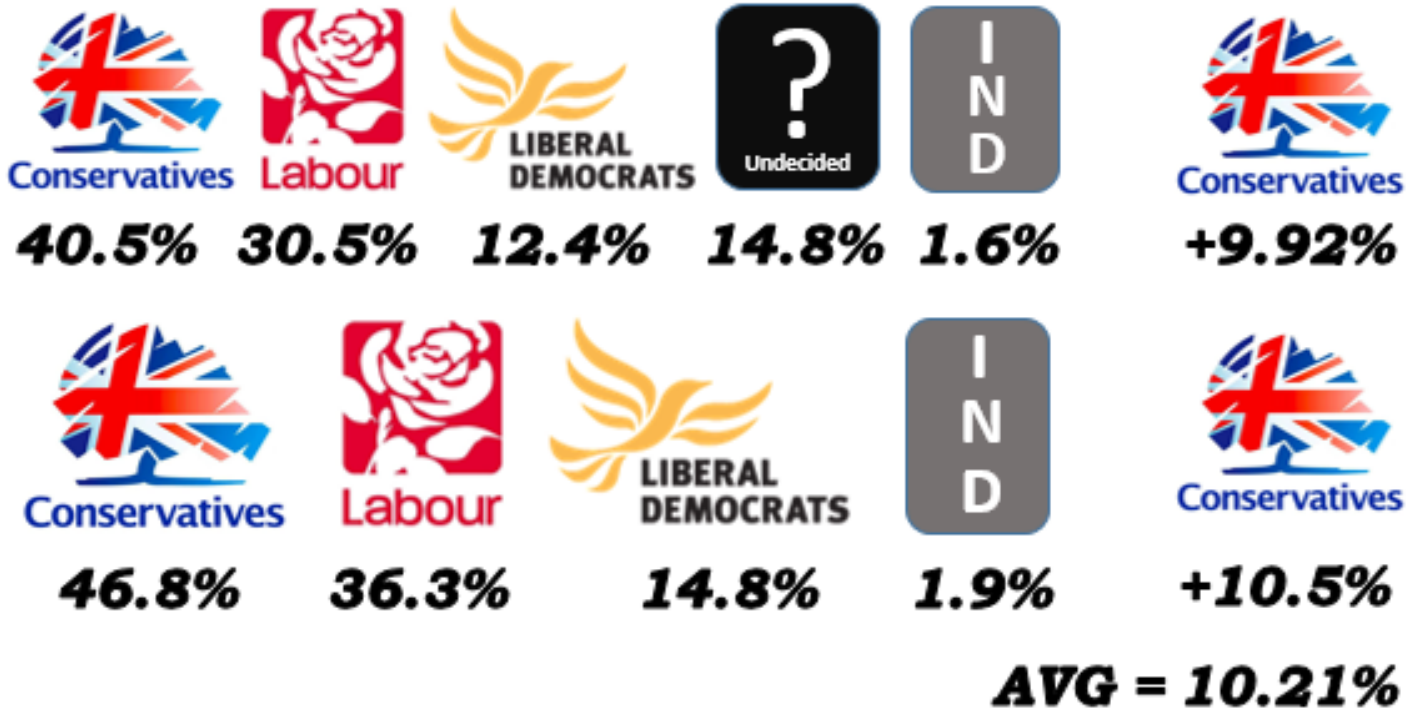


General Election December 2019 Polling Assessments – by James Prentice & Chris Connelley.

Basic Summary of Results:



The result of our poll projects the following:

- A likely Conservative victory in Hastings&Rye.
- The Conservatives are projected to lead by an average of **9-10 points** with undecided people counted.
- There is an average margin error of 5%, making the potential Conservative lead range from 7 – 15%, most likely somewhere in the range of an 8-12% lead. The absolute **average Lead** we calculated for the Conservatives is a **10.21% lead**.
- **However**, there is a **huge caveat** there are a large amount of **undecided voters**. If this flowed towards Labour this could still cause Labour to rapidly close the gap like in the last election. Therefore, the election race **still can't be called**, although the Conservatives are still favourites to win the seat. Percentage wise it **85% likely the Conservatives will win and 15% likely Labour will**.
- **Undecided voters do have the potential to decide who wins this seat still and nothing is settled yet.**
- It should be noted that the **Undecided voters** Labour needs to win over come from multiple parties and is **split** amongst **Remian vs Leave and young vs Old**. As a result, it will be hard for Labour to unite all these voters in one election week and close the gap, meaning the Conservative are favourites to win this seat.
- The Data was collated from the 2nd to 5th of December.

Methodology:

Our Methodology is based primarily around focusing on obtaining a representative sample, even if this means sacrificing time to collect data, resulting in a smaller sample size. This has been called quota sampling where samplers focus on obtaining results from specific sections of the population rather than going for the traditionally accepted volume of responses.

In getting our responses we chose to target specific council wards based upon historic voting patterns and available demographic data, mostly obtained through the County Council website profile figures. Within these council ward constituencies we specifically choose roads that fitted the demographic profile we were after, subsequently once we found this profile our team then conducted face-to-face surveys. If we encountered too many responses from a particular demographic we took the first set of responses and discounted the responses that gave us too much of one demographic. For example, if we encountered excessive older, male Leave voters who voted Conservative in the last election we would only take the maximum number of this demographic. This has allowed us to still have a representative sample. The discounted responses were always the responses that were done after we had reached the threshold for the demographic we were looking for. Therefore, this meant we spent a lot of time ensuring we gathered a representative sample resulting in less time to get the volume of responses that is traditionally used in polling, this is the trade-off this methodology has to accept if it is to work.

Our sample size is **0.31%** (170) of the Hastings&Rye voting population (54,786 – number people who voted in 2017). This compares to a sample of **0.0052%** (1,680) of the national population (32,200,000 – roughly the number of people who voted in the GE in 2017) from a Yougov national poll this week.

