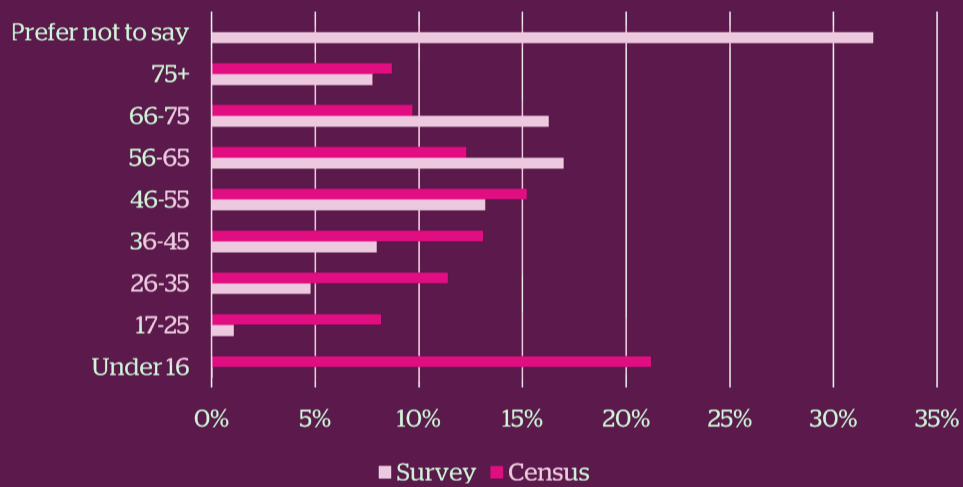


Who completed the survey?

We received 1,507 responses

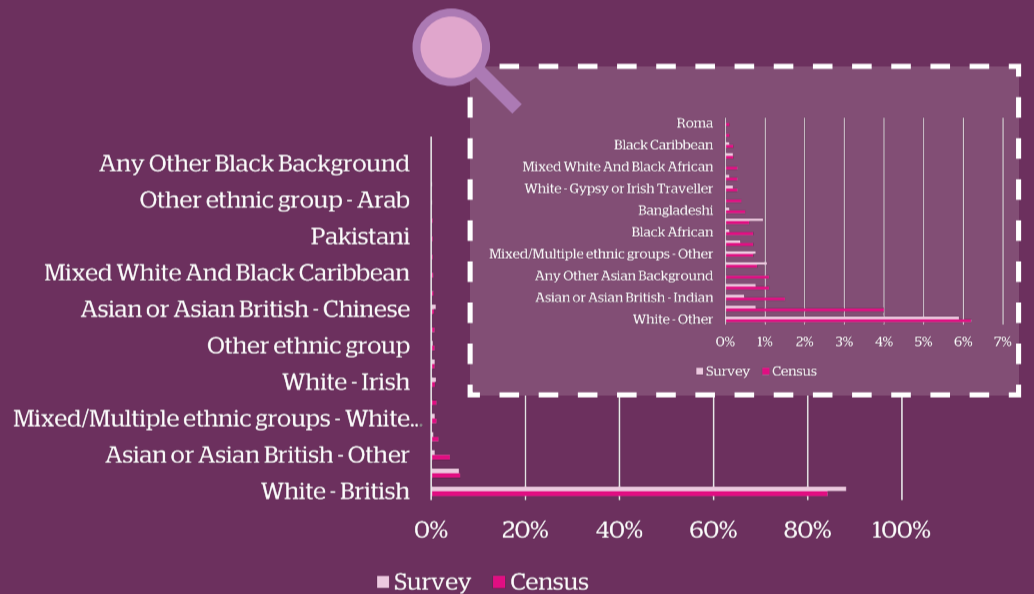
Of those, around 1,000 provided demographic information. We have compared this data with 2021 census data which tells us about the demographics of the borough. This helps us to understand which groups are under or overrepresented in the results.

Representation of age groups

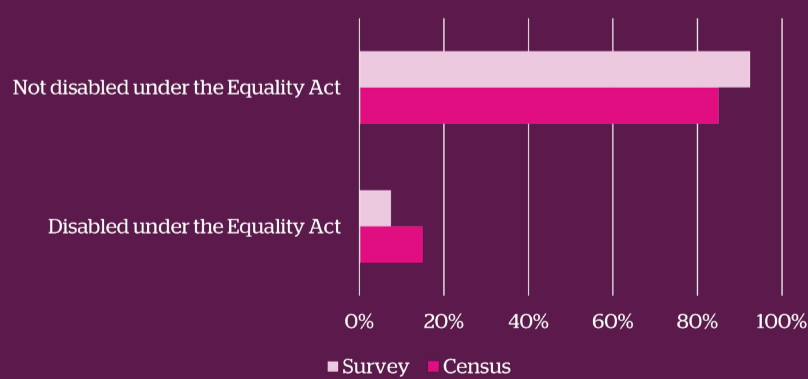


Some age groups were overrepresented (particularly those aged 56 to 75) and some age groups were underrepresented, specifically those aged under 45. We have been actively working to engage younger residents through social media and community groups, and will continue to do so for all future consultations.

