

# BRITISH ELECTION STUDY 2017

## TECHICAL REPORT

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# 1 Introduction

## 1.1 Background

The British Election Study (BES) is the longest running social science survey in the UK and one of the longest running election studies worldwide. It has taken place after each general election since 1964. The aim is to understand people's reasons for turning out to vote, or not, as well as attitudes towards parties, society and democracy and how these change in time.

While it has always been a trusted resource for researchers worldwide, in the aftermath of the surprising result of the 2015 General Election, attention has turned even closer to BES due to its use of robust scientific design and sampling.

This year, as well as in 2015, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) module is also included as part of the study in order to deliver on the objective of international comparability with other post-election studies.

## 1.2 2017 BES post-election cross sectional study; summary of approach and management

As at previous elections, the 2017 BES includes a post-election cross-sectional study with members of the general public in Great Britain. This was conducted face-to-face in home by an interviewer using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

The CSES module is separate to the main study and was conducted after the interviewer had left the household via self-completion methods: either via Computer Assisted Web Interviewing (CAWI) or Pen and Paper Interviewing (PAPI).

The study is directed by the BES scientific leadership team (SLT). The SLT were responsible for the content of the questionnaire and played an active role in decisions regarding the design of the sample and the implementation of the study as a fieldwork instrument. The SLT comprises:

- Professor Ed Fieldhouse; Professor Jane Green; Professor Hermann Schmitt; Dr Jon Mellon; Dr Chris Prosser (all University of Manchester);
- Professor Geoff Evans (University of Oxford, Nuffield) and
- Professor Cees van der Eijk (University of Nottingham)

GfK Social Research were responsible for: the design and implementation of the computer-assisted interviewing (CAI) version of the questionnaire, sampling, managing data collection, data preparation, collating the final data files and preparing this technical report.

As the 2017 General Elections were not scheduled, there was little time to set up this wave of the British Election Study. As such, several important differences are noted versus the 2015 wave:

- Recontact sample – in order to increase the achieved sample size, respondents who had completed the 2015 survey were contacted to take part in the 2017 survey
- Sampling – a total of 468 sample points were used in 2017, compared with 600 in 2015
- Fieldwork – in 2017, fieldwork was conducted by 3 independent agencies: GfK UK, Kantar Social and NatCen

This report provides methodological details for the BES, details of the fieldwork management processes and response rates. This report is structured as follows:

- Section 2: Sampling – describes how individuals were selected to take part in the study
- Section 3: Questionnaire – covers development of the question set and an outline of what was covered
- Section 4: Fieldwork – interviewer training, procedures and response rates
- Section 5: Data - how the data were processed and details of codes/variables

- Section 6: Weighting – describes the weighting schemes that were applied for the main study and CSES module

This document is intended primarily for analysts who wish to make use of the data, who will need to understand the sample design and the questions asked. In order to provide further detail the following study documents have been appended to the end of this document:

- Appendix A – list of sampled constituencies
- Appendix B – advance letter

The following documents can be found in a separate document on the BES website ([www.britishelectionstudy.com/data](http://www.britishelectionstudy.com/data)):

- Appendix 1 – Main questionnaire
- Appendix 2a - Lettered showcards
- Appendix 2b - Numbered showcards - English
- Appendix 2c - Numbered showcards - Scottish
- Appendix 2d - Numbered showcards - Welsh
- Appendix 3a - CSES module - English
- Appendix 3b - CSES module - Scottish
- Appendix 3c - CSES module - Welsh

## 2 Sampling

The sample was designed to be representative of all those who live in Great Britain aged 18+ and who were eligible to vote in the 2017 general election.

The sample was selected based on a multi-stage design, summarised as:

- Stratified random sample of 234 Parliamentary constituencies
- Two LSOAs per constituency were selected with probability proportional to size
- Selection of addresses from the Small user Postcode Address File (PAF)
- One individual randomly selected per address by the interviewer

### 2.1 Selection of parliamentary constituencies

The study was based in 234 Parliamentary constituencies, sampled from the whole of Great Britain (from 650 constituencies - excluding the seat held by The Speaker, and (for practical reasons) Orkney and Shetland). As noted earlier, the number of constituencies is lower than in the 2015 survey. This was decided for practical reasons, as research agencies needed to accommodate fieldwork as soon as possible after election day alongside pre-existing commitments.

