

# Cabinet

24 June 2015



<b>Title</b>	Spelthorne Residents' Survey		
<b>Purpose of the report</b>	To note		
<b>Report Author</b>	Dawn Morrison		
<b>Cabinet Member</b>	Councillor Joanne Sexton	<b>Confidential</b>	No
<b>Corporate Priority</b>	Delivering quality of life services		
<b>Cabinet Values</b>	Community and Opportunity		
<b>Recommendations</b>	Cabinet is asked to note the report and to support, in principle, the continuation of a residents' survey on a two-yearly basis.		

## 1. Key issues

1.1 Market research was commissioned from MEL, an established Research and Development Consultancy Practice, during the autumn of 2014. Its major requirements were to:

- Establish some statistically valid information on which to base key decisions including budgets
- Track, over time, resident responses to a specific set of questions
- Be able to enhance the macro research work undertaken with all 11 Surrey districts to compare issues and understand concerns

1.2 The chosen methodology for the survey was telephone interviews using a structured questionnaire lasting approximately 10 minutes. The survey was conducted using randomly selected telephone numbers covering the key population areas.

1.3 The sample size was 400 interviews, which enabled the results to be statistically valid, and broad targets were set for age, gender and population areas.

1.4 A number of questions were asked to provide a snapshot of views held by Spelthorne residents focussing on:

- Overall satisfaction with the way the Council runs things
- Importance of a range of services provided by the Council
- Feelings of safety and security
- How informed residents feel

- How much residents feel they can influence decision making
  - Value for money
    - Knowledge of recent dog fouling campaign
- 1.5 These questions closely mirror those in the Joint Neighbourhood Survey (which is carried out by Surrey County Council in association with Surrey Police).
- 1.6 Overall there were no particular surprises in the research findings although there were some variations area by area upon which MEL may be able to elaborate and on which the Council may wish to reflect in order to ensure its values, priorities and projects are correctly aligned.
- 1.7 Some of the highlights to come out of the survey are that:
- The most important issue for most residents is the appearance of the Borough with 99% saying that keeping the area clean and litter free is either very or fairly important
  - Rubbish and recycling collection is similarly a priority with 86% feeling it to be very important
  - Parks and open spaces are important to 80% of residents and about 70% say the same about pest control and noise prevention
  - Conversely the services bearing the least significance with residents are advice and support to businesses, licensing, housing and grants to local communities
  - Most residents feel safe in the Borough but, less predictably, Shepperton residents had the lowest feelings of safety after dark
  - Two thirds of residents think they are well informed about Spelthorne's services but this figure drops to 42% in Sunbury-on-Thames
  - Half of all residents felt that the Council acts on their concerns but 29% did not know if they were able to inform decision making about their area and 24% did not know if they could influence decision making
  - Fewer than half of residents felt that the Council provides value for money – one of the key themes that emerged was high Council Tax
  - It is clear that there is misunderstanding about who provides which services (the Borough or the County), particularly in relation to roads and pavements.
- 1.8 The Surrey Residents' Survey (also known as the Joint Neighbourhood Survey) is Surrey County Council's quarterly resident opinion survey. Conducted independently and professionally by market researchers, it gathers public opinion on a range of subjects by interviewing a robust sample of people who live in the County.
- 1.9 Much of the survey is about gauging resident satisfaction with Surrey County Council Services. However there are three views sought that are more general in nature:
- Whether or not residents agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area

- Whether or not residents agree their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together
- Whether or not residents are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live.

1.10 The comparative data for the 11 Surrey districts for the year 2013/2014 for these three general questions is contained in the table below:

	Agree they can influence decisions affecting their local area	Agree their neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together	Are satisfied with the neighbourhood as a place to live
Elmbridge	37%	82%	94%
Epsom & Ewell	42%	86%	92%
Guildford	42%	79%	92%
Mole Valley	48%	84%	95%
Reigate & Banstead	36%	81%	90%
Runnymede	38%	83%	89%
Spelthorne	34%	81%	89%
Surrey Heath	38%	86%	95%
Tandridge	42%	82%	93%
Waverley	46%	82%	96%
Woking	37%	79%	88%

1.11 To put these results into a wider context, the percentage of people who are satisfied with their neighbourhood as a place to live in RB Windsor and Maidenhead is 78%, LB Hounslow 81% and Richmond BC 96%. According to the LGA benchmarking statistics, the national average for this particular question is 82%, although it should be borne in mind that resident surveys are not completed by all councils and the "Place Survey", from which some of these questions derive, was discontinued in 2011.

