

# Evaluation of Voter ID Pilots 2019

Evaluation of pilots introducing an ID requirement for voters at polling stations in May 2019 local elections

July 2019

Constitution Group Analysis, Elections Division

## Acknowledgements

The authors would like to thank all ten pilot authorities for their hard work and enthusiasm as well as the information they provided to aid the evaluation. We appreciate the time taken to speak to the Cabinet Office on various occasions. Thanks go to the members of the Electoral Commission for their collaborative approach to the research and were integral to the design and evaluation of the pilots. We are also appreciative of the support of the Association of Electoral Administrators and we thank them for their input. The authors of this report and the underlying analysis are government social researchers and economists based in the Cabinet Office Constitution Group.

© Crown copyright 2019  
Produced by Cabinet Office

You may re-use this information (excluding logos) free of charge in any format or medium, under the terms of the Open Government Licence. To view this licence, visit <http://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/doc/open-government-licence/> or email: [psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk](mailto:psi@nationalarchives.gov.uk)

Where we have identified any third party copyright material you will need to obtain permission from the copyright holders concerned.

Alternative format versions of this report are available on request from [cg-analysis@cabinetoffice.gov.uk](mailto:cg-analysis@cabinetoffice.gov.uk)

# Contents

|  |    |
|--|----|
| Summary  | 5  |
| Background   | 6  |
| Methodology  | 8  |
| Results  | 12 |
| Integrity  | 12 |
| Democracy & Equality                                   | 14 |
| Delivery   | 17 |
| Next steps   | 18 |
| References   | 19 |
| Annexes  | 20 |
| Annex A - Demographics of pilot authorities            | 20 |
| Annex B - further methodology of public opinion survey | 21 |
| Annex C - Interviews with electoral services teams     | 25 |

## Summary

Constitution Group Analysis within Cabinet Office conducted an evaluation of the 2019 voter ID pilots. We aimed to understand how local areas and electoral services teams would respond to and implement Identification (ID) requirements at polling stations, and also understand the potential short term impact of the requirement on the behaviour and perceptions of electors.

Three different models of the ID requirement were tested in 2019. The **photographic ID model** required electors to bring one form of photographic ID to the polling station; the **mixed ID model** required electors to bring either one form of photographic ID or two forms of non-photographic ID to the polling station; and the **poll card model** required electors to bring poll cards to the polling station (two authorities using this model also piloted the use of machine-scannable barcodes on poll cards). The mixed ID model and the photographic ID model both had a provision for free, locally issued ID available from the local authority, if electors did not have the required form of ID.

We gathered data from a number of sources that tested each of the models against measures of **integrity** (perceptions of the voting process, and of electoral fraud), **democracy & equality** (awareness, voting behaviour), **delivery** (planning and resource implications), and **cost**. The ID requirement, regardless of model, was delivered on top of successfully delivered local elections in the piloting authorities, and these measures serve to highlight the relative strengths and weaknesses of each of the models.

The photographic ID model had the most pronounced impact on the measures of integrity. Electors in the authorities trialling the photographic ID model showed a significant increase in their perception that there are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent electoral fraud at polling stations. While this trend was also seen in the mixed ID model after polling day, the photographic ID model is the only model piloted in which significantly more electors were likely disagree with the perception that there is electoral fraud in polling stations to affect election results.

The proportion of people who did not return to the polling station varied by model, and across all models accounted for under 0.5% of those who were checked at polling stations. There are some indications that the mixed ID model was accessible for electors, particularly in more demographically diverse areas.

The data collected indicated that no consistent demographic group, that we were able to examine, was adversely impacted by the models. There is continued anecdotal evidence from 2018 pilots that the provision of free, locally issued ID allows electors who did not previously have ID to access other public services in their area. This was highlighted as a continued positive benefit in the photographic ID model in Woking from 2018 - where homeless electors were able to use it as locally recognised ID to access the local job centre. These potentially wider benefits of the locally issued ID were also highlighted by the electoral services team in Pendle this year, though electoral services teams highlighted considerations for the broader resource implications of issuing this ID close to polling day.

When selecting the model to pilot, electoral services teams balanced the consideration of the demographics of their area with their perceptions of the security of each requirement. All authorities felt that the requirement that they trialled was the most appropriate for national rollout. Authorities also stressed that delivery partners would be key in the success of rolling out voter ID.

## Background

In August 2016, Sir Eric Pickles produced his report entitled “Securing the Ballot”. The report noted that existing rules for voting had the potential to be abused, and to undermine the integrity of the electoral process. A number of international organisations and the Electoral Commission had recommended the introduction of the use of additional identification procedures in polling stations. One of the recommendations made in the report was for the Government to consider the options for electors to have to produce personal identification before voting at polling stations, and that the Government may wish to pilot different methods.

The Government confirmed that it wished to establish pilot schemes to trial different methods of identification at the local elections due to take place in May 2018. The purpose of these pilot schemes would be to test the impact of voter identification schemes on protection against fraud, the perception of integrity, and on voter participation and turnout. On 3 May 2018, the local government elections took place and the first round of pilot schemes were run in five local authorities.

In July 2018, in addition to the evaluation published by the Cabinet Office, the Electoral Commission published a report in relation to the pilot schemes concluding that the pilot schemes had been successfully completed. It noted that “there is no evidence that levels of turnout in the pilot scheme areas were significantly affected by the requirement for polling station voters to show identification”. Furthermore, there was “some evidence to suggest that requiring voters to show identification had a positive impact on public confidence in the May 2018 elections”, although the picture was not consistent within individual pilot areas. The Electoral Commission found that whilst it was not possible to evaluate whether the pilot schemes prevented actual attempts to commit electoral fraud, they were likely “to have had some positive impact on reducing the potential for electoral fraud by impersonation at polling stations”. Additionally, there were a number of recommendations, one of which was trialling a variation of the poll card model without the technology element.