When conducting our face to face surveys we firstly asked a series of questions so we could gauge how much we were reaching our targeted demographic in a particular area we chose to sample. The area we sampled was randomised based upon available demographic data we had and constituency council wards we chose to sample. The demographic questions we asked were the age of the voter, their gender, how they voted in the 2016 EU referendum and how the respondent voted in the last election. As all these statistics are known for the Hastings we could compare our sample to actual population data, allowing us to objectively and easily determine how representative our sample was.

The final two questions we asked gauged how people would vote in in the coming General Election and how likely they were to cast a ballot, in order to determine whose support would most likely turn out on the day. We then excluded people who were certain not to vote from our 170 sampled voters.

Do we have a representative sample?

A key question with any polling report is just how representative is our sample. Part of our methodology relies upon sacrificing a large sample size in favour of spending much more time gathering a more representative sample size. Therefore, the most critical part of whether an individual chooses to believe our poll, or not, is through an individual's assessment of how representative our sample is. We think our sample is representative for the following reasons:

Gender	% of Respondents
Female	50.00%
Male	50.00%
Total	100.00%

The first reason we believe our poll to be representative is we have a good even split between the different genders. This is important as sometimes there can be gender differences in voting patterns and getting an even split can avoid giving a bias to one of the two main parties.

Age Range	% of Hastings & Rye population	% of Sample
18-30	17.32%	17.36%
31-44	22.57%	23.14%
45-64	35.09%	35.54%
65+	24.95%	23.97%
Total	100.00%	100.00%

The second reason we believe our sample to be representative is due to how close our sample was in terms of age range to the population of the constituency. (**Note:** the population statistics are from 2018 data secured in both the House of Commons Library databases and East Sussex County Council demographic profile figures webpages). Taking a closer look at our population figures it can be seen that our sample is almost bang on the actual demographic make-up of the local constituency in terms of age ranges. This is important as a person's age highly correlates with voting patterns, with older people voting Conservative in larger numbers and younger people backing Labour much more often. Consequently, it is vitally important our sample has an age range distribution that directly reflects the age range of residents who will vote in Hastings & Rye. Looking closely we can see that of the youngest demographic, 18-30, we have the exact range of people for our sample. With the age ranges of 31-44 we are slightly under, and this mainly appears to be because of a slight discrepancy towards older people which is around 1%. As a result, our final poll is slightly weighted towards younger people which will raise the Labour Party vote share by 1% in order to account of this. However, as this discrepancy is such a small figure we are very confident that this poll is a representative sample and little weighting is needed to obtain accurate and reliable results.

2017	% of Responses
Central St Lens	12.50%
Villages	12.50%
West St Lens	12.50%
Town Centre	8.33%
Old Town	8.33%
Silverhill	12.50%
St Helens	12.50%
Ore&Baird	8.33%
Conquest	12.50%

Thirdly, this study states we have a representative sample as we made a large effort to ensure we had a range of responses throughout the constituency. As stated in our methodology we selected random streets based upon specific locations that had specific demographics and historical voting patterns within the constituency. As can be seen in the table here we did successfully get a range of responses across the constituency that neither favours Remain or Leave, Labour or Conservative and young vs old voters. Also we made sure we collected a similar number of responses from similar and contrasting constituencies, again giving us increased confidence our

polling sample is representative.

2017 Vote	% of 2017 Vote	% of Responses
Conservative	46.9%	45.13%
Labour	46.2%	44.36%
Lib-Dem	3.40%	3.54%
UKIP	2.70%	2.77%
Green	Did not Stand	3.31%
Independent	0.80%	0.88%
Grand Total	100%	100%

Fourthly, we feel that we have a representative sample as we feel we have found a sample that mostly mirrors how people voted in the last election. We also feel we have captured the London “DFL” vote coming into Hastings, which has been a talking point with people concerned with gentrification. This is shown through we found people who voted in other Constituencies, mainly London based ones, in 2017 and some

of these voters voted Green. With No Green candidate standing again this time we feel we have captured how the Green vote might flow in this constituency in the coming election. Lastly, we also got slightly more Conservatives than Labour voters, again meaning that we will weight our sample slightly towards Labour and slightly less towards the Conservatives, but again this is a very slight weighting which will give Labour slightly less than a one percent boost.

Leave vs Remain	% of Respondents
Leave	54.24%
Remain	45.76%
Grand Total	100.00%

Finally, we feel that we have a representative sample as we crucially have a representative sample of Remain and Leave voters. In Hastings & Rye the EU referendum vote reflected the exact average for towns outside London in England, a 55% to 45% vote in favour of Leave. There is evidence that how

people voted in the EU referendum directly correlates with voting intention and might even be a direct cause in how people decide to cast their vote (Heath and Goodwin 2017). Consequently, as we have an almost exact reflection of how people voted in the referendum in the Hastings&Rye constituency we feel that our poll is highly representative of the population who will be voting in the coming election, and therefore our polling results have a high potential of being very accurate.

How People might Vote:

How people are intending to vote (if everyone we sampled actually votes).

2019	% of respondents
Conservative	40.50%
Labour	30.58%
Undecided	14.88%
Lib-Dem	12.40%
Independent	1.65%
Grand Total	100.00%

The Conservatives are clearly ahead, just under 10%, which is currently what the national average of the polling companies registered with the British Polling Council are displaying, according to the Britain Elects website. The Lib Dems are around 13% which again appears to be reflective of national polling with the Independents registering some support, which again fills us with confidence we have found a very representative sample. The critical statistic in this table is around 15% of people we contacted even when pushed to say which party they were drifting towards still could not indicate how they would likely vote, making them **completely undecided** with one week left in the campaign. Therefore, it is still possible for Labour to win this election, or lose by a smaller margin again, if they get a lot of these undecided voters backing them on polling day.

