

# NORTHUMBERLAND

## COUNTY COUNCIL

### Panel Consultation Report

On Behalf of Northumberland County Council



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# 1.0 Introduction

## Background

In May 2010 Northumberland County Council commissioned SMSR Ltd to recruit and manage a residents' panel on their behalf. The panel consists of 1,025 residents who are representative of the population of the Northumberland County. This consultation was the fifth to be done using the panel.

The panel has previously been used to undertake consultations on strategic priorities, communications and local services.

## Aims and Objectives

The objective of the consultation was to gather information on local services, communication and broadband.

The main aims of the consultation were to:

- Evaluate opinion of local services, including the frequency of use
- To understand preferred methods of communication
- To gather information on previous experiences of contacting the council
- To assess opinion and use of the internet, including specific pages such as the council's website
- To understand perceptions of the importance of the internet both now and in the future

## Report Structure

Included in the report is a set of top-line findings which provides quick reference to all the questions asked throughout the survey. In addition all questions have been analysed by location and demographic group and any significant differences in opinion across the demographic variables and area are commented on throughout the report.

It should be noted that when the results are discussed within the report, often percentages will be rounded up or down to the nearest one per cent. Therefore occasionally figures may add up to 101% or 99%.

## Acknowledgements

SMSR would like to thank Neil Easton for his help in conducting this consultation and his regular input and interest in the overall process, as well as the 514 panel members who gave up their time to complete a survey.

## 2.0 Methodology

The consultation was undertaken using a questionnaire which was designed by SMSR Ltd in conjunction with officers at Northumberland County Council.

All panel members were sent a letter to explain the consultation subject, a copy of the questionnaire and the results of the previous consultation. A pre-paid envelope was also included so that residents could return their survey free of charge.

Residents were initially given a three week period in which to complete and return the survey. Respondents who had not returned their questionnaire were then sent a reminder letter and questionnaire, which gave them a further two weeks to complete and return a questionnaire.

In total of 514 completed surveys were returned – a 50% response rate.

The demographic and geographic split was as follows:

Area	Number of Responses	Percentage of responses
North	126	25.4
South-East	217	43.7
West	154	31.0

Gender	Number of Responses	Percentage of responses
Male	236	47.5
Female	261	52.5

Age	Number of Responses	Percentage of responses
18-24	3	0.6
25-39	30	6.0
40-59	199	40.1
60-79	230	46.4
80+	34	6.9

Disability	Number of Responses	Percentage of responses
Yes	63	12.7
No	434	87.3

When undertaking analysis all missing responses have been excluded, and results used take into account valid responses only. As a result of this, base numbers will vary for each question.

## **3.0 Summary**

### **3.1 Access to Services**

#### **Perception of the Council**

Around half (51%) of respondents expressed satisfaction with the way Northumberland County Council ran things and around three fifths (61%) felt they were well informed about the council and its services.

#### **Council Services**

More than two thirds (68%) of respondents said local public services were easy to access locally; agreement was also high that local public services were working to make the area cleaner and greener (58%) and safer (56%).

When considering services and facilities provided or supported by the council satisfaction was highest towards local tips / recycling centres (91%) and household refuse and recycling collections (83%). Respondents tended to express greatest dissatisfaction towards pavement and road maintenance (59% and 75% respectively).

For almost all services / facilities considered satisfaction tended to increase with use, with respondents who used the service on at least a monthly basis expressing the highest levels of satisfaction.

Three fifths of respondents used the library / mobile library service, with more than a tenth (12%) doing so on at least a weekly basis. Respondents demonstrated high awareness of all of the services available at their local library, particularly the ability to borrow books (98%), CD's (89%) and DVD's (86%).

### **3.2 Communication**

#### **Contacting the Council**

Respondents tended to express a preference for contacting the council either over the telephone or through the council's website, with preference varying depending on the situation.

