

Backing Badenoch: The Conservative Party Leadership Election of 2024

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This article identifies and interprets the voting behaviour of Conservative parliamentarians in the 2024 leadership election which resulted in the election of Kemi Badenoch as leader of the Conservative Party. Our article utilizes an original dataset of the voting preferences of Conservative MPs alongside a range of personal, political, and ideological variables to identify the drivers for their voting preferences across the four eliminative parliamentary ballots and the membership ballot. Our article challenges existing research findings regarding what has driven parliamentarians' vote in previous Conservative Party leadership elections. Previous studies have identified a strong association between the ideological disposition of candidates and their base of parliamentary support, be that in relation to the economy, Europe, or social, sexual, and moral matters. However, within this leadership election, no clearly defined ideological alignments existed between those parliamentarians and the candidates that they decided to back. This represents a significant development in terms of our understanding of the Conservative Party as it seeks to renew itself in opposition.

Keywords: party leadership elections; British Conservative Party; conservatism; parliamentary behaviour; Kemi Badenoch.

Introduction

This article identifies and interprets the voting behaviour of Conservative parliamentarians in the eliminative ballots for the Conservative Party leadership

Received 10 February 2025; revised 24 February 2025; accepted 3 March 2025

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election which took place between September and October 2024 and in the subsequent membership ballot stage. The article makes a significant initial contribution to the literature on the Conservative Party as it adjusts to the demands of opposition after nearly a decade and a half in government. Given the repeated attempts by Conservative parliamentarians to unseat their party leaders (the unsuccessful confidence motions against Theresa May in December 2018 and Boris Johnson in June 2022, and the mass ministerial resignations and/or widespread withdrawal of backbench support to pressure Johnson and Liz Truss to step aside in July and October 2022), it is clear that understanding the leader/follower relationship at the parliamentary level goes to the heart of understanding the modern Conservative Party.

The article will be developed through four stages. The first stage situates the 2024 Conservative Party leadership election within the broader academic literature by outlining the dominant theoretical approaches to leadership selection within the party. The second stage will provide an overview of the candidates and the results for each stage of the contest. The third section will outline the chosen methodology, explain how our dataset of Conservative parliamentarians was created, and justify our variables as a means of identifying the possible drivers of voting behaviour. The final section will present our findings and evaluate how these findings compare and contrast to studies on previous Conservative Party leadership elections (e.g. Cowley and Garry 1998; Heppell and Hill 2008, 2010; Jeffery *et al.* 2018, 2022, 2023; Roe-Crines *et al.* 2021, and Booth *et al.* 2024).

Existing literature: research on leadership selection in the Conservative Party

The literature on leadership selection in the Conservative Party has grown significantly in recent decades. Emerging subfields of leadership selection within the Conservative Party (and British politics) generally are opening new agendas for further research, see for example, parenthood (Smith 2018), masculinity and femininity (Smith 2022), race (Saini *et al.* 2023), parliamentary mandates and future electoral success (Murr 2021), and leadership change and opinion polling positioning (Heppell and McMeeking 2021¹). These emerging fields move us beyond the traditional focus of leadership selection, namely *inputs* (evaluating the extent to which the rules around leadership selection (and ejection) matter) and *outcomes* (explaining why respective leaders were selected and why defeated candidates were rejected).

¹On how leadership change can be beneficial, or damaging to political parties, in terms resolving policy challenges or exposing ideological disagreements see, from the comparative literature, Somer-Topcu (2017), Fernandez-Vasquez and Somer-Topcu (2019), and So (2021).

The literature focussing on the rules governing Conservative Party leadership selection is dominated by appraisals of the significance of the switch from parliamentary selection alone to the current hybrid system in which parliamentarians act as gatekeepers, whittling down the candidates to just two, who are then presented to party members who vote for the leader via a one member one vote ballot (Alderman 1999; McSweeney 1999; Quinn 2010, 2012, 2024; Denham 2010). Based on the premise that rules matter, these discussions also focus on eviction procedures be they in relation to the challenger provision that existed prior to 1998 or the confidence motion procedure which was introduced that year (Alderman and Smith 1990; Quinn 2005). This focus on the rules governing leadership elections, i.e. who participates, the level of inclusiveness, or how incumbents are removed dominates the comparative studies literature on leadership selection/ejection (see LeDuc 2001; Kenig 2009a, 2009b; Cross and Blais 2010; Enns-Jedanastik and Schumacher 2021).

Important though these rules are, the existing literature on leadership selection in British political parties tends to focus on the explanations as to who wins contests and why. Most Conservative Party leadership elections often result in qualitative evaluations of the campaign period and the strengths and weaknesses of the respective candidates (see, e.g. Alderman and Carter (1991) on the transition from Margaret Thatcher to John Major in 1990; Alderman (1996) on how Major defeated John Redwood in 1995; Alderman (1998) on the selection of William Hague in 1997; Alderman and Carter (2002) on how Iain Duncan Smith was selected in 2001; Denham and Dorey (2006) on why David Cameron defeated David Davis in 2005 and Quinn (2019) on the emergence of Theresa May in 2016). Alongside these single contest studies come summaries of respective contests within broader historical studies (Denham and O'Hara 2008; Heppell 2008; Denham et al. 2020). When explaining how and why victors were successful, many studies make subjective judgements identifying which of the candidates was the most unifying, the most electable, and the most competent (as per the Stark model (Stark 1996)).

Alongside qualitative explanations of leadership selection, a series of quantitative studies have examined the voting preferences of parliamentarians, i.e. the 'acceptability' criterion within the Stark model. These have identified a range of possible motivational bases for why parliamentarians vote as they do based on personal, political, and ideological alignments between themselves and specific leadership candidates (see, e.g. Cowley and Garry (1998) on the selection of Major in 1990; Heppell and Hill (2008, 2010) on the selections of Hague in 1997 and Duncan Smith in 2001; Jeffery et al (2018, 2022, 2023) on the selections of May, Johnson, and Truss respectively; Roe-Crines et al (2021) on the confidence motion against May in 2018; Booth et al (2024) on the nomination process that led to Sunak assuming the leadership, and Booth (2024) on Conservative parliamentarians and the confidence motion against Johnson in 2022).

Covering studies from across the last five decades, two key trends have emerged:

- (1). Ideological preference has been a constant driver of voting behaviour. Prior studies identified how, in terms of economics, economic dries tended towards dry candidates between 1975 and 2001 and economic wets tended towards damper candidates. In terms of positions on the EEC/EU, Eurosceptics tended towards like-minded candidates between 1975 and 2005 while Europhiles were more inclined towards pro-European candidates. After the Brexit referendum, a leave/remain distinction existed in the selections of May, Johnson and Truss, and on social issues socially conservative parliamentarians tended towards traditionalist candidates whereas socially liberal parliamentarians tended towards one nation/centrist candidates.
- (2). No recurring trends could be identified in relation to other possible drivers of the vote, be that in relation to personal or demographic factors or wider political considerations such as an MP's majority or the era in which they were elected.

The focus of our research will be on identifying whether that ideological trend continues to provide us with an explanation for who voted for whom in the 2024 Conservative Party leadership election.

Backing Badenoch: the parliamentary eliminatory ballots

Shortly after Rishi Sunak confirmed his intention to resign as Conservative leader, the 1922 Committee confirmed the procedures for selecting a replacement. The nomination threshold was set at ten members of the parliamentary party out of a total of 121 MPs—8.2 per cent (Swinford 2024).²

A total of six candidates secured enough nominations to proceed to the eliminatory parliamentary ballots. They included four members of the Sunak administration: James Cleverly, who had served as both Foreign and Home Secretary under Sunak; Kemi Badenoch, who had led both the International Trade and Business departments; Mel Stride, who had been Work and Pensions Secretary; and Tom

²In recent party leadership elections, the nominations thresholds had moved around. For the 2019 election to succeed May, the threshold was eight parliamentarians, which amounted to 2.56 per cent of the then 313 strong parliamentary party. For the first parliamentary ballots in 2022, held after the resignation of Johnson, the threshold was 20 parliamentarians, which amounted to 5.59 of a 358 strong parliamentary party. When Truss resigned just two months later, the threshold was increased to 100 parliamentarians (or 27.9 per cent) as part of wider attempts to speed up the selection process, and potentially to forestall any attempt by Johnson to initiate a comeback (Jeffery *et al.* 2022, 2023; Booth *et al.* 2024).

