

Perception Survey Report 2015



Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

in:fusion
inspiring positive change

Report prepared by Adam Pearson
Infusion Research
On behalf of Ribble Valley BC
adam@infusion.org.uk
01282 661614
www.infusion.org.uk
December 2015

Contents

1	Executive Summary	3
1.1	Local area	3
1.2	Local public services	3
1.3	Recycling services	3
1.4	Information and customer service	3
1.5	Local community	3
2	Background and Methodology	4
2.1	Background	4
2.2	Objectives	4
2.3	Methodology	4
2.4	Robustness of the data	5
3	Who Responded?	6
3.1	Gender	6
3.2	Age	6
3.3	Disability	7
3.4	Ethnicity	7
3.5	Where they live	7
4	Main Findings	9
4.1	About the local area	9
4.2	Local public services	11
4.3	Recycling services	14
4.4	Information and customer service	15
4.5	The local community	19
4.6	Final comments	23
5	2015 v 2013 Summary Analysis	24
6	Contextual Analysis	26

1 Executive Summary

The Ribble Valley Borough Council Perception Survey 2015 was undertaken with residents across the borough of Ribble Valley. The aim of the survey was to determine views on the local area, local public services and the local community.

545 questionnaires were returned from the Citizens' Panel, an overall response rate of 55%.

1.1 Local area

- Health services, the level of crime and access to nature are seen to be the three most important things that make the local area a good place to live
- 94% of residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

1.2 Local public services

- Around 9 in 10 residents are satisfied with refuse and recycling services provided by the Council
- Dissatisfaction with dog fouling is down from 49% in 2013 to 37%
- 71% feel the Council provides value for money, down from 76% in 2013, but still higher than the County Council (41%)
- Around 3 in 4 residents are satisfied with the Council overall

1.3 Recycling services

- More than 9 in 10 residents regularly recycle glass, cans, plastic, paper/ cardboard and green waste

1.4 Information and customer service

- People feel less informed about the Council than they did two years ago
- But elements of customer service are on the up – waiting times, politeness of staff and how easy information is to understand
- Residents still prefer printed publications for information and prefer to contact the Council by telephone or in person

1.5 Local community

- Perceptions of safety and anti-social behaviour in the local area are similar to 2013
- But the perception that the police and public services are dealing with these issues successfully is down from 54% in 2013 to 43%

2 Background and Methodology

2.1 Background

Councils all over the country are faced with decisions about reducing many of their services and whether to charge for others, as a result of reductions in government funding.

To help make decisions about where limited resources should be targeted, Ribble Valley Borough Council undertook a survey to gather residents' views on the local area, public services, specific council services and the local community. The information from the survey will be used to gather the latest view as well as comparing changes in opinion/ need from previous surveys.

2.2 Objectives

The specific objectives of the survey are to:

- Understand current views of the local area
- Better understand usage of, and satisfaction with, Council services;
- Gather views on public service providers;
- Understand views on specific services (recycling, communication and customer service);
- Gather views on the local community

2.3 Methodology

The perception survey was sent by post to 461 panel members on 19 October 2015. A further 523 email invitations were sent to panel members on the same date. A reminder was sent on 9 November, with a final closing date of 29 November 2015.

In total 545 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 55%. Of this total, 403 responses were received by post whilst 142 responses were received online.

In order to ensure that the survey reached people in all sections of the community, respondents were asked to provide some demographic information including their gender, age, disability and ethnicity. The breakdown of respondents by these groups is provided in section 3.

The data is weighted by age, gender, disability and ethnicity to reflect the overall population of Ribble Valley, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated.

2.4 Robustness of the data

How well the sample represents the population is gauged by two important statistics – the survey's margin of error and confidence level. For example, this survey has a margin of error of plus or minus 4.18% at a 95 percent level of confidence. This means that if the survey was conducted 100 times, the data would be within 4.18 percentage points above or below the percentage reported in 95 of the 100 surveys (see figure 2.1 below). Typically 3% is considered to be a 'good' margin of error.

Figure 2.1: Margins of error at 95% confidence

Survey Sample Size	Margin of Error Percent
545	+/- 4.18
500	+/- 4.4
250	+/- 6.2
100	+/- 9.8

For each question in the survey, comparisons have been made between different sub-groups of respondents (namely gender, age, disability and geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report. Some groups cannot be included in the sub-group analysis as there were too few respondents to allow statistically significant results (e.g. young people and ethnic groups).

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

Ribble Valley Borough Council ran a perception survey in 2013 using the same methodology used here. The survey was sent to all panel members and in total 596 responses were received, giving a response rate of 62%.

3 Who Responded?

Please note that for the purpose of identifying the borough composition in the tables below, data has been taken from the 2011 Census.

3.1 Gender

More females than males responded to the latest Perception Survey. The weighting process has brought the balance in line with the actual male/ female split for Ribble Valley.

Figure 3.1: Gender

Gender	Un-weighted	Weighted	Borough actual
Male	43%	49%	49%
Female	57%	51%	51%

3.2 Age

Given the low number of younger respondents, it was not possible to weight the different age groups in line with the actual borough percentage. To have done so would have led to unreliably high weightings being applied to a small group of respondents.

As a result, after the weighting, the youngest age group (25 to 44 year olds) accounts for 10% of the response sample whilst the oldest age group has been reduced to 50%, although this is still higher than the actual borough population of people aged 65 or over.

Figure 3.2: Age

Age group	Un-weighted	Weighted	Borough actual
25-44	6%	10%	30%
45-64	32%	40%	42%
65+	62%	50%	28%

3.3 Disability

17% of respondents consider themselves to have a disability which is the same as the borough Census statistics. Weighting was applied to ensure any adjustments to other demographic questions did not alter the disability split.

Figure 3.3: Disability

Disability	Un-weighted	Weighted	Borough actual
Yes	17%	17%	17%
No	83%	83%	83%

3.4 Ethnicity

The unweighted ethnicity breakdown was not too dissimilar to the actual borough population.

Figure 3.4: Ethnicity

Ethnicity	Un-weighted	Weighted	Borough actual
White British	98%	97%	96%
Other	2%	3%	4%

3.5 Where they live

Respondents were asked to provide their home postcode to enable the results to be analysed by different parts of the borough. In order to achieve this, for the purposes of this report the 24 wards in Ribble Valley have been grouped to form 6 areas:

- **Clitheroe** – Low Moor and Edisford, St Mary's, Salthill, Primrose, Littlemoor
- **RV North West** – Alston and Hothersall, Derby with Thornley, Dilworth, Ribchester and Chipping
- **RV South West** – Mellor, Wilpshire, Clayton-le-Dale with Ramsgreave, Langho, Billington and Old Langho
- **RV South East** – Whalley, Wiswell and Pendleton, Sabden, Read and Simonstone
- **RV North East**– Chatburn, Gisburn and Rimington
- **RV Central** – Aighton, Bailey and Chaigley, Waddington and West Bradford, and Bowland, Newton and Slaidburn

To ensure consistency with previous surveys, the response data has not been weighted by locality. However, the response received across the different areas of Ribble Valley is broadly in line with the actual borough population statistics.

