



*insight and
inspiration*

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Post (Local) Elections Survey 2007 – Final Report

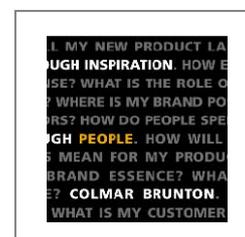


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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Local Government Commission (LGC) has commissioned several pieces of research to gather information concerning how the Local Government Act 2002 and Local Electoral Act 2001 are implemented on a practical level and whether or not they are operating as intended.

This report presents the findings of a survey concerned with voting behaviour of electors (people who were eligible to vote) and the impact of various sources of advertising and other information on voter understanding and behaviour.

A telephone survey of 800 electors was conducted from 23 October to 2 December 2007.

100 telephone interviews were conducted in each of eight local authorities: Far North district, Manukau city, Carterton district, Wellington city, Marlborough district, Christchurch city, Waimate district, and Invercargill city.

Local authorities were selected for inclusion in the survey on the basis of possessing particular characteristics, including location (North or South Island), local authority type (urban, provisional or rural), voter turn-out (high, average or low) and voting system/s used (single transferable vote (STV) or first past the post (FPP)).

The reader should note that the total sample is not intended to be nationally representative nor are the eight selected local authorities that make up the total sample in proportion to their respective population sizes. Rather, the total sample consists of eight samples each of which is given equal weighting and is representative of that local authority.

Key findings are highlighted below:

Demographic profile of voters and non-voters

- Voters tend to be older. One half (51%) of voters were aged 55 years and over compared to only 17% of non-voters. Likewise, 66% of non-voters were aged 18-44 compared to only 28% of voters.
- Maori, Pacific peoples and Asian peoples are over-represented among non-voters.
- Respondents living with a partner are over-represented among voters whereas single respondents are over-represented among non-voters. This is partly related to age.
- The profiles of voters and non-voters do not vary markedly in terms of income.

Motivations and barriers to voting

- Around three quarters (73%) of voters are motivated by having one's say or influencing the outcome of the election by, for example, getting the 'right people for the job' and electing people who share the voter's views. Motivations centre on a sense of democratic duty and responsibility for around one half of voters (48%). Older respondents (70 years and over) are particularly likely to comment on their belief in democracy.
- This research investigated barriers to voting among those who only voted in some elections and among those who did not vote at all:
 - The main reasons for respondents voting in only some elections (say, for example, mayor and local council, but not regional council) relate to a lack of information – in general or about the candidates (44%) – and a decision to only vote for candidates respondents knew (21%).
 - Disengagement with local government is evident in the results assessing the barriers to voting among those who didn't vote at all. Key barriers are apathy or lack of effort (39%) and being too busy or running out of time (22%). Not knowing the candidates or who to vote for (26%) is also a significant barrier. This last barrier is also reflected in non-voters' main suggestions for encouraging voting – in particular, 24% suggest more information be provided about the candidates and candidates' policies. Other suggestions commonly relate to practical enabling factors (18%), such as the option of online voting and promotion of the voting period.
- Respondents were asked if reducing the voting period from three weeks to two weeks would affect their voting behaviour. Based on the results to this question alone¹, we conclude that the voting period should not be reduced. Large majorities of both voters (87%) and non-voters (71%) say that reducing the voting period from three to two weeks would make no difference to how likely they would be to vote. Further, there is a risk that reducing the voting period would adversely affect some voters. Although 17% of non-voters said a reduction in the voting period would result in them being more likely to vote, 11% said they would in fact be less likely to vote. Notably, younger respondents (aged 18-24 years) were more likely to report that they would be less likely to vote if the voting period was reduced to two weeks than respondents overall (23% versus 8% overall).

Electoral systems

- Three quarters (74%) of respondents had heard of the single transferable vote (STV) voting system. Awareness is higher in local authorities that primarily use STV (80% compared to 72% in local authorities that primarily use FPP), and among voters (87% compared to 61% of non-voters).
- Awareness of STV is markedly lower among Maori (54%), Pacific peoples (28%), and Asian respondents (27%) compared to New Zealand European respondents (79%).
- The majority of respondents who had heard of the STV voting system, and who had voted in a DHB election, found the STV system easy to understand and use. Over three quarters (79%) agreed it was easy to understand how to vote using STV, and 84% agreed that it was easy to fill in the voting form and rank candidates.

¹ We acknowledge that a decision on this may need to take into account factors outside of this research.

- 60% of respondents who have heard of the STV voting system prefer the first past the post (FPP) voting system and 33% prefer the STV voting system.
- The main reasons for preferring the FPP voting system relate to the simplicity of the FPP process (mentioned by 63% of those who prefer FPP) and, to a lesser extent, the fairness and the clarity of the outcomes delivered by FPP (mentioned by 38% of those who prefer FPP).
- The main reasons for preferring the STV voting system are that it is perceived to be more representative (22%) and more democratic (21%).
- 82% of respondents who had heard of the STV voting system stated that they would prefer just one voting system for all the elections on their voting papers.
- There is divided opinion over whether having two systems is confusing. Around half (52%) consider having two systems to be personally confusing (either very confusing or quite confusing). However, 46% say that it is not at all confusing.
- Non-voters are more likely than voters to perceive that having two systems is either very or quite confusing (61% compared to 46%).

Advertising

Advertising related to local elections and voting

- Unprompted recall of advertising related to local elections and voting is highest for newspaper advertising (61%), outdoor advertising (52%), and pamphlets/booklets (48%). Unprompted recall for television advertising and radio advertising was 10% respectively. Levels of unprompted recall were generally higher among voters compared to non-voters.

Advertising on how to vote

Local Government Services of the Department of Internal Affairs commissioned advertising on how to vote using STV. The following findings relate to the success of this advertising. The reader should note, however, that respondents answers may also have taken into account any local advertising or initiatives on how to vote.

- Respondents were described the TV ads with two women in a traffic jam ranking three 'hunks', and two men at a rugby stadium ranking the top three All Blacks of all time. Prompted recall of the television advertising was 20%. Recall is higher among voters (24%) than non-voters (17%). In local authorities where the STV voting system is primarily used, respondents were more likely to recall the television advertisements about how to vote using the STV system.
- Taking into account media spend, the survey methodology, and the time between when the advertising was aired and when the survey fieldwork took place, these levels of advertising recall appear to be average.
- Respondents who had heard of the STV voting system were asked whether or not they recalled seeing or hearing any advertising on the radio, in the newspaper or online about how to vote using the STV system. Following this degree of prompting, recall sits at 22% for each of radio and newspaper advertising and just 3% for online advertising. Compared to other evaluations of print campaigns we have been involved in, recall of the newspaper advertising is good (ie above average).
- On the whole, message take out of the advertising is clear. Three of the four most common messages taken from the advertising are in line with the aims of the advertising. These relate to general comments about how the STV system works as well as specific comments on

candidate rankings and how easy voting is under STV. Maori respondents, however, were more likely to be unsure what the advertising was trying to convey (44% were unsure compared to 22% overall).

Perceived helpfulness of advertising

- Respondents found newspaper advertising the most helpful, with around three quarters (73%) describing it as either somewhat or very helpful. This was followed by radio, television and online advertising, each of which around half of respondents felt were helpful. Due to a small sample size, the result for online advertising is only indicative.

Information used to decide who to vote for

- The candidate booklet was very effective. An encouraging 69% of voters either read it thoroughly (41%) or read certain sections (28%), and a further 22% skim-read the booklet.
- Moreover, of those who read, partly read or skim-read the booklet, around three quarters (76%) agreed or strongly agreed that it helped them decide who to vote for.
- The most commonly mentioned other sources of information that voters found helpful in deciding who to vote for were local, community or daily newspapers (67%), followed by personal knowledge of the candidate (64%). Candidate campaigns were mentioned by around half of respondents (49%) and word of mouth by just over one in three (36%).
- Voters from rural areas are more likely to have stated that their personal knowledge of the candidate helped them decide who to vote for (79% compared to 48% of urban voters). Rural voters were also more likely to have drawn on candidate meetings or debates in helping them to decide who to vote (22% compared to only 6% of provincial voters). Conversely, urban voters were more likely to comment that the candidate flyers were helpful (44% compared to 17% of provincial voters).

CONCLUSIONS

This year's post election survey highlights areas where the Local Electoral Act 2001 seems to be functioning as intended with regard to citizens' active participation in local government by voting in local elections, as well as certain areas where communication concerning the election and other means of encouraging voter participation do not appear to be operating to maximum effect.

Many New Zealanders place considerable importance in voting to influence local government outcomes and carry out their democratic rights and responsibilities. However, there is also significant disengagement with local government. This was evident in the difficulties we experienced in getting non-voters to take part in the survey and in the high proportion of non-voters who attributed their lack of participation in the elections to apathy. Whilst lack of interest is a difficult hurdle to overcome, the research indicates that other barriers – in particular, a lack of information about the election and/or candidates – are perhaps more readily addressed. Indeed, the provision of more information, largely about the candidates, was the main suggestion made by non-voters to encourage voting.

Despite a call by some for more information generally, the research shows that several elements of the communications campaign have been important, and effective, in enabling people to vote. The messages respondents took from the advertising were generally clear and in line with the intended messages of the campaign pertaining to how to vote.

The candidate booklet was particularly effective – the vast majority of voters read, or partly read, the booklet and generally found it very helpful. The newspaper advertising also appears to have been successful in assisting voters to participate in local government elections. In comparison to these media channels, the television advertising appears to have been less successful (although still on par with other public information campaigns that are given similar media weight).

The research does bring into question whether all groups within the community are equally well-informed about the elections including how to vote. Maori, Pacific peoples and Asian peoples are considerably over-represented among non-voters and exhibit much lower levels of awareness of STV. Message take-out of the advertising was also notably less clear among Maori.

Finally, the research indicates that opinion is divided over whether having two electoral systems is confusing. This should be interpreted in light of the following findings. There is a strong preference for having one electoral system. While small majorities of both voters and non-voters prefer FPP largely because of its perceived simplicity, most voters who have used STV agreed that it was easy to understand and use. Therefore, the confusion around the voting system that does exist (for around half of voters) appears to largely stem from voters having to tackle two systems rather than any weakness in either system in itself.

BACKGROUND AND OBJECTIVES

The Local Government Commission (LGC) is carrying out an operational review of the Local Government Act 2002 and Local Electoral Act 2001 – the administration of local elections being conducted under the provisions of the Local Electoral Act 2001. The core objective of the reform is to empower communities and individuals by encouraging greater community participation and input into their local governance.

The LGC requires information concerning how the Acts are implemented on a practical level and whether or not they are operating as intended. The LGC requires information concerning residents' experiences and perceptions of opportunities to participate in local government decision-making. 'Participation' in this context encompasses the following:

- Voting in local elections
- Directly inputting into local authority decision-making (through, for example, such mechanisms as making written submissions or attending council meetings).

Similarly, the LGC is interested in gaining an insight into council views of, and experience with, public participation as one input to council decision making.

To that end, four pieces of research have been commissioned with three target groups in mind: a national survey and post election survey of electors (people who were eligible to vote), qualitative interviews with individuals and organisations who have participated in local government processes, and, finally, online interviews with representative council members and officers of 85 councils.

This report presents the findings of the post election 2007 survey. The survey is concerned with voting behaviour of electors and the impact of various sources of advertising and other information on voter understanding and behaviour.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A telephone survey of 800 people aged 18+ was conducted from 23 October to 2 December 2007².

Within each household, the person aged 18+ with the next birthday was interviewed. A small number³ of people who were not aware of the recent local elections were screened out of the survey.

Quotas were set for voters and non-voters (within each local authority) to ensure the final sample was not unduly biased towards voters. Non-voters were particularly difficult to survey. This is perhaps a reflection of their disengagement with local government issues.

The overall response to the survey is 25%⁴. The questionnaire used is appended.

Sampling of local authorities

100 telephone interviews were conducted in each of eight local authorities: Far North district, Manukau city, Carterton district, Wellington city, Marlborough, Christchurch city, Waimate district, and Invercargill city.

Local authorities were selected for inclusion in the survey on the basis of possessing particular characteristics, including location (North or South Island), local authority type (urban, provisional or rural), voter turn-out (high, average or low) and voting system(s) used (single transferable vote (STV) or first past the post (FPP)).

The table overleaf summarises the characteristics of each of the local authorities selected for the survey.