Tugendhat, who served as Security Minister within the Home Office. All four remained in Sunak's shadow cabinet (albeit Tugendhat could only attend meetings).

Two candidates came from outside of Sunak's shadow cabinet: Priti Patel, the former Home Secretary under Johnson, and Robert Jenrick who had been dismissed from the cabinet as Communities Secretary by Johnson in the 2021 reshuffle. Jenrick had the most unusual ministerial career of the candidates as he returned to ministerial office as a junior health minister under Truss a year later and, when Sunak entered Downing Street, Jenrick was appointed immigration minister in the Home Office, a post he resigned from in December 2023 when he argued that the plan to send asylum seekers to Rwanda did not go far enough in tackling illegal immigration (Courea 2024). The expected candidature from the two-time Home Secretary, Suella Braverman, did not materialize as doubts existed about her capacity to reach the nomination threshold following her unhelpful comments on the eve of the general election—declaring the campaign to be 'over'—and her high-profile potential backers switching to Jenrick's camp³ (Allegretti and Swinford 2024).

Of the six candidates, Cleverly, Stride, and Tugendhat were seen by analysts, journalists and commentators to be on, or be making their pitch to, the centre of the party. Badenoch, Jenrick and Patel were seen as on the right of the party (Chamber 2024; Courea 2024).

The ministerial experience each candidate had might have influenced their ability to garner support from their colleagues. However, we must acknowledge that the membership ballot was an additional factor for parliamentarians when deciding whom to support. Those with frontbench ambitions may have considered it in their interests to back a potential winner, paying close attention to polling data on the preferences of party members.

Table 1 shows the results of each round of the leadership contest. Once the initial six candidates declared, YouGov polling in early August showed that Badenoch was the membership's preferred choice (24 per cent), followed by Tugendhat (16 per cent), Cleverly (14 per cent), Jenrick (12 per cent), Patel (11 per cent), and Stride (2 per cent), with 21 per cent of respondents undecided (English 2024). However, by the end of September, after Patel and Stride had been eliminated, *ConservativeHome* polling indicated growing support not just for Badenoch (36 per cent) but also for Jenrick (25 per cent), while Tugendhat and Cleverly stagnated at 13 per cent each, with the remaining 13 per cent undecided (Hill 2024a).

³Prior to the General Election defeat of July 2024, *The Times* reported that Penny Mordaunt, the then Leader of the House of Commons, and defeated candidate two years earlier, had registered website domains for an imminent leadership campaign (Kendix and Scott 2024). Losing her constituency barred her from standing.

Table 1. Conservative Leadership Parliamentary Ballot Results 2024

	Ballot One		Ballot Two		Ballot Three		Ballot Four	
	4 Sep		10 Sep		8 Oct		9 Oct	
	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%	Votes	%
Kemi Badenoch	22	18.6	28	23.5	30	25.2	42	34.7
Robert Jenrick	28	23.7	33	27.7	31	26.1	41	33.9
James Cleverly	21	17.8	21	17.6	39	32.8	37	30.6
Tom Tugendhat	17	14.4	21	17.6	20	16.8		
Mel Stride	16	13.6	16	13.4				
Priti Patel	14	11.9						
Votes Cast	118	97.5	119	98.3	120	99.2	120	99.2
Abstentions	3	2.5	2	1.7	1	0.8	1	0.8

An additional complicating factor in this leadership election was the time between the second and third eliminative ballots. After two eliminative ballots in early September, which resulted in Patel and Stride being eliminated, four weeks passed before the third and fourth ballots were held. In the interim period the Conservatives held their annual party conference (29th September to 2nd October) in which the four remaining candidates delivered speeches to showcase their agendas and communicative capabilities (Dilnot 2024).

The last time a leadership election had coincided with conference season was 19 years earlier, when the relatively untested Cameron wooed the membership, as his widely praised speech helped gain momentum for his campaign and contributed to his eventual victory over Davis (Denham and Dorey 2006). No candidate quite matched the impact of Cameron on this occasion, although commentators were most impressed by Cleverly and this perception was matched by post-conference polling data for *ConservativeHome*. Among the membership, Badenoch's support fell 4 points to 32 per cent, Cleverly was second with 25 per cent (up 13), Jenrick slid to 19 per cent (down 6) and Tugendhat fell one point to 12 per cent (Hill 2024b).

The penultimate ballot saw Tugendhat eliminated as Cleverly moved from third to first place. Given the (possibly misleading) assumption that both Tugendhat and Cleverly were of the one nation/moderate wing, commentators calculated that Cleverly was well positioned to be in the top two in the final ballot by uniting the centrist vote, as Badenoch and Jenrick competed for the right-wing vote. The fact that Cleverly's vote decreased by two in the final round whilst Badenoch's and

Jenrick's vote increased by twelve and eleven votes respectively led to media speculation about the extent of vote lending by Cleverly backers to shape which of the two candidates he would face in the membership ballot. If such vote lending did occur, it was seen to be uncoordinated and ill-thought-through (Allegretti 2024). In the end, Badenoch secured 56.5 per cent of the membership vote (53,806 votes) compared to Jenrick on 43.5 per cent (41,388 votes) (Walker 2024).

Before explaining how we collected our data on the parliamentary Conservative Party (PCP) we need to acknowledge that the composition of the PCP changed significantly at the 2024 general election. The expectation that the party would be heavily defeated resulted in a very high number—75—of parliamentarians stepping down (Baker et al. 2024). The general election saw the Conservatives win just 121 seats: 26 were new parliamentarians and only 95 survived from the previous parliament (Jeffery 2024).

Research methods: selecting variables and identifying candidate preferences

The viability of our study rests on the construction of our dataset. Here we outline which personal, political, and ideological variables we have selected and why, and how we have obtained the data for these variables.

Selecting variables

Previous studies have identified a correlation between candidate preferences and ideological disposition. Research of this type has been influenced by the literature on intra-party factionalism and the 'acceptability' aspect of the Stark criteria on leadership selection (Stark 1996). These studies assume that factions seek to impose their ideological vision of the correct policy agenda and public image on their party, thereby repositioning the party along the ideological spectrum (Budge et al. 2010: 972).

However, we also assume that ideological motivation is not the sole driver of factionalism within political parties. There is also a personal dimension that can underpin factional behaviour—parliamentarians may align themselves with specific leadership figures because, given the circumstances, they perceive it to be in their interest to do so (Sartori 1976: 74-77; Janda 1980: 119-23; Hine 1982: 42). Additionally, the background circumstances of parliamentarians may also influence alignments, particularly around factors such as gender, sexuality, and ethnicity (see, e.g. Childs 2004; Saalfeld and Bischof 2013).

As such, for our first set of variables, we focussed on the personal backgrounds of individual Conservative parliamentarians, namely:

- Gender, coding Conservative parliamentarians as male or female.
- Ethnicity, whether a Conservative parliamentarian is an ethnic minority or not.
- Sexuality, whether a Conservative parliamentarian is openly LGBT or not.
- Service, focussing on the length of time in Parliament by noting year of entry.
- Service, focussing on frontbench status in Parliament by noting whether an MP had previous experience of being in government.

These variables are also common across similar studies of leadership selection (see [Jeffery et al. 2018, 2022, 2023](#); [Roe-Crines et al. 2021](#); [Booth et al. 2024](#)). Gender was derived from the UK Parliament's Members API ([UK Parliament 2025](#)), and ethnicity data was hand-gathered from MPs' personal biographies and media reports. Data on sexuality was taken from the website [lgbt.mp \(LGBT+ Members of Parliament 2025\)](#) though it is important to note that all openly LGBT Conservative MPs are male, making this effectively a 'GB' variable. Both length of service and frontbench status were also gathered from the UK Parliament Members API ([UK Parliament 2025](#)). Length of service was measured as a five-point ordered factor based on the following categories: those elected before 1997, 1997 up to the 2010 general election, 2010 general election up to the Brexit referendum, from the Brexit referendum to up to the 2024 general election, and at the 2024 general election.

Our second set of variables are political variables and relate to the two Conservative leadership contests in 2022. We see this as potentially relevant, given the emphasis placed within the literature between factional positioning and leadership selection, more specifically concerning ejection (see, e.g. [Close and Gherghina \(2019\)](#) on factional moves to eject ideologically unacceptable leaders). This led us to believe that candidate preferences in 2022 could conceivably translate into support for like-minded candidates two years later, noting here that both Badenoch and Tugendhat stood in 2022 and 2024.

