Residents' Survey 2021

Charnwood Borough Council

Final Report

November 2021

Contents Page

Project details

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Executive summary

Charnwood

RESIDENTS SURVEY 2021

On a biennial basis, Charnwood Borough Council carries out a residents' survey to understand and track changes in residents' views on the local area and the Council's services.

The Council commissioned M·E·L Research, an independent market research agency, to undertake the consultation to find out residents' views.

The 2021 survey captured the views of 550 residents across Charnwood between 27th September and 27th October 2021. They were asked about the Council, local services and the local area. Here are some of the things they told us.

LOCAL AREA AND THE COUNCIL

94% were satisfied with living in the area

92% felt people from different backgrounds get on well together

65% trust CBC a great deal or fair amount

61% felt that CBC acts on the concerns of local residents a great deal or fair amount

Top resident priorities:

- Rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis
- Feeling safe in their home and local area
- Cleanliness and tidiness of the local area

Improvements needed:

- Availability of housing that residents can afford to rent
- A variety of shops and markets
- Availability of housing that residents can afford to buy

COMMUNICATIONS

68% felt that CBC kept residents well informed about the services it provides

78% would use more online services if the Council provided them (e.g. bookings, payments and reporting problems online)

24% had used online Council services that they usually wouldn't, during the Covid-19 pandemic

- **67%** are more likely to use online Council services in the future
- **64%** now feel more confident accessing online services

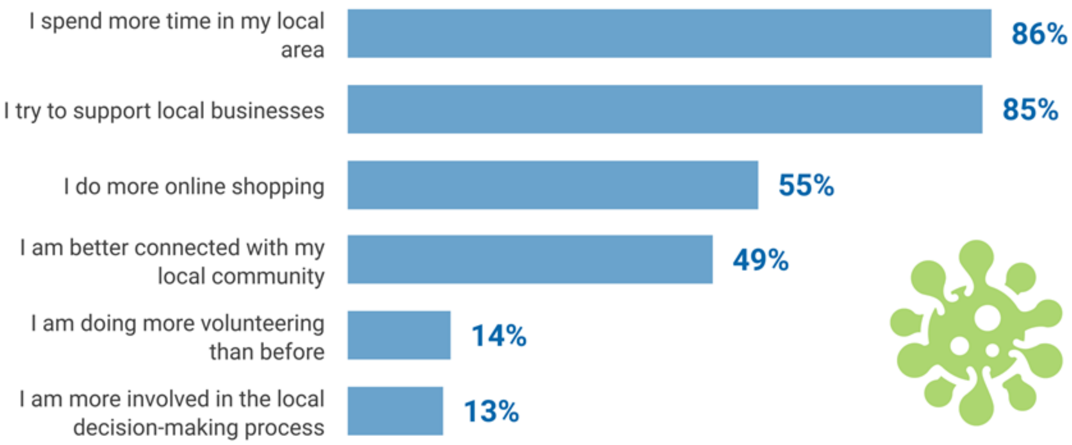
Preferred contact methods:

- Email alerts
- Letter
- Leaflet

VALUE FOR MONEY

63% felt that CBC provides value for money

IMPACT OF COVID-19



Top worries following Covid-19:

Children / dependents aged under 18

Mental health

Current physical health

30% felt that their household finances had been negatively impacted

57% currently feel worried about the Covid-19 pandemic

49% report feeling positive about the future

www.charnwood.gov.uk CharnwoodBC @CharnwoodBC

Introduction

Background

On a biennial basis, Charnwood Borough Council carries out residents' research to understand and track changes in residents' views on the local area and the Council's services. M·E·L Research were commissioned to conduct this research on the Council's behalf in 2017, 2019 and 2021. A copy of the questionnaire used in 2021 is shown in Appendix A.

Method

A telephone survey was conducted among residents using purchased telephone lists. These lists comprised both random digit dial numbers and 'consumer' lists of named individuals and mobile numbers. Use of the latter, significantly increases the reach of the research to younger residents.

A quota sampling approach was used to control the composition of the telephone survey sample. Independent quotas were set by ward, age group and gender based on 2019 ONS population estimates. The aim was to ensure the sample was broadly representative of the Charnwood population.

Response and statistical reliability

An overall target of 550 survey responses was set in order to achieve a margin of error of ±4% at the 95% confidence level (based on a population of 150,411 for those aged 18 and over). This means that we can be 95% certain that had every Charnwood resident been surveyed, the overall results would be no more than 4% above or below the figures that were reported (e.g. a 50% satisfaction rate could in reality lie within the range of 46% to 54%). The target of 550 interviews was achieved with the full respondent profile shown in Appendix B.

Target population	Residents of Charnwood 18 or older
Interview length	Average of 15 minutes
Survey period	27th September– 27th October 2021
Data collection methods	Interviewer-administered telephone survey
Total sample	550

Analysis and reporting

Weighting the survey data

Whilst quotas were set with the aim of achieving a representative sample in the telephone survey, the accuracy of 'consumer' telephone records for Charnwood were a limiting factor. Furthermore, in a pattern that is becoming increasingly apparent in telephone research, younger residents were more difficult to engage with. To bring the data more in line with current population estimates, the data was weighted by age group, gender and geographical groupings based on ward (Loughborough, larger settlements and villages). This ensures that it more accurately matches the known profile of Charnwood.

Presentation of survey data

Owing to the rounding of numbers, percentages displayed visually on graphs and charts within this report may not always add up to 100% and may differ slightly when compared with the text. Where there are differences, the figures provided in the text should always be used. Where figures do not appear in a graph or chart, these are suppressed as equating to 3% or less. The 'base' or 'n=' figure referred to in each chart and table is the total number of residents responding to the question with a valid response.

Differences in views of sub-groups of the population were compared using a statistical test (z test[1]) and statistically significant results (at the 95% level) are indicated in the text. Statistical significance means that a result is unlikely due to chance (i.e. It is a real difference in the population) and that if you were to replicate the study, you would be 95% certain the same results would be achieved again. Results have been analysed by the following sub-groups, where there were a sufficient number of responses in each group:

- Gender
- Age
- Ethnicity
- Disability
- Religion
- Ward*

**Due to small base sizes, findings by ward would be indicative only. Therefore, results have been categorised into three geographical groupings: Loughborough, larger settlements (Syston, Shepshed, Thurmaston and Bistall) and villages.*

[1] A statistical test, where sample sizes are greater than 30, to determine whether two population means are different when variances are known.

Comparison to other data sources

Where possible, results have been compared to the 2019 and 2017 Residents' Survey to show trends. It should be noted that a face-to-face methodology was used in 2019 and 2017 so caution should be used when interpreting these comparisons due to the different methodology. Several questions have also been compared to the June 2021 LGA polling results (https://www.local.gov.uk/publications/polling-resident-satisfaction-councils-round-29-june-2021). Due to the slight difference in the wording of the questions caution should be used when interpreting these comparisons.

Results

Section 1: Your local area and your Council

This section explores perceptions of Charnwood Borough Council and the areas they operate in.

Living in the area

All residents were asked how happy they are living in the area. Over nine in ten (94%) reported that they were either happy or very happy, with most being 'happy' (51%) to live in the area. Just 6% were unhappy with where they live.

Figure 1.1: Living in the area

Unweighted sample base: 535

Comparing this result to historical data for Charnwood shows that this year's result is consistent with 2019, meaning that residents of Charnwood are equally as happy about living in the area as they were two years ago. Later in this report we will describe in more detail how the relationship residents have with their local area has changed as a result of the pandemic. But these changes e.g. more residents spending more time in the local area have not had any impact on this headline indicator of local area satisfaction.

Year	Happiness (%)
2021	**94%**
2019	94%
2017	97%

Sub-group analysis shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

	Those with a disability were less likely to report being happy living in the area compared to those without a disability (90% compared to 95%). One in ten of those with a disability reported being unhappy to some extent.
	Residents in Loughborough were less likely to report being happy living in the area (91%) compared to those living in a large settlement (98%) or village (96%). However overall happiness is very high across the borough.

Area priorities

Residents were provided with a list of statements and asked to rate how important they are to them, from 'very important' to 'not at all important'.

