



Tel: 01706 211524
Fax: 01706 212716
www.qclmr.co.uk

*Hollingrove House, 155 Burnley Road, Rossendale BB4 8HH email: barbara@qclmr.co.uk
doug@qclmr.co.uk*

Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Place Survey 2008

Prepared For Epsom and Ewell Borough Council
Ref 28/12
Date February 2009

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION	1
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	2
ABOUT THE LOCAL AREA	
Quality of life	10
Satisfaction with area (NI 5)	12
Satisfaction with home	13
Belonging to the neighbourhood (NI 2)	14
LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES	
Performance of public services	15
Satisfaction with public services	16
COUNCIL SERVICES	
Keeping land clear of litter and refuse	17
Refuse collection	18
Doorstep recycling	19
Local tips/household waste recycling centres	20
Local transport information	21
Local bus services	22
Cultural and recreational activities - frequency of use	23
Sports and leisure facilities	24
Libraries	25
Museums & galleries	26
Theatres and concert halls	27
Parks and open spaces	28
Value for money	29
Overall satisfaction	30
Information provision (NI 37)	31
Local decision making (NI 4)	32
Volunteering (NI 6)	34
Civic participation (NI 3)	35
RESPECT AND CONSIDERATION	
Parents taking responsibility for children (NI 22)	36
Community cohesion (NI 1)	37
Treating people with respect and consideration (NI 23)	38
Respect from public services (NI 140)	39
Independent living for older people (NI 139)	40
COMMUNITY SAFETY	
How safe feel in neighbourhood	41
Anti-social behaviour (NI 17, NI 41, NI 42)	42
Understanding of local concerns (NI 21, NI 27)	44
General health (NI 119)	45
Protecting the environment	46
Other Comments	48
APPENDICES	
Technical appendix	51
Questionnaire	

Introduction

This report summarises the main findings from the new Place Survey carried out in accordance with CLG guidelines.

Note that The Place Survey was commissioned as part of a consortium made up of all 11 district councils and Surrey County Council. Individual surveys were carried out for each district council with data combined to provide the county data set.

While the questionnaire content was identical, each authority's covering letter included the district council logo, the Surrey County Council logo, and the strapline "Surrey services working together for local people".

Method

Questionnaires were mailed to a random sample of 2,500 addresses in the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council area. This sample was supplied by the Audit Commission and was drawn from the small users Postal Address File (PAF).

Questionnaires were mailed on 26th September 2008, and were addressed to 'The Residents at ...'

After two reminders a total of 1,385 completed questionnaires were received, with a further 17 returned as undeliverable, and 84 incomplete. This represents 0.7% 'deadwood' and an effective response rate of 56%.

A full description of the methodology used is given in the Technical Appendix at the end of this document.

A copy of the questionnaire used is appended to this document. Note that the wording of the questions was set by the CLG and could not be altered.

Weighting of data

Data has been weighted to ensure that the results are fully representative of the population of the district.

All results discussed in this document are based on the weighted data.

Comparison with previous surveys

Where possible results have been compared with the results of the statutory BVPI General surveys carried out in 2006.

It must be borne in mind that all survey data is subject to a statistical margin of error, so care must be taken when interpreting changes between surveys. Where an observed difference between the surveys is within the margin of error then it can be said that the results are effectively the same – i.e. the difference is not statistically significant. As a guideline a difference of less than 4% will generally not be significant.

Where appropriate, comments are made on the statistical significance or otherwise of the data shown.

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

SUMMARY OF NATIONAL INDICATOR SCORES

NI number	Question number	Description	Score
NI 1	Q18	% of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	81%
NI 2	Q5	% of people who feel they belong to their neighbourhood	58%
NI 3	Q16	Civic participation - % taken part in at least one of the activities listed in last 12 months	11%
NI 4	Q13	% of people who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	33%
NI 5	Q3	Overall satisfaction with local area	86%
NI 6	Q15	Participation in regular volunteering	20%
NI 17	Q24 combined	% of residents with a high perception of anti-social behaviour	14%
NI 21	Q26	Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by police and other local public services	30%
NI 22	Q17	Perception of parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	37%
NI 23	Q19	% saying that people not treating each other with respect and consideration is a problem in their area	26%
NI 27	Q25	Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime issues by police and other local public services	26%
NI 37	Q12g	Awareness of civil protection arrangements in local area	13%
NI 41	Q24f	Perception of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem	25%
NI 42	Q24e	Perception of drug use or dealing as a problem	16%
NI 119	Q30	Self-reported measure of people's overall health and well being	82%
NI 138	Q3&4 combined	Satisfaction of people 65 and over with both home and neighbourhood	89%
NI 139	Q 21	The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently	27%
NI 140	Q20	Fair treatment by local services	80%

Quality of life

Respondents were presented with a list of twenty factors relating to quality of life and were asked to say which five they consider to be most important in terms of making somewhere a good place to live, and which five they feel most need improving in their area.

The level of crime emerges as the most important element in terms of making somewhere a good place, being included in the list of 67% of residents; 22% also include this in their list of what most needs improving in their area.

Health services follows in second position with 56% including this in their list of important factors – 22% of residents also feel this needs improving in their area.

In third position, 46% cite clean streets as important, and 24% feel improvements are needed.

Parks and open spaces (39%) and education provision (38%) follow in terms of what is important, and few feel improvements are needed (5% and 10% respectively).

The level of traffic congestion and road and pavement repairs head the list of things which need improving (57% in both cases), followed by activities for teenagers features (45%), affordable decent housing (22%).

All other areas are judged to need improving by 18% or fewer residents.

Satisfaction with area (NI 5)

Overall, 86% of residents say they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live – slightly above the level seen on the BVPI General Survey undertaken in 2006 (82%).

Satisfaction with home

The vast majority of residents also say they are satisfied with their home as a place to live (91%).

Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood (NI 138)

Taken together and relating to residents over the age of 65, satisfaction with area and satisfaction with the home contribute towards NI 138. Results show a score of 89% for this National Indicator.

Belonging to the neighbourhood (NI 2)

Overall, 58% of residents say they feel that they belong to their neighbourhood.

Performance of public services

Around three-quarters of residents believe that local public services are working to make the area safer and cleaner and greener.

While 78% also believe that all types of people are treated fairly, fewer feel that public services promote the interests of local residents (50%) or act on their concerns (55%).

Satisfaction with public services

Local doctors are rated highest from a number of non council public services, with 84% of residents saying they are satisfied with their GP. Dentists are somewhat behind with 75% satisfied, and 73% say they are satisfied with local hospitals.

Satisfaction with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (78%), is higher than for the Police Force (59%).

Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse

Overall, 67% of residents are satisfied with the council's performance in terms of keeping public land clear of litter and refuse, which is significantly below the level seen in 2006 (74%).

Refuse collection

Overall, 83% of residents are satisfied with the refuse collection service. This is a significant improvement over 2006 when 79% were satisfied.

Doorstep recycling

Overall, 66% of residents are satisfied with the recycling collection service, which is similar to the level seen in 2006 (68%).

Local tips/household waste recycling centres

Overall, 80% of residents say they are satisfied with local tips/household waste recycling centres, rising to 83% amongst those who have used these facilities.

Note that this question is not directly comparable with the previous BVPI surveys for district councils which asked residents opinions of recycling banks rather than tips/household waste recycling centres. The county council questionnaire covered local tips and results showed 74% satisfied in 2006.

Local transport information

Amongst all those who expressed a view, 49% said they are satisfied with local transport information; 15% expressed some degree of dissatisfaction, with the remaining 36% opting for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.

Amongst who had actually used this facility were 55% satisfied and 18% dissatisfied.

Note that this was only featured on the questionnaire for the county council on previous surveys, with the 2006 survey showing 45% satisfied overall.

Local bus services

Amongst all those who expressed a view on local bus services, 53% said they are satisfied and 16% dissatisfied.

For users of bus services, 59% were satisfied and 17% dissatisfied.

Note that this was only featured on the questionnaire for the county council on previous surveys, with the 2006 survey showing 49% satisfied overall.

Cultural and recreational activities

Overall, 57% of residents had used sports and leisure facilities in the previous twelve months. At 65% the proportion of users satisfied was significantly below the level seen in 2006 (75%), though much of the difference was accounted for by an increase in the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied category.

Two-thirds had used the libraries in the previous twelve months, with the majority satisfied (87%). While this is lower than the 93% seen in 2006, the difference again is accounted for by an increase in the neither/nor category.

Overall, 30% of residents had visited museums and galleries, 49% of whom were satisfied with their experience. Again this was well below the 2006 level (61%), with most of the difference being in the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.

Overall, 46% of residents had visited theatres and concert halls. At 64%, satisfaction amongst visitors was again down on 2006 (74%) with the difference accounted for by the neither/nor category.

Parks and open spaces were used by 92% of residents. The vast majority of these were satisfied with the facilities provided (88%), similar to 2006 (89%).

Value for money

Overall, Epsom and Ewell Borough Council is judged to perform somewhat better than the county council in terms of offering value for money - 44% agreeing that it offers value for money compared with 31% who feel that the county council does.

Note, however, that there was a large group in each case who opted for the neither agree nor disagree position on the scale (36% and 43% respectively), suggesting that they have no view on the matter.

Overall satisfaction

When asked how satisfied they are with the way the two councils run things, the borough council again tends to perform better than the county council – overall, 57% say they are satisfied with Epsom & Ewell compared with 45% satisfied with Surrey County Council.

Again, there is a large group who opted for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position in each case, with 16% overall expressing dissatisfaction with the county council and 11% with the borough council.

Overall, satisfaction with Epsom and Ewell Borough Council on the latest survey is slightly (though not significantly lower) than in 2006 (when it was 60%).

Information provision (incorporating NI 37)

The great majority of residents say they feel adequately informed about how and where to register to vote (85%), and 68% feel well informed about how their council tax is spent.

While 44% say that overall they feel well informed about local public services, slightly fewer say so in relation to standards of service to expect (40%) or how well these services are performing (38%).

Fewer again say they feel well informed about how to complain about local public services or how to get involved in local decision making (34% in each case).

Only 13% feel adequately informed about what to do in the event of a large scale emergency (NI 37).

Local decision making (NI 4)

Overall, 33% of residents agree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

When asked if they would like to be more involved in such decision making, 28% said they would, with a further 59% saying that it would depend on the issue.

Comparing response to that seen on the 2006 BVPI General Survey shows an increase in the level of disagreement with the notion that residents can influence decisions (up from 62% to 66%).

While the proportion indicating that they would like to be involved has stayed the same, the proportion who may given the right issue rose from 55% to 59%.

Volunteering (NI 6)

Overall, 20% of residents say they have given unpaid help to other people or organisations in the last twelve months.

Civic participation (NI 3)

Overall, 11% of residents say they belong to a group which makes decisions affecting their local area.

Parents taking responsibility for children (NI 22)

Overall, 37% of residents agree that in their local area parents take enough responsibility for the behaviour of their children.

Note that there was not a directly comparable question on previous surveys. On the 2006 BVPI General Survey, 64% of residents described parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children as either a very big, or fairly big problem in their area.

Community cohesion (NI 1)

Amongst those who expressed a view on the issue, 81% agree with the statement “your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together” – down from 86% in 2006.

Treating people with respect and consideration (NI 23)

Overall, 26% of residents feel there is a problem in their area with people not treating each other with respect and consideration.

While this appears to be a big improvement on 2006 when the BVPI General Survey showed 49% of this opinion, caution should be taken when interpreting these results as the question was included as part of a list in 2006 and a stand alone question in 2008 and this may affect the way people answer.

Respect from public services (NI 140)

The great majority of residents with an opinion of the matter say they have been treated with respect and consideration by their local public services either all of the time or most of the time (80%).

Independent living for older people (NI 139)

Overall, 27% of all residents believe that older people in their local area are able to get the services and support they need to continue to live at home for as long as they want to, though a large proportion have no view on this issue (62%).

Looking at older residents shows that the proportion agreeing with this proposition increases with the age of the resident, rising to 57% of those aged over 85 believing that older people are well supported.

How safe feel in neighbourhood

While the vast majority of residents say they feel safe outside in their local area during the day (89%), fewer do so after dark (54%).

Anti-social behaviour (NI 17, NI 41, NI 42)

From a list of seven types of anti-social behaviour, teenagers hanging around the streets emerges as the biggest perceived problem in the area, with 43% of residents citing this as a problem.

Vandalism, graffiti, and other deliberate damage to property and vehicles follows in second place (35%), and is closely followed by rubbish and litter lying around (29%).

A significant group of residents cite people being drunk or rowdy in public places (25% - which informs NI 41), and 16% see people using or dealing drugs as a problem in their area, and this informs NI 42.

Noisy neighbours (10%) and abandoned or burnt out cars (4%) feature at the bottom of the list.

The proportion of residents believing each of these to be a problem fell dramatically between 2006 and 2008.

Note that National Indicator NI 17 is informed by a combination of responses to these questions. The score for Epsom & Ewell for NI 17 is given by the Audit Commission as 14% of residents showing a high perception of anti-social behaviour.

Understanding of local concerns (NI 21, NI 27)

Overall, 26% of residents agree to some extent that the police and other local public services seek people's views about anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area (NI 27), and 30% feel they are successfully dealing with these issues (NI 21).

General health (NI 119)

Overall, 82% of residents describe their general health as being either very good or good.

Protecting the environment

When asked about ways they could reduce their carbon footprint, residents show the greatest willingness to recycle more of their household waste - 60% saying they already do as much as they can, and a further 31% saying they could do so easily.

Overall, 58% say they already do as much as they can to reduce the amount of food waste they throw away, with a further 27% willing to do more.

Though slightly fewer say they currently do as much as they can in terms of buying fresh food with less packaging (39%), or buying more fruit and vegetables grown locally (29%), a significant group show a willingness to do more (40% and 38% respectively).

Around three quarters show a willingness to reduce gas, electricity and water consumption, with more than half saying they already do as much as they can.

It would seem that residents would find making changes to their travelling the most difficult. Almost half say they would find it difficult or would be unwilling to make more journeys by public transport, and 37% in the case of walking or cycling; 36% would also resist reducing or avoiding flying.

***DETAILED
RESULTS***

ABOUT THE LOCAL AREA

Quality of life

Respondents were presented with a list of twenty factors relating to quality of life and were asked to say which five they consider to be most important in terms of making somewhere a good place to live, and which five they feel most need improving in their area.

The chart below shows response to both parts of the question with the factors listed in order of perceived importance in making somewhere a good place to live.

Heading the list on the left of the chart is the level of crime which two thirds of residents include in their list of five things which makes somewhere a good place to live. Just under a quarter include this in their list of what most needs improving in their area (22%).

Health services follows in second position with 56% including this in their list of important factors – 22% of residents also feel this needs improving in their area.

In third position, 46% cite clean streets as important, and 24% feel improvements are needed.

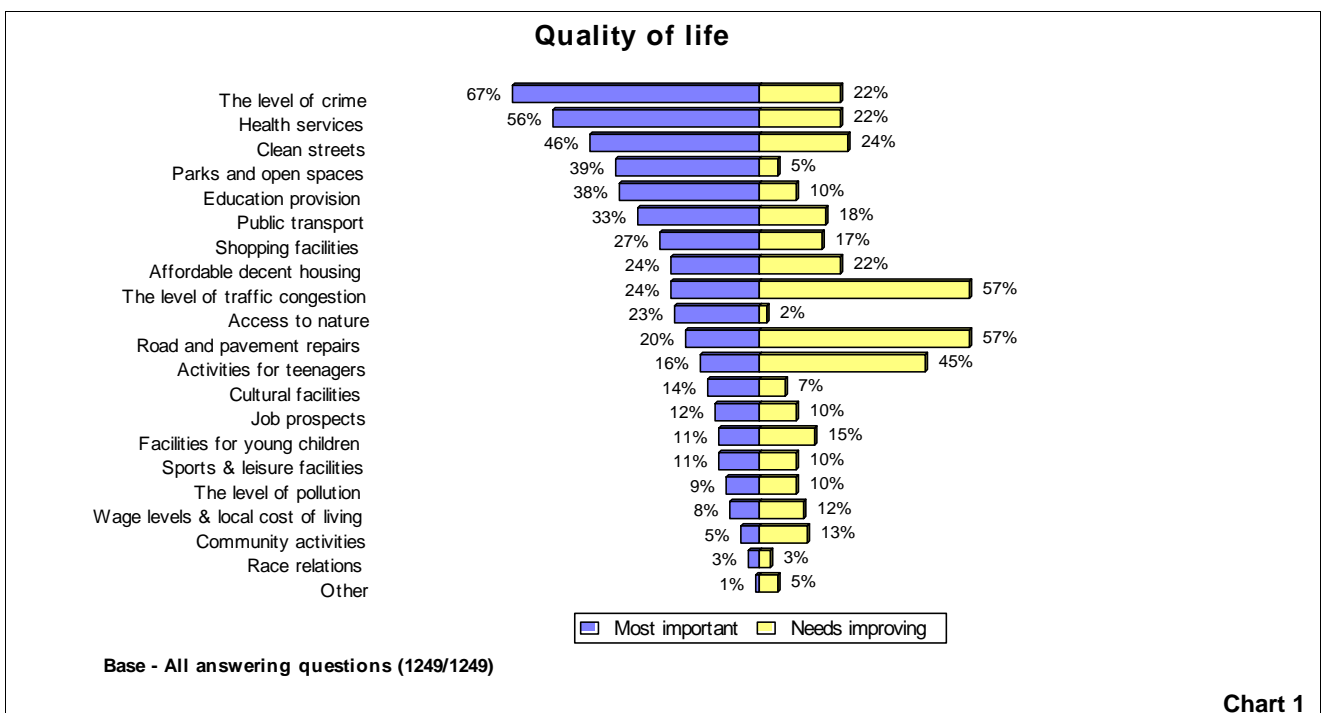
Parks and open spaces (39%) and education provision (38%) follow in terms of what is important, and the borough performs well in terms of the proportion of residents feeling improvements are needed (5% and 10% respectively).

The level of traffic congestion and road and pavement repairs head the list of things which need improving, each being cited by 57% of residents as being in need of improvement.

Activities for teenagers features in second position in terms of areas needing improving, with 45% including it in their list.

Affordable decent housing is felt by 22% to need improving.

All other areas are judged to need improving by 18% or fewer residents.



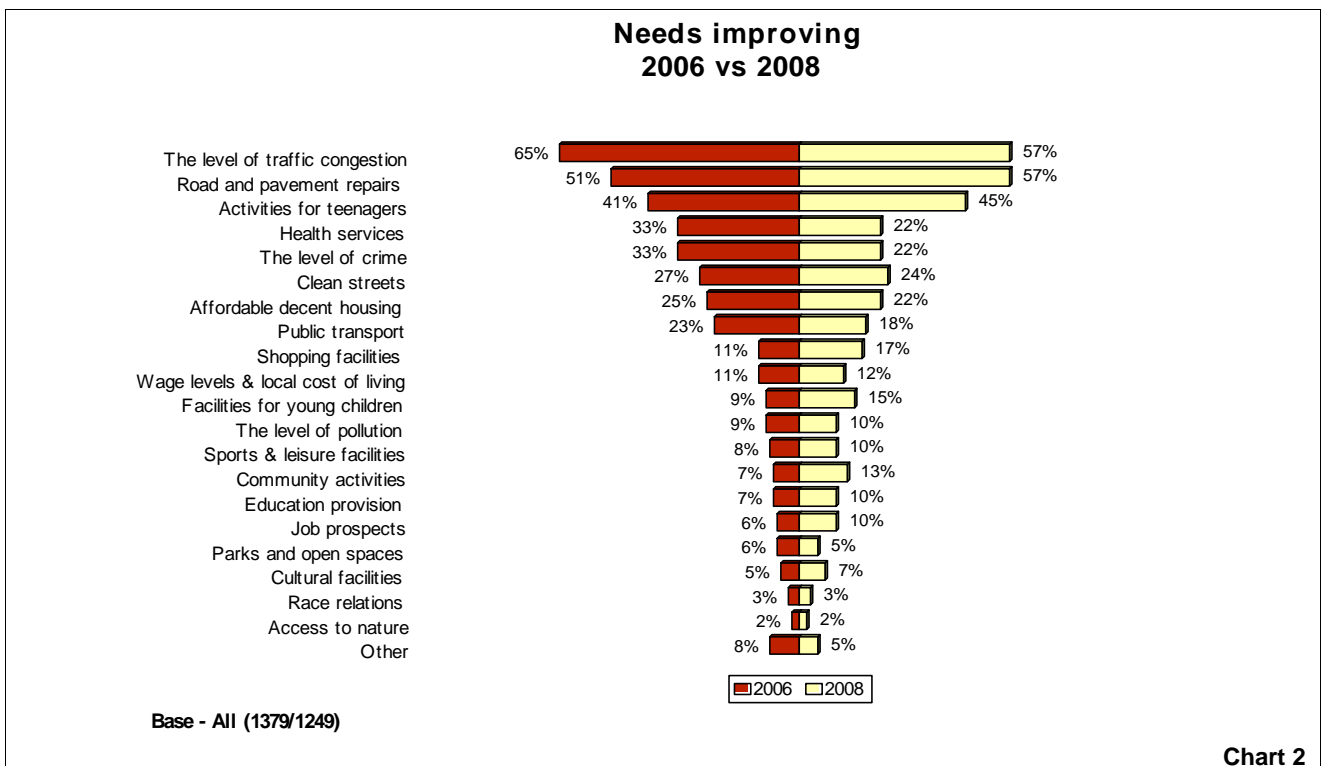
The chart below compares response to the question of what most needs improving with the results seen on the BVPI General Survey carried out in 2006.

