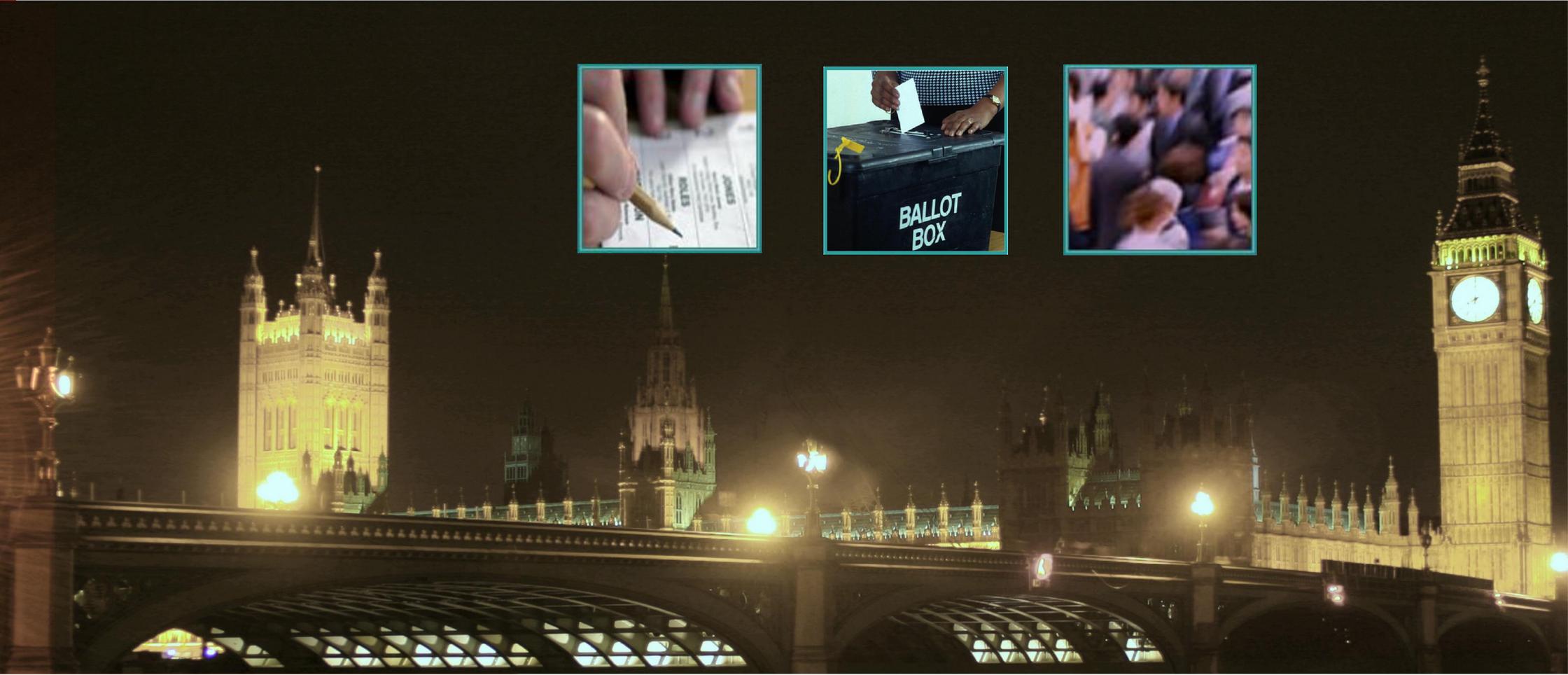
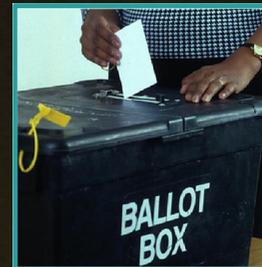


Connected2Voting

An evaluation of accessibility of the local election pilots

August 2007



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Prepared by:
PA Consulting Group,
Equal Ability
Churchill Minty and Friend

Tel: +44 20 7730 9000
Fax: +44 20 7333 5050
www.paconsulting.com

PA Consulting Group
123 Buckingham Palace Road
London SW1W 9SR

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FOREWORD

During the May 2007 local elections, the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) conducted nine pilots of new methods of voting in addition to a number of pilots on electronic counting. These new approaches included electronic voting through the internet and telephone, Advance Voting in polling stations before Election Day and combinations of these approaches (such as internet voting via kiosks in polling stations before Election Day).

Under section 10 of the Representation of the People Act (RPA) 2000, the Electoral Commission (EC) is required to evaluate and report on any pilot schemes for new voting arrangements approved by the Secretary of State. This includes individual evaluation reports on each pilot scheme as well as an overall report on the impact of the pilots on the electoral process.

THIS REPORT

This report contains an evaluation of the extent to which the new methods of voting in the nine pilot areas enhanced accessibility for particular groups, either by removing barriers to voting or by providing alternatives that are more accessible than traditional voting methods. The evaluation was conducted by an innovative partnership between PA Consulting Group, a significant mainstream management consultancy, and Equal Ability CIC and Churchill Minty and Friend Limited, two of the UK's leading disability and equality consultancies.

The report focuses primarily on those areas that piloted e-voting. This is because previous evaluations have shown that internet and telephone voting has the biggest potential to reduce barriers to voting. It also considers the impact of Advance Voting on access for particular groups. The areas piloting e-voting include Rushmoor, Sheffield, Shrewsbury and Atcham, South Bucks and Swindon. The areas piloting Advance Voting only include Bedford, Broxbourne, Gateshead and Sunderland. We did not assess the accessibility impacts of e-counting.

This evaluation considers whether or not these pilots resulted in improvements, or had adverse impacts, on engagement and access to voting, particularly among communities that traditionally have low turn-out. It focuses

in particular on three of the EC's evaluation criteria relating most closely to engaging potential electors who may face barriers to accessing the process:

- **The scheme's success or otherwise in facilitating voting** ~ the EC is required by statute to look at the scheme's impact on voter engagement. The EC has also chosen to look more specifically at the extent to which pilots facilitated participation for particular communities. This is the focus of this evaluation.
- **Whether electors found services and resources provided by the scheme easy to use** ~ this is also a statutory requirement for the EC. This evaluation looks specifically at how accessible the process of voting – from pre-voting through to final casting of the ballot – was for particular groups
- **The effectiveness of communication** ~ Although not required by statute to do so, the EC is seeking to assess the effectiveness of communication and promotion in the pilots.

This report also contains an overview of key findings, underlying causes and recommendations for future pilots.

This report is written to be as accessible as possible. It is in 14 point, has screen-reader friendly introductions to the graphs and has references next to the relevant information again to support screen readers and reduce confusion in general.

This document is based on information received during the evaluation. There is a companion report which provides area by area evaluations. Any information provided to the EC after the evaluation closed is referenced in that document.

OUR APPROACH

This evaluation used an approach that focussed on the barriers and facilitators to voting. It looks primarily at the barriers to voting put in place by **the process and the system** rather than the personal characteristics of

individuals, such as their geographic location or impairment. The former can in general be changed by those organising elections, the latter in general cannot.

A number of methods were deployed to gather information upon which the findings and recommendations are based:

- **Voter experience** ~ the use of mystery electors, questionnaires and interviews with representative organisations, all of which provided qualitative information on the actual experiences of electors. This has been augmented by direct usability testing of the internet and telephone systems by expert Usability Testers, who themselves face barriers to voting (for instance, someone who cannot access standard print)
- **Activity to ensure accessibility** ~ interviews with Returning Officers and others, and reviews of documentation from local authorities and Technical suppliers, have provided a basic understanding of the activities undertaken to develop accessible voting
- **Review of data** ~ use of data collected through a number of sources, including individual local authority questionnaires, polling information collected by ICM and data collected by the EC's lead evaluators. The interpretation of this data has been made by evaluation team.

OVERARCHING FINDINGS

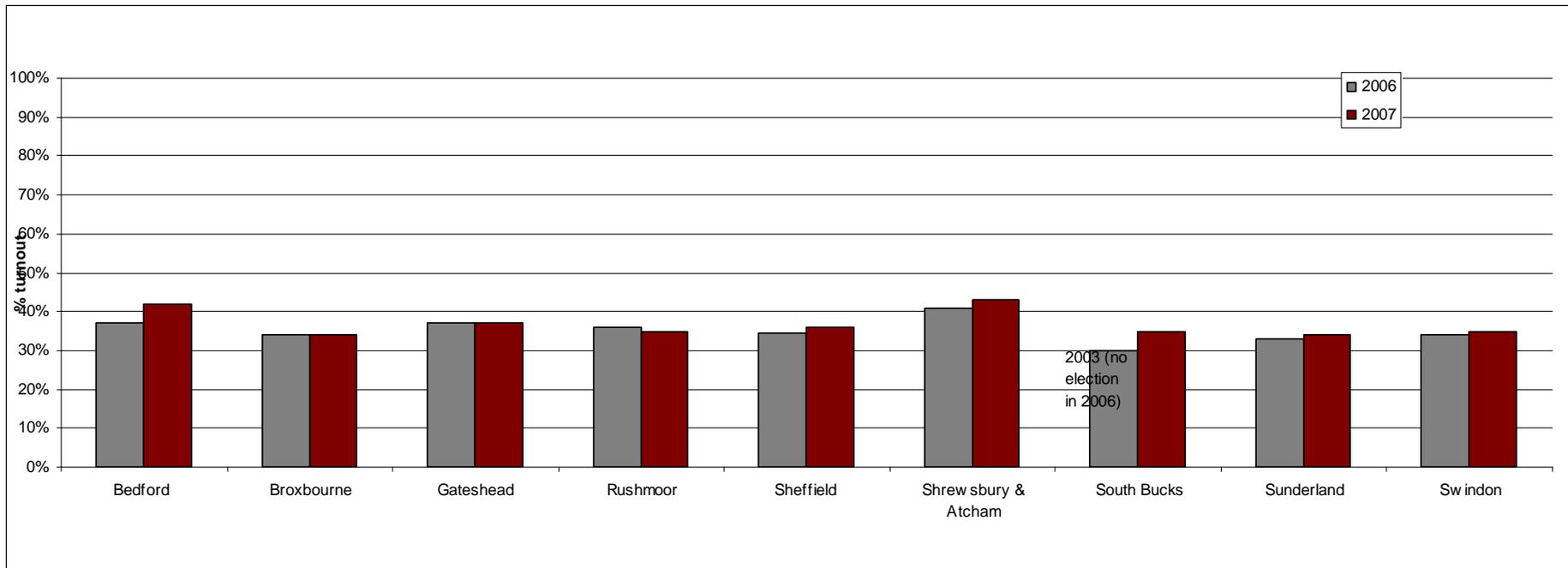
Overall, turn-out in the pilot areas remained stable or increased from the 2006 local elections (with the exception of Rushmoor where turnout was down by 1%). Figure 1 shows the turnout in 2006 compared with 2007. However, there is no overall turnout data yet so it is hard to tell if this increase is due to the pilots or to a national trend.

Figure 1: Turn-out figures for pilot areas 2006 and 2007

Electoral Commission Data

This figure shows turn out figures for 2006 and 2007:

Bedford 37% 2006, 42% 2007; Broxbourne 34% 2006, 34% 2007; Gateshead 37% 2006 and 37% in 2007, Rushmoor 36% 2006. 35% 2007; Sheffield 34.5% 2006. 36% 2007; Shrewsbury and Atcham 41% 2006, 43% 2007, South Bucks 30% 2003 (no election 2006), 35% 2007; Sunderland 33% 2006, 34% 2007. Swindon 34% 2006, 35% 2007.



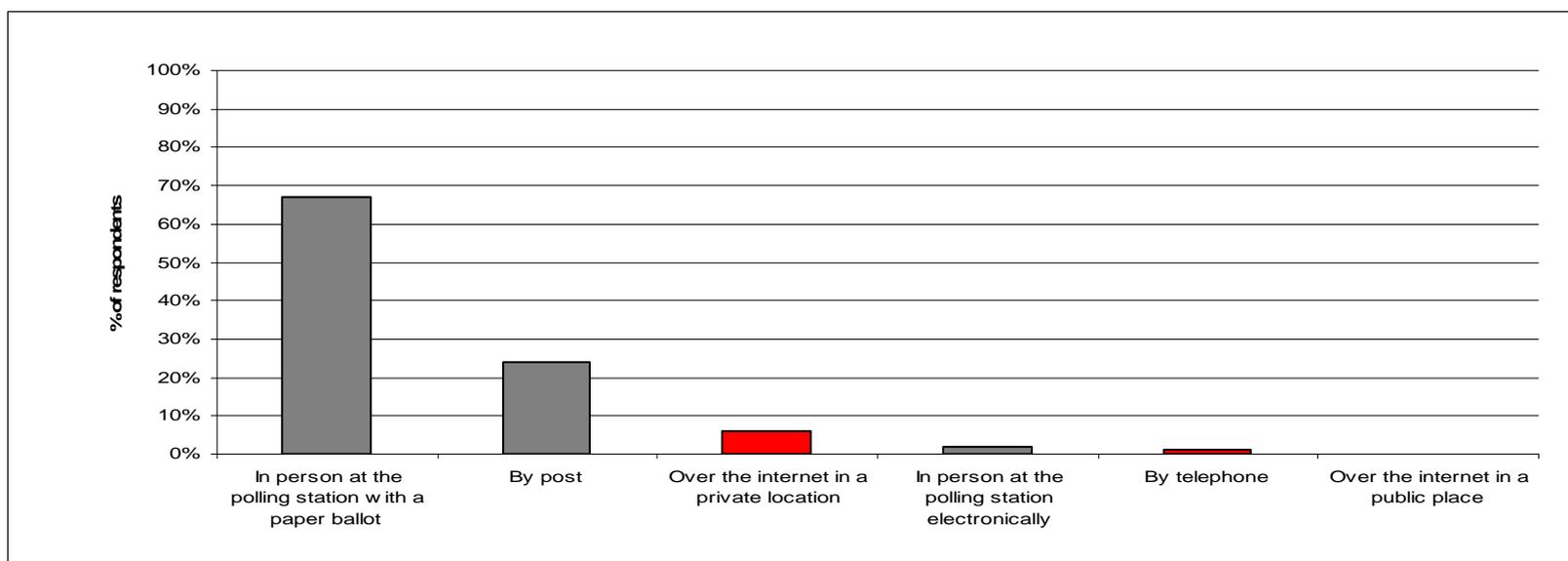
Internet and telephone usage was a relatively small percentage of the total votes cast. ICM's post-election phone poll found that 6% of electors voted over the Internet in a private location (the number of responses for those who voted via the internet in a public location is too small to be statistically significant) and 2% of electors used the telephone to cast their ballots. Figure 1 compares the use of different methods of voting.