The aspects attributed the highest levels of importance were:

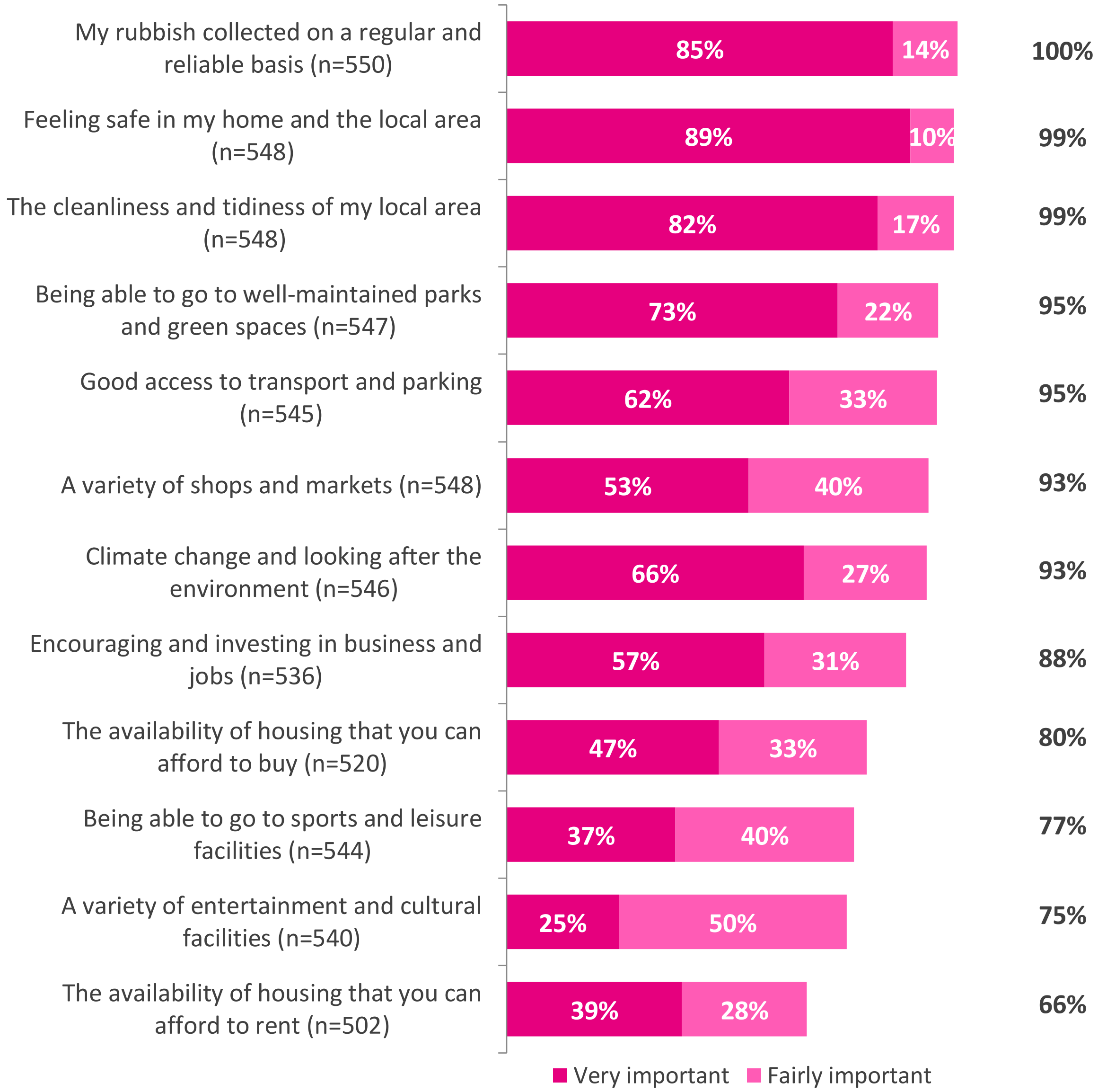
1. Rubbish being collected on a regular and reliable basis (100%)
2. Feeling safe in the home and local area (99%)
3. Cleanliness and tidiness of local area (99%)

The least important aspects are listed below, although it should be noted that these are all described as important by a majority of residents:

1. The availability of housing that you can afford to rent (66%)
2. Having a variety of entertainment and cultural facilities (75%)
3. Being able to go to sports and leisure facilities (77%)

Figure 1.2: Area priorities

Unweighted sample bases in parentheses



Satisfaction with area

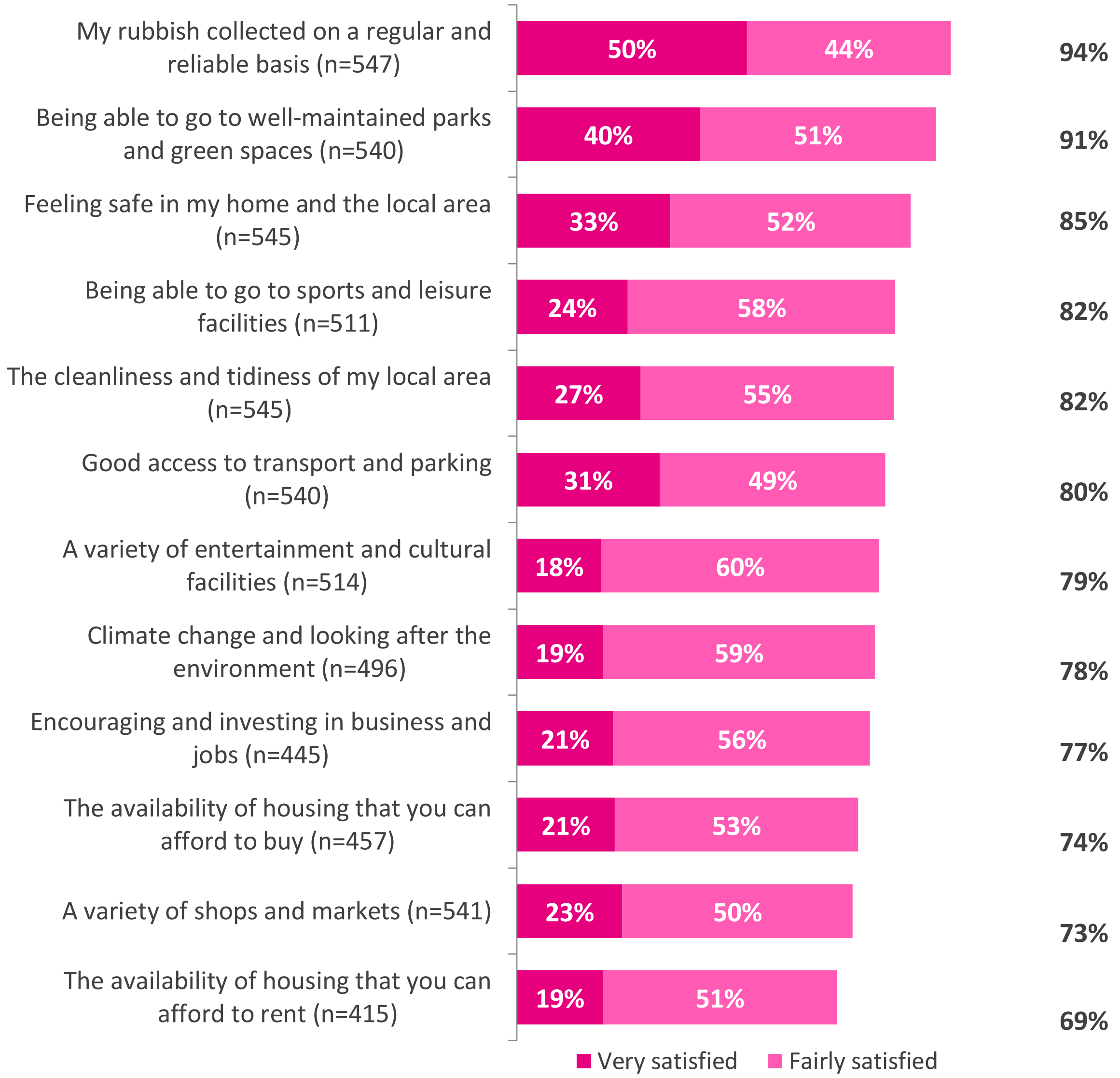
Residents were also asked how satisfied they were with a number of more specific aspects of their local area and the services that they receive where they live. Results show that satisfaction was generally high across the board. The aspects with particularly strong satisfaction were:

- Rubbish being collected on a regular and reliable basis (94%)
- Being able to go to well-maintained parks and green spaces (91%)
- Feeling safe in the home and local area (85%)

Satisfaction was lowest for availability of housing that residents can afford to rent (69%).

Figure 1.3 Satisfaction with services/aspects of living in the area

Unweighted sample bases in parentheses



The table below compares the satisfaction levels for three service areas (cleanliness, waste collection and sports and leisure) against the latest LGA results based on national polling. It shows that Charnwood Borough Council has performed significantly better than the national average for all three service areas. However, these results should be treated as indicative as the question wording used is not identical to the LGA survey.

