BMG Research – draft report
South Staffordshire District Council

Prepared for:
South Staffordshire District 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 1 percentage point from 63% in 2003 to 62% 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	84	63	62	1123	2.8
BV4: COMPLAINTS HANDLING					
BV4: % satisfied with satisfied with the handling of complaints	51	33	38	171	7.3
BV89: LITTER					
BV89: % satisfied that the Authority has kept the land clear of litter and rubbish the waste collection service overall	75	75	76	1154	2.5
BV90: WASTE					
BV90a: % satisfied with the waste collection service overall	95	95	75	1138	2.5
BV90b: % satisfied with the provision of local waste recycling facilities	75	76	75	1032	2.6
BV119: CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL FACILITIES					
BV119a: % satisfied with sports and leisure facilities and events	-	56	61	1101	2.9
BV119b: % satisfied with libraries	-	-	70	1117	2.7
BV119c: % satisfied with museums and galleries	-	-	17	1030	2.3
BV119d: % satisfied with theatres and concert halls	-	-	23	1044	2.6
BV119e: % satisfied with parks and open spaces	-	65	67	1112	2.8

1.2 Key Findings

Corporate health

1.2.1 In total, 62% of respondents providing a response are satisfied with the way South Staffordshire Council runs things, a proportion which is lower than that returned in the 2003/04 survey (63%) and substantially down on that reported in the 2000/2001 BVPI survey (84%).

1.2.2 In terms of whether things have changed in the last three years, one in seven (14%) respondents providing a rating feel the way the Council runs things has got better and a similar proportion (16%) feel it has got worse. The majority think the way the Council runs things has stayed the same (72%).

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 (78% a great deal/to some extent), treats all types of people fairly (76%), and is making the local area a better place to live (74%).

1.2.4 Conversely, perceptions are less strong in relation to the provision of good value for money. Approaching a half (45%) of respondents do not feel the council provides good value for money.

Contact with the council

1.2.5 Fewer than one in six respondents (15%) have contacted the authority with a complaint in the last twelve months. Amongst these[1], just over a third (38%) rate themselves as satisfied with how their complaint was handled, which is an increase on that achieved in 2003/2004 (33%), but down on 2000/2001 (51%).

1.2.6 Almost three in five (58%) of all respondents report that they have contacted the council other than to complain in the last twelve months. Of these, the large majority (70%) are satisfied with the final outcome of that contact, whilst 20% are dissatisfied.

1.2.7 Other than making a complaint, respondents contacted the council principally to ask for advice/information (36%). Contact is generally made via the telephone (70%).

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, almost half (48%) of respondents feel the council keeps them very or fairly well informed, whilst the remainder (52%) 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 council itself (41%) and the local media (17%).

[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 Over three quarters of respondents (76%) providing a valid response are satisfied that the council keeps all open public land it controls clear of litter and refuse. This represents a small increase on the results returned in 2003, where 75% of respondents were satisfied.

1.2.12 Of those providing a response, 18% feel in keeping public land clear of litter and refuse the Council has improved over the last three years, while one in ten (10%) feel it has got worse.

Household waste collection

1.2.13 In terms of overall satisfaction with the household waste collection, three quarters of respondents (75%) providing a valid response reports that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is substantially down on the satisfaction ratings achieved in the 2003 and 2000 BVPI (95% and 95% respectively).

1.2.14 This is supported by the fact that amongst respondents providing a response, 32% feel it has got worse and 33% feel it has improved.

Provision of local waste recycling facilities

1.2.15 In terms of satisfaction with the provision of local waste recycling facilities, three quarters (75%) 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 (76%).

1.2.16 Reflecting this level of satisfaction, over a third (36%) of respondents providing a response feel that the service has improved over the last three years, and only 5% consider it to be worse.

Doorstep recycling collection

1.2.17 Satisfaction with the doorstep recycling collection is high with four in five (79%) respondents providing a response reporting that they are either very or fairly satisfied with the service.

1.2.18 Unsurprising, over half (52%) respondents providing a response feel the service has improved over the last three years, whilst less than one in ten (8%) feel it has got worse.

Sports and leisure facilities

1.2.19 The level of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities, at 61%, is higher than that achieved in 2003 (56%). Just 11% express a level of dissatisfaction.

1.2.20 While the majority (50%) of respondents providing a response feel that sports and leisure facilities have stayed the same over the last three years, more do feel that they have improved (11%) than feel they have deteriorated (5%).

Libraries

1.2.21 The level of satisfaction with libraries, at 70% is high. Indeed, just 7% express a level of dissatisfaction.

1.2.22 More respondents feel libraries have got better over the last 3 years (12%) than feel they have deteriorated (5%).

Museums and galleries

1.2.23 With 17% satisfied and 17% dissatisfied, the level of satisfaction with museums and galleries is equally divided. The large majority are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied (66%).

1.2.24 Whilst 30% of respondents providing a response feel that museums and galleries have stayed the same over the last three years, just 1% feels they have improved and 3% feel they have deteriorated. Indeed, well over half (58%) of respondents do not know whether the quality has improved or deteriorated.

Theatres and concert halls

1.2.25 Satisfaction levels with the theatres and concert halls are divided with over a fifth (23%) satisfied and almost a fifth (18%) dissatisfied.

1.2.26 The majority (36%) of respondents providing a response feel that theatres and concert halls have stayed the same over the last three years. However, more do feel that they have deteriorated (3%) than say they have improved (1%). Again, over half (53%) do not know whether theatres and concert halls have improved or deteriorated.

Parks and open spaces

1.2.27 Satisfaction with parks and open spaces, at 67%, is up on that in 2003 (65%). Amongst users of parks and open spaces, 75% are satisfied.

1.2.28 Although the majority (63%) of respondents providing a response feel that parks and open spaces have stayed the same over the last three years, 10% feel they have improved and just 7% feel they deteriorated.

Housing services

1.2.29 One in ten (10%) respondents report using the housing services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

1.2.30 Amongst users of housing services, almost half (47%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied, and a further 33% are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. However, one in five (20%) express a level of dissatisfaction.

Planning services

1.2.31 Approaching one in five (18%) of all respondents report using the planning services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

1.2.32 Amongst users of planning services, over a half (52%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied. Conversely, almost a third (30%) express a level of dissatisfaction.

Quality of life

1.2.33 When asked about aspects that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live, the level of crime (66%), health services (48%), clean streets (41%), education provision (39%) and affordable decent housing (35%) are the issues mentioned most often.

1.2.34 Similarly when respondents were asked which aspects most need improving in the local area, activities for teenagers (58%), the level of crime (36%), the level of traffic congestion (31%), public transport (29%) and road and pavement repairs (27%) are the factors identified as priorities for improvement.

1.2.35 The large majority (87%) of 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 just 4% are dissatisfied to some extent.

Community cohesion

1.2.36 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. teenagers hanging around in the street; b) those where views are relatively balanced e.g. people not treating other people with consideration and respect; and c) those which a majority of respondents do not regard as being a particular problem e.g. abandoned or burnt out cars.

1.2.37 Almost seven in ten (67%) respondents providing a response agree to an extent that in their local area people from different backgrounds get on well together, whilst just 13% disagree.

Local decision making

1.2.38 Amongst respondents providing a response, over one fifth (22%) are satisfied that the council provides opportunities for participation in local decision-making, and a higher proportion (23%) are dissatisfied. A significant proportion (55%) does not express a strong opinion one way or the other.

1.2.39 In terms of influencing local decision-making affecting the local area, of all respondents providing a response, the majority (72%) disagree that they can do this.

1.2.40 One in five (21%) respondents report that they would like to be more involved in the decisions their council makes that affect their local area, and a further 56% say that it would depend on the issue in question. One in eight (13%) 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 South Staffordshire Council's Best Value General Survey, conducted amongst 1,180 local residents, via a self-completion postal survey carried out between September and November 2006.

2.1.2 It also provides comparisons with previous BVPI results.

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

2.1.4 The methodology was implemented according to ODPM guidelines and as such included two reminder mailings.

2.1.5 The initial mailing of 2,500 South Staffordshire residents took place on 29th September 2006, and following this, those respondents who had not returned a completed questionnaire were re-mailed.

2.1.6 The second mailing was sent on 1st November 2006, and the third mailing on 29th November 2006.

2.1.7 In total 1,180 usable completed questionnaires were returned, representing a response rate of 47%.

2.1.8 On an observed statistic of 50%, a sample size of 1,180 is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-2.9% 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

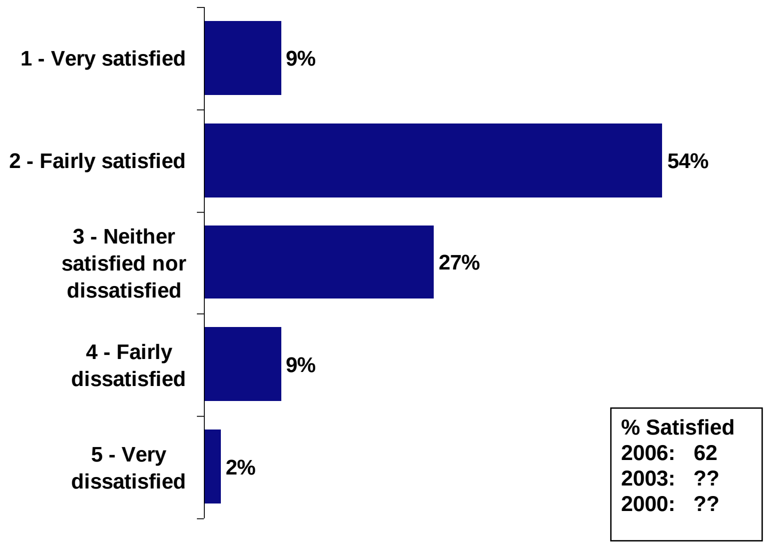
3 Corporate health

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 three in five (62%) of all respondents rate themselves as satisfied, which represents a small decrease of 1% since the last BVPI in 2003 (63%), but is 22% down on the 2000 figure (84%). The proportion of respondents rating themselves as dissatisfied is at just 10%.

