

3rd July 2020

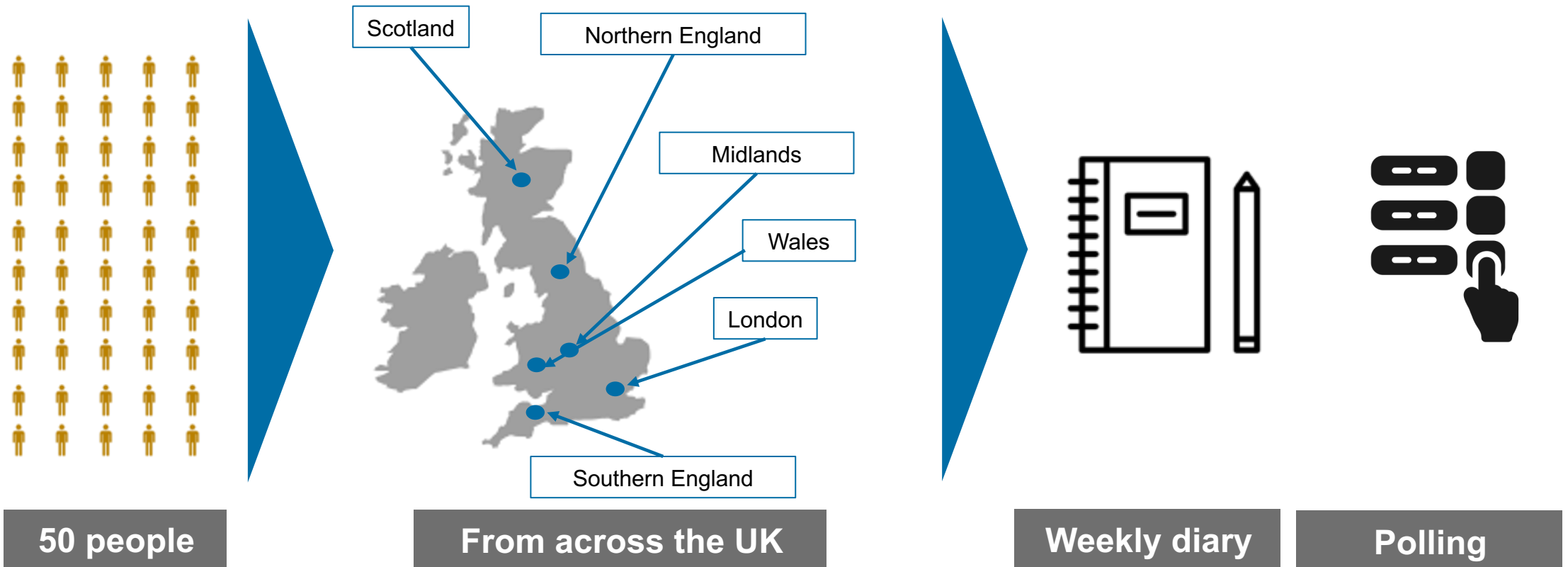
BritainThinks

Coronavirus Diaries

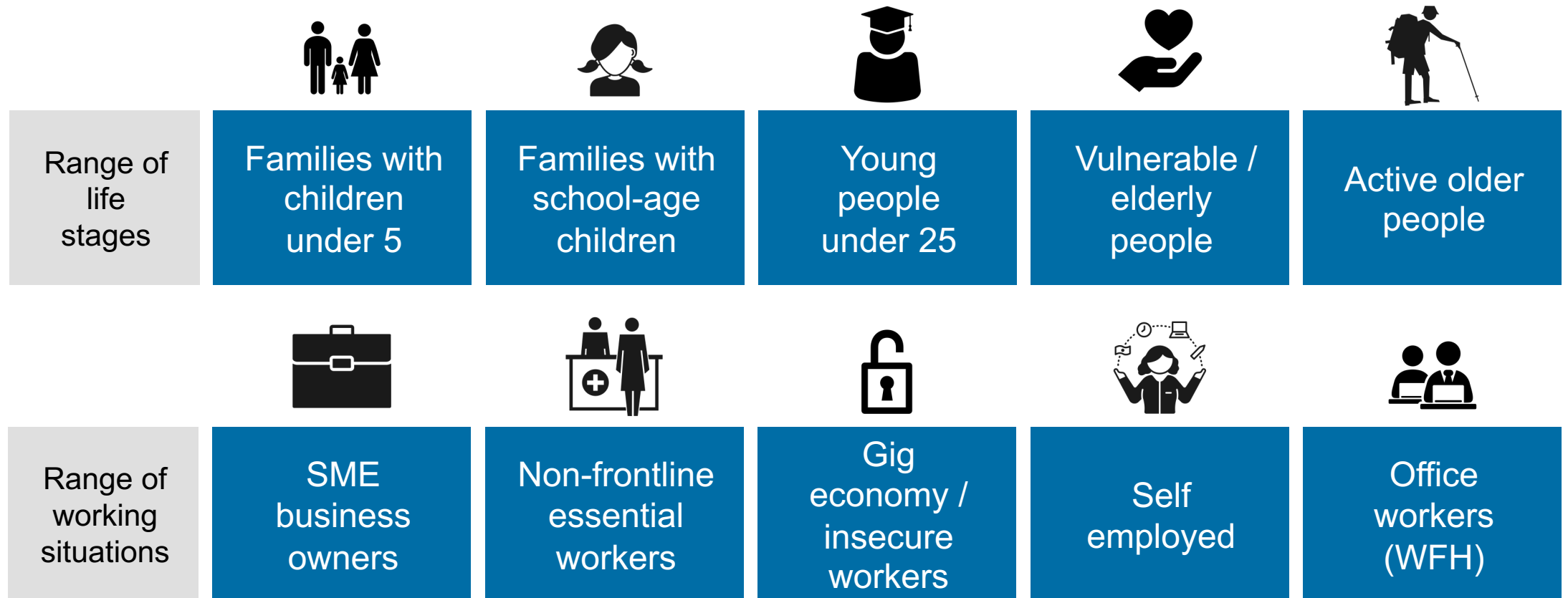
Week 13 Report

britainthinks.com

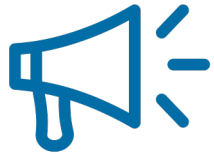
We have been following the crisis as it plays out in people's lives in real time since early April



Our Diarists come from different locations, lifestyles and backgrounds



We will be producing regular reports with tracking data on:



Context

The news stories that have stood out to Diarists each week



Mood

How Diarists are feeling each week and what's on their minds



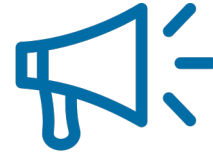
Behaviour

What have Diarists been doing differently and how it makes them feel



Reputation

Perceptions of Government, politicians and brands at this time



The stand-out news for Diarists this week has been the ‘flouting’ of social distancing rules and the announcements around the 4th July.

The easing of lockdown and mass public gatherings are the stand-out news stories for Diarists this week

News stories standing out to Diarists

Domestic CV developments:

- Easing of lockdown (e.g. pubs and bars reopening from 4th July)
- Review of 2m rule to 1m
- Schools reopening in September
- Regional lockdowns (e.g. Leicester)

International CV developments:

- International travel opening up (including possible 'air bridges')
- Rising cases in the US
- Worldwide death toll surpasses 500,000

Negative / positive CV news:

- Overcrowded beaches, Bournemouth
- Mass gatherings (e.g. football, illegal raves)
- UK citizens going on holiday
- UK quarantine eased for people entering the UK
- Lowest daily death toll recorded

Non-CV related news:

- Glasgow stabbings
- Keir Starmer sacks Rebecca Long-Bailey
- BLM protests continue
- Declining support for Trump in the US

- Mentions of non-CV related news have risen in recent weeks, however this week the focus has returned to the crisis in the UK
- News stories that gained most attention from Diarists include:
 - Imminent further relaxation of lockdown
 - Mass public gatherings, particularly at beaches, as widely reported in the media

"I read that pubs and bars will have to go to extensive lengths to open on July 4th."

Unemployed

"The amount of people ignoring social distancing rules, such as at Bournemouth beach."

SME owner



The mood this week continues to be hopeful, but anxiety has increased since last week, with public gatherings a particular source of concern.