Figure 2: Percentage of electors who voted by various methods

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 10 May 2007, weighted base 1214. It should be noted that all of the data from ICM is based on the sample of individuals contacted in the telephone poll. Where the base is too small for significant testing, the information has not been included in the report)

This figure shows average percentage figures for voting by various methods:

In person at the polling station with a paper ballot 67%; By post 24%; Over the internet in a private location 6%; In person at the polling station electronically 2%; By telephone 1%; Over the internet in a public place 0%



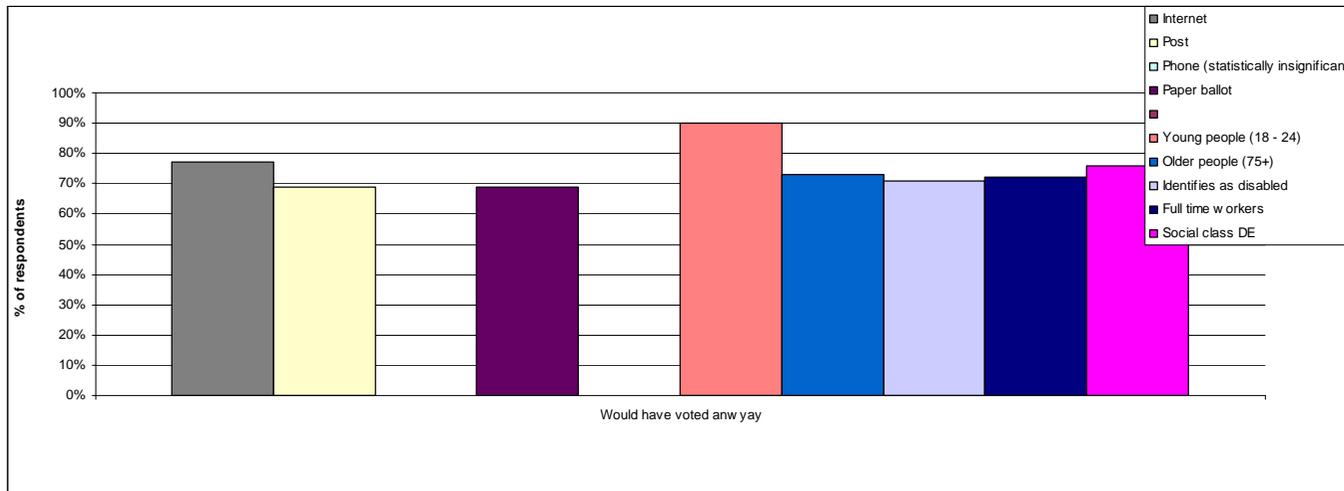
It is also not clear whether the pilots drew in *new* voters. ICM data shows that the majority of individuals who took advantage of these pilots before 3rd of May would have voted anyway. This is true for particular groups as well. This suggests that new ways of voting are enabling those who are already participating to shift their approach rather than attracting significant numbers of new voters. In fact, more people who voted over the internet would have voted anyway than those who voted by post or by paper ballot.

Figure 3: Percentage of voters who voted before 3rd May by various methods and from various communities who would have voted anyway

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 47, 48, 49 May 2007, weighted base 349)

The figure shows the percentage who would have voted anyway:

internet 77%, post 69%, phone – not enough answers, paper ballot 69%, young people (18-24) 90%, older people (75+) 73%, identifies as having a disability 71%, full-time workers 72%, social class DE 76%



The evaluation examined the impact on accessibility across the full voting process, from awareness raising, registration, through to actually casting your ballot. The evaluation found that the biggest barrier to access in the e-voting was the pre-voting process, and the “logging in” procedures required to vote, rather than the voting itself. This was echoed in the advance voting, where take-up was limited, often due to a lack of awareness among particular groups.

Pre-voting

The evaluation indicates that the pre-voting process requires significant attention in the future, both in better awareness raising and also in improving the registration process. Pre-voting appears to be the biggest barrier for these pilots. This raises some serious concerns. If a potential elector is unaware of new approaches to voting or unable to access the registration process then he or she is still barred from voting.

Awareness-raising and communications

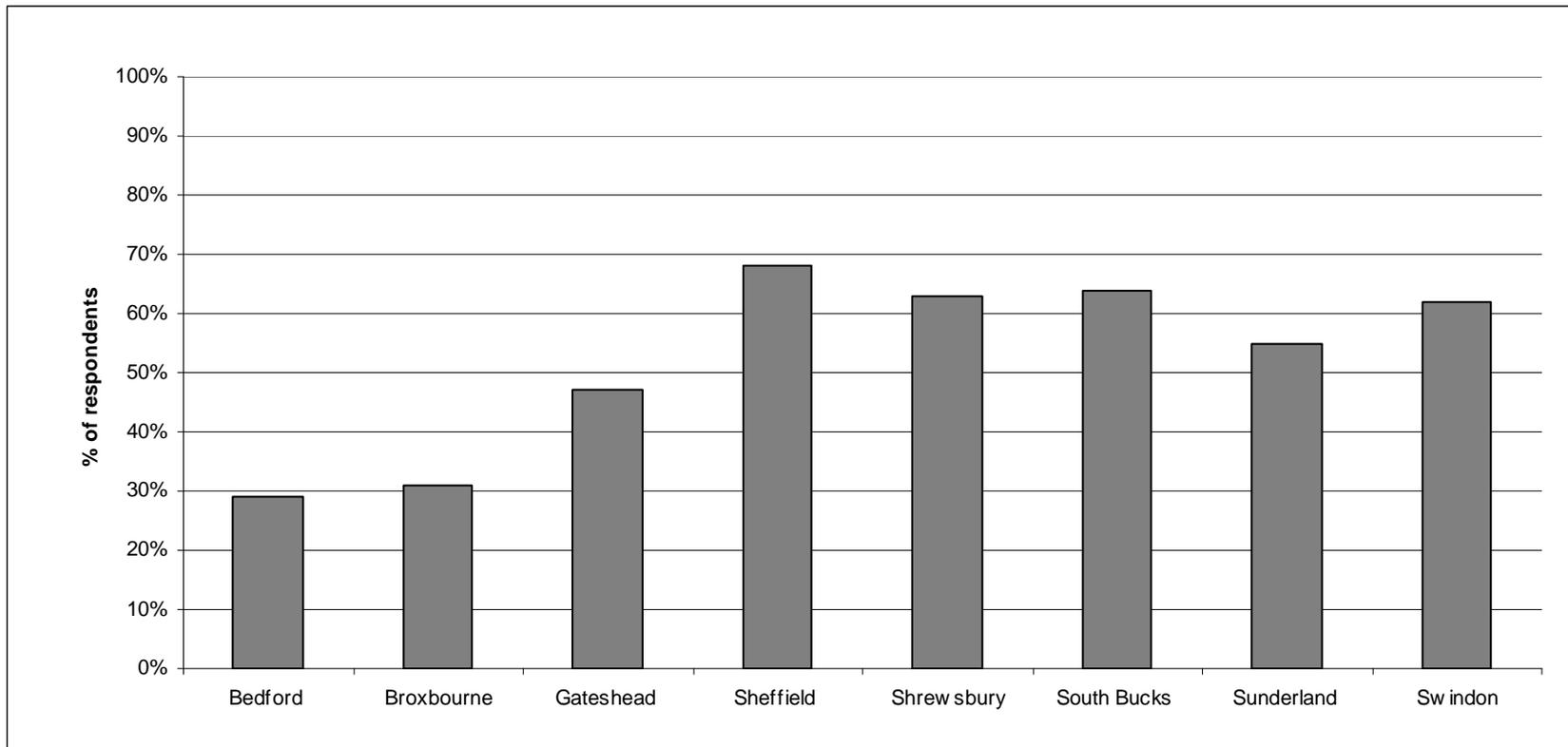
The evaluation team found that the **publicity material** associated with the pilots was mainly print-based, which poses significant challenges for people who have trouble accessing written language (including those who will have trouble accessing written language in their native language, whether English or not). This may include potential electors with visual impairments and dyslexia as well as those who have limited English skills (whether because English is a second language or their literacy skills are poor). This is particularly important to address moving forward, since in most areas the majority of electors became aware of the options for voting through written Council literature.

Figure 4: Percentage of electors who found out about pilots via Council literature

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 40 May 2007, weighted base 1725)

This figure shows the percentage of people finding out through Council literature in each pilot area:

Bedford 29%; Broxbourne 31%; Gateshead 47%; Rushmoor 63%; Sheffield 68%; Shrewsbury 63%; South Bucks 64%; Sunderland 55%; and Swindon 62%.



The front-end websites (i.e. the 'marketing' websites rather than the e-voting sites themselves) were also of variable quality. In some instances it was very difficult to find out about voting options, while in others it was relatively straightforward.

Finally the evaluation found that many local authorities were poor at making use of communities and others to 'get the message out.' This is particularly true for Advance Voting, where very few of the organisations engaged in the evaluation had heard of the Advance Voting pilots. This is a missed opportunity as these organisations have told us they would have proactively reached out to their members to engage them in the new options.

Registration

The registration process associated with e-voting presented barriers to a number of the communities that this evaluation is concerned with. The requirement for paper-based registration left many potential electors frustrated and potentially disenfranchised. As one voter said, she found the number of forms off-putting and difficult to manage. The evaluation also found that the actual registration forms were difficult and cumbersome to use. In Rushmoor for example one voter commented that "I know the ID number on the card has to be secure but if you have a dexterity problem it is almost impossible to peel off the cover strip. Very tenacious adhesive and no tab to grab hold of."

Voting

The evaluation shows that, with the exception of logging onto the internet sites, the voting process *itself* was quite accessible for most electors, both for those who made use of the Advance Voting options and in particular for those who chose internet voting. However, the technical assessment showed that **none of the websites achieved the required level of Technical compliance**. Section 4.3.3.18 of Annex D the SOR requires that "all voter information...delivered via the internet shall be placed in websites that meet the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0 Conformance Level Double 1.

(Statement of Requirements, Section 4.3.3.18 Annex D 2007. Section 4.3.3.19 of the same document also requires that "The user interface of all e-voting websites, and any website that is linked to an e-voting website, must conform as a minimum to Web Content Accessibility Guidelines 1.0. (WCAG 1.0) Conformance Level "Double-A") This is backed up by direct experience. A number of particular communities who faced difficulties in some systems (for instance, South Bucks website was not user-friendly for electors who had screen readers to support access) but overall the process appeared relatively supportive. This was also generally true when potential electors needed some help with the process. A significant number provided feedback that the helpline support they received was useful and effective (although one Deaf voter had a particularly frustrating experience when the help-desk itself was not accessible).

Logging in

The most significant challenge during the process of voting was the logging on into the system. The need for three levels of security, including a self-selected passcode / username / PIN, a date of birth and a computer generated Voter Identification Number (VIN) led to significant errors at log in and a number of people choosing not to vote in the way that they had originally intended. While not all areas kept figures on failure rates, in Rushmoor more than 63% of all VIN entries were failures and in South Bucks more than 55% of all entries were failures. *(ES&S figures from Rushmoor and South Bucks)*

Often these failures were multiple entries by a single user, perhaps adding to frustration in accessing the system. One voter was "unable to find my record of the passcode so not able to vote. Called the help line - after 4 attempts was answered by very helpful lady - unfortunately she could only give me the first number of the passcode which didn't help - or offered me the option of leaving work early to go to central Slough with identification in order to receive the full passcode. I declined this opportunity. Therefore, no vote cast. Will revert to postal vote in future as this has always worked for me in the past." *(Questionnaire response)*

Other electors had similar experiences but were able to get their VIN or passcode from the relevant help-desk.

UNDERLYING CAUSES

This report sets out the findings above in more detail, as well as a brief report on each pilot area. We have also assessed what might be the underlying causes for these findings and make recommendations to respond to these issues.

Potential underlying causes fall into four overarching areas:

Involvement of particular communities in development and design throughout

The evaluation found severely limited involvement of hard-to-engage potential electors or organizations who serve these communities. For many communities there is a legal requirement that public bodies involve them in the design and shaping of services. For instance in relation to disabled people, the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) 2005 requires public bodies to involve disabled people as part of the public sector duty to promote disability equality.

For all communities not covered by legal requirements, it is still clear that direct engagement from the outset is vital to ensure that the whole process reduces the barriers to voting and puts in place as many facilitators as possible.

Expectations and requirements

Local authority activity was often guided by the expectations set by the MoJ and the EC in their framing documents (such as the Statement of Requirements), and in the review of the Project Initiation Documents (PIDs). These expectations were not as effective as possible at promoting accessibility throughout the process of the election. The MoJ issued a Statement of Requirements for the technical aspect of the pilots but it is unclear what was expected in the less technical areas, particularly in relation to pre-voting accessibility, awareness raising and the support that should be given to electors as they go through the process. In addition,

the timescales set posed significant challenges for local authorities trying to ensure effective inclusion of disadvantaged communities in the design and delivery of the service.

This lack of clarity creates a number of risks, including that local authorities will not prioritise these issues, and will focus on other aspects of their elections (such as postal voting).

Motivations of local authorities

There is a need to ensure that local election officials, candidates, and their partners are committed to enabling the widest access to voting through the pilots. This is not just because there is, as with any significant project, the need for clear leadership, but also because other priorities may pull resources away from the pilots to their detriment.

The evaluation found that one group people within the local authority may well decide to apply for the pilots and another may then have to implement them. Everyone involved in the process needs to be committed to ensuring that the pilots are as accessible as possible at all stages of voting.

Capacity of local authorities to deliver

Finally, even with the appropriate expectations and the requisite of commitment local authorities need to be capable of delivering the pilots and fully exploiting their potential to widen access to voting. This includes the basic resources of the Council (which often vary by size of the authority) and the skills and knowledge to engage with particular communities or the organisations that represent them and design a process, from awareness raising through to voting, that is accessible and effective.

It requires sophisticated skills around links and access to marginalised communities and resources to reach out to these groups. In most cases, we found that the time between pilot announcement and voting date was not sufficient to engage fully with these hard-to-include groups. In addition, we found that in almost every case

those developing and delivering the pilots did not appear to have involved members of the various communities (in some cases a legal requirement under an Equality Duty) to shape a truly accessible process.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendations have been developed to address each of the potential causes behind the findings. These are both overarching recommendations on the approach to the pilots and about leadership from the centre. There are also some specific suggestions, all of which are set out in more detail in the body of the report.

Involvement of particular communities in development and design throughout

The evaluation suggests that the MoJ and / or the EC could consider establishing a central body of advisors – an Access to Democracy group with membership of electors who faced barriers to voting. This body could provide direction and support at a national level while also providing input and support to specific local authorities (see below).

Expectations and requirements

The evaluation suggests that the MoJ should consider re-articulating its vision for the future of elections in the UK, including its plans for developing and perhaps implementing new approaches to voting. This vision could benefit from specific focus on extending the right to vote to those who still face barriers to the process. This vision could then be translated, on a practical level, into various statements of requirements and evaluation criteria for future pilots. It could also enable more certainty in planning, which in turn can provide local authorities with more time to ensure appropriate involvement and thereby to build accessibility into their planning and delivery.

As part of setting clear expectations that the whole process of voting is accessible, the evaluation recommends that MoJ and / or the EC consider approaches to ensuring that a useful level of information is accessible to all

potential voters. MoJ and / or the EC could assess various options for ensuring that this takes place, from national requirements through to guidance and support for local areas.

