

COVID 19 and Democracy and Citizen Participation in the UK

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This paper covers how democracy in the UK, and opportunities for citizen participation in particular, have been affected by the coronavirus. It provides evidence on how opportunities for meaningful citizen engagement can be provided in a digital public sphere in a pandemic. It is divided into two sections. Section I is an audit of research on this theme from Newcastle University. Section II is a rapid literature review on this topic to capture the results from research conducted elsewhere.

Section I: Audit of Research from Newcastle University

This section covers the ongoing research on COVID 19 and democracy and citizen participation from Newcastle University. During the pandemic political participation has moved online. How has this affected citizens' assemblies and elections in the UK? It draws primarily on data from the Climate Assembly UK (CAUK) and the Citizens' Assembly of Scotland (CAoS).

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1. Summary of findings

CAUK research

- Assembly members were surveyed at the beginning and end of each weekend. The last of these (weekend 4) were conducted online and spread over three weekends (4a, 4b, 4c).
- With the online format, most assembly members (70%) 'agree' or 'strongly agreed' that online participation was easy and only 20% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they had connection difficulties.
- However, despite the general approval of the online format, the AMs were most satisfied with the in-person format.
- The majority (72%) did not think that future CAs should be conducted online.
- At the end of CAUK (after weekends 4c) most of the AMs (>90%) thought that CAs should be used more often by Parliament and that they are a good way of engaging people. This indicates overall approval for CAs as a format.
- However, the majority (72%) did not think that future CAs should be conducted online.
- There was evidence that the AMs views on online participation was associated with AMs finding online participation difficult.

CAoS research

- Assembly members were surveyed at the beginning and end of each weekend. The last three of these (5-7) were conducted online. Ethnographers also observed these sessions.

Weekend 5

- Some members appeared to be distracted at times in their home environment, which had an impact on their involvement.
- The observation data highlighted a lot of variation among members in their experience and confidence of working in an on-line environment, which had an impact on their participation.
- There was variation in the quality of facilitation. Some facilitators demonstrated very high levels of confidence and capability in the on-line environment, and others less so.

Weekend 6

- 5% 'strongly agreed', or 'agreed', that distractions in their home environment reduced their ability to participate. This compares to 14% in weekend 5.
- Observations during weekend 6 showed that the technical issues experienced by members and facilitators appeared to be dealt with swiftly by the organisers and production team.
- After weekend 6, 98% of members reported that they intended to participate in the next Assembly weekend and 2% were unsure.

Weekend 7

- This weekend, 17% 'strongly agreed', or 'agreed', that connection difficulties reduced their ability to participate. This compares to 10% in weekend 6.
- Comments from members in the survey also highlighted positive experiences in relation to the weekend as well as gratitude towards the organisers
- Observations during the weekend showed that members miss the more social side of the assembly, which is much more constrained in the online environment. There was some use of the chat function at times to write small messages of greeting to each other, and in particular to offer support to members who presented their group's recommendations at the end of the weekend. The lunchbreak was not used for any social interaction.

How to hold elections safely and securing during Covid-19

- Many will suggest the pandemic is an opportunity for online voting or extended postal voting. Online voting is far from widely accepted or used, and while postal voting is much more widespread, most jurisdictions still have a legal obligation to provide vote in-person services.
- An increasing proportion of electoral activity – including campaign spending, voter mobilisation, hate speech and so on – will take place online and will require observers who are deployed on the ground to be monitored. At the same time, the pandemic is likely to spur the growing use of digital technology for processes such as voter registration, identification, and in some cases even voting itself. This will increasingly shift the focus of electoral manipulation – and efforts to prevent it – away from manual processes towards digital ones.

2. Extracts from the papers

a. CAUK: Assembly Member Surveys

Most of the AMs rated the events and facilitation highly over the course of CAUK. However, the event rating reduced over the duration of CAUK. Also, the rating significantly reduced between the in person (weekends 1,2 and 3) and online (weekends 4a, 4b and 4c) events.

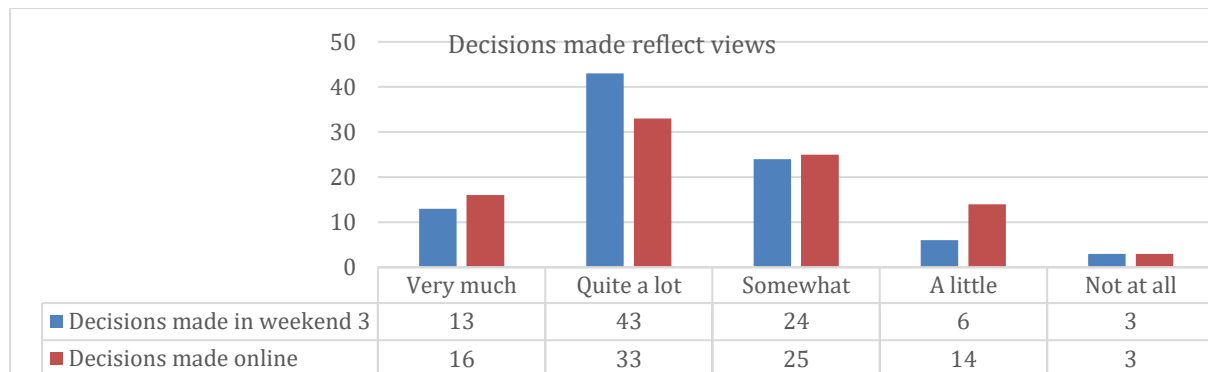
The AMs were most satisfied with the in-person format, as opposed to online. Although most AMs did not experience connection difficulties and thought that participating online was easy, the majority (72%) did not think that future CAs should be conducted online.

The mean difference between the rating at the end of weekend 1 and weekend 4 (0.67) is statistically significant, indicating that overall, the AMs rated the events more poorly over CAUK. Comparing the ratings given during the in-person weekends (1-3) and the online weekends (4a, 4b, 4c), there is a statistically significant mean difference (0.5) between the event ratings given for weekends 1-3, and for the online weekends; the event rating for the online weekends was about half a point poorer.

There are no statistically significant differences in the mean ratings of the lead or table facilitators over the weekends. There were no statistically significant mean differences between the lead or table facilitator ratings given between the in-person and online weekends.

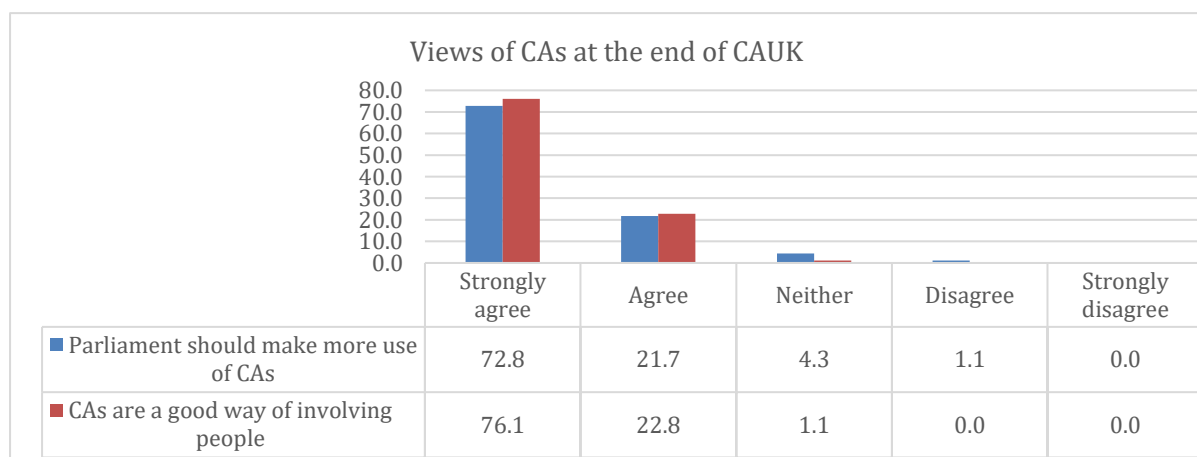
Most AMs consider that the decisions made in weekend 3 and the online weekends (4a, 4b, and 4c) reflect their views very much or somewhat. There is no statistically significant mean difference in how much AMs agreed with the decisions made in weekends 3 and online reflected their views.

There are no statistically significant relationships between gender, age, education, ethnicity, rural/urban residence, or group, and how much the AMs agreed that the principles / decisions made in weekends 3 and 4 reflected their views.



The format of CAUK changed between weekends 3 and 4 due to Covid-19 lockdown restrictions; the planned weekend 4 activities were undertaken online over 3 weekends (Weekends 4a, 4b and 4c).

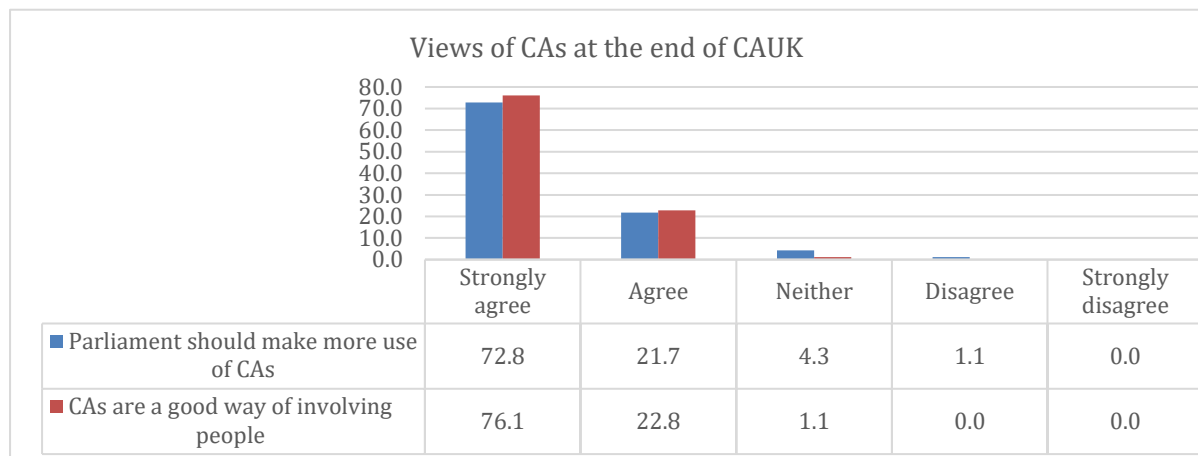
At the end of CAUK (after weekends 4c) most of the AMs (>90%) thought that CAs should be used more often by Parliament and that they are a good way of engaging people. This indicates overall approval for CAs as a format.



