BMG Research
Stafford Borough Council – BVPI General Survey

Prepared for:
Stafford Borough Council

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1 Key Indicators and Findings

1.1 Best value user satisfaction performance indicator scores

1.1.1 Outlined below are the user satisfaction performance indicator out-turns resulting from the 2006 BVPI survey based on comparable statutory statistics required by Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) on a triennial basis. To comply with the DCLG requirements, the proportion of respondents that are very or fairly satisfied is reported for each of the User Satisfaction Best Value Performance Indicators. This statistic is based only on those respondents that provided a rating (i.e. excluding 'don't know' and non-respondents), and the sample base and associated confidence interval is quoted.

1.1.2 Overall satisfaction with the way the Council runs things decreased by just 1 percentage point from 57% in 2003 to 56% in the 2006 survey.

BEST VALUE USER SATISFACTION PERFORMANCE INDICATORS					
	% FAIRLY / VERY SATISFIED			SAMPLE BASE	CONFIDENCE INTERVAL
	2000	2003	2006		
BV3: THE WAY THE AUTHORITY RUNS THINGS					
BV3: % satisfied with the way the Authority runs things	69	57	56	1152	2.9
BV4: COMPLAINTS HANDLING					
BV4: % satisfied with satisfied with the handling of complaints	44	35	46	207	6.8
BV89: LITTER					
BV89: % satisfied that the Authority has kept the land clear of litter and rubbish the waste collection service overall	72	68	75	1212	2.4
BV90: WASTE					
BV90a: % satisfied with the waste collection service overall	74	89	92	1204	1.5
BV90b: % satisfied with the provision of local waste recycling facilities	90	71	72	1111	2.6
BV103/104: PUBLIC TRANSPORT					
BV119a: % satisfied with sports and leisure facilities and events	N/A	45	53	1166	2.9
BV119b: % satisfied with libraries	N/A	N/A	77	1182	2.4
BV119c: % satisfied with museums and galleries	N/A	46	49	1152	2.9
BV119d: % satisfied with theatres and concert halls	N/A	53	52	1163	2.9
BV119e: % satisfied with parks and open spaces	N/A	67	78	1196	2.3

1.2 Key Findings

Corporate health

1.2.1 In total, 56% of respondents providing a response are satisfied with the way Stafford Borough Council runs things, a proportion which is slightly lower than that returned in the 2003/04 survey (57%) and also down on that reported in the 2000/2001 BVPI survey (69%).

1.2.2 In terms of whether things have changed in the last three years, around a sixth of all respondents providing a rating feel the way the Council runs things has got better (16%) and a similar proportion (14%) feel it has got worse. The majority think the way the Council runs things has stayed the same.

1.2.3 Looking at more specific performance indicators, the majority of respondents indicate they agree the council is working to make the area cleaner and greener (75% a great deal/to some extent), treats all types of people fairly (75%), and is making the local area a better place to live (75%).

1.2.4 Conversely, perceptions are less strong in relation to the provision of good value for money. Well over half (55%) of respondents do not feel the council provides good value for money.

Contact with the council

1.2.5 One in six of all respondents (17%) have contacted the authority with a complaint in the last twelve months. Amongst these[1], 46% rate themselves as satisfied with how their complaint was handled which is up on that achieved in 2003/2004 (35%) and 2000/2001 (44%).

1.2.6 Two thirds (66%) of all respondents report that they have contacted the council other than to complain in the last twelve months. Of these, two thirds (68%) are satisfied with the final outcome of that contact, whilst one fifth (19%) are dissatisfied.

1.2.7 Other than making a complaint, respondents contacted the council principally to ask for advice/information (40%) and/or to report an issue or problem (23%). Contact is generally made via the telephone (41%).

Information provision

1.2.8 The degree with which respondents feel informed about certain aspects of council service provision can be divided into three categories: a) those where a majority of respondents feel fairly or very well informed, e.g. how to pay bills to the council; b) those where views are more balanced but weighted towards not feeling well informed, e.g. what standard of service should be expected; and c) those where a large majority do not feel well informed, which relate to more abstract aspects of council performance, e.g. its role in tackling anti-social behaviour.

1.2.9 Overall, over two fifths (43%) of respondents feel the council keeps them very or fairly well informed, whilst the remainder (57%) feel the council does not keep them well informed.

1.2.10 In terms of sources of information about the council, respondents tend to get information from the local media (31%) and/or the council itself (28%).

[1] Noteworthy, responses to this question should be viewed with some caution, as experience shows us that satisfaction with the way a complaint is handled can be significantly affected by the outcome of the complaint, rather than purely how it was handled.

Local public services

Refuse and recycling services

1.2.11 Three quarters of respondents (75%) providing a valid response are satisfied that the council keeps all open public land it controls clear of litter and refuse. This represents an increase on the results returned in 2003, where 68% of respondents were satisfied.

1.2.12 Of those providing a response, a quarter (24%) feel in keeping public land clear of litter and refuse the Council has improved over the last three years, while around one in eight (13%) feel it has got worse.

Household waste collection

1.2.13 In terms of overall satisfaction with the household waste collection, the vast majority of respondents (92%) providing a valid response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is consistent with the satisfaction rating achieved in the 2003 BVPI (89%) and is a considerable improvement on the 74% reported in the 2000 BVPI survey.

1.2.14 This is supported by the fact that amongst respondents providing a response, almost two thirds (65%) feel the household waste collection service has remained the same over the last three years, and 28% feel it has got better.

Provision of local waste recycling facilities

1.2.15 In terms of satisfaction with the provision of local waste recycling facilities, approaching three quarters (72%) of respondents providing a valid response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is similar to the satisfaction rating achieved in the 2003 BVPI (71%).

1.2.16 Reflecting this level of satisfaction, two fifths (39%) of respondents providing a response feel that the service has improved over the last three years, and only 6% consider it to be worse.

Doorstep recycling collection

1.2.17 Satisfaction with the doorstep recycling collection is high with almost three quarters (72%) of respondents providing a response reporting that they are either very or fairly satisfied with the service. Unsurprisingly, more than two out of five (44%) respondents providing a response feel the service has improved over the last three years, whilst only 8% feel it has got worse.

Sports and leisure facilities

1.2.18 The level of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities at 53% is higher than that achieved in 2003 (45%), although one in five (20%) remain dissatisfied.

1.2.19 While the majority (65%) of respondents providing a response feel that sports and leisure facilities have stayed the same over the last three years, they are divided in terms of whether any improvements in the service have been experienced, with 14% having the view that the service has improved and 22% believing it has deteriorated.

Libraries

1.2.20 Over three quarters (77%) of respondents providing a valid response indicate that they are satisfied with libraries. Amongst users providing a response, over four in five (89%) are either very or fairly satisfied.

1.2.21 More respondents (25%) feel libraries have got better over the last 3 years than feel they have deteriorated (4%).

Museums and galleries

1.2.22 With a half (49%) satisfied and a seventh (14%) dissatisfied, the level of satisfaction with museums and galleries is fairly mixed.

1.2.23 Whilst the majority (89%) of respondents providing a response feel that museums and galleries have stayed the same over the last three years, slightly fewer feel that they have deteriorated (5%) than feel they have improved (6%).

Theatres and concert halls

1.2.24 The level of satisfaction with theatres and concert halls at 52% is similar to that achieved in 2003 (53%). Amongst users, more than two thirds (69%) are satisfied, including 18% who are very satisfied

1.2.25 The majority (89%) of respondents providing a response feel that theatres and concert halls have stayed the same over the last three years. However, slightly fewer do feel that they have deteriorated (5%) than say they have improved (6%).

Parks and open spaces

1.2.26 Satisfaction with parks and open spaces at 78% is up on that of 2003 (67%). Amongst users of parks and open spaces, more than four fifths (83%) are satisfied.

1.2.27 Although the majority (70%) of respondents providing a response feel that parks and open spaces have stayed the same over the last three years, almost a quarter (23%) feel they have improved whilst fewer (7%) feel they have deteriorated.

Planning services

1.2.28 One in five (19%) of all respondents report using the planning services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

1.2.29 Amongst users of planning services, almost a half (47%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied. Conversely, almost a third (32%) express a level of dissatisfaction.

Quality of life

1.2.30 When asked about aspects that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live, the level of crime (60%), health services (47%) affordable decent housing (41%), clean streets (40%), and education provision (38%) are the issues mentioned most often.

1.2.31 Similarly when respondents were asked which aspects most need improving in the local area, activities for teenagers (46%), level of traffic congestion (41%), road and pavement repairs (27%), the level of crime (26%), and public transport (24%) are the factors identified as priorities for improvement.

1.2.32 Four in five (82%) respondents providing a valid response rate themselves as satisfied with their local area as a place to live, with 25% rating themselves as very satisfied. Conversely less than one in twenty (4%) are dissatisfied to some extent.

Community cohesion

1.2.33 The way respondents feel about specific types of antisocial behaviour fall broadly into three groups: a) those which most respondents regard as a very or fairly big problem e.g. parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children; b) those where views are relatively balanced e.g. vandalism/graffiti; and c) those which a majority of respondents do not regard as being a particular problem e.g. people being drunk or rowdy in public places.

1.2.34 Two thirds (66%) of respondents providing a response agree to an extent that in their local area people from different backgrounds get on well together, while one in nine (11%) disagree.

Local decision making

1.2.35 Amongst respondents providing a response, a quarter (27%) are satisfied that the council provides opportunities for participation in local decision making, and a similar proportion (24%) are dissatisfied. A significant proportion (49%) does not express a strong opinion one way or the other.

1.2.36 In terms of influencing local decision making affecting the local area, of all respondents providing a response, the majority (68%) disagree that they can do this.

1.2.37 A quarter (25%) of all respondents report that they would like to be more involved in the decisions their council makes that affect their local area, and a further 54% say that it would depend on the issue in question. One in ten (10%) report that they would not like to be more involved in such decisions.

2 Introduction

2.1 Background and method

2.1.1 This report summarises the results of the Stafford Borough Council's Best Value General Survey, conducted amongst 2,625 local residents, via a self-completion postal survey carried out between October and December 2006. It also provides comparisons with previous BVPI results.

2.1.2 The target population for the survey was the adult population (18+) of Stafford, and the sample was drawn from the Postcode Address File (PAF) sample frame as supplied by Audit Commission.

2.1.3 The methodology was implemented according to Department of Communities and Local Government (DCLG) guidelines and as such included two reminder mailings.

2.1.4 The initial mailing of 2,625 Stafford residents took place on 7th October 2006, and following this, those respondents who had not returned a completed questionnaire were re-mailed. The second mailing was sent on 8th November 2006, and the third mailing on 2nd December 2006.

2.1.5 In total 1,243 usable completed questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 47%.

2.1.6 On an observed statistic of 50%, a sample size of 1,243 is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-2.8% at the 95% level of confidence.

2.2 Report contents

2.2.1 This report contains a written summary of the findings of the survey, highlighting those statistics required to be reported to Audit Commission. Indicators are calculated 'where provided a response', thus excluding respondents who 'don't know' or simply do not answer the relevant question. This reduces sample bases in most instances.

2.2.2 Graphs and tables are used throughout the report to assist explanation and analysis. Although occasional anomalies appear due to 'rounding' differences, these are never more than +/-1%. These occur where rating scales have been added to calculate proportions of respondents who are satisfied at all (i.e. either very or fairly satisfied).

