

## LOCAL ELECTIONS AND VOTER ID PILOTS

LIVIA TESTA  
& EXETER Q-STEP CENTRE

*Using a quasi experiment to  
examine the impact of voter id  
requirement on turnout and  
perceptions of fraud.*



A step-change in  
quantitative social  
science skills

Funded by the  
Nuffield Foundation  
ESRC and HEFCE

Presentation prepared for:  
**Voter ID roundtable: what  
happened, where next?**  
**Wednesday 27th June 2018,  
2-4pm**

Mary Sumner Room, Mary  
Sumner House, 24 Tufton  
Street, Westminster, London,  
SW1P 3RB

## QUESTIONS:

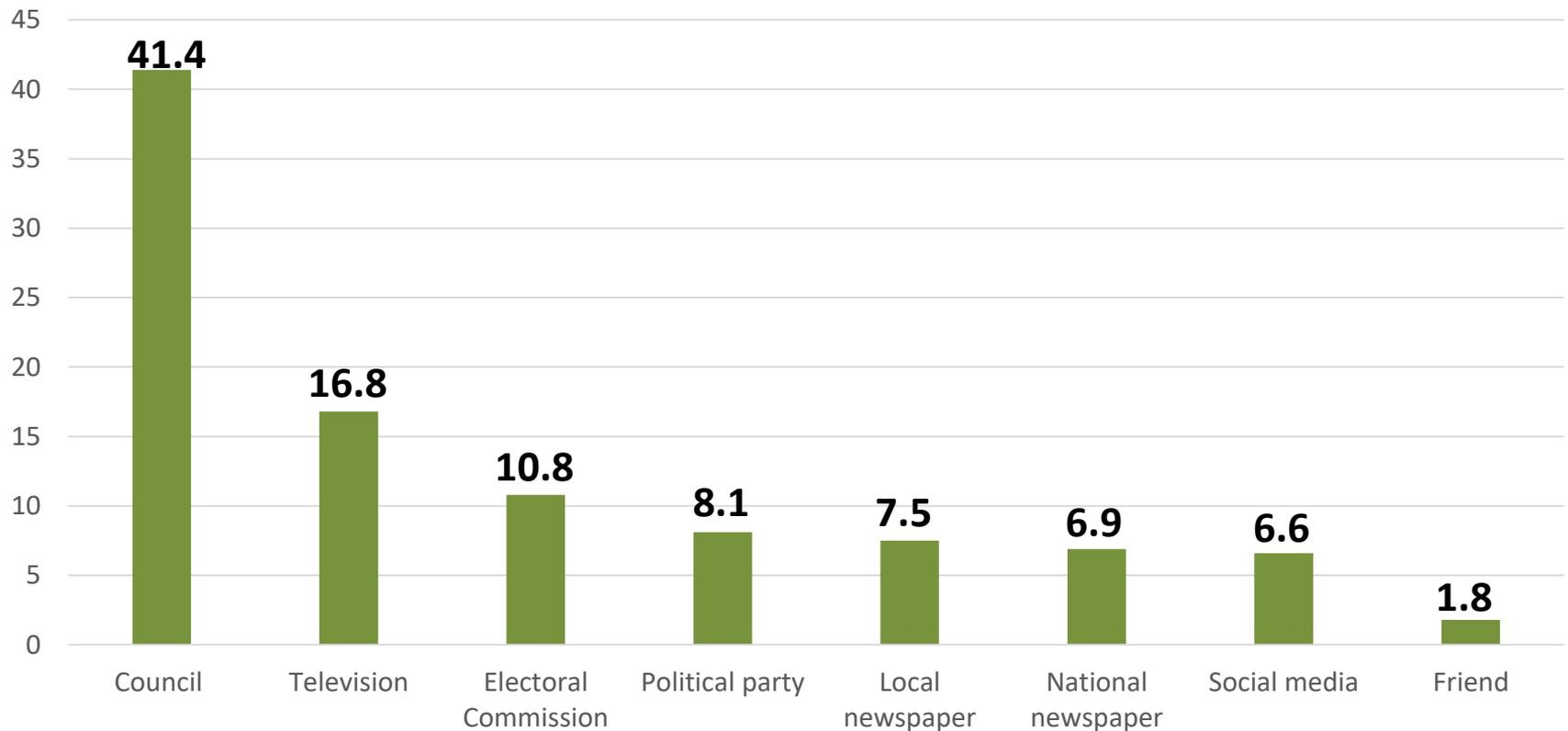
- Are respondents aware of the voter requirements?
- Do voter ID requirements deter people from voting?
- Do identification procedures improve confidence in the election or reduce belief in incidence of voter fraud?
- Are requests for ID equal across all groups where voter id pilots are in effect?



