



East Herts Residents Survey 2011

Report of Study Findings
for East Herts District Council

December 2011





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Chapter 1: Introduction

The Survey

^{1.1} Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned by East Herts District Council to undertake a survey of residents' attitudes towards the Council and the services it provides. This survey was last undertaken by ORS in 2009 and before this by Ipsos Mori in 2007. The residents' survey is used to track changes in residents' opinions on a number of topics. It is important in helping to inform Council planning and decisions. This report presents the findings from this survey under the following main topic headings:

Your Local Area

- Local facilities and services
- Shopping
- Community safety

East Herts Council and Council Services

- Overall opinions
- Council services
- Leisure facilities
- Waste and recycling collections

Contacting East Herts Council

- Contact with East Herts Council
- Satisfaction with Contact
- Complaints
- Finding out about East Herts Council
- Link magazine
- Broadband

^{1.2} Appropriate comparisons with the 2009 residents' survey and the 2008 Place survey have been made where appropriate. Some questions have been altered since the 2009 survey and are, therefore, not compared year on year. There are also some new questions in 2011 that were not previously included.

Methodology

The Sample

^{1.3} The survey was designed to produce results that are representative of the population of East Herts. A random sample of 4085 was drawn from the Postal Address File and questionnaires were distributed to residents of East Hertfordshire on 26 August 2011. A reminder to non-respondents was sent on 26 September 2011. 1,317 completed questionnaires were returned, yielding a response rate of 32%.

Weighting the Data

- 1.4 The extent to which results can be generalised from a sample depends on how well the sample represents the population from which it is drawn. As for all surveys of this type, although a random sample of addresses was selected, the achieved sample was unbalanced owing to non-response.
- 1.5 Under these circumstances, inferences about the views of the population can be improved by calculating weights for any under or over-sampling of particular groups. Weights are assigned by comparing the sample proportions for particular groups with known population characteristics from other sources for the same groups. Each observation is then multiplied by its weight to ensure that the weighted sample will conform to the known population characteristics.
- 1.6 In this case, the data was compared against 2010 mid-year population estimates data for age and gender and against the 2009 experimental mid-year population estimates for ethnicity and weighted.
- 1.7 The weighted data should, therefore, be representative of the population of East Herts and will be treated as being so throughout this report. When we discuss the un-weighted data we refer to 'respondents' but for the weighted data we refer to 'residents'.

Respondent Profile

- 1.8 The tables that appear without commentary on the following pages show the profile of survey respondents in relation to a range of characteristics. Each table includes details about the number and percentage of respondents interviewed in each category alongside the percentage of respondents in the weighted sample.
- 1.9 Please note that the figures may not always sum to 100% due to slight rounding errors. *% denotes a proportion of less than 1% but greater than zero.

Please note * denotes a percentage which is less than 1%

Gender	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
Male	554	43	48
Female	734	57	52
Not Known	29	-	-
Total	1317	100	100

Figure 1: Gender – All Respondents
 Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

Age	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
18-24	16	1	6
25-34	122	9	15
35-44	190	15	21
45-54	249	19	20
55-59	144	11	7
60-64	166	13	9
65-74	200	16	11
75+	201	16	11
Not Known	29	-	-
Total	1317	100	100

Figure 2: Age – All Respondents
 Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

Ethnicity	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
White - British	1222	95	90
BME	61	5	10
Not Known	34	-	-
Total	1317	100	100

Figure 3: Ethnicity – All Respondents
 Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding

Interpretation of the Data

^{1.10} It should be remembered that a sample, and not the entire population of the district, has been interviewed. In consequence, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. When considering changes in responses between this year's survey and previous surveys and between different groups within the population, differences have been analysed using appropriate statistical means to check for statistical significance (i.e. not happened 'by chance'). Differences that are not said to be 'significant' or 'statistically significant' are indicative only. When tracking results between years and comparing results between demographic sub-groups, only results which are significantly different are highlighted in the text. Statistical significance is at a 95% level of confidence.

^{1.11} Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of 'don't know' answers, or multiple answers.

Graphics

^{1.12} Graphics are used extensively in this report to make it as user-friendly as possible. The pie charts and other graphics show the proportions (percentages) of respondents making relevant responses. Where possible the colours used in the charts have been standardised with a 'traffic light' system – in which:

- Green shades represent positive responses
- Beige represents neither positive nor negative responses
- Red shades represent negative responses
- The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the 'extremes' – for example, very satisfied or very dissatisfied.

Acknowledgements

^{1.13} ORS would like to thank Lorna Georgiou at East Herts District Council for her help and assistance in developing the project. We would also like to thank the 1317 people who took part in the survey, without whose valuable input the research would not have been possible.

Publication of Data

^{1.14} 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 ORS. Such approval will only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misrepresentation.

Chapter 2: Key Findings

Your Local Area

- 2.1 Factors consistently identified as the most important in making somewhere a good place to live are the level of crime, health services, education provision and clean streets. Factors considered to be of least importance are cultural facilities, how well people from different backgrounds get on together, tackling climate change and listed buildings and conservation areas.
- 2.2 Factors that are resident priorities for improvement in East Herts are:
- Road and pavement repairs
 - Affordable housing
 - Activities for teenagers
 - Shopping facilities
 - The level of traffic congestion
 - Job prospects
- 2.3 Around half of residents shop in Bishop's Stortford and Hertford at least once a month.
- 2.4 Only 2% of residents feel unsafe outside in their local area during the day. However, nearly a fifth (17%) feel unsafe outside in their local area after dark.
- 2.5 More than a quarter of residents reported that *teenagers hanging around the streets* (30%), *rubbish or litter lying around* (29%) and *people being drunk or rowdy in public places* (27%) are a big problem.
- 2.6 90% of residents or more reported *abandoned or burnt out cars* (98%) and *noisy neighbours or loud parties* (90%) as being not a very big problem/not a problem at all.

East Herts Council and Council Services

- 2.7 Just over half of residents (51%) are generally satisfied with how the Council is running East Herts.
- 2.8 Just over two fifths of residents (42%) agreed that the Council is making the local area a better place to live, while around a third (33%) agreed that the Council is efficient and well run. Almost a third of respondents (31%) disagreed that the Council provides good value for money.
- 2.9 Just over half of residents (51%) agree that the quality of Council services is good overall.
- 2.10 7 in 10 or more residents are satisfied with refuse collection (75%), parks and open spaces (74%), doorstep recycling (72%) and local tips/household waste recycling centres (70%).
- 2.11 Around a fifth or more of residents were dissatisfied with local bus services (30%), keeping public land clear of litter and refuse (24%), local transport information (23%) and sports and leisure facilities (21%).
- 2.12 More than 1 in 10 residents reported using Hartham Leisure Centre (14%), Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre (14%) and Fanshawe Pool and Gym (11%) in the last 12 months. However, more than three fifths of residents (62%) reported not having used any of them in the last 12 months.

- 2.13 Whilst satisfied with the waste collection service overall, the bins provided and how clean and tidy the street is following collection, residents are less happy with the service for the collection of bulky waste.
- 2.14 High levels of satisfaction were also reported for the recycling and composting collection service although relatively low levels of satisfaction were reported for containers provided.

Contacting East Herts Council

- 2.15 Around a third of residents (32%) had contacted the Council within the last three months. The favoured means of contact remains the telephone. However, as in 2009, residents also state a clear preference for future contact by email.
- 2.16 7 in 10 residents (70%) expressed satisfaction with their last contact with the Council.
- 2.17 More than a quarter of residents (29%) had contacted the Council with a complaint and almost half (49%) of these complaints were made in the last six months. Relatively low levels of satisfaction were expressed for the time taken to deal with the complaint (48%), the way in which the complaint was managed (41%), the way in which the complaint was handled overall (39%) and the final outcome (41%). Residents are most satisfied with the ease with which they are able to complain.
- 2.18 Residents were asked how they find out about East Herts Council at the moment. The most popular sources are information provided directly by the Council (50%) and the Council website (24%).
- 2.19 Nearly two thirds of residents (63%) say that the Council keeps them well informed. However, more than a third (36%) say that they receive only a limited amount of information or that the Council does not tell them much about what it does.
- 2.20 88% of residents reported that they have seen a copy of the council's publication 'Link' magazine in the last 12 months.

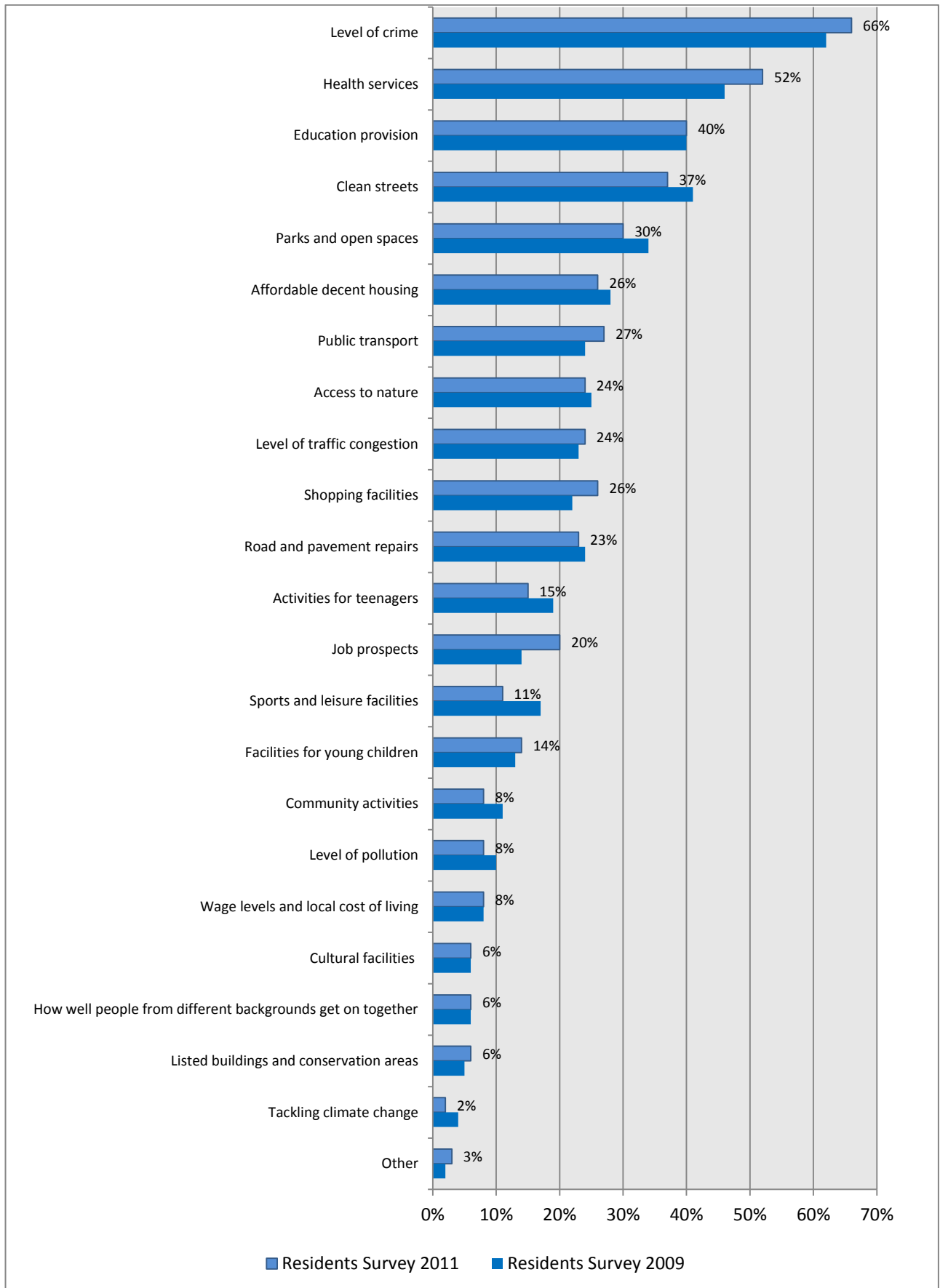
Chapter 3: Your Local Area

Local Facilities and Services

- ^{3.1} Respondents were asked to identify the top five factors, which they consider are most important in making somewhere a good place to live, from a list of 22. Figure 4 (overleaf) presents the results for this survey with those for the East Herts residents' survey in 2009. Factors consistently identified as most important are *the level of crime* (66% in this survey), *health services* (52%), *education provision* (40%) and *clean streets* (39%).
- ^{3.2} Of least importance to making a place a good place to live are: *cultural facilities* (6%), *how well people from different backgrounds get on together* (6%) *listed buildings and conservation areas* (6%) and *tackling climate change* (2%).
- ^{3.3} Following on from *what makes somewhere a good place to live*, East Herts residents were asked to identify the five things that most need improving in their local area. Figure 5 (overleaf) presents the findings for this survey with the results from the 2009 East Herts residents' survey. Almost three fifths (60%) chose *road and pavement repairs* as most in need of improvement. *Activities for teenagers* (41%) and *the level of traffic congestion* (36%) also scored highly. *Access to nature* and *listed buildings and conservation areas* (2%) were identified by residents as the least in need of improvement.
- ^{3.4} Text comments revealed 'other' factors that are important to residents in *making somewhere a good place to live* include: lowering car parking charges and making more spaces available for residents in residential areas, dealing with antisocial behaviour and a greater police presence.
- ^{3.5} Text comments also revealed that 'other' factors that need *improving* in the local area include: residential and public parking, speeding and healthcare provision (in particular care for the elderly).