2019	% of respondents
Conservative	46.88%
Labour	36.37%
Lib-Dem	14.79%
Independent	1.96%
Grand Total	100.00%

When taking out undecided voters, meaning we assume there is no late swing from these voter's to either of the main parties, our sample shows the Conservatives just over 10% ahead. This again is not wildly different from the national average from all the British council polling companies latest polls released this week according to the Britain Elects website. This again gives us increased confidence our poll has the potential to be quite accurate.

EU Ref Vote	Conservative	Labour	Lib-Dem	Undecided
Leave	87.50%	14.71%	23.08%	61.11%
Remain	12.50%	85.29%	76.92%	38.89%

made from mostly Remain voters.

Just like national findings the Conservative Party's vote is overwhelmingly made up of Leave voters, whilst the other two main parties vote make-up is

EU Ref Vote	Conservative	Labour	Lib-Dem	Undecided
Leave	68.85%	8.20%	4.92%	18.03%
Remain	11.54%	55.77%	19.23%	13.46%
Total	42.48%	30.09%	11.50%	15.93%

In terms of where the Leave vote is going it is heading clearly towards the Conservatives with Undecided people up for grabs for the Conservative Party. Meanwhile, Labour has a problem, it is receiving less of the Remain vote than the Conservatives are receiving Leave votes, and recall that there are more Leave voters in this seat. There are undecided Remain voters Labour could go for, but this limits their ability to win over undecided Leave voters, of which there are more. If our poll is accurate for Labour to get a late surge

and to win the constituency they must be able to get both these Leave and Remain voters inside, not an easy task.

Age Profile	Conservative	Labour	Lib-Dem	Undecided
18-30	8.16%	29.73%	20.00%	16.67%
31-44	20.41%	32.43%	13.33%	16.67%
45-64	34.69%	24.32%	40.00%	55.56%
65+	36.73%	13.51%	26.67%	11.11%

The Conservative vote share is mostly coming from older voters, whilst the other two parties are primarily more dependent on younger votes. Given the

distribution of Leave and Remain votes this finding is quite logical as older people tended to vote Leave, so gravitate towards the Conservatives, whilst Labour have younger Remainers inside.

Age Profile	Conservative	Labour	Lib-Dem	Undecided
18-30	19.05%	52.38%	14.29%	14.29%
31-44	37.04%	44.44%	7.41%	11.11%
45-64	40.48%	21.43%	14.29%	23.81%
65+	62.07%	17.24%	13.79%	6.90%

Again the this table shows the generational divide, which shows Labour is the main beneficiary of younger voters, with Conservatives

doing better amongst older groups. There was not a major difference in gender in terms of projected voting patterns. Labour has slightly more female voters, and Conservative slightly more male, but there were not significant difference compared to the Leave and age group voting patterns displayed above.

Who are the undecideds?

Row Labels	Undecided
Leave	61.11%
Remain	38.89%
Grand Total	100.00%

2017 Vote and EU Ref Vote	Undecided
Leave	68.75%
Conservative	31.25%
Labour	37.50%
Remain	31.25%
Conservative	12.50%
Labour	18.75%
Grand Total	100.00%

The Undecided voters are very mixed, making it very hard for any one Party with one strategy to gain a clear majority of these voters. They are spread across a broad range of ages and are split amongst Remain and Leave, with slightly more Leave voters. Also they spread across

Age Profile	Undecided
18-30	14.29%
31-44	11.11%
45-64	23.81%
65+	6.90%

political parties, with some being Remain and Leave Labour voters and others

being Leave and Remain Conservative voters. This therefore captures the complexity and confused nature of this election where historic voting patterns appear to mean little and voters appear less loyal to party attachments they may have been previously. **As a result, we can't project where these Undecided voters will end up, but the problem for Labour gaining these voters to win in a late surge is that these voters are much divided, and as a result likely won't fall under one party on polling day.**

What will a low turnout do to the result?

With a winter election, possibility of bad weather on Election Day and the possibility of rising apathy some might ask if this causes a lower turnout what will happen to the result?

2019	% Certain or Very likely to vote.
Conservative	43.27%
Labour	29.81%
Undecided	14.42%
Lib-Dem	11.54%
Independent	0.96%
Grand Total	100.00%

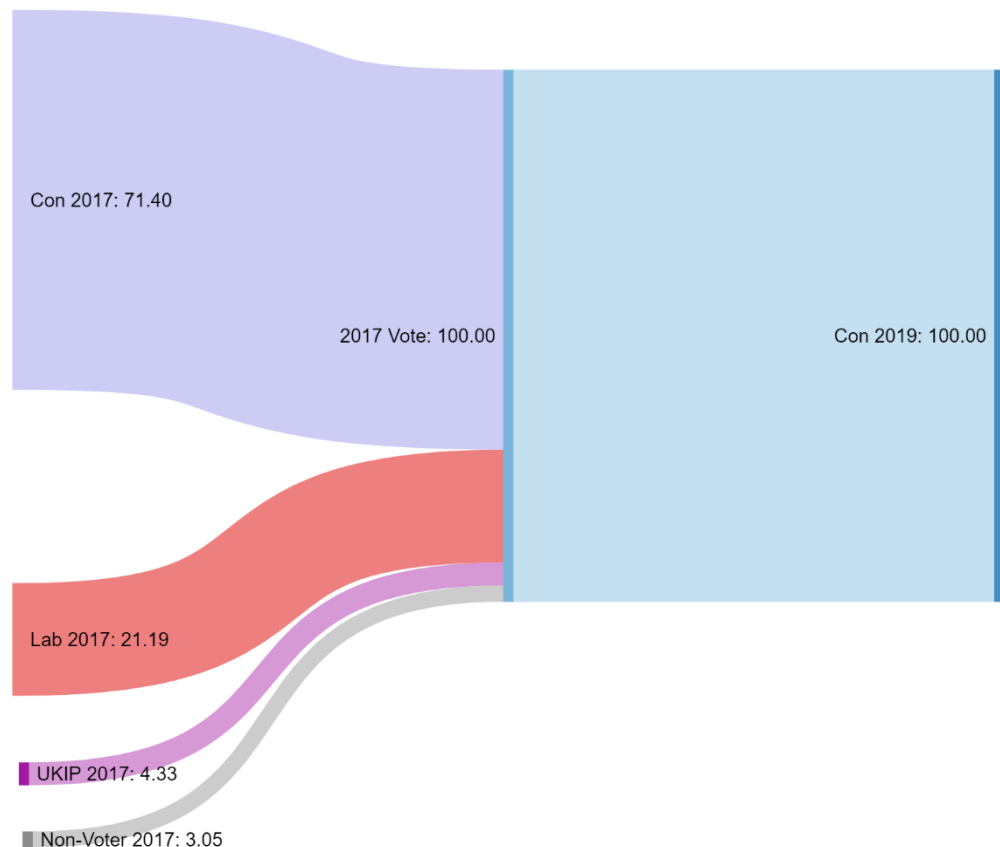
2019	% Certain or Very likely to vote.
Conservative	50.56%
Labour	34.83%
Lib-Dem	13.48%
Independent	1.12%
Grand Total	100.00%

