

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL

COMMUNITY SURVEY

JULY/ AUGUST 2003

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SURVEY : JULY/AUGUST 2003
CONTENTS

	Page No.
SUMMARY OF THE MAIN FINDINGS.....	
A. BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES	
B. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS	
C. PROFILE OF SAMPLE.....	
D. RESEARCH FINDING :	
1. Satisfaction with way Council is running the Borough	
1.1 Overall satisfaction	
1.2 Perceived changes over the last year	
2. Satisfaction with local neighbourhood	
2.1 Overall satisfaction	
2.2 Perceived changes over the last year	
2.3 Satisfaction with particular aspects of neighbourhood	
2.3.1 Availability of housing.....	
2.3.2 Affordability of housing.....	
2.3.3 Employment opportunities.....	
2.3.4 Natural environment.....	
2.3.5 Quality of built environment.....	
2.3.6 Level of social & health services	
2.3.7 Level of cultural, recreational & leisure services	
2.3.8 Standard of schools	
2.3.9 Level of public transport.....	
2.3.10 Opportunities to participate in local planning & decision making.....	
2.3.11 Summary.....	
2.4 Perceived safety of Darlington Borough area	
2.4.1 During the day time	
2.4.2 After dark	
2.5 Noise Pollution.....	
2.6 Ease of access to services	
3 Most Important issues.....	
3.1 Most important issues.....	
3.2 Councils success in dealing with most important issues.....	
4 Council Services.....	
4.1 Satisfaction with services (all respondents)	
4.2 Satisfaction with services (comparison with 1998).....	
4.3 Usage of services	
4.4 Satisfaction with services amongst service users	
4.5 Service Priorities.....	
4.5.1 First Priority for improvement	
4.5.2 First & Second Priority	
4.6 Council spend on Services	

4.7	Service Improvements
5	Access to services
5.1	Frequency of contact
5.2	Methods of contact used and ease of finding contact details.....
5.3	Future Methods of contact
5.4	Adequacy of 'opening times' of Council Buildings.....
5.5	Access to personal Computer and Internet in home
6	Travel to school
7	Willingness to become member of Citizens Panel.....

APPENDICES :

1. Copy of questionnaire (marked up with top-line findings)
2. Tables of Results (Separate contents list)
3. Respondents' suggestions for improvements to services

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SURVEY : JULY / AUGUST 2003

SUMMARY OF MAIN FINDINGS

Background and Methodology

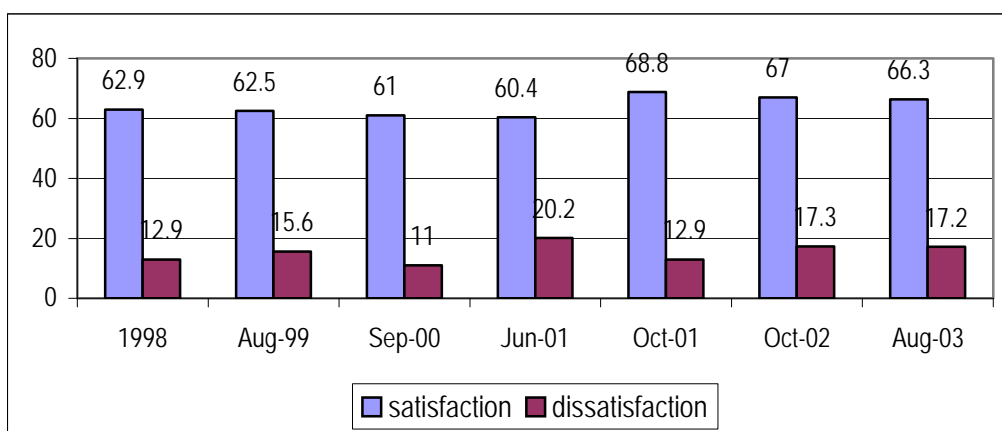
1. In 1998 Darlington Borough Council commenced a programme of community research and consultation covering all aspects of the Council's activities, the overall purpose of which was to inform the development of Best Value initiatives, and to set a context for the evolution of the Council's annual budgets : this survey is part of that ongoing programme of research and consultation.
2. Face-to-face interviews were conducted during July/August 2003, using a structured questionnaire, with 1019 residents of Darlington Borough who were aged 16 years and over. Interviewing took place in all Wards of the Borough, with the number of interviews conducted in each Ward being proportionate to the population therein. Age and gender (inter-locked) quotas were applied in order to ensure that the sample was representative of the Borough in terms of these variables.
3. In order to track changes in residents opinions over time, many of the questions were the same as, or similar to, those included in previous surveys.
4. As there had been some changes to ward boundaries since the last community survey, the opportunity was taken to rationalise the areas used for reporting purposes. In order to develop a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS) for Darlington, the Council has identified 11 most deprived wards – and these have been split into 'Phase 1' (the five most deprived wards), and 'Phase 2' (the next six most deprived wards). This sample was therefore divided into four sub-groups – 'NRS Phase 1 Wards', 'NRS Phase 2 Wards', 'Non NRS Urban Wards' and 'Rural Wards'.

Satisfaction with the Council

5. 66.3% of all respondents said that they were satisfied with the way the Council is running the Borough, and only 17.2% of respondents said that they were dissatisfied.

6. The current satisfaction/dissatisfaction levels are not significantly different from those recorded by the October 2002 Community Survey (67% satisfaction : 17.3% dissatisfaction).

Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the Borough
% response – all respondents



7. Respondents had a slightly more positive perception of how things had changed in the past year, than in October 2002 : 14.4% of respondents believed the Council has 'got better' at running the Borough over the last year (2002 = 11%), whilst a similar proportion, 14.1%, believed it had 'got worse' (2002 = 23.8%). As in 2002, however, the majority of respondents (66.5%) believed that there had been 'no change' (2002 = 61.9%).

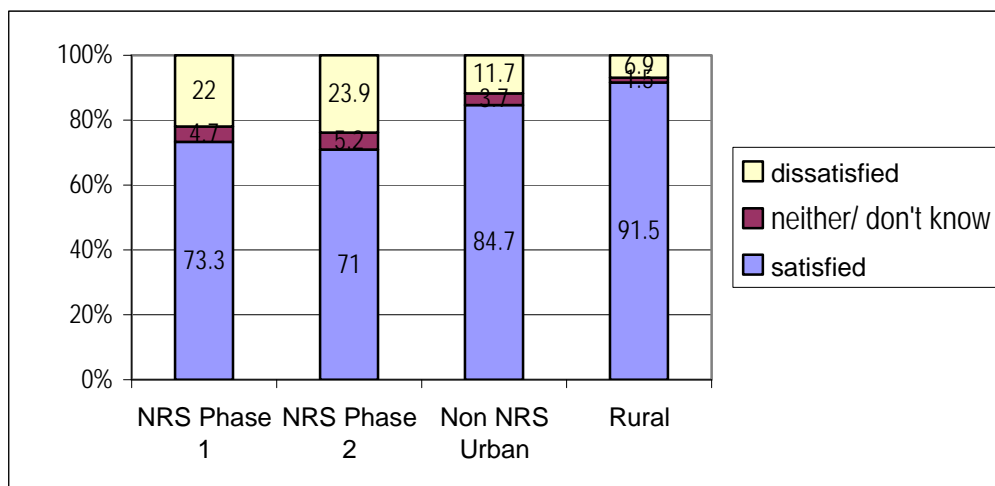
8. The principal issue referred to when asked how the Council had 'got worse' at running the Borough were 'poor standards of cleanliness', followed by 'roads/ pavements/ traffic', 'refuse collection', 'consultation/ communication', and 'crime/ vandalism/ policing'. (10.4%). (In 2002 the principal issue referred to by respondents when asked why they thought things had got worse was the 'refuse collection'.)

9. The principal reason given for believing the Council had 'got better' at running the Borough was 'better cleanliness, maintenance and/or appearance' followed by 'Improvements in recycling /refuse collection services' .

Local Neighbourhood

10. Satisfaction with local neighbourhoods was high (79.3%), with 40.6% of respondents saying they were 'very satisfied' and 38.7% that they were 'fairly satisfied'. 16.7% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction.
11. Overall satisfaction with the local neighbourhood was not statistically different to that recorded in the 2002 Community Survey (81% satisfaction, and 15.3% dissatisfaction).
12. Dissatisfaction with their neighbourhood was highest amongst those who lived in NRS wards (NRS Phase 1 = 22.0% : NRS Phase 2 = 23.9%), and fell to 11.7% in Non NRS Urban Wards, and to only 6.9% in Rural Wards.

Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live
(% response – all respondents – by area)

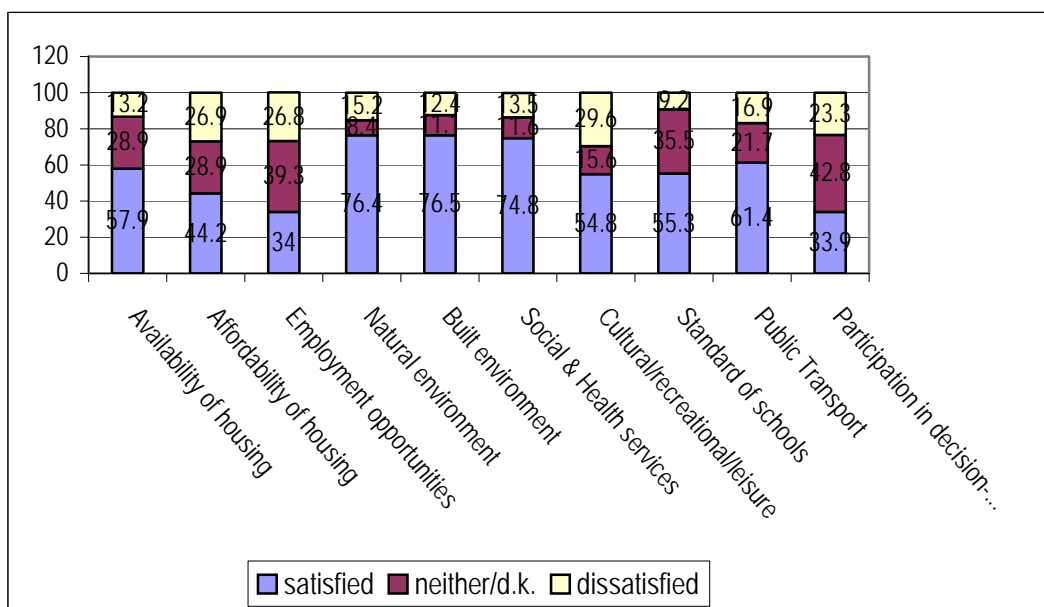


13. Whilst over half (50.9%) of all respondents felt that their neighbourhood had 'stayed about the same' over the past two years, 29.7% thought it had 'got worse' as a place to live, and only 7.7% felt it 'had got better'. This is a similar result to that found in the 2002 Community Survey : 33.1% 'worse'; 49.4% 'same', and 8.2% 'better'.
14. Those who lived in NRS Wards were most likely to think their neighbourhood had 'got worse' (Phase 1 = 37.5% : Phase 2 = 36%), and those who lived in Rural Wards (19.2%) least likely to be of this opinion. In all areas of the Borough, less than 10% were of the opinion that things had 'got better'.
15. 'Other residents or neighbours', 'upkeep / appearance', and 'nuisance children/young people' were the principal aspects referred to when asked in what ways the neighbourhood had got worse.
16. Just under a quarter (24.4%) of those who believed their local neighbourhoods had 'got better' over the past two years referred to 'better neighbours or other residents', with improvements in terms of 'upkeep/ appearance', and 'fewer nuisance children' being the next most frequently mentioned issues.
17. Over a half (51.8%) of all respondents reported feeling safe when outside in the Darlington area after dark. Whilst a third (33.8%) of all respondents reported feeling 'unsafe', this is a substantial decrease on the 48.4% of respondents who gave 'unsafe' responses in the 2002 Community Survey.
18. The great majority (94.5%) of respondents feel 'safe' when outside in the Darlington Borough area during the day, and only 2.2% feel 'unsafe' : this represents a slight increase since 2002 in respondents perception of safety during the day (2002 : 'safe' 88.9% : 'unsafe' 7%).
19. Satisfaction with aspects of local neighbourhoods was highest in respect of 'the quality of the built environment' (76.5% satisfied), 'the quality and amount of the natural environment' (76.4%), and 'the level of social & health services available' (74.8%). Other aspects about which over half of all respondents declared satisfaction were 'public

transport' (61.5%), 'availability of housing' (57.9%), 'standard of schools' (55.3%), and 'cultural/recreational/leisure services' (54.8%).

20. Less than half of all respondents reported satisfaction with 'affordability of housing' (44.1%), 'employment opportunities' (34%), and 'opportunities to participate in local planning, decision making etc.' (33.9%). Overall dissatisfaction was highest in respect of 'cultural/recreational/leisure services' (29.6%), 'affordability of housing', (26.9%), 'employment opportunities', (26.2%), and 'participation in decision making' (23.3%).

Satisfaction with aspects of local neighbourhood :
% response – all respondents

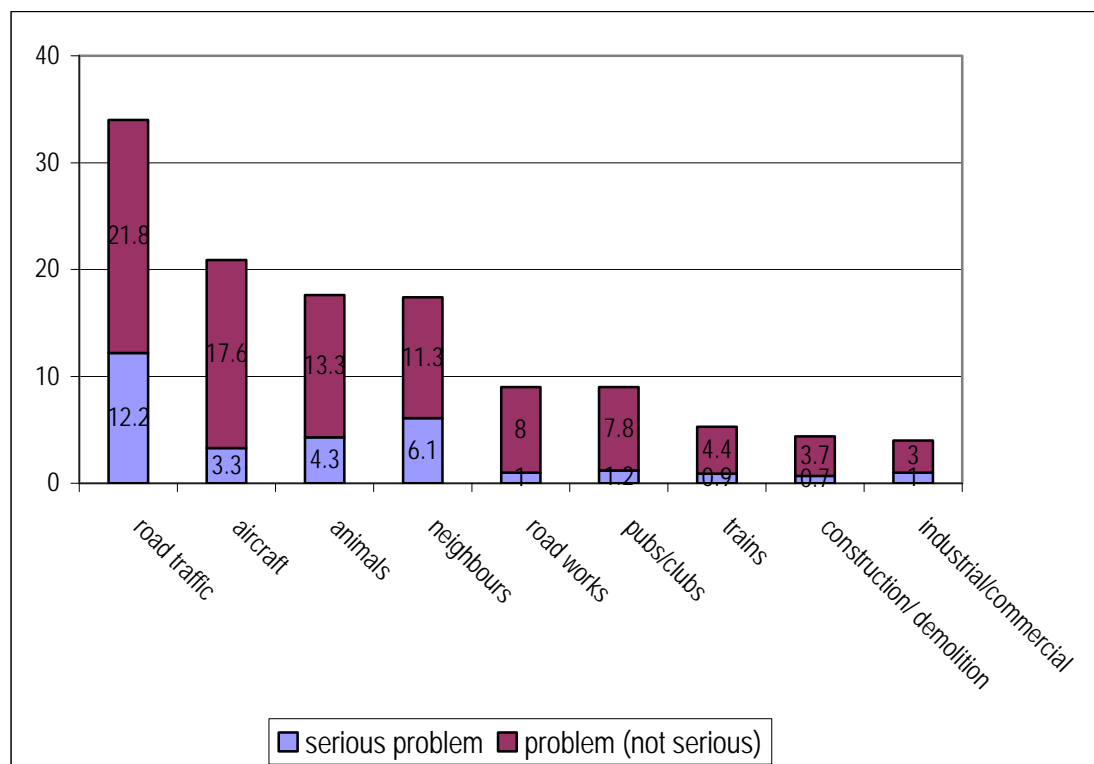


21. However, overall satisfaction levels, as calculated by a mean satisfaction score, which takes into account both the level of satisfaction/ dissatisfaction (very or fairly) and the number of respondents expressing an opinion, suggests that overall satisfaction levels were highest in respect of 'Level of Social & Health Services' (mean 2.21, where 1 = very satisfied, 3 = neither satisfied/dissatisfied, and 5 = very dissatisfied), 'Standard of Schools', (2.22), 'Natural Environment' (2.23), and 'Built environment' (2.24).

22. Satisfaction ratings for most issues were very similar to those achieved in the 2001 survey. The aspect about which the greatest positive change was observed was 'level of social and health services available' (satisfaction + 7% / dissatisfaction – 4.1%), and the greatest negative change was in respect of 'affordability of housing' (dissatisfaction + 7.7%)
23. 64.1% of all respondents were of the opinion that their local area 'was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together', and only 13.9% were of the opposite opinion. Respondents living in properties rented from the Council or Housing Associations were most likely to think that in their area people from different backgrounds 'did not get on well together' (21.2% 'disagree').
24. When asked 'do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area', only 26.8% of respondents 'agreed', whilst 47.2% 'disagreed'. However, 61% of respondents were of the opinion that 'by working together people can influence decisions that affect the neighbourhood', and this was a majority (57.7%+) opinion in all areas of the borough. Only 22.6% were of the opinion that people working together 'could not' influence local decisions .
25. Only 36.4% of all respondents did not find any type of noise a problem : 63.6% reported that at least one type of noise was a problem to them (22.3% serious / 41.3% not serious), and differences between areas were relatively minor in this respect. This is a similar finding to that of the 2002 Survey when 62.4% of respondents reported that at least one type of noise was a problem (serious or not serious).
26. 'Road traffic' was perceived as the greatest noise pollutant, mentioned by just over a third (34%) of all respondents as a problem : by 12.2% as a 'serious problem', and by a further 21.8% as a 'problem, but not serious'.
27. For all aspects listed, there were no significant changes since 2002 in the percentage of respondents reporting these as 'noise' problems (though note, in previous surveys respondents were not questioned about problems with noise from 'animals').

'How would you rate the following types of noise in your neighbourhood ?'

(% response – all respondents)



28. The majority of respondents reported no difficulties in reaching major services. The services most difficult for respondents to get to using their usual form of transport were 'G.P./ Doctor's Surgery' (12.8%), and 'local hospital' (12.3%) : these were the only services reported as being difficult to access by in excess of 8% of respondents.
29. Access to services for all services was most difficult for '75+ year olds', those with 'long standing illnesses or disabilities', and those 'without a car in the household' with 'Doctors Surgeries' presenting the greatest difficulties for these groups.
30. There were some changes since 2002, with fewer respondents reporting difficulty accessing 'G.P.s/Doctor's Surgeries' (- 6.7%), 'banks/ cash points' and (- 3.7%), 'sports centres' (- 3.7%). However, the 2002 survey showed significantly increased difficulty of access in respect of these services since 2001, and the current year's findings are more in line with those found in 2001.

