

# Ashford Borough Council's Residents' Survey 2020

## About the Survey

### Methodology

The survey took place between February and March 2020. An invitation to take part and a hard copy of the survey was sent by post to 10,000 residents across the borough. Residents were selected via random stratified sampling, to ensure that the proportion of residents in each ward receiving a survey was proportional to the number of total ward residents. 2006 replies were received, equating to a response rate of 20%. A copy of the questionnaire is available in appendix 1.

Responses have been weighted by gender and age, to ensure the results are representative of the borough's population. 2018 estimates of age and gender were used as the basis of the weighting.

Some questions are only available through routing, depending on the answer given to a previous question. Where a resident has answered a question in such a way as to render the following question unanswerable, any answer given to the following question has been disregarded.

### Types of question

A mixture of open and closed questions were used in the survey. For closed questions, respondents were asked to select a response from a list of options, such as a Likert style rating scale (e.g. strongly agree to strongly disagree). In instances where open questions were asked, respondents could write a comment to answer the question, in as much detail as they chose.

### Analysis of the results

After weighting the results to apply more or less weight to the responses of certain respondent groups, the data was cross-tabulated to show the differences between responses for certain groups. The groups cross tabulated were:

- Age
- Area
- Ward
- Disability status
- Ethnicity
- Gender
- Acorn Category - Acorn is a segmentation tool which categorises the UK population into types based on significant social factors and population behaviour. There are six categories as shown below:

1	<b>Affluent Achievers</b>	Some of the most financially successful people in the UK
2	<b>Rising Prosperity</b>	Generally younger, well educated and prosperous people
3	<b>Comfortable Communities</b>	Stable families and empty nesters in suburban or semi-rural locations, also comfortably-off pensioners in retirement areas
4	<b>Financially Stretched</b>	Incomes tend to be well below average, unemployment and the proportion of people claiming other benefits are above average
5	<b>Urban Adversity</b>	The most deprived areas and communities across the UK
6	<b>Not Private Households</b>	People living in communal establishments such as military bases, hostels, refuges, hotels and other holiday accommodation

Cross-tabulating responses by these variables allows us to identify where views differ among different groups.

Responses to open questions have been analysed by reading all comments received and grouping them by theme.

### **Statistical significance**

Based on the overall population of the borough and the number of survey responses received, the results of the survey are statistically valid to a margin of error of 2% at the 95% confidence interval. In other words, if everyone in the borough completed the survey, the answers given by 95% of them would be no less than 2% below the survey results and no more than 2% above the survey results.

### **Interpretation of survey data**

To aid interpretation, results are presented as consistently as possible throughout this report. All results are expressed as percentages, rounded to the nearest percentage point. Please note this means percentages may not add up to 100% in all cases.

Where a question has been asked in the previous 2018 survey, the results have been compared. Note that the difference between 2018 and 2020 responses is only deemed significant if the difference is greater than the 2% margin of error (i.e. if 20% of respondents were fairly satisfied in 2018, but 22% are fairly satisfied in the 2020 survey then this difference is not significant).

## Summary of Key Findings

Key results from the council's 2020 residents' survey are as follows, grouped under the relevant subheading. It should be noted the results of the survey are statistically valid to a 2% margin of error. In other words, if everyone in the borough completed the survey the answers could be up to 2% higher or lower than the survey results.

### **Satisfaction with the local area as a place to live**

79% of residents were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Just 10% were dissatisfied to an extent.

### **Satisfaction with the way Ashford Borough Council runs its services**

58% of residents were satisfied to an extent with the way the council runs its services. 17% were dissatisfied to an extent.

### **Understanding needs of customers**

The majority of respondents felt that the council understands the needs of customers (62%). 31% of respondents indicated they felt the council does not understand them very much, and 6% said the council does not understand their needs at all.

### **Influence decisions the council makes**

55% of respondents felt they could not influence council decisions. 15% felt they could to some extent. Respondents said that taking part in polls, surveys and consultations, speaking to their local councillor, and taking part in online discussion forums would help them feel more involved.

### **Pride in Ashford and the local area**

64% of respondents agreed to an extent that they had pride in their local area, and 16% disagreed. Respondents had a more indifferent attitude to pride in the borough, with 34% neither agreeing nor disagreeing they had pride in Ashford.

### **Satisfaction with council services**

- Parks – 66% satisfied, 15% dissatisfied
- Play areas – 55% satisfied, 18% dissatisfied
- Public toilets – 22% satisfied, 55% dissatisfied
- Bin collection – 83% satisfied, 8% dissatisfied
- Keeping streets clean – 56% satisfied, 28% dissatisfied
- Dealing with dog mess – 44% satisfied, 31% dissatisfied
- Dealing with littering – 37% satisfied, 42% dissatisfied
- Dealing with graffiti – 39% satisfied, 21% dissatisfied
- Dealing with fly tipping – 30% satisfied, 44% dissatisfied
- Council car parks – 45% satisfied, 30% dissatisfied

### **3 things most important in making an area a good place to live**

1. Being clean and tidy
2. Good council services and healthcare
3. Good amenities and facilities

### **What needs improving in Ashford**

Respondents felt the following things needed improvement

In respondent's local areas:

1. Pot-holes and road and pathway maintenance
2. Council services: such as dealing with litter, dog mess, fly tipping and landscaping
3. Bus services and other public transport

In Ashford borough:

1. Ashford town centre
2. Level of crime and safety
3. Pot-holes and road and pathway maintenance

### **Safety in Ashford**

Respondents felt Ashford was safe as a whole, but respondents felt increasingly unsafe later in the day

- During the day – 89% felt safe, 4% felt unsafe
- In the evening – 70% felt safe, 14% felt unsafe
- After dark - 49% felt safe, 34% felt unsafe

### **How well informed the council keeps residents**

53% of respondents felt the council keeps them informed to an extent, 47% felt that the council does not keep them informed to an extent.

### **How respondents find out about what the council is doing**

Most respondents use the council website for information about the council. This was followed by Ashford For You magazine, and the council's Facebook page and other social media.

### **Ashford For You**

The large majority of respondents had received and read Ashford For You (70%). Respondents who had received and read Ashford For You had very positive opinions of the magazine overall. Most respondents agreed to an extent that it was informative, interesting and useful, and would like future copies of the magazine.

### **Activities in Ashford Town Centre**

The most frequently visited facilities by residents are:

- Visiting County Square: 94% of respondents have used the shopping centre, 58% visit at least once a month or more

- Visiting Park Mall: 93% of respondents have used the shopping centre, 52% visit at least once a month or more
- Shopping in the town centre in general: 92% of respondents have shopped in the town, 55% visit at least once a month or more

The least frequently visited facilities are:

- Performances at Revelation St Mary's: 18% of residents have done this and no residents did this at least once a month or more
- Socialise in the town in the evening: 53% of residents have done this and 10% of residents did this at least once a month or more
- Socialise in the town during the day: 59% of residents have done this and 18% of residents did this at least once a month or more

### **Events in Ashford Town Centre**

While many respondents did not attend events put on by the council in the town centre, those that attended said they were very satisfied with all events, especially Create Festival and Illuminities. Residents gave a number of reasons for not attending events in Ashford Town Centre, the most common reason was that respondents were not interested in the events that were on. Residents gave a variety of suggestions of events to launch in the town centre. Music and concert events were the most suggested.

### **Satisfaction with Ashford Town Centre**

Residents are were most satisfied with Ashford as a place to shop:

- As a place to shop: 24% are very or fairly satisfied and 58% are dissatisfied to some extent
- As a place to visit: 17% are very or fairly satisfied and 57% are dissatisfied to some extent
- As a place to go out: 19% are very or fairly satisfied and 58% are dissatisfied to some extent

### **Transport to activities**

Car was the most widely used form of transport to get to various activities.

- 70% of respondents use a car to get to school or work, however, only 47% would prefer to use this method
- 79% of respondents use a car to get to shops and supermarkets, however, only 60% would prefer to use this method
- 76% of respondents use a car to get to shops and supermarkets, however, only 49% would prefer to use this method

### **What respondents do to reduce their carbon footprint**

Respondents reported they do a variety of activities to try and reduce their carbon footprint, such as shopping locally and consuming less, recycling, walking where possible and having one car per household which is used sparingly.

## **What barriers prevent respondents from reducing their carbon footprint**

Respondents mentioned a variety of barriers which prevent them from reducing their carbon footprint, such as the convenience of car travel versus public transport, lack of information, difficulties in purchasing environmentally-friendly goods from supermarkets and lack of electric vehicle infrastructure.

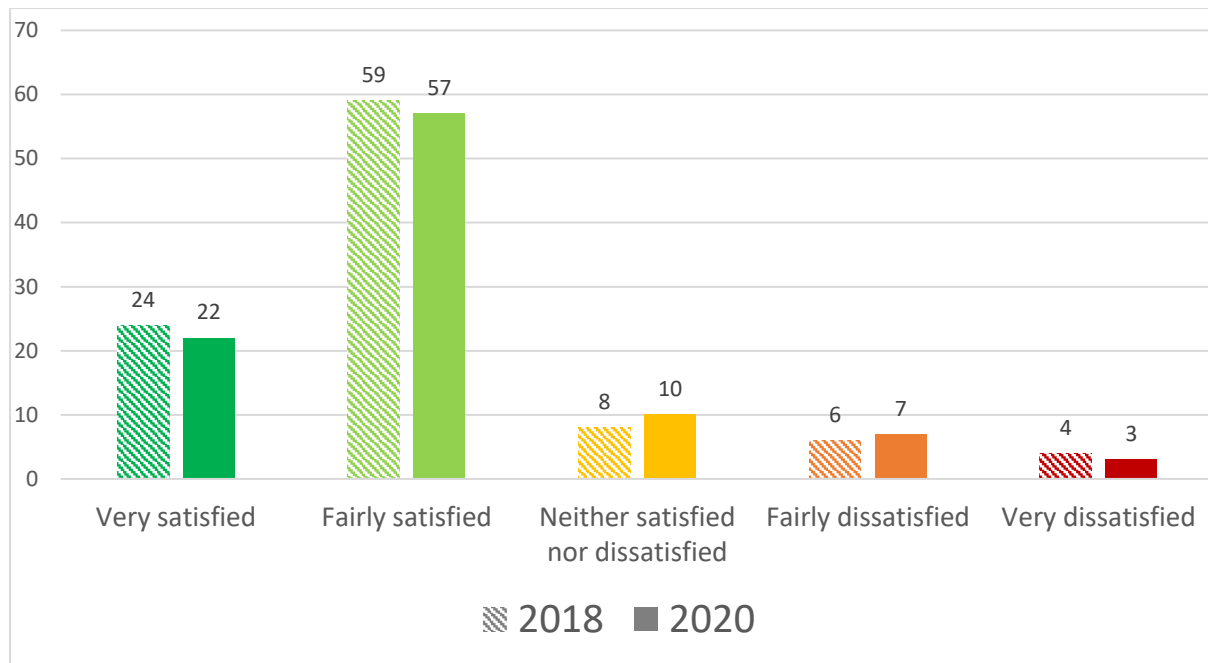
## **Priorities for Ashford's future**

Respondents were asked about what their priorities are for Ashford borough's future.

1. 38% thought Ashford should strive to be a caring borough, with services supporting a healthy, happy and integrated community
2. 35% thought Ashford should work towards being a borough that cares about the environment, and where sustainability is a priority
3. 37% thought Ashford should become an exciting borough, with lots of things to do and places to visit, and a well-connected borough, with fast broadband, and modern travel available to all

## Findings

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



*N = 1995, excl. don't know and no reply*

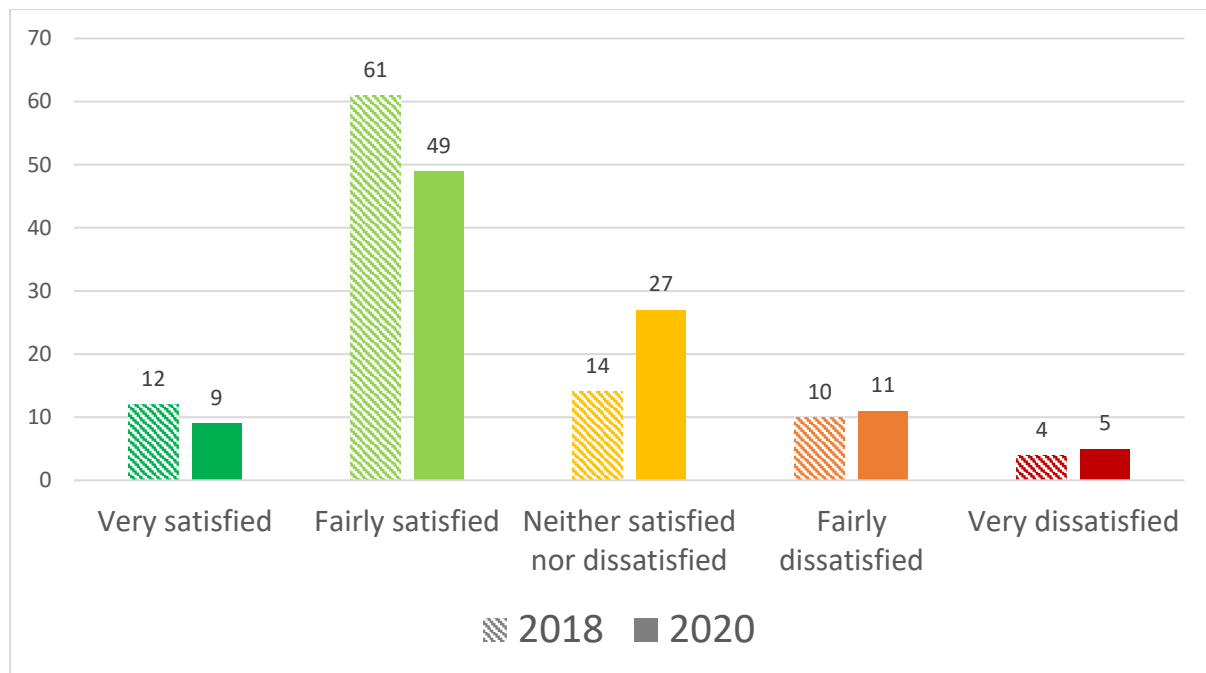
Overall, 79% of residents were very or fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live. Just 10% were dissatisfied to an extent. The results were not significantly different from the findings of the 2018 survey, in which 83% of residents reported they were satisfied to an extent.

Residents living in Wye with Hinxhill ward were most satisfied, as 98% of respondents from that ward reported they were satisfied to an extent. Residents in Tenterden St Michael's ward were second most satisfied (96% satisfied to an extent) and Weald North (95% satisfied to an extent). The ward with the most dissatisfied respondents was Victoria (22% dissatisfied to an extent) followed by Bockhanger, in which 21% of respondents were dissatisfied.

Respondents in the 18-25 age group were the most satisfied with their local area as a place to live, with 85% satisfied to an extent. This was followed by the 65+ age group, with 82% satisfied to an extent. The most dissatisfied age group was 45-54 year olds, as 15% of this group were dissatisfied.

The most satisfied Acorn Category were Affluent Achievers and Comfortable Communities, with 83% and 82% satisfied to an extent respectively. Respondents matching the Urban Adversity category were least satisfied, with 70% satisfied overall.

## Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Ashford Borough Council runs its services?



*N = 1951, excl. don't know and no reply*

Satisfaction with the how the council runs its services has dropped between 2018 and 2020. In the 2018 survey, just over 60% of residents reported they were fairly satisfied, but in 2020 this has dropped to just under 50%. Resident's attitudes have shifted more towards "neither satisfied nor dissatisfied" between 2018 and 2020, as 27% of residents selected this option in 2020, compared to just 14% in 2018. Levels of dissatisfaction has remained largely unchanged. Regardless, 58% of respondents were satisfied to an extent with the way the council runs its services in 2020.

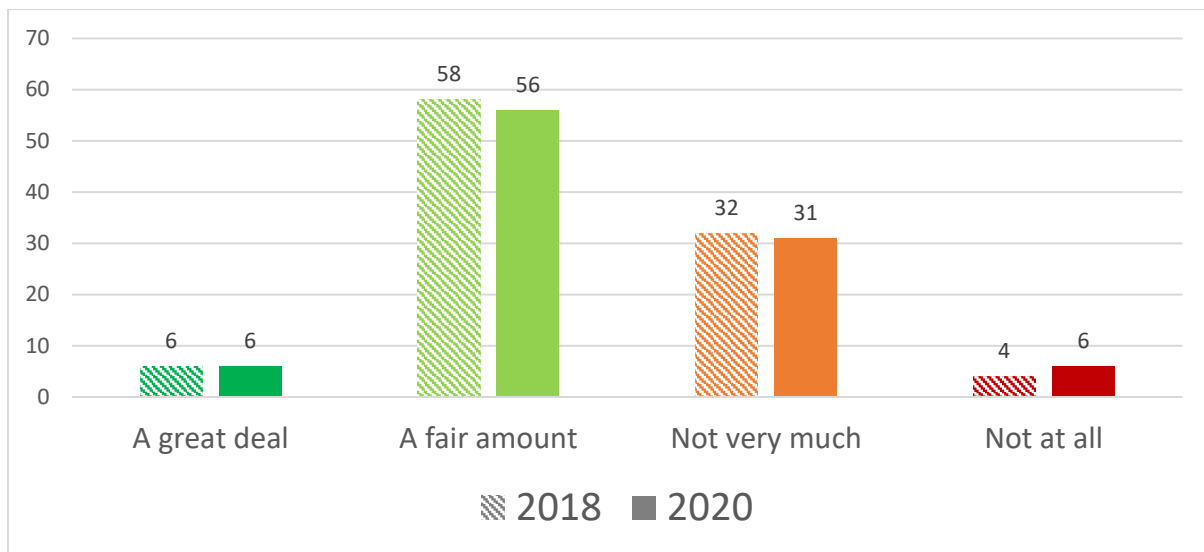
The 55-64 and 65+ age groups were the most satisfied with the way the council runs its services (63% and 65% satisfied respectively). The most dissatisfied age group was 34-44 year olds, with 21% of this age group dissatisfied to an extent.

Respondents in Downs North ward were most satisfied with the way the council runs its services (84% satisfied to an extent). Tenterden St Michaels, Roman and Stanhope were also very satisfied with the way the council runs its services (80%, 78% and 77% respectively). Respondents from Godinton ward were significantly more dissatisfied with the way the council runs its services than respondents in other wards. 60% of respondents from this ward were dissatisfied to an extent, compared to the 2<sup>nd</sup> most dissatisfied ward, Bockhanger, were 36% of respondents were dissatisfied.

Respondents matching the Comfortable Communities Acorn Category were most satisfied with the way Ashford Borough Council runs its services, with 61% of this group stating they were satisfied to an extent. The least satisfied category was Rising Prosperity, with 45% of this group satisfied.