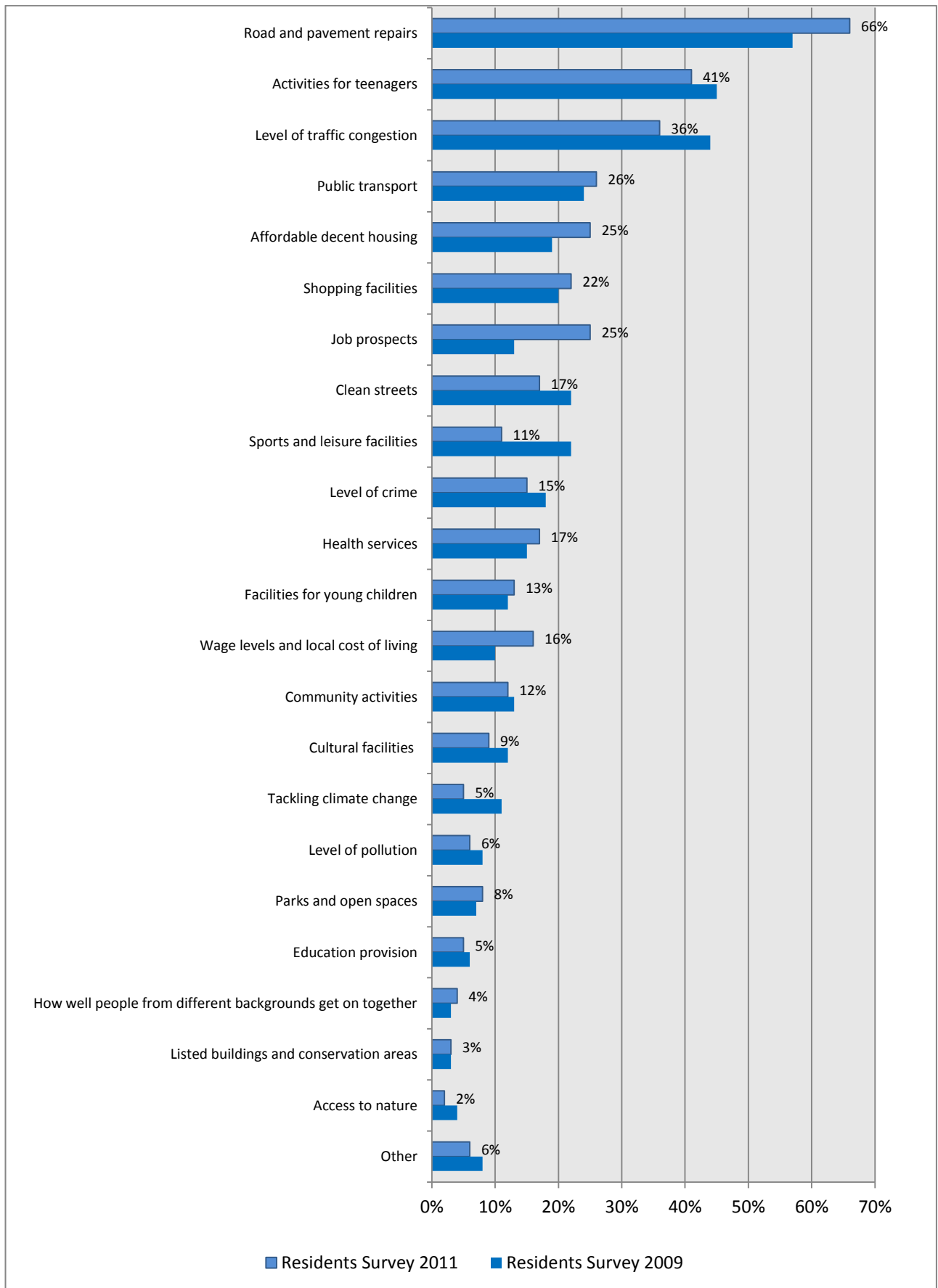
Figure 4

Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live.



Base: All respondents

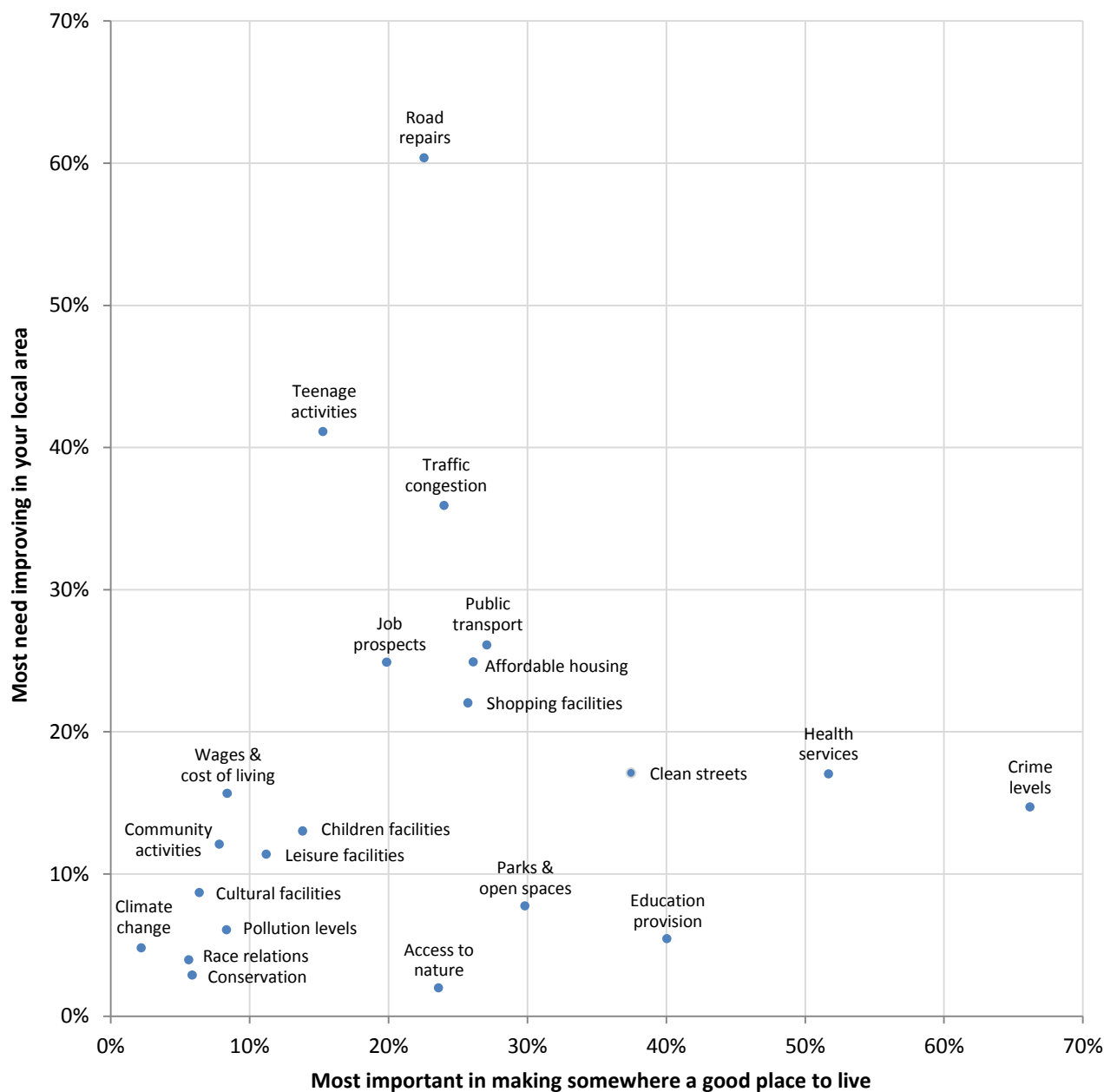
Figure 5
Thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving?



Base: All respondents

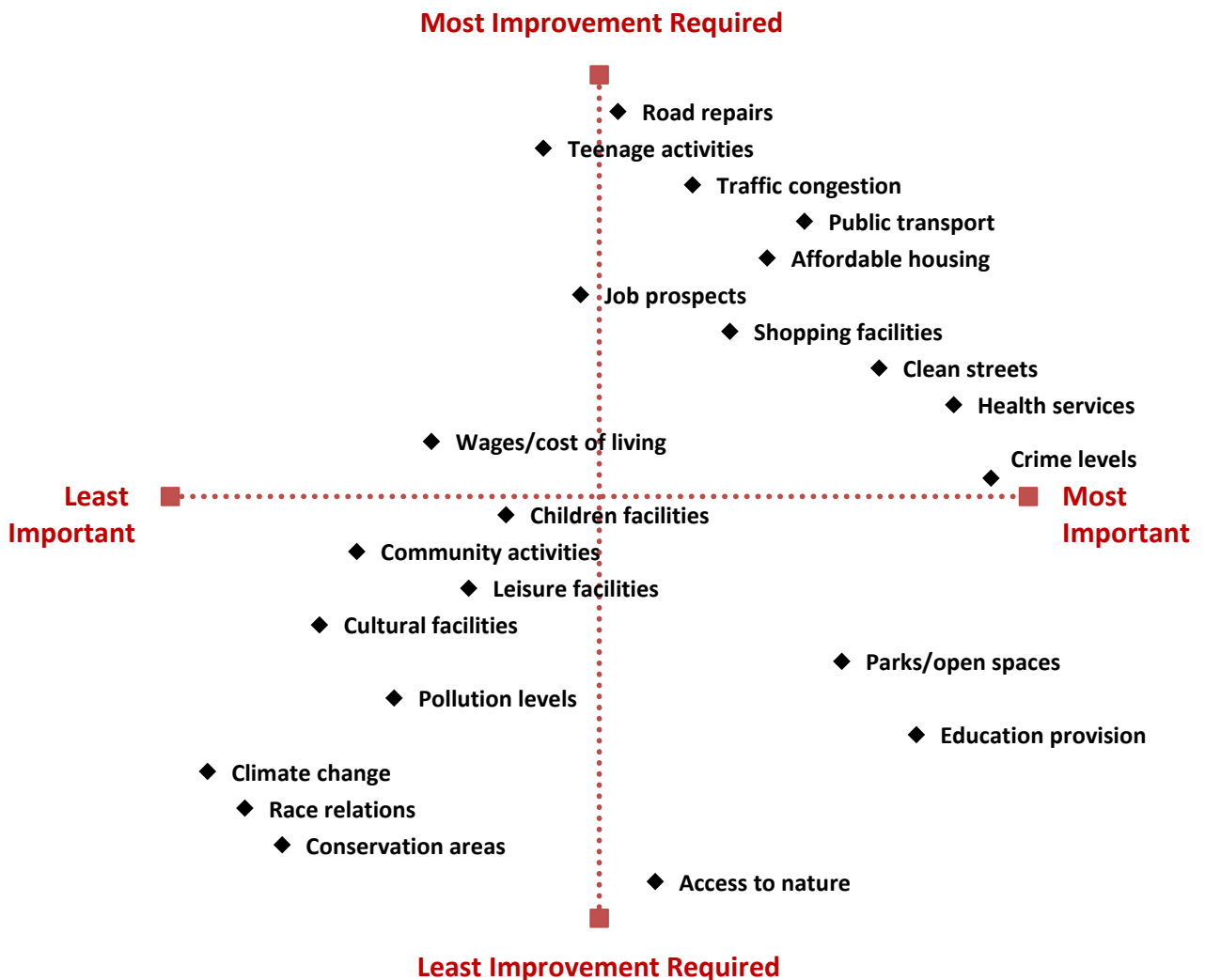
- 3.6 Figures 6 and 7 bring together the factors that East Herts residents feel are most important in making somewhere a good place to live and the factors that they think most need improving locally.
- 3.7 A scatter graph has been used to plot the importance of services against improvement priorities (Strategic Priority Analysis) (see Figure 6). The proportion of residents who said a particular service is the most important factor in making somewhere a good place to live is plotted against the proportion who said that same service is most in need of improving in your local area.

Figure 6
 Quality of Life – Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are **most important** in making somewhere a good place to live?
 And thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving?
 Base: All East Herts respondents: Important generally (1,098); Need improving locally (1,102)



- 3.8 The following graph (figure 7 below) is split into quadrants (divided using the mean scores for importance and need for improvement) and each quadrant represents a particular strength or weakness.
- 3.9 The bottom left hand corner shows services that are performing well but are of lesser importance to residents. The top left hand corner represents services that need improvement but are less important to residents. The bottom right hand corner shows services which are organisational strengths insofar as they are important and performing well. Finally, the top right hand corner presents services that most need improvement and are important to residents.
- 3.10 These quadrants are based on a standard management tool designed to analyse priorities for organisations and it is those services in the top right hand quadrant upon which East Herts Council and its partners might wish to focus. It is important to remember these scatter graphs relate only to public opinion and do not take into account any other pressures or priorities, including statutory responsibilities. Although scatter graphs can help to determine service priorities, they should not, therefore, be used in isolation

Figure 7
 Quality of Life – Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? And thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving? (By rank)
 Base: All East Herts respondents: Important generally (1,098); Need improving locally (1,102)



3.11 In the following table (figure 8 below) the results for each service have been ranked and then plotted against each other. This way of representing the data enables a much clearer representation of where services fall within the four quadrants of the priority analysis chart.

3.12 As with the previous chart the bottom left hand corner shows aspects of services that are performing well but are of lesser importance to residents. The top left hand corner represents services that need improvement but are less important to residents. The bottom right hand corner shows aspects which are organisational strengths. Finally, the top right hand corner includes scores that most need improvement and are important to residents.

Figure 8
Priority Analysis Summary

Less Important, Most Needs Improving IMPROVEMENTS REQUIRED	More Important, Most Needs Improving PRIORITIES FOR IMPROVEMENT
<p>Wage levels and cost of local living</p> <p>Job prospects</p> <p>Teenage activities</p>	<p>Affordable decent housing</p> <p>Clean streets</p> <p>The level of crime</p> <p>The level of traffic congestion</p> <p>Public transport</p> <p>Road and pavement repairs</p> <p>Shopping facilities</p> <p>Health services</p>
Less Important, Least Needs Improving LOW PRIORITY STRENGTHS	More Important, Least Needs Improving KEY STRENGTHS
<p>Community activities</p> <p>Cultural facilities</p> <p>Facilities for young children</p> <p>Leisure facilities</p> <p>The level of pollution</p> <p>Tackling climate change</p> <p>Conservation areas</p> <p>How well people from different backgrounds get on together</p>	<p>Access to nature</p> <p>Education provision</p> <p>Parks and open spaces</p>

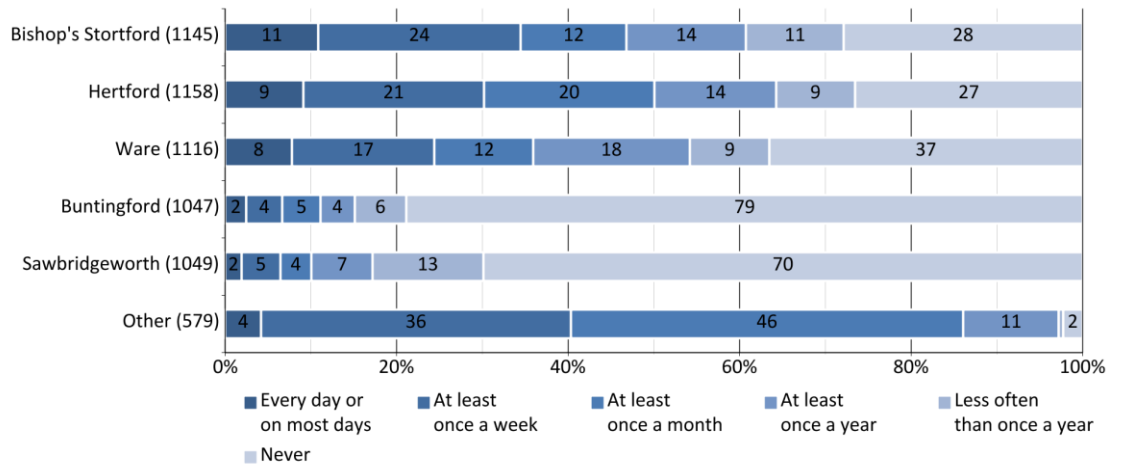
Shopping

- 3.13 Around half of residents shop in Bishop’s Stortford (47%) and Hertford (50%) at least once a month. A similar proportion shop in Ware at least once a year (53%), while Buntingford (79%) and Sawbridgeworth (70%) are the least frequented towns with one in seven or more residents reporting that they never shop in these locations.
- 3.14 Other areas that East Herts residents shop in include: Harlow, Welwyn Garden City, Stevenage, Brookfield and Cambridge.

