

Polling on resident satisfaction with councils

February 2017



Acknowledgements

The Local Government Association (LGA) Research and Information Team would like to thank Populus Data Solutions for their input to this work. We would also like to thank all the participants who took part in the polling.

To view more research from the Local Government Association Research and Information team please visit: <http://www.local.gov.uk/local-government-research>

Contents

- Methodology 4
- Notes 5
- Key findings 6
- Polling on resident satisfaction with councils 8
 - Overall satisfaction with local area 8
 - Overall satisfaction with local council 8
 - Value for money 9
 - Council responsiveness..... 10
 - Informed about the council 11
 - Trust 12
 - Satisfaction with level of engagement 15
 - Community safety..... 16
 - Service specific satisfaction..... 18
- Annex A: Time series data..... 23
 - Overall satisfaction with local area 23
 - Overall satisfaction with local council 24
 - Value for money 25
 - Council responsiveness..... 26
 - Informed about the council 26
 - Service specific satisfaction..... 32
 - Media coverage 39
- Annex B: Polling questions 41

Introduction

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

With the publication of *Are You Being Served*² – a set of resident satisfaction questions that councils can choose to use in their local surveys and benchmark themselves against other authorities – the LGA has responded to demand from the sector for more intelligence in this area.

Our national polling complements councils' local work by regularly looking at the national picture. Tracking national changes in satisfaction with councils alongside questions on other related issues about residents' local areas can provide valuable information on what is driving resident perceptions and, therefore, what councils can do to serve their local communities better.

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

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

Methodology

Between 2nd and 5th February 2017, a representative random sample of 1,007 British adults (aged 18 or over) was polled by telephone.³

Respondents were given the following preamble at the outset:

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

¹ Note that until October 2014, the polling was conducted quarterly, and this has now changed to once every four months.

² <http://lginform.local.gov.uk/about-lg-inform/resident-satisfaction>

³ Quotas were set on age, gender and region and the data weighted to the known British profile of age, gender, region, social grade, taken a foreign holiday in the last 3 years, tenure, number of cars in the household, working status, and mobile only households. The polling was conducted by Populus Data Solutions.

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

The full interview script is included in Annex B for information. Where the questions cover the same topics as the *Are You Being Served*² question set, the same question ordering, wording, definitions and preamble have been used to allow comparability.⁴

A new question about engagement was added to the survey in this round. It asked respondents about their satisfaction or dissatisfaction with the level of engagement offered to residents by their local council. The definition of engagement, read aloud to all respondents, was ‘...giving local people information about the council, asking them for their views and giving them a direct say in decision-making’. Respondents who gave a neutral reply or were dissatisfied with their council’s level of engagement were asked: ‘What three things do you think your council could do better to engage with local residents?’

Notes

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

This is the sixteenth round of polling in this series, and the paper examines trends since the first round in September 2012.⁵ Differences between results are only highlighted within the report where this is statistically significant.⁶

Please note the following when reading the report:

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

⁴ The mode of data collection can have a marked impact on results, therefore, results are only truly comparable with surveys conducted via telephone.

⁵ The full papers outlining the results of previous polls can be found here:

<http://www.local.gov.uk/research-performance-and-improvement>

⁶ Statistical significance is tested at the 95% level.

Key findings

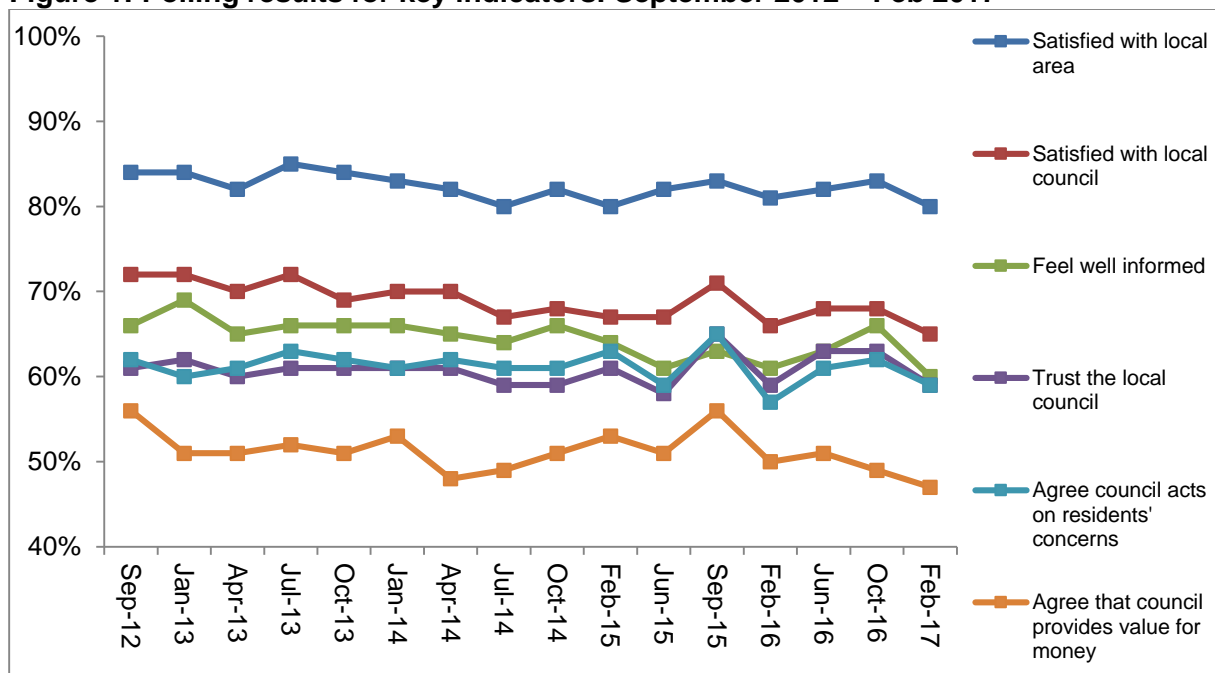
The LGA’s February 2017 poll found no significant changes to the results observed in its last poll in October 2016 with regards to five out of six key indicators of resident satisfaction. Eight out of ten respondents, overall, were satisfied with their local area as a place to live, and almost two-thirds were satisfied with the way their local council runs things, overall. Around six out of ten respondents replied positively when asked if their council acts on the concerns of local residents and if they trusted their council. Value for money received the lowest proportion of positive replies – with 47 per cent indicating agreement.

The shift this time around was a significant drop in the proportion of people who said, overall, their council keeps residents well informed about the services and benefits it provides (from 66 per cent in the last round to 60 per cent).

Moreover, while the majority of respondents tended to give positive replies when questioned on the key indicators of resident satisfaction, the lowest levels to-date were observed for three out of the six indicators (satisfaction with council, feeling well informed and agreement that council provides value for money), and a fourth indicator (satisfaction with local area) stands at its lowest level matched with two previous polls. Future rounds will monitor these indicators to identify whether this is a temporary dip, or the start of a trend.

Figure 1 shows the February results compared to all others since 2012.

Figure 1: Polling results for key indicators: September 2012 – Feb 2017



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017⁷

There have been a number of further significant changes in the polling results since September 2012, and the notable changes in this round are highlighted below:

- Satisfaction among respondents with the way one's local council run things has stood at between 66 and 72 per cent for the last three years. However, in this round, 65 per cent of respondents were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied'. A significantly higher proportion were dissatisfied overall compared to the previous poll (19 per cent compared to and 13 per cent).
- The most notable findings for the eight council services asked about in this poll were:
 - As in all previous rounds, the level of satisfaction with waste collection was higher than overall satisfaction with how the council runs things; 77 per cent were 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with waste collection, compared to 65 per cent for overall satisfaction with the way one's local council runs things. Satisfaction with street cleaning was also higher than overall satisfaction with the council, at 70 per cent.
 - Road maintenance and pavement maintenance continue to have the highest levels of dissatisfaction. In this round, 47 per cent were 'very dissatisfied' or 'fairly dissatisfied' with road maintenance, whilst 33 per cent were 'very dissatisfied' or 'fairly dissatisfied' with pavement maintenance.
 - At 62 per cent, satisfaction with library services is significantly lower than many previous rounds. The highest level of satisfaction with libraries that has ever been observed over the course of the polling was 71 per cent (July 2014).
 - Satisfaction with services and support for older people was at 44 per cent in this round; the lowest level observed (along with July 2014) and a significantly lower proportion than seven other rounds. The majority of remaining respondents answered 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (33 per cent) rather than being actively dissatisfied – this relatively high proportion answering neutrally could reflect that many respondents will not have direct experience of this service.

⁷ The full sample sizes for previous rounds are as follows: 1,006 British adults in September 2012, 1,004 in January 2013, 1,036 in April 2013, 1,002 in July 2013, 1,003 in October 2013, 1,008 in January 2014, 1,005 in April 2014, 1,001 in July 2014, 1,002 in October 2014, 1,003 in February 2015, 1,008 in June 2015, 1,009 in September 2015, 1,001 in June 2016 and 1,002 in October 2016.

