

Analysis of 2024 Wolverhampton Local Election Results

Introduction

I have attempted to summarise the results of the recent election and draw out what lessons, if any, might be learned for future elections; and to try and compare the effect of the different styles of leaflet used in Park and St Peters ward (the question that P.Darke posed in his coordinators report to the March 2024 meeting).

All the data used is taken from the Wolverhampton Council website:

<https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/your-council-and-meetings/elections-and-voting>
 (The 'Elections 2024' and 'Previous Election Results' tabs)

The Results

Table 1 below is a summary for the whole of Wolverhampton :

Table 1: 2024 Local Election: votes cast in each ward

	GRN	LAB	LIB	CON	OTH	Tot.	Turn
Bilston North		1763		710		2473	26.47
Bilston South		1549		661		2210	21.9
Blakenhall**	126	2244	86	453	80	2989	34.52
Bushbury N.		1271	217	1321		2809	29.38
Bush. S & Low Hill		1323	152	403		1878	19.58
East Park		1433		374	294	2101	23.19
Ettingshall North		2224		489		2713	28.2
Ettingshall S. & Spring Vale		1988		780		2768	29.46
Fallings Park		1299	113	716	161	2289	25.64
Graiseley*	240	1724	99	566	278	2907	33.28
Heath Town	193	1305	98	432		2028	23.55
Merry Hill*	233	1540		1459		3232	35.66
Oxley**	266	1444	140	1032		2882	27.85
Park*	491	1668	293	697		3149	32.98
Penn*	330	1656	110	1733		3829	39.45
St Peters*	599	1249	300	282		2430	27.51
Tettenhall Regis*	240	1051	251	1663		3205	35
Tettenhall Wightwick*	267	950	90	2228		3535	39.69
Wednesfield N.		1431		754		2185	26.35
Wednesfield S.	301	1243		914		2458	27.77
City wide total	3286	30355	1949	17667	813	54070	
%	6.1	56.1	3.6	32.7	1.5		

Table 2 below converts these figures for votes cast into percentages:

2024 Local Election: % of vote in each ward

	GRN	LAB	LIB	CON	OTH
Bilston North	0.0	71.3	0.0	28.7	0.0
Bilston South	0.0	70.1	0.0	29.9	0.0
Blakenhall**	4.2	75.1	2.9	15.2	2.7
Bushbury N.	0.0	45.2	7.7	47.0	0.0
Bush. S & Low Hill	0.0	70.4	8.1	21.5	0.0
East Park	0.0	68.2	0.0	17.8	14.0
Ettingshall North	0.0	82.0	0.0	18.0	0.0
Ettingshall S. & Spring Vale	0.0	71.8	0.0	28.2	0.0
Fallings Park	0.0	56.7	4.9	31.3	7.0
Graiseley*	8.3	59.3	3.4	19.5	9.6
Heath Town	9.5	64.3	4.8	21.3	0.0
Merry Hill*	7.2	47.6	0.0	45.1	0.0
Oxley**	9.2	50.1	4.9	35.8	0.0
Park*	15.6	53.0	9.3	22.1	0.0
Penn*	8.6	43.2	2.9	45.3	0.0
St Peters*	24.7	51.4	12.3	11.6	0.0
Tettenhall Regis*	7.5	32.8	7.8	51.9	0.0
Tettenhall Wightwick*	7.6	26.9	2.5	63.0	0.0
Wednesfield N.	0.0	65.5	0.0	34.5	0.0
Wednesfield S.	12.2	50.6	0.0	37.2	0.0

From these figures it is readily apparent that:

The Green Party are the third party in Wolverhampton, after Labour and Conservatives and ahead of the Liberal Democrats.

- The Green Party received about 70% more votes in Wolverhampton than the Lib Dems
- In 9 of the 11 wards that WGP stood the candidate came third after Labour and Conservative and ahead of the Lib Dems
- In only one ward did the Lib Dems poll better than WGP (but only by 11 votes)
- In one ward WGP came second to Labour and well ahead of the Conservatives and Lib Dems. Well done Naseem!

