

Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey 2023

Analysis of Results

August 2023

For more information or to request this report in an alternative format contact:

Business Intelligence
Worcestershire County Council
County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP

Email: viewpoint@worcestershire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01905 846800

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/viewpoint



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1. Introduction

This report contains results from the 2023 Worcestershire County Council Viewpoint Survey, the fifth since the previous Worcestershire Viewpoint partnership activity ended in 2018. The survey period was 15th May – 11th June 2023.

The survey was made up of questions designed to allow us to monitor public perception indicators relating to issues such as priorities for the local area, satisfaction with county council services and how well informed people feel. The majority of questions had previously been asked in the Place Survey¹ in 2008 and in the Worcestershire Viewpoint surveys carried out each November 2009 to 2013 and each May 2014 to 2019. In 2020 the survey was postponed to September due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The autumn timing was retained in 2021. In 2022 and 2023 we have returned to our usual May survey period.

A total of **4,197** questionnaire completion requests were mailed out to panel members, 90% of these via email and 10% by post. **1,838** valid responses were received from panel members, representing a response rate of **44%** (after removal of deadwood). **3** responses were received from residents who could join the panel and complete the survey during the survey period. The number of responses has reduced from 1,980 in 2022 and 2,048 in 2021.

The total number of responses for each question is recorded as the base, shown in all figures and tables throughout the report.

¹ The Place Survey was conducted in last quarter of 2008 and was intended as a biennial statutory survey that all lower and upper tier authorities in England were required to undertake. The survey was cancelled in 2010 by the new Coalition Government

2. Results

2.1 About Your Local Area and Public Services

Throughout the survey, local residents were asked to think about their local area when responding to questions. The local area is defined as the area within 15 to 20 minutes walking distance from the respondents' home.

General satisfaction with local area

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

Satisfaction with a local area is a key indicator about public service delivery which was originally measured by the government for all local authority areas across the country. 78% of Worcestershire residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. This is a statistically significant reduction from the 80% satisfied in 2022.

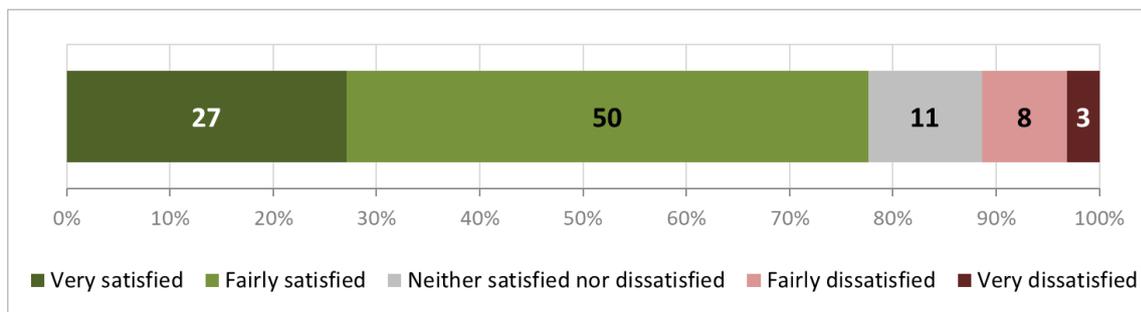


Figure 1: Local area satisfaction in Worcestershire

*Base: 1,824 responses

Satisfaction with Council

Q: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Worcestershire County Council run things?

50% of residents are satisfied with the way the County Council runs things. This is not a significant change from the 52% satisfied in 2022.

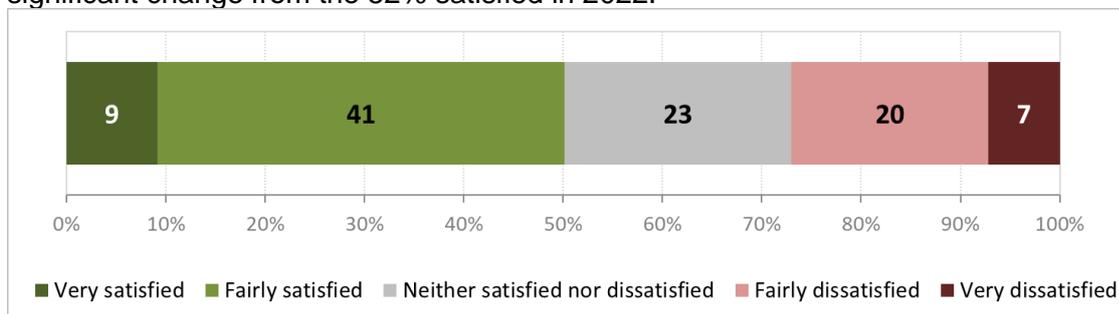


Figure 2: Overall Satisfaction with Worcestershire County Council

*Base: 1,829 responses

Value for Money

Q: To what extent do you agree or disagree that Worcestershire County Council provide value for money?

35% of residents agree that the County Council provides value for money. This is not a significant change from 2022.

