

No need to redraw constituency boundaries

Controversy is resurfacing about changes to constituency boundaries. Surprisingly, there is no need to change these even if the number of Commons seats is reduced. In the digital era there is a more elegant solution.

Require all candidates to obtain for election a certain equal number of votes to be determined by the size of the electorate, traditional turnout and the target number of seats. Install electronic voting at polling stations. The voter is provided on a first screen with the choice of candidates they would currently see on the paper ballot. Voters discontent with this selection would have the option of moving to a second screen which would show all candidates in a larger area, say their county or a region.

There would be a process where candidates falling far short of the threshold would redistribute their contingents of votes to candidates closer to the threshold. Similarly, popular candidates would redistribute their surplus votes. This way no vote need go wasted while voters would have a much wider choice of candidate and so no longer vote for the least bad option. Such a system of “transferable power of political attorney” would make parliament vastly more representative, reward outstanding

candidates with the loyalty of supporters outside their narrow constituency while retaining a geographical anchor, and restore trust in democracy.

Author: Paul Charles Gregory. More at www.fuzzydemocracy.eu