

Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey 2024

Analysis of Results

August 2024

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

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

Email: viewpoint@worcestershire.gov.uk

Telephone: 01905 846800

www.worcestershire.gov.uk/viewpoint



Contents

| | |
|---|----|
| 1. Introduction | 1 |
| 2. Results..... | 2 |
| 2.1 About Your Local Area and Public Services | 2 |
| General satisfaction with local area..... | 2 |
| Satisfaction with Council..... | 2 |
| Value for Money | 3 |
| Belonging to neighbourhood | 3 |
| Making somewhere a good place to live | 4 |
| Satisfaction with services..... | 7 |
| 2.2 Helping Out | 8 |
| 2.3 Information and Local Decision Making | 10 |
| Being kept informed | 10 |
| Influencing Decisions | 10 |
| 2.4 About Yourself..... | 11 |

1. Introduction

This report contains results from the 2024 Worcestershire County Council Viewpoint Survey. The survey period was 20th May – 16th June 2024.

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

A total of **4,170** questionnaire completion requests were mailed out to panel members, 91% of these via email and 9% by post. **1,755** valid responses were received from panel members, representing a response rate of **42%** (after removal of deadwood). No responses were received from residents who could join the panel and complete the survey during the survey period. The number of responses has reduced from 2,048 in 2021.

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

The sample has been weighted so the overall sample profile is representative of the whole population of the local area. Weighting allows us to account for the different demographic profiles of the survey respondents and the residents of Worcestershire. This helps to increase the survey results reliability. The demographic characteristics that factor into the weighting procedure are age, gender, ethnicity and district.

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

2. Results

2.1 About Your Local Area and Public Services

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

General satisfaction with local area

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

Satisfaction with a local area is a key indicator about public service delivery which was originally measured by the government for all local authority areas across the country. 78% of Worcestershire residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live. This is the same as the 78% satisfied in 2023.

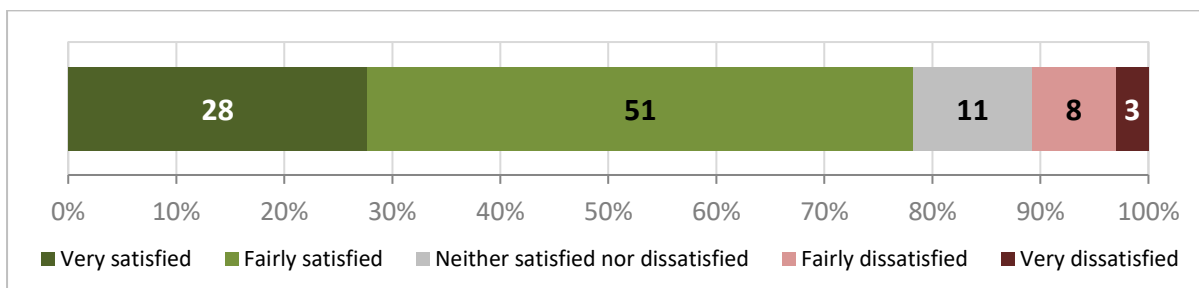


Figure 1: Local area satisfaction in Worcestershire

*Base: 1,748 responses

Satisfaction with Council

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

49% of residents are satisfied with the way the County Council runs things. This is not a significant change from the 50% satisfied in 2023.

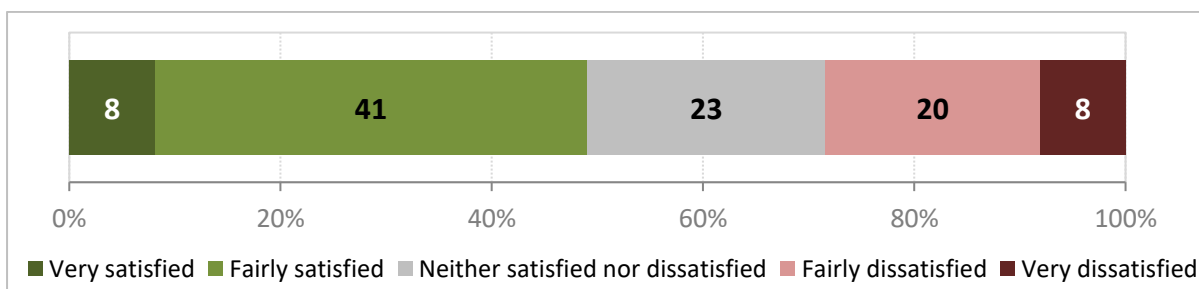


Figure 2: Overall Satisfaction with Worcestershire County Council

*Base: 1,727 responses

Value for Money

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

32% of residents agree that the County Council provides value for money. This is not a significant change from the 35% that agreed in 2023.

