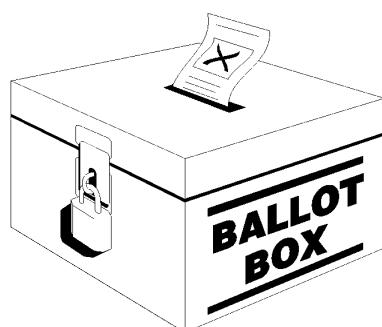


WHY SHOULD I VOTE?



YOUNG PEOPLE'S ATTITUDES TO VOTING AND POLITICS

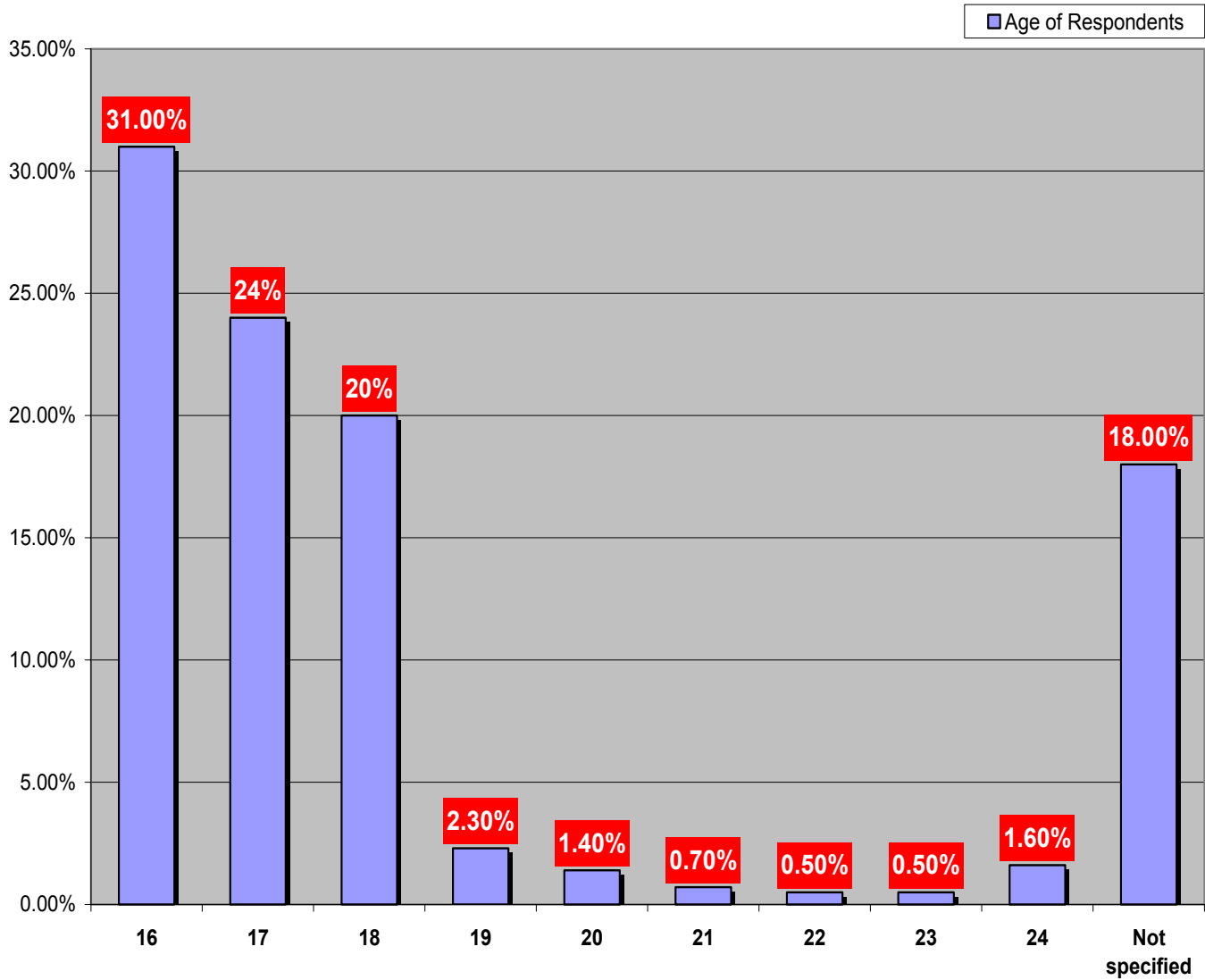
- A survey of the young people of Lewisham, aged between 16-24 to find out their views on voting and politics.
- 3,000 surveys were sent out - 431 replies were received - which is a response rate of 14.5%
- The following schools, colleges and organisations supported the survey by distributing and returning the questionnaires:
 - Catford Business and Enterprise College
 - Christ The King Sixth Form College
 - Haberdasher's Askes' Hatcham College
 - Haberdasher's Askes' Knight's Academy
 - Lewisham College
 - Prendergast School
 - St. Joseph's Academy
 - Connexions
 - Lewisham Library
 - Catford Library
 - Lewisham Shopping Centre