The level of traffic congestion and road and pavement repairs appear at the top of list in both surveys. While some improvement appears to have been made for traffic congestion (down from 65% calling for improvements in 2006 to 57%), road and pavement repairs has gone the other way – up from 51% to 57%.

Improvements are also seen for health services (down from 33% to 22%), the level of crime (also down from 33% to 22%), and public transport (down from 23% to 18%).

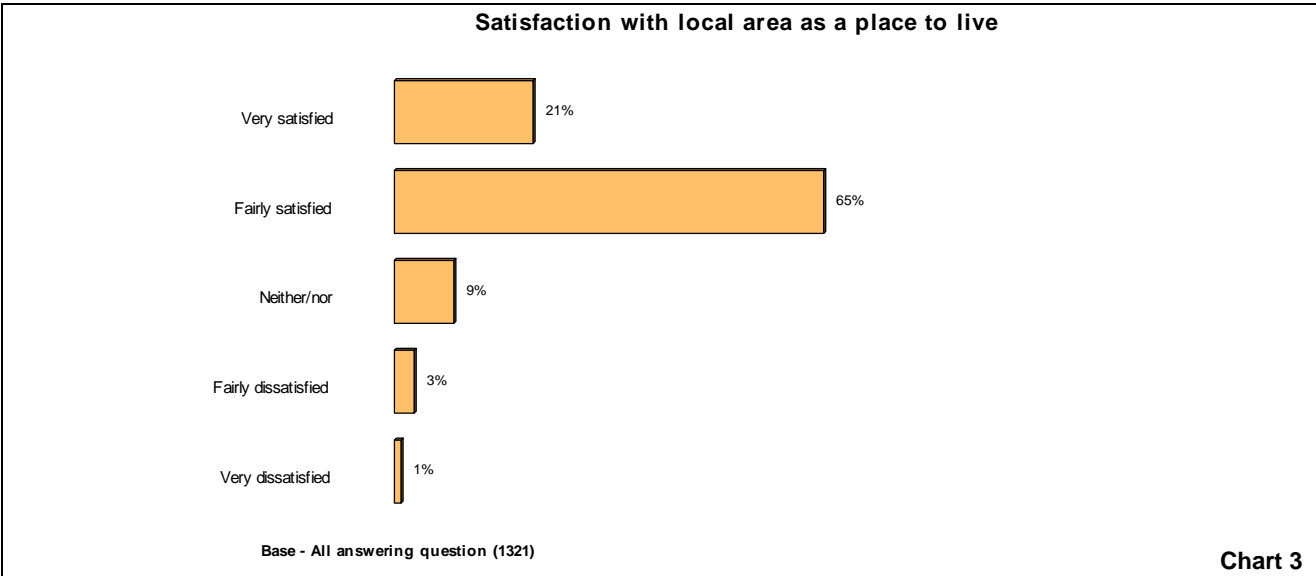
In three areas the proportion feeling improvements are needed have increased significantly between 2006 and 2008 – shopping facilities (up from 11% to 17%), facilities for young children (9% to 15%) and community activities (7% to 13%).

Any other differences shown are not statistically significant.

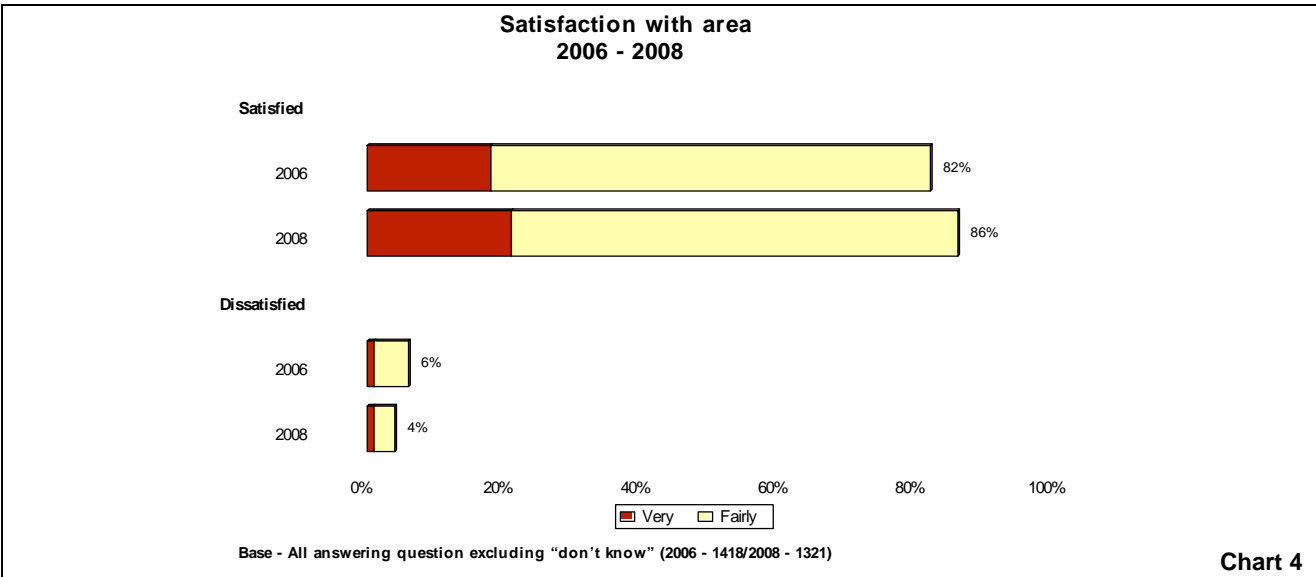


Satisfaction with area (NI 5)

Overall, 86% of residents say they are satisfied with their local area as a place to live, 21% being very satisfied. Note that this informs the new National Indicator NI 5.

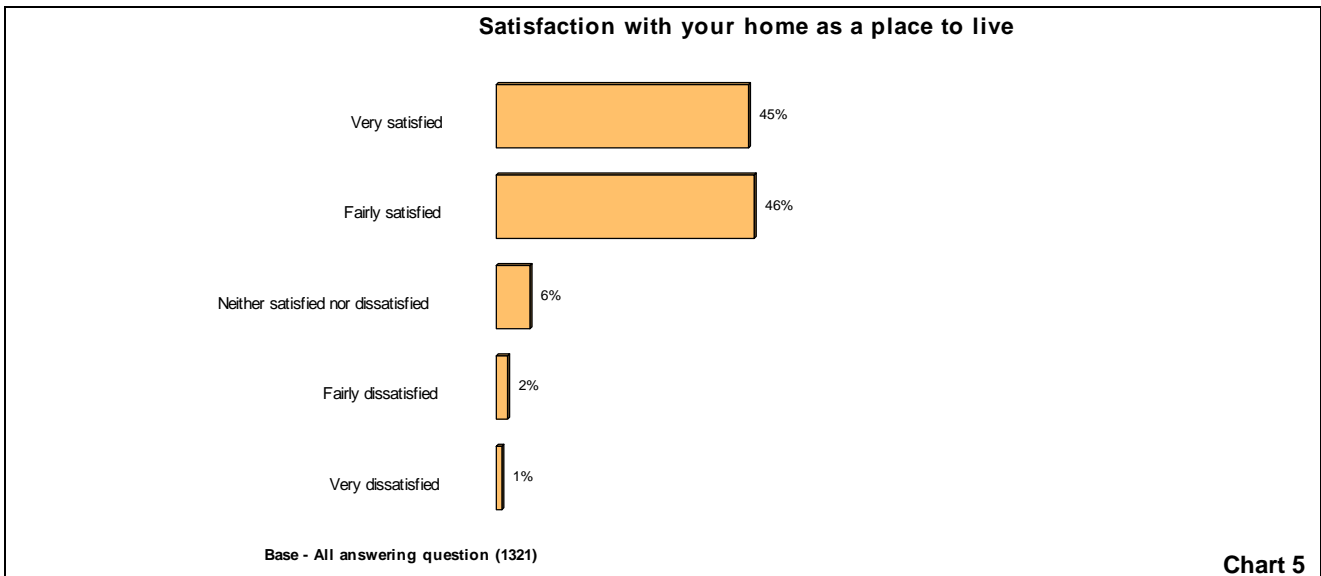


As shown on the chart below, this was a slight improvement on 2006 when 82% were satisfied with their local area (though the difference is not statistically significant).



Satisfaction with home

The vast majority of residents also say they are satisfied with their home as a place to live; 45% being very satisfied and 46% fairly satisfied.

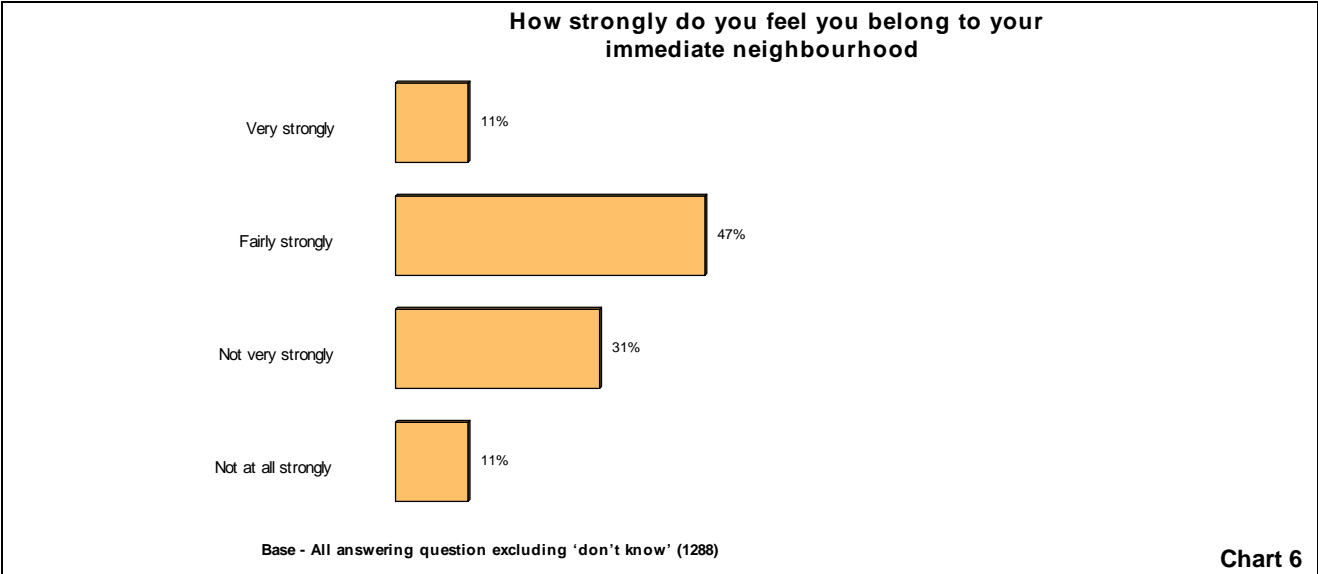


NI 138 - satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood

Taken together and relating to residents over the age of 65, satisfaction with area and satisfaction with the home contribute towards NI 138. Results show a score of 89% for this National Indicator.

Belonging to the neighbourhood (NI 2)

Overall, 58% of residents say they feel that they belong to their neighbourhood – 11% very strongly and 47% fairly strongly. Note that this informs the new National Indicator NI 2.



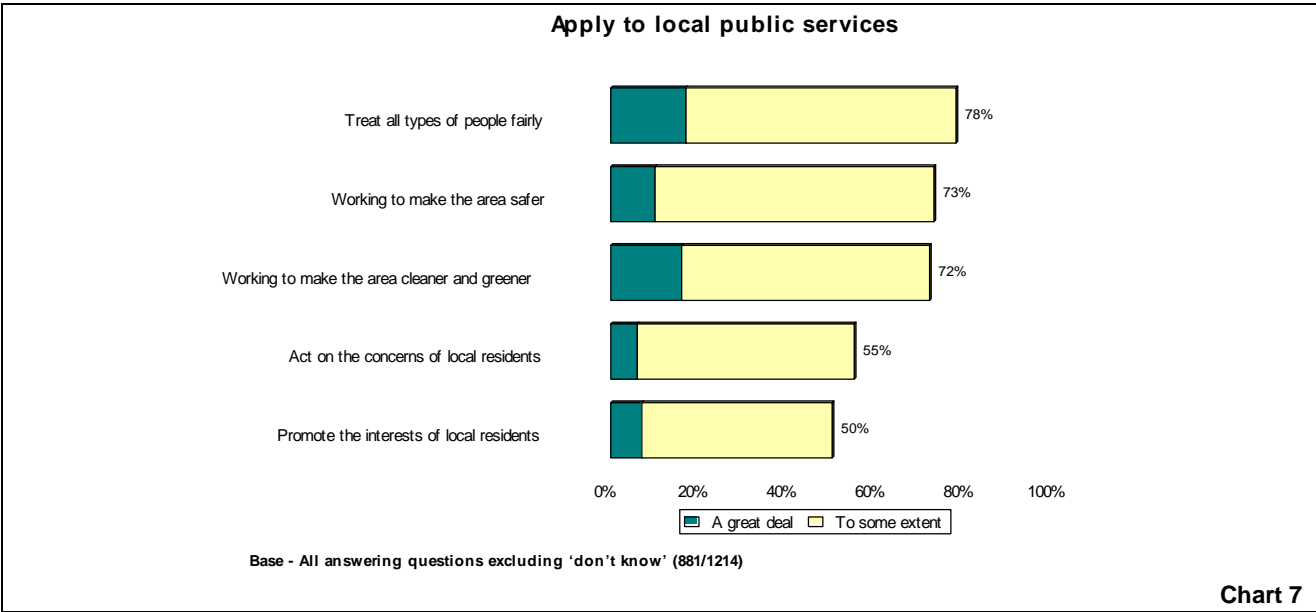
LOCAL PUBLIC SERVICES

Performance of public services

The emphasis of the Place Survey is on 'local public services', and so respondents were asked to say to what extent they believe these services are working for the local area and its residents.

As shown on the chart below, around three-quarters of residents believe that local public services are working to make the area safer and cleaner and greener.

While more than three-quarters believe that local public services treat all types of people fairly, fewer feel that public services promote the interests of local residents (50%) or act on their concerns (55%).



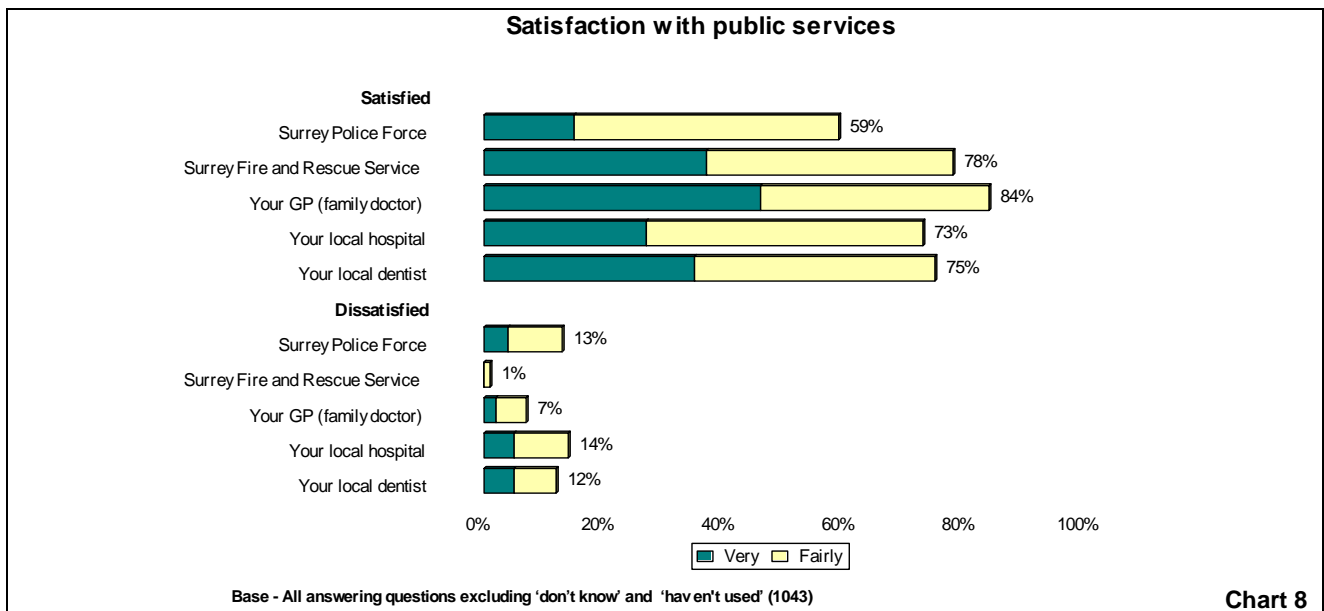
Satisfaction with public services

Residents were also asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with a number of particular public services.

As shown on the chart below, satisfaction is highest for local GPs, with 84% of residents expressing some degree of satisfaction (46% being very satisfied). Dentists are somewhat behind with 75% satisfied – 12% say they are dissatisfied with their local dentist, with the remainder opting for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.

Three-quarters say they are satisfied with their local hospital, though only a quarter are very satisfied. Again there was a significant group responding neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, with 14% being dissatisfied.

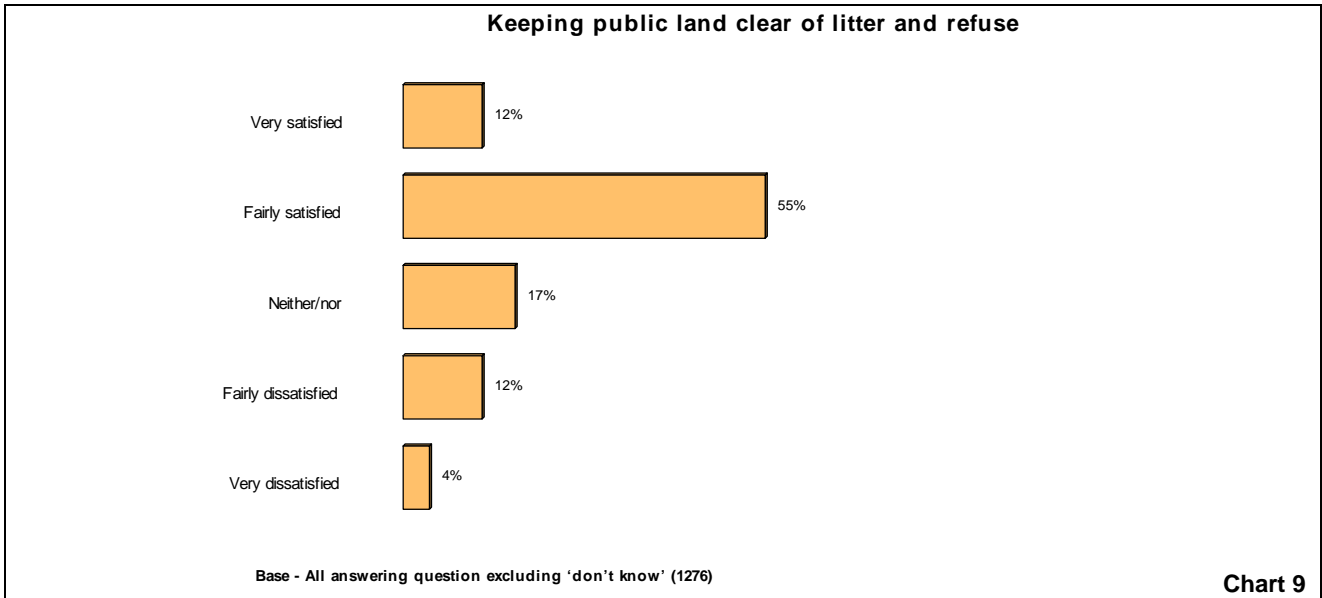
While the great majority of those with an opinion say they are satisfied with Surrey Fire and Rescue Service (78%), satisfaction with the Police Force is rather lower – only 15% say they are very satisfied, with a further 44% fairly satisfied.



SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES

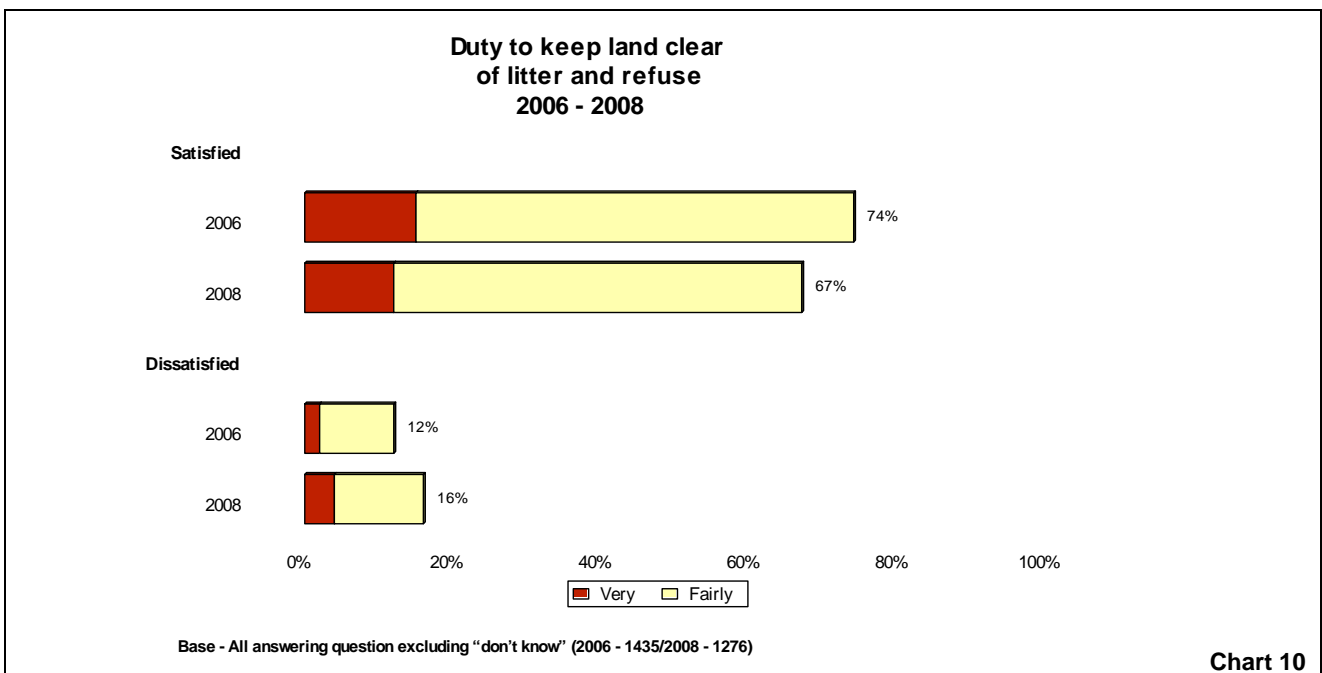
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse

Overall, 67% of residents are satisfied with the council’s performance in terms of keeping public land clear of litter and refuse; 16% are dissatisfied, with the remainder opting for the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position on the questionnaire.



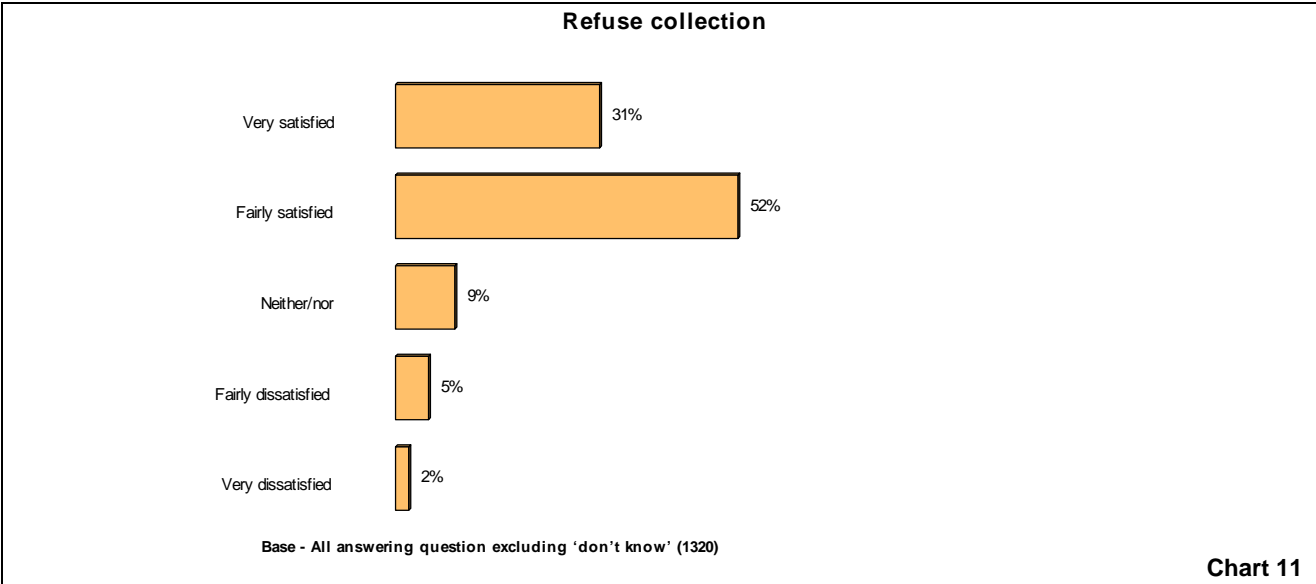
The chart below compares the results of this latest survey with the BVPI General Residents Survey carried out in 2006, and shows a significant fall in the level of satisfaction – down from 74% to 67%.

Note that on previous surveys the question related to the council’s duty to keep *open* public land clear of litter and refuse, and this may affect the way people responded.



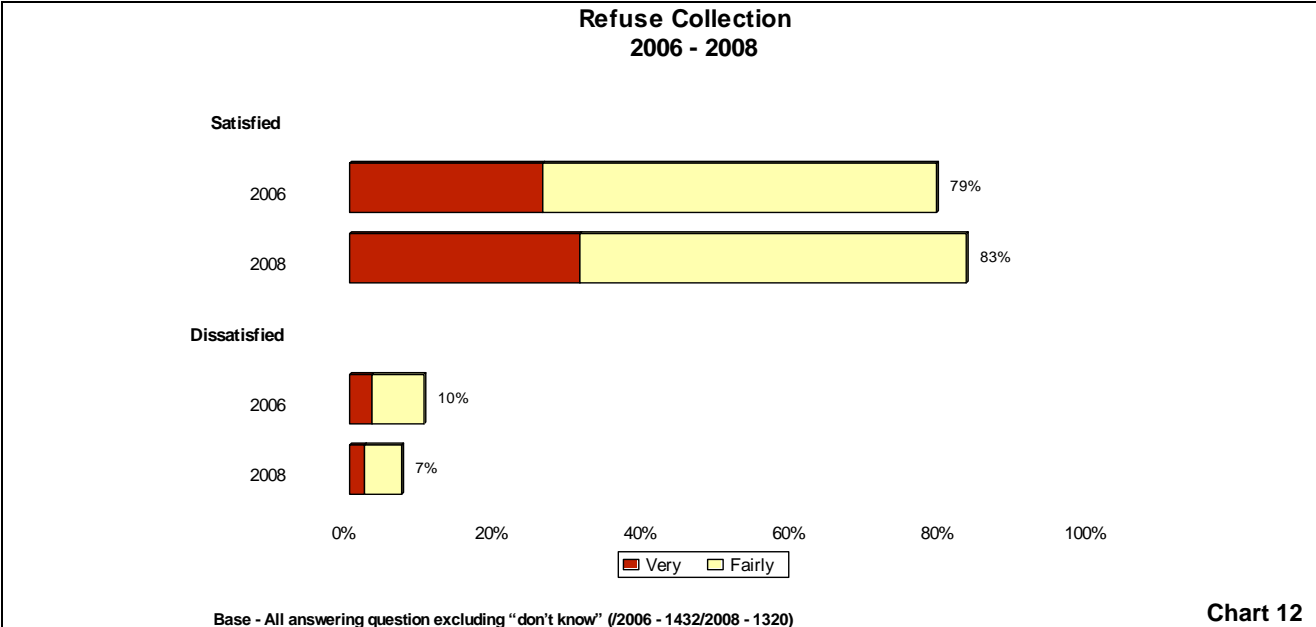
Refuse collection

The latest survey shows 83% of residents satisfied with the refuse collection service, and 7% dissatisfied.



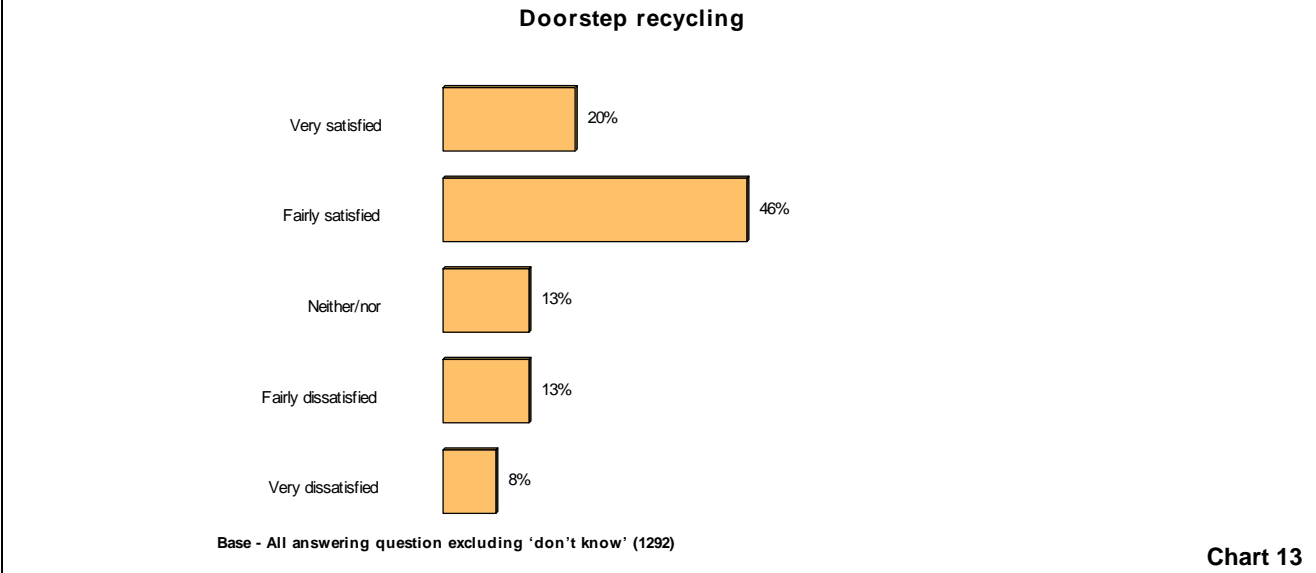
The chart below compares results with those from the BVPI survey carried out in 2006, and shows a significant improvement with satisfaction up from 79% satisfied to 83%.

Note that in previous surveys overall satisfaction was asked at the end of a multipart question relating to the 'household waste collection service', and so data may not be directly comparable.



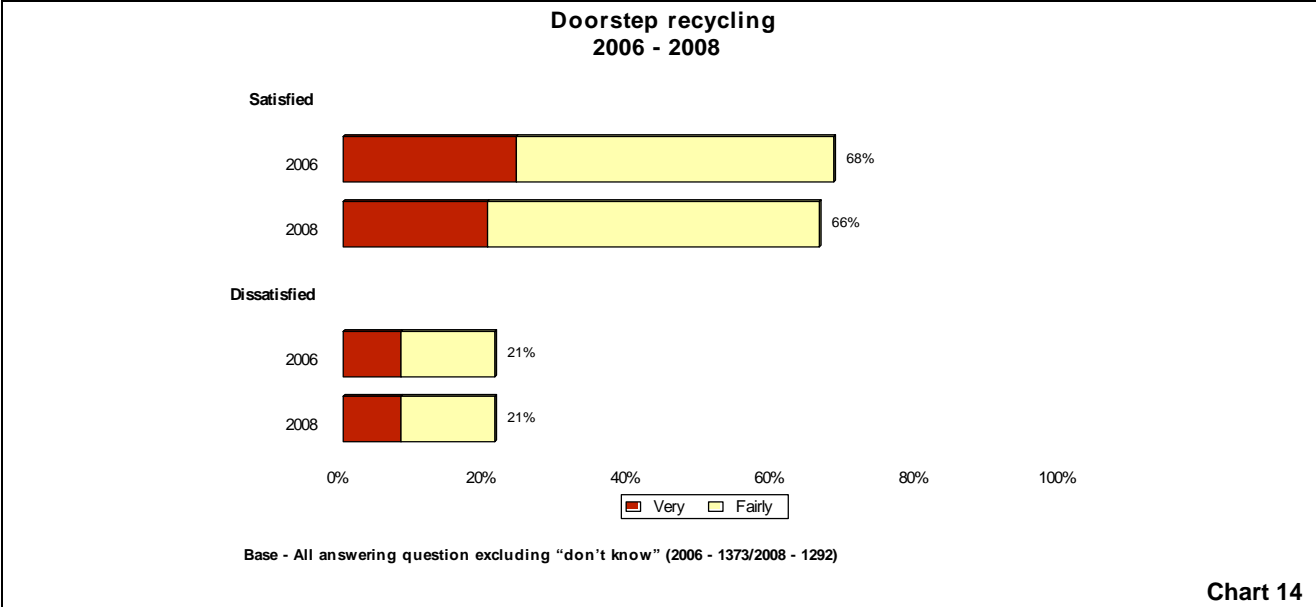
Doorstep recycling

Overall, 66% of residents say they are satisfied with the recycling collection service, with 21% expressing some degree of dissatisfaction – the remainder opting for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position on the scale.



The chart below shows a very similar pattern of response to that seen in 2006 (differences not being statistically significant).

Note, again, that in the previous BVPI surveys overall satisfaction was asked at the end of a multipart question and so data may not be directly comparable.



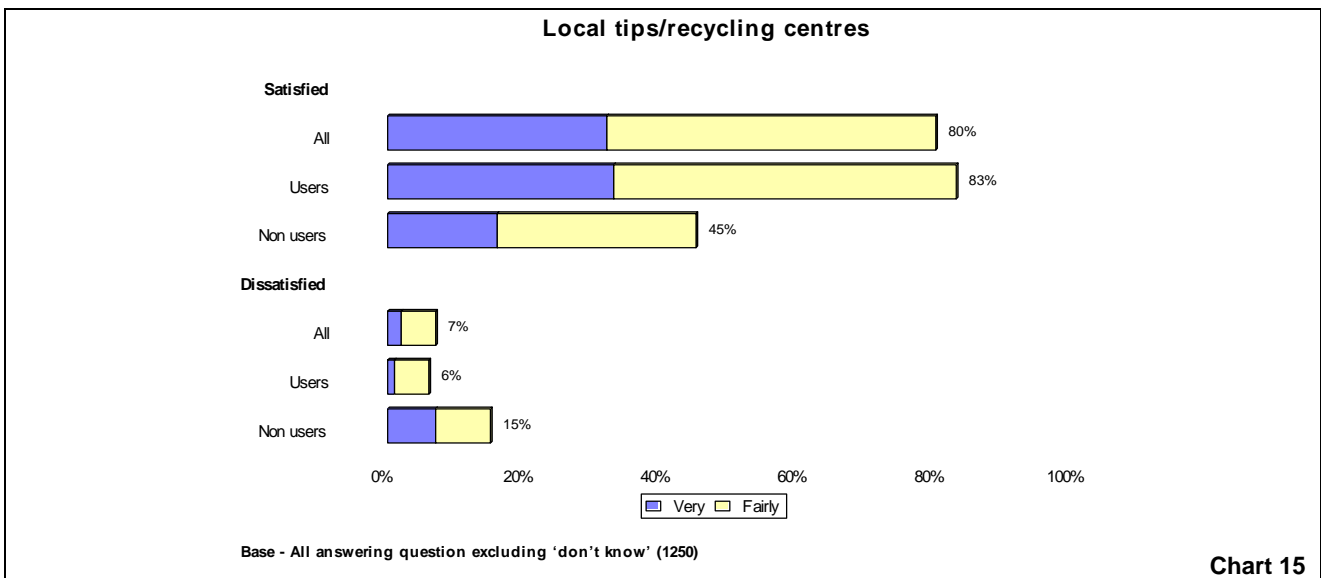
Local tips/household waste recycling centres

Overall, 80% of residents say they are satisfied with local tips/household waste recycling centres.

The vast majority of residents (83%) say they have used these centres in the past twelve months – 83% of whom were satisfied with the facilities provided.

While fewer than half of those who have not used them say they are satisfied with these centres, only 15% actively expressed dissatisfaction, with the remainder ticking the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied box.

Note that this question is not directly comparable with the previous BVPI surveys for district councils which asked residents opinions of recycling banks rather than tips/household waste recycling centres. The county council questionnaire covered local tips and results showed 74% satisfied in 2006.



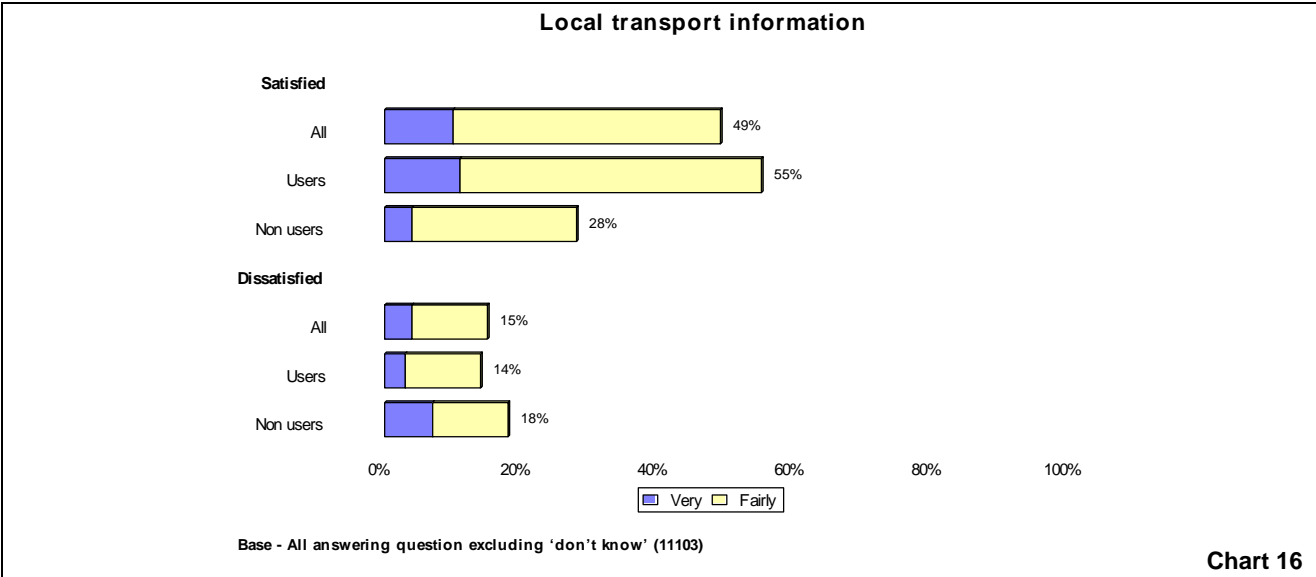
Local transport information

Residents were asked to comment on local transport information (though this is not defined on the questionnaire).

Amongst all those who expressed a view, 49% said they are satisfied with local transport information; 15% expressed some degree of dissatisfaction, with the remaining 36% opting for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.

