Discrimination by Politicians against Religious Minorities: Experimental Evidence from the UK

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November 2020

Are Labour party politicians anti-Semitic, and are Conservative party politicians Islamophobic? In this correspondence study we measure the responsiveness of elected local representatives in the United Kingdom to requests from putative constituents from minority religious groups. We send short email requests to 10,268 local government representatives from each of the main political parties, from stereotypically Islamic, Jewish, and Christian names. Response rates are six to seven percentage points lower to stereotypically Muslim or Jewish names. The two major political parties both show equal bias towards the two minority group names. Results suggest that the bias in response may be implicit. Bias is lower in more dense and diverse locations.

Keywords: Correspondence study, discrimination, islamophobia, antisemitism, politicians

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We thank Stephen Olet for research assistance. Helpful comments were provided by Georgina Turner, Hector Rufrancos, Nicholas Farhi, Vikram Pathania, and Iftikhar Hussain. We also thank all of the councillors who responded (or did not) to our emails. Data on councillors came from <http://opencouncildata.co.uk>, on local area characteristics from nomisweb.co.uk, and on election results from Andrew Teale <https://www.andrewteale.me.uk/leap/downloads>. This research did not receive any specific grant from funding agencies in the public, commercial, or not-for-profit sectors. A pre-analysis plan for this study is registered at the AEA RCT Registry under registration number 0003876. The study was approved by the LSE Research Ethics Committee (ref. 1014). Lee once ran unsuccessfully for local elections as a Green Party candidate, has voted for the Liberal Democrats, and been a member of the Labour Party. Kash joined the Conservative Party in 2018 when it appeared that only Conservative Party members would have a vote on who the next Prime Minister of the UK would be. In the end there was no vote at all as the challenger to Theresa May dropped out, and so Kash wasted his £25.

Introduction

Attention to Islamophobia and anti-Semitism in the main United Kingdom (UK) political parties has increased substantially in recent years. A 2016 inquiry into anti-Semitism in the Labour Party found "clear evidence (going back some years) of minority hateful or ignorant attitudes and behaviours festering within a sometimes bitter incivility of discourse" (Chakrabarti, 2016). However a cross-party Parliamentary Committee noted, "there exists no reliable, empirical evidence to support the notion that there is a higher prevalence of anti-Semitic attitudes within the Labour Party than any other political party" (House of Commons Home Affairs Committee, 2016). In 2018 the Muslim Council of Britain¹ and Conservative Baroness Sayeeda Warsi² called for enquiries into Islamophobia in the Conservative Party. Other critics have accused the Conservative Party of failing to tackle Islamophobia (Dunleavy and Kippin, 2018). The 2017 British Social Attitudes Survey showed that 33 percent of those who identify with the Conservative party would describe themselves as somewhat racist, compared with 18 percent of those who identify with the Labour party (Kelley et al., 2017).

¹ Fisher, Lucy (31 May 2018). "Muslim Council of Britain demands inquiry into Tory 'Islamophobia'". The Times

² Sabbagh, Dan (4 July 2018). "Sayeeda Warsi calls for inquiry into Islamophobia within Tory party". The Guardian.

In this paper we ask whether local politicians of different political parties display systematic bias against constituents with stereotypically Jewish and Muslim names. A growing literature documents discrimination by elected representatives against their constituents, based on race or religion, through their official duties, in the United States (Butler and Broockman, 2011; Grose, 2014; Costa, 2017; Hughes et al., 2019; Lajevardi, 2018), South Africa (McClendon, 2016), and Sweden (Adman and Jansson, 2017). This discrimination varies towards different minority groups (Hughes et al., 2019; Pfaff et al., 2018), and by political party affiliation (Lajevardi, 2018).

We replicate these findings in the UK. We test for the prevalence of discrimination by elected local politicians against their constituents based on perceived race or religious identity. We conduct a correspondence study with a series of email requests from stereotypically Muslim, Jewish, or Christian names, documenting systematic bias in response rates. Such discrimination in the provision of services based on race or religion is against UK law.³ This form of discrimination by councillors may have substantive impacts for constituents. For example councillors set policy on access to the limited supply of social housing, policies which have been documented to disadvantage ethnic minorities (Caney, 2019; Henderson and Karn, 1984; Preece and Bimpson, 2019; Rutter and Latorre, 2009).