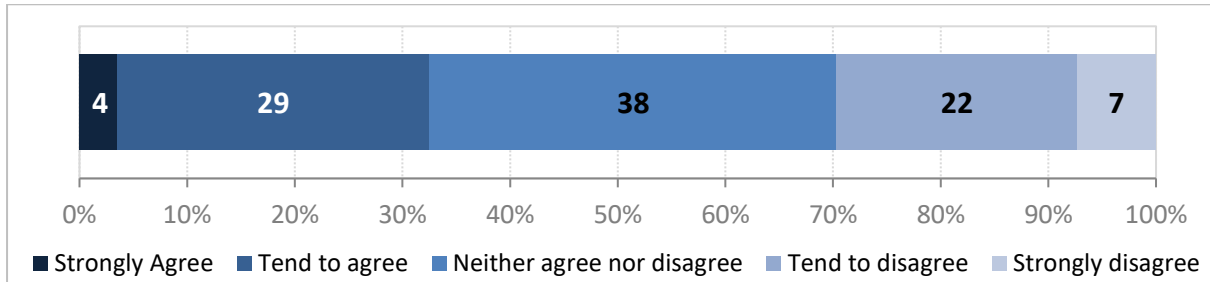


Figure 3: Worcestershire County Council provides value for money

*Base: 1,703 responses

Belonging to neighbourhood

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

The strength of belonging is a way of measuring cohesiveness in the local area and residents were asked to rate the level to which they feel they belong, 74% feel that they belong very or fairly strongly to their local area. This is not a significant change from the 73% feeling they belonged in 2023.

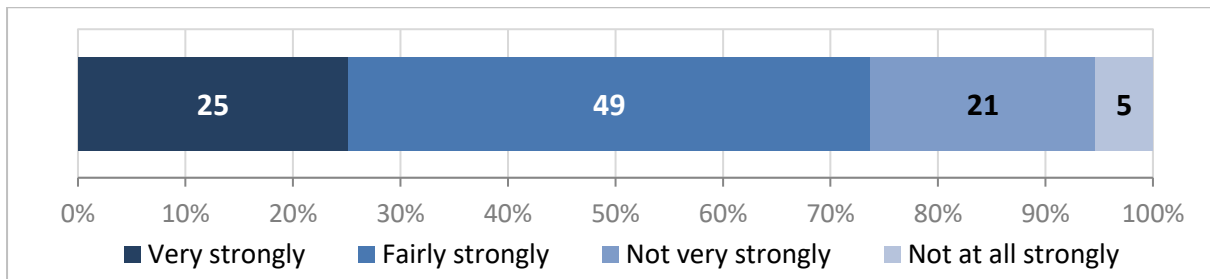


Figure 4: Belonging to the local area

*Base: 1,688 responses

As in previous years those aged between 18-34 have less of a sense of belonging to the local area, with only 50% feeling a very or fairly strong sense of belonging compared to the much higher percentage (over 70%) seen in the other age groups, however this year the split between those who feel they belong very strongly and those who feel they belong fairly strongly has changed. 38% of respondents age 18-34 feel they belong very strongly – the highest of any age group – but only 13% reported feeling like they belong fairly strongly. 78% of those aged 65+ feel a strong sense of belonging to their local area (Figure 5). Note - The comparative age data presented must be treated with caution due to the small sample of residents less than 35 years of age.