² The bulk of the interviews (over 700) were conducted by 20 November. The fieldwork period was extended to 2 December due to difficulties in achieving interviews with people who had not voted in the local elections.

³ Only 52 people were screened out of the survey because they were not aware of the recent local elections.

⁴ This is a reasonable response rate for a random telephone survey of the general public. Because telephone surveys of the general public (which do not involve working from lists of named people) do not generate high responses rates, there is an increased possibility of significant non-response bias; that is, those who responded to the survey differ in some meaningful way from those who chose not to respond to the survey. The possibility of this has been reduced through quotas (for local authority and voters/non-voters) and weighting of the data (by age and gender as well as voters/non-voters). Weighting is discussed in detail later in the 'research methodology' section.

Table1: Local authority characteristics

Local authority	Local authority characteristics			
	Island	Local authority type*	Voter turnout**	FPP/STV
Far North district	North Island	Provincial	Average	FPP
Carterton district	North Island	Rural	High	FPP
Marlborough district	South Island	Provincial	High	STV
Waimate district	South Island	Rural	High	FPP
Manukau city	North Island	Urban	Low	FPP
Wellington city	North Island	Urban	Average	STV
Christchurch city	South Island	Urban	Average	FPP
Invercargill city	South Island	Provincial	High	FPP

*Rural = less than 20,000 people, provincial = 20,000-90,000 people, and urban = more than 90,000 people

** These descriptions provide an overall summary of voter turn-out figures since 1992. For districts, comparisons were made with the average voter turn-out across all New Zealand districts. Likewise, for cities, comparisons were made with the average voter turn-out across all New Zealand cities.

The eight local authorities sampled were deemed by the Commission to have unique characteristics (each of the eight being representative of different groupings of councils).

The sampling approach allows us to compare and contrast the eight local authorities to investigate what characteristics may have an effect on elector understanding and behaviour. Results are presented at a total sample level as they are a useful way of summarising the results of the eight selected local authorities.

The reader should note that the total sample is not nationally representative, nor are the eight selected local authorities that make up the total sample in proportion to their respective population sizes. Rather, the total sample consists of eight samples, each of which is given equal weighting and is representative of that local authority.

Weighting

In any survey of the general public, certain groups of people tend to be over-surveyed (in particular, older females) while others (in particular, young males) are under-surveyed compared to Statistics New Zealand Census population statistics. This is due to non-response bias and the sampling approach taken in only interviewing one person per household⁵. To correct for this, it is standard practice to weight⁶ surveys of the general population so that final sample reflects known population characteristics on key demographic variables.

⁵ Interviewing one person per household is important to avoid 'cluster' effects which can occur when respondents are known to each other (these would occur if we interviewed two people in the same household).

⁶ A weighting factor is applied to each respondent according to their demographic characteristics. Respondents in demographic groups that have been under-surveyed are given a higher weighting factor while respondents in demographic groups that have been over-surveyed are given a lower weighting factor. The final weighted sample exactly matches Statistics New Zealand Census population data on variables used in the weighting process.

To match local authority population characteristics, data has been weighted by:

- age and gender (males 18-44, females 18-44, males 45+, females 45+) within each local authority, according to Statistics New Zealand Census population characteristics
- voter/non-voter characteristics within each local authority, according to information provided by the Local Government Commission.

Definition of income

Respondents without partners were asked for their annual personal gross income. Respondents with partners were asked for their joint gross income (ie the sum of their own personal income and that of their partner). All analyses involving income in this report are based on these definitions.

SAMPLE PROFILES

This section provides a profile of the final sample.

The first table profiles respondents on key demographic variables.

Table 2a: Demographic profile

Demographic variable	Total (n=800) %
Gender	
Male	48
Female	52
Age	
18-24 years	8
25-34 years	16
35-44 years	23
45-54 years	19
55-69 years	21
70+ years	12
Ethnic group	
NZ European	83
Maori	11
Pacific peoples	2
Asian peoples	4
Other	9
Income	
\$20,000 or less	13
\$20,001 to \$30,000	12
\$30,001 to \$40,000	9
\$40,001 to \$50,000	9
\$50,001 to \$60,000	8
\$60,001 to \$80,000	14
\$80,001 to \$100,000	10
\$100,001+	15
Partner status	
Partner or spouse	65
No partner/spouse	34

Source: Q6a-f

The second table profiles respondents according to their responses to a number of questions around their voting behaviour. Note that these figures are from our sample of respondents in the eight selected local authorities only and do not necessarily reflect population characteristics.

Table 2b: Sample profile – voting behaviour

Voting behaviour	% (n=800)
Voted in local elections	49
Voted in <u>all</u> local elections	40
Voted in <u>some</u> local elections	9
Voted in DHB election	45
Did not vote in any local elections	51

Source: Q1b, Q4b and Q4c

Sub-group analyses of the figures in Table 2b by demographic variables shows that the following groups are less likely than average (40%) to have voted in **all** elections:

- Respondents aged 18-44 years (22% compared to 55% of those aged 45+ years)
- Maori (24%), Pacific peoples (10%) and Asian peoples (3%)
- Respondents earning between \$30,000 to \$40,000 (26%)
- Single people (33% compared to 43% of people with a partner).

Likewise, the following groups are less likely to have voted in the DHB elections:

- Younger respondents (aged 18-44 years) compared to older respondents (aged 45+ years) (26%, versus 62%)
- Maori (31%), Pacific peoples (16%) and Asian respondents (3%)
- Respondents earning \$30,000 to \$40,00 annually (29% compared to 45% overall)
- Single people (37% compared to 50% of people with a partner).

Voting behaviour does not vary significantly by gender or income.

Table 2c profiles respondents on local authority characteristics.

Table 2c: Sample profile – local authority characteristics

	% (n=800)
Local authority	
Far North local authority	13
Manukau city	13
Carterton local authority	13
Wellington city	13
Marlborough local authority	13
Christchurch city	13
Waimate local authority	13
Invercargill city	13
Island	
North island	50
South island	50
Local authority type	
Urban	38
Provincial	38
Rural	25
Voter turn-out	
<i>District</i>	
Low	-
Average	12
High	38
<i>Cities</i>	
Low	12
Average	25
High	12
Primary voting system	
FPP	75
STV	25

*Within each local authority variable, percentages may add to more than 100% due to rounding.

DETAILED FINDINGS

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILES OF VOTERS AND NON-VOTERS

This following table examines the demographic profiles of voters and those who didn't vote in any local elections. The reader should note that the percentages in this table are based on all voters and all non-voters in the second and third columns respectively. The table does not give what percentage of certain demographic sub-groups voted – see sub-group analysis under Table 2b on page 13 for this type of analysis.

Table 3: Demographic profiles of voters and non-voters

Demographic variable	Voters (n=385) %	Non-voters (n=415) %
Gender		
Male	48	49
Female	52	51
Age		
18-24 years	2	14
25-34 years	9	24
35-44 years	17	28
45-54 years	21	18
55-69 years	30	13
70+ years	21	4
Ethnic group		
NZ European	88	78
Maori	7	15
Pacific peoples	1	3
Asian peoples	*	7
Other	10	9
Combined income		
\$20,000 or less	11	14
\$20,001 to \$30,000	14	11
\$30,001 to \$40,000	7	11
\$40,001 to \$50,000	10	9
\$50,001 to \$60,000	9	7
\$60,001 to \$80,000	12	15
\$80,001 to \$100,000	11	9
\$100,001+	14	16
Partner status		
Partner or spouse	71	59
No partner/spouse	28	41

Source: Q6a-f

* = Percentage between 0.0% and 0.5%

Voters are significantly more likely than non-voters to be:

- older
- NZ European
- living with a partner or spouse⁷.

Conversely, non-voters are more likely to be:

- younger
- Maori, Pacific peoples or Asian peoples
- single.

With the exception of the combined income band of \$30,001- \$40,000, income does not appear to be a defining characteristic of the voter and non-voter profiles.

Further analysis by local authority indicates that the voter profile has a higher proportion of rural residents (31% of voters are rural residents compared to 19% of non-voters). Likewise, the non-voter profile has a heavier skew towards urban residents (44% of non-voters are urban residents compared to 30% of voters).

⁷ There is a relationship between age and partner status. Respondents aged under 25 and respondents aged 70 years or over are much more likely to be single than respondents aged 25 to 69 years.

MOTIVATIONS AND BARRIERS TO VOTING

This section examines motivations and barriers to voting.

Motivations to vote

Reasons for voting in any local elections

Without prompting with possible responses, voters were asked for what reasons they voted in the local elections. Responses are provided in the table below. Like responses have been grouped into 'nett' categories to highlight general themes. These categories are highlighted in bold print, and give the percentage of respondents that gave at least one of the more detailed suggestions that relate to them.

Table 4: Reasons for voting in any local elections

	% (n=385)
To have your say / influence outcome	73
Can't complain if you haven't voted	26
To get the right people for the job / people who will do a good job	24
To elect the people I wanted / people who share my views	22
To have my say	17
Wanted a change / dissatisfied with current Council / Board	11
Happy with current Council / Board	1
Democratic duty / responsibility	48
Duty / democratic duty / responsibility to vote / belief in democracy	26
Important to vote / everybody should vote	20
Right to vote / democratic right	13
Personal interest in politics / candidate	6
Interested in local politics / affairs / issues	4
Knew candidate / candidates	2
Miscellaneous	10
Always vote / usually vote	3
Easy to vote / voting papers were sent to me	1
Other*	6

Base: Voted in recent local elections (n=385)

Source: Q4a

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

Around three quarters (73%) of voters are motivated by having one's say or influencing the outcome of the election by, for example, getting the 'right people for the job' and electing people who share the voter's views. Motivations centre on a sense of democratic duty and responsibility for around one half of voters (48%).

Dissatisfaction with the current Council or Board appears to be a stronger motivation for voting than being happy with the current council, with 11% of respondents including dissatisfaction with the current Council or Board as a reason for voting, as opposed to only 1% who included being happy with the Council or Board as a reason for voting.

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Sub-group analysis by local authority characteristics reveals the following:

- Voters from provincial and rural areas are more likely to vote because of dissatisfaction with the current Council or Board than urban voters (17% and 12% of provincial and rural voters respectively compared to 3% of urban voters).
- Respondents from the Far North district (a district with traditionally average turn-out) were more likely to have voted because they wanted a change or were dissatisfied with the current Council or Board (29%, versus 11% overall). Conversely, respondents from Christchurch city were less likely to have voted for this reason (0%, versus 11% overall).
- Respondents from Invercargill city were more likely to have voted to elect the people they wanted or people who share their views (41%, versus 22% overall).
- Voters from cities with traditionally low and average turn-outs were most likely to comment on their sense of democratic duty and responsibility (68% and 60% respectively compared to 48% overall). Whilst Manukau city voters (68%) were most likely to refer to this sense of democratic duty, Far North district voters were least likely to comment on this (24%).

Demographic analysis

Analysis by demographic sub-groups shows that:

- older respondents (aged 70 years or over) are more likely to comment on their belief in democracy (41% compared to 26% overall)
- respondents with a combined income of \$60,001 to \$80,000 are more likely to comment that they vote 'to have their say' (31% compared to 17% overall).

Reasons for voting in some local elections

We explained to respondents that they had the opportunity to vote in different elections, including the elections for mayor, the local council, the regional council, the District Health Board, and in some areas, the Community Board or the Licensing Trust. Respondents who said they voted in only some of the local elections were asked for their reasons for doing so. Respondents were not given possible answers. Interviewers recorded their responses verbatim. The responses were then coded into like categories post fieldwork⁸.

Table 5: Reasons for voting in only some local elections

	% (n=72)
Lack of information / lack of information about candidates	44
Lack of information / lack of information about candidates	36
DHB – didn't know what the candidates do	4
DHB – didn't know the candidate	6
Only voted for candidates I knew / certain elections more important	40
Only voted for the candidates I knew	21
Only voted for people who have influence in my immediate geographic area	11
Only voted for the Mayor / Local council – considered these candidates more important	9
Only voted for DHB / made my opinion count in DHB	3
Not impressed with candidates / candidates' programmes	11
Not impressed with candidates / candidates didn't have a programme worth voting for	11
Apathy / too time consuming	7
Too much reading / too time consuming to read through candidates' statements	4
Couldn't be bothered / not interested / too lazy	3
Other*	11
Don't know / no reason	3

Base: Voted in some (or one) of the recent local elections (n=72)

Source: Q4d

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

A key reason respondents gave for voting in only some elections relates to a lack of information – in general or about the candidates (44%). The second main theme (40%) relates to only voting for candidates who respondents know or only voting in certain elections which respondents judge as being more important.

