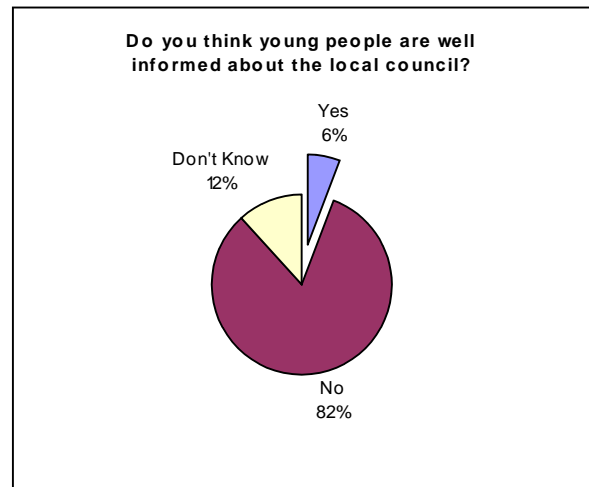
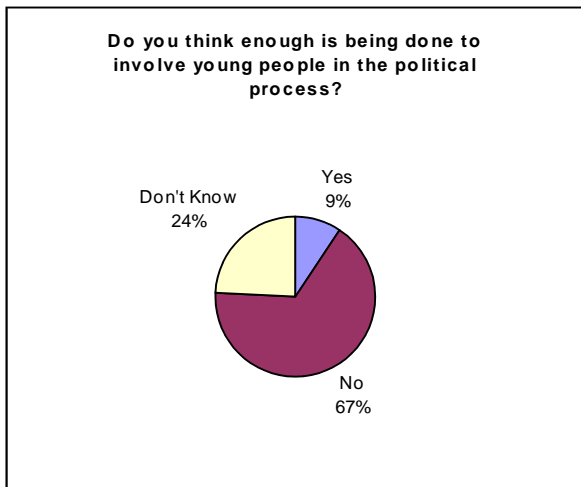


Torbay Youth Survey 2007 Results

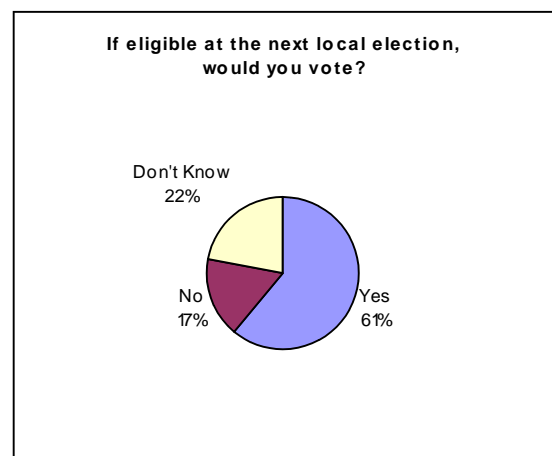
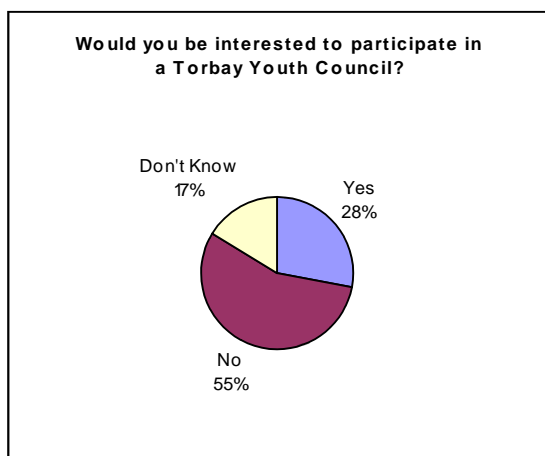
In February of 2007, Adrian Sanders, MP for Torbay, conducted a survey of the sixth formers from the local area. A total of 646 young people responded to a variety of questions about education, Torbay and politics in general. These results will allow Adrian to better represent young people in parliament and make sure their opinions are heard in Torbay.

