



**BEST for
BRITAIN**

ANNUAL REPORT

2022

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INTRODUCTION

By **Naomi Smith** Chief Executive Officer
and **Lord Darroch** Chair of Best for Britain

Dear friends and supporters,

We are thrilled to present Best for Britain's annual report for 2022. This year will probably be remembered for its endless scandals, authoritarian legislation, war on our continent, a spiralling cost of living crisis, a botched budget and revolving door of not one, not two, but three Prime Ministers in Number 10. Despite these challenges facing the UK at home and abroad, the team at Best for Britain has shown us that 2022 was also a year of progress and hope.

Our mission to forge a closer relationship with our European neighbours remains steadfast. We are proud to have been the first and only cross-party organisation to lead an effective parliamentary operation against the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill. By bringing together Peers from all sides of the House to advocate for more constructive UK-EU talks, our efforts created the much-needed political space for the Windsor Framework negotiation and meant that the Sunak government finally committed to dropping the Bill.

The UK Trade and Business Commission has gone from strength to strength in its second year, making a real impact on government trade policy. Based on our findings from hundreds of hours of evidence sessions with local business owners and Commissioner fact-finding trips to Kent and Northern Ireland, the Commission secured a policy win which led to 10,000 additional seasonal work visas being issued by the Environment Secretary this year.

As secretariat for the APPG on Coronavirus, the team have been instrumental in securing £50 million of research funding to better understand the long-term health impacts of Covid-19 and we were pleased to see the APPG's recommendations incorporated into the UK Government's official Covid Inquiry's terms of reference.

This year, the Conservative government introduced draconian laws like the Nationality and Borders Bill, Policing, Crime, Sentencing and Courts Bill, and Elections Bill. Despite the parliamentary odds against us in the Commons, Best for Britain took decisive action and met with Ministers to apply pressure that resulted in the government backtracking on the most egregious clauses of both the Policing Bill and Elections Bill.

These assaults on our constitutional and democratic institutions make the case for electoral reform even more urgent. We launched our major 'Can't Wait' campaign, highlighting people across the UK who have been failed by a broken electoral system. The campaign has targeted millions of Labour voters, members and a wider public to take action by sharing campaign videos, writing letters to local papers, and contacting their elected representatives. The 'Can't Wait' campaign has helped build the political consensus for fairer voting within the trade union movement and the Labour Party, and we were pleased to see delegates vote overwhelmingly in favour of supporting proportional representation in a historic Conference vote this year.

Do read on to find out more about our achievements in 2022, particularly our unrivalled social media reach.

As we look ahead to 2023 and set our ambitions even higher as we prepare for a general election in the next 18 months, we are grateful to our friends and supporters for coming on this journey with us – our work wouldn't exist without you.



KEY

ACHIEVEMENTS



Best for Britain and UK Trade & Business Commission efforts delayed Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, allowing space for constructive UK-EU talks and agreement on the Windsor Framework

Best for Britain, acting as the UK Trade & Business Commission's secretariat, led cross-party opposition to the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill. This Bill would give the UK Government powers to switch off parts of the UK's treaty with the EU - a breach of international law - and would give ministers new powers to change UK law without scrutiny or votes in Parliament. We convened Peers from across the House and provided background briefings, expert analysis and political strategy. Our operation led to our plan gaining the support of all opposition parties and a significant number of Conservative Peers. To avoid the early embarrassment of losing a vote on a flagship policy, Rishi Sunak's new government quietly put the Bill on hold, and focused its efforts on finding a negotiated solution with the EU. The Windsor Framework agreed between the UK and EU was announced on 27th February 2023, along with an announcement that the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill would be scrapped completely.



Most dangerous parts of Elections Bill removed and amended before it was passed

Best for Britain convened dozens of like-minded organisations with an interest in democracy to share expertise and coordinate efforts around the UK Government's Elections Bill. This Bill, among many other things, was originally drafted to give power to the government to take control of the Electoral Commission, the independent regulator of elections and to decide which campaigners are and are not allowed to take part in elections. Best for Britain focused on what we saw as the most dangerous, fundamental issues. Our work with cross-party Peers and Opposition parties resulted in the removal of one entire section of the Bill that would have limited the ability of campaigners like Best for Britain and trade unions to work with political parties, and we secured an amendment to the section that gives power to ban certain types of campaigner from taking part in elections so that it's the independent Electoral Commission and not a Government Minister who has the power.



Labour adopted proportional representation as a party policy at its Conference following Best for Britain's campaigning

Best for Britain launched its Can't Wait campaign, highlighting the people across the UK who can't wait another five years for change and making the case for a fairer electoral system to secure the change they need. Our supporters shared Can't Wait campaign videos, wrote letters to local papers, emailed Labour MPs and thousands of Best for Britain supporters who are also members of the Labour Party or trade union members contacted their branch representatives to ask for their support for PR. Best for Britain attended both Unison trade union conference and Labour's Conference to continue making the case and at both, delegates voted overwhelmingly to support PR.



£50 million in research funding for understanding the long-term health impacts of Covid-19 announced by UK Government following a recommendation from the APPG on Coronavirus

The APPG on Coronavirus, for which Best for Britain acts as secretariat, collected evidence and published reports on the impact of Long Covid, making recommendations to the UK Government. Not only were the APPG's recommendations incorporated in the UK Government's office Covid Inquiry's terms of reference, the APPG's recommendation on the need for research funding to understand the long-term health impacts of Covid was taken up with £50 million announced by the Government.



10,000 additional farming workers visas issued following pressure from the UK Trade and Business Commission

Best for Britain acts as secretariat for the UK Trade and Business Commission and organised a visit for Commissioners to businesses in Kent and the Port of Dover. They heard from local businesses, including how one farm faced an 8% drop in crops harvested in 2021 because of fewer seasonal workers from the EU. Commissioners wrote to the Home Secretary and Environment Secretary and raised it in Parliament. Just weeks later, Environment Secretary George Eustice announced a new route for 10,000 additional farming workers to come to the UK.



Secured a promise in Parliament from the Government Minister that protests would continue to be allowed in Parliament Square, despite the draconian Policing Bill

When the Policing Bill was first announced, criticism and parliamentary opposition focused predominantly on the definition of 'noisy' protests, but missed that the Bill also created powers to limit the ability to protest in Parliament Square. Having identified this significant threat, we used public opinion polls to elevate the profile of the issue in the media and assemble a modest coalition of influential Peers and experts to oppose this element of the Policing Bill. We worked with cross-party Peers and key figures like former Attorney General Dominic Grieve to challenge the government and highlight the issue. Best for Britain negotiated with the Home Office on amendments to the Bill, and secured a promise in writing and at the despatch box in the House of Lords from the Home Office Minister that protests would continue to be allowed in Parliament Square.



BEST FOR BRITAIN'S

IMPACT IN 2022

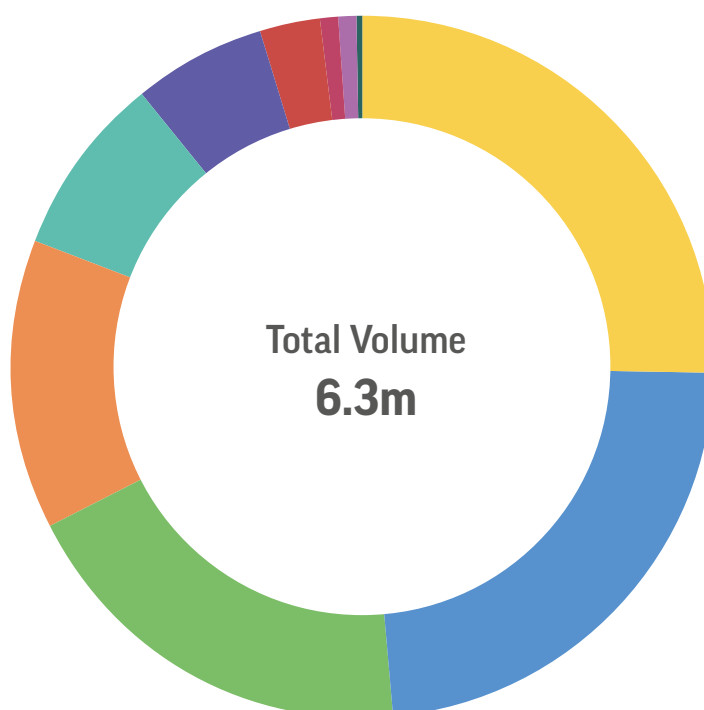
Millions of people engaged with Best for Britain in 2022, with our viral content driving growth of our audiences, raising awareness and generating action on topics ranging from the UK Government's treatment of refugees, to post-Brexit trade barriers, to a vote of no confidence in Boris Johnson, and more.