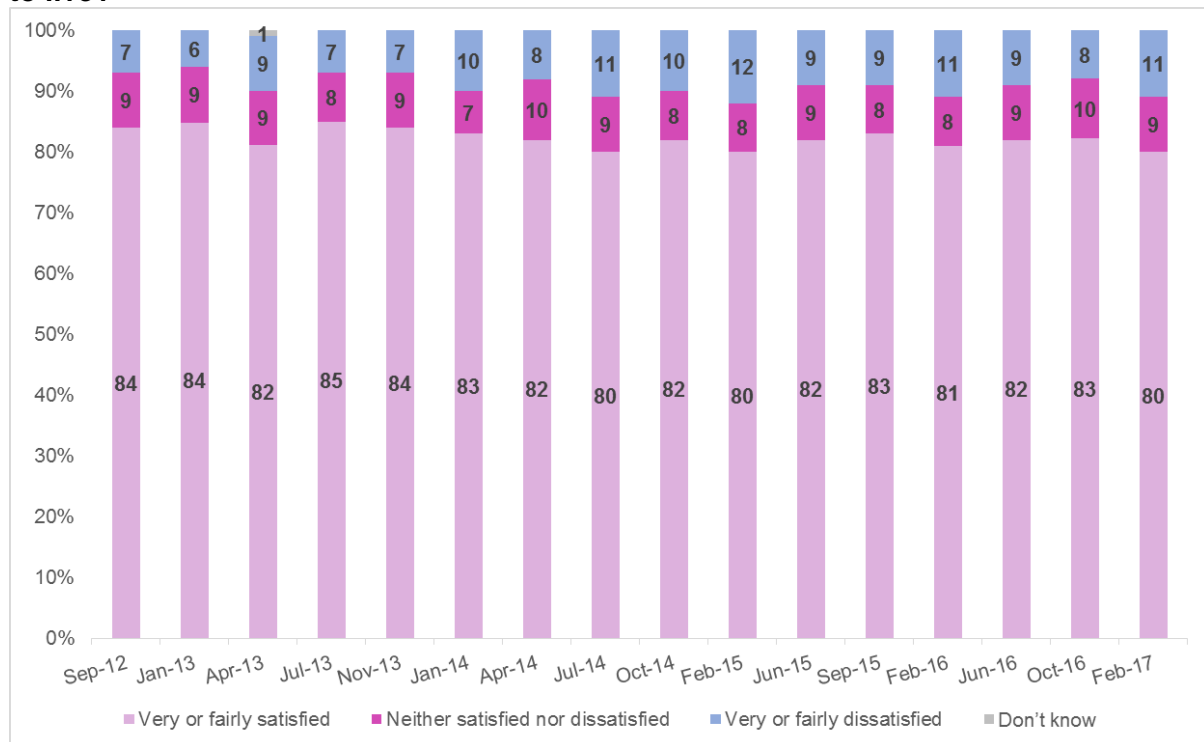
Polling on resident satisfaction with councils

This section outlines the full set of polling results. Tables showing the breakdowns for every answer option can be found in Annex A.

Overall satisfaction with local area

Eight out of ten respondents in this round of polling were positive about their local area as a place to live – 80 per cent were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’. While this is a similar level to that seen in previous rounds, it is the lowest level observed for this indicator (along with two other previous polls). However, the proportion of respondents who said they were ‘very satisfied’ stands at 37 per cent, which is the highest level observed (along with one other poll) and is a significantly higher proportion than eight previous polls. See Figure 2.

Figure 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?⁸



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

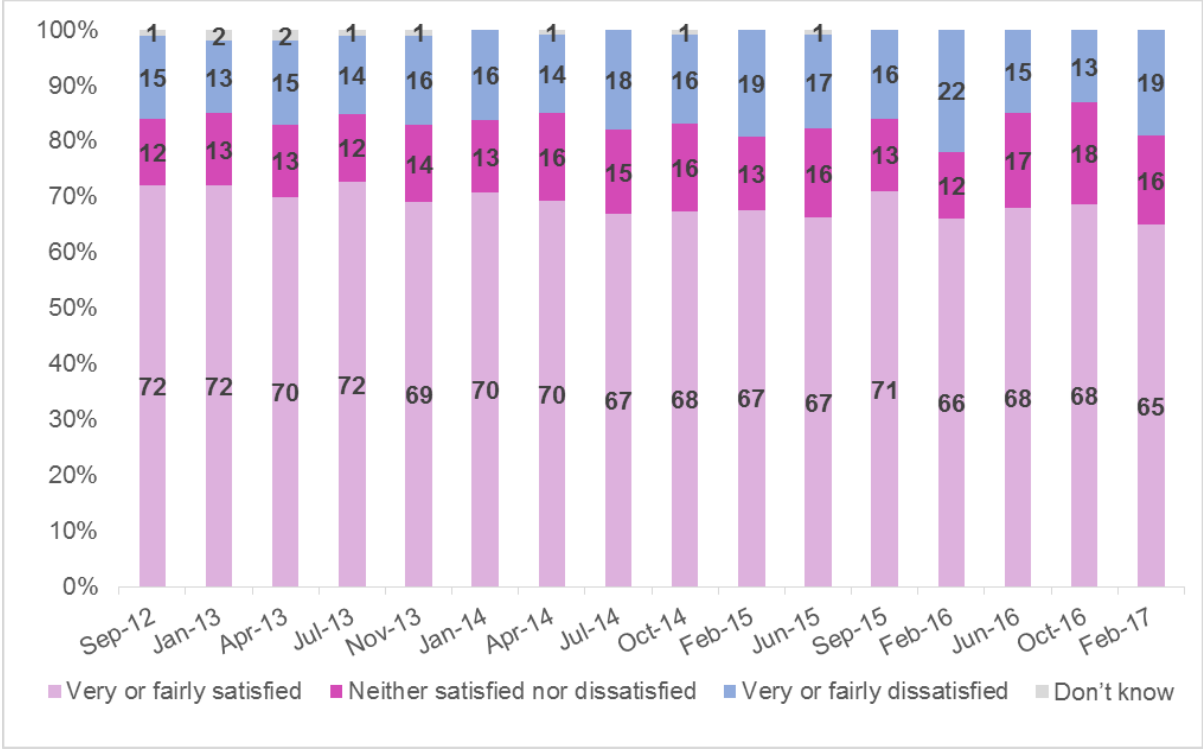
Overall satisfaction with local council

Satisfaction among respondents with the way their local councils run things has stood at between 66 and 72 per cent for the last three years. However, as Figure 3 shows, in this round, 65 per cent of respondents were ‘very satisfied’ or ‘fairly satisfied’. A significantly higher proportion of respondents were, overall, dissatisfied

⁸ Local area was defined as “the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.

with the way their council runs things compared to October 2016 (19 per cent compared to 13 per cent).

Figure 3: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council runs things?

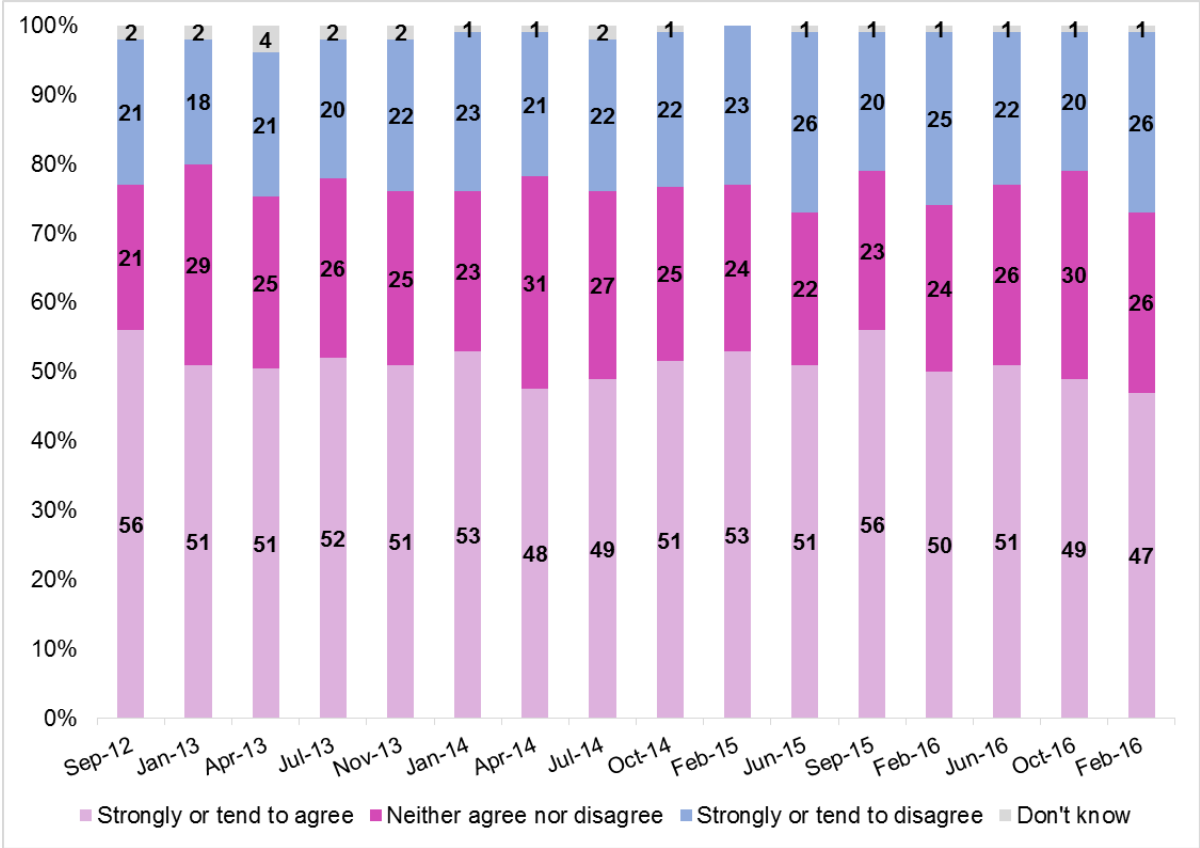


Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Value for money

In the first round of polling in September 2012, and again in September 2015, 56 per cent of respondents tended to or strongly agreed that their local council provided value for money, significantly higher than eight other rounds. In this round, the proportion who agreed that their council provides value for money stands at 47 per cent (see Figure 4). While this is a statistically similar level to all but four previous rounds, it is the lowest level observed across all 16 polls. Twenty-six per cent of respondents disagreed, overall, that their council provides value for money, which is a significantly higher proportion than nine previous polls.

