



# North Hertfordshire District Council Residents Tracker Survey

December 2013

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL





Opinion Research Services | The Strand, SWANSEA. SA1 1AF | 01792 535300 |  
[www.ors.org.uk](http://www.ors.org.uk)

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# Contents

1. Project Overview .....	5
The Survey .....	5
Survey Response.....	5
Weighting the Data.....	5
Interpretation of the Data .....	10
Acknowledgements .....	10
2. Executive Summary .....	11
Some Main Conclusions and Recommendations .....	11
Areas of high performance.....	11
Areas for consideration .....	11
Summary of Main Findings.....	12
Overall Satisfaction.....	12
Council Services .....	12
Information and communication .....	13
Contact with the Council .....	14
3. Overall Satisfaction.....	15
4. Council Services .....	26
5. Information and Communication .....	33
6. Contact with the Council .....	45
7. List of Tables and Figures .....	48
Tables.....	48
Figures .....	49

# The ORS Project Team

## Project Design and Management

Kester Holmes

Hannah Champion

## Fieldwork Management

Ian Yekhlef

## Data Services

Joseph DeMarco

## Data Analysis

Richard Harris

Joe Marchant

Timothy Driscoll

Laura Woodward

## Report Authors

Hannah Champion

# 1. Project Overview

## The Survey

- 1.1 Opinion Research Services (ORS) was commissioned by North Hertfordshire District Council to undertake a Residents Tracker Survey using telephone methodology.
- 1.2 The Residents Survey captures residents' general views and perceptions of certain services and facilities provided by North Hertfordshire District Council, also examined in similar surveys conducted in 2011 (by ORS) and 2008 (by BMG using face to face methodology).
- 1.3 The results in this report are based on a survey of around 1000 telephone interviews conducted from a sample of North Hertfordshire residents. Quotas were set on age, gender and working status in order to achieve a cross-section of responses.
- 1.4 The survey contained questions on the following topics:
  - Overall Satisfaction
  - Council Services
  - Information and Communication
  - Contact with the Council

## Survey Response

- 1.5 1001 interviews were completed between 17<sup>th</sup> September and 10<sup>th</sup> November 2013.

## Weighting the Data

- 1.6 The extent to which results can be generalised from a sample depends on how well the sample represents the population from which it is drawn. As for all surveys of this type, although a random sample of telephone numbers was selected, the achieved sample was unbalanced owing to non-response of certain profile groups.
- 1.7 Under these circumstances, inferences about the views of the population can be improved by calculating weights for any under or over-sampling of particular groups. Weights are assigned by comparing the sample proportions for particular groups with known population characteristics from other sources for the same groups. Each observation is then multiplied by its weight to ensure that the weighted sample will conform to the known population characteristics.
- 1.8 In this case, the returned sample was checked against comparative data for age, gender, ethnicity and working status, then subsequently weighted by age, gender and ethnicity.

1.9 The weighted data should, therefore, be representative of the population of North Hertfordshire and will be treated as being so throughout this report. When the un-weighted data is discussed the report refers to 'respondents' but for weighted data it refers to 'residents'.

1.10 The tables on the following pages show the profile characteristics of respondents to the survey. Any value denoted by a \* represents a percentage which is less than 1%.

Table 1: Gender – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding)

Gender	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
Male	447	45%	49%
Female	554	55%	51%
Not Known	0	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 2: Age – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding)

Age	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
16-24	111	11%	12%
25-34	140	14%	16%
35-44	140	14%	19%
45-54	239	24%	18%
55-64	149	15%	14%
65-74	130	13%	10%
75+	92	9%	10%
Not known	0	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 3: Ethnic Origin – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding)

Ethnic Origin	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
White	923	92%	87%
Non-White	78	8%	13%
Not Known	0	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

Table 4: Ward Groups – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding)

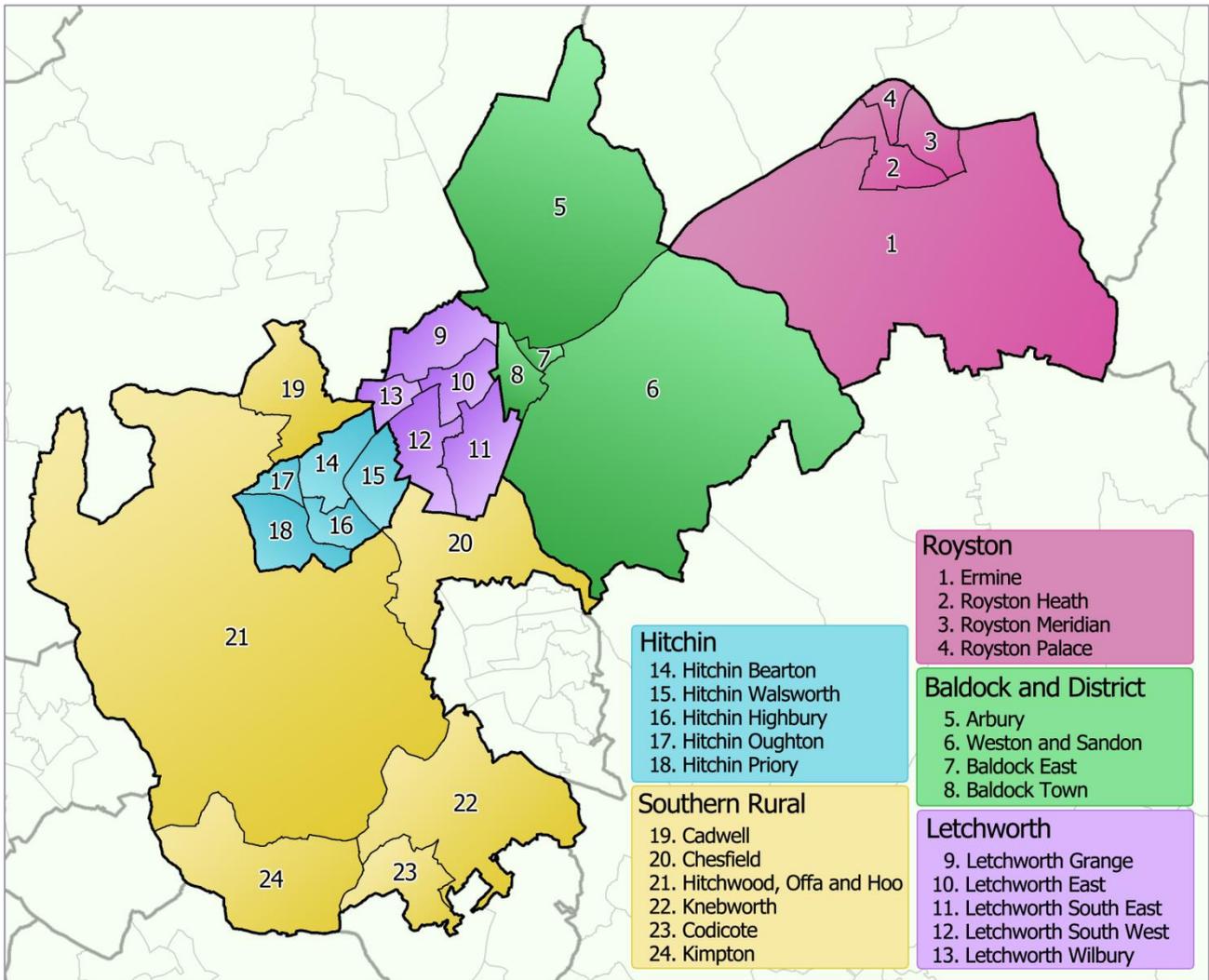
Ward Group	Unweighted Count	Unweighted Valid %	Weighted Valid %
Baldock & District	128	13%	12%
Hitchin	271	27%	28%
Letchworth	203	20%	19%
Royston	224	22%	23%
Southern Rural	175	17%	17%
Not known	0	-	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>1001</b>	<b>100%</b>	<b>100%</b>

1.11 Table 5 below and map (Figure 1) overleaf shows how the various wards have been grouped for the survey results.

Table 5: Ward Groupings for Survey Responses

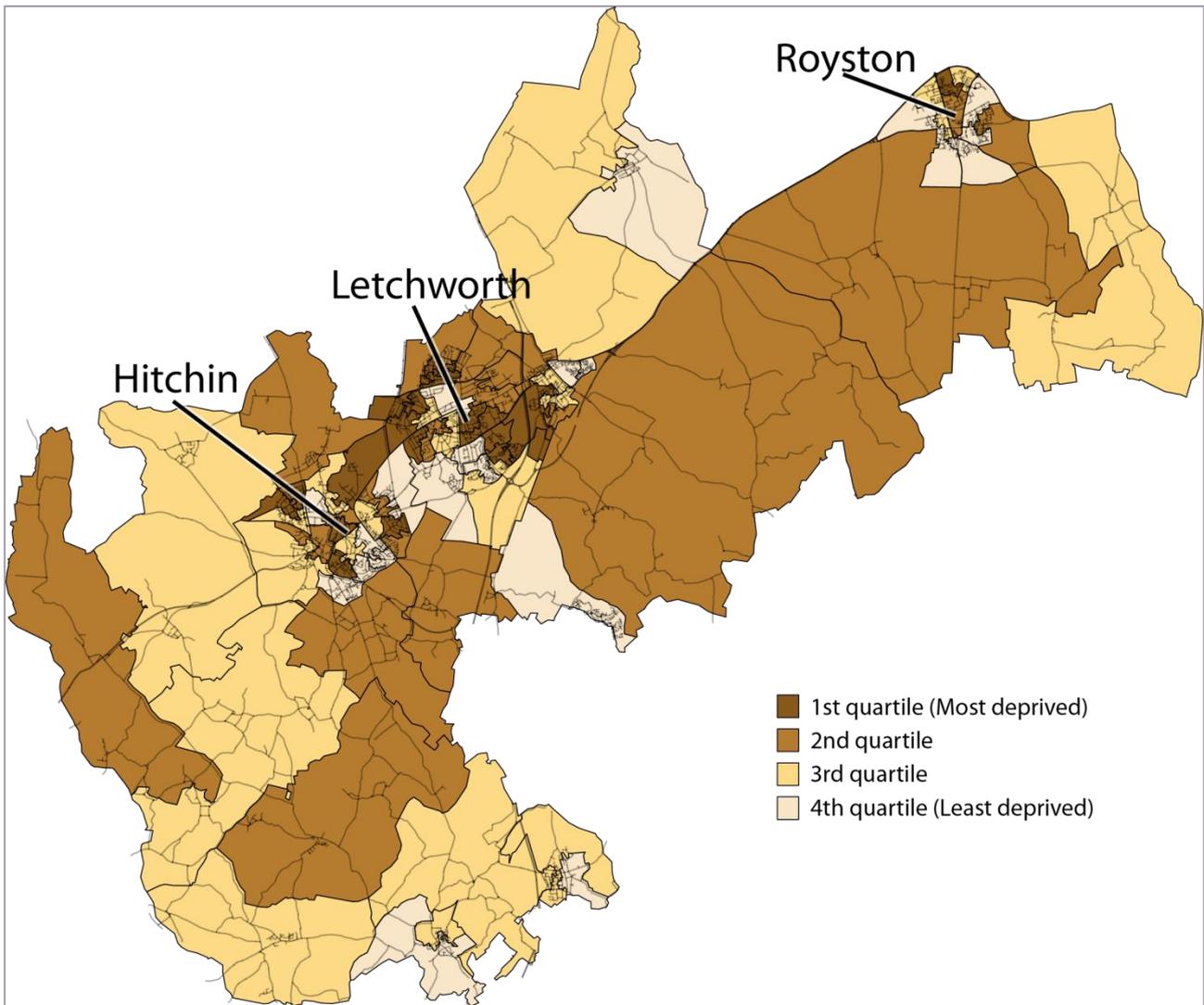
Ward Group	Ward Name
<b>Baldock &amp; District</b>	Arbury
	Baldock East
	Baldock Town
	Weston and Sandon
<b>Hitchin</b>	Hitchin Bearton
	Hitchin Highbury
	Hitchin Oughton
	Hitchin Priory
	Hitchin Walsworth
<b>Southern Rural</b>	Cadwell
	Chesfield
	Codicote
	Hitchwood, Offa and Hoo
	Kimpton
	Knebworth
<b>Letchworth</b>	Letchworth East
	Letchworth Grange
	Letchworth South East
	Letchworth South West
	Letchworth Wilbury
<b>Royston</b>	Ermine
	Royston Heath
	Royston Meridian
	Royston Palace
	Ermine

Figure 1: Mapped ward groups for survey responses



1.12 In addition, results have also been analysed by the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD); they have been proportioned into quartiles and ranked from highest to the lowest IMD score. The map below depicts the breakdown of IMD rankings across North Hertfordshire.

Figure 2: Mapped Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for North Hertfordshire



## Interpretation of the Data

- 1.13 Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don’t know” categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the volume an asterisk (\*) denotes any value less than half a per cent.
- 1.14 In some cases figures of 2% or below have been excluded from graphs.
- 1.15 Graphics are used extensively in this report to make it as user friendly as possible. The pie charts and other graphics show the proportions (percentages) of residents making relevant responses. Where possible, the colours of the charts have been standardised with a ‘traffic light’ system in which:
- Green shades represent positive responses
  - Beige and purple/blue shades represent neither positive nor negative responses
  - Red shades represent negative responses
  - The bolder shades are used to highlight responses at the ‘extremes’, for example, very satisfied or very dissatisfied.
- 1.16 It should be remembered that a sample, and not the entire population of the district, has been interviewed. In consequence, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are statistically significant. When considering changes in responses between this year’s survey and previous surveys, and between different groups within the population, differences have been analysed using appropriate statistical means to check for statistical significance (i.e. not happened ‘by chance’). Differences that are not said to be ‘significant’ or ‘statistically significant’ are indicative only. When tracking results between years and comparing results between demographic sub-groups, only results which are significantly different are highlighted in the text. Statistical significance is at a 95% level of confidence.
- 1.17 The report includes some demographic charts which show how responses vary across different sub-groups of the population. Such sub-groups include the Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD), which has been proportioned into quartiles and ranked from highest to lowest IMD score (cf. figure 2).
- 1.18 Comparisons with results from previous surveys of North Hertfordshire residents are made at appropriate points. Please note that 2013 and 2011 North Hertfordshire Residents Surveys, as well as the current Hertfordshire County Council Omnibus Survey are carried out via personal telephone interviews. However, the 2008 North Hertfordshire Residents Survey was conducted via personal face to face interviews. They also used questionnaires that differed in the order of questions and overall topics. These differences between methodologies imply that results between surveys are not necessarily directly comparable; however previous experience has demonstrated that while results of paper based surveys (such as BVPI & Place 2008) are not comparable, results obtained via personal face to face or telephone interview are typically similar and are broadly comparable.

## Acknowledgements

- 1.19 ORS would like to thank Sarah Dobor at North Hertfordshire District Council for her help and assistance in developing the project. We would also like to thank the 1,001 people who took part in the survey, without whose valuable input the research would not have been possible.

## 2. Executive Summary

### Some Main Conclusions and Recommendations

- 2.1 The most positive indicators have been outlined below as well as some areas for consideration. Please bear in mind that these comparisons of 'best' and 'worst' rankings are an arbitrary indication of performance.

#### Areas of high performance

- 2.2 The vast majority (94%) of North Hertfordshire residents are satisfied with their area as a place to live; nearly two thirds are very satisfied (64%).
- 2.3 More than four fifths (86%) of residents are satisfied with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things.
- 2.4 Since 2011, the level of satisfaction with general waste and recycling collection has increased significantly by 6 percentage points (85% in 2013; 79% in 2011).
- 2.5 Satisfaction with Council services that residents have used within the last year is generally high – 90% or more are satisfied with: parks and open spaces (93%), children's and sports services (92%), benefits administered by the Council (91%) and children's play areas/playgrounds or multi-use games areas (90%).
- 2.6 Around four fifths (81%) of residents agree that North Hertfordshire District Council services are of good quality.
- 2.7 The majority of residents feel informed about how to register to vote (93%) and how to pay Council Tax (88%).
- 2.8 Of the residents who received a copy of 'Outlook' magazine and at least just glanced at it, four fifths or more agree that they like the way that the magazine looks and is presented (85%) and like the way it is written (80%) – a significant increase of 4 and 5 percentage points respectively since 2011.
- 2.9 Over three quarters (77%) of residents are satisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the Council, including more than four fifths (45%) who are very satisfied.

#### Areas for consideration

- 2.10 Around 3 in 10 residents disagree that NHDC makes an effort to find out what local people want (32%) and that NHDC fully involves/consults residents on important issues (28%).
- 2.11 More than two fifths do not feel informed about the following: how to get involved in local decision making (60%); whether North Hertfordshire District Council is delivering on its promises (51%); what North

Hertfordshire District Council spends its money on (46%); how to resolve an issue with North Hertfordshire District Council (44%); and how well North Hertfordshire District Council is performing (43%).

