

**Isle of Wight Council:
General User Satisfaction Survey
BVPI research**

November 2003

**A final report on behalf of
Isle of Wight Council**

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Questions Answered

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1 Introduction

This report was commissioned by Isle of Wight Council (IoWC) and was undertaken and completed by the independent York-based research company, Questions Answered Ltd (QA).

The report offers analysis of eight areas of concern to Isle of Wight residents who responded to a randomly sent questionnaire. The eight areas are: the quality of life in the respondents' area, the respondents' local authority, overall satisfaction with the authority as a whole, have things got better or worse, complaints handling, changes in residents' quality of life and anti-social behaviour.

The research is quantitative in style and is based on 1,192 questionnaires that were completed using a postal survey (see *4. Methodology* below), in full accordance with recommended Best Value guidance from the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM).

2 Objective

The main objective of the research was to obtain responses from a minimum of 1,100 people, following ODPM guidelines, on a variety of issues relating to quality of life and the environment on the Isle of Wight. These responses were then analysed to produce this report.

3 Aim

The main research aim within the overall objective was:

- To survey at least 1,100 randomly selected residents within the boundaries of the Isle of Wight, using the relevant General User Satisfaction Survey for 2003.

4 Methodology

In order to meet this main aim the responses were obtained using a postal survey; following the guidelines set out by the ODPM. This involved randomly selecting 3,300 addresses for residents to be mailed the General User Satisfaction Survey, a cover letter and a return envelope. All returned surveys were tracked to a central database. Reminders were sent to all respondents that had not returned surveys by a set date (unless they had advised us that they were in anyway unable to do so). This was repeated for a final, third wave of mailings. The result of this was an overall return of 1,192 responses.

Respondents' demographics

The following tables show breakdowns of the 1,192 respondents' demographics by gender, age, occupation and ethnic group. Bases differ due to the differing level of completion of survey questions:

Figure 4.1: Breakdown of respondents by gender

Gender / Response	Number	Percentage
Male	467	39%
Female	680	57%
No answer / Void	49	4%
Base	1192	100%

Figure 4.2: Breakdown of respondents by age

Age	Number	Percentage
18 – 24	24	2%
25 – 44	255	21%
45 – 59	310	26%
60 – 64	108	9%
65 +	431	36%
No answer	64	5%
Base	1192	99%¹

Figure 4.3: Breakdown of respondents by occupation

Occupation	Number	Percentage
Employee in Full time job	258	22%
Employee in part time job	128	11%
Self employed full or part time	89	7%
On a government sponsored training programme	2	<1%
Full-time education at school, college or university	6	1%
Unemployed and available for work	21	2%
Permanently sick / disabled	64	5%
Wholly retired from work	453	38%
Looking after the home	97	8%
Doing something else	33	3%
No answer / Void	41	3%
Base	1192	100%

¹ Score adds up to 99% due to rounding up or down of percentages

Figure 4.4: Breakdown of respondents by ethnic group

	Number	Percentage
White British	1123	94%
White Irish	6	1%
White Other	23	2%
Black or Black British Caribbean	2	<1%
Black or Black British African	1	<1%
Black or Black British Other	1	<1%
Asian or Asian British Indian	1	<1%
Asian or Asian British Pakistani	1	<1%
Asian or Asian British Other	1	<1%
Mixed White and Asian	1	<1%
Mixed Other	3	<1%
Other Ethnic Group	3	<1%
No answer	26	2%
Base	1147	100%

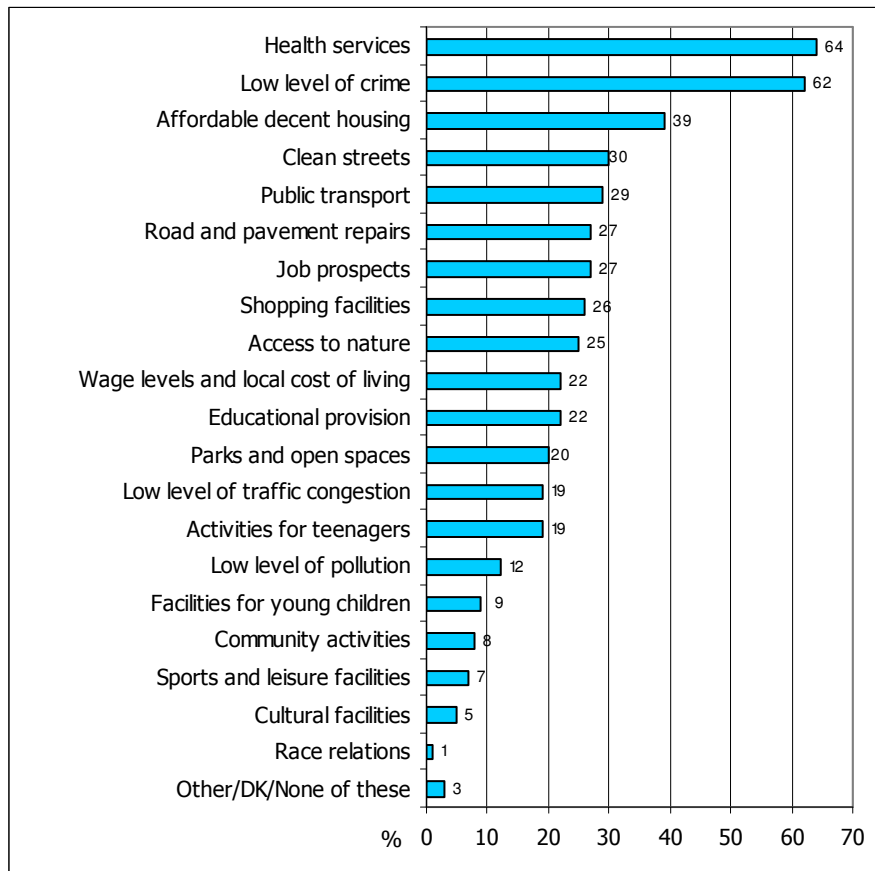
5 Findings

This section provides information on each section of the research, following the structure of the survey. (A copy of this accompanies the report).

Section 1: The quality of life in the area

5.1 The most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live

Figure 5.1: Most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live



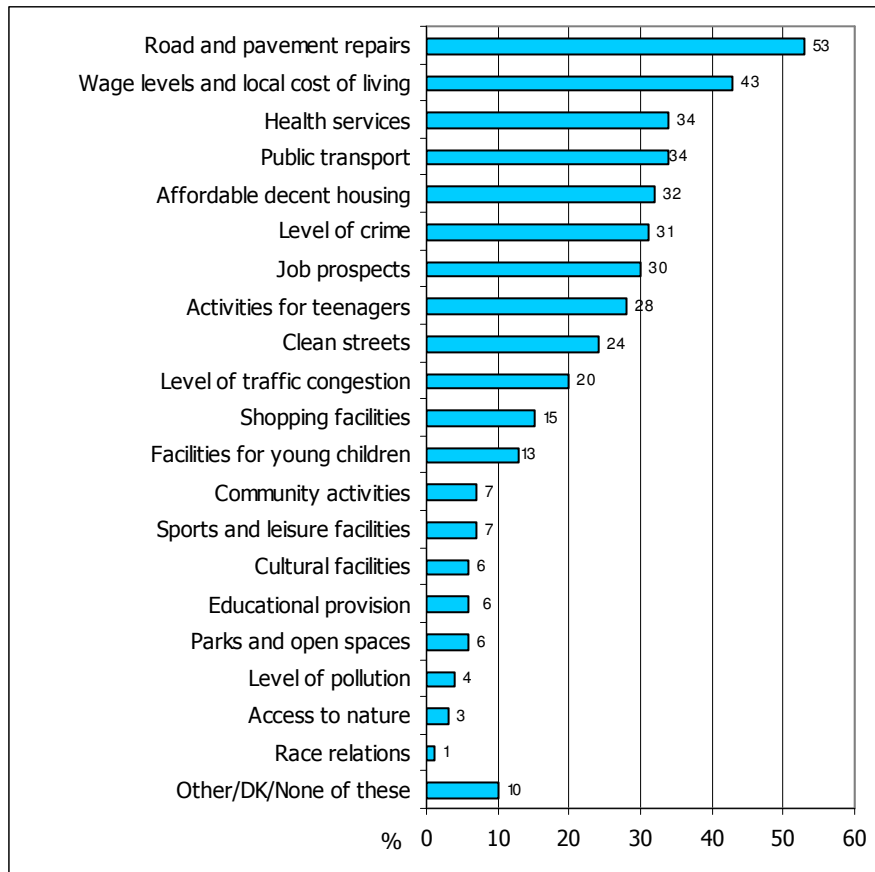
Base: 1023

The respondents were asked to consider what factors made somewhere a good place to live and to provide a maximum of five responses. Figure 5.1 shows that health services (64%) and low levels of crime (62%) are most important to the respondents in making somewhere a good place to live. Clearly there are a range of factors that are also valued by respondents, such as affordable decent housing (39%).

The finding regarding race relations should perhaps be viewed in the context of the island's ethnic mix.