Overall, 65% of residents indicated that they had used this information in the last twelve months; 55% of these saying they are satisfied with the facility and 14% dissatisfied.

Note that this was only featured on the questionnaire for the county council on previous surveys, with the 2006 survey showing 45% satisfied overall.



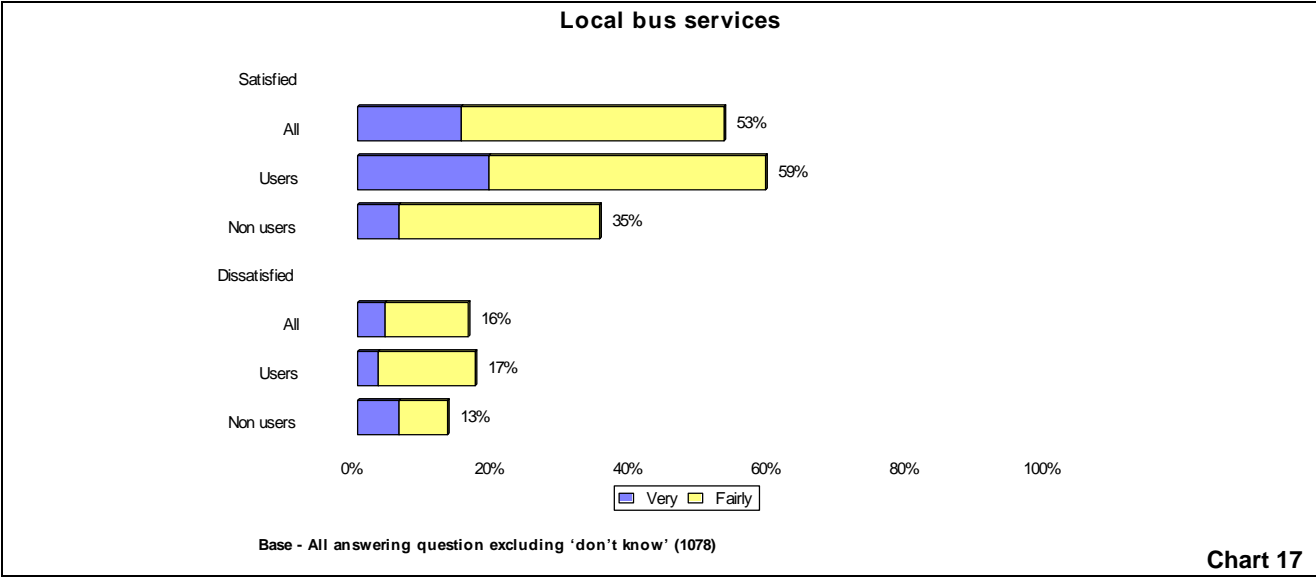
Local bus services

Residents were also asked to comment on local bus services.

Amongst all those who expressed a view, 53% said they are satisfied and 16% dissatisfied.

Amongst those who indicated that they had used these services in the last twelve months (63% of residents), the proportion satisfied rose to 59%, with 17% dissatisfied.

Note that this was only featured on the questionnaire for the county council on previous surveys, with the 2006 survey showing 49% satisfied overall.



CULTURAL AND RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES

Questions relating to use of, and satisfaction with, cultural and recreational facilities were included in the Place Survey questionnaire and were identical to those featured on the previous BVPI General Surveys.

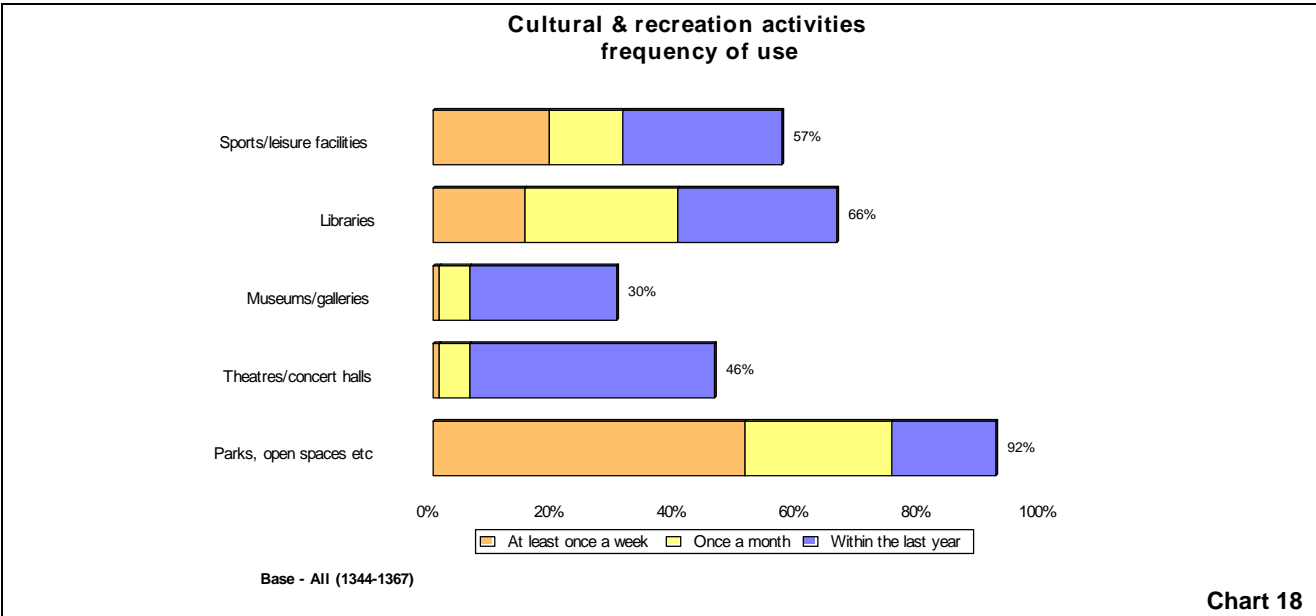
Frequency of use

Overall, 57% of residents had used sports and leisure facilities in the twelve months prior to taking part in the survey – 19% using these facilities at least once a week and further 12% once a month.

Around two-thirds had used the libraries in the previous twelve months, though only 15% use them on a weekly basis.

Overall, 30% of residents had visited museums and galleries, and 46% had visited theatres and concert halls in the previous twelve months – albeit infrequently.

Parks and open spaces were used by 92% of residents - 51% at least weekly and 24% monthly.



Sports and leisure facilities

Amongst those who had used sports and leisure facilities in the twelve months prior to taking part in the latest survey, 65% were satisfied with the facilities provided, with 10% dissatisfied (the remainder falling into the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position).

A large proportion of non-users have no view on these facilities with 46% of those who answered the question opting for the neutral category on the questionnaire; the balance of opinion amongst the remainder was positive – 39% being satisfied and 15% dissatisfied.

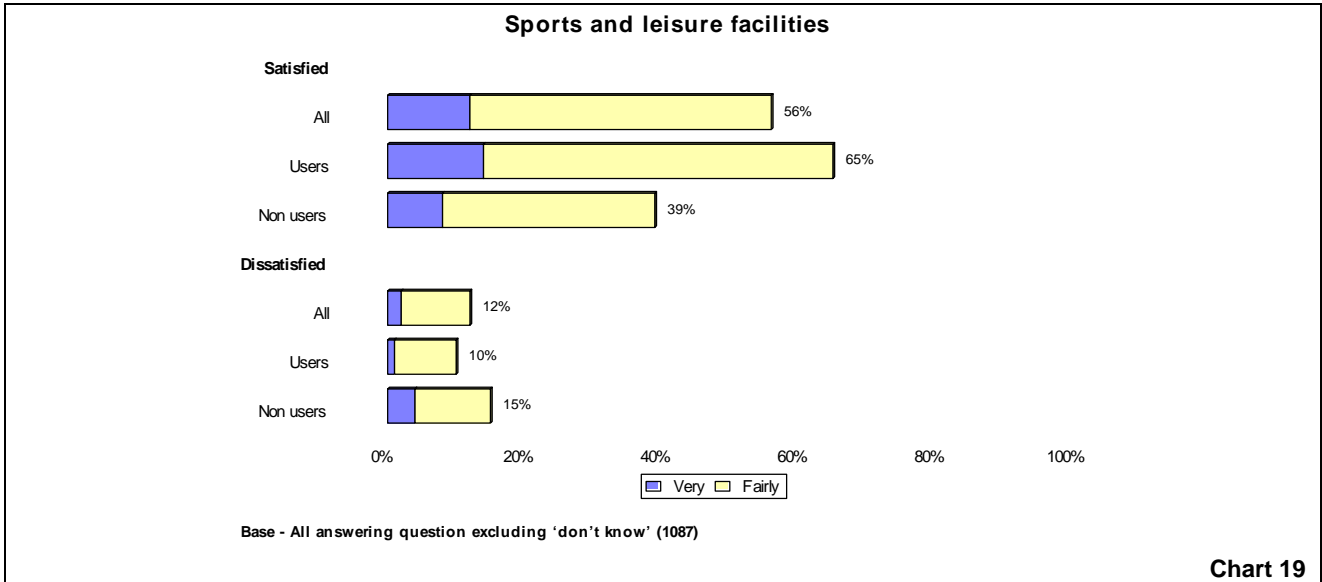


Chart 19

The chart below shows that the level of satisfaction with sports and leisure facilities amongst users (defined as used in the last twelve months) fell significantly from 75% in 2006 to its current level of 65%. Most of this, however, is accounted for by an increase in the proportion responding neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, with the level of dissatisfaction increasing only slightly (and not significantly), from 7% to 10%.

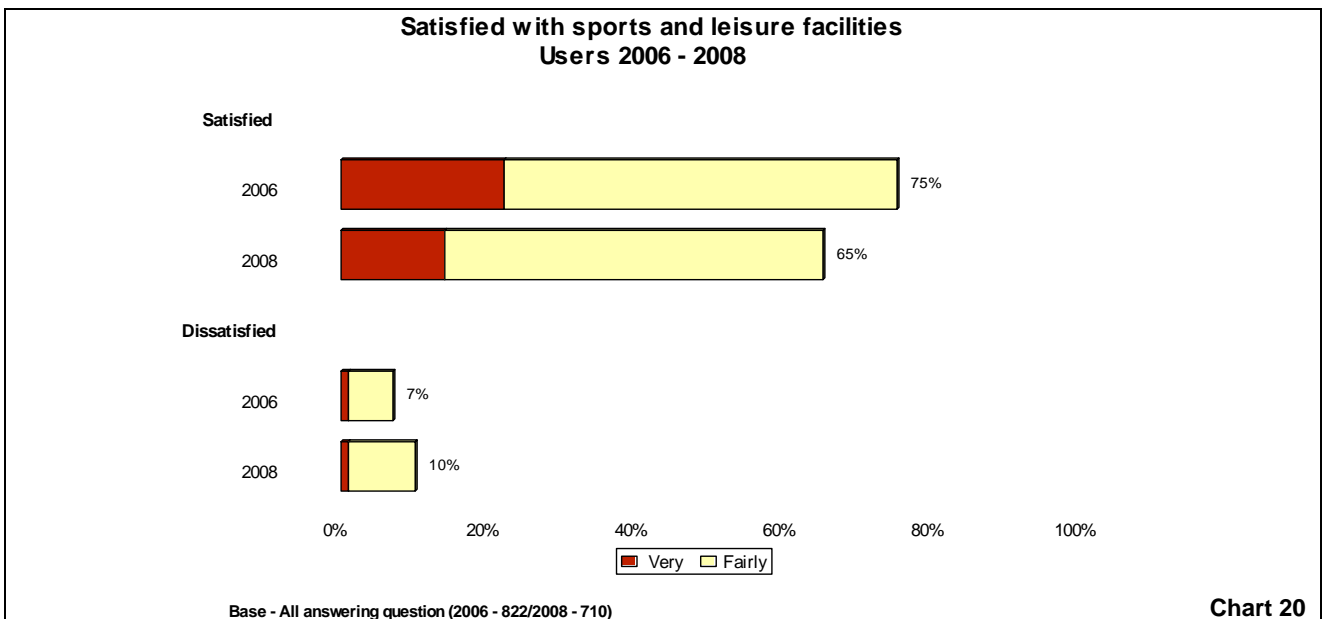


Chart 20

Libraries

The majority of those who had visited a library in the previous twelve months were satisfied with their experience (87%), with only 2% dissatisfied.

Only two-thirds of those who have not used these facilities were able to comment one way or the other, with the majority being positive (53%).

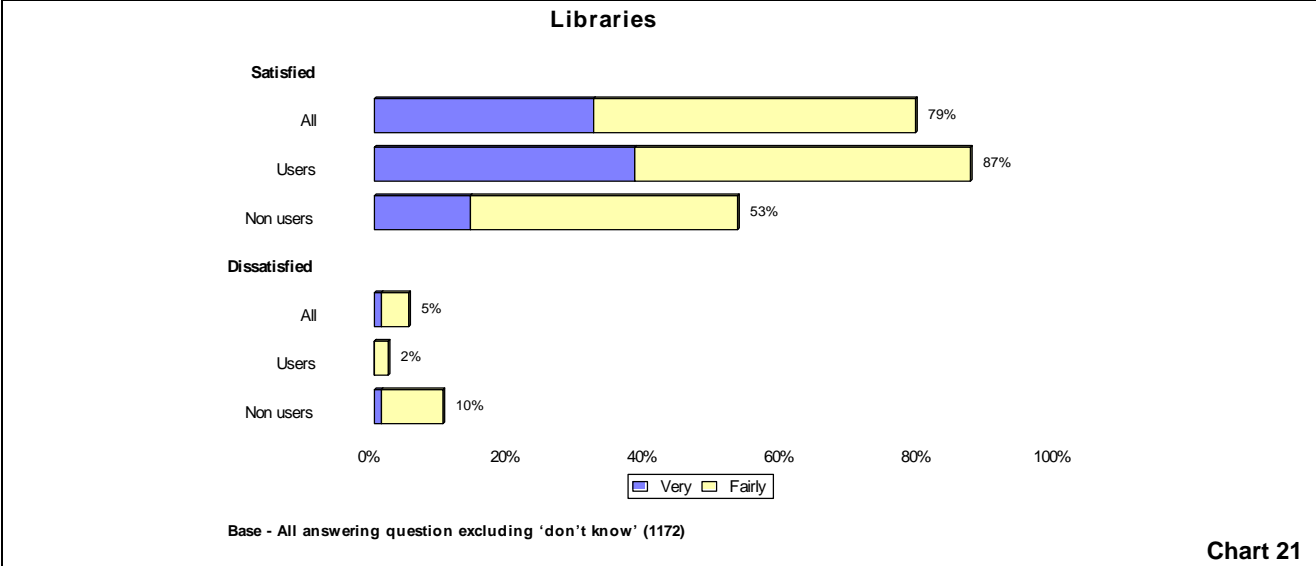


Chart 21

While the chart below shows a fall in satisfaction since 2006, the difference is wholly accounted for by an increase in the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position, with dissatisfaction unchanged.

Note that district councils were not required to ask about libraries prior to the 2006 survey.

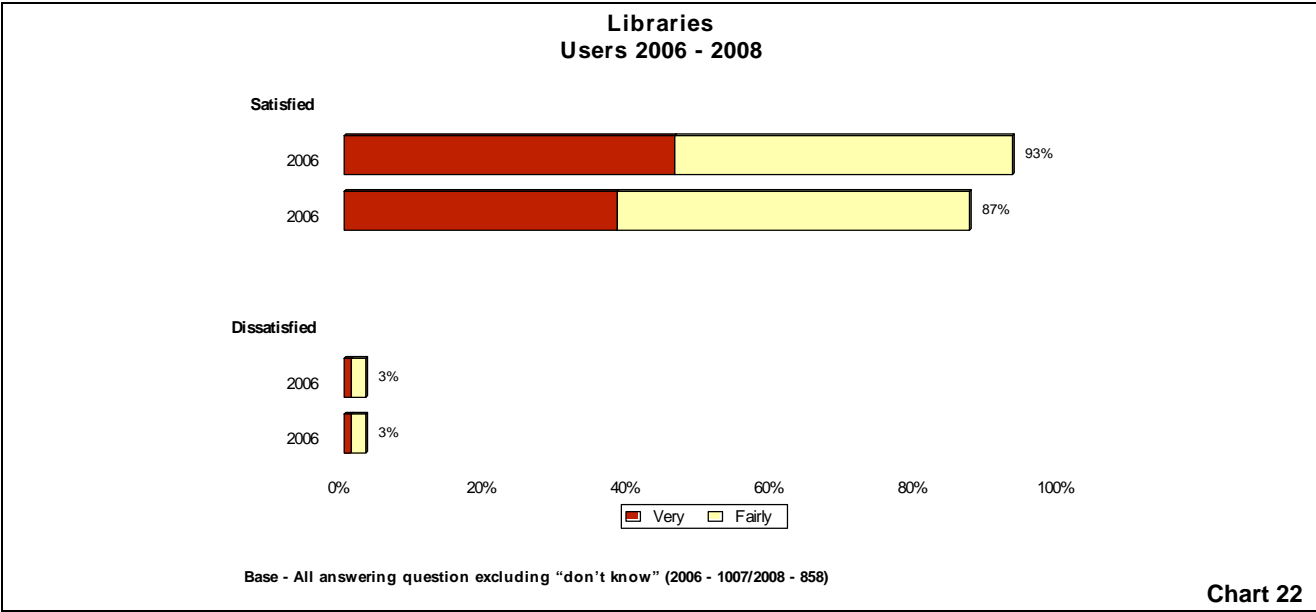


Chart 22

Museums and galleries

Around half of those who had visited museums and galleries in the previous twelve months were satisfied with their experience, with 12% being dissatisfied (the remainder selecting the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position).

Amongst those who have not used these facilities and were able to comment one way or the other, the balance of opinion was mixed – 23% satisfied and 19% dissatisfied.

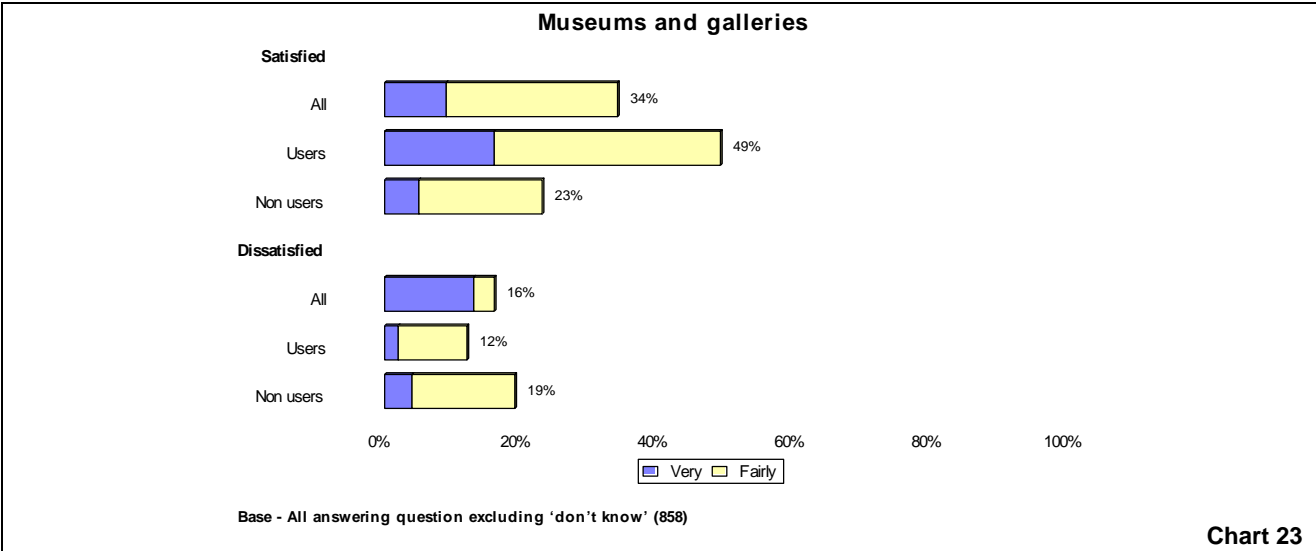


Chart 23

The chart below shows satisfaction amongst users well below the level seen in 2006 (61%), though again much of the difference is accounted for by an increase in the neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.

