



Scrutiny Management
Committee

Review of Island-Wide Voting

November 2023

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Executive Summary

The comments and conclusions in this executive summary must be set in the broader context of this entire Report and the body of evidence which informs them.

The 2020 island-wide voting election was a significant change from previous systems which were based largely around parish or district representation. In September 2022, the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) resolved to review the election. It appointed a Review Panel to undertake a Review of Island-Wide Voting and to present a Report to the SMC for publication.

It was made clear at the outset that it was not the intention of the Review Panel to recommend any change to the *system* of election for 2025. The main objective was to gather evidence reflecting public opinion and to propose improvements for the 2025 general election.

The changes introduced in the 2020 election were made as the result of a referendum in which the first or subsequent choice of 6,017 people was for a change to an island-wide electoral system with 38 deputies elected on one day, with each voter having 38 votes. 14,379 people voted in that referendum, representing a turnout of 45.1% of those registered on the electoral roll. The States had resolved to treat as binding any result of 40% or greater of the turnout, and therefore the decision to move to an island-wide electoral system had been made.

The Review Panel gathered evidence by three separate means: a call for evidence, a survey, and public hearings. The survey showed that, despite the apparent limited change in support for island-wide voting since 2018,¹ there is nevertheless a significant majority of people who wish to see a change to a different system.² When asked which system people now prefer out of the five options presented in the referendum, support for the current full island-wide voting system fell dramatically, whilst rolling island-wide voting, a four-district system and a hybrid system each increased in popularity. There was no significant change in support for the previous parish-based seven-district system.³

The conclusion drawn from the evidence gathered for this Report is that for a system to likely satisfy the majority of the electorate it must: allow voters to vote for any candidate, or at least a significant proportion of candidates; not require voters to assess an unwieldy number of candidates; and (to a lesser degree) respect or reinstate parish links to some extent. Neither the current nor the previous system fulfil all three criteria.

Island-wide voting removed the direct parish connection with elected members, and this was a significant concern for a number of respondents to the call for evidence process. Despite it being the case that any resident is at liberty to contact any deputy about a matter of concern, it is clear that for some people the direct parish connection to their deputy remains of significant importance. However, it is possible that some, although certainly not all, of the perceived and actual losses of parish links may be able to be addressed under the present system.

¹ See Figure 4, section 4.2.10

² See Figure 5, section 4.2.10

³ See Figure 6, section 4.2.10

There was also a desire expressed by some to be able to meet candidates in person or at least ‘see them in action’, in order to make more informed decisions. Different systems directly affect how practical that is. This desire tends to be stronger in older age groups.

For some of its supporters the expectation was that island-wide voting would provide the spur for the development of political parties locally; however, such hopes have not been met. The reasons behind that failure are varied but it now seems reasonable to argue that an electoral system cannot, of itself, create parties where there has been no history of them operating effectively. Furthermore, half of the respondents to the survey said they did not support political parties whilst only a fifth were in favour.

For the 2025 election, drawing from the evidence, the Review Panel considers that some changes could be made that would constitute improvements to the current system and these are set out as recommendations to the States Assembly and Constitution Committee. It is acknowledged that such changes are relatively minor, and that they will not resolve what many people see as fundamental issues with the current system. Beyond that, this Report provides a broad evidence base for any future reconsideration of the electoral system.

1 Introduction

In September 2022, the Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) resolved to undertake a Review of the first full island-wide voting (IWW) election, with assistance from the States Assembly & Constitution Committee (SACC).

The change in 2020 to an island-wide electoral system, allowing voters to select up to 38 candidates in a single constituency on a single day, was a significant departure from previous systems based largely around parish representation. Two years into the new Assembly, it was agreed that such a major change in how our democracy is organised should be reviewed, with a particular emphasis on seeking the views of the public.

The SMC, working closely with SACC, set up a Review Panel to undertake the Review⁴. Members of the Panel each have previously-stated positions on island-wide voting and for full transparency those positions are included below in Table 1.

The members of the Review Panel were:

Panel Member	Experience/Position	Previously expressed position on electoral systems
Deputy Yvonne Burford	SMC President and Review Panel Chair	Wrote in the Guernsey Press on Option D (four districts) and Option E (rolling island-wide voting) prior to the 2018 referendum.
Deputy Simon Fairclough	SMC Vice-President and SACC member	Supporter of Option E (rolling island-wide voting) followed by Option A (island-wide voting) in the 2018 referendum.
Deputy Carl Meerveld	SACC President	Spearheaded the Option A (island-wide voting) campaign in the 2018 island-wide voting referendum.
Advocate Chris Green	Former deputy and former SMC President	Laid a successful amendment that introduced Option C (the hybrid system) onto the referendum ballot paper.
Ms Michelle Le Clerc	Former deputy and former member of SACC	Supportive of Option D (four districts), followed by Option B (previous system) in the 2018 referendum.

Table 1: Scrutiny Management Committee Review Panel membership with previously expressed positions on electoral systems

Section 2 of this Report explains the background to how the change of electoral system came about.

In Section 3, the three ways in which evidence was gathered for this Report are outlined. Section 4 presents the results and analysis of the data gained from those actions.

Section 5 presents a discussion distilling the evidence from this process, leading to the Review Panel's conclusions in Section 6.

⁴ The terms of reference for the Review can be found at Appendix 1 of this Report.

It was made clear at the outset of this Review that it was not the intention of the Review Panel to recommend any fundamental changes at this time to the *system* of electing deputies, namely electing 38 deputies on one day in one constituency. Rather, the objective was to gather an evidence base reflecting public opinion and, after considering that evidence, to recommend changes that the Review Panel consider could improve and refine the current system, in response to that public feedback, in time for the next election which will be held in June 2025. These recommendations are presented in Section 7. The Report itself, however, provides an evidence base against which any future proposals in respect of Guernsey's electoral system can be considered.

Except where otherwise stated, unattributed quotations throughout the Report are drawn from survey respondents.

2 Background

2.1 The history of island-wide voting since 1900

The issue of island-wide voting is far from a new one.

Until 1900, no member of the States of Deliberation had been elected directly by the people. The first nine deputies to sit in the States were elected that year on an island-wide basis although, at that time, only certain cohorts of the population had the right to vote. Jurats, douzaine representatives and rectors, together with the Bailiff and Law Officers, made up the other members of the Assembly. Gradually, the franchise was extended and the number of directly elected members increased. In 1920 the island was split into five electoral districts which between them elected 18 deputies, while non-elected members made up the remainder of the States. In 1948 the ten parishes became the electoral districts and a total of 33 deputies were elected to serve alongside the non-elected members. Also that year, the office of Conseiller was created "to ensure that the States should not at any moment, so far as we could avoid it, be overloaded with inexperienced men [...] in the hope that this would prevent decisions which would later be regretted being taken as a result of some passing mood or possibly even some passing events." These 12 Conseillers were elected not by the people of the island, but by the States of Election, partly because "it would be very unfortunate if experienced men lost their seats simply because the electorate was ignorant of the services they had given to this Island."

The 1970s to 1990s featured numerous States debates about the office of Conseiller and, in particular, the method of their election. In 1976 an investigation committee of the States found "no justifiable reason why Conseillers should not be elected by universal suffrage", but the States voted to maintain an electoral college to appoint them. In each of 1983 and 1986 and 1991, similar debates ended in the same outcome. On each occasion, one practical effect of the States' decision was to reject the notion that some members, representing around 20% of the States, should be elected on an island-wide basis. In 1992, having only a few months earlier approved a proposal to abolish the office of Conseiller, the States resolved that Conseillers should be retained after all, but elected by universal suffrage and with an island-wide mandate. The first such election was held in 1994 when there were 26 candidates for 12 seats; and a second election was held in 1997 when there were 10 candidates for six seats. In 2000, the office of Conseiller was finally abolished and there was an increase in the number of deputies,

bringing the total number to 45, all of whom were elected in parishes, with none on an island-wide basis.

In the 2000-04 term, the States rejected various amendments which proposed reintroducing island-wide elections for a portion of the seats in the Assembly but agreed that the island should be divided into seven approximately equal-sized electoral districts, rather than the ten parishes. In 2006, the States directed that a “comprehensive review of all practicable methods of introducing island-wide voting” should be undertaken. That review was carried out in the following States’ term of 2008-12, culminating in 2011 in a debate in which the States rejected two options for the election of all deputies on an island-wide basis and a third option for the election of only some deputies on an island-wide basis. The 2012-16 term saw several requêtes and amendments which related to the electoral system. That Assembly rejected a proposal for all deputies to be elected on an island-wide basis in one election on a single day; it rejected a proposal for only some deputies to be elected on an island-wide basis; and it rejected, on a tied vote, a proposal for a referendum on electoral reform. Deputies made and then rescinded a resolution to establish an investigation committee to review options for electoral reform. They then approved an amendment which proposed that in 2020 all deputies should be elected on an island-wide basis in one election on a single day but that in 2024 there should be a return to the present district-based electoral system, before scrapping the latter provision and directing that the former provision should be put to a referendum to be held during the 2016-20 States’ term. In all, over the past 40 years, there have been more than 20 substantial States’ debates about the procedure for electing members of the States.

Given the long history of island-wide voting as a topic for debate in the Assembly, it is not surprising that, in the end, the 2012-16 Assembly voted to hand the decision over to the people by means of a referendum. Some deputies speaking in that debate stated that they were against island-wide voting but voted for there to be a referendum to be held on it to enable the electorate to decide.

2.2 The 2018 referendum and its outcome

A new Assembly convened in July 2016. In May of the following year, SACC published a policy letter entitled ‘Referendum on Guernsey’s Voting System’,⁵ which the States approved as amended. The referendum was held on Wednesday 10th October 2018, using a preferential voting system, whereby voters were invited to rank the options in order of preference.

Five options were presented as follows:

Option A - Island-wide voting

- 1 island-wide electoral district
- Each voter would have 38 votes at each election
- Each deputy would serve for 4 years
- An election would be held every 4 years for all deputies at once

Option B - Status quo

- 7 electoral districts

⁵ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - Referendum on Guernsey's Voting System](#)

- Each voter would have 5 or 6 votes at each election
- Each deputy would serve for 4 years
- An election would be held every 4 years for all deputies at once

Option C - Hybrid system

- 1 island-wide electoral district (represented by 10 deputies) plus the 7 existing electoral districts (represented by 28 deputies, with precise allocation per district to be determined in accordance with respective populations)
- Each voter would have 10 votes at each election in respect of the 1 island-wide electoral district and 3, 4 or 5 votes, depending on appropriate allocation of deputies, in their own electoral district
- Each deputy would serve for 4 years
- Elections would be held every 4 years for all deputies but the election for the 10 island-wide deputies would take place first and then the election for the 28 district deputies would take place on a different day.

Option D - 4 Districts

- 4 electoral districts
- Each voter would have between 9 and 11 votes at each election
- Each deputy would serve for 4 years
- An election would be held every 4 years for all deputies at once

Option E – Rolling island-wide

- 1 island-wide electoral district
- Each voter would have 12 or 13 votes at each election
- Each deputy would serve for 6 years
- An election would be held every 2 years for a third of deputies each time

Official campaign groups were established for three of the options as follows:

- **Option A** – island-wide: promoted by Deputy Carl Meerveld and Deputy Peter Ferbrache
- **Option B** – the status quo: promoted by Mr Fergus Dunlop and Mrs Caroline McManus
- **Option C** – hybrid system: promoted by Deputy John Gollop and Mr Rhoderick Matthews

Options D and E, by contrast, did not have publicly-run campaigns mounted to promote them which may have contributed to their low polling numbers.

Table 2, below, shows the results of the referendum after the first and final rounds of counting.

Option	First round result - votes	% of turnout	Final round result - votes	% of turnout
A: Island-wide	5,304	37.5	6,017	52.5
B: Status quo	3,486	24.6	-	-
C: Hybrid system	3,760	26.6	5,448	47.5
D: 4 Districts	672	4.6	-	-
E: Rolling island-wide	940	6.6	-	-

Table 2: First and final round results of the 2018 referendum on electoral systems

In the first round of voting Option A, island-wide voting, secured 37.5% of the votes. By the final round, after second and subsequent preferences were accounted for, Option A increased its share of the vote to 52.5%, with Option C, the hybrid system, placing second with 47.5%.

14,379 people voted in the referendum, representing a turnout of 45.1% of those registered on the electoral roll. The fact that less than two-fifths of those who were on the electoral roll and who exercised their right to vote placed Option A as their first preference illustrates the issue of gaining a majority consensus for any single form of electoral system without either using a preferential voting system or limiting the available options to just two.

There were 31,865 people on the electoral roll at the time of the referendum. At that point, there were 52,159 people on the island aged 16 or over, although a small proportion of these would not have been entitled to be on the electoral roll.

The States had previously resolved to treat as binding any result which attracted a turnout of 40% or higher of those on the electoral roll. The decision to move to an island-wide electoral system had therefore been made.

As a result of the outcome of the referendum, the States Assembly & Constitution Committee published its first policy letter on the General Election 2020 in March 2019.⁶ This covered changes to The Reform (Guernsey) Law, 1948, which governs elections, and was necessitated by the change of electoral system. Other recommendations, which did not require law changes, were included in a second policy letter which was published in November 2019.⁷

The first full island-wide voting election took place in October 2020, the election having been delayed by four months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Some of the concerns about island-wide voting that were articulated before the election turned out to be unfounded. There were claims that under island-wide voting unknown candidates would struggle. However, 19 new candidates (representing 50% of deputies) were successful in 2020, compared with just 14 new candidates (37%) under the previous system in 2016, dispelling fears that new candidates would be at a significant disadvantage.

⁶ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - General Election 2020](#)

⁷ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - General Election 2020 Second Policy Letter](#)

It was also claimed during the States debate on the referendum that some candidates would be elected with very few votes, perhaps just a few hundred, which could lead to doubts about the legitimacy of some deputies' mandates. In terms of actual votes this was not true, with the lowest polling successful candidate in the 2016 election receiving 799 votes compared with the lowest polling successful candidate in the 2020 island-wide election receiving 6477 votes.

In terms of percentages, however, the candidate elected with the lowest number of votes in 2016 polled 30.3% of the electorate in that district (although that figure was a significant outlier: the next lowest candidate in any district polled 37.5% of that vote), whilst under island-wide voting the lowest-polling successful candidate gained just 26.3% of the vote. It is, therefore, the case that deputies previously needed in the order of two fifths of the district electorate to support them in order to be successful, while under island-wide voting that figure has fallen to around one-quarter, admittedly of a much larger electorate.

3 The evidence gathering process

The Review Panel sought to gather evidence by means of a call for evidence, a survey and public hearings, as described below.

3.1 The call for evidence

The Review process began with a call for evidence inviting the public to submit their views. A total of 67 responses were received. Six responses were from current deputies and six were submitted on behalf of parishes. Many of the responses were very detailed, yielding a total of approximately 120 pages of evidence. An analysis was undertaken to establish the dominant themes, and these are examined in Section 4.1

3.2 The survey

A survey was undertaken on behalf of the Review Panel by Island Global Research, with the aim of gathering people's attitudes to a wide range of issues around island-wide voting. A total of 1,465 completed responses were received, which is a statistically significant sample. 1% of responses were paper-based.

The survey was available for completion online for a period of 5 weeks. A paper version of the survey was available for those without online access. A copy of the paper version can be found at the end of the Island Global Research report at Appendix 3.

The survey included questions about respondents' experience of Guernsey's general election, how people expect to approach the election in 2025, and ideas for improving the process, together with more general views.

Residents of Guernsey, Herm and Jethou aged 16 and over were eligible to take part, whether or not they had voted in the referendum or in the 2020 election.

Respondents were asked questions about their age, sex, income, and which parish they are resident in, to assist in weighting responses in accordance with the latest population data from the States of Guernsey. The survey was completed by a wide range of people. Respondents' parish, sex and income data was reasonably representative, but there was an under-representation of younger people, and a corresponding over-representation of those aged 50 to 79, and this was accounted for.

All figures, tables, charts, and text refer to weighted data unless otherwise specified. Survey weighting is a statistical technique used to manage survey data to help ensure that it accurately represents the perspective of the population being surveyed, and a further explanation of this process is included in the Island Global Research survey results.

90% of respondents to the survey were on the electoral roll in 2020

The responses to the survey are analysed in Section 4.2

3.3 The public hearings

Once the Review Panel had received the survey results, it arranged two public hearings which were held in early October 2023, covering four broad themes related to island-wide voting. Each theme had a different panel of witnesses as follows:

1. The effects of island-wide voting on the parishes

Mr Richard Digard – Vale Douzenier and former Editor of the Guernsey Press

Mrs Mary Lowe – Former Deputy

Deputy Sue Aldwell – Current Deputy and former Torteval Constable

2. Island-wide voting: the composition and operation of the States

Ms Shelaine Green – Chair of Women in Public Life

Mr Alistair Doherty – Former Westminster House of Commons Clerk

Mr Peter Gillson – Former Deputy and former St Sampson's Douzenier

3. Political parties

Mr David Piesing – Former Adviser to The Guernsey Party

Deputy Peter Roffey – Current Deputy

Mr Nigel de la Rue – Chaired a working party on referendum options

4. Mechanics of elections and electoral systems

Professor Kevin Bales – St Saviour's Douzenier

Mr Alistair Doherty – Former Westminster House of Commons Clerk

Mr Matt Fallaize – Former Deputy and former President of SACC

The hearings were live-streamed and can be viewed online via the Scrutiny Management Committee page on the States website⁸ until such time as the Hansard transcript of the hearings is published.

The evidence gained in the public hearings is set out and analysed in Section 4.3.

4 Results and analysis of the evidence gathered

4.1 The call for evidence

Four main themes emerged from the call for evidence which are discussed below, followed by other aspects raised by respondents.

4.1.1 General dissatisfaction with island-wide voting

The vast majority of representations in the call for evidence were unsupportive of island-wide voting. Comments included:

“As a voter, I found IWV both liberating and frustrating, but the latter outweighed the former.” Deputy Roffey

“The island-wide vote gave the public what they wanted – I am not sure it was in their best interest.” Deputy Brouard

“An unmitigated disaster.” Mr P Creasey

“I do not think it [island-wide voting] has been a success by any means, but we do need to do something more equitable than historically.” Ms D de Garis

Only three of the sixty-seven respondents to the call for evidence (4%) stated they were in favour of island-wide voting:

“Island-wide voting is a must.” Ms P Lanyon

Some respondents simply listed the pros and cons of island-wide voting:

⁸ gov.gg/scrutiny

“There is an advantage in all voters having the capability to vote/not vote for [anyone] who is standing [...] I do think this capability is also a huge burden given the unmanageable number of candidates.” Ms C Smillie

The dominance of views against island-wide voting is perhaps unsurprising as there is likely to be less of an incentive for people to take the trouble to submit written representations that support the status quo, when compared with submitting ones that oppose it in the hope of future change. Those who made submissions to the inquiry were not necessarily representative of the island population. They were likely to be older and, in many cases, to have had some engagement with the parishes and the douzaines. As will be seen in Section 4.2, the division between support and opposition for island-wide voting in the survey was not as pronounced as it was in the call for evidence.

4.1.2 The lack of ability to make an informed choice

The inability to make an informed choice about who to vote for when faced with 118 candidates, their manifestos, and a wealth of other information, was the main theme that emerged in the call for evidence and was, by far, the main criticism of the island-wide system. Comments included:

“As something of a political anorak, [island-wide voting] was ridiculously hard to use properly ... because being given so many votes and asked to choose between so many candidates is almost impossibly difficult, even if you commit many hours to it.” Mr W Mason

“As a member of Guernsey’s youth, I know many of us struggle to see any positive impacts other than that you can vote for who you like. The manifesto book [is] intimidating in turn putting youth off engaging.” Ms I Bacon

“If a significant majority of the candidates in the 2020 general election had been members of credibly organised and structured political parties, the IWW would have served Guernsey well as an efficient and effective electoral system.” Mr N de la Rue

“It is asking far too much of the electorate to expect them to look through, say, 80 manifestos and make informed choices. It becomes a sticking the tail on the donkey exercise.” Mr N Baudains

This issue was forecast by many. Speaking in a debate in the 2012-16 Assembly on whether a referendum should be held on the matter of island-wide voting, Deputy Scott Ogier said:

“...in my view there would be too many candidates and too many manifestos for meaningful and adequate scrutiny to be conducted.”⁹

⁹ [Hansard p.479](#)

It was widely predicted that island-wide voting would lead to a list of between 70 and 90 candidates. In the event 118 people stood, exceeding the lower estimate by nearly 50 candidates, or 69%. However, there is a possibility that the novelty value of the first island-wide election was responsible for some of the increase in the total number of candidates when compared with previous elections, and there may be fewer candidates next time.

4.1.3 Scrutiny of candidates in person

Closely linked to the previous point, many respondents complained of not being able to personally scrutinise all, or enough, of the candidates – for example at a hustings or on the doorstep. In the same way as reading a person’s CV and then subsequently interviewing them in person can produce two different impressions of someone, reading a candidate’s manifesto may create a very different impression to seeing them perform at a hustings or meeting them on the doorstep.

“No one visited my home as they had no chance of walking the island and we are too disabled to go to a public meeting. In the end I voted for four people.” Mr R Goldsmith

“The loss of door-to-door campaigning has taken away the ability to look all candidates in the eye.” Mr H Camp

4.1.4 Parish connection and engagement

Many respondents complained of a loss of accountability, connection and engagement brought about by island-wide voting due the loss of the parish-based districts. Despite it being the case that any resident is at liberty to contact any deputy about a matter of concern (and indeed this was the case before island-wide voting was implemented), nevertheless, there is clear evidence that for some people, the direct parish connection to their deputy remains of significant importance. Although island-wide voting has redistributed the number of deputies representing each of the previous parish-based districts, all areas still currently retain some representation in terms of where deputies reside, although the distribution of deputies is now more geographically uneven as is shown in Table 3, below. (It is acknowledged that some individual parishes are at risk of being without a resident deputy but that was the also case under the previous system, particularly in the West district which comprised four of the smaller parishes.)

District/Parish	No. of seats in district/parish in 2016-20 term*	No. of deputies resident in district/parish 2020-2025 term	Change
Castel	5	5	0
South-east	5	8	+3
St Peter Port North	6	9	+3
St Peter Port South	5	1	-4
St Sampson's	6	3	-3
Vale	6	3	-3
West	5	9	+4

Table 3: Comparison of number of deputies representing/resident in parish-based districts - 2016 vs 2020

No change	Increase	Decrease
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*There was no requirement under the previous system for a deputy to live in the parish/district in which they were elected, although the vast majority did.

The analysis shows that the geographically-central parishes of Castel and St Peter Port have been largely unaffected (despite a significant shift in the north/south district division of St Peter Port), whilst representation has fallen by a half in the north of the island (Vale, St Sampson's) and has increased by 70% in the south of the island (South-East, West). Putting it another way, the two southern districts now have nearly three times as many deputies resident in them compared with the two northern districts, despite the population of both areas being similar.

The breakdown by parish-based district also shows that, for example, whilst only three deputies were elected from the former St Sampson's district in 2020, under the previous system a further three candidates from that district would have been successful but they failed to convince the island-wide electorate. Equally, the island-wide electorate selected nine candidates from the West district to be deputies, but under the previous system only five candidates from that district would have been elected.

Under a system of island-wide voting where all voters can vote for any candidate, this shift of resident deputies from the north to the south must be considered to be democratically achieved; nevertheless, it is of concern to some. The issue specifically arises when matters of concern have a geographical implication. Certainly, in previous Assemblies, deputies frequently acted on behalf of the interest of their parish in bringing matters to the attention of the States. If there is a reduced number of deputies residing in an area, residents may feel they have no one to champion their local concerns. The counter-argument is that all deputies should be equally concerned about all parts of the island. Of course, no one can predict what will happen in 2025 and it may be the case that this shift will resolve, reverse or leave some former districts with no resident deputies at all.

Many respondents were concerned about the loss of parish links:

“We regret having lost specific representation of our Parish and the opportunity to get to know local deputies via house calls during the selection process and thereafter through formal and informal contact.”

“At least with the parish/district system, deputies would have to face their parishioners and explain their actions whereas now they don’t feel allegiance to anyone.”

Whilst it would not mitigate the principal concerns people have with island-wide voting, endeavouring to restore some form of parish link between deputies, the douzaines and residents may address dissatisfaction in this area to an extent. Informal ways of making up for the loss of direct local representatives do not appear to have materialised to any significant degree during this political term. The implication, therefore, is that a more formal approach is needed if this is to be addressed. The Review Panel recommend that SACC, in consultation with the parish douzaines, give consideration as to how this might be approached in 2025, both in the campaign period and post-election.

Recommendation 1

To consider, in consultation with the parish douzaines and other interested parties, all possible methods of improving links between elected representatives and parish douzaines and between elected representatives and parish or district residents, in time to implement such improvements for the 2025 election, mindful of the potential issue in section 4.3.5.1.

4.1.5 Other themes

4.1.5.1 Ordering of candidates’ names in the manifesto booklet

Comments were received about the potential unfairness of candidates’ names in the manifesto booklet being alphabetically listed from A-Z, pointing out that there are more deputies in the Assembly with surnames beginning with the letters A to L than there are with M to Z.

“I wonder if anyone with a surname at the end of the alphabet is now disadvantaged.”

An analysis is provided at Table 4 of the last three elections. In each case, the successful candidates have been compared against the full list of people who stood in each of those three elections, and a calculation undertaken to show the percentage candidates in each half of the alphabet for both successful and unsuccessful candidates. A ratio has then been calculated to show whether having a surname in the first half of the alphabet was statistically advantageous.

First letter of surname	2012 Parish-based election		2016 Parish-based election		2020 Island-wide election	
	% elected	% not elected	% elected	% not elected	% elected	% not elected
A-L	37.2	23.1	24.7	30.9	18.6	38.1
M-Z	20.5	19.2	22.2	22.2	13.6	29.7
Ratio A-L / M-Z	1.81	1.20	1.11	1.39	1.37	1.28
A-L preference factor	1.51		0.8		1.07	

Table 4: The chance of being elected over last 3 elections based on first letter of surname

In 2012, candidates in the A-L group were significantly more likely to be successful than those in the M-Z group by a factor of 1.51. In 2016, those in the A-L group stood less chance of success than those in the M-Z group by a factor of 0.8 and, in 2020, those in the A-L group were marginally more likely to be elected than those in the M-Z group by a factor of 1.07. (A factor of 1 would indicate equal likelihood.)

The conclusion drawn is that despite a perception in some quarters that the alphabetical ordering of the 2020 manifesto booklet significantly favoured candidates in the first half of the alphabet over those in the second half, the analysis does not support this hypothesis as the difference in the percentage of A-L candidates elected compared to M-Z candidates elected was not significant. Of course, as with the variation between the 2012 and 2016 elections shows, the results in 2025 may be very different.

The opinion of the Review Panel is, that based on the 2020 election, there is no evidence on numbers alone that the alphabetical ordering of the manifesto booklet favoured candidates in the top half of the alphabet. Irrespective of this finding, whatever system is chosen to present candidates' manifestos in 2025, ease of reference and usability for the voter must not be compromised.

4.1.5.2 The referendum

Although measures to explain the preferential system at the time of the referendum were made, a number of respondents felt that people had not fully understood it. Another respondent said that the threshold for changing an electoral system should have been higher than 50%.