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



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3.1.3 The levels of satisfaction is slightly higher for women (64%) than men (60%), but appears to increase with age, from 50% of those aged 18 to 24, to 74% of those aged over 65.

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 almost 1 in 7 (14%) of those responding felt that things had improved over the last 3 years, the same proportion (16%) felt that things have got worse over this period. The majority of respondents (72%) however felt that the way things are run remained the same.

3.2.3 The same proportion of men (15%) and women (14%) are of the opinion that things have improved over the past 3 years.

4 How the council performs overall

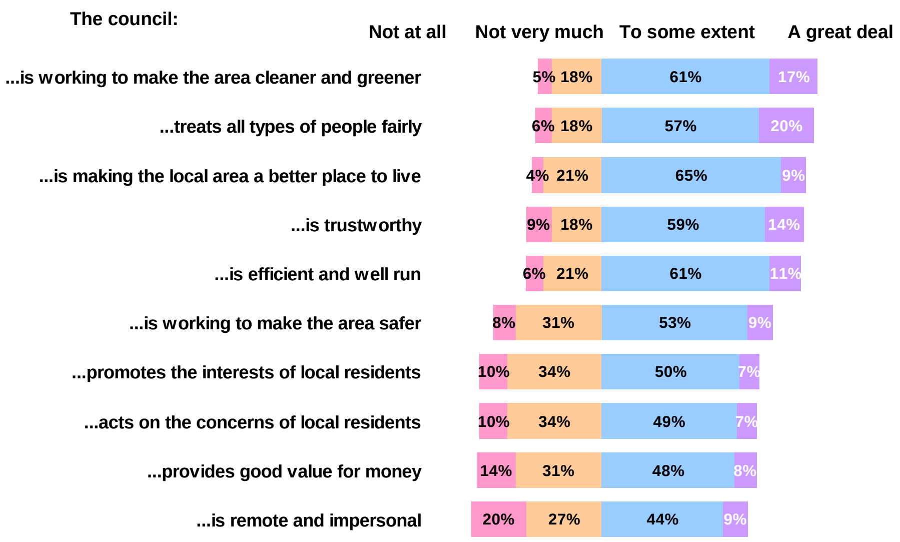
4.1.1 Respondents were asked to consider a number of things other people have said about their council, and to rate the extent to which they think each one applies to their council.

4.1.2 Overall, around three quarters of respondents express agreement that the council is working to make the area cleaner and greener (78% a great deal/to some extent), treats all types of people fairly (76%), and is making the local area a better place to live (74%).

4.1.3 However, perceptions are less strong in relation to providing value for money (55% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 45% 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), and in terms of acting on the concerns of local residents (57% a great deal/to some extent, compared to 43% not very much/not at all).

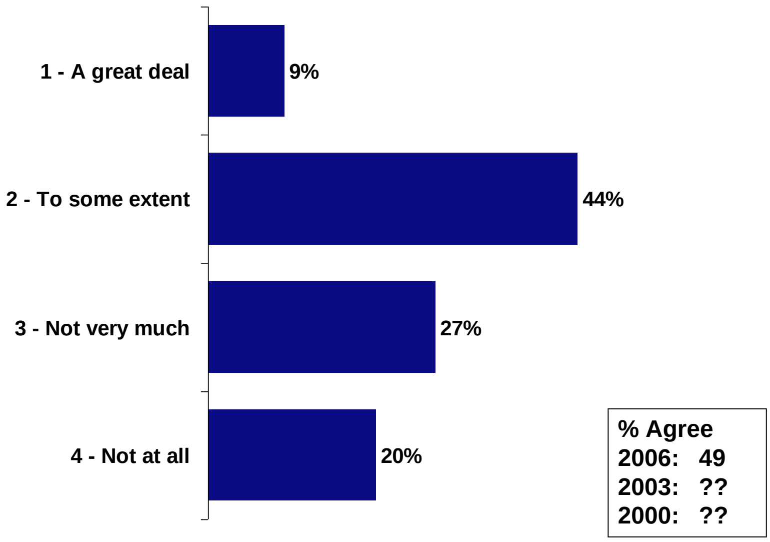
(Q27) How the council performs overall (valid responses only)



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 = 853/872

4.1.6 One in ten respondents (9%) consider the council to be remote and impersonal to a great extent and just under half (44%) 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 Fewer than one in six respondents (15%) 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:

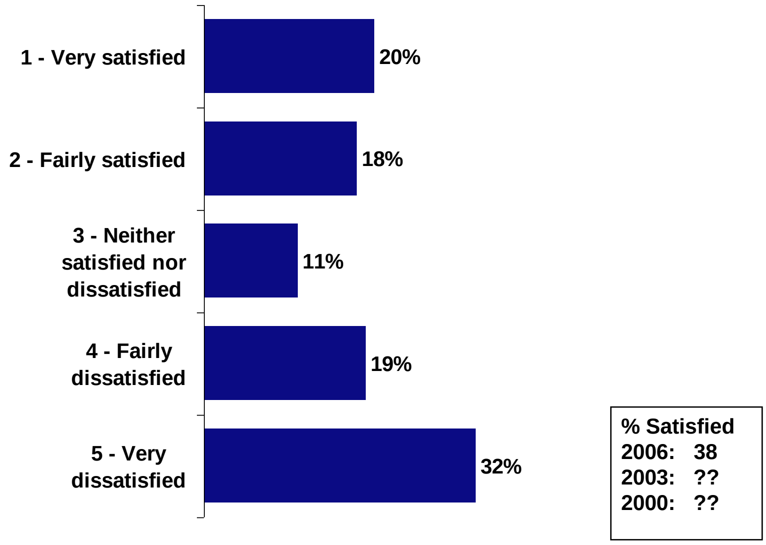
- Males (18% compared to 12% of females);
- Those with a disability (21% compared to 13% of those without);

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, over a third (38%) rate themselves as satisfied with how their complaint was handled, which is an improvement on 2003 (33%), but down on 2000 (51%).

5.1.5 Exactly half (50%) of respondents rate themselves as dissatisfied with how their complaint was handled.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 171/169

5.2 Satisfaction with other types of contact with council

5.2.1 Almost three in five (58%) 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 and 25 to 44 (64% and 69% compared to 46% of those aged 65 or over);
- Other tenants (68% compared to 58% of owner/occupiers).

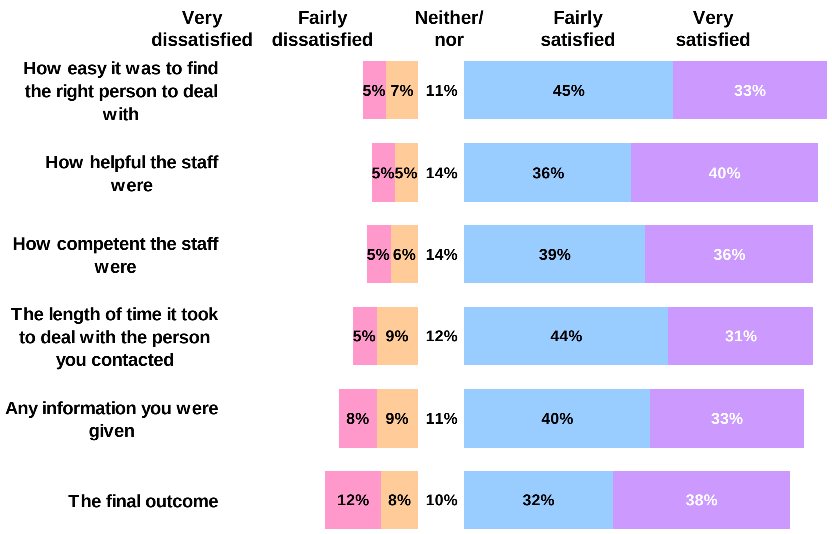
5.2.3 When asked the reason for their most recent contact with the council, a higher proportion said it was to ask for advice/obtain information (21%) than said it was to report an issue or problem (13%) or to apply to use a service (13%).

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 (70%), 22% in person, 13% by letter, 4% by email, and 3% 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, with the exception of 'the final outcome'. Apart from the final outcome, most dissatisfaction was shown with 'the information given' (17%).

(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 70% 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 (20%) are dissatisfied, including over one in ten (12%) who are very dissatisfied.