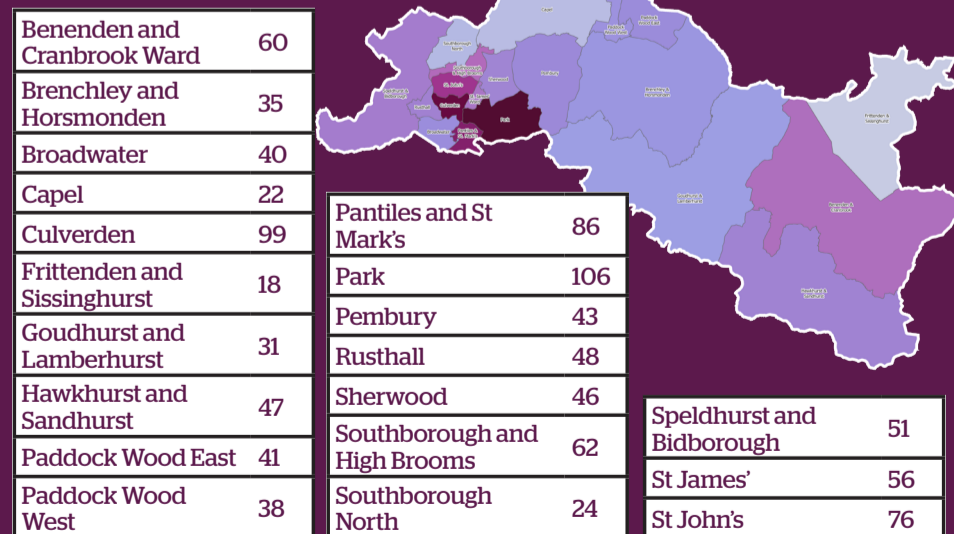
Representation of ethnicities



Representation of those identifying as disabled



Responses per ward



Those respondents who gave their postcode were divided across the wards as above. We went out into rural wards to do drop-in sessions allowing residents without online access to take part in the survey.

Residents' survey responses

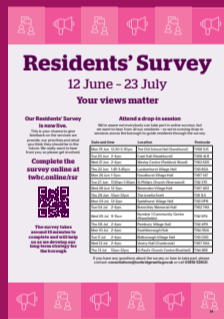


How did we promote the survey?

Drop-in survey session locations



We carried out drop-in sessions across the borough. These were designed to help residents without access to the internet take part in the survey. We publicised these on our social media channels and in Local magazine.



Social media posts



We designed a campaign of social media posts to drive engagement with the survey. We also ran an Instagram competition where participants could be entered into a prize draw.

Postal and e-mail invites
(10,000 residents across the borough)

Weekly E-newsletter



We shared the survey several times through our E-newsletter which goes to nearly 18,000 residents.



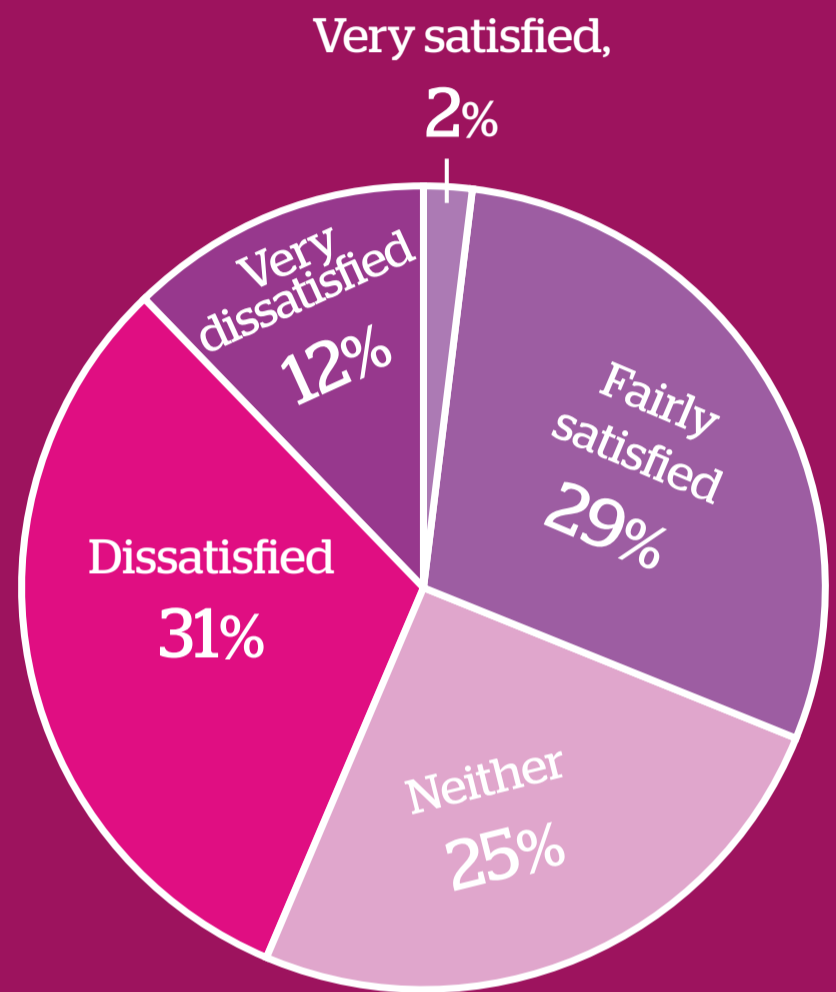
We sent invites to 10,000 random households, distributed proportionally across the borough's wards.

■ Invited ■ Self selected

Satisfaction with services

How satisfied are you with how TWBC runs things?

While just over 40% of residents were dissatisfied with the way TWBC runs things, younger residents (under 35s) were more positive. 51% of residents aged 26 to 35 described themselves as fairly satisfied. Overall, around two thirds of respondents were either satisfied or didn't have an opinion.



Did you know?

Satisfaction levels with
parks in the borough
(87% satisfied)
are above the national
average (80%
satisfied)!