- 2.12 More than a fifth (22%) of residents have not seen nor had a copy of 'Outlook' delivered to their door.
- 2.13 Of the residents who have seen or had a copy of 'Outlook' delivered to their door, around a third (32%) just glanced at it or didn't read it at all. Furthermore, since 2011, the proportion of residents who have read all or nearly all of the copy of Outlook they received has decreased significantly by 5 percentage points (40% in 2013; 45% to 2011).
- 2.14 Around a fifth (19%) are dissatisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the Council.
- 2.15 Of the residents who said that they are dissatisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the council, the highest proportion are unhappy with the final outcome (42%).

## Summary of Main Findings

- 2.16 The following paragraphs selectively highlight some key issues, but readers are referred to the detailed graphics for the full story. The suite of ORS reports also includes full cross tabulations.

### Overall Satisfaction

- 2.17 94% of residents are satisfied with their area as a place to live – a similar proportion to the 2011 Residents Survey (95%) and 4 percentage points higher than the Hertfordshire wide result obtained in the September/October 2013 Hertfordshire Omnibus survey (90%) .
- 2.18 More than four fifths (86%) of residents are satisfied with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things. This is 17 percentage points higher than the Hertfordshire wide result (69%) (obtained in the September/October 2013 Hertfordshire Omnibus survey) when asked about their satisfaction with the way their local district council runs things. Furthermore, since the 2011 North Hertfordshire Residents Survey, the level of satisfaction has increased by 2 percentage points (86% in 2013; 84% in 2011).
- 2.19 When residents who are dissatisfied with that way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things were asked how the Council could improve the overall running of North Hertfordshire, the main comments included: better communication; involve and listen to the public more; and change the refuse collection to weekly instead of fortnightly.
- 2.20 More than a quarter (28%) of residents feel that the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things has got better over the last two years – a significant increase of 6 and 8 percentage points since 2011 and 2008, respectively.

### Council Services

- 2.21 More than three quarters of North Hertfordshire residents are satisfied with: general waste and recycling collection (85%); the administration of Council tax (82%); and street cleaning (78%).

- 2.22 Around four fifths of residents have used parks and open spaces (79%) and public car parks run by North Hertfordshire District Council (78%) in the last year. However, three quarters of residents or more have not used: the Council's Careline Community Alarms Service (98%); housing services (96%); any benefits administered by the Council (87%); children's and sports services (79%); and public halls and community facilities (75%).
- 2.23 Positively, around three quarters or more of residents are satisfied with the Council services they have used within the last year. In particular, 90% or more are satisfied with: parks and open spaces (93%); children's and sports services (92%); benefits administered by the Council (91%); Council run leisure facilities (90%) and children's play areas/playgrounds or multi-use games areas (90%). The services which showed the highest level of dissatisfaction are housing services (18%) and public car parks run by NHDC (14%).
- 2.24 The majority of North Hertfordshire residents feel that general waste and recycling collection (62%) is by far the most important service the District Council provides.

### Information and communication

- 2.25 Around four fifths (81%) of residents agree that North Hertfordshire District Council services are of good quality, while more than three fifths agree that NHDC is working to make the area cleaner and greener (72%) and treats all types of people fairly (63%). However, around 3 in 10 residents disagree that NHDC makes an effort to find out what local people want (32%) and that NHDC fully involves/consults residents on important issues (28%).
- 2.26 Around 9 in 10 residents feel informed about how to register to vote (93%) and how to pay Council Tax (88%), while more than three fifths feel informed about the services and benefits NHDC provides (65%) and what standards of service they should expect from NHDC (62%).
- 2.27 However, more than two fifths do not feel informed about the following: how to get involved in local decision making (60%); whether North Hertfordshire District Council is delivering on its promises (51%); what North Hertfordshire District Council spends its money on (46%); how to resolve an issue with North Hertfordshire District Council (44%); and how well North Hertfordshire District Council is performing (43%).
- 2.28 The highest proportion of residents normally obtain information about NHDC from the District Council website (60%). This was followed by 'Outlook' magazine (22%) and local newspapers (16%).
- 2.29 Residents prefer to obtain information from the District Council website (56%), this was followed by 'Outlook' magazine (14%) and leaflets delivered through the door (14%).
- 2.30 The majority (78%) of residents have seen or had a copy of out of 'Outlook' delivered to their door. Of these, more than two thirds (68%) have at least read a few articles, including two fifths (40%) who have read all or nearly all of it. However, more than a fifth (23%) just glanced at the magazine and around 1 in 10 (9%) didn't read it at all.
- 2.31 Of the residents who have at least just glanced at 'Outlook', four fifths or more agree that they like the way that 'Outlook' looks and is presented (85%) and like the way 'Outlook' is written (80%) – a significant increase of 4 and 5 percentage points respectively since 2011. Furthermore, around three quarters (76%) of residents agree that they find 'Outlook' interesting.
- 2.32 90% of North Hertfordshire residents state that they have access to the internet.

## Contact with the Council

- 2.33 In the last 12 months, around three fifths (58%) of residents have contacted North Hertfordshire District Council, including 35% who have made contact once or twice and 23% who made contact three or more times.
- 2.34 The highest proportions of North Hertfordshire residents got in contact with the council to report an issue or a problem (33%) and/or to ask for advice/information (29%). More than 1 in 10 made contact to make a payment (13%) and/or to apply to use a service (12%).
- 2.35 The majority of residents contacted the Council by telephone (74%). This was followed by email (14%) and via council website (14%).
- 2.36 Over three quarters of residents are satisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the Council (77%), while under a fifth are dissatisfied (19%).
- 2.37 Of the residents who said that they are dissatisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the council (19%), the highest proportion are unhappy with the final outcome (42%) – a significant decrease of 9 percentage points since 2011 (51%). This was followed by residents reporting that staff were not helpful/polite (19%) and that it took too long to deal with the person they contacted (18%).

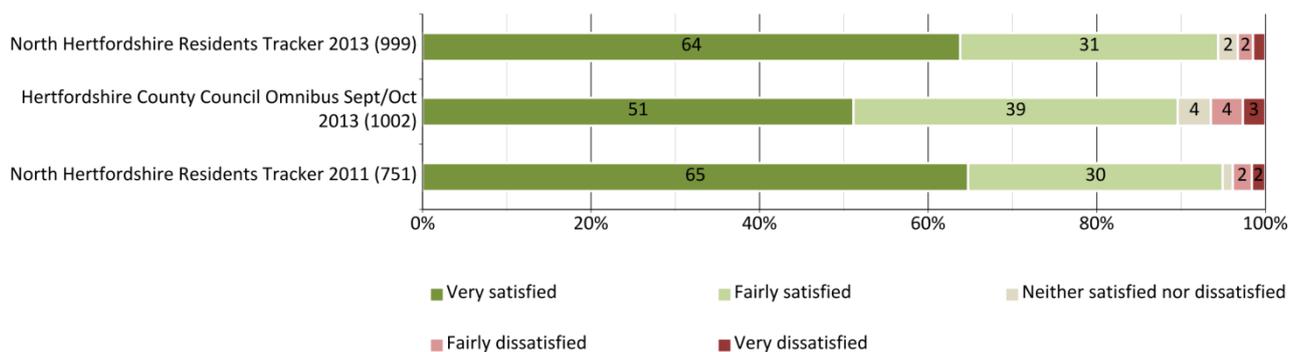
## 3. Overall Satisfaction

### Results

- 3.1 94% of North Hertfordshire residents are satisfied with their area as a place to live (including just under two thirds (64%) who are very satisfied) - a similar proportion to the 2011 Residents Survey (95%) and 4 percentage points higher than the Hertfordshire wide result obtained in the September/October 2013 Hertfordshire Omnibus survey (90%) .

Figure 3: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live?

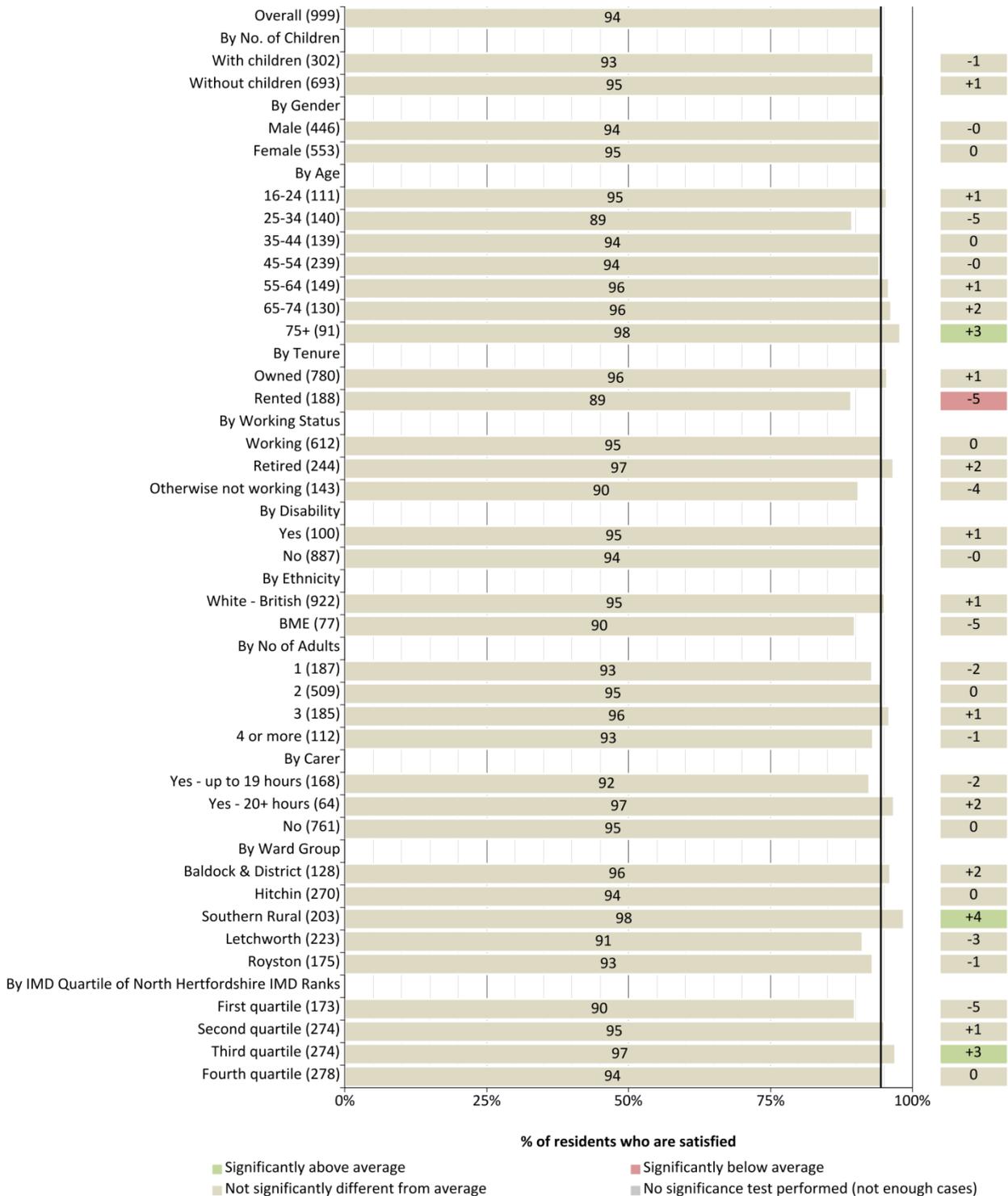
Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 3.2 The chart overleaf (Figure 4) shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who stated they are satisfied. Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely than the overall score are highlighted in green, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in red.
- 3.3 Residents aged 75 or over, those who live within Southern Rural ward group and those who fall into the third Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks are significantly more likely to feel satisfied with their area as a place to live. However, residents who currently live in rented accommodation are significantly less likely to feel this way.

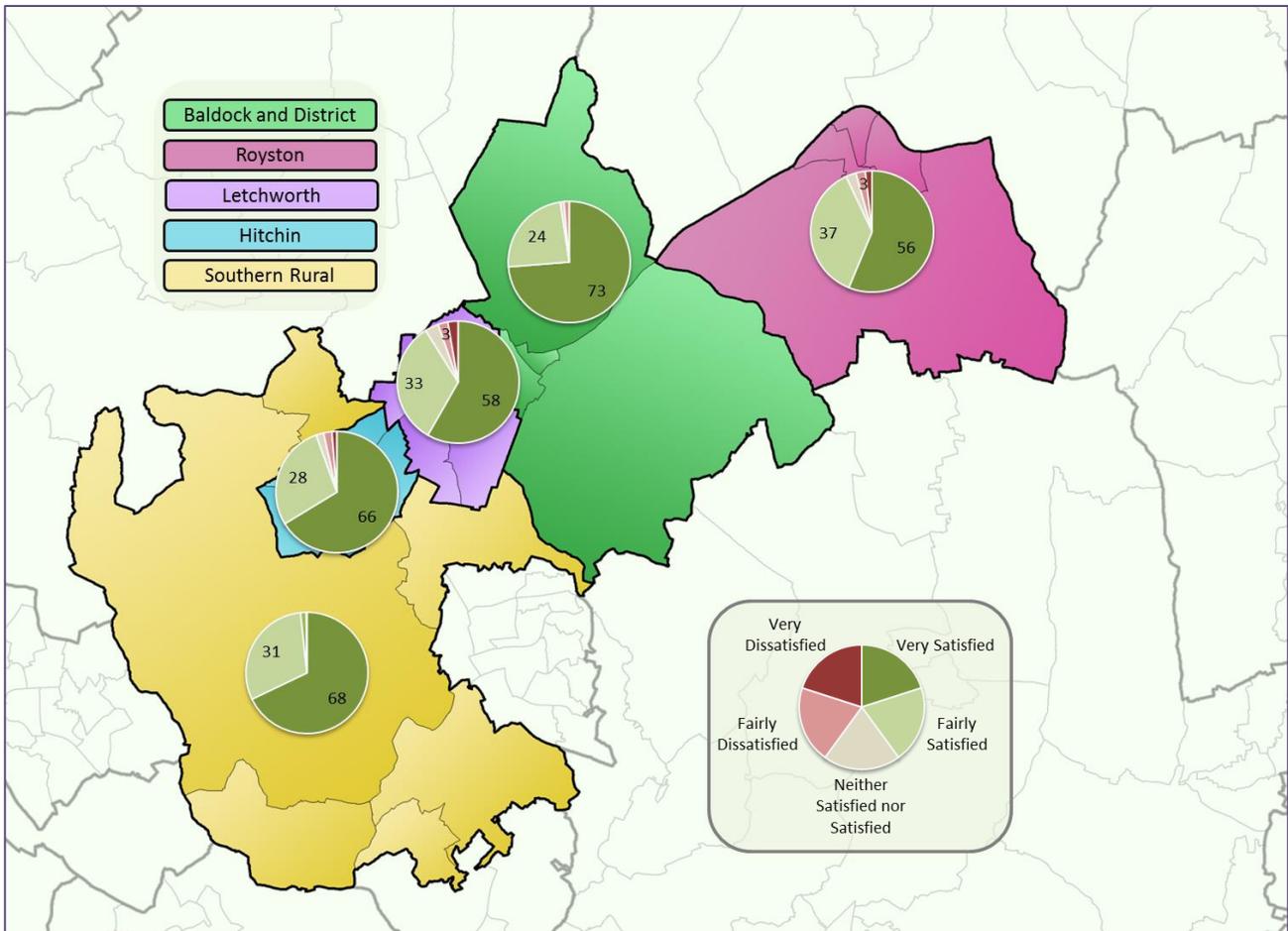
Figure 4: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who are satisfied

Base: All respondents (999)



3.4 Figure 5 (below) shows satisfaction with area as a place to live broken down by ward groupings. Residents who live within the Southern Rural region are significantly more likely to be satisfied (99%).