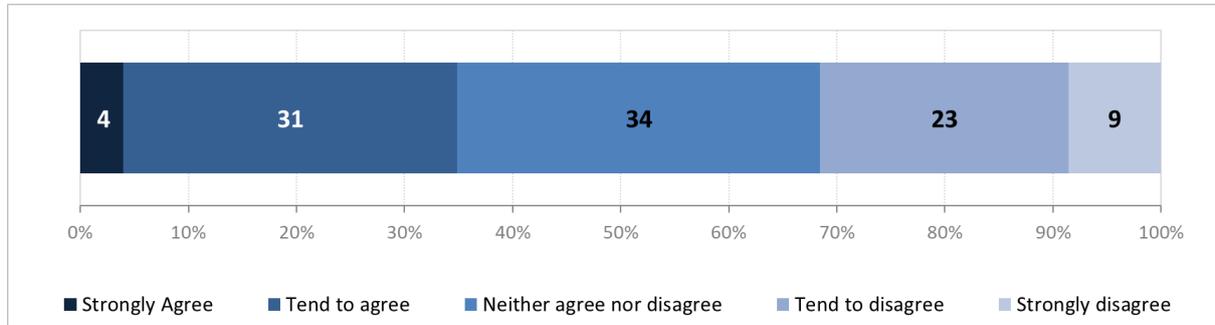


Figure 3: Worcestershire County Council provides value for money

*Base: 1,789 responses

Belonging to neighbourhood

Q: How strongly do you feel you belong to your local area?

The strength of belonging is a way of measuring cohesiveness in the local area and residents were asked to rate the level to which they feel they belong, 73% feel that they belong very or fairly strongly to their local area. This is not a significant decrease from the 74% feeling they belonged in 2022.

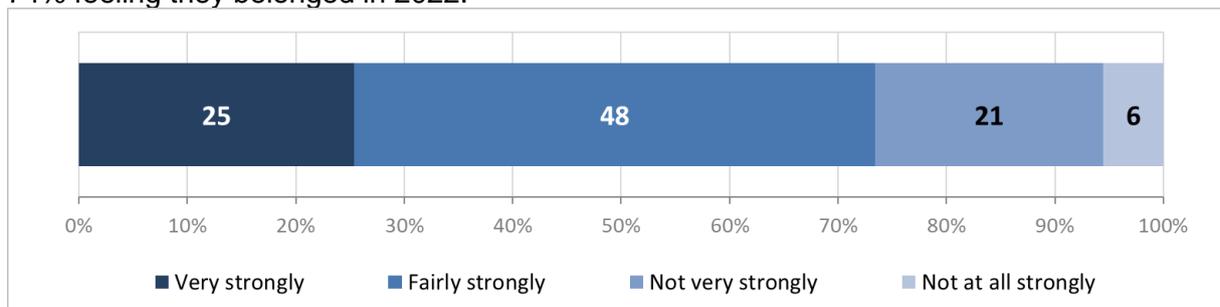


Figure 4: Belonging to the local area

*Base: 1,780 responses

Those aged between 18-34 have less of a sense of belonging to the local area, with only 59% feeling a strong sense of belonging compared to the much higher percentage seen in the other age groups, shown in Figure 5. 79% of those aged 65+ feel a strong sense of belonging to their local area.

