



GENERAL ELECTION 2010 – CCPR GUIDE

We have reached the end of one of the most tumultuous Parliamentary terms in British political history. The expenses scandal damaged the reputation of politics, and the global economic crisis caused the deepest recession for a generation. Parliament was formally dissolved on 12 April, the Election has been set for 6 May, and the parties will now be taking their ideas to the country over a frantic month of campaigning.

So, what will all this mean for sport and recreation? With so much to think about, we at CCPR thought members might value a guide to the election and what it might mean for sport and recreation. This paper will cover the current electoral picture, possible outcomes, and the sport and recreation policies of the three main parties.

Dominic Goggins, CCPR Fiscal and Regulatory Officer, will be on hand all the way up to 6 May to discuss any aspect of the election that may interest or concern you or your sport. He can be contacted at dgoggins@ccpr.org.uk or 020 7976 3903.

STATE OF THE PARTIES

This looks like being one of the closest elections in living memory and is being made more interesting by the fact that this is essentially the first 'online election' in the UK, with social networks such as Twitter and Facebook, and websites such as You Tube, being used extensively by the parties. 2010 also brings the first televised debates between the leaders of the three major parties, providing Messrs Brown, Cameron and Clegg a chance to speak directly to voters about the choice they face.

Labour has enjoyed three full Parliamentary terms with an overall majority for the first time in its history, but current polling suggests that it is unlikely to continue into a fourth term. Polling also suggests a narrow Conservative victory or a hung Parliament, although Labour retains a slim chance of an overall majority. At the time of writing, Mr Clegg's performance in the first televised leaders' debate has added the extra dimension of an increasingly realistic challenge from the Liberal Democrats.

CCPR Swingometer

The 'swingometer' has long been used to demonstrate the margin of an election result and the mood of the country. There are some key 'swings' to look out for in 2010:

- 1.6% swing against Labour. This is the uniform national swing needed for Labour to lose their overall majority. This would lead to a hung Parliament.
- 2.5% swing against Labour: This is the uniform national swing needed for the Liberal Democrats to produce a hung parliament.
- 4.3% swing against Labour. This is the uniform national swing needed for the Conservatives to become the largest party. They would still not have an overall majority.
- 6.9% swing against Labour: This is the uniform national swing needed for the Conservatives to gain an overall majority and therefore form the next government. It would also be the largest swing towards the Conservatives since World War II. In reality, though, as the Conservatives need to win an extra 116 seats to secure even the smallest overall

majority, it is likely that they will need a national swing of around 10% to ensure that any majority they can win is workable.

Consequences for Sport

With so many possible outcomes, CCPR is aiming to show how each would affect sport and recreation. The consequences of a hung Parliament and victory for all three of the major parties is outlined below:

Hung Parliament

This is the name for the situation when after an election no political party has an overall majority in the House of Commons. Without a written constitution the response to such a circumstance is governed by statements by courtiers and senior civil servants as to what the constitution requires the Monarch to do. Possible scenarios in the event of a hung Parliament include:

- The incumbent Prime Minister may continue in office and offer a Queen's Speech; that is, a speech delivered by the monarch but written by the Government, outlining its programme. This is likely only if the prime minister's party still has the largest number of seats, or a pact with another party can be engineered to ensure an overall majority.
- If the Prime Minister cannot command the largest party in the Commons and has no pact then he may ask the monarch to dissolve Parliament and call a further election. In the absence of precedent it remains unclear whether the monarch would be obliged to accede to this request.
- More likely, the Prime Minister would resign and advise the monarch upon a successor. Usually the monarch would heed that advice, although in the last resort the monarch is not bound to do so.
- The new Prime Minister would then form a government and if a working majority could again not be sustained, a dissolution of Parliament and calling of a second election would be sought and gained from the monarch.

Essentially, then, in the event of a hung Parliament a pact between two of the parties would probably be required to avoid a second General Election within a matter of months.

Labour Victory

Labour's Manifesto is entitled ***A Future Fair for All***. It contains the following commitments in relation to sport and recreation:

- To deliver the Olympic Games on time and on budget, and secure a soft and hard legacy that makes the best use of world class facilities and gets two million people more active.
- "Taking part in sport uncovers talent, improves physical fitness, and encourages important social skills. We are providing more resources to give every child the opportunity to do at least five hours' sport per week. This will be provided through extended schools, community sports clubs and 3,000 new Olympic-inspired sports clubs. We will invest in a new national network of school sports coaches to increase the quality and quantity of coaching in some of the most deprived areas."
- Celebration of the Decade of Sport, capped off by a successful bid for the 2018 Football World Cup
- Creating strong, more cohesive, active communities, which includes a strong community sport structure.
- Creating Registered Supporters Trusts, enabled to buy stakes in their football clubs, "bringing mutualism to the heart of football."

Conservative Victory

The Conservative Party's Manifesto is entitled ***Invitation to Join the Government of Britain***. It contains the following commitments in relation to sport and recreation:

- To return the National Lottery to its four original pillars - “sports, heritage and the arts will each see their original allocations of 20 per cent of good cause money restored.”
- To deliver a successful Olympic Games and ensure that the participation legacy is achieved
- To support the other major international events secured in recent years, including Glasgow 2014, and the Rugby League and Union World Cups in 2013 and 2015.

The Conservatives have also indicated that they will allow Community Amateur Sports Clubs to claim Gift Aid on junior subscriptions – CCPR’s Subs for Clubs campaign – although that didn’t make it into the Manifesto.

Liberal Democrat Victory

The Liberal Democrat Party’s Manifesto is entitled ***Change that Works for You***. It contains the following commitments in relation to sport and recreation:

- To support the delivery of the 2012 Olympic Games and secure the participation legacy, as well as supporting bids for other major international sporting events.
- Reform the National Lottery - “We will change the way the National Lottery is taxed from a ticket tax to a gross profits tax, which is forecast to deliver more for good causes and the Exchequer.”
- Use cash in dormant betting accounts to set up a capital fund for improving local sports facilities and supporting sports clubs.
- Close loopholes that allow playing fields to be sold or built upon without going through the normal planning procedures.

CCPR ENGAGEMENT WITH THE NEW PARLIAMENT

CCPR will also be planning for the next Parliament, building a profile of the new Parliamentarians who may have a personal interest in sport and ensuring that every MP understands how important sport can be to people in their constituencies and to the strength of their local communities. Governing bodies or clubs who are interested in engaging with the new Parliament are also welcome to contact Dominic Goggins at CCPR.