There are no statistically significant differences by local authority characteristics.

⁸ This is one approach to capturing and analysing responses to open-ended questions. The other approach involves the interviewer assigning a code during the interview using a pre-determined list of categories (an 'other specify' category is usually included to capture unexpected and/or uncommon responses). Both approaches are valid, but the approach used for this question is preferable as it removes any need for interviewers to quickly interpret the response in order to determine which category in the pre-determined list the answer fits into.

Demographic analysis

Older respondents (aged 55 years and over) were more likely than their younger counterparts to have voted in some or only one election because they only voted for candidates they knew (42% compared to 7%).

Barriers to voting

Respondents who did not vote in local elections were asked for what reason they did not vote. Again, respondents were not given possible answers. Interviewers recorded their responses verbatim. The responses were then coded into like categories post fieldwork⁹.

The results are displayed in the table below.

Table 6: Reasons for not voting

	% (n=415)
Apathy / lack of effort	39
Didn't matter much to me / couldn't be bothered / apathy	22
Forgot about it / forgot to send the voting paper	12
Laziness	6
Didn't know the candidates / lack of information	30
Didn't know the candidates / who to vote for	26
Didn't know much about the election	5
Too busy / ran out of time	22
Just never got around to it / too busy	17
Ran out of time / didn't put completed voting paper in the post on time	5
Not impressed with candidates / candidates' programmes	14
Wasn't impressed with the candidates / no one has a programme worth voting for	14
New to the area / out of town	11
Was not around / on holiday / out of town	6
New to the area just recently moved	5
Perceived process / system barriers to voting	7
Didn't receive any voting paper	5
Didn't know how to vote / voting system was confusing	1
No polling booths / nowhere to go to vote	1
Wasn't eligible / enrolled to vote / lost voting papers	4
Wasn't eligible to vote / not enrolled to vote	3
Lost the voting papers	1
Other*	6
No reason / just didn't	2

Base: Did not vote in recent local elections (n=415)

Source: Q4e

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

⁹ This is one approach to capturing and analysing responses to open-ended questions. The other approach involves the interviewer assigning a code during the interview using a pre-determined list of categories (an 'other specify' category is usually included to capture unexpected and/or uncommon responses). Both approaches are valid, but the approach used for this question is preferable as it removes any need for interviewers to quickly interpret the response in order to determine which category in the pre-determined list the answer fits into.

Key barriers to voting appear to be apathy or lack of effort, mentioned by 39% of non-voters. Related to this, perhaps, are the reasons of being too busy or running out of time (mentioned by 22%).

The other main reason for not voting relates to not knowing the candidates or who to vote for (mentioned by 30%).

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Analysis by local authority characteristics shows that:

- respondents from rural areas were more likely not to have voted because they were new to the area or had recently moved (15%, versus 5% overall)
- in Invercargill where voter turn-out is traditionally high, respondents were more likely not to have voted because they forgot about it or forgot to send in the voting paper (28% versus 12% overall)
- in Manukau where voter turn-out is traditionally low, respondents were more likely to say they didn't know much about the election (15% versus 5% overall).

Demographic analysis

Analysis of demographic variables shows that:

- older respondents (aged 55 years and over) were more likely than younger respondents not to have voted because they were unimpressed with the candidates (30% versus 10% respectively)
- women were more likely than men not to vote because they did not know the candidates or who to vote for (31% of women versus 20% of men) and because they were not around, on holiday or out of town (9% of women versus 3% of men).

There were no significant differences by income.

Suggestions for encouraging voting

Respondents who did not vote in the local elections were asked what changes could be made to encourage people to vote. Respondents were not given possible answers. Interviewers recorded their responses verbatim. The responses were then coded into like categories post fieldwork¹⁰. The results are displayed in the table below:

Table 7: Suggestions for encouraging voting

	% (n=415)
More information about the candidates / candidates' policies	24
More background information about the candidates	10
Meeting the candidate / more public meetings / getting to know the candidate	8
Greater understanding of candidates' policies / agenda / goals	7
More media exposure for candidates / candidates need to advertise more / advertise better	5
Practical enabling factors	18
Option of online voting	6
More awareness / advertising of closing date	6
Receiving voting papers	4
Have polling booths / somewhere to go to vote / booths like general elections	3
Candidates	12
Candidates I have confidence in / good people / trustworthy	9
Limit the number of candidates / have less candidates	2
Have more candidates	1
Suggestions to overcome apathy	11
Personal change / for me to take more interest / pay more attention / be more organised	10
Provide voting incentives	1
More / clearer information	6
Send out more information	2
More explanation of system	2
Information needs to be clearer	2
Other*	16
Nothing	14
Don't know	11

Base: Did not vote in recent local elections (n=415)

Source: Q4f

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

The main suggestion for getting more people to vote is for more information about candidates and their policies to be made available (mentioned by 24% of non-voters). Eighteen percent of non-

¹⁰ This is one approach to capturing and analysing responses to open-ended questions. The other approach involves the interviewer assigning a code during the interview using a pre-determined list of categories (an 'other specify' category is usually included to capture unexpected and/or uncommon responses). Both approaches are valid, but the approach used for this question is preferable as it removes any need for interviewers to quickly interpret the response in order to determine which category in the pre-determined list the answer fits into.

voters suggested practical enabling factors such as the option of online voting and promotion of the end of the voting period.

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Respondents from Marlborough district were more likely to report that receiving voting papers would make them more likely to vote (12%, versus 4% overall). This is in keeping with the finding that Marlborough district respondents were significantly more likely not to have voted because they did not receive any voting papers (14%, versus 5% overall).

Demographic analysis

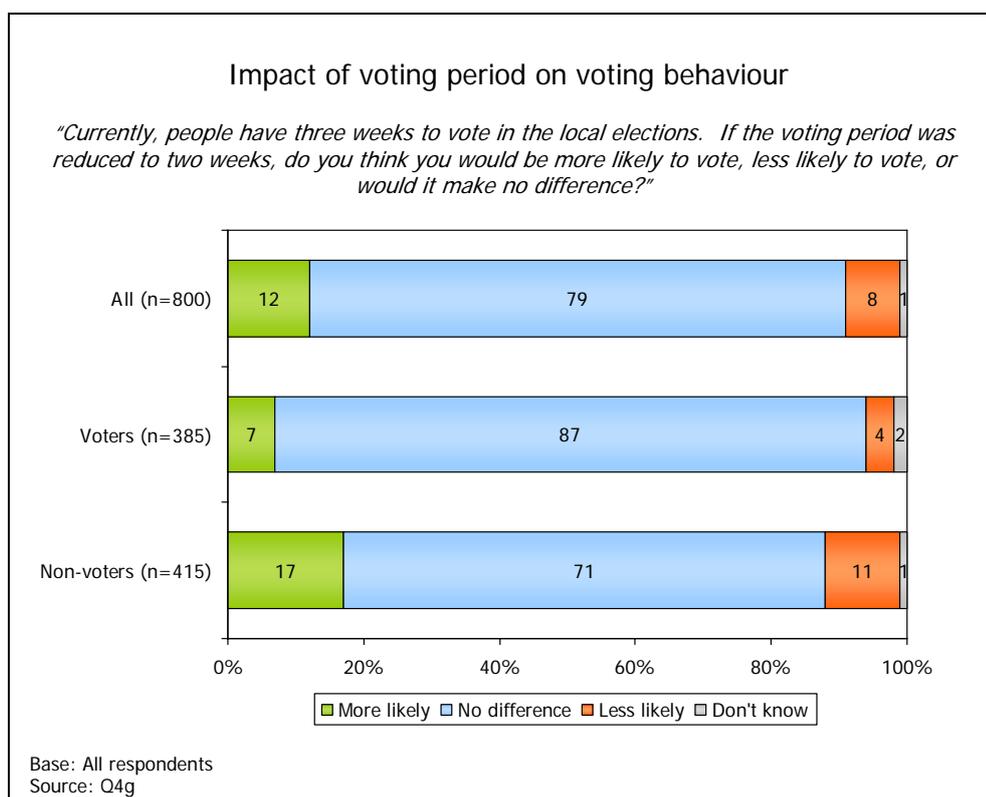
Sub-group analysis by demographic variables reveals that:

- respondents aged 70 years and over were more likely to report that more background information about candidates would encourage them to vote in the next elections (30% versus 10% overall)
- Asian respondents were more likely to request more media exposure for candidates (15% versus 5% overall – significant at the 90% confidence level)
- Maori respondents were more likely to be unsure what to suggest (22% versus 11% overall).

Suggestions for encouraging voting do not vary significantly by gender or income.

Impact of voting period on voting behaviour

All respondents were asked what effect reducing the voting period from three to two weeks would have on voting behaviour, i.e. would people be more, less or equally likely to vote if the voting period was shorter. The results are displayed for voters and non-voters separately in the chart below.



Based on the results to this question alone¹¹, we conclude that the voting period should not be reduced. A resounding majority of both voters and non-voters said reducing the voting period from three to two weeks would make no difference to how likely they would be to vote. Further, there is a risk that reducing the voting period would adversely affect some voters. Although 17% of non-voters said a reduction in the voting period would result in them being more likely to vote, 11% said they would in fact be less likely to vote.

There are no significant differences by local authority characteristics.

¹¹ We acknowledge that a decision on this may need to take into account factors outside of this research.

Demographic analysis

Sub-group analysis of demographic variables reveals the following:

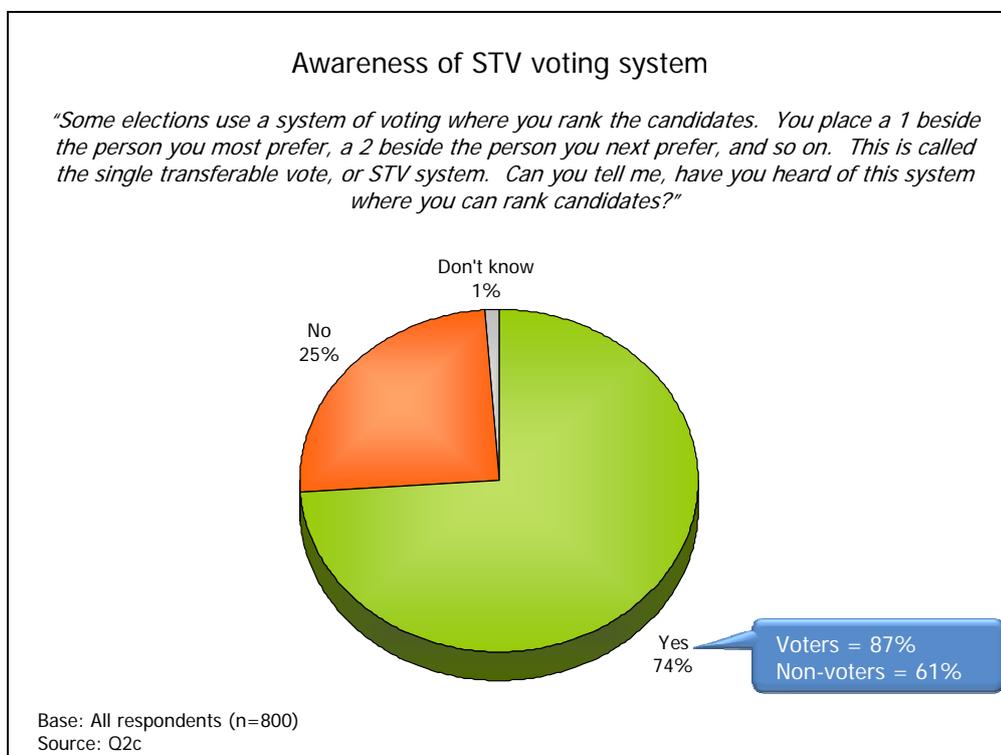
- Asian respondents were more likely to report that they would be more likely to vote if the voting period was reduced (36% said 'more likely' compared to 12% overall, and 56% said it would make no difference compared to 79% overall).
- Younger respondents (aged 18-24 years) were more likely to report that they would be less likely to vote if the voting period was reduced to two weeks than respondents overall (23% versus 8% overall).
- Older respondents (aged 70 years and over) were more likely to report that reducing the voting period to two weeks would make no difference to how likely they would be to vote (88%, versus 79% overall), and less likely to report that it would make them less likely to vote (1%, versus 8% overall).

