

## **Voting Past, Present and Future**

### **Summary**

1. Bobby Duffy, Managing Director of the Social Research Institute at Ipsos MORI, and Professor Colin Rallings, Professor of Politics and Co Director of the Local Government Elections Centre at the University of Plymouth will give a post-election analysis following the local elections on Thursday 2<sup>nd</sup> May. They will give their expert opinion into the implications of the changes and what we might expect in the future.
2. They will also speak about their research into generational change and an update on individual electoral registration.

### **Biographies**

#### **Professor Colin Rallings, Professor of Politics and Co Director Local Government Elections Centre at University of Plymouth**



Colin Rallings' first degree was in Politics and Modern History from the University of Manchester. Subsequently he was awarded a Master's degree in Politics by Strathclyde and, in 1979, a Ph.D. by the University of Essex for a thesis on electoral behaviour. He joined the then Plymouth Polytechnic in 1976, being appointed Professor of Politics in 1997. He has held visiting appointments at the University of Leiden, the University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, the University of Queensland, and the Australian National University, Canberra. He is a member of the Economic and Social Research Council's (ESRC) panel of assessors for Politics and International Relations, and of the Council's Research Resources Board.

He is Co-Director of the Local Government Chronicle Elections Centre. With his co-researcher, Michael Thrasher, he established the Elections Centre in 1985 in order to collect, analyse and publish the results of local elections in Britain. The Centre produces the annual Local Elections Handbook, now in its 19<sup>th</sup> year of publication, which provides full details of local voting throughout Great Britain. Twentieth century local election results for a range of authorities are the subject of a new series of Centre publications.

Rallings and Thrasher have published extensively in the area of local electoral behaviour. A list of more recent publications can be found below. Since 1984 they have also published a monthly review of by-elections for the Local Government Chronicle. These results are used to develop a model that estimates the monthly national standing of the three main political parties. Rallings and Thrasher are frequent contributors to The Sunday Times and Daily Telegraph while Rallings is an elections analyst for ITN.

The Plymouth team has recently completed two other important projects relevant to electoral reform. The first project, funded by the DETR, has examined the determinants of local electoral turnout in England and is available from the DETR website. The second, a report on sub-national electoral systems in Europe, commissioned by the Rowntree Foundation, was recently published. A third project, sponsored by the Leverhulme Foundation, is examining the process and effects of re-drawing local authority ward boundaries and a research monograph on this topic will be published in 2001.

**Bobby Duffy, Managing Director of Social Research Institute at Ipsos MORI**



Bobby runs Ipsos MORI's Public Affairs specialism in the UK. This is made up of the Social Research Institute (the largest social research agency in the UK) and the Reputation Centre. He joined MORI in 1994 from an economic policy think tank and has worked in social research ever since. He has particularly focused on our work for major evaluations of government programmes, as well as policy development in public service reform. He also set up and ran a number of our key initiatives, including the Research Methods Unit and Participation Unit, and produces many of our main thought leadership reports. He writes and presents widely on public policy and political issues, and has been a User Fellow at the Centre for Analysis of Social Exclusion at LSE and spent time working in the Prime Minister's Strategy Unit.

Bobby is particularly focused on making sure that the huge wealth of information on social issues that Ipsos MORI collects is as widely used as possible to inform policy and academic thinking.

He lives in the Barbican with his partner and two daughters.

**Contact officer:** Joe Simpson  
**Position:** Principal Strategic Adviser  
**Phone no:** 07773 335 341  
**E-mail:** [joe.simpson@local.gov.uk](mailto:joe.simpson@local.gov.uk)