Based on the above assumption we constructed a set of binary variables relating to:

- Which candidate(s) an MP endorsed in the first leadership contest of 2022, coding as 1 if a parliamentarian backed the given candidate within any of the eliminative ballots.
- Which candidate an MP endorsed in the second leadership contest of 2022, coding as 1 if a parliamentarian backed the given candidate⁴.

⁴We removed candidates with a low number of supporters (< 15) in the first leadership election of 2022.

The data for these two selection processes already existed from prior studies (see [Jeffery et al. 2023](#) and [Booth et al. 2024](#)) and for Conservative MPs elected in 2024, we explored their social media outlets, their website, and other public statements for signs of support for any of the candidates.

Our third set of variables covered ideology, thus aligning this study with the traditional drivers of intra-party factionalism. Here, our primary interest was identifying a means by which to capture the positioning of Conservative parliamentarians within a left-right spectrum, reflecting the classic one nation (economically wet, pro-European, and socially liberal) versus Thatcherite (economically dry, Eurosceptic, and socially conservative) distinctions (see [Garry 1995](#) and [Heppell 2002, 2013](#)). To achieve this, we updated data from previous studies by using affiliation with, or membership of, ideologically significant intra-party subgroups. This led to the establishment of the following variables:

- (7). For social liberalism, we grouped together Conservative MPs affiliated with the socially liberal Tory Reform Group, the One Nation Conservative caucus, and those who voted to restore the 0.7 per cent foreign aid target in June 2021 (HC Deb 13 Jul 2021, vol. 699 cols. 225–228).
- (8). For social conservatism we used membership of the Common Sense Group, known for their social and cultural conservatism, including scepticism towards ‘woke’ policies.
- (9). For positioning on the EU we used membership of the European Research Group to capture the hard-core Eurosceptic wing of the party.
- (10). For economic ‘drys’ we listed those affiliated with the Institute for Economic Affairs’ Free Market Forum and the Conservatives for Canzuk group, to identify those with a Thatcherite non-interventionist (dry) mindset.
- (11). For economic ‘wets’ we looked for support for the Johnsonian project of levelling-up, which brought together those affiliated with the Northern Research Group, the Blue Collar Conservatism group, and the Onward Levelling Up Taskforce⁵.
- (12). For environmentalists, we looked for support for the Conservative Environment Network.
- (13). For MPs’ position on relations with China, we used membership of the China-sceptic China Research Group.

⁵Although support for levelling-up is somewhat determined by the type of constituency an MP represented—no rational MP seeking re-election would reject levelling-up funding—affiliation with one of these groups was a conscious choice to explicitly support the policy regardless of the MP’s constituency. For example, Esther McVey, chair of the Blue Collar Conservatism group, represented the very affluent and middle-class constituency of Tatton.

For those Conservatives who were members of the previous parliament, the data for the above variables had already been established from prior research for the two leadership elections in 2022 (see [Jeffery et al. 2023](#) and [Booth et al. 2024](#)). We updated our records to identify any changes between then and now for those returning parliamentarians, and we then added in the affiliations made by the twenty-six new entrants at the 2024 general election.

We also incorporated a new variable in relation to left-right economic estimates for parliamentarians, based on new research conducted by [Hanretty and Lazarov \(2025\)](#) alongside Survation, Royal Holloway, and UK in a Changing Europe. Local councillors were asked to compare the left-right position of the MPs in their local area, from which an MP's overall left-right position was inferred on a scale of 0 to 100, with 100 being 'more economically conservative' ([Hanretty and Lazarov 2025](#)).

Identifying candidate preferences

The process of identifying which parliamentarians backed which candidates replicated the methods used in previous studies of this type. Lists of declared supporters for each candidate were provided by various newspaper outlets and online blogs, which we validated. Our study involved tracking public declarations for each of the eliminative parliamentary ballots, which was a task not undertaken in previous studies on the 2001, 2016 and 2019 ballots (see [Heppell and Hill 2010](#); [Jeffery et al. 2018](#) and [2022](#)). It is worth noting, however, that the leadership election operated as a secret ballot, and as such it is impossible to know whether an MP actually voted in accordance with their public declaration. However, given this is an issue which cannot ever be properly addressed, and given public declarations are the best guide to how MPs would actually vote, there is a broad consensus in the literature not to make the perfect the enemy of the good in this regard.

The number of public declarations of support for candidates was lower than in previous studies of this type, and given the reduced size of the parliamentary party after the general election defeat we were left dealing with smaller numbers overall. For example, for Patel, who was eliminated in the first round of voting, the number of publicly declared supporters is only six. We identified the preferences of 55 per cent of supporters in round one (66 MPs), 58 per cent in round two (70 MPs), 61 per cent in round three (73 MPs), 54 per cent in round four (65 MPs), and 47 per cent for the membership ballot stage (57 MPs)⁶. This is lower than, for example, the 68 per cent of MPs whose preferences were identified in the second contest of 2022 (245 MPs out of 358) and which informed the study by [Booth et al. \(2024\)](#), or the 72 per cent in the final parliamentary ballot of the 2019 contest between Johnson, Jeremy Hunt, and Michael Gove ([Jeffery et al. 2022](#)).

⁶Percentages based on 120 voters as Sunak did not participate.

To overcome some relatively small sample sizes, we use Firth logistic regression which is designed for models with small samples, rare outcomes, missing data, and data with complete separation—i.e. when the predictor variables perfectly divide the data into distinct outcome groups (Suhās et al. 2023). Firth logistic regression is also superior to alternative approaches such as Fisher’s exact test and exact logistic regression, because Firth logistic regression also allows for continuous covariates to be considered (Wang 2014). As such, Firth’s logistic regression ‘has become a standard approach for the analysis of binary outcomes with small samples’ (Pühr et al. 2017). This also builds on the approach used in similar studies in this field, such as those in Booth et al. (2024). We have presented the descriptive stats in the [Appendix](#).

Research findings

We present the outputs of a series of logistic regression models below, where the dependent variable is whether a given Conservative MP supported a candidate or not. We present two models: a standard model that includes all the variables of interest and a stepwise model. Stepwise regression is a statistical method of fitting regression models where variable selection is carried out based on a certain criterion, in this case the Akaike Information Criteria (AIC). A lower AIC is preferred as it represents a better model fit and the stepwise algorithm seeks to produce the best model fit with the smallest number of variables. This approach thus lets us see which variables help explain patterns in the data best, without relying on prior hypotheses (an approach which is suited to this type of dataset, where all variables could plausibly influence an MP’s given choice of candidate).

[Figure 1](#) presents a graphical summary of the regression output for each model (the full tables can be found in the [Appendix](#)). Boxes shaded green or red mean the coefficient is statistically significant at the $P \leq .05$ level and the coefficient direction is positive or negative respectively. Grey boxes mean the variable is included in the model but is not statistically significant. White boxes—only in the stepwise regression models—mean a variable was not included in the final model. The full tables are presented in the [Appendix](#), where we also highlight variables significant at the $P \leq .1$ level due to some of the small sample sizes involved.

Personal variables

Personal backgrounds of individual Conservatives—namely gender, sexuality, ethnicity, and service (career circumstances)—provided very few examples of statistical significance. The only gender effect observed was that female MPs were less

likely to support Cleverly in the third and fourth rounds (although in the second round the relationship was also significant at the 0.1 level in the stepwise model).

Ethnicity is somewhat related to candidate choice: for Cleverly, the relationship is statistically significant at the 0.1 level in the full models for the first and third rounds. For Badenoch, the relationship is statistically significant at either the 0.1 or 0.05 level in both models for the third and fourth rounds, and in the stepwise model in the final round. Taken together, this suggests that ethnic minority parliamentarians were more likely to vote for ethnic minority candidates. LGBT MPs were more likely to support Cleverly in the third round (in the full model only) and at the 0.1 level in the second- and fourth-round full models.

In terms of length of service an interesting pattern emerges: MPs elected more recently are less likely to keep their views on who they are backing hidden. They are more likely to back Badenoch up until the final round, when the relationship disappears, and more likely to back Jenrick in the standard models for the first, second, and final round (in the first two cases at the 0.1 level), and in the stepwise model in all rounds except the first. Greater support for Cleverly is also present in all stepwise models, at the 0.05 level.

In our regression models looking at support for candidates on the right of the party vs the centre of the party (not presented here), we see a consistent relationship between more recently elected Conservatives supporting candidates of the right relative to keeping quiet. Taken together, this is evidence that the newer cohorts of Conservatives are more likely to be on the right of the party than the centre.

