

# Polling on resident satisfaction with councils: Round 39

Research Report

October 2024



## Acknowledgements

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## Contents

Summary .....	4
Key messages .....	4
Results .....	4
Introduction .....	6
Methodology .....	7
Notes .....	7
Polling on resident satisfaction with councils.....	8
Overall satisfaction with local area .....	8
Overall satisfaction with local council .....	9
Value for money .....	9
Council responsiveness .....	10
Service-specific satisfaction .....	11
Informed about the council .....	13
Trust in forms of government .....	14
Annex A: Data Tables – Round 39 .....	18
Overall satisfaction with local area .....	18
Overall satisfaction with local council .....	18
Value for Money .....	18
Council responsiveness .....	19
Service-specific satisfaction .....	19
Informed about the council .....	21
Trust .....	22
Annex B: Polling questions.....	23

## Summary

The Local Government Association (LGA) measures resident satisfaction with councils every four months. This report presents the results of the 39<sup>th</sup> round of polling conducted in October - November 2024.

Six key indicators are used to measure residents' views of their local council. Respondents are also asked to indicate their level of satisfaction with nine council services. Additional questions are occasionally asked.

## Key messages

This set of results includes some positives, with a slight increase seen in the number of people who think their local council acts on the concerns of local residents. However, this round also saw some of the lowest/joint lowest scores since polling began in areas such as whether local councils provide value for money.

Four of the six key measures of satisfaction received positive feedback from most respondents. There were no significant changes compared to June 2024. Trust in local councillors remained high; 70 per cent of respondents selected 'local councillors' rather than 'members of parliament' (8 per cent) or 'government ministers' (5 per cent) when asked who they most trust to make decisions about local service provision.

Perceptions that one's council provides value for money, and levels of trust in one's council, were comparatively low again; they had increased significantly during the pandemic. Waste collection and parks and green spaces received the highest levels of satisfaction with council services.

## Results

- 74 per cent of respondents are 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with their local area as a place to live.
- 56 per cent of respondents are 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way their local council runs things.
- 36 per cent of respondents 'strongly agree' or 'tend to agree' that their council provides value for money – and 31 per cent neither agree nor disagree.
- 53 per cent of respondents think their local council acts on the concerns of residents 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.
- Most respondents are satisfied with five of the nine councils services presented in this round. Waste collection and parks and green spaces received the highest levels of satisfaction. Seventy-six per cent of respondents are 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with waste collection whilst 74 per cent of respondents are 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with parks and green spaces.

- 47 per cent of respondents think their local council keep residents 'very well informed' or 'fairly well informed' about the services and benefits it provides.
- 50 per cent of respondents trust their local council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.
- 69 per cent of respondents said they most trust their 'local council' to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area compared to 12 per cent who said they most trusted 'the government' and 15 per cent who said 'neither'.
- 70 per cent of respondents singled out 'local councillors' rather than 'members of parliament' (8 per cent) or 'government ministers' (5 per cent), as the individuals they most trust to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area.

## Introduction

This report outlines the 39<sup>th</sup> set of results in a series of regular Local Government Association (LGA) public polls on resident satisfaction with local councils, conducted every four months.<sup>1</sup>

As well as providing a regular, long-term view of public opinions of councils at a national level, this polling also provides comparator figures for councils who wish to benchmark their own local survey results. To assist with this, we have developed a [set of questions and guidance](#) for councils conducting surveys within their own area.

Tracking national changes in satisfaction with councils, alongside other questions on related issues about residents' local areas, can provide valuable information on what is driving resident perceptions and, therefore, what councils can do to serve their local communities better.

Many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level, including local demographics, economic factors and social circumstances. It is important, therefore, that polling results are viewed as complementary to a wider approach aimed at understanding and responding to communities at a local level.

Comparison against national polls provides context and trends, and helps to identify possible relationships with other variables, but councils could include additional questions in their local surveys and conduct other engagement activities. Analysis of this information might help diagnose what other factors are driving satisfaction levels locally.

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<sup>1</sup> Note that until October 2014, the polling was conducted quarterly. It was later changed to once every four months.

## Methodology

Between 25<sup>th</sup> October and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2024, a representative random sample of 1,000 British adults (aged 18 or over) was polled by telephone by Yonder Data Solutions.<sup>2</sup> The same set of questions is asked in the same order each round to allow for the reporting of any changes in the overall views of the general public about the reputation of local government. Respondents were given the following preamble at the outset:

*“I would like to ask you some questions about your local council. Local councils are responsible for a range of services such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social care services and road maintenance.*

*If you live in an area with more than one council, please think about the way in which they deliver services to you overall. This would include district and county councils. We are doing this to keep the survey simple as it is part of a national study.”*

A full set of interview questions is included in [Annex B](#) for information. Where the questions cover the same topics as the [question set for local surveys](#), the same question ordering, wording, definitions and preamble have been used to allow comparability.<sup>3</sup>

## Notes

Where tables and figures report the base, the description refers to the group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the unweighted number of respondents who answered each question.

This is the 39<sup>th</sup> round of polling in this series, and the paper examines trends since the first round in September 2012.<sup>4</sup> Differences between results are highlighted within the report where this is statistically significant.<sup>5</sup>

Please note the following when reading the report:

- Throughout the report percentages in figures and tables may add to more than 100 due to rounding.
- The following conventions are used in tables: ‘\*’ - less than 0.5 per cent; ‘0’ – no observations; ‘-’ – category not applicable/data not available.

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<sup>2</sup> Quotas were set on age, gender and region and the data weighted to the known British profile of age, gender, region, social grade, taken a foreign holiday in the last three years, tenure, number of cars in the household, working status, and mobile only households. The polling was conducted by Yonder Data Solutions, formerly Populus Data Solutions.

<sup>3</sup> The mode of data collection can have a marked impact on results; therefore, results are only comparable with surveys conducted via telephone.

<sup>4</sup> The full papers outlining the results of previous polls can be found here:

<https://www.local.gov.uk/our-support/research/research-publications/residents-satisfaction-surveys>

<sup>5</sup> Statistical significance is tested at the 95 per cent level.