³ <https://www.citizensadvice.org.uk/law-and-courts/discrimination/discrimination-because-of-race-religion-or-belief/discrimination-because-of-religion-or-belief/>

We find that response rates to simple requests from purported constituents are 6 - 7 percentage points lower from stereotypically Muslim or Jewish names. Results do not vary when the religion of the sender is explicitly identified, indicating that the bias is driven by names alone. Response rates to female constituent names are 2 - 3 percentage points higher than to male constituent names. Response rates to both Jewish and Muslim names from Labour Party councillors show less bias than from other party councillors, though some bias remains. Responses to Jewish names are higher in places with more dense populations, with larger Jewish populations, and with larger non-white populations. Responses to Muslim names are also higher in places with large non-white populations.

Our study adds to the literature by not only showing the existence of discrimination by elected representatives, but also by demonstrating how these discriminatory behaviours differ depending on political party affiliation and the target of discrimination.

Experimental Setting and Data

Local government is responsible for around one fifth of public spending in the UK. There are 418 councils, with an average of 50 councillors each, for a total of 20,712 local councillors. Most of these belong to the three major political parties; the Conservatives (9,022), Labour (6,457), and the Liberal Democrats (1,874). Our sample contains 10,268 councillors acquired by web-scraping local council websites that share a standardized layout. These councils are more likely to be urban, with larger, more dense, and more diverse populations.

Obtaining informed consent from our subjects is impractical, so we follow the ethical guidelines outlined in McClendon (2012) and Riach and Rich (2004), and argue that the value of the information obtained (and the lack of alternative methods for obtaining it) outweighs the small cost to the subjects. We aim to minimize burden by keeping the message short, and protect the confidentiality of individuals involved. Evidence from Sweden suggests that neither politicians themselves nor ordinary citizens find survey experiments to be particularly problematic (Naurin and Öhberg, 2019).

Our sample comprises roughly half (198 of 418) councils in the UK. We select only those councils that use a standardised website format that can be easily

scraped⁴. This is therefore a non-random sample of all councils, but still represents a large share. Councils in our sample are in general slightly more urban than other councils – with higher population density, higher incomes, bigger non-white populations, and being more likely to be run by one of the two main parties⁵. We randomly assign councillors within our sample to receive an email from a stereotypical Jewish, Muslim, or Christian resident⁶. We block the randomisation by council.

Our main outcome is simply a binary indicator for whether a response is received or not. We discard automated and “out of office” responses. We use pre-specified control variables to improve the precision of our main estimates and also to assess heterogeneity in effects. At the ward (sub-council) level, we have data on the percentage of the population that are Jewish and Muslim, the proportion of migrants (from the 2011 Census), and the local unemployment rate (from the Department for Work and Pensions Job Seekers Allowance data).⁷ On average there

⁴ These councils provide a list on a single page of all councillors alongside their email address, which allows for relatively simple and efficient scraping. Other councils also provide contact details for councillors but in a less standardised format. The full population list was obtained from the website opencouncildata.co.uk.

⁵ Descriptive statistics for councils are shown in the appendix.

⁶ Pre-testing indicated that the stereotypical Muslim name was more reliably identified than the stereotypical Jewish name, and so to avoid any bias in our results through mistaken non-identification of Jewish names by email recipients, we explicitly mention the emailer’s religion in the body of a randomly assigned half of the emails.

⁷ In our pre-analysis plan we also discussed controlling for Gross Disposable Household Income and the party in power, however these are only available at council level and we also control for council fixed effects.

are three councillors in each ward. The local unemployment rate is based on the Department for Work and Pensions actual claimant counts as the numerator (August 2017 to May 2018) and the 2011 census population as the denominator.

We estimate the ethnicity of councillors based on their names, using an algorithm developed by Laohaprapanon and Sood (2018) based on data scraped from over 130,000 Wikipedia pages by Ambekar et al. (2009), and gender using an algorithm developed by Vanetta (2015).

Treatment

We randomize each councillor to receive one of two email scripts, from one of six different names. The email scripts are shown in Figure 1 below. The first email script makes a simple request in line with basic councillor responsibilities. The second request explicitly indicates the religion of the emailer. The two email scripts can be seen as different levels of intensity of the treatment. The six treatment names are Levi Goldstein (male Jewish), Shoshana Goldstein (female Jewish), Mohammad Hussain (male Muslim), Zara Hussain (female Muslim), Harry White (male Christian), and Sarah White (female Christian).⁸ For the sake of consistency, we are labelling Harry White and Sarah White as ‘Christian’ names. We do, however, acknowledge that these names may not be explicitly associated with being religious, but rather as being associated membership of the majority population.

The email addresses used were created to include the full name of treatment (e.g. levi.goldstein1576@gmail.com), therefore councillors could be treated from their inbox, before even opening the email. Email delivery was staggered across two weeks, from 4th to 16th March 2019. Data was collected two weeks after the last email was sent out, on 30th March 2019.