As far as I am aware, campaigning took place in three wards, and it shows in the higher voter numbers. Leaflets were delivered in Park and St Peters, and going on his facebook posts Hardev Singh got out and canvassed in Wednesfield South.

I have not gone back through previous years meticulously, but I think St Peters was the highest number of votes cast for WGP in recent years with the exception of Tettenhall Wightwick in 2019 (609); but this might be the highest percentage (because turnout in St Peters is lower).

Looking ahead to the next General Election

Candidates standing for Parliament have to put up a deposit of £500, which is returned if they receive more than 5% of the vote cast in the constituency. WGP are planning to have a candidate in all three Wolverhampton constituencies; reimbursing candidates for lost deposits will be a massive drain on our resources, so we want to do everything possible to try and retain at least one of these. In the Local Election WGP stood candidates in all the wards that make up the Wolverhampton West Parliamentary constituency. This was with the aim of improving awareness amongst voters there that the Green Party was a viable force, either by leaflets, canvassing or the mere(!) fact of standing. A separate point about the importance of getting as many Green votes as possible is that it helps candidates elsewhere who do get elected to access money for Parliamentary research and travel. See 'Short Money':

<https://commonslibrary.parliament.uk/research-briefings/sn01663/>

Table 3 below repeats the votes cast from Table 1, but only for those wards within, or partly within, the Wolverhampton West constituency and adds a column for the % Green vote in each ward.

2024 Local Election: Votes in wards partly/wholly within Wolverhampton West constituency

	GRN	LAB	LIB	CON	OTH	Tot.	Turn	GRN %
Blakenhall**	126	2244	86	453	80	2989	34.52	4.2
Graiseley*	240	1724	99	566	278	2907	33.28	8.3
Merry Hill*	233	1540	0	1459	0	3232	35.66	7.2
Oxley**	266	1444	140	1032	0	2882	27.85	9.2
Park*	491	1668	293	697	0	3149	32.98	15.6
Penn*	330	1656	110	1733	0	3829	39.45	8.6
St Peters*	599	1249	300	282	0	2430	27.51	24.7
Tettenhall Regis*	240	1051	251	1663	0	3205	35	7.5
Tettenhall Wightwick*	267	950	90	2228	0	3535	39.69	7.6
City wide total	2792	13526	1369	10113	358	28158		
%	9.9	48.0	4.9	35.9	1.3			

As the Green vote is 9.9% over the constituency, it might appear that there should be no problem in retaining the deposit, at least in Wolverhampton West. However, two things need to be borne in mind:

- People do not always vote for the same party in General Elections as they did for Local. In particular Greens (and Lib Dems) may choose to vote tactically for Labour in order to keep Conservatives out.
- The turnout for a G.E. is about twice that for a L.E. I suspect that Green supporters are in general going to be more enthusiastic voters (ie most of those who are going to vote Green in a G.E. will have turned out at the L.E. as well); the number of Green votes will not go up by much at the G.E. but the % will decrease because of the higher turnout.

Comparison of effectiveness of leaflets in Park and St Peters

What I had hoped to do was:

- Compare results from 2023 and 2024 ward by ward to get an idea of any general trend between the two years.
- Strip out this effect to predict what the 2024 vote would have been in Park and St Peters if there had not been any leafletting
- Subtract this from the actual 2024 vote in each ward, which would then be the number of votes added due to the effect of the leaflets
- Compare this number in the two wards

Table 4 below is the data to be worked on:

Table 4: 2024 Local Election: votes cast in each ward where Green standing 2023 Local Election

	GRN	LAB	LIB	CON	OTH	Tot.	GRN	LIB
Blakenhall**	126	2244	86	453	80	2989	0	245
Graiseley*	240	1724	99	566	278	2907	433	0
Heath Town	193	1305	98	432	0	2028	315	0
Merry Hill*	233	1540	0	1459	0	3232	448	0
Oxley**	266	1444	140	1032	0	2882	0	592**
Park*	491	1668	293	697	0	3149	0	700**
Penn*	330	1656	110	1733	0	3829	0	395
St Peters*	599	1249	300	282	0	2430	0	398
Tettenhall Regis*	240	1051	251	1663	0	3205	0	679*
Tettenhall Wightwick*	267	950	90	2228	0	3535	478	0
Wednesfield S.	301	1243	0	914	0	2458	194	0
City wide total	3286	16074	1467	11459	358	32644		*2 cand.
%	10.1	49.2	4.5	35.1	1.1			**3 cand.