At the first stage the constituencies were stratified by country and then (within England) by region, using what were formerly known as Government Office Regions (now simply referred to as 'Regions').

Within each country/region, constituencies were classified by party competition, defined as a combination of winning party and party competition from the 2010 election.

The final stage of stratification was to sort the constituencies within each cell from the least to the most marginal. The constituencies were then selected with probability proportional to population size. The full list of sampled constituencies can be found in Appendix A.

### 2.2 Selection of Lower Super Output Area (LSOAs)

LSOAs were used as secondary sampling units in each sampled constituency. Because there is not a perfect match between LSOAs and constituencies (some LSOAs straddle two constituencies) the LSOAs were treated as being part of the constituency in which the majority of its population live.

All LSOAs were ranked in each constituency by their Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) score, and then divided into quartiles. Within each quartile the LSOAs were listed from lowest to highest population density.

Two LSOAs were selected with probability proportional to size. Rather than used a sampling interval, two random numbers – one between 1 and the total population of the top two quartiles, and the other between 1 and the total population of the lower two quartiles were used for selection.

### 2.3 Selection of addresses

Addresses were sampled from the latest version of the PAF using a fixed sampling interval and random start.

### 2.4 Selection of individuals

At each address the interviewer established the number of dwellings, then households, and finally people aged 18 or over who are eligible to vote in the general election. At each of these levels, if there was more than one present, one was selected by the interviewer using a Kish grid, randomised for each address.

### 2.5 2015 re-contact sample

Respondents that took part in the 2015 and agreed to be re-contacted were sent an invitation to take part in BES 2017 either by email or post. A total of 2198 respondents were approached to take part in the 2017 survey. For each respondent that agreed to be interviewed again, 2 addresses were removed from that sample point. Respondents who had moved out of the constituency they were living in in 2015 were discarded from the 2017 sample.

### **3 The questionnaire**

This section outlines how the content for the main BES questionnaire was developed and agreed upon. The CSES questionnaire is based on a question set that is agreed at an international level; there was some discussion about the content between GfK and the SLT – but any changes had to be kept to a minimum to ensure comparability with other countries.

