



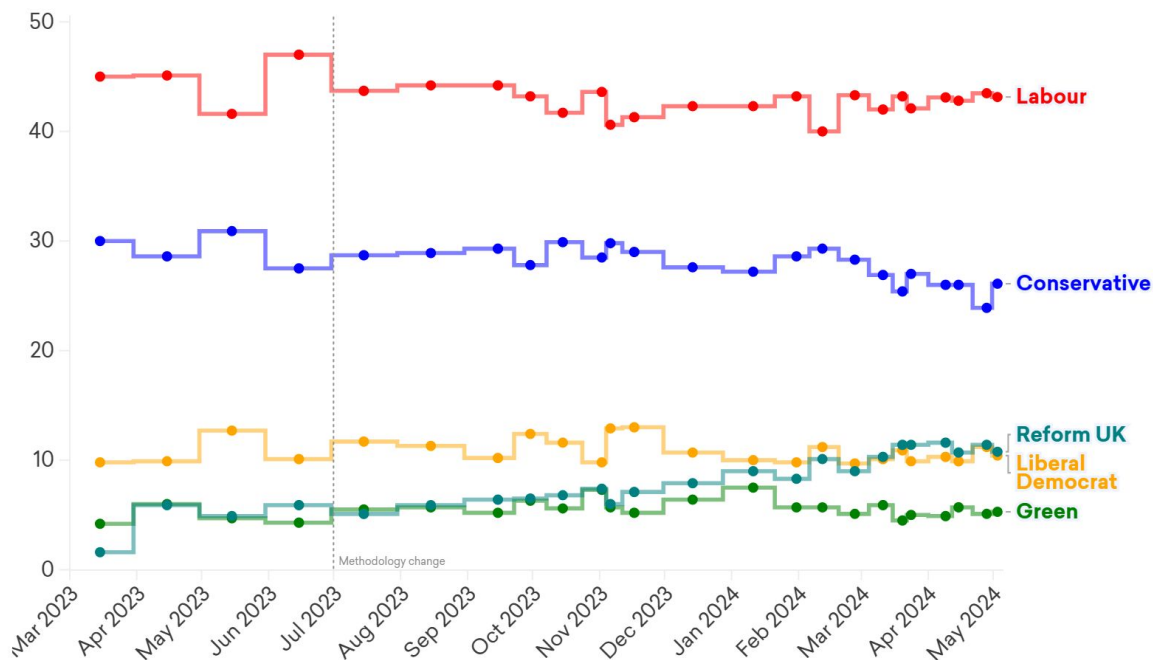
More in
Common

Local Elections 2024: What happened?

May 2024

Forecast for the next General Election

Westminster voting intention over time



Labour remain on track for a healthy win at the next General Election - although forecasts range from a small majority to a 1997 style landslide. The story of the past year is one of stability in the Tory and Labour vote

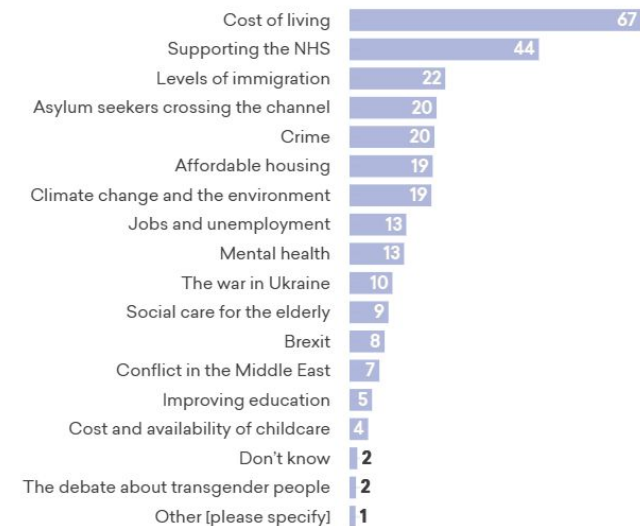
Labour have not only increased their vote share, but increased the efficiency of their vote - holding a majority in 6 out of 7 of our segments.

Reform UK has been growing in vote share in opinion polls, but are yet to replicate this in real-world elections.

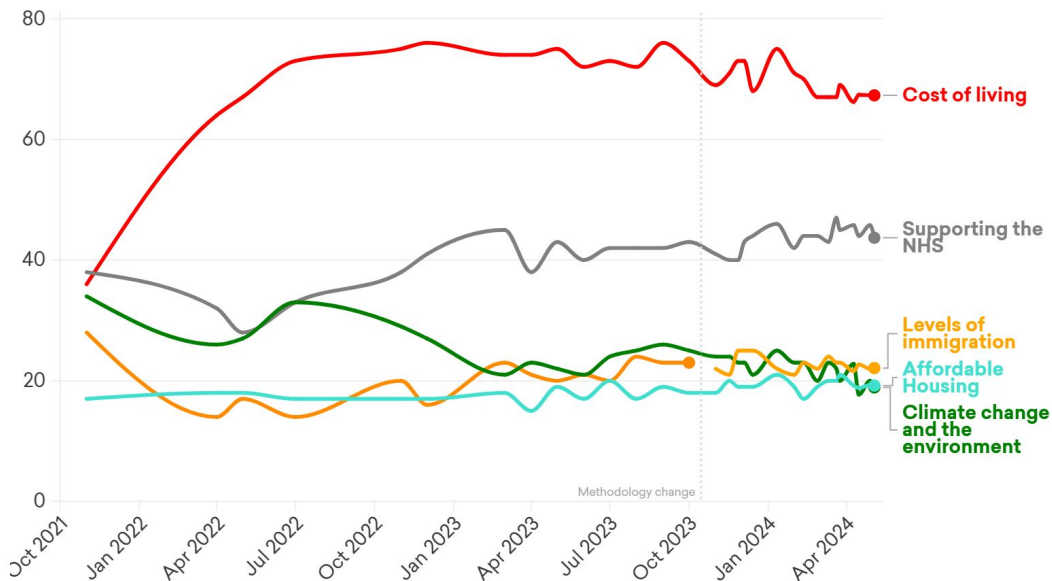
Britons' big issues

In your opinion, which are the most IMPORTANT issues facing the country today? Please select up to three

Segment: **All**



Britons' big issues over time

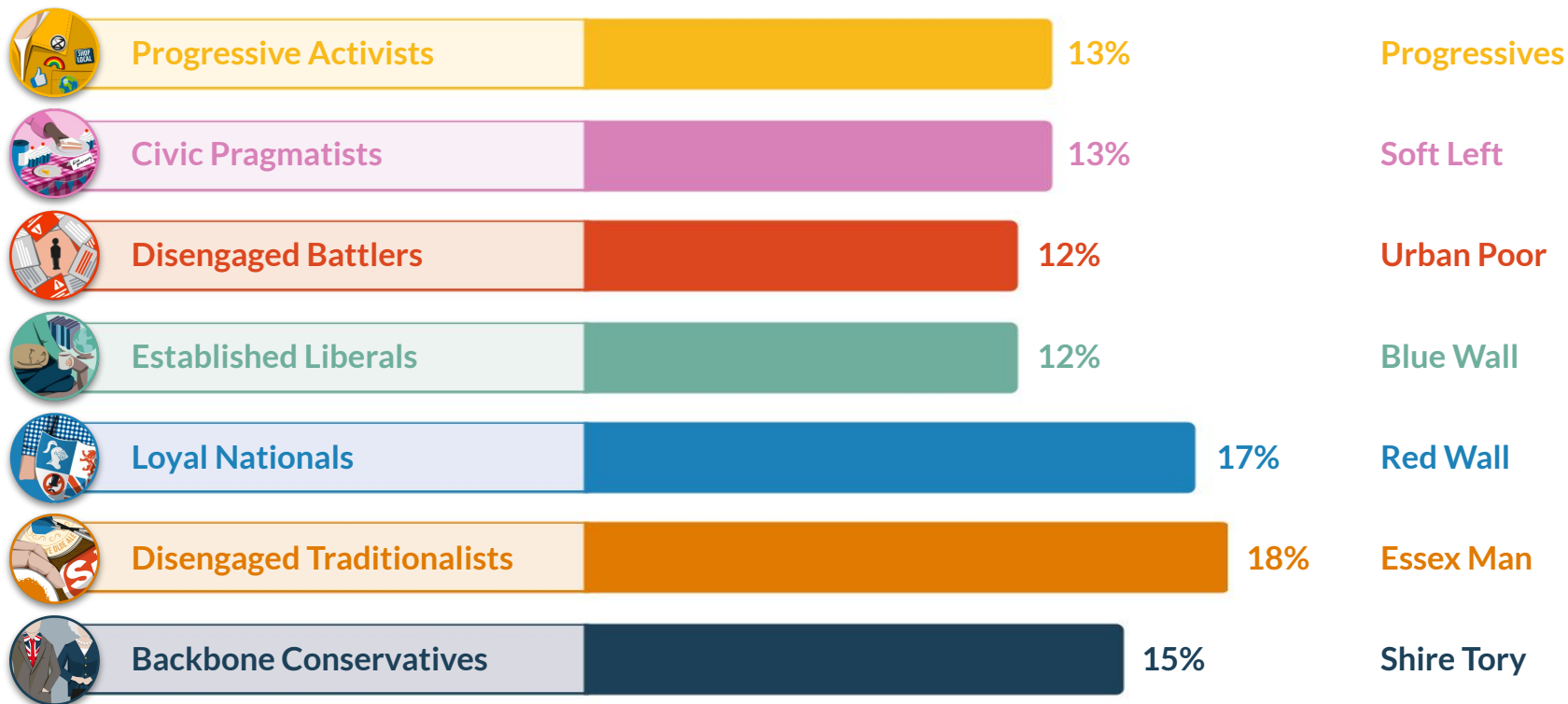


**More in
Common**

Source: More in Common, May 2024 • Last fieldwork: 2nd-3rd May 2024

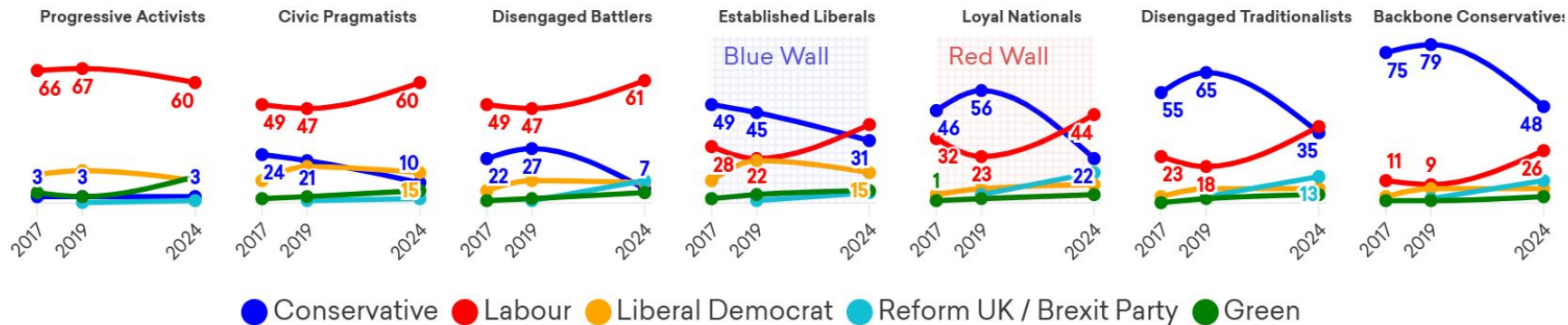
Methodology change: rephrasing of migration answer options
Latest fieldwork: 2nd-3rd May 2024

The British Seven Segments and political proxies



The seven segments at a General Election

How are the segments intending to vote?



Source: More in Common

Mean voting intentions from three polls throughout February and March 2024

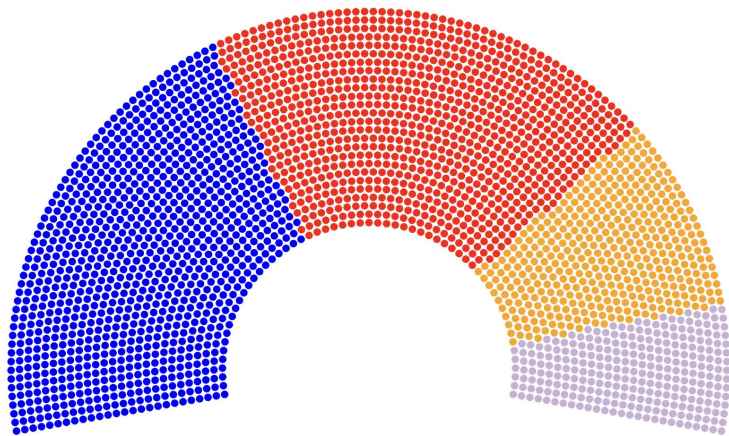
Labour are leading in six out of our seven segments and the gap is narrowing among the Backbone Conservatives. Since 2019, Established Liberals (“Blue Wall”), Loyal Nationals (“Red Wall”) and Disengaged Traditionalists “Essex Man”) have moved into the Labour column. While Labour have lost some of the progressive vote the dip has only been 7 points and they retain a healthy lead



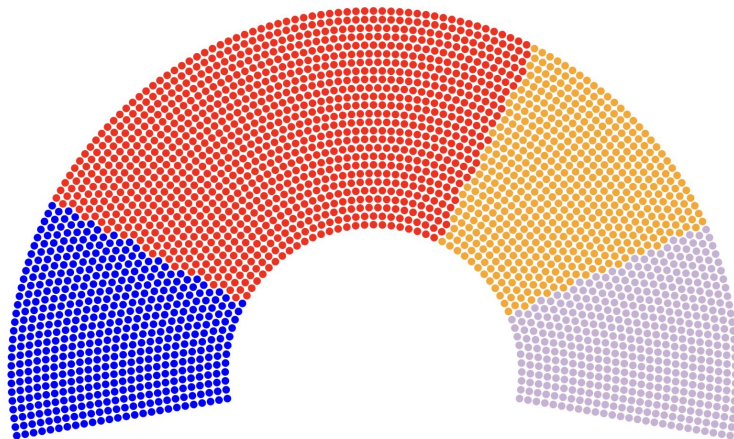
Section 1: What happened?