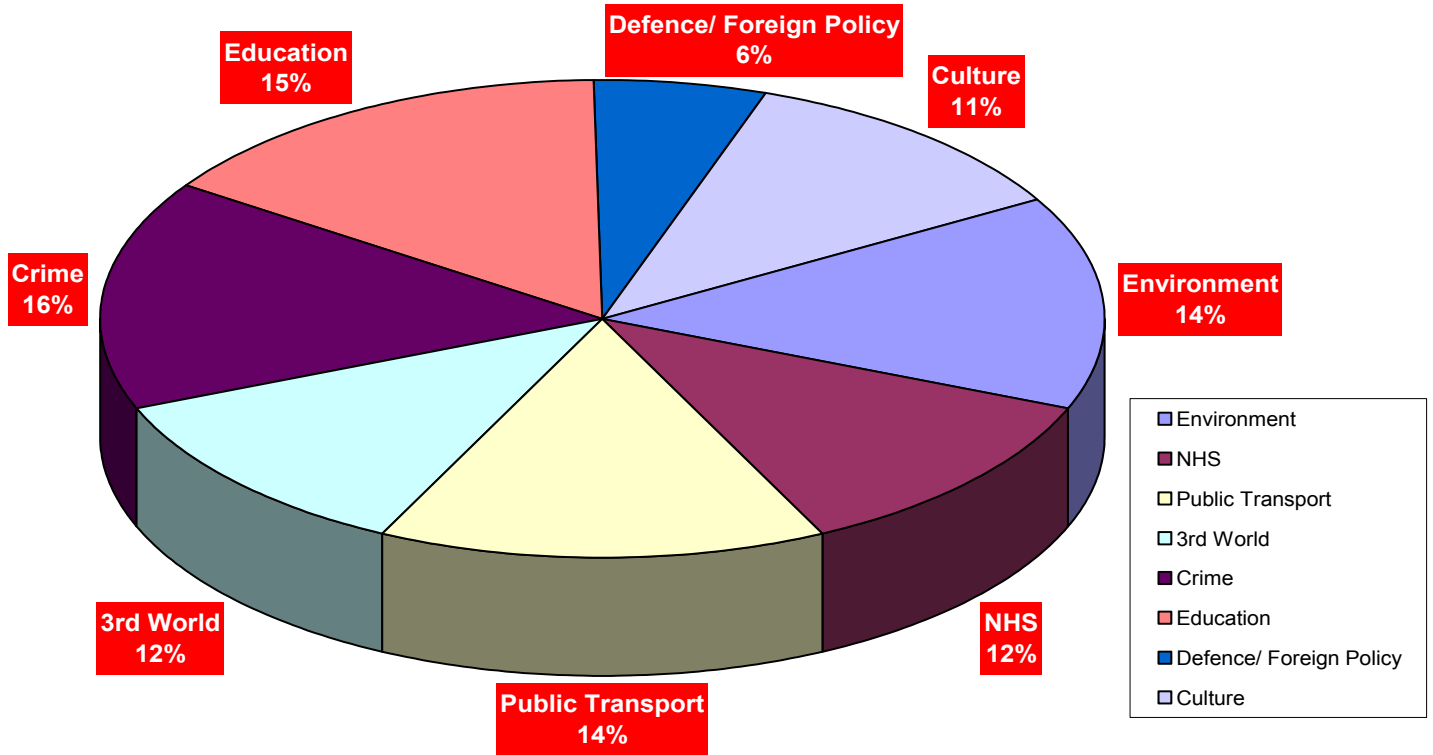
The survey was conducted by Bridget Prentice MP between 15th September 2006 and 1st December 2006, and was co-ordinated by John Wyman-White and Sam Pope.