If we only include responses that said they were certain or very likely to vote we can eliminate those who only vote every so often and may not vote in the coming election due to apathy. Therefore, we have tried to create a scenario where if there is bad weather on Election Day and people decide not to turn out we have eliminated those most likely not to cast a ballot. Note: we marked those who had already voted with a postal vote as certain to vote. We can say when doing this the Conservatives lead gets slightly bigger if we included undecided voters or not. Importantly, this suggests that the Labour vote might be slightly softer and more vulnerable to a lower turnout election than the Conservative vote. This is not that surprising as Labour have often said they find it harder to get their vote out than the Conservative's do, which might be partly linked to different demographics, such as younger people turning out less than older people.

What has changed?

2017 --> 2019	Conservative % of Flow.
Conservative)	71.40%
Labour	21.19%
Non-Voter	3.08%
UKIP	4.33%
Grand Total	100.00%

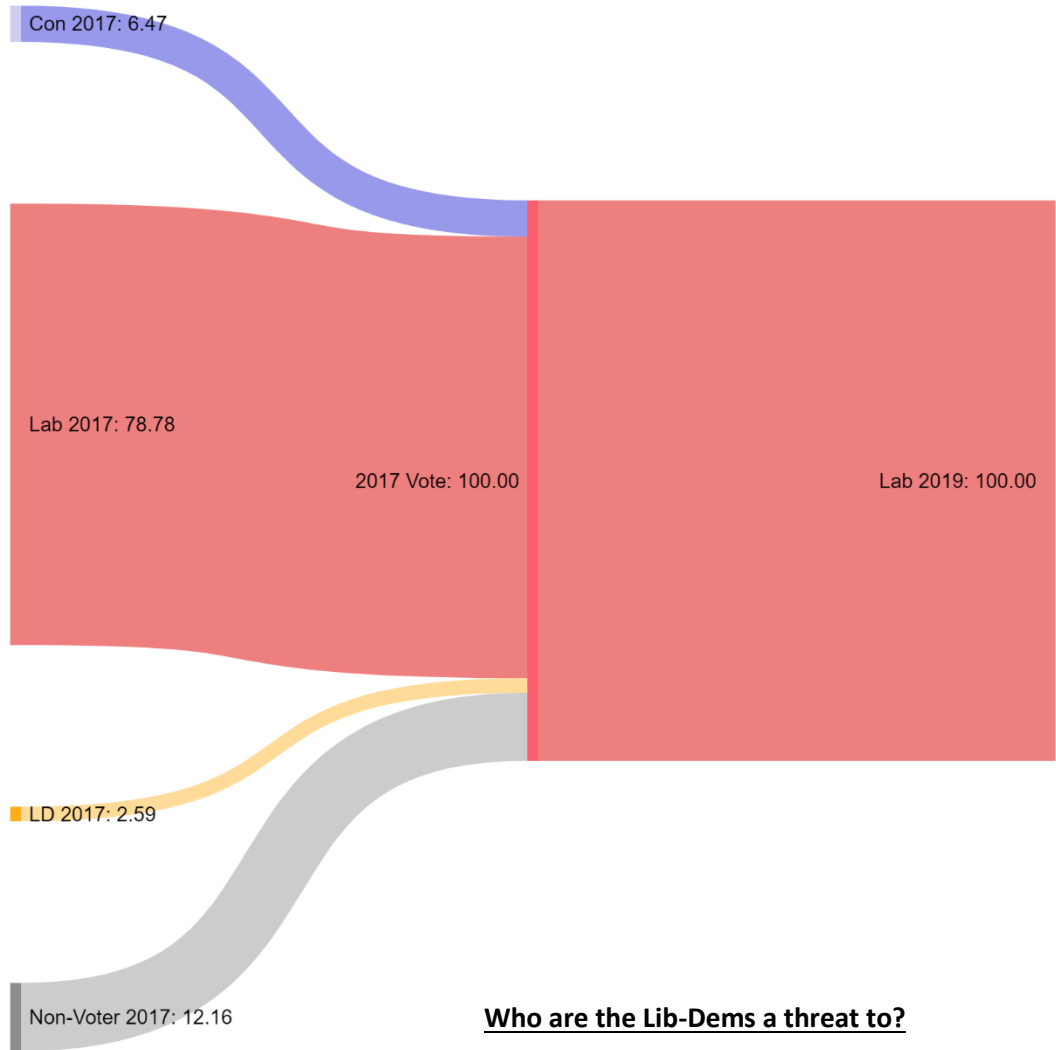
The Nature of the Conservative vote has changed quite dramatically. Only 70% of the vote they could get this time was from Conservative support in the last election. However, a good chunk, nearly a fifth of their support could be coming from Labour circles.



