

2006 GENERAL USER SATISFACTION SURVEY

TORBAY COUNCIL

2006 RESULTS & COMPARISON WITH THE 2003 SURVEY



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INTRODUCTION:

As part of the Government's Best Value improvement programme, all local authorities in the country are required to undertake a general user satisfaction survey (GUSS) of residents to find out what people think of their local area and the range of services provided by their local Council. All surveys must be completed during a set time period and all surveys must use a set methodology.

The latest survey was undertaken in the last quarter 2006 and follows the previous survey of 2003. The results and a comparative analysis follow in this paper.

Brief overview of methodology

Sampling frame:

The Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) supplied Torbay Council with a random postal address file of 6,000 addresses for which a minimum of 1,200 completed responses were to be obtained from. The view was taken by officers that to minimise printing and postal costs, a random sample from the initial 6,000 would be taken to reduce the sampling frame from 6,000 to 3,000 using a statistical package to randomly select the 3,000. This basically halved the overall cost.

The 3,000 addresses were then sent the initial survey, followed up with reminders being sent at specific points in time to non-respondents, a further final reminder was also sent out. Both of these reminders were prescribed in the guidance from the DCLG as the minimum effort required by local authorities to maximise the responses. In total, of the 3,000 households, 1,555 completed and returned the surveys, or a 51.8% response rate, which for a cold survey is very good – this response rate places Torbay in the top quartile for response rate.

In order to analysis the results and ensure they are representative of the general population aged 18 years and over, a weighting process was undertaken – described below:

Weighting:

Weighting of data for the survey is undertaken to correct for systematic biases that may occur in the achieved sample. The weighting then corrects the bias in the data to reflect the more generic population of the local authority and allows further comparison of satisfaction levels between other local authorities.

The weighting model is based on four key demographics, age, sex, ethnicity and household size. These four demographics are weighted accordingly based on the 2001 census results and other known national statistical datasets. In some instances where

there is an under or over representation of a specific age group, sex, ethnicity and household size, the views would have be weighted accordingly to reflect the profile of the bay.

Confidence:

When dealing with public opinion, it is very rare that a complete census of the population is under taken to gauge the actual opinion. Instead statistical confidence is given to the question in hand. The confidence identifies, in lay mans terms, a narrow banding where we would expect the vast majority of response to lie. Confidence limits are expressed in terms of a confidence coefficient with 95% being the most commonly used. A confidence interval is a statistical range with a specified probability that a given parameter lies within the range.

The range is defined by the confidence limits; the limits are calculated and expressed as a '+' or '-' figure around the actual figure.

For example, question 20 (BVPI BV 3 – Overall Satisfaction). The overall weighted net satisfaction is 43%; the associated confidence limit is +/- 3%. i.e. we would expect 95% of responses to be within the range 40% to 46%.

Using this statistical technique for each question, we can be 95% confident that the results reflect what the Torbay wide population may say within the associated ranges.

Additional notes:

- The 2006 survey experienced a couple of design flaws in the original post out of surveys; the design flaw was quickly picked up and corrected the Audit Commission were also notified.
- It should be noted that in some service areas there is a noticeable decrease in the overall satisfaction. It could be argued that a change by the Audit Commission in the way the 2003 survey was analysed changed the denominator and thus increased satisfaction levels. In the 'overall satisfaction' question for service areas, an additional option was included in the 2003 survey and not included in the analysis – this option was omitted from the 2006 survey and arguably makes the questions incomparable and as a consequence produces arguably a lower level of satisfaction for 2006.
- Some of the numbers may not add due to rounding.

SUMMARY FINDINGS

The findings in all tables contained within this paper for both the 2003 and 2006 surveys are based on the weighted data, unless other wise stated.

The following table gives a summary for some of the net satisfaction levels with different service areas for 2006 compared to the 2003 results.

Table A	BV	2003 (%)	2006 (%)	Difference (%)	Actual change (%)	CI (+/- %)		Key 2006 survey comparators - Unitary	
						2003	2006	Quartile	Mean (%)
Net satisfaction with authority	3	45.0	43.1	-1.9	-4.2	2.51	2.60	Bottom	49.6
Satisfaction with complaints handling	4	36.7	31.1	-5.6	-15.3	6.10	5.65	Lower Middle	32.1
Waste and litter services overall	89	51.2	52.3	1.1	2.1	2.56	2.51	Bottom	64.3
The waste collection service overall	90A	81.0	77.5	-3.5	-4.3	2.05	2.11	Lower Middle	78.5
The provision of local recycling facilities overall	90B	75.0	72.5	-2.5	-3.3	2.27	2.32	Upper Middle	69.5
The local tip / household waste recycling centre overall	90C	85.9	77.9	-8.0	-9.3	2.68	2.38	Bottom	80.8
The provision of public transport information overall	103	58.3	56.2	-2.1	-3.6	4.05	2.76	Top	50.8
The local bus service overall	104	57.6	62.4	4.8	8.3	3.85	2.68	Upper Middle	57.2
Sports / leisure facilities and events	119A	68.6	60.3	-8.3	-12.1	2.70	2.50	Upper Middle	57.6
Libraries	119B	81.3	75.4	-5.9	-7.3	2.20	2.18	Top	72.2
Museums and galleries	119C	65.7	48.9	-16.8	-25.6	2.86	2.55	Upper Middle	46.4
Theatres / concert halls	119D	73.5	61.5	-12.0	-16.3	2.57	2.47	Top	50.1
Parks and open spaces	119E	82.3	75.5	-6.8	-8.3	2.09	2.17	Upper Middle	74.0

Full results for the service areas in table A can be viewed in the main results.