■ Response Profile

1. Ages of respondents (from 431 replies)	16	133	31%
	17	103	24%
	18	86	20%
	19	10	2.3%
	20	6	1.4%
	21	3	0.7%
	22	2	0.5%
	23	2	0.5%
	24	7	1.6%
	Age not given	79	18%

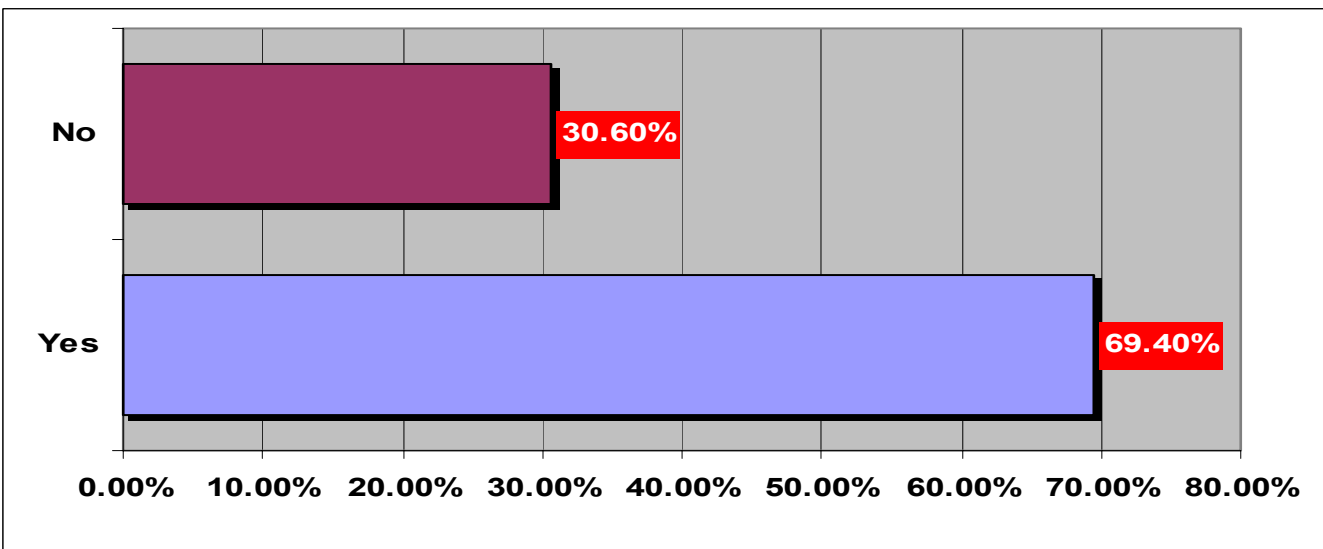


2. What national and local issues are you most interested in? (Taken from 1377 answers)	Crime/Anti Social Behaviour	218	16%
	Education	207	15%
	Environment	198	14%
	Public transport	198	14%
	World poverty/Aid to foreign countries	163	12%
	NHS	163	12%
	Culture/Arts/Leisure	157	11%
	Defence/Foreign policy	79	6%