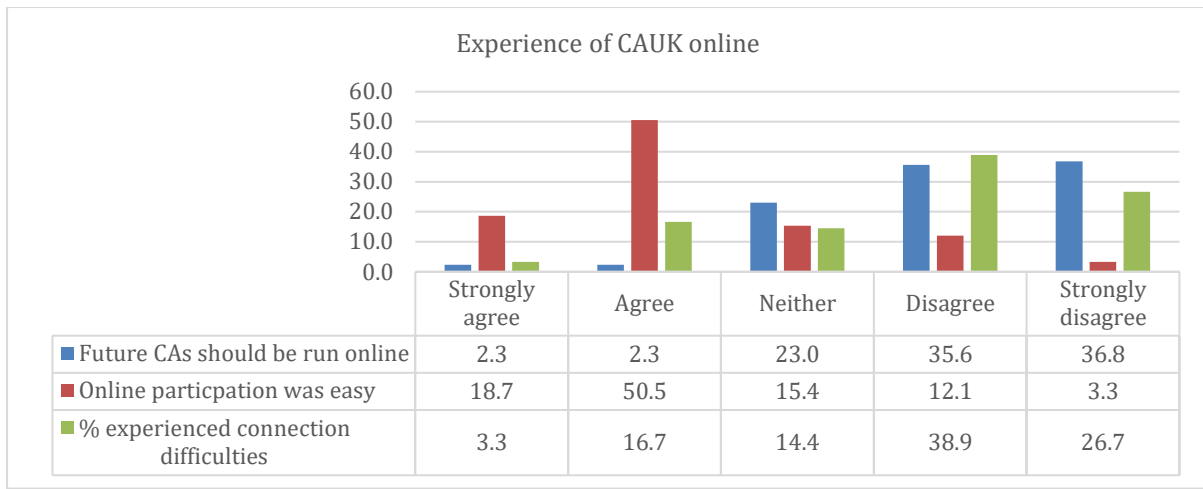
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This was supported by the results that showed that all the AMs that responded to the survey at the end of the online weekends and CAUK said they would definitely (85%) or probably (15%) participate in a CA again.

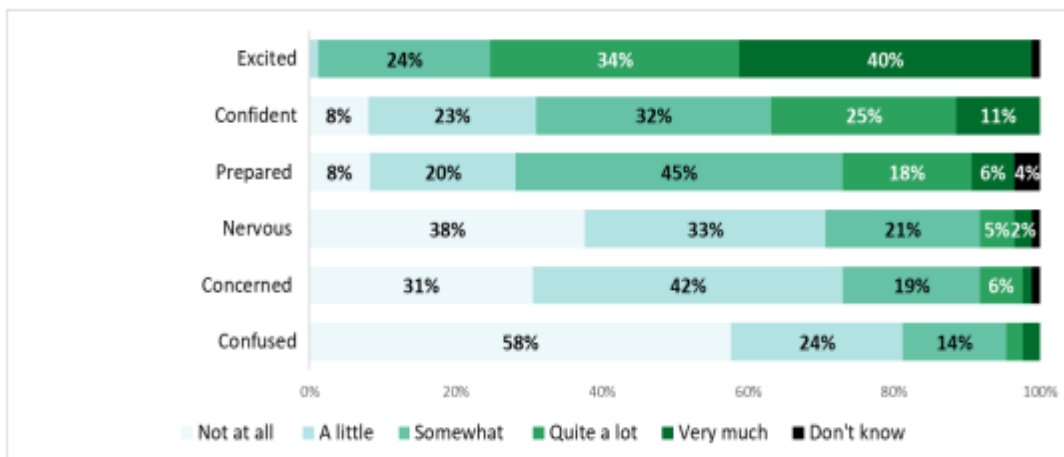


Despite the general approval of the format of CAs, most of the AMs did not support the suggestion that future CAs should be undertaken online; 72% of AMs either 'disagreed' or 'strongly disagreed' that future CAs should be online. Although they were not keen on other CAs being completed online, most (70%) 'agree' or 'strongly agreed' that online participation was easy and only 20% 'agreed' or 'strongly agreed' that they had connection difficulties. However, there was evidence that the AMs views on online participation was associated with AMs finding online participation difficult. There is a statistically significant (<1%) moderately strong (0.43) correlation between the AMs views on having future CAs online and their thoughts on how easy online participation was; as the strength of disagreement the CAs should be done online rose with the strength of disagreement that online participation was easy. There is also a statistically significant (<5%) weak (-0.22) correlation between the AMs views on having future CAs online and them having connection difficulties; as the strength of disagreement the CAs should be done online rose the strength of disagreement that they had connection difficulties reduced.



b. CAoS Data Briefing – Weekend 5

This section focuses on assembly members’ experiences prior to the assembly restarting and then following the first online weekend. In the week prior to the assembly restarting online, 74% reported feeling ‘very much’ or ‘quite a lot’ excited about participating. With regard to feeling prepared, 24% reported feeling ‘very much’ or ‘quite a lot’ and 28% reported feeling ‘not at all’ or ‘a little’.

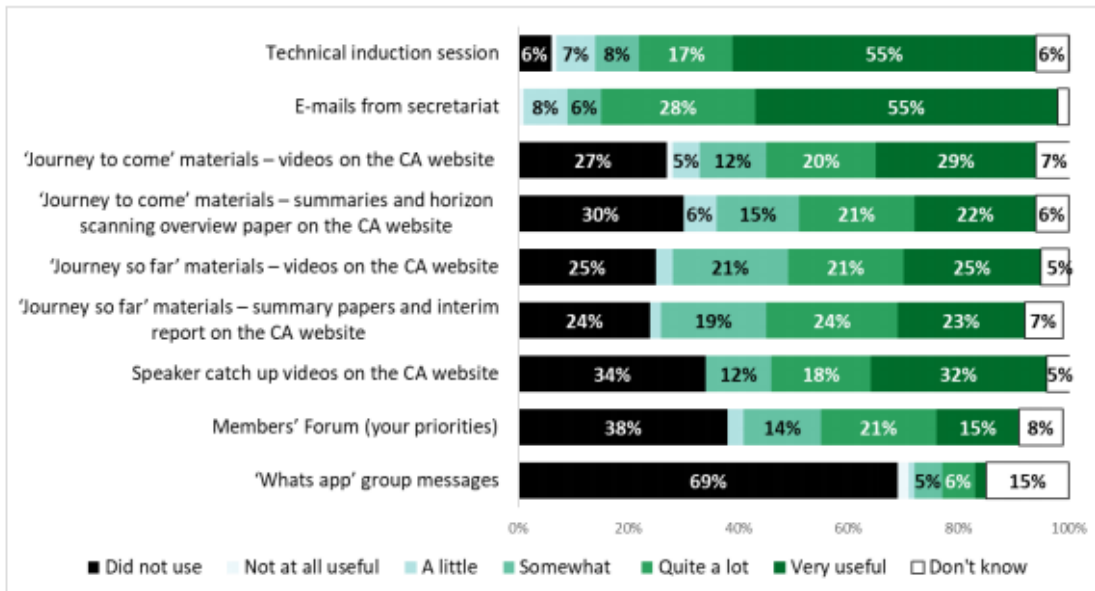


Source: Member Questionnaire – Before Online Assembly

Members were invited to comment on whether they had any concerns or worries about taking part online. Comments included concerns about the technology e.g. “just hoping technology and me get on well together on the day!!” and how the experience would compare to the face to face meetings e.g. “I will miss the personal face to face interaction with everyone”.

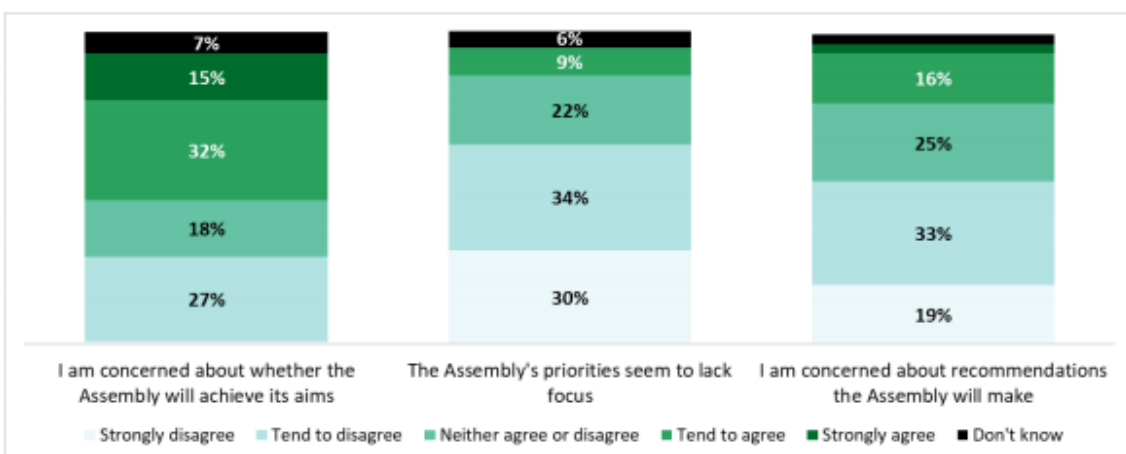
Members were also asked how useful they had found various activities and materials for helping them to prepare for returning online. Free text comments by members in relation to the information or support available to them ahead of the weekend indicated that some members had not yet looked at

the materials available but intended to do so before weekend 5. For example, “I haven't had a chance to use the tools sent but I do hope to catch up with the ‘journey to come’ materials prior to the next session starting”. The comments also highlighted some positive views on the materials and support available e.g. “preparations toward going back to finish work have been great” and also some concerns e.g. “I just don't understand a lot of this on my phone and nothing is sinking in”.



