stand for this seat?

Yes ₁ No ₀

If 'No' why are you standing in this ward?

.....

THE RECENT ELECTION CAMPAIGN

Some candidates publish information leaflets to be delivered to the residents of their ward. In this recent campaign:

15. Did you produce a campaign leaflet for distribution?

Yes ₁ No ₀

If 'YES', go to **Question 16** If 'NO', go to **Question 21**

16. How much personal input did you have into the content of your campaign leaflet? (Please circle **ONE**)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

17. Did you deliver the campaign leaflets?

Yes ₁ No ₀

If 'Yes', approximately how many hours a week did you spend delivering campaign leaflets?

18. Did you have help in delivering campaign leaflets?

Yes ₁ No ₀

19. Was your leaflet delivered to all addresses in your ward?

Yes Yes No

If **not**, how were the addresses selected?

.....

20. When you prepared the leaflet, how important was it to include the following information for voters?

	Very Important	Quite Important	Not Very Important	Not At All Important
Your personal background				
Your previous political experience				
Your record of local community involvement				
Your competency for public office				
Comment on the record of other parties / Councillors				
Your party's local priorities				
Your party's national policies				
Political party information to increase membership				
Response code	1	2	3	4

21. Do you maintain a personal website?

Yes Yes No

If **'No'** please go to **Question 25**

22. If **'Yes'**, did you use this website as part of your ward election campaign?

Yes Yes No

23. If **'Yes'**, do you think your website made a difference to the effectiveness of your campaign in any of the following areas:

	Very effective	Somewhat effective	Not particularly effective	Made no difference
Raising my overall profile among voters in general				
Reaching younger people				
Helping to recruit volunteer workers for my campaign				
Actually recruiting more people to vote for me				
Response code	1	2	3	4

24. How much personal input did you have into the content of your personal website?
(Please circle **ONE**)

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

25. Thinking back to the recent campaign, do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
The campaign received sufficient coverage by the local media					
The campaign was of little interest to most people in the ward					
Local newspaper coverage of the campaign was fair					
Voters were mostly interested in the national campaign issues of the major parties.					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

26. Did you campaign in other wards?

Yes ⑥₁ No ⑥₀

If 'Yes', why did you campaign in those wards?

.....

27. Overall, did you enjoy campaigning?

Yes ⑥₁ No ⑥₀

28. Would you be prepared to stand as a candidate for local election again?

Yes ⑥₁ No ⑥₀

HOLDING PUBLIC OFFICE

29. Almost all adults are eligible to become local councillors, yet relatively few come forward to be candidates. Do you agree or disagree with these possible reasons for the non-involvement of most citizens? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Being a councillor is too time consuming					
Councillors don't have the power to make a difference					
Councillors are insufficiently paid					
Most people are not interested in local government					
Intrusive media coverage of personal life may discourage some people from standing					
There is a general lack of public knowledge about local government					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

30. One of the aims of recent modernisation initiatives in local government is to attract a greater cross-section of people to serve as councillors. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
There should be more women as councillors.					
There should be more younger (18-35 years) people as councillors					
There should be more Black, Asian and minority ethnic people as councillors					
Greater social diversity amongst councillors would improve the public image of local government.					
Greater social diversity amongst councillors would increase voter turnout					
Women and men have different life experiences and so bring distinctive insights to the work of a council.					
In general, women councillors have different policy priorities than men.					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

31. Local authorities use a variety of ways to publicise the role of councillors and to encourage more people to stand as candidates. Do you agree or disagree with the following statements? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Local authorities should provide more public information about the work of councillors.					
It is the responsibility of the political parties to recruit candidates					
Councillors are in the best position to recruit new candidates					
Local authorities should advertise for candidates					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

Questionnaire continues on next page.../

32. Do you agree or disagree with the following general explanations of why there are relatively few women in politics? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

Women...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
are not interested in politics					
don't have the confidence for politics					
put their families above a political career					
Political parties should encourage more women to be candidates					
Voters discriminate against women candidates					
Too few women come forward to be candidates					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

33. Would you approve or disapprove of the following positive action measures to improve the diversity of councils? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Approve	Approve	Neutral	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
Guarantee a percentage of seats for women					
Party quotas for women candidates					

34. What are the reasons for your opinion regarding positive action on women?

.....

