Momentum Submission to the Labour Together Review of the 2019 General Election

Summary

- Labour was beaten by more powerful, better financed, and more ruthless political forces in 2019, operating in a political context that was extremely unfavourable to any progressive or transformative political offer. It will not be able to re-establish itself as a vibrant political force without articulating a coherent transformative vision that genuinely addresses the severe challenges faced by the UK and the world.

- Momentum used the latest digital tools and distributed organising techniques to mobilise tens of thousands of people to knock on millions of doors in marginals during the election. Building significantly on 2017, the campaign was genuinely innovative in its use of digital communications tools (My Campaign Map, Zoom, Slack, and WhatsApp in particular) to mobilise and direct members more effectively. Twinned with an open and empowering approach to activist engagement, including publishing the campaign strategy, helping activists to organise and promote their own events, asking activists to take weeks off work with the Labour Legends scheme and trusting them to run core campaign functions, Momentum saw a significant increase in the diversity and overall levels of campaigning compared to 2017. However, the impact in marginals was undermined by the strength of our opponents, the political difficulties of the election and targeting based on expectations set by the 2017 result.

- Momentum's social media performance also improved dramatically, with video views more than twice the 2017 campaign despite unhelpful changes to Facebook's algorithm, and a successful targeted campaign that registered approximately 200K voters in marginals.

- Evidence suggests that campaigning does work and high levels of doorknocking did contribute to winning Putney, a seat with a particularly well organised ground game, as well as retaining marginal seats such as Sheffield Hallam, Bedford, Dagenham and Rainham, Warwick and Leamington and Enfield Southgate. While Labour must target campaigning more effectively, and there is an urgent need to develop and engage party members outside of metropolitan areas, it is clear that the ground campaign has the potential to be a crucial weapon in future elections.

- Local volunteers, Party organisers, and Community Organisers experimented with numerous local innovations that built on the traditional voter ID model and dynamised

specific local campaigns. These need to be looked at and where appropriate integrated at the national level.

● The Party had major deficiencies in terms of support for local campaigns, digital tools and social media campaigning. It is clear that the party machinery requires significant overhauling to fully harness the benefits of having an expanded membership and to remain competitive with the Tories on social media. Improvements to digital tools, Facebook campaigning, targeting, membership development and political education should be key priorities. Achieving these requires deep structural changes to HQ, which is currently characterised by bureaucratic inertia and hostility to organisational innovations, low levels of trust and internal communication, poor hiring procedures, and inappropriate factionalism amongst Party staff that saps energy and undermines the ability to deliver strategic objectives. The scale of cultural and structural transformation that is needed was made clear by the recent leaked report.[1] All wings of the Party bear some responsibility, and all should have an interest in supporting reforms.

● Community organisers played key roles in implementing impressive ground campaigns, and community organising should be strengthened to rebuild a winning electoral coalition. Key to this is breaking down the false dichotomy between community organising and conventional electoral organising, and empowering a larger cross section of the membership in community organising efforts.

Introduction

Labour's election result in 2019 was devastating. It happened in the context of a global rise of right-wing nationalism, the decline of the social forces conducive to transformative politics across Western Europe, and widespread public skepticism about the potential of government to deliver genuine improvements to people's lives. Given the obstacles to Labour, it is remarkable that the Party had managed to buck long-term trends by achieving a major increase in both share of the vote and seats in 2017. But in 2019 it was a different story, as the long-term factors working against Labour were dynamised by the issue of Brexit, allowing the Conservative Party to build an unbeatable electoral coalition. Labour's transformative vision, backed up by popular policies which would have addressed many of the underlying causes of these problems, did not get a fair hearing in the face of the most relentless and fundamentally dishonest right-wing campaign of disinformation in living memory. Unfortunately, after years of sustained attack, Jeremy's reputation did hurt the party on the doorstep and the failure of the party to put forward a coherent narrative selling the programme ahead of the election meant voters just didn't trust us to deliver on our promises. This said, the severe nature of the challenges faced by our society means that backing away from the transformative vision outlined in the 2017 and 2019

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[1] The report was discussed in some detail in Labour List and elsewhere: https://labourlist.org/2020/04/internal-report-lays-bare-poor-handling-of-complaints-by-labour/

manifestos cannot be an option for Labour. The 2010 and 2015 elections, alongside the falling vote share of other European social democratic parties who have pursued centrist platforms, show that it would not make Labour more electable either.

