

Gateshead Residents 2002

Research Study Conducted for
Gateshead Council

August - October 2002

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Introduction

Background and Objectives

This report presents the findings of a research study conducted by MORI on behalf of Gateshead Council. This survey of residents builds on previous work conducted for the Council in 1997 and 2000. Among the issues covered in this survey are:

- attitudes towards Gateshead as a place to live;
- the image of the Council;
- satisfaction with service provision and reasons for dissatisfaction;
- ratings of the Council when contacting departments;
- perceptions of safety in local area/neighbourhood;
- Tenant's views on housing provision
- Residents of Bensham and Saltwell's awareness of the Bensham and Saltwell Partnership
- Residents of Blaydon and Birtley's awareness of Gateshead@ local offices

Methodology

MORI interviewed a representative quota sample of 1,014 residents (aged 18+) in 80 Enumeration Districts (EDs) distributed at random across the borough (the 'main' sample). Interviews were carried out face-to-face, in-home, between 6th July and 14th September 2002. Quota controls were set by sex, age, work status and ethnicity.

In addition to the main sample interviews, five additional 'booster' samples were interviewed. The purpose of the boosters was to enable more robust analysis of residents within each of the sub-groups, listed below:

- *SRB (Bensham & Saltwell wards)*: Additional 79 interviews across Bensham and Saltwell, which combined with interviews from the main survey totals 169 interviews. Quotas were set, within ED sample points, drawn at random across these wards.

- *Gatehead@ (Blaydon & Birtley wards):* An additional 79 interviews across Birtley and Blaydon, which combined with interviews from the main survey and Birtley booster totals 346 interviews. We have set out all interviews conducted in Birtley (246) and Blaydon (100) separately in the cross break analysis in order to avoid any bias the additional Birtley interviews might bring when comparing these two wards. Again, quotas were set within EDs.
- *Birtley ward:* an additional 175 interviews in Birtley, these were added to the Birtley booster total. Quotas were set within EDs.
- *Ethnic minority residents:* an additional 99, which combined with interviews conducted from the main survey totals 101 interviews. Quotas were set within ward, based on the relative proportion of Gateshead's minority ethnic population living in each. Controls were flexible, and set on sex and age.
- *Jewish residents:* an additional 56, which combined with interviews conducted from the main survey totals 59 interviews. Flexible quotas were set within the streets where the Jewish communities are known to be focussed.

At the analysis stage, the demographic data were compared with the findings from 2000. As in 2000, data were not weighed.

A separate volume contains detailed computer tabulations from the survey.

Report layout

Following this introduction the report contains:

- a summary of **key findings** of the survey and their **implications** for Gateshead
- more detailed commentary of the **main findings**, including reference to MORI's normative data
- **appendices**, including a marked up questionnaire, sample profile and a guide to statistical reliability

MORI Normative Data

Where appropriate, the report includes comparisons between Gateshead's results and those from surveys conducted for other authorities in recent years (taken from the MORI Local Government database).

These comparisons are intended to act as a context in which to place findings for Gateshead and to assist the interpretation of results. However, because MORI has not worked for every authority, this is by no means exhaustive and is not a league table. In addition, each survey may differ in timing and methodology which may affect results. This data is the copyright of MORI and should not be released to any third party without the written permission of MORI.

Interpretation of the Data

It should be remembered that a sample, not the entire population of Gateshead, has been interviewed. In consequence, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant.

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of "don't know" categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the report an asterisk (*) denotes any value less than half a per cent, but greater than zero.

In this report, reference is made to "net" figures. This represents the balance of opinion on attitudinal questions, and provides a particularly useful means of comparing the results for number variables. In the case of a "net satisfaction" figure, this represents the percentage satisfied on a particular issue or service, less the percentage dissatisfied. For example, if a service records 40% satisfied and 25% dissatisfied, the "net satisfaction" figure is +15 points.

Publication of Data

As with all our studies, findings from this survey are subject to our Standard Terms and Conditions of Contract. Any press release or publication of the findings of this survey requires the advance approval of MORI. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

Key Findings

Satisfaction levels steady since 2000

Gateshead continues to be one of the top-rated councils for residents' satisfaction, when compared with those for whom MORI has worked. However, although there has been no significant change in the overall balance of opinion in the last two years, the longer-term trend, since 1997, appears to be downwards. This is in line with MORI's findings for other local authorities (Local Government Chronicle, vital statistics supplied by MORI, 18.10.02), reflecting a peak in levels of satisfaction with local government in around 1997. This was due, we believe, to increased sympathy for local government, and rising *expectations* of change from a political change in power at a national level.

In spite of this overall drift down, the detailed analysis suggests a slight rise in the proportion 'very' satisfied over the last two years in Gateshead has risen from 10% to 13%.

The Council still has a strong positive image

As well as having a high proportion of local residents that are satisfied with its performance, Gateshead Council is also one of the best-rated Councils that MORI has measured on a range of individual image attributes developed to establish comparisons over many years. For example, it is positioned in top place for residents feeling that the Council *provides residents with good value for money* and for residents disagreeing that the Council is *too remote and impersonal*.

Residents perceive the Council as being good at communicating and keeping them informed about the services and benefits it provides. People also feel that they are able to contact the Council easily if they need to and that the Council employs staff that are polite and helpful. The majority feel that the Council treats them without discrimination and that overall the Council provides high quality services.

Seven in ten agree that the Council does a good job of attracting funding for high profile projects and buildings, a view that is far more common now than in 2000, and is likely to be strengthened by the recent acclaim for the Millennium Bridge. Six in ten agree that the Council gives residents good value for money, reversing a downward trend from 2000.

On the negative side, there is a level of criticism about involving local people in decision making. Just over two in five feel that the Council does not consult them about issues that affect them, with a similar proportion sensing that the Council does not allow residents to participate in making decisions.

There are also relatively high proportions of residents agreeing that the Council is out of touch, as well as remote and impersonal, impressions that emphasise the

need to communicate more about the reasons for Council decisions, and giving greater publicity to public consultation mechanisms.

More residents feel they are informed

More Gateshead residents now feel informed by their council than ever before, with around a quarter (26%) feeling that Gateshead Council keeps them very well informed. Overall, three-quarters of residents feel 'very or fairly well informed' (74%), an increase of 12 percentage points since 2000. This now places Gateshead Council as one of the highest performing authorities that MORI has worked for and has undoubtedly helped to bolster the Gateshead's position relative to other authorities in the overall measure of 'satisfaction with the council'.

However, it would appear providing more information and good services are not the complete answer to keeping local residents happy. This study highlights several areas where local people would like to see improvements. It is also true to say that not all groups in the local population are equally likely to feel informed, and younger residents in particular stand out for feeling that they get limited information.

Neighbourhood satisfaction remains high

Just over four in five residents are satisfied with their area as a place to live, a picture that is consistent with findings from 1997 and 2000. Gateshead also compares well on satisfaction with local neighbourhoods compared with similar authorities across Britain.

The most commonly selected neighbourhood problems include 'speeding motorists' (30%) and 'teenagers hanging around in the streets/groups' (28%). Environmental issues are also often mentioned, with around one in five commenting on 'stray dogs/dog mess in streets' (24%), and one in five, litter (20%).

One in four feels that their neighbourhood has deteriorated over the past 5 years. The factors they mention are problem families/undesirables/anti-social tenants' (33%) and 'children/gangs hanging around in the streets' (28%).

On the other hand, around one in eight feels their neighbourhood has improved. For them, there are 'fewer problems with youths/children/kids hanging around' (17%) and the area is 'cleaner/tidier/less litter' (16%). In fact, a perception that there are fewer problems with youth is the converse of one of the main reasons that some people feel their local area has got worse. If emphasis were needed, this underlines the importance of these factors in people's perceptions of their neighbourhoods.

Increasing concern over youth crime

It is important to recognise that the majority of residents do not feel threatened by crime in their neighbourhood, a fact that has not changed since 2000,

sustaining an improvement measured at that time compared with 1997. However, there are differences between sub groups, in particular women (44%) are more likely to fear crime than men (36%) and older people are more likely to fear crime than younger people.

Residents have become more concerned about problems associated with youth while burglaries and theft from cars appear to have become less of an issue. Anti-social behaviour from young people hanging around streets, drunkenness in streets, disturbances from teenagers, through to speeding motorists and joy riders all receive mentions.

Furthermore, the clear majority of residents are dissatisfied with the number of police on the beat when directly asked, and increasing police presence is mentioned spontaneously by one in ten residents when suggesting ways to improve the quality of life in their area.

Declining satisfaction in contacting the Council

Our overall measure of public satisfaction with the way contact with the Council is dealt with has seen a further decline since 2000, continuing the downward trend since 1997. Three in ten residents who contacted the Council in the past 12 months are dissatisfied with the way the matter was dealt with. This is a worrying trend.

Residents do, however, feel that the Council is accessible, with the vast majority of residents saying that they are satisfied with the ease of contacting the Council and satisfied with the variety of ways to contact them.

When residents do make contact with Gateshead Council, their impressions are mixed. While they tend to find staff friendly and helpful, they are less satisfied with the outcome of their enquiries. Some of this may stem from problems with resolving complex issues, but some seems to result from a perception of delay in responding or resolving problems. The sense that problems go unresolved does not seem to be strongly correlated with tenure, but does seem to be linked with whether the household contains children. It is not clear why this should be the case.

Most residents (68%) telephone the Council when they wish to make contact, and while around a quarter do so face to face, telephone contact is also most people's preference. Furthermore, when asked to choose from a list outlining ways that Gateshead Council could improve on access, the most commonly favoured improvement would be a 24-hour telephone service.

Satisfaction with universal services

Gateshead continues to perform well on satisfaction with universal services, although there appears to be a slight decline in some satisfaction levels from 2000.

In-street services (street scene) that continue to perform well compared to other authorities include street lighting, street sweeping and pavement maintenance. On the road, Gateshead also remains one of the leading Council's on satisfaction with road maintenance, despite a slight decline in satisfaction since the previous MORI survey in 2000. This is in line with other 'road related' services, satisfaction appears generally to be quite high but has fallen slightly since the previous survey.

Waste collection services provide some of the highest levels of service satisfaction for Gateshead Council, both in comparison with other services, and with other authorities. However, the public has a more critical opinion of the recycling services in Gateshead.

Satisfaction among users of services

There has been little change to the proportions of household members who say they are using local services compared with 2000. The one exception is 'sports facilities/leisure facilities (not swimming pools)' where there appears to have been a decline in the number of users.

Services that perform well include libraries, primary and secondary schools. Gateshead has one of the highest levels of satisfaction with libraries in MORI's normative data with the vast majority of library users (96%) satisfied with the service. Similarly, the majority of 'users' of primary schools (94%) and secondary schools (84%) are satisfied, representing an increase in 'net satisfaction' since 2000.

The services that perform less well include swimming pools, council housing, sports & leisure facilities and children's playgrounds. There has been a decline in satisfaction ratings of swimming pools and council housing, while for sports & leisure facilities a nine percentage point decline in satisfaction may relate to a decline in the number of users since 2000. More users of children's playground and play facilities are dissatisfied than satisfied, a finding that has not changed since 2000, and is in stark contrast with many other findings in the survey.

Racial prejudice

Around half of residents (49%) think there is generally more racial prejudice in Britain now than 5 years ago. Younger people, in particular the under-35s, are more likely to say there is less racial prejudice than are those aged 55+. Perhaps surprisingly, residents from ethnic minority groups are *less* likely to say that racial prejudice has increased in Britain over the past 5 years, around three in ten (28%) saying so.

The vast majority says they believe they would be treated fairly by public services (the fire service, their local hospital, the police, the courts, the immigration service and Gateshead Council). Of these service, people are most likely to feel they would be treated fairly by the fire service and their local hospital. They are least sure that they would be treated fairly by the Council.

When we look at the differences in perceptions of white, non-white and Jewish residents, the picture is complicated by differing propensities to express 'no opinion'. It does appear, however, that non-white residents are least confident that they would be treated fairly by all public services (this conclusion is drawn by examining the mean scores of responses, which factors out 'no opinion' responses). Only on education services do Jewish residents appear to feel they may be treated unfairly – on other services they are as or more confident than the white community.

Housing

MORI asked council tenants what conditions, if any, would need to be met in order for them to favour the transfer of the Council's housing stock to a housing association. Although two in five (40%) say they would not agree to a stock transfer under any conditions, the most important consideration for others is that 'rent levels remain the same', two in five (41%) saying that they would need to be sure of this before they could support stock transfer. Older tenants are markedly more likely than others to say that they would not consider a vote for stock transfer, while younger people are more willing to consider it.

Considering perceptions of council housing, Council tenants are more likely to feel that 'Council estates are good places to live' (46% vs 29%) and that 'rent levels are high' (29% vs 6%) than are those that rent from a housing association or private landlord.

We compared the views of tenants with respect to aspects of the service provided by their landlords. Council tenants tend to be less satisfied with the service they receive than are housing association, or private landlord tenants. The exceptions to this trend are 'how easy it is to contact your landlord' and 'the general condition of their property' for which there is little difference among different tenancies.

Council tenants are less likely to be satisfied with 'the quality of repairs carried out', 'the speed of response time with to concerns and problems raised with their landlord', 'how quickly repairs are carried out' and 'the extent to which you are involved by your landlord in decisions about the property where you live'.

Bensham & Saltwell Partnership

There is a relatively low awareness of the Bensham & Saltwell Partnership with around one-quarter of residents having heard of the organisation, while over half (56%) say they have not heard of the Partnership.

Not surprisingly therefore, given the low awareness of the Partnership, fewer than one in seven are aware that Bensham & Saltwell Partnership received additional funding in 1997 to make improvements in the local area. Asked what the priority for future improvement in Bensham and Saltwell, just over one quarter (27%) select 'housing and the environment'.

Gateshead@

The vast majority of residents of Blaydon and Birtley say they have at least heard of the Gateshead Council@ shop. Almost half of residents of Blaydon and Birtley claim to have visited it, while a further third say they have not visited, but have heard of it. The figure for visiting is extremely high, and it is possible that some people mistook the office to which the question referred.

There appears to be little awareness of what services the offices provide. Even among those that have heard of the shop, only around half say they are aware that they can access all Gateshead Council's services at these local offices. Perhaps more positively, those who say they have visited the shop appear to have had their enquiries dealt with there and then.

Confidence that the offices will have an impact is not universal - just around half say they think having these offices will make it easier to contact the Council. It is likely that raising public awareness and use will improve on this, if they have the resources to respond to public demand.

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Looking ahead

Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the borough remains at a similar level to that in 2000 although the overall trend still appears to be downward. This is in spite of a rise in the proportion of residents that say they feel informed of what the Council is doing. This study highlights several areas where local people would like to see improvements.

- *Consultation:* Give greater prominence to consultation exercises, and their outcomes. Provide more information on the rationale behind decisions the Council makes
- *Neighbourhood issues:* Two critical issues – dealing with problematic tenants and neighbours, and reducing the disruption and destruction caused by youth
- *Youth crime:* the recurrent problem persists of a perception that there are not enough police on the beat
- *Contacting the Council:* methods for contacting the Council appear to be generally satisfactory, although extending the hours for telephone contact would be welcomed. However, more could be done to understand the nature of, and resolution of, problematic public enquiries
- *Recycling:* despite relatively high satisfaction ratings for waste collection, Gateshead performs less well on recycling waste. This is an area where an improvement in service may lead to satisfaction levels similar to that of the waste collection service generally.
- *Children's play parks:* this is the only service where more users are dissatisfied than satisfied with rating stagnant since 2000.
- *Council tenants:* tenant engagement in decision making, and improvements in the quality and speed of the repairs service are important to tenants. If they are to support stock transfer, they will require reassurance over stability in rent levels in particular.

Attitudes towards Gateshead Council

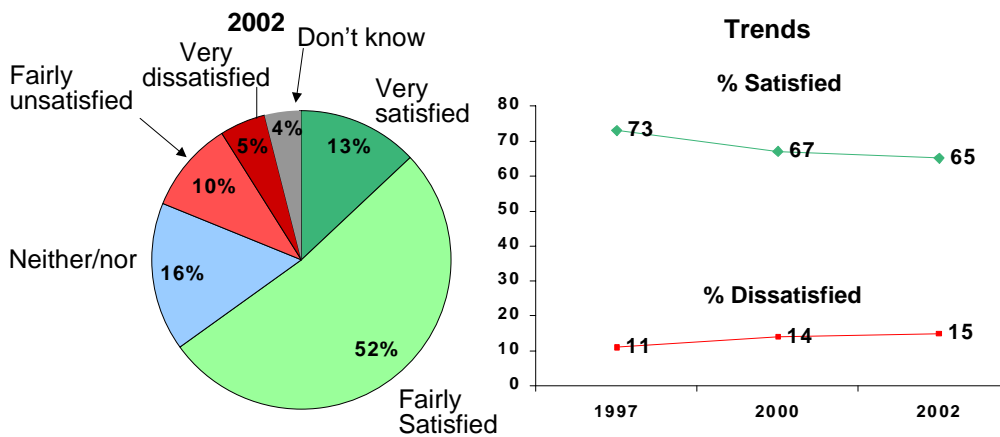
Satisfaction with Gateshead MBC

Four times as many people are satisfied with the way the Council is running the borough as are dissatisfied. Around two thirds (65%) are satisfied, while one in six (15%) is dissatisfied.

Although there has been no significant change in the overall balance of opinion in the last two years, the longer-term trend, since 1997, appears to be downwards. This is in line with MORI's findings for other local authorities (Local Government Chronicle, vital statistics supplied by MORI, 18.10.02), reflecting a peak in levels of satisfaction with local government in around 1997. This was due, we believe, to increased sympathy for local government, and rising *expectations* of change from a political change in power at a national level. In spite of this overall drift, the detailed analysis suggests a slight rise in the proportion 'very' satisfied over the last two years in Gateshead has risen from 10% to 13%.