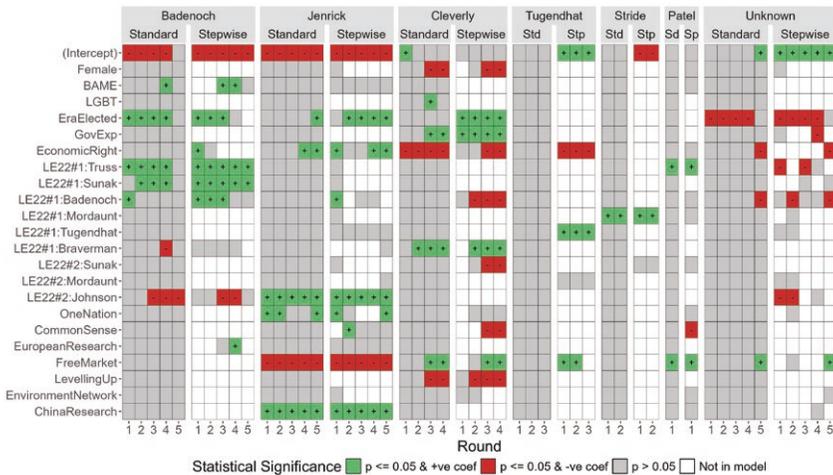


Figure 1. Graphical summary of regression model outputs.

There is also evidence that Conservatives who previously held a government post are more likely to back Cleverly in all the stepwise models, as well as in the standard models for the second round (at the 0.1 level), and the third and fourth rounds. In terms of our economic left-right measure, we find that economically right-wing MPs were more likely to back Jenrick in all models except the full round one and two models (if the 0.1 level is included) and generally less likely to support Cleverly and Tugendhat.

Leadership variables

Next we move to the prior leadership preferences of Conservative MPs, i.e. who they backed in the two leadership elections in 2022. For the first contest, we find that support for Truss was associated with support for Patel in both round one models, who was then eliminated, and for Badenoch in every model except the final full model. Support for Sunak in the first leadership election is also associated with support for Badenoch in all models except the full models in rounds one and five. Unsurprisingly, Conservatives who backed Badenoch in the 2022 leadership election were more likely to support Badenoch in 2024 in all rounds (if both 0.05 and 0.1 levels are included) except for in the membership round. However, in the stepwise models for rounds one, three, and four, these MPs are also more likely to support Jenrick too, suggesting a fracturing of the right of the party. Former Badenoch supporters were also less likely to support Cleverly in both the third and fourth rounds.

Conservatives who backed Mordaunt in the first leadership contest were positively associated with support for Stride's campaign across all the models for the two rounds he contested, and then with no candidate in the subsequent rounds. Support for Tugendhat in the 2022 leadership election is associated with support for him in this contest in most of the models.

Interestingly, support for Braverman is associated with being less likely to support Badenoch in the first, second, third, and fourth round full models and the fourth round's stepwise model—which is interesting given they were both seen as candidates of the right—but no more likely to support the other candidate of the right, Jenrick. Also interestingly, support for Braverman is associated with increased support for Cleverly in the second, third, and fourth rounds, consistently at the 0.05 level despite the two candidates having significant ideological differences. This suggests that MPs do not vote solely along ideological lines in these leadership elections.

Moving to support in the second leadership contest in 2022, we see that Conservatives who backed Sunak were more likely to back Stride in both stepwise models and less likely to back Patel. They were also less likely to back Cleverly in the third and fourth round models (at the 0.1 level in the

full models and 0.05 level in the stepwise models). There was no relationship between support for Mordaunt in the second 2022 leadership election and any candidate. MPs who backed Johnson in 2022 were consistently more likely to back Jenrick—in every model for every round, the relationship was positive and statistically significant at the 0.05 level—and less likely to support Badenoch.

Ideological variables

Surprisingly, given Jenrick's perceived position on the right of the party, Conservatives affiliated with one nation groups were more likely to support Jenrick in the majority of the models if the 0.1 level is included, and in the final membership round the relationship was statistically significant at the 0.05 level for both models. Relatedly, none of the perceived 'centrist' candidates—Cleverly, Tugendhat, or Stride—enjoyed greater support from this group of Conservatives, and for Cleverly the relationship was actually negative in the round in which he was eliminated (in both models, at the 0.1 level). Conservatives from the culturally conservative Common Sense Group did not seem to fall behind a candidate—they were less likely to support Patel in the first round, more likely to support Jenrick in the stepwise model for the second round, and less likely to support Cleverly in the stepwise models for the third and fourth rounds only.

There are also no consistent patterns of support among members of the European Research Group, apart from support for Badenoch in the stepwise model in the third round (0.1 level) and fourth round (0.05 level). This suggests that the internal cohesiveness of the ERG might have diminished somewhat as Brexit becomes less of an all-encompassing feature of Tory politics.

Conservatives affiliated with free-market groups are consistently less likely to support Jenrick in all models in all rounds, and more likely to support Patel and then Cleverly from the second round onwards. They are also more likely to support Tugendhat in the first round (stepwise) and second round (both models). In the final round, these MPs are more likely to have an unknown position. Conversely, MPs supportive of pro-levelling up groups were less likely to support Cleverly across all models except the first-round full model, albeit this varied between the 0.1 and 0.05 levels but were no more likely to support any other candidate. Affiliation with the Conservative Environment Network, however, was only weakly associated with opposition to Cleverly in the stepwise models for the first two rounds, and with support for Jenrick in the first-round stepwise model. Finally, members of the China Research Group were

consistently more likely to back Jenrick in all models and all rounds and were less likely to back Patel.

Analysis and conclusions

We built a unique dataset capturing the voting preferences of all Conservative MPs in the 2024 Conservative Party leadership election. Using this data, we examined whether associations between candidate preferences and parliamentarians could be identified based on a range of personal, political, and ideological variables.

To date, this is the first substantive study on the Conservative Party since entering opposition and it reveals that the progression of Kemi Badenoch to the membership ballot was not driven by ideology in the way that previous leadership selection processes have been.

In rounds where the so-called centrist or one nation candidates were also in contention, the extent to which affiliation with ideologically distinct groups was associated with support for a given candidate was limited. Being aligned to a one-nation group was never associated with support for centrist candidates, or opposition to candidates of the right. Instead, membership of a one-nation group was associated with support for Jenrick, a candidate of the right, whose key policy was leaving the European Convention on Human Rights—anathema to the one-nation wing.

Despite this relative lack of importance of ideology across the whole contest, Jenrick's support was notable for its ideological eclecticism: whereas in the final round no Conservative-aligned group was associated with support for Badenoch, Jenrick's support was associated with both the one nation group and the China Research Group. He was opposed by Conservatives associated with free market groupings too.

We also see that previous leadership elections play a limited role in delineating support for a given candidate—perhaps best epitomized by the fact that having supported Badenoch in the first leadership contest of 2022 was associated with support for Jenrick in later rounds of the contest (as well as for Badenoch herself). There is evidence that support for both Truss and Sunak in the first leadership contest of 2022 was associated with support for Badenoch and that support for Johnson in the second round was associated with support for Jenrick and negatively associated with support for Badenoch. This could be due to hidden Tory grandee rivalries: Michael Gove, Johnson's 'frenemy', was keen to be a key backer of Badenoch's campaign.

This highlights a key weakness of focussing solely on demographics and ideology when studying leadership elections—for any party. MPs are social creatures,

and they do not simply vote in a Downsian way for the candidate who best represents their ideology. As noted above, the Stark model's criteria of acceptability, electability, and competence are also seen as key metrics which are not captured by the type of analysis carried out here. Similarly, interpersonal relationships and, more bluntly, grudges also play a role in shaping who backs whom, and these metrics cannot be captured by any regression model. As such, although our study provides a key insight into the leadership election contest and patterns of party support, it cannot provide the full picture—no study can.

That we do not see clear ideological alignments between the candidates and their backers, especially for the winning candidate, is intriguing and requires us to speculate on its potential significance. We can offer an optimistic and pessimistic viewpoint. The optimistic argument is as follows: that there is no ideologically based core group of parliamentarians who propelled Badenoch to the membership ballot means that she has a freer hand in terms of her use of patronage and thus is better positioned to unify the party.