Figure 3.5: Ribble Valley Areas

Area	Un-weighted	Weighted	Borough actual
Clitheroe	24%	24%	26%
RV North West	18%	18%	20%
RV South West	24%	25%	23%
RV South East	19%	18%	16%
RV North East	4%	5%	5%
RV Central	11%	11%	10%

4 Main Findings

4.1 About the local area

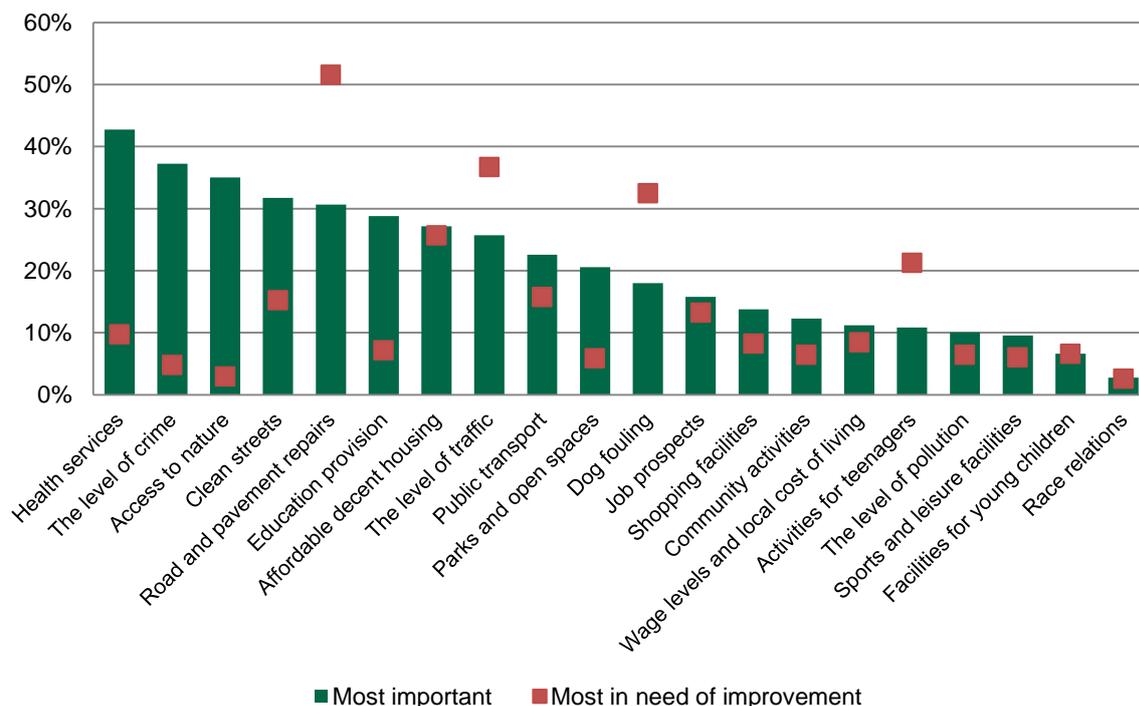
Q1 – Thinking generally, please use the left hand column to indicate which of the features listed you feel are most important in making somewhere a good place to live. In addition, please use the right hand column to indicate which of these things need improving the most in your local area.

Throughout the survey, respondents were asked to consider their ‘local area’. This was defined as the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from their home.

Health services, the level of crime and access to nature are seen to be the three most important things that make the local area a good place to live. In 2013 survey the three most important factors were the level of crime, health services and clean streets (in that order).

Figure 4.1 shows the factors most important to people (green bars) and which people feel need most improvement (red squares). The top three things listed above do not appear to be in need of improvement. However, the fifth most important factor, road and pavement repairs, is considered to be the thing most in need of improvement. The level of traffic and dog fouling also appear to be in need of improvement.

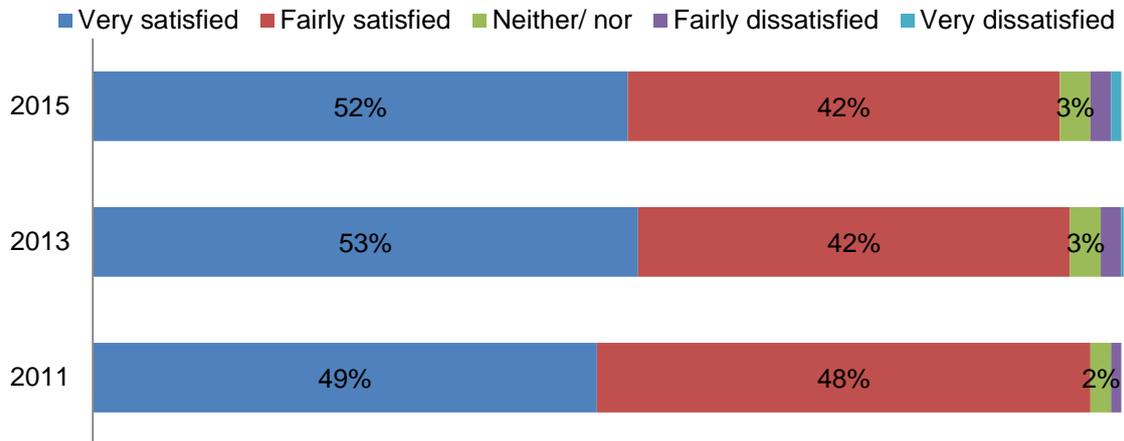
Figure 4.1: Most important and most in need of improvement in the local area



Q2 – Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

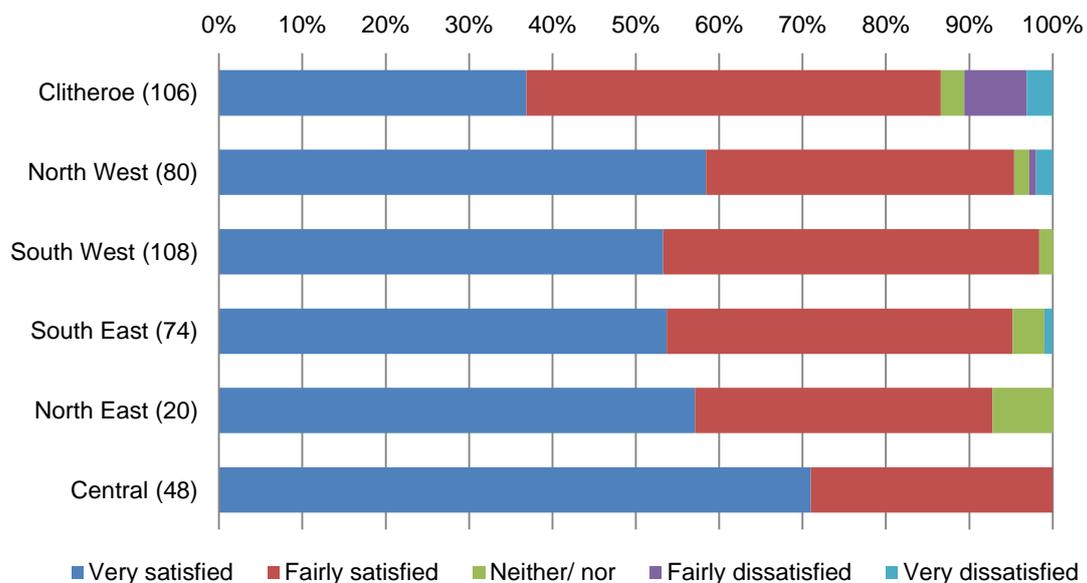
94% are very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live (95% in 2013).

Figure 4.2: Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live (base – 483)



Satisfaction appears higher for residents living in the Central area of Ribble Valley and lowest (relatively) in the Clitheroe area.

Figure 4.3: Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live by area (base totals in brackets)