2.2.3 All the data included in this report have been weighted by household size, age and gender in order to provide a sample that is representative of the area. The weighting process was carried out by the Audit Commission's sub-contractors, Cobalt Sky.

2.3 Data reporting

2.3.1 A separate data report is available, containing cross-tabulations by the following:

- Gender;
- Age;
- Employment status;
- Disability status;
- Ethnicity;
- Length of time lived in area;
- Overall satisfaction (BV3);
- Tenancy

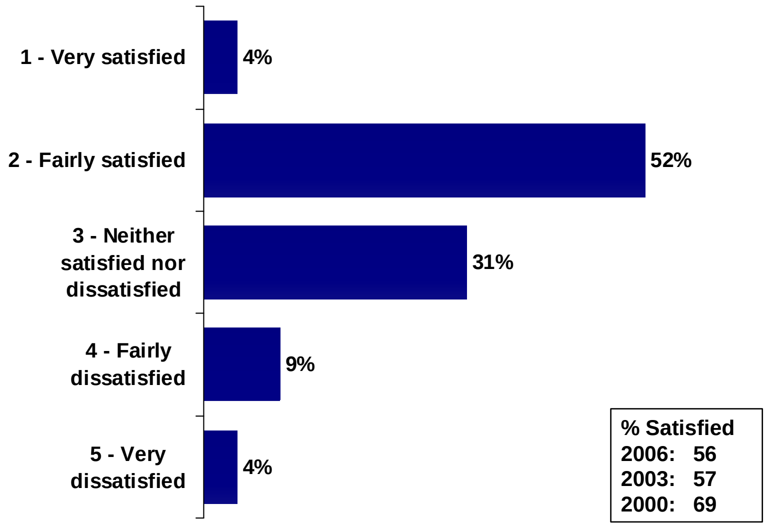
3 Corporate health

3.1 BV3 – Overall satisfaction with the way the authority runs things

3.1.1 Respondents were asked, taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the way the authority runs things.

3.1.2 Over half (56%) of all respondents rate themselves as satisfied, which represents a small decrease of 1% since the last BVPI in 2003 but is 13% down on the 2000 figure. The proportion of respondents rating themselves as dissatisfied is at 13%.

(Q15 – BV3) Overall satisfaction with the way the authority runs things (valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1152/1159

3.1.3 The level of satisfaction is similar for men (55%) and women (58%), but increases from 56% of owner occupiers to 68% of RSL tenants.

3.2 How the way the authority runs things has changed

3.2.1 Respondents were also asked, thinking about the way the authority runs things, whether they think this has got better or worse over the last three years, or whether it has stayed the same.

3.2.2 Whilst 1 in 6 (16%) of those responding felt that things had improved over the last 3 years, a similar proportion (14%) felt that things have got worse over this period. The majority of respondents (70%) however felt that the way things are run remained the same.

3.2.3 A similar proportion of men (17%) and women (16%) are of the opinion that things have improved over the past 3 years.

4 How the council performs overall

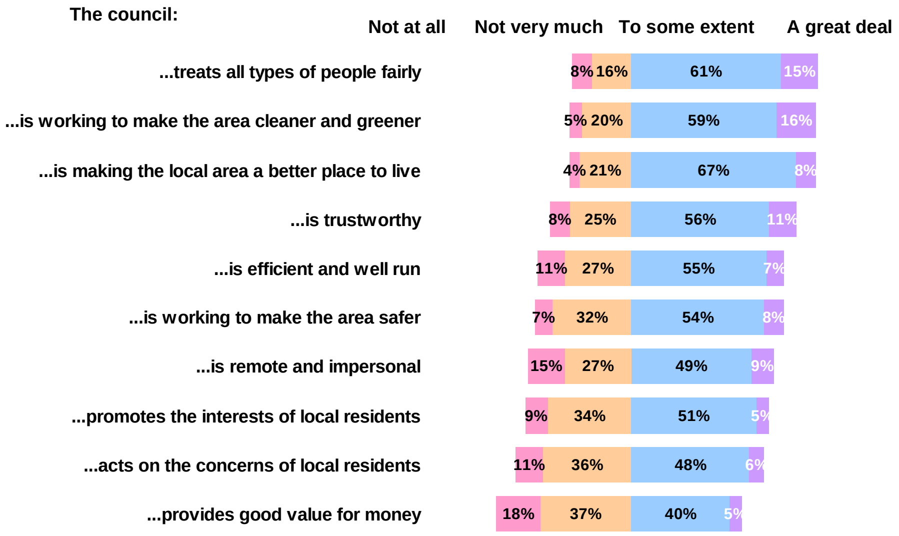
4.1.1 Respondents were asked to consider a number of things other people have said about their council, and to rate the extent to which they think each one applies to their council.

4.1.2 Overall, around three quarters of respondents express agreement that the council treats all types of people fairly (75% a great deal/to some extent), is working to make the area cleaner and greener (75%) and is making the local area a better place to live (75%).

4.1.3 However, perceptions are less strong in relation to providing value for money (45% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 55% not very much/not at all).

4.1.4 Opinions are divided in relation to promoting the interests of local residents (56% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 44% not very much/not at all) in terms of acting on the concerns of local residents (53% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 47% not very much/not at all), and is efficient and well run (62% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 38% not very much/not at all).

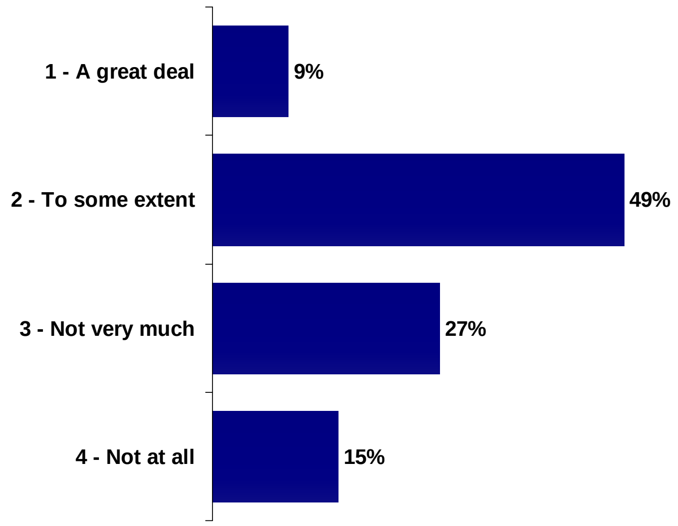
(Q27) How the council performs overall (valid responses only)



Bases vary

4.1.5 Within this series of questions respondents were also asked to rate the extent to which they feel the council is remote and impersonal.

(Q27) Extent to which council is perceived to be remote and impersonal (other contact valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 957/962

4.1.6 One in eleven respondents (9%) consider the council to be remote and impersonal to a great extent and just under half (49%) consider it to be remote and impersonal to some extent.

5 Contact with the council

5.1 BV4 – Satisfaction with complaints handling

5.1.1 One in six respondents (17%) report that they have contacted the authority with a complaint in the last twelve months.

5.1.2 This figure is higher amongst the following groups:

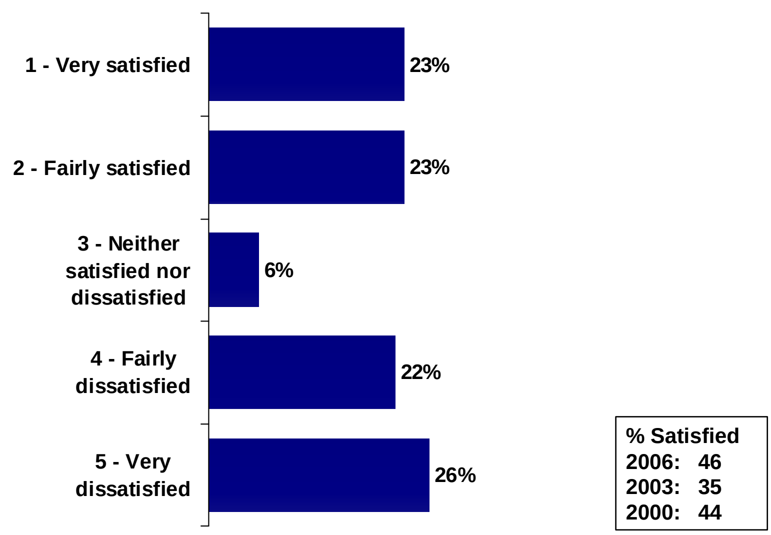
- RSL tenants (23% compared to 17% of owner occupiers and 9% of other tenants);
- Those with a disability (21% compared to 15% of those without);

5.1.3 Those who have made a complaint were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the way in which their complaint was handled. Responses to this question should be viewed with some caution, as experience shows us that satisfaction with the way a complaint is handled can be significantly affected by the outcome of the complaint, rather than purely how it was handled.

5.1.4 Amongst all complainants providing a valid response, approaching half (46%) rate themselves as satisfied with how their complaint was handled, which is an improvement on 2003 (35%) and also slightly up on 2000 (44%).

5.1.5 Almost half (48%) rate themselves as dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled, and this figure rises slightly to 56% amongst economically active respondents.

(Q20 – BV4) Satisfaction with complaints handling (complainants valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 207/200

5.2 Satisfaction with other types of contact with council

5.2.1 Two thirds (66%) of respondents report that they have contacted the council other than to complain in the last twelve months.

5.2.2 This figure is higher amongst the following groups:

- Those aged 18 to 24 (95% compared to 67% of 25 to 54 year olds, and 59% of those aged 55 or over);
- Other tenants and RSL tenants (79% and 77% respectively compared to 63% of owner/occupiers.

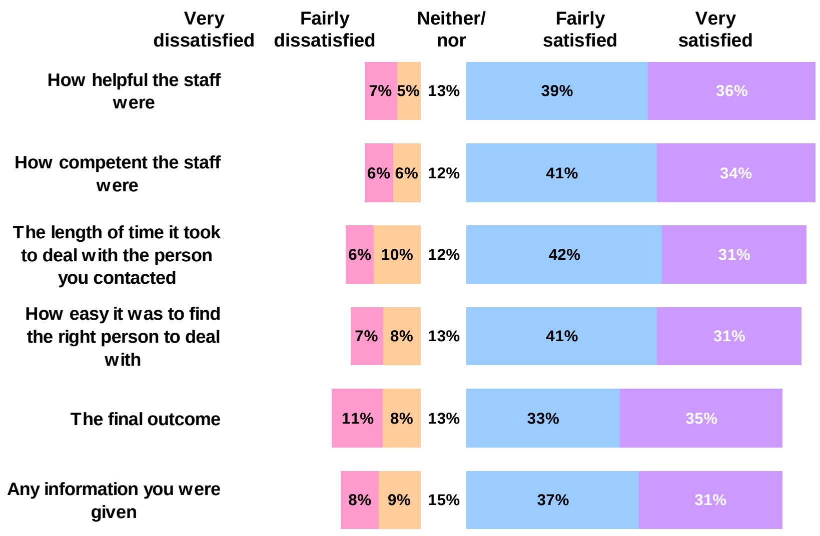
5.2.3 When asked the reason for their most recent contact with the council, a higher proportion said it was to ask for advice/obtain information (40%) than said it was to report an issue or problem (23%) or to apply to use a service (17%).