More than three fifths (61%) of respondents had contacted the council in the 12 months prior to taking part in the consultation and were asked to rate various aspects of doing so. Overall the helpfulness of the staff was rated most positively, with 69% of respondents saying this had been excellent / good; for all other aspects considered at least half of respondents gave a positive opinion.

#### **Customer Information Points and Contact Centres**

Around a quarter (26%) of respondents had visited a council customer information point in the 12 months prior to taking part in the consultation, mostly in relation to licencing, permits and passes (38%) and waste disposal enquiries (27%).

More than a third (37%) of respondents were aware of the council's contact centre telephone number however 68% said that should they need to contact the council via telephone it was likely that they would do so using this number.

### **Locally Elected Members**

Around a quarter (24%) of respondents had contacted their Parish or Town Councillor in the 6 months prior to taking part in the consultation, while just under a fifth had contacted their Member of Parliament (19%) or County Councillor (18%). Only 2% of respondents had contacted their European Member of Parliament.

### **Receiving Information**

Similar to the preferred methods of contacting the council, in many situations the council website was one of the preferred methods of receiving information. It was also common for respondents to express a preference for receiving information through letter / post, particularly when considering the receipt of bills.

Almost three fifths (57%) of respondents had used the council's website to gain information or contact the council however, use of other online mediums (including social media) to make contact / find information was low.

### **Council's Website**

Around three fifths (61%) of respondents had accessed the council's website in the 12 months prior to taking part in the consultation, and at least half of those who had visited the website rated the range of information (66%), ease of ordering / making payments online (54%) and the level that the website was up-to-date (50%) as either excellent or good.

When asked what should be improved in regards to the council's website, respondents most frequently selected the ability to report problems / faults (24%).

### **Local Publications**

Seven out of ten respondents had received an Adult Learning Guide through the post, while more than a third (37%) reported recently receiving a council tax leaflet; more than half of respondents who had received each of these publications considered them to be useful (council tax: 63%, Adult Learning Guide: 56%).

Although only 6% of respondents had registered to receive a copy of Northumberland News, a further 41% said that it was something which they planned to subscribe to in the future. More than half (53%) of respondents said that they had not registered to receive the Northumberland News nor were they planning to in the future.

The Journal was the most frequently read local publication, with 19% reading this publication on a daily basis and a further 14% doing so every week. A significant proportion of respondents also read the News Post Leader (38%) and Hexham Courant (22%) on at least a weekly basis.

### 3.3 Broadband / Connectivity

#### Mobile Coverage

Around nine out of ten respondents reported having mobile phone coverage at their home address, meaning a tenth either did not have coverage (9%) or were not sure if their home address had mobile phone coverage (1%).

#### Internet Usage

Almost two thirds (65%) of respondents said either themselves or another member of their family used the internet on a daily basis, while another 15% said the internet was used most days. It was most common for this access to be through fixed broadband (66%) or wireless / Wi-Fi (48%).

Almost all respondents who accessed the internet did so at home (99%) and more than a quarter indicated that they had access at work (27%).

More than eight out of ten (84%) respondents agreed that the internet was now more important than it had been five years ago and 78% agreed that it would become more important to them in the future. The internet was perceived to be of particular importance to leisure / recreational facilities (86%), as well as their life as a whole (84%); agreement was also high that the internet was important to the respondent's personal education and learning (78%) as well as the education of their children (61%).