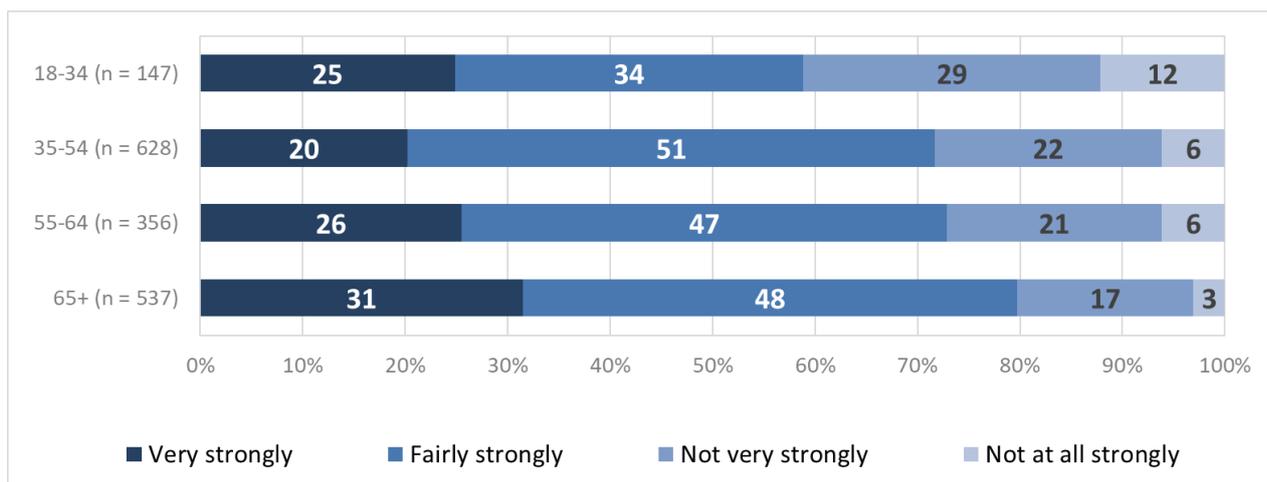


Figure 5: Belonging to the local area by age group

Making somewhere a good place to live

Q: Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

Respondents were asked to select the top five things that make somewhere a good place to live. As a whole, residents of Worcestershire rate the importance of NHS services most highly, followed by crime levels and parks and open spaces. NHS services and the level of crime are the top two things selected by every age group. Residents under 65 rate parks and open spaces more highly than those 65+. Residents aged 65+ are more likely to think road and pavement/repairs and public transport are more important than younger age groups. More residents aged 35-54 think education provision is important compared to other age groups. More residents aged 18-34 think affordable, decent housing is important compared to other age groups.

Table 1: Top 5 most important things in making somewhere a good place to live 2023

1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
NHS services	Level of crime	Parks and open spaces	Clean streets	Access to nature

*Base: 1,793 responses

Table 2: Top 5 most important things in making somewhere a good place to live 2023 by age band

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
18-34 (n = 159)	Level of crime	NHS Services	Parks and open spaces	Affordable decent housing	Access to nature
35-54 (n = 625)	Level of crime	NHS services	Parks and open spaces	Clean streets	Education provision
55-64 (n = 361)	NHS services	Level of crime	Clean streets	Access to nature	Parks and open spaces
65+ (n = 547)	NHS services	Level of crime	Road/pavement repairs	Public transport	Clean streets

Q: And thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving?

Residents were also asked for the top five things that most need improving in their local area. NHS services and road issues, including traffic congestion and road/pavement repairs, are consistently top. Public transport and affordable, decent housing are also considered as needing improvement as is activities for teenagers. All age groups selected the same top 4 issues that most need improving with just some variation in the order of these. Older generations were more likely to say road and pavement repairs need improving whereas as younger generations were more likely to choose NHS services as the most needs improving. This year affordable, decent housing made the top 5 for all but one of the age groups.

Table 3: Top 5 areas that most need improving 2023

1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
NHS services	Road and pavement Repairs	Public transport	Level of traffic congestion	Activities for teenagers

**Base: 1,782 responses*

Table 4: Top 5 areas that most need improving 2023, by age band

	1 st	2 nd	3 rd	4 th	5 th
18-34 (n = 153)	NHS services	Public transport	Road/pavement repairs	Level of traffic congestion	Affordable decent housing
35-54 (n = 625)	NHS services	Level of traffic congestion	Public transport	Road/pavement repairs	Activities for teenagers
55-64 (n = 362)	Road/pavement repairs	NHS services	Level of traffic congestion	Public transport	Affordable decent housing
65+ (n = 542)	Road/pavement repairs	NHS services	Public transport	Level of traffic congestion	Affordable decent housing

