

JUNE 2026

HAPPENINGS

Dundee Liberal Democrat Association Newsletter



Leader of the Scottish Liberal Democrats, Alex Cole-Hamilton, came to Dundee to give a boost to the NE list campaign

Lib Dem vote share is up in Scotland

by Cllr Craig Duncan, Convener

Now that the dust has begun to settle in the aftermath of the latest Holyrood elections, I wanted to take this opportunity to thank our Dundee City candidates, Daniel Coleman and Tanvir Ahmad for contesting these seats and doing themselves and us proud.

I don't intend to go deeply into statistics as Dr Lewis Miller is better qualified than myself to do that, but the vote share in Dundee is up as it is generally speaking across Scotland for the Scottish Liberal Democrats. Although the SNP are again the largest party at Holyrood, their vote share has dipped significantly. I sense that change is brewing but whether that will be welcome or not will depend on our efforts to persuade people that we are the positive change they yearn for.

Accordingly I want to say a heartfelt thank you to all of you who found the time and inclination to help our campaign and look forward to growing our vote over the next year, firstly at an inevitable Westminster by-election and then at the local government elections next year. We will have much to do and help of all kinds is much needed and appreciated but as our former party leader Tim Farron MP always rightly says : "Where we work, we win!"



Dr Lewis Miller and Cllr Craig Duncan

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Reflections on the Scottish Election: The SNP's Silent Decline

By Dr Lewis G. Miller

As a political scientist, the biggest story of this election is how disastrous SNP vote was hidden by the most disproportionate result in the electoral history of the Scottish Parliament. It is almost hard to believe the scale of their losses given that this has not translated into a decline in their parliamentary party.

There is quite a lot to reflect on with these past elections. As a Liberal Democrat, I am of course happy to see our representation over double to 10 MSPs and to see our vote share increase to nearly where it was prior to 2011. Similarly, I suspect most attention will surround what the election of 17 Reform UK MSPs will mean for the future tone and conduct of parliamentary business.

The first notable element of this election is the low turnout. There are three aspects which generally affect it. Firstly, voters tend not to turn out when one party is expected to win by a large margin. Secondly, turnout has generally declined as trust in and identification with parties has fallen. Finally, voters often turn out in polarised elections to stop parties they oppose, such as in 2019 with Corbyn and Johnson.

Polling by Ipsos ahead of the election showed that with respect to party support, no party commanded a positive net approval rating. This, alongside the SNP's likely victory, made it likely turnout would fall.

The least disliked parties were the SNP (-1%), the Greens (-9%) and the Liberal Democrats (-10%). The most disliked were Labour (-24%), the Conservatives (-39%) and Reform UK (-41%).

The SNP lost a little over 392,000 votes in the constituencies and around 468,000 votes on the list – around a third of their constituency vote and 42% of their list vote. This is reflected in their list vote of 27.2%, once again their lowest with the exception of 2003 (20.9%). For comparison, in 1999 the SNP gained 27.3% of the list vote and in 2007 31% of the list vote.

It is unclear how many SNP voters will have used their list vote tactically, as in the last two elections where these strategies were popularised, their list vote was substantially higher.

What hides this dramatic decline is our semi-proportional electoral system. In Scotland there are 73 constituency seats and 56 list seats. This means that if a party does very well in the constituencies, there are not enough list seats to balance out the result. This year, in the constituencies the SNP won 78% of the constituency seats with 38% of the vote. Only one of their 58 seats is from the list.

“In terms of sheer quantity of votes, this was the second fewest number of list votes the SNP had gained with the exception of 2003, a campaign also led by Swinney.”



Dundee team at the vote counting centre at DISC on 8th May 2026 (from left): Daniel, Freddy, Mark, Tanvir, Thomas, Jenny, Fraser, Chris and Outi

The reason why the SNP are so heavily over-represented is a result of two factors. Firstly, the pro-union opposition to the SNP is fragmented in most seats, with voters were split between four pro-union parties and, in most cases, only one pro-independence party. Secondly, the pro-independence vote was not split because the Greens do not stand in every constituency. Due to the prominence of the First Past the Post element of our electoral system and fragmented party system, the SNP has been able to perform deceptively well.

While the media will likely focus on Reforms victory, the SNP's silent decline is what I consider the main story of the election. In my mind, this election resembles that of Labour in 2003, where the party won on due to a fragmented opposition. Eventually, when that opposition coalesced enough around one alternative Labour never recovered. The worst thing the SNP could do now is take their seat share for granted and ignore the dramatic decline in their vote. If they do, they will likely be in for a shock in next year's local elections.

ATTENTION, ATTENTION!

- **CAMPAIGN LAUNCH**
- **WEST END FOCUS DELIVERIES**
- **DLDA MEMBERS' MEETING**

Arbroath and Broughty Ferry By-Election on 18th June 2026

There will be a very short campaign for this by-election. The Angus and Mearns candidate **Tanvir Ahmad** needs your help!