Beyond the political lessons that have been debated since the election, it is also clear that Labour's 2019 campaign contains lessons for all wings of the Party regarding organising and campaigning models, including things that were done well and should be expanded on, and things that were done less well and need to be changed. The Labour Together review is therefore a necessary and welcome effort to provide a cross-party analysis of the election campaign. Momentum's contribution is focused on the ground campaign and the social media campaigns, as these are the areas which overlap most with Momentum's own contributions. The findings are based on approximately 30 semi-structured interviews carried out with activists and organisers from across the country and the Party's different factions[2], contributions from staff, and we also used responses from a consultation of our core activists conducted during the campaign.

We begin by explaining some of the key components of Momentum's election campaign and strategy, before moving onto a discussion of Labour's ground campaign, its probable impacts, and key techniques that were experimented on in a localised fashion. Subsequently we discuss some of the limitations of the Party campaign and the way these limited the potential of Labour's overall effort, and finally we conclude with some recommendations to strengthen electoral campaigning in the future.

Momentum's Campaign

Momentum's election campaign strategy built on the 2017 campaign, aiming to use digital tools and distributed organising techniques to unleash the power of Party members and contact tens of thousands of voters in marginal constituencies. We also attempted to increase the ownership of Momentum activists in the broader strategy by making our campaign plan publicly available on the one hand, and maximising opportunities for communication and feedback through frequent Conference calls, slack threads, and emailed consultations.

Some of the key initiatives are as follows:

● Labour Legends, an initiative to maximise sustained engagement and improve the geographical distribution of Labour Party activists. We encouraged people to take 1-2 weeks off work to campaign in areas of key priority, attempting to prioritise geographically remote marginal seats. In total we allocated 500 Labour Legends in 59 marginal seats, and many played key roles in the campaigns they were allocated to.

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[2] A further 30 are planned as part of a longer-term evaluation of the election campaign.

- My Campaign Map (renamed from My Nearest Marginal in 2017) was revamped to improve the allocation of activists in key seats and host a greater diversity of events. After early high mobilisations in London and some other key urban areas, we adjusted it to encourage more activists to canvass in non-metropolitan areas. We believe we had some success in increasing mobilisations in marginal seats accessible from metropolitan areas, such as key seats in the Eastern and South East regions. We continued adjusting frequently, taking into account polling, distributions of activists, and feedback we received from organisers. Another key aspect of the map was the ability for members to upload their own events without having to go through traditional party structures. The Map also allowed people to host their own phonebanks, trainings, leafleting sessions and post-canvass socials, and it was also used to publicise Labour Party training events. We had on average 3,000 users per day at the beginning of November, rising to 9,000 per day during the last week. A total of 170,000 users hit MCM at least once during the election.
- 35 'Unseat' Campaign Days, mobilising an average of 200 activists for mass canvassing events, frequently with the support of Owen Jones, and other leading figures in the party. These campaign days frequently allowed local campaigns to significantly increase their contacts with local voters.
- A video operation, designed to create viral videos that reached outside the bubble and communicated our policies to the public. An expanded team allowed us to more than double our own performance from 2017 (from 51m to 106m video views) as well as providing Jeremy Corbyn's page with a number of its most viral videos. This included 'Montage of Inequality' which at 11.6m views was the most viral video of the campaign. Nearly 1 in 2 Facebook users saw one of our videos on FB, in spite of the more difficult circumstances caused by the changing of Facebook's algorithm.
- Targeted Online Advertising, where approximately 201k people were registered to vote in marginals, and 7m out of 12m people in marginals saw a video designed to persuade them to vote Labour.
- VideosByTheMany, a project where activists around the country were supported to make and share in their communities nearly 300 videos about why they were supporting Labour. The videos achieved around 2.5m views in total and formed a core part of our advertising strategy.
- GOTV mobilisation, involving 6,370 people pledging to take the day off using the My Plan to Win and My Polling Day websites, followed with allocation of those people to priority local constituencies, as well as the hiring of an additional 15 coaches to bus activists to key constituencies on that day.
- Distributed Volunteer teams, based on a large network of online volunteers, centered around a large volunteer slack channel which peaked at around 4'000 users. Within this channel, volunteers could join a host of teams lead and run by volunteers, to engage with the General Election in a way best suited to their skills. These volunteer teams included a phonebanking team, texting team, research team, translation team and research team.

