



PrioryPost116. Lent15

## Our General Election

### Voting Matters

It's General Election year and at St Augustine's Priory we held our own General Election ahead of May. Candidates were selected from the Sixth Form to represent the political parties, hustings were held, speeches were made, voting slips produced and ballot boxes were situated around the school. Then it was up to the pupils in the Senior School to cast their votes. In the event there was a majority turnout of the voting population, a great reflection on the commitment to the democratic process!

For most of our pupils, casting their vote in a local or national election is several years away, but being aware that their right to vote at future elections is their hard-fought for right and responsibility is essential.

An organisation which has been founded to encourage and empower young women to participate in the democratic process and in Parliament is The Emily Tree [www.emilytree.org](http://www.emilytree.org) and we are proud that one of the co-founders of The Emily Tree is Ciara O'Connor, a recent past pupil of St Augustine's Priory

The Emily Tree's website states, 'The Emily Tree project took shape in response to the need for greater gender balance in Parliament in the UK. The organisation works with young women to provide them with the skills, confidence and support to take action and raise awareness about the issues that matter most to them.' They go on to say, 'We provide training and advice to empower young women to speak out and campaign about issues that matter to them. We support young women to pursue opportunities in politics through work placements and training, helping them to make new and valuable connections in their communities and beyond.'

The Emily Tree runs several programmes which will be of interest to our Senior pupils - visit their website to find out more – [www.emilytree.org](http://www.emilytree.org)

In the St Augustine's Priory elections, after collecting the ballot boxes, the votes were counted and the returning officers announced the results. Here is their speech:

'We, Pervin Kaur and Lida Ghanadian, being the Acting Returning Officers for the constituency of St Augustine's Priory, hereby give notice that the total number of votes given for each candidate at the election on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2015 was as follows:

- Jessica Francois-Davis (The Conservative Party): 23 votes
- Alexia Kirov (The Labour Party): 73 votes
- Rhiannon Phillips (The Liberal Democrats): 59 votes
- Jasleen Deu (The Green Party): 16 votes
- Nida Ahmed (UK Independence Party): 24 votes

We therefore declare that Alexia Kirov of the Labour Party has been duly elected to represent St Augustine's Priory.'

Congratulations to all our candidates on a well-fought campaign and well done to the victor, Alexia Kirov!