5.2.4 When asked how they made contact with the council on their most recent contact, the highest proportion said they made contact by telephone (62%), over a quarter (26%) in person, 11% by letter, 4% by email, and 2% via the website.

5.2.5 Those respondents who have contacted the council other than to complain in the last twelve months were asked to rate their satisfaction with a range of aspects of the service received.

5.2.6 In general, responses are positive, with a majority satisfied to some degree with each of the aspects, and less than a fifth dissatisfied. Most dissatisfaction was shown with 'the final outcome' (19%), and 'the information given' (18%).

(Q23) Satisfaction with aspects of service received (valid responses only)



Bases vary

5.2.7 Within this series of questions, respondents were also asked to rate their level of satisfaction with the final outcome of their contact with the council.

5.2.8 While two thirds (66%) of those who have made contact with the council for reasons other than to complain, and who provide a valid response, are satisfied with the final outcome of their contact, a fifth (19%) are dissatisfied, including one in nine (11%) who are very dissatisfied.

6 Information provision

6.1 How well informed residents feel

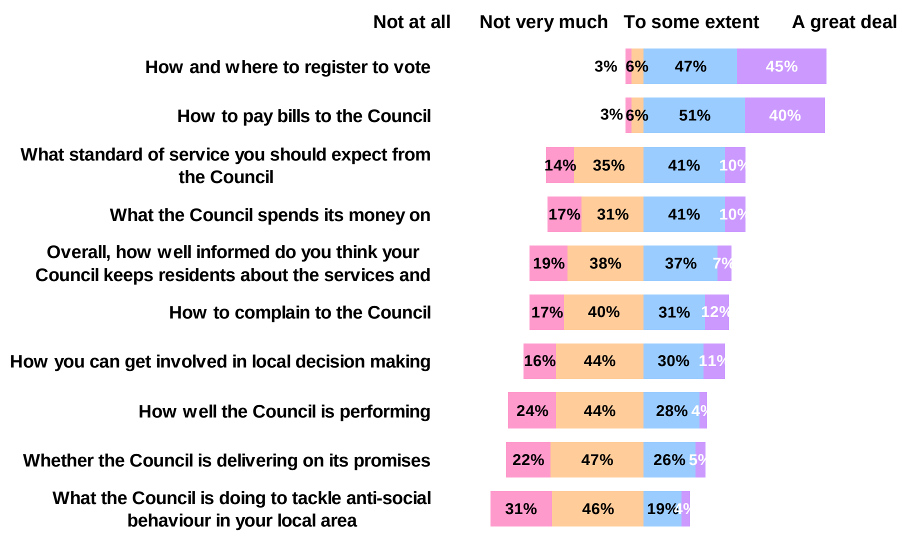
How well informed residents feel about specific aspects of services

6.1.1 All respondents were asked to rate how well informed they feel about a range of aspects of council service provision.

6.1.2 The aspects fall into three clear groups:

- Those where a majority of residents feel fairly or very well informed, which focus around actions required by residents: e.g. how and where to register to vote and how to pay bills to the council;
- Those where views are more balanced: e.g. what standard of service you should expect, how to complain, what the council spends its money on and how they can get involved in local decision making.
- Those where a large majority do not feel well informed, which relate to more abstract aspects of council performance, and its role in tackling anti-social behaviour: how well it is performing, whether it is delivering on its promises, and what it is doing to tackle anti-social behaviour.

(Q16) How well informed residents feel about specific issues (valid responses only)



Bases vary

6.1.3 Within this section of the questionnaire, residents were also asked to rate overall how well informed they feel the council keeps them about the services and benefits it provides.

6.1.4 Reflecting how well informed they feel about the specific aspects discussed above, while 43% feel the council keeps them very or fairly well informed, the remainder, over half (57%) feel they do not keep them well informed, including 19% who feel they do not keep them well informed at all.

6.2 Sources of information about the council

6.2.1 Respondents were asked the main source they use for finding out about the council.

6.2.2 A similar proportion of respondents say they use information provided by the council (28%) as use the local media (31%). Relatively few respondents (10%) currently use the council website and word of mouth is used by 7%. Only 8% say they have direct contact with the council, and 1% consider their local Councillor to be their main source of information.

6.2.3 Not surprisingly, the council's website is largely a source consulted by respondents under 55 (15% of 18 to 32 year olds compared to 14% of 25 to 54 year olds and 3% of 55+ year olds).

6.2.4 RSL tenants are most likely to find out about the council from information provided by the council (35%).

7 Refuse and recycling services

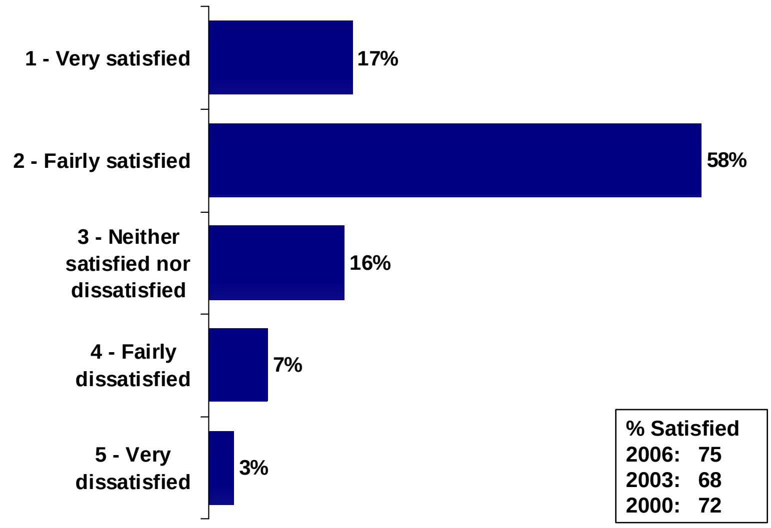
7.1 BV89 – Keeping land clear of litter and refuse

BV89 – Satisfaction with keeping land clear of litter and refuse

7.1.1 Respondents were reminded that the council has a duty to keep all open public land that it controls clear of litter and refuse, and asked to rate their level of satisfaction that the council has done so.

7.1.2 Results show an increase in levels of satisfaction from those reported in 2003 (68%), with 75% now expressing a level of satisfaction and are also higher than the 2000 results (72%).

(Q6 – BV89) Satisfaction with keeping this land clear of litter and refuse (valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1212/1215

7.1.3 Of those providing a response, a quarter (24%) of respondents feel the council's keeping land clear of litter and refuse has improved over the last three years, while around one in eight (13%) feel it has got worse.

7.2 BV90a – Household waste collection

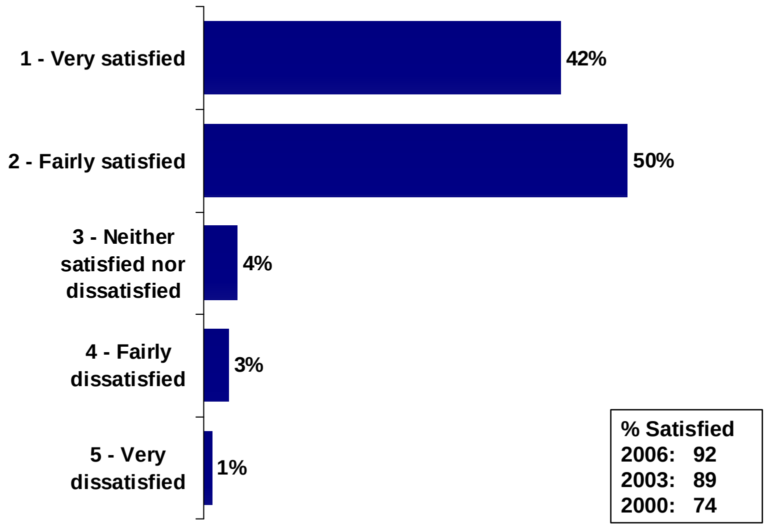
BV90a – Satisfaction with household waste collection overall

7.2.1 Respondents were reminded that the council undertakes a weekly collection of general household waste, and were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with a number of elements of the service, as well as the service overall.

7.2.2 In terms of overall satisfaction with the household waste collection, the vast majority (92%) of respondents who provided a response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is consistent with satisfaction ratings achieved in the 2003 BVPI (89%) and is a considerable improvement on the 74% reported in the 2000 survey. Only 4% expressed a level of dissatisfaction.

7.2.3 This is supported by the fact that amongst respondents providing a response, almost two thirds (65%), feel the household waste collection service has stayed the same over the last three years, while 28% feel it has got better.

(Q7 – BV90a) Satisfaction with waste collection service overall (valid responses only)



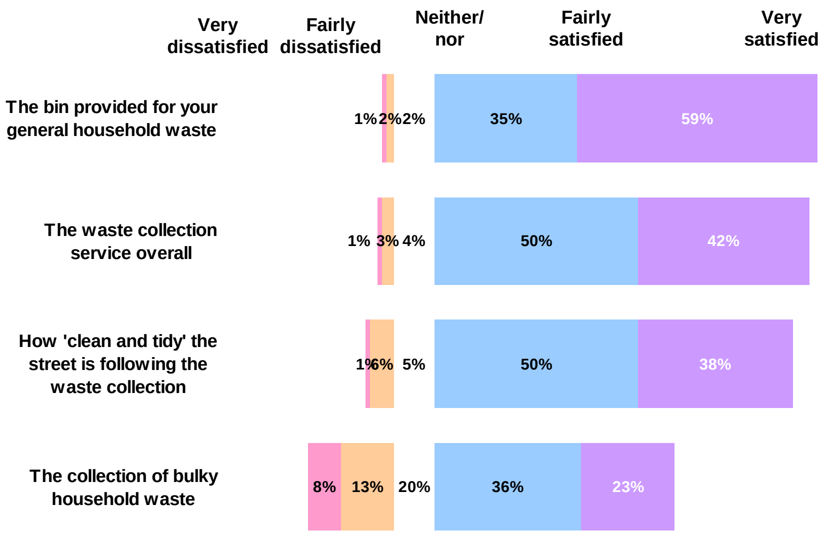
UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1204/1213

Satisfaction with aspects of household waste collection

7.2.4 Respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with specific aspects of the household waste collection service.

7.2.5 Satisfaction ratings are generally positive. However, a fifth (21%) of respondents providing a rating express dissatisfaction with 'the collection of bulky household waste'.

(Q7) Satisfaction with aspects of household waste collection (valid responses only)



Bases vary

7.2.6 The following table summarises the net satisfaction across three aspects of household waste collection, and shows the lowest net score rating achieved by 'the collection of bulky household waste'.