In recent leadership selections, Johnson, Truss, and Sunak were seen to reward those who had backed them in the eliminative parliamentary ballot, or the nomination stage for Sunak in late 2022, and were felt to punish those who did not, which intensified perceptions of a factionalized party (Bale 2023, chapter six and eleven). In a bivariate analysis not presented here, Badenoch was statistically more likely to appoint her own supporters to the shadow front bench but was not more likely to keep those MPs who supported rival candidates out—there was no statistically significant negative relationship against supporters of other candidates, just those who kept their position private.

The more pessimistic interpretation is that if Badenoch struggles to make an impression as leader of the Conservative Party, and the party flatlines in the opinion polls during this parliament, then she cannot rely on an ideologically cohesive praetorian guard to protect her in a possible confidence motion. If triggered she would need the backing of sixty-one parliamentarians to survive, nineteen more than she secured in the final eliminative parliamentary ballot.

Acknowledgements

Special thanks to Prof Jon Tonge for his valuable comments on a final, pre-submission draft.

Funding

None declared.

Conflict of Interest

None declared.

Appendix 1—Descriptive statistics

Characteristic	<i>N</i> = 120	%
LE24: R1		
Badenoch	15	13
Cleverly	9	7.5
Jenrick	18	15
Patel	7	5.8
Stride	8	6.7
Tugendhat	9	7.5
Unknown	54	45
LE24: R2		
Badenoch	19	16
Cleverly	12	10
Jenrick	22	18
Stride	8	6.7
Tugendhat	9	7.5
Unknown	50	42
LE24: R3		
Badenoch	21	18
Cleverly	16	13
Jenrick	24	20
Tugendhat	12	10
Unknown	47	39
LE24: R4		
Badenoch	22	18
Cleverly	18	15
Jenrick	25	21
Unknown	55	46
LE24: R5		
Badenoch	30	25
Jenrick	27	23
Unknown	63	53
Female	29	24
BAME	15	13
LGBT	5	4.2
Era Elected		
Pre-1997	6	5.0
New Labour	15	13
2010-Brexit	40	33

Characteristic	<i>N</i> = 120	%
Brexit-24	33	28
2024 GE	26	22
Gov't Experience	73	61
Economic Left-Right Position	67.7 (65.0, 70.1)	
LE22#1: Truss	36	30
LE22#1: Sunak	43	36
LE22#1: Badenoch	8	6.7
LE22#1: Mordaunt	15	13
LE22#1: Tugendhat	6	5.0
LE22#1: Braverman	7	5.8
LE22#2: Sunak	45	38
LE22#2: Mordaunt	9	7.5
LE22#2: Johnson	11	9.2
One Nation	42	35
Common Sense Group	8	6.7
European Research Group	24	20
Free Market	15	13
Levelling Up	37	31
Environment Network	26	22
China Research Group	13	11

Table A1 - Support for Badenoch by round

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	-21.2* (<0.1)	-22.3** (<0.1)	-17.8* (<0.1)	-18.8** (<0.1)	-15.1* (<0.1)	-7.0*** (<0.1)	-14.8* (<0.1)	-6.2** (<0.1)	-3.9 (0.5)	-2.2*** (<0.1)
Female	-0.2 (0.8)		-0.1 (0.9)		0.1 (0.9)		0.1 (0.9)		-0.1 (0.9)	
BAME	1.2 (0.1)		1.0 (0.2)		1.5+ (<0.1)		1.9* (<0.1)		1.1 (0.2)	1.3+ (<0.1)
LGBT	0.1 (0.9)		-0.2 (0.8)		-0.2 (0.9)		-0.1 (0.9)		-0.3 (0.8)	
Era Elected	1.1* (<0.1)	1.2* (<0.1)	1.2* (<0.1)	1.2** (<0.1)	1.4* (<0.1)	0.8* (<0.1)	1.2* (<0.1)	0.6 (0.1)	-0.1 (0.8)	
Gov Exp	-0.2 (0.8)		-0.4 (0.7)		-0.2 (0.9)		-0.4 (0.7)		0.4 (0.6)	
Economic Right	0.2+ (<0.1)	0.2* (<0.1)	0.1 (0.1)	0.2+ (<0.1)	0.1 (0.4)		0.1 (0.3)		0.0 (0.7)	
LE22#1 × Truss	2.1* (<0.1)	2.8** (<0.1)	2.9** (<0.1)	3.0** (<0.1)	3.4** (<0.1)	2.9** (<0.1)	3.4** (<0.1)	2.9** (<0.1)	0.8 (0.3)	1.3* (<0.1)
LE22#1 × Sunak	1.6 (0.1)	2.3* (<0.1)	2.4* (<0.1)	2.8** (<0.1)	3.0* (<0.1)	2.8** (<0.1)	3.1* (<0.1)	2.5** (<0.1)	0.8 (0.3)	1.5* (<0.1)
LE22#1 × Badenoch	2.6* (<0.1)	2.9* (<0.1)	2.6+ (<0.1)	2.8* (<0.1)	2.4+ (<0.1)	2.4* (<0.1)	2.7+ (<0.1)	2.4+ (<0.1)	1.5 (0.3)	1.3 (<0.1)

Table A1. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise								
LE22#1 × Mordaunt	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(0.1)	(0.1)
	-0.2	-0.6	-0.6	(0.7)	0.6	0.6	0.3	0.5	0.5	0.5
	(0.9)	(0.7)	(0.7)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.6)
LE22#1 × Tugendhat	1.0	0.6	0.6	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.2	0.4	0.4	0.4
	(0.4)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.7)	(0.7)	(0.7)
LE22#1 × Braverman	-3.5+	-3.1	-3.8+	-3.0	-4.1+	-2.9	-4.6*	-3.5+	-1.9	-1.9
	(<0.1)	(0.1)	(<0.1)	(0.1)	(<0.1)	(0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(0.2)	(0.2)
LE22#2 × Sunak	0.6	0.7	0.7	0.9	0.9	0.9	0.7	0.2	0.2	0.2
	(0.5)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.7)	(0.7)	(0.7)
LE22#2 × Mordaunt	0.9	0.9	0.9	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	-0.2	0.1	0.1	0.1
	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)
LE22#2 × Johnson	-2.3	-3.6+	-3.8+	-3.8+	-4.2*	-4.2*	-4.5*	-4.5*	-3.1*	-2.7+
	(0.2)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)	(<0.1)
One Nation	0.4	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.4	0.4	-0.4	-0.4	-0.4
	(0.6)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.6)	(0.6)	(0.5)	(0.5)	(0.5)
Common Sense	0.9	0.5	0.5	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.3	0.1	0.1	0.1
	(0.6)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.8)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)	(0.9)
European Research	0.1	0.9	0.9	1.2	1.2	1.4+	1.2	1.7*	0.9	0.9
	(0.9)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(<0.1)	(0.2)	(<0.1)	(0.3)	(0.3)
Free Market	-0.9	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.4	-1.6	-1.6	-0.7	-0.7	-0.7

Table A1. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
Levelling Up	(0.4) 0.3	(0.2) 0.1	(0.2) 0.0	(0.2) 0.0	(0.2) 0.0	(0.2) 0.0	(0.2) 0.2	(0.2) 0.2	(0.4) -0.1	(0.4) -0.1
Environment Network	(0.7) 0.3	(0.9) 0.0	(0.9) 0.0	(1.0) -0.5	(1.0) -0.5	(0.9) -0.5	(0.8) -0.5	(0.8) -0.5	(0.9) 0.6	(0.9) 0.6
China Research	(0.7) 0.1	(0.9) 0.1	(0.9) 0.1	(0.5) 1.0	(0.5) 1.0	(0.5) 1.0	(0.5) 1.1	(0.5) 1.1	(0.3) -0.6	(0.3) -0.6
	(1.0)	(0.9)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.4)	(0.3)	(0.3)	(0.5)	(0.5)
Num. Obs.	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
AIC	106.5	78.4	116.2	90.8	119.0	96.6	118.2	95.8	154.3	127.0
BIC	170.6	100.7	180.3	113.1	183.1	121.7	182.3	120.9	218.4	143.7
Log.Lik.	-30.240	-31.191	-35.101	-37.381	-36.497	-39.304	-36.107	-38.904	-54.141	-57.499
RMSE	0.27	0.28	0.30	0.31	0.30	0.31	0.30	0.31	0.38	0.40

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Table A2 - Support for Jenrick by round