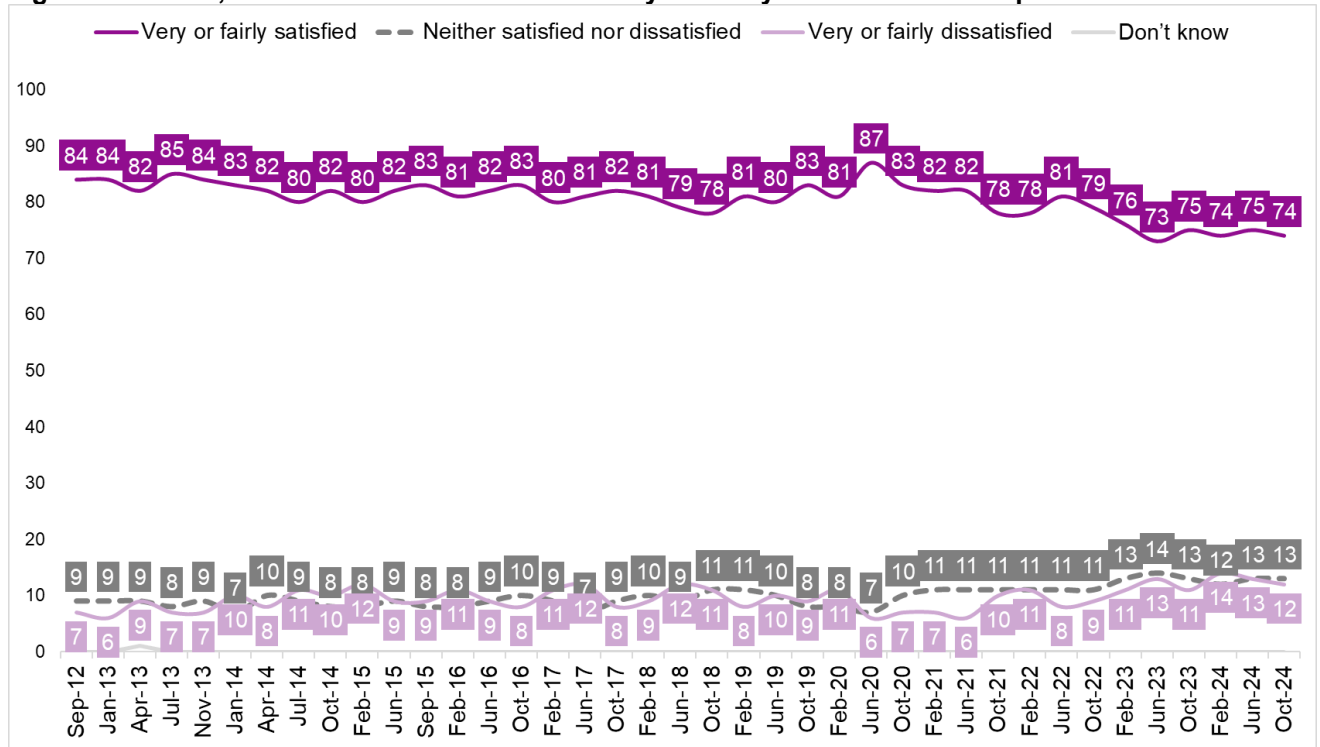
## Polling on resident satisfaction with councils

This section outlines the polling results for October 2024. Tables showing the full response breakdowns for every answer option for this round can be found in [Annex A](#). In addition, [Annex C](#) – a full set of Excel tables showing all results for all years – accompanies this report.

### Overall satisfaction with local area

A total of 74 per cent of respondents reported being ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’ with their local area as a place to live in this round. See Figure 1.

**Figure 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?<sup>6</sup>**



Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

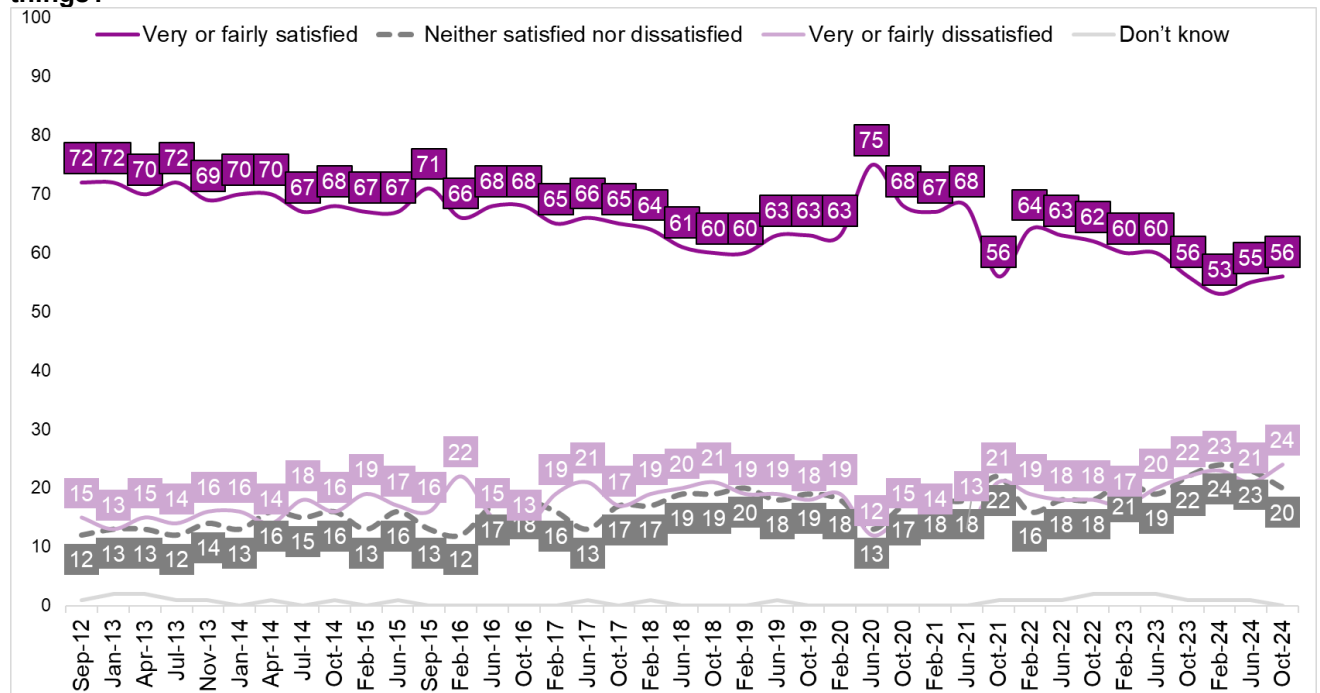
<sup>6</sup> Local area was defined as “the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.