In 2022 we commissioned an independent Social Listening & Sentiment Measuring service to compare Best for Britain's reach to that of other organisations, using an accurate and fair methodology. The 2022 benchmarking survey showed record performance, thanks to the consistency of our results across the entire year. While other organisations saw peaks around key events for them - for MSF, the Ethiopia Tigray conflict; for Good Law Project, the Partygate revelations - our ability to maintain strong engagements with our audience no matter what is happening in the news cycle ensured we achieved the highest share of voice.

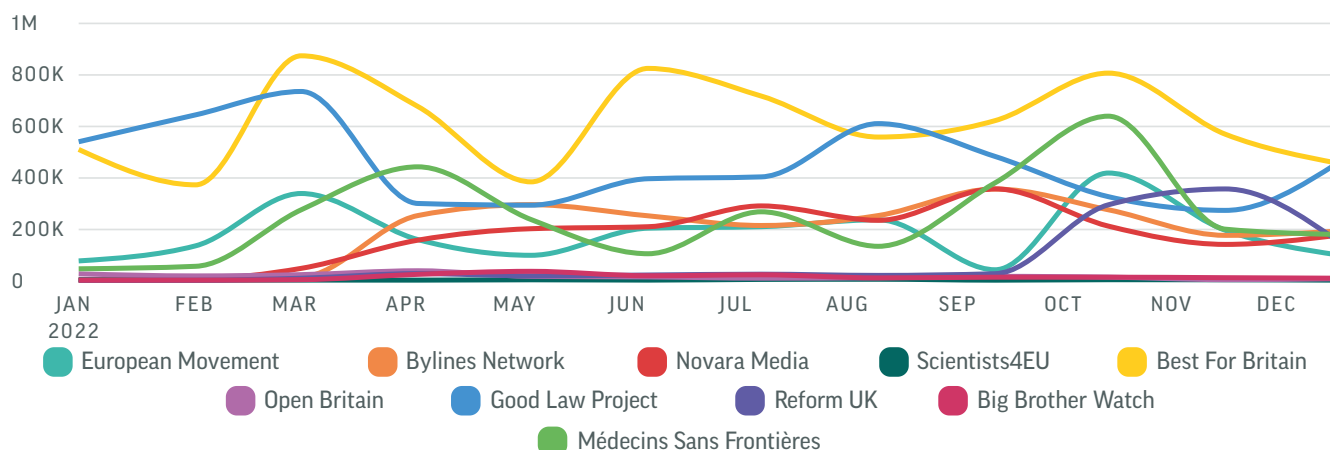
Share of Voice

🏆 Best for Britain

Best for Britain	25.6%
Good Law Project	23.2%
Médecins San Frontières	19%
Bylines Network	13.4%
European Movement	8.3%
Reform UK	6.2%
Novara Media	2.9%
Big Brother Watch	0.8%
Open Britain	0.8%
Scientists4EU	0.1%



Engagements by Competitor By Month



Alongside engagements, a key metric driving this is 'Total Unique Authors', reflecting the number of people talking about, or to, Best for Britain and our content. We had over 250K unique authors in 2022. This means we're increasingly reaching a wider audience.

- 475 million impressions
 - A 16% increase on 2021
- 32.7 million engagements
 - A 46% increase on 2021
- Nearly 90,000 new followers and subscribers
 - Growing our audience by 25%
- 76 million video views
 - A 305% increase on 2021 due to our TikTok launch
- Three TikTok videos that broke the 1 million + views mark

Our supporters took action and made a real difference in 2022. More than 1.2million estimated visitors to our sites took more than 144,000 identifiable online actions. Tens of thousands of petition signatures, letters to local papers, emails and tweets to MPs and donations all combined to keep the pressure on this government.

- 102,460 digital campaign actions taken on BestforBritain.org
- 33,978 messages sent to MPs and Peers through Hey-MP.uk

1.2 million people visited our websites in 2022*

*Unique website visitors who accepted cookies, total actual visitors likely to be higher.

Unique website visits in 2022

BestforBritain.org	1,090,015
Hey-MP.uk	76,030
TradeandBusiness.uk	38,289
APPGCoronavirus.uk	37,038