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	-17.2* (<0.1)	-20.0* (<0.1)	-12.3* (<0.1)	-15.9* (<0.1)	-13.9* (<0.1)	-14.2* (<0.1)	-14.9* (<0.1)	-15.7* (<0.1)	-18.2** (<0.1)	-20.5*** (<0.1)
Female	-1.5 (0.2)	-1.5 (0.2)	-0.3 (0.7)		0.1 (0.8)		0.0 (1.0)		0.1 (0.9)	
BAME	-1.1 (0.3)	-1.5 (0.3)	-1.4 (0.2)	-2.0 (0.2)	-1.5 (0.2)	-1.8 (0.2)	-1.7 (0.1)	-1.9 (0.1)	-1.4 (0.2)	-1.8 (0.1)
LGBT	-0.2 (0.9)		-0.6 (0.7)		-0.6 (0.7)		-0.9 (0.6)		-1.1 (0.6)	
Era Elected	0.9+ (<0.1)	0.7 (0.1)	0.8+ (<0.1)	1.0** (<0.1)	0.6 (0.1)	0.7* (<0.1)	0.7 (0.1)	0.8* (<0.1)	1.1* (<0.1)	1.2** (<0.1)
Gov Exp	1.1 (0.4)		1.0 (0.4)		0.6 (0.6)		0.6 (0.6)		1.0 (0.4)	
Economic Right	0.2 (0.1)	0.2* (<0.1)	0.1 (0.2)	0.1+ (<0.1)	0.1+ (<0.1)	0.2+ (<0.1)	0.2* (<0.1)	0.2* (<0.1)	0.2* (<0.1)	0.2** (<0.1)
LE22#1 × Truss	-1.2 (0.4)	-1.0 (0.3)	-1.1 (0.4)		-0.7 (0.5)		-0.8 (0.5)		-0.7 (0.5)	
LE22#1 × Sunak	-1.6 (0.2)	-1.4 (0.2)	-0.9 (0.4)		-0.5 (0.7)		-0.6 (0.6)		-0.6 (0.6)	
LE22#1 × Badenoch	1.6	2.8*	1.2		1.6	1.8+	1.6	1.7+	0.9	

Table A2. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
LE22#1 x Mordaunt	(0.2) -2.1	(<0.1) -2.3+	(0.3) 0.1	(<0.1) 0.1	(0.2) 0.1	(<0.1) 0.1	(0.2) -0.1	(<0.1) 0.1	(0.4) -0.2	(0.4) -0.2
LE22#1 x Tugendhat	(0.3) -3.5	(<0.1) -3.9+	(0.9) -3.1	(0.9) -3.0	(0.9) -3.1	(0.9) -2.8	(1.0) -3.3	(1.0) -3.0	(0.9) -3.3+	(0.9) -3.3
LE22#1 x Braverman	(0.1) 0.5	(<0.1) 0.7	(0.1) 0.7	(0.1) 0.1	(0.1) 0.9	(0.2) 0.9	(0.1) 0.8	(0.2) 0.8	(<0.1) 1.6	(0.1) 1.6
LE22#2 x Sunak	(0.8) -0.5	(0.7) -1.0	(0.7) -1.3	(0.7) -1.3	(0.5) -1.0	(0.5) -1.0	(0.5) -1.0	(0.5) -1.0	(0.3) -0.6	(0.2) -0.6
LE22#2 x Mordaunt	(0.6) 0.3	(0.3) -2.3	(0.2) -2.3	(0.2) -2.3	(0.3) -1.8	(0.3) -1.8	(0.3) -1.8	(0.3) -1.8	(0.5) -1.8	(0.5) -1.2
LE22#2 x Johnson	(0.9) 4.5**	(0.2) 5.2**	(0.2) 4.4**	(0.2) 4.5**	(0.3) 4.0**	(0.3) 3.7**	(0.3) 4.0**	(0.3) 3.7**	(0.4) 4.0**	(0.4) 4.1**
One Nation	(<0.1) 2.2*	(<0.1) 2.8*	(<0.1) 2.0*	(<0.1) 1.4+	(<0.1) 1.5+	(<0.1) 1.5+	(<0.1) 1.5+	(<0.1) 1.5+	(<0.1) 1.9*	(<0.1) 1.7*
Common Sense	(0.9) 0.9	(<0.1) 1.2	(0.1) 1.2	(0.1) 2.7*	(0.1) 1.1	(0.1) 2.1	(0.1) 1.0	(0.1) 2.1	(0.1) 1.3	(0.1) 1.8
European Research	(0.5) -1.2	(0.3) -1.7	(0.3) -1.8	(0.3) -1.5	(0.4) -1.7	(0.4) -1.3	(0.4) -1.7	(0.4) -1.3	(0.3) -1.5	(0.2) -1.1
Free Market	(0.3) -3.8*	(0.2) -4.6*	(0.1) -4.1*	(0.2) -5.1**	(0.1) -4.1*	(0.2) -4.0*	(0.1) -4.1*	(0.2) -4.1*	(0.2) -4.3**	(0.2) -5.1**

Table A2. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
Levelling Up	(<0.1) 0.2 (0.7)	(<0.1) 0.1 (0.9)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)	(<0.1) -0.1 (0.9)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)	(<0.1) 0.0 (1.0)
Environment Network	1.3 (0.1)	1.7+ (<0.1)	0.7 (0.4)	0.6 (0.4)	0.6 (0.4)	0.6 (0.4)	0.6 (0.4)	0.3 (0.7)	0.3 (0.7)	0.3 (0.7)
China Research	2.6* (<0.1)	3.1* (<0.1)	2.6* (<0.1)	2.8** (<0.1)	2.6* (<0.1)	2.4* (<0.1)	2.5* (<0.1)	2.4* (<0.1)	2.6* (<0.1)	2.7** (<0.1)
Num.Obs.	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
AIC	97.7	86.0	113.5	92.7	118.1	98.5	118.6	99.2	120.6	103.1
BIC	161.8	133.4	177.6	123.4	182.3	129.2	182.7	129.9	184.7	139.3
Log.Lik.	-25.862	-26.001	-33.737	-35.371	-36.071	-38.256	-36.306	-38.594	-37.278	-38.530
RMSE	0.25	0.26	0.29	0.30	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.31	0.32

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Table A3 - Support for Cleverly by round

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	13.7* (<0.1)	-10.0 (0.3)	10.3 (0.1)	0.9 (0.9)	12.0+ (<0.1)	2.8 (0.7)	9.1 (0.2)	0.4 (1.0)
Female	-1.1 (0.2)	-1.6+ (<0.1)	-1.3 (0.1)	-1.6+ (<0.1)	-2.0* (<0.1)	-2.2* (<0.1)	-1.7* (<0.1)	-2.0* (<0.1)
BAME	1.7+ (<0.1)		1.2 (0.2)		1.8+ (<0.1)		1.4 (0.1)	
LGBT	1.3 (0.4)		2.7+ (<0.1)		2.9* (<0.1)		2.6+ (<0.1)	
Era Elected	0.0 (1.0)	3.4* (<0.1)	0.2 (0.7)	1.8* (<0.1)	0.5 (0.4)	1.9* (<0.1)	0.4 (0.4)	2.1** (<0.1)
Gov Exp	1.6 (0.2)	7.0* (<0.1)	2.7+ (<0.1)	5.3* (<0.1)	4.1** (<0.1)	6.9*** (<0.1)	4.2** (<0.1)	7.3*** (<0.1)
Economic Right	-0.2* (<0.1)	-0.1 (0.1)	-0.2* (<0.1)	-0.2+ (<0.1)	-0.3* (<0.1)	-0.2* (<0.1)	-0.2* (<0.1)	-0.2* (<0.1)
LE22#1 x Truss	-0.7 (0.5)		-0.4 (0.7)		0.0 (1.0)		-0.5 (0.6)	
LE22#1 x Sunak	-1.4 (0.2)		-1.0 (0.4)		-0.3 (0.8)		-0.9 (0.4)	
LE22#1 x Badenoch	-1.4	-3.5	-1.9	-4.2*	-2.9+	-4.9*	-2.8+	-5.4*

