

Traditional Conservatives

8 per cent of the population

A group who respect authority and tradition. They are nostalgic for the past, and believe in individual responsibility and established systems that have served them well. They maintain optimism that Britain's institutions can be reformed rather than revolutionised.



"I definitely feel that we are in a very bad place at the moment, but if you look at the rest of the world, I think the world's in a bloody bad place at the moment as well."

Chris, Cirencester

"I just think that there is a very big lack of respect in the country for authorities mainly. Children have no respect for their elders these days... I was brought up with respect for my elders, but I'm afraid to say that's gone completely now".

Margaret, Great Yarmouth

"I would say I was proud of the way we, as a country, not necessarily a government, but immediately stepped in to help the Ukrainian families and supported them. I felt that that was Britain at its best"

Susan, Great Yarmouth

Key words

Comfortable, traditional, institutional, optimistic, meritocratic, stable, individualist, risk-averse, conservative.

What they worry about

Declining respect for authority and tradition, social disorder and antisocial behaviour, economic instability, threats to British institutions, breakdown of family values.

Where you might find them

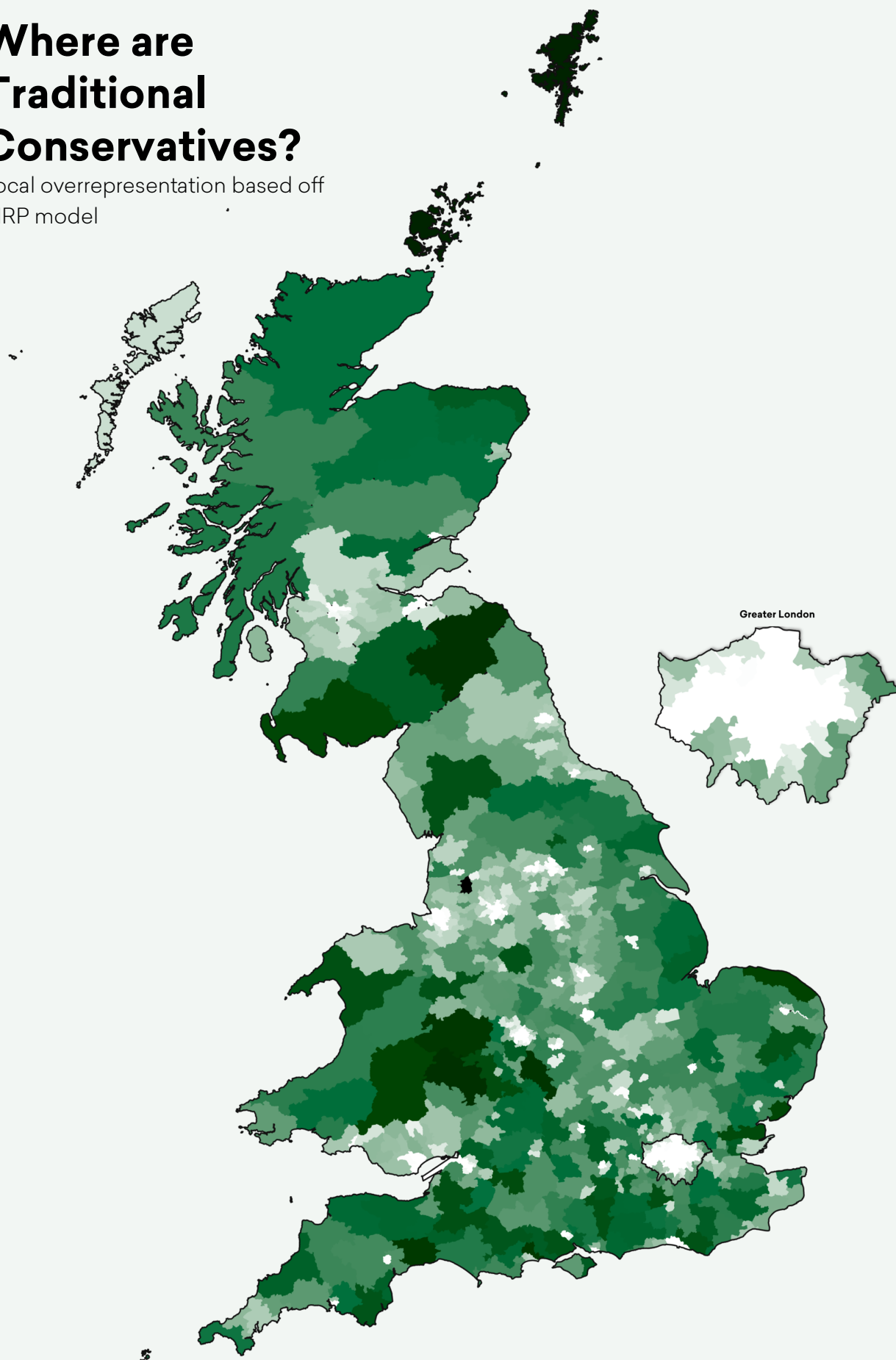
In rural areas and market towns; in detached houses they own outright; attending church or community events; reading broadsheet newspapers; in constituencies such as Hexham, Stratford-on-Avon, and Richmond and Northallerton.