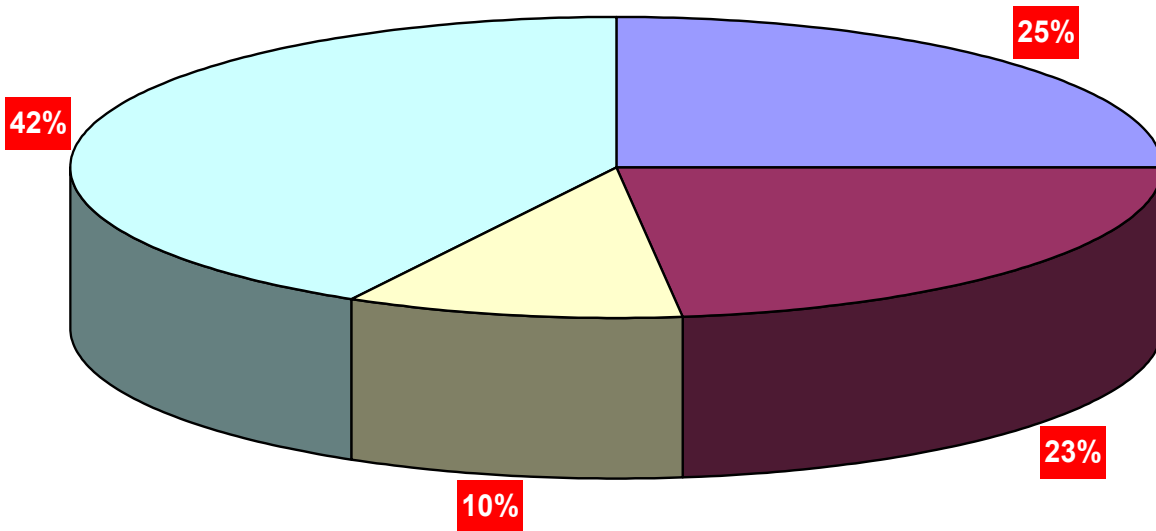
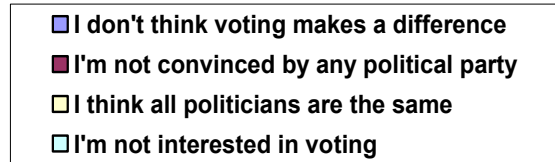


■ Voting In The General Election

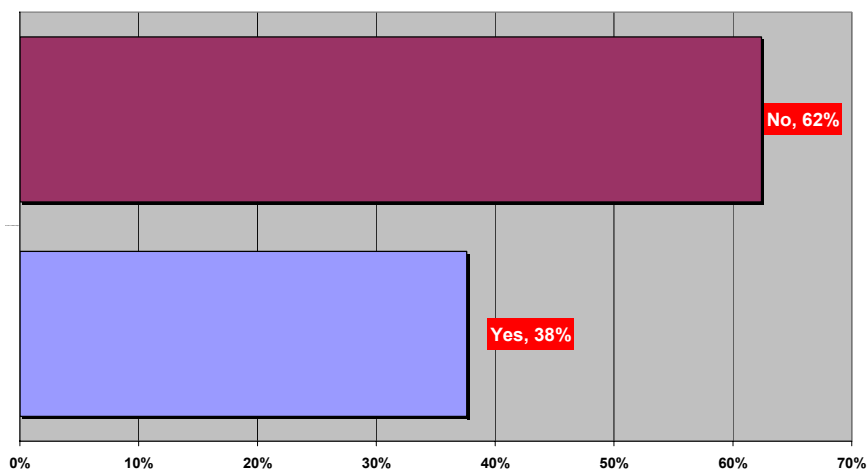
3. If and when you are old enough to vote, do you intend to register and vote at the next general election?	Yes	299	69.4%
	No	132	30.60%
	Total	431	



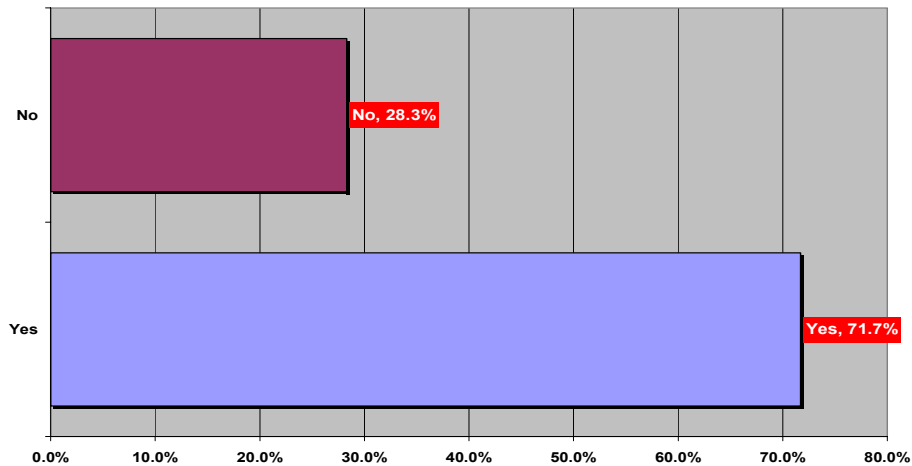
4. If you do not intend to register and/or vote, please say why. (Taken from 132 replies)	I don't think voting makes a difference	33	25%
	I'm not convinced by any political party	30	23%
	I think all politicians are the same	13	10%
	I'm not interested in voting	56	42%