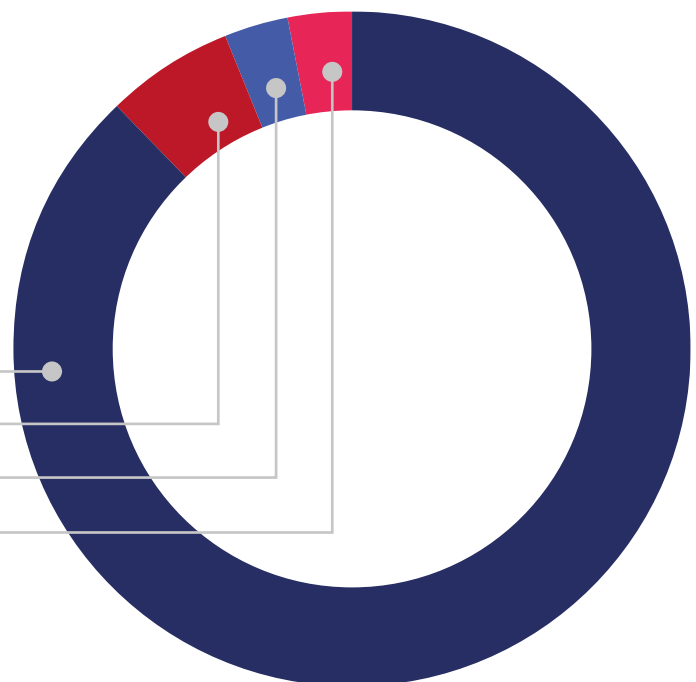
Best for Britain in Press & Media

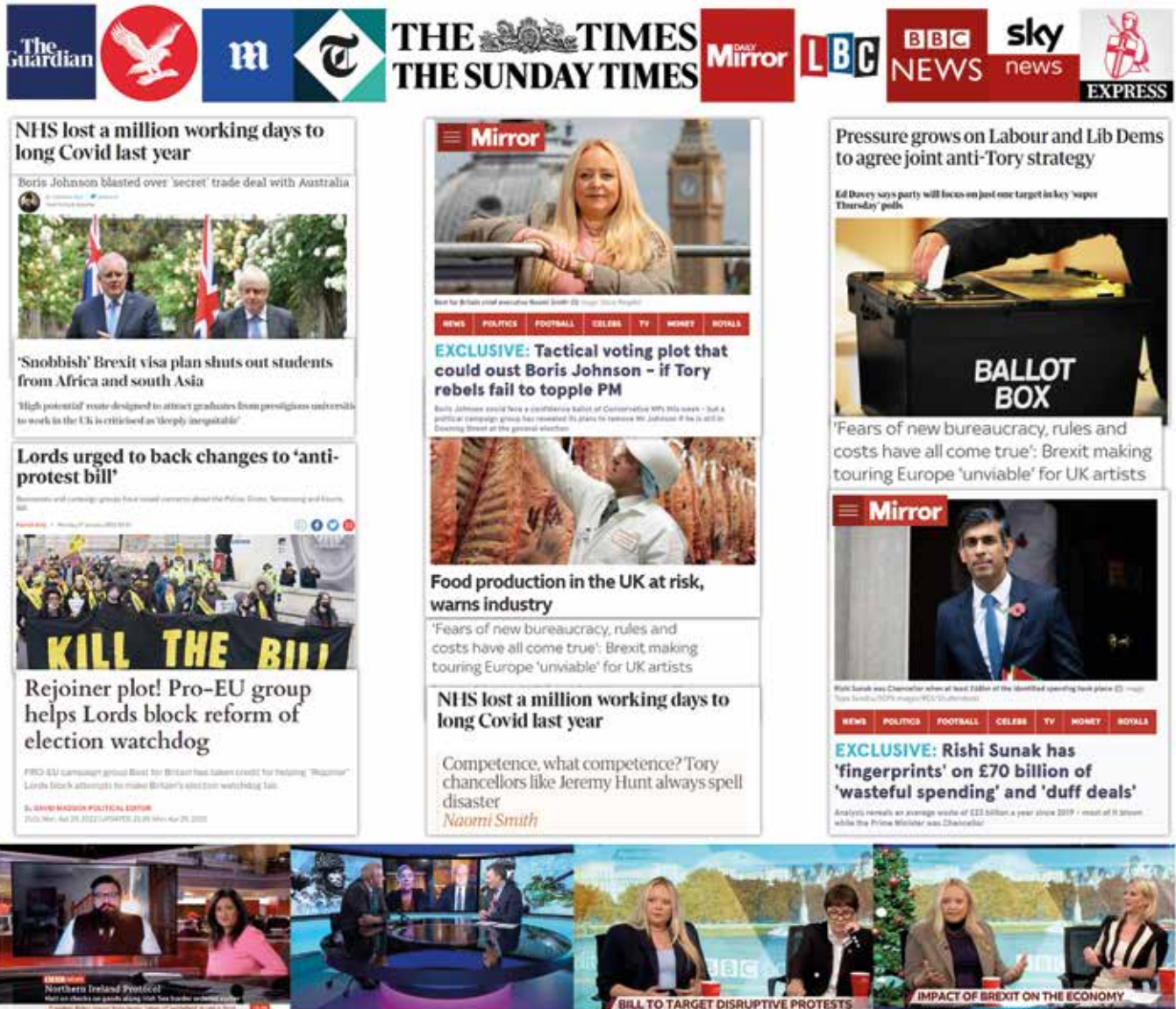
In 2022 Best for Britain was successful in generating significant press coverage every week of the year. Our tried and tested ability to identify stories, do the research to back them up, and our strong relationships with journalists and producers means we know how to get noticed.

The year saw Best for Britain debut appearances on BBC Politics Live, Newsnight, Sunday Politics and Sky News and Naomi Smith, our CEO, had her first opinion piece published in the Guardian. In fact, our work was reported on at least 772 times in 2022 and we got noticed in national press and broadcast TV and radio as well as in local papers and trade press.

Highlights

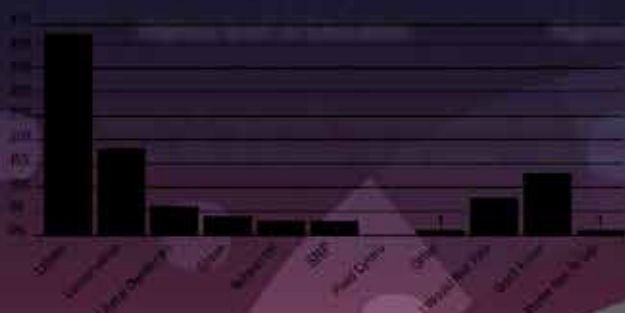
- Best for Britain's campaigns against antidemocratic legislation including the Elections Bill, Policing Bill and the Nationality and Borders Bill were amplified by countless media outlets this year, helping us consolidate opposition to these power grabs, lobby to have some of the worst bits removed and in the case of the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill, do our bit to have the entire thing scrapped. To increase coverage for these campaigns we worked with figures from both the opposition and government parties.





- Best for Britain's original research into the impact of Brexit on touring musicians was covered repeatedly in a range of outlets, organically getting picked up and referenced by third parties in interviews, highlighting this important issue. The UK is rightfully proud of our history of 'soft power' through our cultural output, but how much longer can we feel the same when musicians find they increasingly have to choose between working in the UK or working in the EU.
- We created a tracker following reports of scandalous UK Government spending, from ministers giving money to their cronies, to duff deals wasted on things that just didn't work, we found an incredible £69,222,884,250 had been scandalously wasted since 2019. The Scandalous Spending Tracker received repeated coverage throughout the year and helped show how damaging the government really is to the financial health of our nation.
- In Spring of 2022, when polling was neck and neck between Labour and the Conservatives, we secured significant and repeated coverage for Best for Britain's major Spring poll of Westminster voting intention. It helped us make the argument to all opposition parties that the best way they could ensure that Johnson's Government was removed at the next election was to work together. How times change.
- 2022 was the year that the economic impact of Brexit could be more easily isolated from the pandemic. As the trickle of bad Brexit news became a torrent, Best for Britain and the UK Trade and Business Commission led the charge in making the case for breaking down barriers with our closest neighbours.

First Poll (20th - 26th October)



Second Poll (28th - 30th October)



PUBLIC OPINION

- HOW WE MEASURE IT

AND HOW WE USE IT

Before we propose solutions to the problems facing the UK, we need to understand what the British people think. We pride ourselves on our best-in-class polling and MRP data, our in-house data analysis and our political antennae.

In 2022 we proved the strength of feeling in Britain for safeguarding our democracy, the right to protest and the importance of fair and free elections. We analysed changes in voters' party preferences and what that would mean for opposition parties looking to take power from the Conservatives. And we found for the first time that Conservative voters, as well as a majority of all voters, think Brexit has caused more problems than it has solved.

Polling Data Impact Case Study

Don't Know: How we understood the Wavering Wall

Best for Britain's own polling in 2022 highlighted a huge gap in predictions for the next election outcome. It's common for voting intention polls to be published with those who answered 'Don't Know' excluded - but Best for Britain's MRPs found that 13% of respondents in both May and October answered 'Don't Know' when asked how they would vote at the next Election. Other polls throughout the year found even higher proportions unable or unwilling to commit to a particular party.

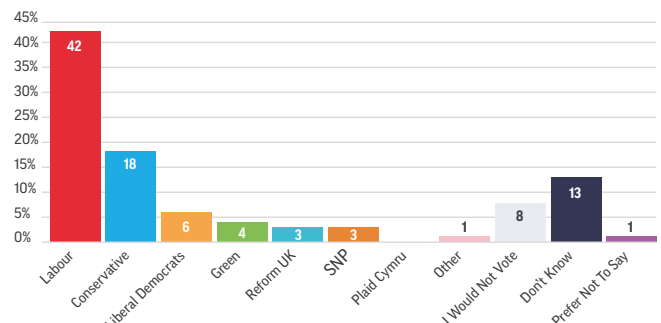
It bothered us that a significant chunk of the population was missing from our understanding of how the next election might play out. We wanted to uncover two essential uncertainties in the current polls: how would these people cast their votes when they got to a polling booth, and how likely were they to actually vote?

What we found by accident

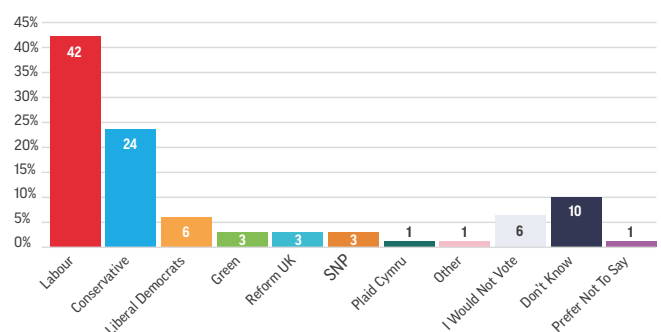
We commissioned a poll, conducted by Focaldata, of 10,000 people across Great Britain to answer these questions. Through an accident of timing, our poll went into the field on the day Liz Truss resigned so we conducted a follow-up poll of 2,000 people a week later once Rishi Sunak had been installed as PM.

By accident rather than design, we had the opportunity to see how the change of Prime Minister affected people's voting intentions.