## Study Design:

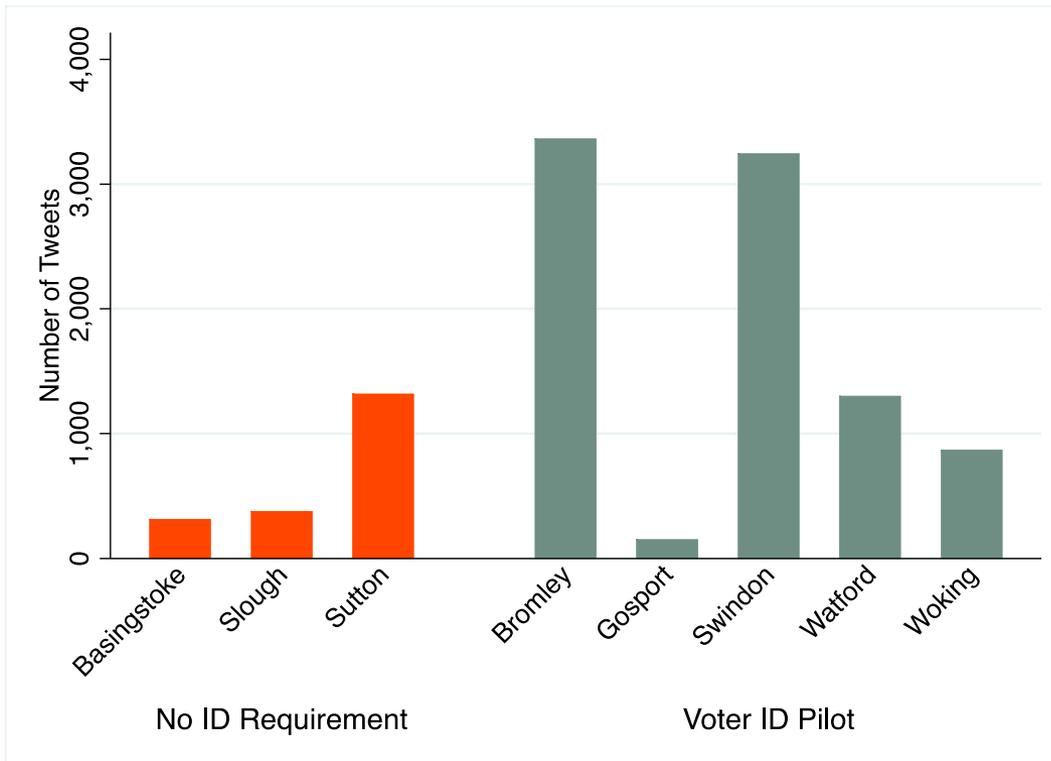
- **5 pilot** (Watford, Woking, Swindon, Gosport, Bromley) and **3 control** councils (Slough, Basingstoke and Deane, Sutton)
- Voting behaviour, awareness and attitudes towards fraud
- **Postal Survey** with 452 responses [330 in pilot councils]
- Sample drawn from open registers, 11% response rate

75% respondents indicated they were aware of voter id requirement (in pilot councils): where they hear about it [% of total mentions]