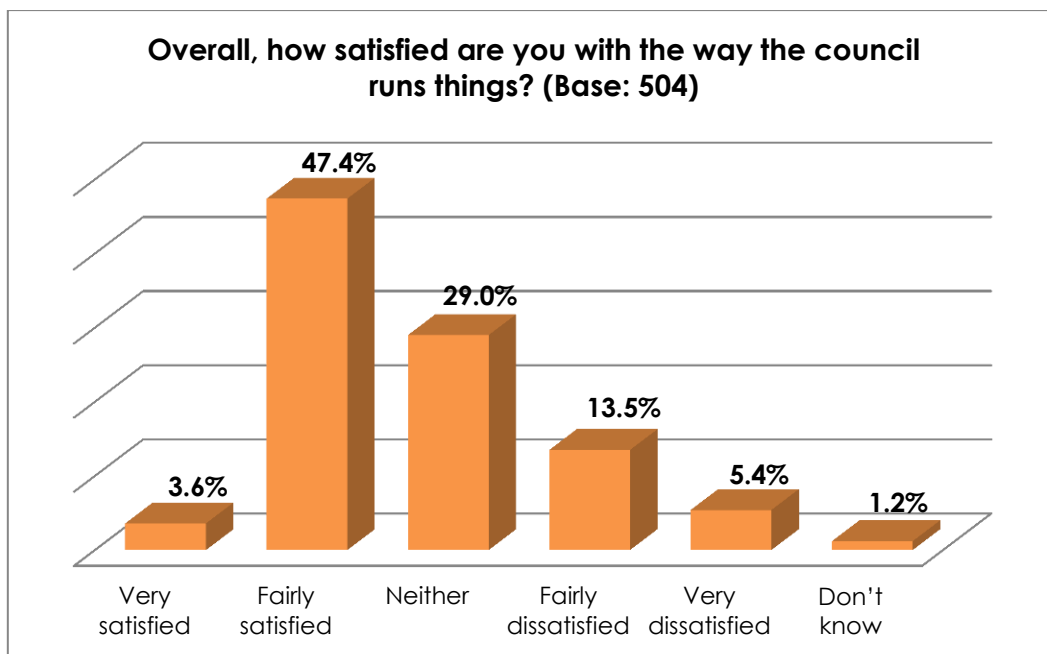
Overall respondents tended to be positive about the benefits which the internet could have on the various aspects of their life, community and employment. In particular, the internet was considered to be useful for keeping in contact with friends and family (89%) and improving the individual's education (86%). There was however, scepticism regarding whether the internet could help improve feelings of safety and security in the home (37%).

Between £10 and £15 was generally considered to be the most appropriate amount to pay for a fast and reliable broadband service.

## 4.0 Section 1: Access to Services

### 4.1 Perception of the Council

#### 4.1.1 The Way Things are Run



Around half (51%) of respondents expressed satisfaction with the way Northumberland County Council ran things and a further 29% said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with this aspect of the council. Only 19% of respondents indicated any level of dissatisfaction with the way the council ran things.

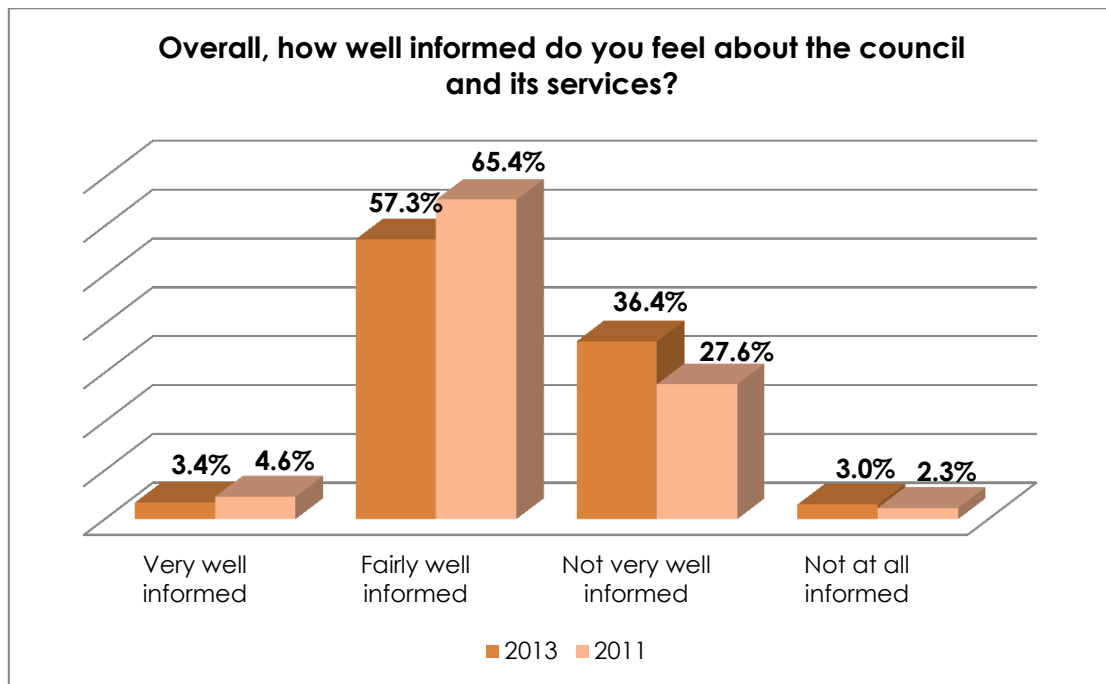
Female respondents (54%) most frequently said they were either very or fairly satisfied with how the council ran things; fewer male respondents (49%) expressed satisfaction towards this statement.

