

**The North East Regional Assembly Referendum
November 2004**

– the public's perspective

Report to the Electoral Commission

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1. Executive summary

The referendum on establishing a North East Regional Assembly attracted a good deal of public attention. Although personal campaigning and canvassing was extremely limited, most people had seen, heard or read at least something about the referendum in the weeks leading up to the vote. Much of this information came from leaflets delivered to individual households, from watching a campaign election broadcast or other programme about the contest, or from reading the local and regional press.

However, only a minority of electors claimed to have paid close attention to the campaign and this was reflected in knowledge of the issues. More than half of all electors said they did not know what the issues were, and a similar proportion professed little or no interest in politics in general or to care about the result of the referendum in particular. Women and the young were consistently less engaged than were men and those in older age groups. There was also considerable scepticism about whether a regional assembly could be trusted to work in the interests of the North East, or would have made much difference in those policy areas affecting people's lives.

These attitudes were reflected in electors' willingness to vote. The elderly were several times more likely than the young to vote; home owners were more likely to participate than those in rented accommodation; those in the highest social class category were more frequent voters than those lower down the scale; a greater proportion of men than women electors cast a ballot. Voters saw their action as reflecting both a right and a duty, and they were also influenced by the opportunity of having a say on the issue at hand. Non-voters cited either circumstantial factors for their failure to participate, or admitted that they were not sufficiently interested or knowledgeable to think it worth taking part. Voting was positively associated with other acts of civic activism. Strong partisans were more likely to vote than those with no settled party allegiance; those who had discussed the referendum with others were twice as likely to vote as those who had not; electors who cared about the outcome were particularly keen to ensure that they also influenced it.

These patterns were confirmed in a formal model of turnout at the referendum. This showed that attitudes were more important than most demographic factors and that the key to understanding participation was voter engagement. Referendum voters were disproportionately drawn from those electors who took an active interest in their community and/or had a commitment to the democratic process in general.

Most electors reacted positively to the all-postal ballot. The arrangements were considered satisfactory, convenient and secure, and the level of satisfaction was higher than at the European Parliament elections. However, around one in five respondents did say they had received too little information about voting and that the instructions were difficult to understand. One reflection of this was the lack of knowledge that assisted delivery points were provided to enable electors to receive assistance, vote in private, and/or simply drop off their ballot paper.

Given the overall result of the referendum it was no surprise that opposition to an Assembly was spread across all demographic groups. Significantly, though, the group most strongly opposed to an assembly was also the one whose members were most

likely to vote -those aged 55 or more. The failure of the Labour party to persuade even a plurality of its own supporters to back the assembly in a region where it dominates the political landscape was also critical.

In terms of attitudes it is clear that the regional assembly as proposed struck few positive chords with a large majority of those who voted. Those who believed that it would lead to increased taxes, no more say for ordinary people, no increased regional voice in Europe, and no more pride in the region did the rational thing and voted 'No'. Moreover, the views of non-voters tended to be more in tune with those of 'No' rather than 'Yes' voters such that their participation would have made no material difference to the result.

One explanation for voters thinking like this comes from our evidence on the success of the respective campaigns. The 'No' campaign was seen as the more effective in getting its message across by both 'Yes' and 'No' voters and by those who did not vote alike. This also lends credence to the idea that voters who are uncertain of the consequences and benefits of a proposed change take the cautious option and vote 'No'. This tendency is compounded by the fact that those who are most likely to vote are also most likely to distrust change. For many, too, voting 'No' was not incompatible with continuing support for a party whose official policy was 'Yes'.

Whether they had just voted 'Yes' or 'No', all electors were asked to make a choice about consequential changes in local government arrangements in those areas which currently have county and district councils. More than half our respondents said it mattered to them which councils would exist below regional level, but a substantial minority felt that they had been given insufficient information about the options for local government to make an informed decision.

2. Research Objectives

The research reported here draws on surveys conducted by MORI among electors in the North East region of England before and after the November 2004 Referendum on the establishment of an elected Regional Assembly. The project was initially funded by a grant to the University of Plymouth from the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC) as part of its Devolution and Constitutional Change programme (grant number RES 219252003). The Electoral Commission provided additional support to the project primarily to enable the sample size to be increased and questions on the process of the election to be asked.

This report to the Electoral Commission is designed to inform the statutory report on the Referendum in the North East which the Commission will publish later in 2005. Its objectives include:

Presenting an overview of public knowledge about and attitudes towards both the Referendum itself and the proposed Regional Assembly, including attention paid to the campaign and to media coverage of it.

Analysing why people did and did not vote, and how important different factors were in their decision.

Identifying, explaining and modelling the key drivers of turnout, both attitudinal and in terms of the characteristics of electors.

Assessing reactions to the all postal vote ballot and any impact this had on behaviour.

Outlining the patterns of behaviour in the two types of referendum (Assembly and local government reorganisation) and explaining the key drivers of those voting decisions.

3. Methodology and Technical Note

Omnibus survey

Questions were run on 3 waves of MORI's omnibus survey in September/October 2004 across the three northern regions to establish pre-campaign benchmarking data.¹ The aims of this research were to:

- Gauge and track awareness that the Referendum was taking place;
- Understand awareness of the postal voting system;
- Look at whether people were likely to vote;
- In the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber, understand how people felt about a Referendum in those regions being delayed.

The questionnaire used can be found in the Appendices. In total 943 adults aged 15+ across the North East, North West and Yorkshire & Humberside were interviewed. Interviews carried out face-to-face, in home, using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI).

Main survey

The sample was designed in order to achieve 700 successful interviews in the North East.

Sampling in the North East involved the following:

- All wards were sorted by whether they were in single tier or two tier local authority areas, then by county and then by district. Within each district, all wards were sorted by the proportion of households where the chief income earner is classified as belonging to the social grade AB.

A total of 59 wards were selected to be used as the sampling points, and 20 addresses randomly selected in each point, using a one in 'n' approach. In addition, 3 addresses were randomly selected from each ward to make up the reserve sample. This produced 1,180 main and 177 reserve addresses.

Initial sampling profile			
Region	Main addresses	Reserve addresses	Target interviews
North East	1,180	177	700

¹ Fieldwork conducted between 23rd – 28th September, 7th – 12th and 21st – 27th October 2004

This project proved more difficult in the field than anticipated. The number of “Yes” voters was lower than expected. This prompted the research team to develop a separate “booster” design in the North East in order to achieve a reasonable sample. Second, many potential respondents proved reluctant to take part in research on this subject. The following table sets out the total number of addresses issued and final number of target interviews.

Final sample profile		
Region	Sample issues	Target interviews
North East	1,360	700

‘Yes’ Voter Booster

Taking into account the turnout at the Referendum (47.7%) and the high proportion of people in the North East who voted against setting up an elected Regional Assembly (77.9%), few people who voted in favour of it would have been picked up in the random pre-selected sample. Only around 75 people who voted ‘Yes’ would have been interviewed, all other things being equal.

In order to obtain a more robust sample of ‘Yes’ voters, a booster survey was also conducted, running in parallel to the main survey. Random location quota in Output Area (OA) sampling was used for this component of the research. OAs are the smallest units of the Postal Address File to which census data can be attached. Ten OAs were selected to form the sampling points. In each of these OAs (or sampling points), we set an indicative target of six interviews, to give a total of around 60 “yes voter” booster interviews.

Interviewers asked a series of screening questions to establish whether the respondent voted in the Referendum, and if they did vote, whether this was in favour or against an elected Regional Assembly being set up. Interviews were only conducted with those who voted in favour of setting up an Assembly.

Statistical Reliability

The respondents to the survey are only samples of the total "population", so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been interviewed (the "true" values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the "true" values from knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the "true" value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the "95% confidence interval":

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
100 interviews	6	9	10
200 interviews	4	6	7
300 interviews	3	5	6
400 interviews	3	4	5
500 interviews	3	4	4
600 interviews	2	4	4
699 interviews (NE total)	2	3	4
700 interviews	2	3	4
800 interviews	2	3	4
900 interviews	2	3	3
1,000 interviews	2	3	3

For example, with a sample size of 699 where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the "true" value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of ± 3 percentage points from the sample result (i.e. between 27% and 33%).

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be "real," or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is "statistically significant", we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume "95% confidence interval", the differences between the results of two separate groups must be greater than the values given in the table below:

Size of samples compared	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
100 and 100	8	13	14
100 and 200	7	11	12
100 and 400	7	10	11
100 and 600	6	10	11
200 and 200	6	9	10
200 and 400	5	8	9
300 and 300	5	7	8
400 and 400	4	6	7
500 and 500	4	6	6
500 and 1,000	3	5	6

Survey Piloting and Monitoring

The questionnaires were developed by MORI working closely with Plymouth University and The Electoral Commission. At the early drafting stage, it was clear that the specific geographic nature of some of the questions meant that different versions were needed for different authority types – single-tier or two-tier.

Questionnaire Version	Region	Areas covered
1	North East	Northumberland two-tier
2	North East	North East single-tier areas
3	North East	County Durham two-tier

Pilot

A pilot was conducted on Wednesday 13th October 2004. The purpose of the pilot was to test the questionnaires and other survey materials for clarity, length of the survey, etc. Interviewers were de-briefed by telephone and completed a pilot feedback document which formed the basis of the discussion. On the whole the questionnaire worked well, but the main issue was with the length (and the target number of interviews for the main stage was reduced as a result). Interviewers timed each section of the questionnaire, and on average it was coming out about 10 minutes longer than the target length of 35 minutes.

Briefings

A Conference call was held before the start of fieldwork between the MORI Executive Team and Field Managers, and the Regional Area Managers who manage the field force in their area. This provided an opportunity for the project team to fully explain the background and aims of the survey, as well as talking through the specifics of the project. The Area Managers provide a first point of contact for interviewers, so it was important that they fully understood the project.

Interviewer instructions

Interviewers were provided with comprehensive and detailed Interviewer Instructions written by MORI executives.

In advance of the start of the main survey fieldwork, MORI was responsible for sending out a letter to all sample households, notifying them that the survey was taking place and that their address had been randomly selected. Formara Ltd printed the letters and enclosed this in a stamped envelope which was then dispatched to interviewers as part of their work pack. This method was used so that interviewers could post the letter a few days before they were due to visit the property, therefore keeping the letter as fresh in the minds of the potential respondents as possible.