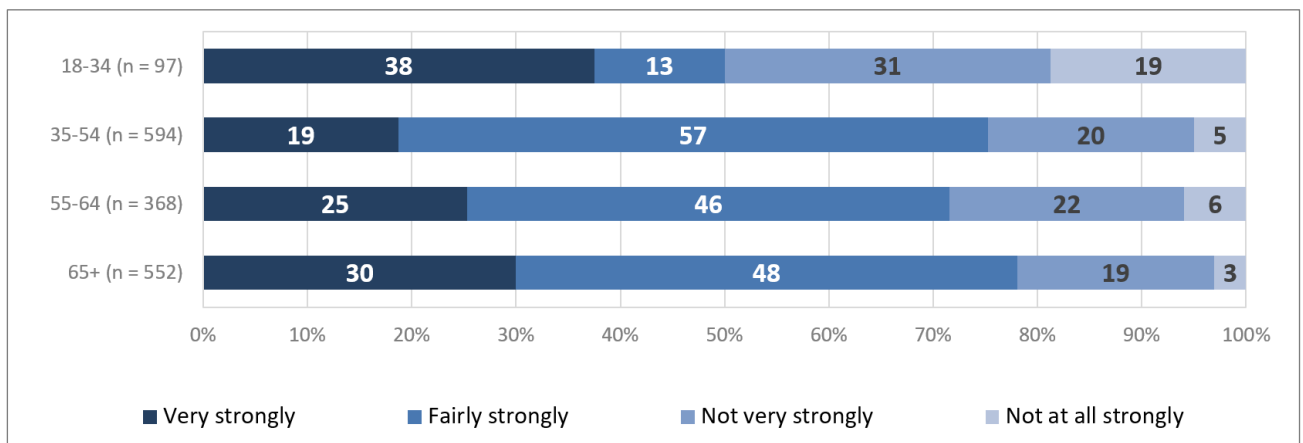


Figure 5: Belonging to the local area by age group

Making somewhere a good place to live

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

Respondents were asked to select the top five things that make somewhere a good place to live. As a whole, residents of Worcestershire rate the importance of NHS services most highly, followed by crime levels and clean streets. When looking at the breakdown by age group, NHS services and the level of crime are the top two things selected by age groups 35-54, 55-64 and 65+ however respondents aged 18-34 chose affordable decent housing as the most important thing. Residents under 55 rate parks and open spaces more highly than those 55-64 or 65+. Residents aged 65+ are more likely to think road and pavement/repairs are more important than younger age groups, however both the oldest and youngest age groups thought that public transport was important. More residents aged 35-54 think education provision is important compared to other age groups.

Table 1: Top 5 most important things in making somewhere a good place to live 2024

| 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th |
|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---------------------------|
| NHS services | Level of crime | Clean streets | Parks and open spaces | Affordable decent housing |

*Base: 1,729 responses

Table 2: Top 5 most important things in making somewhere a good place to live 2024 by age band

| | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------|-----------------------|---|---------------------------|
| 18-34 (n = 104) | Affordable decent housing | Level of crime | Public Transport | Parks and open spaces/ NHS services (tied) | |
| 35-54 (n = 613) | NHS services | Level of crime | Clean streets | Education provision | Parks and open spaces |
| 55-64 (n = 370) | NHS services | Level of crime | Clean streets | Access to nature | Affordable decent housing |
| 65+ (n = 567) | NHS services | Level of crime | Road/pavement repairs | Public transport | Clean streets |

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

Residents were also asked for the top five things that most need improving in their local area. NHS services and road issues, including traffic congestion and road/pavement repairs, are consistently top. Public transport and affordable, decent housing are also considered as needing improvement as is activities for teenagers. Older age groups are more likely to say road and pavement repairs need improving. Public Transport and NHS services make the top 5 for all age groups. Affordable decent housing was the top issue that needed improving for the youngest age group 18-34 but also featured in the top 5 for ages 55-64 and 65+.

Table 3: Top 5 areas that most need improving 2024

| 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th |
|-----------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|------------------|---------------------------|
| NHS services | Road and pavement Repairs | Level of traffic congestion | Public transport | Affordable decent housing |

**Base: 1,711 responses*

Table 4: Top 5 areas that most need improving 2024, by age band

| | 1 st | 2 nd | 3 rd | 4 th | 5 th |
|------------------------|---------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| 18-34 (n = 104) | Affordable decent housing | Level of crime | Public transport | NHS services | Parks and open spaces/ Wage levels and local cost of living (tied) |
| 35-54 (n = 609) | NHS services | Level of traffic congestion | Road/pavement repairs | Public transport | Activities for teenagers |
| 55-64 (n = 371) | Road/pavement repairs | NHS services | Level of traffic congestion | Public transport | Affordable decent housing |
| 65+ (n = 558) | Road/pavement repairs | NHS services | Public transport | Level of traffic congestion | Affordable decent housing |

