

POWER AND PEOPLE IN THE UK CONSTITUTION

Seminar on Thursday 29th June 12.30-5.00pm,
Attlee Suite, Portcullis House



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Hosted by Electoral Reform Society with former members of the All Party Parliamentary Group on Devolution, Decentralisation and Reform; Local Government Association; RSA; Involve

Context

Despite huge constitutional changes taking place, important questions remain concerning the role of the people in constitution making. From the recent election of the first ever ‘metro-mayors’ to continued disagreement about the form Brexit should take, the voice of citizens is often lacking in these momentous debates.

With this in mind, we are organising a seminar in London comprised of civil servants, politicians, academics, campaigners and democracy practitioners to discover how we can advance understanding of, and promote good practice in, the realm of democratic engagement.

The questions raised about where powers will be held once transferred from EU institutions, the possibility of a second Scottish independence referendum, the functioning of the new mayoralities, and the subsequent calling of a UK general election on June 8th make the issue of public involvement in the UK constitution more vital than ever.

This event will be a post-election examination of the issue of where powers lie within and between the nations of the UK and one year after the EU referendum examine what role there is for the public in shaping the future of UK democracy.

The event will address two main questions:

1. Where should powers lie within and between nations once Britain is no longer an EU member?
2. What is the public role in negotiations/shaping the final form of Brexit and in determining question 1?

Seminar focus and format

The event will bring together up to 50 key individuals involved in these momentous changes (from politicians and policy makers to academics and democratic practitioners) to assess where the British constitution is going and what role the people can and should take in its future. A crucial aspect of the debate is the role of the nations and subnational authorities in the future configuration of power in the UK.

This half-day conference will look at these questions with a view of integrating both the novel experiences of democratic innovations (such as citizens’ assemblies and other deliberative fora) and the emerging and evolving arrangements of the devolved institutions throughout the UK. The format, combining brief keynotes and responders together with workshops on key themes will enable people from different fields to challenge each other

on what the public's role ought to be, and how this can be achieved. Confirmed participants include Prof. Vernon Bogdanor, Prof. Tony Travers and Rt Hon Dominic Grieve MP.

Bringing together civil servants and deliberative practitioners, with think-tanks and academics, should assist a rich melding of theory and practice, as well as influence the government's thinking on public and parliamentary involvement, at the point of commencing formal Brexit negotiations. A report authored by event participants will capture their perspectives following the discussions will be produced by the ERS in conjunction with partners.

12.30-13.00	Lunch, introduction and welcome from Katie Ghose (ERS)
13.00-13.45	Wigan Council Chief Executive Donna Hall CBE
13.45-14.30	Workshops 1
14.30-14.45	Break
14.45-15.30	Mark Drakeford AM Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government
15.30-15.35	Break
15.35-16.20	Workshops 2
16.20-16.30	Next steps and conclusions

Chair: Felicity Evans (BBC)

Workshops 1

- Devolution and the changing role of local government: Councillor Mark Hawthorne ([People and Places Board, Local Government Association](#)) with Jessica Garland (ERS)
- [Involving citizens in deliberative democracy](#): Tim Hughes (Involve) with Lord Tyler
- Wales, Scotland and Brexit: Doreen Grove (Scottish Government), Dr Diana Stirbu (London Metropolitan University)

Workshops 2

- Innovations in involvement: Dr Andrew Mycock ([Kirklees Democracy Commission](#)) and Reema Patel ([RSA's Citizens' Economic Council](#)) with Willie Sullivan (ERS)
- The role of deliberation in shaping the constitution: Claudia Chwalisz ([Populus](#)) and Ed Hammond ([Centre for Public Scrutiny](#)), with Lord Purvis
- Citizens' Assembly on Brexit: Dr Alan Renwick (UCL Constitution Unit), and Northern Ireland Border Deliberation: Dr Kevin McNicholl (Queen's University, Belfast), with Dr Edward Molloy (ERS)