Realignment of local government

Before 2024 Election



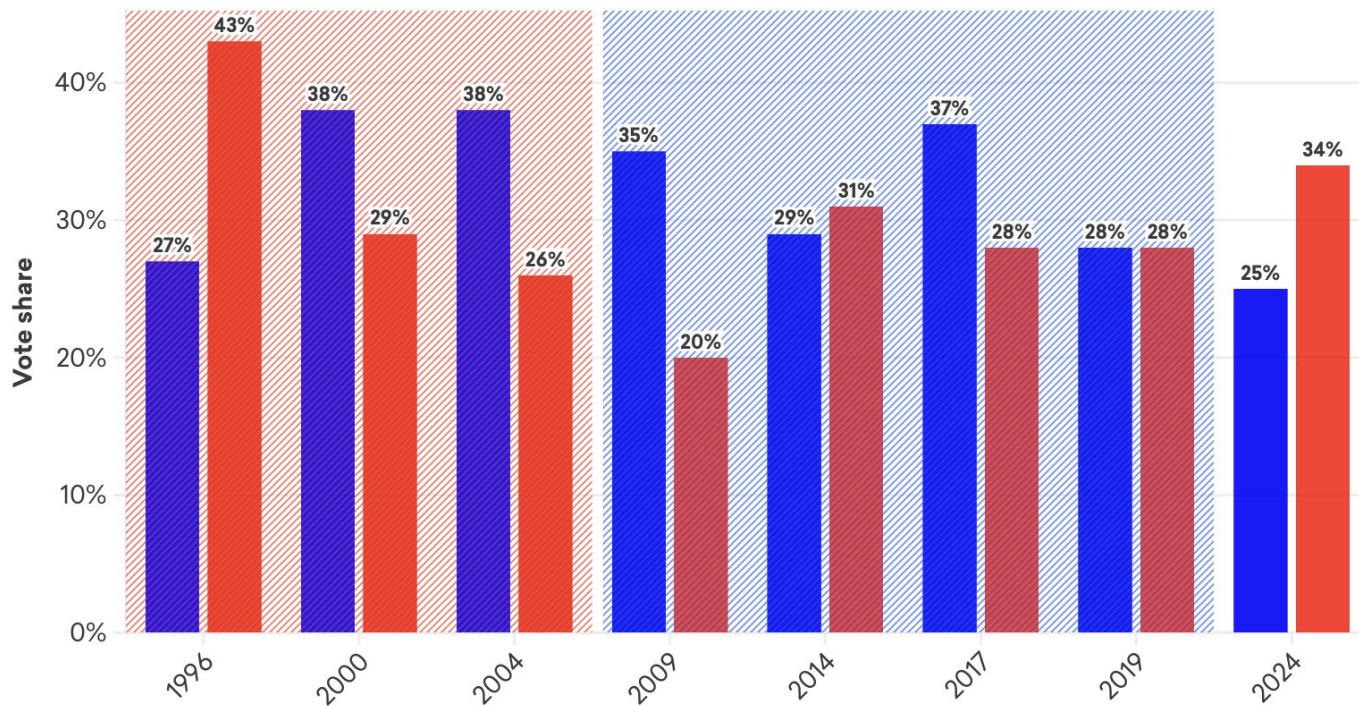
After 2024 Election



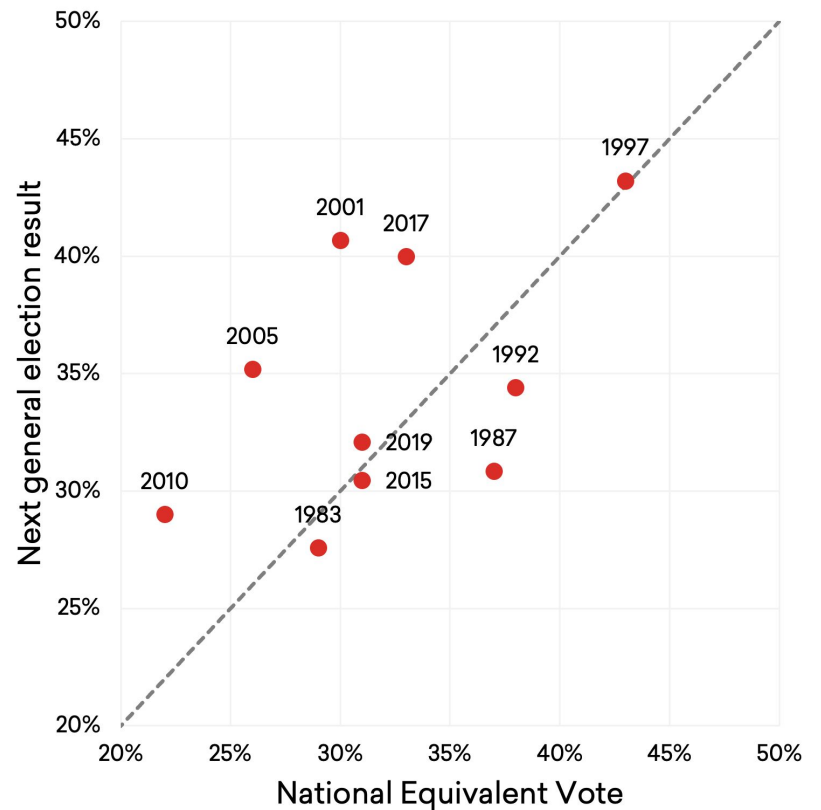
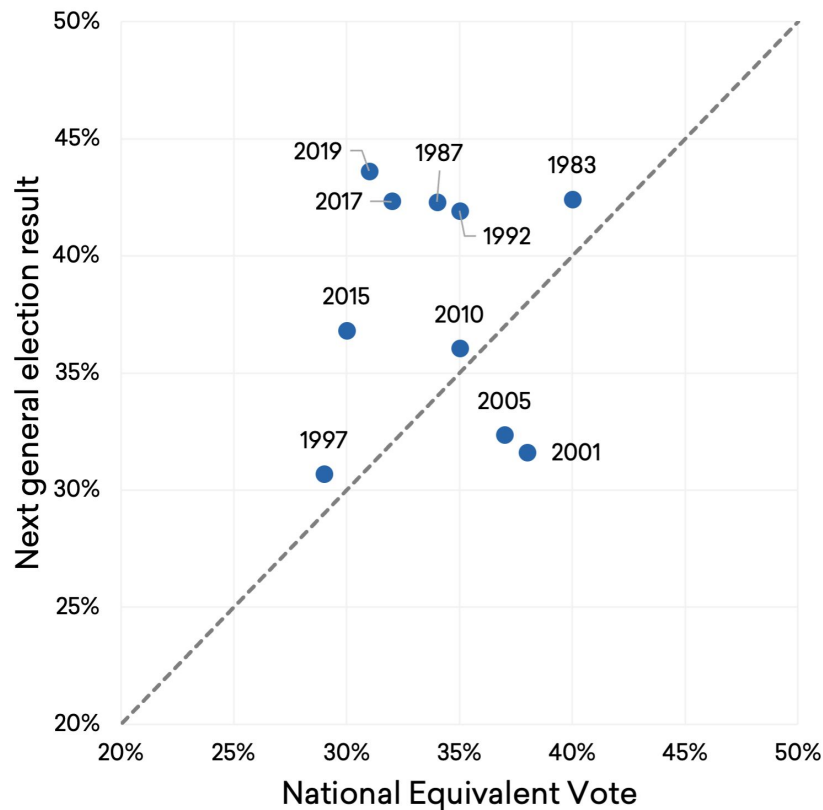
Party	Before 2024 Election	Results
● Conservatives	989	515
● Labour	972	1158
● Liberal Democrats	418	522
● Other	279	457

How does it compare to previous pre-general local elections?

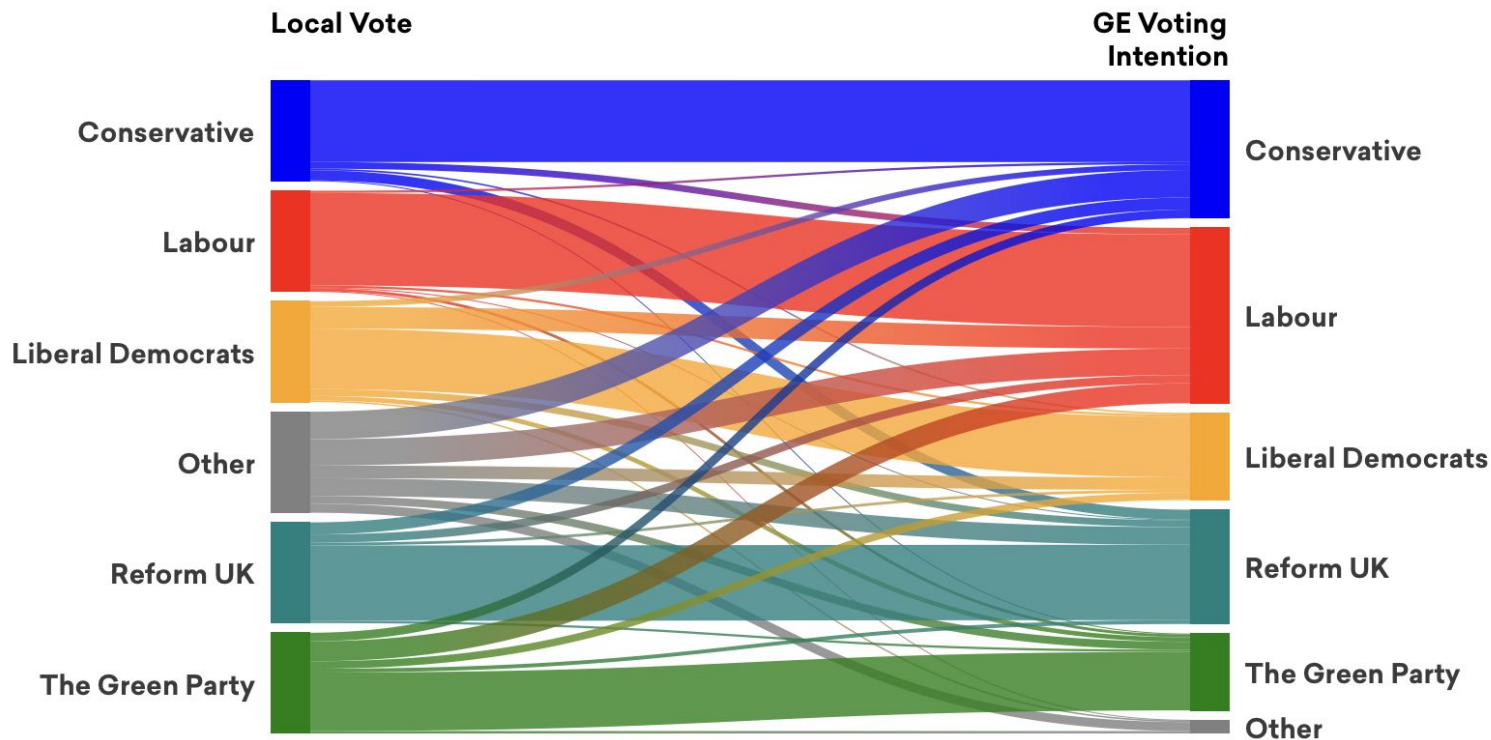
Projected National Share of Local Elections Preceding General Elections



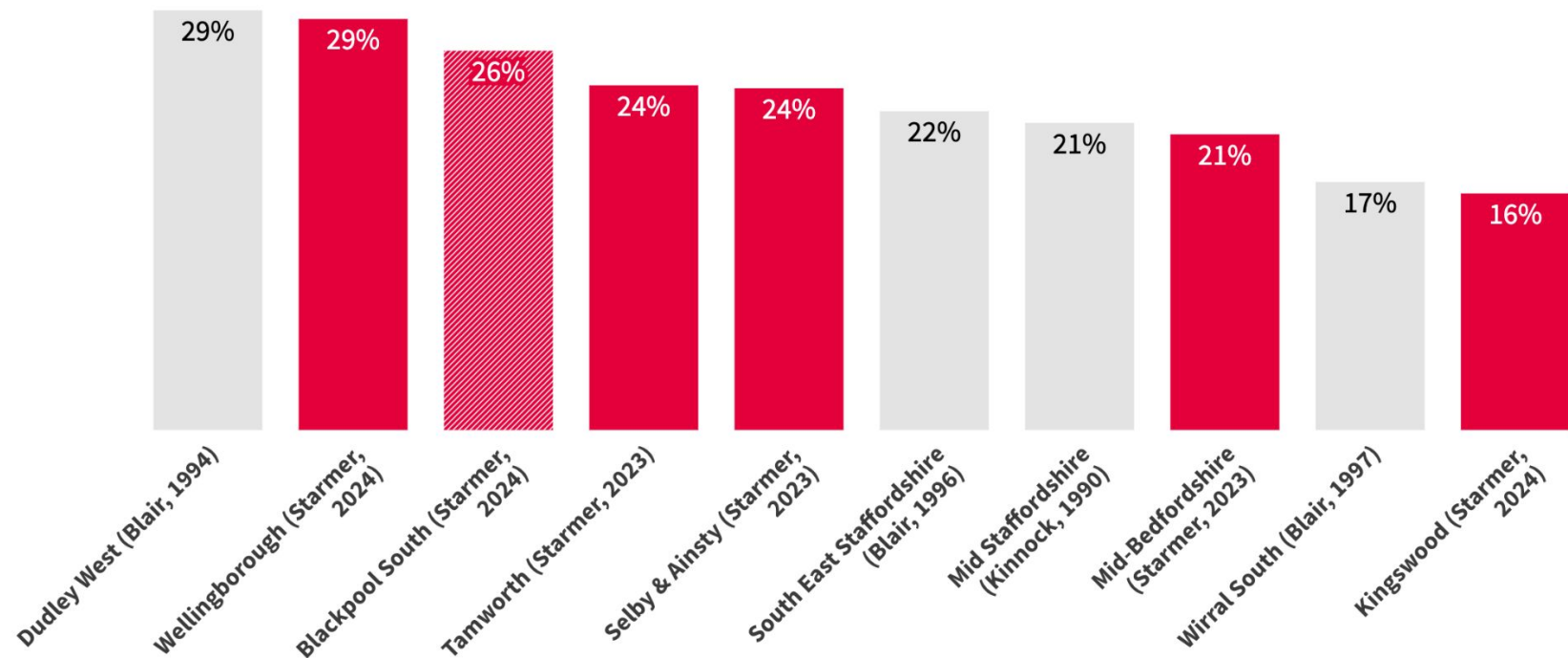
NEV is often a poor prediction of the following year's general election



Many who voted for smaller parties in the Locals will vote differently in a General Election.

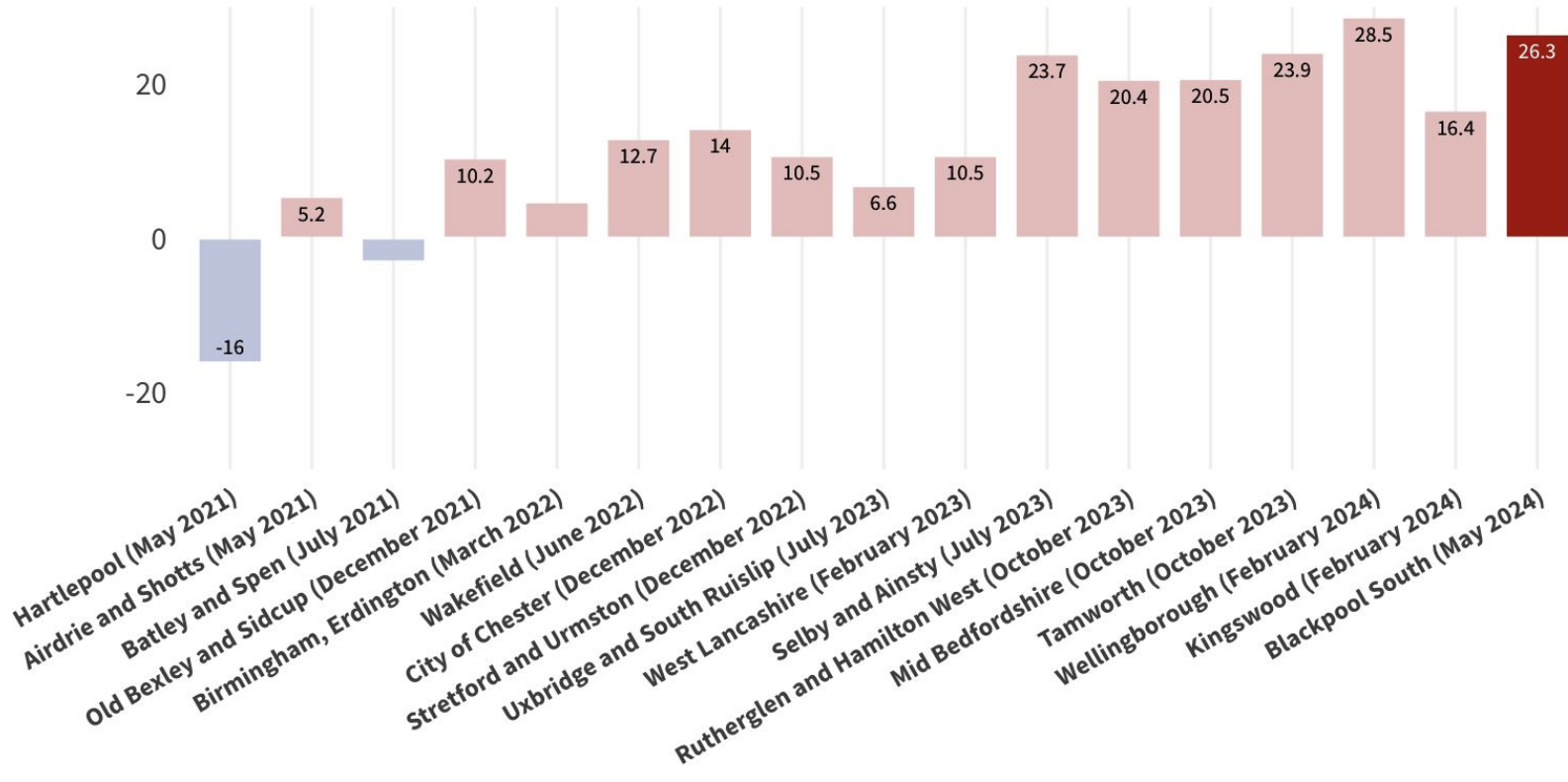


Blackpool South by-election swing - 3rd largest since 1945



Blackpool South: Labour's by-election streak continues

Change in Labour swings in by-elections (2021-24)

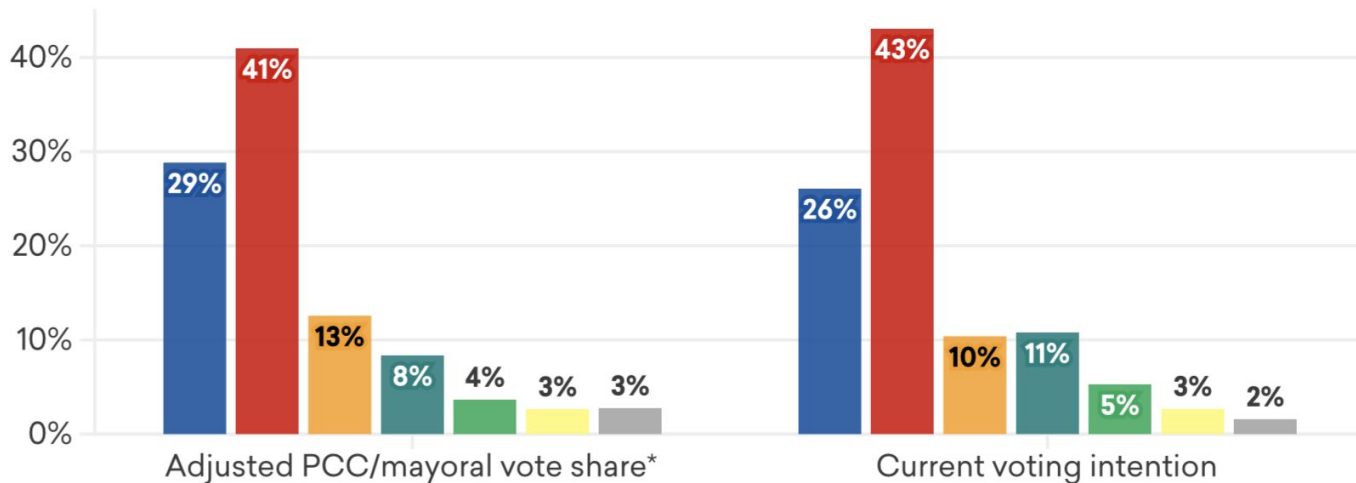


PCC results point towards a Labour majority

The results from PCC or mayoral elections across all of England and Wales are aligned with current polling. On a uniform national swing, the adjusted PCC vote share would give Labour a Blair-style majority.