Satisfaction with the Way the Council is Running the Borough

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the borough?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

There are several differences between sub-groups of the population:

- Jewish residents (86%) are more likely to be satisfied with the Council than white (65%) or ethnic minority (68%) residents.
- Residents from Whickham (74%) are more likely to be satisfied than are those living in Felling (58%) or Blydson (63%).

- Residents aged over-65 years living alone (78%) are also more likely to be satisfied than households with children (61%), and particularly single parent households (59%)

While Gateshead continues to perform well against other Local Authorities MORI has worked with, it's relative position has declined over the years.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the area?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
			%	%	±
<i>Base: All</i>					
Sutton	LB	1999	77	10	67
Poole	U	1998	72	8	64
Gateshead (3)	M	1997	73	11	62
Herefordshire (1)	U	1999	72	10	62
Stirling	S	1998	74	13	61
Gateshead (3)	M	2000	67	14	53
Sunderland(2)	M	2001	67	14	53
Slough	U	1998	66	14	52
Wokingham	U	2000	64	12	52
Gateshead (3)	M	2002	65	15	50
Richmond	LB	1998	65	15	50
Swindon	U	1998	65	15	50
Tameside	M	2000	64	18	46
Trafford	M	1997	60	14	46
Kingston	LB	1996	59	14	45
Torfaen	W	1999	64	22	42
Portsmouth	U	2000	57	18	39
Camden	LB	2001	56	22	34
Southend-on-Sea (3)	U	1999	52	18	34
Southwark	LB	2000	57	23	34
South Tyneside	M	2002	59	26	33
Stockton-on-Tees	U	1998	53	20	33
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	54	23	31
Enfield	LB	1999	57	26	31
Waltham Forest Council	LB	2001	53	23	30
Manchester	M	2001	54	26	28
Leicester	U	1998	52	25	27
Peterborough	U	1999	47	21	26
Tower Hamlets	LB	1996	55	29	26
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	50	25	25
Lambeth	LB	1999	49	27	22
Birmingham	M	1999	48	32	16
Brent	LB	2000	43	27	16
Hertsmere	U	1999	62	48	14
Oldham	M	1998	47	33	14
Islington	LB	1999	38	42	-4

Wording:

(1) ...the way ...provides its services

(2) ...the city (3) ...the Borough

Source: MORI

Just five per cent say that they are 'very dissatisfied' with the way the Council is running the borough, and the most common criticism is a general feeling that their area is being neglected or run down (15%), or that complaints are not acted on. Other criticisms are reflected in the verbatim comment below:

The village is a mess, they let the kids hang about there, there is no police to do anything about them'

Female, 55- 64 years

Traffic calming has been requested but keeps getting turned down because of the cost'

Female, 25-34 years

Repairs take too long'

Female, 35-44 years

Do repairs quicker, turn up when they say they will

Male, 25-34 years

Improve the pavements, get rid of the weeds around the pavements'

Female, 55-64 years

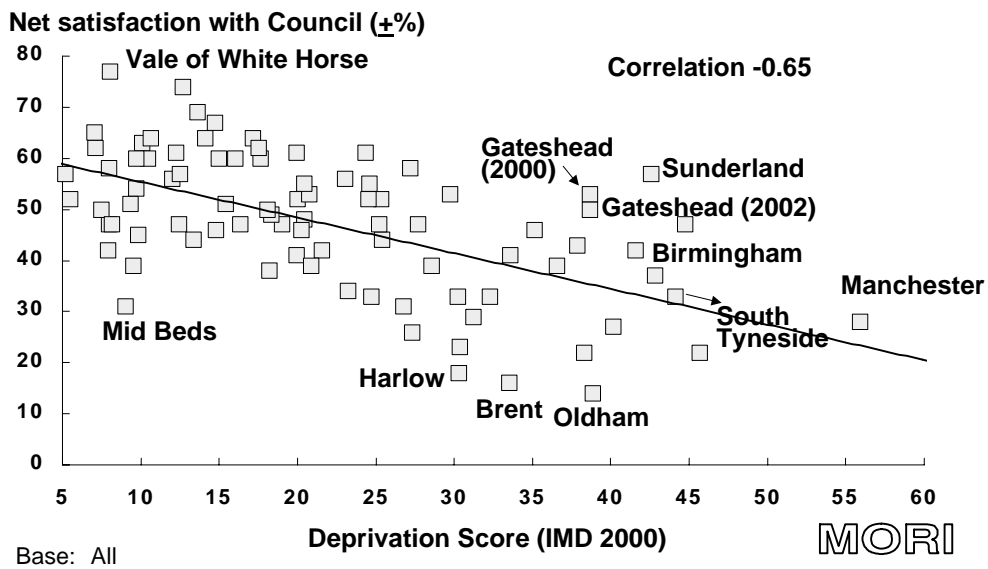
More litter bins in the street areas and residential areas'

Females, 25-34 years

Linking Satisfaction with Deprivation

The 'satisfaction rating' that an authority attracts from local residents is affected by many factors, some of which are largely outside the control of the authority. Analysis by MORI suggests that a significant factor is the level of deprivation (as illustrated by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) in which there is a general trend that, the greater the IMD score, the lower the levels of satisfaction with the local council. The scatter chart below illustrates this, and plots 'net satisfaction' (the balance between satisfied and dissatisfied responses) for a large number of councils across Britain against the IMD. Gateshead attracts more 'satisfied' responses than one might expect, given the levels of deprivation in the area.

Satisfaction with council versus deprivation score

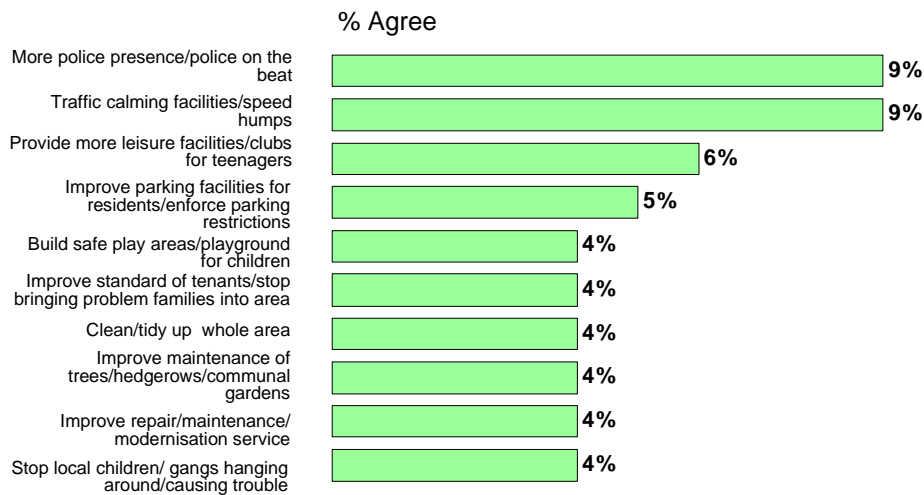


Improvements to quality of life

People have very different ideas about how life might be improved in their area. Faced with the question ‘what, if anything, do you think the Council could do in your area to make the biggest difference to your family’s quality of life?’, no single issue is mentioned by more than one in ten, and the two most commonly mentioned ways residents suggest to improve quality of life are ‘more police presence/police on the beat’ (9%) and ‘traffic calming facilities/speed humps’ (9%).

Improving Quality of Life

Q What, if anything, do you think the Council could do in your area, to make the biggest difference to your family’s quality of life?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

This continues a theme running throughout the survey, with residents feeling that speeding cars, young people hanging around on the streets and the lack of Police on the beat all contribute to the problems in the area and are issues that have become more pertinent since 1997. To put in residents’ own words:

More police, especially at the weekends. A neighbourhood watch scheme

Female, 25-34 years

More facilities for young children and young people. Improve policing in the area

Male, 45- 54 years

Enforce the law for dog fouling and litter offences’

Female, 45-54 years

More police constables walking the streets

Male, 65-74 years

Carry out repairs to council properties, modernise the properties and upkeep of properties

Male, 64-74 years

Somewhere for young children to play, more activities for young children in the area. More under 8's year old facilities

Female, 35-44 years

Clean the streets outside the house

Female, 35-44 years

Provide more facilities for young people to keep them occupied

Male, 45-54 years

Don't put problem families into area

Female, 45-54 years

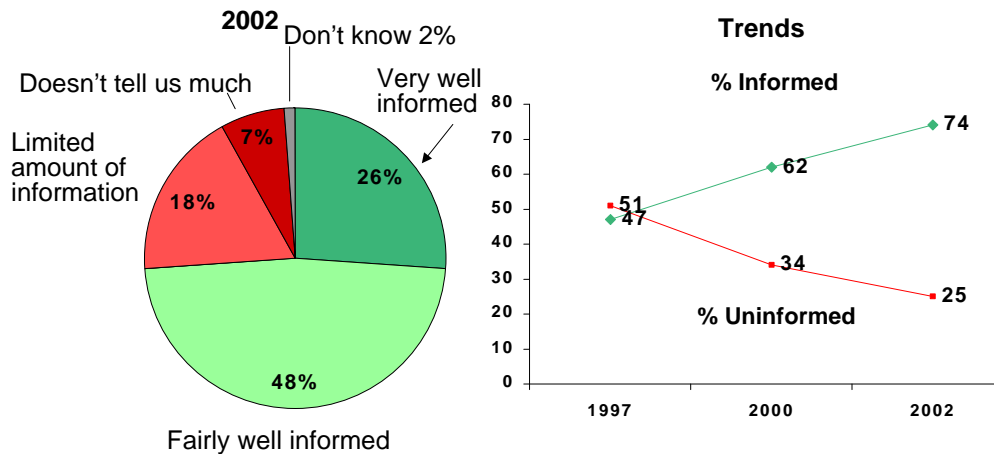
Feeling Informed

MORI often finds in its research that there is a positive correlation between how well informed residents feel they are and levels of satisfaction with the Council. Feeling informed tends to lead to higher levels of satisfaction.

More Gateshead residents now feel informed by their council than ever before, with around a quarter (26%) feeling that Gateshead Council keeps them very well informed. Overall, three quarters of resident's feel 'very or fairly well informed' (74%), an increase of 12 percentage points since 2000. This now positions Gateshead Council as one of the highest performing authority that MORI has worked for and has undoubtedly helped to bolster the authorities position relative to other authorities in the overall measure of 'satisfaction with the council'.

Level of Information

Q How well informed do you feel Gateshead Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

This table illustrates that Gateshead Council has moved to up to top position.

Q How well informed do you think the Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?					
	Type	Year	Very/ Fairly well informed	Limited/ not much at all	Net informed
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Gateshead	M	2002	74	25	49
Sutton	LB	1999	68	30	38
Gateshead	M	2000	62	37	25
Portsmouth	U	1998	61	36	25
Slough	U	1998	61	37	24
Stirling	S	1998	60	38	22
Medway	U	2000	57	40	17
Poole	U	1998	56	39	17
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	52	45	7
Camden	LB	2001	51	45	6
Swindon	U	1998	50	44	6
Tower Hamlets	LB	1996	52	47	5
Richmond	LB	1998	50	45	5
Tameside	M	2000	49	45	4
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	50	48	2
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	49	48	1
Brent	LB	2000	47	49	-2
Gateshead	M	1997	47	51	-4
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	45	50	-5
Sunderland	M	2001	45	50	-5
South Tyneside	M	2002	46	52	-6
Peterborough	U	1999	46	53	-7
Southwark	LB	2000	43	54	-11
Canterbury	DC	1999	43	54	-11
Islington	LB	1999	42	54	-12
Trafford	M	1997	40	53	-13
Birmingham	M	2001	39	57	-18
Manchester	M	1998	37	57	-20
Waltham Forest Council	LB	2001	37	60	-23
Herefordshire	U	1999	34	62	-28

Source: MORI

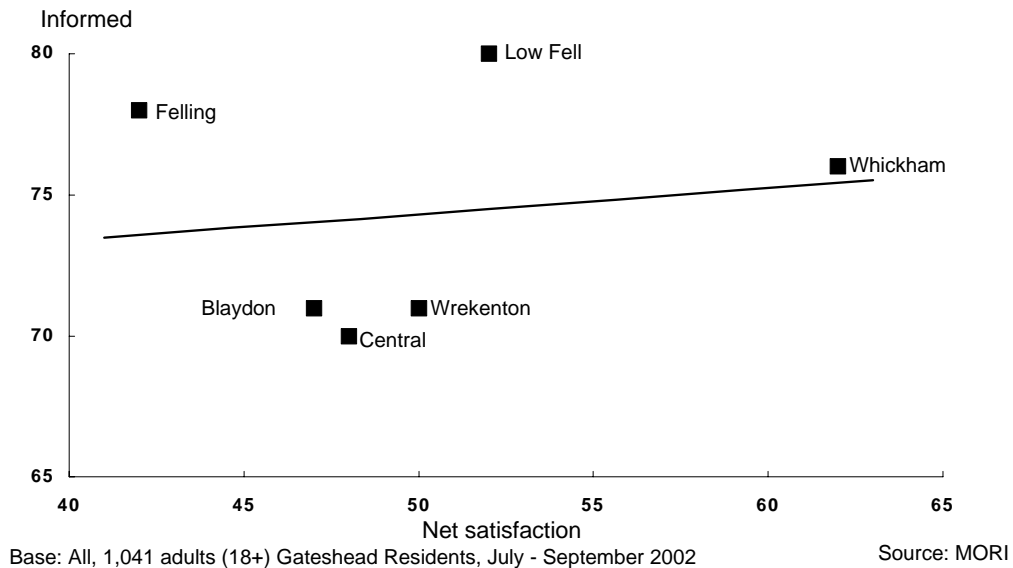
Clearly, however, providing information is not the answer to keeping local residents happy. This study highlights several areas where local people would like to see improvements. It is also true to say that not all groups in the local population are equally likely to feel informed, and younger residents in particular stand out for feeling that they get limited information.

Satisfaction vs Information

The chart below shows that, while communications are important, other issues may be at work when we are trying to understand the image of the authority. For example, Wrekenton is one of the more positive areas on satisfaction with the Council, despite residents feeling less informed than average. Conversely, residents from Felling score well on level of information but satisfaction levels are particularly low in comparison to other areas.

The graph below looks at net satisfaction with the Council by the proportion of those that say they are very/fairly well informed. As we can see, there is not a strong correlation between these two categories (if there were, we would expect some kind of linear relationship to emerge).

Satisfaction Vs Information

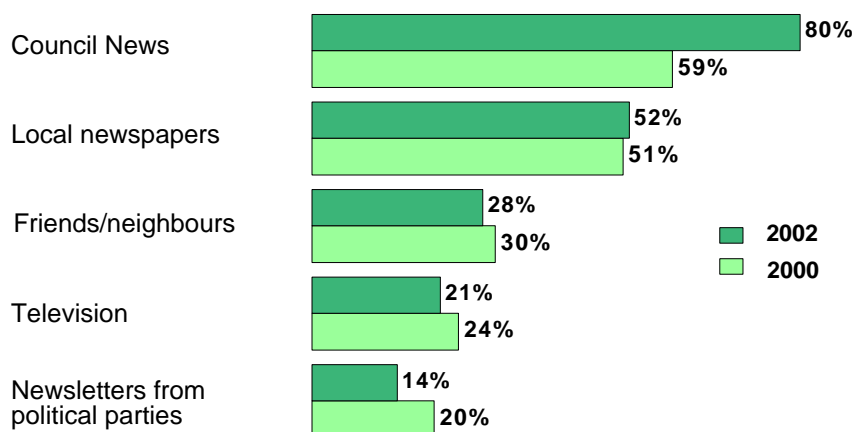


Sources of Information

Council News is the most common source of information used by residents for information about Gateshead Council, and has risen in prominence by over twenty percentage points since 2000. Other sources of information have not changed significantly 2000.

Sources of Information

Q From which sources on this card, if any, do you obtain most of your information about Gateshead Council and the services it provides?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

With such widespread use of Council News, we would expect high recognition, and this is the case, particularly among 55-64 year olds. Younger residents, however, are substantially less likely to recognise it, with around one in five 18-24 year olds saying that they have not seen a copy. Perhaps this is because they are not drawn to it, dismissing it as a magazine that is not for them. Gateshead would not be the only authority to face this problem with younger residents.

Q Have you ever seen a copy of this publication (Council News) before?

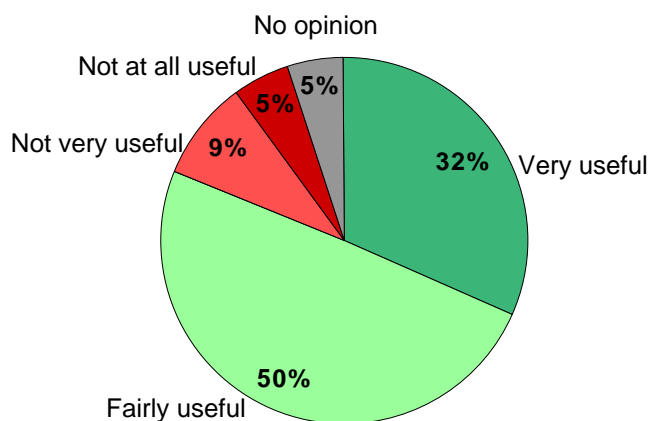
	18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65+
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(62)	(153)	(340)	(172)	(219)
	%	%	%	%	%
Yes	81	91	94	99	94
No	19	7	4	1	6
Don't know/ not stated	-	2	2	-	-

Source: MORI

Overall, four in five residents find the magazine useful in informing residents about the activities of the Council. Older residents are more likely to find the Magazine more useful than younger residents.

The Council's Magazine 'Council News'

Q Thinking about the most recent issue of 'Council News' that you have seen, how useful do you think it is in informing you of the activities of the Council?