Contact procedure

When interviewers attempted to contact respondents at their allocated addresses they were required to complete a contact sheet. This involved completing the contact record, detailing the date, time and outcome of each call made. Once contact was made with someone at the household, the interviewer made a household selection (if there was more than one household at that address) and then made a respondent selection using the kish grid selection process. Once the respondent had been selected, that was the person the interviewer was required to interview. No substitution of another household member was allowed. Interviewers were required to make at least 6 calls to the address, including visits in the evening and at weekends to try to secure an interview.

Once the final outcome had been reached – either by a successful interview, refusal, or other outcome, interviewers sent their contact sheet back to Head Office. If the outcome was a successful interview, interviewers sent the contact sheet back along with the corresponding questionnaire.

Fieldwork monitoring

Interviews were carried out face-to-face, in respondents' homes, between 5 November 2004 and 20 February 2005. Interviews were conducted using a paper questionnaire. The booking-in system was an important element to allow monitoring of the survey. It was essential that all booking-in and data entry was kept up-to-date so that there was an accurate picture of response rate and targets, where re-issuing could take place etc. As the contact sheets were returned to the office they were booked in using the barcode, which was a product of the address number. This procedure is more accurate than

relying on punching in the address number each time. Outcome codes for all addresses were therefore logged on to a database at MORI to allow monitoring and analysis.

MORI's Field department produced weekly updates which detailed an overview of progress in terms of numbers achieved, response rate etc, but also at a detailed sample point level. MORI Executives and the Field Managers met regularly to discuss progress. Progress reports were sent on a weekly basis to Plymouth University and The Electoral Commission.

Reissues

In order to maintain a high level of response rate, and help meet the target number of interviews, MORI re-issued all non-contacts and soft refusals to be worked again.

Response report

The table below summarises the aggregate response rates achieved during fieldwork in the North East.

Area	North East
Sample issued	1,360
Valid sample – n	1,197
Valid sample - %	88.0
Invalid sample – n	163
Invalid sample - %	12.0
Successful	699
Unadjusted response rate	51.4%
Adjusted response rate	58.4%
Refused sample – n	323
Refused sample - %	23.8
No contact sample – n	175
No contact sample - %	12.9

Source: MORI

When analysing the table above, it is important to note the following definitions:

- **Sample issued** – the total number of randomly selected addresses issued to MORI interviewers;
- **Valid sample** – of the sample issued, the total number of addresses where it was possible to obtain an interview, regardless of whether an interview was successfully completed or not. This includes:

Valid sample:

Successful Interview
Refused before respondent selection
Refused after respondent selection
Entry to block/scheme refused by warden
Occupied, no contact at address after 6 calls
No contact with selected respondent after 6 calls
Occupier in but not answering door after 6 calls

Source: MORI

- **Invalid sample** - of the sample issued, the total number of addresses where it was not possible to obtain an interview. This includes:

Invalid sample:

Property vacant
 Property derelict
 Property demolished
 Non-residential property
 Property not found
 Too ill to participate
 Away during fieldwork
 Other
 Unsure if occupied, no contact after 6 calls
 Not needed, target achieved
 Withdrawn by HO

Source: MORI

- **Successful** – the total number of interviews successfully completed;
- **Unadjusted response rate** – the total number of interviews obtained by MORI interviews – expressed as a percentage of the total number of addresses issued – regardless of whether they are valid or invalid addresses;
- **Adjusted response rate** – the total number of interviews obtained by MORI interviews – expressed as a percentage of the total number of valid addresses only.

The non-contact and refusal sample can be further broken down into the more detailed codes, as shown in the table below:

Area	North East
	n
Sample issued	1360
Refused sample:	323
Refused before respondent selection	207
Refused after selection	115
Entry to block refused by warden etc	1
Non contact sample:	175
Occupied, but no contact at address after 6+ calls	105
No contact with selected resident after 6+ calls	48
Occupier in, but not answering door after 6+	22

Source: MORI

Weighting

Various weighting attributes were used in order to ensure that the data is representative.

Main Survey weighting

1. *Household to individual weights:* This is necessary because of the switch from (mostly) electoral registers (a sample of individuals) to PAF (a sample of households). (Electoral registers are no longer used for most research projects, following the Robertson judgement). From a sampling perspective, if the aim is to collect the views of all individuals, a random selection of households will tend to over-represent the characteristics and views of single person households. This is because a resident living on their own in a household will have a higher probability of selection than someone living with two or three other people. Therefore, we need to take corrective weighting action to overcome this.

North East (699)		
People in hh	% Unweighted	% Weighted
1	45	27
2	46	54
3	7	12
4	2	5
5	*	1
6	0	0
7	*	1

Source: MORI

2. *Demographic Profile:* Weighting on gender, age and work status has been applied using 2001 Census information to ensure that the profile is representative of the region.

North East (699)		
	% Unweighted	% Weighted
Male	38	48
Female	62	52
18-34	23	28
35-54	35	37
55+	42	35
Working full-time	45	38
Not working full-time	55	62
Single-tier (unitary)	67	68
Two tier	33	32

3. *Authority type weights:* The survey covered both single and two-tier authority areas. In Yorkshire and the Humber, the sample was stratified to ensure enough interviews were achieved in two-tier areas. To account for this a population area weight has been applied to the data for each region.

North East (699)		
	% Unweighted	% Weighted
Single-tier (unitary)	67	68
Two tier	33	32

Source: MORI

Booster Survey Weighting

The 'yes' booster data - where quota in OA sampling was used - has not been weighted in the computer tables. The SPSS contains a weighting variable which allows this data to be weighted to the demographic profile of the people in the main survey who voted in favour of an elected regional assembly.

Demographics	Profile of Yes Voters in the Main sample (weighted)
	%
Male	57
Female	43
18-34	18
35-54	42
55+	40
Working full-time	46
Not working full-time	54

Source: MORI

4. The Referendum in Context

The referendum on establishing an elected Regional Assembly for the North East took place some two and a half years after the government published its White Paper, *Your Region, Your Choice: Revitalising the English Regions*. In the intervening period a formal ‘soundings’ exercise was conducted to gauge the level of interest in holding such a referendum in each of the English regions. These ‘soundings’, comprising largely ‘elite level’ submissions to the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM) by a variety of individuals and organisations, led to an announcement in June 2003 that referendums would be held in the North East, North West, and Yorkshire and the Humber regions.

Although the ODPM did not draw direct conclusions from these ‘soundings’, it is clear from the publication *Your Region, Your Say* that only in the three northern regions did a majority of respondents favour holding a referendum, and half or more of them (as against just a quarter everywhere else in England) claimed that interest in such a referendum in the region was ‘strong’ or ‘very strong’.

Similar inter-regional differences were not always apparent in public opinion polls carried out around the same time. These showed that about six in ten people in *every* region favoured holding a referendum on a regional assembly, but also that there was low awareness of the government’s proposals. A plurality of respondents everywhere also said they would vote ‘Yes’ in a putative referendum, with those in the three northern regions a little more likely to be in favour.

In July 2004 the ODPM further announced that only the North East would now move forward to a referendum. Citing concern over reports of irregularities in the all-postal voting process during the June 2004 local and European Parliament elections in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber, the Local Government Minister Nick Raynsford said that the North East had ‘consistently welcomed’ all-postal ballots and had shown ‘clear expectation and overwhelming support for a referendum’. Opposition politicians were, however, quick to suggest that the government had been influenced by Labour backbenchers reporting that any referendum in the North West or Yorkshire would be lost. Only the North East, it was believed, where Labour won 28 of the 30 seats and almost 60% of the vote in the 2001 general election and where it controlled 16 out of 25 local authorities, could be relied upon to vote ‘Yes’.

Polling evidence in the run up to the referendum painted a less sanguine picture. Especially noticeable was the consistent majority against an Assembly among those who claimed to be ‘certain’ to vote. This became more pronounced as the referendum approached. A MORI poll conducted in mid-October for the *Northern Echo* showed a clear majority of such electors preparing to vote ‘No’ –see Table 1.

Table 1. Pre-referendum attitudes to an elected Regional Assembly*

	<i>July/August</i>			<i>September/October</i>		<i>October</i>	
	<i>All</i>	<i>'Certain to vote'</i>		<i>All</i>	<i>'Certain to vote'</i>	<i>All</i>	<i>'Certain to vote'</i>
Support	31	37	Will vote 'Yes'	38	35	35	31
Oppose	24	41	Will vote 'No'	33	51	42	54
Neither/don't know	45	22	Don't know	29	14	23	16

*All data taken from MORI polls. July/August = 935 interviews in 3 Northern regions; September/October = 176 interviews in North East region; October = 1,013 interviews in North East region.

That the referendum was conducted using an all-postal ballot gave an unusual twist to the campaign. Electors could, of course, vote as soon as they received their ballot papers and many of them did just that. Over a quarter (26.3%) of all votes that would be cast had been registered by two weeks before the close of poll, and more than two-thirds (68.4%) by seven days before.

When the ballot papers were counted just under half the eligible electorate was found to have voted. The turnout was 47.7% if both valid and invalid ballots are included; 47.1% on the basis of valid ballots only. Turnout varied from 57.4% in the rural authority of Alnwick, Northumberland to 42.1% in the urban unitary authority of Middlesbrough. Across the region turnout was 5 percentage points higher than at the all-postal European and local elections in June 2004. However, the average increase was just 1.7% in those councils which had had combined European and local elections five months earlier as opposed to 8.1% in authorities where there had only been European contests. This tends to confirm previous research on the greater importance of local than European elections as a driver of electoral participation. There are also very high correlations between local authority level turnouts at the two contests in 2004. The correlation is 0.95 in cases where a council had local elections in June; 0.91 where it did not. This suggests that similar factors related to the structural and demographic characteristics of each local authority play an important role in influencing where it sits in any league table of turnout regardless of the nature of the actual contest. We will investigate this further using the individual level data provided by our survey.