How they get their news

The Times, Telegraph, and Financial Times; BBC Radio 4 and television news; 6pm BBC News. They seek out expert opinion and trust established media outlets over social media voices. They are unlikely to believe any information their grandchildren might tell them they learned on social media.

Where are Traditional Conservatives?

Local overrepresentation based off
MRP model



Source: More in Common, June 2025

In many ways, the Traditional Conservative segment captures what many will think of as a typical 'Shire Tory': Nostalgic for the past, with strong respect for authority and tradition, typically owning their own home and living in rural areas. This group is older than other segments, wealthier, the most White, the most Christian, and most likely to vote Conservative.

I just think that there is a very big lack of respect in the country for authorities mainly. Children have no respect for their elders these days. And I'm really disgusted with that... I was brought up with respect for my elders, but I'm afraid to say that's gone completely now

Margaret, Traditional Conservative, Great Yarmouth

Unlike other segments who are nostalgic for the past, they are not despairing about the future and have a great faith in Britain's ability to ride out the storm. Unlike other segments who see decline as the default, Traditional Conservatives treat it as temporary - a rough patch that proper leadership and traditional British values can fix.

While Traditional Conservatives tend to think that Britain's best years are behind us, they also believe that their children's generation will live better lives than they have and, alongside Established Liberals, Traditional Conservatives are most likely to say they feel like they have a strong sense of purpose in life. They are relatively fixed politically and have been among the least likely to change their vote between elections.

Traditional Conservatives feel broadly respected by Britain's institutions and, in return are more likely to trust those institutions. That makes them more trusting of the BBC than average, even if they might occasionally complain about a perceived left wing bias. They are more likely to trust elected representatives to make decisions for the majority of people. They express fewer populist sentiments, are more likely to think Britain is a genuine democracy and are less attracted to the idea of a strong-man leader, particularly when compared to the Dissenting Disruptors with whom they share some social values.

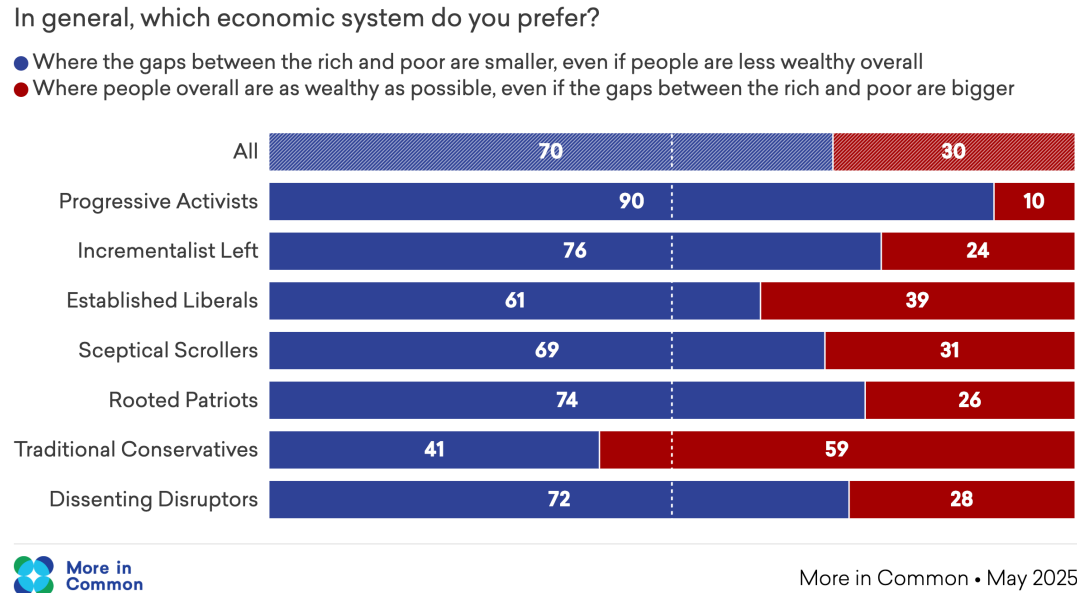
I definitely feel that we are in a very bad place at the moment, but if you look at the rest of the world, I think the world's in a bloody bad place at the moment as well.

Chris, Traditional Conservative, Cirencester

Traditional Conservatives are believers in individual responsibility. They believe in a society where everyone does their bit and think that if people work hard enough (and in some cases, if the government gets out of their way), then they will be able to succeed. Their views on the economy are shaped by their win-win thinking - including a strong belief that we need to grow the economy for everyone before we start thinking about how to distribute its benefits more fairly. In fact, they are the only segment to say they prefer an

economy where people overall are as wealthy as possible, even if the gaps between the rich and poor are bigger.