ELECTORAL SYSTEMS

This section discusses respondents' awareness of STV, preferences for the two electoral systems (FPP and STV), and whether having two systems creates confusion.

Awareness of STV

In order to gauge the level of awareness of the STV system, respondents were given an explanation of the STV system. They were then asked if they had heard of the STV voting system, whereby voters rank candidates in order of preference.



Three quarters of respondents (74%) had heard of the STV system. Not surprisingly, voters are more likely than non-voters to have heard of the STV system (87% versus 61%).

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Analysis by local authority characteristics reveals the following:

- Awareness was higher in local authorities that primarily use STV compared to local authorities that primarily use FPP (80% and 72% respectively).
- Awareness is lowest in cities with low voter turn-out (56%) and the district with average voter turn-out (58%), and highest in cities with average voter turn-out (85%).
- Awareness was low in provincial local authorities (67%) compared to rural (81%) and urban (76%) local authorities.

- Respondents from Wellington city and Carterton district were more likely (87% and 84% respectively), and those from Far North district and Manukau city less likely (58% and 56% respectively), to have heard of the STV voting system.

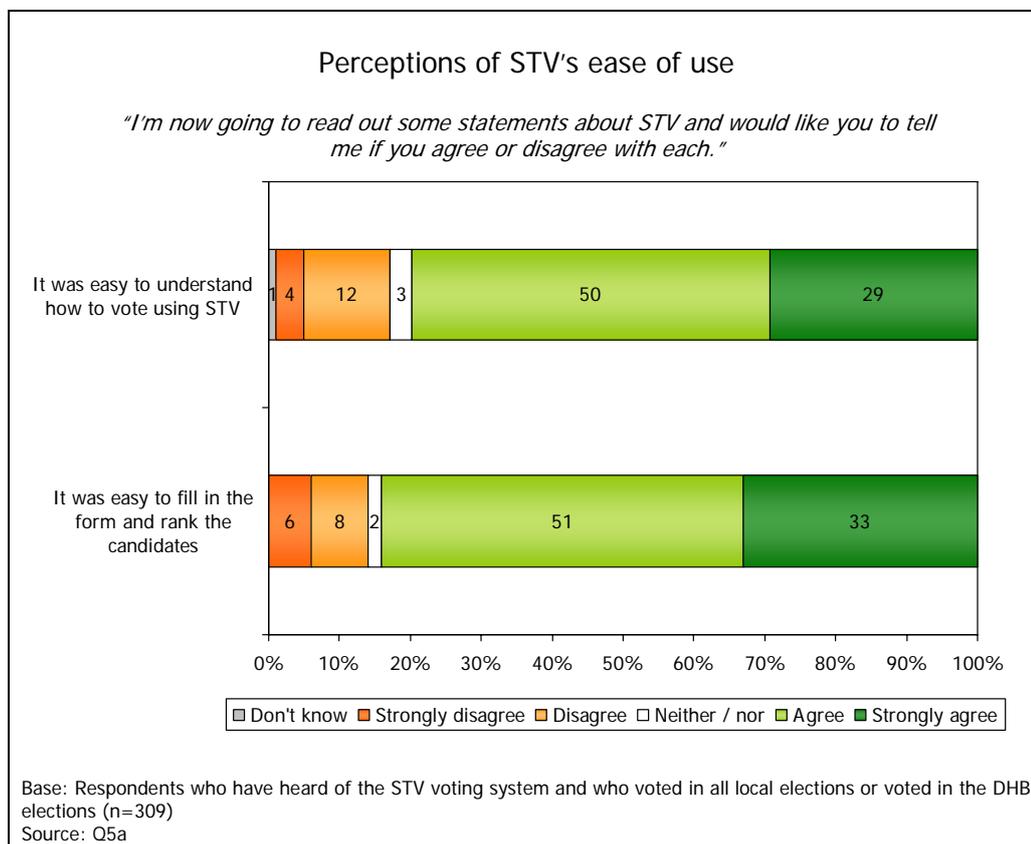
Demographic analysis

Analysis by demographic sub-groups shows that:

- awareness was markedly lower among Maori (54%), Pacific peoples (28%), and Asian respondents (27%) compared to New Zealand European respondents (79%)
- younger respondents (18-34 years) were less likely to have heard of the STV system than respondents overall (62% aware versus 74% overall)
- respondents with a combined income of less than \$20,000 were less likely to be aware of STV (61%) whereas respondents with a combined income of over \$100,000 were more likely to be aware of STV (83%).

Perceptions of STV's ease of use

Respondents who had heard of the STV electoral system, and who voted in a DHB election, were asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed or disagree with two statements about how easy it was to understand and use the STV voting system. The results are displayed below.



A large majority of respondents who had heard of the STV electoral system, and voted in the DHB elections, found the STV system easy to understand and use.

Eight in ten respondents (79%) felt that it was easy to understand how to vote using STV. The feedback regarding filling in the form was even more positive, with 84% of respondents agreeing or strongly agreeing that it was easy to fill in the voting form and rank candidates.

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Overall, perceptions among respondents in local authorities that primarily use STV do not differ significantly from those in local authorities that primarily use FPP.

However, respondents from Invercargill city (a city with traditionally high voter turn-out) were less likely to agree or strongly agree that the STV system is easy to understand (62%, versus 79% overall).

Demographic analysis

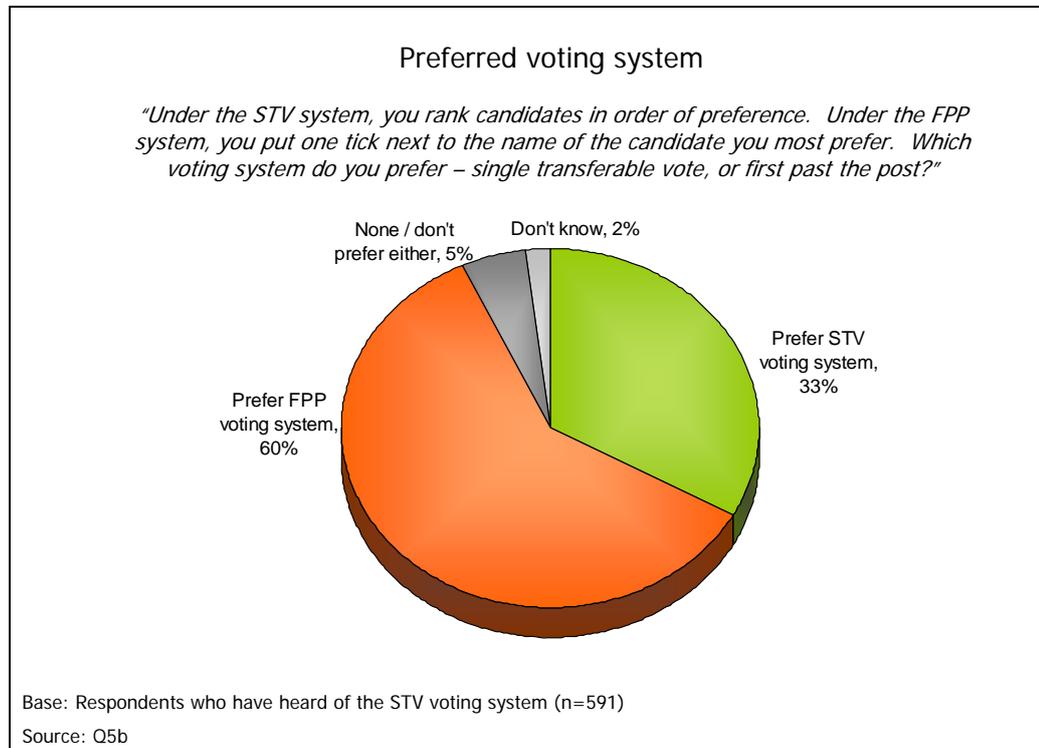
Respondents with an ethnicity that fell into the 'other' category were more likely to disagree that it was easy to fill in the form and rank the candidates (39% either strongly disagreed or disagreed

compared to only 14% in the total sample). This finding is likely to reflect a high number of respondents with English as a second language in the 'other' ethnicity category.

Perceptions of STV's ease of use do not vary significantly by any other demographic variable (including age, gender and income).

Preferred electoral system

Respondents who had heard of the STV electoral system were then asked which voting system they prefer – the single transferable vote (STV) system, or the first past the post system (FPP). The results are displayed below.



FPP is the more popular system with 60% of respondents who have heard of the STV voting system indicating a preference for FPP compared to 33% for STV.

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Preference for STV is highest in Wellington and Far North District (both at 41% versus 33% overall) whereas preference for FPP is highest in Manukau (a city with traditionally low voter turnout) and Invercargill (both at 71%).

Overall, preference for STV does not differ significantly between respondents in local authorities that primarily use STV and respondents in local authorities that primarily use FPP.

Demographic analysis

Older respondents (aged 70 years and over) were more likely to have no preference with regard to which voting system is used (FPP or STV) (11%, versus 5% overall).

There are no variations by gender or any other demographic variable.

Reasons for preferring STV system

Without prompting with possible answers, respondents who said they prefer the STV voting system were asked why they prefer it. The results are displayed below.

Table 8: Reasons for preferring the STV voting system

	% (n=191)
STV is more representative	22
STV is fairer / more democratic system	21
Gives you more choices / options of people you want / more flexibility in voting	18
With STV you can rank all candidates	17
STV is simple / easy to vote	14
Better chance for candidates to be elected	6
Proportional system / better reflects proportionality of votes	5
More control over who you vote for / more likely to get the results you want	5
Vote is not wasted / is transferred	4
Get a better result	4
More accurately reflects the will of the people	3
Used to it / familiar with it	3
Other*	9
No reason	1
Don't know	3

Base: Respondents who prefer the STV voting system (n=191)

Source: Q5c

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

The main reasons for preferring the STV voting system are that it is perceived to be more representative and more democratic – mentioned by a respective 22% and 21% of respondents.

A significant number of respondents also expressed the sense that they can have more of a say under STV, with 18% commenting on the greater choices and options available under STV and 17% specifically referring to the ranking of all candidates.

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Overall, there are no significant differences between respondents that primarily use STV and local authorities that primarily use FPP (or any other local authority characteristic).

Demographic analysis

Respondents aged 45-54 years were more likely than respondents overall to say that STV is more representative (38%, versus 22% overall).

Reasons for preferring FPP system

Without prompting with possible answers, respondents who said they prefer the FPP voting system were asked why they prefer it. The results are displayed below.

Table 9: Reasons for preferring the FPP voting system

	% (n=351)
Prefer FPP process	63
FPP is simple / easy to vote	42
Can just pick one candidate / don't have to rank	26
STV is too complicated	11
You have to know the candidate to use STV	3
FPP is quick / doesn't take long / faster	2
Prefer outcomes of FPP voting system	38
FPP is more precise / definite / clear cut	8
FPP is fairer / more democratic	8
The one who gets the most votes wins with FPP	7
You know where your vote goes with FPP	6
You get who you want with FPP / more chance that the person you're voting for will win	6
More accurate / clearer results	3
People you don't really want might end up winning with STV	4
STV disadvantages certain candidates (e.g., rural / ethnic minority)	2
Other reasons for preferring FPP	19
FPP is the way I'm used to / the way it's always been	4
Not enough information / understanding about STV	3
Don't like STV / not a good system / doesn't work	2
Best / idealistic / right way to vote	4
Other*	7
No reason	2
Don't know	2

Base: Respondents who prefer the FPP voting system (n=351)

Source: Q5d

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

The main reasons for preferring the FPP voting system relate to the simplicity of the FPP process (mentioned by 63% of those who prefer FPP) and, to a lesser extent, the fairness and the clarity of the outcomes delivered by FPP (mentioned by 38% of those who prefer FPP).

There is very little variation in reasons given by voters and non-voters. Non-voters were more likely than voters to comment that with STV people they don't want might end up winning (8% versus 2% of voters).