Biographies

- **Claudia Chwalisz** is a Consultant at Populus and a Crook Public Service Fellow at the Crick Centre, The University of Sheffield. She is the author of [The People's Verdict: Adding Informed Citizen Voices to Public Decision-Making](#) (2017) and [The Populist Signal: Why Politics and Democracy Need to Change](#) (2015).
- **Mark Drakeford** is the Cabinet Secretary for Finance and Local Government in the Welsh Government, and the Welsh Labour Assembly Member for Cardiff West since 2011.
- **Felicity Evans** is a journalist and broadcaster based in Cardiff who's presented a number of news and current affairs programmes including The World Tonight, Farming Today and Open Country on BBC Radio 4. Newshour on World Service Radio and and Dragon's Eye, The Wales Report and Good Morning Wales for BBC Wales.
- **Jessica Garland** joined ERS in November 2011. A former Senior Political Adviser, she has spent six years working in Parliament for Shadow Ministers and MPs. Jess is responsible for policy and research development for the Society. She has a Research Masters in Government, Policy and Politics and was formerly Chair of a youth-led volunteering charity.
- **Doreen Grove** is Head of Open Government in Scottish Government. She is based in Local Government and Communities, but works across public services. Much of the work of her team is supporting is the transformation of how they work, as public servants, to ensure that people can be involved in the decisions that affect them.
- **Katie Ghose** is a barrister and campaigner. Chief Executive of the Electoral Reform Society since 2010, she has established the Society as the UK's leading campaign for a better democracy. Previously Katie was Director of the British Institute of Human Rights (2005-2010) where she pioneered new initiatives to bring human rights to life for everyone in the UK. In 2009 she was awarded Pro Bono Lawyer of the Year by the Asian Lawyers' Association.
- **Donna Hall**, CBE is Chief Executive at Wigan Council. She leads on public service reform in Greater Manchester and last year was named Northern Powerwomen Transformational Leader of the year.
- **Ed Hammond** is a Director of the Centre for Public Scrutiny and leads on programmes, projects and policy developments relating to promoting and improving scrutiny and governance in local government. Ed leads CfPS's work on devolution and has been influential in shaping national thinking on the scrutiny elements of the new Devolution Act.
- **Mark Hawthorne** is the Leader of Gloucestershire County Council. First elected to Gloucester City Council in 1998 at the age of 22, Mark went on to become the council's youngest leader in 2004 before deciding to step down in 2007. Mark returned to Local Government in 2009 when he was elected to Gloucestershire County Council. Mark was elected as leader in 2010 and again following the May 2013 elections, and was awarded an MBE for services to local government in the 2014 New Year Honours list.
- **Tim Hughes** is director of Involve - a charity and think tank working to make politics more open, participatory and deliberative. Tim has advised national governments, devolved governments and local authorities in the UK on designing and facilitating

effective participatory processes; worked with multilateral organisations and international civil society to improve the practice of participation and open government globally; and researched and written on topics including public participation, open government, democratic reform, civil society advocacy and public administration.