6 Information provision

6.1 How well informed residents feel

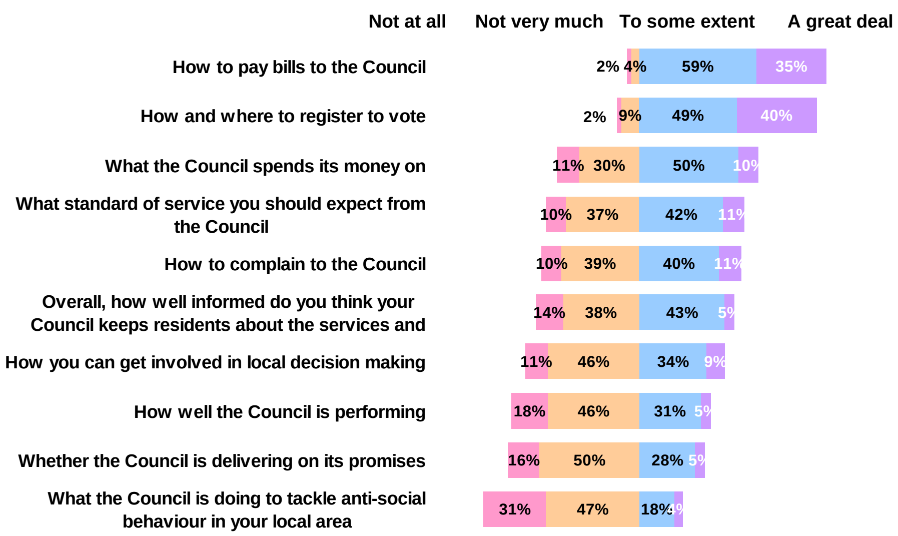
How well informed residents feel about specific aspects of services

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 to pay bills to the council and how and where to register to vote;
- Those where views are more balanced: e.g. what standard of service you should expect, how to complain, and how well informed you think your council keeps residents; and
- 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 48% feel the council keeps them very or fairly well informed, the remainder, over half (52%) feel they do not keep them well informed, including 14% who feel they do not keep them well informed at all.

6.1.5 Feeling that the council keeps them very or fairly well informed is higher than average amongst those aged 65 or more (64%), and council tenants (82%).

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 substantially higher proportion of respondents say they use information provided by the council (41%) as use the local media (17%). Relatively few respondents (8%) currently use the council website and word of mouth is used by 8%. Only 7% say they have direct contact with the council, and 1% considers 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 younger respondents (27% of 18 to 24 year olds compared to 4% of 45 to 64 year olds and 1% of 65+ year olds).

6.2.4 Council tenants are most likely to find out about the council from information provided by the council (64%).

7 Refuse and recycling services

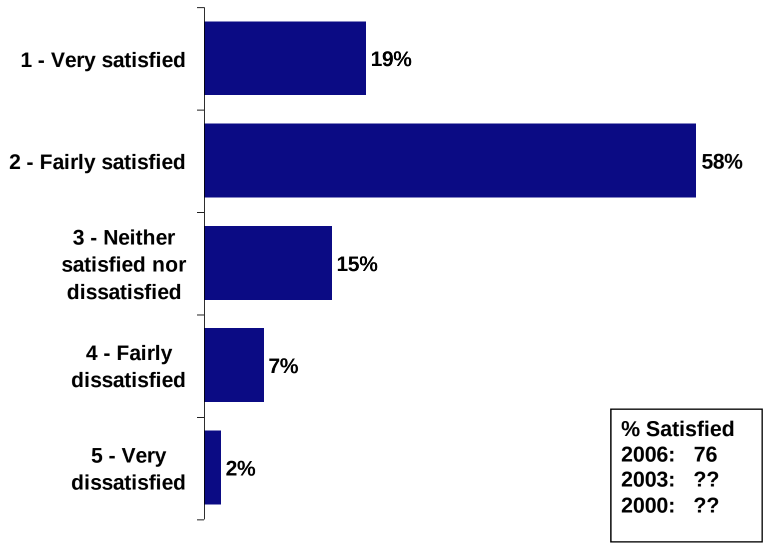
7.1 BV89 – Keeping land clear of litter and refuse

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 (75%), with 76% now expressing a level of satisfaction and are also higher than the 2000 results (75%).

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1154/1154

7.1.3 Of those providing a response, approaching one in five (18%) of respondents feel the council's keeping land clear of litter and refuse has improved over the last three years, while one in ten (10%) feel it has got worse.

7.2 BV90a – Household waste collection

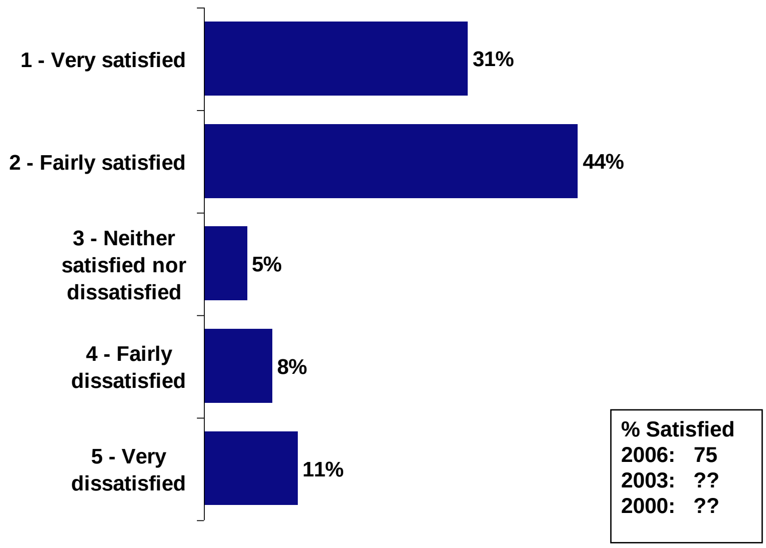
BV90a – Satisfaction with household waste collection overall

7.2.1 Respondents were reminded that the council undertakes a fortnightly 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 (75%) of respondents who provided a response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied. This is substantially down on the satisfaction ratings achieved in the 2003 and 2000 BVPI surveys, 95% and 95% satisfaction levels respectively. Approaching one in five (19%) express a level of dissatisfaction.

7.2.3 This is supported by the fact that amongst respondents providing a response, a third (33%) feel it has got worse over the last three years. However, a further third (32%) also feel it has improved.

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



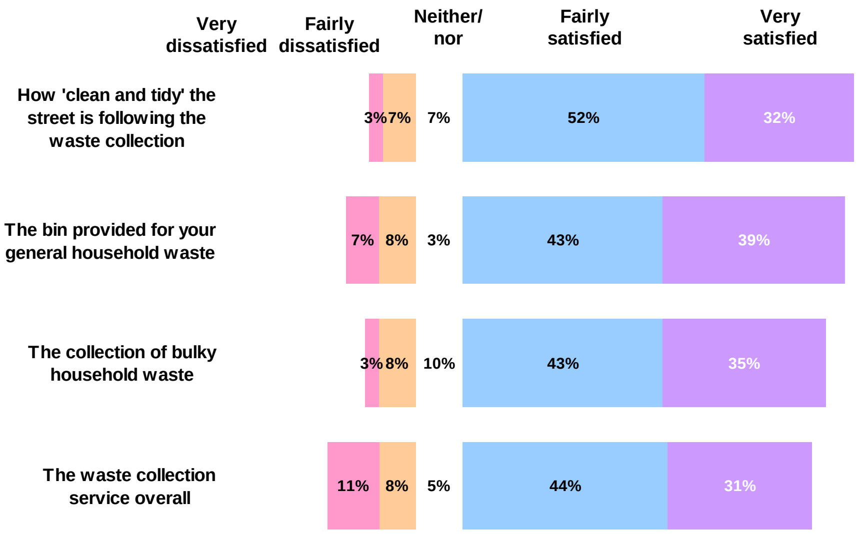
UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1138/1141

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, one in six (15%) respondents providing a rating express dissatisfaction with 'the bin provided for general household waste', and over one in ten (11%) 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 container provided for your general household waste'.

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

	2006 %
The container provided for your general household waste	+23
The collection of bulky household waste	+47
How clean and tidy the street is following collection	+58
Bases vary	

7.3 BV90b – Provision of local waste recycling facilities

BV90b – Satisfaction with provision of local waste recycling facilities

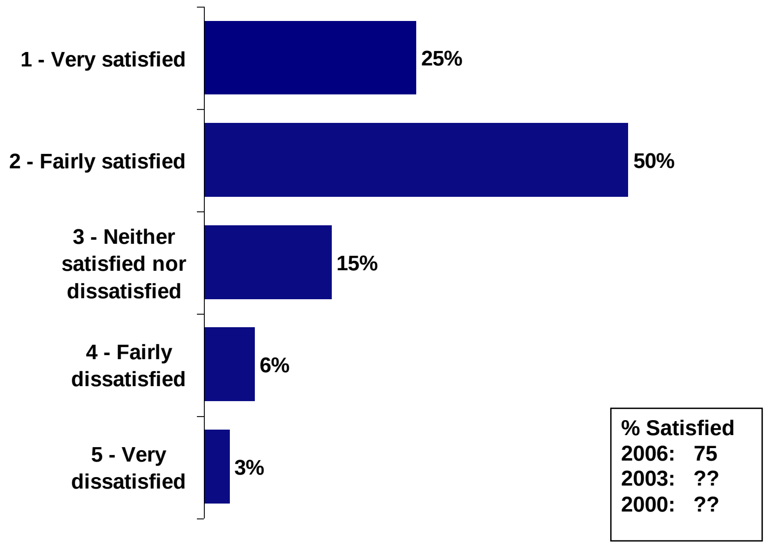
7.3.1 Respondents were reminded that the council provides a range of local recycling facilities.

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, three quarters (75%) 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 (76%) and 2000 (75%) BVPI surveys. Just one in ten (10%) express dissatisfaction with the service overall.

7.3.4 Encouraging, over a third (36%) of respondents feel that the service has improved over the last three years, and only 5% are of the view that it has got worse.