Satisfaction %	Cleanliness	Waste collection	Sports and leisure
Charnwood Borough Council	82%	94%	82%
LGA (June 2021)	68%	80%	61%

Sub-group analysis of the survey data also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

- *A variety of entertainment and cultural facilities*: Residents aged 55-64 were more satisfied (87%) than those aged under 35 (67%), 35-44 (77%) and 65-74 (75%).
- *A variety of shops and markets*: Residents aged 35-44 were more satisfied (77%) than those aged 45-54 (61%).
- *Being able to go to sports and leisure facilities*: Residents aged 35-44 were less satisfied (74%) than those aged under 35 (88%), 45-54 (89%) and 55-64 (89%).
- *Encouraging and investing in business and jobs*: Residents aged 35-44 were more satisfied (80%) than those aged 45-54 (63%).
- *Feeling safe in my home and the local area*: Residents aged 35-44 were less satisfied (76%) than those aged 55 and over (87-92%).
- *Good access to transport and parking*: Residents aged 35-44 were more satisfied (86%) than those aged under 35 (75%), 55-64 (74%) and 65-74 (75%).
- *Climate change and looking after the environment*: Residents aged under 35 were more satisfied (88%) than those aged 35-74 (72-76%).
- *My rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis*: Residents aged under 35 and 75 and over were more satisfied (98% and 100% respectively) than those aged 35-54 (88-91%).
- *The availability of housing that you can afford to rent*: Residents aged 35-44 were less satisfied (62%) than those aged 45-54 (81%) and 75+ (84%).
- *The cleanliness and tidiness of my local area*: Residents aged 35-44 were less satisfied (77%) than those aged under 35 (89%).

- *Being able to go to well-maintained parks and green spaces*: Residents with a disability were less satisfied than those without one (83% compared to 93%).
- *The availability of housing that you can afford to buy*: Residents with a disability were less satisfied than those without one (62% compared to 77%).
- *The availability of housing that you can afford to rent*: Residents with a disability were less satisfied than those without one (56% compared to 73%).

- *A variety of entertainment and cultural facilities*: Residents living in a large settlement were less satisfied (69%) than those living in Loughborough (81%) or a village (84%).
- *A variety of shops and markets*: Residents living in Loughborough were less satisfied (65%) than those living in a large settlement (76%) or a village (80%).
- *Being able to go to sports and leisure facilities*: Residents living in a large settlement were less satisfied (73%) than those living in Loughborough (88%) or a village (83%).
- *Encouraging and investing in business and jobs*: Residents living in a village were more satisfied (84%) than those living in Loughborough (74%) or a large settlement (70%).

Importance vs satisfaction

Figure 1.4 overleaf plots importance against satisfaction for the above statements. The vertical pink line marks the mean importance score (88%) and the horizontal pink link marks the mean satisfaction score (80%). In summary, the figure highlights the following:

High importance and low satisfaction

Items in box A are those that were considered important (above 88%) but have lower satisfaction levels (below 80%). Items within this box are the ones that the Council should prioritise for future improvement. This includes good access to transport and parking, climate change and looking after the environment and a variety of shops and markets.

High importance and high satisfaction

Items that fall in box B were also considered to be important services, but satisfaction is higher. The Council should therefore ensure that the quality of these services (such as rubbish being collected on a regular and reliable basis) is maintained.

Low importance and high satisfaction

Items in box C are aspects which have a low importance but high satisfaction. Just one statement falls into this box: being able to go to sports and leisure facilities. Less priority is needed here as this is less important to residents and satisfaction is high.

Low importance and low satisfaction

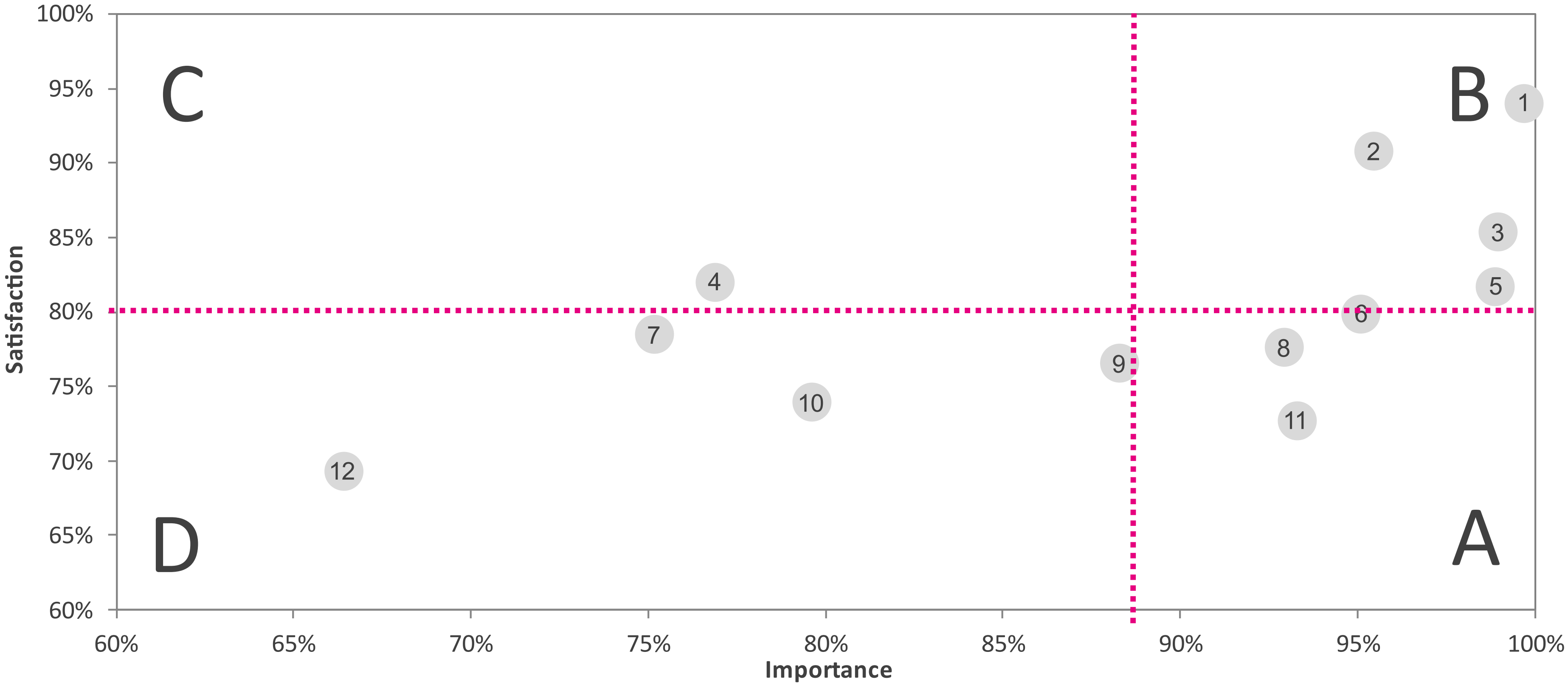
Items in box D are those that have both a relatively low importance and low satisfaction rating. These include: a variety of entertainment and cultural facilities, encouraging and investing in business and jobs and the availability of housing that residents can afford to buy or rent. Therefore, results suggest that the Council should not direct resources in improving on these areas as they are considered relatively less important to residents.

Although indicative as the 2019 question asked residents to select their top three most important priorities, analysis by survey period does show that the top three priorities identified in 2019 remain the top three currently.

Figure 1.4: Importance vs satisfaction

Percentage of respondents

1. My rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis
2. Being able to go to well-maintained parks and green spaces
3. Feeling safe in my home and the local area
4. Being able to go to sports and leisure facilities
5. The cleanliness and tidiness of my local area
6. Good access to transport and parking
7. A variety of entertainment and cultural facilities
8. Climate change and looking after the environment
9. Encouraging and investing in business and jobs
10. The availability of housing that you can afford to buy
11. A variety of shops and markets
12. The availability of housing that you can afford to rent

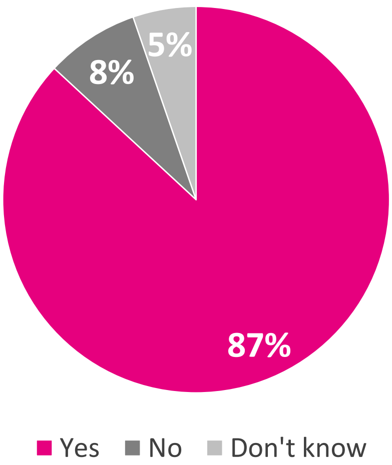


Community cohesion

Residents were asked whether they felt that their local area was a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together. Around nine in ten (87%) felt that it was.

Figure 1.5: Do you feel that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison by survey period shows that this year's result was lower than that of 2019. However, perceptions of community cohesion remain high in the borough.

Year	Getting on well (%)
2021	**87%**
2019	93%
2017	93%

Sub-group analysis also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

	Residents aged under 55 were less likely to feel that they local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together (80-87%) compared to those aged 75 and over (97%).
	Residents living in a large settlement were less likely to feel that people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area (83%) compared to those living in a village (89%).