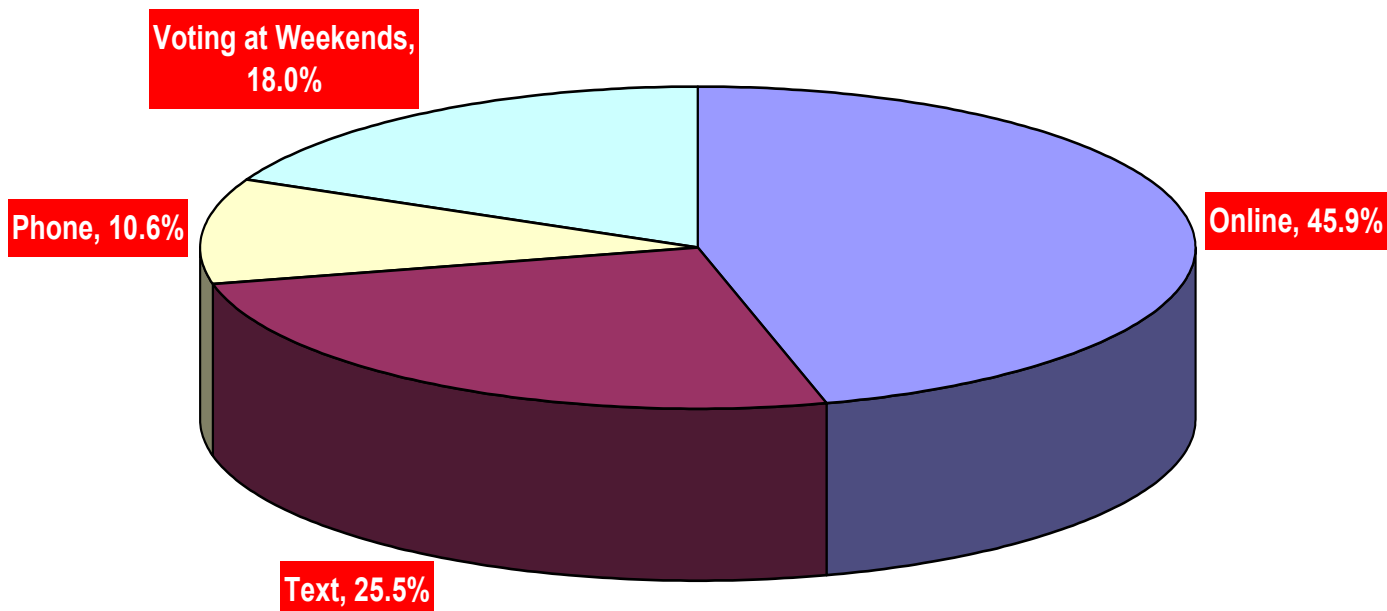
5. Is there enough information available about how you are able to vote and the different ways of voting?	Yes	162	38%
	No	269	62%



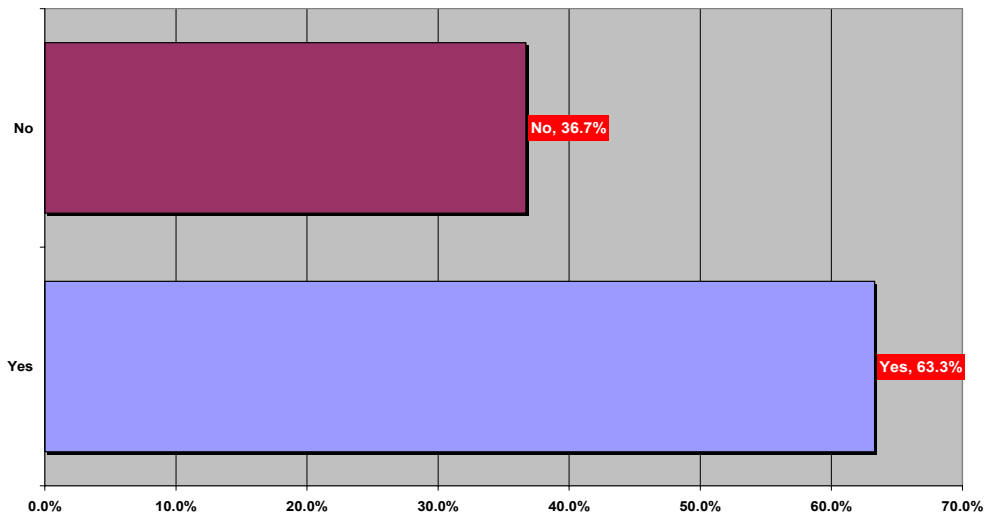
6. Is it easy enough to vote?	Yes	309	71.7%
	No	122	28.3%