● Conservative ● Labour ● Liberal Democrat ● Reform ● Green ● SNP ● Other

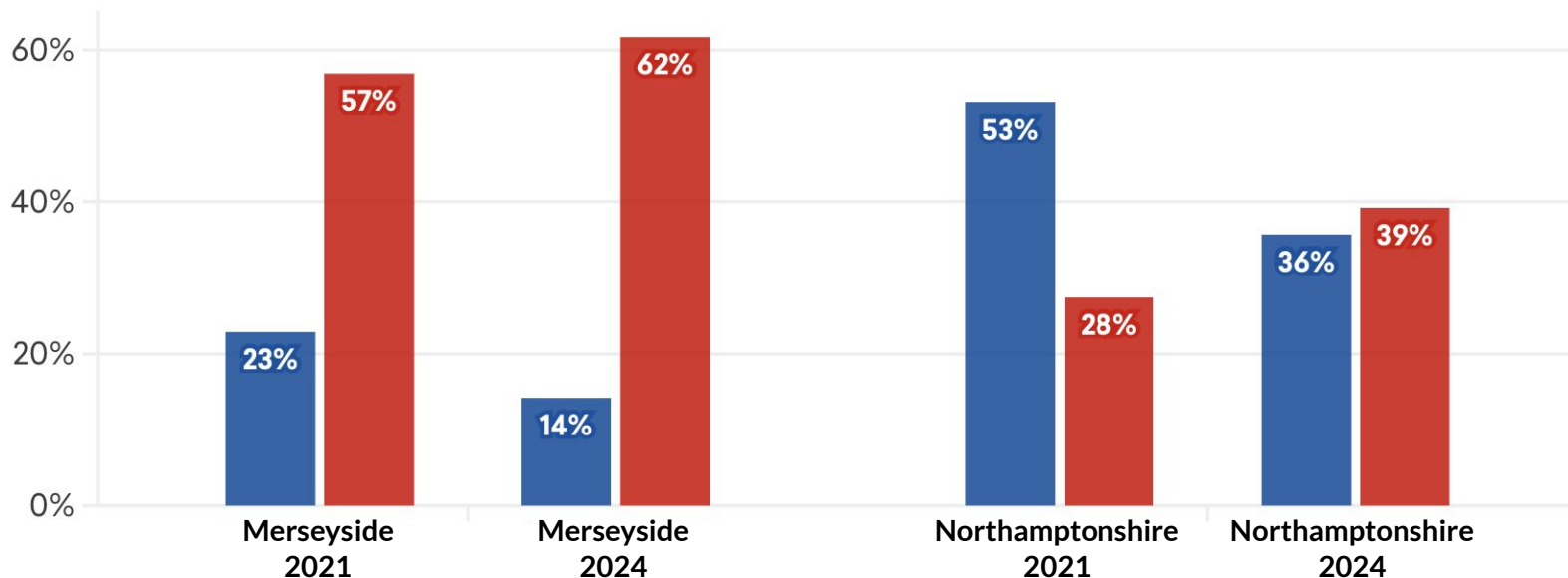
Vote share



The efficiency of Labour's vote

In 2019 Labour came second to the Conservatives in Northamptonshire's seven parliamentary constituencies, whereas in Merseyside Labour hold 14 out of 15 constituencies. But in last week's PCC elections Labour outperformed the national swing in Northamptonshire not Merseyside - an example of Labour doing well in areas where it counts.

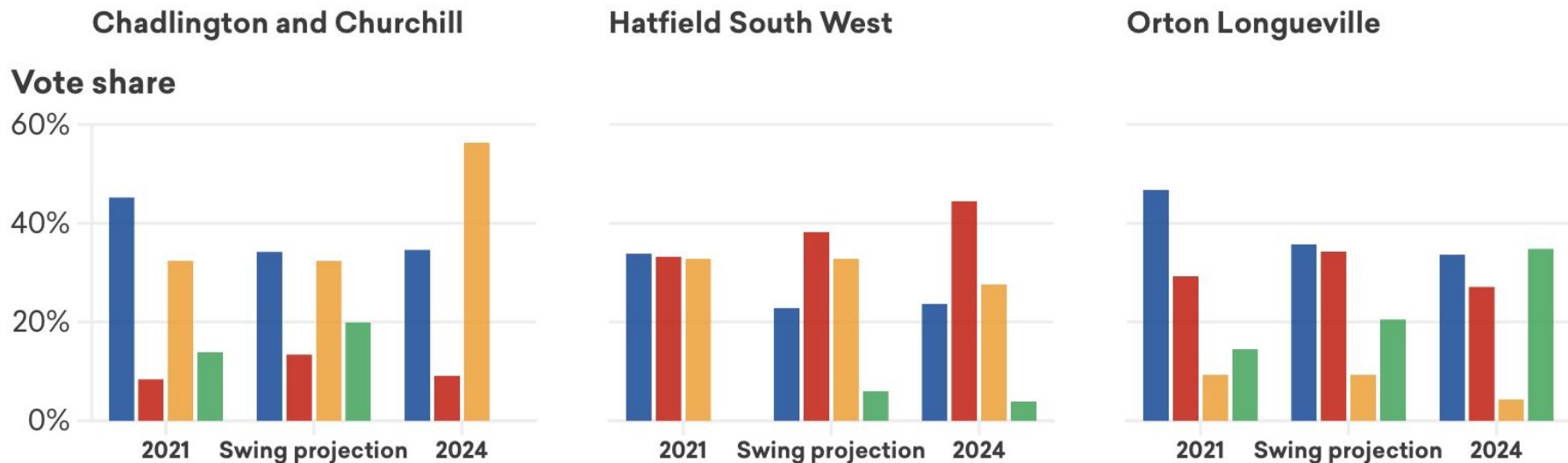
Vote share



Tactical voting on the left

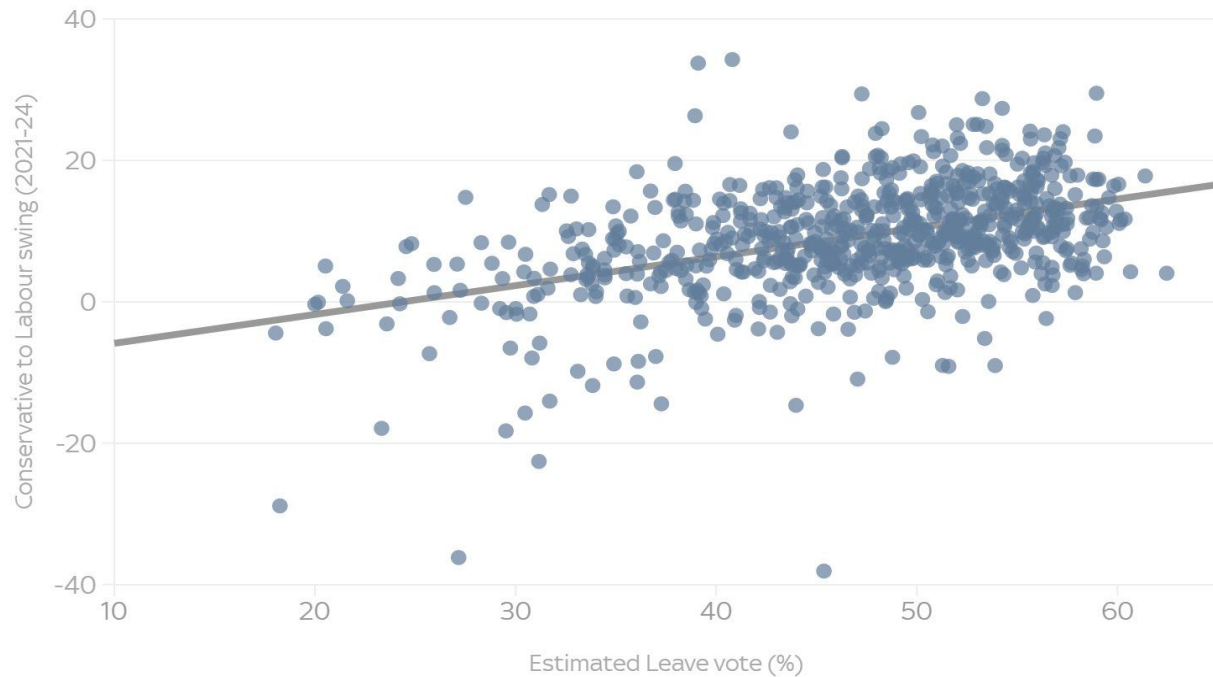
In some areas voters seem to have voted tactically for the party most likely to unseat incumbent Conservatives - benefiting the Lib Dems in Chadlington and Churchill, Labour in Hatfield South West and the Greens in Orton Longueville, as examples.

● Conservative ● Labour ● Liberal Democrat ● Other



Labour won biggest in areas that voted Leave

Conservative to Labour swing by estimated Leave vote

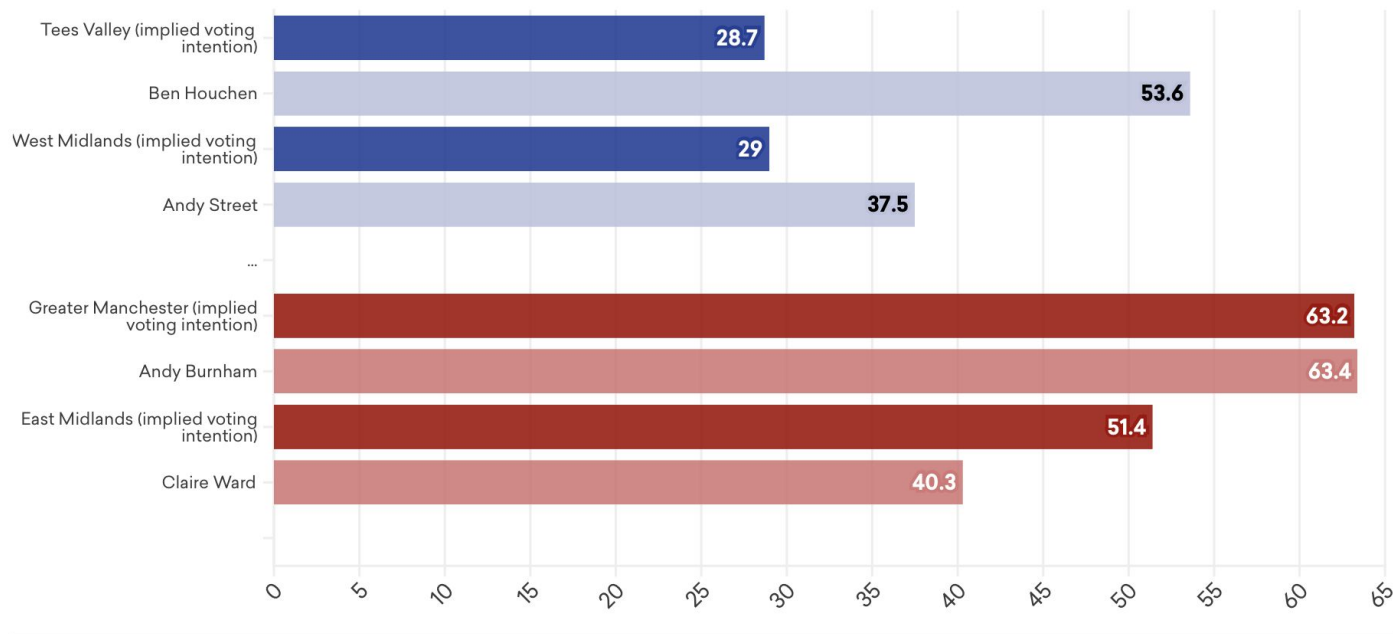


SOURCE: SKY NEWS, 15:30 (AFTER 711 WARDS COUNTED)
via Professor Will Jennings

Conservative mayors were boosted by personal brands

In focus groups voters cited the fact that Street and Houchen did what they said they were going to do, didn't feel like 'Tories' and focused on things like championing their area and using opportunities like jobs in renewables to build up industry.

Conservative/Labour leads in 2024 mayoral elections versus current implied regional voting intention.

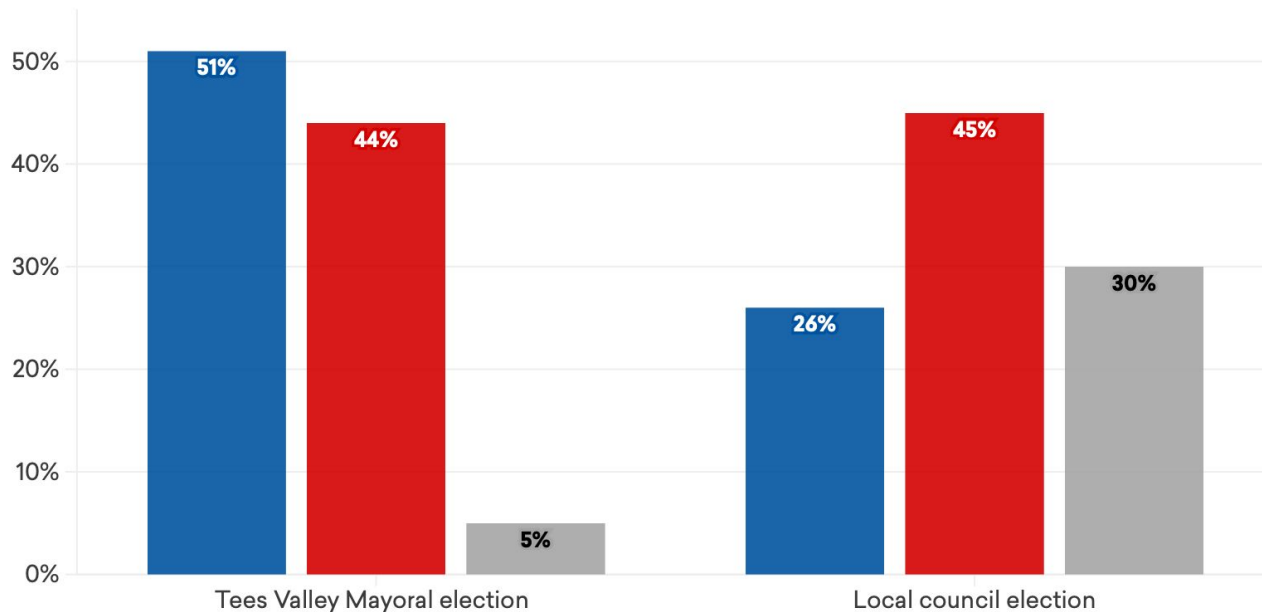


Houchen has a very strong personal vote

Hartlepool voted for a Conservative Mayor and a Labour council

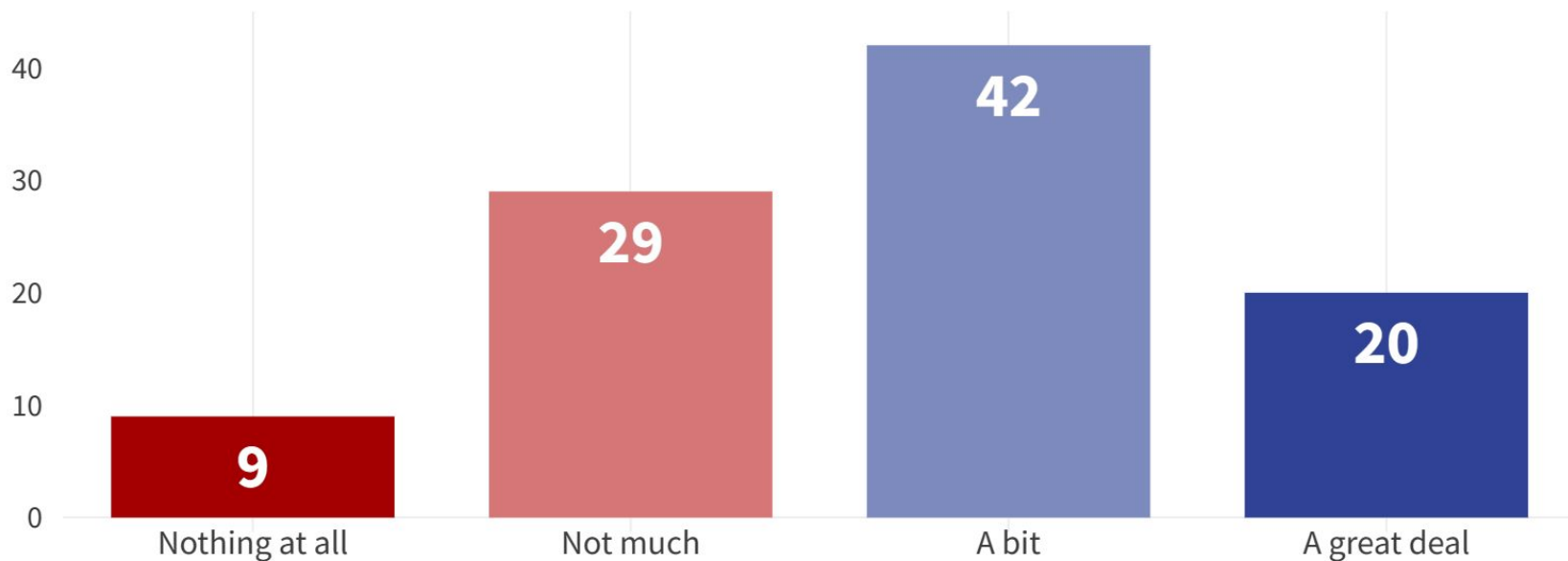
● Conservative ● Labour ● Others

Vote share



Two in five hadn't heard much about the local elections

And before today, how much had you heard about local elections happening in your area this week?