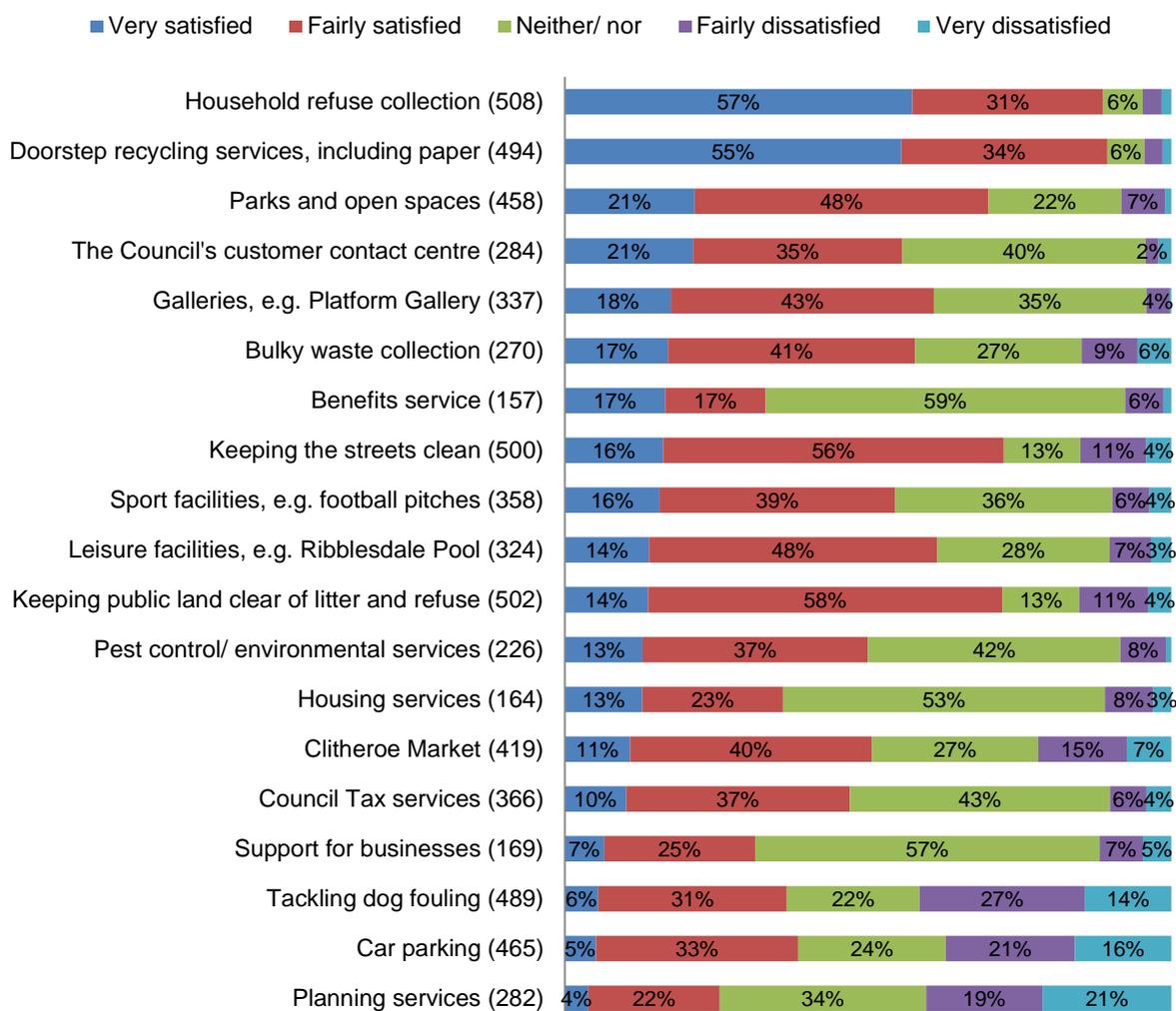
4.2 Local public services

Q3 – How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following local services/ facilities provided by Ribble Valley Borough Council in your local area?

Satisfaction appears to be at its highest for the refuse and recycling services. 88% are very or fairly satisfied with the refuse service (91% in 2013) whilst 89% are very or fairly satisfied with the recycling service (85% in 2013).

Dissatisfaction appears to be at highest for tackling dog fouling and planning. 41% are fairly or very dissatisfied with dog fouling (down from 49% in 2013) whilst 40% are fairly or very dissatisfied with planning (36% in 2013).

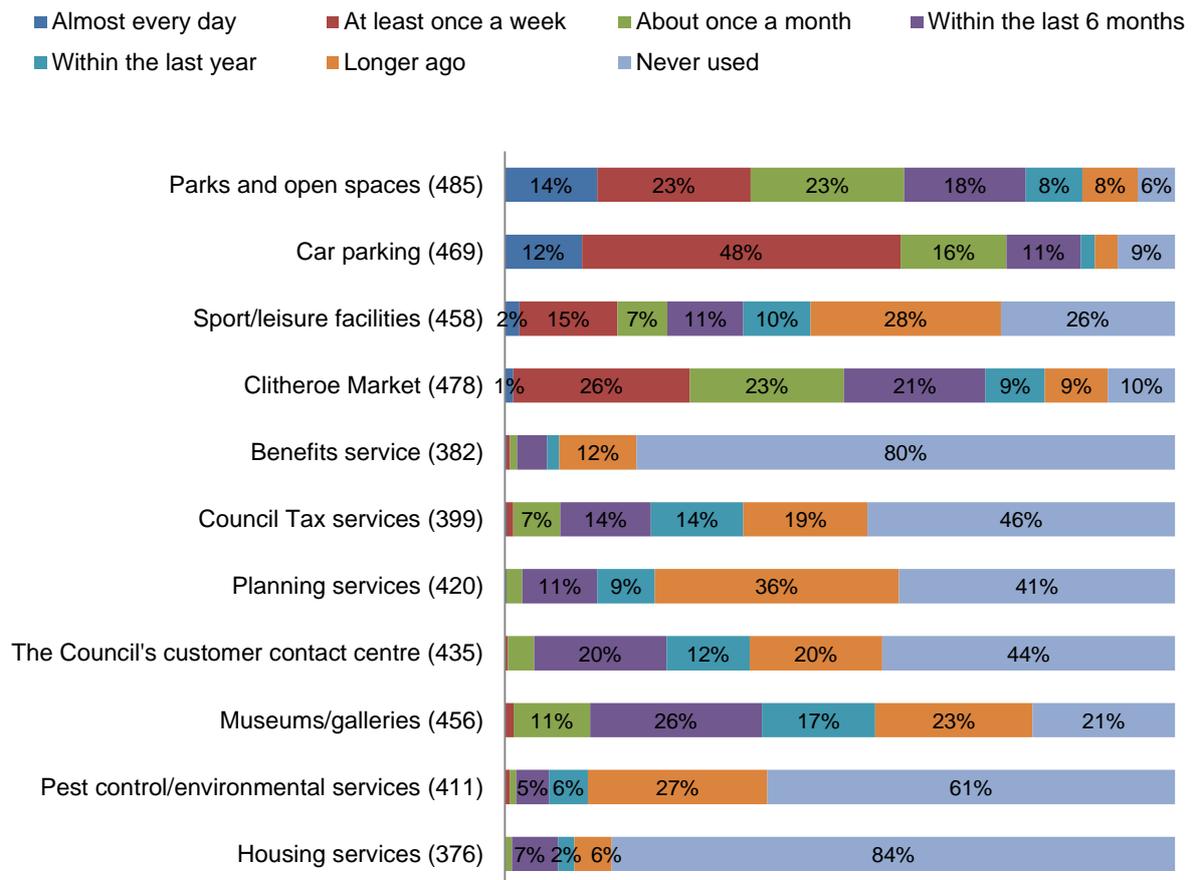
Figure 4.4: Satisfaction with Council services (base totals in brackets)



Q4 – Please indicate how frequently you have used the following public services provided by Ribble Valley Borough Council.

Parks and open spaces and car parks are the most frequently used council services. 37% visit a local park at least weekly although this has been falling over the last few years (42% in 2013, 49% in 2011). Three out of five residents use a local car park at least weekly.

Figure 4.5: Frequency of service use (base totals in brackets)

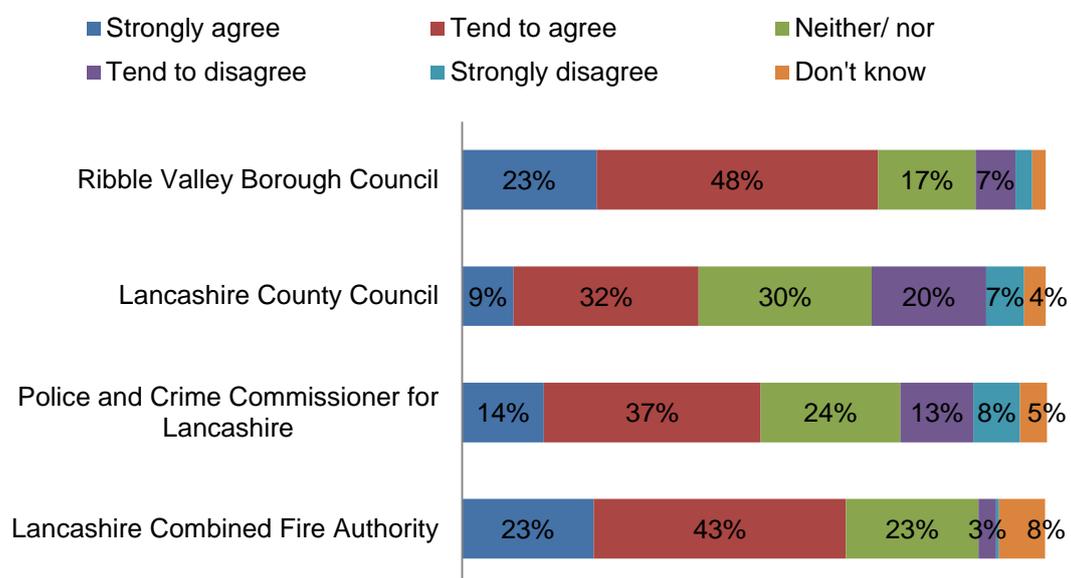


Q5 – Approximately £12 a month of your council tax payment goes to RVBC, approximately £94 a month goes to Lancashire County Council, approximately £13 a month goes to the Police and Crime Commissioner for Lancashire and approximately £5 per month goes to Lancashire Combined Fire Authority. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the authorities provide value for money?