## 2. Options analysis and proposal

- 2.1 To note the report and to support, in principle, its **continuation on an annual basis**. This is the preferred option.
- 2.2 To note the report and support its **continuation on a two-yearly basis**. There are clearly cost savings with this approach compared to an annual survey. However, an annual survey fits in with budget setting, decision making on service provision and the formulation of priorities, and can be used alongside the macro research undertaken by Surrey County Council.
- 2.3 To **commission a more comprehensive survey** to ascertain, in more detail, perceptions held about the Council and its services. This option has potentially much higher cost implications depending on the specification.
- 2.4 To note the report but **not support its continuation**, thus saving the cost of the survey and indirect costs such as staff time.

### **3 Financial implications**

- 3.1 The cost of this survey was £6,560. A budget has been set for the year 2015/16 that will enable a similar survey to be conducted.

### **4 Other considerations**

- 4.1 There are none

### **5 Timetable for implementation**

- 5.1 Should Cabinet give approval for a further survey to be commissioned, it is proposed that this be conducted during autumn 2015.

#### **Background papers:**

There are none

#### **Appendices:**

**Appendix 1 Copy of MEL Survey report**

# Spelthorne Borough Council Residents Survey 2014



Presentation of key findings  
June 2015

# Background

- ◆ provide a ‘snapshot’ of views held by Spelthorne residents focusing on:
  - ◆ importance of a range of services;
  - ◆ views on value for money;
  - ◆ views on feelings of safety;
  - ◆ how well informed residents feel about the services and benefits provided;
  - ◆ the extent to which they feel they can inform and influence council decisions.

# Methodology

- ◆ Telephone survey lasting c. 10 minutes
- ◆ Fieldwork between 4<sup>th</sup> and 30<sup>th</sup> September 2014
- ◆ Random digit dial (RDD) telephone numbers covering key population centres:
  - ◆ Ashford, Shepperton, Staines-upon-Thames, Stanwell and Sunbury-on-Thames
- ◆ Broadly representative sample of 400 surveys

Area	Total	Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 54	55+	Refused
Ashford	139	55	84	8	22	48	8
Shepperton	42	14	28	4	15	39	0
Staines-upon-Thames	83	40	43	8	21	44	5
Stanwell	73	29	44	6	14	22	0
Sunbury-on-Thames	63	25	38	13	49	69	5
Base:	400	163	237	39	121	222	18

# Statistical reliability

- ◆ Data weighted to 2011 census profile

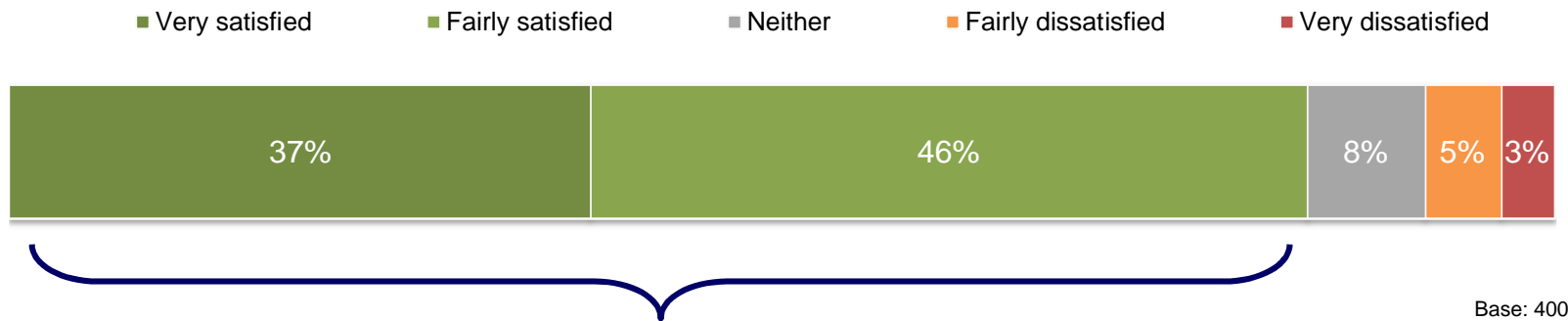
Area	Total	Male	Female	18 to 34	35 to 54	55+
Ashford	149	74	75	37	63	49
Shepperton	71	34	36	24	25	21
Staines-upon-Thames	72	42	30	16	26	31
Stanwell	38	20	18	11	13	14
Sunbury-on-Thames	71	30	41	15	23	33
Base:	400	200	200	103	150	148