5.2 Factors in most need of improvement in the local area

Figure 5.2: Factors that are seen as being in most need of improvement



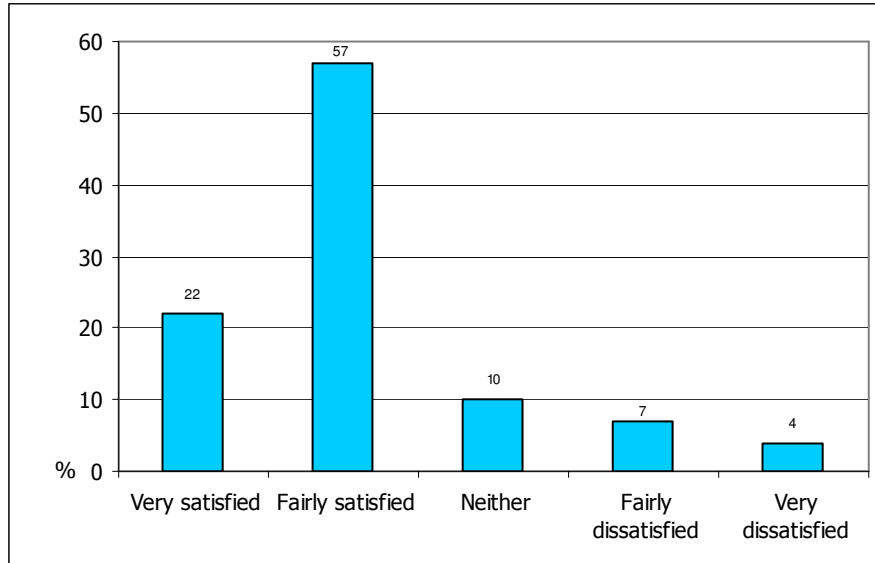
Base: 1110

Figure 5.2 shows the factors that respondents feel are in most need of improvement. Road and pavement repairs (53%) and wage levels and local cost of living (43%) are seen as the factors in most need of improvement. When comparing these results to what respondents see as being most important (figure 5.1) it can be seen that affordable decent housing is rated fairly high in both charts. This also applies to the parallel levels of crime and health services.

Section 2: Your local authority

5.2 Satisfaction with waste and litter services

Figure 5.3: Level of satisfaction with IoWC keeping the land clear of litter and refuse



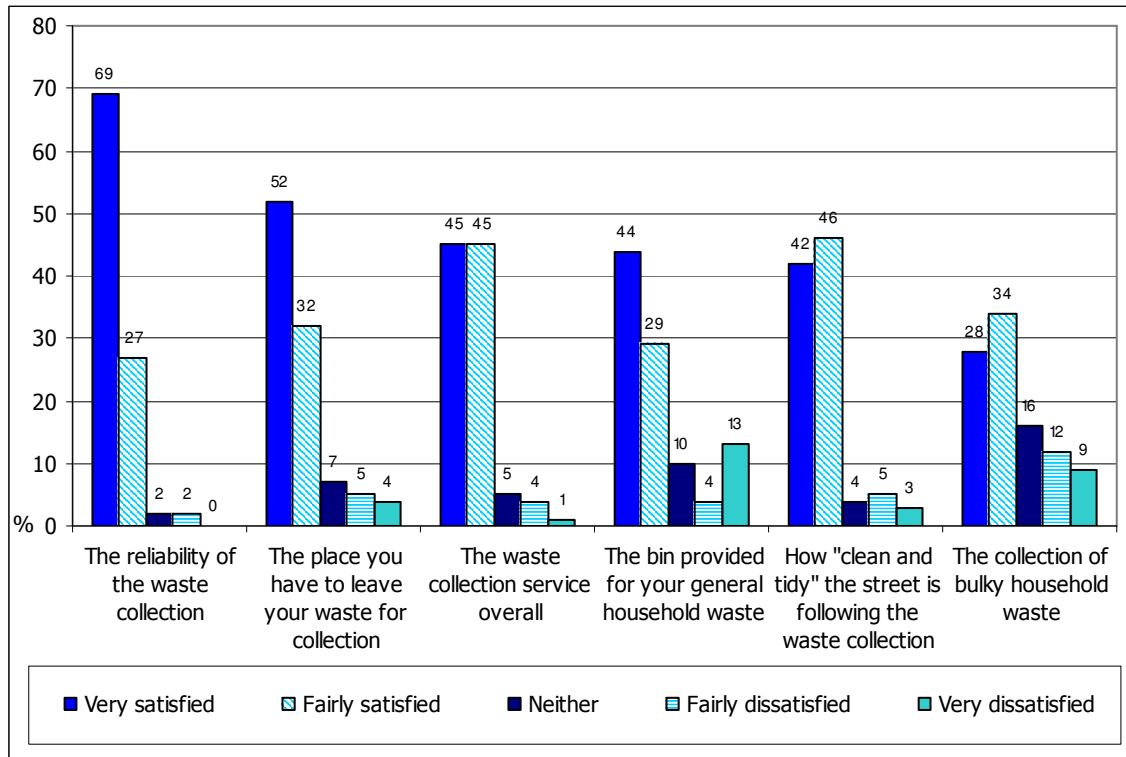
Base: 1131

The respondents were asked to state how satisfied they were that IoWC has kept the land free of litter and refuse. In total, 79% of the respondents are 'very' or 'fairly satisfied' that the Council keeps the land free of litter and refuse².

² Throughout this report we combine 'very satisfied' and 'fairly satisfied', in line with ODPM guidance.

5.4 Satisfaction with household waste collection

Figure 5.4: Level of satisfaction with elements of the household waste collection service

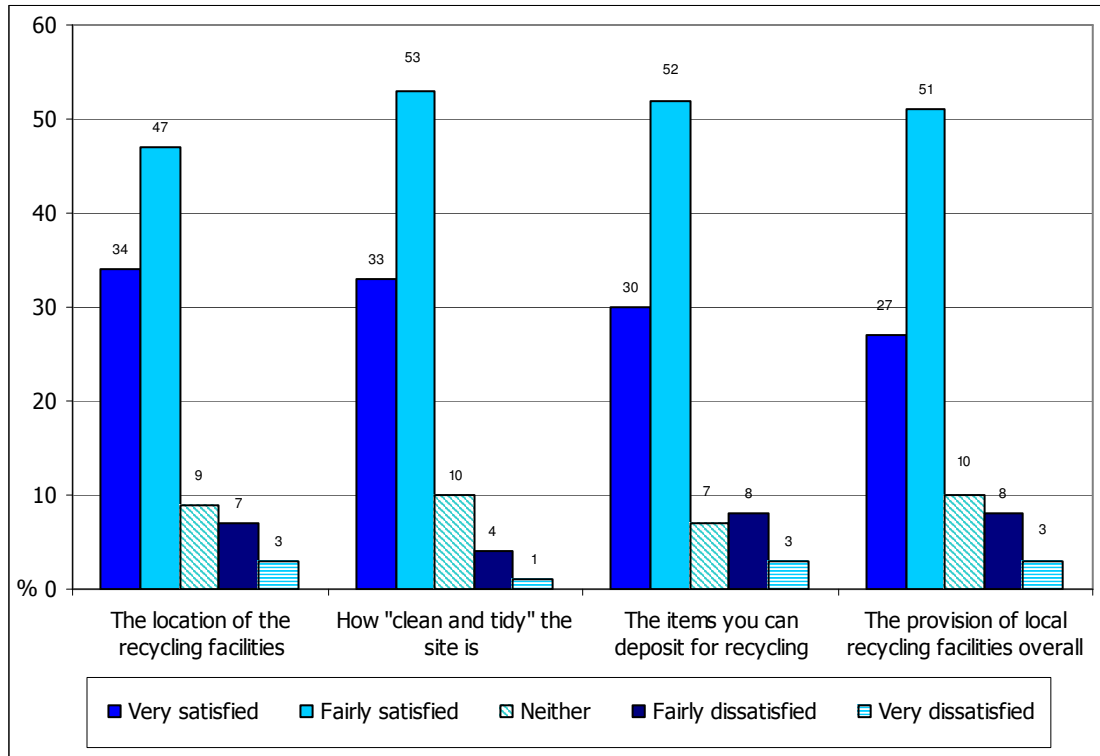


Base: 1129, 1034, 1131, 499, 1126, 722

The respondents were asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with various elements of the weekly household waste collection service provided by the IoWC. Figure 5.4 shows that the highest levels of satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') are with the reliability of the waste collection (96%) and the waste collection service overall (90%).