- Conference calls allowed members to engage with Momentum, Jeremy Corbyn, and other key stakeholders in a way not before possible. Conference calling was either used as a means of sharing strategy and plans for the election, such as our weekly strategy calls or zoom calls around dedicated policy areas, or as a means of creating a buzz around different volunteering opportunities and events. Conference calls were furthermore used on a smaller scale to deliver the trainings we would usually only offer as physical events, increasing the amount of people who could be skilled up.
- A training programme built around the infrastructure and foundations that had been created in the 2017 general election. The key pillar of this was "Persuasive Conversations" which allowed members to make the most of their canvassing sessions, whilst also giving new activists the skills and confidence to try canvassing for the first time. Overall we delivered 22 trainings for 1300 people, complementing efforts by the Community Organising Unit, who trained an impressive 15,000 people. Since the general level of campaigning knowledge and skill was far higher than in 2017, it also allowed Momentum to deliver smaller trainings on the more niche aspects of Labour Party campaigning, such as how to run a board.

Overall Momentum's campaign achieved a greater scale and operational effectiveness than the 2017 campaign, and involved activists and volunteers in more substantial ways. While it is difficult to establish the precise impact of Momentum's interventions because of overlaps with other initiatives by different parts of the Labour Party, it is fair to say that Momentum has significantly outperformed the party in terms of member engagement and mobilisation while also filling substantial gaps in Labour's campaign. Ultimately, the overall impact was undermined by the strength of our opponents, the political difficulties of the election and our targeting based on expectations set by the 2017 result. However we believe that our own contributions were relatively successful within their own parameters, and created a legacy of techniques and tools that can be expanded on in future campaigns.

Labour's Ground Campaign

The ground campaign in 2019 was substantial, mobilising massive numbers of activists. This was impressive given that many local campaigns began from a standing start, and in many cases local organisers had only recently been employed. There is strong evidence that canvassing did have a positive impact, reducing falls in the vote share compared to regional and national averages. Its impacts were most substantial in the areas with highest levels of canvassing, particularly London, where there was a strong relationship between the size of each campaign and Labour's change in vote share compared to the city-wide average. Canvassing almost certainly contributed to winning Putney as well as saving a number of seats, including Sheffield Hallam, Bedford, Dagenham and Rainham, Warwick and Leamington and Enfield Southgate.

One key limitation was the persistence of geographical imbalances in the Party's ability to mobilise, with London-based marginal seats being able to achieve far more contacts with voters than Scottish ones, for example. These were partly mitigated by Momentum's efforts, via My Campaign Map and Labour Legends, to shift activists from seats close to areas of high membership density to seats with lower membership density and smaller mobilisations. There was also increased activist awareness of target seats, and the combination of these efforts led to major increases in mobilisations in a number of marginal seats outside of metropolitan areas that had received only negligible support in 2017.[3] In spite of these efforts, many seats were lost in the Midlands and Northern regions without having had significant campaigns, pointing not only to issues with targeting (to be discussed in a subsequent section), but more significantly towards the long-term challenge of how to build up Party membership in constituencies across the country.

Consultations with activists and organisers across the country and across Party factions show that an increased number of campaigns engaged in local innovations to campaign more effectively and creatively. Although it isn't possible to decisively test the impact of all of these, they are certainly worth considering expanding on in future campaigns. Key innovations include:

- In seats like Hastings and Rye, Broxtowe, Harrow East, Hendon, and Putney, Community Organisers implemented a strategy based on a combination of traditional Voter ID, focused engagement with established key community figures, harnessing local campaigns to identify and empower new organic leaders pre-election, targeted voter registration drives, and training events to develop activists in the early campaign period. These methods were highly effective in increasing mobilisation and contact rates, which helped reduce the swing to the Tories in these seats. Elements of this strategy were also widely used by local organisers beyond the Community Organising Unit, for example in Canterbury.

- In particular, the use of persuasive canvassing strategies was a crucial complement to traditional Voter ID strategies in a number of campaigns. They were particularly effective when (a) existing data was patchy and/or of poor quality, and (b) when targeted at persuadable voter groups such as Liberal Democrat and Green voters. The best example was in Putney, where the Community Organiser organised 'Special Ops' canvassing sessions to encourage more confident canvassers to focus specifically on these households, mitigating the damage done by Liberal Democrats' dishonest claims.