## Overall satisfaction with local council

A total of 56 per cent of respondents said they were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with how their council runs things. See Figure 2.

**Figure 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council(s) runs things?**

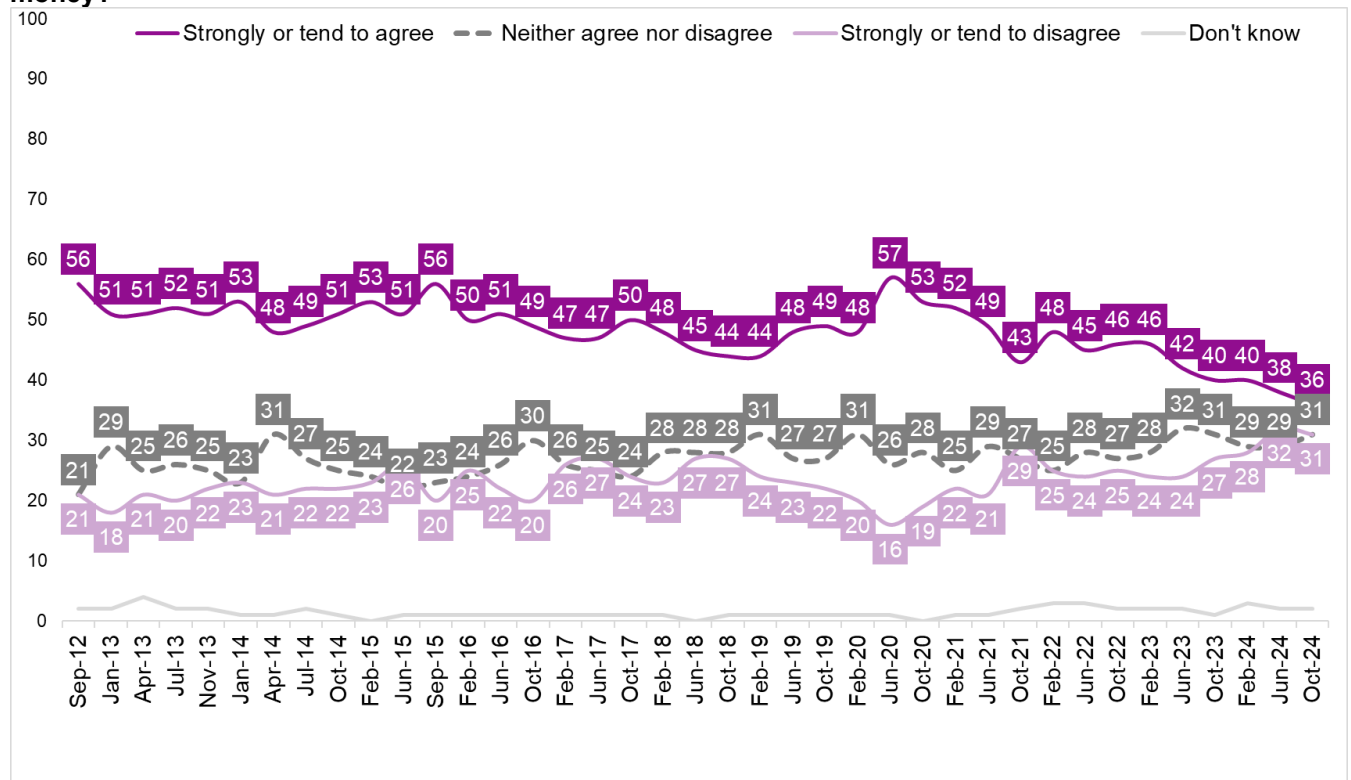


Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

## Value for money

Thirty-six per cent of respondents agreed that their council provides value for money (see Figure 3). This is the lowest result for this indicator on record. Almost a third of respondents (31 per cent) gave a neutral reply. Of the six indicators of resident satisfaction, perceptions about value for money have always received much lower positive ratings than the other measures. This is largely due to a greater proportion of respondents giving neutral responses (i.e. neither agreeing nor disagreeing with the statement) relative to the other indicators of satisfaction.

**Figure 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local council(s) provides value for money?<sup>7</sup>**



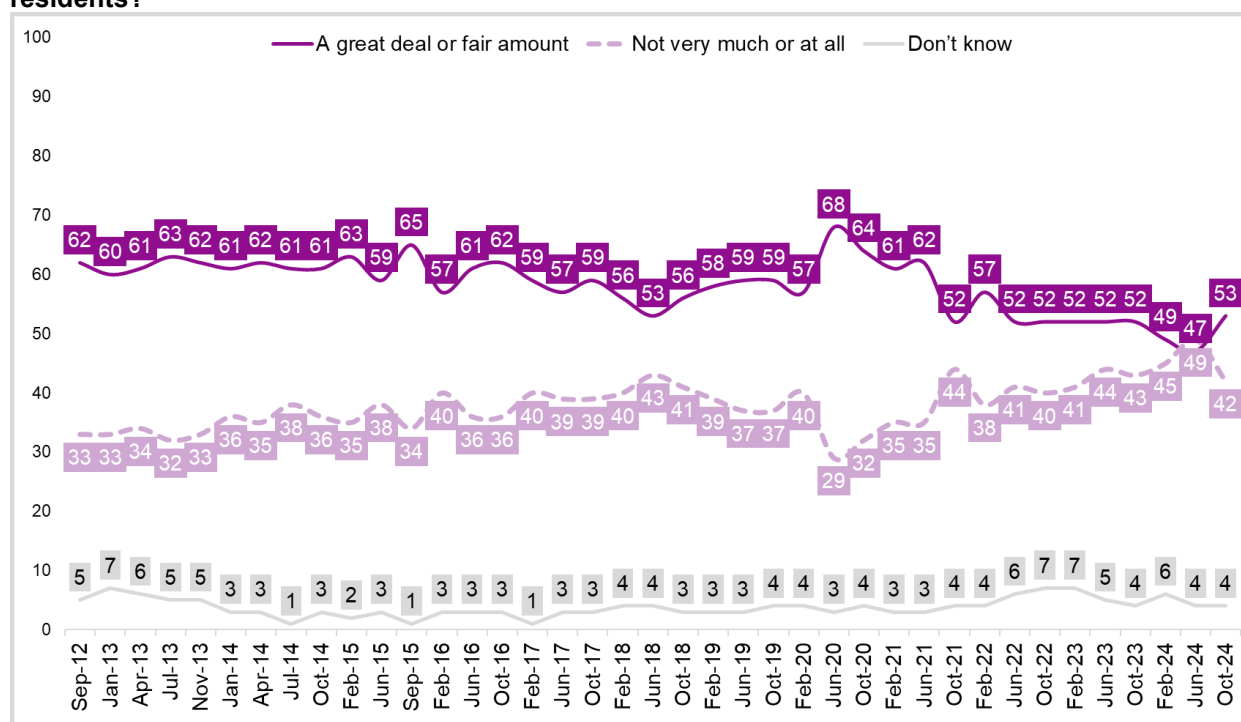
Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