The 2019 pilots delivered on this whilst incorporating the other recommendations made. Ten authorities participated in the Voter ID Pilots in 2019, incorporating a wider set of demographics (in terms of geography, ethnicity and rurality<sup>1</sup>) and with one authority taking forward the non-tech model variant on the poll card model. This is detailed in Table 1 below.

---

<sup>1</sup> Demographic data for each authority can be found in Annex A.

**Table 1: 2019 Pilot Sites**

| <b>Model</b>                 | <b>Requirement</b>   | <b>Local Authority</b>  |
|------------------------------|--|---|
| <b>Poll card model</b>       | Poll card (technology enabled) - electors told to bring poll cards - with barcodes that can be scanned on them - to the polling station. | Mid Sussex and Watford<br><br>Watford piloted the same ID requirements in 2018. |
|                              | Poll card (non-tech) - Electors told to bring poll cards to the polling station.   | North West Leicestershire   |
| <b>Mixed ID model</b>        | Electors told to bring either one form of photographic ID or two forms of non-photographic ID to the polling station.                    | Derby, Craven, Braintree, North Kesteven and Broxtowe                           |
| <b>Photographic ID model</b> | Electors told to bring one form of photographic ID to the polling station.   | Woking and Pendle<br><br>Woking piloted the same ID requirements in 2018.       |

The mixed ID model and the photographic ID model both had a provision for free, locally issued ID available from the local authority, if electors did not have the required form of ID.

The ID requirement, regardless of model, was delivered on top of successful elections in the piloting authorities - showing that all of the models tested are workable. The data gathered for the evaluation, testing the model against measures of integrity, democracy & equality, delivery and cost, highlight the relative strengths and weaknesses of each of the models.

# Methodology

## Authority selection process

The opportunity to pilot voter ID in May 2019 was offered to all local authorities holding local elections in Great Britain. An Electoral Integrity Pilots prospectus was published on GOV.UK on 22 August 2018. It confirmed the approach to piloting and set out how authorities could submit an expression of interest.

The Cabinet Office then worked closely with those authorities who had expressed an interest in participating to develop realistic research criteria and practical delivery plans. Following initial discussions, authorities were invited to submit a formal application if committed to participating and if they met selection criteria. These formal applications were agreed by the Cabinet Office Electoral Integrity Project Board which includes representatives from the Electoral Commission and the Association of Electoral Administrators (AEA), with the Minister for the Constitution approving the final selected authorities.

## Evaluation Themes and Data Sources

To fully assess the different dimensions of the ID requirements, we evaluated the pilots through the following themes:

| Theme                         | Definition  | Key Measures   |
|-------------------------------|---|--|
| <b>Integrity</b>              | Ensuring that public confidence in the security of the electoral system remains high  | <b>Perceptions of the voting process</b> (confidence in knowing how to vote, voting satisfaction) and <b>perceptions of electoral fraud</b> (safeguards and secrecy of the vote, polling station security, and occurrence of fraud in local area versus Great Britain) |
| <b>Democracy and equality</b> | Ensuring that the ID requirements being trialled do not prohibit electors from voting where eligible, and do not stop electors overall from being able to participate in the democratic process | <b>Awareness of the pilot</b> (recall of ID requirements and channel communications), <b>voting behaviour</b> (likelihood to vote and ID used), and <b>attitudes towards the pilot requirements</b>  |
| <b>Delivery</b>               | Ensuring that the ID requirements can be delivered successfully   | Electoral service teams' <b>planning and resourcing</b> considerations, delivery of <b>training</b> , and working with <b>delivery partners</b>  |
| <b>Cost</b>                   | Measuring changes, if any, to the monetary cost of delivering elections with ID requirements, including implementation and ongoing delivery   | Cost modelling of <b>national rollout</b> including costs of hiring <b>additional members of staff, training staff members, any additional facilities required, and the cost of issuing ID.</b>  |

We have used the following data sources to inform our evaluation against these themes:



- **Public opinion surveys** – Two waves of telephone surveys were conducted, with different samples before and after polling day, to provide measures of the extent to which the application of an ID requirement affected public attitudes to fraud and confidence in the electoral system. We have been able to compare survey results for the pilot areas before and after the elections as well as between the pilot areas and other areas in England running polls without an ID requirement. It is not fully possible to attribute changes in public attitudes and perceptions to the pilots alone, as other external factors may also have played a part in informing responses to our surveys.
- Data obtained from the public opinion survey was weighted to correct for any imbalances in the achieved sample. Data was weighted by gender, age, working status and in the rest of England by region. Additionally, authorities within a model were given equal weights. More detail on the methodology used for the public opinion survey are at Annex B.
- **Data from polling stations** – data on the different ID used and the number of people unable to vote, recorded directly by polling station staff on 2 May.
- **Interviews with electoral services teams** – we interviewed the key staff involved in the pilots soon after polling day to gather their views on the delivery of the pilot and any issues they encountered. More detail on the methodology used for these interviews are at Annex C.
- **Census data** – we have used demographic data on the ward and local authority level from the 2011 census to understand if there were any particular groups of people that would be impacted by the requirement. This data can only be taken as indicative in some areas, as the data is not adjusted for population changes, and several of the pilot areas have had ward boundary changes since 2011.