⁸ In an online pre-test survey 98 percent of respondents correctly identified the Muslim names as belonging to a Muslim, and 78 percent correctly identified the Jewish names.

Figure 1: Treatment Email Scripts

Email 1: Subject: Question about Surgery Times

Dear [Councillor Name],

I have a question about local services and was wondering if you could tell me when your surgery* is held?

Kind regards, [Name]

Email 2: Subject: Question about Sponsored Walk

Dear [Councillor Name],

I'm interested in organizing a sponsored walk in the local area to raise money for [Christian Aid/Islamic Relief/Global Jewish Relief]. Could you advise me if I need to get some kind of permit?

Kind regards, [Name]

* A "surgery" is a time when politicians hold open office hours in which constituents can come for private one-to-one meetings with their representatives. These 'advice' surgeries are common in British, Irish, and Australian politics.

Results

The overall response rate to our emails from the male Christian name (Harry White) was 54 percent. This is a similar response rate to that found by a survey of real requests to councillors, in which 51 percent received a response within two weeks (see Annex). Amongst those who responded, the median time to response was 12 hours, and the median length of responses was 228 words.

We next estimate linear probability regressions of the form:

$$Response_i = \beta_1 Name_i + \beta_2 EmailType_i + c + d + t + \varepsilon_i \quad (1)$$

where *Response* is a binary indicator for whether a response was recorded within two weeks, *Name* is a categorical variable for which of the six treatment names was randomly assigned, *EmailType* is a binary variable for whether Email 1 or 2 was randomly assigned, *c* are council fixed effects, *d* are day of the week fixed effects, *t* are time of day fixed effects, and ε_i are individual specific error terms.

Compared to the male Christian name (Harry White), response rates to Jewish names are 5 – 6 percentage points lower, and 6 to 9 percentage points lower to Muslim names. Response rates are marginally higher to the female Christian name (Sarah) than to the male Christian name (Harry). Response rates are also higher to Zara Hussain than to Mohammad Hussain. Results are robust to the inclusion of

council (randomization strata) fixed effects (Table 1), and to sub-council level control variables (see Appendix).

Bias in response rates is similar across the two types of emails that represent different levels of religious identification. This suggests that the discrimination occurs based on the name of the sender alone. Due to the high volume and low cognitive effort of checking emails, councilors may be acting unconsciously when exposed to non-Christian/minority group names (Bertrand et al., 2005, p. 96; Hughes et al., 2019). Alternatively, councillors may simply be consciously discriminating against minority constituents, irrespective of their degree of self-identity. Because the identity of the sender is present in the email address itself, councillors may simply choose to not even open the emails from names associated with minority groups.

Table 1: Effect of Sender Name on Email Response Rate

	All	All	Email 1	Email 2
harry.white	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)
levi.goldstein	-0.050*** (0.017)	-0.045*** (0.017)	-0.022 (0.022)	-0.057** (0.027)
mohammad.hussain	-0.070*** (0.017)	-0.095*** (0.018)	-0.088*** (0.023)	-0.125*** (0.029)
sarah.white	0.029* (0.017)	0.030* (0.017)	0.036 (0.025)	0.040* (0.024)
shoshana.goldstein	-0.051*** (0.017)	-0.062*** (0.017)	-0.095*** (0.021)	-0.012 (0.027)
zara.hussain	-0.043** (0.017)	-0.058*** (0.018)	-0.059** (0.024)	-0.063** (0.029)
Time and Day FE		Yes	Yes	Yes
Council FE		Yes	Yes	Yes
N	9,994	9,994	5,157	4,837
R2	0.005	0.124	0.177	0.122
Outcome Mean	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54

Note: This table shows the effect of sender name on the probability of receiving a response, relative to the omitted category Harry White (White male). The treatment names are Levi Goldstein (Jewish male), Shoshana Goldstein (Jewish female), Mohammad Hussain (Muslim male), Zara Hussain (Muslim female), and Sarah White (White female) Column (1) shows unconditional results. Column (2) adds council fixed effects (the strata within which randomization was conducted). Email 1 provides no detail about the sender besides their name. Email 2 explicitly identifies the religion of the sender. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent critical level.

Turning to the pre-registered analysis of heterogeneity by non-randomly assigned mediators, we first show that bias against both Muslim and Jewish names is greater from Conservative Party councillors than Labour Party councillors (Figure 2). Responses from Conservative councillors are no different to other non-main party councillors. Bias is similar towards both Jewish and Muslim names, for both Labour

and Conservative councillors. Contrary to the popular narrative, Labour councillors do not discriminate against Jewish names more than Muslim names, and Conservative councillors do not discriminate against Muslim names more than Jewish names.