The turnout in the North East may also be compared with that at the three other 'devolution' referendums which have taken place in Great Britain since 1997. Far more people voted in the North East than in London, but fewer than in Scotland and Wales –see Table 2. In the latter two contests the turnout partly reflected different perceptions of the powers of the bodies being created and of their ability to make a difference to people's lives. In London there was no real opposition to the creation of a Mayor and Assembly and many electors saw it as a 'done deal' even before the referendum had even taken place. Voting was by traditional methods, though it did coincide with scheduled London Borough election contests. In the North East, by contrast, both sides of the argument mounted vigorous campaigns and voting was entirely by post. The second column in Table 2 shows the proportion of people in

each case who said they cared a good deal about the result. Only in the North East is this exceeded by the turnout at the contest itself. A clue perhaps that all-postal voting may have some success in boosting participation by those who are otherwise less engaged with the issue at hand.

Table 2. Turnout at devolution Referendums 1997-2004

	% turnout (valid votes only)	% 'cared a good deal' 'about the result'
Scotland 1997	60.2	72
Wales 1997	50.1	51
London 1998	34.1	53
North East 2004	47.1	44

*taken from surveys conducted after the Referendums. All fieldwork (except that in the North East) by the National Centre for Social Research.

5. Survey Results

5a The campaign and the issue

The fact that a referendum was taking place in the North East did not escape many electors. However, there was much less certainty about precisely what the referendum was about, let alone the nature of the institution which was being proposed.

A large majority (89%) reported that they had seen, heard or read at least something about the referendum in the weeks leading up to the vote. Those who had heard nothing at all varied from just 3% among voters to 21% among those who did not vote. Younger people and those in lower social grades were also less likely to have been aware of the referendum. Most of the campaigning appears to have been passive rather than active –that is, conducted through leaflets and broadcasts rather than by direct contact with electors. Only a few handfuls of respondents said they had been canvassed in person or by telephone, and only 3% of our sample experienced an approach in the street by somebody campaigning about the referendum. In contrast, 76% had received a leaflet at home and nearly half (46%) had watched a campaign broadcast.

However, a rather smaller proportion of the electorate seems to have paid close attention to the campaign. About three in ten respondents said they had watched or read a great deal or a fair amount of the coverage of the referendum on television and/or in the newspapers, and a similar proportion had that level of discussion of the contest with family or friends. One aspect of the campaign that was noticed by many electors was the involvement of regional 'celebrities'. More than a quarter of our respondents spontaneously mentioned Brendan Foster's name, and 18% cited the local businessman Sir John Hall. In each case more than 90% were also correctly aware that they were supporting the 'Yes' campaign. About 30 other names were raised by more than one respondent, including the footballers Jackie Charlton and

Alan Shearer and the actor Kevin Whateley. The only prominent ‘No’ celebrity campaigner with any degree of public recognition was the so-called ‘metric martyr’ Neil Herron, but he was mentioned by little more than 2% of respondents.

Awareness of the campaign does not, however, seem to have been translated into knowledge of the issues. 56% agreed that they did not know what the issues were against 30% who disagreed. No fewer than 68% of those aged between 18 and 34 and 70% of non-voters professed ignorance. There was even greater uncertainty when respondents were asked about specific aspects of the regional government agenda. Those who knew at least a fair amount about the proposed elected Assembly and how it would work were easily outweighed by those who knew not very much –see Table 3. Knowledge of the current appointed Assembly was even sketchier. When asked a series of factual questions about the consequences of having a regional assembly, a striking proportion of respondents simply did not know the answer

Table 3. Knowledge of regional government.

% know a ‘great deal’/‘fair amount’ about:	
how an Assembly would have worked	21
the work of the appointed NE Assembly	6
% did not know whether regions with assemblies:	
will have fewer MPs	41
will have power to set the school leaving age	40
will have same powers as Scottish Parliament	34

This disjunction between campaign awareness and knowledge of the issues may partly be explained by how interested electors were in the issue. More people than was the case in Scotland and Wales in 1997 seemed to take only a minimal interest in politics in general. 56% of those in the North East said they were not very or not at all interested; in Scotland 31%, and in Wales 36%, reported that interest in politics was not very much or none. This pattern is supported by the figures on caring about the result of the referendum in table 2 above. Moreover, only 19% of respondents in the North East took a positive view that it was ‘an interesting campaign’ whereas 48% disagreed with that assertion.

In keeping with previous research findings (for example, ICM’s report to the Electoral Commission on public attitudes to the June 2004 elections), women and the young consistently showed less interest and care about the result than did men and the elderly. 47% of men and 63% of women said they were not very or not at all interested in politics. Among those aged 18-34 the figure was 70% compared with 46% among respondents aged 55 or over. Similarly 50% of men and 40% of women agreed that they cared a good deal about the result of the referendum, and 26% of younger voters as opposed to 62% of older ones took the same view.

It was also the case that many respondents lacked confidence that the regional Assembly, to the degree they knew anything about it, would make much of a difference. Almost as sceptical of regional as of national level government, a majority believed that the assembly would have little impact either in particular policy areas or even in redressing the democratic deficit –see Table 4.

Table 4. Trust in and expectations of government

% who 'just about always'/'most of the time':	
trust governments to put the needs of the nation above party	27
trust UK government to work in interests of North East	28
would trust elected assembly to work in interests of North East	39
% (of those with an opinion) who felt a regional assembly would make 'no difference' to:	
the region's economy	46
the region's health service	59
the region's voice in Europe	57
ordinary people's say in how region was governed	67

The Electoral Commission's own campaign to increase awareness and participation won mixed reviews. More than a third of respondents (37%) were unable or unwilling to offer any views on it, and of those who were, a much greater proportion thought it ineffective (64%) than effective (36%). 'No' voters and those in social class AB were most likely to think the Commission's efforts effective. The Electoral Commission did though receive a more positive endorsement than the 'Yes' campaign. Not only did fewer electors (17%) have no opinion about it, but no less than 79% of those who did said it was ineffective. The 'No' campaign, by contrast, was clearly seen as more effective than ineffective by all categories of respondent.

5b Patterns of turnout

These reactions to the campaign and to the issue of regional government are likely to have been reflected in electors' willingness to turn out at the referendum. In this section we show how turnout varied between different groups of electors, defined in terms of both their attitudes and their socio-economic characteristics.

Table 5 confirms many previous findings on the correlates of electoral participation. The elderly were several times more likely than the young to vote; home owners were more likely to participate than those in rented accommodation; those in the highest social class category were more frequent voters than those lower down the scale. On all those dimensions the pattern at the North East referendum was similar to that found in the Scottish and Welsh devolution referendums in 1997. However, unlike in those contests, women were less likely than men to vote, reflecting perhaps their lesser engagement with the issue.

Table 5. %Turnout by socio-demographic characteristics

Overall turnout	55	(‘true’ turnout 47)
Men	58	
Women	53	
Age 18-24	15	
25-34	30	
35-44	49	
45-54	60	
55-64	79	
65+	82	
Working	51	
Not working	57	
AB	71	
C1	51	
C2	51	
DE	52	
Owned	64	
Rented	43	

Respondents were asked to articulate why they had decided to vote or not. As is customary in surveys of this kind, many of those who voted saw their behaviour as fulfilling an aspect of their democratic rights or duties. For example, ‘it is important to vote’ (28%), ‘it is my right’ to vote (17%), ‘it is my duty’ to vote (16%). In addition, a good proportion also appeared to be influenced by the issue at hand. 37% said they wanted to have a say and 15% that the issue was important. More explicitly 31% were motivated by a desire to ensure that a regional assembly was either created or stopped.

Among non-voters, there was a similar mix of general and specific explanations. The all-postal ballot seemed to have the effect of minimising the numbers who cited circumstantial factors. Just 9% said they were ‘too busy’; 7% that they ‘forgot’; and 6% that they had ‘meant to vote’. On the other hand, 25% claimed not to be interested in the issue and 8% that the referendum was ‘not important’. Some 14% cited the fact that ‘didn’t know enough about the issue’ to be able to cast a ballot.

The propensity to turn out also appeared to be strongly related to other attitudes and characteristics. For example, those who showed greater general civic activism or political allegiance were highly likely to vote. Nearly three-quarters of those who had recently engaged in two or more acts such as contacting a local councillor, helping with fund-raising, or being an officer in a voluntary organisation voted as opposed to fewer than half of those who had done nothing of this kind –see Table 6. And 70% of those who saw themselves as being strong partisans (of whichever party) took part in the referendum, but just 30% of those who supported no party did so.

Table 6. Turnout and activism

	% voted
Two or more 'civic' acts	72
One 'civic' act	64
No such activity*	47
*including those whose sole activity was a general election vote.	
Very strong partisan	70
Strong partisan	65
Not very strong partisan	47
Not a party supporter	30

Equally, the more respondents were interested in politics or engaged with the issue, the more likely were they to vote. Table 7 shows that 71% of those who are very or fairly interested in politics voted, but only 43% of those who are not very or not at all interested. Participation was even more common among the minority who reported having discussed the referendum a good deal or a fair amount, as it was among those who cared about its outcome

Table 7. Turnout and engagement

	% voted
Very or fairly interested in politics	71
Not very or not at all interested	43
Discussed the referendum:	
a good deal/fair amount	84
not very much/ not at all	44
'I cared a good deal about the result':	
strongly agree/tend to agree	83
strongly disagree/tend to disagree	30

A sense that the act of voting is a civic duty, which many voters had spontaneously cited as a reason for their behaviour, is also correlated with turnout. Two-thirds of those who strongly agreed or tended to agree that 'it is my duty to vote' took part in the referendum, but only 28% of those who strongly or tended to disagree.

5c Modelling turnout at the referendum

Those variables which we have suggested as having clear positive or negative associations with the likelihood of individual electors turning out to vote at the North East referendum may themselves, of course, be interrelated. For example, older people are more likely to be voters and also have a stronger belief in the idea of a civic duty to vote. A greater proportion of people in social class AB voted in the referendum than did those in other classes, and they also showed a greater general interest in politics.

To untangle some of these relationships we now outline a model of turnout at the referendum. This is based on a logistic regression analysis which has turnout (that is, whether an individual voted or not) as its dependent variable. A number of independent variables are then considered in terms of their ability to distinguish between those who did and did not vote –see Table 8. The logistic regression model was significant at the 1% level according to the chi-square statistics. The model’s fit to the data was relatively good (Nagelkerke R-square = 0.5) and more than 80% cases/respondents were classified correctly.