Week-day Travel

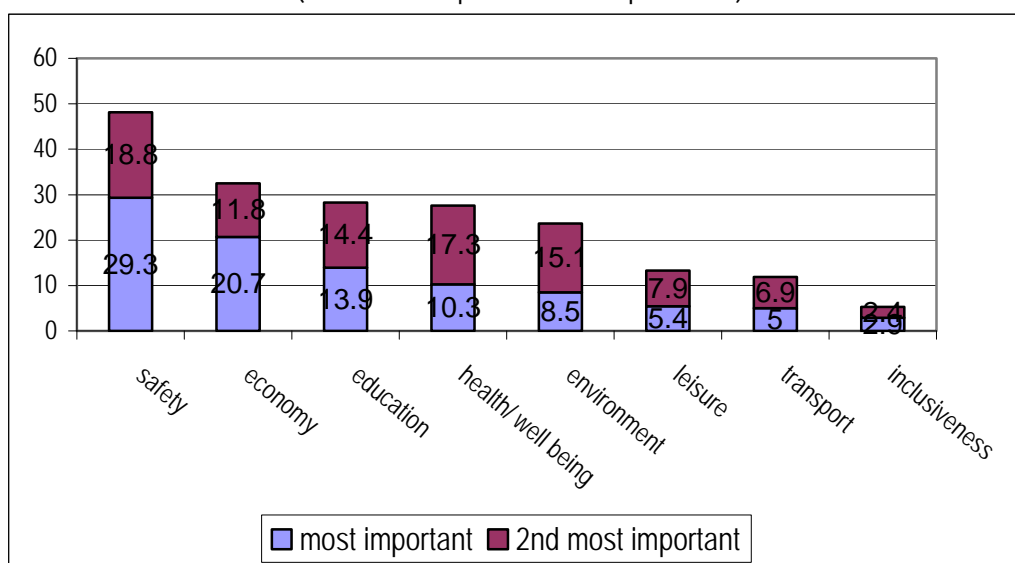
31. On an 'average weekday' (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday), a majority of respondents make journeys for 'shopping' (72.5%) and/or 'leisure' (54%) purposes, and almost a half for 'work' (49.8%) purposes. Fewer respondents, however, make journeys for 'education' (16.8%) or 'other' (16.8%) purposes.
32. The 'car' was the principal mode of transport for all types of journeys and was used by the majority of all respondents who made weekday journeys in respect of work (72.8%), 'shopping' (70.8%), 'leisure' (66.2%), 'education' (56.1%), and 'other' (63.2%). This represents a slight decrease in the use of the car for 'leisure purposes' since the 2002 Survey ('work' 74.3% : 'shopping' 70.8% : 'leisure' 73%) (questions about 'education' and 'other' journeys were not included in the 2002 survey).
33. 'Walking' was the second most popular mode of transport, and was used by more than one in five of those who made journeys for 'education' (33.3%), 'leisure' (25.6%), 'shopping' (22.7%), and 'other' purposes, but by only 17.4% of those who travelled 'to work'. The 'bus' was the third most frequently used method of transport – 'shopping' (21%), 'leisure' (16.9%), 'education' (13.5%), 'work' (12%), and 'other' (26.9%).
34. 34.3% of all 'work' journeys were 'less than 2 miles', 31.6% were '2-7 miles' and 33.1% were '8 miles or over' (1.0% 'not sure/ varies'). The 'car' was the main mode of transport for all 'work' journeys, irrespective of distance : almost half (49.4%) who travel 'less than 2 miles' to work do so by car, whilst only 41.4% 'walk'. (this is a similar finding to 2002 when 50.4% of '0-2 mile work journeys' were undertaken by car, and 36.7% 'on foot').
35. 61.3% of all 'shopping' journeys were 'less than 2 miles', 31.4% were '2-7 miles' and 4.1% were '8 miles or over'. The 'car' was the main mode of transport for all 'work' journeys, irrespective of distance : ranging from 63.6% for those 'less than 2 miles', up to 90% and over for those 'over 5 miles'. Only 30% of those who made journeys of 'less than 2 miles' referred to 'walking'. Again this is a similar finding to 2002, when 64.4% of shopping journeys of less than '2 miles' were undertaken by 'car', and only 34.4% referred to 'walking'.

36. 41.6% of all 'leisure journeys were 'less than 2 miles', 34.2% were '2-7miles' and 24.2% were '8 miles or over' (3.1 'not sure/ varies'). The 'car' was the main mode of transport for all 'leisure' journeys, though was mentioned by less than half (46.7%) of those who usually make journeys of 'less than 2 miles. 38% of those who make short ('0-2 miles') leisure journeys do so on 'foot', and 24.5% 'by bus'. 57.4% of those who made '0-2 miles' leisure journeys in 2002 did so by 'car', 45.5% 'on foot' and 14.8% 'by bus', suggesting a possible slight increase in the use of public transport for short leisure journeys.
37. 52% of all 'journeys to places of education' were 'less than 2 miles', 25.1% were '2-7miles' and 25.7% were '8 miles or over' (3.5% 'not sure/ varies'). Over half of those who travelled for 'education' purposes, and made journeys of 'less than two miles', 'walked' (56.2%), and only 37.1% travelled by car, whilst amongst those who travelled '2-5 miles' 73.2% travelled by 'car', 26.2% 'walked' and 17.3% travelled by bus. (Questions relating to journeys for educational purposes were not included in previous surveys.)

Important Issues facing the Council

38. Almost half (48.2%) of all respondents believe that 'promoting community safety' is one of the two most important issues facing the Council :(29.3% 'most' + '2nd most'), with 'Improving the local economy' (32.5% : 20.7% 'most' + '18.8% 2nd most') achieving the second highest '1st + 2nd most important' rating.

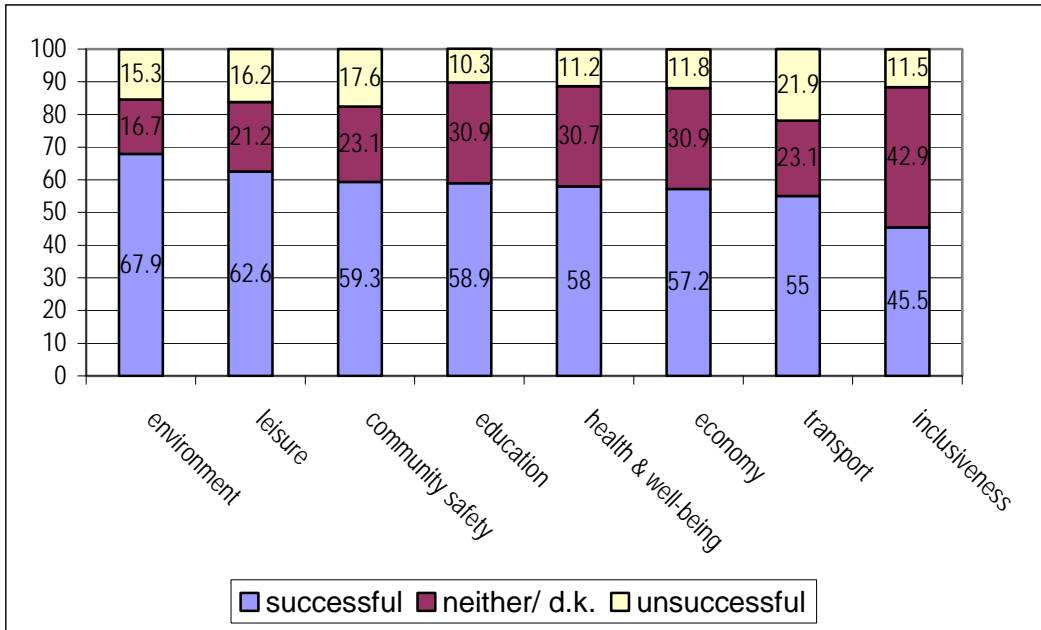
Most important issues : 'Most important' + 'Second Most Important)
 (Q15a : % response – all respondents)



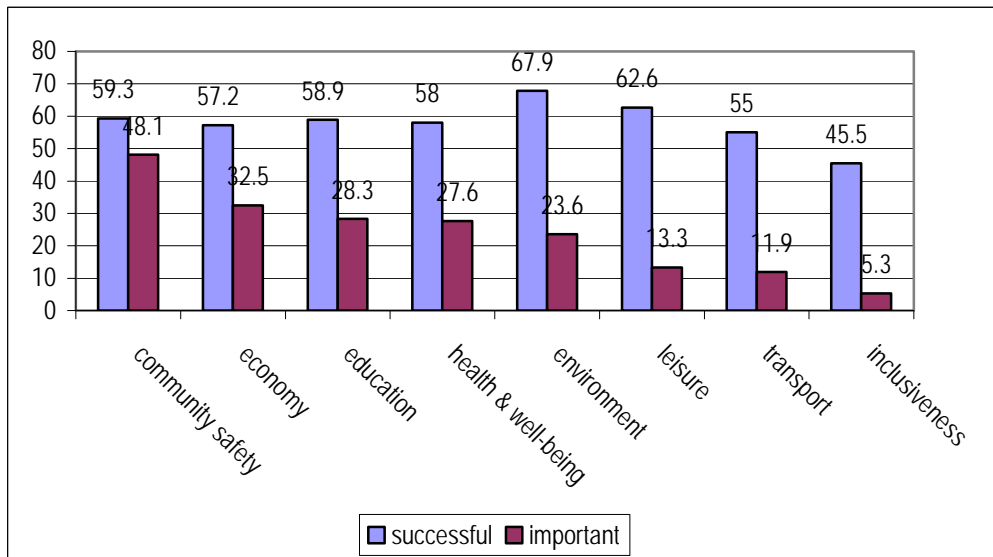
39. 'Community safety' and 'the local economy' were also rated as the most important issues facing the Council in the 2002 Community Survey (though more direct comparisons are not possible because of changes to wording of descriptions listed and because 'promoting inclusive communities' was not listed as an issue in 2002).
40. Only three of the issues listed were believed to be NOT IMPORTANT by 3% or more of the sample : 'promoting inclusive communities' (4.8%), 'developing an effective transport system' (4.2%), and 'stimulating leisure activities' (3%) : the great majority of respondents (85%) were of the opinion that ALL of the issues listed were important (a similar finding to the 2002 Survey).
41. The Council was perceived by the overall sample as being most successful in terms of 'enhancing the environment' (67.9% successful), and in 'supporting educational achievement' (65.1%).
42. The only issue listed which the Council was not seen as being having success with by a majority of the sample was 'promoting inclusive communities' (45.5% successful). However, the issue which on which the Council was rated most 'unsuccessful' was 'developing an effective transport system' (21.9% 'unsuccessful'). Analysis of 'mean

success scores' shows that 'transport' achieved the lowest rating in all but one of the four sample areas ('NRS Phase 2, where 'inclusive communities' was rated least successful).

'How successful is the Council in dealing with these issues?'
 (Q16 : % response – all respondents)



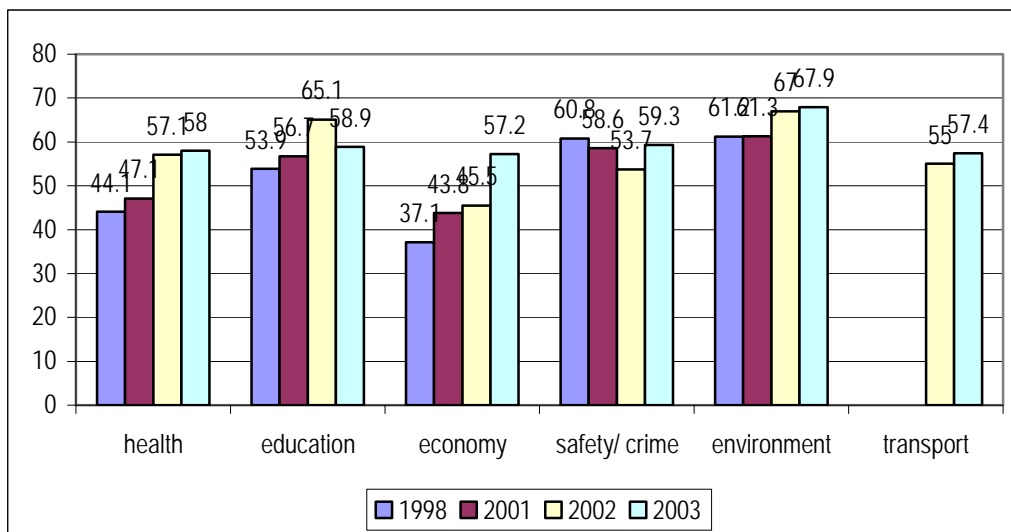
Most Important (1st + 2nd) Issues & Perceived Council Success in dealing with them
 (Q15/ 16 : % response – all respondents)



43. Comparisons with responses from the 1998, 2001 and 2002 Community Surveys are shown below, and this shows a higher 'success' rating for the 'local economy' since

2002, and a lower 'success' rating for 'education'. However, there were significant differences in the wording describing the issues between surveys, and this may well have influenced responses (e.g. 2003 'improving the local economy and raising educational achievement' : 2002 'improving the local economy and creating jobs' and 'supporting educational achievement').

Perceived Successful : Change over time : 2003, 2002, 2001 cf. 1998
 (all respondents - % 'successful' response)



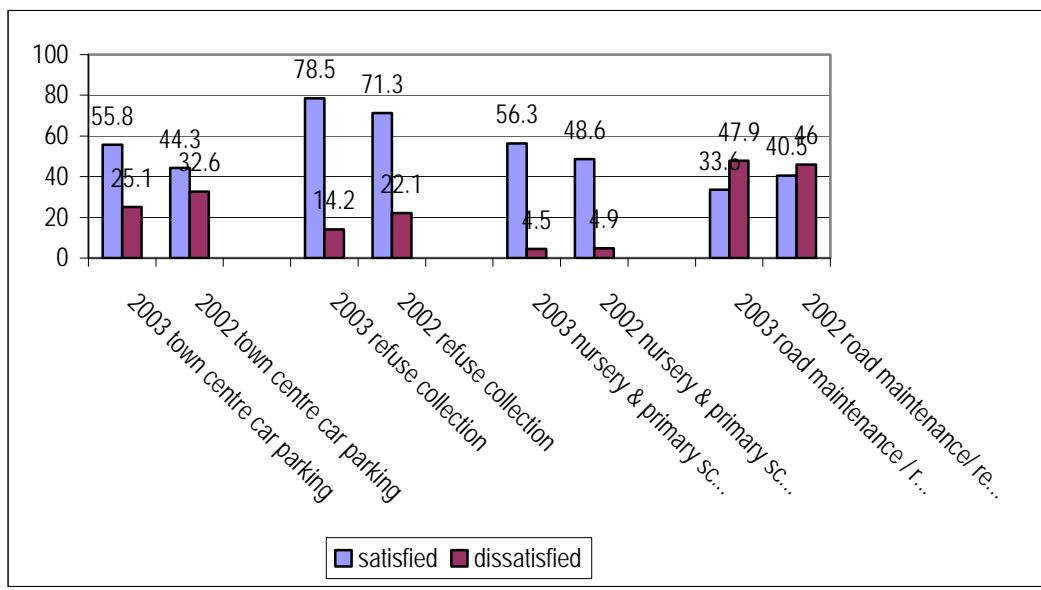
Council Services

44. Services about which most (more than three-quarters) of all respondents expressed satisfaction were 'street lighting' (87.3%), 'security, incl. c.c.t.v. in the town centre' (86.6%), 'upkeep & appearance of the town centre' (86.3%), 'Civic Theatre' (82.7%), 'refuse collection' (78.5%), 'sign posting' (78.1%), and libraries' (77.8%),
45. Services about which most (more than a quarter) of all respondents expressed dissatisfaction were 'road maintenance & repairs' (47.9% 'dissatisfied'), 'pavement maintenance' (45.2%), 'children's play areas' (39.7%), 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people' (31.3%), 'car parking in residential areas' (39%)., and 'car parking in the town centre' (25.1%),
46. The highest overall satisfaction levels (as calculated by the 'mean' score which takes into account both the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, where 1 = very satisfied, and 5 = very dissatisfied, and the varying level of don't know responses) were achieved by

'civic theatre' (mean 1.74), 'security measures (incl. c.c.t.v.) in the town centre' (1.77), and 'libraries' (1.79). (This was similar to the 2002 findings, when 'civic theatre' (1.71) and 'security measures in the town centre' (1.77) achieved the highest ratings.

47. Services which achieved the lowest satisfaction ratings (as calculated by mean scores) were : 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people' (3.40); 'pavement maintenance', (3.25), 'road maintenance and repairs' (3.33), and 'children's play areas' (3.21).
48. 'Youth clubs and other facilities for young people', 'children's play areas', 'road maintenance & repairs' and 'pavement maintenance, achieved low satisfaction ratings (mean of 3+) in all areas of the Borough. 'Council housing' also achieved a low score (3.02) from 'those living in 'NRS Phase 2', whilst 'recycling facilities were scored lowly (mean = 3.01) amongst those from 'Rural areas'.
49. Principal changes in 'net satisfaction scores' (% 'satisfied' minus % 'dissatisfied') since 2002 were in relation to the 'car parking in the town centre' (+ 19%), 'refuse collection' (+ 15.1%), 'nursery and primary schools' (+ 8.1%), and 'road maintenance & repairs' (- 8.8%).

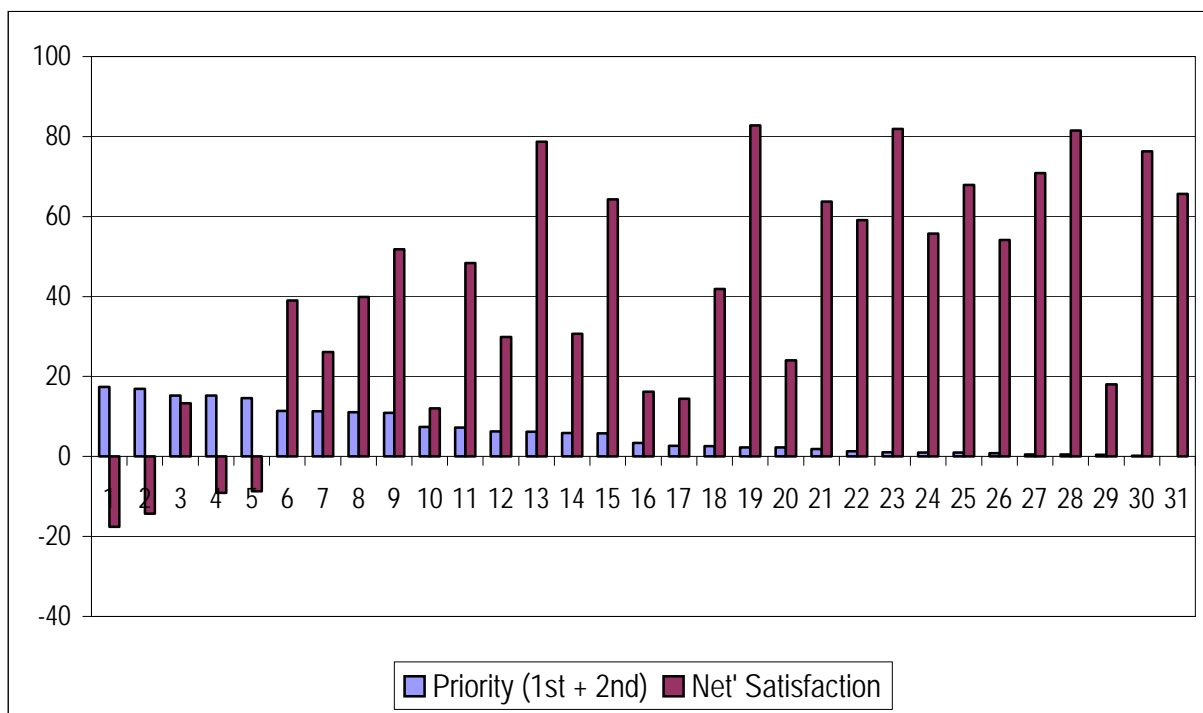
Satisfaction with Council Services
Major changes in 'net' satisfaction since 2001
 (% response – all respondents)



50. For most services, overall satisfaction levels (as calculated by 'mean' satisfaction scores) amongst users were somewhat higher than amongst all respondents. However, there were some exceptions with users of 'children's play areas', 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people', 'car parking in residential areas', and 'planning & control of development' rating these services more negatively than non-users.
51. Satisfaction amongst users of services was highest in respect of the 'Civic Theatre' (1.58), 'Libraries' (1.60), and 'Arts Centre' (1.65), and was lowest amongst users of 'youth clubs and other facilities for young people' (3.44) 'children's play areas' (3.29) and 'Planning & Control of Development' (3.0) - all other services achieving a mean score of lower than 3 (where 1 = very satisfied/ 5 = very dissatisfied)
52. Opinion was quite divided as to which service should be given the greatest (first) priority for improvement. 'Children's play areas' was referred to by most respondents here (9.2%), but was closely followed by 'Youth clubs and other facilities for young people' (8.9%), 'Pavement maintenance' (8.6%), 'Road maintenance and repair' (8%), 'Nursery & Primary Schools' (7%), 'Secondary Schools' (6.6%), and 'Social care for older and vulnerable people' (6.6%).
53. When first and second priorities for improvements are added together, opinion is still quite divided, with 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' being rated as the top priority overall, mentioned by 17.4% of all respondents, and this was followed by 'Road Maintenance & repairs' (16.9%), 'Pavement maintenance' (15.2%), 'Social care for older and vulnerable people' (15.2%) and 'Children's play areas' (14.6%).
54. There were some areas differences, with 'Children's play areas' being deemed the highest priority in both 'NRS Phase 1' (19%) and 'NRS Phase 2' (17.6%) wards, whilst in 'Non-NRS Urban wards' this was 'Road Maintenance & Repairs' (20.5%), and in 'Rural wards' 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' (21.5%).
55. Only five services had 'priority' scores (1st + 2nd priorities) which exceeded their 'net satisfaction' (over all respondents), and these were 'Youth Clubs and other young

people', 'Road Maintenance & Repairs', 'Pavement Maintenance', 'Children's Play Areas', and 'Social Care for older and vulnerable people'.

