

Press release for immediate release from Coastal Action

Press release begins

Coastal Action, a non-profit Hastings social research organisation, has just released details of an exclusive local poll focused on Remain voter's attitudes to a No-Deal Brexit and how this may affect a snap general election outcome.

It zooms in on the Remain vote here in Hastings and Rye, and specifically explores which of the parties voters identify as Remain supporting, as well as the appetite amongst that group towards a possible united single candidacy standing on a 'Stop No Deal Brexit' slate in the constituency in a possible snap general election this autumn. This is a prospect attracting much attention amongst experts and the political parties as the October 31 looms larger.

"We wanted to dig down and get a clear sense of what Hastings and Rye Remain voters make of the parties' position on Brexit and how strong an appetite there is for some kind of coming together of the Remain parties under a single banner", explained Coastal Action founder and Director James Prentice, a doctoral researcher at Sussex University.

Hastings and Rye is currently held by Cabinet Minister Amber Rudd for the Conservatives. Her 2017 majority of just 346 votes makes it one of the most marginal seats in the country and a site of major political interest. In the referendum, the constituency voted for Brexit by a margin of 55% to 45%.

The research organisation developed a short questionnaire which was sampled in a broad range of identified Remain/ strong Remain locations across the constituency, taking in both the more populous urban areas and outlying rural settings.

Over the course of the exercise, which ran from 17 through 26 August, over 130 responses were received.

The headlines are as follows:

- Voting intention for the 3 stop a No Deal parties is Labour 21%, Lib Dems 19% & Greens 7%. This means the Conservatives only likely need +25% to win if these parties do not unite.
- When asked to identify which political parties were Remain parties, most respondents clearly identified the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party, with 79% and 74% recognition respectively. Labour, by contrast, generated a much more ambiguous response, with just 31% seeing them as a Remain party. This figure included many previous supporters.
- Most respondents strongly identified with Remain parties in Hastings and Rye uniting behind a single 'stop no deal' candidate, with 63.5% saying they strongly support such an option and a further 30% supporting such an option. Just 2% opposed/ strongly opposed this.
- At 49%, almost half of the sample identified a preference for that 'Stop a No Deal Brexit' candidacy to be led by the Liberal Democrats, with 30% opting for Labour and 24% for the Greens.
- While Labour attracted overwhelming support among the sample in the 2017 General Election, winning 46.2% of the vote and over 70% of the Remain vote, the Liberal Democrats would now win most of the Remain vote in the event of an immediate general election, with 42% of the vote against Labour's 35% and the Green Party's 16%.

Commenting on the results, Coastal Action Co-Director Chris Connelley, claimed "there has been a major falling away in support for Labour among local Remain voters, probably reflecting

disillusionment with its national policy position on Brexit. This has seen a sizeable direct shift from Labour to the Liberal Democrats and to a lesser extent the Greens, reinforcing the evidence seen earlier this year at the EU elections when Labour's vote was topped by the other two parties."

With a possible election just weeks away, the Coastal Action poll reveals a strong appetite for a united 'Stop a No Deal' candidacy but with opinion split as to who might best lead it.

Coastal Action's James Prentice sums up the position as follows, "From a near winner last time, Labour is now one of three parties in active contention to lead any united 'stop the no deal' formation. Given the party's near success in 2017 and dominance on the local council, Labour will continue to make the case that it is the most obvious and strongest contender to challenge the Conservatives or indeed lead any 'stop no deal' 'coalition'.

"However, the situation has changed markedly over the past 2 years and Labour probably needs to accept it cannot go it alone this time if it wants to avoid a 'No Deal' win. Labour must engage with- and even lead- the local talks to form an anti-No Deal alliance and must show leadership and make concessions to ensure 'No Deal' is taken off the table locally. If it fails to do so, it runs the real risk of being blamed for failing Remain voters, who clearly wish to avoid a No Deal Brexit, and this could damage their longer- term electoral prospects".

2. Prediction of a snap General Election Outcome (If called in Early September when parliament resumes).



Labour

21.2%



**LIBERAL
DEMOCRATS**

19.02%



Green Party

6.9%



Conservatives

**+25% likely
wins it**

Currently has 33% nationally according to the most recent YouGov poll.

Press release ends

For full information on the polling, please go to www.coastalaction/polling

For media interviews or follow-up, please contact our director James Prentice through the email James.Prentice@live.co.uk