The first Action Day is on **Friday 5th June 2026 @ 10 am**

meeting point: Balgillo road/Ballinard Road Junction.

After this we will be knocking on doors every day in the evenings (5.30 PM to 8 PM) Weekend morning session (10 am to 12.30) and afternoon session (2PM to 4.30PM) Please contact Tanvir to let him know that you will be there on 07484613646

Can you help with West End Focus?

A brand new edition of West End Focus has arrived. Over 10,000 leaflets need to be delivered. Cllrs Fraser and Michael are calling for any volunteers to assist in this mammoth task!

Please e-mail Fraser at

fraser.macpherson@dundee.gov.uk

if you can help or give him a call at 07303 145670.



*How is your step count?
Fraser and Michael know
how to get back on track.*

**The Next DLDA Members' meeting will be held on
Wednesday 10th June @ 8, City Square @ 7 PM.
Agenda will be emailed to members asap.**

On the campaign trail in Dundee and beyond

by Freddy Horton,
DLDA member



Michael T, Tanvir and Freddy out and about canvassing for support

Over the past couple of months, I have been delivering leaflets across Dundee City East with Tanvir Ahmad, our candidate, for him and the party. Overall, I found the experience incredibly rewarding and the response of those we talked to quite positive across the constituency. People are willing to hear us out, and they are open to trying something different.

For myself, it was great to explore the city, finding new pockets of Dundee I have not been to before since I moved here three years ago. The experience also definitely improved my fitness a lot!

The engagement and responses Tanvir received on Facebook were also very positive, engaging with people from across the city, with some posts gaining significant traction and six-figure view counts. I had people coming up to me, mentioning that they had seen the posts from Tanvir. This is an area we must build upon at all levels of the party, but it must be a particular focus on the local party here in Dundee. This is especially important if we want to reach out to younger voters.

The highlight of the campaign was definitely when Alex Cole-Hamilton visited us in the Ferry and went door-knocking with members of our team. Once again, getting a very positive response on the doorstep. It was also great to meet the teams from Aberdeen and Angus, who came down to Dundee for the day.

"..we are limited by the size of our team. This is why I'm encouraging members to reach out and help...."

Although this was a very positive day, this was the limit of our door-knocking during this election, as we were limited by the size of our team. This is why I am encouraging members to reach out and help, even if it's just for an afternoon or two. With more active members, we can do more to reach out to voters, and it is an incredibly rewarding experience to reach out to the community that we live in. With more elections coming up in the next year, I really do encourage more members to come out and campaign with us for a more liberal Dundee and Scotland!



We have a lot of work to do, says Yi-Pei Chou Turvey

Since being announced as the new North East regional MSP on 8th May, life has been a whirlwind for Yi-Pei Chou Turvey. There has not been much time to recover from the NE List campaign, but Yi-Pei has thrown herself into the new role with energy and determination.

We managed to have a quick “how are things going in Holyrood” - chat before Yi-Pei had to run to yet another meeting. The new Lib Dem group of MSPs are still getting organised and Yi-Pei, just like other newbies, is currently adjusting to the new political environment.

Sworn into the Parliament in three languages (English, Chinese and French) was a nod to her roots in Taiwan and Belgium, where she grew up. In her maiden speech, Yi-Pei took up an issue close to her heart: childcare, which costs to parents more in the UK than elsewhere in Europe.

The SNP has free child care in their manifesto and Yi-Pei wants to see this becoming a reality.

“We will bring the SNP into account about this in Scotland,” she promises.



Yi-Pei and her husband Michael with local supporters and campaigners

Health care is another issue Yi-Pei is going to keep on her agenda. “People in Dundee are so lucky to have Ninewells hospital and they love it. But we have a problem across the North East on the level of care we are receiving and that is something we have to fight for”, she says and adds that “we have a lot of work to do!”.

For the time being, Yi-Pei has decided to stay as a councillor in the Aberdeenshire Council, representing Banchory and Mid-Deeside ward as well as being the MSP. She will be commuting from home to Holyrood three times a week for meetings at the Scottish parliament.

The forthcoming by-election in Arbroath and Broughty Ferry is another opportunity to grow Lib Dem presence and increase our vote share for the 2027 council elections. But Yi-Pei is disappointed about the way this by-election was triggered.

“It’s very sad and annoying that MPs think that they can just swap seats like that. The cost of a by-election is huge. I don’t think it’s a fair way to do politics.”, Yi-Pei says.

Nevertheless, she would like to encourage all members to go out and help with the campaign.

“It’s important to have extra hands on deck. Do what you can, come and help!” (OM)

Dundee Liberal Democrat Association (DLDA)

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