71% strongly or tend to agree that Ribble Valley Borough Council provides value for money, dropping from 76% in 2013. This is highest in the South West of the borough (82%) and lowest in Clitheroe (66%).

Agreement of perceived value for money from the district council is higher than the county council (41%), the PCC (51%) and the Fire Authority (66%).

Figure 4.6: Value for money offered by local public services (base – 508)

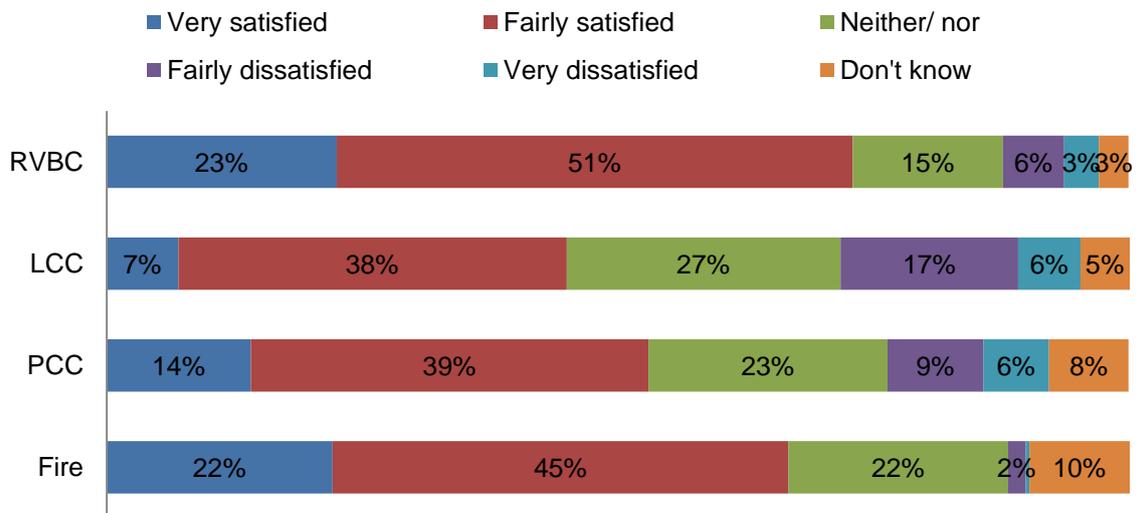


Q7 – Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the different authorities runs things?

74% of residents are very or fairly satisfied with the way Ribble Valley Borough Council runs things. This compares to 76% in 2013 and 69% in 2011.

Again, satisfaction is higher than that found for the county council (45%), the PCC (53%) and the Fire Authority (67%).

Figure 4.7: Satisfaction with the way different authorities run things (base – 510)

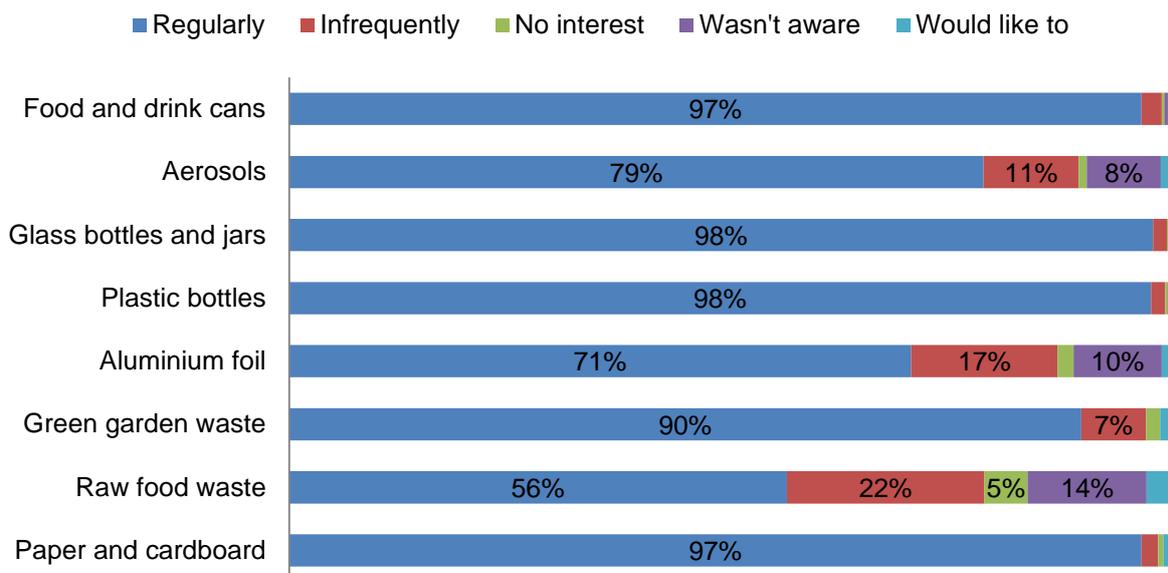


4.3 Recycling services

Q8 – We would like to know more about your recycling habits

Recycling is high across the borough, with more than 9 in every 10 residents regularly recycling glass, cans, plastic, paper/ cardboard and green waste. Indeed, regularly recycling of green waste is up from 81% in 2013 to 90%.

Figure 4.8: Recycling frequency (base – 510)



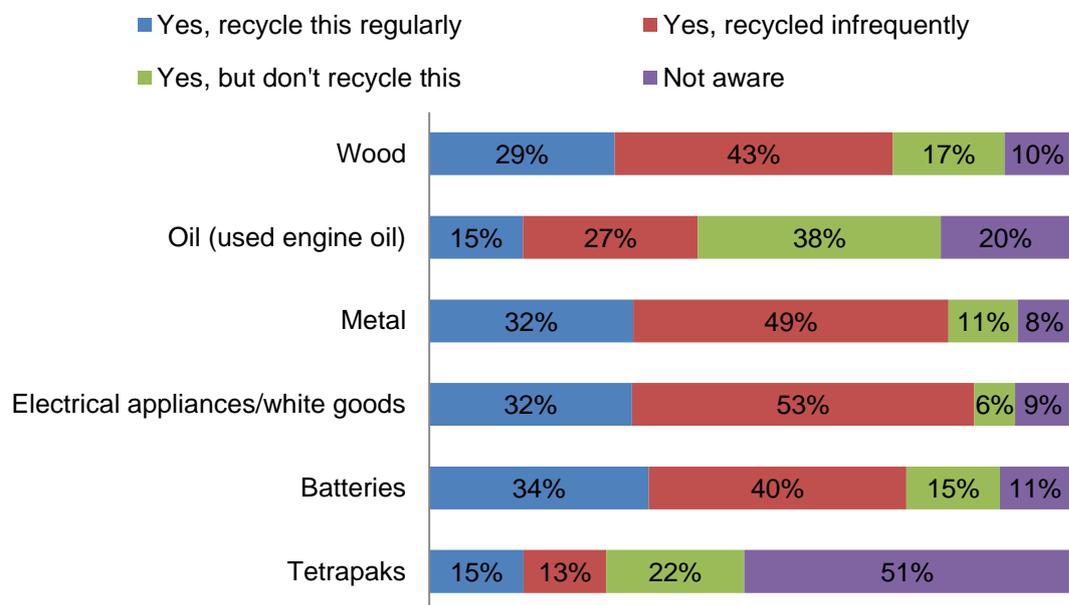
Q8 – If you currently do not have wheeled bins, would you like to receive blue and burgundy bins for your recyclables and household waste and/ or a green wheeled bin for your green waste?

