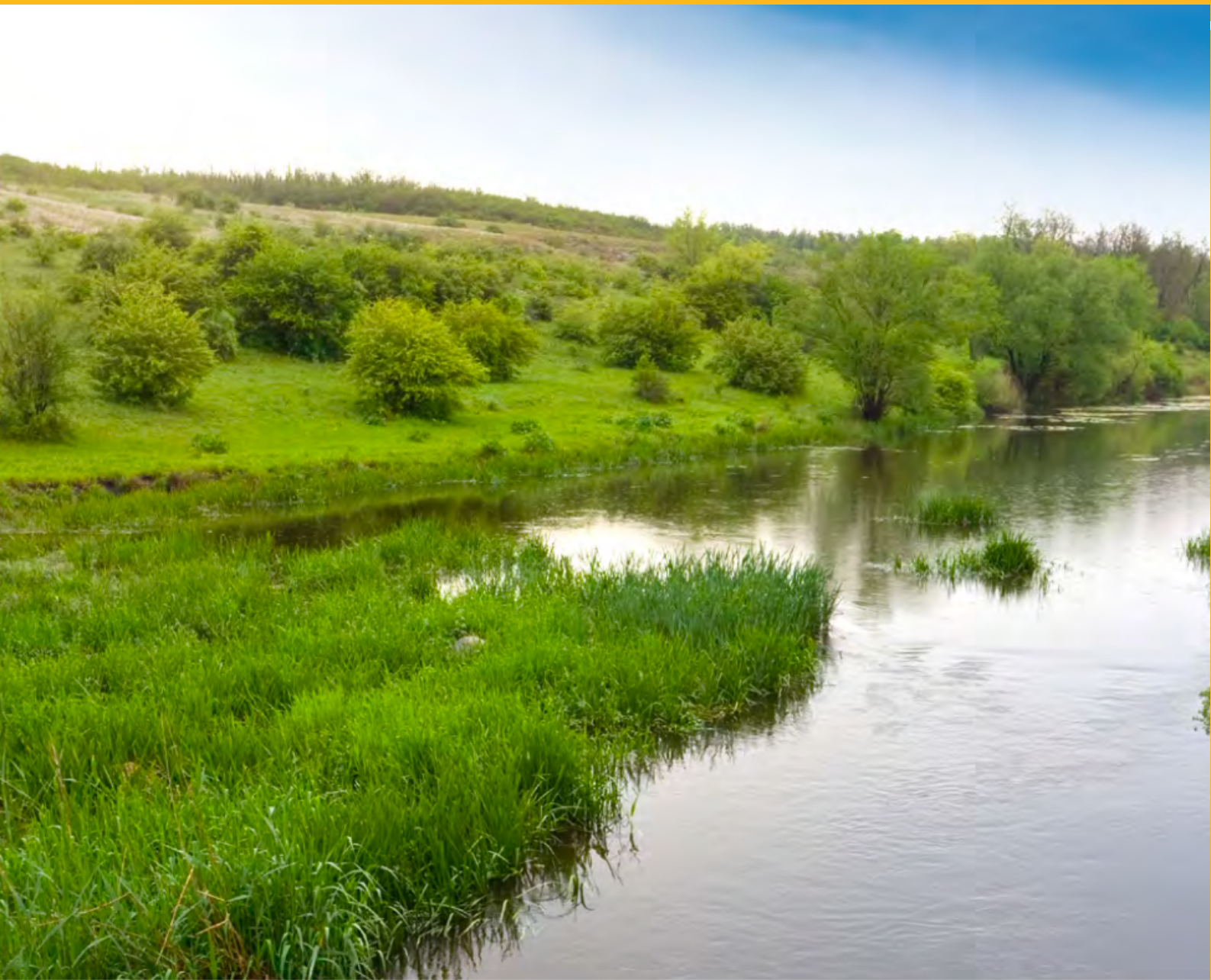


# THE "RURAL WALL"

THE COUNTRYSIDE'S VOTING INTENTIONS FOR THE  
NEXT GENERAL ELECTION

2023



[WWW.CLA.ORG.UK](http://WWW.CLA.ORG.UK)



# CONTENTS



- Foreword
- Voting Intention
- Cost-of-Living Crisis
- Local Government
- Planning System



# FOREWORD



The countryside, with its diverse range of businesses, natural beauty, and historic villages, has always been a cornerstone of our nation. Yet, despite its beauty and economic potential, it has been left behind by successive governments of all colours that have failed to provide a robust and ambitious plan for its prosperity.

This polling shows that political parties are paying an electoral price for their failure to unlock the potential of the rural economy – with the public showing little trust in the ability of political parties, or indeed local authorities, to provide the business environment necessary to generate growth.

While cities enjoy the benefits of major investments and development initiatives, the countryside is so often held back by an outdated planning system, lack of affordable housing, poor infrastructure and a lack of skills provision. This is an injustice that threatens the livelihoods of the hard-working people who call these areas home.

This report paints a vivid picture of how rural communities are looking for a government with a plan to see rural Britain flourish. Families are struggling to make ends meet, small businesses are unable to grow, and the exodus of young people to urban areas in search of better opportunities continues.

12 million voters live in rural areas, representing a significant proportion (16%) of the UK economy. Government can ill afford to take these communities for granted. We call on all political parties to champion the rural economy, giving our communities and businesses the tools they need to support the UK's growth.