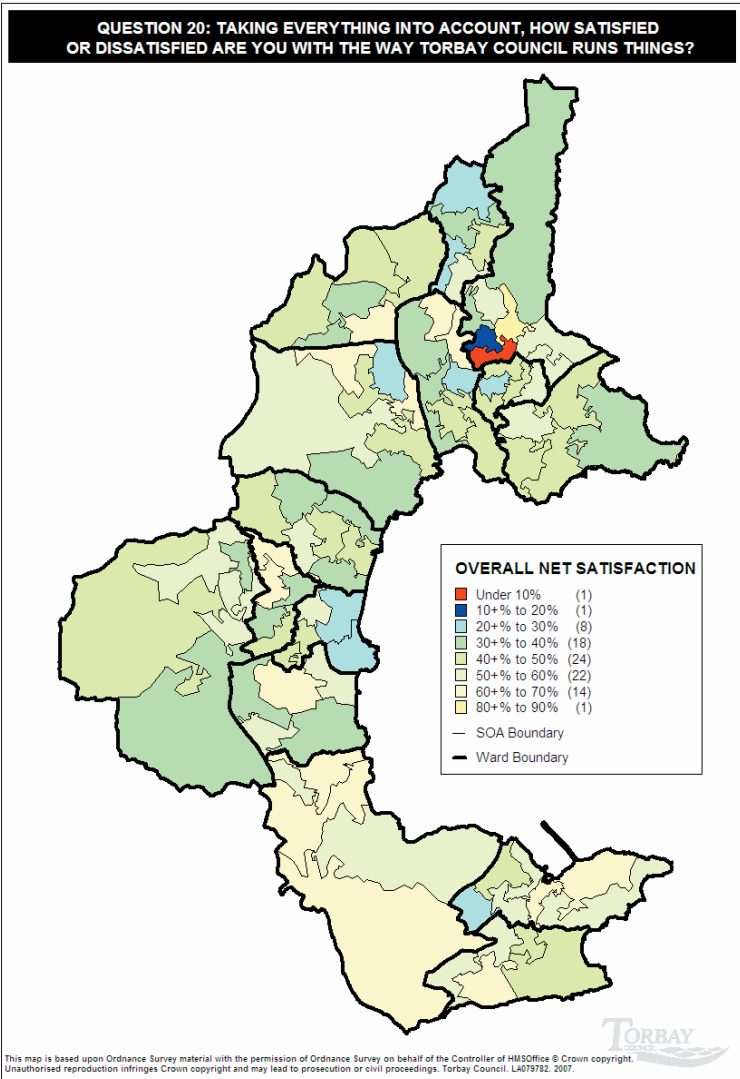
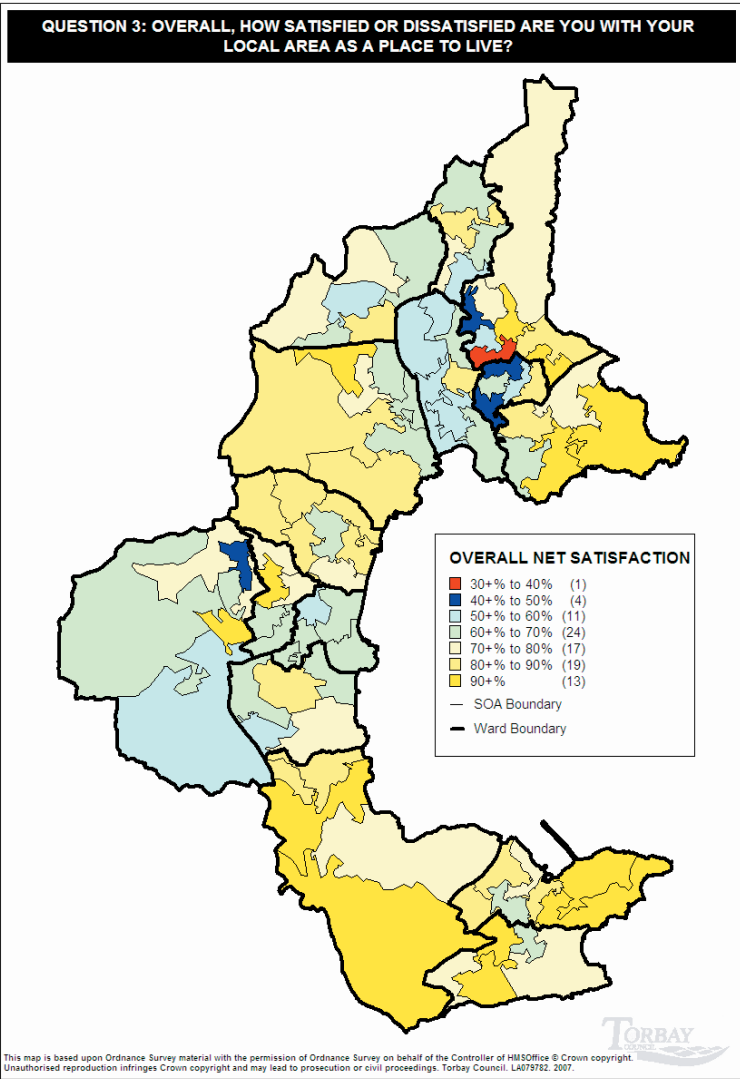
Notes:

Net satisfaction is defined through the survey as the sum of both very satisfied and fairly satisfied.

The difference is the pure difference in the percentage figures between surveys, for example the waste and litter services overall, the difference is 1.1% i.e. the 2006 figure of 52.3 is 1.1 higher than the 51.2 of 2003, however, in real terms the percentage has increased by 2.1% from 51.2% in 2003 to 52.3% for 2006.

How do satisfaction levels vary across the bay? The following maps illustrate the net satisfaction levels for questions 3 and 20 respectively.

These maps are based on un-weighted data and are an expression of relatively low numbers; they do however give a localised feeling of satisfaction. No statistical significance can be given at this level; details of specific ward level satisfaction will be available in a forthcoming ward level analysis.



THE 2006 RESULTS AND 2003 COMPARISON

SECTION 1: ABOUT YOUR LOCAL AREA

Question 1: Thinking generally, which of the following things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live? (please cross up to five boxes only).