More than half (55%) of respondents aged 60 and over said they were satisfied with the way the council ran things; this was 5% higher than satisfaction among those aged 40 to 59 (50%) and almost a fifth higher than satisfaction among respondents aged 18 to 39 (36%).

Satisfaction with the way the council ran things tended to be higher among those living in the North, as almost three fifths (58%) of respondents within this area indicated being either very or satisfied. Satisfaction was around a tenth lower among those living in the South East (49%) and West (48%) areas.



### 4.1.2 Feeling Informed



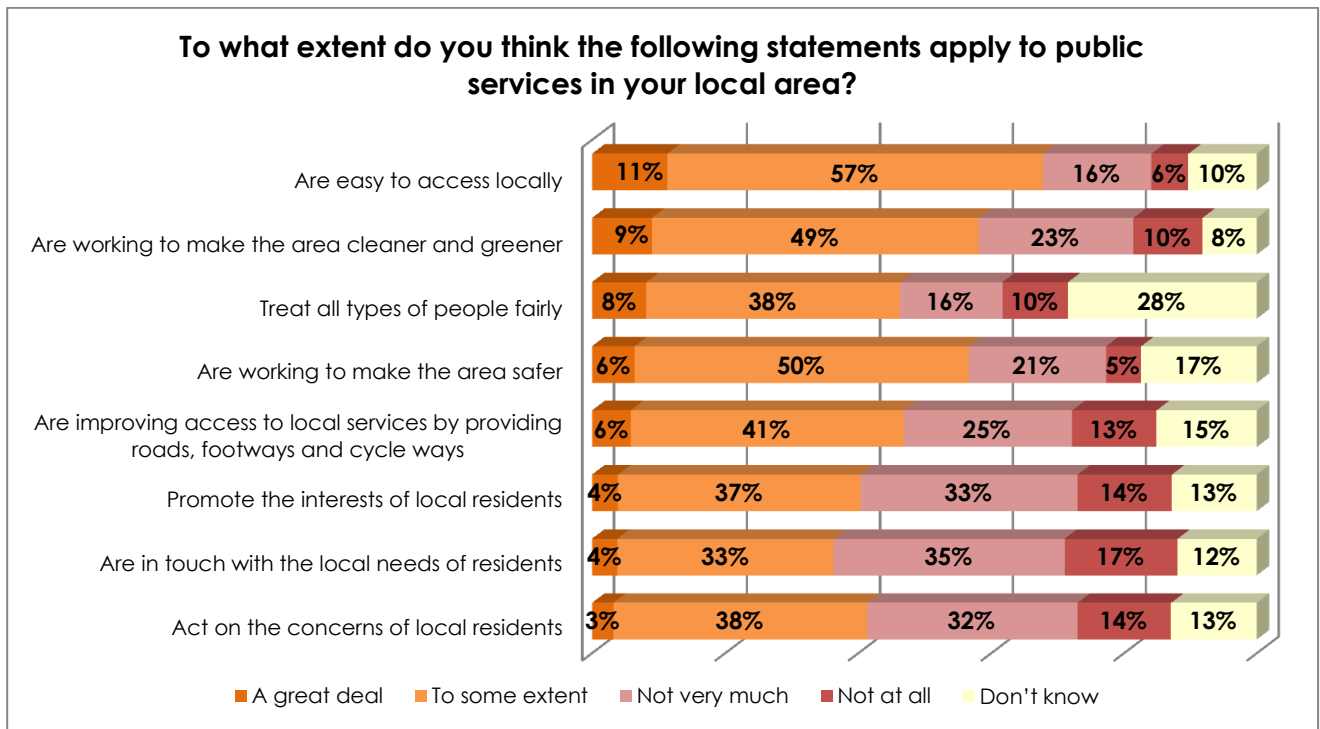
Around three fifths (61%) of respondents felt either very or fairly well informed about Northumberland County Council and its services; although high this does represent a decrease of almost a tenth (9%) when compared with 2011. In both 2011 and 2013 few respondents indicated that they were not at all informed about the council and its services (2011: 2%, 2013: 3%).