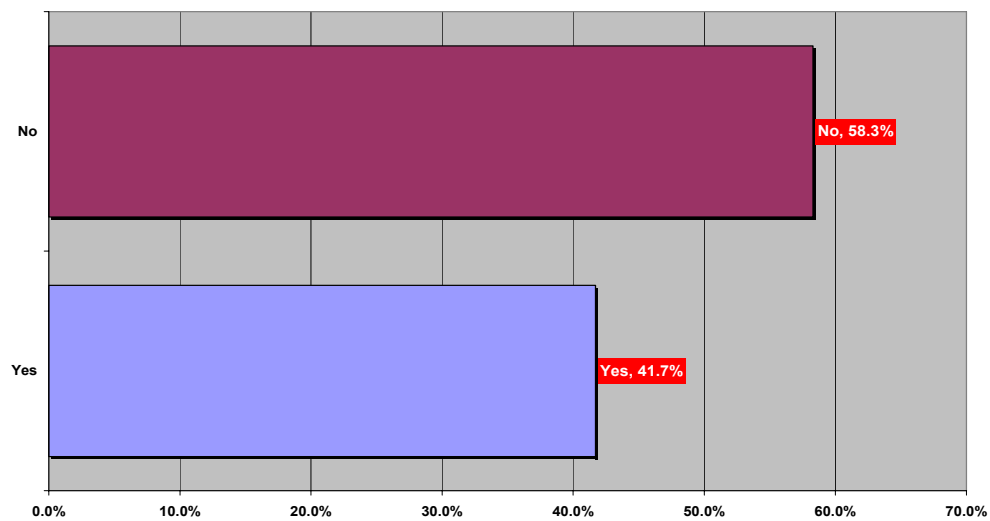
7. Which of the following ways of voting should be adopted to make voting easier?	Voting online	247	45.9%
	Voting by text	137	25.5%
	Voting at the weekend	97	18.0%
	Voting by telephone	57	10.6%



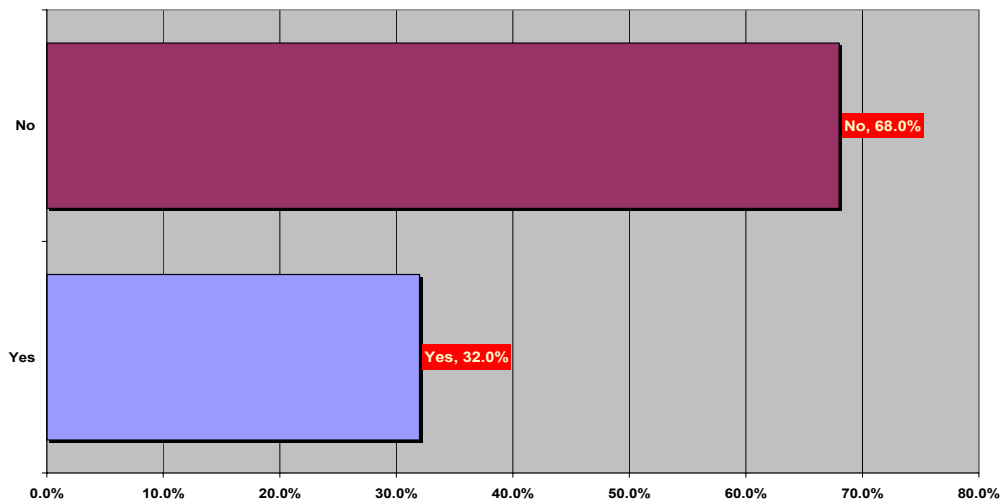
8. Should Polling Day be a national holiday?	Yes	273	63.3%
	No	158	36.7%