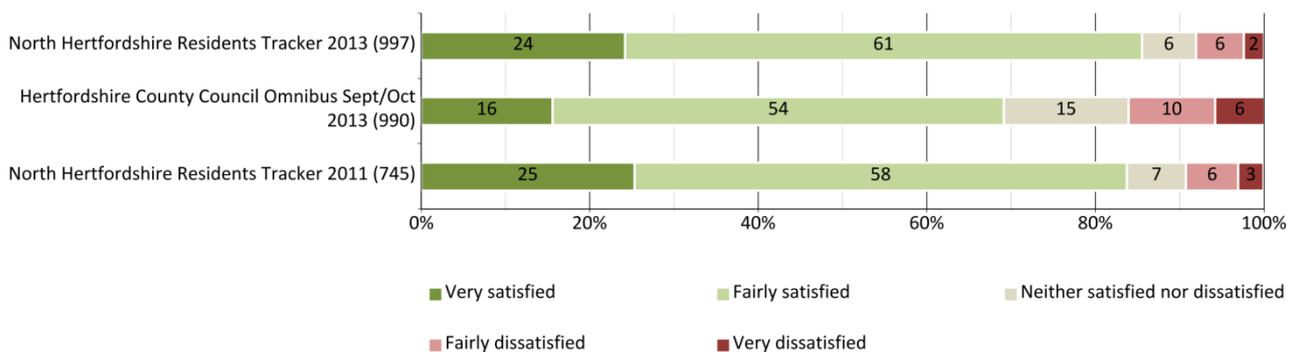
Figure 5: Satisfaction with area as a place to live mapped by ward group



3.5 More than four fifths (86%) of residents are satisfied with the way North Hertfordshire District Council (NHDC) runs things. This is 17 percentage points higher than the Hertfordshire wide result (69%) (obtained in the September/October 2013 Hertfordshire Omnibus survey) when asked about their satisfaction with the way their local district council runs things. Furthermore, since the 2011 North Hertfordshire Residents Survey, the level of satisfaction has increased by 2 percentage points (86% in 2013; 84% in 2011).

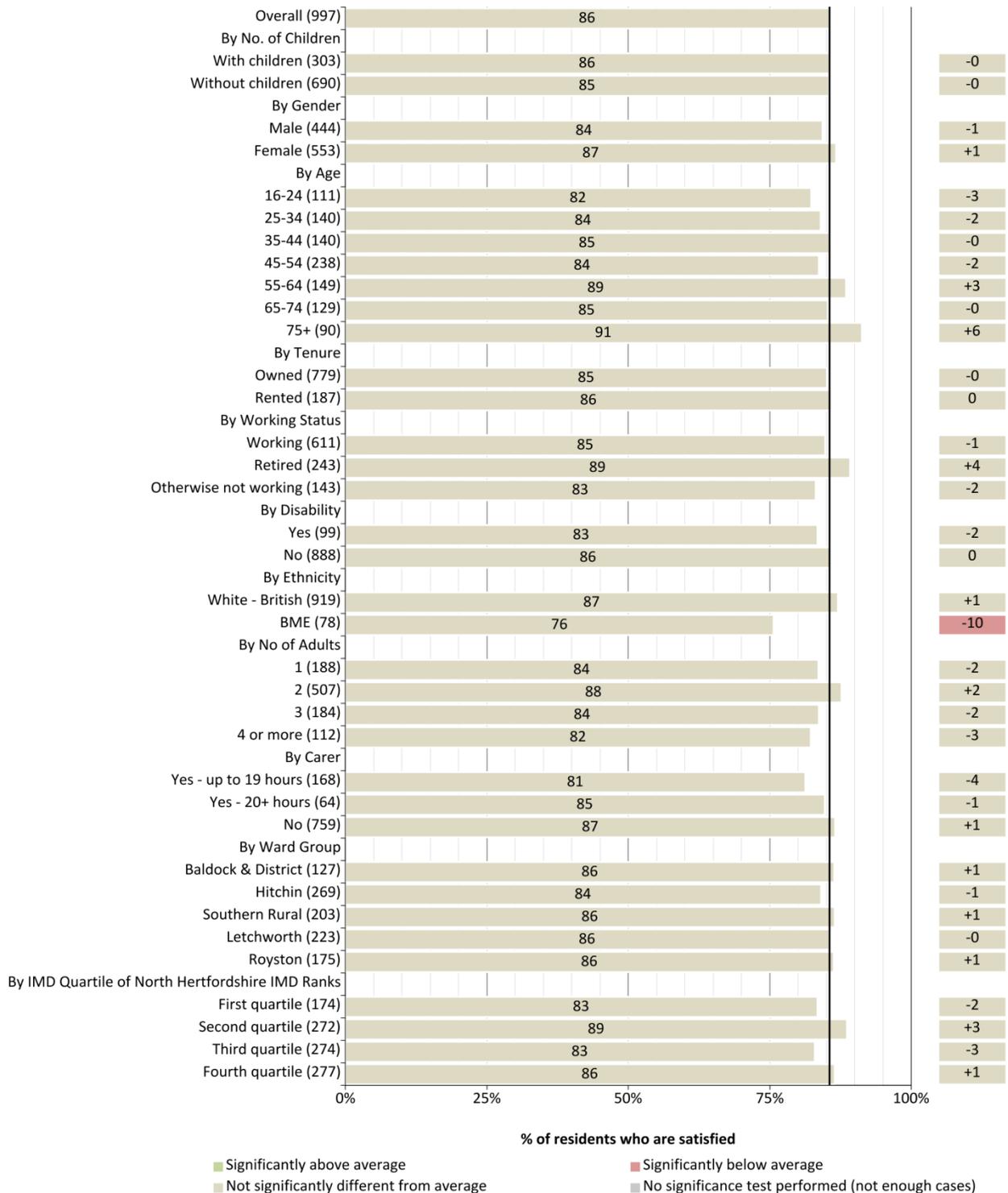
Figure 6: Taking everything in to account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



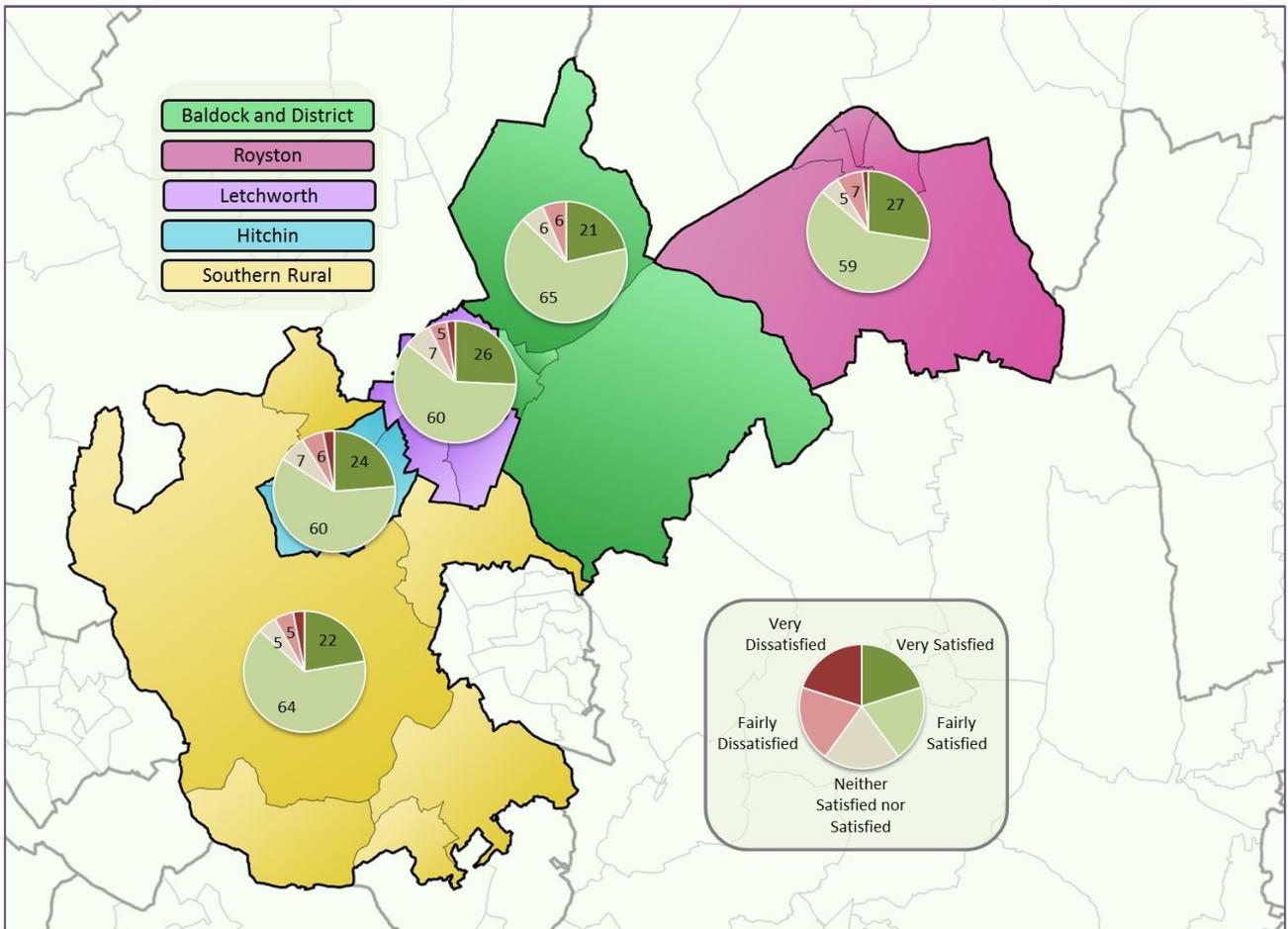
- 3.6 The chart below shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who stated they are satisfied. Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely than the overall score are highlighted in green, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in red.
- 3.7 Residents who belong to a black and ethnic minority group are significantly less likely to feel satisfied with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things.

Figure 7: Taking everything in to account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who are satisfied  
Base: All respondents (997)



3.8 The map below shows satisfaction with the way North Hertfordshire Council runs things broken down by ward groupings. There is little difference in satisfaction between ward groups.

Figure 8: Satisfaction with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things mapped by ward group

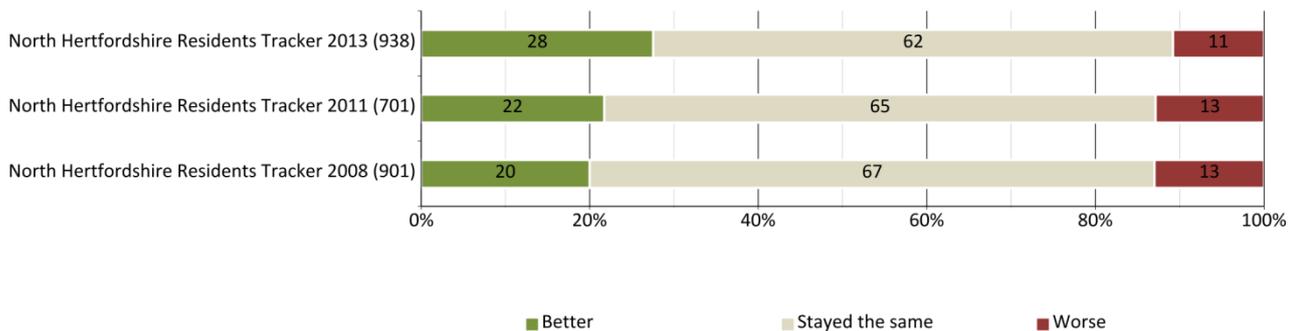




- 3.10 More than a quarter (28%) of residents feel that the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things has got better over the last two years – a significant increase of 6 and 8 percentage points since 2011 and 2008, respectively. The highest proportion (62%) feel that the way that NHDC runs things has stayed the same and only around 1 in 10 (11%) feel that it has got worse.

Figure 10: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years?

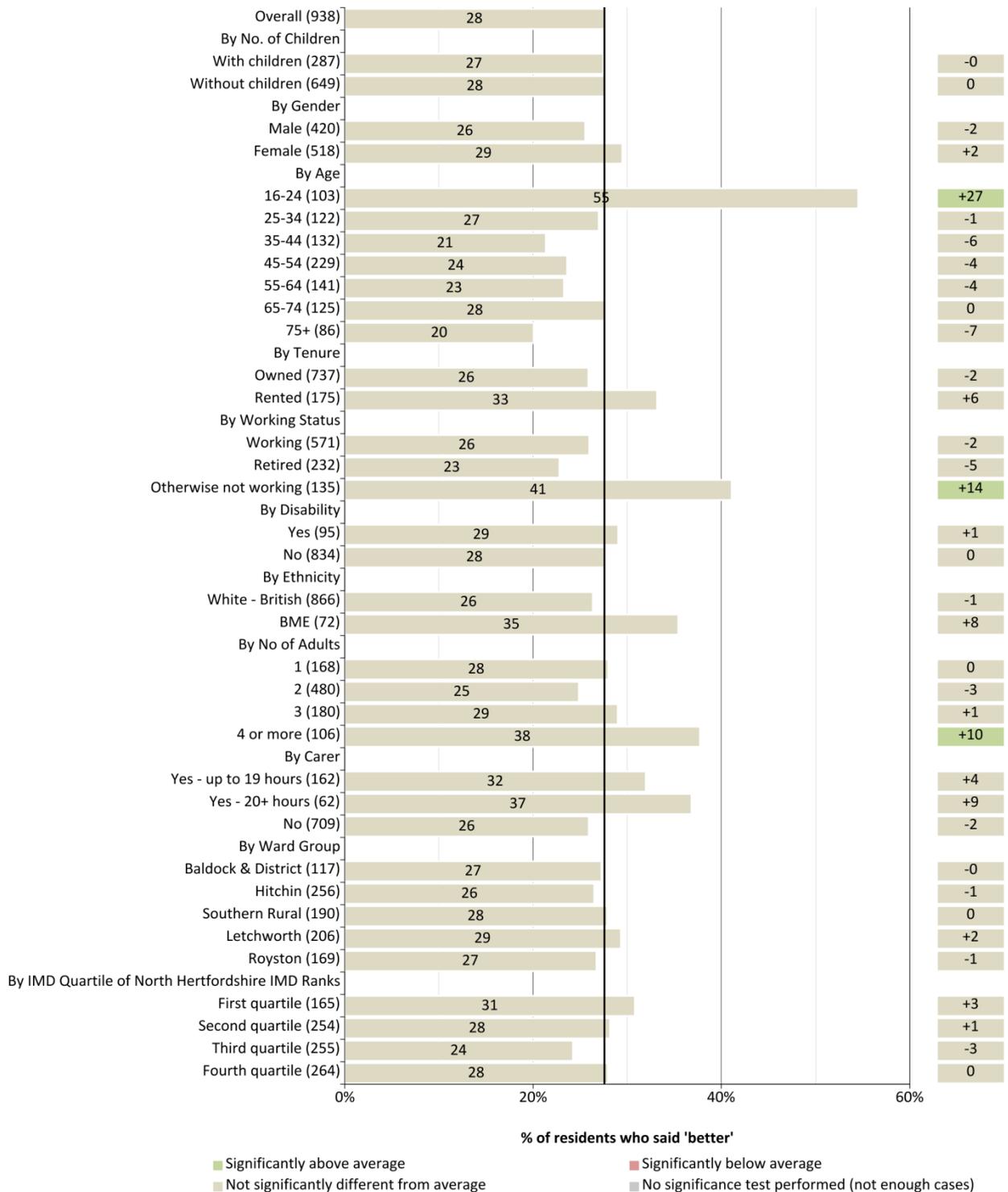
Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 3.11 The chart overleaf (Figure 11) shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who stated they felt the way the council runs things has got better. Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely than the overall score are highlighted in green, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in red.
- 3.12 Residents aged between 16 and 24, those who are otherwise not working as well as households comprised with 4 or more adults are significantly more likely to feel that the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things has got better over the last two years.