## To what extent do you think Ashford Borough Council understands the needs of customers?



*N = 1755, excl. don't know and no reply*

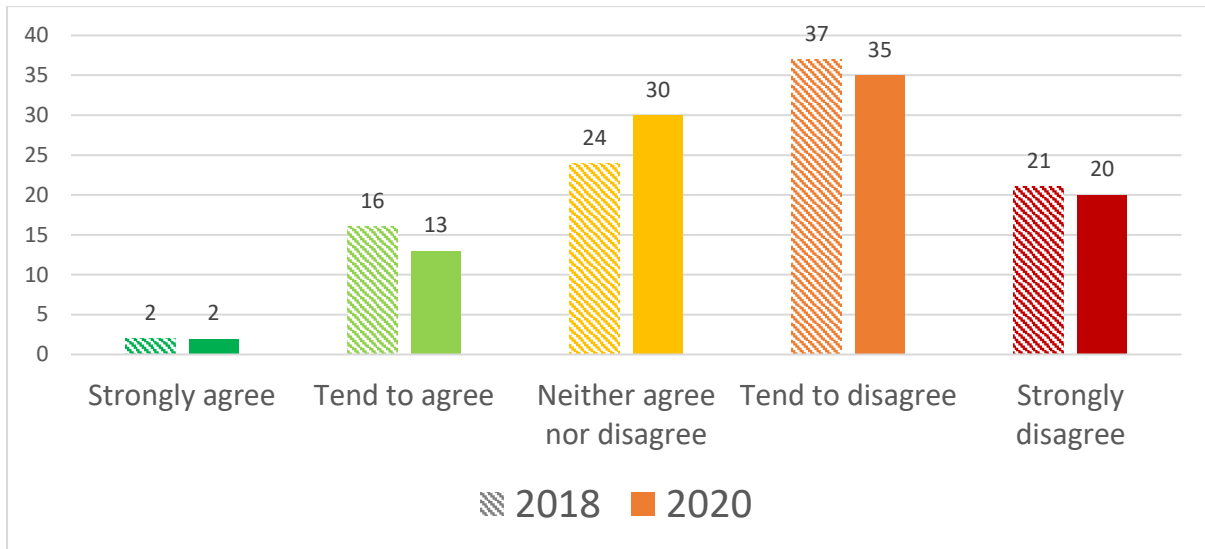
Respondent's attitudes to whether or not the council understands the needs of customers have not changed since 2018. The majority of respondents felt that the council has some level of understanding of the needs of customers (6% selected "a great deal", 56% selected "a fair amount"). 31% of respondents indicated they felt the council does not understand them very much, and 6% said the council does not understand their needs at all.

All age groups felt that the council understands their needs overall. In all age groups, between 59 and 65% of respondents agreed that the council understands their needs.

Respondents from Tenterden St Michaels Ward agreed the most that the council understands the needs of customers (87% agreed to an extent). This was followed by Highfield and Stanhope (81% of respondents from both these wards agree to an extent). The ward that disagrees the most that the council understands customer needs is Kingsnorth Village and Bridgefield Ward (16% disagree).

There was not a significant difference between respondents in different Acorn Categories and their opinion on how well Ashford Borough Council understands their needs.

## To what extent do you agree you can influence the decisions that Ashford Borough Council makes?



*N = 1847, excl. don't know and no reply*

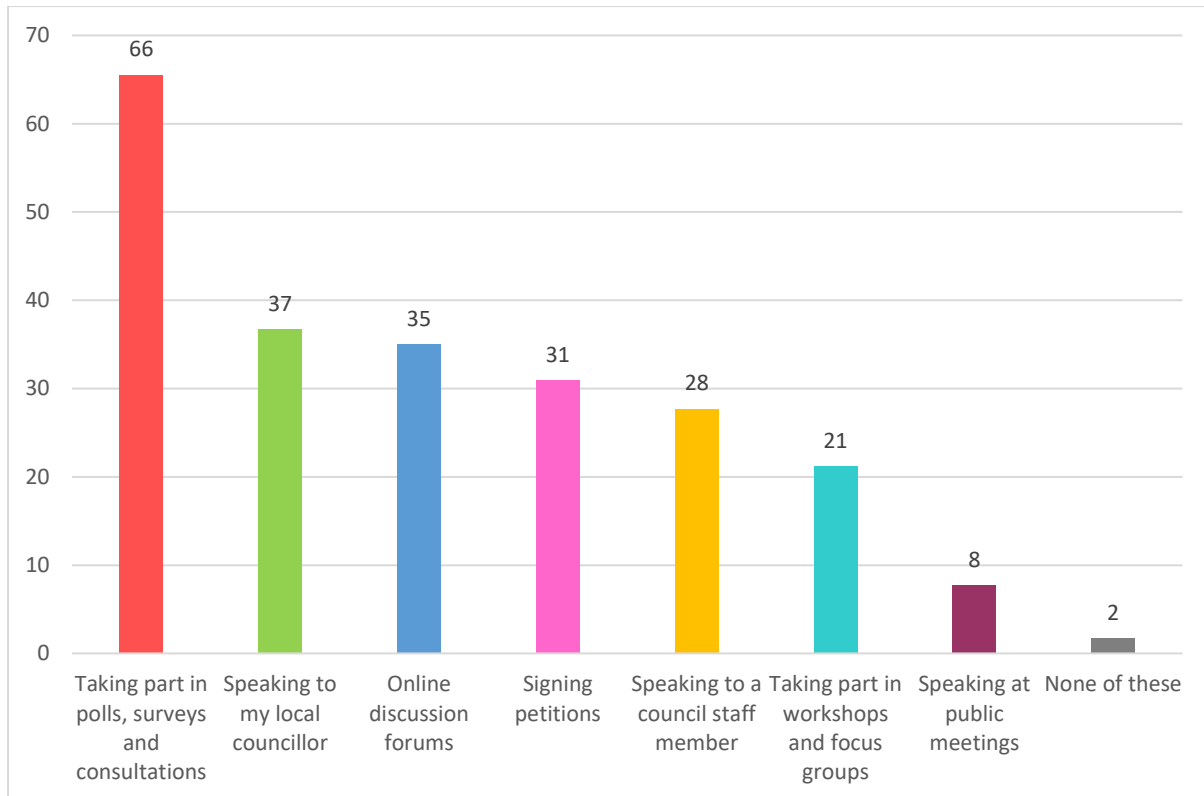
In 2018, respondents felt strongly that they could not influence decisions that the council makes, and this is reflected in the 2020 survey too. In 2018, 58% of respondents felt they could not influence decisions, and in 2020, 55% of respondents felt unable to influence decisions. More respondents selected “neither agree nor disagree” in response to this question in 2020, suggesting a shift in attitudes.

There was not much variation in responses between age groups, as all groups disagreed they had influence over council decisions to an extent.

Respondents living in Goats Lees ward were much more likely to agree they had influence than respondents living in other wards, with 73% in agreement they have influence. Respondents living in Godinton ward were much more likely to disagree they had influence over council decisions (78% disagree to an extent).

Respondents matching the Urban Adversity category agreed they had influence on council decisions more than the other Acorn categories. 20% of Urban Adversity respondents agreed to an extent they had influence over decisions, compared to an average of 14% for all other categories.

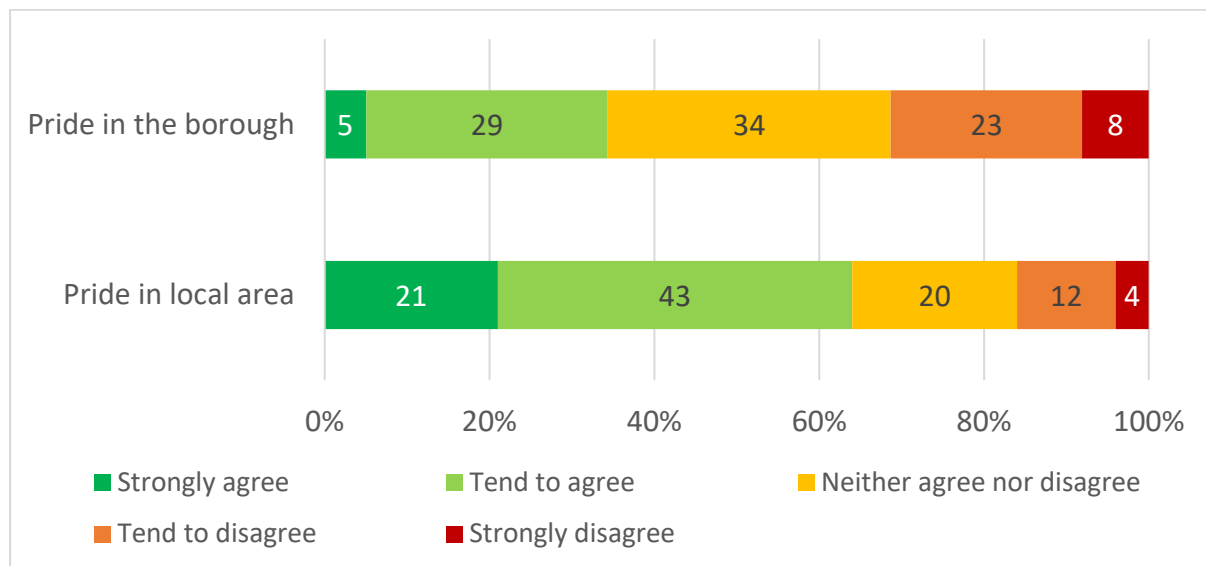
## Which of the following would make you feel more involved in council decision making?



To better understand how to enable residents to feel more involved in decision making, the council proposed several options for respondents to choose from. Note that for this chart, results do not add up to 100% as respondents could select as many options as they wanted.

Taking part in polls surveys and consultations was the most popular option, with 66% of respondents selecting this option. This was followed by speaking to my local councillor (37%) and online discussion forums (35%).

## Pride in Ashford and the local area



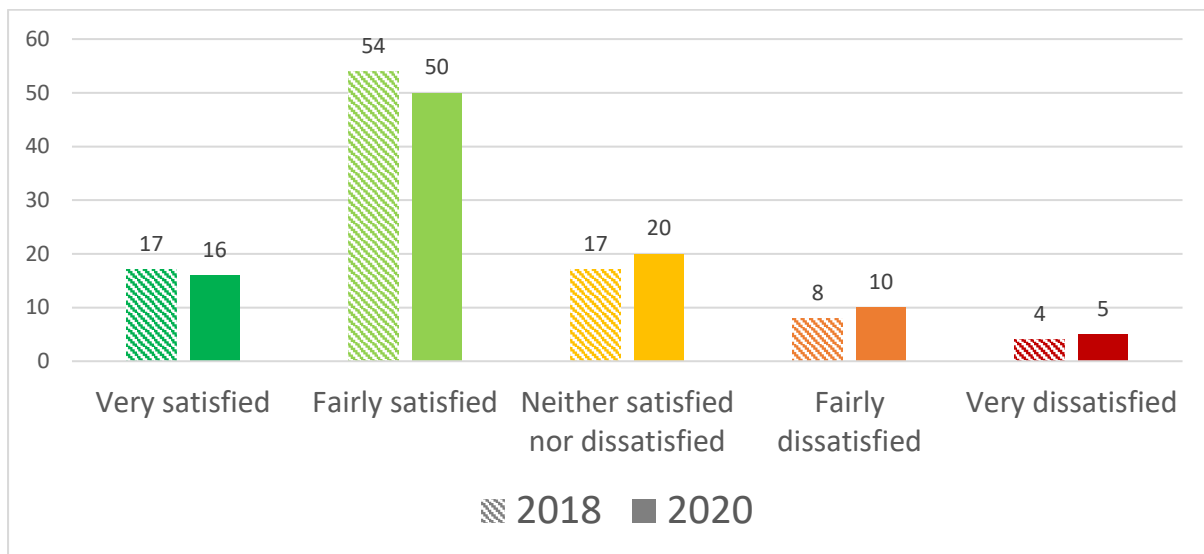
Residents were asked whether they had pride in their local area, and in the wider Ashford borough. The graph above shows that 64% of respondents agreed to an extent that they had pride in their local area, with only 16% disagreeing. However, respondents attitudes towards pride in the wider Ashford area was largely indifferent, with 34% agreeing to an extent, and 34% neither agreeing nor disagreeing they had pride in the borough.

69% of 35-44 year olds and 55-64 year olds agreed they had pride in their local area. Generally, respondents in older age groups agreed they had pride in the local area than 18-25 and 26-34 year olds. 35-44 year olds also agreed they had pride in the borough to a greater degree than other age groups, with 43% of this age group agreeing.

Pride in the local area was over 90% in three wards: 96% of respondents from Wye with Hinxhill, 95% of respondents from Weald North, and 91% of respondents in Downs North agreed they had pride in their local area. Pride in the borough was highest in Bockhanger and Goat Lees, with 57% and 54% of respondents agreeing they had pride in the borough respectively.

Affluent Achievers were the most proud with their local area as a place to live, with 75% of respondents matching this category agreeing they were proud to an extent. This is followed by Rising Prosperity respondents, 66% agreed they had pride in their local area. The category least proud of their local area was Urban Adversity, 45% of which agreed they had pride in their local area. However, both Urban Adversity and Rising Prosperity respondents agreed more than the other categories that they had pride in Ashford Borough. 43% of Rising Prosperity respondents agreed they had pride in Ashford, and 42% of Urban Adversity respondents agreed they had pride in Ashford.

## How satisfied are you with parks in the borough



*N = 1804, excl. don't know and no reply*

The majority of respondents were satisfied to extent with parks in the borough, with 66% reporting they were satisfied with parks. However, the percentage of respondents who selected “fairly satisfied” has dropped since the 2018 survey, with a slight increase in the number of respondents saying they are “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”.

The oldest and youngest age groups were the most satisfied with parks in the borough: 73% of 18-25 year olds and 69% of 65+ year olds were satisfied to an extent with the borough’s parks. 35-44 year olds were the most dissatisfied (24%).

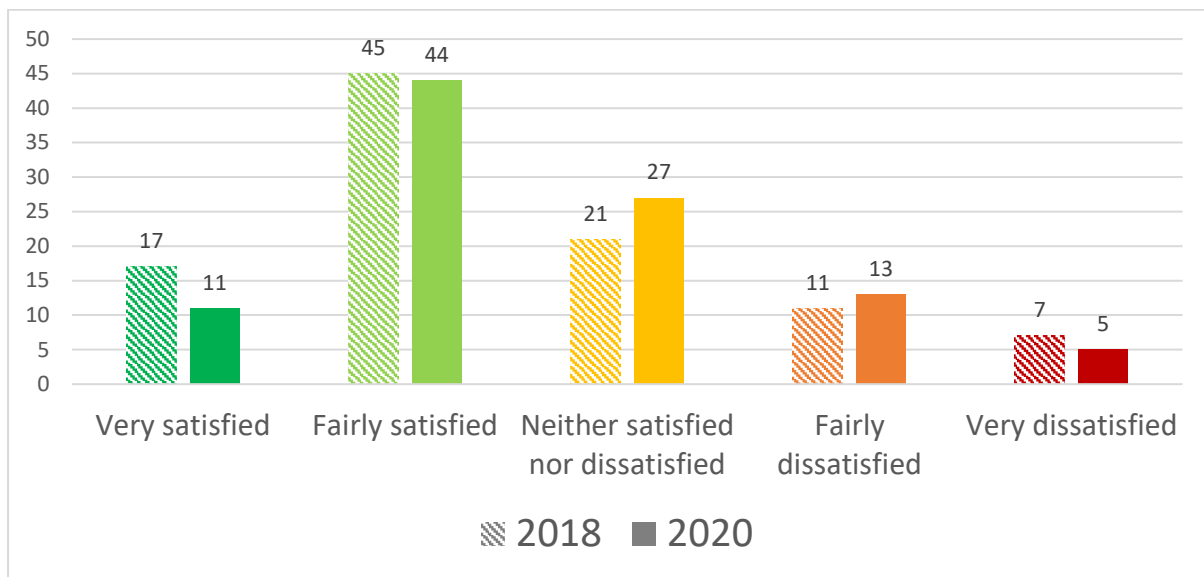
Satisfaction with parks was highest in Stanhope (84%), Downs North (82%) and Singleton East (81%). Dissatisfaction with parks was highest in Bybrook (44%), Conningbrook and Little Burton Farm (32%) and Bockhanger (31%).

Of the Acorn Categories, Rising Prosperity, Comfortable Communities, and Financially Stretched respondents were the most satisfied with parks, with 69%, 68% and 68% satisfied respectively.

### Comments:

Respondents who were dissatisfied with parks in the borough believed that they require an “upgrade” – that park facilities were often outdated and more should be done to make them welcoming and pleasant to walk through. A few respondents felt that the parks were hotspots for litter and dog mess, which could be combated through enforcement and more bins.

## How satisfied are you with play areas in the borough



*N = 1586, excl. don't know and no reply*

The majority of respondents were satisfied to an extent with play areas in the borough, with 55% of respondents reporting they were satisfied. However, the percentage of respondents who selected “very satisfied” has dropped since the 2018 survey, with a fair increase in the number of respondents saying they are “neither satisfied nor dissatisfied”.

Overall, there was not much variation in satisfaction with play areas between age groups, however 65+ year olds were the most satisfied (59% satisfied). 28% of 35-44 year olds were dissatisfied with play area facilities.

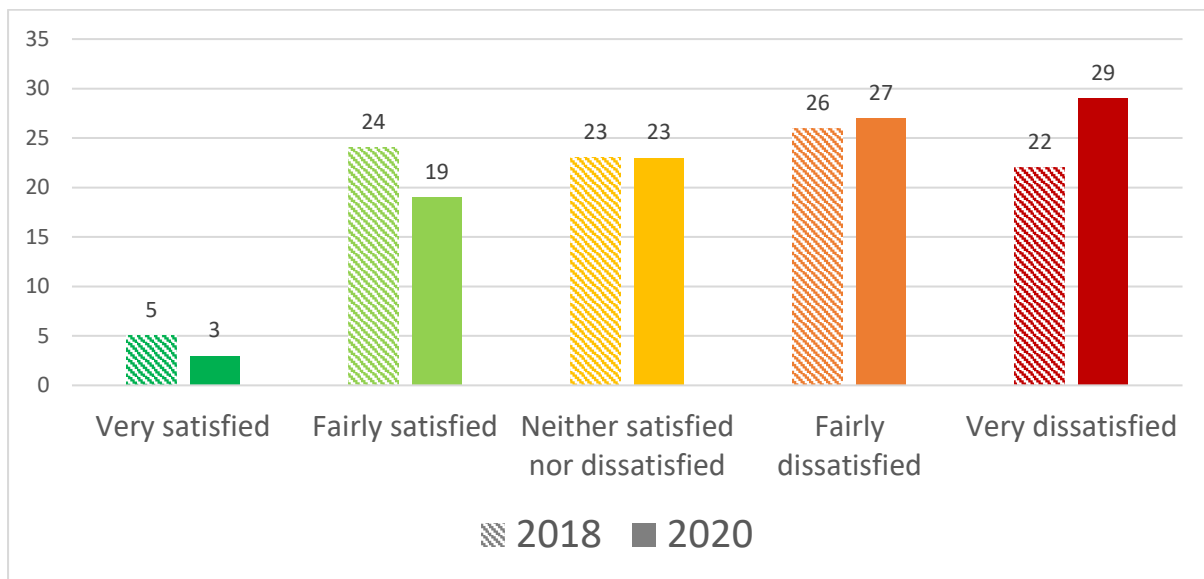
Respondents in Biddenden, Roman and Stanhope were most satisfied to an extent with play areas in the borough, with 87%, 77% and 77% satisfied respectively. The wards with the greatest percentage of dissatisfied respondents were Bybrook (69%) and Bockhanger (42%).