Figure 4: To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local council(s) provides value for money?⁹



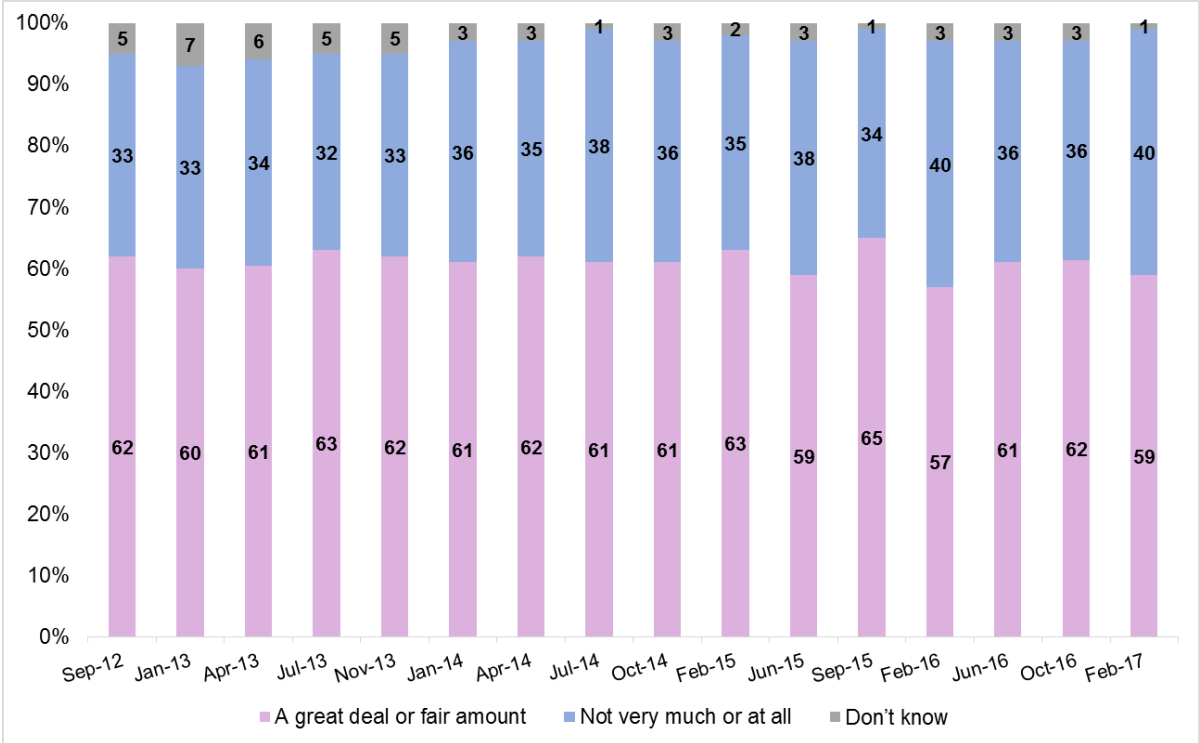
Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Council responsiveness

Acting on residents’ concerns is an important measure of local accountability as it looks at whether councils are perceived to be responsive to local issues and problems. As Figure 5 shows, in this round, 59 per cent of respondents said that their council acts on the concerns of local residents either ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’ – the highest level achieved is 65 per cent and the lowest is 57 per cent. Forty per cent of respondents gave a less than positive reply (i.e. ‘not very much’ or ‘not at all’), which is the highest level observed (along with February 2016) and is a significantly higher proportion than seven other polls.

⁹ The following preamble was used: “In considering the next question, please think about the range of services your local council(s) provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services your local council(s) provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.”

Figure 5: To what extent do you think your local council(s) acts on the concerns of local residents?

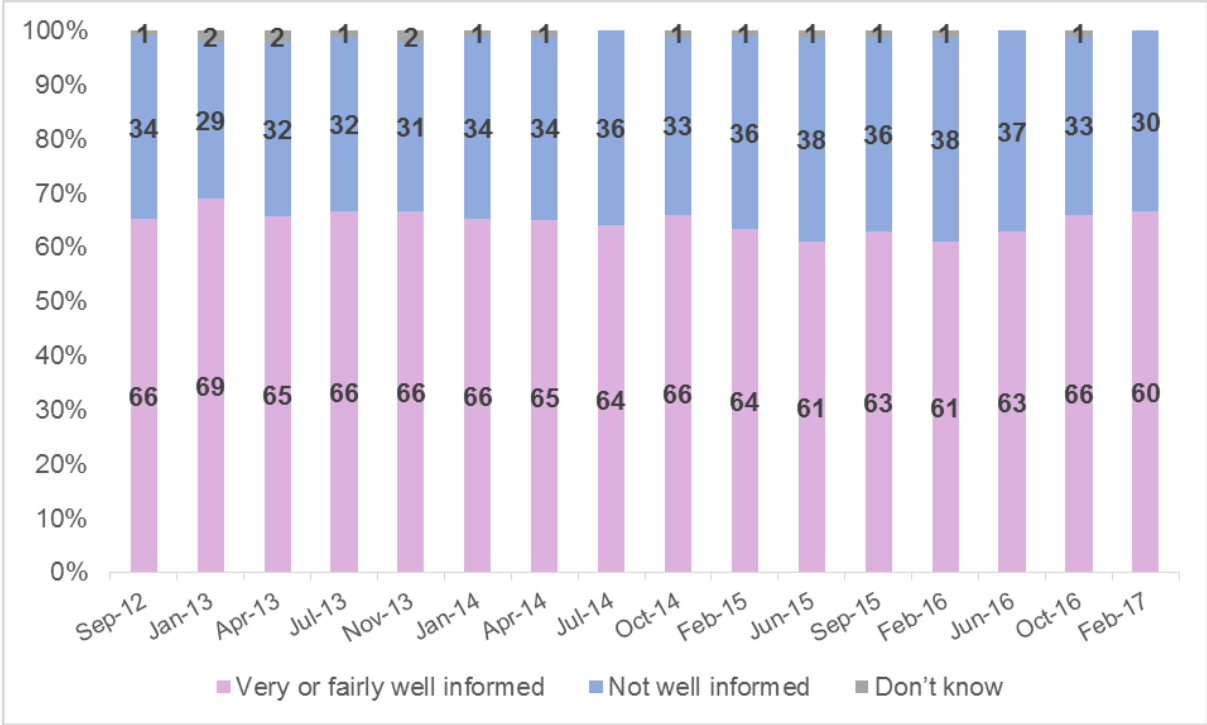


Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Informed about the council

Six out of ten respondents said their local council keeps residents ‘very well informed’ or ‘fairly well informed’ about the services and benefits it provides. This is a significantly lower proportion than nine other rounds, including the previous poll in October 2016. It is the lowest level observed across all 16 polls. The proportion of respondents who replied negatively (i.e. ‘not very well informed’ or ‘not well informed at all’) stands at 40 per cent, which is significantly higher than for nine other rounds (mainly between September 2012 and October 2014, and also our previous poll in October last year).

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

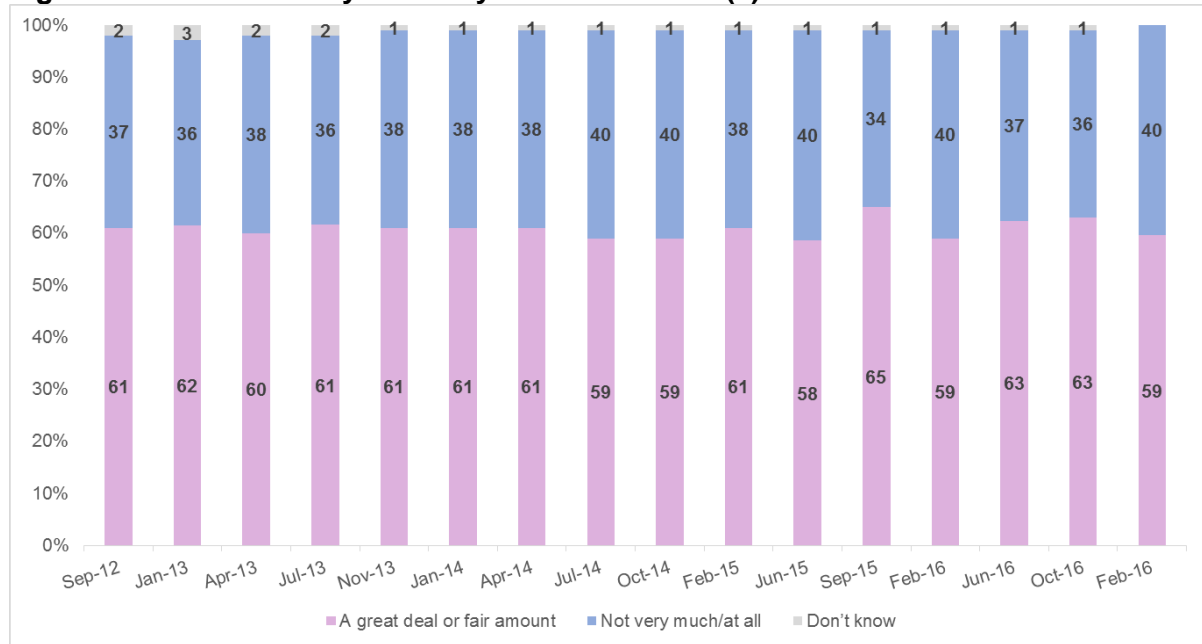


Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Trust

Levels of trust in councils have been fairly consistent since polling started in September 2012. The proportion of respondents who said they trusted their council ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’ in this round stands at 59 per cent – a similar level to most previous rounds (the lowest result is 58 per cent and the highest is 65 per cent). See Figure 7.