#### **3.1 Development**

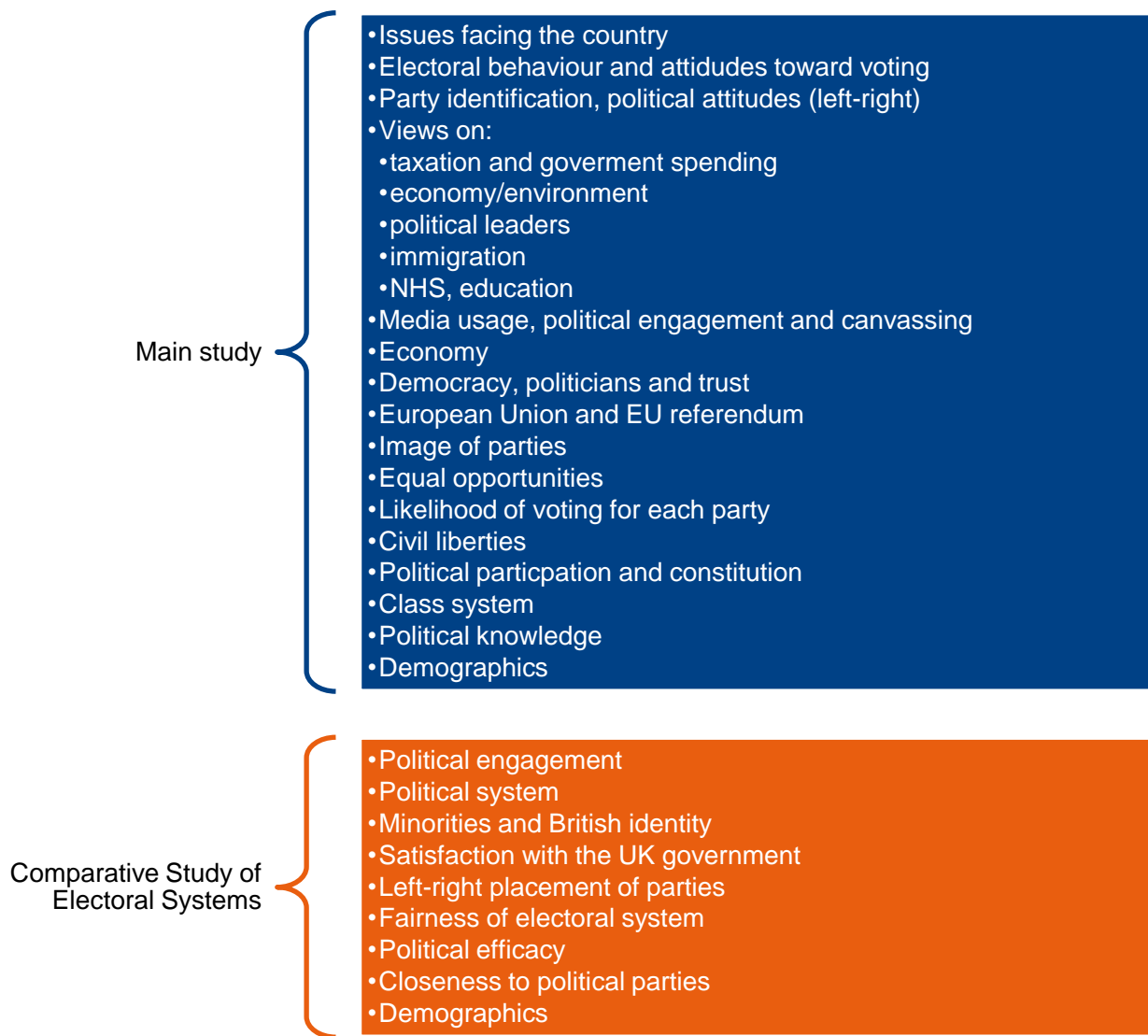
The SLT were responsible for the topics covered in questionnaire; the SLT provided the questionnaire to GfK. Due to the short time available for setup, the questionnaire content was kept as similar as possible to 2015. As opposed to 2015, no pilot was undertaken to test the questionnaire. The Word document was converted into a CAPI script by GfK. IBM SPSS Data Collection Family Suite of interviewing software (often referred to as Dimensions) was used to create the script. The CAPI script was created by the GfK CAI scripting team. Initial testing was carried out by the programmer before the CAPI script was passed to the GfK research team for testing.

GfK has stringent quality procedures for checking CAPI questionnaires before they are released into the field. The script was systematically checked by the GfK research team to ensure that question wording, filtering, text fills and logic checks had all been scripted correctly. Where errors were found they were sent back to the CAPI scripting team and corrections made; this was an iterative process concluding when the research team at GfK were satisfied that the CAPI script reflected the Word version of the pilot questionnaire.

Once GfK was satisfied with the CAPI script, it was sent to the scripting teams at Kantar Public and NatCen. The research team there undertook further testing to ensure the script works on their systems.

#### **3.2 Questionnaire coverage**

The full questionnaires for the main study and the CSES module can be found in on a separate document on the British Election Study website. In summary, they covered the following:



Where required, the question wording was tailored to the country of residence. Showcards used in the main study can be found appended to the survey questionnaire.

## 4 Fieldwork

### 4.1 Main study

Interviewing was carried out by 208 fully trained and experienced interviewers. Interviewing began soon after the general election on 26<sup>th</sup> June 2016 and continued until 1<sup>st</sup> October 2017.