Source: Member Questionnaire – Before Online Assembly

Before the first online assembly meeting, members were asked about their attitudes towards the CA. Overall, 64% ‘strongly disagreed’ or ‘tended to disagree’ that the assembly’s priorities seem to lack focus and 9% ‘tended to agree’. In relation to the statement ‘I am concerned about whether the Assembly will achieve its aims’, 47% ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘tended to agree’ and 28% ‘strongly disagreed’ or ‘tended to disagree.’ Finally, 52% ‘strongly disagreed’ or ‘tended to disagree’ and 19% ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘tended to agree’ with the statement ‘I am concerned about the recommendations the Assembly will make.’



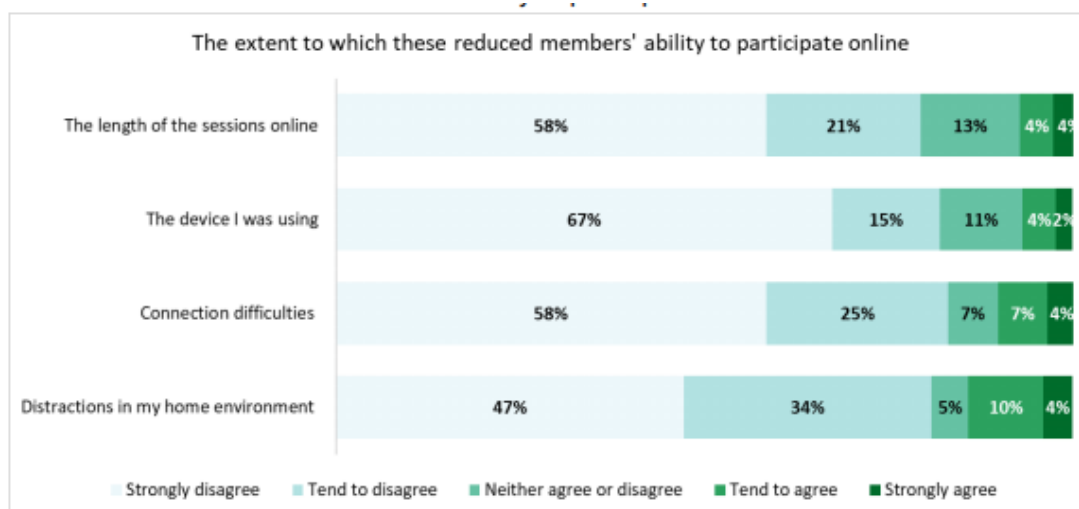
Source: Member Questionnaires – Before Online Assembly

Ahead of the CA restarting online, 9% of respondents said they had considered leaving the assembly since the last face to face meeting in February. The comments from members who had not considered leaving the assembly highlighted general enjoyment with both the learning aspect and meeting others from across Scotland alongside a commitment to complete and make a difference. Some comments also highlighted this commitment despite concerns about moving online e.g. “I had been really enjoying the experience. I took it all very seriously and hoped and wanted to be making a difference within Scotland. I still feel the same today, but I think for me it will be harder, as I’m not hugely great with technology and I really enjoyed being round a table with different people and actually discussing all the different topics. That being said, I still want to be a part of the assembly till the end.” Observations during weekend 5 showed that the majority of members continued to demonstrate a high level of commitment and enthusiasm to the assembly, and a strong focus on its results.

The table below shows the proportion of members who had used different devices to participate in weekend 5.

Device	% of respondents
Computer/laptop with video camera	59%
Tablet/iPad	21%
Smartphone	15%
Mobile Phone	3%
Computer/laptop without video camera	1%
Other	1%
Landline	0%

In relation to the online experience, 14% ‘strongly agreed’ or ‘agreed’ that distractions in their home environment reduced their ability to participate. The majority of respondents (78-83%) ‘strongly disagreed’ or ‘disagreed’ that the length of the sessions; the device they were using; connection difficulties or distractions in their home environment reduced their ability to participate online.

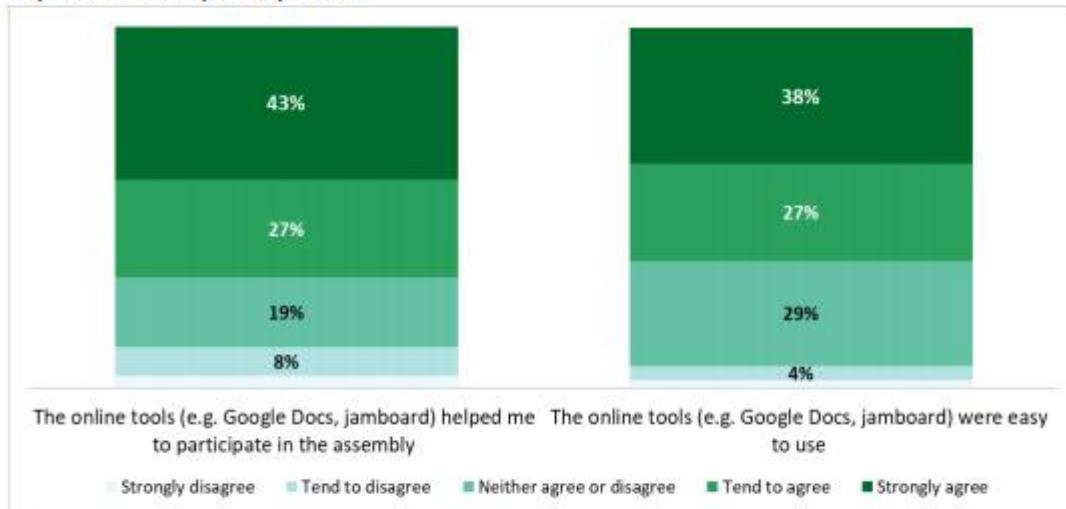


Source: Member Questionnaires – After weekend 5

Free text comments from members on their ability to participate online highlighted positive experiences. For example, one member commented “I was bit anxious at first, but with all the help at hand I enjoyed taking part online” and another “overall the online assembly worked well for me personally. It flowed very well and was just great seeing everyone again“. On the other hand, the

following illustrates some difficulties with the online experience: “My video link was muted by host and despite messages being sent it was not unmuted for the whole of the second session” and “Felt it was rushed, and I felt that if we had the previous paperwork to hand it would have been better as the screen switch from docs to docs I found difficult”. The observation data highlighted a lot of variation among members in their experience and confidence of working in an on-line environment, which had an impact on their participation.

impact on their participation.



Source: Member Questionnaires – After weekend 5

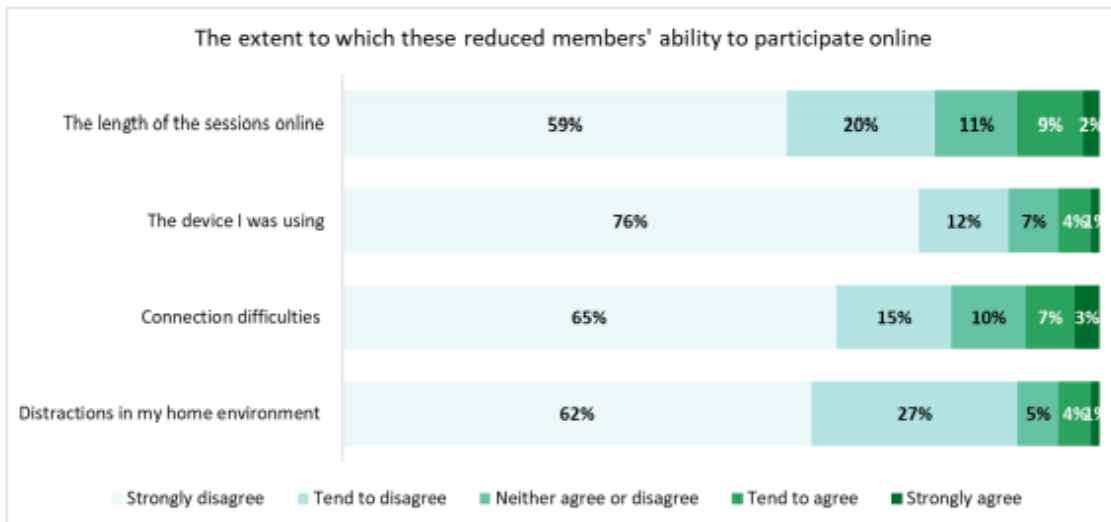
The observation data helped to highlight the experience of the facilitators. They were asked to use online resources (Jamboard and Google Docs), to share these with members, and to use them to make notes of the discussions as they went along. They also needed to share material with members at times, for example the list of vision statements. This proved a distraction at times from the facilitation of the groups themselves, which impacted on the quality of their interactions with members. Some members were observed not to participate, or to do so minimally, in the group discussions (including in the longer afternoon one) with insufficient action taken by the facilitator to remedy this. Some members appeared to be distracted at times in their home environment, which had an impact on their involvement. In the groups observed, there was variation in the quality of facilitation. Some facilitators demonstrated very high levels of confidence and capability in the on-line environment, and others less so.

c. CAoS Data Briefing – Weekend 6

It was evident that timing was a difficulty this weekend; this is reflected in both the observational data and comments from members. The transitions between small group discussions and plenaries was, at times, abrupt and there were moments when members were waiting around for the next activity to begin. The table below shows the proportion of members who had used different devices to participate in weekend 6; 7% reported using a smartphone compared to 15% in weekend 5.