Figure 78 | Attitudes to economic equality by segment



The Purity moral foundation is particularly important to Traditional Conservatives: along with Rooted Patriots, they are the most likely to say that it bothers them when people think that nothing is sacred in this world. Similarly, they have among the strongest respect for authority as a segment, and are the most likely to believe that it is more important that children are well behaved than creative. This worldview means other segments may sometimes see Traditional Conservatives as rigid or atavistic, and occasionally even uncaring or cruel.

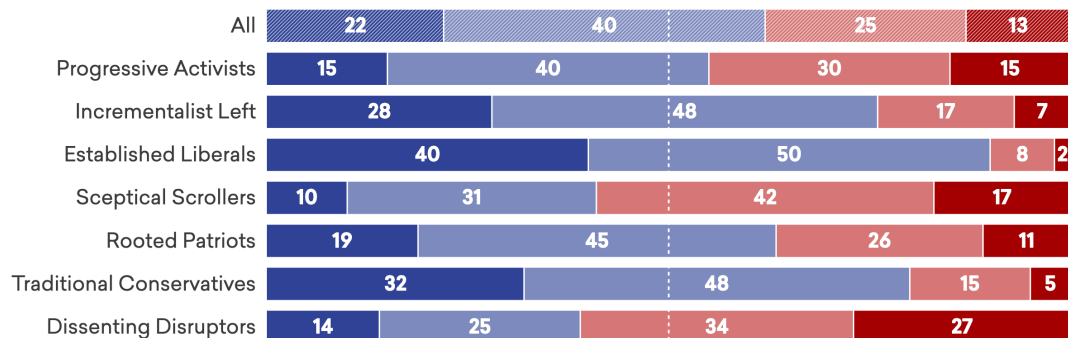
Along with Dissenting Disruptors, Traditional Conservatives are particularly migration sceptic - in large part because of the social change it brings. Almost all (nine in ten) Traditional Conservatives say that immigration has undermined rather than enriched British identity and similar numbers believe that multiculturalism threatens our national identity. Ninety five per cent believe that British identity is disappearing nowadays.

While Traditional Conservatives and Dissenting Disruptors have similar moral foundations on traits such as Authority and Purity and issues such as immigration, they are distinguished most clearly in their attitudes to change, risk, and chaos. Dissenting Disruptors have much higher comfort with risk, and in some cases express a greater need for chaos, Traditional Conservatives in contrast want social and political change to be navigated more cautiously.

Figure 79 | Desire for radical institutional change by segment

Which comes closest to your view?

- 1 - Our political and social institutions are worth preserving and improving, not destroying.
- 2
- 3
- 4 - When I think about our political and social institutions, I cannot help thinking “just let them all burn.”



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For example, Traditional Conservatives are among the most likely of the segments to say political and social institutions are worth preserving and that problems can be fixed through reform and change rather than starting over. This puts them in stark contrast with Dissenting Disruptors who are much more likely to say our institutions are not worth preserving and that we ought to tear them down and start over. In practice, this made Traditional Conservatives more hesitant about voting for Reform UK in the 2024 General Election and they remained the last bastion for the Conservative Party in that election.

Elizabeth

Elizabeth lives in a cottage in the Cotswolds that she and her late husband bought twenty years ago, surrounded by gardens that she tends with the same care she once brought to raising her children.

At 72, she maintains routines that have served her well - prayers at the village church where she arranges flowers, afternoon walks through lanes she has known since childhood and evening news on BBC One while she works on her latest knitting project for her grandchildren. Elizabeth takes genuine satisfaction in these patterns, viewing them not as limitations but as the foundations of a well-ordered life that has weathered decades of social upheaval largely intact.

Elizabeth's concerns about the direction of the country are tempered by her fundamental belief that Britain has weathered worse storms and emerged stronger. When she sees news about rising crime or social unrest, she feels genuinely troubled but not despairing - these problems seem to her like symptoms of abandoning tried-and-tested values rather than evidence of inevitable and irreversible decline.

She voted Conservative again in the last election despite her frustrations with the party's recent chaos and more than anything else its inability to control immigration, believing that proper leadership and a return to traditional principles can restore the country's equilibrium without needing to tear down institutions that have served Britain well for centuries.

When her grandchildren visit and challenge her views on issues like gender identity or climate change, she listens politely but remains convinced that some eternal truths about human nature and social order should not be discarded simply because they have become unfashionable.

Elizabeth owns her home outright, has a comfortable pension and believes that individual responsibility and hard work remain the surest paths to prosperity. When she hears about young people struggling to buy homes she sympathises, but also wonders whether they have made the necessary sacrifices or shown the patience that her generation displayed.

Elizabeth's neighbours still help each other, the parish council makes things run well and many local traditions add to the sense of community in her area. Elizabeth thinks that Britain may feel less broken if people in big towns and cities would learn a bit more about the rural way of life.

When political debates become too heated or complex, Elizabeth tends to retreat back to the certainties of her faith and community, confident that the institutions she has relied upon throughout her life - the Church, the Monarchy, Parliament - will ultimately preserve what matters most in Britain today, whatever the storm.