Figure 2: Response Rates by Political Party

Note: Response rates are estimated after removing council fixed effects, and standardizing residuals to a response rate equal to the sample average of 55 percent for whites. Bars represent 95 percent confidence intervals.

We then consider the relationship between local area characteristics and bias. Bias is largest against non-Christian names in the least densely populated locations with small non-white populations (Figure 3). One reason for this could be that councillors in the most white areas are more likely to be white themselves. On

average we see much lower levels of bias by councillors with names estimated to be Jewish or Muslim (though these estimates are imprecise due to the small number of such councillors). There may also be other differences in the selection of candidates with different levels of unobserved racial and religious bias in rural and urban areas. Alternatively, councillors may respond to political incentives and be less likely to respond to minorities in locations where minority groups are a small proportion of the electorate. We test responses to electoral incentives directly by showing the relationship between response rates and two measures of competition – the margin of victory at the last election and the number of days until the next election. We see now less bias in close elections. Finally, reduced bias could be attributed to the degree of ‘contact’ that councillors have with different minority groups. Councillors in more diverse urban locations may show less discrimination through an erosion of prejudice as described by the contact hypothesis (Allport, 1954; Paluck et al., 2018), though we are unable to test this hypothesis directly.

Figure 3: Response Rates by Location Type

Note: The top-left figure shows a binned scatterplot of response rates against population density, by whether the sender name was Christian or non-Christian. The top-right figure shows response rates against the non-white population share. The bottom-left shows the response rate against the winning margin of the elected councillor at the last election. The bottom-right shows the response rate by the number of days until the next election. Fitted lines are polynomial regressions of order three, with bars showing 95 percent confidence intervals. Population density and non-white population shares are calculated at the ward (sub-council) level from 2011 census data. On average there are three councillors in each ward. Population density is expressed as residents per hectare.

Conclusion and Discussion

We find evidence for bias from local politicians in response to requests for basic information from putatively “Jewish” or “Muslim” constituents. Despite the media narrative of anti-Semitism in the Labour party and Islamophobia in the Conservative party, our results suggest that both parties are equally discriminatory to both minority groups. This discrimination seems to occur based on names alone,

and is unchanged by the explicit identification of religious identity. These effects are largest in areas with rural areas (with low population density) and with small non-white populations. Councillors in such areas may have fewer opportunities for positive interactions with minority groups.

There are several limitations in our study. First, our sample may not be representative of all councils in the UK due to the way we acquired the councillor's email addresses. Since we might expect the urban councils in our sample to have lower levels of discrimination than other councils, our results can be considered a lower bound on the degree of discrimination nationally. Second, our analysis of heterogeneity (on population density and political party), though pre-registered, is not randomly assigned. Finally, low response rates in some regions could be due to councillors being familiar enough with their local constituents, and would therefore be suspicious of emails seemingly from members of a minority group that may not be present in their area. This may also partially explain the reduced treatment effects in more densely populated areas.

This work demonstrates that even access to basic services are susceptible to forms of discrimination, and that minority group members may struggle to be heard through this process. Reducing councilor bias could be attempted through training designed to reduce implicit prejudice (Lai et al., 2013). The leader of the Labour Party has announced the party's commitment to undergoing this type of training,

though more research is needed into the effectiveness of such training⁹. Future studies may benefit from further investigating the process through which politicians engage with their community, and identify ways in which to reduce these biases.

⁹ <https://www.theguardian.com/politics/2020/jul/06/keir-starmer-to-sign-up-for-unconscious-bias-training-amid-criticism>

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Annex: Figures

Figure A 1: Searches for Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and major UK political parties

Note: This figure presents results from Google Trends. Search interest is indexed at 100 at the point of highest volumes.

Figure A 2: Religiously Motivated Hate Crime in the UK, by Victim's Religion

Note: This figure shows data from police recorded crime as published by the UK Home Office, available from the following source (accessed 3 November 2020) https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/839172/hate-crime-1819-hosb2419.pdf

Figure A 3: Overall Response Rate by Council

Note: This figure shows response rates by council in England and Wales

Figure A 4: Political Party by Ward

Note: This figure gives the party in power for two councils, showing the variation that exists within councils. Blue is for Conservative, Red for Labour, Yellow for Liberal Democrat, and Green for Green Party.