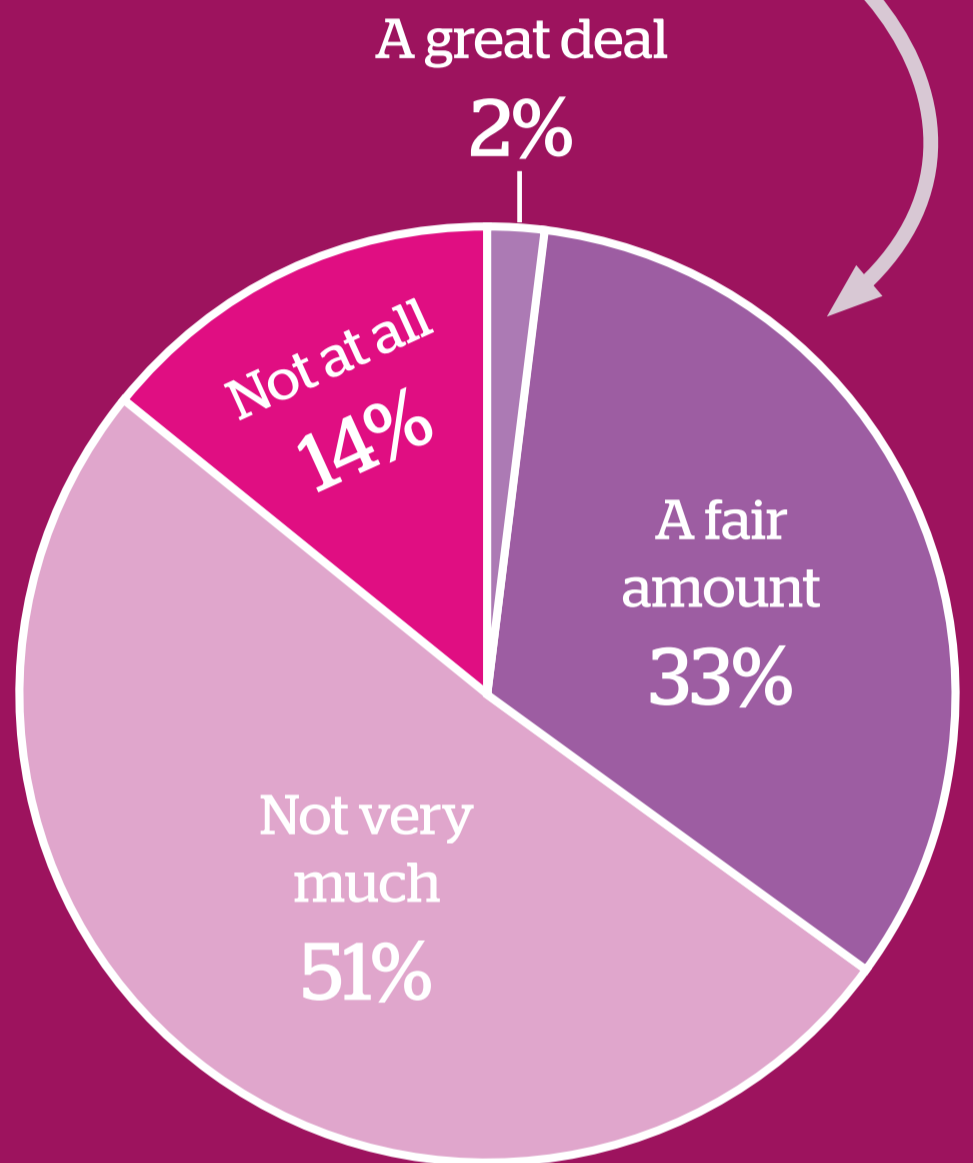
Satisfaction with services

What you said

How much do you feel TWBC acts on the concerns of local residents?

You told us that you didn't feel TWBC acts on your concerns very much, so we're listening and making consultation an essential part of everything we do. We've carried out 15 consultations in the last 12 months and received over 7,000 responses. From balancing our budget to places to parks, we want to put residents' views at the heart of our work.

This is our first residents' survey since 2015, and we plan to do these more frequently.



What we're doing twbc.online/talkingpoint



TWBC provides some, but not all of the services residents have access to in the borough.

Our Services

- Assembly Hall Theatre
- Community safety and CCTV
- Council Tax
- Crematorium and cemetery
- Elections
- Environmental health
- Health and wellbeing
- Housing and homelessness
- Housing benefits
- Leisure centres
- Licensing
- Parking
- Parks and open spaces
- Planning and Building Control
- Recycling and refuse collection
- Sports facilities
- The Amelia Scott

Other Services

- Kent County Council**
- Education and children
- Libraries
- Trading standards
- Social care and health
- Household waste recycling centres
- Roads and public rights of way
- Kent Fire & Rescue Service**
- Kent Police**