Table 1	2003 GUSS - Question 1			2006 GUSS - Question1		
	Count	Rank	%	Count	Rank	%
The level of crime	936	1	62.0	725	1	46.6
Health services	639	2	42.3	532	2	34.2
Clean streets	598	3	39.6	529	3	34.0
Affordable decent housing	531	4	35.2	512	4	32.9
Wage levels & local cost of living	403	5	26.7	423	5	27.2
Job prospects	372	6	24.6	373	6	24.0
Parks and open spaces	290	11	19.2	290	7	18.6
Education provision	319	8	21.1	287	8	18.4
The level of traffic congestion	317	9	21.0	252	9	16.2
Public transport	345	7	22.9	249	10	16.0
Shopping facilities	288	12	19.1	240	11	15.4
Activities for teenagers	208	13	13.7	224	12	14.4
Road and pavement repairs	293	10	19.4	215	13	13.8
Access to nature	188	15	12.5	166	14	10.7
Facilities for young children	124	16	8.2	142	15	9.1
The level of pollution	206	14	13.6	127	16	8.1
Sports & leisure facilities	105	17	7.0	74	17	4.7
Cultural facilities	7	20	0.4	64	18	4.1
Community activities	7	19	0.4	60	19	3.8
Race relations	16	18	1.0	17	20	1.1
Other	16	-	1.1	30	-	1.9
None of these	1	-	0.0	2	-	0.1
Don't know	-	-	-	9	-	0.6
Not answered	192	-	12.7	407	-	26.2
Total	6,400	-	423.9	5,948	-	382.5

- In both the 2003 and 2006 surveys, the level of crime, i.e. a low level of crime, was ranked as most important in making somewhere a good place to live.

Question 2: Thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving? (please cross up to five boxes only).

Table 2	2003 GUSS - Question 1			2006 GUSS - Question1		
	Count	Rank	%	Count	Rank	%
Affordable decent housing	284	6	17.8	501	1	32.2
Job prospects	146	11	9.2	463	2	29.8
Activities for teenagers	211	7	13.2	447	3	28.8
The level of traffic congestion	409	5	25.7	339	4	21.8
The level of crime	427	3	26.8	337	5	21.6
Sports & leisure facilities	73	14	4.6	333	6	21.4
Wage levels & local cost of living	435	1	27.3	313	7	20.1
Road and pavement repairs	427	4	26.8	305	8	19.6
Health services	146	10	9.2	303	9	19.5
The level of pollution	54	16	3.4	281	10	18.1
Clean streets	428	2	26.9	267	11	17.1
Access to nature	19	19	1.2	246	12	15.8
Race relations	12	20	0.7	205	13	13.2
Facilities for young children	111	12	6.9	185	14	11.9
Parks and open spaces	196	8	12.3	143	15	9.2
Education provision	64	15	4.0	127	16	8.2
Shopping facilities	108	13	6.8	119	17	7.6
Community activities	45	17	2.8	105	18	6.8
Public transport	196	9	12.3	99	19	6.4
Cultural facilities	31	18	2.0	56	20	3.6
Other	26	-	1.6	21	-	1.3
None of these	3	-	0.2	5	-	0.3
Don't know	7	-	0.4	6	-	0.4
Not Answered	611	-	38.3	353	-	22.7
Total	4,471	-	280.5	5,557	-	357.4

- There has been a noticeable change in opinion in what most needs improving in the local area; with affordable decent housing now ranked as number 1 most needing improvement.

Question 3: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

Table 3	Count	%
Very satisfied	187	12.4
Fairly satisfied	870	57.7
Neither	232	15.4
Fairly dissatisfied	177	11.7
Very dissatisfied	42	2.8
Total	1,508	100

- Over 70% of respondents surveyed expressed a positive level of satisfaction with their local area as a place to live.

This question was not asked in the 2003 survey and thus no historical comparison is available, it is hoped that a comparison both nationally and with other local authorities will become available in due course.

Anti-Social Behaviour

Question 4: Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think are...

Table 4	Very big problem (%)		Fairly big problem (%)		Not a very big problem (%)		Not a problem at all (%)		Don't know (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
parents not being made to take responsibility for the behaviour of their children	-	31.0	-	39.1	-	18.6	-	7.0	-	4.3	-	1,485
people not treating other people with respect and consideration	-	20.6	-	37.1	-	29.9	-	11.0	-	1.3	-	1,463
noisy neighbours or loud parties	9.1	6.5	15.0	12.5	35.9	42.1	35.2	37.1	4.7	1.7	1,443	1,433
teenagers hanging around on the streets	24.2	25.2	32.8	33.8	23.1	27.9	15.4	11.1	4.6	2.0	1,365	1,463
rubbish and litter lying around	25.7	23.2	30.7	32.5	33.2	32.1	8.1	11.7	2.3	0.4	1,409	1,486
people being drunk or rowdy in public spaces	33.0	17.5	31.1	30.1	18.6	33.7	10.1	14.5	7.3	4.2	1,418	1,453
abandoned or burnt out cars	19.1	2.8	24.4	9.3	29.0	36.9	16.0	43.9	11.5	7.0	1,333	1,427
vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	29.9	17.5	31.6	26.1	23.3	38.6	10.7	14.5	4.5	3.3	1,442	1,464
people using or dealing drugs	39.7	27.2	27.2	28.1	10.4	16.5	8.8	14.8	13.9	13.4	1,404	1,462

Results from table 4 can be viewed in a summarised format in table 4a.

It is noticeable that two of the questions were not included in the 2003 survey.

Table 4a	Net Problem (%)		Net not a problem (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
parents not being made to take responsibility for the behaviour of their children	-	70.1	-	25.6
people not treating other people with respect and consideration	-	57.7	-	41.0
noisy neighbours or loud parties	24.2	19.1	71.1	79.2
teenagers hanging around on the streets	56.9	59.0	38.5	39.0
rubbish and litter lying around	56.3	55.8	41.3	43.8
people being drunk or rowdy in public spaces	64.1	47.6	28.7	48.2
abandoned or burnt out cars	43.5	12.1	45.0	80.9
vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	61.5	43.5	34.0	53.1
people using or dealing drugs	66.9	55.3	19.2	31.3

- There has been a significant drop in the belief that abandoned or burnt out cars as a net overall problem (very big or fairly big problem), with a decrease of 72.2% from 43.5% in 2003 to 12.1% for 2006.
- The only area where the belief is that an increase of a net problem has occurred is with teenagers hanging around on the streets, an increase of 3.7% from 56.9% to 59.0%
- It is a positive statement that, other than teenagers hanging around on streets, between surveys the remainder of questions asked the perception is that they have all decreased.