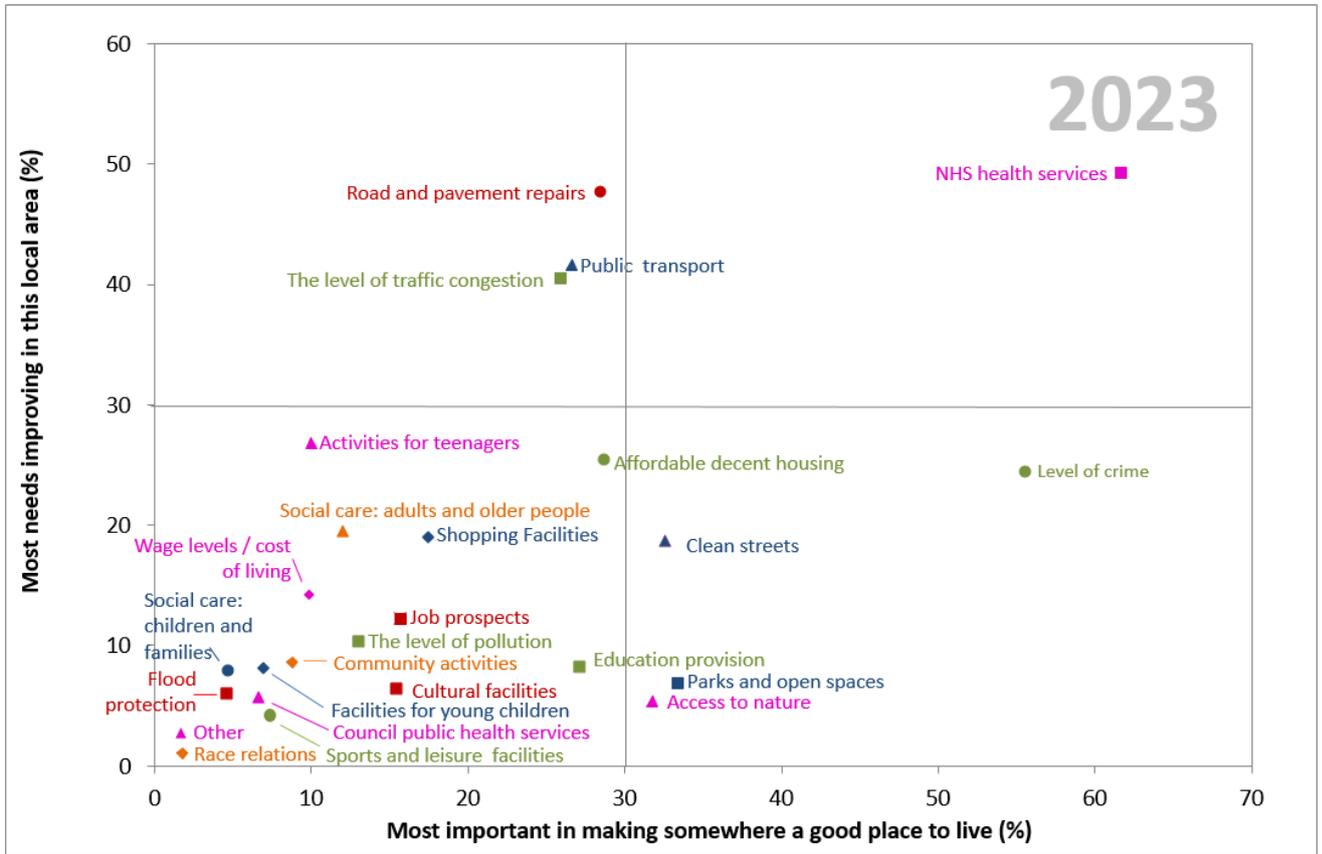


Figure 6: relationship of most important and needs improving

*Base: 1,793 responses for most important; 1,782 responses for most need improving

**Note the lines creating quadrants (arbitrarily at 30% on each axis) are to aid visual interpretation and do not define specific categories

Satisfaction with services

Q: Worcestershire County Council is a key provider of public services locally, so we would like your views on some of the services we provide. Please indicate how often you have used the following public services provided or supported by Worcestershire County Council in the last year.

Respondents were asked how often they had used a range of local services provided by Worcestershire County Council. This helps us to understand difference in views between users and non-users of the various services.

Unsurprisingly, the services most frequently used are those which are widely available to all, and generally free or low cost, namely parks and open spaces, and local tips or household waste recycling centres.

For the second year in a row there has been a significant increase in the number of respondents that have used local bus services in the last year. This follows a significant decrease between 2020 and 2021 in residents using local bus services. There has also been a significant increase in the use of museums and galleries. There has been no significant change in use of local tips and household waste centres, parks and open spaces or libraries.

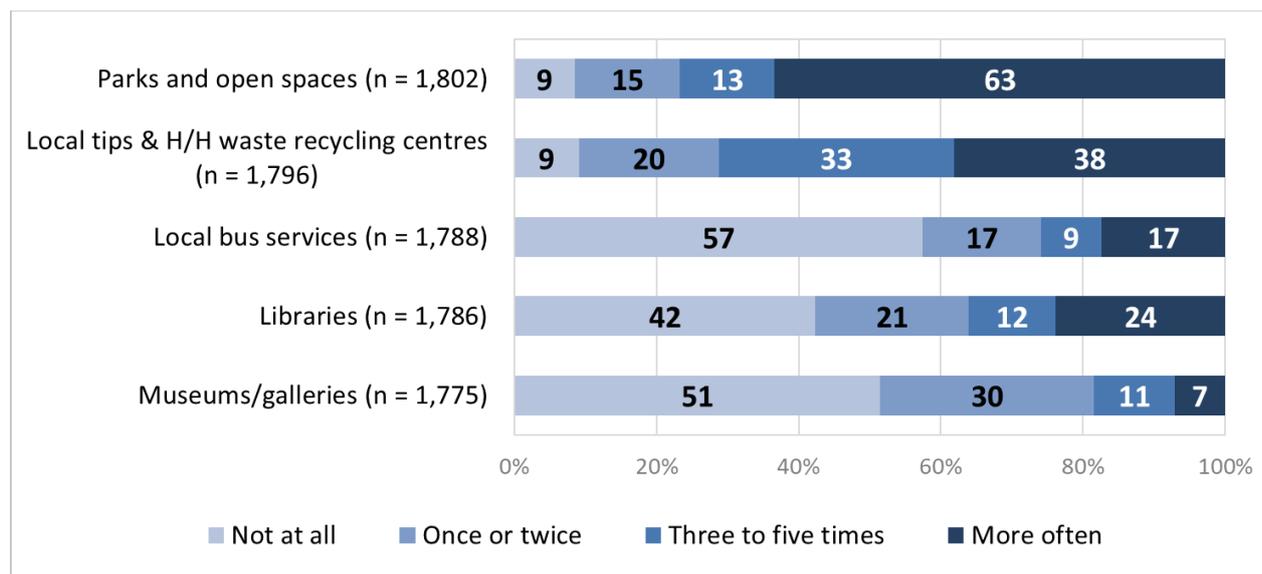


Figure 7: Usage frequencies for local services in Worcestershire in the last year

Q: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by Worcestershire County Council?