First Poll (20th - 26th October)



Second Poll (28th - 30th October)



The moment Sunak took office saw a fall in Don't Knows by 3% with the Conservative vote increasing by 6%, while Labour's vote remained steady. A clear indication that at least a significant chunk of Don't Knows probably lean Conservative.

What we found from our poll

Both polls asked people which party they would support right now, and those who answered 'Don't Know' were then asked two follow-up questions:

- *Even if it is only slight, which party are you leaning towards?*
- *If a general election were held tomorrow, how likely or unlikely would you be to actually vote?*

	LAB	CON	SNP	LIB DEM	DON'T KNOW	GREEN	REF UK	PLAID	OTHER	PREFER NOT TO SAY
1,298 sample, 20-26th October 2022	22%	25%	1%	7%	36%	4%	3%	0%	2%	1%
195 sample, 28-30 October 2022	17%	32%	1%	8%	32%	3%	5%	0%	1%	2%
Changes	-5	+7	=	+1	-4	-1	+2	=	-1	+1

Clearly, undecided voters cannot be won as easily by Labour as the Conservatives and are more likely to vote Tory at the next election than any other party. 85% of undecided voters also said that they are likely to vote in the next election.

Deeper analysis - confirming our hunch

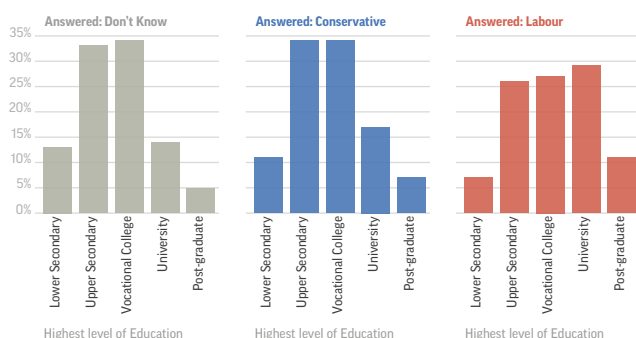
Our aim was to answer the central question of how Don't Knows would translate into actual votes on polling day.

First, we compared our May 2022 and October 2022 MRP constituency-level results to see whether there was a relationship between the distribution of Don't Knows and seat-by-seat party results. What we found was that there was no relationship between changes in Labour's vote share and the proportion of Don't Knows. But where Conservative vote shares dropped there was a corresponding increase in Don't Knows.

Two key demographics that often map closely to voting intention are age and education attainment, so we plotted the age and education profiles of our results for the Don't Knows and other voters.

Education profiles of respondents to the question "If a general election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?"

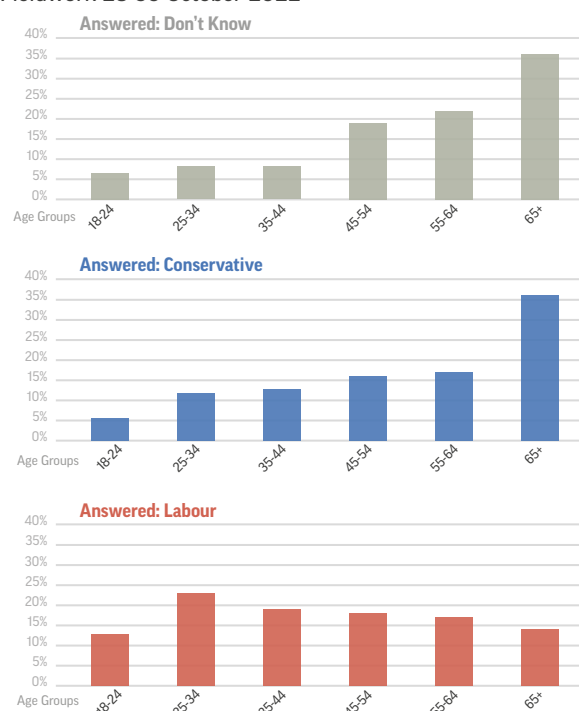
Fieldwork 28-30 October 2022



Source: A nationally representative top up poll by Focaldata on behalf of Best for Britain carried out between 28-30 October 2022 asked 2,000 people their voting intention at the next UK general election.

Age profiles of respondents to the question "If a general election were held tomorrow, which party would you vote for?"

Fieldwork 28-30 October 2022



Source: A nationally representative top up poll by Focaldata on behalf of Best for Britain carried out between 28-30 October 2022 asked 2,000 people their voting intention at the next UK general election.

There is a striking similarity in both the profiles of those who say Don't Know and those who say they would vote Conservative, while looking quite different to the profiles of those who say they would vote Labour.

Impact on the Wavering Wall

Best for Britain published findings in our landmark report "The Wavering Wall: The Impact of Undecided Voters on Britain's Next General Election" on New Year's Eve 2022. The story splashed the first Sunday Times of 2023 and resulted in 160 pieces of subsequent national and regional media coverage by outlets including the BBC, The Daily Mail, Evening Standard, Press Association, an interview on LBC, Sky News broadcast and the Daily Express who cited the findings in 8 separate articles.



BRITAIN



CAN'T WAIT

Britain can't wait another 5 years for a government that will address the countless crises facing this country. People need change at the next election, not the one after next.

Best for Britain launched a major digital campaign targeting Labour Party and union members as well as the general public, providing ways to influence those in positions of power within the Labour Party and the trade union movement. The ongoing campaign uses Best for Britain's highly accurate, seat-level polling data to ensure opposition parties are in the best position to win the next election.

The launch of the Can't Wait campaign gained the support of high profile politicians from across the Labour movement including former Shadow Chancellor John McDonnell and Mayor of Greater Manchester, Andy Burnham.

Andy Burnham, Labour Mayor of Manchester said:

"My message to all progressive people is simple: let's not let the next hundred years be like the last. It is time for like-minded people to reach out across party divides and agree a wide-ranging programme of political reform."

"That way we can ensure that economic and social policies with majority public support will shape our lives, rather than those designed to further the vested interests of the few."

John McDonnell, Former Labour Shadow Chancellor said:

"In recent years working people have come to recognise more than ever that the current system has consolidated power in the hands of politicians who have lined the pockets of their rich friends and protected the profiteering of corporations whilst undermining workers' rights."

"The result is that almost all of the Labour affiliated unions are now in favour of proportional representation and it's time the party did the same."



#FRANKCANTWAIT
#CERICANTWAIT
#SANDRACANTWAIT
#CAROLECANTWAIT
#HASSANCANTWAIT

Campaign overview:

- 7 million people reached
- 16 million impressions
- 8.7 million video views
- Average click-through rate: 6.1%

Click-through rate of these ads is nearly 4 times higher than the best-performing ads on Meta, which are usually in the legal industry. Click-through rate is 6.7 times higher than the average CTR across all industries.

Demographics:

Our campaign resonates especially well with young, predominantly female voters - these users have traditionally been difficult to reach with political content.

- 75% of link clicks by female users
- 80% of link clicks by users aged 18-34
- 45% of link clicks by users aged 18-24: impacting potential first-time voters at the next election



The path to success...

Step 1 - Get Labour to support changing our voting system.

Once Labour joins other parties in calling for electoral reform at an election there could be enough MPs in parliament to make a change to the voting system. The majority of Labour members already back PR as do their largest affiliated unions. It's time Labour committed to electoral reform in their manifesto.

Step 2 - Get opposition parties to work together.

By working together there would be enough MPs to change our outdated voting system. At the next election, and after it, parties can cooperate to achieve this shared aim. If we get this right, we only need to get parties to work together at an election ONCE!

But we would get a government that truly represents people FOREVER.

Step 3 - Secure a fairer voting system.

People like Frank, Ceri, Hassan, Sandra, Carole, and YOU are being failed by governments you didn't elect. By changing the voting system we can elect politicians who help people in need and solve the problems we can see Britain is facing. Labour should commit to electoral reform being enacted in the first term of the next Labour-led government. People need help TODAY. They can't wait.