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

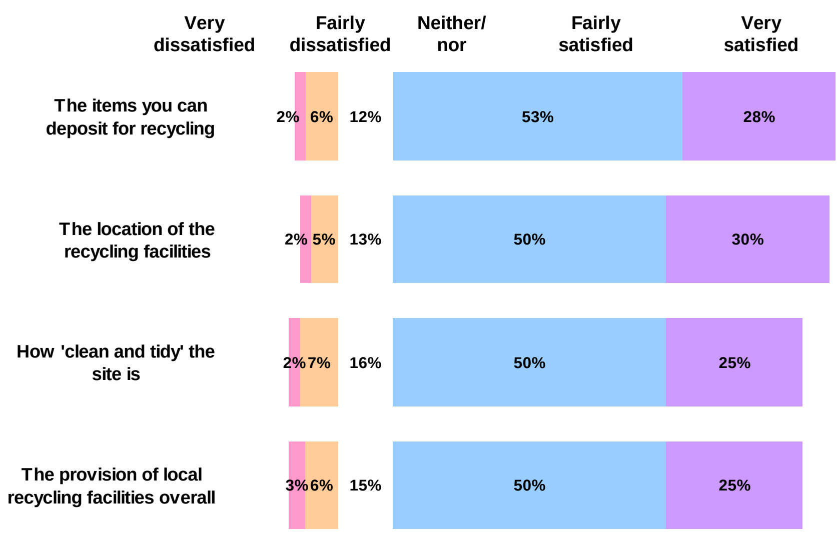


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1032/1053

Satisfaction with aspects of local recycling facilities

7.3.5 Levels of satisfaction with the items that can be deposited, the location of the facilities, the cleanliness and tidiness of the site and the provision of facilities overall are all relatively high (81%, 80%, 76% and 75% 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 ‘the items you can deposit for recycling’.

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

	2006 %
The items you can deposit for recycling	+69
The location of the recycling facilities	+71
How clean and tidy the site is	+71
Bases vary	

7.4 Doorstep recycling collection

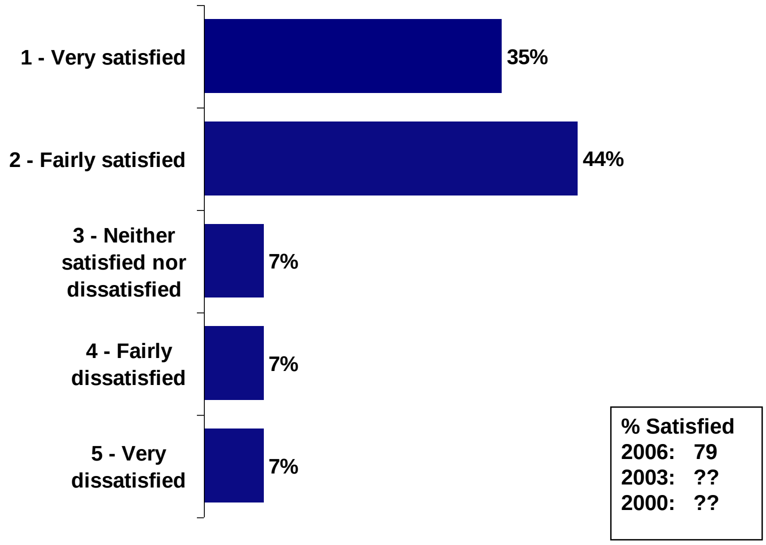
Satisfaction with doorstep recycling collection

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, almost four in five respondents (79%) who provide a response report that they are either very or fairly satisfied.

7.4.3 It is very encouraging to note that over half (52%) of 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)



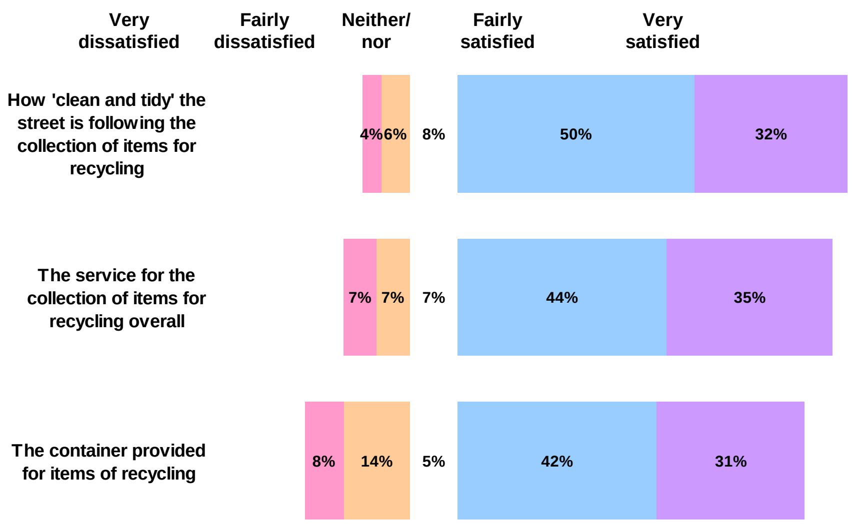
UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1135/1141

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 Four fifths (81%) are satisfied with the latter and 10% dissatisfied, while 73% are satisfied with the container provided and 22% 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	+76
The container provided for items of recycling	+72
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.

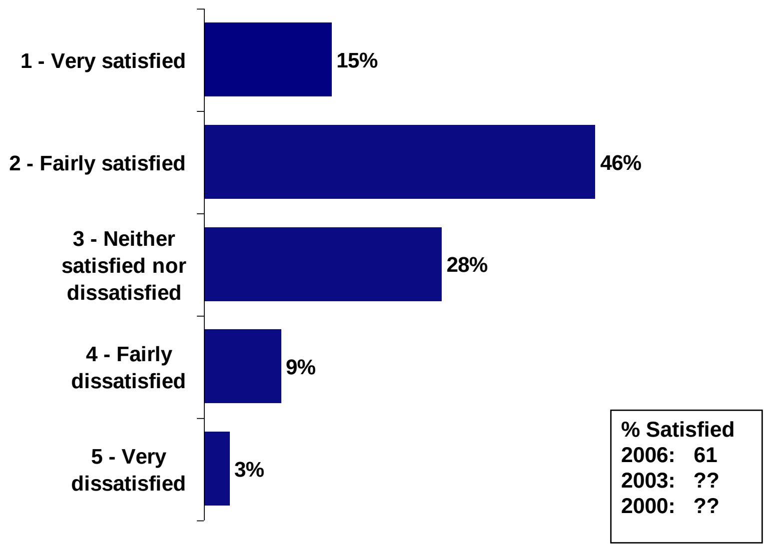
8.2 BV 119a – Sports and leisure facilities

BV119a – Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities

8.2.1 The level of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities at 61% is higher than that achieved in 2003 (56%), although 11% remain dissatisfied.

8.2.2 In line with the above finding, half (50%) 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 improved (11%) than feel they have deteriorated (5%).

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

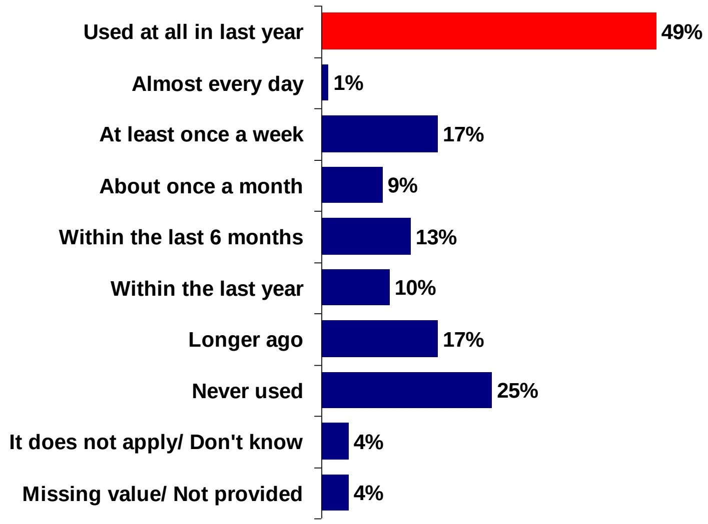


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1101/1128

Frequency of use of sports and leisure facilities

8.2.3 Almost half (49%) of all respondents report that they have used sports and leisure facilities in the last twelve months, including almost a fifth (18%) who report using such facilities at least weekly.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1179/1179

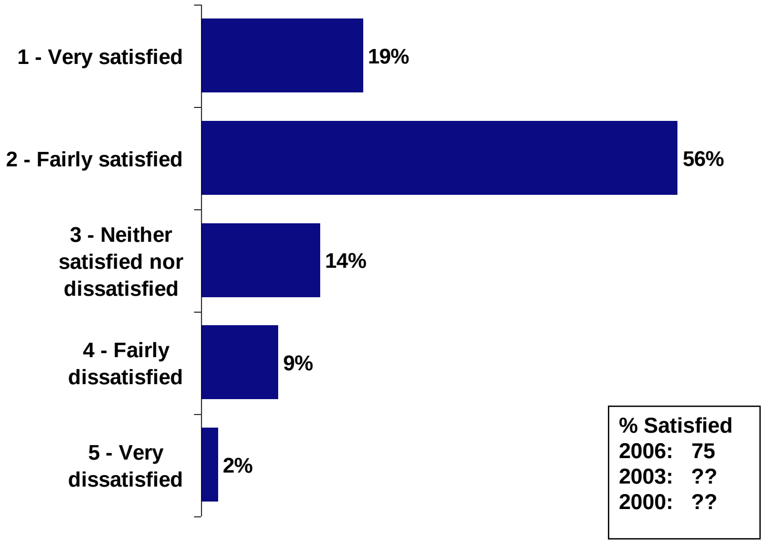
8.2.4 Levels of use of sports and leisure facilities are higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Those aged 18 to 24 (82% compared to 69% of 25 to 44 year olds and 20% of those aged 65 and over);
- Those in work (58% compared to 35% of those not in work and 27% retired);
- Those without a disability (53% compared to 40% of those with a disability).