Survey Results

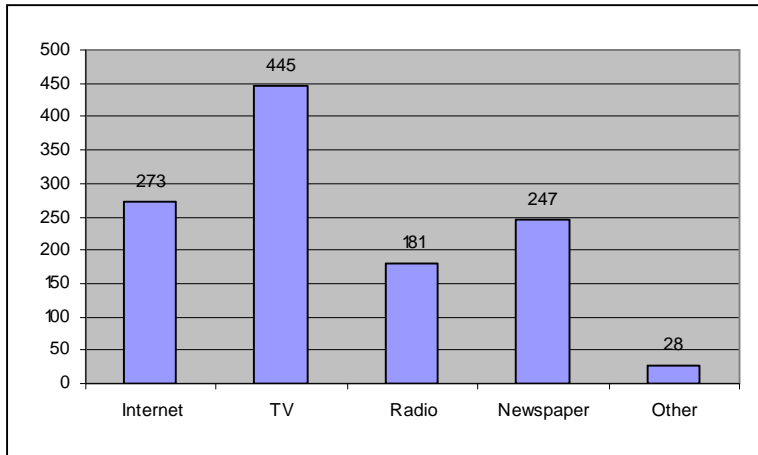
Politics



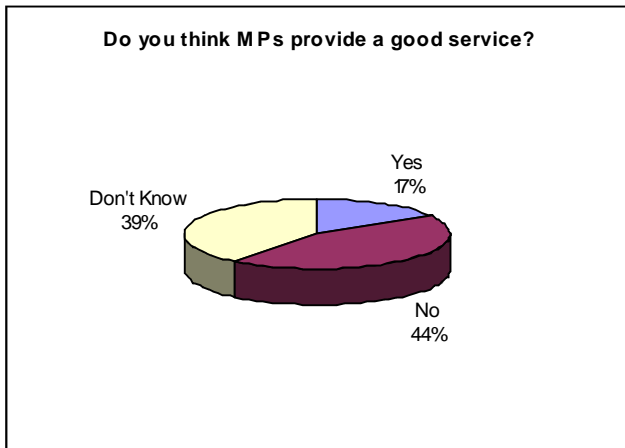
More effort needs to be made to involve young people in politics, especially in decisions that affect them directly. The council in particular does not advise young people what it is doing for them. Only 16% were aware of the local Youth Forum, the main arena for young people to have their say in local affairs. 65%, however, thought that the lack of voter involvement was a serious issue, although a majority of young people still intend to vote.



Another way young people can get involved in politics is the youth parliament; 49% of people had heard about it and 45% knew Torbay sends a representative. This year the MYP is James Roddy from Cuthbert Mayne. Many people expressed an interest in there being a youth council that enabled them to have their say and get things done for young people. 378 people mentioned that text or internet voting would encourage greater participation and I shall, through parliament, be advocating reform to the electoral system.

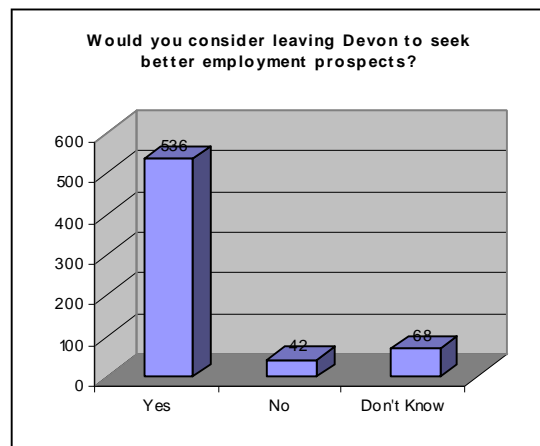


Media: while TV is still the main way young people get information about the wider world, the internet is becoming increasingly popular; 2 years ago 10% highlighted it while now almost half of people go online for news.

