



The 2012 Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales: aspects of participation and administration

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Summary

- Of the 37 Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) contests in England, 15 were won by the Conservatives, 12 by Labour and 10 by Independent candidates. In Wales, Independents won 2 seats, and Labour and the Conservatives one each.
- The electorate for the PCC contests was nearly 36.3 million –34 million in England and 2.3 million in Wales.
- Over 175,000 people registered to vote in the weeks leading up to November 15th; more than half of them taking advantage of the so-called ‘11 day rule’ introduced by the 2006 Electoral Administration Act.
- Nearly 5.5 million votes were cast, making the overall turnout 15.1%. This is by some way the lowest turnout ever recorded in a nationwide election.
- The proportion of ballots rejected at the count (2.84%) was higher than at any other nationwide electoral event in recent years, but comparable to some other local contests held using the Supplementary Vote system.
- The majority of those rejected were deemed ‘unmarked’ or ‘void for uncertainty’, but in a third of cases more than one candidate had been chosen in the first preference column.
- Some 15% of ballots were rejected at the count of second votes. In over 90% of cases this was because voters had failed to record any such second preference.
- More than 5.8 million postal votes were issued - 16.1% of the entire eligible electorate. In most areas of England this represented a small decrease compared with both the 2011 AV referendum and the 2010 general election. In Wales, however, more electors were registered for a postal vote than on either of those previous occasions.
- In six English counting areas more than 30% of the electorate had a postal vote.
- Just under 50% of those with a postal ballot returned it. By way of contrast, however, less than one in 10 of those electors required to vote ‘in person’ did so. In each case this marked a record low participation rate.
- The number of postal votes at the count in both England and Wales was about half the total cast. In the North East region of England more than two-thirds of all votes were cast by post.
- The proportion of postal votes rejected or otherwise not included in the count was 4.7%. In England the rate of rejection (4.8%) was somewhat higher than at the 2010 general election but lower than at the 2011 AV referendum; in Wales (3.7%) it was lower than in both.

- Rejection following a mismatch of signature and/or date of birth was more common than rejection for incomplete information, and in a quarter of cases voters returned their postal voting envelopes but failed to include either the ballot paper itself or the verification statement or both.
- More than one half of one percent of electors with a postal vote were granted a waiver to use their date of birth as their sole identifier. Such waivers were nearly twice as common in Wales as in England.
- Just 24,000 electors (0.07% of the total) appointed proxies. This was a quarter the level at the 2010 general election and half that at the 2011 combined local elections and AV referendum.
- Turnout was higher in those places which combined the PCC elections with other electoral events than it was in adjacent areas with stand-alone PCC contests.

Introduction

The inaugural Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) elections were held on Thursday 15th November. They covered 41 Police Authority areas throughout England and Wales outside London. On the same day parliamentary by-elections were held in the Cardiff South and Penarth, Corby, and Manchester Central constituencies; there was an election for the first directly-elected mayor of Bristol; and a referendum in Hartlepool to determine the future of that council's mayor.

The PCC and mayoral elections used the Supplementary Vote (SV) electoral system which allows voters to record first and second choice votes, and for their second choice to be taken into account if no candidate receives more than 50% of first preference votes.

Results

Of the 37 contests in England, 15 were won by the Conservatives, 12 by Labour and 10 by Independent candidates. Seven contests were determined after the first ballot –in two cases because there were only 2 candidates, and in 5 cases because the winning (Labour) candidate received more than 50% of first preference votes.

In Wales, Independents won 2 seats, and Labour and the Conservatives one each. There were only two candidates in the seat won by the Conservatives.

In 8 elections in England the candidate who had been in second place after the first preference votes emerged as the winner following the count of eligible second preferences.

Electorate

The franchise for the PCC elections was the same as for a local government election. Every registered elector in England and Wales outside London had the opportunity to vote – a total of nearly 36.3 million individuals. Some 34 million of these were in England and 2.3 million in Wales. The Police Authority with the largest electorate was Greater Manchester (2.0 million electors) and that with the smallest was Cumbria (0.39 million electors).

Some 78,000 electors, (76,000 in England) were added to the register by the monthly notice of alteration published on November 1st; a further 99,000 electors (93,000 in England) registered to vote under the so-called ‘11 day rule’ which was introduced by the 2006 Electoral Administration Act and allows people to register to vote until 11 working days before an election.