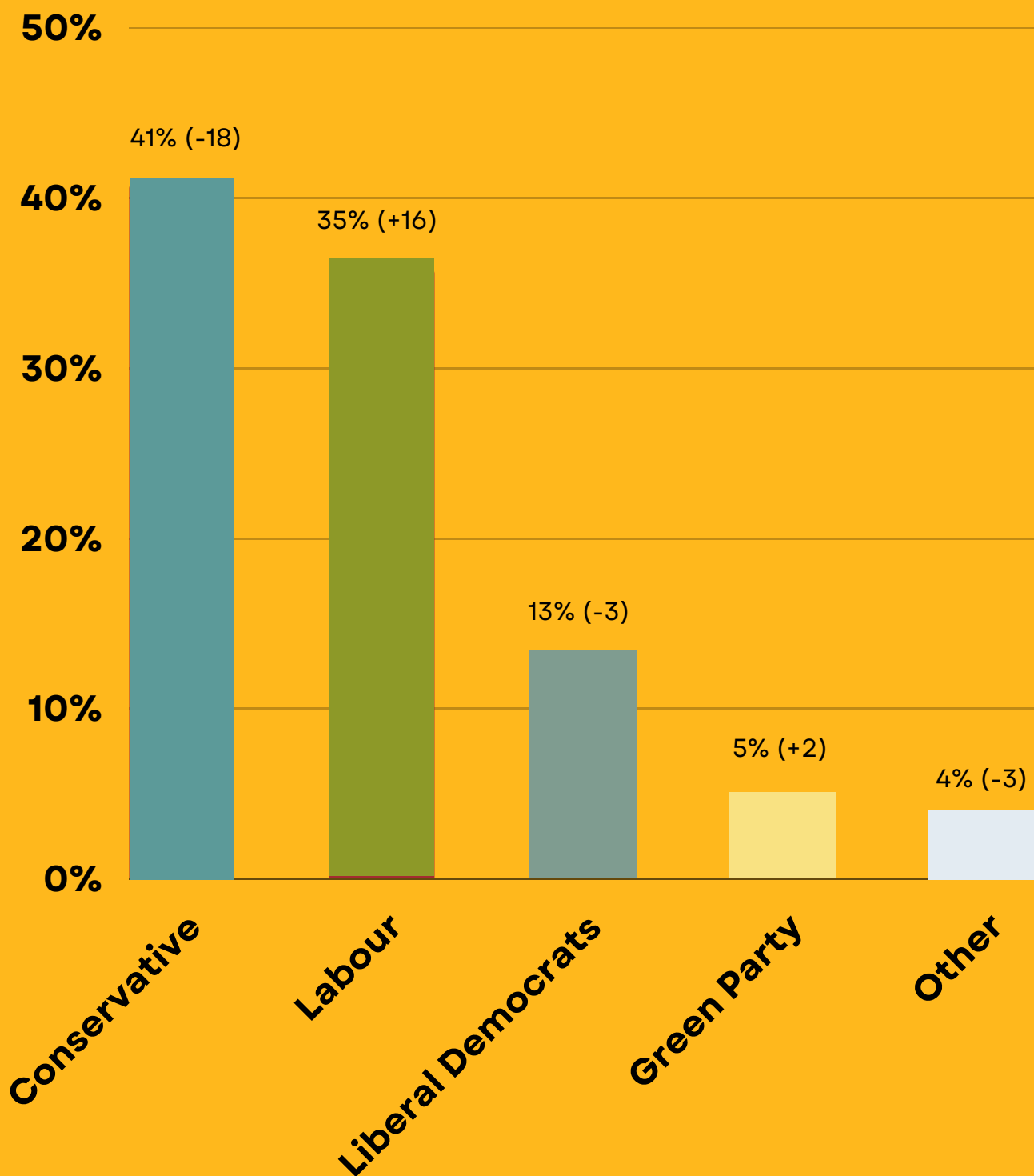


MARK TUFNELL,  
PRESIDENT OF THE COUNTRY LAND  
& BUSINESS ASSOCIATION

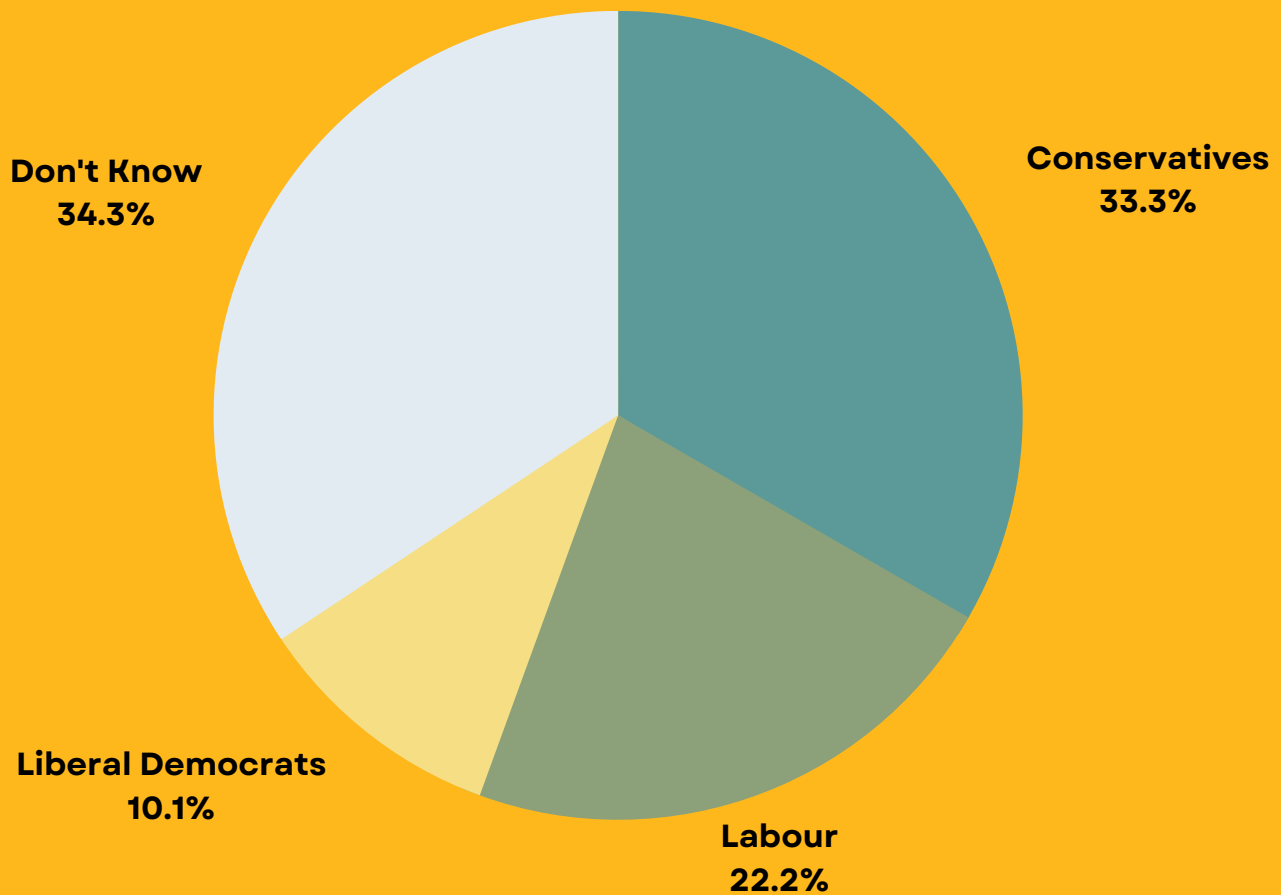
# VOTING INTENTION

**POLL**  
**STAT**