Respondents matching the Comfortable Communities category were the most satisfied with play areas (60% satisfied). Urban Adversity respondents were most dissatisfied (24%).

### Comments:

As with parks, respondents who were dissatisfied with play areas felt the play equipment in many areas needed to be upgraded or fixed. A few respondents felt there were not enough play areas or recreational grounds for young people to go to. In particular, some play areas were thought to be unsafe, as they attract anti-social behaviour.

## How satisfied are you with public toilets



*N = 1692, excl. don't know and no reply*

Dissatisfaction with public toilet provision in Ashford Borough is high, with the majority of respondents (55%) stating they are dissatisfied to an extent with this service. The percentage of respondents selecting “very dissatisfied” has increased from 22% to 29% since 2018. Just 22% of respondents were satisfied with this service to an extent.

18-26 year olds were much more satisfied with public toilets than the remaining age groups, as 31% of this age group were satisfied with the provision. 58% of 26-34 year olds and 65+ year olds were dissatisfied with public toilets.

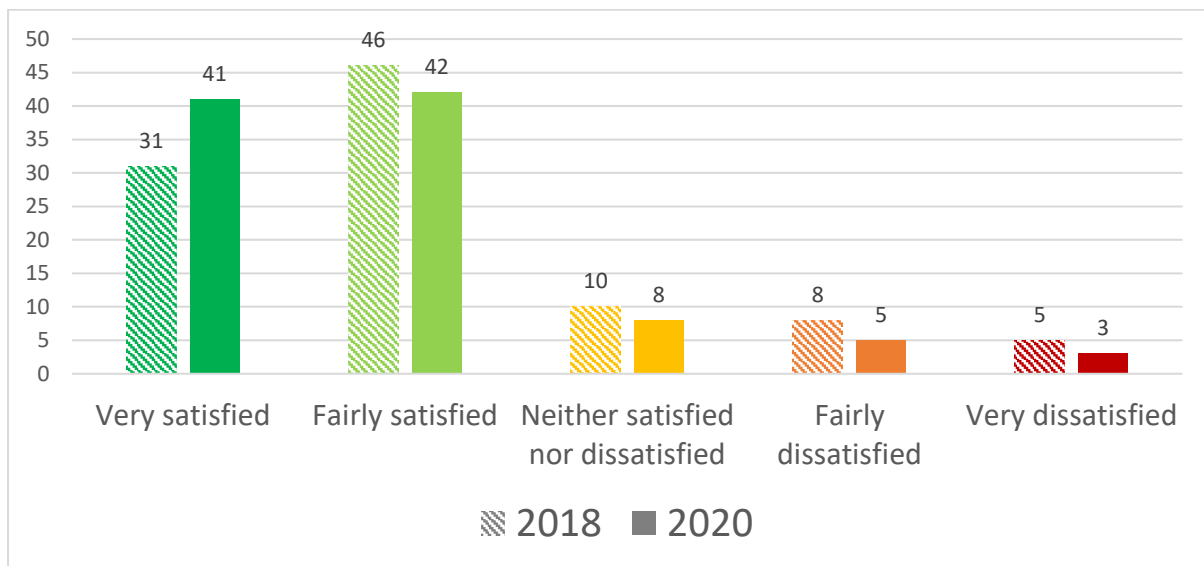
Residents with disabilities are more dissatisfied with public toilet provision than those without: 68% of residents with disabilities reported they were dissatisfied, compared to 53% of residents without disabilities reporting dissatisfaction.

Respondents in Tenterden South and Tenterden St Michaels were most satisfied with public toilets; 66% and 64% satisfied respectively. Wards with the highest percentage of dissatisfied respondents were Godinton (86%), Bybrook (83%) and Saxon Shore (79%).

### Comments:

Comments left by respondents were mainly around the lack of public toilets, and the condition of existing ones. Respondents largely felt that there are not enough public toilets (in particular in Ashford town centre), and that the ones that are open are not cleaned frequently enough and become shelter for homeless people.

## How satisfied are you with bin collection



*N = 1979, excl. don't know and no reply*

An overwhelming majority of respondents were satisfied with bin collection service in 2020, with 83% reporting they were satisfied with this service. The percentage of respondents selecting “very satisfied” has increased by around 10% since 2018.

There was a slight correlation between age and satisfaction with bin collection: as age increases satisfaction with this service also increases. 91% of 65+ year olds were satisfied with this service, compared to 65% of 18-25 year olds.

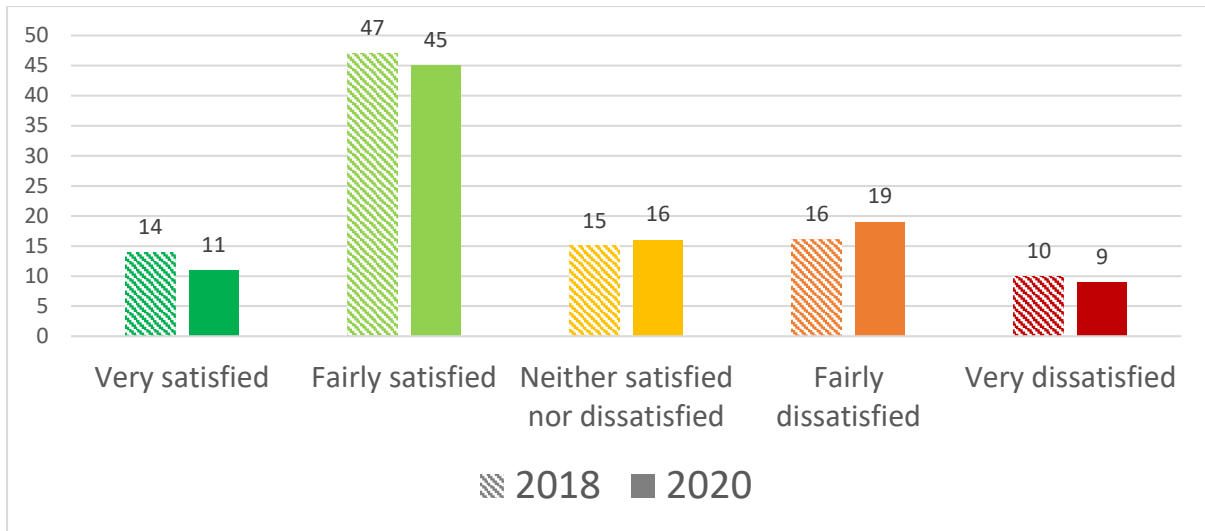
Over 90% of respondents were satisfied to an extent with bin collection: Charing, Bybrook, Biddenden, Park Farm North, Tenterden South, Wye with Hinxhill, Mersham, Sevington South and Finberry, Conningbrook and Little Burton Farm, Downs North, Rolvenden and Tenterden West, Downs West, Upper Weald, Washford, and Saxon Shore. Respondents in Godinton were much more dissatisfied with bin collection than respondents in other wards, with 43% dissatisfied to some extent.

### Comments:

Respondents did not have many comments as to why they were dissatisfied with bin collection. Most comments were around specific issues that residents had experienced with this service, such as the collections being late or sometimes not coming. A few respondents were concerned that waste disposal operatives leave collected bins on the pavement, blocking the walkways for residents with physical disabilities or parents with small children in pushchairs.



## How satisfied are you with the way the council keeps streets and footpaths clean?



*N = 1967, excl. don't know and no reply*

56% of respondents were satisfied to an extent with the way the council keeps the streets and footpaths clean. However, the percentage of respondents selecting “very satisfied” has dropped slightly since the 2018 survey, while the percentage of respondents selecting fairly dissatisfied has slightly increased.

26-34 year olds were the most satisfied with keeping the streets and footpaths clean (61%). 18-25 year olds were the most dissatisfied with this service, as 36% of this age group were dissatisfied.

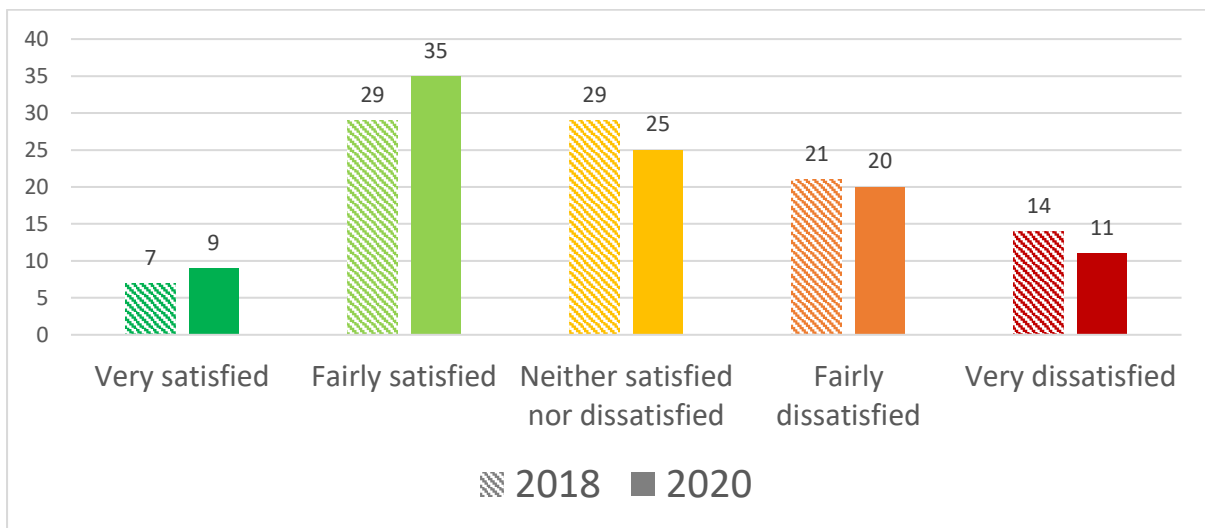
Satisfaction with the council’s ability to keep the streets and footpaths clean was highest in Park Farm North, with 82% of respondents from this ward reporting they are satisfied to an extent. The ward with the highest percentage of dissatisfied respondents was Norman, with 59% dissatisfied.

Residents and the Rising Prosperity and Comfortable Communities Acorn categories were most satisfied with the council’s ability to keep the streets and footpaths clean, as 61% of both groups were satisfied to an extent.

### Comments:

Many of the comments on street and footpath cleanliness were regarding the maintenance of the pavements, rather than their actual cleanliness. Some respondents felt that pavements needed to be repaired in places, where they have become cracked or overgrown, making them less accessible.

## How satisfied are you with the way the council deals with dog mess



*N = 1822, excl. don't know and no reply*

Satisfaction with the way the council deals with dog mess was fairly mixed. 44% were satisfied to an extent, and 31% were dissatisfied to an extent with this service. 25% of respondents were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Satisfaction with this service has increased since the 2018 survey.

Of all age groups, 18-25 year olds were the most satisfied with the way the council deals with dog mess (63%). 45-54 year olds were the most dissatisfied with this service (41%).

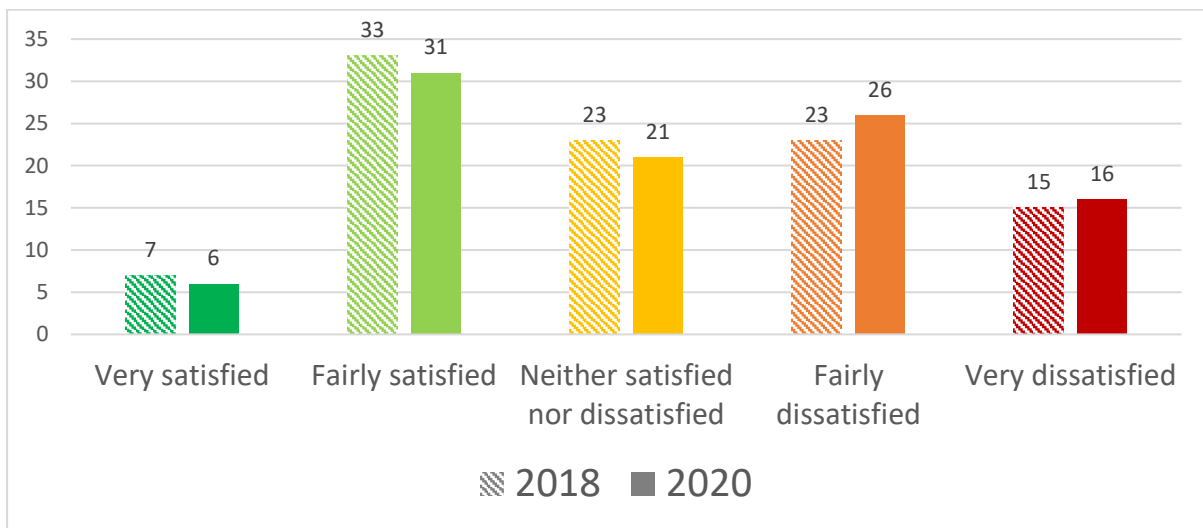
Satisfaction with the way the council deals with dog mess was highest in Tenterden North Ward (67% satisfied). Respondents in Norman ward were most dissatisfied, with 70% of respondents in this ward dissatisfied to an extent.

Respondents in the Fairly Satisfied Acorn category were the most satisfied with the way the council deals with dog mess (49%). Respondents in the Urban Adversity category were the most dissatisfied.

### Comments:

Respondents noted that dog mess was a problem in some places, particularly green spaces and on public walkways. Some respondents stated they wanted the council to install more dog waste bins, and to fine residents not picking up their dog's waste more harshly. A few said they wanted more enforcement officers to do more patrols.

## How satisfied are you with the way the council deals with littering



*N = 1927, excl. don't know and no reply*

Overall, respondents were dissatisfied with the way the council deals with littering in the borough, with 42% saying they were dissatisfied. However, 37% of respondents were also satisfied with this service. Opinions on littering varied by area, as explained below.

The two youngest age groups (18-25, 26-34 year olds) were most satisfied with the way the council deals with littering, with 44% and 50% satisfied with this service respectively. 45-54 year olds are most dissatisfied with this service (51%).

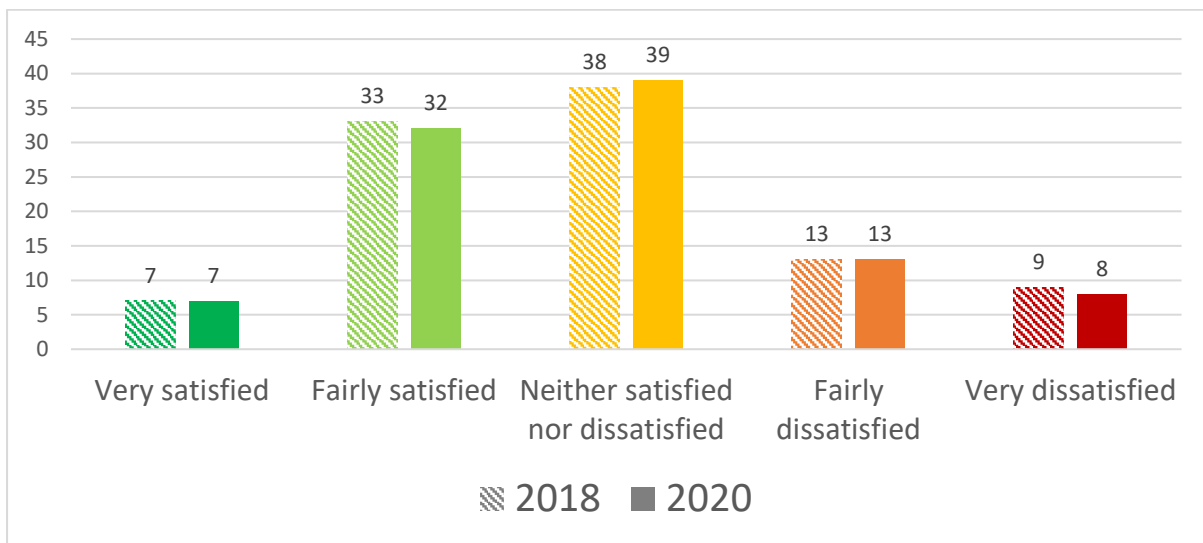
Respondents in Tenterden North and South were most satisfied with the way the council deals with littering (65% satisfied). Respondents in Weald North and Godinton were most dissatisfied, with 68% and 67% of respondents dissatisfied respectively.

There was a correlation between the affluence of respondents and their satisfaction with littering in the borough, as affluence increases, satisfaction with littering decreases.

### Comments:

Respondents identified littering as more of an issue in the following areas: on roadsides, on green spaces, parks and play areas, and in streets. Respondents would like to see more enforcement for those littering, and more frequent litter picks.

## How satisfied are you with the way the council deals with graffiti



*N = 1681, excl. don't know and no reply*

39% of respondents were satisfied to an extent with the way the council deals with graffiti. However, 39% were also neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the way the council deals with graffiti in the borough.

18-25 year olds were the least satisfied with the way the council deals with graffiti, with just 26% satisfied and 26% dissatisfied with this service.