Around two thirds (67%) of respondents aged 60 and over said they were very or fairly well informed about the council and council services; more than a tenth higher than respondents aged 18 to 39 (52%) and 40 to 59 (54%) who said that this was the case.

More than three fifths of respondents living in the West (64%) and North (65%) areas felt they were informed about the council and its services; feeling informed tended to be lower among those living in the South East (56%).

## 4.2 Council Services

### 4.2.1 Opinion of Local Public Services



Respondents were given a list of statements and asked to what extent they applied to their local public services.

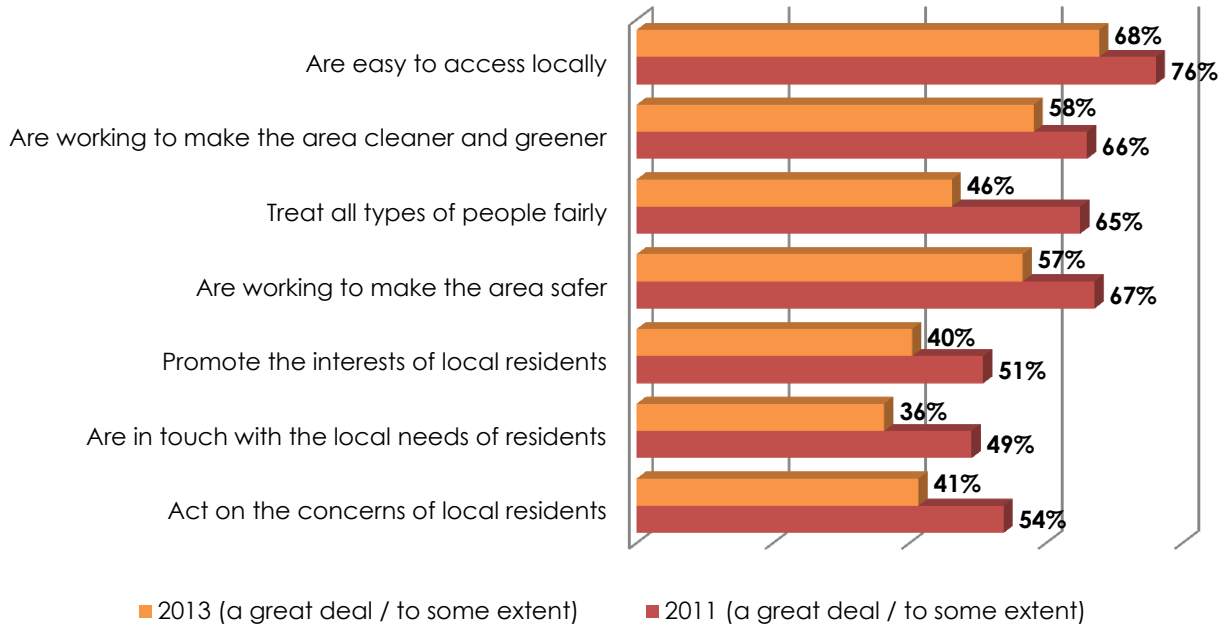
More than a tenth (11%) said that the statement *local public services are easy to access locally* applied to their local area a great deal and a further 57% said it applied to some extent. Only 6% of respondents said this statement did not apply to their local public services at all.