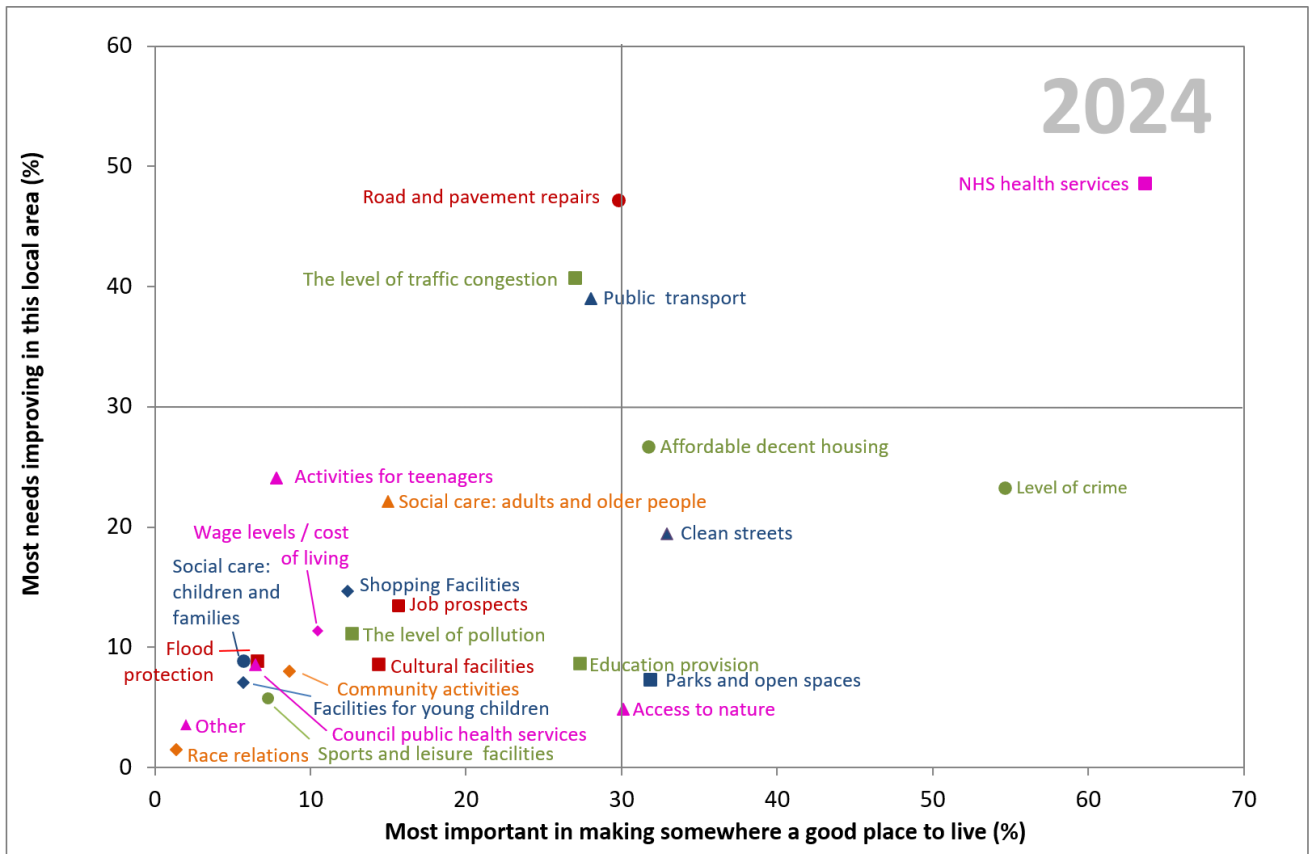


Figure 6: relationship of most important and needs improving

*Base: 1,729 responses for most important; 1,711 responses for most need improving

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

Satisfaction with services

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

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

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

There has been no significant change in use of any of these services this year.

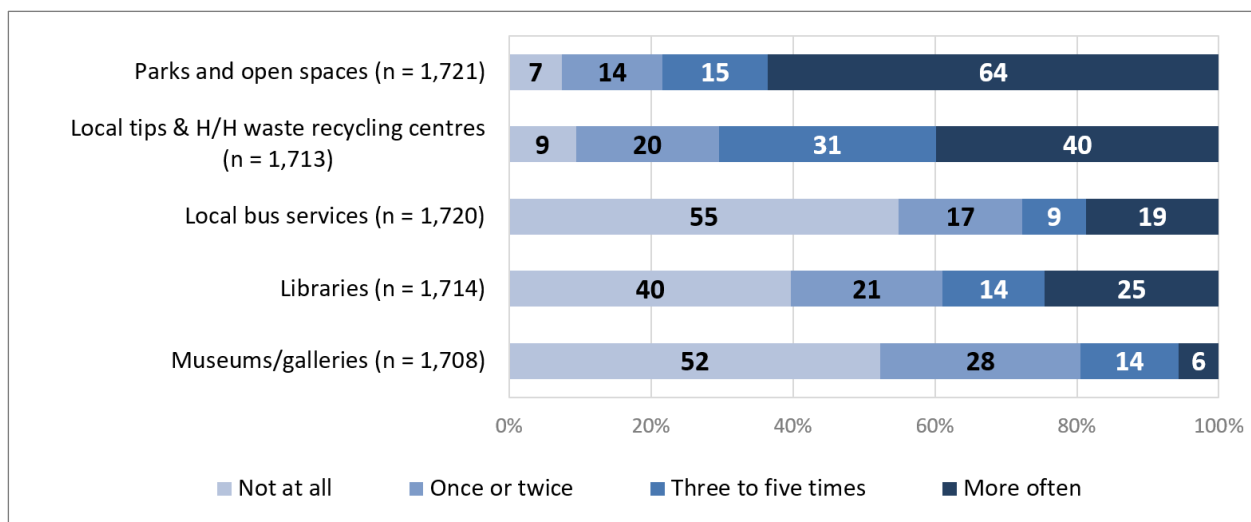


Figure 7: Usage frequencies for local services in Worcestershire in the last year

