

# #GE2017 - candidates ' speeches

# Edinburgh acceptance



Following the announcements of the result in each constituency it is customary for each winner to make an acceptance speech.

So what did they all say?

The voters brought home three SNP MPs and one Labour MP all the same as before but in Edinburgh West a brand new LibDem MP.

When the first result was made known at 3.15 am we had been made aware that it could be the SNP's Tommy Sheppard who would be victorious. All the SNP observers had indicated to us that this was the only outcome. Sheppard who has made a name for himself in Westminster the short time since being first elected.



Sheppard is an accomplished public speaker, and without notes of any kind that we could see addressed the audience in the hall and at home watching on TV. He said : "Thank you also to all the electorate of Edinburgh East who have put their faith in me and returned me to Westminster.

"I promise to fight tirelessly to work on your behalf whether you voted for me or not. My friends we are witnessing things happening this very night that we did not expect to happen when this election was called seven weeks ago. The

overwhelming story of the night is that this is the case of a determined party snatching defeat from the jaws of victory.

“No matter what happens as a result of this election tonight I promise you one thing that we will look again at the Brexit deal. In Scotland we will put back on the table we will put back on the table the fact that we wish to remain part of the single market. We are not deserving to be dragged out of the partnership with our European neighbours against the stated will of the people of Scotland.”

He concluded : “I think that Ruth Davidson’s obsession with trying to prevent the people in Scotland having a choice in their own future has attracted some support from Labour voters for whom the union is more important than Scotland’s economic performance.

But that has even more poignancy by people putting their faith in the Labour Party because they liked what Jeremy Corbyn stands for and they were attracted to it. And that has happened in Scotland as well.

“I only hope that those people who did that will not be too disappointed when realise that what they are doing tonight in Scotland is sending people to Westminster on a Labour ticket to oppose Jeremy Corbyn and the Labour Party.

“In Scotland there is one clear victor in the General Election in Scotland. One party who has more seats than all of the other parties put together and that party is the SNP.”



The new MP in Edinburgh West was declared at 3.48. The total number of votes cast here was 52,724 which was almost a 74% turnout. The SNP were beaten into second place by the LibDem

candidate Christine Jardine who had taken on the SNP's Alex Salmond at the 2015 election.

Ms Jardine said : "We will be making sure that meantime Scotland stays at the heart of the UK and that the UK is as close to the heart of the European Union as possible.

She referred to her LibDem predecessors such as Donald Gorrie who had gone before her. She also referred to those who were not there to help celebrate her win. Ms Jardine's husband died just a short time ago during the campaign. She continued : "The past few months have been quite a journey for me.

"Voters in Edinburgh West and elsewhere have made it perfectly clear that they do not want independence let alone another independence referendum. To the Conservatives there is a message too that the country does not necessarily want your hard Brexit and we do not want your austerity any more than we want your independence."

When Deidre Brock came to the podium she referred to the loss of some SNP seats across the country : "We will have to redouble our efforts when we get back to Westminster and we will do that because there is no more important time for good people to stand against the uncaring policies."



She also made reference to the thought that if indeed the result was a hung parliament then the voters might have to return to the polls in a few months' time.

The Labour candidate's election agent and former councillor, Lesley Hinds, could be heard in the crowd saying that she would look forward to that. Gordon Munro who is a councillor in Edinburgh certainly had a good result, coming a fairly close second to Ms Brock with 17,618 votes to the total of 19,243 cast for the SNP.

Ms Hinds explained to us that any success would be due to the work by activists behind the scenes, some of which was done with the benefit of brand new Labour technology such as bespoke apps for making calls to voters.

Ian Murray was returned to Edinburgh South with a massively increased vote some 15,000 or so ahead of the SNP candidate former MSP Jim Eadie. He took delight in having done that during his speech. He said : "I stood here two years ago bemoaning the loss of all my colleagues well tonight the Scottish Labour Party is back!



He thanked the Scottish Labour leader Kezia Dugdale MSP who was in the hall. Nobody wanted this General Election. Theresa May called this election to get rid of scrutiny of the hard Brexit she wanted to deliver.

"Well the people of this country, the people of Scotland, have said tonight that we do not give the prime minister a blank cheque for a hard Tory Brexit."



And Joanna Cherry QC was returned to Westminster.

She said : "May I start by thanking the Returning Officer and his staff as well as the police who have kept us safe today while we have gone about our business.

"My two biggest thank yous must go to my team and the people in Edinburgh South West.

"It was my enormous privilege to be elected as the member of parliament two years ago and it is even more of an honour that they have renewed their belief in me a second time round.

"My victory tonight is a victory for positive campaigning and campaigning on my record, standing up for the rights of those

especially those who have no voice. I fought hard to be a strong voice at Westminster. I am proud of my record and the record of every one of my SNP MP colleagues.”

Ms Cherry was very shocked to learn after her speech of the loss of Alex Salmond as an MP, but she did not know it at the time she made this speech.

She continued : “My main opponents, the Conservative and Unionist Party, fought a wholly negative campaign based on not submitting to a democratic referendum process and designed to avoid any scrutiny of the Tories’ miserable record on austerity at Westminster.

“I am glad the people of Edinburgh South West could see through that campaign for what it was. This election was called by Theresa May to give her what she thought would be an overwhelming majority so she can carry through her plans for an extreme Brexit. I am so happy that her plan has backfired spectacularly.

“Leaving the European Union and fracturing the single market is an act of madness, and it is an act of madness that my constituents rejected roundly last June. You have my word that I will fight with every breath in my body to oppose Brexit and to keep Scotland and indeed the whole of the UK in the single market.

“In all the the turmoil of this extraordinary General Election we should not lose sight of the fact that once more the SNP have won this election and the Scottish people have rejected the Conservative and Unionist Party.”