Positive opinion was also high when considering the statements *local public services are working to make the area cleaner and greener* and *local public services are working to make the area safer*, with more than half of respondents indicating that these statements applied either a great deal or to some extent (58% and 56% respectively).

Although fewer respondents indicated that local public services treated all types of people fairly (46% great deal / to some extent), a significant proportion (28%) did not know if this was the case.

Fewer respondents felt the statement *local public services are in touch with the needs of local residents* applied to their local area, with almost a fifth (17%) of respondents saying this statement did not apply at all.

**To what extent do you think the following statements apply to public services in your local area?**



Positive opinion towards each statement relating to local public services has decreased when compared with 2011; with decreases varying from -8% (are easy to access locally and are working to make the area cleaner and greener) and -19% (treat all types of people fairly).

## 4.2.2 Use of Council Services

Please specify how frequently you have used the following public services provided or supported by the council.

Service	Every day (%)	Every week (%)	Once a month (%)	Once every 3 months (%)	Once a year (%)	Less often (%)	Never used/ doesn't apply (%)
Public rights of way	19.5	32.7	18.3	10.0	3.4	6.6	9.6
Car parks	18.5	58.2	9.7	2.4	0.6	1.2	9.5
Parks and green spaces	11.4	24.6	26.1	15.8	7.4	6.8	7.8
Concessionary bus travel	5.7	17.0	12.9	6.9	2.0	3.2	52.3
Bus timetable information at bus stops	4.0	16.6	18.0	16.4	3.0	10.2	31.9
Home to school / college transport	2.8	1.4	0.2	0.4	0.4	1.4	93.3
Sports and leisure facilities	2.2	21.1	11.2	12.9	7.4	19.3	25.9
Customer information points	1.0	3.0	12.7	13.9	8.5	17.5	43.5
Local tips / recycling centres	0.4	13.0	43.1	30.9	7.5	2.2	3.0
Museums / galleries	0.0	0.4	9.4	23.6	22.0	18.9	25.7
Theatres / art venues	0.0	1.6	10.7	22.6	17.7	18.5	28.8

Respondents were asked to specify the frequency with which they used various services provided / supported by Northumberland County Council.

More than three quarters of respondents used council owned car parks on at least a weekly basis (77%); almost nine out of ten (86%) used these car parks once a month or more. A significant proportion (71%) of respondents also used public rights of way on at least a monthly basis, with a fifth reporting doing so daily.

There was less frequent use of the specific transport services provided; the majority of respondents (93%) never used home to school / college transport, and more than a half (52%) reported never using concessionary bus travel.

Although more than seven tenths of respondents used museums / art galleries (74%) and theatres / art venues (71%), the majority did so infrequently.

**Please specify how frequently you have used the following public services provided or supported by the council.**

Service	2013		2011	
	At least monthly (%)	Never used (%)	At least monthly (%)	Never used (%)
Public rights of way	70.5	9.6	53.2	10.6
Parks and green spaces	62.1	7.8	62.6	5.2
Sports and leisure facilities	34.5	25.9	31.3	23.3
Local tips / recycling centres	56.5	3.0	55.9	3.6

When compared with 2011, there has been an increased use of public rights of way, with 71% of respondents compared with 53% saying they used these on at least a monthly basis.

