BRITISH ELECTION STUDY 2015

TECHICAL REPORT

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1 Introduction

1.1 Background

The British Election Study (BES) is one of the longest running election studies world-wide and has become an invaluable resource for political scientists. Consecutive British Election Studies have made a major contribution to the understanding of political attitudes and behaviour over fifty years. Studies have taken place immediately after every general election since 1964. The BES explores why people choose to vote (or not) and why they support one party rather than another, as well as wider questions about democracy and political participation.

Despite the increased availability of opinion polls and other data about what voters think, the post-election cross sectional study has remained a crucial tool for political scientists because of the spread and depth of its content and its use of robust scientific design and sampling. In addition to the main post-election BES questionnaire, the Comparative Study of Electoral Systems (CSES) module is also included as part of the 2015 study in order to deliver on the objective of international comparability with other post-election studies.

1.2 2015 BES post-election cross sectional study; summary of approach and management

As at previous elections, the 2015 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 (all University of Manchester);
- Professor Geoff Evans (University of Oxford, Nuffield) and
- Professor Cees van der Eijk (University of Nottingham)
- Dr Jon Mellon (Nuffield, Oxford) and Dr Chris Prosser (Manchester)

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.

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 that accompanies this data release.

- 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 2015 general election.

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

- Stratified random sample of 300 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 300 Parliamentary constituencies, sampled from the whole of Great Britain (from 630 constituencies - excluding the seat held by The Speaker, and (for practical reasons) Orkney and Shetland).

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.

3 The questionnaire

This section outlines how the content for the main 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 first draft of the questionnaire to GfK. The SLT and GfK then worked collaboratively to develop the question wording and structure keeping the questionnaire as a text document for ease of discussing the content. Once a pilot version was signed off by the SLT, 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.

3.2 Pilot

As part of the questionnaire development stage pilot interviews were conducted with members of the general public in Great Britain. The aim of the pilot was to evaluate question wording and questionnaire structure, estimate length, and establish effective ways of introducing the questionnaire on the doorstep.

A team of 8 GfK interviewers were briefed via web conferencing by GfK researchers and members of the SLT. The session focused on administering the questionnaire, including a full run through of the questionnaire led by the interviewers. Interviewers were provided with a feedback form to fill in: this contained a list of questions and prompts to uncover what questions were not working as they should and what was the best approach on the doorstep.

Random location quota sampling was used to select respondents for the pilot. This allowed the fieldwork to be completed in the short period of time and helped to ensure that a range of people were included in the pilot. Between 27th March and 6th April 2015 a total of 41 interviews were conducted. Interviewers worked in a range of locations across Great Britain – two interviewers were located in Wales and two in Scotland to ensure that region specific questions were tested.