The MoJ should also consider mechanisms to ensuring that requirements that are stated are met, particularly requirements for Website accessibility.

Motivations of local authorities

The report also recommends that the MoJ and the EC should work closely with potential pilot authorities to support their energy and engagement and enable them to maintain their commitment to making the pilots as accessible as possible. This could include guarantees of further funding if the pilots meet certain performance criteria in the first year or even recognition nationally for exemplary practice in the area of elections.

Capacity of local authorities

At a **national level** the report suggests that the MoJ and the EC could explore ways in which the two bodies can play a more proactive and supportive role in addressing capacity gaps including Learning Sets and bolstering existing guidance. The report also suggests that the MoJ could consider working with experienced local authorities to develop reasonable timelines for pilot development and implementation, including ensuring time to develop and take advantage of relationships with marginalised communities.

At a **local level** the report makes a number of recommendations for local authorities and Technical Suppliers. The report suggests that local authorities and Technical Suppliers should consider accessibility from the very beginning of the process of development so that there is limited need to 'back-track' once systems and pilots have been developed. It is clear that internet and phone systems can be made accessible and secure at the same time if both issues are considered from the outset of development rather than needing to shoe-horn accessibility into the systems at later stages.

The report also recommends that local authorities and Technical Suppliers actively involve communities of individuals from their marginalised communities (which we recognise may vary area to area) at each stage of the process so that they can identify potential problems and pitfalls before they become apparent during the voting process.

For Advance Voting specifically, the report recommends that local authorities conduct an analysis of their local population to identify where Advance Voting polls would be most usefully placed. This might include areas where a number of electors with limited mobility live or where turnout has historically been poor.

Finally, the report recommends that relatively small local authorities who would like to undertake pilots, or those with limited resources in the Electoral Services area, should consider working with each other and creating consortia (often building on existing joint working relationships in other service areas).

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1. APPROACH

This evaluation looks at both e-voting and Advance Voting in order to identify good practice and make recommendations for future pilots and future activity designed to remove barriers to voting. The approach to the evaluation was designed to gather as much information on the experience that an actual voter might have when taking advantage of these new approaches.

1.1 FOCUS OF THE EVALUATION

The focus of the evaluation was, as we have indicated, to assess the impact of new approaches to voting on removing barriers and / or increasing access to voting for particular groups. In order to focus the evaluation and resources most appropriate, the nine pilot areas were split into two priority groups. Priority 1 areas were those piloting one or more methods of e-voting (i.e. Rushmoor, Sheffield, Shrewsbury and Atcham, South Bucks, and Swindon). These were considered first priority as they have the biggest potential to remove barriers for particular communities and are most likely to be exploited by those who don't vote.

Priority 2 areas (Bedford, Broxbourne, Gateshead, and Sunderland) principally maintained the same or similar approaches as voting on Election Day but, in effect, simply shifted Election Day forward.

1.2 APPROACH TO ACCESSIBILITY

The evaluation took a barriers and facilitators approach to the impact of e-voting and Advance Voting on engagement of particular groups. A barriers and facilitators approach means that equality of access is *denied* by mainstream approaches rather than individuals having personal characteristics that *prevent* them from engaging. The evaluation is therefore looking at what prevents or enables communities of individuals to engage in voting.

It should be noted that where data has been obtained from the ICM telephone surveys, the language around disability echoes the language in the Telephone Survey Tables ('having a disability'). This language does not

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conform to our barriers and facilitators approach which would suggest that people are disabled by the systems and services they engage with rather than having a disability. The question actually posed in the ICM survey is more in line with this approach.

1.3 PARTICULAR COMMUNITIES

The EC made clear that the evaluation needed to consider the impact of the pilots on accessibility for 'particular groups.' This include a wide range of communities, such as disabled people, older people and those who cannot easily leave their home, those from ethnic minorities, particularly where they have limited use of English, young voters and so on. The evaluation therefore did not focus on specific communities but instead tried to focus across the full range of individuals who might face barriers to voting including:

- **Communities identified by the local authorities as priorities** ~ in discussions, and in their project initiation documents (PIDs), local authorities identified particular communities that they were seeking to engage. This was often reflected in marketing materials that were developed.
 - In South Bucks there was a focus on enabling the large commuter population to vote
 - In Rushmoor election officials were particularly interested in engaging with the large armed services population who are based locally. There was a specific marketing campaign aimed at the armed forces
 - In Shrewsbury and Atcham there was a desire to engage with people who travelled into the centre of town for shopping and other activities
- Those who **historically face barriers** to voting ~ there is significant evidence and research that shows that some people are more likely than others to face barriers to voting.
 - There is on-going recognition that **disabled people** face significant barriers to voting. This includes people who have visual or hearing impairments, people with mobility impairments, people with learning

1. Approach...

difficulties or disabilities including those with dyslexia, people experiencing mental distress or illness and those with other long term medical conditions which may be hidden.

- **Ethnic minority communities**, particularly those with low levels of English language skills, face barriers to a wide range of services including voting
- Young people have **significantly lower turn-out rates** than others. In 2005 MORI found that 37% of young people voted compared to 75% for those aged 65 or over. (*Young People and Democracy, What We Already Know Electoral Commission Nov 2006*)
- Those who were **willing to participate and engage with the evaluation** ~ to some extent the coverage of different communities was determined by the various bodies that were willing to engage in the evaluation process. There were instances where some representative communities refused to act as links between the evaluators and their constituent population often because they were reluctant to be involved in what they considered as a political project.

As figure 5 shows, voting patterns were relatively consistent across the various groups. However, there are some variations worth mentioning.

For example, young people (18-24) appear to be much less likely to vote by post than other communities (and less than the average) and more likely to vote via the internet and in the polling station.

People who self-identified as disabled, those who were older (75+), and those who are unemployed were less likely than the average to vote in a polling station; instead they were more likely than the average to vote by post (which means they did not choose internet or telephone as the alternative to polling stations).

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Figure 5: Percentage of various communities (people who identified as disabled, young people (18-24), Older people (75+), Full-time workers, Unemployed, lowest social class indicator (DE)) who voted by different methods against the average

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 11 and 12 May 2007, weighted base 1214)

This figure shows percentages for voting by various methods:

In person at the polling station with a paper ballot - Average 67% - People who self identify as disabled 54% - Young people (18-24) 69% - Older people (75+) 57% - Full-time workers 69% - Unemployed 57% - DE Social Class 64%

By post – Average 24% - People who self identify as disabled 41% - Young people (18-24) 15% - Older people (75+) 38% - Full-time workers 21% - Unemployed 38% - DE Social Class 31%

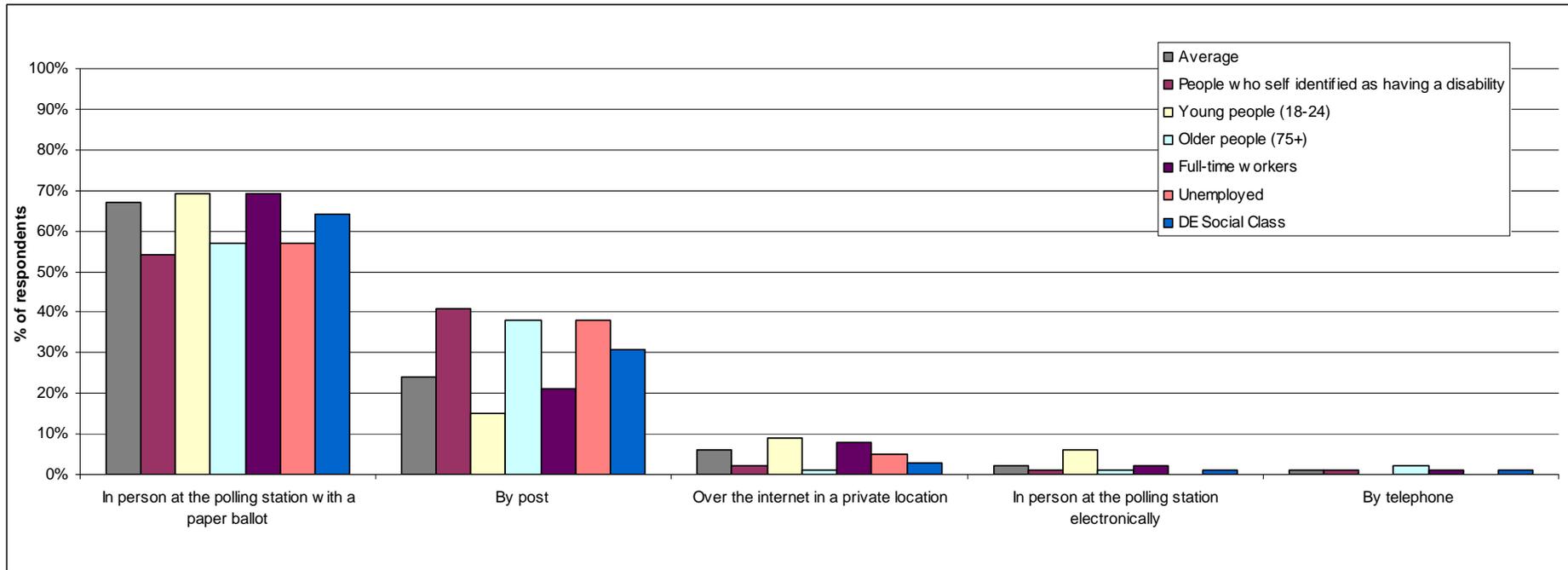
Over the internet in a private location – Average 6% - People who self identify as disabled 2% - Young people (18-24) 9% - Older people (75+) 1% - Full-time workers 8% - Unemployed 5% - DE Social Class 3%

In person at the polling station electronically – Average 2% - People who self identify as disabled 1% - Young people (18-24) 6% - Older people (75+) 1% - Full-time workers 2% - Unemployed 0% - DE Social Class 1%

By telephone – Average 1% - People who self identify as disabled 1% - Young people (18-24) 0% - Older people (75+) 2% - Full-time workers 1% - Unemployed 0% - DE Social Class 1%

Over the internet in a public place – statistically insignificant for all groups

1. Approach...



2. METHODOLOGY

The evaluation was designed to gather as much information as possible to make an assessment of the quality of a voter's experience and the reasons that underpinned the experience. The focus was on qualitative feedback from individuals or representative communities and the methods used for information collection reflect this.

2.1 DIRECT USER FEEDBACK

- **Mystery electors** ~ each of the Priority 1 areas had Mystery Electors who were individuals who were voting in that area and were willing to provide feedback about their experience. The Mystery Electors represented a range of communities including two older voters, one member of the BME community, two Deaf voters, three young people (18-24) and two University students living away from home.

Mystery electors provided direct feedback on the experience of electors both before and during the election.

- **Questionnaires** ~ in Priority 1 areas evaluators built up links with communities representing people who experience, or may experience, significant barriers to voting. These communities facilitated individuals in completing questionnaires that provided insight into their experience of voting. Despite significant outreach by evaluators to representative bodies, there was limited engagement with the questionnaires – only fifteen were received. However, those that were completed provided useful insight, particularly around the extent to which electors would use the approach again. Twelve out of the fifteen respondents were positive or very positive about their intention to vote in this manner again, the remainder being ambivalent (2) and negative (1). No one recorded total negativity.

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- **Web forum** ~ a web forum was opened that anyone who participated in a pilot was invited to join. Individuals were alerted to the web forum via the questionnaire and a media release was sent to all the relevant local authorities to publicise the resource. However, there was limited to no take-up.
- **Usability testing** ~ in addition to direct voter experience, the evaluation also made use of proxy electors to provide feedback. Four experienced Usability Testers, all of whom have varying barriers to access, tested each of the sites made available during the timescale of the evaluation. The Usability Testers were unable to test the Swindon telephone site because it was not made available. In addition, the Shrewsbury and Atcham internet site was not tested as it was the same format and approach as the Sheffield site. The findings from Sheffield are being used to inform assessment of Shrewsbury and Atcham.

As each user tested each site, he or she tracked their experiences and thoughts so as to provide feedback on the actual experience. Table 1 shows the characteristics of each of the Testers. Each site was tested by all of the testers.

Table 1: Characteristics of Usability Testers

User Detail	Experience Level	Sex	Age	Observations
Vision impaired user; uses magnifying glass and Windows® screen magnifier	Experienced	M	26 – 35	Has problems with poor contrast between text and backgrounds. Prefers static sites with logical, consistent layouts.
Blind user; uses screen reader; JAWS for Windows® V5	Experienced	M	46 – 55	Has problems with frequently refreshing pages, Flash animation and unlabelled links. Prefers plenty of reference points such as

User Detail	Experience Level	Sex	Age	Observations
				headings and other navigational aids.
User with Dyslexia	Average	F	36 – 45	Has difficulties with large blocks of text, and text on poorly contrasting coloured backgrounds.
User with learning difficulties	Average	M	26 -35	Relies on simple text, clear navigation and well-described links.

Due to difficulties in gaining access to the websites and the telephone numbers, the timetable for testing and technical testing was significantly curtailed and the evaluation team was not able to test to the depth that was originally hoped. However, the Usability Testing did prove extremely useful in identifying seemingly insignificant design choices that made substantial impacts on accessibility. For example, one Usability Tester found that Swindon was “all in all a very pleasant experience” while South Bucks was “variable” because of specific challenges in logging on and security. (*Usability Testing May 2007*)

2.2 INDIRECT FEEDBACK

Given the short timescales and limited resources for face-to-face engagement, direct user feedback was augmented by a range of other information sources:

- **Interviews with local authorities** ~ in each priority 1 area the evaluation team visited the local authority to have direct discussions about the purpose and focus of the pilots. The visits also allowed the evaluation team to collect hard copies of marketing materials, communication plans and so on.

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- **Review of documents** ~ in addition to the hard copies viewed during local authority visits, the evaluation team reviewed all of the documents associated with Priority 1 and Priority 2 areas. These included poll cards, notice of elections, marketing material and so on. The evaluation team looked at whether or not these documents were accessible to a wide range of groups.
- **Review of quantitative data** ~ quantitative data was collected by a number of sources including local authorities, the EC and other commissioned organisations including ICM and Professors Rallings and Thrasher.

It is worth being clear that the data used from ICM is from a telephone survey and is not analysis of the full election turnout. The telephone survey included 2412 telephone interviews of whom 1274 (53%) were people who had voted. Interpretations of this data were made by the evaluation team. This data should be treated with some caution as a telephone survey approach is likely to exclude some communities of voters such as those without telephones, those who do not answer the telephone to unknown callers, and those who use textphones.

This information has been used to develop the context within which the specific assessments around accessibility are being made. The documents reviewed in each area will vary based on what that authority developed and what was made available to the evaluators.

- **Technical assessment** ~ technical assessment is a recognised process for testing whether or not a website is in compliance with the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA). The DDA says that services must make reasonable adjustments to make sure the goods and services are available to disabled people. This legislation includes services delivered through IT or web channels. (More detail can be found in Appendix A).

2. Methodology...

A recognised standard in web accessibility is the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The guidelines are broken down into three levels, or priorities, reflecting the importance of each guideline:

- **Priority 1** - A Web content developer **must** satisfy this checkpoint. Otherwise, one or more communities will find it impossible to access information in the document. Satisfying this checkpoint is a basic requirement for some communities to be able to use Web documents.