Respondents were asked to rate a range of services provided by Worcestershire County Council.

Figure 8 shows the highest level of satisfaction is seen with 'local tips and household waste recycling centres' with 85% overall satisfaction across the county. Those who have used the services within the last year are more likely to be satisfied (Figure 9).

There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who were satisfied with keeping public roads in a reasonable condition from 35% down to 27%.

There has been a significant increase with the proportion of respondents who were satisfied with museums and galleries from 52% in 2022 to 57% this year. There was no significant change for people who said they were users of museums and galleries however.

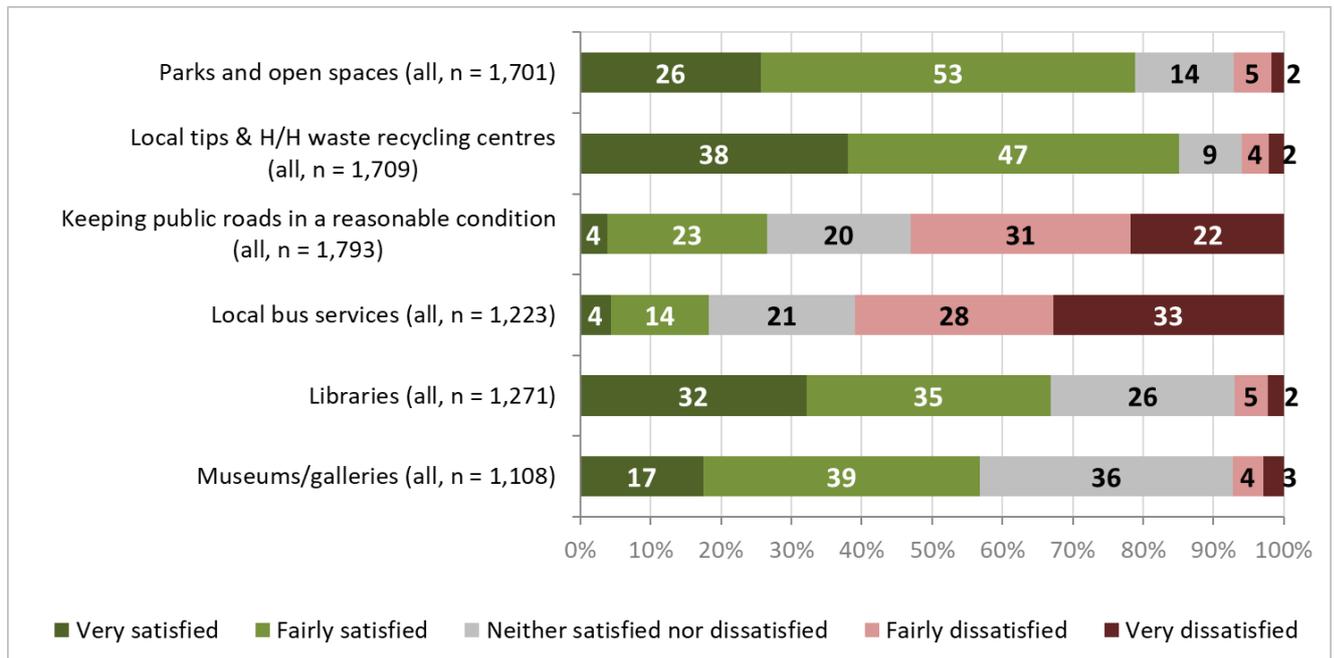


Figure 8: Overall satisfaction with services, Worcestershire

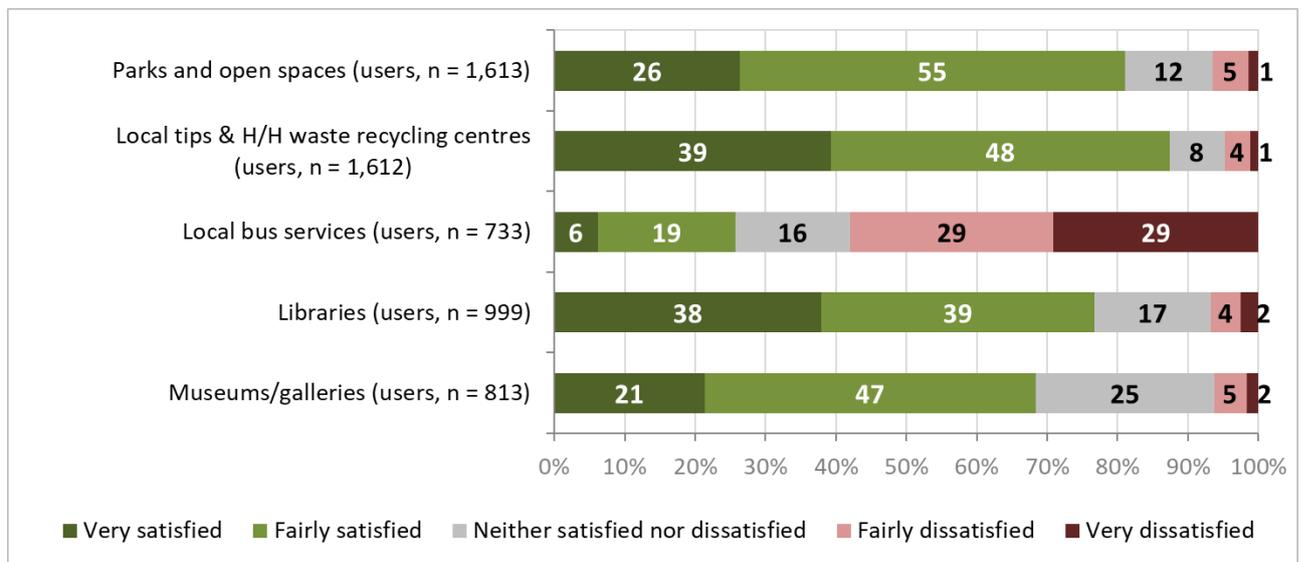


Figure 9: User satisfaction with services, Worcestershire