Less than 3% of respondents indicated that they would like to receive a container or bin to help them recycle more regularly.

Q9 - Are you aware that the following waste can be recycled at one of the Lancashire County Council’s Household Waste Recycling Centres (such as Henthorn, Clitheroe and Chapel Hill, Longridge)?

With the exception of tetrapacks, awareness is high for additional materials which can be recycled at household recycling centres across the borough.

Figure 4.9: Awareness of additional recycling materials (base – 492)



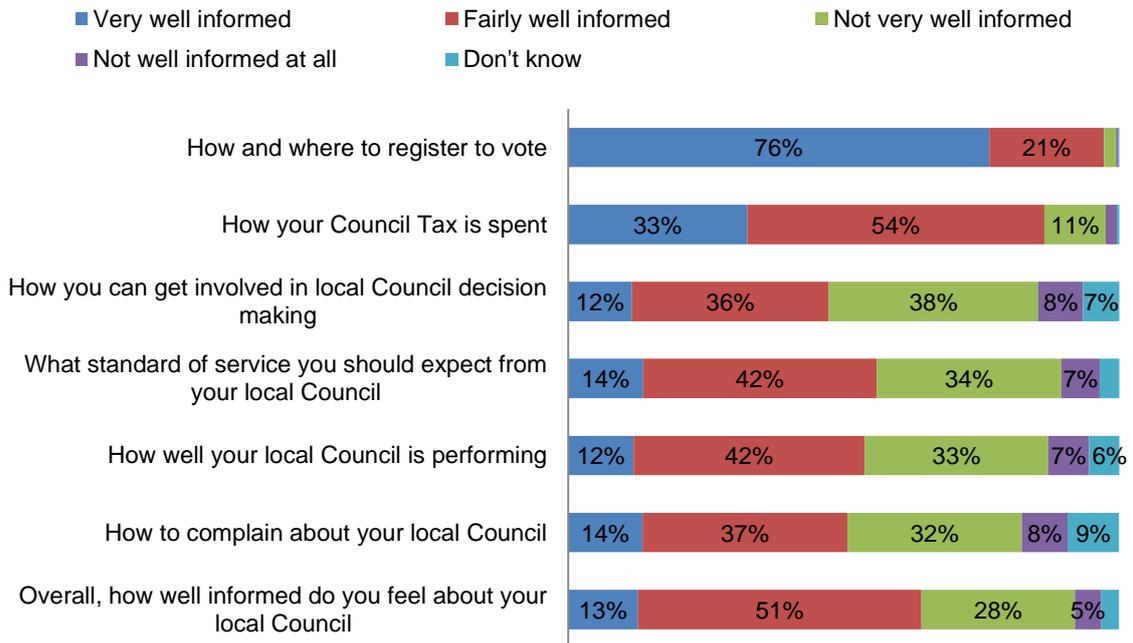
4.4 Information and customer service

Q10 – How well informed, if at all, do you feel about each of the following?

The level to which residents feel informed varies according to each statement below.

97% feel very or fairly well informed about how and where to vote. This falls to 51% with regard to how to complain about your local council and 48% for how you can get involved in local council decision making, which are similar to the results in 2013.

Figure 4.10: How well informed residents feel

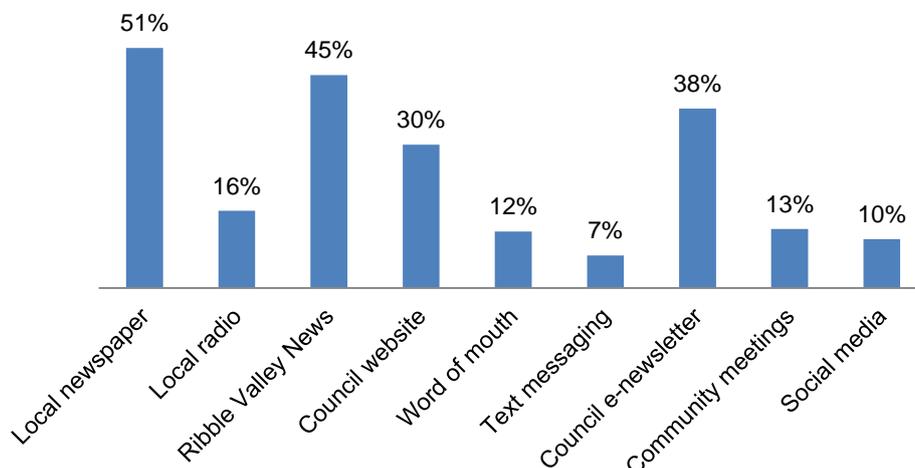


Q11 – How do/ would you prefer to receive information about the Council?

Around half of residents prefer to receive information about the Council through the local newspaper, higher for those aged 65 or over (58%). They also like to find out about the Council through Ribble Valley News and the Council e-newsletter.

Text messaging and social media are less popular communication methods for receiving information about the Council. 37% of 25 to 44 year olds would like to receive information through Facebook or Twitter.

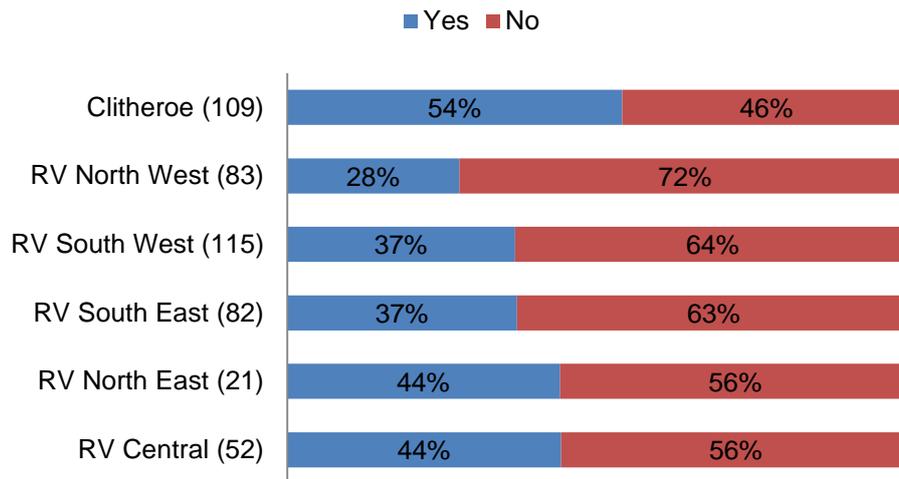
Figure 4.11: Communication preferences (base – 498)



Q12 – Have you contacted the Council in the last 6 months?

Overall, 40% of respondents had contacted the Council in the last 6 months, down from 48% in 2013. Residents living in the Clitheroe area appear most likely to contact the Council (54%), with those in the North West of the borough least likely (28%).

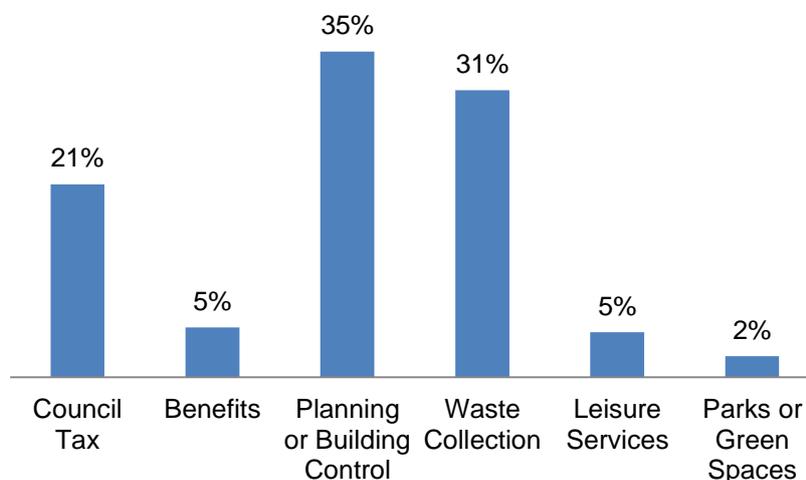
Figure 4.12: Whether residents have contacted the Council in the last 6 months (base totals in brackets)



Q13 – Thinking of the last contact, what was it about?

The main reasons for contacting the Council in the last 6 months were matters relating to planning or building control and waste collection. On further analysis, a number of 'other' reasons were given for contacting the Council, including dog fouling and road maintenance.