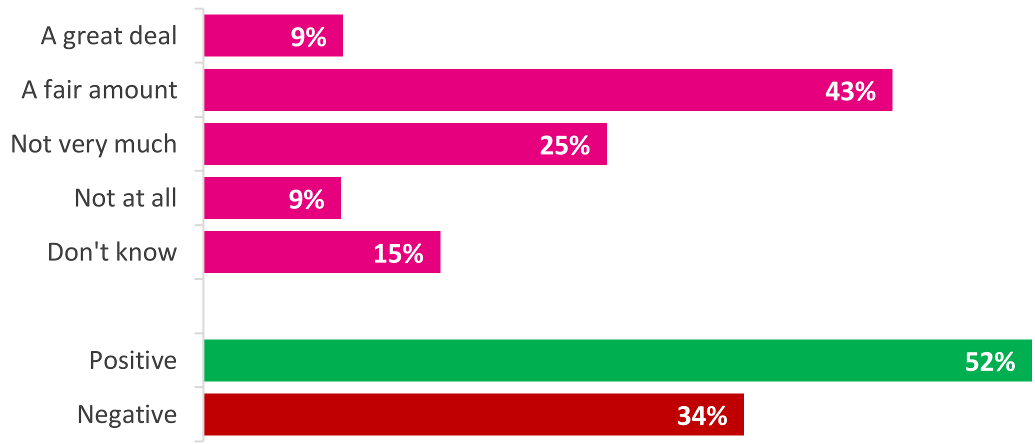
Charnwood Borough Council

Residents were next asked a set of questions relating to their views of and experiences with Charnwood Borough Council.

When asked the extent to which they thought the Council acts on the concerns of local residents, the majority of residents gave a positive response rather than a negative response (52% cf. 34%), with just over half stating that they think the Council acts on concerns 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.

Figure 1.6: Charnwood Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison with the LGA polling results from June 2021 shows that results are significantly lower than the national findings, as 62% of people nationally feel that their local council acts on the concerns of residents 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.

Sub-group analysis with Charnwood also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

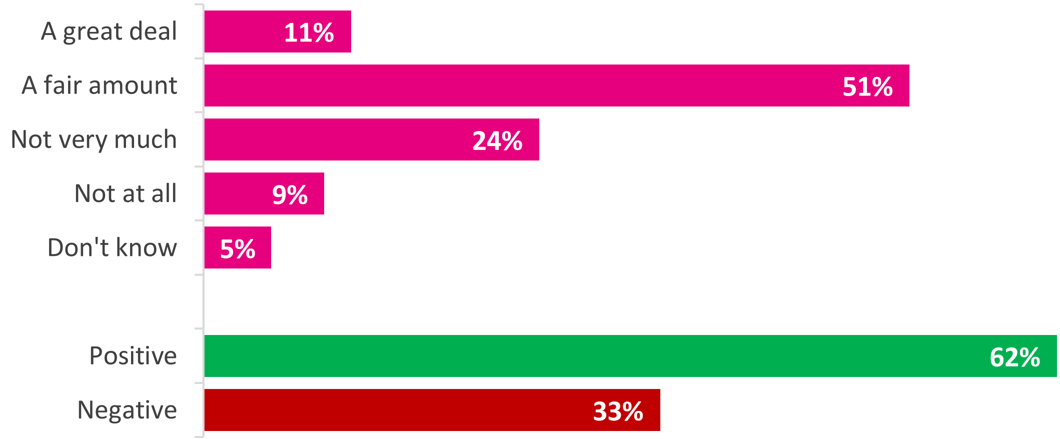
Residents aged 65 and over were more likely to feel that the Council acts on the concerns of local residents (62-64%) than those aged 45-54 (39%).

Trusting the Council

Residents were also asked to rate how much they trust Charnwood Borough Council. Most residents reported that they do trust the Council (62%), with the highest response being that they trust them 'a fair amount' (51%). Only 9% of residents do not trust the Council at all.

Figure 1.7: Trusting Charnwood Borough Council

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison to the 2019 survey period shows a significant fall in the proportion of residents stating that they trust the Council, with 83% stating that they trust the Council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' in 2019.

However, comparison with the LGA polling results from June 2021 again shows that results are broadly in line with national findings, with 64% of residents nationally trusting their local council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'.

Sub-group analysis also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

	Residents aged 75 and over were more likely to trust the Council (80%) than younger residents aged under 65 (54-64%). 17% of those aged 45-54 did not trust the Council at all.

Section 2: Communications

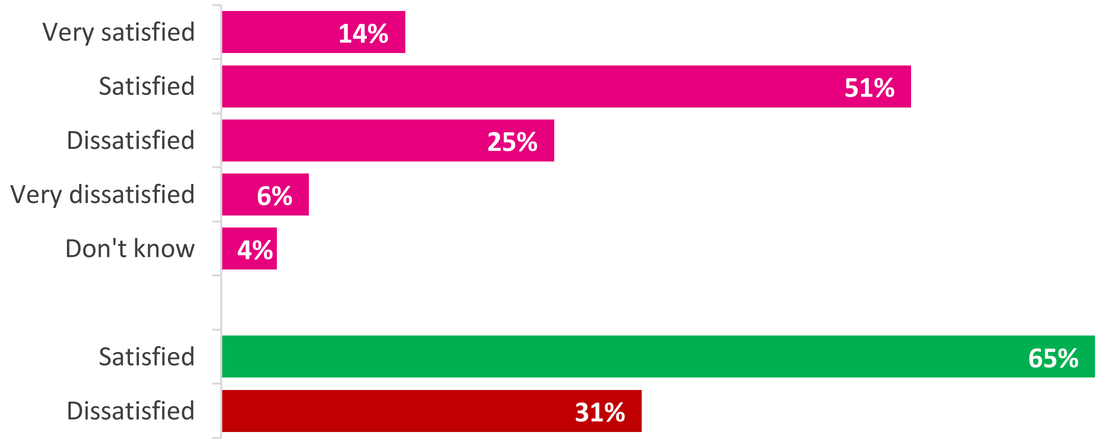
This section explores how residents receive Council information and access the services provided by Charnwood Borough Council.

Being kept informed

Residents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with how the Council keeps them informed about their services. Results show that nearly two thirds (65%) were satisfied ('very satisfied' and 'satisfied' combined) with over half being 'satisfied' (51%). Around a third (31%) said they were dissatisfied.

Figure 2.1: Satisfaction with Charnwood Borough Council keeping residents informed

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison by survey period shows that this year's result is significantly lower than that of 2019. In interpreting this drop Charnwood Bough Council should consider the impact the pandemic and demand for information has had on communication, coupled with the Council having less face to face contact with residents.

Year	Satisfied (%)
2021	**65%**
2019	80%
2017	81%

Comparison with the LGA polling results from June 2021 however does show that Charnwood Borough Council residents are more satisfied with the way the Council keeps them informed (65%), compared to the national score (61%). Still, caution is advised when interpreting this result because the questions differ slightly.

Sub-group analysis also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

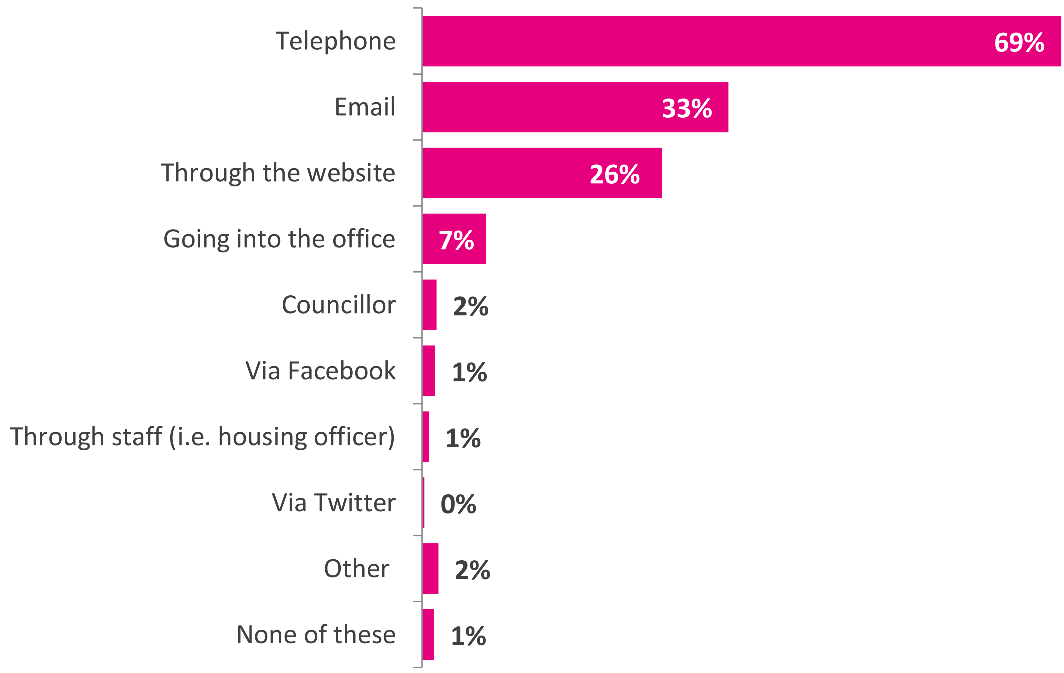
	Residents aged 35-44 were less satisfied with being kept informed (57%) compared to those aged 55 and over (71-77%).