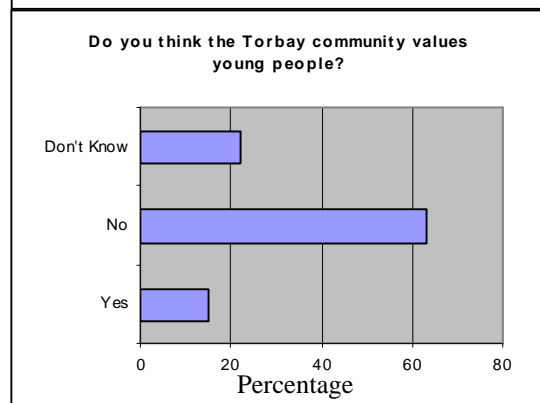


While 36% thought political parties provide the best approach to democracy, 78% said politicians focus too much on re-election and many young people thought politicians were focusing too heavily on personality traits rather than ideas to improve Britain. There is still room for improvement for my colleagues in Parliament and I, and most importantly we need to inform young people more about what we are doing for them in their local communities.

There are not enough employment prospects in Torbay, only 7% said they would not leave the area to look for a better job. A large majority also thought that Torbay does not value the contribution young people make. 49% considered anti social behaviour to be as bad as other areas, while 29% felt it was worse.



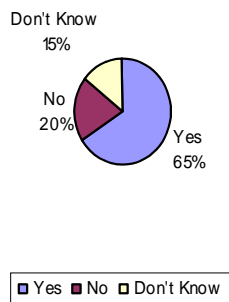
A number of people mentioned the poor public transport and high fares for 16-18 year olds.



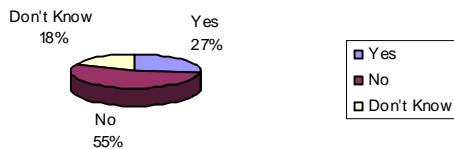
Many young people mentioned the lack of facilities available in Torbay to enjoy their free time. Hopefully the results of this survey will prompt investment in more things for young people to do.

Education

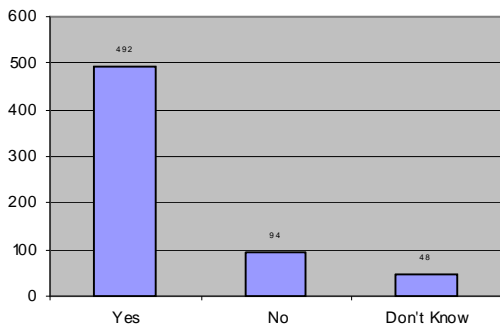
Do you think children should be selected according to ability?



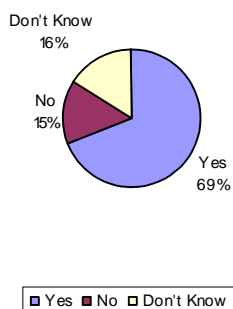
Do you think religious organisations should be involved in providing education?



Should higher education be freely available to everyone?



Would you prefer a reformed exam service?



The vast majority of those polled, 78%, thought university education should be free and 43% considered that it was a good idea for half of 18 year olds to attend higher education.

63% agreed that the national curriculum was good for education, but some did feel that it could do with some revision. 58% felt that education could be improved by involving parents and the local community more.

Inclusion of special needs students within mainstream education split opinion. 44% thought that special needs requirements could not be met in mainstream schools while many considered that each situation should be judged on its own merits.

Many noted that students needed more input into how their education is run.

I shall of course be looking into all of these issues, aiming to improve education in the Bay for current and future generations of young people.

One of the main conclusions I have found from the results is the large number of young people who know they are not well informed about the political issues that affect their daily lives, but want more information.

It is vital in a democracy for people to be aware and involved in politics, even if it is just a small commitment. This can be anything from making an informed choice on how to vote from writing to your MP and councillors on the issues that affect you to make sure that your opinion is taken into account.

Thank you to everyone who participated in the survey. I hope that it has been interesting as well as informative. If you do have any queries, please contact my office in Torbay on 01803 200036, or email at sandersa@parliament.uk.

For more information about what I am doing in Torbay and Westminster, please visit www.adriansanders.org or www.myspace.com/adriansandersmp.