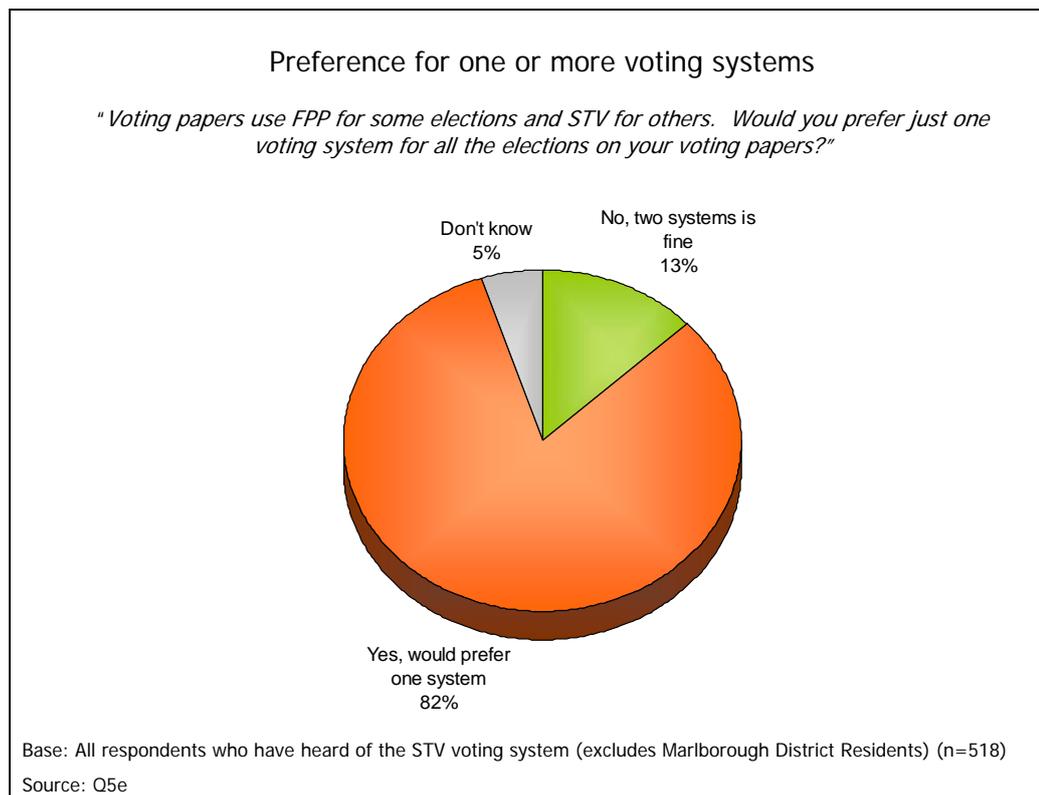
There are no significant differences between respondents that primarily use STV and local authorities that primarily use FPP (or any other local authority characteristic).

Demographic analysis

Respondents with an ethnicity that fell into the 'other' category were more likely to say they prefer FPP because they can just pick one candidate (43% compared to 26% overall). This difference is statistically significant at the 90% confidence level.

Preference for one or more electoral systems

All respondents who were aware of STV, except Marlborough local authority residents (who use only one voting system), were asked whether they would prefer to have only one voting system for all the elections on their voting papers, or more than one voting system. The results are displayed below.



A substantial majority (82%) would prefer the simplicity of just one system for all the elections on their voting papers. This result does not differ significantly between voters and non-voters (80% and 85% respectively).

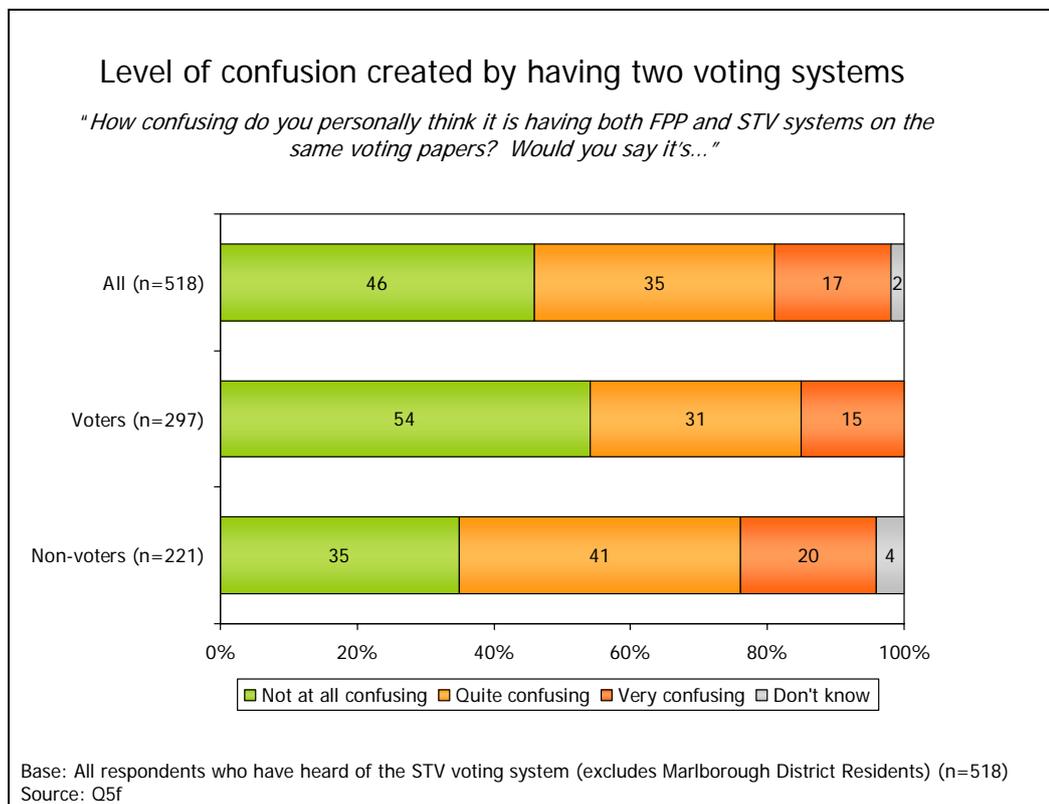
Analysis by local authority characteristics

Respondents in the Far North district (a district with traditionally average voter turn-out) were more likely to be happy with two systems (33% compared to 13% of the sample overall).

There are no demographic variations of note.

Level of confusion caused by having two voting systems

All respondents who had heard of STV (except Marlborough local authority residents) were asked how confusing they personally think it is having two voting systems. The results are displayed in the graph below.



Despite an overwhelming preference for one voting system (illustrated on the previous page), there is divided opinion over whether having two systems is confusing. Around half (52%) consider having two systems to be confusing (either very confusing or quite confusing). However, 46% say that it is not at all confusing.

Non-voters are more likely than voters to perceive that having two systems is either very or quite confusing (61% compared to 46%).

Manukau city residents were more likely to say having two systems is 'very' confusing (29% versus 17% overall).

There are no differences by age or income (or any other demographic variable).

ADVERTISING

This section examines recall of advertising (including the candidate booklet), message take-out, and perceptions of the extent to which the advertising materials were helpful.

Unprompted recall of advertising related to local elections and voting

Respondents were initially asked whether immediately before and during the elections, they saw, heard, or read any advertising or information about the local elections and voting. They were then asked to describe in detail what they saw, hear or read. Respondents were not given possible answers. Interviewers recorded their responses verbatim. The responses were then coded into like categories post fieldwork¹².

Findings are detailed in the table overleaf.

¹² This is one approach to capturing and analysing responses to open-ended questions. The other approach involves the interviewer assigning a code during the interview using a pre-determined list of categories (an 'other specify' category is usually included to capture unexpected and/or uncommon responses). Both approaches are valid, but the approach used for this question is preferable as it removes any need for interviewers to quickly interpret the response in order to determine which category in the pre-determined list the answer fits into.

Table 10: Unprompted recall of advertising related to local elections and voting

	All respondents (n=800) %	Voters (n=385) %	Non-voters (n=415) %
Newspaper	57	69	46
Newspaper – who to vote for	31	41	21
Newspaper – other	20	24	16
Newspaper – advertising non-specific	7	5	9
Newspaper – how to vote	1	2	-
Newspaper – advertising forthcoming elections / encouraging people to vote	1	2	1
Billboards / hoardings / posters – who to vote for	50	42	57
Billboards / hoardings / posters – who to vote for	50	42	57
Pamphlets / flyers / booklets	45	50	40
Pamphlets / flyers / booklets – who to vote for	26	31	20
Pamphlets / flyers / booklets – other	20	19	20
Television	9	12	6
Television – other	4	5	4
Television – advertising forthcoming elections / encouraging people to vote	2	3	2
Television – candidate advertising	2	2	1
Television – election discussion / interviews	1	1	1
Radio	13	14	12
Radio – other	4	5	3
Radio – who to vote for	3	4	2
Radio – election discussion / interviews	2	2	3
Radio – advertising non-specific	2	2	3
Radio – advertising forthcoming elections / encouraging people to vote	1	1	1
Media non-specific	9	11	7
Saw / heard / read / was aware of who to vote for – media non-specific	9	11	7
Miscellaneous			
Street campaigning by candidate / talking to candidate / public address by candidate	8	10	6
Talking with friends / neighbours / other local people / work colleagues / word of mouth	4	5	4
Voting paper / papers	3	3	3
Candidates' names on motor vehicles	1	1	2
On the internet / on the website	1	1	1
Other*	1	2	-
Don't know	2	1	3
Didn't see or heard any advertising	6	4	7

Base: All respondents

Source: Q2b

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

The vast majority of respondents (92%)¹³ recalled seeing or hearing some advertising related to the local elections. Voters were a little more likely than non-voters to recall advertising about the election (95% compared to 90%).

Newspaper advertising (57%), outdoor advertising (billboards, hoardings, and posters) (50%) and pamphlets/flyers (45%) receive the highest levels of unprompted recall. Recall of advertising about who to vote for appears to be most common.

Compared to voters, non-voters were significantly more likely to recall:

- billboards, hoardings or posters (57% versus 42% of voters).

Conversely, compared to voters, non-voters were significantly less likely to recall:

- newspaper advertising about who to vote for (21%, versus 41% of voters)
- pamphlets, flyers or booklets about who to vote for (20%, versus 30% of voters)
- other newspaper advertising relating to the election (16%, versus 24% of voters)
- street campaigning by the candidate (6%, versus 10% of voters)
- newspaper advertising about how to vote (0%, versus 2% of voters).

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Sub-group analysis by local authority characteristics shows that respondents in Manukau city (69%), Wellington city (66%) and Christchurch city (66%) were more likely to have seen outdoor advertising (billboards, hoardings, and posters) compared to respondents in the Far North district (40%) and the Marlborough district (41%).

Analysis by other local authority characteristics also shows that:

- respondents in urban local authorities were more likely to recall outdoor advertising (billboards, hoardings, and posters) (63%, versus 50% overall)
- respondents in urban local authorities were less likely to recall newspaper advertising about who to vote for (22%, versus 31% overall)
- recall of newspaper advertising is highest in districts with traditionally high voter turn-out (64% compared to 57% overall)
- respondents in Invercargill were less likely to recall pamphlets, flyers or booklets (34% compared to 48% overall).

Demographic analysis

Analysis indicates that:

- younger respondents (18-44 years) were significantly more likely to recall seeing billboards, hoardings or posters than older (45+ years) respondents (63% versus 38%), whereas older respondents were more likely to have seen newspaper advertising about who to vote for (38%, versus 23% of younger respondents)
- women were more likely men to have seen pamphlets, flyers or booklets relating to the election (23%, versus 16% of men).