2.2 Helping Out

Q: In the last 12 months, have you given unpaid help to any group, club or organisation supporting activities or services in your local area?

Respondents were asked if they have given any unpaid help in the last 12 months; 43% had. This is not a significant change from the 41% who said they had volunteered in the 2022 survey. Volunteering rates are still below those seen before the COVID pandemic; 48% had volunteered in the previous year in 2019.

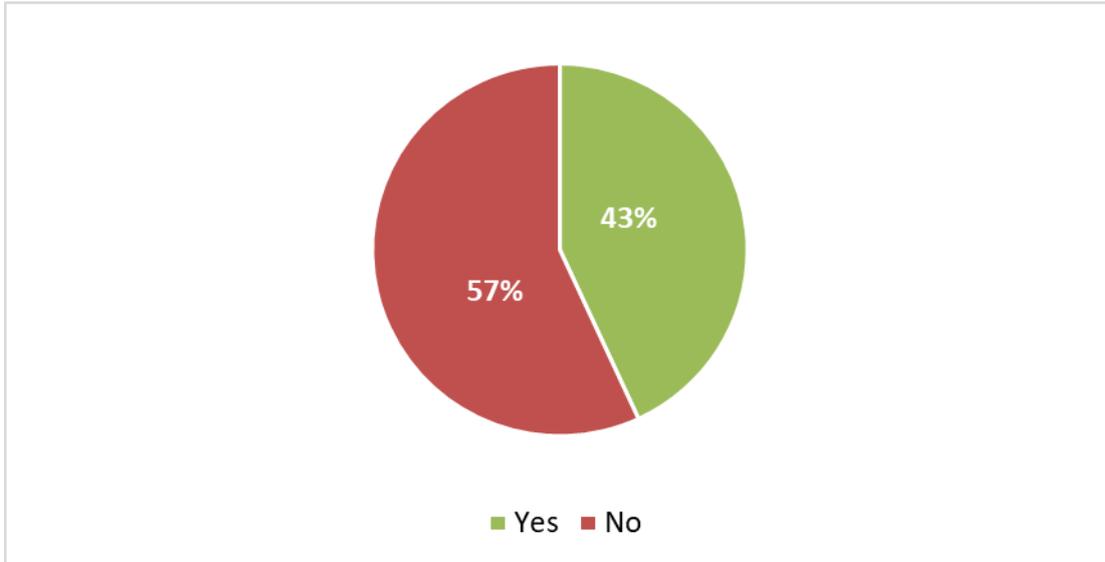


Figure 10: Split of respondents offering unpaid help in the last year

*Base: 1,698 responses

A greater proportion of older residents are offering their time unpaid compared to younger residents, shown in figure 11.

There has been an increase in those aged 18-34 offering their time unpaid in 2023 (32%) compared to 2022 (23%), however this is not statistically significant. This reverses a previous decrease from 32% in 2021 for 18-35 years olds offering unpaid help.