Question 5: To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

Table 5	Count	%
Definitely agree	69	4.5
Tend to agree	613	40.3
Tend to disagree	184	12.1
Definitely disagree	35	2.3
Don't know	413	27.2
Too few people in local area	113	7.5
All the same background	94	6.2
Total	1,520	100.0

- 44.8% (682 of 1,520) believe that within their local area, people from different back grounds get on well together.
- It should be noted that over a quarter answered don't know.

SECTION 2: YOUR LOCAL AUTHORITY

Waste and litter services

Torbay Council has a duty to keep clear of litter and refuse all open public land, including beaches which it controls.

Question 6: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Torbay Council has kept this land clear of litter and refuse?

Table 6	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Very satisfied	113	7.7	129	8.4
Fairly satisfied	637	43.5	669	43.9
Neither	271	18.5	268	17.6
Fairly dissatisfied	254	17.4	337	22.1
Very dissatisfied	188	12.9	122	8.0
Total	1,464	100.0	1,525	100.0

- The level of satisfaction for Torbay Council keeping open public land clear of litter & refuse has increased by 2.1% from 51.2% in 2003 to 52.3% for 2006.

Household waste collection

Torbay Council undertakes a weekly collection of general household waste from 37% of households and a fortnightly collection from the other 63% who are a part of our twin collection of general household waste.

This question was not statutory and included by Torbay Council.

Question 7: Is your household waste collected as part of the twin bin recycling scheme?

Table 7	2006	
	Count	%
Yes	1,105	73.0
No	409	27.0
Total	1,514	100

Question 7a: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide.

Table 7a	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Don't know / doesn't apply (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
The container provided for your general household waste	42.4	39.2	27.9	34.5	4.5	4.7	4.6	6.0	5.4	6.0	15.2	9.5	1,429	1,514
How 'clean and tidy' the street is following the waste collection	23.5	24.0	42.4	45.9	6.3	6.2	14.2	13.9	10.0	8.6	3.5	1.4	1,479	1,513
The collection of bulky household waste	13.5	12.3	23.0	26.7	14.4	14.7	11.3	8.6	11.0	6.7	26.8	30.9	1,404	1,485
The waste collection service overall	31.3	27.2	49.7	50.3	6.8	7.4	7.4	11.2	4.9	3.8	-	-	1,407	1,499

The findings from table 7a are summarised in table 7b:

Table 7b	Net Satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
The container provided for your general household waste	70.3	73.7	10.0	12.0
How 'clean and tidy' the street is following the waste collection	65.9	69.9	24.2	22.5
The collection of bulky household waste	36.5	39.0	22.3	15.3
The waste collection service overall	81.0	77.5	12.3	15.0

- Interestingly, the three separate indicators all experienced an increase in net satisfaction where as the waste collection service overall experienced a decrease in satisfaction, this may partially be explained by the second additional note in the introduction on page 2.
- The satisfaction with the waste collection service overall has decreased by 4.3% from 81.0% in 2003 to 77.5% for 2006.

Doorstep recycling collection

Torbay Council undertakes a fortnightly collection of waste for recycling via its twin bin system from 63% of domestic properties.

Question 8: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide.

Table 8	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Don't know / doesn't apply (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
The container provided for items of recycling	40.4	39.8	28.6	34.3	3.4	4.6	2.5	4.6	1.5	3.0	23.6	13.7	1,450	1,501
How 'clean and tidy' the street is following the collection of items for recycling	24.2	27.9	37.7	43.8	6.2	5.8	7.2	8.5	3.8	3.0	20.9	11.0	1,414	1,485
The service for the collection of items for recycling overall	38.9	31.9	45.6	43.2	7.9	11.4	3.5	9.2	4.1	4.2	-	-	1,411	1,372

The findings from table 8 are summarised in table 8a:

Table 8a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
The container provided for items of recycling	69.0	74.1	4.0	7.6
How 'clean and tidy' the street is following the collection of items for recycling	61.9	71.7	11.0	11.5
The service for the collection of items for recycling overall	84.5	75.1	7.6	13.5

- The satisfaction levels for both aspects of doorstep recycling collection have increased by a noticeable amount, and like the previous question the overall satisfaction has decreased.
- The most noticeable increase was for 'how 'clean and tidy' the street is following the collection of items for recycling', increasing by 15.8% from 61.9% in 2003 to 77.7% for 2006.

Local recycling facilities

Torbay Council provides a range of local recycling facilities on 66 (bring –banks) sites across Torbay, where domestic residents can deposit such items as newspapers and magazines, glass bottles, cans and textiles. There is also a large Drive-In Recycling Centre at the Transfer Station, Yalberton in Paignton, where residents can also deposit those same items as above and most other items such as cookers, fridges, freezers, furniture as well as green garden waste.

Question 9: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide:

Table 9	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Don't know / doesn't apply (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
The location of the recycling facilities	29.7	25.8	45.0	45.9	8.3	8.3	5.8	8.2	5.1	3.8	6.1	8.0	1,505	1,512
The items you can deposit for recycling	32.1	27.7	47.4	49.1	7.3	8.5	4.5	5.5	2.4	2.2	6.3	7.1	1,478	1,487
How 'clean and tidy' the site is	18.8	16.2	46.6	47.4	12.6	15.4	9.4	8.5	4.5	3.0	8.1	9.4	1,481	1,485
The provision of local recycling facilities overall	24.7	22.1	50.3	50.4	10.2	13.8	8.7	10.4	6.1	3.3	-	-	1,398	1,429

The findings from table 9 are summarised in table 9a:

Table 9a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
The location of the recycling facilities	74.7	71.7	10.9	12
The items you can deposit for recycling	79.5	76.8	6.9	7.7
How 'clean and tidy' the site is	65.4	63.6	13.9	11.5
The provision of local recycling facilities overall	75.0	72.5	14.8	13.7

- Levels of overall net satisfaction for local recycling facilities have fallen slightly from 75.0% in 2003 to 72.5% for 2006, a drop of 3.3%.