- Many successful campaigns gave volunteers an important stake. These included: giving all volunteers regular updates on the campaign and strategy for the coming weeks (in Gloucester and other places this took the form of regular 'barnstorm' events); building

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[3] These include Bedford, Peterborough, Watford, Thurrock, Crewe and Nantwich, Sheffield Hallam, Southampton Itchen, Hendon, Broxtowe, Stroud, Calder Valley, and Hastings and the Rye.

personal bonds between volunteers and the candidate/local team; and handing out key responsibilities to volunteers so to empower them and expand the core team.

- Many organisers also spoke of the importance of organising outside of election cycles, especially in terms of listening to what local communities need and want and delivering visible wins (as was done by the community organiser in Broxtowe). This can be done even without a selected candidate. This helps to provide data for future election cycles, to establish bonds between the party and communities, to identify and develop local leaders, to build CLP campaigning infrastructure and know-how (which was often sorely lacking) and can also directly win over voters.

- In Aberconwy, the local organiser established a more decentralised campaign structure with four localised hubs given much greater autonomy than is normally the case in a campaign. This enabled them to achieve the necessary scale in a large, rural constituency with a dispersed population. A similar approach was used in Canterbury, where Whitstable ran a largely autonomous campaign from Canterbury itself.

- In Chingford and Woodford Green, campaigners implemented multiple training sessions to enthuse first-time activists, undertook listening campaigns to identify specific issues in wards that could then be targeted with messages that would resonate, and then following up with targeted communications on that basis.

Ultimately the scale of the national swing against Labour meant that much of the campaigning went into seats that ended up being outside of Labour's reach. However, we know that, with improved targeting and a broader base of engaged members, there will be many seats which can be won with strong local campaigns in the future. In each of the last four elections there have been between 50 and 100 seats which were won by less than 5% of the vote (i.e. within margins small enough for a large ground campaign to be decisive). In 2019, there were 12 seats which were won by less than 500 votes. Moreover, thousands of activists took on key roles in local campaigns for the first time, learning new skills and gaining in confidence, all of which could be harnessed for far more effective and dynamic campaigns in the future.

Our own conversations with activists suggest that high volunteer mobilisations are generally driven by ordinary people being inspired by national messages and policies, personal relationships and networks, a sense of ownership over local campaigns and the belief that their contributions are valuable. Provided Labour can retain its transformative vision, at the same time as developing its membership and providing better quality support to on-the-ground activists and organisers, Labour's ground campaign could be a decisive factor in future elections.

The Party Campaign

While it is clear that Labour's ground campaign helped to boost Labour's vote share in key marginal constituencies, it was also held back by an archaic and dysfunctional Party machinery. This section contains some key areas where the Party's organisation was lacking.

Inadequate social media campaigning

Social media interventions clearly have the potential to allow Labour to have unmediated communication with voters, and this played a key role in the 2017 campaign. Unfortunately the national digital campaign went backwards compared to 2017, despite a huge increase in expenditure on paid advertisements.

Key problems appear to have included low quality content, lack of knowledge of which formats work best in the modern social media landscape, inappropriate use of split testing and lack of informed oversight. This meant that Labour's output underperformed on several key metrics compared to two years earlier. While content produced by a separate team for Jeremy Corbyn's page performed significantly better (more than three times better in fact), it did not have the resources available to the main campaign.[4] Labour achieved 29.4m video views during the campaign, less than ⅓ of Momentum's total, despite having drastically greater resources to work with.

The inadequate quality of the Party's digital infrastructure

The existing digital infrastructure is inadequate, with a number of digital tools that were undeveloped and faulty during the General Election, to the extent that many local campaigns came to see them as 'gambles' with the potential to cause more problems than they solved.

- Dialogue (Labour's phone banking app) was extremely unreliable, causing major delays for activists and therefore limiting the calls that could be made. Although there are questions over the potential for phonebanking to make a major impact on elections due to data protection laws and rules around auto-dialing, it is clearly inadequate not to have fully developed a tool whose usage could have been predicted years in advance.
- Doorstep (Labour's canvassing data entry app) cannot be used in tower blocks and is therefore virtually unusable in most urban areas, meaning that its usage has not increased since 2017, and most campaigns remain dependent on collecting data on paper and manual data entry, creating major demands on volunteer time.
- Contact Creator (Labour's voter information database) crashed frequently, costing countless hours for local organisers. Many campaigns also ignored the 'Recommended

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https://www.huffingtonpost.co.uk/entry/jeremy-corbyns-digital-operation-labour-election-performance_uk_5e309224c5b6e8375f641e75?guccounter=2

Selections' (which define which people on the electoral register should be contacted in a given canvass), arguing that they were inappropriate. Given Labour's adherence to canvassing and data collection (which as we have seen, can have major impacts when targeted accurately), this model needs to be supported by an organising tool that helps rather than hinders local organisers.