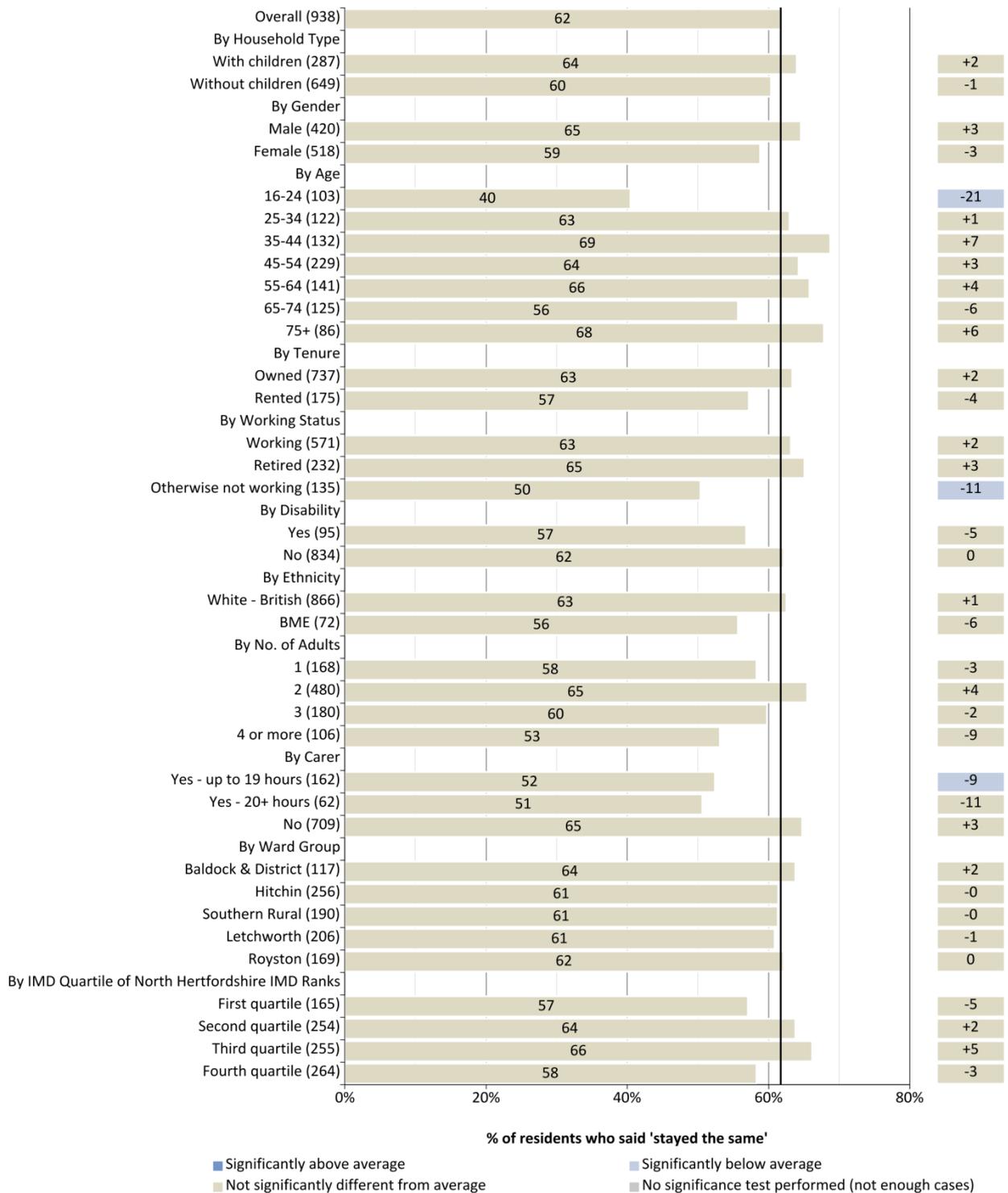
Figure 11: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who felt it had got better

Base: All respondents (938)



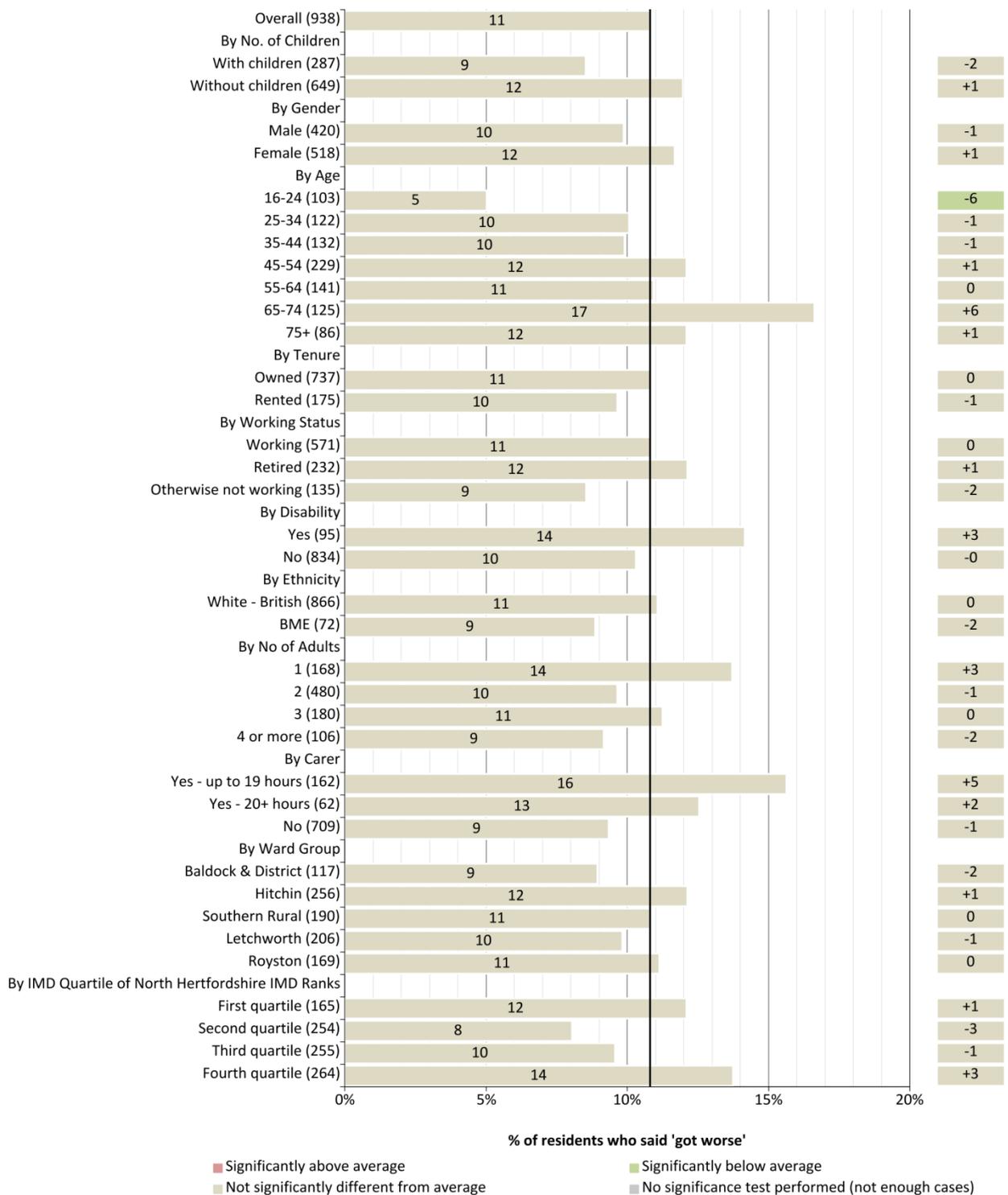
3.13 The chart below shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who stated they felt the way the council runs things has stayed the same. Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely to think that the way the council runs things has stayed the same compared to the overall score, are highlighted in dark blue, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in light blue.

Figure 12: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who felt it had stayed the same  
Base: All respondents (938)



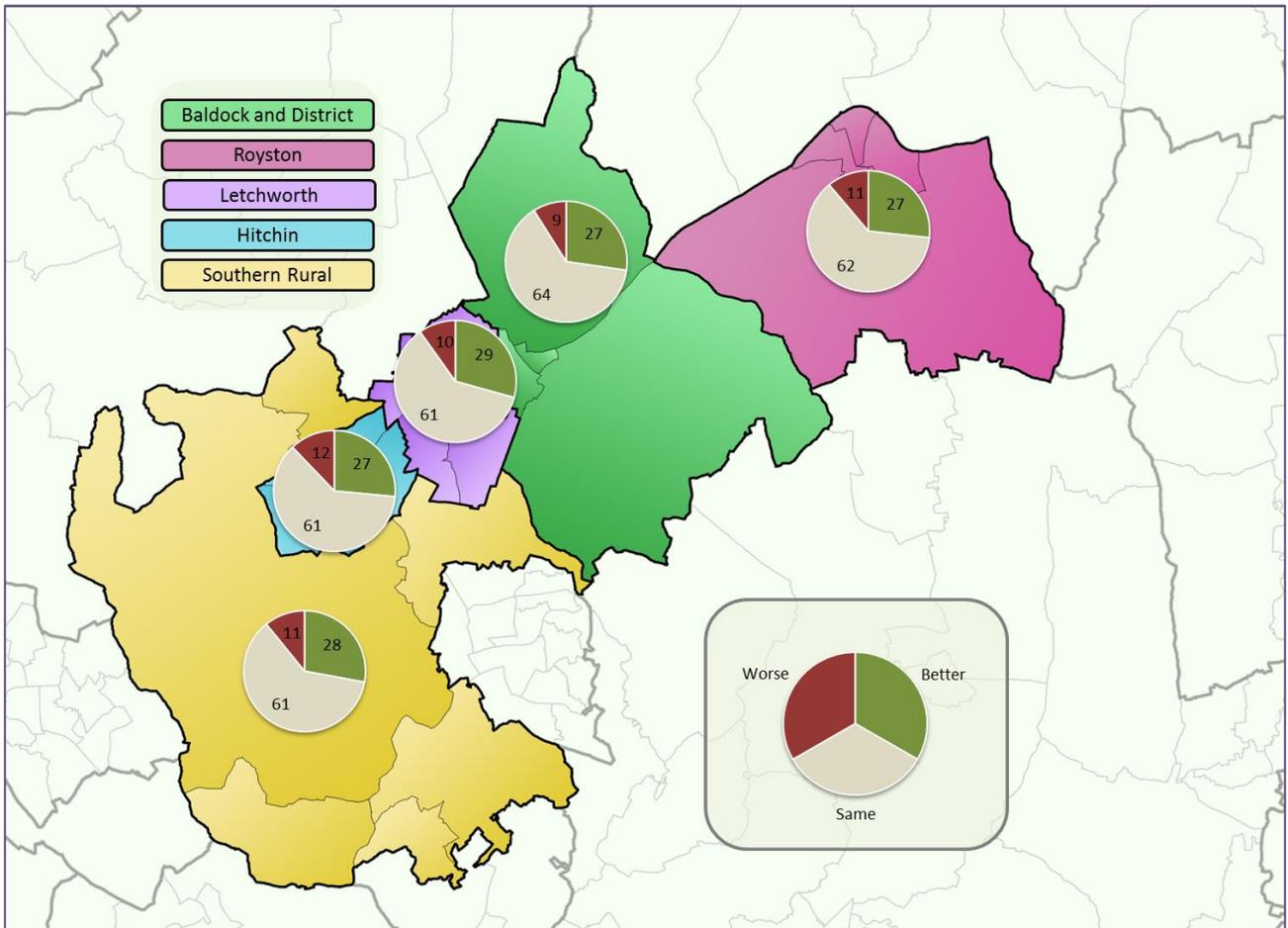
3.14 The chart below shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who stated they felt the way the council runs things has got worse. Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely to think that the way the council runs things has got worse than the overall score are highlighted in red, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in green.

Figure 13: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who felt it had got worse  
Base: All respondents(938)



3.15 Figure 14 below shows opinion on whether the way in which North Hertfordshire District Council runs things has got better, stayed the same or worse (in the last two years) by ward groupings. Residents who live within the Letchworth area are more likely to think that things have got better (29%), while those who reside in the Hitchin ward group are more likely to think that things have got worse (12%) – although these are not significant differences.

Figure 14: Opinion on whether the way North Hertfordshire District council runs things has got better, stayed the same or worse, mapped by ward group



## 4. Council Services Results

- 4.1 Over three quarters of North Hertfordshire residents are satisfied with: general waste and recycling collection (85%); the administration of Council tax (82%); and street cleaning (78%). Only very small proportions of residents are dissatisfied with each of the three services.
- 4.2 Since 2011, the level of satisfaction with general waste and recycling collection has increased significantly by 6 percentage points (85% in 2013; 79% in 2011). However, there has been a slight decrease of 2 percentage points in the proportion who are satisfied with street cleaning (78% in 2013; 80% in 2011).

Figure 15: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 4.3 Table 6 below shows the sub-groups of residents who are significantly more or less likely than average to be satisfied with the council services listed at Figure 15.

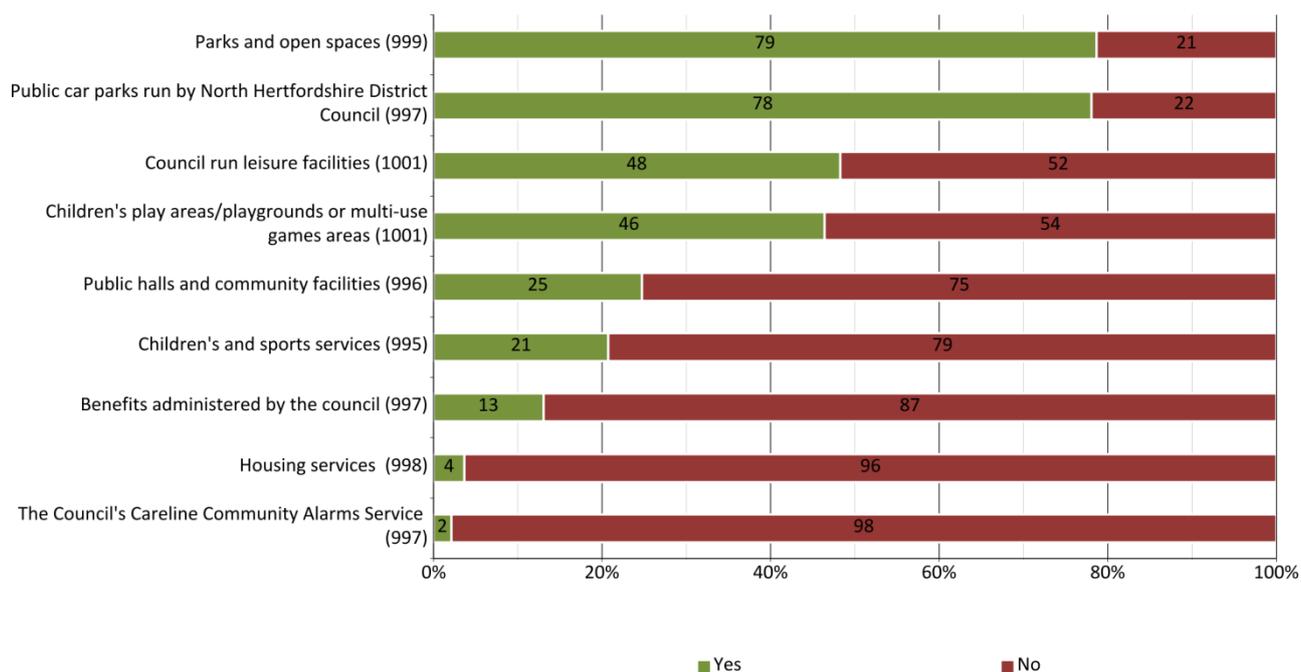
Table 6: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...Demographic sub-group analysis.

Service	Residents significantly more likely than average to be satisfied	Residents significantly less likely than average to be satisfied
<b>General waste and recycling collection</b>	Aged 75 or over Retired	Aged 25 to 34 Black Minority Ethnicity Carer for up to 19 hours a week
<b>Street cleaning</b>	Aged 16 to 24 Aged 35 to 44 Household with children	Aged 55 to 74 Retired Southern Rural ward group
<b>The administration of Council tax/benefits</b>	Aged 45 to 54 Aged 75 or over Retired 2 adults in the household	Aged 16 to 24 Otherwise not working 3 or more adults in the household

- 4.4 When asked whether they have used various Council services within the last year, parks and open spaces (79%) and public car parks run by North Hertfordshire District Council (78%) are most frequently used by residents. This was followed by just under half who have used council run leisure facilities (48%) and children's play areas, playgrounds or multi-use games areas (46%).
- 4.5 Three quarters of residents or more have not used: the Council's Careline Community Alarms Service (98%); housing services (96%); any benefits administered by the Council (87%); children's and sports services (79%); and public halls and community facilities (75%).

Figure 16: Within the last year, have you used any...?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 4.6 The table below show the results and the percentage point changes between 2011 and 2013. However, caution should be taken when making comparisons between years for level of usage of 'council run leisure centres', 'public halls and community facilities' and 'housing services' due to the change of question wording. Please see footnotes for more details.

Table 7: Within the last year, have you used any...? Comparison with 2011 survey.

Service/facility	% who said yes 11	% who said yes 13	% point change since 2011
Parks and open spaces	78%	79%	↑1
Public car parks run by North Hertfordshire District Council	77%	78%	↑1
Council run leisure facilities <sup>1</sup>	55%	48%	↓7
Children's play areas/playgrounds or multi-use games areas	41%	46%	↑5
Public halls and community facilities (this includes Council run community halls and community centres for hire) <sup>2</sup>	44%	25%	↓19
Children's and sport services	22%	21%	↓1
Housing services <sup>3</sup>	6%	4%	↓2

- 4.7 The table below (and continued overleaf) presents the sub-groups of residents who are significantly more or less likely than average to have used the Council services listed at Figure 16.

Table 8: Within the last year, have you used any...Demographic sub-group analysis.