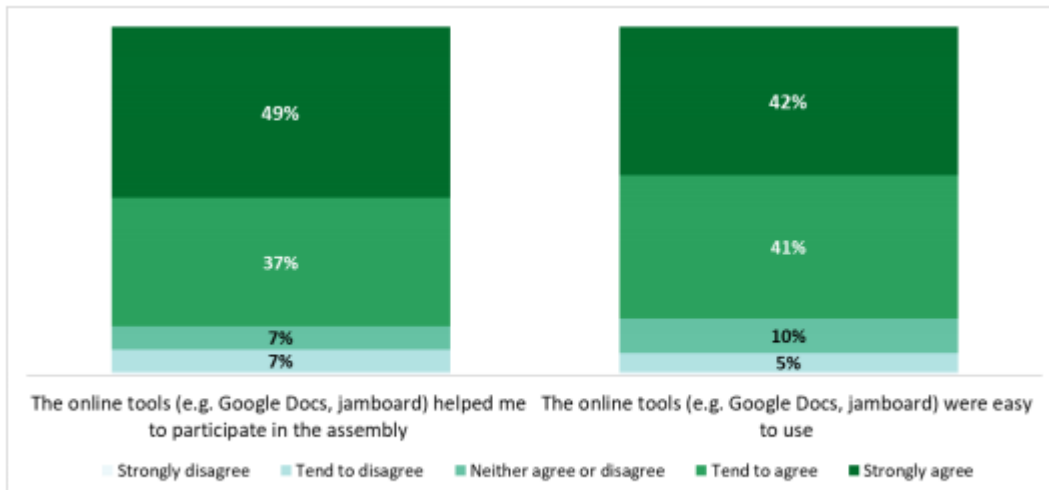
Device	% of respondents
Computer/laptop with video camera	65%
Tablet/iPad	21%
Smartphone	7%
Mobile Phone	3%
Computer/laptop without video camera	4%
Other	0%
Landline	0%

In relation to the online experience, 5% 'strongly agreed', or 'agreed', that distractions in their home environment reduced their ability to participate. This compares to 14% in weekend 5. Observations during weekend 6 showed that the technical issues experienced by members and facilitators appeared to be dealt with swiftly by the organisers and production team. Free text comments from members on their ability to participate highlighted some technical issues e.g. "the internet reception in my area is shocking, especially with the bad weather. A number of times I was thrown out. On Saturday, when i got back online, i was allocated to another group for 15 minutes which was frustrating" but also appreciation for the support provided during the weekend e.g. "On sat I did have sound issues but called and was given great advice which allowed me to access with my mobile device."



Source: Member Questionnaires – After weekend 6

Comments from members in the survey and from the observational data indicated that the visibility of slides and size of text on the Jamboard was difficult for some 3 members. For example, one member commented "Size of screen for Jamboard made some illegible and therefore limited participation! Lack of printed materials also meant only seeing one screen as determined by the facilitator which was cumbersome and unhelpful!?"



Source: Member Questionnaires – After weekend 6

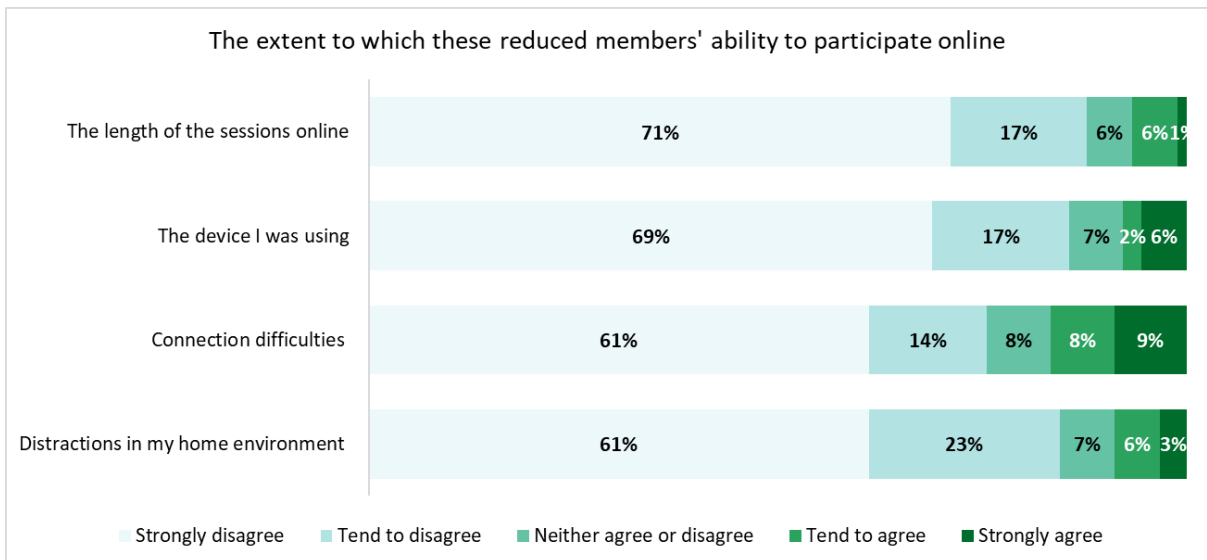
After weekend 6, 98% of members reported that they intended to participate in the next Assembly weekend and 2% were unsure. Overall, 91% ‘strongly agreed’, or ‘tended to agree’, that weekend 6 had made them want to continue as an Assembly member and 3% ‘strongly disagreed’, or ‘tended to disagree’. In addition, 54% ‘strongly agreed’ that they understood what was expected of them; similar to weekends 2 and 3 when over 50% ‘strongly agreed’ with this statement. Of the remaining respondents, 33% ‘tended to agree’, 4% ‘neither agreed or disagreed’, 5% ‘tended to disagree’ and 3% ‘strongly disagreed’.

d. CAoS Data Briefing – Weekend 7

The table below shows the proportion of members who had used different devices to participate in weekend 7.

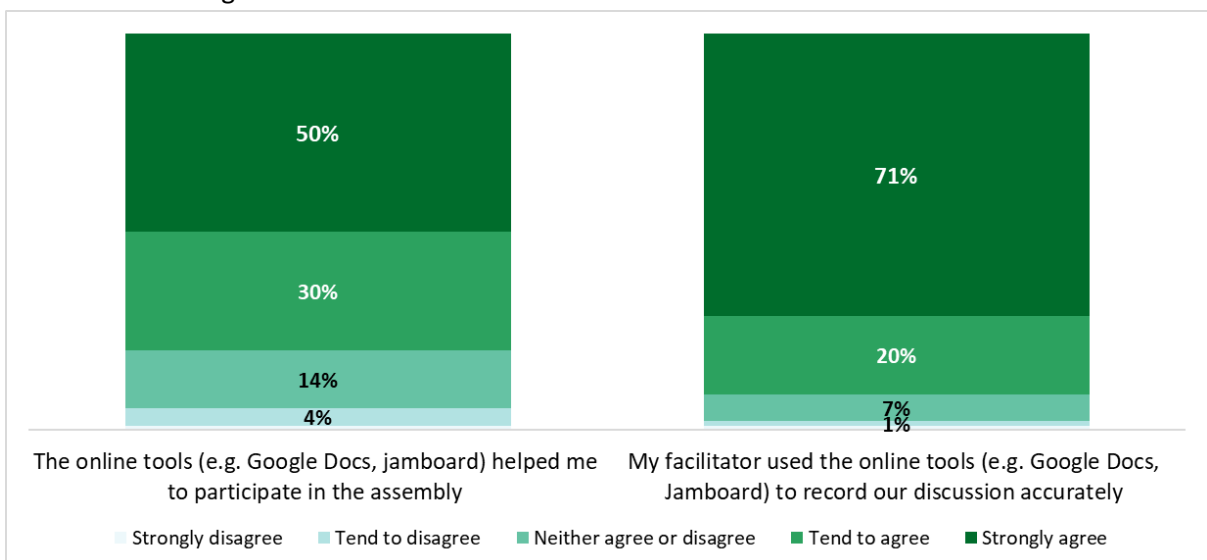
Device	% of respondents
Computer/laptop with video camera	62%
Tablet/iPad	18%
Smartphone	10%
Computer/laptop without video camera	7%
Mobile Phone	4%
Other	0%
Landline	0%

This weekend, 17% ‘strongly agreed’, or ‘agreed’, that connection difficulties reduced their ability to participate. This compares to 10% in weekend 6. Free text comments indicated some members had experienced technical issues e.g. “Due to power cut had to use phone on roaming data which disconnected me frequently” and “Technical problems i.e. local internet connection and change of equipment (chromebook to phone) prevented me from fully participating”.



Source: Member Questionnaires – After weekend 7

Comments from members in the survey also highlighted positive experiences in relation to the weekend as well as gratitude towards the organisers e.g. “The best ever (online!)” and “I would like to thank everyone for their hard work this weekend”. Other comments suggested some difficulties with the online experience. The following illustrates a concern with navigating documents digitally “I do not own a printer therefore sometimes it's difficult to go back & forward looking at various documents “ and some members highlighted perceived limitations of the move online e.g. “Notwithstanding my personal difficulties with technology, I feel the Assembly does not function as well as it did in person. The interaction among members is sporadic and lacks the immediacy and warmth of meeting face to face. 2D rather than 3D. Black and white instead of Technicolor!”



Source: Member Questionnaires – After weekend 7

Observations during the weekend showed that members miss the more social side of the assembly, which is much more constrained in the online environment. There was some use of the chat function at times to write small messages of greeting to each other, and in particular to offer support to members who presented their group’s recommendations at the end of the weekend. The lunchbreak was not used for any social interaction. The majority of members chose not to use their video in

plenary sessions, but most, with a small exception of those without a video camera, were all are visible in the group discussions.

e. How to hold elections safely and democratically during the COVID-19 pandemic

Sarah Birch, Fernanda Buriel, Nic Cheeseman, Alistair Clark, Staffan Darnolf, Susan Dodsworth, Larry Garber, Roxana Gutiérrez-Romero, Tanja Hollstein, Toby S. James, Vasu Mohan & Koffi Sawyer

Running elections is highly labour-intensive. Poll workers in particular, play a vital role in building confidence around electoral processes. Their role will be ever more important during forthcoming elections as they will meet and interact with voters, issue ballots and oversee polling stations during a challenging public health crisis. Many will suggest the pandemic is an opportunity for online voting or extended postal voting. Online voting is far from widely accepted or used, and while postal voting is much more widespread, most jurisdictions still have a legal obligation to provide vote in-person services. Even with voting machines, there is a need for poll workers to guide voters on polling day. Here we highlight five key risk and threats to how poll workers will cope with the pandemic circumstances and offer key recommendations.

Leaving aside health and logistics, traditional methods of observation are also likely to be significantly less effective in the current environment. In countries such as South Korea and Uganda, campaign rallies and public meetings have been replaced by digital campaigns. In some cases, this has come about through the voluntary compliance of parties and candidates, while in others, such as Uganda, it has been mandated by the government or electoral commission. As a result, an increasing proportion of electoral activity – including campaign spending, voter mobilisation, hate speech and so on – will take place online and will not require observers who are deployed on the ground to be monitored. At the same time, the pandemic is likely to spur the growing use of digital technology for processes such as voter registration, identification, and in some cases even voting itself. This will increasingly shift the focus of electoral manipulation – and efforts to prevent it – away from manual processes towards digital ones. One of the greatest risks for international election observation is to stand still while the world changes.