Service Priorities (1st + 2nd) and 'Net Satisfaction
(% response – all respondents)



Code

No.		Priority	Net Sat.	No.		Priority	Net Sat
		%	%			%	%
1	youth clubs etc.	17.4	-17.6	17	housing / CT benefits	2.7	14.4
2	road maintenance / repairs	16.9	-14.3	18	other sports facilities	2.6	41.9
3	social care	15.2	13.3	19	security - town centre	2.3	82.2
4	pavement maintenance	15.2	-9.1	20	planning	2.3	24
5	play areas	14.6	-8.7	21	dolphin centre	1.9	63.7
6	parks & open spaces	11.4	39	22	Council Tax Admin & Coll	1.3	59.1
7	security - other areas	11.3	26.1	23	street lighting	1.1	81.9
8	secondary schools	11.1	39.9	24	railway centre/ museum	1	55.7
9	nursery & primary schools	10.9	51.8	25	festivals & events	1	67.9
10	council housing	7.4	12	26	adult education	0.8	54.1
11	upkeep/appearance - resid areas	7.2	48.4	27	sign posting	0.5	70.9
12	recycling facilities	6.3	29.9	28	civic theatre	0.5	81.5
13	upkeep/appearance - town centre	6.2	78.7	29	school meals	0.4	18
14	car parking - town centre	5.9	30.7	30	libraries	0.2	76.3
15	refuse collection	5.8	64.3	31	arts centre	0	65.7
16	car parking - resid areas	3.4	16.2				

56. 71% of respondents did not mention a service on which they felt that Council spending could be reduced. The service mentioned most frequently as the one on which spending could be reduced was 'the upkeep and appearance of the town centre' (4.8% of all respondents): this was a similar result to that found in the 2002 survey, when 6.1% referred to this service.

Helping Others and Receiving Help from Others

57. Over a half (56.4%) of all respondents reported having given 'unpaid help to someone who is not a relative' in the past 12 months, with 'looking after a property or pet for someone who is away' (31.5%) being the main types of help given. Respondents most likely to give 'unpaid help to others' are '30-44 year olds' (67.2%). Those most unlikely to give 'unpaid help to others' are '75+ year olds (61.7% none), those living in 'Council/ H.A. homes' (63% none), and those 'without a car in the household' (60.8% none).
58. Just over a quarter (26.7%) of respondents reported having 'received' unpaid help from someone who is not a relative in the past 12 months, with looking having 'property or pets looked after whilst away' (14.0%) being the main type of help received. '75+ year olds' (37.4%) were the most likely to report receiving help.

Travel to School

59. In total, amongst all respondents, there were 247 children attending primary schools, and 179 attending secondary schools. Amongst those who attended primary school, 68.8% 'walked', and 26.7% travelled by 'car', with only small minorities using other methods of transport. This finding is very similar to that of the 2002 Community Survey.
60. Amongst those who attended secondary school, 58.1% 'walked', 22.9% 'travelled by school bus', 10.6% 'travelled by car' and 7.8% travelled by 'other bus' These figures are not statistically significantly different from those of the 2002 Community Survey.

Citizen's Panel

61. 60.3% of all respondents said they were willing to become members of the Citizens Panel (a significant increase on the 42.9% of the 2002 Community Survey). Willingness to participate was lowest amongst '75+ year olds' (only 29.9%).

MAIN REPORT

DARLINGTON BOROUGH COUNCIL
COMMUNITY SURVEY : JULY/ AUGUST 2003

A. BACKGROUND AND RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

A.1 In 1998 Darlington Borough Council commenced a programme of community research and consultation covering all aspects of the Council's activities, the overall purpose of which was to inform the development of Best Value initiatives, and to set a context for the evolution of the Council's annual budgets : this survey is part of that ongoing programme of research and consultation.

A.2 Specific objectives of this survey were to gather information relating to :

- 2.1 Satisfaction with Council overall, and reasons for any dissatisfaction
- 2.2 Satisfaction with local area, and reasons for any dissatisfaction
- 2.3 Perceived changes – in way Council running the Borough, and in local area
- 2.4 Perceived safety of local neighbourhood and town centre
- 2.5 Satisfaction with particular aspects of local neighbourhood
- 2.6 Perceived community cohesion (how well people from different backgrounds get on together)
- 2.7 Belief as to whether residents can influence the decisions that affect local area.
- 2.8 Concern about noise pollution
- 2.9 Ease of access to services
- 2.10 Journeys made on an average week-day, and mode of transport
- 2.11 View as to most important issues, and perception of Council success in dealing with these issues
- 2.12 Satisfaction with specific Council Services
- 2.13 Usage of Council Services
- 2.14 Services Priorities
- 2.15 Unpaid help/assistance – given and received
- 2.16 Mode of transport for travel to school for children (primary & secondary)
- 2.17 Willingness to become member of Citizens' Panel

B. METHODOLOGY AND ANALYSIS

Survey Methodology

- B.1 Face-to-face interviews were conducted during July/August 2003, using a structured questionnaire, with 1019 residents of Darlington Borough who were aged 16 years and over.
- B.2 In order to track changes in residents opinions over time, many of the questions were the same as, or similar to, those included in previous surveys. A copy of the questionnaire (marked up with the overall sample results) is attached as Appendix 1 to this report.
- B.3 Interviewing took place in all Wards of the Borough, with the number of interviews conducted in each Ward being proportionate to the population therein. Age and gender (inter-locked) quotas were applied in order to ensure that the sample was representative of the Borough in terms of these variables.
- B.4 In order to avoid interviews being carried out solely within one location in a ward, randomised starting points were selected for the interviewers, and around eight interviews were carried out from any random location starting point. Only one interview was conducted per household.
- B.5 All interviewing was conducted in accordance with the Market Research Society Code of Conduct. Interviewers showed respondents NWA Identity Cards, and letters from the Council, which explained the nature of the research. Respondents were also given an NWA free-phone telephone number for contact if they had any queries.

Analysis

- B.6 The data was analysed using the statistical package SPSS 11.0. Tables were produced, for all questions, showing counts and percentages for the total Borough, and for the following sample sub-groups : age, gender, tenure, occupation of chief wage earner, number of cars in household, whether anyone in household has long-term illness/disability, whether or not there are children in the household, and area. These tables are included as Appendix 2 .

Area Analysis/ Ward Groupings

B.7 As there had been some changes to ward boundaries since the last community survey, the opportunity was taken to rationalise the areas used for reporting purposes, and use area sub-groups which reflect the concentrations of affluence and deprivation between wards. In order to develop a Neighbourhood Renewal Strategy (NRS) for Darlington, the Council has identified 11 most deprived wards – and these have been split into 'Phase 1' (the five most deprived wards), and 'Phase 2' (the next six most deprived wards). This sample was therefore divided into four sub-groups – 'NRS Phase 1 Wards', 'NRS Phase 2 Wards', 'Non NRS Urban Wards' and 'Rural Wards'.

NRS Phase 1

Central
Cockerton West
Eastbourne
Haughton East
Park East

NRS Phase 2

Bank Top
Cockerton East
Lascelles
Lingfield
North Road
Northgate

Non-NRS Urban

College
Faverdale
Harrowgate Hill
Haughton North
Haughton West
Hummersknott
Park West
Pierremont
Mowden

Rural

Heighington & Conniscliffe
Hurworth
Middleton St. George
Sadberge & Whesoe

Sampling Error

B.8 All sampling is liable to sampling error: this is based on both the size of the sample and the level of response to individual questions. An estimation of potential sampling error at the 95% Confidence level is given below for the total sample, and for all sample sub-groups. Estimations are based on a 50%/50% split in response, and a 10%/90% split. As an example, if 50% of the total sample said they were 'satisfied' with a particular aspect, we estimate with 95% Confidence that between 46.3 % and 53.7 % ($50\% \pm \%$) of the total adult Darlington are satisfied with that same aspect.

Sampling Error : 95% Confidence Intervals for sample sub-groups

		Count	50%/50% + %	10%/90% + %
Age	16 to 29 years	168	7.56	4.54
	30 to 44 years	296	5.70	3.42
	45 to 59 years	256	6.13	3.68
	60 to 74years	192	7.07	4.24
	75+ years	107	9.47	5.68
Gender	male	490	4.43	2.66
	female	529	6.28	2.56
Tenure	owner occupied	360	5.16	3.10
	buying/ mortgage	457	4.58	2.75
	rented from the Council	127	8.70	5.22
	rented other	72	11.55	6.93
Occupation chief wage earner	AB (Professional/ Managerial)	212	6.73	4.04
	C1 (Other White Collar)	259	6.09	3.65
	C2 (Skilled Manual)	252	6.17	3.70
	DE (Semi/Unskilled /Benefits)	295	5.70	3.42
Car/van in household	yes - 1	481	1.41	2.68
	yes - more than 1	268	5.99	3.59
	no	250	6.20	3.72
Long term illness/disability	yes - self	231	6.45	3.87
	yes - other h'hold member	134	8.47	5.08
	no	697	3.71	2.23
Children in household	yes	351	5.23	3.14
Household	no	668	1.19	2.28
Ward Groupings	NRS Phase 1 Wards	232	6.44	3.86
	NRS Phase 2 Wards	272	5.94	3.57
	Non NRS Urban Wards	385	4.99	3.00
	Rural Wards	130	8.59	5.16
ALL RESPONDENTS		1019	3.07	1.84

C. PROFILE OF SAMPLE
(Appendix 2, pages 181 to 190 refer)

The great majority (80.8%) of respondents had lived in the Darlington area 'more than ten years', whilst 6.0% had lived in the area 'six to ten years', 10.6% 'one to five years' and only 2.6% 'less than a year, though more than three months'.

16.5% of respondents were aged '16-29 years', 29% '30-44 years', 25.1% were '45-60 years', 18.8% '60-74 years', and 10.5% were of '75 years or over'.

Over half (57%) of the sample was economically active : 34.4% in full-time employment (30+ hours per week), 14.9% in 'part-time' employment, 3.6% self-employed, 0.1% 'on a government scheme' and 4.0% 'unemployed and available for work'. The remainder were : 'wholly retired from work' (26.9%), 'full time education at school, college or university' (1.5%), 'looking after family and/or home' (9%), 'permanently sick or disabled' (5.1%) or 'doing something else' (0.4%).

48.1% of respondents were 'male' and 51.9 % 'female'. 97.8% of the sample was 'White – British'.

20.2% of respondents lived in a 'single person household', 35.8% in a 'two person household', 18.4% in a 'three person household', 17.3% in a 'four person household', and 8.3% in a 'five or more person household'.

31.6% of respondents reported that they (22.7%) and/or another member of their household (13.2%) 'suffered from a limiting long term illness or disability'.

Just under a quarter (24.5%) of respondents 'did not have a car' in the household; 47.2% had 'one car or van', and 28.3% had 'more than one car or van'. 19.6% of respondents lived in 'rented' property (12.5% from the Council or Housing Association, and 7.1% from other landlords), whilst 35.3% were 'owner occupiers' and 44.8% were 'buying their home on a mortgage'.

D. RESEARCH FINDINGS :

1. SATISFACTION WITH THE WAY THE COUNCIL IS RUNNING THE BOROUGH

1.1 Overall satisfaction

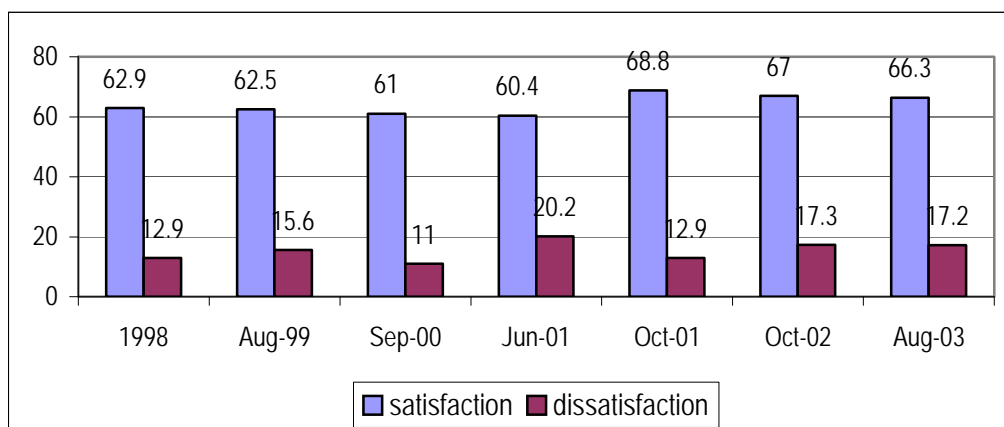
Q.1 : 'Thinking about Darlington Borough Council. Overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the Borough ?
 (Appendix 2, page 1 refers)

1.1.1 The above question has been included in several previous surveys undertaken by the Council and acts as a 'tracking' question.

1.1.2 66.3% of all respondents said that they were satisfied with the way the Council is running the Borough, (9.1% - very satisfied and 57.2% fairly satisfied), and only 17.2% of respondents said that they were dissatisfied, (11.5% fairly dissatisfied, and 5.7% very dissatisfied). 14.1% of respondents gave 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' responses, and a further 2.4% said 'don't know'.

1.1.3 There have been only minor differences in satisfaction levels since the tracking exercise was started in 1998 when overall satisfaction was recorded as 62.9%. The current satisfaction/dissatisfaction levels are not significantly different from those recorded by the October 2002 Community Survey (67% satisfaction : 17.3% dissatisfaction).

Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the Borough
% response – all respondents



1.1.4 Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the Borough was lowest amongst those who lived in 'NRS Phase 1 Wards' (61.2% satisfied), and highest amongst those who

lived in 'Non NRS Urban' (68.6%) and 'Rural Wards' (70.8%). Satisfaction was also slightly higher amongst younger respondents (16-29 years 73.2%), falling to 62% amongst those '60 years and over'.

1.2 Perceived changes over the last year

Q.2 : *'And over the past year or so, do you think Darlington Council has got better or worse at running the Borough, or has it stayed about the same ?'*

Q.3 : *'In what ways do you think it has got better (worse)?'*

(Appendix 2, pages 2 to 7 refer)

- 1.2.1 Respondents had a slightly more positive perception of how things had changed in the past year, than in October 2002 : 14.4% of respondents believed the Council has 'got better' at running the Borough over the last year (2002 = 11%), whilst a similar proportion, 14.1%, believed it had 'got worse' (2002 = 23.8%). As in 2002, however, the majority of respondents (66.5%) believed that there had been 'no change' (2002 = 61.9%). 4.9% of respondents gave 'don't know' responses.
- 1.2.2 Differences between 'ward groupings' were small, though those who lived in 'rural wards' were more likely than others to think things 'had stayed about the same' (75.4%).
- 1.2.3 The principal issues referred to when asked how the Council had 'got worse' at running the Borough were 'poor standards of cleanliness' (20.8% of those who thought things had changed for the worse), 'roads, pavements, traffic' (19.4%), 'refuse collection' (15.3%), 'consultation/ communication' (14.6%), and 'crime/ vandalism/ policing' (10.4%). (In 2002 the principal issue referred to by respondents when asked why they thought things had got worse was the 'refuse collection' 29.2%.)
- 1.2.4 Other issues referred to by small numbers of respondents for perceiving a negative change were 'grass cutting/tree maintenance' (4.9%), 'council tax/ costs' (4.9%), 'Council wasting money' (2.8%), 'housing repairs' (2.8%), 'parking' (2.8%), 'service cutbacks' (2.8%); 'bus stops/bus shelters', (2.8%), 'planning/ building' (2.1%), 'Problem neighbours' (1.4%) and 'parks' (0.7%).
- 1.2.5 The principal reason given for believing the Council had 'got better' at running the Borough was 'better cleanliness, maintenance and/or appearance' (referred to by 34% of

those gave a 'got better' responses, with a further 10.2% referring to 'flowers, parks and open spaces'). 'Improvements in recycling /refuse collection services' (19%) was another major issues referred to as an indication of the Council getting better at running the Borough. Other issues referred to were 'increased security/ less crime' (10.9%), 'general improvements/ more services' (10.9%), 'roads' (9.5%), 'community wardens' (7.5%), leisure activities/ events' (6.1%), 'housing/ repairs' (4.1%), 'town centre improvements' (4.1%), 'better consultation/communication' (3.4%), 'services for the elderly' (1.4%), and 'schools' (1.4%).

2. SATISFACTION WITH LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD

2.1 Overall satisfaction

Q.4 : 'Thinking now about this neighbourhood. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your neighbourhood as a place to live ?'

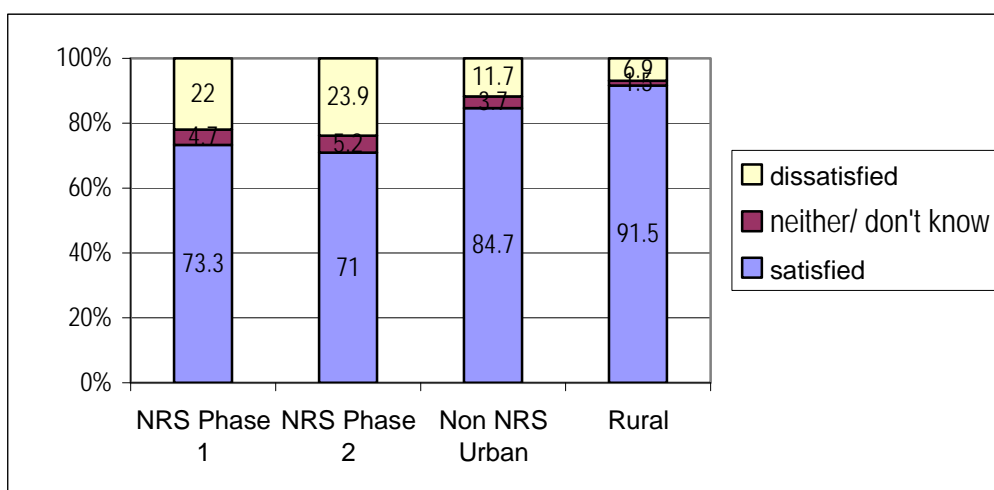
(Appendix 2, page 8 refers)

Satisfaction with local neighbourhoods was high (79.3%), with 40.6% of respondents saying they were 'very satisfied' and 38.7% that they were 'fairly satisfied'. 16.7% of respondents expressed dissatisfaction (10.7% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 6.0% 'very dissatisfied'), whilst 3.7% gave 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' responses and 0.3% said 'don't know'.