Full compliance in priority 1 will result in an “A” rating

- **Priority 2** - A Web content developer **should** satisfy this checkpoint. Otherwise, one or more communities will find it difficult to access information in the document. Satisfying this checkpoint will remove significant barriers to accessing Web documents.

Full compliance in priority 2 will result in an “AA” rating

- **Priority 3** - A Web content developer **may** address this checkpoint. Otherwise, one or more communities will find it somewhat difficult to access information in the document. Satisfying this checkpoint will improve access to Web documents.

Full compliance in priority 3 will result in an “AAA” rating

Again, due to the timescales and the scale of the site to be reviewed, it was not possible to carry out a full conformance review with disabled or otherwise disadvantaged communities; automated tools were used to provide an indication of the current accessibility of the site. Manual checks were then used to confirm elements of the automated review and recommendations derived from the most commonly occurring issues.

3. E-VOTING

3.1 OVERVIEW

Electronic voting, either over the internet or via the telephone, is designed to enable potential electors to cast their ballots without having to go anywhere, whether it's to a polling station or even to the post box. These methods also bring with them the potential for those who make use of equipment or other 'work-arounds' to access internet and / or the telephone in general to apply these to voting and perhaps reduce barriers in that way.

Five local authorities piloted some combination of internet and/or telephone voting. Table 2 shows the nature of each pilot: As the table shows, there were a number of variations on internet voting piloted by local authorities ; in addition to the relatively straightforward remote internet voting, Shrewsbury and Atcham piloted Advance electronic voting at kiosks in specific locations, and Swindon piloted electronic voting in polling stations.

Table 2: e-voting pilots

Local Authority	Type of voting
Rushmoor	Remote internet voting
Sheffield	Remote internet voting Telephone voting (Advance voting as well)
Shrewsbury and Atcham	Remote internet voting

3. e-voting...

Local Authority	Type of voting
	Telephone voting (Advance electronic voting as well)
South Bucks	Remote internet voting Telephone voting
Swindon	Remote internet voting Telephone voting Vote-anywhere e-voting on Election Day at polling station

Overall, turn-out in the areas that piloted this method increased from the 2006 local elections. However, there is no overall turnout data yet so it is hard to tell if this increase is consistent with a national trend. 77% of the electors who voted via the internet said that they would have voted anyway. While this means that 23% of these voters are new voters, it is unlikely that this would have a significant impact on turnout given the low *absolute* numbers associated with internet voting. Only 6% of the electors interviewed by ICM who had actually voted did so via the internet. (*ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 10 May 2007, weighted base 1214*)

3.2 IMPACT ON PARTICIPATION FOR PARTICULAR COMMUNITIES

As set out in the overview, e-voting was designed with a number of target communities in mind. While there were some additions in a few local authorities, for the most part they were focused on communities who are **likely to be away from home** (for instance commuters, members of the armed forces), communities who are **unable to access traditional polling stations** (perhaps those who do not have the ability or assistance needed

3. e-voting...

to leave their home, have limited mobility, have caring responsibilities that restrict them), those who face barriers to the voting process, (such as individuals with limited amounts of free time to vote, and potential electors who find traditional papers difficult to use) and non-electors particularly attracted by technology (for instance young people).

Before looking at each of these communities in turn, it is worth an overview of the impact of e-voting in general. Many electors clearly found e-voting useful for various reasons. One mother in Rushmoor said “The process was so much quicker than going to my usual local polling station. As I am currently heavily pregnant and also have a young toddler to vote in this way was a godsend,” (*ES&S Rushmoor IVote questionnaire May 2007*) while a number of electors said that long hours in the job kept them from accessing traditional voting methods. However, data from ICM suggests that the majority of e-voters would have voted anyway. 77% of those who voted via the internet before May 3rd said they would have voted even if the option of voting in this manner was not available (compared to 69% of postal voters). (*ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 47 May 2007, weighted base 349*)

The data is not available to break down internet voters into different communities (for example young people, older people). In addition, national turnout data is not available at the time of the report so the evaluation is unable to compare turnout in pilot areas to national turnout. There therefore remains the question as to whether or not the new approaches *actually increased* engagement or simply shifted the method of voting.

3.2.1 Target communities

The majority of our evidence is qualitative but provides a picture that suggests that overall new methods of voting **had some success** in enabling individuals to vote but did not provide a step-change in access for a wide range of groups. However, data does suggest that many of the target communities took advantage of internet or telephone voting because it was more convenient or they didn't have to leave their house. As figure 6 shows, more than 60% of electors in each target group made use of internet or telephone voting because it was easier than going out to a polling station.

3. e-voting...

Figure 6: Percentage of various communities (people who identified as disabled, young people (18-24), Older people (75+), Full-time workers, Unemployed, DE social class) who voted via the internet or telephone because it was difficult to get to a polling station

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 98 and 99 May 2007, weighted base 832)

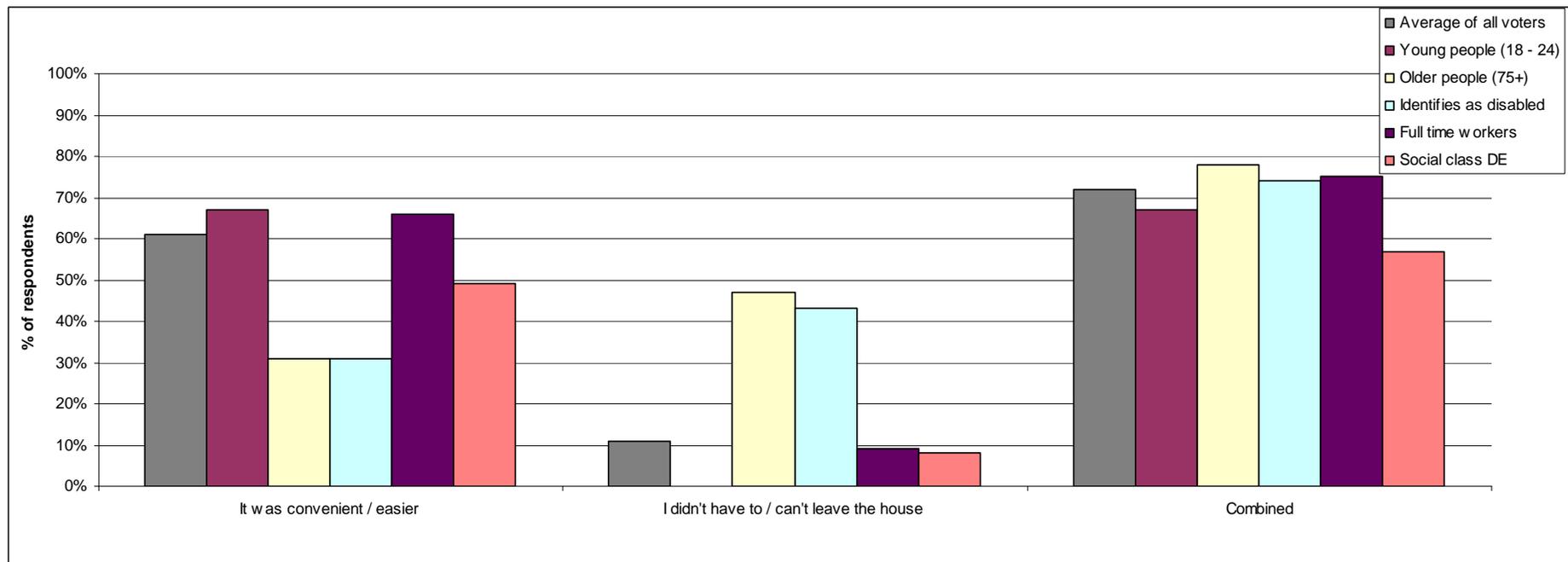
This figure shows percentages of various communities who voted via the internet or telephone because it was difficult to get to the polling station:

It was convenient / easier – Average 61% - People who self identify as disabled 67% - Young people (18-24) 31% - Older people (75+) 31% - Full-time workers 66% - Unemployed no data- DE Social Class 49%

I didn't have to / can't leave the house – Average 11% - People who self identify as disabled 0% - Young people (18-24) 47% - Older people (75+) 43% - Full-time workers 9% - Unemployed no data - DE Social Class 8%

Combined – Average 72% - People who self identify as disabled 67% - Young people (18-24) 78% - Older people (75+) 74% - Full-time workers 75% - Unemployed no data - DE Social Class 57%

3. e-voting...



The communities below were of particular interest to the EC and local authorities:

- **Those likely to be away from home** ~ for many areas individuals who were away from home were particularly targeted for the use of internet voting. In Rushmoor for example this included members of the armed forces who are serving overseas as well as commuters. There was evidence, at least among young people who were away from home at university, that the availability of internet voting specifically enabled them to engage.
- **Those unable to access traditional polling stations** ~ again the information here is limited but strong nonetheless. One voter found internet voting particularly useful because they “have an illness so easy to

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do it from home, not have to worry if I am not well and can't get out." (*Rushmoor iVote Questionnaire Reponses May 2007*)

- **Those who face barriers to the actual voting process** ~ again the information here is quite patchy and there is limited additional data to assess this area; particularly useful data is available from South Bucks where 48% of telephone voters said they chose this method because it was easier than using a ballot paper and 54% of internet voters said the same.
- **Those attracted by technology** ~ finally there are those electors who local authorities hope to engage by making use of attractive or 'cool' methods of voting. Again the information here is limited and patchy but shows that the findings are actually the opposite of what was expected. In the main one would expect that younger electors would take up the internet and telephone voting at greater rates than older electors. However, data shows that in some areas 'silver surfers' were a noticeable percentage of the electors (for instance in Rushmoor 13% of e-voters were 65+). (*ICM Rushmoor Summary Briefing May 2007*)

As figure 7 shows, some of these communities made more use of internet voting than others.

Figure 7: Percentage of various communities (people who identified as disabled, young people (18-24), Older people (75+), Full-time workers, Unemployed, DE social class) who voted via the internet compared to other methods

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 11 and 12 May 2007, weighted base 1214)

This figure shows that of the **average** number of people voting by method:

in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 67%; by post 24%; over the internet in a private location 6%; in person at the polling station electronically 2%; and by telephone 1%.

3. e-voting...

Of people who self identify as disabled the number voting in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 54%; by post 41%; over the internet in a private location 2%; in person at the polling station electronically 1%; and by telephone 1%.

Of young people (18-24) the number voting in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 69%; by post 15%; over the internet in a private location 9%; in person at the polling station electronically 6%; and by telephone statistically insignificant

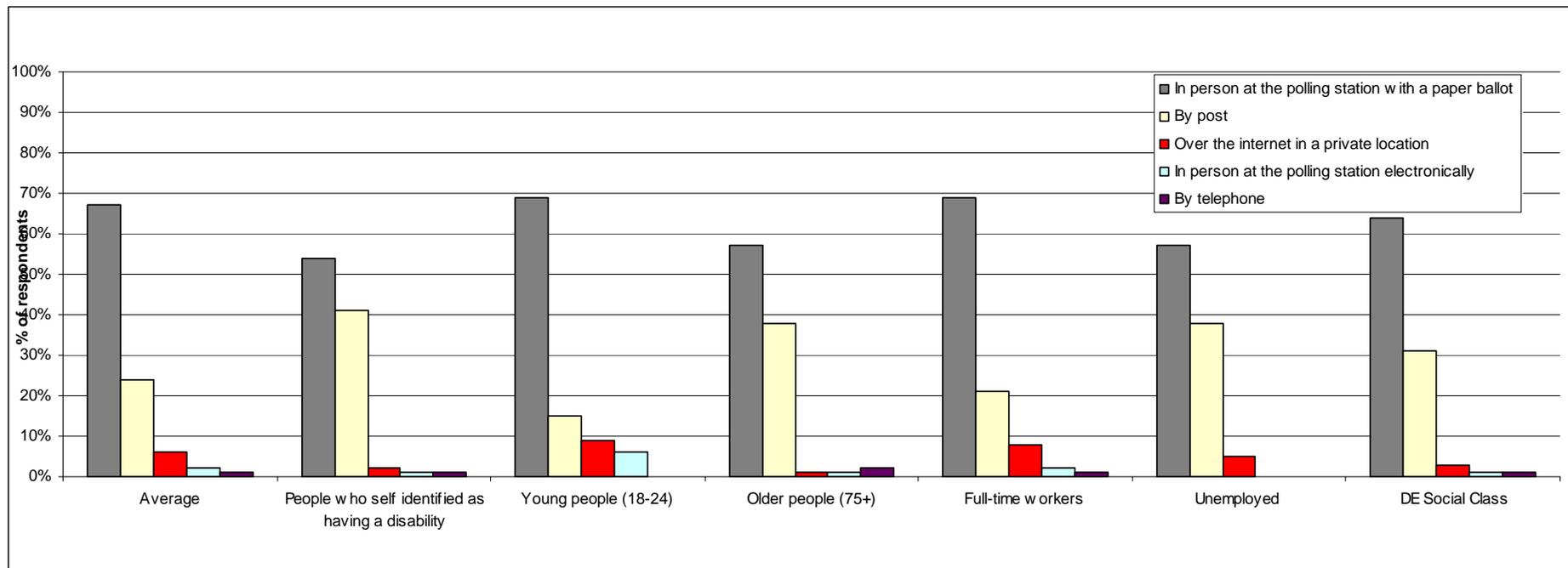
Of older people (75+) the number voting in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 57%; by post 38%; over the internet in a private location 1%; in person at the polling station electronically 1%; and by telephone 2%.

Of those in **full-time work** the number voting in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 69%; by post 21%; over the internet in a private location 8%; in person at the polling station electronically 2%; and by telephone 1%.

Of those who are **unemployed the number** voting in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 57%; by post 38%; over the internet in a private location 5%; in person at the polling station electronically 0%; and by telephone statistically insignificant.

Of those in **DE Social Class** the number voting in person at the polling station with a paper ballot was 64%; by post 31%; over the internet in a private location 3%; in person at the polling station electronically 1%; and by telephone 1%.

3. e-voting...



3.3 ACCESSIBILITY OF THE PROCESS

When considering accessibility of the process it is important to consider not only the voting itself but what happens in advance (i.e. the pre-voting) and what could happen to 'log on' (accessing the voting). This evaluation sees both of these steps as crucial to enabling access for particular groups; it is a truism that if you cannot register to use e-voting then you cannot then make use of the new approach to voting.

Of some concern is the fact that none of the websites met the accessibility requirements set out in the Statement of Requirements. The evaluation found that every website met WCAG standard level A but did not comply with standard level AA as required by the SOR. This is addressed in the recommendations in section 6. More detail on WCAG compliance can be found in Appendix A.

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3.3.1 Pre-voting

The main aspect of pre-voting was the registration process in which potential electors were required to choose a PIN number (this is different from the computer-generated VIN) and provide their date of birth. Authorities were required to conduct this process on paper rather than any other method (or indeed over the internet). The process of registration proved cumbersome and inaccessible. At the simplest level, the registration forms that had to be filled out were in standard font size (not accessible to many with visual impairments for instance), there were limited options for non-English speakers and they contained a significant amount of information.