There has been little variance in the use of all other comparable public services:

- Parks and green spaces (-0.5%)
- Sports and leisure facilities (+3%)
- Local tips / recycling centres (+1%)

## 4.2.3 Opinion of Council Services

### Travel and Transport

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council?						
Service	Net Satisfied (%)	Very satisfied (%)	Fairly satisfied (%)	Neither (%)	Fairly dissatisfied (%)	Very dissatisfied (%)
Concessionary bus travel	69.1	43.0	26.0	24.0	3.1	3.9
Bus timetable information at bus stops	62.5	19.9	42.6	21.6	10.5	5.4
Public rights of way	51.4	8.1	43.3	32.6	10.9	5.0
Car parks	48.1	7.1	41.0	19.9	20.3	11.7
Facilities for public transport passengers	43.6	7.6	36.0	31.9	12.1	12.4
Cycleway provision	41.5	7.3	34.2	42.5	7.8	8.1
Home to school / college transport	38.4	8.0	30.4	49.6	5.8	6.3

Satisfaction was highest when considering the bus services, with 69% of respondents expressing satisfaction with concessionary bus travel and 63% saying they were satisfied with the bus timetable information at bus stops. Satisfaction was also high when considering public rights of way (51%) and council car parks (48%).

Although satisfaction was lower when considering home to school / college transport (38%), half of respondents indicated being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with this service.

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council? Very / fairly satisfied				
Service	Frequency of use			
	At least once a month (%)	Once every 3 months (%)	Once a year (%)	Less often (%)
Concessionary bus travel	92.7	85.7	88.9	35.7
Bus timetable information at bus stops	73.4	64.2	69.2	46.5
Public rights of way	54.0	40.5	35.3	36.0
Car parks	49.4	36.4	0.0	20.0
Home to school / college transport	72.7	-	0.0	14.3

For all services relating to travel and transport, satisfaction tended to increase with frequency of use; this was particularly evident when considering home to school / college transport.

## Planning, Maintenance and Refuse

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council?						
Service	Net Satisfied (%)	Very satisfied (%)	Fairly satisfied (%)	Neither (%)	Fairly dissatisfied (%)	Very dissatisfied (%)
Local tips / recycling centres	<b>90.6</b>	53.2	37.5	4.4	2.4	2.6
Household refuse and recycling collections	<b>83.4</b>	41.7	41.7	7.0	6.2	3.3
Street lighting	<b>72.0</b>	22.2	49.8	16.3	7.7	2.6
Garden waste collections	<b>59.7</b>	33.2	26.5	24.1	8.5	7.6
Street cleaning	<b>50.1</b>	7.9	42.2	16.9	19.6	11.8
Upkeep of grass verges, flower beds, trees and shrubs in streets and public places	<b>47.3</b>	8.8	38.4	20.4	17.8	12.7
Winter maintenance	<b>46.4</b>	10.3	36.1	14.6	20.3	18.5
Planning service	<b>24.9</b>	3.8	21.0	51.2	13.0	10.9
Pavement maintenance	<b>15.4</b>	2.4	13.0	23.4	28.5	30.7
Road maintenance	<b>13.0</b>	1.8	11.2	11.4	28.9	46.2