Figure 9

How often do you shop in the following towns?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



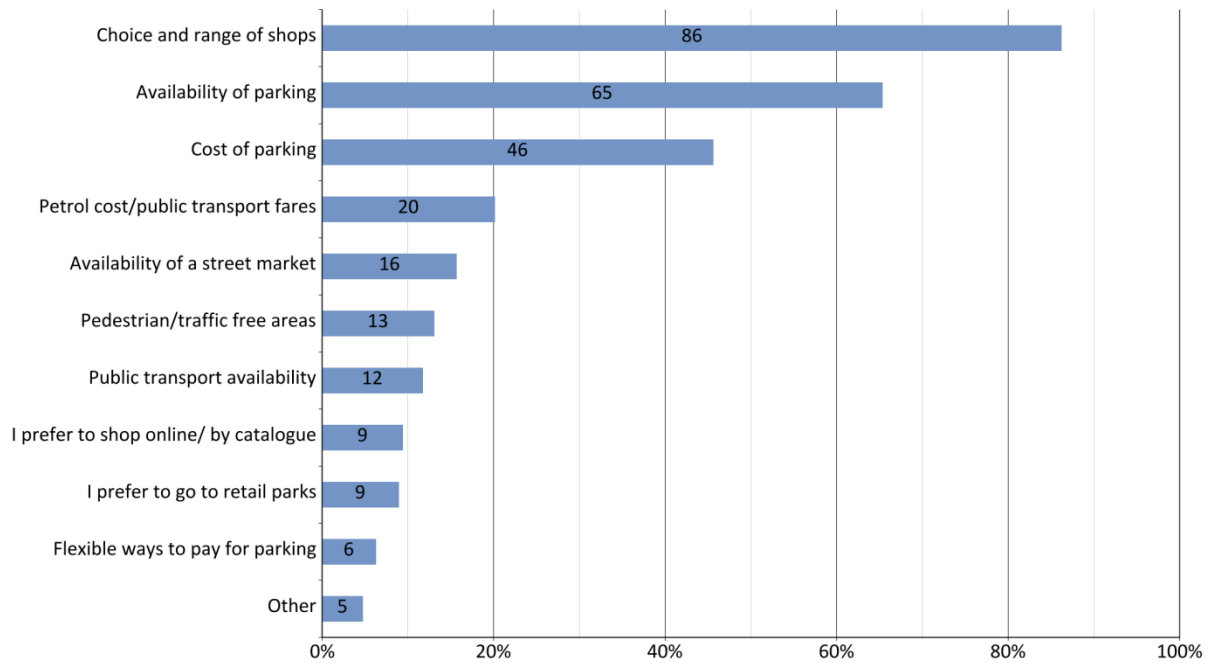
3.15 Residents' main considerations when deciding where to shop are the choice and range of shops (86%), availability of parking (65%) and the cost of parking (46%). Preferring to shop online/by catalogue (9%), preferring to go to retail parks (9%) and flexible ways of parking (6%) are the least considered factors.

3.16 Text responses revealed that 'other' considerations that residents take into account when deciding where to shop include: convenience, distance to the shops, accessibility, disabled parking, the provision of park and ride schemes and shop opening hours.

Figure 10

From the list below what are the THREE MAIN considerations you take into account when deciding where to shop?

Base: All Respondents (1247)



Community Safety

3.17 When asked about their feelings of safety outside in their local area, the vast majority (94%) of residents said that they feel safe during the day (an increase of 1 percentage point since 2009), with almost three fifths of residents (59%) saying that they feel very safe. Only 2% said that they feel unsafe. However, nearly a fifth of residents (17%) admitted that they feel unsafe outside in their local area after dark. Nevertheless, it is encouraging to note that 7 in 10 residents (70%) say that they feel safe outside in their local areas after dark (an increase of 2 percentage points since 2009).

Figure 11

How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

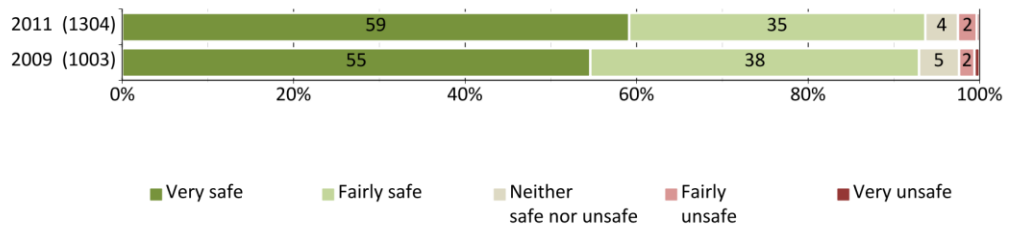
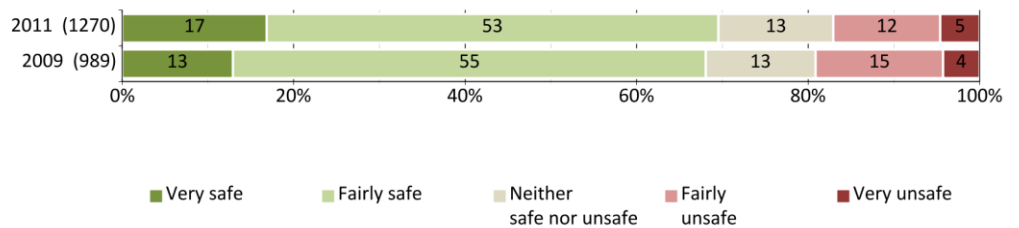


Figure 12

How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

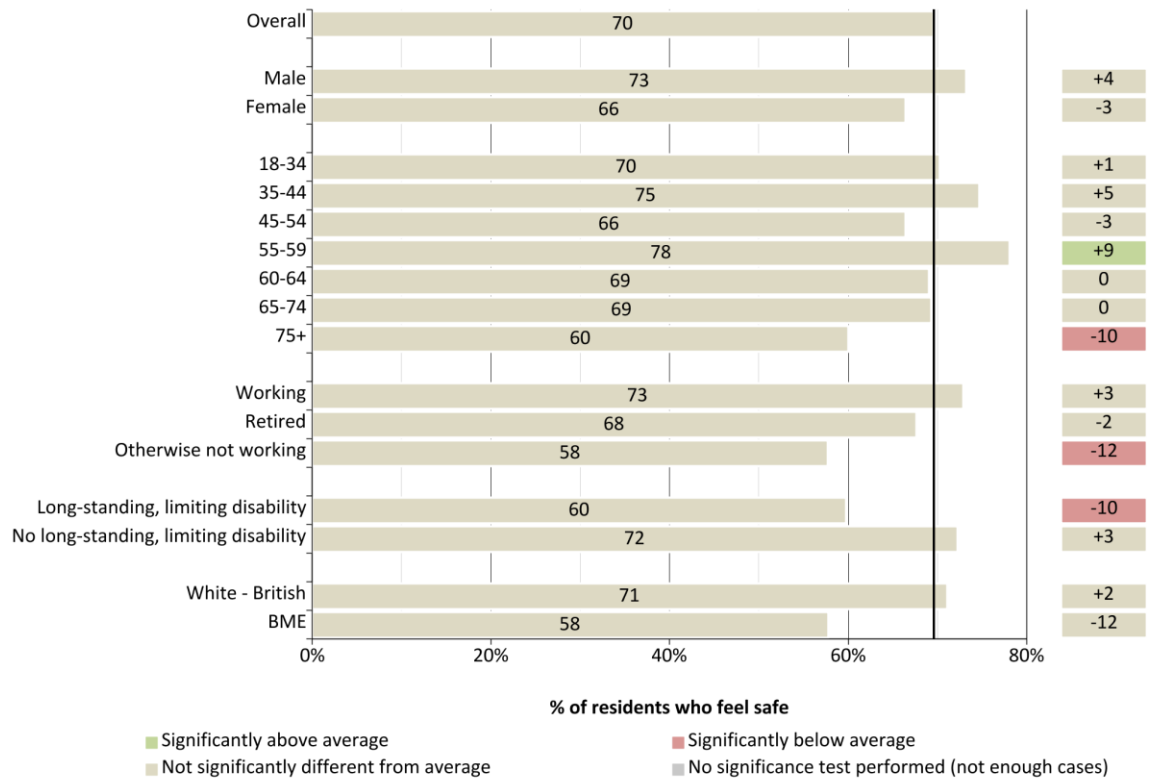


3.18 Residents who are significantly less likely to say that they feel safe after dark are aged 75 and over, otherwise not working and have a longstanding or limiting illness/disability.

Figure 13

How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?

Base: Respondents who feel safe (885)

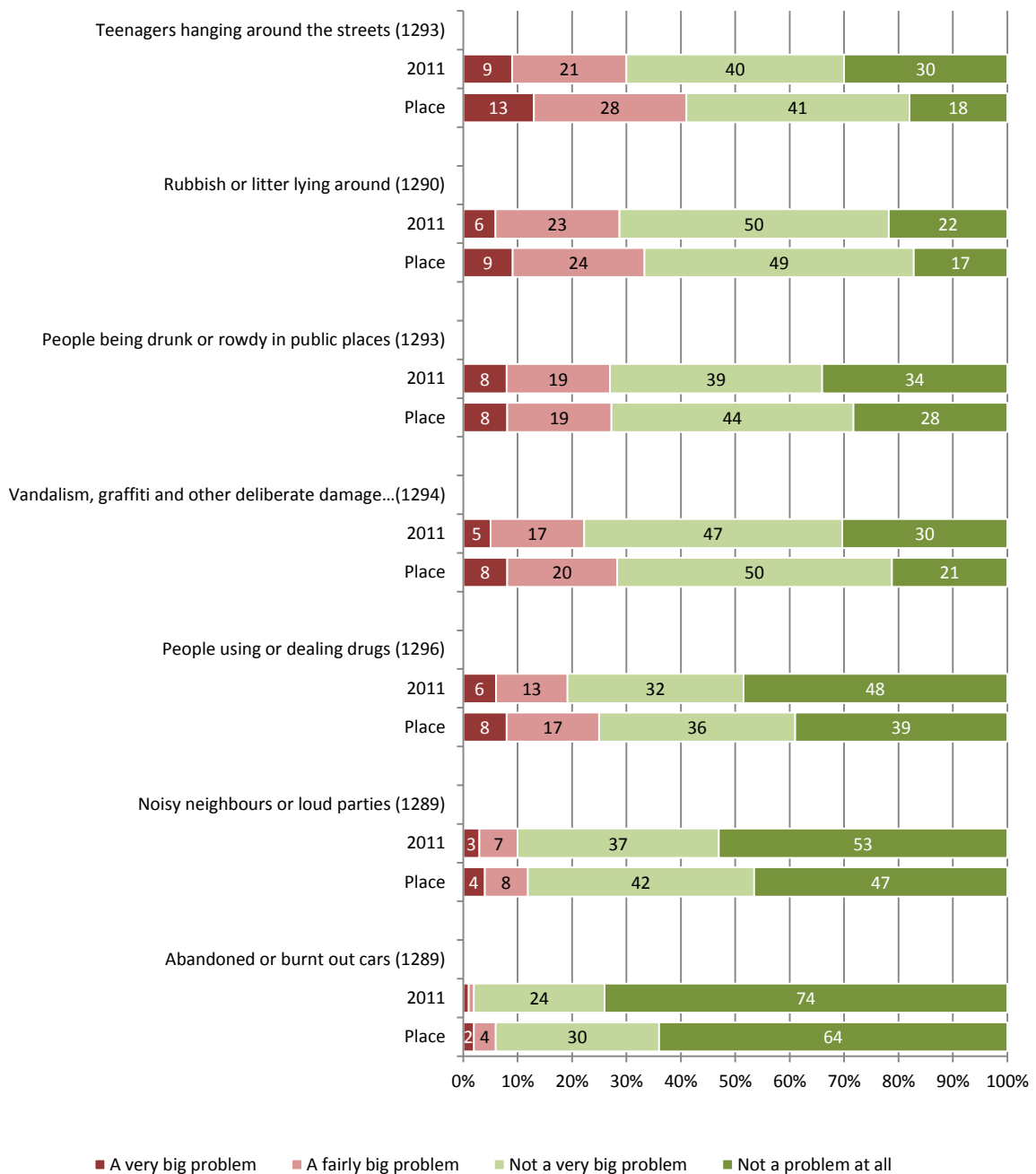


3.19 More than a quarter of residents reported that *teenagers hanging around the streets* (30%), *rubbish or litter lying around* (29%) and *people being drunk or rowdy in public places* (27%) are a big problem. However, 90% or more residents reported *abandoned or burnt out cars* (98%) and *noisy neighbours or loud parties* (90%) as being not a very big problem/not a problem at all.

Figure 14

Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are...?

Base: All Respondents (number of 2011 respondents shown in brackets)



Summary of Key Points – Your Local Area

- Factors consistently identified as the most important in making somewhere a good place to live are the level of crime, health services, education provision and clean streets.
- Factors that are resident priorities for improvement in East Herts are:
 - Road and pavement repairs
 - Affordable housing
 - Activities for teenagers
 - Shopping facilities
 - The level of traffic congestion
 - Job prospects
- Around half of residents shop in Bishop’s Stortford and Hertford at least once a month.
- Only 2% of residents feel unsafe outside in their local area during the day. However, nearly a fifth (17%) feel unsafe outside in their local area after dark.
- More than a quarter of residents reported that teenagers hanging around the streets (30%), rubbish or litter lying around (29%) and people being drunk or rowdy in public places (27%) are a big problem.

Chapter 4: East Herts Council and Council Services

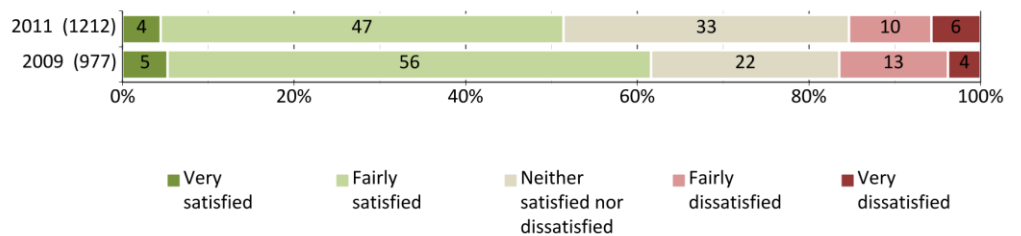
Overall Opinions

- 4.1 Just over half of residents (51%) are generally satisfied with how the Council is running East Herts. 16% expressed dissatisfaction and a third (33%) were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with how the Council runs East Herts.