Contacting the Council

Residents were asked, if they had to contact the Council for any reason, how they would they do it. Seven in ten (69%) would contact the Council by telephone, a third (33%) said by email and a quarter said they would use the Council's website (26%).

Figure 2.2: Methods that would be used to contact Charnwood Borough Council

Unweighted sample base: 550



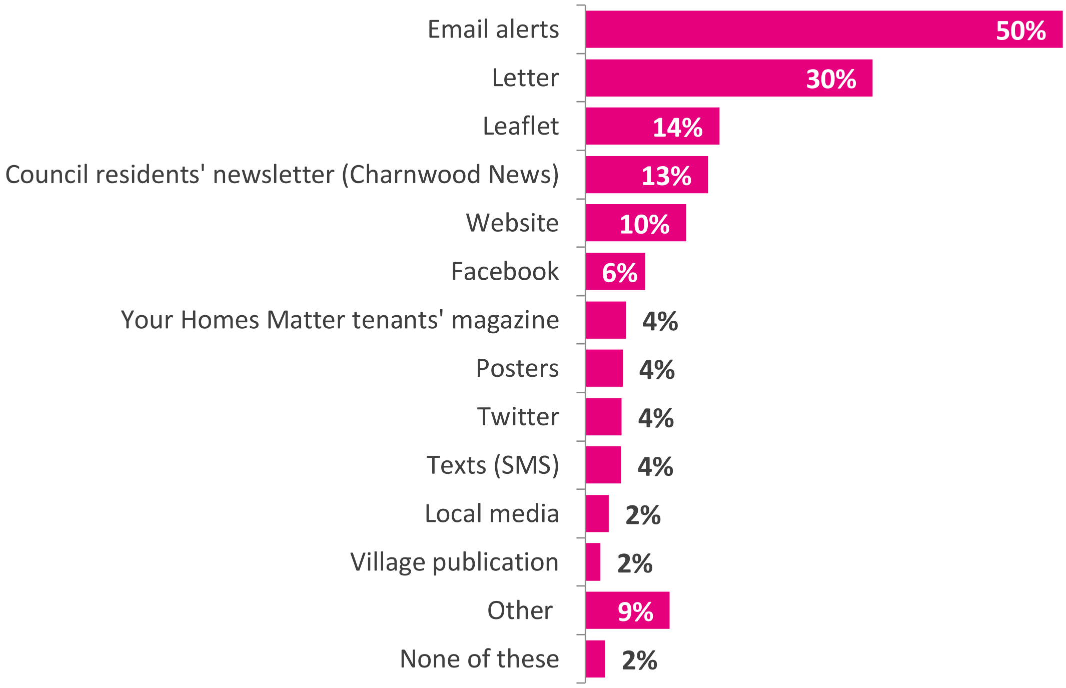
Comparison to the 2019 survey period shows no change in the top three methods.

Preferred method of receiving Council news and information

Residents were asked how they would like to hear about Council news and information. Results show that the most popular methods were email alerts (50%) and letter (30%). The least popular methods were via village publication (2%) and local media (2%).

Figure 2.3: Preferred contact methods for receiving news and information about Council services

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison to the 2019 survey period shows that the proportion of residents preferring letter as a method of communication has decreased (30% compared to 50% in 2019). The proportion of residents preferring email alerts has stayed the same, but the fall in the proportion stating letter has made email alerts the most popular method.

The table below presents the top three preferred methods by age group. This reiterates the popularity of email alerts and letter as means of receiving Council information across all age groups, with letter being the most preferred amongst those in the oldest age group. What is also evident is the preference for more 'traditional' methods of communication for the Council to reach those aged 55 and over, including residents' newsletters and leaflets.

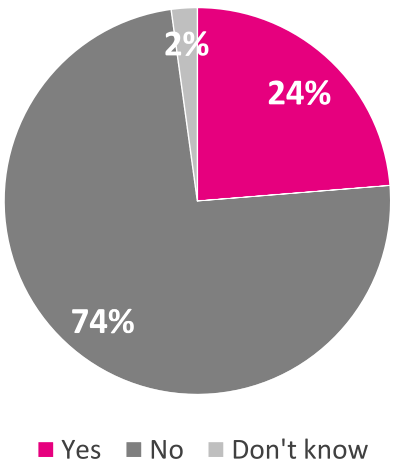
	Under 35 (n=54)	35-44 (n=115)	45-54 (n=56)	55-64 (n=129)	65-74 (n=100)	75+ (n=79)
1.	Email alerts	Email alerts	Email alerts	Email alerts	Email alerts	Letter
2.	Letter	Letter	Letter	Letter	Letter	Email alerts
3.	Facebook	Website	Leaflet	Council residents' newsletter (Charnwood News)	Council residents' newsletter (Charnwood News)	Leaflet

Accessing services during the Covid-19 pandemic

To assess the usage of online Council services during the pandemic, residents were asked whether they had used any Council services in a manner they usually wouldn't. The majority (74%) stated that they hadn't, but almost a quarter (24%) reported that they had. On this basis the pandemic has been a significant driver of channel shifts/behaviour changes.

Figure 2.4: During the pandemic did you have to use any Council services online that you wouldn't normally have used in person face to face?

Unweighted sample base: 550



Sub-group analysis shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

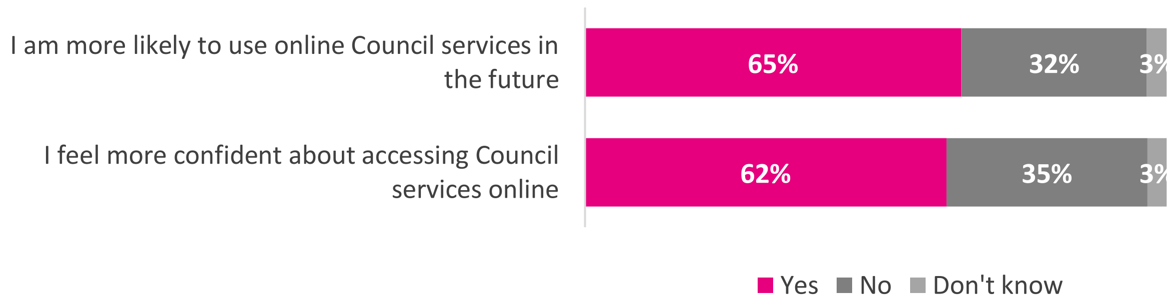
	Men were more likely to have newly accessed Council services online during the pandemic (29%) compared to women (18%).

Perhaps unsurprisingly, residents aged 35-44 and 45-54 were more likely to have newly accessed Council services online during the pandemic (32% and 27% respectively) compared to those aged 75+ (8%).

Those who had used Council services online during the pandemic, that they wouldn't normally have used in person, were then asked whether the following statements applied to them. The majority of these residents felt that they are now more likely to use online Council services in the future (65%) and feel more confident about accessing Council services online (62%). These results do suggest a positive outcome from the pandemic in terms of a broadening of service access, although as the focus group comments show, there remains an appetite among some residents/service users for face to face Council contact.

Figure 2.5: Having done this, do any of these statements apply to you?

Unweighted sample base: 116

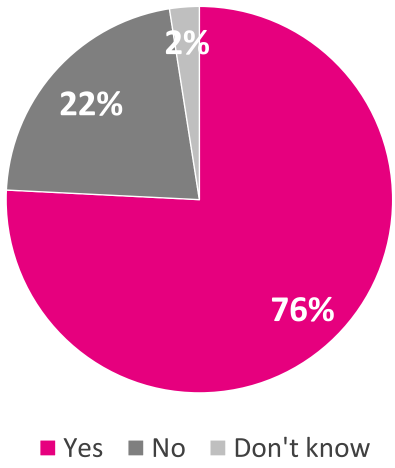


Accessing services online

Residents were asked whether they would use more online services if the Council provided them – such as bookings, payments and reporting problems online. Over three quarters (76%) said that they would.

Figure 2.6: If the Council provided more services online, would you use them?

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison by survey period shows a greater proportion of residents reporting an appetite to use online services now (76%) compared to in 2019 (71%).

Sub-group analysis also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses. These variations identify groups that perhaps have a greater risk of being digitally excluded.

	Perhaps unsurprisingly, residents aged 75 and over were less likely to agree that they would use online services (38%) compared to younger residents (67-90%).