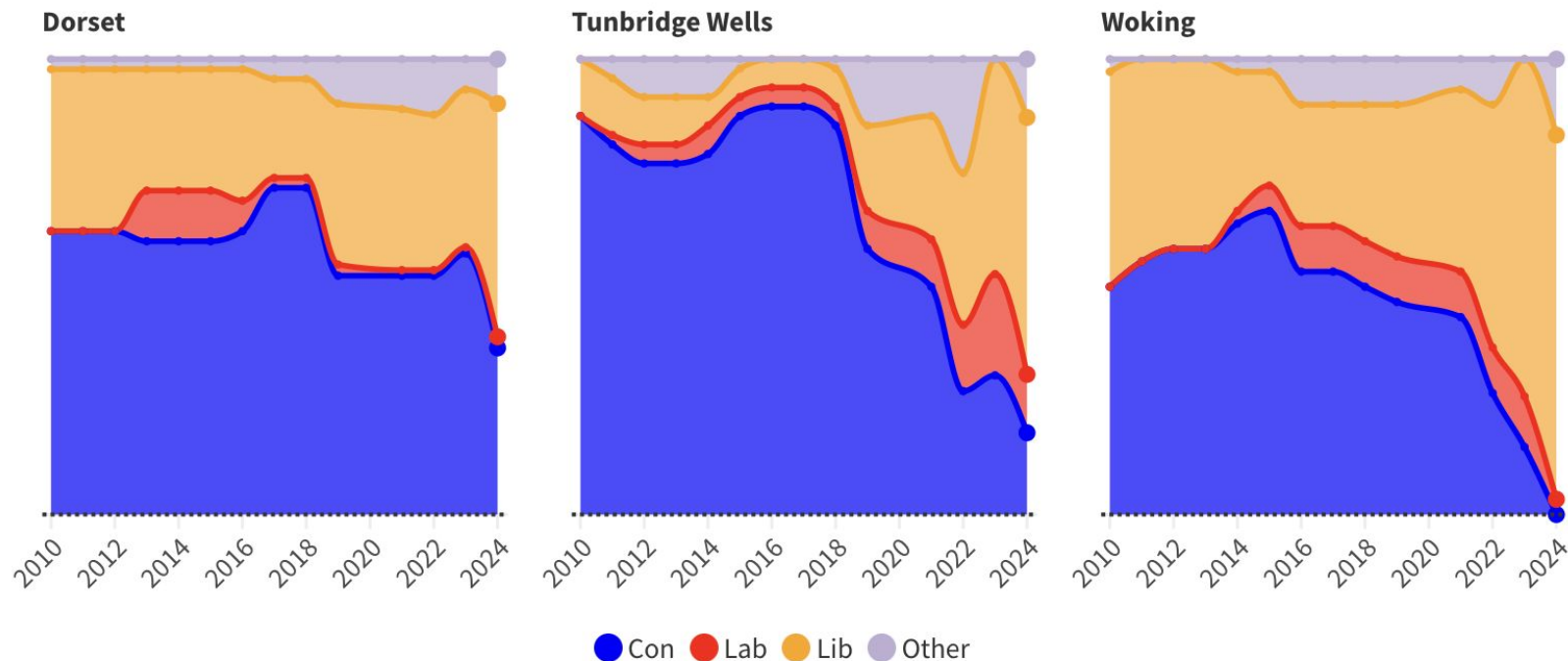




Section 2: How did the smaller parties and independents do?

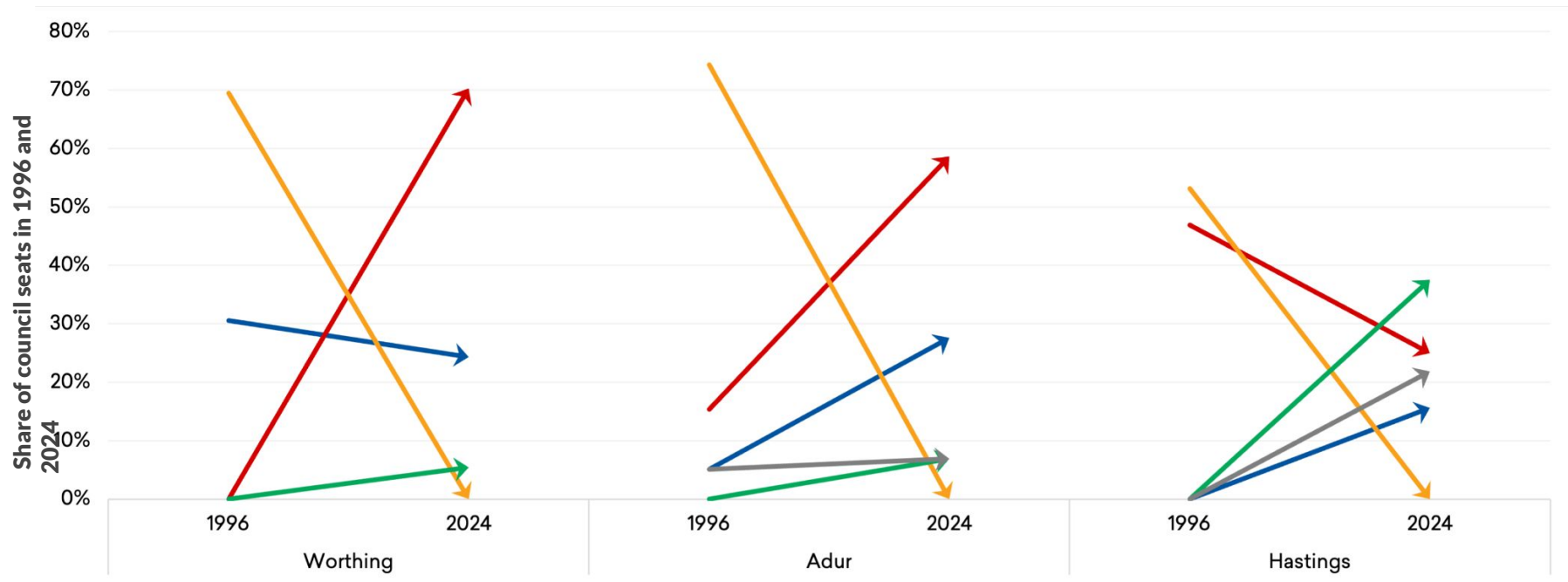
Lib Dems are eroding Tory strongholds

Council Composition

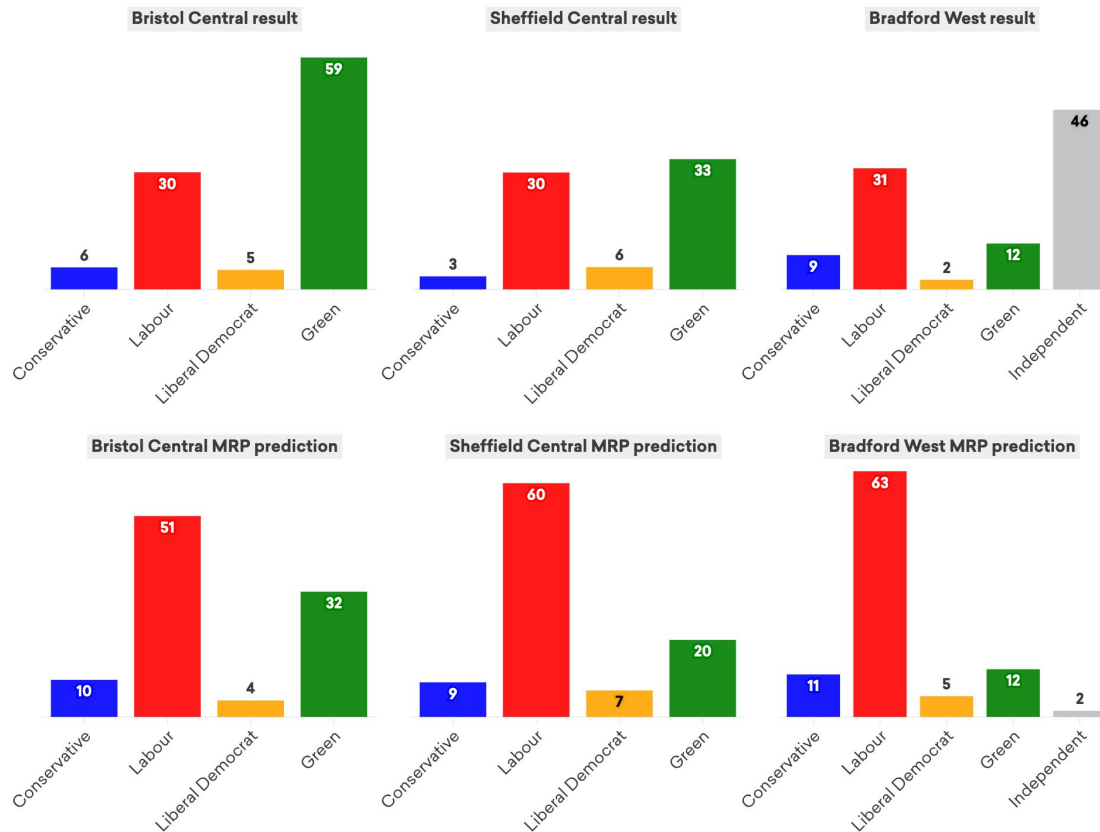


But in South East coastal towns they have been usurped

The Liberal Democrats had majority control of Adur, Worthing and Hastings in the run-up to the 1997 General Election. They now don't have even a single councillor in any of these coastal areas. Instead, Labour has emerged as the main challenger against the Conservatives in many parts of the South East.



Green overperformance



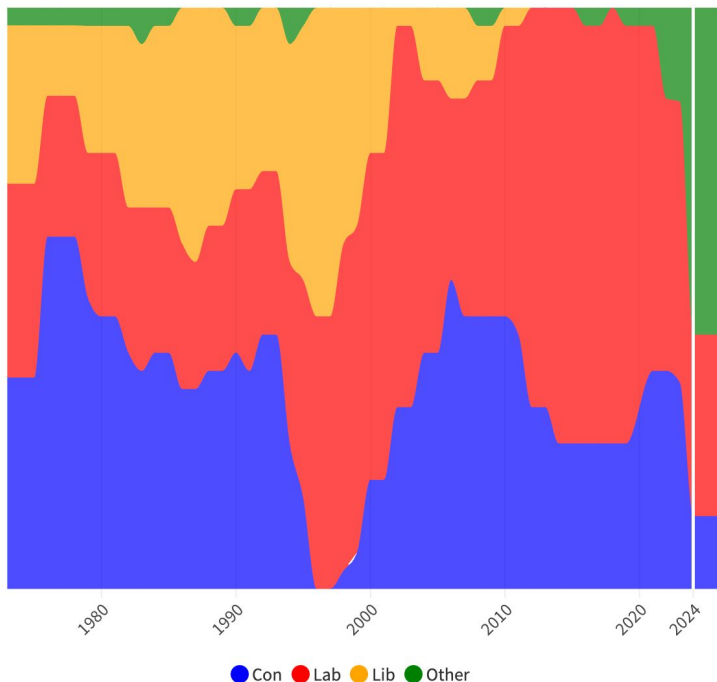
The Greens have overperformed MRP polling predictions in a range of seats, in most cases at the expense of Labour.

Of those councils up for election, MRP polls predict the highest vote share for the Greens in Bristol Central, Sheffield Central, and Bradford West - and the Greens outperformed prediction in two of these.

The exception is Bradford where strong independent candidates massively outperformed MRPs.

Hastings - Green's best performance

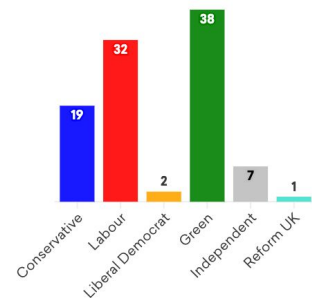
Hastings Council Composition



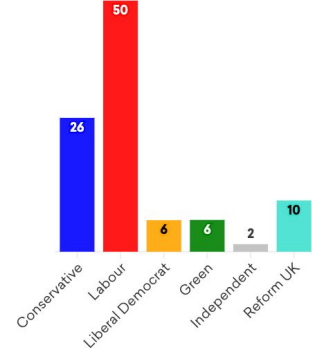
Arguably the Greens' best performance was in Hastings, where the party moved from fourth largest in the council to the largest party.

This is a significant overperformance on MRP results (although the Hastings constituency is slightly bigger than the Borough)

Hastings Borough result

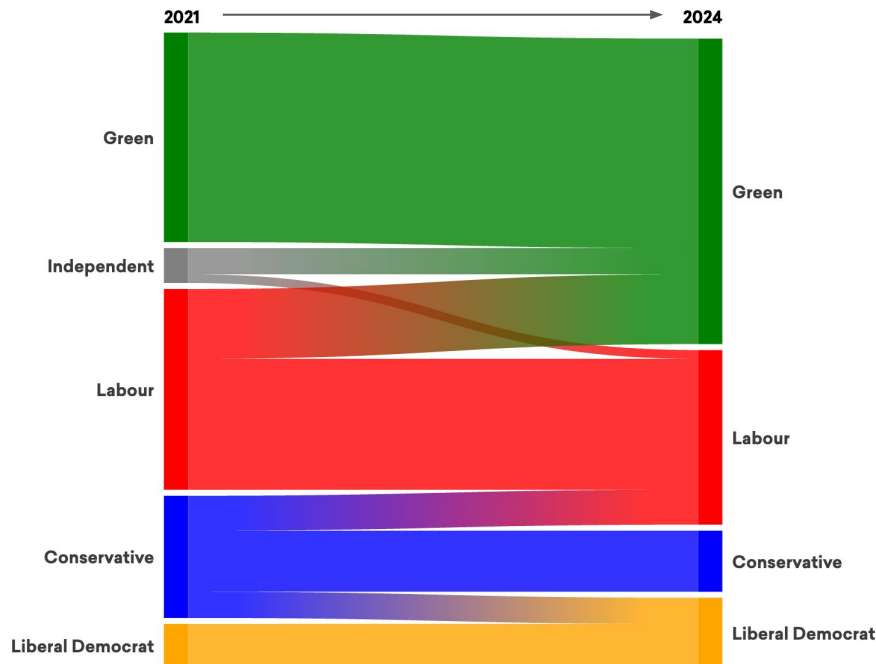


Hastings Constituency MRP prediction



What is driving Green gains?

