

# STARTER GUIDE TO BRITISH **POLITICS**

---

By Alexander Williams



CONFUSED ABOUT POLITICS?

UNSURE WHERE TO START?

**THIS** IS THE PERFECT GUIDE FOR YOU.

# *Contents*

---

1. CONSTITUENCIES
2. ELECTION
3. VOTING
4. COALITION
5. BILL
6. PARLIAMENT
7. WHAT'S NEXT?
8. FROM THE AUTHOR



# Constituencies

The United Kingdom is split into **650 Constituencies**.

**533** Constituencies in England,  
**59** in Scotland,  
**40** in Wales, and  
**18** in Northern Ireland.

Each Constituency is represented by an **MP** (Member of Parliament).

These are often referred to as **seats**, as each Constituency represents a seat in the **House of Commons**, which we'll get to later on.

For example, **Burton** in the midlands is a constituency with a population of 102,731 in 2011.

### Why is this important to me?

Finding out which constituency you are in is important as you can then register to vote, and find out where to vote.



# Election

There are many different types of **elections**, such as Local Elections, General Elections, European Parliament Elections and many more.

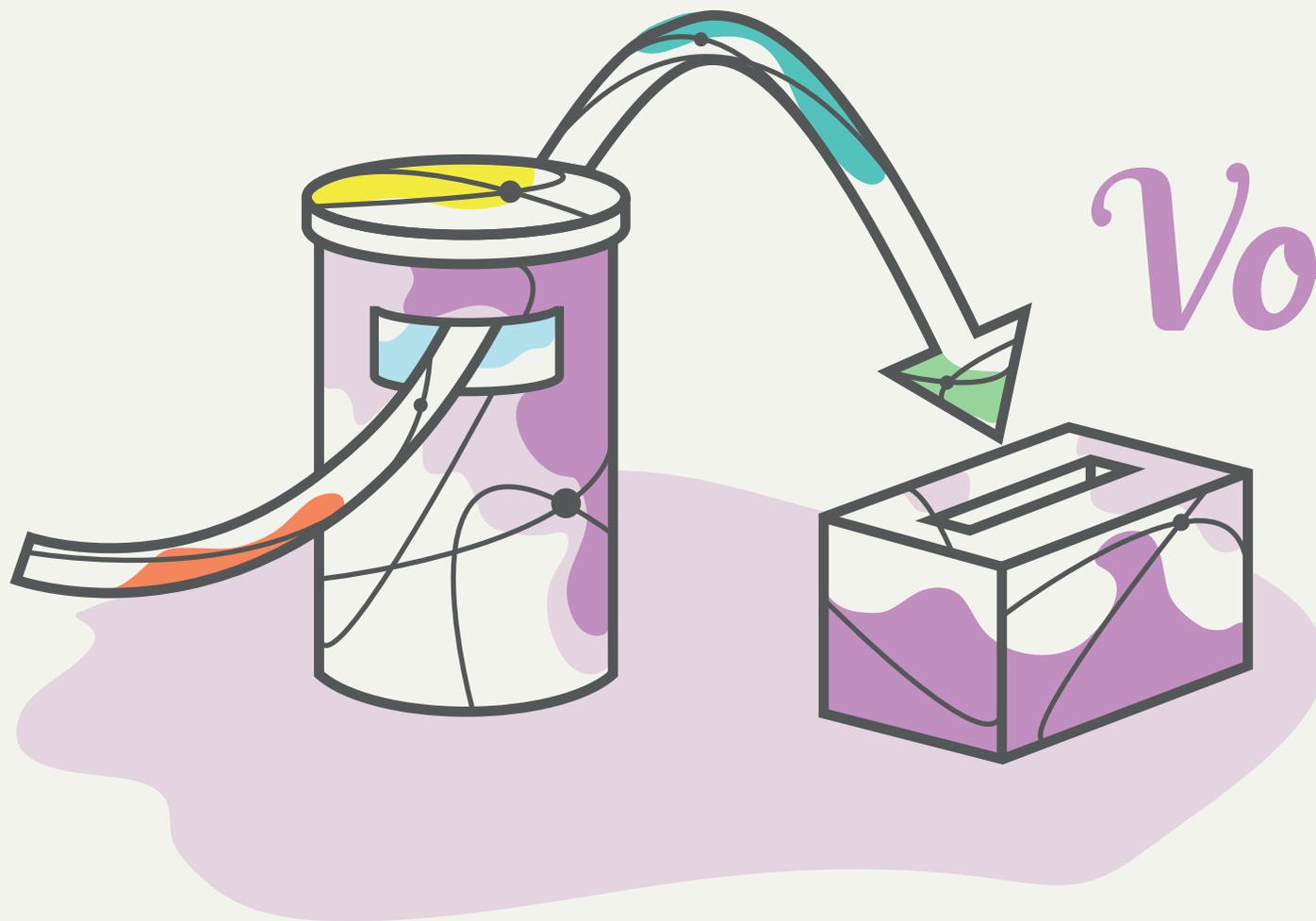
For now, we'll focus on two types of Elections: **General Elections** and **Referendums**.