Service	Residents significantly more likely than average to have used service	Residents significantly less likely than average to have used service
Parks and open spaces	Aged 35 to 44 Working Household with children Fourth Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks	Aged 65 or over Retired In rented accommodation Household without children With a limiting longstanding illness/disability One adult in the household
Public car parks run by North Hertfordshire District Council	Aged 45 to 54 Working Fourth Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks	Aged 75 or over Retired Otherwise not working Living in rented accommodation BME group With a limiting longstanding illness/disability 1 adult in the household Carer – 20+ hours per week
Council run leisure facilities	Aged 16 to 24 Aged 35 to 44 Working Otherwise not working Household with children 2 adults in the household 4 or more adults in the household	Aged 55 or over Retired With a limiting longstanding illness/disability Household without children 1 adult in the household Southern Rural ward group
Children's play areas/playgroups or multi-use games areas	Aged 25 to 44 Otherwise not working Household with children 2 adults in the household	Aged 45 to 64 Aged 75 or over Retired With a limiting longstanding illness/disability Household without children 1 adult in the household 4 or more adults in the household

<sup>1</sup> Please note that the 2011 question wording for this option was: 'Within the last year, have you used any...Leisure facilities?'

<sup>2</sup> Please note that the 2011 question wording for this option was: 'Within the last year, have you used any ...Public halls and community facilities? This includes town halls, village halls and community centre'

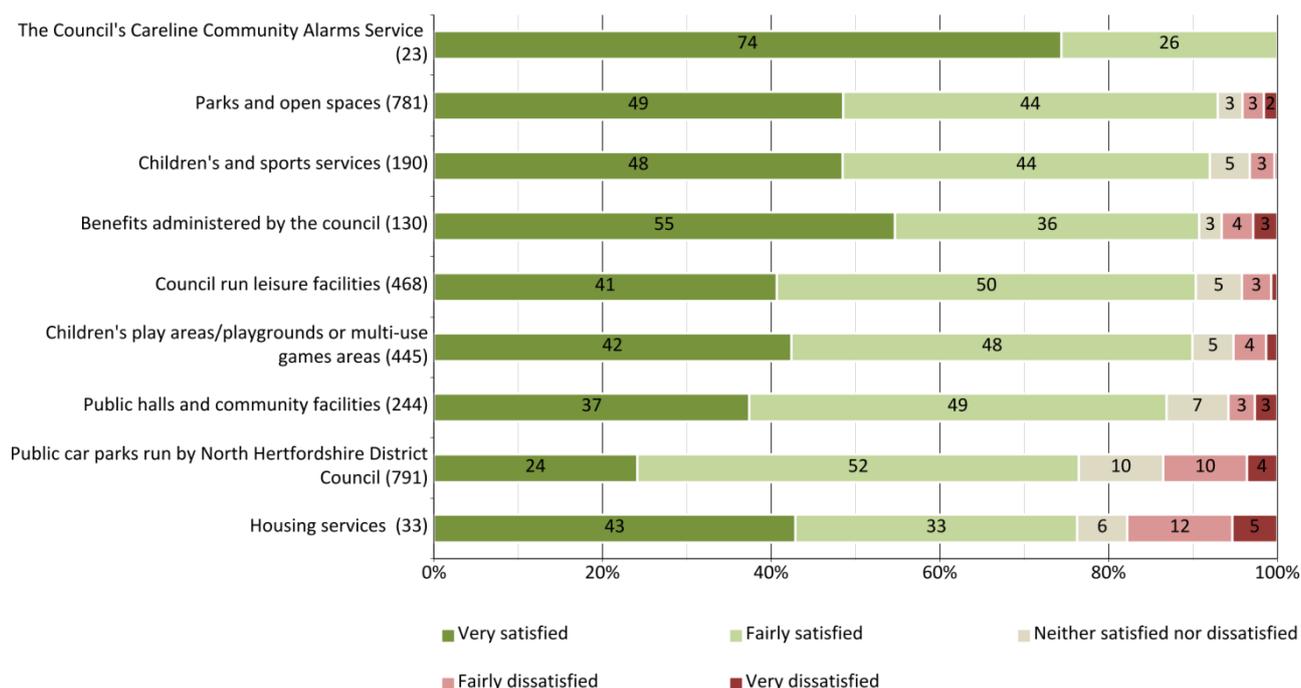
<sup>3</sup> Please note that the 2013 option included: *social housing allocation* and *homelessness services*, while the 2011 options also included *community alarms*

Service	Residents significantly more likely than average to have used service	Residents significantly less likely than average to have used service
Public Halls and community facilities	Southern Rural ward group	4 or more adults in the household
Children's and sports services	Aged 35 to 44 Household with children	Aged 55 or over Retired Household without children 1 adult in the household Third Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
Benefits administered by the Council	Female Aged 65 or over Retired In rented accommodation With a limiting longstanding illness/disability 1 adult in the household Carer – 20+ hours per week First Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks	Male Aged 16 to 24 Aged 35 to 54 Working Property is owned Household with children 2 or more adults in the household Fourth Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
Housing services	Female In rented accommodation 1 adult in the household	Male Aged 45 to 64 Property owned 2 adults in the household Third Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
The Council's Careline Community Alarms Service	Aged 75 or over Retired In rented accommodation With a limiting longstanding illness/disability 1 adult in the household Carer – 20+ hours per week	Aged 25 to 44 Working Household with children 3 or more adults in the household Carer – up to 19 hours per week

- 4.8 When asked their satisfaction with the Council services they have used within the last year, residents' satisfaction is generally high, with around three quarter or more of residents feeling satisfied. In particular, 90% or more are satisfied with: parks and open spaces (93%); children's and sports services (92%); benefits administered by the Council (91%); Council run leisure facilities (90%) and children's play areas/playgrounds or multi-use games areas (90%). All residents who have used the Council's Careline Community Alarms Service in the last year are satisfied with the service, although due to the small sample size of respondents who answered this question, (23 respondents), caution should be taken when making conclusions based on this result.
- 4.9 The services which showed the highest level of dissatisfaction are housing services (18%) (although please note the small sample size) and public car parks run by NHDC (14%).

Figure 17: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...?

Base: All Respondents who have used North Hertfordshire District Council Services within the last year (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 4.10 The table below show the results and the percentage point changes between 2011 and 2013. The proportion of residents who have used parks and open spaces in the last year has increased by 4 percentage points.

Table 9: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...? Comparison with 2011 survey.

Service/facility	% satisfied 11	% satisfied 13	% point change since 2011
Parks and open spaces	89%	93%	↑4
Children's and sport services	93%	92%	↓1
Council run leisure facilities <sup>4</sup>	92%	90%	↓2
Children's play areas/playgrounds or multi-use games areas	87%	90%	↓3
Public halls and community facilities (this includes Council run community halls and community centres for hire) <sup>5</sup>	93%	87%	↓6
Public car parks run by North Hertfordshire District Council	75%	76%	↑1
Housing services <sup>6</sup>	79%	76%	↓3

- 4.11 Table 10 below displays the sub-groups of residents who are significantly more or less likely than average to be satisfied with the council services listed in Figure 17.

Table 10: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with... Demographic sub-group analysis.

Service	Residents significantly more likely than average to be satisfied	Residents significantly less likely than average to be satisfied
The Council's Careline Community Alarms Service	-	-
Parks and open spaces	Aged 16 to 24 Aged 55 to 64	-
Children's and sports services	Third Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks	-
Benefits administered by the Council	-	-
Council run leisure facilities	With a limiting longstanding illness/disability	-
Children's play areas/playgroups or multi-use games areas	Baldock & District ward group	-
Public halls and community facilities	-	Fourth Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
Public car parks run by North Hertfordshire District Council	Aged 55 to 64 Aged 75 or over Retired Baldock & District ward group	4 or more adults in household Fourth Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
Housing Services	-	-

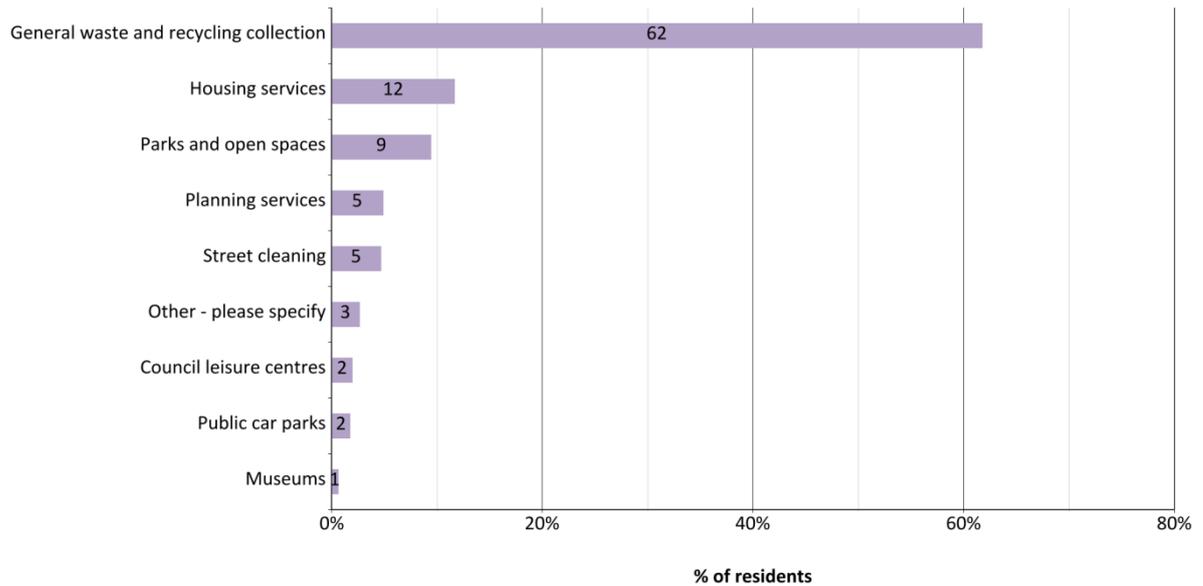
<sup>4</sup> Please note that the 2011 question wording for this option was: 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...Leisure facilities?'

<sup>5</sup> Please note that the 2011 question wording for this option was: 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with ...Public halls and community facilities? This includes town halls, village halls and community centre'

<sup>6</sup> Please note that the 2013 option included: *social housing allocation* and *homelessness services*, while the 2011 options also included *community alarms*

4.12 The majority of North Hertfordshire residents feel that general waste and recycling collection (62%) is by far the most important service the District Council provides (this was also the most important service in the 2011 Residents Survey). Around 1 in 10 said that housing services (12%) and parks and open spaces (9%) are the most important.

Figure 18: Which of the following services provided by North Hertfordshire District Council do you think is the most important?  
Base: All Respondents (974)



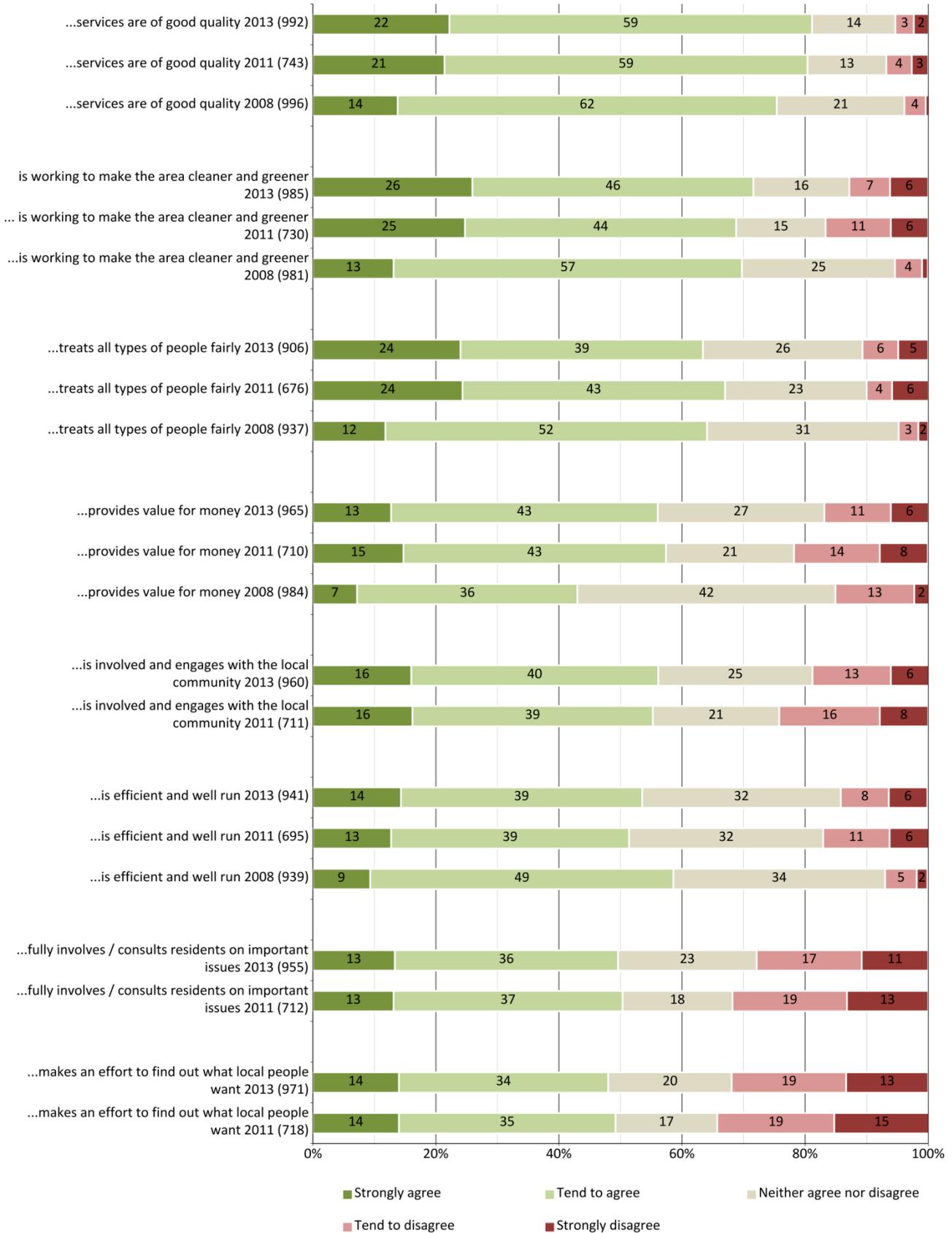
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## 5. Information and Communication

### Results

- 5.1 Residents were asked to what extent they agree or disagree with various perceptions of the District Council. The highest proportion of residents agree that North Hertfordshire District Council services are of good quality (81%). This was followed by more than three fifths who agree that NHDC is working to make the area cleaner and greener (72%) and treats all types of people fairly (63%). See Figure 19, overleaf.
- 5.2 However, around 3 in 10 residents disagree that NHDC makes an effort to find out what local people think (32%) and that NHDC fully involves/consults residents on important issues (28%).
- 5.3 Since the 2011 and 2008 Resident Surveys, agreement levels have stayed about the same, or have improved slightly; the proportion of residents who agree that NHDC services are of good quality has increased by 1 percentage point since 2011 and 5 percentage points since 2008. Also, agreement that NHDC is working to make the area cleaner and greener has increased by 3 percentage points since 2011 and 2 percentage points since 2008.
- 5.4 It is also worth noting that levels of disagreement have decreased for 7 out of the 8 perceptions since 2011. In particular, the proportion who disagree that NHDC is involved and engages with the local community has decreased by 5 percentage points (19% in 2013; 24% in 2011).

Figure 19: How strongly do you agree or disagree that North Herefordshire District Council...  
 Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 5.5 The table below shows the sub-groups of residents who are significantly more or less likely than average to agree with statements asked to them about North Hertfordshire District Council displayed in Figure 19.
- 5.6 Residents aged between 16 and 24 and those aged 75 or over are significantly more likely to agree with 5 out of the 8 statements about NHDC, while residents aged between 45 to 54 are significantly less likely than average to agree with 4 out of the 8 statements.