Table 8. Logistic regression model of turnout at the North East referendum

	B (S.E.)	Exp(B)
AGE	0.46 (0.06)**	1.6
PAPER_W	0.48 (0.21)*	1.6
PAPER_D	0.31 (0.21)	1.4
ACTIVE	1.06 (0.24)**	2.9
CAREREF(1)	1.63 (0.21)**	5.1
DUTYSTRG(1)	0.79 (0.21)**	2.2
Constant	-5.10 (0.46)**	0.01

Table entries are estimated logistic regression coefficients, with standard errors in parentheses, and the odds ratio coefficients, Exp(B). ** = significant at the 0.01 level; * 0.05= significant at the 0.05 level.

Definition of independent variables:

AGE – age is included as a continuous variable with 7 categories: 18-24; 25-34; 35-44; 45-54; 55-64; 65-74; 75+;

PAPER_W: dummy variable, with code of ‘1’ if ‘regularly read at least one local weekly newspaper, including free newspapers’;

PAPER_D: dummy variable, with code of ‘1’ if ‘regularly read at least one daily newspaper’;

ACTIVE: dummy variable with code of ‘1’ if R has engaged in a civic activity (including voting at a general election) in the last two or three years’;

CAREREF: dummy variable, with a code of ‘1’ if R strongly agrees or tends to agree that ‘I cared a good deal about the result of referendum.’;

DUTYSTRG: dummy variable, with a code of ‘1’ if R strongly agrees ‘It is my duty to vote’.

The independent variable AGE has a significant positive effect on the likelihood to vote. All other things being equal, the odds that a respondent from the age group, let’s say, 55-64 has voted is 60% higher than the odds of voting for a respondent from the age group 45-54. This relationship applies across all age categories. Those who regularly read a local weekly newspaper are significantly more likely to have voted than those who do not, holding all the other variables constant. The impact of attitudes on voting propensity is even sharper. The odds of those who strongly agreed or tended to agree with the statement ‘I cared a good deal about the result of referendum’ voting were five times the odds of those who did not agree. And if a respondent strongly agreed with the statement ‘It is my duty to vote’, then their odds of voting were more than twice the odds for those who did not think like that.

Because of the relatively small size of our sample (n=699) we were obliged to restrict the number of predictors in the logistic regression model. Nonetheless we were able successfully to distinguish between those who did and did not vote in the referendum. Younger people, people who had not participated in any other civic activity, those who did not read regularly (local) newspapers, those did not care about the result of

the referendum, and those who did not consider participation in elections as a civic duty were less likely to have voted. In short, the key to turnout was engagement. Referendum voters were disproportionately drawn from those electors who took an active interest in their community and/or had a commitment to the democratic process in general.

5d The ballot process

Although very few electors spontaneously mentioned the all-postal ballot as a reason for their deciding to vote or not vote in the Referendum, it is worth reviewing public attitudes to the voting process. There are two aspects to this. First, reactions to the postal vote in a region which had already experienced a similar system at the European Parliament elections earlier in 2004. Second, opinions about the ease of understanding of the questions asked in both the Regional Assembly and local government referendums.

The vast majority of respondents said either that they posted their ballot papers personally (82%) or that they asked someone else to do it for them (9%). Small fractions either handed their ballot paper in at an official delivery point (3%) or at the local council offices (4%). In many cases, these are likely to have been one and the same place! Those respondents who were working were a little more likely than average to hand in rather than post their ballot papers, but there are no other striking demographic differences in responses. There should though be some concern that many electors professed to be unaware of the facilities provided by assisted delivery points (ADPs). One-third of voters and six in ten non-voters did not know that there was somewhere they could go to receive assistance, vote in private, and/or simply drop off their ballot paper.

There was widespread satisfaction and, more importantly, minimal dissatisfaction with these arrangements s-see Table 9. Non-voters were also asked this question. Although fewer appeared to find the system satisfactory (56%), this was more because a large minority reasonably said they had no opinion one way or the other (31%) than because they were dissatisfied (13%). Even larger majorities of voters also found voting by post convenient. This level of satisfaction was substantially higher than that found across the four all-postal pilot regions at the 2004 local and European elections. Then only 59% of respondents said they were very or fairly satisfied with the arrangements for voting (ICM report Table 12.2.2).

Table 9. Satisfaction with and convenience of arrangements for voting in the Referendum

	All voters	Yes voters	No voters
% Very or fairly satisfied	82	89	79
% Very or fairly dissatisfied	10	5	12
% Very or fairly convenient	89	95	88
% Very or fairly inconvenient	5	3	5

Concern over alleged abuses of the postal voting system was one factor in leading the government to postpone the referendums in the North West and Yorkshire and the Humber, and in causing the Electoral Commission to revise its initial advice that all-

postal voting could safely be rolled out as a matter of course in local elections (EC reports). Such concerns were far from the minds of most electors in the North East. Among voters, those thinking the system safe from fraud and abuse outweighed those thinking it unsafe by more than three to one, and an even smaller minority thought such fraud and abuse was a problem at this referendum. There were few worries either about the impact of voting by post on an elector's ability to vote in secret –see Table 10. The views of non-voters *are* relevant on the issue of perceptions of the effect of all-postal voting on fraud and secrecy. It is at least possible that concerns about these are responsible for some people not voting. However, as with satisfaction and convenience, non-voters were no more likely to have a negative view than voters. Simply that a greater proportion of them have no clear opinion.

Table 10. Perceptions of fraud and abuse

	All voters	Yes voters	No voters	Non-voters
% voting by post very or fairly safe	66	68	65	51
% voting by post very or fairly unsafe	21	20	22	21
% believing fraud and abuse very or fairly big problem at the referendum	12	11	14	10
% believing fraud and abuse not very big or no problem at the referendum	73	83	69	57
% voting by post very or fairly good for secrecy	76	83	74	61
% voting by post very or fairly bad for secrecy	10	7	12	10

When asked explicitly whether all postal voting had encouraged or discouraged their participation in the referendum, about a quarter of all electors said it had made a difference to them. One in five of these had been put off by the system; the others encouraged by it. Moreover, only 7% of all non-voters said they had been discouraged. These findings may well be linked to responses on the amount of information available about voting, and on the ease of understanding the instructions that accompanied the ballot papers. Most electors thought they had sufficient information about the process and reported no problems in understanding what they had to do –see Table 11. Both 'Yes' voters and those who did not vote were more likely to feel that too little information had been provided, but there was no evidence that either group found the mechanics especially challenging.

Table 11. Understanding the voting process

	All voters	Yes voters	No voters	Non-voters
% 'too much' information about voting	5	3	6	3
% 'too little' information about voting	15	30	11	26
% instructions very or fairly easy to understand	74	78	74	28
% instructions very or fairly difficult to understand	18	17	17	10

We could find no evidence that any of these responses were significantly mediated by the gender, age or social class of respondents. Voters of all types took a similar view on the electoral arrangements, on the threat of fraud and to the secret ballot, and on

the ease of understanding the process. If anything the young were slightly more likely than the elderly to find the system challenging and confusing. This suggests a lack of either willingness to engage or appropriate civic education rather than concerns and misunderstanding as such. However, the minority of political ‘sophisticates’ –those with a great deal of interest in politics or those who strongly disagreed that they did not know what the issues were- were somewhat more likely to find all-postal voting both unsatisfactory and not safe from fraud and abuse. Between a quarter and a third of them took this view compared to fewer than 20% of the less engaged.

One slight puzzle amidst what in general is a benign reaction to an all-postal ballot in the North East was respondents’ reported previous experience of voting in this way. Despite the fact that the entire region had voted by post at the European Parliament and any coincident local elections just five months previously, and that several individual local authorities had conducted all-postal pilots in earlier years, only four in ten of those who took part in the referendum could remember voting by post before. It seems scarcely plausible that all (or even a majority) of the 58% of referendum voters who said they had not previously taken part in such a ballot were really using the system for the first time. The findings stand as a useful reminder of how transient an experience the process of voting is for many electors, and of how the publicity and ‘voter education’ accompanying each discrete election (or referendum) should assume very little retained knowledge from previous events.

5e Patterns of voting.

The outcome of the referendum was decisive with scarcely one in ten electors in the region voting for an Assembly. Every council area in the North East voted ‘No’ by a margin of greater than two to one –see Table 12. In nine councils, including Sunderland, the margin of rejection exceeded four to one. Opinion was more evenly divided about the choice of future local government arrangements in those areas which currently have county and district councils. In Durham, a narrow majority preferred a single county-wide unitary authority; in Northumberland, the division of the county between two unitary authorities was the favoured structure.

Table 12. NE Referendum outcome

‘Yes’ votes	%	(as % of electorate)	‘No’ votes	%	(as % of electorate)
197,310	22.1	(10.4)	696,519	77.9	(36.7)
Max % ‘Yes’	Derwentside 29.8		Min % ‘Yes’	Darlington 12.9	

Local government options

Durham

Option A (Single council)	50.6%
Option B (Three councils)	49.4%

Northumberland

Option A (Single council)	43.8%
Option B (Two councils)	56.2%

A. Regional Assembly

Given such an overwhelming ‘No’ vote, it is little surprise to find that opposition to an Assembly was spread across all demographic groups –see Table 13. Those in less skilled occupations were the most likely to vote ‘Yes’. Among those in the youngest age category who actually voted, opinion was more evenly split. By contrast, those aged 55 or over and those in the highest social class (AB) came down particularly heavily on the ‘No’ side. It so happens, as we noted above, that these are also the groups of electors most likely to cast a ballot.

Non-voters in the sample were disproportionately concentrated among those groups (especially the young) who have been consistently shown to be less willing to participate in elections of all kinds. Their views on the Assembly were not, however, dissimilar to those of voters and their participation would have made no material difference to the result.

Table 13. Referendum vote and social characteristics

	% Yes	% No	% did not vote		% Yes	% No	% did not vote
Gender				Social class			
Male	17	41	42	AB	12	59	29
Female	12	41	46	C1	11	41	48
				C2	13	38	48
				DE	18	35	47
Age				Housing			
18-34	10	13	77	Owner	14	50	37
35-54	16	39	46	Non-owner	15	28	57
55+	16	67	17				

One other aspect of the level and spread of the rejection of an Assembly in the North East is worthy of comment. It is often assumed that the stated preferences of political parties influence how their supporters will behave in a referendum. In the referendums in both Scotland and Wales in 1997, for example, those Labour supporters who voted heavily endorsed their party’s policy on devolution. Although many high profile Labour politicians, including Tony Blair himself, Gordon Brown, John Prescott and Ken Livingstone, actively engaged in the campaign in the North East, they were unable to persuade even a plurality of Labour identifiers to back them –see Table 14. Given the dominance of Labour in the region, this failure was pivotal to the outcome. The behaviour of Conservatives is not surprising given their party’s stance, but Liberal Democrat identifiers were also reluctant to follow their party on this issue.