The local tip / household waste recycling centre

Torbay Council provides a site for the disposal and / or recycling of bulky household waste that is, the local 'tip' or 'household waste recycling centre'. This site is located at the Transfer Station, Yalberton in Paignton where residents can deposit most items such as cookers, fridges / freezers as well as all household waste recycling items including green waste.

Question 10: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service, which we provide.

Table 10	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Don't know / doesn't apply (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
The location of the site	40.4	27.4	32.7	42.7	5.4	8.2	4.3	7.5	3.8	4.9	13.5	9.4	761	1,273
The opening hours of the site	34.7	26.7	41.0	44.0	4.3	7.5	4.4	9.2	1.7	2.4	13.9	10.3	744	1,257
The recycling facilities at the site	40.2	31.9	35.7	44.1	5.3	8.4	2.4	3.5	0.7	1.3	15.7	10.8	739	1,255
How clean the site is	27.0	19.2	46.0	45.9	7.6	15.1	3.4	6.2	2.4	2.8	13.6	10.6	739	1,255
How helpful the staff are	32.7	27.5	37.1	36.5	10.3	12.5	4.1	5.0	1.6	4.0	14.2	14.5	738	1,257
How 'user friendly' the site is (the ability to deposit your waste easily)	32.1	26.5	39.4	42.2	6.8	7.4	5.7	8.3	3.1	5.1	13.0	10.5	740	1,256
The local tip / household waste recycling centre overall	34.7	26.0	51.2	51.9	8.3	12.4	4.1	6.6	1.8	3.1	-	-	649	1,171

The findings from table 10 are summarised in table 10a:

Table 10a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
The location of the site	73.1	70.1	8.1	12.4
The opening hours of the site	75.7	70.7	6.1	11.6
The recycling facilities at the site	75.9	76.0	3.1	4.8
How clean the site is	73.0	65.1	5.8	9.0
How helpful the staff are	69.8	64.0	5.7	9.0
How 'user friendly' the site is (the ability to deposit your waste easily)	71.5	68.7	8.8	13.4
The local tip / household waste recycling centre overall	85.9	77.9	5.9	9.7

- On the whole, the levels of net satisfaction have decreased between surveys, the overall level of satisfaction for the local tip / household waste recycling centre overall has decreased by 9.3%, from 85.9% in 2003 to 77.9% for 2006.

Public transport information

Torbay Council has responsibility for the following types of information about local transport services: The three Tourist Information Centres provide public transport information to visitors and residents. They are rail booking agents and can issue tickets and provide information on all national rail services. They also have a wide range of local and regional bus information and can issue some tickets.

The Council also produces timetable leaflets and posters for financially supported bus services and we also include public transport information on our web site.

The Council also contribute to the 'Traveline' public transport telephone helpline, which provides information on local bus, coach, rail & ferries. The authority also has a role in ensuring the information produced by private transport companies for local services are of the standard required.

Question 11: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the information on transport we provide.

Table 11	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Don't know / doesn't apply (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
The amount of information	10.7	13.8	32.9	32.7	11.6	15.2	7.9	5.7	3.6	2.5	33.4	30.1	856	1,496
The accuracy of the information	10.4	11.8	30.4	33.7	14.5	14.9	5.9	4.4	3.0	1.6	35.8	33.7	847	1,480
The provision of public transport information overall	12.9	16.2	45.4	40.0	17.9	29.5	14.2	9.3	9.7	4.9	-	-	569	1,244

The findings from table 11 are summarised in table 11a:

Table 11a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
The amount of information	43.5	46.5	11.4	8.2
The accuracy of the information	40.8	45.5	8.9	5.9
The provision of public transport information overall	58.3	56.2	23.9	14.3

- Net satisfactions with the amount and accuracy of information have both increased, and yet the overall provision has decreased.

Question 12: Have you received or seen any of the information provided on local transport services, in the last 12 months?

Table 12	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	258	33.7	551	36.8
No	507	66.3	728	48.6
Don't know	-	-	218	14.6
Total	765	100.0	1,497	100.0

- There has been an increase in the proportion of households who have received or seen information on the local transport services.

The local bus service

Torbay Council has responsibility to support local bus services and provides a 'ring and ride' service for residents. The authority also has a role in ensuring privately run local services are meeting the needs of the local community.

Question 13: Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the local bus service.

Table 13	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Don't know / doesn't apply (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
The frequency of buses	11.0	18.9	32.6	34.7	9.1	6.6	10.8	8.2	9.2	3.0	27.2	28.7	876	1,502
The number of bus stops	15.7	22.0	38.8	35.7	9.1	8.3	6.0	5.0	3.1	1.1	27.4	27.8	865	1,488
The state of the bus stops	9.2	13.1	36.0	38.6	12.6	11.9	10.8	8.3	5.3	3.2	26.1	24.8	863	1,490
Whether buses arrive on time	6.2	9.1	30.4	31.6	13.4	12.6	11.9	10.1	7.0	4.0	31.1	32.6	855	1,493
How easy buses are to get on and off	11.1	21.7	38.8	34.4	11.4	8.6	6.3	3.7	5.0	2.5	27.4	29.1	869	1,496
The local bus service overall	10.6	19.0	47.0	43.4	13.0	24.9	13.9	7.5	15.6	5.1	-	-	632	1,255

The findings from table 13 are summarised in table 13a:

Table 13a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
The frequency of buses	43.7	53.6	20.0	11.2
The number of bus stops	54.5	57.8	9.0	6.1
The state of the bus stops	45.2	51.7	16.1	11.6
Whether buses arrive on time	36.6	40.7	18.9	14.1
How easy buses are to get on and off	49.8	56.1	11.4	6.2
The local bus service overall	57.6	62.4	29.5	12.7

- Satisfaction levels with the local bus service have increased across the range of service areas.
- The level of satisfaction with the local bus service overall has increased by 8.3% from 57.6% in 2003 to 62.4% for 2006.

Question 14: How frequently, if at all, do you use the local bus service?

Table 14	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Almost every day	116	13.0	178	11.7
At least once a week	184	20.7	283	18.6
About once a month	105	11.7	188	12.4
Within the last 6 months	81	9.1	214	14.1
Within the last year	79	8.9	126	8.3
Longer ago	119	13.4	208	13.7
Never used	192	21.5	291	19.1
Don't know	15	1.7	32	2.1
Total	891	100.0	1,520	100.0

- The proportion of people using the local bus service at least once a month has fallen by 5.9% from 45.4% in 2003 to 42.7% for 2006.