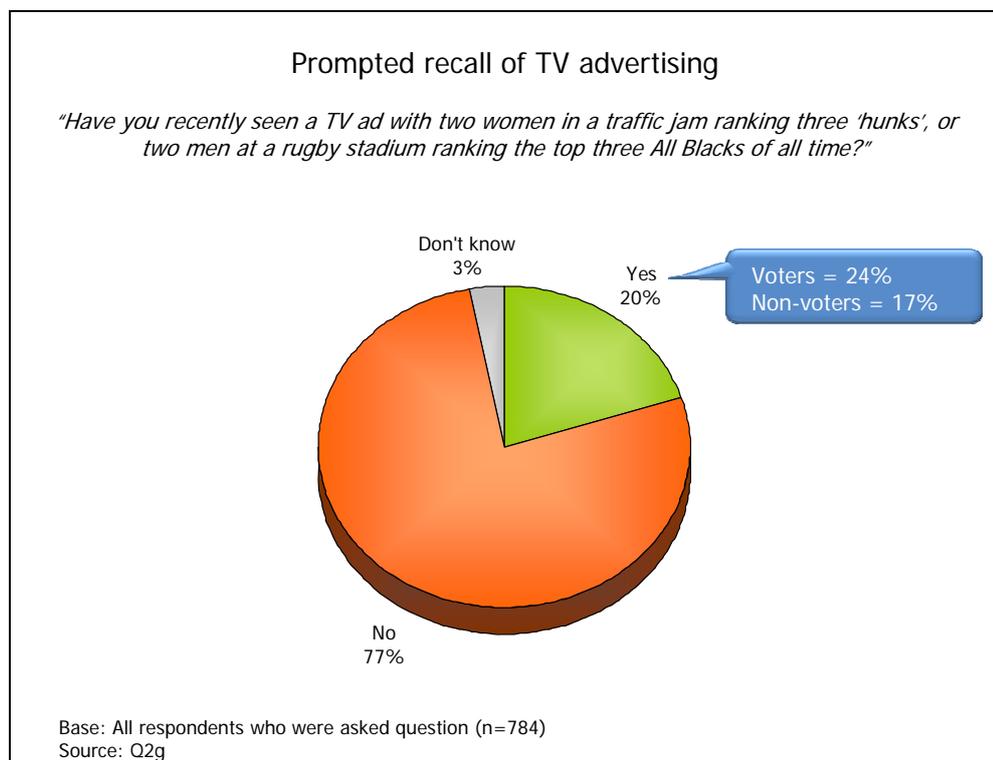
¹³ As indicated in the table above the remaining 8% consists of 2% who stated they didn't know and 6% who said they had not seen or heard any advertising.

Advertising on how to vote

Local Government Services of the Department of Internal Affairs commissioned advertising on how to vote using STV. The following pages examine the success of this advertising. The reader should note, however, that respondents' answers may also have taken into account any local advertising or initiatives on how to vote.

Prompted recall of TV advertising

Respondents were given a brief description of the TV advertisements about the local elections to prompt their recall. The results are displayed in the pie graph below:



One in five respondents (20%) recalled the television advertising when prompted with details about the advertisements. Recall is higher among voters than non-voters (24% versus 17%).

This result should be interpreted in the context of the following factors:

- Media spend – this campaign did not involve heavy media spending.
- Memory decay – the extent to which respondents forget having seen the advertising due to the amount of time that lapsed between when the advertising was on air and the survey fieldwork period. The advertising campaign finished on 10 October 2007. The survey fieldwork was conducted from 23 October to 2 December 2007 (although over 700 of the 800 interviews were completed by 20 November). On average, we expect about 10 to 20 percentage points of memory decay within six weeks of the on-air period (this is based on Millward Brown models). Advertisements with strong creative elements suffer less from memory decay.
- The use of a telephone survey methodology. Whilst respondents were read a verbal description of the advertising, visual prompting was not possible. We find that with visual prompting, people can recall more than with purely a verbal description.

Taking into account the above factors, we consider the 20% prompted recall result to be an average result for public information campaigns. In our experience, public information campaigns achieve recall at least as high as campaigns for commercial products and services (given equal media weighting).

Analysis by local authority characteristics

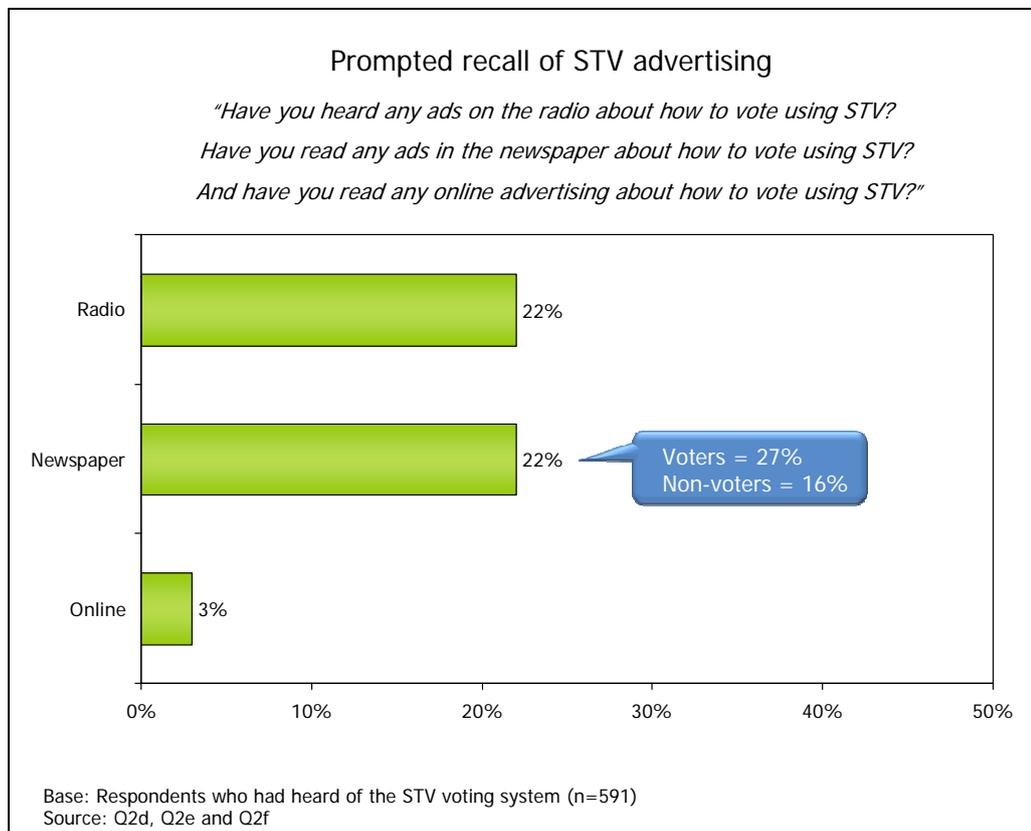
Sub-group analysis of demographic variables reveals that in local authorities which primarily use the STV voting system, respondents were more likely to recall the television advertisements (27% versus 20% overall).

Marlborough district residents were more likely to recall the television advertisements (29% versus 20% overall).

There are no significant differences by gender or any other demographic variables.

Prompted recall of other STV advertising

Respondents who had heard of the STV voting system were asked whether or not they recalled seeing or hearing any advertising on the radio, in the newspaper or online about how to vote using the STV system. The results are displayed below.



Around one in five (22%) respondents who had heard of the STV system recalled the radio advertising. This appears to be a good result.

Given that the advertising was limited to Maori and Pacific language radio stations, this result suggests some respondents may have been recalling other radio content. Because this question is analysed on the reduced base of those who had heard of STV, analysis by ethnicity suffers somewhat from small sample sizes. However, the result among Maori (20%) is statistically robust and comparable with the overall result.

Print advertising was organised for major daily and Sunday papers, some community papers and selected 'ethnic' publications. The same proportion of respondents (22%) recalled reading newspaper advertising about how to vote using STV. Compared to other public information campaigns we have been involved in evaluating, this is a good result.

Recall of the radio advertising does not differ between voters and non-voters. Recall of the newspaper advertising is higher among voters than non-voters (27% versus 16%).

Few (3%) recalled the online advertising.

There are no variations by local authority characteristics.

Demographic analysis

Respondents aged 70 years and over were more likely to have read advertisements in the newspaper about how to vote using the STV system (44%, versus 22% of respondents overall).

There are no variations by gender or any other demographic variable.

Message take-out

Respondents who had seen any advertising about how to vote using the STV voting system were asked what message or messages they thought the advertisements were trying to get across. Respondents were not prompted with possible answers.

The results are displayed in the table below. The messages in italics with an asterisk indicate key messages used in the advertising copy.

Table 11: Message take-out

	% (n=313)
<i>*How to use STV / how the system works / how to vote</i>	23
<i>*Ranking / list candidates in order of preference</i>	16
Encouraging you to vote / get people to vote	15
<i>*It is easy to vote using single transferable voting (STV)</i>	10
Candidates campaigning for themselves	9
<i>*STV allows you to vote for as many or as few candidates as you want to</i>	7
Information on voting / election	3
Vote transfers to other candidates	2
Fair way of voting	1
<i>*STV is used for District Health Board (DHB) elections and some council elections</i>	1
Other^	4
Don't know	22

*Key messages used in the advertising copy.

Base: Seen advertising (n=313)

Source: Q2h

^A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

On the whole, message take out is clear. Three of the four most common messages taken from the advertising are in line with the aims of the advertising. These relate to general comments about how the STV system works as well as specific comments on candidate rankings and how easy voting is under STV.

One in five (22%) were not sure what the advertising was trying to convey.

There are no significant variations between voters and non-voters, or by local authority characteristics.

Demographic analysis

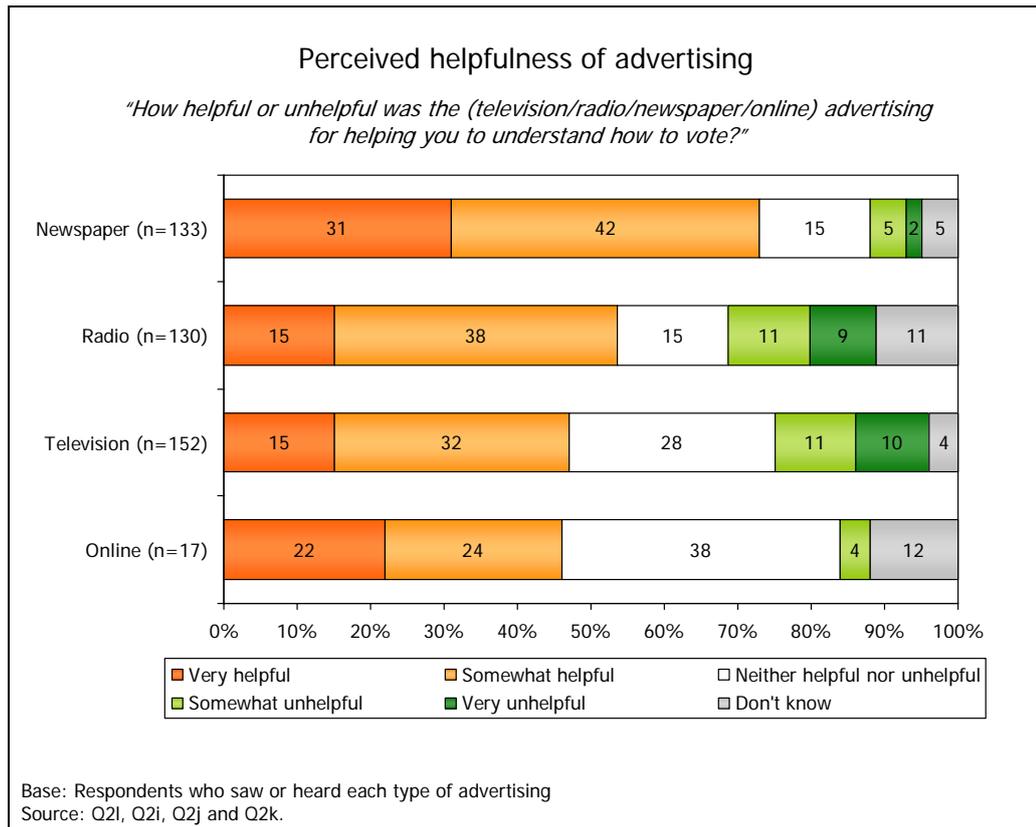
Sub-group analysis of demographic variables reveals that:

- respondents aged 18-24 years were more likely to think that the message the advertisement was trying to get across was that STV allows you to vote for as many or as few candidates as you want to (23%, compared to 7% of respondents overall)
- respondents aged 25-34 years were more likely to think that the message the advertisement was trying to get across about ranking or listing candidates in order of preference (31%, versus 16% overall)

- respondents aged 70 years and over were more likely to think that the message the advertisement was trying to get across concerned candidates campaigning for themselves (21%, versus, 9% overall)
- women were more likely than men to think that the message the advertisement was trying to get across was about candidates campaigning for themselves (13% versus 5%)
- men were more likely than women to think that the message that the advertisement was trying to get across was about how to use the STV voting system (29% versus 18%)
- respondents with a combined income of over \$80,000 were more likely to comment that the advertising was about ranking or listing candidates in order of preference (30% compared to 16% overall)
- Maori respondents were more likely to be unsure what the advertising was trying to convey (44% compared to 22% overall).