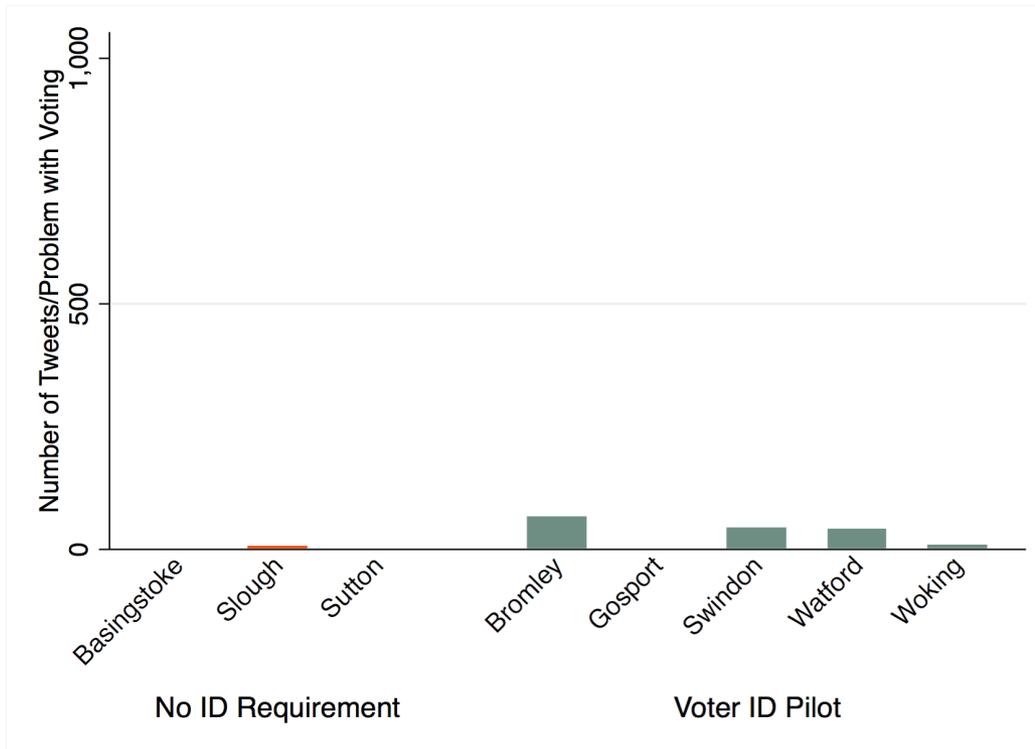
■ Voter ID Pilot

## Saliency of local election in pilot councils: Twitter activity by borough



Note: We collected Twitter activity mentioning local elections on day of election and following day. In all there were 84,335 tweets of which 13% can be linked to the boroughs in our analysis. Data collected 3-4 May 2018