Section 3: Value for money

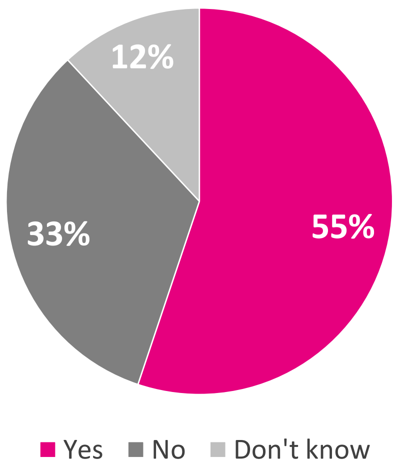
This section explores residents' perceptions of whether the services they receive are value for money.

An average Band D property pays £131.08* to the Borough Council on an annual basis. This covers services such as waste collection and recycling, leisure centres, food hygiene and safety, council housing, markets and fairs, CCTV. (This figure does not include the Loughborough Special levy for residents living in Loughborough or Parish or Town Council precepts).

Residents were provided with this information in the survey and were then asked whether or not they think that the Council offers value for money. Over half (55%) felt that the Council does provide value for money, whilst 33% felt they do not.

Figure 3.1: Do you think the Council provides value for money?

Unweighted sample base: 550



Comparison by survey period shows that this year's result is significantly lower than that of 2019, with less residents feeling that the Council provides value for money.

Year	Satisfied (%)
2021	**55%**
2019	63%

However, comparison with the LGA polling results from June 2021 shows that Charnwood Borough Council residents were significantly more satisfied with the value for money offered by the Council (55%), compared to the national score (49%). Still, caution is advised when interpreting this result because the question wording differs.

Sub-group analysis also shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

Residents aged 75 and over were more likely to think that the Council provides value for money (74%) than those aged under 55 (45-56%). Those aged 35-44 and 45-54 were the most likely to disagree (42% and 43% respectively).

Section 4: Covid-19

This section looks at the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on different aspects of life.

Impact of Covid-19

Residents were asked the extent to which they agree or disagree with a list of statements looking at behaviours following the pandemic. The majority of residents agreed that they now spend more time in their local area (86%) and that they try to support local businesses (85%). Around half of residents felt that they now do more online shopping (55%) and are better connected with their local community (49%).

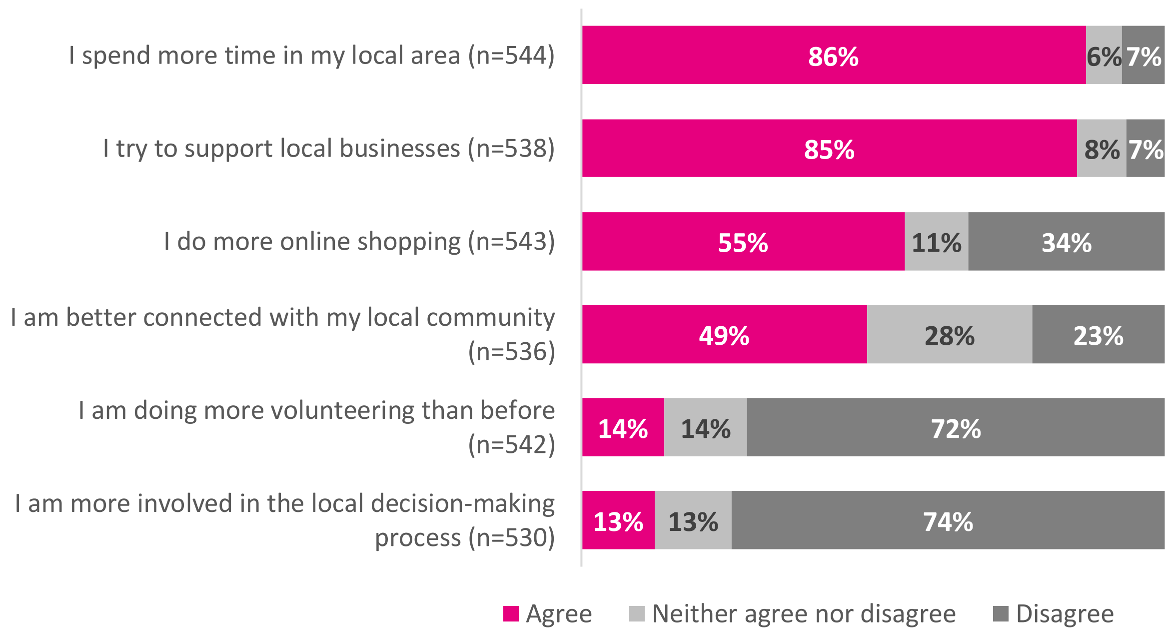
At lower levels 14% of residents report doing more volunteering and being involved in the local decision-making processes (13% agreed).

It is worth noting that 28% of residents neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement “Following the pandemic I am better connected with my local community” which may suggest that they already felt connected with their local community.

Figure 4.1: Agreement with statements

Unweighted sample bases in parentheses

Following the pandemic…



Sub-group analysis shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

- *I am better connected with my local community*: Residents aged 65-74 were more likely to agree (58%) than those aged under 35 (41%).
- *I try to support local businesses*: Residents aged under 35 were more likely to agree (95%) than those aged 35-44 (82%), 55-64 (84%) and 75 and over (80%).
- *I spend more time in my local area*: Residents aged 65-74 were more likely to agree (94%) than those aged 55-64 (82%).
- *I do more online shopping*: Residents aged under 44 were more likely to agree (64-72%) than those aged 55 and over (27-48%).

- *I try to support local businesses*: White residents were more likely to agree (86%) than non-White residents (78%). However, it was more a case of non-White residents stating neither than disagreeing.
- *I am more involved in the local decision-making process*: Non-White residents were more likely to agree (23%) than White residents (11%).

- *I spend more time in my local area*: Residents living in a village were more likely to agree (92%) than those living in Loughborough (84%) or a large settlement (84%).

Worries about the effects of Covid-19

Residents were also asked how worried they are about the impact of Covid-19 on various aspects of their lives. For all statements, the majority of residents did not view them as a huge worry (rated them between 0-4). The top three aspects which gained the highest ratings of worry (between 6-10) were children/dependents aged under 18 (38%), mental health (36%) and current physical health (35%). These relatively high concerns illustrate the wider public health impacts of the pandemic (i.e. those not directly associated with virus transmission).

Figure 4.2: Impact of Covid-19 on aspects of life (0 – Not at all worried to 10 – Very worried)

Unweighted sample bases in parentheses

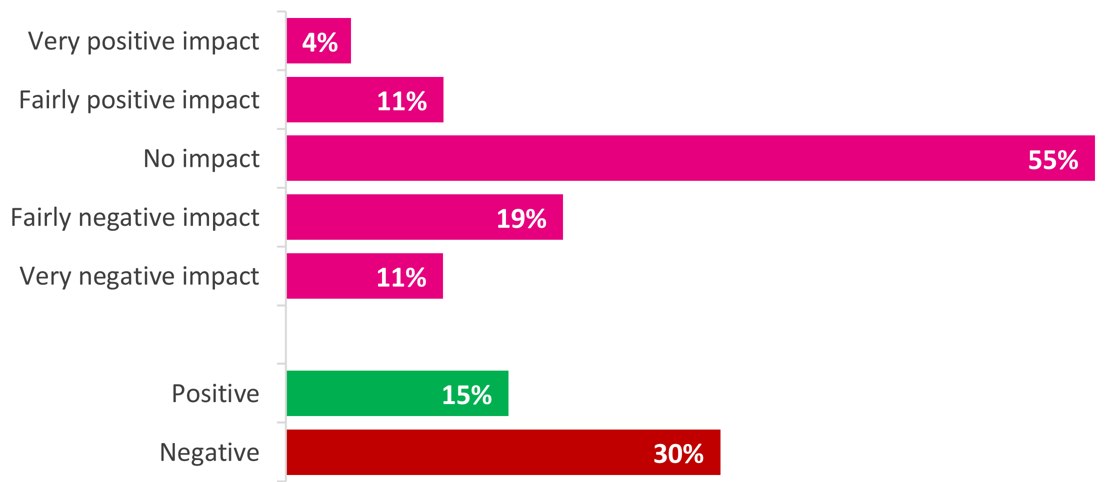
	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	6-10
Current physical health (n=546)	23%	3%	7%	6%	6%	19%	4%	10%	9%	3%	10%	**35%**
Mental health (n=547)	24%	3%	10%	5%	7%	14%	6%	8%	9%	5%	8%	**36%**
Financial situation (n=537)	24%	5%	10%	7%	7%	17%	6%	7%	5%	4%	7%	30%
Employment (n=468)	40%	7%	9%	8%	4%	11%	5%	2%	4%	2%	8%	21%
Relationships (n=532)	40%	8%	9%	6%	5%	12%	5%	5%	4%	2%	5%	21%
Children/dependents aged under 18 (n=388)	42%	2%	4%	3%	2%	10%	8%	10%	5%	3%	13%	**38%**

Financial impacts of Covid-19

Residents were then asked what effect, if any, the coronavirus pandemic has had on their household finances. The majority (55%) of residents stated that the pandemic had no impact on their household finances. Where there was an impact, this was twice as likely to be negative (30%) than positive (15%).