With an increasing proportion of electoral activity taking place digitally and online – especially during the pandemic – it makes sense for international observers to place greater emphasis on monitoring online spaces such as Twitter and Facebook. Given that most newspapers are available digitally, or can be quickly scanned, traditional media can also be monitored remotely.

Public participation in electoral administration has both normative and instrumental benefits. Involving citizens in the design of public services has a normative value because citizens have a right to have their voices heard about how services are run. The instrumental value is that it can improve efficiency and effectiveness through the identification of problems and can help to identify the specific needs of minority and vulnerable groups (James 2020a, 62). These are rarely achieved, however, since decision making networks tend to be relatively closed. EMB interaction tends to be with the

government, the media and political parties, while ideas for electoral reform are least likely to come directly from citizens, research shows (James 2020a, 157-8). This can create insular bubbles in which the needs of other actors are not considered. Interactions with civil society could therefore create a much richer 'needs list'. Mechanisms for consulting the public or vulnerable groups include: holding focus groups, consulting with stakeholder organisations, online surveys of samples of the population and open online consultations.

Crowdsourcing (and then verifying) data from individuals on the ground – as the Ushahidi platform famously did to track the violence surrounding Kenya's 2007-8 general elections – can be a cost-effective way of mapping the extent of electoral manipulation. Along with working in partnership with local groups with existing networks and virtual monitoring, crowd sourcing data can also insulate observers from the risk of being shut out of certain areas due to local lockdowns – so long as access to the Internet is maintained throughout the electrical cycle.

Section II: Rapid Literature Review

This section contains a rapid literature review on the effects of Covid-19 on **democracy and political participation in the UK**, with a particular focus on young people.

Our review will focus on three broad areas:

- a) How has the pandemic affected democracy in the UK in general. Including the public's trust in democracy, government and political institutions, with a particular focus on the views of young people?
- b) How has the pandemic affected opportunities for political participation in the UK, in particular for young people? What role have democratic innovations (e.g. participatory budgeting, digital participation and mini-publics) played?
- c) How can democracy and political participation, in particular opportunities for young people, be improved as the pandemic continues?

Each source around the following themes (The most relevant themes to this part of the study will be 1, 2 and 4):

1. **Governance:** How has COVID impacted on relationships between national and local actors, accountability for decisions, and freedom of the individual? This relates to welfare; use of devolved powers; politicians vs experts; individual citizens' voices.
2. **Trust:** How has COVID affected society's relationship with information, data, media, the role of experts. This relates to trust in government, institutions, technology, information, and in academic research.
3. **Cohesion:** How has COVID impacted on relationships within and between communities of people and ideas? This relates to making decisions at a time of change, and cohesion as a day-to-day practice (e.g. being neighbourly), and as a shared value (e.g. a societal glue).
4. **Inequalities:** What has been the role of COVID in highlighting, ameliorating, causing, exacerbating inequalities. This relates to inequalities of place, religion and belief, sex and gender, economics and class, race and ethnicity, health and disability.
5. **Sustainability:** How has COVID impacted the way we think about, and the importance we attribute to, sustainability? This relates to the long-term health of the environment, value of green spaces, impact of political decisions, institutions and practices.

Landman, T. & Di Gennaro Splendore, L. (2020) Pandemic democracy: elections and COVID-19. *Journal of Risk Research*, DOI: 10.1080/13669877.2020.1765003.

Governance

- It claims there are several ways in which the pandemic and government response can affect the conduct of genuine and transparent elections around the world. Firstly, people can be discouraged from casting their votes, reducing overall turnout. Secondly, there can be a postponement of elections, and the impacts of this varies by regime type. Second, the consequences of formal postponement varies by regime type. Thirdly, many different elements in the electoral cycle may be affected, such as voter registration. The article emphasises that new challenges will emerge as the pandemic progresses, and that there is no single or simple solution. It advocates for electoral authorities to follow an election risk management plan, and avoid delays to election and incentive participation.

Bell D. (2020) Covid-19: democracy and hard choices in public health. *BMJ* 2020; 369 :m2090. Available online: <https://doi-org.libproxy.ncl.ac.uk/10.1136/bmj.m2090> (Published 05 June 2020)

Governance

- Justifying the “lockdown” with the phrase “it has to be done” is said to be “threatening decades of norms on human rights by focusing whole countries, the world, on one problem and one outcome” (p. 1).

Deckman, M., McDonald, J., Rouse, S., & Kromer, M. (2020). Gen Z, Gender, and COVID-19. *Politics & Gender*, 1-9. doi:10.1017/S1743923X20000434

Using a national survey of Generation Z - those born after 1996 - conducted in late May 2020, it measures the attitudes about the impact of the coronavirus on personal health, financial and job concerns, views about shelter-in-place laws, and 2020 voting intentions. The main findings are:

- **Inequalities:** Gen Z women express greater health and economic concerns and support for shelter-in-place [stay at home/lock down] measures than their male counterparts, but this gender gap is largely mitigated by party and other covariates. Party also mediates the differences between young male and female voters concerning the influence of the coronavirus on their vote choice in 2020. Notably, women have significantly greater concern about the impact of COVID-19 on their personal financial situation, while Gen Z men express more concern about their personal health amid COVID-19 in more fully specified statistical models.
- **Inequalities:** The two significant gender differences that emerged in the multivariate analysis do speak to the gender gap literature: women’s greater concern about how COVID19 may jeopardize their employment echoes earlier studies that argue that the gender gap is rooted in women’s greater economic vulnerability. Men’s greater prioritization of their own personal health in wake of COVID-19 may also speak to their lack of empathy or “prosocial values”

(Lizotte 2020). No large gender gaps emerge with respect to how Gen Z will factor responses to COVID into their votes in the 2020 election, though it should be noted that 58% of all Gen Z Americans say this issue is very important to their vote choice; an additional 30% say it is somewhat important. Overall, however, while gender may matter to these opinions even among the youngest cohort of Americans, its influence is largely mediated by parties, which play a crucial role in sorting the attitudes and policy preferences of men and women of older generations.

- **Inequalities:** A recent national survey conducted by the Pew Research Center (Schaeffer and Rainie 2020) suggests that younger Americans, more so than their older counterparts, view the coronavirus as stress inducing and a greater threat to their personal finances.
- **Governance:** Pickup, Stecula, and van der Linden (2020) find that partisanship shapes attitudes about the coronavirus, with Democrats expressing more concern than Republicans about the pandemic, while also being less confident in the federal government's handling of it.
- **Governance:** During the first months of the outbreak, women were more likely to support government steps to combat the virus and to take personal measures such as washing their hands more often or avoiding physical contact (Kahn 2020). Explanations for the gender gap in public opinion vary, but some scholars argue that the divergence may be linked to gender role socialization (Diekman and Schneider 2010). Given that women are often socialized to be more compassionate and nurturing, they are primed to hold more liberal positions on social compassion issues and to support a larger government role on issues such as health care and school spending (Eagly and Diekman 2006; Greenlee 2014).

Sharfuddin, S. (2020) The world after Covid-19. *The Commonwealth Journal of International Affairs*. Volume 109, Issue 3. Pp. 247 - 257.

Governance/trust:

- The coronavirus pandemic has forced many governments to adjust how citizens access services through e-government portals. This article claims that in a post-corona world, governments will expand their e-government services, enabling citizens to pay utility bills, rates and taxes, obtain official documents and receive government notifications in real time.

Trust:

- The article claims that countries may use *"IT to monitor the movement of citizens through tracking software in mobile phones or chips embedded in driving licences and photo ID cards. Police may be given limited access to citizens' financial, employment and criminal records at the click of a button on their mobile instruments. Any outcry for privacy will be outweighed by considerations of security and health. Human rights defenders will be worried about the power this could give to authoritarian governments for silencing opposition and blackmailing them into submission. In established democracies, there would be legislation to define the limits and mandates of authorised government agencies, which will have the power to monitor citizens' movements under law, and a mechanism will be available to citizens to challenge misuse through courts. With the passage of time, the location of every individual will be traceable*

through satellite, just as machine-readable passports contain all the relevant information about their holders on government portals.” (p. 251).

Cohesion:

- This article rather dramatically claims that in a post-Covid-19 world, “many social norms we take for granted will collapse”. It states: “ *Coffee shops and bars may have to change the way they served their customers before, relying on take aways and perhaps charging them extra for use of indoor space. Smoking already became a taboo 10 years ago. Tobacco companies have struggled to reinvent themselves. Now they will wind up completely. The next target will be alcohol and fizzy drink manufacturers because of concerns about diabetes and alcohol misuse, as health will take the top priority. Social distancing will become the new norm and individualism will undermine social and cultural contacts, including people taking crowded trains and attending weddings and social gatherings. On the negative side, the destitute will take to crime, cyber fraud, drug abuse and in extreme cases fall into depression and suicide. Enemy states will utilise these elements to disrupt life and create internal dissent in order to advance their agendas. Wars will not disappear but the way these are fought will change. In this gloomy setup, the poor and disadvantaged will suffer most in all aspects of their daily lives. In a strange way, individualism will become the keyword for human survival in a globalised world” (p. 253).*

Wnuk A, Oleksy T, Maison D (2020) The acceptance of Covid-19 tracking technologies: The role of perceived threat, lack of control, and ideological beliefs. *PLoS ONE* 15(9).

Trust & Governance:

- It may not be relevant but examples of technological monitoring of citizens: “*In France, for example, the police have begun monitoring parks and public spaces with drones to know people do not leave their homes for non-essential purposes. Some governments (e.g., in Israel and Singapore) have gone further and are using smartphone applications that enable tracking those with whom the users have contact to detect the spread of the virus while others (e.g., in Taiwan) have introduced an electronic system that alerts the local authorities if a quarantine obligation is violated. Also, artificial intelligence is often used to predict the spread of the virus and to examine a vast amount of personal data related to Covid-19. For example, Chinese tracking systems used personalised location data combined with facial recognition technology to identify suspected coronavirus carriers or citizens who were not wearing a face mask in public spaces.*”

Trust & Governance:

- The use of technology to track citizens and combat Covid-19, have raised concerns about potential violations to privacy and civil liberties. Their use has been triggered under the so-called 'state of exception', whereby violation of certain laws is justified to preserve the existing order. This has led to surveillance technologies being used to monitor and track citizens, and existing rights have been curtailed, including the freedom of assembly, and the freedom of movement. The article claims that the surveillance systems go beyond monitoring Covid-19, and the data being collected could be used for commercial purposes.