### Council responsiveness

Fifty-three per cent of respondents said their council acts on the concerns of local residents either ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’. This is the highest result for this indicator since June 2022. Between June 2020 and June 2021, about two-thirds of respondents gave a positive answer to this question. Acting on the concerns of local people is an important measure of local accountability as it looks at whether councils are perceived to be responsive to local issues and problems (see Figure 4).

<sup>7</sup> The following preamble was used: “In considering the next question, please think about the range of services your local council(s) provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services your local council(s) provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.”

**Figure 4: To what extent do you think your local council(s) acts on the concerns of local residents?**



Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

### Service-specific satisfaction

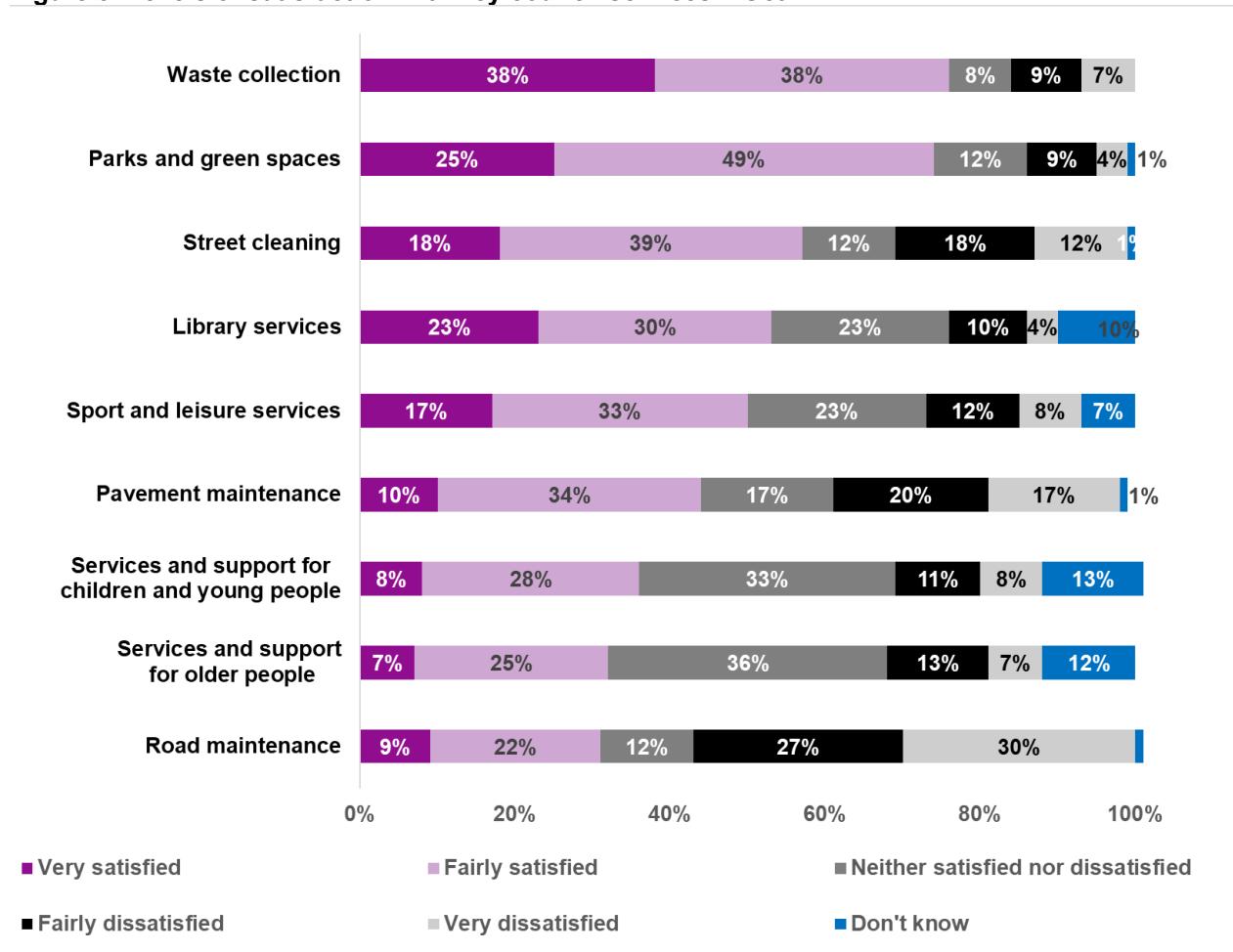
Respondents were invited to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the following council services<sup>8</sup>: waste collection; street cleaning; road maintenance; pavement maintenance; library services; sport and leisure services; services and support for older people; services and support for children and young people; and parks and green spaces. Tables showing the full set of service-specific satisfaction results can be found at [Annex B](#).

Five of the nine services presented in this round received positive feedback from at least half of the respondents (see Figure 5). The highest levels of satisfaction were with waste collection and parks and green spaces; 76 per cent of respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with waste collection whilst 74 per cent of respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with parks and green spaces. The third highest level of satisfaction was with street cleaning (57 per cent). These results are higher than overall satisfaction with how one's council runs things (56 per cent, see Figure 2).