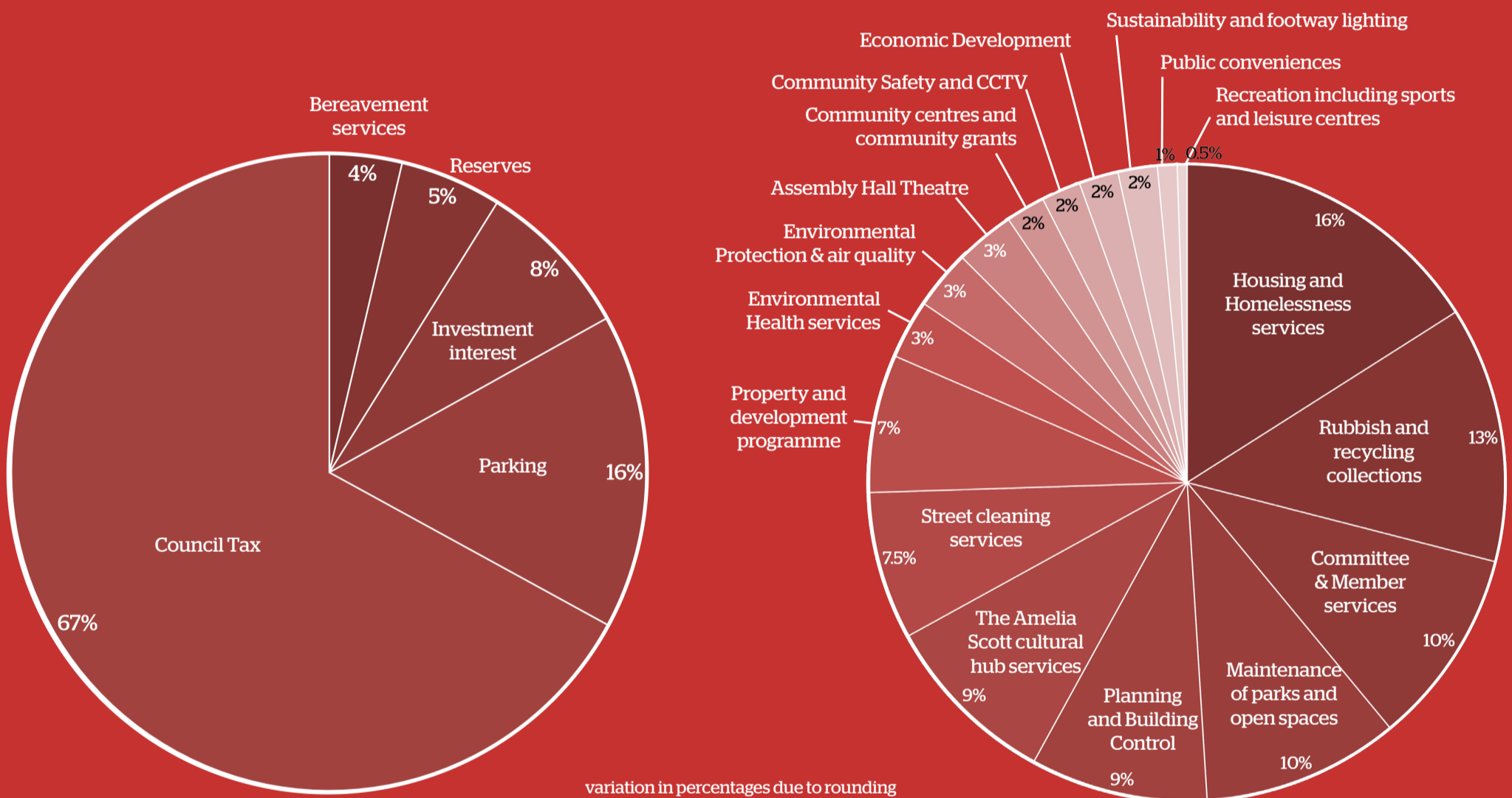
Funding our services

How we spend our budget

The first chart shows all the income the Council receives for a Band D Council Tax property. This includes:

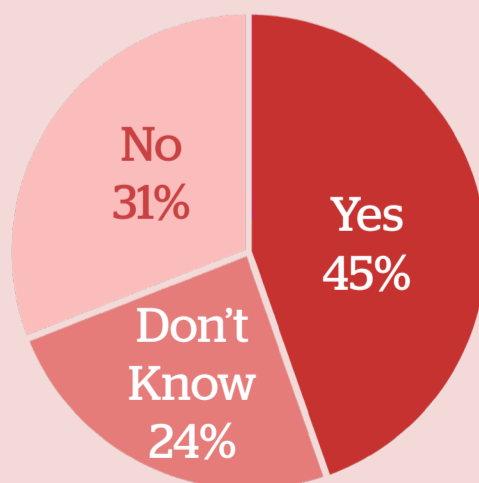
- Council Tax, the proportion shown here is from a Band D property (we keep around 9p per pound)
- Income from investment interest
- The money we withdraw from our reserves (like a savings account)
- Some services make more money than they cost to run, and so they generate income, this is also shown here.

The second chart shows how that money is spent on services.

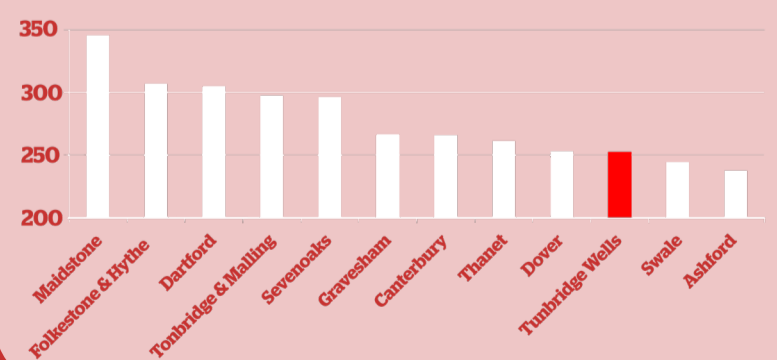


Surplus from some services, such as Parking and Bereavement Services are reinvested into the service, plus support other services which helps to balance the Council's budget.

Considering the range of services we provide, do you believe that represents value for money?



£ Core Spending Power per Dwelling 2022/23



TWBC does a lot with a little - we have the third lowest core spending power per dwelling in Kent. This chart represents how much or how little local authorities across the county have available to spend.

Balancing our budget

We asked **“What information would help you understand how your Council Tax is spent?”**
And here are some of your comments...



I'd need to see a financial breakdown of how and where the funds are spent.

...Generally I'm happy with the services provided but I don't access lots of them so don't feel I have a full picture.

A more transparent easily accessible breakdown of the services and true remit of TWBC covered by Council Tax and how many third parties are involved /subcontracted to.