9. Should the voting age be reduced to 16?	Yes	180	41.7%
	No	251	58.3%

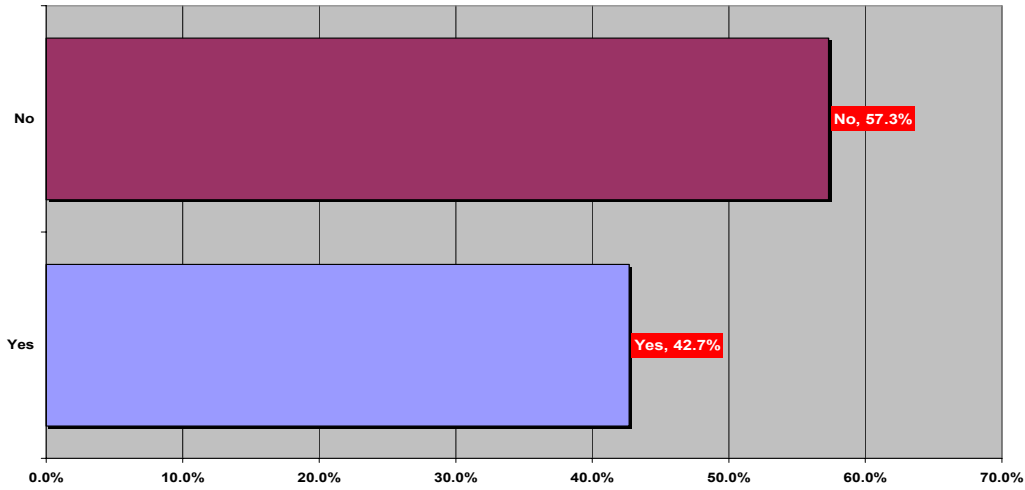


10. Do you think that voting should be compulsory, as it is in Australia?	Yes	138	32 %
	No	303	68 %

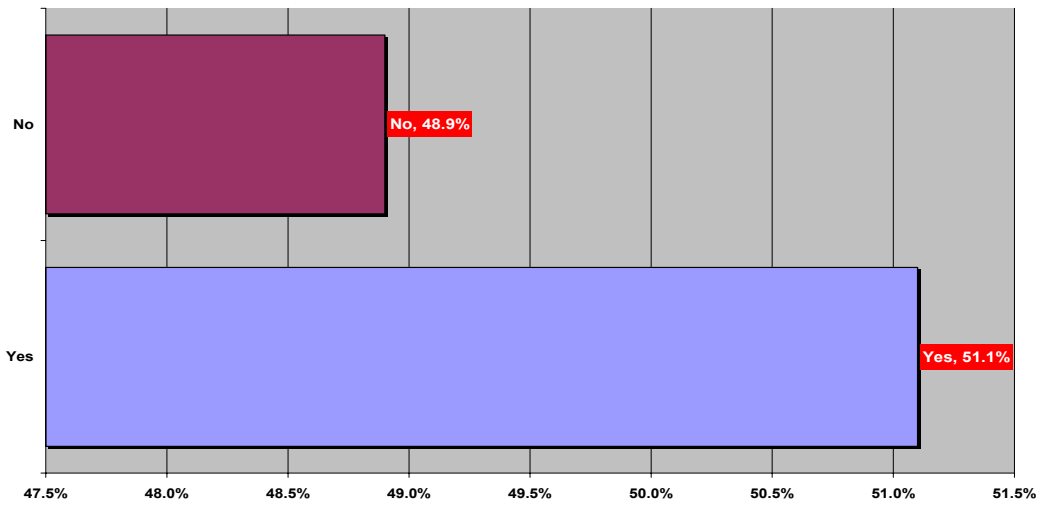


■ Voting In Other Elections

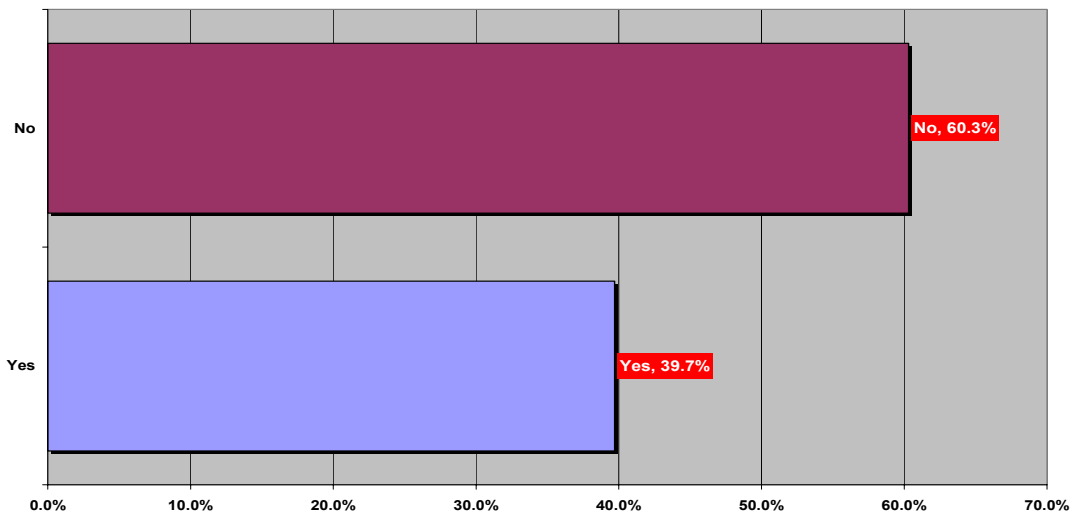
11. Do you intend to vote for your local Council in Lewisham?	Yes	184	42.7 %
	No	247	57.3 %



12. Do you intend to vote for the Mayor of London ?	Yes	220	51.0 %
	No	211	48.9 %



13. Do you intend/did you vote for the Young Mayor of Lewisham this year?	Yes	171	37.9 %
	No	260	60.3 %



■ Changes to the voting / political system

We asked for suggested changes to the voting/political system that would make it more likely that young people would take part in the democratic process in future.

The respondents were encouraged to be as radical as possible.

Here is a selection of the responses – giving an indication of the main themes that arose.

- No current political party relates to the younger generation and deals with things important to us. Most major political groups are quite similar. It is important to elect politicians whose values young people agree with.

Start having younger people in major political parties so as to represent younger people.

- Start encouraging people to vote at a younger age - as soon as 12.

Politics needs to be more accessible to young people with parties pitching an age appropriate view, e.g. students - focussing on education, travel, environment etc. things that will interest that market (not dissimilar from a sales pitch)

I think they could present more information about what they can do for teenagers, sports, etc.

- It is disgusting that at 16 people are eligible to pay taxes but cannot vote for how it is spent. If you are old enough to pay taxes and get married you should be old enough to vote.