Overall, road maintenance continues to have the highest level of dissatisfaction of all services; 57 per cent of respondents were either 'very dissatisfied' or 'fairly dissatisfied' with the service provided by their council.

<sup>8</sup> Note that these questions were asked of all respondents, and the bases include those who may not have used particular services.

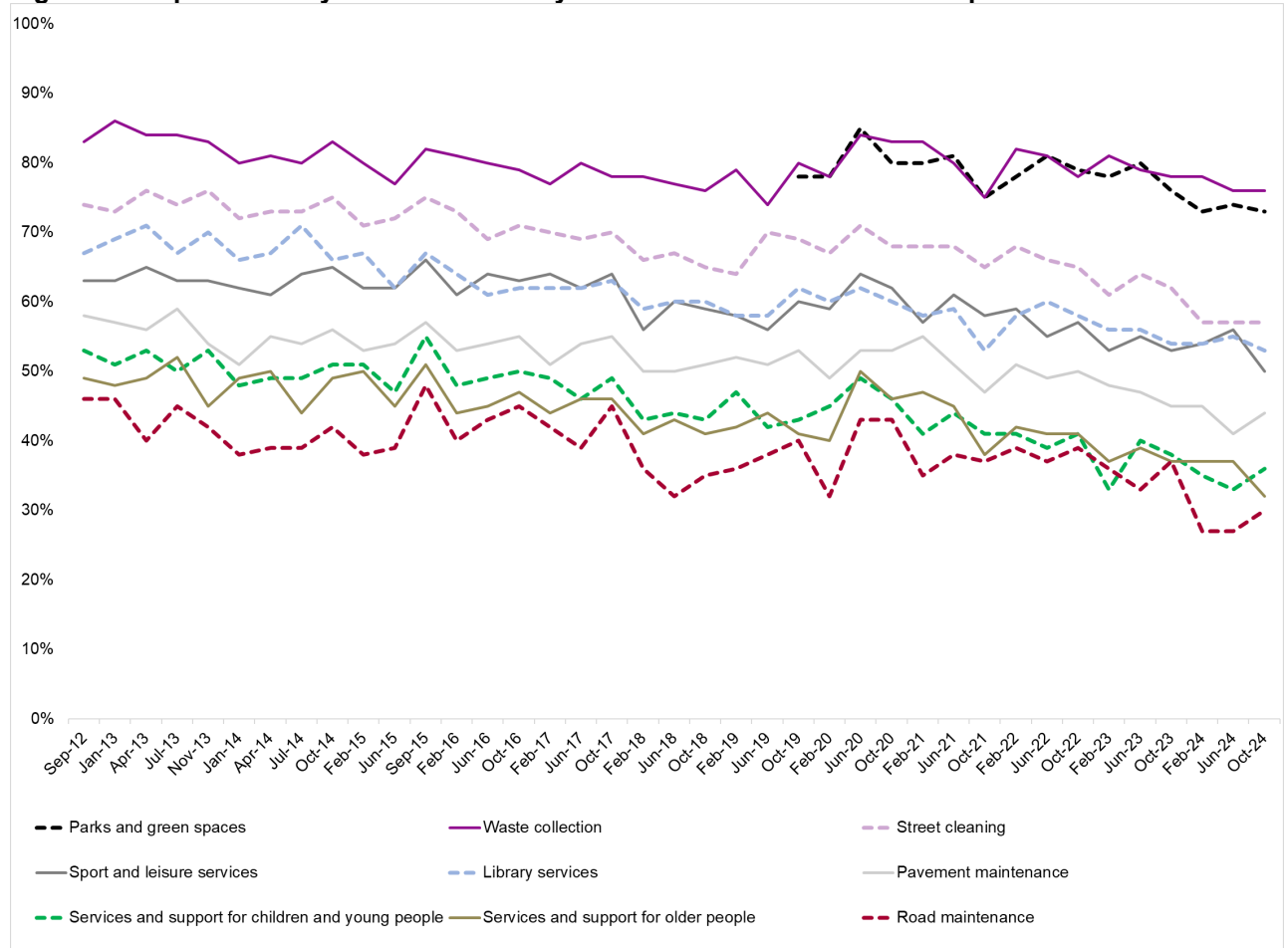
**Figure 5: Levels of satisfaction with key council services – Oct-24**



Base (all respondents): 1000 British adults in Oct-24

The general trend for satisfaction with services across the polling time-series is shown in Figure 6. The services which received greater satisfaction this round compared to the previous round were pavement maintenance, road maintenance and service and support for children and younger people. Satisfaction with waste collection and street cleaning remained the same as the previous round.