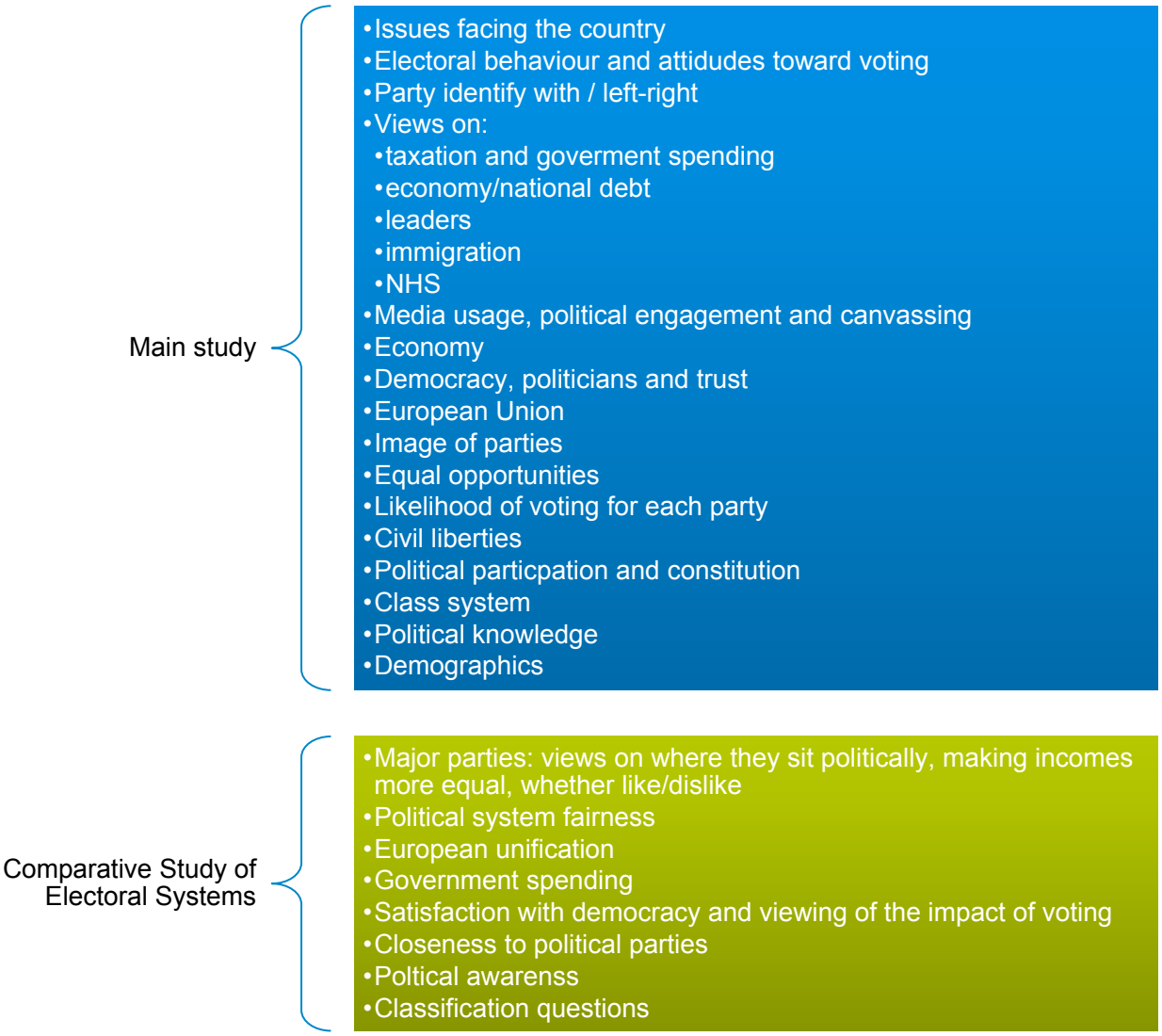
Once the pilot fieldwork was completed interviewers attended an in-person de-brief session to discuss feedback. GfK researchers and the SLT attended the session to listen and discuss feedback from the interviewers.

A number of changes were made as a result of the feedback - including changes to the question wording, questionnaire structure and length, and the doorstep introduction wording. Following the pilot debriefing there was a further round of discussions to produce the final version of the questionnaire.

Once a revised questionnaire was agreed, the resultant CAPI script was thoroughly tested in the same way as described above before main fieldwork began.

3.3 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 fully trained and experienced GfK interviewers: in total 202 interviewers were used to conduct the study. Interviewing began the day after the general election on 7th May 2015 and continued until 13th September 2015, although 97% of interviews were conducted within 3 months of the election date.