Figure 15

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running East Herts?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 4.2 A similar question relating to satisfaction with East Hertfordshire District Council (How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way East Herts District Council is running things?) was asked to East Hertfordshire respondents in the following surveys:

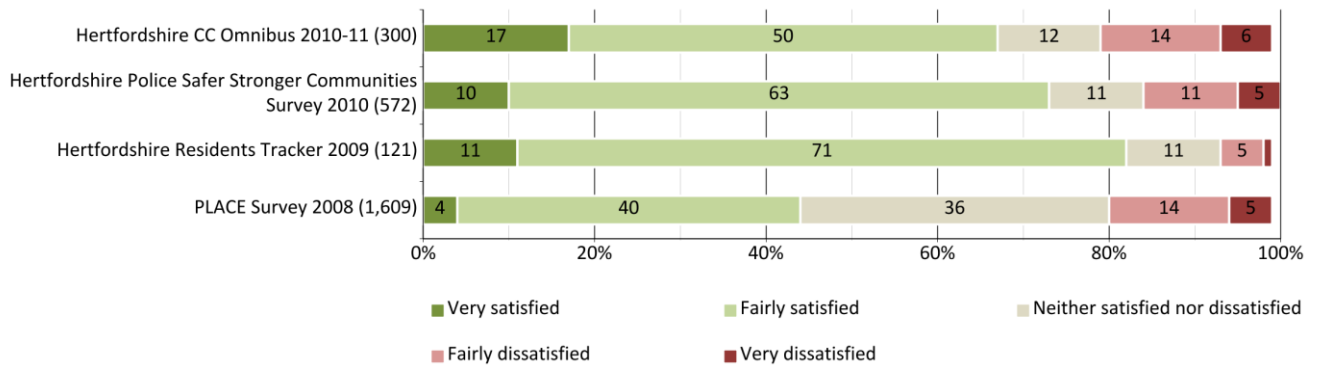
Survey Name	Year	Survey Methodology
Hertfordshire County Council: Omnibus	2010-11	Personal Telephone Interviews
Hertfordshire Police: Safer Stronger Communities	2010	Personal Telephone Interviews
Hertfordshire County Council: Residents Tracker	2009	Personal Face-to-face Interviews
Hertfordshire County Council: PLACE Survey	2008	Postal

4.3 The results for all four surveys are shown below in figure 16. Please note that caution must be exercised when comparing results from the postal 2011 East Hertfordshire Residents Survey against the below survey results due to the difference in question wording, as well as the different survey methodologies employed. Whereas results from both a telephone and face-to-face survey are broadly comparable, results from a postal survey cannot be reliably compared with those from either a telephone or face-to-face survey; therefore results are not directly comparable.

Figure 16

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way East Herts District Council is running things?

Base: By all East Herts respondents (respondent figures are shown in brackets below)

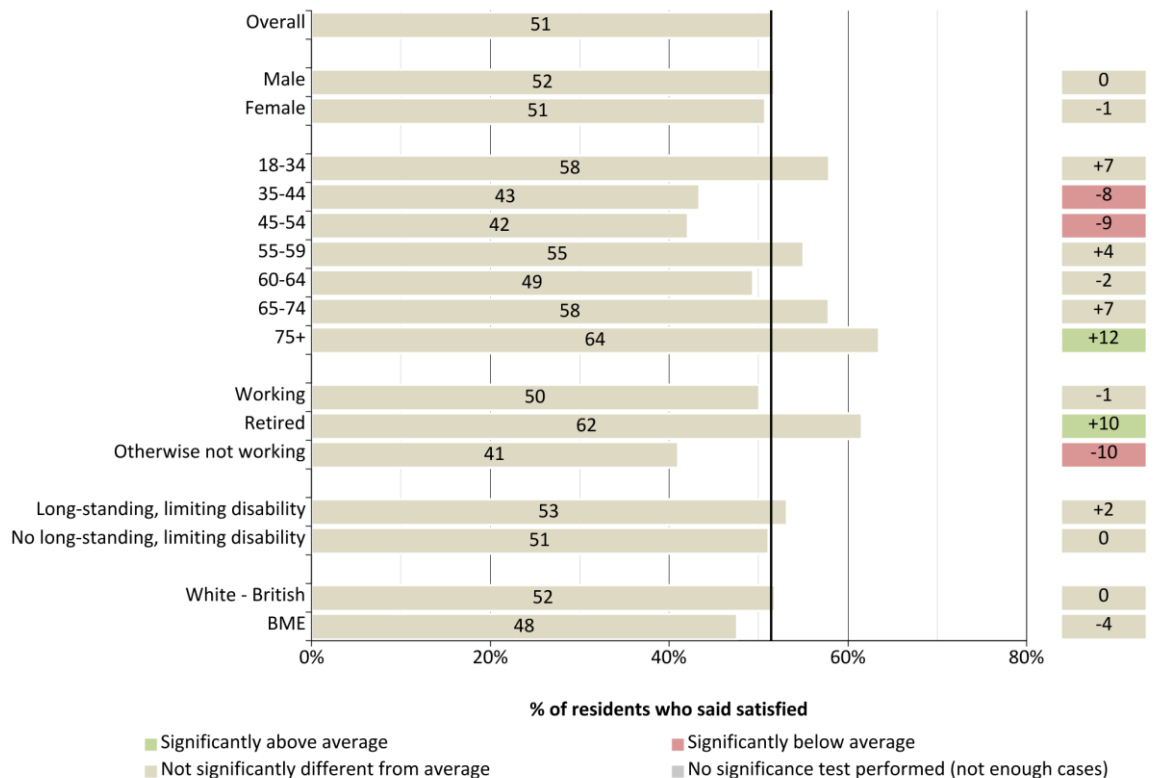


4.4 Residents aged 75 and over and the retired in general are significantly more likely than average to be satisfied with the way the Council is running East Herts. Significantly less likely to be satisfied are those aged 35-54 and those who are 'otherwise not working'.

Figure 17

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running East Herts?

Base: Respondents who said satisfied (1186)

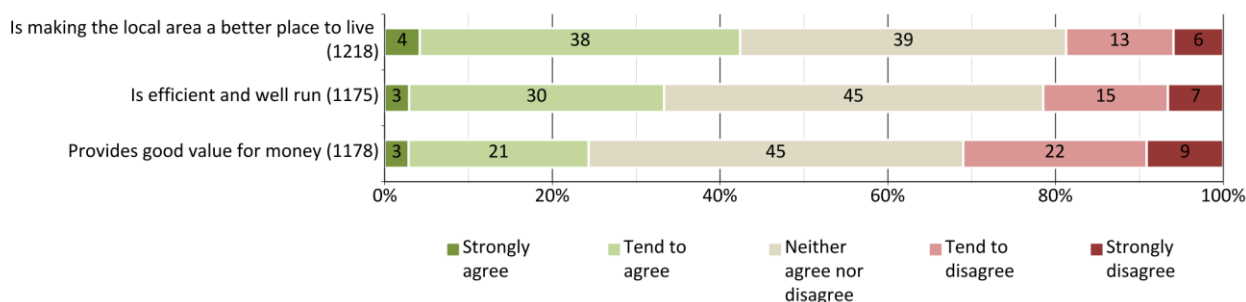


4.5 Respondents were presented with a number of statements about East Herts Council and asked whether they agreed or disagreed with them. Just over two fifths of residents (42%) agreed that the Council is making the local area a better place to live, while around a third (33%) agreed that the Council is efficient and well run. Almost a third of respondents (31%) disagreed that the Council provides good value for money.

Figure 18

To what extent do you agree or disagree that these statements apply to East Herts Council? ¹

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

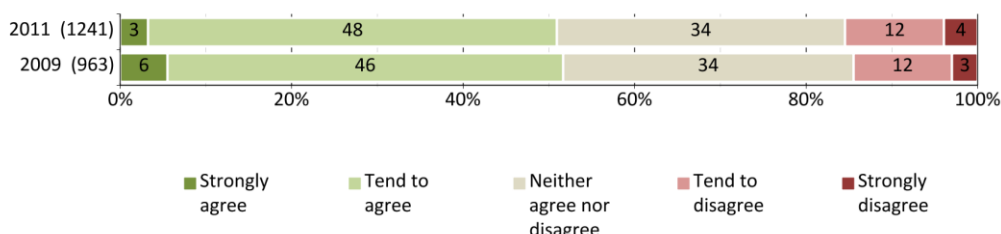


4.6 Just over half of residents (51%) agreed that overall, the quality of East Herts Council services is good. A relatively high proportion (34%) gave the neutral, 'neither agree nor disagree' response to this question and 16% disagreed with it. The proportion agreeing with this statement has fallen by one percentage point compared with the 2009 resident's survey (see figure 19 below).

Figure 19

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The quality of East Herts Council services is good overall.

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



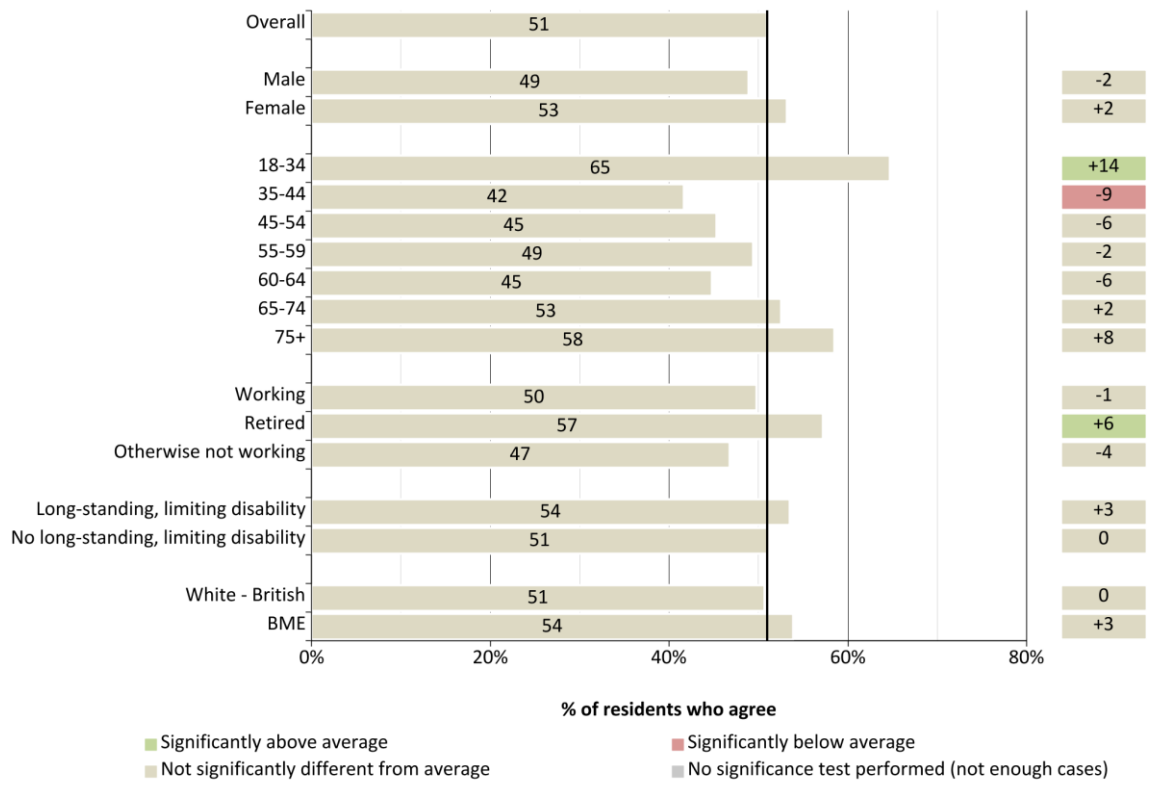
4.7 It can be seen that residents aged 18 to 34 and those who are retired are significantly more likely to agree that the quality of East Herts Council is good overall, while residents aged 35 to 44 are significantly less likely to agree with this statement (see figure 20 overleaf).

¹ Please note that the scale has changed since the 2009 survey and is therefore not comparable

Figure 20

How strongly do you agree or disagree with the following statement? The quality of East Herts Council services is good overall.

Base: Respondents who agree (1211)



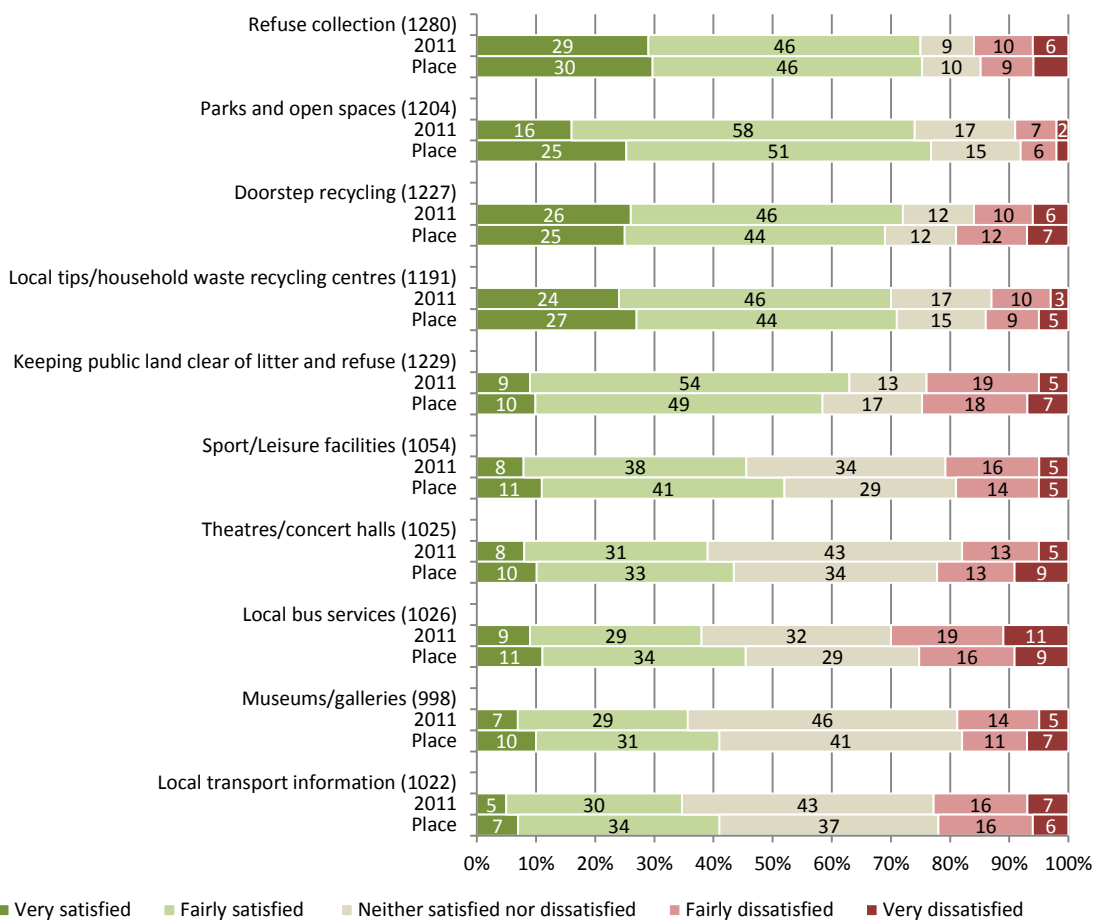
Council Services

- 4.8 Residents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with various services provided or supported by East Herts Council.
- 4.9 7 in 10 residents or more are satisfied with refuse collection (75%), parks and open spaces (74%), doorstep recycling (72%) and local tips/household waste recycling centres (70%). However, more than a fifth of residents were dissatisfied with local bus services (30%), keeping public land clear of litter and refuse (24%), local transport information (23%) and sports and leisure facilities (21%).