- Users report that Labour Connects (Labour's online tool for creating leaflets) is extremely difficult to use and this wasted huge amounts of organisers' time. There were also severe delays in printing leaflets and direct mails across the country which massively disrupted local campaign efforts.
- Promote (Labour's digital advertising platform) was rarely used by local CLPs. One reason for this was due to issues getting the necessary accreditation. Facebook changed those rules around political advertising during the European Elections, so there was a window of many months for the Party to address this. The other was that Promote itself proved difficult for local organisers to master.
- Insight (Labour's targeting and demographic analysis tool), on the other hand, was generally praised as being a really useful tool which was widely used to aid local targeting decisions.

While it is true that an election presents challenges which may not be testable outside of a campaign, such as the impacts of increased numbers of users on digital tools, these were not unpredictable challenges. Most of these technologies have been in development for years and, despite the widespread expectation that an election was imminent, resources do not appear to have been set aside to make sure they were usable.

Inadequate Support to Local Campaigns

Beyond digital failings, activists were held back by a number of failings on part of the Party to adequately support local activists or provide adequate guidance to them.

- Local campaigns received variable guidance on how to access data of newly registered voters, meaning that in many instances only the savviest organisers were able to access the newly registered voter data and contact this key voter group. There were also widespread issues with updated electoral registers not being uploaded to Contact Creator even after the Electoral Registration Officer had supplied them.
- Some local Party organisers received inadequate management support from the Party, meaning they were left to their own devices or required to reinvent the wheel, thus wasting effort and resources. For obvious reasons, organisers who were hired after the election had already started had far fewer opportunities to implement effective strategies than ones who had been in place for many months beforehand.
- Local campaigns suffered from not having prior warning of key policy announcements or a clear sense of the overall party strategy, leaving them unable to promote or defend key policies.

- Many printed materials sent out on behalf of local campaigns arrived late, undermining local campaign strategies.

Underneath the specific problems faced by local organisers and activists lie a litany of structural problems which systematically prevent the Party from campaigning effectively. These include: bureaucratic inertia and hostility to organisational innovations; poor hiring procedures; and inappropriate factionalism that undermines the ability to deliver strategic objectives. Fundamentally, Labour's organising model is excessively hierarchical, with regional organisers expected to play the roles of enforcers of a fixed model of campaigning, rather than enabling or supporting local groups.

Controversies over Targeting

The scale of the national swing against Labour meant a large number of seats were lost by narrow margins without having benefited from large campaigns. Datapraxis have estimated that 16 seats could have been saved with more defensive targeting. Many key actors in the Party, including ourselves, were guilty of being over-optimistic. Both Labour and Momentum did implement a partial readjustment half way through the campaign, but there are limits to the flexibility of such changes,[5] and in many cases some of the newly-vulnerable seats did not have a locally organised base of activists or the foundations of a strong campaign to call upon.

By contrast, in the 2017 election a number of additional seats would almost certainly have been won by Labour if they had received anything like the support and mobilisations that subsequently happened in 2019, including Broxtowe, Hendon, Broxtowe, Morley and Outwood, Southampton Itchen, Pudsey, Thurrock, Harrow East. These were lost narrowly by Labour in 2017 having not seen much campaigning at all, and then subsequently contacted many times more voters in 2019 but in far more adverse political conditions. Overall, it is clear that the Party failed to successfully align its targeting of activist resources with the political opportunities actually available in successive elections.

Public debates and discussions with activists and organisers have identified three narratives explaining this mistargeting of seats: (a) over-optimistic targeting, based on positive assumptions that the polls would improve as dramatically as they had done in 2017, as well as a valid but potentially counterproductive desire to continue projecting the image of a Party 'on its way to power'; (b) a general opacity in the logic behind targeting decisions, with the methodologies and political logics behind them not being circulated even internally within the Party, resulting in decisions being made which are easily interpreted as arbitrary (or, as is suggested in the leaked report, as narrowly factional); (c) as with previous elections, some

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[5] These include resistance from stakeholders including candidates, organisers, factions and other affiliated bodies, activists themselves being emotionally invested in campaigns and unwilling to be redirected, and at times legitimate mistrust in the quality of the data and assumptions used to redirect.

