

Consumer Focus for Public Services

People's Panel Wave 5

Research Study Conducted for
Modernising Public Services Group



CABINET OFFICE



March - April 2000

Contents

PREFACE	1
SUMMARY OF FINDINGS	3
Complaints Handling.....	8
IMPLICATIONS	10
OVERVIEW OF SERVICES	11
Overview - Satisfaction and Importance.....	11
Information Provision.....	16
HEALTH AND EMERGENCY SERVICES	19
Health Services	19
Emergency Services	25
LOCAL COUNCIL	31
EDUCATION SERVICES	34
TRANSPORT	43
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	49
LEISURE SERVICES	60
BENEFITS AGENCY AND EMPLOYMENT SERVICE	70
COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES	77
OTHER AGENCIES / SERVICES	80
Child Support Agency.....	80
Passport Agency	83
The Courts.....	86
Inland Revenue.....	89
COMPLAINTS HANDLING	92
PERCEPTIONS OF EMPLOYERS	95
PUBLIC LEADERSHIP	99

Appendices

Preface

This document contains summary findings of a quantitative survey of a representative sample from the People's Panel conducted by MORI Social Research on behalf of the Modernising Public Services Group at the Cabinet Office.

On 9 February, Cabinet Office Minister Ian McCartney announced a new consumer focus for public services. The aim is to encourage services to be more responsive to their user, with a focus on how consumers' views are built into an organisation's planning process and how the quality of service delivery is improved as a result.

As part of the initiative, the People's Panel is to be used to measure consumer satisfaction with and expectations of key public services. The aim of this research was to:

- track how satisfaction with public services has changed since 1998;
- look at the public's expectations of these services; and
- set a baseline for future tracking of attitudes to public services.

The research also looks at:

- how public sector workers feel about working in the public sector; and
- examines what qualities people think are needed for providers of public services

In total, 1,086 were conducted with members of the People's Panel between 18th March and 30th April 2000. The results have been weighted to the profile of all adults in the UK.

Report Layout

The first section of the report is an overview of how public services are perceived. This is followed by a detailed examination of each separate service area, covering service usage, satisfaction, expectations of each service and evaluation of service communications. We have also included trend data, reflecting how the views of this sample have changed since they were recruited to the Panel.

The remainder of the report covers attitudes towards complaints handling, public sector employment and public leadership qualities.

Interpretation of Survey Findings

Interviews have been conducted with a representative sample drawn from the People's Panel, and all data have been weighted to the profile of the United Kingdom population. Findings are subject to the normal tolerances for sample surveys, and although these tolerances are small for relatively large sample sizes, it should be noted that some findings (for example, those of ethnic minority Panel members) are drawn from small sub-groups for which the tolerances may be high. Care should, therefore, be taken when interpreting findings based on answers from a small number of respondents.

Where percentages do not add up to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don't know” categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the report, an asterisk (*) indicates a value of less than 0.5% but not zero.

“Net” figures refer to the percentage of people expressing one view minus the percentage holding the opposite view; thus the “net satisfied” figure is based on the proportion satisfied minus the proportion dissatisfied.

Publication of the Data

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Summary of Findings

Service Overview

As in 1998, education and health services, libraries, and refuse and recycling facilities achieve the highest levels of satisfaction among users, with road and pavement maintenance, local councils as a whole, council housing, street cleaning and youth clubs and other facilities for young people receiving the highest levels of dissatisfaction.

In many cases, results are broadly similar to those found in 1998 (especially bearing in mind the small base of users for some services). However, there have been some significant changes in attitudes. Satisfaction with local adult education and train companies has increased. Also, people are more dissatisfied with local sports/leisure facilities, street cleaning, their local council, youth clubs and other facilities for young people. Both the police and council housing have seen falls in satisfaction and rises in dissatisfaction. In most cases the changes – if not the actual figures – are consistent with other surveys.

Panel members say health services are the most important services to them and their household, followed by the police and emergency services, and refuse collection. Other services all mentioned by more than one in ten include parks and open spaces, libraries, local bus services, local primary schools, local sports and leisure services and road maintenance and repairs.

Health Services

Health services – GP and NHS hospitals – are considered the most important public services. While rated highly by Panel members, satisfaction falls slightly below the high expectations respondents have of these services – but is in keeping with the high satisfaction rating recorded in 1998. GPs and hospitals are considered average or above average at keeping respondents informed of the range of services on offer. Recipients are generally positive about the quality of information, although the clarity of the information provided by the NHS as a whole is rated below that provided by GPs.

Access to services are the top health priority for Panel members – 62% mention seeing a GP within a week, over half cite providing a bed to all who need them, providing care when needed, and limiting Accident and Emergency waiting times to no more than one hour.

Police and Emergency Services

Fire and Ambulance services, although not considered quite as important by the public, still receive high satisfaction ratings, with almost three in five happy with their service (although around two in five don't know having no recent experience). They are among the worst services for the amount of information they provide (although our experience in other areas suggests that the public does

not expect – or want – a great deal of information from these emergency services); the quality of the information they do provide is rated relatively highly.

The public has clear expectations of fire and ambulance services – over nine in ten say ambulances should be able to reach victims within 15 minutes, and that fire services should respond to 999 calls within 10 minutes. To be able to deal with all medical emergencies is also an important priority for both services (mentioned by over eight in ten).

The police, although rated as more important than other emergency services, receive relatively lower satisfaction ratings (63% satisfied, 13% dissatisfied). This represents a ten point fall in satisfaction and a five point rise in dissatisfaction since summer 1998. Satisfaction with the police is lowest among the young and those in social classes AB (professional middle classes). As with the other emergency services, three in five say that the police ‘doesn’t tell us much about what it does’. However, they are more critical of the Police service for the quality of the information provided.

Again, like the fire and ambulance services, quick response times are the public’s highest priority for the Police, followed by reducing crime (70% and 64% respectively). Police patrols are more important to older Panel members, while younger respondents place a higher priority on treating all groups in society equally and without discrimination.

Local Councils

Just over half are satisfied with the service they receive from their local council, with just under a quarter dissatisfied – a slight deterioration since 1998. This is consistent with national trends in separate Omnibus surveys. As we often find, satisfaction is higher among older Panel Members, but lower among younger respondents. Local councils receive an average rating for the amount of information they provide (with similar sub-group differences to satisfaction), but Panel members are far more critical about the usefulness of the information they provide, with lowest ratings for any public service covered in this survey.

Choosing from a list, the highest priority for a council is to maintain good quality local services (mentioned by half), but listening to local people and involving them in the way the council spends their money is also important to around one in three.

Education Services

As in 1998, education services receive some of the highest satisfaction ratings from their users. They are also among the best rated for the amount and quality of the information that they receive.

Choosing from a list drawn up with the DfEE, the highest priority for nursery schools are to encourage children to develop personally, socially and emotionally, and to provide a safe and healthy environment (mentioned by around three in ten of users).

Primary schools, on the other hand, are expected to make sure that all children are educated to the standards of Maths and English for their age group by the time they are 11 years old (57%, although a safe and healthy environment is still mentioned by 51%). Two in five think that it is important for schools to have sufficient staff and equipment, and to teach children in line with the national curriculum.

The most important priority for secondary schools is to 'ensure that all children are given the opportunity to realise their full potential and that targets for educational attainment are met' (56%). Thirty-seven percent think it is important to prepare children for further education, and 30% to prepare them for employment.

Adult education is expected to provide courses that people want to study (68%), with high quality teaching (48%) and flexible courses and hours (44%) also important.

Transport

Two-thirds of bus travellers are satisfied (one in five dissatisfied), while three in five train users are satisfied (a quarter dissatisfied). The proportion satisfied with train companies has risen over the last two years. Despite this, Panel members remain very dissatisfied with the information that they receive from bus and train services, particularly their lack of accuracy and clarity (this may be partly a comment on unreliable services, as opposed to inaccurate information).

The most important priority for users of public transport is to make sure that buses and trains run on time (mentioned by 77% and 87% respectively of users). Around two in five think that it is important to provide buses and trains when people need them. While safety is more of an issue for train users (34% vs 28% of bus travellers), 40% of bus users think it is important to provide buses where people need them, compared with 18% of users who think that about trains – reflecting concerns about the provision of rural services.

Environmental Services

Environmental services are generally well rated, especially refuse and waste collection (also seen as the most important environmental service), parks and open spaces, provision of recycling facilities and street lighting. Views are mixed over street cleaning – 62% satisfied, and 28% dissatisfied (a rise in dissatisfaction since 1998) – while, as in 1998, road and pavement maintenance receive one of the worst scores for any service, with more people dissatisfied than satisfied.

Parks and open spaces are rated the worst council service for keeping users informed, although recycling and refuse collection are rated more highly (recycling has improved since 1998). Similarly, the quality of information provided by recycling and refuse services is rated much more highly than that from parks.

Users say that the most important priority for parks is for them to be kept clean and tidy (70%) and for them to be safe (especially important to users with

children). Forty-five per cent think there should be separate areas for dogs. Recycling services are expected to provide for a broad range of household waste (69%), but also to be easily accessible and to provide door-to-door collection (both 45%). The top priority for refuse collection is to be picked up at regular times, and to avoid leaving any mess. Frequent cleaning is also important for street cleaning services, as well as providing enough litter bins. Panel members also expect streets to be adequately lit and for lights to be kept in working order. The top priorities for road and pavement maintenance are to ensure an even surface (mentioned by half). Forty-seven per cent of respondents also think it is important to co-ordinate road works with gas, electricity, cable and telephone companies.

Leisure Services

Among users, libraries are the most highly rated leisure service in terms of importance and satisfaction (consistent with numerous local surveys). In contrast, a quarter of those who use youth clubs and other facilities for young people (or who have other household members who use them) are dissatisfied with the service they provide, with just over half satisfied. Latest results appear to indicate a rise in dissatisfaction over the last two years, although the question wording has changed slightly since 1998.

In terms of information provision, libraries and sports and leisure services are seen as being among the better public services, while museums and art galleries and local youth clubs and other facilities for young people are not so highly rated.

Stocking a wide range of books is seen as the most important priority for library services (78%), and a third want to see extended opening hours. The biggest priorities facing museums and art galleries are seen as providing interesting exhibitions that tie in with the history of the local area. Safety is the most important issue facing sports and leisure facilities, along with providing a broad range of facilities, and being easily accessible. Users want youth clubs to provide a wide range of interesting activities (mentioned by 69%). Having somewhere to go in their spare time is the most important issue for users aged 16-24.

Benefits and Employment

Seven in ten (68%) of Benefits Agency users are satisfied with the service they receive, and one in ten (10%) are dissatisfied. Three in five of those who have contacted the employment service over the last year are satisfied, with one in eight dissatisfied. While half of users feel well informed by each service, the quality of the information provided is less well regarded, particularly the clarity of the information provided by the Benefits Agency.

Reflecting this, the most important issue facing the Benefits Agency is seen as telling claimants clearly what they are entitled to. A third stress the importance of producing forms that are easy to complete, while three in ten pick the importance of equality in treatment. For the Employment Service, as might be expected, top priority is to help people find a job, along with helping people with paperwork and clearly informing them of their rights and responsibilities.

Council Housing Service

Three in five service users are satisfied with the service, and three in ten dissatisfied. Since 1998, satisfaction has fallen by 13 points and dissatisfaction has risen by nine points (although in 1998 we asked about 'council housing, not 'the council housing service'). Fifty-three per cent feel well informed by the council housing service and 45% badly informed, although the quality of the information is rated relatively well among those who do receive it.

Service users say that the most important priority for council housing is to carry out repairs to a sufficient quality so that they are only needed once, mentioned by just over half of users. The second highest priority is to deal with repairs quickly, while a third want the service to be understanding and to listen to complaints.

Other Agencies/Services

Only three per cent of respondents have contacted the **Child Support Agency** over the last year, so these results should be treated with caution. Users are evenly split between those who are satisfied with the service, and those who are dissatisfied. Over half feel well-informed by the CSA, compared with a third who feel badly informed, though there are concerns about the accuracy and clarity of the information it provides. Users see the most important priorities for the CSA are to deal with enquiries quickly, to ensure parents support their children financially, and to produce forms that are easy to complete.

Seven in ten users of the **Passport Agency** are satisfied by the service they receive – however, this masks a big difference by age, with less than half of users aged under 25 satisfied with the service. The Passport Agency is, however, rated relatively badly by service users over the amount of information it provides, although there are no substantial criticisms over the quality of the information. The biggest priority for the Passport Agency is the need to provide passports within two weeks of the application, mentioned by 71% of users, while half cite the importance of providing forms that are easy to fill in.

Again, only six per cent of Panel members have contacted **the Courts** over the last 12 months, so results should be treated with caution. Forty-nine per cent of users are satisfied with the service, compared with 15% dissatisfied. However, the Courts are rated as one of the worst providers of information in the public sector, with significant minorities finding the information they do provide not useful, inaccurate and unclear. Users see the most important priorities for the courts as dealing with cases quickly and competently, to be in touch with 'real life' and to explain procedures fully to users.

Over half of users are satisfied with the quality of the service they receive from the **Inland Revenue**, with 8% dissatisfied – a slight deterioration since 1998 (largely due to more people saying neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). Half of users feel well informed by the Inland Revenue, while two in five disagree. Although the usefulness and accuracy of the information provided is praised, there are concerns over its clarity, particularly for younger users. The most important issues for the Inland Revenue are seen to be calculating people's tax

right first time, mentioned by a half, and a third also stress the importance of easy to complete forms, and being treated fairly and objectively.

Complaints Handling

As in 1998 (and indeed in other surveys in 1994 and 1997), the public service most complained to by the public is their local council (complained to by 12% over the last year) – especially by respondents in socio-economic classes DE, and those living in the North (who tend to be more dependent on Council services).

More say they were dissatisfied with the way their complaint was handled than satisfied (by 56% to 33%), particularly those in social classes DE.

Trend questions measuring the way that public services handle complaints were also updated from the second wave of People's Panel research, conducted in Autumn 1998. The vast majority of respondents still believe that you need a lot of determination to get something done about a complaint – indeed, this proportion has risen slightly since 1998. Respondents are also more likely to agree that most public services do not take complaints seriously. However, there are encouraging signs. Half agree that most public services are ready to listen to complaints, against a quarter who disagree. More also agree than disagree that public services have improved in the way they listen to complaints – this is consistent with earlier survey results..

Compared with a separate (non-People's Panel) survey conducted by MORI in 1994, the proportion who say that you need a lot of determination to get something done about a complaint, and that public services do not take complaints seriously, are broadly similar. The figure of those who say that most public services are ready to listen to complaints, meanwhile, has risen, while there is also a slight rise in the proportion who think that public services are better at listening to complaints than they were a few years ago.

Public Sector Employment

Two-thirds of Panel members in employment say they work in the private sector, with three in ten working in the public sector. The vast majority say they are satisfied with their present job, although 12% are unhappy - there is no difference between public and private sector workers.

When asked how they would describe their current employer, two in five would speak highly of them to a person from outside the organisation, although a quarter would be critical – twice as many who say they are dissatisfied with their current job. Again, there is no difference between private and public sector workers.

However, Panel members in work are far more likely to be positive about the services provided by their organisation than about their organisation as an employer, especially those on higher incomes. Three in five Panel members – in

private and public sectors - say they are proud to work for their employer (especially those on higher incomes); 56% feel valued by their employer, although 21% do not. Only one in five agree with the statement, 'I'm not really interested in the organisation I work for, it is just a job' – though this rises among part-time workers and those in unskilled manual jobs.

When asked about their senior management, employees are on balance positive about the development and training they receive, the goals and objectives that are set, the vision of the direction of the company, and the confidence in their senior management, although a significant minority are critical in each case.

Public Leadership

Asked to choose from a list, local councillors are most likely to be seen as being in charge of public services in the local area (mentioned by 66%), followed by senior managers in public services (36%). Local councillors are also thought to have most influence over issues that affect local people.

In contrast, national politicians are seen as being in charge of public services in the UK, followed by civil servants (65% and 35%, respectively). Younger Panel members are more likely to identify national politicians, while older respondents are more likely to mention civil servants – possibly reflecting differences in comprehension of how central government works.

The most important qualities for national politicians are seen as honesty, trustworthiness and being a good communicator. Honesty and trustworthiness are also the most important qualities for local councillors, although accessibility is seen as more important for them than national politicians (26% and 14%, respectively). Efficiency, competence and honesty are seen as the most important skills for civil servants.

Implications

Overall, there are some significant changes in the attitudes of Panel members to public services since 1998. Among others, satisfaction ratings for the police, council housing and local councils have fallen, with the ratings of transport services improving. Targeted work among users of each of these services will allow a more detailed picture to be built up, and to help distinguish service changes from the impact of external events. For example, the publicity surrounding the Macpherson report may have had an impact on the rating of the police service.

Importantly, this wave of research also heralds the beginning of a benchmarking process that will provide an opportunity to track the public's expectations of public services – these have an important, if difficult to quantify, effect on their perceptions of public services.

This research has also highlighted the importance of the quality of the information provided by public services. While Panel members may feel relatively well informed about a service, and will think that the information they provide is accurate (except bus and train services), there are often concerns it is not very useful (local councils and the police) or not very clear (local councils, the police, the Benefits Agency, and the Inland Revenue). This all suggests that there is still some way to go before all the information produced by the public sector is written with the needs of the consumer in mind.

Public services also still need to improve the way they handle complaints. This is often the first direct contact a member of the public will have with a service, and can have an important impact on their perceptions of the service. Although results suggest complaints handling is slowly improving, there is still some way to go.

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Overview of Services

Overview - Satisfaction and Importance

As in 1998, education and health services, libraries, and refuse and recycling facilities achieve the highest levels of satisfaction among users, with road and pavement maintenance, local councils as a whole, council housing, street cleaning and youth clubs and other facilities for young people receiving the highest levels of dissatisfaction.

The table overleaf shows how satisfaction and dissatisfaction figures have changed (if at all) since 1998, at the time of the original satisfaction survey.

The table shows that in many cases, results are broadly similar to those found in 1998 (especially bearing in mind the small base of users in some cases). Nonetheless, there have been some noteworthy changes. Satisfaction with local adult education and train companies has increased while satisfaction with the Inland revenue has decreased (more people are now neither satisfied nor dissatisfied). Also, people are more dissatisfied with local sports/leisure facilities, street cleaning, their local council, youth clubs and other facilities for young people. Both the police and council housing have seen falls in satisfaction and rises in dissatisfaction.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of....?				
People's Panel	Wave 1		Wave 5	
	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All/service users (5,000 in 1998, 1,086 in 2000)</i>				
Your GP	90	3	90	4
Libraries	87	3	88	3
Local Primary Schools	88	5	87	4
Refuse/ Waste Collection Services*	86	8	87	8
Local Adult Education*	78	5	84	4
Parks and Open Spaces*	79	10	82	11
Recycling Facilities	78	10	81	10
Local Secondary Schools	82	8	80	10
Local Nursery Schools/ Classes	82	4	79	4
NHS Hospitals	81	11	78	10
Local Sports/ Leisure Facilities*	78	6	76	11
Street lighting	76	12	75	12
Museums and Art Galleries	n/a	n/a	73	2
Passport Agency	n/a	n/a	71	8
Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS)	n/a	n/a	68	11
Local Bus Service	62	23	65	21
Police	73	10	63	13
Street cleaning	62	23	62	28
Employment Service	n/a	n/a	60	12
Council Housing Service*	73	21	60	30
Fire Service	n/a	n/a	58	1
Ambulance Services	n/a	n/a	58	2
Train Companies	53	21	58	22
Inland Revenue	62	10	56	8
Youth Clubs and Other Facilities for Young People*	53	12	56	24
Your local Council	52	18	51	23
The Courts	49	18	49	15
Pavement maintenance	n/a	n/a	41	44
Child Support Agency	n/a	n/a	40	41
Road maintenance and repairs	n/a	n/a	39	46

**NB Different wording used in Wave 1 and Wave 5. Wave 5 wording shown
Source: MORI*

A similar pattern appears in information provision, with education services clearly perceived as the best providers of information in the public sector by their users. Emergency services, the police, parks, the courts, train companies, the Passport Agency (a newly measured service), youth services and museums/art galleries (another newly measured service) all find more people feel badly informed than well informed.

As with satisfaction, many ratings for information provision remain broadly in line with those recorded in 1998, although there is slightly more variation (see the

table below). NHS hospitals, council housing services, youth services and train companies appear to have deteriorated, while recycling services have improved.

Q How well informed, if at all, does keep you about the services it provides?				
People's Panel	Wave 1		Wave 5	
	Well informed	Not well informed	Well informed	Not well informed
<i>Base: All/service users</i>	%	%	%	%
Local Primary Schools	89	8	87	10
Local Secondary Schools	83	12	87	10
Local Adult Education*	79	16	77	22
Local Nursery Schools/ Classes	77	16	74	14
Local Sports/ Leisure Facilities*	61	33	65	30
Libraries	63	32	64	31
Your GP	65	32	62	35
Refuse/ Waste Collection Services*	64	32	62	35
Recycling Facilities	51	44	56	40
Child Support Agency	n/a	n/a	56	36
Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS)	n/a	n/a	54	40
Inland Revenue	55	38	54	41
Council Housing Service*	63	34	53	45
Local Bus Service	49	46	51	46
Your local Council	50	45	51	46
Employment Service	n/a	n/a	47	44
NHS Hospitals	54	42	46	44
Youth Clubs and Other Facilities for Young People*	50	36	46	47
Museums and Art Galleries	n/a	n/a	44	44
Train Companies	46	45	41	53
Passport Agency	n/a	n/a	39	47
The Courts	33	54	37	55
Parks and Open Spaces*	32	55	36	56
Police	33	58	32	58
Fire Service	n/a	n/a	27	56
Ambulance Services	n/a	n/a	24	58

**NB Different wording used in Wave 1 and Wave 5. Wave 5 wording shown
Source: MORI*

Service Importance

As can be seen from the table below, Panel members think that health services are the most important services to them and their household, followed by the police and emergency services, and refuse collection. Other services all mentioned by more than one in ten include parks and open spaces, libraries, local bus services, local primary schools, local sports and leisure services and road maintenance and repairs.

Q	Wave 5
<i>Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?</i>	
	%
<i>Base: All</i>	1,086
Your GP	62
NHS Hospitals	44
Police	36
Fire Service	27
Ambulance Service	26
Refuse/ Waste Collection Services	24
Parks and Open Spaces	18
Libraries	17
Local Bus Service	17
Local Primary Schools	14
Local Sports/ Leisure Facilities	12
Road maintenance and repairs	11
Local Secondary Schools	9
Street lighting	9
Train Companies	9
Council Housing Service	7
Local Nursery Schools/ Classes	6
Street cleaning	6
Your local Council	6
Recycling Facilities	5
Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS)	5
Pavement maintenance	4
Local Adult Education	3
Museums and Art Galleries	3
Youth Clubs and Other Facilities for Young People	3
Inland Revenue	2
Employment Service	1
The Courts	1
Child Support Agency	1
Passport Agency	*

Source: MORI

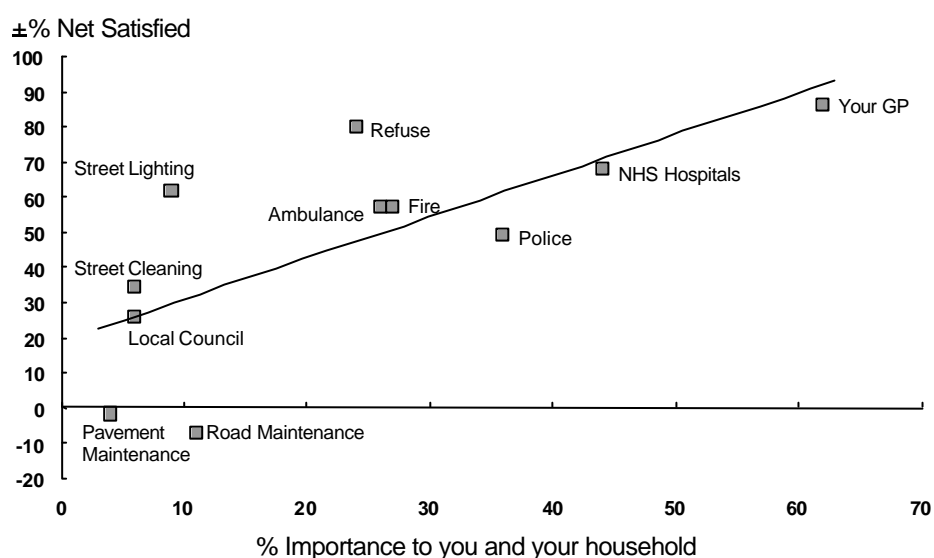
The chart below illustrates the relationship between the importance Panel members attach to specific services, and how highly they rate the performance of these services. The line shows the relationship between satisfaction and importance (i.e. it shows that satisfaction tends to increase as the relative

importance increases) – those well below the line do not receive as high satisfaction ratings as might be expected, and may be priorities for improvement.