**General Election:** Each Constituency can vote for who they want to represent them in the **House of Commons**, this happens every five years.

**Referendums:** During a Referendum, everyone will vote on a major issue. For example; Britain leaving the European Union (otherwise known as Brexit) during June 2016.

## Why is this important to me?

Elections are incredibly important, it gives you the chance to see which candidates or political parties share your views, or major issues you could get involved with.



# Voting

There are different types of ways to vote, the main two being **ballot box voting** or **absentee vote**.

During a **General Election** or a **Referendum**, each **Constituency** will allocate voting stations across towns all over the United Kingdom.

This is where you would usually go to vote, unless you are doing an **absentee vote**, otherwise known as a **postal vote**. This is where you would post your vote if you were unable to visit a voting station for any reason whatsoever.



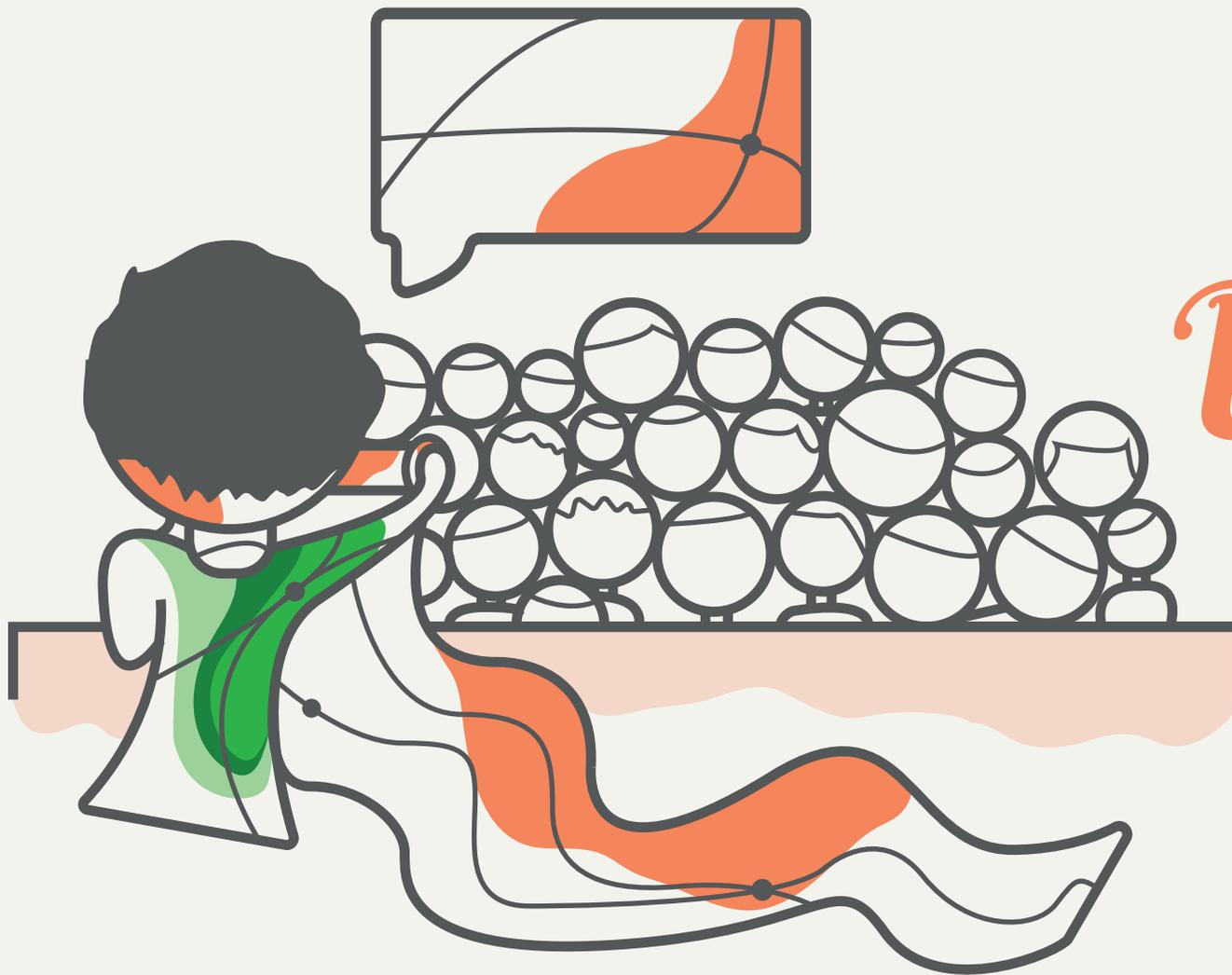
# Political Party

Most **candidates** that run for an **Election** are part of a **Political Party**, such as **The Conservatives**, **Labour**, or **The Liberal Democrats**. There are lots of different parties all with separate methods and goals, so take care when voting and make sure you research a wide variety of parties to see which you agree with.

Candidates that aren't part of any Party are called **Independents**.

In the **House of Commons**, the Political Party that has the most **Constituencies** (over half) wins control of the **House of Commons** for the next five years.

Important to note: During 2010, there was a **Co-alition**. This meant that no political party had over half of the **Constituencies**, and two parties came together to form a **Government**, the **Conservatives** and **Liberal Democrats**.