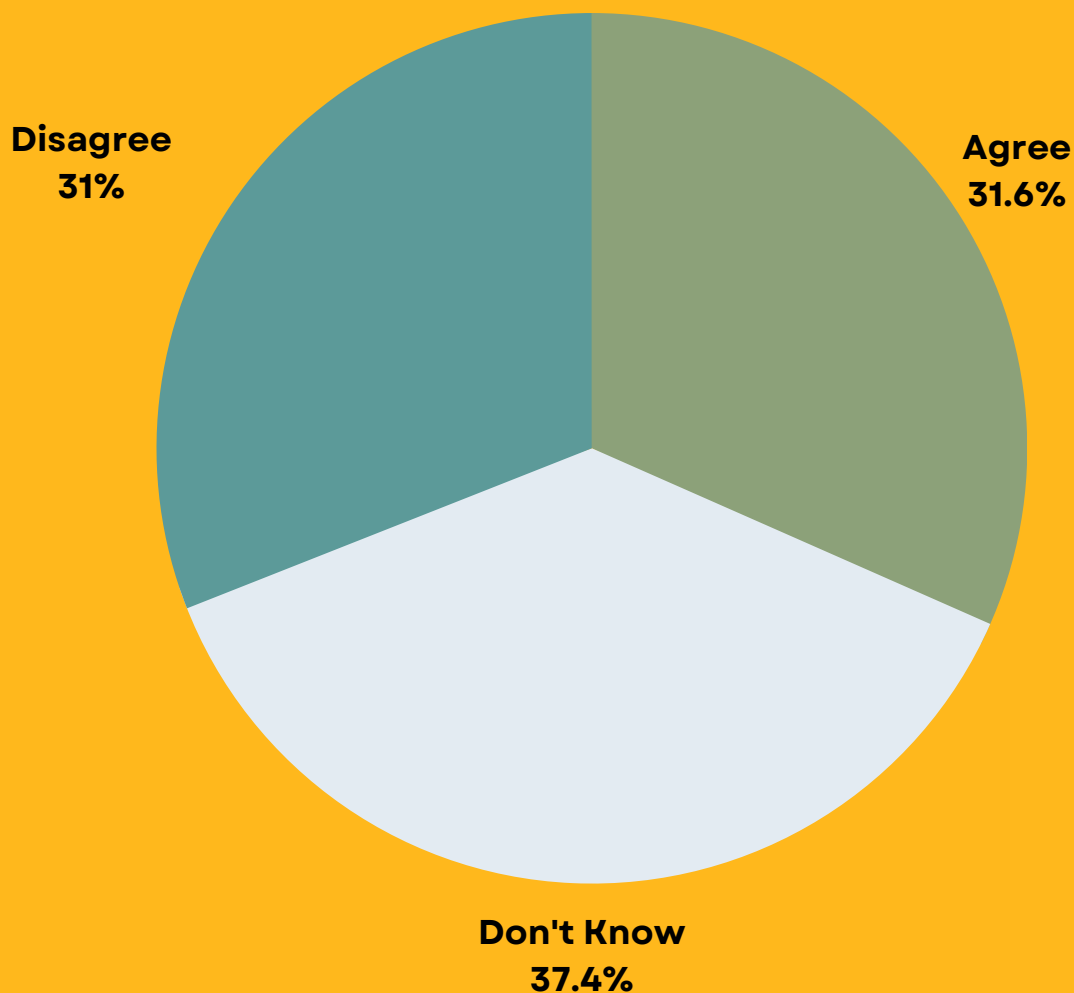
If there were a general election tomorrow, and there were candidates from all political parties standing in your constituency, for which party would you vote?