"I feel using a referendum ... was a mistake, because the public ... can't possibly have weighed up all the pros and cons in a rigorous manner." Ms S Gallienne

4.1.5.3 Political parties

Some respondents commented on the role of parties including a view that the expectation of political parties is the likely cause of much disharmony and division within the current Assembly. It was also pointed out that the concept of political parties should not just be characterised along the narrow lines of UK parties.

4.2 The survey

The responses to and analysis of the main themes from the survey are presented below. Perhaps unsurprisingly, half of respondents said they were very interested in Guernsey's politics and current affairs, with a further 38% saying they were moderately interested.

4.2.1 Assessing candidates from online and printed material

Voters were asked which sources of information they used to assess candidates in the run up to voting in 2020, and how useful each of those sources were.

Figure 1, below, gives a comparison of the two sets of responses. It shows that the States manifesto booklet was, by a significant margin, the most frequently used *and* the most useful source of information. This was followed by the States website, demonstrating the role that the States' site played in disseminating information about candidates. This is perhaps not surprising as other information about candidates was spread far and wide and it required a significant and time-consuming effort to proactively search it out, given the number of candidates. For example, 64 of the 118 candidates had personal election websites, but it would have been a significant effort to visit even half of them, so it is not surprising that people favoured sources that brought at least some candidate information together in one place.

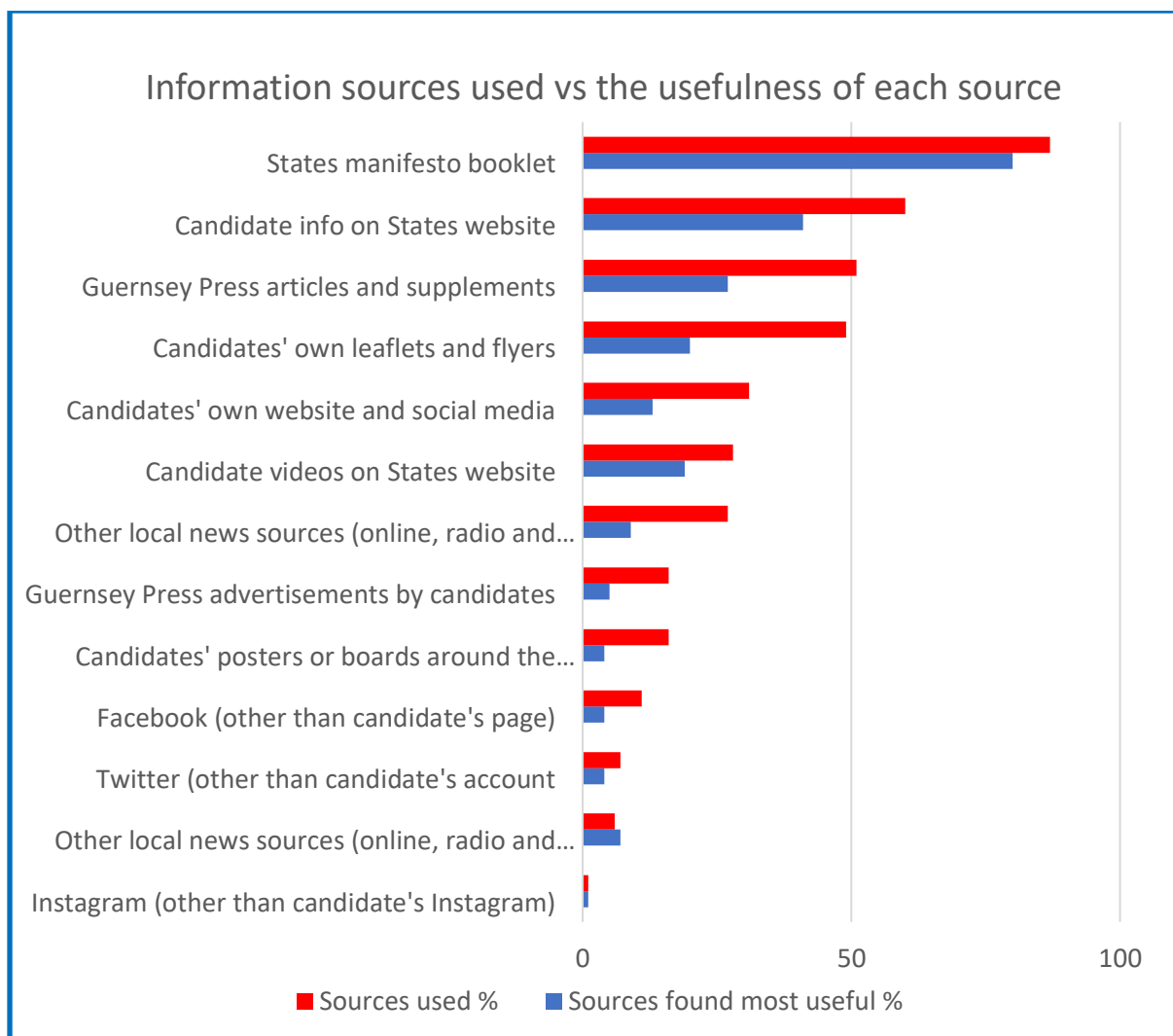


Figure 1: Sources of information used and usefulness of each source in deciding how to vote

4.2.2 Assessing candidates in person

Many respondents said that it was difficult to assess candidates in person under island-wide voting due to the how many there were.

People were asked how many candidates had called at their home and had spoken to them or a member of their family. Just two-fifths of respondents reported that at least one candidate had called. Only 2% recalled seeing more than four candidates on the doorstep.

55% of respondents overall said they found it helpful to a greater or lesser degree to have candidates call on them, whilst one third did not think it was of value. Voters aged 65+ were more likely than other age groups to consider that meeting candidates this way very helpful. It is clear that most voters will only ever be able to meet a vanishingly small percentage of candidates personally under the present system.

Door-to-door canvassing is a time-consuming task for candidates and often residents won't be at home, especially during the daytime. Under the previous system it was feasible for a candidate to visit all the households on the electoral roll in her or his district during the election period. Under island-wide voting

it is simply not possible for a candidate to call on approximately 26,000 households. It is also possible that a lesser proportion of candidates canvassed than under parish/district voting, perhaps due to the enormity of the task. It is clear that as a method for voters to meet candidates, door-to-door canvassing can only ever scratch the surface under the island-wide system.

Various events were held to enable voters to meet candidates in person. These were run variously by the States, by political parties and groupings, and by individuals. Only just over a third of people attended one or more events with nearly two thirds not attending any. The main reasons given for non-attendance related to not feeling it was necessary, not having the time, not feeling it would help and not being aware of the events.

It is perhaps useful at this point to restate that the survey had a high percentage of responses (87%) from people who said they were very or moderately interested in Guernsey's politics and current affairs. It is unlikely that this is representative of the community and therefore, across voters as a whole, the actual attendance at events was likely very much lower. Organisers of many events reported extremely poor turnouts and those staging such events in 2025 will want to consider how to better engage with the electorate.

Additionally, many of these events only had a handful of candidates present so, again, the in-person interaction between voters and candidates was minimal. The exception to this was the States-run event at Beau Sejour which most candidates attended. Although there was a steady stream of people visiting the event, candidates reported that they only spoke to around 30 or perhaps 40 voters during the course of the day, out of over 30,000 people who were on the electoral roll.

4.2.3 Approach to selecting candidates

Respondents who voted in 2020 were asked how important a list of 10 different attributes relating to candidates were to them when deciding who to vote for.

Overwhelmingly, the candidate's views and policies as well as any previous performance as a deputy were rated as the most important factors to consider when coming to a decision on who to select.

Professional skills, recommendations by trusted people, the candidate's involvement in parish matters as a Constable or Douzenier and a voter's personal experience of the candidate were ranked as the next most important, followed by the candidate's record of voluntary or community work.

Half of voters thought that a candidate being resident in their parish was important to a greater or lesser degree, whilst two fifths of respondents considered that factors like age, sex and the candidate's photos mattered to some extent, with three fifths saying they were not important – the highest proportion of any of the attributes listed in the question.

People who oppose island-wide voting tended to put a greater emphasis on the importance of a candidate's residency and involvement in parish matters.

4.2.4 Making informed voting decisions

Respondents were asked how well-informed they felt about the 118 candidates when the time came to vote. There was a similar question relating to the previous parish-based election and the difference is marked and is compared in Figure 2.

Under island-wide voting, only one sixth (16%) of voters said they felt sufficiently well informed about all or nearly all of the candidates. This compares with 57% under the previous system. The responses

to this question are striking and concerning in their implications, but they are not surprising, given the enormity of the task facing voters.

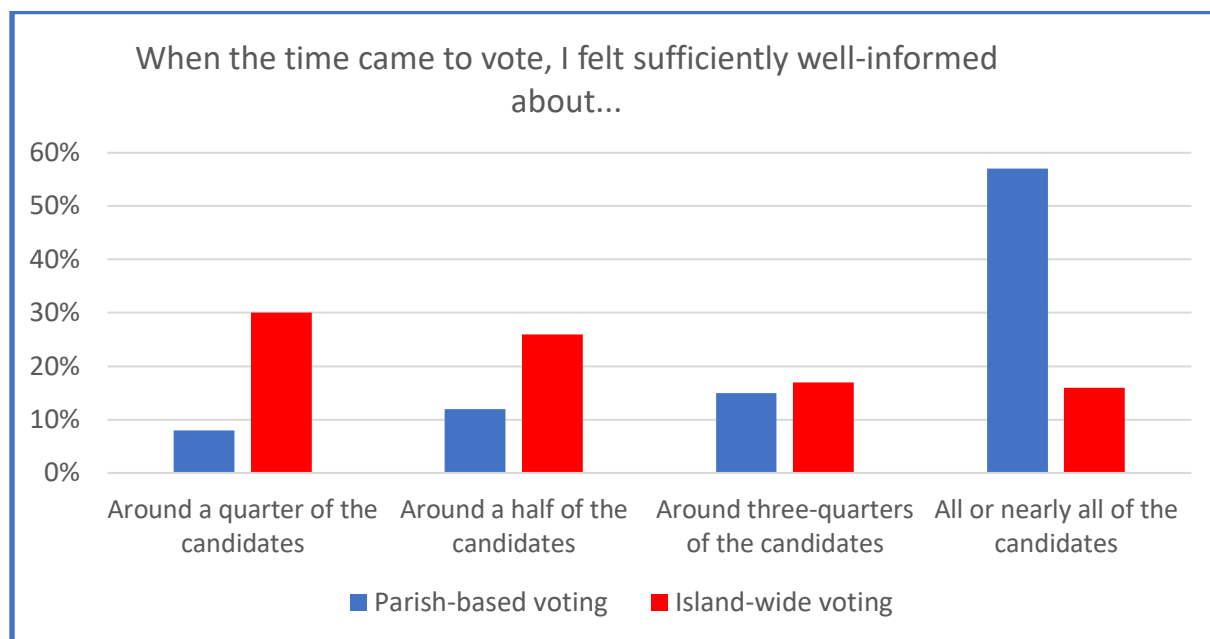


Figure 2: The number of candidates whom voters felt sufficiently well-informed about - 2016 vs 2020

“Whilst it would be a valid voter choice to consciously vote for two candidates with opposing positions, it is submitted that there ought to be sufficient information available to voters to enable them to make that choice consciously and not erroneously.” Deputy St Pier

4.2.5 Number of votes and approach to voting

The survey asked people how many of their 38 votes they used in 2020.

One third of respondents recalled using all 38 votes. The election data gives this figure as just over one fifth, appreciably lower than in the survey. It is possible that those who responded to the survey are more politically engaged than the population at large and were therefore more inclined to use all of their permitted votes; however, some submissions to the call for evidence suggested that the more politically engaged someone was, the less likely they were to ‘fly blind’ by using all votes.

Over half of all respondents said that they voted for candidates who they felt neutral about to try to prevent the election of candidates who they did not support. Whilst it is perfectly reasonable to want to keep out candidates that one dislikes, it does raise the question as to whether a system that seemingly encourages voters to vote for people who they have no positive views about in order to attempt to block others is the best way to elect a government.

People were also asked whether they thought that the number of votes each voter has should be reduced from the present 38. Over half (55%) said yes, with approximately a quarter (27%) saying no, whilst 18% did not know. Support increases to two thirds when ‘don’t knows’ are excluded.

When those who thought there should be a reduction were asked how many votes people should have, 83% gave a figure of 20 votes or fewer, with half of those saying it should be 10 votes or fewer.

Figure 3 amalgamates the answers to the two questions of whether or not the number of votes should be reduced and, if so, to what number.

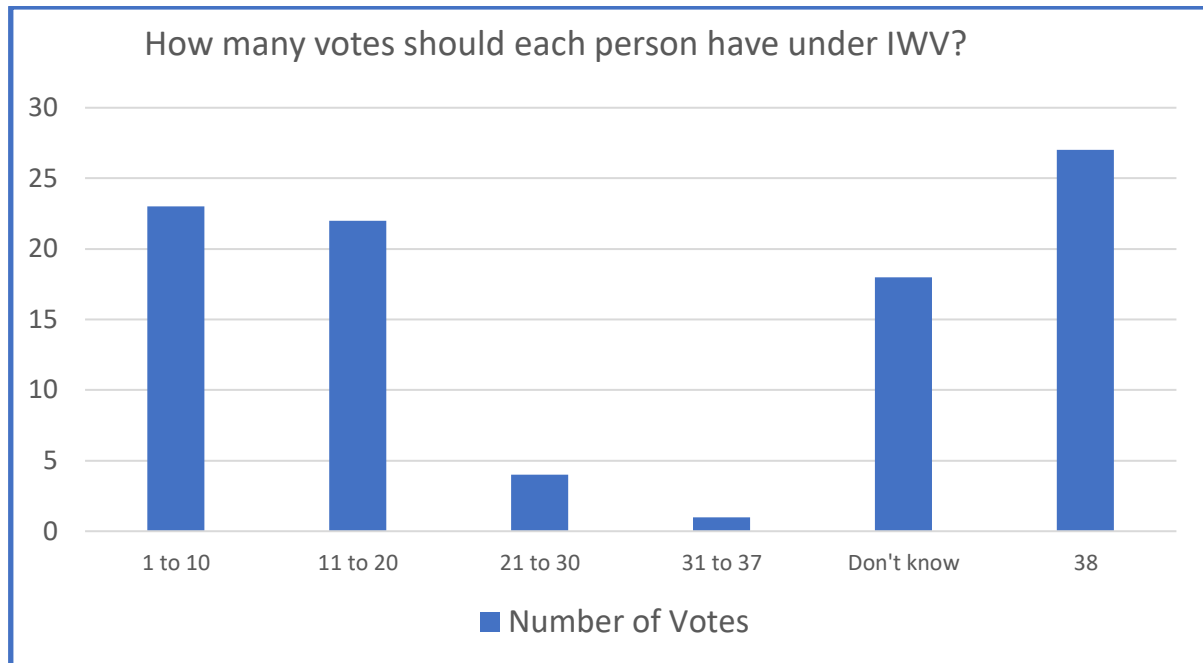


Figure 3: How many votes should each voter have?

(In addition a further 3% said that the number should be reduced but were unsure by how much.)

“Happy with IWW, but fewer preferences to be expressed by each voter.”

The ability to vote, and votes themselves, are widely considered important and valued. Previous complaints about parish-based voting often included claims that there were insufficient suitable candidates in a voter’s district for them to happily use all their votes, and this feeling was also reflected in relation to island-wide voting in comments in the survey. It is understandable for a voter to feel that a vote not used is a vote wasted and that it represents a squandering of one’s franchise. People voted for candidates they had no strong feelings about or whom they knew little about, perhaps partly in preference to ‘wasting’ (i.e. not using) votes. It is impossible to know what effect on the outcome of the election a tendency to vote for more candidates than one might otherwise do, in order to avoid feeling disenfranchised, had. Comments included:

“Choosing the first third of candidates is relatively easy, the second third problematic and the last third very difficult.” A & J Beardsell

“Using 38 votes in a reasoned fashion is nigh on impossible.” Vale Constables and Douzaine

Recommendation 2

To consider a reduction in the number of votes available to each voter in time for the 2025 election, taking into account the evidence obtained by the Review Panel.

4.2.6 Opinions on political parties

2020 was the first election in Guernsey where political parties were a significant factor. Three parties fielded candidates, and between them put forward 39 out of the 118 names on the ballot paper, representing 33% of all candidates. 15 party-affiliated candidates (39% of the Assembly) were successful. Whilst this might seem to indicate that being a member of a party enhanced one's chance of election, there are other relevant factors, such as the prevalence of well-known names amongst party-affiliated candidates, and therefore this cannot be considered a definitive conclusion.

The survey asked about people's views on political parties. A third of respondents (34%) said that they were very unsupportive of parties, contrasting with just 8% who said they were very supportive. One quarter of people were neutral. Older people and those who oppose island-wide voting were less supportive of parties. In retrospect, it may have been helpful to have asked in the survey the extent to which people had voted for all members of a party on the basis of their support for that party.

"Political parties are essential to produce a government."

The survey asked what effect a candidate belonging to a party, with all other things being equal, would have on whether respondents would vote for that person, and the results largely mirrored those in the previous question. Again, older people and those who oppose island-wide voting were less likely to vote for a candidate belonging to a party.

In 2007, the UK independent campaigning organisation, the Electoral Reform Society, which seeks to change the UK voting system to one of a single transferable vote, and which has been advising on political and electoral reform for more than 130 years, prepared a paper for the States of Guernsey on the issue of island-wide voting. In the report, which was published in a January 2009 policy letter on island-wide voting,¹⁰ their Parliamentary Officer, Stuart Stoner, said:

"We note the Committee's instructions to undertake a comprehensive review of all practicable methods of introducing Island-wide voting. There are possible models for all-island voting but, unfortunately, they all present significant practical difficulties, because of the size of the States of Deliberation, and the lack of political parties in Guernsey."

A respondent to the call for evidence acknowledged the weak development and sustainability of political parties and stated:

¹⁰ [Billet d'Etat, 28th January, 2009](#)

“Unless political parties are reformed prior to the next election, then the disadvantages of island-wide voting will be more keenly felt than previously.” Mr de la Rue

4.2.7 Potential changes to information availability for candidates in 2025

The survey sought to establish what improvements to information availability might be made to the island-wide election due to be held in 2025.

70% of respondents said that the candidate manifesto booklet should be delivered earlier to allow people more time to make decisions about who to vote for, whilst 68% also wanted to see more information in the booklet about each candidate, despite the already significant size of the document. On the face of it, this is perhaps a surprising finding given the strong theme throughout the evidence that choosing from so many candidates is an impossible task.

One explanation may be that whilst people find it relatively easy to rule in and rule out certain candidates with a high-level assessment, for the remaining candidates it may well be helpful to have more easily accessible information. In response to this finding, viewpoints on the length and format of manifestos in the booklet were sought from current deputies who each experienced the system as candidates. Only 8 out of 38 deputies responded, with a mix of views including:

“If we are stuck with 100+ candidates then I’m really not sure you can do much more; under those circumstances, space, format and word count all seems like a reasonable attempt to make a mad system less mad.”

“Personally, I would have preferred more space to explain my policies in greater depth, but I am not sure electors would have welcomed that.”

“It was an exercise in distillation of main manifesto into fewer words. I didn’t find it much of a challenge. I saw it as the ‘elevator pitch’.”

“I think it was just about right.”

“I thought the booklet was excellent and try as I may, I can’t see any way in which it can be improved.”

“Two more sides [of paper] as an option for those who want it.”

“I thought the designs were decent and felt modern and that having some sort of uniformity within the variety of templates probably made it easier on the electorate.”

“My main gripe with the booklet was that it didn’t really help electors understand the candidates in any depth.”

This question in the survey referred solely to the information in the manifesto booklet. Of course, in 2020, there was other information available hosted by the States of Guernsey about the candidates. This included online videos as well as candidate answers to a long set of questions which had been

compiled from those sent in by members of the community. However, it is perhaps the case that the manifesto booklet lying on the kitchen table is seen as a much more easily accessible form of information and its standardised layout also facilitates side-by-side candidate comparisons. The manifesto booklet was used by 87% of people when deciding how to vote. 80% found it to be a useful source, which was twice the next most popular source of information. Anecdotally, people organised gatherings of family and friends to jointly consider who to vote for, using the booklet as a principal source. This was a new development under island-wide voting as previously family and friend groups were likely to be split over various districts.

There was a tendency for older people to support the idea of more information in the booklet, but even in the 16–39 age cohort, 59% supported more information, rising to 73% amongst those over 65.

The survey shows that the manifesto booklet is *the* key document for voters and the Review Panel considers that providing the opportunity for candidates to give more information about themselves should be seriously considered. In parish-based district elections it was not uncommon for candidates (who all produced their own manifestos) to use a four- or even a six-page format.

Additionally, given the lack of face-to-face contact between candidates and voters, the Review Panel believes that the States should promote candidate videos more heavily and consider different formats for accessing them (e.g. an app). Consideration could also be given to each candidate having a short version and a longer version of the video whereby a voter could opt to watch the more detailed version if the short one left them seeking more information. The evidence from the survey showed that only 28% of voters used the videos as a source of information, yet with the inability to meet candidates or watch their performance at hustings to any meaningful extent, videos take on an increased relevance for voters.

Recommendation 3

To produce and distribute the manifesto booklet earlier to enable voters more time to review it, specifically before postal voting opens.

Recommendation 4

To consider increasing the space available to candidates in the manifesto booklet, possibly by giving options of two, three or four sides for candidates to choose from, as well as more freedom in layout whilst retaining a cohesive format that facilitates voter comparison.

Recommendation 5

To significantly improve the promotion and accessibility of candidate videos, including consideration of a shorter and a longer version for each candidate.

4.2.8 Potential changes to requirements for candidates

4.2.8.1 Formal sessions on the role of a deputy

Respondents were asked if any changes should be made to what is required of a candidate in order to be able to stand for election.

87% of respondents supported or strongly supported prospective candidates being obliged to attend formal sessions on the operation of government and the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments involved in being a deputy, *before* they can register to stand. It is perhaps reasonable to assume that some prospective candidates may be deterred from standing once they understand more about the requirements of the role and of course it is to everybody's benefit, including the potential candidate, if this is discovered sooner rather than later. Such sessions would also allow successful candidates to arrive in the Assembly much better prepared for the tasks and expectations that face them. Furthermore, the significant time that is taken up in the early days of a parliamentary term in induction sessions could be reduced if candidates had already undergone some similar sessions. If this requirement is to be implemented, it would be important to ensure that the timings of such sessions take into account the likely commitments of candidates who may have employment or childcare responsibilities so that no unnecessary hurdles are introduced in the form of a barrier to standing. Consideration would need to be given to returning candidates who have already served one or more terms in the Assembly as they will already be versed in what the job should entail and thus should have a lesser need of such sessions.

Recommendation 6

To introduce a robust series of information sessions for potential candidates focusing on what the role of a deputy entails, the workload and commitments that can be expected, the amount of preparation needed for States Meetings and Committee work, an overview of the structure of Government and the detail of Committee mandates, to be undertaken in whole or part before a person can register to stand for election and to implement a mechanism whereby the electorate can easily see what sessions new candidates have attended.

4.2.8.2 Declaration of interests

91% of respondents felt that candidates should be required to declare interests (e.g. affiliations, directorships etc.) to be able to stand. At present these declarations are made annually by sitting deputies and are available on the States website.

4.2.8.3 Monetary deposit

The idea of candidates having to place a monetary deposit that would be forfeited if the candidate failed to secure support from at least 10% of the electorate received much less support in the survey. For context, the lowest-polling successful candidate in 2020 secured 2% of the vote, whilst 20 candidates secured less than 10%. Only one third of respondents supported this idea, perhaps indicating that people are generally not supportive of anything that represents an additional financial barrier to someone putting themselves forward for election.

4.2.8.4 Declaration of truthfulness

87% of respondents supported candidates being required to sign a declaration that they have written their manifesto themselves, have not used AI to write it, have not plagiarised other manifestos and that the contents are truthful to the best of their knowledge. The issue of AI is perhaps the most controversial factor here as it is a fast-developing area which may increasingly divide opinion as time goes on.

Recommendation 7

To investigate whether an expanded signed declaration by candidates should be required and, if so, what it should encompass.

4.2.9 The impact of island-wide voting on the States Assembly

People were asked for their opinion on the potential impact of island-wide voting on the governing of the island by the States Assembly. 55% of respondents think island-wide voting has resulted in much worse or slightly worse governing of the island than previously, whilst 15% think it has resulted in slightly better or much better governing, with just 18% who said that there has been no change.

People who oppose island-wide voting were most likely to say that island-wide voting has resulted in much worse governing of the island than previously. Residents of the former West district were significantly more likely to say that island-wide voting has resulted in much worse governing compared to residents living in St Peter Port (45% vs 29% respectively).

Respondents were then asked what impact, if any, moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents the overall views of (a) the people of Guernsey, (b) the people in their parish and (c) the individual voter. In each case around half thought the States was less representative of views, with around a quarter saying that there was no change. Again, opponents of island-wide voting were significantly more likely to say it is less representative than supporters. Two thirds of the former West district said island-wide voting makes the States less representative of the views of people in their parishes compared with 47% of people resident in St Peter Port. This is likely to be a reflection of the different demographics between the two areas, with residents of St Peter Port tending to be both more transient and younger.

Of course, there will be many confounding factors which make it difficult to directly attribute the Assembly's performance to the system of election.

4.2.10 Change in support for island-wide voting, and support for electoral systems

Respondents were asked three questions, all relating to their support or otherwise for island-wide voting, as follows:

1. At the time of the referendum, to what extent did you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting, and to what extent do you support or oppose it today?
2. Looking to the future, would you like to see changes made to Guernsey's electoral system? (i.e. replacing the current system of island-wide voting)?
3. Which of the following [six] electoral systems do you think would be best for Guernsey?

This section will analyse these three areas and contrast the responses which paint an interesting, if slightly contradictory, picture.

Firstly, the survey sought to establish how supportive people were of island-wide voting in a simple broad-brush question which compared how they felt in 2018 to today. Figure 4 presents the support

and opposition. Support for island-wide voting has dropped from 43% in 2018 to 39% today, whilst opposition has risen from 46% in 2018 to 51% today.