Taken

from

https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/Category:Maps_created_by_ElectionMapsUK

Annex 2: Tables

Table A 1: Responsiveness of UK elected (and unelected) representatives

Rank	Elected body	Response rate (in 2 to 3 weeks) *	People writing for first time †	Messages sent
1	Welsh Assembly Members	63% (67 out of 106)	41% (41 out of 101)	1,457
2	Members of the Scottish Parliament	56% (408 out of 725)	35% (229 out of 661)	6,031
3	Councillors	51% (2,258 of 4,439)	49% (1,915 of 3,916)	39,043
4	House of Commons	50% (24,906 of 50,175)	35% (15,849 of 44,974)	90,184
5	Members of the European Parliament	47% (506 of 1,068)	40% (382 out of 958)	54,997
6	Northern Ireland Assembly Members	45% (80 out of 178)	34% (52 out of 152)	3,828
7	London Assembly Members	35% (40 out of 113)	51% (42 out of 83)	5,981
8	House of Lords	28% (188 out of 672)	35% (201 out of 574)	1,908
	Total / average	50% (28,453 of 57,476)	36% (18,711 of 51,419)	203,429

Note: This table presents data from “writetothem.com” from 2015-16. This website allows users to look up who their representative is and send them an email. The website then conducts a user-survey to assess what proportion of users received a response to their message.

<https://www.writetothem.com/stats/2015/bodies>

Table A2: Party of Councillors

Party	All	Our Sample	Each Arm (sample / 3)	Minimum Detectable Effect
Conservative	9,022	4,633	1,609	.050
Labour	6,457	3,469	1,192	.058
Independent	1,980	852	284	.117
Liberal Democrat	1,874	1,007	354	.107
Other*	1,379	307	102	.191
Total	20,712	10,268	3,422	

Note: This table presents a comparison of our sample against the overall population of councillors by party, and the minimum detectable effect that we are powered to measure, by party.

* Other includes the Scottish Nationals, Plaid Cymru, Greens, Democratic Unionists, UK Independence, Sinn Fein, Ulster Unionists, Social Democratic and Labour, Alliance, Traditional Unionist Voice, and Progressive Unionists.

Table A3: Sample representativeness

	Non-sample	Sample	p-value
	Mean (SD)	Mean (SD)	
N	10,444	10,268	
Population ('000s)	7.413 (4.491)	8.644 (4.544)	<0.001
% with Post-Secondary Education	0.212 (0.092)	0.232 (0.097)	<0.001
% non-white	0.093 (0.145)	0.127 (0.165)	<0.001
Average age	40.740 (4.330)	39.729 (4.256)	<0.001
% migrants	0.097 (0.109)	0.132 (0.134)	<0.001
Population Density	23.507 (25.608)	32.231 (34.349)	<0.001
% Muslim	0.031 (0.078)	0.038 (0.076)	<0.001
% Jewish	0.002 (0.006)	0.006 (0.028)	<0.001
GDHI (£ '000s)	19.527 (7.093)	20.828 (6.056)	<0.001
% Unemployed	0.013 (0.012)	0.013 (0.010)	0.73
Majority Conservative Council	0.423 (0.494)	0.486 (0.500)	<0.001
Majority Labour Council	0.244 (0.429)	0.331 (0.471)	<0.001

Note: This table shows a balance test of our sample against councillors not in our sample. Population, education levels, non-white population, share of migrants, population density, and share of Muslims and Jews, are all available at the Ward level from the 2011 Census. Population density is the number of persons per hectare. Gross Domestic Household Income (GDHI) is available only at the local authority (council) level, and comes from 2016. Unemployment is measured at the ward level and is calculated as the actual unemployment benefit claimant count as a share of the resident population.

Table A4: Balance test

	(1)	(2)	(3)	t-test	t-test
	Christian	Jewish	Muslim	Difference	Difference
	Mean/SE	Mean/SE	Mean/SE	(1)-(2)	(1)-(3)
Population ('000s)	8.462	8.17	9.288	0.291**	-0.826***
	[0.089]	[0.082]	[0.096]		
% with Post-Secondary Ed	0.236	0.23	0.231	0.006**	0.004
	[0.002]	[0.002]	[0.002]		
% non-white	0.132	0.12	0.132	0.012***	-0.001
	[0.003]	[0.003]	[0.003]		
Average age	39.669	39.794	39.679	-0.125	-0.010
	[0.092]	[0.082]	[0.080]		
% migrants	0.139	0.128	0.133	0.010***	0.006
	[0.003]	[0.002]	[0.003]		
Population Density	32.412	32.094	32.585	0.318	-0.173
	[0.749]	[0.644]	[0.665]		
% Muslim	0.04	0.035	0.04	0.005**	0.000
	[0.002]	[0.001]	[0.001]		
% Jewish	0.007	0.007	0.006	0.000	0.001
	[0.001]	[0.001]	[0.000]		
GDHI (£ '000s)	21.274	20.96	20.362	0.314*	0.912***
	[0.134]	[0.117]	[0.114]		
% Unemployed	121.061	115.7	141.47	5.360	-20.410***
	[2.667]	[2.447]	[2.767]		
Majority Conservative Council	0.51	0.506	0.439	0.004	0.071***
	[0.008]	[0.009]	[0.009]		
Majority Labour Council	0.303	0.313	0.383	-0.010	-0.080***
	[0.008]	[0.008]	[0.009]		