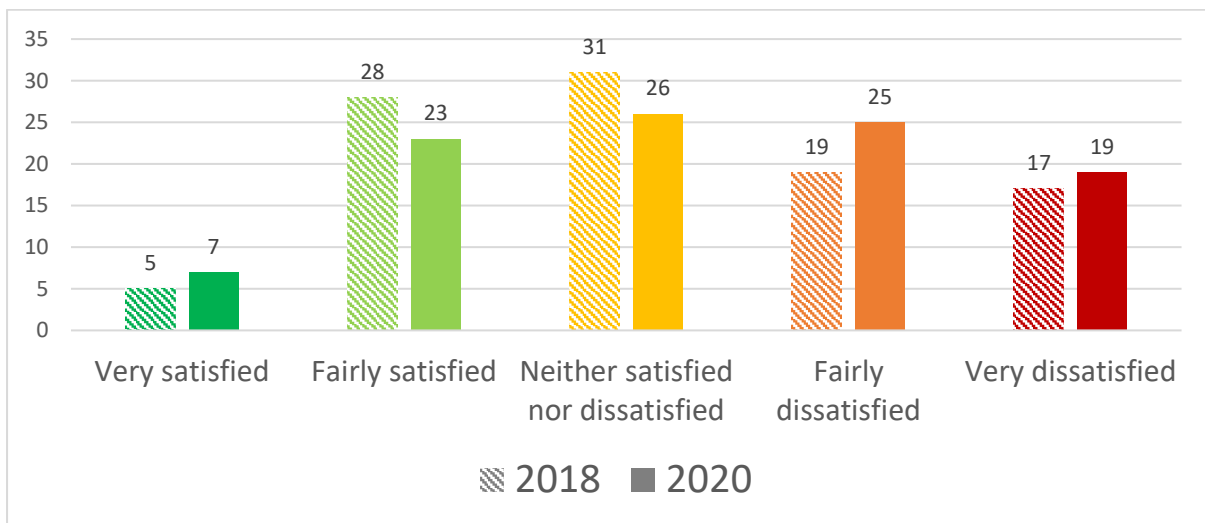
Respondents in Tenterden North were most satisfied with graffiti (74%), followed by Respondents in Washford (68%). Respondents in Godinton and Mersham, Sevington and Finberry were most dissatisfied, with 56% and 48% dissatisfied respectively.

Respondents matching the Urban Adversity category are the most satisfied with graffiti, with 45% satisfied with the way the council deals with it.

### Comments:

A few respondents left comments as to why they were dissatisfied with graffiti, mainly stating it is an issue in some areas of the borough, and that it is not cleared away quickly enough.

## How satisfied are you with the way the council deals with fly tipping



*N = 1769, excl. don't know and no reply*

Dissatisfaction with flytipping has increased since the 2018 survey, from 36% to 44%. 30% of respondents were satisfied to an extent with this service.

26-34 year olds were most satisfied with the way the council deals with flytipping (36%), followed by 35-44 year olds (32% satisfied). The most dissatisfied age group was 45-54 year olds (50% dissatisfied), followed by 55-64 and 65+ year olds (both 47%).

Respondents in Washford ward were most satisfied with flytipping (58%).

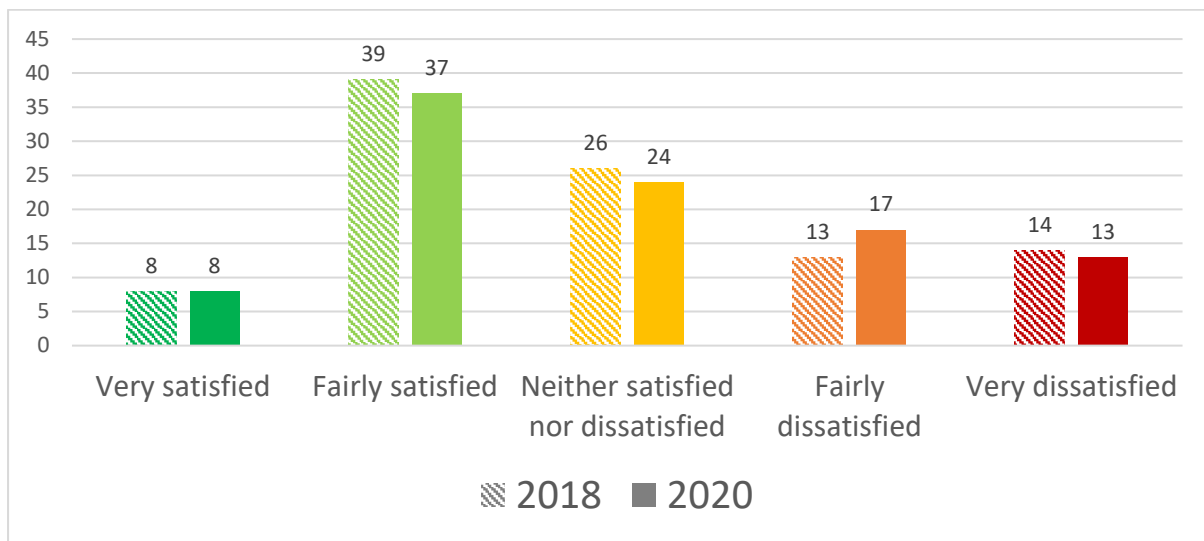
Respondents in rural wards were more dissatisfied than urban ones. The three most dissatisfied wards were Saxon Shore (76%), Weald North (71%) and Weald South (69%).

Respondents matching the Urban Adversity category were the most satisfied with flytipping (35% satisfied to an extent). The Acorn category with the most dissatisfied respondents was Affluent Achievers: with just over half (54%) the respondents in this group stating they were dissatisfied.

### Comments:

Many respondents said KCC's charge on the household waste centre has lead to an increase in fly tipping, however, actual flytipping statistics demonstrate there has not been such a trend. Many respondents felt prosecuting people committing fly tipping offences was required to reduce fly tipping and deter others.

## How satisfied are you with council car parks



*N = 1852, excl. don't know and no reply*

Respondents were largely satisfied with council car parks, with 45% of respondents indicating they were satisfied to an extent with the car park provision. However, dissatisfaction has increased slightly since the 2018 survey.

Older respondents were slightly more satisfied with council-owned car parks than respondents in younger age groups. 50% of over 65s were satisfied with the car parks, compared to 41% of 18-25 year olds. In contrast, 22% of over 65s were dissatisfied with the car parks, compared to 35% of 18-25 year olds.

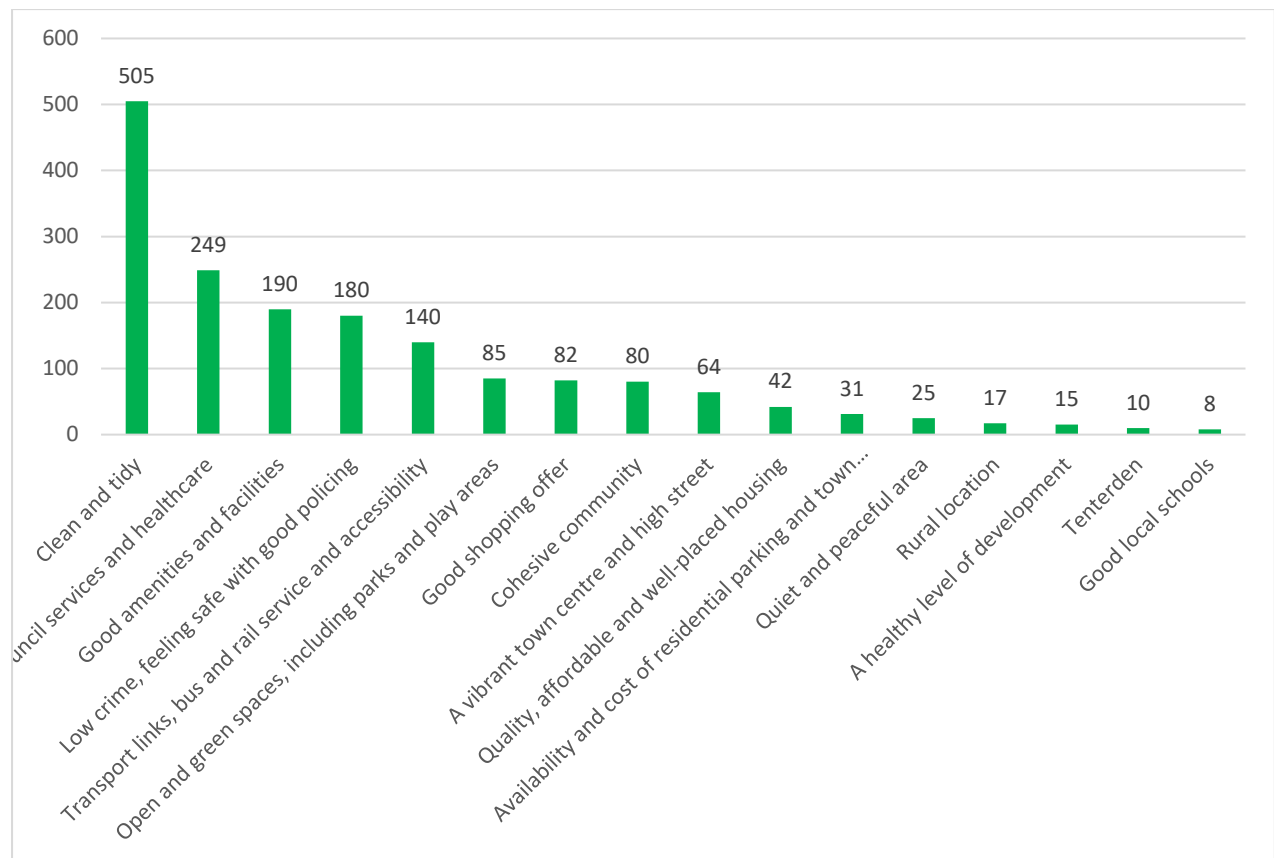
Respondents in Downs North were most satisfied with council car parks (66%). 66% of respondents in Godinton were dissatisfied.

Respondents matching the Comfortable Communities Acorn category were the most satisfied with council-owned car parks; with 50% satisfied to an extent. The most dissatisfied Acorn category was Rising Prosperity, with 39% of this group stating they are dissatisfied to an extent.

### Comments:

Most of the comments around car parking were regarding the price of council car parks; many respondents feel they are too expensive and should be free or free at certain times to bring more people into the towns. A few respondents felt the charges and lack of available spaces lead to pavement parking, which makes walkways less accessible.

## What 3 things do you think are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?



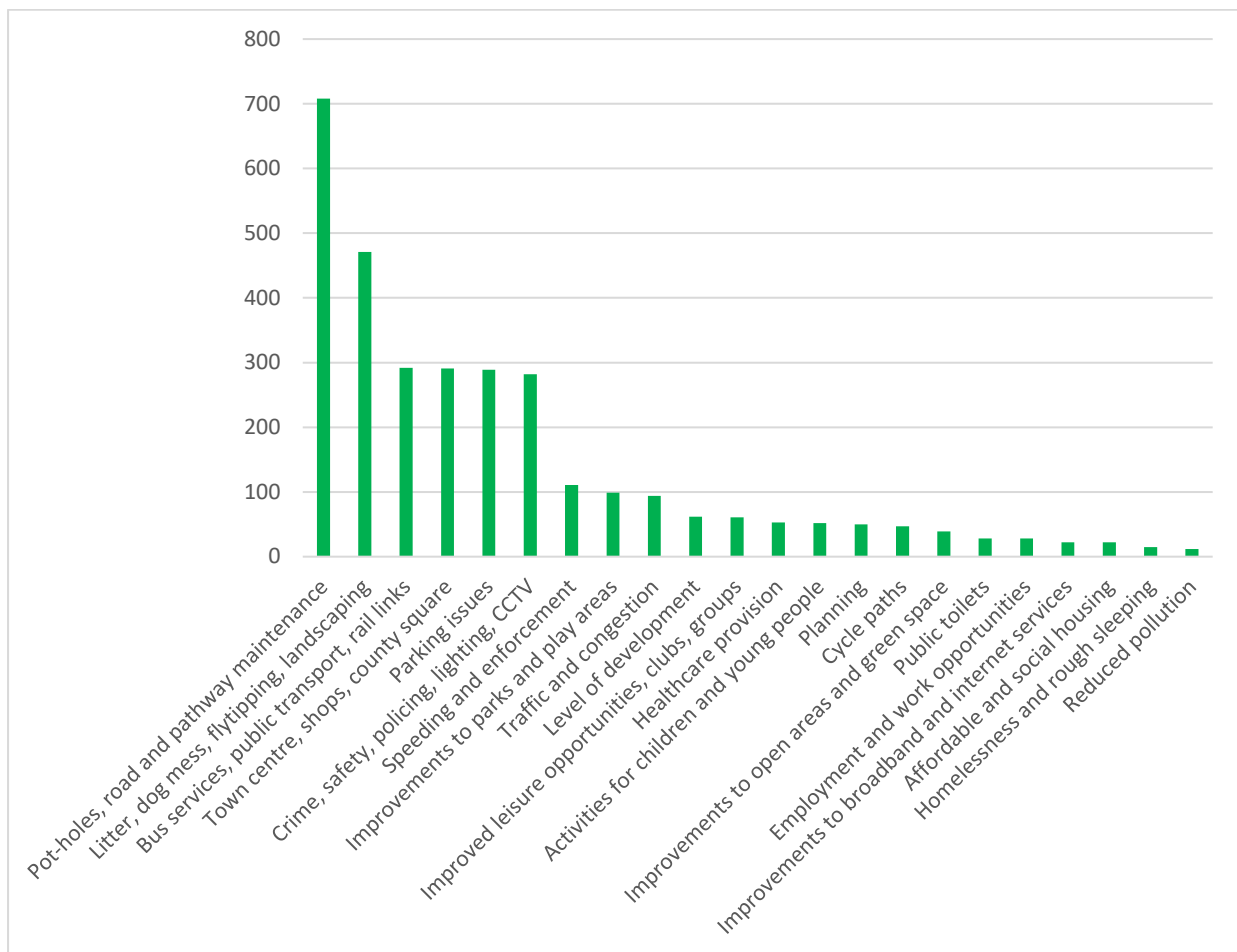
This question was open-ended so respondents could write in as much detail as possible. A similar question to this was asked in the 2018 survey, but instead of being an open-ended question, respondents were asked to select from a list of options, so are not directly comparable.

Respondents gave a number of reasons as to what is most important in making somewhere a good place to live. Though the questions did not directly asking about what they feel makes Ashford a good place to live, many respondents took this question as an opportunity to state what they felt makes Ashford a nice area to live in.

Keeping an area clean and tidy was the most important thing in making somewhere a good place to live. Many respondents said Ashford was clean and tidy already, with roads and walkways kept clear of rubbish, and well-maintained open-spaces. Good council services and healthcare provision was the second most mentioned aspect of making an area a good place to live.

In the 2018 survey, low crime and feeling safe in your local area was the most selected aspect of making somewhere a good place to live from the options respondents were given. However, in the 2020 survey, it was the 4<sup>th</sup> most mentioned aspect, with 180 respondents commenting on safety.

## What do you think needs most improving about your local area?

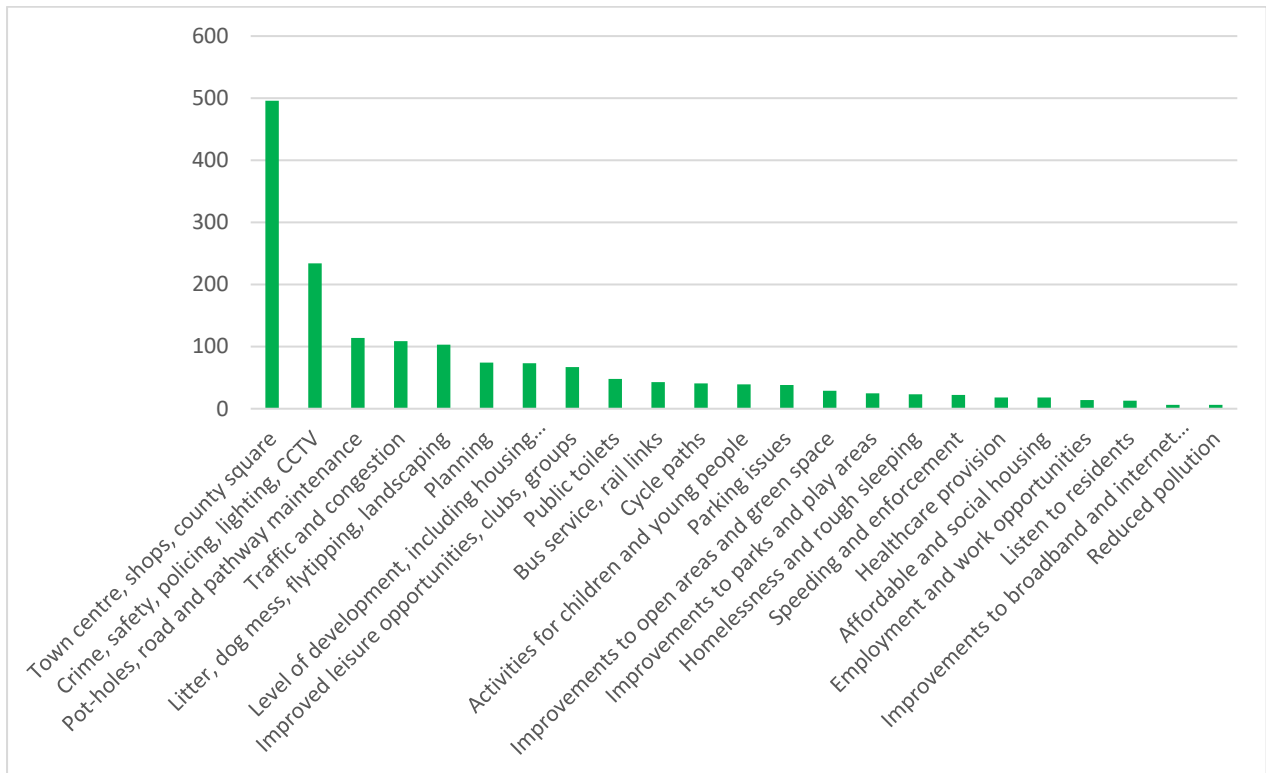


This question was open-ended so respondents could write in as much detail as possible. A similar question to this was asked in the 2018 survey, but instead of being an open-ended question, respondents were asked to select from a list of options, so are not directly comparable.

Respondents gave a number of reasons as to what is most needed improvement in the local area. By far the most mentioned issue was the condition of road and pathways, with just over 700 comments mentioning this. This was followed by comments regarding council services, such as problems with litter, dog mess and fly tipping.