Table 3. Continued

	Round 1			Round 2			Round 3			Round 4		
	Full	Stepwise										
LE22#1 × Mordaunt	(0.3)	(0.1)	(0.2)	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)	0.9	(< 0.1)	0.9	(< 0.1)
	0.8		0.0		1.4		1.4		(0.5)		(0.5)	
	(0.5)		(1.0)		(0.3)		(0.3)					
LE22#1 × Tugendhat	2.1+		1.8		2.3		2.3		1.6		1.6	
	(< 0.1)		(0.2)		(0.1)		(0.1)		(0.2)		(0.2)	
LE22#1 × Braverman	2.2		3.9*		5.0**		7.2**		5.0**		5.0**	
	(0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)	
LE22#2 × Sunak	-0.1		-1.3		-1.7		-2.0+		-2.1+		-2.1+	
	(0.9)		(0.2)		(0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)	
	-0.6		-0.3		-0.7		-0.7		0.5		0.5	
	(0.7)		(0.9)		(0.7)		(0.7)		(0.8)		(0.8)	
LE22#2 × Johnson	-0.3		-0.3		-1.1		-1.1		-0.9		-0.9	
	(0.8)		(0.8)		(0.5)		(0.5)		(0.5)		(0.5)	
One Nation	-0.2		-1.1		-1.5		-1.5		-1.7+		-1.7+	
	(0.8)		(0.3)		(0.1)		(0.1)		(< 0.1)		(< 0.1)	
Common Sense	1.0		-0.8		-1.1		-1.1		-2.1		-2.1	
	(0.5)		(0.6)		(0.5)		(0.5)		(0.3)		(0.3)	
European Research	1.4		0.3		0.5		0.5		0.0		0.0	
	(0.3)		(0.8)		(0.7)		(0.7)		(1.0)		(1.0)	
Free Market	1.1		2.3+		2.4+		2.8*		3.4*		2.9*	
												3.5*

Table 3. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
Levelling Up	(0.3) -0.9	(0.3) -3.1+	(0.3) -1.8+	(0.3) -3.2*	(0.3) -2.1*	(0.3) -5.1**	(0.3) -2.7*	(0.3) -5.6**
Environment Network	(0.2) -1.3	(0.2) -3.2+	(0.3) -1.2	(0.3) -3.5+	(0.3) -1.2	(0.3) -1.2	(0.3) -0.9	(0.3) -0.9
China Research	(0.9) -0.2	(0.9) (0.9)	(0.9) -0.3	(0.9) (0.9)	(0.7) -0.5	(0.7) -0.5	(0.5) -1.0	(0.5) -1.0
Num.Obs.	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
AIC	90.6	56.4	93.5	72.4	99.2	79.2	103.1	82.8
BIC	154.8	75.9	157.6	105.8	163.3	112.7	167.2	116.3
Log.Lik.	-22.319	-21.196	-23.726	-24.183	-26.583	-27.601	-28.537	-29.407
RMSE	0.22	0.23	0.23	0.24	0.25	0.26	0.26	0.27

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Table A4 - Support for Tugendhat by round

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	4.2 (0.5)	14.2* (< 0.1)	4.2 (0.5)	14.2* (< 0.1)	10.5+ (< 0.1)	14.5** (< 0.1)
Female	0.6 (0.5)		0.6 (0.5)		0.3 (0.7)	
BAME	0.6 (0.5)		0.6 (0.5)		0.3 (0.8)	
LGBT	0.0 (1.0)		0.0 (1.0)		-0.1 (1.0)	
Era Elected	0.0 (1.0)		0.0 (1.0)		-0.4 (0.4)	
Gov Exp	-1.0 (0.3)		-1.0 (0.3)		-1.1 (0.3)	
Economic Right	-0.1 (0.2)	-0.3** (< 0.1)	-0.1 (0.2)	-0.3** (< 0.1)	-0.2+ (< 0.1)	-0.3*** (< 0.1)
LE22#1 × Truss	0.5 (0.6)		0.5 (0.6)		-0.1 (1.0)	
LE22#1 × Sunak	0.3 (0.8)		0.3 (0.8)		-0.3 (0.8)	
LE22#1 × Badenoch	0.5 (0.7)		0.5 (0.7)		0.6 (0.7)	
LE22#1 × Mordaunt	1.2 (0.2)		1.2 (0.2)		0.5 (0.6)	
LE22#1 × Tugendhat	1.9+ (< 0.1)	2.8* (< 0.1)	1.9+ (< 0.1)	2.8* (< 0.1)	1.7 (0.1)	2.0* (< 0.1)
LE22#1 × Braverman	0.8 (0.6)		0.8 (0.6)		0.3 (0.8)	
LE22#2 × Sunak	0.2 (0.8)		0.2 (0.8)		0.1 (0.9)	
LE22#2 × Mordaunt	-2.0 (0.3)	-3.9 (0.1)	-2.0 (0.3)	-3.9 (0.1)	-3.3 (0.1)	-1.7 (0.4)
LE22#2 × Johnson	-0.7 (0.6)		-0.7 (0.6)		-0.6 (0.7)	
One Nation	0.2 (0.8)		0.2 (0.8)		0.1 (0.9)	
Common Sense	-0.1 (1.0)		-0.1 (1.0)		-0.6 (0.7)	

Table 4. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
European Research	-0.2 (0.9)		-0.2 (0.9)		-0.4 (0.7)	
Free Market	1.1 (0.3)	2.2* (< 0.1)	1.1 (0.3)	2.2* (< 0.1)	1.4 (0.2)	
Levelling Up	0.2 (0.8)		0.2 (0.8)		-0.1 (0.9)	
Environment Network	0.0 (1.0)		0.0 (1.0)		0.3 (0.7)	
China Research	0.3 (0.8)		0.3 (0.8)		-0.1 (0.9)	
Num.Obs.	120	120	120	120	120	120
AIC	97.1	57.1	97.1	57.1	105.0	67.5
BIC	161.2	71.0	161.2	71.0	169.1	78.7
Log.Lik.	-25.558	-23.537	-25.558	-23.537	-29.504	-29.773
RMSE	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.23	0.26	0.26

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Table A5 - Support for Stride by round

	Round 1		Round 2	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	3.2 (0.6)	-3.6*** (< 0.1)	3.2 (0.6)	-3.6*** (< 0.1)
Female	-1.0 (0.3)		-1.0 (0.3)	
BAME	-0.2 (0.9)		-0.2 (0.9)	
LGBT	-0.5 (0.8)		-0.5 (0.8)	
Era Elected	-0.2 (0.7)		-0.2 (0.7)	
Gov Exp	0.5 (0.7)		0.5 (0.7)	
Economic Right	-0.1 (0.4)		-0.1 (0.4)	
LE22#1 × Truss	-0.3		-0.3	

Table A5. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
	(0.8)		(0.8)	
LE22#1 × Sunak	-0.2		-0.2	
	(0.8)		(0.8)	
LE22#1 × Badenoch	0.5		0.5	
	(0.7)		(0.7)	
LE22#1 × Mordaunt	2.1*	2.0*	2.1*	2.0*
	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)	(< 0.1)
LE22#1 × Tugendhat	0.7		0.7	
	(0.7)		(0.7)	
LE22#1 × Braverman	1.9		1.9	
	(0.1)		(0.1)	
LE22#2 × Sunak	0.8	1.4+	0.8	1.4+
	(0.4)	(< 0.1)	(0.4)	(< 0.1)
LE22#2 × Mordaunt	-0.4		-0.4	
	(0.8)		(0.8)	
LE22#2 × Johnson	0.4		0.4	
	(0.8)		(0.8)	
One Nation	-0.1		-0.1	
	(0.9)		(0.9)	
Common Sense	0.0		0.0	
	(1.0)		(1.0)	
European Research	0.2		0.2	
	(0.9)		(0.9)	
Free Market	0.2		0.2	
	(0.9)		(0.9)	
Levelling Up	-0.7		-0.7	
	(0.4)		(0.4)	
Environment Network	-0.7		-0.7	
	(0.4)		(0.4)	
China Research	-0.5		-0.5	
	(0.7)		(0.7)	
Num.Obs.	120	120	120	120
AIC	96.0	57.8	96.0	57.8
BIC	160.2	66.1	160.2	66.1
Log.Lik.	-25.019	-25.888	-25.019	-25.888
RMSE	0.23	0.24	0.23	0.24

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Table A6 - Support for Patel by round