BV119au – Satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities – users

8.2.5 Amongst users providing a response, three quarters (75%) are either very or fairly satisfied, with just one in ten (11%) expressing a level of dissatisfaction.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 493/576

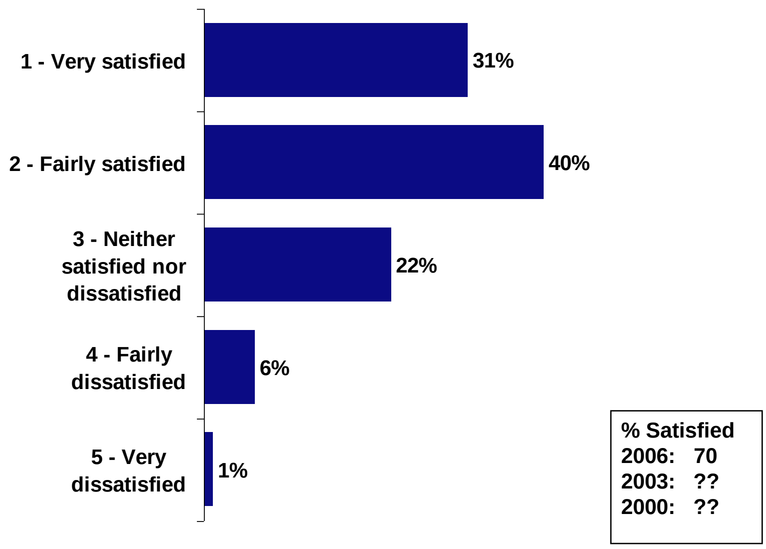
8.3 BV 119b – Libraries

BV119b – Satisfaction with libraries

8.3.1 The level of satisfaction with libraries at 70% is high.

8.3.2 Certainly, more respondents providing a response feel that libraries have got better over the last three years (12%), as compared to those who believe they have got worse (5%).

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

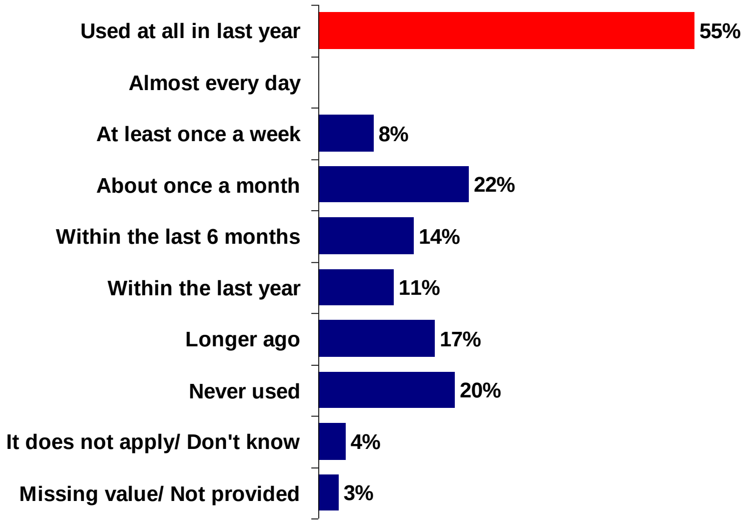


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1117/1132

Frequency of use of libraries

8.3.3 Over half (55%) of all respondents report that they have used library facilities in the last twelve months, including 30% who report at least monthly use.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1179/1179

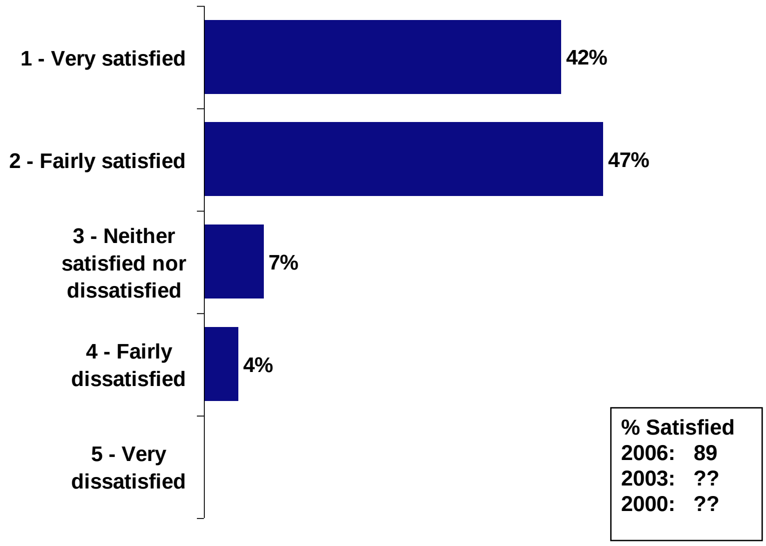
8.3.4 Levels of use of libraries are higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Young and middle age groups (64% of 18 to 24 year olds and 60% of 25 to 44 year olds, compared to 49% 65 and over).

BV119bu – Satisfaction with libraries – users

8.3.5 Amongst users providing a response, the vast majority (89%) are either very or fairly satisfied, with less than one in twenty (4%) expressing a level of dissatisfaction.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 613/646

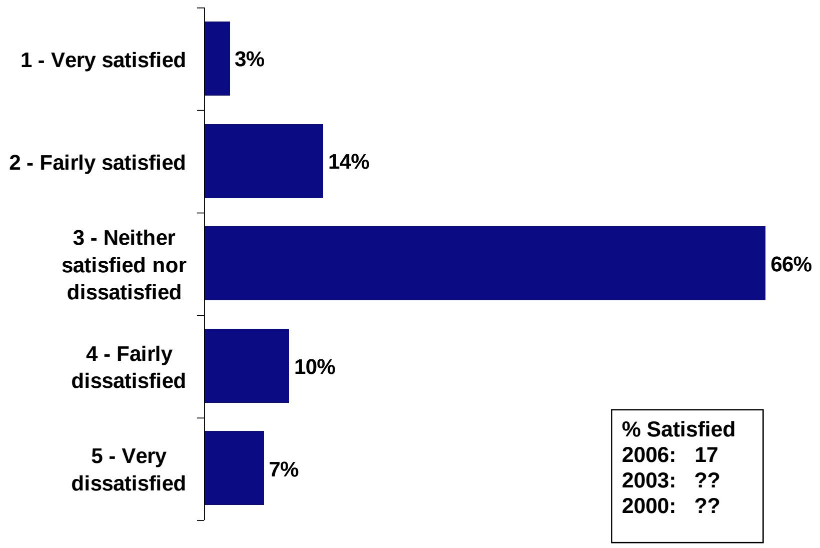
8.4 BV 119c – Museums and galleries

BV119c – Satisfaction with museums and galleries

8.4.1 With 17% satisfied and 17% dissatisfied, the level of satisfaction with museums and galleries is relatively divided. The large majority (66%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

8.4.2 While 30% of respondents providing a response feel that museums and galleries have stayed the same over the last three years, just 1% feels they have improved and 3% feel they have deteriorated. Indeed, well over half (58%) of respondents do not know whether the quality has improved or deteriorated.

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

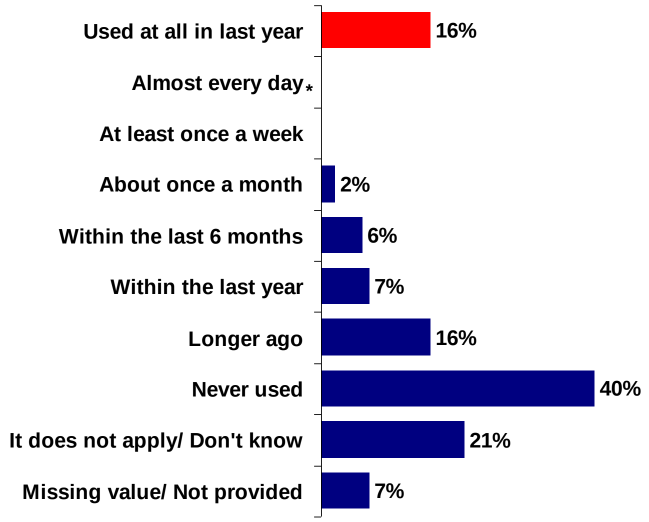


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1030/1065

Frequency of use of museums and galleries

8.4.3 Only 16% of respondents report that they have visited a museum or gallery in the last twelve months, with just 8% having visited within the last six months.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1179/1179

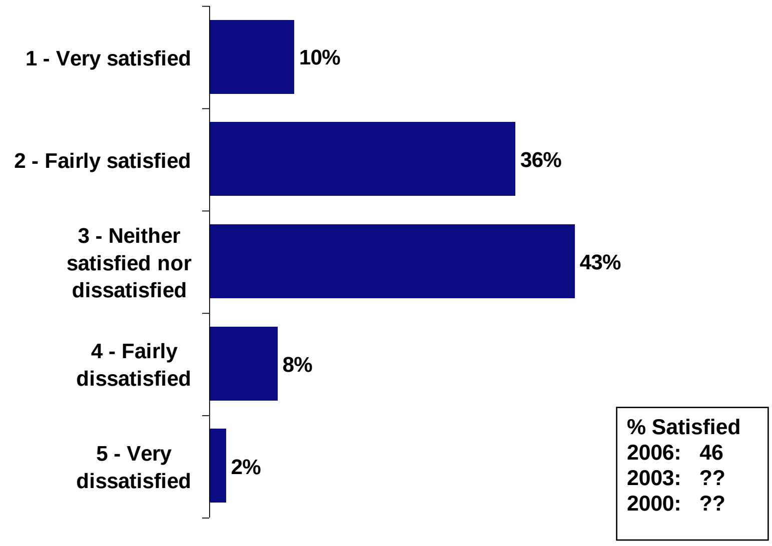
8.4.4 Levels of use of museums and galleries are higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Those without a disability (19% compared to 6% of those with a disability);
- Those in work (18% compared to 12% of those not in work).