5.5 Satisfaction with recycling facilities

Figure 5.5: Level of satisfaction with elements of the local recycling facilities

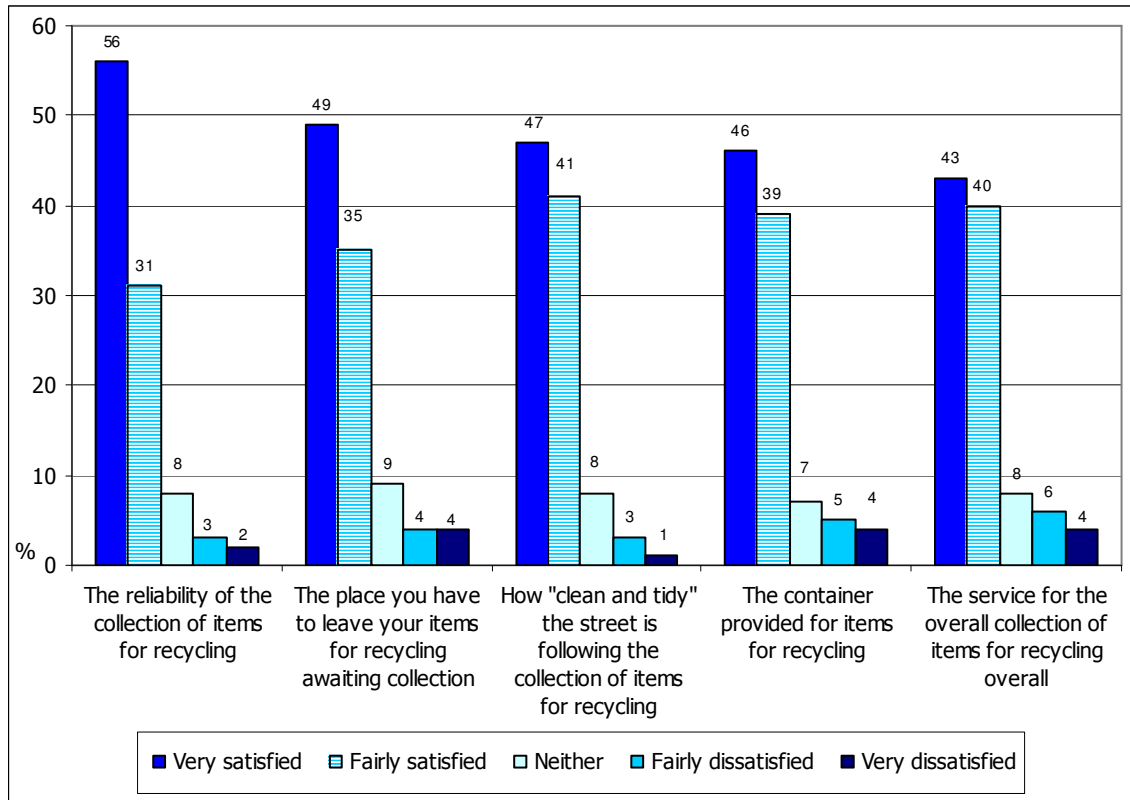


Base: 1020, 987, 1008, 810, 1016

Figure 5.5 shows the level of satisfaction with the recycling service provided by IoWC. Levels of satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') are fairly uniform across the four services – the location of the recycling facilities (81%), the items you can deposit for recycling (82%), how "clean and tidy" the site is (86%) and the provision of local recycling facilities overall (78%).

5.6 Satisfaction with doorstep recycling collection

Figure 5.6: Level of satisfaction with elements of the doorstep recycling service

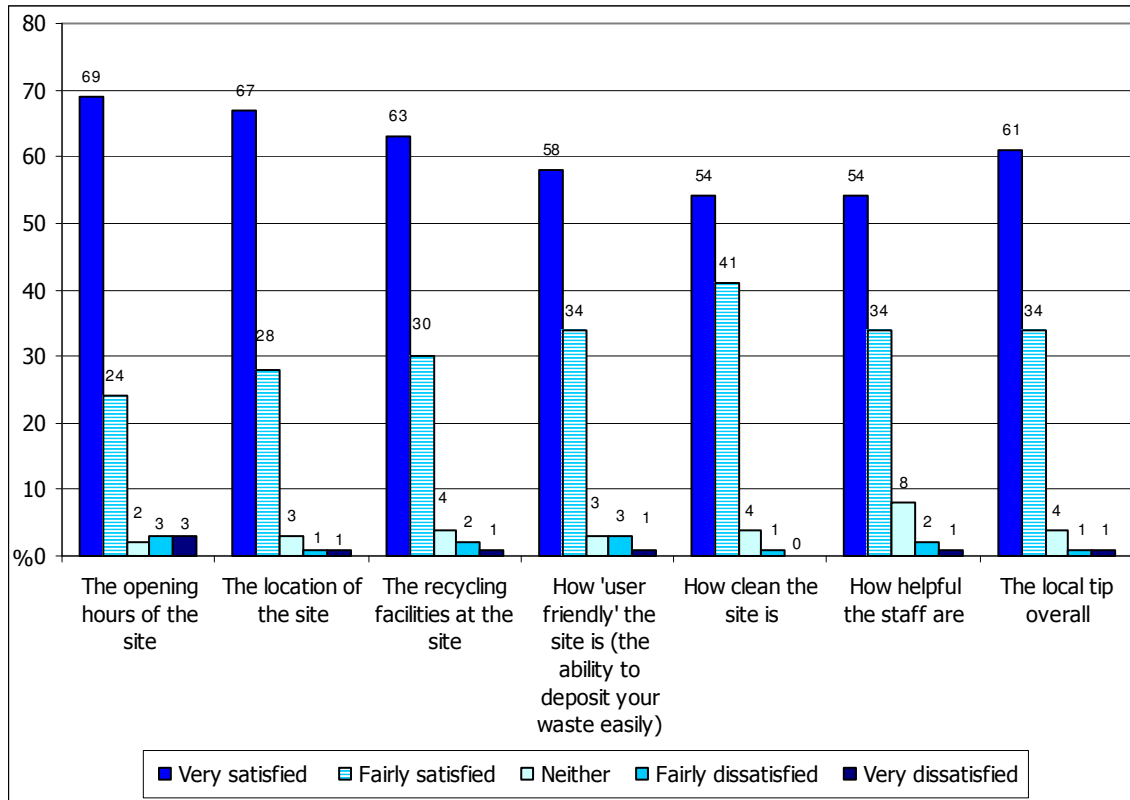


Base: 803,806,852,810,830

Respondents were asked to indicate how satisfied they were with various elements of the doorstep recycling service. Figure 5.6 shows that the greatest satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') is with how "clean and tidy" the street is following the collection of items for recycling (88%). This is closely followed by the remaining elements of the service; the reliability of the collection of items for recycling (87%), the container provided for recycling (85%), the place respondents leave their items for recycling (84%) and the recycling service overall (83%).

5.7 Levels of satisfaction with elements of the local tip.

Figure 5.7 Levels of satisfaction with elements of the local tip.

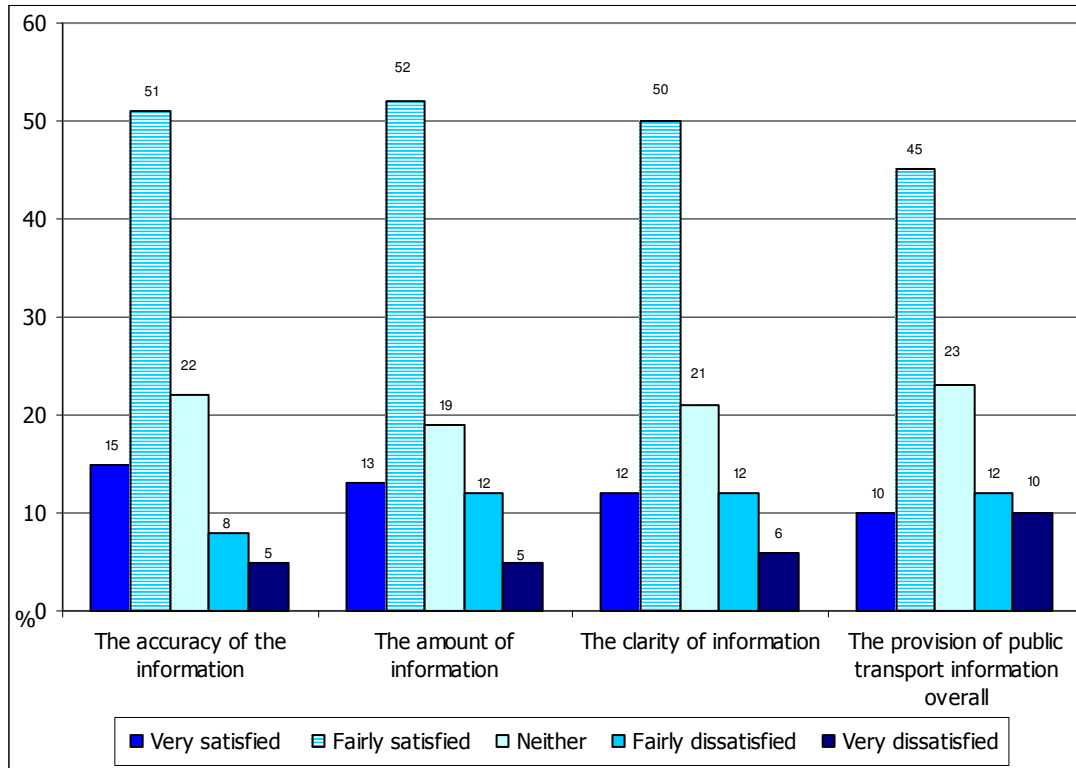


Base 628, 637, 611, 630, 626, 592, 633.

The respondents identified high degrees of satisfaction with the site, 95% of whom were either 'very' satisfied or 'fairly' satisfied with the 'tip' overall. A 95% satisfaction rating was also recorded for 'The location of the site' and 'How clean the site is.' No more than 6% of respondents identified dissatisfaction with any of the seven site elements.

5.8 Transport Information

Figure 5.8 graph to show satisfaction with elements of transport information.