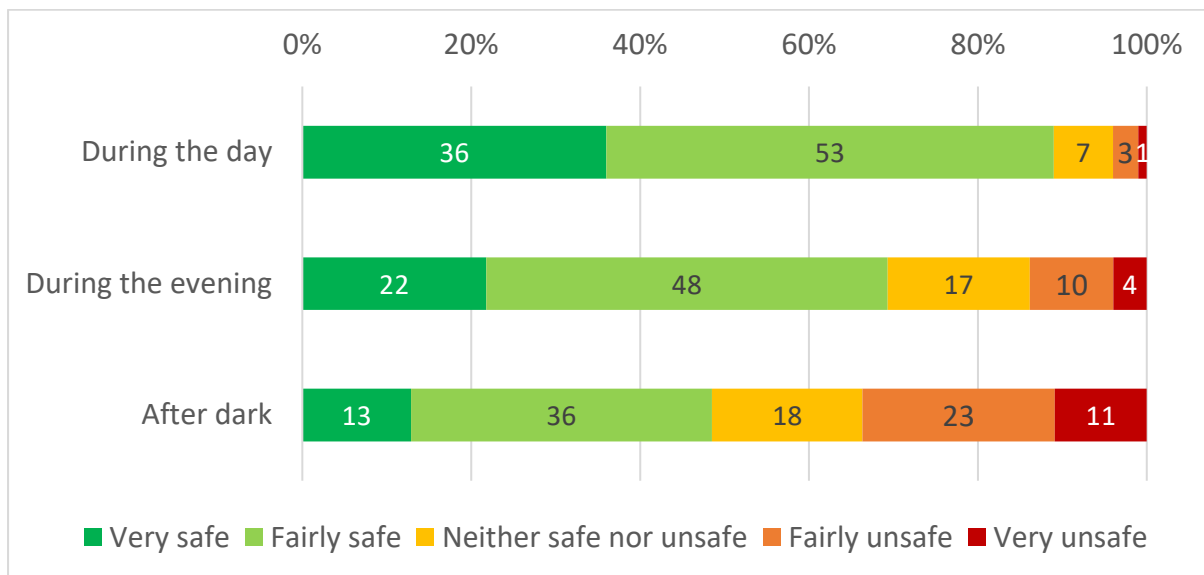
## What do you think needs most improving about Ashford Borough?



This question was open-ended so respondents could write in as much detail as possible. As opposed to the previous question, which asked about the local area, this question asked what most needed improvement in the whole of the borough.

Respondents gave a number of reasons as to what is most needed improvement in the local area. By far the most mentioned issue was the town centre. Many respondents felt it was unsatisfactory: due to perceptions that it was not safe, that the shopping provision was poor and too many shops were vacant and that it is too difficult to access and has issues with littering. Alongside issues with Ashford town centre, many respondents would like improvements made to safety, with particular regard to reducing crime and more policing.

## Safety in Ashford



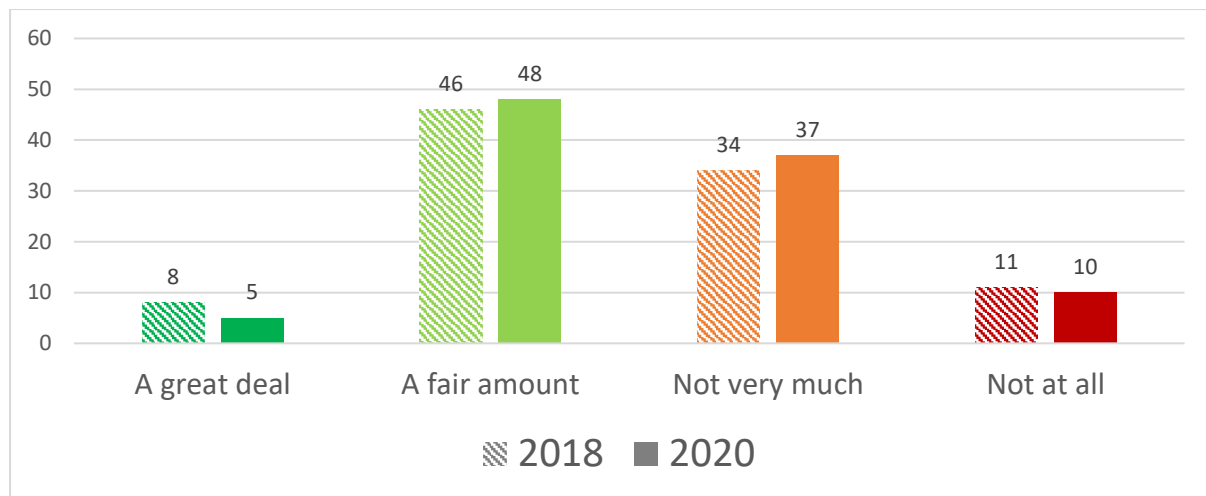
The survey asked for residents' perceptions of safety in the local area at different times of day. Respondents felt overwhelmingly safe in their local area during the day, with 36% indicating they felt very safe, and 53% indicating they felt fairly safe. While most respondents (70%) reported they feel safe during the evening, feelings of safety diminish throughout the day. 49% of respondents saying they feel safe to an extent after dark, and 34% reported they feel unsafe.

There was a correlation between respondent affluence and feelings of safety across all times of day; as affluence increases so do feelings of being safe. For instance 93% of Affluent Achievers feel safe to an extent during the day, in contrast to 84% of Urban Adversity respondents. After dark, 62% of Affluent Achievers reported they felt safe, compared with 32% of Urban Adversity respondents.

### Comments:

Respondents often felt that some areas of the borough were unsafe, in particular Ashford Town Centre. Respondents felt that feelings of safety could be improved through more police controls, security cameras (CCTV), better lighting in the evening and at night, and ultimately a reduced crime rate.

## Overall, how well informed do you think Ashford Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?



*N = 1910, excl. don't know and no reply*

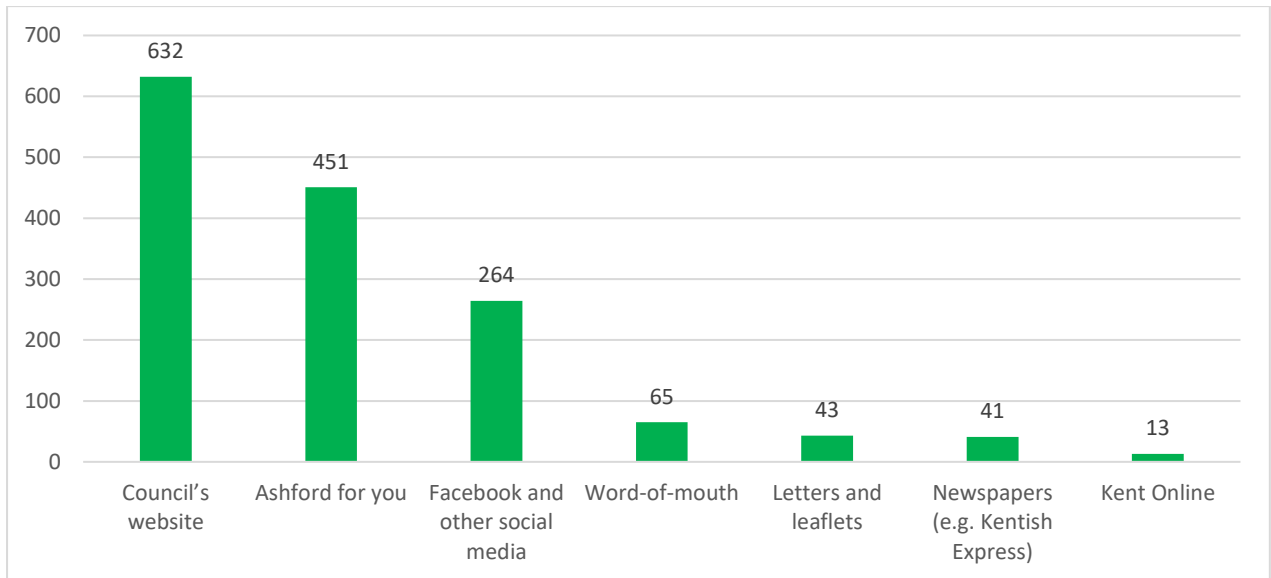
A large proportion (48%) of respondents felt that the council keeps them informed “a fair amount” about the services and benefits provided. 37% of respondents felt that the council keeps them informed “not very much”, and 10% “not at all.” Overall, more respondents feel the council keeps them informed than uninformed.

There was a correlation between age agreement that the council keeps residents informed. As age increases, so does the level of agreement that the council keeps residents informed. 65% of 65+ year olds felt the council keeps them informed to a degree, whereas 34% of respondents in the 18-25 year old group felt they are informed.

Respondents in Rolvenden and Tenterden West felt the most informed of all respondents, with 79% of the respondents in this ward feeling informed to some extent. Respondents from Godinton felt most uninformed of all the wards, with 81% stating they felt uninformed. There was a noticeable trend in the results – residents in urban areas around the town centre generally felt more uninformed than those living in rural wards.

Over 50% of respondents in the following Acorn Categories felt informed to a degree about the services and benefits provided by the council: Affluent Achievers, Comfortable Communities, and Financially Stretched. However, 55% of Rising Prosperity respondents and 61% of Urban Adversity respondents felt the council does not keep them informed. It is important to note that these two Acorn categories are more likely to contain younger respondents, who felt they were kept uninformed.

## How do you find out about the services and benefits Ashford Borough Council provides



The council's website was the most frequently mentioned way residents get informed about the benefits and services the council provides, with 632 respondents mentioning this method. This was followed by Ashford For You (451 mentions) and the council's Facebook and various social media pages (264 mentions). Just 13 respondents said they get their information on the council from Kent Online.

## Ashford For You

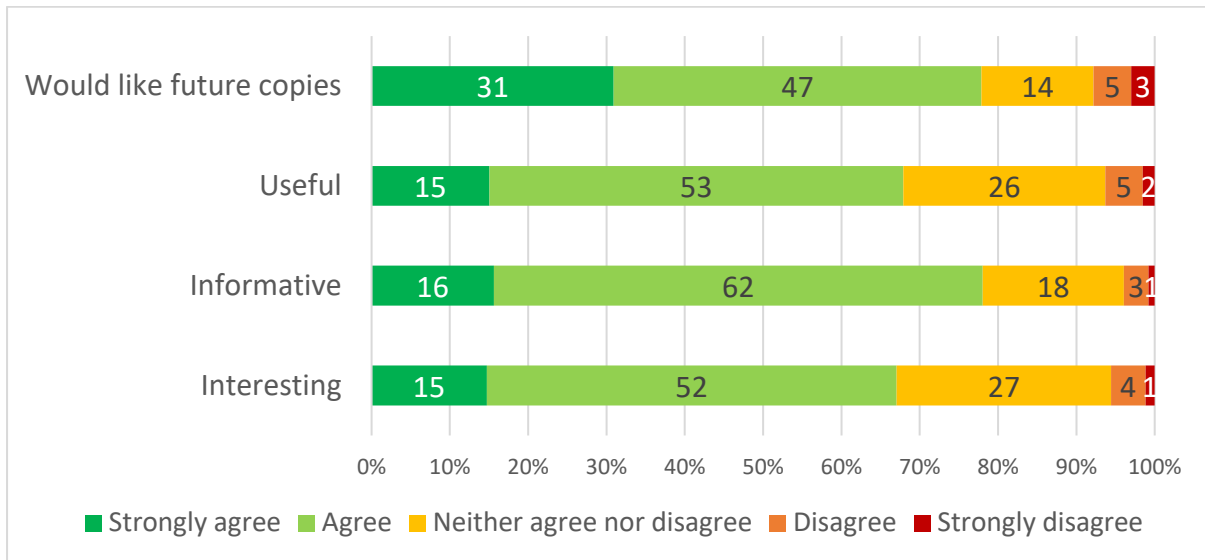


*N = 1964, excl. no reply*

The large majority of respondents had received and read Ashford For You (70%), Ashford Borough Council's magazine which is sent to all households across the borough. However, 22% of respondents reported they had never received a copy of the magazine.

Over half of respondents in Godinton and Mersham, Sevington South and Finberry had reported they had never received a copy of Ashford For You (61% of Godinton respondents, 52% of Mersham respondents).

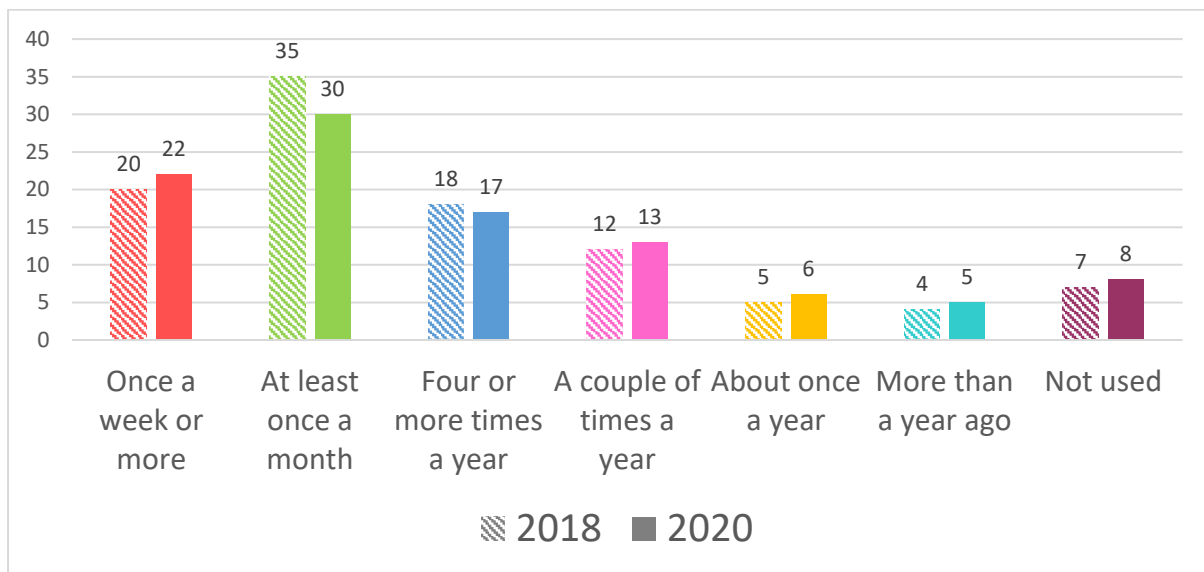
## Opinions on Ashford For You



*N = 1409, excl. no reply*

Respondents who had received and read Ashford For You had very positive opinions of the magazine overall. Most respondents agreed to an extent that it was informative, interesting and useful, and would like future copies of the magazine.

## How often do you visit Park Mall shopping centre?



*N = 1969, excl. no reply*

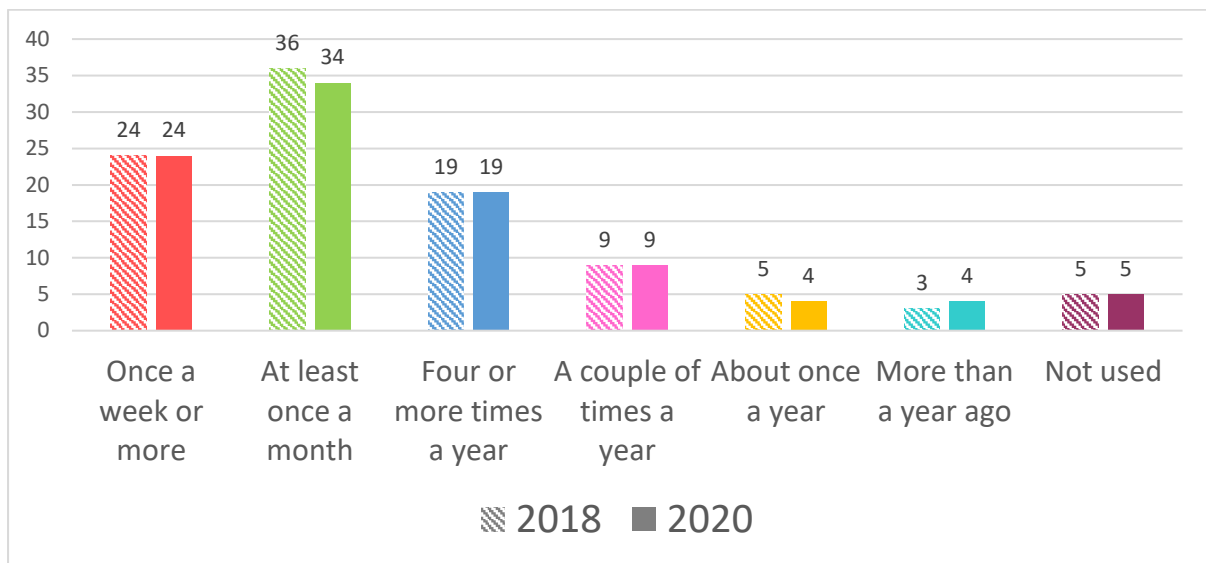
Respondents visited Park Mall shopping centre fairly frequently, with 22% visiting once a week or more, and 30% visiting at least once a month. However, monthly visits to Park Mall have dropped slightly since the 2018 survey.

18-26 year olds visit Park Mall much more frequently than the other age groups, with 31% of this age group visiting once a week or more, in contrast to an average of 20% of respondents in other age groups. 44% of 18-25 year olds also visit at least once a month. 65+ year olds visit the least overall, with 13% of respondents of this age group having never visited Park Mall.

Respondents living in wards around the town centre visited Park Mall more frequently than those in rural wards. For example, 49% of respondents in Furley ward and 48% of respondents in Bybrook visited Park Mall at least once a week or more, compared to 0% Tenterden North respondents and 1% of Tenterden South respondents.

Due to the trend outlined above, Acorn Categories with a high proportion of younger respondents were more likely to visit Park Mall more frequently, resulting in 30% of Rising Prosperity respondents and 39% of Urban Adversity respondents visiting Park Mall once a week or more. In contrast 16% of Affluent Achievers had never visited Park Mall.

## How often do you visit County Square Shopping Centre?



*N = 1979, excl. no reply*

Respondents visited County Square shopping centre slightly more frequently than Park Mall. 24% said they visit once a week or more, and 34% reported they visit at least once a month. Visit frequency to County Square remains mostly unchanged since the 2018 survey.

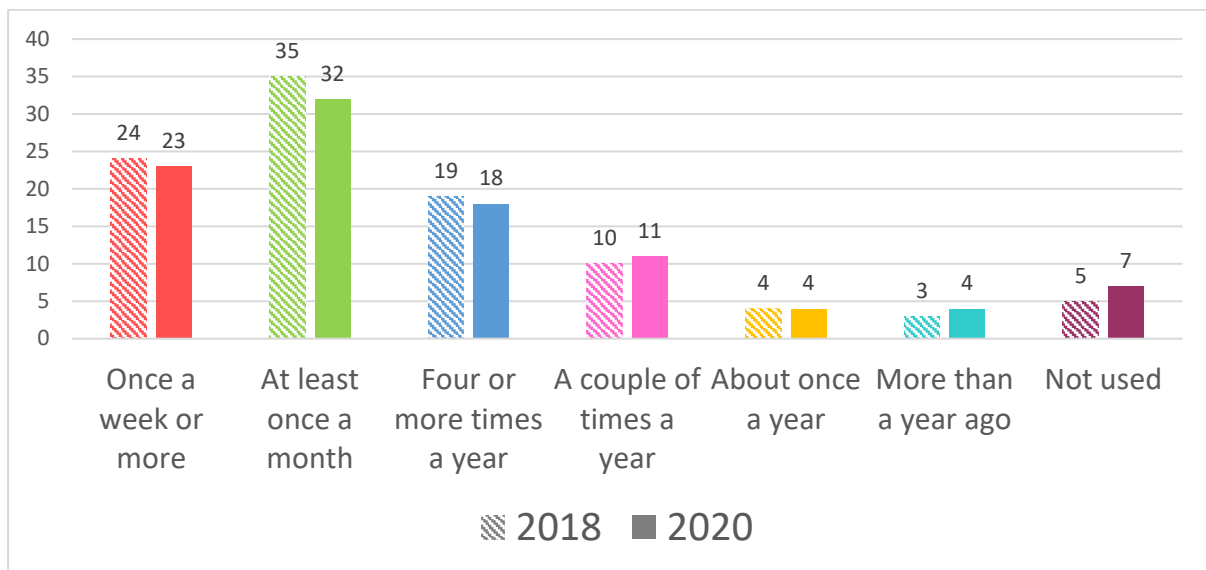
Almost all respondents aged 18-25 and 26-34 had visited County Square at some point in the past year. 40% of 18-25 year olds visit once a week or more, and nearly half of 26-34 year olds visited at least once a month. 65+ year olds visited the least frequently, with 10% of this age group reporting they had never been to County Square.