Last week the mood was dominated by hope and excitement; this week worry has featured more prominently

3 words used by Diarists to describe how they feel

w/c 15th June



w/c 22nd June



w/c 29th June



"It's nice that we have more personal freedoms and the opportunity to visit friends and family, pubs and shops; but in the background I feel a sense of dread."

Young person

Day to day lives are looking slightly more normal and many are feeling excited about new freedoms

20/50 Diarists used the smile emoji to describe how they feel



- Anticipation is building for the further relaxation of the rules from 4th July
- Younger Diarists in particular are excited about being able to socialise with friends in pubs and restaurants

“Other than working from home, this week has been back to normal for me. I took a long weekend and spent it travelling around to visit university friends. It felt normal, it felt good.”

Young person

“I’m excited for restaurants and pubs to open. I’m still feeling concerned that there may be a second spike, but I’m happy to see things going back to normal.”

Unemployed

At the same time, there is renewed concern over the risk of a second wave

12/50 Diarists used a sad/angry emoji to describe how they feel



- Concern is driven by awareness of second waves in other countries, events in Leicester and media stories of mass gatherings in the UK
- Older Diarists and those with health conditions are the most likely to express concern

"I'm very disappointed at the complete and utter disregard by so many people congregating in large numbers at beaches, raves etc. It risks a second wave."

Vulnerable

"I feel disappointed about seeing the scenes of people on the beaches at Bournemouth and the football supporters celebrating. There are still large numbers of people dying in the UK."

Self employed



This week Diarists are returning to non-essential shops for the first time, and some are returning to work. As they start to take advantage of these freedoms, they report feeling less nervous than before.

Diarists are engaging in a wide range of behaviours for the first time since lockdown



Visiting non-essential shops

"We had one trip for non-essential shopping to B&Q and Matalan; both shops have organised themselves very well to protect their customers."

Active 65+



Seeing friends and family without socially distancing

"I was able to visit my 3 year old grandson, and pick him up and hold him for the first time in 3 months. It felt fantastic, I had missed him so much."

Essential worker



Children returning to school

"We have sent our child to school which was worrying but we felt it was in the best interest of our child who really needs stability and structure in their life."

Parent with school age children



Going back to work or attending a job interview

"I went for a job interview, it made me feel like things are returning to normal."

Unemployed

Anxiety over doing new things is dissipating



- Many Diarists report feeling initially nervous about doing something new, but then quickly find that it felt very normal
- A few report concerns about people not social distancing when they are out and about
- Many say they are feeling the benefits of doing new things on their mental health and wellbeing; feeling more relaxed and less anxious

“I think having been out a bit more in the last few weeks means I am starting to relax a bit more. To begin with I barely went out and being in public made me feel guilty and put me on edge, but now I feel a bit more relaxed about things.”