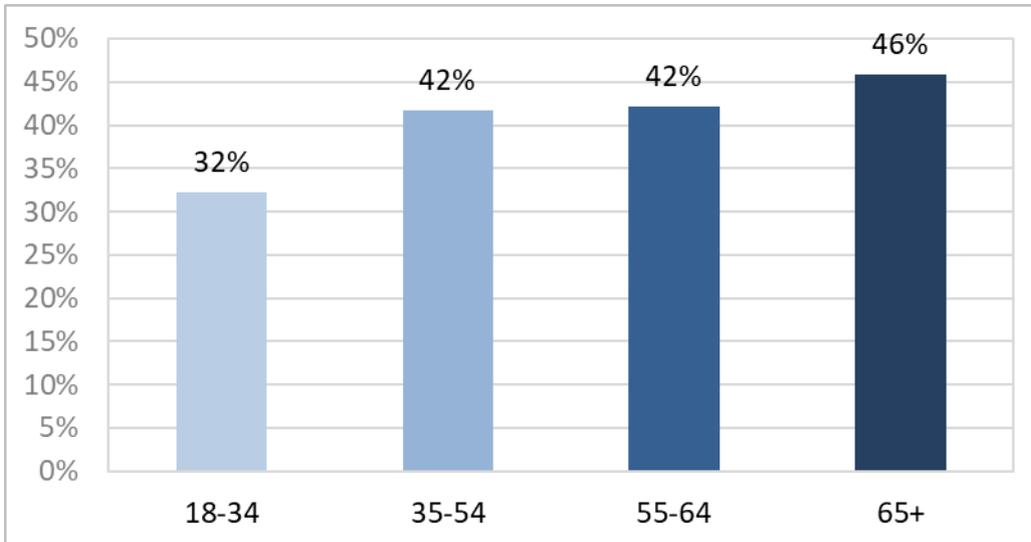


Figure 11: Percentage of people in different age categories who have offered unpaid help in the last year

*Base: 1,725 responses

2.3 Information and Local Decision Making

Being kept informed

Q: How well informed do you feel about each of the following?

Most residents (63%) feel well informed about how council tax is spent, but fewer feel informed about how to get involved in local decision making and the work of Worcestershire County Council. There has been a no significant changes in residents feeling informed since 2022.

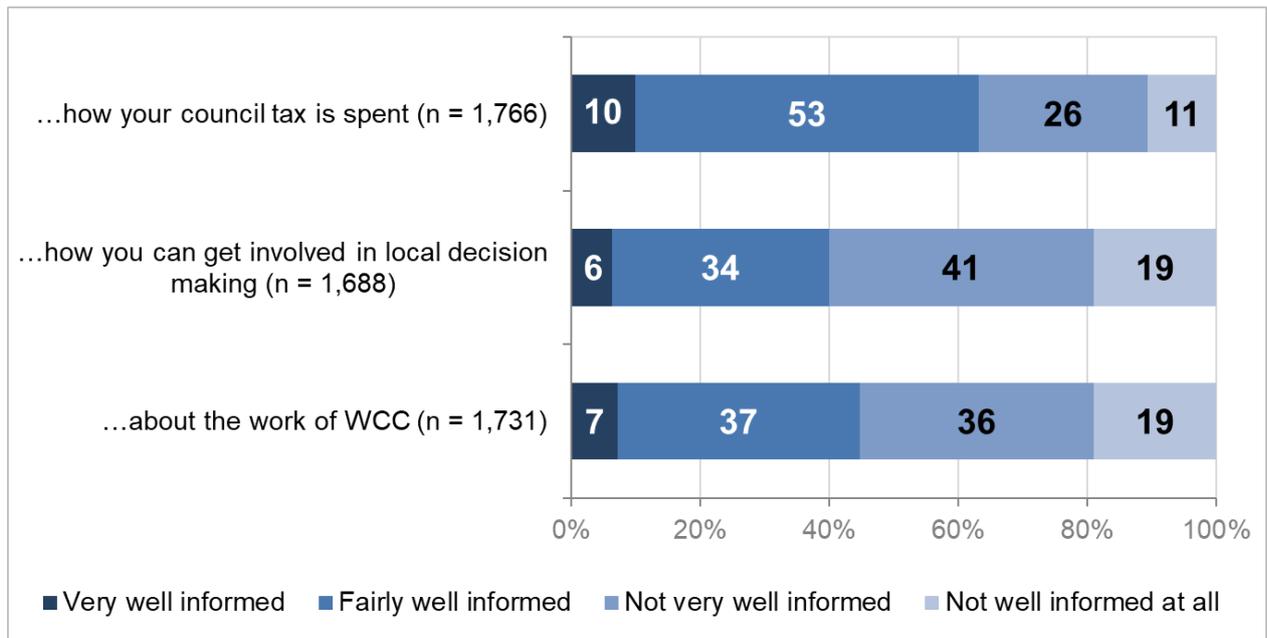


Figure 12: How well-informed respondents feel

Influencing Decisions

Q: Do you agree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

The extent to which people feel they can influence local decisions relates to how well local authorities and their partners engage with local residents in the community, and the degree to which residents feel they have the ability to influence decisions and the decision-making process. 30% of Worcestershire residents agree that they can influence local decisions, this is not a significant change from 2022.