Figure 21

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services that are provided or supported by East Herts Council?

Base: All Respondents (number of 2011 respondents shown in brackets)



Leisure Facilities

- 4.10 Residents were asked whether they had used any of the council’s leisure facilities such as swimming pools and gyms in the five East Herts towns. More than 1 in 10 residents reported using Hartham Leisure Centre (14%), Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre (14%) and Fanshawe Pool and Gym (11%) in the last 12 months. However, more than three fifths of residents (62%) reported not having used any of them in the last 12 months.
- 4.11 When residents who have not used any of the leisure facilities in the five towns in East Herts (see figure 23 below) were asked why they have not used them, around a quarter or more of residents reported that this is because they use alternative facilities (29%), because they don’t wish to use leisure facilities (27%) and because they take part in other sports/fitness activities (24%). A fifth of residents (20%) also reported that they don’t have the time.
- 4.12 Text responses revealed that ‘other’ reasons for not having used any of the leisure facilities are: physical disabilities, high costs and a lack of awareness.

Figure 22

The council has a range of Leisure facilities such as swimming pools and gyms in all five towns in East Herts. Have you used any of them in the last 12 months?

Base: All Respondents (1184)

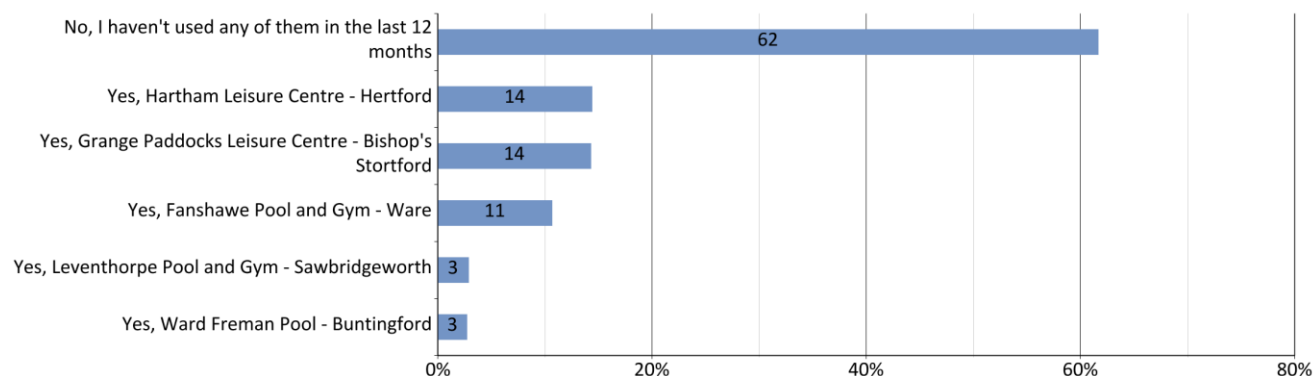
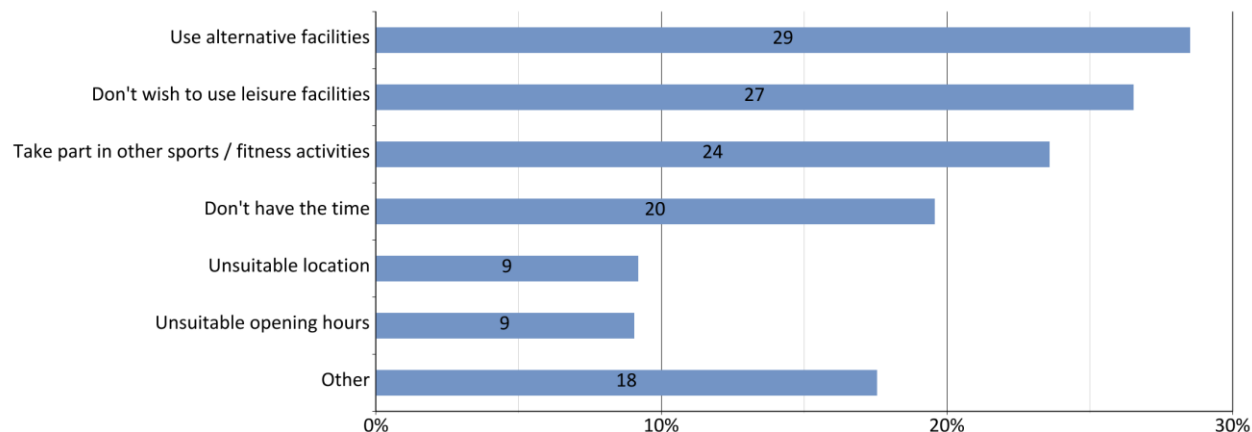


Figure 23

Can you please tell us why you have NOT used them?

Base: Respondents who have not used any of the Leisure facilities mentioned at figure 24 in the last 12 months (888)



Waste and Recycling Collections

- 4.13 The survey included a number of questions about the Council's waste and recycling collection services.
- 4.14 Whilst generally satisfied with the waste collection service overall (78% very or fairly satisfied), residents express highest dissatisfaction with the collection of bulky waste (22%). In addition, a third of residents (33%) say they are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with this aspect of service.
- 4.15 Far more positive are responses to questions about the bin provided for the collection (85% satisfied) and how clean and tidy the streets are following collection (78% satisfied). These results are in line with survey findings from 2009 (Figure 24 overleaf).
- 4.16 In response to questions about the recycling and composting collection, more than four fifths of residents said that they are satisfied with the information provided by the service (87%) while almost three quarters (74%) are satisfied with how clean and tidy the streets are following collections. Residents say that they are less satisfied, however, with the containers provided, with a fifth (20%) expressing dissatisfaction.
- 4.17 More than three quarters of residents (77%) expressed satisfaction with the service overall but 14% said that they are dissatisfied. All of these results are broadly in line with the findings from the 2009 survey (Figure 25, overleaf). Although it is worth noting that the proportion of residents who are dissatisfied with the types of materials collected has decreased by 23 percentage points since 2009 (13% in 2011 v 36% in 2009).

Figure 24

East Herts Council undertakes a collection of **general household waste**. Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide

Base: Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

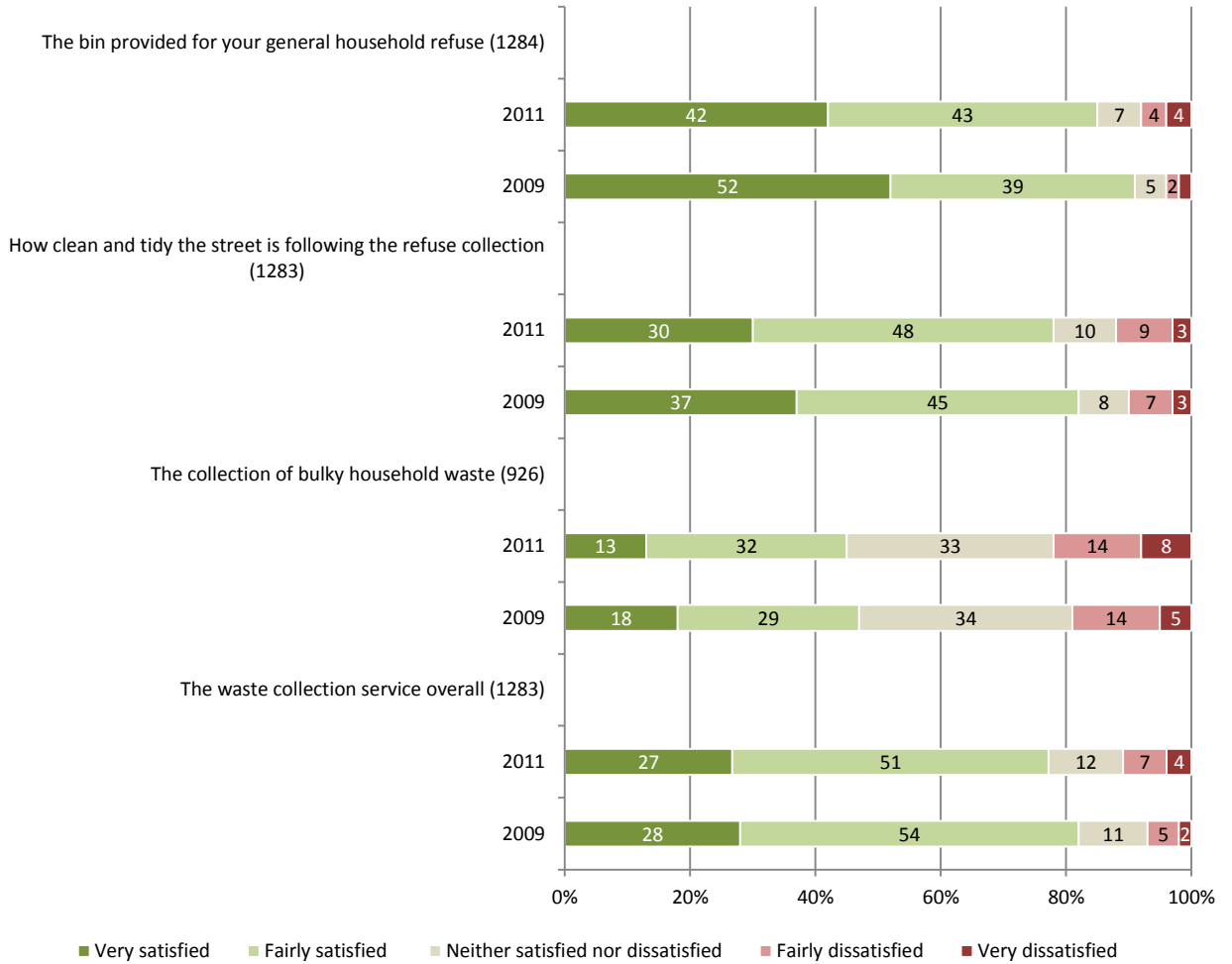
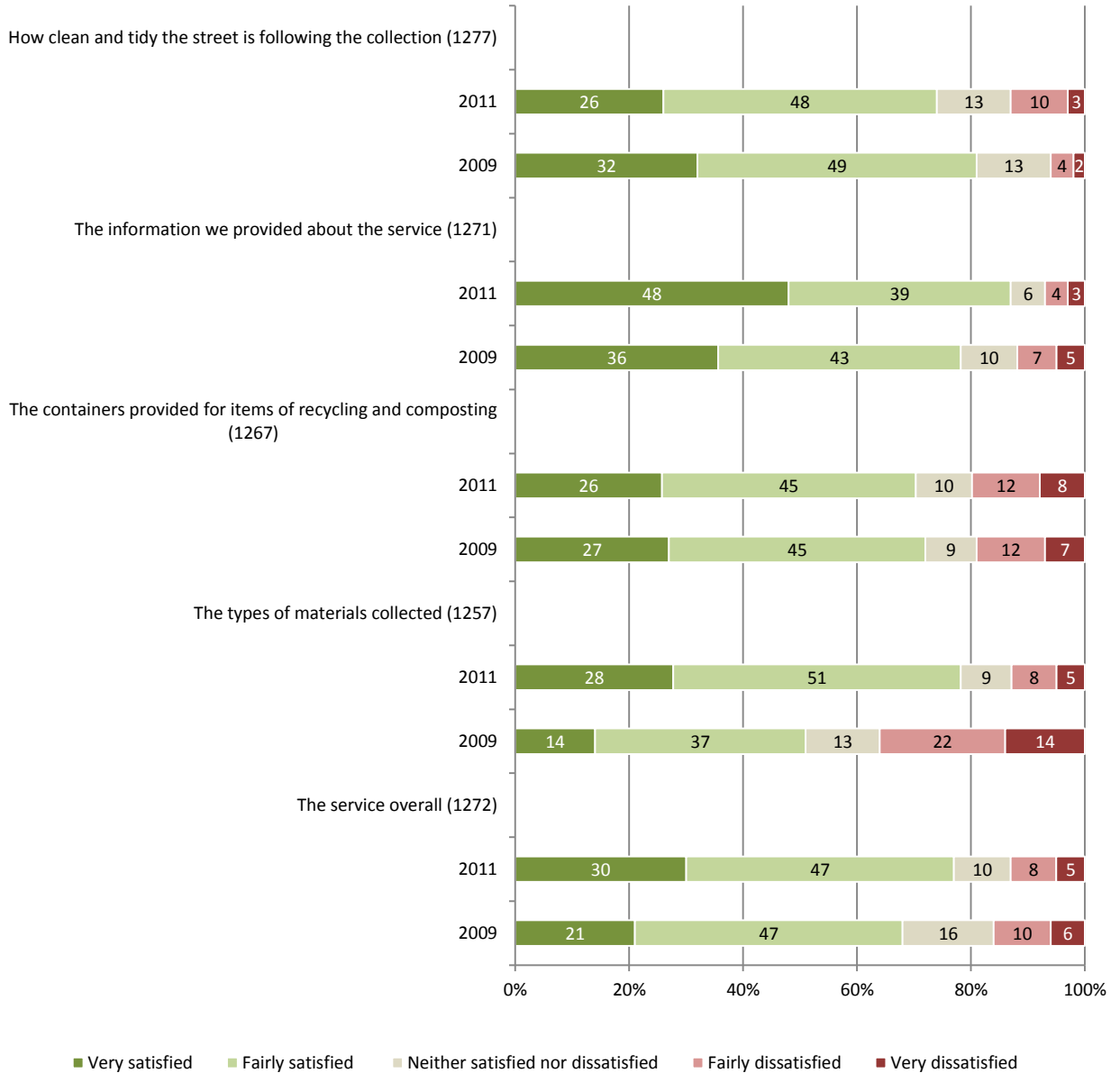


Figure 25

East Herts Council undertakes a collection of waste for recycling and composting. Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide.

Base: Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



4.18 Figure 26 presents the groups of residents significantly more or less likely to be dissatisfied with aspects of the recycling and composting collection service.