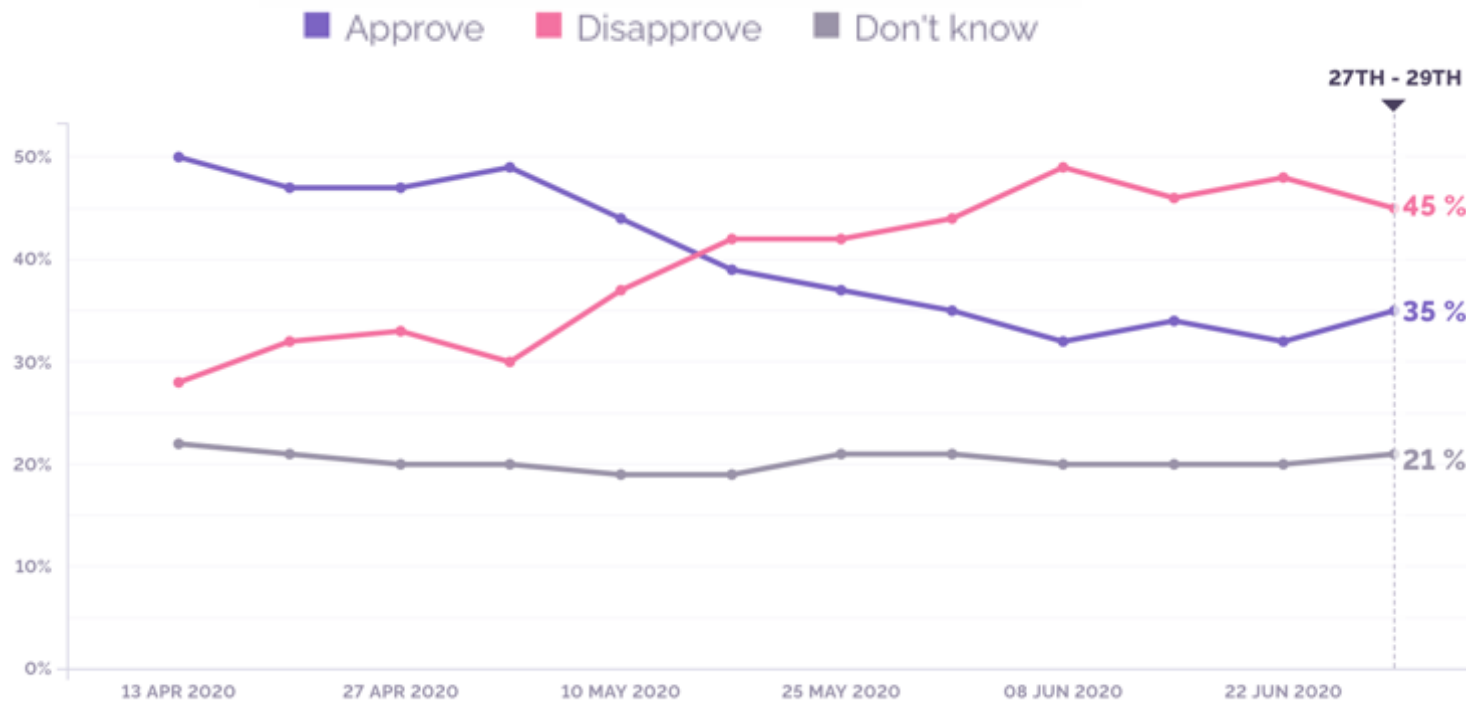
Young person



Government approval has edged up slightly. Diarists appreciate the balancing act the Government is having to tread between opening the economy and keeping the public safe, and feel angry at those members of the public who are not following the rules.

Government approval has risen slightly; many Diarists say they feel the Government is balancing the economy and health

% saying they approve or disapprove of the Government (YouGov)



“They are trying to get the right balance between getting the economy back on track, as the impact on jobs has been devastating, and ensuring that the virus is going away.”

Parent with school age children

In contrast to previous weeks, people are now shifting blame towards the public rather than Government

% saying who would be most to the blame if there was a second wave in the UK (J.L. Partners)

The public not following the lockdown rules or not observing social distancing

59%

The Government lifting lockdown too quickly or not giving clear guidelines

33%

This trend has been reflected in our sample:

Week 6

“There has been a lack of accountability and clarity from Westminster over PPE, testing capacity and how prepared they were for looking after care homes.”

Self employed

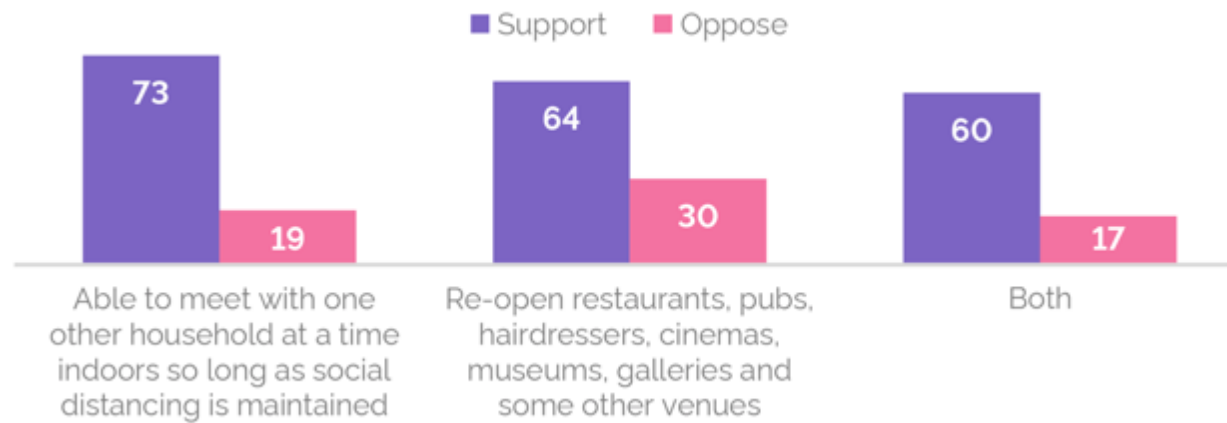
Week 13

“There are these mass gatherings happening when the politicians keep telling people not to gather. People are not listening and it’s going to hold the whole thing up.”