**Figure 6: Proportion 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with each service: Sep-2012 to Jun-24**

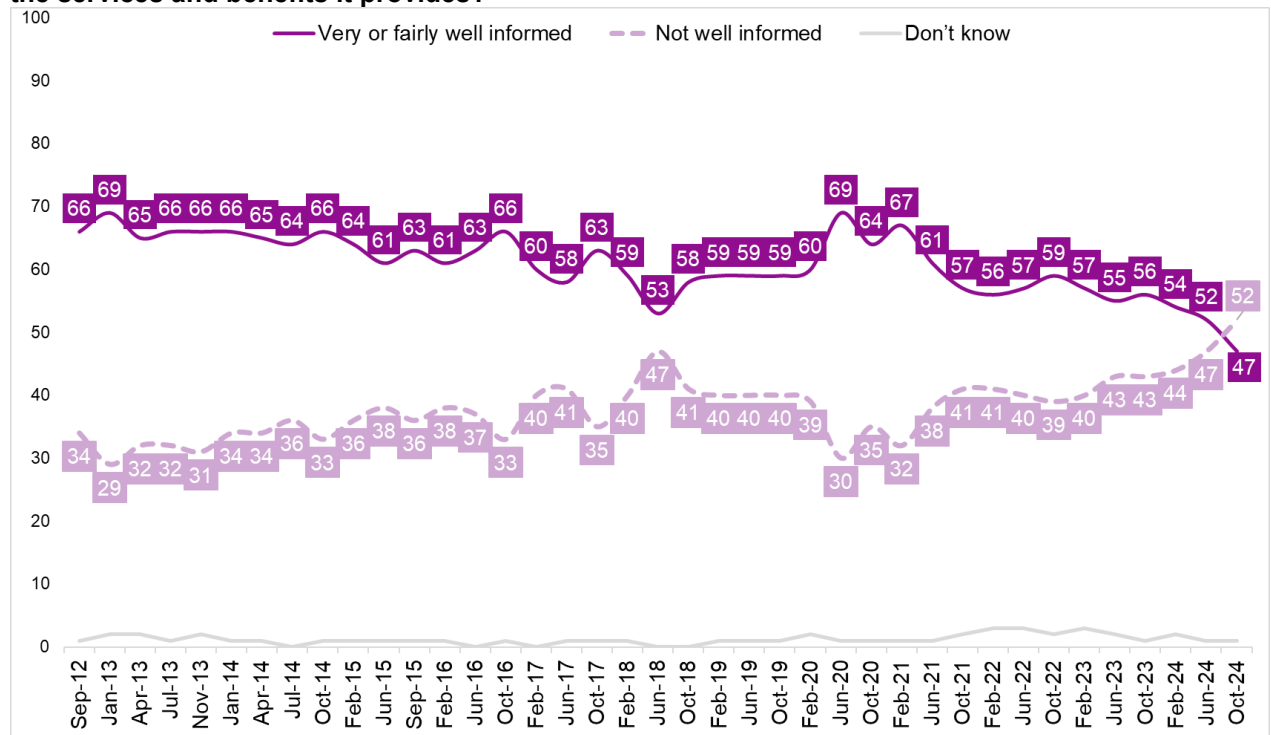


Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

### Informed about the council

Forty-seven per cent of respondents were satisfied with the information received from their local council about the services and benefits it provides. This is the lowest result for this indicator on record. See Figure 7.

**Figure 7: Overall, how well informed do you think your local council(s) keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**

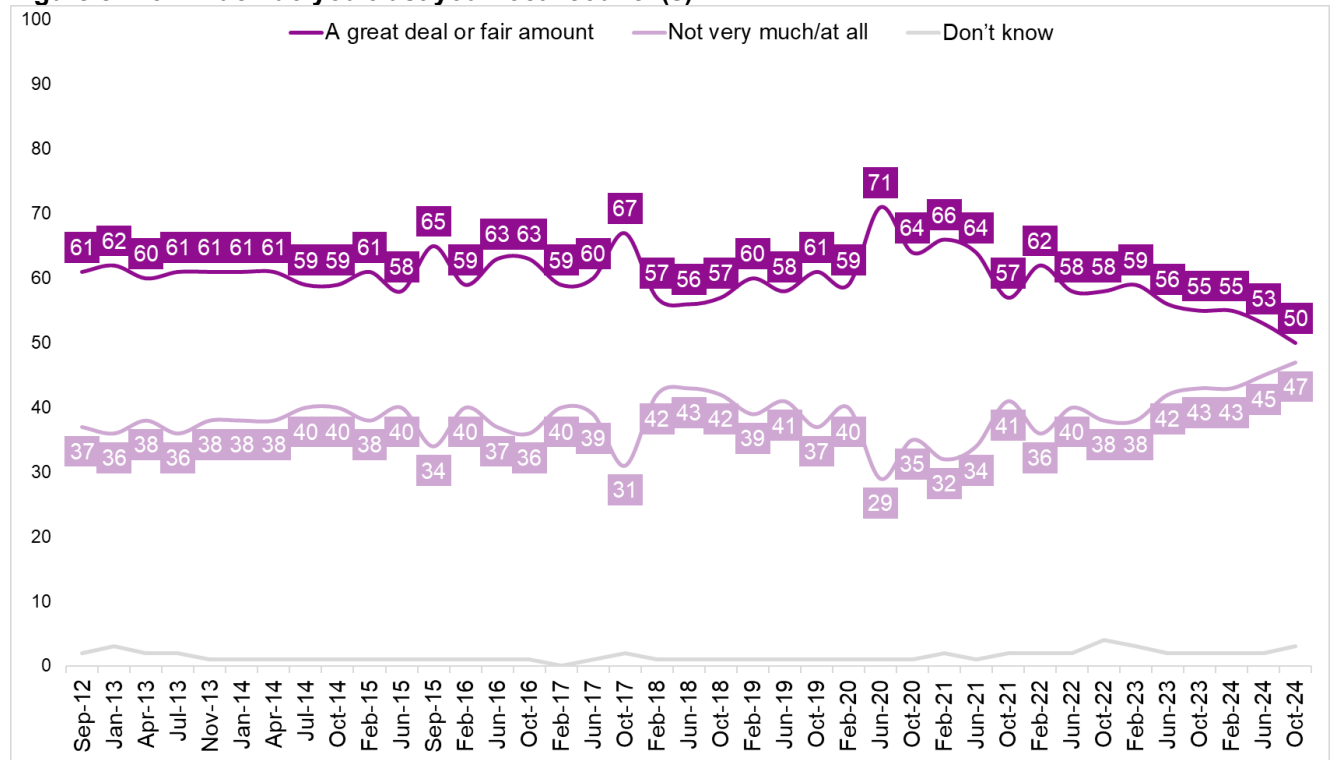


Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

### Trust in forms of government

Fifty per cent of respondents reported trusting their local council either 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'. This is the lowest result for this indicator on record. See Figure 8.