Base: 946, All who have ever seen a copy of Council News

Source: MORI

Q Thinking about the most recent issue of 'Council News' that you have seen, how useful do you think it is in informing you of the activities of the Council

	18-24	25-34	35-54	55-64	65+
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	(62)	(153)	(340)	(172)	(219)
	%	%	%	%	%
Very useful	15	19	30	34	46
Fairly useful	58	52	50	50	45
Not very useful	16	10	11	9	4
Not at all useful	2	10	5	5	2
No opinion/not stated	10	8	4	2	3
Useful	73	71	80	84	91
Not useful	18	20	16	14	6

Source: MORI

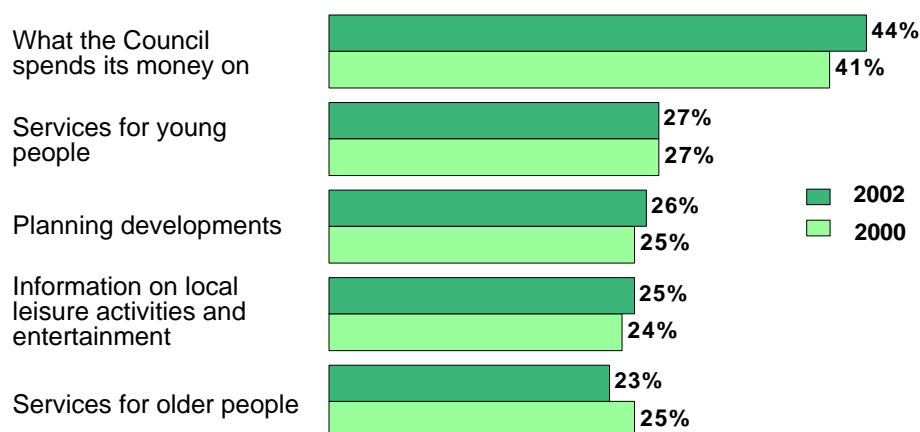
Type of Information

Residents often say they are interested in receiving information on what the Council are spending their money on. This kind of information can affect satisfaction levels in a variety of ways, and indeed is sometimes one of the causes of dissatisfaction. When dissatisfied residents are probed for their reasons for being unhappy with the council's performance, one aspect of criticism is a sense that the Council spends money in other areas leaving theirs neglected. They read of improvements, but do not believe that they are benefiting from them. On the other hand, some people say that they would like to receive information on services for young people, and implicit in this comment is a concern that there are not enough things for young people to do in the area.

People's concerns often focus on their own local areas, so they are also interested in any planned changes or improvements that might affect their area. There is, for example, always a level of interest in local planning developments.

Type of Information

Q Which, if any, of the items on this list would you like more information about?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

The Image of the Council

Gateshead Council is one of the best-rated Council's that MORI has measured on a range of image attributes developed to establish comparisons over many years. For example, it is positioned in top place for residents feeling that the Council *provides residents with good value for money* and for residents disagreeing that the Council is *too remote and impersonal*. As we have already seen, the Council is also rated very well for keeping residents informed.

For the 2000 study in Gateshead, we used a series of questions for the first time, and while there has been relatively little change since then, these questions do highlight areas for improvement. In particular there is a perception that the Council could do more to ensure people feel involved in, and consulted over, decisions that it makes.

The positives

Residents perceive the Council as being good at communicating, with just over half agreeing that the Council is clear about what it is trying to achieve, this is backed up by the fact that the majority feel that the Council keeps them informed about services and benefits it provides.

Residents feel that they are able to contact the Council easily if they need to and that the Council employs staff that are polite and helpful. The majority feel that the Council treats them without discrimination and that overall the Council provides high quality services.

Seven in ten agree that the Council does a good job of attracting funding for high profile projects and buildings, a view that is far more common now than in 2000, and is likely to be strengthened by the recent acclaim for the Millennium Bridge. Six in ten agree that the Council gives residents good value for money.

The negatives

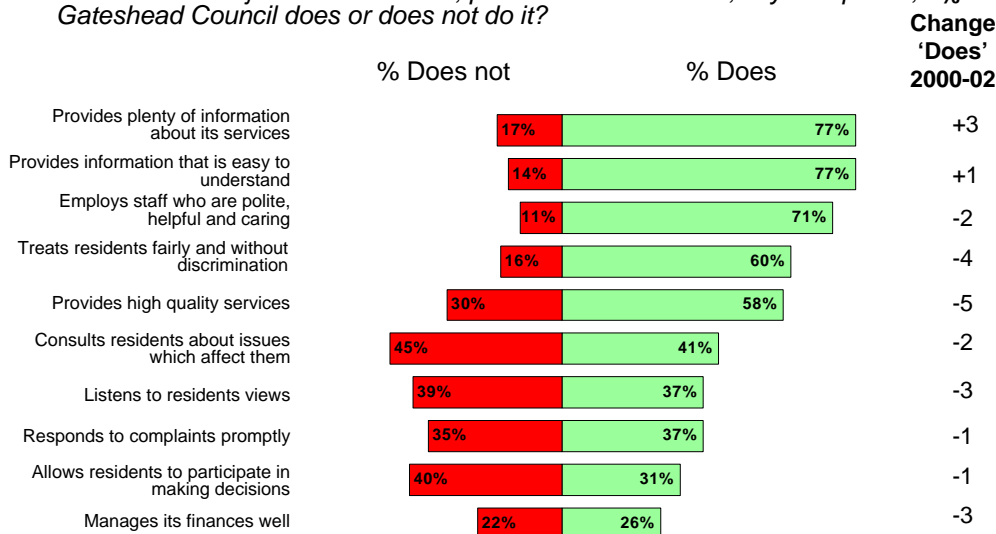
Even though residents generally feel they are kept informed by the Council, there is a level of criticism about involving them in decision making. Just over two in five feel that the Council does not consult them about issues that affect them, with a similar proportion sensing that the Council does not allow residents to participate in making decisions.

There are relatively high levels of residents agreeing that the Council is out of touch, and remote and impersonal (37% and 27% respectively) perhaps emphasising the need to communicate more about the reasons for its decisions, and giving greater publicity to its consultation efforts.

Interestingly, although it is an issue on which many people claim to want more information, most residents were unable to give an opinion either way as to whether or not the Council manages its finances well.

Image Ratings

Q I am going to read out a list of things that might describe the way Gateshead Council does its job. For each one, please tell me whether, in your opinion, % Gateshead Council does or does not do it?

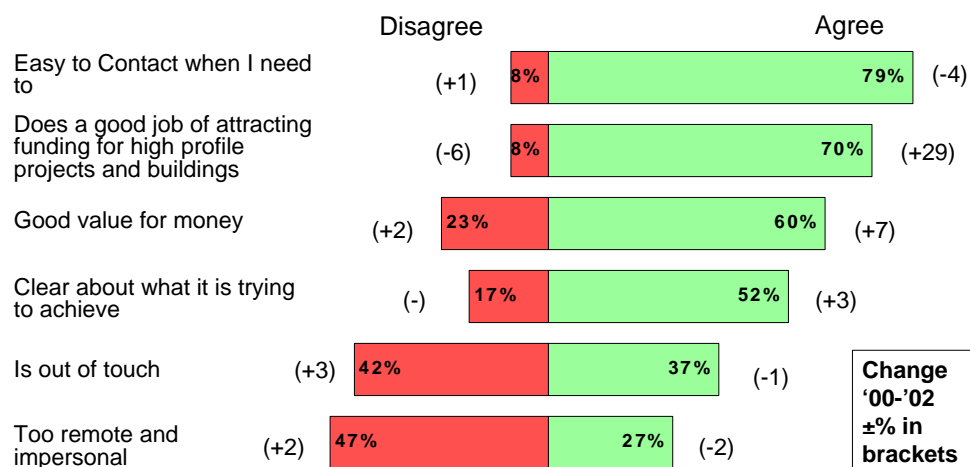


Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

Perception of the Council

Q I'm going to read out a list of statements that some people have made about their local councils. I would like you to tell me, from this card, how strongly you agree or disagree that each applies to Gateshead Council?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

As we would expect, the perceptions on these attributes of residents who are generally satisfied with the Council, and those of people generally dissatisfied, are very different. What is illuminating, however, is that the greatest disparity in views between these two groups of residents is on the measures of whether the Council as 'giving residents good value for money' and 'providing high quality services'. These are clearly critical factors in explaining perceptions of the Council.

Image verses Satisfaction with the Council

General attitude to the way the Council runs the Borough

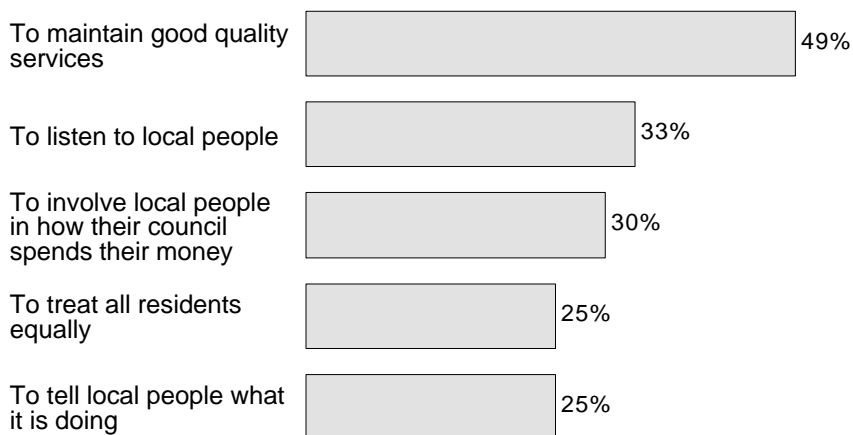
	‘Satisfied’	‘Dissatisfied’
<i>Base: All</i>	(662) %	(152) %
Value for Money (Agree)	76	27
Provides high quality services (Does)	71	26
Consults residents about issues which affect them (Does)	50	19
Listens to residents views (Does)	47	13
Allows residents to participate in making decisions (Does)	38	15
Remote and impersonal (Agree)	19	49

Source: MORI

Quality of service, providing information, and spending money wisely are all very important. What seems to becoming more important is involving and consulting people in decisions, something that we have observed in other studies. The chart below – based on a national survey – illustrates the importance to people of their local authority being seen to consult, although not at the expense of front line services.

Expectations of Councils - Top 5

Q Which two or three, if any, do you think it is most important for your local council to do?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All respondents (1,086)

Source: MORI

To help throw further light on the way residents perceive Gateshead Council, we asked them to select items from a list that they felt applied to the Council (a list developed for the 1997 study), and also to select those that they felt applied to the *local health service*. Half of the sample were asked to respond in relation to the council first, and half were asked to respond in relation to the health service first (in order to neutralise question order bias). Comparison with the findings in 1997 need to be treated with caution, given the change to the question style (in the previous study we did not include the comparative public service).

Generally, the Council does not come out favourably from the comparison, with people less likely to consider it efficient, or to provide good public services, and more likely to think the Council secretive, impersonal and bureaucratic. On the other hand, people are more likely to consider the Council to be responsive to local residents, have clear goals. Neither organisation is considered to be fast moving or innovative.

Image comparison

	Gateshead MBS	Local Health Service	Net diff
<i>Base: All respondents (1,014)</i>	%	%	%
Bureaucratic	15	5	+10
Secretive	10	2	+8
Behind the times	12	4	+8
Impersonal	11	4	+7
Overstaffed	8	1	+7
Responsive to local residents	15	8	+7
Formal	9	3	+6
Has clear goals	10	5	+5
Innovative	6	2	+4
Too cost conscious	16	12	+4
Inflexible	6	3	+3
Provides good training	7	6	+1
Is an uncaring employer	2	1	+1
Cares for staff	9	9	0
Fast moving	5	5	0
Inefficient	10	7	-3
Appreciative	2	5	-3
Friendly	32	39	-7
Efficient	14	26	-12
Provides a good public service	33	46	-13
Understaffed	11	42	-31

Source: MORI

The Wider Context

Gateshead's rating is positioned at the top end of the table when we look at other authorities in terms of overall value for money, and the perceived remoteness of the Council.

Value for Money

Q *To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement "the Council gives residents good value for money"?*

	Type	Year	Agree	Disagree	Net agree
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Gateshead	M	1997	61	20	41
Sutton	LB	1997	56	15	41
Gateshead	M	2002	60	23	37
Trafford (1)	M	1997	55	19	36
Gateshead	M	2000	52	21	31
Sunderland (2)	M	2001	50	25	25
Herefordshire	U	1999	45	24	21
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	45	25	20
Stirling	S	1998	47	27	20
Thurrock	U	1997	45	26	19
Slough	U	1998	48	29	19
Tameside	M	2000	47	30	17
Oldham	M	1998	40	33	7
South Tyneside	M	2002	42	36	6
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	35	34	1
Leicester	U	1998	36	36	0
Portsmouth	U	2000	33	34	-1
Manchester	M	1998	32	35	-2
Peterborough	U	1999	28	33	-5
Torfaen	W	1999	35	41	-6
Carmarthenshire (1)	W	2000	34	41	-7
East Ayrshire	S	2000	36	43	-7
Birmingham	U	1999	30	46	-16
Lambeth (1)	LB	1999	25	44	-19
Glasgow	S	1999	28	52	-24
Islington	LB	1999	24	50	-26

Wording:

(1) Local people

(2) Local residents

Source: MORI

Remote and Impersonal

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement "the Council is too remote and impersonal"?

	Type	Year	Agree	Disagree	Net agree
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Gateshead	M	2002	27	47	-20
Gateshead	M	2000	29	44	-15
Stirling	S	1998	31	45	-14
Gateshead	M	1997	33	45	-12
Richmond	LB	1998	30	36	-6
Herefordshire	U	1999	26	30	-4
Sutton	LB	1999	35	36	-1
Wokingham	U	2000	36	35	1
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	36	33	3
Slough	U	1998	39	33	6
Portsmouth	U	2000	37	31	6
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	38	29	8
Poole	U	1998	41	27	14
Blackburn with Darwen	U	1998	42	26	16
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	44	27	17
Brent	LB	2000	41	23	18
South Tyneside	M	2002	45	25	20
Birmingham	M	1999	48	26	22
Lambeth	LB	1999	46	23	23
Southwark	LB	2000	45	22	23
Leicester	U	1998	45	22	23
Oldham	M	1998	46	21	25
Manchester	M	1998	49	23	26
East Ayrshire	S	2000	52	25	27
Islington	LB	1999	47	20	27
Peterborough	U	1999	44	17	27
Torfaen	W	1999	51	23	28
Enfield	LB	1999	48	16	32
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	57	23	34
Glasgow	S	1999	64	17	47

Source: MORI

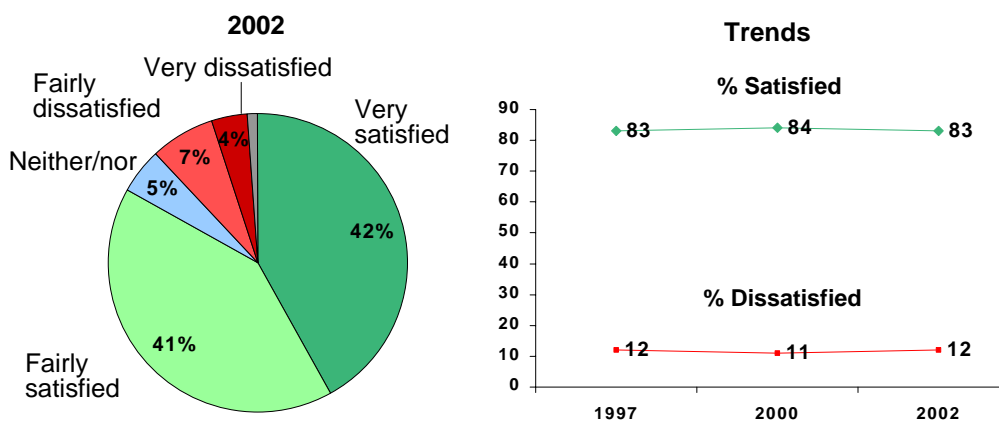
Quality of Life in Gateshead

Satisfaction with the neighbourhood

The vast majority of residents (83%) are satisfied with the area as a place to live, with two in five (42%) stating that they feel very satisfied with their neighbourhood. This is a similar picture to that drawn from the 1997 and 2000 surveys with high levels of neighbourhood satisfaction remaining constant.

Satisfaction with the Neighbourhood

Q Thinking about this neighbourhood on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it as a place to live?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

However, there are some variations in the level of satisfaction by area. Residents from Central are least likely to be satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (71%).

There are also variations by sub group, particularly by ethnic group where Jewish (92%) and White (83%) residents are more likely to be satisfied than are those from non-white minority ethnic groups (75%). Older people are more likely to say they are 'very' satisfied with their neighbourhood, but once combined with those 'fairly' satisfied, there is no significant difference between age groups. Single parents, however, do appear to be particularly dissatisfied with their neighbourhoods (something that is common in similar studies elsewhere in Britain).

Younger residents are less likely to express satisfaction this year than in 2000 (57% vs 79% respectively).

Satisfaction with neighbourhood - by Sub Group

Q Thinking about this neighbourhood on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it as a place to live?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

Gateshead still compares well on satisfaction with neighbourhood compared with similar authorities across Britain where MORI has undertaken similar research, although it has dropped a couple of places since 2000.