Pleyers, G. (2020) The Pandemic is a battlefield. Social movements in the COVID-19 lockdown, *Journal of Civil Society*, DOI: 10.1080/17448689.2020.1794398

Governance / Inequalities

- The Covid-19 lockdown measures have stopped mass protests for democracy. Yet, this article claims that far from disappearing, social movements have adapted to unexpected circumstances and been particularly active since March 2020.
- Around the world, activists focused their energy in implementing five roles: protests (that re-emerged in some countries despite sanitary risks); defending workers' rights; mutual aid and solidarity; monitoring policymakers and popular education. These five roles performed by movements during the pandemic combine concrete practices and arguments with a cognitive dimension by which they interpret the crisis and provide particular meanings to it (p. 2).

Cohesion

- Mutual aid groups have surged in European neighbourhoods since the start of the pandemic in March 2020. Neighbours "take care of each other" by shopping, collecting medical prescriptions, making friendly phone calls to isolated neighbours, and dog walking.
- In the UK alone there are over 4,000 "Covid-19 mutual aid groups". These groups and networks are almost entirely organised from the bottom-up, and focussed on the neighbourhood level. To organise under lockdown, and to adhere to social distancing, they rely heavily on social media. In addition, posters, leaflets and conversations are deemed "indispensable to reach neighbours of a generation that is less connected online" (p. 7).
- Participating in a "Covid-19 mutual aid group" is both a learning and collective learning process. Participants learn how to organise, often in horizontal ways and become familiar with new usages of social media.
- The article claims that "*Neighbour groups for mutual aid provide a perspective of the crisis 'from below' and offer concrete examples of rebuilding the social fabric based on concrete solidarity. By monitoring the government policies and sharing analyses in its popular education activities, civil society and movements show a very different perspective as the centrality of states and government in dealing with the crisis that dominates mainstream media.*" p. 13
- The article asks several questions: "*In an emergency like the coronavirus outbreak, activists and movements focus on immediate needs and concrete solidarity. Does this divert energy*

from demands for a structural change and contentious actions? Do teamsters divert money that could have been used to strike for social justice to expand healthcare for some of their members? Do mutual aid groups contribute to the ‘taming’ of social movements (Glasius et al., 2004; Kaldor, 2003) and their progressive integration in the social system as ‘service providers’ (Kriesi, 1996)? Do they contribute to a depoliticization of movements? “(p. 7).

- In the UK, the Covid-19 aid groups are defined not as charity, but as solidarity. The COVID-19 Mutual Aid UK coordination explains it clearly on its website: *Mutual aid isn’t about ‘saving’ anyone. It’s about people coming together, in a spirit of solidarity, to support and look out for one another. (...) Mutual aid is where a group of people organise to meet their own needs, outside of the formal frameworks of charities, NGOs and government. It is, by definition, a horizontal mode of organising, in which all individuals are equally powerful. There are no ‘leaders’ or unelected ‘steering committees’ in mutual aid projects; there is only a group of people who work together as equals. P.7*
- The article argues that mutual help is more than delivering food packages to neighbours, and that “these groups (re-)generate a sense of community or ‘communality’ where citizens self-organize, rebuild social fabric and experience their neighbourhood differently. They create other ways of living and relating to each other. Knitting social relations among neighbours across ethnicity divide play a fundamental role in a time of strong resurgence of racism. [...] In a world dominated by selfish interests and hyper-individualism, caring for others and establishing active solidarity and inter-personal convivial relationships have a prefigurative dimension. They have become a fundamental part of activism and a crucial contribution of contemporary popular movements.” (p. 7).

Trust

- Civil society and social movements have acted as watchdogs of public policies and governments since the very beginning of the COVID-19 outbreak. *Social movement experts and committed intellectuals have produced counter-expertise, reports and analyses that have scrutinized the way governments have tackled the sanitary and social crisis. They have shown how the virus spread is deeply connected with social inequalities and have written reports analyzing the impact of austerity policies in public hospitals or housing. Progressive movement experts have carefully scrutinized the allocation of public budgets to cope with the crisis. In Europe, activist experts denounced the priority given to saving airline companies while we face an ecological crisis. European citizens associations also successfully lobbied to prevent corporations who receive help from COVID-19 bailout programs to pay dividends to their shareholders. Expert activists and civil society organizations propose ‘alternative help packages’ whose measures focus on social justice and ecological transition rather than on corporations’ interests. Civil society experts also play a crucial role in monitoring lobbies and their influence on policymakers. During the pandemic, the NGO ‘Corporate Europe Observatory’ (McArdle & Tansey, 2020) published a report showing that ‘pharmaceutical industry controls billions in EU research funding and deprioritises the public interest’ in EU initiatives. They gather evidence that the main lobby of the European pharmaceutical industry successfully opposed funding for the development of medical technologies to address coronaviruses by the EU Innovative Medicines Initiative. (p. 8)*

- *National and international movement networks are actively engaging in sharing experience and analyses via online platforms and social media. Online spaces and forums have been set up for grassroots movements from different continents to share experiences and analyses. One example is the ‘Viral Open Space’, an ‘online social forum to connect positive responses to our current global crisis’ including workshops, sharing experiences and arts’. (p.9).*

Efuribe, C., Barre-Hemingway, M., Vaghefi, E., and Suleiman, A.B. (2020) "Coping With the COVID-19 Crisis: A Call for Youth Engagement and the Inclusion of Young People in Matters That Affect Their Lives." *Journal of Adolescent Health* 67.1 (2020): 16-17.

Inequalities

- Young people are being asked to make significant sacrifices to protect the health of older adults and other vulnerable populations. When the article was written, in the U.S., the CDC estimates that while youth under the age of 18 years comprise 22% of the U.S. population, they represent only 1.7% of current COVID-19 cases. Although adolescents and young adults are least likely to be severely affected if they contract COVID-19, drastic measures are being taken that affect large populations of youth to slow the rate of infection. Young people have experienced the closure of schools, colleges, cinemas, restaurants, and bars; and the cancellation of sports games, music concerts, dance recitals, and graduations.
- Despite viewing these public health measures as critically important to protect individuals’ health, reduce the burden on our health care system, and limit the number of people whose lives are cut short by COVID-19, the article questions the costs to young people associated with these measures, and asks whether these measures have considered youth voice and participation.
- The article draws on the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child which asserts that it is a fundamental human right for youth and young adults to participate in designing the programs and policies aiming to serve them. Furthermore, youth participation is important for young people to develop critical knowledge and skills, as well as for them to experience a sense of purpose.

Kavanagh, M.M. & Singh, R. (2020) Democracy, Capacity, and Coercion in Pandemic Response—COVID 19 in Comparative Political Perspective. *J Health Polit Policy Law* 8641530. doi: <https://doi-org.libproxy.ncl.ac.uk/10.1215/03616878-8641530>

Governance

- “With COVID-19, governments have been praised for enacting rigid lockdowns that would not have been seen as ethical in other contexts” (p. 5)
- “In general, social scientists have tended to agree, albeit with caveats, that democracy is beneficial for public health. COVID-19 is raising important questions about this contention as high-profile cases show authoritarian countries winning praise for their response while leading democracies have struggled to respond. This complicates, perhaps in helpful ways, the exploration of health and of democracy.” (p. 6).

Bol, D., Giani, M., Blais, A., & Loewen, Peter, J. (2020). "The Effect of COVID-19 Lockdowns on Political Support: Some Good News for Democracy?" *European Journal of Political Research*, 2020-05-31.

Governance

- The paper draws on a web survey conducted in March and April 2020, to study the political effect of the Covid-19 lock down on Western Europe. The paper finds that lockdowns have increased vote intentions for the party of the Prime Minister/President, trust in government and satisfaction with democracy. Furthermore, it finds that, while rallying individuals around current leaders and institutions, they have had no effect on traditional left–right attitudes.

Gaskell, J., Stoker, G., Jennings, W. & Devine, D. (2020) "Covid-19 and the Blunders of Our Governments: Long-run System Failings Aggravated by Political Choices." *The Political Quarterly* 91.3 (2020): 523-33.

Governance

- The paper assesses the performance of governments on Covid-19 across a range of advanced democracies, and argues that the UK’s system of governance has “proved itself vulnerable to failure at the time when its citizens most needed it.” (p. 523).
- It proposes an agenda for reform, with both short and long term mitigation strategies. The article claims this agenda would provide more consensual leadership, a willingness to share ownership for problems and insights, greater trust, and mutual respect between levels of government and a wider openness to local learning and diversity, all helping improve the governance arrangements of the UK.
- The reform agenda is summarised in the table below (p. 531).

Table 2: An agenda of reform

Structural causes of governance failure	Mitigation by policy actors strategies and choices	Mitigation by long-term structural change
Over-weening or ineffectual central direction and confidence	Reflective and consensual political leadership	Better division of power and more effective decentralised governance
Conflicts and confusions over responsibilities leading to coordination problems	Political mechanisms to provide for shared ownership or greater clarity	Forums and collaboration mechanisms that are developed to meet unpredicted and complex challenges
Lack of integration, collaboration, and mutual learning	Sponsorship of trust and mutual respect	Systems to share lessons of good and bad practices that are not about blaming but about learning
Weak capacity to experiment and tailor policy to meet diversity	Openness to ideas coming from below and growing sense of autonomy	Local commissioning powers, local financial control and resources

Pearse, Harry. "Deliberation, Citizen Science and Covid-19." *The Political Quarterly* 91.3 (2020): 571-77.

Trust / governance

- Deliberative and citizen science interventions could help both develop and legitimise the UK government's Covid-19 response strategy.
- "Deliberative and citizen science exercises can invigorate that life by improving the interaction between citizens, experts and politicians. In the present moment, these interventions could help develop and legitimise the government's Covid strategy. But the same mechanisms could also serve democracy in whatever state of 'normality' we subsequently find ourselves." (p. 577).
- The paper calls for a permanent, or semi-permanent, deliberative body with a rotating membership, which would convene on issues of national importance and report back to government via a select committee, or similar, to expand the scope for inclusivity and participation in decision making. The paper argues over time, all citizens would either be current or ex-participants or know someone (who resembled them) who had participated, and everyone could expect to be called upon at some point in the future. In achieving this, "*the so-called deliberative turn—still more evident on the page than in the world—would then be a live and instituted aspect of our democratic culture*". (p. 577)>

Steen, T. & Brandsen, T. "Coproductio during and after the COVID-19 Pandemic: Will It Last?" *Public Administration Review* 80.5 (2020): 851-55. Web.