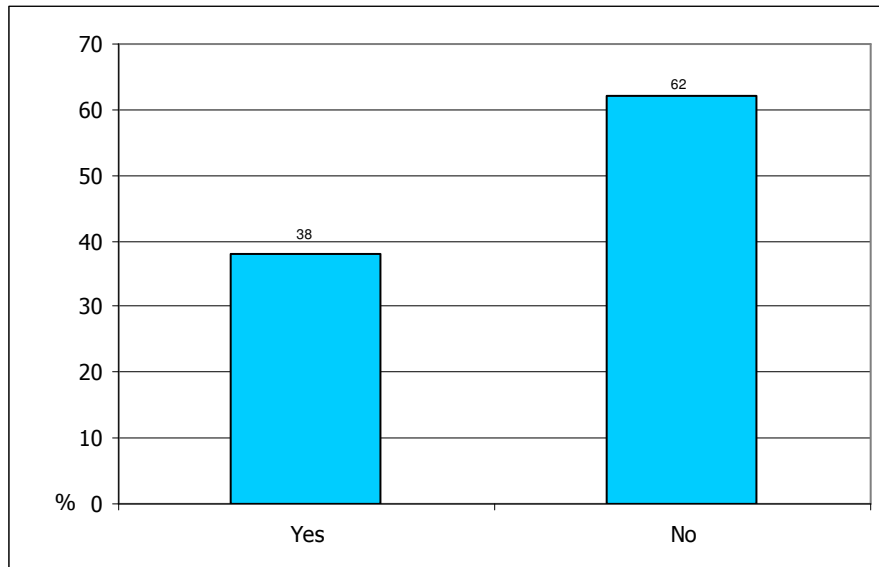


Base 483, 496, 493, 568

Respondents identified their degree of satisfaction with aspects of public transport information. The majority of respondents identified that they were 'fairly satisfied' with transport information provided by IoWC. This pattern was relatively uniform across all four categories. The highest degree of satisfaction was recorded with the accuracy of the information, with 66% of respondents stating they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied.'

5.9 Reception of transport information

Figure 5.9 Whether respondents have received transport information

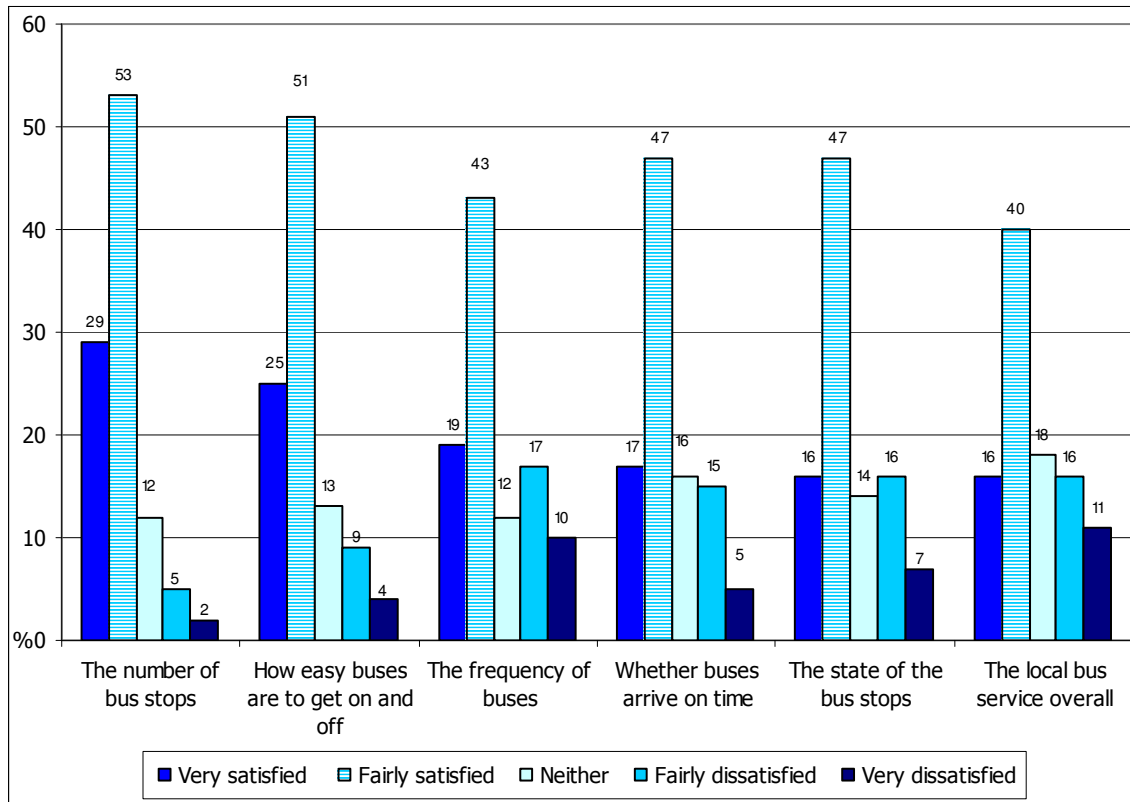


Base: 651

Figure 5.9 indicates that a significant minority (38%) of respondents had accessed transport information.

5.10 Satisfaction with elements of the bus service

Figure 5.10 Graph to show satisfaction with elements of the bus service.



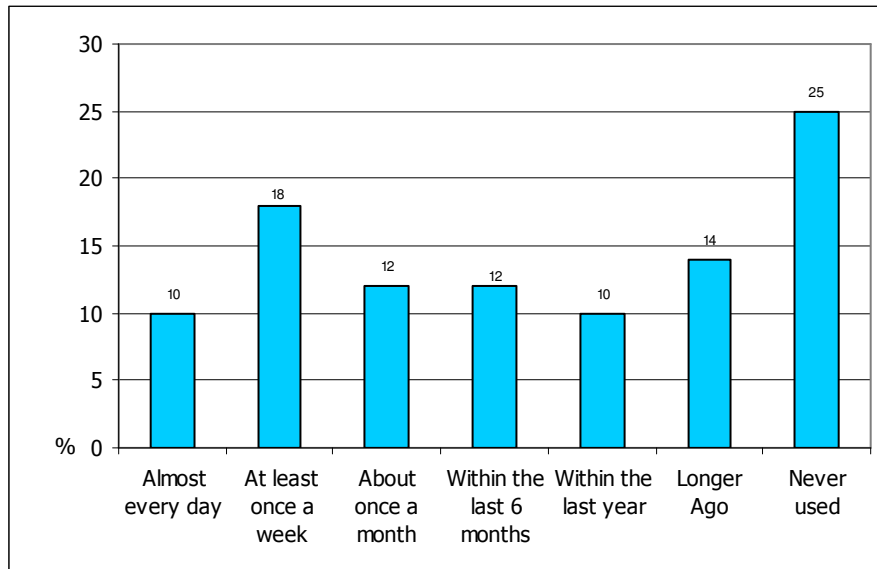
Base 549,534,550,506,552,579

Respondents were asked to consider how satisfied they were with six elements of the local bus service. In each category, at least 56% of the respondents stated that they were either 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with the bus service.

The highest degree of satisfaction was expressed with the number of bus stops, with 82% of respondents considering themselves 'very' or 'fairly satisfied.'

5.11 Frequency of bus use

Figure 5.11 the frequency of bus use



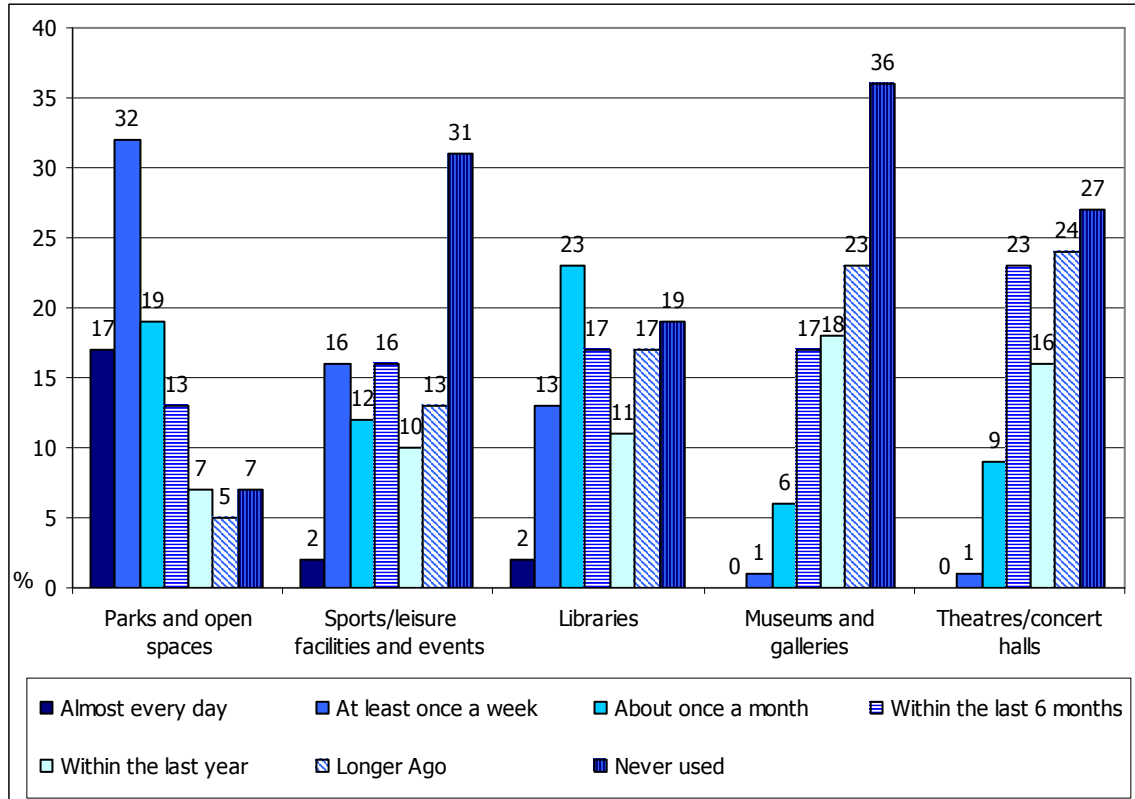
Base: 778

Respondents were asked to state how often they used the bus service. Overall, 40% of respondents identified that they accessed the service at least once a month. However a significant minority of the respondents, 25% identified that they never used any bus provision. A total of 10% used a bus almost every day.