Satisfaction: in Context

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisf	Net
			%	ied	satisfied
				%	±
<i>Base: All</i>					
Wokingham (1)	U	2000	91	4	87
Portsmouth	U	1999	87	8	79
Trafford	M	1998	86	9	77
Glasgow	S	1999	86	9	77
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	85	9	76
Wandsworth	LB	1997	85	12	73
Gateshead	M	2000	84	11	73
Hertsmere	U	1999	82	10	72
Gateshead	M	2002	83	12	71
Gateshead	M	1997	83	12	71
Peterborough	U	1999	77	8	69
Medway	U	2000	81	12	69
Leicester	U	1998	80	13	67
South Tyneside	M	2002	80	15	65
Torfaen	W	1999	80	15	65
Enfield	LB	1999	79	15	64
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	78	16	62
East Ayrshire	S	2000	77	15	62
Slough	U	1990	76	15	61
Tameside	M	2000	78	18	60
Brent	LB	1996	75	16	59
Southwark	LB	2000	76	18	58
Oldham	M	1998	74	17	57
Lambeth	LB	1999	74	17	57
Barking and Dagenham	LB	2001	74	19	55
Sunderland	M	2001	74	20	54
Birmingham	M	1997	73	20	53
Manchester	M	1998	71	21	50
Waltham Forest	LB	1987	65	21	44

Wording:

(1) Neighbourhood

Source: MORI

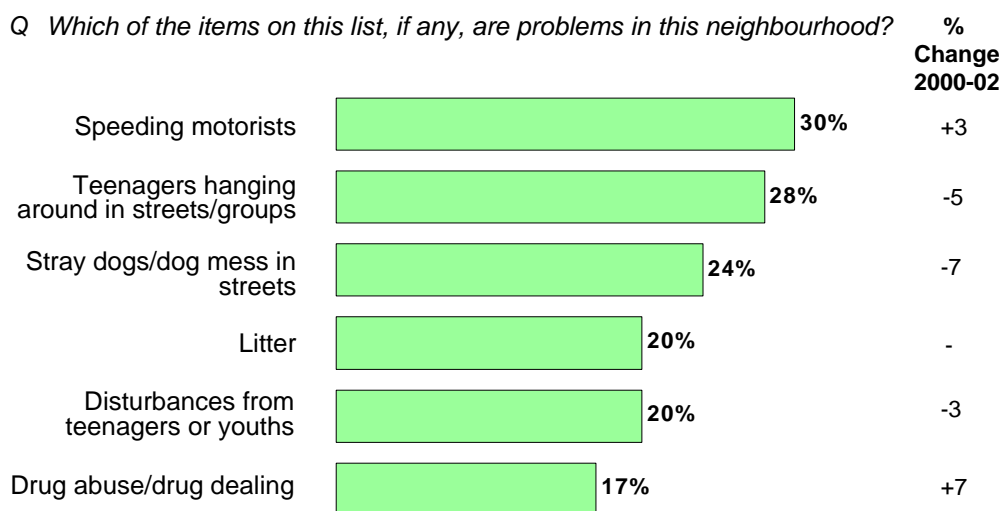
Quality of life: Problems in the area

The most commonly selected neighbourhood problems include ‘speeding motorists’ (30%) and teenagers hanging around in the streets/groups (28%). Environmental issues are also mentioned, with around one in five (24%) ‘stray dogs/dog mess in streets’ and one in five (20%) litter.

‘Speeding motorists’ are of particular concern for those with children in the household (40%). Those that say they are dissatisfied with the Council are also more likely than average to mention this issue (41%).

‘Teenagers hanging around the streets’ is a more common concern for Jewish (58%) and ethnic minority (40%) residents.

Quality of life: Problems in the area



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

In the table below, each area has their top five concerns ranked.

‘Speeding motorists’ and ‘teenagers hanging around in the streets/in groups’ are mentioned as top problems across nearly all the areas with the exception of Central where ‘litter’ and ‘drug abuse/dealing’ are the top two problems.

Top 5 Problems in the area (by area)						
	Central	Felling	Low Fell	Whickham	Wrekenton	Blaydon
1	Litter (35%)	Speeding motorists (25%)	Teenagers hanging around in streets/in groups (41%)	Speeding motorists (35%)	Speeding motorists (33%)	Speeding motorists (29%)
2	Drug abuse/ drug dealing (29%)	= Teenagers hanging around in streets/in groups (22%) = Stray dogs/dogs mess in streets (22%)	Speeding motorists (31%)	Teenagers hanging around in streets/in groups (25%)	Teenagers hanging around in streets/in groups (31%)	= Teenagers hanging around in streets/in groups (25%) = Stray dogs/dogs mess in streets (25%)
3	Speeding motorists (27%)	= Litter (19%) = Sale of alcohol to under-aged (19%)	Disturbances from teenagers or youths (30%)	Litter (24%)	Drug abuse/drug dealing (19%)	Disturbances from teenagers or youths (20%)
4	Stray dogs/dogs mess in streets (25%)		Stray dogs/dogs mess in streets (29%)	Stray dogs/dogs mess in streets (22%)	Disturbances from teenagers or youths (18%)	Drug abuse/drug dealing (19%)
5	Burglaries/ house breaking (23%)		Burglaries/ house breaking (23%)	Disturbances from teenagers or youths (19%)	Stray dogs/dogs mess in streets (15%)	

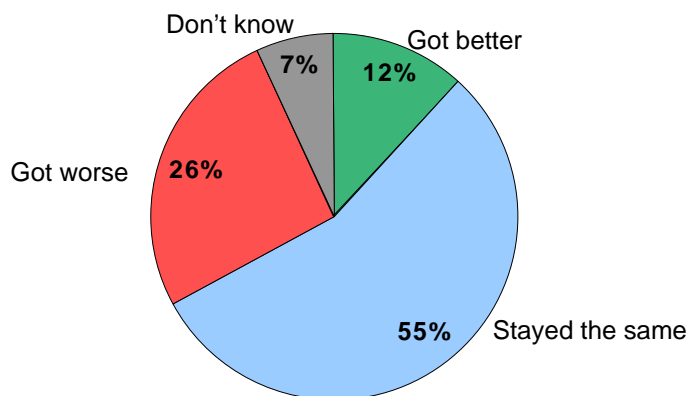
Base: All respondents (1,014)

Source: MORI

Just as the percentage responses in the 2000 and 2002 studies have suggested that people are similarly satisfied with their neighbourhoods, so the majority of residents (55%) say that they feel their area has neither improved nor got worse over the past five years. However, despite consistently high levels of satisfaction with neighbourhoods as places to live, as many as one in four (26%) say that their area has got worse over the past 5 years. This is around twice the proportion of those that say their area has got better (12%).

Perceptions of the Area

Q Overall, would you say that your area has got better or worse or stayed the same over the past 5 years?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

Jewish residents are more likely than others to say their area has got better (37%).

Residents of Central appear to be most inclined to say they feel their area has got worse over the past 5 years (34%).

	Area					
	Central (208)	Felling (79)	Low Fell (182)	Whickham (156)	Wrekenton (153)	Blaydon (236)
<i>Base: All respondents (1,014)</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Got better	12	10	13	10	10	13
Stayed the same	46	65	52	64	61	52
Got worse	34	19	25	22	22	28
Don't know	8	4	9	4	7	6

Source: MORI

The most commonly mentioned improvements are 'less problems with youths/children/kids hanging around' (17%) and 'cleaner/tidier/less litter' (16%). In fact, a perception that there are fewer problems with youth is the converse of one of the main reasons that some people feel their local area has got worse.

Speeding traffic, a commonly selected problem when asked to select from a list is less prominent, mentioned by just over one in ten (13%). On the other hand, 'problem families/undesirables/anti-social tenants' (33%) and 'children/gangs hanging around in the streets' (28%) are the two most commonly mentioned reasons people give for feeling their area has got worse over the past five years.

Got better	Got worse
Less problems with youths/children/kids hanging around (17%)	Problem families/undesirables moving into area/landlords renting to anti-social tenants (33%)
Cleaner/tidier/less litter (16%)	Children/gangs hanging around/causing bother/giving abuse (28%)
Quieter (12%)	Too much drug dealing/abuse (15%)
Bad/disruptive tenants have moved out/moved away (12%)	Dirtier/too much litter/roads not swept regularly (14%)
Less burglaries (6%)	Speeding traffic (13%)
Nicer/friendlier people (5%)	People/youngsters drinking in the streets/alcohol abuse/high level of underage drinking (9%)
Improved street lighting (4%)	More noisy (general) (8%)

Got Better

To put it in people's own words:

'It's quieter, not as many rough people here'

Male, 22-24 years

'It seems to be settling down, it's quieter, more homely and residential now'

Male, 75- 84 years

'Now a cleaner area, friendlier people'

Male, 55-64 years

'Less crime in the area'

Female, 18-21 years

'Moved problem neighbours out of area'

Male, 22-24 years

'Shop has closed, school children stop coming into the area, therefore less disruptions'

Female, 55-64 years

Got worse

'Litter in the street not swept regularly'

Male, 65-74 years

'Moving problem families onto estate and bringing in problems with them from elsewhere'

Female, 35-44 years

'Teenagers make noise hanging around the streets'

Female, 35-44 years

'Teenagers are a nuisance making noises and fighting in the street, leaving litter and broken bottles'

Male, 75-84 years

'Teenagers drinking and being noisy, disturbances from teenagers'

Male, 45-54 years

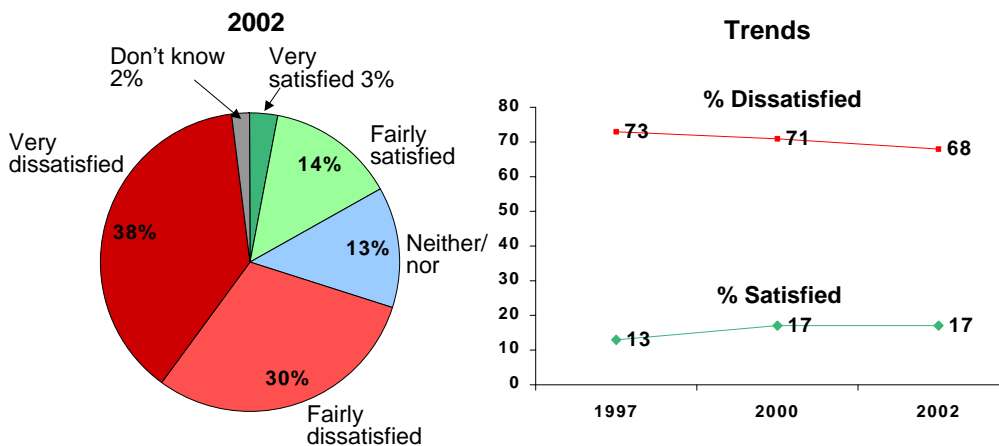
Community Safety - Police

People in Gateshead have become more concerned about problems associated with youth while burglaries and theft from cars appear to have become less of an issue. Anti-social behaviour from young people hanging around streets, drunkenness in streets, disturbances from teenagers, through to speeding motorists and joy riders all receive mentions.

Furthermore, the clear majority of residents are dissatisfied with the number of police on the beat when directly asked, and 'more Police in the local area/ more police on the beat' is mentioned spontaneously by one in ten residents when suggesting improvements to the quality of life in their area.

Community Safety - Police on the Beat

Q From what you know or have heard, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the number of police on the beat, that is, foot patrols, in this neighbourhood?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

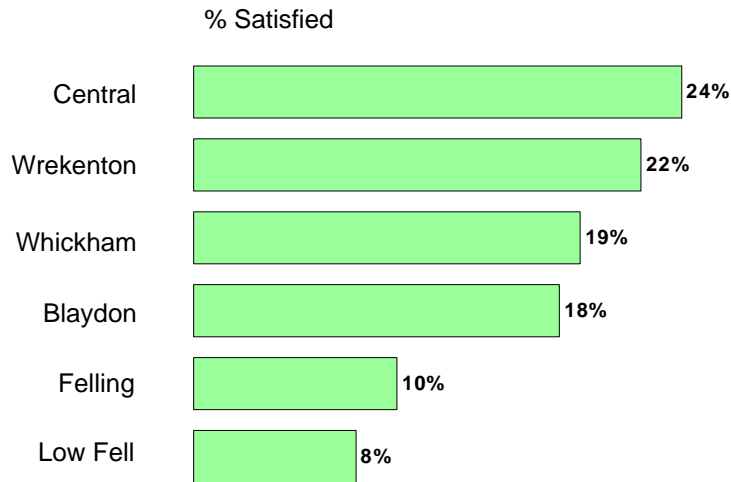
Source: MORI

Younger people appear to be less dissatisfied with the number of police on the beat, while levels of dissatisfaction are higher in the white community than among the ethnic minority groups and Jewish residents.

People in Central and in Wrekenton appear to be more satisfied with the number of Police on the beat than those in other areas, in particular those in Low Fell and Felling.

Community Safety - Police on the Beat

Q From what you know or have heard, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the number of police on the beat, that is, foot patrols, in this neighbourhood?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

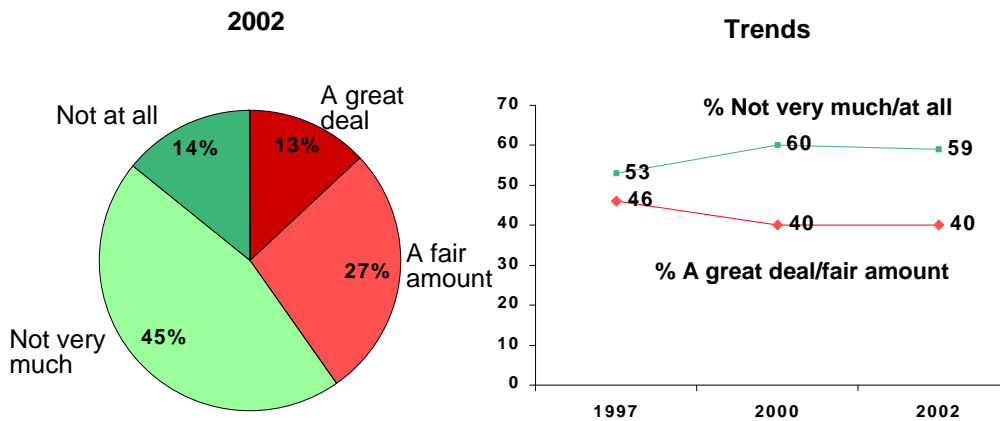
Source: MORI

Feeling Threatened by Crime

The majority of residents do not feel threatened by crime in their area, a fact that has not changed since 2000, sustaining an improvement measured at that time compared with 1997.

Community Safety - Feeling Threatened

Q To what extent do you feel threatened by crime in this neighbourhood these days?



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

However, there are differences between sub groups.

- Women (44%) are more likely to feel threatened by crime in their area than men (36%)
- 18-24 year olds are more likely **not to** feel threatened by crime
- Residents in Central are more likely to feel threatened by crime than those living in Felling, Whickham and Wrekenton, while residents in Low Fell are more likely to feel threatened.

Q To what extent do you feel threatened by crime in this neighbourhood?

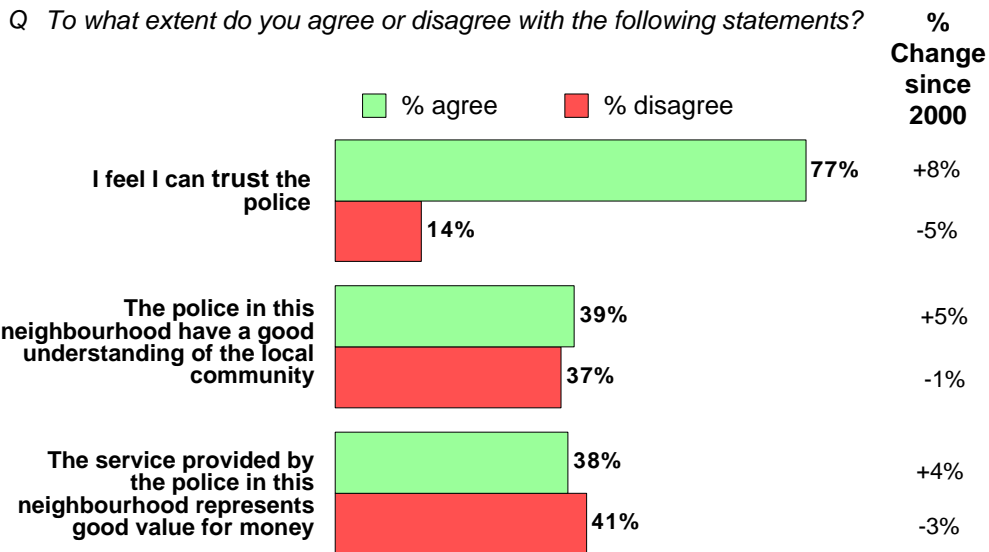
	Great deal/ fair amount	Not very much/ at all
	%	%
Total (1,014)	40	59
Men (474)	36	64
Women (540)	44	55
18-24 (77)	27	73
25-34 (169)	42	57
35-54 (360)	45	54
55-64 (174)	41	59
65+ (234)	35	65
White (1,000)	40	59
Minority Ethnic Group (101)	48	50
Jewish (59 – small base size)	90	10

Source: MORI

There has however, been an increase in the level of trust that residents have with the Police since 2000.

Opinion is divided over whether or not the Police have a good understanding of the local community or provide a service that is good value for money.

Community Safety - Police



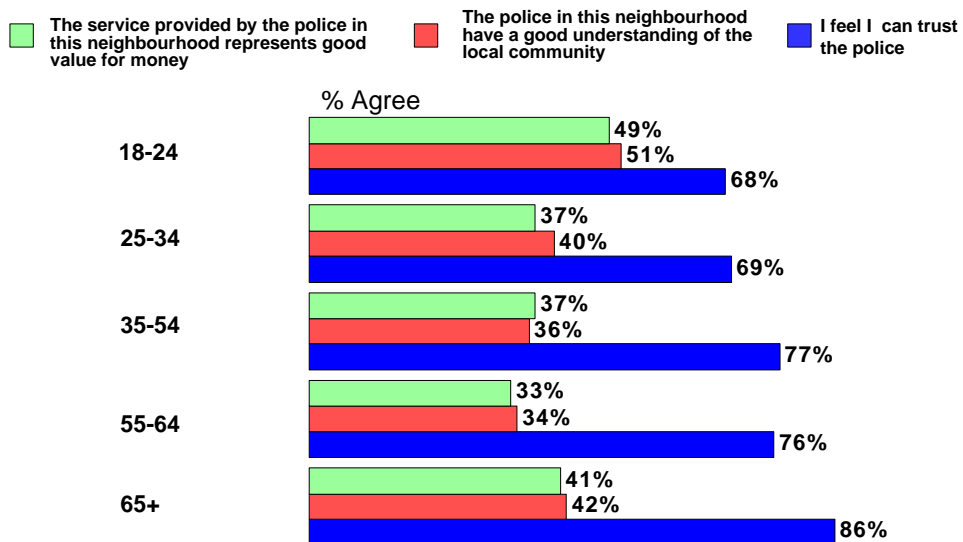
Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

Trust levels are highest among older residents, although it is younger residents who feel that the Police provide a service that is good value for money and have a good understanding of the local community.