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

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

Figure 8 shows the highest level of satisfaction is seen with 'local tips and household waste recycling centres' with 84% overall satisfaction across the county. Those who have used the services within the last year are more likely to be satisfied (Figure 9).

There has been a significant decrease in the proportion of respondents who were satisfied with museums and galleries from 57% in 2023 down to 52%. Satisfaction with museums and galleries had previously increased from 52% in 2022. There was also a significant decrease in satisfaction for people who said they were users of museums and galleries from 30% to 27%).

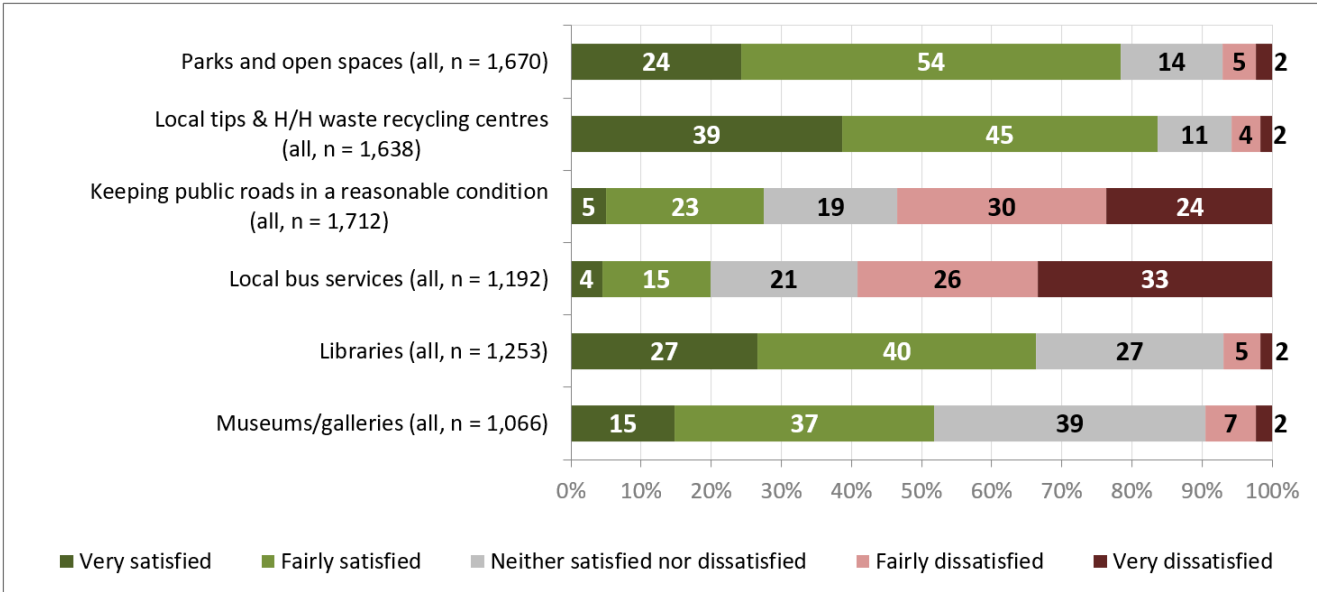


Figure 8: Overall satisfaction with services, Worcestershire

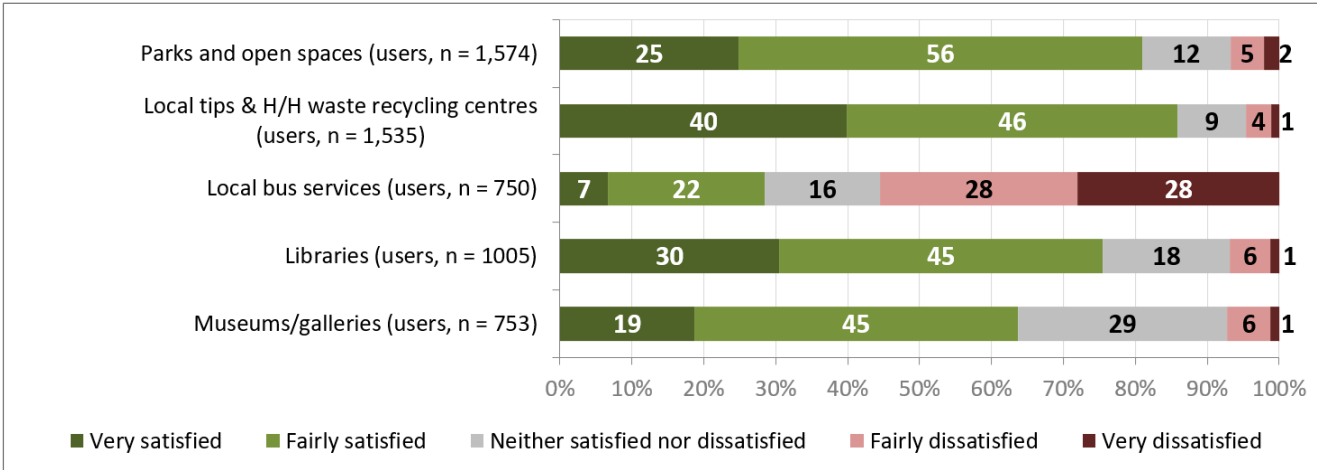


Figure 9: User satisfaction with services, Worcestershire