Section 3: Cultural and recreational activities and venues

5.12 Frequency of use of cultural and recreational services

Figure 5.12: Frequency of visits to cultural and recreational services in the last 12 months

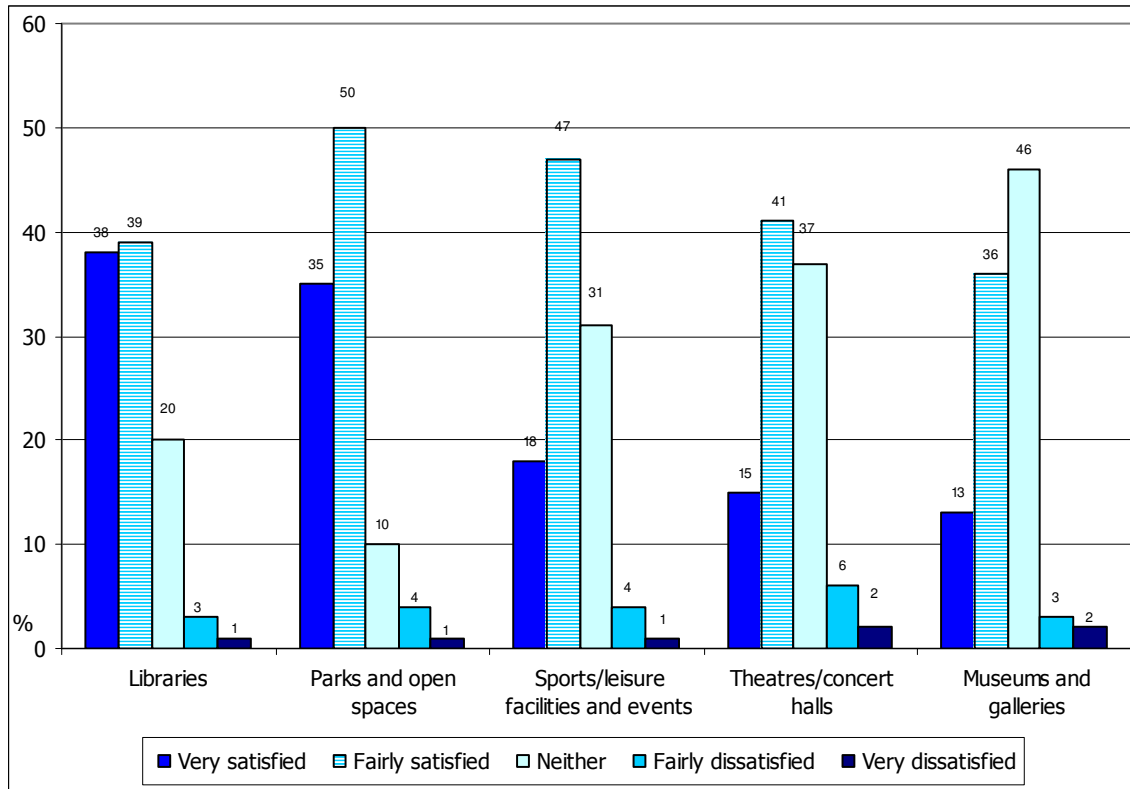


Base: 1118, 1086, 1123, 1054, 1076

Respondents were asked to indicate how frequently they used various cultural and recreational services provided or supported by IoWC in the last 12 months. Figure 5.12 shows that 49% of respondents use the parks and open spaces daily or weekly. Museums and galleries are least regularly used with 36% of the respondents having never used them.

5.13 Satisfaction with cultural and recreational activities and venues

Figure 5.13: Level of satisfaction with cultural and recreational services provided by IoWC



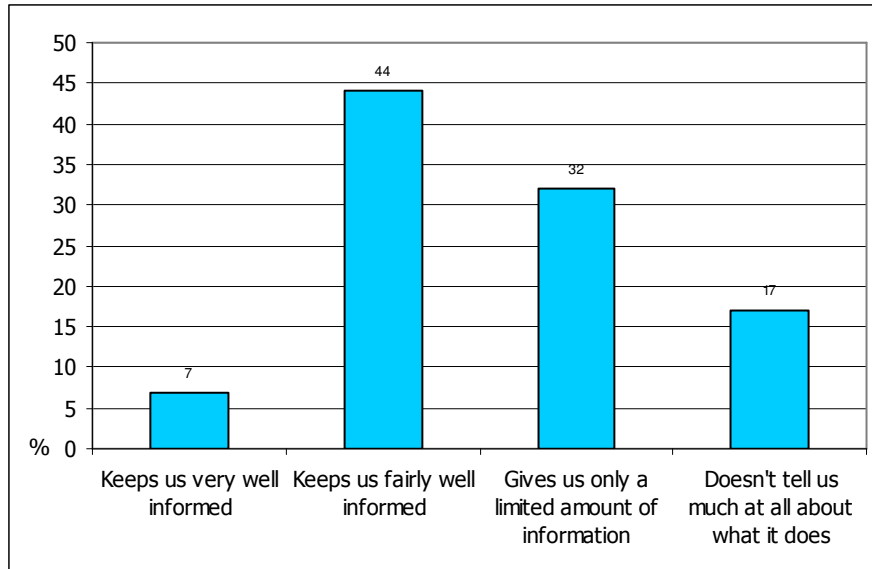
Base: 1111,1117,1077,1072,1058

Figure 5.13 shows the level of satisfaction respondents have with various cultural and recreational services provided by IoWC. Respondents have the greatest level of satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') with parks and open spaces (85%) and the lowest level of satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') with museums and galleries (49%), although it should be noted that actual 'dissatisfaction' is low in all services.

Section 4: Overall satisfaction with the Authority as a whole

5.14 How well informed do residents feel they are about services and benefits provided by the Council?

Figure 5.14: Percentage of respondents who feel they are kept informed to different degrees

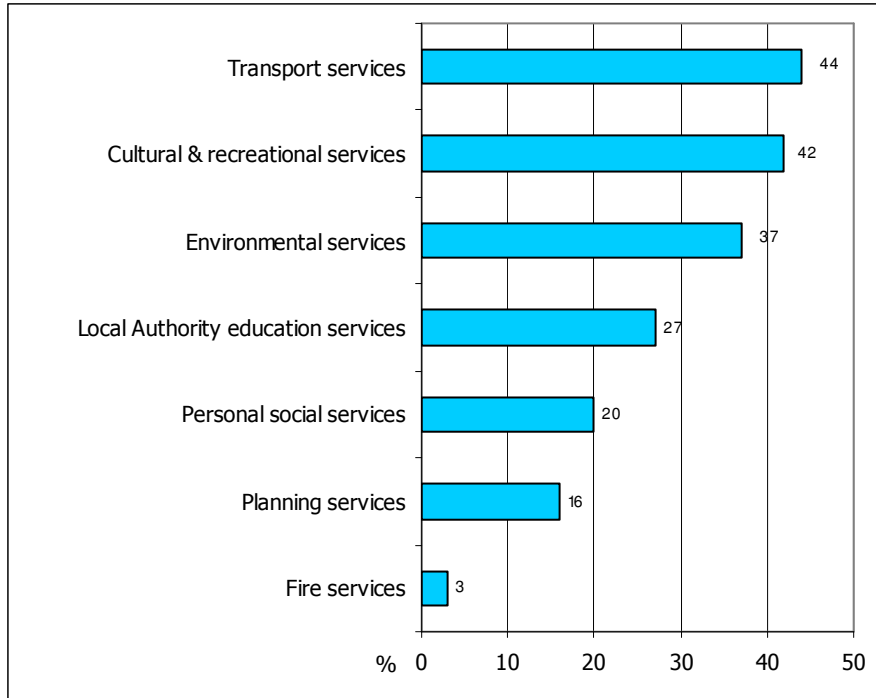


Base: 1033

Figure 5.14 shows the percentage of respondents who feel they are kept informed by IoWC about services and benefits to varying extents. The majority of respondents (51%) feel that the IoWC keeps them 'fairly' or 'very' well informed. In total, 17% of respondents feel that the Council doesn't tell them much at all about what it does.

5.15 Use of services in the last 12 months

Figure 5.15: Percentage of respondents who have used various services in the last 12 months



Base: 905

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they or any other member of their family have used any of the services provided by IoWC in the last 12 months. Figure 5.15 shows that the greatest percentage of respondents (44%) have used transport services in the last 12 months.