Overall satisfaction with the local neighbourhood was not statistically different to that recorded in the 2002 Community Survey – 81% satisfaction, and 15.3% dissatisfaction.

Dissatisfaction with their neighbourhood was highest amongst those who lived in NRS wards (NRS Phase 1 = 22.0% : NRS Phase 2 = 23.9%), and fell to 11.7% in Non NRS Urban Wards, and to only 6.9% in Rural Wards.

Satisfaction with neighbourhood as a place to live
 (% response – all respondents – by area)



2.2 Perceived changes over the past two years

Q.5 : *'And over the past two years, do you think your neighbourhood has got better or worse ?'*

Q.6 : *'In what ways do you think it has got better (worse)?'*

(Appendix 2, pages 9 to 14 refer)

- 2.2.1 Whilst over half (50.9%) of all respondents felt that their neighbourhood had 'stayed about the same' over the past two years, 29.7% thought it had 'got worse' as a place to live, and only 7.7% felt it 'had got better'. (11.7% gave 'don't know' responses.) This is a similar result to that found in the 2002 Community Survey : 33.1% 'worse'; 49.4% 'same', and 8.2% 'better'.
- 2.2.2 Those who lived in NRS Wards were most likely to think their neighbourhood had 'got worse' (Phase 1 = 37.5% : Phase 2 = 36%), and those who lived in Rural Wards (19.2%) least likely to be of this opinion.. In all areas of the Borough, less than 10% were of the opinion that things had 'got better'.
- 2.2.3 'Other residents or neighbours' (mentioned by 29% of all respondents who perceived a negative change), 'upkeep / appearance' (24.1%), and 'nuisance children/young people' (21.8%) were the principal aspects referred to when asked in what ways the neighbourhood had got worse, and these were followed by 'crime and vandalism' (15.8%, reduced from 30.4% in 2002), 'drug or alcohol abuse' (13.2%), 'noise' (10.2%), 'parking' (9.9%), and 'roads, pavements, traffic issues, (6.3%).'.
- 2.2.4 Problems with 'other residents or neighbours' was the main reason given for being of the opinion that things had 'got worse' in all ward areas, with the exception of 'Non NRS Urban Wards' where 'upkeep/appearance' was cited as the reason for perceiving a deterioration.
- 2.2.5 Just under a quarter (24.4%) of those who believed their local neighbourhoods had 'got better' over the past two years referred to 'better neighbours or other residents', with improvements in terms of 'upkeep/ appearance' (20.5%), 'fewer nuisance children' (16.7%), and a 'less crime and vandalism' (12.8%). 'Quieter environment' (11%) and 'new buildings' (10.3%), being the next most frequently mentioned issues (as only a

small percentage of respondents perceived a change for the better, the aforementioned issues were the only ones referred to as improvements by more than five respondents).

3 PERCEPTIONS OF SAFETY

Q.6/7 : *'How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in Darlington Borough area1) after dark ? 2) ... during the day ?*
(Appendix 2, pages 15 to 17 refer)

3.1 After dark

Over a half (51.8%) of all respondents reported feeling safe when outside in the Darlington area after dark (10% 'very safe' and 41.8% 'fairly safe'). Whilst a third (33.8%) of all respondents reported feeling 'unsafe' when outside after dark (16.1% 'fairly unsafe' and 17.7% 'very unsafe'), this is a substantial decrease on the 48.4% of respondents who gave 'unsafe' responses in the 2002 Community Survey.

Whilst those who lived in Rural Wards were less likely than others to feel 'unsafe' when outside after dark (20.8%), there was little difference here between those living in NRS and Non-NRS Urban wards (33.7% to 39.3%).

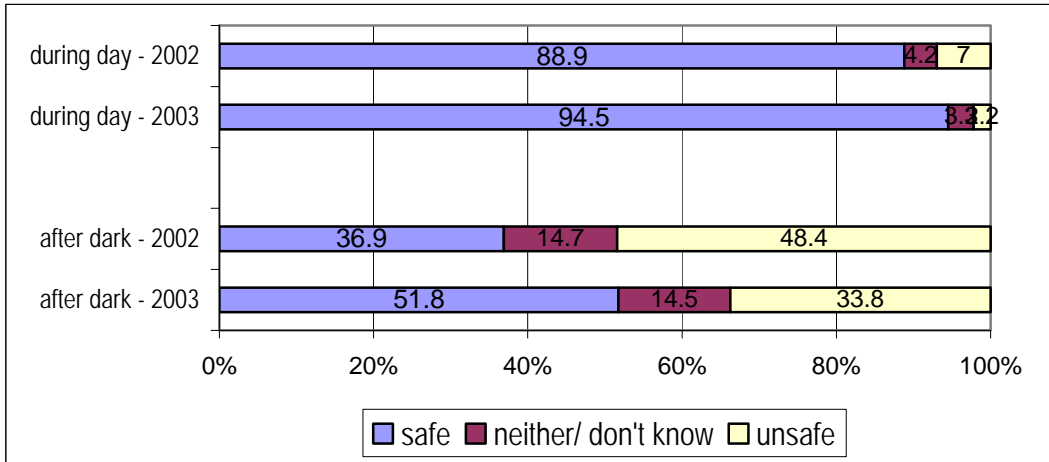
'Females' (46.1% 'unsafe'), 'those with long term illness or disabilities (43.3%) and older respondents ('60+ years' over 40%), were most likely to report feeling 'unsafe when outside in Darlington after dark'.

3.2 During the day

The great majority (94.5%) of respondents feel 'safe' when outside in the Darlington Borough area during the day (46.5% 'very safe' + 48.0% 'fairly safe'), and only 2.2% feel 'unsafe' (0.5% 'don't know', and 2.8% 'neither safe nor unsafe'). This represents a slight increase since 2002 in respondent's perception of safety during the day (2002 : 'safe' 88.9% : 'unsafe' 7%).

In all sample sub-groups the great majority of respondents reported feeling 'safe' when outside during the day – with 'unsafe' responses being greatest (but still only 8.3%) amongst those who lived in 'non-Council/ HA rented accommodation'.

'How safe do you feel when you are outside in Darlington Borough area?'
 (% response – all respondents – by year)



4. SATISFACTION WITH ASPECTS OF THE LOCAL NEIGHBOURHOOD

Q.8 : 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following aspects in your neighbourhood ?'

(Appendix 2, pages 18 to 31 refer)

4.1 Availability of Housing

57.9% of respondents expressed satisfaction with 'availability of housing' (15.3% 'very satisfied' + 42.6% 'fairly satisfied', and only 13.2% expressed dissatisfaction (10.2% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 3.0% 'very dissatisfied'). 12.8% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 16/1% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. (This result represents a small increase in satisfaction since 2002 when 52.6% expressed satisfaction, and a return to the 2001 satisfaction level of 56.8%).

Differences between areas were minor.

Those who were most likely to express dissatisfaction with the 'availability of housing' were those in rented accommodation ('Council/ H.A.' 26% dissatisfied : 'Other Rented' 36.1% dissatisfied), and those with long-term illness or disabilities (20.9% dissatisfied) .

4.2 Affordability of Housing

Only 44.1% of respondents expressed satisfaction with 'affordability of housing' (8.3% 'very satisfied' + 35.8% 'fairly satisfied', and 26.9% expressed dissatisfaction (18.1% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 8.8% 'very dissatisfied'). 13.7% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 15.2% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. This result represents a small, but statistically significant increase in dissatisfaction since 2002 (19.2% 'dissatisfied'/ 46.9% 'satisfied'), and a substantial increase since 2001 when 61.3% of respondents expressed satisfaction, and only 8.2% dissatisfaction.

'Dissatisfaction' with 'affordability of housing', was highest amongst those living in 'non Council/ H.A. rented properties' (50% dissatisfied), and amongst '18-29 year olds' (34.6%), and lowest amongst '60+ year olds' (less than 20%). Area differences were smaller, though those living in 'NRS Phase 1' areas were most likely to be satisfied with 'affordability of housing' (49.2% satisfied/ 21.1% dissatisfied).

4.3 Employment Opportunities

Only 34% of respondents expressed satisfaction with 'employment opportunities' (5.1% 'very satisfied' + 28.9% 'fairly satisfied', whilst 26.7% expressed dissatisfaction (18.4% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 8.3% 'very dissatisfied'). 19% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 20.2% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. This response is little changed from 2002 (33.8% satisfaction, 25.8% dissatisfaction) and 2001 (36.3% satisfaction, 21.8% dissatisfaction).

Satisfaction with 'employment opportunities' was highest amongst younger respondents ('16-29 year olds' = 47%: '25-44 year olds' 42.9%), whilst 'dissatisfaction' was highest amongst '45-59 year olds' (34.7% 'dissatisfied'). Area differences were not significant.

4.4 Quality & amount of natural environment, e.g. countryside, wildlife

76.5% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'natural environment' (18.1% 'very satisfied' + 58.4% 'fairly satisfied', and 15.2% expressed dissatisfaction (11.9% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 3.3% 'very dissatisfied'). 7.5% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 0.9% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses.

This represents little change since 2002 (74% 'satisfied' / 16.4% 'dissatisfied') and 2001 (70.6% satisfied /16.9% dissatisfied.)

Those living in 'Rural' wards were most satisfied (90% satisfied), and those living 'NRS Wards' least likely to be satisfied ('Phase 1' 68.9%/ 'Phase 2' 73.5% / 'Non-NRS Urban 78.5%) with the 'natural environment' of their neighbourhood.

4.5 Quality of built environment, e.g. town centre, housing industrial estates

76.5% of respondents expressed satisfaction with 'built environment' (13.8% 'very satisfied' + 62.7% 'fairly satisfied'), and 12.4% expressed dissatisfaction (10.1% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 2.3% 'very dissatisfied'). 10.4% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 0.7% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. This satisfaction level is not significantly different from that recorded in 2002 (78.3% 'satisfied'/ 11% 'dissatisfied'), though still represents a small increase in satisfaction since 2001 (70.6% satisfied, 9.3% dissatisfaction).

Satisfaction with the 'built environment' was highest in 'Non-NRS Urban' wards where 85.7% of respondents expressed 'satisfaction', though differences between other areas were small ('NRS Phase 1' = 70.3% : 'NRS Phase 2' = 70.2% : Rural = 73.9%).

4.6 Level of Social & Health Services Available

74.8% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'level of social & health services available' (18.4% 'very satisfied' + 56.4% 'fairly satisfied', whilst 13.5% expressed dissatisfaction (10.5% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 3.0% 'very dissatisfied'). 9.1% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 2.5% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. This represents only a small positive change since 2002

(67.6% 'satisfied'/ 17.6% 'dissatisfied'), and is nearer the satisfaction levels of 2001 (71.1% satisfaction, 12% dissatisfaction)

'Satisfaction' levels did not vary significantly by area, though there were some small differences in 'dissatisfaction', which ranged from 9.3% (Rural Wards) to 16.3% (NRS Phase 1). 'Dissatisfaction' was highest amongst those who lived in 'Council/H.A. Rented Properties' (18.1%), and amongst those who had 'long term illness or disabilities' (17.4%).

4.7 Level of cultural, recreational & leisure services available

54.8% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'level of cultural, recreational & leisure services available' (11.9% 'very satisfied' + 42.9% 'fairly satisfied'), whilst 29.6% expressed dissatisfaction (18.7% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 10.9% 'very dissatisfied'). 10.4% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 5.2% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. This result has not significantly changed since the 2002 Survey (53.2% 'satisfied' / 31% 'dissatisfied'), though still represents a small increase in dissatisfaction since 2001 (57.5% satisfaction / 24.7% dissatisfaction).

Differences between areas were only minor, with 'dissatisfaction' ranging only between 26.2% (Rural Wards) and 32.4% (NRS Phase 1) (not statistically significant.). 'Council/H.A. Tenants' (43.3% 'dissatisfied'), were most likely to express 'dissatisfaction' with the availability of 'cultural, recreational & leisure services' in their neighbourhood.

4.8 Standard of schools

55.3% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'standard of schools' (17.7% 'very satisfied' + 37.6% 'fairly satisfied'), whilst 9.3% expressed dissatisfaction (6.8% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 2.5% 'very dissatisfied'). 14.2% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 21.3% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. This is a very similar response to that received in 2002 (55.4% satisfied : 7.6% dissatisfied) and 2001 (55.8% satisfied : 7.4% dissatisfied).

Satisfaction was higher in 'Non-NRS Urban' (60.3%) and 'Rural' (64.6%) wards, than in 'NRS Wards' (Phase 1 = 50% : Phase 2 = 48.2%). 'Dissatisfaction' was highest in 'NRS Phase 2' wards (12.5%).

Whilst over three-quarters (76.4%) of all respondents who had children in the household expressed 'satisfaction' with local schools, satisfaction was slightly higher amongst those with children attending 'primary schools (81.2% 'satisfied' / 13.9% 'dissatisfied'), than amongst those whose children attended 'secondary schools' (73.1% 'satisfied/ 19.5% 'dissatisfied').

		Primary School Children		Secondary School Children		Any Children in H'hold			
		yes		yes		Yes		No	
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %
Q8.8: Standard of schools	Very satisfied	56	33.9%	30	21.7%	91	27.9%	89	18.7%
	Fairly satisfied	78	47.3%	71	51.4%	158	48.5%	225	47.3%
	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8	4.8%	10	7.2%	30	9.2%	115	24.2%
	Fairly dissatisfied	16	9.7%	18	13.0%	32	9.8%	37	7.8%
	Very dissatisfied	7	4.2%	9	6.5%	15	4.6%	10	2.1%
Total		165	100.0%	138	100.0%	326	100.0%	476	100.0%

(NOTE: Above table excludes respondents who gave a 'don't know/no opinion' response)

4.9 Level of public transport services available

61.5% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'level of public transport services available' (18.1% 'very satisfied' + 43.4% 'fairly satisfied'), whilst 16.9% expressed dissatisfaction (11.1% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 5.8% 'very dissatisfied'). 12.8% of respondents were 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' and a further 8.9% gave 'no opinion/don't know' responses. Levels of satisfaction with public transport services do not appear to have changed significantly over the past two years : 2002 (60.5% satisfaction, 19.6% dissatisfaction : 2001 (60.6% satisfaction, 16% dissatisfaction).

Dissatisfaction with the level of public transport services was highest, and exceeded 25% in the Rural areas (25.4%). 20.8% of those 'without a car/van in the household' expressed 'dissatisfaction' with 'public transport services' (68.4% satisfied).

4.10 Opportunities to participate in local planning & decision making processes

Only 33.9% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the 'opportunities to participate in local planning & decision making processes' (4.3% 'very satisfied' + 29.6% 'fairly satisfied', whilst 23.3% expressed dissatisfaction (10.1% 'fairly dissatisfied' + 13.2% 'very dissatisfied'). The largest proportion of respondents (42.8%), however, gave either 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (23%) or 'don't know/no opinion' (19.8%) responses. This is a very similar response to that received in the 2002 survey (32.7% satisfaction, 19.3% dissatisfaction) and 2001 survey (31.8% satisfaction, 19.9% dissatisfaction).

Differences in 'satisfaction' between areas were minimal, though 'dissatisfaction' levels were highest amongst those living in 'NRS Phase 1' (28.9%) and 'Non NRS Urban' (23.7%) wards (Others – 19.9%).

4.11 Summary

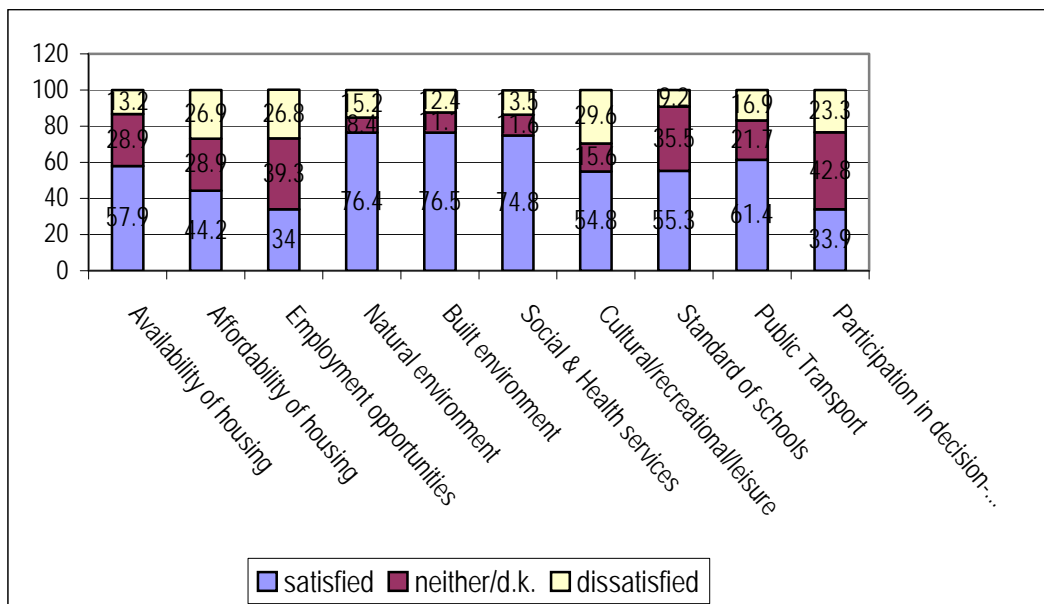
As displayed in the Chart below, expressed satisfaction over all the sample was highest in respect of 'the quality of the built environment' (76.5% satisfied), 'the quality and amount of the natural environment' (76.4%), and 'the level of social & health services available' (74.8%). Other aspects about which over half of all respondents declared satisfaction were 'public transport' (61.5%), 'availability of housing' (57.9%), 'standard of schools' (55.3%), and 'cultural/recreational/leisure services' (54.8%).

Less than half of all respondents reported satisfaction with 'affordability of housing' (44.1%), 'employment opportunities' (34%), and 'opportunities to participate in local planning, decision making etc.' (33.9%). Overall dissatisfaction was highest in respect of 'cultural/recreational/leisure services' (29.6%), 'affordability of housing', (26.9%), 'employment opportunities', (26.2%), and 'participation in decision making' (23.3%).

However, overall satisfaction levels, as calculated by a mean satisfaction score, which takes into account both the level of satisfaction/ dissatisfaction (very or fairly) and the number of respondents expressing an opinion, suggests that overall satisfaction levels were highest in respect of 'Level of Social & Health Services' (mean 2.21, where 1 = very

satisfied, 3 = neither satisfied/dissatisfied, and 5 = very dissatisfied), 'Standard of Schools', (2.22), 'Natural Environment' (2.23), and 'Built Environment' (2.24).