We asked: **“To help balance our budget, what do you think we should do?”**
What you told us



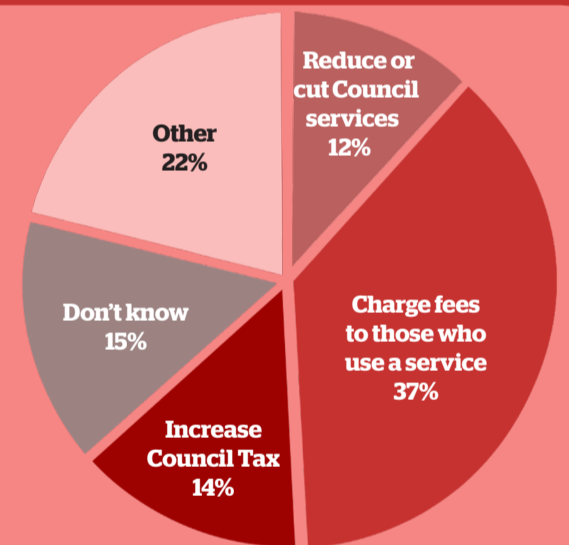
Initiate and lead, more participation by volunteers to maintain green spaces and public rights of way.

Better efficiencies within the system and adoption of suitable technology.

Use smaller offices remote working to avoid the upkeep of old building.

Encourage more varied businesses to come to Tunbridge Wells...

Involve community. Listen to residents...



What we're doing

We're committed to making efficiencies and generating income where we can, here are a few ways we're doing that.

Town Hall converted into a coworking space

Converting the town hall into a coworking space will provide new office space for local businesses and make a significant saving to Council running costs.

The Amelia Scott

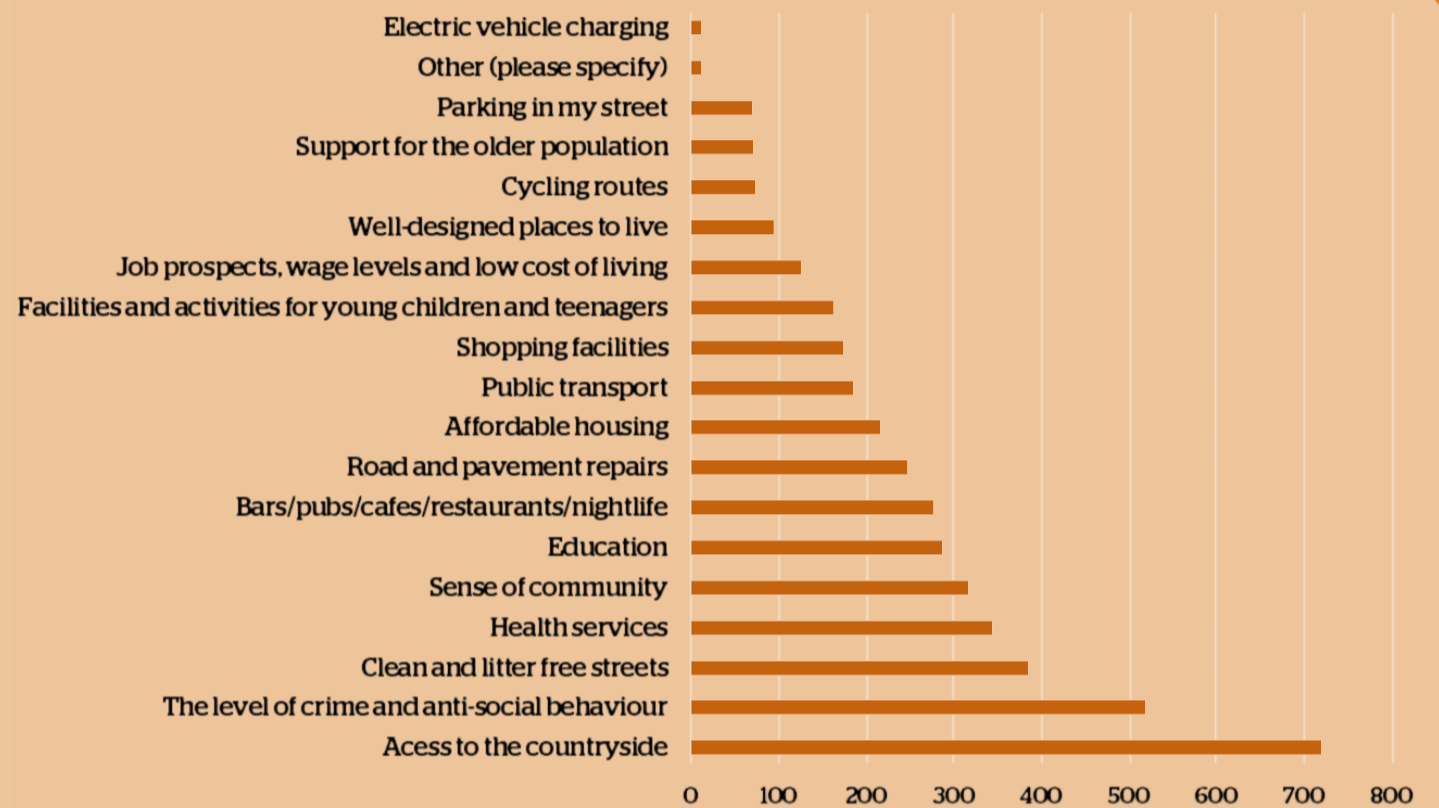
Investment of £23m in a place for the whole community. The Amelia Scott combines cultural and learning activities and access to Council services under one roof.

Budget survey

Every year we ask residents for their views on our draft budget, our next budget survey will be published in mid-December, so keep an eye on our communications.