We have not used the following data sources:

- **Electoral Commission polling station staff survey** - all polling station staff in the pilot areas were surveyed by the Electoral Commission to gather information on their experience of administering the pilot. We have tried to understand the impact of the pilots on polling station staff via interviews with electoral services teams that hire and train them.
- **Turnout data** - in some cases it has been impossible to compare against comparable elections, due to the nature of the poll. Levels of turnout fluctuate year-on-year as a result of a range of factors, even between the same types of elections. This is also impacted by limited comparable data in some instances. For example, several of the pilot areas have either had recent boundary changes or last had local elections in combination with different polls. Turnout data for the 2019 local elections will be published by the Electoral Commission<sup>2</sup>, and will be considered when it is available.
- **Data on confirmed cases of electoral fraud** - We are not able to compare cases of proven electoral fraud, as these have not progressed from allegations by the time of this publication. It is not possible to directly attribute any change in number of allegations or proven cases of electoral fraud to the introduction of the ID requirements. We are reliant on evidence from the public opinion survey and self-reporting from electoral service teams, to indicate likely outcomes but these will be inferred and will not be able to prove cause and effect.

---

<sup>2</sup><https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/our-work/our-research/electoral-data/electoral-data-files-and-reports>

## Interpreting results

These pilots were designed to understand how the potential impact of an ID requirement for voters at the polling station is likely to vary between areas with different demographics and electoral administration capacity. The results from the data gathered are not nationally representative, but do enable an understanding of the potential effects of rolling out an ID requirement on particular demographic groups and type of local authorities.

When we have compared the results between sites, models and pre/post-election day waves in the public opinion survey, we have noted where the difference is statistically significant. A result is said to be statistically significant if it is likely to be attributable to differences between the sites, models or waves. Where a result is not statistically significant, we cannot be certain that the difference was not caused by chance. We tested for statistical significance where  $p < 0.05$ <sup>3</sup> Where sample sizes were sufficient we have provided additional analysis by the demographics we specifically interested in understanding any potential impact on.

While we are confident in the robustness of the findings within each participating authority and subsequent insight into the impact of implementation nationally, the following limitations apply:

- We have indicated where we have seen a significant change in perceptions of people surveyed in the authorities piloting the requirements. We have identified these differences as potential impacts of the model when a significant change has not been seen in the areas in England holding elections that were also surveyed. It is important to note that these are potential impacts, and we cannot isolate these as a direct impact of the model requirement as there will be other drivers to attitudes.
- Authorities participating in the pilots do not involve areas in Wales or Valuation Joint Boards (VJBs) in Scotland - while the demographics of the pilot authorities do cover similar characteristics, we are not able to draw out any national differences. The authorities taking part were self-selecting.
- These pilots were conducted during Local Elections, and we have only been able to indicate the potential impact on other types of polls, notably UK Parliamentary General Elections (UKPGE), where a different electorate is eligible to vote, and a different group of electors may intend to vote.
- It is not possible to directly attribute any change in the number of allegations or proven cases of electoral fraud to the introduction of the ID requirements. We are reliant on evidence from the public opinion survey and self-reporting from electoral service teams to indicate likely outcomes, but these will be inferred and will not be able to prove cause and effect.

## Ethical Considerations

The pilot orders were supported by Equality Impact Assessments that were completed by each piloting authority to ensure the ID requirements did not impact adversely on particular groups with protected characteristics. These assessments took into account the needs of different communities and wherever possible, authorities worked with any groups that were concerned about the impact of the ID requirements.

When conducting the research, ethical and data issues were considered. Informed consent was obtained from each participant who took part in an interview prior to recording. When conducting survey and interview research, electoral service teams, polling station staff, and the public were first made aware of what their data would be used for and who it would be shared with. We also informed participants that all data would be anonymised and not used in a manner that would allow identification of individuals. All research participation was optional and participants could withdraw

---

<sup>3</sup> Further details can be found in Annex A.

their consent at any point during the process. The public opinion survey fieldwork was carried out under the guidelines set out by the Market Research Code of Conduct.

# Results

The following section outlines the results obtained from the data sources. We have organised the results according to each theme. Within each theme there are a number of key measures used to evaluate the impact of the ID requirement.

## Integrity

We aimed to understand the impact of each model on perceptions of the voting process (confidence in knowing how to vote, voting satisfaction) and perceptions of electoral fraud (safeguards and secrecy of the ballot, polling station security, and occurrence of fraud in local area versus Great Britain). We used the public opinion survey as the main data source for this theme.

- Over 9 in 10 people surveyed remained confident in, and 8 in 10 people surveyed remained satisfied with knowing how to cast their vote after each of the pilots. Significant increases in confidence were seen in the poll card and the mixed ID model. Elector confidence in Watford and Woking<sup>4</sup> remain at similar levels in comparison to when they piloted last year - suggesting the requirement does not significantly impact this perception in the short term.
- The majority of those surveyed in each local authority agree that there are sufficient safeguards to prevent electoral fraud in polling stations - only the mixed ID model and the photographic ID models show significant increases in this metric after polling day. The authorities trialling the photographic ID model were also the only authorities that showed a decrease in the perception that there is enough electoral fraud in polling stations to affect election results. This suggests that the photographic ID model may have the most pronounced impact on polling station integrity measures.

### **Elector confidence and satisfaction in the process of casting a ballot**

In the poll card model, electors showed a significant increase in confidence after polling day (98%, up from 94%). Level of satisfaction in the process of voting increased by three percentage points (85%, up from 82%); both poll card models had consistent levels of confidence with one another. There are no indications to suggest the model had an impact on one particular group examined that is different from the general population.

In the mixed ID model, electors also showed a significant increase in confidence after polling day (98%, up from 96%). Levels of satisfaction in the process of voting increased by two percentage points (85%, up from 83%). Following polling day electors classified SEG<sup>5</sup> ABC1 (99%, up from 98%) are significantly more confident in knowing how to go about casting their vote and are more confident than the model average (98%) - given this increase was not seen amongst electors in other areas in England holding elections we can attribute the positive impact to the model.