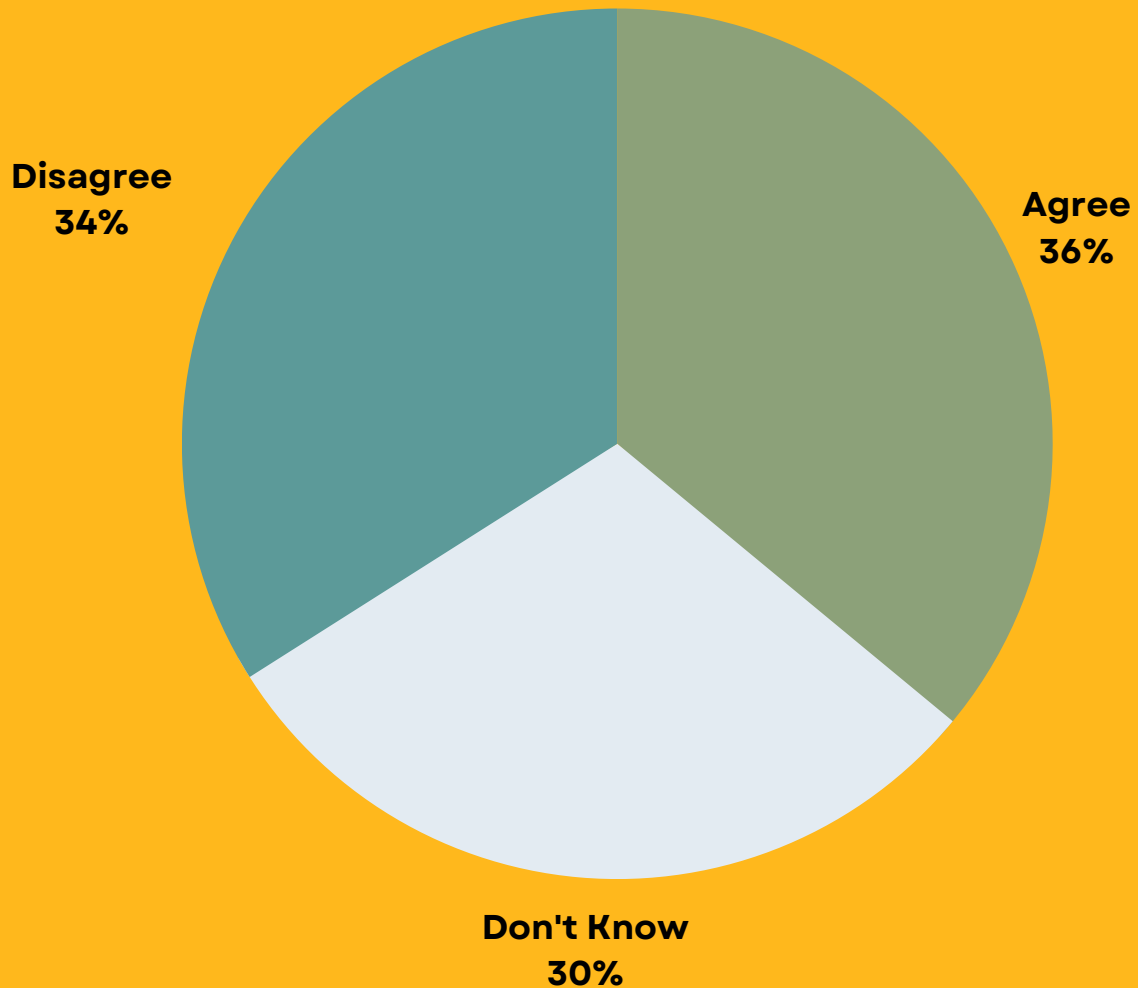
Which of the following political parties do you trust most to stimulate economic growth in rural areas?



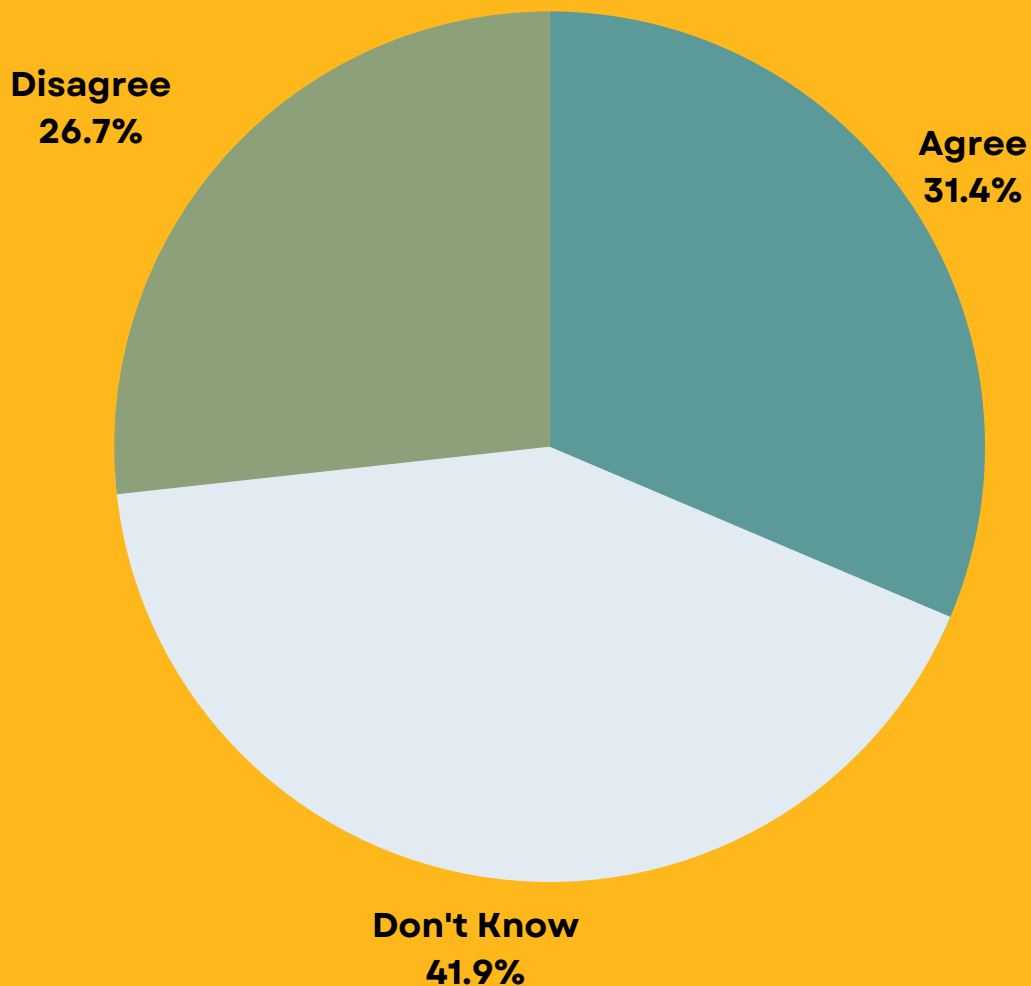
To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The Labour Party understands and respects rural communities and the rural way of life'