Satisfaction with aspects of local neighbourhood :
% response – all respondents



Satisfaction with aspects of local neighbourhood :
All Respondents :Mean Satisfaction Scores

(1 = very satisfied : 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied : 5 = very dissatisfied)
 (Note : highest mean scores denotes lowest satisfaction level)

	mean
Social & Health services	2.21
Standard of Schools	2.22
Quality of natural environment	2.23
Quality of built environment	2.24
Availability of housing	2.32
Public Transport	2.38
Cultural/ leisure services	2.72
Affordability of housing	2.80
Employment opportunities	2.95
Opportunities to participate in local planning/ decision-making	2.98

‘Employment opportunities’ was one the two most negatively rated issues in all areas :

Satisfaction with aspects of local neighbourhood :
Mean Satisfaction Scores by Area

(1 = very satisfied : 3 = neither satisfied nor dissatisfied : 5 = very dissatisfied)
(Note : highest mean scores denotes lowest satisfaction level)

	NRS Ph 1.	NRS Ph 2.	Non NRS Urban	Rural	TOTAL
Availability of housing	2.36	2.44	2.22	2.30	2.32
Affordability of housing	2.59	2.91	2.83	2.84	2.80
Employment opportunities	2.97	2.91	2.97	2.93	2.95
Quality & amount of natural environment	2.44	2.36	2.19	1.75	2.23
Quality of built environment	2.40	2.41	2.05	2.15	2.24
Level of social & health services available	2.31	2.28	2.20	1.95	2.21
Level of cultural, recreational & leisure services available	2.85	2.82	2.63	2.60	2.72
Standard of schools	2.29	2.43	2.12	2.03	2.22
Level of public transport services available	2.34	2.24	2.45	2.51	2.38
Opportunities to participate	3.14	2.90	2.98	2.84	2.98

4.12 Changes since 2001

Satisfaction ratings for most issues were very similar to those achieved in the 2001 survey. The aspect about which the greatest positive change was observed was ‘level of social and health services available’ (satisfaction + 7% / dissatisfaction – 4.1%), and the greatest negative change was in respect of ‘affordability of housing’ (dissatisfaction + 7.7%)

	Mean	Mean	mean	Change since 2002
	2001	2002	2003	
Social & Health services	2.26	2.39	2.21	0.18
Cultural/ leisure services	2.61	2.79	2.72	0.07
Quality and amount of natural environment	2.23	2.28	2.23	0.05
Employment opportunities	2.94	3	2.95	0.05
Public Transport	2.33	2.42	2.38	0.04
Availability of housing	2.25	2.35	2.32	0.03
Quality of built environment, e.g. town centre, housing, industrial estates	2.2	2.2	2.24	-0.04
Opportunities to participate in local planning/ decision-making	2.8	2.88	2.98	-0.1
Standard of Schools	2.17	2.07	2.22	-0.15
Affordability of housing	2.38	2.63	2.80	-0.17

5. **COMMUNITY COHESION**

(Q9 : 'To what extent to you agree or disagree that this local area (within 15/20 minutes walking distance) is a place here people from different backgrounds get on well together?'

(Appendix 2, page 32 refers)

64.1% of all respondents were of the opinion that their local area 'was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together' (11.5% 'definitely agree' + 52.6% 'tend to agree'), and only 13.9% were of the opposite opinion. However, 7.3% felt that 'all the people in the local area were of the same backgrounds', 0.7% felt there were 'too few people in the local area' to express an opinion on it, and 14.1% gave 'don't know' responses.

Respondents living in properties rented from the Council or Housing Associations were most likely to think that in their area people from different backgrounds 'did not get on well together' (21.2% 'disagree'). On an area basis, those living in 'NRS Phase 1' wards (19% 'disagree') were most likely to think people from different backgrounds didn't get on well together, and those living in 'Non NRS Urban Wards' were least likely to be of this opinion (8.3% 'disagree').

6. **'INFLUENCING DECISION MAKING'**

- 6.1 *(Q10 : 'Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?'*
(Appendix 2, pages 33 refers)

When asked 'do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area', only 26.8% of respondents 'agreed', whilst 47.2% 'disagreed' (20.2% gave 'neither agree nor disagree' responses and 5.8% 'didn't know'). Respondents living in 'Rural Wards' (40% agree' were most likely to believe they could have an influence on local decision making, whilst those living in 'NRS Phase 1' wards were least likely to believe this (22%).

- 6.2 *(Q11 : 'And do you agree or disagree with the following statementby working together people in my neighbourhood can influence decisions that affect the neighbourhood'*
(Appendix 2, page 34 refers)

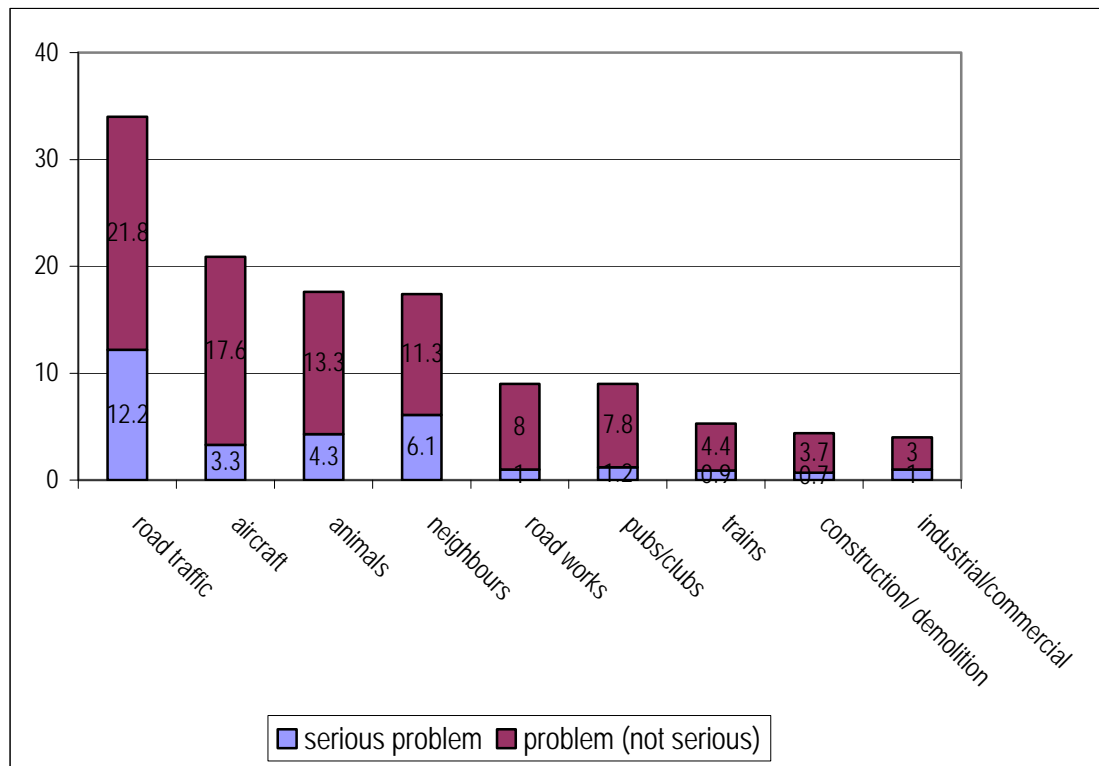
However, 61% of respondents were of the opinion that 'by working together people in my neighbourhood can influence decisions that affect the neighbourhood', and this was a majority (57.7%+) opinion in all areas of the borough. Only 22.6% were of the opinion that people working together 'could not' influence local decisions (12.7% gave 'neither nor' and 3.7% 'don't know' responses).

7. NOISE POLLUTION

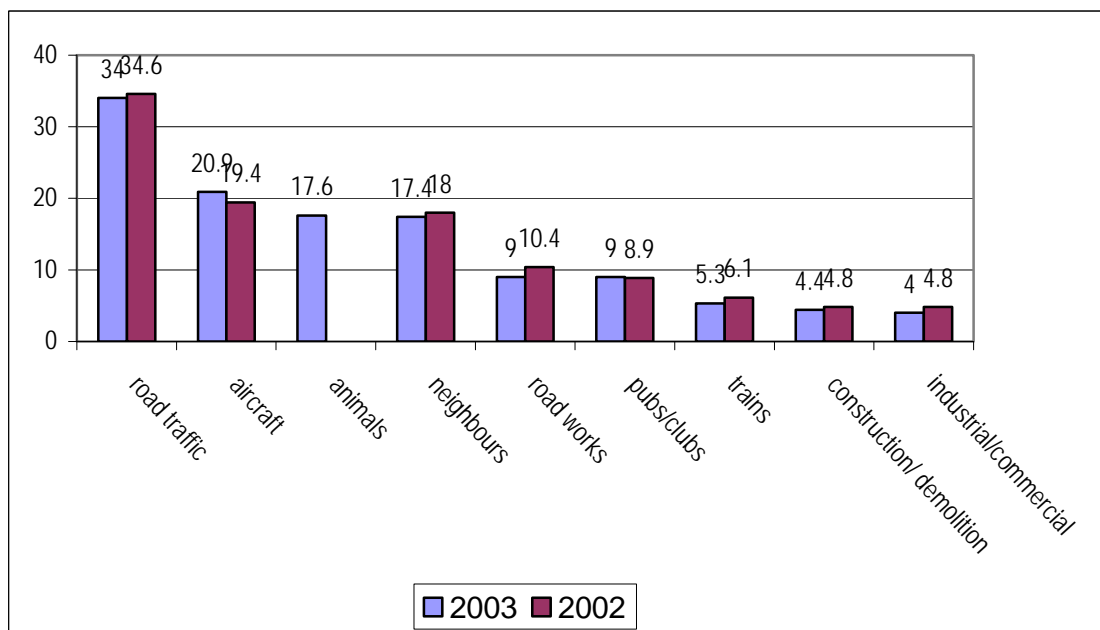
Q.12 : *'Noise pollution can be a problem. How would you rate the following types of noise in your neighbourhood ?'*
(Appendix 2, pages 35 to 44 refer)

- 7.1 Only 36.4% of all respondents did not find any type of noise a problem : 63.6% reported that at least one type of noise was a problem to them (22.3% serious / 41.3% not serious), and differences between areas were relatively minor in this respect. This is a similar finding to that of the 2002 Survey when 62.4% of respondents reported that at least one type of noise was a problem (serious or not serious).
- 7.2 'Road traffic' was perceived as the greatest noise pollutant, mentioned by just over a third (34%) of all respondents as a problem : by 12.2% as a 'serious problem', and by a further 21.8% as a 'problem, but not serious'. Again this represents a similar finding to the 2002 (34.6%).
- 7.3 'Aircraft' (20.9% problem : 3.3% 'serious' + 17.6% 'not serious'), ' animals' (17.6% : 4.3% 'serious' + 13.3% 'not serious'), and 'neighbours' (17.4% problem : 6.1% 'serious' + 11.3% 'not serious'), were the only other noise problems referred to by more than one in ten of all respondents. Other noise pollutants listed were rated as problems (serious or not serious) by less than 10% of all respondents, : 'roadworks' (9%), 'trains' (5.3%), construction/ demolition' (4.4%) and ' industrial or commercial premises' (4%).
- 7.4 For all aspects listed, there were no significant changes since 2002 in the percentage of respondents reporting these as 'noise' problems (though note, in previous surveys 'respondents were not questioned about problems with noise from 'animals').
- 7.5 Respondents living in 'NRS Wards' were more likely report noise a 'serious' problem (Phase 1 = 29.7% : Phase 2 = 28.3%), than those living in 'Non NRS Urban' (17.4%) or 'Rural' (10.8%) Wards. This difference between areas was most noticeable in regards to 'road traffic' which 17.2% of those from 'NRS Phase 1' wards, and 14% from 'NRS Phase 2' wards, reported as a 'serious problem', compared to only 9.6% of those from 'Non-NRS Urban' wards, and 6.9% from 'rural wards'. However, 'road traffic' was reported as the most serious noise problem in all areas of the Borough.

'How would you rate the following types of noise in your neighbourhood ?'
 (% response – all respondents)



Types of noise rated as a problem (serious or not serious)
 (% response – by year)



8. EASE OF ACCESS TO SERVICES

Q.13 : *'From your home, how easy is it for you to get to the following, using your usual form of transport ?'*

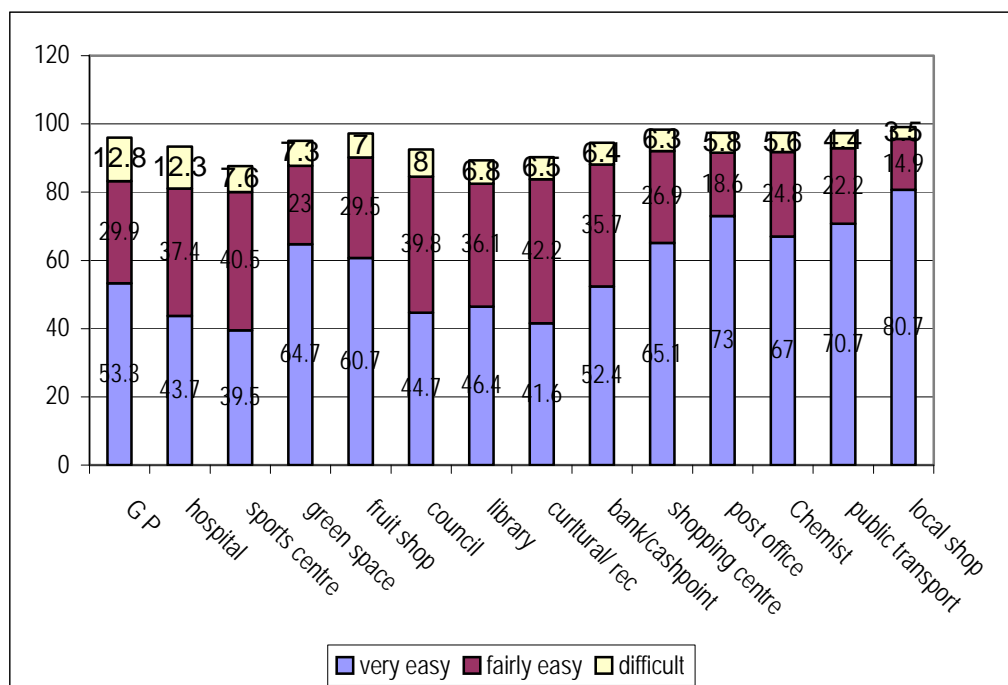
(Appendix 2, pages 45 to 60 refer)

The majority of respondents reported no difficulties in reaching major services. The services most difficult for respondents to get to using their usual form of transport were 'G.P./ Doctor's Surgery' (12.8%), and 'local hospital' (12.3%) : these were the only services reported as being difficult to access by in excess of 8% of respondents.

Other services were reported as being difficult to reach by smaller minorities – 'sports/leisure centre' (7.6%), 'publicly accessible green space' (7.3%), 'fresh fruit and vegetables shop' (7%), 'council or neighbourhood office' (8%), 'library' (6.8%), 'cultural/ recreational facilities' (6.4%), 'bank/ cash-point' (6.4%), shopping centre or supermarket' (6.3%), 'post office', (5.8%); 'chemist/pharmacy' (5.6%), 'public transport', (4.4%), and 'local shop' (3.5%).

The services most easily accessible are 'local shops' (80.7% 'very easy'), 'post office' (73% 'very easy') and 'public transport' (70.7% 'very easy'). Other services which 60%+ of respondents reported as being 'very easy' to get to using their usual form of transport were 'chemist/ pharmacy' (67%), 'shopping centre/ supermarket' (65.1%), 'publicly accessible green space' (64.7%), and 'fresh fruit/ vegetable shop' (60.7%).

'How easy to get to... using usual form of transport ?'
 (% response – all respondents)

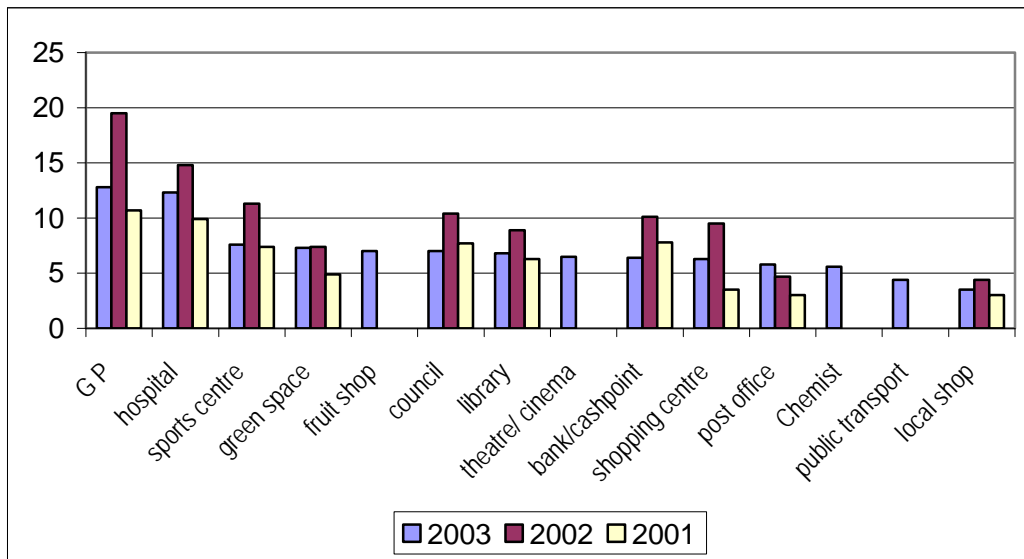


Access to services for all services was most difficult for '75+ year olds', those with 'long standing illnesses or disabilities', and those 'without a car in the household' with 'Doctors Surgeries' presenting the greatest difficulties for these groups.

Respondents who lived in 'Rural' wards were also more likely to report difficulty in accessing services particularly 'Post Offices' (20.8% difficult) and 'Bank/cash points' (15.4%). However, those in Rural areas reported less difficulties than others in getting to 'Doctors' Surgeries' (where respondents living in Rural areas reported fewer problems (6.9% 'difficult', compared to 16.9% 'NRS Phase 2', and 15% 'NRS Phase 1'.

There were some changes since 2002, with fewer respondents reporting difficulty accessing 'G.P.s/Doctor's Surgeries' (- 6.7%), 'banks/ cash points' (- 3.7%), 'sports centres' (- 3.7%), and 'council /neighbourhood offices' (- 2.4%). However, the 2002 survey showed significantly increased difficulty of access in respect of these services since 2001, and the current year's findings are more in line with those found in 2001.

Service Reported to be Difficult to Get To : Changes since 2001
(Q10 : All respondents : 'very difficult' + 'fairly difficult' response)



9. WEEK-DAY JOURNEYS

Q.14 (a) *‘Could you tell me whether on an average weekday ... you make the following journeys?’* (b) *‘And for each of the journeys made please could you tell me the mode of transport you use?’* (c) *‘And for each of the journeys you make what is the approximate number of miles you travel?’*

(Appendix 2, pages 61 to 68 refer)

9.1 Journeys Made

On an ‘average weekday’ (Tuesday, Wednesday or Thursday), a majority of respondents make journeys for ‘shopping’ (72.5%) and/or ‘leisure’ (54%) purposes, and almost a half for ‘work’ (49.8%) purposes. Fewer respondents, however, make journeys for ‘education’ (16.8%) or ‘other’ (16.8%) purposes.

9.2 Main Modes of transport

The ‘car’ was the principal mode of transport for all types of journeys and was used by the majority of all respondents who made week-day journeys in respect of work (72.8%), ‘shopping’ (70.8%), ‘leisure’ (66.2%), ‘education’ (56.1%), and ‘other’ (63.2%). This represents a slight decrease in the use of the car for ‘leisure purposes’ since the 2002 Survey (‘work’ 74.3% : ‘shopping’ 71.9% : ‘leisure’ 73%) (questions about ‘education’ and ‘other’ journeys were not included in the 2002 survey).

‘Walking’ was the second most popular mode of transport, and was used by more than one in five of those who made journeys for ‘education’ (33.3%), ‘leisure’ (25.6%), ‘shopping’ (22.7%), and ‘other’ purposes, but by only 17.4% of those who travelled ‘to work’.