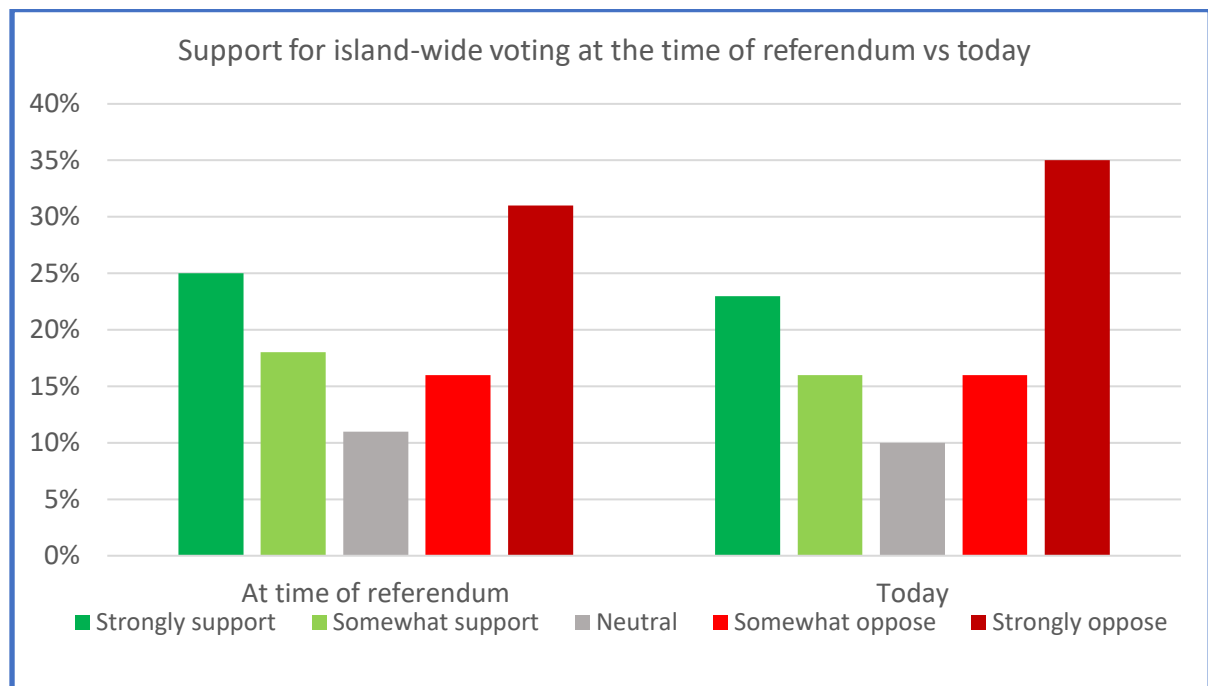


Figure 4: Support for island-wide voting - 2018 vs 2023

Secondly, respondents were asked if they would like to see the current system of island-wide voting replaced. 62% were in favour of change with a further 11% who answered that 'it depends'. This group of respondents were able to give a free-text comment, and the most frequent response centred on what system might be put in place instead, which would seem to indicate that provided they approved of the alternative, they too would like to see a change (Figure 5). This level of support for change may seem contradictory when 39% of people say they are still supportive of island-wide voting; however, part of the reason may be that some of those people now support a different version of island-wide voting which would of course require a change. Only 14% of respondents said that the system should not be changed.

This data underlines, yet again, the difficulty of finding a system around which a majority of voters can coalesce.

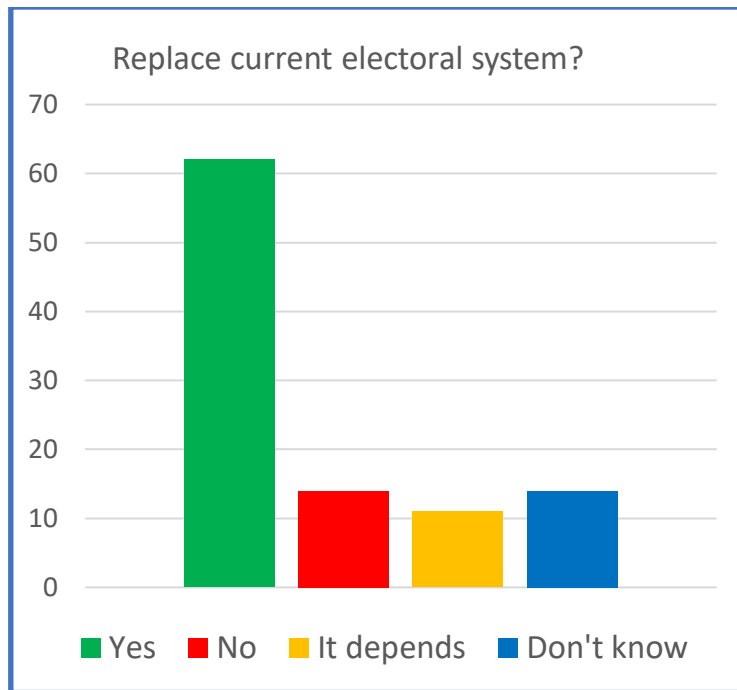


Figure 5: Looking to the future, would you like to see changes to Guernsey's electoral system? This would mean replacing the current system of island-wide voting.

Lastly, respondents were asked which electoral system they personally thought would be best for Guernsey from a choice of six, together with 'don't know' and 'other' options.

In the survey, the hybrid system of electing some deputies island-wide and some in parishes scored highest at just over a quarter of responses. The previous parish-based district system came in next with a fifth of responses and island-wide voting and rolling island-wide voting scored 11% each.

Excluding the 8% for 'don't know', the 9% for 'another system' and the minimal 3% for '2 districts', and rebasing the remaining five options to 100%, it is possible to compare the survey results against the first round of voting in the referendum to show the change that has occurred since 2018. The first round referendum results have been used in this comparison as that was the round that was reflective of people's first choice preferences.

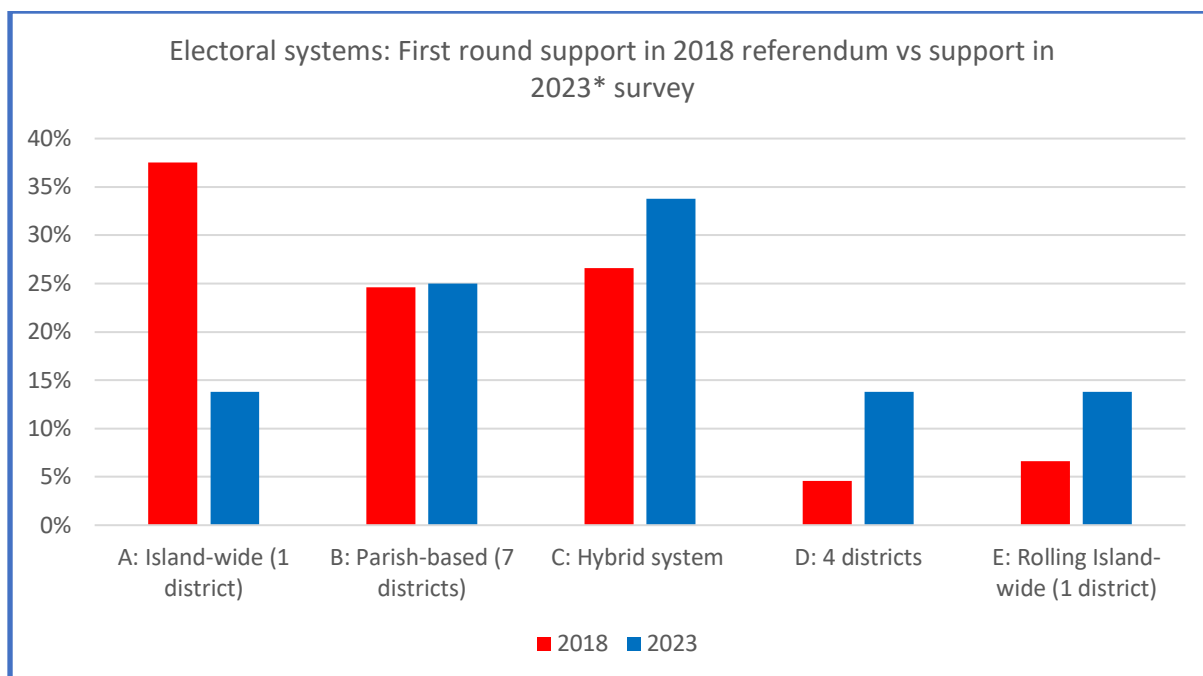


Figure 6: Comparison of support for the 5 referendum options - 2018 vs 2023. *The 2023 survey question had 8 options. For the purposes of comparison, the 2023 figures have been recalculated and exclude 3% who selected “2 districts” 9% who selected “Another system (please describe)” and 8% who selected “Don’t know”. The 5 remaining options were rebased to 100%.

As can be seen, support for the previous parish-based system has remained stable in the five years since the referendum and perhaps to some extent this explains the marginal change in the previous question (Figure 4). However, support for pure island-wide voting (38 deputies elected on one day from a list of approximately 120 candidates) has fallen significantly from 37.5% to just 13.8%. At the same time, rolling island-wide voting (whereby one-third of the States are elected island-wide each two years for a six-year term) has more than doubled from 6.6% to 13.8%, picking up some of the loss from Option A island-wide voting. Option D in the referendum (four districts) has also seen a significant increase in support. This may be partially due to people perceiving it as a way to have a say over more candidates, but without the issue of there being too many to assess and choose from. As previously noted, these two options, D and E, were the only two options not to have campaign groups at the time of the referendum. In the survey, all options were presented equally with a neutral description, number of votes and likely number of candidates and this may have contributed to their increase in popularity.

4.2.11 A referendum

Respondents were asked whether, if changes were to be considered to Guernsey’s electoral system, there should be another referendum first to establish people’s preferences. The results are shown in Figure 7.

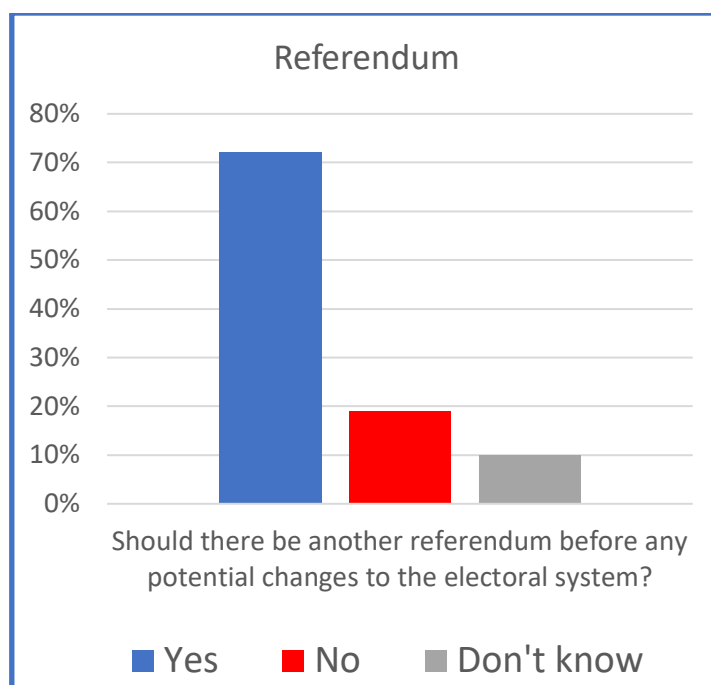


Figure 7: If changes are to be made to the system of election, should there first be a referendum?

As can be seen, there is overwhelming support for any potential future change to the electoral system (i.e. a move away from the current system of island-wide voting) to be preceded by a referendum, although some felt that referendums are divisive, or that it is the job of the States to make decisions.

It is appropriate at this point to include a longer observation on the referendum campaign groups. The 2017 policy letter¹¹ on the referendum allowed the opportunity for campaign groups to form to promote each of the five options. In respect of this it was stated:

“A method would need to be agreed for dealing with circumstances where one (or more) of the options [in the referendum] did not have a group wishing to be its campaign group. In other jurisdictions this has often been addressed by either not appointing any campaign groups unless each option has one or by the government acting as a surrogate and providing technical information where no campaign group exists. The Committee prefers the second solution because the first would be rather unfair on any groups which do organise themselves and submit strong applications. The Committee also believes there will be sufficient news coverage of all the options – so a satisfactory minimum amount of publicity will be generated for every option.”

However, an amendment directed that:

(a) If no campaign group comes forward to be selected as the official campaign group for an option, there shall be no official campaign group for that option, and

¹¹ [Referendum on Guernsey's Voting System - amendments](#)

the government shall not act as a surrogate campaign group; (b) If there is no campaign group which meets the criteria adopted by the independent Appointment Panel for selection as an official campaign group for an option, there shall be no official campaign group for that option, and the government shall not act as a surrogate campaign group; and (c) The States' Assembly & Constitution Committee shall have principal responsibility for ensuring the provision of a set of impartial and comparable information on each of the options A to E which – (i) it shall provide in such formats and publish in such manner as it believes will be most readily accessible to all eligible voters, and (ii) may be further supplemented by the information provided by official campaign groups, but should, in its own right, be sufficient to enable voters to reach an informed decision on their preferred choice of option.

In the event, only three of the five options had a campaign group. The States did distribute information to all households on the five options but there was no actual campaigning on the two options without a group (four districts and rolling island-wide voting). If at any point in the future it is decided to hold another referendum, the opinion of the Review Panel is that a much more equitable system of explaining all the options to voters must be devised.

Recommendation 8

To note that any future consideration (post-2025) of a further referendum on the electoral system should include a more equitable system of explaining the options to voters.

4.2.12 What people like most about island-wide voting

Survey respondents were invited to write free-text comments on what they liked most about island-wide voting. This invitation elicited 963 responses.

The most popular responses were:

- **The ability to vote for any candidate**
This was overwhelmingly the most frequent response. Reasons given included better candidates with a wider selection of views. Some people also included the ability not to vote for someone.
- **Nothing**
One-quarter of respondents indicated that they liked nothing at all about island-wide voting.
- **Whole-island issues**
A smaller number of respondents said they liked the move away from parish voting as they felt it was too parochial – deputies should be focussed on the whole island.
- **Tactical voting**

The ability to vote tactically to try and keep people out was cited as a benefit of island-wide voting.

4.2.13 What people like least about island-wide voting

Survey respondents were invited to write free-text comments on what they liked least about island-wide voting. This invitation elicited 998 comments.

The most popular responses were:

- **Too many candidates and too many manifestos**
This was overwhelmingly the most frequent response.
- **Loss of parish the connection**
A belief that island-wide candidates won't understand parish issues, as well as the loss of personal contact with a deputy.
- **Too many votes**
This was the third most frequent response – people felt 38 votes was too many.
- **Too difficult to see candidates in person**
Due to the number of candidates and the lack of parish hustings and canvassing.

4.2.14 Final comments in the survey

Survey respondents were given the opportunity to add a final, general, free-text comment. 354 people chose to do this. Whereas the previous question on what people liked most and least focussed on the system as it stands, this question allowed people to make other comments including those not covered in the survey. Some related comments have also been picked up from other free-text opportunities in the survey. The comments have been analysed and the following themes emerged:

- **Change the system**
The most frequent response was a call to change the electoral system, although there was no consensus on what should take its place.
- **Too many deputies**
Many people commented that there were too many deputies although there were no explanations of how a reduction in the number would improve government. Suggestions ranged from as few as seven right up to just under the current number.

“Reduce the number of deputies by one-third.”

“A significant reduction in the number of deputies.”

“Have a maximum of 12 deputy positions with half elected each two years”

“Any system that reduces the number of politicians weakens us democratically because it places power in too few hands.”

- **Don’t change the system**

A smaller number of people expressed the desire to stick with island-wide voting.

- **Voters should be able to choose the Chief Minister**

Some respondents felt that the Chief Minister and, in some cases, other senior positions should be elected by the people.

“Direct election of CM.”

“The Chief Minister should be publicly elected either by separate vote or should be the candidate who gets most votes in the general election.”

- **Too many candidates**

The recurring theme of too many candidates was evident in these responses.

- **Stick to manifesto commitments**

Some respondents complained about deputies abandoning their manifesto commitments.

- **Candidates need training and a job description**

Some respondents felt that there should be a job description for deputies and that candidates should receive training.

- **Deputies should not be paid**

Some respondents felt that only those people prepared and able to work for nothing should be deputies.

4.3 The public hearings

Each of the four panels of witnesses was asked questions on their particular theme as well as more general questions. Summaries of the key points discussed in each hearing are set out below.

4.3.1 The effects of island-wide voting on the parishes

Witness panel:

Mr Richard Digard – *Vale Douzenier and former Editor of the Guernsey Press*

Mrs Mary Lowe – *Former Deputy*

Deputy Sue Aldwell – *Current Deputy and former Torteval Constable*

Whilst it cannot be said to be a universal view, the evidence from the witnesses on this panel, (backed up by those douzaines who responded to the call for evidence), was that island-wide voting has not been a positive change from their point of view:

"From a parish perspective, [island-wide voting] has been something of a disaster – there's a total disconnect." Mr. Digard

"There's no doubt about it – there's a great loss to the parish." Mrs Lowe

Having spoken to all the Constables, I don't think we have anyone in the upper parishes who likes island-wide voting." Deputy Aldwell

The witnesses were asked what efforts had been made to remedy the loss of links between the douzaines and resident deputies. Deputy Aldwell emphasised that douzaine meetings are closed meetings and if douzaines wish a deputy to attend then the onus was on them to issue an invitation. She was sure that every deputy would be very happy to attend if they were invited, but at the same time pointed out that some douzaines have parish officials who are also deputies, thus obviating the need for any invitation to be issued.

"In 2018, it was decided by Torteval, by the Douzeniers, that they didn't see the value in deputies coming to meetings and we were asked to ask them to no longer come, so that's interesting. Every parish is very different." Deputy Aldwell

On the matter of the link between parishioners and deputies, Mrs Lowe said she often received calls from people who thought she was still a deputy. In response, Mr Digard noted that this emphasised his point, namely that people don't know where to go or who to call. "The system that's in place isn't working at a parish level," he said. Deputy Aldwell related her experience of contact with parishioners:

"Within my upper parishes, I get phone calls all the time with simple problems that people need to have sorted. Invariably on a Saturday I'm out in my parishes doing my local shopping and I get asked all kinds of questions and I have said 'phone me of an evening – that's what I am there for.'" Deputy Aldwell

"People expect to have resident deputies who are passionate about their parish or their district. That's pretty much gone." Mr Digard

Mr Digard felt that suggestions about nominating parish representatives in order to try and restore links between elected members and the electorate was merely another workaround for a process that, in his view, was fundamentally flawed. "How would that work in practice?" he asked.

Responding to broader concerns about the difficulty of voters seeing candidates in person during an election period, Deputy Aldwell suggested asking parishes if they could put on hustings for all the candidates who are resident in their parish.

The witnesses were asked whether they thought that island-wide voting had made deputies take a more island-wide perspective. Mrs Lowe commented that deputies from the upper parishes now have to pay

more attention to things happening in the north of the island as “there are a lot of votes to upset”, saying that was the plus side of island-wide voting. Mr Digard observed that if you were to ask people in the north of the island if their concerns about traffic transport and housing are adequately listened to, they will tell you ‘no’. Asked if deputies surgeries could help bridge the gap between parishioners and deputies, Mr Digard explained that previously deputies had a real interest in the parish because they were appealing to the people of that parish to support them and get them into the States. “That link has gone,” he said.

“Parishes can invite deputies along, but that emotional attachment, that electoral dependency on the parish has gone. It’s not a question of ‘can we mitigate that?’; we shouldn’t have broken the link in the first place.” Mr Digard

“If you look back historically, the island has functioned on the basis of having strong parochial representation and having a system where those who are able to vote probably had quite an active personal knowledge of the candidates. That, it seems to me, has been swept away with island-wide voting. Doing that is fine if that’s what you wanted to do, but what was the point, what was the purpose, what were we trying to achieve with island-wide voting? Normally, if you make a material change it is for a specific reason. If you’ve made that change, it’s practical to review it and ask yourself ‘has it produced the desired objectives’? Well, perhaps someone can tell me, what were the desired objectives?” Mr Digard

The shift in where deputies are resident, which has left the north of the island with half the number of deputies compared to under the previous system was discussed (see section 4.1.4). Mr Digard said “It can’t be healthy, who is championing the north?”

Deputy Aldwell responded:

“Clearly we are hearing that the north are not happy and so, hopefully, there will be more candidates that come forward next time, quality candidates – we have quality now and we had quality before – and that they will come forward, and hopefully we might get some from the douzaines that will have had some input, have some understanding, and that will put themselves forward for the election.” Deputy Aldwell

Mrs Lowe explained why she had had a change of heart over island-wide voting:

“I took a requête to the States, I’ve taken amendments to the States over the years to try and get island-wide voting, so I’ve always been glued to island-wide voting. I used to say that the electorate should be able to elect

their government, not just part of it, but seeing the fallout from what's happened this term and the backlash from people who feel that they've been deprived of being able to have a deputy, whether it's a shared deputy or not in the districts, I think it's come back to more and more that people want the parish deputies, not even the districts any more from what I'm hearing." Mrs Lowe

A debate was had around the idea of induction courses for candidates:

"Being a deputy requires certain strengths and attributes and one of the ways of mitigating this lack of understanding [by the electorate] of the candidates would be if there was some process that made sure whoever stood knew in a very real fashion what they were letting themselves in for, and they had a pre-election process." Mr Digard

"If [induction courses] were made mandatory before you stood, that would be a great idea." Deputy Aldwell

However, Mrs Lowe was much more dismissive of the idea, believing that if a person is thinking of standing to be an elected member of the States, the onus should be on that person to do their own research.

"It is up to the candidate to find out before they put their name forward what it's all about. You are accountable from the day you are elected. It's no good saying 'I'll find out what it's all about [once I'm elected]' No! They didn't elect you waiting to find out what it was all about." Mrs Lowe

Mr Digard was resolute in his belief that such training should be provided for potential candidates:

"Wouldn't it be nice if some homework was done ahead of standing for election?" he said, continuing: "Some people will jib at making [pre-election induction courses] mandatory. If you don't make them mandatory, then at least make sure the candidate can show whether they have done them and that there is a record of attendance."

Expanding on his point further, Mr Digard quoted former Deputy, Allister Langlois who wrote the following in 'Representing the People – A Guide for People's Deputies':

“Each member of the States Assembly brings unique combinations of skills and experience to their job as a democratically-elected representative of the people. Combining those different backgrounds in a way that makes government and the legislature efficient and effective in a significant challenge. That challenge can be made easier if members have a more shared view of how the system operates and the behaviours which lead most effectively to consensus, whilst accommodating a wide range of political views.”

“That is hitting the nail on the head”, said Mr Digard. He further emphasised the need for a broad church of deputies who, as a result of the process of seeking election, developed a strong understanding of what they were letting themselves in for, what the role entails, and the culture in which they can best operate.

“Being a deputy is a really important function – please be clear on what it is that you have to do, the stuff you need to know and the way that you have to behave with your colleagues to get that job done. No, you’re not going to get your way every time, but we need to move Guernsey forward in a non-damaging way. I think we have lost that sense of purpose and that has been accelerated by island-wide voting.” Mr Digard

“It’s a great shame that we don’t actually see people who are interested in becoming a States member sitting in the public gallery. We started last term, we’re seeing it this term, the lack of experience. They turn up on the door, having been elected and they have no idea what’s going on. And that’s a worry because it’s a serious position, it’s a privilege to be elected, and they should have taken more interest in what’s going on.” Mrs Lowe

Asked about the role of political parties, Mr Digard said that parties formed in response to social pressure, events and needs. “Who is going to lead these parties?” he asked, “you can’t just magic them up”.

“Although there were groupings and parties last time, it was just names. There was no whipping ... so the whole thing just struck me as being rather pointless. The other thing with [proper] political parties is that there is a filter system, so that you can make sure that the candidates that you field know what they are doing and have a knowledge and understanding of what they are putting themselves up for, so it upskills the process.” Mr Digard

Finally, on the disadvantages of island-wide voting, Mr Digard summed up the mood of the panel by saying that trying to make an informed choice from a list of 118 candidates is impossible – “you just cannot do it.”

4.3.2 Island-wide voting: the composition and operation of the States

Witness Panel

Ms Shelaine Green – Chair of Women in Public Life

Mr Alistair Doherty – Former Westminster House of Commons Clerk

Mr Peter Gillson – Former Deputy and former St Sampson’s Douzenier

The witnesses were asked what effect they thought the move to island-wide voting had had on the political culture of Guernsey. With the caveat that it’s not possible to draw definitive conclusions from just one election, Ms Green said that her organisation had looked at what happened to the demographics at the 2020 election and the evidence was that “things contracted”. In other words, she said, there were fewer women, young people and older people elected, with a corresponding increase in men aged in their 50s and 60s. Mr Gillson said that looking at who got elected, he did not consider that the composition of the States would have been significantly different had the election taken place under a parochial system. “It’s down to how you attract people of the right calibre rather than the electoral system,” he said.

On the issue of the significant increase in candidates standing, Mr Gillson felt that there had been a novelty value with the first island-wide election:

“People may have thought it was easier to get elected island-wide than parochially. I suspect that at the next election there will be fewer candidates.” Mr Gillson

Referring to the very high turnout in the election which people cite as evidence of legitimacy of the system, Mr Doherty said that the additional facilitation of postal voting last time will have pushed the turnout up. Mr Doherty expressed surprise that single issue candidates didn’t push through as he felt it would have been easier to do that island-wide than in districts, but Ms Green felt that any uplift candidates may have gained from a single issue seemed drowned out by people having less time to spend assessing each candidate and therefore resorting to shortcuts, like their expectation of what a deputy looks like.

“One of the big problems that politicians have generally is the belief that outside of election years most of the public are interested in politics, and I think most people don’t care about politics. They just want to do right by their family and be treated fairly and have a good life and they hope that politicians create the environment where they can do that.” Mr Gillson

“There is interest in politics out there we just don’t cultivate it enough.” Ms Green

The witnesses were asked what they thought the main advantage and disadvantage of island-wide voting were. Ms Green said that she had discussed this with the Women in Public Life politics group and had been really struck by how, in particular, the younger people in the room valued being able to vote for people outside their district. “They gave examples of having looked at candidates in previous elections and not having felt any affinity for any of them. So, they felt that was the biggest advantage,” she said.

“The main disadvantage is the number of candidates, meaning people inevitably having to be quite perfunctory in how they do their choosing. The question I get most when showing people the manifesto booklet is ‘tell me, how am I supposed to start with this?’” Ms Green

Mr Gillson concurred, adding that for elected members “there’s also a more subtle advantage which is you’re less likely to suffer parochial wrath if you make a decision the parish doesn’t like.”

On the potential for reducing the number of votes each person has, Mr Gillson felt that although it may make it easier for voters in terms of choosing candidates, the result would be “to end up with some very popular candidates getting in with a huge number of votes and others getting in with a very low number of votes because people would use their top votes for popular candidates”. He continued: “That’s my criticism. Whether it’s a reason not to reduce the number of votes, that’s a subjective decision. But I think there will be a bigger range in the number of votes between those that are elected.”

“Whatever you do is going to upset some people. In terms of the system you put in place it’s really a case of balance – trying to minimise the downside issues or at least have them so that people can understand what those downside issues are, and why they are considered to be acceptable, compared to having another slightly different system with other downside issues.” Mr Gillson

“Perhaps we could make it clearer that people don’t have to use all of their votes? Regardless, you still have to sift through all 118 candidates.” Ms Green

Commenting further on diversity in the Assembly, and how it relates to the number of candidates, Ms Green noted that:

“The lack of women stands out most strongly – we had 12 in 2016, that went down to eight in 2020. I don’t think you can attribute that to island-

wide voting, but what you can do is respond to what the election observers said when they saw that result which is that there should be more government encouragement of a wider variety of people to join the candidate pool.” Ms Green

She explained that action might sound contradictory given the acknowledgement that 118 candidates was too many for people to easily assess, but she felt that the increased gathering of candidates could be narrowed down by giving a rigorous explanation of what it takes to be a deputy “so hopefully what emerges is more diverse, more competent candidates”.