Cultural and recreational activities and venues

Torbay Council directly supports cultural and recreational activities and venues. The authority's licensing and planning responsibilities also make a difference to the level of private and voluntary cultural provision in your area.

Question 15: Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following services provided or supported by Torbay Council.

Table 15	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
Sports/leisure facilities and events	16.9	13.4	51.7	46.8	20.7	27.0	9.0	9.7	1.8	3.0	1,136	1,476
Libraries	35.8	33.4	45.6	42.0	13.0	22.0	4.2	2.4	1.5	0.3	1,206	1,500
Museums and galleries	17.8	11.9	47.9	37.0	27.3	42.1	4.3	6.7	2.7	2.2	1,060	1,472
Theatres / Concert halls	21.8	16.8	51.8	44.7	18.6	27.9	6.1	8.0	1.7	2.5	1,135	1,494
Parks and open spaces	28.2	20.8	54.1	54.8	8.6	11.8	6.3	9.3	2.7	3.3	1,283	1,514

The findings from table 15 are summarised in table 15a:

Table 15a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
Sports/leisure facilities and events	68.6	60.3	10.8	12.7
Libraries	81.3	75.4	5.7	2.6
Museums and galleries	65.7	48.9	7.0	8.9
Theatres/Concert halls	73.5	61.5	7.8	10.6
Parks and open spaces	82.3	75.5	9.1	12.7

- Satisfaction levels for all cultural and recreational activities and venues have decreased.
- Part of the explanation for the decrease could be due to the explanation given in the second additional note in the introduction.

Question 16: Please indicate how frequently you have used the following cultural and recreational services provided or supported by Torbay Council in the last 12 months.

Table 16	Almost every day (%)		At least once a week (%)		About once a month (%)		Within the last 6 months (%)		Within the last year (%)		Longer ago/ Never used / Don't know (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
Sports/leisure facilities and events	3.0	2.9	12.7	17.8	10.8	16.1	14.8	18.0	10.2	11.5	48.5	33.6	1,343	1,500
Libraries	1.2	0.8	11.4	13.2	19.9	20.5	16.8	17.4	12.1	9.8	38.6	38.3	1,426	1,517
Museums and galleries	2.6	0.3	3.7	0.8	5.5	5.6	14.6	16.2	14.8	15.3	58.8	61.9	1,361	1,501
Theatres / Concert halls	0.7	0.3	0.7	0.3	12.0	12.1	30.2	31.4	20.2	20.3	36.2	35.6	1,230	1,509
Parks and open spaces	19.8	19.9	31.2	36.6	19.6	18.2	12.4	11.4	7.2	4.9	9.7	9.2	1,263	1,522

The findings from table 16 are summarised for participation rates for service users accessing the service at least once a month (or more), are provided in table 16a:

Table 16a	Participation – at least once a month or more (%)	
	2003	2006
Sports/leisure facilities and events	26.5	36.8
Libraries	32.5	34.5
Museums and galleries	11.8	6.7
Theatres / Concert halls	13.4	12.7
Parks and open spaces	70.6	74.7

- The proportion of people accessing sports/leisure facilities and events at least once a month has increased by 38.9%, from 26.5% in 2003 to 36.8% for 2006.
- However, the proportion of people accessing museums and galleries has decreased by 43.2%, from 11.8% in 2003 to 6.7% for 2006.

Question 17: For each of the following services provided by Torbay Council, do you think the service has got better or worse over the last three years, or has it stayed the same?

Table 17	Better (%)		Stayed the same (%)		Worse (%)		Don't know (%)		Total (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	15.8	16.2	46.9	50.2	29.9	26.2	7.4	7.4	1,393	1,504
Collection of household waste	25.0	21.9	62.2	64.0	7.3	9.4	5.5	4.7	1,405	1,518
Local recycling facilities	24.4	27.0	57.2	58.6	6.2	3.9	12.2	10.5	1,413	1,489
Doorstep collection of items for recycling	15.8	23.6	43.6	44.0	7.0	6.5	33.6	25.8	1,404	1,493
Local tips/Household waste recycling centres	25.2	18.6	43.2	56.9	6.0	6.5	25.6	18.0	860	1,491
Local transport information	8.3	12.6	40.4	47.2	12.1	7.6	39.1	32.6	854	1,490
Local bus service	7.0	19.1	32.4	39.9	27.7	11.5	32.9	29.5	878	1,508
Sport/leisure facilities	9.8	8.8	55.3	54.9	6.7	7.9	28.2	28.3	1,380	1,486
Libraries	13.7	17.2	57.8	55.5	3.7	2.7	24.8	24.6	1,413	1,494
Museums/galleries	6.3	4.3	54.0	50.7	2.9	3.2	36.7	41.8	1,386	1,494
Theatres/concert Halls	6.9	5.0	60.4	61.2	7.9	6.4	24.8	27.3	1,351	1,499
Parks and open spaces	13.9	15.9	59.2	58.8	15.3	15.7	11.6	9.5	1,354	1,511

- The increase with overall net satisfaction for the local bus service is reflected with 19.1% believing the service has got better over the last three years.
- Despite a decrease in overall satisfaction for libraries, 17.2% believe the service has got better over the last three years.
- It should be noted that a significant number of respondents in both surveys selected don't know.

Other services

Torbay Council also provides other services. The Devon Fire & Rescue Authority has responsibility for fire and rescue services in your area. Personal Social Services now forms part of the Torbay Care Trust.

Question 18: Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are overall with the following services provided by Torbay Council, Devon Fire & Rescue Authority, or the Torbay Care Trust.