Figure 4.13: Reason for contact (base – 165)

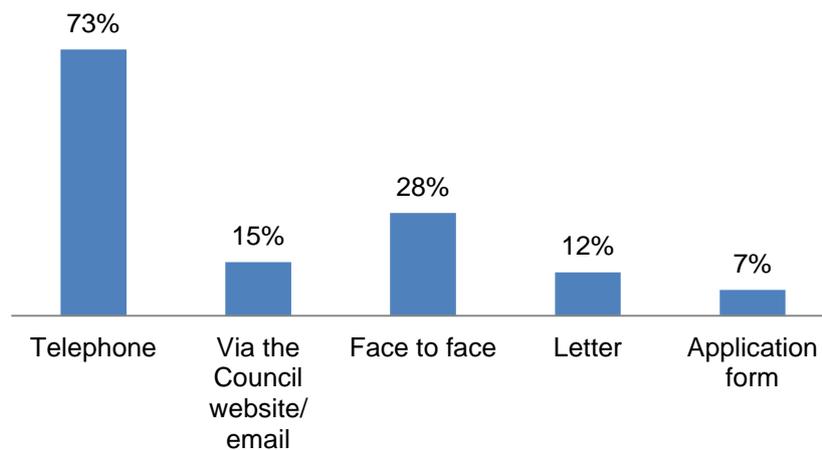


Q14 – How did you contact the Council?

The vast majority of contact was made by telephone (73%) which is up from 66% in 2013, and is higher for 25 to 44 year olds (85%). Residents aged 65 or over are more likely to contact the Council in person (33%).

Residents of RV North West are most likely to telephone the Council (91%), whilst Clitheroe residents are most likely to contact the Council in person (45%).

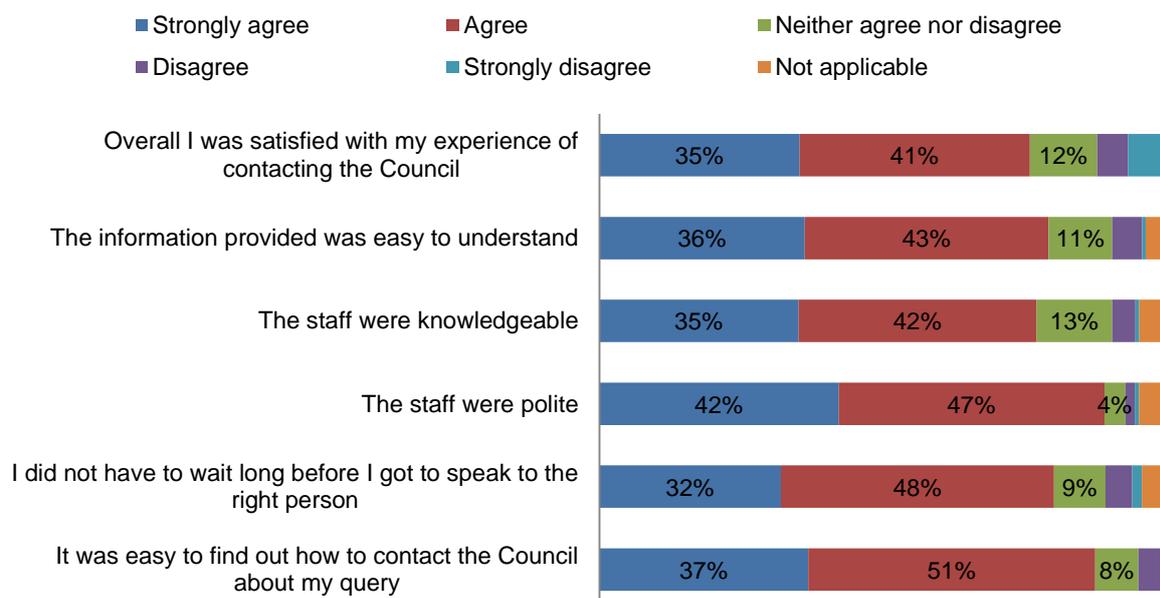
Figure 4.14: Contact channels (base – 207)



Q15 - Still thinking of that contact, please indicate whether you agree or disagree with the following statements about the council's customer service.

76% of people agreed that they were satisfied with their experience of contacting the Council, which is up slightly from 73% in 2013.

Figure 4.15: Satisfaction with most recent council contact (base – 208)



Q16 – How do/ would you prefer to contact the Council?

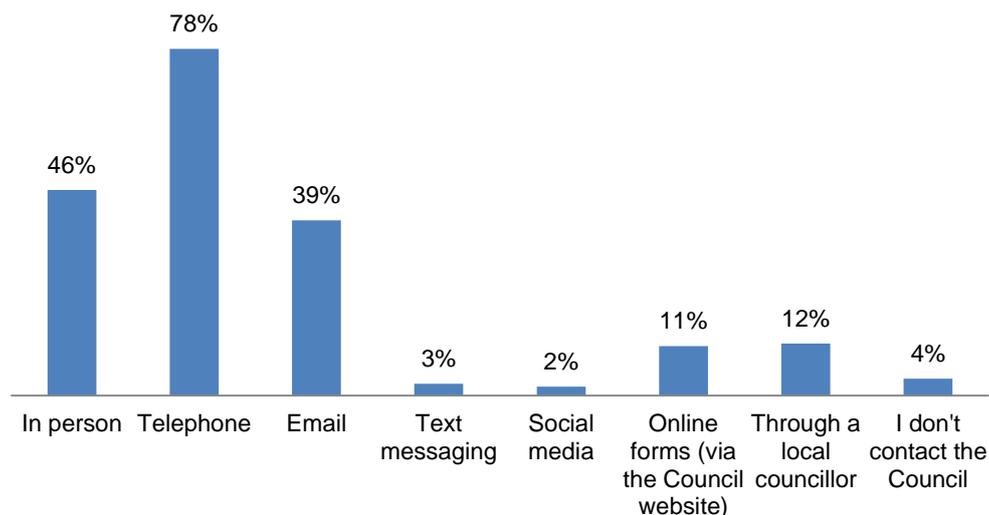
All respondents to the survey were asked how they would like to contact the Council. Nearly four in five would prefer to make contact by telephone and nearly half would like to visit in person.

Two in five would contact the Council by email but only 2% and 3% would contact by social media and text messaging respectively.

52% of residents aged 25 to 64 would contact the Council by email, dropping to 26% of residents aged 65 or over.

91% of RV North West residents would prefer to contact the Council by telephone, higher than any other area in the borough. 61% of RV Central residents would prefer to contact the Council in person, higher than any other area.

Figure 4.16: Contact preferences (base – 500)



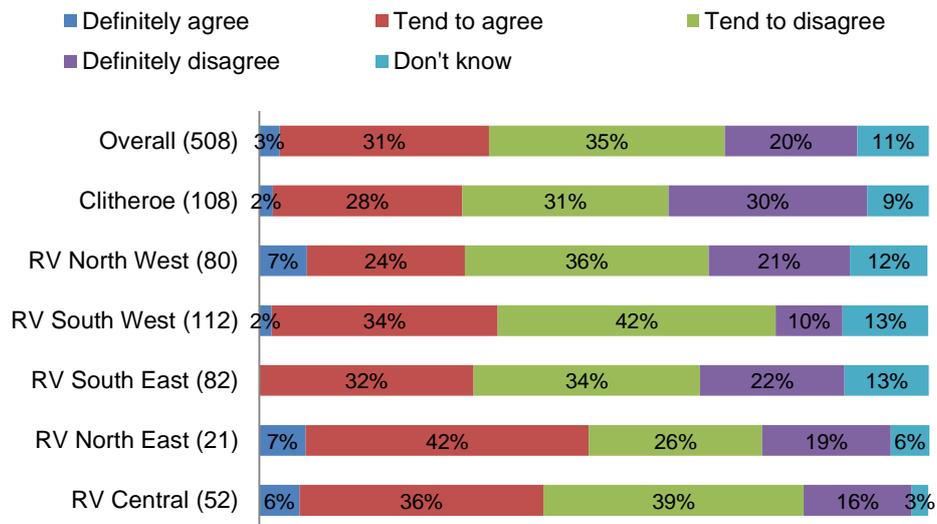
4.5 The local community

Q17 – Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

34% of respondents definitely or tend to agree that they can influence local decisions, down from 38% in 2013.