Respondents living in wards around the town centre visited County Square more frequently than those in rural wards. For example, 49% of respondents in Furley ward and 48% of respondents in Bybrook visited County Square at least once a week or more, compared to 0% Tenterden North respondents and 1% of Tenterden South respondents.

As with Park Mall, Acorn Categories with a high proportion of younger respondents were more likely to visit Park Mall more frequently, resulting in 31% of Rising Prosperity respondents and 42% of Urban Adversity respondents visiting County Square once a week or more. In contrast 16% of Affluent Achievers had never visited County Square.



## How often do you shop in general in the town centre?

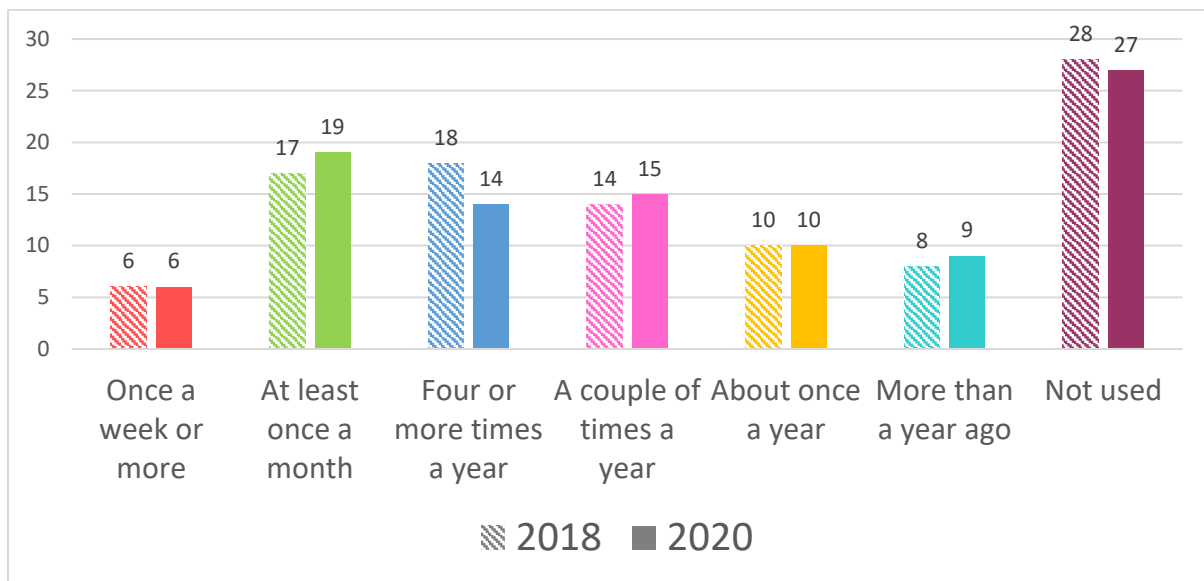


*N = 1972, excl. no reply*

Shopping in the town centre in general was still frequent in 2020 as in 2018. 23% of respondents said they visited the town centre for general shopping once a week or more, and 32% said they visited at least once a month.

Respondents in 3 of the closest wards to the town centre go there to shop in general more frequently than respondents in other wards: 61% of respondents in Furley, 50% of respondents in Bybrook and 41% of respondents in Victoria go to the town centre for general shopping once a week or more. Respondents in rural wards, particularly those surrounding Tenterden, were more likely to have never visited Ashford Town Centre to shop in general: 33% of respondents in Tenterden North, 29% in Rolvenden and Tenterden West and 27% of respondents in Biddenden indicated they had never been to Ashford town centre for general shopping.

## How often do you eat out in the town centre in the daytime?



*N = 1960, excl. no reply*

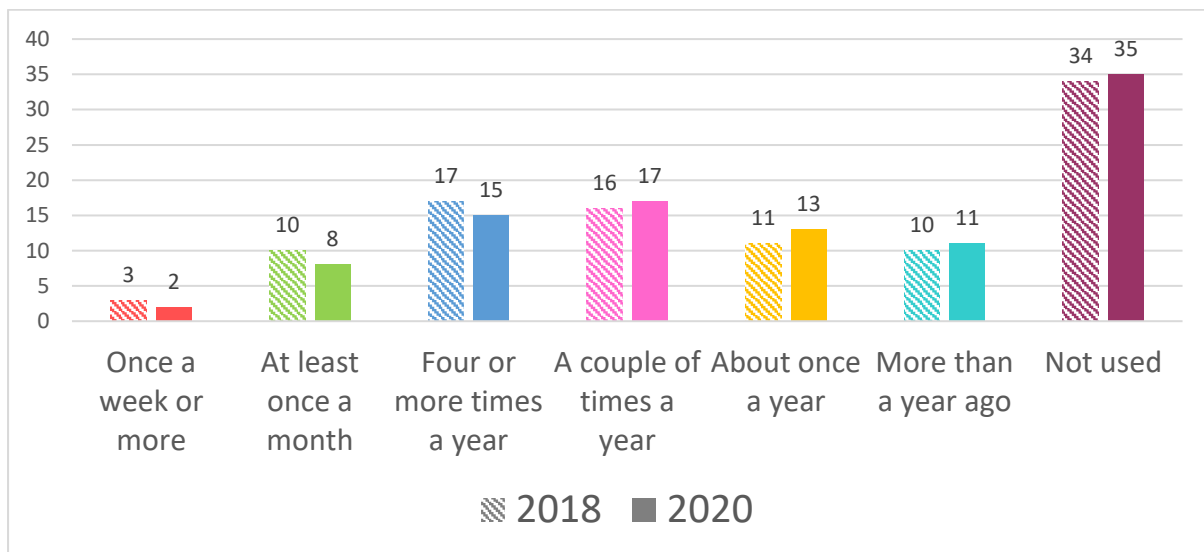
A large proportion of respondents had not been to the town centre to dine out during the daytime. However, 19% of respondents reported they dine out in Ashford Town Centre at least once a month.

Once again, younger respondents were the most frequent visitors of the town centre to eat out during the day time, with 48% of 18-25 year olds visiting the town to dine during the daytime at least once a month. There was a strong correlation between age and non-usage of this town centre for this activity; as age increases so do the number of respondents indicating they had never dined out in the town centre – from 4% of 18-25 year olds to 43% of 65+ year olds.

Despite only 6% of respondents stating they dine out in the town centre during the day once a week or more, respondents in Godinton and Bybrook do this activity more frequently than respondents in other wards. 46% of Godinton respondents and 25% of Bybrook respondents visit the town centre to dine out during the day once a week or more. As with previous activities, respondents in wards around Tenterden have never visited Ashford Town Centre for this purpose, with 72% of Tenterden North respondents, 64% of Rolvenden and Tenterden West respondents and 59% of Tenterden South respondents having never visited the town centre to dine out during the day.

Respondents matching the Rising Prosperity Acorn Category were by far the most frequent group to dine out during the day, with 18% dining out in the day once a week or more, and 18% dining out in the day at least once a month. In contrast, 42% of Affluent Achievers had not dined out in the town centre during the daytime.

## How often do you eat out in the town centre in the evening?



*N = 1956, excl. no reply*

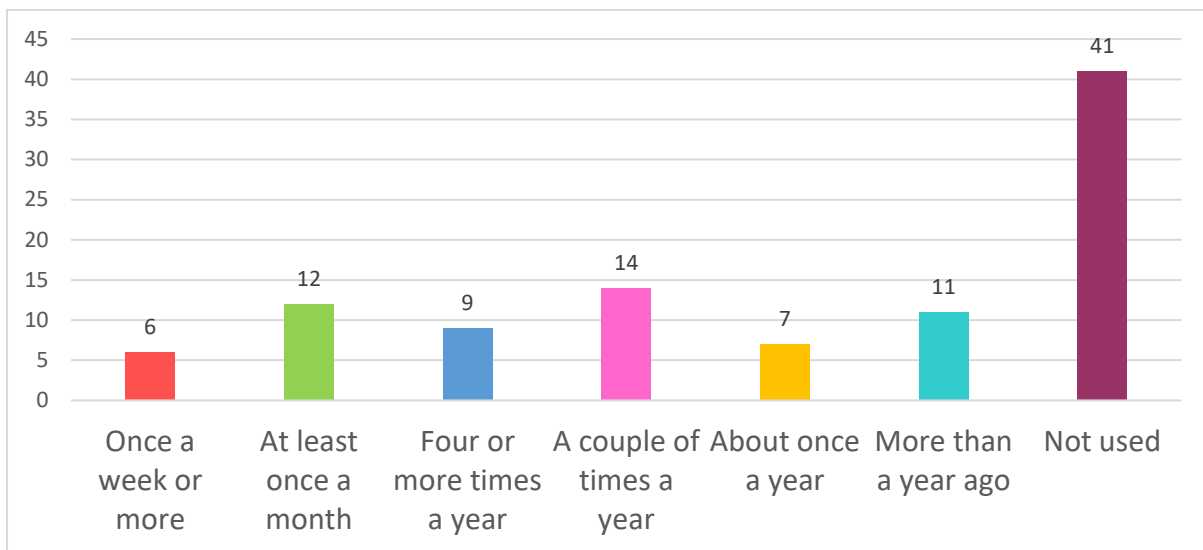
As with dining during the daytime, many respondents did have never dined out in Ashford Town Centre (35%). Respondents visit Ashford Town Centre for dining out less frequently in the evening as they do in the daytime, with 8% visiting for this reason at least once a month, and 15% visiting four or more times a year.

There was a notable correlation between age and dining out in the town centre during the evening. As age increases, visits to the town centre to dine out at this time become less frequent. 19% of 18-25 year olds dine out in the town centre in the evening at least once a month, compared to 2% of 65+ year olds.

Respondents in Godinton stated they dine out in the town centre in the evening much more frequently than any other ward. 36% of Godinton respondents visited Ashford for this purpose once a week or more, compared to an average of 1% of respondents in all other wards visiting at this frequency.

As with dining during the daytime, Rising Prosperity respondents visit the most frequently to dine in the evening. 11% of this group visit the town centre once a week or more for this activity, compared to an average of 1% of the other Acorn categories. Over half of Affluent Achievers had never dined out in the town centre during the evening (52%).

## How often do you socialise in the town centre in the daytime?



*N = 1937, excl. no reply*

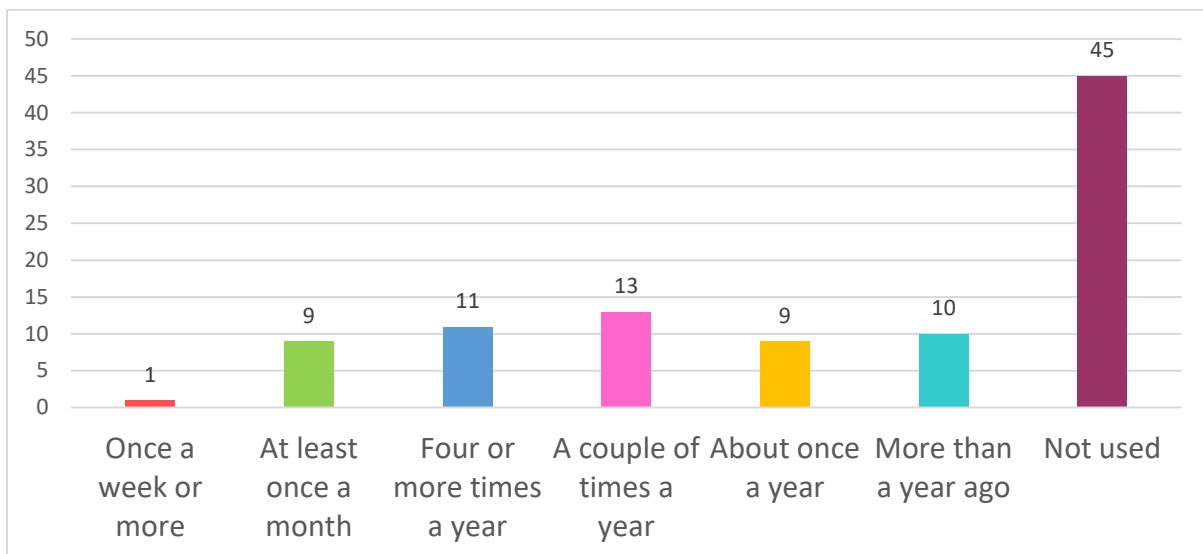
41% of respondents reported they had never visited Ashford Town Centre during the daytime. 12% visit the town centre for this reason at least once a month, and 14% socialise in the town centre in the daytime a couple of times a year.

As with the previous activities, younger residents were the most frequent visitors to the town centre to socialise. 43% of the 18-25 year old age group visit the town to socialise during the day at least once a month. 62% of respondents aged 65+ had never done this.

Despite only 6% of respondents stating they visited the town centre to socialise during the day once a week or more, respondents in Godinton and Bybrook do this activity more frequently than respondents in other wards. 17% of Godinton respondents and 25% of Bybrook respondents visit the town centre to socialise during the day once a week or more. Respondents in rural wards were more likely to have never visited Ashford Town Centre for this purpose, with 86% of Tenterden South respondents, 83% of Isle of Oxney respondents and 82% of Biddenden respondents having never visited the town centre to socialise during the day.

Respondents in the Financially Stretched and Urban Adversity categories visited the town centre to socialise in the day more frequently than the other Acorn categories, with 9% of both groups visiting once a week or more. 58% of Affluent Achievers and 42% of Comfortable Communities respondents had never visited the town to socialise in the daytime.

## How often do you socialise in the town centre in the evening?



*N = 1944, excl. no reply*

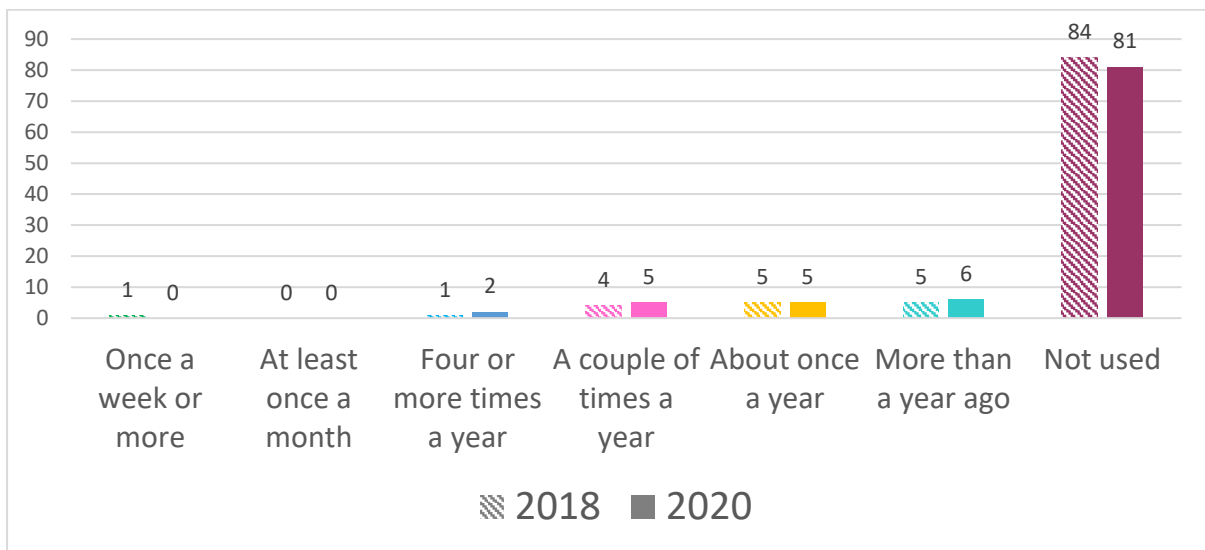
Nearly half (45%) of respondents have not used the town centre as a place to socialise in the evening. Only 9% of respondents visited the town centre to socialise at night at least once a month, and 11% visited the town centre for this reason four or more times a year.

47% of 18-25 year olds visited the town centre during the evening to socialise at least once a month. On average, 6% of the remaining age groups visit the town centre at least once a month for this reason. 76% of respondents aged 65+ had never socialised in the town centre in the evening.

Respondents living in wards close to the town centre visited the town centre to socialise in the evening more frequently than those in rural wards. 59% of respondents in Godinton socialised in the town during the evening at least once a month. Over 90% of respondents in Tenterden North and South had never socialised in the town centre in the evening.

Respondents in the Rising Prosperity, Financially Stretched and Urban Adversity categories visited the town centre to socialise in the evening more frequently than the other Acorn categories, with 21%, 14% and 16% of these groups visiting at least once a month respectively. 61% of Affluent Achievers and 46% of Comfortable Communities respondents had never visited the town to socialise in the evening.