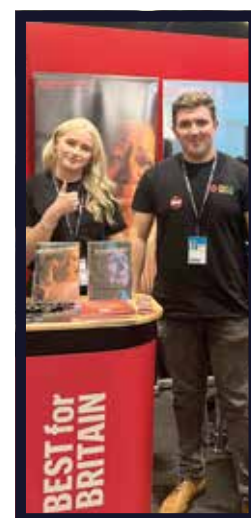
Can't Wait in action

Unison Conference

Best for Britain took the campaign to Unison's conference in June. Unison is the largest trade union, and has a big influence on Labour. With partners, including Labour for a New Democracy, Make Votes Matter and others, supporters of the campaign helped get PR on the conference agenda. We spoke to hundreds of conference delegates and Unison members and delegates overwhelmingly supported PR in a vote on the conference floor.

Labour Party Conference

The Best for Britain team attended Labour's conference in September, after months of helping supporters propose and pass motions on PR at Labour branch meetings across the country. Labour and trade union delegates supported PR with a huge majority, though Labour Leader Keir Starmer responded to this seismic shift in UK politics by ruling out committing to PR in the next Labour manifesto.



In 2023

The campaign continues, with new Can't Wait stories and a renewed focus on influencing Labour's leaders, elected representatives and internal Party processes. 10,000 people have already signed an open letter to Labour's leaders calling for electoral reform to be in Labour's next manifesto.

bestforbritain.org/cant_wait



UK TRADE

& BUSINESS

COMMISSION

FINDING SOLUTIONS

AFTER BREXIT

The UK Trade and Business Commission (UKTBC) exists to provide solutions to the problems with the UK's post-Brexit trade agreements identified through its evidence-gathering.



In 2022 commissioners made over thirty recommendations to the UK Government and corresponded with Ministers at the Home Office, the Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs, the Foreign, Commonwealth and Development office and Vice-President of the European Commission, Maroš Šefčovič.

2022 in numbers

- The UKTBC held 12 sessions in 2022, producing 24 hours of live oral evidence
- The Commission heard from 75 expert witnesses
- Across the sessions, 17 key topics were covered ranging from the Northern Ireland Protocol to the Retained EU Law Bill
- The sessions generated 12 UKTBC press releases and got 180 mentions in the press

Building on the groundwork laid during 2021, its first year of operation, 2022 has seen the Commission visit businesses on the ground in Northern Ireland, Dover and Maidstone. It has published eight reports covering a range of topics, including trade deals and negotiations between the UK and USA, Japan, Canada and India, key sectors like the music and travel industries, and important issues facing the UK like the Northern Ireland Protocol, cost of living and food security.

What is the UKTBC?

Since its launch in April 2021, the UK Trade and Business Commission has provided independent scrutiny of the UK's trade deals with Europe and the rest of the world. Best for Britain provides secretariat for the Commission which is co-convened by Hilary Benn MP and the Chairman of Virgin Group, Peter Norris. It brings

together ten MPs from all nine Westminster parties and all four nations of the UK, along with business leaders and expert economists.



Visit to Northern Ireland

Led by Peter Norris and Hilary Benn MP, the UK Trade and Business Commission's delegation visited iconic Belfast tea and coffee importer SD Bells on the Newtownards Road in East Belfast, a major distribution centre in the Port of Larne and met the Deputy Chief Veterinary Officer and a host of other businesses from dairy farmers to supermarkets.



As a result of this trip Co-Convenors Hilary Benn MP and Peter Norris wrote a joint-letter to the Vice President of the European Union, Maroš Šefčovič, and the Foreign Secretary at the time, Liz Truss. The letter made a series of recommendations both to the UK Government and to the European Union; and highlighted proposals that had previously been made by the UK Trade and Business Commission. The Commission received a response from Vice President Šefčovič.



Visit to Dover

Commissioners visited the Port of Dover, accompanied by the Port's Head of EU Exit, Tim Reardon and heard how the UK's exit from the EU has affected freight flows through Dover and supply chains across the UK. The Port of Dover, though smaller in size than other UK ports, handles around £144bn of trade in goods, and 33% of the UK's trade with the EU.

This trip highlighted to Commissioners how integral the Port of Dover is to UK supply chains, and that it is crucial the port is supported by the UK Government. The Commission has since continued to take note of how the Port may be affected by any changes to the UK's trading relationships.



Visit to Maidstone

Winterwood Farms in Maidstone opened its doors to Commissioners to hear how their fruit farming business has been affected by Brexit. They heard how the farm's model of employing 18-25 year-olds from across Europe as seasonal workers collapsed after Brexit, with 8% of their crop left unpicked in 2021 due to a shortage of workers.

Following this visit, the Commission wrote to the Environment & Rural Affairs Secretary, George Eustice highlighting the problems faced by Winterwood Farms and other businesses. In response, Eustice announced a

new visa route for 10,000 additional seasonal workers for the fruit vegetable and poultry sectors.

Hilary Benn, Labour MP and UKTBC Co-Convenor:

"The quality of the visits and witnesses matches what we had on the Brexit Select Committee I used to chair."

"The Best for Britain team have got our reports and recommendations in front of government ministers and EU officials."



Impact



IRISH CORNER: A cross-party group of parliamentarians and Irish representatives will visit Northern Ireland on Thursday to gather evidence on the impact of the Northern Ireland protocol as part of efforts to help the U.K. and EU reach a deal under the Northern Ireland protocol as part of efforts to help the U.K. and EU reach a deal, MTUK's Graham Lanktree texts in. Labour's Hilary Benn, leading the Trade and Business Commission delegation, said he hoped the visit would help "chart a pragmatic way through and provide workable solutions for the U.K. and EU negotiators Liz Truss and Maros Sefcovic..... and the plenary of the British-Irish Parliamentary Assembly will be held in Westminster today from 9.30 a.m. U.K. and ROI Europe Ministers James Cleverly, Thomas Byrne. Labour leader Keir Starmer and the DUP's Jeffrey Donaldson are all slated to speak at the ties-promoting event - [full timetable here](#).

Farmers say Brexit means less home-grown products at UK

Social media

- ✓ **5.3 million impressions**
65% higher than non-profit and government industry averages
- ✓ **115,000 engagements**
18% higher than non-profit and government industry averages
- ✓ **Increased total audience by 64.3%**
Growth 3X higher than non-profit and government industry averages
- ✓ **Received 19,500 messages by engaged followers on the work of the Commission**
- ✓ **321,000 video views on Twitter, YouTube, LinkedIn and Facebook**
- ✓ **Built an informed audience of trade experts, journalists, academics, business owners and trade bodies.**

EXIT: UKRAINE WAR ITS NEW URGENCY FOUND BETTER UK-EU TRADE RELATIONS

Industry
ence on
.K. and
y Benn,
the trip
lutions”
the 61st
tminster
erly and
onaldson

ans fall in K supermarkets

Liz Truss may face Lords rebellion over Northern Ireland bill

Exclusive: about 50 peers due to meet on Wednesday morning to
discuss how to amend or halt proposed legislation



Seasonal Workers' Visas

The then Environment Secretary, George Eustice unveiled a new route in June for 10,000 farming workers to come to the UK following pressure from the UK Trade and Business Commission.

The government confirmed that 8,000 fruit and vegetable pickers and 2,000 poultry workers will be given a new visa route for seasonal work after a delegation from the UK Trade and Business Commission visited Winterwood Farms in Maidstone who told of an 8% drop in crops harvested in 2021 because of fewer EU seasonal workers.

Commissioners wrote to Eustice and then Home Secretary Priti Patel to raise concerns around investment in domestic food production, the UK's food security and food waste during a cost of living crisis. The correspondence called for the implementation of a similar scheme for seasonal workers to those which the government announced in October 2021 for HGV drivers and Poultry workers. Co-convenor of the Commission, Hilary Benn also raised the issue in the House of Commons.

NIP Bill delayed

Best for Britain led opposition to the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill. The team developed a parliamentary strategy which would result in a political block of the legislation and successfully build a cross-party coalition of Peers who supported our strategy.