Returning Officers also reported that over 20,000 people tried to register after the deadline, but that fewer than 800 appeared at polling stations wishing to vote without being registered. The latter two figures should be seen as approximate as not all EROs kept appropriate records.

Turnout

Turnout at the PCC elections can be measured in a number of ways. Taking into account the total number of votes at the ballot box (that is, including all those votes rejected at the count), the turnout was 15.13%. A more traditional measure of turnout, valid votes cast as a proportion of the eligible electorate, gives a rate across England and Wales of 14.70%.

Turnout on both measures was a little higher in Wales than in England – see Table 1 and Table 3. In each country, however, the turnout was by some way the lowest recorded in a nationwide contest. The previous low was 22.7% in England and 28.1% in Wales at the 1999 European Parliament elections.

Table 1: Turnout at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>Electorate</i>	<i>Total votes cast</i>	<i>%turnout</i>
England and Wales	36,294,821	5,491,027	15.13
England	33,982,414	5,135,741	15.11
Wales	2,312,407	355,286	15.36

The Police Authority area with the highest ‘ballot box’ turnout was Northamptonshire (19.8%) and that with the lowest was Staffordshire (12.0%) – see Table 2. The local authority with the highest turnout was Corby (36.1%) where a simultaneous parliamentary by-election took place; that with the lowest Barrow in Furness (8.4%).

Table 2: Police Authority and local authority counting area level ‘ballot box’ turnout at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>Highest turnout 2012</i>		<i>Lowest turnout 2012</i>	
Police Authority	Northamptonshire	19.8	Staffordshire	12.0
	Avon and Somerset	19.6	West Midlands	12.3
	Humberside	19.5	Merseyside	12.7
	Bedfordshire	18.2	Essex	13.1
	Dyfed-Powys	17.1	Thames Valley	13.3
Local counting area	Corby	36.1	Barrow in Furness	8.4
	East Northamptonshire	29.2	Stoke on Trent	9.5
	Bristol	27.4	Halton	9.7
	South Lakeland	23.8	Thurrock	10.2
	East Riding of Yorkshire	23.2	Cannock Chase	10.3

We are also able to examine aggregate turnout taking into account all those electors who tried to vote but whose postal vote returns and/or ballot papers were rejected –see Table 3. ‘Ballot box’ turnout includes all electors whose ballot papers were scrutinised at the count. ‘Total participation’ turnout adds those who tried to vote, but whose postal vote returns were deemed invalid and therefore not forwarded to the count. Each adjustment has the effect of fractionally increasing the % of the electorate who participated at the election, but makes little difference to the overall pattern.

Table 3: ‘Adjusted’ and ‘unadjusted’ turnout at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>Valid vote % turnout</i>	<i>‘Ballot box’ % turnout</i>	<i>‘Total participation’ % turnout</i>
England and Wales	14.7	15.1	15.5
England	14.7	15.1	15.5
Wales	14.9	15.4	15.7

Rejected ballots

The number of ballot papers rejected at the first count was a small fraction of the total cast (2.84%), but high compared with all other recent nationwide electoral events –see Table 4. The previous highest rejection rate was 1.0% at the coincident local elections and AV referendum in 2011; the lowest was 0.3% at the 2005 and 2010 general elections. However, the rejection rate at individual mayoral elections using the SV system has reached similar levels in the past, especially where those contests were combined with other elections. For example, it was 4.3% in Bedford and 3.3% Middlesbrough in 2011 and 2.8% in Liverpool in 2012.

A majority of ballots were rejected because the voter had either not marked the ballot paper or made their intention clear –see Table 5. In a third of cases, votes were rejected because more than one candidate had been chosen in the first preference column. This is perhaps not surprising. The SV system

The 2012 Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales: aspects of participation and administration

and ballot paper was new to most voters and many are likely to have been uncertain where to record their two available preferences. However without the ability to examine individual ballot slips we can never know precisely what they did or the exact reason for rejection.

The highest proportion of rejected ballot papers in a Police Authority area was in North Yorkshire (7.2%) where there were only two candidates and therefore a traditional 'first past the post' contest was held. At the local authority level Ceredigion, within the similarly two candidate Dyfed-Powys Police Authority, had the largest percentage of rejections (11.2%). Indeed, with North Yorkshire local authorities occupying the top four places for rejected ballots in England, and with Powys joining Ceredigion at the top of the Welsh table, it may be that voter reaction to the election itself and the choice of candidates available played as large a part as confusion about the new system in leading to ineligible ballots.