Community Safety - Police

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



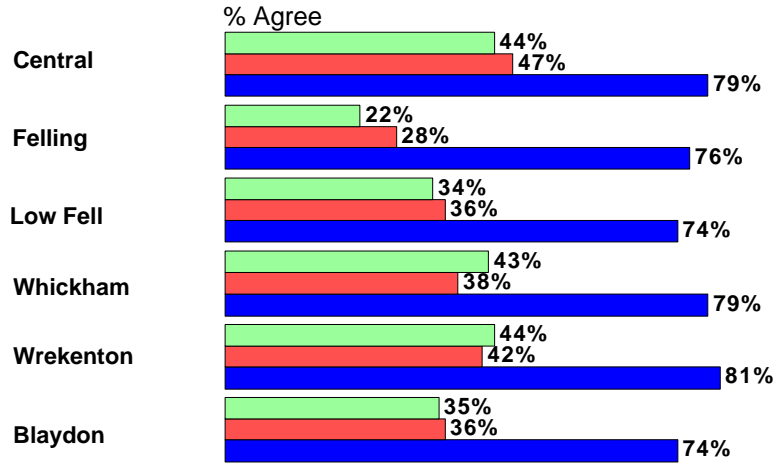
Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

Community Safety - Police

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

- The service provided by the police in this neighbourhood represents good value for money
- The police in this neighbourhood have a good understanding of the local community
- I feel I can trust the police



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

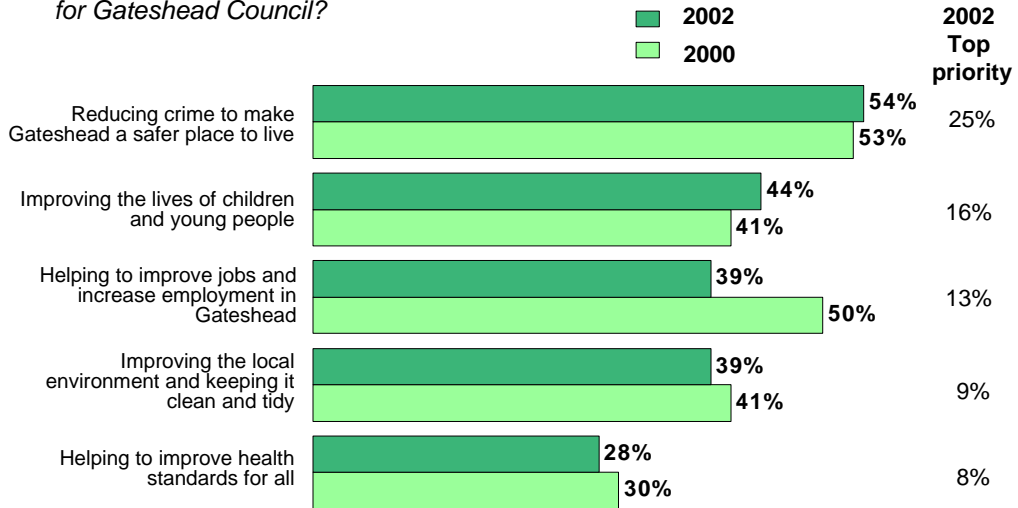
Improving Quality of Life: Identifying Priorities

Out of a series of over-arching objectives the Council might set, the most commonly selected 'top priority' is reducing crime. Set alongside the fact that the most common single item spontaneously mentioned by people to improve the quality of life locally is an increase in police presence, we can see the significance of joint working between the Council and the police.

Two in five highlight improving the lives of children and young people, which may itself be related to the widespread concern about youth disorder.

Identifying Policy Priorities

Q From this list, what would you like to be the three or four main policy priorities for Gateshead Council? Q9.



Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

The Area Dimension

The table below sets out the top policy priorities for Gateshead Council by location.

Top 3 Priorities (by area)						
	Central	Felling	Low Fell	Whickham	Wrekenton	Blaydon
1	Reducing crime (65%)	Reducing crime (57%)	Reducing crime (62%)	Improve local environment (50%)	Reducing crime (50%)	Improving lives for YP (51%)
2	Increase employment (47%)	Improve local environment (48%)	Improve local environment (41%)	Reducing crime (46%)	Improving lives for YP (48%)	Reducing crime (45%)
3	= Improve lives for YP (38%) = Improve local environment (38%)	Increase employment (41%)	Improve lives for YP (40%)	Improving lives for YP (45%)	Increase employment (38%)	Increase employment (38%)

Base: All residents

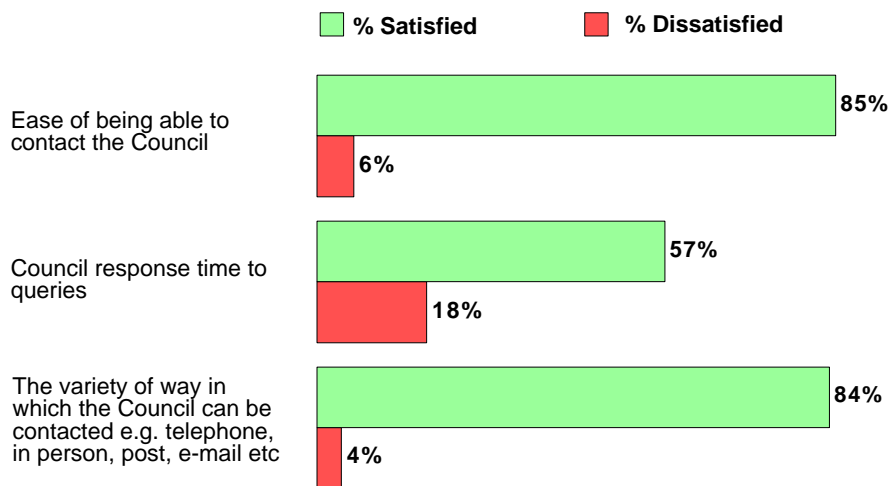
Source: MORI

Contact with the Council

Residents feel that the Council is accessible, with the vast majority of residents saying that they are satisfied with the ease of contacting the Council and satisfied with the variety of ways to contact them. Response time to queries would appear to be the point of weakness, and is more commonly criticised by council tenants (26%) than owner-occupiers (13%).

Contact with the Council

Q And now could you tell me to what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following services that Gateshead Metropolitan Borough Council provides?



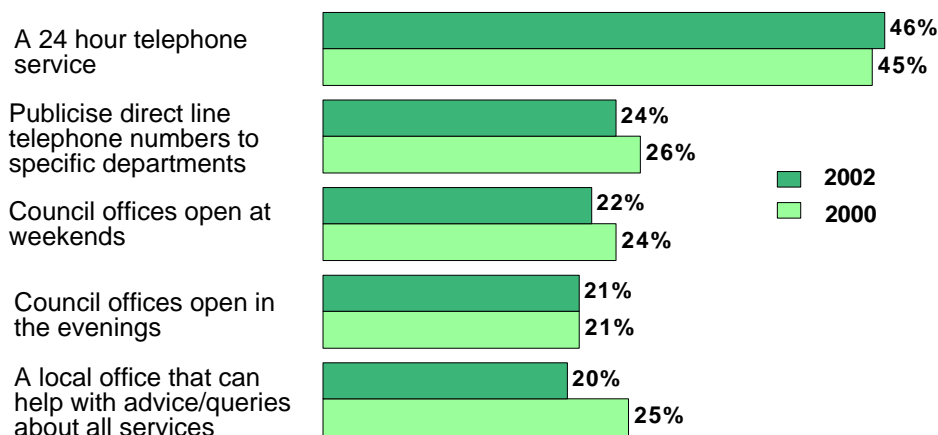
Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

The majority (68%) of residents telephone the Council when they wish to contact them, while around a quarter do so face to face, and telephone contact is also most peoples preference. Furthermore, when asked to choose from a list how Gateshead Council could improve on access, the most commonly favoured improvement would be a 24-hour telephone service.

Preferred Methods of Contact

Q *The council wants to make it easier for people to have contact with them, and to give their views. Which of these would you find particularly helpful?*



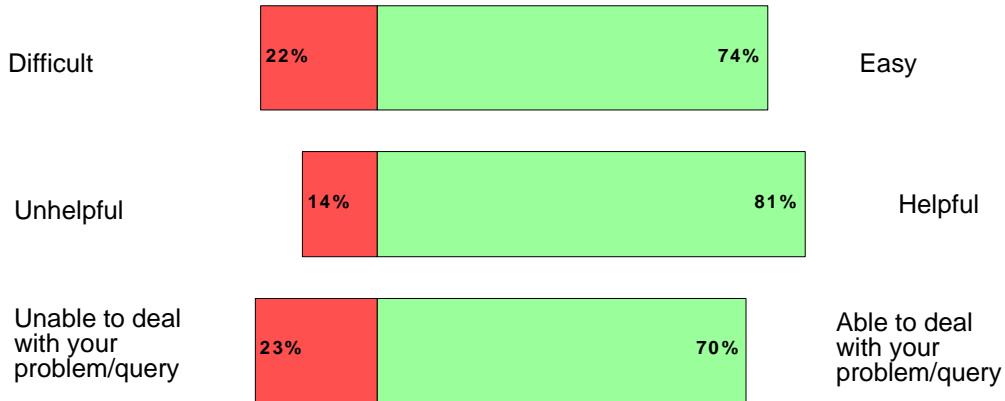
Base: All, 1,041 adults (18+) Gateshead Residents, July - September 2002

Source: MORI

When residents contact Gateshead Council their impressions are mixed. Although they tend to find staff friendly and helpful, they are less satisfied with the outcome of their enquiries. Some of this may stem from problems with resolving complex issues, but some seems to result from a perception of delay in responding or resolving problems. The sense that problems go unresolved does not seem to be strongly correlated with tenure, but does seem to be linked with whether the household contains children.

Customer Care

Q Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way the matter was dealt with on your most recent contact with the Council?



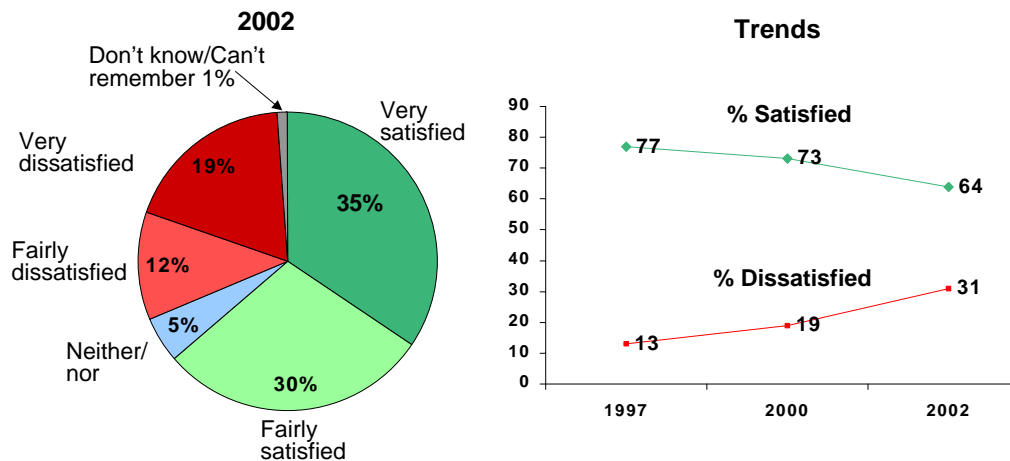
Base: 490, All who have contacted the Council in the past 12 months

Source: MORI

This overall measure of satisfaction with the way public contact is dealt with has seen a further fall since 2000, continuing the downward trend since 1997. Three in ten residents who contacted the Council in the past 12 months are dissatisfied with the way the matter was dealt with. This is a worrying trend.

Customer Care

Q Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way the matter was dealt with on your most recent contact with the Council?



Base: 490, All who have contacted the Council in the past 12 months

Source: MORI

Residents are also slightly more likely to say they find it difficult to get hold of the right person, and that they speak to staff that are unable to deal with their problem than was the case in 2000.

Q When you contacted the Council...

	1997	2000	2002
<i>Base: All who contacted the Council in the past 12 months</i>	<i>(606)</i>	<i>(597)</i>	<i>(490)</i>
	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>	<i>%</i>
Found getting hold of the right person...			
Easy	78	82	74
Difficult	14	15	22
Found staff...			
Helpful	84	85	81
Unhelpful	8	11	14
Able to deal with problem	77	76	70
Unable to deal with problem	13	15	23
Satisfaction with the way the matter was dealt with...			
Satisfied	77	73	64
Dissatisfied	13	19	31

Source: MORI

In spite of this marked deterioration since 1997, Gateshead still ranks favourably compared with other authorities for whom MORI has worked (even if its position has fallen slightly since 2000) with staff being easy to get hold of, helpful and able to deal with resident's problems.

Easy to Get Hold of the Right Person

Q When you last contacted the Council (..... Service) did you find (the staff there) easy to get hold of the right person?

	Type	Year	%
<i>Base: All contacting the Council</i>			
Gateshead	M	2000	82
Wokingham	U	2000	80
Gateshead	M	1997	78
Sutton	LB	1999	77
Gateshead	M	2002	74
Portsmouth	U	2000	73
Sunderland	M	1998	73
Tameside	M	2000	73
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	72
Poole	U	1998	72
Torfaen	W	1998	71
Portsmouth	U	1998	71
Torfaen	W	1999	69
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	69
Stockton-on-Tees	U	1998	67
Birmingham	M	1998	67
Carmarthenshire	W	1998	66
Oldham	M	1998	65
Herefordshire	U	1999	64
Birmingham	M	1999	64
Birmingham	M	2001	64
Leicester	U	2001	60
Glasgow	S	1999	60
Richmond	LB	1998	60
Enfield	LB	1999	60
Leicester	U	1998	59
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	58
Manchester	M	1998	52
Southwark	LB	1998	51
Lambeth	LB	1999	47
Carmarthenshire	W	1998	40
Working			

(1) All who have contacted the Council in the last year

(2) By phone

* asterisk by the type or authority indicates that the status of the Council has changed since the survey took place

Source: MORI

Helpful Staff

Q When you last contacted the Council (..... Service) did you find (the staff there) helpful/unhelpful?

	Type	Year	%
<i>Base: All contacting the Council</i>			Helpful
Wokingham	U	2000	88
Gateshead	M	2000	85
Gateshead	M	1997	84
Sunderland	M	2001	84
Gateshead	M	2002	81
Stirling	S	1998	81
Lancashire	U	2000	81
Poole	U	1998	80
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	79
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	78
Hampshire	M	1999	77
Birmingham	M	2001	77
Tameside	M	2000	76
Torfaen	W	1999	75
Portsmouth	U	2000	75
Trafford	M	1997	74
South Tyneside	M	2002	73
Oldham	M	1998	71
Enfield	LB	1999	71
Leicester	U	1999	70
Sutton	LB	1999	69
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	69
Herefordshire	U	1999	67
Glasgow	S	1999	67
Southwark	LB	1998	66
Manchester	M	1998	65
Camden	LB	1997	63
Richmond	LB	1998	61
Carmarthenshire	W	1998	61
Lambeth	LB	1999	58

Source: MORI

Able to Deal with your Problem

Q When you last contacted the Council (..... Service) did you find (the staff there) able to deal with your problem?

	Type	Year	%
<i>Base: All</i>			Able
Wokingham	U	2000	88
Gateshead	M	1997	77
Gateshead	M	2000	76
Poole	U	1998	74
Sunderland	M	2001	72
Carmarthenshire (1)	W	2000	71
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2001	71
Gateshead	M	2002	70
Stirling	S	1998	70
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	69
Torfaen	W	1999	67
Tameside (1)	M	2000	65
Portsmouth	U	2000	65
Trafford	M	1997	64
Enfield	LB	1999	64
Blackburn with Darwen	U	1998	64
Birmingham	M	1999	63
South Tyneside	M	2002	60
Lambeth	LB	1999	56
Southwark	LB	1998	55
Herefordshire	U	1999	55
Glasgow	S	1999	55
Richmond	LB	1998	54
Camden	LB	1997	45

Wording:

(1) ...query

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with Final Outcome

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the final outcome following your last contact with the Council?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied %
<i>Base: All contacting the Council (includes non complainants)</i>			
Gateshead (1)	M	1997	77
Gateshead (1)	M	2000	73
Wokingham	U	2000	73
Gateshead (1)	M	2002	65
Herefordshire	U	1999	62
Poole	U	1998	62
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	62
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	61
Portsmouth	U	1998	60
Sunderland	M	1998	60
Leicester	U	1998	58
Leicester	U	2001	56
Enfield	LB	2002	55
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	53
Sutton	LB	1999	53
Southwark	LB	1998	52
South Tyneside	M	2002	51
Camden	LB	1997	51
Manchester	M	1998	46
Lambeth	LB	1999	44
Oldham	M	1998	41
Richmond	LB	1998	41

Wording

(1) ...with the way the matter was dealt with on your most recent contact

Source: MORI

Easy to Get Hold of the Right Person

Q When you last contacted the Council (..... Service) did you find (the staff there) easy to get hold of the right person?