The ‘bus’ was the third most frequently used method of transport – ‘shopping’ (21%), ‘leisure’ (16.9%), ‘education’ (13.5%), ‘work’ (12%), and ‘other’ (26.9%).

9.3 Work Journeys

34.3% of all 'work' journeys were 'less than 2 miles', 31.6% were '2-7 miles' and 33.1% were '8 miles or over' (1.0% 'not sure/ varies').

The 'car' was the main mode of transport for all 'work' journeys, irrespective of distance : almost half (49.4%) who travel 'less than 2 miles' to work do so by car, whilst only 41.4% 'walk'. (this is a similar finding to 2002 when 50.4% of '0-2 mile work journeys' were undertaken by car, and 36.7% 'on foot').

		Q14 WORK: Distance travelled										Total	
		between 0 to under 2 miles		2 to 4 miles		5 to 7 miles		8 miles or over		(not sure/ varies)		Count	Col %
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %		
Q14) Journeys to work - mode :	car	86	49.4%	85	71.4%	34	82.9%	161	95.8%	3	60.0%	369	72.8%
	bus	25	14.4%	25	21.0%	7	17.1%	2	1.2%	2	40.0%	61	12.0%
	cycle	11	6.3%	11	9.2%	1	2.4%	2	1.2%			25	4.9%
	walk	72	41.4%	9	7.6%	1	2.4%	2	1.2%	4	80.0%	88	17.4%
	train			1	.8%			9	5.4%			10	2.0%
	motorbike/moped			2	1.7%	1	2.4%	3	1.8%			6	1.2%
	other			4	3.4%			1	.6%			5	1.0%
Total		174	100.0%	119	100.0%	41	100.0%	168	100.0%	5	100.0%	507	100.0%

9.4 Shopping Journeys

61.3% of all 'shopping' journeys were 'less than 2 miles', 31.4% were '2-7 miles' and 4.1% were '8 miles or over' (3.2 'not sure/ varies').

The 'car' was the main mode of transport for all 'shopping' journeys, irrespective of distance : ranging from 63.6% for those 'less than 2 miles', up to 90% and over for those 'over 5 miles'. Only 30% of those who made journeys of 'less than 2 miles' referred to 'walking'. Again this is a similar finding to 2002, when 64.4% of shopping journeys of less than '2 miles' were undertaken by 'car', and only 34.4% referred to 'walking'.

		Q14: SHOPPING : Distance travelled										Total	
		between 0 to under 2 miles		2 to 4 miles		5 to 7 miles		8 miles or over		(not sure/ varies)		Count	Col %
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %		
Q14.2) Journeys for Shopping : Modet?	car	288	63.6%	137	77.8%	51	91.1%	27	90.0%	20	83.3%	523	70.8%
	bus	107	23.6%	31	17.6%	8	14.3%	4	13.3%	5	20.8%	155	21.0%
	cycle	11	2.4%	1	.6%					2	8.3%	14	1.9%
	walk	136	30.0%	16	9.1%			2	6.7%	14	58.3%	168	22.7%
	motorbike/moped	1	.2%					1	3.3%			2	.3%
	other	4	.9%	7	4.0%	1	1.8%			2	8.3%	14	1.9%
Total		453	100.0%	176	100.0%	56	100.0%	30	100.0%	24	100.0%	739	100.0%

9.5 Leisure Journeys

41.6% of all 'leisure journeys were 'less than 2 miles', 34.2% were '2-7miles' and 21.1% were '8 miles or over' (3.1 'not sure/ varies').

The 'car' was the main mode of transport for all 'leisure' journeys, though was mentioned by less than half (46.7%) of those who usually make journeys of 'less than 2 miles. 38% of those who make short ('0-2 miles') leisure journeys do so on 'foot', and 24.5% 'by bus'. 57.4% of those who made '0-2 miles' leisure journeys in 2002 did so by 'car', 45.5% 'on foot' and 14.8% 'by bus', suggesting a possible slight increase in the use of public transport for short leisure journeys.

		Q14: LEISURE: Distance travelled										Total	
		between 0 to under 2 miles		2 to 4 miles		5 to 7 miles		8 miles or over		(not sure/ varies)		Count	Col %
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %		
Q14.3 : Leisure Journeys : Modecil spends too much on?	car	107	46.7%	108	73.0%	37	92.5%	101	87.1%	11	64.7%	364	66.2%
	bus	56	24.5%	20	13.5%	3	7.5%	11	9.5%	3	17.6%	93	16.9%
	cycle	8	3.5%	6	4.1%	3	7.5%	5	4.3%			22	4.0%
	walk	87	38.0%	33	22.3%	2	5.0%	9	7.8%	10	58.8%	141	25.6%
	train	1	.4%					3	2.6%	1	5.9%	5	.9%
	motorbike/moped	2	.9%					2	1.7%			4	.7%
	other	2	.9%	2	1.4%					4	23.5%	8	1.5%
Total		229	100.0%	148	100.0%	40	100.0%	116	100.0%	17	100.0%	550	100.0%

9.6 Education Journeys

52% of all 'journeys to places of education' were 'less than 2 miles', 25.1% were '2-7miles' and 19.3% were '8 miles or over' (3.5% 'not sure/ varies').

Over half of those who travelled for 'education' purposes, and made journeys of 'less than two miles', 'walked' (56.2%), and only 37.1% travelled by car, whilst amongst those who travelled '2-4 miles' 65.6% travelled by 'car', 15.6% 'walked' and 18.8% travelled by bus. (Questions relating to journeys for educational purposes were not included in previous surveys.)

		Q14: EDUCATION: Distance travelled										Total	
		between 0 to under 2 miles		2 to 4 miles		5 to 7 miles		8 miles or over		(not sure/ varies)		Count	Col %
		Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %	Count	Col %		
Q14.4)	car	33	37.1%	21	65.6%	11	100.0%	30	90.9%	1	16.7%	96	56.1%
Journeys to Education : Modet from?	bus	13	14.6%	6	18.8%			3	9.1%	1	16.7%	23	13.5%
	cycle			2	6.3%							2	1.2%
	walk	50	56.2%	5	15.6%					2	33.3%	57	33.3%
	train							3	9.1%			3	1.8%
	motorbike/moped							1	3.0%			1	.6%
	other									3	50.0%	3	1.8%
Total		89	100.0%	32	100.0%	11	100.0%	33	100.0%	6	100.0%	171	100.0%

10. MOST IMPORTANT ISSUES

Q.15 : ' *The Council's principal role is to make Darlington a place where people want to live, work and can enjoy a high quality of life. The Council has identified six main issues which it believes are important –*

a) Which of these issues do you feel are most important (first & second) in making Darlington a place where people want to live, work and can enjoy a high quality of life ?

b) And how successful or unsuccessful would you say the Council is in dealing with these issues. ? '

10.1 Most important issues

(Appendix 2, pages 69 to 75 refer)

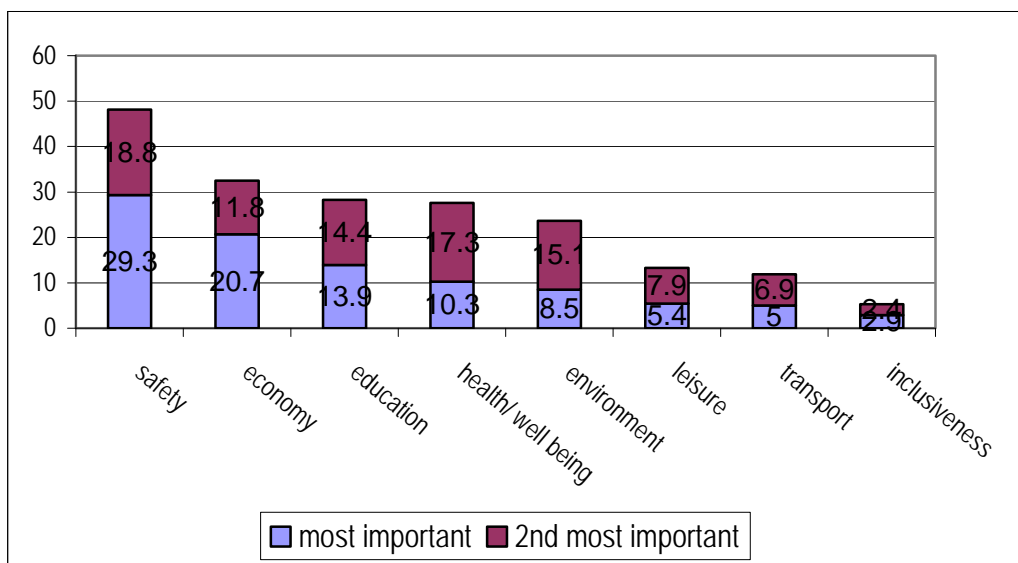
'Promoting community safety' (29.3%), and 'Improving the local economy' (20.7%) were deemed the two 'most important' issues facing the Council by the total sample, with 'Raising educational achievement' (13.9%) and 'Improving health and well-being' (10.3%) being in third and fourth place, but some way behind – and these were the only four issues referred to by over 10% of all respondents as the 'most important' issue. Other issues were referred to by smaller minorities – 'enhancing the environment' (8.5%), 'stimulating leisure activities' (5.4%), 'developing an effective transport system' (5%), and 'promoting inclusive communities' (2.9%).

'Promoting community safety' was deemed the most important issue by respondents from all areas of the Borough, but was referred to most frequently by those in NRS Wards (Phase 1 = 33.6% : Phase 2 = 31.3%, Non NRS Urban 27% : Rural = 24.6%).

Almost half (48.1%) of all respondents believe that 'promoting community safety' is one of the two most important issues facing the Council :(29.3% 'most' + 18.8% '2nd most').

'Improving the local economy' (32.5% : 20.7% 'most' + '11.8% 2nd most') achieved the second highest '1st + 2nd most important' rating, followed by 'raising educational achievement' (28.3% : 13.9% 'most' + 14.4% '2nd most') 'improving health and well being' (27.6% : 10.3% 'most' + 17.3% 2nd most') and 'enhancing the environment' (23.6% : 8.5% 'most' + 15.1% '2nd most') : these were the only five issues referred to by more than one in five respondents when asked for the two most important issues facing the Council.

Most important issues : 'Most important' + 'Second Most Important)
 (Q15a : % response – all respondents)



'Community safety' and 'the local economy' were also rated as the most important issues facing the Council in the 2002 Community Survey (though more direct comparisons are not possible because of changes to wording of descriptions listed and because 'promoting inclusive communities' was not listed as an issue in 2002).

Only three of the issues listed were believed to be NOT IMPORTANT by 3% or more of the sample : 'promoting inclusive communities' (4.7%), 'developing an effective transport system' (4.2%), and 'stimulating leisure activities' (3%) : the great majority of respondents (85.3%) were of the opinion that ALL of the issues listed were important (a similar finding to the 2002 Survey).

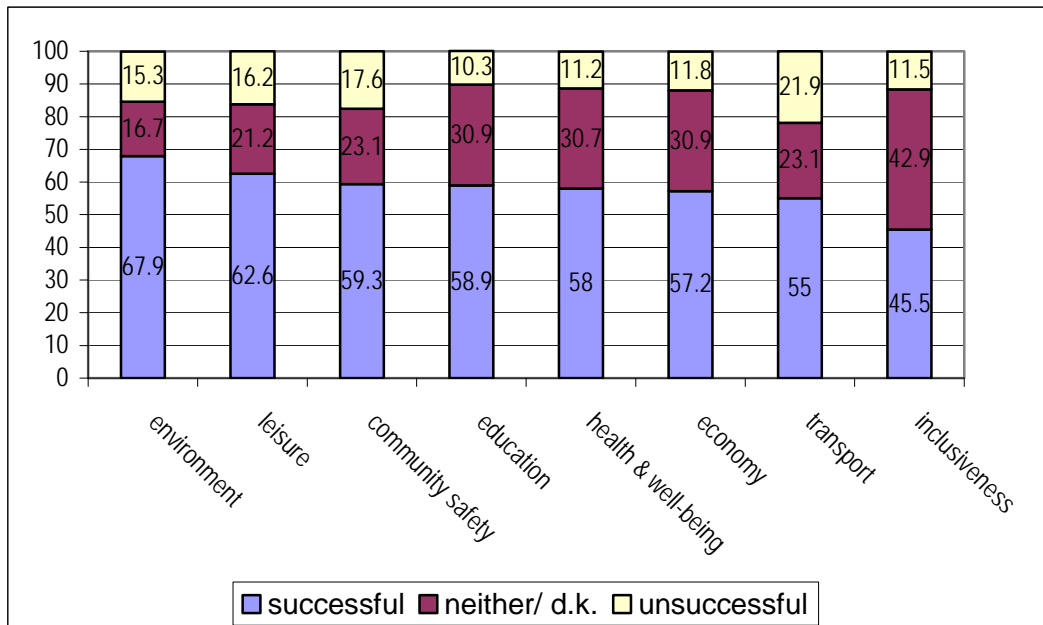
10.2 Councils success in dealing with most important issues

(Appendix 2, pages 76 to 83 refer)

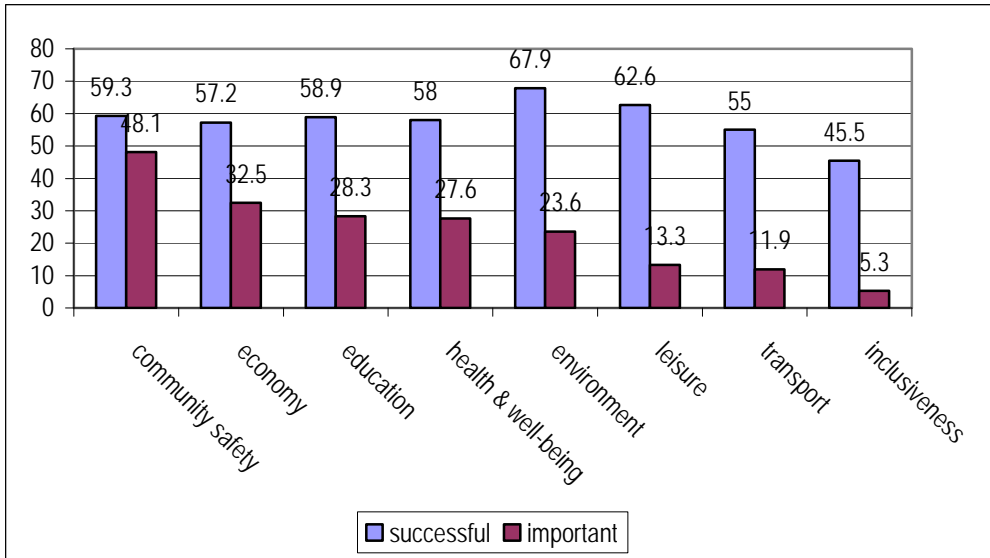
The Council was perceived by the overall sample as being most successful in terms of 'enhancing the environment' (67.9% successful : 11.1% very + 56.8% fairly), and in 'stimulating leisure activities' (62.6% : 9.2% very + 53.4% fairly).

The only issue listed which the Council was not seen as being having success with by a majority of the sample was 'promoting inclusive communities' (45.5% successful -4 % very +41.5 % fairly). However, the issue which on which the Council was rated most 'unsuccessful' was 'developing an effective transport system' (21.9% 'unsuccessful'), though this was the only issue rated negatively by more than one in five respondents). Analysis of 'mean success scores' (reference 'mean scores on page , shows that 'transport' achieved the lowest rating in all but one of the four sample areas ('NRS Phase 2, where 'inclusive communities' was rated least successful).

'How successful is the Council in dealing with these issues?'
 (Q16 : % response – all respondents)

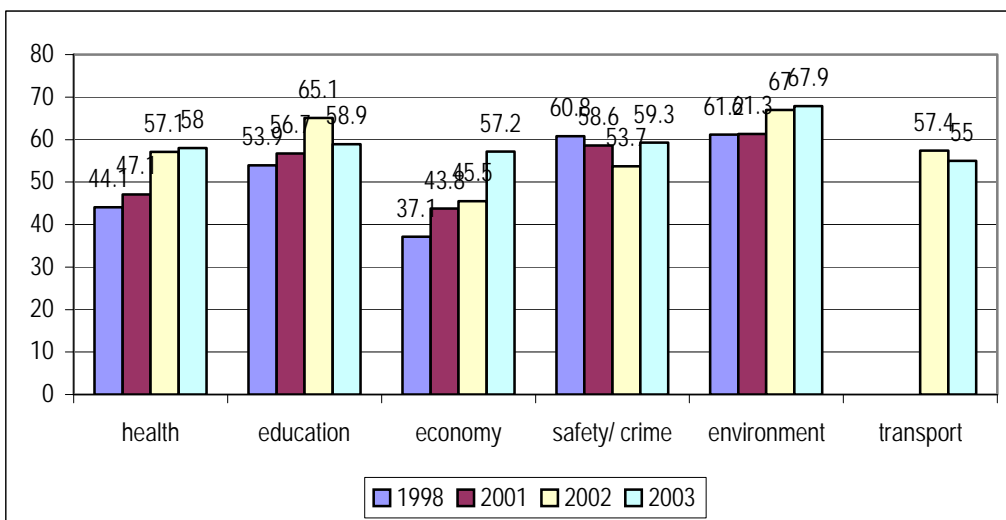


Most Important (1st + 2nd) Issues & Perceived Council Success in dealing with them
 (Q15/ 16 : % response – all respondents)



Comparisons with responses from the 1998, 2001 and 2002 Community Surveys are shown below, and this shows a higher 'success' rating for the 'local economy' since 2002, and a lower 'success' rating for 'education'. However, there were significant differences in the wording describing the issues between surveys, and this may well have influenced responses (e.g. 2003 'improving the local economy and raising educational achievement' : 2002 'improving the local economy and creating jobs' and 'supporting educational achievement').

Perceived Successful : Change over time : 2003, 2002, 2001 cf. 1998
 (all respondents - % 'successful' response)



11. COUNCIL SERVICES

11.1 Satisfaction with Services (all respondents)

Q.17 : *'...I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the way in which each of these services is provided in your local area ?'*

Q.18: *'Are there any other services, not mentioned here, that you are particularly satisfied or dissatisfied with ?'*

(Appendix 2, pages 83 to 120 refer)

Services about which most (more than three-quarters) of all respondents expressed satisfaction were 'street lighting' (87.3%), 'security, incl. c.c.t.v. in the town centre' (86.6%), 'upkeep & appearance of the town centre' (86.3%), 'Civic Theatre' (82.7%), 'refuse collection' (78.5%), 'sign posting' (78.1%), and libraries' (77.8%),

Services about which most (more than a quarter) of all respondents expressed dissatisfaction were 'road maintenance & repairs' (47.9% 'dissatisfied'), 'pavement maintenance' (45.2%), 'children's play areas' (39.7%), 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people' (31.3%), 'car parking in residential areas' (39%)., and 'car parking in the town centre' (25.1%),

Only 2.0% of respondents referred to 'unlisted' services which they were particularly satisfied with, these were diverse and are listed in Appendix 2. More respondents (6.3%) referred to 'other' services which they felt particularly dissatisfied with : again these were diverse, with many respondents referring to issues already queried.. Issues referred to by more than five or more respondents were 'street cleaning' (7), 'drains' (5), 'community safety' (9), 'facilities for young people (5), 'tree maintenance' (7), and 'refuse collection (5).

A summary of the satisfaction/dissatisfaction percentage responses from all respondents is shown in the following table for all services. The 'net' satisfaction score (satisfaction percentage minus dissatisfaction percentage) is also shown for each service.