At the other extreme fewer than 2% of ballots were rejected in the Humberside and Kent Police Authority areas, in 49 of the 293 local authority counting areas in England, and on the Isle of Anglesey in North Wales. The lowest proportion of rejections was in North Lincolnshire (Humberside) with 1.2% and in Sunderland (Northumbria) with 1.3%.

There was some discussion in social media sources about the extent to which ballots had been spoilt intentionally. However, there can be no firm empirical evidence about this as none of the categories for rejection make any distinction between inadvertent and conscious acts. It seems certain though that many electors did deliberately choose not to cast a valid ballot in the PCC elections. There can be little other interpretation of the figures from Dyfed-Powys and North Yorkshire discussed above, nor from the fact that nearly five times as many ballot papers were rejected in Bristol at the PCC contest (6.4%) as at the coincident mayoral election (1.2%) despite both being conducted using the SV system.

Table 4: Rejected ballot papers at the 2012 PCC elections and comparisons

	<i>Ballot papers rejected at the count</i>	<i>% of ballots at count</i>
England and Wales	155,884	2.84
England	144,811	2.82
Wales	11,073	3.12

Table 5: Reasons for rejection of ballot papers at the first count at 2012 PCC elections

	<i>No official mark (%)</i>	<i>Voting more than once (%)</i>	<i>Voter could be identified (%)</i>	<i>Ballot paper unmarked (%)</i>	<i>Ballot paper void for uncertainty (%)</i>
England and Wales	134 (0.1)	51,026 (32.7)	2,460 (1.6)	50,530 (32.4)	51,733 (33.2)
England	107(0.1)	47,307 (32.7)	2,411 (1.7)	47,941 (33.1)	47,044 (32.5)
Wales	27 (0.2)	3,719 (33.6)	49(0.4)	2,589 (23.4)	4,689 (42.3)

The ballot papers in the 33 contests where voters' second preferences had to be taken into account were scrutinised again with the exception of those where a valid first vote had been cast for one of the top two candidates and those already deemed invalid. Second votes cast for one of the eliminated candidates were, of course, not counted but neither were they recorded as rejected. Rather the formal rejection of ballots was for reasons similar to those for the first count. As illustrated in Table 6, in over 90% of cases it was because voters had failed to record any second preference.

Table 6: Reasons for rejection of ballot papers at the second count at 2012 PCC elections

	<i>No official mark (%)</i>	<i>Voting more than once (%)</i>	<i>Voter could be identified (%)</i>	<i>Ballot paper unmarked (%)</i>	<i>Ballot paper void for uncertainty (%)</i>
England and Wales	1 (0.0)	2,083 (0.9)	840(0.3)	218,622 (91.0)	18,603 (7.7)
England	1 (0.0)	2,043(0.9)	839(0.4)	209,709 (91.1)	17,594 (7.6)
Wales	0 (-)	41 (0.4)	1(0.0)	8,913 (89.5)	1,009 (10.1)

It is impossible to know from these data whether this was due to a misunderstanding of the electoral system or a deliberate wish to vote for one candidate only. Doubtless many of those voting for one of the top two candidates similarly did not mark a second preference, but those figures were not collated. The average proportion of second votes rejected was 15.2% in England and 13.9% in Wales. The highest proportion was in Pendle (32.2%) and more than 30% were also rejected in Stratford-upon-Avon. The lowest proportion was 4.0% in Bath and North East Somerset followed by 7.0% in Reading.

Inspection of the data suggests that rejected (usually unmarked) ballots were particularly prevalent where a locally popular, main party candidate –often coming in first or second place at the authority level- did not make it to the second round. Many of his/her supporters seem to have been content to vote just once and/or assume that their candidate would secure a place in the run off.

Postal voting – uptake and turnout

The proportion of electors with postal votes remains at about one in six of the total, but appears to have stabilised. More than 5.8 million were issued for the PCC elections -16.1% of the total electorate (see Table 7). Comparisons with previous elections can best be made at the national and regional level. In Wales the number of postal ballots issued continues to rise, but in every region in England there was a fall compared with the 2011 AV referendum. In every region except the North West and South West the total was also below that at the 2010 general election. The four regions which had all postal ballots at the 2004 European Parliament elections continue to top the England league table more than eight years after the event.