(Q7) Net satisfaction with aspects of household waste collection service (valid responses only)

	2006 %
The container provided for your general household waste	+90
How clean and tidy the street is following collection	+81
The collection of bulky household waste	+38
Bases vary	

7.3 BV90b – Provision of local waste recycling facilities

BV90b – Satisfaction with provision of local waste recycling facilities

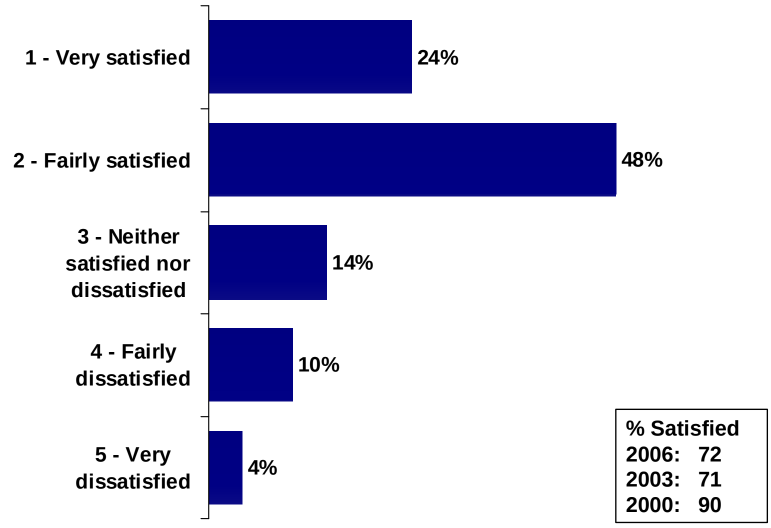
7.3.1 Respondents were reminded that the council provides a range of local recycling facilities.

7.3.2 They were the asked to rate their level of satisfaction with a number of elements of the service, as well as the service overall.

7.3.3 In terms of overall satisfaction with the provision of local waste recycling facilities, approaching three quarters (72%) of respondents who provide a response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is more or less the same as ratings achieved in the 2003 (71%) but lower than those achieved in the 2000 (90%) BVPI surveys. One in seven (14%) express dissatisfaction with the service overall.

7.3.4 Encouraging, two fifths (39%) of respondents feel that the service has improved over the last three years, and only 6% are of the view that it has got worse.

(Q9 – BV90b) Satisfaction with the provision of local recycling facilities overall (valid responses only)

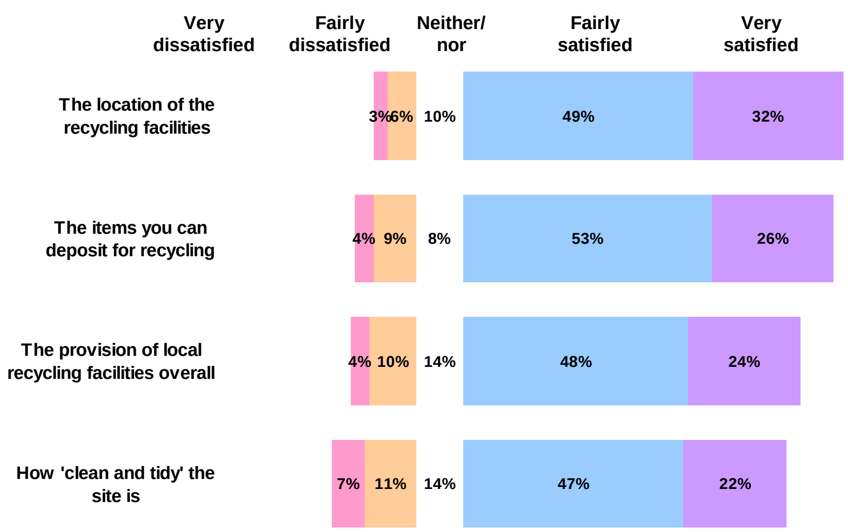


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1111/1125

Satisfaction with aspects of local recycling facilities

7.3.5 Levels of satisfaction with the location of the facilities, the items that can be deposited, the provision of facilities overall and the cleanliness and tidiness of the site are all relatively high (81%, 79%, 72% and 69% respectively).

(Q9) Satisfaction with aspects of local recycling facilities (valid responses only)



Bases vary

7.3.6 The following table summarises the net satisfaction across three aspects of local recycling, and shows the lowest net score rating achieved by 'how clean and tidy the site is'.

(Q9) Net satisfaction with aspects of local recycling facilities (valid responses only)

	2006 %
The items you can deposit for recycling	+72
The location of the recycling facilities	+71
How clean and tidy the site is	+62
Bases vary	

7.4 Doorstep recycling collection

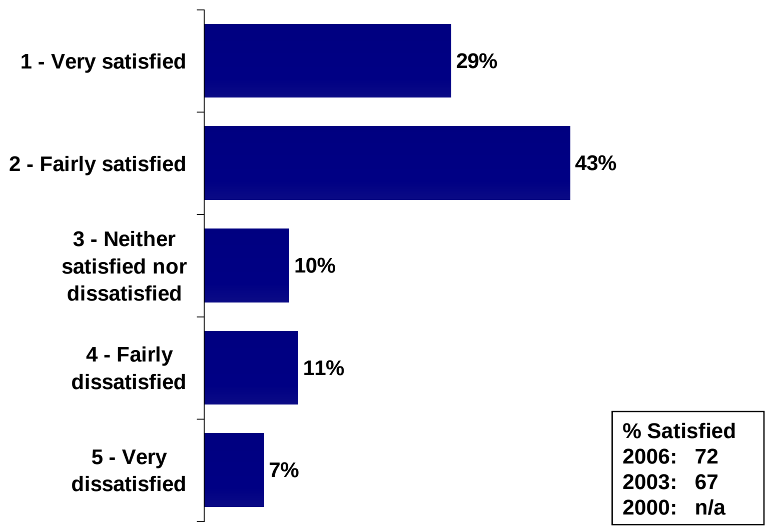
Satisfaction with doorstep recycling collection

7.4.1 Respondents were reminded that the council undertakes a regular collection of waste for recycling, and were asked to rate their level of satisfaction with a number of elements of the service, and the service overall.

7.4.2 In terms of overall satisfaction with the doorstep recycling collection, over seven in ten respondents (72%) who provide a response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This represents a 5% point increase on the result obtained in 2003. This question was not asked in 2000.

7.4.3 It is very encouraging to note that more than two in five (44%) respondents providing a response feel the service has improved over the last three years, and only 8% feel it has got worse.

(Q8) Satisfaction with the service for collection of items for recycling overall (valid responses only)



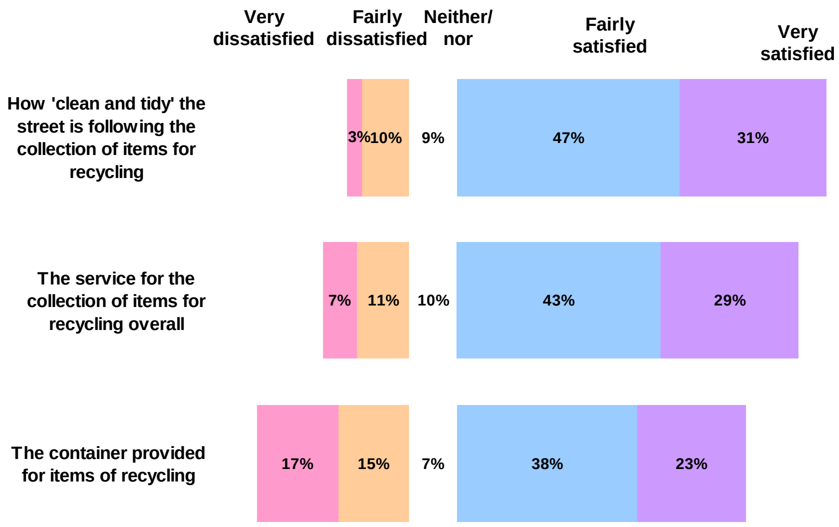
UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1143/1143

Satisfaction with aspects of doorstep recycling collection

7.4.4 By considering satisfaction with specific aspects of the doorstep recycling collection demonstrates the high level of satisfaction that exists with both 'the provision of a container for items of recycling' and 'cleanliness of the street after collection'.

7.4.5 78% are satisfied with the latter and 12% dissatisfied, while 61% are satisfied with the container provided but a third (32%) dissatisfied.

(Q8) Satisfaction with aspects doorstep recycling collection (valid responses only)



Bases vary

7.4.6 The table below summarises the net satisfaction across two aspects of doorstep recycling collection, and shows the highest net score rating achieved by 'how clean and tidy the street is following collection'.

(Q8) Net satisfaction with aspects of doorstep recycling collection (valid responses only)

	2006 %
How clean and tidy the street is following collection	+66
The container provided for items of recycling	+29
Bases vary	

8 Cultural and recreational facilities

8.1.1 Respondents were informed that the council directly supports cultural and recreational activities and venues, and that its licensing and planning responsibilities also make a difference to the level of private and voluntary cultural provision. They were then asked to rate their level of satisfaction with a range of cultural and recreational activities and venues.

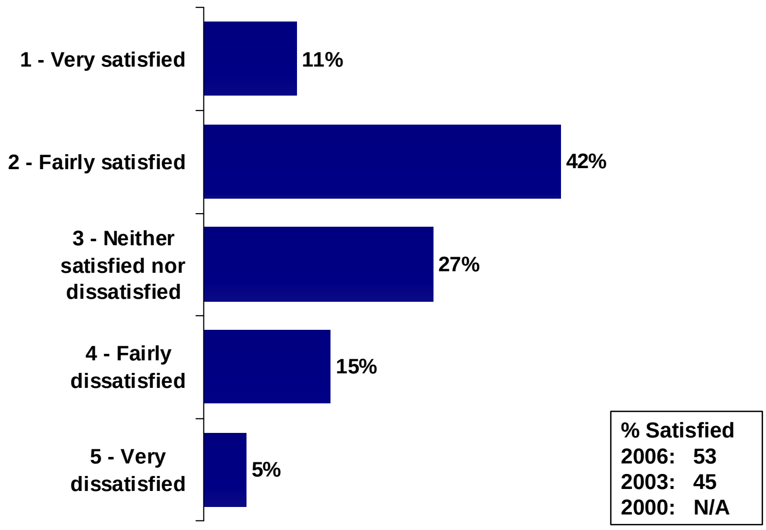
8.2 BV 119a – Sports and leisure facilities

BV119a – Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities

8.2.1 The level of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities at 53% is higher than that achieved in 2003 (45%), although one in five (20%) remain dissatisfied.

8.2.2 In line with the above finding, almost two thirds (65%) of respondents providing a response feel that sports and leisure facilities have stayed the same over the last three years. However, more do feel that they have deteriorated (22%) than feel they have improved (14%).

(Q10 – BV119a) Satisfaction with sports/leisure facilities (valid responses only)

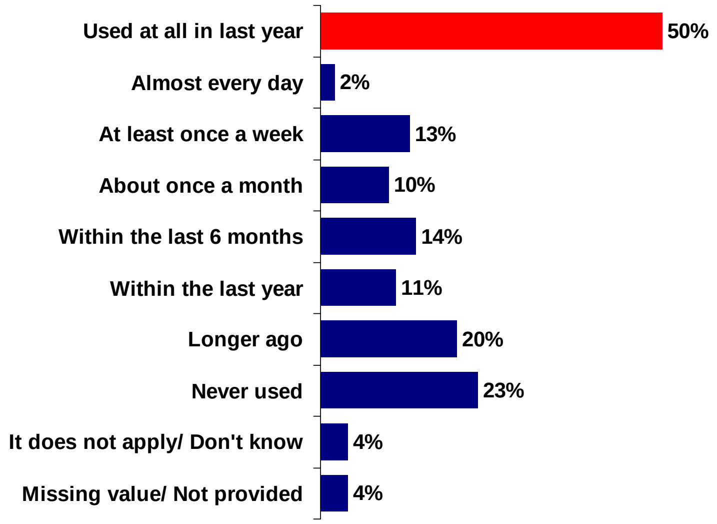


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1166/1181

Frequency of use of sports and leisure facilities

8.2.3 Half (50%) of all respondents report that they have used sports and leisure facilities in the last twelve months, including one in eight (13%) who report using such facilities at least weekly.