Working with Conservative Peer and former Minister Baroness Ros Altmann, former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland and Labour Peer Lord Peter Hain, we convened meetings of up to 50 Peers and obtained the support of all opposition parties and many Conservatives. To avoid an early defeat in the House of Lords, Rishi Sunak's new government quietly put the Bill on hold. These meetings were attended by key Labour frontbenchers in the House of Lords.



PARLIAMENT AND LEGISLATION

Designing solutions to the problems faced by the UK is just one part of Best for Britain's mission. We go further: we work to put our solutions into practice. In 2022 so many of the problems faced by the UK have been inflicted by our own government, including anti-democratic new laws imposed to limit our freedom to protest and make elections less fair.

Best for Britain's polling proved that the people of this country do not want their freedoms taken away. 78% said protests should be allowed outside the UK Parliament, including 75% of people who voted Conservative in 2019. And 70% said the Electoral Commission should be independent of the Government.

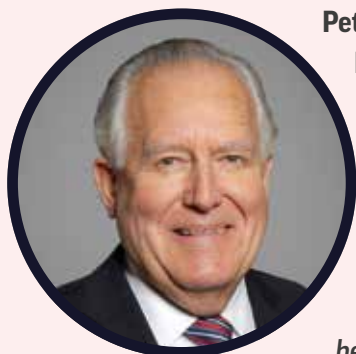
Best for Britain's campaigns, using data to prove to journalists, politicians and the general public that people really were against the government, secured significant concessions on both the Policing Bill and the Elections Bill.

Politically-connected

We have briefed hundreds of stakeholders over the last year on areas of our work such as our campaigns, through to our cutting edge MRP polling. This network of influence extends across all of the opposition parties - we have engaged directly with around one in five of all Labour and Liberal Democrat MPs.

Given Labour's steady lead in the polls, we have been working closely with rising stars in and around the Labour Party, from Metro Mayors to Parliamentary Candidates and influential voices, to create a series of thought leadership pieces on what Labour's programme for government should look like. That is because we know that hopeful (and successful) opposition parties start working on a policy blueprint for government long before getting the keys to Number 10, and this heavy-lifting on policy needs to take place years in advance.

The aim of our Labour plan for government work is to help focus minds on not just how to win an election (which is informed by our polling and MRP analysis) but how to govern. We hope this media series, launching in 2023 will inform the Leader of the Opposition and Shadow Cabinet as they formulate manifesto pledges, focusing



Peter Hain, Labour Peer and former Secretary of State for Northern Ireland, on the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill: *"Best for Britain are providing expert help to bring peers together on an all-party basis to amend the bill."*

"Their expertise, their energy, their enthusiasm is infectious, and that's why Conservative peers, Labour peers, Liberal Democrat peers, cross-bench peers are working with the Best for Britain team."

Ros Altmann, Conservative Peer: *"I'm a pro-European Conservative and that can be lonely at times... the policy and research heft provided by the team at Best for Britain is a great source of support."*

"Best for Britain were the first organisation, as far as I know, to wake up to how terrible a piece of legislation the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill actually is..."

"The quality of the Best for Britain briefings has been among the best we have ever received. And some of those who've said this have been ministers."

"Without question, the Best for Britain team is supporting politicians who want to do the right thing by our country to be better legislators, and also help provide us with what we need to counter the dangerous anti-democratic pressures that are currently in Parliament."



on Best for Britain's expert policy areas, including what an internationalist Labour government should look like and why an incoming Labour government must progress the electoral reform agenda in its first term in office.

Policing Bill Case study

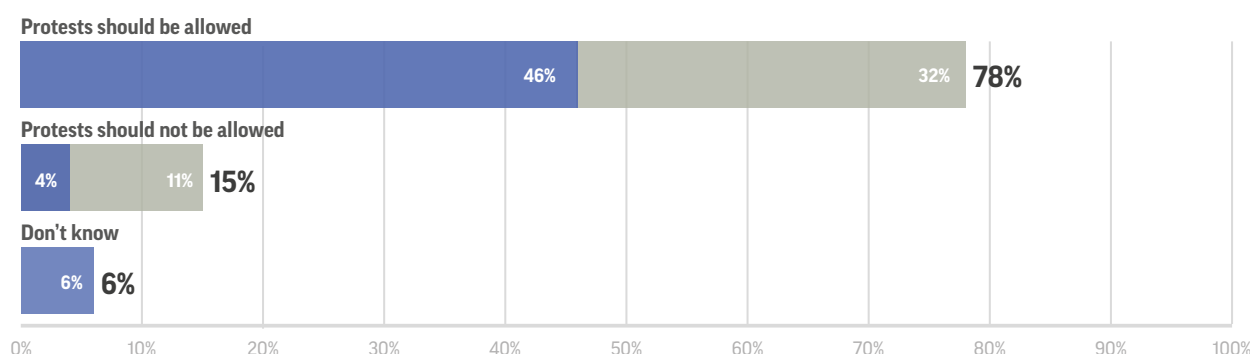
When the Policing Bill was first announced, criticism and parliamentary opposition focused predominantly on the definition of 'noisy' protests, but missed that the Bill also created powers to limit the ability to protest in Parliament Square.

Further negotiations with the Home Office resulted in the Minister issuing us written assurances that the powers would only be used in extreme cases, and that the right to protest in Parliament Square would continue to be protected under Articles 10 and 11 of the European Charter of Human Rights.

To draw attention to the vote, Best for Britain secured broadcast interviews on BBC Radio 4 and Times Radio for Dominic Grieve. The story was included in the Press Association coverage which led to it being written up by

Should peaceful protests be allowed to take place outside parliament?

■ Definitely ■ Probably



Poll conducted by Opinium on behalf of Best for Britain. Question asked: 'Do you think that peaceful protests should or should not be allowed to take place outside Parliament?'
1,999 UK adults were polled between 11th - 13th January 2022

Having identified this significant threat, we used public opinion polls to elevate the profile of the issue in the media and assemble a modest coalition of influential Peers and experts to oppose this element of the Policing Bill.

Our polling found that an astonishing 78% of the public agreed that the right to protest in Parliament Square should be protected. The polling result was surprising because, at the time, the Government was using high-profile Extinction Rebellion protests as political cover for their agenda. Seizing the opportunity, we launched a petition which gained over 23,000 signatures. Over 6,000 of our supporters then wrote to MPs and Peers, asking them to support our campaign.

We worked with former Attorney General Dominic Grieve KC to develop an amendment capable of commanding cross party-support in the House of Lords. After drawing support from all opposition parties and Crossbenchers, and following multiple rounds of failed negotiations with the Minister, we succeeded in defeating the Government in a vote on the floor of the House of Lords.

scores of regional media outlets. We ensured the vote was covered in Politico London Playbook on the morning of the vote, The Evening Standard and the Independent. We also secured an Op Ed from Baroness Altmann on the issue in Politics Home.

Elections Bill case study

Best for Britain mounted a staunch parliamentary campaign in opposition to several clauses in the Elections Bill. We convened dozens of organisations and campaigners from across the democracy sector to highlight the key concerns about the Bill and coordinate a sector-wide response. While other campaign groups took the lead on the issue of voter identification, we focused on some of the worrying aspects of the Bill that were not initially receiving as much publicity.

Working closely with Labour, the Lib Dems and the Crossbenchers in the Lords, the Best for Britain team worked to craft a series of amendments to dangerous clauses in the Bill. These included an amendment to the clause which removed the independence of the Electoral Commission, an amendment to the clause which allowed

the Secretary of State to ban categories of campaigner and amendments which protected joint campaigning - which the Bill sought to severely curb.