In terms of individual counting areas, Sunderland had the largest proportion of postal electors (as it had at the 2011 AV Referendum) and Barrow in Furness the least –see Table 8. In Wales, Neath Port Talbot topped the list with nearly a quarter of electors registered to vote by post; in Gwynedd, on the other hand, the proportion was just 11.9%. In six areas of England more than 30% of electors were on the postal vote register –Sunderland; South Tyneside; Stevenage; Telford and Wrekin; Gateshead; and Rushcliffe.

Table 7: Postal voting at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>Postal ballots issued</i>	<i>%electors with postal ballot</i>	
England and Wales	5,845,801	16.1	
England	5,435,429	16.0	
Wales	410,372	17.7	
English regions	<i>%electors with postal ballot PCC 2012</i>	<i>%electors with postal ballot AV ref 2011</i>	<i>%electors with postal ballot GE 2010</i>
East Midlands*	16.1	16.6	16.2
Eastern	14.1	14.8	14.5
North East*	25.1	27.1	26.7
North West*	17.8	18.2	17.7
South East	14.4	15.1	14.6
South West	15.8	16.0	15.7
West Midlands	12.5	13.1	12.8
Yorkshire & The Humber*	17.5	18.1	18.0
Wales	17.7	17.1	16.4

*All-postal voting at the 2004 European parliament elections.

Table 8: Counting area level issue of postal votes at the 2012 PCC elections

<i>Highest % of postal electors 2012</i>		<i>Lowest % of postal electors 2012</i>		
England	Sunderland	39.8	Barrow in Furness	6.1
Wales	Neath Port Talbot	23.5	Gwynedd	11.9

As noted in previous elections, turnout among postal electors was again significantly higher than that among in-person voters –see Table 9. However, with fewer than one in two returning their postal ballot papers, it was much lower this time than at any other election for which we have records. For example, at the 2009 European Parliament elections the postal turnout was 64.4%; it was 83.2% at the 2010 general election; 71.4% in both England and Wales at the 2011 AV referendum; and 68.0% at 2012 the English local elections. The highest turnout among postal electors was in Kingston-upon-Hull (67.5%); the lowest in South Staffordshire (35.5%).

By comparison the ‘in-person’ turnout was derisory –less than 10% in both countries. Corby, where a parliamentary by-election encompassed the entire local authority area, topped the league table at 30.5%; Sunderland brought up the rear with a miserly 3.6%. This contrasts with a high of 42.8% and a low of 14.1% (Sunderland again) among local authorities at the 2012 local elections in England.

Table 9: Turnout among postal and in-person electors at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>Postal ballot papers returned</i>	<i>Ballot box turnout (in-person electors)</i>	
	<i>2012</i>	<i>2012</i>	<i>Difference</i>
England and Wales	48.2	9.2	39.0
England	48.4	9.2	39.2
Wales	45.4	9.3	36.1

The increase in the take up of postal votes, and the discrepancy between postal and in-person turnouts, had an inevitable impact on the proportion of total votes cast in that way. In both England and Wales about a half of all the votes counted were postal ballots –see Table 10. In the North East region postal votes comprised two-thirds of the total. In nine counting areas more than three-quarters of votes were cast by post; in three of these (South Tyneside, Stevenage, and Sunderland) the figure exceeded 80%.

The 2012 Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales:
aspects of participation and administration

Table 10: Postal votes as % of votes at count at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>postal votes as % of votes at count</i>
England and Wales	48.9
England	48.8
Wales	50.4
English regions	
East Midlands*	47.3
Eastern	44.7
North East*	67.0
North West*	56.1
South East	45.1
South West	42.7
West Midlands	44.1
Yorkshire & The Humber*	53.0

*2004 all-postal pilot regions

Postal voting – invalid returns

Under the provisions of the Electoral Administration Act 2006, all those electors opting to vote by post are required to provide two pieces of personal information both when they apply for a postal ballot and when they return it. This record of their signature and date of birth is then used to verify their ballot paper and so provide additional security against personation or other electoral fraud.

A number of electors who try to vote by post are found to have completed the documentation incorrectly and their ballot papers are rejected before the count. Judgements about rejection are made following a verification procedure which aims to match the information provided by electors at the application and voting stages. At the 2012 PCC elections almost all local returning officers across England and Wales claimed to have verified 100% of all postal ballot returns. In many of those few cases where the proportion verified was close to but less than 100%, the evidence suggests that covering envelopes returned with no postal vote statements enclosed were simply set aside before the formal verification process.