(Q10) Frequency of use of sports/leisure facilities (all respondents)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1243/1243

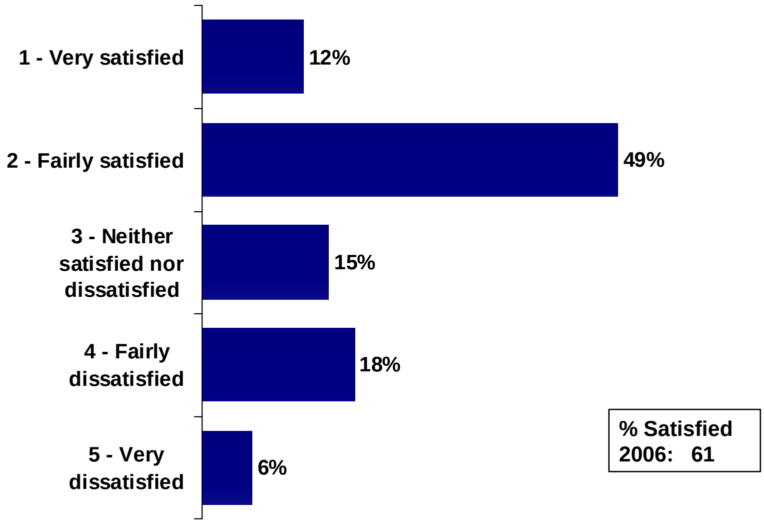
8.2.4 Levels of use of sports and leisure facilities are higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Those aged 25 to 54 (64% compared to 57% of 18 to 24 year olds and 31% of those aged 55 and over);
- Those in work (63% compared to 31% of those not in work);
- Those without a disability (56% compared to 30% of those with a disability).

BV119au – Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities – users

8.2.5 Amongst users providing a response, three fifths (61%) are either very or fairly satisfied, with one in four (24%) expressing a level of dissatisfaction.

(Q10 – BV119au) Satisfaction with sports/leisure facilities (users valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 541/611

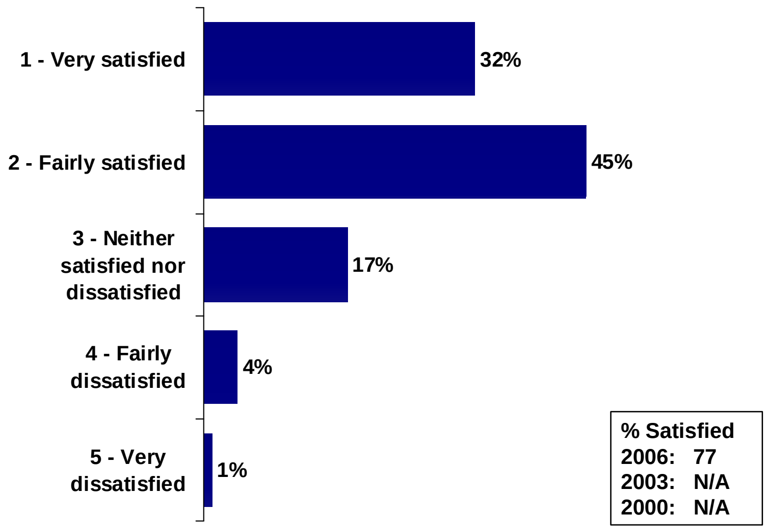
8.3 BV 119b – Libraries

BV119b – Satisfaction with libraries

8.3.1 The level of satisfaction with libraries at 77% is high.

8.3.2 Certainly, more respondents providing a response feel that libraries have got better over the last three years (25%) as compared to those who believe they have got worse (4%).

(Q10 – BV119b) Satisfaction with libraries (valid responses only)

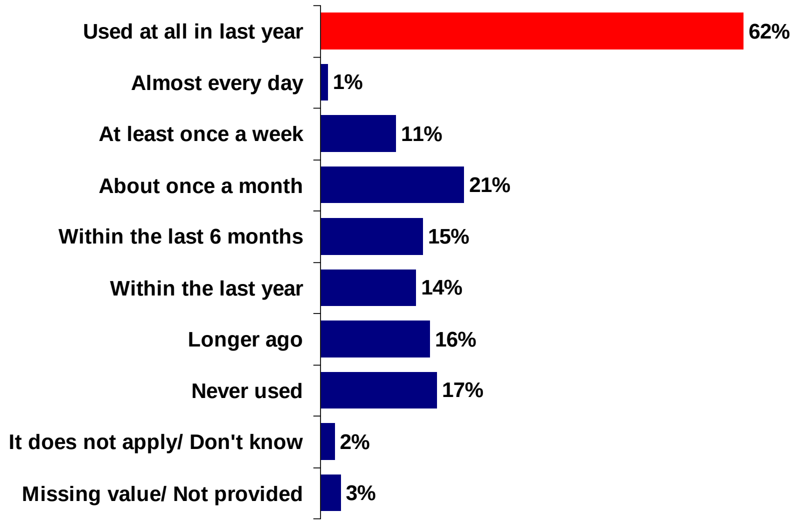


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1182/1191

Frequency of use of libraries

8.3.3 Three fifths (62%) of all respondents report that they have used library facilities in the last twelve months, including over a fifth (21%) who report at least monthly use.

(Q11) Frequency of use of libraries (all respondents)

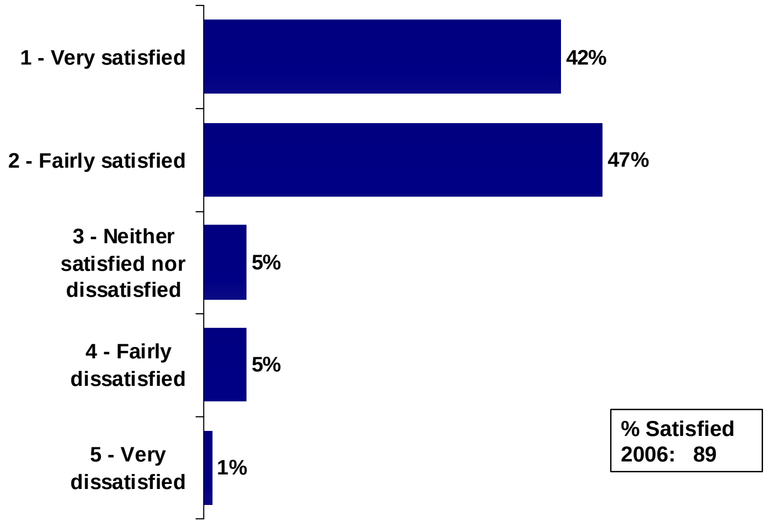


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1243/1243

BV119bu – Satisfaction with libraries – users

8.3.4 Amongst users providing a response, the vast majority (89%) are either very or fairly satisfied, with only one in twenty (6%) expressing a level of dissatisfaction.

(Q10 – BV119bu) Satisfaction with libraries (users valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 753/762

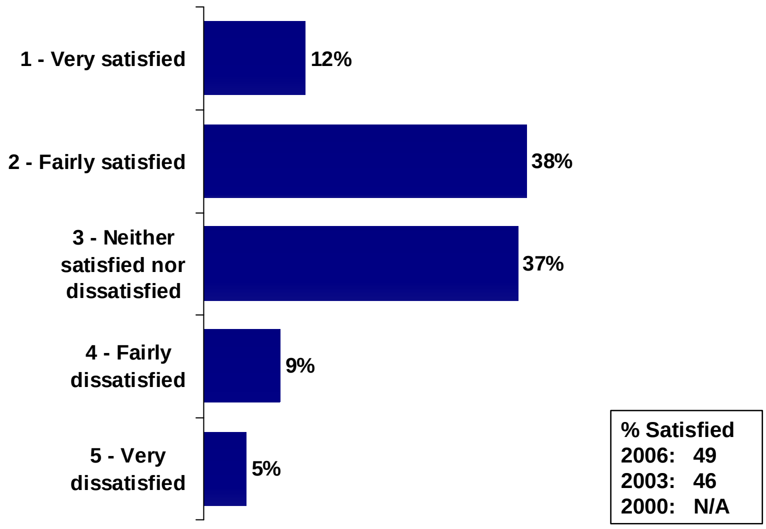
8.4 BV 119c – Museums and galleries

BV119c – Satisfaction with museums and galleries

8.4.1 With 49% satisfied and 14% dissatisfied, the level of satisfaction with museums and galleries is similar to that recorded in previous years.

8.4.2 While the majority (89%) of respondents providing a response feel that museums and galleries have stayed the same over the last three years, fewer feel that they have deteriorated (5%) than feel they have improved (6%).

(Q10 – BV119c) Satisfaction with museums and galleries (valid responses only)

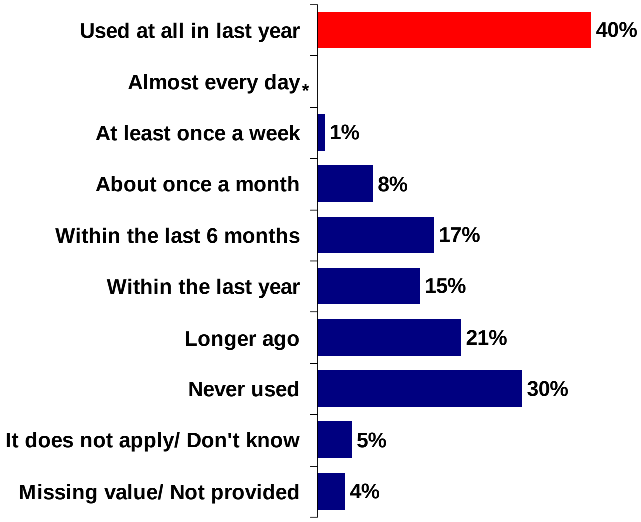


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1152/1167

Frequency of use of museums and galleries

8.4.3 Two in five (40%) respondents report that they have visited a museum or gallery in the last twelve months, with almost half of these having visited within the last six months (17%).

(Q11) Frequency of use of museums and galleries (all respondents)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1243/1243

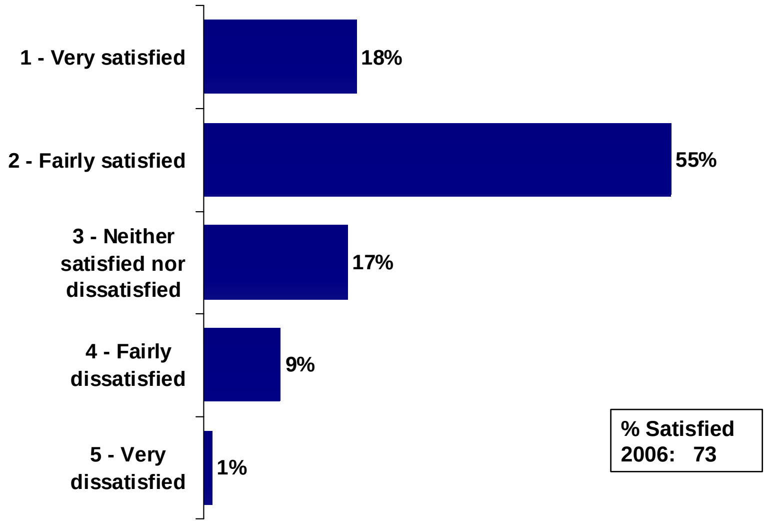
8.4.4 Levels of use of museums and galleries are higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Middle age groups (42% of those aged 25 to 54) compared to 38% of those aged 55 or over, and 31% of 18 to 24 year olds.