- **Kevin McNicholl** is a post-doctoral research fellow at Queen's University Belfast. His research focuses on the use of citizens' assemblies to gauge public opinion on possible post-Brexit border scenarios in Ireland.
- **Edward Molloy** joined the Electoral Reform Society in March 2015 and is now developing the democratic innovations strand of ERS work, looking at how new modes of deliberation and participation can help build a better democracy as well as co-ordinating the development of ERS in Northern Ireland. He recently completed his PhD in politics at Queen's University, Belfast.
- **Andy Mycock** is a Reader in Politics at the University of Huddersfield and the Chair of the Kirkless Democracy Commission. His recent work has focused on the development of active citizenship and democratic participation of young people in the UK. Andy served on the Ministry of Justice Youth Citizenship Commission in 2008-9. The Commission reported to government in June 2009 (research and final reports). He has also have published widely on issues of youth citizenship and government youth initiatives such as National Citizen Service.
- **Reema Patel** is the Programme Manager for the RSA Citizens' Economic Council, an initiative that seeks to increase and strengthen the influence that ordinary citizens have over national economic policy. She formerly worked as a policy analyst on Sciencewise, a BEIS-funded and cross-government programme using deliberative approaches to engage citizens on science and technology policy.
- **Alan Renwick** is Deputy Director of the Constitution Unit at University College London and Director of the Citizens' Assembly on Brexit. He is a political scientist whose research focuses on the institutions through which citizens can engage in politics.
- **Diana Stirbu** is a Senior Lecturer in Public Policy at London Metropolitan University, specialising in constitutional design, public engagement and Welsh devolution. She often undertakes advisory and consultancy work in relation to the National Assembly for Wales, provides expert advice on constitutional and legislative matters, and delivers bespoke executive training for overseas civil servants. Diana is also an Independent Trustee for the Centre for Public Scrutiny and promotes the importance of scrutiny and accountability in the governance process.
- **Willie Sullivan** is the Director of ERS Scotland. He has worked at senior levels in the business, voluntary and public sector. He was the Campaign consultant on the successful Fairshare Campaign for introduction of STV for Scottish Local Government and was Campaign Director for Vote for a Change, the campaign to secure a referendum on electoral reform. He also has been a paid political advisor to senior politicians in the UK and Scottish governments.
- **Paul Tyler** has campaigned for electoral and political reform throughout his political career, both in the Commons and Lords, and is now Liberal Democrat Shadow Minister for Constitutional & Political Reform.

Attendees

NAME	ORGANISATION
Titus Alexander	Democracy Matters
Sarah Allan	Involve
Heather Bolton	South East Councils
Ruth Breidenbach-Roe	Locality
David Burnside	New Century Media
Alvin Carpio	Joseph Rowntree Foundation
Claudia Chwalisz	Populus
Sarah Clarke	Unlock Democracy
Philip Clifford	Local Government Association
Catherine Cooke	Building Change Trust
Ronnie Cowan MP	Scottish National Party
Owen Davies	Head of the Constitutional Affairs and Intergovernmental Relations
Mark Drakeford AM	Labour Party
Hannah Duffy	Local Government Association
Felicity Evans	BBC WALES
Jessica Garland	Electoral Reform Society
Katie Ghose	Electoral Reform Society
Kayshani Gibbon	RSA
Dominic Grieve MP	Conservative Party
Doreen Grove	Scottish Government
Donna Hall	Chief Executive of Wigan Council
Ed Hammond	Centre for Public Scrutiny
Mark Hawthorne	LGA / Leader of Gloucestershire County Council
Jacqui Howard	RSA
Tim Hughes	Involve
Jack Hunter	IPPR
Libby Keys	Building Change Trust
Ben Kind	Unison
Stephen Kinnock MP	Labour Party
Dr Kevin McNicholl	Queen's University, Belfast
Auriol Miller	Institute of Welsh Affairs

Edward Molloy	Electoral Reform Society
Josiah Mortimer	Electoral Reform Society
Andy Mycock	Huddersfield University
Chi Onwurah MP	Labour Party
Reema Patel	RSA's Citizens' Economic Council
Nick Perks	Joseph Rowntree Charitable Trust
Jeremy Purvis	APPG on Decentralisation, Devolution and Reform
Dr Alan Renwick	UCL Constitution Unit
Liz Saville Roberts MP	Plaid Cymru
Jim Rollo	Sussex University
Simon Sapper	Freelance
Jonathon Shafi	Electoral Reform Society
Martin Sime	Scottish Council for Voluntary Organisations
Dick Sorabji	London Councils
Dr Diana Stirbu	London Metropolitan University
Willie Sullivan	Electoral Reform Society
Professor Tony Travers	London School of Economics
Lord Paul Tyler	Liberal Democrats
George Wilson	Liberty