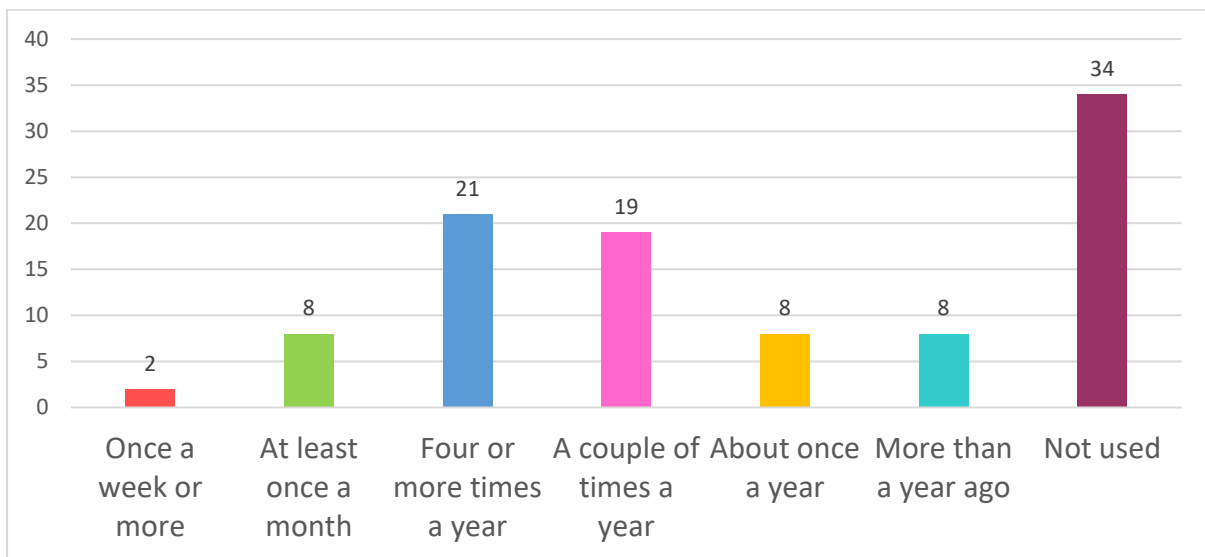
## How often do you attend performances at Revelation St Mary's



*N = 1914, excl. no reply*

The majority of respondents had never attended a performance or event at Revelation St Mary's. Attendance to Revelation has remained unchanged since 2018, with 5% stating they attend a couple of times a year, and 5% indicating they visit about once a year.

## How often do you see a film at the Cinema?



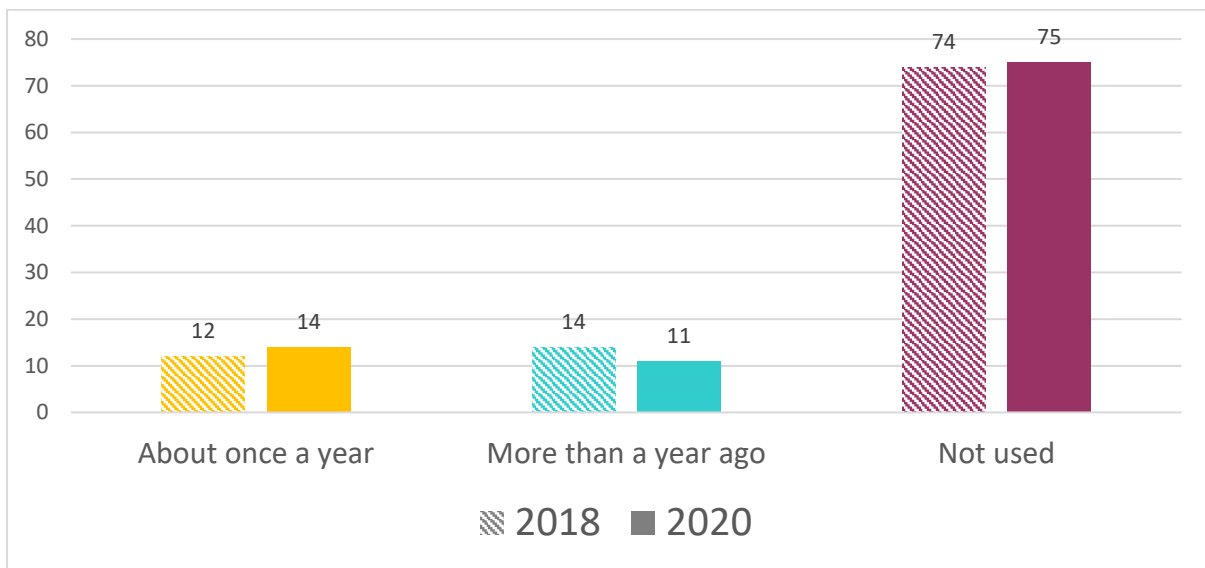
*N = 1931, excl. no reply*

34% had never visited the town centre to visit the cinema. 21% of respondents visited the cinema four or more times a year and 19% visited for this reason a couple of times a year. It was not expected that respondents would visit the town centre to see a film at the least once a month or more.

Overall, 26-34 year olds were the most frequent visitors to the cinema, with 12% visiting at least once a month and 33% of this group visiting four or more times a year. 50% of 65+ year olds had never visited the cinema in the town.

Respondents living near to the town centre visited the cinema more frequently. 54% of respondents in Godinton and 47% of respondents in Norman visited the cinema four or more time a year. Rural respondents were more likely to have never been to the town centre cinema; 74% of Bircholt respondents and 64% of Isle of Oxney respondents had never used this facility.

## How often do you attend Create Festival?



*N = 1790, excl. no reply*

75% of respondents had never visited Create Festival, the council's annual music festival hosted in Victoria Park. However, 14% reported they visited the festival about once a year.

There was a correlation between age and attendance to Create Festival. The following shows the percentage of each age group that visited Create Festival about once a year:

- 35% of 18-25 year olds
- 20% of 26-34 year olds
- 18% of 35-44 year olds
- 10% of 45-54 year olds
- 10% of 55-64 year olds
- 5% of 65+ year olds.

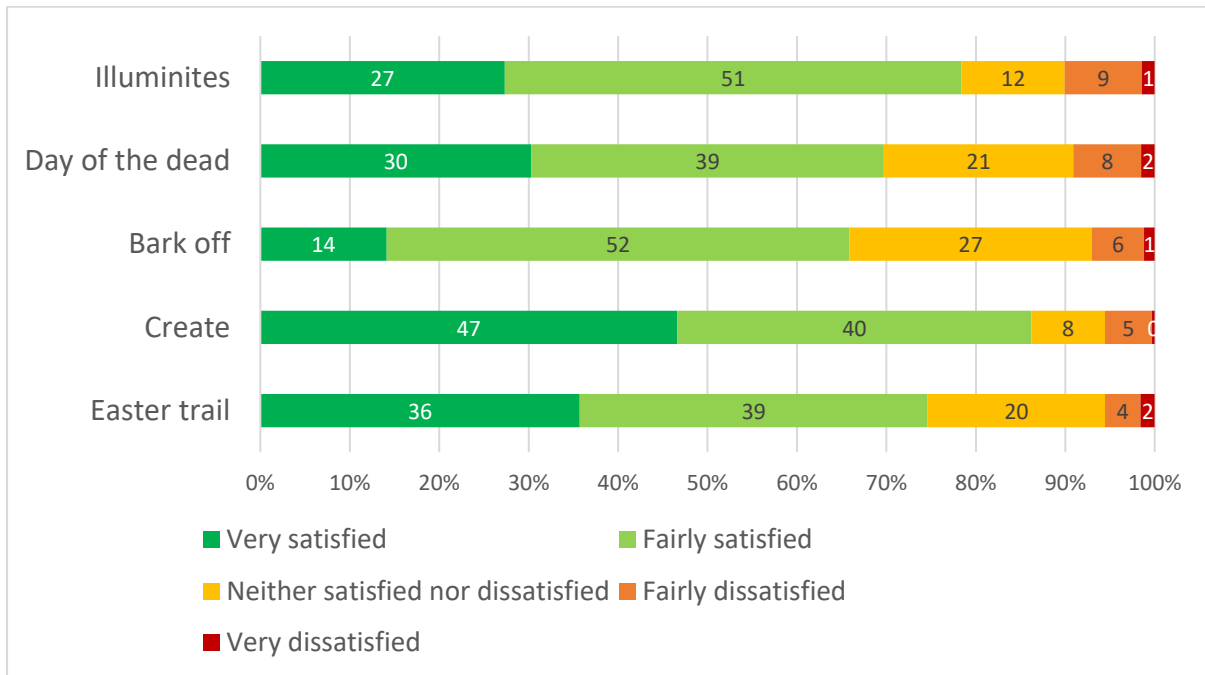
100% of respondents in Godinton had been to Create in the last year. In general, residents living in wards around the town centre were more likely to have attended Create Festival. Over 90% of respondents in the following wards had never been to Create:

- Biddenden (100%)
- Tenterden North (100%)
- Tenterden St Michaels (97%)
- Tenterden South (96%)
- Rolvenden and Tenterden West (94%)
- Saxon Shore (93%)
- Isle of Oxney (92%)
- Charing (92%)
- Mersham, Sevington South and Finberry (91%)
- Kennington (90%)



Higher percentages of respondents matching the Rising Prosperity and Urban Adversity acorn categories visited Create Festival than the remaining groups, with 28% and 26% of these groups visiting about once a year respectively. Around 86% of Affluent Achievers had never been to Create Festival.

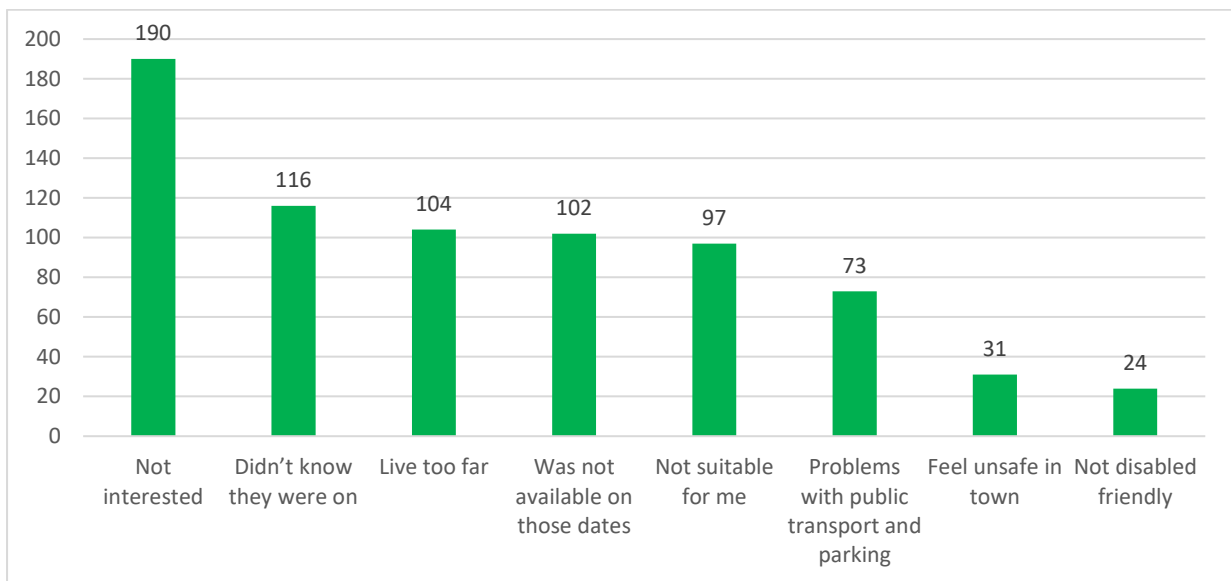
## Opinion on Town Centre Events



*N = 383, excl. no reply and "did not attend"*

Overall, all events that occurred in the town centre over the last year were positively received by respondents who attended them. Respondents were most satisfied with Create, as nearly 90% of respondents reported they were satisfied to an extent. Similarly, 78% of respondents were satisfied to an extent with the Illuminities event.

## Why residents did not attend events in Ashford Town Centre

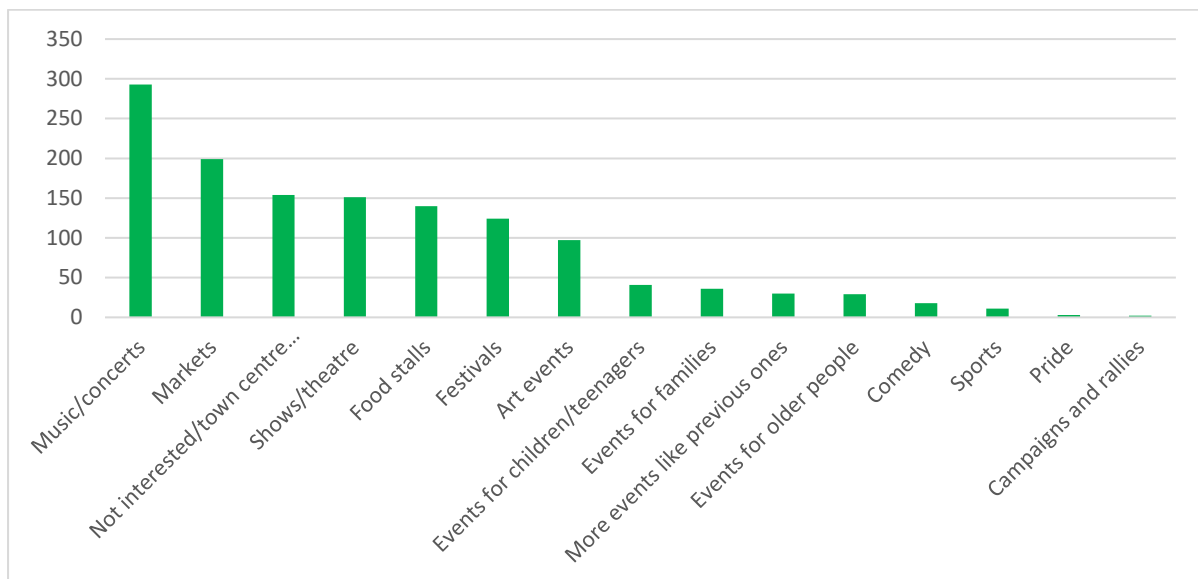


Residents gave a number of reasons for not attending events in Ashford Town Centre, the most common reason was that respondents were not interested in the events that were on. 116 respondents said they did not know the events were on, and some stated they need to be promoted more widely.

Respondents living in Tenterden or near the borough boundaries stated they felt they live too far from the town, and often sought activities closer to home. For example, respondents living in Downs North were more likely to visit Canterbury for events.

A few respondents said that the town or the events themselves were not “disabled-friendly” and can be too crowded, uncomfortable, or inaccessible for people with disabilities.

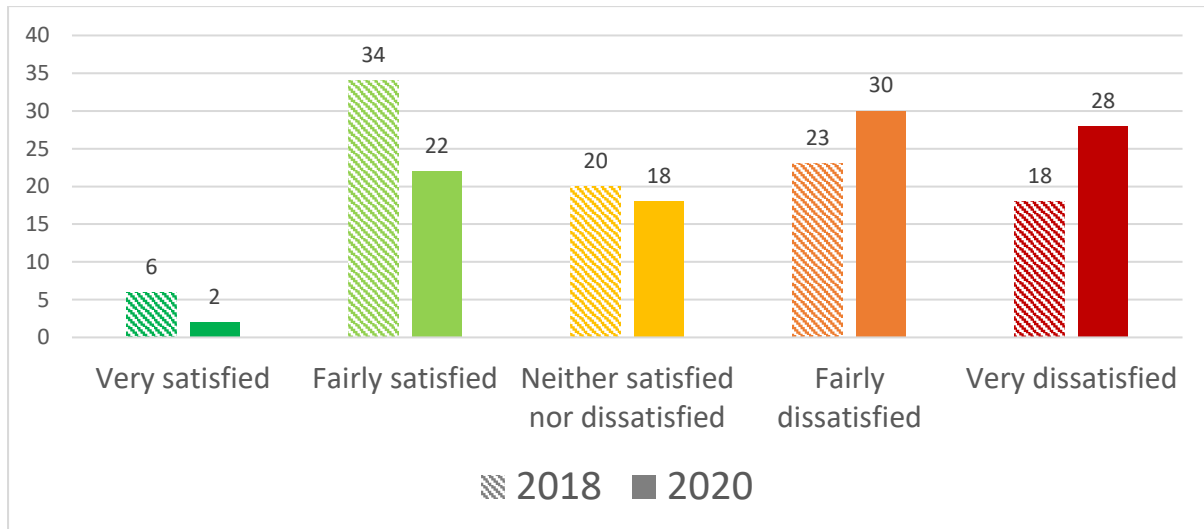
## What sort of events residents would like to see in the town centre



Residents gave a variety of suggestions of events to launch in the town centre. Music and concert events were the most suggested, with many respondents stating they thought the bandstand could be used more. Markets were also popular, with some respondents referring to Ashford's history as a market town, and a variety of market types were suggested. Other events included shows, performances, food stalls and a variety of festivals, such as a beer festival.

A number of respondents said they would not be interested in any kind of event in the town centre. A few respondents felt that the town centre should be focused on shopping, and that events should occur elsewhere.

## Overall, how satisfied are you with Ashford Town Centre as a place to shop?



*N = 1874, excl. no reply*

Satisfaction with the Town Centre as a place to shop has reduced quite significantly since the 2018 survey. The reduction in satisfaction and increase in dissatisfaction can be partially attributed to the loss of major retailers in the town, as well as perceptions around the town centre being unsafe.

26-34 year olds are the most satisfied with the Town Centre as a place to shop, with 34% of this group satisfied to an extent. 45-54 year olds are the most dissatisfied, with 66% dissatisfied to an extent.

Urban wards were generally more satisfied with the town centre as a place to shop. The ward with the most satisfied respondents was Stanhope, with 50% of respondents satisfied, followed by Beaver, with 44% of respondents satisfied. Over 70% of respondents in the following wards reported they were dissatisfied:

- Highfield (79%)
- Saxon Shore (78%)
- Bybrook (76%)
- Kingsnorth Village and Bridgefield (75%)
- Bircholt (74%)
- Downs West (74%)
- Weald North (73%)
- Charing (73%)
- Tenterden North (73%)
- Kennington (71%)

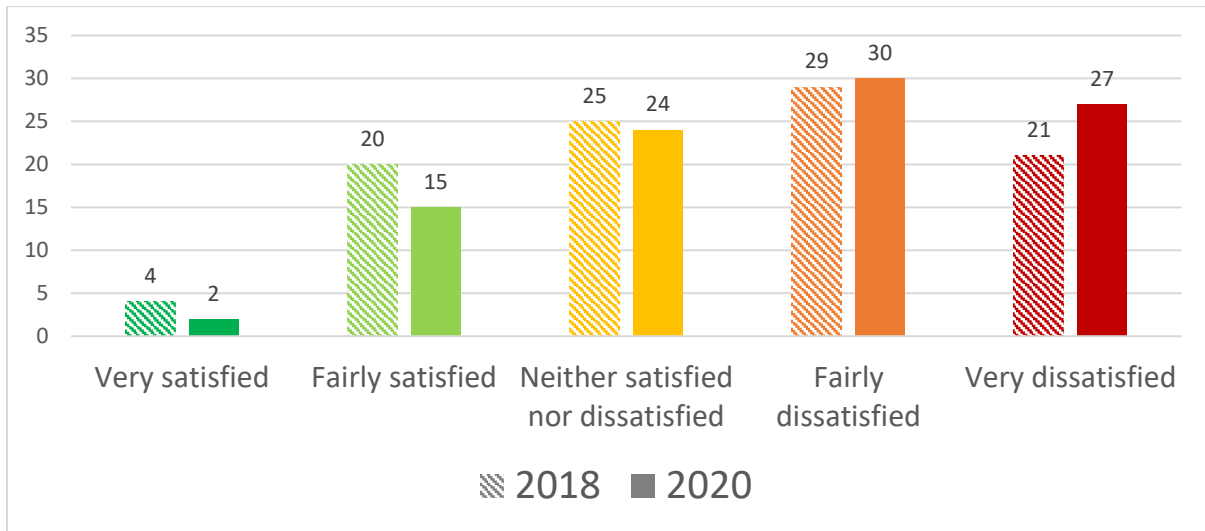
Financially Stretched and Urban Adversity respondents were the most satisfied with the town centre as a place to shop, with 31% and 39% satisfied to an extent respectively. Rising Prosperity respondents, despite being one of the groups visiting

the town most frequently, are the most dissatisfied to an extent (66%), followed by Affluent Achievers (65%).