In addition, electors reported significant confusion about who needed to complete the form, as well as a lack of instructions or methods for retaining the PIN number that was chosen. One voter in Rushmoor said “The observation I would like to make is that when choosing what username we would like to use, not everybody thought to remember what it was. It could have been made clearer that it could [should] be noted down, as there are no reminders later on for the chosen username” (*Rushmoor IVote Questionnaire Responses May 2007*) while one questionnaire respondent suggested a tear-off strip for electors to record their self-selected password.

Once a voter had registered to use e-voting tools, he or she then received a VIN (voter identification number) on the poll card. Again, there was confusion about what to do with this number and many electors lost their number. In fact, far and away the biggest cause of phone calls to the relevant help-desks was due to losing the PIN or VIN. For example, in Rushmoor 77% of the calls to the help-desk were about the username / PIN. (*ES&S statistics May 2007*)

This was particularly problematic for the elderly population, some of whom had even given the PIN to someone else for safe-keeping and then were unable to vote because that person was not around. One voter called the South Bucks help-desk because his son was holder of the passcode and was on holiday. Another voter called because their father could not recall his passcode. (*South Bucks Help-desk Logs May 2007*) Finally, the PIN / VIN process was made even more complex in some areas because the language used on the registration form did not then match the language on the website itself.

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Overall there was a strong sense that the registration process was overly complex and that, without the process, a significantly higher number of people would not only have registered to vote using e-voting but would have actually been successful in casting their vote in this way. ICM found that 1% of all voters mentioned problems registering for on-line voting as a reason (perhaps among many) for not voting. (*ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 13 May 2007, weighed base 1198*)

3.3.2 Logging on

Logging in itself provided the most challenging step of the voting process, mainly because of the need to enter 3 different alpha-numeric forms of identification including a date of birth, a PIN / passcode / username and a VIN. As above, the majority of calls to help-desks were about this security process. Data from Rushmoor and South Bucks proves particularly useful in highlighting where potential electors 'fell down' in the process. Table 3 provides some basic information from South Bucks and Rushmoor about entry failure-rate across at some point in the process. It shows that 275 people tried to vote electronically in Rushmoor but didn't manage to in the end and that 325 people in South Bucks tried but were unable to access the process.

Table 3: Information about failure to access internet voting (ES&S data July 2007)

Local Authority	# of Voters who had errors	# of voters who managed to vote after errors	# of voters who then didn't vote	% of voters with errors who didn't eventually vote electronically
Rushmoor	1788	1513	275	15%
South Bucks	971	646	325	33%

3. e-voting...

Needing to enter VINs and PINs was not the only barrier presented by the security elements of the technology. In many areas the sites also had additional security features that acted as barriers. This is particularly problematic for potential electors who are using screen readers or other access software. As one voter said, “how I hate these things. These things are a disaster for me; without a regular and consistent font I really do struggle to read the text...I often have to try several codes before I get one right.” (*Usability Testing May 2007*)

3.3.3 Casting a ballot

This step of the process, the actual voting itself, was in general the most accessible part of the voting. As the voter who struggled with security above said “once I was into the voting area things ran much more smoothly.” However, there were a few communities who did experience significant barriers to gaining access to some of the sites.

Electors who use screen readers

Potential electors who rely on screen readers found some of the sites particularly challenging. Screen readers ‘read’ the technical content of a site. This means that if something looks like an icon on a screen but is coded differently (for example actually coded as “layout image button”) that is what the screen reader will read and what the user will hear. This will not be picked up by automatic accessibility testing but is a clear indication that whoever is designing the site does not have adequate understanding of how to make sure that sites are accessible. The most disruptive example of this was in South Bucks where the actual ‘tick box’ for voting was coded as a link rather than as a box itself. While this makes little difference to a sighted user, someone relying on a screen reader will only hear a reading of the link and has no way of knowing if they have ticked this box or not. (*Technical Assessment May 2007*)

Electors who need additional time

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The threat – or actuality – of being ‘timed out’ also posed challenges for various electors. In South Bucks electors found the time allowed for decisions to be too short which led to stress and dissatisfaction with the process. As one Usability Tester said “had I not been testing the site, I would have given up sooner” having been timed out on a number of occasions trying to make effective use of access technology. (*Usability Tester May 2007*)

On the same site another Tester found that “things went a bit pear-shaped: I was timed out while saving my voting receipt to the computer and was asked to go through the whole process again...the ‘timed out’ warning came up several times during the voting process, and there seemed to be just a few seconds between each warning.” (*Usability Tester May 2007*) Again, while security considerations may have led to this timeframe, there is a need to understand the impact on the user.

3.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION

In this section, the evaluation has assessed the effectiveness of communication in terms of raising awareness and supporting access to the voting process. Communication around e-voting was relatively effective for the general population. As figure 8 shows, awareness of internet pilots was at least 65% when prompted and at least 50% before prompting.

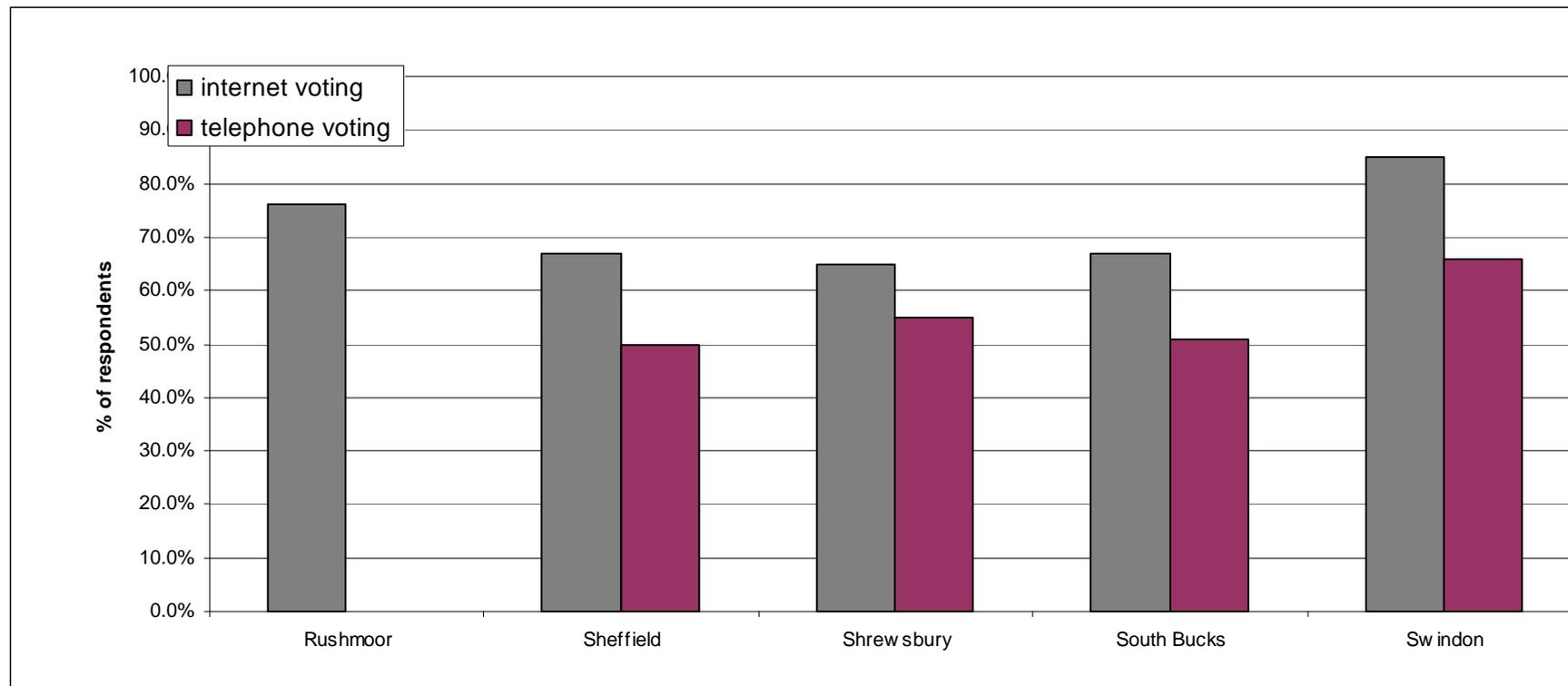
Figure 8: Percentage of people aware of local pilot

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 21, 25 – 27, and 35 – 37 May 2007, weighted bases 2412 (table 21) , 1877 (tables 25-27) 1338 (Table 35-36) and 272 (table 37))

This figure shows the percentage of respondents in each pilot area who were aware of the availability of internet voting and telephone voting:

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Rushmoor internet (no telephone pilot) 76%; Sheffield internet 67% telephone 50%; Shrewsbury internet 65% telephone 55%; South Bucks internet 67% telephone 51%; Swindon internet 85% telephone 66%.



This information can be further disaggregated and suggests some areas for improvement. For example, only 65% of people who identify as having a disability were aware of internet pilots locally compared to 72% of all interviewed voters. 71% of full time workers were aware (close to the average) of the potential to vote over the internet. The figures were reversed for telephone voting: 60% of those who identified as disabled knew about telephone voting versus an average of 55% (i.e. more than average) while only 50% of full-time workers knew about telephone voting (i.e. lower than average). It is unclear why these figures are reversed; one potential

3. e-voting...

explanation is that full-time workers are potentially more aware of internet opportunities than they are of phone opportunities but it is unclear why disabled people had such different levels of awareness of the two methods (*ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 21, 25 – 27, and 35 – 37 May 2007, weighted bases 2412 (table 21) , 1877 (tables 25-27) 1338 (Table 35-36) and 272 (table 37))*)

However, close review of the publicity materials, as well as discussions with organisations representing these groups, shows that local authorities varied in the extent to which they ensured accessible information campaigns. The majority of publicity and information was written, often in letters or Council information. As figure 9 shows, the majority of individuals became aware of the pilots from Council leaflets.

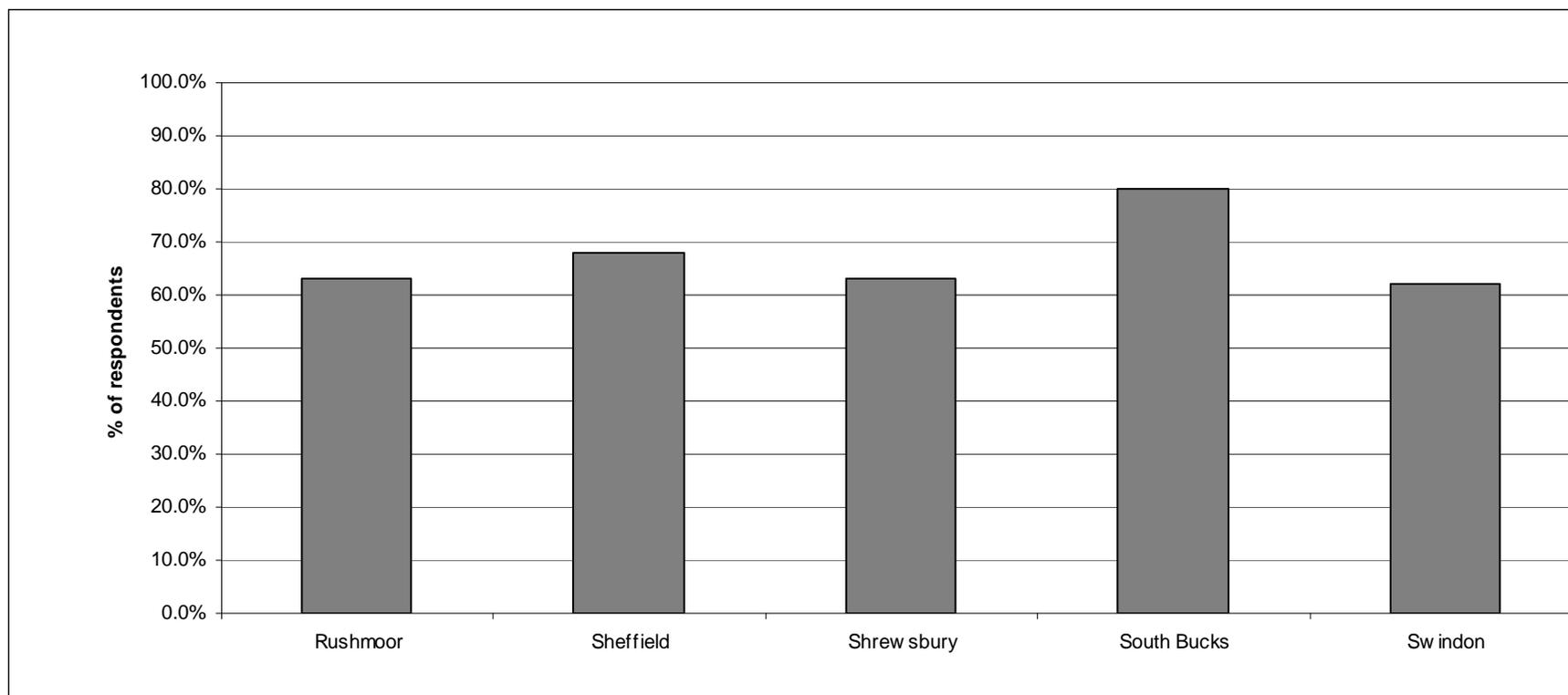
Figure 9: Percentage of electors who learned of e-voting pilot through Council leaflets

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 40 May 2007, weighted base 1725)

This figure shows the percentages of people who learned of e-voting through council leaflets:

3. e-voting...

Rushmoor 63%; Sheffield 68%; Shrewsbury 63%; South Bucks 80%; and Swindon 62%.



While written communication is effective for a significant part of the population, those communities who either have visual impairments or poor English skills cannot access this type of information. There was little evidence of innovative alternative approaches such as radio or television adverts, announcements in local community centres, shops and so on. people walking around and speaking to potential voters, visits to community centres or representative organisations and so on.

4. ADVANCE VOTING

4.1 OVERVIEW

The purpose of Advance Voting was to enable people to cast their ballots in polling stations before Election Day on 3rd May. Four local authorities piloted Advance Voting only, with two areas piloting kiosk-based advance voting. Table 4 shows the nature of each pilot.

Table 4: Advance Voting Pilots

Local authority	Timeframe	Locations
Bedford	Sat 28 and Sun 29 April	1 location at the Civic Centre in the town centre
Broxbourne	Wed 25 April – Wed 2 May	3 locations in 3 different wards
Gateshead	Mon 23 April – Wed 2 May	1 location at the Civic Centre in the town centre
Sheffield	Thurs 26 April – Mon 30 April	1 location at the City Hall
Shrewsbury and Atcham	Fri 21 April – Sun 29 April	3 locations – using electronic voting kiosks
Sunderland	Mon 23 April – Sun 1 May	3 libraries across the city
Swindon	Thurs 26 April – Wed 2 nd May	5 supervised locations

4. Advance voting...

As the Table shows, all of the local authorities had polling stations open during the weekend, with most local authorities also opening polling stations during the week. In general the polling stations were open from 9 – 5 (i.e. traditional working hours).