- ◆ Confidence interval of  $\pm 4.9\%$  for 400 sample



# Resident satisfaction with local area

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

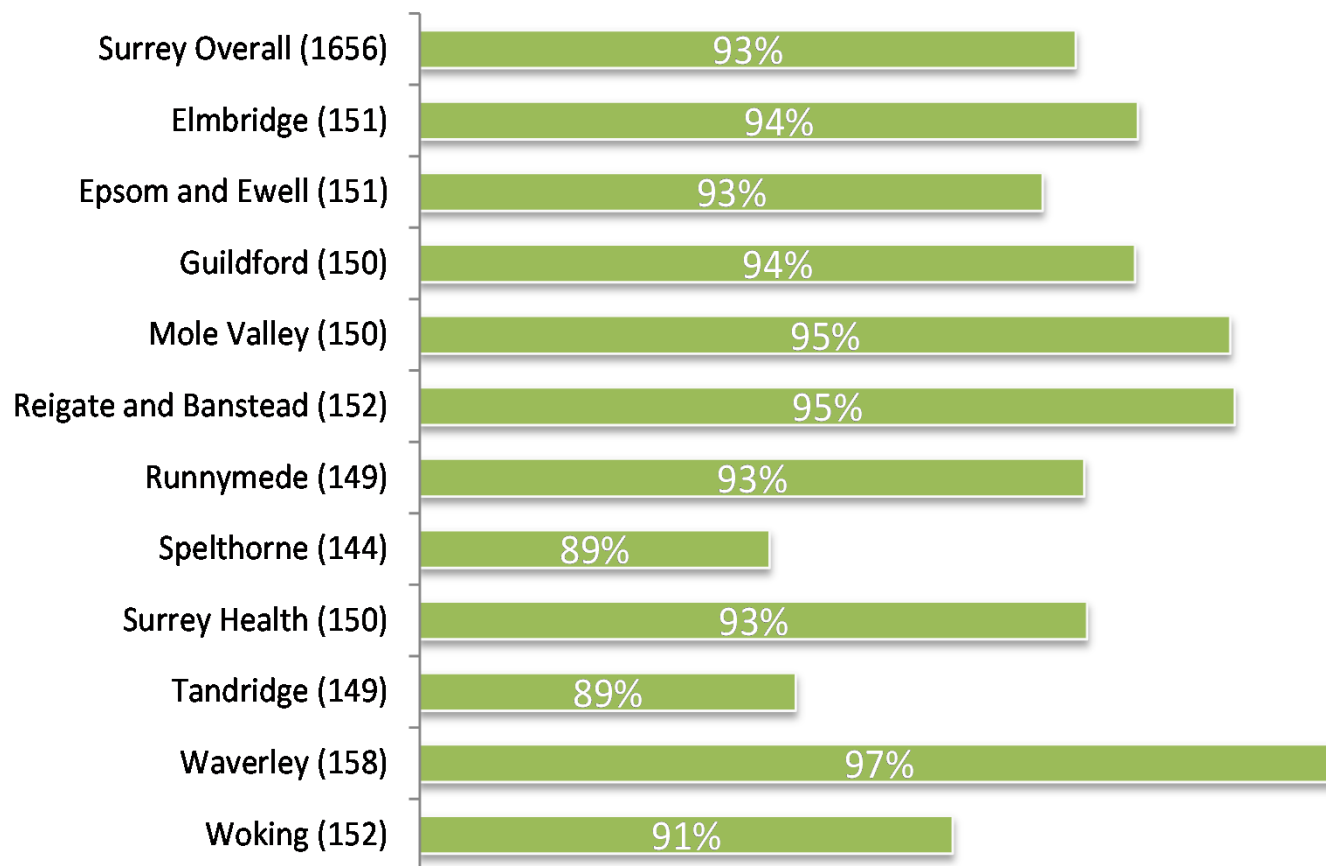


**83%**

- ◆ Each of the five areas have similar levels of satisfaction; 82% or above

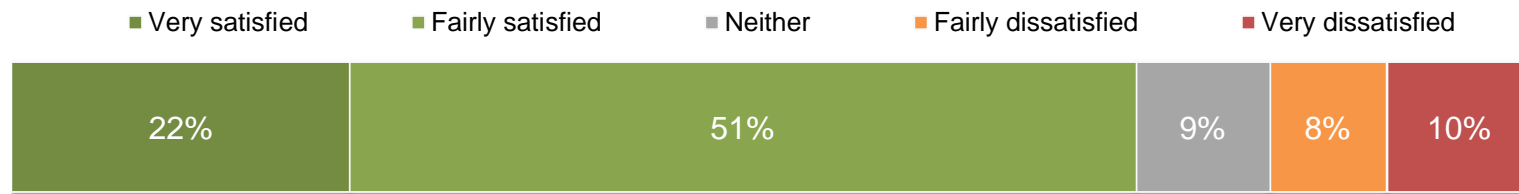
# Resident satisfaction with local area

## ◆ County Council & Police JNS Survey (Jul to Sep 2014)



# Resident satisfaction with council

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Spelthorne Borough Council runs things?