The idea of candidates who poll highly being given top jobs within the Assembly was discussed. Mr Gillson dismissed this, saying simply that we don’t have a presidential system. Ms Green said that while it’s not absolute, it should be an indicator. She acknowledged that it is very difficult for the electorate to understand when they’ve gone to the trouble of selecting deputies that those deputies are sitting on the back benches unused, and she felt the States needed to do a better job of explaining that.

Mr Gillson said that the greatest strength of Guernsey’s democracy is also its greatest weakness. He explained:

“The strength is its pure democracy in that anyone can stand and be elected and when you’re elected you are elected into government; there’s technically no such thing as a back bencher. And that’s also its greatest weakness. We need a broad church of people, but we need to have the brightest and the best because in the UK system you have got filtration, in that the party will ensure that their candidates are reasonably competent capable people. Those people get elected into Parliament and the best of those, you would hope, get chosen for government. A large majority of MPs do not form part of the government, whereas in Guernsey every deputy is part of government.” Mr Gillson

He was asked if he felt that the reduction in the number of deputies from 45 to 38 in 2016 was a mistake, in that it inevitably meant that there was a smaller pool of deputies to draw the necessary skills from for the important roles in government. “Yes. I hold the view that reducing the number of deputies was a mistake, for that reason,” he said.

This view was backed up by Mr. Doherty who said:

“I suspect [the number of deputies] is too small and this links to the question about populism – it’s very popular to say, ‘let’s cut down the number of politicians’ but I think that no matter how small your jurisdiction, if you’re self-governing the jobs to be done are largely the same.” Mr Doherty

Finally, the witnesses were asked for their thoughts on the value of hustings. Mr Gillson felt that candidates could simply copy the answers of previous speakers. He said:

“You got to see someone on a stage and whether they could perform competently in public, but whether that’s a good indication of how someone will operate in Government doesn’t necessarily follow. I think the role of hustings was overstated.” Mr Gillson

However, Ms Green thought that hustings were very revealing and were a good part of the mix of getting to know a candidate.

4.3.3 Political Parties

Witness Panel

Mr David Piesing – Former Adviser to The Guernsey Party

Deputy Peter Roffey – Current Deputy

Mr Nigel de la Rue – Chaired a working party on referendum options

The panel were asked whether island-wide voting needs political parties to function properly. Making it clear that he’d rather not have island-wide voting or political parties, Deputy Roffey agreed that it was a system that had been designed to bring about parties but noted that Guernsey doesn’t seem to be enamoured with parties so, as a result, it is stuck with a system that doesn’t work with independents. Mr de la Rue wasn’t convinced that the 2020 election and the period since proved that the island wasn’t keen on parties, saying that mechanisms needed to exist to encourage their formation; meaning that Guernsey could make parties work if there was a will to do so. Mr Piesing said that when the decision was made to move to island-wide voting we didn’t know if parties would emerge and his feeling is that it’s too early to make the judgment on whether island-wide voting needs parties, or indeed whether parties need island-wide voting.

With the exception of the Alliance Party, which gained no seats, Deputy Roffey did not view the parties that emerged in 2020 as actual parties. Rather, he felt, they were electoral support systems. He pointed out that in a small community when people want a deputy to do things and the deputy agrees, that person is not going to turn around and say, ‘no that’s not what my party want me to do’. They are simply going to act as an independent.

“We can’t assess the merits and demerits of a party system on the back of what happened in the 2020 election. We need to think of parties in a broader sense than what happens in the UK. There doesn’t necessarily have to be a whipping system; there is flexibility around that to differing degrees.” Mr de la Rue

Mr de la Rue said that he didn't believe that those who voted in the referendum thought that the advantage of island-wide voting would be the creation of political parties full stop.

"I believe the electorate made a clear statement that they were more interested in island-wide politics than they were in parish or district politics. I think, particularly among younger people, that they are interested in political philosophy, in vision, in the direction of travel. Young people I speak to who are engaged in politics worldwide or nationally – they have no interest whatsoever in what is happening in their parish. I only want access to politicians to discuss island-wide issues. It's because we are a small nation and we have all of the issues to confront as a small nation, of taxation of education, health and social care and fighting poverty. We are an internationally-recognised centre of financial services and my experience of the 2012 election in the Vale was that I had to choose seven candidates from nine options and that is all the say that I had in what happened in the island. My say in how the island was run was microscopic. Without parties we have a half-baked solution." Mr de la Rue

Deputy Roffey countered that he didn't think that when a candidate was elected in a district it was any less a consideration of their island-wide issue views.

Mr Piesing said that part of the problem last time, when parties collapsed not long after the election, was that those parties had formed very close to the election. "The most important thing is to start a lot earlier," he said.

"The lead-in period is probably 18 months to two years before an election in order to create a party from scratch" he said, adding "If you really do it properly and you start two years in advance of the next election, you've got far more chance of having a sustainable party. People will learn from the experience of what we've seen with parties to date and try and avoid making those same mistakes." Mr Piesing

The advantages and disadvantages of political parties were considered. Mr de la Rue believed that parties allow for more diversity of candidates, as a party will seek to ensure they have a wide range of people in order to appeal to as many voters as possible. Additionally, he thought that parties could help revitalise parish links by party candidates representing different parishes, albeit under an island-wide mandate.

Mr Piesing said that having party members on different committees in the States, particularly if members are on the Policy & Resources Committee, can create difficulties: "It can be a conflict as you have information you can't share with your fellow members."

Mr de la Rue was very keen to stress that we shouldn't be considering the electoral system in isolation from the political system. "It's very important that they match each other and go hand in hand," he said.

“The purpose of an electoral system is to transform the electoral will of the voters into people who will represent it. The will of voters isn’t being expressed either under our previous system or under island-wide voting at the moment in proportion to what their will actually is.” Mr de la Rue

Whatever the advantages and disadvantages were, and Deputy Roffey conceded that parties have both, he indicated that it seemed fairly irrelevant as he cannot see any way to move from where we are now under island-wide voting to properly developed parties. He further observed that parties do tend to ingrain an adversarial, unpleasant approach to politics which can be very hard to reverse. Mr Piesing said that the perception is that political parties facilitate tribalism:

“I think there are people who are so vehemently against the concept of parties that they’ll probably never change their mind, but that could be ... because we haven’t got a full-blown system. If we had a full-blown system, then people who are against parties might be more in favour. But until we get there, you’re in no man’s land really.” Mr Piesing

*“A government of all the talents is much harder under party politics.”
Deputy Roffey*

Discussing different electoral systems, the three witnesses were united, if for different reasons, on the view that Option D in the referendum, namely four equal districts each electing 9 or 10 candidates had merit:

“If option D had been successful would that have been a better stepping-stone to island-wide voting with parties?” Mr de la Rue

“I lived in the West [district] for 20 years and choosing six out of eight candidates became a case of who do I want to not get in? That isn’t a healthy democracy but is that any better or worse than picking 38 from 118? To my mind if you have four districts where you are picking eight or nine from 25, it is manageable for everyone. Its manageable for candidates. It seems a more natural halfway house.” Mr Piesing

“[My referendum working party] looked at the options in considerable detail and we felt a gradualist approach of Option D, which was four electoral districts, was the most favoured. There’s a tendency in the island and a tendency in politics towards binarism that there is only one right way and one wrong way to do anything, but actually the best solution often lies very near the middle in a sense of proportionality of all of the different factors that you are presented with.” Mr de la Rue

Deputy Roffey explained that in his view, the advantage of having four districts was to maximise people's choice while making the system manageable. "You'd be able to have hustings and I really wouldn't underestimate how important that was – it was the only place you could see people's performance under fire and really make a judgment about what they were like." In response to claims that only two to three hundred people attended the hustings out of an electorate of thousands, Deputy Roffey said "It went back, believe me!" He explained further:

"The number of people who would tell me after a hustings 'my aunty or my cousin was at the Vale Douzaine Room and saw you!' We've replaced that with sitting like lemons at Beau Sejour where candidates can nuance their answers depending on who is speaking to them. So, I thought four districts would be the right balance between the previous and present systems".
Deputy Roffey

Mr de la Rue observed that having four districts would increase the proportion of elected members that voters could vote in from 15% to 25%, so it would be trending towards being able to vote for everyone who is going to form your central government, at the same time as giving a period in which parties could emerge if that is what people wanted.

"Unfortunately because we ended up with island-wide voting, it was necessary have parties but there wasn't time for them to emerge properly, in a mature and sensible way and at the same time all the disadvantages of island-wide voting have been felt." Mr de la Rue

The panel was asked about their views on the process of the referendum:

"There was a real misunderstanding of how the single transferable vote system worked. The message was going out from both camps that putting a second or third choice lessened the chances of your first choice being successful. Absolute, utter nonsense! Your second choice would only be engaged if and when your first choice option had been eliminated and, if it had been eliminated anyway, you're not damaging it by having a second choice, but that was the message that was going around everywhere."
Deputy Roffey

"The campaigners of both island-wide voting and the status quo options in the referendum emphatically stated that voters should not use the transferable vote system. They should abandon their second option and in fact if you analyse the results it is very possible that the hybrid system would have succeeded if those who were prepared to exercise their second vote had done so." Mr de la Rue

The witnesses then discussed the merits and demerits of reducing the number of votes each voter has under island-wide voting:

“I’d be completely opposed to reducing the number of votes. Even though I think its impractical to have 38 votes, if you are going to elect 38 people, I think you should have the right to vote for up to 38 people.” Deputy Roffey

“All we would be doing by reducing the number of votes would be tinkering around the edges of an already faulty system.” Mr de la Rue

“[The survey result] was probably more of a reflection of too many people believing just how difficult it is to select 38 candidates. It was just too big a task for them.” Mr Piesing

Finally, Deputy Roffey was asked why he thought there had been so many candidates in 2020. He felt that because of the difficulty of standing in such a large constituency, everything was facilitated for people:

“We will organise everything for you, you are not expected to knock on doors, you will be in this brochure, we will make a little film of you, and someone else can write all your words for you. I think you have to provide that under island-wide voting, and if you have to do that then there is less of a barrier for people who might not be entirely committed and who think ‘let’s give it a punt’, In the old days those people would have been caught out. Additionally, there were no hustings and there was no need to knock on doors.” Deputy Roffey

4.3.4 Mechanics of elections and electoral systems

Witness Panel

Professor Kevin Bales – St Saviour’s Douzenier

Mr Alistair Doherty – Former Westminster House of Commons Clerk

Mr Matt Fallaize – Former Deputy and former President of SACC

The panel were asked about the difficulties associated with electoral systems in small jurisdictions. Mr Doherty talked of tendency for parliaments in small countries to become hyper-personalised. He added that parties are harder to establish in small places, and where they are established, they tend to be support vehicles for local big political figures rather than programmatic parties. For Professor Bales, the most important factor was that:

“Democracies should be representative of some place or ideology or some political party so that the person knows who or what they are representing when they cast their vote.” Professor Bales

“Where there are parties, they put out a programme and once elected they seek to implement that programme. But we don’t have anything like that, so all that work on policy development is being done post-election which makes it even harder. The absence of executive government, which can be argued as a good thing or a bad thing, certainly means there is a difficult trade off in Guernsey between democracy and leadership. There are pros and cons of island-wide voting, but I think what we have to recognise is that we now have a radically different electoral system from almost anywhere else in the world and that is bound to have a significant impact on our democracy and the functioning of our government.” Mr Fallaize

The panel then moved onto considering how the issues of island-wide voting might best be mitigated.

“... if you want island-wide representatives and particularly if you want all members of the States to be island-wide, I always took the view that you had to split the elections. One of the options in the referendum was to have twelve or thirteen seats elected every two years ... it would at least get the number of candidates and the number of votes down to a manageable figure, while protecting whatever is perceived to be special and unique about the island-wide mandate. My suspicion is that if the current system is maintained, then sooner rather than later there will be a change in the timetable of elections because I think people will simply get fed up with having 100 candidates and 38 votes.” Mr Fallaize

Mr Doherty added that, in the absence of sustained development of political parties, he could see the merit in rolling island-wide voting. He suggested that it would improve the representative function of the States by reflecting whatever the current thinking in the population was at the time by ‘topping up’ the States every two years. Mr Fallaize pointed out that the potential weakness of rolling island-wide voting for some is that a term would have to be six years long.

Professor Bales related his experience working on US elections and drew a parallel between the US Senate electoral system, in which one third of the Senate is elected every two years to serve for a term of six years, and a rolling island-wide system for Guernsey, saying that with only one third of seats being chosen at each election, there was an inherent stability to the system.

“Of all the systems that we’re talking about that could be island-wide, the only one that seems both logical, and most representative, and democratically sound would be one that involved rolling island-wide elections. Because it would reduce the numbers that had to be considered

in each election and it would have a long-term stability because of the overlapping tenures.” Professor Bales

Mr Fallaize was asked why the Committee charged with producing the referendum policy letter, which he presided over, had omitted the hybrid system whereby some deputies are elected island-wide and some are elected in districts (this option was subsequently added by amendment). He replied that the Committee had decided to only include options which all had just one class of States member, but the decision was possibly also informed by the difficulties Jersey had experienced over a long period of time with having different classes of States member. Additionally, Guernsey had had different classes of States member previously in the period 1994-2000, and it was felt that to include it would be a retrograde step.

“[Under a hybrid system] there is a problem in having different classes of States member. The expectation would be that those elected island-wide should hold the most senior roles in the States and there isn’t really very much correlation at all between electing members to a parliament and the senior roles in a government. There are real problems with it post-election.”
Mr Fallaize

On the issue of political parties Mr Fallaize wondered whether the electorate actually wanted parties:

“Parties don’t normally emerge top-down; they are normally bottom up movements either because, as Mr Doherty has said, a group of people want to obtain power or because there is a group of people in Guernsey who feel unrepresented. I don’t think those dynamics exist in Guernsey. My impression is that the prevailing view in Guernsey is very sceptical about political parties, and I was always sceptical that you could hold them together after the election. I am not sure whether there will be parties at the next election, but I think there will be even more reservations, given what happened last time.” Mr Fallaize

Mr Fallaize observed that due to the absence of parties, if people get fed up with the government, they can’t say, like they can elsewhere, ‘we will kick them out’. He said that what tends to happen is that the permanent features of Guernsey’s government system are criticised instead, such as the institution of the States, the role of the deputy, the voting system and the system of government which all act as proxies, absorbing the criticism that in other places the governing party would absorb.

The panel were asked about the findings of the survey which showed how strongly the electorate had relied on the manifesto booklet as their principal source of information. Mr Fallaize pointed out that it was the only organised way voters had of obtaining information.

"In the previous system there were hustings where all the candidates were put in front of a voter. It was easier to knock on all doors, and candidates were responsible for sending out their own manifesto, so there were many opportunities for voters to see candidates side by side and compare them. In 2020, the candidate booklet became the only way. The booklet was the right thing to do, recognising the gap in information. But the booklet was just two pages per candidate, half of which was taken up with a photo, so the space for the candidate to explain their policies was minimal. The way in which voters will make decisions in that kind of environment becomes much more simplistic, because you just don't have the material and the way of comparing candidates against each other. I think what that has meant is that the choices people are making are reduced to much more simple considerations. It lends itself to a kind of check-list election where the only way voters are able to compare their choices is to use a small number of criteria on key issues and I don't think there is a way around that if you are going to present 120 candidates to a voter." Mr Fallaize

Mr Doherty suggested that voters were perhaps more likely to rely on what candidates claimed to be against as they may have little faith in the ability of an individual deputy to deliver a policy proposed in their manifesto, leading to voting decisions being made on negatives such as stopping certain projects or tax systems, rather than on positive policy proposals. Professor Bales highlighted the possible perils of relying purely on printed material:

"I endeavoured to go to all the opportunities where I could meet candidates and what I found a few times was that the person I thought would make a great candidate, when I got to talk to them I realised 'oh my goodness, I don't want that person at all.'" Professor Bales

Mr Fallaize concluded that 2020 was an election fought on social media or somewhere away from where the candidates actually were.

"The biggest disadvantage is that you completely break down the proximity between the elector and the candidate. It becomes an election fought at a much greater distance than was ever the case previously and my view is that the voter is less informed and therefore less likely to make informed choices. If I am going to vote for someone, I'd quite like to speak to them first at the hustings or on the doorstep. Then you can tell who is serious, who has done their homework and who is just chancing it." Mr Fallaize

Following on from the finding in the survey that most voters think the number of votes available to people should be reduced, Professor Bales said that it didn't surprise him. "It was unwieldly and overwhelming for a lot of people." Mr Fallaize agreed that there was an attraction to the idea but felt that the practical issue was not the number of votes, but the number of candidates. He also thought that giving voters fewer votes than there are seats to fill is unconventional, and he was unsure if we should make an already unconventional system even more unorthodox. Nevertheless, he conceded that logically, the fewer votes people have, the more likely it is that a greater proportion of them will be taken up with people they are positively voting for. Mr Doherty considered that reducing the number of votes would just be another work around designed to support a flawed system.

Finally, Mr Fallaize said that the principal advantage of island-wide voting was that voters could have influence over every seat.

"The question that has never been satisfactorily answered is what are island-wide representatives giving you that district ones can't?" Mr Fallaize

4.3.5 Summary and analysis of public hearings

4.3.5.1 The parishes

Issues around parish representation were explored which aroused strong feelings about the emotional loss to the parishes and their inhabitants of the move away from a district system, with one witness declaring island-wide voting 'a disaster'. It is not just about the link between the douzaines and deputies but also the link between parish or district residents and deputies that is a concern for some. Possible ways of restoring links to some degree under the new electoral system were explored, including giving deputies a specific responsibility for a certain parish, but without coming to any firm conclusion on how practical or effective such a move might be.

A suggestion was made that parishes could have a role in putting on hustings for resident candidates. In practice, this would probably need to be done based on the previous district divisions as, on a purely parish level, Torteval might have only two candidates, whilst the whole of St Peter Port might have 30. Of course, voters wishing to see all candidates perform would have to attend at least seven hustings. It is worth noting in this context that the distinction between parish and parish-based district raises interesting questions as to what extent it is equitable to highlight the parish of residency of candidates. For example, a candidate proudly displaying their parish as Torteval may result in the 500 voters of that parish giving them greater consideration, whilst a candidate in St Peter Port could spark the interest of 9,500 voters.

4.3.5.2 Electoral systems

Alternative voting systems were discussed with the four-district system receiving some support, particularly in the role it might play towards allowing parties to develop before then moving on to a party-based island-wide system. Alternatively, it was considered that such a system would help address the desire to be able to vote for a larger percentage of candidates than in the previous district system, but without being overwhelmed by the numbers seen in island-wide voting. Some of the witnesses saw merit in the rolling island-wide system as a way of retaining island-wide voting but cutting candidate numbers to around 50, with the additional benefit of introducing stability into the Assembly as a result of only replacing or re-electing one-third of members at any one time. The hybrid system, which would

involve some island-wide deputies and some district ones, was criticised for the creation of two different classes of States member and the effects that would have on the Assembly. There was support for the previous district system, particularly in terms of the close link that was possible between a deputy and the electors and parish officials in a district, as well as the ability for voters to comprehensively assess candidates due to the very manageable numbers standing.

4.3.5.3 Political parties

There was both support for and opposition to political parties. It was generally agreed that island-wide voting would function better with conventional parties as this would overcome the number of manifestos that needed to be scrutinised. However, there were differing views on how one might get to that point, with some witnesses feeling that it is highly unlikely to happen as various conditions in Guernsey, from a lack of the drivers that lead to the formation of true political parties, to the perceived view that the public don't really want them anyway, to the difficulty of enforcing party discipline and maintaining collective responsibility for the party's programme. If a party member was to break the party whip there is no real sanction. The party might expel them but, in our system, they remain in office and in government.

4.3.5.4 The number of votes

There were mixed views on the possibility of reducing the number of votes. One witness feared that a reduction in the number of votes would result in some very popular candidates getting in with a huge number of votes and others getting in with a very low number of votes because people would use their top votes for popular candidates. This view mirrors the criticism levelled in advance of island-wide voting that some candidates would be elected with only a handful of votes, a fear that proved unfounded. Taken to its logical extreme, this effect might happen if votes were reduced to an extremely low number, but to what extent it would be apparent if the number was simply halved, for example, is difficult to predict. The votes polled by successful candidates in 2020 ranged from 13,925 to 6,477, with the 118th candidate gaining just 555. On average in 2020, people only used 26 votes, so it seems unlikely that a reduction to, say, 20 would have a dramatic effect on the voting range.

It was suggested by two witnesses that reducing the number of votes would simply be yet another workaround for a flawed system, but it would perhaps seem reasonable that, for as long as the system is in operation, any changes which make it more manageable should be seriously considered. The point was also made that having fewer votes does not stop people from having to assess all the candidates. However, as was also pointed out, the fewer votes people have, the more likely it is that a greater proportion of them will be taken up with people they are positively voting for. One witness was completely opposed to the concept, saying that if you are going to elect 38 people you should have 38 votes. This is an opinion, however, not a hard and fast electoral norm. Of course under the previous system voters could only vote for five or six people out of an Assembly of 38.

4.3.5.5 The composition and operation of the States

The witnesses were generally agreed that it was not possible to positively attribute either the current composition of the States Assembly, or how it has operated this term, to island-wide voting. It was observed that diversity in term of sex and age had contracted, with just 20% of deputies being female, and fewer younger and older people than in the previous term, although there is no evidence of a causal connection to island-wide voting. The remedy to this was to encourage a wider range of people to stand, thus giving the voters a more representative choice of candidates. The shift in the residency of deputies since the last election from the north to the south of the island shows that, under island-wide

voting, more deputies are now living in what is perceived to be the more affluent parts of the island and raises a question as to what, if any, effect this has on decision-making in the States.

4.3.5.6 Candidate information sessions

There was support for the provision of information sessions, to be undertaken before a potential candidate lodges their nomination. It was perceived that there would be two advantages to this. Firstly, successful candidates would arrive in the Assembly better prepared for the role and, secondly, the sessions may act as a filtering process, if some potential candidates came to realisation that the job was not what they actually wanted. One witness felt very strongly that the onus was on potential deputies to research the role, including finding the time to sit in the public gallery and observe States meetings, before putting themselves forward. However, in the absence of some (perhaps many) candidates doing this, it seems reasonable for a provision to be made by the States although this might present some practical difficulties which will need to be carefully considered.

It was also stated that it would help voters if they knew which candidates had availed themselves of the information sessions. Additionally such sessions should be at varying times to ensure people with work or caring responsibilities could find the time to attend. There was some desire to see such sessions being made mandatory, but as acknowledgment that this might not be straightforward.

4.3.5.7 The referendum

Witnesses expressed concerns about the referendum, with one considering that in order to change something as fundamental as an electoral system, a supermajority should have been required. The biggest concern was a feeling that voters had not understood the preferential voting system, not aided by campaign groups who were encouraging people to only vote for the particular group's preferred option. It was explained that had the referendum merely presented a binary choice between island-wide voting and the status quo, island-wide voting would likely have won but the prediction was that the States would have then spent years debating what sort of island-wide voting it should be.

4.3.5.8 Advantages and disadvantages

Most witnesses concurred with the general view that has emerged in this Report that the principal advantage of island-wide voting is the ability to vote for anyone. One witness framed the principal advantage as being the ability for a voter to have an influence over every seat. While this might sound similar to the advantage of being able to vote for anyone, it is fundamentally different. If the number of votes were reduced to 19, people could still vote for anyone, but they would only have influence over half the seats. Given the survey results which strongly underline the importance of voting for anyone whilst at the same time support reducing the number of votes, one could draw the conclusion that when voting island-wide, voters are not generally considering what the final Assembly might look like overall, which is interesting, as it is the key ability voters now have which they did not have in district voting.

The principal disadvantage was clearly the number of candidates, leading to the view that people had to be quite perfunctory in their choosing. For some, the disadvantage was the loss of parish links and the ability for voters to really get a good sense of the candidates in their district. A majority of the witnesses felt that the inability to hold hustings meaningfully under island-wide voting was a disadvantage.

4.3.5.9 *The number of deputies*

The number of deputies in the States was briefly touched upon. Although this is more related to the machinery of government, this topic came up relatively frequently in comments in the survey. Contrary to popular opinion, it was felt that the number was too low, partly because all the same functions and departments of a larger jurisdiction are still present in a smaller one, and partly because there was too small a pool from which to draw sufficient skilled people in order to adequately populate committees. It is perhaps part of the price of democracy that a number of people will be elected who for a variety of reasons do not play a full part in the Assembly and that the total number should make an allowance for this. It is obviously and understandably counterintuitive to the public, and comes with a financial cost, but it is hard to argue that having a larger elected pool from which to draw skills and experience would not improve the operation of government.

5 Discussion

The Terms of Reference of this Review sought to:

- *evaluate demonstrable advantages and disadvantages from using the island-wide voting system*
- *evaluate the effectiveness of the election process*
- *evaluate the views of those who took part in the process*
- *provide evidence-based recommendations for future action*

In this section the first three objectives of the Review are discussed. The recommendations are summarised in Section 7.

5.1 Advantages and disadvantages: the dilemma at the heart of island-wide voting

The evidence gathered by the Review Panel was wide-ranging and detailed, involving over 1500 members of the community. The distillation of advantages and disadvantages overwhelmingly comes down to a dilemma that lies at the very heart of island-wide voting.

The dilemma is as follows: The overarching reason people support island-wide voting is to have the ability to vote for any candidate, wherever they live. At the same time, the overarching reason that people oppose island-wide voting is the difficulty, if not the impossibility, of adequately assessing over one hundred candidates. To move forward with a system that engages a majority, this dilemma must ultimately be resolved. Various modifications can be made to the present system that will improve it, but they will be unable to resolve this intrinsic dilemma.

(There were, of course, many subsidiary issues raised in evidence, not least the loss of parish links, and these are addressed either here or elsewhere in this Report.)

Below is an analysis of the five systems that were on the referendum ballot paper principally *in the context of how well they might resolve this dilemma between the ability to vote for anyone who stands*

and the difficulty of assessing so many candidates. Other systems that were suggested by respondents are also briefly considered. Some of the arguments made for and against individual electoral systems draw on those set out in the policy letter on the Referendum on Guernsey's Voting System.¹²

"If we can find a way to [vote for any candidate] without having to look at 120 candidates, that would be an improvement."

5.1.1 Island-wide voting (A)

Island-wide voting, electing all deputies on one day, resoundingly meets the desire to be able to vote for any candidate.

However, it is difficult or even impossible for voters to realistically assess all the candidates who stand, and the only likely way to mitigate that significant issue under this particular system is the widespread introduction of political parties, with each party signed up to a common manifesto which its members pledge to uphold. Nascent attempts at the last election to introduce parties failed and with 18 months to go to the start of campaigning for 2025 there is no evidence of widespread party formation for 2025. Even if parties do emerge, many candidates are likely to decide to stand as independents. The survey showed that 34% of voters are very unsupportive of political parties with only 8% saying they are very supportive, all of which would seem to indicate that a robust party system will not emerge any time soon.