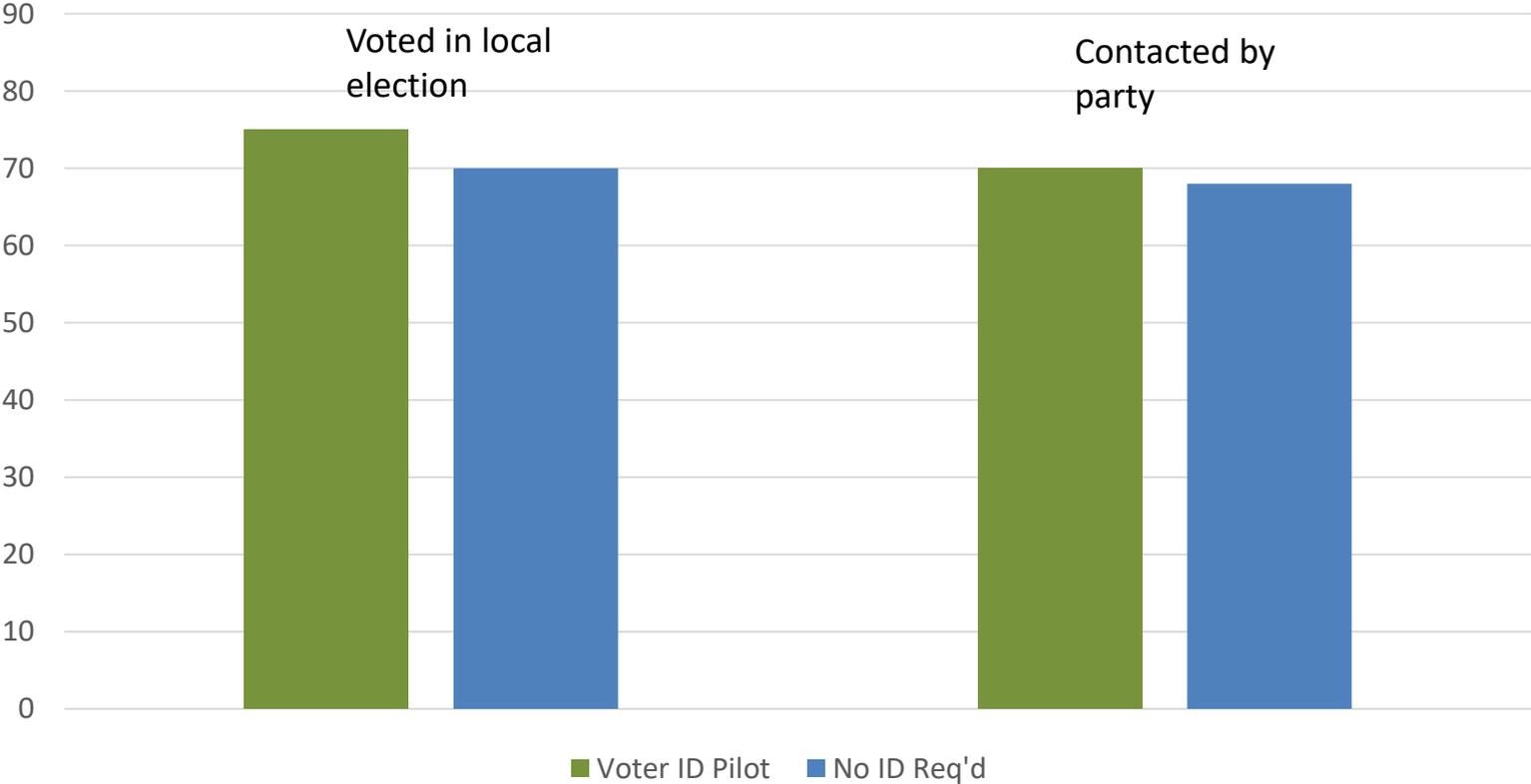
## Problems with voting: Twitter activity by borough