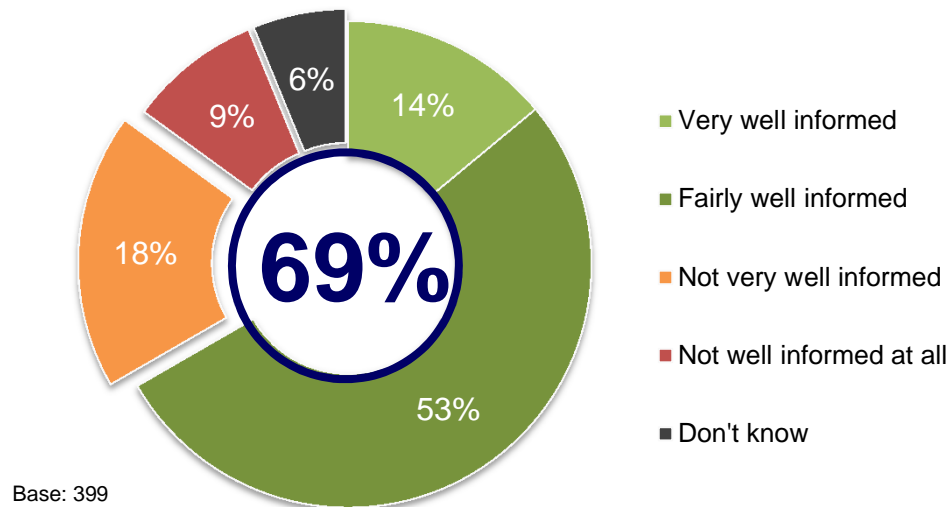
Base: 400

**73%**

- ♦ 85% in Staines-Upon-Thames
- ♦ 68% in Ashford
- ♦ 67% in Stanwell

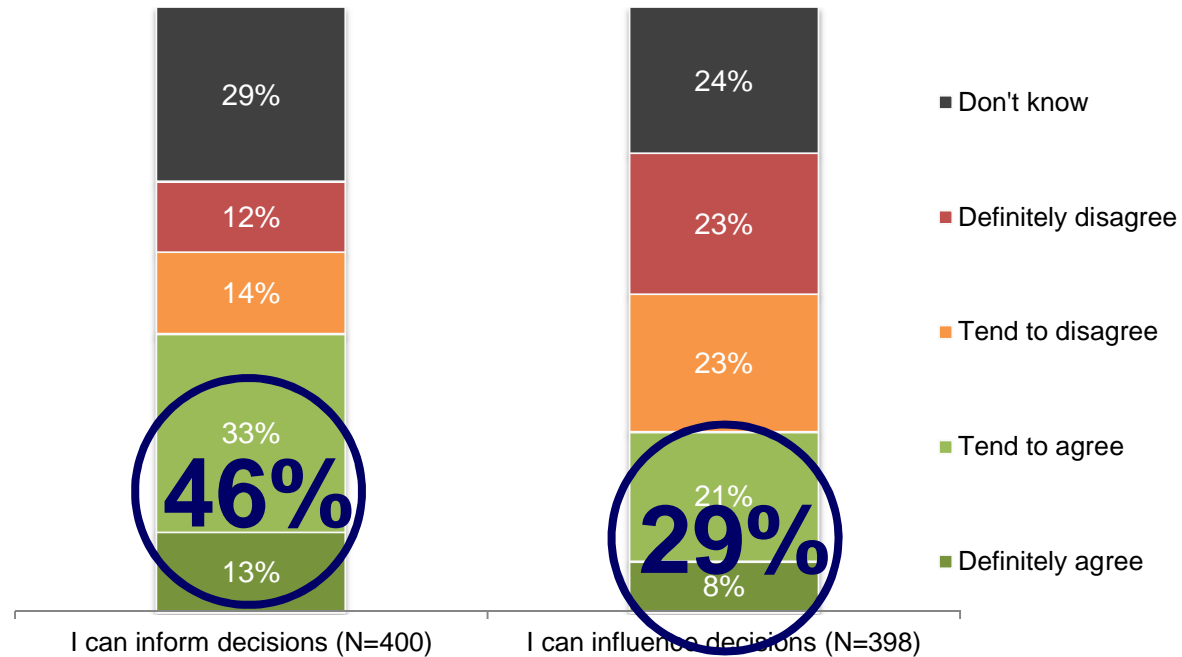
# Being kept informed

Overall, how well informed do you think SBC keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?