BV119cu – Satisfaction with museums and galleries – users

8.4.5 Amongst users providing a response, over two in five respondents (46%) are satisfied to a degree, whilst 11% express a level of dissatisfaction.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 169/184

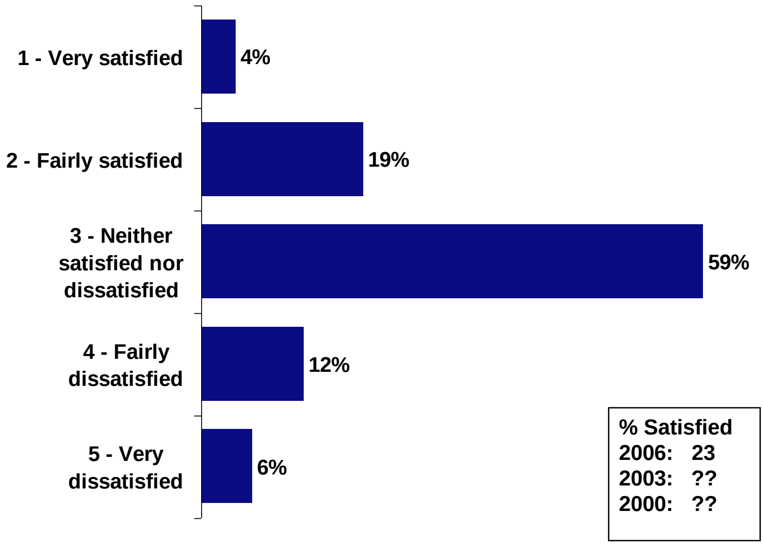
8.5 BV 119d – Theatres and concert halls

BV119d – Satisfaction with theatres and concert halls

8.5.1 Satisfaction levels with the theatres and concert halls are divided with over a fifth (23%) satisfied and almost a fifth (18%) dissatisfied.

8.5.2 Certainly, while the majority (36%) of respondents providing a response feel that theatres and concert halls have stayed the same over the last three years, more do feel that they have deteriorated (3%) than feel they have improved (1%). Again, over half (53%) do not know whether theatres and concert halls have improved or deteriorated in the last three years.

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

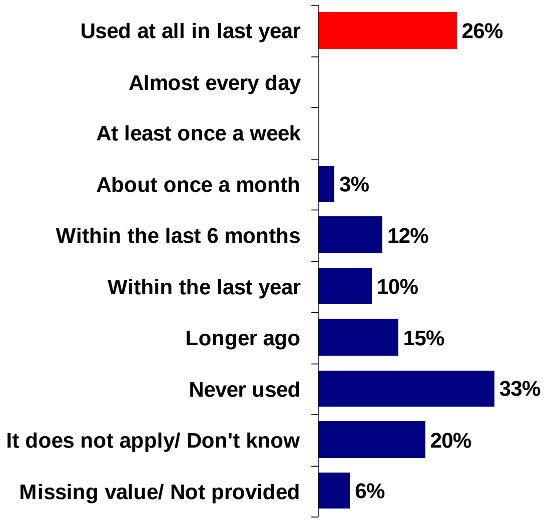


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1044/1079

Frequency of use of theatres and concert halls

8.5.3 A quarter (26%) of all respondents report that they have visited a theatre or concert hall in the last twelve months, with just 15% having visited within the last six months.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1179/1179

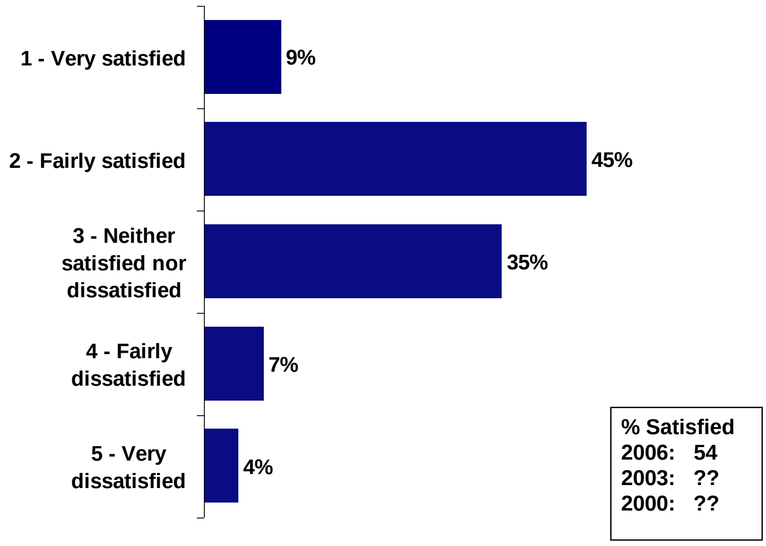
8.5.4 Levels of use of theatres and concert halls are higher amongst the following respondent groups:

- Young and middle age groups (32% of 18 to 24 year olds and 29% of 25 to 44 year olds compared to 17% of 65+ year olds);
- Those in work (29% compared to 21% of those not in work).

BV119du – Satisfaction with theatres and concert halls – users

8.5.5 Amongst users providing a response, over half (54%) are satisfied to a degree, whilst just 11% express a level of dissatisfaction.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 276/296

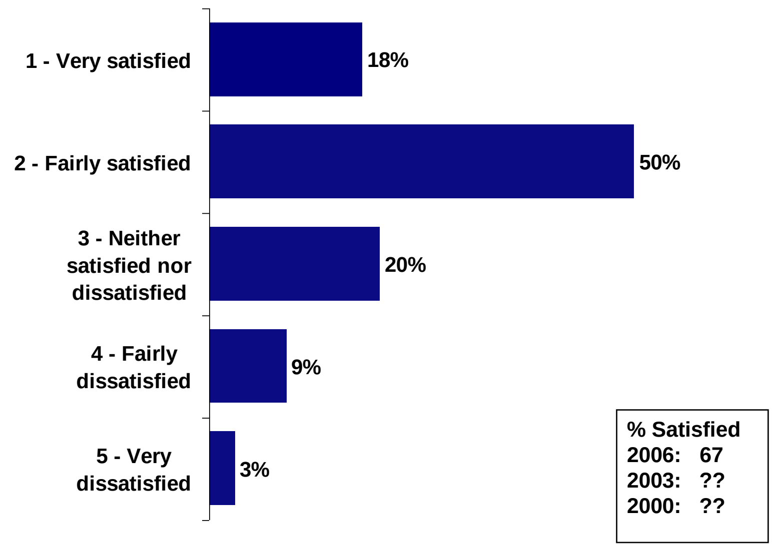
8.6 BV 119e – Parks and open spaces

BV119e – Satisfaction with parks and open spaces

8.6.1 Satisfaction with parks and open spaces is relatively high at 67% of all respondents, with just 13% dissatisfied. This is up on the results from 2003 (65% satisfaction).

8.6.2 While the majority (63%) 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 (10%) is slightly greater than the proportion (7%) that feel they have deteriorated.

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

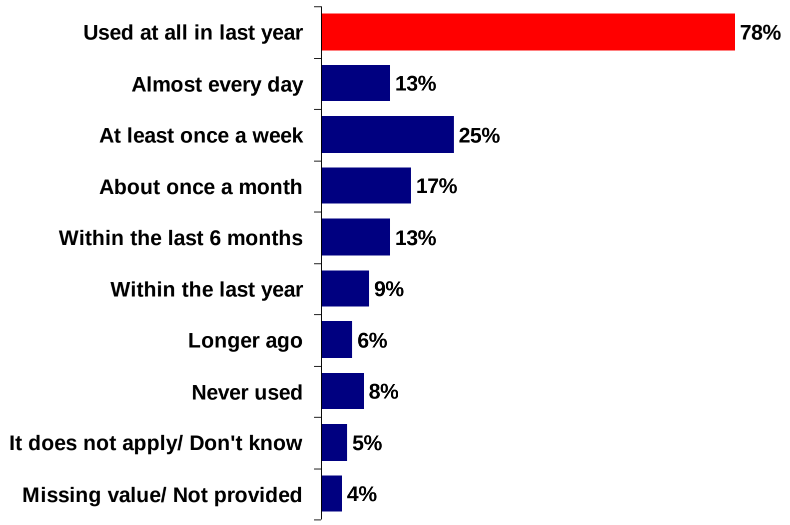


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1112/1133

Frequency of use of parks and open spaces

8.6.3 Almost four in five (78%) respondents report that they have visited a park or open space in the last twelve months, including almost half of these (38%) who report at least weekly use.