Cohesion / Trust / Governance

- Coproduction between citizens and public services professionals has flourished under Covid-19, but the paper argues that the conditions which enabled coproduction to emerge, are likely to change as emergency regulations and funds are abandoned, and the sense of urgency disappears.
- The paper argues that coproduction is most likely to be sustained in areas where the conditions for coproduction are already in place, including the basic commitment, complementarity, and supportive regulatory frameworks. This includes the involvement of parents in their children's education, which has been proven to be beneficial to educational achievement. Although the levels of "homeschooling" will not be sustained (nor would this be desirable), the heightened interaction between parents and teachers, the greater involvement of parents with their children's homework, and the swift adoption of digital technologies would easily allow a greater level of coproduction than existed prior to the pandemic. Yet, this will rely upon a deliberate effort on the part of policy makers and staff to sustain it after school returns to normal.
- The history of major societal changes show they can come about after a crisis, such as voting rights after World War I, but there are other instances, such as the charity during plague, where things go back to normal very quickly. The paper states, "*despite commonly heard assumptions that "everything will change," research on past epidemics shows that this is not necessarily true. While it is clear that sharp population decreases and social upheaval as a result of pandemics can change the course of history or accelerate existing developments,*

most likely, in post-COVID-19 times, people and institutions will easily slip back into business as usual. This is not only because deeply rooted social behavioral patterns are not necessarily changed by a few months' lockdown, but also because the conditions that made coproduction emerge are likely to change as emergency regulations and funds are abandoned and the sense of urgency disappears." p. 854.

Seaton, J., Sippitt, A., & Worthy, B. "Fact Checking and Information in the Age of Covid." *The Political Quarterly* 91.3 (2020): 578-84.

Trust / Governance

- In the UK, the government's unwillingness to share complete information about Covid-19, has enabled misinformation and suspicion to fill the gap.
- "Uncertainty is at the heart of politics and yet, rather than including the public in a realistic conversation about risk, the UK government continued saying it knew best (when it evidently did not). Information is not some mysterious material that specialists wield to 'make' policy; rather, changes in how it is accumulated and moved around the national and international political system are re-shaping political realities." p. 578.

Coulter, S. "All in It Together? The Unlikely Rebirth of Covid Corporatism." *The Political Quarterly* 91.3 (2020): 534-41.

- The UK government's business support packages as a result of Covid-19 have led to a thaw in the industrial relationships between business, trade unions and the government.

Goodman, A. (2020, Mar 20). Democracy to autocracy? COVID-19 is exposing a crisis in the UK constitution. *OpenDemocracy*.

Governance

- The response to COVID-19 is showing how the UK's unwritten constitution puts democracy at risk. Parliament must limit the use and extent of the emergency measures, and ensure that fundamental rights, rule of law and democracy are retained to a high standard.
- The article says that the UK government has "autocratic fervour", evidenced by the cancellation of the local authority elections, and the elections for the London Mayor and Police Commissioners. The article argues that postal voting and online voting could have been used.

Sibony, A. (2020). The UK COVID-19 Response: A Behavioural Irony? *European Journal of Risk Regulation*, 11(2), 350-357.

Governance

- In the early days of the pandemic, the UK government tried to contain the virus through encouraging herd immunity, rather than through a lock down. This decision was presented as based on behavioral science and epidemiology, with the government stating that “behavioural fatigue - whereby people would get tired of staying at home - would reduce the effectiveness of a lockdown. This paper argues that other behavioural science outcomes and theories could have been used, and that this situation should give policy makers and analysts pause to consider the proper place of behavioural insights.

Larcher V, Dittborn M, Linthicum J, et al. (2020) Young people’s views on their role in the COVID-19 pandemic and society’s recovery from it. *Archives of Disease in Childhood*. doi: 10.1136/archdischild-2020-320040

Equality / Trust

- Drawing on focus group discussions with fifteen Children’s Hospital Young People’s Forum members to explore perceptions of the impacts of Covid-19 on their lives, their community, on school closures, and the roles they wanted to play in society’s recovery from the pandemic.
- Four major themes were identified:
 - 1) awareness of the pandemic’s impact on others: participants showed mature awareness of the effects on broader society, especially the elderly, socially disadvantaged and parents.
 - (2) Perceived impact on their own lives: principal concerns were the educational and practical repercussions of school closures and social isolation, including effects on educational prospects.
 - (3) Views about school reopening: young people understood the broader rationale for school reopening and were generally positive about it, but expressed concerned about their safety and that of others.
 - (4) Communication issues: a need for clear, concise, understandable information readily accessible for young people was expressed. Up to now, they felt passive recipients rather than participants.
- In conclusion, the authors argue that young people are concerned about their own future, their family, and broader development, and want to be active participants in social recovery. To achieve this, they require the appropriate information and the means to enable their voices to be heard.

Groarke JM, Berry E, Graham-Wisener L, McKenna-Plumley PE, McGlinchey E, Armour C (2020) Loneliness in the UK during the COVID-19 pandemic: Cross-sectional results from the COVID-19 Psychological Wellbeing Study. *PLoS ONE* 15(9): e0239698. <https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0239698>

Inequalities / Cohesion

- This study was a cross-sectional survey of UK adults to analyse the impact of the UK's Covid-19 lockdown. It found that rates of loneliness during the initial phase of lockdown were high. 41% of 18 to 24 year olds were found to have experienced loneliness during the national lockdown (p. 7). Limited social interaction is a particularly important risk factor for loneliness among younger people. The study argues that supportive interventions to reduce loneliness should prioritise younger people and those with mental health symptoms. Improving emotion regulation and sleep quality, and increasing social support may be optimal initial targets to reduce the impact of COVID-19 regulations on mental health outcomes.

Borkowska, M. & Laurence, J. (2020) Coming together or coming apart? Changes in social cohesion during the Covid-19 pandemic in England, European Societies, DOI: [10.1080/14616696.2020.1833067](https://doi.org/10.1080/14616696.2020.1833067)

Cohesion

- Using data from the Understanding Society Survey, the paper examined both trends over time in overall levels of cohesion as well as patterns of positive and negative changes experienced by individuals. It found that overall levels of social cohesion are lower in June 2020 compared to all of the examined pre-pandemic periods. It found that the pandemic had a negative effect on perceived cohesion among all people, across the whole of the UK.
- The decline of perceived-cohesion is particularly high in the most deprived communities, among certain ethnic minority groups and among the lower-skilled. Groups that saw their cohesion decline more than others includes those in younger age groups (under 35, compared to those under 35).

Weible, C.M., Nohrstedt, D., Cairney, P. et al. (2020) COVID-19 and the policy sciences: initial reactions and perspectives. *Policy Sci* 53, 225–241.

Governance

- The Covid-19 pandemic has increased reliance on scientific and technical expertise in making policy decisions, which raises questions about political accountability in policy making.

Westminster Foundation for Democracy (2020) Parliamentary Committees: windows into the world of COVID-19 legislation and its impact. Published October 19th, 2020. Available online: https://www.wfd.org/2020/10/19/parliamentary-committees-as-windows-into-the-world-of-covid-19-legislation-and-its-impact/?utm_source=WFD+Newsletter&utm_campaign=73be8e5bdc-EMAIL_CAMPAIGN_2019_11_26_09_28_COPY_02&utm_medium=email&utm_term=0_1ff65c4dc0-73be8e5bdc-542778826

Governance

- To help scrutinise the large volume of Covid-19 related laws, the UK Parliament also has a Delegated Powers and Regulatory Reform Committee that is tasked with scrutinising proposals in bills to delegate legislative power from Parliament to another body.
- In addition to these technical scrutiny committees, there are more than 25 Standing and Select Committees from within the House of Lords and House of Commons have been involved in scrutinising aspects of the UK's COVID-19 legislative response. These include: the Home Affairs Committee, which inquired into Home Office preparedness for COVID-19, the Commons' Justice Committee inquiring into the impact of the pandemic on prison, probation and court systems, the Women and Equalities Committee inquiring into the unequal impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on 'people with protected characteristics' under the Equality Act, and the Lords Economic Affairs Committee inquiring into the effects of the pandemic on the labour market. In addition, a special House of Lords Select Committee on COVID-19 was established to consider 'the long-term implications of the COVID-19 pandemic on the economic and social wellbeing of the United Kingdom'.
- These scrutinise policy making and focus on the legal frameworks which authorise the use of executive powers.

PB Scotland (2020) Opinion: PB can give citizens a stake in the Covid-19 recovery. June 17, 2020. Available online: <https://pbscotland.scot/blog/2020/6/17/opinion-pb-can-give-citizens-a-stake-in-the-covid-19-recovery>

Governance

- This blog argues for the "power and positivity" of communities for participatory budgeting (PB) to be harnessed to help plan the response to Covid-19.
- PB Scotland Network surveyed its members and from more than 60 responses, it found that there is an "appetite for using participatory budgeting to help us ensure that citizens have a stake and a contribution in supporting Scotland to move through the next stage of recovery from this global crisis, and beyond."

Involve (2020) The Perfect Storm? Emerging from the crisis stronger, through sharing what we have. Published 25 September 2020. Available online:
<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/opinion/perfect-storm-emerging-crisis-stronger-through-sharing-what-we-have>

Governance

- This blog outlines the benefits of participatory budgets (PB) and argues that they have value in developing government's response to Covid-19. It identifies the benefits of PB as helping mutual aid groups work together and share ideas, helping local authorities build consensus about how public money should be spent, provide a platform to engage people in budget decisions using technology without the need for face to face meetings, and help build community resilience.

Harari, Y. N. (2020, March 20). The world after Coronavirus. Financial Times, 445. <https://www.ft.com/content/19d90308-6858-11ea-a3c9-1fe6fedcca75>

Trust

- This Financial Times argues that rather than using technologies as surveillance mechanisms to monitor citizens, governments should use the technology to empower citizens [it lacks details on how it would do this and the potential impacts].