This is quite unusual for Conservative Party support where there is usually little exchanges between Conservative and Labour vote shares between respective elections. Some of their support have come from the remnants of the UKIP party now no Brexit Party candidate is standing in the seat, leaving with these voters with little options. Also some non-voters deciding to enter the electorate have also boosted Conservative Party support back to similar levels they obtained in the last election. Therefore, despite losing support from the last election the Conservatives have topped this back up with Labour Leave voters. This therefore could represent quite a change in British politics.

Labour’s Vote:

Lab 2019 – Where has it come From?	% of the Flow.
2017 --> 2019	Labour
Conservative	6.47%
Labour	78.78%
Lib-Dem	2.59%
Non-Voter	12.16%
UKIP	0.00%
Grand Total	100.00%



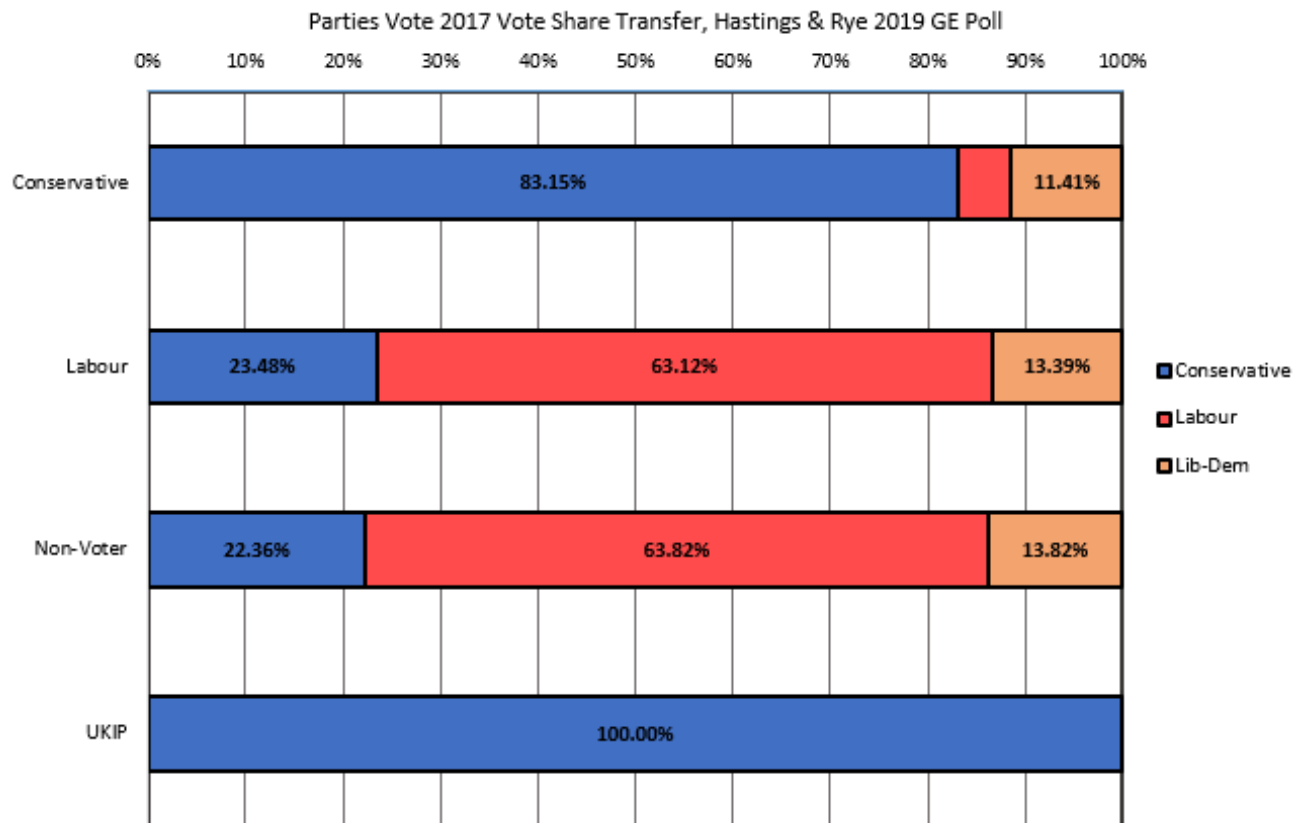
The 2017 Labour vote holds up slightly better, but Labour makes little gains, resulting in labour being left behind the Conservatives. Labour is also more reliant on historic non-voters turning up to vote, whom may not when it comes down to turning out on polling day. Labour have also received some Remain Tory and Lib-Dem votes, but too few to close the gap the Conservatives may have over them, suggesting their Remain position might be limiting the amount of Remain votes they can get.

2017 --> 2019	Lib-Dem
Conservative	11.41%
Labour	13.39%
Lib-Dem	44.90%
Non-Voter	13.82%
UKIP	0.00%
Grand Total	12.81%

Who are the Lib-Dems a threat to?