- ◆ More of those living in Sunbury-on-Thames claim to be not very/not well at all informed; 42%

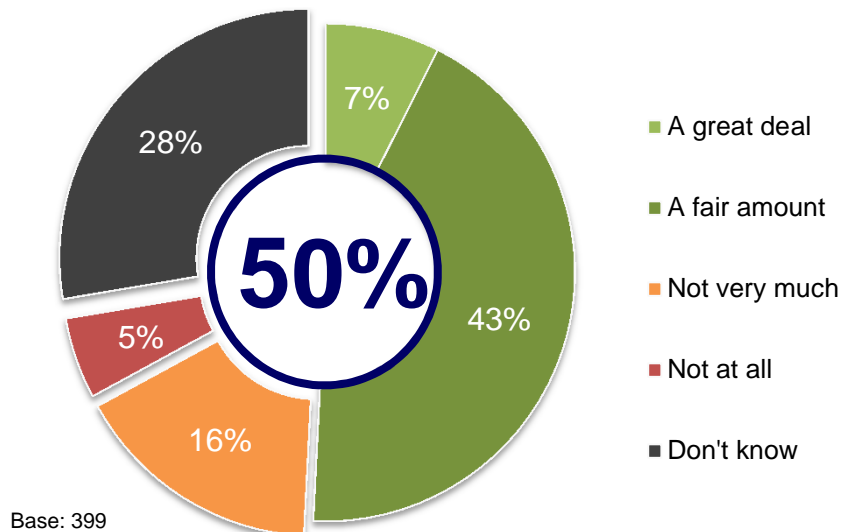
# Inform and influence decisions



- ◆ Less than one-half of residents feel able to inform council decisions
- ◆ Less than one in three feel they can influence decisions; almost one-half (46%) disagree that they can do this

# Act on concerns

To what extent do you think Spelthorne Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?



- ◆ A relatively high proportion of residents were unable to tell whether SBC acts on residents' concerns; 28%