GP services are the most highly rated public services, and are also seen as among the most important. While Panel members are less satisfied with NHS hospitals, the service is not considered as important as the GP service, meaning the satisfaction rating is in keeping with that expected by the public.

As in 1998, road and pavement maintenance are considered the most poorly performing services. Although they are only given a low salience compared to these national services, they are often seen as more important than some other local services.

Universal Services: Satisfaction v Importance



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

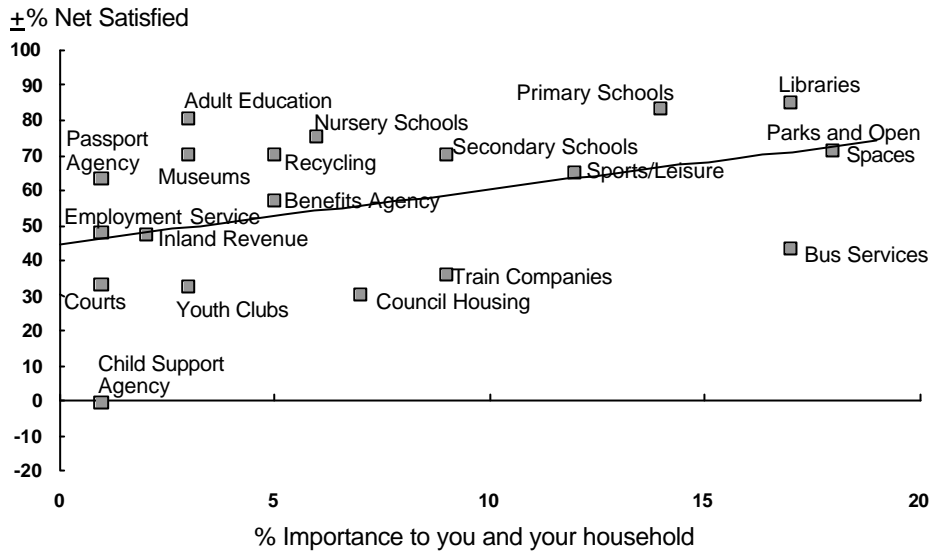
The chart below shows the relationship between service satisfaction and importance of service for non-universal services.

Transport services stand out. Bus and train services are rated as relatively important public services, but receive low net satisfaction ratings – although train service ratings have improved since 1998.

Youth clubs remain a poorly rated service – and satisfaction ratings have fallen since 1998 (although a different wording was used in 1998). This leaves a significant gap between Panel members' expectations and service performance.

Council housing is another service which is very negatively regarded relative to its importance among users (tenants).

Non-Universal Services: Satisfaction v Importance



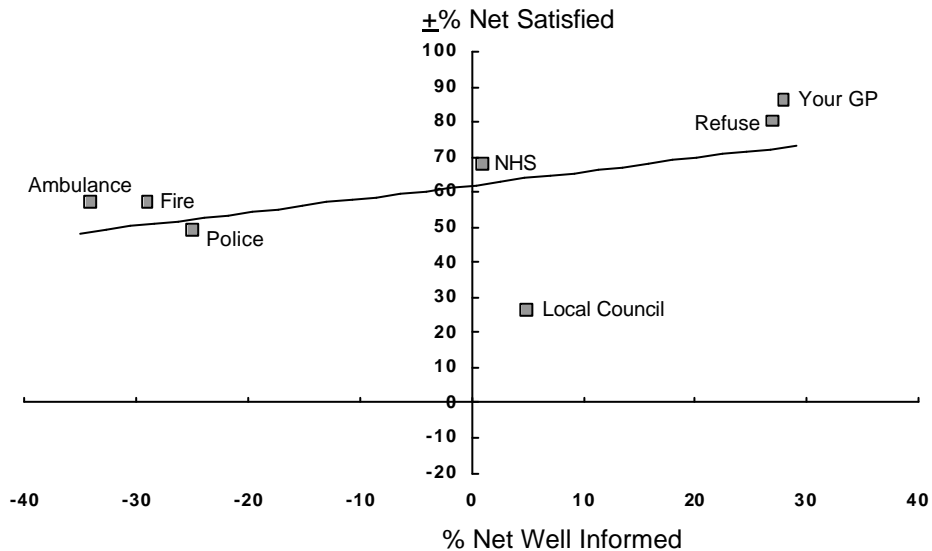
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - Service Users

Source: MORI

Information Provision

GP services and Refuse and waste collection services are considered the best universal services at keeping respondents informed of the services they provide.

Universal Services: Satisfaction v Information Provision



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

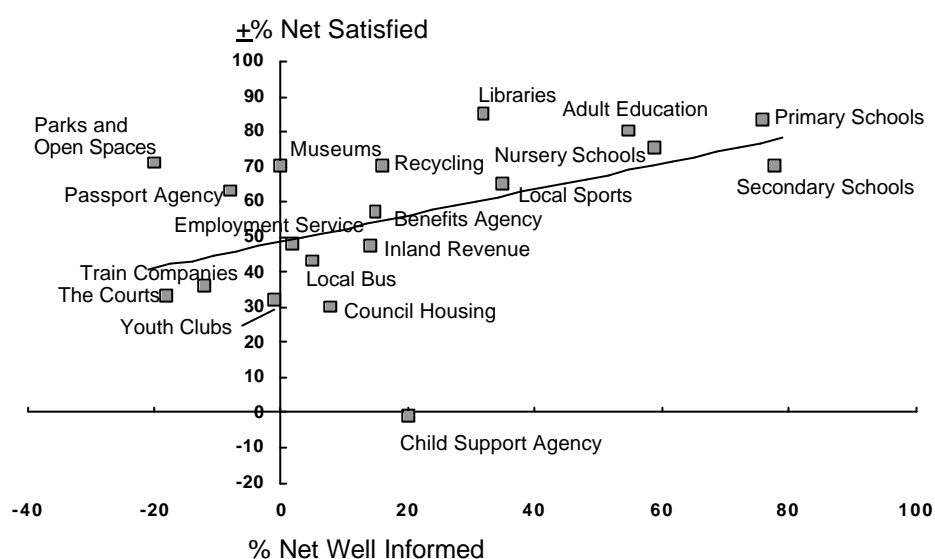
In contrast, Emergency services – Fire, Ambulance and Police – are considered some of the worst public services at keeping Panel members informed.

On balance, local Councils are given a positive rating for keeping respondents informed on the services they provide. This rating is, however, not reflected in a higher satisfaction rating – as can be seen for the other services illustrated above.

Education services are considered the best non-universal public service at keeping respondents informed, receiving very high ratings across the range of different services provided – nursery, primary and secondary schools and adult education.

Council Housing services, Youth Clubs, the Passport Agency, Parks and open spaces, the Courts and transport services are all poorly rated as information providers.

Non-Universal Services: Satisfaction v Information Provision



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All Service Users

Source: MORI

Quality of Information

Those respondents who received at least a limited amount of information from each service provider, were asked to rate the quality of the information they received in terms of its usefulness, accuracy and clarity.

Reflecting the high rating as an information provider above, Education services are highly rated for each of these aspects – particularly information on local primary schools. Respondents are less positive about the clarity of the information provided by local nursery schools and classes.

The Inland Revenue and Benefits Agency/Department of Social Security are seen as providers of useful and accurate information, but again, it is the clarity of the information that causes Panel members concern.

While individual Council services receive high ratings, overall the local Council receives below average ratings for the quality of information it provides to

respondents. This is despite the requirement to publish a Best Value Performance Plan this year. Of particular concern, is the fact that it receives the lowest rating for the usefulness of the information it produces. Does some of this reflect the perceived relevance of local authorities as much as the information itself?

Q	Is the information you received from ... ?		
	Net useful	Net accurate	Net clear
	$\pm\%$	$\pm\%$	$\pm\%$
<i>Base: All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service</i>			
Passport Agency	+96	+86	+76
Local Primary Schools	+94	+94	+96
Local Adult Education	+92	+82	+80
Local Nursery Schools/ Classes	+88	+92	+72
Local Secondary Schools	+88	+82	+96
Recycling Facilities	+88	+88	+90
Your GP	+88	+88	+86
Refuse/ Waste Collection Services	+86	+84	+86
Youth Clubs and Other Facilities for Young People	+86	+80	+74
Inland Revenue	+84	+78	+32
Libraries	+84	+94	+94
Local Sports/ Leisure Facilities	+84	+82	+86
NHS Hospitals	+84	+82	+76
Employment Service	+80	+54	+52
Fire Service	+80	+76	+76
Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS)	+76	+70	+30
Ambulance Service	+74	+78	+78
Local Bus Service	+74	+38	+52
Train Companies	+74	+44	+50
Police	+70	+76	+68
Council Housing Service	+68	+48	+52
Museums and Art Galleries	+68	+82	+82
Parks and Open Spaces	+62	+68	+68
Child Support Agency	+62	+22	-24
The Courts	+58	+50	+42
Your local Council	+56	+62	+60

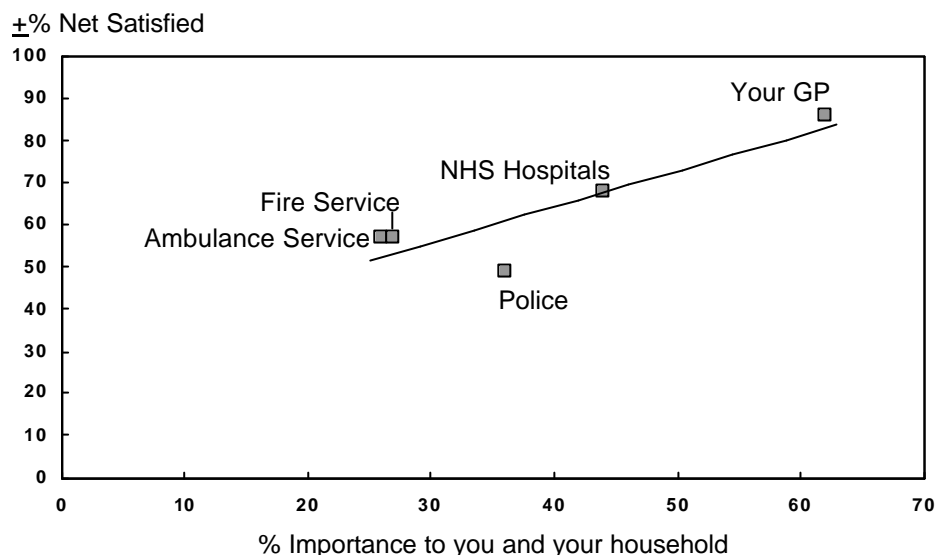
(Top three answers for each aspect are emboldened)

Source: MORI

Health and Emergency Services

Health and Emergency services are considered the most important public services for the general public (as in 1998).

Health and Emergency Services: Satisfaction v Importance



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

This section examines public usage of each service, service importance, satisfaction with each service, expectations of service provision, and how well the public are kept informed by each service. Health services – the GP service and NHS Hospitals – are covered below, with the Emergency services – Fire, Police and Ambulance services – dealt with later in this chapter.

Health Services

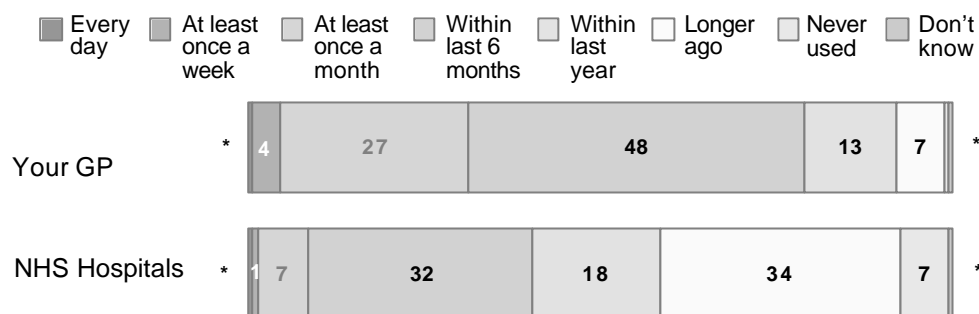
Service Usage

One in twenty have seen their GP within the last week, and over three in ten within the last month. Over nine in ten have used the service within the last year. **These figures are broadly similar to 1998.**

One in twelve have been to an NHS hospital in the last month, and just over half in the last year. **This represents a slight decrease** in the proportion of users (i.e. have used NHS hospitals over the last year) since 1998.

Health Service Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Importance

When asked to choose from a list, which are the most important services to the respondent and their family, 62% place GPs in the top four or five, and 44% choose NHS hospitals. They are the two most important services from the prompt list.

Health Services Importance

Q Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

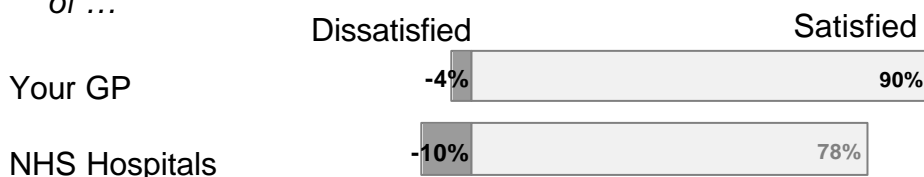
Source: MORI

Service Satisfaction

The GP service and NHS Hospitals are both highly rated services, with net satisfaction figures (satisfaction less dissatisfaction) of +86 and +68, respectively.

Satisfaction with Health Services

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are of ...



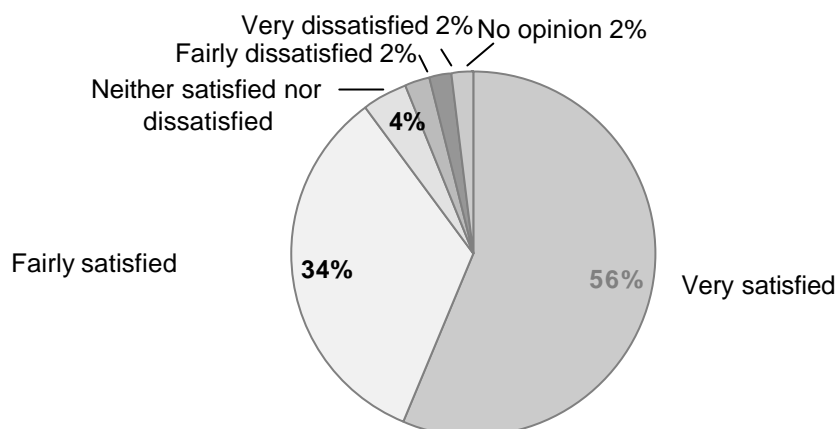
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Nine in ten are satisfied with quality of the service they receive from their GP (56% very satisfied, and 34% fairly satisfied, net satisfied +86): the same proportion as 18 months ago. Women and those aged 65+ are significantly more likely to say they are 'very satisfied' with the service they receive: does this reflect lower expectations?

Satisfaction with your GP

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... your GP?*



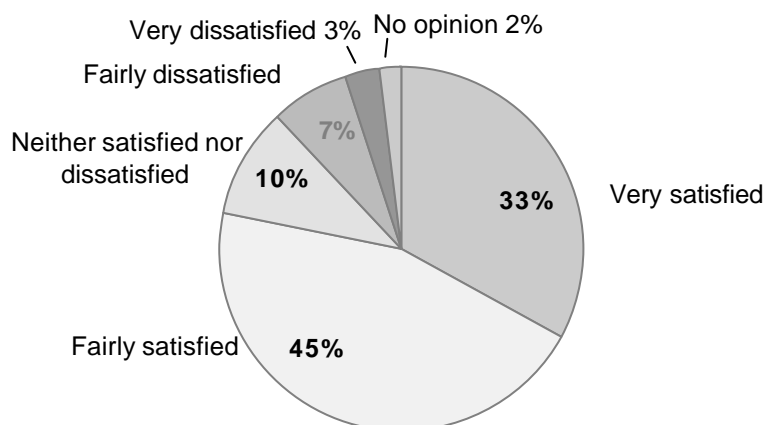
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Although still positively rated, respondents are less satisfied with NHS hospitals than with their GP. Three-quarters are satisfied (33% very satisfied, and 45% fairly satisfied, net satisfied +68), and one in ten are dissatisfied. This is little changed since first asked in 1998. Again, it is female, and older panel members who are likely to be 'very satisfied'.

Satisfaction with NHS Hospitals

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... NHS Hospitals?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

Panel members were asked about their expectations with the service provided by GPs, and NHS Hospitals.

Three in ten mention access to a GP within a week as the key priority for the service. Almost half mention the provision of reliable medical advice (49%), and reference to a specialist consultant when appropriate (44%). These are the top three issues for Panel members, irrespective of age or class. But younger respondents (aged 16-24) place greater stress than other groups on the confidentiality of the GP service.

Q	%
Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for your GP service to do?	
<i>Base: All</i>	<i>(1,086)</i>
To enable patients to make an appointment and see a GP within a week	62
To provide patients with reliable medical advice	49
To refer patients to specialist consultants when appropriate	44
For the GP service to be free of charge	31
To be efficient	26
To treat all patients with respect	25
To be confidential	25
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	20
To provide value for money	5
To be able to deal with the service electronically, for example by internet, or digital TV	2
Other	1
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

There are three broad aspects of NHS Hospital service that are each mentioned by just over half of the Panel members – the provision of beds for all who need them (56%), the provision of medical care when needed (55%) and a maximum waiting time of one hour for those waiting in Accident and Emergency (54%). The provision of beds to all who need them is more likely to be mentioned by those aged 16-24, 71%.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for NHS Hospitals to do?

	%
<i>Base: All</i>	(1,086)
To provide beds to all who need them	56
To provide the medical care needed, when it is needed	55
Accident and Emergency waiting times to be no more than 1 hour	54
To see a consultant within a month, if necessary	39
For the Hospital service to be free of charge	31
To be seen within ten minutes of your appointment time	25
To be efficient	19
To provide value for money	5
Other	1
Don't know	1

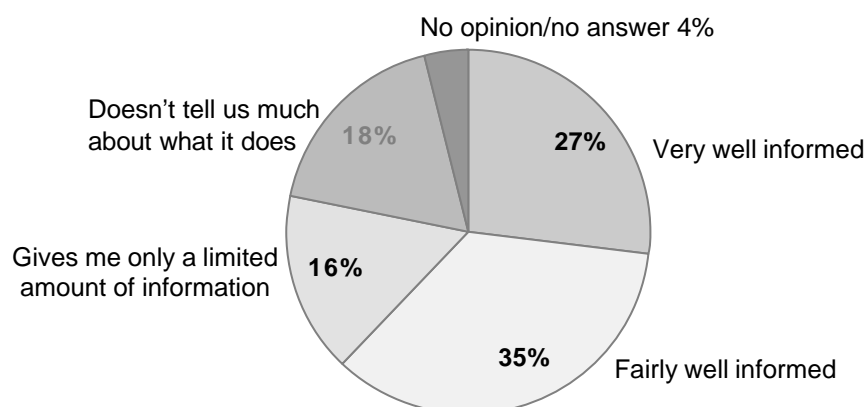
Source: MORI

Service Information

Panel members were asked to consider how well these health services keep them informed. Two-thirds (62%) say that their GP keeps them very or fairly well informed about the service they provide, in contrast to less than half who say this of NHS Hospitals (46%). Over a quarter say that NHS Hospitals do not tell them much about what they do. These figures place the GP service as one of the better public services at informing the public, and the NHS about average.

Provision of Information from Your Local GP

Q *Still thinking how well informed does... your GP... keep you about the services they provide?*

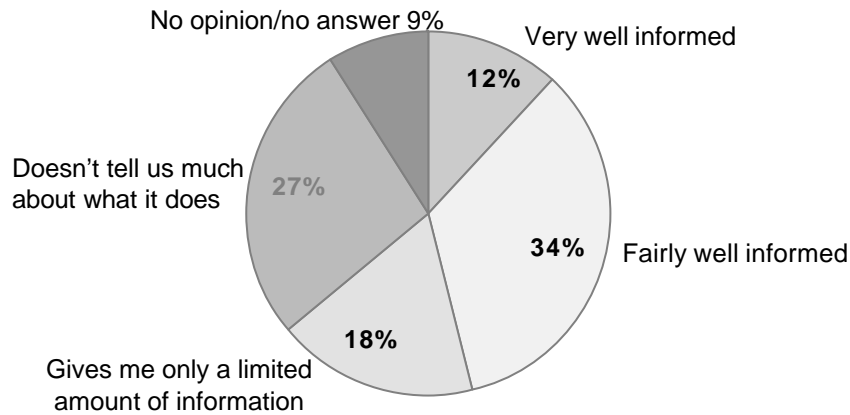


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Provision of Information from NHS Hospitals

Q *Still thinking how well informed do... NHS Hospitals... keep you about the services they provide?*



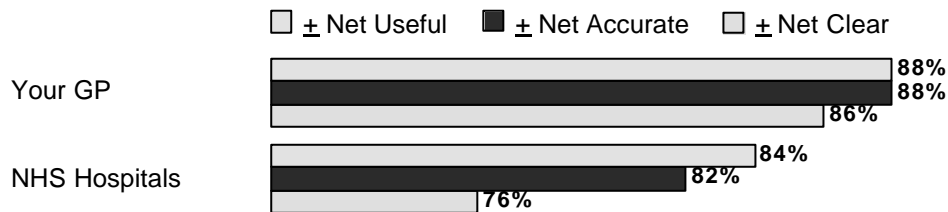
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Those who received at least a limited amount of information on each service, were asked to evaluate the quality of the information they receive. Health services are viewed very positively. On balance, over four in five consider the information they receive from both services as useful, and accurate. While still rating the information highly, one in eight say the information from the NHS is unclear, giving a net figure of +76.

Health Services - Quality of Information

Q *Is the information you received from ... ?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

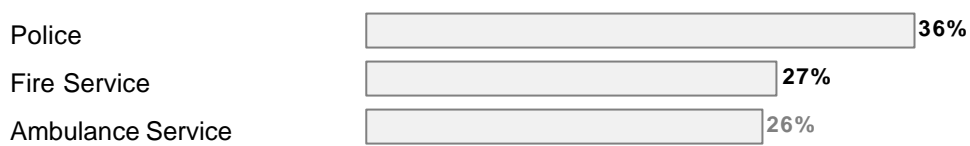
Emergency Services

Service Importance

After health, the emergency services are seen as the most important public services to Panel members. Thirty-six per cent say the police are among the four or five most important services to themselves or their family, 27% say fire services, and 26% the ambulance service.

Emergency Services Importance

Q Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

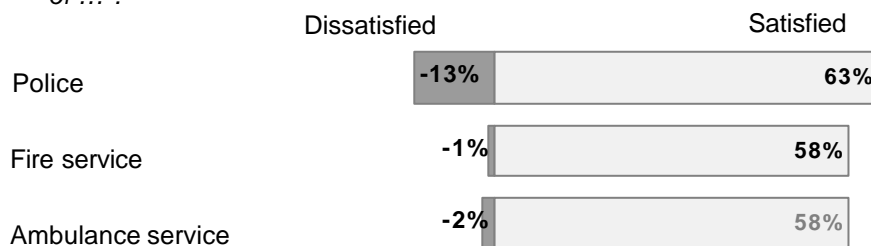
Source: MORI

Service Satisfaction

Of the three emergency services, the Police is considered to be providing a service below the level expected by the public, given its relative level of importance (i.e. it is below the trendline on the satisfaction v importance chart above). While considered a more important service than Fire or Ambulance services, it is, on balance, not rated as highly.

Satisfaction with Emergency Services

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

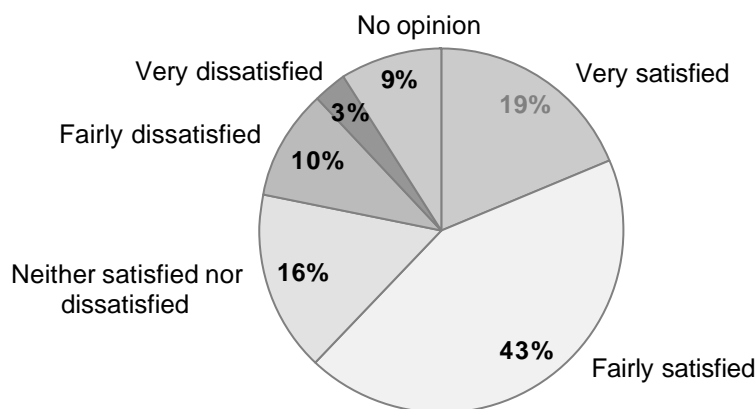
Source: MORI

Although two-thirds (63%) are satisfied with the service, thirteen per cent are dissatisfied. Furthermore, only one in five are very satisfied, with the remainder fairly satisfied. This shows a **drop of ten percentage points since 1998** when the overall satisfaction figure was 73%.

There is also considerable variation among different population sub-groups on the Police are rated. Younger panel members (aged 16-24) and those in social classes AB (professional middle classes), are most critical.