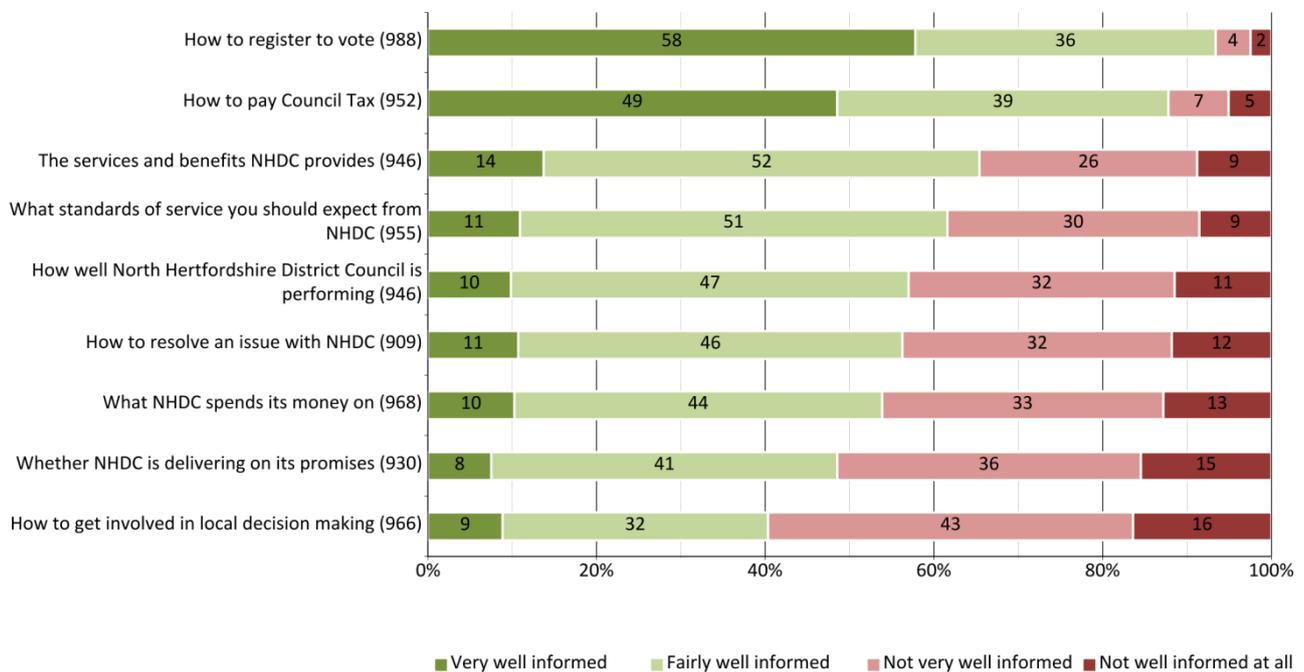
Table 11: How strongly do you agree or disagree that North Hertfordshire District Council...Demographic sub-group analysis.

Perceptions of North Hertfordshire District Council	Residents significantly more likely than average to agree	Residents significantly less likely than average to agree
Services are of good quality	Aged 16 to 24	1 adult in the household
Is working to make the area cleaner and greener	Aged 16 to 24	-
Treats all types of people fairly	Aged 16 to 24 Aged 75 or over In rented accommodation With a limiting longstanding illness/disability	Aged 45 to 54
Provides value for money	Aged 75 and over Retired In rented accommodation 1 adult in the household	Aged 45 to 54 4 or more adults in the household
Is involved and engages with the local community	-	-
Is efficient and well run	Aged 16 to 24 Aged 75 and over Otherwise not working In rented accommodation With a limiting longstanding illness/disability	Aged 45 to 54
Fully involves / consults residents on important issues	Aged 16 to 24 Aged 75 and over Otherwise not working In rented accommodation First Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks	Aged 45 to 54 Fourth Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
Makes an effort to find out what local people want	Aged 75 and over	-

- 5.7 Around 9 in 10 residents feel informed about how to register to vote (93%) and how to pay Council Tax (88%), while more than three fifths feel informed about the services and benefits NHDC provides (65%) and what standards of service they should expect from NHDC (62%).
- 5.8 However, more than two fifths do not feel informed about the following: how to get involved in local decision making (60%); whether North Hertfordshire District Council is delivering on its promises (51%); what North Hertfordshire District Council spends its money on (46%); how to resolve an issue with North Hertfordshire District Council (44%); and how well North Hertfordshire District Council is performing (43%).

Figure 20: How well informed, if at all, do you feel about...

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 5.9 Table 12 overleaf shows the results and the percentage point changes between 2008, 2011 and 2013. When comparing the results with the 2011 Residents Survey, the proportion who feel informed has increased for 7 of the 9 services provided by NHDC. In particular, there has been a significant increase of 6 percentage points in the proportion of those who feel informed about how well NHDC is performing.
- 5.10 However, although residents generally feel more informed now than they did in 2011, the results from 2008 still show that more residents felt informed then than they do now.

Table 12: How well informed, if at all, do you feel about...? Comparison with 2008 and 2011 surveys.

	% informed 08	% informed 11	% informed 13	% change since 2008	% change since 2011
How to register to vote <sup>7</sup>	97%	93%	93%	↓4	-
How to pay Council Tax	97%	89%	88%	↓9	↓1
The services and benefits NHDC provides	-	64%	65%	-	↑1
What standards of service you should expect from NHDC	81%	57%	62%	↓19	↑5
How well NHDC is performing	78%	51%	57%	↓21	↑6
How to resolve an issue with NHDC	-	52%	56%	-	↑4
What NHDC spends its money on	79%	52%	54%	↓27	↑2
Whether NHDC is delivering on its promises	76%	46%	49%	↓27	↑3
How to get involved in local decision making	81%	37%	40%	↓41	↑3

5.11 Table 13 below presents the sub-groups of residents who are significantly more or less likely than average to feel informed about the aspects of North Hertfordshire District Council shown at Figure 20.

Table 13: How well informed, if at all, do you feel about...?...Demographic sub-group analysis.

Aspects of North Hertfordshire District Council	Residents significantly more likely than average to feel informed	Residents significantly less likely than average to feel informed
<b>How and where to register to vote</b>	Aged 35 to 74 Retired 2 adults in the household	Aged 16 to 24 Otherwise not working BME group 4 or more adults in the household First Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks
<b>How to pay Council Tax</b>	Aged 35 to 44 Aged 55 or over Retired 2 adults in the household Baldock and District ward group Third Quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks	Aged 16 to 24 Otherwise not working BME group 3 or more adults in the household
<b>The services and benefits NHDC provides</b>	In rented property	Aged 45 to 54
<b>What standards of service you should expect from NHDC</b>	Aged 75 and over In rented property Retired	-
<b>How well NHDC is performing</b>	Aged 55 and over In rented property Retired With a limiting longstanding illness/disability	Household with children Aged 25 to 34 Working
<b>How to resolve an issue with NHDC</b>	Aged 75 or over In rented property Retired Carer – 20+ hours per week	-
<b>What NHDC spends its money on</b>	Aged 55 to 74 Retired Southern Rural ward group	Aged 16 to 34 Otherwise not working 4 or more adults in the household
<b>Whether NHDC is delivering on its promises</b>	Aged 55 to 64 Retired	Aged 25 to 34 4 or more adults in the household
<b>How to get involved in local decision making</b>	Aged 55 to 64 75 and over Retired Southern Rural ward group	Aged 45 to 54 4 or more adults in the household

<sup>7</sup> Please note that the 2001 and 2008 option was worded as: ...'How and where to register to vote?'

5.12 Respondents were asked how they normally obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council. The highest proportion of residents obtain information from the District Council website (60%), followed by 'Outlook' magazine (22%) and local newspapers (16%) – these were also the top 3 ways in which residents currently obtained information in 2011 (see table 14 below).

Figure 21: Where do you normally obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council if you need it?

Base: All Respondents (996)

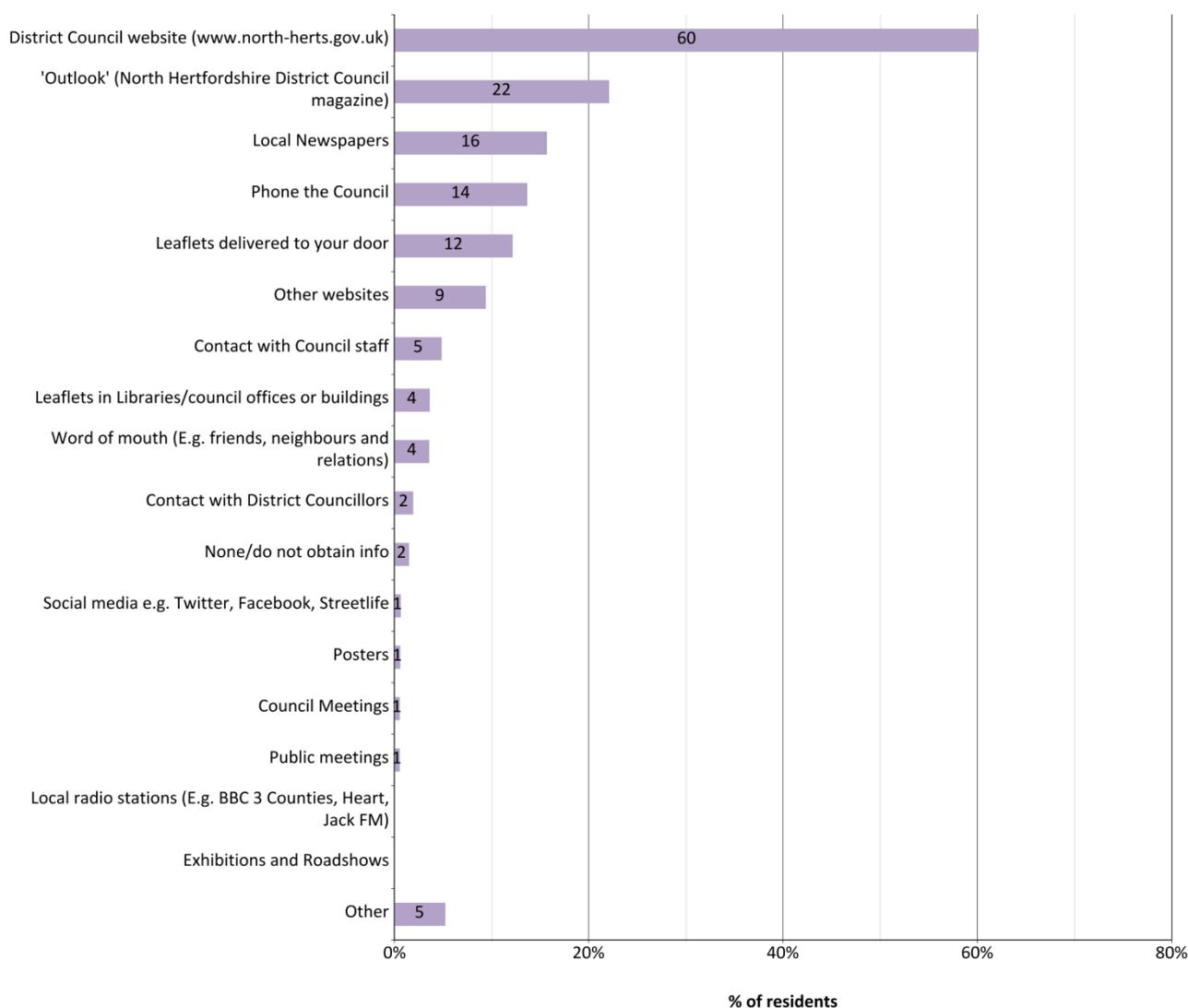


Table 14: Where do you normally obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council if you need it?

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

Top 3 ways residents obtain information	2008 (990)	2011 (735)	2013 (996)
1	Outlook - (75%)	District Council Website - (56%)	District Council Website - (60%)
2	Local Newspapers - (74%)	Outlook - (23%)	Outlook - (22%)
3	Leaflets delivered to your door - (44%)	Local Newspapers - (19%)	Local Newspapers - (16%)

5.13 Residents prefer to obtain information from the District Council website (56%), this was followed by 'Outlook' magazine (14%) and leaflets delivered through the door (14%).

5.14 Since 2011, the proportion of residents who would prefer to obtain information via leaflets through the door has decreased by 5 percentage points and has moved down from being the second most preferred method of obtaining information to the third (see Table 15 below).

Figure 22: Where do you prefer to obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council?

Base: All Respondents (984)

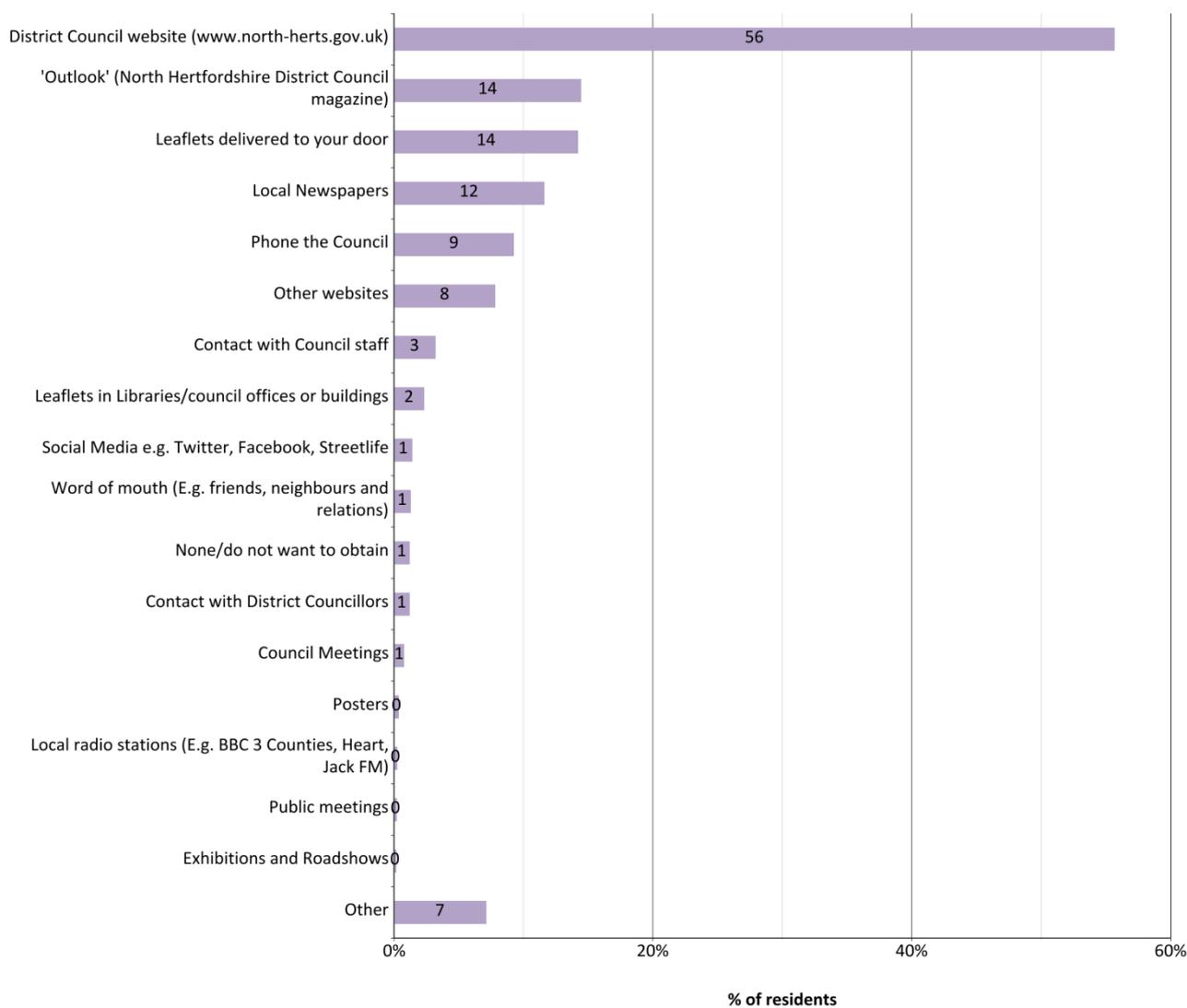


Table 15: Where do you prefer to obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council?

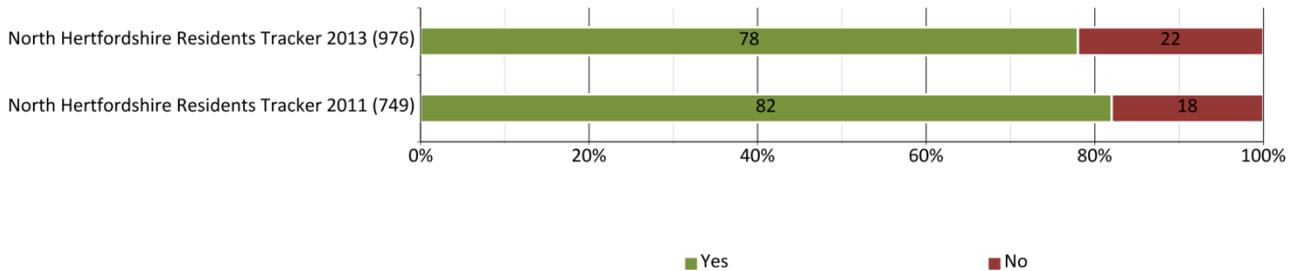
Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)

Top 3 ways residents prefer to obtain information	2008 (987)	2011 (744)	2013 (984)
1	Outlook - (63%)	District Council Website - (55%)	District Council Website - (56%)
2	Local Newspapers - (53%)	Leaflets delivered to your door - (19%)	Outlook - (14%)
3	Leaflets delivered to your door - (38%)	Outlook - (13%)	Leaflets delivered to your door - (14%)

- 5.15 The majority of residents have seen or had a copy of out of 'Outlook' delivered to their door (78%) – although this is a significant decrease of 4 percentage points since 2011.