Figure 26

East Herts Council undertakes a collection of waste for [recycling and composting](#). Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide. Demographic sub-group analysis

Aspect of service	Residents significantly more likely to be satisfied/less likely to be dissatisfied	Residents significantly more likely to be dissatisfied/less likely to be satisfied
The containers provided	Aged 60 and over Retired Of Christian religion With a limiting longstanding illness/disability Without children in household	Aged 18-44 Rented accommodation Of no religion Working Household with children
How clean and tidy the street is following the collection	Aged 65+ Retired Rented accommodation	Aged 35-44 Household with children
The types of materials collected	Aged 55-59; 65+ Retired Without children in household With a limiting longstanding illness/disability Of non-Christian religion	Aged 18-34 With children in household Working Rented accommodation Of no religion
The information provided	Aged 55-59 Aged 65+ Retired Owned accommodation	Aged 18-34 Rented accommodation Of non-Christian religion
The overall service	Aged 55-59; 65+ Retired Of Christian religion	Rented accommodation Working Household with children Of no religion

Summary of Key Points – East Herts Council and Council Services

- Just over half of residents (51%) are generally satisfied with how the Council is running East Herts.
- Just over two fifths of residents (42%) agreed that the Council is making the local area a better place to live, while around a third (33%) agreed that the Council is efficient and well run. Almost a third of respondents (31%) disagreed that the Council provides good value for money.
- Just over half of residents (51%) agree that the quality of Council services is good overall.
- 7 in 10 or more residents are satisfied with refuse collection (75%), parks and open spaces (74%), doorstep recycling (72%) and local tips/household waste recycling centres (70%).
- Around a fifth or more of residents were dissatisfied with local bus services (30%), keeping public land clear of litter and refuse (24%), local transport information (23%) and sports and leisure facilities (21%).
- More than 1 in 10 residents reported using Hartham Leisure Centre (14%), Grange Paddocks Leisure Centre (14%) and Fanshawe Pool and Gym (11%) in the last 12 months. However, more than three fifths of residents (62%) reported not having used any of them in the last 12 months
- Whilst satisfied with the waste collection service overall, the bins provided and how clean and tidy the street is following collection, residents are less happy with the service for the collection of bulky waste.
- High levels of satisfaction were also reported for the recycling and composting collection service. However, almost a quarter (23%) of residents expressed dissatisfaction with regard to the containers used.

Chapter 5: Contacting East Herts Council

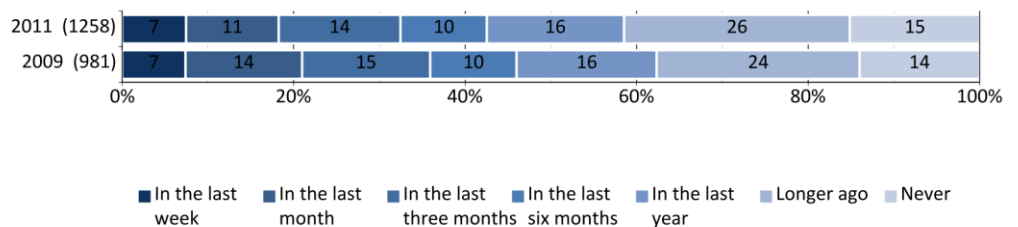
Contact with East Herts Council

5.1 Around a third of residents (32%) had contacted the Council within the last three months. This increases to 58% for residents who were in contact within the last 12 months. Just over a quarter (26%) were in contact with the Council over a year ago, while 15% have never contacted the Council.

Figure 27

When did you last contact East Herts Council?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



5.2 As in 2009, the method of contact (64%) that most residents' used to contact the council was the telephone (Figure 28). This was also the preferred method of choice for contacting East Herts (58%) (see Figure 29 below).

Figure 28 How did you get in contact with East Herts Council on the most recent occasion?

Base: Respondents who have contacted East Herts Council (number of respondents shown in brackets)

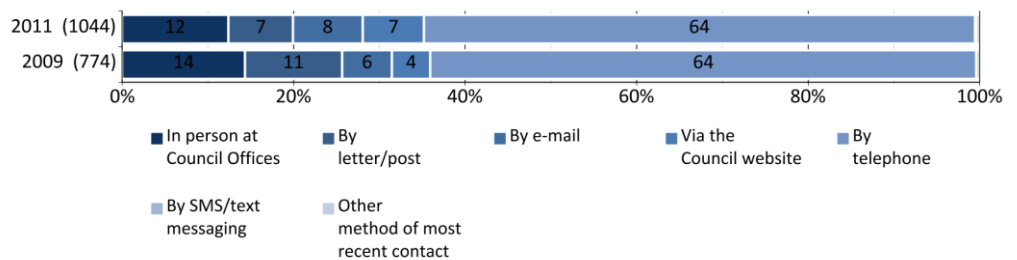
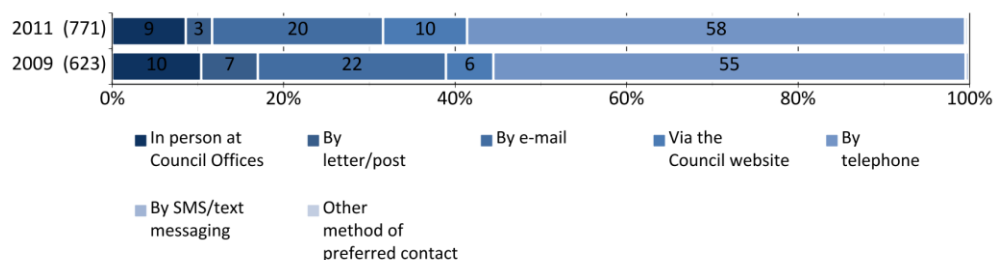


Figure 29 How would you prefer to contact East Herts Council?

Base: Respondents who have contacted East Herts Council (number of respondents shown in brackets)

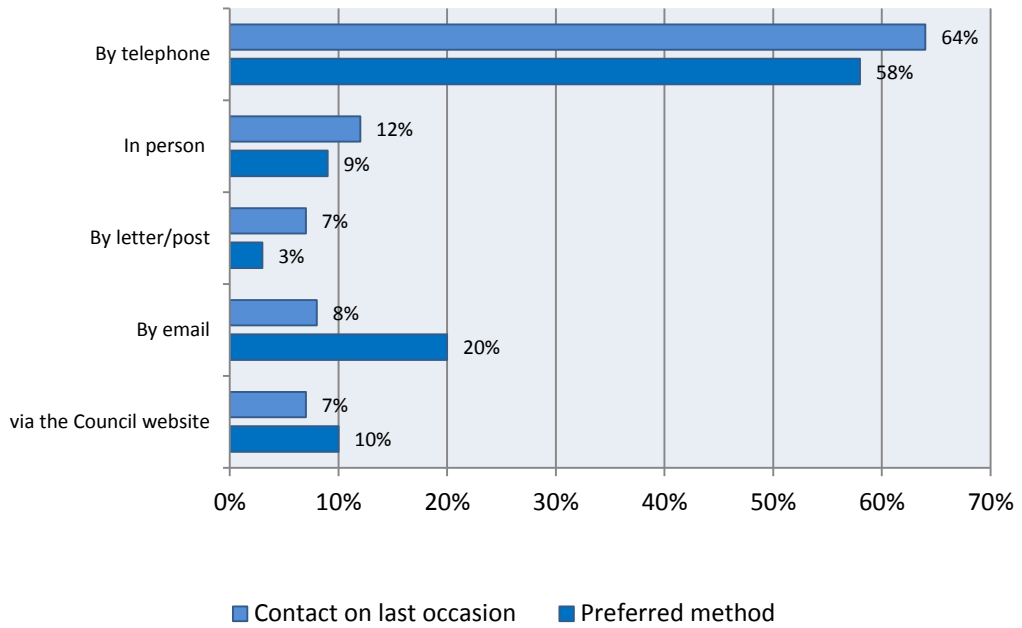


5.3 Figure 30 (below) compares current ways of communicating with the Council with how residents would prefer to make contact. It is worth noting that a fifth (20%) of residents would prefer to contact the Council by email. At present only 8% of residents contact the council via this method.

Figure 30

How did you get in contact with East Herts on the most recent occasion? How would you prefer to contact East Herts Council?

Base: All Respondents



Satisfaction with Contact

- 5.4 Just under two thirds of residents (65%) expressed satisfaction with their last contact with the Council; 33% said they were very satisfied with this contact. However, 13% said that they are dissatisfied with their last contact. Significantly more satisfied are those aged 75 or over (see figure 32 overleaf).
- 5.5 Text responses revealed that residents who were satisfied felt this way due to: the speed and effectiveness of the response, polite/helpful staff, being put through to the right department, the issue/problem being resolved and their question/request being answered.
- 5.6 Text comments also showed that residents who were dissatisfied felt this way this for a number of reasons which included: the manner of the person the resident spoke to, the quality, speed and effectiveness of the response, the problem/issue not being resolved and a lack of response.

Figure 31

Thinking about the most recent time you got in touch with the Council, on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your contact with the Council?

Base: All Respondents who have contacted East Herts Council (number of respondents shown in brackets)

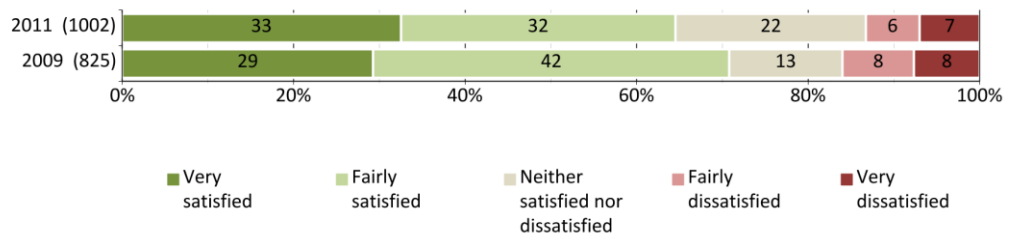
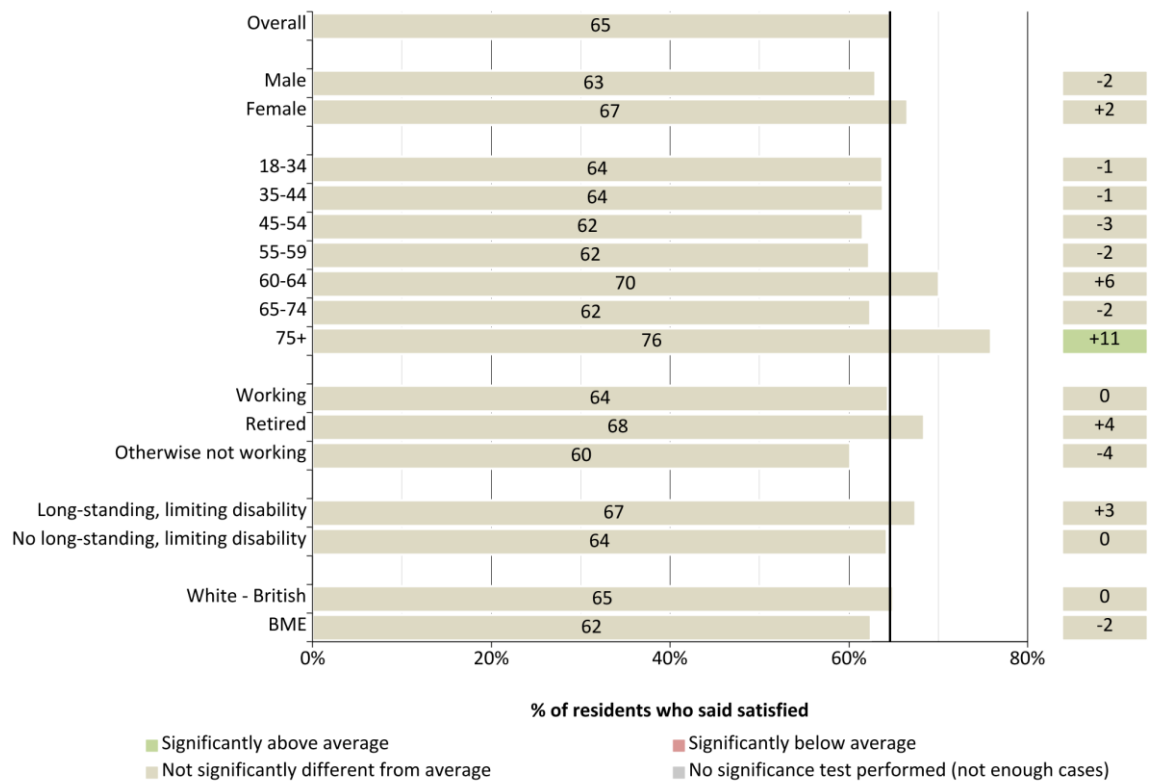


Figure 32

Thinking about the most recent time you got in touch with the Council, on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with your contact with the Council?

Base: Respondents who said satisfied (982)



Complaints

- 5.7 More than a quarter of residents (29%) said that they had contacted East Herts Council with a complaint. Almost a third of these (32%) had made a complaint within the last three months and 49% within the last six months (see figure 35 overleaf). Nearly a third of them (32%) had made a complaint to the Council over a year ago (see figure 35 overleaf).
- 5.8 Residents who are of Black Minority Ethnic (BME) background are significantly more likely to have contacted East Herts Council with a complaint (see Figure 34 below).

Figure 33

Have you contacted East Herts Council with a complaint?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

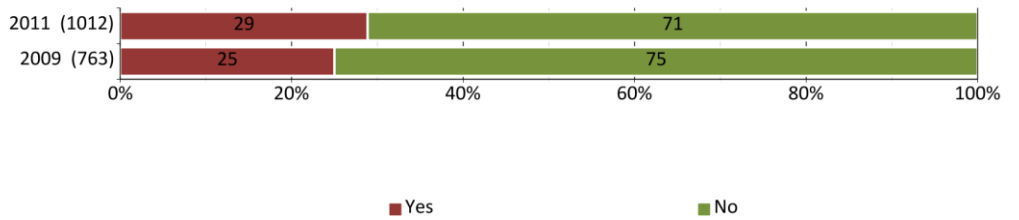


Figure 34

Have you contacted East Herts Council with a complaint?