Interviewers received extensive study specific training. All interviewers were provided with written instructions which gave a detailed explanation of all aspects of the study. A master briefing session was held via webinar by GfK researchers and attended by researchers from Kantar Public and NatCen, SLT members and experienced GfK interviewers. The session covered the background to the survey and further important aspects of interviewers' job; this session also included a run through of the questionnaire. Kantar Public and NatCen then conducted their own interviewer briefings. A summary of what was covered is shown below:

Web conferencing meeting	Written instructions
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Background</li> <li>•Achieving high response rate</li> <li>•Making contact/eligibility/ respondent selection</li> <li>•Key questionnaire issues</li> <li>•Questionnaire run through</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Provides further detail on issues explored in the web conferencing</li> <li>•Interviewer completed a practice interview on their CAPI machine in conjunction with the written notes about the questions</li> </ul>

Upon commencement of fieldwork, interviewers sent out a letter addressed to the 'householder'. This explained the purpose of the study, why they have been chosen and who will be calling at the household. The letter was signed by a member of the SLT. The letter mentioned an incentive for taking part in the study (a gift voucher: £25 for 18-24s, £20 for addresses in London with respondents aged 25+ and £10 for addresses outside of London with respondents aged 25+). Contact details were provided for respondents to get in touch with GfK if more information was required. A copy of the letter has been included in Appendix B.

Later on during fieldwork, some addresses had to be re-issued to a different interviewer where initially there had been no contact or a refusal. A higher incentive was offered to the re-issued cases, .

Due to the differences in fieldwork procedures and survey administration between the three agencies that conducted fieldwork, an average interview duration for the full sample cannot be computed. Interviews conducted by GfK interviewers lasted on average 45 minutes, with a median length of 44.5 minutes<sup>1</sup>.

### 4.2 CSES module

At the end of the interview respondents were asked whether they wanted to complete the CSES self-completion questionnaire either online or via paper self-completion. Those who said they would complete the CSES module online were asked to type their email address into the interviewer's CAPI machine, and an email was sent to them containing a personalised link to the online questionnaire. Those who said they would prefer paper were given a paper copy of the questionnaire and a reply paid envelope. Interviewers copied the sample serial number onto the paper questionnaire for linking back to the main data set.

All respondents who either returned their paper questionnaires or completed the survey online were sent a £5 voucher.

Up to 3 reminders were sent to non-responders (who initially agreed to complete the CSES). For those that agreed to the paper self-completion, a reminder letter was sent for the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> reminder. For the 3<sup>rd</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Extreme outliers (likely to be the result of computer or interviewer error) were excluded from these calculations.



reminder another copy of the paper self-completion questionnaire was also enclosed with the letter. Those who said they would complete the CSES module online were sent email reminders.

### 4.3 Response rate

At the end of fieldwork, 2194 interviews had been conducted. Using the standard AAPOR conventions for reporting response rates this represents 46.2% response (using response rate 3<sup>2</sup>). This response rate includes an estimate of the proportion of cases with unknown eligibility that would be eligible (i.e. those who are eligible to vote in the general election). As there are no robust eligibility estimates available in the public domain, the best estimate for the eligibility rate is the study itself: 96.5% - and this is what the response rate calculation is based on.

The full breakdown of response rate is provided in the following table:

	N
Total issued addresses	4866
<b>Not eligible</b>	
Out of scope properties	400
No eligible respondents in household i.e. not eligible to vote in the general election	170
<b>Unknown eligibility, non-interview</b>	
Refused before screening stage	744
Non contacts	388
Other unproductive before screening stage	32
<i>Total unknown eligibility, non-interview cases</i>	<i>1164</i>
<i>Total unknown eligibility, non-interview cases who are expected to have someone in the household eligible for the study (A)</i>	<i>1123</i>
<b>Eligible, non-interview</b>	
Refused	609
Non contacts	238
Other unproductive	319
<i>Total eligible, non-interview cases (B)</i>	<i>1166</i>
<b>Full interviews (C)</b>	<b>1966</b>
Total eligible (A+B+C)	4255
<b>Main study response rate (C/(A+B+C))</b>	<b>46.20%</b>
Issued re-contact sample (D)	249
<b>Interviews from re-contact sample (E)</b>	<b>228</b>
<b>Response rate with re-contact sample included ((C+E)/(A+B+C+D))</b>	<b>48.71%</b>
Completed CSES module cases (F)	984
<b>CSES module response rate (F/(C+E))</b>	<b>44.85%</b>