Figure 7: How much do you trust your local council(s)?

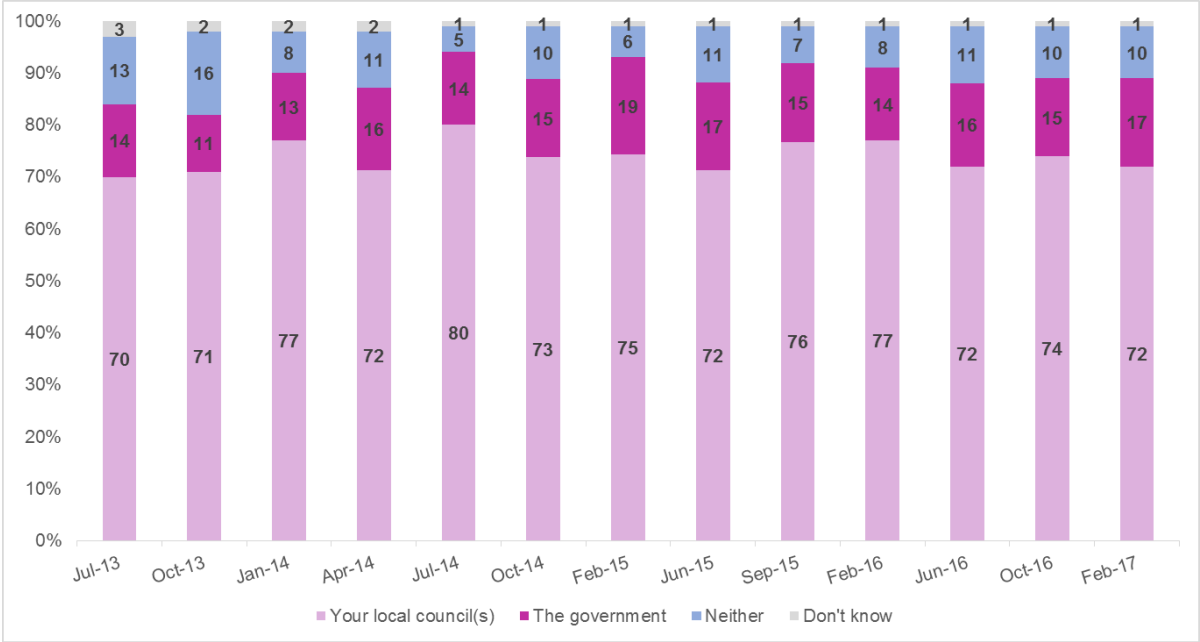


Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

A new question was introduced in July 2013, looking at public trust in local councils to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area, compared to their trust in the government.

Figure 8 shows that the vast majority of respondents said, of the two, they trusted their local council most to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area. In the most recent poll, 72 per cent said they most trusted their local council. The proportion of respondents who trusted the government most is much lower, at 17 per cent.

Figure 8: Who do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?¹⁰

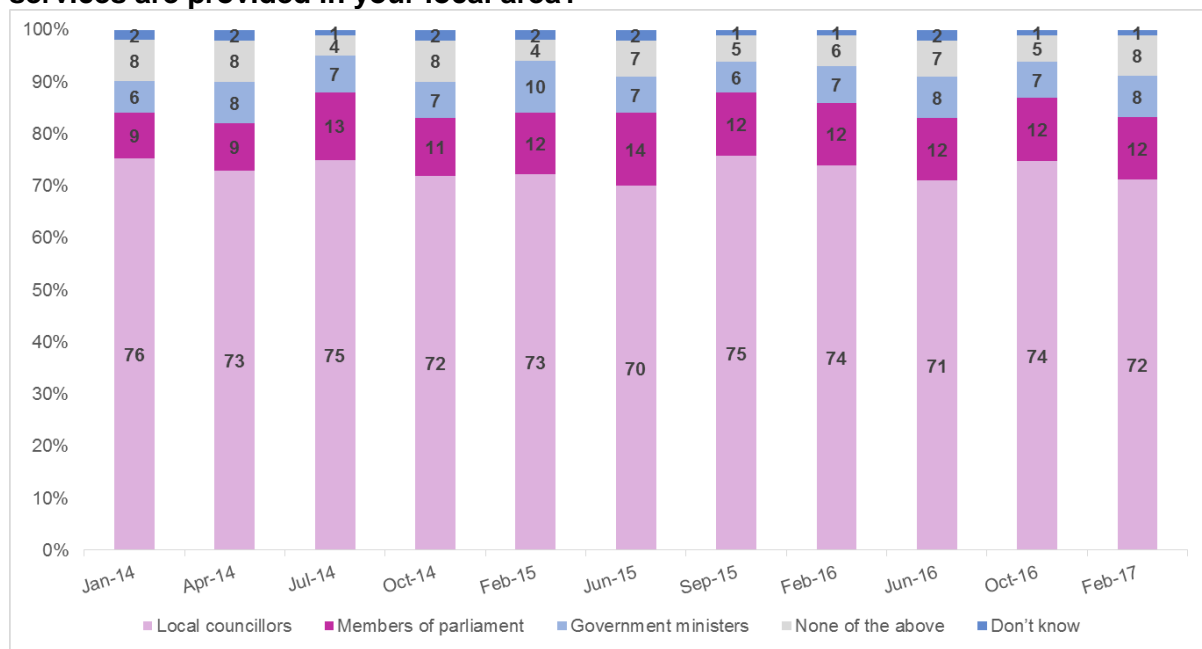


Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

A new question was also introduced in January 2014 asking which *individuals* were most trusted by respondents to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area. As Figure 9 shows, local councillors remain by far the most trusted group, with 72 per cent of respondents stating that they most trusted local councillors to make decisions about services compared to members of parliament (12 per cent) and government ministers (eight per cent). This is similar to previous rounds.

¹⁰ 'Neither' was not read out to respondents as an answer option but the interviewer could code it if it was given spontaneously.

Figure 9: And which individuals do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?¹¹



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Satisfaction with level of engagement

A new question about engagement¹² was included in this round of polling. Respondents were asked about their satisfaction, or dissatisfaction, with the level of engagement offered to residents by their local council. Forty six per cent of respondents were, overall, satisfied with the level of engagement offered by their council (see Table 1).

Table 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of engagement your council offers to local residents?

	Feb-17
	%
Very or fairly satisfied	46
Very satisfied	11
Fairly satisfied	34
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	29
Fairly dissatisfied	12
Very dissatisfied	12
Don't know	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

The 548 respondents who gave a neutral reply or were dissatisfied with their council's level of engagement were asked to select three things that their council could do better to engage with local residents. They were given a list of ten possible options, and could also give other replies. As shown in Table 2, the largest proportion

¹¹ 'None of the above' was not read out to respondents as an answer option but the interviewer could code if it was given spontaneously

¹² Engagement was defined as: "...giving local people information about the council, asking them for their views and giving them a direct say in decision-making."

of respondents selected ‘explain more clearly how it [their council] is using your money’ (41 per cent).

Table 2: What three things do you think your council could do better to engage with local residents?