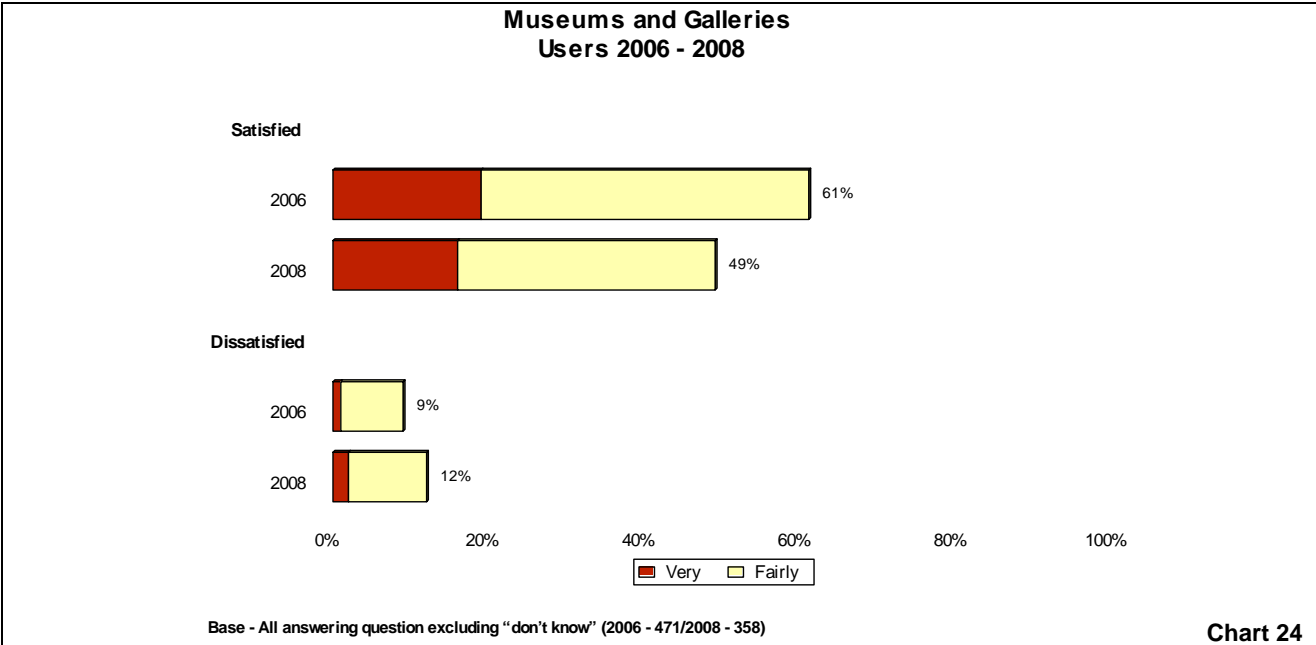
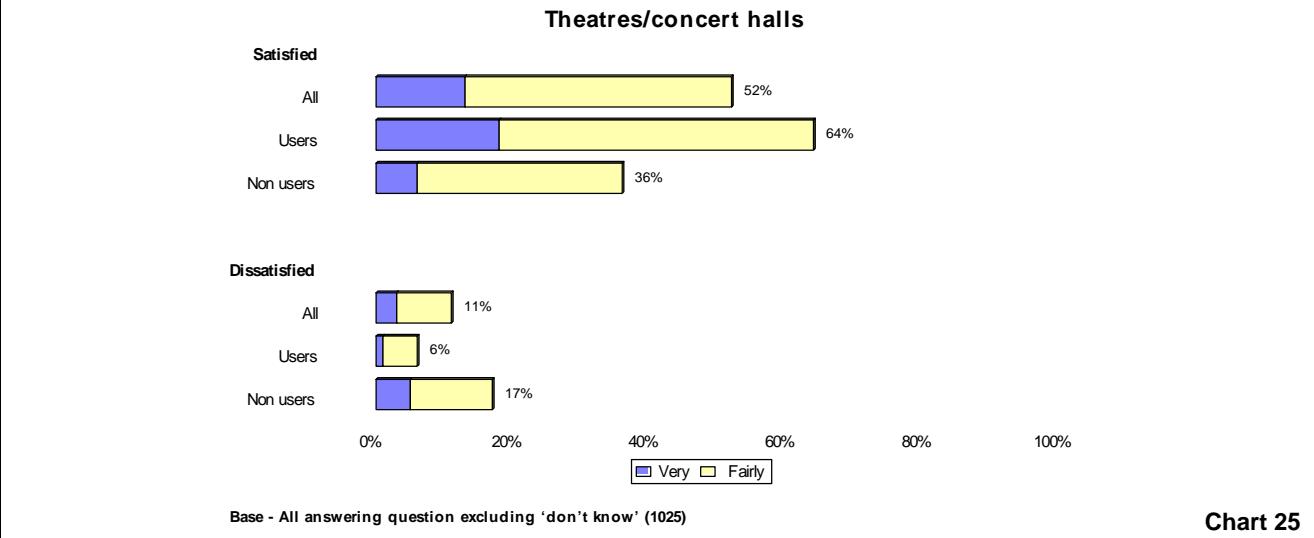


Chart 24

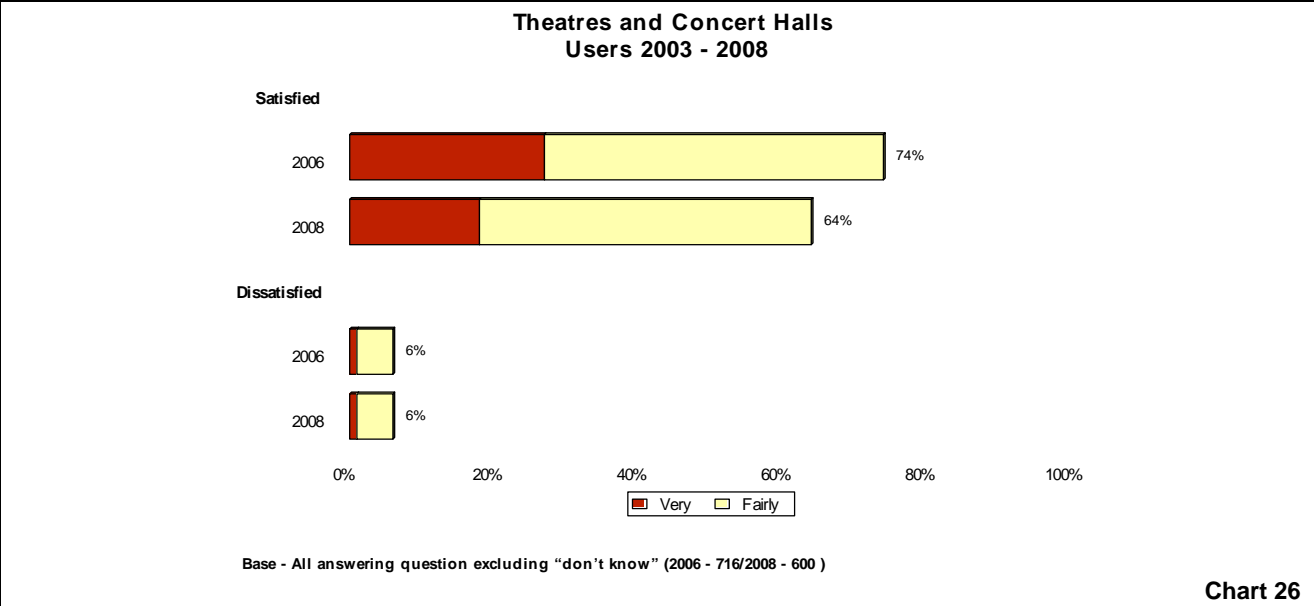
Theatres and concert halls

Amongst those who had visited theatres and concert halls 64% were satisfied with the facilities, and 6% were dissatisfied (the remainder responding neither satisfied nor dissatisfied).

Only around half of those who answered the question who have not used these facilities expressed a view one way or the other, with 36% being satisfied and 17% dissatisfied.



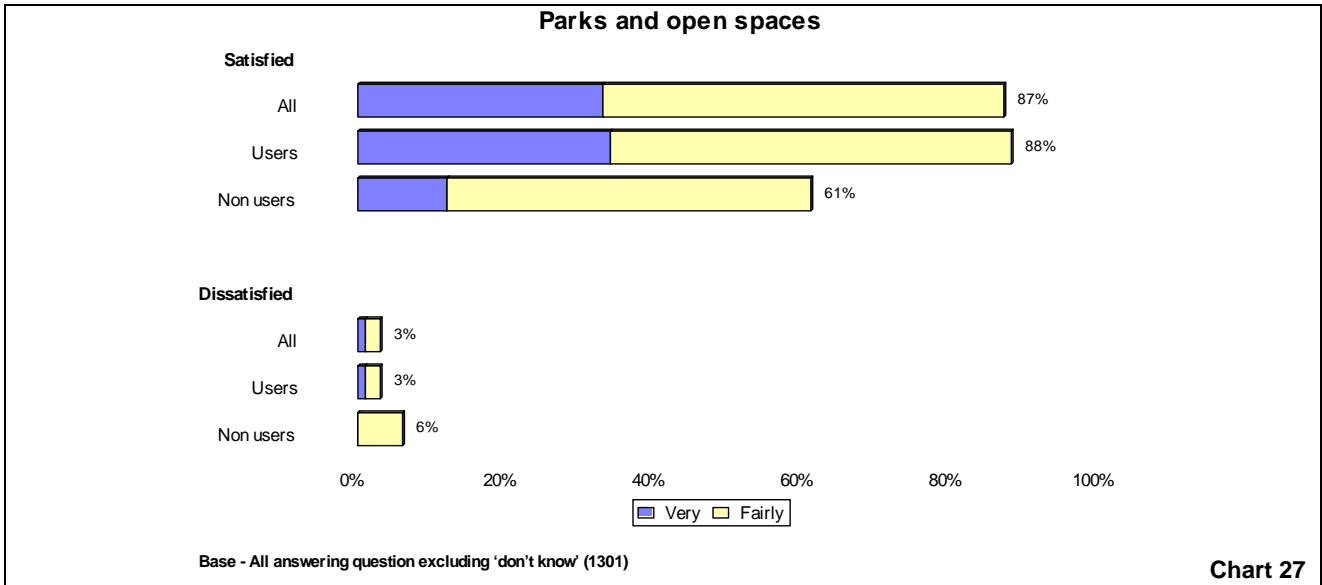
As shown on the chart below, satisfaction amongst users of theatres and concert halls fell from 74% in 2006 to 64% on the latest survey. Again, however, the difference is accounted for by larger numbers opting for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position.



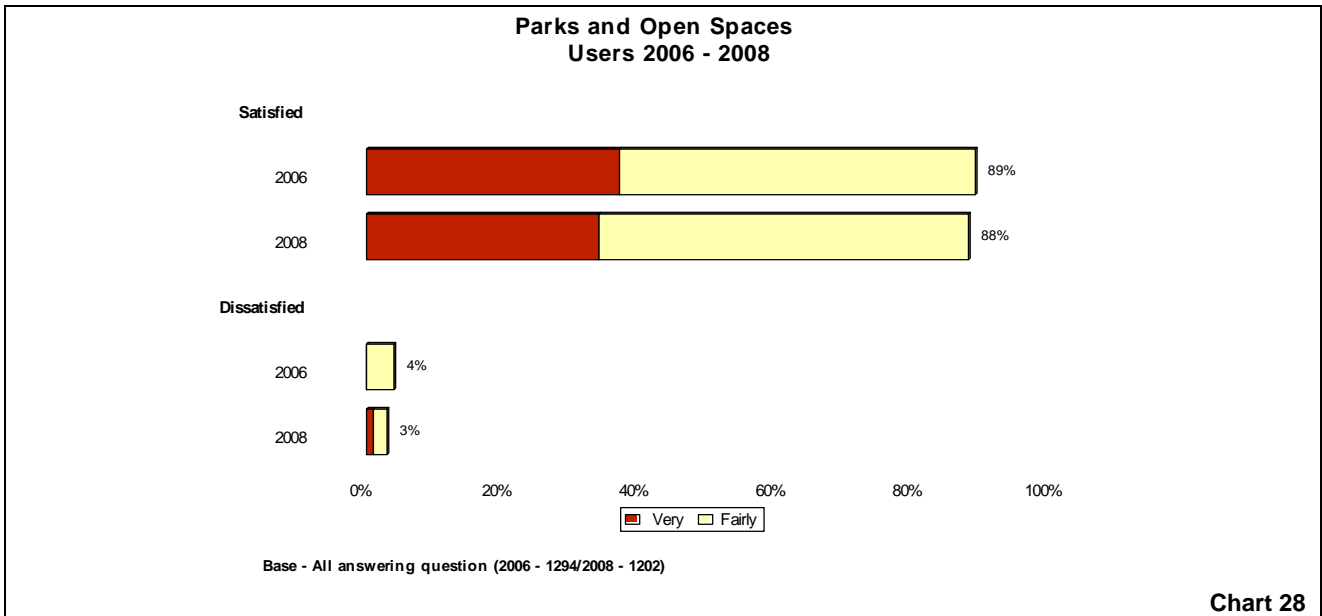
Parks and open spaces

Amongst those who had visited parks and open spaces in the previous twelve months, the vast majority were satisfied with the facilities provided (88%).

Again amongst non-users who expressed a view the balance of opinion was favourable – 61% satisfied and 6% dissatisfied.



Comparing results with those seen on the 2006 BVPI General Survey shows an almost identical pattern of response.

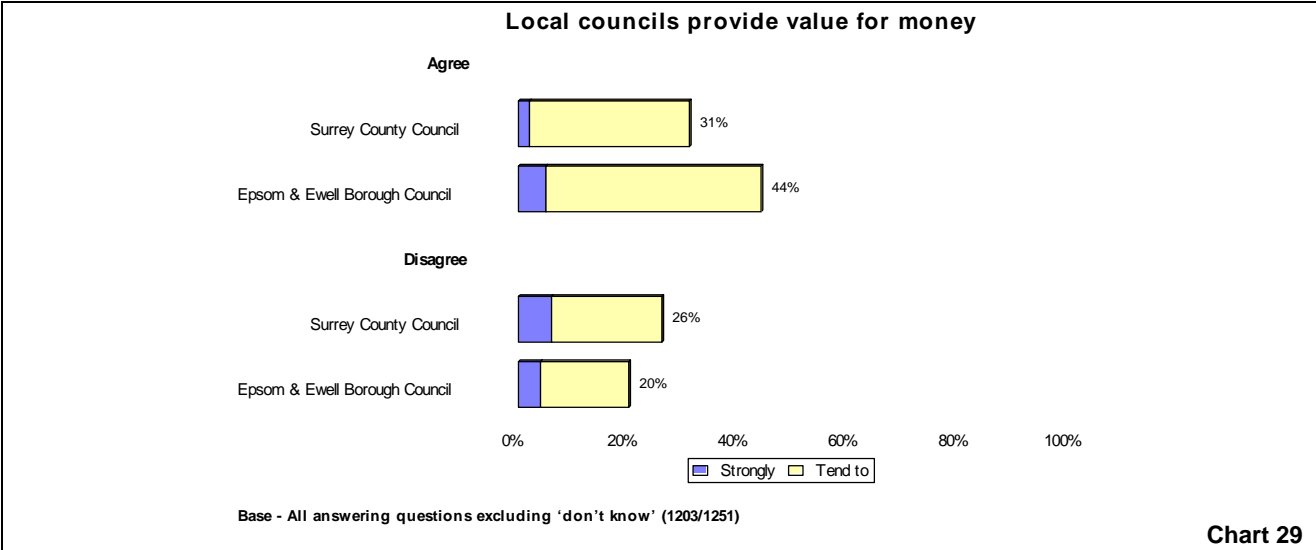


Value for money

Following a brief summary of the key services provided by each, residents were asked to say to what extent they agree or disagree that the county council and the district council provide value for money.

As shown on the chart below, opinion is very mixed. In the case of Surrey County Council the proportion who agree that it offers value for money (31%) is only slightly higher than those who disagree (26%), with the highest proportion falling into the neither agree nor disagree category (43%).

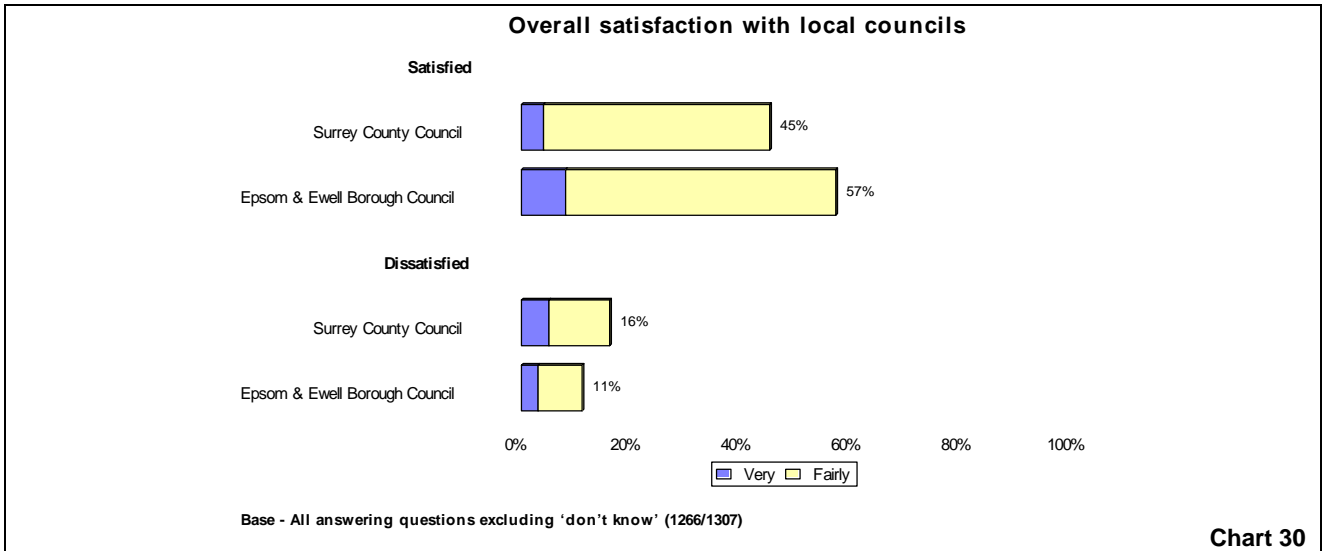
In the case of Epsom and Ewell Borough Council, while there is a greater tendency towards agreeing that the council offers value for money (44%) and fewer disagreeing (20%), there is again a significant group who expressed no view one way or the other – 36% falling into the neither agree nor disagree position.



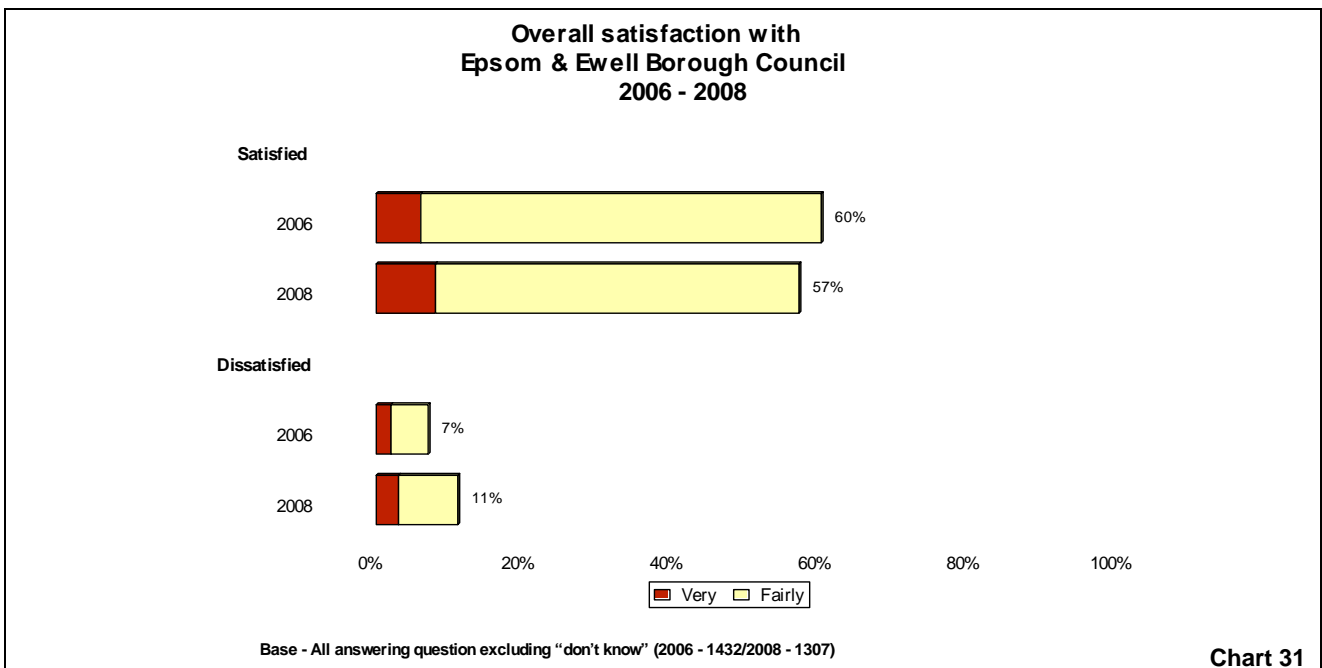
Overall satisfaction

When asked how satisfied they are with the way the two councils run things, the borough council tends to perform better than the county council – overall, 57% say they are satisfied with Epsom & Ewell compared with 45% satisfied with Surrey County Council.