	Round 1	
	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	-8.2 (0.4)	-20.3+ (< 0.1)
Female	-0.1 (1.0)	-0.5 (0.6)
BAME	0.1 (0.9)	-1.1 (0.4)
LGBT	-0.5 (0.8)	
Era Elected	-0.5 (0.3)	
Gov Exp	-0.6 (0.6)	
Economic Right	0.1 (0.3)	0.2 (0.1)
LE22#1 × Truss	2.7* (< 0.1)	4.9* (< 0.1)
LE22#1 × Sunak	-0.1 (1.0)	
LE22#1 × Badenoch	-0.9 (0.5)	-1.3 (0.4)
LE22#1 × Mordaunt	-1.7 (0.3)	-2.0 (0.3)
LE22#1 × Tugendhat	-0.3 (0.9)	
LE22#1 × Braverman	-0.1 (1.0)	
LE22#2 × Sunak	-2.2+ (< 0.1)	-2.5+ (< 0.1)
LE22#2 × Mordaunt	1.4 (0.5)	
LE22#2 × Johnson	-1.6 (0.3)	
One Nation	-1.5 (0.2)	-2.0 (0.1)
Common Sense	-2.4 (0.1)	-4.2* (< 0.1)

Table A6. Continued

	Round 1	
	Full	Stepwise
European Research	0.4 (0.8)	
Free Market	3.4* (< 0.1)	5.0* (< 0.1)
Levelling Up	-0.6 (0.6)	
Environment Network	-0.7 (0.6)	-1.9 (0.2)
China Research	-3.9+ (< 0.1)	-4.4+ (< 0.1)
Num.Obs.	120	120
AIC	71.2	42.6
BIC	135.3	78.9
Log.Lik.	-12.595	-8.317
RMSE	0.15	0.12

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Table A7. Unknown position by round

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
(Intercept)	0.2 (1.0)	3.7** (<0.1)	2.1 (0.7)	2.5** (<0.1)	-0.4 (0.9)	3.2** (<0.1)	6.4 (0.2)	3.8** (<0.1)	16.3** (<0.1)	14.6** (<0.1)
Female	1.0+ (<0.1)	0.7 (0.2)	0.8 (0.2)	0.8 (0.2)	0.5 (0.4)	0.5 (0.4)	0.7 (0.2)	0.7 (0.2)	-0.5 (0.4)	-0.5 (0.4)
BAME	-1.0 (0.2)	-0.3 (0.7)	-0.3 (0.7)	-0.3 (0.7)	-0.9 (0.2)	-0.9 (0.2)	-0.9 (0.2)	0.1 (0.9)	0.1 (0.9)	0.1 (0.9)
LGBT	0.6 (0.6)	0.0 (1.0)	0.0 (1.0)	0.0 (1.0)	-0.2 (0.9)	-0.2 (0.9)	-0.3 (0.7)	0.8 (0.5)	0.8 (0.5)	0.8 (0.5)
Era Elected	-0.7* (<0.1)	-0.8** (<0.1)	-0.9** (<0.1)	-0.7** (<0.1)	-1.0** (<0.1)	-0.8** (<0.1)	-0.9* (<0.1)	-0.8** (<0.1)	-0.6+ (<0.1)	-0.2 (0.3)
Gov Exp	-0.9 (0.2)	-1.0+ (<0.1)	-0.5 (0.4)	-0.5 (0.4)	-0.8 (0.3)	-0.8 (0.3)	-1.1 (0.1)	-1.1* (<0.1)	-0.1 (0.9)	-0.1 (0.9)
Economic Right	0.0 (0.4)	0.0 (0.7)	0.0 (0.7)	0.0 (0.7)	0.1 (0.3)	0.1 (0.3)	0.0 (0.6)	0.0 (0.6)	-0.2** (<0.1)	-0.2** (<0.1)
LE22#1 × Truss	-1.1 (0.1)	-1.1* (<0.1)	-0.8 (0.3)	-0.8 (0.3)	-1.4+ (<0.1)	-1.7* (<0.1)	-1.0 (0.2)	-0.8 (0.1)	-0.8 (0.3)	-0.8 (0.3)
LE22#1 × Sunak	-0.2 (0.8)	-0.5 (0.5)	-0.5 (0.5)	-0.5 (0.5)	-0.9 (0.2)	-0.8 (0.1)	-0.6 (0.4)	-0.9 (0.2)	-1.0 (0.2)	-0.6 (0.2)
LE22#1 × Badenoch	-2.4 (0.8)	-2.6 (0.5)	-2.6+ (0.5)	-3.2* (0.5)	-2.4 (0.2)	-2.5 (0.1)	-2.2 (0.4)	-2.2 (0.4)	-3.2* (0.2)	-3.9* (0.2)

Table 7. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
LE22#1 × Mordaunt	(0.1) -1.0 (0.2)	(0.1) -1.1 (0.2)	(<0.1) -0.8 (0.3)	(<0.1) -1.1 (0.2)	(0.1) -0.8 (0.3)	(0.1)	(0.1) -0.4 (0.6)	(0.2)	(<0.1) -0.1 (0.9)	(<0.1)
LE22#1 × Tugendhat	-1.4 (0.2)	-1.3 (0.2)	-1.4 (0.3)	-1.6 (0.2)	-1.1 (0.4)	0.4 (0.7)	0.4 (0.7)	0.4 (0.7)	1.4 (0.3)	1.4 (0.3)
LE22#1 × Braverman	-0.3 (0.8)	0.0 (1.0)	0.0 (1.0)	0.0 (1.0)	0.1 (0.9)	0.3 (0.8)	0.3 (0.8)	0.3 (0.8)	-0.5 (0.7)	-0.5 (0.7)
LE22#2 × Sunak	0.2 (0.7)	0.0 (1.0)	0.0 (1.0)	0.0 (1.0)	0.6 (0.4)	0.6 (0.3)	0.6 (0.3)	0.6 (0.3)	-0.3 (0.7)	-0.3 (0.7)
LE22#2 × Mordaunt	1.3 (0.2)	0.5 (0.5)	1.6 (0.2)	1.9+ (<0.1)	1.6 (0.2)	0.4 (0.8)	0.4 (0.8)	0.4 (0.8)	0.3 (0.8)	0.3 (0.8)
LE22#2 × Johnson	-2.3+ (<0.1)	-2.2* (<0.1)	-1.6 (0.1)	-1.8* (<0.1)	-1.0 (0.3)	-1.1 (0.3)	-1.1 (0.3)	-0.9 (0.3)	-0.7 (0.4)	-0.7 (0.4)
One Nation	-0.2 (0.7)	-0.6 (0.3)	-0.6 (0.3)	-0.7 (0.2)	-0.6 (0.3)	-0.5 (0.4)	-0.5 (0.4)	-0.6 (0.3)	-0.6 (0.3)	-0.6 (0.3)
Common Sense	0.0 (1.0)	-0.6 (0.6)	-0.6 (0.6)	-0.8 (0.5)	-0.8 (0.5)	-0.8 (0.5)	-0.8 (0.5)	-0.8 (0.5)	-0.6 (0.6)	-0.6 (0.6)
European Research	0.6 (0.5)	0.3 (0.7)	0.2 (0.8)	0.2 (0.8)	0.2 (0.8)	0.1 (0.9)	0.1 (0.9)	0.1 (0.9)	0.2 (0.8)	0.2 (0.8)
Free Market	-0.1	0.7	0.4	1.1	0.4	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.6**	2.1**

Table 7. Continued

	Round 1		Round 2		Round 3		Round 4		Round 5	
	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise	Full	Stepwise
Levelling Up	(0.9) 0.2	(0.3) 0.4	(0.1) 0.5	(0.6) 0.5	(0.2) 0.5	(0.2) 0.5	(<0.1) -0.2	(<0.1) -0.2	(<0.1) -0.2	(<0.1) -0.2
Environment Network	(1.0) 0.0	(0.7) 0.2	(0.7) 0.2	(0.7) 0.2	(0.6) 0.3	(0.6) 0.3	(0.4) -0.5	(0.7) -0.5	(0.7) -0.5	-0.9+ (<0.1)
China Research	(0.4) -0.7	(0.3) -0.9	(0.1) -1.4	(0.7) -1.4	(0.1) -1.3	(0.1) -1.3	(0.1) -0.9	(0.1) -1.1	(0.3) -0.9	(0.3) -0.9
Num.Obs.	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120	120
AIC	170.1	148.9	173.2	152.1	168.5	148.1	176.5	154.8	168.3	146.7
BIC	234.2	174.0	237.3	177.2	232.6	162.0	240.7	174.3	232.4	166.2
Log.Lik.	-62.054	-65.438	-63.583	-67.074	-61.252	-69.034	-65.274	-70.411	-61.136	-66.354
RMSE	0.42	0.43	0.42	0.44	0.41	0.45	0.43	0.45	0.42	0.44

+ $P < .1$, * $P < .05$, ** $P < .01$, *** $P < .001$

Appendix 2—Regression models for each candidate.

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