	Feb-17
	%
Explain more clearly how it is using your money	41
Make it clearer how residents can get involved in decision-making	33
Demonstrate more clearly how it is acting on residents’ feedback	32
Explain more clearly its decisions when they affect you	32
Be more visible in the community	31
Further improve its customer service	20
Encourage more people to vote in local elections	20
Increase residents’ access to local councillors	17
Make more use of jargon-free and plain English	15
Make more use of existing community networks	13
Other answers (including improve its communication, forums/meetings, don’t waste money, better online presence, more involvement with schools, listen to public views, keep promises)	10
Don’t know	4

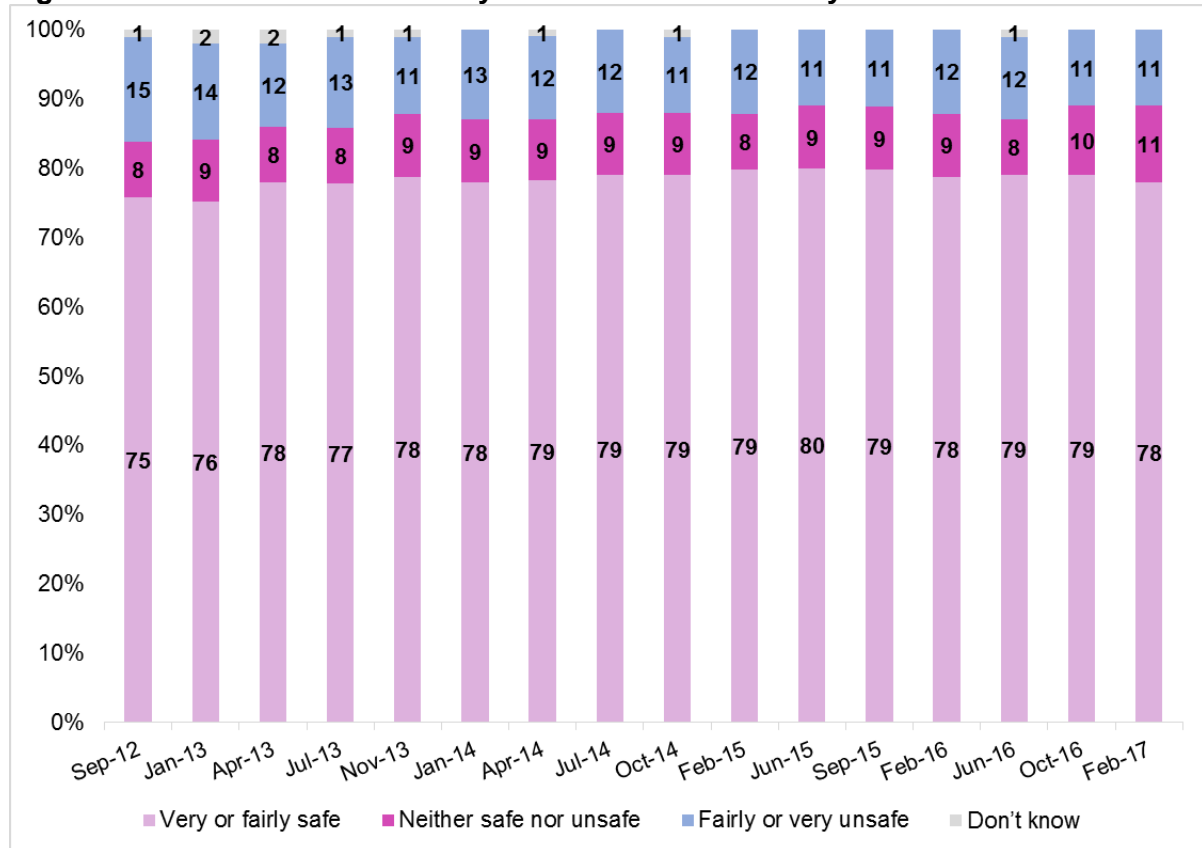
Base (all respondents who gave a neutral response or were dissatisfied with their council’s level of engagement): 548 British adults in February 2017

Please note that percentages sum to more than 100 as respondents could select multiple answer options

Community safety

Most respondents said they felt safe in their local area. Seventy eight per cent said they felt ‘very safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ after dark; this is similar to most other rounds (see Figure 10).

Figure 10: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark¹³

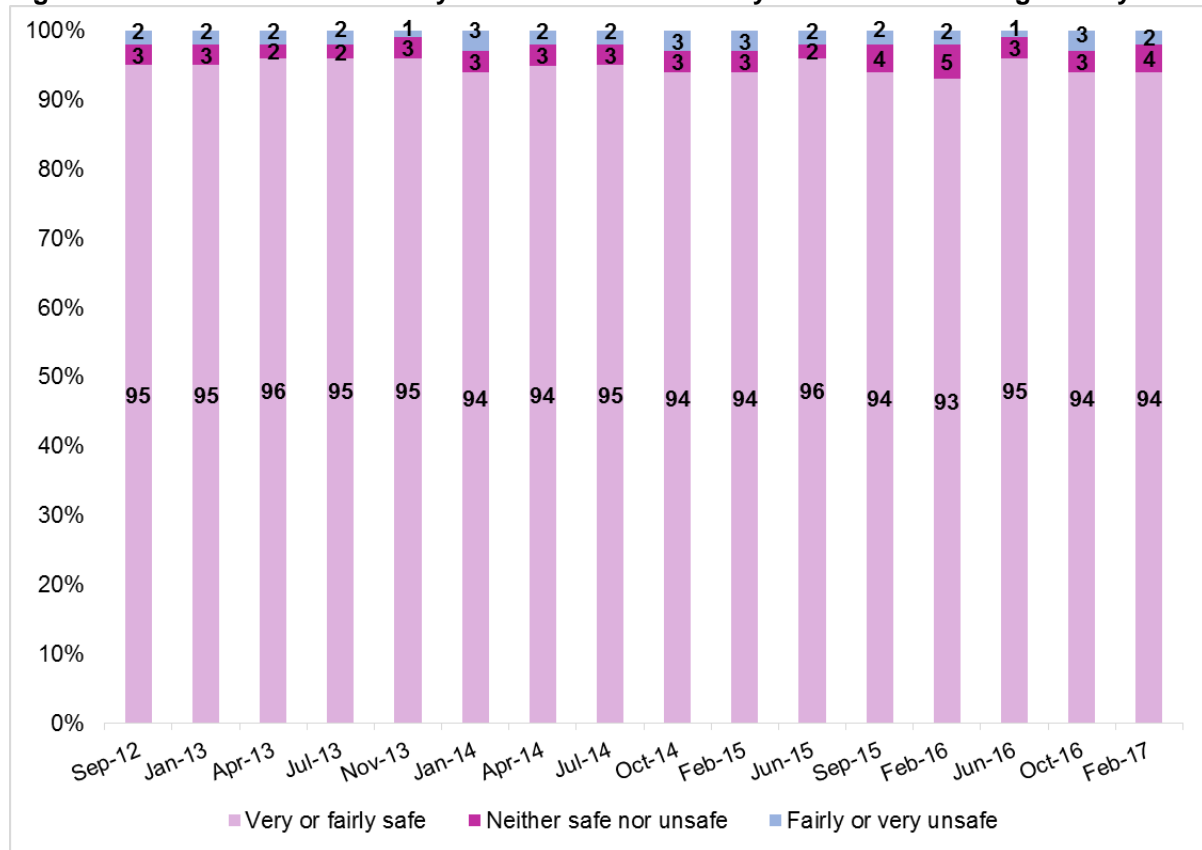


Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

As Figure 11 shows, respondent feelings of safety during the day in their local area also remain high, with 94 per cent saying that they felt ‘very safe’ or ‘fairly safe’ – a similar level to all previous rounds.

¹² Local area was defined as “the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.

Figure 11: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day¹⁴



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Service specific satisfaction

Respondents were invited to indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the following key services:

- waste collection
- street cleaning
- road maintenance
- pavement maintenance
- library services
- sport and leisure services
- services and support for older people
- services and support for children and young people.

Respondents' views remained positive for most of services in this round (see Figure 12). As in all previous rounds, the level of satisfaction with waste collection was higher than overall satisfaction with how the council runs things; 77 per cent were 'fairly satisfied' or 'very satisfied' with waste collection, compared to 65 per cent for overall satisfaction with the way one's local council runs things (Figure 2).

¹⁴ Local area was defined as "the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home".

Satisfaction with street cleaning was also higher than overall satisfaction with the council, at 70 per cent.

Road maintenance and pavement maintenance continue to have the highest levels of dissatisfaction. In this round, 47 per cent were 'very dissatisfied' or 'fairly dissatisfied' with road maintenance (a significantly higher proportion than for the previous round of polling), while 33 per cent were very or fairly dissatisfied with pavement maintenance.

As Figure 13 shows, levels of satisfaction with specific services have remained fairly stable since the polling began in September 2012, although several notable changes were observed in this round. Tables showing the full set of service-specific satisfaction results can be found at Annex A.

Consistent levels of satisfaction:

- **Road maintenance:** Satisfaction with road maintenance stands at 42 per cent which is halfway between the highest and lowest levels of satisfaction observed over the course of the polling.
- **Sport and leisure services**¹⁵: Satisfaction in this round was 64 per cent – similar to all previous rounds.
- **Services and support for children and young people:** Satisfaction was at 49 per cent in this round; a similar level to most previous rounds. The majority of remaining respondents answered 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (28 per cent) rather than being actively dissatisfied.