Note: This table presents a balance test of differences in characteristics of areas of councilors randomized into our three treatment groups. Though there are statistically significant differences between the groups, the magnitude of these differences is small. For example the non-white population was 1.2 percent larger in areas where councillors received emailed from a Jewish name.

The value displayed for t-tests are the differences in the means across the groups.

***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent critical level.

Table A5: Main results controlling for imbalanced covariates

	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
harry.white	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)
levi.goldstein	-0.050*** (0.017)	-0.045*** (0.017)	-0.049** (0.021)	-0.050** (0.021)
mohammad.hussain	-0.070*** (0.017)	-0.095*** (0.018)	-0.075*** (0.022)	-0.076*** (0.022)
sarah.white	0.029* (0.017)	0.030* (0.017)	0.009 (0.021)	0.007 (0.021)
shoshana.goldstein	-0.051*** (0.017)	-0.062*** (0.017)	-0.061*** (0.021)	-0.062*** (0.021)
zara.hussain	-0.043** (0.017)	-0.058*** (0.018)	-0.057*** (0.022)	-0.057*** (0.022)
Controls				Yes
Time and Day FE		Yes	Yes	Yes
Council FE		Yes	Yes	Yes
N	9,994	9,994	7,609	7,609
R2	0.005	0.124	0.136	0.138
Outcome Mean	0.54	0.54	0.54	0.54

Note: This table shows the effect of the sender identity on the probability of receiving a response. Column (1) shows unconditional results. Column (2) adds council fixed effects (the strata within which randomization was conducted). Column (3) restricts the sample to those for whom local area controls are available (but does not yet include those controls). Column (4) adds the local area controls. The controls are those which were imbalanced in Table A4: population, post-secondary education, non-white population, migrations, muslim population, income, unemployment, and council majority party. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent critical level.

Table A6: Heterogeneity by Recipient Party

	Cons	Lab	Other
harry.white	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)
levi.goldstein	-0.061** (0.025)	-0.047 (0.032)	-0.005 (0.037)
mohammad.hussain	-0.083*** (0.028)	-0.085*** (0.031)	-0.143*** (0.040)
sarah.white	0.060** (0.025)	-0.021 (0.031)	0.048 (0.037)
shoshana.goldstein	-0.041 (0.025)	-0.051* (0.031)	-0.128*** (0.037)
zara.hussain	-0.060** (0.028)	-0.052 (0.033)	-0.040 (0.041)
Time and Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council FE	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	4,504	3,381	2,109
R2	0.141	0.136	0.230
Outcome Mean	0.52	0.57	0.54

Note: This table shows the effect of the sender's name on the probability of receiving a response, by party of the recipient councilor.

***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent critical level.

Table A7: Heterogeneity by Neighbourhood Characteristics

	Density		Non-white		Winning Margin		Days to Election	
	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High	Low	High
harry.white	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)	(.)
levi.goldstein	-0.087***	-0.010	-0.085***	-0.085***	-0.019	-0.079**	-0.063***	-0.027
	(0.030)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.023)	(0.025)
mohammad.hussain	-0.100***	-0.047	-0.080**	-0.080**	-0.112***	-0.063**	-0.042	-0.128***
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.031)	(0.028)	(0.024)
sarah.white	0.043	-0.015	0.035	0.035	0.018	-0.005	0.028	0.030
	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.030)	(0.032)	(0.023)	(0.025)
shoshana.goldstein	-0.083***	-0.028	-0.086***	-0.086***	-0.069**	-0.067**	-0.038*	-0.091***
	(0.031)	(0.030)	(0.031)	(0.031)	(0.029)	(0.031)	(0.023)	(0.025)
zara.hussain	-0.054*	-0.047	-0.043	-0.043	-0.085**	-0.078**	-0.038	-0.080***
	(0.032)	(0.032)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.033)	(0.032)	(0.026)	(0.026)
Time and Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	3,799	3,810	3,805	3,805	3,559	3,559	5,016	4,978
R2	0.169	0.140	0.145	0.145	0.172	0.155	0.121	0.136
Outcome Mean	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55

Note: This table shows the effect the sender's name on the probability of receiving a response, for different sub-groups of councilors. For each of the four area characteristics, the sample is split into low and high groups at the median. All models include council fixed effects (the strata within which randomization was conducted) and time and day of week fixed effects. ***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent critical level.