Table 14. Referendum vote and partisanship (those identifying with a party only)

	% Yes	% No	Did Not Vote
Conservative (14% of sample)	3	66	31
Labour (52% of sample)	22	37	41
Liberal Democrat (11% of sample)	13	51	36

In other cases where referendums have resulted in a clear rejection of a government initiated reform, it has been argued that voters are simply casting a cost-free opinion on the performance

of the sponsoring body rather than engaging with the issue at hand. Certainly there was a degree of dissatisfaction with both the government and the Prime Minister among electors in the North East, and scepticism about politicians in general. These feelings were more prevalent among ‘No’ voters –see Table 15. Nonetheless, some 60% of all those who voted and were satisfied with the government and/or the Prime Minister also voted ‘No’.

Table 15. Referendum vote and feelings of satisfaction and trust

	Yes voters	No voters	Did not vote
% dissatisfied with government	42	63	45
% dissatisfied with Prime Minister	34	66	45
% ‘almost never’ trust politicians to tell the truth	32	55	49
% attack on Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein ‘unjustified’	36	48	43

One particular articulation of dissatisfaction can be seen in respondents’ perception of how the North East is treated by the government at Westminster. More than three-quarters thought that the government ‘looks after some parts of England more than others’, and two-thirds that the North East received ‘a little’ or ‘much less than its fair share of government spending’.

Such views might be thought to be compatible with support for an Assembly to help redress the imbalance. However, as we have seen, the idea of regional government was hardly embedded in everyday life –two-thirds of respondents (including more than half of even ‘Yes’ voters) knew nothing about or had never heard of the current appointed Assembly. And few, except ‘Yes’ voters, seemed to expect that an elected assembly would have much impact – except perhaps by leading to an increase in taxes –see Table 16.

Table 16. Referendum vote and perceived impact of Assembly

	Yes voters	No voters	Did not vote
% believing:			
taxes would be ‘a lot’/‘a little’ higher	51	79	51
region’s economy would be ‘a lot’/‘a little’ better	62	11	21
region’s voice in Europe would be ‘a lot’/‘a little’ stronger	57	16	23
pride in the region would be ‘a lot’/‘a little’ stronger	42	10	14
ordinary people will have more say in how region is governed	62	26	28
regional assembly would be a ‘waste of money’	12	80	46

These findings contrast sharply with the situation in Scotland and Wales in 1997. Then, some 64% of all Scottish electors and 41% of Welsh ones thought a devolved institution would lead to a better economy; 77% and 54% respectively that it would give them more pride in their country; and 79% and 54% that it would give ordinary people more say in how the country was governed. A much higher proportion than in the North East also felt they could trust the new institution to work in the country’s (region’s) best long-term interests. 84% in Scotland and 67% in Wales said they would trust it to do this ‘just about always’ or ‘most of the time’; in the North East only 39% of respondents felt the same.

It is clear then that the regional assembly as proposed struck few positive chords with a large majority of the North East electorate. One explanation may be that they had too little information about it. More than a third of respondents felt that to be the case as against just

7% who said that they had had ‘too much’ information. However, some two-thirds had received leaflets from *both* the ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ campaigns, and some six in ten of those claimed to have read them. Nearly half had also watched a campaign broadcast on television –with similar numbers tuning in for each side of the argument. Indeed regional television programmes were the single most cited source of information about the referendum.

For a good many respondents, though, the decision to vote ‘No’ seemed to be based on an assessment of the campaign and the issues involved. The ‘No’ campaign was seen as the more effective by both ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ voters and by those who did not vote alike –see Table 17. Many more ‘No’ (37%) than ‘Yes’ (18%) voters strongly agreed that they ‘cared a good deal about the result of the referendum’. More than a third (36%) of ‘No’ voters offered their desire to stop the regional assembly going ahead as one of the prompts behind their decision to vote; only 24% of ‘Yes’ voters were similarly motivated by a wish to ensure the assembly was set up.

Table 17. Referendum vote and perceived effectiveness of ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ campaigns

	Yes voters	No voters	Did not vote
% believing ‘Yes’ campaign to be:			
‘very’ or ‘fairly effective’	30	18	13
‘not very’ or ‘not at all effective’	68	78	52
% believing ‘No’ campaign to be:			
‘very’ or ‘fairly effective’	67	69	32
‘not very’ or ‘not at all effective’	29	28	33

B. Local Government changes

As is normally the case when two elections are held simultaneously, almost all those who voted in the regional assembly referendum also made an effort to do so at the parallel local government reorganisation referendum. The ‘drop-off’ in ballots returned was just over 4,000 votes (2.2% of the total) in Durham and nearly 3,000 votes (also 2.2% of the total) in Northumberland. However, rather more ‘local’ votes were rejected either before or at the count, mainly as being ‘unmarked or void for uncertainty’.

Once turnout is taken into account, however, we had relatively few respondents in our sample who had expressed an opinion on the future structure of local government in Durham and Northumberland. What is more almost 15% of them (compared to just 2% of voters at the assembly referendum) could not remember how they had voted. That is not to say that electors in these areas were uninterested in the outcome. More than half said it mattered to them which councils would exist below regional level, with 23% of those in Durham –where opinions on structure were evenly divided- as opposed to 12% of those in Northumberland saying this concerned them a ‘great deal’. Once again, men and older people seemed to bother about the issue more than women and the young.

In Northumberland, men and women, the different age groups, and ‘Yes’ and ‘No’ voters alike supported the two councils option. In Durham, the single council option came out narrowly ahead though a plurality of women favoured having three councils.

However, of those who had an opinion, a substantial minority – 41% in Durham and 32% in Northumberland- did not believe that they had had sufficient information about the local government options for their area. This view was particularly prevalent among those who had not voted. Those who did vote reported little problem with understanding what was being asked of them. 69% said it was very or fairly easy to understand the options; 23% that it was very or fairly difficult. However, ‘No’ voters (25%) were more likely than ‘Yes’ voters (18%) to report difficulties.

6. Marked-up questionnaire

Regional Government Referendum Study North East

- Interviews conducted face-to-face with 699 residents of the North East region aged 18+
- Fieldwork conducted from 5 November 2004 to 20 February 2005
- Data is edited, and weighted to the profile of the region
- An asterisk (*) denotes a finding of less than 0.5%, but greater than zero
- Where figures do not add up to 100, this is due to multiple coding or computer rounding
- Results based on all respondents unless otherwise stated
- Where bases are less than 30, unweighted numbers (N) are given, rather than percentages (%)

Partisan

Q1. **How would you vote if there were a General Election tomorrow? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Q2. **Which party are you most inclined to support?**

Base: All undecided or refused to say how they would vote in a General Election tomorrow (139)

	Q1 %	Q2 %
Conservative	13	9
Labour	40	29
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	12	12
Green Party	*	0
UK Independence Party (UKIP)	1	1
British National Party (BNP)	1	0
Other (PLEASE WRITE IN AND CODE '7')	*	1
Would not vote	13	2
Undecided	18	34
Refused	2	6
Don't know/ not stated	1	6

- Q3. **And how likely would you be to vote in an immediate general election, on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you would be absolutely certain to vote, and 1 means that you would be absolutely certain not to vote? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
10 (Absolutely certain to vote)	46
9	5
8	9
7	4
6	5
5	8
4	2
3	2
2	3
1 (Absolutely certain not to vote)	14
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

- Q4. **Generally speaking, do you think of yourself as Labour, Conservative, Liberal Democrat, or what? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

- Q5. **Do you generally think of yourself as closer to one of the parties than the others? (IF YES) Which party is that? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Base: All not identifying with a party (149)

	Q4 %	Q5 %
Conservative	14	2
Labour	52	9
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	11	6
Other	1	0
None	15	53
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	7	31

- Q6. **Would you call yourself very strong ... [INSERT NAME OF PARTY], fairly strong or not very strong? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Base: All identifying with a party (576)

	%
Very strong	22
Fairly strong	43
Not very strong	34
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	2

- Q7. **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way the Government is running the country?** SINGLE CODE ONLY
- Q8. **Are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way Mr Blair is doing his job as Prime Minister?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q7 %	Q8 %
Satisfied	37	40
Dissatisfied	52	51
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	11	9

General political

- Q9. **How much do you trust British governments of any party to place the needs of the nation above the interests of their own political party? Just read out the letter that applies.** SINGLE CODE ONLY
- Q10. **And how much do you trust politicians of any party in Britain to tell the truth when they are in a tight corner? Again, just read out the letter that applies.** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q9 %	Q10 %
Just about always	3	*
Most of the time	24	10
Only some of the time	51	38
Almost never	18	48
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	4	3

- Q11. SHOWCARD C (R) **Which of these statements best describes your opinion on the present system of governing Britain? Just read out the letter that applies.** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Works extremely well and could not be improved	1
Could be improved in small ways but mainly works well	36
Could be improved quite a lot	45
Needs a great deal of improvement	14
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3

Q12. Looking at the things on this card, which one do you think should be Britain's highest priority, the **most** important thing it should do? Just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q13. And which one do you think should be Britain's next highest priority, the **second** most important thing it should do? Again, just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q12 %	Q13 %
Maintain order in the nation	35	25
Give people more say in government decisions	37	24
Fight rising prices	13	24
Protect freedom of speech	11	22
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3	5

Q14-
Q19

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor dis-agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q14. People like me have no say in what the government does	28	39	12	17	3	1
Q15. Parties are only interested in people's votes, not in their opinions	35	39	8	13	2	2
Q16. Voting is the only way people like me can have any say about how the government runs things	26	44	11	15	4	1
Q17. It is my duty to vote	42	31	10	10	6	2
Q18. This country should adopt a new voting system that would give parties seats in parliament in proportion to their share of the votes	22	30	22	14	4	7
Q19. We should keep the current voting system for parliamentary elections as it is more likely to produce single-party government	10	34	24	17	7	8

Q20- **How interested would you say you are in each of the following?** SINGLE CODE
 Q23 ONLY