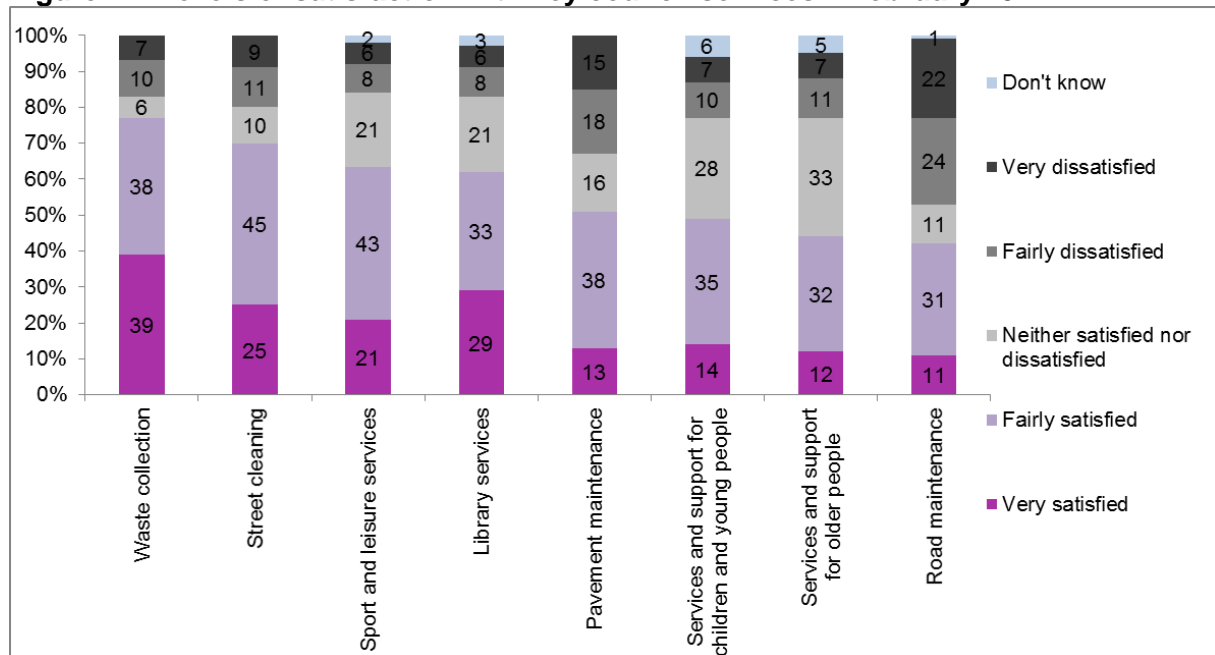
Lower levels of satisfaction:

- **Waste collection:** Satisfaction stands at 77 per cent; this is the lowest level observed (along with June 2015), while the highest is 86 per cent. This is a significantly lower proportion than for seven other rounds.
- **Street cleaning:** Satisfaction with street cleaning was 70 per cent – this is towards the lower end of the satisfaction levels observed over the course of the polling (the highest level stands at 76 per cent and the lowest at 69 per cent).
- **Library services:** At 62 per cent, satisfaction with library services is significantly lower than many previous rounds. The highest level of satisfaction observed over the course of the polling was 71 per cent (July 2014). This is a significantly lower proportion than for nine other rounds.
- **Pavement maintenance:** Satisfaction in this round was 51 per cent; this is the lowest level observed (along with January 2014), and a significantly lower proportion than six other rounds.

¹⁵ Note that as this question was asked of all respondents, the base includes those that may not have used particular services.

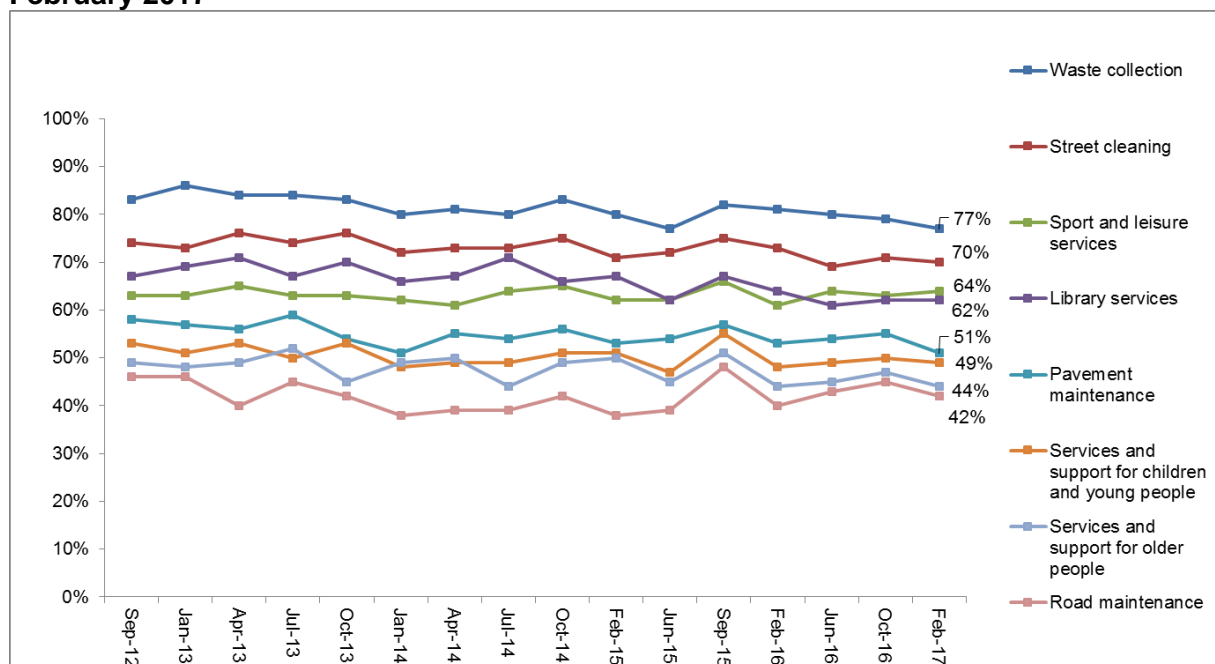
- Services and support for older people:** Satisfaction was at 44 per cent in this round; the lowest level observed (along with July 2014) and a significantly lower proportion than seven other rounds. The majority of remaining respondents answered 'neither satisfied nor dissatisfied' (33 per cent) rather than being actively dissatisfied – this relatively high proportion answering neutrally could reflect that many respondents will not have direct experience of this service.

Figure 12: Levels of satisfaction with key council services – February 2017



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Figure 13: Proportion very or fairly satisfied with each service: September 2012 – February 2017



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

The media

Respondents were asked whether, overall, they thought that the media had viewed the following organisations positively or negatively in the last few months:

- the government
- local councils across the country
- their own local council.

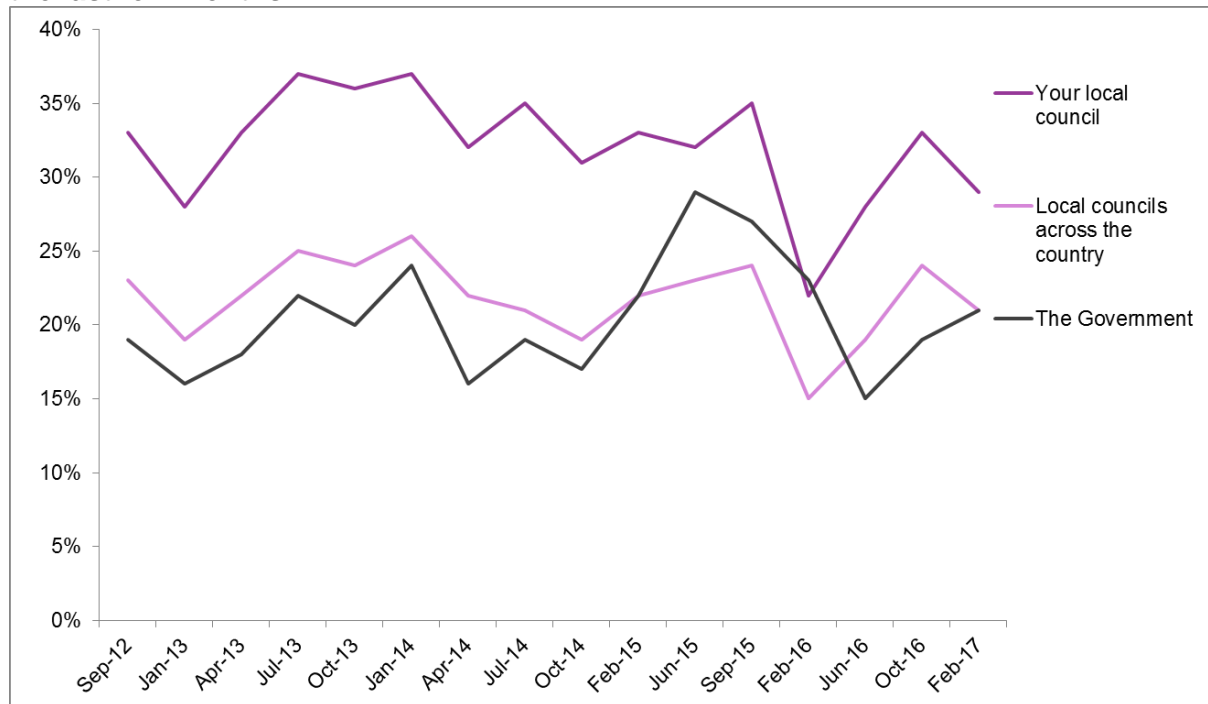
Regarding the government, the proportion of respondents observing overall positive coverage was 21 per cent, while 51 per cent observed negative coverage. Those answering 'neither positively nor negatively' made up about a quarter of all responses (26 per cent).

A similar pattern can be seen when looking at observed coverage of local councils across the country – 21 per cent of respondents observed overall positive coverage, which is fairly consistent with other rounds of polling. Those observing negative coverage stands at 35 per cent.

When asked about one's own council, 29 per cent of respondents observed generally positive coverage – this is roughly halfway between the highest and lowest levels of positive coverage observed over the course of the polling (the highest level is 37 per cent and the lowest level is 22 per cent).

Figure 14 shows the proportion of respondents who said that media coverage had been positive, since September 2012. Table 3 shows the results for all answer options since April 2014; the full set of figures can be found at Annex A.

Figure 14: Overall, do you think that the media has viewed the following positively in the last few months?



Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table 3: Overall, do you think that the media has viewed the following positively or negatively in the last few months?