5.16 Overall satisfaction with services

Figure 5.16: Overall satisfaction with the services provided by the IoWC

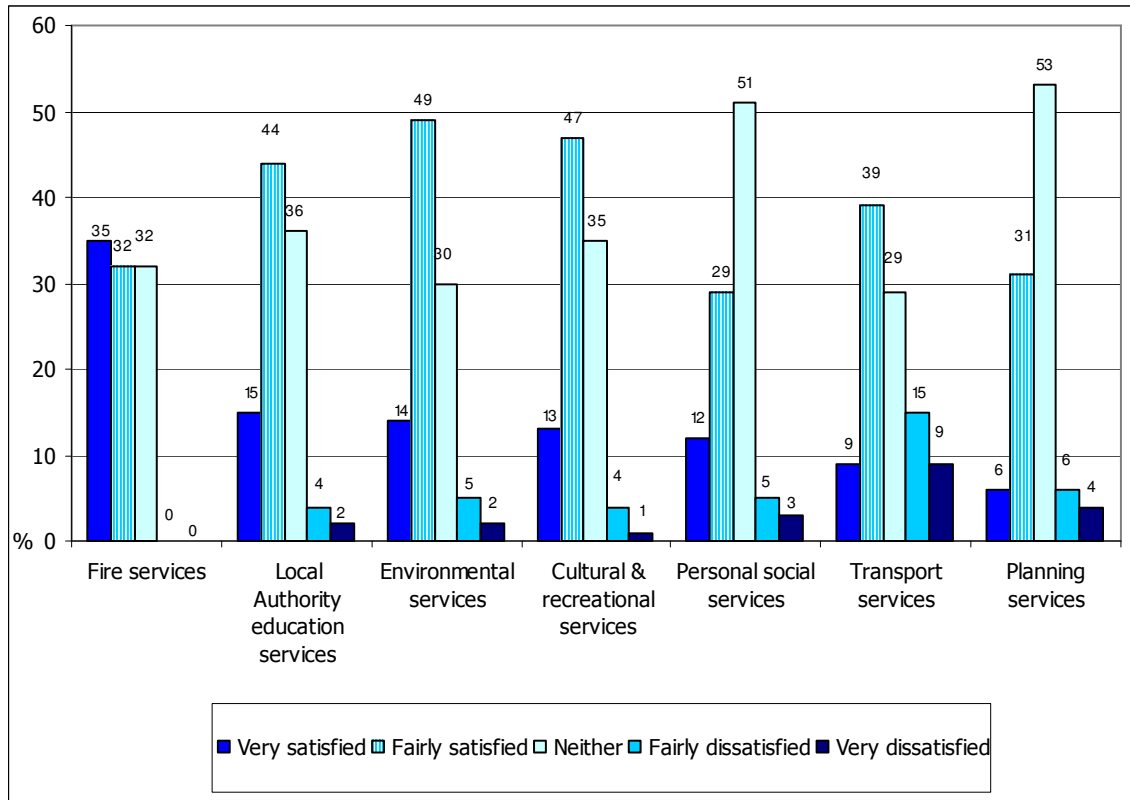
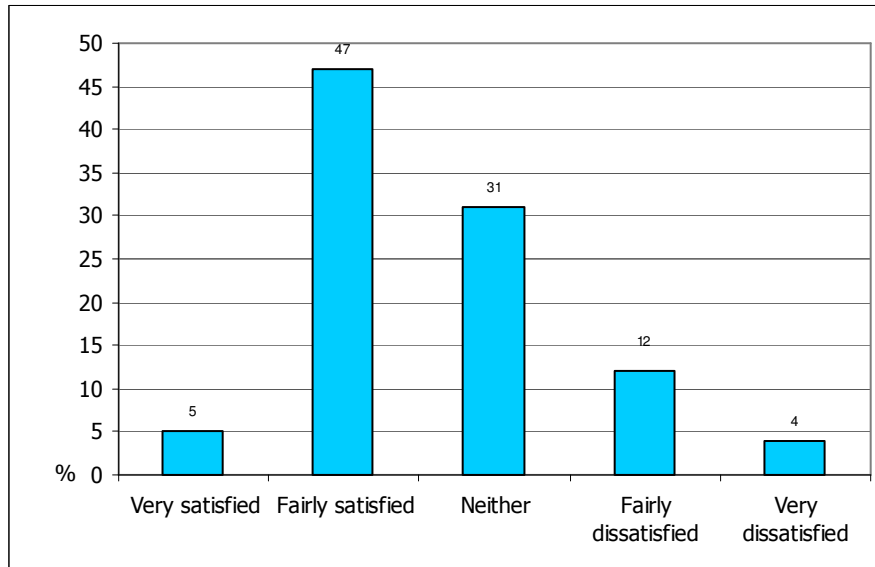


Figure 5.16 shows the level of satisfaction respondents have with each of the services provided by the IoWC. The greatest level of satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') is with the fire service (67%). The lowest levels of satisfaction ('very' and 'fairly satisfied') are with personal social services (41%) and planning services (37%) however it can be seen that over half the respondents stated 'neither' satisfied or dissatisfied, possibly due to not using these services.

5.17 Overall satisfaction

Figure 5.17: Overall satisfaction with the way IoWC runs things



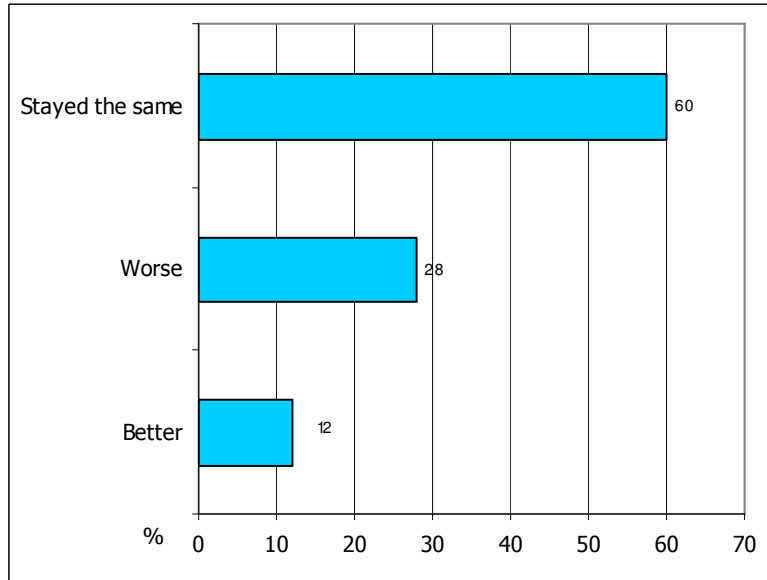
Base: 1143

The respondents were asked to comment on how satisfied they were overall with the way IoWC runs things. Figure 5.17 shows that the majority of respondents (47%) are 'fairly satisfied' with the way IoWC runs things. In total, half of the respondents (52%) are satisfied in some way ('fairly' and 'very satisfied') with the way the council runs things. This compares with 16% of the respondents being dissatisfied ('fairly' and 'very dissatisfied').

Section 5: Have things got better or worse?

5.18 Overall opinion on whether things have got better or worse

Figure 5.18: Overall opinion on whether the way IoWC run things has got better or worse

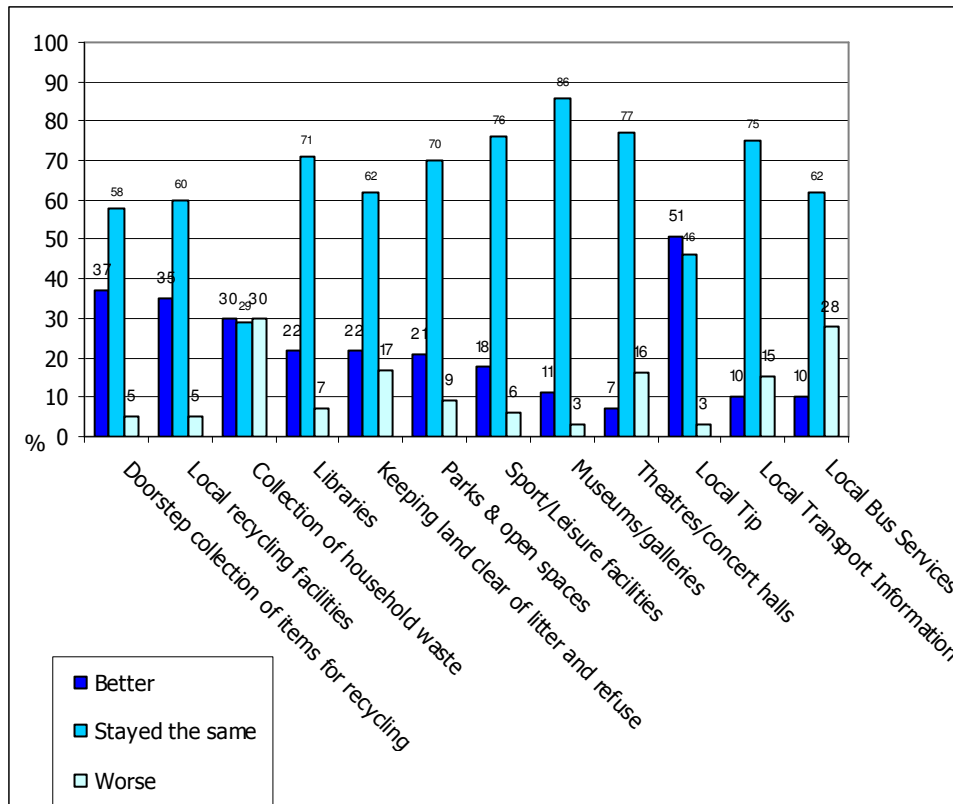


Base: 978

Figure 5.18 shows the respondents' opinions on whether the way the IoWC runs things has got better or worse in the last three years. The greatest percentage of respondents (60%) feels that the way the Council runs things has stayed the same over the last three years. A further 28% of respondents feel that it has got worse. 12% feel that things have, overall, got better in the last three years.