Figure 23: Have you seen, or had a copy of 'Outlook' delivered to your door?

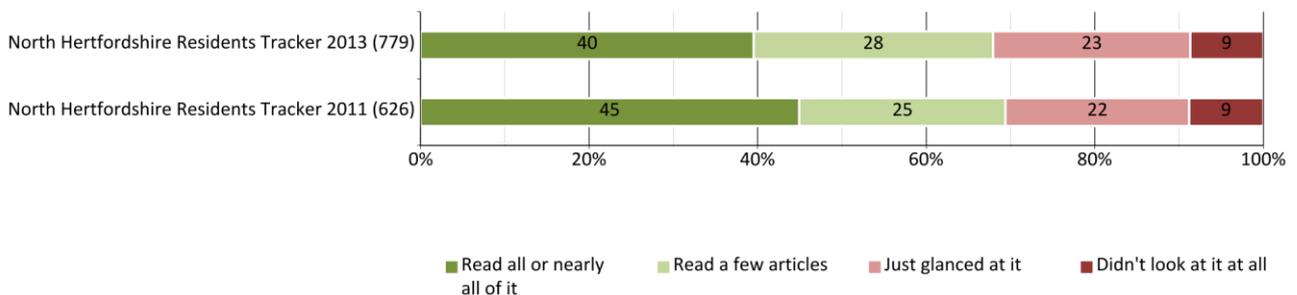
Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 5.16 Of the residents who have seen or had a copy of Outlook delivered to their door, more than two thirds (68%) have at least read a few articles, including two fifths (40%) who have read all or nearly all of it. However, more than a fifth (23%) just glanced at the magazine and around 1 in 10 (9%) didn't read it at all.
- 5.17 Since 2011, the proportion of residents who have read all or nearly all of the copy of Outlook they received has decreased significantly by 5 percentage points (40% in 2013; 45% to 2011).

Figure 24: Would you say you have...?

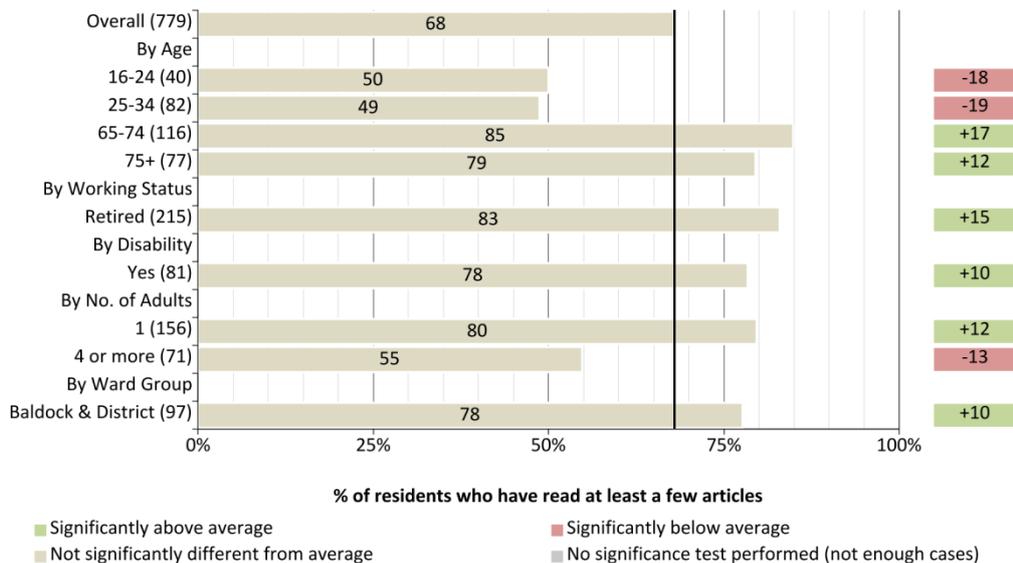
Base: All respondents who have seen, or had a copy of Outlook delivered to their door (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 5.18 The chart (figure 25) overleaf shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who have at least read a few articles of Outlook magazine.
- 5.19 Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely to have read all, nearly all or a few articles than the overall score are highlighted in green, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in red.

Figure 25: Would you say you have...? Demographic sub-group analysis

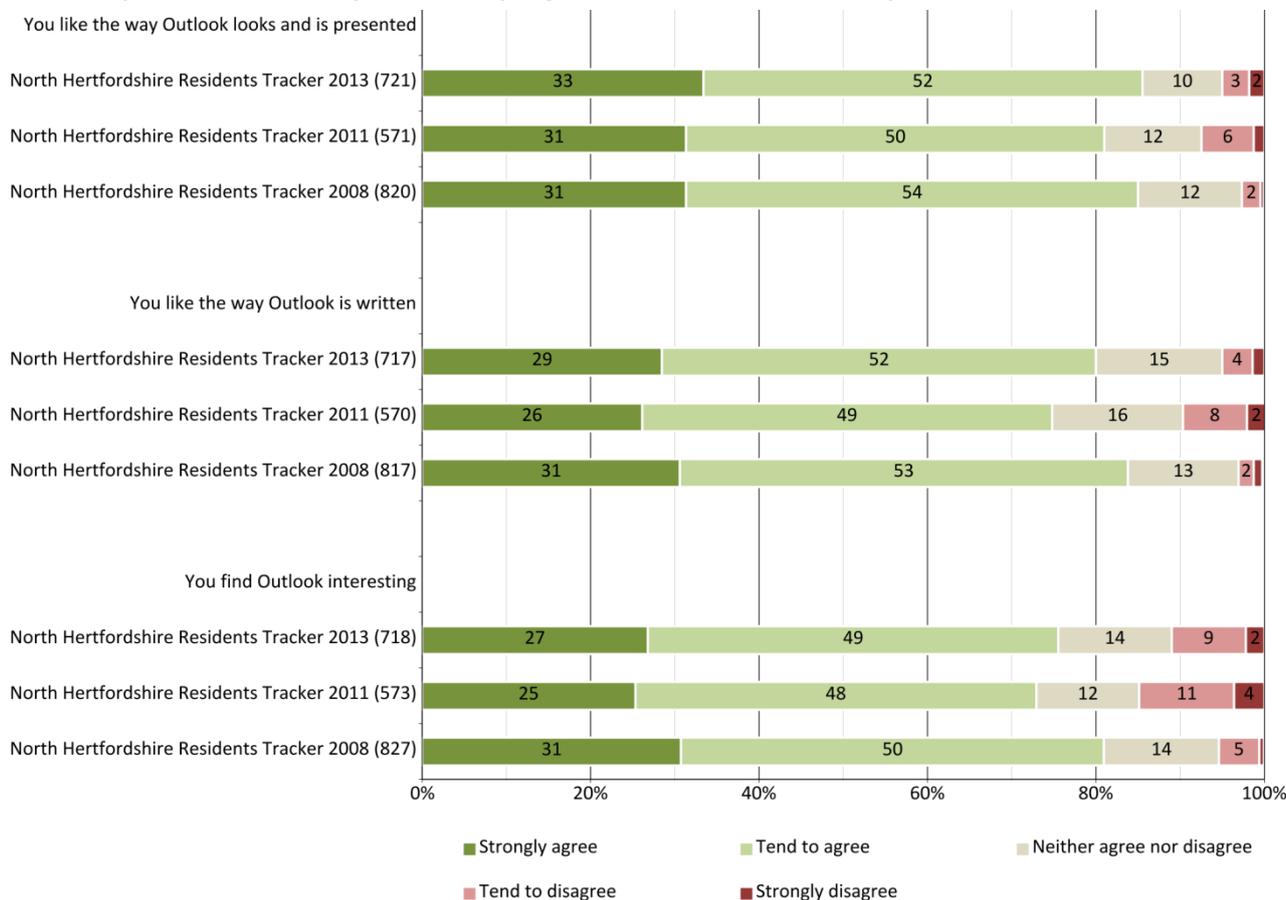
Base: All respondents who have seen, or had a copy of Outlook delivered to their door (number of respondents shown in brackets)



5.20 Of the residents who have at least just glanced at Outlook, four fifths or more agree that they like the way that 'Outlook' looks and is presented (85%) and like the way 'Outlook' is written (80%) – a significant increase of 4 and 5 percentage points respectively since 2011. Furthermore, around three quarters (76%) of residents agree that they find 'Outlook' interesting - an increase (although not significant) of 34 percentage points since 2011.

Figure 26: To what extent do you agree or disagree that...?

Base: All respondents who said they have at least just glanced at Outlook (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 5.21 The table below displays the sub-groups of residents who are significantly more or less likely than average to agree with statements about different aspects of Outlook magazine shown in Figure 26.

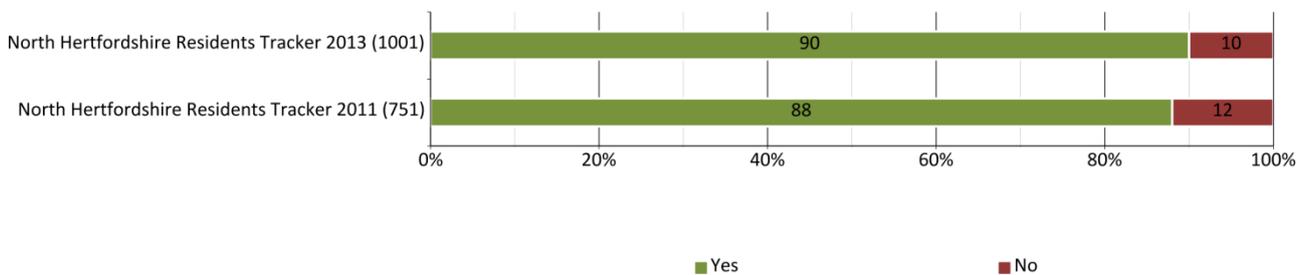
Table 16: To what extent do you agree or disagree that...? Demographic sub-group analysis.

Aspects of Outlook	Residents significantly more likely than average to agree	Residents significantly less likely than average to agree
<b>You find Outlook interesting</b>	Aged 75 or over Retired With a limiting longstanding illness/disability	Aged 25 to 34
<b>You like the way Outlook is written</b>	Aged 75 or over Retired With a limiting longstanding illness/disability	-
<b>You like the way Outlook looks and is presented</b>	Retired	-

- 5.22 In 2013, 90% of North Hertfordshire residents state that they have access to the internet – a similar proportion to 2011 (88%) and a 9 percentage point increase compared with 2008 (81%).

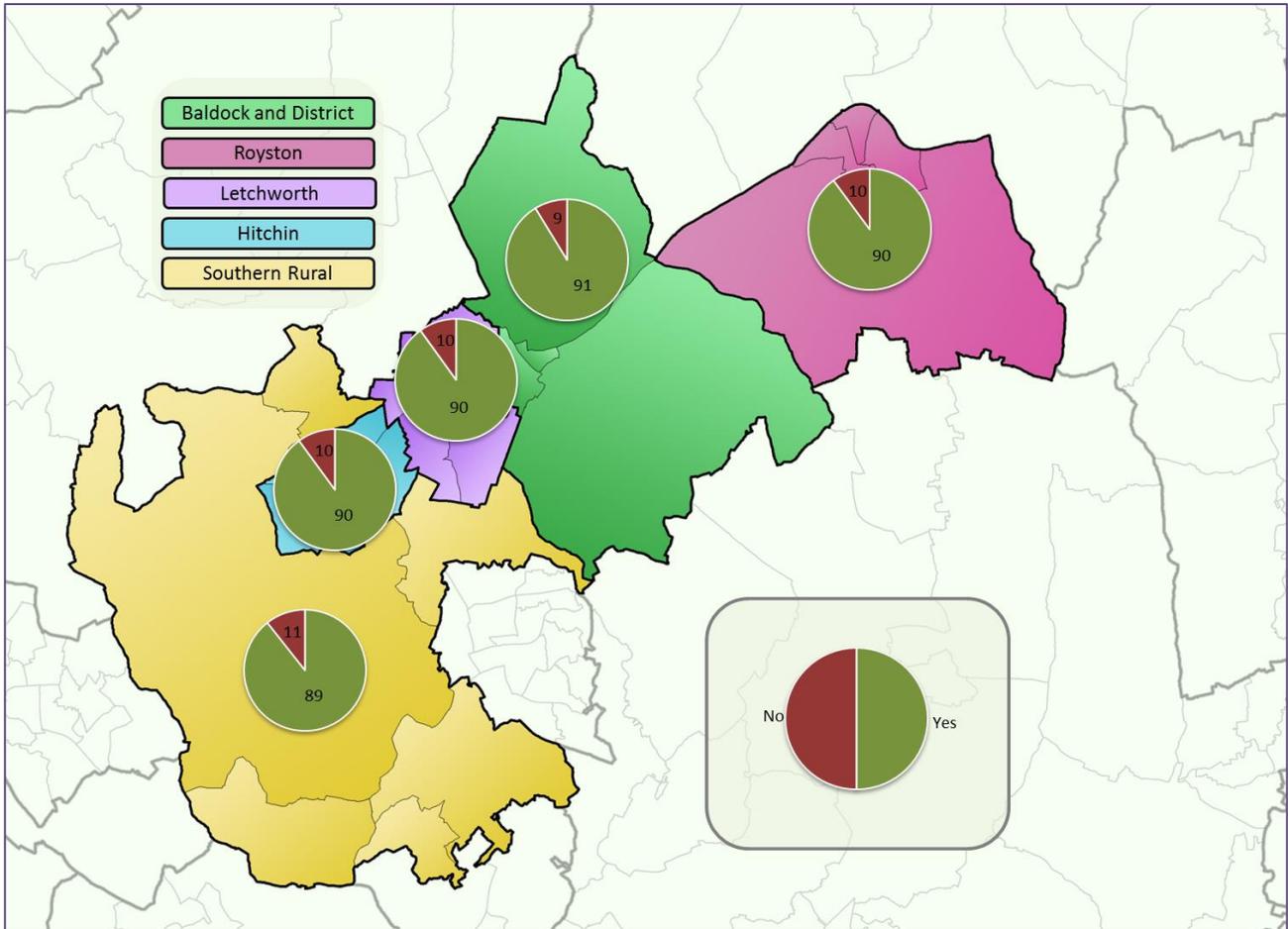
Figure 27: Do you have access to the internet? For example this could include at home, your place of work, in an education institution, or on your mobile etc.

Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 5.23 The map overleaf shows access to the internet in North Hertfordshire broken down by ward groupings – there is little difference between results.

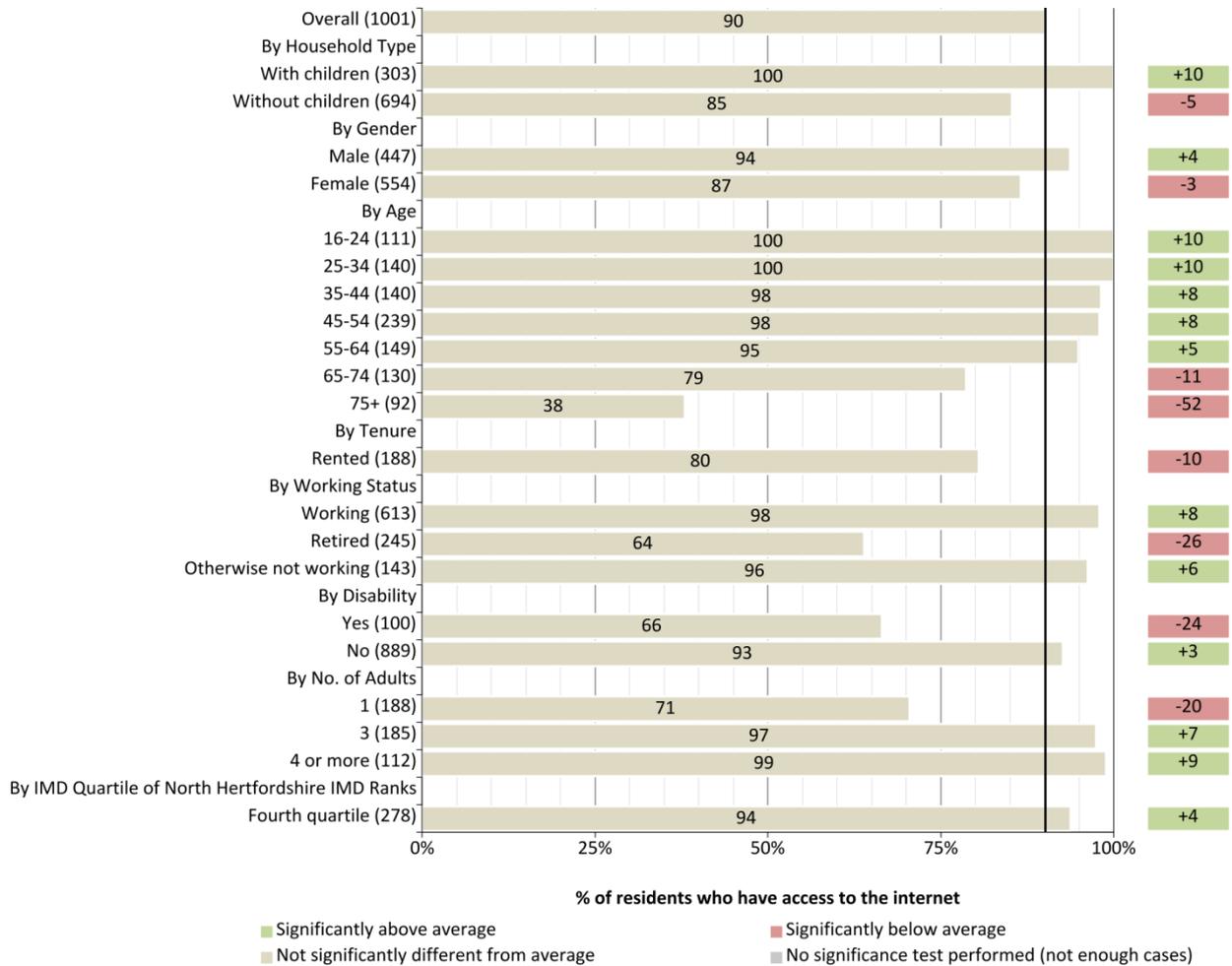
Figure 28: Access to the internet in North Hertfordshire mapped by ward group



- 5.24 The chart overleaf shows how the responses for this question vary across different sub-groups of the population who stated they have access to the internet.
- 5.25 Results for sub-groups which are significantly more likely than the overall score are highlighted in green, whilst results which are significantly less likely are highlighted in red.