Base: Respondents who said yes (991)

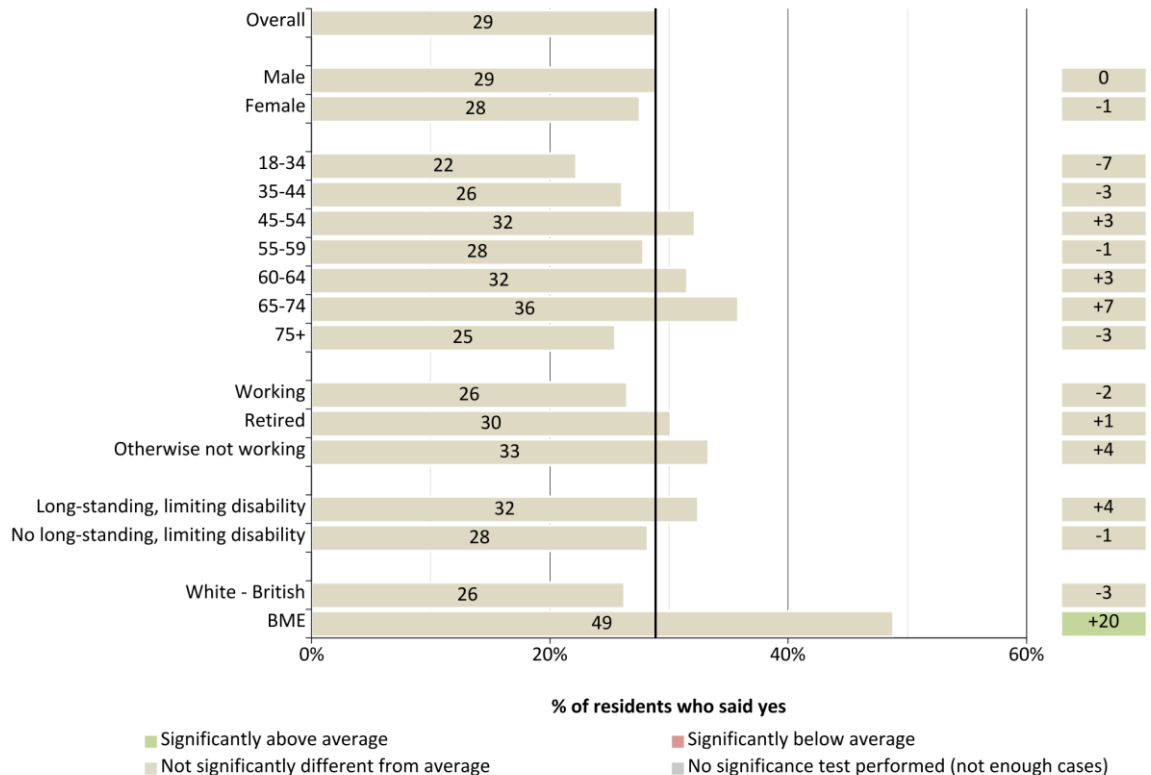
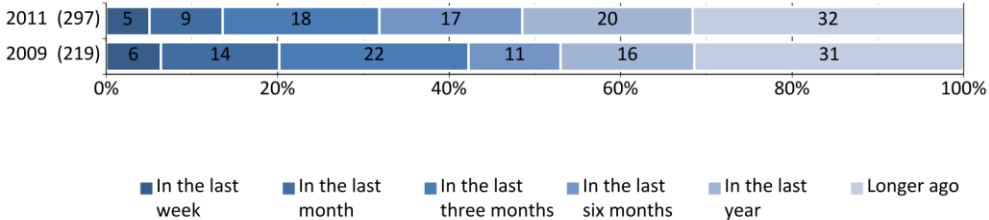


Figure 35

When did you last complain to East Herts Council?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

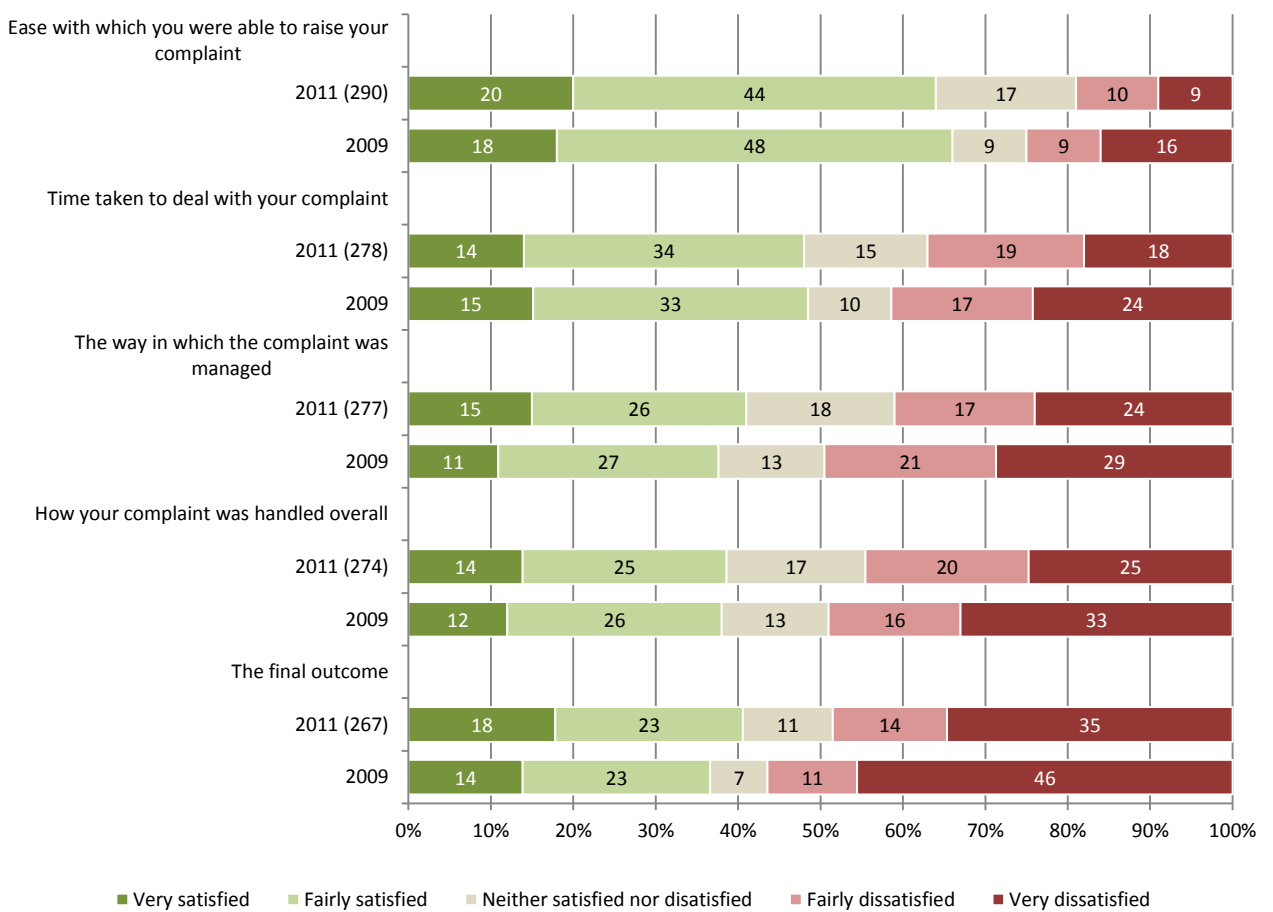


5.9 Residents were asked to rate how satisfied or dissatisfied they are with how the Council dealt with their complaints. They expressed most satisfaction with the ease with which they were able to complain (64% satisfied; 19% dissatisfied). However, less than half of them (48%) were satisfied with the time taken to deal with the complaint and 37% were dissatisfied with this aspect of the service. Lower still was satisfaction concerning the way in which the complaint was managed (41% satisfied), the way in which the complaint was handled overall (39% satisfied) and the final outcome (41% satisfied). For these three aspects, the proportion of residents who were dissatisfied outnumbered those who said they were satisfied (Figure 36, below).

Figure 36

How satisfied or dissatisfied were you with how the following were handled?

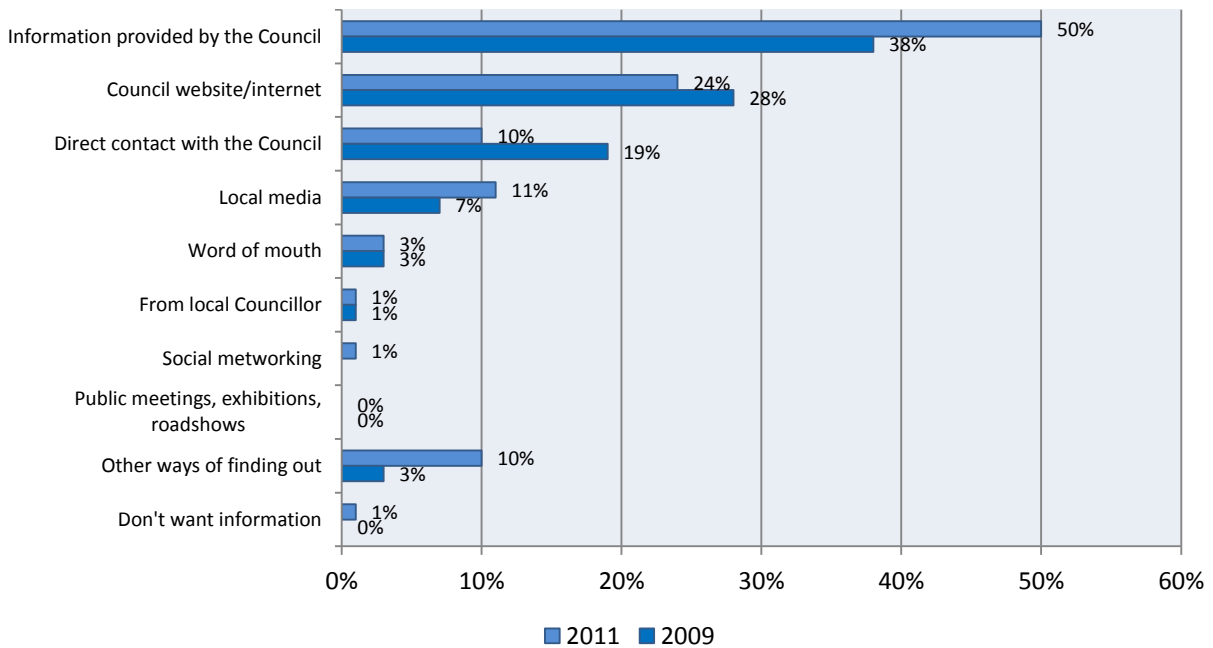
Base: Respondents who have made a complaint to East Herts (number of respondents shown in brackets)



Finding out about East Herts Council

5.10 Residents were asked how they find out about East Herts Council at the moment. The majority of residents reported that they find out about East Herts Council from *information provided by the Council* (50%), followed by the *Council website/internet* (24%), and *direct contact with the Council* (10%). The results are fairly comparable to the 2009 residents' survey (see Figure 37 below). However, there has been an increase of 12 percentage points in those who find out about East Herts information provided by their council.

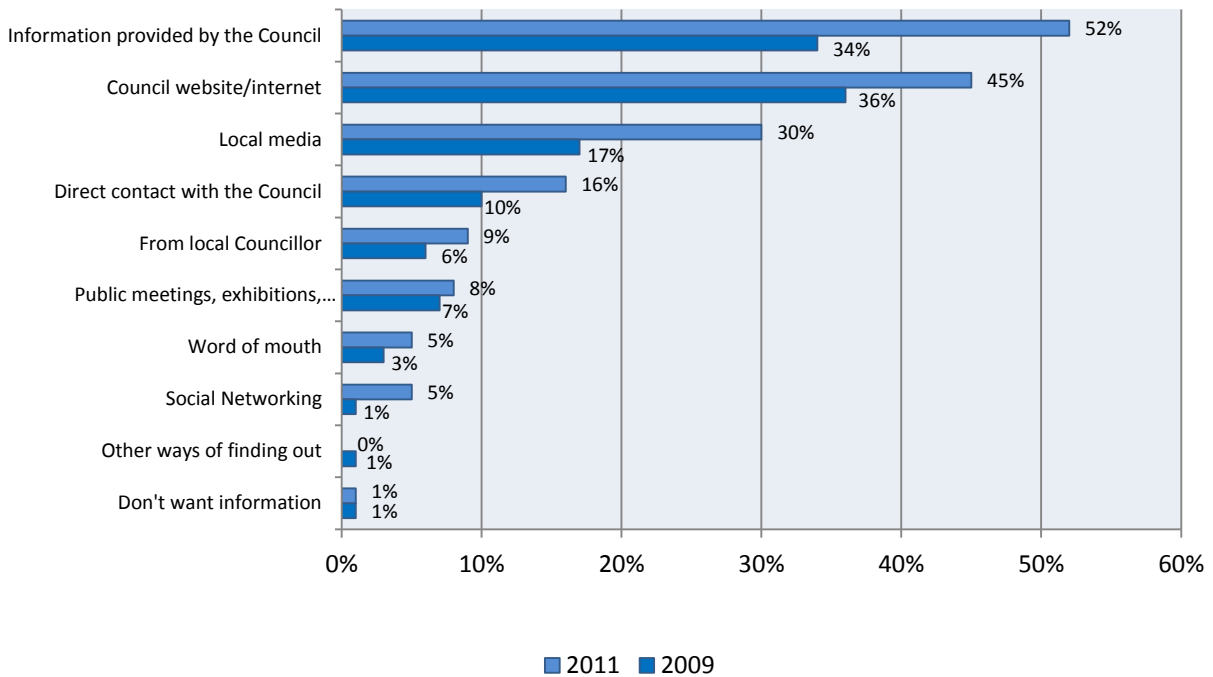
Figure 37
 What is the main source from which you find out about East Herts? ²
 Base: All Respondents (1115)



² Please note that 'social networking' was not an option in last year's survey

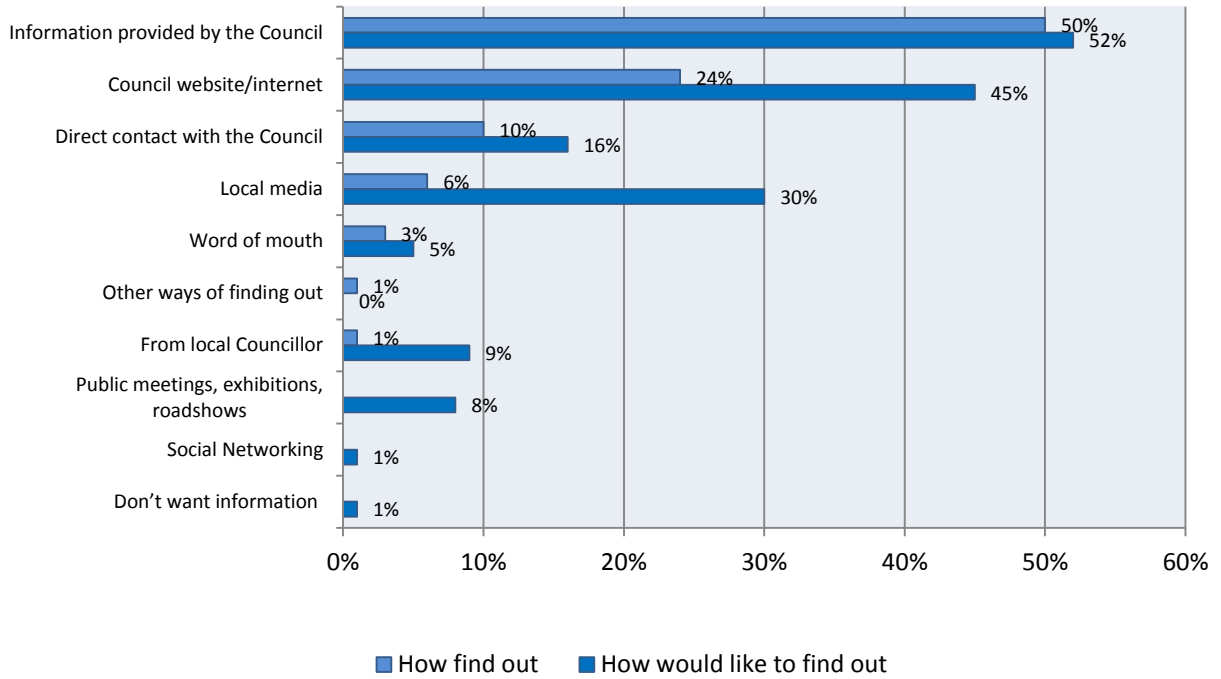
- 5.11 Residents were asked how they would like to find out about East Herts Council. The majority of residents reported that they would like to find out about the council from *information provided by the Council* (52%), followed by the *Council website/internet* (45%), and *local media* (30%). The results are fairly comparable to the 2009 residents' survey.
- 5.12 It is worth noting that the proportion of residents that would like to find out about information provided by the Council, local media and the Council website/internet and have increased by 18, 13 and 9 percentage points respectively.