		Very interested	Fairly interested	Not very interested	Not at all interested	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q20.	Politics	8	36	35	21	*
Q21.	News about Parliament and the government	9	45	28	18	*
Q22.	News about your local council and councillors	16	43	26	15	*
Q23.	News about the European Union	9	27	30	32	2

Q24. **Do you know the name of any of your current local councillors, or not?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Yes	50
No	49
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

Q25. **How often would you say that you discuss politics or political issues with your family or friends?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Often	22
Every now and then	25
Rarely	28
Never	24
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	0

Q26. **Single tier**
And to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way your county council is doing its job these days? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All in single tier areas (471)

Two tier

And to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way your local council is doing its job these days? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All in two tier areas (228)

Q27. **To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with the way your local district council is doing its job these days?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q26 single tier %	Q26 two tier %	Q27 %
Very satisfied	5	4	7
Fairly satisfied	38	45	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	22	17	20
Fairly dissatisfied	22	20	18
Very dissatisfied	12	10	9
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1	4	4

Political/constitutional issues

- Q28. Which of the statements on this card best describes your own view of British participation in the European single currency, the euro? Just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY
- Q29. And which best describes your own view of British membership of the European Union? Again, just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY
- Q30. And which best describes your own view of Britain adopting the new European constitution? Again, just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q28 %	Q29 %	Q30 %
I strongly support it	6	9	4
I am generally in favour of it, but could be persuaded against if I thought it would be bad for Britain	24	30	18
I am generally opposed to it, but could be persuaded in favour if I thought it would be good for Britain	29	27	26
I strongly oppose it	34	23	30
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	7	12	21

- Q31. From everything you have seen and heard, do you think the military attack on Iraq to remove Saddam Hussein was justified or unjustified? SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Justified	45
Unjustified	44
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	11

Identity

- Q32. What is the name of the local council/ county council for this area? SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Single tiers correctly identified Council	75
Two tier correctly identified Council	86

- Q33. What is the name of the borough, district or city council for this area? SINGLE CODE ONLY.

Base: All in two-tier local authorities (228)

	%
Correct	81

Q34. **England is divided into several official regions for administration of government services. Can you tell me which region you think you are in? DO NOT PROMPT. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Humberside	0
North	4
North East	62
North West	*
Merseyside	0
Tees-side	1
Tyneside	*
Tyne and Wear	4
Yorkshire and the Humber	0
Yorkshire	*
Yorkshire and Humberside	0
Other	7
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	21

Q35- Q41 **I would like you to think about how close you personally feel to different parts of the world, that is, how much you feel a sense of attachment and belonging to them. SINGLE CODE ONLY FOR EACH Q35-Q41.**

		Very closely	Fairly closely	Not very closely	Not at all	Don't know/ refused / not stated
Q35.	First of all, how closely attached do you feel to <u>your local area</u>?	54	36	9	2	*
Q36.	And how closely attached do you feel to the county of...?	37	40	16	3	4
Q37.	And how closely attached do you feel to the former county of...?	SEE TABLES				
Q38.	And how closely attached do you feel to the North East region as a whole?	47	40	9	3	*
Q39.	And how closely attached do you feel to <u>England</u> as a whole?	56	33	9	2	*
Q40.	And how closely attached do you feel to <u>Britain</u> as a whole?	49	36	12	2	0

Q41. And how closely attached do you feel to Europe as a whole?	7	30	36	25	1
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Q42. **Some people think of themselves first as British. Others may think of themselves first as English. Which, if any, of the following best describes how you see yourself?**
SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
English not British	14
More English than British	20
Equally English and British	37
More British than English	16
British not English	10
Other	2
None of these	2
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	*

Q43. **How long have you been living at your current address?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q44. **And how long have you been living in the North East?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q43 %	Q44 %
Up to 1 year	10	1
Over 1 year up to 2 years	9	1
Over 2 years up to 5 years	17	3
Over 5 years up to 10 years	17	3
Over 10 years up to 15 years	11	3
Over 15 years up to 20 years	9	3
Over 20 years or more	25	15
All my life/born in the region	2	72
Don't know/can't remember	0	*

Awareness of proposals

Q45. **How much would you say you know about the issue of whether or not to have an elected Regional Assembly in the North East?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q46. THERE IS NO Q46 IN THIS VERSION

Q47. **How much would you say you know about how the new North East Regional Assembly would have worked?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q45 %	Q47 %
A great deal	5	2
A fair amount	25	19
Not very much	58	63
Nothing at all/never heard of issue	10	13
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1	3

Q48. **Do you think that regional government (if it is set up) will be mainly taking powers that are currently exercised by central government, or powers that are currently exercised by local government, or will it be a mixture of both?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Central	7
Local	14
Both	52
Neither	4
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	22

Q49. THESE IS NO Q49 IN THIS VERSION

Q50. **As far as you know, which, if any of these powers would have been transferred to the North East Regional Assembly if it had been set up? Again, just read out the letter that applies.** MULTICODE OK

	Q50 %
Agreeing long-term action for improving the region's economy	38
Co-ordinating cultural and sporting activities in the region	24
Maintenance of major roads	21
Running a new regional fire authority	17
Supervising the National Health Service in the region	28
Other	*
None of these	7
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	33

Q51- PLEASE TELL ME IF YOU THINK THAT THE FOLLOWING STATEMENTS ARE TRUE OR FALSE. IF
 Q54 YOU DON'T KNOW, JUST SAY SO AND WE WILL MOVE ON TO THE NEXT QUESTION. SINGLE
 CODE ONLY

		True	False	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q51.	REGIONS THAT SET UP REGIONAL ASSEMBLIES WILL HAVE A REDUCED NUMBER OF MPs AT WESTMINSTER	18	41	41
Q52.	London is the only <u>English</u> region that currently has its own elected assembly	40	19	41
Q53.	Regional assemblies will have the power to set the school leaving age in their own area	10	50	40
Q54.	Regional assemblies in England will have the same powers as the Scottish Parliament, including being able to vary the rate of taxation	18	48	34

Q55. **Taking your answers from this card, which of the following do you think currently has most influence on people's everyday lives in your area? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Base: All in single tier areas (471)

	%
The UK government at Westminster	39
Local council	51
The European Union	6
Other	0
None	0
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3

Taking your answers from this card, which of the following do you think currently has most influence on people's everyday lives in your area? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All in two tier areas (228)

	%
The UK government at Westminster	47
County council	24
District/borough council	16
The European Union	6
Other	1
None	0
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	6

Q56. **And if/when an elected regional assembly is set up in the North East region and the county and district councils have merged into a single local council, which do you think will have most influence on people's everyday lives in your area? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Q57. **And which do you think ought to have most influence on people's everyday lives in your area? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	Q56 %	Q57 %
Elected regional assembly	27	21
The UK government at Westminster	33	20
Local council	26	51
The European Union	5	1
Other	*	*
None	*	1
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	9	6

General case for devolution

Q58. THERE IS NO Q58-62 IN THIS VERSION

Q59. THERE IS NO SHOWCARD P, Q OR R

Q60.

Q61.

Q62.

Q63. **How much do you trust the UK government to work in the best long-term interests of the North East region?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q64. **And how much would you trust an elected regional assembly for the North East to work in the best long-term interests of the North East region?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q63 %	Q64 %
Just about always	3	8
Most of the time	25	31
Only some of the time	49	36
Almost never	19	15
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	4	10

Q65. **Would you say the government looks after the interests of all parts of England more or less equally, or would you say that it looks after some parts of England more than others?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Looks after all parts more or less equally	17
Looks after some parts more than others	77
Neither	1
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	5

Q66. **Please look at this card and tell me which parts of England you think the government looks after more than others?** MULTICODE OK

Base: All who say the government looks after some parts of England more than others (532)

	%
London	45
The South of England as a whole	80
The Midlands	6
The North	1
Somewhere else	1
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

Q67. **And, taking your answer from this card, would you say that compared with other parts of the United Kingdom, the North-East gets pretty much its fair share of government spending, more than its fair share, or less than its fair share? Just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY.**

	%
Much more than its fair share of government spending	*
A little more than its fair share of government spending	3
Pretty much its fair share of government spending	24
A little less than its fair share of government spending	41
Much less than its fair share of government spending	25
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	6

Q68. **Thinking about things like the health service, schools, the roads, the police and so on, in general do you think it is better that the standards for such services be the same in every part of Britain, or do you think each region should be allowed to set its own standards? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Should be same in every part of Britain	63
Each region should be allowed to set its own standards	33
Other	1
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3

Q69. **With all the changes going on in the way the different parts of Great Britain are run, which of the systems described on this card do you think would be best for England? Just read out the letter that applies. SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
For England to be governed as it is now, with laws made by the UK parliament	50
Each region of England to have its own assembly that carries out functions like economic planning	22
England as a whole to have its own new parliament	19
None of these	*
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	9

As far as you know, which of these best describes... [INSERT WORDING].
SINGLE CODE FOR EACH. TICK START

		Strongly in favour	Generally in favour	No preference either way	Generally against	Strongly against	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q70.	(And) the Conservative Party's policy on elected regional assemblies?	1	5	13	26	16	38
Q71.	(And) the Labour Party's policy on elected regional assemblies?	22	32	10	5	4	28
Q72.	(And) the Liberal Democrats' policy on elected regional assemblies?	5	22	16	8	6	43
Q73.	And which of these best describes your own attitude towards elected regional assemblies?	5	17	23	23	21	11

Q74. **How important would you say that the parties' policies on regional government would be to you in helping you decide which party to vote for at the next general election?**
SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Very important	16
Fairly important	33
Not very important	23
Not at all important	18
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	10
Will not vote	5

Q75. **And how important would you say it is to you personally whether an elected regional assembly is set up in the North East region?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
Very important	11
Fairly important	28
Not very important	36
Not at all important	22
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	4

Q76. THERE IS NO Q76 IN THIS VERSION
THERE IS NO SHOWCARD Z IN THIS VERSION

Q77. THERE IS NO Q77 IN THIS VERSION
Q78. THERE IS NO Q78 IN THIS VERSION

Q79. **If a regional assembly were to be set up in the North East region, voters in Northumberland/Durham would have to decide whether to keep Northumberland/Durham County Council and abolish the district councils or whether to replace all the existing councils with two new councils covering a bigger area than the existing districts. How much would you say it matters to you personally which councils exist below regional level if a regional assembly is set up? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

Base: All in two-tier areas (228)

	Q79 %
A great deal	19
A fair amount	32
Not very much	27
Not at all	10
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	12

Impact of regional assembly

Q80. In recent years, the government has set up appointed chambers or assemblies in each of the regions of England. How much have you heard about the work of the North East Assembly? SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
A great deal	*
A fair amount	6
Just a little	26
Heard of it but know nothing about it	30
Never heard of it	37
Don't know/ not stated	*

And now, thinking about what the results would/will be for the region if/when an elected regional assembly is set up for the North East.