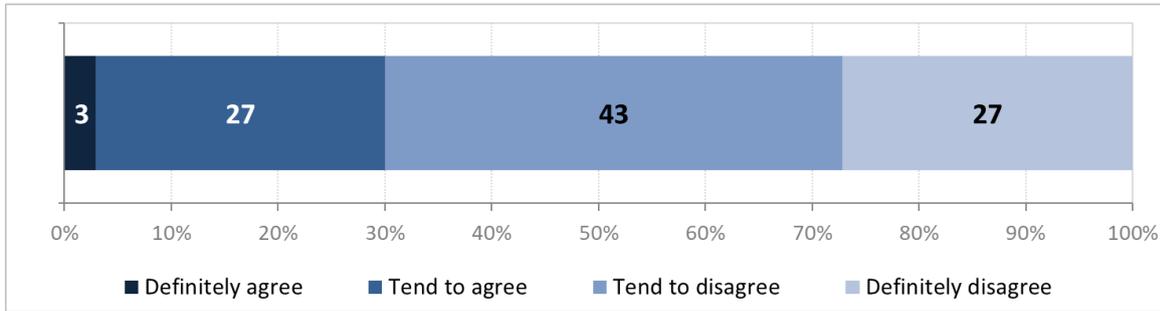


Figure 13: Influencing decisions

*Base: 1,683 responses

2.4 About Yourself

Comparing results of the Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey sample (un-weighted) to the most recent demographic estimates indicates that those aged over 55, male and of white ethnicity are more likely to respond to the survey, as Figure 14 illustrates. However, the sample has been weighted so the overall sample profile is representative of the whole population of the local area. The demographic characteristics that factor into the weighting procedure are age, gender, ethnicity and district.

Age is one of the demographic factors that often divide opinions on issues and some of the items in this analysis were compared across age groups to better understand the views of different residents. The comparative age data presented must be treated with caution due to the small sample of residents less than 35 years of age.

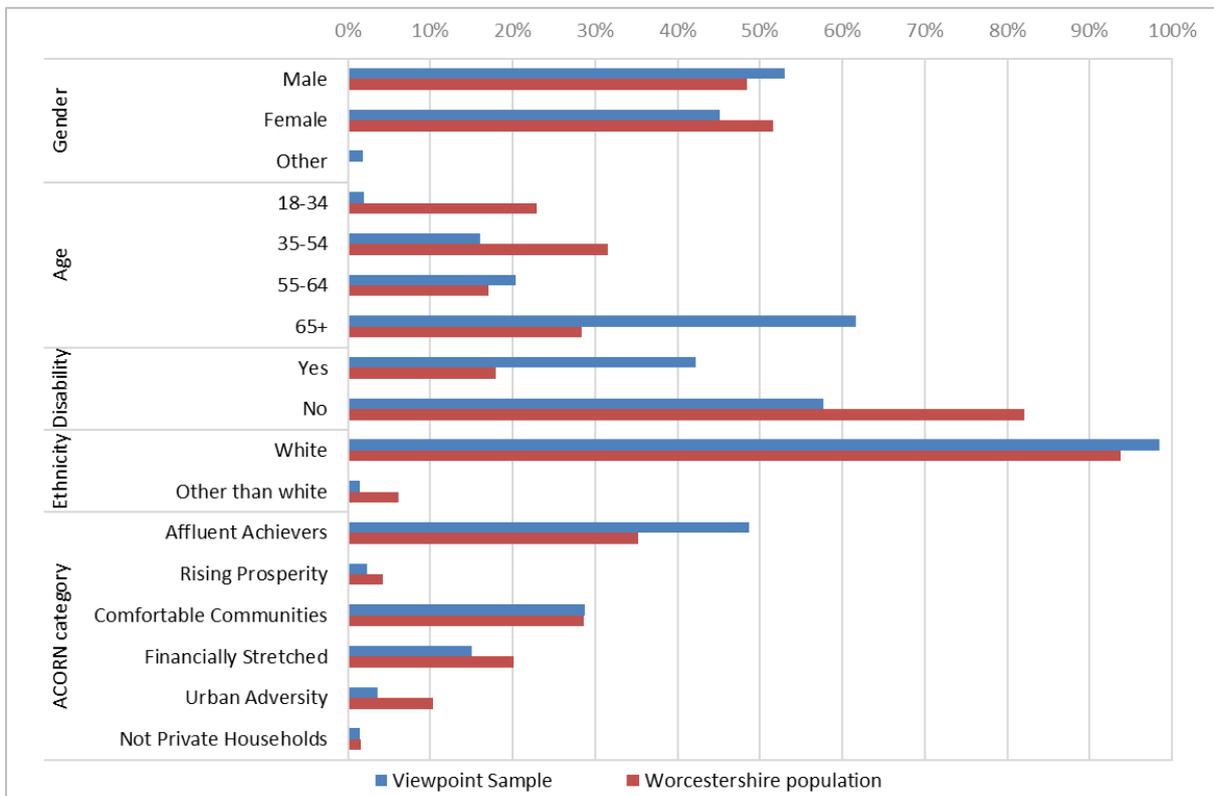


Figure 14: Sample Profile for Worcestershire – Key Demographics 2023

*Base: All valid responses