Interviewers received extensive study specific training. Initially, interviewers were asked to watch a video briefing which provided an overview of the key study issues. Interviewers were also provided with written instructions which gave a detailed explanation of all aspects of the study. Finally, interviewers had to attend a web conferencing session which covered further important aspects of their job; this session included an interviewer led run through of the questionnaire to familiarise interviewers with the questions wording. The web conferencing was also a forum in which interviewers could ask questions of GfK researchers and any SLT members who might be on the web session. A summary of what was covered is shown below:

Video briefing:	Web conferencing meeting	Written instructions
•Overview of the study •Interviewer task •Sample provided •Eligibility •Questionnaire •Acheiving high response	•Background •Acheiving high response rate •Making contact/eligibility/ respondent selection •Key questionnaire issues •Questionnaire run through	•Provides further detail on issues explored in the video and web conferencing •Interviewer completed a practice interview on their CAPI machine in conjuction with the written notes about the questions

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. A £5 note was enclosed in the envelope with the letter as a thank you in advance for help with the study. The letter also mentioned a further incentive for taking part in the study (a gift voucher: £15 for 18-24s nationwide, £10 for those aged 25+ in London and £5 for the rest of the country). Contact details were provided 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.

The average interview length was 52 minutes[1] and the median interview length was 50 minutes.

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 those who said they would complete the module were provided with a £5 unconditional voucher by the interviewer.

[1] Outliers (likely to be the result of computer or interviewer error) were excluded from the interview length calculations

Up to 3 reminders were sent to non-responders (who initially agreed to complete the CSES); for the paper self-completion: a letter was sent for the 1st and 3rd reminder, for the 2nd 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, 2,987 interviews had been conducted. Using the standard AAPOR conventions for reporting response rates this represents 55.9% response (using response rate 3[2]). 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: 98.1% - 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	6072
Not eligible	
Out of scope properties	590
No eligible respondents in household i.e. not eligible to vote in the general election	114
Unknown eligibility, non-interview	
Refused before screening stage	1040
Non contacts	295
Other unproductive before screening stage	73
Total unknown eligibility, non-interview cases	*1408*
Total unknown eligibility, non-interview cases who are expected to have someone in the household eligible for the study (A)	*1381*
Eligible, non-interview	
Refused	588
Non contacts	198
Other unproductive	187
Total eligible, non-interview cases (B)	*973*
Full interviews (C)	**2987**
Total eligible (A+B+C)	5341
Main study response rate (C/A+B+C)	**55.9%**
Completed CSES module cases (D)	1567
CSES module response rate (D/C)	**52.4%**

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 55.6%.

For the CSES module, 52.4% of those who took part in the main study completed the CSES either online or by post.

[2] 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.

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. Data edits were as follows:

- 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
- When a single coded question was multi coded the answer to that question was deleted completely and was coded as 'not stated' in the data

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 4 weights, as follows:

- wt_sel_wt - Selection weight (including capping)
- wt_combined_main - combined main study weight (capped selection plus uncapped demographic weights)
- wt_combined_main_capped - combined main study weight (capped selection plus capped demographic weights)
- wt_combined_CSES - combined CSES weight (capped selection weight plus demographic weighting)

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 14 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

A number of demographics were considered for the non-response weighting, and it was decided that the demographics that should be corrected were age, gender and region. The targets for these were taken from the Office for National Statistics (ONS) mid-year population estimates for 2014[3], and weights were calculated after the selection weights had been applied. This weight was capped at the 2nd and 98th percentiles; this increased the effective sample size by 72 but only had a minimal impact on the profiles by age, gender and region.

The following table sets out the target weights (ONS mid-year population estimates) and the corresponding BES main study demographic profiles with only the selection weights applied.