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

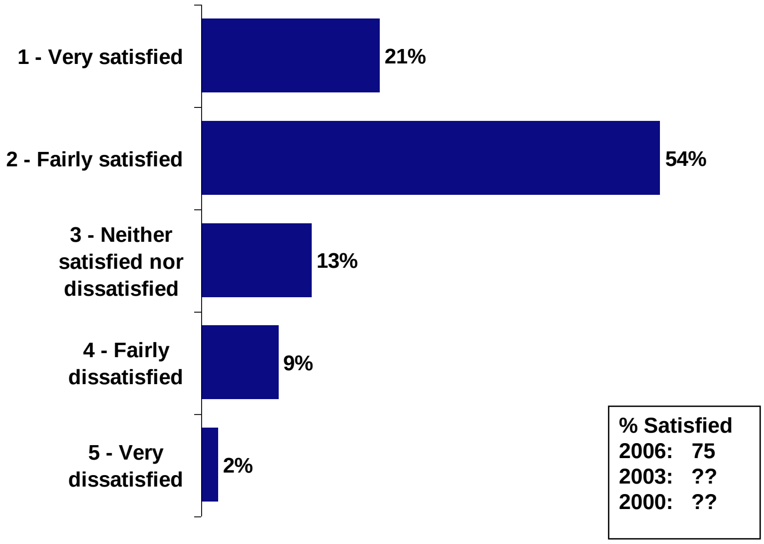


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 1179/1179

BV119eu – Satisfaction with parks and open spaces – users

8.6.4 Amongst users providing a response, three quarters (75%) are satisfied to a degree, including over a half (54%) who are fairly satisfied. This compares with just 11% of respondents who have expressed a level of dissatisfaction.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 865/913

9 Housing services

Use of housing services

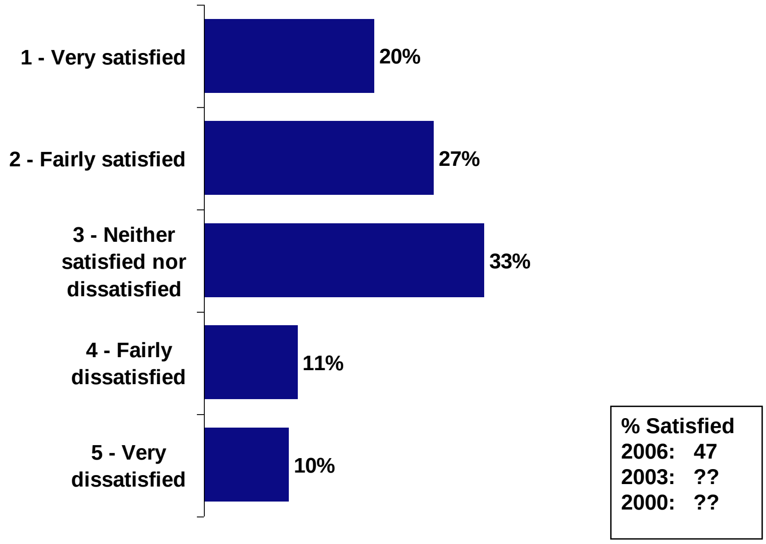
9.1.1 Over one in ten (11%) respondents report using the housing services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

Satisfaction with housing services – users

9.1.2 Amongst users of housing services, almost half (47%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied, and a third (33%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

9.1.3 However, a further 20% express a level of dissatisfaction.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 148/133

10 Planning services

Use of planning services

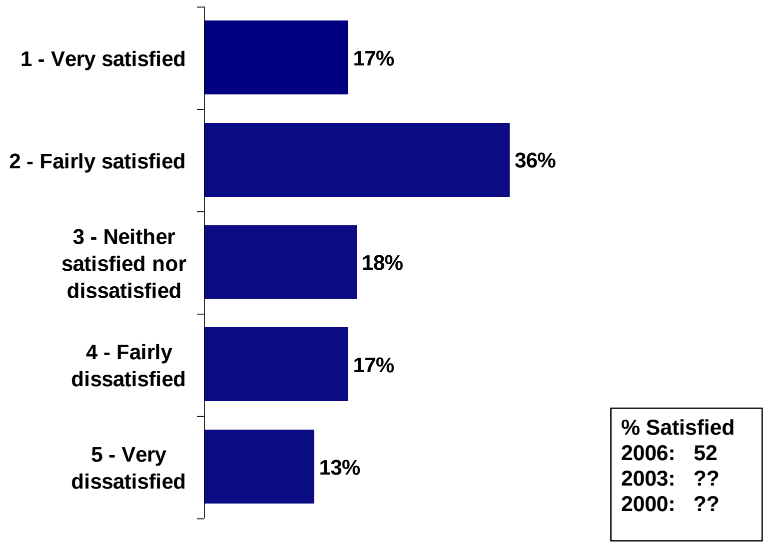
10.1.1 Approaching one in five (18%) of all respondents report using the planning services provided by the council in the last twelve months.

Satisfaction with planning services – users

10.1.2 Amongst users of planning services, over half (52%) of those providing a response are either very or fairly satisfied, with 13% very satisfied. Approaching one in five (18%) are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

10.1.3 Almost a third (30%) express a level of dissatisfaction, with one in seven (13%) being very dissatisfied.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 189/211

11 Quality of life and community cohesion

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

11.1.1 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 (66%), health services (48%), clean streets (41%), education provision (39%), and affordable decent housing (35%) 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	66
Health services	48
Clean streets	41
Education provision	39
Affordable decent housing	35
Public transport	26
Shopping facilities	26
Activities for teenagers	25
Access to nature	22
Parks and open spaces	21
The level of traffic congestion	21
Road and pavement repairs	14
Facilities for young children	13
The level of pollution	13
Community activities	11
Job prospects	10
Sports & leisure facilities	9
Wage levels & local cost of living	7
Race relations	3
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	3
Other	1
None	*
Don’t know/not provided	6
Weighted/unweighted base	1179/1179

11.2 Factors that most need improving

11.2.1 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 (58%), the level of crime (36%), the level of traffic congestion (31%), public transport (29%), and road and pavement repairs (27%) are the factors identified as priorities for improvement.

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

	2006 %
Activities for teenagers	58
The level of crime	36
The level of traffic congestion	31
Public transport	29
Road and pavement repairs	27
Affordable decent housing	24
Facilities for young children	22
Clean streets	18
Shopping facilities	16
Job prospects	15
Sports & leisure facilities	15
Community activities	13
Health services	13
Parks and open spaces	12
Wage levels & local cost of living	10
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	10
The level of pollution	8
Education provision	5
Access to nature	4
Race relations	2
Other	3
None	1
Don’t know/not provided	7
Weighted/unweighted base	1179/1179

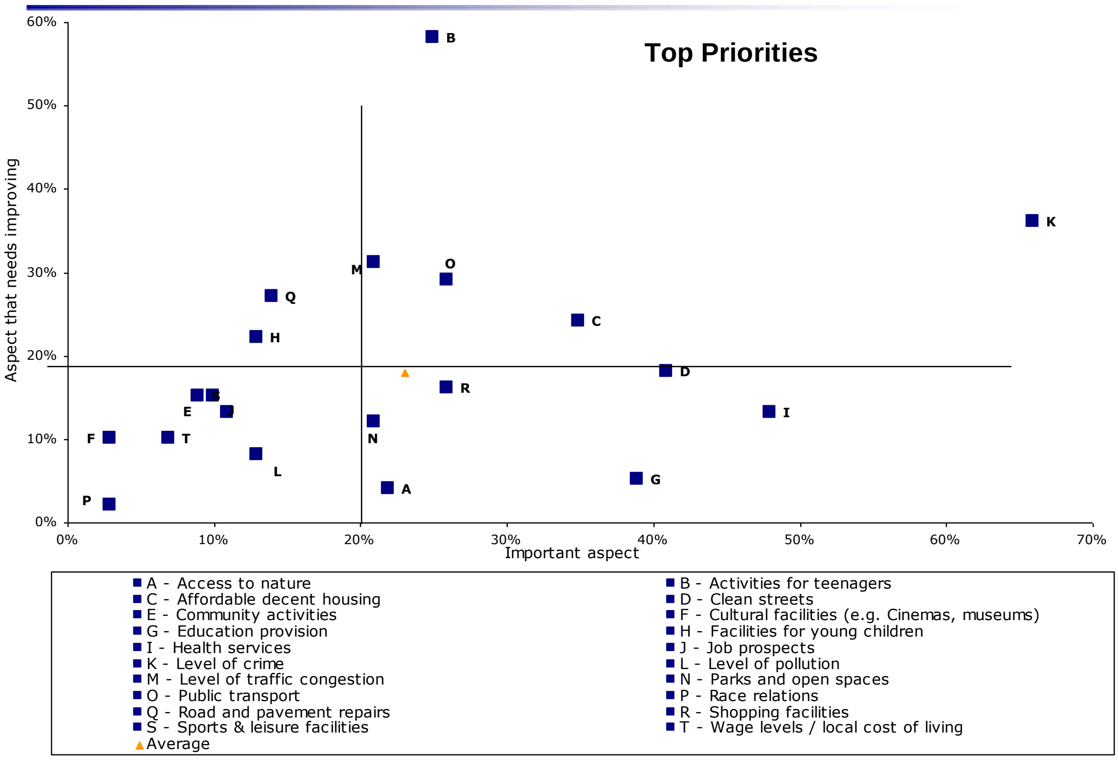
11.3 Priorities for improvement

11.3.1 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.