Again, there is a large group who opted for the neutral neither satisfied nor dissatisfied position in each case, with 16% overall expressing dissatisfaction with the county council and 11% with the district council.



The proportion expressing satisfaction with the way the borough council runs things was slightly below that seen in 2006. While this difference is not statistically significant, the increase in dissatisfaction (up from 7% to 11%) is significant.



INFORMATION PROVISION (incorporating NI 37)

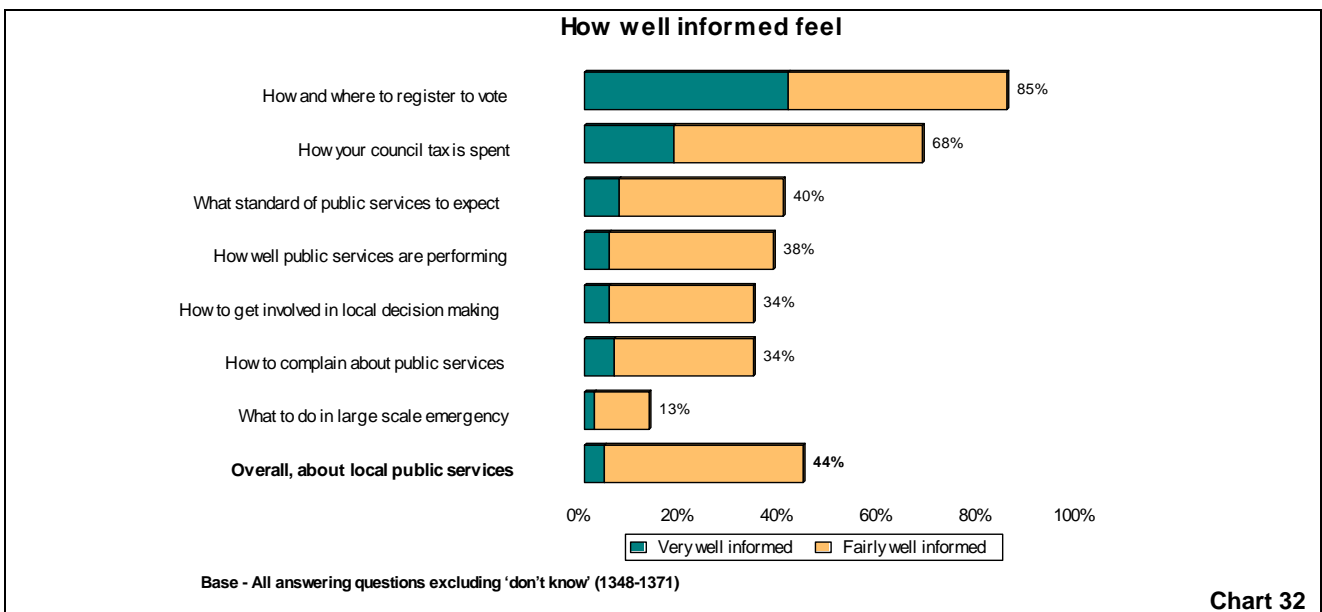
Residents were asked to indicate how well informed they feel about a range issues and aspects of the performance of local public services. Note that while there was a similar question on the previous BVPI General Surveys, residents were then asked to comment in relation to their local district council, and so data is not directly comparable.

As shown on the chart below, the great majority of residents feel adequately informed about how and where to register to vote (85%), and 68% feel well informed about how their council tax is spent.

While 44% say that overall they feel well informed about local public services, slightly fewer say so in relation to standards of service to expect (40%) or how well these services are performing (38%).

Fewer again say they feel well informed about how to complain about local public services or how to get involved in local decision making (34% in each case).

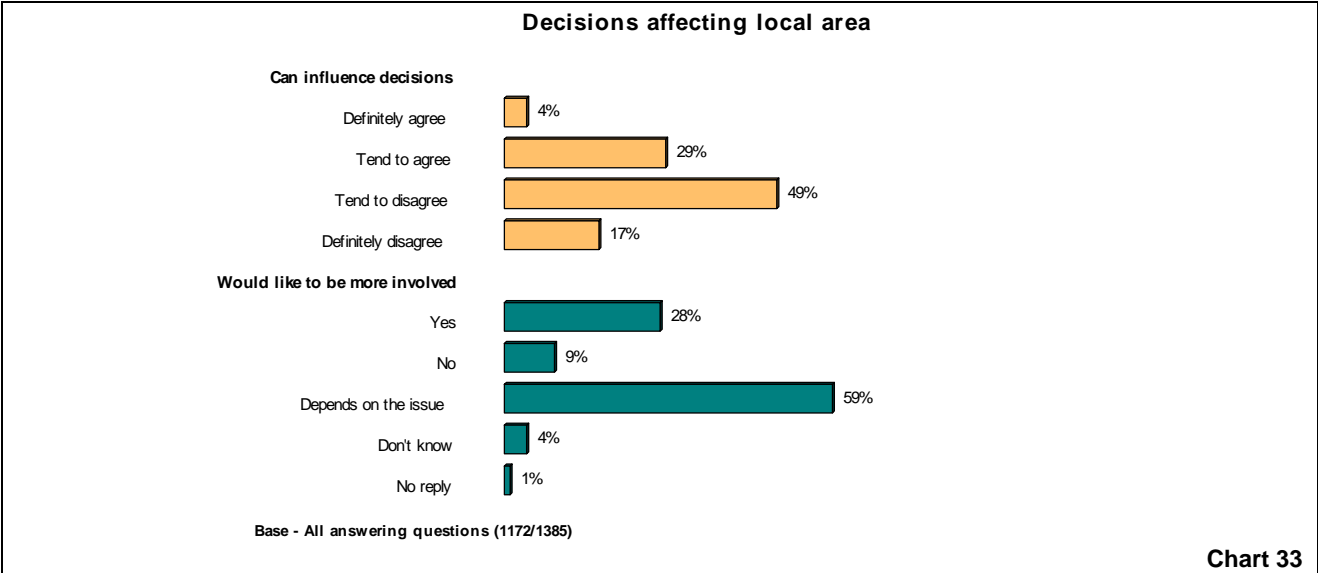
Only 13% feel adequately informed about what to do in the event of a large scale emergency. Note that response to this part of the question informs NI 37.



Local decision making (NI 4)

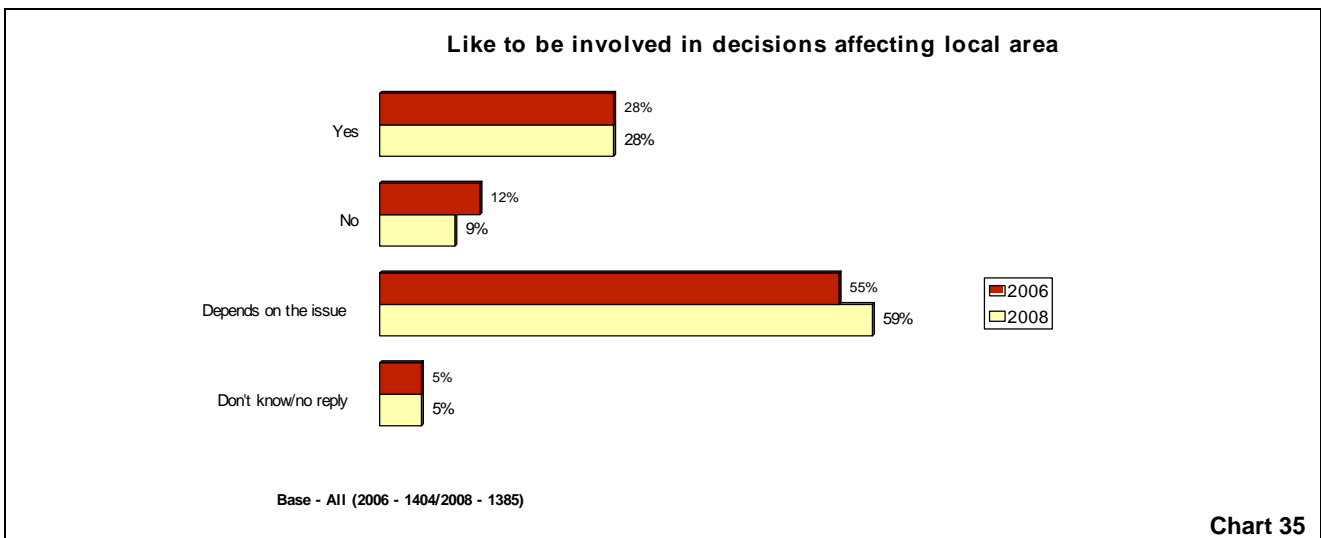
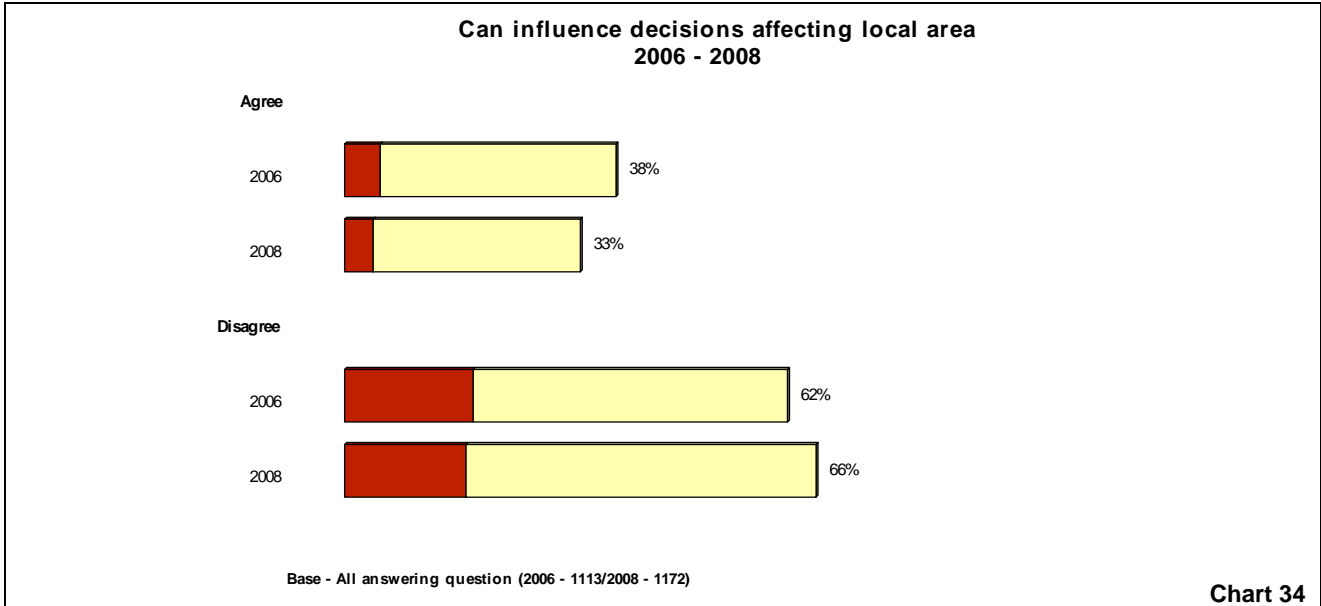
Around two-thirds of residents disagree with the notion that they can influence decisions affecting their local area. Note that response to this question informs NI 4 which shows a score of 33% who agree.

When asked if they would like to be more involved in such decision making, just over a quarter said they would, with a further 59% saying that it would depend on the issue.



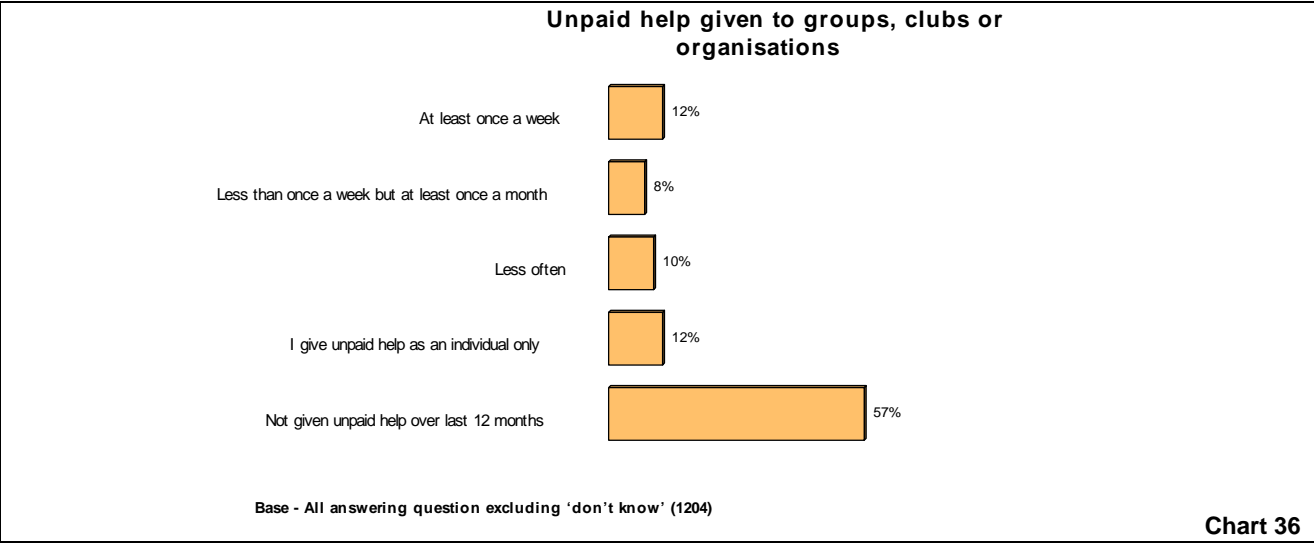
The charts below compare response to these questions with that seen on the 2006 BVPI General Survey, and shows an increase in the level of disagreement with the notion that residents can influence decisions (up from 62% to 66%).

While the proportion indicating that they would like to be involved has stayed the same, the proportion who may given the right issue rose from 55% to 59%.



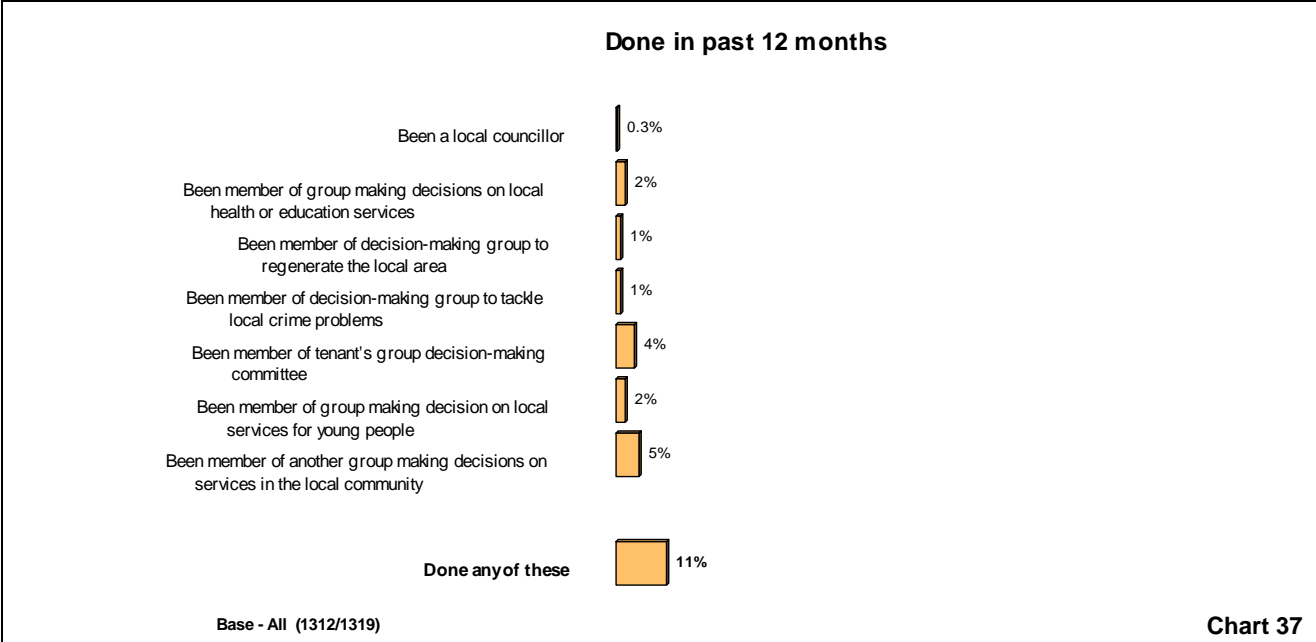
VOLUNTEERING (NI 6)

The chart below shows that 20% of residents have given unpaid help to other people or organisations in the last twelve months. Note that this corresponds to the new National Indicator NI 6.



CIVIC PARTICIPATION (NI 3)

The chart below shows the proportion of residents belonging to different types of groups which make decisions affecting their local area. Overall, 11% say they belong to at least one of these types of group, and this informs NI 3.

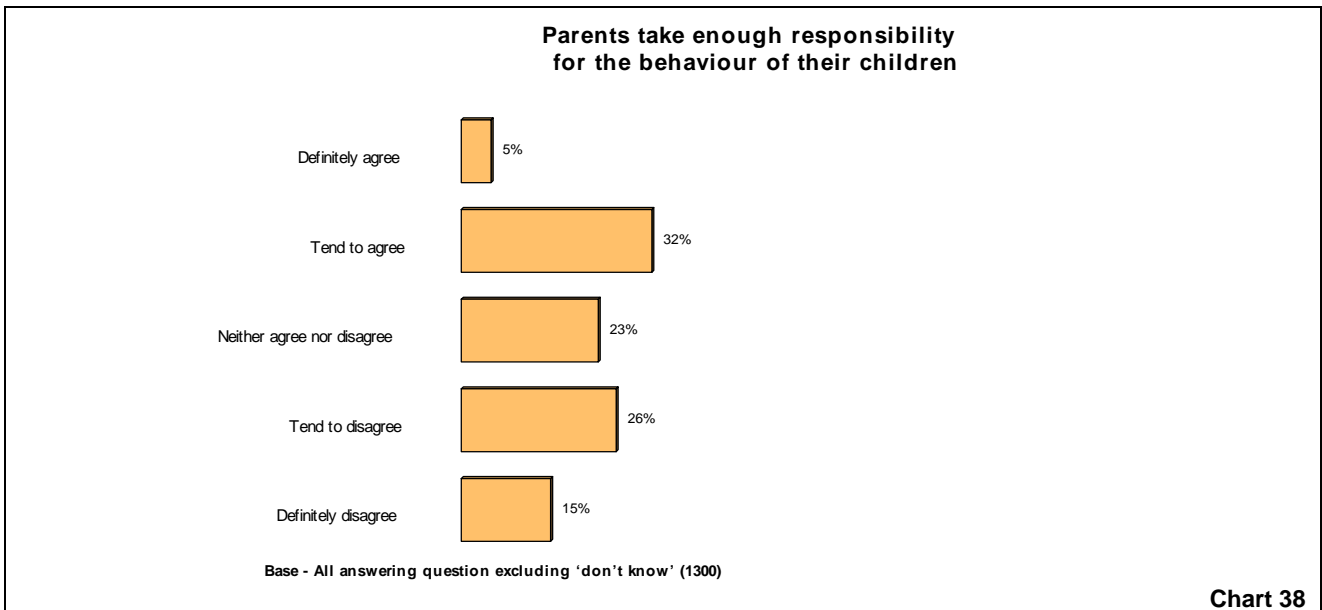


RESPECT AND CONSIDERATION

Parents taking responsibility for children (NI 22)

Overall, 37% of residents agree that in their local area parents take enough responsibility for the behaviour of their children (which informs NI 22); while 23% responded neither agree nor disagree, 41% disagree that this is the case.