Q81. First, what do you think would happen to taxes in the region? SINGLE CODE ONLY

	%
A lot higher	25
A little higher	35
No difference	21
A little lower	3
A lot lower	1
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	15

Q82- Q83. And, taking your answer from this card, what do you think would happen to? SINGLE CODE EACH.

		A lot better	A little better	No difference	A little worse	A lot worse	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q 82.	the region's economy?	4	18	40	16	8	14
Q 83.	the health service?	3	18	50	8	4	16

Q84- Q85. And, taking your answer from this card, what do you think would happen to...? SINGLE CODE EACH.

		A lot stronger	A little stronger	No difference	A little weaker	A lot weaker	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q 84.	this region's voice in Europe?	3	22	49	5	7	13

Q 85.	your pride in this region?	%	4	12	68	4	2	9
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Q86. **And do you think that ordinary people will have more of a say in how the North East is governed, less say, or will it make no difference? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
More say	21
Less say	10
No difference	63
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	5

Q87. THERE IS NO Q87 IN THIS VERSION

Q88-
Q91 **Taking your answer from this card, please say how much you agree or disagree with these statements. READ OUT**

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor dis-agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	No opinion/ not stated
Q88.	If regions vote to set up their own regional assemblies, they should pay for their services out of taxes collected in their own region, and not be subsidised by taxes collected in the rest of the country	9	24	20	20	16	12
Q89.	A regional assembly for the North East region would be a waste of money	28	26	18	15	4	9
Q90.	Any regional assembly for the North East region should be elected using a voting system that would give parties seats in proportion to their share of votes	17	32	26	8	3	16
Q91.	There would be no point voting in regional assembly elections in the North East because the Labour party would always win	15	23	18	27	9	9

REFERENDUM QUESTIONS

Vote

Q92. **Now, thinking about the recent referendum on setting up an elected regional assembly in the North East. Many people didn't manage to vote in the referendum. Can you tell me whether or not you voted? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Yes, voted	55
No, did not vote	42
Can't remember/don't know	2
Refused	*
Not stated	1

Q93. **And can you tell me why you did not vote?** DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK.

Base: All who do not claim to have voted (279)

	%
Don't care about result/not interested in the issue	25
Didn't know enough about the issue	14
Too busy/lack of time	9
Not on electoral register/not eligible to vote	8
Referendum not important	8
I forgot	7
Didn't receive ballot paper	6
Meant to vote but circumstances at the time prevented me	6
Away from home	6
Ballot paper too complicated/couldn't understand the vote	5
Didn't know there was a referendum	5
A waste of time	4
Couldn't decide how to vote	3
Lost my ballot paper	2
Left it too late to vote/return ballot paper	2
I didn't want to vote by post/disagree with postal voting/we should have had a choice about how to vote/should have had polling stations	2
My vote wouldn't have made a difference/result was foregone conclusion	2
Didn't know how to vote	2
Too ill at the time	2
Never vote	2
A waste of money	1
Ballot not secret	*
Other	6
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	4

Q94. **As far as you know, were you registered to vote or not?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All who do not claim to have voted or would not say if they voted (293)

	%
Yes	80
No	12
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	9

Q95. **If you had voted, would you have voted for or against setting up an elected regional assembly in the North-East?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All who do not claim to have voted or would not say if they voted (293)

	%
For	19
Against	42
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	29
Would not have voted	10

Q96. **People have many different reasons for voting. Why did you vote in the referendum?**

DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK.

Base: All who claim to have voted (402)

	%
I wanted to have a say	37
To create/stop regional assembly	31
It is important to vote	28
I always vote	19
It is my right to vote	17
It is my civic duty/everyone should vote	16
Issue was important	15
If people don't vote then they have no right to complain/have an opinion	10
Because I was sent a ballot paper in the post	6
People fought to win the right to vote for me/others	6
I was urged/persuaded to vote by a family member/friend	3
To send a message to the government/council	2
To abolish a particular local council	1
Council tax increase	1
Agree with Labour/ Labour Party	1
Step forward/ good for the area	1
Vote against jobs for the boys	1
To save a particular local council	*
Husband told me I had to	*
Other	4
None of these/no reason	*
Don't know	2

Q97. **Did you vote for or against setting up an elected regional assembly in the North-East?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All who claim to have voted (402)

	%
For	24
Against	71
Can't remember	2
Refused	1
Didn't vote on that question	0
Spoiled paper	0
Not stated	2

Q98. **Why did you vote/would you have voted in favour?**

Base: All who voted in favour, or would have done so (157)

%

Would give local people more say	23
If it would be better than what we have/ change would be a good thing/ something different	18
To improve the North East/ make it a better place to live in	13
It's a good idea/ generally in favour of it	8
More power for the North/North East	7
Feel the North East is left out/ forgotten/ neglected	7
We need an assembly for our own region that will look after our interests	7
Would improve local services	6
There would be more focus on/ support for local issues	6
Better for the North East financially/would improve the economy of the North East	5
Would benefit local people/ be to our advantage	5
Local health services may improve	5
More jobs for the North East	5
Elected people would represent the North East	4
I always support the Labour Party's policies	3
Because my partner/relative/friend did	3
Local issues should be decided by local people	3
Would have more input as to how money is spent	2
Central government doesn't always know best	2
Would do away with local councils	2
Because we live here and have pride in the North East	2
Would be a fairer system	2
Education/schools may improve	2
Listened to opinions of others/ media/ politicians etc	2
Council tax might be reduce	2
People would become more interested/ involved	1
People can choose their local representatives	1
Roads may be improved	1
Other	14
None of these/no reason	*
Don't know	2

Q99. **And do you think that all regions of England should have regional assemblies, or do you feel that there are particular reasons why the North East needs a regional assembly which may not apply elsewhere?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All who voted in favour/ would have done so (157)

	%
All should have assemblies	49
Particular reasons	28
Other	2
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	20

Q100. **Why did you vote/would you have voted against??**

Base: All who voted against, or would have done so (157)

	%
A waste of money/ would cost a lot/ the cost would outweigh the benefits	29
Would increase taxes/ council tax	16
We already have enough MPs, don't want to pay for more	9
Jobs for the boys	8
Just an extra tier/layer of government	7
People will feather their nests/ fill their own pockets	7
Lack of information/ explanation	7
Of no benefit/ advantage to the North East	7
Would make no difference to the amount of say we had	6
We already have enough bureaucrats- don't want any more	6
Increased bureaucracy/ red tape	6
Things should be kept as they are/ present system works well	6
It would be a waste of time and effort/ it would never work	6
Just disagreed with it	5
It's a Labour Party promotion exercise/ dislike the politicians involved in the campaign	5
It's not needed	4
My area will lose out/ be forgotten	4
Just another talking shop with no real power	4
Because my partner/ relative/ friend did	3
Parliament buildings would cost too much	3
Would have been dominated by Newcastle	3
Power will stay with Westminster/the government	3
We won't have enough power	3
There should be one government for all	3
It would weaken the government and give	3

Europe a bigger say in our affairs/ don't want to be part of EU	
Would be of no benefit to ordinary people/ would take their views into account	2
Would alienate us from the rest of the country/ increase the north/south divide	1
Not convinced it would benefit me/ my family personally	1
Separate parliaments set up in Scotland and Wales were costly and unsuccessful	1
Health services would be worse off	1
The media coverage opposed it	1
The literature I saw was against it	*
We wouldn't have been treated fairly enough in the area	*
Other	9
None of these/no answer	1
Don't know/ not stated/ don't know enough about it	15

Q101. **And do you think that no regions of England should have regional assemblies, or do you feel that there are particular reasons why some other regions may need a regional assembly which do not apply in the North East?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All who voted against/ would have done so (397)
%

None should have assemblies	62
Particular reasons	16
Other	5
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	17

Q102. **And how did you vote on the question about local government boundaries under a regional assembly? Did you vote for a single Northumberland County Council or for two separate councils covering North-West Northumberland and South-East Northumberland?**

Base: All in Northumberland who claim to have voted (60)

	%
Single council	24
Two councils	52
Can't remember	19
Refused	3
Didn't vote on that question	0
Spoiled paper	0
Not stated	2

And how did you vote on the question about local government boundaries under a regional assembly? Did you vote for a single Durham County Council or for three separate Council's covering East Durham, North Durham and South Durham?

Base: All in County Durham who claim to have voted (81)

	%
Single council	47
Three councils	36
Can't remember	10
Refused	2
Didn't vote on that question	4
Spoiled paper	0
Not stated	1

And how easy or difficult did you find it to understand the options for new local government boundaries that were offered on the ballot papers? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q103.

Base: All in two-tier local authorities who claim to have voted (141)

	%
Very easy	26
Fairly easy	43
Neither easy nor difficult	9
Fairly difficult	14
Very difficult	5
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3

Q104. **And how would you have voted on the question about local government boundaries under a regional assembly? Would you have voted for a single Northumberland County Council or for two separate councils covering North-West Northumberland and South-East Northumberland?**

Base: All in Northumberland who do not claim to have voted (37)

	%
Single council	15
Two councils	30
Would not vote	21
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	34

And how would you have voted on the question about local government boundaries under a regional assembly? Would you have voted for a single Durham County Council or for three separate councils covering East Durham, North Durham and South Durham?

Base: All in County Durham who do not claim to have voted (49)

	%
Single council	37
Two councils	24
Would not vote	0
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	40

Campaign

Q105. **In the weeks leading up to the referendum, how much did you see, hear or read about the referendum? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
A great deal	9
A fair amount	35
Not very much	44
Nothing at all	11
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	*

Q106. In the run-up to the referendum, which if any of the following applied to you? Just read out the letter or letters that apply. MULTICODE OK

	%
Received a phone call from somebody campaigning about the referendum	3
Was visited at home by somebody campaigning about the referendum	3
Was approached in the street by somebody campaigning about the referendum	3
Had a leaflet about the referendum put through your letter box	76
Watched a campaign broadcast on TV	46
None of these	13
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

Q107 And which group or groups...?