A total of more than 130,000 individual postal ballots were rejected or otherwise excluded from the count. This amounted to 4.7% of all those returned. The proportion rejected was 4.8% in England and 3.8% in Wales—see Table 11. In England the rate of rejection was somewhat higher than at the 2010 general election but lower than at the 2011 AV referendum; in Wales it was lower than in both. In 2010 and 2011 a similar number of postal votes were issued, but many more returned. In 14 local authorities in England more than 8% of returned postal votes were rejected; in 19 authorities in England and one in Wales less than 1% were. We have commented in previous reports for the Commission (see, for example, *Postal vote verification and rejections in Great Britain: general and local elections 2010*) that there appears to be some association between an electoral area's social character

and the degree to which votes cast by its postal electors are rejected. There is prima facie evidence of a similar relationship at the PCC elections, but more systematic investigation is outside the scope of this report.

Table 11: Invalid postal vote returns at the 2012 PCC elections and comparisons

England and Wales

Number returned	2,816,506
Number included 'in count'	2,684,847
Rejected or otherwise not included in count	131,659

England

Number returned	2,630,355
Number included 'in count'	2,505,763
Rejected or otherwise not included in count	124,592

Wales

Number returned	186,151
Number included 'in count'	179,084
Rejected or otherwise not included in count	7,067

	<i>Invalid as % of returned 2012 PCC elections</i>	<i>Invalid as % of returned 2011 AV referendum</i>	<i>Invalid as % of returned 2010 general election</i>
England and Wales	4.7	5.9	3.8
England	4.8	5.7	3.8
Wales	3.8	7.3	4.2

In order to obtain more information on the reasons for postal vote rejection than the statutory forms allow and to try to overcome inconsistencies within and between local authorities in the recording of answers to questions B16-18 within Form 5—'Number of postal voting statements NOT subject to verification rejected -not completed'; 'Number of postal voting statements rejected following verification -not completed'; and 'Number of postal voting statements rejected following verification -personal identifier match', each returning officer was asked to compile and submit additional data on the outcomes of their verification process.

Table 12 makes clear that rejection following a mismatch of signature and/or date of birth was more common than rejection for incomplete or missing information. The latter accounts for less than a third of rejections; the former for half (Wales) or a little less (England). In a further quarter of cases voters returned their postal voting envelopes but failed to include either the ballot paper itself or the verification statement or both. Having said that, the vast majority did of course correctly file their returns complete with matching signature and date of birth.

Although the overall pattern is similar to that found at both the 2010 general election and the 2011 AV referendum, these data should be seen as

The 2012 Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales:
aspects of participation and administration

indicative rather than definitive. For example, there remain sharp differences between counting areas in the distribution of the reasons for rejection which are likely to be the result of the way ballots are interpreted and recorded locally as much as different behaviour patterns among postal electors. One aspect of this to which it is worth drawing attention is that of the 21 authorities where more than 40% of all rejected postal ballots were deemed to lack a signature, 14 used the Strand software programme and seven the Halarose one; on the other hand, of the 65 authorities where fewer than 1% of rejected postal votes were ruled ineligible for this reason, 49 used Xpress software compared with 14 using Strand and five Halarose.

Table 12. Reasons for rejection of postal votes at verification by % of total rejected at 2012 PCC elections (rounded)

	E and W	England	Wales
PV statement rejected (No signature)	17	17	17
PV statement rejected (No DoB)	4	4	4
PV statement rejected (Both)	10	10	7
Proportion rejected (incomplete information)	31	31	28
PV statement mismatched signature	21	21	17
PV statement mismatched DoB	16	16	23
PV statement mismatched both	7	7	10
Proportion rejected (mismatching)	44	44	50
Prop rejected (ballot paper or statement missing)	25	25	22

Waivers

A concession granted under the terms of the EAA 2006 was that postal electors who either had a disability, or were illiterate, or were unable to furnish a consistent signature could apply for a waiver to use their date of birth as their sole identifier. Some 28,139 waivers were issued in England and 3,386 in Wales. Table 13 shows that the proportion of postal electors granted such a waiver at the PCC elections was 0.52% in England and 0.83% in Wales. In both cases this is a little higher than at either the 2010 general election (0.40% and 0.72% respectively) or the 2011 AV referendum (0.43% and 0.76%). The largest proportions of waivers in England were in the Isles of Scilly (4.1%) and in the Arun district council counting area (3.9%) which also topped this list at the 2011 AV referendum as well as the 2010 general and 2009 European and local elections. In Wales, Ceredigion had the highest proportion of waivers with 2.9%. The figures would suggest that the take up of this facility is gradually increasing as local authorities draw attention to it.