Figure 4.3: Impact of Covid-19 on household finances

Unweighted sample base: 539



Sub-group analysis shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

	Residents aged under 55 were more likely to report a negative impact on household finances (36-39%) compared to older residents aged 55 and over (16-21%).
	Non-White residents were more likely to report a positive impact on household finances (26%) compared to White residents (14%).

At the point at which this survey was delivered, indicators of inflationary pressures (gas, petrol prices etc.) were becoming increasing evident nationally. Based on the data above, these new challenges to household finances are arising when a notable portion of the Charnwood population have already experienced negative impacts upon their finances.

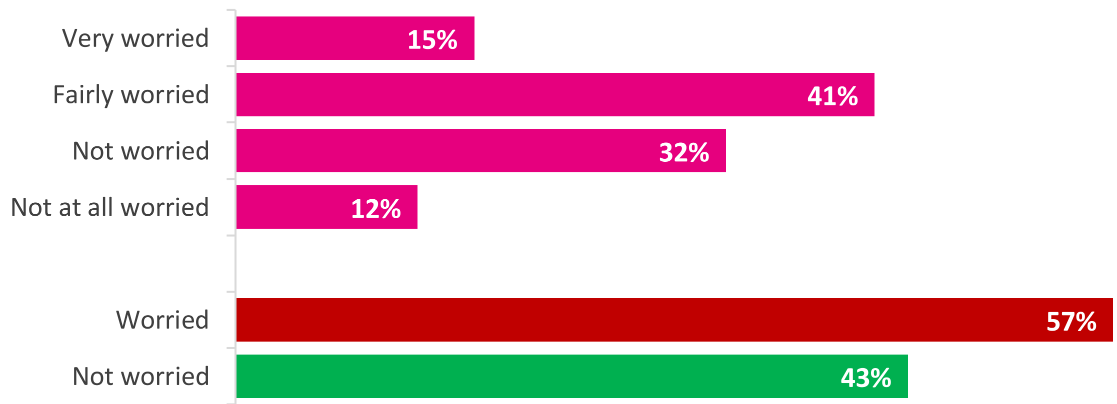
Current and future feelings

Questions relating to both current and future feelings about the coronavirus pandemic were then asked to residents.

Currently, more residents are feeling worried than not worried about the coronavirus pandemic (57% compared to 43%), with four in ten (41%) feeling 'fairly worried'. There was not scope within this research to explore how such feelings are manifesting themselves in individual behaviours/the management of risks. But it is a reasonable assumption that feeling worried is likely to translate into relatively cautious behaviours.

Figure 4.4: Current feelings about the coronavirus pandemic

Unweighted sample base: 540



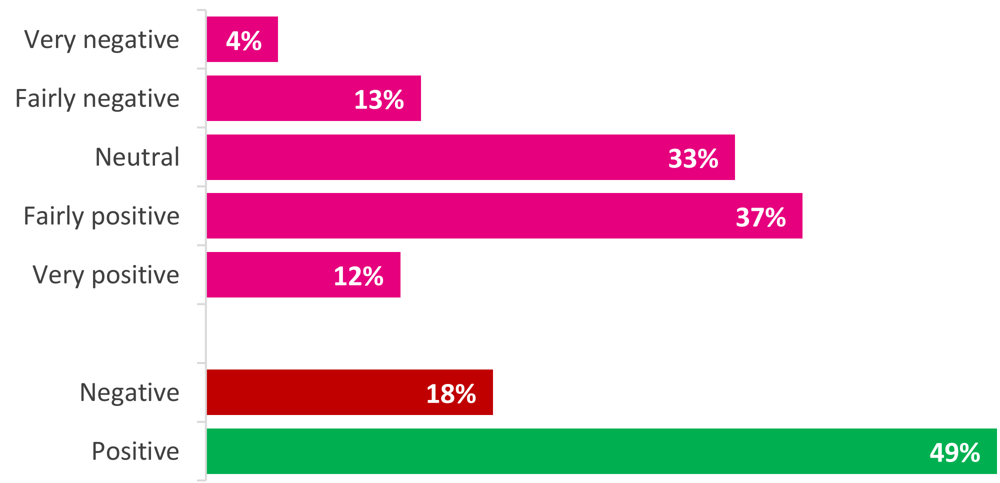
Sub-group analysis shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

	Women were more likely to be worried about the coronavirus pandemic currently (62%) compared to men (51%).
	Residents aged 45 and over were more likely to be worried about the coronavirus pandemic currently (63-67%) compared to residents aged under 35 (445).
	Residents with a disability were more likely to be worried (71%) than those without one (53%).

Looking ahead, more residents felt positive than negative (49% compared to 18%), with 37% feeling 'fairly positive'. One third of residents (33%) held neutral feelings.

Figure 4.5: Feelings about the future

Unweighted sample base: 542



Sub-group analysis shows that there were significant variations amongst responses:

	Residents aged 35-44 were more likely to be positive about the future (52%) compared to those aged 45-54 (35%).
	Residents with a disability were less likely to be positive about the future (37%) compared to those without one (53%). 34% of those with a disability felt negative about the future.

Conclusions

Living in Charnwood and the impact of the pandemic

The vast majority of residents in Charnwood are happy with where they live, and equally as happy as two years ago. This sentiment was shared across the borough, with over nine in ten residents happy with the place they call home. Results show that Charnwood is also a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, with a strong sense of community cohesion.

Looking at the impact of Covid-19 on residents, results show that residents report spending more time in their local area and that they try to support local businesses more. Around half felt better connected to their local community; the idea of coming together as a community during a time of need, highlighting the strong community cohesion within the borough. However, the pandemic has impacted some negatively. Around of third of residents are worried about the impact on their physical and mental health and their children or dependents. Furthermore, three in ten report their finances being negatively impacted. This suggests there may be a support need for some groups of residents as we recover from the pandemic.

Relationship and engagement with the Council

There was a mixed picture when residents were asked about their perceptions of the Council. Whilst over half felt the Council acts on the concerns of residents, this leaves a large proportion of residents who do not feel their concerns are acted upon. Trust in the Council has also fallen significantly since 2019 (62% compared to 83%).

Satisfaction with being kept informed has also fallen significantly since 2019 but results are broadly in line with the LGA national scores. Whilst the majority of residents show an appetite for accessing services online, a sizeable proportion did not.

Resident priorities

There has been no change in the top three priorities when compared to 2019. The most important priorities for residents continue to be having rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis, feeling safe in the home and local area and the cleanliness and tidiness of the local area. Positively, satisfaction was high in all these areas. Other areas to be focused on include access to transport and parking, climate change and having a variety of shops and markets – all of which were shown to be of high importance but currently low satisfaction. Residents feel the town lacks variety in retail and food outlets and was considered by some to be unsafe at night. Themes also emerged around employment opportunities and supporting residents and businesses as they recover from the pandemic, as findings in this report show too.

Appendices

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Appendix B: Survey respondent profile

Appendix A: Questionnaire

Charnwood Borough Council – Residents' Survey 2021

SCREENER:
The first two questions are about you. These are to ensure that we talk to a good mix of Charnwood residents.

QA. Please can you tell me your gender? **SINGLE CODE**
1. Male
2. Female
3. Prefer not to say

QB. How old are you? **SINGLE CODE**
1. 18-24
2. 25-34
3. 35-44
4. 45-54
5. 55-64
6. 65-74
7. 75-84
8. 85+
9. Prefer not to say

YOUR LOCAL AREA AND YOUR COUNCIL: The first few questions are about the local area where you live and Charnwood Borough Council.