2.2 Helping Out

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

Respondents were asked if they have given any unpaid help in the last 12 months; 47% had. This is a significant increase from the 43% who said they had volunteered in the 2023 survey. Volunteering rates are now similar again to those seen before the COVID pandemic; 48% said they volunteered in 2019.

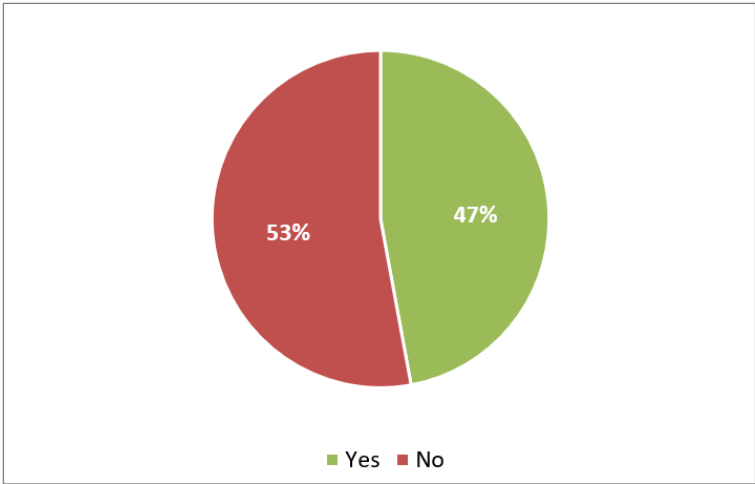


Figure 10: Split of respondents offering unpaid help in the last year
 *Base: 1,611 responses

As in previous years, a greater proportion of older residents age 65+ are offering their time unpaid compared to younger residents age 35-64, shown in figure 11.

There has been a significant increase in those aged 18-34 offering their time unpaid in 2024 (50%) compared to 32% in 2023 and 23% in 2022. The comparative age data presented must still be treated with caution due to the small sample of residents less than 35 years of age.