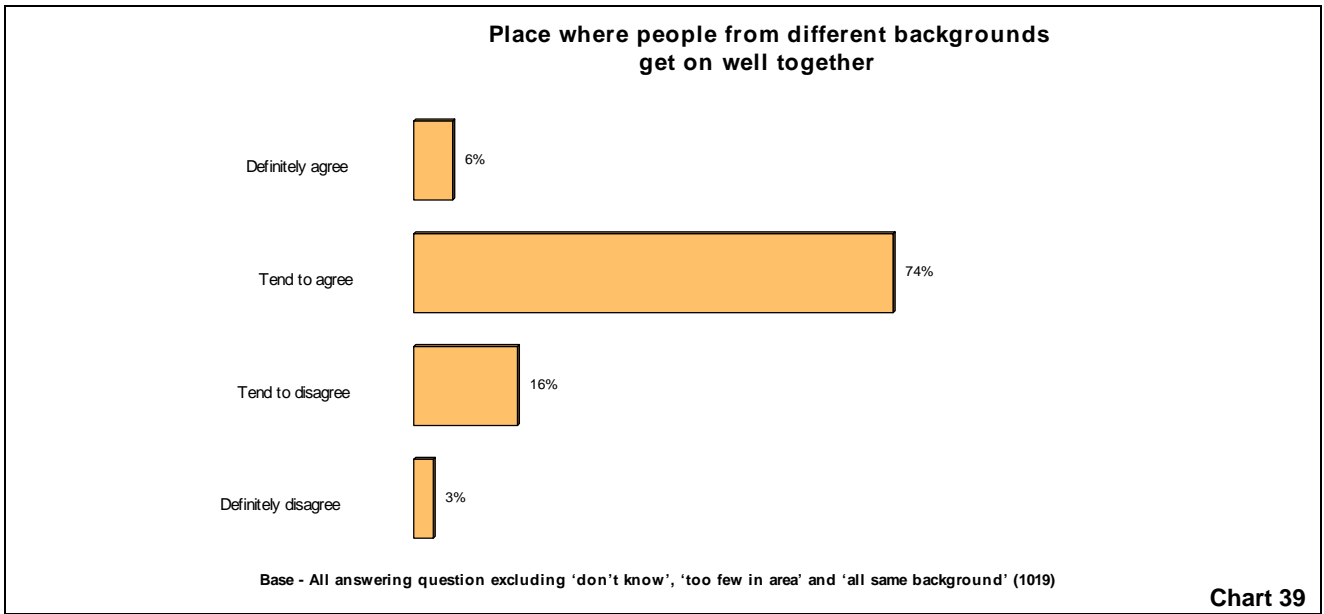
Note that there was not a directly comparable question on previous surveys – rather residents were asked to say to what extent parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children is a problem in their area. On the 2006 BVPI General Survey, 64% of residents described this as either a very big, or fairly big problem.



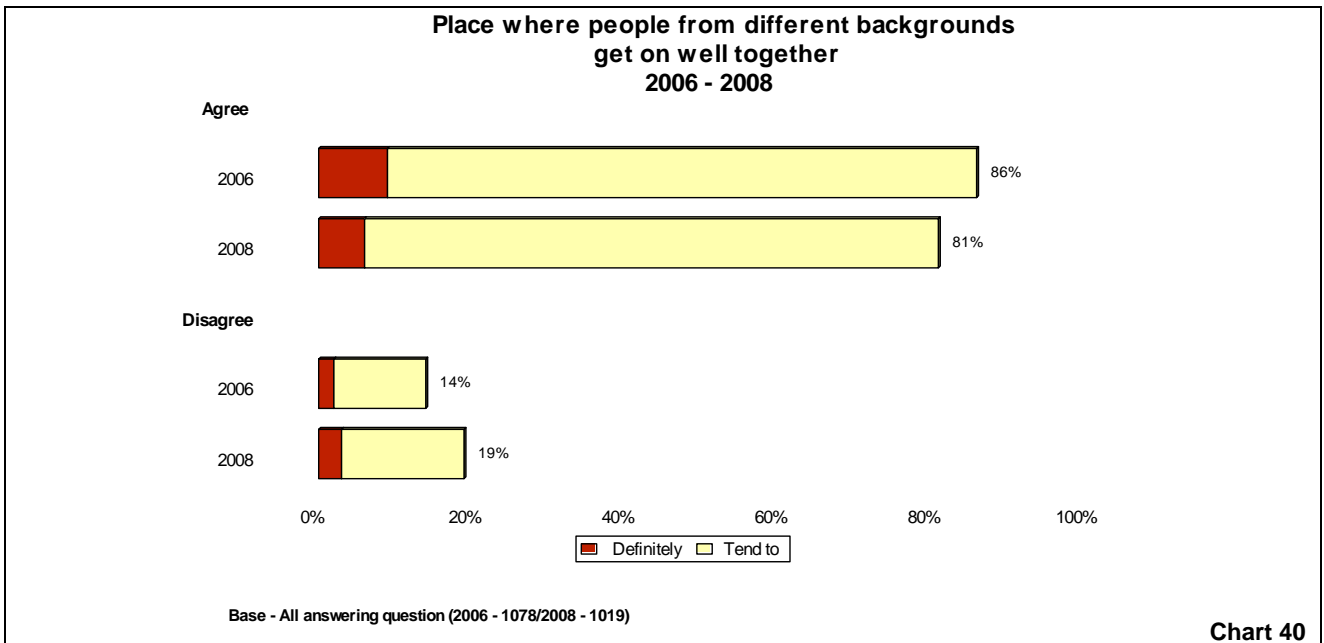
Community cohesion (NI 1)

When asked to agree or disagree with the statement “your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together”, a significant group of residents had no view on the matter (i.e. 26% did not answer the question, ticked don’t know’ or indicated that this was not relevant to the mix of people in their area).

Amongst those who expressed a view, the great majority would agree to some extent with this proposition – 81% overall (after rounding). Note that this informs NI 1.

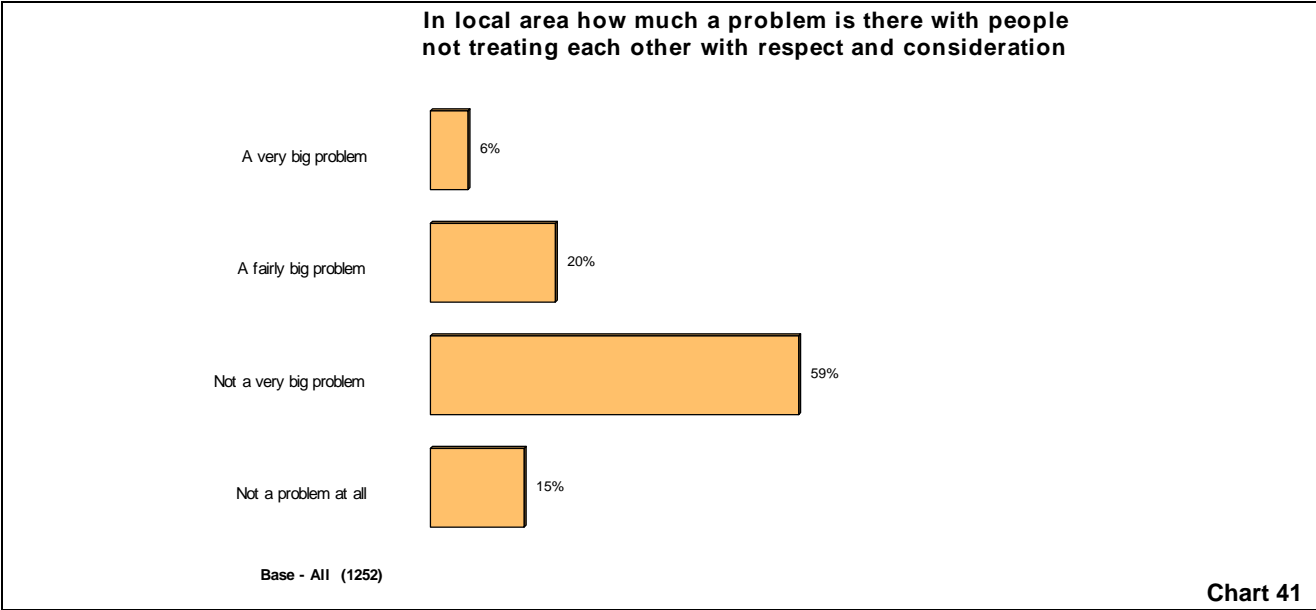


Comparing response to this question with that seen on the 2006 BVPI General Survey shows a significant fall in the proportion agreeing down from 86% to 81%.

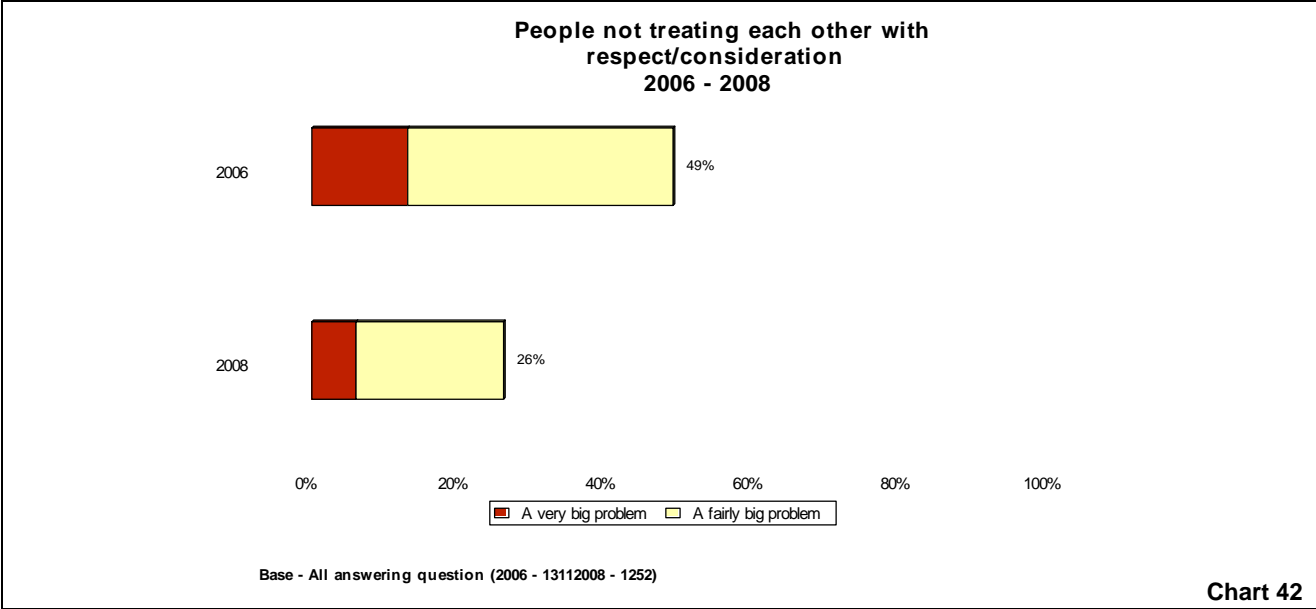


Treating people with respect and consideration (NI 23)

Overall, 26% of residents feel there is a problem in their area with people not treating each other with respect and consideration, and this informs NI 23.

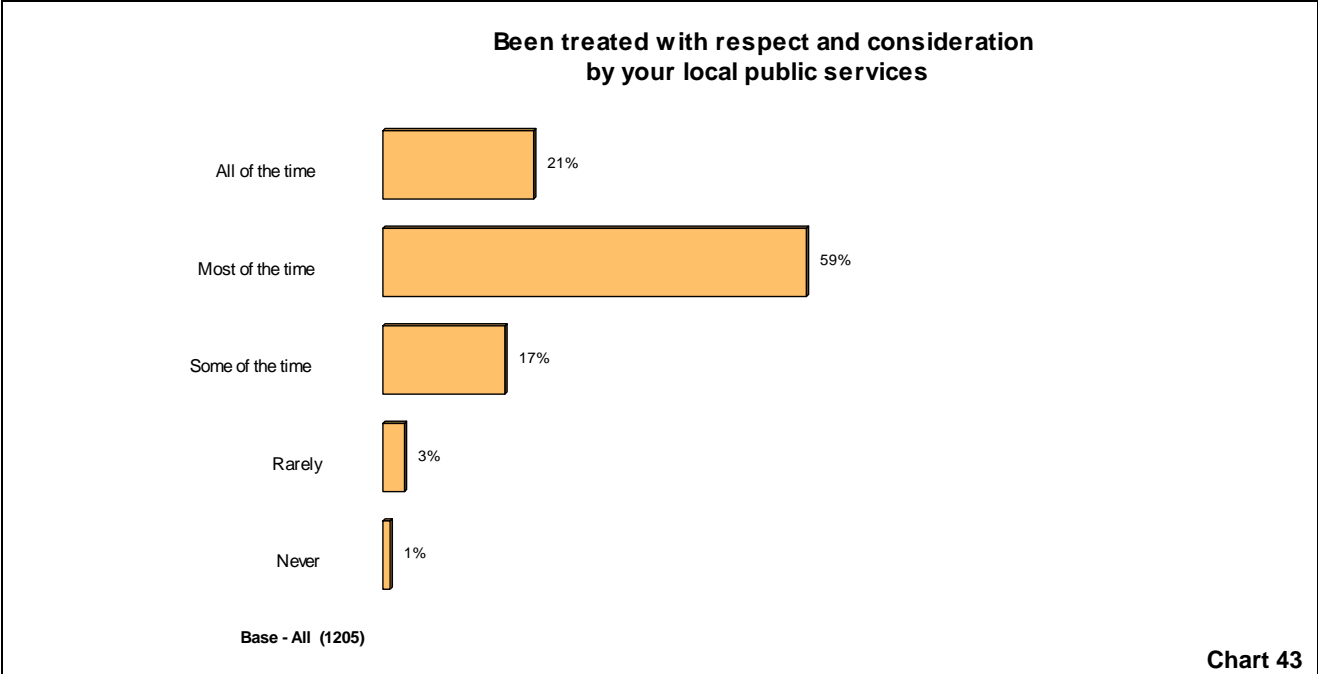


As shown on the chart below this appears to be a big improvement on 2006 when the BVPI General Survey showed 49% of this opinion. Caution should be taken when interpreting these results, however, as the question was included as part of a list in 2006 and a stand alone question in 2008 and this may affect the way people answer.



Respect from public services (NI 140)

The great majority of residents with an opinion of the matter say they have been treated with respect and consideration by their local public services either all of the time (21%) or most of the time (59%), which together inform NI 140 (giving a score of 80%).

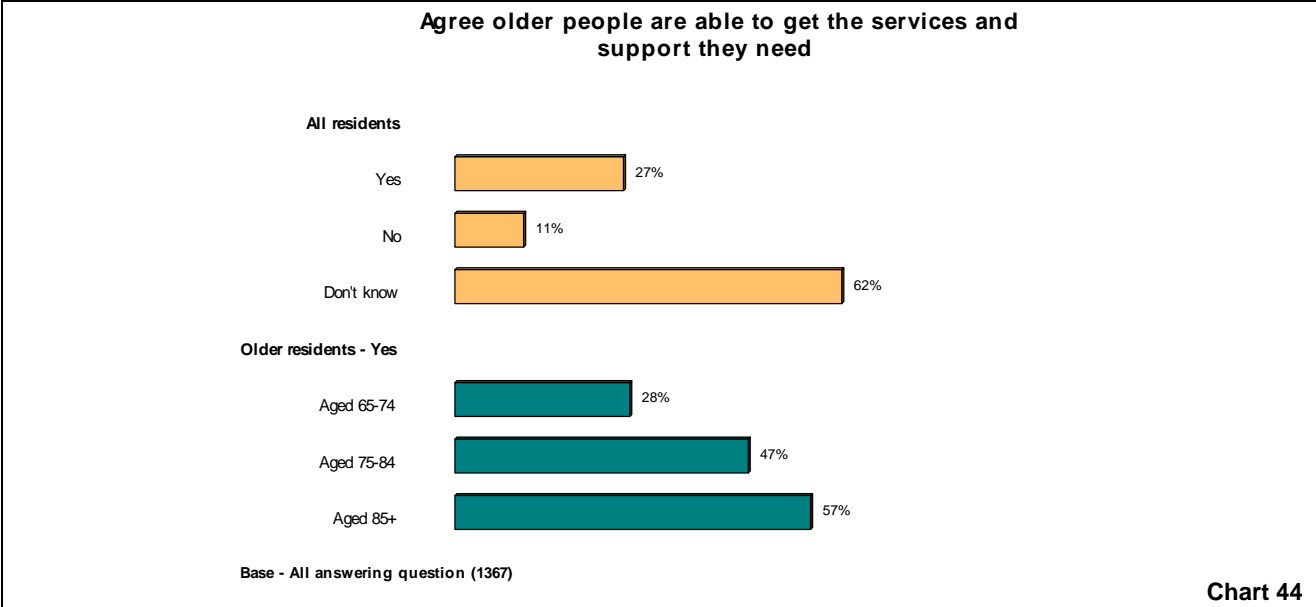


Independent living for older people (NI 139)

The new National Indicator 139 measures the proportion of residents who believe that older people in their local area are able to get the services and support they need to continue to live at home for as long as they want to (which could include help or support from public, private or voluntary services or from family, friends and the wider community).

The chart below show that a large proportion of residents have no view on this issue (62%). The overall score for NI 139 would therefore be the 27% of all residents who answered 'yes'.

Looking at older residents shows that the proportion agreeing with this proposition increases with the age of the resident, rising to 57% of those aged over 85 believing that older people are well supported.

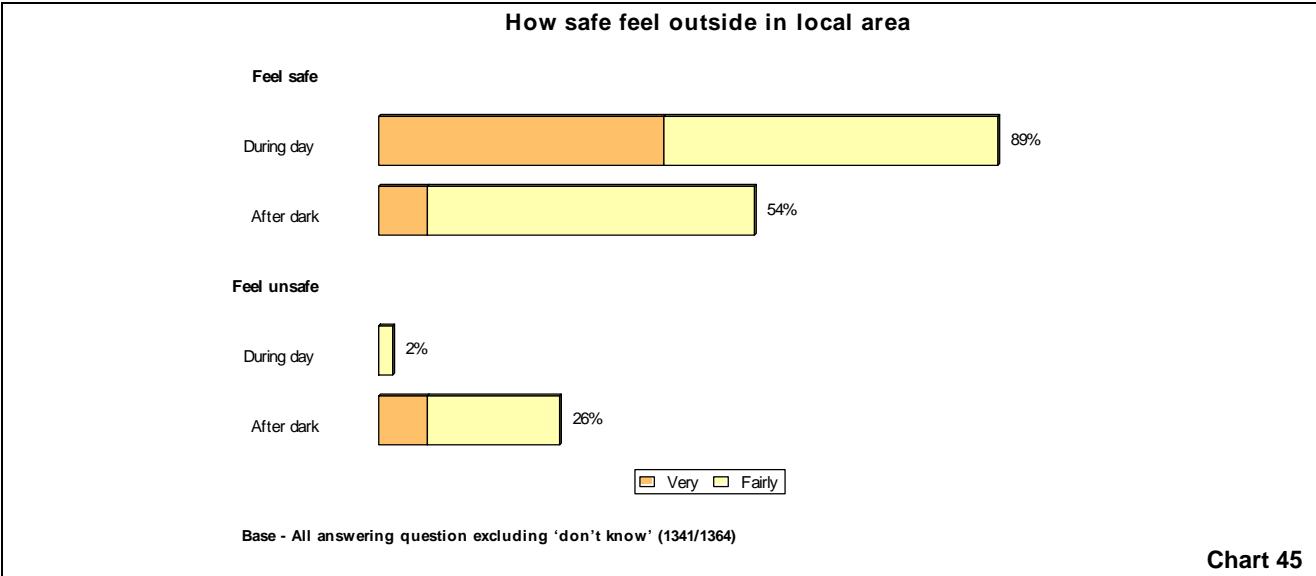


COMMUNITY SAFETY

How safe feel in neighbourhood

As shown on the chart below, the vast majority of residents say they feel safe outside in their local area during the day– 41% feeling very safe and a further 48% fairly safe.