[3] http://www.ons.gov.uk/ons/rel/pop-estimate/population-estimates-for-uk--england-and-wales--scotland-and-northern-ireland/mid-2014/stb---mid-2014-uk-population-estimates.html

	ONS Mid-Year Population estimates 2014 %	Main study profile with only selection weights applied %
Gender and age[4]		
Males 18-24	5.9	4.1
Males 25-34	8.6	7.3
Males 35-54	17.0	16.2
Males 55-74	13.0	15.2
Males 75+	4.2	4.3
Females 18-24	5.7	5.7
Females 25-34	8.6	6.7
Females 35-54	17.3	19.4
Females 55-74	13.6	15.8
Females 75+	6.1	4.6
Region		
North East	4.2	4.3
North West	11.3	13.2
Yorkshire And The Humber	8.5	9.3
East Midlands	7.4	7.6
West Midlands	9.0	10.2
East	9.6	8.5
London	13.4	10.7
South East	14.1	13.5
South West	8.8	9.3
Wales	5.0	5.8
Scotland	8.7	7.5

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

While there are some quite large weights for the CSES (because those who completed CSES were not a random sub-set of all BES respondents) these could unfortunately not be capped because the capping had a negative impact on the demographic profile of the CSES responders.

[4] For BES 2015 age/gender %s: those who refused to provide their age are not shown in the table (and therefore the total does not sum to 100%)

7 Appendix A – sampled constituencies

Aldridge-Brownhills
Altrincham and Sale West
Angus
Arfon
Arundel and South Downs
Ashfield
Ashford
Aylesbury
Ayr, Carrick and Cumnock
Banbury
Barnsley East
Bassetlaw
Bath
Bedford
Bermondsey and Old Southwark
Berwickshire, Roxburgh and Selkirk
Berwick-upon-Tweed
Beverley and Holderness
Bexhill and Battle
Bexleyheath and Crayford
Birkenhead
Birmingham, Edgbaston
Birmingham, Erdington
Birmingham, Hall Green
Birmingham, Hodge Hill
Birmingham, Northfield
Birmingham, Perry Barr
Birmingham, Selly Oak
Birmingham, Yardley
Bishop Auckland
Blackburn
Blaenau Gwent
Blaydon
Blyth Valley
Bolsover
Bolton South East
Bolton West
Bournemouth West
Bradford East
Bradford South
Brent Central
Brent North
Brentwood and Ongar
Bridgwater and West Somerset
Brigg and Goole
Brighton, Pavilion
Bristol East
Bristol West
Bromley and Chislehurst
Bromsgrove
Broxbourne
Broxtowe
Burnley
Bury North
Caerphilly
Camberwell and Peckham
Cannock Chase
Canterbury
Cardiff Central
Cardiff West
Castle Point
Charnwood
Chatham and Aylesford
Chelsea and Fulham
Chichester
Chorley
Christchurch
Cities of London and Westminster
City of Chester
Clacton
Clwyd West
Colchester
Coventry North West
Crawley
Croydon North
Cumbernauld, Kilsyth and Kirkintilloch East
Cynon Valley
Dagenham and Rainham
Darlington
Daventry
Delyn
Derby North
Derby South
Don Valley
Doncaster Central
Dulwich and West Norwood
Dumfriesshire, Clydesdale and Tweeddale
Dunfermline and West Fife
Ealing, Southall
East Devon
East Hampshire
East Lothian
Eastleigh
Edinburgh North and Leith
Edinburgh South West
Edmonton
Ellesmere Port and Neston
Elmet and Rothwell
Enfield North
Epping Forest
Falkirk
Faversham and Mid Kent
Filton and Bradley Stoke
Finchley and Golders Green
Forest of Dean
Garston and Halewood
Gateshead
Gillingham and Rainham
Glasgow Central
Glasgow North East
Glasgow South
Gordon
Gosport
Grantham and Stamford
Great Grimsby
Great Yarmouth
Guildford
Hackney North and Stoke Newington
Halesowen and Rowley Regis
Halifax
Hammersmith
Hampstead and Kilburn
Harborough
Harlow
Harrow East
Harwich and North Essex
Havant
Hayes and Harlington
Hemel Hempstead
Hendon
Hertford and Stortford
Hexham
Heywood and Middleton
Hornchurch and Upminster
Houghton and Sunderland South
Hove
Huntingdon
Hyndburn
Ilford North
Inverness, Nairn, Badenoch and Strathspey
Islington North
Jarrow
Kenilworth and Southam
Kingston and Surbiton
Kingston upon Hull West and Hessle
Kingswood
Kirkcaldy and Cowdenbeath
Leeds North East
Leicester South
Lewes
Lewisham West and Penge
Leyton and Wanstead
Lichfield
Lincoln
Linlithgow and East Falkirk
Liverpool, Walton
Liverpool, West Derby
Loughborough
Ludlow
Luton South
Maidenhead
Makerfield
Maldon
Manchester, Gorton
Mansfield
Mid Dorset and North Poole
Mid Norfolk