Perceived helpfulness of advertising

Respondents who said they had seen the newspaper advertising about how to vote using the STV voting system were asked to rate the newspaper advertising in terms of how well the advertising helped them to understand how to vote. A similar questioning approach was used in regard to radio, television and online advertising. The results are displayed in the chart below. Percentages for each medium are based on those who saw/heard advertising through that medium.



Respondents found newspaper advertising the most helpful, with around three quarters (73%) describing it as either somewhat or very helpful. This was followed by radio, television and online advertising, each of which around half of respondents felt were helpful. The readers should note that the results pertaining to online advertising are only indicative due to the small sample size (n=17).

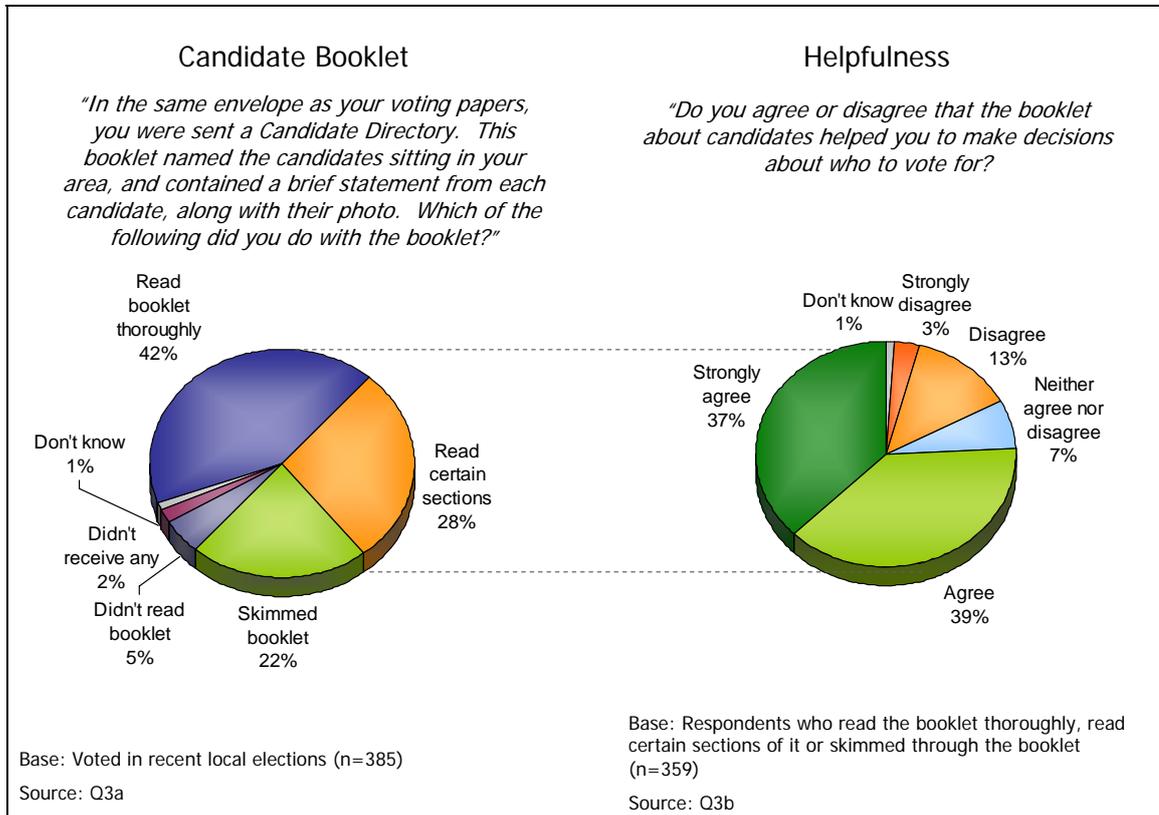
Television and radio advertising were viewed as unhelpful by significant numbers of people (21% and 20% respectively).

There are no variations by local authority characteristics or demographics.

Information used to decide who to vote for

Candidate booklets

Respondents who voted in the local elections were asked whether or not they received the candidate booklet and what they did with it. The results are displayed below.



The candidate booklet was very effective. An encouraging 69% of respondents who voted either read it thoroughly (41%) or read certain sections (28%), and a further 22% skim-read the booklet. Moreover, of those who read at least some of the booklet, around three quarters (76%) agreed or strongly agreed that it helped them decide who to vote for.

There is a high correlation between how much of the booklet respondents read and how helpful they found the booklet: 55% of those who read the booklet thoroughly strongly agreed that it was helpful compared to only 28% of those who read certain sections and 16% who skimmed it.

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Respondents from Christchurch city were more likely to strongly agree that the booklet helped them to decide who to vote for (55%, versus 37% overall).

Demographic analysis

Analysis by demographic variables shows the following patterns:

- Respondents aged 35-44 years were less likely to have read the booklet thoroughly (22%), but more likely to have read sections of the booklet (43%) than respondents overall. This may be an effect of the busier overall lifestyle of this age-bracket. Further, 51% of 35-44 year olds

who read at least some of the booklet strongly agreed that it was helpful (compared to only 37% overall).

- Respondents with a combined income of under \$20,000 were more likely to have read the booklet thoroughly (63% compared to 42% overall).

There are no variations by gender.

Suggestions for improvement to the booklet

Respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed that the candidate booklet was helpful were asked how the booklet could be improved. Respondents were not given possible answers. Interviewers recorded their responses verbatim. The responses were then coded into like categories post fieldwork¹⁴.

The results are displayed below.

Table 12: Suggestions for improvement to candidate booklet

	% (n=60)
Nothing / there is not much more they could have done	32
Provided more information about candidates / candidates' policies	27
Information about candidates should be truthful / accurate / non-conflicting	8
Provided less / more concise information	7
Sent out the booklet earlier / advertised beforehand that the booklet was coming	5
Other*	11
Don't know	10

Base: Respondents who disagreed that the candidate booklet was helped them decide who to vote for (n=60).

Source: Q3c

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

Of those respondents who disagreed that the candidate booklet helped them to decide who to vote for, one in three said that nothing could be done to improve the booklet (32%), while just under one in three said that the booklet could be improved by providing more information about candidates and / or candidates' policies (27%). A further 8% said that information about candidates should be accurate and non-conflicting.

¹⁴ This is one approach to capturing and analysing responses to open-ended questions. The other approach involves the interviewer assigning a code during the interview using a pre-determined list of categories (an 'other specify' category is usually included to capture unexpected and/or uncommon responses). Both approaches are valid, but the approach used for this question is preferable as it removes any need for interviewers to quickly interpret the response in order to determine which category in the pre-determined list the answer fits into.

Other helpful sources of information in deciding who to vote for

Respondents who voted in the recent local elections were asked what, if any, sources of information (other than the booklet) helped them decide who to vote for. The results are displayed below.

Table 13: Other helpful sources of information

	% (n=385)
Newspaper	67
Local or community newspapers	57
Daily newspapers	39
Personal knowledge of candidate	64
Personal knowledge of candidate	64
Candidate campaign	49
Candidate flyers in the mail	29
Candidate signs, billboards, or posters	21
Candidate meetings or debates	13
Candidate flyers handed to you while you were out	6
TV / radio interviews with candidate	1
Word of mouth	36
Word of mouth	36
Any other sources*	2
No other sources	7

Base: Voted in recent local elections (n=385)

Source: Q3d

*A specific category is developed when three or more like responses are identified. All other responses are included in this category labeled 'other'.

Newspapers (67%) and candidate campaigns (49%) were key sources of information in helping respondents choose who to vote for.

Many also drew on their own personal knowledge of the candidate (64%). Related to this perhaps is word of mouth (36%).

Analysis by local authority characteristics

Sub-group analysis shows the following:

- Respondents in districts with traditionally high voter turn-out are most likely to have relied on their personal knowledge of the candidates (74% compared to 64% overall). This is particularly the case in the Waimate district (82%). Personal knowledge of the candidates is least common in cities with traditionally low and average turn-out, particularly Manukau city (40%) and Christchurch city (35%).
- Word of mouth is more common in the Far North district, a district with traditionally average turn-out, at 54% compared to 36% overall.
- Candidate flyers in the mail are most commonly mentioned by respondents in cities with traditionally low and average voter turn-out, particularly Manukau city (49%) and Christchurch city (45%).
- Carterton district respondents were more likely to mention candidate meetings or debates (24% compared to 13% overall).
- Compared respondents in other local authorities, Christchurch city respondents were most likely to mention newspapers (83%) and the candidate campaign (66%).
- Marlborough respondents were the respondents least likely to comment on the candidate campaign (only 27% compared to 49% overall).

Related to the above results:

- voters from urban areas were less likely (48%), and voters from rural areas more likely (79%), to have used personal knowledge of the candidate to help them decide who to vote for.
- voters from provincial areas were less likely (17%), and voters from urban areas more likely (44%), to have used candidate flyers in the mail to help them decide who to vote for. This result is unsurprising as it is likely that candidates targeted more densely populated urban with their direct mail.
- voters from provincial areas were less likely (6%), and voters from rural areas more likely (22%), to have drawn on candidate meetings or debates to help them decide who to vote for.

Demographic analysis

Maori respondents were more likely to have used candidates signs, billboards, or posters (39% compared to 21% overall) to help them decide who to vote for.

There are no variations by income, gender or any other demographic variable.

APPENDIX: QUESTIONNAIRE

POST ELECTION SURVEY 2007 - 36983300

INTERVIEWERS NAME	
DATE	PHONE NUMBER

EMPLOYEE NO.					
INTERVIEW DURATION					

START TIME	FINISH TIME	AUDIT DETAILS
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Initial contact

Good morning/afternoon/evening my name is ... from Colmar Brunton, the research company. I am calling about a very important survey we are doing among New Zealanders. May I please speak to the person in your home who is 18 or over and has the next birthday?

RE-INTRODUCE IF SPEAKING TO A NEW PERSON

This is an important survey to find out your views on the recent local elections. We want to find out your opinions about the voting system, the reasons why you did or did not vote, and your awareness of any recent advertising or information about the elections.

This survey involves us speaking with you for 10 to 15 minutes, depending on your answers. Can I run through this with you now?

IF NECESSARY: We are wanting to talk with New Zealanders who didn't vote, as well as New Zealanders who did vote in the elections. Your views are very important.

IF NECESSARY: We are conducting this research for Local Government Commission, who are conducting a review of the way that local government involves members of the public.

MAKE APPOINTMENT IF NECESSARY

THANK RESPONDENT AND TERMINATE INTERVIEW IF RESPONDENT NOT WILLING TO CONTINUE

That's great. Thank you for agreeing to take part. All our calls are recorded for training purposes, but no one will be able to identify you from your answers.

DO NOT PAUSE. CONTINUE TO NEXT SCREEN UNLESS RESPONDENT IS CONCERNED

IF NECESSARY: The purpose of the recording is to check that I have conducted the survey correctly.

IF NECESSARY: All recordings are stored securely and can only be accessed by authorised staff.

Introductory/screening questions

Before we get started, I just have some questions to check whether you are eligible for the survey.

Q1a Before today were you aware of the recent local elections in your area, such as elections for the Mayor, the Council, and the District Health Board.

CODE ONE ONLY

IF NECESSARY: The local elections ran for three weeks and finished on the 13th of October.

Yes	1	
No	2	CLOSE
Don't know	3	CLOSE

IF CODE 2 OR 3 CLOSE WITH: To carry out this survey, we need to talk with people who are aware of the recent local elections. Thank you for your time today.

Q1b Did you actually vote in the recent local elections?

CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	QUOTA CHK
No	2	QUOTA CHK
Don't know	3	CLOSE

IF QUOTA FULL CLOSE WITH: We have already interviewed enough people who **[INSERT: voted / did not vote]** in the election, so those were all the questions I have. Thank you very much for your time today.

IF CODE 3 CLOSE WITH: To carry out this interview, we really need to know whether or not a person voted in the local elections, so those were all the questions I have for you. Thank you for your time today.

Knowledge of voter information and advertising

Q2a Immediately before and during the elections, did you see, hear, or read any advertising or information about the local elections and voting?

CODE ONE ONLY.

Yes	1	
No	2	GO TO Q2g
Don't know	3	GO TO Q2g

Q2b Can you describe in detail what you saw, heard, or read?
RECORD VERBATIM. PROBE TO NO/CLARIFICATION.