	Type	Year	%
<i>Base: All contacting the Council</i>			
Gateshead	M	2000	82
Gateshead	M	1997	78
Sutton	LB	1999	77
Gateshead	M	2002	74
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	74
Portsmouth	U	2000	73
Tameside	M	2000	73
Poole	U	1998	72
Trafford	M	1997	71
Solihull	M	1991	70
South Tyneside	M	2002	69
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	69
Torfaen	W	1999	69
Dudley	M	1989	68
Oldham	M	1998	65
Birmingham	M	2001	64
Enfield	LB	1999	60
Leicester	U	2001	60
Richmond	LB	1998	60
Manchester	M	1998	52
Southwark	LB	1998	51
Lambeth	LB	1999	47
Corby	DC	1998	43

Source: MORI

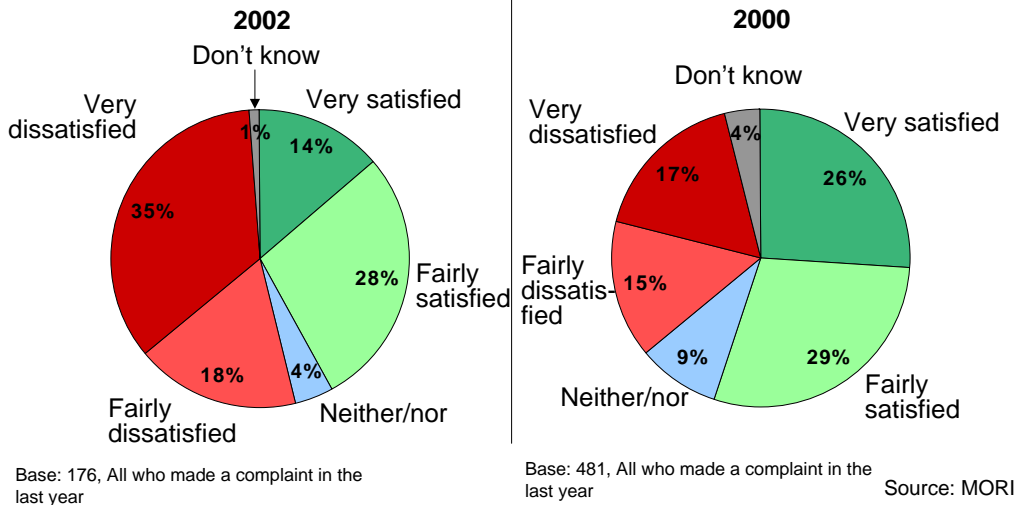
Making a complaint

As with other aspects of contact with the Council, overall satisfaction with the way the Council deals with residents' complaints has declined since 2000. More than half who have made a complaint are dissatisfied with the way the matter was dealt with.

It is striking that three in ten residents who say they are generally dissatisfied with the way the Council is running the area also say they have contacted the Council with a complaint. Of these people, the majority (68%) are also dissatisfied with the way the matter was dealt with.

Making a complaint

Q *And overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way the matter was dealt with when you made your complaint?*



Satisfaction with services

Universal services

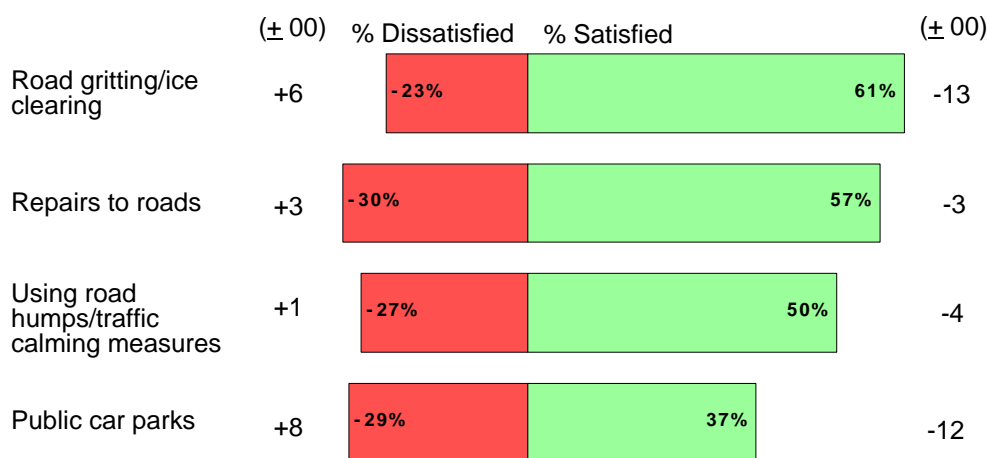
On the road

Gateshead remains one of the leading Council's on satisfaction with road maintenance with a net satisfaction score of +27%, which compares to an average of +12% in MORI's normative data (table below). However, this finding has fallen slightly since the previous residents survey in 2000.

This is in line with other 'road related' services, satisfaction appears generally to be quite high but has fallen slightly since the previous survey in 2000. In particular, satisfaction with 'road gritting/ice clearing' and 'public car parks' has declined over the past two years.

On the road

Q I'd like you to tell me to what extent you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each in your local area



Base: All respondents (1,014)

Source: MORI

- Around six in ten (61%) of residents are satisfied with 'road gritting/ice clearing' while almost one quarter (23%) say they are dissatisfied. This finding is consistent across areas.
- A similar proportion (57%) are satisfied with 'repairs to roads' while three in ten (30%) say they are dissatisfied. Residents of Whickham and Blaydon are more likely to be satisfied than are those living in Felling, Low Fell or Wrekenton.

- Around half (50%) of residents are satisfied with 'road humps/traffic calming measures', while just over one quarter are dissatisfied (27%). Residents of Whickham are more likely to be satisfied than those living in Central, Felling and Low Fell, while residents in Blaydon are also more likely to be satisfied than those in Felling.
- Fewer than two in five residents (37%) are satisfied with public car parks, while one quarter (25%) are dissatisfied. Interestingly, those with a car in the household are more likely to be *satisfied* with public car parks than are residents generally (41% vs 37%). Residents living in Low Fell are more likely to be satisfied than those that reside in Central, Wrekenton and Blaydon.

Satisfaction with road maintenance

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with road maintenance?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All</i>			%	±	
Greenwich	LB	1999	60	20	40
Enfield	LB	1999	59	22	37
Rutland	U	1997	58	24	34
Gateshead (1)	M	2000	60	27	33
Sutton	LB	1999	55	27	28
Leicester	U	1998	55	27	28
Gateshead (1)	M	2002	57	30	27
Richmond	LB	1998	53	28	25
Sunderland	M	2001	49	31	18
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	50	32	18
Southend-on-Sea (2)	U	1999	49	32	17
South Tyneside	M	2002	49	32	17
Wokingham	U	2000	49	34	15
Peterborough	U	1999	46	31	15
Carmarthenshire (2)	W	2000	50	35	15
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	48	37	11
Poole	U	1998	42	39	3
Camden (1)	LB	2001	40	38	2
Stirling	S	1998	42	46	-4
Swindon	U	1998	35	42	-7
Medway	U	2000	36	45	-9
Portsmouth	U	2000	37	47	-10
Manchester (2)	M	1998	39	49	-10
Lambeth	LB	1999	34	44	-10
Torfaen	W	1999	37	49	-12
Birmingham	M	2001	40	53	-13

Wording:

(1) repair of roads

(2) road maintenance and repairs

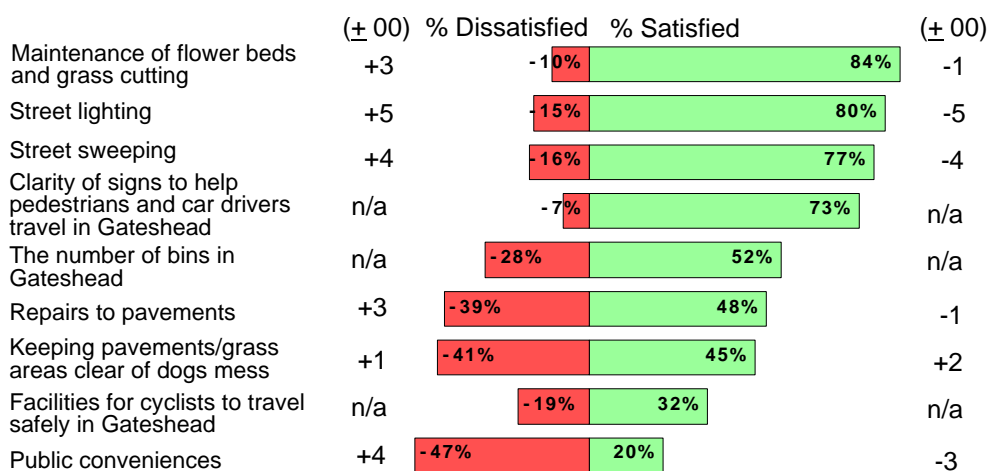
Source: MORI

Street scene

Gateshead continues to perform well on satisfaction with services, although as we have seen, there appears to be a slight decline in some satisfaction levels from 2000. Services that continue to perform well compared to other authorities include street lighting, street sweeping and pavement maintenance.

Street scene

Q I'd like you to tell me to what extent you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each in your local area



Base: All respondents (1,014)

Source: MORI

- More than four in five (84%) are satisfied with ‘maintenance of flower beds and grass cutting’ while one in ten (10%) say they are dissatisfied. Residents in Central and Whickham are more likely to be dissatisfied than are those living in Wrekenton and Blaydon.
- Four in five (80%) of residents are satisfied with street lighting, while 15% say they are dissatisfied. Gateshead compares well with other authorities on street lighting and continues this trend in this survey, despite a slight decline in satisfaction rating. Residents in Whickham are more likely to be satisfied with street lighting than those living in Central and Low Fell.
- Just over three-quarters (77%) of residents are satisfied with ‘street sweeping’, while around one in six (16%) is dissatisfied. Once more, Gateshead compares well with other authorities with residents still rating it higher than any other authority in MORI’s normative data. Residents in Low Fell and Whickham are more likely to be dissatisfied

- Around three-quarters (73%) are also satisfied with ‘the clarity of signs to help pedestrians and car drivers travel in Gateshead’, with fewer than one in ten (7%) dissatisfied. Those with a car in the household are more likely to be satisfied than are residents generally (79% vs 73%). Residents in Low Fell are more likely to be satisfied than are those living in Central and Felling, while those that reside in Blaydon are also likely to be more satisfied than those in Central.
- Around half (52%) are satisfied with ‘the number of bins in Gateshead’ while around three in ten (28%) are dissatisfied. There is little difference across area.
- Around half (48%) are also satisfied with ‘repairs to pavements’ while around two in five (39%) are dissatisfied. In MORI’s experience residents are frequently dissatisfied with pavement maintenance. Gateshead appears to be above average in this regard, in spite of some decline since 2000. Residents of Whickham and Blaydon are more likely to be satisfied than those living in Low Fell and Wrekenton.
- Just under half (45%) are satisfied with ‘keeping pavements/grass areas clear of dogs mess’ while around two in five (41%) are dissatisfied. Those most likely to be *dissatisfied* include residents that say they are dissatisfied with the way the Council is running the area (58%). There is little difference across area.
- Around half of residents are non-committal on the issue of ‘facilities for cyclists to travel safely in Gateshead’ either answering ‘neither’ or ‘no opinion’, while around three quarters (32%) are satisfied and around one in five (19%) dissatisfied. Residents from Felling are more likely to be *dissatisfied* than those living in Low Fell and Whickham. There is little difference between those with a car in the household and residents generally.
- There are fairly low levels of satisfaction with ‘public conveniences’ with more residents dissatisfied (47%) than are satisfied (20%). Satisfaction has also declined since the survey in 2000. Residents of Wrekenton are more likely to be dissatisfied than those living in Central and Low Fell.

Satisfaction with street lighting

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with street lighting?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	±
Poole	U	1998	86	7	79
South Tyneside	M	2002	86	8	78
Richmond	LB	1998	84	7	77
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	85	9	76
Gateshead	M	2000	85	10	75
Leicester	U	1998	82	8	74
Gateshead	M	2002	80	15	70
Sutton	LB	1999	80	11	69
Rutland	U	1997	78	11	67
Oldham	M	1998	79	12	67
Manchester	M	1998	78	14	64
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	78	14	64
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	79	15	64
Trafford	M	1997	77	14	63
Portsmouth	U	2000	76	13	63
Birmingham	M	1998	76	14	62
Tameside	M	2000	76	15	61
Sunderland	M	2001	76	16	60
Medway	U	2000	72	14	58
Enfield	LB	1999	71	13	58
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	73	18	55
Greenwich	LB	1999	77	18	54
Torfaen	W	1999	72	19	53
Camden	LB	2001	64	18	46
Southwark	LB	2000	60	20	40
Lambeth	LB	1999	59	25	34
Islington	LB	1999	51	24	27

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with street cleaning

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with street cleaning?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	±
Gateshead (1)	M	2000	81	12	69
Gateshead (1)	M	2002	77	16	61
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	72	17	55
Greenwich	LB	1999	72	18	54
Sutton (1)	LB	1997	69	20	49
Stockton-Upon-Tees	U	2002	69	22	47
Poole	U	1998	67	20	47
Wokingham (2)	U	2000	64	19	45
Stirling	S	1998	67	26	41
South Tyneside	M	2002	63	24	39
Tameside	M	2000	63	24	39
Sunderland	M	1999	63	27	36
Medway	U	2000	61	26	35
Herefordshire	U	1999	58	27	31
Camden	LB	2001	56	27	29
Richmond	LB	1998	56	30	26
Peterborough	U	1999	54	27	26
Southwark	LB	2000	53	29	24
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	56	34	22
Birmingham	M	2001	57	36	21
Portsmouth	U	2000	55	35	20
Oldham	M	1998	59	29	20
Trafford	M	1997	53	35	18
Isle of Wight	U	1996	53	37	16
Islington	LB	1999	44	35	9
Swindon	U	1998	45	42	3

Wording:

(1) street sweeping

(2) street cleansing

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with pavement maintenance

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with pavement maintenance?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied %	Dissatisfied %	Net satisfied ±
<i>Base: All</i>					
Sutton	LB	1999	57	29	28
Enfield	LB	1999	53	27	26
Wokingham	U	2000	51	30	21
South Tyneside (1)	M	2002	52	31	21
Richmond (1)	LB	1998	51	33	18
Sunderland	M	2001	50	34	16
Gateshead	M	2000	49	35	14
Portsmouth	U	1998	49	36	13
Gateshead	M	2002	48	39	13
Greenwich	LB	1999	45	35	10
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	44	36	8
Camden (1)	LB	2001	42	38	4
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	44	42	2
Poole	U	1998	41	41	0
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	44	45	-1
Medway	U	2000	41	44	-3
Birmingham (2)	M	1998	43	49	-6
Leicester	U	1998	39	46	-7
Manchester	M	1998	35	51	-15
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	36	52	-16
Lambeth	LB	1999	31	49	-18
Peterborough	U	1999	28	51	-23
Torfaen	W	1999	32	57	-25
Swindon	U	1998	29	56	-27

Wording :

(1) footpath maintenance

(2) road and footpath maintenance

Source: MORI

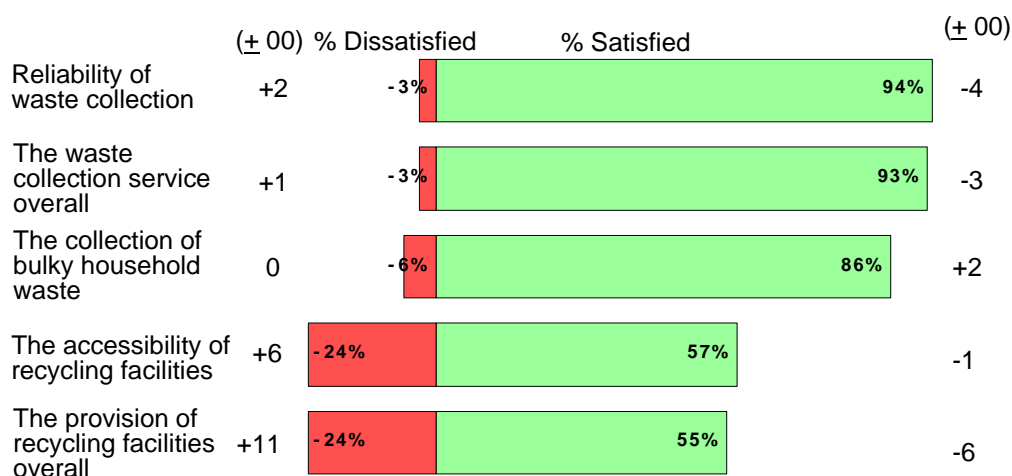
Waste collection services

Waste collection services provided some of the highest levels of service satisfaction for Gateshead Council. In particular, from this survey and the 2000 survey, Gateshead has some of the highest satisfaction ratings for refuse collection in MORI's normative data.

However, perhaps as a result of these high levels of satisfaction and consequently high service expectations, satisfaction ratings for recycling perform less well. While 93% of residents are satisfied with the 'waste collection service overall', just under one in six (57%) are satisfied with 'the provision of recycling facilities overall'. Thus while Gateshead has some of the highest comparative levels of satisfaction for waste collection, this figure falls to a comparatively low figure for recycling.

Waste collection services

Q I'd like you to tell me to what extent you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each in your local area



Base: All respondents (1,014)

Source: MORI

- The vast majority of residents (94%) are satisfied with the 'reliability of waste collection', with just 3% dissatisfied.
- Residents are also generally satisfied with 'the waste collection service overall', more than nine in ten satisfied (93%) with just 3% dissatisfied. Gateshead also performs comparatively well with a higher satisfaction rating than other authorities in the normative data. There is little difference between area within Gateshead.
- More than four in five (86%) are satisfied with 'the collection of bulky household waste', with just 6% dissatisfied. Residents of Whickham (72%) are *less* likely to be satisfied than are residents of other areas.
- Almost six in ten (57%) are satisfied with 'the accessibility of recycling facilities' while around one quarter (24%) are dissatisfied. Residents of Wrekenton (38%) are more likely to be *dissatisfied* than are residents of other areas.
- Over half (55%) are satisfied with 'the provision of recycling facilities overall' while around one quarter (24%) are dissatisfied. This is one service area where Gateshead compares less favourably with other authorities in MORI's normative data. Once more, residents of Wrekenton are most likely to be dissatisfied (37%).