35. Do you agree or disagree with the following general explanations of why there are relatively few people from Black, Asian and minority ethnic backgrounds in politics? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

Black, Asian and minority ethnic people...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
are not interested in politics					
don't have the confidence for politics					
put their families above a political career					
Political parties should encourage more Black, Asian and minority ethnic people to be candidates					
Voters discriminate against Black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates					
Too few Black, Asian and minority ethnic people come forward to be candidates					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

36. Would you approve or disapprove of the following positive action measures to improve the diversity of councils? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Approve	Approve	Neutral	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
Guarantee a percentage of seats for Black, Asian and minority ethnic people					
Party quotas for Black, Asian and minority ethnic candidates					

37. What are the reasons for your opinion regarding positive action on Black, Asian and minority ethnic people?

.....

38. Do you agree or disagree with the following general explanations of why there are relatively few younger people (18-35 years age group) in politics? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

Younger people ...	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
are not interested in politics					
don't have the confidence for politics					
put their families before politics					
Political parties should encourage more people in this age group to be candidates					
Voters discriminate against younger candidates					
Too few younger people come forward to be candidates					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

39. Would you approve or disapprove of the following positive action measures to improve the diversity of councils? (Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)

	Strongly Approve	Approve	Neutral	Disapprove	Strongly Disapprove
Guarantee a percentage of seats for younger people					
Party quotas for younger candidates					

40. What are the reasons for your opinion regarding positive action on younger people?

Questions 41- 43 should be answered only by those who had experience as a councillor, PRIOR to the 2007 election. Otherwise please go to Question 44

41. Approximately how many hours a week did you spend on council duties?hours.

42. In your capacity as a councillor did you have additional responsibilities e.g. leader of the council, or other portfolio holder?

43. Approximately how frequently were you involved in the following activities relating to your position as a councillor? *(Please tick **ONE** box in each row.)*

	More than once a week	More than once a month	About once a month	Less than once a month	Never
Hold ward surgeries					
Circulate newsletters					
Receive letters from residents					
Receive telephone calls from residents					
Receive emails from residents					
Contact an MP on behalf of a resident					
Attend community events					
Attend party meetings					
Contact local media to publicise ward news					
Approached by local reporters to give interviews					
Response code	1	2	3	4	5

Finally, a few questions about you.

44. Are you ? Male © 1 Female © 2

45. What was your age last birthday?years.

46. Ethnic origin (*please choose **ONE** from section A – E, then tick the appropriate box*)

A. White

- British Ⓒ₁
- Irish Ⓒ₂
- Other White (*please specify*) Ⓒ₃
-

B. Asian

- Asian British Ⓒ₄
- Indian Ⓒ₅
- Pakistani Ⓒ₆
- Bangladeshi Ⓒ₇
- Other Asian (*please specify*) Ⓒ₈
-

C. Mixed

- White and Black Caribbean Ⓒ₉
- White and Black African Ⓒ₁₀
- White and Asian Ⓒ₁₁
- Other Mixed (*please specify*) Ⓒ₁₂
-

D. Black

- Black British Ⓒ₁₃
- Caribbean Ⓒ₁₄
- African Ⓒ₁₅
- Other Black (*please specify*) Ⓒ₁₆
-

E. Chinese or other ethnic group

- Chinese Ⓒ₁₇
- Any other (*please specify*) Ⓒ₁₈
-

47. Educational qualifications: (*Please tick the highest that you have obtained.*)

No qualifications		1
GCSEs or equivalent		2
“A” levels or equivalent		3
First degree		4
Higher degree		5

48. Which of these best describes your current occupation? (*Please tick **ONE**.*)

In full time paid employment		1
In part-time paid employment		2
Self-employed		3
In voluntary occupation		4
Registered unemployed		5
Full-time student		6
Retired		7
Looking after home / children / other relatives		8

Other

49. If currently employed, what is your occupation, or if unemployed/retired what was your previous occupation?

.....

50. How would you describe your current or previous occupational status?
 (Please tick **ONE**.)

Professional occupation		1
Managerial and / or Technical occupation		2
Skilled occupation, non manual		3
Skilled occupation, manual		4
Partly skilled occupation		5
Unskilled occupation		6

51. Where would you most like to be in ten years from now? (Please tick **ONE**.)

A councillor		1
A councillor and portfolio holder		2
A Member of Parliament		3
Employed full-time, away from politics		4
Employed by a political party		5
Retired from public life		6
Other voluntary occupation		7

Other.....

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire. Your responses are much appreciated and will contribute enormously towards our aim to reflect the opinions of as many candidates as we can in our report. Please feel free to add any observations of your own about the experience of being a candidate or elaborate on your answers to our questions.

If you would be willing to take part in a follow-up interview please write in a telephone number or email address.

Telephone No:.....

Email address:

Mary Shears, Research Officer.
 LGC Elections Centre.

FOR OFFICE USE:	Date received	Office Reference