- MULTICODE OK

Q111 Base: For each question , all who were said it applied to them at Q106

		“Yes” camp- aign	“No” camp- aign	Elect- oral Comm- ission	Other	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q107. ...did you receive a phone call from?	n (20)	5	4	2	0	9
Q108. ...were you visited by?	n (20)	14	9	1	0	6
Q109. ...were you approached in the street by?	n (21)	19	6	4	0	3
Q110. ...did you receive leaflets from?	% (530)	70	66	32	2	16
Q111. ...did you watch a broadcast by?	% (331)	71	68	21	2	18

Q112 **And which, if any, ...?**
MULTICODE OK

Base: All who can name groups from which leaflets were received (443)

		"Yes" campaign	"No" campaign	Electoral Commis- sion	Other	Don't know/ refused/ not stated	None of them	
Q112.	... of the leaflets that you received did you read?	%	67	63	28	*	3	19

Q113. **During the referendum campaign, a number of celebrities publicly declared their support for one side or the other in the referendum. Which, if any, celebrities did you happen to notice campaigning in this way? DO NOT PROMPT. MULTICODE OK. PROBE FOR UP TO FOUR NAMES**

ASK FOR EACH PERSON NAMED

Q114. **And do you happen to remember which side he/she supported – the "yes" campaign or the "no" campaign? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	Q113 0 %		Q114 "Yes" campaign	"No" campaign	Don't remember
Jackie Charlton	5	0 %	TBC		
Suzannah Clarke	1	0 %			
Sir Tom Cowie	3	0 %			
Brendan Foster	27	0 %			
Sir John Hall	18	0 %			
Neil Herron	2	0 %			
Melanie Hill	1	0 %			
Jaap Kroese	1	0 %			
Bob Moncur	2	0 %			
Denise Robertson	3	0 %			
Alan Shearer	4	0 %			
Kevin Whately	4	0 %			
Ray Mallon/ Mayor of Middlesborough	4	0 %			
John Prescott	3	0 %			
Paul Gascoigne	1	0 %			

Steve Cram	1	0 %
Sebastian Coe	*	
Kilroy Silk	1	
Joanna Lumley	*	
Tony Blair	*	
Charles Kennedy	*	
Mayor of Hartlepool	*	
The agony aunt	*	
Ron Graham	*	
Ant McPartlin	*	
Dec Donnelly	*	
Joan Collins	*	
Business man Middlesborough	*	
Conservative MP	*	
They were from Newcastle more than Teesside	*	
David Bellamy	*	
Somebody Middleton (vicar in Emmerdale)	*	
Chief Constable of Middlesborough	*	
Steve Gibson	*	
Sting	1	
Denise Welch	*	
Tim Healey	*	
Leslie Garret	*	
An opera singer	1	
Jonathan Edwards	1	
Jill Halfpenny	*	
Gordon Brown	*	
An athlete	*	
Robson Green	*	
Mike Neville	*	
Bob Johnson (TV weatherman)	*	
Sportsman	*	
OHB Foster	*	
Lord Mayor	*	
Mark Knopfler	*	
Newcastle football players	*	
Rugby players	*	
Leslie Joseph	*	
Kieron Dyer	*	
Peter Beardsly	*	
David Milliband MP	*	

Ken Livingstone	*	
Alan Milburn	*	
Michael Howard	*	
Can't remember names	*	
None	42	0 %
Don't know	16	0 %

ALTERNATE ORDER OF Q115-116. TICK START

Q115. **On balance, how effective would you say that campaigning by the “yes” campaign and its supporters was?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q116. **) And on balance, how effective would you say that campaigning by the “no” campaign and its supporters was?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q117. ALWAYS ASK LAST

And on balance, how effective would you say that the campaign by the Electoral Commission to increase awareness and participation was? SINGLE CODE ONLY

	“Yes” campaign Q115 %	“No” campaign Q116 %	Elec. Comm. Q117 %
Very effective	2	21	2
Fairly effective	15	30	21
Not very effective	41	19	24
Not at all effective	25	12	16
Don’t know/ refused/ not stated	17	19	37

Q118- **And in the run up to the referendum, how much...?**
 Q121 ROTATE ORDER OF QUESTIONS. TICK START SINGLE CODE FOR EACH

		A great deal	A fair amount	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q118.	... coverage of the referendum did you watch on TV?	3	25	46	26	1
Q119.	... coverage of the referendum did you listen to on the radio?	1	9	26	62	1
Q120.	... coverage of the referendum did you read in the newspapers?	4	22	35	38	1
Q121.	...did you discuss the referendum with family and friends?	4	26	29	41	*

- ALTERNATE ORDER. TICK START
- Q122. **How do you feel about the amount of coverage that the newspapers gave to the referendum campaign? SINGLE CODE ONLY**
- Q123. **And how do you feel about the amount of coverage that television and radio gave to the referendum campaign? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	Q122 %	Q123 %
Far too much	3	4
A bit too much	9	11
About the right amount	37	40
A bit too little	12	16
Far too little	9	8
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	30	21

Q124. From which, if any, of these sources did you obtain information about the referendum and the issues that it involved? Just read out the letter or letters that apply. MULTICODE OK

	%
National/international TV programmes	30
Local/regional TV programmes	56
National radio	5
Local radio	11
National newspapers	20
Regional daily newspapers (e.g. Newcastle Journal, Northern Echo)	18
Local/regional evening newspapers	23
Local weekly newspapers	16
Friends	17
Family	19
Work colleagues	8
The internet	3
Other	3
None of these/nowhere	15
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

Q125. Overall, would you say you got too much, too little or about the right amount of information to help you decide whether to vote for or against setting up an elected regional assembly? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q126. And would you say you got too much, too little or about the right amount of information about options for local government if an elected regional assembly were to be set up? SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q127. And would you say you got too much, too little or about the right amount of information about the arrangements for voting in your area? SINGLE CODE ONLY

	Q125 %	Q126 %	Q127 %
Too much	7	3	4
Too little	36	10	20
About right	42	13	61
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	15	75	15

Q128- I am going to read out a number of statements some people have made about the referendum. Please tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each.
 Q131 SINGLE CODE ONLY

		Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/ refused/ not stated
Q128.	It was an interesting referendum campaign	% 2	17	23	25	23	9
Q129.	I didn't know what the issues were	% 23	32	9	21	9	5
Q130.	There wasn't much evidence that a referendum was taking place	% 13	32	12	25	12	7
Q131.	I cared a good deal about the result of the referendum	% 20	25	15	18	18	4

Ballot system

As you probably remember, in the referendum everyone was sent a ballot paper by post, and either returned it by post or handed it in at an official delivery point, rather than going to their local polling station to get their ballot paper and to vote.

Q132. **How did you cast your vote in the referendum?** SINGLE CODE ONLY
 Base: All who claim to have voted (402)

	%
I posted my ballot paper personally	82
I handed in my ballot paper at an official delivery point	3
I handed in my ballot paper at the local council offices	4
I gave my ballot paper to somebody else to post or hand in	9
I appointed a proxy to vote for me	0
Other	1
Don't remember	1
Refused/ not stated	0

Q133. **Regardless of whether or not you voted, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with this arrangement? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Very satisfied	33
Fairly satisfied	37
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13
Fairly dissatisfied	6
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know	5

Q134. **Before this referendum, have you personally ever previously voted in an all-postal election, that is an election where all the people who are entitled to vote are sent a ballot paper by post? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Yes	29
No	69
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	2

Q135. **And have you ever voted by post at a normal election, when most people vote in person at polling stations but where some people vote by post instead? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Yes	17
No	82
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

Q136. **Were you aware or unaware that at the referendum you could go to certain places set up by the council in your area for you to receive assistance, vote in private and drop off completed ballot papers? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Yes, was aware	52
No, was not aware	45
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3

Q137. **From what you have seen, heard or experienced, how convenient do you think that voting by post was? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Very convenient	49
Fairly convenient	31
Neither convenient nor inconvenient	8
Fairly inconvenient	3
Very inconvenient	3
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	5

Q138. **And when it comes to being safe from fraud or abuse, how safe would you say that voting by post was? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Very safe	18
Fairly safe	41
Neither safe nor unsafe	12
Fairly unsafe	14
Very unsafe	7
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	8

Q139. **From what you know or have heard, how much of a problem, if at all, do you think electoral fraud or abuse was at the referendum? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
A very big problem	3
A fairly big problem	8
Not a very big problem	39
Not a problem at all	26
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	24

Q140. **And how good or bad would you say that voting by post was in allowing people to vote in secret – that is, without anyone else knowing how they voted? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Very good	32
Fairly good	38
Neither good nor bad	14
Fairly bad	6
Very bad	4
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	7

Q141. **Did holding voting in this way encourage you to vote, discourage you from voting, or did it not make much difference either way? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Encouraged	19
Discouraged	5
Made no difference	74
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	1

Q142. **How easy or difficult did you find it to understand the instructions that came with the ballot papers on how to complete your ballot papers and return them? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
Very easy	22
Fairly easy	31
Neither easy nor difficult	13
Fairly difficult	11
Very difficult	3
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	20

Q143. **And if/when a regional assembly is set up, how likely would you be to vote in the election of members for that Regional Assembly; on a scale of 1 to 10, where 10 means you would be absolutely certain to vote, and 1 means that you would be absolutely certain not to vote? SINGLE CODE ONLY**

	%
10 (Absolutely certain to vote)	31
9	6
8	7
7	5
6	6
5	14
4	3
3	4
2	5
1 (Absolutely certain not to vote)	15
Don't know/ refused/ not stated	3

Q144. **And if there were an election to a North East regional assembly tomorrow, how would you vote?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Q145. **Which party would you be most inclined to support?** SINGLE CODE ONLY

Base: All undecided or who refused to say how they would vote in a General Election tomorrow

	Q144 %	Q145 %
Conservative	11	4
Labour	39	13
Liberal Democrats (Lib Dem)	12	10
Green Party	*	0
UK Independence Party (UKIP)	1	2
British National Party (BNP)	*	0
Other	1	0
Would not vote	15	1
Undecided/ refused/ not stated	22	70