In the photographic ID model, elector confidence in knowing how to cast their vote remained stable following polling day (96%, up from 95%). Level of satisfaction in the process of voting also remained stable (83%, up from 82%). Following polling day electors aged 45-64 (99%, up from 97%) and electors classified SEG ABC1 (95%, up from 96%) are significantly more confident in knowing how to go about casting their vote and are more confident than the model average (97%) -

---

<sup>4</sup> In 2018 Watford piloted the poll card model (technology enabled) and Woking piloted the photographic ID model.

<sup>5</sup> Socio-Economic Grouping (SEG) is classification that groups people with a similar social and economic status. SEG A refers to people from an upper middle class background, SEG B refers to people from a middle class background, SEG C1 refers to people from a lower middle class background, SEG C2 refers to people from a skilled working class background, SEG D refers to people from a working class background, SEG E refers to people from a non-working background.

given this increase was not seen amongst electors in other areas in England holding elections we can attribute the positive impact to the model.

## **Perceptions of electoral fraud in general, in the local area, and in Great Britain**

Across the piloting authorities, those surveyed remained unlikely to think that electoral fraud happens in their own area in general. Only 5% of respondents from the survey in the poll card model and 7% in the mixed ID model report there is a great deal or fair amount of electoral fraud in polling stations where they live (in-line with pre-wave figures). Within the mixed ID model, significantly more people report this in Derby (13%) than on average, as also seen in the pre-wave. Amongst areas piloting the poll card model, the amount that people say this is broadly consistent (Watford 8%, North West Leicestershire 5%, Mid Sussex 3%).

Patterns diverge in the two areas piloting the photographic ID model. This is particularly striking in Pendle, where a third of respondents felt that fraud takes place in their local area. This is of note as the photographic ID model, seen as the most stringent set of requirements, did not have an impact on this perception in an area with perceived issues with electoral fraud. Conversely, in Woking there was a significant decrease in perception that there is a great deal or fair amount of electoral fraud at the polling station in their area (9%, down from 14%).

Following polling day, those aged 18-34 within authorities piloting the photographic ID model are less likely to believe there is a great deal or fair amount of electoral fraud taking place in their area (8%, down from 24%), this is significantly below the pilot average (19%). Given this change was not seen amongst electors in other areas in England holding elections the impact may be linked to the photographic ID model.

Around one in five in the poll card model and mixed ID model believe there is a great deal or fair amount of electoral fraud at polling stations happening in Great Britain (20% down from 22% in poll card model, 23% in mixed model both waves). As with perceptions of electoral fraud in their local area, electors in Pendle are more likely than in other areas to say electoral fraud takes place in Great Britain (40%, up from 37%). In Woking, also testing the photographic ID model, perceptions of electoral fraud in Great Britain are similar to other areas (22%, down from 25%).

A similar pattern can be seen across perceptions of electoral fraud at polling stations occurring in Great Britain, with significantly more saying a great deal or fair amount takes place in the photographic model (31%), than the mixed ID model (23%), or the poll card model (20%), and all in line with the pre-wave. Again, this is driven largely by responses in Pendle (40%) as Woking (22%) remains in line with the other models.

## **Safeguards at the polling station**

The perception that voting at polling stations is safe from fraud and abuse increases consistently across all models after polling day. Agreement that voting is very or fairly safe significantly increased in the poll card with tech model (90%, up from 87%), photographic ID model (90%, up from 85%), and the mixed ID model (89%, up from 87%). Sentiment in North West Leicestershire (piloting the poll card without technology model) slightly decreased, albeit not significantly (80%, down from 91%). There was a significant increase after the polling day in the perception that there are enough safeguards in place at a polling station in the photographic ID and mixed ID model. This could be a potential impact of these specific pilots, people in other areas of England holding elections more were likely to disagree there are sufficient safeguards in place (20%, up from 16%).

Overall, the poll card model (either with or without tech) had no significant impact on the extent to which electors agree there are sufficient safeguards in place to prevent electoral fraud in polling stations, with agreement remaining stable across waves (65%, from 62%). There was some divergence between the two different poll card models tested. Electors within poll card (technology enabled) models were significantly less likely to agree there was enough electoral fraud to affect

the election result (26%, down from 32%). This was largely driven by Mid Sussex (22%, down from 30%), while in North West Leicestershire there was no such impact suggesting the technology may have had some impact on perceptions.

In the mixed ID model, the proportion of people who felt there are sufficient safeguards in place at the polling station significantly increased after the pilot (78%, up from 63%). This is driven in particular by changes in Derby (66%, up from 58%) and Braintree (65%, up from 55%).

The mixed ID model has somewhat varying impacts on sub groups within the general population in terms of integrity measures - with men being more likely to believe polling stations are safe from fraud and abuse (92% up from 88%) versus the model average (89%). Those self-identifying as having a disability are more likely to feel there is a great deal or fair amount of fraud in their local area (14%, up from 6%) versus the model average (7%).

Similarly, in the photographic ID model, the proportion of people who felt there are sufficient safeguards in place at the polling station significantly increased after the pilot in perception that there are enough safeguards in place at the polling station (63%, up from 57%). This is driven in particular by changes in Pendle (43%, up from 36%).

In addition, in the photographic ID model there was a decrease in the perception that there is enough electoral fraud in polling stations to affect election results. More people in this model said they strongly or tend to disagree that there is enough electoral fraud in polling stations to affect the election results (35%, up from 30%). This is largely driven by Pendle (43%, up from 36%) - something that is not seen in the other models.

Within the photographic ID model ethnic minorities are more likely to believe that polling stations are free from fraud and abuse (97%, up from 84%), versus model average following polling day (90%) - given this increase was not seen amongst electors in other areas in England holding elections, this could potentially be an impact of the model.