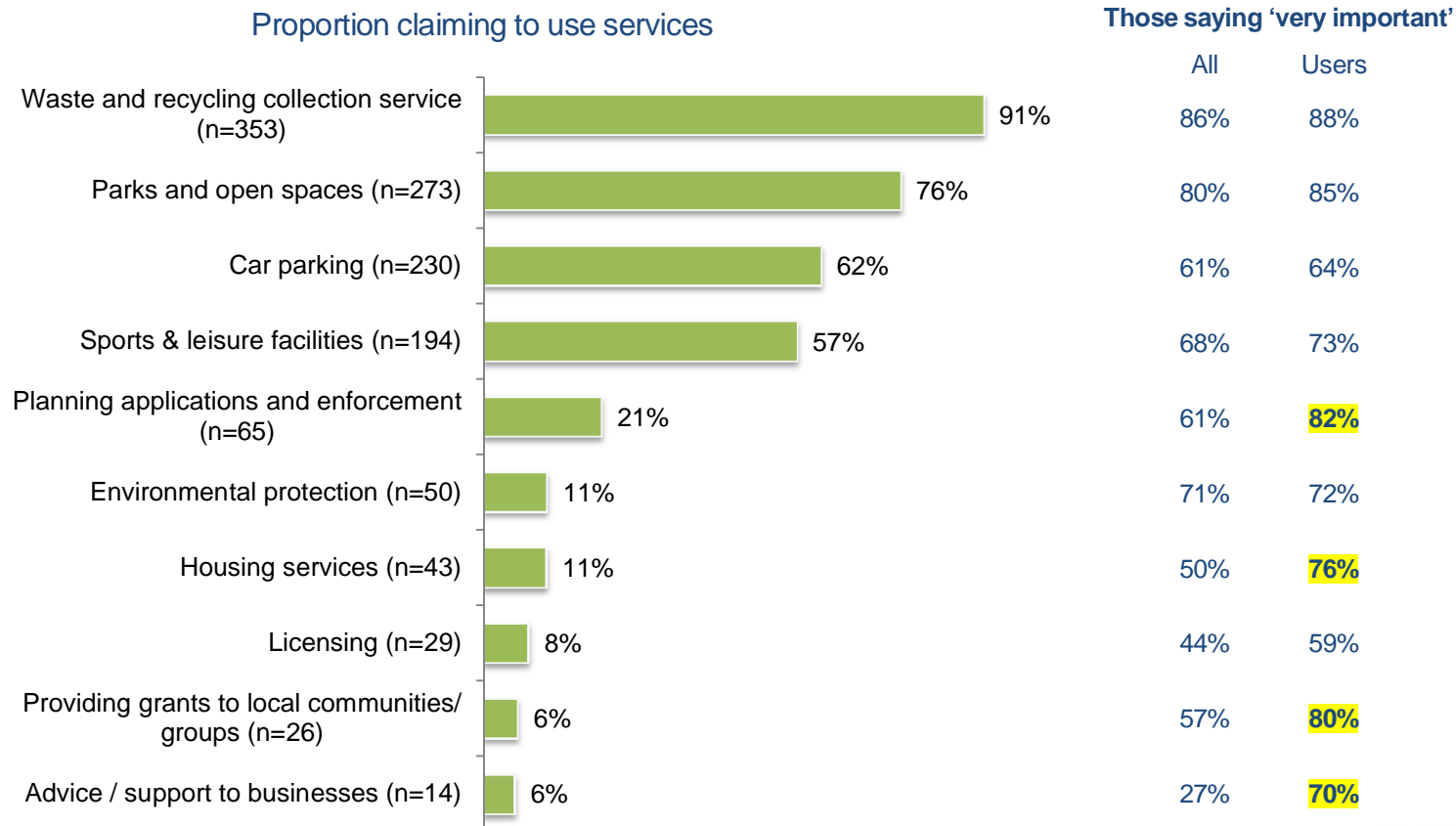
# Importance of Council services

- ◆ Keeping areas clean/litter free and waste/recycling collections are the most important council services



# Views of ‘users’ of council services

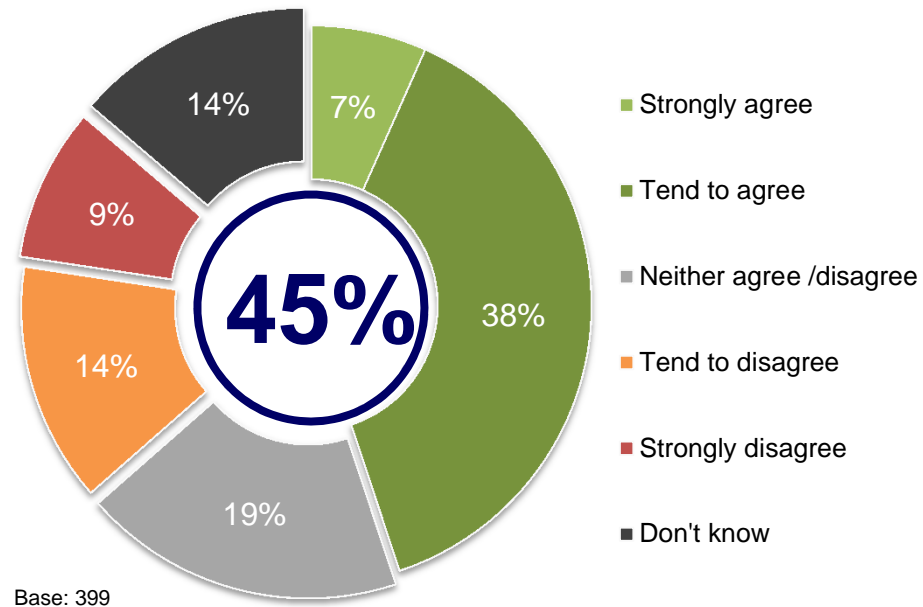
- ◆ Significantly more ‘users’ of planning, housing, grants and business advice are satisfied, compared to all residents