The weekend opening times are likely a reflection of the fact that the pilots focused on commuters who are unable to get to a polling station on Election Day. However, the opening times suggest that local authorities were also trying to engage with wider communities such as potential electors who were unlikely to make a specific journey to polling stations but would vote if they were already out near to a polling station.

Overall, turn-out in the areas that piloted this method increased from the 2006 local elections. However, there is no overall turnout data yet so it is hard to tell if this increase is consistent with a national trend. Only 1% of those interviewed by ICM who had voted did so over the telephone. (*ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 10 May 2007, weighted base 1214*)

4.2 IMPACT ON PARTICIPATION FOR PARTICULAR COMMUNITIES

It was not possible at the time of this report either to make a full assessment of turn-out at Advance Voting stations, nor to compare that to the turnout figures in general. However, the evaluation is able – and does – make comparisons across some of the target groups. In addition, qualitative information and feedback from questionnaires, local authority surveys and discussions with organisations representing the target communities has allowed for some assessment of the impact of the pilots on accessibility. It is worth noting that much of the data from ICM used to make some assessment is based on a survey that was conducted at polling stations rather than the main telephone survey. The polling station survey had 1097 respondents all of whom used Advance Voting polling stations versus the 349 respondents to the phone survey who voted before 3rd May by any method (i.e. post, internet, telephone). (*ICM Advance Voting Survey May 2007*)

4. Advance voting...

In general, Advance Voting does not seem to have drawn in many new voters. As figure 10 shows, the majority of electors who voted in advance would have voted anyway; figure 10 also shows however that those who did vote in advance found it 'a lot' and 'a little' more convenient.

Figure 10: Percentage of target communities who would have voted anyway but who found voting in advance convenient (Note; the number of young people responding to the question about convenience was too low to be included)

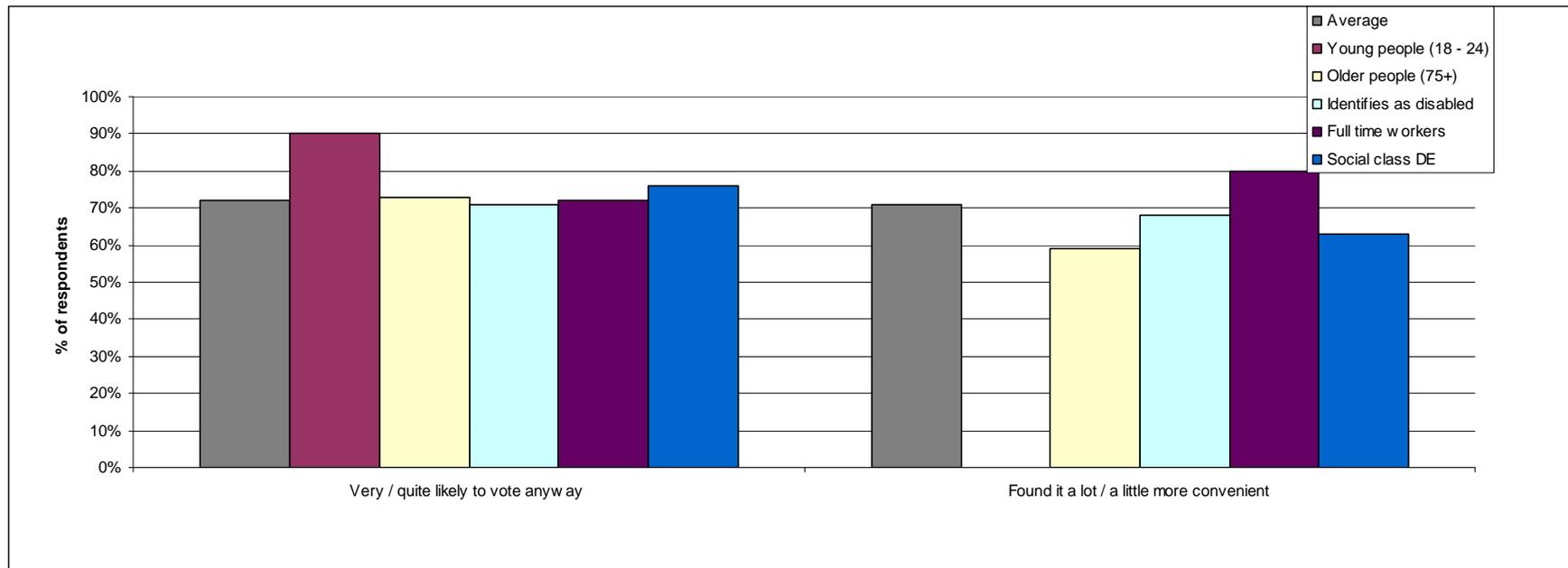
(ICM Advance Voting Survey May 2007)

This figure shows the percentage of electors who would have voted anyway but did find advance voting convenient:

Very / quite likely to vote anyway – Average 72%, Young people (18-24) 90%, Older people (75+) 73%, Identifies as having a disability 71%, Full time workers 72% and social class DE 76%

Found it a lot / a little more convenient – Average 71%, Young people (18-24) NA, Older people (75+) 59%, Identifies as having a disability 68%, Full time workers 80% and social class DE 63%

4. Advance voting...



4.2.1 Target communities

There was limited information provided by local authorities, either in documentation (such as PIDS, Communication Plans and so on) or in conversations with election officials, about the target communities for the Advance Voting pilots. In addition, there is less detail in the data collected by ICM around Advance Voting (for instance there is no data specifically about electors who identified as having a disability). This is a missed opportunity since identifying target communities might enable local authorities to situate the Advance Voting sites in areas that would be most convenient to voters, including those who tend not to vote (for example in a community centre on an estate).

4. Advance voting...

However, it is possible to infer from the nature of the pilots (for instance their opening hours and locations) that in local authorities were targeting **commuters** and which '**convenience**' **electors** (such as potential electors who would not make a 'special journey' for voting but will vote if the opportunity presents).

The pilots do not seem to be designed to make it easier to actually access polling stations or the voting process (for example ballot papers, desk heights and so on) given that the majority were situated in traditional polling areas (including libraries and civic centres) and used traditional ballots. The same considerations around access were raised by these sites as by sites used on Election Day; the quality of those activities varied considerably and is covered in section 4.3.2 below.

4.2.2 Impact on target communities

As above, it is not possible to compare engagement in Advance Voting at polling stations with wider turnout. Based on data from ICM, it is possible to extrapolate the percentage of electors who voted before 3rd May in a polling station (i.e. by a paper ballot). Of the 29% of electors who voted before 3rd May, only 8% did so by paper ballot in a polling station (of which the majority voted by paper – 6% of total and a minimal number cast an electronic ballot – 2% of total). *(ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 44 May 2007. The survey found that 349 electors voted before 3rd May. 21 (6%) of these said that they had voted by paper ballot in a location. 75% of early voters did so by post, 3% by phone and 14% via the internet, weighted base 1214)*

The evaluation has looked at the impact of the pilots on the communities that we have inferred were the focus of the pilot:

- **Commuters** ~ a number of local authorities (such as Rushmoor and South Bucks) focused their Advance Voting on commuters who, because of travel and working away from the local area, are not able to get to the polling station during traditional opening hours; for these individuals weekend opening hours were considered ideal.

4. Advance voting...

The information available is hard to disaggregate into those who are commuters and those who aren't. Furthermore, the evaluation is unable to compare these figures to overall turnout figures for full and part-time workers and is therefore unable to make any specific conclusions. However, it is possible to place markers in the sand for baseline use of advance voting, including weekend voting, by full and part-time workers. 28% of all advance voters were full-time workers and 9% were part time workers. Of these, 29% of full-time workers voted on the weekend and 20% of part-time workers voted on the weekend (Sat 28th April and Sunday 29th April). There is also very limited qualitative information about commuters making use of advance voting. (*ICM Advance Voting Survey Table 1 May 2007, weighted base 1097*)

- **Convenience electors** ~ Furthermore, most of the electors who made use of the Advance Voting facilities did so as part of a journey they were already making which suggests that some existing electors do take advantage of the opportunity offered by advance voting. It is interesting to note, however, that the lowest instance of this was in Sunderland where the Advance Polling stations were all located in libraries, suggesting that the location of the polling stations may have an impact on take up, particularly around drawing in 'passing traffic.'

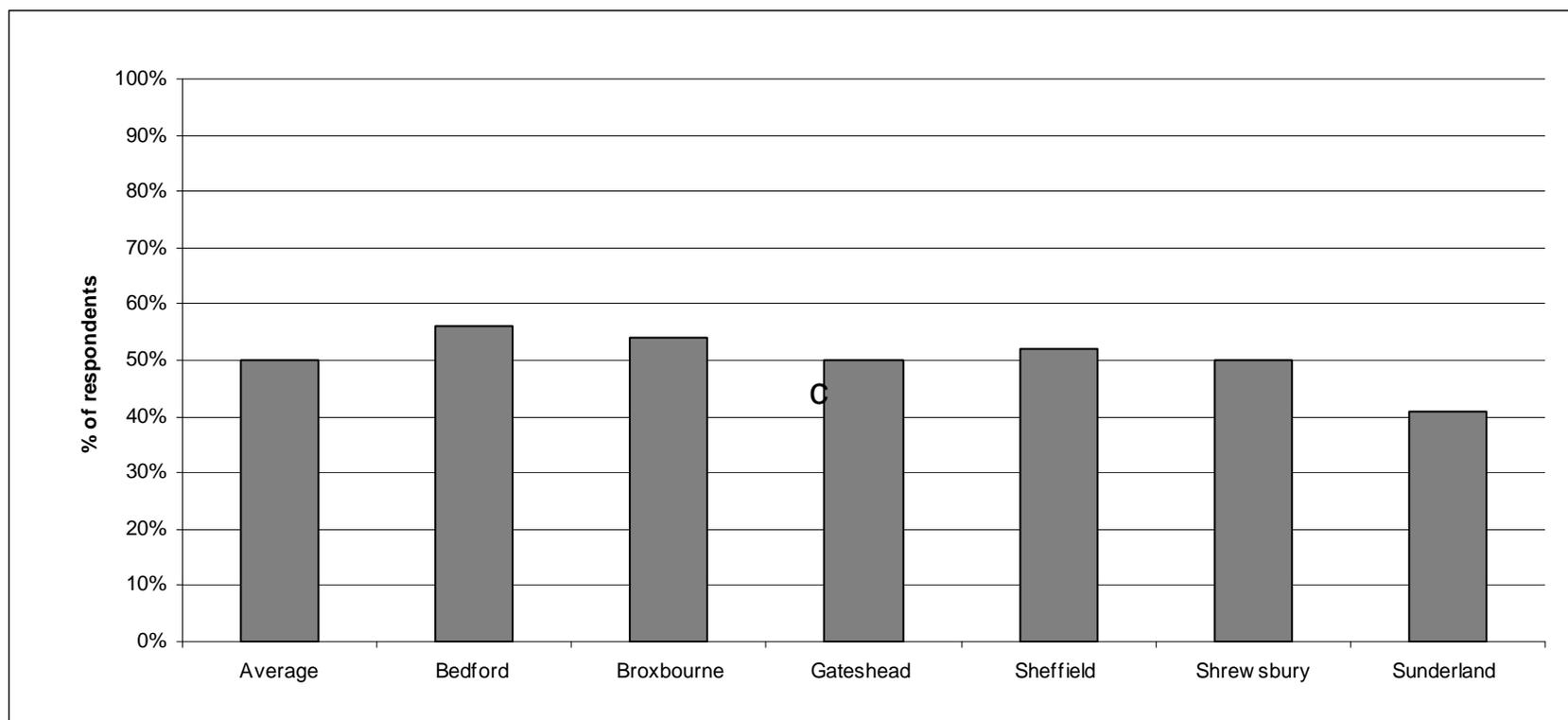
4. Advance voting...

Figure 11: Percentage of advance electors who voted as part of an existing journey

(ICM Advance Voting Survey Table 5 May 2007, weighted base 1097)

This figure shows the percentage of electors who voted as part of an existing journey:

Average 50%, Bedford 56%, Broxbourne 54%, Sheffield 52%, Shrewsbury and Atcham 50% and Sunderland 41% - there was no data for Swindon



4.2.3 Impact on communities who traditionally face barriers to voting

In addition to the target communities above, the Advance Voting pilots also provide an opportunity to engage potential electors who traditionally face significant barriers to voting on Election Day itself. This includes individuals who may have caring responsibilities, who have to undergo medical treatment or need to choose a day when they feel “well enough” to go, who may be working or not be in the area such as those in the armed forces, who have religious observance, or may need (or want) to arrange for one or more people to go with them to vote.

It is important to stress that the representative communities contacted all expressed the view that had they had sufficient notice they would have publicised Advance Voting amongst their members, some of whom they felt sure would benefit from the service. The minimal numbers of electors who participated in Advance Voting limits the usefulness of any further segmentation and, as such, there is not very much evidence against which to assess the impact of these pilots on these groups. It is not possible to make comparisons between turn out of these communities in Advance Voting versus traditional voting.

4.3 ACCESSIBILITY OF THE PROCESS

As above, this section looks at both the **pre-voting process** as well as the **actual voting**.

4.3.1 Pre-voting

Pre-voting focuses on informing individuals of their options and raising their awareness as to how best to cast their votes. The methods of informing potential electors about Advance Voting **were not fully accessible**; most of the information was provided in print, often in standard size and standard colours, with limited alternative languages, formats or methods for communication.

4. Advance voting...

This is particularly problematic given that, in all areas but Bedford, the majority of participants found out about Advance Voting opportunities through Council leaflets, which are written material. If these are inaccessible, barriers to voting remain for a large group of potential electors. In Broxbourne, an innovative method was used by putting adverts on their refuse trucks. These would reach more people with a very simple message but it still had limits for most non-print users.

Advance voting did not require electors to register for the process which meant that these pilots avoided the problems faced in that process. It also meant that people could choose to vote if a crisis occurred that they realised would prevent them from voting on Election Day, or if they were offered an unexpected lift or company on an Advance Voting day.

4.3.2 Voting

In general there is little evidence that the *Advance* element of Advance Voting made significantly reduced barriers to access or enabled those who are disenfranchised to participate. The evidence that is available shows that particular communities of electors face greater barriers than others. For example, 11% of electors who identified as having a disability found that the location or layout of the voting station – or the methods of voting – presented barriers to them compared to 5% of all electors. Figure 12 compares the extent to which different target communities found that the Advance Voting stations presented barriers to them voting.