Living in the borough

In your opinion, what makes an area a good place to live?



We asked what makes an area a good place to live, and the most important factors according to residents were: access to the countryside, the level of crime and anti-social behaviour and clean and litter-free streets.

What we're doing

You told us you valued low crime levels, access to the countryside, clean and litter-free streets and a sense of community. Here's what we're doing to support those areas.

Wellbeing: We're supporting the community and offering residents wellbeing activities, whether that's via the 'Naturally Creative' arts and crafts sessions at The Amelia Scott, or Wellbeing Walks run across the borough by our Health team.

Wellbeing activities like these benefit residents' health as well as growing their sense of community.

Safety: 34% of respondents rated the level of crime an important factor. Our Community Safety team works with other organisations, such as the Safe Town Partnership across the borough as part of the Tunbridge Wells Community Safety Unit to keep residents safe. The Community Safety team is currently running a survey to find out how residents feel about travelling in the borough at night. By asking residents about their concerns, we can find out how to keep you safer!

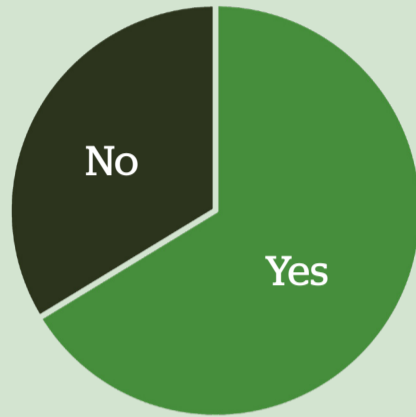
Award winning parks: It's no secret that our parks and green spaces are our best feature! Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom was one of 44 community gardening groups who secured a place in the finals from the 17 Britain in Bloom regions and nations which run individual Bloom competitions during the year. They were also the only group to achieve a Gold award from all the groups nominated from the South East.

Keeping your streets clean: The Council empties 750 street litter bins across the borough following a schedule that sees the most used bins being emptied most frequently.

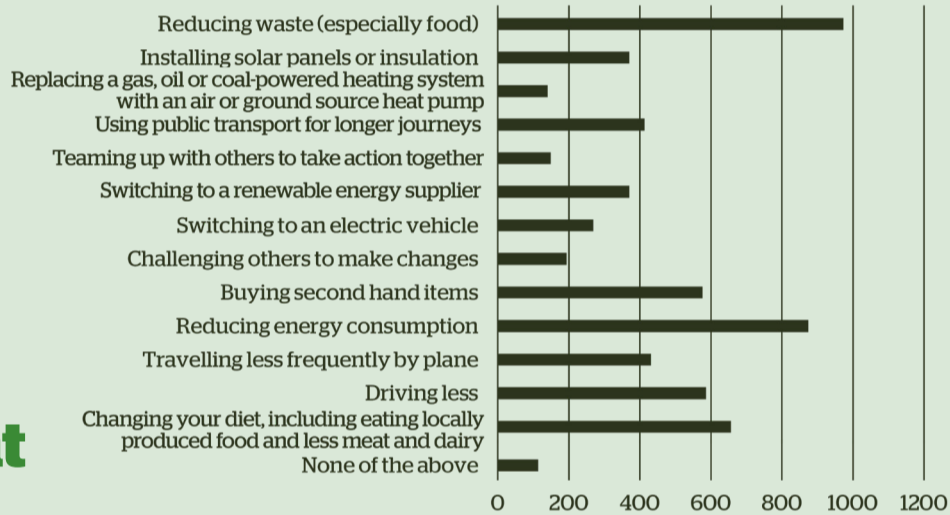
Leaves are swept from the busiest roads and pavements in the borough where we know there is heavy leaf fall. The leaf sweeping schedule is planned in conjunction with the usual street cleaning rota.

Your environment

Do you feel well informed about the actions you can take to combat climate change?