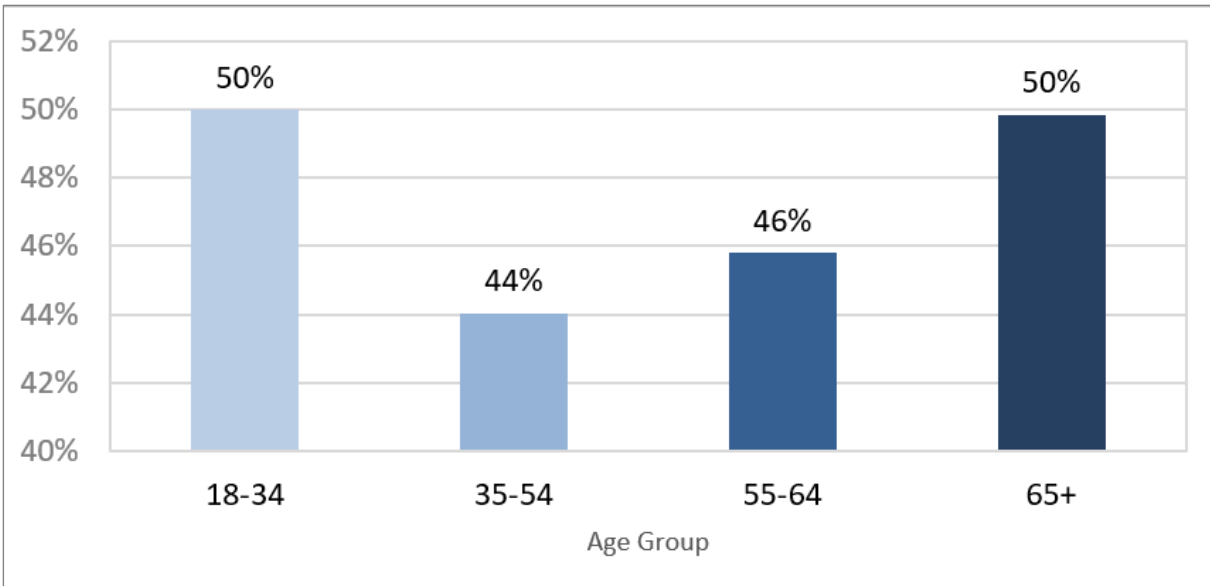


Figure 11: Percentage of people in different age categories who have offered unpaid help in the last year
 *Base: 1,668 responses

2.3 Information and Local Decision Making

Being kept informed

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

Most residents (62%) feel well informed about how council tax is spent, but fewer feel informed about how to get involved in local decision making and the work of Worcestershire County Council. There has been a no significant changes in residents feeling informed since 2023.

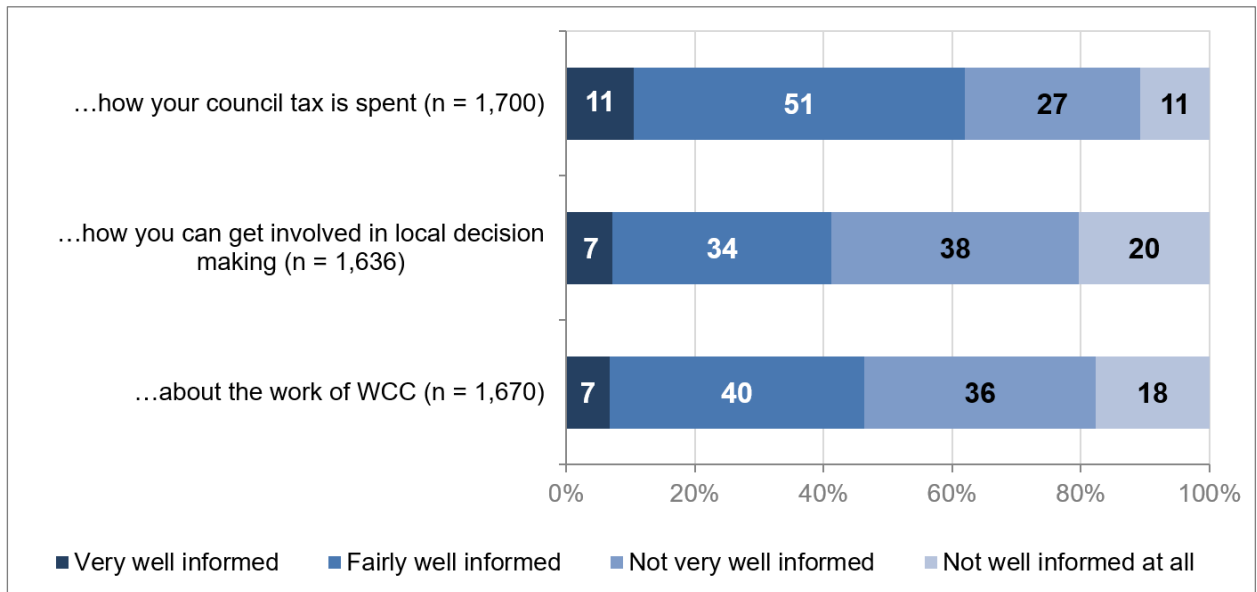


Figure 12: How well-informed respondents feel

Influencing Decisions

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

The extent to which people feel they can influence local decisions relates to how well local authorities and their partners engage with local residents in the community, and the degree to which residents feel they have the ability to influence decisions and the decision-making process. 27% of Worcestershire residents agree that they can influence local decisions, however this is a significant decrease from 30% in 2023.