Residents in the North East of the borough appear more likely to agree that they can influence local decisions. 61% of Clitheroe residents disagree that they can influence local decisions.

Figure 4.17: Whether residents feel they can influence local decisions (base totals in brackets)

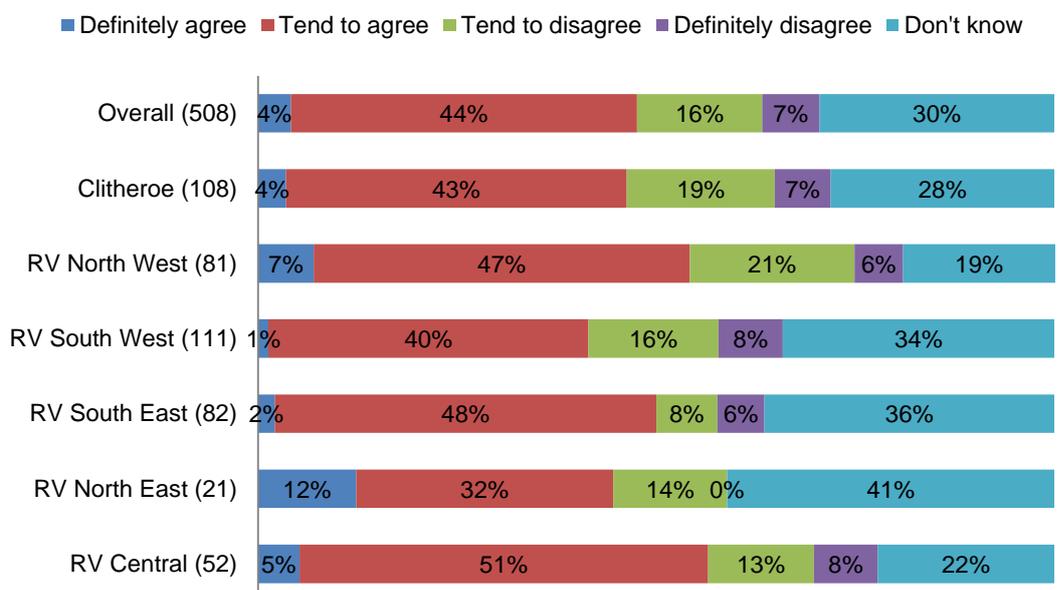


Q18 – To what extent do you agree or disagree that the Council takes an active role in supporting the local community and makes a difference to quality of life by working in partnership?

A new question was included in the 2015 Perception Survey around the Council’s role in supporting the local community through partnership working.

48% agree that the Council’s partnership working does make a difference and this is highest in the Central and North West parts of the borough.

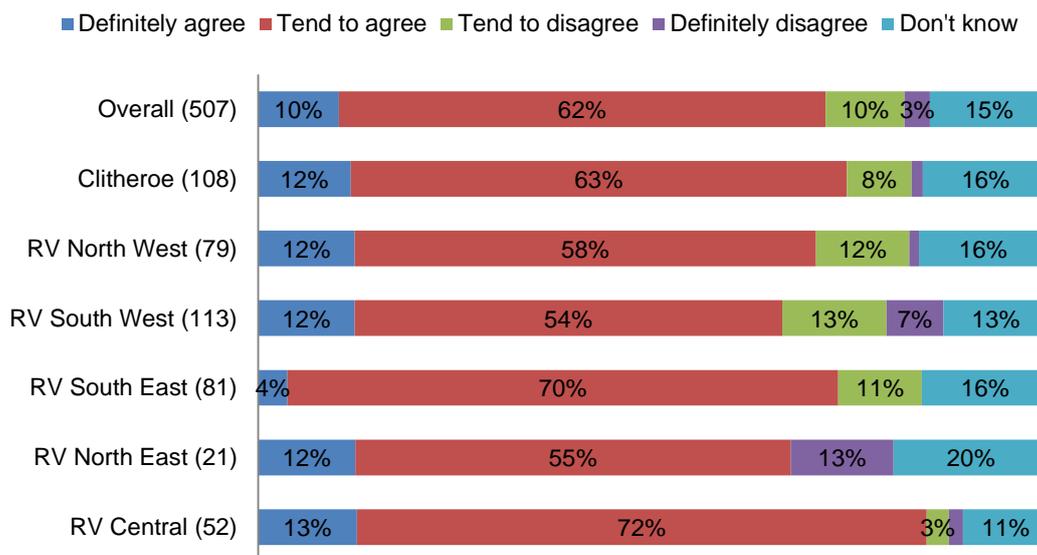
Figure 4.18: Agreement with council partnership working (base totals in brackets)



Q19 – To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

72% of respondents definitely or tend to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together (70% in 2013 and 66% in 2011). The level of agreement is highest in the Central part of the borough (85%).

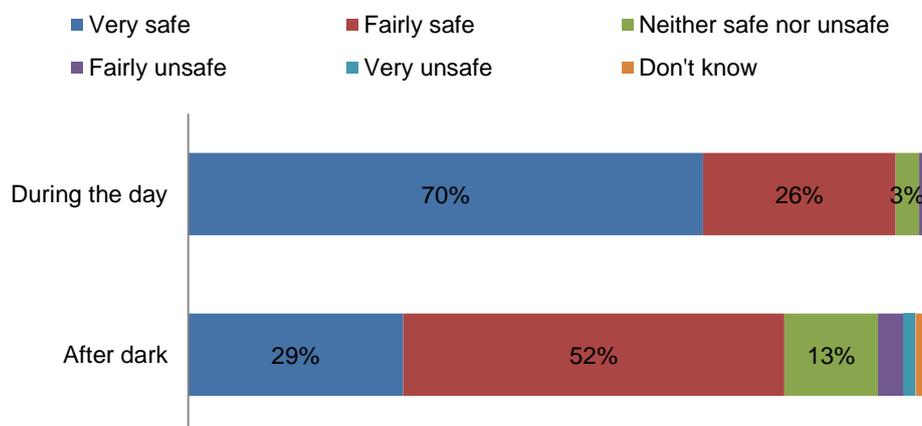
Figure 4.19: Whether people from different backgrounds get on well together (base totals in brackets)



Q20/21 – How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark/ during the day?

96% of respondents feel very or fairly safe during the day, which is the same as in 2013. 81% feel very or fairly safe in their local area after dark (80% in 2013).

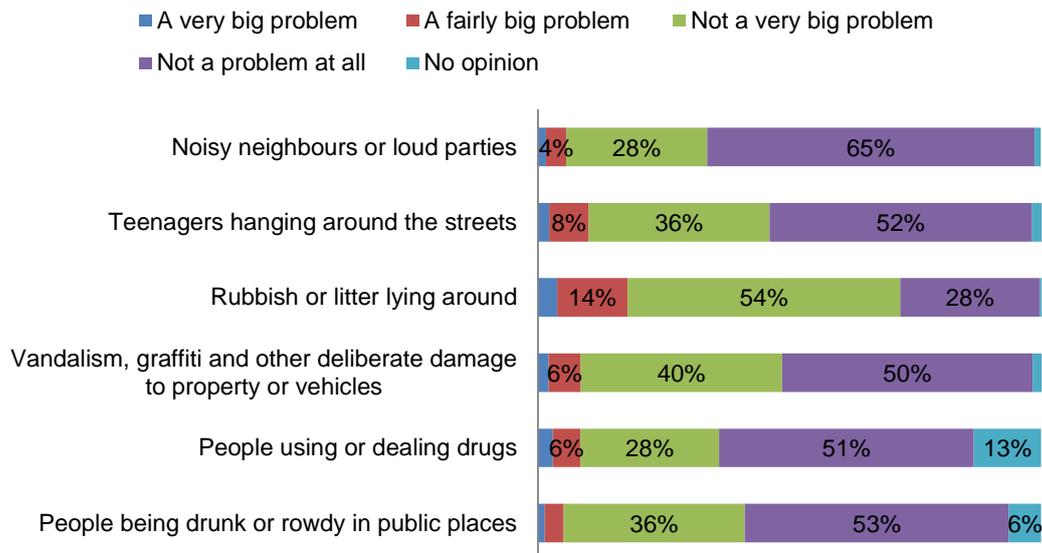
Figure 4.20: Perceptions of safety (base – 511)



Q22 – Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem, if at all, are each of the following anti-social behaviour issues?