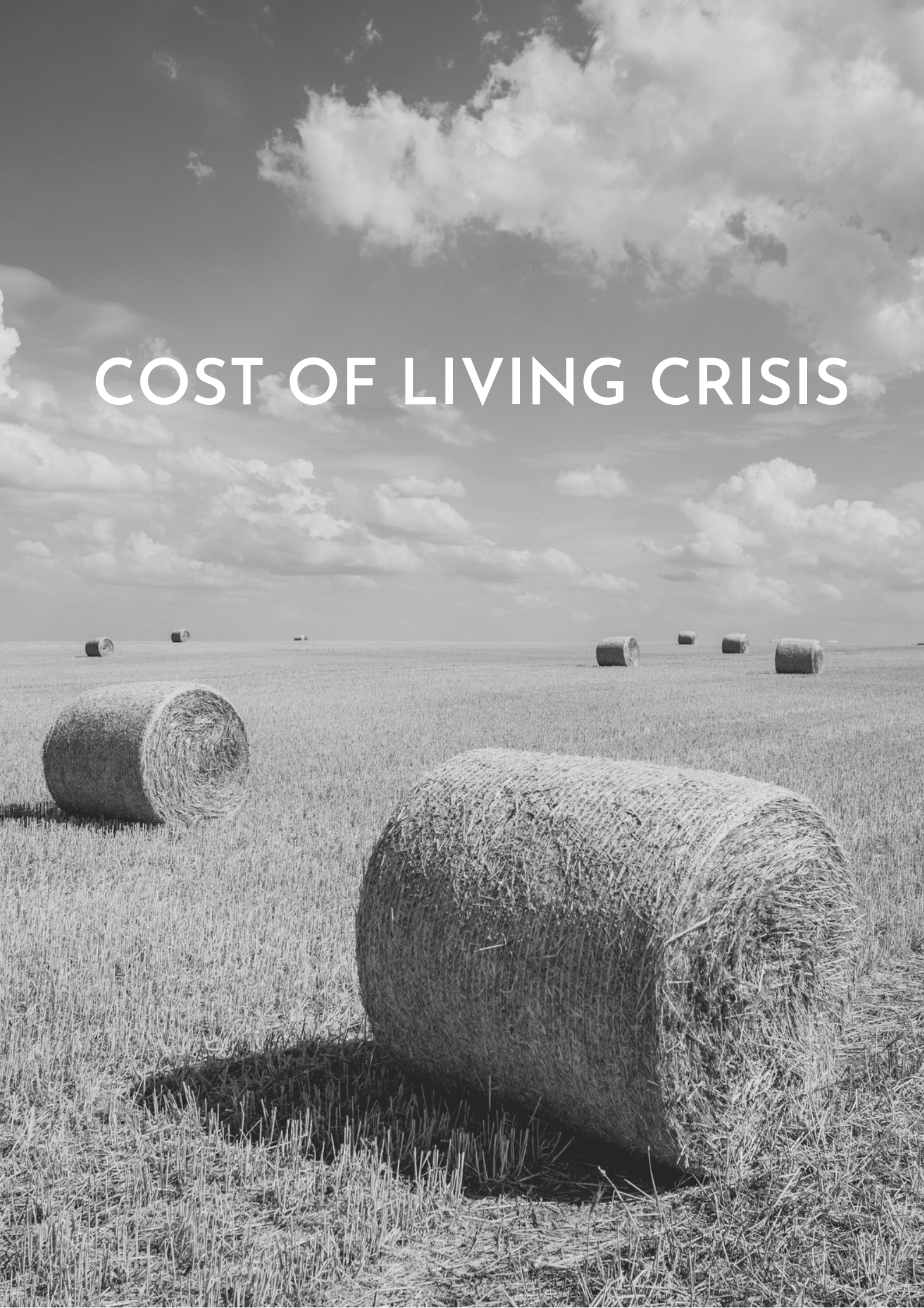
To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The Conservative Party understands and respects rural communities and the rural way of life'



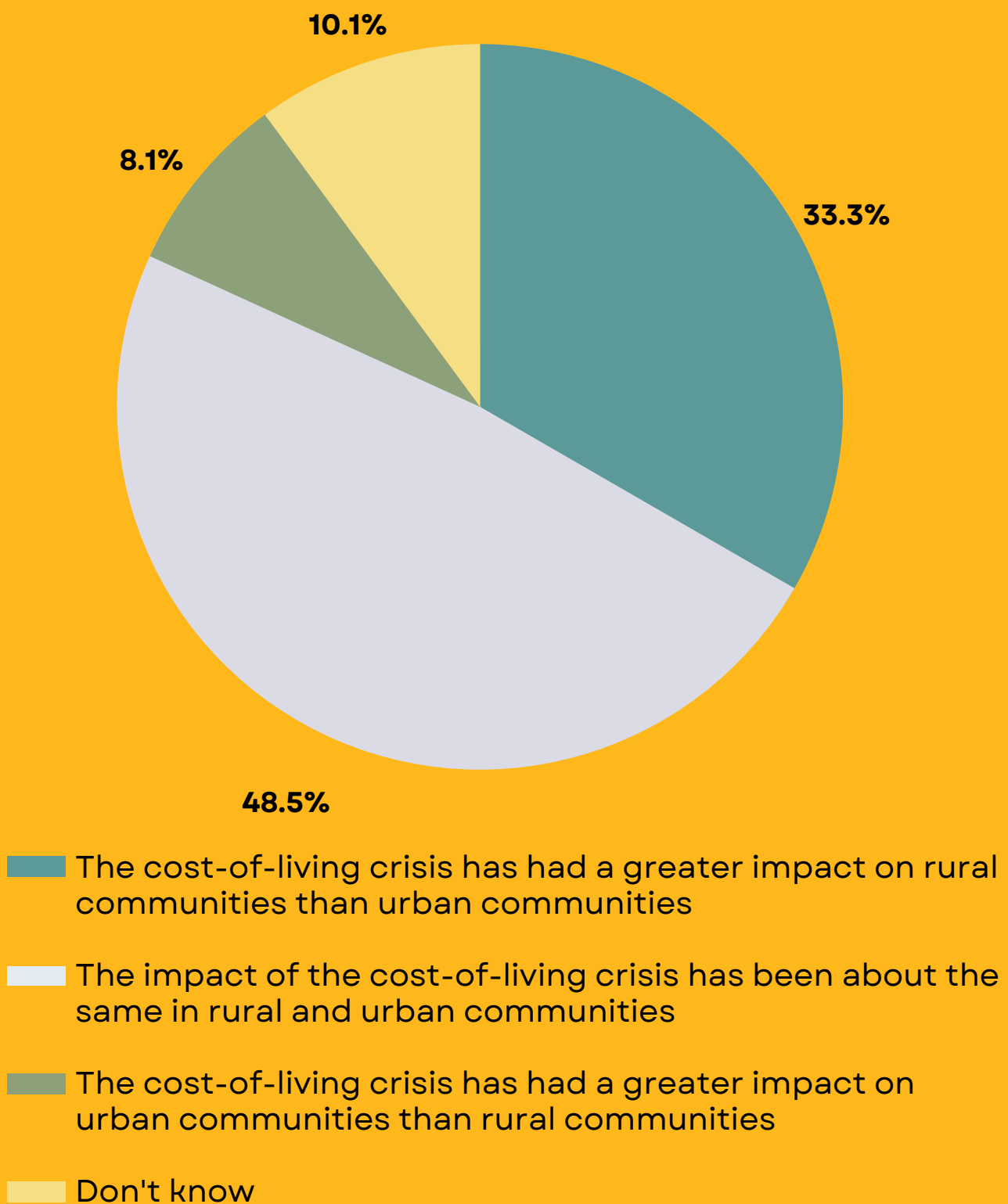
To what extent, if at all, do you agree or disagree with the following statement: 'The Liberal Democrats understand and respect rural communities and the rural way of life'