## Democracy & Equality

We aimed to understand the impact of the requirement on electors' participating in the pilots. Awareness of the pilot (recall of ID requirements and channel communications), voting behaviour (reasons for not voting and ID used), and attitudes towards the pilot requirements; this theme is important in understanding the impact of the requirement on people with protected characteristics. We used the public opinion survey, data collected at polling stations and interviews with electoral services teams to understand this theme.

- The data collected does not indicate that any one demographic group, of those examined, is being adversely impacted across the evaluation metrics. Very few people surveyed who stated they did not vote cited ID requirements as the reason for not casting their vote.
- The proportion of people who did not return to the polling station varied by model - with the fewest electors who did not return in the poll card model (0.2%), and similar proportions did not return in the mixed ID model and the photographic ID model (0.5% and 0.4% respectively).
- There is similar evidence to that in 2018 that the provision of free, locally issued ID allows electors who did not previously have ID access other public services in their area. This was highlighted as a positive benefit in the photographic ID model as a continued benefit in Woking from 2018 - where homeless electors were able to use LEID as locally recognised ID to access the local job centre. These wider potential benefits of LEID were also highlighted by the electoral services team Pendle.

## **Awareness of the requirement**

As expected, awareness among the electorate of the ID requirement significantly increased following polling day, and was high across all models. In addition, there was a significant increase in awareness of the requirement in the areas in England holding elections (excluding pilot areas); with two in five claiming they had heard about them (42%, up from 28%), likely being driven by the national press attention the pilots received leading up to and following polling day.

The authorities piloting the poll card model had lower levels of awareness of the requirement after polling day, compared to the other participating authorities. This could be indicative of the perception that the poll card is not seen as ID or that bringing a poll card to the polling station is seen as a normal requirement (41% of people in England think they have to bring their poll card to the polling station in order to vote).

The majority of electors cited official local sources of information as the main channel for how they became aware of the ID requirements. This is a marked change from the pre-wave survey where awareness was predominantly driven through national media. Across all models the main source of information was the council issued poll card; 67% in the Poll Card models (68% in poll card technology enabled models and 66% in North West Leicestershire), 62% in the mixed ID model, and 58% in the photographic ID model. Leaflets from the local council were the second most commonly cited channel (42% in the poll card, 54% in the mixed model, and 59% in the photographic model).

Electoral services teams piloting for the second time in Woking (photographic ID model) and in Watford (poll card tech enabled) felt that there was a certain level of “bedding in,” that occurred in electors’ behaviour, with the ID requirement seen as “the new normal.”

## **Types of ID used**

### **Poll card model**

The vast majority of people in the poll card model showed their poll card (93%) to verify their identity. In North West Leicestershire, 95% of polling station voters presented their poll card to verify their identity. Of the 5% that presented the alternative forms of ID, almost all presented a driving licence (4% of total) or passport (1% of total). In Watford, 88% of polling station voters presented their poll card to verify their identity. Of the 12% that presented alternative forms of ID, almost all showed their driving licence (8%) or their passport (3%).

### **Mixed ID model**

Nine in ten polling station voters in the mixed ID model presented a form of photographic ID, with the most popular form of ID being driving licences (57% avg) followed by passports (15% avg) and bus passes (14% avg). Debit/credit cards (3% avg) and poll cards (6% avg) were by far the most popular forms of non photographic ID presented. A higher proportion of electors in Derby presented non-photographic ID, particularly in wards with a higher than average ethnic minority population.

### **Photographic ID model**

The most popular forms of ID presented were driving licences (62% avg, 65% Woking, 58% Pendle), followed by passports (25% avg, 23% Woking, 26% Pendle), and bus passes (11% avg, 9% Woking, 13% Pendle). In Pendle, 63 polling station voters presented a Local Elector ID (LEID) issued by the authority (out of the 70 issued), and in Woking 37 polling station voters presented a LEID (out of 27 issued in 2019, and 64 issued in 2018).

The public opinion survey conducted in areas in England holding elections (excluding the pilots) showed that the majority of electors said they have to show some form of ID in order to vote following polling day. Seven in ten cited the need to show a photographic ID in order to vote (71%, down from 77%) and one in five (21%, down from 23%) cited they had to show non-photographic ID. Two in five (41%, down from 45%) agree they need to show their poll card to vote. Only 8% said they don’t need to have to show any form of ID. These results, whilst caveated as they are

prompted responses, suggest that showing some form of ID may already be considered part of the process at the polling station.

## Number of people who did not return to vote

**Table 2: Number of people who did not return to vote**

|   | Poll Card Model   | Mixed ID model   | Photographic ID Model  |
|---|---|--|--|
| <b>Overall model</b>  | 102 people from the sites piloting the poll card model did not return, representing 0.21% of people checked*.   | 515 people from the sites piloting the mixed model did not return, representing 0.46% of people who were checked.  | 123 people from the sites piloting the photographic model did not return, representing 0.40% of people checked.  |
| <b>LAs</b>  | <p><b>Watford</b> - 33 people did not return, representing 0.2% of people checked.</p> <p><b>Mid Sussex</b> - 8 people did not return, representing 0.03% of people checked.</p> <p><b>North West Leicestershire</b> - 61 people did not return, representing 0.4% of people checked.</p> | <p><b>Braintree</b> - 73 people did not return, representing 0.3% of people checked.</p> <p><b>Craven</b> - 49 people did not return, representing 0.7% of people checked.</p> <p><b>North Kesteven</b> - 68 people did not return, representing 0.4% of people checked.</p> <p><b>Broxtowe</b> - 69 people did not return, representing 0.3% of people checked.</p> <p><b>Derby</b> - 256 people did not return, representing 0.6% of people checked.</p> | <p><b>Woking</b> - 22 people did not return, representing 0.1% of people checked.</p> <p>In <b>Pendle</b>, 101 people did not return, representing 0.7% of people checked.</p> |
| **“People checked” is the number of people who were asked for ID at the polling station and were either issued a ballot paper, or asked to return with ID/correct ID. |   |  |  |

This was Watford's second round of pilots and fewer people did not return compared to 2018 (42 in 2018), however this represents a similar proportion of people who were checked (0.2% in both years). In Woking, also in its second year of piloting, saw a reduction in the number and proportion of people who did not return to the polling station (22 people, or 0.1% in 2019, down from 51 people, or 0.3% from 2018).

