

PRESS RELEASE

Young voter power could influence the 2019 general election

According to new analysis by the Intergenerational Foundation (www.if.org.uk) first-time voters outnumber the incumbent MP's majority in 56 marginal constituencies in England and Wales in the forthcoming General Election. This number is up from 43 constituencies in 2017.

In 2017, the Intergenerational Foundation identified Croydon Central, the seat of Gavin Barwell, former Minister of State for Housing and Planning, as the constituency where more than 2,500 first-time voters – voters who had turned 18 since the 2015 election – could have made most difference, as his majority was just 165. Interestingly Barwell went on to lose his seat to Sarah Jones with a 9.6% swing to Labour.

Of the 56 constituencies identified this time around, Kensington, Dudley North, Newcastle-under-Lyme, Southampton (Itchen), Richmond Park, Crewe and Nantwich, Arfon, Ceredigion, and Canterbury comprise the Top 10 constituencies where new voters could make the biggest difference in 2019.

IF also identified 28 seats where the current MP's majority is less than 10% of the number of 18–34 year-olds in that constituency. In 2017, Plymouth, Sutton and Devonport was the seat where an increase in voting by the under-34s could have made the most difference. Interestingly, Labour's Luke Pollard took the seat from the Conservative incumbent, Oliver Colville, with a 7,000+ majority. This year's top constituency to watch, where the current MP's majority is less than 10% of the number of 18–34 year-olds is Kensington.

Of the Top 20 constituencies where “new” voters outnumber the incumbent's majority by the biggest margin, 9 belong to each of the Conservatives and Labour, and 2 belong to Plaid Cymru.

Angus Hanton, IF co-founder comments, “The raw power of Britain's grey vote has led politicians to take the views of young people less seriously. Our report shows that young people have more voting power than either they, or many politicians, may think. Woe betide 2019 political candidates who do not take seriously their concerns – crime, mental health, housing, student debt, climate change and the environment. They too could find themselves without a seat in 2019.”

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Note to Editors:

- For further press information or to arrange an interview with Angus Hanton or Ashley Seager, IF Co-founders please email liz@if.org.uk or call on mob: 07971 228823

- Analysis based on statistical modelling of the following datasets:
 - Electoral Commission (2015) 2015 UK Parliamentary general election results London: Electoral Commission
 - ONS (2016) Population Estimates for the UK, England and Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland: mid-2015 Swansea: ONS
 - ONS (2013) 2011 Census: Quick Statistics for England and Wales on national identity, passports held and country of birth Swansea: ONS