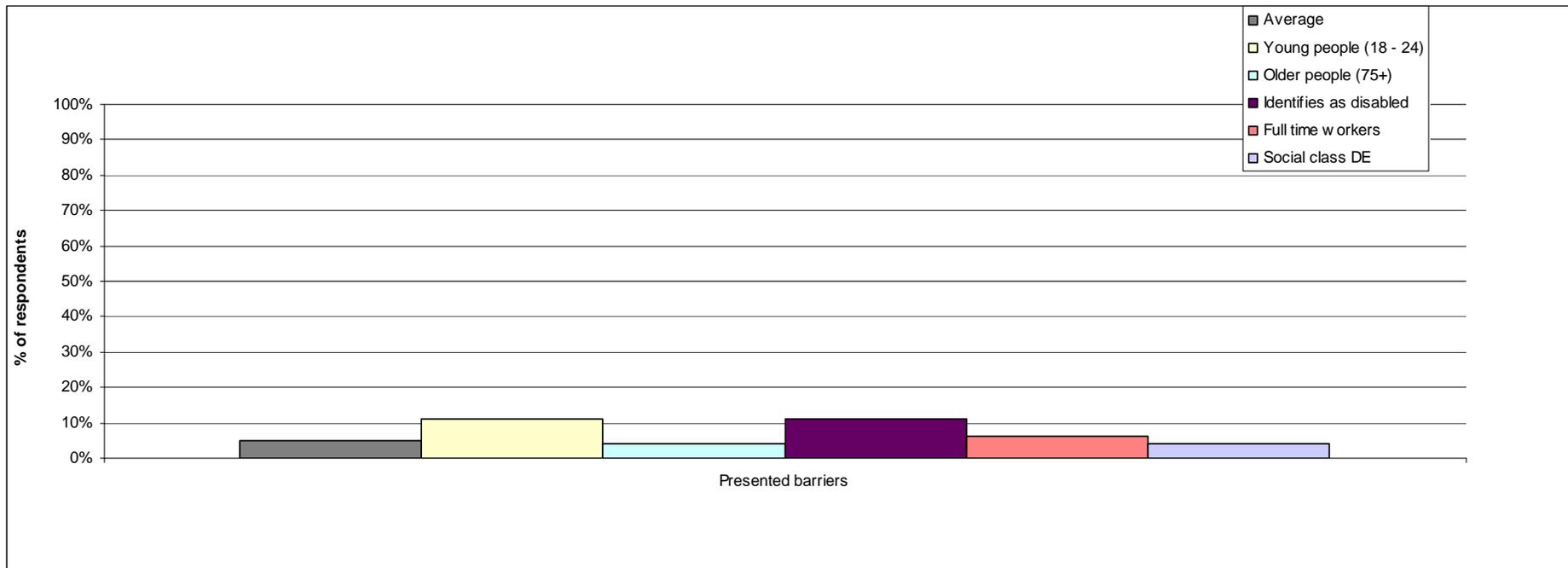
4. Advance voting...

Figure 12: Percentage of voters by group who found that the elements of the polling station made it difficult to vote

(ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 99 – 100 May 2007, weighted base 832)

This figure shows the percentage of people who found elements of the polling station made it difficult to vote:

Average 5%, Young people (18-24) 11%, Older people (75+) 4%, Those reporting to have a disability 11%, Full time workers 6%, Social Class DE 4%



4. Advance voting...

Again, due to data not being available at the time of this report, the evaluation is unable to compare these figures with access figures from the election overall. However, the evaluation did make use of qualitative information to look at barriers and facilitators in more detail, looking at both the *location* of the polling stations and what goes on *inside* the polling station:

- **Location** ~ there was limited feedback on the location of the polling stations. Having only one polling station was useful in that it reduced the potential for confusion but unfortunately in Bedford this was minimised because different pieces of information had different addresses on and once at the polling station it was not clear where to go to actually vote. There were also some concerns (for instance in Broxbourne) that the polling stations were not on public transport routes. It is recognised, however, that the provision of Advance polling stations could be proportionate to the costs involved in doing so, and therefore it is inevitable that some will find the location of these advance stations more convenient than others.
- **Inside the polling station** ~ the level of training and awareness raising with Poll Clerks and Presiding Officers varied across areas and in most cases any awareness raising was relatively generic and focused on basic customer care. In Bedford Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks had discussions around diversity as part of their training, while in Gateshead there was clear acknowledgement of the right of electors to have support during the process, as well as specific equipment for visually impaired electors.

4.4 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION

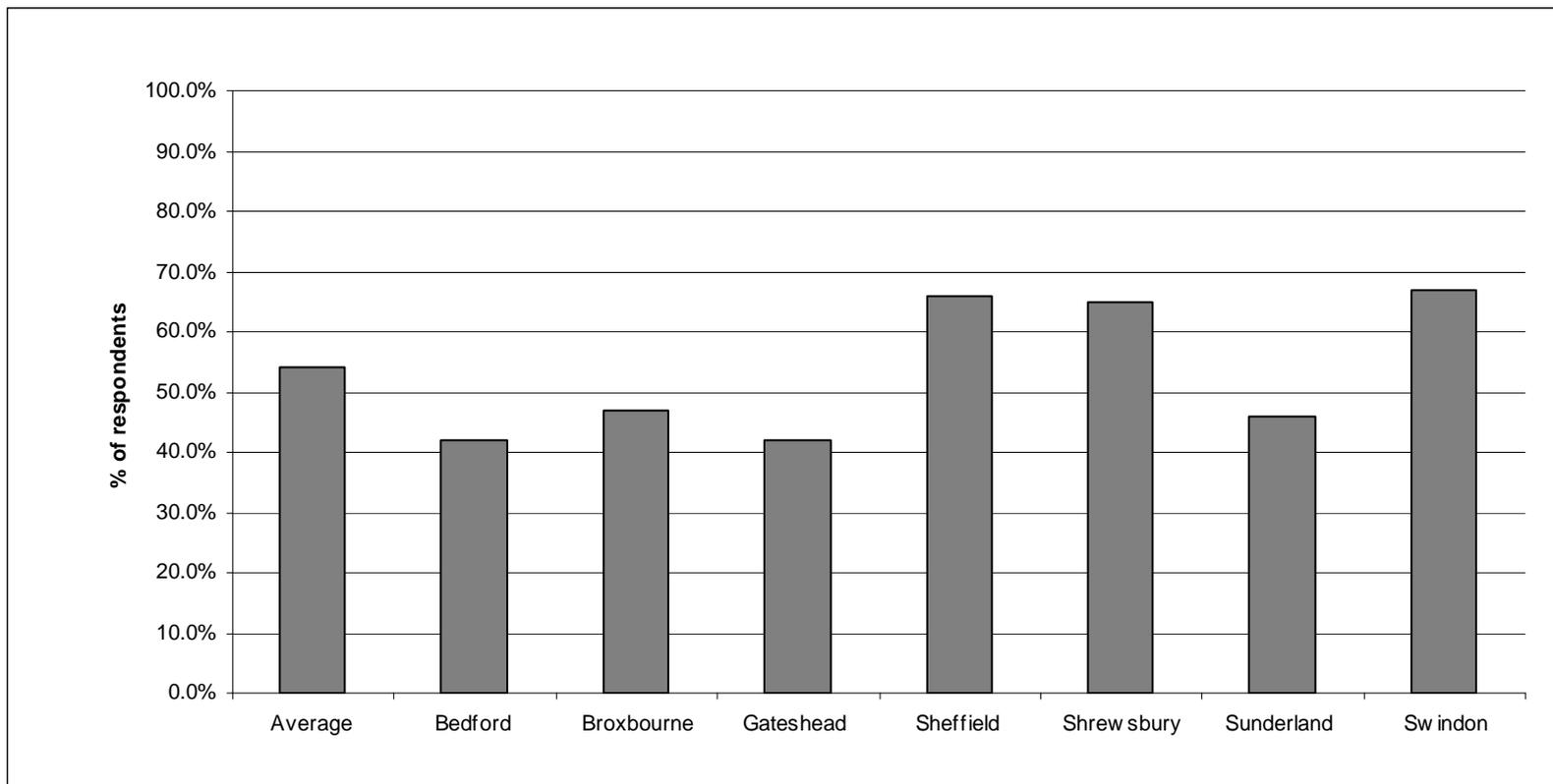
In this section, the evaluation has considered the means of communication and its impact of these approaches. As figure 13 shows, ICM found that awareness of Advance Voting was on average 54% when prompted (compared with 72% awareness of e-voting and 55% for telephone voting). (*ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 26, 32 and 34 May 2007, weighted base 1338 (table 26), 1071 (table 32), 1338 (table 34)*)

4. Advance voting...

Figure 13: Percentage of respondents aware of Advance Voting pilots in local authorities without prompting
(ICM Main Telephone Survey Table 19 May 2007, weighted base 2412)

This figure shows the percentage of people aware of advance voting in pilots without prompting:

Average 54%, Bedford 42% Broxbourne 47%; Gateshead 42%; Sheffield 66%, Shrewsbury 65% Sunderland 46%



4. Advance voting...

However, there was a greater lack of awareness among particular communities considered in this evaluation. The evaluators found that very few of the representative communities that they spoke to were aware of the pilots. This is expanded on below.

4.4.1 Written materials

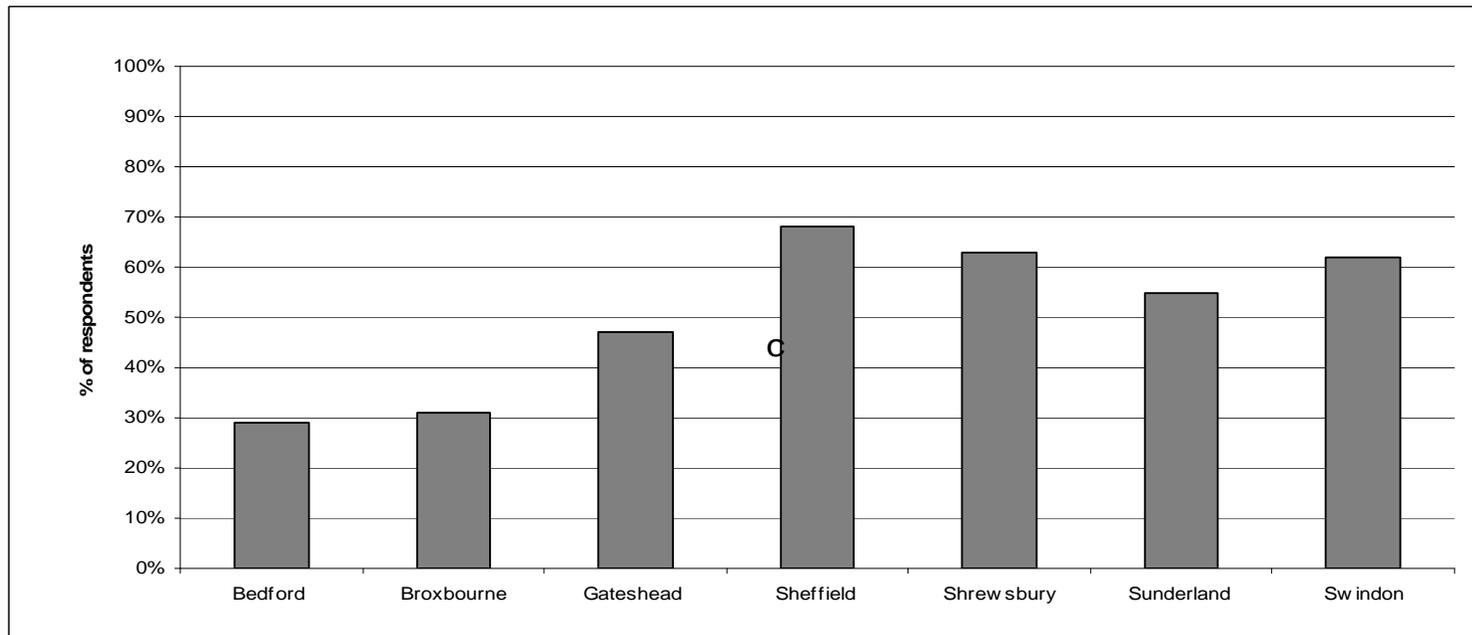
Figure 14 shows the percentage of electors who found out about Advance Voting through written material versus media (some of which may be print). As the graph shows, with the exception of Bedford, print media was the method most often identified as how individuals found out about the pilots.

4. Advance voting...

Figure 14: Percentage of electors who found out about Advance Voting through Council literature
(ICM Main Telephone Survey Tables 40 – 42 May 2007, weighted base 1725)

This figure shows the percentage of electors who found out about advance voting via council literature:

Bedford 29% Broxbourne 31%; Gateshead 47%; Sheffield 68%, Shrewsbury 63%, Sunderland 55% Swindon 62%.



While written material is appropriate for some potential electors, it is inaccessible to a wide range of individuals from those who cannot actually read the written material (for instance someone with limited vision or dyslexia) to those with limited ability to read English (for instance people with learning difficulties, the Deaf community using

4. Advance voting...

BSL (British Sign Language), and minority ethnic communities, where English is not the first language). Design elements including font style and size, colours, simplicity of language and so on mean that any written material could be carefully reviewed to ensure that it is accessible to widest range of individuals.

Written material as a base would be appropriate if it was supplemented by a wide range of other materials. However, there are very few examples of where local authorities were innovative in their methods of communication.

4.4.2 Reaching out to organisations who have links with particular communities

One simple method for communicating, particularly with harder to reach groups, would be for local authorities to make links with organisations who work closely with different communities of individuals. However, although evaluators contacted a wide range of organisations across the local authorities (for instance in Gateshead the evaluator liaised with the Pakistani Community Centre / Gateshead Muslim Society, and the Broxbourne and Hoddesdon Workers Education Association in Broxbourne) there was very little evidence of local authorities reaching out and making use of these organisations.

This is clearly a missed opportunity; the majority of organisations that were contacted made clear to evaluators that they it would have actively promoted the opportunities among their membership. One organisation in Sunderland said that would have “happily have promoted the facility at meetings and via other means” while another in Broxbourne would have put the information in their newsletter which has a readership of 5000 people locally.

5. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

As sections three and four show, e-voting and Advance Voting had common features in relation to the EC's key areas for assessment. In summary, the evaluation found:

5.1 IMPACT ON PARTICIPATION FOR PARTICULAR COMMUNITIES

It is difficult to determine the full impact of the pilots on participation for particular groups. This is in a large part because most local authorities did not have a clear set of hard-to-engage communities that they were including in the focus of the pilot. In most cases, the pilots were aimed at increasing choice and access in general. While this is key to elector engagement across the piece, it does mean that authorities were relatively poor at reaching out to those for whom mainstream approaches to building participation would not work.

While the evidence suggests that many communities found e-voting or Advance Voting more convenient and more attractive (once they were made aware of the option) than traditional voting, the majority of electors who took advantage of these approaches would have voted anyway. This suggests that the pilots themselves are not leading to significant increase in voter turnout, including among the priority communities for this evaluation but instead facilitating access for those already engaged in the electoral process.

5.2 ACCESSIBILITY OF PROCESS

Where accessibility was specifically considered (the design of the e-voting systems) there was some evidence that the processes supported different communities in taking part in voting. However, the level of accessibility was variable across the different pilots and there are still significant efforts are still needed to really make these opportunities open to all electors.

Across the piece, there was limited involvement of hard-to-engage communities in designing the full voter experience from pre-voting through to ballot casting (virtually or on paper). This is a missed opportunity. A

5. Summary of findings...

number of the barriers remaining would most likely have been identified if not resolved through early and on-going involvement of these electors.