**Comments:**

Many respondents commented they want business rates reduced to ensure shops remain open in the town centre, as the lack of shopping options were one of the main reasons they were dissatisfied. Respondents also want larger brands to return to the town, or more independent, unique brands to revive the town centre.

## Overall, how satisfied are you with Ashford Town Centre as a place to visit?



*N = 1851, excl. no reply*

As with satisfaction with the town centre as a place to shop, satisfaction with the town centre as a place to visit has reduced since the 2018 survey. 67% of respondents were dissatisfied to an extent with the town centre as a place to visit. Many respondents said they don't feel safe in the town centre, and that the empty stores lower their satisfaction with their visits.

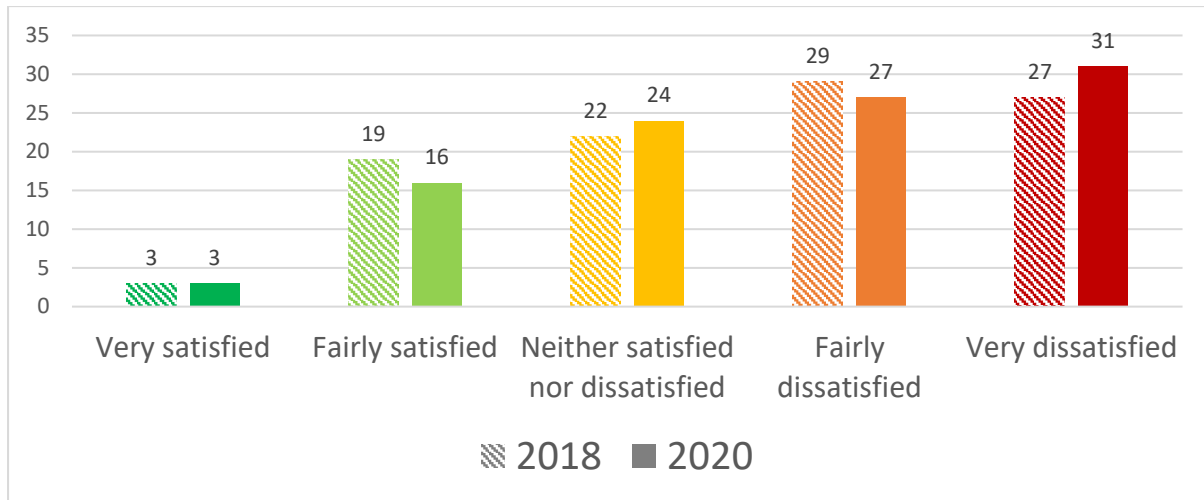
There was a correlation between age and satisfaction with the town centre as a place to visit, the following shows the percentage of each age group that reported they were satisfied to an extent:

- 25% of 18-25 year olds
- 22% of 26-34 year olds
- 17% of 35-44 year olds
- 15% of 45-54 year olds
- 16% of 55-64 year olds
- 16% of 65+ year olds.

Respondents in wards closer to the town centre were more satisfied with the town centre as a place to visit. The most satisfied ward was Stanhope, with 53% of respondents in this ward satisfied to an extent. The ward with the most dissatisfied respondents was Tenterden North, with 86% of respondents from this ward dissatisfied to an extent.

Respondents matching the Urban Adversity acorn category were the most satisfied with the town centre as a place to visit, with 32% of this group reporting they were satisfied. However, 68% of Affluent Achievers were dissatisfied to an extent with the town centre as a place to visit.

## verall, how satisfied are you with Ashford Town Centre as a place to go out?



*N = 1694, excl. no reply*

Respondents were predominantly dissatisfied with the town centre as a place to go out (58%), compared to 19% who were satisfied to an extent. As before, many respondents said they were dissatisfied with the town centre as they don't feel safe there.

There was a correlation between age and satisfaction with the town centre as a place to go out, the following shows the percentage of each age group that reported they were satisfied to an extent:

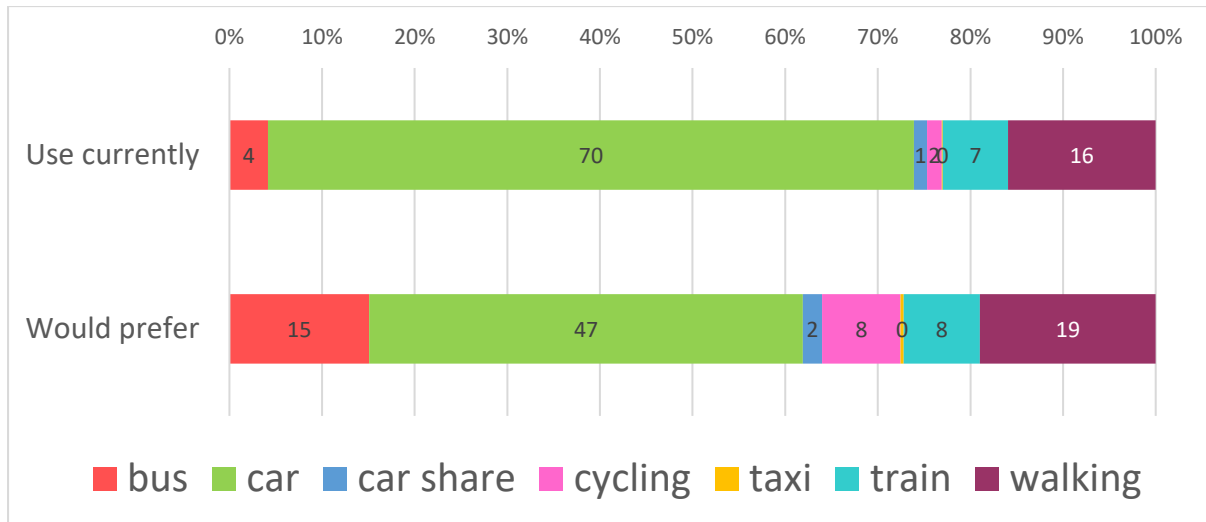
- 37% of 18-25 year olds
- 21% of 26-34 year olds
- 16% of 35-44 year olds
- 16% of 45-54 year olds
- 15% of 55-64 year olds
- 12% of 65+ year olds.

Respondents in wards closer to the town centre were more satisfied with the town centre as a place to go out. The most satisfied ward was Stanhope, with 45% of respondents in this ward satisfied to an extent. Respondents living in Stanhope were the most satisfied with the town centre overall. The ward with the most dissatisfied respondents was Kennington, with 89% of respondents from this ward dissatisfied to an extent.

Respondents matching the Urban Adversity acorn category were the most satisfied with the town centre as a place to go out, with 28% of this group reporting they were satisfied. However, 68% of Affluent Achievers were dissatisfied to an extent with the town centre as a place to go out.



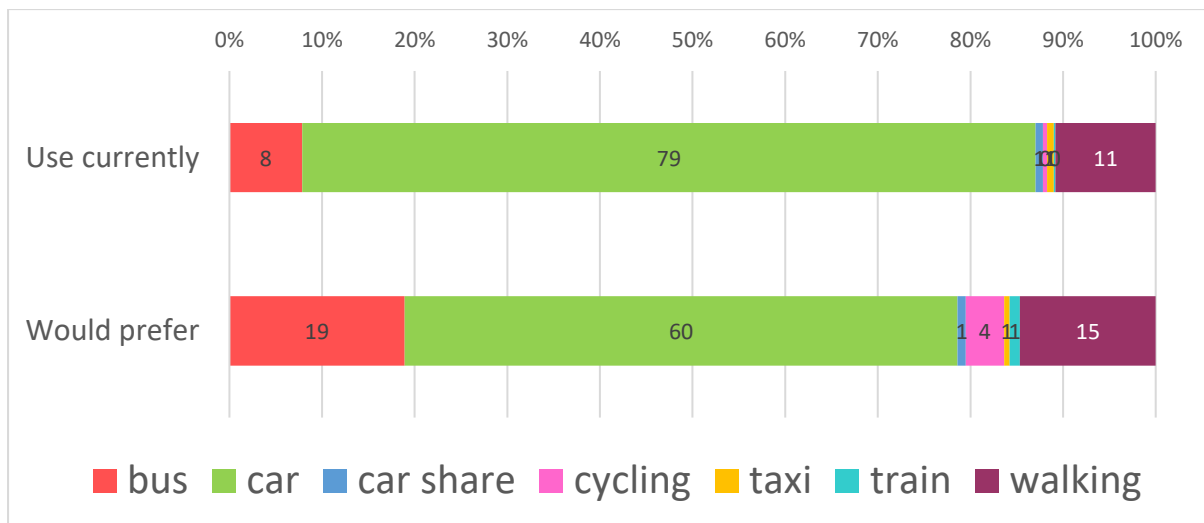
## Which of the following modes of transport do you typically use and would prefer to use to travel to work or school?



*N = 1510, excl. no reply*

Cars are the most used form of transport currently to get to work, shops, and to attend leisure activities. 70% of respondents used cars to get to work. However, many of these would prefer other methods of getting to work, such as by bus (15%), and walking (19%).

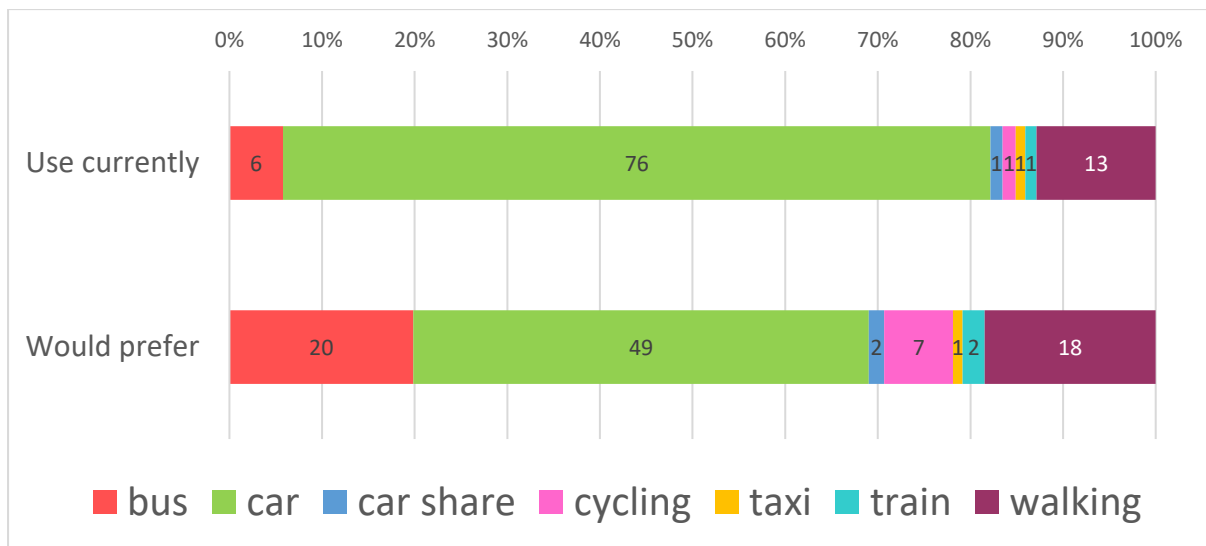
## Which of the following modes of transport do you typically use and would prefer to use to travel to shops and supermarkets?



*N = 1938, excl. no reply*

Cars are also the most used form of transport to get to shops and supermarkets; 79% use this method of transport to get to this activity. More would prefer to use other methods of transport if available, such as bus (19%) or walking (15%), however the majority would still prefer to use the car. Some residents explained that they only do large shops, and the transportation of shopping was much easier with access to a car.

## Which of the following modes of transport do you typically use and would prefer to use to travel to leisure activities?



*N = 1833, excl. no reply*

As with the previous activities, respondents mostly use a car to get to leisure opportunities (76%). However, only 49% would prefer to use this method; many instead favour cycling (20%) and walking (18%).

## **Thinking about your own behaviour, what do you currently do to try and reduce your carbon footprint?**

Respondents reported they do a variety of activities to try and reduce their carbon footprint, as follows:

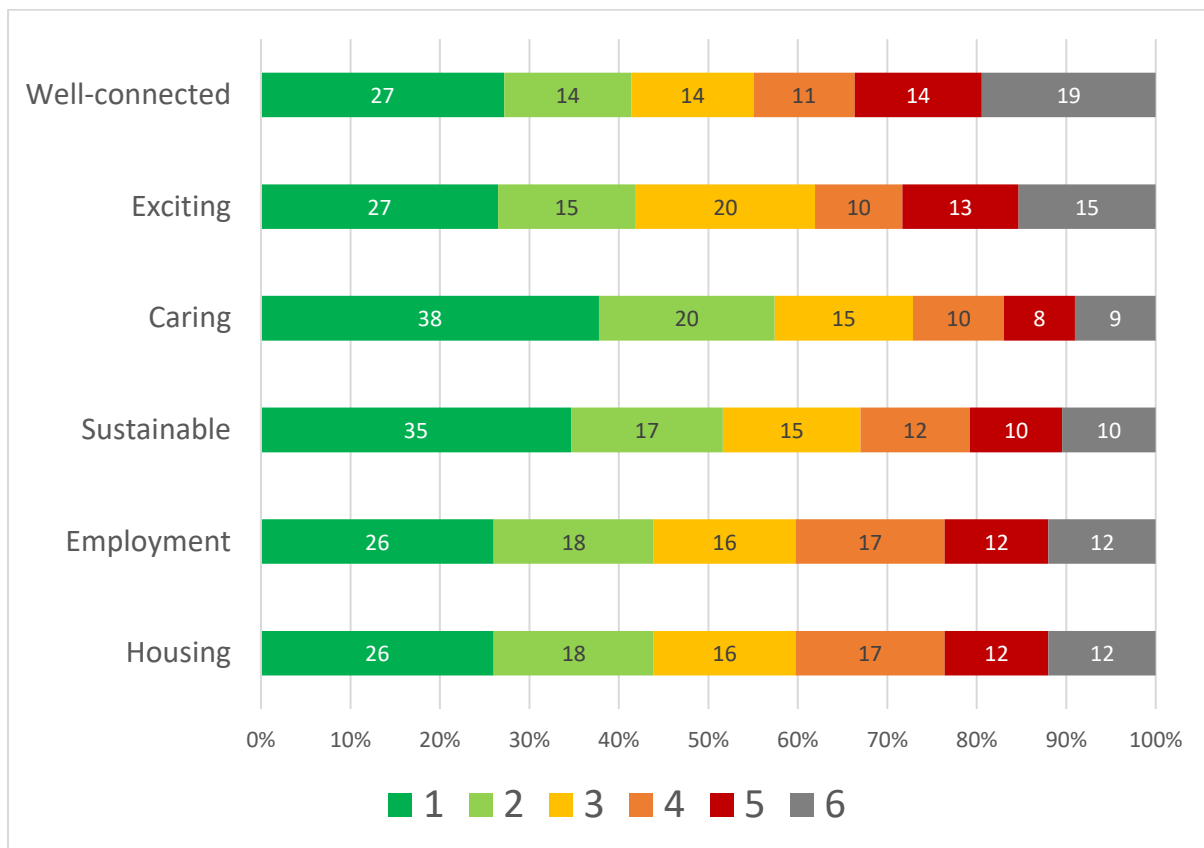
- Shop locally and consume goods less. Consume locally produced goods where possible.
- Recycle what they can
- Walk, cycle and use public transportation for journeys where it is possible. A few respondents had given up a car entirely
- Using central heating less or not at all, or less energy consumption overall
- Eating less or no meat
- Have changed some of the things they buy to be non-disposable (esp. plastics), or for electronics, to more energy efficient options
- Have solar panels installed
- Would consider or currently do own an electric vehicle
- Growing plants (trees, for food etc)
- Have one car per household
- Saving water
- Composting

## **What barriers prevent you from making changes to reduce your carbon footprint?**

Respondents gave the following barriers which prevent them from reducing their carbon footprint:

- Price of electric vehicles, or the range of electric vehicles being insufficient
- Cars being more convenient
- Public transport too expensive, or routes not going to places where the respondent needs to go (esp. places of work and rurally), or too infrequent
- Disability and poor health
- Lack of information (in particular about what can be recycled)
- Lack of time/too busy
- Needing a vehicle for work purposes (e.g. vans)
- Environmentally friendly goods are more expensive
- Too many cars on the road (if cycling)
- Attitude to reducing footprint
- Poor quality of routes and roads (if cycling)
- Retailers and manufacturers making it difficult (e.g. wrapping goods in plastic, not making paper bags available)
- Perception that Ashford favours car travel over any other kind of transport
- Distance to amenities – particularly if rural
- Perceptions of safety
- Poor weather
- Walkways and cycleways – routes not good enough, not enough of them, and don't go where they need to
- Lack of electric vehicle infrastructure
- Concerns about how electricity is sourced

## Priorities for Ashford's future



Respondents were given the following list of statements about the future of Ashford:

- As a growing borough with access to high quality, affordable housing for all
- As a borough with good employment opportunities, especially in IT and creative industries
- As a borough that cares about the environment, and where sustainability is a priority
- As a caring borough, with services supporting a healthy, happy and integrated community
- As an exciting borough, with lots of things to do and places to visit
- As a well-connected borough, with fast broadband, and modern travel available to all

Respondents were asked to rank these statements 1 to 6, with 1 being “most important” for Ashford’s future and 6 being the “least important.” The above graph shows the percentage of respondents that ranked each statement as 1<sup>st</sup>, 2<sup>nd</sup>, 3<sup>rd</sup> and so on. The statements which received the highest percentage of 1<sup>st</sup> votes were assumed to be the top priority for residents.

However, some respondents chose to rank multiple statements the same rank, e.g. ranked both being a sustainable and caring borough as the top priority, affecting the overall results.

35% of respondents placed being a sustainable borough, and 38% place being a caring borough first on their list of priorities for the future of Ashford. 27% ranked both being well-connected and exciting first on their priorities for the future. Housing was ranked 6<sup>th</sup> more than the other options, with 15% ranking housing as their last priority.