Satisfaction with Council Services

(Q17 : % response – all respondents)

('Net satisfaction' = 'Satisfied' – 'Dissatisfied')

	<u>Satisfied</u>	<u>Neither/ don't know</u>	<u>Dissatisfied</u>	<u>(net)</u>
	%	%	%	%
security - town centre	86.6	9	4.4	82.2
street lighting	87.3	7.3	5.4	81.9
civic theatre	82.7	16.1	1.2	81.5
upkeep/appearance - town centre	86.3	6	7.6	78.7
Libraries	77.8	20.8	1.5	76.3
sign posting	78.1	14.8	7.2	70.9
festivals & events	71.8	24.2	3.9	67.9
arts centre	67.2	31.4	1.5	65.7
refuse collection	78.5	7.3	14.2	64.3
dolphin centre	70.6	22.6	6.9	63.7
Council Tax Admin & Coll	68.3	22.5	9.2	59.1
railway centre/ museum	59.6	36.5	3.9	55.7
adult education	58.7	36.6	4.6	54.1
nursery & primary schools	56.3	39.2	4.5	51.8
upkeep/appearance - resid areas	66.1	16.3	17.7	48.4
other sports facilities	57.1	27.7	15.2	41.9
secondary schools	48.8	42.3	8.9	39.9
parks & open spaces	63.6	11.8	24.6	39
car parking - town centre	55.8	19	25.1	30.7
recycling facilities	54.7	20.5	24.8	29.9
security - other areas	47.3	31.5	21.2	26.1
Planning	37.9	48.2	13.9	24
school meals	25.8	66.5	7.8	18
car parking - resid areas	46.2	23.9	30	16.2
housing / CT benefits	28.6	57.3	14.2	14.4
social care	36.3	40.6	23	13.3
council housing	25.1	61.8	13.1	12
Children's play areas	31	29.3	39.7	-8.7
pavement maint'ce	36.1	18.7	45.2	-9.1
road maint'ce / repairs	33.6	18.5	47.9	-14.3
youth clubs etc.	13.7	55.1	31.3	-17.6

The highest overall satisfaction levels (as calculated by the 'mean' score which takes into account both the degree of satisfaction or dissatisfaction, where 1 = very satisfied, and 5 = very dissatisfied, and the varying level of don't know responses) were achieved by 'civic theatre' (mean 1.74), 'security measures (incl. c.c.t.v.) in the town centre' (1.77), 'libraries' (1.79), 'street lighting' (1.87), 'upkeep and appearance of the town centre' (1.89), 'arts centre' (1.94), and 'festivals and events' (1.98). (This was similar to the 2002 findings, when "civic theatre' (1.71) and 'security measures in the town centre' (1.77) achieved the highest ratings.

Services which achieved the lowest satisfaction ratings (as calculated by mean scores) were : 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people' (3.40); 'pavement maintenance', (3.25), 'road maintenance and repairs' (3.33), and 'children's play areas' (3.21).

'Youth clubs and other facilities for young people', 'children's play areas', 'road maintenance & repairs' and 'pavement maintenance, achieved low satisfaction ratings (mean of 3+) in all areas of the Borough. 'Council housing' also achieved a low score (3.02) from 'those living in 'NRS Phase 2', whilst 'recycling facilities were scored lowly (mean = 3.01) amongst those from 'Rural areas'.

The following table shows the means scores for all services for the overall sample and for the five areas of the borough.

Mean Satisfaction Scores by Area

(1 = very satisfied : 3 = neither satisfied/dissatisfied : 5 = very dissatisfied)
(‘don't know’ responses excluded from calculations)

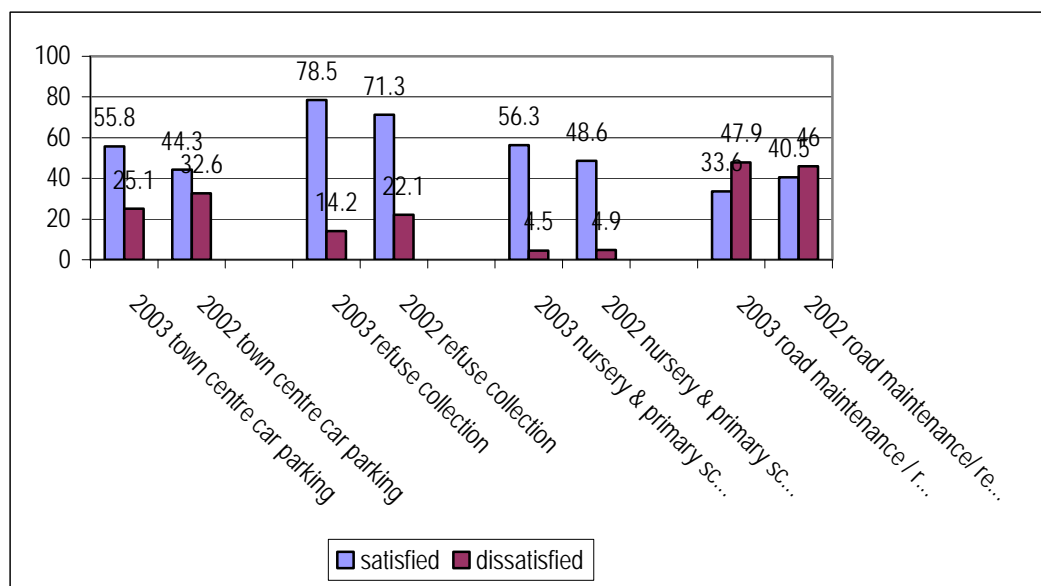
	NRS Phase 1.	NRS Phase 2	Non NRS Urban	Rural	TOTAL
Q17.1: Nursery and Primary schools	2.13	2.18	2.01	2.07	2.09
Q17.2: Secondary schools	2.38	2.44	2.24	2.17	2.32
Q17.3: School meals	2.74	2.60	2.58	2.64	2.63
Q17.4: Adult education	2.14	2.17	2.12	2.38	2.17
Q17.5: Children's play areas	3.16	3.33	3.21	3.05	3.21
Q17.6: The Dolphin Centre	2.02	1.95	2.09	2.19	2.05
Q17.7: Other sports facilities	2.42	2.45	2.41	2.32	2.41
Q17.8: Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people	3.34	3.41	3.37	3.61	3.40
Q17.9: Civic Theatre	1.85	1.71	1.72	1.70	1.74
Q17.10: Arts Centre	2.01	1.88	1.92	2.01	1.94
Q17.11: Libraries	1.79	1.74	1.77	1.91	1.79
Q17.12: Railway Centre and Museum	2.09	1.92	2.13	2.36	2.09
Q17.13: Festivals and Events	1.98	1.89	1.93	2.29	1.98
Q17.14: Council housing	2.72	3.02	2.82	2.81	2.84
Q17.15: Housing & Council Tax Benefits	2.71	2.81	2.85	2.96	2.81
Q17.16: Council Tax Administration & Collection	2.29	2.32	2.21	2.43	2.29
Q17.17: Parks & Open spaces	2.53	2.58	2.54	2.36	2.52
Q17.18: Upkeep of appearance - of Town Centre	1.85	1.80	1.95	1.97	1.89
Q17.19: Upkeep of appearance - Residential Areas	2.58	2.56	2.34	2.21	2.44
Q17.20: Pavement Maintenance	3.35	3.26	3.23	3.06	3.25
Q17.21: Road maintenance and repairs	3.36	3.39	3.30	3.27	3.33
Q17.22: Refuse Collection	2.02	2.08	2.05	2.32	2.09
Q17.23: Recycling facilities	2.62	2.54	2.53	3.01	2.61
Q17.24: Street lighting	1.91	1.85	1.85	1.91	1.87
Q17.25: Sign posting for facilities & attractions	2.17	2.00	1.93	2.20	2.04
Q17.26: Car parking - in Town Centre	2.59	2.54	2.66	2.56	2.60
Q17.27: Car parking - in Residential Areas	2.92	2.99	2.75	2.82	2.86
Q17.28: Planning & Control of Development	2.73	2.62	2.72	2.95	2.73
Q17.29: Security measures (incl CCTV) - in Town Centre	1.82	1.70	1.72	1.99	1.77
Q17.30: Security measures (incl CCTV) - in Other Areas	2.77	2.68	2.57	2.74	2.67
Q17.31: Social care for older and vulnerable people	2.96	2.75	2.91	2.86	2.87

11.2 Satisfaction with Services (comparison with 2002)

Principal changes in 'net satisfaction scores' (% 'satisfied' minus % 'dissatisfied') since 2002 were in relation to the 'car parking in the town centre' (+ 19%), 'refuse collection' (+ 15.1%), 'nursery and primary schools' (+ 8.1%), and 'road maintenance & repairs' (- 8.8%).

Other services which registered small increases in 'net satisfaction' were 'libraries' (+ 6%), 'arts centre' (+ 4.8%), 'adult education' (+ 4.8%), 'upkeep & appearance of residential areas' (+ 4.6%), and 'civic theatre' (+ 4.4%). Other services which recorded small 'negative changes' were 'housing & council tax benefits' (= 6.2%), 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people' (-4.7%), 'recycling facilities' (-4.4%), and 'car parking in residential areas' (- 4.1%).

Satisfaction with Council Services
Major changes in 'net' satisfaction since 2001
 (% response – all respondents)



Changes in 'net' satisfaction since 2001 : All Respondents
('net' satisfaction = % satisfied response minus % dissatisfied response)

	2001 net satisfaction	2002 net satisfaction	2003 net satisfaction	Change since 2002
Car parking in town centre	14.0	11.7	30.7	19
Refuse collection	79.0	49.2	64.3	15.1
Nursery & primary schools	45.8	43.7	51.8	8.1
Libraries & museum	74.8	70.3	76.3	6
Arts centre	68.6	60.9	65.7	4.8
Adult education	49.1	49.3	54.1	4.8
Upkeep & appearance - residential areas	40.9	43.8	48.4	4.6
Civic Theatre	83.3	77.1	81.5	4.4
Security incl CCTV in other areas	28.6	22.5	26.1	3.6
Council Tax administration & collection	43.3	55.5	59.1	3.6
Secondary schools	39.5	36.7	39.9	3.2
Social care for older & vulnerable people	8.2	10.7	13.3	2.6
Street lighting	80.3	80	81.9	1.9
Pavement maintenance	1.5	-9.9	-9.1	0.8
Planning & control of development	24.5	23.2	24	0.8
Upkeep & appearance - town centre	80.7	79	78.7	-0.3
Children's play areas	-3.7	-8.3	-8.7	-0.4
Security incl CCTV in town centre	82.4	82.7	82.2	-0.5
Parks & open spaces	38.3	39.6	39	-0.6
Festivals & events	73.8	69	67.9	-1.1
Signposting for attractions/facilities	76.8	72.5	70.9	-1.6
School meals	22.1	19.8	18	-1.8
The Dolphin Centre	73.4	66	63.7	-2.3
Council housing	15.7	14.5	12	-2.5
Other sports facilities	41.5	45.5	41.9	-3.6
Car parking in residential areas	26.5	20.3	16.2	-4.1
Recycling facilities	53.5	34.3	29.9	-4.4
Youth clubs & other facilities for young people	-6.9	-12.9	-17.6	-4.7
Housing & Council Tax Benefits	15.3	20.6	14.4	-6.2
Road maintenance & repairs	-3.9	-5.5	-14.3	-8.8

11.3 Usage of Services

Q.21 : *'Which, if any, of the services on this card do you or members of your family use or feel you benefit from ?'*

(Appendix 2, pages 151 to 158 refer)

Respondents were asked about usage of services which are 'discretionary' (i.e. accessed by choice or need). Services with the highest usage, and which more than one fifth (20%) of respondents reported that they or members of their household used were the 'Council Tax Administration & Collection' (65.5%), 'Car parking in the Town Centre' (57.2%), 'Civic Theatre' (53.8%), 'The Dolphin Centre' (50.9%), 'Parks & open spaces' (46.9%), 'Libraries' (44.7%), 'Car parking in other areas' (41.2%), 'Festivals and events' (32%), 'other sports facilities' (25.6%), 'Arts Centre' (25.3%), and 'Nursery & Primary Schools' (24.8%).

The least used services (used by less than 10%) were 'social care for older and vulnerable people' (8.4%), 'planning & control of development' (3.5%), and, 'Youth Clubs and other facilities for young people' (3.3%). Reported usage for all services is shown in the following table.

'Which...do you or members of your family use, or feel you benefit from ?
(Q17 : % response – all respondents)

Q21) SERVICES USE/ BENEFIT FROM	Council Tax Administration & Collection	65.5%
	Car parking - in Town Centre	57.2%
	Civic Theatre	53.8%
	The Dolphin Centre	50.9%
	Parks & open spaces	46.9%
	Libraries	44.7%
	Car parking- in other Areas	41.2%
	Festivals & Events	32.0%
	Other sports facilities incl. golf course, park facilities	25.6%
	Arts Centre	25.3%
	Nursery & Primary Schools	24.8%
	Children's play areas	19.1%
	Housing & Council Tax Benefits	17.5%
	Secondary Schools	16.7%
	Railway Centre & Museum	15.8%
	Adult Education	14.7%
	School Meals	14.4%
	Council Housing	12.4%
	Social care for older and vulnerable people	8.4%
	Planning & Control of Development	3.5%
Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people	3.3%	

11.4 Satisfaction with Services amongst Service Users

For most services, overall satisfaction levels (as calculated by 'mean' satisfaction scores) amongst users was somewhat higher than amongst all respondents. However, there were some exceptions with users of 'children's play areas', 'youth clubs & other facilities for young people', 'car parking in residential areas', and 'planning & control of development' rating these services more negatively than non-users.

Satisfaction amongst users of services was highest in respect of the 'Civic Theatre' (1.58), 'Libraries' (1.60), and 'Arts Centre' (1.65), and was lowest amongst users of 'youth clubs and other facilities for young people' (3.44) 'children's play areas' (3.29) and 'Planning & Control of Development' (3.0) - all other services achieving a mean score of lower than 3 (where 1 = very satisfied and 5 = very dissatisfied).

'Mean' Satisfaction with Services – Users & All Respondents
(1 – very satisfied : 3 = neither satisfied/dissatisfied : 5 = very dissatisfied)

	USERS.	ALL RESPONDENTS
Q17.1: Nursery and Primary schools	1.97	2.09
Q17.2: Secondary schools	2.28	2.32
Q17.3: School meals	2.27	2.63
Q17.4: Adult education	1.86	2.17
Q17.5: Children's play areas	3.29	3.21
Q17.6: The Dolphin Centre	1.96	2.05
Q17.7: Other sports facilities	2.19	2.41
Q17.8: Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people	3.44	3.40
Q17.9: Civic Theatre	1.58	1.74
Q17.10: Arts Centre	1.65	1.94
Q17.11: Libraries	1.60	1.79
Q17.12: Railway Centre and Museum	1.75	2.09
Q17.13: Festivals and Events	1.71	1.98
Q17.14: Council housing	2.48	2.84
Q17.15: Housing & Council Tax Benefits	2.37	2.81
Q17.16: Council Tax Administration & Collection	2.29	2.29
Q17.17: Parks & Open spaces	2.46	2.52
Q17.26: Car parking - in Town Centre	2.56	2.60
Q17.27: Car parking - in Residential Areas	2.90	2.86
Q17.28: Planning & Control of Development	3.00	2.73
Q17.31: Social care for older and vulnerable people	2.46	2.87

11.5 Service Priorities

Q.19 'And which two services do you think should be given the greatest priority for improvement ?'

(Appendix 2, pages 123 to 146 refer)

11.5.1 First Priority for Improvement

Opinion was quite divided as to which service should be given the greatest (first) priority for improvement. 'Children's play areas' was referred to by most respondents here (9.2%), but was closely followed by 'Youth clubs and other facilities for young people' (8.9%), 'Pavement maintenance' (8.6%), 'Road maintenance and repair' (8%), 'Nursery & Primary Schools' (7%), 'Secondary Schools' (6.6%), and 'Social care for older and vulnerable people' (6.6%).

On an area basis, in 'NRS Wards' 'children's play areas' (achieved the highest vote, (Phase 1 12.5% : Phase 2 11.0%), whereas in 'Non NRS Urban' areas 'Road maintenance & repairs' (10.9%), followed closely by 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' (10.4%), were deemed the greatest single priority, and in 'Urban' wards this was 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' (11.5%).

11.5.2 First + Second Priorities

When first and second priorities for improvements are added together, opinion is still quite divided, with 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' being rated as the top priority overall, mentioned by 17.4% of all respondents. Other services mentioned as priorities (1st or 2nd) by 10% or more of all respondents were 'Road Maintenance & repairs' (16.9%), 'Pavement maintenance' (15.2%), 'Social care for older and vulnerable people' (15.2%), 'Children's play areas' (14.6%), 'Parks & open spaces' (11.4%), 'Security measures, including CCTV, in other areas' (11.3%), 'Secondary schools' (11.1%), and 'Nursery & Primary Schools' (10.9%). In the 2002 Community Survey services deemed to be the highest overall priority (1st + 2nd) for improvement were 'social care for older and vulnerable people' (16.8%), and 'children's play areas' (14.8%).

There were some areas differences, with 'Children's play areas' being deemed the highest priority in both 'NRS Phase 1' (19%) and 'NRS Phase 2' (17.6%) wards, whilst in 'Non-NRS Urban wards' this was 'Road Maintenance & Repairs' (20.5%), and in 'Rural

wards' 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' (21.5%). However, 'Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people' was one of the top three priorities in all ward areas.