Bristol councillors flow since 2021

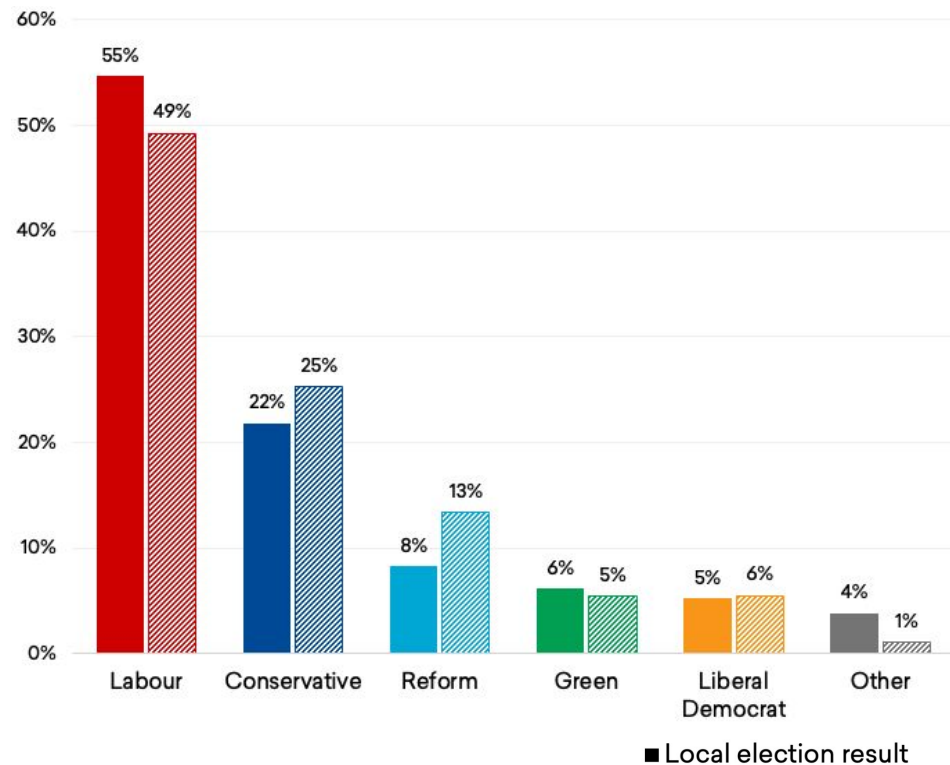


Green gains are a result of Labour's realignment towards the right. As Labour have moved to capture more Conservative areas, they have lost their more progressive voters in safe Labour seats.

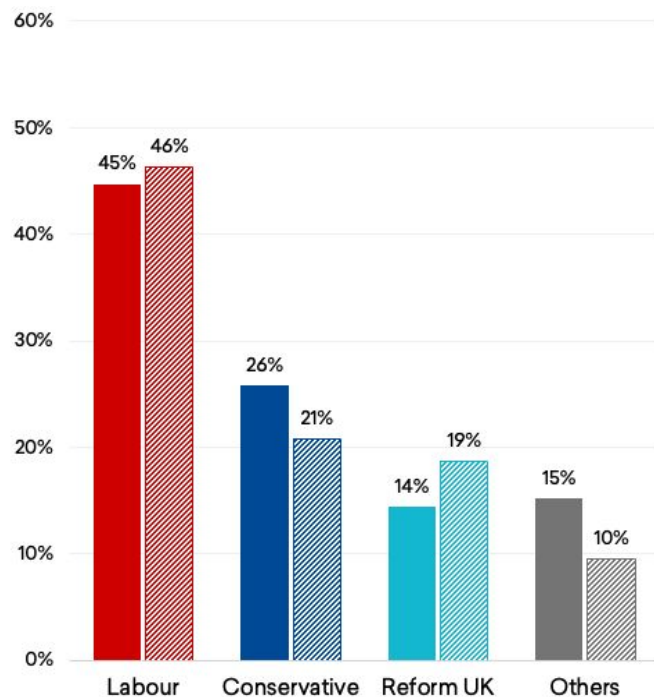
In Bristol, for example, Greens made all of their gains directly from Labour, whereas Labour have gained from the Conservatives.

Are polls overstating Reform?

Reform underperformed by 8 percentage points in **West Bromwich** (Sandwell), compared to what MRP models currently predict



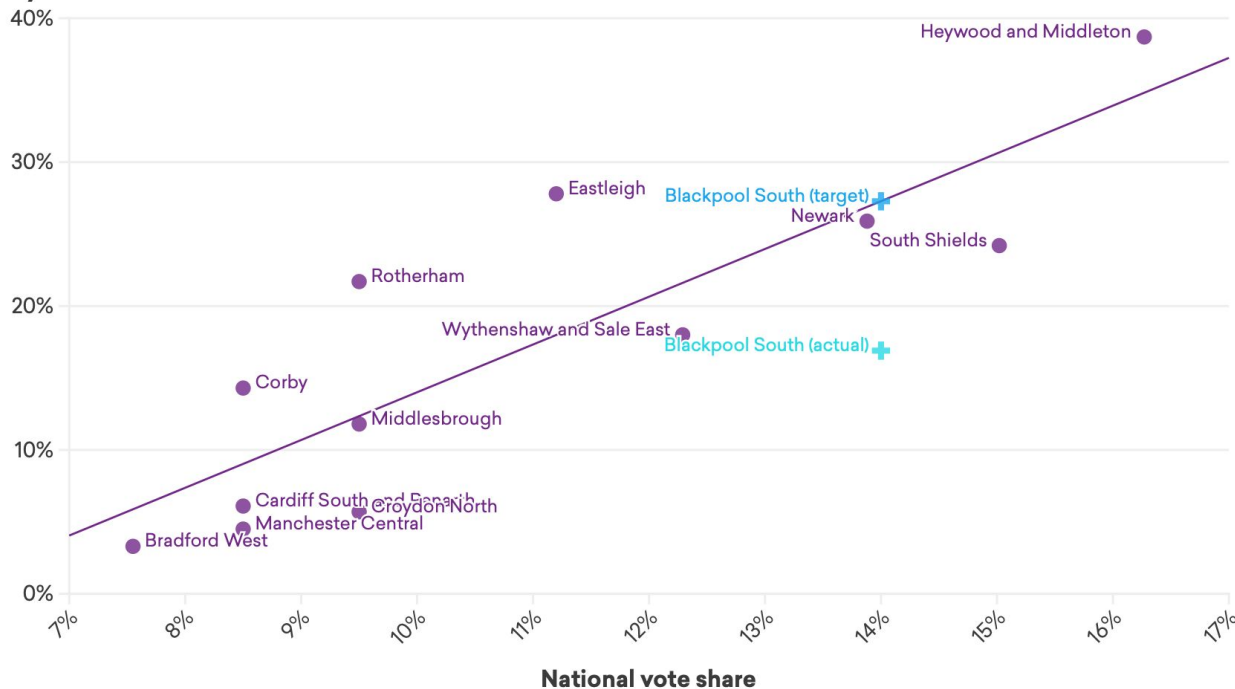
MRPs suggest that Reform are polling at 27% in **Hartlepool**, but they only won 14% of the vote in the local elections



Reform's vote in Blackpool was underwhelming

Reform should have been aiming at 27% in Blackpool South

By-election vote share



Reform is not the political force that UKIP was in 2012-14.

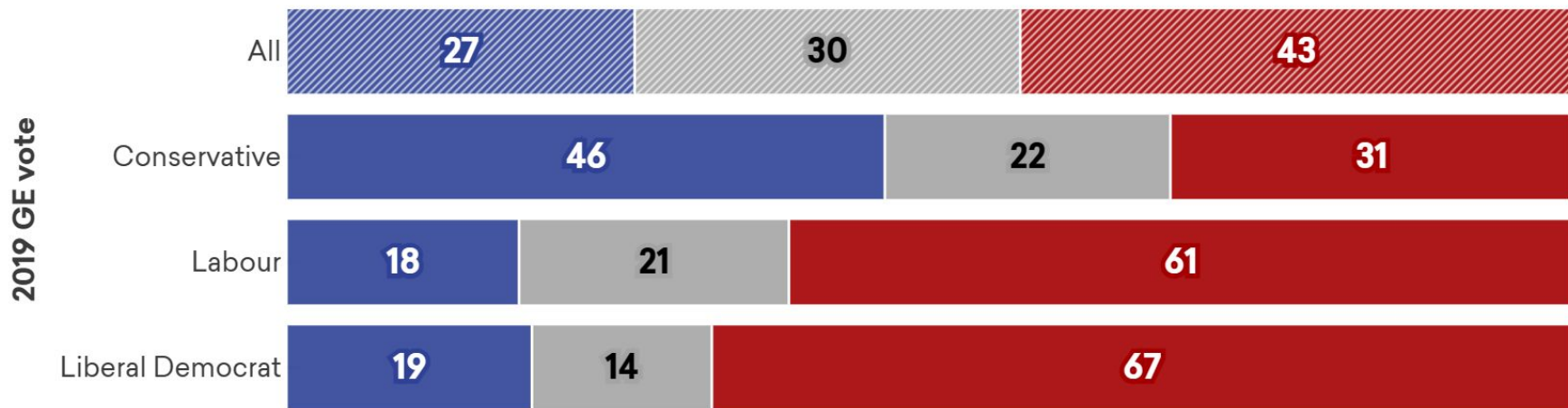
Comparing UKIP's performance in by-elections with their national vote share at the time, then Reform's 14% vote share should have roughly translated into 27% in the Blackpool South by-election

But Reform only managed 18%.

Nigel Farage is popular with Conservative voters

Would it be good or bad for the country if Nigel Farage returned to frontline politics?

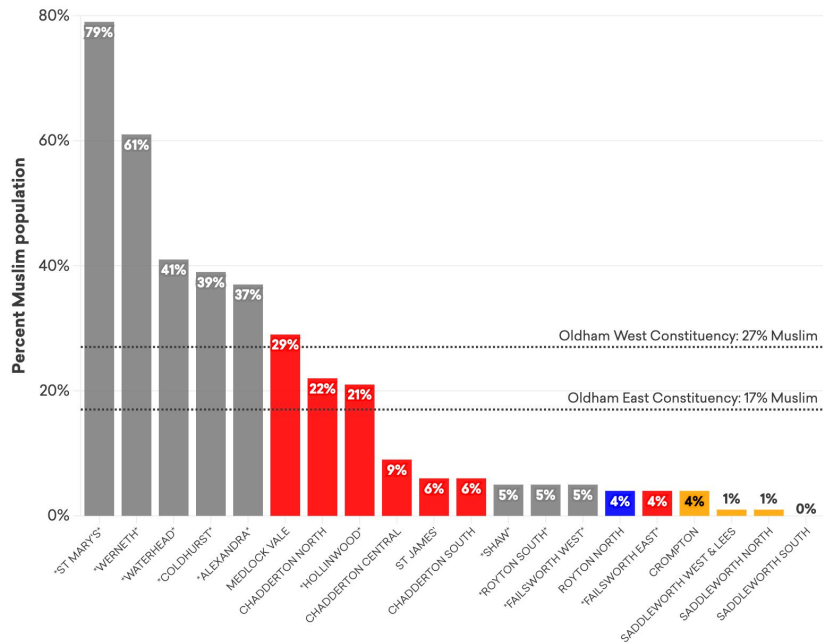
● Good for the country ● Don't know ● Bad for the country



The Gaza vote

Independents have won in Muslim and non-Muslim areas in Oldham

Stars indicate a councillor gained



Independent candidates have done remarkably well across the country.

A large part of this is in highly-Muslim areas, where candidates have run on messaging relating to the conflict in Gaza. The threshold for a Labour loss here seems to be a Muslim population of about 30%.

But this is not the whole story. In Oldham, for example, right-wing independents did well in the council's least Muslim wards.

Similar events happened elsewhere - the anti-LTN independent group did well in Oxford where the pro-Gaza independent group lost seats. Similarly, in Peterborough, most independent gains were from the Peterborough First who are mostly independent defectors.

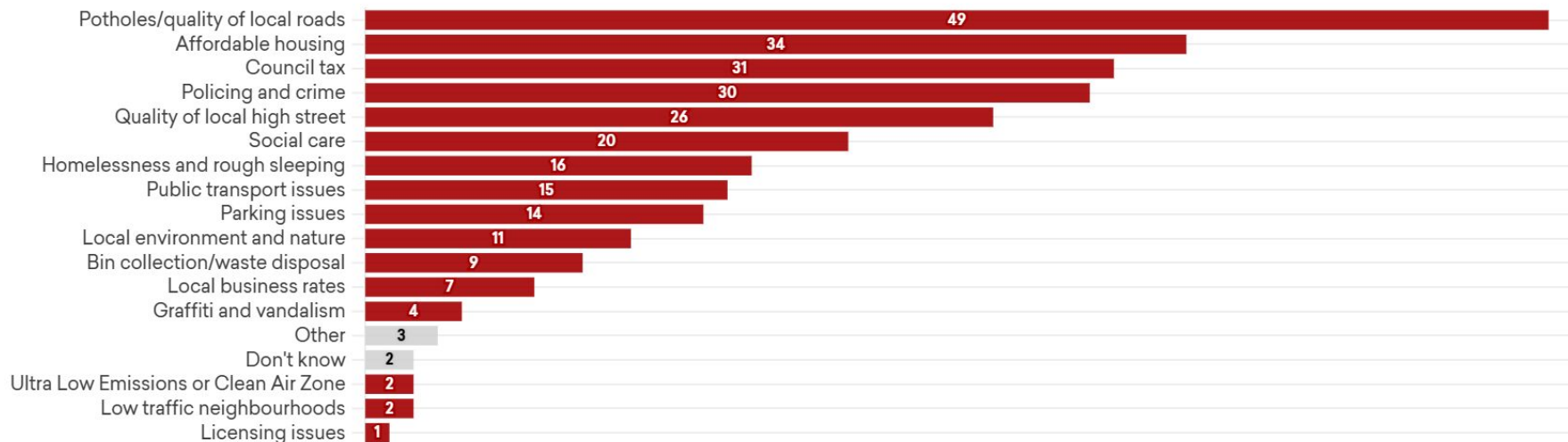


Section 3: What drove the voters?

Biggest issues in the local elections were potholes, housing, and council tax

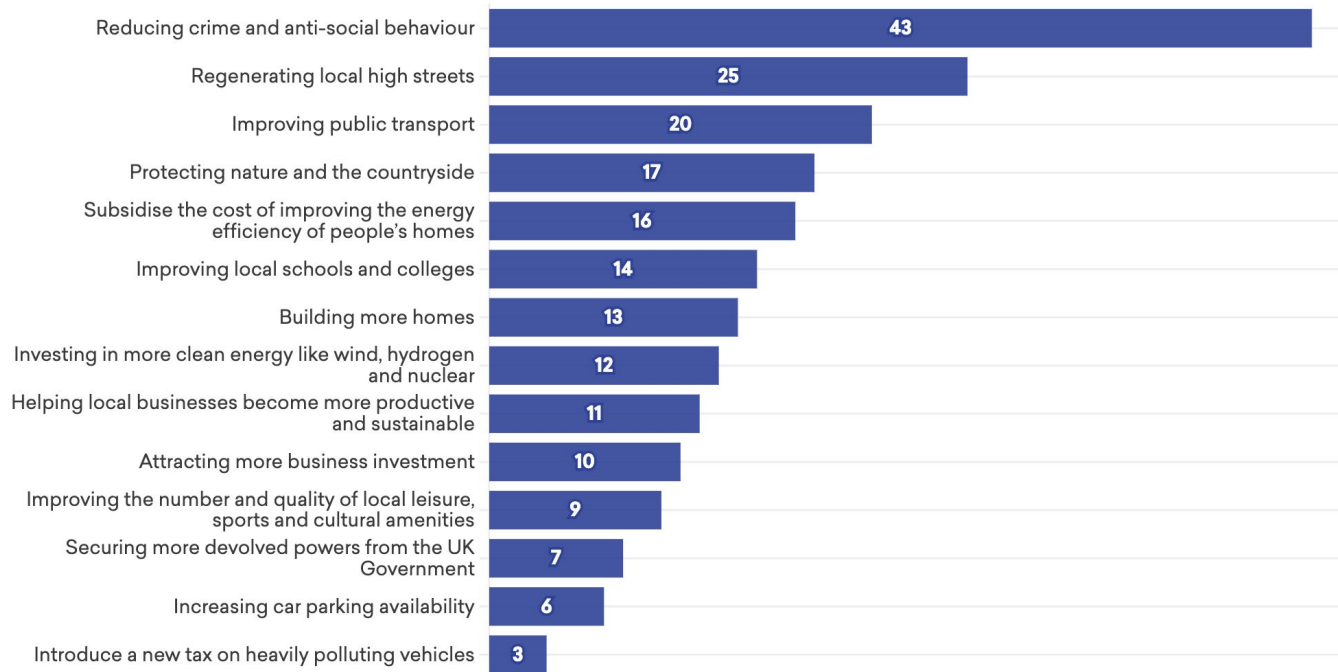
Thinking now about issues directly under local authority control, which of these - if any - are the biggest local issues in your area? Pick up to three

Responses only from likely voters in areas with council elections



Environment and energy are top priorities after crime and high streets for incoming mayors