Table A 8: Heterogeneity by Councillor Characteristics

	Jewish	Muslim	Female	Male
harry.white	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)	0.000 (.)
levi.goldstein	0.043 (0.085)	-0.092 (0.140)	-0.048 (0.033)	-0.045** (0.020)
mohammad.hussain	0.017 (0.089)	-0.054 (0.138)	-0.123*** (0.036)	-0.089*** (0.021)
sarah.white	0.079 (0.088)	-0.178 (0.136)	0.034 (0.034)	0.030 (0.020)
shoshana.goldstein	-0.004 (0.089)	-0.111 (0.125)	-0.106*** (0.034)	-0.051*** (0.020)
zara.hussain	0.045 (0.097)	-0.186 (0.134)	-0.070** (0.035)	-0.056** (0.022)
Time and Day FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Council FE	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
N	552	322	2,531	7,242
R2	0.456	0.403	0.203	0.124
Outcome Mean	0.55	0.55	0.55	0.55

Note: This table shows the effect of the sender's name on the probability of receiving a response, for different sub-groups of councilors. The race of councilors is estimated by matching councilor names with a database scraped from Wikipedia, using an algorithm developed by Laohaprapanon and Sood (2018). The gender of councillors is estimated by linking names to UK birth record data, using an algorithm developed by Vanetta (2015). All models include council fixed effects (the strata within which randomization was conducted) and time and day of week fixed effects.

***, **, and * indicate significance at the 1, 5, and 10 percent critical level.

Table A 9: Response Rates by Council

Council	Response Rate	Response Rank	N
Aberdeen	0.91	1	44
Bridgend	0.78	2	54
Sutton	0.78	3	54
Basildon	0.77	4	40
York	0.77	5	44
Stoke-on-Trent	0.77	6	44
Staffordshire	0.75	7	60
Havant	0.74	8	35
Richmond upon Thames	0.74	9	54
Scarborough	0.73	10	48
Brent	0.71	11	63
Worcestershire	0.71	12	55
Rutland	0.71	13	24
Southampton	0.70	14	44
Shropshire	0.70	15	71
Kingston upon Thames	0.70	16	46
Wrexham	0.69	17	49
Southend-on-Sea	0.69	18	51
Eastleigh	0.69	19	35
Tunbridge Wells	0.68	20	47
Havering	0.68	21	53
Hyndburn	0.68	22	31
Swansea	0.68	23	68
Trafford	0.67	24	61
Brighton and Hove	0.67	25	54
Conwy	0.67	26	57
Merton	0.67	27	60
Barnet	0.66	28	61
Rushcliffe	0.65	29	40
Basingstoke and Deane	0.65	30	57
Peterborough	0.65	31	57
Wandsworth	0.65	32	57
South Lakeland	0.65	33	37
South Gloucestershire	0.65	34	65
Hillingdon	0.65	35	62
East Sussex	0.64	36	50
Crawley	0.64	37	36
Lichfield	0.63	38	41
Boston	0.63	39	30
Lincolnshire	0.63	40	68
Gloucestershire	0.63	41	51
Plymouth	0.62	42	56
Exeter	0.62	43	37
Redditch	0.62	44	29
Hertfordshire	0.62	45	58
Cardiff	0.62	46	71

Hampshire	0.62	47	76
Preston	0.62	48	55
Oxfordshire	0.62	49	60
Canterbury	0.62	50	39
Wolverhampton	0.61	51	57
North Hertfordshire	0.61	52	49
Wycombe	0.61	53	59
Denbighshire	0.61	54	46
Barking and Dagenham	0.60	55	48
Tonbridge and Malling	0.60	56	53
Epping Forest	0.60	57	55
Leicestershire	0.60	58	55
Stratford-on-Avon	0.60	59	35
Buckinghamshire	0.60	60	45
Stevenage	0.59	61	37
Hastings	0.59	62	32
Merthyr Tydfil	0.59	63	32
Enfield	0.59	64	59
Central Bedfordshire	0.59	65	56
Westminster	0.59	66	56
Devon	0.59	67	58
Lancashire	0.59	68	82
Bracknell Forest	0.59	69	41
East Hertfordshire	0.58	70	45
Herefordshire	0.58	71	52
Bromley	0.58	72	59
Salford	0.58	73	59
Lincoln	0.58	74	33
Hammersmith and Fulham	0.57	75	40
Bury	0.57	76	47
St. Helens	0.57	77	47
Leeds	0.57	78	94
Stockport	0.57	79	61
Carmarthenshire	0.57	80	68
Surrey	0.57	81	75
Gateshead	0.57	82	63
Brentwood	0.57	83	35
Knowsley	0.57	84	44
Bromsgrove	0.57	85	30
Bradford	0.57	86	83
East Lindsey	0.57	87	53
Chichester	0.57	88	46
Cambridge	0.56	89	39
Cheshire East	0.56	90	78
Haringey	0.56	91	55
Swindon	0.56	92	55
Solihull	0.56	93	50
Ryedale	0.56	94	25