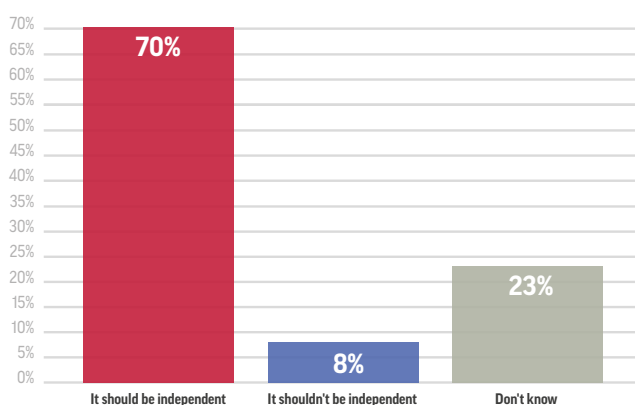
We then worked with the different groups of peers to build up support for the various amendments, putting pressure on the Government by dealing them several defeats in the Lords. While the Bill did eventually pass, the Government did concede on certain issues that Best for Britain had staunchly campaigned on.

To avoid facing another defeat in the Lords, the Government agreed to amend their clause which granted the Secretary of State unilateral power to ban certain campaigners. While the clause was not scrapped entirely, the Electoral Commission would instead be responsible for making decisions regarding a ban on any sort of campaigning - and these decisions could no longer be made by one individual.

The Government also conceded by removing a clause which hampered the ability of third party campaigners to work with political parties, acknowledging that this clause could be seen to threaten Labour's relationship with the trade unions.

These concessions were hard fought for and likely only granted by the Government as an attempt to save face. We had worked closely with Conservative peer Lord Hodgson on the clause concerning third party campaigners and we had already sown the seeds for a Conservative rebellion in the Lords. This threat was perhaps what secured us the concessions.

We asked whether the Electoral Commission should be independent of the UK Government



Opinion polling for Best for Britain. A survey was conducted of 2000 adults between 8th-12th April 2022. Participants were asked 'Do you think the Electoral Commission should or should not be fully independent of the UK Government?' and were given the following options: 'The Electoral Commission should be fully independent of the UK Government', 'The Electoral Commission should not be fully independent of the UK Government' and 'Don't know'.

Part of persuading peers to work with us was the evidential data we gained through polling, which found that 70% of all adults asked believed that the Electoral Commission should remain independent of the Government, rising to 79% of all Conservative voters.

The public strength of feeling around the issues in the Bill was also evidenced by our campaigning work. We garnered 19,222 signatures on a petition calling for the Government to stop assaulting our democratic freedoms, while we also saw 5,519 of our supporters email their MP regarding the Elections Bill.

Northern Ireland Protocol (NIP) Bill

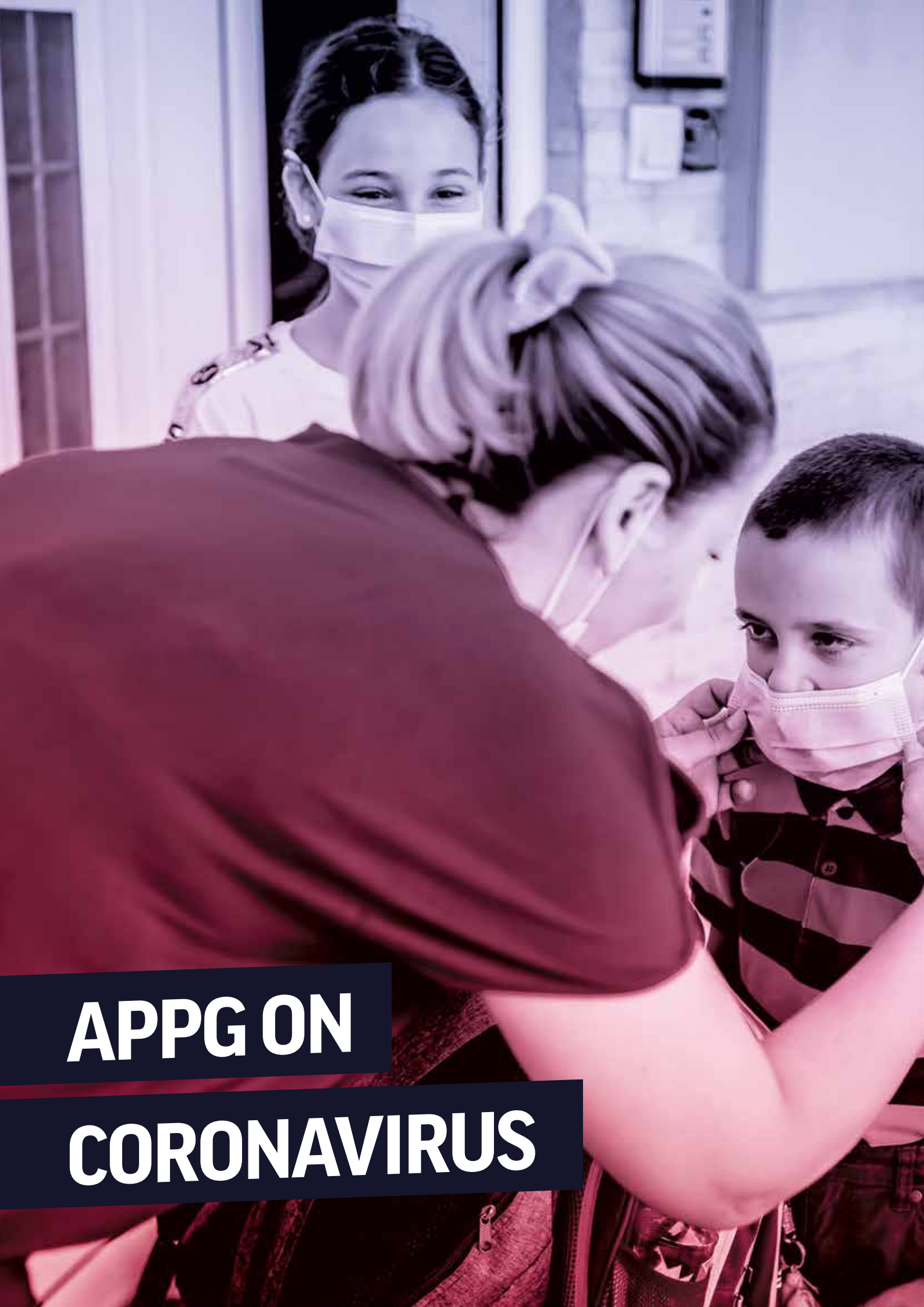
Best for Britain, acting as the Commission's secretariat, led cross-party opposition to the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill this year. This Bill would give the UK Government powers to switch off parts of the UK's treaty with the EU - a breach of international law - and would give ministers new powers to change UK law without scrutiny or votes in Parliament.

We convened Peers from across the House of Lords, produced briefings on each stage of the Bill and worked with members of the House of Lords to draft amendments and agree parliamentary strategy.

Having identified a parliamentary procedure which allowed for a de-facto block of the legislation, the team set out to build a large cross-party coalition of Peers to build the critical mass necessary to implement our parliamentary strategy.

We convened three meetings with up to 50 Peers in attendance and facilitated briefings with leading experts on both the Protocol and the Bill to broaden support from across the House of Lords. Our operation led to our plan gaining the support of all opposition parties and a significant number of Conservative Peers as well.

To avoid the early embarrassment of losing a vote on a flagship policy, Rishi Sunak's new government quietly put the Bill on hold, and focused its efforts on finding a negotiated solution with the EU. Those negotiations concluded in February 2023 with agreement on the Windsor Framework, the final scrapping of the Northern Ireland Protocol Bill and the promise of continuing discussions between the UK and EU.



APPG ON

CORONAVIRUS

Best for Britain acts as secretariat to the APPG on Coronavirus, which aims to ensure lessons are learned from the UK's handling of the coronavirus outbreak so that the UK's response and preparedness may be improved in future.

The APPG brings together 74 MPs and peers from across the political spectrum, representing all four nations and every Westminster party. Members of the APPG are conducting a cross-party inquiry into the Government's handling of the pandemic and have so far held over 30 hearings and made over 50 recommendations.

Work in 2022

- The APPG held 6 sessions, creating 9 hours of live oral evidence
- The APPG heard from 34 witnesses including 9 witnesses living with Long Covid
- Across the year, 6 key topics were covered ranging from Global Vaccine Access to Living with Long Covid
- The APPG has made 15 recommendations to the UK Government, some of which have been acted on already
- The APPG Chair, Layla Moran MP, met with the Minister for the Department for Work and Pensions, Tom Pursglove. In the meeting, APPG members presented the minister with the latest APPG's Long Covid report and recommendations.

