

Thurrock Council 2016 Residents' Survey

Introduction

BMG Research was commissioned by Thurrock Council to undertake a residents' survey in order to obtain valuable feedback from residents and customers, in order to understand and assess the overall effectiveness of the Council, and to make informed comparisons regarding resident satisfaction to help shape future strategies and performance. In November - December 2016, 1,000 telephone interviews were conducted among a sample of Thurrock residents, with representative quotas set during fieldwork by ward, age and gender. A sample size of 1,000 is subject to a maximum standard error of +/-3.1% at the 95% level of confidence (on an observed statistic of 50%). This means that if all Thurrock residents had responded to the survey, we are 95% confident that a figure of 50% in these findings would actually have been between 53.1% and 46.9%. To ensure the data set is representative the data has been weighted by ward, age, ethnicity, and gender at a borough level.

Overall perceptions

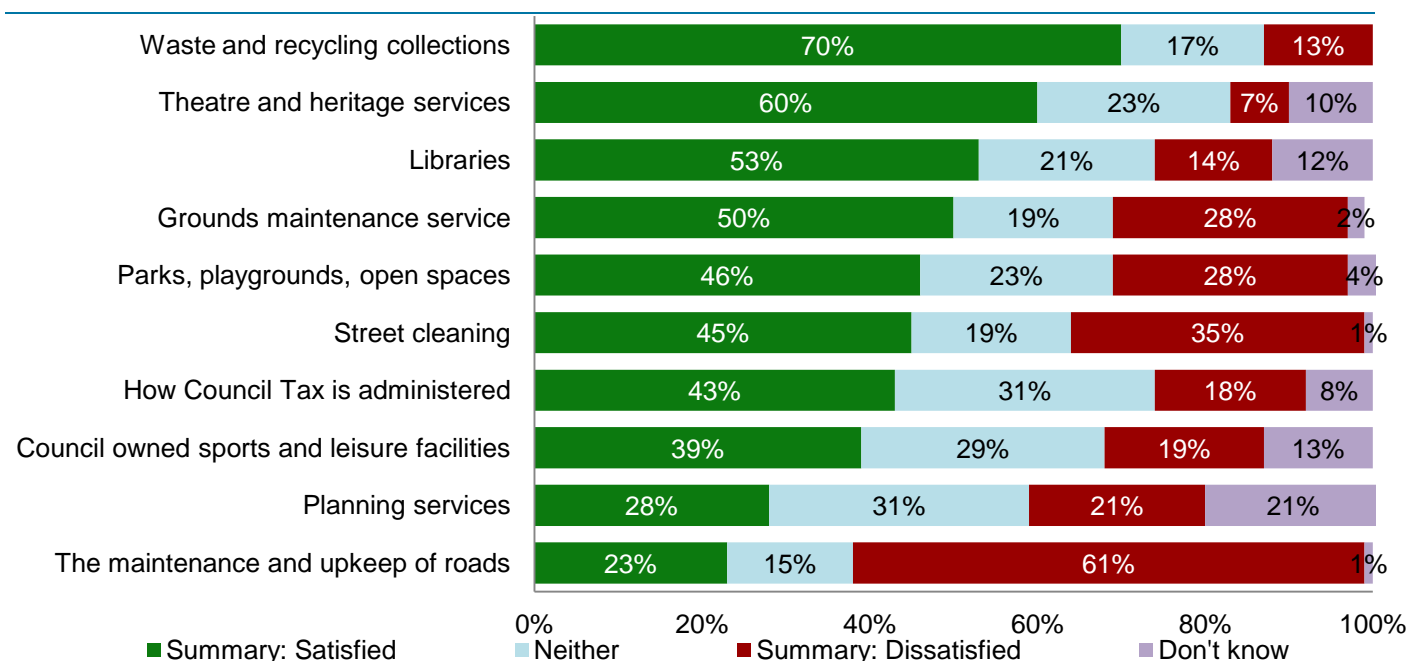
- Approaching seven in ten residents (69%) are satisfied with their **local area as a place to live**, whilst two in ten indicate some degree of dissatisfaction (19%). There is a significant variation in levels of satisfaction indicated by residents dependent on the ward they live in; those living in wards in the North and North East of the borough (Corringham and Fobbing - 89%, Stanford-le-Hope West - 89%, Orsett - 88% and Stanford East and Corringham Town - 87%) indicate significantly higher than average levels of satisfaction, whilst those residents living in wards in the South of the borough (Tilbury Riverside and Thurrock Park – 52%, Grays Riverside – 49% and Tilbury St Chads – 47%) indicate significantly lower than average levels of satisfaction.
- Just over half of residents (55%) are satisfied with **the way Thurrock Council runs things**, by contrast, nearly three in ten state they are dissatisfied (28%). Just over one in ten (13%) think the way Thurrock Council runs things has got better in the last 12 months, three in ten (31%) think it has got worse, whilst around half feel it has stayed the same (53%).
- Less than half of residents (45%) agree that **Thurrock Council provides value for money**. Around one in four disagree (26%).
- On balance, one in three residents (33%) state that they **speak positively about Thurrock Council**. By contrast, around one in four (27%) state they speak negatively.
- Around seven in ten residents think that Thurrock Council has **staff who are friendly and polite** (72%) and **makes it easy for residents to exercise in the parks and open spaces** (69%). Around half of residents think that Thurrock Council is **efficient and well run** (51%), is **making the local area a better place for people to live** (50%), and **responds quickly and efficiently to queries** (48%). Whilst four in ten think that Thurrock Council **involves residents in making decisions** (43%).