5.19 Whether services that have got better or worse

Figure 5.19: Level of change of services in the last three years



Base: 863,987,1081,892,1013,959,806,692,746,613,474,496

Respondents were asked to state whether they feel that various services provided by IoWC have got better, stayed the same or got worse in the last three years. The greatest positive change can be seen for the local tip (51% felt that it has got better) and for doorstep collection of items for recycling; 36% of respondents feel that these have got better.

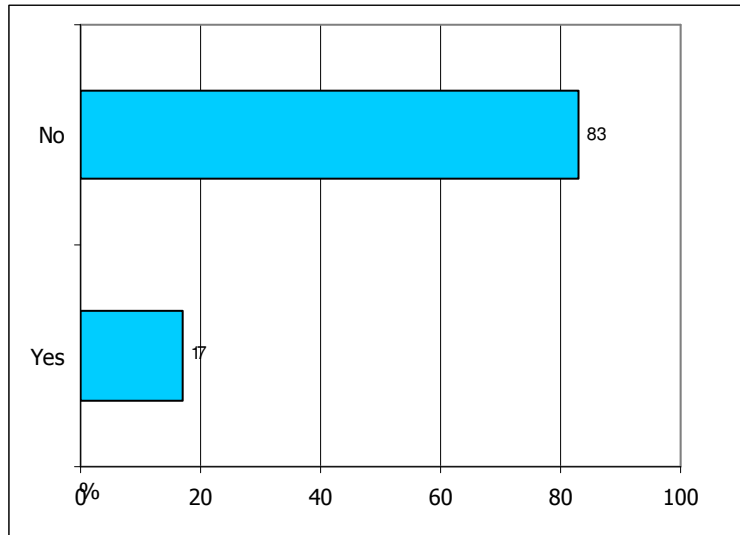
In total 30% of respondents feel that the collection of household waste had got worse, while 28% feel that the local bus service had got worse, keeping the land clear of litter and refuse has got worse and 16% feel theatres and concert halls have got worse in the last three years.

In most cases, the majority responded that things have in fact stayed the same, perhaps indicating that these services are not easily evaluated or particularly important to residents' daily routines.

Section 6: Complaints Handling

5.20 Percentage of residents who have made a complaint in the last 12 months

Figure 5.20: Percentage of respondents who have contacted the Council with a complaint in the last 12 months



Base: 1110

Figure 5.15 shows the percentage of respondents who have made a complaint to the Council in the last 12 months. In total, 17% state that they have and 83% state that they have not made a complaint to the Council.

5.21 Subject of the complaints

Figure 5.21: Verbatim responses relating to the complaints made

Subject of complaints	Frequency of mention
Environment	39
Roads / Pavements	36
Dog waste / Refuse collection	26
Planning	17
Parking	16
Social care / Benefits / Tax	14
Crime	7
Flooding	4
Other	16
Vague / No answer	9
Total	184

Respondents who made a complaint (17% or 184 respondents) to IoWC were asked to state what their complaint was relating to. Figure 5.21 shows the responses to this question which have been coded into categories. The greatest numbers of respondents made a complaint relating to environmental issues the roads or pavement (39

respondents), followed by 36 complaints relating to the conditions of the roads or pavements.

5.22 Departments contacted

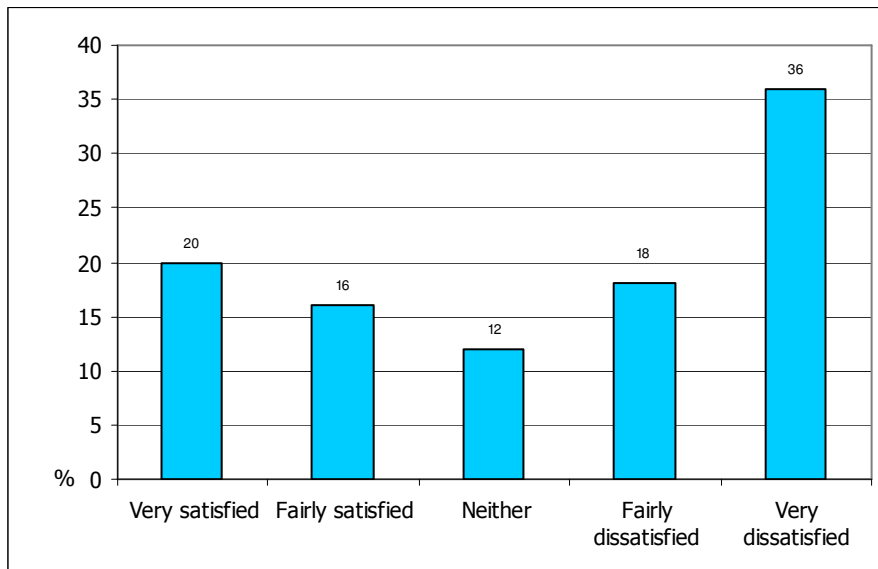
Figure 5.22: The Departments complaints were made to

Department contacted	Frequency of mention
Transport services	73
Environment services	30
Planning services	14
Social services Department	5
Cultural and recreational services	0
Housing services	1
Local Authority Education services	4
All	1
Other	15
Vague	16
No answer	0
Total	159

Respondents who made a complaint (15% or 182 respondents) were also asked to state which department they made their complaint to. Figure 5.22 shows that the greatest number of respondents made a complaint to Transport services (73). A further 30 respondents made their complaint to Environment services.

5.23 Satisfaction with handling of complaints

Figure 5.23: Level of satisfaction with the handling of complaints



Base: 180

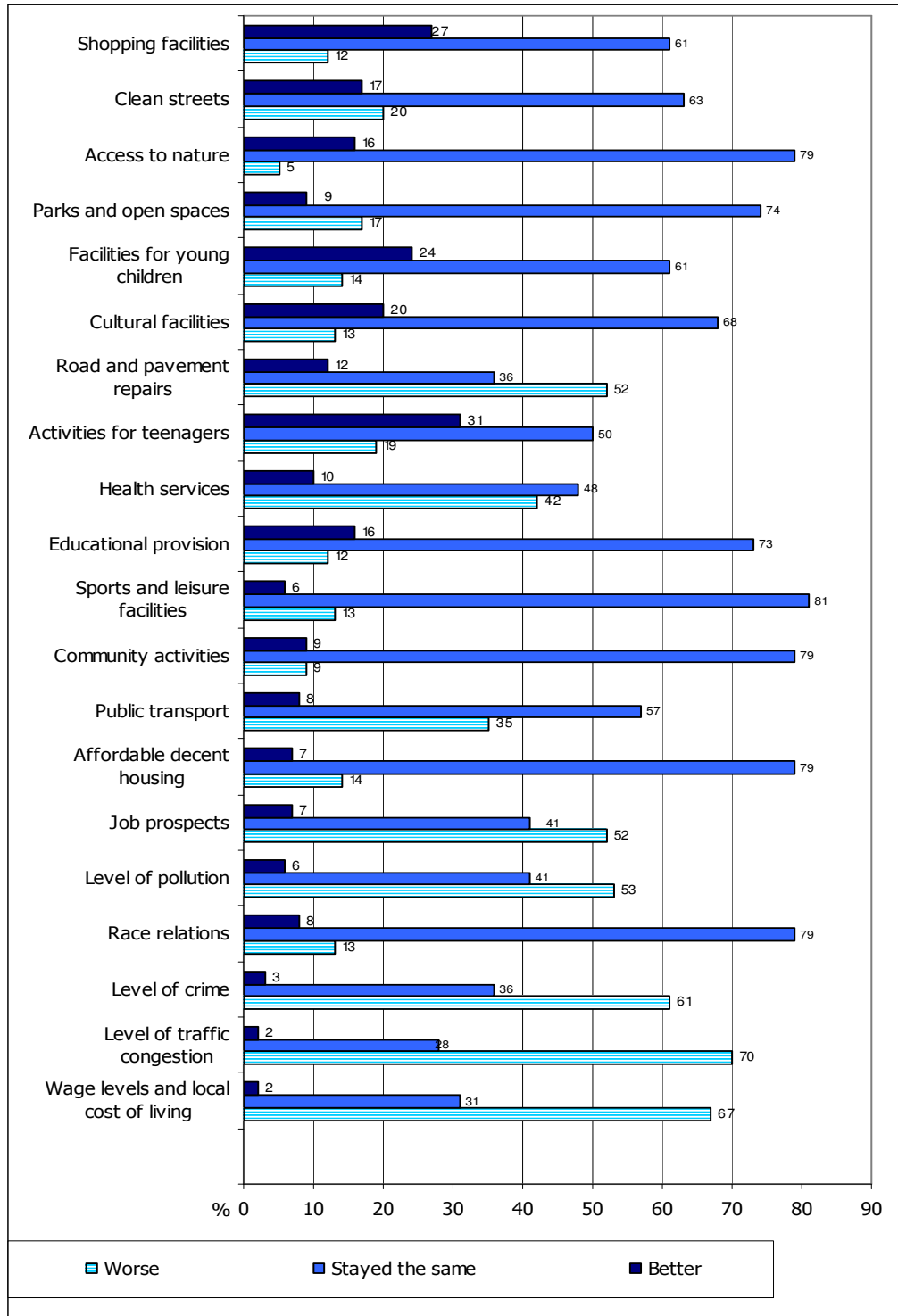
Respondents were asked to state how satisfied they were with the way their complaint(s) had been handled by the IoWC. Figure 5.23 shows that 54% of the

respondents who made a complaint were 'fairly' or 'very dissatisfied' with the way their complaint(s) was handled in comparison with 36% who were 'fairly' or 'very satisfied'.