For comparability with previous BES studies, AAPOR Response Rate 1 (where the total number of those in the unknown eligibility category has not been adjusted) is 45.76%.

Including interviews from the re-contact sample results in a response rate of 48.71%.

For the CSES module, 44.85% of those who took part in the main study completed the CSES either online or by post.

<sup>2</sup> [http://www.aapor.org/AAPORKentico/AAPOR\\_Main/media/MainSiteFiles/Standard\\_Definitions\\_07\\_08\\_Final.pdf](http://www.aapor.org/AAPORKentico/AAPOR_Main/media/MainSiteFiles/Standard_Definitions_07_08_Final.pdf)

## 5 Data

### 5.1 Main study

Completed interviews are automatically transferred from interviewers' CAPI laptops to GfK's central CAPI server each time the interviewer dials in to the server. The data transfer software interrogates the interviewer's laptop, and transfers data from all interviews identified by the CAPI program as complete. Kantar Public and NatCen supplied GfK with datasets containing their completed interviews.

#### 5.1.1 Data editing

The CAPI script ensures that any routing errors are removed, since the CAPI script (if properly written and tested) will always present the interviewer with the correct next question given the answer to the previous one.

Where questions were open ended or allowed respondents to mention something that was not on the pre coded answer list (known as 'other – specify') the verbatim answers were typed in by interviewers.

The 'other – specify' questions were reviewed and 'back-coding' was conducted, if required (when the answer typed in should have been coded as one of the original pre-codes). Only for question B6 was more formal 'coding' required – for this question a number of new codes were created based on the answers given by respondents. The remaining questions which included an 'other – specify' had a low number of others answers and therefore it was deemed not necessary to raise new codes. Any open ended questions were not coded.

The SPSS file was created by the data processing team working in conjunction with GfK researchers. GfK researchers checked the data to: 1) ensure that the correct respondents were answering each question and each response code (based on the raw data) and 2) the questions and codes were correctly labelled.

### 5.2 CSES module

The CAWI version of the CSES needed no data editing because, similar to a CAPI script, it routes the respondents to the correct question and therefore there are no instances of missing data.

The PAPI version did require some editing where respondents had incorrectly filled in the paper questionnaire. Instances where a substantive response option plus a don't know was coded the don't know answer was deleted and the substantive response option was taken to be the answer to that question.

Only one question was multi-punched when only one answer should have been given, when respondents were asked what language they usually spoke at home. All answers were kept in the data file.

### 5.3 SPSS file

#### Coding

The code numbering in the SPSS file corresponds with the numbering found in the questionnaire document. Note that consistent codes have been applied to the following responses in the SPSS file: Don't know: -1, Refused: -2, Not stated: -999

#### Weighting variables

For more details of the weighting applied, see section 6. The data file contains 5 weights, as follows:

- wt\_sel\_wt – selection weights (including capping)
- wt\_demog –demographic weight (capped selection plus uncapped demographic weights targeted to the voting eligible population)
- wt\_vote –demographic and result weight (capped selection plus capped demographic weights targeted to the voting eligible population and weighting to GB turnout and vote results)
- wt\_vote\_valid – demographic and result weight validated (capped selection plus capped demographic weights targeted to the voting eligible population and weighting to GB turnout and vote results for cases with vote validation)

- wt\_demog\_cses – combined CSES weight (capped selection weight plus demographic weighting targeted to the voting eligible population for CSES cases)

## 6 Weighting

### 6.1 Main study

To ensure that the respondents who took part in the study represent the views of the population (18+ adults in Great Britain who are eligible to vote) the data collected were weighted. There were two weights which were applied: initially selection weights to correct for unequal selection probabilities and secondly post-stratification weights which account for differing levels of response from various groups in the population.

