

Torbay Residents Satisfaction Survey Results 2025

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Foreword from the Leader of the Council

I'd like to thank everyone who took part in our second Residents' Satisfaction Survey. Whether you completed it online, filled in a paper copy, or spoke to us at one of our roadshows, your feedback has helped us understand what life feels like in Torbay right now, including what's improving, what still frustrates people, and where we should focus our effort next.

I particularly want to thank the young people aged 12–15 who took part in the young people's version of the survey, helping us understand what it feels like growing up in Torbay.

We received 22% more responses than when we first ran this survey in 2023, plus a 40% increase in the number of 12-15 year olds who completed the survey specifically designed for that age group. These higher response rates matter as it gives us a stronger, more reliable picture of what residents think and what you want us to improve.

The improvements you're seeing and why they matter

The most encouraging message from this year's results is that seven of the core measures have improved since 2023, including several that go right to the heart of what residents tell us matters most: value for money, trust, and whether the Council acts on local concerns. We also saw improvement across most questions in the survey for 12–15 year olds, including liking where they live, belonging, feeling listened to and trust.

The results show that the Council is delivering for residents – satisfaction with Torbay as a place to live increasing from 56% to 58%, and satisfaction with how Torbay Council runs things has risen from 23% to 28%. Among 12–15 year olds, more young people said they like where they live (68% compared to 34%) and feel the Council is doing a good job (32% compared to 6%).

These are not abstract measures. They reflect everyday experience from the condition of local areas to how well services work, through to how confident people feel that we are focused on the right priorities.

One of the clearest improvements is on value for money, up 12 percentage points from 21% with 33% of residents agreeing that the Council provides value for money. This improvement suggests more people are beginning to recognise the steps we're taking but it also comes with a clear challenge: we must keep improving, through visible results, that we are spending public money carefully and well.

The percentage of residents agreeing that we act on local concerns has increased from 26% to 30%. This reinforces the message we heard at roadshows where people told us they want action on the things that affect daily life most, and they want clearer feedback on what has been done and why.

Those who speak positively about the Council increased from 18% to 23% (with those that speak negatively about the Council decreasing by 4% as well). Reported trust in the Council increased from 30% to 35% with those not trusting the Council falling by 8%. Amongst the 12-15 year olds who responded 31% said they trust the Council and 26% said that the Council listens (up from 20% and 15% respectively in 2023).

These improvements are welcome and they tell us we're moving in the right direction, but we recognise that there is still a long way to go.

Changes in services people value

The responses we received highlight where residents have noticed improvements in specific services:

- Satisfaction with **library services** rose by 10% – although the views in our survey for 12-15 year olds were more mixed.
- Satisfaction with **services and support for older people** rose by 8%
- Satisfaction with **sport and leisure services** increased by 5%

We know that these are important services that contribute to people's wellbeing and independence as well as their community connection and quality of life.

At the same time, you also told us that, even where satisfaction has not risen sharply, levels of dissatisfaction have fallen in some of the areas. For example:

- Dissatisfaction with **pavement maintenance** and **road maintenance** reduced by 10% and 9% respectively
- Dissatisfaction with **street cleansing** reduced by 9%

Whilst many residents feel there is still room for improvement, people are less dissatisfied than they were in 2023. This aligns with our focus on Operation Brighter Bay, which we will continue and build on over the next year.

Where we need to do better

This year, fewer residents aged 16+ said they feel safe outside during the day and after dark. Among 12–15 year olds, feelings were more mixed, with more saying they feel safe in the day, but a larger number also saying they feel unsafe, particularly after dark.

Young people also highlighted concerns about drugs, alcohol, homelessness and antisocial behaviour, especially in town centres and parks.

For those aged 12-15 years as well as for those age 16+, there was a mixed view of whether people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together locally; but what was really clear where the things which matter to young people: feeling safe, tackling antisocial behaviour, being able to trust and hear from the Council, and having more positive things to do and places to go.

This reinforces the need to continue with Operation Town Centres as well as our wider work on community safety and pride in place.

You told us that we need to communicate more clearly, with the proportion of residents feeling well informed about Council services and benefits remaining static at around 40%. When residents explained their views on trust, issues around transparency and, in particular, public consultations were the third highest issue (behind spending and value for money and roads and transport). Young people told us they often don't feel listened to or don't always understand what decisions are being made or why.

We recognise that residents want us to focus on the basics, be more transparent about decisions and spending, and show more visibly how consultation influences outcomes.

Our commitment

It is pleasing to see the improvements around Torbay are being recognised, but we know that our communities have a clear expectation that more needs to be done. We will use these results to sharpen our focus on the areas that matter most to people in Torbay:

- Cleaner streets and better maintained residential areas
- Better roads and pavements, and clearer prioritisation of repairs
- A stronger sense of safety in our communities, town centres and parks
- Greater transparency and continued improvements in communication, including with our young people
- Continued improvement in the services our residents value most, including support for older people
- Supporting more positive opportunities for young people, including safe spaces and activities, reflecting what many of the 12-15 year olds who responded to the survey told us

Most importantly, we will keep listening. This survey is not the end of the conversation, but a checkpoint along the way. We know we need to do more to hear from young people, and we will strengthen how we engage with them ahead of the next survey.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your views and help shape a Torbay that is healthier, happier and more prosperous for everyone.

Cllr David Thomas

Leader of Torbay Council

Introduction

From Tuesday 16 September 2025 to Sunday 2 November 2025 Torbay Council ran its second Residents Satisfaction Survey. As well as making this survey available to complete online, 15 face-to-face Residents Roadshows took place. Understanding resident views is a key element of assessing the effectiveness of a local authority, alongside cost and performance information. It can also strengthen local accountability and be a key part of our approach to managing our own performance.

The purpose of the Survey was to seek the views of our residents on the effectiveness of the Council. We are seeking to use the results from the survey to improve how the Council operates.

This report presents the findings from the main survey aimed at those aged 16 and over who live in Torbay. There is a separate survey which shows the findings from the 12 to 15-year-old survey – you can see this in Appendix 1.

Executive summary of the results

As advised by the Local Government Association (LGA), we have weighted our results against the age of our population. We do this because the people who answer might not perfectly represent the whole of our population. For example, if more older people respond than younger people, which has been the case with this survey, the results could be biased. By weighting the results, this adjusts the data so that each age group reflects its actual share of the population. This means the final results are more accurate and better represent everyone, not just the people who responded. We weighted the results the same way in the 2023 survey.

This year we received in total 1,674 surveys. This was an increase from the 1,369 completed surveys we received when we ran the survey in 2023. That's a 22% increase.

15 engagement events / roadshows were also run this year where 891 people were spoken to with 248 paper surveys completed. This is an increase from 2023, when 10 roadshows took place.

Compared to 2023, in seven questions the results have gone up:

- Asked about their local area as a place to live - those who answered very or fairly satisfied went up by 2% from 56% to 58%
- How Torbay Council runs things - those who answered very or fairly satisfied went up 5% from 23% to 28%
- Asked if we provide value for money - those who answered strongly or tend to agree went up by 12% from 21% to 33%
- Asked if we act on the concerns of local residents - those who answered a great deal or fair amount went up 4% from 26% to 30%
- When asked how you feel about Torbay Council - those that speak positively of the council went up 5% from 18% to 23%
- When asked how strongly do you feel you belong to your local area - those that answered very or fairly strongly went up 2% from 64% to 66%
- When asked if our residents trust us - those that answered a great deal or fair amount went up 5% from 30% to 35%.

One question went down by 1%. This was:

- How well informed our residents are about our services and benefits – Those that answered very or fairly well informed went down from 42% to 41%

Three questions went down 2% or more:

- How safe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark - very or fairly safe - down 2% from 42% to 40%
- How safe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day - very or fairly safe - down 4% from 72% to 68%
- Local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together - Definitely or tend to agree - down 5% from 53% to 48%

For the questions about our services, please note that this year we asked if our residents were neither satisfied or dissatisfied which we didn't do in 2023. Last time we asked don't know instead.