Satisfaction with Refuse Collection

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with refuse collection?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	±
Gateshead (1)	M	2000	96	2	94
Gateshead (1)	M	2002	93	3	90
Torfaen	W	1999	91	5	86
South Tyneside	M	2002	91	5	86
Sunderland	M	2001	89	4	85
Poole	U	1998	90	5	85
Herefordshire	U	1999	91	6	85
Tameside	M	2000	88	4	84
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	89	6	83
Stirling	S	1998	90	7	83
Leicester	U	1998	87	5	82
Wokingham	U	2000	86	7	79
Carmarthenshire	W	2000	86	8	78
Peterborough	U	1999	83	8	76
Medway	U	2000	85	9	76
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	84	9	75
Manchester	M	1998	83	11	72
Glasgow	S	1999	81	12	69
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	81	12	69
Sutton	LB	1999	79	12	67
Birmingham	M	2001	80	13	67
Portsmouth	U	2000	78	16	62
Oldham	M	1998	77	16	61
Lambeth	LB	1999	72	15	57
Southwark	LB	1998	73	18	55
Enfield	LB	1999	70	18	52
Islington	LB	1999	56	21	35
Swindon	U	1998	57	30	27

Wording:
Waste collection service

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with recycling

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with recycling?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	±
Sutton	LB	1999	80	8	72
Leicester	U	1998	77	8	69
Poole	U	1998	77	8	69
Peterborough	U	1999	76	8	68
Tameside	M	2000	67	7	60
Southend-on-Sea (2)	U	1999	74	21	53
Swindon	U	1998	67	14	53
Portsmouth	U	2000	69	19	50
Gateshead (1)	M	2000	61	13	48
Oldham	M	1998	59	12	47
Torfaen (1)	W	1999	61	17	44
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	61	20	41
Camden	LB	1999	54	15	40
Carmarthenshire (1)	W	2000	58	20	38
Gateshead (1)	M	2002	55	24	31
Sunderland	M	2001	43	23	20
South Tyneside	M	2002	40	21	19
Manchester	M	1998	40	32	8

Wording:

(1) recycling facilities

(2) recycling services

Source: MORI

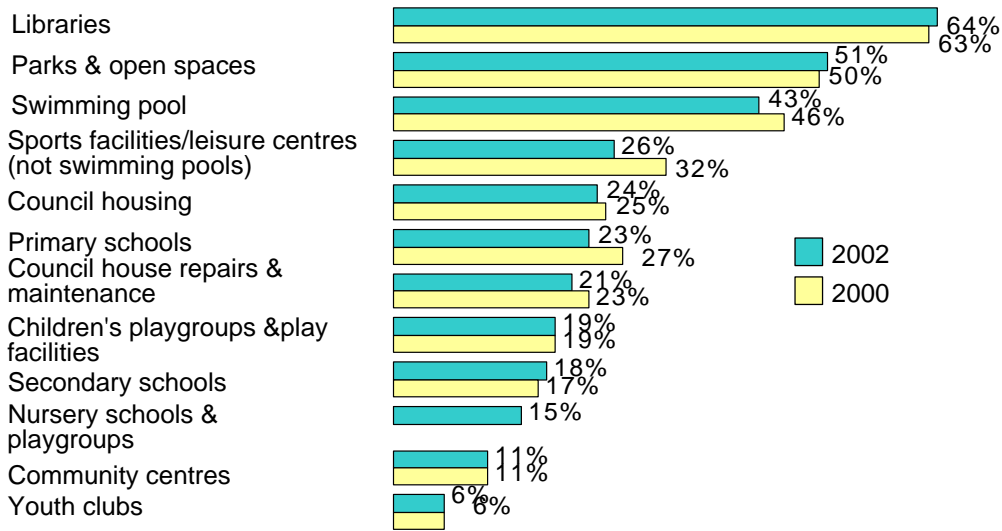
Non-universal services

Number of users

There has been little change in the picture when it comes to the proportions of household members who say they are using local services compared with 2000. The one exception is 'sports facilities/leisure facilities (not swimming pools)' where there appears to have been a decline in the number of users, from around one third of residents (32%) to around one quarter (26%).

Service Usage

Q Which of these services have you or other members of your family used or benefited from over the past year?



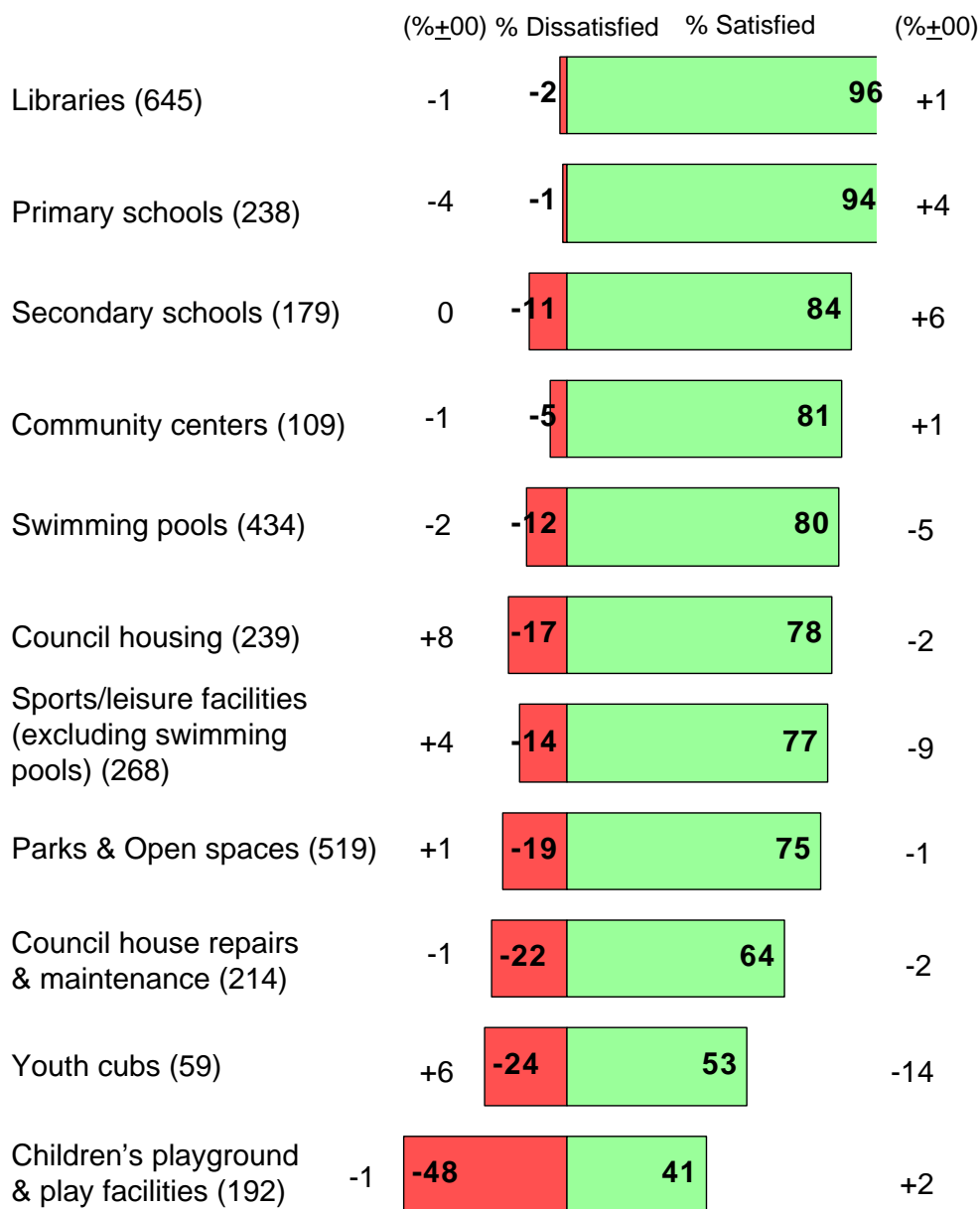
Base: All respondents (1,014)

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with non-universal services

The graph below outlines services users' satisfaction, including percentage change from the survey in 2000.

Satisfaction with non-universal services



Base: All users

Source: MORI

- The vast majority of library users (96%) are satisfied with the service. Gateshead also has one of the highest levels of satisfaction with Libraries in MORI's normative data.
- Similarly, the vast majority (94%) of users of primary schools are satisfied with the service. Indeed, net satisfaction has increased since 2000 (from 90% to 94%).
- Satisfaction among users of secondary schools has also risen since 2000, net satisfaction up 6 percentage points. More than four in five users say they are satisfied (84%) with around one in ten dissatisfied (11%).
- Around four in five users are satisfied with community centres while just one in twenty five (5%) are dissatisfied.
- Similarly, four in five users (80%) are satisfied with swimming pools, while around one in ten (12%) are dissatisfied. This represents a slight decline in satisfaction since 2000 where 85% of users were satisfied.
- Around four in five council house tenants are satisfied with the service they receive, while around one in five (17%) are dissatisfied. This represents an 8 percentage point increase in dissatisfaction since 2000. Despite this, satisfaction among council tenants remains high when compared with other authorities.
- Just over three quarters (77%) are satisfied with sports and leisure facilities (excluding swimming pools) while 14% are dissatisfied. This represents a slight downturn in satisfaction with services from 2000 (86%), there has also been a decline in the number of users of the service over the past two years.
- Three quarters (75%) of users of parks and open spaces are satisfied with the service provided, while around one in five (19%) are dissatisfied. This is a similar finding to levels of satisfaction with the service in 2000.
- Just under two thirds (64%) of council tenants are satisfied with council house repairs and maintenance, while around one in five (22%) are dissatisfied. This is a similar level of satisfaction with the service as in 2000.
- Around half (53%) of residents that use youth clubs say they are satisfied with the service, while one quarter are dissatisfied (24%).

- More users of children's playground and play facilities are dissatisfied than satisfied. While around two in five (41%) are satisfied around half (48%) are dissatisfied with the service. There appears to have been little change in satisfaction ratings since 2000.

Satisfaction with libraries

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with libraries?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Users</i>			%	%	±
Gateshead	M	2002	96	2	94
Sunderland	M	2001	95	2	93
Gateshead	M	2000	95	3	92
Sutton	LB	1997	93	1	92
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	92	3	90
Torfaen	W	1999	90	3	87
Poole	U	1998	91	4	87
Portsmouth	U	1997	90	5	85
Peterborough	U	1999	89	4	85
Trafford	M	1997	89	5	84
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2001	88	6	82
Swindon	U	1998	87	6	81
Richmond	LB	1998	87	6	81
Leicester	U	1998	86	5	81
South Tyneside	M	2002	81	2	79
Birmingham	M	2001	84	5	79
Enfield	LB	1997	85	7	78
Rutland	U	1997	82	8	74
Herefordshire	U	1999	84	11	73
Medway	U	2000	79	9	70
Manchester	M	1998	81	13	68
Southwark	LB	2000	77	11	66
Camden	LB	2001	70	17	53
Islington	LB	1999	47	10	37

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with primary schools

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with primary schools?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
			%	%	±
<i>Base: Users</i>					
Gateshead	M	2002	94	1	93
South Tyneside	M	2002	92	2	90
Carmarthenshire	W	1998	91	2	89
Torfaen	W	1999	89	3	87
Sunderland	M	2001	90	3	87
Gateshead	M	2000	90	5	85
Enfield	LB	1999	85	6	79
Tameside	M	2000	85	7	78
Herefordshire	U	1999	85	7	78
Birmingham	M	2001	85	8	77
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	84	7	77
Medway	U	2000	81	6	75
Peterborough	U	1999	79	10	69
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	79	12	67
Poole	U	1998	77	10	67
Leicester	U	1998	78	12	66
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	77	11	66
Camden (1)	LB	2001	75	10	65
Rutland	U	1997	76	12	64
Islington	LB	1999	76	12	64
Sutton	LB	1999	74	11	63
Richmond	LB	1999	75	13	62
Southwark (2)	LB	2000	63	21	42
Lambeth	LB	1999	55	25	30

Wording:

(1) primary education

(2) local primary schools

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with secondary schools

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with secondary schools?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
			%	%	±
<i>Base: Users</i>					
South Tyneside	M	2002	87	5	82
Sunderland	M	2001	85	8	77
Gateshead	M	2002	84	11	73
Torfaen	W	1999	80	7	73
Tameside	M	2000	80	7	73
Herefordshire	U	1999	81	12	69
Enfield	LB	1999	78	10	69
Birmingham	M	2001	79	10	69
Gateshead	M	2000	78	11	67
Poole	U	1998	74	7	66
Peterborough	U	1999	77	11	66
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	78	13	65
Barking & Dagenham	LB	2000	75	11	64
Richmond	LB	1998	75	13	62
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	73	15	58
Sutton	LB	1999	69	13	56
Medway	U	2000	69	15	54
Camden (1)	LB	2001	68	14	54
Rutland	U	1997	69	17	52
Leicester	U	1998	66	18	48
Manchester	M	1998	63	22	42
Portsmouth	U	1997	60	24	36
Islington	LB	1999	51	25	26
Lambeth	LB	1999	51	31	20
Southwark (2)	LB	2000	47	35	12

Wording:

(1) Secondary Education

(2) Local secondary schools

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with swimming pools

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with swimming pools?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Users</i>			%	%	±
Torfaen	W	1999	84	8	76
Gateshead	M	2000	85	10	75
Sunderland	M	2001	82	10	72
Gateshead	M	2002	80	12	68
South Tyneside	M	2002	74	12	62
Richmond	LB	1998	71	11	60
Manchester	M	1998	65	25	40
Islington	LB	1999	44	6	38
Stockton-On-Tees	U	2002	59	30	29
Portsmouth	U	1997	49	34	15
Brent	LB	1996	46	34	12
Rutland	U	1997	45	41	4

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with council housing

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Council housing?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Council Tenants</i>			%	%	±
Herefordshire	U	1999	87	3	84
Gateshead	M	2000	80	9	71
Poole	U	1998	77	10	67
Gateshead	M	2002	78	17	61
Enfield	LB	1999	74	17	58
Blackburn with Darwen	U	1998	73	17	56
Rutland	U	1997	66	20	46
South Tyneside	M	2002	67	21	46
Peterborough	U	1999	63	19	44
Sutton	LB	1999	64	24	40
Portsmouth	U	1997	63	23	40
Swindon (1)	U	1998	51	15	36
Leicester	U	1998	61	25	36
Torfaen	W	1999	60	26	35
Lambeth	LB	2000	57	22	35
Richmond	LB	1999	57	25	32
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	55	29	26
Birmingham	M	2001	55	35	20
Southwark (2)	LB	2000	52	33	19
Camden	LB	1997	48	29	19
Stockton-On-Tees	U	2002	52	38	14
Manchester	M	1998	42	45	-4

Wording:

(1) housing repairs (2) Council housing service

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with leisure centres

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with leisure centres?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Users</i>			%	%	±
Poole	U	1998	90	4	86
Torfaen	W	1999	87	6	81
Swindon	U	1998	85	7	78
Sunderland	M	1999	85	8	77
South Tyneside	M	2002	83	6	77
Gateshead	M	2000	86	10	76
Birmingham	M	2001	78	6	72
Carmarthenshire	W	1998	82	10	72
Gateshead	M	2002	77	14	63
Camden	LB	1999	71	10	61
Herefordshire	U	1999	74	17	57
Southend-on-Sea	U	1999	72	16	56
Sunderland	M	2000	61	9	52
Portsmouth	U	1997	66	18	48
Medway (1)	U	2000	68	21	47
Maidstone	DC	1989	63	24	39
Southwark	LB	1998	57	24	33
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	46	39	7

Wording:

(1) sports and leisure facilities

Source: MORI

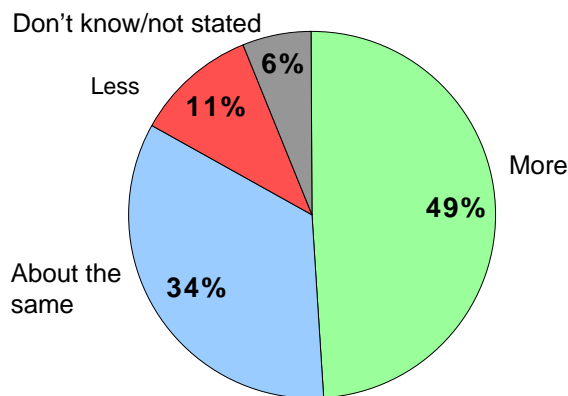
Racial prejudice

Around half of residents (49%) think there is generally more racial prejudice in Britain now than 5 years ago. In particular, residents of Central are more likely to hold this view than are residents of Whickham and Blaydon, as are those from Felling compared to residents of Blaydon.

Younger people, in particular the under-35s, are more likely to say there is less racial prejudice than are those aged 55+.

Racial Prejudice

Q Do you think that there is generally more racial prejudice in Britain now than 5 years ago, less or about the same?