Across individual authorities there were particular wards where the proportion who did not return was higher than the authority average. In Watford, the proportion of people who did not return was significantly higher in two wards - one of which has a higher than authority average proportion of ethnic minorities. In Derby, the proportion of people who did not return was significantly higher than the average in three wards with higher than average ethnic minority populations. In Woking, 9 of the 22 people who did not return came from a ward that had higher than authority average ethnic minority population. In Pendle, this proportion increased to 1% in 3 out of the 20 electing wards - one of these wards had a higher than average proportion of Asian/British or Asian residents. While this pattern exists, it is not possible to say that the ID requirement definitively impacts ethnic minorities.

Woking and Pendle are of a similar demographic - both are more urban, have a higher proportion of ethnic minority residents than their respective regional averages, and have a similar age composition (about a third in the 24-44 age band). The difference in the absolute number/proportion of people who did not return could be driven by factors that go beyond



demographic - notably that this is Woking's second year of piloting the requirement, and this may have had an impact on polling station voting behaviour.

## Reasons for not voting

Across all models the main reason cited for not voting was lack of time: 20% in the poll card model, 13% in the mixed model, and 20% in the photographic model. Very few stated a reason related to not having the correct ID (34 out of 1,749 who said they did not vote, or 2%), a similar proportion to 2018 pilots.

Within the poll card model three people out of 509 who reported they did not vote cited not having the correct ID as their reason. All three electors were from Mid-Sussex.

Within the mixed ID model 10 people out of 576 who reported they did not vote in the elections cited not having correct ID as their reason.

In the photographic ID model sites, 21 out of the 304 who did not vote cited the ID requirement as the reason. This breaks down to 13 from Pendle and 8 from Woking. Given the low numbers of people who cited ID as a reason for not voting, we cannot draw out any further analysis on the demographics of this group. It is of note that 11 of the 21 people were in the 45-64 age group - and electors who applied for LEID were broadly from this age group as well.

## Delivery

We aimed to understand planning, resourcing and training considerations from the perspective of the participating local authority, as well as their experience of working with delivery partners like Cabinet Office, Electoral Commission and civil society groups. We used interviews with electoral services teams to understand this theme.

- When selecting which model to pilot, electoral services teams in piloting authorities balanced the consideration of the demographics of their area with their views on the security that each ID requirement provided. All LAs felt that the requirement that they trialled was the most appropriate for national rollout.
- Engagement with the equality duty increased across all authorities as the result of piloting voter ID. This was seen as a positive engagement exercise with vulnerable groups and civil society groups. Most electoral services teams cited this as something they would look to continue, although some flagged that they would need an additional dedicated resource to coordinate equality impact work in the event of national rollout. Authorities found that civil society groups responded positively to engagement irrespective of the voter ID requirements.
- Authorities across models stressed that delivery partners would be key in the success of rolling out voter ID. They reflected on the need for a centralised communications campaign to raise awareness and highlighted that simplicity of the requirements was key for successful rollout.

## Training and Polling Day

From qualitative interviews it was noted that training on the additional voter ID requirement in the mixed ID model and the photographic ID model was delivered as an additional element within the standard polling station staff training. Specific training was required for the technology elements of the poll card (technology enabled) model.

Electoral services teams did not feel that any particular group was adversely impacted by the requirements on polling day. Staff were positive about their experience of delivering voter ID and felt that complaints from the electorate were minimal across models due to the high level of

awareness of the requirements among electors.

For the poll card model (non-tech), polling station staff noted that electors thought they had to bring their poll card to vote anyway. Electoral services teams in the poll card (technology enabled) model felt that the technology performed well on the day and that staff understood how to use the tablets.

### **Local elector ID (LEID)**

It was noted that amongst the poll card model the need for LEID was eliminated, as the poll card is used as a substitute. Electoral administrators flagged this was a benefit as it is utilising a process already in place. Replacement poll card numbers were low. Authorities stressed the need to keep the deadline for re-issuing poll cards at 9pm on polling day in order to ensure the requirements are accessible for every elector.

Those who preferred the photographic card as the format for LEID felt that a photographic card may be less onerous over time if the ID was valid for a longer period. The electoral services teams felt that the deadline for issuing LEID needs to be brought further back from polling day, and they challenged the ability for some rural authorities to issue LEID and deliver to electors so close to polling day.

Electoral services teams delivering the photographic ID model were keen that LEID should remain as a physical card in format due to greater perceived integrity. They also felt that a card could then be used to access other services in the area. Woking felt that people are more likely to retain cards over time - and they felt this was evidenced by the smaller uptake of LEID in the second year of piloting.

### **Reflections on national rollout**

The poll card model sites felt that their model required the least behavioural change, as many electors already bring their poll card with them to the polling station. Electoral administrators from Mid Sussex felt that tech has to be part of the solution to bring polling stations up to modern standards and in line with the registration process (i.e. the registration process is the check and the poll card the product of that check). Those who piloted the poll card model without technology raised the concern that connectivity might be an issue in more rural areas.

All of the authorities piloting the mixed ID models felt that the photographic/non-photographic solution was suited to national rollout as it provided more flexibility to account for different demographics and levels of rurality. However, they did feel the list of non-photographic ID options was too long as the majority of electors who used this option brought similar documents (poll card and bank card). All authorities indicated that the data capture element should be discontinued due to the delivery constraints it placed on polling station staff.