5.1.2 The parish-based system - the previous system (B)

Whilst strongly meeting the requirement of a very manageable list of candidates, the parish-based electoral system is the furthest away from the expressed desire to be able to vote for any candidate standing. Indeed, it was this last point which led for calls, over the course of at least a decade for a move to island-wide voting. This system also adequately addresses the issue of parish-links and being able to get to know one's deputies. However, some critics say that maintaining relatively small electoral districts encourages parochialism among deputies who, it is considered, should be more concerned with issues of strategic importance to the whole island. It is difficult to evaluate whether, post-2020, the Assembly has a different focus on island-wide issues compared to its predecessors.

Under the parish-based system candidates were able to disseminate their election literature and promote their views relatively easily and inexpensively and each elector received a manageable number of manifestos – typically around 11 or 12. It was also quite feasible for candidates to call at a substantial proportion of their electors' homes. In every district there were traditional hustings meetings and some districts held more than one.

5.1.3 The hybrid system (C)

The seemingly irreconcilable tension between the desire to be able to vote for any candidate and being unable to adequately assess over a hundred manifestos or meet even a fraction of the candidates may partly explain why the preferred electoral system in our survey (and the one that came a close second in the referendum) was the hybrid system whereby some candidates are elected island-wide, and the remainder are elected in parishes/districts. It is very easy to see the attractiveness of this hybrid system,

¹² [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - Referendum on Guernsey's Voting System](#)

especially to those who also mourn the loss of a parish connection but who still want the ability, to a limited extent at least, to vote for any candidate.

Conceptually, the hybrid system would be a return to the six-year period from 1994 to 2000. At that time, twelve Conseillers were elected on an island-wide basis and 33 deputies were elected in parish-based electoral districts. It is worth noting at this point that the Committee tasked to review which electoral systems to put on the referendum ballot paper did not actually propose to include the hybrid system as a referendum option; rather it was added to the ballot paper by an amendment on the day of debate. Many of the disadvantages of full island-wide voting are not mitigated by moving to a hybrid system depending on the number of seats to be reserved for each of the two categories of deputy.

It is claimed that creating two classes of States member would be detrimental to good government as, after a General Election, some members are elected to more senior offices, but all members are elected to the States as equals. Creating different classes of States member ('island-wide' or 'district') would inevitably be divisive. The problem would be compounded by the conflation of electoral popularity and suitability for senior office – indeed this very problem was felt to be one of the principal disadvantages of the popularly-elected office of Conseiller during its short-lived six-year existence. Even under the current system there is a slight tension between electoral popularity and senior positions, and this was more pronounced under the hybrid system.

The previous experience of a hybrid system was in 1994-2000, when turnout at such elections fell. In 1994, in the first island-wide election for Conseillers, 17,080 people voted. In 1997, in the second and last island-wide election for Conseillers, only 11,521 people voted whereas in the Parish Deputies' election a month later 14,812 people voted. In the parish-based district election of 2016, 21,803 people voted.

Jersey has also has a history of much debate and change about its electoral system including at least two referendums in recent years. The States Assembly in Jersey currently comprises the Constables of each of the Island's 12 parishes and 37 deputies elected in nine constituencies based on the parishes. Prior to the 2022 election there were 12 Constables, eight Senators elected on an island-wide basis, and 29 deputies in 14 constituencies. The changes for the 2022 election meant that there were there was much less variation in the ratio of population to elected representatives. General elections are held every four years.¹³

Without setting out in full the intricate history of the Jersey electoral system since 2000, the key point to make is that Jersey moved away from electing some representatives island-wide shortly after Guernsey moved to electing all representatives island-wide.

5.1.4 The four-district option (D)

The idea of dividing the island into four districts, which was more popular in the survey than in the referendum (possibly partly because the survey was uninfluenced by campaign groups and this option did not have such a group in the referendum) can again be seen as an attempt to allow voters to choose from a larger pool of candidates whilst keeping the number of candidates one must choose from to a manageable number.

On the continuum of electoral systems, a four-district system is somewhere between island-wide voting and the previous seven parish-based districts. Like the hybrid system, it represents a form of

¹³ [Jersey's Political System \(policy.je\)](https://policy.je)

compromise. It is, in effect, an alternative way of increasing the proportion of seats over which each elector has some influence while providing for elections with a practicable number of candidates to evaluate.

Perhaps the single greatest disadvantage of four districts is that it would not fully satisfy either those people who favour electing all deputies on an island-wide basis or those people who favour retaining the previous seven, smaller parish-based districts.

A diligent candidate with sufficient time available during the day could certainly canvass the majority of a district representing a quarter of the island, possibly with a slight extension to the campaign period. Traditional hustings meeting would still present some difficulty with a candidate list in the order of 25, but it would be a significant improvement on 100-120 in island-wide voting.

Some people feel that another advantage of a four-district system is that it would allow the evolutionary development of parties, whilst not being dependent on them to function adequately.

5.1.5 Rolling island-wide voting (E)

Another system that seeks to reconcile the tension between voting for any candidate whilst being able to adequately assess all candidates is the system of rolling island-wide voting. This system would see elections held every two years for one third of the Assembly, with candidates serving a period of six years. It could be expected that the candidate list would be shorter, perhaps in the order of 50 candidates, although this is difficult to predict accurately. As was pointed out at the public hearing on electoral systems, at any given election, there would still be 26 States members not up for election, so this of itself would reduce the candidate list. Voters would be required to choose 12 or 13 candidates at each election.

Supporters of this system point to the inherent continuity in a such a system. Holding elections for one third of the Assembly every two years would provide the States with more continuity because the potential for turnover in membership at each election would be much reduced. Improving the balance between continuity and renewal could be a significant advantage, particularly if it addressed the lacuna in activity which tends to affect each newly-elected Assembly for several months immediately after a general election. The downsides for some are having a general election every two years and having States members in position for six years, although some claim that an election every two years would allow voters to reflect the public mood more frequently. Additionally, this system does not directly address issues with parish links.

This system mitigates many of the logistical obstacles associated with island-wide voting. In particular it provides for full island-wide voting without the need for elections involving potentially impracticable numbers of seats, votes and candidates.

As with the current system, it would enable every elector to have some influence over every seat in the States which, in the absence of political parties, is seen by some people as the best way of securing a legitimate democratic mandate for the whole of the States.

Rolling island-wide voting carries some of the other disadvantages of island-wide voting which concern opponents of such a system. No candidate could canvass all, or even most, of the island in an election campaign lasting only a few weeks. In a similar vein, traditional hustings meetings with all candidates at a single event would not be feasible under this system and would perhaps need to be split into two or three sessions depending on numbers. If drop-in sessions were held under Option E, an elector could conceivably speak individually to all of his or her candidates, though clearly that would undoubtedly

require several sessions to be held and the elector would need to attend on perhaps two or three occasions. The six-year term would perhaps assist in continuity and experience on committees, rather than the case at present where frequently five new deputies start from scratch every four years.

Finally, if a move to rolling island-wide voting was to be made, it would require a transitional period. A full island-wide election would need to be held, in which the top third of candidate would be elected for six years, the middle third for four years and the bottom third for two years, in order to commence the cycle of two-yearly elections.

5.1.6 Other suggestions from respondents

The survey also invited respondents to suggest other systems not considered in either the referendum or the survey. Most comments received related to changes to the system, such as the number of deputies, rather than describing a system itself. It was implied that fewer deputies would lead to fewer candidates to scrutinise but there is no evidence to suggest that fewer available seats would deter people from standing. The number of people who stood in the 2016 election was marginally greater than in the 2012 election, even though there had been a reduction in the number of deputies by seven. Some people suggested capping the number of candidates, but it is difficult to see how this could be achieved democratically.

Suggestions for alternative electoral systems outside of those suggested in the survey were proffered by some respondents. Even amongst these ideas there was no trend or consensus, with many just being variations on the systems proffered at the referendum, including a variety rolling island-wide systems and mix of island-wide and parish-based. What did come through clearly was that many people were also trying to reconcile the dilemma between being able to vote for anyone but not being overwhelmed with candidates.

Another suggestion was to revert to the previous parish-based system but in addition give voters five 'wildcard' votes that they could use for any candidates standing elsewhere on the island in other districts. The main risk with this proposal is that votes from the rest of the island could effectively deselect candidates who would have been successful had it just been left to the particular parish-based district. What the exercise does show is that there is no perfect system, just that some are more imperfect than others.

Finally, there were a small number of detailed submissions which emphasised the need to match the system of government with the system of election rather than dealing with these two things in isolation. Whilst systems of government are outside the scope of this Report, this is an important point and should certainly not be without consideration if there are any proposals in the future to change the electoral system.

5.1.7 Summary of voting systems

Table 5, below, shows the percentage of seats each voter can influence for each electoral system. It is important to note that there is a difference between being able to vote for any candidate and the percentage of seats that a voter can influence. Whilst it might appear attractive to be able to influence all the seats in the election, the evidence in the survey was that voters felt they had too many votes. Nevertheless the desire to be able to vote for any candidate was clear.

Electoral system	Ability to vote for any candidate in the election	Percentage of seats a voter can influence	Potential number of candidates to assess
Island-wide voting – 1 district (the present system) (A)	yes	100%	120
Rolling island-wide voting – 1 district (E)	yes	100%	50
Island-wide voting but with 19 votes (A modified)	yes	50%	120
Hybrid system: 10 seats island-wide; 3 - 5 seats per parish-based district (C)	no*	34-39%	30+10
4 districts (D)	no	25%	25
Parish-based system - 7 districts (the previous system) (B)	no	14%	12

*Table 5: The ability to vote for any candidate, the percentage of seats a voter can influence and the potential number of candidates to assess. Letters in brackets refer to the 2018 referendum options. *Under the hybrid system, each voter could choose 10 out of approximately 30 candidates island-wide and 3 to 5 out of approximately 10 candidates in a parish-based district. There would be a further 60 candidates approximately who they would be unable to choose to vote for.*

It would seem from the foregoing analysis that any system needs to meet three principal criteria in order to be broadly acceptable to a majority of voters. It needs to:

- allow voters to vote for any candidate or at least significant proportion of candidates, and
- not require voters to assess an unwieldy number of candidates at one time, and
- pay some respect to parish links between deputies and voters and deputies and the douzaine.

It will be interesting to see how the second election under island-wide voting, due to take place in June 2025, plays out. Voters will be more familiar with the system and the Review Panel believes that various refinements can be made to improve the experience. Nevertheless, without the sudden and unlikely emergence of a robust party system with party manifestos, to which the vast majority of candidates sign up, there can be nothing to save the voter from having to work through a long candidate list and accept that it is infeasible to hope to meet more than a very small percentage of candidates.

5.2 The effectiveness of the election process

How effective was island-wide voting in producing an effective government?

It is very difficult to accurately measure the effectiveness of the system of election. While the mechanics of the physical process ran very smoothly, assessing the outcome in terms of the type of Government it delivered is much more subjective as, amongst other things, it is difficult to account for confounding factors. There are many criticisms of the current Assembly, but how different would it have been had it been run under the previous district-based system?

One significant change was the number of candidates who put themselves forward. On the face of it a greater choice is a good thing, however, it is worth asking why there was such an increase. The 2012 and 2016 elections fielded 78 and 81 candidates respectively. These numbers increased very significantly by between 46% and 52% to 118 candidates in 2020. Four possible explanations for this increase seem likely. Firstly, 40 candidates were members of parties with 24 of them being first time candidates. It is likely that some, perhaps many, of these people would not have stood without the support of a party. The second possibility is it was perceived that standing island-wide would attract less scrutiny than standing in a parish-based district where there would be an expectation of participating in parish hustings, which can be a daunting prospect, particularly for first-time candidates. Third, there was a novelty factor with island-wide voting and, fourth, the referendum may have stirred up more interest than normal.

Another factor is the residency redistribution of successful candidates as detailed in Table 3. Historically, the vast majority of candidates stood in their own district, and on that basis, had the 2020 election been run as a parish-based one there would be some different faces in the current Assembly.

However, neither of these reasons of themselves can establish whether the resulting government is more or less effective than it would have been, had the election been conducted under the previous system.

“The first island-wide voting election produced candidates who were on average of poorer quality than those in previous parish elections.” Mr H Camp

As detailed in section 4.2.9, when respondents were asked for their opinion on the potential impact of island-wide voting on the governing of the island by the States Assembly, half thought island-wide voting has resulted in much worse or slightly worse governing of the island than previously, with people who oppose island-wide voting being most likely to say that it resulted in much worse governing of the island than previously.

People were also asked what impact, if any, moving to an island-wide system of voting had on how well the States represents the overall views of (a) the people of Guernsey, (b) the people in their parish and (c) the individual voter. In each case, around half thought the States was less representative of views. Again, opponents of island-wide voting were significantly more likely to say it is less representative than supporters.

In summary, it is not possible to empirically measure the effectiveness of government when compared with what it might have been under the previous system, as there is no control group and there are numerous other confounding factors, but there is a correlation between those who consider government has become less effective and who also expressed a dislike of island-wide voting.

5.3 The views of those who took part in the process

The three evidence gathering processes undertaken by the Review Panel lead to a wealth of information and views and these are set out at length in preceding sections and in the survey results at Appendix 3.

6 Conclusion

Across all the forms of evidence obtained there remains significant support for the ability to vote for any candidate who stands. It was the desire to be able to vote (or, according to some, actively not vote) for people outside of one's district that led to the sustained calls for island-wide voting for more than two decades. Despite the understandable desire by some for a return to the previous parish-based system, the risk is significant that any reversion to a parish-based system would simply revive these calls and possibly make them even louder given that people will have had a taste of the ability to vote for any candidate.

As noted above, the distilled evidence gathered in this Review shows that only a system which

- allows voters to vote for any candidate, or at least significant proportion of candidates, and
- does not require voters to assess an unwieldy number of candidates at one time and
- pays some respect to parish links between deputies and voters and deputies and the douzaines

is likely to go any way towards satisfying the desires of a majority voters. Neither the current nor the previous system fulfil all three criteria.

It is possible that many, if not most, of the perceived and actual loss of parish links and connections can be ameliorated sufficiently without the need to return to a parish-based electoral system, as set out in section 4.1.4.

"It should be made clearer which deputy one should contact for certain matters, split by topic or for local parish matters."

It is important to note that it is not just the large number of manifestos to read that is a problem – there is a desire by many voters to be able to meet the candidates or at least 'see them in action', in order to make more informed decisions. Any future system needs to ensure the feasibility of this.

Despite the limited change in support for, or opposition to, island-wide voting since 2018 (see Fig. 4) nevertheless, a majority of people who responded to the survey wish to see a change to a different system (see Fig. 5). What that system should be is not clear, but it is clear what criteria it needs to meet.

For 2025, however, the Review Panel considers that changes can be made that will improve the experience of voters and the preparedness of candidates within the current system, whilst it acknowledges that, in the words of some of the public hearing witnesses, such changes are only tinkering with the system; they cannot and will not resolve what many see as fundamental issues.

7 Recommendations

7.1 Preamble

In 2021, SACC brought forward a policy letter ‘green paper’¹⁴ in response to reports from the CPA BIMR¹⁵ Election Expert Mission and the Registrar-General of Electors on the General Election of 2020. That policy letter also contained resolutions that were aimed at refining the election procedures in 2025. Those resolutions can be found at Appendix 2.

The SMC Review Panel was clear that it was not their intention or remit to duplicate the work done by either SACC or by the organisations on which its policy letter was based. Evidence obtained by the Review Panel during its research should assist SACC in three areas addressed in their policy letter, namely (a) candidate disclosures, (b) States involvement in communications and hustings, and (c) increasing the information provided regarding the role of a States member. In addition the Review Panel has identified five further areas which it believes could improve the experience for voters at the next election.

As noted elsewhere in this Report the SMC were also clear that it was not either the intention or the remit of the Review Panel to make any recommendations to change the electoral system itself for the 2025 election and therefore the recommendations do not encompass such matters. Nevertheless, it is hoped that this Review will provide a robust evidence base that will inform any future Assembly that may be minded to make changes.

7.2 Recommendations

The Scrutiny Management Committee, as advised by its Review Panel on Island-Wide Voting makes the following recommendations to the States Assembly and Constitution Committee:

Recommendation 1

To consider, in consultation with the parish douzaines and other interested parties, all possible methods of improving links between elected representatives and parish douzaines and between elected representatives and parish or district residents, in time to implement such improvements for the 2025 election, mindful of the potential issue in section 4.3.5.1.

Recommendation 2

To consider a reduction in the number of votes available to each voter in time for the 2025 election, taking into account the evidence obtained by the Review Panel.

Recommendation 3

To produce and distribute the manifesto booklet earlier to enable voters more time to review it, specifically before postal voting opens.

Recommendation 4

¹⁴ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - General Election 2020 - Reports](#)

¹⁵ Commonwealth Parliamentary Association - British Islands and Mediterranean Region

To consider increasing the space available to candidates in the manifesto booklet, possibly by giving options of two, three or four sides for candidates to choose from, as well as more freedom in layout whilst retaining a cohesive format that facilitates voter comparison.

Recommendation 5

To significantly improve the promotion and accessibility of candidate videos, including consideration of a shorter and a longer version for each candidate.

Recommendation 6

To introduce a robust series of information sessions for potential candidates focusing on what the role of a deputy entails, the workload and commitments that can be expected, the amount of preparation needed for States meetings and committee work, an overview of the structure of Government and the detail of committee mandates, to be undertaken in whole or part before a person can register to stand for election and to implement a mechanism whereby the electorate can easily see what sessions new candidates have attended.

Recommendation 7

To investigate whether an expanded signed declaration by candidates should be required and, if so, what it should encompass.

Recommendation 8

To note that any future consideration (post-2025) of a further referendum on the electoral system should include a more equitable system of explaining the options to voters.

8 Acknowledgements

The Scrutiny Management Committee wishes to thank all Islanders who took the time to submit individual representations and to complete the survey. We also wish to extend our thanks to all the witnesses who attended the public hearings and to Island Global Research for assistance with the survey and their attention to detail. Finally, thanks are due to the States Assembly and Constitution Committee for their assistance with the Review.

9 Appendices

9.1 Appendix 1 – Terms of Reference

Review of Island-Wide Voting in Guernsey

TERMS OF REFERENCE

Overview

The Scrutiny Management Committee (SMC) jointly with the States' Assembly Constitution Committee (SACC) will form a Panel consisting of members of the Committees and members of the public with relevant expertise, to review the first full Island-Wide Voting election.

Background

In May 2017, SACC published a policy letter on a Referendum on Guernsey's Voting System¹⁶ and the States resolved to proceed with the holding of a referendum on the method of electing people's deputies to the States of Deliberation.

The referendum was held on the 10th October, 2018, using a preferential voting system. Option A, full island-wide voting with 38 deputies elected in one constituency narrowly secured the greatest number of votes in the final round of counting, receiving 6017 votes or 52% of the vote ahead of Option C, 28 deputies elected in 7 constituencies and 10 deputies elected island-wide, which received 5448 votes or 48% of the vote. 14,379 people voted in the referendum. The States' Assembly and Constitution Committee (SACC) is responsible for advising the States and developing and implementing policies in respect of elections for people's deputies. The responsibility for making practical arrangements for running such elections is discharged by the Registrar-General of Electors. The Committee's first policy letter, published in March 2019,¹⁷ covered changes to the Election law (the Reform (Guernsey) Law, 1948) which needed to be made. Other recommendations, which did not require law changes, were included in a second policy letter which was published in November 2019.¹⁸

The first Island-Wide Voting election took place in October 2020, after the election was delayed for four months due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Review Scope:

The review will evaluate

- any demonstrable advantages from using the Island-Wide Voting system
- any demonstrable disadvantages from using the Island-Wide Voting system
- the effectiveness of the election process
- the views of those who took part in the process.

¹⁶ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - Referendum on Guernsey's Voting System](#)

¹⁷ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - General Election 2020](#)

¹⁸ [States Assembly & Constitution Committee - General Election 2020 Second Policy Letter](#)

Review Methodology

The Committee will create a Panel which will:

- undertake a review of the States of Guernsey report into Island-Wide Voting of the 2020 election;
- evaluate the submissions to the call for evidence;
- conduct interviews with deputies, relevant staff and other stakeholders;
- conduct public hearings, as necessary, to obtain further evidence to support the review process;
- commission a survey of public opinion;
- deliver a Report on its findings to the Scrutiny Management Committee.

Outcome

A balanced Scrutiny Management Committee Report, based on the evidence available to the Committee, together with the transcript of any subsequent public hearings which will be released into the public domain.

The Report will contain evidenced based recommendations for future action.

9.2 Appendix 2 – SACC 2021 Policy Letter resolutions

(Resolutions in bold are those on which the Review Panel have made a recommendation)

1. To agree the following workstreams should be undertaken by the States' Assembly & Constitution Committee:

- a) investigate the creation of a dedicated, independent elections body for future elections;
- b) review the Reform Laws and other relevant legislation underpinning General Elections, including:
 - i. increasing the number of signatories on the nomination form.
 - ii. introducing provisions requiring the publication of candidates and parties' election expenditure.
 - iii. reviewing the deadline for postal vote applications.
 - iv. introducing Deputy Polling Station Officers and Deputy Central Returning Officers to support election administration.
 - v. reviewing provisions relating to the vote count and recount to ensure they meet the requirements of an electronic vote count and recount.
 - vi. reviewing the margin required to trigger a recount;

- c) introduce proposals for a system of complaints and appeals for future elections;
- d) investigate the merits of introducing disclosures by candidates/and or deputies and consider the disqualification provision at Article 8(e) of the Reform Law;**
- e) review the regulation of election finance, considering the findings of the 2 Committee on Standards in Public Life review of electoral regulation in England.
- f) review communication initiatives including the feasibility of the States of Guernsey co-ordinating 'hustings-type' meetings.**
- g) research the feasibility of introducing i-voting for a future election.
- h) undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders in order to identify, and consider how the States of Guernsey can work towards the implementation of, suitable measures for Guernsey as outlined in Articles 4 and 7 of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women to Guernsey and Articles 21 and 29 of the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
- i) increasing the information provided regarding the role of a States' Member, the States of Guernsey and the election process by the end of 2023.**

9.3 Appendix 3 – Island Global Research report on survey results

GUERNSEY'S ELECTORAL SYSTEM

SURVEY CONDUCTED FOR
THE STATES OF GUERNSEY



Island Global Research

8 AUGUST 2023

CONTENTS

This report presents findings from a survey conducted in June and July 2023 on Guernsey's Electoral System. The survey was undertaken by Island Global Research on behalf of the Scrutiny Management Committee of the States of Guernsey.

Introduction and approach	3
Profile of respondents	5
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Guernsey's Next General Election in 2025	16
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About Island Global Research

Island Global Research is a market research and consultancy company with experience in both quantitative and qualitative research methods. We regularly conduct market research for clients in the Crown Dependencies.

Island Global Research is part of the BWC Group.

INTRODUCTION

Island Global Research conducted a survey about Guernsey's electoral system on behalf of the Scrutiny Management Committee of the States of Guernsey. The findings from the survey will assist in the Review of Island-Wide Voting.

Questionnaire Design

Island Global Research worked closely with the Client on the design of the questionnaire. The survey covered a range of topics including:

- Experience of Guernsey's 2020 General Election
- How residents expect to approach the process of voting in 2025;
- Views on the island-wide electoral system.

There were also some profiling questions on the respondent, including by age, gender, parish, educational qualification, household income and interest in Guernsey's politics and current affairs.

Eligibility

Residents of Guernsey, Herm or Jethou aged 16 or over were eligible to share their views, regardless of whether or not you voted in 2020. The introduction to the survey indicated that we would like to hear from as many people as possible, regardless of how informed they feel about local politics. Many of the multiple choice questions include options such as "Don't remember", "Don't know", or "Not eligible". Respondents were told they can use these if they cannot recall your experience, they don't have a view, or a question does not apply to them.

Survey conducted
12 June - 20 July 2023



The survey results are
based on responses
from **1465** residents of
Guernsey.

APPROACH

Data Collection

Data collection took place between 12 June and 20 July and in total, there were 1465 eligible responses from adults (aged 16+) living in Guernsey.

Island Global Research invited members of their research panel to complete the survey. In addition, the States of Guernsey issued a press release and posts on social media. Paper copies of the questionnaire were available on request by phoning or emailing Island Global Research. 26 paper copies were sent to Guernsey residents and could be returned via a Freepost address. 14 paper copies were received and these responses were uploaded to the database to be analysed alongside survey responses that were completed online.

Analysis and Reporting

Survey responses were weighted in proportion to the profile of the adult population in Guernsey. All figures, tables and text presented in this report refer to weighted responses, unless otherwise specified.

In the analysis we have undertaken sub-group analysis including:

- Age group: 16-39; 40-64 and 65+
- View on island-wide voting: Support (either strongly or somewhat); Oppose (either strongly or somewhat); Neither support nor oppose
- Interest in local politics: Very interested; Moderately interested and Less interested (the latter combines slightly interested and not interested)
- Parish: St Peter Port; Vale/St Sampson; Castel/St Martin/St Andrew; Forest/St Saviour/St Pierre du Bois/Torteval

Where applicable, notable differences in the views expressed by sub-group have been highlighted in the text accompanying the graph.



PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS



PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The profile of people who completed the survey was compared to the latest available data on the population of the Bailiwick of Guernsey.

Survey responses were weighted in proportion to the age and sex profile of the adult population on both islands. All figures, tables and text presented in this report refer to weighted responses, unless otherwise specified.

Please refer to the Appendix for additional profiling.

About survey weights

Survey weights correct for differences between the sample and the population. Thus, they compensate for different patterns of non-response from different sub-groups of the population, such that survey results can be generalised from the sample back to the population from which they are drawn.

Fewer young people completed the survey and more females participated in the survey than males (see right). However, the survey was completed by a wide range of the people and the differences are relatively small. The largest weights are for females and males aged 16-24 and they were capped at 3.0.

Results rounded to the nearest integer

All calculations were independently rounded so totals published in tables and graphs may not necessarily sum to 100%.

The table shows the age and gender profile of the adult population living in the Guernsey, and the profile of the sample who completed the survey. It also shows the profile of the sample after weights have been applied.

		Guernsey's Population	Survey	
		%	% of sample	% after survey weights
Age group				
	16-24	11%	1%	4%
	25-29	7%	3%	7%
	30-34	8%	4%	8%
	35-39	8%	5%	8%
	40-44	8%	7%	8%
	45-49	8%	7%	8%
	50-54	9%	12%	10%
	55-59	9%	12%	10%
	60-64	8%	13%	9%
	65-69	7%	12%	7%
	70-74	6%	11%	7%
	75-79	5%	8%	5%
	80+	7%	5%	7%
	Prefer not to say	-	1%	1%
Are you ...				
	Female	51%	53%	50%
	Male	49%	46%	49%
	Prefer to self-describe	*	<1%	<1%
	Prefer not to say	-	1%	1%

*States of Guernsey data is for biological sex

GUERNSEY'S 2020 GENERAL ELECTION



REGISTERED TO VOTE IN 2020

Respondents were told: "Guernsey's first full island-wide General Election took place in October 2020 and elected 38 deputies to the States Assembly using a single district island-wide electoral system. To be able to vote in the election, residents were required to be registered on the electoral roll." and then asked:

"Were you registered to vote at the time of Guernsey's 2020 General Election?"

- 91% of respondents were registered to vote at the time of Guernsey's 2020 General Election.
- 5% were not registered; 4% were not eligible; and 1% said they don't remember.