- There should be more compulsory education in school about political matters and electoral procedures.

Explain the system to first time voters.

- Make people more aware of who is up for election.

Make clear, concise policies. Long speeches are boring - cut the waffle.

I'd be more likely to vote if the political aims, goals and targets were made clear so I feel more confident in who I vote for.

People should actually follow through on promises they make and prove themselves by actually doing what they say, putting their topics into action. If I was able to see that things were actually changing - voting doesn't appear to make a difference.

- FPTP isn't representative enough. I would like to see PR being used.

The House of Lords is undemocratic and should be a fully elected second chamber.

There should be fewer MPs in the House of Commons.

- Make it more interesting by voting for different for things instead of just Mayors and Councils.

- Make it more convenient by allowing voting through the internet or interactive television.

People are too lazy to go to polling stations, you should be able to vote over the phone or online.

- Everybody should be able to vote - regardless of whether they are an asylum seeker or do not have British citizenship - as long as you live in the UK.

- Elect people who speak other languages.

- If there were separate polling stations for 18-30 and 30+ etc.

- More representation for ethnic minorities and young people and more different ethnic minorities running for election.

More black MPs and more communication between communities and government.

- If the political system was more funky - red suits for Labour, blue for Tories, yellow for Lib Dems (a nice pea green for the Green party) - more people would vote.