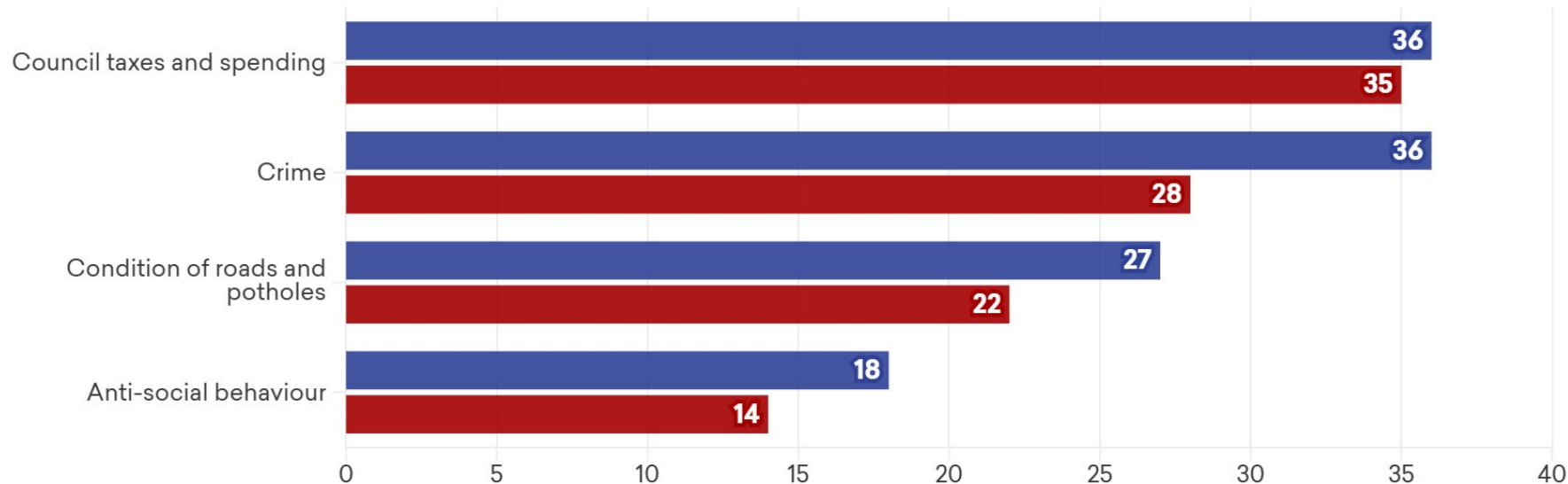
What would you most want the Mayor of the [REGION] to focus on over the next few years?
Please select up to three.



Conservative voters were more concerned about crime and potholes...

What were the main local issues that determined your vote? Select up to three.

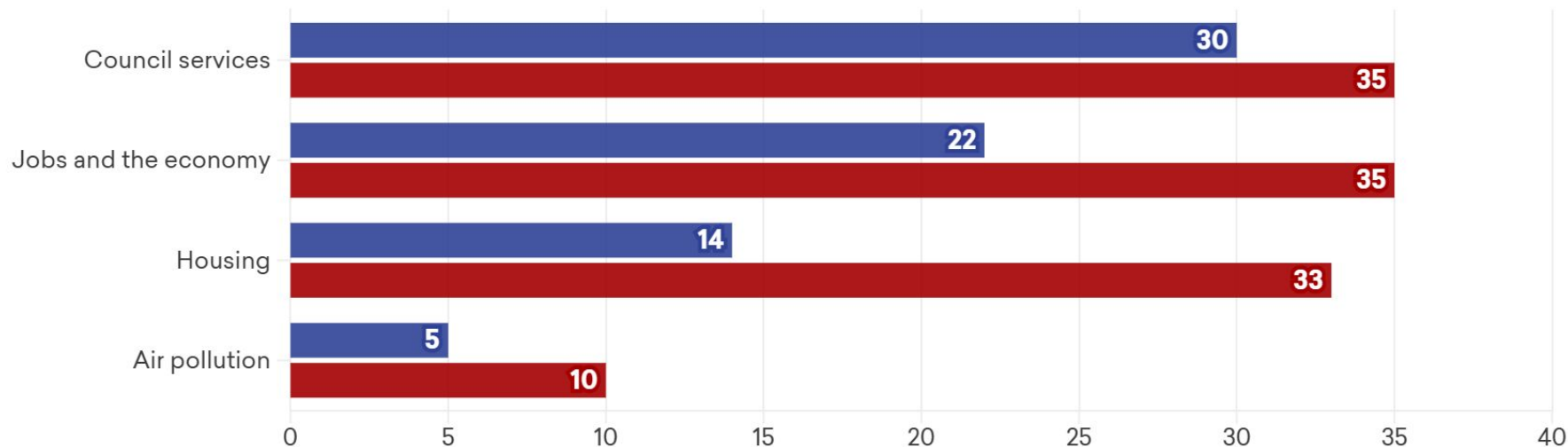
● Conservative ● Labour



...while Labour voters were more concerned about housing and council services

What were the main local issues that determined your vote? Select up to three.

● Conservative ● Labour



The top issues are the “worst” thing about voters local area

In a few words, what would you say is the WORST thing about the area that you live in?

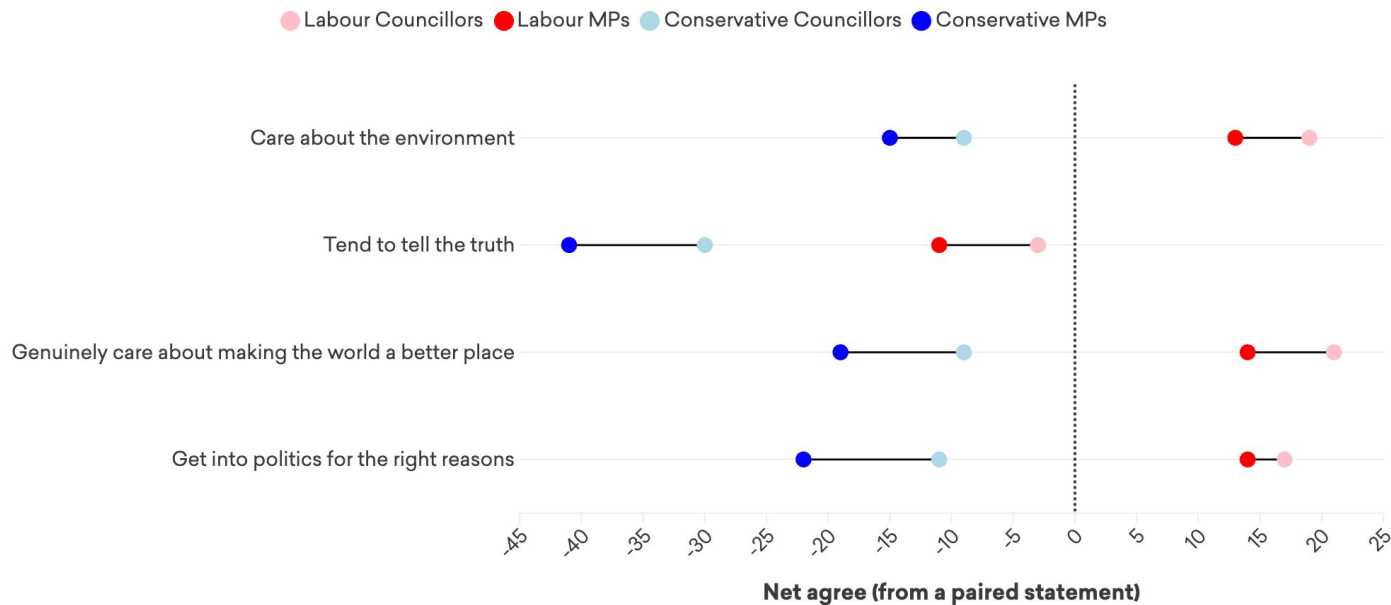


In a few words, what would you say is the BEST thing about the area that you live in?



Councillors are viewed more positively than MPs

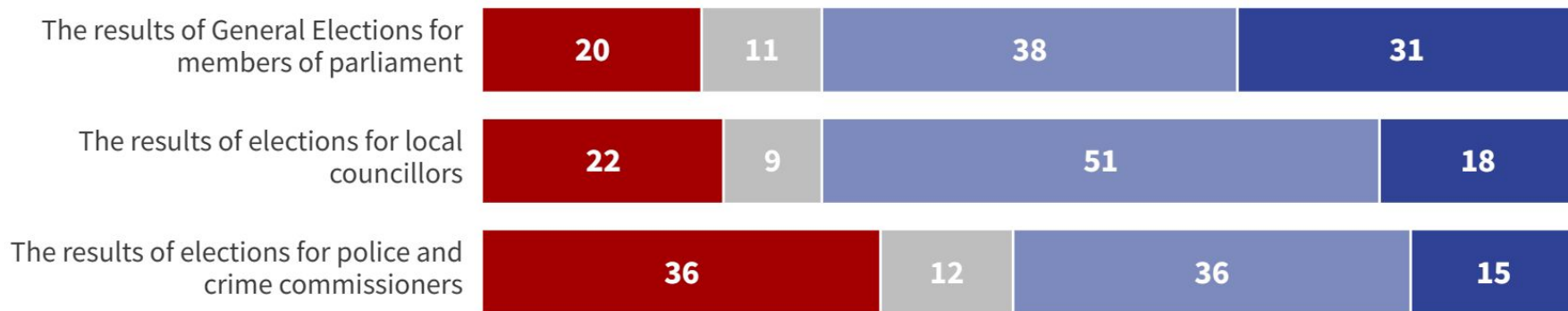
Local politicians are seen more positively than national ones, and Labour politicians much more positively than Conservative politicians



Much of the public think elections for councillors are as important as elections for Members of Parliament

Thinking about each of the following, how much of an impact do you think they have on the lives of people like you?

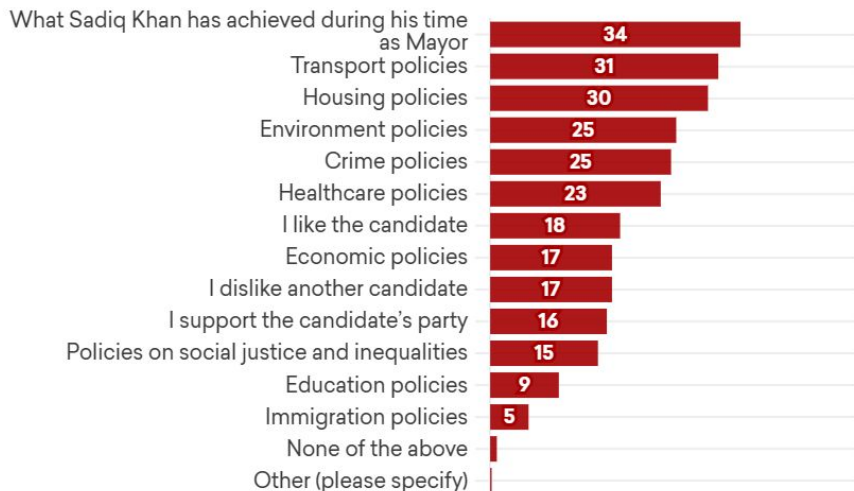
- Has no impact on people like me ● Don't know ● Has some impact on people like me
● Has a great deal of impact on people like me



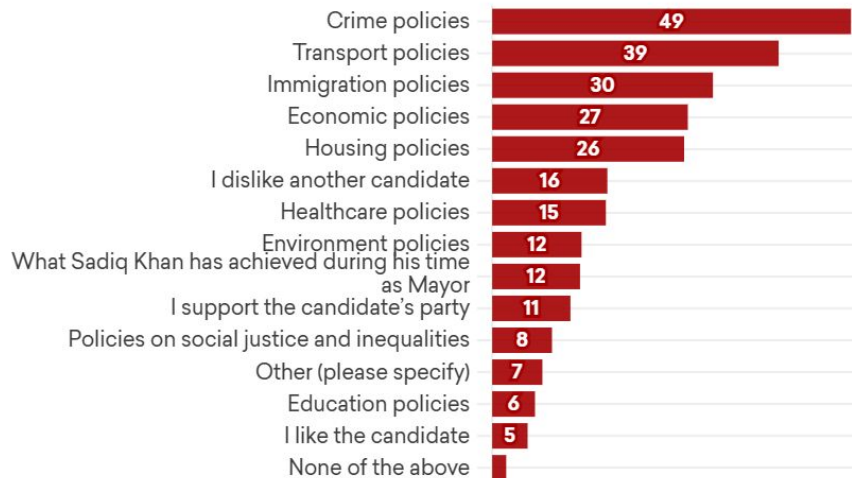
Londoners who voted for Susan Hall were motivated by crime, while many voted for Sadiq Khan's record

When it comes to deciding your vote in the London mayoral election, which factors are the most important?