BV119cu – Satisfaction with museums and galleries – users

8.4.5 Amongst users providing a response, almost three quarters of respondents (73%) are satisfied to a degree, whilst one in ten (10%) express a level of dissatisfaction.

(Q10 – BV119cu) Satisfaction with museums and galleries (users valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 468/488

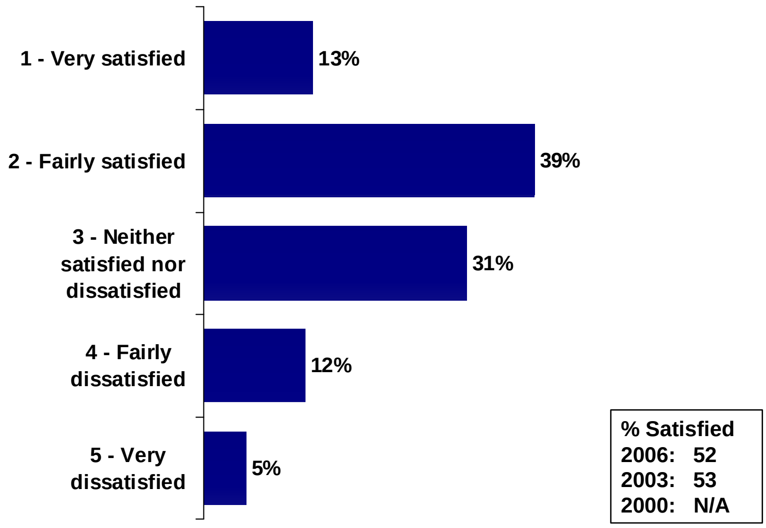
8.5 BV 119d – Theatres and concert halls

BV119d – Satisfaction with theatres and concert halls

8.5.1 More than half of respondents (52%) are satisfied with theatres and concert halls while one in six (17%) are dissatisfied. Satisfaction levels are the same as those of 2003 (53%).

8.5.2 Certainly, while the majority (89%) of respondents providing a response feel that theatres and concert halls have stayed the same over the last three years, slightly fewer do feel that they have deteriorated (5%) than feel they have improved (6%).

(Q10 – BV119d) Satisfaction with theatres/concert halls (valid responses only)

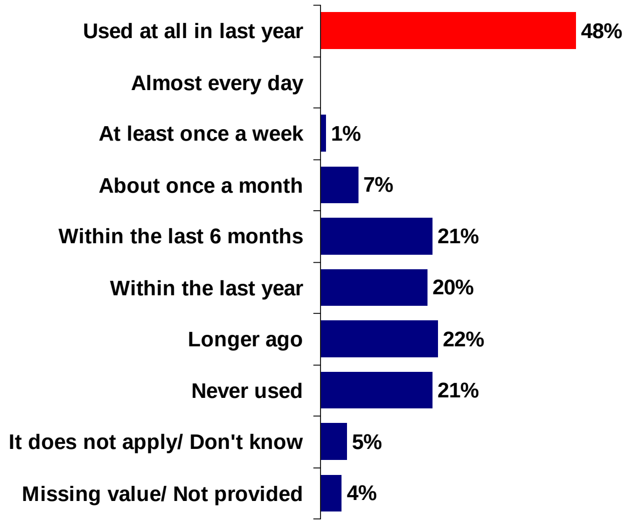


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1163/1174

Frequency of use of theatres and concert halls

8.5.3 Almost half (48%) of all respondents report that they have visited a theatre or concert hall in the last twelve months, with almost half of these having visited within the last six months (21%).

(Q11) Frequency of use of theatres/concert halls (all respondents)

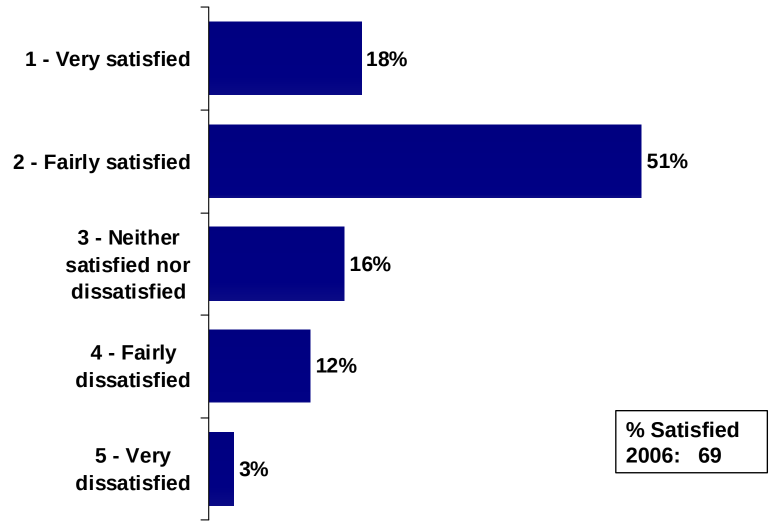


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1243/1243

BV119du – Satisfaction with theatres and concert halls – users

8.5.4 Amongst users providing a response, almost seven in ten (69%) are satisfied to a degree, including 18% who are very satisfied, with 15% expressing a level of dissatisfaction.

(Q10 – BV119du) Satisfaction with theatres/concert halls (users valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 587/595

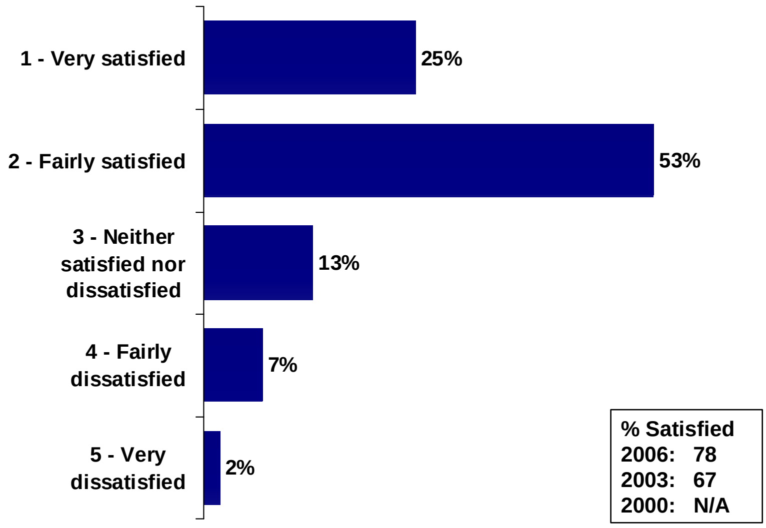
8.6 BV 119e – Parks and open spaces

BV119e – Satisfaction with parks and open spaces

8.6.1 Satisfaction with parks and open spaces is high at 78% of all respondents, with one in eleven (9%) dissatisfied. This is higher than the results from 2003 (67% satisfaction).

8.6.2 While the majority (70%) of respondents providing a response feel that parks and open spaces have stayed the same over the last three years, the proportion feeling they have improved (23%) is greater than the proportion (7%) that feel they have deteriorated.

(Q10 – BV119e) Satisfaction with parks and open spaces (valid responses only)

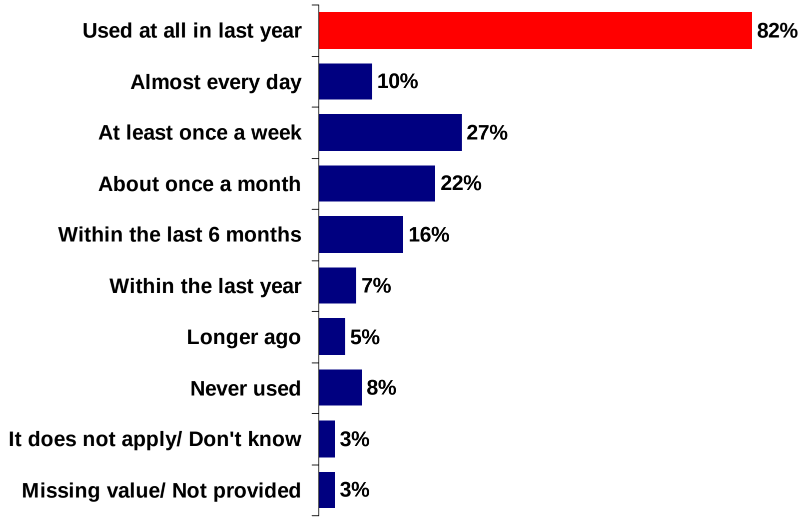


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1198/1204

Frequency of use of parks and open spaces

8.6.3 Over four in five (82%) respondents report that they have visited a park or open space in the last twelve months, including a third of these (27%) who report at least weekly use.

(Q11) Frequency of use of parks and open spaces (all respondents)

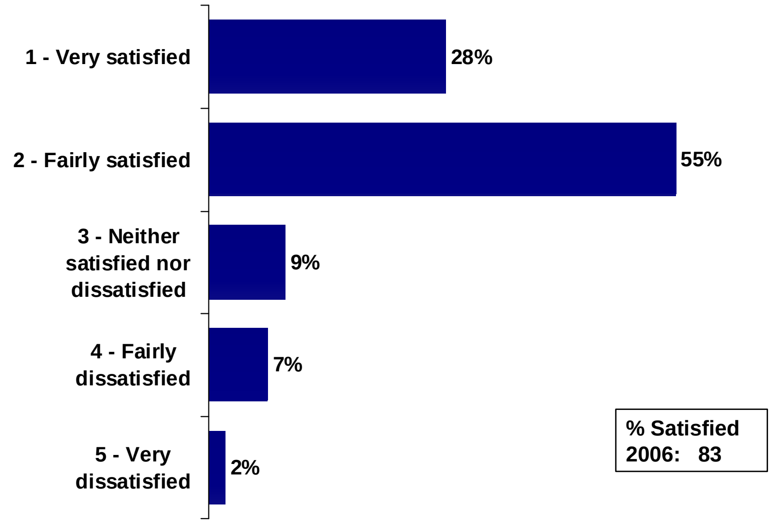


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1490/1490

BV119eu – Satisfaction with parks and open spaces – users

8.6.4 Amongst users providing a response, more than four fifths (83%) are satisfied to a degree, including more than half (55%) who are fairly satisfied. This compares with one in eleven (9%) respondents who have expressed a level of dissatisfaction.