Satisfaction with Police

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Police?*



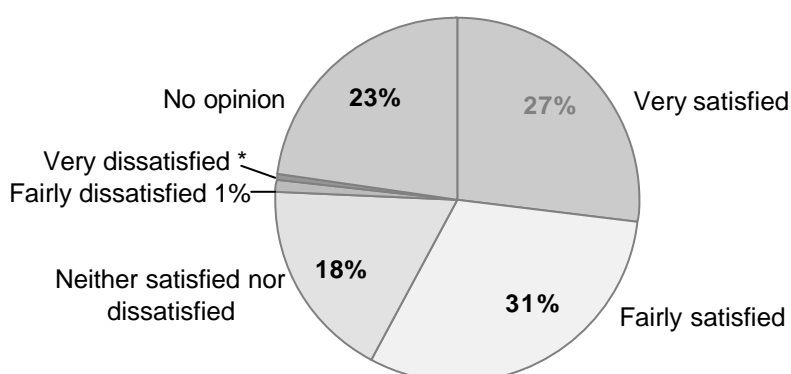
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

The Fire and Ambulance services are considered less important than GPs and NHS Hospitals. Almost three in five consider the Fire and Ambulance services satisfactory, with only two per cent critical. Satisfaction is significantly higher with each service among those in social classes DE (unskilled manual workers, those on benefits). It should, however, be noted that two in five do not express an opinion on these services.

Satisfaction with Fire Service

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Fire Service?*



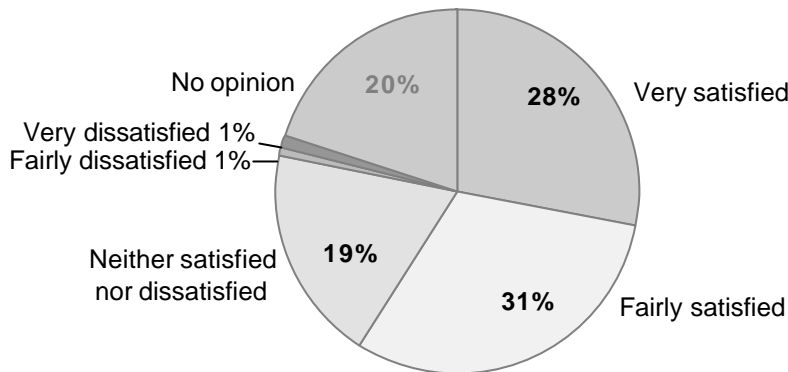
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

As with the police, Panel members in social classes AB are most critical of the fire and ambulance services (net satisfaction ratings of +45 and +44 respectively) – although they are slightly more likely to offer no opinion. Panel members in the South of England also tend to be more critical (with net satisfaction ratings of +44 and +50 respectively).

Satisfaction with Ambulance Service

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Ambulance Service?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

Panel members have clear expectations of what they want from the Ambulance and Fire services. The overriding priorities are speed of response, and having the knowledge to deal with the emergencies they encounter. Over nine in ten say that reaching accident victims within 15 minutes is the most important objective for the Ambulance service, and that responding to 999 calls within 10 minutes is the top priority for the Fire service. Over four in five mention the ability to deal with all fire or medical emergencies.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Ambulance Service to do?

	%
<i>Base: All</i>	<i>(1,086)</i>
To reach accident victims within 15 minutes	92
To be able to deal with all medical emergencies	86
To educate people on how to prevent accidents	42
To make me feel safe	34
To provide value for money	8
Other	*
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Fire Service to do?

	%
<i>Base: All</i>	(1,086)
To respond to 999 calls within 10 minutes	93
To be able to deal with all emergencies	85
To provide Fire Safety advice	50
To make me feel safe	29
To provide value for money	9
Other	*
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

As with the other Emergency services, a fast response to an emergency is seen as the most important expectation the public have of the Police service, mentioned by seven in ten Panel members. The reduction of crime is cited by two-thirds of respondents. Both of these issues are more likely to be mentioned by middle class Panel members, than those in social classes C2DE.

Patrols of local neighbourhoods, and equal, non-discriminatory, treatment of all groups in society are mentioned by a third of respondents. Police patrols are more frequently given as a priority by older Panel members – 43% among those aged 55+, in contrast to 20% among those aged 16-24. The importance of equal treatment of all groups in society by the Police also correlates with age, with younger Panel members more likely to consider this a priority.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Police to do?

	%
<i>Base: All</i>	(1,086)
To respond to 999 calls within 10 minutes	70
To reduce crime	64
To patrol where I live	35
To treat all groups in society equally and without discrimination	32
To respond quickly to complaints and appeals	29
To be efficient	19
To make me feel safe	16
To provide crime prevention advice	10
To deal with people and information in a confidential manner	10
To provide value for money	4
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	1
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	1
Other	*
Don't know	1

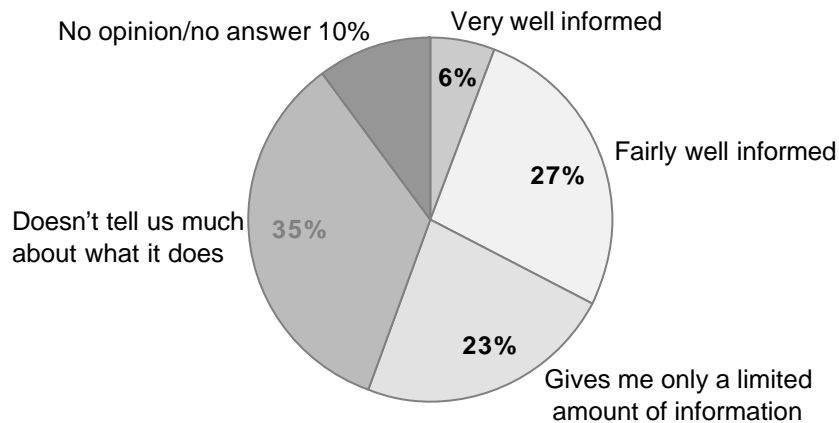
Source: MORI

Service Information

Emergency services are rated as the worst information providers of the range of public services asked about. On balance, each service is rated negatively, with more respondents saying they receive limited information, or less, than say they feel very or fairly well informed about the services provided. Three in five say that they get limited information, or the service ‘doesn’t tell us much about what it does’ (Ambulance 58%, Fire 56%, and Police 58%).

Provision of Information from Police

Q *Still thinking how well informed do... Police... keep you about the services they provide?*

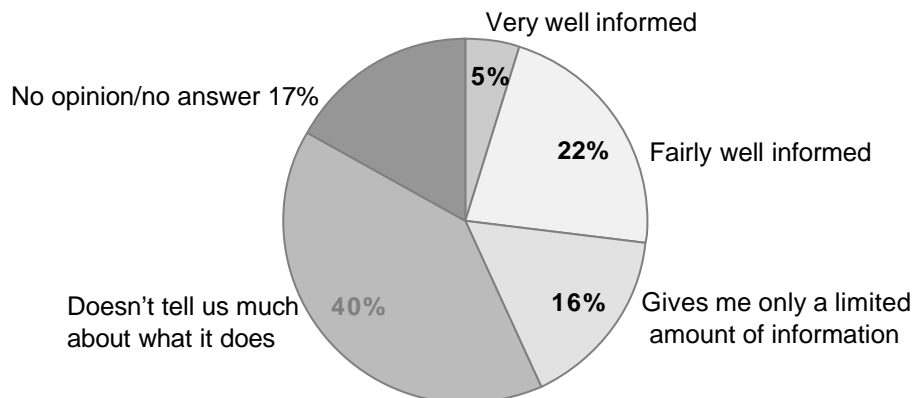


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Provision of Information from Fire Services

Q *Still thinking how well informed do... Fire Services... keep you about the services they provide?*

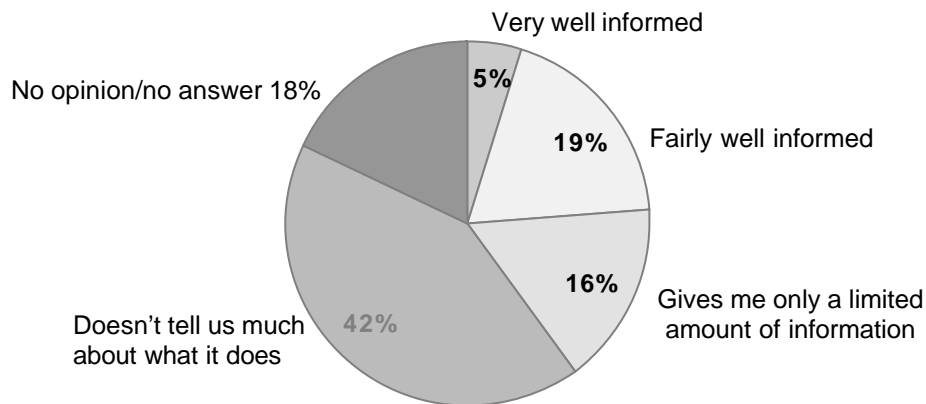


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Provision of Information from Ambulance Services

Q *Still thinking how well informed do... Ambulance Services... keep you about the services they provide?*



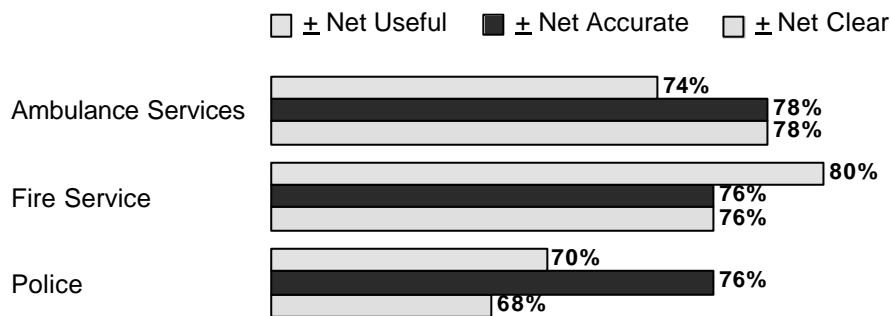
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

The quality of the information that Emergency services provide is relatively well rated. On balance, three-quarters consider the information they get from the Ambulance and Fire services as useful, accurate and clear. They are, however, more critical about the information produced by the Police: they are less likely to think this is useful or clear.

Emergency Services - Quality of Information

Q *Is the information you received from ... ?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

Local Council

Service Importance

Only six per cent of Panel Members say that their “local council” is among the four or five most important public services to them and their household. However, it should be noted that this list included a number of services provided by the council - such as council housing, refuse collection, parks and open spaces, libraries and so on – which received higher importance ratings. (We know from previous research that there is widespread confusion over what local authorities deliver.)

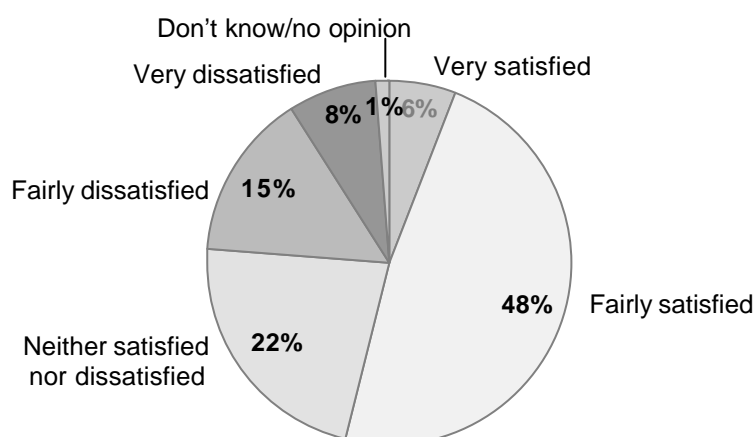
Service Satisfaction

Satisfaction with local councils was asked about in two ways. For trend purposes, Panel Members were asked, ‘Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the quality of your local Council’, a repeat of the question wording used in 1998. At the end of the battery of services, respondents were then asked ‘And overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local Council runs things’. This is the same wording as used by the DETR for its Best Value Performance Indicators, and will provide a useful national comparison when their results are published in 2001/2.

According to the DETR question, over half of Panel members are satisfied with the quality of service they receive from their local council, with a quarter dissatisfied (54% and 23%, respectively).

Satisfaction with Local Council

Q *And overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local Council runs things?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things is higher among older Panel members (60%), and lower among those with children in household (47%), and those living in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland (46%).

The trend question **shows a rise in dissatisfaction of five percentage points since 1998**. Using this question wording, 51% say they are satisfied, and 23% say they are dissatisfied. Again, older respondents are much more likely to be satisfied than younger Panel Members.

Service Expectations

Half of respondents (49%) say their main expectation for local Councils is the maintenance of good quality of local services. This is more likely to be mentioned by full time workers (58%), and those living in the North (56%).

Other key aspects of the Council's role relate to the way in which the Council listens and involves local residents. A third mention listening to local people as an important objective for the Council, and involving local people in budgetary decisions is cited by three in ten. Younger Panel members, aged 16-24, are significantly more likely to see this as priority than other age groups (43%).

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for your Council to do?	
	%
<i>Base: All</i>	<i>(1,086)</i>
To maintain good quality local services	49
To listen to local people	33
To involve local people in how the local council spends their money	30
To treat all residents equally	25
To tell local people what it is doing	25
To treat all areas it serves equally	21
To provide value for money	20
To be open to scrutiny	19
To be efficient	19
To encourage regeneration investment in the area and job creation	14
To work to promote the well being of the area	11
To be helpful	7
To be friendly	6
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	5
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	1
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	1
Other	1
Don't know	1

Source: MORI

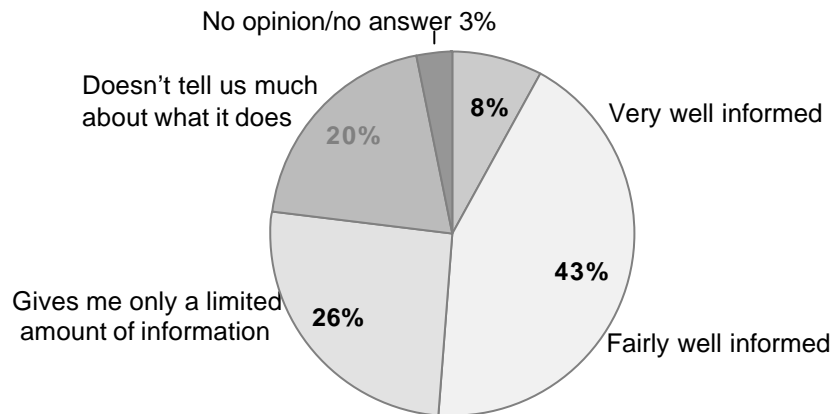
Service Information

On balance, Panel members feel their local Council keeps them well informed, with a net figure of +5 (51% well informed, minus 46% not well informed). This is an average rating, when compared to the other public services covered in this study.

As we frequently find in our work for Local Authorities, there is some variation in how well informed different subgroups feel about their local Council. Most well informed are older respondents, those in social classes DE, disabled Panel members, and those in the South. In contrast, younger Panel members and those living in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland feel least well informed.

Provision of Information from Your Local Council

Q *Still thinking how well informed does... your local council... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

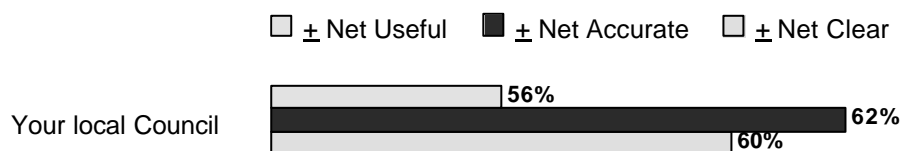
Source: MORI

While respondents consider their local Council about average for the quantity of information they provide, they are far more negative about the quality of the information – rating it more critically than for any other of the public services covered.

On balance, three in five consider the information accurate and clear, but they are less likely to say it is useful. One in five Panel members say the information they get from their local Council is not useful, inaccurate or unclear. Younger Panel members are more likely to be critical.

Local Council- Quality of Information

Q *Is the information you received from ... ?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

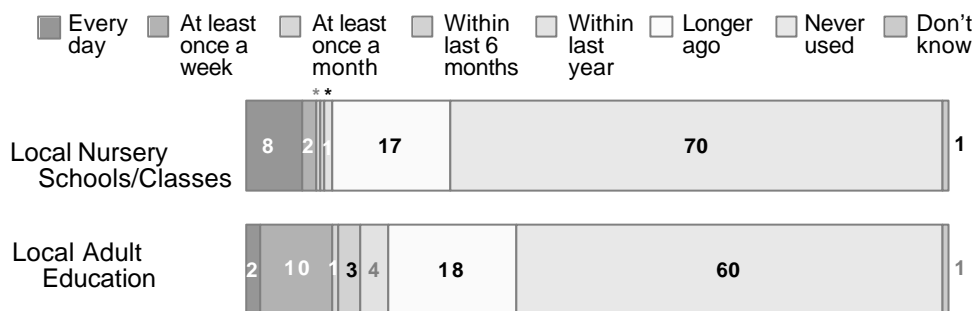
Education Services

Service Usage

One in nine Panel members make use of local nursery facilities, one in five have children who currently attend local primary schools, and one in seven have children attending local secondary schools. One in five Panel members – or members of their households – have made use of local adult education services within the last year. **These are very similar proportions of users over the last year to the figures in 1998**

Education Services Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

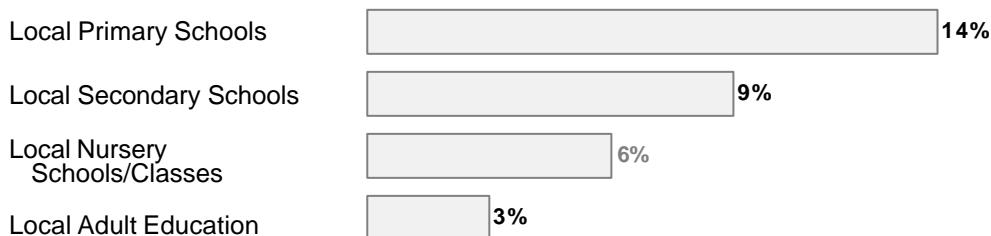
Source: MORI

Service Importance

As shown on the chart below, primary schools are seen as the most important education service, followed by local secondary schools, local nursery schools and local adult education.

Education Services Importance

Q Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

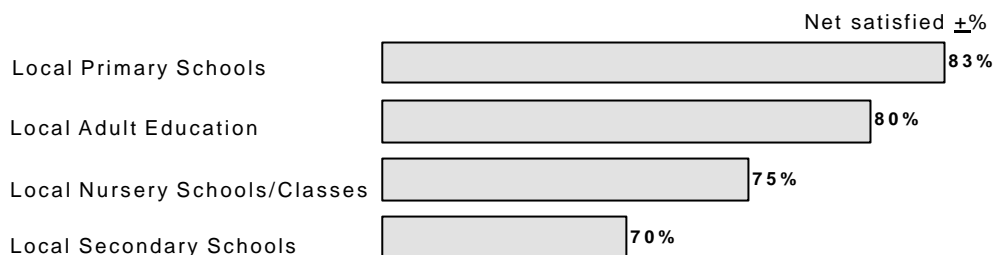
Source: MORI

Service Satisfaction

Overall education services are rated more highly than other public services.

Satisfaction with Education Services

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's ... ?



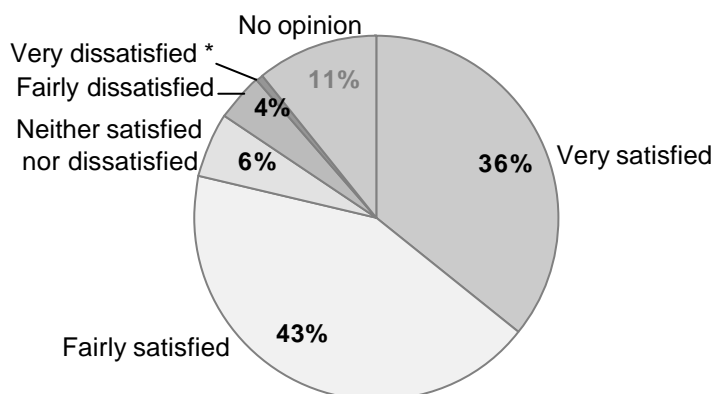
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users

Source: MORI

Four in five service users are satisfied with local authority nursery schools and classes, and four per cent are dissatisfied. Over a third are very satisfied, and a further four in ten are fairly satisfied (36% and 43% respectively). **There has been no significant change since 1998.**

Satisfaction with Provision of Nursery Schools/Classes

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall your local authority's ... Local Nursery Schools/Classes?



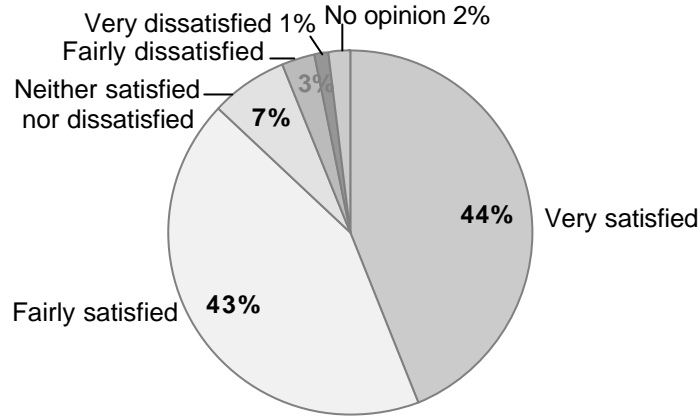
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (105)

Source: MORI

In contrast, the rating of local primary schools has **remained constant since 1998**. Almost nine out of ten are satisfied with local authority's primary schools, and four per cent are dissatisfied. This means the balance of opinion among those who have children at local primary schools is unchanged at +83.

Satisfaction with Local Primary Schools

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall your local authority's ... Local Primary Schools?



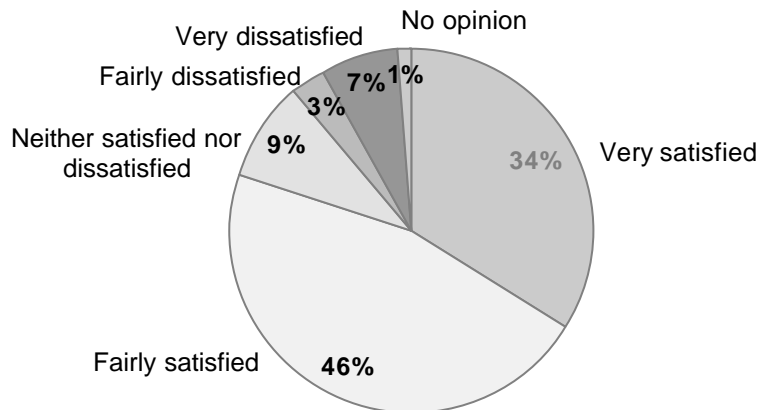
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (212)

Source: MORI

Parents are more critical of local secondary schools than nursery or primary schools. While satisfaction is still high at 80%, a larger minority express dissatisfaction with secondary schools than with other layers of the education system, 10%.

Satisfaction with Local Secondary Schools

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's local secondary schools?



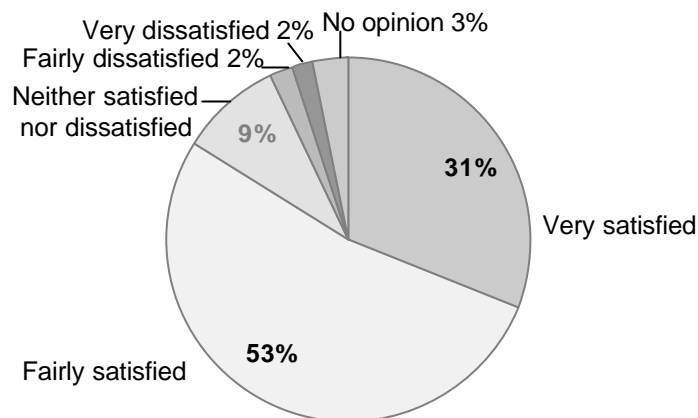
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (188)

Source: MORI

Local Adult education services are highly rated, with 84% satisfied, and four per cent dissatisfied (+80). This compares with +78 in 1998.

Satisfaction with Local Adult Education

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall your local authority's ... Local Adult Education?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (217)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

When asked about expectations of the local **nursery** school service, parents focus on safety and personal development, rather than specific measurable targets for educational achievement. Two-thirds feel it is most important for nursery provision to ensure that all children develop personally, socially and emotionally, and that all children are safe and healthy in school.

While still saying that a safe and healthy school environment is one of the most important tasks for schools, when considering parents' top expectation for **primary** school education is by the time children are 11, they should have reached Maths and English standards for their age. This is mentioned by three in five parents (57%).

Other key expectations of primary schools are that there are sufficient staff and equipment to support children's learning (43%), and that children are educated in line with the national curriculum (42%).