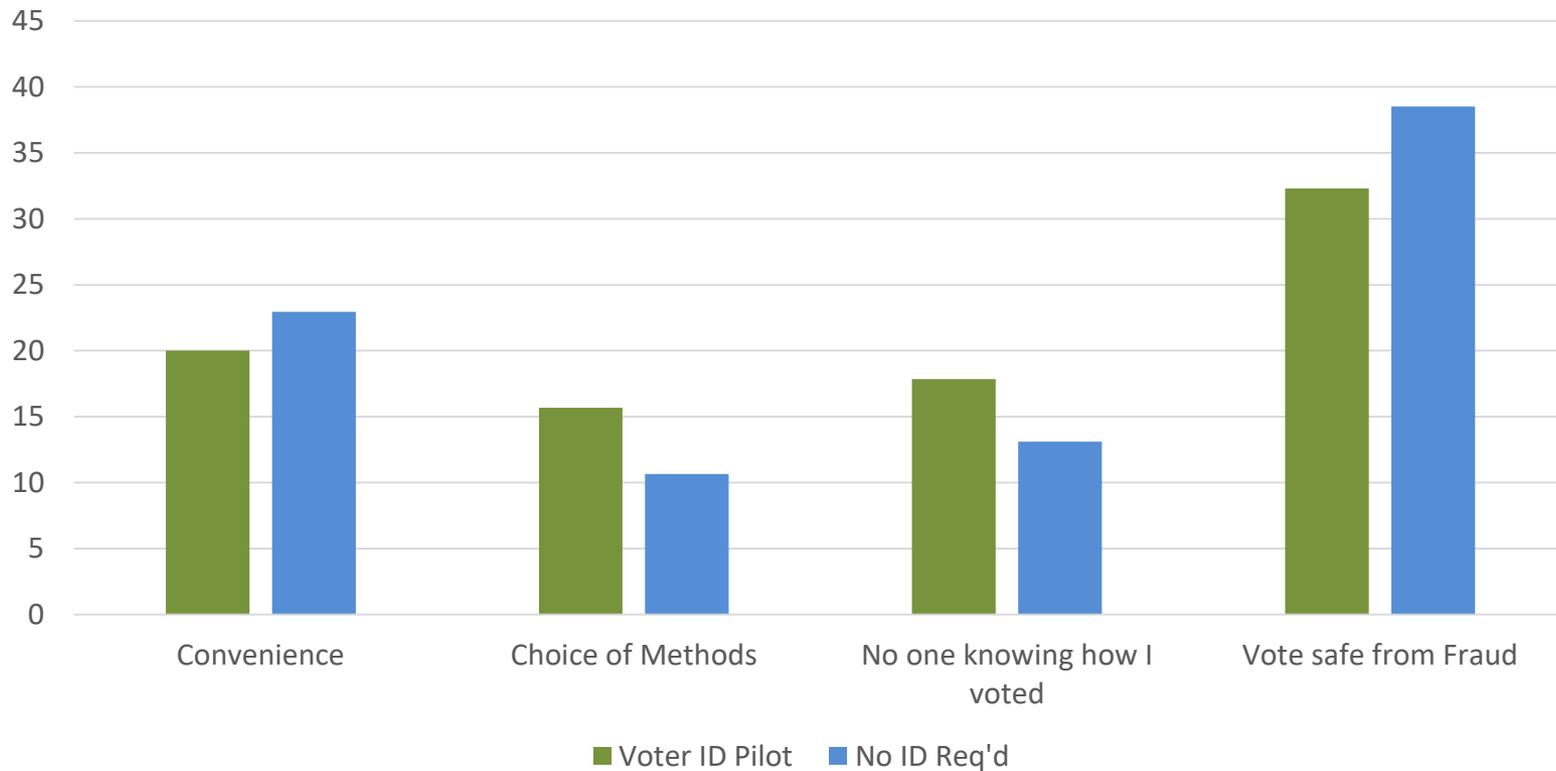
Note: Figure shows number of Tweets mentioning problem with voting where location identified (e.g “turned away” – not necessarily instances of voters having issues). Data collected 3-4 May 2018