Table 13: Postal electors granted 'waivers' at the 2012 PCC elections

	As proportion of postal electors	Average per LA counting area
England	0.52	96
Wales	0.83	154

Proxy voting

The introduction of postal voting on demand continues to have a downward impact on the number of electors appointing proxies, especially when there is no concurrent general election –see Table 14. This time was no different with only some 24,300 electors (0.07% of the total electorate) appointing a proxy and just 54 emergency proxies being issued across all councils with PCC elections. This was a quarter the level at the 2010 general election and half that at the 2011 combined local elections and AV referendum. It is a further reflection of the low level of engagement with the PCC contests.

Table 14: Proxy voting at the 2012 PCC elections

	<i>Proxy votes issued 2012</i>	<i>as % of electorate</i>
England and Wales	24,206	0.07
England	22,176	0.07
Wales	2,030	0.09

Proxy voters as percentage of electorate in England 2001-2012

2012 Loc	2011 Loc	2010 Loc	2010 Gen	2009 Loc	2008 Loc	2005 Gen	2001 Gen
0.10	0.15	0.28	0.32	0.13	0.09	0.22	0.47

Software suppliers

Three companies continue to dominate the supply of election software to local authorities in England and Wales –see Table 15.

Table 15. Election software suppliers at the 2012 PCC elections

	England	Wales
Xpress	157	7
Strand	59	8
Halarose	74	7
Democracy Counts	2	-

ANNEX

Impact of combined PCC and other elections

Five other significant electoral events were held in combination with the PCC contests –a mayoral election; a referendum on the future of a mayoral system; and three parliamentary by-elections. In each case turnout was higher than that for the PCC elections in adjacent areas –see Table 16. It appears too that fewer ballots were rejected. In Hartlepool, for example, 88 were rejected in the referendum compared with 699 at the PCC election. In Bristol, where both elections used the SV system, it was 1,117 at the mayoral election and 5,645 at the PCC contest. Precise comparisons cannot be made for the parliamentary elections, but 110 parliamentary ballots were rejected

The 2012 Police and Crime Commissioner elections in England and Wales:
aspects of participation and administration

throughout the Corby constituency compared with 742 at the PCC election just within Corby borough.

Table 16: Valid vote turnout at combined PCC and other electoral events

		<i>% turn</i>		<i>% turn</i>
Bristol	Mayoral election	27.6	PCC election in rest of Avon and Somerset	16.4
Hartlepool	Mayoral referendum	17.9	PCC election in rest of Cleveland	14.3
Cardiff South	Parliamentary by-election	25.7	PCC election in rest of South Wales	14.1
Corby	Parliamentary by-election	44.6	PCC election in rest of Northamptonshire	16.1
Manchester Central	Parliamentary by-election	18.2	PCC election in rest of Greater Manchester	13.4

Although local electoral administrators do not discriminate between different elections when sending and receiving postal votes, there can be differences in the number of returns which are deemed valid. Table 17 shows that in most cases the number of postal ballots rejected before the count is similar at both types of election, but in Bristol some 1,000 voters did not return a ballot paper for the PCC election despite doing so for the mayoral contest.

Table 17: Rejected postal ballots at combined PCC and other electoral events

		<i>% PV reject</i>		<i>% PV reject</i>
Bristol	Mayoral election	3.7	PCC election	7.2
Hartlepool	Mayoral referendum	4.3	PCC election	4.2
Cardiff South	Parliamentary by-election	1.8	PCC election in Cardiff*	3.5
Corby	Parliamentary by-election	2.1	PCC election in Corby*	2.1
Manchester Central	Parliamentary by-election	7.1	PCC election in Manchester*	6.7

*PCC data not available at constituency level.

In general, it seems clear that the turnout in these contests was higher than it would have been for stand-alone PCC elections and that more voters took care to ensure that they cast a valid ballot. Partly this will have been because of a perception of that election's greater local or national relevance; partly because there is likely to have been more campaigning directly aimed at boosting participation. In some cases, such as Hartlepool and Manchester Central, the difference was slight; in Corby, a marginal parliamentary seat closely fought by the Conservative and Labour parties, turnout was almost three times as high as in those parts of Northamptonshire which only had the PCC election.

Finally, it is worth noting that 36 local council by-elections were also held coincident with the PCC contests. The average turnout was 25.3% with a high of 44.2% (within the Corby constituency) and a low of 12.9% (within the Manchester Central constituency).