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for local primary schools to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who have child/ren attending local primary schools</i>	<i>(212)</i>
To make sure that all children are educated in English and Maths to the standards for their age by the time they are 11 years old	57
To ensure that all children are safe and healthy in school	51
To have the staff and equipment needed to support children's learning	43
To ensure that all children are educated in line with the national curriculum	42
To ensure discipline is maintained	38
To ensure that there is provision for children with special educational needs	24
To ensure that parents are welcomed into school and actively seek to involve them in their children's education and development	18
To prepare all youngsters for growing up	17
To ensure that all children can make good use of computers	13
Other	1
Don't know	1

Source: MORI

When asked to consider what it is most important for local **secondary** schools to do, parents have a clear priority. Almost three in five (56%) mention 'to ensure that all children are given the opportunity to realise their full potential and that targets for educational attainment are met'.

The second priority, cited by over a third of respondents (37%), is to ensure that by the age of 16 children have the skills, attitudes and personal qualities ready for further education.

In contrast, three in ten (30% of parents) say children should have the skills, attitudes and qualities ready for the workplace.

Q	%
Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for local secondary schools to do?	
<i>Base: All who have child/ren attending local secondary schools</i>	
	<i>(188)</i>
To ensure that all children are given the opportunity to realise their full potential and that targets for educational attainment are met	56
To ensure that all children reach the age of 16 with skills, attitudes and personal qualities ready for further studies at college or university	37
To ensure that all children are safe and healthy in school	31
To ensure that children reach the age of 16 with skills, attitudes and personal qualities ready for work	30
To ensure discipline is maintained	27
To ensure that there is provision for children with special educational needs	26
To have the staff and equipment needed to support children's learning	23
To ensure that parents are welcomed into the school and actively seek to involve them in their children's education and development	22
To provide a range of out of school activities	18
To ensure that all children are educated in line with the national curriculum	16
To ensure that children can make good use of computers	16
Other	1
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

The three top expectations for the local adult education service are the provision of the courses people want to study (68%), high quality teaching and support (48%), and flexible courses and opening hours (44%).

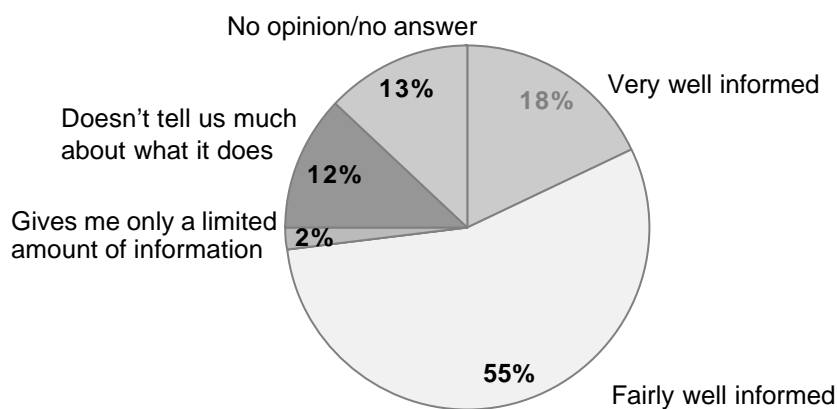
Service Information

Education services are considered among the best public services at keeping users informed about the services they provide.

Most highly rated are local secondary schools, with nine in ten (88%) of service users saying they are kept very or fairly well informed. Similarly, 86% of those with a child at local primary schools say they are well informed, and three-quarters of parents using local nursery schools or classes, or residents using adult education services say are well informed (73% and 77%, respectively).

Provision of Information from Local Nursery Schools/Classes

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... Local Nursery Schools/Classes ... keep you about the services they provide?*

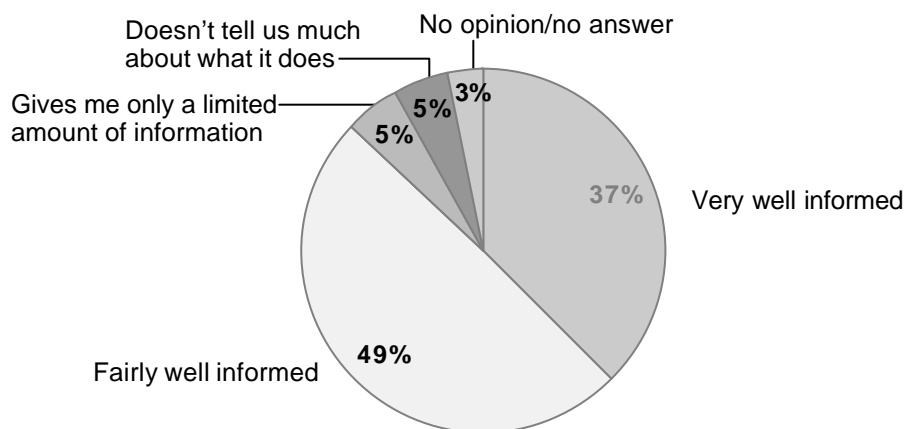


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (105)

Source: MORI

Provision of Information from Local Primary Schools

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... Local Primary Schools ... keep you about the services they provide?*

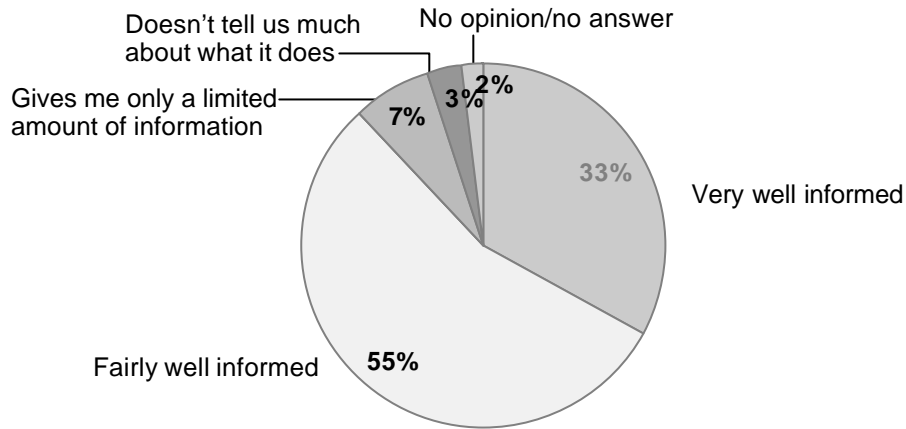


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (212)

Source: MORI

Provision of Information from Local Secondary Schools

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... Local Secondary Schools ... keep you about the services they provide?*

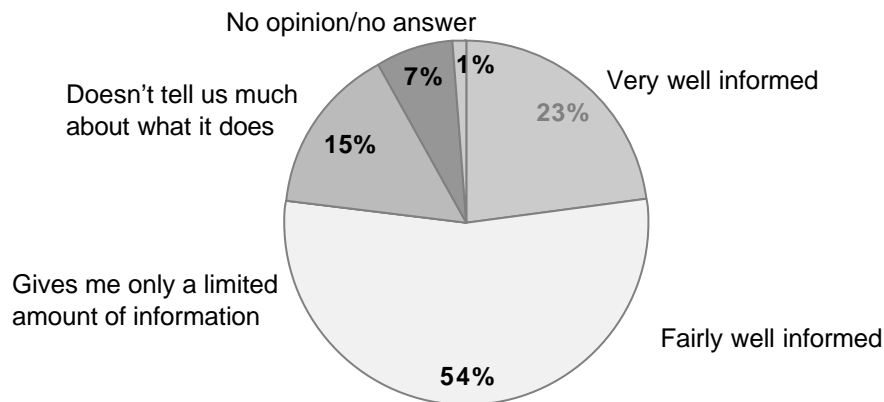


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (188)

Source: MORI

Provision of Information from Local Adult Education Services

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does ... Local Adult Education ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (217)

Source: MORI

When asked to consider the quality of the information they receive from the education services, those receiving at least a little information are overwhelmingly positive. Over nine in ten consider the information provided by each tier of the education system useful, accurate and clear. The only exception is the information provided by nursery schools, where 14% say the information is unclear, giving this aspect a lower rating.

Education Services - Quality of Information

Q Is the information you received from ... ?

± Net Useful ± Net Accurate ± Net Clear



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

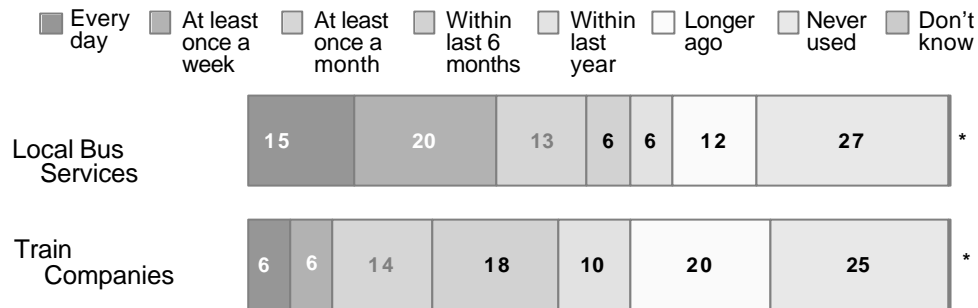
Transport

Service Usage

A third of respondents say they make use of the local bus service at least once a week, with half of these using it every day – **very similar figures to 1998**. Three in five say they have taken the bus within the last year. Women, and those on lower income, make greatest use of the service.

Transport Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

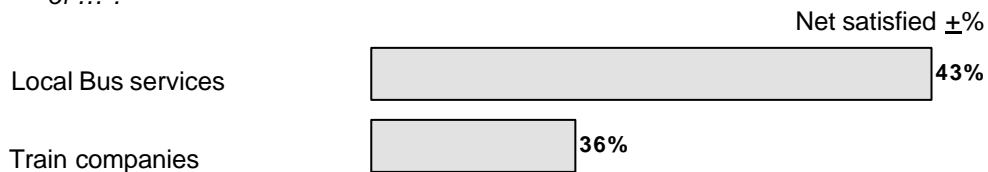
While over half (54%) have taken a train journey within the last year, respondents are less frequent train users than bus users. One in eight take the train at least once a week, of whom six per cent are travelling by train every day – again, **very similar figures to 1998**. As might be expected, these frequent users are predominantly full time workers.

Service Importance

One in six say that local bus services are among the most important public services, compared with one in eleven who say train companies.

Satisfaction with Transport Services

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users

Source: MORI

Service Satisfaction

Local train companies are more positively rated than two years ago, although there has been no significant change in satisfaction with local bus services since 1998.

Satisfaction with Transport Services

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users

Source: MORI

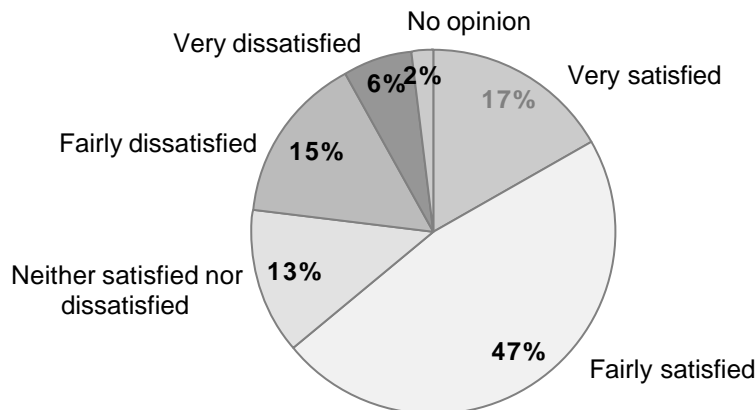
Bus Services

Two-thirds of bus travellers are satisfied with the quality of the service (17% very satisfied, and 47% fairly satisfied). One in five are dissatisfied, giving a net figure of +43.

Those groups most likely to be using buses, are those most likely to be satisfied with the service – women, older residents, and those in social classes DEs. There are also interesting regional variations with users in the South, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland more positive, and those in the North and Midlands less so.

Satisfaction with Local Bus Services

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... Local Bus Services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (630)

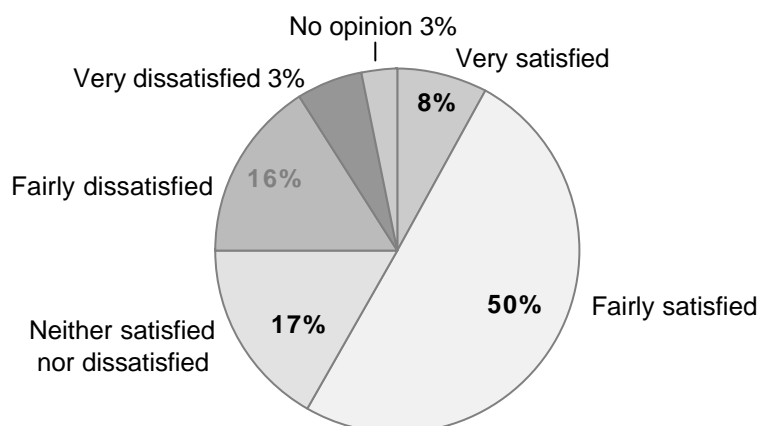
Source: MORI

Train Services

Satisfaction with train services has also improved. Three in five train users are satisfied, while a quarter are dissatisfied (58%, and 24%, respectively). This gives a balance of opinion of +36, **a rise of five points over the last eighteen months.**

Satisfaction with Train Companies

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... Train Companies?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (611)

Source: MORI

Again, there are interesting geographical differences in opinion, with Panel members in the South significantly more critical of the train companies than those living elsewhere.

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... train companies*

	North	Midlands	South	Wales/ Scotland/ Northern Ireland
	%	%	%	%
Base:	(159)	(174)	(201)	(77)
Satisfied	55	65	47	84
Dissatisfied	19	19	29	11
Net satisfied ±	+36	+46	+18	+73

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

When asked their expectations of transport services, Panel members' overriding concern is that services are reliable. Over three-quarters mention buses running on time as the most important aspect of the service (77%). Younger respondents

(aged 16-24), and more middle class Panel members (AB) are more likely to mention this (80%, and 92%, respectively).

The second key driver is convenience. Two in five say that buses should be provided when, and where, people want them. Cleanliness and safety are also issues.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for local bus services to do?	
	%
<i>Base: All who have used local bus services</i>	
	(630)
To make sure buses run on time	77
To provide buses when people want them	41
To provide buses where people want them	40
To ensure all passengers feel safe when on a bus	28
To keep buses clean	26
To provide value for money	20
To provide clear information about prices and services	20
To ensure all passengers have a seat	11
To provide value for money	11
To minimise the number of breakdowns	6
Other	1
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

Train travellers have similar service expectations. Even more, nine in ten, mention service reliability, 'to make sure trains run on time', 87%, and over a third (37%) cite providing trains when people want them as top priorities.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for train companies to do?	
	%
<i>Base: All who have used train companies</i>	
	(611)
To make sure trains run on time	87
To provide trains when people want them	37
To ensure all passengers feel safe when on a train	34
To provide clear information about prices and services	30
To keep trains clean	27
To ensure that all passengers have a seat	22
To provide value for money	20
To provide trains where people want them	18
To minimise the number of breakdowns	13
Other	*
Don't know	1

Source: MORI

However, respondents are more likely to mention safety as an issue in relation to train travel, than they are to bus use. Ensuring safety is seen as an important

aspect of the train service by a third of train travellers – particularly women and those in social classes DE (37%, and 46%, respectively).

Reflecting respondents views on the quality of the information, three in ten cite the provision of clear price and service information as an important expectation.

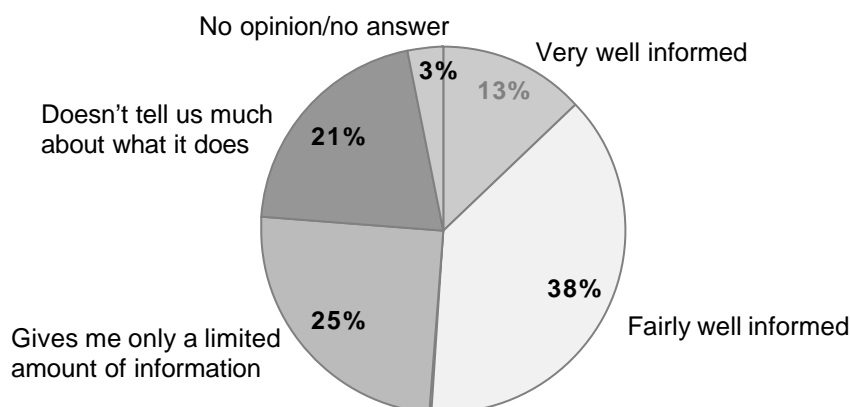
Service Information

Panel members who use bus and train services are very negative about how well these services keep them informed. They are considered to be below average in this area.

Those who make use of local bus services are evenly divided between those who feel they are very or fairly well informed about the services bus provided (51%), and those who feel they receive a limited amount of information, or less (46%). This gives a balance of opinion of +5.

Provision of Information from Local Bus Services

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... Local Bus Services ... keep you about the services they provide?*



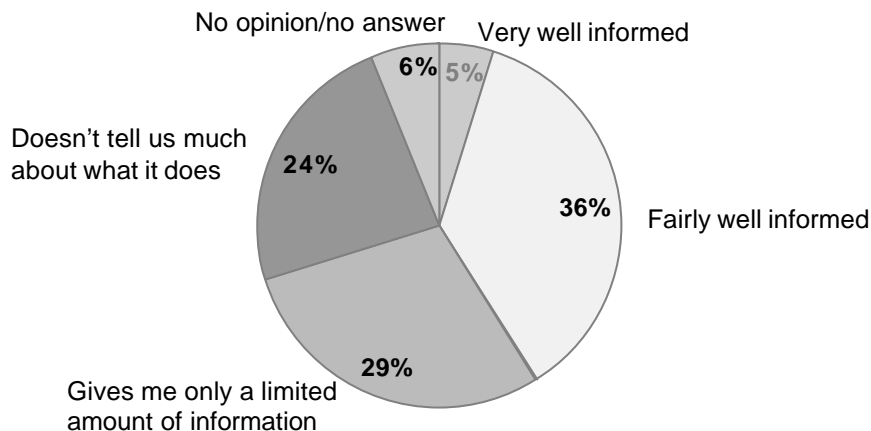
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (630)

Source: MORI

However, fewer train travellers now feel well informed about train services, and the net informed figure **has fallen by ten points** from -2 to -12.

Provision of Information from Train Companies

Q Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... Train Companies ... keep you about the services they provide?



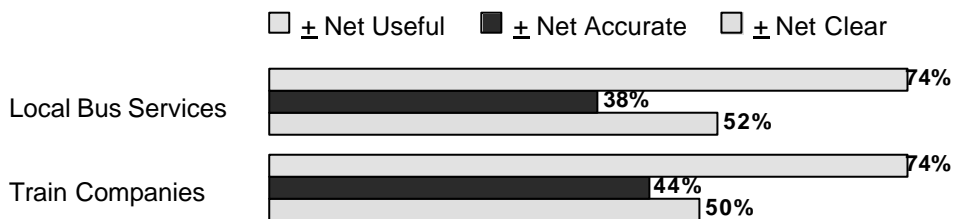
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (611)

Source: MORI

While bus and train users who receive at least a limited amount of information are relatively positive about the usefulness of the information they get, they are very critical of its accuracy and clarity. Three in ten say bus and train information is inaccurate, and a quarter feel the information provided by each service is unclear.

Transport - Quality of Information

Q Is the information you received from ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

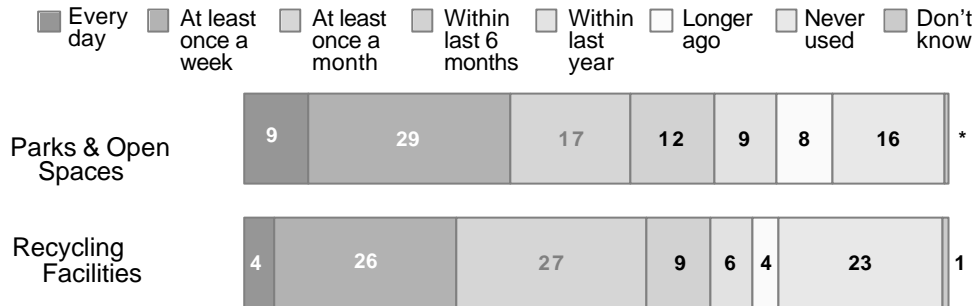
Environmental Services

Service Usage

Over a third of Panel members say that they, or a member of their household, visits a local park or open space at least once a week (38%) – an increase on 1998 (up 7 points). As would be expected, it is those with children in household who are most likely to use local parks regularly (50%). Those aged 55+ are twice as likely as other age groups to say that they never visit parks and open spaces.

Environmental Services Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

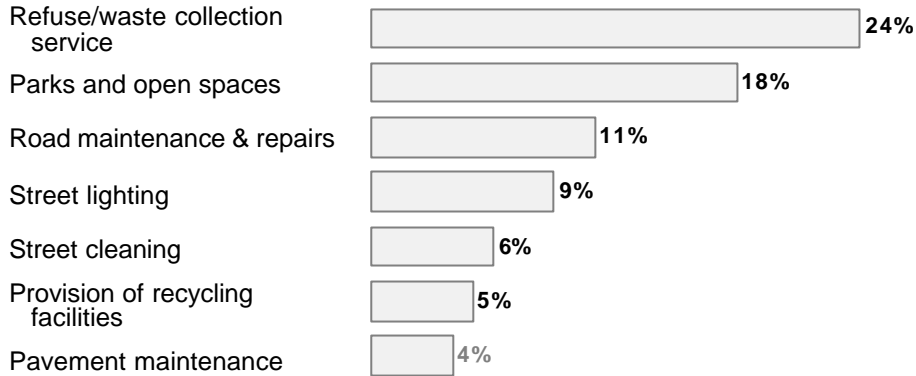
Three in ten say they use recycling facilities at least once a week, and three in five do so at least once a month – **very similar to 1998**. Regular recycling correlates closely with social class and income, with more middle class and affluent Panel members twice as likely as those in social classes DE to recycle at least once a week.

Service Importance

A quarter of Panel members say that refuse and waste collection services are among the most important services to them and their household – a very similar figure to the ratings for fire and ambulance services. Eighteen per cent say parks and open spaces, and 11% say road maintenance (with 4% citing pavement maintenance). Street lighting is mentioned by one in eleven, and around one in twenty say street cleaning and the provision of recycling.

Environmental Services Importance

Q Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?

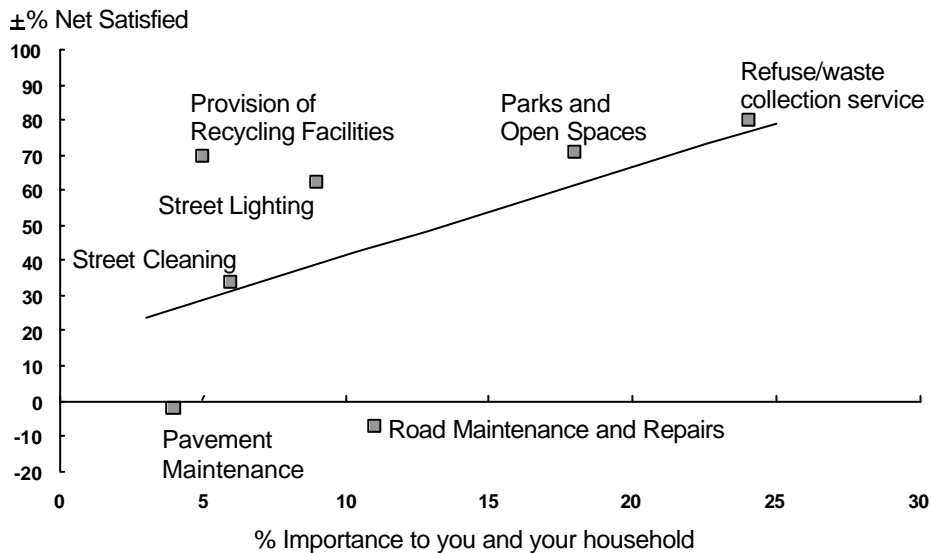


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Environmental services are generally well rated, and considered to provide a quality of service in keeping, or beyond, the importance respondents apply to the service. This can be seen from the graph below illustrating net satisfaction with each service, against net importance. The two exceptions to this – as illustrated by the fact that they sit below the line of best fit – are pavement and road maintenance. While not considered as important as services such as refuse and parks, respondents rating of these services falls below expectations.