	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
%										
The Government										
Positively	16	19	17	22	29	27	23	15	19	21
Neither positively/negatively	29	26	30	29	29	27	34	26	24	26
Negatively	51	54	49	47	40	43	40	56	55	51
Don't know	4	2	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	2
Local councils across the country										
Positively	22	21	19	22	23	24	15	19	24	21
Neither positively/negatively	39	36	42	34	43	41	50	41	37	39
Negatively	30	36	32	40	30	29	29	33	33	35
Don't know	9	7	7	5	5	6	6	7	7	5
Your local council										
Positively	32	35	31	33	32	35	22	28	33	29
Neither positively/negatively	40	36	43	39	44	41	53	46	39	43
Negatively	21	23	19	23	19	18	20	20	21	24
Don't know	7	6	7	5	4	5	6	7	7	4

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Annex A: Time series data

Overall satisfaction with local area

Table A1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live? ¹⁶																
	Sep-12	Jan-13 ¹⁷	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	84	84	82	85	84	83	82	80	82	80	82	83	81	82	83	80
Very satisfied	34	28	34	34	34	30	28	31	29	28	31	37	31	33	33	37
Fairly satisfied	50	57	48	51	50	53	54	50	53	52	51	46	50	49	50	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	9	9	8	9	7	10	9	8	8	9	8	8	9	10	9
Fairly dissatisfied	5	4	5	4	4	5	6	6	5	7	6	6	8	6	5	7
Very dissatisfied	2	2	3	3	3	5	2	5	4	5	3	3	3	3	3	4
Don't know	0	*	1	*	*	0	*	0	*	*	0	*	0	*	0	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

¹⁶ Local area was defined as “the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.

¹⁷ Whilst the individual ‘very’ or ‘fairly’ answer options displayed in Table A1 for January 2013 appear to sum to 85 per cent, this is due to the fact the figures in the table have been rounded to the nearest whole number. Please note that this may also occur in other parts of the report where answer categories are combined.

Overall satisfaction with local council

Table A2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local council(s) runs things?																
	Sep-12	Jan-13 ¹⁸	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	72	72	70	72	69	70	70	67	68	67	67	71	66	68	68	65
Very satisfied	19	16	20	18	19	15	16	14	16	16	16	21	15	18	15	17
Fairly satisfied	53	57	50	54	50	55	54	54	52	51	50	50	50	50	53	48
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	12	13	13	12	14	13	16	15	16	13	16	13	12	17	18	16
Fairly dissatisfied	10	9	9	8	10	10	8	11	9	11	10	9	14	10	8	11
Very dissatisfied	4	4	7	6	6	6	6	7	6	8	6	7	8	5	5	8
Don't know	1	2	2	1	1	*	1	*	1	*	1	*	*	*	*	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

¹⁸ Whilst the individual 'very' or 'fairly' answer options displayed in Table A1 for January 2013 appear to sum to 73 per cent, this is due to the fact the figures in the table have been rounded to the nearest whole number.

Value for money

Table A3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local council(s) provides value for money? ¹⁹																
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Strongly or tend to agree	56	51	51	52	51	53	48	49	51	53	51	56	50	51	49	47
Strongly agree	10	9	11	11	12	9	11	12	11	11	9	13	11	12	11	13
Tend to agree	46	42	40	42	39	44	37	37	41	41	42	42	39	39	39	34
Neither agree nor disagree	21	29	25	26	25	23	31	27	25	24	22	23	24	26	30	26
Tend to disagree	15	11	13	13	13	14	15	13	12	14	18	12	17	15	13	15
Strongly disagree	6	7	7	8	8	9	7	9	10	9	8	8	8	7	7	11
Don't know	2	2	4	2	2	1	1	2	1	*	1	1	1	1	1	1

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

¹⁹ The following preamble was used: "In considering the next question, please think about the range of services your local council(s) provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services your local council(s) provides to the community. We would like your general opinion."

Council responsiveness

Table A4: To what extent do you think your local council(s) acts on the concerns of local residents?																
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
A great deal or fair amount	62	60	61	63	62	61	62	61	61	63	59	65	57	61	62	59
A great deal	8	9	10	8	10	8	9	9	9	10	8	10	9	9	10	12
A fair amount	54	52	51	54	52	53	53	52	52	53	51	54	48	52	52	48
Not very much	28	27	26	25	27	28	27	29	28	27	31	27	31	29	28	31
Not at all	5	6	7	7	7	7	8	9	7	7	7	7	9	6	7	8
Don't know	5	7	6	5	5	3	3	1	3	2	3	1	3	3	3	1

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Informed about the council

Table A5: Overall, how well informed do you think your local council(s) keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?																
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly well informed	66	69	65	66	66	66	65	64	66	64	61	63	61	63	66	60
Very well informed	17	17	17	15	17	14	14	15	15	14	12	16	13	16	13	14
Fairly well informed	49	52	48	51	49	51	51	49	51	49	49	47	48	47	53	46
Not very well informed	25	23	23	22	22	23	25	25	24	25	28	26	27	28	24	30
Not well informed at all	8	6	9	10	9	11	9	11	9	11	11	10	10	8	9	10
Don't know	1	2	2	1	2	1	1	*	1	1	1	1	1	*	1	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Trust

Table A6: How much do you trust your local council(s)?																
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
A great deal or fair amount	61	62	60	61	61	61	61	59	59	61	58	65	59	63	63	59
A great deal	10	7	9	9	10	8	8	8	9	8	8	9	9	10	10	10
A fair amount	51	55	51	53	51	52	53	51	50	53	50	55	50	53	52	49
Not very much	26	27	28	25	26	26	28	29	29	25	28	25	29	25	25	28
Not at all	10	8	10	11	12	12	10	11	11	13	13	9	11	12	11	13
Don't know	2	3	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A7: Who do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?²⁰														
	Jul-13	Nov-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17	
	%													
Your local council(s)	70	71	77	72	80	73	75	72	76	77	72	74	72	
The government	14	11	13	16	14	15	19	17	15	14	16	15	17	
Neither	13	16	8	11	5	10	6	11	7	8	11	10	10	
Don't know	3	2	2	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

²⁰ 'Neither' was not read out to respondents as an answer option but the interviewer could code it if it was given spontaneously.

Table A8: And which individuals do you trust most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?²¹											
	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%										
Local councillors	76	73	75	72	73	70	75	74	71	74	72
Members of parliament	9	9	13	11	12	14	12	12	12	12	12
Government ministers	6	8	7	7	10	7	6	7	8	7	8
None of the above	8	8	4	8	4	7	5	6	7	5	8
Don't know	2	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1	1

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Satisfaction with level of engagement

Table A9: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of engagement your council offers to local residents?	
	Feb-17
	%
Very or fairly satisfied	46
Very satisfied	11
Fairly satisfied	34
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	29
Fairly dissatisfied	12
Very dissatisfied	12
Don't know	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

²¹ 'None of the above' was not read out to respondents as an answer option but the interviewer could code if it was given spontaneously

Table A10: What three things do you think your council could do better to engage with local residents?	
	Feb-17
	%
Explain more clearly how it is using your money	41
Make it clearer how residents can get involved in decision-making	33
Demonstrate more clearly how it is acting on residents' feedback	32
Explain more clearly its decisions when they affect you	32
Be more visible in the community	31
Further improve its customer service	20
Encourage more people to vote in local elections	20
Increase residents' access to local councillors	17
Make more use of jargon-free and plain English	15
Make more use of existing community networks	13
Other answers (including improve its communication, forums/meetings, don't waste money, better online presence, more involvement with schools, listen to public views, keep promises)	10
Don't know	4

Base (all respondents who gave a neutral response or were dissatisfied with their council's level of engagement): 548 British adults in February 2017
Please note that percentages sum to more than 100 as respondents could select multiple answer options

Community safety

Table A11: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area ²²after dark																
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly safe	75	76	78	77	78	78	79	79	79	79	80	79	78	79	79	78
Very safe	27	30	32	33	34	32	31	33	34	35	37	37	38	34	35	34
Fairly safe	48	46	46	45	45	46	47	46	46	44	43	42	41	45	44	44
Neither safe nor unsafe	8	9	8	8	9	9	9	9	9	8	9	9	9	8	10	11
Fairly unsafe	12	9	8	10	7	9	7	7	7	9	7	7	8	8	8	7
Very unsafe	3	4	4	4	4	4	5	5	4	4	3	4	4	3	3	4
Don't know	1	2	2	1	1	*	1	*	1	*	*	*	*	1	*	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

¹² Local area was defined as “the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.

Table A12: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area²³.....during the day																
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly safe	95	95	96	95	95	94	94	95	94	94	96	94	93	95	94	94
Very safe	60	62	65	66	66	62	63	62	63	65	68	67	63	62	65	63
Fairly safe	35	33	31	29	29	32	32	33	31	29	28	27	30	33	30	31
Neither safe nor unsafe	3	3	2	2	3	3	3	3	3	3	2	4	5	3	3	4
Fairly unsafe	2	2	1	1	*	2	2	1	2	2	2	2	2	1	2	2
Very unsafe	*	*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*	*	1	*	1	*
Don't know	0	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	0	*	*	*	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

²³ Local area was defined as “the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from your home”.