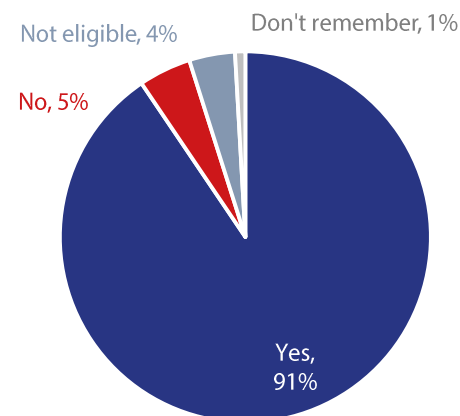
Registration was high among all groups, however residents under the age of 40 were significantly less likely to be registered than those aged over 65 (86% vs 97%).

As you would expect, there was also a lower rate of registration among those who are less interested* in Guernsey's politics and current affairs (69% of those less interested compared to 95% of those who said they are very interested).

Respondents who had indicated they were not registered to vote (i.e. "no") were asked to indicate the primary reason they didn't register to vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election.

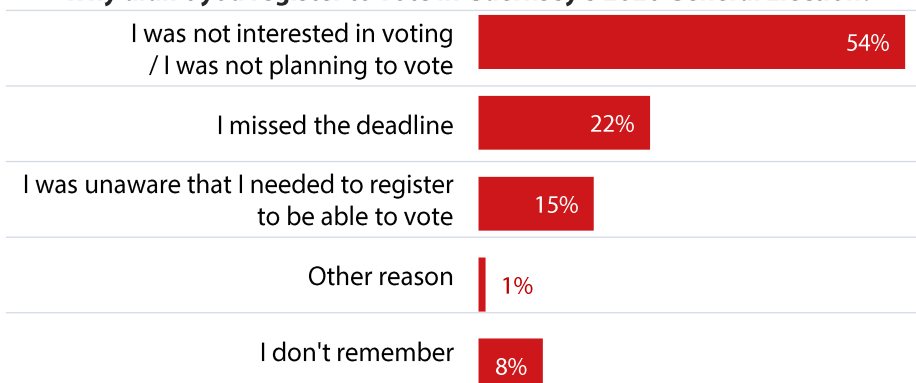
- 54% said they were not interested in voting or planning to vote in the 2020 election.
- 22% said they missed the deadline.
- 15% were not aware they needed to register to be able to vote.

Were you registered to vote at the time of Guernsey's 2020 General Election?



If not registered:

Why didn't you register to vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election?



INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

Respondents who were registered to vote were asked two questions:

“Which of the following sources of information about the candidates standing in the 2020 General Election did you use or refer to? Please select all that apply.”

- 87% of people who were registered to vote indicated they had used or referred to the States of Guernsey produced booklet containing the manifestos of the candidates. This was the most frequently selected source of information.
- 60% had used the candidate information on official website. This was more frequently used by those aged 16-39 and aged 40-64 than those aged 65+ (70% aged 16-39 and 64% aged 40-64 compared to 45% aged 65+).
- 51% had used Guernsey Press articles and supplements. This was more frequently selected by those aged 65+ (63% compared to 42% aged 16-39 and 49% aged 40-64).

“Which of the following sources of information about the candidates standing in the 2020 General Election did you find the most useful when deciding how to vote? Please select all that apply.”

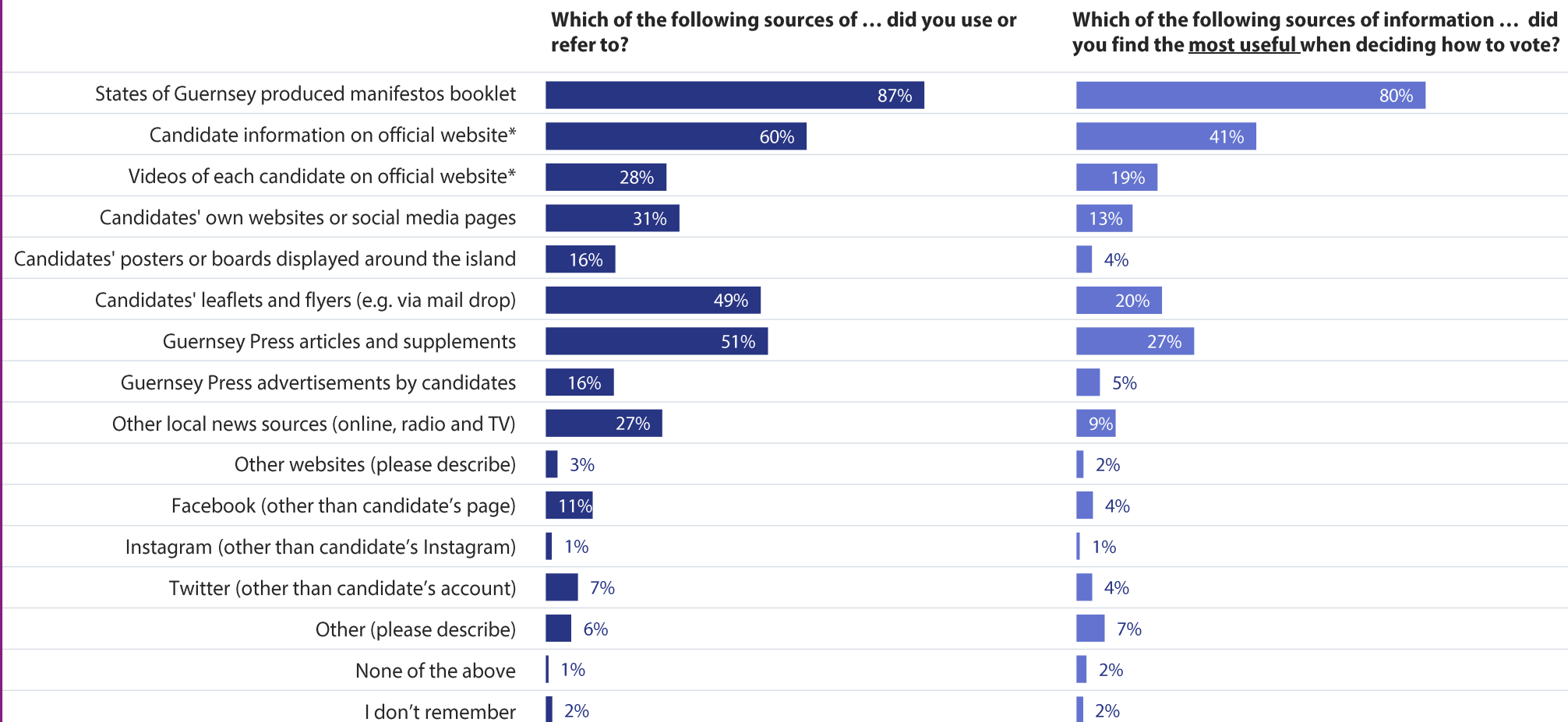
- 80% indicated they had found the States of Guernsey produced booklet a useful source of information when deciding how to vote.
- 41% found the candidate information on official website useful and 27% found the Guernsey Press articles and supplements useful.

The graphs on the following page list all the information sources asked about, and show the percentage of people registered to vote who selected each source they had used and each source they considered useful.



INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

The information source that was most frequently used or referred was the States of Guernsey produced manifestos booklet. It was also the source that was considered the most useful when deciding how to vote.



EVENTS TO MEET CANDIDATES

Respondents who were registered to vote were asked: ***“Approximately how many events (e.g. hustings with small groups of candidates or drop-in sessions) did you attend to hear from or meet the candidates prior to Guernsey’s 2020 General Election? This may have been in-person or online.”***

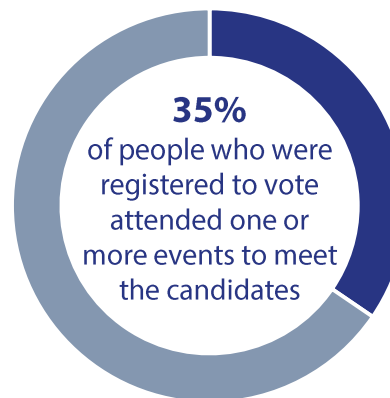
- 35% had attended at least one event. This included 23% who they had attended 1 or 2 events, a further 7% attended 3 or 4 events, 4% had attended 5-10 events and 1% had attended more than 10 events.
- 62% had not attended any event, and 2% couldn’t remember.
- There were no notable differences by age.

Respondents who had attended one or more events were then asked: ***“Overall, how helpful were the events you attended in deciding how to vote?”***

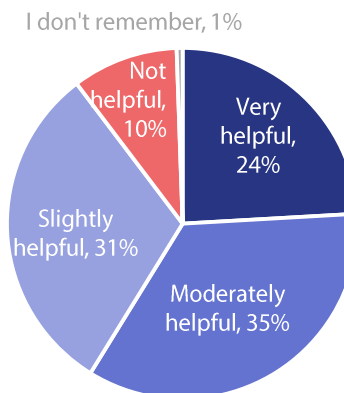
- 24% of people who had attended at least one event said the event(s) were very helpful in deciding how to vote. A further 35% said they were moderately helpful, and 31% said they were slightly helpful. There were 10% who said the event(s) were not helpful and 1% who couldn’t remember.

Respondents who had not attended any events were asked: ***“Why didn’t you attend any events? Please select all that apply.”***

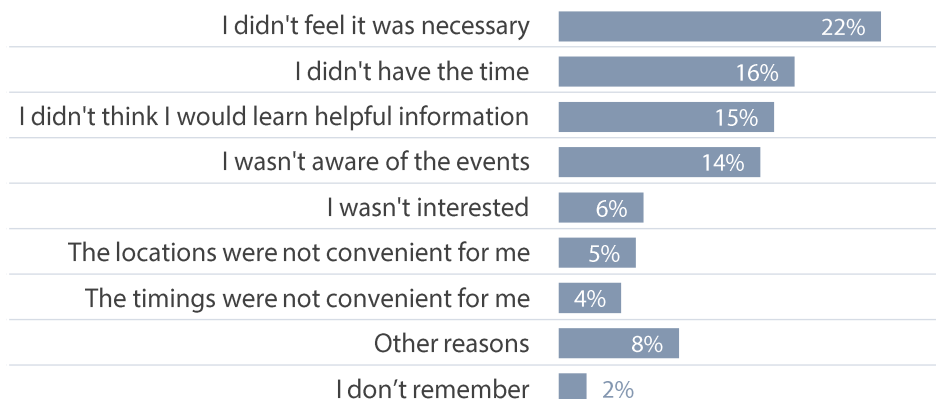
- The most frequently selected reasons were: “I didn’t feel it was necessary”, “I didn’t have the time”, “I didn’t think I would learn helpful information”. There were also 14% of this group who said they were not aware of the events.



If attended one or more event:
Overall, how helpful were the events you attended in deciding how to vote?



If none: **Why didn’t you attend any events?** (Please select all that apply)



CANDIDATES CALLING AT YOUR HOME

Respondents who were registered to vote were asked:

“Approximately, how many candidates called at your home and spoke to you or a member of your household?”

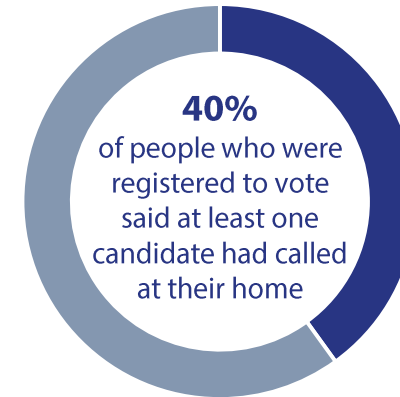
- 40% said at least one candidate had called at their home and spoke to them or another member of their household. This included 28% who said 1 or 2 candidates, a further 9% said 3 or 4 candidates, 2% said 5-10 candidates and <1% said more than 10 candidates .
- 56% said they did not have any candidates calling at their home and 4% couldn't remember.

Respondents who were registered to vote were asked:

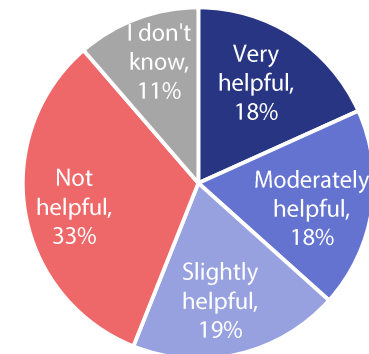
“How helpful do you find it to have candidates calling at your home when deciding which candidates to vote for? We are interested in your views, whether or not you had any candidates call at your home before the 2020 General Election.”

- 18% indicated they find it very helpful to have candidates calling at their home when deciding which candidates to vote for. A further 18% selected moderately helpful, and 19% selected slightly helpful.
- There were also 33% who selected not helpful and 11% who selected don't know.

Around half of people aged 65+ had at least one candidate call at their home. This was significantly higher than the other age groups. Those aged 65+ were also more likely to consider it very helpful.



How helpful do you find it to have candidates calling at your home when deciding which candidates to vote for?



GUERNSEY'S GENERAL ELECTION IN 2020

Respondents who were registered to vote were asked: ***"Did you vote in the Guernsey's 2020 General Election? It was possible to vote at a polling station or return a postal vote. This was the first election in Guernsey to use full island-wide voting."***

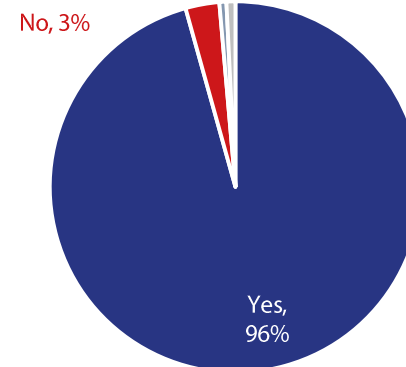
- 96% of respondents who were registered to vote said that they had voted in Guernsey's 2020 General Election.
- 3% did not vote, 1% prefer not to say and 1% don't remember.
- There were no notable differences by age group.

The small number of respondents who completed the survey but did not vote in 2020 were asked: ***"Why didn't you vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election? Please select the statement that best fits or select 'other reason' and write in the box provided."***

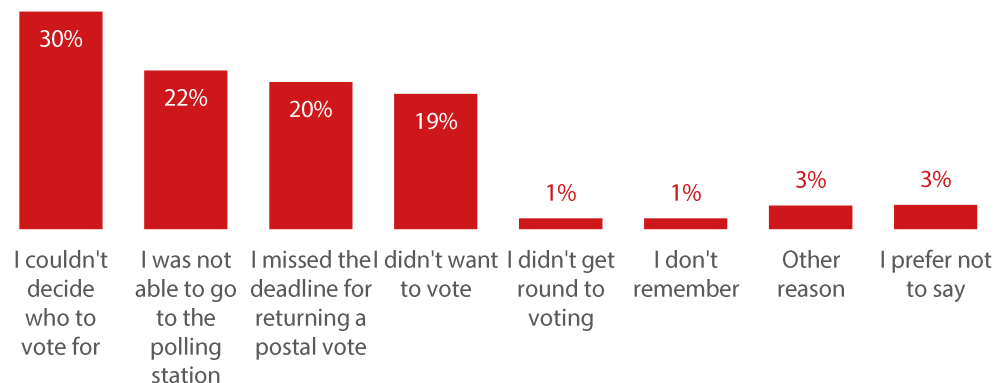
- 30% indicated they didn't vote because they couldn't decide who to vote for;
- 22% were not able to go to the polling station;
- 20% missed the deadline for returning their postal vote; and
- 19% didn't want to vote.

Did you vote in the Guernsey's 2020 General Election?

I prefer not to say, 1% I don't remember, 1%



If did not vote: Why didn't you vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election?*



APPROACH TAKEN TO VOTING IN 2020

Respondents who voted in 2020 were asked: ***“In Guernsey’s 2020 General Election you could vote for up to 38 deputies. Approximately how many votes did you use?”***

- 36% of people who voted said they had used all 38 votes.
- 18% said they had used between 1 and 10, 19% had used between 11 and 20, 13% had used between 21 and 30 votes and 10% had used between 31 to 37 votes. There were 4% who didn’t remember.
- People aged 65+ were less likely to have voted for all 38 compared to the other age groups (26% vs 40% aged 16-39 and 41% aged 40-64).

Respondents were then asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with two statements about how they approached voting:

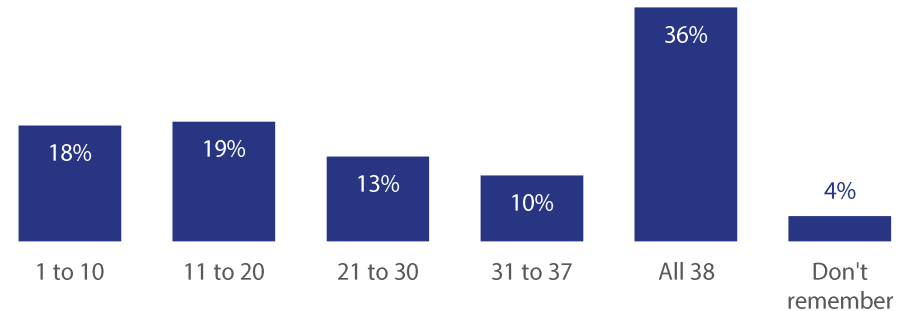
“I voted for some candidates I felt neutral about to try and prevent the election of candidates who I did not support”

- 51% agreed or strongly agreed that they voted for some candidates they felt neutral about to prevent the election of candidates who they did not support.
- This was higher among respondents aged 16-39 (67% agree or strongly agree compared to 49% aged 40-64 and 43% aged 65+).

“I only voted for the candidates who I felt positive or mostly positive about”

- 63% agreed or strongly agreed that they only voted for candidates they felt positive or mostly positive about
- This was higher among respondents aged 65+ than those aged 16-39 and aged 40-64 (71% agree or strongly agree compared to 63% aged 40-64 and 55% aged 65+).

Approximately how many votes did you use in the 2020 General Election?



Please indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statements:

“I voted for some candidates I felt neutral about to try and prevent the election of candidates who I did not support”



“I only voted for the candidates who I felt positive or mostly positive about.”



■ Strongly disagree ■ Disagree ■ Neither agree nor disagree ■ Agree ■ Strongly agree

SELECTING CANDIDATES

Respondents who voted in 2020 were asked: “When you were deciding which candidates to vote for, how important were the following to you?”

The most important consideration when deciding which candidates to vote for in 2020 were:

- Views expressed by the candidate on specific issues or policies (78% said this was very important and a further 18% said it was moderately important).
- The candidate’s previous performance as a deputy (72% said this was very important and further 21% said it was moderately important).

The least important considerations were:

- The candidate’s photos of themselves (62% said this was not important).
- Personal attributes of the candidate (61% said this was not important).

People aged 65+ were more likely to consider a candidate’s professional skills, the candidate’s involvement in parish matters and being a resident in their parish as very important than people in the other age groups.

People aged 16-39 were more likely to say that views or recommendations of people they trust were very important.

People who said they oppose island-wide voting were more likely than those who support it to say that a candidate’s involvement in parish matters, being a resident in their parish and their own experience of the candidate is very important.

When you were deciding which candidates to vote for, how important were the following to you?

Views expressed by the candidate on specific issues or policies*



The candidate’s previous performance as a deputy



The candidate's professional skills



My own experience of the candidate**



Views or recommendations of people you trust***



The candidate’s involvement in parish matters (e.g. as a Constable or in the Douzaine)



The candidate being resident in my parish



The candidate's record of voluntary or community work



Personal attributes of the candidate (e.g. age, sex, gender, ethnicity, etc.)



The candidate’s photos of themselves



■ Not important ■ Slightly important ■ Moderately important ■ Very important

* e.g. in their manifesto or elsewhere

** e.g. know personally, have met before or during the campaign

*** e.g. family / friends / colleagues / candidate’s proposer or seconder

GUERNSEY'S NEXT ELECTION IN 2025



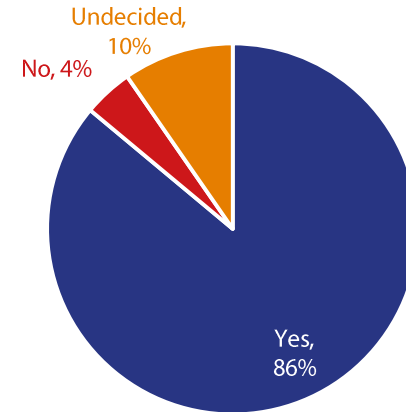
GUERNSEY'S NEXT ELECTION IN 2025

All respondents were told: "Guernsey's next General Election will be held in 2025. As in the last election, 38 deputies will be elected to the States Assembly using an island-wide electoral system." and then asked: **"Do you intend to vote in 2025?"**.

- 86% of respondents said they intend to vote in Guernsey's next General Election in 2025.
- 4% said they will not vote.
- 10% said they were undecided. This rises to 20% of people who are not interested in Guernsey's politics and current affairs and 19% who neither support nor oppose Island Wide Voting

There were no significant differences by age. However, people who support Island wide voting were more likely to say that they intend to vote in 2025 than those who oppose it (92% vs 85%).

Do you intend to vote in Guernsey's next General Election in 2025?*



INFORMATION ABOUT THE CANDIDATES

All respondents were asked: ***“Do you believe any changes should be made to the information available about candidates standing for election?”*** and were shown four statements:

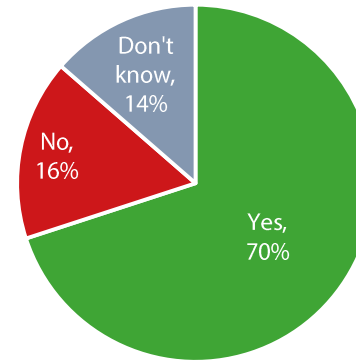
The majority of respondents believe changes should be made to the information available about candidates standing for election:

- 70% think there should be more information about the candidates on States’ Election website.
- 72% think the manifesto booklet should be distributed to households earlier than previously.
- 68% think there should be more information about the candidates in the manifesto booklet
- 50% think there should be more opportunities to meet the candidates. This rises to 60% for those who are very interested in politics (compared to 43% of those who are moderately interested and 30% who are less interested*).

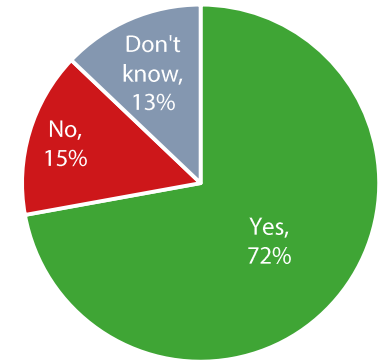
People aged 16-39 were less likely to think more information should be made available about the candidates in the manifesto booklet than other age groups (59% aged 16-39 said yes compared to 70% aged 40-64 and 73% aged 65+).

Do you believe any changes should be made to the information available about candidates standing for election?

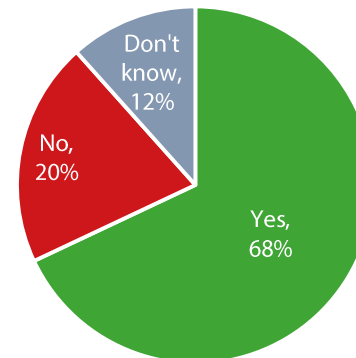
More information about the candidates on States’ Election website



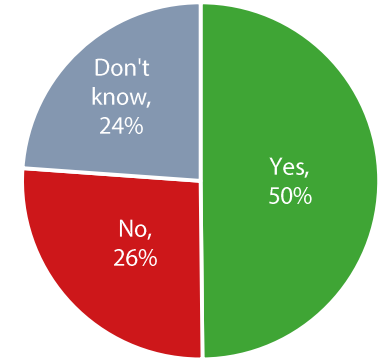
Manifesto booklet to be distributed to households earlier than previously



More information about the candidates in the Manifesto booklet



More opportunities to meet the candidates (e.g. drop-in sessions, hustings)



VIEWS ON POTENTIAL CHANGES

All respondents were asked: ***“To what extent would you support or oppose the following potential changes?”***

- 91% support or strongly support candidates being required to declare their interests in order to stand for election.
- 87% support or strongly support prospective candidates should be obliged to attend formal sessions on the operations of government and the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments involved in being a deputy.
- 85% support or strongly support candidates declaring that they have written their manifesto themselves.
- There was less support for candidates being required to make a monetary deposit: 36% support or strongly support this, while 39% oppose or strongly oppose this.

People aged 65+ were more likely to support candidates being required to declare that they have written their manifesto and the requirement for candidates to make a monetary deposit:

- 89% of those aged 65+ support candidates declaring they have written their manifesto themselves compared to 79% of people aged 16-39.
- 54% of those aged 65+ support candidates being required to make a monetary deposit compared to 24% of people aged 16-39.

People who oppose island-wide voting are significantly more likely to support candidates making a monetary deposit than people who support island-wide voting (41% vs 30%).

To what extent would you support or oppose the following potential changes?*

Candidates to be required to declare interests (e.g. affiliations, directorships etc.) in order to stand for election



Prospective candidates to be obliged to attend formal sessions on the operation of government and the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments involved in being a deputy, before they can register to stand



Candidates to declare that they have written their manifesto themselves, have not used AI to write it, have not plagiarised other manifestos, and that the contents of the manifesto are truthful to best of their knowledge



Candidates to be required to make a monetary deposit, which would be lost if the candidate secured less than 10% of the vote.



■ Strongly oppose ■ Oppose ■ Neutral ■ Support ■ Strongly support

* Excluding don't know

VIEWS ON THE ELECTORAL SYSTEM



VIEWS ON ISLAND WIDE VOTING

All respondents were told: ***"A referendum was held in Guernsey in October 2018 to decide the method of electing deputies in future, with options ranging from a parish-based system to a single island-wide system. Voters were able to rank up to five options in order of preference."*** and were then asked: ***"Did you vote in the referendum on Guernsey's electoral system in October 2018?"***.

- 72% of respondents voted in the referendum on Guernsey's electoral system in October 2018
- Young people were significantly less likely to have voted (58% of people aged 16-39 voted vs 73% age 40-64 vs 83% age 65+)
- People who oppose island wide voting were more likely to have voted than those who support it (80% who oppose vs 65% who support vs 58% who neither support or oppose)

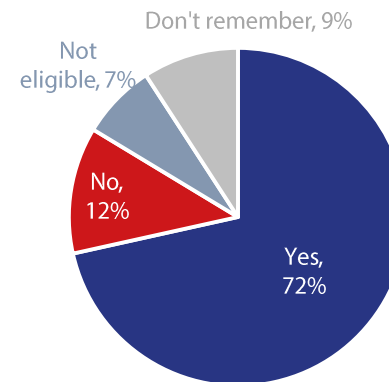
Respondents who were eligible to vote in the 2018 reference were then asked: ***"The outcome of the referendum on Guernsey's electoral system was a system of island-wide voting in which residents can vote for up to 38 candidates. At the time of the referendum, to what extent did you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?"***

Support and opposition for the island-wide system of voting was fairly balanced at the time of the referendum with 42% supporting it and 46% opposing it.