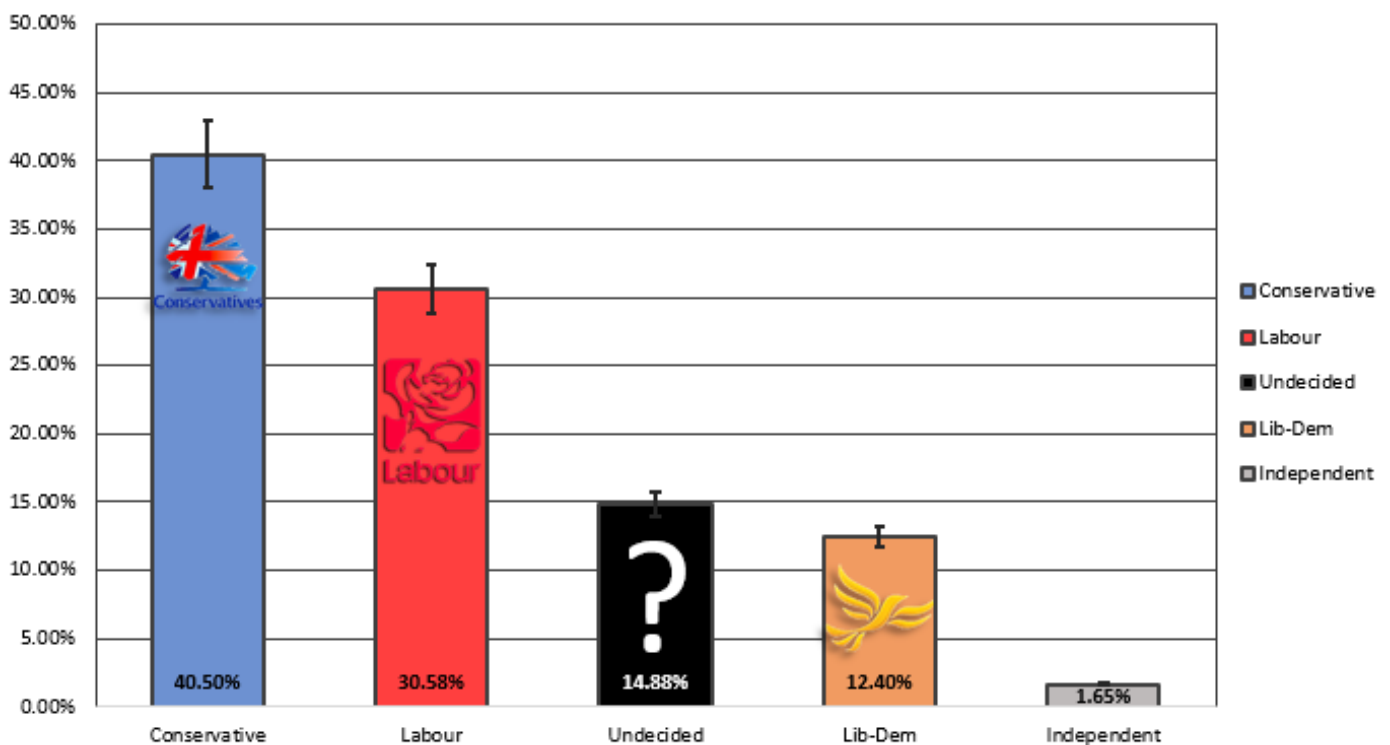
The Lib Dems have been criticised for splitting the Remain vote in a way that will hurt Labour. There appears to be mixed evidence for this. Yes, the Lib-Dems appear to be attracting more Labour Remain voters to them than Conservative Remain voters, but not that much more. The affect the Lib-Dems have on Labour appears to depend upon a personal view point of how many

Conservative Remains would go Labour if they did not have the option of Lib-Dems. If the answer is few then the Lib-Dems might do almost as much damage to the Conservative as they do Labour. There is not overwhelming evidence that the Lib-Dems standing in this seat is hurting Labour to the point where it stops them from being able to win this seat.

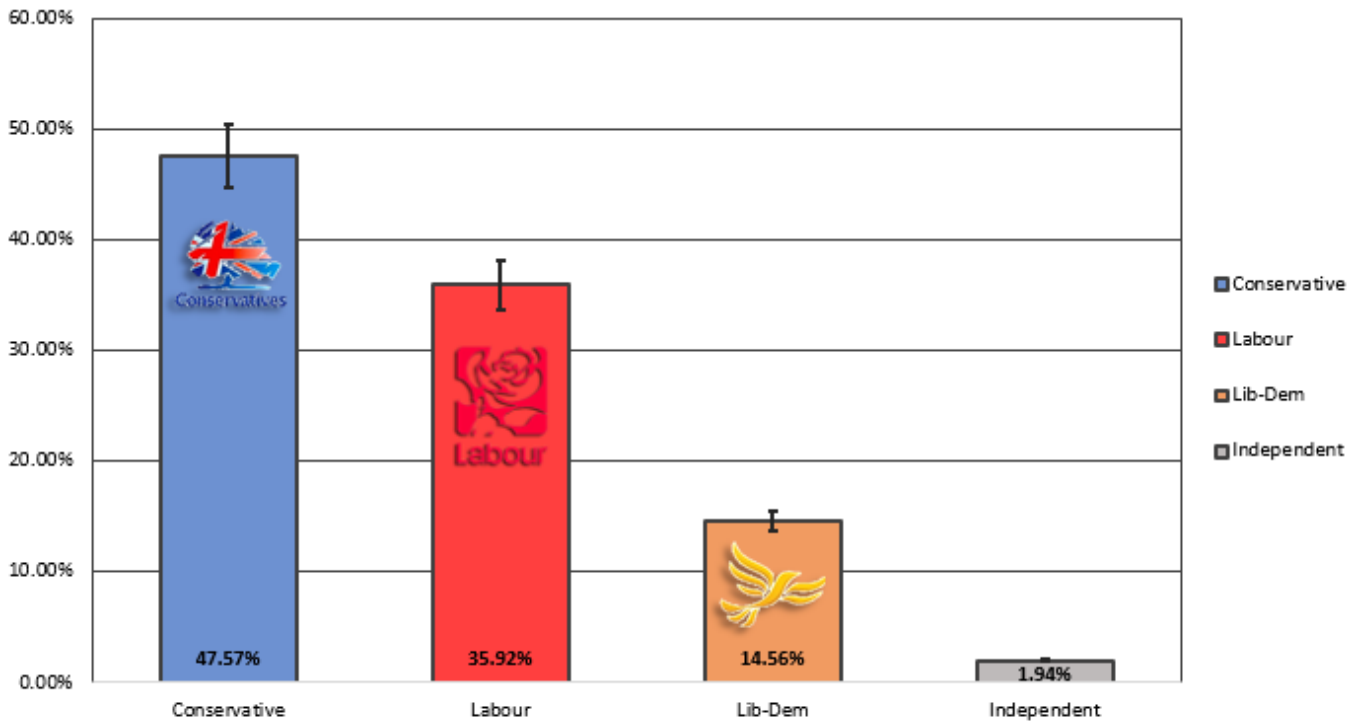


The above chart show what the parties' current voting base in terms of how their voters voted in the 2017 General Election.