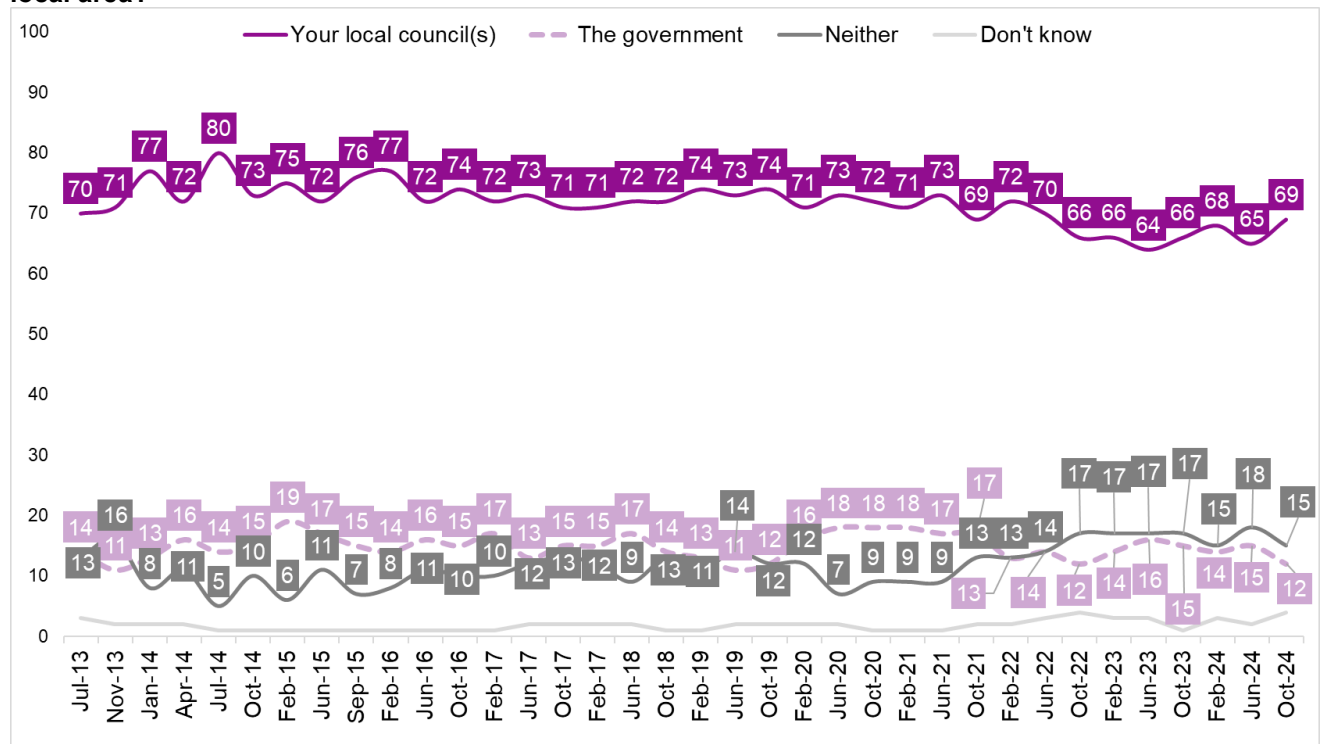
**Figure 8: How much do you trust your local council(s)?**



Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Sep-12 to Oct-24

Over two-thirds of respondents (69 per cent) said they trusted their 'local council', as opposed to 'the government', to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area (see Figure 9). Twelve per cent of respondents answered 'the government', 15 per cent said 'neither' and 4 per cent of respondents were unsure.

**Figure 9: Who do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?<sup>9</sup>**



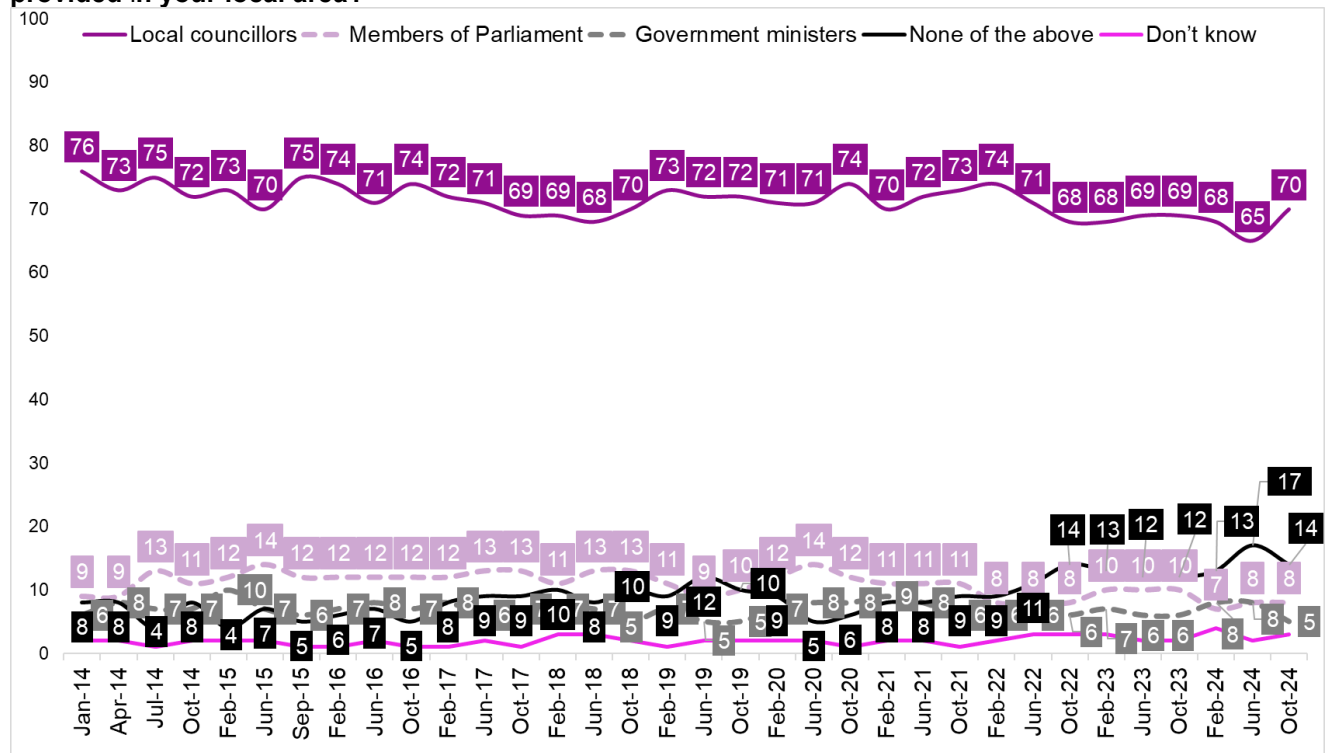
Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1036 British adults per round from Jul-13 to Oct-24

Seventy per cent of respondents selected 'local councillors', rather than 'members of parliament' or 'government ministers', as the individuals they most trusted to make decisions about how services were provided in their local area (see Figure 10). Eight per cent of respondents selected 'members of parliament', 5 per cent selected 'government ministers', 14 per cent selected 'none of the above' and three per cent were unsure.