# Bill

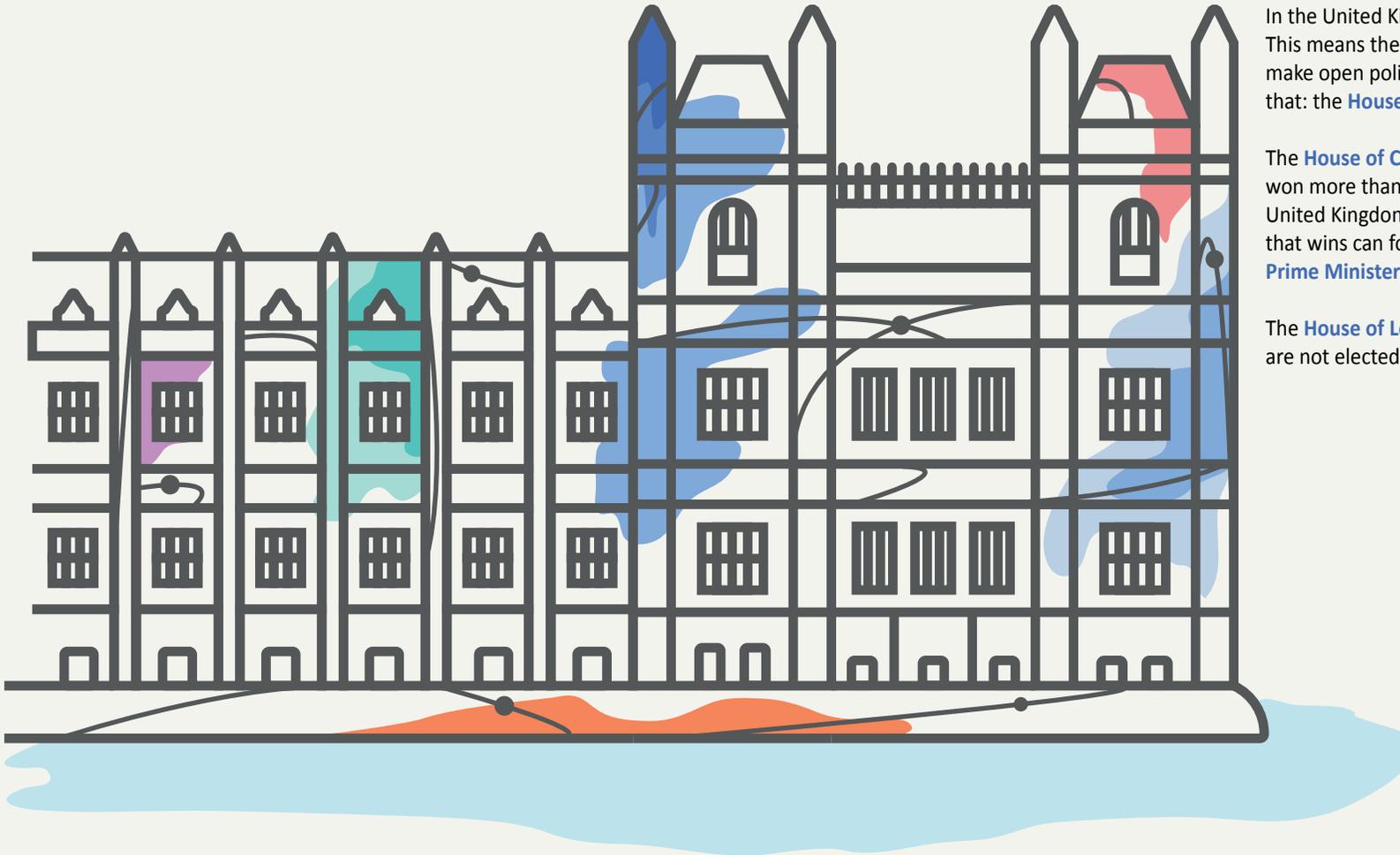
A **bill** is a drafted proposal for a new **law**, or a proposal to change an existing **law**.

**Bills** are passed through our **Parliament** and then given **Royal Assent**, which means the bill is sent to the reigning monarch to pass. Currently, this is the Queen.

**Bills** can take a long time to pass through parliament, for example: **the High Speed Rail (London - West Midlands) Act 2017** was introduced on 25th November 2013 but was introduced on 23rd February, 2017.

Once a **bill** has been passed, it becomes a **law**.

# Parliament



In the United Kingdom, we are a **Constitutional Monarchy**. This means the **King** or **Queen** whom reigns does not make open political decisions, we have a **Parliament** for that: the **House of Commons** and the **House of Lords**.

The **House of Commons** is run by a **Political Party** that has won more than half of the **Constituencies** around the United Kingdom, as stated before. The political party that wins can form a government body with roles such as: **Prime Minister**, **Secretary of State** and **Chancellors**

The **House of Lords** is slightly different as it's members are not elected by the nation, they are appointed.

# From the author

---

Hi.

I created this book for the sole purpose of educating people about Great Britain's political system, how it works and it's separate elements.

There are many elements I have left out to keep the information simple and understandable, so it is important to go away and research further into Politics after reading.

Are you a teacher?

This book is also an online PDF as well as a series of posters.

**If you want to contact the author for additional information please email: [wila1\\_13@worc.ac.uk](mailto:wila1_13@worc.ac.uk)**

# What's next?

---

## Keep up to date.

In the United Kingdom, our government is constantly changing so it's important to keep up to date with everything that's going on.

### How?

Visiting [www.parliament.uk](http://www.parliament.uk) is a great way to stay on top with the current changes, but that is just one of hundreds of sources for information.

## Be Careful

Politics is very opinionated, and places where you find your information could be biased. Make sure you check multiple sources and manifesto's before you vote.

### Feeling like your vote won't make a difference?

In the 2015 General Election, only 66.1% of registered voters voted. If the other 33.9% shared the same view that their vote didn't matter, imagine the difference they could've made if they voted for smaller parties?

## Most importantly

Politics is a large subject but it's not incredibly complicated once you get into it. Be passionate, and engage with issues that you care about.