- Waste collection - very or fairly satisfied - stayed the same at 78% but fairly or very dissatisfied went down by 8% from 21% to 13%
- Street Cleansing - fairly or very dissatisfied - went down by 9% from 52% to 43%. Very or fairly satisfied fell though by 6% from 46% to 40%
- Parks and green spaces - Fairly or very dissatisfied - went down by 6% from 33% to 27 % but very or fairly satisfied also went down 7% from 65% to 58%
- Road maintenance - fairly or very dissatisfied - went down by 9% from 78% to 69%. Very or fairly satisfied changed by 2% from 20% to 18%
- Pavement Maintenance - fairly or very dissatisfied - went down by 10% from 61% to 51%. Very or fairly satisfied went down by 5% from 36% to 31%
- Library services - very or fairly satisfied - went up by 10% from 57% to 67%
- Sport and leisure services - very or fairly satisfied - up by 5% from 44% to 49%
- Services & support for older people - very or fairly satisfied - up by 8% from 26% to 34%. Fairly or very dissatisfied stayed the same at 28%
- Services & support for children & young people - very or fairly satisfied - up by 1% from 23% to 24%. Fairly or very dissatisfied though went up by 5% from 33% to 38%

New questions this year:

- 41% responded definitely or tended to agree that people in their local area pull together.
- A number of Anti-Social Behaviour questions were asked about how they feel in their local area. The highest answer for each one is:
 - Noisy neighbours or loud parties - 41% don't see these as a big problem
 - Rubbish or litter lying around - 24% see this as a fairly big problem
 - Vandalism, graffiti & damage to property / vehicles - 32% don't see this as a very big problem
 - People using or dealing drugs - 45% see this as a very big problem
 - People being drunk or rowdy in public places - 28% see this as a very big problem
 - Groups hanging around the streets - 27% see this as a very big problem

This year, after asking the question about Trust we also asked our residents why they answered the way they did. Microsoft Copilot, which is an AI-powered tool, was used to assist in the analysis and summarisation of the feedback received for this question. Copilot reviewed the free text comments and identified key themes.

Of all the 1,857 individual comments in this section, there were 297 negative comments, 247 positive, and 1,313 neutral comments.

There is clearly more work to be done around the issue of trust in the council, with the largest number of comments on a single issue (267) being around spending and value for money.

The second biggest issue in terms of number of people raising it (197) was around roads and transport, with potholes being a particular concern but also related issues such as bus services.

Transparency was the next biggest issue raised with 190 people commenting on this. Particularly in relation to communications and transparency with public consultations there is a perception that decisions have already been made. This suggests we need to do more to feedback to residents and also involve them at the earliest possible stage. Also raised in this was slow or no replies to emails/complaints and a desire for clearer 'why' behind decisions and spend.

Methodology

In conducting the survey, we took account of the LGA guidance "Are you being served?". The LGA measures resident satisfaction with councils every four months.

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. Other questions focus on perceptions of safety, trust in politicians and government, and media coverage of councils.

This year's survey included several new questions that the LGA added into the 2025 survey. These were focused on how people pull together to improve the local area as well as various anti-social behaviour scenarios.

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.

Whilst the LGA use a representative random sample of 1,001 British adults (aged 18 and over) to be polled by telephone, we determined that an online survey supplemented by roadshows in each of the three towns would provide the most cost-effective means of reaching as many residents as possible.

In making that decision, we recognised that the mode of data collection can have a marked impact on results. Although results are only accurately comparable with surveys conducted via telephone, we have included the comparator data within the results in this report.

We also decided that we wanted to hear the voice of young people and so the survey was also open to those aged 12 and over (with one question omitted). Please see Appendix 1 for the results of this survey.

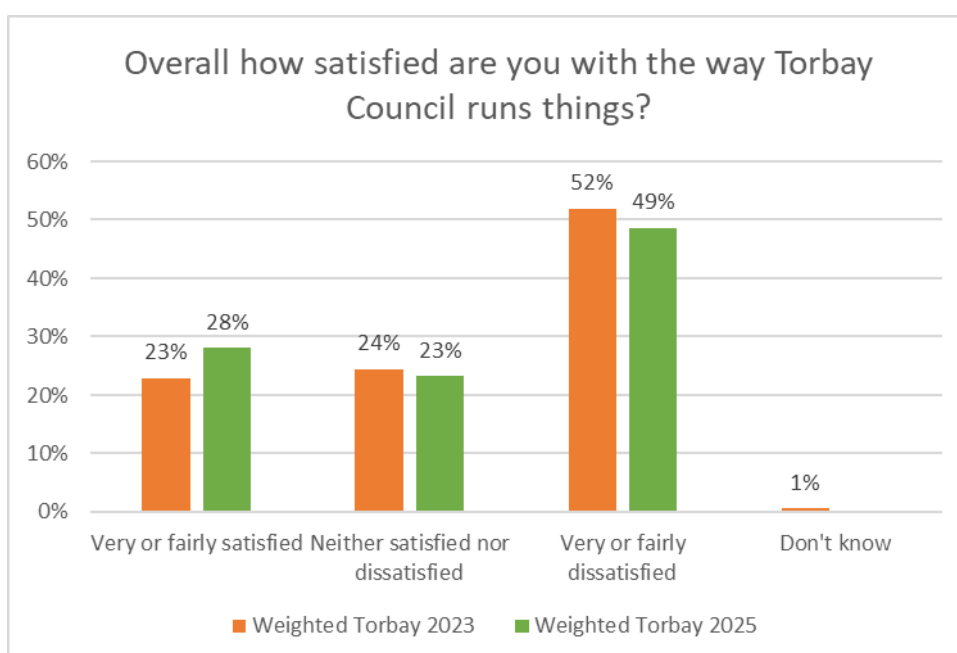
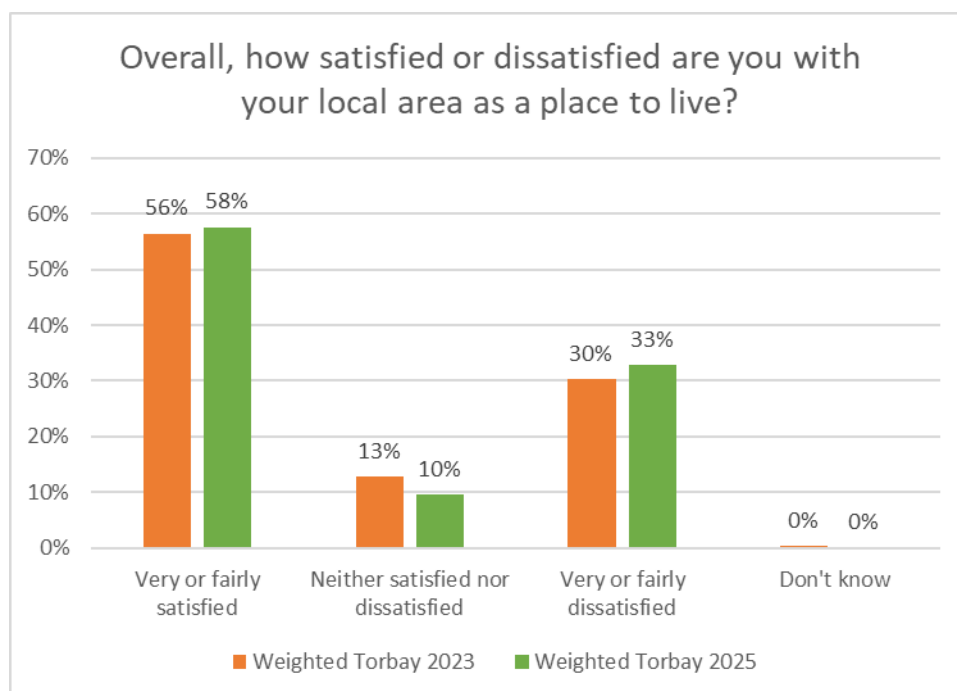
We used a wide range of communication and engagement methods to promote the surveys and encourage Torbay residents to participate. This included face-to-face engagement via the Residents Roadshows at a range of locations across Torquay, Paignton and Brixham which had printed surveys, to online surveys, and paper surveys left at venues including libraries.

