

**LORD ASHCROFT – NEWS STORY AWARENESS POLL
NOVEMBER 2012**

1,681 adults were interviewed online on 28 and 29 October 2012. Results have been weighted to be representative of all adults in Great Britain.

We would like you to think about any political events, or news stories about political parties or politicians you have heard about in the last few weeks or months. For each story that comes to mind please write a very brief description of it in the boxes below. We would like to know what political stories you can remember, whether you think they were important or trivial.

| % spontaneously mentioning story | Story |
|----------------------------------|---|
| 33% | Andrew Mitchell and 'plebgate' |
| 13% | George Osborne's train ticket |
| 8% | Scottish referendum |
| 7% | Child benefit cuts |
| 6% | MPs' expenses; Jimmy Savile affair; Cameron on energy prices; other benefit cuts |
| 5% | GDP increase; prisoner votes |
| 4% | US elections; party conferences; NHS cuts/reforms |
| 3% | Pressure for an EU referendum; speculation on Boris for leader |
| 2% | Postponing badger cull; Police Commissioner elections; West Coast rail; TUC march against cuts; Miliband conference speech; exam changes/marking; immigration; Leveson/phone hacking |
| 1% | Abu Hamza extradition; McKinnon extradition blocked; Berlusconi jailed; changes to teacher training; Cameron leaving daughter in pub; EU budget; replacing Trident; public sector pensions; Cabinet reshuffle; Nick Clegg apology; Jeremy Hunt on abortion; two-tier road tax; falling unemployment; Hillsborough inquiry; Cameron on Letterman; Lords wanting iPads; tax cuts for the rich; Ed Balls on the deficit; education reforms; HS2 rail; inflation falling; factory closures; Afghanistan; defence cuts; workplace pensions; tuition fees; fuel tax |

- Liberal Democrat voters were the most likely to be able to remember particular stories (51% mentioned 'plebgate' and 22% mentioned George Osborne's train ticket). Only 28% were unable to name a single political story, compared to 38% of Conservative voters and 40% of Labour voters.
- 44% of women were unable to name a single story, compared to 37% of men.
- 54% of 18-24 year-olds were unable to name a single story, compared to 50% of 25-39s, 35% of 40-59s and 34% of those aged 65+.

Below is a list of political stories that you may have heard about in the last few weeks or months. Some of these are true, and some are invented. We would like to know whether you have heard about each one. For each story please indicate whether you have heard a great deal, a bit, or nothing at all about this. If you have not heard about a story please be honest and say so – this is not a general knowledge test. // Please say how important you think each story is on a 0-10 scale, where 0 means “not important at all” and 10 means “extremely important”.

| Story | Heard great deal | Heard a bit | Heard nothing | Mean importance |
|---|------------------|-------------|---------------|-----------------|
| The Conservative Chief Whip allegedly calling a policeman a “pleb” | 70% | 18% | 7% | 5.4 |
| The government imposing VAT on hot food like pasties and then changing its mind | 49% | 37% | 9% | 5.2 |
| Virgin Trains not winning the West Coast franchise and the process having to be repeated because of mistakes by the Department of Transport | 56% | 28% | 11% | 6.4 |
| David Cameron accidentally leaving one of his children in a pub | 43% | 40% | 13% | 3.5 |
| New rights for householders to use force against burglars and other intruders | 32% | 50% | 12% | 7.2 |
| The government forcing energy companies to make sure customers are on the best value deals, but David Cameron announcing the policy before the details were ready | 37% | 41% | 14% | 7.0 |
| George Osborne sitting in a First Class train carriage with a Standard Class ticket | 47% | 29% | 18% | 4.8 |
| Figures showing the economy came out of recession and grew 1% in the last quarter | 30% | 45% | 16% | 7.3 |
| Child Benefit being removed from families in which one parent earns over £50,000 | 32% | 41% | 17% | 7.1 |
| Speculation that Boris Johnson wants to be Prime Minister | 28% | 45% | 20% | 3.7 |
| Nick Clegg’s video apology for promising not to raise tuition fees | 35% | 33% | 25% | 4.3 |
| Plans to cap welfare benefits so nobody can claim more than £26,000 per year | 21% | 42% | 25% | 7.8 |
| The top rate of income tax being cut from 50p to 45p for those earning £150k or more | 23% | 32% | 34% | 6.5 |
| Ed Miliband saying Labour is the “one nation” party | 23% | 30% | 36% | 3.4 |
| The tax threshold being raised so nobody earning under £10k will pay income tax | 15% | 34% | 39% | 7.8 |
| The government announcing that council tax will be frozen for the third year in a row | 11% | 30% | 47% | 7.5 |
| Rail fares to rise by no more than inflation plus 1% | 10% | 25% | 51% | 6.4 |
| The last Budget being described as an “omnishambles” | 16% | 18% | 53% | 4.0 |
| <i>Labour MP Audrey Cockburn used union campaign funds to redecorate her home</i> | 3% | 11% | 74% | 6.0 |
| <i>News that married Tory MP David Williams is having an affair with another man</i> | 2% | 9% | 78% | 2.2 |