Figure 29: Do you have access to the internet? For example this could include at home, your place of work, in an education institution, or on your mobile etc. Demographic sub-group analysis

Base: All respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



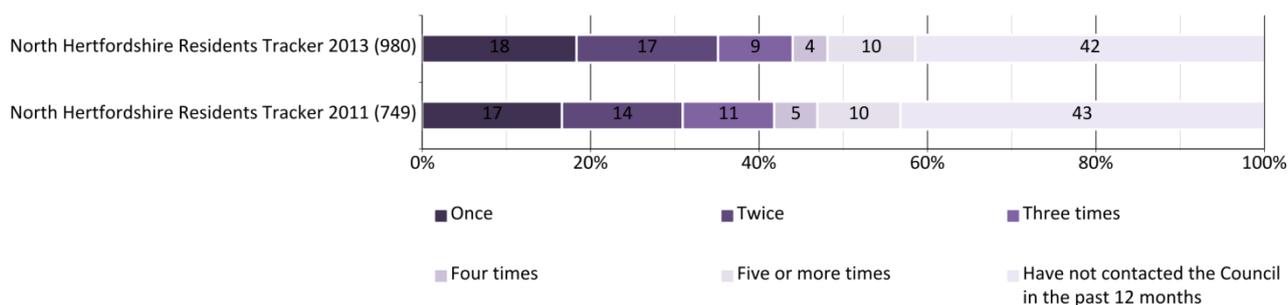
## 6. Contact with the Council

### Results

- 6.1 In the last 12 months, around three fifths (58%) of residents have contacted North Hertfordshire District Council – a similar proportion to those surveyed in 2011 (57%).
- 6.2 Residents aged between 35 and 44 are significantly more likely to have contacted NHDC once in the last year, while residents living in rented property as well as carers (20+ hours per week) are significantly more likely to have made contact five or more times. Residents aged between 16 and 24, are otherwise not working and those who have 3 or more adults in the household are significantly more likely to have not contacted NHDC in the last 12 months

Figure 30: In the last 12 months, how many times have you contacted North Hertfordshire District Council?

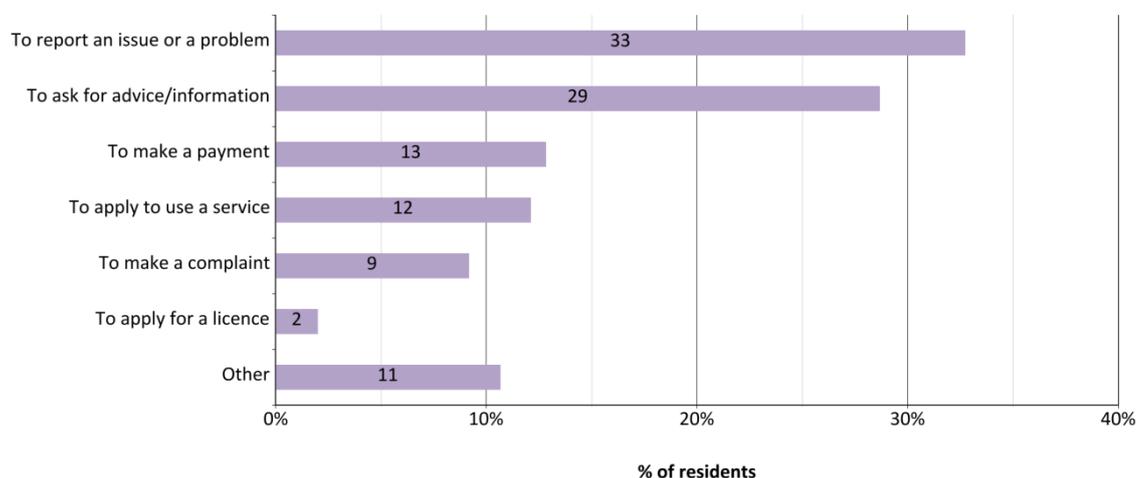
Base: All Respondents (number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 6.3 Figure 31 below shows the various reasons for why residents got in contact with the council. The highest proportion did so to report and issue or a problem (33%) – an increase of 5 percentage points since 2011 (28%). This was closely followed by making contact to ask for advice/information (29%) – a decrease of 5 percentage points since 2011 (34%).

Figure 31: Which of these describes the reasons why you made your most recent contact with the council?

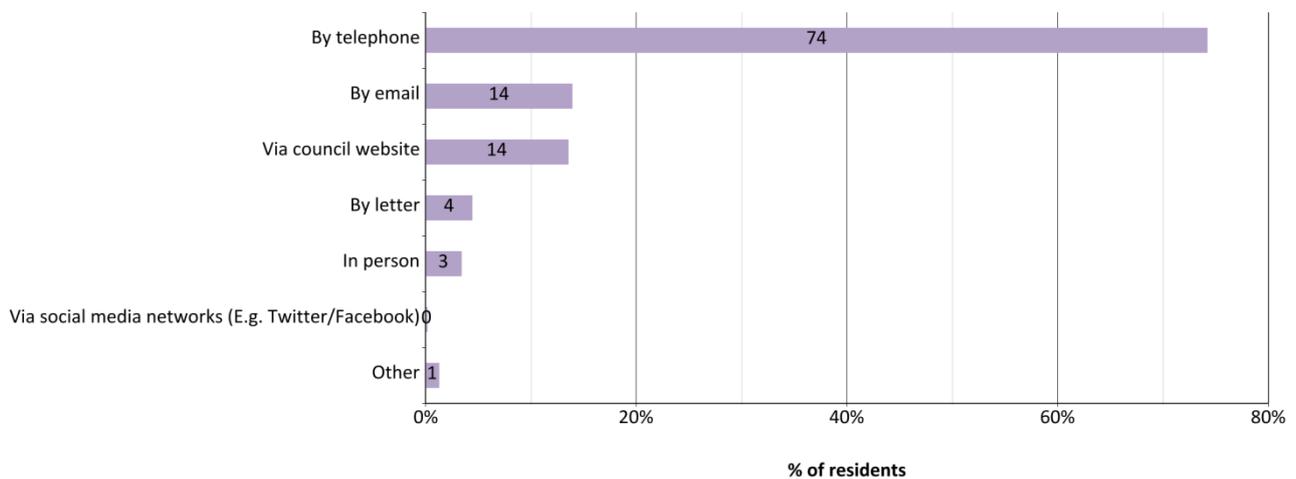
Base: All respondents who said they have contacted the Council at least once in the last 12 months (573)



- 6.4 The majority of residents contacted the council by telephone (74%) - a similar proportion to those surveyed in 2011 (75%). This was followed by more than 1 in 10 made contact by email (14%) and/or via the Council website (14%).
- 6.5 Since 2011, the proportion of residents who contacted the Council in person has decreased significantly by 8 percentage points (3% in 2013; 11% in 2011), whereas the proportions who made contact by and via the council website have increased by 4 percentage points, respectively (14% in 2013; 10% in 2011).

Figure 32: How did you contact the Council?

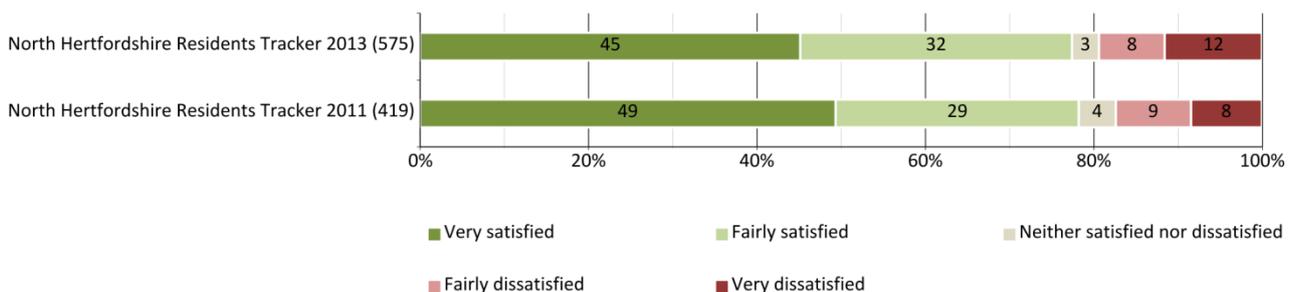
Base: All respondents who said they have contacted the Council at least once in the last 12 months (574)



- 6.6 Over three quarters of residents are satisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the Council (77%), while under a fifth are dissatisfied (19%) – this is comparable with the 2011 results, although it is worth noting that the proportion who are very satisfied has decreased by 4 percentage points (45% in 2013; 49% in 2011).
- 6.7 Residents who fall into the first quartile of North Hertfordshire IMD ranks are significantly more likely than average to be dissatisfied.

Figure 33: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received the last time you contacted the Council?

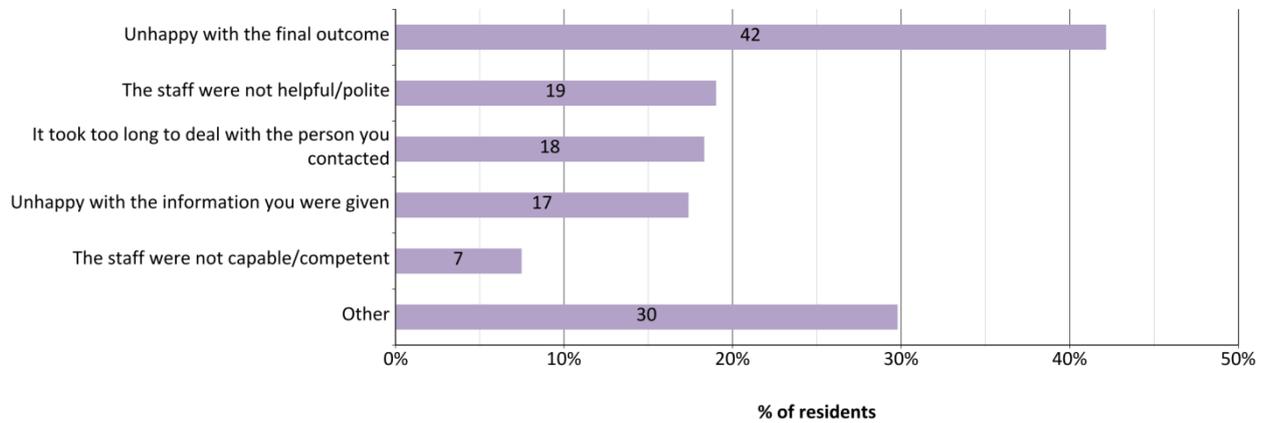
Base: All respondents who said they have contacted the Council at least once in the last 12 months ((number of respondents shown in brackets)



- 6.8 Of the residents who said that they are dissatisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the council (19%), the highest proportion are unhappy with the final outcome (42%) – a significant decrease of 9 percentage points since 2011 (51%). It is worth noting that the proportion of residents who said that they were dissatisfied because the staff were not capable/competent has decreased significantly since by 10 percentage points since 2011 (7% in 2013; 17% in 2011).
- 6.9 The majority of residents who stated other reasons for being dissatisfied said that no one replied or got back to them.

Figure 34: Why were you dissatisfied with the service you received the last time you were in contact with the Council?

Base: All respondents who said they were dissatisfied with the service they received the last time they contacted the Council (109)



## 7. List of Tables and Figures

### Tables

Table 1: Gender – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding) .....	6
Table 2: Age – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding) .....	6
Table 3: Ethnic Origin – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding) .....	6
Table 4: Ward Groups – All Respondents (Note: Figures may not sum due to rounding) .....	6
Table 5: Ward Groupings for Survey Responses .....	7
Table 6: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...Demographic sub-group analysis. ....	27
Table 7: Within the last year, have you used any...? Comparison with 2011 survey. ....	28
Table 8: Within the last year, have you used any...Demographic sub-group analysis. ....	28
Table 9: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...? Comparison with 2011 survey. ....	31
Table 10: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with... Demographic sub-group analysis. ....	31
Table 11: How strongly do you agree or disagree that North Herefordshire District Council...Demographic sub-group analysis.....	35
Table 12: How well informed, if at all, do you feel about...? Comparison with 2008 and 2011 surveys. ....	37
Table 13: How well informed, if at all, do you feel about...?...Demographic sub-group analysis.....	37
Table 14: Where do you normally obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council if you need it?.....	38
Table 15: Where do you prefer to obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council?.....	39
Table 16: To what extent do you agree or disagree that...? Demographic sub-group analysis.....	42

## Figures

Figure 1: Mapped ward groups for survey responses.....	8
Figure 2: Mapped Index of Multiple Deprivation (IMD) for North Hertfordshire .....	9
Figure 3: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live? .....	15
Figure 4: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who are satisfied .....	16
Figure 5: Satisfaction with area as a place to live mapped by ward group.....	17
Figure 6: Taking everything in to account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things? .....	17
Figure 7: Taking everything in to account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things? Sub-group breakdown of respondents who are satisfied.....	18
Figure 8: Satisfaction with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things mapped by ward group.....	19
Figure 9: Examples of free text comments made by respondents who are dissatisfied with the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things (76) .....	20
Figure 10: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years?.....	21
Figure 11: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years? Sub- group breakdown of respondents who felt it had got better.....	22
Figure 12: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years? Sub- group breakdown of respondents who felt it had stayed the same .....	23
Figure 13: Thinking about the way North Hertfordshire District Council runs things, do you think it has got better, stayed the same or got worse over the last two years? Sub- group breakdown of respondents who felt it had got worse.....	24
Figure 14: Opinion on whether the way North Hertfordshire District council runs things has got better, stayed the same or worse, mapped by ward group .....	25
Figure 15: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with.....	26
Figure 16: Within the last year, have you used any...?.....	27
Figure 17: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with...? .....	30

Figure 18: Which of the following services provided by North Hertfordshire District Council do you think is the most important? .....	32
Figure 19: How strongly do you agree or disagree that North Hertfordshire District Council.....	34
Figure 20: How well informed, if at all, do you feel about... ..	36
Figure 21: Where do you normally obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council if you need it?.....	38
Figure 22: Where do you prefer to obtain information about North Hertfordshire District Council?.....	39
Figure 23: Have you seen, or had a copy of 'Outlook' delivered to your door?.....	40
Figure 24: Would you say you have...?.....	40
Figure 25: Would you say you have...? Demographic sub-group analysis .....	41
Figure 26: To what extent do you agree or disagree that...? .....	41
Figure 27: Do you have access to the internet? For example this could include at home, your place of work, in an education institution, or on your mobile etc. ....	42
Figure 28: Access to the internet in North Hertfordshire mapped by ward group.....	43
Figure 29: Do you have access to the internet? For example this could include at home, your place of work, in an education institution, or on your mobile etc. Demographic sub-group analysis .....	44
Figure 30: In the last 12 months, how many times have you contacted North Hertfordshire District Council? .....	45
Figure 31: Which of these describes the reasons why you made your most recent contact with the council?.....	45
Figure 32: How did you contact the Council?.....	46
Figure 33: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the service you received the last time you contacted the Council? .....	46
Figure 34: Why were you dissatisfied with the service you received the last time you were in contact with the Council? .....	47