The photographic ID model sites felt that the photographic ID is most appropriate for national rollout due to the level of security it provides compared to the other models. The electoral services teams from Pendle highlighted that the mixed model has too many options, and could potentially be confusing for the electorate. They felt the option of being able for LEID as a back-up to the photo model was ideal.

## **Next steps**

We will update this publication with cost data at a later date when we have received all the validated cost data from pilot authorities.

Ministers will consider this evidence in their decisions for national rollout of an ID requirement.

## References

- Cabinet Office (2018). Electoral Integrity Project - Local Elections 2018 - Evaluation.  
[https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/733128/Electoral\\_Integrity\\_Project\\_-\\_Local\\_Elections\\_2018\\_-\\_Evaluation.pdf](https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/733128/Electoral_Integrity_Project_-_Local_Elections_2018_-_Evaluation.pdf)
- Cabinet Office (2016). Securing the ballot: review into electoral fraud.  
<https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/securing-the-ballot-review-into-electoral-fraud>
- The Electoral Commission (2018). May 2018 voter identification pilot schemes - findings and recommendations.  
[https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/\\_data/assets/pdf\\_file/0006/244950/May-2018-voter-identification-pilots-evaluation-report.pdf](https://www.electoralcommission.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0006/244950/May-2018-voter-identification-pilots-evaluation-report.pdf)
- ONS Census (2011). <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>
- ONS Electoral statistics for the UK (2018).  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/elections/electoralregistration/datasets/electoralstatisticsforuk>
- ONS - Population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (2016).  
<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwalesscotlandandnorthernireland/mid2016/ukmidyearestimates2016.xls>

## Annexes

### Annex A - Demographics of pilot authorities

The following table summarises key demographic data for each Local Authority who participated in the. Taken from ONS Census data (2011) and ONS Electoral statistics for the UK (2018).

**Table 3: Demography of participating local authorities**

| Model                          | Local Authority           | Region               | Urban/Rural Classification                       | % ethnic minority | Local Government Electors - excluding attainers (2018 register) |
|--------------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------|--|-------------------|---|
| Poll card model (non-tech)     | North West Leicestershire | E Mids               | Largely Rural (rural including hub towns 50-79%) | 2%                | 78,828  |
| Poll card (technology enabled) | Watford                   | East                 | Urban with Major Conurbation                     | 28%               | 69,910  |
|                                | Mid Sussex                | S East               | Urban with City and Town                         | 5%                | 111,834   |
| Mixed ID model                 | Derby                     | E Mid                | Urban with City and Town                         | 20%               | 175,595   |
|                                | Braintree                 | East                 | Largely rural (rural including hub towns 50-79%) | 3%                | 111,934   |
|                                | North Kesteven            | E Mid                | Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)   | 2%                | 88,348  |
|                                | Broxtowe                  | E Mid                | Urban with Minor Conurbation                     | 7%                | 84,061  |
|                                | Craven                    | Yorks and the Humber | Mainly Rural (rural including hub towns >=80%)   | 3%                | 44,046  |
| Photographic ID model          | Woking                    | S East               | Urban with Major Conurbation                     | 16%               | 72,299  |
|                                | Pendle                    | N West               | Urban with City and Town                         | 20%               | 65,908  |

## Annex B - further methodology of public opinion survey

### Methodology and sampling

The public opinion survey took place between:

- Pre-wave: 12 January – 7 March 2019
- Post-wave: 3 May – 9 June 2019

The telephone survey included a number of close and open questions - open questions were manually coded to create a coding frame

Adults aged 18+ who are eligible to vote in Local Government Elections in each area were interviewed for the public opinion survey. Adults eligible to vote are: UK citizens, Commonwealth citizens living in the UK, citizens of the Republic of Ireland living in the UK or EU citizens living in the UK. Respondents were selected for the research regardless of whether they were registered to vote or intended to vote or voted in the 2 May 2019 Local Government Elections.

Sample sizes were decided with a view to achieving at least 1,000 interviews in each of the three models and roughly equal interviews in each local authority in each model. As a result, more interviews were conducted per LA where there were fewer LAs in the model. For example, the sample size per local authority was higher in the Photo ID model (roughly 600 in each of Woking and Pendle), and lower in the mixed model (roughly 400 per area). In the final dataset, results were weighted so that each LA within a model was equal. Sample sizes are noted in table 4.

**Table 4: Sample sizes achieved**

|  | Pre-wave     | Post-wave    |
|--|--------------|--------------|
| <b>Poll card model</b>                 | <b>1,736</b> | <b>1,807</b> |
| North West Leicestershire              | 562          | 609          |
| Watford                                | 504          | 528          |
| Mid Sussex                             | 670          | 670          |
| <b>Mixed ID model</b>                  | <b>2,024</b> | <b>2,045</b> |
| Derby                                  | 400          | 419          |
| Braintree                              | 401          | 416          |
| North Kesteven                         | 419          | 418          |
| Broxtowe                               | 404          | 408          |
| Craven                                 | 400          | 384          |
| <b>Photographic ID model</b>           | <b>1,183</b> | <b>1,226</b> |
| Woking                                 | 624          | 648          |
| Pendle                                 | 559          | 578          |
| <b>England areas holding elections</b> | <b>1,024</b> | <b>1,030</b> |

Telephone numbers were sourced using a combination of RDD (random digit dialling) and targeted mobile sample. Demographic quotas were set to ensure the sample is representative of adult populations in each area. Within each local authority, quotas were set on age, gender and working status. The precise targets varied according to the different population profiles in each LA. For the England comparison sample, age, gender, working status and region quotas were set.