# Value for money

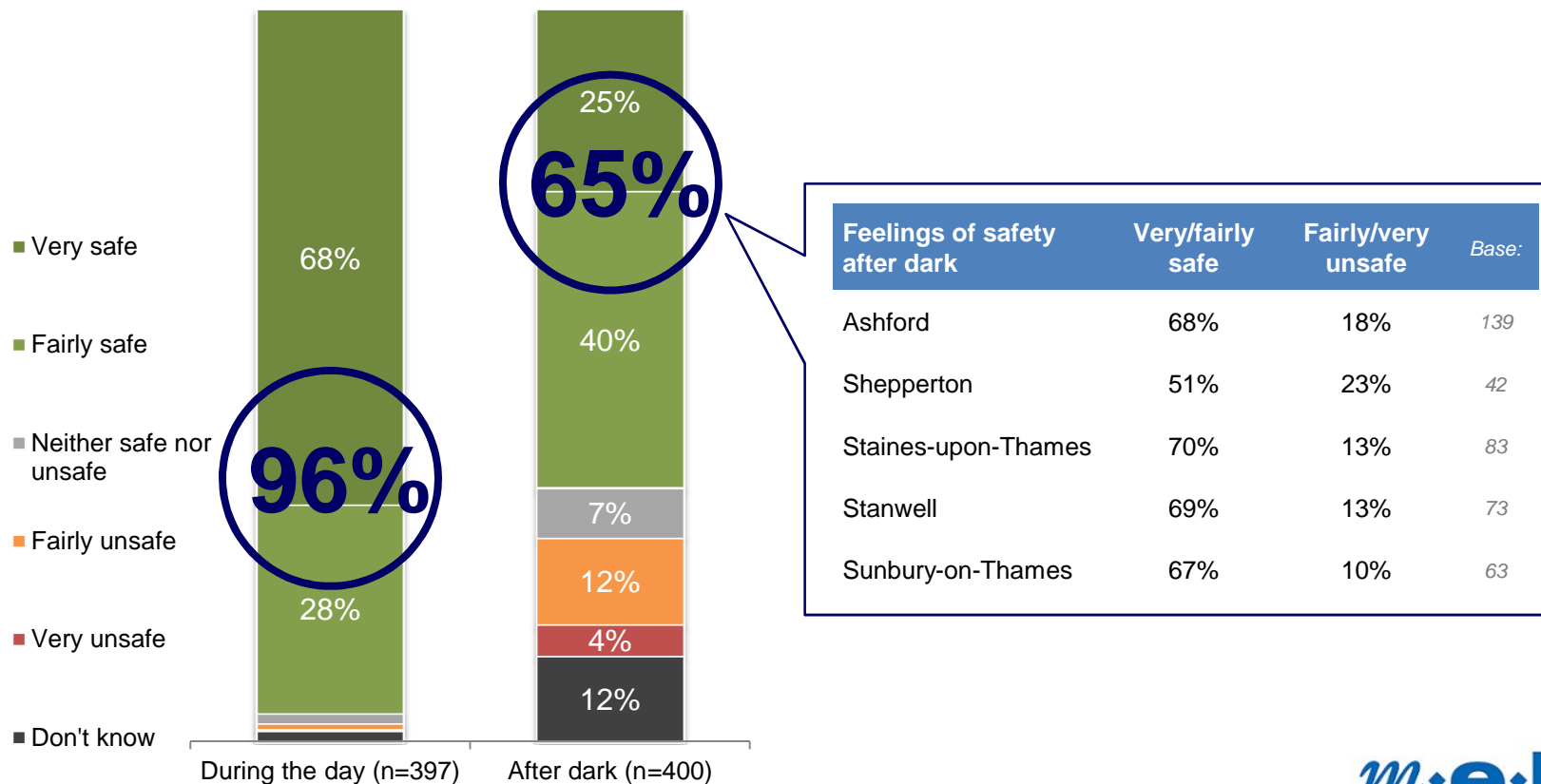
To what extent do you agree or disagree that SBC provides value for money?



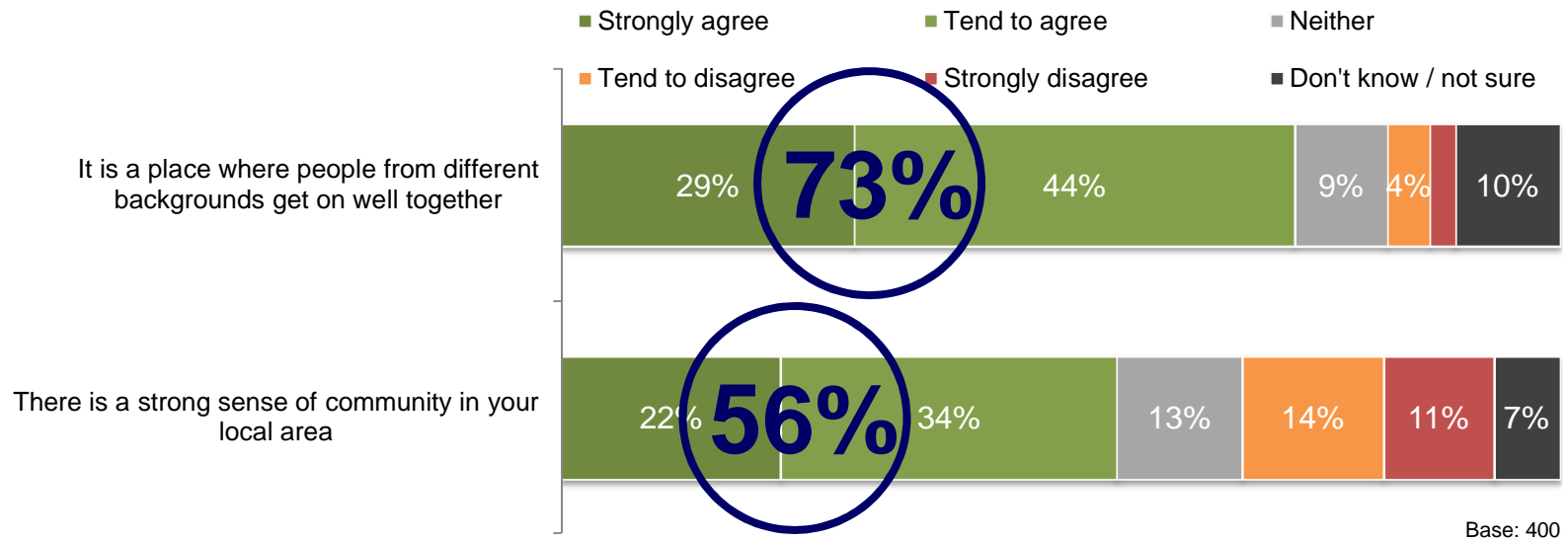
- ◆ Rises to 53% for those living in Staines-Upon-Thames
- ◆ Falls to 39% for those living in Sunbury-on-Thames