Table 18	Very satisfied (%)		Fairly satisfied (%)		Neither (%)		Fairly dissatisfied (%)		Very dissatisfied (%)		Total (Count)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006	2003	2006
Housing Services	8.5	9.3	36.5	31.5	38.6	34.4	9.6	11.3	6.7	13.5	709	580
Planning Services	10.3	10.2	37.1	33.1	36.1	32.3	11.3	14.0	5.3	10.4	731	712
Personal Social Services	14.3	12.7	37.4	38.8	34.5	30.2	10.2	11.6	3.6	6.7	766	610
Devon Fire and Rescue Service	42.6	50.5	37.1	32.5	17.5	16.0	2.0	0.6	0.8	0.4	871	858
Local Authority Education Service	15.0	14.8	50.9	50.3	24.5	23.5	7.0	7.3	2.6	4.1	851	808

The findings from table 18 are summarised in table 18a:

Table 18a	Net satisfaction (%)		Net dissatisfaction (%)	
	2003	2006	2003	2006
Housing Services	45.0	40.8	16.3	24.8
Planning Services	47.4	43.3	16.6	24.4
Personal Social Services	51.7	51.5	13.8	18.3
Devon Fire and Rescue Service	79.7	83.0	2.8	1.0
Local Authority Education Service	65.9	65.1	9.6	11.4

- Net satisfaction for Devon Fire & Rescue has increased by 4.1%, from 79.7% in 2003 to 83.0% for 2006.
- Net satisfaction for the remaining service areas has decreased, most noticeably housing services has decreased by 9.3% from 45.0% in 2003 to 40.8% for 2006.

Question 19: Please indicate whether you or any other member of your family have used any of the following services provided by Torbay Council, Devon Fire & Rescue Authority, or Torbay Care Trust in the last 12 months.

Table 19	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Housing Services	177	24.4	179	23.9
Planning Services	194	26.7	241	32.3
Personal Social Services	240	33.2	207	27.8
Devon Fire and Rescue Service	90	12.4	88	11.7
Local Authority Education Service	344	47.4	322	43.2
Total	1,045	144.1	1,036	138.9

In 2003, 725 respondents made a total of 1,045 selections, and in 2006, 746 respondents made a total of 1.036 selections.

- For both the 2003 and 2006 survey, local authority education service was selected most as the service most used.

Question 20: Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Torbay Council runs things?

Table 20	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Very satisfied	91	6.0	55	3.9
Fairly satisfied	586	38.9	548	39.2
Neither	474	31.5	305	21.8
Fairly dissatisfied	230	15.3	341	24.4
Very dissatisfied	123	8.2	151	10.8
Total	1,504	100.0	1,399	100.0

The findings from table 20 are summarised in table 20a:

Table 20a	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Net Satisfaction	676	45.0	602	43.1
Net Dissatisfaction	353	23.5	492	35.1

- The overall net satisfaction with the way Torbay Council runs things has decreased by 4.2% from 45% in 2003 to 43.1% for 2006.

SECTION 3: INFORMATION ABOUT YOUR COUNCIL AND ITS SERVICES

Question 21: How well informed do you feel about each of the following?

Table 21	Very well informed		Fairly well informed		Not very well informed		Not well informed at all		Don't know		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
How to pay bills to the Council	480	31.6	817	53.8	127	8.3	42	2.8	54	3.5	1,519
How and where to register to vote	600	39.3	750	49.2	110	7.2	24	1.6	40	2.7	1,526
How you can get involved in local decision making	82	5.4	343	22.7	645	42.7	213	14.1	229	15.2	1,512
How to complain to the Council	127	8.3	429	28.2	561	37.0	247	16.3	155	10.2	1,519
What the Council spends its money on	72	4.8	437	28.7	515	33.9	391	25.7	106	7.0	1,522
What standard of service you should expect from the Council	128	8.5	411	27.5	579	38.6	264	17.6	117	7.8	1,498
Whether the Council is delivering on its promises	36	2.4	245	16.3	612	40.7	404	26.9	207	13.8	1,505
What the Council is doing to tackle anti-social behaviour in your local area	35	2.3	156	10.3	600	39.6	527	34.8	197	13.0	1,516
How well the Council is performing	42	2.8	265	17.5	595	39.5	418	27.7	189	12.5	1,508
Overall, how well informed do you think your Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides	45	3.0	384	25.3	598	39.4	372	24.5	120	7.9	1,520

The complete question was asked in the 2003 survey and thus no historical comparison is available, it is hoped that a comparison both nationally and with other local authorities will become available in due course.

- 88.5% (1,350 of 1,526) of respondents feel very or fairly well informed about how and where to register to vote.
- Just over a third, 36.5%, feel very or fairly well informed about how to complain to the council.

The only comparable question from the 2003 survey is overall, how well informed do you think your council keeps residents about the services and benefits provided – results can be seen in table 21a.

Table 21a	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Very well informed	126	8.9	45	3.0
Fairly well informed	526	36.8	384	25.3
Not very well informed	460	32.2	598	39.4
Not well informed at all	252	17.6	372	24.5
Don't know	64	4.5	120	7.9
Total	1,428	100.0	1,520	100.0

- The proportion of residents who feel either very well informed or fairly well informed has dropped by 38.1% from 45.7% in 2003 to 28.3% for 2006.

Question 22: How do you find out about Torbay Council? Please tick the main source you use from the list below.

Table 22	Count	%	rank
Local media	670	48.7	1
Information provided by the Council	282	20.5	2
Council web site	123	9.0	3
Direct contact with the council	110	8.0	4
Word of mouth	102	7.4	5
Don't know	46	3.3	6
None of these	18	1.3	7
Other	18	1.3	8
From local councillor	6	0.5	9
Total	1,376	100.0	

- Almost half, 48.7% find out about Torbay Council through the local media.

SECTION 4: CONTACTING YOUR COUNCIL

Making a complaint

Question 23: Have you contacted the authority with a complaint(s) in the last 12 months?

Table 23	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Yes	264	19.2	262	17.1
No	1,115	80.8	1,268	82.9
Total	1,379	100.0	1,530	100.0

- The proportion of residents contacting the council to make a complaint has decreased by 10.9%, from 19.2% in 2003 to 17.1% for 2006.

Only respondents stating they have contacted the council to make a complaint in the last 12 months are included in the analysis for questions 24 and 25.

Question 24: What did the complaint(s) relate to?

Question 25: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which your complaint(s) was (were) handled?