#### 6.1.1 Selection weight

These weights need to be applied to correct for unequal selection probabilities; during the selection process this happened at the following points:

1. If a selected address on PAF contains a number of separate dwellings (typically flats) and the interviewer has to select one of the dwellings for interview
2. If a dwelling contained more than one household (a household is defined as people who share a living room or who have common catering for at least one meal a day) and one of these households has to be selected
3. If a selected household contains more than one eligible person and one person has to be randomly selected for interview

At all these levels, people living at addresses with multiple dwellings/households/people have less of a chance of selection than a person living alone, and weighting is needed to compensate for this. To calculate a person's chance of being interviewed: the number of number of dwellings was multiplied by the number of households within the selected dwelling which is in turn multiplied by the number of adults in the selected household. The probability of selection is the inverse of this number, and so to correct for it we simply need to weight by the result of the multiplication.

Any form of weighting has a negative effect on the power of the data, as it reduces the effective sample size and thus increases sampling error. The impact of weighting on effective sample size is mainly determined by the extreme high and low weights, and the number of respondents who receive those weights.

To minimise this it is standard practice to “cap” selection weights. It was decided to cap the selection weight at 5 – a range of possible caps were tested and this was felt to have the least impact on results for key questions whilst also increasing overall effective size and reducing the impact of any individual with extreme weights. Only 6 cases were affected by this cap. After the selection weight was capped it was rescaled to arrive at the original sample size.

#### 6.1.2 Post-stratification weighting

The post-stratification weights (wt\_demog) were calculated by the British Election Study team. A number of demographics were considered for the non-response weighting, and it was decided that the demographics that should be corrected were age, education, gender and region. The targets for these were taken from the Annual Population Survey (APS) combined with additional data from Understanding Society about the education levels of the oldest age groups. Targets were calculated as a proportion of the Voting Eligible Population.<sup>3</sup> Age and education were specified as interlocking targets. Weights were calculated after the selection weights had been applied.

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<sup>3</sup> For the implications of the difference between the Voting Eligible Population and the Voting Age population, see Mellon et al (2018) *Opening the Can of Worms: Most Existing Studies of Aggregate Level Turnout are Meaningless* <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3098436>. For more detail about the weighting targets, see Prosser et al. (2018) *Tremors But*

The following table sets out the target weights and the corresponding BES main study demographic profiles with only the selection weights applied.

	Main study profile with only selection weights applied (%)	Annual Population Survey 2017 eligible population target (%)
<b>Region</b>		
East Midlands	7.3	7.5
Eastern	10.4	9.7
London	10.8	11.6
North East	4.8	4.4
North West	13.7	11.6
Scotland	8	8.9
South East	13.3	14.2
South West	7.1	9
Wales	5.9	5.2
West Midlands	10.7	9.1
Yorkshire & Humber	8	8.7
<b>Gender</b>		
Male	47.4	49
Female	52.6	51
<b>Age/degree</b>		
18-24 Degree	3.2	2.5
18-24 No degree	6.2	8.5
25-34 Degree	7.3	7.2
25-34 No degree	6.4	8.4
35-44 Degree	8.8	7.3
35-44 No degree	6.8	7.8
45-54 Degree	8.2	7.1
45-54 No degree	9.4	11.2
55-64 Degree	7	5.4
55-64 No degree	10.6	10.3
65-74 Degree	5.2	3.6
65-74 No degree	10.5	10
75+ Degree	2.8	2.2
75+ No degree	7.6	8.4

Separate post-stratification weights were calculated for the CSES (wt\_demog\_cses). The same variables as the main study were used – age, education, gender and region – and were again calculated once selection weights had been applied to the subset of respondents who completed the CSES module.