# Feeling of safety in local area

- ◆ Residents living in Shepperton have lowest feelings of safety after dark



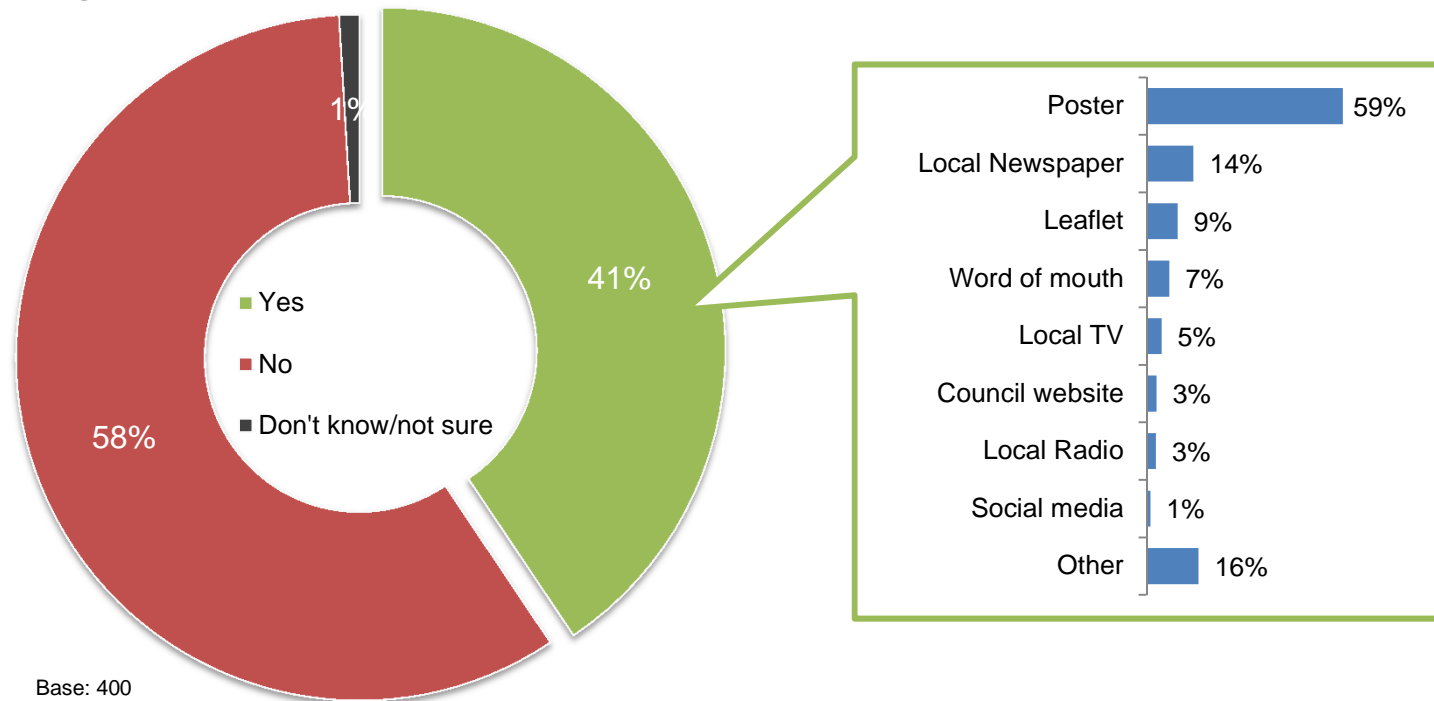
# Community cohesion



- ◆ Greatest agreement relating to community cohesion exists in Shepperton; 85% and 75% agree with the above, respectively
- ◆ Just 42% of those living in Staines-Upon-Thames agree that there is a strong sense of community
- ◆ 34% of those living in Sunbury-on-Thames disagree that there is a strong sense of community

# Dog Fouling comms campaign

Are you aware of Spelthorne Council's recent dog fouling campaign?



♦ Awareness rises to 52% for those living in Ashford