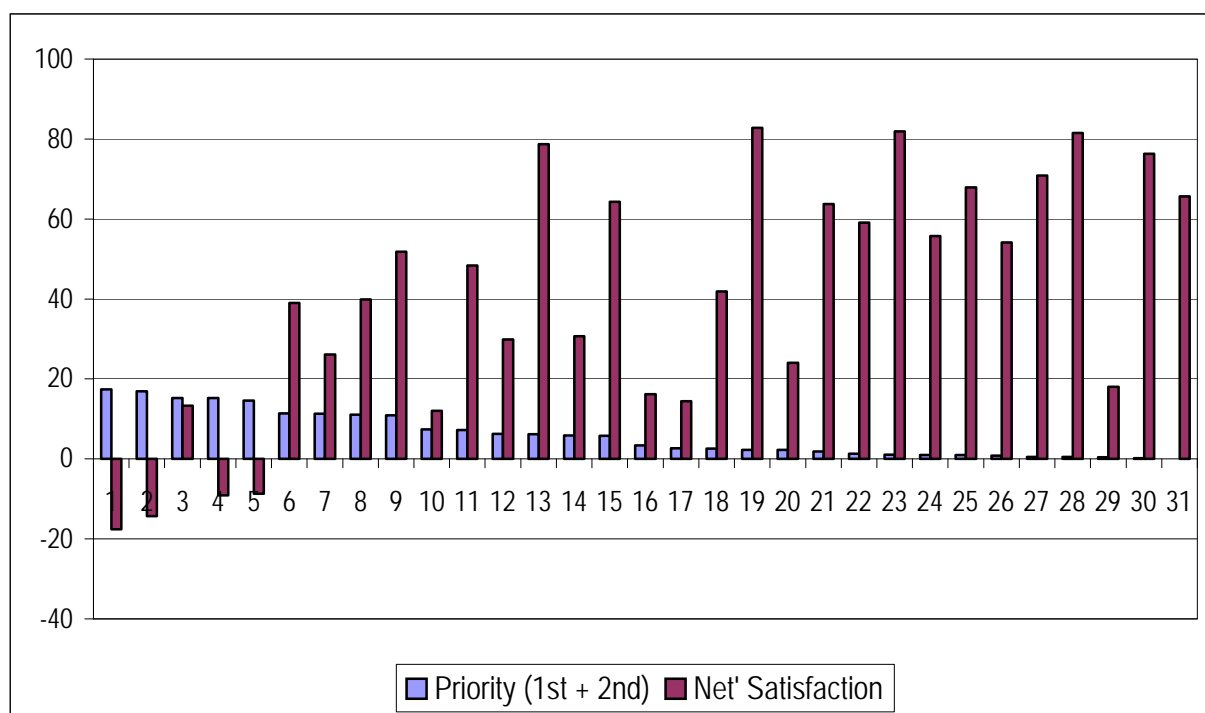
<u>NRS Phase 1</u>	Children's play areas (19.0%) Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people (17.7%) Pavement Maintenance (17.2%)
<u>NRS Phase 2</u>	Children's play areas (17.6%) Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people (15.1%) Road maintenance & repairs (15.1%)
<u>Non-NRS</u>	Road maintenance & repairs (20.5%)
<u>Urban</u>	Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people (17.4%) Pavement Maintenance (17.1%)
<u>Rural</u>	Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people (21.5%) Social care for older and vulnerable people (19.2%) Recycling facilities (15.4%)

First + Second Priorities by Area

		Area				Total
		NRS Phase 1	NRS Phase 2	Non NRS Urban	Rural	Col %
		0 %	0 %	0 %	0 %	
Q19) FIRST AND SECOND PRIORITIES	Youth Clubs & other facilities for young people	17.7%	15.1%	17.4%	21.5%	17.4%
	Road maintenance and repairs	14.2%	15.1%	20.5%	14.6%	16.9%
	Pavement Maintenance	17.2%	13.6%	17.1%	9.2%	15.2%
	Social care for older and vulnerable people	12.9%	14.0%	16.1%	19.2%	15.2%
	Children's play areas	19.0%	17.6%	13.0%	5.4%	14.6%
	(Don't Know)	13.8%	12.9%	11.2%	13.8%	12.6%
	Parks & open spaces	10.3%	12.9%	13.0%	5.4%	11.4%
	Security measures (incl CCTV) - in Other Areas	15.5%	13.2%	9.1%	6.2%	11.3%
	Secondary Schools	8.6%	12.5%	11.9%	10.0%	11.1%
	Nursery & Primary Schools	10.8%	10.3%	10.4%	13.8%	10.9%
	Council Housing	10.3%	9.2%	3.6%	9.2%	7.4%
	Upkeep of appearance - Other areas	9.9%	8.5%	5.7%	3.8%	7.2%
	Recycling facilities	3.4%	3.3%	7.0%	15.4%	6.3%
	Upkeep of appearance - Town Centre	5.2%	5.1%	6.8%	8.5%	6.2%
	Car parking - in Town Centre	4.7%	4.0%	8.6%	3.8%	5.9%
	Refuse Collection	3.9%	6.6%	4.7%	10.8%	5.8%
	Car parking- in other Areas	4.3%	5.1%	2.1%	2.3%	3.4%
	Some other service	3.0%	4.8%	2.3%	.8%	2.9%
	Housing & Council Tax Benefits	3.9%	2.2%	2.3%	3.1%	2.7%
	Other sports facilities incl. golf course, park facilities	1.3%	3.7%	2.6%	3.1%	2.6%
	Planning & Control of Development	1.7%	.7%	2.9%	4.6%	2.3%
	Security measures (incl CCTV) - in Town Centre	1.7%	1.1%	2.6%	4.6%	2.3%
	The Dolphin Centre	.9%	2.6%	1.8%	2.3%	1.9%
	Council Tax Administration & Collection	1.7%	1.1%	.8%	2.3%	1.3%
	Street lighting		1.8%	1.0%	1.5%	1.1%
	Railway Centre & Museum	1.3%	.4%	1.6%		1.0%
	Festivals & Events	.4%	1.1%	1.0%	1.5%	1.0%
	Adult Education	.9%	.7%	.8%	.8%	.8%
	Civic Theatre	.4%	.4%	.8%		.5%
	Sign posting for facilities & attractions	.4%		1.0%		.5%
School Meals	.4%	.4%	.3%	.8%	.4%	
Libraries				1.5%	.2%	
Total		200.0%	200.0%	200.0%	200.0%	200.0%

Only five services had 'priority' scores (1st + 2nd priorities) which exceeded their 'net satisfaction' (over all respondents), and these were 'Youth Clubs and other young people', 'Road Maintenance & Repairs', 'Pavement Maintenance', 'Children's Play Areas', and 'Social Care for older and vulnerable people'.

Service Priorities (1st + 2nd) and 'Net Satisfaction
(% response – all respondents)



Code

No.		Priority	Net Sat.	No.		Priority	Net Sat
		%	%			%	%
1	youth clubs etc.	17.4	-17.6	17	housing / CT benefits	2.7	14.4
2	road maintenance / repairs	16.9	-14.3	18	other sports facilities	2.6	41.9
3	social care	15.2	13.3	19	security - town centre	2.3	82.2
4	pavement maintenance	15.2	-9.1	20	planning	2.3	24
5	play areas	14.6	-8.7	21	dolphin centre	1.9	63.7
6	parks & open spaces	11.4	39	22	Council Tax Admin & Coll	1.3	59.1
7	security - other areas	11.3	26.1	23	street lighting	1.1	81.9
8	secondary schools	11.1	39.9	24	railway centre/ museum	1	55.7
9	nursery & primary schools	10.9	51.8	25	festivals & events	1	67.9
10	council housing	7.4	12	26	adult education	0.8	54.1
11	upkeep/appearance - resid areas	7.2	48.4	27	sign posting	0.5	70.9
12	recycling facilities	6.3	29.9	28	civic theatre	0.5	81.5
13	upkeep/appearance - town centre	6.2	78.7	29	school meals	0.4	18
14	car parking - town centre	5.9	30.7	30	libraries	0.2	76.3
15	refuse collection	5.8	64.3	31	arts centre	0	65.7

16	car parking - resid areas	3.4	16.2				
----	---------------------------	-----	------	--	--	--	--

11.6 Council spend on Services

Q.20: 'Are there any services listed, which you feel that the Council spends too much money on, and could be reduced?'
 (Appendix 2, pages 147 to 150 refer)

71% of respondents did not mention a service on which they felt that Council spending could be reduced. The service mentioned most frequently as the one on which spending could be reduced was 'the upkeep and appearance of the town centre' (4.8% of all respondents): this was a similar result to that found in the 2002 survey, when 6.1% referred to this service.

Other services referred to by more than 2% of all respondents in this respect were 'road maintenance and repairs' (3.3%), 'Council Housing' (2.9%), 'Festival & Events' (2.5%), and 'Housing & Council Tax Benefits' (2.4%).

4.7% of respondents referred to services 'other' than those listed (with 2.4% referring to 'flowers'). 'Other services' mentioned here included 'council administration costs', 'councillor's allowances', 'cycle lanes', 'bus shelters', 'car park signs', 'community centres', 'traffic calming', 'gypsy camps', and 'Asian awareness days'.

11.7 Service Improvements

Q.18 : '*You mentioned as being your first priority for improvement. How would you like this service to be improved ?*'

Respondents suggestions as to improvements were diverse and are shown in full in Appendix 3.

The main suggested improvements in respect of the two services mentioned as a first priority by the greatest number of respondents were :

'Children's play areas'(1st priority for 94 respondents)

- More play areas
- More/ better equipment
- Better standard of maintenance/cleanliness
- Supervision/safety

Youth clubs and other facilities for young people' (1st priority for 91 respondents)

- More for young people to do and more places for them to go to keep them off the streets.

12. **OTHER COMMENTS**
(Appendix 2, pages 170 to 173 refer)

Respondents were asked 'And do you have any further comments about Darlington Borough Council?', and 37.3% of respondents took this opportunity to express their views. Comments were diverse, and are listed in full in Appendix 3. Most comments were expressing concerns or referring to a need for improvement, with the main issues referred to here being 'upkeep/appearance' (4.1%), 'consultation, information, communication' (3.8%), 'traffic, parking, roads or pavements' (3.6%), 'housing repair service', (2.0%), 'refuse collection/ recycling' (2%), 'Councillors/ Cabinet System' (1.9%), 'security/ policing/ anti-social behaviour' (1.8%), and 'leisure/play facilities' (1.6%). However, 7.8% of all respondents took the opportunity to make a positive comment about the Council.

		Cases	Col Response %
Q23)	(no comments)	639	62.7%
OTHER COMMENTS	positive comment about council	79	7.8%
	other concerns/ criticisms	67	6.6%
	improve upkeep/ appearance	42	4.1%
	better consultation/ information/ communication	39	3.8%
	Concerns about traffic/ parking/ roads/ pavements	37	3.6%
	Improvements to housing/ repair service	20	2.0%
	Improvements to Refuse Collection/ Recycling	20	2.0%
	Negative comments about Councillors/ Cabinet System	19	1.9%
	better security/ policing / reduce anti-social behaviour	18	1.8%
	more leisure / play facilities	16	1.6%
	Council Tax too high	12	1.2%
	Council wastes money	11	1.1%
	other comments	11	1.1%
	more money spent in local area/ less in other areas	7	.7%
Total		1019	101.8%

13. HELPING OTHERS/ RECEIVING HELP

Q34 *'In the last twelve months have you.... (a) given any (unpaid) help to someone who is not a relative (this might be a friend, neighbour, or someone else)?(b) received (unpaid) help from someone who is not a relative (this might be a friend, neighbour, or someone else)?'*

(Appendix 2, pages 174 to 181 refer)

13.1 Helping Others

Over a half (56.4%) of all respondents reported having given 'unpaid help to someone who is not a relative' in the past 12 months, with 'looking after a property or pet for someone who is away' (31.5%) being the main types of help given. Other types of unpaid help referred to by more than one in ten respondents were 'transporting or escorting someone' (22.1%), 'giving advice to someone' (18.9%), 'keeping in touch with someone who has difficulty getting out and about' (16.8%), 'babysitting or caring for children' (15.8%), 'writing letters or filling in forms for someone' (14.7%), 'doing shopping, collecting pension, or paying bills for someone' (12.3%), and 'cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs' (10.2%).

Respondents most likely to give 'unpaid help to others' are '30-44 year olds' (67.2% giving help of some kind). Those most unlikely to give 'unpaid help to others' are '75+ year olds (61.7% none), those living in 'Council/ H.A. homes' (63%), and those 'without a car in the household' (60.8%). As regards area differences, respondents living in 'NRS Phase 1' (55.2% none) were least likely to give unpaid help to others, whilst those living in 'Non-NRS Urban' wards, were most likely (36.6% none).

13.2 Unpaid help received from others (non-relatives)

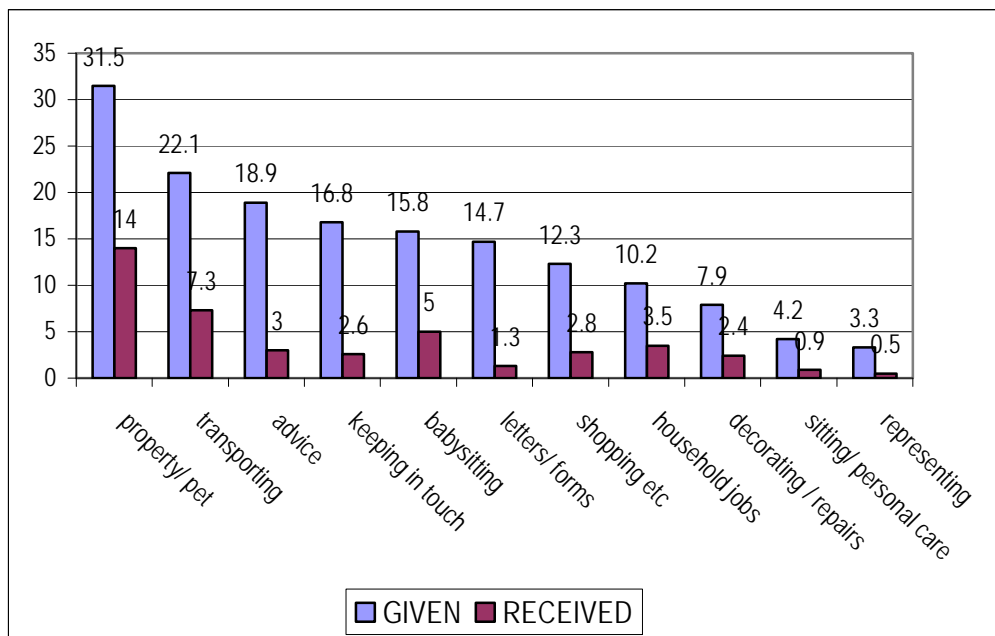
Just over a quarter (26.7%) of respondents reported having 'received' unpaid help from someone who is not a relative in the past 12 months, with looking having 'property or pets looked after whilst away' (14.0%) being the main type of help received.

'Transporting or escorting someone' (7.3%) was the second most frequent type of help reported, followed by 'babysitting or caring for children' (5%), and 'cooking, cleaning, laundry, gardening or other routine household jobs' (3.5%).

'75+ year olds' (37.4%), 'Households with children' (33.9 'help received'), 'under 45 year olds' (31%) , those living in 'Non-NRS Urban areas' (32.2%) and 'households where the

chief wage earner was professional or managerial (36.8%) were most likely to have reported receiving unpaid help from none relatives,

Unpaid help – given and received in the last year
 (Q24 : % response – all respondents)

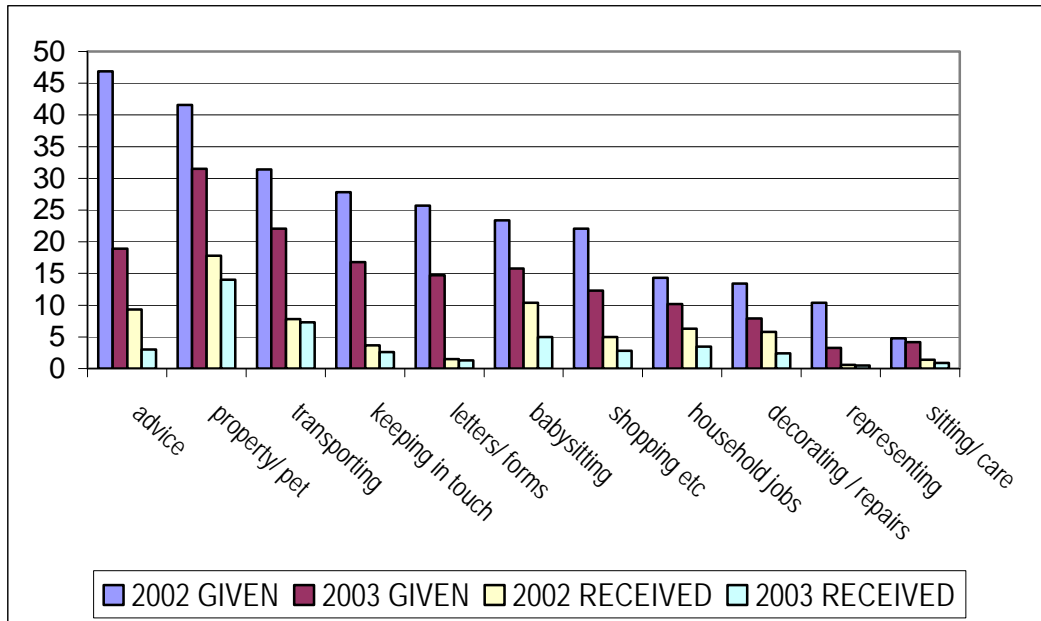


13.3 Comparison with 2002

Whilst the questions relating to 'unpaid help' were not included in the 2002 Community Survey (face-to-face interviews), it was included in a Citizens Panel Survey in November 2002 (postal survey). However, there were significant differences in the responses from the two surveys, with respondents to the 2003 'face-to-face' survey being much less likely to report having either 'given' or 'received' unpaid help from friends or neighbours : (2003 'face-to-face' given 56.4% / received 26.7% : 2002 'postal' given 75.3%/ received 33.1%). This tendency applied to all types of help, but was greatest in respect of 'giving/receiving advice'. Whilst we cannot be sure of the reason for the great difference between the two surveys, it is highly unlikely that residents behaviour has changed so radically over such a short time. Possible explanations for the differences include respondents being reluctant to divulge such personal information on a 'face-to-face basis', 'having more time to consider issues when responding to postal surveys', 'panel members being more likely than other residents to give/receive unpaid help', and/or a

'misunderstanding of the postal question'. However, this difference indicates the undesirability of comparing findings from research when different methodologies are employed.

2003 'Face-to-face' Survey, compared with 2002 'Postal' Survey
Unpaid help – given and received in the last year
 (Q24 : % response – all respondents)



14. **TRAVEL TO SCHOOL**

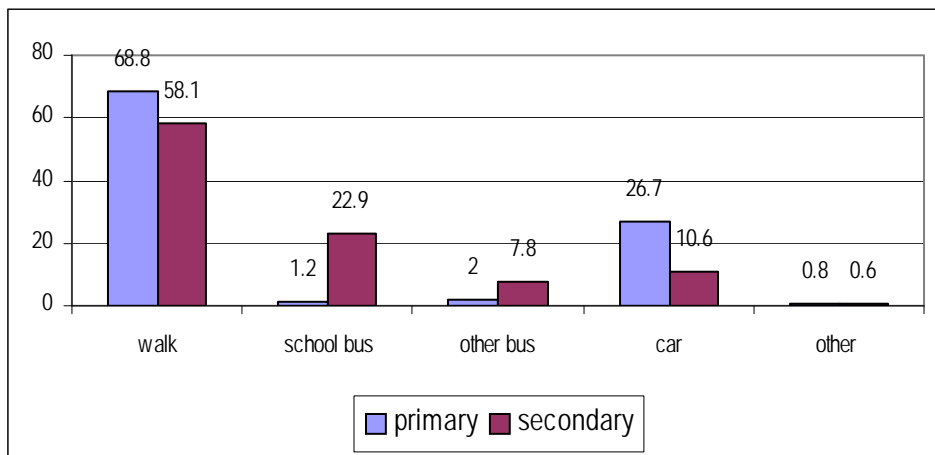
(If children attending primary or secondary schools in household) *‘How do your children normally travel to school? Will you tell me the main method for each child please?’* (Appendix 2, page 187 refers)

In total, amongst all respondents, there were 247 children attending primary schools, and 179 attending secondary schools.

Amongst those who attended primary school, 68.8% ‘walked’, and 26.7% travelled by ‘car’, with only small minorities using other methods of transport (1.2% ‘school bus’, 2.0% ‘other bus’, 0.4% ‘taxi’, 0.4% ‘cycle’ and 0.4% ‘other’). This finding is very similar to that of the 2002 Community Survey, when 69.8% ‘walked’ and 26.5% ‘travelled by car’.

Amongst those who attended secondary school, 58.1% ‘walked’, 22.9% ‘travelled by school bus’, 10.6% ‘travelled by car’, 7.8% travelled by ‘other bus’, whilst only 0.6% travelled by ‘other’ methods (‘taxi’). These figures are not statistically significantly different from those of the 2002 Community Survey when 52.2% ‘walked’, 20.6% ‘travelled by school bus’, 12.9% travelled by car’ and 11.5% ‘travelled by ‘other bus’.

Main methods of transport to/from school
 (all children)



15. **WILLINGNESS TO BECOME MEMBER OF CITIZENS PANEL**

(Appendix 2, page 191 refers)

60.3% of all respondents said they were willing to become members of the Citizens Panel (a significant increase on the 42.9% of the 2002 Community Survey). Willingness to participate was lowest amongst '75+ year olds' (only 29.9%).