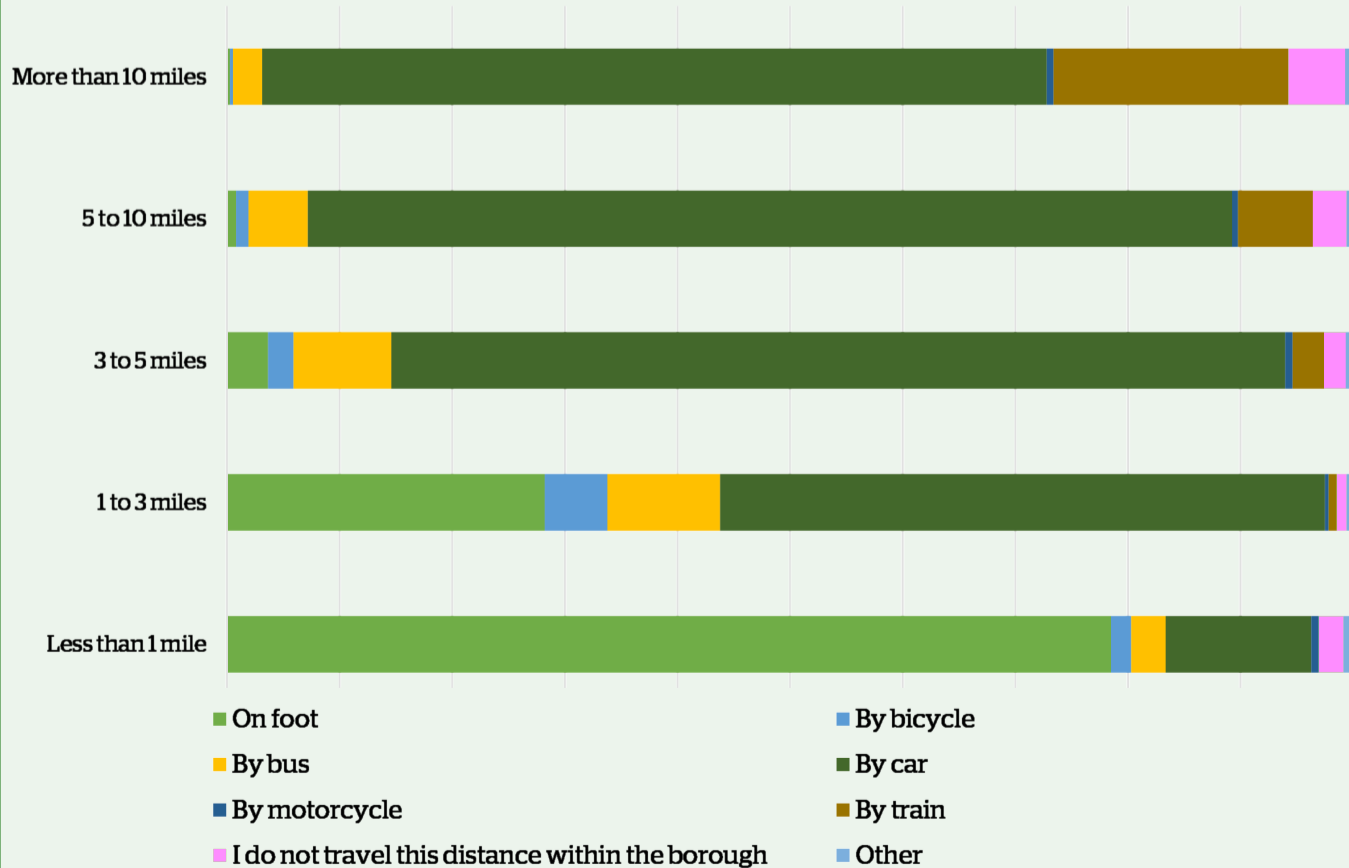


Changes residents would be willing to make to help the environment



Travel

How are you most likely to travel in the borough...



Residents are happy to travel short journeys on foot in the borough, and cars become the most popular method of travel for journeys of more than one mile.

What we're doing

Co-Wheels: A more sustainable alternative to owning your own vehicle, the Co-Wheels car club provides residents with access to a fleet of vehicles you can use as and when you need to. The car club is so popular that in 2023 we added two more. There are now eight cars available locally.

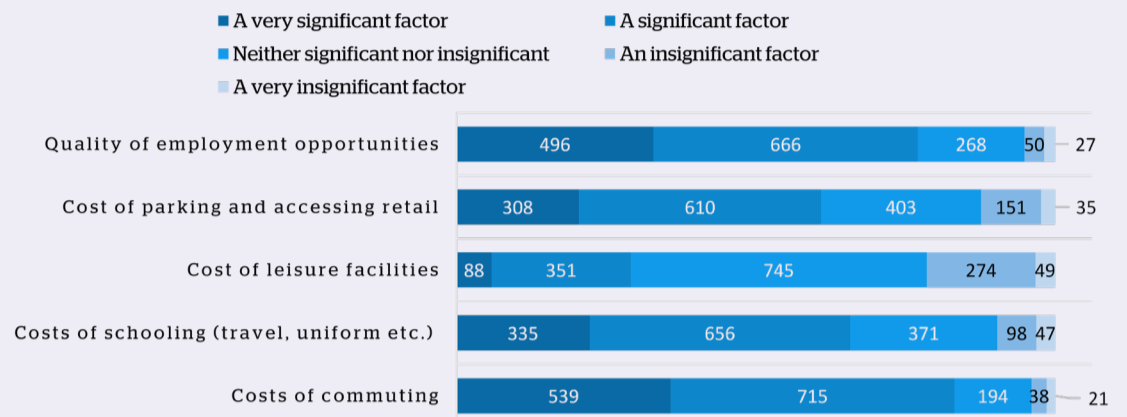
Better streets: Active travel is essential to reducing energy, and nearly 600 residents said they'd be willing to drive less to reduce their carbon footprints. We've been awarded funding to improve traffic issues in two neighbourhoods in Royal Tunbridge Wells, with a focus on active travel access. We started this work by running a consultation in those areas earlier this year and got over 500 responses.

Pollution Patrol: Our environmental protection officers are actively promoting Pollution Patrol in primary schools around the borough. Pollution Patrol is an online tool designed to educate children about air quality and how to combat pollution. By educating residents on how to make a difference, we can work together to improve air quality and reduce pollution!

Solar Together: We are working in partnership with other Kent councils to help residents transition to clean energy in a cost-effective way. The Solar Together scheme offers residents the opportunity to save money on solar panels and EV charge points. Cleaner energy at a reduced cost.

Housing and homes

How much do you think that each of the following factors influences people's decision to move into or stay in the borough?



We are progressing our Local Plan, which determines which areas will be developed over the next 15 years, and what shape those developments will take.

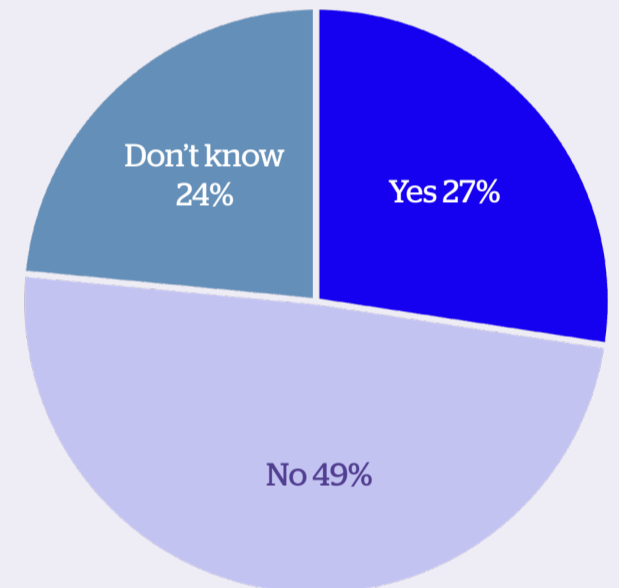


To find out which areas will be changing, take a look at our interactive Local Plan map.

