



Gateshead 4th September 2009

Is your Electoral Services Unit fit for purpose
and the challenges of the forthcoming
General Election?

The key issues for a
Parliamentary General
Election



Where do we start?

“.....as we know, there are known knowns; there are things we know we know.

We also know there are known unknowns; that is to say we know there are some things we do not know.

But there are also unknown unknowns - the ones we don't know we don't know.”

Donald Rumsfeld US Secretary of State for Defence 12/2/02.



Donald Rumsfeld



4th September 2009

Andy Tiffin, Hart DC / John Owen AEA

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Known - V - Unknown

- **Recent past - post 2001**
 - Period of legislative change
 - A period of relative predictability
- **This next 8 months & 29 days or less**
 - A period of unpredictability
 - A period of uncertainty
 - A period of increased risk
 - A challenge both personal and professional



Outline of this briefing

- To identify the key issues that will be faced at the next Parliamentary General Election (PGE), particularly if it is to be combined with local government elections to be held on Thursday 6 May 2010.
- To run through the known's, the established processes
- to shine some light on the known unknowns
- to speculate on where the unknown unknowns may come from



On the horizon

- **Local Government elections for Principle Areas on 6th May 2010**
- **Local Government elections for Parish Areas**
- **The PGE, the latest date is 3rd June 2010..... But when?**



Over to You

- The most likely date of the next General election is



General election - 4 possible scenarios

- **October 2009 – “the mid canvass surprise”**
- **Spring 2010 - “the free stander”**
- **May 2010 - “mixed combo – the bookies’ favourite”**
- **June 2010 - “five years”**



Known knowns

- **Statutory process**
- **Boundaries / New registers**
- **Outsourcing, Printing, Postal votes**
- **Media, councillor and public interest**
- **Challenges caused by tight timetable**
- **Nominations**
- **Equipment**

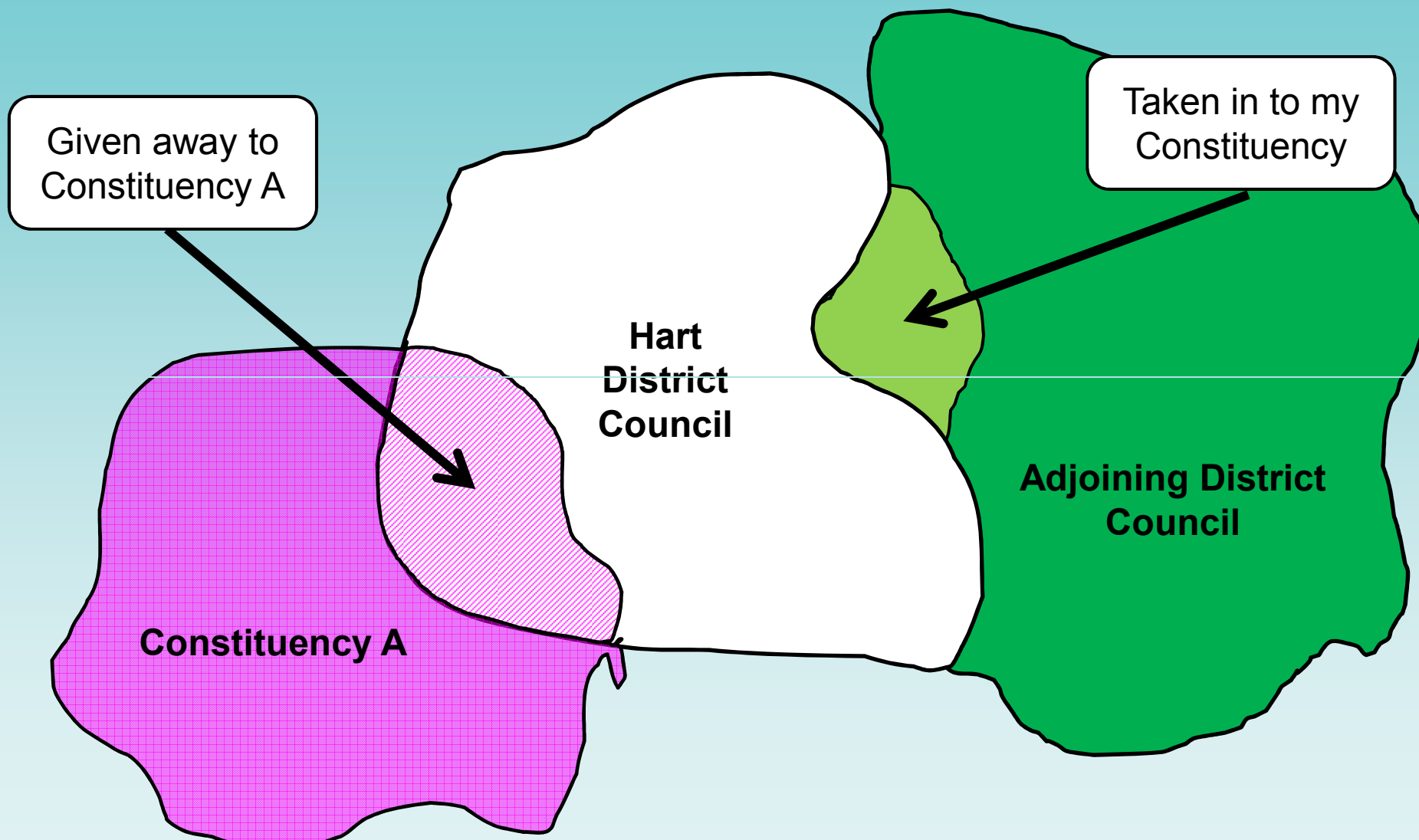


Known unknowns 1

- The biggest “known unknown” is the date of dissolution and the subsequent impact of combination
- Non coterminosity



Non-coterminous constituencies





Combination – non coterminosity

Sub Area	District Election	Parliamentary Lead Authority	Poll Card issue	District Postal vote issue	Parly Postal Vote issue & Return
Core	Hart DC	Hart DC (NE Hampshire Constituency)	Hart – Combined card	Hart at Fleet	Hart at Fleet
“Take in”	BDBC	Hart DC (NE Hampshire Constituency)	1:District – BDBC 2: Parly - Hart	BDBC at Basingstoke	Hart at Fleet
“Give away”	Hart	Rushmoor BC (Aldershot Constituency)	1:District – Hart 2: Parly - Rushmoor	Hart at Fleet	Rushmoor at Farnborough



Known unknowns 2

- Late applications
- Blending two electoral processes into one – or not
- Cost impact
- PVI checking – cross boundary
- Impact of current political climate
- Timing of the count.



The start of a Plan - x 4

- Identify issues
- Bullet points
- Understand issues
- Work on solutions



Unknown Unknowns

- **Process barriers**
 - Industrial action, external or internal / Disaster recovery
- **The political class**
 - A scandal like the expenses issue, that as yet we can't imagine
- **Health Alert**
 - Swine Flu/Foot & Mouth
- **Procedural changes**
 - Referendum on Electoral Reform on the same day as the General



The way forward

- Tackle the known knowns now
- Talk to everyone
- Spread the knowledge
- Dissipate the risk
- Bullet points - to a plan (times 4)
- Build in Contingencies



Final thought

“.....enjoy your time in public service, It may well be one of the most interesting and challenging times of your life.”

Donald Rumsfeld US Secretary of State for Defence 16/11/01