Middlesbrough
Midlothian
Milton Keynes South
Mole Valley
Montgomeryshire
Morecambe and Lunesdale
Motherwell and Wishaw
New Forest East
Newark
Newbury
Newcastle upon Tyne North
Newport West
Normanton, Pontefract and Castleford
North Ayrshire and Arran
North Cornwall
North Devon
North Dorset
North East Cambridgeshire
North East Derbyshire
North East Hampshire
North East Hertfordshire
North East Somerset
North Shropshire
North Warwickshire
Northampton North
Northampton South
Norwich South
Oxford West and Abingdon
Paisley and Renfrewshire South
Pendle
Penistone and Stocksbridge
Penrith and The Border
Perth and North Perthshire
Plymouth, Moor View
Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport
Pontypridd
Poplar and Limehouse
Preston
Pudsey
Putney
Reading East
Ribble Valley
Rochdale
Rochester and Strood
Romford
Romsey and Southampton North
Ross, Skye and Lochaber
Rotherham
Rugby
Runnymede and Weybridge
Rushcliffe
Rutland and Melton
Saffron Walden
Scarborough and Whitby
Selby and Ainsty
Sevenoaks
Sheffield Central
Sheffield South East
Sheffield, Hallam
Sheffield, Heeley
Sittingbourne and Sheppey
Skipton and Ripon
Sleaford and North Hykeham
Slough
South Cambridgeshire
South East Cambridgeshire
South East Cornwall
South Ribble
South Shields
South Staffordshire
South Suffolk
South Thanet
South West Hertfordshire
Southampton, Test
Southport
St. Albans
St. Austell and Newquay
St. Helens North
St. Helens South and Whiston
St. Ives
Stafford
Staffordshire Moorlands
Stalybridge and Hyde
Stevenage
Stirling
Stockport
Stoke-on-Trent North
Streatham
Stretford and Urmston
Suffolk Coastal
Sunderland Central
Surrey Heath
Sutton and Cheam
Swansea West
Tamworth
Telford
Tewkesbury
The Cotswolds
Thirsk and Malton
Thurrock
Tiverton and Honiton
Tooting
Torbay
Truro and Falmouth
Tunbridge Wells
Vale of Clwyd
Vale of Glamorgan
Walthamstow
Wantage
Weaver Vale
Wellingborough
Welwyn Hatfield
West Aberdeenshire and Kincardine
West Bromwich East
West Dorset
West Dunbartonshire
West Ham
West Lancashire
West Worcestershire
Westmorland and Lonsdale
Weston-Super-Mare
Wigan
Wimbledon
Witney
Woking
Wokingham
Workington
Wycombe
Wyre and Preston North
Wyre Forest
Ynys Mon
York Central
York Outer

8 Appendix B – advance notification of study letter

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 2015

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. **As an advance thank you for your help, we have enclosed £5 for the person selected to take part.**

What happens next?
GfK NOP, the independent research company, is conducting the survey on our behalf. One of their interviewers 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 GfK NOP interviewers wear or carry identification badges bearing their photo.

Those who take part in the survey will be given at least a £[5/10] 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 GfK NOP on 0800 0564536 or email britain2015@gfk.com
When making contact, please quote your full address and the reference number at the top of this letter. For more information and background to the survey please visit www.Britain2015.uk

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