Vulnerable

Polling shows that the public largely support Government's new, looser lockdown measures

% saying they support or oppose the new lockdown measures (YouGov)



% saying the pace of Government loosening lockdown is 'about right' (YouGov)

35%

10th May

+12

47%

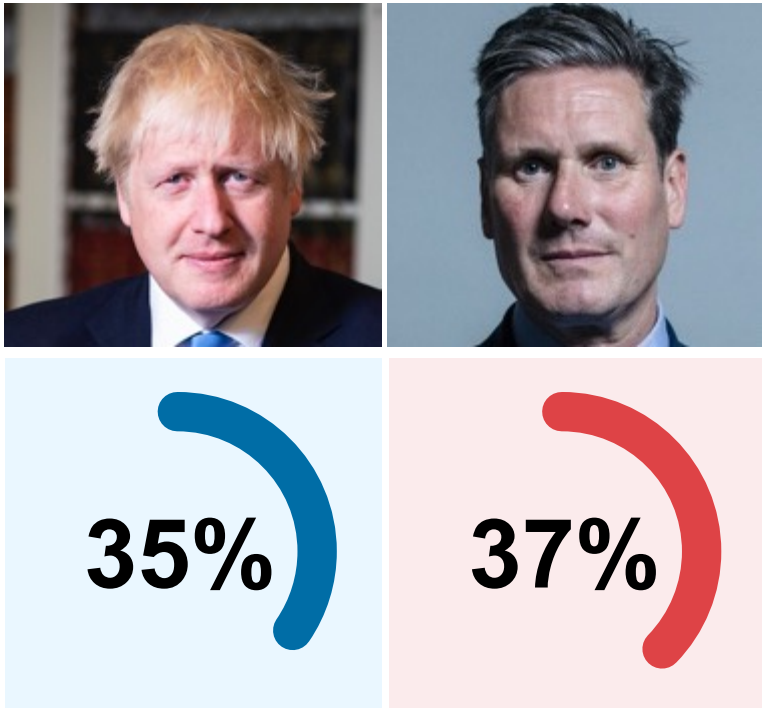
23rd June

"It feels like there is real hope for our local economy now that the majority of our businesses have started to open. I feel more positive about our recovery."

Parent with school aged children

Latest polling suggests that Keir Starmer has overtaken Boris Johnson as the public's preferred choice for Prime Minister

Who would be the best PM? (Opinium)

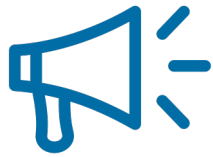


- This is the first time an opposition leader has led on a Prime Minister since Opinium started tracking the question in 2015
 - Some of our Diarists noted Keir Starmer's recent removal of Rebecca Long-Bailey and indicated their support of this
- But Conservatives still hold a four-point lead in voting intentions (43% to 39%)

"The two different approaches to handling political scandals; Keir Starmer fires Rebecca Long-Bailey instantly, whereas Boris Johnson holds onto yet another MP who's associated to allegations of corruption."

Young person

Key findings



The stand-out news for Diarists this week has been the ‘flouting’ of social distancing rules and the announcements around the 4th July.



The mood this week continues to be hopeful, but anxiety has increased since last week, with public gatherings a particular source of concern.



Diarists are returning to non-essential shops for the first time, and some are returning to work. As they start to take advantage of these freedoms, they report feeling less nervous than before.



Government approval has edged up slightly, with strong support for new measures.

Thank you

For more information:

Ben Shimshon bshimshon@britainthinks.com

Michaela Rhode mrhode@britainthinks.com

Isabel Gill igill@britainthinks.com

Katharine Allen kallen@britainthinks.com

+44 (0)207 8455880

BritainThinks

Somerset House

Strand

London

WC2R 1LA

britainthinks.com