Like previous years, perceptions of anti-social behaviour issues being a problem in the borough is low. 18% of people think rubbish or litter lying around is a very or fairly big problem, up from 14% in 2013.

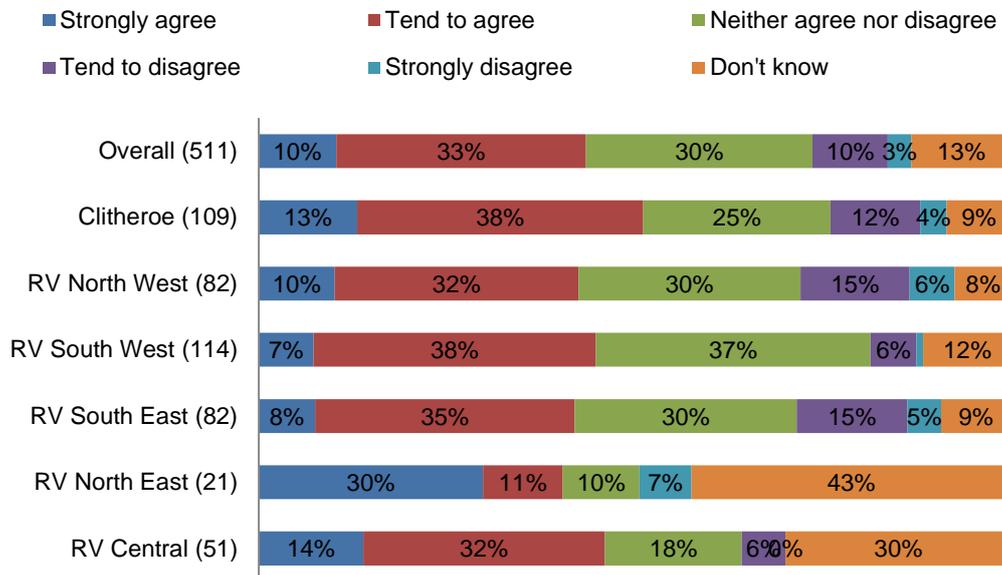
Figure 4.21: Anti-social behaviour problems (base – 508)



Q23 – How much would you agree or disagree that the Police and other local public services are successfully dealing with issues in your local area?

43% of respondents agree that the police and other public services are successfully dealing anti-social behaviour and crime in their local area. This is down from 54% in 2013. Residents in the Clitheroe area had the highest level of agreement (51%).

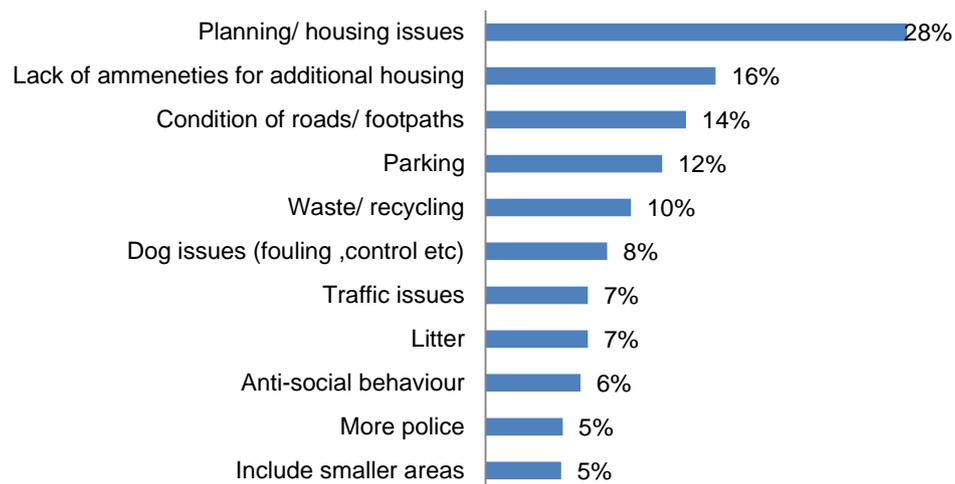
Figure 4.22: Whether police and other public services are dealing with local anti-social behaviour and crime (base totals in brackets)



4.6 Final comments

Of the comments made, planning and housing issues were the most common topic raised by residents through the survey.

Figure 4.23: Categorising comments made by residents (base – 208)



5 2015 v 2013 Summary Analysis

This section is aimed at giving an overview of the direction of travel between 2015 and 2013. Comparisons are only possible with those questions included in both surveys. Any changes in direction are for movements of five percentage points or more.

Question	2015	2013	Direction
About your local area			
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?	94%	95%	↔
Your local public services			
Satisfaction with keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	72%	74%	↔
Satisfaction with household refuse collection	89%	91%	↔
Satisfaction with doorstep recycling	89%	85%	↔
Satisfaction with parks and open spaces	70%	74%	↔
Agree that RVBC provides value for money	71%	76%	↓
Agree that LCC provides value for money	41%	45%	↔
Satisfaction with the way RVBC runs things	74%	76%	↔
Satisfaction with the way LCC runs things	45%	49%	↔
Information and customer service			
Informed about how and where to vote	97%	98%	↔
Informed about how council tax is spent	86%	83%	↔
Informed about how to get involved in local decisions	47%	53%	↓
Informed about the standards of service to expect	56%	61%	↓
Informed about how well the council is performing	54%	60%	↓
Informed about how to complain	51%	53%	↔
Informed overall about RVBC	64%	69%	↓
Agree it was easy to find out how to contact RVBC	88%	86%	↔
Agree I did not have to wait long to get to the right person	80%	73%	↑

Agree the staff were polite	89%	82%	↑
Agree the staff were knowledgeable	77%	74%	↔
Agree the information provided was easy to understand	79%	74%	↑
Agree that overall I was satisfied with my experience	76%	73%	↔
The local community			
Agree that I can influence local decisions	34%	38%	↔
Agree that different backgrounds get on well together	72%	70%	↔
Feel safe in the local area after dark	81%	80%	↔
Feel safe in the local area during the day	96%	96%	↔
Noisy neighbours are not a problem	93%	95%	↔
Teenagers hanging around is not a problem	88%	89%	↔
Rubbish lying around is not a problem	82%	86%	↔
Vandalism or graffiti is not a problem	90%	89%	↔
People using or dealing drugs is not a problem	78%	81%	↔
People being drunk in public is not a problem	89%	85%	↔
Agree that the Police and others are dealing with ASB	43%	54%	↓

6 Contextual Analysis

This section is designed to provide some context to the 2015 Perception Survey findings by comparing these to the findings of other authorities across Lancashire. Please note that timings and methodologies do differ between the authorities. Also, some of the question wording between the questionnaires differs slightly.

Question	RV	Burnley	Pendle	Wyre
About your local area				
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?	94%	76%	76%	82%
Your local public services				
Satisfaction with keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	72%	59%	54%	71%
Satisfaction with household refuse collection	89%	84%	83%	83%
Satisfaction with doorstep recycling	89%	79%	76%	
Satisfaction with parks and open spaces	70%	85%	72%	79%
Agree that RVBC provides value for money	71%	57%	56%	46%
Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things	74%	56%	58%	59%
Information and customer services				
Informed about how and where to vote	97%	-	96%	-
Informed about how council tax is spent	86%	-	71%	-
Informed about how to get involved in local decisions	47%	-	40%	-
Informed about the standards of service to expect	56%	-	51%	-
Informed about how well the council is performing	54%	-	46%	-
Informed about how to complain	51%	-	52%	-
Informed overall about the Council	64%	-	55%	59%
The local community				
Agree that I can influence local decisions	34%	-	26%	-
Agree that different backgrounds get on well together	72%	61%	46%	-
Noisy neighbours are not a problem	93%	86%	91%	89%
Teenagers hanging around is not a problem	88%	73%	85%	-
Rubbish lying around is not a problem	82%	59%	65%	64%
People being drunk in public is not a problem	89%	74%	81%	78%