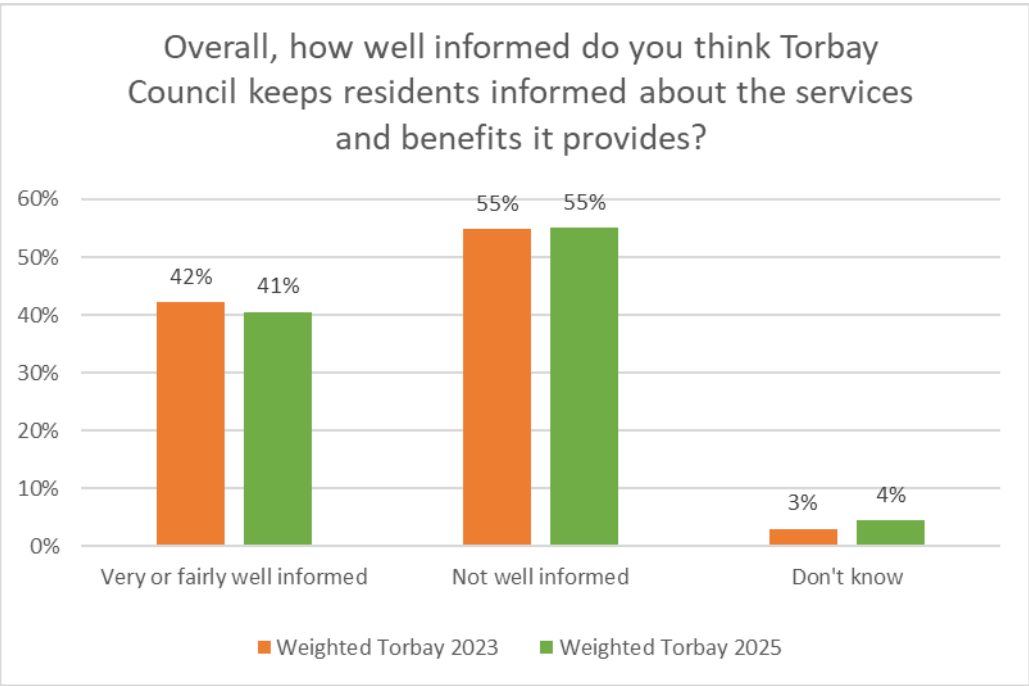
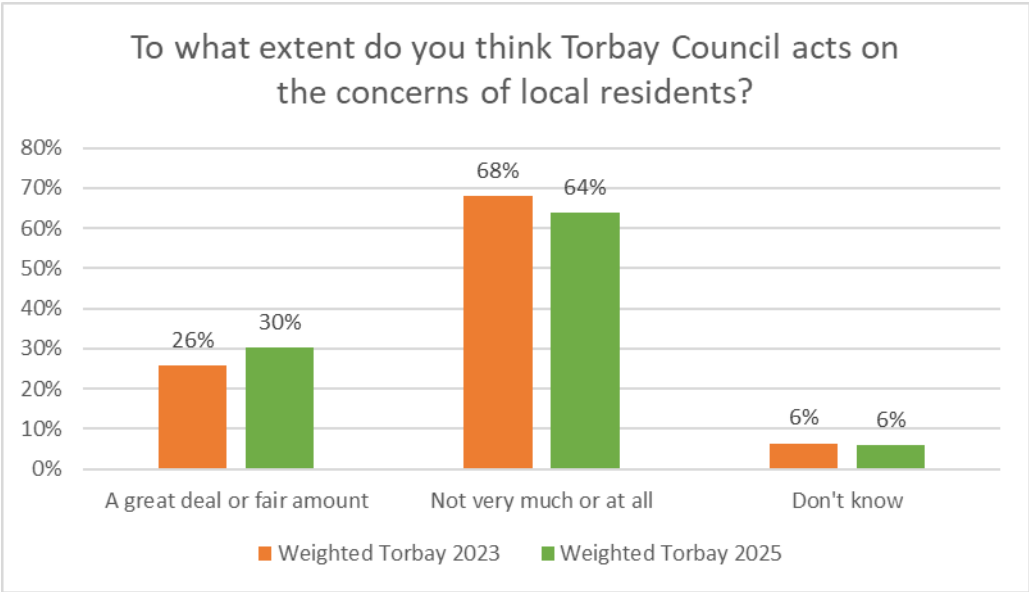
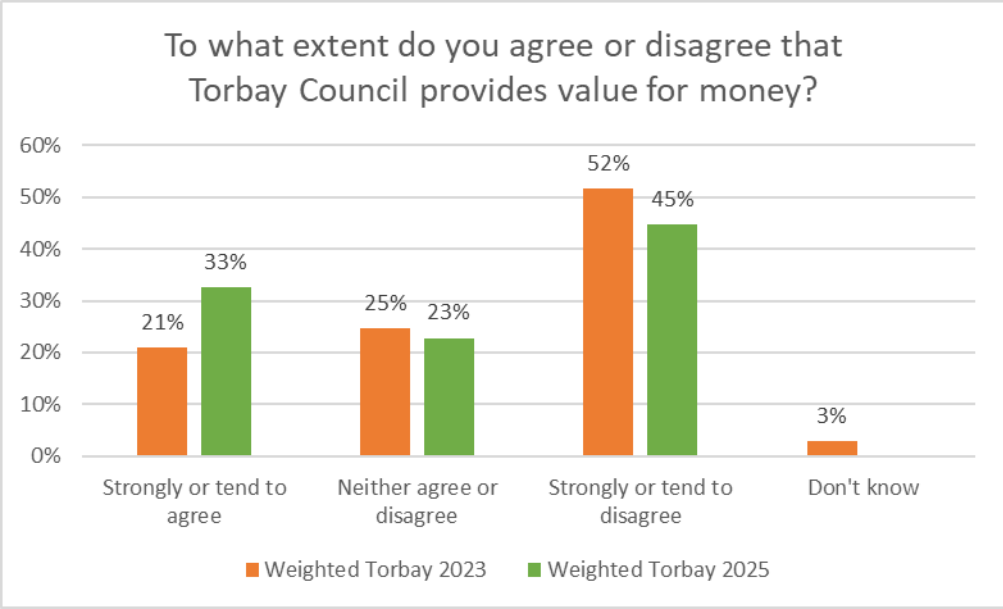
Findings

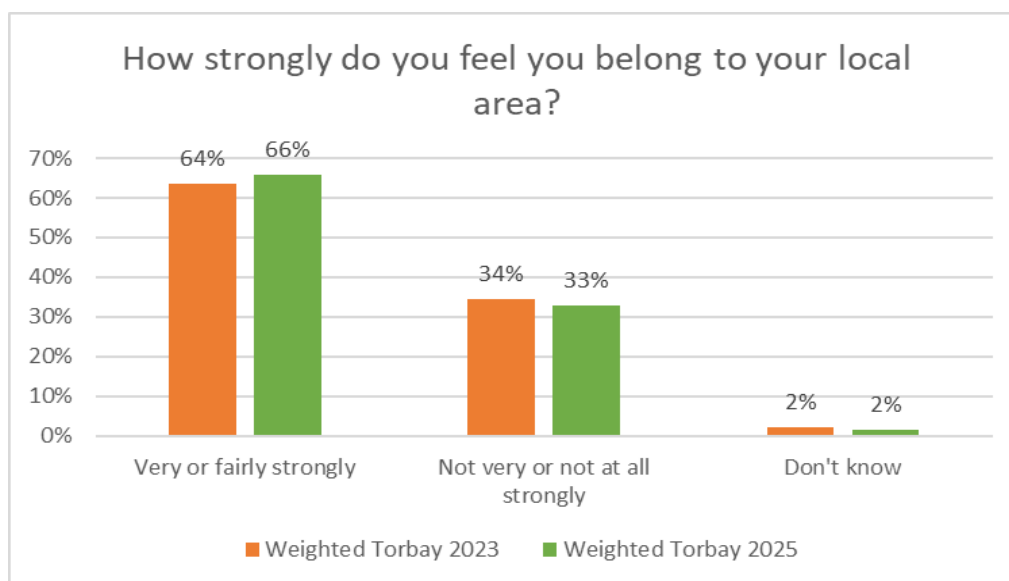
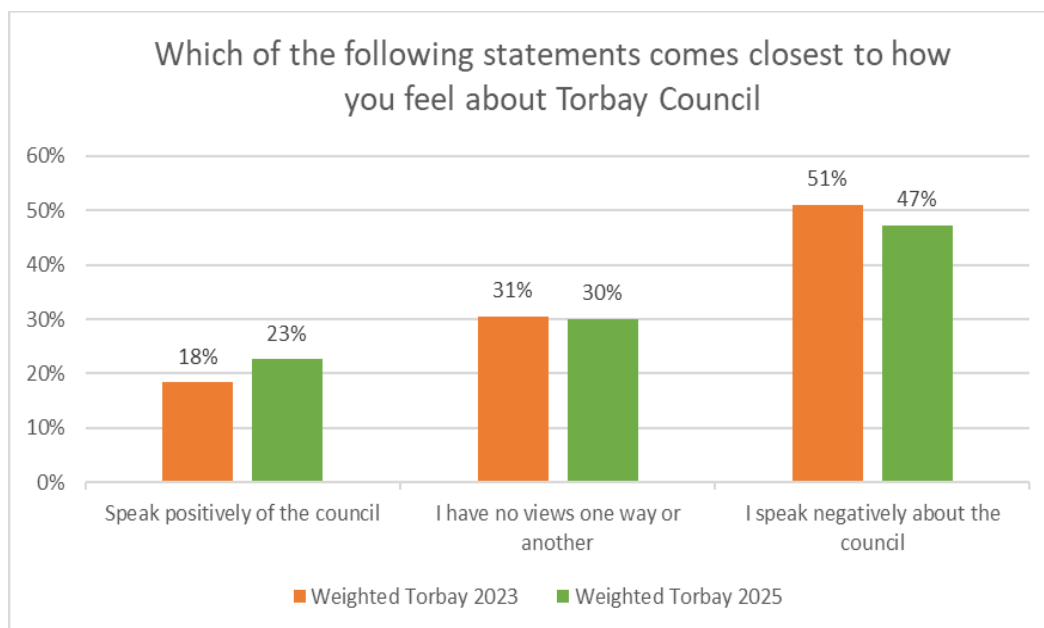
A total of 1,674 surveys were completed – 1,419 online and 255 from the roadshows and/or paper surveys. This is an increase from 2023 when a total of 1,369 surveys were completed (931 online and 438 from the roadshows and/or paper surveys).