# Voting: turnout & party contact

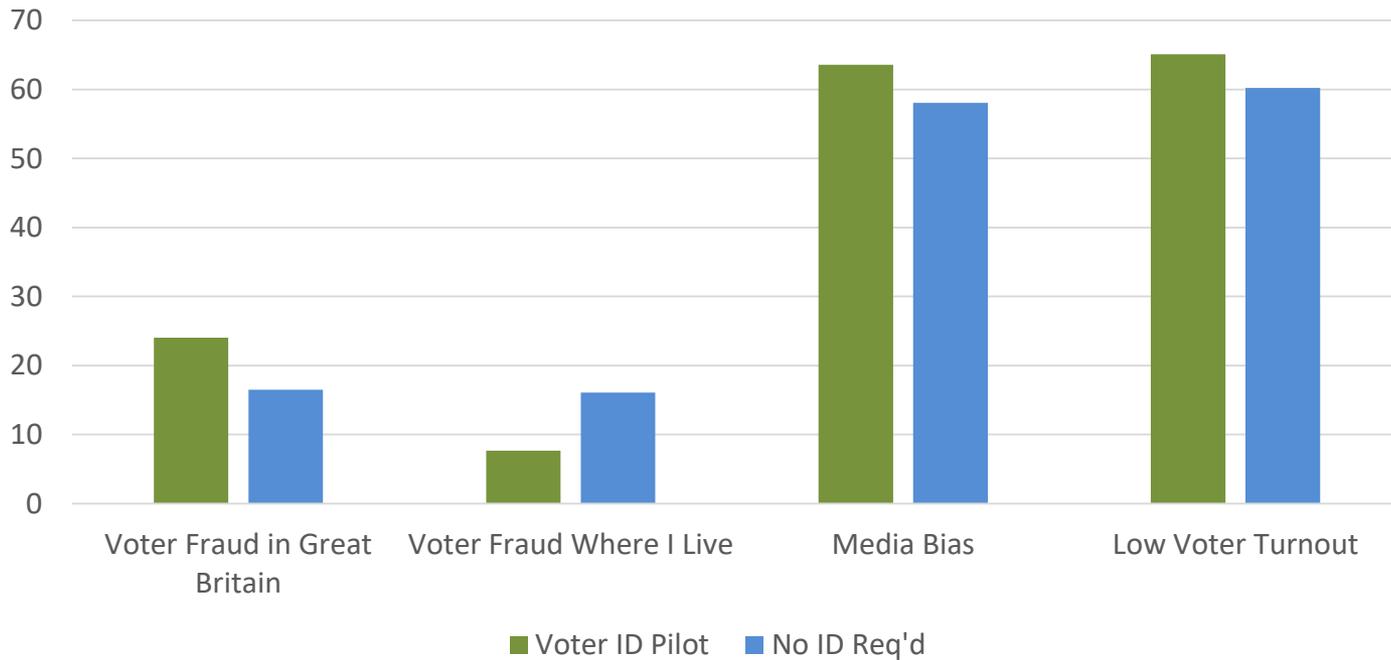


# Voting procedures:...which one of the following is most important to you when you vote? [% saying most important]

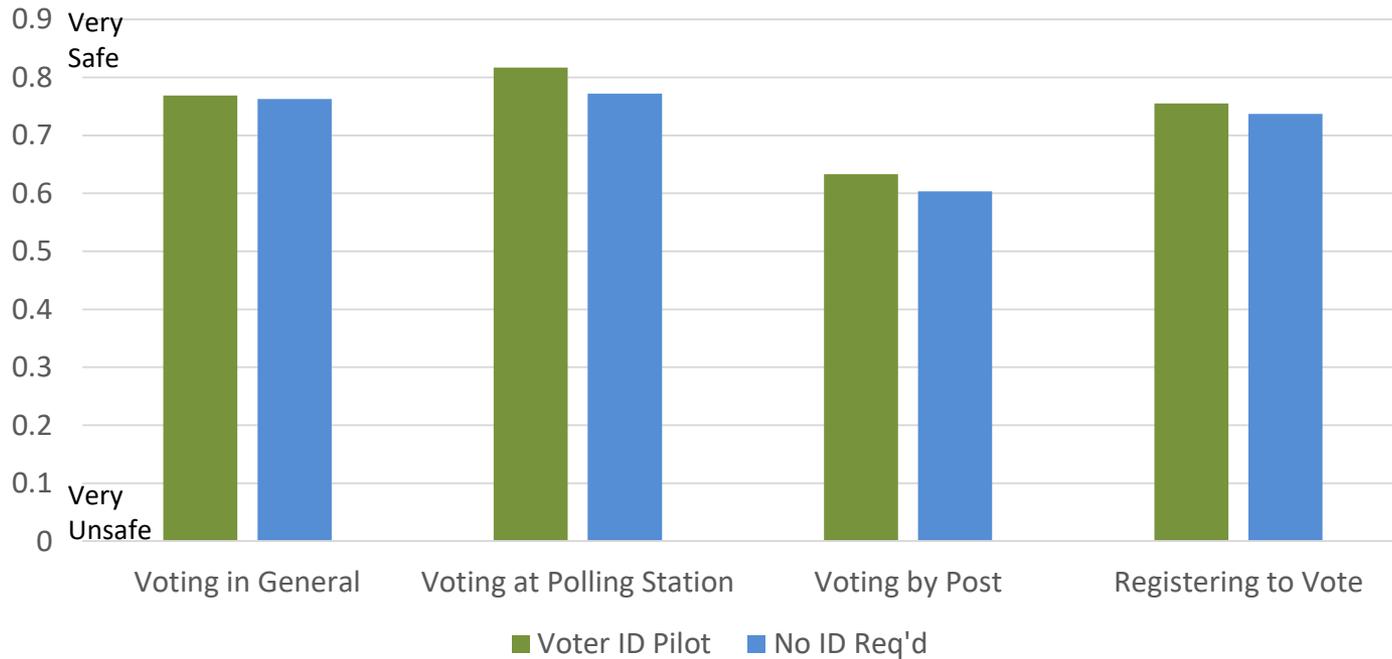




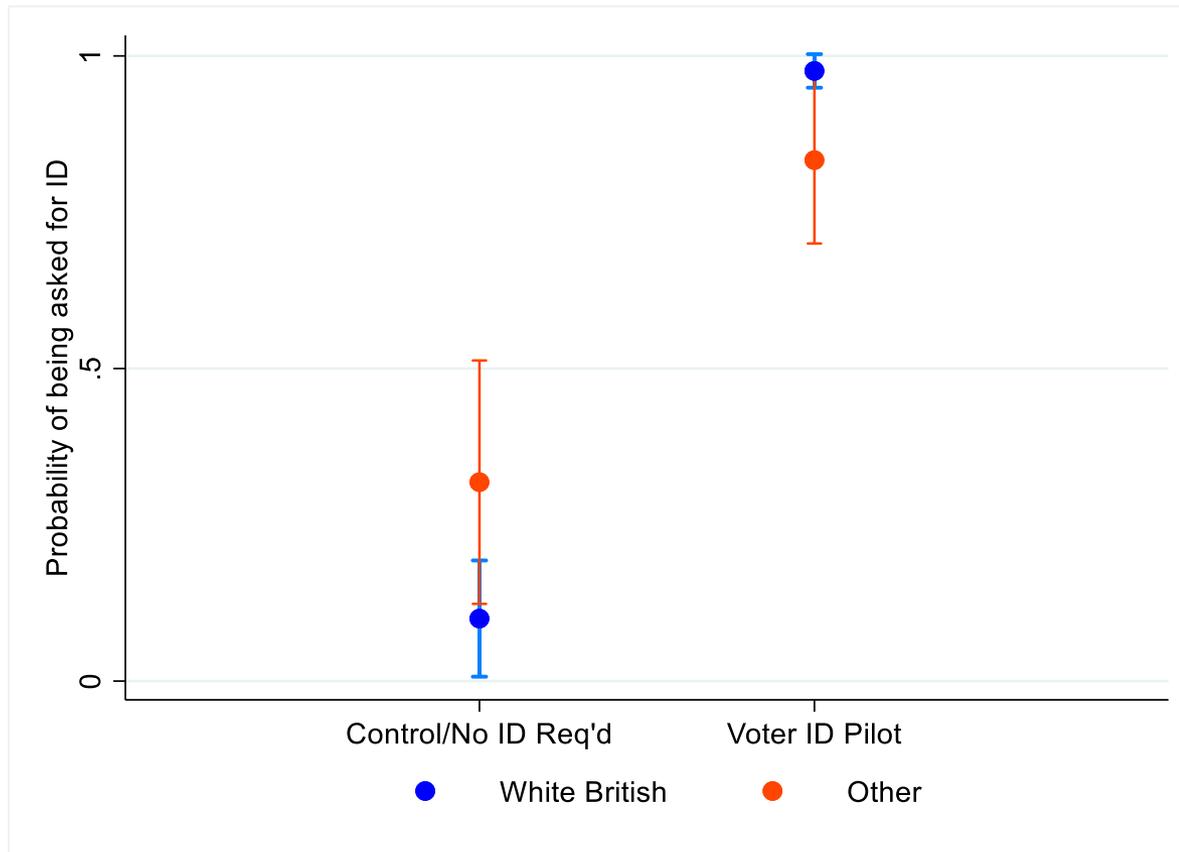
## Voting procedures:...thinking about elections, how big of a problem are the following? [% very big or fairly big problem]



# Safety of voting procedures:...when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, how safe or unsafe would you say the following are?



Is requirement applied equally? For those who voted at polling station, probability of being asked for id.



# Conclusions:

- Novelty effect likely thus no turnout depression.
- Small but significant difference in perceptions of fraud at polling stations – pilot councils seen as more safe.
- Lack of evidence for discrimination in application of id requirement in pilot councils (but note of caution in non-pilot councils).
- Awareness of the pilots did prime respondents to think more about voter fraud.