Figure 38
 And how would you like to find out about East Herts Council in the future?
 Base: All Respondents (1004)



5.13 When asked how they would like to find out about East Herts Council in the future, proportionally more residents would like to use the Council website/internet (45%) compared with current usage (24%). Residents also identified that they would like to use *local media* (30% V 6%) more in the future.

Figure 39
 How do you find out about East Herts Council? And how would you like to find out about East Herts Council in the future?
 Base: All respondents



- 5.14 Nearly two thirds of residents (63%) say that the Council keeps them very or fairly well informed, a 3 percentage point decrease since 2009 (Figure 40 below).
- 5.15 However, nearly a quarter (24%) say that they receive *only a limited amount of information* from the Council and a further 12% say the Council *doesn't tell us much about what it does*.
- 5.16 Retired East Herts residents are significantly more likely to report feeling well informed about the services and benefits that East Herts Council provides while residents aged 18 to 34 are significantly less likely to feel this way.

Figure 40

How well informed do you think East Herts Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

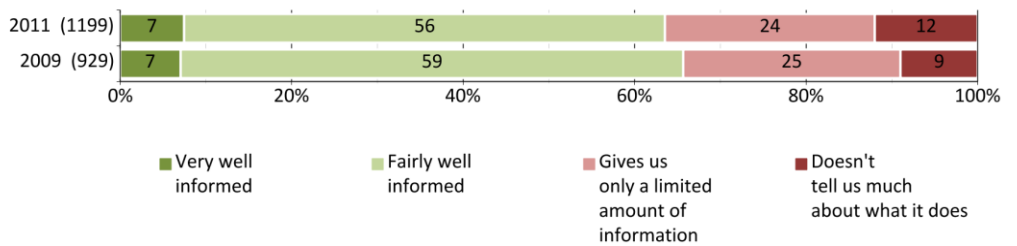
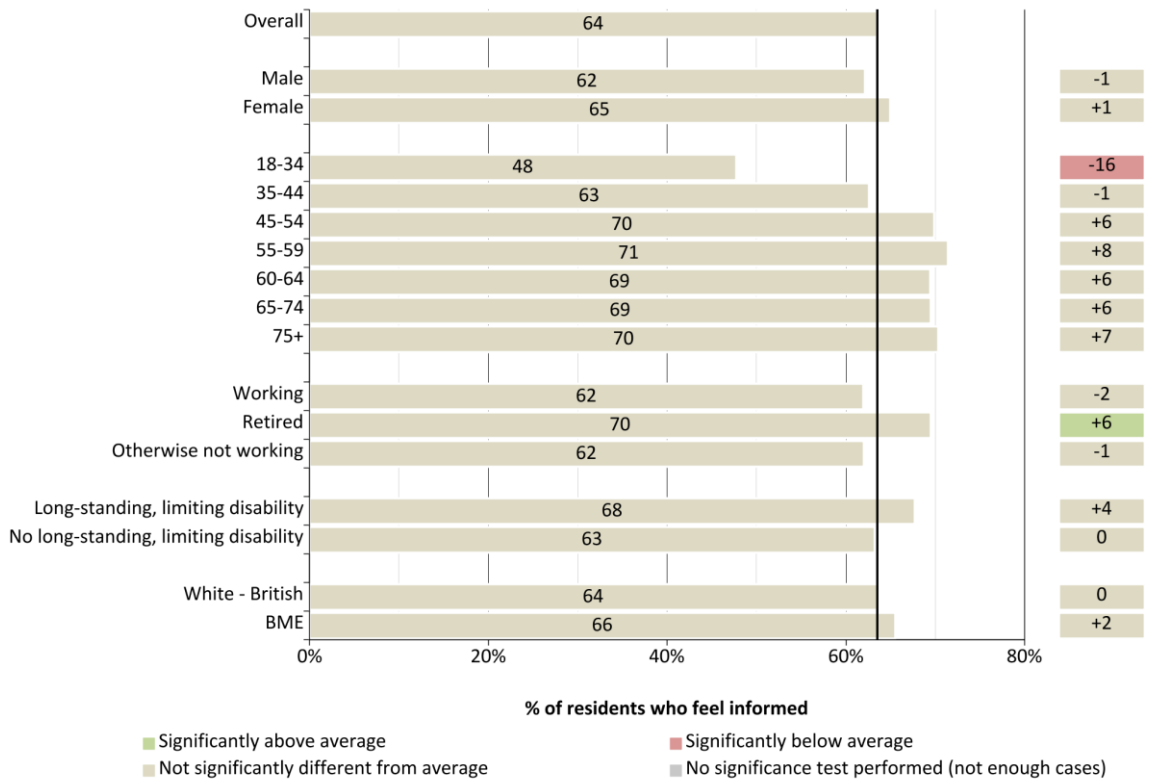


Figure 41

How well informed do you think East Herts Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?

Base: Respondents who feel informed (1172)



Link Magazine

5.17 88% of residents reported that they have seen a copy of the council's publication 'Link' magazine in the last 12 months.

5.18 Residents aged 45 and over and the retired are significantly more likely to have seen a copy, while those aged 18 to 34 and those who are working are significantly less likely to have seen it.

Figure 42

Link magazine is the council's publication, currently delivered four times a year to each household. Have you seen a copy in the last 12 months?

Base: All Respondents (1287)

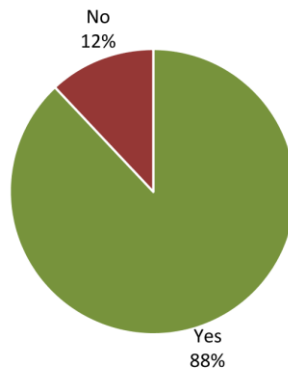
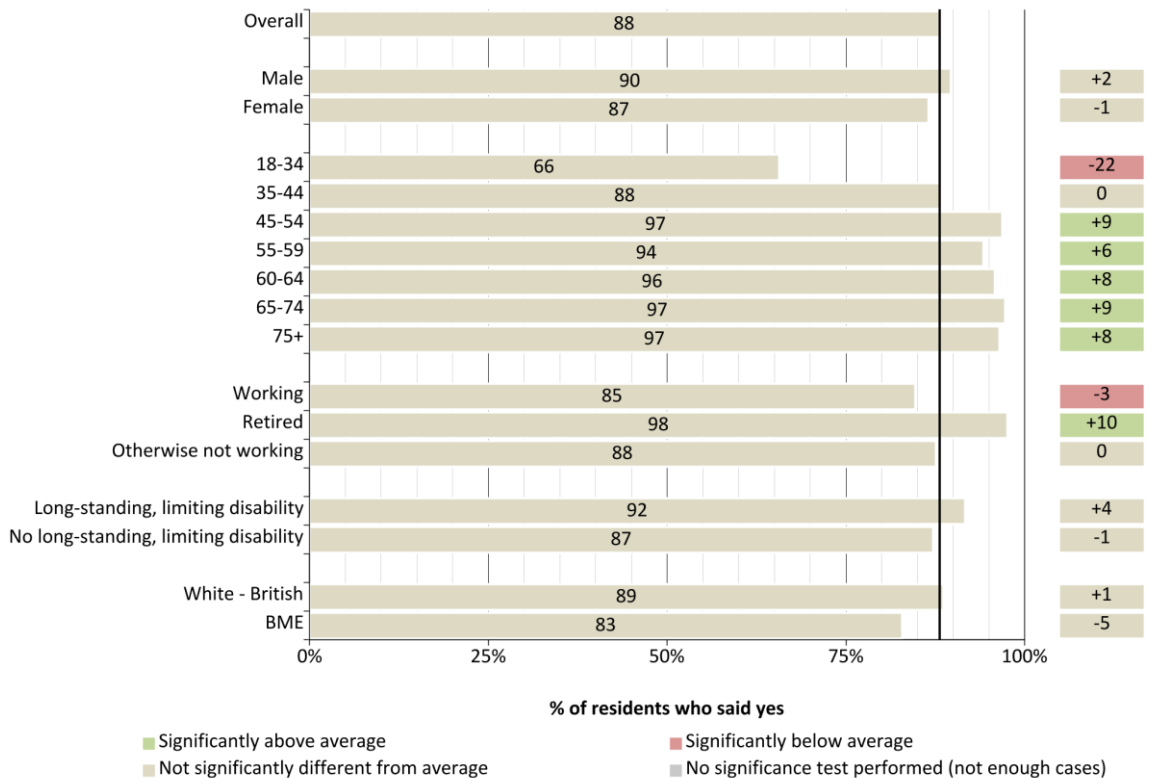


Figure 43

Link magazine is the council's publication, currently delivered four times a year to each household. Have you seen a copy in the last 12 months?

Base: Respondents who said yes (1258)



- 5.19 Of the residents who have seen a copy of 'Link' magazine in the last 12 months, more than half reported having read *all* (20%) or *most of it* (34%) while a fifth (20%) have *read a few articles* and just over a fifth (21%) have *just glanced at it*. Only 4% said they *never read it*.
- 5.20 Residents aged 60 or over, those with a long-standing or limiting disability and the retired are significantly more likely to have read all or most of Link whereas those aged 18 to 44 and those who are working are significantly less likely to have read all or most of the publication.

Figure 44

Thinking about the most recent issue of Link magazine that you have seen, would you say you:

Base: Respondents who have seen a copy of Link Magazine in the last 12 months (1186)

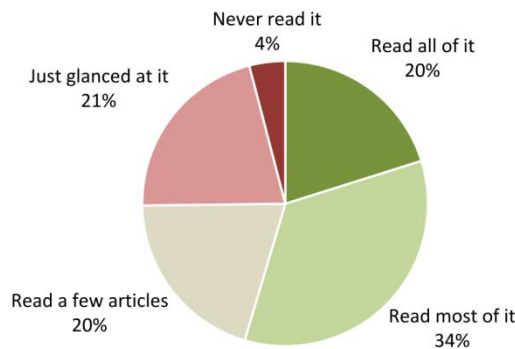
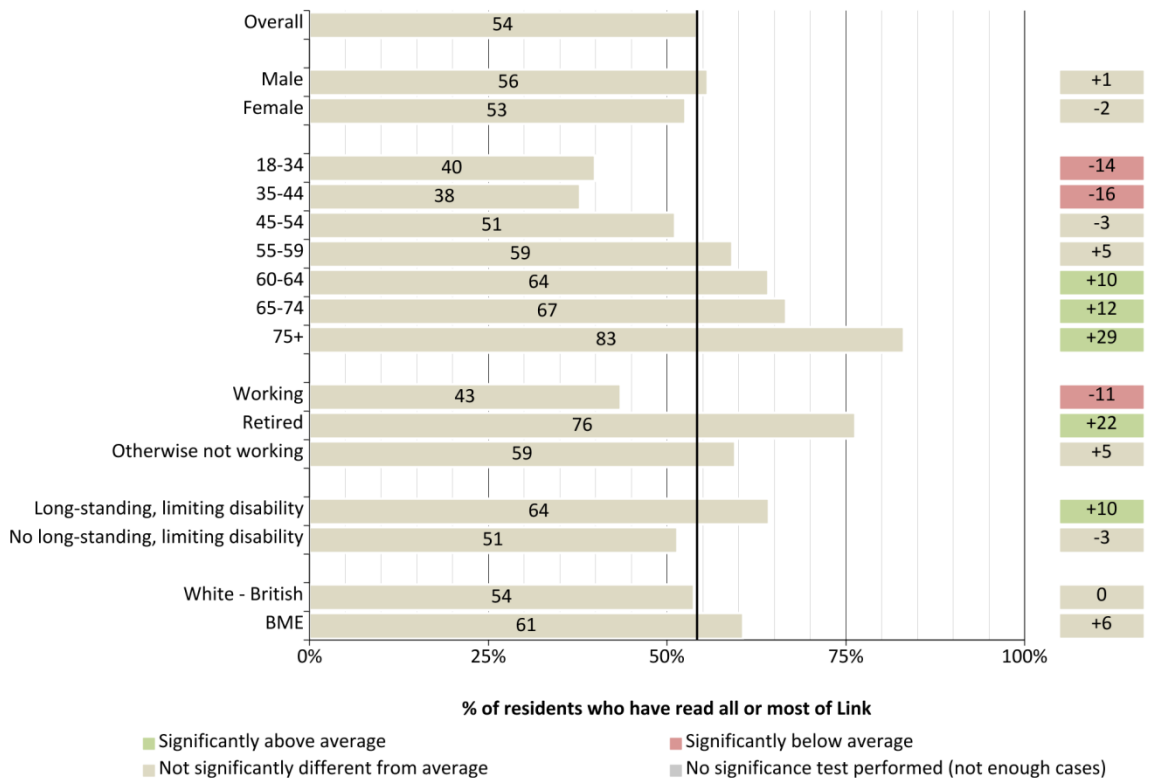


Figure 45

Thinking about the most recent issue of Link magazine that you have seen, would you say you:

Base: Respondents who have read all or most of Link (1161)



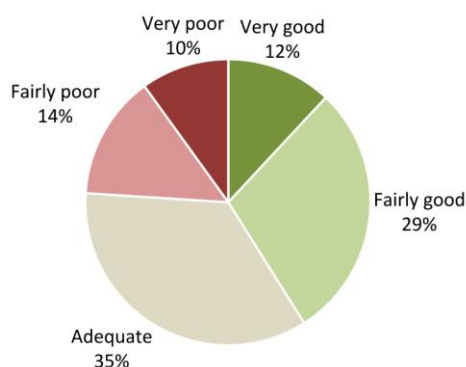
Broadband

5.21 Just over two fifths (41%) of residents stated that the broadband facilities in their area are good and more than a third reported them as being adequate. However, almost a quarter (24%) of residents thought that broadband facilities in their area are poor.

Figure 46

What do you think of the broadband facilities in your area?

Base: All Respondents (1033)



Summary of Key Points – Contacting East Herts Council

- Around a third of residents (32%) had contacted the Council within the last three months. The favoured means of contact remains the telephone. However, as in 2009, residents also state a clear preference for future contact by email.
- 7 in 10 residents (65%) expressed satisfaction with their last contact with the Council.
- More than a quarter of residents (29%) had contacted the Council with a complaint and almost half (49%) of these complaints were made in the last six months. Relatively low levels of satisfaction were expressed for the time taken to deal with the complaint (48%), the way in which the complaint was managed (41%), the way in which the complaint was handled overall (39%) and the final outcome (41%). Residents are most satisfied with the ease with which they are able to complain.
- Residents were asked how they find out about East Herts Council at the moment. The most popular sources are information provided directly by the Council and the Council website.
- Nearly two thirds of residents (63%) say that the Council keeps them well informed. However, more than a third (36%) say that they receive only a limited amount of information or that the Council does not tell them much about what it does.
- 88% of residents reported that they have seen a copy of the council's publication 'Link' magazine in the last 12 months.



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