stakeholders in the Party were better able to lobby for more resources, meaning that some targeting decisions responded to internal power relations rather than any strategy to get the best result possible. All three narratives point towards the need for a greater degree of transparency of the methodology, data, and assumptions involved in targeting decisions amongst key decision-makers and implementers of the ground campaign as well as more oversight from the NEC, which is more pluralistic and representative of party stakeholders. This final point is particularly important given the allegations contained in the leaked report, which suggest that significant resources were being diverted to particular seats without the knowledge of the Party leadership.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Given the strength of the forces against Labour, it is valid to ask whether the 2019 election was winnable or whether any organisational improvements could have made a decisive difference. However, it is also clear that there are a lessons to be learned from the defeat about the campaign, and given the challenges Labour faces in the next five years, it is incumbent on all actors in the Party to learn the right lessons and to work towards acting on them in order to strengthen our ability to win future elections. While 2019's impressive mobilisation reduced the falls in vote share experience by Labour in key marginal seats, and a combination of innovations by local organisers, activists, Party staffers, the Community Organising Unit, and Momentum, achieved some improvements on the 2017 campaign, it is also clear that the potential of the Party's mass membership has not yet been fully harnessed.

The Labour Party election machinery requires a systematic overhauling of its structure, culture, and technical capacity if it is to fully maximise the potential of its membership. The following recommendations would enhance Labour's ability to harness its members:

- Retain the core elements of the 2019 manifesto, including commitment to public ownership of utilities, universalism in public services, redistribution of income and wealth, economic intervention to drive a Green Industrial Revolution, and reversal of austerity in favour of investment. Any substantial reversals to this agenda would undermine Labour's ability to provide a distinctive message, sending confused signals to current and potential Labour voters, as well as leading to gradual disengagement of Party activists.
- Review of the internal structure and culture of Labour Party HQ, including revision of recruitment practices, internal communication, management and pastoral care of junior staff, NEC oversight, and internal culture.
- Review into the performance and resource management of teams within the party that performed significantly below the level that would have been expected, such as the digital campaigns team. In general, clear lines of oversight and accountability seem to be lacking inside the Labour Party's bureaucracy - something demonstrated systematically in the organisational diagram produced from Labour Together, and anecdotally by the recent leaked report.

- Strengthen community organising in the Party, and break down the false dichotomy between community organising and electoral campaigning. They are mutually complementary rather than competing approaches, and have massive overlaps. Party organisers should be recruited on the basis of, or be encouraged to develop, diverse skills sets allowing them to support membership development, political education, and community campaigning outside of elections, and then integrate these into local electoral strategies when elections happen.
- Increased support for membership development, training and political education should be aligned with medium and long-term efforts to build up engaged party membership bases in constituencies currently lacking them, particularly outside of metropolitan areas, and should involve training councillors and MPs to identify organic leaders in local communities and support local campaigns that resonate with the public.
- Move away from a one size fits-all approach to electoral campaigning and encouragement of local innovations, as well as the development of techniques to test those innovations where this is feasible. Encouraging a greater diversity of approaches, whilst retaining the core elements of Voter ID and GOTV-based campaigning, is crucial if the Party is to give local activists and organisers stronger ownership over campaigns, and to retain flexibility in the Party's operational capacity, particularly given broader societal changes such as voter volatility and technological changes.
- Targeting decisions need to be made more transparent to key decision-makers and implementers of the ground campaign. A first step might be to make available within the Party the methodology and summaries of the data used. This would have several benefits: (a) it would explicitly separate the prior statistical analysis from (legitimate or not) political decisions about where to target, (b) it would enable the Party to hold those analysing the data to account, rather than seeing them accumulate excessive personal power without accountability, and (c) it would force influential actors within the Party to make clear which arguments are based on what kinds of data, and what arguments are instead based on political judgements.
- The Party also needs to move beyond only thinking of targeting as a short-term tactic. Many of the seats lost in 2019 had seen declining Labour votes for many years, yet there seems to have been little interest from the Party in developing a long term, data-driven, strategic response. In addition to its normal 'next-election' focus, Labour ought to be thinking in 10-15 year time horizons and planning a long term strategy. No amount of data analysis can or should replace the politics of which direction our Party should take, but dedicating some resources to those long run, demographic analyses would certainly improve the quality of that debate.