



**Summary Results:**

**Voting Intention, The Economy  
October 2011**

## 1. Background

The South West Poll gives a snapshot picture of opinion in the South West region. Previously, businesses and public sector organisations who wanted to find out the opinions of people who lived in the South West either had to rely on a national omnibus survey, which would only have between 60 and 80 people to represent the entire region, or would have to commission an expensive ad hoc survey.

The South West Poll is a monthly omnibus survey interviewing a representative sample of members of the general public resident in the South West region of England. The survey features questions from more than one business or organisation to be asked as part of one survey. By sharing them amongst more than one organisation, costs are kept relatively low, and a fast turnaround can be achieved.

Because the sample used is large enough, it is possible to break down the results by County / Unitary Authority level so differences within the region can be highlighted.

## 2. Method

- The South West Poll is a combined telephone and online survey of adults aged over 18 years old living in the South West Region (as defined by the Government).
- The telephone numbers called were generated using random digit dialling.
- Online surveys were conducted using respondents from the 'Research Now' consumer panel
- The sample was a stratified random sample by County / Unitary Authorities in order ensure that the achieved sample was representative at that level (as a percentage of the total number of people living in the South West Region).
- A maximum of 10 call-backs were made at different times of the day on different days of the fieldwork timeframe.
- Interviews were carried out between 6<sup>th</sup> October September and 8<sup>th</sup> October 2011, and a total of 619 responses were achieved.
- Data was weighted to ensure the final results were representative of the region in terms of age and gender.
- Voting intention results were derived from 3 questions: current voting intention; likelihood to vote; vote in General Election 2010.
- Voting intention were therefore weighted for age, gender, likelihood to vote and vote in General Election 2010.
- Data was analysed by Marketing Means using SPSS.
- Voting intention is a tracking question on the poll commissioned by The Western Morning News / Western Daily Press

### 3. Results

#### 3.1 Voting intention in the South West Region (comparison to last SW Poll)

Firstly, the Conservatives, Labour, the Liberal Democrats and other parties would all stand candidates for a new MP in your area in a General Election. If a General Election was held tomorrow which party do you think you would vote for?

##### Voting intention March 2011

Party	October 2011	September 2011	Change
Labour	25%	23%	+2%
Conservatives	40%	40%	nc
Liberal Democrats	20%	22%	-2%
Green	6%	4%	+2%
Independent	0%	3%	-3%
UKIP	5%	6%	-1%
Others	3%	2%	+1%

Source: Marketing Means October 2011

Base: All those intending to vote 403

Based on the results from the poll, Marketing Means calculate the approximate seat changes in the South West would be:

##### Approximate Seat Changes South West (current boundaries excl. Bournemouth Poole)

Party	General Election	SW Poll	Change
Labour	4	6	+2
Conservatives	32	36	+4
Liberal Democrats	14	7	-7

Source: Marketing Means October 2011

Base: All those intending to vote 403

Somerset and Cornwall would see the biggest losses for the Liberal Democrats (-3) with them holding on to their Devon seats. The strong showing of Labour in Cornwall would see the Conservatives gaining at their expense.

The Conservatives on these figures, despite losing some support from the last General Election, would benefit from the even split between the other two major parties.

### 3.2 The Economy

i) Which political party do you most trust to handle the economy?

**Party trusted to handle the economy**

Party	%
Labour	21%
Conservatives	25%
Liberal Democrats	8%
Other	11%
None	31%

Source: Marketing Means Oct 2011

Base: All respondents 619

The largest single response was that ‘none’ of the parties were trusted to handle the economy at present, and including ‘others’ there were 41% who did not trust one of the big three parties to do so.

The Conservatives remain just ahead of Labour, partly because their supporters are slightly more likely to have faith in them than Labour’s supporters are (Con supporters - 81% trust the Conservative Party with the economy; Labour supporters – 75% trust Labour).

The Coalition combined (33%) still holds a 10% lead over the Labour Party on being trusted with the economy.

Some people think that the Government needs to spend more in order to kick start growth in the economy and reduce the deficit with the increased tax receipts that that will bring. Others think that the deficit needs to be reduced first by making cuts to put the economy on a stable footing.

ii) Which of these options do you think would be the best policy?

**Best overall economic policy**

Policy	%
Spend more to kick start growth	30%
Cut the deficit to ensure stability	46%
Not sure	24%

Source: Marketing Means Oct 2011

Base: All respondents 619

People in the South West are still more likely to back cuts rather than kick starting the economy with an economic stimulus programme. However, there are a quarter who are not sure which is the best overall policy to follow.

As may be expected, Conservative supporters (75%) and Liberal Democrats (51%) are more likely to favour cuts, whereas Labour supporters (57%) are more likely to favour increased spending.