

Most Essex voters were cheated by crazy voting system

The undemocratic First-past-the-post voting system used in May 7th's Essex County Council elections effectively disenfranchised nearly 6 out of 10 of those who voted while gifting Reform UK a majority of the seats and absolute power on the Council even though they were supported by under 4 out of 10 of those who voted.

The Supervote Project* has calculated that these were the voting figures for Essex County Council on May 7th:

	Con	Green	Labour	LibDem	Reform	Others
Vote s %	25 %	9%	8%	12%	37%	8%
Seats	13	1	1	5	53	4
Seats %	17 %	1%	1%	6%	69%	5%

Reform UK did well, but nowhere near well enough to walk off with 69% of the Council seats at the expense of the Conservative, Labour, Green and Liberal Democrat parties who were all short-changed.

Moreover, only 9 of the 77 councillors were elected on an absolute majority of the vote in their division. This explains why, of the 498,497 votes cast in the County, only 208,566 (42%) were effective. **A majority - over 290,000 - of the votes cast failed to elect anybody and so were wasted.**

These crazy results are a disgrace. This was **not** what the voters of Essex had voted for on May 7th.

The fault lies with continued use of the Victorian First-past-the-post voting system, an outdated steam age device which wastes many, if not most, of the votes shovelled into it, while producing a distorted result with the remainder. Moreover, outcomes are neither consistent nor certain. First-past-the-post is past it and continued use of this museum piece makes about as much sense as having Stephenson's Rocket haul trains on HS2.

We need to replace First-past-the-post with a system of proportional representation which awards seats to parties in proportion to the votes cast for them so that, say, if Labour won 4 out of 10 votes, they would be awarded 4 out of 10 seats. First-past-the-post is not designed to achieve this. Not only would voting reform deliver more accurate representation, there would be no need for tactical voting and there would be no more safe seats as every vote would be keenly contested. Local politics would be revitalised, with everything for everyone everywhere to play for.

All is not lost. Reform UK are staunch supporters of voting reform so should use what has happened in Essex to highlight the fact that they have won far more seats than their support warranted and demand that the Government takes action to reform our outdated voting system.

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*This press statement is published by David Green, a Merseyside resident who runs the Supervote Project, a small campaign which, in the company of others, seeks to reform the voting system in the UK. While colleagues tend to concentrate on elections to Westminster, the Supervote Project focuses on council elections in the belief that far more damage is being done to the fabric of our democracy at the grassroots by the continued use of the First-past-the-post voting system in local government elections. Please note that, while best endeavours have been used to ensure that the information is correct, this is an amateur production.

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