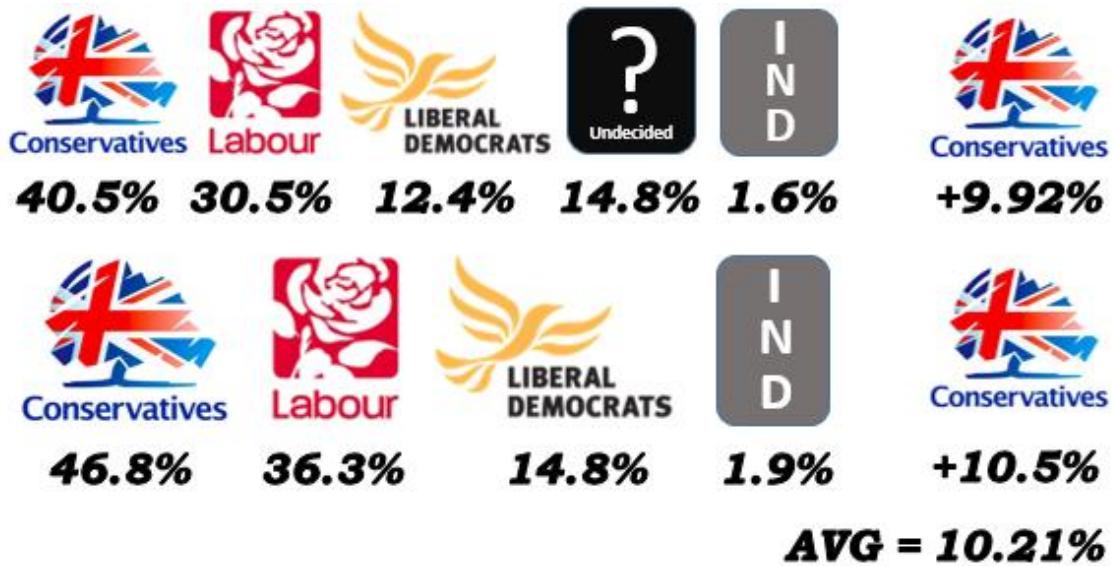
Projected result of Hastings&Rye 2019 GE



Projected result of Hastings&Rye 2019 GE



Conclusion: (see Summary on Page 1).

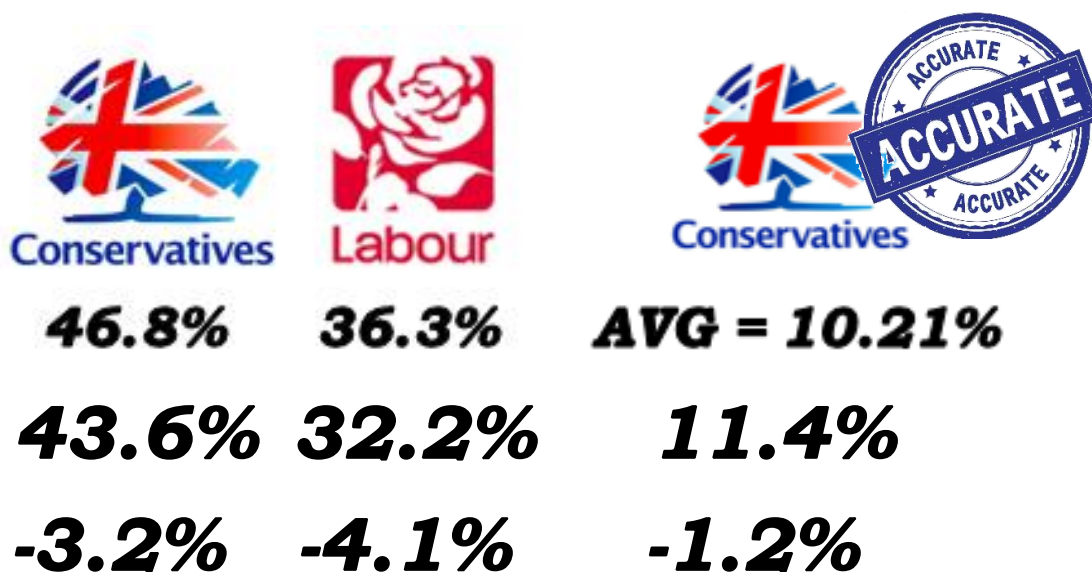


From the analysis displayed in the above pages we currently project the Conservative Party is the most likely Party to win this seat, with Labour the second mostly likely to win this seat. Of course as with any poll it is just a snapshot, things can change and we also admit our poll has the potential to be wrong, as with any poll.

References:

Heath, O. and Goodwin, M. (2017). The 2017 General Election, Brexit and the Return to Two-Party Politics: An Aggregate-Level Analysis of the Result. *The Political Quarterly* **88**:345–358.

Afterwards – How Accurate was our poll?