Fewer, however, feel so safe after dark (54%). While there was a group who responded ‘neither safe nor unsafe’, 26% of residents admit to feeling unsafe outside after dark.



Anti-social behaviour (NI 17, NI 41, NI 42)

From a list of seven types of anti-social behaviour, teenagers hanging around the streets emerges as the biggest perceived problem in the area, with 43% of residents citing this as a problem.

Vandalism, graffiti, and other deliberate damage to property and vehicles follows in second place (35%), and is closely followed by rubbish and litter lying around (29%).

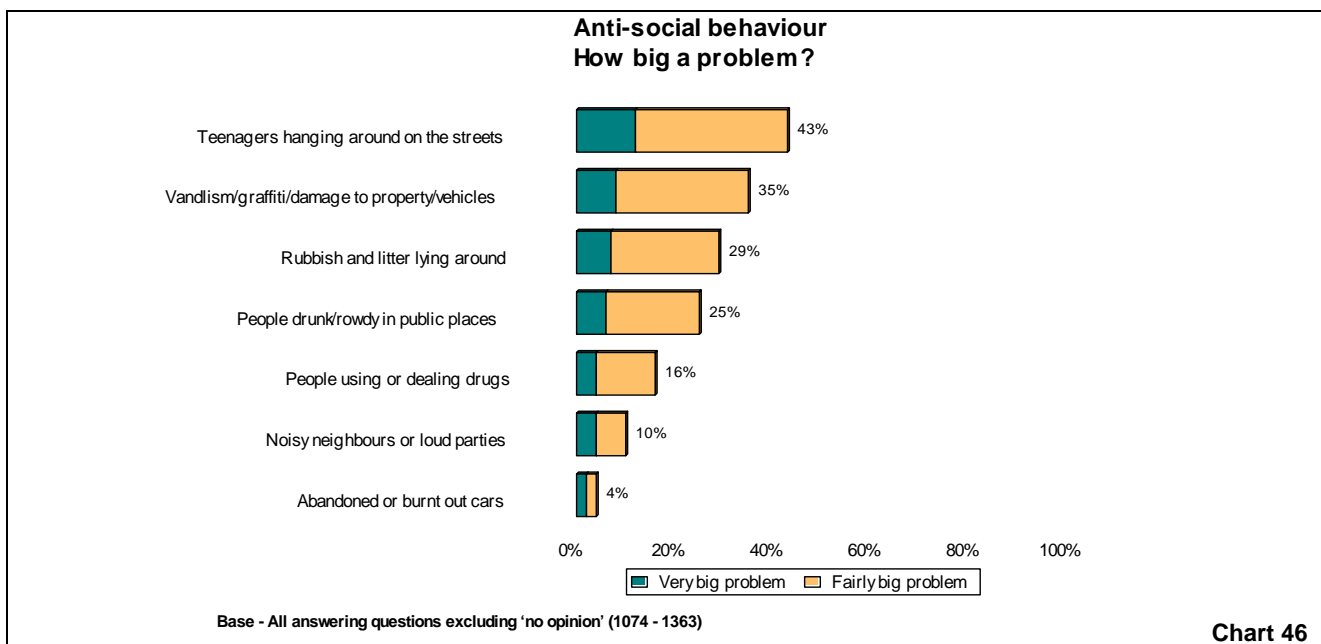
A significant group of residents cite people being drunk or rowdy in public places (25% - which informs NI 41), and 16% see people using or dealing drugs as a problem in their area, and this informs NI 42.

Noisy neighbours (10%) and abandoned or burnt out cars (4%) feature at the bottom of the list.

Note that a further National Indicator is informed by a combination of responses to these questions. NI 17 is calculated over all seven aspects of anti-social behaviour. Responses are allocated scores from 1 to 3 where 3 = a very big problem – the maximum possible score is therefore 21 (i.e. a response of a very big problem for all seven parts of the question). A score of 11 or higher is taken as a high perception of anti-social behaviour.

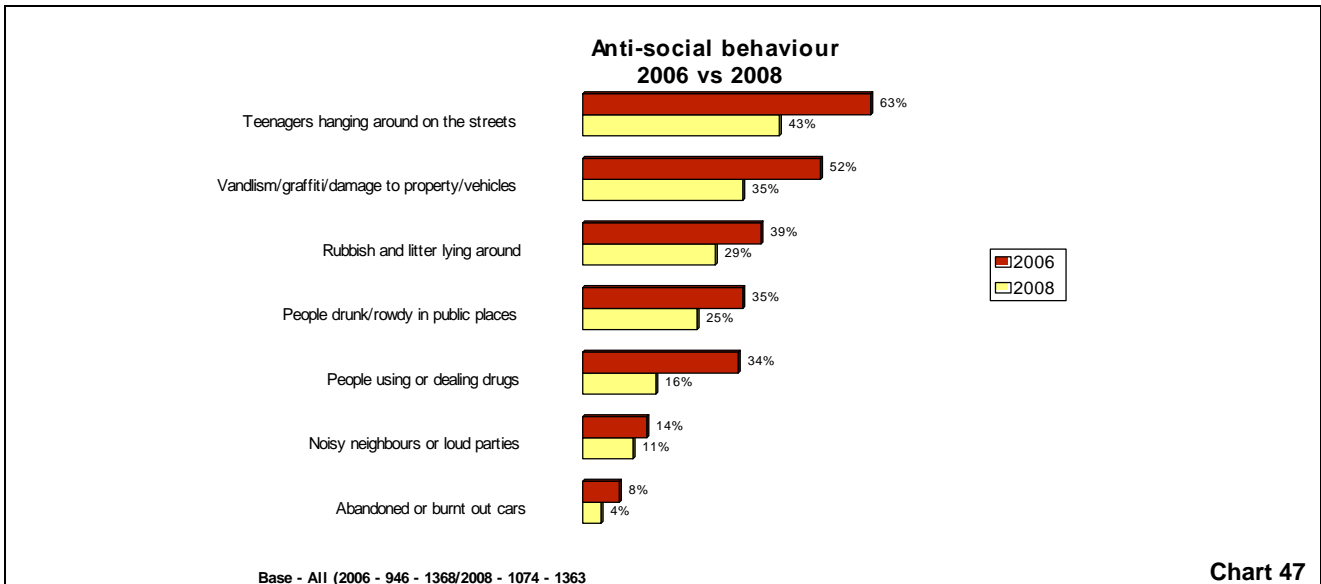
The National Indicator score is calculated as the percentage of respondents with a score of 11 or above (note that this is calculated based on only those who answered the questions).

The score for Epsom & Ewell for NI 17 is given by the Audit Commission as 14%, indicating a relatively low level of perceived anti-social behaviour.



The chart below compares the results seen on the latest survey with those from the BVPI General Survey carried out in 2006 for statements included on both questionnaires.

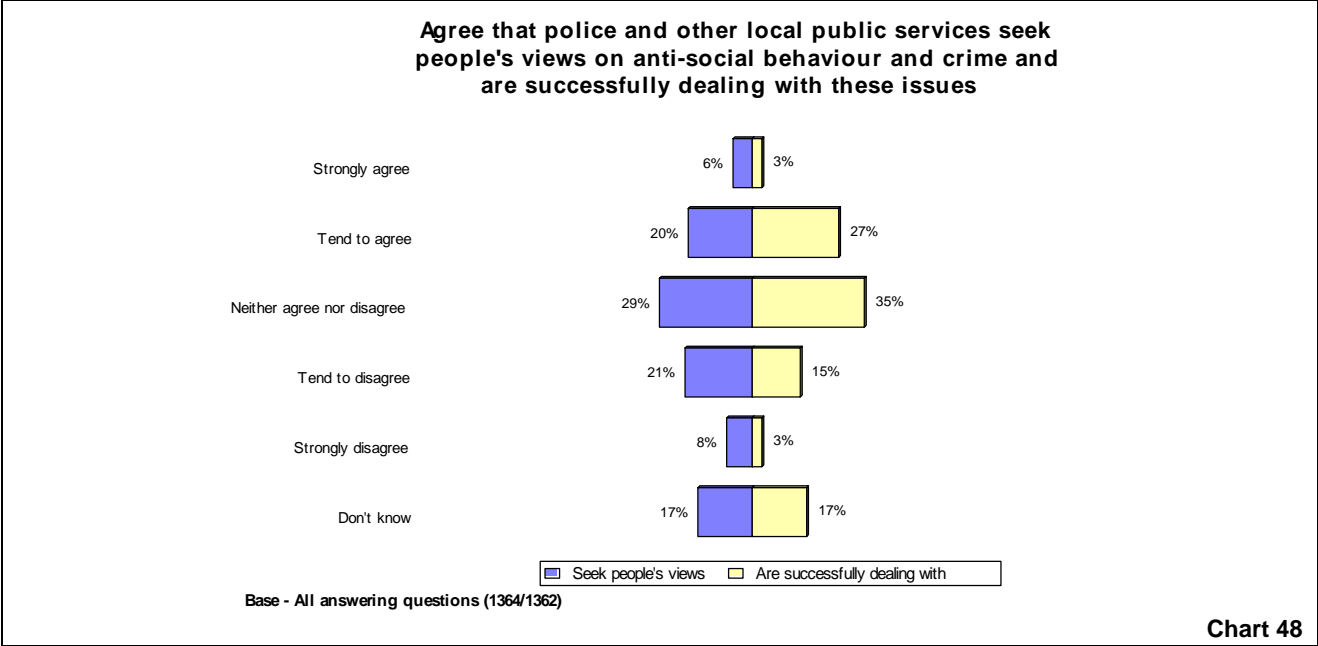
The chart shows that for all these aspects of anti-social behaviour the proportion of residents believing it to be a problem in their area fell dramatically between 2006 and 2008.



Understanding of local concerns (NI 21, NI 27)

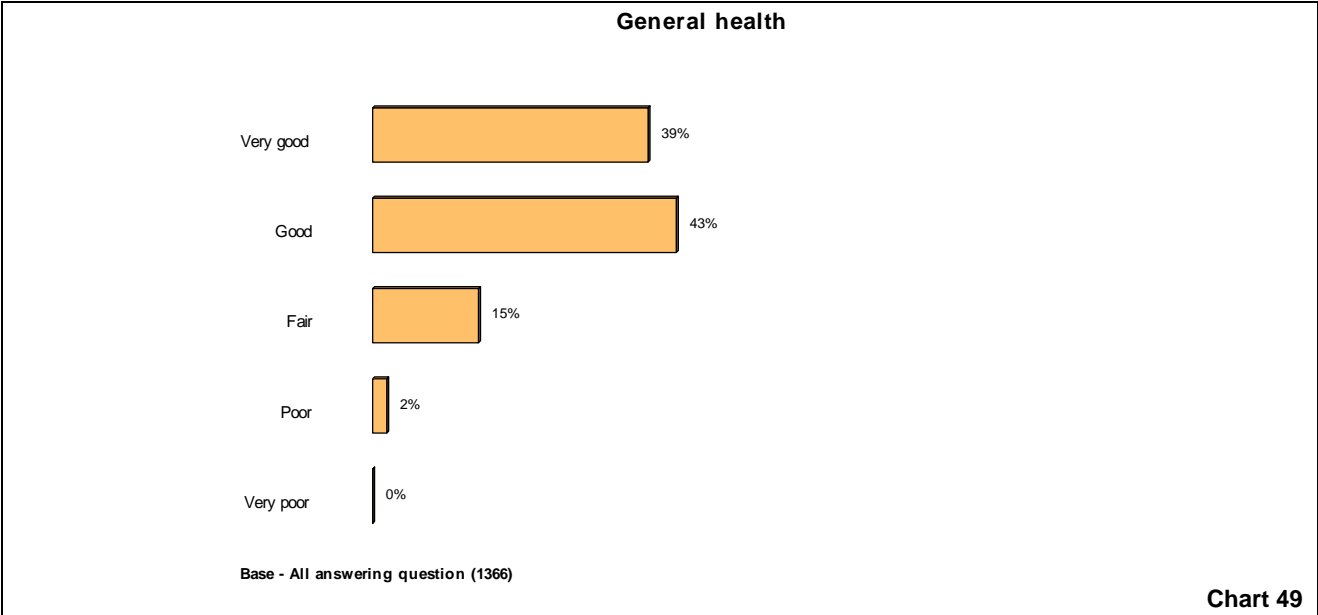
Overall, 26% of residents who expressed an opinion agree to some extent that the police and other local public services seek people’s views about anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area (NI 27), and 30% believe they are successfully dealing with these issues (NI 21).

As shown on the chart below, however, a great many residents have no view on these matters, with around half at each question responding neither agree nor disagree or don’t know.



GENERAL HEALTH (NI 119)

As shown on the chart below, 82% of residents describe their general health as being either very good or good, which informs National Indicator NI 119.



PROTECTING THE ENVIRONMENT

All Surrey Councils chose to add a question to explore to the extent to which residents do, or would be willing to do, certain things to reduce their carbon footprint.

The two charts overleaf show response to this question in Epsom & Ewell.

The greatest willingness is shown for recycling more of their household waste, with 60% of residents saying they already do as much as they can and a further 31% say they could do so easily.

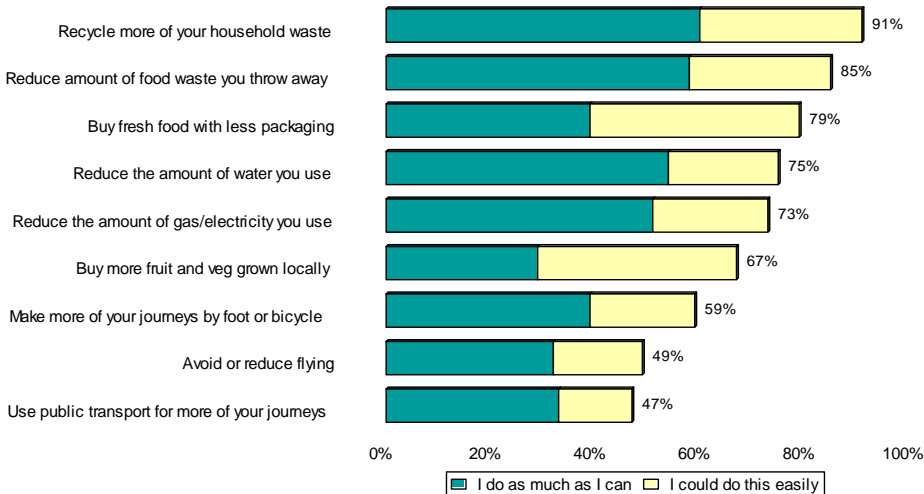
This is closely followed by reducing the amount of food waste thrown away, which is already done by 58% of residents with a further 27% willing to do so.

Though slightly fewer say they currently do as much as they can in terms of buying fresh food with less packaging (39%), a significant group show a willingness to do more (40%). Similarly while 29% say they do as much as they can to buy more fruit and vegetables grown locally, a further 38% say they could easily do more.

Around three quarters show a willingness to reduce gas, electricity and water consumption, with more than half saying they already do as much as they can.

It would seem that residents would find making changes to their travelling the most difficult. Almost half say they would find it difficult or would be unwilling to make more journeys by public transport, and 37% in the case of walking or cycling. More than a third would also resist reducing or avoiding flying.

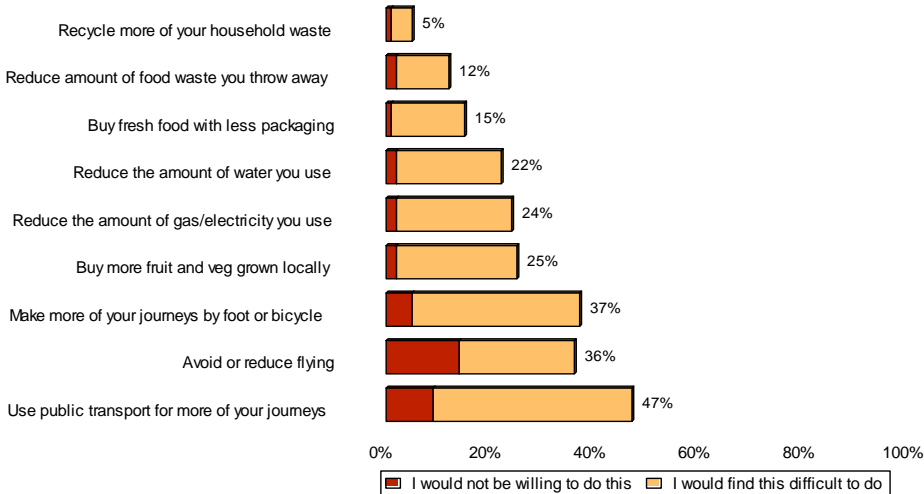
Do already or would find easy to do



Base - All (1385)

Chart 50

Unwilling to do or would find difficult



Base - All (1385)

Chart 51

OTHER COMMENTS

At the end of the questionnaire respondents were invited to add any other comments they might wish to make, and 20% took the opportunity to do so. The table below shows the range of comments made and the number making each comment (based on unweighted data).

Made any comment	273 (20%)
	Number mentioning
Poor/lack of recycling service	68
Problems with car parking	30
Poor maintenance of roads/footpaths/streets	28
Poor/lack of public transport	25
Lack of police/poor police presence/poor service from police	24
Poor street cleaning/litter problems	24
Traffic problems	24
Overgrown trees/hedges/verges	16
High council tax/poor value for money	15
Problems with youths	13
General good service/no problems	10
Vandalism/graffiti problems	9
Poor refuse service	8
Over development/too many houses being built	8
Poor/lack of street lighting	6
Survey is a waste of time/money could be better spent	6
Poor/lack of sports/leisure facilities	6
Do not close/downgrade Epsom Hospital	5
Dog fouling problems	4
Problems with neighbours	4
Anti-social behaviour	4
Poor/lack of health services	4
Problems with blocked drains/flooding	3
Poor state of/lack of play areas/open spaces	3
Lack of investment in rural areas	3
Problems with people dealing/taking drugs	3
Problems with people being drunk/drinking in public	3
Councils do not listen to residents	3
Poor/lack of public toilets	2
Too many empty/boarded up buildings	2
Long waiting list for housing	2
Poor service/poor decisions from Planning Dept	2
General poor service from council	2
Spend budgets more wisely	2
Make Derby Square more attractive	2

Fly tipping problems	1
Poor road links/improvements needed to road systems/by-pass needed	1
Poor council house repairs	1
Lack of affordable housing	1
Publish/act on survey results	1
Replace missing road signs	1
Too many bonfires	1
Unhappy with council using Icelandic banks for our money	1
More help for local businesses	1
No local shops	1
Too much emphasis on ethnics/immigrants	1
Demarcation of responsibility between SCC & Housing Association	1
Problems with roving dogs	1
More CCTV needed	1
Problems with speed bumps	1

Appendices

TECHNICAL APPENDIX

Detailed methodology

The Audit Commission supplied a random sample of 6,000 addresses for the Epsom and Ewell Borough Council area drawn from the small users Postal Address File (PAF). The PAF is a listing of all domestic mailing addresses.

From the 6,000 addresses QCL Market Research selected a random sample of 2,500 for mailing.

Questionnaires were mailed to 'The Residents at ...' for these 2,500 addresses on 26th September 2008. A FREEPOST return envelope addressed to QCL Market Research was included.

Those who had not responded by 17th October were sent a reminder which comprised of the same questionnaire with the covering letter changed to include a reminder message. A FREEPOST envelope was included for the return of the questionnaire.

Those who had still not responded by 7th November were sent a further reminder again comprising of the same questionnaire with the covering letter including a reminder message. A FREEPOST envelope was included for the return of the questionnaire.

By 7th January a total of 1,385 completed questionnaires had been received, together with 17 returned by the Post Office as undeliverable and 84 of these were returned as incomplete or unusable. This represents 0.7% dead wood and an effective response rate of 56%.

All questionnaires were checked manually by QCL's experienced staff in preparation for data entry.

Data entry was carried out by experienced data entry staff and checked by the department supervisor.

A preliminary print out of results was examined by one of the QCL's Directors and any errors were identified and corrected before data was finalised.

Weighting of data

Postal surveys invariably produce a sample which is not fully representative of the population as different demographic groups tend to respond at different rates. Using the PAF as a sampling frame exacerbates the skewing of the achieved sample towards the older age groups.

Raw data was submitted to the Audit Commission and a weighting process was undertaken. A weighting factor for each case in the achieved sample was given which was then attached to the raw data file.

The application of these weighting factors ensures that when the data is analysed the results are fully representative of the demographic profile of the local authority area.

Questionnaire