However, because of the arrangement in 2023 with the Lib Dems not to stand against each other there are only 2 wards (Merry Hill and Wednesfield South) which are comparable; ie Green candidate but no Lib Dem candidate in both years.

In Merry Hill the Green vote went down; in Wednesfield South it went up. So the hope of getting any trend information between 2023 & 2024 is a non-starter.

(Table 4 does also rather suggest that in the wards where WGP stood a 'paper' candidate the Greens and Lib Dems are sharing the same pool of voters).

So, in order to get some baseline figures I have gone back as far as 2015, see Table 5:

Table 5: 2015-24 Local Election: votes cast in each ward

	2015	2016	2018	2019	2021	2022	2023	2024
Bilston North	144	0	110	0	148	0	274	0
Bilston South							0	0
Blakenhall**	0	0	0	0	151	0	0	126
Bushbury N.	116	63	96	134	99	0	0	0
Bush. S & Low Hill	0	0	0	209	137	0	0	0
East Park	144	50	0	0	140	0	110	0
Ettingshall North							225	0
Ettingshall S. & Spring Vale							279	0
Fallings Park	0	0	0	229	105	0	0	0
Graiseley*	277	168	232	234	252	250	433	240
Heath Town	0	0	0	0	301	159	315	193
Merry Hill*	0	208	0	415	227	0	448	233
Oxley**	148	0	155	114	130	94	0	266
Park*	335	228	192	359	249	237	0	491
Penn*	0	0	0	394	271	0	0	330
St Peters*	192	173	145	179	272	0	0	599
Tettenhall Regis*	0	0	120	254	210	207	0	240
Tettenhall Wightwick*	223	184	160	609	556	284	478	267
Wednesfield N.	144	200	67	122	112	0	197	0
Wednesfield S.	121	0	141	252	140	0	194	301
Total Green Votes	1844	1274	1418	3504	3500	1231	2953	3286
Green Candidates standing	10	8	10	13	19	6	10	11
Average vote per candidate	184	159	142	270	184	205	295	299

Note: 2021: 2 cand. in Heath Town & Tettenhall Wightwick

Note: The ward boundaries changed in 2023 so the comparisons between 2023/4 and before will not be as accurate as I would have liked, I can't see any way of correcting for that.

I think it does show a general upward trend in the Green vote over the years.

Table 6 below extracts the data for the two wards of interest:

Table 6: Average vote cast (in years standing)

	AVG	2024	Added
Park	267	491	224
St Peters	192	599	407

So in St Peters the effect of campaigning was to add nearly twice as many votes as in Park. But, as far as I am aware, twice as many leaflets were delivered in St Peters (5000 ie whole ward) as in Park ward.

Conclusions

- When Green Party candidates stand for election, the number of votes they receive has been trending up over the last 10 years (the total number of votes cast for the Green Party has been higher in some previous years, but this is mainly because there were more candidates standing).
- The Green Party are the third party in Wolverhampton.
- Looking back over the last 10 years I think St Peters this year was the Green Party's best result in % terms and only narrowly missed being best in terms of the number of votes cast as well.
- When you campaign (eg deliver leaflets) more people vote for you. This shouldn't be a surprise, but it is good to see it confirmed.
- It has not been possible to draw any conclusions about the relative effectiveness of the different styles of leaflet used in Park and St Peters wards. It may be that it doesn't matter; it may be just the fact delivering a leaflet drawing attention to the fact the Green Party is standing a candidate does the trick.

Mike Jenkins 23/05/24