# COST OF LIVING CRISIS






Which of the following statements is closest to your view?



Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

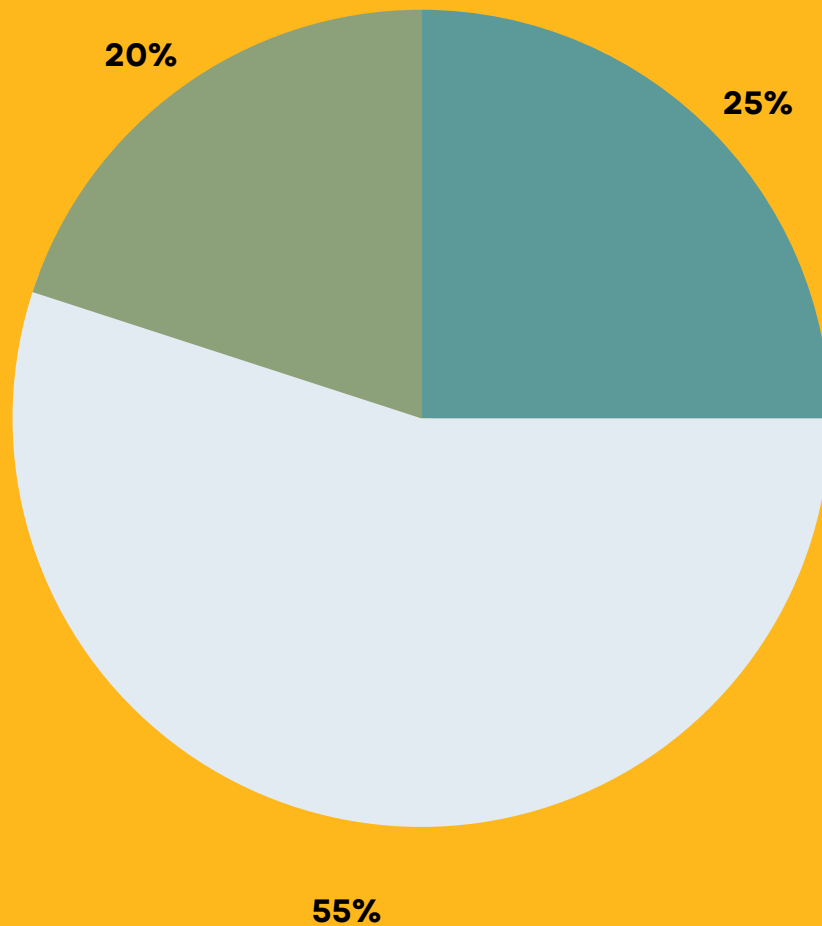





-  The Government is doing enough to address the cost-of-living crisis in rural communities
-  The Government is not doing enough to address the cost-of-living crisis in rural communities
-  Don't know

# LOCAL GOVERNMENT

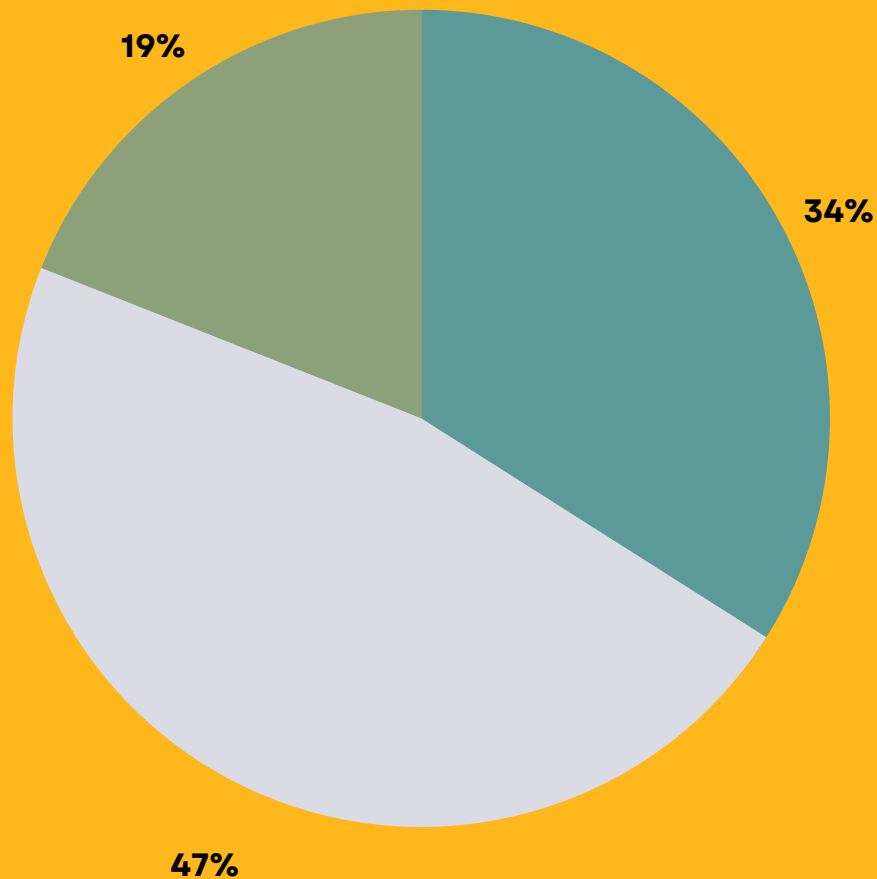





Which of the following statements is closest to your view?