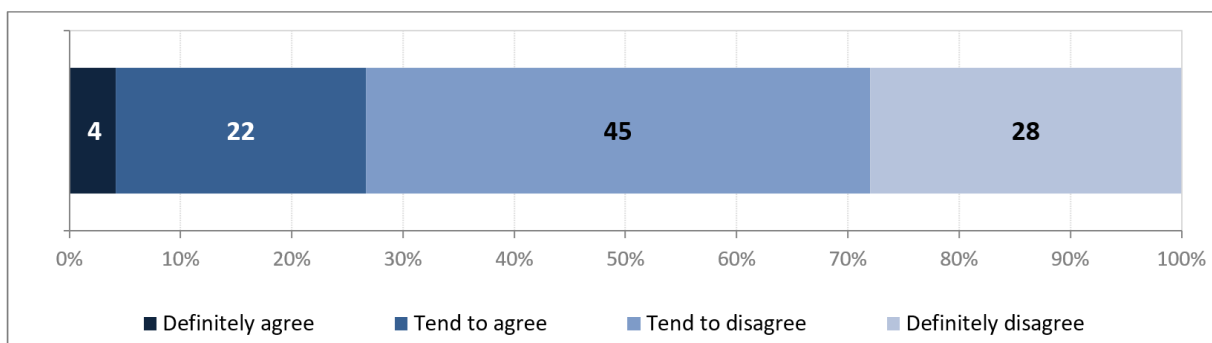


Figure 13: Influencing decisions

*Base: 1,616 responses

2.4 About Yourself

Comparing results of the Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey sample (un-weighted) to the most recent demographic estimates indicates that those aged over 65, male and of white ethnicity are more likely to respond to the survey, as Figure 14 illustrates. However, the sample has been weighted so the overall sample profile is representative of the whole population of the local area. The demographic characteristics that factor into the weighting procedure are age, gender, ethnicity and district.

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

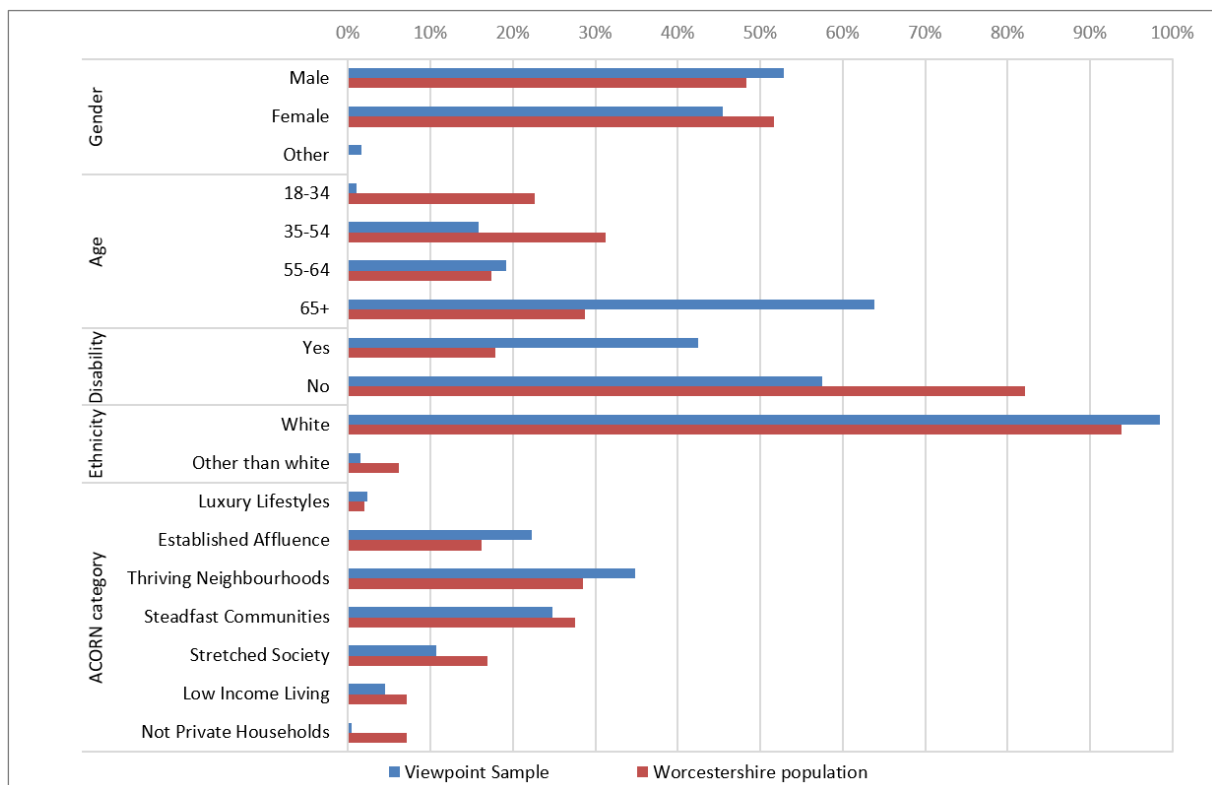


Figure 14: Sample Profile for Worcestershire – Key Demographics 2024

**Base: All valid responses*