Impact in 2022

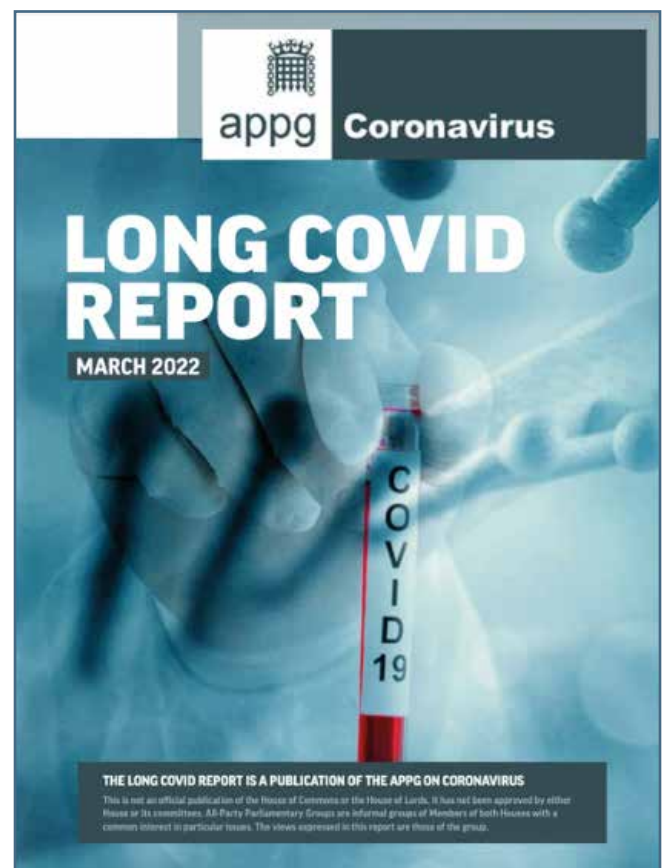
Success

The APPG made fifteen recommendations to the UK Government based on the evidence collected from witnesses and consultees. In 2022, the APPG has achieved:

- £50 million in research funding for understanding the long-term health impacts of Covid-19 announced by UK Government following a recommendation from the APPG on Coronavirus.
- Official UK Government Inquiry into the Coronavirus pandemic incorporated several APPG on Coronavirus recommendations into its terms of reference.

Social media

- ✓ 2.1 million impressions
- ✓ 56,000 engagements
- ✓ 106,000 video views
- Matching non-profit and government industry averages despite waning media interest in Covid-19
- ✓ An audience of nearly 10,000 informed followers, including scientists, medical professionals, politicians, journalists and Long Covid patients



Long Covid Report

The APPG produced two reports on Long Covid, examining the difficulties facing those living with Long Covid after contracting Covid-19 through workplace exposure, drawing on the key findings and recommendations from the APPG on Coronavirus's hearings. Most notably, the reports call for increased funding for research into Long Covid, workplace guidance for employers, and the classification of Covid-19 as an occupational disease - all of which were laid before the Minister for the Department for Work and Pensions, Tom Pursglove in a recent meeting with Layla Moran MP.

HOW WE WORK



We grew in 2022 and our team now boasts more than 20 passionate individuals, each knowledgeable experts in their respective fields. Best for Britain is now an established and permanent feature on the UK political scene, adding to the national debate and providing thought leadership, data-led insight and political campaigning and organisation.

In the spring, we conducted a thorough internal restructure to ensure Best for Britain is using its team and in-house experience most efficiently. While we made several new hires, we also recognised the exceptional work of existing team-members with promotions and additional responsibilities.

Our Board constituted a new Finance Committee and a People Committee to strengthen our internal governance and provide support and challenge to the senior management team. As part of the restructure we

also hired a new Head of Governance and HR to provide full-time support to our employees, senior management team and board members.

Financials Nov 2021 - Oct 2022

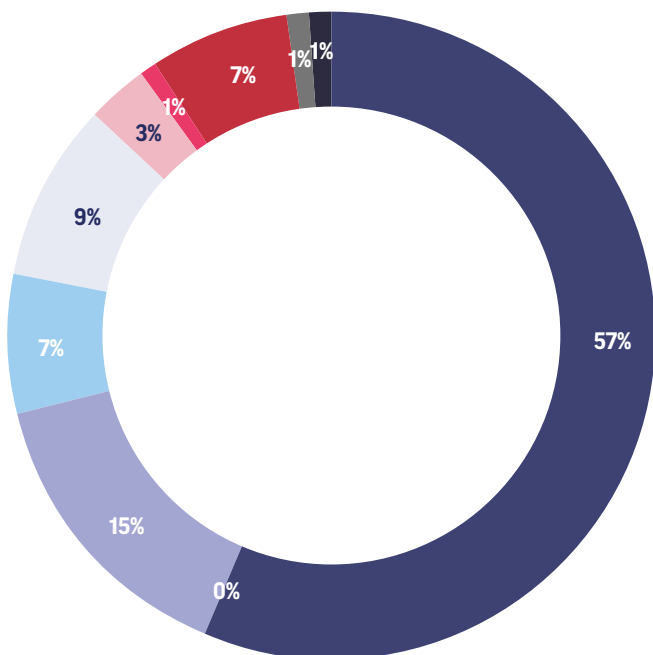
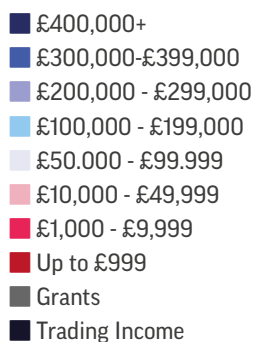
We are extremely grateful to all our supporters and funders whose generous donations have made sure we could achieve so much in 2022 and helped us build plans for the future to win lasting change for our country.

INCOME		EXPENDITURE	
YE Oct 2021	£846,161	YE Oct 2021	£1,124,128
YE Oct 2022	£1,619,734	YE Oct 2022	£1,458,035

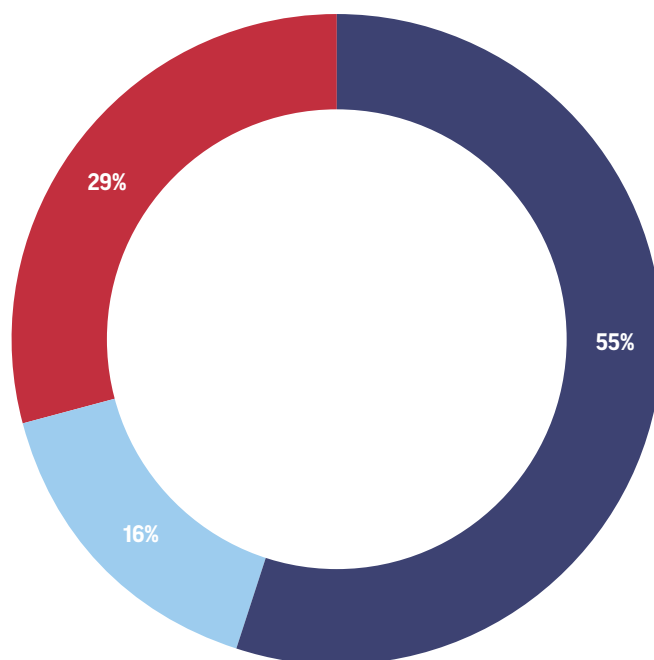
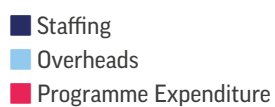
Our income increased 91% on 2021 reflecting the momentum behind Best for Britain's plans, while our expenditure increased by nearly a third. This has been driven by an increase in regular monthly donations, either at a level of £5 or £10 per month, or commitments from some of the UK's most renowned philanthropists giving £10,000 to £25,000 annually, as part of our new donor club schemes.

Increase in regular monthly supporters: 73% increase from 2021 to 2022

Proportion of income by category



Expenditure breakdown by category



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