### 6.1.3 Turnout and results weighting

In addition to the demographic weights, we also correct for observable non-response by turnout and vote.<sup>4</sup> The turnout target used is the VEP turnout estimate calculated by Mellon et al (2018): 68%.<sup>5</sup> Two versions of the weights were calculated. The first is calculated on the full sample using self-reported turnout (wt\_vote) and the second using the validated-vote subsample using validated turnout (wt\_vote\_valid).

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<sup>4</sup> For more detail on the impact of turnout weighting, see Prosser et al. (2018) *Tremors But No Youthquake: Measuring Changes in the Age and Turnout Gradients at the 2015 and 2017 British General Elections*. <http://ssrn.com/abstract=3111839>

<sup>5</sup> For more detail on the VEP turnout calculation, see Mellon et al (2018) *Opening the Can of Worms: Most Existing Studies of Aggregate Level Turnout are Meaningless* <https://ssrn.com/abstract=3098436>

## 7 Appendix A – sampled constituencies

Altrincham and Sale West	Coventry North West	Kenilworth and Southam
Angus	Crawley	Kingston upon Hull West and Hessele
Arfon	Croydon North	Kingswood
Arundel and South Downs	Darlington	Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath
Ashfield	Daventry	Leeds North East
Ashford	Delyn	Lewes
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock	Derby South	Leyton and Wanstead
Bassetlaw	Don Valley	Lichfield
Bath	Dulwich and West Norwood	Lincoln
Bedford	Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale	Linlithgow and East Falkirk
Bermondsey and Old Southwark	Dunfermline and West Fife	Liverpool, Walton
Berwick-upon-Tweed	Ealing, Southall	Liverpool, West Derby
Beverley and Holderness	East Devon	Loughborough
Bexhill and Battle	East Hampshire	Luton South
Bexleyheath and Crayford	Eastleigh	Maidenhead
Birkenhead	Edinburgh North and Leith	Makerfield
Birmingham, Edgbaston	Edinburgh South West	Manchester, Gorton
Birmingham, Erdington	Edmonton	Mansfield
Birmingham, Hall Green	Ellesmere Port and Neston	Mid Dorset and North Poole
Birmingham, Hodge Hill	Elmet and Rothwell	Mid Norfolk
Birmingham, Selly Oak	Epping Forest	Middlesbrough
Birmingham, Yardley	Falkirk	Midlothian
Blackburn	Faversham and Mid Kent	Milton Keynes North
Blaenau Gwent	Filton and Bradley Stoke	Milton Keynes South
Blaydon	Finchley and Golders Green	Mole Valley
Blyth Valley	Gateshead	Montgomeryshire
Bolsover	Glasgow Central	Morecambe and Lunesdale
Bolton South East	Glasgow North East	Newbury
Bolton West	Glenrothes	Newcastle upon Tyne North
Bradford South	Gordon	Newport West
Brent Central	Gosport	North Ayrshire and Arran
Brent North	Grantham and Stamford	North Devon
Brentwood and Ongar	Great Grimsby	North East Cambridgeshire
Bridgwater and West Somerset	Great Yarmouth	North East Derbyshire
Brigg and Goole	Hackney North and Stoke Newington	North East Hampshire
Brighton, Pavilion	Halesowen and Rowley Regis	North East Hertfordshire
Bristol West	Halifax	North East Somerset
Bromsgrove	Hammersmith	North Shropshire
Broxtowe	Hampstead and Kilburn	North Warwickshire
Burnley	Harborough	Northampton North
Bury North	Harlow	Northampton South
Cannock Chase	Harrow East	Norwich South
Canterbury	Harwich and North Essex	Paisley and Renfrewshire South
Cardiff Central	Havant	Pendle
Cardiff West	Hendon	Penistone and Stocksbridge
Castle Point	Hertford and Stortford	Penrith and The Border
Charnwood	Hexham	Perth and North Perthshire
Chatham and Aylesford	Heywood and Middleton	Plymouth, Moor View
Chelsea and Fulham	Houghton and Sunderland South	Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport
Chichester	Hove	Pontypridd
Chorley	Huntingdon	Poplar and Limehouse
Christchurch	Ilford North	Putney
Cities of London and Westminster	Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey	Reading East
City of Chester	Islington North	Ribble Valley
Clacton	Jarrow	Rochdale
Clwyd West		Rochester and Strood