(Q10 – BV119eu) Satisfaction with parks and open spaces (users valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 974/1018

9 Planning services

Use of planning services

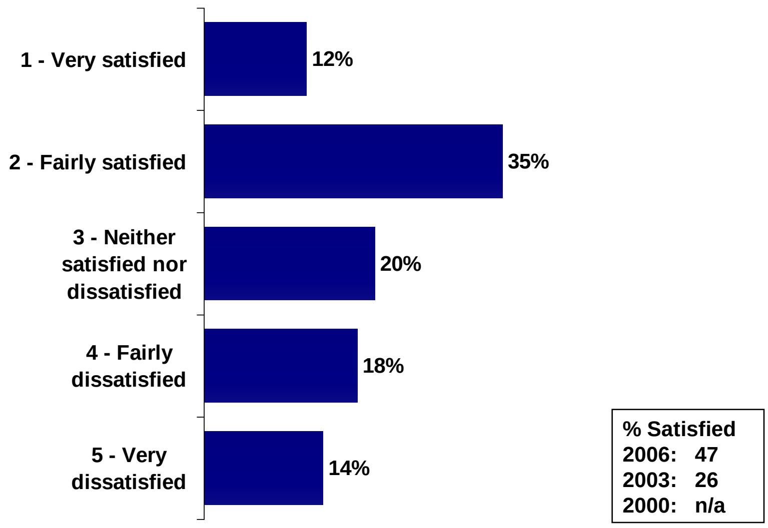
9.1.1 Almost one in five (19%) of all respondents report using the planning services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

Satisfaction with planning services – users

9.1.2 Amongst users of planning services, approaching a half (47%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied, with one in eight (12%) very satisfied. One in five (20%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. In 2003, just 26% were satisfied (very/fairly), which shows a significant increase in satisfaction over the last 3 years.

9.1.3 A third (32%) express a level of dissatisfaction, with one in seven (14%) being very dissatisfied.

(Q13) Satisfaction with planning services (users valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 231/234

10 Quality of life and community cohesion

10.1 Most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live

10.1.1 All respondents were asked to specify from a list the five aspects that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live. The table overleaf summarises the responses, and reveals that the level of crime (60%), health services (47%) affordable decent housing (41%), clean streets (40%), and education provision (38%) are the issues mentioned most often.

(Q1) Most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live (all respondents)

	2006 %
The level of crime	60
Health services	47
Affordable decent housing	41
Clean streets	40
Education provision	38
The level of traffic congestion	24
Public transport	24
Shopping facilities	21
Job prospects	21
Parks and open spaces	19
Activities for teenagers	19
Access to nature	19
Wage levels & local cost of living	15
Road and pavement repairs	12
The level of pollution	12
Facilities for young children	11
Sports & leisure facilities	11
Community activities	7
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	7
Race relations	1
Other	1
None	*
Don't know/not provided	7
Weighted/unweighted base	1243/1243

* Statistically insignificant

10.2 Factors that most need improving

10.2.1 All respondents were then asked to specify from a list five aspects that most need improving in the local area. The table overleaf summarises the responses, and reveals that activities for teenagers (46%), level of traffic congestion (41%), road and pavement repairs (27%), the level of crime (26%), and public transport (24%) are the factors identified as priorities for improvement.

(Q2) Factors that most need improving (all respondents)

	2006 %
Activities for teenagers	46
The level of traffic congestion	41
Road and pavement repairs	27
The level of crime	26
Public transport	24
Affordable decent housing	23
Job prospects	20
Clean streets	19
Health services	19
Facilities for young children	17
Sports & leisure facilities	17
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	16
Shopping facilities	15
Community activities	14
Wage levels & local cost of living	12
The level of pollution	8
Parks and open spaces	8
Education provision	7
Access to nature	3
Race relations	2
Other	3
None	1
Don't know/not provided	6
Weighted/unweighted base	1342/1342

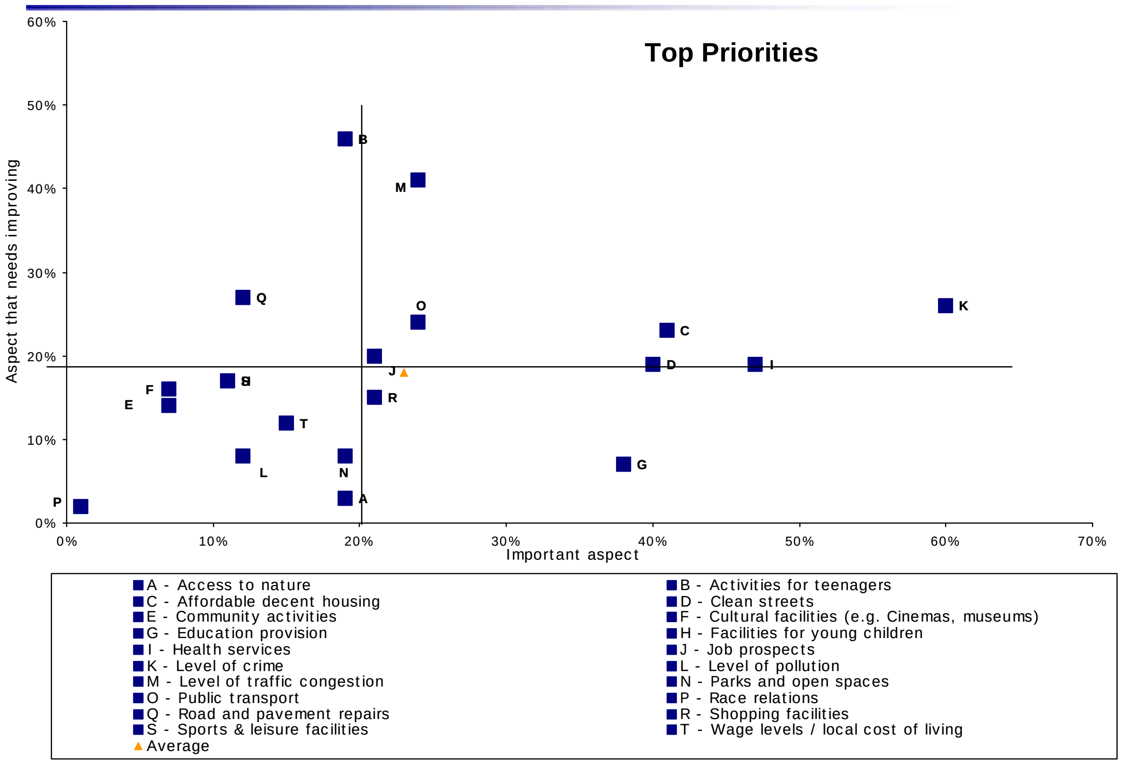
10.3 Priorities for improvement

10.3.1 When these two measures – aspects that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live, and aspects that most need improving – are plotted against each other it is possible to identify those areas that are perceived by respondents to be priorities for improvement, i.e. that are regarded both as important and as in need of improvement.

10.3.2 Factors identified as both important and in need of improvement are :-

- level of crime
- affordable decent housing
- public transport
- level of traffic congestion

(Q1/2) Priorities for improvement (all respondents)

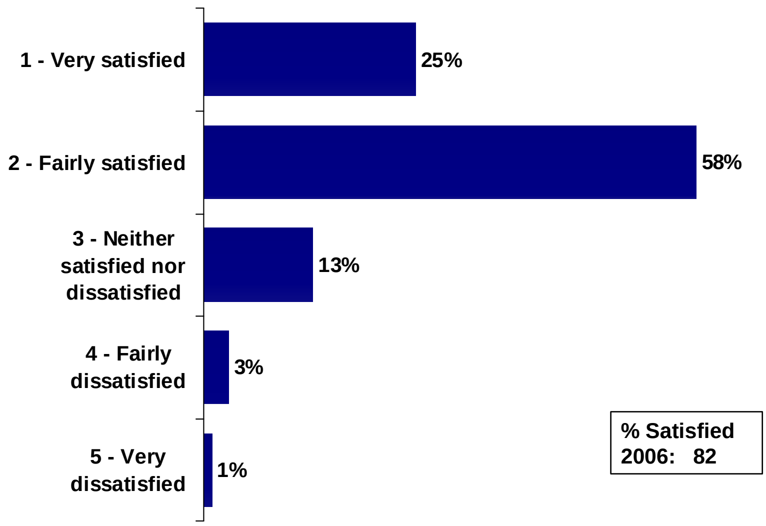


10.4 Satisfaction with local area as a place to live

10.4.1 Four in five (82%) of respondents providing a valid response rate themselves as satisfied with their local area as a place to live, with one quarter (25%) rating themselves as very satisfied.

10.4.2 Just under one in twenty (4%) have said they are dissatisfied with the local area as a place to live.

(Q3) Satisfaction with local area as a place to live (valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1201/1207

10.4.3 Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live is higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Economically active (85%) compared to 80% of the inactive
- Older respondents (86% of those aged 55+ compared with 81% of 25 to 54 year olds and 66% of those aged 18 to 24)

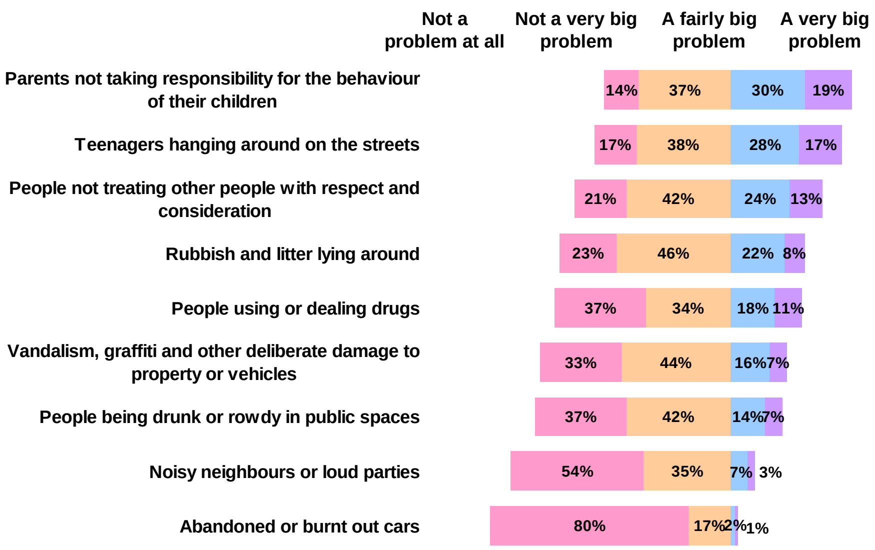
10.5 Anti-social behaviour

10.5.1 Respondents were asked to think about their local area and rate the extent to which they feel specific types of anti-social behaviour are a problem.

10.5.2 The types of behaviour fall broadly into three groups:

- Those which a majority regard as a very or fairly big problem: parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children; and teenagers hanging around on the street
- Those where views are relatively balanced: people not treating other people with consideration and respect; people using or dealing drugs and vandalism/graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles; and rubbish & litter lying around
- Those which a majority of respondents do not regard as being a particular problem: noisy neighbours or loud parties; abandoned or burnt out cars; people being drunk or rowdy in public places.