Tameside	0.56	95	54
Wigan	0.56	96	72
Waverley	0.56	97	54
Chorley	0.55	98	47
Hounslow	0.55	99	60
East Hampshire	0.55	100	42
Medway	0.55	101	55
Wiltshire	0.54	102	92
Hertsmere	0.54	103	37
Vale of White Horse	0.54	104	37
Eastbourne	0.54	105	26
Camden	0.54	106	54
Croydon	0.54	107	69
King's Lynn and West Norfolk	0.53	108	60
Woking	0.53	109	30
Kent	0.53	110	77
Charnwood	0.53	111	49
Torridge	0.53	112	34
Spelthorne	0.53	113	36
South Holland	0.53	114	36
Horsham	0.52	115	42
Burnley	0.52	116	42
Gwynedd	0.52	117	69
Newham	0.52	118	58
Wirral	0.52	119	62
Torbay	0.52	120	33
Monmouthshire	0.51	121	41
West Berkshire	0.51	122	51
Christchurch	0.50	123	24
Harrow	0.50	124	62
Cherwell	0.50	125	46
Doncaster	0.50	126	52
Gedling	0.50	127	36
Lancaster	0.49	128	59
Rochdale	0.49	129	53
Oxford	0.49	130	47
Islington	0.49	131	43
Malvern Hills	0.49	132	37
South Oxfordshire	0.48	133	33
New Forest	0.48	134	58
Windsor and Maidenhead	0.48	135	54
Slough	0.48	136	42
Newcastle-under-Lyme	0.47	137	36
Swale	0.47	138	45
Flintshire	0.46	139	67
Dorset	0.46	140	46
Cheshire West and Chester	0.46	141	68
Liverpool	0.45	142	86

Barnsley	0.45	143	62
Harlow	0.45	144	31
Breckland	0.45	145	49
Hackney	0.45	146	56
Tower Hamlets	0.44	147	45
Cornwall	0.44	148	113
Maidstone	0.44	149	52
Wyre	0.44	150	43
Watford	0.44	151	34
Durham	0.43	152	123
East Dorset	0.43	153	28
North West Leicestershire	0.42	154	36
Sefton	0.42	155	65
Chesterfield	0.41	156	46
Wokingham	0.41	157	51
Cumbria	0.41	158	78
Reigate and Banstead	0.41	159	49
Aylesbury Vale	0.41	160	54
Sevenoaks	0.40	161	50
Dartford	0.40	162	40
Erewash	0.38	163	40
Hinckley and Bosworth	0.36	164	33
Dacorum	0.36	165	50
Allerdale	0.33	166	52
Tewkesbury	0.32	167	37
Ashfield	0.32	168	34
Halton	0.32	169	56
Northampton	0.32	170	44
Gravesham	0.30	171	44
West Lindsey	0.29	172	34
Surrey Heath	0.29	173	38
Copeland	0.27	174	48
South Ribble	0.26	175	46
Forest of Dean	0.26	176	46
Cheltenham	0.26	177	39
Chiltern	0.25	178	40
Dover	0.24	179	42
Huntingdonshire	0.24	180	51
Lewisham	0.23	181	53
West Lancashire	0.22	182	50
Portsmouth	0.20	183	41
Pembrokeshire	0.19	184	59
South Bucks	0.18	185	28
Lambeth	0.18	186	62
Guildford	0.15	187	46
Blaby	0.11	188	37
Hambleton	0.11	189	28
Tendring	0.11	190	57

Isle of Anglesey		0.10	191	29
Bath and North East Somerset		0.10	192	63
Sheffield		0.09	193	81
Bexley		0.07	194	45
Blackpool		0.02	195	41
Caerphilly		0.01	196	71
Oadby and Wigston	0.00		197	24
St Albans	0.00		198	57

Note: This tables shows response rates by local council