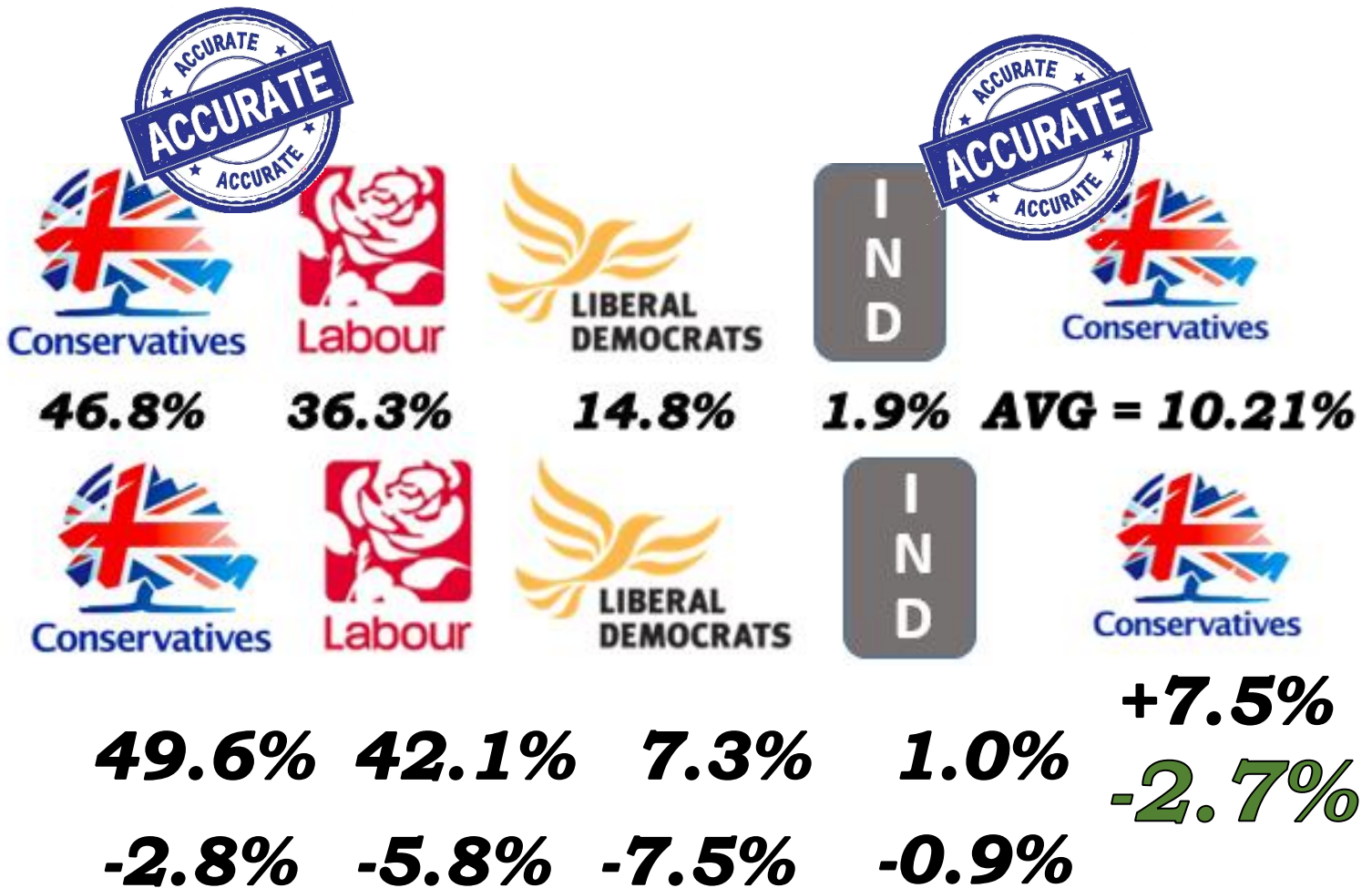
National Vote:

We theorised that as Hastings can often be representative of wider national trends our poll's findings could potentially project the end result of the entire election. We projected that the Conservatives would be on average around 10.21% ahead of the Labour Party, with the end result being the Conservatives 11.4% ahead of Labour. This makes our national projection only 1.2% out in terms of projecting the national lead for the Conservative Party. On top of this, we were on average within our 5-6% margin of error we expected our poll to have with projecting both the Labour and Conservative Party vote shares. Finally, in terms of the national projection we used the electoral calculus website to input our polling figures to calculate a possible seat share. We arrived at a 74 seat majority for the Conservatives, with the final majority being 80 seats. We also got a similar number of Conservative, Labour and SNP seats again showing our sample was reliable.

National Prediction: Conservative majority 74

Party	2017 Votes	2017 Seats	Pred Votes	Gains	Losses	Net Change	Pred Seats
CON	43.5%	318	45.6%	47	3	+44	362
LAB	41.0%	262	35.4%	2	48	-46	216
LIB	7.6%	12	11.7%	3	2	+1	13
Brexit	0.0%	0	1.9%	0	0	+0	0
Green	1.7%	1	1.0%	0	1	-1	0
SNP	3.1%	35	3.6%	6	0	+6	41
PlaidC	0.5%	4	0.3%	0	4	-4	0
UKIP	1.9%	0	0.1%	0	0	+0	0
Other	0.7%	0	0.3%	0	0	+0	0
N.Ire		18		0	0	+0	18





The local result saw Conservative's Sally-Ann Hart secure 49.6% of the vote, with Labour's Peter Chowney on 42.1%. The Liberal Democrat Nick Perry obtained 7.35% with Independent Paul Crosland on 1%. With many people undecided and a small sample size it was always going to be hard to project the exact percentage of each party's vote, but despite this issue we managed to project the Conservative Party vote share within a 3% margin of error. It would appear that the Lib-Dem vote was squeezed by Labour as tactical voting kicked in and national trends showed the Lib-Dems polling ratings down with Labour's increasing. As a result, we were not as close with projecting the Labour and Lib-Dem votes, but still not totally off and around the 5-6% margin of error we expected our poll to have on average. We also quite accurately reported the Independent's share of the vote, which was impressive given our sample size.

On the night of the result the exit poll projected that Hastings was 95% likely to stay Conservative held. This was not far away from our projection of a Conservative hold being 85% likely, again showing our poll's accuracy. Finally, our projected lead the Conservatives had over Labour was 10.21%, with the end result being a 7.5%. This was quite accurate as it was within the standard margin of error of 3% and was still accurate despite the narrowing of the polls the week after our poll was released.