Finally, where security and accessibility were seen as competing, security seemed to win out. The technical assessment shows that this does not need to be the case and that both accessibility and security can be delivered in an integrated system.

5.3 EFFECTIVENESS OF COMMUNICATION

The findings around effectiveness of communication were relatively consistent across areas. There was some positive feedback, such as individual help-desk staff who were singled out for praise, as well innovative approaches to communication including use of a refuse truck in Rushmoor.

There was very limited evidence (if any) of communities being involved in designing any of the publicity materials or approaches to raising awareness. Again, had they been involved, this might have had significant impact on the variety of communication methods and therefore the reach of the information. Across the board local authorities failed to make best use of the links and influence that community communities have with their local constituent groups.

6. UNDERLYING CAUSES AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This quick summary of the findings leads the evaluation to then consider why these gaps remain and why the pilots had limited impact on access for particular groups. These causes fall into four main areas which are set out in detail below.

6.1 INVOLVEMENT LEADING TO IMPROVED ENGAGEMENT

6.1.1 Impact on pilots

It is vital that throughout the pilot process, those who are shaping, developing, and delivering the pilots actively involve electors who face a variety of barriers to voting and whose opportunity to vote could be eased by a number of facilitators. The lack of meaningful involvement was evident in the barriers that remained throughout the process from pre-voting through to casting ballots and included participating in post-election evaluations. The consistent lack of awareness of pilots (particularly around advance voting) by representative organisations was a missed opportunity. The organisations the evaluators spoke to were clear in their commitment to informing and raising awareness of the new approaches to voting amongst their community.

6.1.2 Recommendations

The evaluation suggests that the MoJ and / or the EC could consider establishing **a national, central 'Access to Democracy' group**. This group could be made up of electors who face barriers throughout the election process from awareness raising to candidate information through casting a ballot and contributing to post-election surveys and assessment of the process. MoJ and / or the EC should consider working directly with actual electors who could provide advice to the central agencies on shaping future electoral pilots or electoral modernisation programmes.

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

MoJ could also consider including harder targets within the PID requirements for the pilots. These targets could require local authorities to specify priority communities where barriers to voting are particularly strong (which leaves room for local discretion and focus). These targets could include elements around involvement, staff training (at polling stations, help desks and any other elector-facing activities), varied forms of communication and a wider range of activities to enable engagement.

6.2 EXPECTATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

6.2.1 Impact on pilots

It is crucial that there are clear parameters and expectations on local authorities and their partners that cover the full lifespan of the voting process. To date, evidence is that the parameters are clear around some aspects of the pilots and not around others; in particular there are expectations set around the nature of the websites and the phone lines used for e-voting. These are framed in the Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) and made more specific in the Statement of Requirements (SOR) that potential e-voting suppliers had to meet. This was bolstered by the EC's own *e-voting Disability Access Guidance and Standards* produced by Scope for the Commission. For the most part however these cover the voting process and fail to set standards for the awareness raising and engagement required before the voting process itself.

The DDA aspects also apply to Advance Voting pilots – again from information through to casting a ballot.

The lack of specific expectations around access throughout the voting process contributes to the gaps that the evaluation has identified. A number of e-voting suppliers and Presiding Officers pointed specifically to documents like the DDA and the SOR as guiding and shaping their behaviours. There are no parallel documents that would guide activity not specifically related to technical development. There were also no documents that provided specific guidance on wider engagement, particularly for the Advance Voting pilot areas.

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

Finally is also worrying that some of the expectations that were set out in the SOR were not achieved. As set out in Section 3 none of the websites met the standards for WCAG compliance set in the SOR. It may be that concerns around security outweighed access concerns but the failure to comply with standards that were articulated does cause concern.

6.2.2 Recommendations

In response to this gap in expectations and requirements, this evaluation recommends that the MoJ and the EC consider making a statement of their **vision of accessible voting** for all those who want to take part in the process. This statement could be made publicly, and form a new 'statement of requirements' for all local authorities around their election process, whether or not they are embarking on pilots. When new pilots are launched, this statement could form the backbone of any process for assessing bids, as well as further planning documentation (PIDs), the on-going development of the pilot and evaluation of the compliance and then success of the pilots.

The MoJ and the EC should consider developing this statement, involving (that is in partnership with) disenfranchised voters (perhaps via the Access to Democracy group suggested above).

In addition, the MoJ may want to consider setting specific requirements around particular areas of poor practice in line with the targets suggested in section 6.1.2. This could include requirements to show evidence of involvement of disenfranchised electors and representative organisations who are effective at communication with their community. This could be in place from the outset of the process, particularly around the design of communications materials and the voting process itself. MoJ may also consider requiring local authorities to show segmentation of their population and how they will respond to this as part of their bids and subsequent PIDs.

In light of the failure to meet WCAG standards, the MoJ should consider the mechanisms it would put in place to ensure, before polls 'open' that all pilots meet the SOR. It may also develop a menu of responses, from support

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

and intervention through to contractual discussions to respond to gaps before the election. Finally, the MoJ may want to explore options for responses (short of 'stopping' a pilot and thereby replacing the barriers that pilots are removing) when the final 'product' fails to meet requirements.

Finally, as part of setting clear expectations that the whole process of voting is accessible, the evaluation recommends that MoJ and / or the EC consider approaches to ensuring that a useful level of information about all candidates is accessible to all potential voters. MoJ and / or the EC could assess various options for ensuring that this takes place, from national requirements through to guidance and support for local areas.

6.3 MOTIVATIONS OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

Another key underlying cause for the success and shape of the 2007 pilots is the extent to which local authority officials are committed and motivated to ensuring access in conjunction with all of their other priorities. Election officers are under pressure from a number of areas including national expectations, local community expectations and pressures from their local Councillors. Accessibility is not always the top priority for all of these communities. In some cases there are concerns that accessibility for particular communities is discouraged for fear of the impact on the election outcome. In some instances the drive to submit a bid and be awarded a pilot may sit with one individual within the local authority and responsibility for delivering the pilot may then fall to another person or team who is not as enthusiastic as the original bidder. This might lead to energy and resources being devoted elsewhere and not towards reducing barriers or improving facilitators.

6.3.1 Recommendations

At a national level, the evaluation recommends that the MoJ explore mechanisms for truly assessing the commitment of a local authority, at all levels but particularly with those who will lead development and implementation of the pilots to ensuring that accessibility is a priority. In addition, MoJ could examine options for nurturing and maintaining that commitment throughout the process.

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

There are both 'carrot' approaches that might be employed, such as the potential for beacon Council status on elections or indeed engagement and accessibility, and 'stick' approaches such as awarding of final funding based on evidence that the pilots have made good faith efforts to be accessible and inclusive.

On a local level, the evaluation recommends that local authorities fully consider the implications of taking on a pilot, who would be responsible for implementation and whether or not accessibility and piloting new approaches to elections are a priority for the Council, the community and the political leadership.

6.4 CAPACITIES OF LOCAL AUTHORITIES

The evaluation suggests that the gap in capacities of local authorities has as much impact on whether or not the pilots were accessible as the motivations of various players in the process. The capacity gaps break down into a number of areas, all of which point to some practical steps that may be taken nationally or locally to address them.

6.4.1 Time and resources

Time and resources (money and people) are the capacity gaps most often highlighted when services fail to deliver against expectations. In terms of time, there was strong feeling from local authorities and suppliers in the e-voting areas that the timeline for delivery was dangerously short. Suppliers had about three months to implement programmes that one supplier said had taken 18 months in other areas. There are two concerns here – one around the actual timescale for any form of pilot and the second around the scale of ambition and whether there is a need to manage that ambition to be deliverable within the timeframe. Both of these point to potential areas for improvement which are addressed in the recommendations below

The evaluation is not in a position to make a full judgement on the level of resources to ensure accessibility across the piece due to limits in the data available. However there may be opportunities around economies of scale and the **size of local authorities** in determining the extent to which they can, and do, enable access.

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

Larger authorities often have the potential to shift resources to meet needs (or indeed, in the case of Sheffield, buy in the project management resources) while smaller authorities often lack that flexibility (for instance in South Bucks the majority of work was done by one person – the biggest risk to delivery was that person being ‘run over by a bus’).

The lack of time and resources (but particularly time) also impacts heavily on the ability of local authorities to effectively involve and then engage with electors who face significant barriers. Time is essential for building the relationships and the knowledge necessary to understand barriers. Time is also crucial for developing approaches that respond to these barriers or enable these facilitators.

6.4.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings around time and resources, there are a number of recommendations in this area. First, the MoJ should consider **developing a reasonable timeframe** for the full pilot process from announcing the pilots through to bidding and agreeing the pilots and implementation. This process could be developed with local authorities who have already engaged with pilots, as well as with suppliers and other partners. This timeline could then be made public so that authorities have clarity before they embark on the bid process as to the time that they have to implement their new approaches. The MoJ could **also work closely with local authorities** when they do bid for pilots to test whether or not the ambition is deliverable within the timeframe and, where the ambition is unattainable, helping local authorities to maintain the essence of the programme they want to deliver within the limits of their resources.

In response to potential benefits from joint working or resource sharing, the MoJ could consider promoting and facilitating partnerships between smaller authorities or mentoring / sharing relationships between larger and smaller authorities. Many authorities already work together around a wide range of services from back-office shared services in the traditional sense to more front-line programmes including youth justice and health

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

services. Authorities may want to consider building on these relationships and expanding them to include voter support services and accessibility approaches.

6.4.3 Skills and knowledge

The evaluation also found that, while there were some variations in skills and knowledge around how to ensure that the voting process was accessible, there was a need to improve in this area across the piece. The skills and knowledge include technical skills to build and design accessible processes, whether e-voting or advance voting, as well as the skills to engage effectively with communities that face barriers to voting.

Engaging with particular communities effectively takes not only strong links with those communities (something that the evaluation found lacked across the board) but also the skills and approaches necessary to enable meaningful interactions that can help shape a more successful and accessible voting process.

Finally, the evaluation found that local authorities who had conducted pilots in the past were building on their own learning. On the other hand, the evaluation found that local authorities who were 'new' to the process felt out of their depth, particularly around ensuring access.

6.4.4 Recommendations:

In addition to national advice and guidance, the Access to Democracy group suggested in section 6.1.2 could also provide bespoke support to local authorities when they are embarking on a pilot. The type of support could include direct review of programme plans, overview of accessibility needs or indeed making links with local bodies. They could act as a sounding board for individual authorities or indeed a group of authorities if the MoJ found it useful. This could be supplemented by some good practice guides (perhaps a video or tool-kit) that could be developed with the user group in partnership with some local authorities who have led the way on pilots.

6. Underlying causes and recommendations...

At a local level, the report recommends that local authorities could work closely with electors who face barriers and **local communities** who focus on involvement and engagement of marginalised communities. This should be done to develop a robust understanding of barriers to access. These groups, should at every least, be testing the full process of voting as it is developed, from publicity through to the voting process and follow-up.

In addition to specific actions to support the accessibility of pilots, the evaluation found that local authorities would benefit from some generic support in developing and managing their pilots. In some areas (for instance Shrewsbury and Atcham and Sheffield) the local authority 'bought in' programme management resource. In other areas with fewer resources this might not be possible. The MoJ and / or the EC could consider providing 'master classes' either in person or virtually to pilot managers drawing in advice and expertise from local authorities who have already participated in pilots of one kind or another. This could include a **learning set** specifically designed for those running pilots.

Finally, in light of feedback from local authorities who had conducted pilots in the past, the MoJ might consider multi-year pilots that would test both on-going skills development but also provide opportunity for stronger relationships to develop between local authorities and marginalised communities.

7. CONCLUSIONS

The causes and recommendations above provide the EC with some concrete steps to take forward in advance of another round of election pilots should they be forthcoming. Some of these actions would not be possible or prudent to invest in until there is clarity on the future for election pilots. Others however, such as the user panel, would be prudent to invest in to support the EC's wider remit to widen participation in voting.

The evaluation team feel strongly that the pilots in May 2007 were a good step in the process to delivering truly accessible voting for those who choose to take part in the democratic process and are willing to work closely with the EC to take forward recommendations as the Commission sees fit.

APPENDIX A: DETAIL ON TECHNICAL ASSESSMENT

The purpose of the technical assessment is to give an indication of the level of accessibility of the e-voting pilots covered by this evaluation. For a site to be deemed to be accessible it should be equally straightforward for all users to negotiate, irrespective of any physical impairment the user may have, including visual or hearing impairments. The Disability Discrimination Act 1995 (DDA) tells us that it is illegal to treat disabled people less favourably than others who do not have that disability and that we must make reasonable adjustments to make sure the goods and services you provide are available to disabled people. This legislation includes services delivered via IT or web channels.

A.1 TESTING METHOD

A recognised standard in web accessibility is the Web Content Accessibility Guidelines (WCAG) developed by the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C). The guidelines are broken down into three levels, or priorities, reflecting the importance of each guideline:

Priority 1 - A Web content developer **must** satisfy this checkpoint. Otherwise, one or more communities will find it impossible to access information in the document. Satisfying this checkpoint is a basic requirement for some communities to be able to use Web documents.

Full compliance in priority 1 will result in an “A” rating

Priority 2 - A Web content developer **should** satisfy this checkpoint. Otherwise, one or more communities will find it difficult to access information in the document. Satisfying this checkpoint will remove significant barriers to accessing Web documents.

Full compliance in priority 2 will result in an “AA” rating

A. Technical assessment

Priority 3 - A Web content developer **may** address this checkpoint. Otherwise, one or more communities will find it somewhat difficult to access information in the document. Satisfying this checkpoint will improve access to Web documents.

Full compliance in priority 3 will result in an “AAA” rating

The accessibility of a system can be measured in three ways:

Automatic checking (using automated tools) against W3C WCAG guidelines

Expert review to ensure conformance to the remaining WCAG guidelines

Testing with disabled people to make sure that it works in the real world

Although automated checking is the quickest, full conformance with W3C guidelines cannot be achieved by automatic checking alone. WCAG conformance can be assessed manually by an expert though this can be time consuming. Generally speaking, the most pragmatic approach is to expert review to back up the results of an automated assessment.

Watchfire Bobby Version 5.1 was used to assess compliance with the WCAG. **Internet Explorer 7** was used to test browser accessibility and **Juicy Contrast Analyser** was used to assess the contrast, brightness and luminosity of the sites.

The results of the testing for each site split the errors into the three priorities of the WCAG guidelines. A priority 1 error would be considered to be a more serious flaw in the accessibility of the system than a priority 2 error.

A.2 VOTING PROCESS

Each supplier tackled the voting process in a slightly different way. However, a generic process could be seen in each of the sites tested:

Step 1 – Validation of credentials

Allows the user to enter the credentials provided by the local authority. This is usually a voter identification number (VIN), date of birth and passcode.

Step 2 – Explanation of contests

A page that describes the voting process and the number of contests that can be voted on with the system.

Step 3 – Candidate selection

A list (and in some cases a profile) of the candidates with a system of recording votes against a candidate.

Step 4 – Candidate confirmation

A confirmation of the candidates selected by the user.

Step 5 – Vote confirmation\receipt

A confirmation that the votes have been recorded and a voting receipt.