<sup>9</sup> 'Neither' was not read out to respondents as an answer option but the interviewer could code it if it was given spontaneously.



**Figure 10: Which individuals do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?<sup>10</sup>**



Base (all respondents): Between 1000 and 1009 British adults per round from Jan-14 to Oct-24. This question was introduced in January 2014.

<sup>10</sup> 'None of the above' was not read out to respondents as an answer option but the interviewer could code if it was given spontaneously.

## Annex A: Data Tables – Round 39

### Overall satisfaction with local area

**Table 1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>74</b>
Very satisfied	24
Fairly satisfied	50
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13
Fairly dissatisfied	8
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	*

Base (all respondents): 1000

### Overall satisfaction with local council

**Table 2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council(s) runs things?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>56</b>
Very satisfied	13
Fairly satisfied	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	20
Fairly dissatisfied	15
Very dissatisfied	8
Don't know	*

Base (all respondents): 1000

### Value for Money

**Table 3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local council(s) provides value for money?**

	Per cent
<b>Strongly or tend to agree</b>	<b>36</b>
Strongly agree	7
Tend to agree	29
Neither agree nor disagree	31
Tend to disagree	19
Strongly disagree	12
Don't know	2

Base (all respondents): 1000

## Council responsiveness

**Table 4. To what extent do you think your local council(s) acts on the concerns of local residents?**

	Per cent
<b>A great deal or fair amount</b>	<b>53</b>
A great deal	8
A fair amount	45
Not very much	33
Not at all	9
Don't know	4

Base (all respondents): 1000

## Service specific satisfaction

**Table 5. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's waste collection?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>76</b>
Very satisfied	38
Fairly satisfied	38
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	8
Fairly dissatisfied	9
Very dissatisfied	7
Don't know	*

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 6. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's street cleaning?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>57</b>
Very satisfied	18
Fairly satisfied	39
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12
Fairly dissatisfied	18
Very dissatisfied	12
Don't know	1

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 7. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's road maintenance?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>30</b>
Very satisfied	9
Fairly satisfied	22
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12
Fairly dissatisfied	27
Very dissatisfied	30
Don't know	1

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 8. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's pavement maintenance?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>44</b>
Very satisfied	10
Fairly satisfied	34
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	17
Fairly dissatisfied	20
Very dissatisfied	17
Don't know	1

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 9. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's library services?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>53</b>
Very satisfied	23
Fairly satisfied	30
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23
Fairly dissatisfied	10
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	10

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 10. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's sport and leisure services?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>50</b>
Very satisfied	17
Fairly satisfied	33
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	23
Fairly dissatisfied	12
Very dissatisfied	8
Don't know	7

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 11. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's services and support for older people?**

	Per cent
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>32</b>
Very satisfied	7
Fairly satisfied	25
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	36
Fairly dissatisfied	13
Very dissatisfied	7
Don't know	12

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 12. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's services for children and young people?**

	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>36</b>
Very satisfied	8
Fairly satisfied	28
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	33
Fairly dissatisfied	11
Very dissatisfied	8
Don't know	13

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 13. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your council's parks and green spaces?**

	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Very or fairly satisfied</b>	<b>73</b>
Very satisfied	25
Fairly satisfied	49
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12
Fairly dissatisfied	9
Very dissatisfied	4
Don't know	1

Base (all respondents): 1000

### **Informed about the council**

**Table 14. Overall, how well informed do you think your local council(s) keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**

	<b>Per cent</b>
<b>Very or fairly well informed</b>	<b>47</b>
Very well informed	10
Fairly well informed	37
Not very well informed	37
Not well informed at all	14
Don't know	1

Base (all respondents): 1000

## Trust

**Table 15. How much do you trust your local council(s)?**

Per cent	
<b>A great deal or a fair amount</b>	<b>50</b>
A great deal	6
A fair amount	44
Not very much	31
Not at all	16
Don't know	3

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 16. Who do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?**

Per cent	
Your local council(s)	69
The government	12
Neither	15
Don't know	4

Base (all respondents): 1000

**Table 17. And which individuals do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?**

Per cent	
Local councillors	70
Members of parliament	8
Government ministers	5
None of the above	14
Don't know	3

Base (all respondents): 1000

## Annex B: Polling questions

*NOTE TO INTERVIEWERS: On treatment of 'don't know' throughout the survey: a specific reference to 'don't know' should not be included in the answer lists. The interviewer can, however, code this answer if it is given spontaneously.*

### INTRODUCTION

I would like to ask you some questions about your local council. Local councils are responsible for a range of services such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social care services and road maintenance.

If you live in an area with more than one council please think about the way in which they deliver services to you overall. This would include district and county councils. We are doing this to keep the survey simple as it is part of a national study.

#### **1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?**

Please consider your local area to be the area within 15–20 minutes walking distance from your home.

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

#### **2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council(s) runs things?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

In considering the next question, please think about the range of services your local council(s) provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services your local council(s) provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.

**3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local council(s) provides value for money?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree

**4. To what extent do you think your local council(s) acts on the concerns of local residents?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all

**5. I am going to read out a number of different types of services that are provided by your council(s) in your area. I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with your council's...**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY PER OPTION

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied

RANDOMISE ORDER

- Waste collection
- Street cleaning
- Road maintenance
- Pavement maintenance
- Library services
- Sport and leisure services
- Services and support for older people
- Services and support for children and young people
- Parks and green spaces

**6. Overall, how well informed do you think your local council(s) keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- Very well informed
- Fairly well informed
- Not very well informed



- Not well informed at all

**7. How much do you trust your local council(s)?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all

**8. Who do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY  
RANDOMISE ORDER

- Your local council(s)
- The government
- Neither (not read out but the interviewer can code if given spontaneously)

**9. And which individuals do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?**

SELECT ONE ANSWER ONLY  
RANDOMISE ORDER

- Local councillors
- Members of parliament
- Government ministers
- None of the above (not read out but the interviewer can code if given spontaneously)

**End and thanks.**



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