Section 7: Changes in residents' quality of life

5.24 Change in the local area in the last 3 years

Figure 5.24: Elements of the local area which have changed in the last three years



Base: 994, 1024, 929, 934, 607, 775, 1107, 669, 991, 668, 766, 887, 729, 470, 834, 763, 909, 992, 851.

Figure 5.24 shows respondents' opinion on whether various elements of the local environment have got better, stayed the same or got worse in the last three years. It can be seen that the greatest percentage of respondents see change for the better in activities for teenagers (31%) and the shopping facilities (27%) in their local area.

A minimum of 28% of respondents feel that all the elements of their local area have stayed the same. The greatest percentage of respondents (70%) sees change for the worst in the level of traffic congestion. 67% also see wage levels and local cost of living as getting worse.

The elements where more respondents see things getting better than worse are:

- Shopping facilities
- Access to nature
- Facilities for young children
- Cultural facilities
- Activities for teenagers
- Educational provision

The elements where more respondents see things getting worse than better are:

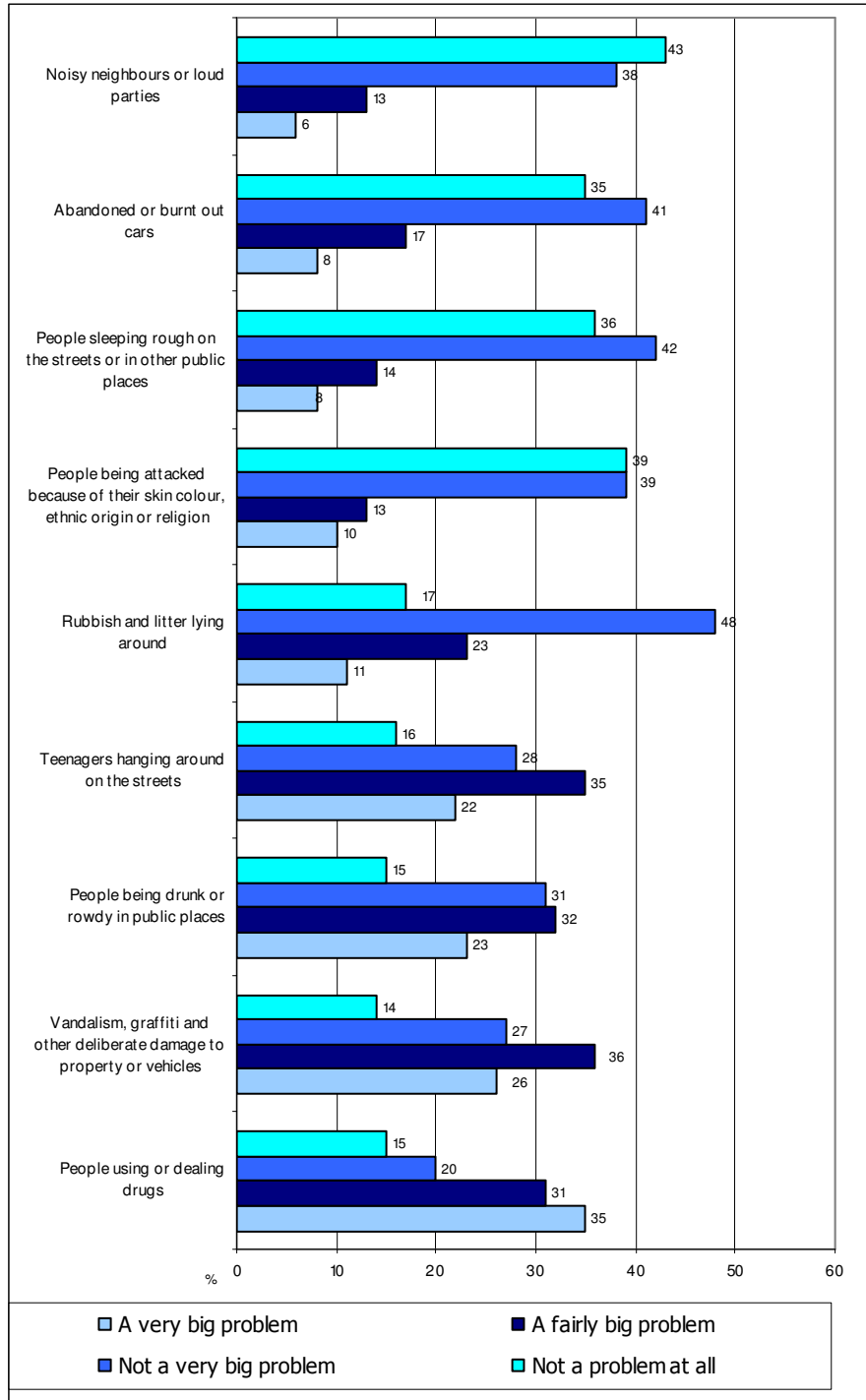
- Clean streets
- Parks and open spaces
- Road and pavement repairs
- Health services
- Sports and leisure facilities
- Public transport
- Affordable decent housing
- Job prospects
- Level of pollution
- Race relations
- Level of crime*
- Level of traffic congestion*
- Wage levels and the local cost of living*

Those marked with an asterisk are those where the disparity between 'getting worse' and 'getting better' is 50% or more.

Section 8: Anti-social behaviour

5.25 Problems with anti-social behaviour

Figure 5.25: Perceived level of problem anti-social behaviour is considered to be



Base: 1074, 955, 850, 803, 1099, 1070, 978, 1082, 832

Figure 5.25 shows the level of problem that respondents feel the various types of anti-social behaviour in their area poses. Noisy neighbours and loud parties are seen by the greatest percentage of respondents (43%) as 'not being a problem at all'. People using or dealing drugs are seen as a 'very big problem' by 35 % of the respondents.

Analysis of the verbatim provided throughout the survey (see Appendix 1) and the final question "Is there anything else you would like to add" revealed several key issues. Some of these issues go beyond the questions posed on the survey.

Parking was seen as a key issue. Responses related to residents' parking and permit schemes near home, parking near shopping facilities and disabled parking provision. The cost of transport to the mainland was seen by some respondents as a problem. This linked to issues with a lack of health provision on the Isle of Wight, particularly dental, and the need to visit the mainland for this. A number of respondents had problems with public transport provision, particularly for school children and the elderly.

Dog fouling was seen as a problem by many of the respondents. Responses related to calls for patrols and fines, the provision of bins and boxes and the frequency with which they are emptied.

Respondents also made calls for more traffic calming measures and changes to speed limits in residential areas.

Lastly council tax rises were seen as a key issue, responses ranged in content, however many it felt was unfair to base it on property ratings.

6 Conclusions

- **The quality of life in your area:**
Health service provision (64%), low level of crime (62%), affordable decent housing (39%), clean streets (30%) and public transport (29%) are seen as the top five factors in making somewhere a good place to live. The factors that are seen as being in most need of improving are road and pavement repairs (53%), wage levels and local cost of living (43%), health services (34%), public transport (34%) and affordable decent housing (32%).
- **Your local authority:**
Satisfaction was high with the waste collection service overall (90%) and doorstep recycling (83%). In total 78% of respondents were satisfied with the recycling facilities overall and 79% were satisfied with how IoWC keep the land free of litter and refuse. An excellent 95% were satisfied with local tips overall
- **Local transport:**
Satisfaction could be higher (55%) with the overall provision of public transport information, and the local bus service overall (56%).
- **Cultural and recreational activities and venues:**
Parks and open spaces are used the most frequently (49% - daily and weekly), followed by sports/leisure facilities and events (18% - daily and weekly). Respondents are the most satisfied with parks and open spaces (85%) but less satisfied with museums and galleries (49%).
- **Overall satisfaction with the Authority as a whole:**
The greatest percentage of respondents (44%) feel they are kept fairly well informed about Council services and benefits, indicating considerable room for improvement. The largest percentage of respondents (44%) has used transport services in the last 12 months. The greatest satisfaction (67%) is with the fire service. In total 52% of the respondents are satisfied with the way the Council runs things overall.
- **Have things got better or worse:**
In total 60% of respondents feel that the way the Council runs things has stayed the same in the last three years. The most positive change is seen in the doorstep recycling facilities as 37% of respondents feel these have got better in the last three years.
- **Complaints Handling:**
In total 17% of the respondents have made a complaint to the Council on a variety of issues. Altogether 36% of these respondents were satisfied with the way their complaint had been handled. However, a concerning equal 36% were 'very dissatisfied' with the way their complaint was handled.
- **Changes in residents quality of life:**

A minimum of 28% of respondents feel that all elements of their quality of life have stayed the same in the last three years. The greatest positive change was seen as being the activities for teenagers (31% felt they had changed for the better).

- Anti-social behaviour:

Opinions on anti-social behaviour ranged. In total 43% of respondents saw noisy neighbours or loud parties as being not a problem at all in comparison with 35% seeing people using or dealing drugs as a very big problem.