Table 24	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Very satisfied	30	12.7	28	11.0
Fairly satisfied	58	24.0	52	20.1
Neither	21	8.9	31	12.1
Fairly dissatisfied	56	23.5	62	24.2
Very dissatisfied	74	30.9	84	32.6
Total	240	100	258	100

- The level of net satisfaction in the way the complaint was handled has dropped by 15.3% from 36.7% in 2003 to 31.1% for 2006.

Contacting your Council for other reasons - The following questions were open to all respondents to answer.

Questions 26 to 29 are about your most recent contact with the Council for other reasons than to make a complaint.

If you have contacted the Council for any reason other than to make a complaint in the past 12 months, please continue. Otherwise, please go to question 29.

Question 26: Which of these describes the reasons why you made your most recent contact with the Council?

Table 25	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
Reported an issue or problem	219	22.1	24.8
Asked for advice/information	357	36.0	40.3
Applied to use a service	165	16.7	18.7
Don't know / can't remember	155	15.6	17.5
Any other reason	95	9.6	10.8
Total	991	100.0	112.1

884 respondents made a total of 991 selections.

- 40.3% (357 of 884) contacted the council to ask for advice or information.

Question 27: How were you in contact with the Council?

Table 26	Responses		Percent of Cases
	N	Percent	
In person	226	22.0	27.4
By telephone	546	53.0	66.3
By e-mail	51	5.0	6.2
Via a web site/ Internet	38	3.7	4.6
By letter	150	14.6	18.2
Other method	18	1.7	2.1
Total	1,029	100	125

824 respondents made a total of 1,029 selections.

- Two thirds, 66.3% contacted the council via telephone.

Question 28: Still thinking about your most recent contact with the Council, please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you were with each aspect of the service you received. If any aspect does not apply to your particular experience, please tick not applicable.

Table 27	Very satisfied		Fairly satisfied		Neither		Fairly dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Don't know / Not applicable		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
How easy it was to find the right person to deal with	210	23.1	325	35.7	105	11.6	88	9.6	56	6.2	127	13.9	912
The length of time it took to deal with the person you contacted	202	22.6	309	34.7	106	11.8	86	9.6	59	6.6	130	14.6	891
How competent the staff were	245	27.3	301	33.7	108	12.1	61	6.8	58	6.5	122	13.6	895
How helpful the staff were	273	30.4	303	33.7	91	10.2	61	6.8	54	6.0	117	13.0	898
The final outcome	240	26.8	223	25.0	107	12.0	74	8.3	123	13.8	126	14.1	894

It should be noted that Torbay omitted to include a statutory sub question to this main question.

- Almost two thirds of respondents, 64.1% were satisfied with how helpful the staff were to them.
- Just over half, 51.8% were satisfied with the outcome of the service received.

SECTION 5: LOCAL DECISION MAKING

Torbay Council provides opportunities for residents to participate in decision making in your local area such as the ViewPoint residents panel, the YEP youth panel, Ward Partnership meetings, the 'Have your Say in the Bay' budget consultation and the regular Torbay Connections road show events with the Mayor.

Question 29: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by your Council?

Table 28	Count	%
Very satisfied	29	1.9
Fairly satisfied	218	14.5
Neither	672	44.8
Fairly dissatisfied	177	11.8
Very dissatisfied	114	7.6
Don't know	290	19.3
Total	1,499	100.0

- Only 16.4% (247 of 1,499) expressed a level of satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in local decision making provided by the council.

Question 30: Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?

Table 29	Count	%
Definitely agree	42	2.8
Tend to agree	257	16.9
Tend to disagree	543	35.7
Definitely disagree	341	22.4
Don't know	336	22.1
Total	1518	100.0

- Well over half, 58.1% disagree that they can influence decisions affecting their local area.

Question 31: Generally speaking, would you like to be more involved in the decisions your Council makes that affect your local area?

Table 30	Count	%
Yes	315	21.3
No	164	11.1
Depends on the issue	897	60.7
Don't know	103	7.0
Total	1478	100.0

- When being involved in local decision making, 60.7% stated that it would depend on the issue.

SECTION 6: HOW YOUR COUNCIL PERFORMS OVERALL

Question 32: Here are some things that other people have said about their Council. To what extent do you think that statements apply to your local Council?

Table 31	A great deal		To some extent		Not very much		Not at all		Don't know		Total
	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count	%	Count
is making the local area a better place to live	76	5.1	677	45.4	484	32.5	165	11.1	89	6.0	1,492
is working to make the area safer	88	5.9	648	43.7	453	30.5	172	11.6	123	8.3	1,485
is working to make the area cleaner and greener	128	8.6	683	46.1	442	29.8	154	10.4	76	5.1	1,483
is efficient and well run	60	4.0	377	25.5	469	31.7	376	25.4	199	13.5	1,481
provides good value for money	56	3.8	270	18.3	469	31.7	457	30.9	227	15.3	1,479
is trustworthy	73	5.0	388	26.5	367	25.0	294	20.0	345	23.5	1,468
is remote and impersonal	155	10.5	602	40.8	257	17.4	180	12.2	281	19.1	1,474
promotes the interests of local residents	52	3.5	510	34.5	489	33.1	232	15.7	194	13.2	1,478
acts on the concerns of local residents	44	2.9	459	30.9	506	34.1	244	16.4	230	15.5	1,482
treats all types of people fairly	128	8.7	558	37.7	204	13.8	145	9.8	443	29.9	1,479

- Over half, 54.7% believe that Torbay council is to some extent or a great deal working to make the area cleaner and greener.
- Only 22.1% believe that Torbay council to some extent or a great deal provides good value for money.

Question 33: Thinking about the way the authority runs things, do you think this has got better or worse over the last three years, or has it stayed the same?

Table 32	2003		2006	
	Count	%	Count	%
Better	148	10.1	125	8.2
Stayed the same	699	47.6	700	46.2
Worse	465	31.6	467	30.8
Don't know	157	10.7	225	14.8
Total	1,469	100.0	1,517	100.0

- Almost half, 46.2% believe the way the authority runs things has stayed the same over the last three years, compared to 47.6% for 2003.

For further analysis of the General User Satisfaction Survey results including filtering on selected demographics, geographical location, please contact the Consultation & Research Team, Torbay Council.

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