## Weighting

The tables below detail the weighted sample profiles in each piloted area. Area profiles were taken from the 2011 Census<sup>6</sup> and the ONS Mid-Year<sup>7</sup> population estimates. Respondents were allowed to refuse to answer about their age and gender, or to say they identify in a different way, but very few chose this option and are not shown in the table below.

**Table 5: Weighting profile of local authorities**

|                                  | Gender  |           | Age       |           |           |           |           |         | Working status |               |                                  |
|----------------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|----------------|---------------|----------------------------------|
|                                  | Men (%) | Women (%) | 18-34 (%) | 35-44 (%) | 45-54 (%) | 55-64 (%) | 65-74 (%) | 75+ (%) | Full Time (%)  | Part Time (%) | Self-employed or not working (%) |
| <b>Pendle</b>                    | 49      | 51        | 29        | 17        | 17        | 16        | 11        | 10      | 38             | 17            | 45                               |
| <b>Woking</b>                    | 50      | 50        | 28        | 21        | 18        | 14        | 10        | 10      | 48             | 17            | 35                               |
| <b>Broxtowe</b>                  | 49      | 51        | 25        | 18        | 18        | 16        | 12        | 11      | 42             | 17            | 42                               |
| <b>Derby</b>                     | 49      | 51        | 32        | 18        | 17        | 13        | 10        | 10      | 39             | 17            | 43                               |
| <b>North Kesteven</b>            | 49      | 51        | 21        | 18        | 19        | 17        | 14        | 12      | 42             | 17            | 41                               |
| <b>Braintree</b>                 | 49      | 51        | 25        | 19        | 18        | 17        | 11        | 10      | 45             | 18            | 37                               |
| <b>Craven</b>                    | 48      | 52        | 18        | 16        | 19        | 19        | 14        | 14      | 42             | 18            | 40                               |
| <b>Mid- Sussex</b>               | 49      | 51        | 23        | 19        | 19        | 16        | 12        | 11      | 45             | 19            | 36                               |
| <b>Watford</b>                   | 50      | 50        | 34        | 21        | 17        | 12        | 8         | 8       | 50             | 17            | 34                               |
| <b>North West Leicestershire</b> | 50      | 50        | 23        | 19        | 19        | 17        | 12        | 10      | 44             | 17            | 39                               |

<sup>6</sup> ONS - <https://www.nomisweb.co.uk/census/2011>

<sup>7</sup> ONS - Population Estimates for UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland.

<https://www.ons.gov.uk/file?uri=/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/populationestimatesforukenglandandwales/scotlandandnorthernireland/mid2016/ukmidyearestimates2016.xls>

**Table 6: Weighting profile of England sample**

|                        | Gender  |           | Age       |           |           |           |           |         | Working status |               |                                  |
|------------------------|---------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|-----------|---------|----------------|---------------|----------------------------------|
|                        | Men (%) | Women (%) | 18-34 (%) | 35-44 (%) | 45-54 (%) | 55-64 (%) | 65-74 (%) | 75+ (%) | Full Time (%)  | Part Time (%) | Self-employed or not working (%) |
| <b>Rest of England</b> | 49      | 51        | 27        | 16        | 18        | 15        | 13        | 11      | 41             | 17            | 42                               |

|                        | Region         |                |                   |                   |          |                |                |
|------------------------|----------------|----------------|-------------------|-------------------|----------|----------------|----------------|
|                        | North East (%) | North West (%) | East Midlands (%) | West Midlands (%) | East (%) | South East (%) | South West (%) |
| <b>Rest of England</b> | 4              | 17             | 12                | 10                | 15       | 20             | 9              |

### Significance testing

Statistical theory is based on the assumption that the samples are drawn using purely random methods and each individual in the population has a known and non-zero chance of being selected. This assumption is not met by the sample surveys cited in this evaluation as recruitment to the survey was done to set quota specifications. Nevertheless, it is standard practice to conduct significance testing on non-probability samples and provides a useful guide for interpreting results.

As with any sample surveys, all results are subject to a margin of error, meaning not all differences between estimates are statistically significant. Table 7 shows the 95% confidence intervals for each local authority, model and the rest of England, for various point estimates.



**Table 7: Confidence Intervals**

| Confidence Intervals         |          |          |          |          |          |
|------------------------------|----------|----------|----------|----------|----------|
|                              | 10%/ 90% | 20%/ 80% | 30%/ 70% | 40%/ 60% | 50%      |
| <b>Poll card model</b>       | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> |
| North West Leicestershire    | 3        | 4        | 4        | 4        | 5        |
| Watford                      | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| Mid Sussex                   | 3        | 3        | 4        | 4        | 4        |
| <b>Mixed ID model</b>        | <b>1</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>2</b> |
| Derby                        | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| Braintree                    | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| North Kesteven               | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| Broxtowe                     | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| Craven                       | 3        | 5        | 5        | 6        | 6        |
| <b>Photographic ID model</b> | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>4</b> | <b>4</b> |
| Woking                       | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| Pendle                       | 3        | 4        | 5        | 5        | 5        |
| <b>Rest of England</b>       | <b>2</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> | <b>3</b> |

## Annex C - Interviews with electoral services teams

Trained social researcher from Cabinet Office Constitution Group conducted semi-structured interviews with electoral service teams from the ten participating authorities. During a semi-structured interview, interviewers follow a structured topic guide, but they also prompt spontaneously during interview depending on what participants say. Informed consent to take part in the project was obtained from all participants.

Taking part was completely voluntary and participants were assured that they could change their mind at any time, and did not have to answer any questions they did not wish to. Interviews were audio recorded using a dictaphone to ensure that the information gathered was interpreted accurately.

Data were analysed using a thematic analysis approach, where themes and patterns across multiple interviews (or other qualitative data sources) are identified in order to describe a specific phenomenon, and answer specific research questions. Quality Assurance checks were carried out to ensure information and insights presented were grounded in the data collected.