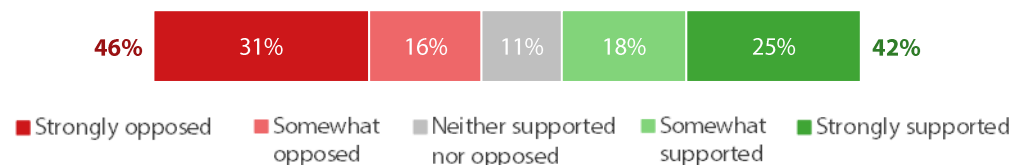
All respondents were then asked: ***"And now (i.e. today) to what extent do you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?"****

- Opposition for island-wide voting has risen slightly with around half of respondents opposing it, including 35% who strongly oppose it.
- This rises to more than two-thirds of people aged 65 (69% vs 38% aged 16-39 and 47% aged 40-64)

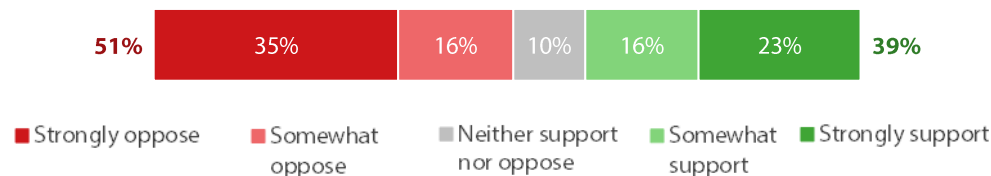
Did you vote in the referendum on Guernsey's electoral system in October 2018?



At the time of the referendum, to what extent did you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?



And now (i.e. today) to what extent do you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?*

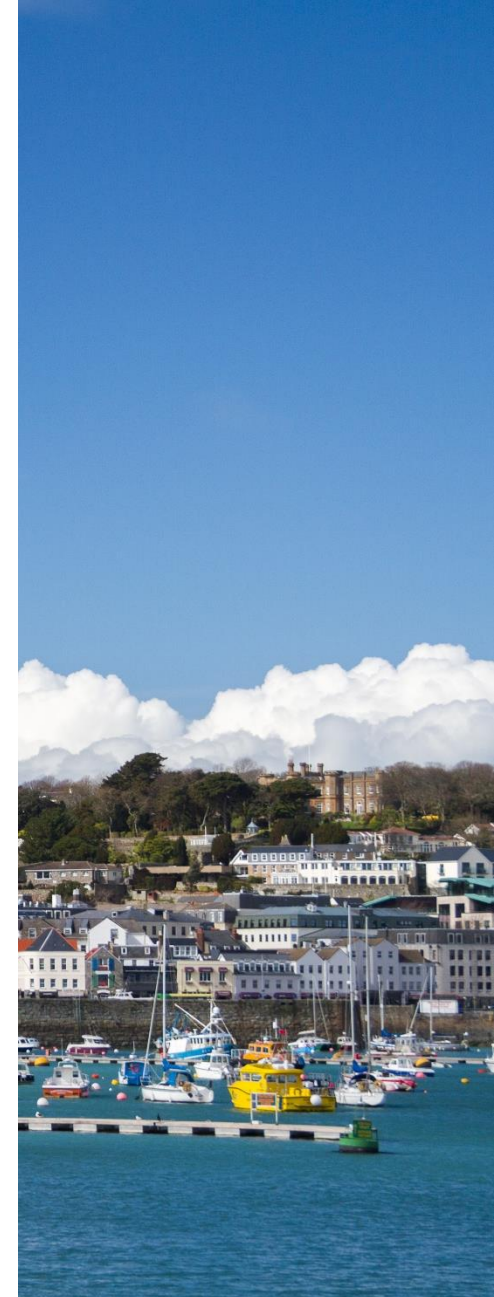
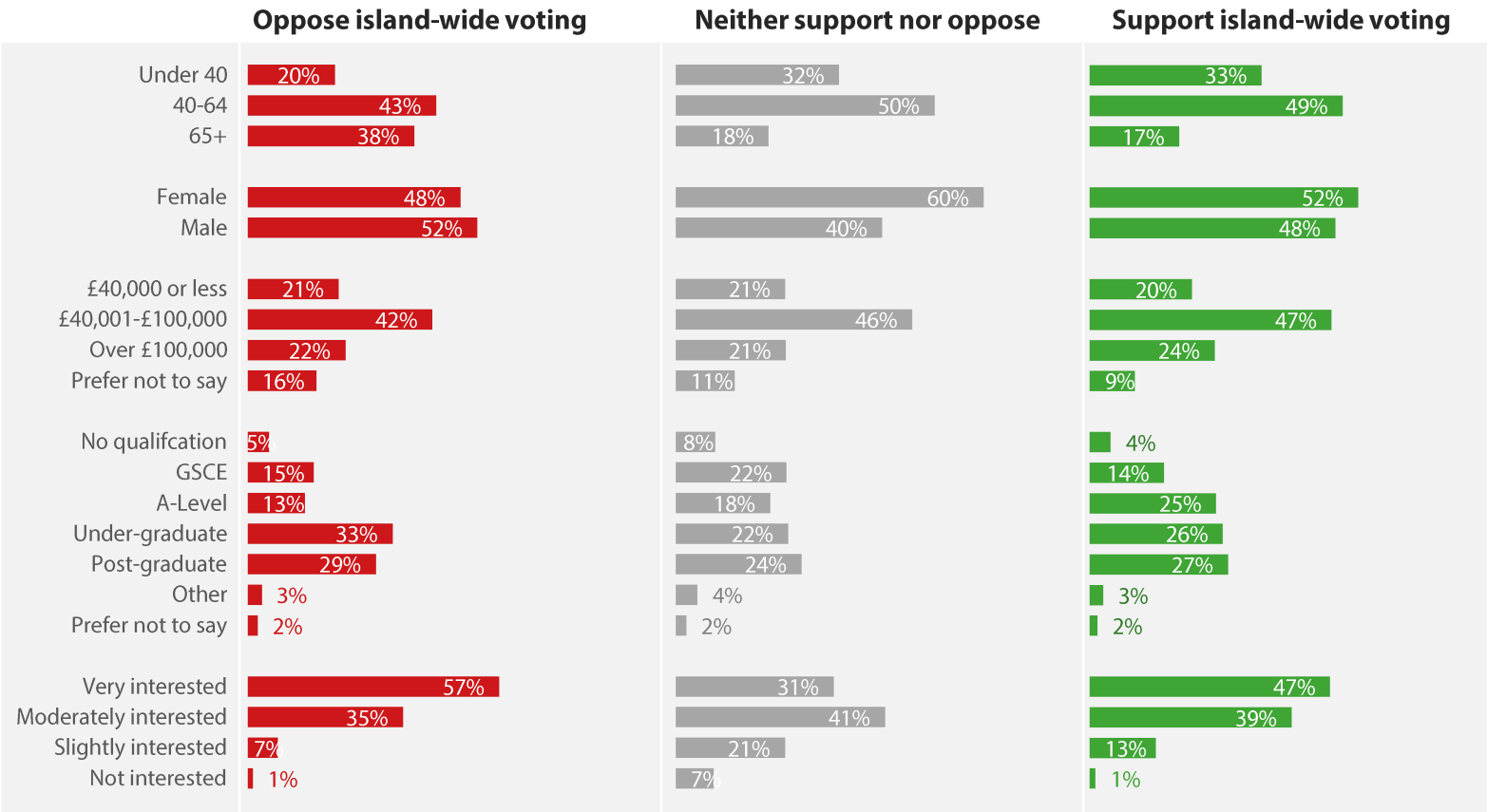


* Respondents who were not eligible to vote in the referendum in 2018 were asked: *"To what extent do you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?"*

VIEWS ON ISLAND-WIDE VOTING

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

The graphs below show the demographic profile of people who support, oppose and neither support nor oppose. For example it can be seen that people who oppose island-wide voting are more likely to aged 65+ (38% vs 18% neither support nor oppose vs 17% support). Opponents of island-wide voting were also more likely to be very interested in politics (57% vs 47% who support and 31% who neither support nor oppose).



VIEWS ON ISLAND WIDE VOTING

LIKE MOST ABOUT ISLAND-WIDE VOTING

Respondents were then encourage to provide written feedback about island wide voting: ***“What do you like most and what do you like least about island-wide voting?”***

Some who oppose island-wide voting said they didn’t like anything about island-wide voting however, most respondents regardless of their views of island-wide voting, were able to identify some benefits:

- **Better choice** - wider selection of views
- **Best candidates** – can vote for candidate regardless of location
- **Fairer and more representative** - all votes have the same weight
- **More accountable** – deputies have to be accountable to all islanders
- **Tactical voting** – can vote tactically to keep out deputies that don’t align with your views
- **Level playing field** - equal opportunity for all candidates to be elected
- **More democratic** - prevents candidates from smaller parishes getting elected by default
- **Wider impact** - opportunity to elect deputies who will have influence on whole island issues
- **Party politics** – allows deputies with similar views to form political parties
- **Candidate manifesto** - More focused on candidate’s views than where they live, ability to read and compare to decide who to vote for
- **New deputies** – more of a chance for newcomers to be elected



“The fact that you're not restricted to deputies linked to your own parish and your vote has a wider impact”

“Truly democratic”

“Being able to pick potentially the best candidates in any area of the island”

“It gives every candidate a chance to stand irrespective of where they live in the island”

“Fairer than only be able to vote for deputies in your own parish as deputies have a say for the whole island not only their parish.”

“I can try to be tactical to try and keep out candidates that previously would have been in other districts that I would never support.”

“Matters are much more island wide than parish specific, thus, having a vote on all deputies is important to influence decisions across the bailiwick.”

“It gives me the opportunity to vote for all the candidates that I support and think will do a good job for Guernsey”

“I have a voice and vote on all deputies that represent me rather than just a small minority”

“Doesn't advantage people living in certain parishes”

VIEWS ON ISLAND WIDE VOTING

LIKE LEAST ABOUT ISLAND-WIDE VOTING

Respondents were then encourage to provide written feedback about island wide voting: *"What do you like most and what do you like least about island-wide voting?"*

- **Too many candidates** – too much choice and too many elected for size of the island
- **Time consuming** - Not enough time to read through all the manifestos in enough detail to make an informed decision, disadvantages candidates in second half of booklet
- **Limited opportunity to meet candidates** - Voters are unable to meet all of the candidates in person so cannot gain detailed understanding of their views
- **Advantages candidates with more finances** – Voters are more aware of candidates who have previously been in the States or have paid for publicity
- **Loss of parish representation** - leading to deputies not understanding parish issues
- **No accountability** – manifesto promises are not met
- **Unsuitable candidates elected** – due to tactical voting and the number of deputies
- **Loss of connection** - more difficult to know who to contact about issues
- **No minimum threshold of votes for election**
- **Disagree with party political system**
- **No say in who becomes Chief Minister** - Some who support island-wide voting felt the electorate should have more influence over key roles in the States such as Chief Minister



ELECTORAL SYSTEM: SELECTING CANDIDATES

Respondents were asked to recall how many of the candidates they feel they were sufficiently well informed about when voting in the 2020 General Election (first election to apply a full island-wide electoral system) and the 2016 General Election (which was a parish-based system).

The question about the 2020 General Election was asked of everyone who had indicated they had voted. The question on the 2016 General Election was asked of everyone. Both included options "I don't remember" and "Not applicable" – and these responses have been excluded.

Awareness of candidates was significantly higher in 2016 than 2020.

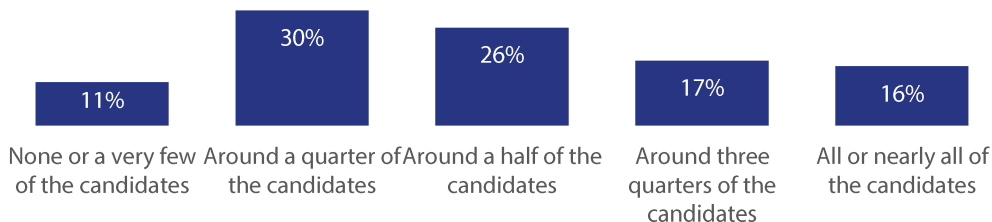
In 2020:

- 16% said they felt sufficiently well informed about all or nearly all of the candidates.
- 17% felt informed by three quarters; 26% by around half; and 30% felt informed by around a quarter of the candidates.
- 11% felt informed by none or very few of the candidates.

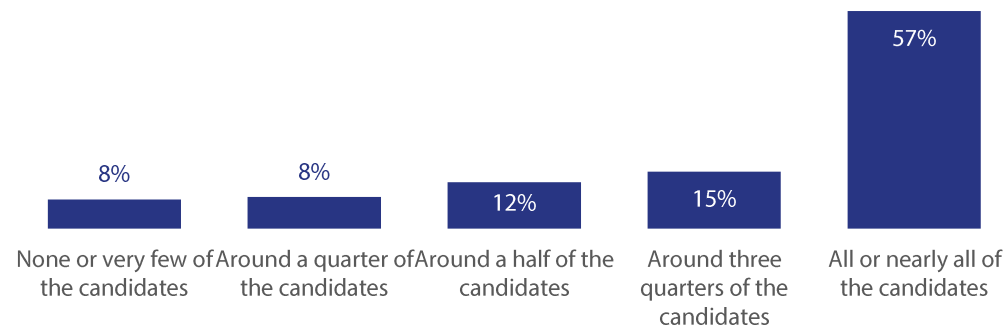
In 2016:

- 57% said they felt sufficiently well informed about all or nearly all of the candidates.
- 15% felt informed by three quarters; 12% by around half; and 8% felt informed by around a quarter of the candidates.
- 8% felt informed by none or very few of the candidates.

Please think back to the time you were preparing to vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election - the first elections under the full island-wide electoral system. In the 2020 election there were 118 candidates. When the time came to vote, did you feel that you were sufficiently well informed about:



Please think back to your experience of Guernsey's General Election in 2016, which was a parish-based system. In the 2016 parish-based election, when the time came to vote, did you feel that you were sufficiently well informed about:*



* The small number of responses who selected "Don't remember" and "Not applicable" have been excluded.

IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON THE STATES ASSEMBLY

All respondents were asked:

"We are interested in your opinion on the potential impact of island-wide voting on the governing of the island by the States Assembly.

Please complete the following sentence by selecting one of the options or by selecting "other" and writing in the box provided.

"In my opinion, island-wide voting is likely to have resulted in ... "

- More than a third of respondents think island-wide voting has resulted in much worse governing of the island than previously
- 19% think it has resulted in slightly worse governing
- 18% said there has been no change
- 15% said island-wide voting has made the governing of the island better or much better

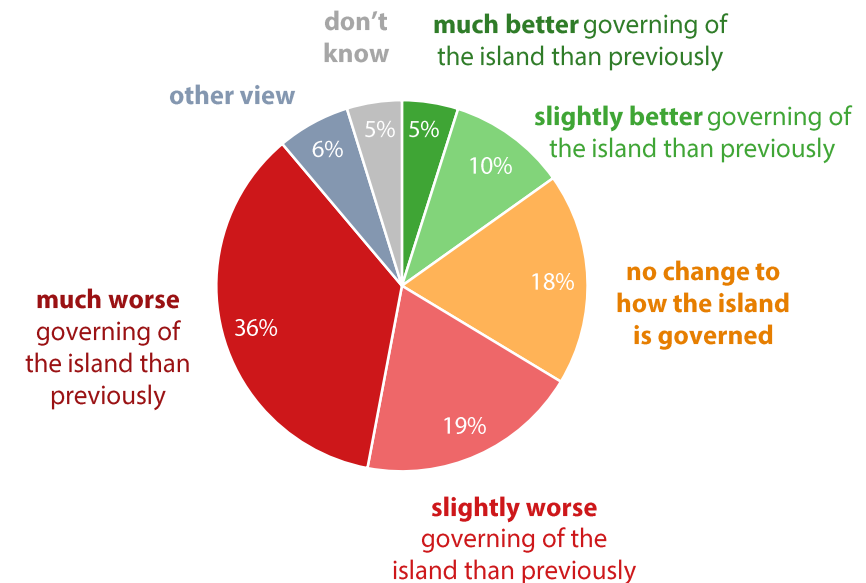
People who oppose island wide voting were most likely to say that island-wide voting is likely to have resulted in much worse governing of the island than previously (63% compared to 5% who support island-wide voting and 17% who neither support nor oppose).

57% of people over the age of 65 said they thought island-wide voting has resulted in much worse governing compared to 32% aged 40-64 and 20% aged 16-39.

Residents of Forest/St Saviour/St Pierre du Bois/Torteval were significantly more likely to say that island-wide voting has resulted in much worse governing compared to residents living in St Peter Port (45% vs 29% respectively).

We are interested in your opinion on the potential impact of island-wide voting on the governing of the island by the States Assembly.

"In my opinion, island-wide voting is likely to have resulted in ...



IMPACT OF ELECTORAL SYSTEM ON THE STATES ASSEMBLY

All respondents were asked three questions to elicit their opinion on the potential impact of island-wide voting on the governing of the island by the States Assembly (see right).

- 49% think moving to an island-wide system of voting has made the States less representative of the overall views of people living in Guernsey.
- 59% think moving to an island-wide system of voting has made the States less representative of the views of people living in their parish.
- 54% think moving to an island-wide system of voting has made the States less representative of their own views

People aged 65+ were significantly more likely to think the States is less representative for all aspects than the other age groups.

For example, 73% aged 65+ think that moving to an island-wide voting system impacted how well the States represents their views (vs 50% aged 40-64 and 39% aged 16-39).

Opponents of island-wide voting were significantly more likely to say it is less representative compared to supporters. For example, 79% of people who oppose island-wide voting think makes the States less representative of the overall views of people living in Guernsey (vs 15% who support island-wide voting).

Two-thirds of residents of Forest/St Saviour/St Pierre de Bois/Torteval said island-wide voting makes the States less representative of the views of people living in their parish (vs 47% residents of St Peter Port).

We are interested in your opinion on the potential impact of island-wide voting on the governing of the island by the States Assembly.

What impact, if any, do you think moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents the overall views of people living in Guernsey?



What impact, if any, do you think moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents the views of people living in your parish?



What impact, if any, do you think moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents your views?



■ Less representative ■ No change ■ More representative ■ Don't know

POLITICAL PARTIES

All respondents were asked two questions related to political parties in Guernsey.

Support for political parties:

- A third were very unsupportive of having political parties in Guernsey and a further 15% were moderately unsupportive
- A quarter felt neutral about political parties in Guernsey
- 21% were supportive (either moderately or very)

People aged 65+ were less supportive of political parties in Guernsey than the younger age groups (47% were very unsupportive vs 32% aged 40-64 and 23% aged 16-39).

43% of those who oppose island-wide voting said they are very unsupportive of political parties in Guernsey. This compares with 26% who support island-wide voting and 25% who neither support nor oppose it.

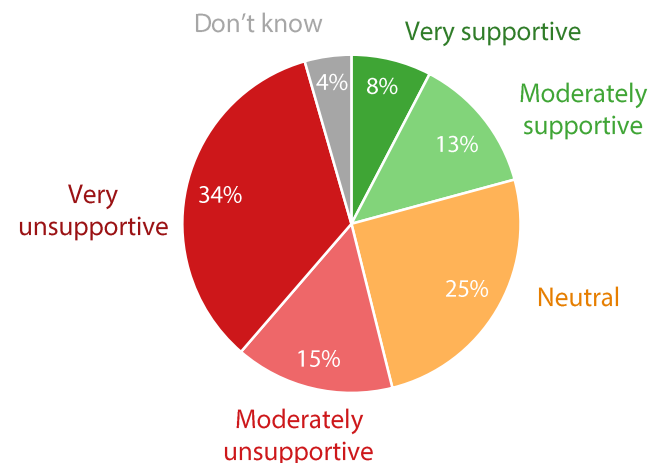
Likelihood of voting for a candidate who belongs to a political party:

- 29% of respondents said a candidate belonging to a political party would not make a difference to their likelihood of voting for them.
- 25% said it would make them a lot less likely to vote for them and a further 19% said it would make them a bit less likely to vote for them.
- 15% said that a candidate belonging to a political party would make them more likely to vote for them.

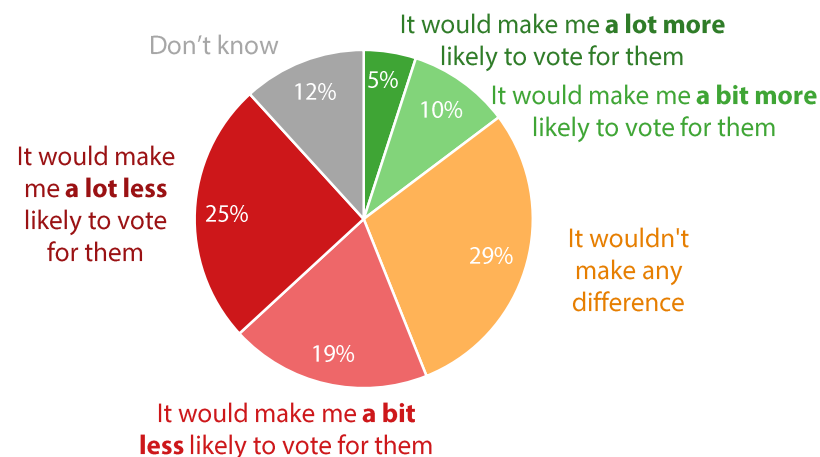
People aged 65+ were a lot less likely to vote for a candidate if they belong to a political party than the other age groups (37% said it would make them a lot less likely to vote for them vs 22% aged 40-64 vs 18% aged 16-39).

Opponents of island-wide voting were more likely to say a candidate belonging to a political party would make them a lot less likely to vote for them (31% vs 21% who support and 14% who neither support or oppose).

How supportive are you of having political parties in Guernsey?



Disregarding for a moment the other aspects of a candidate, how would the fact that a candidate belongs to a political party affect the likelihood of you voting for them?



ISLAND WIDE VOTING: NUMBER OF VOTES

All respondents were asked:

"In the current system of island-wide voting, individuals can vote for up to 38 candidates. It would be possible to have a system of island-wide voting in which individuals have fewer votes. Do you think the number of votes each voter has should be reduced?"

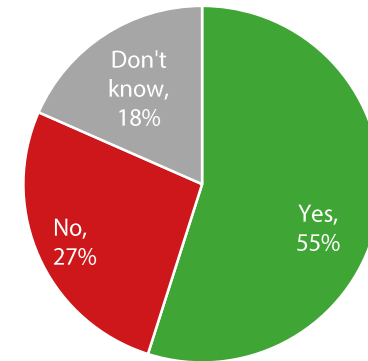
- 55% think the number of votes each voter has should be reduced
- 27% don't think it should be reduced
- 18% said they don't know

Respondents who had answered "Yes" to the previous question were then asked: ***"If it were to be reduced, how many votes do you think each person should have?"***

- Around a third of respondents think that each person should have 6 to 10 votes
- 22% think each person should have 16 to 20 votes
- 19% think each person should have 11 to 25 votes

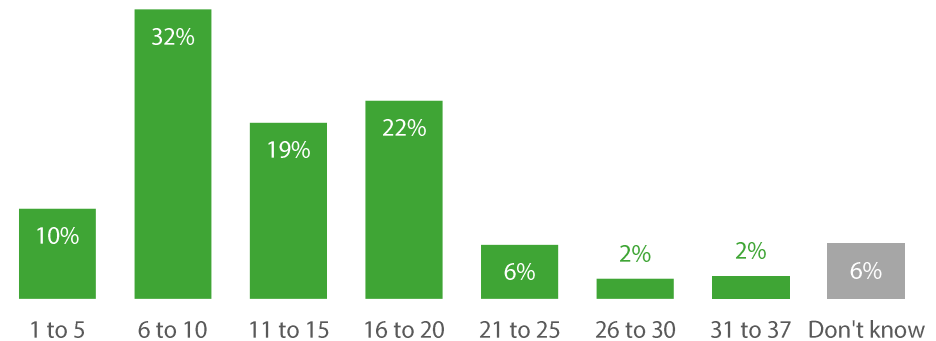
In the current system of island-wide voting, individuals can vote for up to 38 candidates. It would be possible to have a system of island-wide voting in which individuals have fewer votes.

Do you think the number of votes each voter has should be reduced?



If answered yes:

If it were to be reduced, how many votes do you think each person should have?



WRITTEN COMMENTS ABOUT ISLAND WIDE VOTING

All respondents were then given the opportunity to provide suggestions about changes to the system of island-wide voting: ***“Within an island-wide system for voting, do you have any other suggestions about changes that you would like to see made?”***

There were a wide range of suggestions of changes people would like to see for island-wide voting. There were a lot of similarities between those who support, oppose and neither support nor oppose so the key themes are presented together.

Voting

- **Reduce number of deputies.** The suggestions for the amount there should be range from 10 to 30.
- **Public should have more influence** over who is elected as the head of each committee with the candidate who has the most votes becoming Chief Minister or a separate election to determine senior committee positions
- **Support for rolling system of voting** where a third of deputies are elected every two years and serve for a longer term of 6 years
- **Minimum number of votes** to be achieved before a candidate is elected
- **Ability to cast negative votes** to candidates to prevent them from being elected
- **Online voting**
- **Compulsory voting** or automatic registration of votes to increase political engagement

Candidates

- **Voting record should be published** and position on key policies (e.g. GST, Education etc) for new candidates should be in the public domain
- **Interview questions to be posed to all candidates** and video answers uploaded to allow for comparisons and better understanding of each candidate's views
- **Candidate experience and work history** should be included as part of the manifesto so qualifications are transparent. Suggestion for this to be in the form of a CV
- **Candidates to declare their interests** including business ties
- **Vetting of candidates** through minimum educational qualification for candidates or through a test to assess suitability of candidates
- **Requirement to serve a term as deputy** before being elected onto a committee
- **Prove understanding of politics** when standing for election and receive induction training once elected
- **Deposit to stand** to prove commitment and reduce the amount of candidates

WRITTEN COMMENTS ABOUT ISLAND WIDE VOTING

CONTINUED

Elections

- **Hybrid system for election** of parish deputies as well as additional island-wide deputies
- **More parish representation**, either by assigning elected deputies a parish or by splitting the island up into districts each with a selected deputy to act as a point of contact
- **Political parties with collective manifestos** would work better under an island-wide system, however, not everyone supports a party based system.
- **Limit campaign spending** and introduce rules for marketing to make it more fair
- **Odd number of deputies** to prevent ties when voting takes place
- **Keep existing system** - A few people who support island-wide voting think island-wide voting should be trailed for longer before reassessing it
- **Manifestos should be in random order** instead of alphabetical to remove advantage
- **Mandatory participation in public hustings**
- **More accountability** for deputies who don't stick to their manifesto promises by making them legally binding or fine/reduction in pay for not adhering to them.
- **Return to old system** of parish elections

"I would like to see either more staggered elections and/or a hybrid system between island-wide and parish-wide..."

"Divide the island into districts rather than parishes and candidates would stand in their district."

"Scrap it and return to the old system"

"The candidate with the most votes should automatically be appointed Chief Minister."

"Staggered length of service, to allow continuity of projects"

"Formal position statements on key policies that demonstrate candidates understand the difficult trade offs that Guernsey faces."