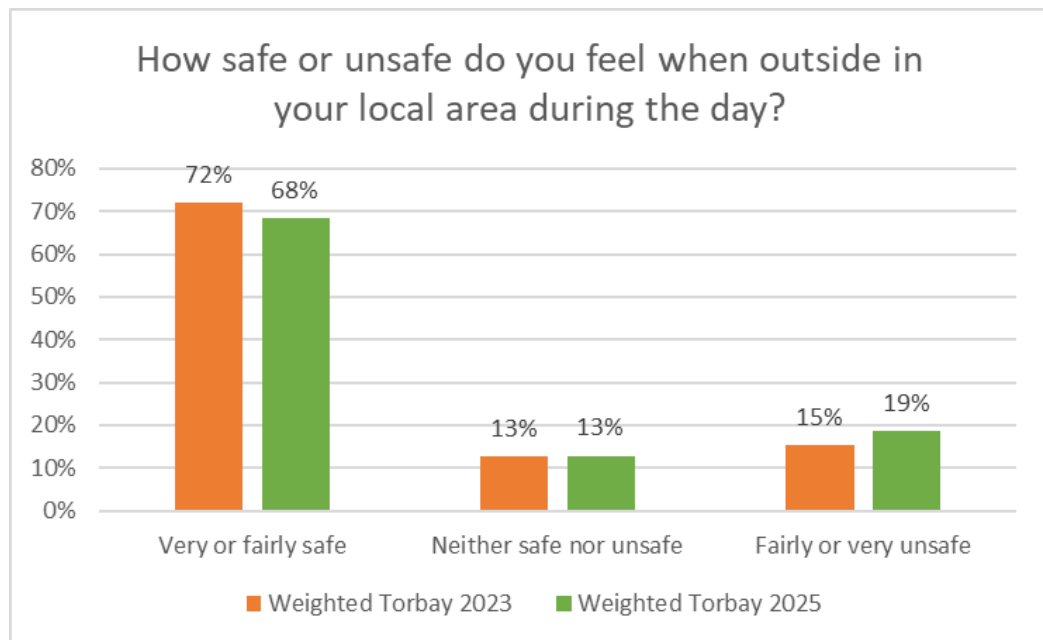
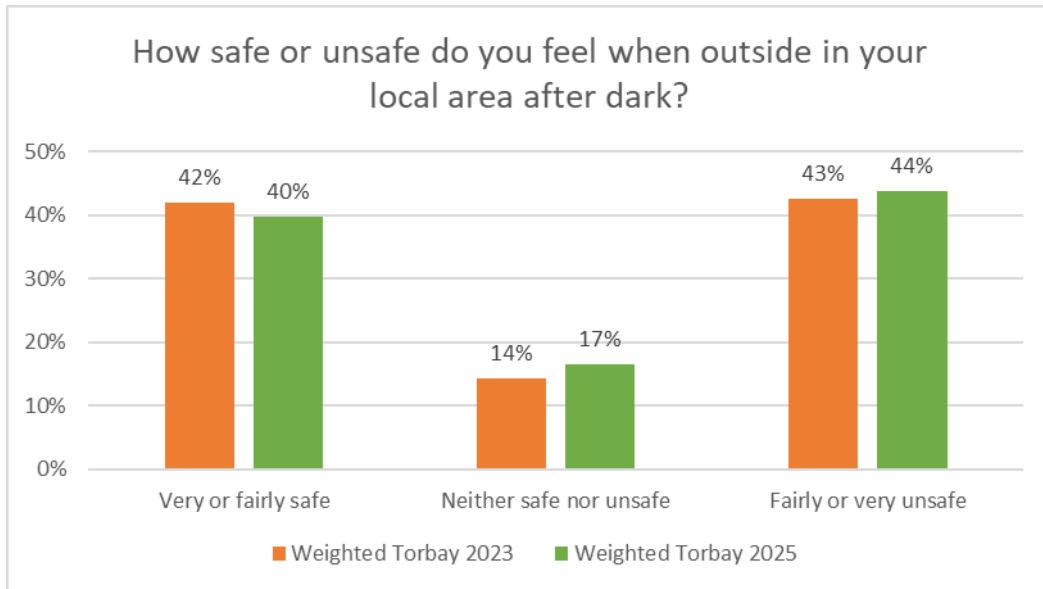
In total, 891 people were spoken to at the 15 engagement events with 248 paper surveys completed during them.

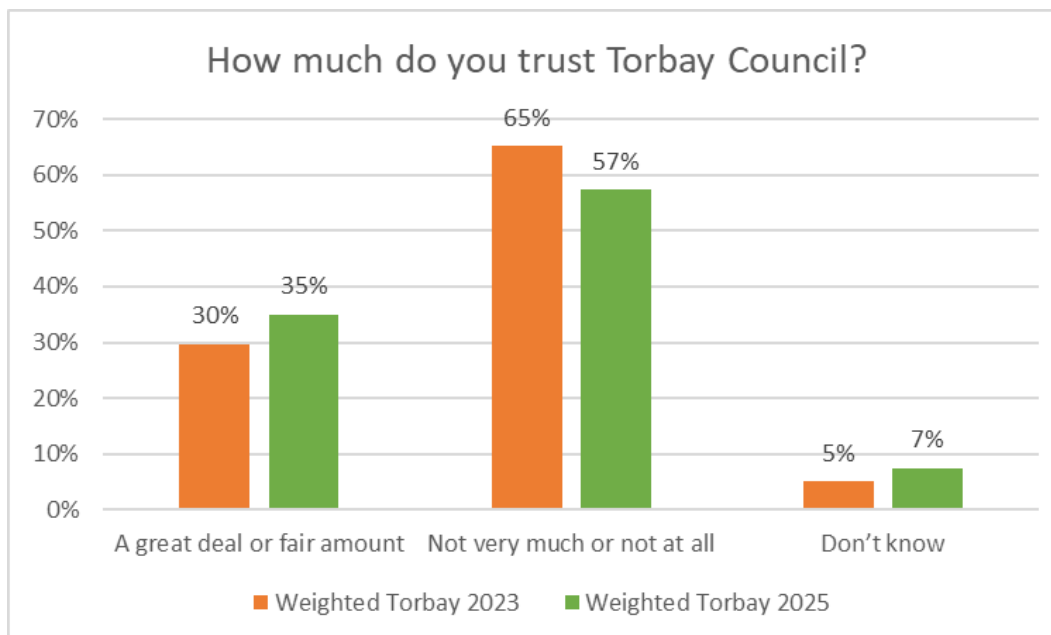
In accordance with the LGA guidance, we have taken the overall responses and weighted them by age. Below are the graphs that show the weighted results, comparing the 2023 results with the latest survey carried out in 2025.