Q2g I'm now going to describe some specific local election ads to you. Have you recently seen a TV ad with two women in a traffic jam ranking the top three 'hunks', or two men at a rugby stadium ranking the top three All Blacks of all time?
CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q2c Some elections use a system of voting where you rank the candidates. You place a 1 beside the person you most prefer, a 2 beside the person you next prefer, and so on. This is called the single transferable vote, or STV system.

Can you tell me, have you heard of this system where you can rank candidates?
CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1	GO TO Q2h GO TO Q2h
No	2	
Don't know	3	

Q2d Have you heard any ads on the radio about how to vote using STV?
CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q2e Have you read any ads in the newspaper about how to vote using STV?
CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

Q2f And have you read any online advertising about how to vote using STV?
CODE ONE ONLY

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know	3

IF CODE 1 AT Q2d, Q2e, Q2f, OR Q2g ASK Q2h, OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q3a

Q2h Thinking about the advertising that I've asked you about, to the best of your knowledge, what message, or messages were these ads trying to get across?
DO NOT READ. PROBE TO NO.

It is easy to vote using single transferable voting (STV)	1
STV is used for District Health Board (DHB) elections and some council elections	2
STV allows you to vote for as many or as few candidates as you want to	3
Other (SPECIFY)	4
SINGLE CODE Don't know	5

ASK Q2I IF CODE 1 AT Q2g

Q2I How helpful or unhelpful was the television advertising for helping you to understand how to vote. Was it...
READ ENTIRE SCALE BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ONE ONLY.

Very helpful	1
Somewhat helpful	2
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	3
Somewhat unhelpful	4
Very unhelpful	5
DO NOT READ: Unsure / Don't know	6

ASK Q2i IF CODE 1 AT Q2d

Q2i How helpful or unhelpful was the radio advertising for helping you to understand how to vote using STV. Was it...
READ ENTIRE SCALE BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ONE ONLY.

Very helpful	1
Somewhat helpful	2
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	3
Somewhat unhelpful	4
Very unhelpful	5
DO NOT READ: Unsure / Don't know	6

ASK Q2k IF CODE 1 AT Q2e

Q2j How helpful or unhelpful was the newspaper advertising for helping you to understand how to vote using STV. Was it...
READ ENTIRE SCALE BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ONE ONLY.

Very helpful	1
Somewhat helpful	2
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	3
Somewhat unhelpful	4
Very unhelpful	5
DO NOT READ: Unsure / Don't know	6

ASK Q2k OF CODE 1 AT Q2f

Q2k How helpful or unhelpful was the online advertising for helping you to understand how to vote using STV. Was it...

READ ENTIRE SCALE BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ONE ONLY.

Very helpful	1
Somewhat helpful	2
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	3
Somewhat unhelpful	4
Very unhelpful	5
DO NOT READ: Unsure / Don't know	6

Voting papers

ASK Q3a IF CODE 1 AT Q1b, OTHERWISE SKIP TO Q4e

Q3a In the same envelope as your voting papers, you were sent a Candidate Directory. This booklet named the candidates sitting in your area, and contained a brief statement from each candidate, along with their photo. Which of the following did you do with the booklet?

READ ENTIRE LIST BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ONE ONLY.

You read the booklet thoroughly	1	
You read certain sections of the booklet, but not the whole thing	2	
You skimmed through the booklet	3	
You did not read the booklet	4	GO TO Q3d
DO NOT READ: Don't know	5	GO TO Q3d
DO NOT READ: I did not receive voting papers or booklet	6	GO TO Q3d

Q3b Do you agree or disagree that the booklet about candidates helped you to make decisions about who to vote for? **PROMPT:** Do you strongly agree/disagree or just agree/disagree?

CODE ONE ONLY.

Strongly disagree	1	GO TO Q3c
Disagree	2	GO TO Q3c
Neither agree nor disagree	3	GO TO Q3d
Agree	4	GO TO Q3d
Strongly agree	5	GO TO Q3d
Don't know	6	GO TO Q3d

Q3c What could have been done to improve the usefulness of the booklet?

CLARIFY

Q3d Other than the booklet about candidates, which of the following sources of information helped you to decide who to vote for?

READ OUT ENTIRE LIST BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ALL MENTIONS.

PROMPT: Were there any other sources that were helpful?

Daily newspapers	1
Local or community newspapers	2
Word of mouth	3
Personal knowledge of candidate	4
Candidate flyers in the mail	5
Candidate flyers handed to you while you were out	6
Candidate signs, billboards, or posters	7
Candidate meetings or debates	8
Any other sources (SPECIFY)	9
DO NOT READ No other sources	10

Voting behaviour

Q4a For what reasons did you vote in the local elections? **PROMPT:** Anything else?
DO NOT READ. PROBE TO NO. CODE EACH MENTIONED.

Can't complain if you haven't voted	1
Duty/democratic duty/responsibility to vote/belief in democracy	2
Easy to vote/voting papers were sent to me	3
Important to vote/everybody should vote	4
Interested in local politics/affairs/issues	5
Right to vote/democratic right	6
To elect the people I wanted/people who share my views	7
To get the right people for the job/people who will do a good job	8
To have my say	9
Wanted a change/dissatisfied with current Council/Board	10
Happy with current Council/Board	11
Other (SPECIFY)	12
SINGLE CODE None/no particular reason	13
SINGLE CODE Don't know	14

Q4b On your voting papers, you had the opportunity to vote in different elections, including the elections for mayor, the local council, the regional council, the District Health Board, and in some areas, the Community Board or the Licensing Trust.

Can you please tell me, when you voted, did you vote in all the elections on your voting papers, or just some of them?

CODE ONE ONLY.

All of them	1	GO TO Q4g
Just some (or one) of them	2	GO TO Q4c
Don't know / can't remember	3	GO TO Q4g

Q4c Now thinking about just the elections that you did vote in, was one of those the District Health Board election?

CODE ONE ONLY.

Yes	1
No	2
Don't know / can't remember	3

Q4d For what reasons did you vote in some of the elections, but not others?

PROBE TO NO/CLARIFY

GO TO Q4g

Q4e For what reasons did you not vote in the local election?

PROBE TO NO/CLARIFY

Q4f What could be changed, or what would need to be different, for you to vote next time around, in 2010?

PROBE TO NO/CLARIFY

**IF NOTHING ENTER 96
IF DON'T KNOW ENTER 99**

Q4g Currently, people have 3 weeks to vote in the local elections. If the voting period was reduced to 2 weeks, do you think you would be more likely to vote, less likely to vote, or would it make no difference?

CODE ONE ONLY.

More likely	1
Less likely	2
No difference	3
Don't know	4

STV and FPP systems

ASK Q5a IF CODE 1 AT Q2c AND CODE 1 AT Q4b OR CODE 1 AT Q4c

Q5a I'm now going to read out some statements about STV and would like you to tell me if you agree or disagree with each. **PROMPT:** Is that strongly agree/disagree or just agree/disagree?

CODE ONE ONLY FOR EACH STATEMENT.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neither/nor	Agree	Agree strongly	Don't know
i) It was easy to understand how to vote using STV	1	2	3	4	5	6
ii) It was easy to fill in the form and rank the candidates	1	2	3	4	5	6

ASK Q5b IF CODE 1 AT Q2c, OTHERWISE SKIP TO 6a

Q5b There are two different systems for voting, the single transferable vote, or STV system, and the first past the post, or FPP system.

Under the STV system, you rank candidates in order of preference. Under the FPP system, you put one tick next to the name of the candidate you most prefer.

Which voting system do you prefer – single transferable vote, or first past the post?

CODE ONE ONLY.

Prefer single transferable vote (STV)	1	GO TO Q5c
Prefer first past the post (FPP)	2	GO TO Q5d
None/don't prefer either	3	GO TO Q5e
Don't know	4	GO TO Q5e

Q5c What are your reasons for preferring the single transferable vote system? **PROBE:** What else?

DO NOT READ. PROBE TO NO. CODE EACH MENTIONED.

STV is fairer/more democratic system	1
STV is more representative	2
With STV you can rank all candidates	3
STV is simple / easy to vote	4
Vote is not wasted / is transferred	5
Other (SPECIFY)	6
SINGLE CODE No reason	7
SINGLE CODE Don't know	8

GO TO Q5e

Q5d What are your reasons for preferring the first past the post system? **PROBE:** What else?

DO NOT READ. PROBE TO NO. CODE EACH MENTIONED.

FPP is simple / easy to vote	1
STV is too complicated	2
FPP is fairer/more democratic	3
STV disadvantages certain candidates (eg, rural/ethnic minority)	4
Can just pick one candidate / don't have to rank	5
You know where your vote goes with FPP	6
FPP is the way I'm used to / the way its always been	7
Not enough information / understanding about STV	8
Other (SPECIFY)	9
SINGLE CODE No reason	10
SINGLE CODE Don't know	11

IF LOCATION = MARLBOROUGH DISTRICT GO TO Q6a

Q5e Voting papers use FPP for some elections and STV for others. Would you prefer just one voting system for all the elections on your voting papers?

CODE ONE ONLY.

IF NECESSARY: All District Health Boards use STV, and all Regional Councils use FPP.

Yes, would prefer one system	1
No, two systems is fine	2
Don't know	3

Q5f How confusing do you personally think it is having both FPP and STV systems on the same voting papers. Would you say that it's...

READ OUT ENTIRE SCALE BEFORE ACCEPTING ANSWER. CODE ONE ONLY.

Not at all confusing	1
Quite confusing	2
Very confusing	3
DO NOT READ: Don't know	4

Demographics

So that we can check that we've surveyed a range of people, I have a few background questions.

Q6a **CODE GENDER**

Male	1
Female	2

Q6b First of all, which of the following age groups do you fall into?

READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

18 to 19 years	1
20 to 24 years	2
25 to 29 years	3
30 to 34 years	4
35 to 44 years	5
45 to 49 years	6
50 to 55 years	7
55 to 59 years	8
60 to 69 years	9
70+ years	10
DO NOT READ Refused	11

Q6c And which of these ethnic groups do you fit into. You can be in more than one. Are you..?

READ OUT. CODE ALL MENTIONS.

NZ Maori	1
NZ European / Pakeha	2
Other European	3
Samoan	4
Cook Islander/Cook Island Maori	5
Tongan	6
Niuean	7
Chinese	8
Indian	9
Other (SPECIFY)	10
DO NOT READ: Refused	11

Q6d Do you live with a partner or spouse?
CODE ONE ONLY.

Yes	1	GO TO Q6f
No	2	GO TO Q6e
Don't know	3	GO TO Q6e
Refused	4	GO TO Q6e

Q6e Which of the following best describes your total **personal** annual income from all sources before tax? **IF NECESSARY:** Before tax is gross
READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

\$20,000 or less	1
Over \$20,000 to \$30,000	2
Over \$30,000 to \$40,000	3
Over \$40,000 to \$50,000	4
Over \$50,000 to \$60,000	5
Over \$60,000 to \$80,000	6
Over \$80,000 to \$100,000	7
Over \$100,000 to \$120,000	8
Over \$120,000 to \$140,000	9
Over \$140,000 to \$160,000	10
Over \$160,000	11
DO NOT READ: Refused	12
DO NOT READ: Don't know	13

CLOSE

Q6f And which of the following best describes the combined annual income of you and your partner, from all sources, before tax? **IF NECESSARY:** Before tax is gross
READ OUT. CODE ONE ONLY.

\$20,000 or less	1
Over \$20,000 to \$30,000	2
Over \$30,000 to \$40,000	3
Over \$40,000 to \$50,000	4
Over \$50,000 to \$60,000	5
Over \$60,000 to \$80,000	6
Over \$80,000 to \$100,000	7
Over \$100,000 to \$120,000	8
Over \$120,000 to \$140,000	9
Over \$140,000 to \$160,000	10
Over \$160,000	11
DO NOT READ: Refused	12
DO NOT READ: Don't know	13

Close

That is the end of the survey. Thank you very much for your time. My name is ... from Colmar Brunton, and we were conducting this survey for the Local Government Commission. If you have any questions please feel free to call my supervisor.

GIVE RESPONDENT SUPERVISOR'S NAME AND PHONE NUMBER IF REQUESTED

INTERVIEWER DECLARATION:

'I certify that I have conducted this interview in accordance with the guidelines set out in the Market Research Society Code of Practice and in accordance with the instructions from Consumer Link. I have thoroughly checked the questionnaire and it is complete in all respects.'

Yes	1
No	2