Environmental Services: Satisfaction v Importance



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)/Service Users

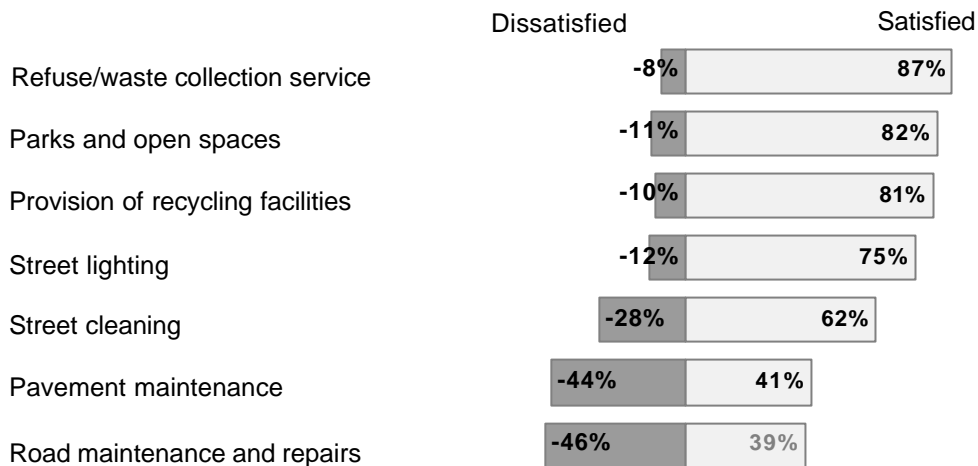
Source: MORI

Service Satisfaction

The chart below illustrates the net satisfaction figures for each of the seven environmental services.

Satisfaction with Environmental Services

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's ... ?



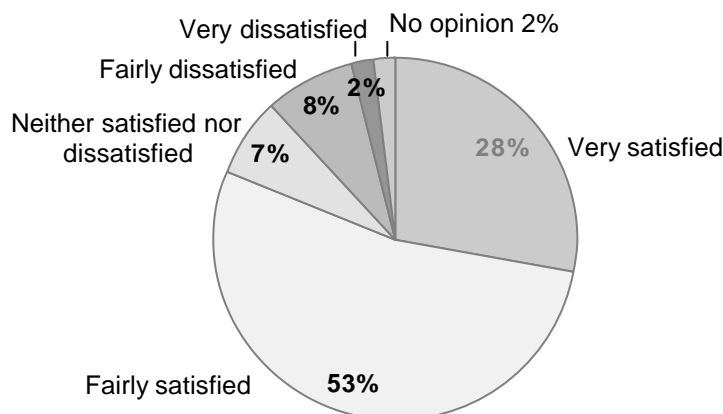
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All/All service users

Source: MORI

Four in five park users say they are satisfied with their local authority's parks and open spaces. One in nine are dissatisfied, giving a balance of opinion of +71. Satisfaction with parks is higher among men, and among older Panel Members

Satisfaction with Parks and Open Spaces

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's parks and open spaces?



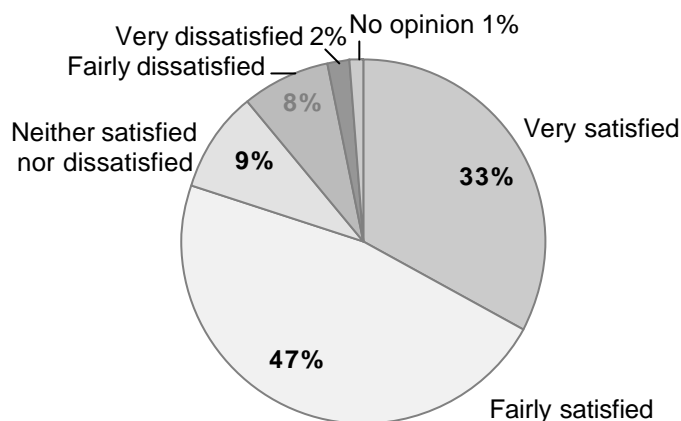
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (840)

Source: MORI

Respondents are similarly satisfied with the recycling facilities provided by their local authority – 80% are satisfied, and ten per cent dissatisfied, giving a balance of opinion of +70 – **no significant change since 1998**. This makes recycling one of the more highly rated council services.

Satisfaction with Provision of Recycling Facilities

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's provision of recycling facilities?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (803)

Source: MORI

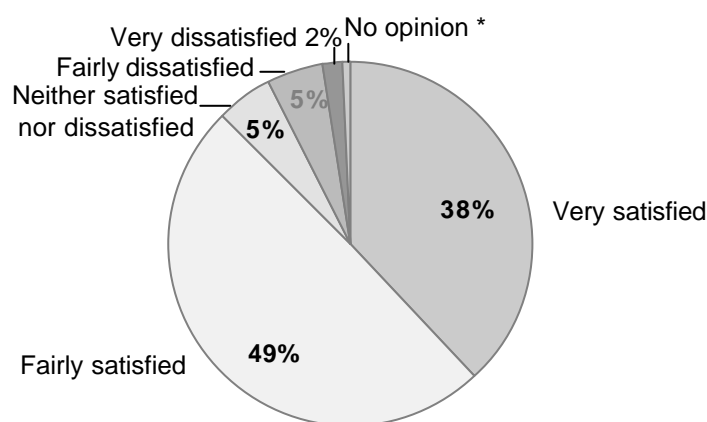
Satisfaction with recycling facilities is lower among those most likely to make use of the service – younger and more middle class respondents. There are also regional differences with those in the South most positive (net satisfied +82), and those in the North least (net satisfied +58).

Refuse and waste collection is the most highly rated environmental service. Almost nine in ten Panel members say they are satisfied with the way their local authority provides this service, including 38% who say they are very satisfied. Seven per cent are dissatisfied. The net satisfaction figure for this service is +80 – **again, no significant change since 1998.**

Older Panel members are more satisfied with this service than younger members.

Satisfaction with Refuse/Waste Collection Service

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's refuse/waste collection service?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

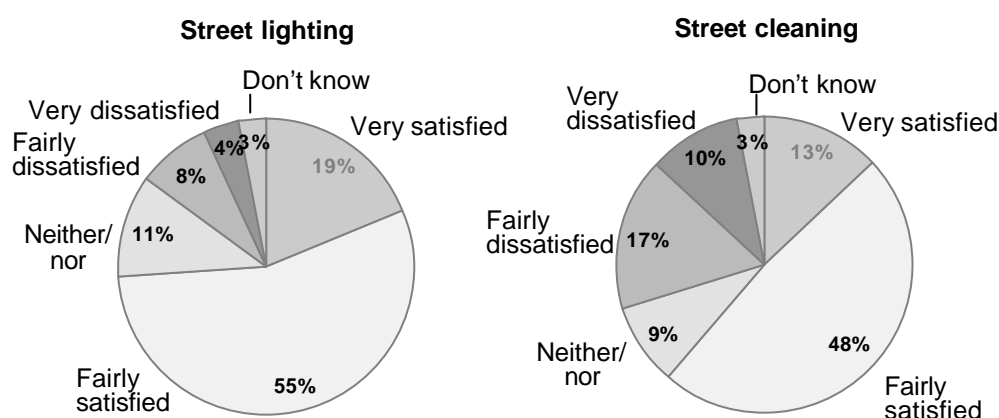
Source: MORI

Street cleaning and street lighting are less well regarded. Three-quarters are satisfied with street lighting, and three in five with street cleaning. Only one in eight say they are dissatisfied with street lighting, giving a net satisfaction score of +62. **This is in keeping with the figure for 1998**, net satisfied +65, showing only a small two point fall.

However, over a quarter (27%) are dissatisfied with their local authority's street cleaning. This gives a balance of opinion of +34 – a below average rating for a council service. **This shows a small fall since measured in 1998**, dropping four points from a net satisfaction figure of +39.

Satisfaction with Street Lighting and Street Cleaning

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's street lighting/street cleaning?



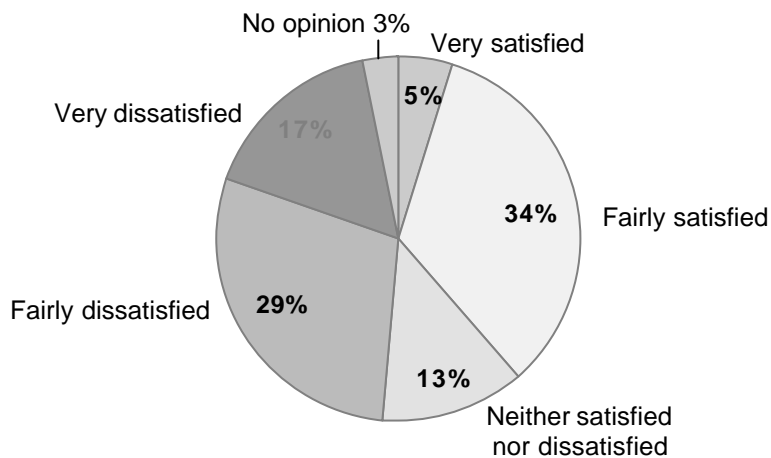
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

On balance, respondents are negative about the road and pavement maintenance service provided by their local authority. Two in five are satisfied with each service, with marginally larger proportions dissatisfied, giving net satisfaction figures of -7 for road maintenance and repairs, and -2 for pavement maintenance. This was asked as a combined category, 'road and pavement maintenance', 1998. The net satisfaction score was -8, **suggesting that there has been a slight improvement in the way Panel members rate these services**. However, they remain the most poorly rated council services measured.

Satisfaction with Road Maintenance and Repairs

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's road maintenance and repairs?

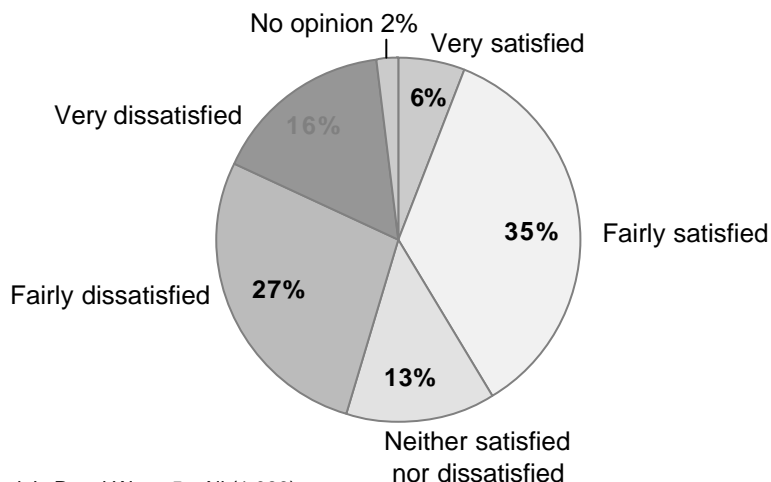


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with Pavement Maintenance

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's pavement maintenance?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Views of these two services are consistent across the Panel, with no particular sub-group significantly more positive, or negative, than other groups.

Service Expectations

Parks and Open Spaces

The key expectation for park users is that parks are safe and clean. Seven in ten mention cleanliness and tidiness, and half say parks should be safe for young children, for visitors, and that dogs should be provided with separate areas.

Safety related issues are of greater concern to those Panel members with children. Also female respondents are significantly more likely to be concerned about keeping dogs in a separate part of the park, than male respondents (52% and 36%, respectively).

Three in ten mention that parks should be accessible to the whole community. Older and more middle class respondents are more likely to give this response.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for those responsible for local parks and open spaces to do?	
	%
<i>Base: All who use parks and open spaces</i>	
	(840)
To keep parks and open spaces clean and tidy	70
To provide safe play areas for young children	55
To make parks and open spaces safe places for visitors	45
To provide separate areas for dogs	45
To make parks and open spaces accessible to the whole community	30
To provide park wardens	16
To set reasonable opening hours for parks and open spaces	13
To make parks and open spaces a focal point for the community	11
To provide value for money	1
Other	1
Don't know	1

Source: MORI

Recycling

The key objective for the recycling service is felt to be to help users recycle a broad range of household waste, rather than just paper. This is mentioned by seven in ten Panel members who recycle.

Almost half (45%) say recycling facilities should be easy to access, and that recycling waste should be collected from residents doorstep. Two in five also mention broader themes such as working to improve the environment, and reducing the volume of waste put into landfills.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for providers of recycling facilities to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who use recycling facilities</i>	<i>(803)</i>
To recycle a broad range of household waste	69
To be easily accessible/ easy to take part	45
To collect waste for recycling from your door	45
To improve the environment	42
To reduce the amount of waste put in landfills	40
To recycle garden waste	16
To be efficient	13
To provide value for money	5
Other	1
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

Refuse Collection

Ease of use is also key when considering how the refuse service should operate. Three in five respondents say that refuse should be picked up at regular times, and half mention that those collecting the waste should avoid leaving any mess.

Two in five say that being kept informed of changes to collection times is important (39%), and that the refuse service should collect bulky items of household waste (37%).

Street Lighting

When considering street lighting, Panel members see adequate lighting levels and that all lights are in working order as the most important issues (mentioned by 80% and 68%, respectively). Half mention that lights should be repaired within 24 hours, and that residents should be made to feel safe.

Street Cleaning

Respondents have three key objectives for the street cleaning service – that street are cleaned frequently (81%), that there are an adequate number of litterbins (74%), and that the cleaning is done to a high standard (69%).

Road and Pavement Maintenance

Respondents feel that maintaining an even surface is the most important thing for the road maintenance service to do (51%). They also see co-ordination of road works caused by gas, electricity, cable and telephone companies as a key issue (mentioned by almost half - 47%). Two in five think that disruptions caused by road works should be minimised, and the number of potholes reduced.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for road maintenance and repair services to do?

	%
<i>Base: All</i>	(1,086)
To maintain an even road surface	51
To co-ordinate road works with gas, electricity, cable and telephone companies	47
To minimise the number of road works and traffic disruptions	41
To reduce the number of potholes	38
To repair potholes within 5 days	33
To complete roadworks on time	28
To give advance warning of roadworks	26
To look well maintained with adequate road markings	16
To provide value for money	5
Other	*
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

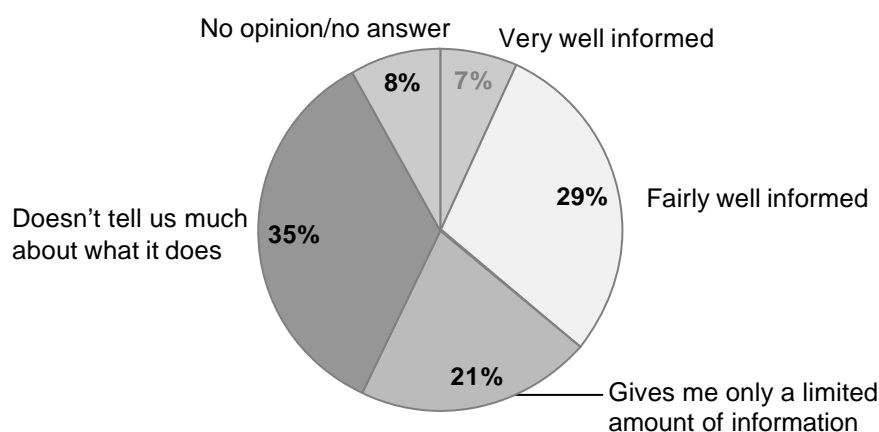
The priorities for pavement maintenance are that an even surface is maintained (52%), and that pavements are generally well maintained (52%). Respondents want to reduce the number of broken pavement slabs (39%), and the number of accidents caused by faulty paving (40%).

Service Information

Panel members rate parks and open spaces as the worst council service for keeping users informed of the services provided: over half say they receive limited information, or less, and only a third say they are well informed. This gives a negative balance of -20. Women are more likely than men to say they do not feel well informed about the parks service.

Provision of Information from Parks & Open Spaces

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... parks and open spaces ... keep you about the services they provide?*



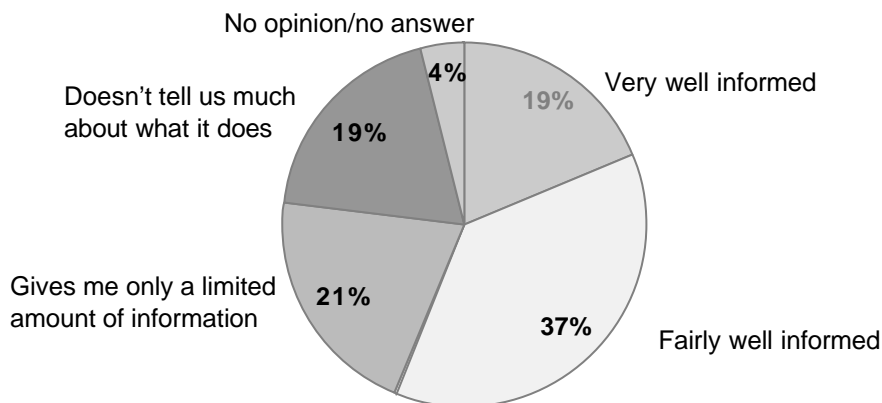
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (840)

Source: MORI

In contrast, respondents rate information provided about their local authority’s recycling facilities relatively highly. Over half feel well informed and two in four say they are not well informed, giving a net figure of +16. This shows a considerable improvement since 1998, when the net informed figure was +7.

Provision of Information from Recycling Facilities

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... recycling facilities ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (803)

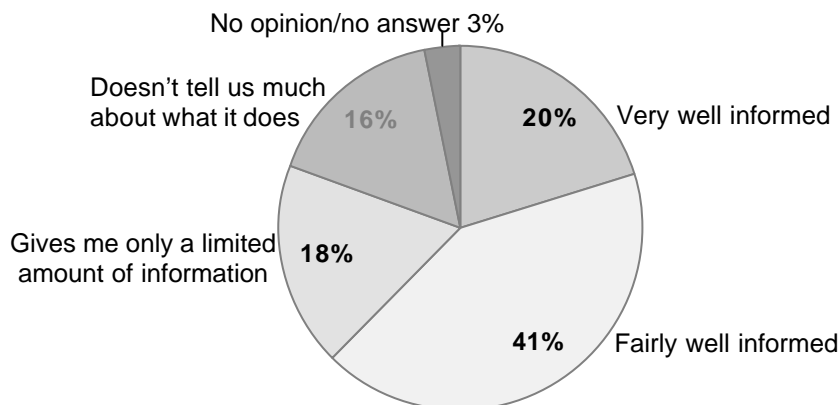
Source: MORI

Older respondents are more likely to say they feel they are kept well informed on the recycling facilities.

Reflecting the overall positive rating of the refuse service, respondents are also more likely to say this service keeps them well informed than other environmental services. Three in five feel well informed, with a third saying they receive limited information, or the service ‘doesn’t tell them much about what it does’. The net well informed figure is +27.

Provision of Information from Refuse/Waste Collection

Q *Still thinking how well informed do... Refuse/Waste collection services... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

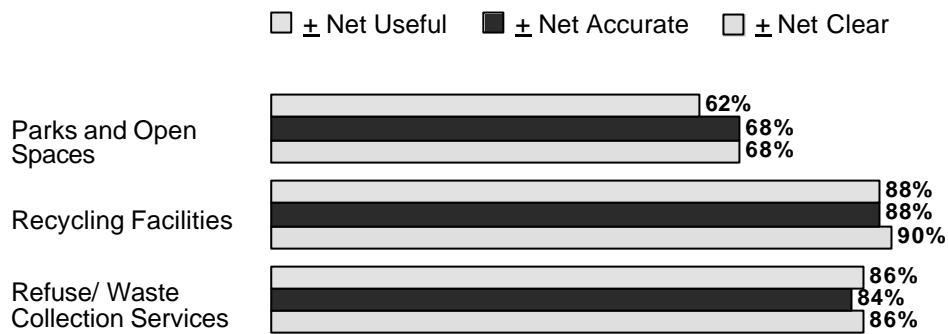
Source: MORI

Age is a key determinant of whether or not a respondent feels well informed about the refuse service. Among the youngest age group, aged 16-24, the net figure is -10, however this rises to +53 among those aged 55+.

Nine in ten Panel members receiving at least a limited amount of information on these services, rate the information they receive on recycling facilities and refuse and waste collection as useful, accurate and clear. In contrast, they are more critical of the information they get about local parks and open spaces. One in five do not find this information useful, and one in six say it is inaccurate and unclear.

Environmental Services - Quality of Information

Q Is the information you received from ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

Leisure Services

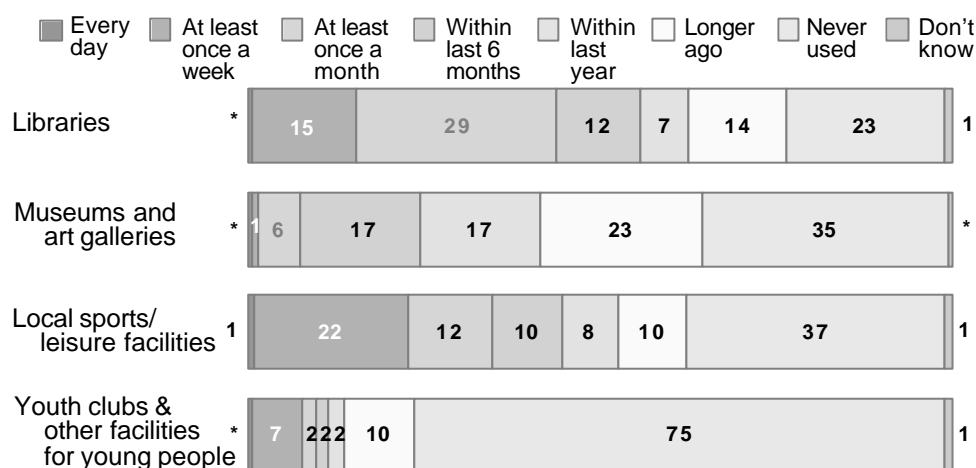
Service Usage

Almost half (44%) of Panel members visit the library at least once a month, with 15% going at least once a week and two-thirds using the library at some point during the last year. Overall, **this is broadly similar to 1998**, with a slight fall in the proportion saying they visit the library at least once a month (from 41%).

Two in five respondents say they, or a household member, have visited a museum or art gallery over the last year. Middle class Panel members, and those on higher incomes, are more likely to museum or gallery visitors. Over half of those in social classes DE say they have never visited a museum or art gallery, compared to 14% of ABs.

Leisure Services Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

One in four use local sports or leisure facilities on a weekly basis. These regular users are significantly more likely to be female (26%, compared to 20% among men). They are also more likely to be more middle class, affluent, Panel members – a third of those earning £24,500 or more exercise weekly, compared to 10% among those earning less than £11,500. Over a third of respondents say they have never used the local sports and leisure facilities. These are predominantly older people, aged 55+.

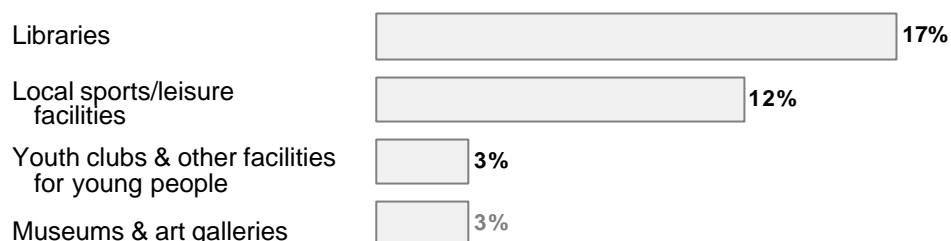
Fewer Panel members say they, or a member of their household, make use of youth clubs or other facilities for young people. Seven per cent use these facilities at least once a week. Predictably, those with children are most likely to say a household member uses these facilities (34% in the last year).

Service Importance

Libraries are rated as the most important leisure service, mentioned by one in six Panel members. One in eight see local sports and leisure facilities as important, and three per cent mention youth clubs and museums and art galleries.

Leisure Services Importance

Q Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

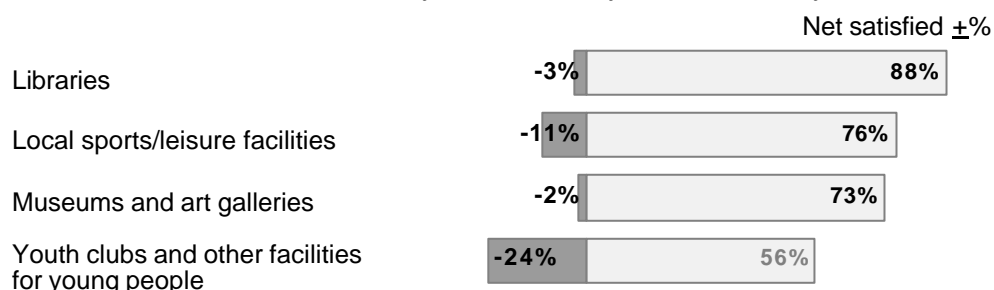
Service Satisfaction

Leisure services are generally well regarded by Panel members.

Satisfaction with Leisure Services

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied you are with the quality of each ... Museums and art galleries?

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's ... ?