Service specific satisfaction

Table A13: I am going to read out a number of different types of services that are provided by your council(s) in your area. I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with your council's...																
	... waste collection ²⁴															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	83	86	84	84	83	80	81	80	83	80	77	82	81	80	79	77
Very satisfied	45	45	48	43	44	41	41	39	41	42	39	44	41	39	41	39
Fairly satisfied	37	41	36	41	39	39	39	41	42	38	38	38	40	41	38	38
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	5	4	4	4	4	5	6	4	4	4	5	6	5	6	6	6
Fairly dissatisfied	7	5	7	8	7	10	8	8	6	9	9	7	9	10	10	10
Very dissatisfied	5	5	5	5	5	5	6	7	7	7	8	5	5	4	5	7
Don't know	1	*	*	*	1	0	*	0	*	*	*	0	0	*	*	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

²⁴ Note that in September 2012 respondents were asked about 'refuse collection'.

Table A13 continued...																
	... street cleaning															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	74	73	76	74	76	72	73	73	75	71	72	75	73	69	71	70
Very satisfied	27	26	30	27	26	24	24	25	25	27	24	29	26	24	25	25
Fairly satisfied	47	47	46	48	49	48	50	48	50	44	48	45	47	45	46	45
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	6	10	8	8	7	10	9	8	9	10	10	9	8	11	12	10
Fairly dissatisfied	12	10	9	10	10	10	11	12	9	10	11	9	11	12	10	11
Very dissatisfied	7	6	7	7	7	7	6	7	7	8	7	7	7	8	7	9
Don't know	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	*	1	*	*	1	*	*	1	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A13 continued...																
	... road maintenance															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	46	46	40	45	42	38	39	39	42	38	39	48	40	43	45	42
Very satisfied	12	11	10	10	9	9	10	8	11	8	9	11	8	8	11	11
Fairly satisfied	35	35	30	35	32	29	30	31	31	30	30	37	32	35	34	31
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	12	8	11	9	11	12	14	14	11	12	13	12	13	14	11
Fairly dissatisfied	24	22	22	23	26	25	22	24	24	25	25	20	25	21	22	24
Very dissatisfied	19	20	28	20	22	26	26	22	20	27	23	19	23	23	19	22
Don't know	*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*	*	*	*	*	*	1

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A13 continued...																
	... pavement maintenance															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	58	57	56	59	54	51	55	54	56	53	54	57	53	54	55	51
Very satisfied	15	13	15	12	14	11	14	13	14	13	13	16	12	13	13	13
Fairly satisfied	43	44	41	47	41	39	42	41	42	41	41	41	41	41	42	38
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	12	11	9	11	15	14	15	12	13	12	14	15	15	15	16
Fairly dissatisfied	19	19	18	16	20	19	19	19	17	18	19	16	18	18	17	18
Very dissatisfied	13	10	15	14	14	14	11	11	14	15	14	12	13	13	12	15
Don't know	1	2	1	1	1	1	1	*	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	*

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A13 continued...																
	... library services															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	67	69	71	67	70	66	67	71	66	67	62	67	64	61	62	62
Very satisfied	34	29	30	32	32	30	27	30	31	30	31	29	26	26	26	29
Fairly satisfied	34	40	41	35	38	36	40	41	35	38	32	38	38	35	36	33
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	10	12	11	13	10	17	14	15	17	16	19	17	17	22	19	21
Fairly dissatisfied	7	5	6	5	6	7	7	6	5	6	9	7	8	7	7	8
Very dissatisfied	3	3	3	3	3	5	4	5	6	6	6	4	7	5	6	6
Don't know	12	11	10	11	10	5	7	3	7	5	4	5	5	5	6	3

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A13 continued...																
	... sport and leisure services															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	63	63	65	63	63	62	61	64	65	62	62	66	61	64	63	64
Very satisfied	21	19	22	18	19	18	18	21	21	21	19	25	20	19	19	21
Fairly satisfied	42	43	43	45	44	44	43	42	44	41	43	42	40	45	44	43
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	13	16	14	13	14	17	18	17	16	17	19	16	19	19	21	21
Fairly dissatisfied	11	8	8	12	9	9	9	10	7	11	9	7	12	9	8	8
Very dissatisfied	5	5	5	5	5	6	6	6	7	6	5	6	5	4	5	6
Don't know	8	9	9	8	9	6	6	3	5	3	5	4	4	4	4	2

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A13 continued...																
	... services and support for older people															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	49	48	49	52	45	49	50	44	49	50	45	51	44	45	47	44
Very satisfied	10	13	15	12	10	11	10	13	13	13	12	15	11	10	11	12
Fairly satisfied	39	35	34	40	35	38	39	31	36	38	33	36	33	34	37	32
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19	21	21	20	23	28	27	31	25	28	28	26	28	33	31	33
Fairly dissatisfied	9	8	9	8	10	9	8	11	9	9	11	9	14	11	10	11
Very dissatisfied	4	5	5	5	7	8	5	6	6	7	9	8	8	5	7	7
Don't know	18	18	17	14	15	7	9	8	11	5	6	7	7	7	5	5

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A13 continued...																
	... services and support for children and young people															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Very or fairly satisfied	53	51	53	50	53	48	49	49	51	51	47	55	48	49	50	49
Very satisfied	14	14	15	15	14	14	11	16	12	13	12	16	12	13	13	14
Fairly satisfied	39	38	38	35	39	34	38	33	40	38	35	38	36	36	37	35
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15	19	16	17	18	24	23	26	21	24	26	21	26	26	28	28
Fairly dissatisfied	10	7	9	10	9	11	10	12	9	9	12	9	11	11	9	10
Very dissatisfied	6	7	6	8	5	7	6	7	8	9	5	8	7	5	7	7
Don't know	16	16	15	15	15	10	12	6	10	7	9	7	9	8	7	6

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Media coverage

Table A14a: Overall, do you think that the media has viewed the following positively or negatively in the last few months?																
	The Government															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Positively	19	16	18	22	20	24	16	19	17	22	29	27	23	15	19	21
Neither positively nor negatively																
Negatively	23	28	29	20	20	23	29	26	30	29	29	27	34	26	24	26
Don't know	4	6	7	6	5	4	4	2	4	2	2	3	3	3	2	2

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A14b: Overall, do you think that the media has viewed the following positively or negatively in the last few months?																
	Local councils across the country															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Positively	23	19	22	25	24	26	22	21	19	22	23	24	15	19	24	21
Neither positively nor negatively																
Negatively	34	31	27	34	34	37	30	36	32	40	30	29	29	33	33	35
Don't know	13	12	12	16	13	9	9	7	7	5	5	6	6	7	7	5

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Table A14c: Overall, do you think that the media has viewed the following positively or negatively in the last few months?																
	Your local council															
	Sep-12	Jan-13	Apr-13	Jul-13	Oct-13	Jan-14	Apr-14	Jul-14	Oct-14	Feb-15	Jun-15	Sep-15	Feb-16	Jun-16	Oct-16	Feb-17
	%															
Positively	33	28	33	37	36	37	32	35	31	33	32	35	22	28	33	29
Neither positively nor negatively																
Negatively	34	43	41	27	30	32	40	36	43	39	44	41	53	46	39	43
Don't know	12	11	9	13	9	7	7	6	7	5	4	5	6	7	7	4

Base (all respondents): 1,007 British adults in February 2017

Annex B: Polling questions

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

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

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

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

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know

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

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know

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

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

Strongly agree
Tend to agree
Neither agree nor disagree
Tend to disagree
Strongly disagree
Don't know

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

A great deal
A fair amount
Not very much
Not at all
Don't know

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

Very well informed
Fairly well informed
Not very well informed
Not well informed at all
Don't know

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

A great deal
A fair amount
Not very much
Not at all
Don't know

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

SELECT ONE ANSWER OPTION ONLY

RANDOMISE ORDER

Your local council(s)

The government

Neither (not read out but the interviewer can code if given spontaneously)

Don't know

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

SELECT ONE ANSWER OPTION ONLY

RANDOMISE ORDER

Local councillors

Members of parliament

Government ministers

None of the above (not read out but the interviewer can code if given spontaneously)

Don't know

9. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of engagement your council offers to local residents?

READ ALOUD TO ALL RESPONDENTS: By engagement we mean giving local people information about the council, asking them for their views and giving them a direct say in decision-making.

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know

IF NEITHER SATISFIED NOR DISSATISFIED, FAIRLY DISSATISFIED OR VERY DISSATISFIED AT Q9 THEN

9 a) What three things do you think your council could do better to engage with local residents?

ROTATE ORDER OR OPTIONS

Make it clearer how residents can get involved in decision-making
Be more visible in the community
Make more use of existing community networks
Further improve its customer service
Make more use of jargon-free and plain English
Demonstrate more clearly how it is acting on residents' feedback
Increase residents' access to local councillors
Explain more clearly its decisions when they affect you
Explain more clearly how it is using your money
Encourage more people to vote in local elections
Don't know
Other (please specify)

10.a) How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?

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

Very safe
Fairly safe
Neither safe nor unsafe
Fairly unsafe
Very unsafe
Don't know

10. b) How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day?

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

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Fairly unsafe
- Very unsafe
- Don't know

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

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

RANDOMISE ORDER

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

12. Overall, do you think that the media has viewed the following positively or negatively in the last few months?

- Positively
- Neither positively nor negatively
- Negatively
- Don't know

RANDOMISE ORDER

- The Government
- Local council(s) across the country
- Your local council

End and thanks.



Local Government Association

Local Government House
Smith Square
London SW1P 3HZ

Telephone 020 7664 3000
Fax 020 7664 3030
Email info@local.gov.uk
www.local.gov.uk

© Local Government Association, February 2017

For a copy in Braille, larger print or audio, please contact us on 020 7664 3000.

We consider requests on an individual basis.