"Should be an odd number of deputies to eliminate tied voting"

"Reduce the number of deputies to 15-20 max "

"I would favour a mix with some votes in the parish and others island wide"

"More public scrutiny of candidates views and their values via hustings etc"

"The electorate must be given a direct say in the make up of Committees"

BEYOND THE NEXT ELECTION



BEYOND THE NEXT ELECTION

All respondents were asked three final questions about Guernsey's Electoral System:

- ***"Looking to the future, would you like to see changes made to Guernsey's electoral system? This would mean replacing the current system of island-wide voting."***
- ***"If changes were to be considered to Guernsey's electoral system, do you think there should be referendum first to establish people's preferences?"***
- ***"Which of the following electoral systems do you personally think would be the best one for Guernsey?"***

Changes to electoral system:

- 62% said they would like to see changes made to Guernsey's electoral system
- People aged 65+ were significantly more likely to want to replace the current system of island-wide voting (73% vs 57% aged 40-64 and 58% aged 16-39)
- 89% of people who oppose island-wide voting would like to see changes made compared to 33% who support it
- 11% said it depends on what the alternative is.

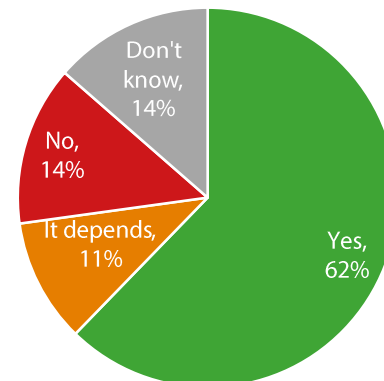
Suggestions include: reduction in deputies; more parish representation within island-wide voting; letting public decide committee members; current island-wide system being given more time before changes decided; rolling system of deputies serving staggered terms (50% elected every two years); district representatives.

There are split views on the introduction of political parties with some being in favour and others being very against them.

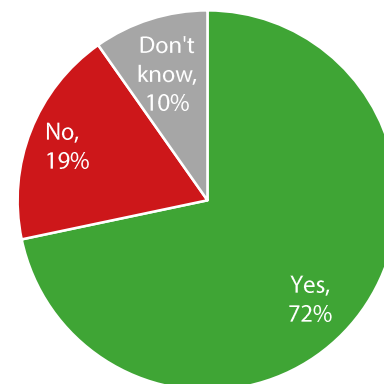
Referendum to establish preferences:

- 72% think there should be a referendum first to establish peoples' preference
- This rises to 81% for those who support island-wide voting (vs 66% who oppose it)

Looking to the future, would you like to see changes made to Guernsey's electoral system? This would mean replacing the current system of island-wide voting.



If changes were to be considered to Guernsey's electoral system, do you think there should be referendum first to establish people's preferences?



BEYOND THE NEXT ELECTION

All respondents were asked: "Which of the following electoral systems do you personally think would be the best one for Guernsey?"

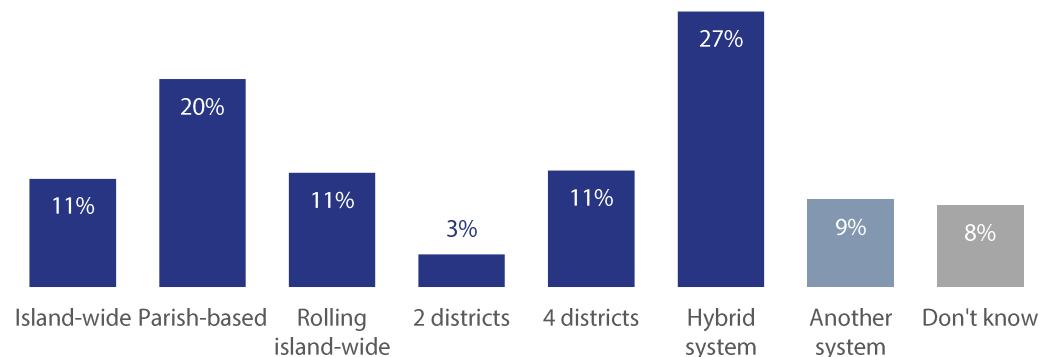
- 27% think that a hybrid system with voting every 4 years for 10 island-wide deputies plus 3-5 parish deputies is the best one for Guernsey.
- 20% prefer a parish-based system
- 11% think that the current island-wide system is the best one for Guernsey.

The table below shows the preferences for three sub-groups which are based on their view of prevailing view of island-wide voting.

Preferences based on current view on Island-wide Voting

	Support Island-wide voting	Neither support nor oppose	Oppose Island-wide voting
Island-wide	26%	5%	0%
Parish-based	4%	14%	34%
Rolling island-wide	18%	11%	6%
2 districts	5%	6%	1%
4 districts	6%	10%	16%
Hybrid system	23%	21%	31%
Another system	9%	11%	8%
Don't know	9%	22%	4%

Which of the following electoral systems do you personally think would be the best one for Guernsey?



The six options were presented with this additional information.*

Island-wide: 1 district: Every 4 years, vote for 38 deputies from approx. 120 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years. (Current system)

Parish-based: 7 districts: Every 4 years vote for 5 or 6 deputies from approx. 12 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years (Previous system)

Rolling island-wide: 1 district: Every 2 years vote for 12 or 13 deputies from approx. 50 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 6 years. (i.e. one-third of deputies elected every two years)

2 districts: Every 4 years vote for 19 deputies from approx. 50 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years

4 districts: Every 4 years vote for 9 or 10 deputies from approx. 25 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years

Hybrid system: Every 4 years vote for 10 island-wide deputies (from approx. 30 candidates) plus 3-5 parish-based deputies (from approx. 10 candidates). Elected deputies serve for 4 years

FINAL COMMENTS

At the end of the survey respondents were able to provide some final comments on any of the topics covered in the survey. These are some illustrative examples of the range of views expressed.

"Feel deputies should have to sign a job description. They should not be allowed to miss meetings or votes unless for a good reason."

"Every parish should have at least 1 Deputy. For continuity half the states voted every 2 years and serve for 4 years."

"I think deputies should be means tested and only those with no other income should receive a salary."

"Think the people of Guernsey should also have the opportunity to vote for who is heading up each committee and in particular the top job of chief minister."

"can we not reduce the total number of deputies as we appear to have too many per population on this small island."

"Parishes need their own representation in government."

"It would be useful to have more easily accessible voting history for current deputies standing for re-election."

"The main problem is that there are too many candidates and it is therefore impossible to make properly informed choices as a voter. We need to find a way to stage meaningful hustings again as well."

"Needs to be some positive changes and proper training for people to be deputies."

"Please give it more time to settle before you judge this system."

"Keep island wide voting. Introduce party politics, in the hope stuff promised will be delivered. LESS politicians.."

"I would like to see cvs included in the candidates manifestos"

"A system where deputies can be voted out should they not adhere to their manifesto pledges."

"I could support a system with an element of IWV but we need to have greater continuity. The large turnover of politicians we seem to have every four years is not conducive with good governance. A conseilleror type system maybe? "

"Very close to supporting the rolling system but I think that going to the polls every 2 years will be too much for voters and lead to fatigue."



APPENDIX

PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The profile of people who completed the survey was compared to the latest available data on the population of the Bailiwick of Guernsey, where available.*

The profiling shows the sample of respondents, and the distribution after survey weights have been applied. The sample contains a good distribution of respondents by parish. The distribution by household income also appears to be reasonably representative, though there is a slightly higher response rate among from those with higher household incomes.

	Guernsey's Population	Survey	
	% of total population	% of sample	% after survey weights
Parish			
Castel	13.9%	14%	13%
Forest	2.5%	3%	2%
St Andrew	3.7%	5%	5%
St Martin	10.4%	11%	12%
St Peter Port	30.4%	25%	29%
St Pierre du Bois	3.3%	5%	5%
St Sampson	14.2%	14%	13%
St Saviour	4.5%	4%	3%
Torteval	1.6%	2%	2%
Vale	15.1%	18%	16%
Herm / Jethou	0.1%	0%	0%
Address unknown	0.3%	-	-
Prefer not to say	-	<1%	<1%

	Guernsey's Population	Survey	
	%	% of sample	% after survey weights
Gross Household Income (excluding prefer not to say and don't know)			
£20,000 or less	9.9%	7%	6%
£20,001 - £40,000	22.5%	19%	17%
£40,001 - £60,000	18.7%	19%	20%
£60,001 - £80,000	16.0%	16%	17%
£80,001 - £100,000	11.6%	14%	15%
£100,001 - £120,000	8.3%	8%	9%
Over £120,000	13.0%	17%	17%
Highest educational or professional qualification			
No formal qualification	Data not available	6%	5%
GSCE or equivalent		16%	15%
A-Level or equivalent		17%	17%
Undergraduate degree or equivalent		26%	29%
Postgraduate degree or equivalent		29%	29%
Other		4%	3%
Prefer not to say		2%	2%
In general, how interested are you in Guernsey's politics and current affairs?			
Very interested	Not known	52%	49%
Moderately interested		37%	38%
Slightly interested		9%	11%
Not interested		2%	2%
Don't know		0%	0%



Please return your completed survey to:
Island Global Research, Freepost GU212, Guernsey, GY1 55S

If you would prefer to complete the survey online, you can do so at
<https://survey.islandglobalresearch.com/s3/2023ElectionSurvey>
or by scanning the QR code.

Survey on Guernsey's Electoral System

Introduction

This survey is about Guernsey's electoral system and is being undertaken by Island Global Research on behalf of the Scrutiny Management Committee of the States of Guernsey. Your responses to this survey will assist in the Review of Island-Wide Voting.

The survey contains questions about your experience of Guernsey's 2020 General Election, how you expect to approach the process of voting in 2025 and more generally your views about the island-wide electoral system.

You are eligible to share your views if you are resident in Guernsey, Herm or Jethou and are aged 16 or over, regardless of whether or not you voted in 2020.

We would like to hear from as many people as possible, regardless of how informed you feel about local politics. Many of the multiple-choice questions include options such as "Don't remember", "Don't know", or "Not eligible". You can use these if you cannot recall your experience, you don't have a view, or a question does not apply to you.

All responses are anonymous and will be used to show views from across the community. No individual responses will be published. The survey is likely to take between 10 and 15 minutes to complete.

Thank you for taking part.

PRIVACY STATEMENT

You are not required to provide your name, email address, date of birth or any other identifiable personal data in order to complete this survey. If you wish to view our privacy policy, it is available on our website (<https://www.islandglobalresearch.com/Your-Privacy>) or please in get in touch (01481 716227 / info@islandglobalresearch.com).

This survey is being undertaken in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct.

About You

These questions about you help us to make sure that a wide range of people who are representative of the local population complete the survey. All responses are anonymous and will be used to show views from across the community.

1. In which island are you based?

- ☐ Guernsey, Herm or Jethou
- ☐ Alderney - Sorry, this survey is only for Guernsey residents aged 16 and over.
- ☐ Sark - Sorry, this survey is only for Guernsey residents aged 16 and over.
- ☐ Elsewhere - Sorry, this survey is only for Guernsey residents aged 16 and over.

2. Please indicate your age group:

- ☐ 16-17
- ☐ 18-24
- ☐ 25-29
- ☐ 30-34
- ☐ 35-39
- ☐ 40-44
- ☐ 45-49
- ☐ 50-54
- ☐ 55-59
- ☐ 60-64
- ☐ 65-69
- ☐ 70-74
- ☐ 75-79
- ☐ 80+
- ☐ Prefer not to say

3. Are you:

- ☐ Male
- ☐ Female
- ☐ Prefer to self-describe
- ☐ Prefer not to say

4. Which parish are you currently resident in?

- ☐ Castel
- ☐ Forest
- ☐ St Andrew
- ☐ St Martin
- ☐ St Peter Port
- ☐ St Pierre du Bois
- ☐ St Saviour
- ☐ St Sampson
- ☐ Torteval
- ☐ Vale
- ☐ Herm/Jethou
- ☐ Prefer not to say

5. What is your highest educational qualification?

- ☐ Post-graduate degree or equivalent
- ☐ Under-graduate degree or equivalent
- ☐ A-Level or equivalent
- ☐ GCSE or equivalent
- ☐ Other
- ☐ No formal qualification
- ☐ Prefer not to say

6. What is your total annual household income before tax?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> £20,000 or less | <input type="radio"/> £60,001-£80,000 | <input type="radio"/> Over £120,000 |
| <input type="radio"/> £20,001-£40,000 | <input type="radio"/> £80,001-£100,000 | <input type="radio"/> Don't know |
| <input type="radio"/> £40,001-£60,000 | <input type="radio"/> £100,001-£120,000 | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |

7. In general, how interested are you in Guernsey's politics and current affairs? We hope to hear the views of a wide range of people, and understand that some people will follow local politics more closely than others.

- ☐ Not interested
- ☐ Slightly interested
- ☐ Moderately interested
- ☐ Very interested
- ☐ Don't know

Registered to Vote

Guernsey's first full island-wide General Election took place in October 2020 and elected 38 deputies to the States Assembly using a single district island-wide electoral system. To be able to vote in the election, residents were required to be registered on the electoral roll.

8. Were you registered to vote at the time of Guernsey's 2020 General Election?

- ☐ Yes [- Go to Question 9](#)
- ☐ No [- Go to Question 10](#)
- ☐ Not eligible (including not resident in Guernsey, or below 16, at the time) [- Go to Question 24](#)
- ☐ I don't remember [- Go to Question 9](#)

9. Which parish did you live in at the time of Guernsey's 2020 General Election (i.e. in October 2020)?

- | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|---|
| <input type="radio"/> Castel | <input type="radio"/> St Peter Port | <input type="radio"/> Torteval |
| <input type="radio"/> Forest | <input type="radio"/> St Pierre du Bois | <input type="radio"/> Vale |
| <input type="radio"/> St Andrew | <input type="radio"/> St Saviour | <input type="radio"/> Herm/Jethou |
| <input type="radio"/> St Martin | <input type="radio"/> St Sampson | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |

[Now go to Question 11](#)

10. Why didn't you register to vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election? Please select one.

- ☐ I missed the deadline
- ☐ I was not interested in voting/I was not planning to vote
- ☐ I was unaware that I needed to register to be able to vote
- ☐ Other reason [please describe]: _____
- ☐ I don't remember

Guernsey's 2020 General Election: Information about the Candidates**11. Which of the following sources of information about the candidates standing in the 2020 General Election did you use or refer to? Please select all that apply.**

- ☐ States of Guernsey produced booklet containing the manifestos for all candidates
- ☐ Candidate information (e.g. Q&As, Manifestos, CV) on official website (www.election2020.gg)
- ☐ Videos of each candidate on official website (www.election2020.gg)
- ☐ Candidates' own websites or social media pages (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
- ☐ Candidates' posters or boards displayed around the island
- ☐ Candidates' leaflets and flyers (e.g. via mail drop)
- ☐ Guernsey Press articles and supplements
- ☐ Guernsey Press advertisements by candidates
- ☐ Other local news sources (online, radio and TV)
- ☐ Other websites (please describe): _____
- ☐ Facebook (other than candidate's page)
- ☐ Instagram (other than candidate's Instagram)
- ☐ Twitter (other than candidate's account)
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ None of the above [- Go to Question 13](#)
- ☐ I don't remember [- Go to Question 13](#)

12. Which of the following sources of information about the candidates standing in the 2020 General Election did you find the most useful when deciding how to vote? Please select all that apply.

- ☐ States of Guernsey-produced booklet containing the manifestos for all candidates
- ☐ Candidate information (e.g. Q&As, Manifestos, CV) on official website (www.election2020.gg)
- ☐ Videos of each candidate on official website (www.election2020.gg)
- ☐ Candidates' own websites or social media pages (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter)
- ☐ Candidates, posters or boards displayed around the island
- ☐ Candidates' leaflets and flyers (e.g. via mail drop)
- ☐ Guernsey Press articles, supplements
- ☐ Guernsey Press advertisements by candidates
- ☐ Other local news sources (online, radio and TV)
- ☐ Other websites (please describe): _____
- ☐ Facebook (other than candidates' page)
- ☐ Instagram (other than candidates' Instagram)
- ☐ Twitter (other than candidates' account)
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____
- ☐ None of the above
- ☐ I don't remember

Guernsey's 2020 General Election: Assessing the Candidates

13. Approximately how many events (e.g. hustings with small groups of candidates or drop-in sessions) did you attend to hear from or meet the candidates prior to Guernsey's 2020 General Election? *This may have been in-person or online.*

- ☐ None - Go to Question 15
 ☐ Between five and ten - Go to Question 14
☐ One or two - Go to Question 14
 ☐ More than ten - Go to Question 14
☐ Three or four - Go to Question 14
 ☐ I don't remember - Go to Question 16

14. Overall, how helpful were the events you attended in deciding how to vote?

- ☐ Not helpful
 ☐ Very helpful
☐ Slightly helpful
 ☐ I don't remember
☐ Moderately helpful

Now go to Question 16

15. Why didn't you attend any events? *Please select all that apply.*

- ☐ I didn't feel it was necessary
☐ I didn't have the time
☐ I didn't think I would learn helpful information
☐ I wasn't aware of the events
☐ I wasn't interested
☐ The locations of the events were not convenient for me
☐ The timings of the events were not convenient for me
☐ Other reason [please describe]: _____
☐ I don't remember

16. Approximately, how many candidates called at your home and spoke to you or a member of your household?

- ☐ None
 ☐ Between five and ten
☐ One or two
 ☐ More than ten
☐ Three or four
 ☐ I don't remember

17. How helpful do you find it to have candidates calling at your home when deciding which candidates to vote for? *We are interested in your views, whether or not you had any candidates call at your home before the 2020 General Election.*

- ☐ Not helpful
 ☐ Very helpful
☐ Slightly helpful
 ☐ I don't know
☐ Moderately helpful

Guernsey's 2020 General Election: Voting

18. Did you vote in the Guernsey's 2020 General Election? *It was possible to vote at a polling station or return a postal vote. This was the first election in Guernsey to use full island-wide voting.*

- ☐ Yes - Go to Question 20
 ☐ I prefer not to say - Go to Question 24
☐ No - Go to Question 19
 ☐ I don't remember - Go to Question 24

19. Why didn't you vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election? *Please select the statement that best fits or select 'other reason' and write in the space provided.*

- ☐ I didn't want to vote
 ☐ I was not able to go to the polling station
☐ I couldn't decide who to vote for
 ☐ Other reason [Please describe]: _____
☐ I didn't get round to voting
☐ I missed the deadline for returning a postal vote
 ☐ I prefer not to say
☐ I don't remember

Now go to Question 24

20. In Guernsey's 2020 General Election you could vote for up to 38 deputies. Approximately how many votes did you use?

- ☐ None (i.e. zero)
 ☐ Between 31 and 37
☐ Between 1 and 10
 ☐ All of them (i.e. 38)
☐ Between 11 and 20
 ☐ I don't remember
☐ Between 21 and 30

21. Now think about your approach to selecting candidates. Please can you indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"I voted for some candidates I felt neutral about to try and prevent the election of candidates who I did not support".

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

22. Now think about your approach to selecting candidates. Please can you indicate to what extent you agree or disagree with the following statement:

"I only voted for the candidates who I felt positive or mostly positive about".

Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	Don't know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

23. When you were deciding which candidates to vote for, how important were the following to you?

	Not important	Slightly important	Moderately important	Very important	I don't remember
The candidate's previous performance as a deputy	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Views expressed by the candidate on specific issues or policies (e.g. in their manifesto or elsewhere)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The candidate's photos of themselves	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Professional skills and experience of the candidate (e.g. employment history, educational qualifications)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The candidate's record of voluntary or community work	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The candidate's involvement in parish matters (e.g. as a Constable or in the Douzaine)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The candidate being resident in my parish	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Personal attributes of the candidate (e.g. age, sex, gender, ethnicity, etc)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My own experience of the candidate (e.g. know personally, have met before or during the campaign)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Views or recommendations of people you trust (e.g. family/friends/colleagues/candidate's proposer or seconder)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Guernsey's next election in 2025

Guernsey's next General Election will be held in 2025. As in the last election, 38 deputies will be elected to the States Assembly using an island-wide electoral system.

24. Do you intend to vote in 2025?

- ☐ Yes
 ☐ I prefer not to say
☐ No
 ☐ I do not expect to be resident in 2025
☐ Undecided

25. Do you believe any changes should be made to the information available about candidates standing for election?

	Yes	No	Don't know
More information about the candidates on States Election website	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More information about the candidates in the Manifesto booklet	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Manifesto booklet to be distributed to households earlier than previously	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
More opportunities to meet the candidates (e.g. drop-in sessions, hustings)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

26. To what extent would you support or oppose the following potential changes?

	Strongly oppose	Oppose	Neutral	Support	Strongly support	Don't know
Candidates to declare that they have written their manifesto themselves, have not used AI to write it, have not plagiarised other manifestos, and that the contents of the manifesto are truthful to best of their knowledge	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidates to be required to make a monetary deposit, which would be lost if the candidate secured less than 10% of the vote. (This would have applied to 20 of the 118 candidates in 2020)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Candidates to be required to declare interests (e.g. affiliations, directorships etc.) in order to stand for election. (Currently deputies are only required to declare interests once elected)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Prospective candidates to be obliged to attend formal sessions on the operation of government and the roles, responsibilities, and time commitments involved in being a deputy, before they can register to stand	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Views on Island-Wide Voting

A referendum was held in Guernsey in October 2018 to decide the method of electing deputies in future, with options ranging from a parish-based system to a single island-wide system. Voters were able to rank up to five options in order of preference.

27. Did you vote in the referendum on Guernsey's electoral system in October 2018?

- ☐ Yes – Go to Question 28
☐ No – Go to Question 28
☐ I was not resident in the island or not eligible to vote in the 2018 referendum – Go to Question 29
☐ I don't remember – Go to Question 28

The outcome of the referendum on Guernsey's electoral system was a system of island-wide voting in which residents can vote for up to 38 candidates.

28. At the time of the referendum, to what extent did you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?

Strongly opposed	Somewhat opposed	Neither supported nor opposed	Somewhat supported	Strongly supported	I don't know / don't remember / not applicable
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

29. And now (i.e. today) to what extent do you support or oppose an island-wide system of voting?

Strongly oppose	Somewhat oppose	Neither support nor oppose	Somewhat support	Strongly support	I don't know
<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

30. We would be interested to understand more about your view of island-wide voting. What do you like most and what do you like least about island-wide voting? Please share your views in the two boxes below or skip to the next question.

Like most about island-wide voting:

Like least about island-wide voting:

Electoral System: Selecting Candidates

Please think back to the time you were preparing to vote in Guernsey's 2020 General Election – the first elections under the full island-wide electoral system.

31. In the 2020 election there were 118 candidates. When the time came to vote, did you feel that you were sufficiently well informed about:

- ☐ None or a very few of the candidates
☐ Around a quarter of the candidates
☐ Around a half of the candidates
☐ Around three quarters of the candidates
☐ All or nearly all of the candidates
☐ I don't remember/not applicable (e.g. I was not resident or eligible at that time)

Please think back to your experience of Guernsey's General Election in 2016, which was a parish-based system.

32. In the 2016 parish-based election, when the time came to vote, did you feel that you were sufficiently well informed about:

- ☐ None or very few of the candidates
☐ Around a quarter of the candidates
☐ Around a half of the candidates
☐ Around three quarters of the candidates
☐ All or nearly all of the candidates
☐ I don't remember
☐ Not applicable (e.g. I was not resident or eligible at that time)

Impact of Electoral System on the States Assembly

33. We are interested in your opinion on the **potential impact of island-wide voting** on the governing of the island by the States Assembly. Please complete the following sentence by selecting one of the options or by selecting "other" and writing in the box provided.

"In my opinion, island-wide voting is likely to have resulted in ..."

- ☐ much worse governing of the island than previously
- ☐ slightly worse governing of the island than previously
- ☐ no change to how the island is governed
- ☐ slightly better governing of the island than previously
- ☐ much better governing of the island than previously
- ☐ Other view (please describe): _____
- ☐ Don't know

34. What impact, if any, do you think moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents the overall views of **people living in Guernsey**?

Less representative ○	No change ○	More representative ○	Don't know ○
--------------------------	----------------	--------------------------	-----------------

35. What impact, if any, do you think moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents the views of **people living in your parish**?

Less representative ○	No change ○	More representative ○	Don't know ○
--------------------------	----------------	--------------------------	-----------------

36. What impact, if any, do you think moving to an island-wide system of voting has had on how well the States represents **your views**?

Less representative ○	No change ○	More representative ○	Don't know ○
--------------------------	----------------	--------------------------	-----------------

Political Parties

37. How supportive are you of having political parties in Guernsey?

Very unsupportive ○	Moderately unsupportive ○	Neutral ○	Moderately supportive ○	Very supportive ○	Don't know ○
---------------------------	---------------------------------	--------------	-------------------------------	----------------------	-----------------

38. Disregarding for a moment the other aspects of a candidate, how would the fact that a candidate belongs to a political party affect the likelihood of you voting for them?

- ☐ It would make me a lot less likely to vote for them
- ☐ It would make me a bit less likely to vote for them
- ☐ It wouldn't make any difference
- ☐ It would make me a bit more likely to vote for them
- ☐ It would make me a lot more likely to vote for them
- ☐ Don't know

Island-wide Voting System: Other considerations

39. In the current system of island-wide voting, individuals can vote for up to 38 candidates. It would be possible to have a system of island-wide voting in which individuals have fewer votes. Do you think the number of votes each voter has should be reduced?

- ☐ Yes – Go to Question 41
- ☐ No – Go to Question 42
- ☐ Don't know – Go to Question 42

41. If it were to be reduced, how many votes do you think each person should have? Please write a number (between 0 and 37) or write "don't know".

42. Within an island-wide system for voting, do you have any other suggestions about changes that you would like to see made? Please note the final few questions in the next section ask about other electoral systems.

Beyond the next election

43. Looking to the future, would you like to see changes made to Guernsey's electoral system? This would mean replacing the current system of island-wide voting.

- ☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 ☐ Don't know
- ☐ Other (please describe): _____

44. If changes were to be considered to Guernsey's electoral system, do you think there should be referendum first to establish people's preferences? Please answer this question, regardless of whether or not you would like to see changes made to the system.

- ☐ Yes
 ☐ No
 ☐ Don't know

45. Which of the following electoral systems do you personally think would be the best one for Guernsey?

Note: the suggested number of potential candidates in each option is an estimate based on previous elections and may vary in practice.

<input type="radio"/> Island-wide	1 district: Every 4 years, vote for 38 deputies from approx. 120 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years. (Current system)
<input type="radio"/> Parish-based	7 districts: Every 4 years vote for 5 or 6 deputies from approx. 12 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years (Previous system)
<input type="radio"/> Rolling island-wide	1 district: Every 2 years vote for 12 or 13 deputies from approx. 50 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 6 years. (i.e. one-third of deputies elected every two years)
<input type="radio"/> 2 districts	Every 4 years vote for 19 deputies from approx. 50 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years
<input type="radio"/> 4 districts	Every 4 years vote for 9 or 10 deputies from approx. 25 candidates. Elected deputies serve for 4 years
<input type="radio"/> Hybrid system	Every 4 years vote for 10 island-wide deputies (from approx. 30 candidates) plus 3-5 parish-based deputies (from approx. 10 candidates). Elected deputies serve for 4 years
<input type="radio"/> Another system	(please describe): _____
<input type="radio"/> Don't know	

46. Please feel free to share any final comments on any of the topics covered in this survey.

Thank you for taking our survey.

We appreciate you taking the time to share your views and experiences.



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