In this year's survey, following this question we included a free text question which asked the respondent to elaborate on why they answered the way they did. Microsoft Copilot was used to assist in the analysis and summarisation of the feedback received for this. Copilot, an AI-powered tool, reviewed the free text comments from the provided dataset, identifying key themes.

Of all the 1,857 individual comments in this section, there were 297 negative comments, 247 positive, and 1,313 neutral comments.

Although more than a thousand residents responded to the survey and a wide variety of subjects and views came up, and there were some local variations depending on where people lived, there were a number of themes that were fairly consistent across the Bay.

There is clearly more work to be done around the issue of trust in the council, with the largest number of comments on a single issue (267) being around spending and value for money.

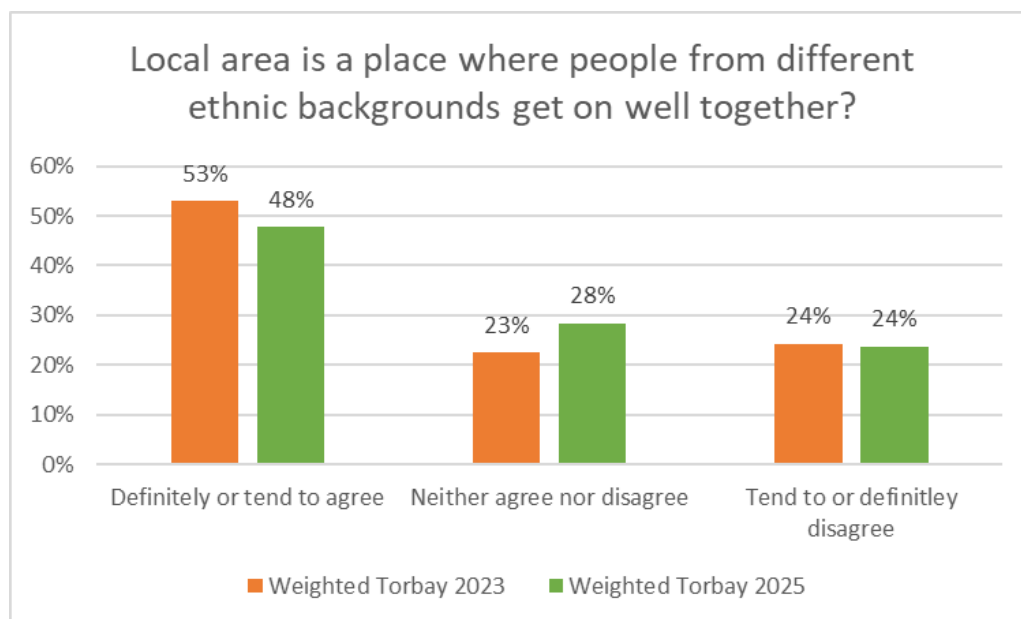
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Transparency was the next biggest issue raised with 190 people commenting on this and particularly in relation to public consultations there is a perception that decisions have already been made. This suggests we need to do more to feedback to residents and also involve them at the earliest possible stage.

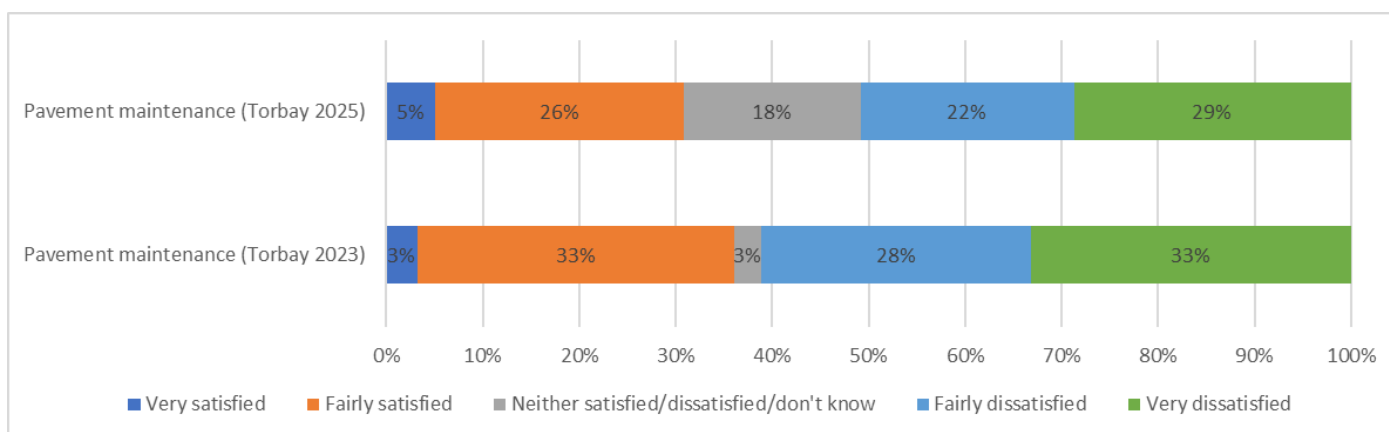
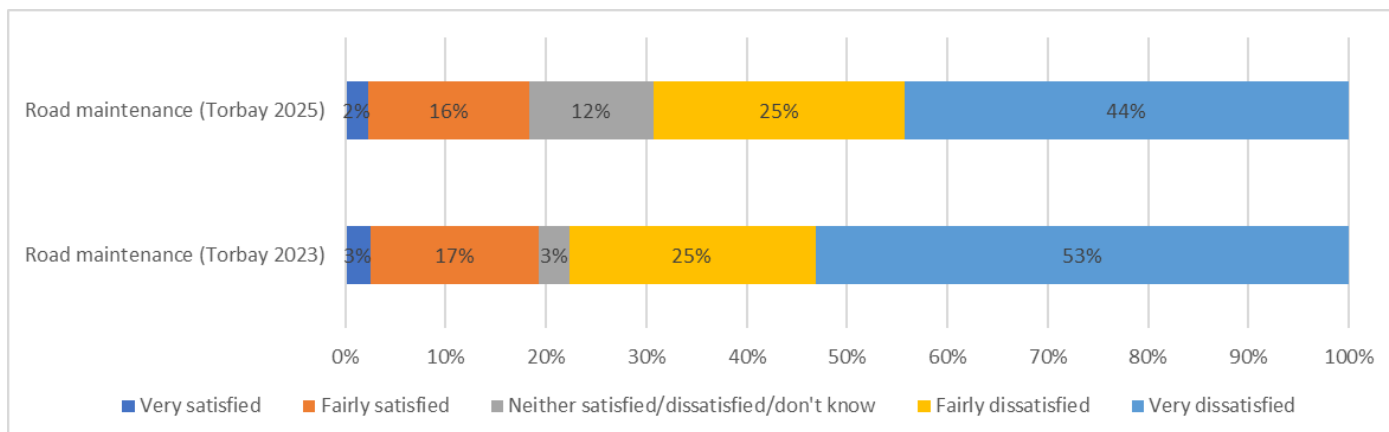
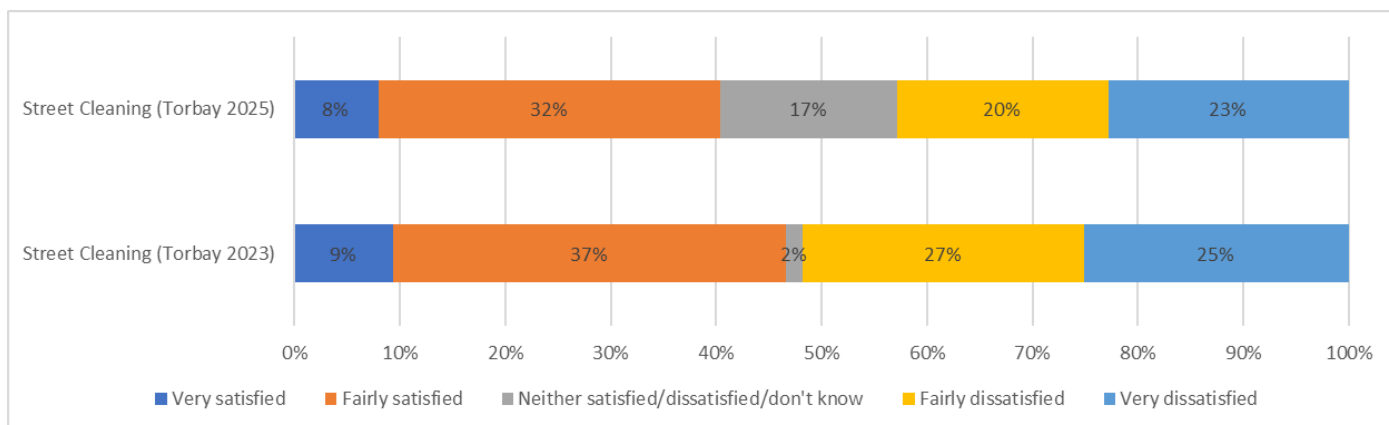
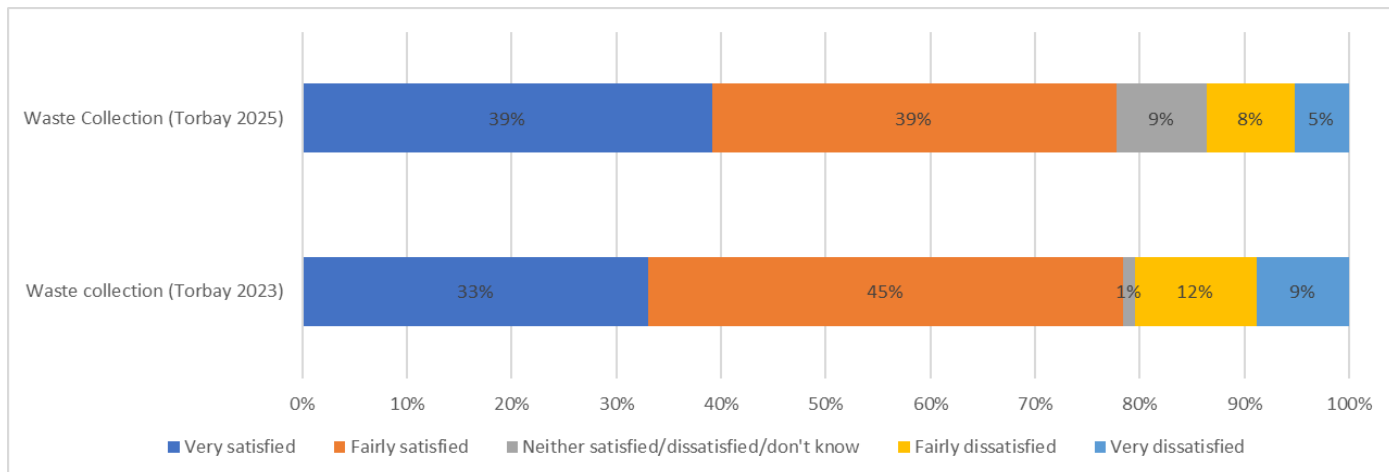
Below is a summary of the main issues that were mentioned:

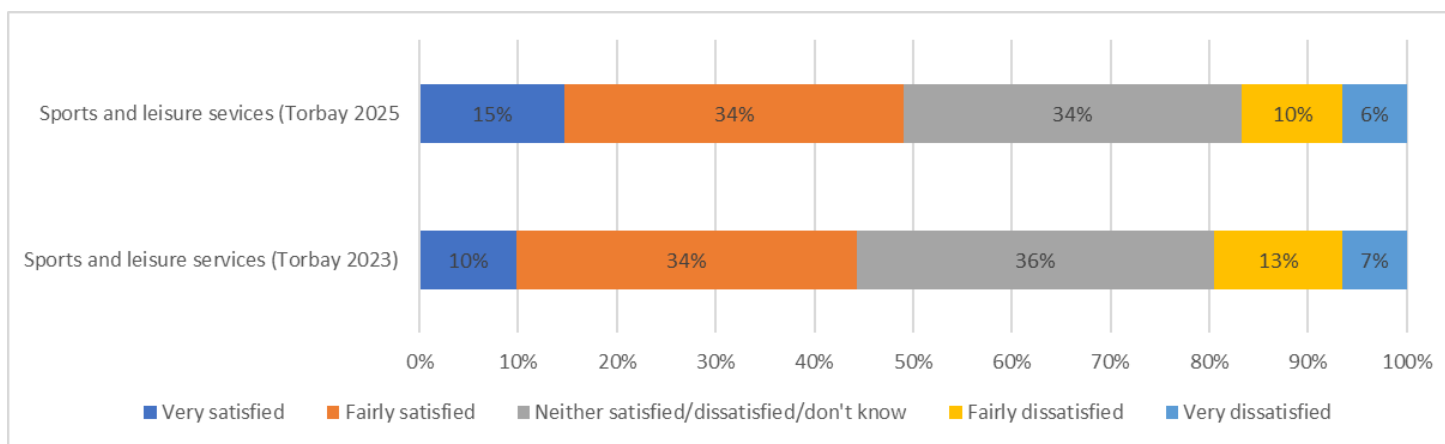
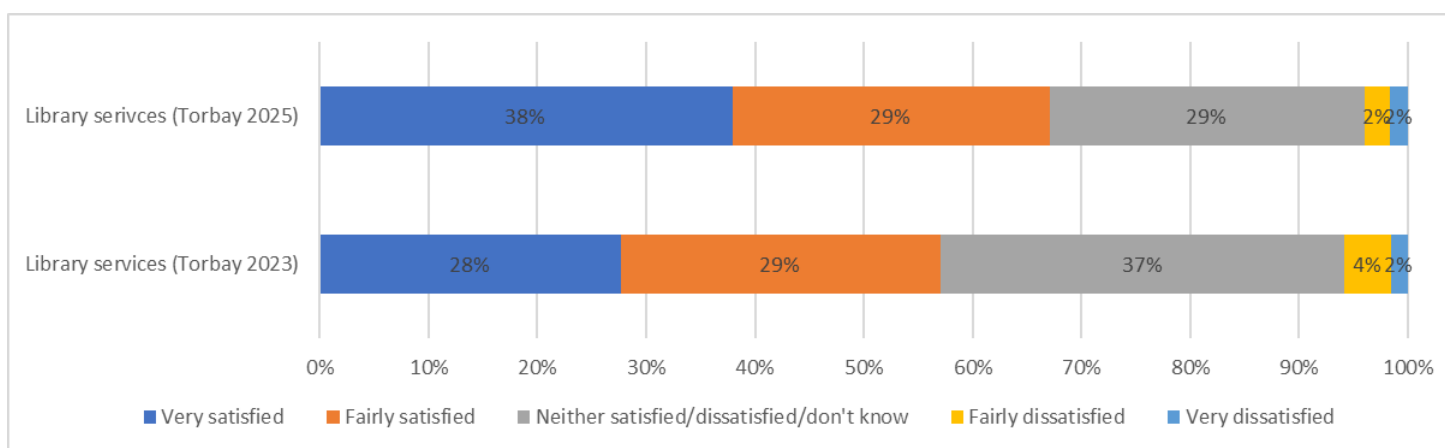
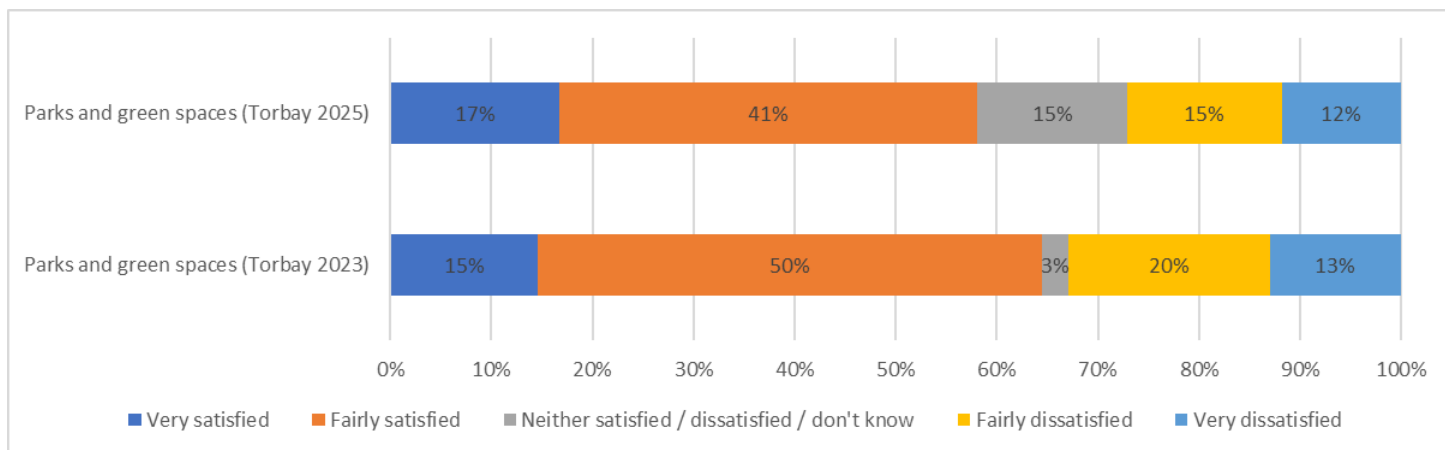
Theme or issue	How many comments on the issue
Spending and value for money – a perception that the council wastes money, rising council tax without improvements, a suggestion that we should focus on the basics rather than large capital investment.	267
Roads and transport – in particular around potholes, traffic flow, parking charges and bus services.	197