Involve (2020) Building Back With: Involving communities in the Covid-19 response and recovery A handbook for local government. Version 1: October 2020. Available online:
<https://www.involve.org.uk/resources/blog/project-updates/building-back-handbook-involving-communities-covid-19-response-and> (largely taken verbatim from p. 15 - 17).

Cohesion / Trust / Governance

- The report identified a few examples of deliberative democracy occurring in response to Covid-19:
 - West Midland Combined Authority - Citizens' Panel on the Covid Recovery
 - The West Midlands Combined Authority ran a Citizens' Panel involving 36 residents from across the region and a range of backgrounds, who met online throughout the summer to learn about the issues facing the region and share experiences of how the pandemic has affected them and their families. The panel agreed six priorities: 1) Getting back to normal, safely – ensuring people can live safely and there is clear guidance as we move out of lockdown and to avoid a second peak. 2) Healthcare – making sure that patients can be treated, avoiding risk of Covid-19, and the healthcare system gets back on track to diagnose and treat people when they need it. It also means promoting healthy living to reduce demand for the NHS in the long-term. 3) Mental Health – specific emphasis on making sure that anyone who needs mental health

support knows where to find it and is guided to access support. 4) Education – preparing children to go back to an adapted school environment, ensuring their safety and wellbeing. Making sure that every child is supported to make up for lost time so children from all backgrounds are equally able to achieve their goals. 5) Employment – creating new jobs, with an emphasis on apprenticeships and entry-level jobs. Making sure that additional training is provided to give people the right skill sets to enter the workforce and getting people who have lost their jobs for Covid-related reasons back into work. 6) Promoting and supporting business – especially smaller and/or local businesses and the self-employed for example by encouraging people to buy local. Providing financial and business support to help them get back on their feet and protect jobs.

- The Scottish Government: Coronavirus (COVID-19: framework for decision making)
 - The Scottish Government ran a rapid public engagement process to get input from the public on managing the lockdown arrangements. As part of this, the government set up a crowdsourcing platform for people to add ideas and comments to inform its approach. Over the course of less than a week, the platform collected 4,122 ideas and 17,966 comments.
- Bristol City Council Citizens' Assembly on the Covid Recovery
 - Bristol City Council has adopted a multi-stage participatory and deliberative process to rebuild a more resilient, fair and sustainable city and understand how Covid-19 has affected its residents and how the city should respond. The Council sees this as an opportunity to confront and address the inequalities that existed before the pandemic and which may be further entrenched. A specific aim is to ensure engagement with those who are often unheard and underrepresented in decision making. The engagement process has three phases: 1. Focus groups: To hear from a broad spectrum of people in detail about how coronavirus and lockdown had impacted them. This information was then used to shape the topics covered in the survey. 2. Survey: The Your City Our Future survey was launched at the beginning of August with the aim of hearing from 5,000 citizens. The topics covered are broad and include how people feel about working from home, as well as changes in travel behaviour, income and job opportunities for example. Crucially, by tracking responses from different communities, the Council is able to target certain groups to ensure it hears from the full diversity of the city. 3. Citizens' Assembly: Based on the work outlined above, the Council will identify the issues that are both important to people but which also divide opinion. This will then be brought to a citizens' assembly of one hundred Bristolians, or up to three smaller citizens' juries depending on the breadth of issues raised through the survey. Using evidence, and through debate, participants will produce

recommendations for the council and other city partners to consider. This work is feeding into Bristol's recovery plan, which is being developed alongside the assembly as part of an iterative process, allowing for the incorporation of the outputs of engagement with citizens.

House of Commons (2020) House of Commons Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee Parliamentary Scrutiny of the Government's handling of Covid-19 Fourth Report of Session 2019–21. Published on 10 September 2020.

Governance

- The Public Administration and Constitutional Affairs Committee launched an inquiry into the UK Government's response to COVID-19 and the Coronavirus Act 2020. The Committee concluded that the framework for parliamentary scrutiny of the Government's approach to COVID-19 is inadequate. The approach that should be taken for emergency legislation is something that the Committee will examine as part of its future work. The Committee has recommended that the Government provide, for that debate, information relating to the original rationale for the temporary provisions in the Coronavirus Act, why those provisions are still justified and the evidence base for demonstrating those provisions are still effective.

Not Equal (2020) COVID-19 Call to Action Report 2nd June 2020 . Available online: https://not-equal.tech/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/Not-Equal_COVID-19_CallToAction_Report.pdf

Inequalities

- The report summarises the findings of interviews with 21 representatives of NotEqual non-academic members organisations – mainly community and voluntary groups – to find out how they were using technology to work with their constituencies and what issues they were facing as they tried to continue to work with the communities they support during lockdown.
- Some respondents highlighted that the provision of their services via digital technology enabled engagement and inclusion of new service users. This was countered by the disappearance of other long-standing service users. Here issues of digital inequities and exclusion (access to hardware, wifi, data as well as skills and language barriers) were raised as the principal reasons for the disappearance of some beneficiaries
- As activities such as education and educational support moved online, service-providers were aware that children and young people from less advantaged backgrounds were being further disadvantaged, either because of digital exclusion and/or because of lack of self-motivation and/or parental motivation, or parental language skills and access. Another concern is that some already socially-isolated people may be reluctant to leave their homes and re-engage in person because they have come to rely on tech, thus exacerbating social isolation, a sedentary lifestyle etc. Finally, it was thought that an erosion of democracy was possible if there was not the physical space for groups and communities to act together and to feel the power of alliance together.

- Despite some service users having ‘disappeared’ during the pandemic, others – who were previously not engaged – were able to benefit from the digitalisation of some services and partake in activities via digital means.

Aitken, M., Cunningham-Burley, S., Darlington, A., Elstub, S., Escobar, O., Jones, K. H., Sethi, N., & Thompson, R. (2020). Why the Public Need a Say in How Patient Data are Used for Covid-19 Responses. *International journal of population data science*, 5(2), 1357.

Governance / Trust

- This article is a letter to the editors of the International Journal of Population Data Science.
- It argues that the global coronavirus pandemic has clearly demonstrated the great urgency to collect and use patient data effectively to understand, track and manage the spread of Covid-19. It calls for public engagement and deliberation around all uses of patient data, to establish good governance and to maintain a legitimate social licence for data practices around Covid-19.
- Already there exists a statement on public involvement and engagement (PI&E) relating to data-intensive health research published in IJPDS last year, and it sets out eight principles to underpin best practice in this field and to inform the design, implementation and evaluation of PI&E strategies and activities, and these are:
 1. Have institutional buy-in;
 2. Have clarity of purpose;
 3. Be transparent;
 4. Involve two-way communication;
 5. Be inclusive and accessible to broad publics;
 6. Be ongoing;
 7. Be designed to produce impact;
 8. Be evaluated.
- The paper argues for engaging the public, including those with little experience of digital communication.

Lavazza, A., & Farina, M. (2020). The Role of Experts in the Covid-19 Pandemic and the Limits of Their Epistemic Authority in Democracy. *Frontiers in public health*, 8, 356.

Governance

- In the 2020 Covid-19 pandemic, medical experts, including virologists, epidemiologists, public health scholars and statisticians alike) have become instrumental in suggesting policies to counteract the spread of coronavirus. The paper argues that these suggestions have rarely been questioned but their guidance implemented by policy makers, and often used to justify unpopular measures, including restricting people's freedom of movement. The paper argues that experts should justify their recommendations, and that “civic epistemologies” should be constructed to evaluate procedures and decisions concerning new aspects of the application of scientific knowledge to people' lives. Prior to implementation, recommendations should be

scrutinized in a decision making process which is civil, participatory and political, without compromising the criteria of competence and rationality.

Flinders, M. (2020) Democracy and the Politics of Coronavirus: Trust, Blame and Understanding, *Parliamentary Affairs*. <https://doi.org/10.1093/pa/gsaa013>

Governance / Trust

- Coronavirus is shaping debates about democracy, regime legitimacy and state capacity.
- The paper argues that it is crucial that the pre-existing concerns about the crisis of democracy, and the impacts on democracy of the unfolding pandemic, are not allowed to cross-contaminate, and the “cynicism, negativity and frustration concerning politicians, political processes and political institutions that existed before the coronavirus outbreak is allowed to direct, define and automatically devalue how democratic structures are subsequently judged in terms of how they responded to the challenge. Without appreciating (i) the fragility and significance of public trust, (ii) the potentially pathological impacts of blame-games or (iii) understanding the achievements of individuals and institutions working together to address a collective threat, there is a very real risk that the coronavirus crisis will fuel a broader crisis of democracy.” (p. 18).

Pavarini, G., Lyreskog, D., Manku, K., Musesengwa, R. & Singh, I. (2020) Debate: Promoting capabilities for young people’s agency in the COVID-19 outbreak. *Child and Adolescent Mental Health* 25, No. 3, 2020, pp. 187–188

Inequalities / Cohesion

- Surveys reporting the impacts of Covid-19 identified young people experiencing anxiety, uncertainty and a lack of control. The authors undertook their own survey with young people aged 14- to 25-year-olds in Europe and Africa, indicating that young people worry about the health and well-being of loved ones and are anxious about their own and their families’ financial situations. Furthermore many young people do not trust their government leaders to make decisions on their behalf, and they experience deep anxieties around the broader impacts of this crisis on communities, countries and the world, as recession and nationalist impulses rise up around them. Conversely, at the same time, young people also reported experiencing a regained sense of self control through community and civic engagement.
- The papers for young people to be engaged in meaningful participatory activities that increase capacity and create opportunities for young people to discover and express their own personal agency, contribute to resilience and well being.
- However, the article states that consideration needs to be given to young people with mental health challenges, and hard to reach groups. The pandemic has made young people vulnerable, and an assessment of vulnerability is needed to protect their welfare, but this does not mean that young people should be viewed as passive participants in civic engagement, instead the “*promotion of capabilities for diverse groups of young people is arguably a matter of justice: young people encounter numerous systemic barriers to the forms of civic participation that can foster agency and well-being. Building young people’s resilience through*

the COVID-19 crisis should involve more than tracking their mental health over time, or 'giving voice' to their experiences. By supporting capabilities that allow young people to achieve agency in the COVID-19 crisis response and beyond, we contribute to the development of resilient citizens and strengthen our communities' responses to future global crises" (p. 188).