(Q4) Extent to which anti-social behaviour is regarded as a problem (valid responses only)



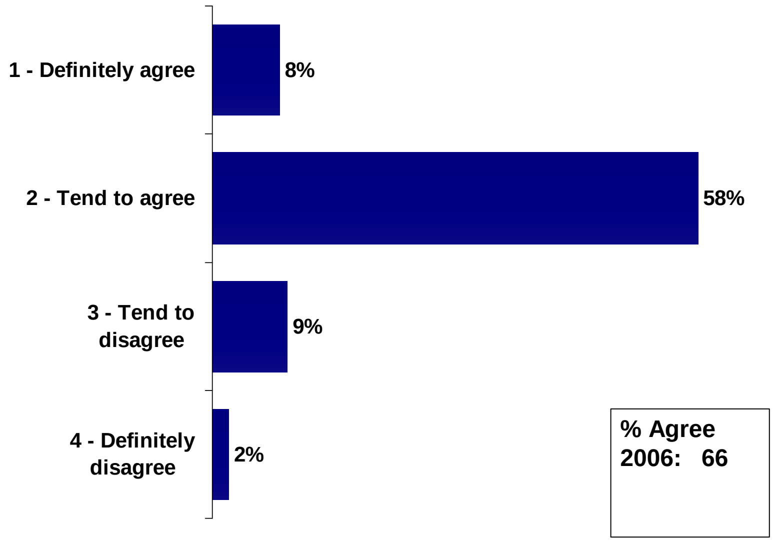
Bases vary

10.6 Extent to which people from different backgrounds get on well

10.6.1 Respondents were asked to rate the extent to which they agree that their local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together.

10.6.2 Two thirds (66%) of respondents providing a response agree to an extent that this is the case, while one in nine (11%) disagree.

(Q5) Agreement that the local area is a place where people from different backgrounds to get on well together (valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 988/976

11 Local decision making

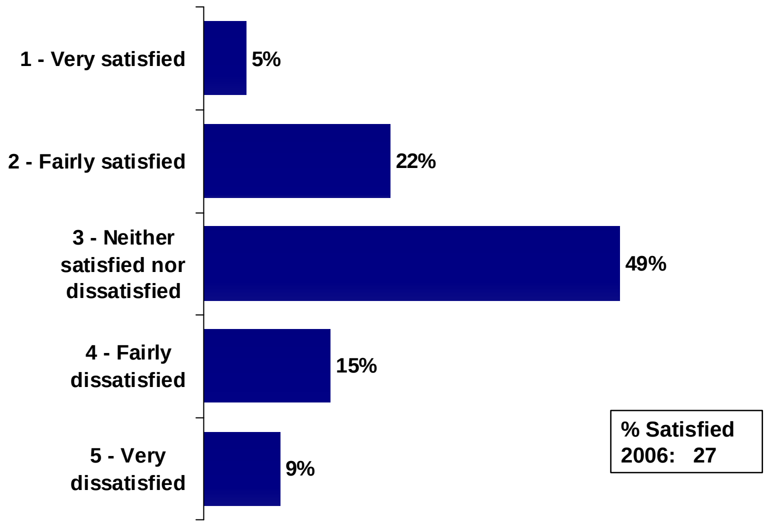
11.1 Satisfaction with opportunities for participation

11.1.1 Respondents were informed that the council provides opportunities to participate in decision making.

11.1.2 Amongst respondents providing a response, views are relatively balanced, with just over a quarter (27%) satisfied, and a quarter (24%) dissatisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by the council.

11.1.3 A significant proportion (49%), do not express a strong opinion one way or the other.

(Q24) Satisfaction with opportunities for participation in local decision-making (valid responses only)

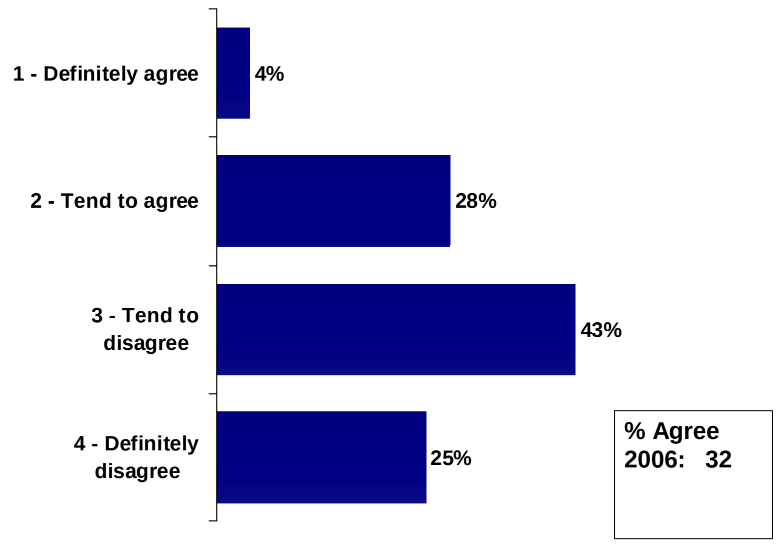


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 923/935

11.2 Influence over local decisions

11.2.1 Of all respondents providing a response, the majority (68%) believe they cannot influence decisions affecting the local area, while a third (32%) believe they can.

(Q25) Agreement that can influence decisions affecting the local area (valid responses only)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 947/969

11.3 Desired level of involvement

11.3.1 A quarter (25%) of all respondents report that they would like to be more involved in the decisions their council makes that affect their local area, and a further 54% say that it would depend on the issue in question. One in ten (10%) report that they would not like to be more involved in such decisions.

11.3.2 The proportion of respondents who would like to be more involved is higher amongst the following respondent groups:

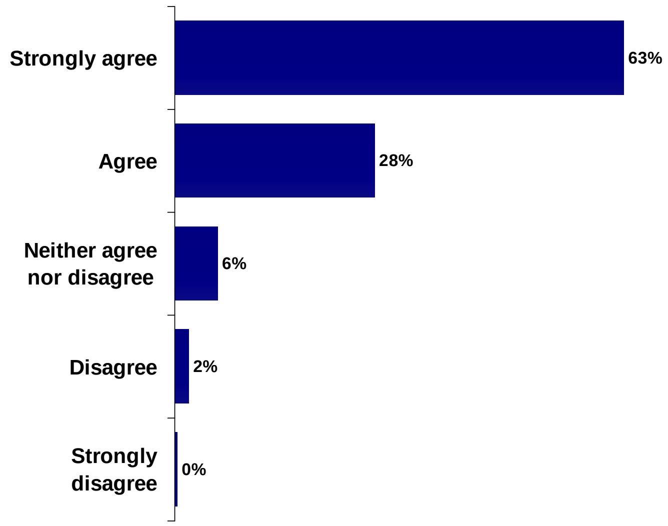
- Men (29% compared to 21% of women);
- Younger respondents (27% of 18 to 24 year olds compared to 19% of those aged 55 or over);
- Owner occupiers (26% compared to 14% of RSL tenants);
- Those in work (28% compared to 21% of those not in work)

12 Additional questions other than BVPI core

12.1 Litter on public land

12.1.1 Respondents were asked to rate their level of agreement with two statements about litter being dropped on public land. The first of these, ‘A fixed penalty notice (fine) should be given to people who drop litter’ prompted more than nine in ten (91%) to agree.

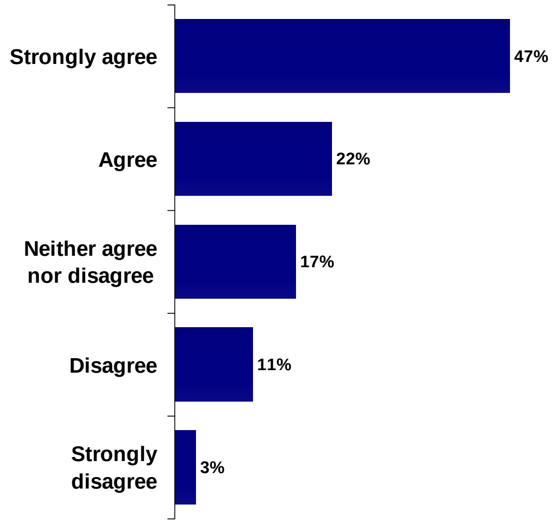
(QS1) To what extent do you agree with the statement: ‘A fixed penalty notice (fine) should be given to people who drop litter’ (Respondents providing a valid response)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1206/1210

12.1.2 The second statement, 'The Council should name and shame those who drop litter' received a lower level of agreement, with seven in ten (70%) respondents agreeing and one in eight (13%) disagreeing.

(QS1) To what extent do you agree with the statement: 'The Council should name and shame those who drop litter' (Respondents providing a valid response)



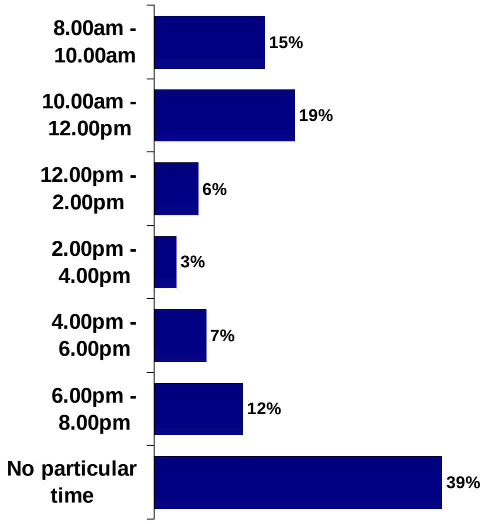
UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1186/1190

12.2 The Council's call centre

12.2.1 Respondents were reminded that the Council's call centre is open Monday to Friday from 8.00am to 8.00pm and were asked if there is any particular time of day when they would call the Council with an enquiry.

12.2.2 As the following figure shows, while two fifths of respondents said there was no particular time when they would phone, the largest proportion (34%) of the remainder would call during the morning.

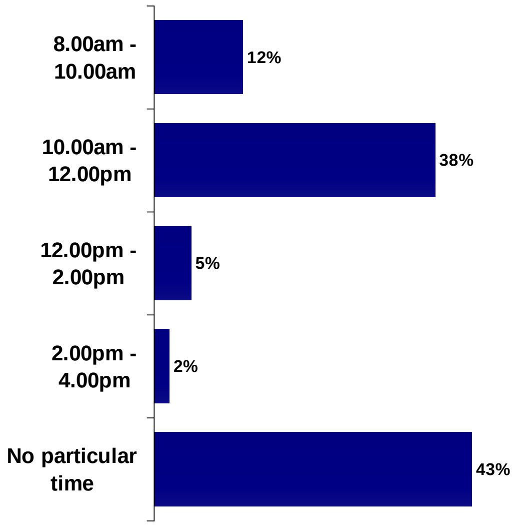
(QS2) Is there any particular time of day when you would call the Council with an enquiry? (Respondents providing a valid response)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 798/803

12.2.3 Finally respondents were asked what time they would phone the Council if the call centre were to open on a Saturday. Again, while just over two fifths of respondents said there was no particular time when they would phone, the predominant preference was for a morning telephone call (43%).

(QS3) If the call centre were to open on a Saturday, is there any particular time of day when you would call the Council with an enquiry? (Respondents providing a valid response)



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 804/822

Appendix 1 – Sample profile

12.2.4 The following tables show a breakdown of the key respondent profile details, showing both unweighted and weighted figures.

Unweighted and weighted sample profile (all respondents)

	Unweighted %	Weighted %
SEX		
Male	53	48
Female	46	51
Unspecified	1	1
AGE		
18 to 24	2	5
25 to 54	41	53
55+	53	38
Unspecified	5	5
TENURE		
Owner occupier	81	82
RSL tenant	6	5
Other tenant	11	11
Other	1	1
Unspecified	1	1
WORKING STATUS		
Working	50	60
Not working	46	38
Unspecified	3	3

Unweighted and weighted sample profile (all respondents)

	Unweighted %	Weighted %
DISABILITY		
Yes	28	22
Yes – limiting	20	15
Yes – not limiting	7	6
No	67	73
Unspecified	5	5