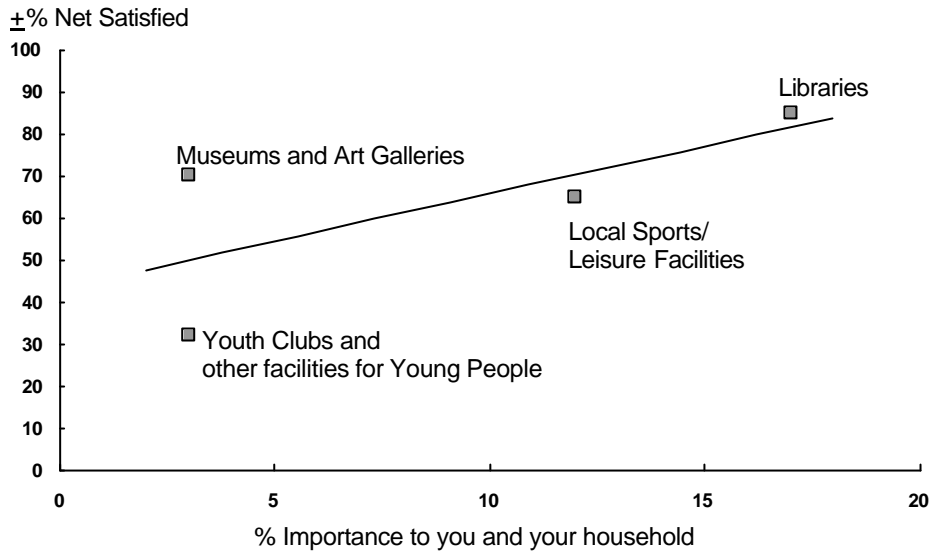


Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users

Source: MORI

As can be seen from the graph below, satisfaction ratings are broadly in keeping with the importance the public attach to them. The only service where there is a marked disparity is youth clubs, and other facilities for young people. Here, satisfaction is relatively low. As we know from our other research programmes for many local authorities, this is a service that residents prioritise, and stress as vital for improving quality of life in their local neighbourhoods, and contributing towards crime reduction.

Leisure Services: Satisfaction v Importance



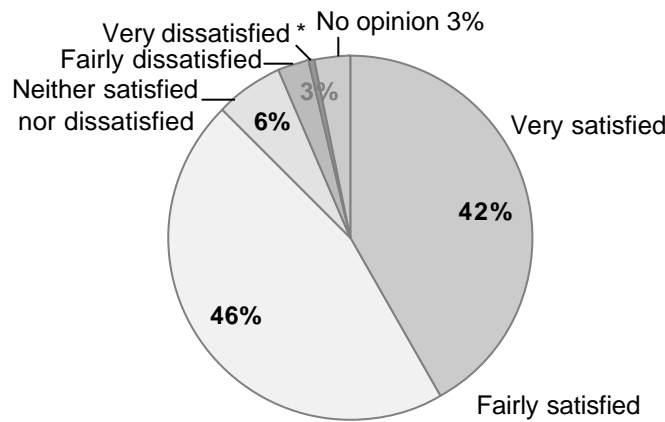
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - Service Users

Source: MORI

Taking each service in turn, libraries are most highly rated, as in most local studies.

Satisfaction with Libraries

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's ... libraries?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (706)

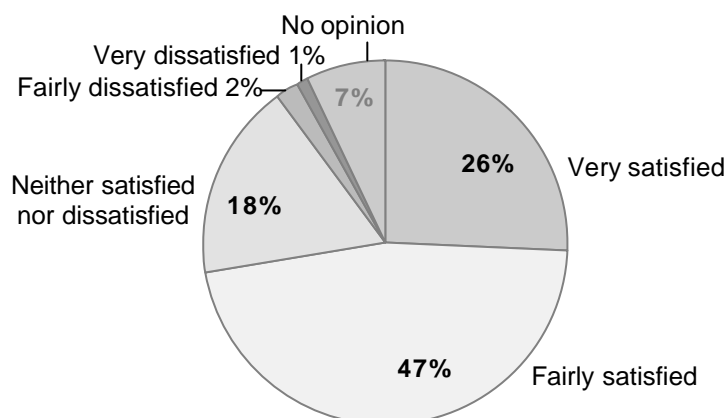
Source: MORI

Among those who have visited their local library in the last year, nine in ten are satisfied (with 42% very satisfied). Only three per cent are dissatisfied. **Satisfaction has remained constant since 1998**, with the balance of opinion virtually unchanged (+85).

Three-quarters of those who have visited museums and art galleries over the course of the last year say they are satisfied with the quality of the service – a quarter are very satisfied, and half are fairly satisfied. Only three per cent say they are dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with Museums and Art Galleries

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... Museum and Art Galleries?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (480)

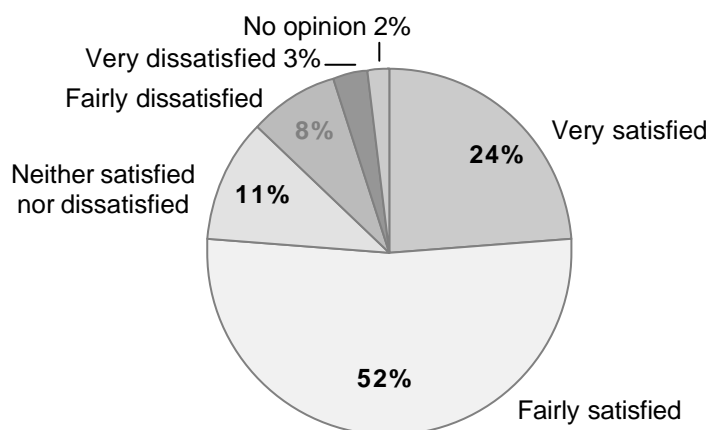
Source: MORI

Satisfaction with the experience of visiting museums and galleries differs considerably between different groups of the population. Female visitors are significantly more positive than male visitors (84% v 64% satisfied). Also satisfaction is far higher among those aged 35+, than younger age groups who are more likely not to express an opinion on the quality of the gallery or museum.

Three-quarters of sports and leisure facilities users are satisfied with the service, and one in nine are dissatisfied. This gives net satisfaction for this service of +65. **This shows an overall drop of four points since 1998¹.**

Satisfaction with Local Sports/Leisure Facilities

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's ... local sports/leisure facilities?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (584)

Source: MORI

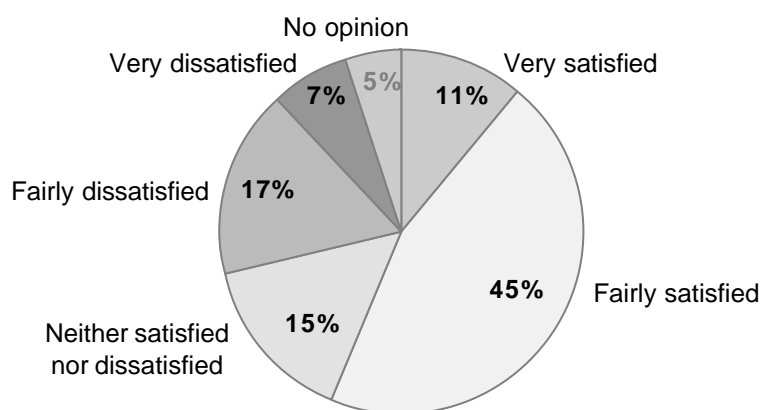
¹ The service was asked as 'Leisure Centres' in the 1998 recruitment questionnaire.

Again, women are significantly more satisfied with the service than male users (81% and 70%, respectively). Dissatisfaction is marginally higher among younger, and more middle class users.

Those who use – or who have household members who use – the local youth clubs and facilities for young people are markedly more critical than are users of other leisure services. Over half (56%) are satisfied and almost a quarter (22%) are dissatisfied, giving a balance of opinion of +32. While a positive rating, this falls below the standard of other leisure services. Although the wording is slightly different to that used in 1998 - which may impact on the data² - the balance of opinion **has fallen by seven points** from +39 to +32.

Satisfaction with Youth Clubs and other facilities for Young People

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with your local authority's ... youth clubs and other facilities for young people?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (163)

Source: MORI

Young people are particularly positive about the clubs and facilities available (+48 net satisfied). Women are also more satisfied with the service.

Service Expectations

When asked about expectations with library services, unsurprisingly three-quarters say that the most important thing for libraries to do is to stock a wide range of books. This is the top issue for all Panel members, although middle class respondents are more likely to mention it than others. For users, then, libraries' traditional focus remains key.

Other aspects of the library service that users feel are important include extending opening hours beyond 9 to 5 (34%) and stocking a wide range of other media, such as CDs and videos (31%). Extended hours are particularly important to those in work, while younger Panel member are more likely than other age groups to consider it important for libraries to stock a wide range of other media such as CDs and videos.

² The service was asked as 'Youth and Community Centres' in the 1998 recruitment questionnaire.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for libraries to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who use libraries</i>	<i>(706)</i>
To stock a wide range of books	78
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	34
To stock a wide range of other media, e.g. CDs and videos	31
To be helpful	26
To replace 5% of books every year	23
To provide a focal point for the community	23
To help make the library easier to use	20
To provide Internet access	16
To be friendly	13
To be efficient	12
To provide value for money	6
Other	1
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

Visitors to galleries and museums say the provision of interesting exhibitions, and presenting the history and skills of the local community are most important (56% and 50%, respectively). Two in five respondents say that exhibits should be educational, and that galleries and museums should provide free entry to all. Free entry to galleries and museums is more likely to be mentioned by older respondents, and those from ethnic minorities.

Half of those using sports and leisure facilities identify the safety of those facilities as the most important element of the service. Other key aspects mentioned by a third of respondents are a broad range of facilities, that facilities are accessible and available to all, and that trained supervision is provided.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for local sports and leisure facilities?

	%
<i>Base: All who use local sports and leisure facilities</i>	<i>(584)</i>
To provide safe facilities	48
To provide a broad range of facilities	37
To be easily accessible and available to all	36
To provide supervision by trained staff	33
To meet the needs of the local community	30
To provide value for money	26
To be spotlessly clean	25
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	24
To provide enough room to exercise properly	23
Other	1
Don't know	1

Source: MORI

Those who use, or have household members using, youth clubs and facilities for young people, see the top priority for the service as being to provide a range of interesting activities for young people. This is mentioned by seven in ten respondents (69%). It is particularly important to male Panel members, 88%.

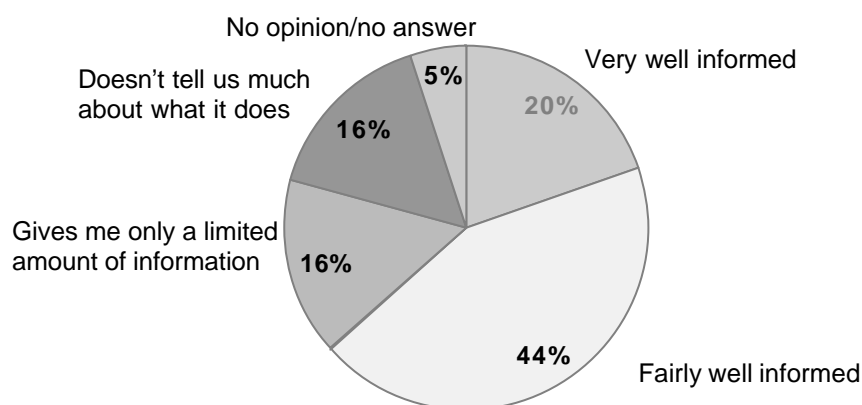
Other key issues mentioned by half of users are providing somewhere for young people to go in their spare time, and giving them the opportunity to achieve things outside school (50% and 49%, respectively). Young people, aged 16-24, cite having somewhere to go in their spare time as the most important thing for youth clubs to provide.

Service Information

Library services are rated as a relatively good information provider. Almost two-thirds of those who have visited a library in the last year say that they are kept very or fairly well informed about the services provided. A third say that they receive limited information, or are not told much about what the library does. This gives a balance of opinion of +32. Library users aged 55+, and those in social classes DE are more likely to praise the service than other groups.

Provision of Information from Libraries

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... libraries ... keep you about the services they provide?*



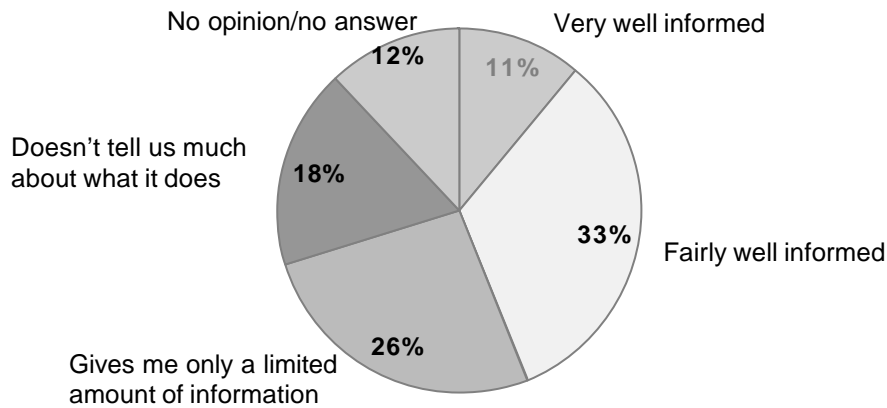
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (706)

Source: MORI

In contrast, museum and art gallery visitors rate information provision below average for this service. Equal proportions feel well informed, or not well informed, giving a net figure of zero. Again, it is older users who are more likely to consider themselves well informed about the services provided.

Provision of Information from Museums and Art Galleries

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... Musuems and Art Galleries ... keep you about the services they provide?*



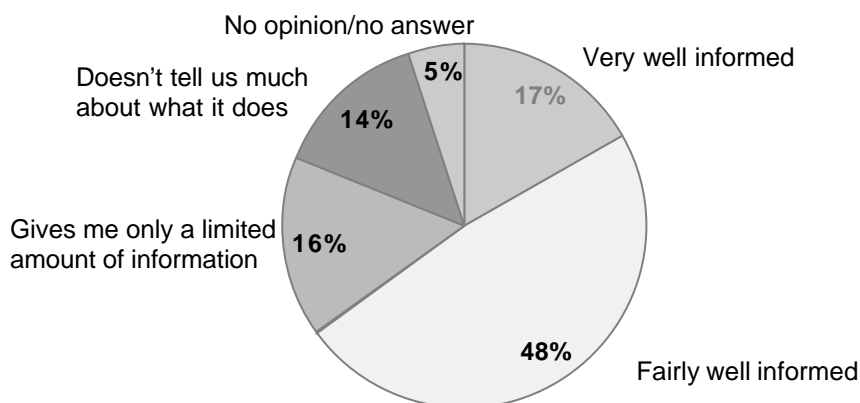
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (480)

Source: MORI

Users of local sports and leisure facilities rate the service as one of the better information providers, among the public services measured. Two-thirds feel well informed, and three ten not well informed (net figure +35). It is the frequent users (middle class, affluent respondents) who are more likely to say they are not kept well informed on the sports and leisure services provided.

Provision of Information from Local Sports/Leisure Facilities

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... local sports/leisure facilities ... keep you about the services they provide?*



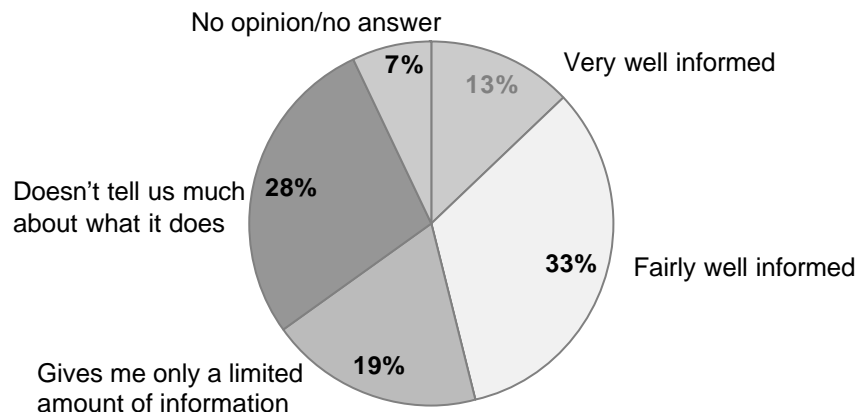
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (584)

Source: MORI

Those who use, or whose household members use, local youth clubs and facilities for young people, are again evenly divided between the well informed, and the not well informed (net figure -1).

Provision of Information from Youth Clubs and Other Facilities for Young People

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... youth clubs and other facilities for young people ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (163)

Source: MORI

This places the service as below average in comparison to other non-universal public services. Younger Panel members, aged 16-24, are most likely to say they do not feel well informed about the services on offer (70% not well informed), a typical finding in our experience.

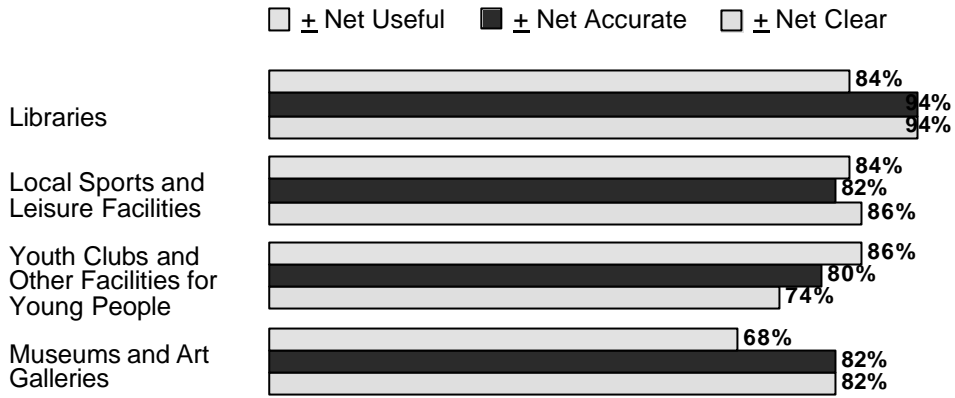
Among service users who receive at least a limited amount of information from the specific service, the information provided by the library service is highly rated – nine in ten library and sport facilities users find the information useful, accurate and clear.

Users are equally positive about the information produce by youth clubs, but a higher proportion are critical, with one in eight saying the information is unclear.

The information received by those visiting museums and art galleries is thought accurate and clear, but a significant minority question the usefulness of the information (16% not useful).

Leisure Services - Quality of Information

Q Is the information you received from ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

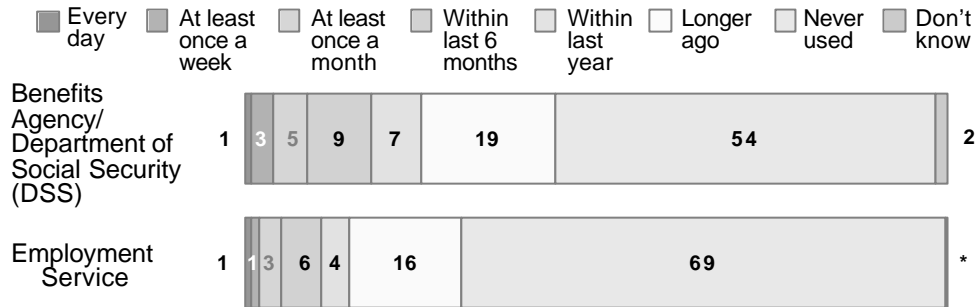
Benefits Agency and Employment Service

Service Usage

The majority of Panel members say they have never used the Benefits Agency or the Employment Service. Four per cent use the Benefits Agency at least once a week, 18% have used it with the last 6 months and a quarter have used it within the last year. Less, one in nine, have been in contact with the Employment Service in the last 6 months, and 15% have used it over the last year.

Benefit and Employment Services Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

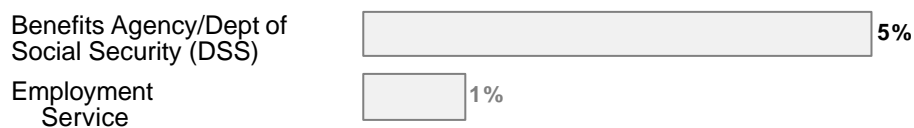
Source: MORI

Service Importance

One in twenty say that the Benefits Agency is among the four or five most important public services to them and their family, while one in a hundred say the same of the Employment Service (it should be noted when interpreting this question throughout the report that these services were not asked about in isolation, but in comparison with, for example, health and emergency services, which are likely to get higher importance ratings). Obviously, among users, these figures are much higher.

Benefit and Employment Services Importance

Q Which four or five services on this card are the most important to you and members of your household?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

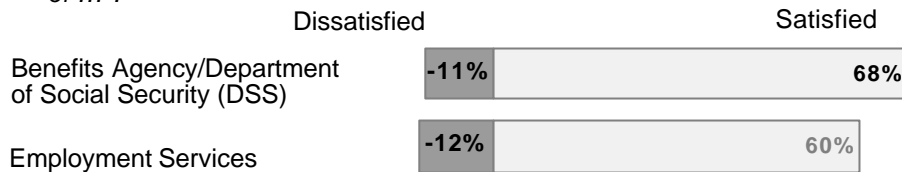
Source: MORI

Service Satisfaction

The bar chart below illustrates the net satisfaction figures for the Benefits Agency and the Employment service.

Satisfaction with Benefits Agency and Employment Services

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... ?*



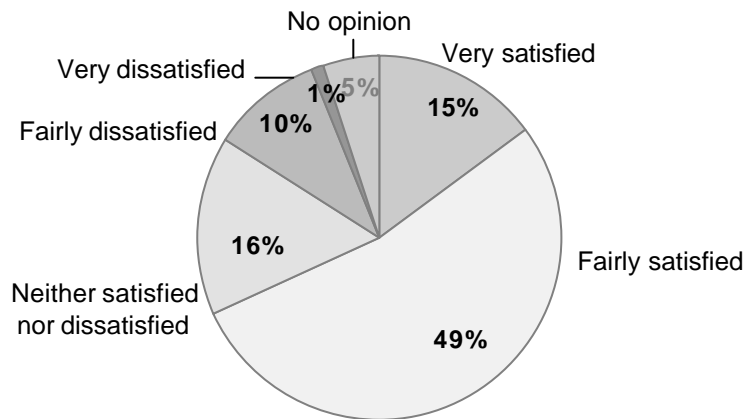
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users

Source: MORI

Two-thirds of those who have had contact with the Benefits Agency within the last year, are satisfied with the quality of service they received, with only one in nine dissatisfied. This gives an overall rating of +57.

Satisfaction with the Benefits Agency/DSS

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Benefits Agency/Department of Social Security (DSS)?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (273)

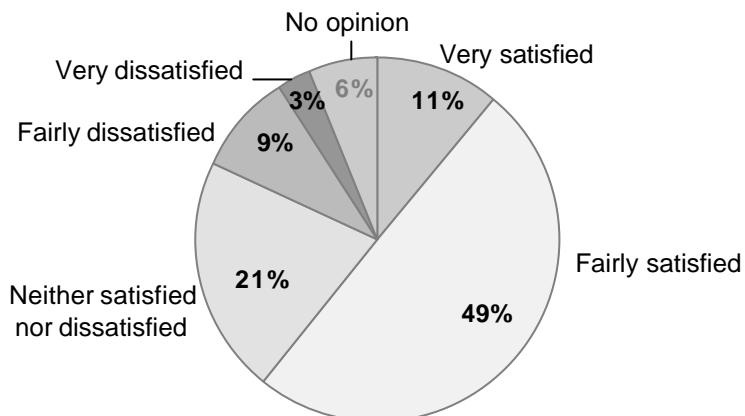
Source: MORI

It is also encouraging that satisfaction is higher among those groups having more frequent contact with the Agency – ie, those in social classes DE.

Three in five of those who have contacted the Employment Service in the last year, are satisfied with the experience, of whom eleven per cent are very satisfied. One in eight are dissatisfied, giving a net satisfaction figure of +48.

Satisfaction with the Employment Service

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Employment Service?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (141)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

Benefits Agency users prioritise aspects of the service that focus on ease and clarity of use. Over half see clearly telling claimants what they are entitled to as the most important thing the Agency should be doing.

A third see easy to complete forms as a priority, and three in ten mention the equal treatment of all claimants. A quarter cite the payment of the correct amount the first time a claimant applies as a priority, or the stopping of benefits fraud.

One in five mention efficiency (22%), and the quick response to complaints and appeals (19%).

Q	%
Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS) to do?	
<i>Base: All who have had contact with the Benefits Agency/Department of Social Security (DSS)</i>	
	(273)
To tell claimants clearly what they are entitled to	55
To produce forms that are easy to complete	33
To treat all claimants equally	30
To pay claimants the correct amount the first time they apply	27
To stop fraud	26
To be efficient	22
To respond quickly to complaints and appeals	19
To pay claimants their benefits within 14 days of applying for them	17
To explain the basis of their decisions	17
To be helpful	14
To be seen within ten minutes of your appointment time	10
To be friendly	5
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	2
To provide value for money	2
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	1
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	1
To have clean and tidy offices	0
Other	1
Don't know	2

Source: MORI

When thinking about the Employment Service, users naturally see the key role for the service as helping people find a job – mentioned by 56%. Other top concerns are helping people find their way through the forms and paperwork (45%), and clearly telling people what their rights and responsibilities are (42%). A third see the quick handling of enquiries as an important aspect of the services role.