You can receive weekly updates on planning applications in your local area in our e-newsletter.

For more information about planning, visit twbc.online/planning

Is Tunbridge Wells somewhere you can see young people remaining when they leave home?



What do you think is the main reason young people would not remain in Tunbridge Wells

Here's what you had to say:

Young people will move for higher education and job opportunities. They seek modern urban lifestyles when they are single but tend to settle in suburbia when married with children when education is paramount.

They want to spread their wings elsewhere but may come back to TW later.

Too expensive, poor public transport, Tunbridge Wells town looks shabby. Not many opportunities for young people.

Job opportunities, plus the draw of London within reach, can see them returning once established in a sector / industry though.

What we're doing:

Developing our Local Plan and running employment events and fairs.

Cost of living support: When asked about young people staying in the area, 395 residents commented on the cost of living in the borough. Our Local Plan aims for 40% of houses developed on brownfield sites to be affordable and 30% for those on greenfield sites.

We're offering advice on energy bills and consumption, our Economic Development team is running employment events to help get residents into work. We created a £100,000 Community Support Fund. This fund provides grants to organisations which help combat the cost of living crisis, so far we've supported Charlie's Angels, Nourish, Number One Community Trust and others!

What one thing would you change to make the borough a better place?

“ TWBC should support historic/heritage celebrations to encourage pride in our town.

Invest in your small businesses and non-profits!

More forward-looking changes such as Rapid EV charging provision.

Regeneration of pedestrianised area.

More cycle routes.

Find things for teenagers with no money something to do. Help with isolation.

What would you like to see more of in the next three years

“ Make the most of our growing tourism economy.

Reduce vacant retail space on the high street and shopping centre.

More youth facilities.

Better community safety.

Climate change action.

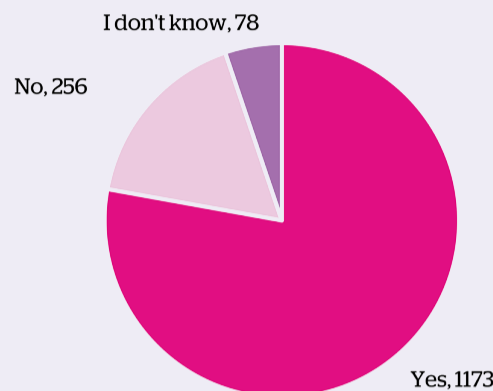


twbc.online/alerts

We are taking your feedback on board, and putting together our new draft strategic plan which will be shared early in 2024. Sign up to our e-newsletter for updates on Council news and events around the borough.

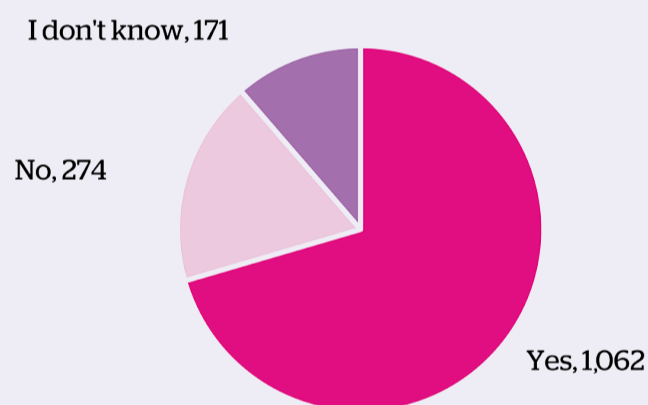
Accessing the Council

If you had a question about a Council service, would you know how to get in contact?



78% of residents felt confident that they would be able to get in contact if they had a question about a service. Lots of services can be accessed online.

Does the Council keep you up to date on changes and news in the borough?



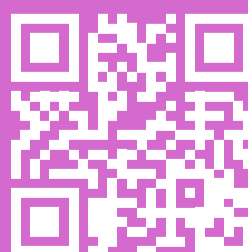
71% of residents felt that the Council keeps them up to date with changes and news in the borough. The most popular ways of keeping up to date were the Council's weekly email newsletter, Local magazine which is delivered quarterly across the borough and the Council website.

We're committed to keeping you up to date by publishing news across all our channels, including Local magazine. The winter edition will be hitting doormats in early December!



Register for our email alerts service

[twbc.online/alerts](https://www.twbc.online/alerts)



 [tunbridgewells.gov.uk](https://www.tunbridgewells.gov.uk)  TWellsCouncil

 TunbridgeWellsBoroughCouncil  TWellsbc

Most visited online services:

Benefits

- Housing Benefit
- Council Tax Support
- Upload your benefit proofs

Bins and recycling

- Check your bin collection day
- Report a missed bin
- Garden waste service sign-up

Business Portal

- Business support and grants
- Planning for businesses
- Business rates and licensing

Council Tax

- Pay your Council Tax online
- Pay by Direct Debit
- Moving house

Housing

- Housing register
- Affordable housing
- Homelessness

Parking

- Pay a penalty charge notice
- Appeal a penalty charge notice
- Parking permits and season tickets

Planning

- Planning applications
- Pre-application advice
- Planning support services