-  I trust my local authority to facilitate economic growth in my area
-  I do not trust my local authority to facilitate economic growth in my area
-  Don't know

Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

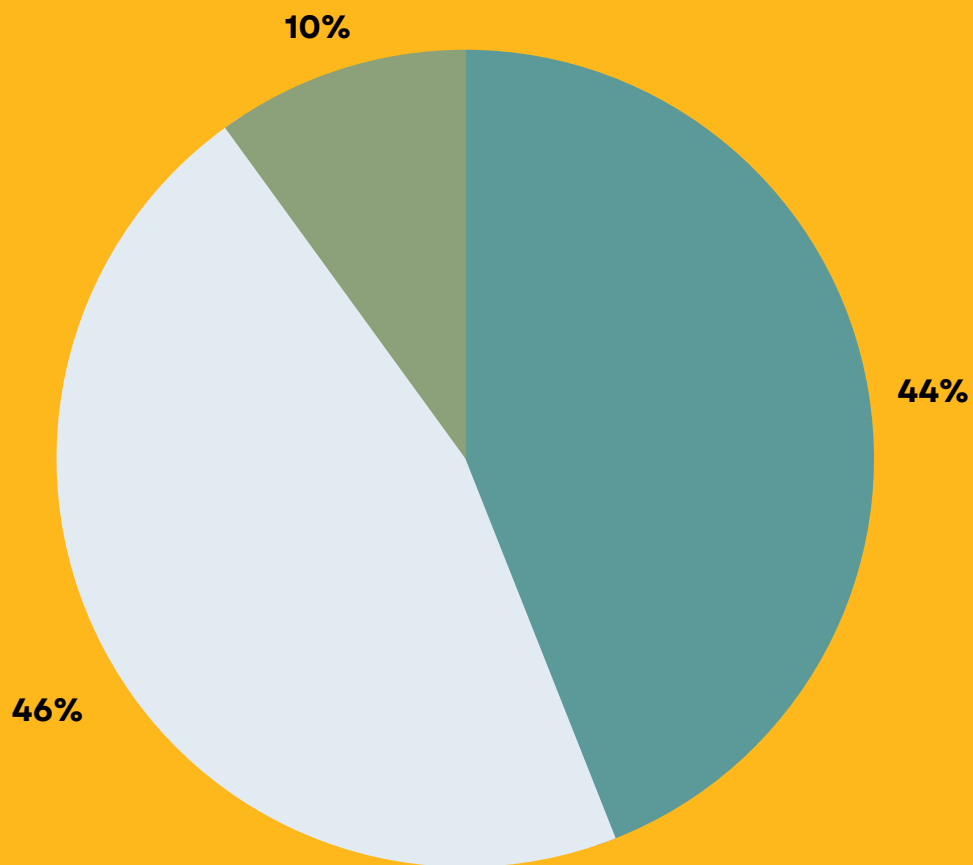





-  My local authority understands the needs of people living in the countryside
-  My local authority does not understand the needs of people living in the countryside
-  Don't know

# PLANNING SYSTEM

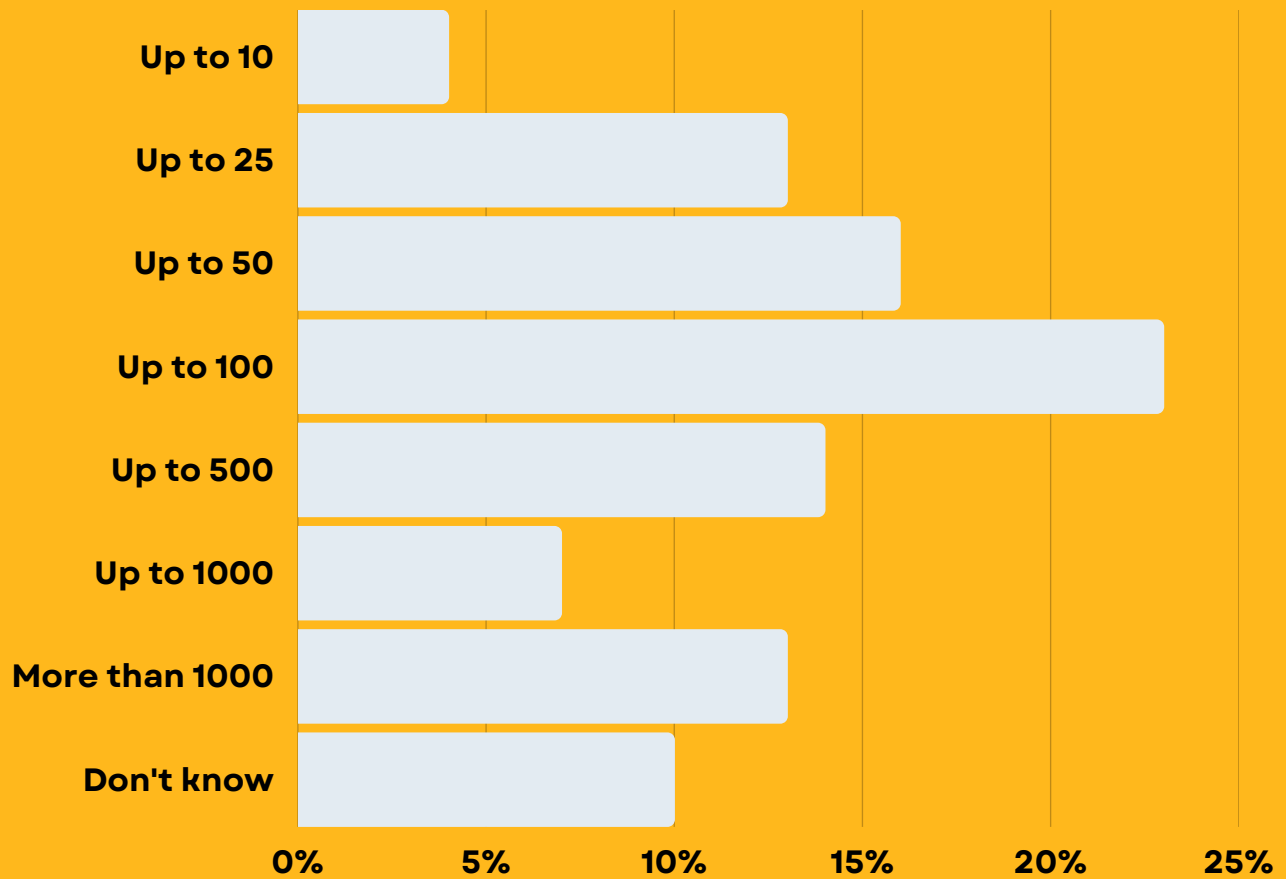
A black and white photograph of a narrow street in a village. On the left is a tall, multi-story stone building with several windows and a dark downspout. On the right is another stone building with two prominent windows. A paved road curves through the center. In the background, a steep, grassy hill rises, dotted with bare trees. A small house with a tiled roof is visible on the hillside. The text "PLANNING SYSTEM" is overlaid in large, white, sans-serif capital letters across the middle of the image.