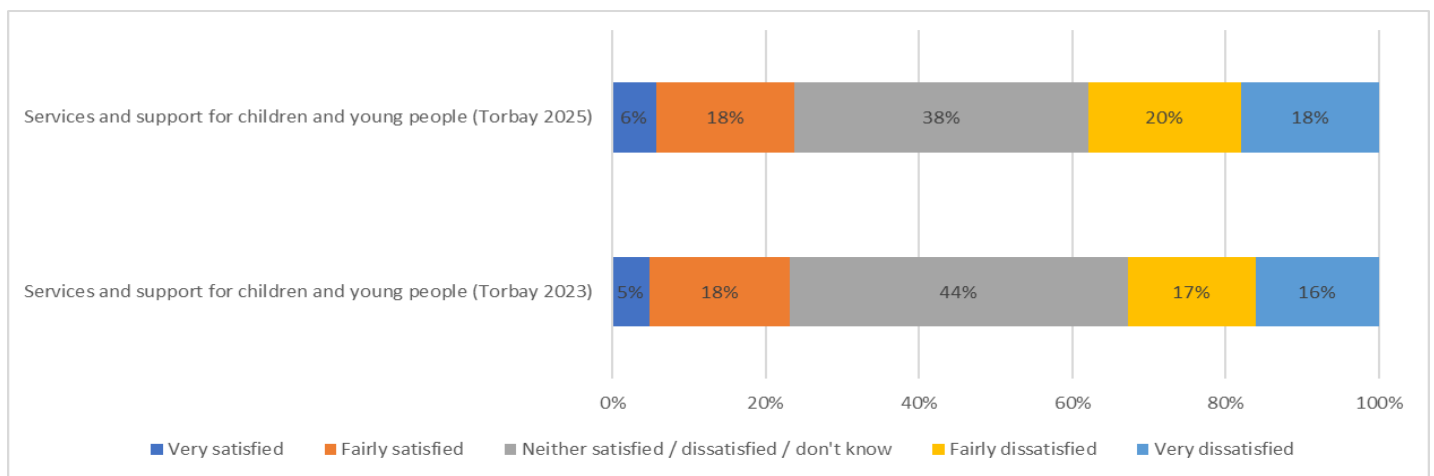
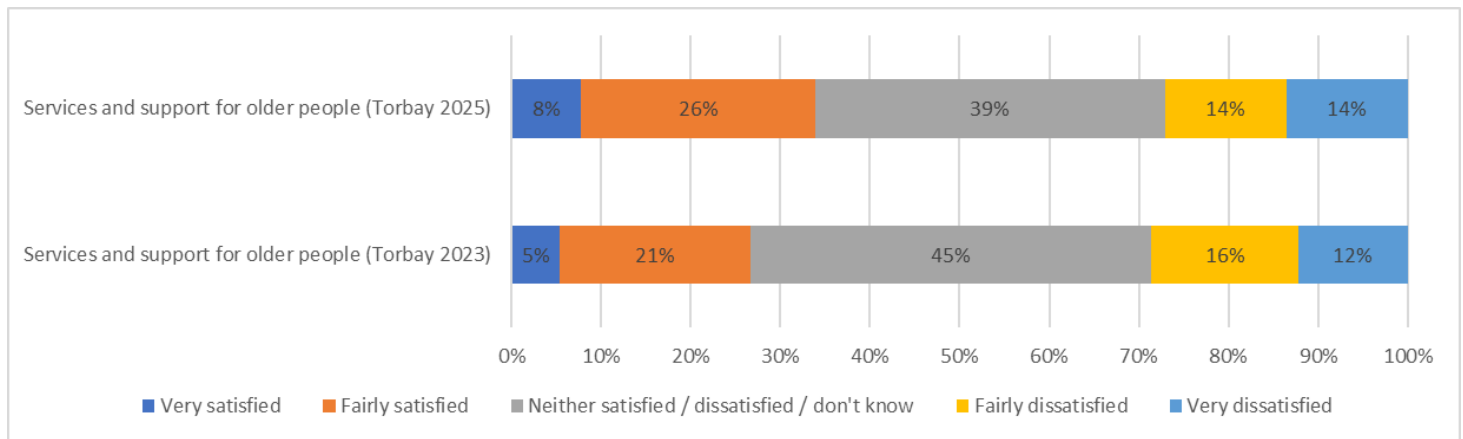
Communication, transparency and consultation. Perceived lack of early- stage engagement, consultations seen as “decided already,” slow or no replies to emails/complaints/FOI, and desire for clearer “why” behind decisions and spend.	190
Perceived inequality between the different parts of Torbay (Torquay vs Brixham vs Paignton) - Paignton and Brixham residents regularly say they feel neglected relative to Torquay (e.g., public realm, enforcement, road maintenance). Paignton often cited as “run down” or “messy”; Brixham residents reference harbour decisions and town- centre priorities.	153
Maintenance and cleanliness - Requests to increase frequency/quality of street cleaning, weed control, gully clearing, graffiti removal, and verge cutting.	128
Planning and development decisions - design quality/heritage fit, enforcement consistency and perceived deference to large developers. Calls for more transparency and heritage stewardship.	91
Crime and anti-social behaviour - Feeling unsafe in parts of Torquay (e.g., Castle Circus, Upper Union Street), visible street drinking/drug use, and desire for more wardens/police on foot and consistent PSPO enforcement.	89
Customers and access – Comments regarding unanswered calls, being passed around departments etc. Residents want accountable case handling and timely responses.	81
Concern about housing and Houses of Multiple Occupation (HMOs) - Concerns about HMOs in tourist areas; demand for affordable housing for locals; frustration at second- home tax impacts and clarity on how those revenues are used.	78



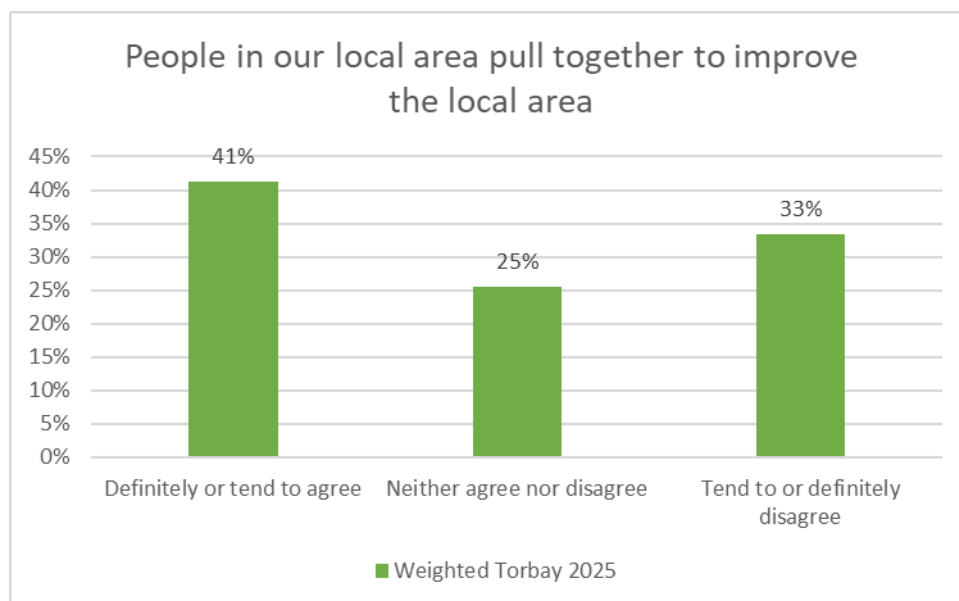
How satisfied are our residents with their services:

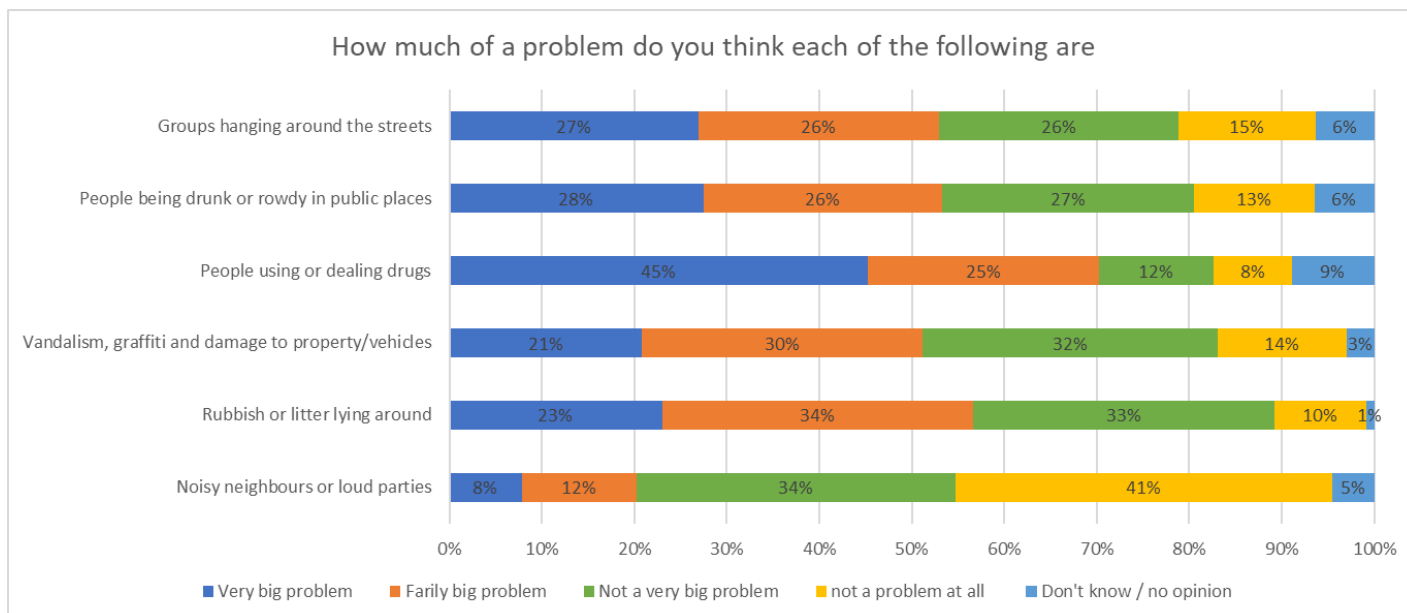






The next questions were new additions to this year's survey and don't have comparable data from 2023:





Key themes from the Roadshows

Although more than 1,500 residents responded to the survey and a wide variety of subjects and views came up, as well as there were some local variations depending on where people lived, there were several themes that were consistent across the Bay.

From both talking to people at the Roadshows and through the Surveys it was clear that there are still certain services, notably household waste and recycling collections and parks and green spaces where a significant proportion of respondents were either satisfied or very satisfied.

It was equally clear that there were some services that residents weren't satisfied with, such as road maintenance and pavement maintenance.

In addition to the surveys, at the Roadshows we also used enquiry forms to capture some of the main issues residents were facing, so that these could be looked into and acted upon.

Analysis of the themes captured during the conversations at the Roadshows was also done using CoPilot. The following list is of the five most common themes (number of mentions in brackets):

- Empty shops and town centre vitality (6)
 - Examples: “Empty shops”; “Too many empty shops in Paignton”; “Viability of local shops”; “Open closed shops for popup businesses”.
- Regeneration and development progress (5)
 - Examples: “What is happening with regeneration in Paignton”; “Questions over plans for central car park”; “When will Victoria Street works start”; “Former hotel in Victoria Street”.
- ASB and community safety (4)
 - Examples: “ASB Union Street” (twice); “ASB in town centre”; “Need to tackle ASB in Paignton”.
- Roads and highways maintenance and safety (3)
 - Examples: “Concern over road maintenance/ number of potholes”; “Poor state of roads”; “Speeding traffic”.
- Cleanliness and upkeep of public spaces (3)

- Examples: “Pavement litter/dog mess”; “Town needs deep clean”; “Parks poorly maintained”.

Demographics

Age

Considerable effort was made to target all age groups and particularly younger age groups. Despite this, and perhaps reflecting Torbay's older demographic, there were many more people aged 55 or over (1,106) responding to the survey than in the groups aged 54 and under (431).

This also reflected the Roadshow events where the vast majority of people we spoke to were in the older, 55 and above, bracket. The largest age bracket was the 65-74 age bracket with 433 respondents to the survey, compared to the lowest bracket which was the 16-24 demographic with 30 responses.

0-15	16-24	25-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65-74	75 plus
2	30	79	122	198	384	433	289

Gender

Female	Male	Prefer not to say
858	683	53

Ethnicity

The vast majority of respondents to the Residents Survey identified as White British (1,495), compared to 28 who answered Mixed Ethnicity, 13 as Asian or Asian British, 8 as Black or Black British, 2 as Chinese and 39 as Other Ethnic Group.

Again, this reflected the experience of the Roadshows where there were far more residents that spoke to us who were White British than any other ethnic groups.

Disability

Of the respondents, 397 considered themselves disabled compared to 1,147 respondents who didn't. Of the disabled respondents most (293) said it affected their mobility.

It affects my mobility	It affects my vision	It affects my hearing	It affects me in another way	Prefer not to say
293	45	80	130	46

We asked two new demographic questions for this survey, which have been in place on our other survey's for a while now. This is about considering yourself to be a carer or spending time in care:

Do you consider yourself to be a carer (unpaid carer to a friend or relative?)

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
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15	51	5
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Have you spent any time in care?

Yes	No	Prefer not to say
7	54	11

Communications and engagement evaluation

We used a wide range of communication and engagement methods to promote the surveys and encourage Torbay residents to participate. This included face-to-face engagement via the Residents Roadshows at a range of locations across Torquay, Paignton and Brixham, printed and online surveys and paper surveys left at venues including libraries.

Below is a summary of the channels and methods used and the reach each one had. The majority of surveys (1,419) were completed online through our Consultation webpage, while a total of 255 were completed at the Residents Roadshows either on paper surveys or on MS Forms. There were also 50 paper surveys completed from the ones that were left at libraries and local businesses. Web traffic was directed to our Consultation webpages through a range of channels.

Press releases

Three press releases were issued to the media.

In total over the survey period, the articles on the News section of our website they received 186 views, from 73 active users.

- 5 November 2025: [Still time for 12-15 year olds to have their say on life in Torbay - Torbay Council](#) - 9 views, 1 active user, average engagement time 1m 42s
- 22 October 2025: [Just over a week to go to have your say on Torbay Residents' Satisfaction Survey - Torbay Council](#) - 24 views, 19 active users, 16s
- 19 September 2025: [Have your say – Residents in Torbay to be asked their views in wide-ranging survey as part of an autumn of engagement - Torbay Council](#) - 153 views, 53 active users, 28s

Other media

17 September 2025: Torbay Weekly, [Leader's Column](#)

Social media

A social media campaign ran from 18 September to 2 November 2025. The campaign was extended to 15 November for the 12-15 Survey.

Posts were published on our channels on Facebook, LinkedIn and NextDoor to publicise the survey and the engagement events.

- Total posts: 67
- Total clicks: 267
- Total reach: 36,668
- Total impressions: 69,357
- Engagement rate: 0.72%

- Total comments: 96
- Total likes: 63
- Shares/reposts: 67

Meta (Social Media) advertising

A separate paid-for post was made using the Meta network which appeared on the Facebook and Instagram social media platforms. This included a link to the online survey. The post was targeted at adults aged 18 and over living in Torbay.

£93.20 was spent from 15 October to 1 November. This resulted in 586 link clicks, at a cost of £0.16 per click, which is the average for similar ads.

The post reached 12,276 accounts with 32,227 impressions.

Email newsletters

10 articles were included in email newsletters - one Members' Briefing and nine in One Torbay. These were seen 52,351 times and generated 389 clicks to the Consultations page of the website or directly to the main survey and 12-15 survey pages.