While these are the overall priorities for the Employment service, different subgroups of users see these aspects very differently. Those in full or part time work, who have been in touch with the service within the last year, are more likely to mention finding a job as a priority (77% and 64%, respectively). In contrast, this is only mentioned by 30% of those not working (i.e. students and those retired), and 22% of those currently unemployed.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Employment service to do?

	All	Full-time	Part-time	Not working	Unemployed
<i>Base: All who have had contact with the Employment service</i>	(141)	(65)*	(19)*	(44)*	(25)*
	%	%	%	%	%
To help people find a job	56	77	64	30	22
To help people with forms and paperwork	45	34	61	48	63
To tell people clearly their rights and responsibilities	42	34	28	57	70
To deal with enquiries quickly	32	24	37	37	66
To be helpful	18	26	1	17	11
To provide job advertisements in a number of formats, for example large print, or a variety of languages	18	13	35	20	20
To be flexible when arranging appointments	12	18	0	9	9
To be professional	11	15	18	4	3
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	10	13	*	8	15
To be efficient	9	7	12	7	9
To pay people the correct amount the first time they apply	9	8	0	16	3
To have more local information shops	7	7	10	3	5
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	7	9	14	*	0
To be friendly	3	4	6	4	*
To provide value for money	1	2	0	0	0
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	*	*	0	0	0
Other	*	0	0	*	0
Don't know	4	0	0	12	0

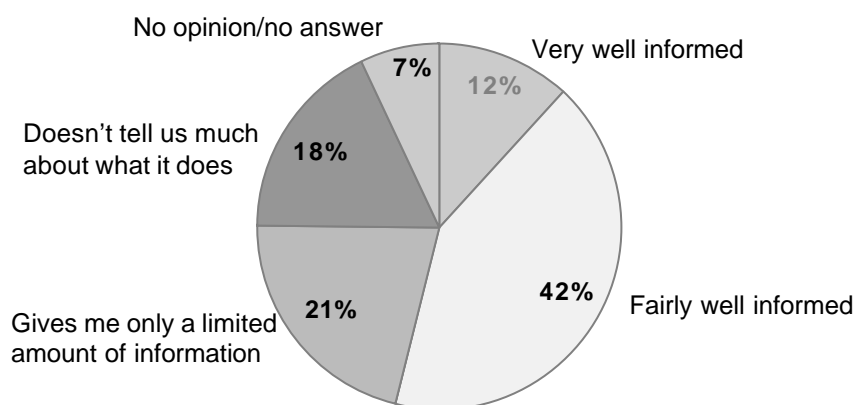
**NB Caution. Very small bases, treat results as indicative only
Source: MORI*

Service Information

Half of respondents who have had contact with each service feel well informed about the range of services provided – 54% feel well informed about the Benefits Agency, and 47% feel well informed about Employment services.

Provision of Information from Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS)

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does the ... Benefits Agency/Department of Social Security (DSS) ... keep you about the services they provide?*



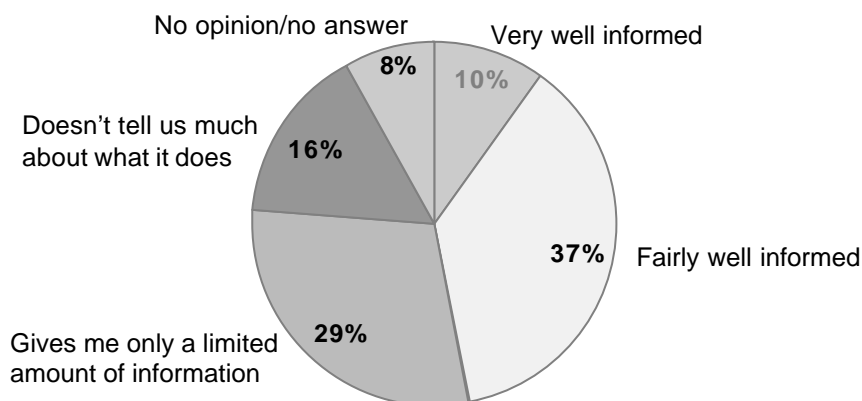
Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (273)

Source: MORI

Those who have had frequent contact with the Benefit Agency are most likely to say they feel well informed – 62% among Panel members in social class DE.

Provision of Information from Employment Service

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does ... the Employment Service ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (141)

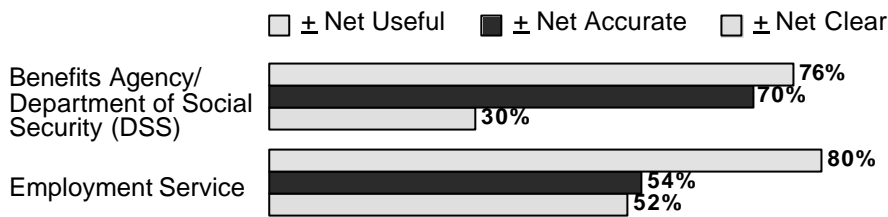
Source: MORI

While the proportion of users who feel well-informed is average compared with other public services, the quality of the information is more poorly rated.

Service users are relatively positive about the usefulness of the information received from both the Benefits Agency and the Employment service (88% and 90% useful, respectively). The information produced by the Benefits Agency is seen as accurate by over four in five, but a significant minority find the information unclear (35%). Three-quarters of those who have contacted the Employment service found the information accurate and clear, with a quarter disagreeing.

Benefits and Employment - Quality of Information

Q Is the information you received from ... ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who receive at least a limited amount of information from each service

Source: MORI

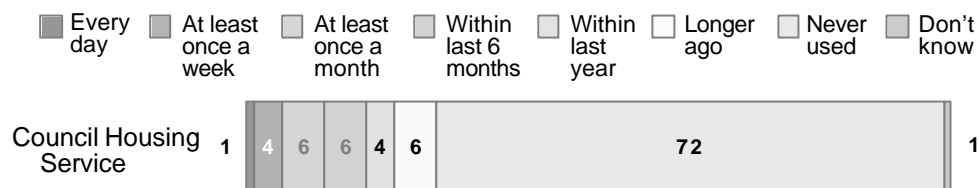
Council Housing Services

Service Usage

One in twenty say they have used the council housing service over the last week, while 21% say that they have used it over the last year. It should be noted that while we did not ask this question in 1998, it does correspond closely to the proportion of tenants in the sample.

Council Housing Service Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Importance

Seven per cent of respondents say that the council housing service is among the four or five most important services to them and their household.

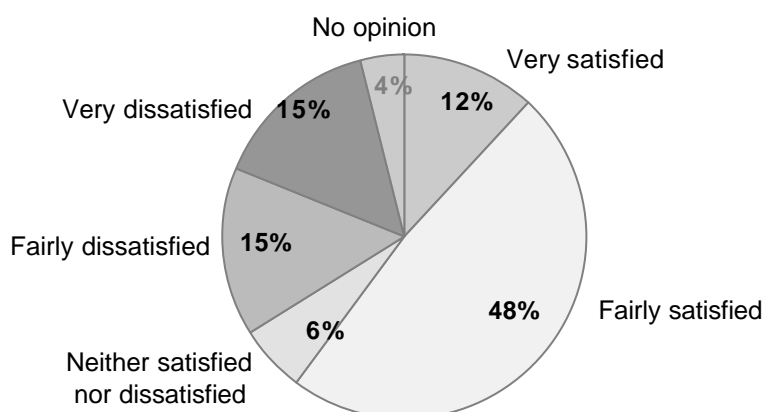
Service Satisfaction

Satisfaction with Council Housing services falls far below recipients' expectations, in relation to the importance that is attached to the service. Three in five are satisfied with the service and three in ten dissatisfied, giving a net satisfaction figure of +30.

While it should be noted that this was asked as 'council housing' in 1998, rather than 'council housing service' (and this change in wording may have contributed to the fall), there has been a **marked drop in satisfaction** since views were first measured in the People's Panel recruitment interview. Since 1998, satisfaction has fallen by thirteen points and dissatisfaction has risen by nine percentage points. The survey of English Housing (DETR) has also seen falling satisfaction with the Council as landlord.

Satisfaction with the Council Housing Service

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your local authority's ... council housing service?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (168)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

The key issue for users of the Council Housing service is repair quality. This is mentioned by over half (53%).

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for your council housing service to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who use Council Housing services (168)</i>	
Carry out good quality repairs so these do not need to be done again	53
To deal with repairs quickly	44
To be understanding and listen to complaints/enquiries	35
To help people find a suitable home	31
Provide a range of accommodation to meet people's housing needs	29
Provide clear and accurate information and advice about housing options open to tenants	24
To be helpful	23
To be efficient	21
To be friendly	17
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	10
To provide value for money	7
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	4
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	0
Other	0
Don't know	*

Source: MORI

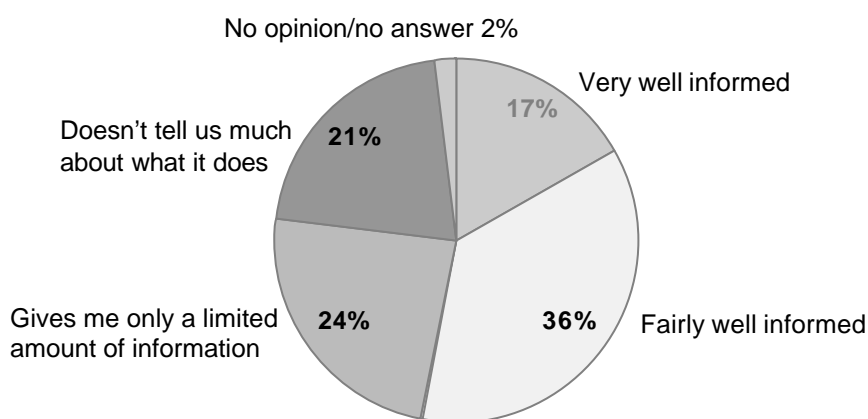
The second most important objective for the service is the speed with which these repairs are carried out (44%). A third mention complaints handling as an issue (35%).

Service Information

Those who have had contact with their Council Housing service are relatively evenly divided in their opinion of how well informed the service keeps them. Over half (53%) say they are very or fairly well informed, and 45% say they receive limited information, or the service ‘does not tell them much about what it does’. This gives a positive balance of +8 – a very similar figure to their local Council.

Provision of Information from Council Housing Service

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does the Council Housing service keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (168)

Source: MORI

Among those who receive at least a limited amount of information from the Council Housing service, the information is generally well rated – 84% think it useful, 74% say it is accurate and 76% say it is clear. This leaves a minority who are critical.

Other Agencies/Services

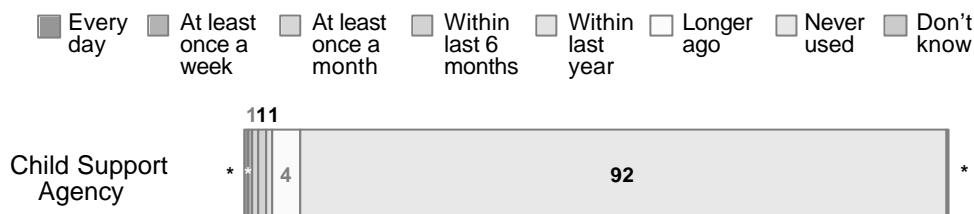
Child Support Agency

Service Usage

Three per cent of Panel members have contacted the Child Support Agency (CSA) at some point over the last year, while over nine in ten have never used them.

Child Support Agency Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Importance

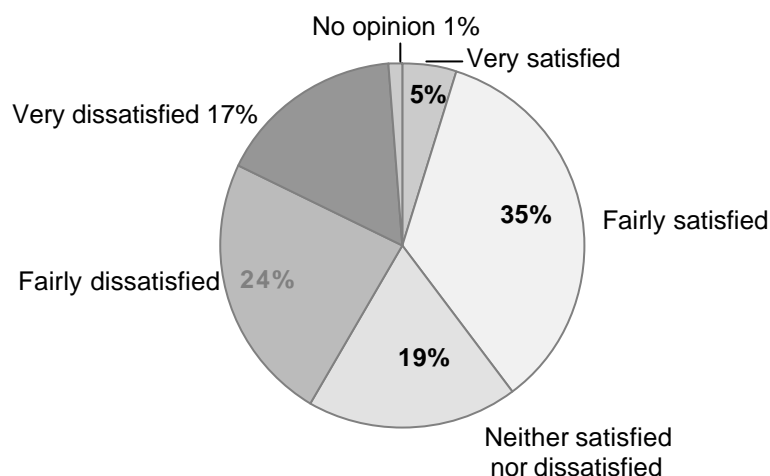
One in a hundred Panel members say that the Child Support Agency is among the most important public services to them and their household.

Service Satisfaction

Of these forty-four individuals (caution – small base), clients are evenly split between those satisfied with the quality of service they received from the Agency, and those dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with the Child Support Agency

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Child Support Agency?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (44)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

The three most important aspects of the service for CSA clients are speed with which enquiries are dealt, to ensure parents support their children, and that the forms are easy to complete.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Child Support Agency to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who have had contact with the Child Support Agency (44)</i>	
To deal with enquiries quickly	52
To make sure parents support their children financially	43
To produce forms that are easy to complete	40
To provide financial support for parents and children	39
To be able to have face-to-face meetings within three weeks	28
To respond quickly to complaints and appeals	26
To provide financial support for children	21
To be helpful	14
To be efficient	12
To provide value for money	10
To provide financial support for parents	3
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	3
To be friendly	1
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	0
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	*
Other	3
Don't know	*

Source: MORI

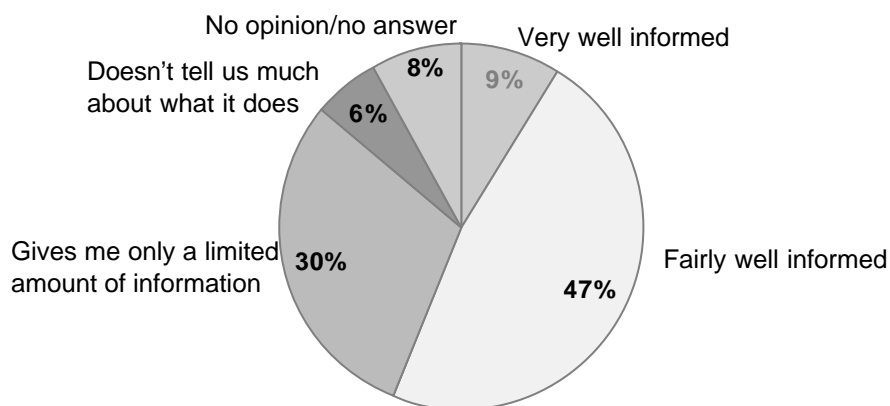
Service Information

Over half say the CSA kept them well informed about the services they provide, and a third say they were told limited amounts of information, or not told much about what the Agency does.

Those who receive at least a limited amount of information from the CSA, find the information useful but substantial minorities say it is inaccurate and unclear.

Provision of Information from Child Support Agency

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does the ... Child Support Agency ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (44)

Source: MORI

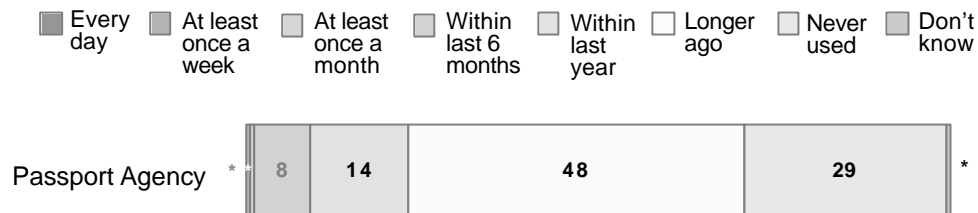
Passport Agency

Service Usage

Almost a quarter of Panel members have had contact with the Passport Agency within the last year (23%), and a further half (48%) have used them longer ago – although this group is not defined as ‘users’ for the purposes of this survey.

Passport Agency Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Importance

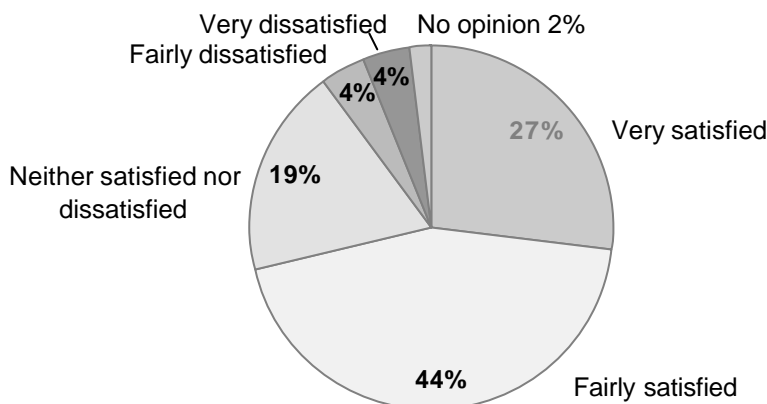
Less than 0.5% of Panel members think that the Passport Agency is among the four or five most important services to them and their household, when asked to choose from a list.

Service Satisfaction

Seven in ten are satisfied with the quality of service they receive from the Passport Agency, with eight per cent dissatisfied. Satisfaction falls to under half among those aged under 25.

Satisfaction with Passport Agency

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Passport Agency?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (253)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

The most important expectation for those who have used the Passport Agency, is that their passport should be provided within two weeks of them applying for it. This is mentioned by seven in ten (71%).

Easy to complete forms are a priority for almost half of Panel members. Three in ten expect to receive an efficient service and would like to be sent a reminder telling them when their passport needs renewing.

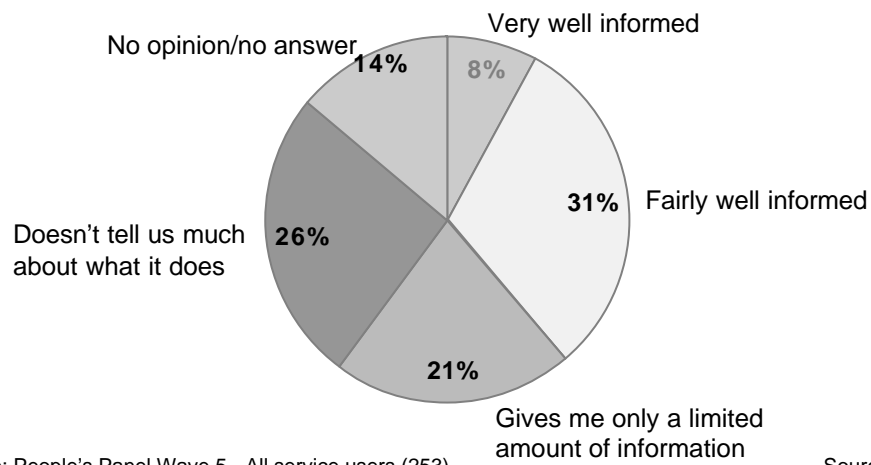
Service Information

Service users are relatively negative about how well informed they are kept by the Agency. Almost half say they are not well informed, with two in five well informed, giving a balance of -8%. Men, those in full-time work and middle class respondents are markedly more critical of the level of information provided by the Passport Agency.

When asked about the quality of the information, nine in ten of those who have contacted the Passport Agency say the information is useful, accurate and clear. Of these three aspects, clarity is the least strong, with one in eight finding the information unclear.

Provision of Information from Passport Agency

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does ... the Passport Agency ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (253)

Source: MORI

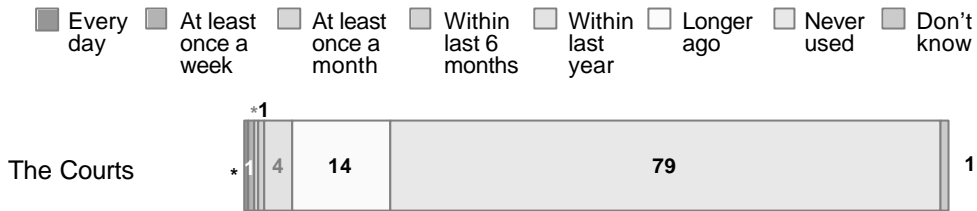
The Courts

Service Usage

Six per cent of Panel members, or members of their households, have been in contact the courts over the last year. Eight in ten have never been in contact with them.

The Courts Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Importance

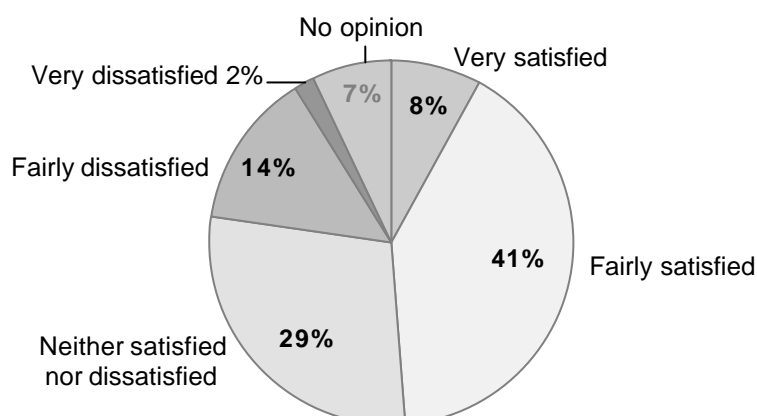
One in a hundred Panel members say that the Courts are among the most important services to them and their household.

Service Satisfaction

Half of those who have had contact with the courts are satisfied with the quality of service they received (49%). One in seven are dissatisfied. This gives a balance of opinion of +33.

Satisfaction with the Courts

Q *I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Courts?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (73)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

Half of those who have been in touch with the court service say handling cases in a quick, well-organised way is a key priority. Other important expectations include being in touch with real life, and fully explaining court procedures to those using the service.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Courts service to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who have contact with the Courts service (73)</i>	
To deal with the cases in a competent and well-organised way	54
To deal with cases quickly	51
To be in touch with 'real life'	46
To explain procedures fully to those using the service	45
To be sensitive to the needs of witnesses	39
To treat all groups in society equally and without discrimination	27
To provide value for money	8
To be able to request forms by 'phone, fax or internet	4
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	2
Other	2
Don't know	0

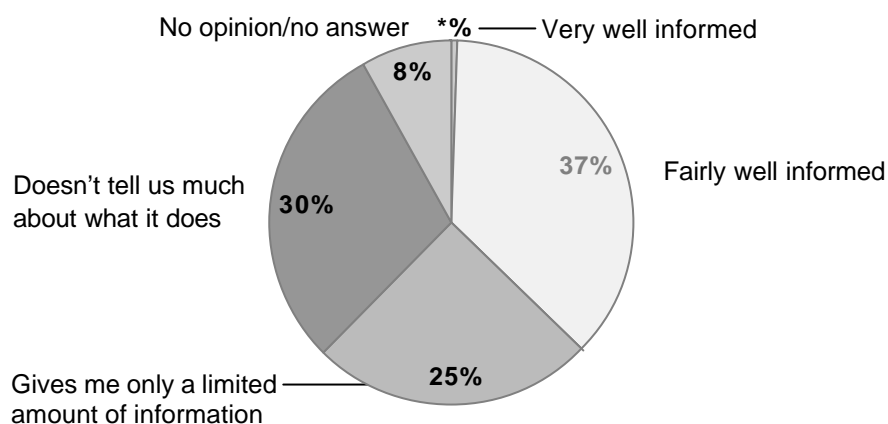
Source: MORI

Service Information

The courts are rated as one of the worst providers of information in the public sector. Over half of those who have had contact with the service say they received limited amounts of information, or that they were not told much about what the service does. The balance of opinion is -18.

Provision of Information from The Courts

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed do ... the Courts ... keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (73)

Source: MORI

The quality of information provided by the courts is also rated poorly relative to that provided by other public services. One in five of those who receive at least limited information from the court service say the information is not useful, a quarter say it is inaccurate, and three in ten find it unclear.

Inland Revenue

Service Usage

Almost half of respondents have contacted the Inland Revenue during the last twelve months, 46% - **a slight fall** from the figure of 52% two years ago. One in five have used them longer ago, and almost a third have never been in contact with them.

Inland Revenue Usage

Q How frequently, if at all, do you or member of your household use each of the following services?

- Every day
- At least once a week
- At least once a month
- Within last 6 months
- Within last year
- Longer ago
- Never used
- Don't know



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Service Importance

Two per cent of respondents say that the Inland revenue is among the four or five most important public service to them, when prompted with a list.