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

- Level of crime
- Affordable decent housing
- Public transport
- Activities for teenagers

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

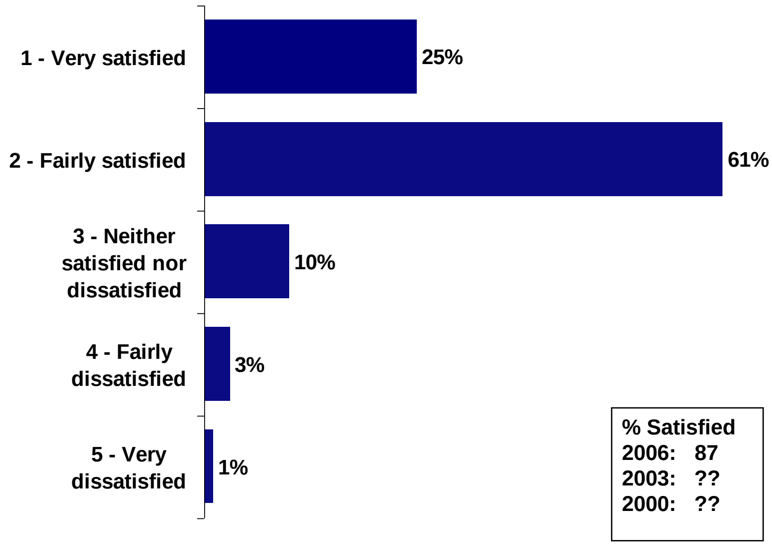


11.4 Satisfaction with local area as a place to live

11.4.1 The large majority (87%) of respondents providing a valid response rate themselves as satisfied with their local area as a place to live, with a quarter (25%) very satisfied.

11.4.2 Just 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 = 1154/1160

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

- Females (89% compared to 84% of males);
- Those without a disability (88% compared to 83% of those with a disability).

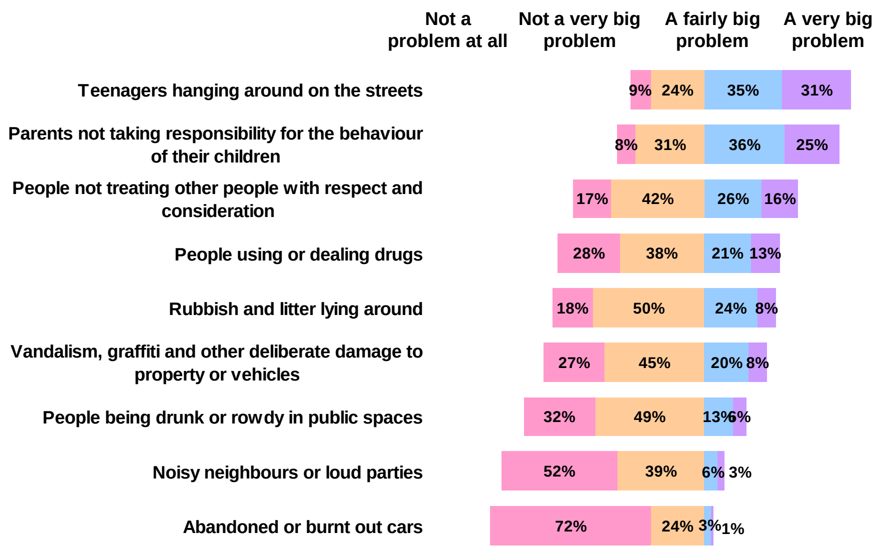
11.5 Anti-social behaviour

11.5.1 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.

11.5.2 The types of behaviour fall broadly into three groups:

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

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



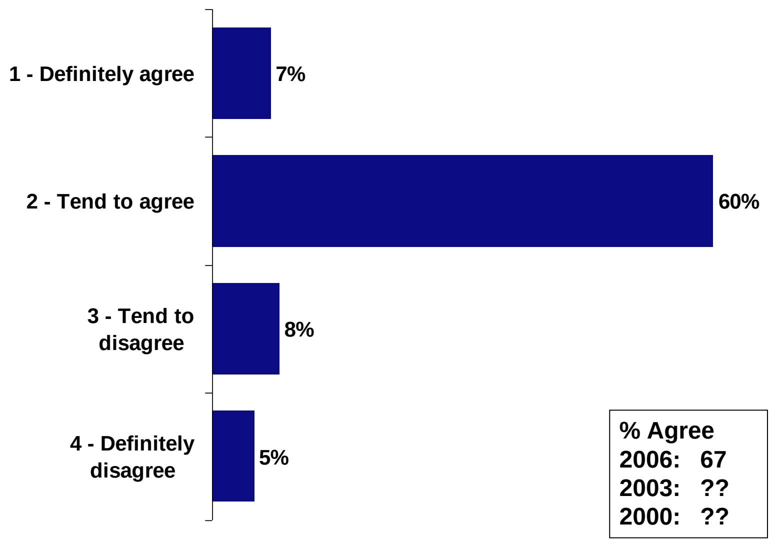
Bases vary

11.6 Extent to which people from different backgrounds get on well

11.6.1 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.

11.6.2 Almost seven in ten (67%) respondents providing a response agree to an extent that this is the case, while just 13% 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 = 878/868

12 Local decision making

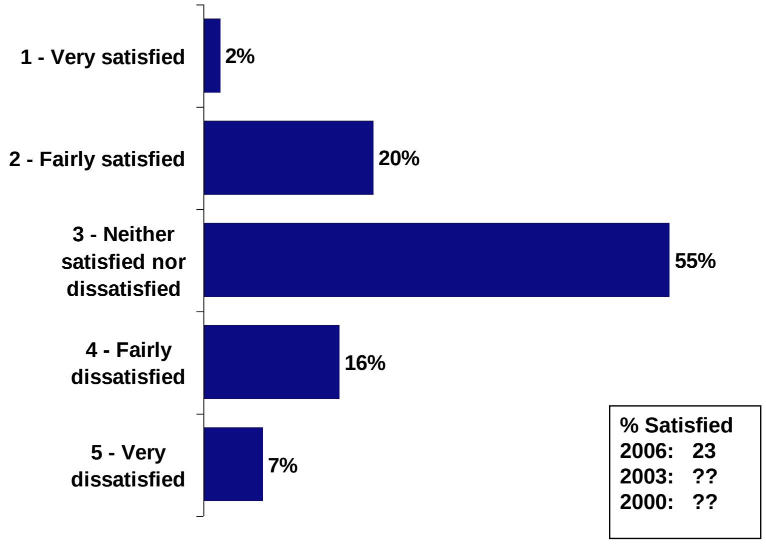
12.1 Satisfaction with opportunities for participation

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

12.1.2 Amongst respondents providing a response, views are relatively balanced, with almost 22% satisfied, and almost 23% dissatisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by the council.

12.1.3 A significant proportion (55%) does not express a strong opinion one way or the other.

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

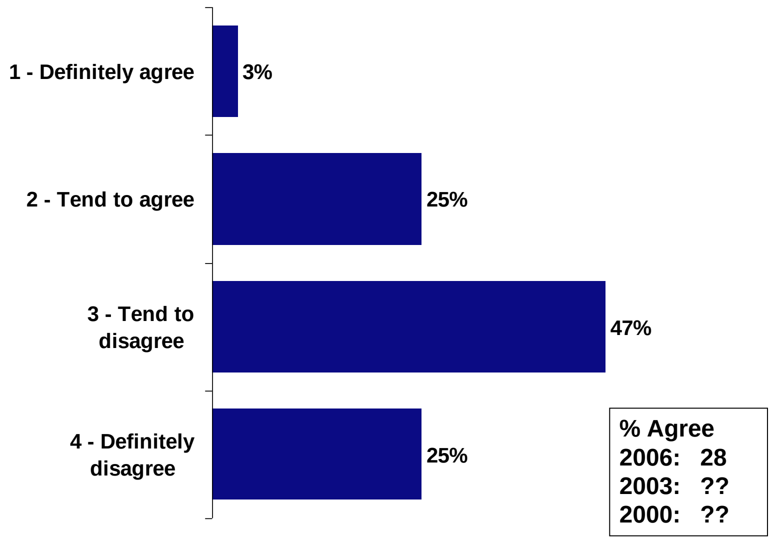


UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 794/813

12.2 Influence over local decisions

12.2.1 Of all respondents providing a response, the majority (72%) believe they cannot influence decisions affecting their local area, while over a quarter (28%) believe they can.

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



UNWEIGHTED/WEIGHTED SAMPLE BASE = 821/841

12.3 Desired level of involvement

12.3.1 One in five (21%) respondents report that they would like to be more involved in the decisions their council makes that affect their local area, and a further 56% say that it would depend on the issue in question. One in eight (13%) report that they would not like to be more involved in such decisions.

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

- Men (26% compared to 19% of women);
- Middle age respondents (27% of 25 to 44 years olds compared to 15% of those aged 65 or over);
- Those in work (24% compared to 18% of those not in work).

Appendix 1 – Sample profile

12.3.3 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	50	43
Female	47	55
Unspecified	3	2
AGE		
18 to 24	1	3
25 to 44	22	32
45 to 64	41	39
65+	31	21
Unspecified	5	5
TENURE		
Owner occupier	82	84
Council tenant	1	1
Other tenant	14	12
Unspecified	3	3
WORKING STATUS		
Working	50	59
Not working	46	37
Unspecified	4	4

Unweighted and weighted sample profile (all respondents)

	Unweighted %	Weighted %
DISABILITY		
Yes	27	23
Yes – limiting	22	17
Yes – not limiting	5	5
No	66	72
Unspecified	7	5