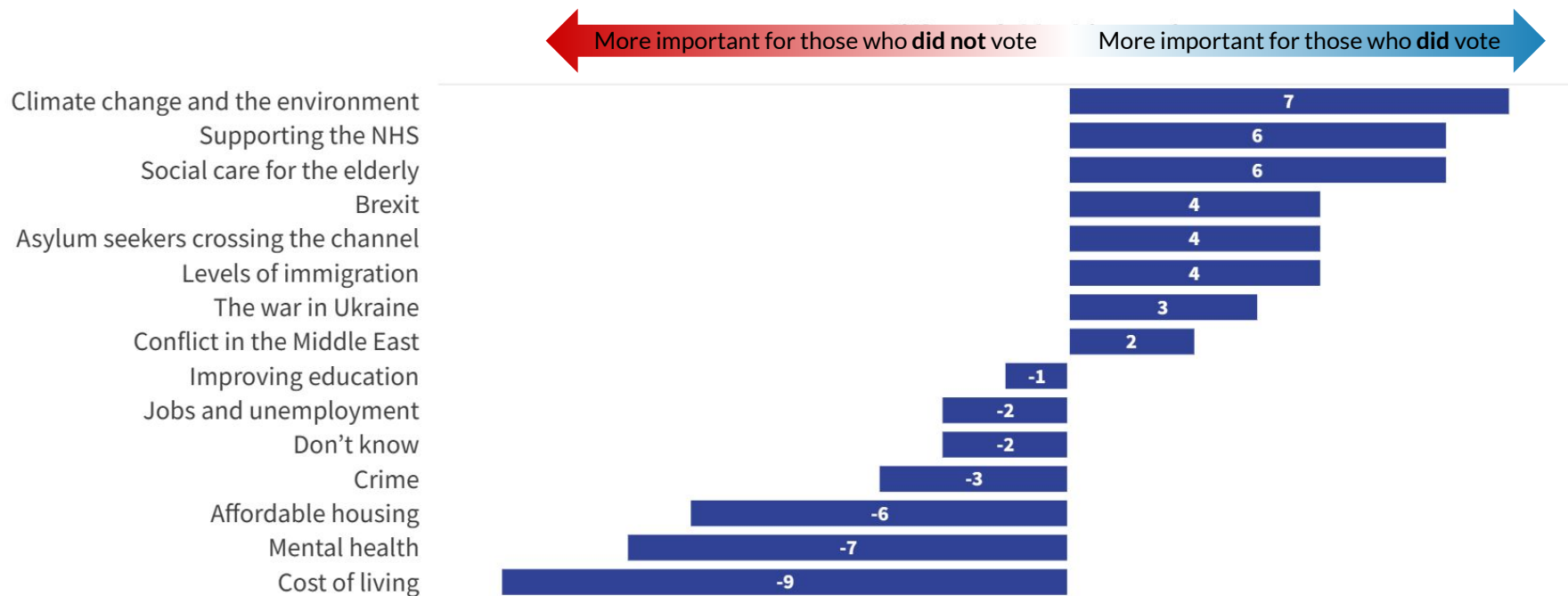
Sadiq Khan



Susan Hall



Voters concerned about climate change were more likely to turnout

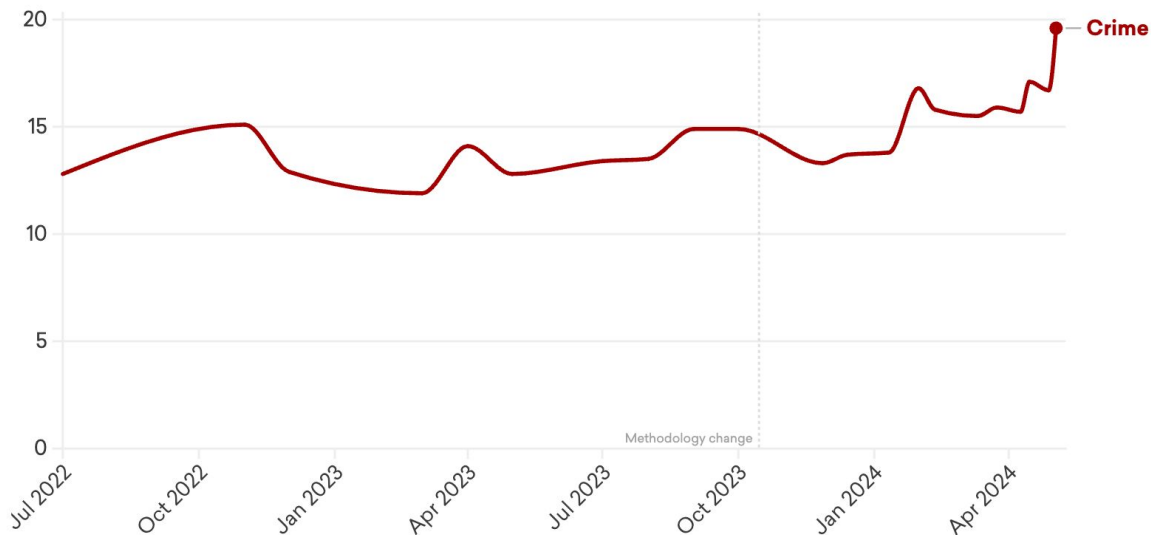


Crime is reaching new highs as a top issue

Crime has reached its highest salience since we started tracking it

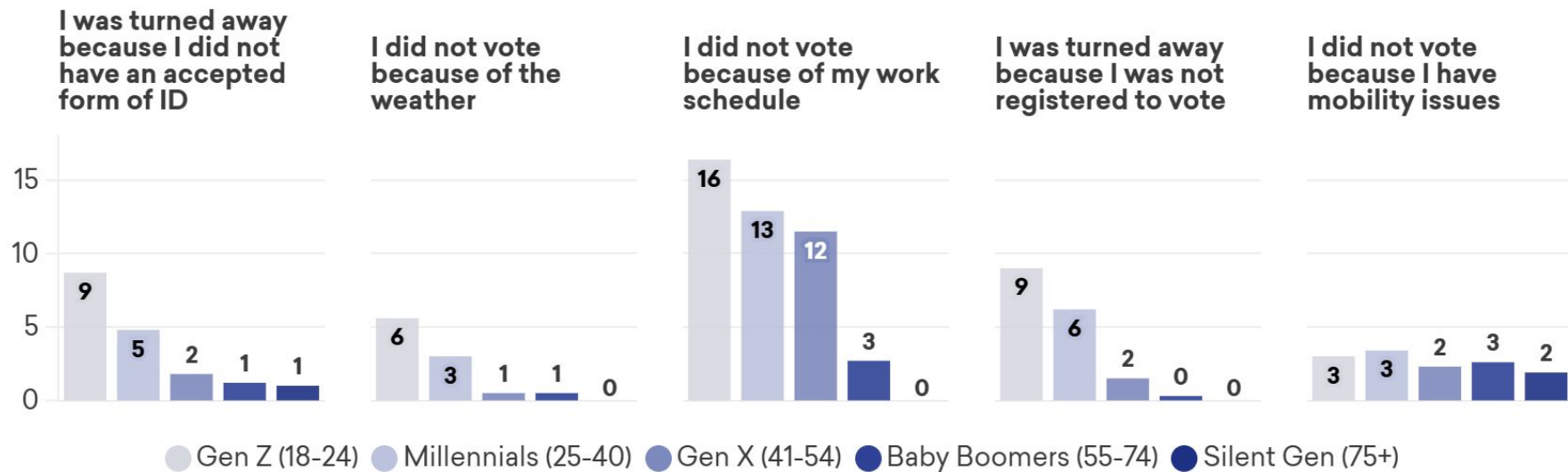


In your opinion, which are the most IMPORTANT issues facing the country today? Please select up to three.



Methodology change: rephrasing of migration answer options
Latest fieldwork: 2nd-3rd May 2024

Young people self reported more issues voting





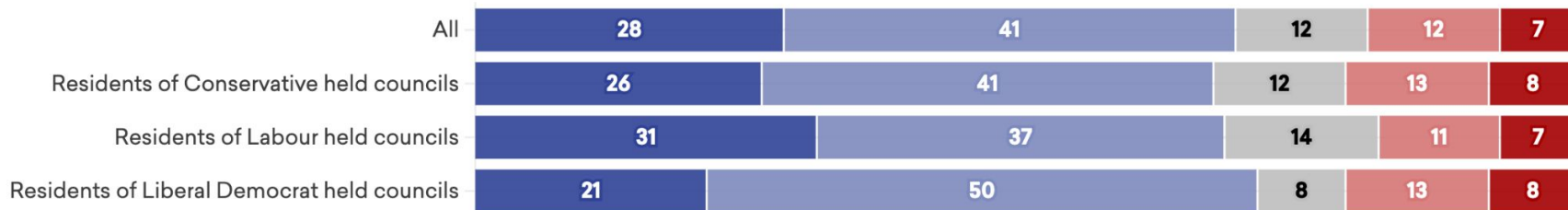
Section 4: Case study on climate

Support for net zero endures across the electoral map

Climate change is caused by the greenhouse gases we emit into the atmosphere, mostly through burning fossil fuels such as oil and gas. In 2019, the UK legislated to reach 'net zero' by 2050, which means that the amount of greenhouse gases we produce must be equivalent to the amount removed by things like trees.

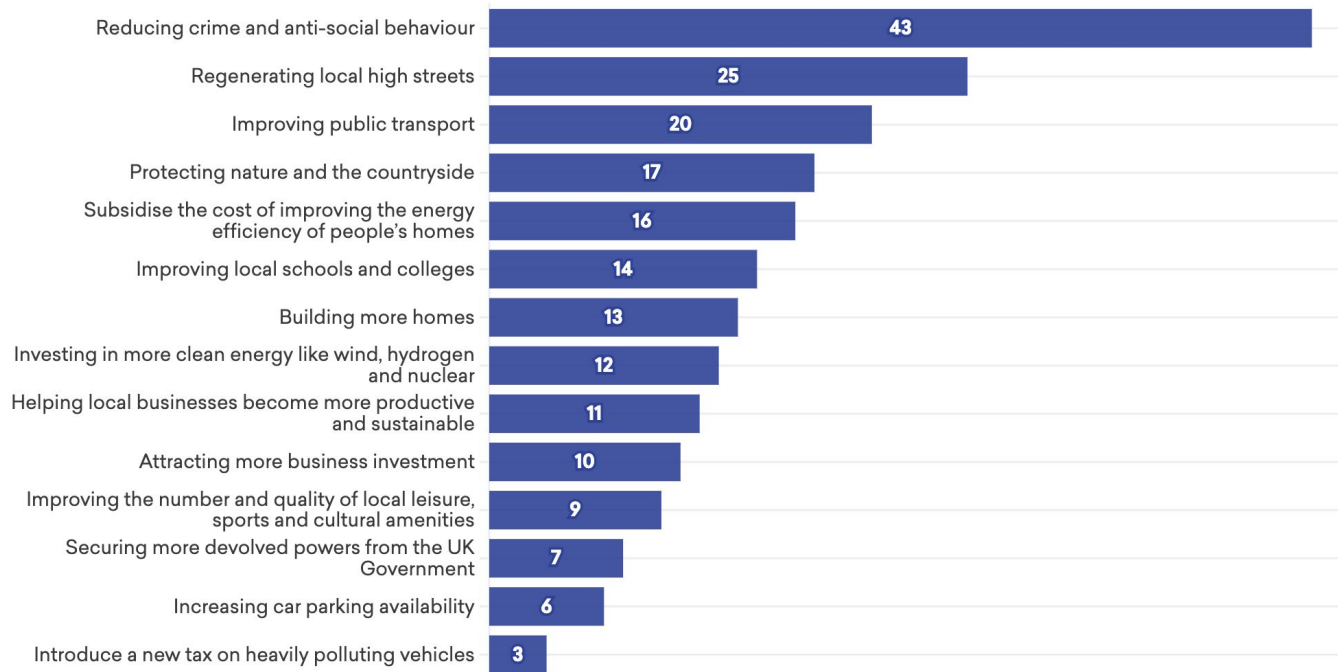
In general, do you support or oppose the government's target to reach net zero by 2050?

● Strongly support ● Somewhat support ● Don't know ● Somewhat oppose ● Strongly oppose



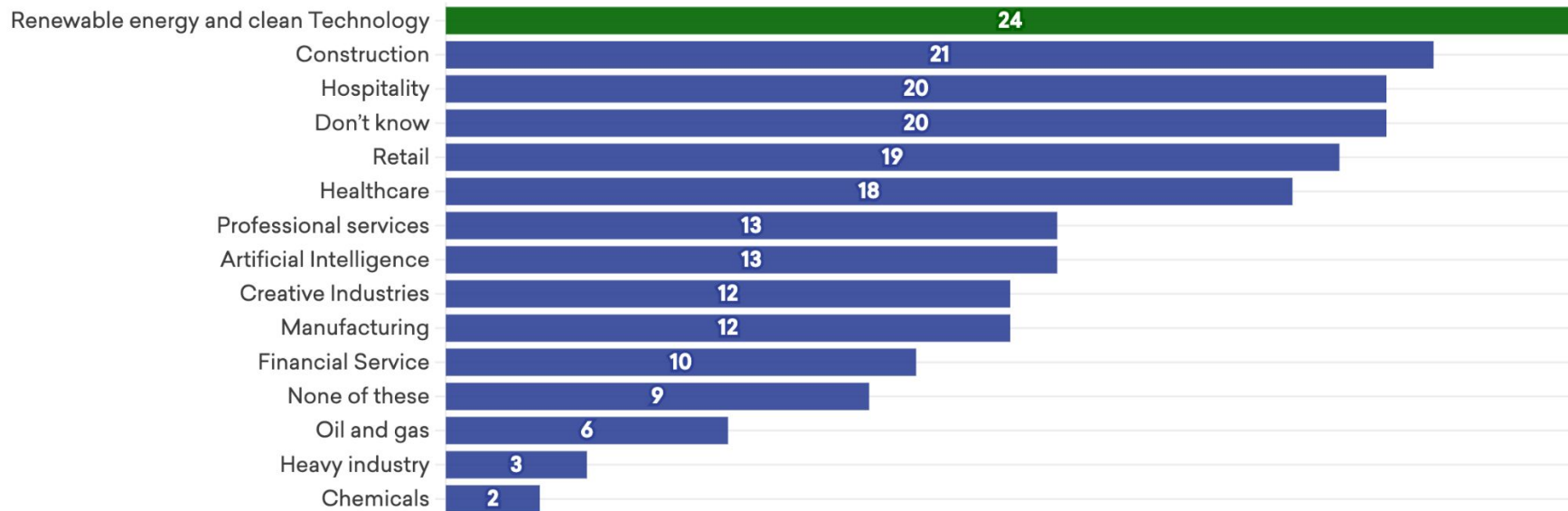
Environment and energy are top priorities after crime and high streets for incoming mayors

What would you most want the Mayor of the [REGION] to focus on over the next few years?
Please select up to three.



Renewable energy and green tech seen as key for local growth

And which sectors do you think show the biggest growth opportunity for your local area in the next five years? Pick up to three.



Avoid misreading ULEZ in the London Mayoral election

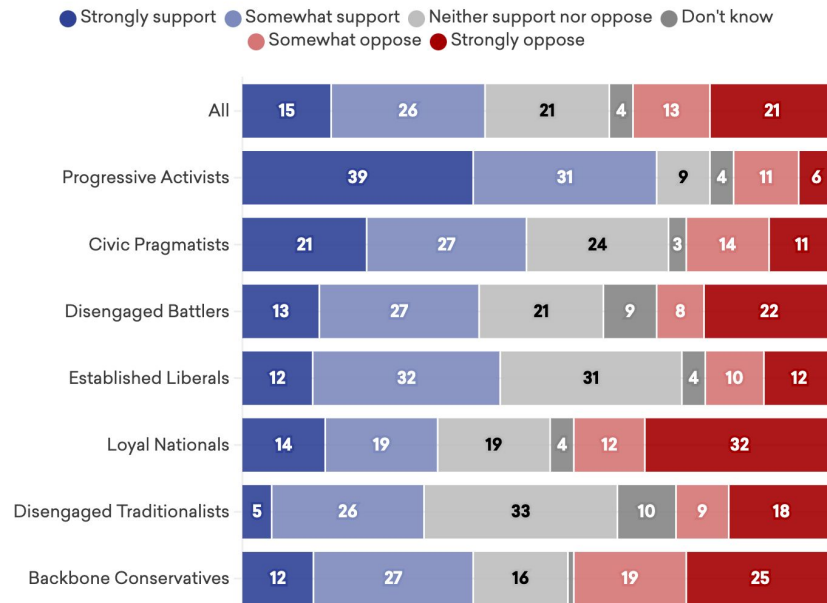
ULEZ and other clean air zones are policies which divide the public - the public are more supportive (41 per cent) than opposed (34 per cent) - but this support is driven largely by highly engaged progressives and opposed by more typical Red wall voters like Loyal Nationals.

Sadiq Khan's victory shows that it is possible to push through difficult policies such as the ULEZ extension and succeed electorally.

However, ULEZ shouldn't be seen as a model for how to do net zero transition effectively or fairly, and there is a broader danger for climate politics if ULEZ is seen as a template for other environmental/climate related policy challenges.

To address air pollution or reduce emissions which contribute to climate change, some areas have introduced clean air zones (requiring certain types of motor vehicles to pay a charge if they drive into it, such as London's ULEZ).

To what extent, if at all, do you support or oppose this policy?



Focus on tangible benefits, not gimmicks

There is also a danger for Mayors (and politicians more generally) when their climate policies are seen as gimmicks - and equally a reward for politicians who can focus on the tangible benefits of climate transition in jobs, regeneration and investment.

Voters in West Midlands and Tees Valley backed Mayors Street and Houchen approach to tackling climate change that prioritised both job creation and regeneration.

In contrast, Sadiq Khan's commitment to make the Thames 'swimmable' within 10 years was met with laughter by focus group participants in Ilford. They suggested he focus on more everyday matters first.

I think it's massively important and I think, again, I have kids and I think that does make a difference to how probably you view it for me anyway, because thinking about their future and things and I think unfortunately you hear about it a lot and you don't actually see a lot of action and drastic action needs to be taken - Claire, HR Manager, Solihull

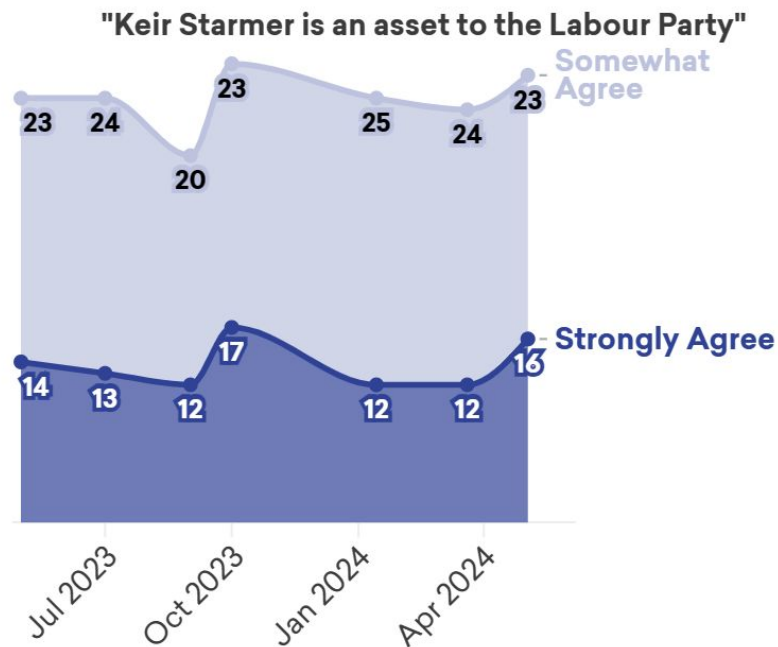
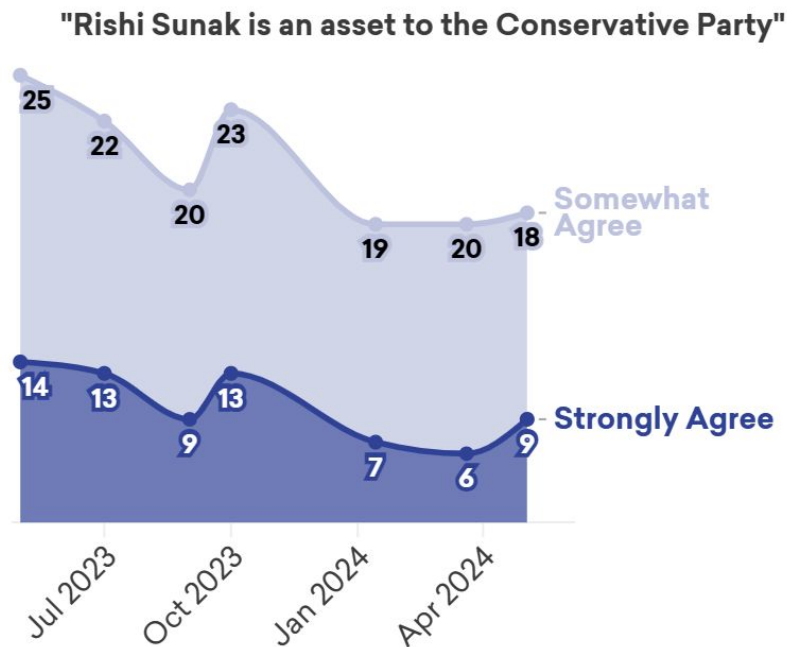
I mean in the long big scheme of things, if it lowers the cost of energy then I'm all for it. I know that I looked into getting solar panels for the salon because obviously we use a lot of energy and we had a quote from, I think it was synergy, I can't remember. But as long as it lowers the cost, I'm quite up here, don't care what they look like, they're only going to be on the roof anyway really or in a random field somewhere. So I don't really care - Abi, Hairdresser, Darlington