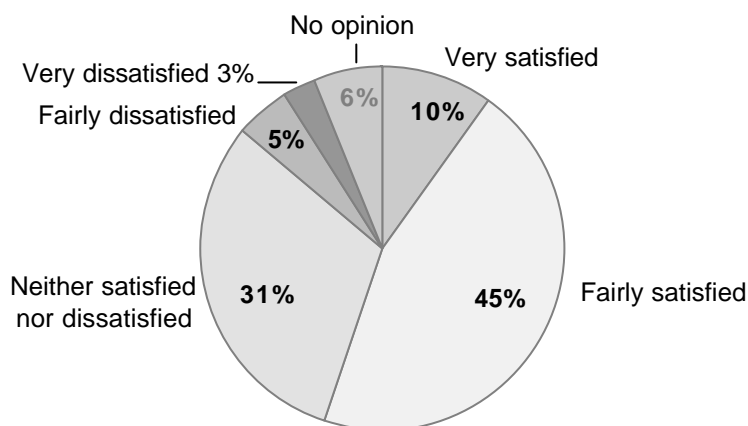
Service Satisfaction

Most are satisfied with the quality of service they received when they contacted the Inland Revenue, 56%. Eight per cent are dissatisfied, giving a balance of +48. This shows **a fall in satisfaction of six points since 1998**, but reflects more people.

Male Panel members who have been in touch with the Inland Revenue are significantly more likely to be satisfied, while younger respondents, aged under 25, are least satisfied.

Satisfaction with the Inland Revenue

Q I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with the quality of ... the Inland Revenue?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (506)

Source: MORI

Service Expectations

Among those who have had contact with the Inland Revenue in the last year, calculating people's tax right first time is considered the most important thing for the service to do, mentioned by 50%. Over a third stress the importance of easy to complete forms, and being treated fairly and objectively by the Inland Revenue.

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think it is most important for the Inland Revenue to do?

	%
<i>Base: All who have contacted the Inland Revenue (506)</i>	
To get people's tax right first time	50
To produce forms that are easy to complete	38
To be fair and objective	35
To be efficient	29
To quickly pay back over-paid tax	28
To be helpful	25
To explain the basis of their decisions	22
To help people fill in self-assessment forms	20
To respond quickly to complaints and appeals	17
To have extended opening hours beyond 9 to 5	9
To be friendly	8
To be able to fill in forms on the internet	2
To be able to request forms by phone, fax or internet	1
To provide value for money	1
Other	*
Don't know	2

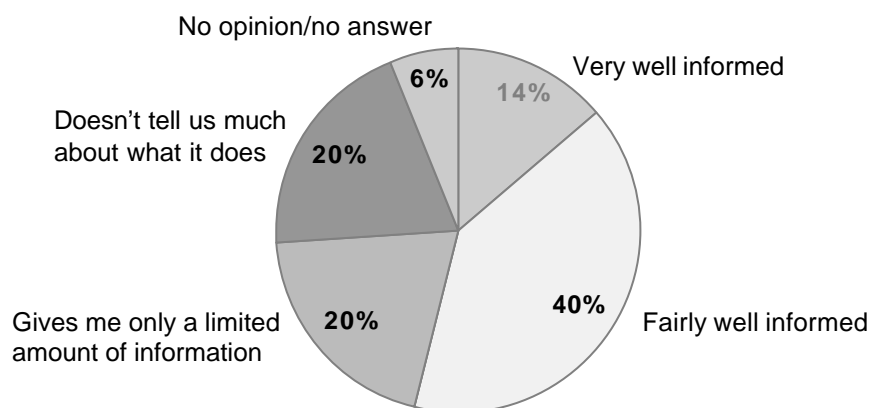
Source: MORI

Service Information

Half of those who have used the Inland Revenue over the last year feel that they are kept well informed about the service, but two in five disagree (net well informed +14). Again, men and older respondents feel better informed by the service. Southern respondents are significantly more likely to say the Inland Revenue keeps them well informed than users in the North or Midlands.

Provision of Information from Inland Revenue

Q *Still thinking about the same organisations, how well informed does the Inland Revenue keep you about the services they provide?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All service users (506)

Source: MORI

While the quality of information provided by the Inland Revenue is rated highly for its accuracy and usefulness, a third say it is unclear. Younger respondents, who are presumably less familiar with revenue-related issues, are particularly likely to be critical of the clarity of the information.

Complaints Handling

Consistent with the 1998 findings at the recruitment stage of the People's Panel, the top three services respondents complain about remain their local council (12%), the police (4%) and council housing services (4%).

Those in social classes DE are significantly more likely than middle class Panel members to have made a complaint about their local council (more are heavy service users among this group). Northern respondents are also twice as likely to have complained about their council than those living in the South.

Q Which, if any, of the following organisations have you made a complaint to in the last year?

	1998 %	2000 %	Net change ±%
<i>Base: All</i>	(5,064)	(1,086)	
Your Local Council	11	12	+1
Police	6	4	-2
Council Housing Service ³	5	4	-1
Refuse/ Waste Collection Service ⁴	4	3	-1
Road Maintenance and Repairs ⁵	4	3	-1
Street Lighting	2	3	+1
Local Bus Services	4	3	-1
Train Companies	4	3	-1
Your GP	2	2	0
NHS Hospitals	2	2	0
Inland Revenue	3	2	-1
Street Cleaning	2	2	0
Benefits Agency/ Department of Social Security (DSS) ⁶	2	2	0

Responses greater than one per cent shown

Source: MORI

A third of those who have made a complaint in the last year were satisfied with the way in which the complaint was handled, and 56% were dissatisfied. This gives a net satisfaction figure of -23.

Satisfaction with the way in which complaints are handled varies markedly among different subgroups of the population. Older respondents (aged 65+) are most positive, net satisfied +12. Whereas those in social class AB are more positive, net satisfied +1, three-quarters of those in social classes DE are dissatisfied, giving a balance of -52.

³ The service was asked as 'Council Housing' in the 1998 recruitment questionnaire.

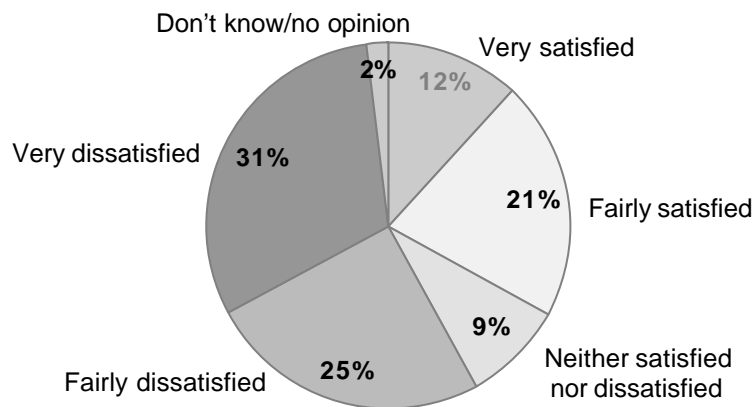
⁴ The service was asked as 'Refuse collection' in the 1998 recruitment questionnaire.

⁵ The service was asked as 'Road and Pavement maintenance' in the 1998 recruitment questionnaire.

⁶ The service was asked as 'Benefits Agency' only in the 1998 recruitment questionnaire.

Complaint Handling

Q *And thinking about your most recent complaint, how satisfied or dissatisfied were you with the way in which your complaint was handled?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All who have made a complaint in the last year (380)

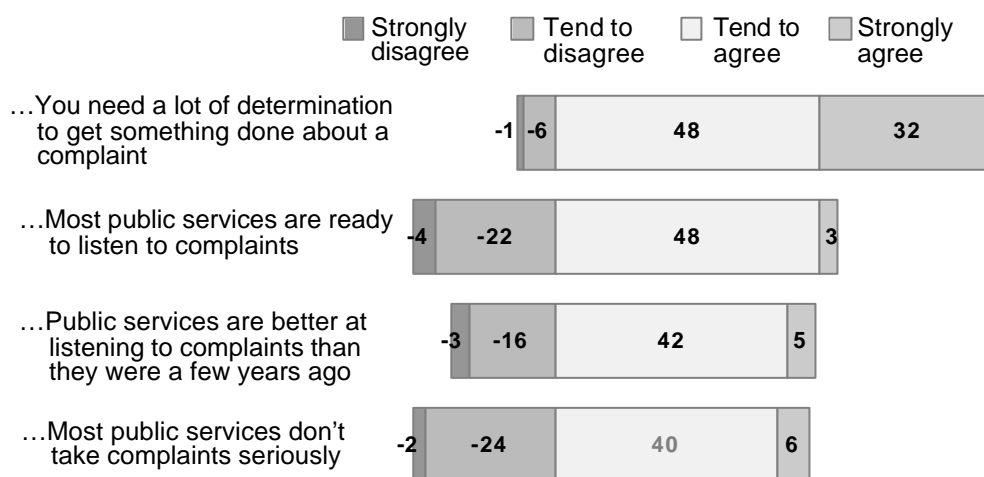
Source: MORI

Respondents were asked a number of statements about the way in which public services handle complaints, and their experience of making a complaint. Four in five agree that you need a lot determination to get something done about a complaint. Middle class respondents are less likely to agree with statement than other Panel members.

This high level of agreement has changed little since 1998, and remains similar to results from the 1994 and 1997 surveys on complaints handling undertaken for the Cabinet Office.

Complaints Handling

Q *Please could you tell me strongly you agree or disagree with each ?*



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Half feel that public services are ready to listen to complaints (51%). Again, reflecting the greater ease with which middle class respondents handle the complaints process, they are more likely to agree that services listen to them.

In contrast, almost half say that public services do not take their complaints seriously (46%). As above, there is a significant class difference in how these statements are perceived, with those in social classes C2DE (54%) more likely to agree that their complaints are not taken seriously.

On balance, respondents are positive that public services are better at listening to complaints than they were a few years ago. Almost half agree with this statement, and one in five disagree, giving a positive balance of +28.

Perceptions of Employers

Three in ten working Panel members class themselves as public sector workers, and two-thirds say they work in the private sector. One per cent do charity or voluntary work. Among those who are public sector employees, one in seven describe themselves as civil servants.

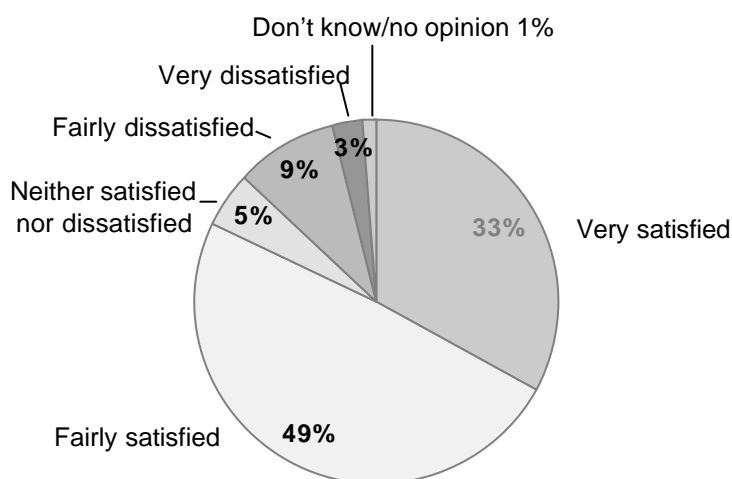
Satisfaction with Present Employment

Four in five (82%) of those in employment are satisfied with their present job – a third are very satisfied, and half are fairly satisfied. Only one in eight employees are dissatisfied, giving a positive balance of +70.

Employment sector appears to make no difference in reported satisfaction with one's present job. Public sector and private sector employees are equally satisfied – both have a net figure of +70.

Satisfaction with Job

Q On the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your present job?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All working (580)

Source: MORI

Those on the lowest incomes are more dissatisfied with their present jobs than better paid employees. One in four of those with a household income of under £11,500 are dissatisfied, compared to one in ten of those on higher incomes.

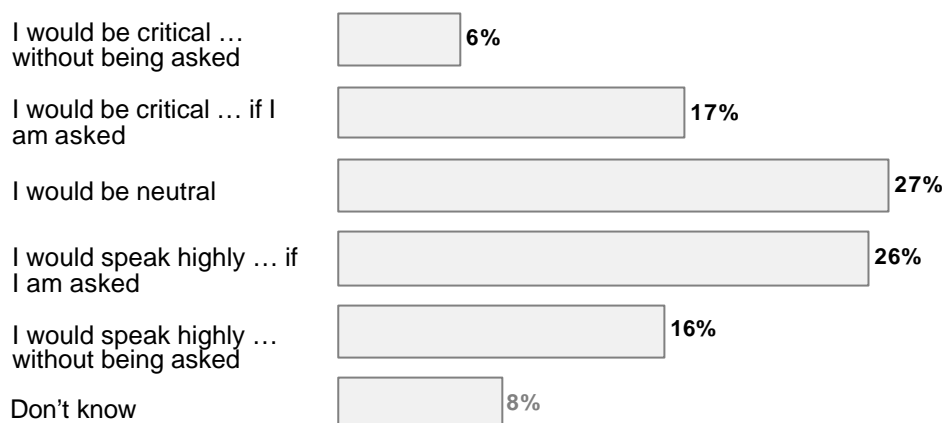
Advocacy of Employer, and Employer's Services

Panel members were asked to consider how they would describe their employer to those outside the organisation. Two in five would speak highly of their employer – of which 16% would do so without being asked. A quarter are critical, which is surprisingly high given the fact that only 12% are dissatisfied with their present job.

Men are significantly more likely to be critical of their employer than women (27% and 17%, respectively). Again, there is no difference in opinion between private and public sector workers, with both equally likely to speak highly or be critical of their employers.

View of Employer

Q How would you describe the organisation you work for as an employer, if you were speaking to someone from outside the organisation?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All working (580)

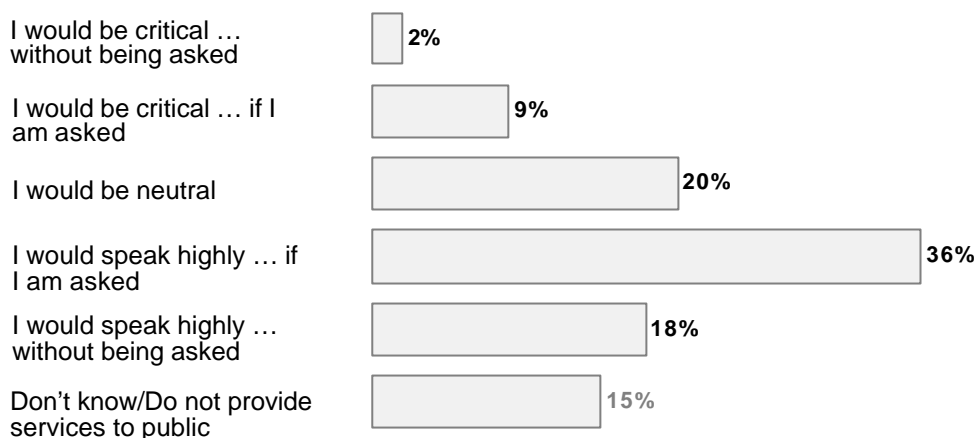
Source: MORI

Panel members are far more positive about the services provided to the public by the organisation they work for, than they are about the organisation as an employer. Over half say they speak highly of the organisation's services (54%), and one in nine are critical (11%).

Praise or criticism of the organisation's services varies considerably depending on respondent's household income. Wealthier Panel members (earning £24,500 and over) are far more likely to speak highly of the organisation's services to the public, than those earning less than £11,500 (61% and 37%, respectively).

View of Services

Q And how would you describe the services provided to the public by the organisation you work for, if you were speaking to someone from outside the organisation?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All working (580)

Source: MORI

Reflecting the high proportion who are satisfied with their job, three in five say they feel proud to work for their employer. One in seven disagree, giving a positive balance of +46. Those on higher incomes are more likely to say they feel proud. Again, private and public sector workers are equally as likely to say they feel proud of who they work for.

Attitudes towards Employment

Q Please tell me to what extent you agree or disagree with each ?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All working (580)

Source: MORI

Respondents were asked whether they agree or disagree that the statement 'I'm not really interested in the organisation I work for, it is just a job. Only one in five agreed with this statement. Part-time workers and those in social classes DE are more likely to agree with this sentiment than other respondents. There is no significant difference of opinion on this statement between private and public sector employees.

Attitudes toward Senior Management

Panel members were asked to assess four different aspects of their employer's senior management's performance – their vision, their setting of goals and

objectives for employees, whether or not they instil confidence in the staff, and whether or not they provide sufficient training and development opportunities.

On each of these aspects, employees were, on balance, positive. Three in five say they are given the development and training they need for their job.

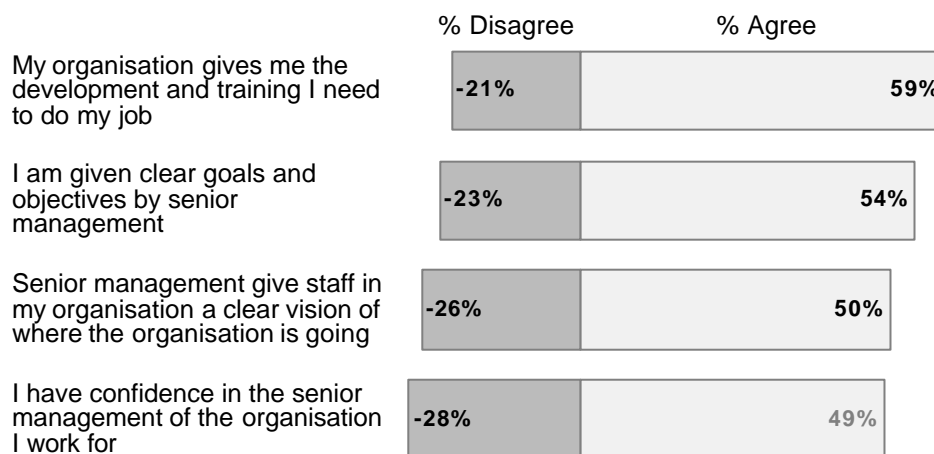
Over half say that they are given clear goals and objectives by senior management (54%) - almost a quarter disagree (23%). Half say senior management give staff a clear vision (50%), and half say they have confidence in their senior management (49%). Over a quarter disagree with each of these statements.

While retaining confidence in senior management, those in social classes DE, on lower incomes, are less likely to agree that management provides them with a clear vision of the organisation’s future.

Employment sector – public or private – makes no significant difference to employees’ perception of these aspects of senior management’s performance.

Attitudes towards Senior Management

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with each of the statements?



Base: People’s Panel Wave 5 - All working (580)

Source: MORI

Public Leadership

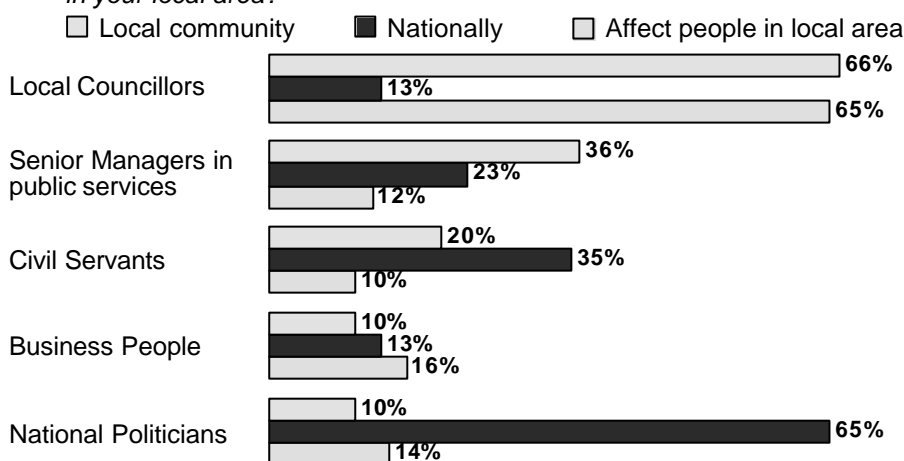
Respondents were asked to consider who was in charge of public services locally, and in the country as a whole. They were also asked who has most influence over the issues that affect local people. The chart below summarises the top three responses for each of these questions.

Public Leadership

Q Which of these people, if any, do you think are in charge of public services in your local community?

Q Which of these people, if any, do you think are in charge of public services in the United Kingdom?

Q Which of these people has most influence on the issues that affect people in your local area?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Respondents are most likely to see local councillors as being in charge of public services in their local area, 66%. Senior public service managers are mentioned by a third, and one in five mention civil servants.

Men are more likely than women to identify senior managers as being in charge (41% and 31%, respectively). Middle class respondents are also more likely than other respondents to think senior public service managers have responsibility for public services.

When thinking about public services nationally, two-thirds see national politicians as being in charge of public services. A third mention civil servants, and a quarter mention senior managers.

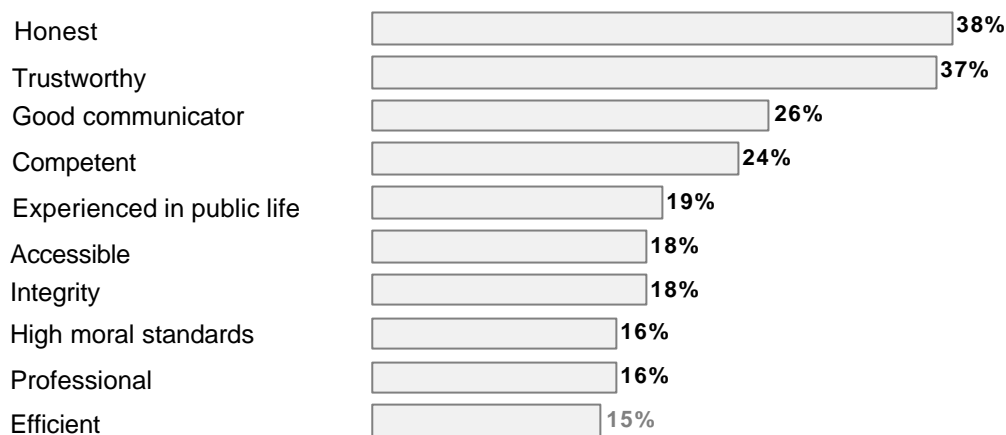
Younger and middle class Panel members are more likely than older respondents and those in social classes DE to see national politicians as in charge of public services. In contrast, younger respondents are less likely to say civil servants are in charge.

When thinking about who has greatest influence on the issues that actually affect people in the local area, two-thirds say local councillors. One in six think business people are influencing the local area.

Panel members were asked to think generally which qualities are most important for public leaders. The top three responses were honesty, being trustworthy, and being a good communicator. Middle class respondents are more likely than others to mention competency and good communication skills as important.

Personal Qualities in Public Leaders

Q Which three of these qualities, if any, do you feel are most important in a public leader?



Base: People's Panel Wave 5 - All (1,086)

Source: MORI

Panel members were then asked to consider the different attributes and personal qualities that are most important for different roles. The table below summarises the top three qualities for each role.

For business people the most important attribute is relevant business experience, professionalism and honesty.

Efficiency, competency and honesty are seen as the most important skills for civil servants.

When thinking about what makes a good national politician, Panel members mention skills such as honesty, trustworthiness, and being a good communicator. Men are significantly more likely to mention aspects such as honesty and integrity. In contrast, women are more likely than men to mention trustworthiness. There are also regional differences, with those living in Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland significantly more likely to say intelligence is an important quality in a national politician than those Panel members living in England.

Q	Thinking (again) about this list of personal qualities, which three, if any, do you feel are most important in ... ?			
	... business people	... civil servants	... national politicians	... local councillors
	%	%	%	%
<i>Base: All</i>				
Accessible	4	17	14	26
Caring	4	7	10	14
Competent	21	29	17	24
Efficient	19	33	9	20
Experienced in running a business	49	3	1	4
Good communicator	18	20	27	22
Honest	25	28	42	41
Professional	38	26	17	11
Trustworthy	21	24	30	32

The top three answers for each role are shown – other answer categories are not shown.

Source: MORI

As with national politicians, it is seen as important that local councillors are honest and trustworthy. However, accessibility is also rated as an important quality. This aspect is particularly important to more middle class respondents.

Panel members consider honesty and caring qualities as the most important personal attributes for local people. This is mentioned by 53% and 49%, respectively. Those in social classes DE are significantly less likely than others to mention that local people should be co-operative. Younger Panel members are more likely to say local people should be 'involving', and disabled respondents are significantly more likely to say local people should be caring.

Respondents feel that public service senior managers should be professional, honest and efficient. The top three skills for front line staff are professionalism, being caring and being a good communicator.

For senior managers, middle class respondents place greater stress on skill such as efficiency, and competency than those in social classes DE. In contrast, DE respondents see caring skills and being co-operative as more important than middle class respondents do.

The personal qualities important for voluntary sector workers are that they are caring, honest and trustworthy.

Q Thinking (again) about this list of personal qualities, which three, if any, do you feel are most important in ... ?

	... local people %	... senior managers in public services %	... front line staff in public services %	... voluntary sector workers %
<i>Base: All</i>				
Accessible	6	14	21	8
Caring	49	7	39	54
Competent	5	23	24	18
Efficient	5	24	24	19
Experienced in running a business	1	21	1	1
Good communicator	9	21	26	19
Honest	53	30	22	34
Professional	2	33	41	11
Trustworthy	35	22	23	31

The top three answers for each role are shown – other answer categories are not shown.

Source: MORI

Appendices