Q1. How happy or unhappy are you with living in the area? **SINGLE CODE**
1. Very happy
2. Happy
3. Unhappy
4. Very unhappy
5. Don't know (DNRO)

Q2. To help the Council understand what is important to residents, can you please tell us how important you consider the following to be to you? **SINGLE CODE PER ROW**

	Very important	Fairly important	Not very important	Not at all important	Don't know (DNRO)
A variety of entertainment and cultural facilities	1	2	3	4	5
A variety of shops and markets	1	2	3	4	5
Being able to go to sports and leisure facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Being able to go to well-maintained parks and green spaces	1	2	3	4	5
Encouraging and investing in business and jobs	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling safe in my home and the local area	1	2	3	4	5

Good access to transport and parking	1	2	3	4	5
Climate change and looking after the environment	1	2	3	4	5
My rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis	1	2	3	4	5
The availability of housing that you can afford to buy	1	2	3	4	5
The availability of housing that you can afford to rent	1	2	3	4	5
The cleanliness and tidiness of my local area	1	2	3	4	5

Q3. And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of these? **SINGLE CODE PER ROW**

	Very satisfied	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know (DNRO)
A variety of entertainment and cultural facilities	1	2	3	4	5
A variety of shops and markets	1	2	3	4	5
Being able to go to sports and leisure facilities	1	2	3	4	5
Being able to go to well-maintained parks and green spaces	1	2	3	4	5
Encouraging and investing in business and jobs	1	2	3	4	5
Feeling safe in my home and the local area	1	2	3	4	5
Good access to transport and parking	1	2	3	4	5
Climate change and looking after the environment	1	2	3	4	5
My rubbish collected on a regular and reliable basis	1	2	3	4	5
The availability of housing that you can afford to buy	1	2	3	4	5
The availability of housing that you can afford to rent	1	2	3	4	5
The cleanliness and tidiness of my local area	1	2	3	4	5

Q4. Do you feel that your local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know (DNRO)

Q5. To what extent do you think Charnwood Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents? **SINGLE CODE**

1. A great deal
2. A fair amount
3. Not very much
4. Not at all
5. Don't know (DNRO)

Q6. How much do you trust Charnwood Borough Council? **SINGLE CODE**

1. A great deal
2. A fair amount
3. Not very much
4. Not at all
5. Don’t know (DNRO)

COMMUNICATIONS: We would now like to understand a bit more about how you receive Council information and access services.

Q7. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with how the Council keeps you informed about their services? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Very satisfied
2. Satisfied
3. Dissatisfied
4. Very dissatisfied
5. Don't know

Q8. How would you contact the Council if you needed to? **MULTI CODE**

1. Email
2. Telephone
3. Going into the office
4. Councillor
5. Through staff (i.e. housing officer)
6. Through the website
7. Via Twitter
8. Via Facebook
9. Other (please specify)
10. None of these

Q9. How would you like to receive news and information about Council services? **MULTI CODE**

1. Email alerts
2. Facebook
3. Twitter
4. Council residents' newsletter (Charnwood News)
5. Posters
6. Texts (SMS)
7. Letter
8. Leaflet
9. Website
10. Local media
11. Your Homes Matter tenants' magazine
12. Village publication
13. Other (please specify)
14. None of these

Q10. During the pandemic did you have to use any Council services online that you wouldn't normally have used in person face to face? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know (DNRO)

IF 1@Q10...

Q11: Having done this, do any of these statements apply to you? **SINGLE CODE PER ROW**

	Yes	No	Don't know (DNRO)
I feel more confident about accessing Council services online	1	2	5
I am more likely to use online Council services in the future	1	2	5

Q12. If the Council provided more services online (such as bookings, payments and reporting problems online), would you use them? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know (DNRO)

VALUE FOR MONEY: An average Band D property pays £131.08* to the Borough Council on an annual basis. This covers services such as waste collection and recycling, leisure centres, food hygiene and safety, council housing, markets and fairs, CCTV.

**this figure does not include the Loughborough Special levy for residents living in Loughborough or Parish or Town Council precepts.*

Q13. Do you think the Council provides value for money? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Yes
2. No
3. Don't know (DNRO)

COVID-19: The next set of questions look at the impacts of the coronavirus pandemic on different aspects of life.

Q14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements? Following the pandemic... **SINGLE CODE PER ROW**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know (DNRO)
I am better connected with my local community	1	2	3	4	5	6
I try to support local businesses	1	2	3	4	5	6
I spend more time in my local area	1	2	3	4	5	6

I do more online shopping	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am more involved in the local decision-making process	1	2	3	4	5	6
I am doing more volunteering than before	1	2	3	4	5	6

Q15. On a scale of 0 (not at all worried) to 10 (very worried), how worried are you about the impact of the Covid-19 on each of the following aspects of your life? **SINGLE CODE PER ROW**

	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	Don't know/NA (DNRO)
Current physical health	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Mental health	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Financial situation	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Employment	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Relationships	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11
Children/dependents aged under 18	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11

Q16. What impact, if any, has the coronavirus (COVID-19) pandemic had on your household finances? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Very positive impact
2. Fairly positive impact
3. No impact
4. Fairly negative impact
5. Very negative impact
6. Don't know (DNRO)

Q17. Taking everything into account, how worried or not do you currently feel about the coronavirus pandemic? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Very worried
2. Fairly worried
3. Not worried
4. Not at all worried
5. Don't know (DNRO)

Q18. Overall, how are you feeling about the future? **SINGLE CODE**

1. Very negative
2. Fairly negative
3. Neutral
4. Fairly positive
5. Very positive
6. Don't know (DNRO)

PROFILE: Finally, we'd like to ask a few questions about you, to help analyse the data. Please note that you do not have to provide answers to any of the questions, however even a partial response is useful. This information will be kept confidential and you will not be personally identifiable from the results or the report.

Q19. What is your ethnic group? **SINGLE CODE**
1. English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / British
2. Irish
3. Gypsy or Irish Traveller
4. Any other White background
5. African
6. Caribbean
7. Any other Black / African / Caribbean background
8. White and Black Caribbean
9. White and Black African
10. White and Asian
11. Any other mixed / multiple ethnic background
12. Indian
13. Pakistani
14. Bangladeshi
15. Chinese
16. Any other Asian background
17. Arab
18. Any other ethnic group
19. Prefer not to say (DNRO)

Q20. Are your day to day activities limited because of a health problem which has lasted, or is expected to last, at least 12 months? **SINGLE CODE**
1. Yes - limited a lot
2. Yes - limited a little
3. No
4. Prefer not to say (DNRO)

Q21. What is your religion? **SINGLE CODE**
1. No religion
2. Christian (all denominations)
3. Buddhist
4. Hindu
5. Jewish
6. Muslim
7. Sikh
8. Any other religion
9. Prefer not to say (DNRO)

Q22. How would you describe your sexual orientation? **SINGLE CODE**
1. Heterosexual/straight
2. Gay man
3. Gay woman

4. Bisexual
5. Other
6. Prefer not to say (DNRO)

Q23. What is your first language? **SINGLE CODE**

1. English
2. Other (please specify)
3. Prefer not to say (DNRO)

Q24. What is your postcode?
This will be used so that we can see if there are differences in views by different areas/wards. **CODE IN VERBATIM**

Finally, would you like to be kept up-to-date on Borough Council news via the Council's email alert, Charnwood Now? This would require your name and email address.
If you give permission, we would only pass on your contact details; your answers to this survey remain confidential.

Q25. Are you happy to be re-contacted?

1. Yes
2. No

IF 1@Q25...

Full name:

Email address:

END OF SURVEY

Thank you for your time. Your feedback is extremely valuable to Charnwood Borough Council and will help improve the services they provide.

If you would like more information about who we are and how we use the information provided, please see our privacy policy at: www.melresearch.co.uk/privacypolicy

Appendix B: Survey respondent profile

Ward	Frequency	%
Anstey	12	2%
Barrow and Sileby West	27	5%
Birstall Wanlip	23	4%
Birstall Watermead	23	4%
East Goscote	6	1%
Forest Bradgate	5	1%
Loughborough Ashby	13	2%
Loughborough Dishley and Hathern	25	5%
Loughborough Garendon	23	4%
Loughborough Hastings	28	5%
Loughborough Lemyngton	25	4%
Loughborough Nanpantan	20	4%
Loughborough Outwoods	19	3%
Loughborough Shelthorpe	35	6%
Loughborough Southfields	13	2%
Loughborough Storer	15	3%
Mountsorrel	23	4%
Queniborough	8	1%
Quorn and Mountsorrel Castle	26	5%
Rothley and Thurcaston	23	4%
Shepshed East	21	4%
Shepshed West	20	4%
Sileby	32	6%
Syston East	23	4%
Syston West	21	4%
The Wolds	9	2%
Thurmaston	23	4%
Wreake Villages	9	2%

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	276	50%
Female	274	50%

Age	Frequency	%
Under 35	83	15%
35-44	177	32%
45-54	51	9%
55-64	116	21%
65-74	69	13%
75+	54	10%

Ethnicity	Frequency	%
White	468	86%
BAME	75	14%

Disability	Frequency	%
Yes - limited a lot	56	10%
Yes - limited a little	54	10%
No	436	80%

Religion	Frequency	%
No religion	235	43%
Christian (all denominations)	240	44%
Buddhist	1	0%
Hindu	36	7%
Jewish	1	0%
Muslim	8	1%
Sikh	4	1%
Any other religion	15	3%

Sexual Orientation	Frequency	%
Heterosexual/straight	510	97%
Gay man	4	1%
Gay woman	2	0%
Bisexual	5	1%
Other	4	1%

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