Romford  
Romsey and Southampton  
North  
Rotherham  
Rugby  
Runnymede and Weybridge  
Rutland and Melton  
Scarborough and Whitby  
Selby and Ainsty  
Sevenoaks  
Sheffield Central  
Sheffield South East  
Sheffield, Hallam  
Sheffield, Heeley  
Skipton and Ripon  
Sleaford and North Hykeham  
South Cambridgeshire  
South East Cambridgeshire  
South East Cornwall  
South Ribble  
South Staffordshire  
South Suffolk  
South Thanet

South West Hertfordshire  
Southampton, Test  
Southport  
St. Austell and Newquay  
St. Helens North  
St. Helens South and Whiston  
St. Ives  
Stafford  
Stirling  
Stockport  
Streatham  
Stretford and Urmston  
Suffolk Coastal  
Sunderland Central  
Surrey Heath  
Sutton and Cheam  
Swansea West  
Telford  
Tewkesbury  
The Cotswolds  
Thurrock  
Tooting  
Truro and Falmouth

Tunbridge Wells  
Vale of Glamorgan  
Walthamstow  
Welwyn Hatfield  
West Aberdeenshire and  
Kincardine  
West Bromwich East  
West Dorset  
West Dunbartonshire  
West Ham  
West Lancashire  
West Worcestershire  
Weston-Super-Mare  
Wigan  
Wimbledon  
Witney  
Wokingham  
Workington  
Wycombe  
Wyre Forest  
Ynys Mon  
York Central  
York Outer

## 8 Appendix B – advance notification of study letter



The University of Manchester



The University of  
Nottingham

UNITED KINGDOM · CHINA · MALAYSIA

The Householder  
{Address Line 1}  
{Address Line 2}  
{Address Line 3}  
{Address Line 4}  
{Postcode}  
Date as postmark / Ref xxx

Dear Sir/Madam,

### BRITAIN IN 2017

I am writing to you about a very important study of public opinion about the state of the nation, and problems facing your area and the whole country. The study is being conducted jointly by the universities of Manchester, Nottingham and Oxford. We want to speak to people from all walks of life, of all ages and with all sorts of views. If you don't have an interest in politics or government **we are still very keen to hear from you.**

#### Why was I chosen?

Your address was chosen from the Post Office's list of addresses to ensure we get a representative picture of people living in Britain. To ensure our results are accurate, we rely on the voluntary co-operation of people in selected homes – no other address can take the place of yours. We would like to interview one person in your household who is aged 18 or over. If there is more than one person living at this address who is aged 18 or over, the interviewer will select one person at random from the household to be interviewed.

#### What happens next?

This year, we are working with 3 independent research companies. An interviewer from **[GfK/Kantar/NatCen]** will visit your address in the near future to arrange a convenient time to talk to the selected member of your household – please share this letter with other members of the household so they are aware of the visit. When they visit, all interviewers wear or carry identification badges bearing their photo.

**Those who take part in the survey will be given at least a £[10/20] voucher as a 'thank you' after the interview. This can be spent in a wide range of high street stores.**

#### Will my answers be confidential?

Your answers will be treated in the strictest confidence. It will not be possible for any individual person to be identified from the survey findings and the anonymised data will provide an important resource for researchers.

**What should I do if I need further information or help with the survey?** If you would like any more information about the survey please contact the research team at GfK on 0800 4960301 or email [britainin2017@gfk.com](mailto:britainin2017@gfk.com). When making contact, please quote your full address and the reference number at the top of this letter.

I very much hope that you will be able to help us. The information from this research will contribute towards understanding how democracy in Britain works.

**Thank you in advance for your help.**

Yours sincerely,



Professor Ed Fieldhouse  
University of Manchester