Which of the following statements is closest to your view?

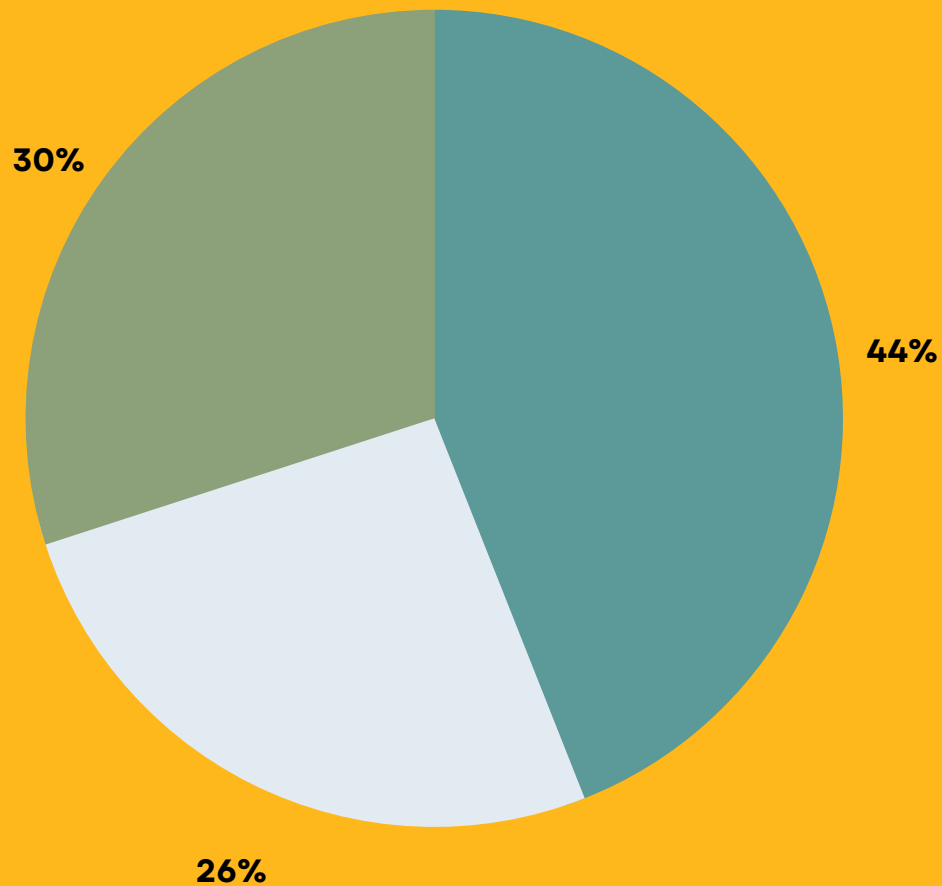





-  I would support additional homes being built in my community
-  I would not support additional homes being built in my community
-  Don't know

How many homes would you support being built in your community?



Which of the following statements is closest to your view?



-  Reforming the planning system would help stimulate growth in rural communities
-  Reforming the planning system would not help stimulate growth in rural communities
-  Don't know

# APPENDIX

## **The Country Land and Business Association (CLA)**

represents around 28,000 landowners and land managers with rural businesses across England and Wales

### **Survation. Engaging opinion to inform the future.**

Survation provides vital insights for brands and organisations wanting to better understand authentic opinions, adding value and credibility to the research we provide to our clients. We are an innovative and creative market researcher and do not believe any single method can always be the right answer to complex client objectives. We conduct bespoke online and telephone custom research, omnibus surveys, face-to-face research, and advanced statistical modelling and data analysis.

Survation is an MRS Company Partner. All MRS Company Partners and their employees agree to adhere to the MRS Code of Conduct and MRS Company Partner Quality Commitment whilst undertaking research.

As a member of the British Polling Council, Survation is strongly committed to transparency and our work's integrity.

## **Survation.**

---

### **Contact details:**

For more information please reach out to:

teamcla@woodrowcommunications  
+44 7821 750672

# Methodology

## Fieldwork Dates:

- 13th – 24th April 2023

## Data Collection Method:

- The survey was conducted via online panel. Invitations to complete the survey were sent out to members of the panel.
- Differential response rates from different demographic groups were taken into account.

## Population Sampled:

- Adults aged 18+ living in the 100 most rural constituencies in England.

## Sample Size:

- 1,017