I don't see how that's a feasible promise...I can't see it. And it's not exactly Barbados is it either. So it'd be a bit chilly for me, I think - Emma, Beautician, Ilford



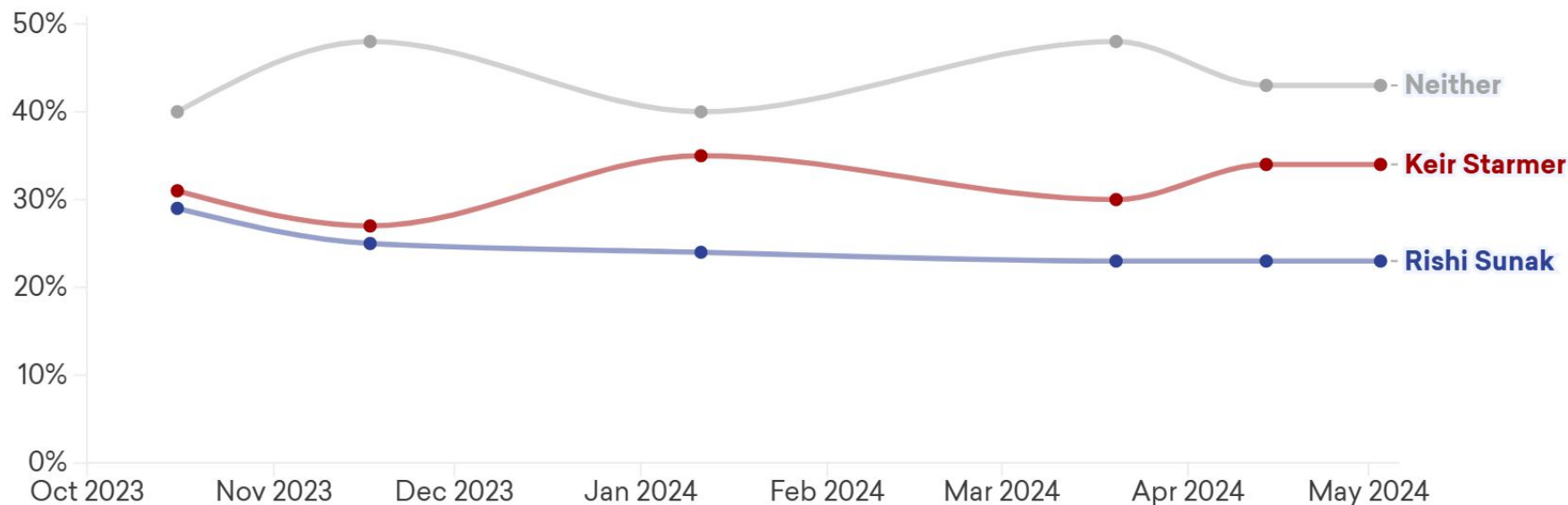
Section 5: Leaders' standing

Only a quarter of Britons think that Sunak is an asset to the Conservative Party

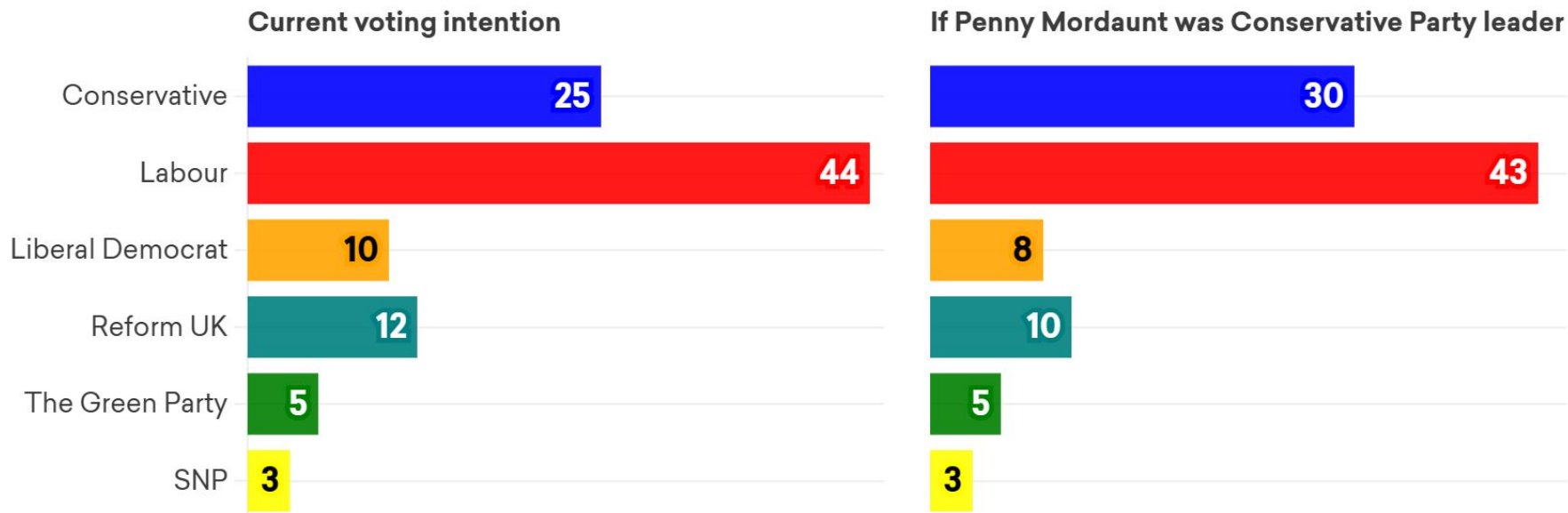


Keir Starmer is seen as a better Prime Minister than Rishi Sunak - but most say “neither”

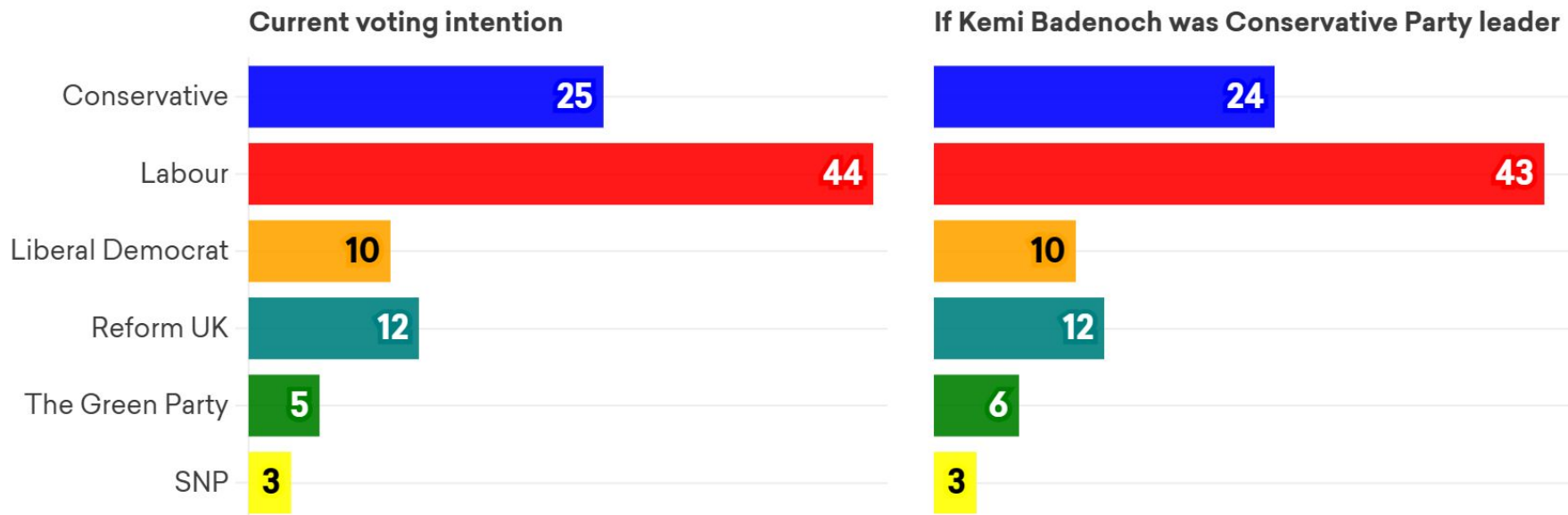
Who do you think would make a better Prime Minister?



Labour lead shrinks 6pts with Penny Mordaunt as Conservative party leader

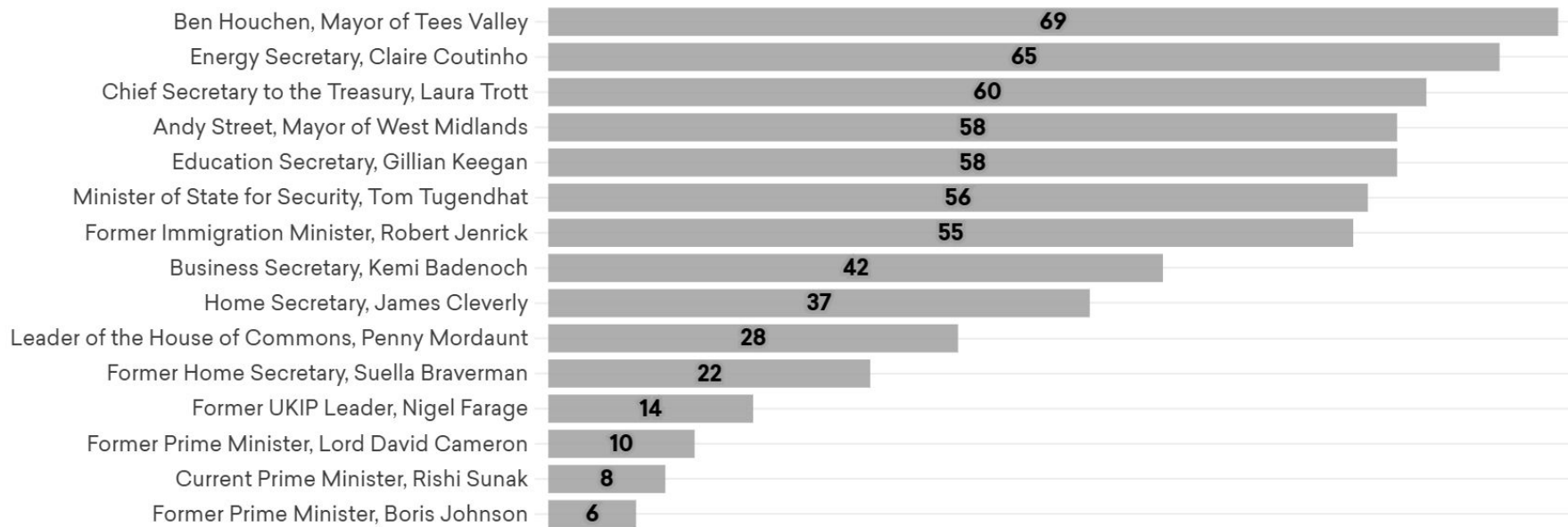


Labour lead does not change with Kemi Badenoch as Conservative party leader



Awareness of potential future Conservative Party leaders is low - even among 2019 Conservative voters

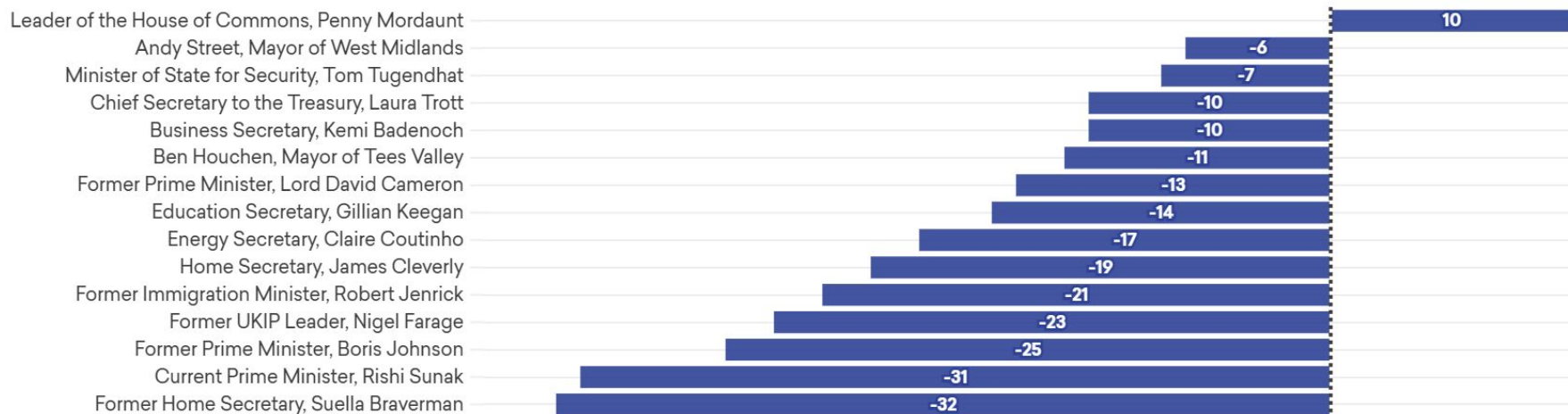
Conservative 2019 voters: ● I don't know enough to say



Penny Mordaunt is the only Tory leadership contender viewed favourably by the public

In the event that the Conservative Party lose the next election and there is a leadership contest to replace Rishi Sunak, for each of the following please indicate if you think they would be a good or bad leader of the Conservative Party

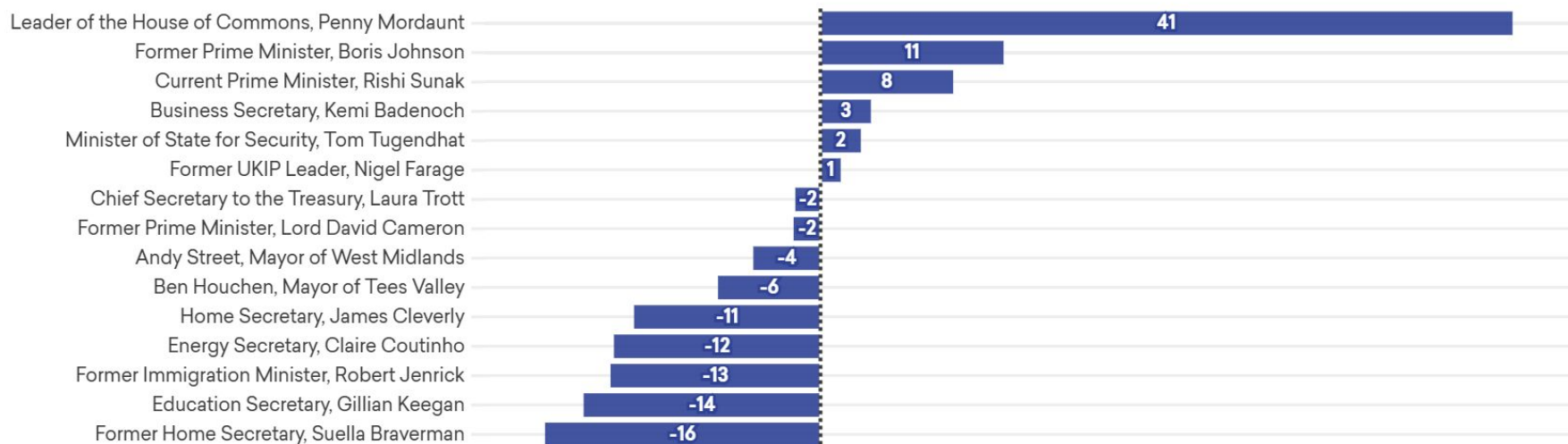
● Net "Would be a good leader"



More popularity among Conservative 2019 voters

For each of the following please indicate if you think they would be a good or bad leader of the Conservative Party

Conservative 2019 voters: ● Net "Would be a good leader"



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