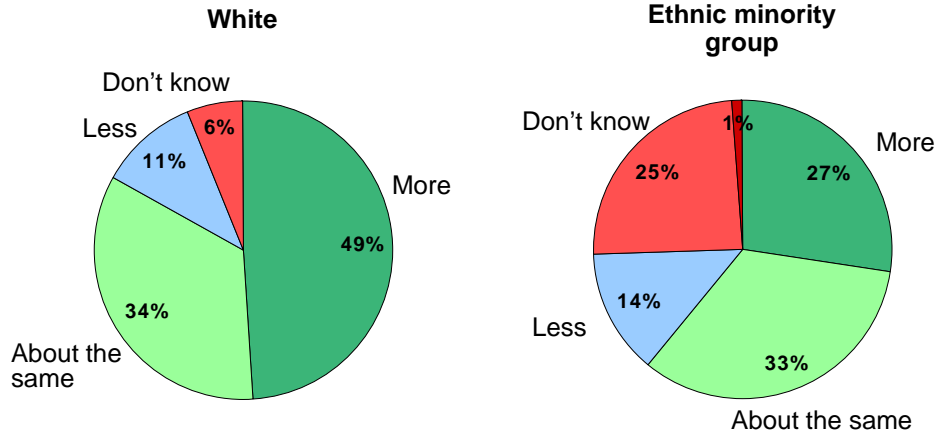
Base: All respondents (1.014)

Source: MORI

Perhaps surprisingly, residents from ethnic minority groups are *less* likely to say that racial prejudice has increased in Britain over the past 5 years, around three in ten (28%) saying so. However, a relatively high proportion (25%), state they ‘don’t know’ whether racial prejudice has remained the same, got better or worse in Britain. This could be for a number of reasons – a reluctance to respond to the question, or an inability to respond to a question reviewing a period of five years if they have been resident for less than that. Alternatively, it could be a combination of these factors, resulting in members of the minority ethnic communities being less likely to be content to respond on the basis of general impressions, and feeling that they do not have sufficient direct experience to make an appropriate comparison.

Racial prejudice - by ethnicity

Q Do you think that there is generally more racial prejudice in Britain now than 5 years ago, less or about the same?



Base: White (1,000)/Ethnic minority (101)

Source: MORI

The vast majority say they would be treated fairly by the fire service, their local hospital, the police and Gateshead Council. Although still a majority, Jewish residents are less likely to feel they would be treated fairly by the education service (59%) compared with white and ethnic minority residents (83%). Ethnic minority and Jewish residents are also *more* likely to say they would be treated fairly by the immigration service than are white residents.

Another way of looking at this issue is to ask people how fairly they feel **they** would be treated by a range of public services. If we compare the responses of people from minority ethnic groups, we get an idea of the extent to which there is apprehension about discrimination or prejudice affecting the operation of each service.

When we look at the differences in perceptions of white, non-white and Jewish residents, the picture is complicated by differing propensities to express 'no opinion'. It does appear, however, that non-white residents are least confident that they would be treated fairly by all public services (this conclusion is drawn by examining the mean scores of responses, which factors out 'no opinion' responses). Only on education services do Jewish residents appear to feel they may be treated unfairly – on other services they are as or more confident than the white community.

Perceived treatment by public services

	White	Ethnic minority	Jewish
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	<i>(1,000)</i>	<i>(101)</i>	<i>(59)</i>
Police	2.27	2.09	2.58
Fire Service	2.58	2.26	2.69
Courts	2.28	2.11	2.62
Immigration Service	2.21	2.08	2.56
NHS	2.46	2.20	2.65
Education Service	2.35	2.19	2.26
Gateshead MBC	2.15	2.08	2.59

Source: MORI

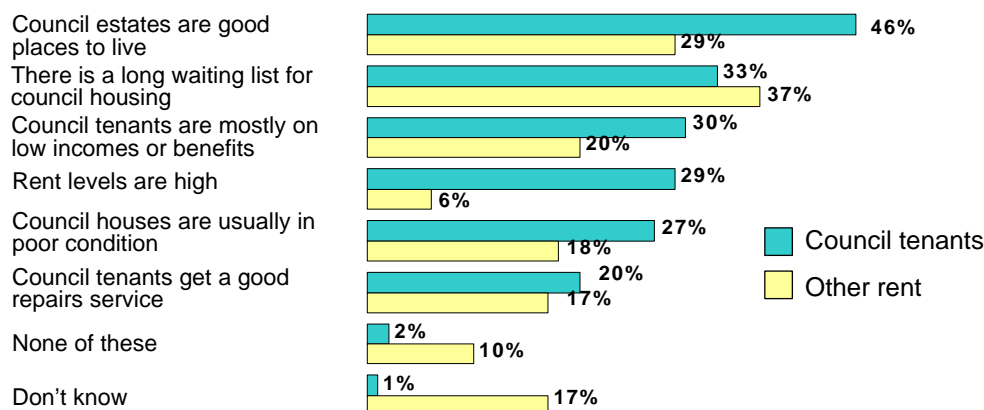
Housing

Impressions of Council housing

Considering impressions of council housing between council house tenants and those that rent from a housing association or private landlord provides an interesting comparison. Council tenants are more likely to feel that ‘Council estates are good places to live’ (46% vs 29%) and that ‘rent levels are high’ (29% vs 6%).

Impression of council housing

Q Which of the items on this card would you use to describe your impression of council housing in Gateshead?



Base: All council tenants (309)/other rent (76)

Source: MORI

Provisions for stock transfer

MORI asked council tenants what conditions, if any, would need to be met in order for housing stock to be transferred to a housing association.

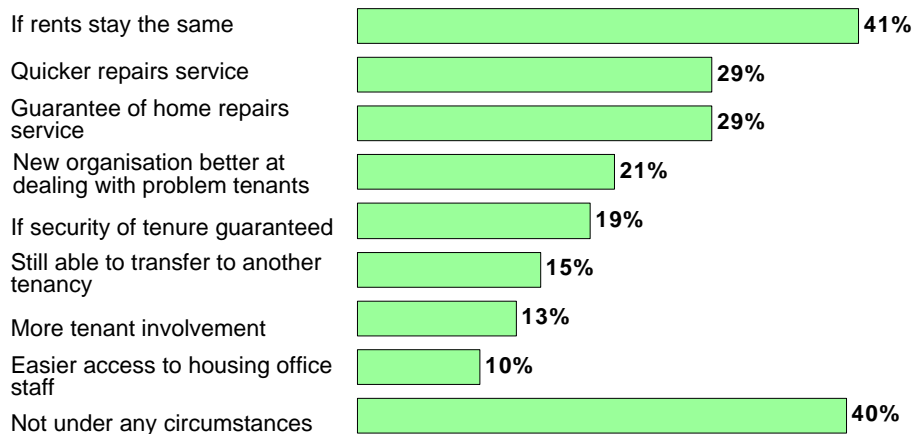
Although two in five (40%) say they would not agree to a stock transfer under any conditions, the most important consideration for others is that ‘rent levels remain the same’, two in five (41%) saying that they would need to be sure of this before they could support stock transfer.

Next in frequency are a quicker repairs service (29%) and guarantee of home repairs service (29%).

Older tenants are markedly more likely than others to say that they would not consider a vote for stock transfer, while younger people are more willing to consider it.

Stock transfer

Q *Some council's no longer act as landlords, and housing associations manage and own the housing instead. Which of the items on this list, if any, would you need to be sure of before you would support Gateshead Council transferring its housing stock to a housing association*



Base: All council tenants (278)

Source: MORI

Rating of rented property

Once we start looking at the differing views of groups of tenants, the base sizes mean we have to be cautious. However, there do seem to be some trends in the survey. Council tenants tend to be less satisfied with the service they get than housing association or private landlord tenants. The exceptions to this trend are 'how easy it is to contact your landlord' (89%) and 'the general condition of their property' (80%) for which there is little difference among different tenancies.

Around two in three (67%) are satisfied with the quality of repairs carried out on their property. Those that rent from a housing association (87%) or private landlord (78%) are more likely to be satisfied than are council house tenants (63%). Council tenants are also more likely to be dissatisfied (27%).

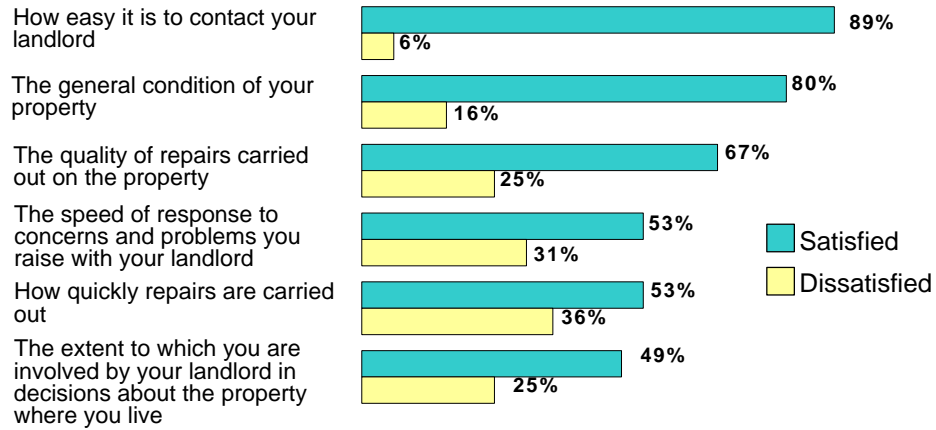
Similarly, while just over half (53%) are satisfied with the speed of response time to concerns and problems raised with their landlord, those that rent from a housing association (68%) or a private landlord (69%) are more likely to be satisfied than are council tenants (49%).

A similar proportion (53%) is satisfied with 'how quickly repairs are carried out'. Once more, council tenants are less likely to be satisfied (40%) than are housing association (77%) and private landlord (78%) tenants.

Just under half (49%) say they are satisfied with 'the extent to which you are involved by your landlord in decisions about the property where you live'. Perhaps something to bear in mind if considering a stock transfer, council tenants (42%) are less likely to be satisfied than housing association (71%) and private landlord (71%) tenants.

Rating of rented property

Q Using the scale on this card, how would you rate each of the following?



Base: All who rent (354)

Source: MORI

SRB – Bensham & Saltwell

Compared with Gateshead residents generally, residents of Bensham & Saltwell are more likely to say they are dissatisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live (22% vs 12%). They are also less likely to say they are satisfied (72% vs 83%).

MORI has found that less affluent areas tend to provide less positive satisfaction ratings. Considering socio-economic indicators, compared with Gateshead residents generally, residents of Bensham and Saltwell are more likely not to own a car (59% vs 38%), are more likely to comprise of social class D and E (59% vs 40%) and are less likely to own their own home (47% vs 64%).

Bensham & Saltwell Partnership

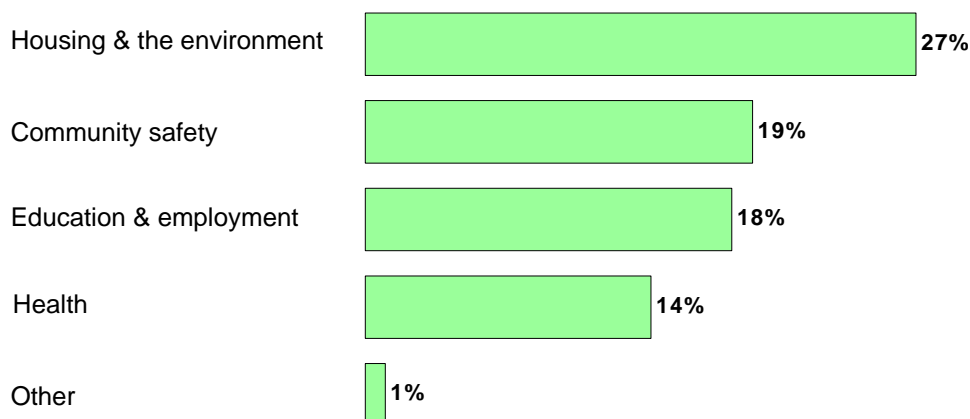
There is a relatively low awareness of the Bensham & Saltwell Partnership with around one quarter (27%) of residents having heard of the organisation while over half (56%) say they have not heard of the Partnership.

Not surprisingly therefore, given the low awareness of the Partnership, fewer than one in seven (15%) are aware that Bensham & Saltwell Partnership received additional funding in 1997 to make improvements in the local area.

Asked what the priority for future improvement in Bensham and Saltwell, just over one quarter (27%) select ‘housing and the environment’.

SRB top priority

Q Which of the following would you choose to be the top priority for future improvement in Bensham & Saltwell?



Base: All residents of Bensham & Saltwell (169)

Source: MORI

Gateshead@

There are currently two ‘one-stop shops’ called “Gateshead@Birtley” and “Gateshead@Blaydon” respectively. When considering these shops it should be borne in mind that due to the Birtley booster being included in this section there may be some bias towards Birtley.

Compared with Gateshead residents generally, residents in Birtley and Blaydon are less likely to say they are satisfied with the way Gateshead Council is running the borough (56% vs 65% respectively). There is little difference between Blaydon and Birtley an Gatehead as a whole on composition of social class, tenure or work status.

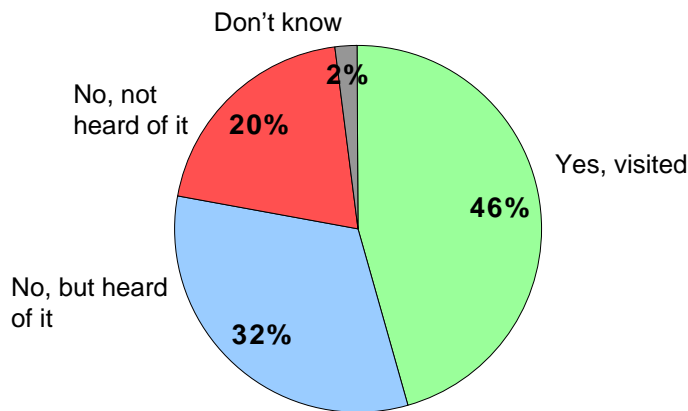
Residents of Birtley and Blaydon are more likely to have contacted the Council with a problem or query in the past 12 months (57% vs 48%). Considering those that have contacted the Council involves relatively small base sizes so findings may be only indicative. However, there are similar levels of satisfaction with the final outcome, ease of getting hold of the right person, how helpful the person was and the person being able to deal with the problem/query.

Gateshead@

The vast majority of residents of Blaydon and Birtley say they have at least heard of the Gateshead Council@ shop. Almost half of residents of Blaydon and Birtley (46%) have visited it, while a further third (32%) say they have not visited, but have heard of it. Just one in five (20%) say they have not heard of it.

Visited Gateshead@ shop

Q The Council has set up two local offices where people can go to contact the Council in person. Have you ever visited the ‘Gateshead Council @ Birtley’ or ‘Gateshead Council @ Blaydon’ local offices?



Base: All residents of Blaydon & Birtley (333)

Source: MORI

However, there appears to be little awareness of what services it provides. Even among those that have heard of the shop, only around half (53%) say they are aware that they can access all Gateshead Council's services at these local offices.

Those who say they have visited the shop appear to have had their enquiries dealt with there and then – fewer than one in twenty (4%) say they were referred elsewhere.

Confidence that the offices will have an impact is not universal - just around half (52%) say they think having these offices will make it easier to contact the Council, while two in five (41%) think it will make no difference. It is likely that raising public awareness and use will improve on this, if they have the resources to respond to public demand.

Appendices

Sample Profile

	Number	%
	(unweighted)	(unweighted)
All	1,014	100
Gender		
Male	474	47
Female	540	53
Age		
18-24	77	8
25-34	169	17
35-54	360	36
55-64	174	17
65+	234	23
Occupation		
AB	126	12
C1	239	24
C2	240	24
DE	408	40
Work status		
Working full time	371	37
Working part time	87	9

	Number	%
	(unweighted)	(unweighted)
All	1,014	100
Area		
Central	208	20
Felling	79	7
Low Fell	182	18
Whickham	156	15
Wrekenton	153	15
Blaydon	236	23
Household Composition		
Children in Household	326	32
65+ in Household	253	25
Single Parent	63	6
Single 65+	121	12

Statistical Reliability

The respondents to the questionnaire are only samples of the total “population”, so we cannot be certain that the figures obtained are exactly those we would have if everybody had been interviewed (the “true” values). We can, however, predict the variation between the sample results and the “true” values from a knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which we can make this prediction is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” value will fall within a specified range. The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the “95% confidence interval”.

Size of sample on which survey result is based	Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
100 interviews	6	9	10
200 interviews	4	6	7
400 interviews	3	4	5
500 interviews	3	4	4
600 interviews	2	3	4
800 interviews	2	3	4
900 interviews	2	3	3
1,000 interviews	2	3	3
1,014 interviews	2	3	3

For example, with a sample of 1,014 where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the “true” value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of plus or minus 3 percentage points from the sample result.

When results are compared between separate groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be “real”, or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is “statistically significant”, we again have to know the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer and the degree of confidence chosen. If we assume the “95% confidence interval”, the differences between the two sample results must be greater than the values given in the table below:

Size of samples compared	Differences required for significance at or near these percentage levels		
	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
100 and 100	7	13	14
100 and 200	7	11	12
200 and 200	7	10	11
250 and 400	5	7	8
200 and 400	5	8	9
500 and 500	4	6	6
1000 and 250	4	6	7
1014 and 500	3	5	5

For example, when comparing a sample of 500 with the population of 1,014 where 30% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the “true” value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of plus or minus 3 percentage points from the sample result.

Social Class Definitions

- A** Professionals such as doctors, surgeons, solicitors or dentists; chartered people like architects; fully qualified people with a large degree of responsibility such as senior editors, senior civil servants, town clerks, senior business executives and managers, and high ranking grades of the Services.
- B** People with very responsible jobs such as university lecturers, hospital matrons, heads of local government departments, middle management in business, qualified scientists, bank managers, police inspectors, and upper grades of the Services.
- C1** All others doing non-manual jobs; nurses, technicians, pharmacists, salesmen, publicans, people in clerical positions, police sergeants/constables, and middle ranks of the Services.
- C2** Skilled manual workers/craftsmen who have served apprenticeships; foremen, manual workers with special qualifications such as long distance lorry drivers, security officers, and lower grades of Services.
- D** Semi-skilled and unskilled manual workers, including labourers and mates of occupations in the C2 grade and people serving apprenticeships; machine minders, farm labourers, bus and railway conductors, laboratory assistants, postmen, door-to-door and van salesmen.
- E** Those on lowest levels of subsistence including pensioners, casual workers, and others with minimum levels of income