Council services

- When asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with the different services provided by Thurrock Council, residents indicate the **highest levels of satisfaction for the waste and recycling**

collections (70%), whilst the **lowest level of satisfaction is observed for the maintenance and upkeep of roads** (23%). Indeed, six in ten (61%) indicate some degree of dissatisfaction with this aspect.

Figure 1: Q12. Thinking about the following services provided by Thurrock Council, can you tell me on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 is very satisfied and 5 is very dissatisfied, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following? (All respondents)



Unweighted sample base = 1,000

- Residents indicate the most important services to be: the **maintenance and upkeep of roads such as fixing pot holes** (26% stated it as important); **waste and recycling collections** (23% stated it); and **parks, playgrounds and open spaces** (13% stated it).
- In the last 12 months: three in four residents state that they used the parks, playgrounds and open spaces (74%); around half state that they used the libraries (50%), theatre and heritage services (53%) and Council owned sports and leisure facilities (44%); and nearly two in ten state that they used the planning service (16%).

Communication

- The most commonly used method of finding information about the local area is **via local newspapers** (68%) and **word of mouth** (65%). Although notably, approaching seven in ten (68%) find out information about their local area via a Thurrock Council controlled information stream, most typically the **Thurrock Council website** (47%).
- Six in ten residents (58%) think that **Thurrock Council keeps residents well informed about services and benefits** it provides.
- If they needed to contact the Council, the **most preferred method of contact would be on the telephone** (81% state they would prefer to use this method).

- One in four residents (27%) state that they would prefer to contact the Council using an online method (Thurrock Council website – 10%, Social media – 1%, mobile phone app – 2%, via email – 17%). Of the remaining residents (73%), six in ten would be willing to contact the Council using an online method in the future (61%).

Community cohesion

- Seven in ten residents (70%) feel that they **belong strongly to their local area**. Community cohesion is markedly higher amongst residents living in the Orsett ward (90%), whilst is markedly lower for residents living in wards: Grays Riverside (58%); West Thurrock and South Stifford (53%); Chafford and North Stifford (49%); and Little Thurrock Blackshots (46%).
- When asked where they live, residents are most likely to say Essex (43%), or the name of their town or village (37%). Less than two in ten (15%) would say that they lived in Thurrock.
- Six in ten residents (61%) agree that their local area is a place where **people from different backgrounds get on well together**. When analysing levels of agreement by BME / non-BME residents there are no significant differences found (67% cf. 60%). Agreement with this measure is significantly higher amongst residents living in wards: South Chafford (78%) and the Homesteads (78%), and significantly lower for residents living in wards: West Thurrock and South Stifford (45%) and Little Thurrock Blackshots (46%).
- Half of residents (51%) agree that **people in the local area pull together to improve their local area**. One in four disagree (25%). Agreement is markedly higher amongst residents living in wards: East Tilbury (78%), Orsett (72%) and the Homesteads (71%), and markedly lower for residents living in Ockendon (39%), Chadwell St Mary (34%) and West Thurrock and South Stifford (31%).
- Over four in ten residents (44%) would be interested in **volunteering and helping out in their local community to improve the neighbourhood**.

Recycling behaviours

- Seven in ten residents (72%) claim that their **household recycles as much as possible**, a further two in ten (17%) claim that they **recycle a lot but could probably recycle a bit more**.
- Encouragingly, eight in ten residents (80%) suggest that they would recycle more if certain activities were undertaken by the Council. Most prominently around four in ten indicate that they would recycle more if they had: stickers on the bins (44%), an information leaflet (39%) or more space for recycling and less for waste (39%).

Safety

- When asked about whether commonly found neighbourhood issues were a problem in their local area, over four in ten state that there is a problem with: **rubbish or litter lying around** (44%), or **groups hanging around the streets** (42%). Around one in three indicate there is a problem in their local area with **people using or dealing drugs** (36%) or **vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles** (33%), and a slightly lower proportion state **people being drunk or rowdy in public places** (28%) is a problem. The least commonly cited problem is with **noisy neighbours or loud parties** (13%).
- Nine in ten residents (89%) feel **safe when outside in their local area during the day**, whilst nearly six in ten (56%) feel **safe when outside in their local area after dark**. Three in ten (31%) feel unsafe when outside in their local area after dark.