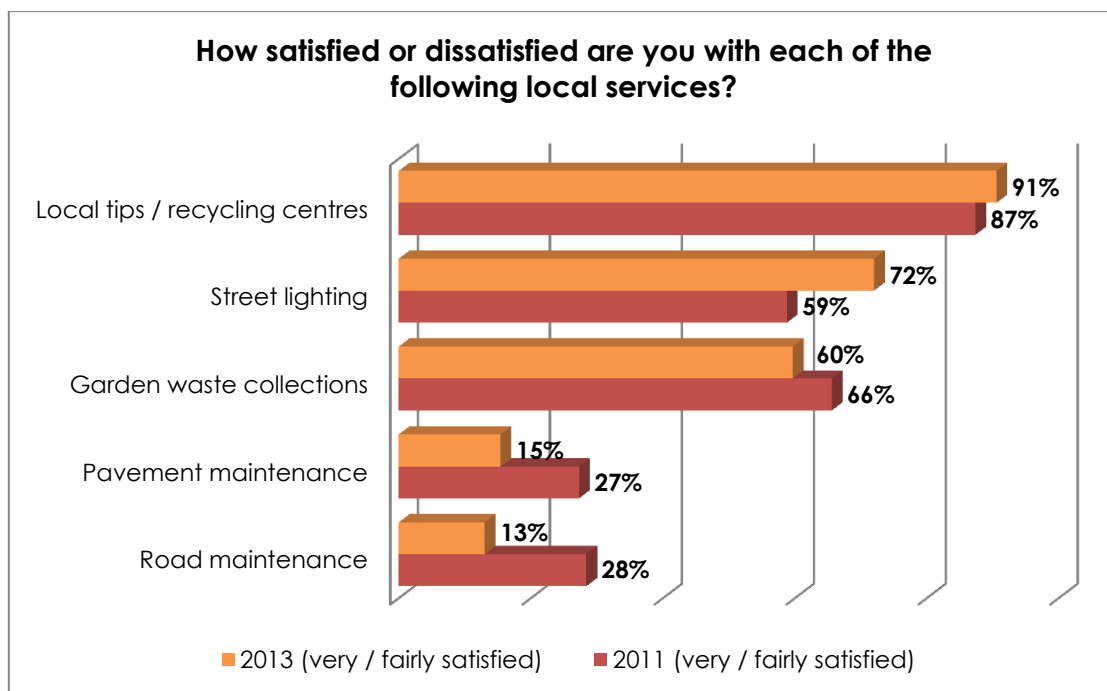
Overall, 91% of respondents expressed satisfaction with local tips / recycling centres, and satisfaction increased to 95% among those who used this service at least once a month.

Satisfaction was also high with household refuse and recycling collections, as more than eight out of ten (83%) respondents said they were either very or fairly satisfied with this service.

Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents were either very or fairly satisfied with street lighting; just one in ten respondents expressed any level of dissatisfaction with this council service.

Although only a quarter of respondents expressed satisfaction with the planning service provided by the council, more than half (51%) said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with this service.

Dissatisfaction was significantly higher when considering the maintenance services, with three quarters of respondents expressing dissatisfaction with road maintenance and almost three fifths (59%) saying they were dissatisfied with pavement maintenance.



Satisfaction with street lighting has increased by more than a tenth (13%) when compared with 2011; there has also been a 4% increase in respondents who expressed satisfaction with local tips / recycling centres (from 87% to 91%).

In contrast, when compared with 2011 there have been significant decreases in satisfaction when considering the maintenance of pavements (-12%) and roads (-15%).

### Local Facilities

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council?						
Service	Net Satisfied (%)	Very satisfied (%)	Fairly satisfied (%)	Neither (%)	Fairly dissatisfied (%)	Very dissatisfied (%)
Parks and green spaces	71.6	18.0	53.6	16.4	7.2	4.9
Sports and leisure facilities	52.7	10.5	42.3	30.7	10.7	5.9
Museums / galleries	51.8	13.1	38.7	38.5	6.4	3.3
Theatres / art venues	43.0	9.4	33.6	41.4	9.9	5.7
Customer information points	34.7	4.3	30.4	46.3	12.7	6.2

Almost three quarters (72%) of respondents expressed satisfaction towards parks and open spaces, with almost a fifth (18%) saying they were very satisfied with these facilities.

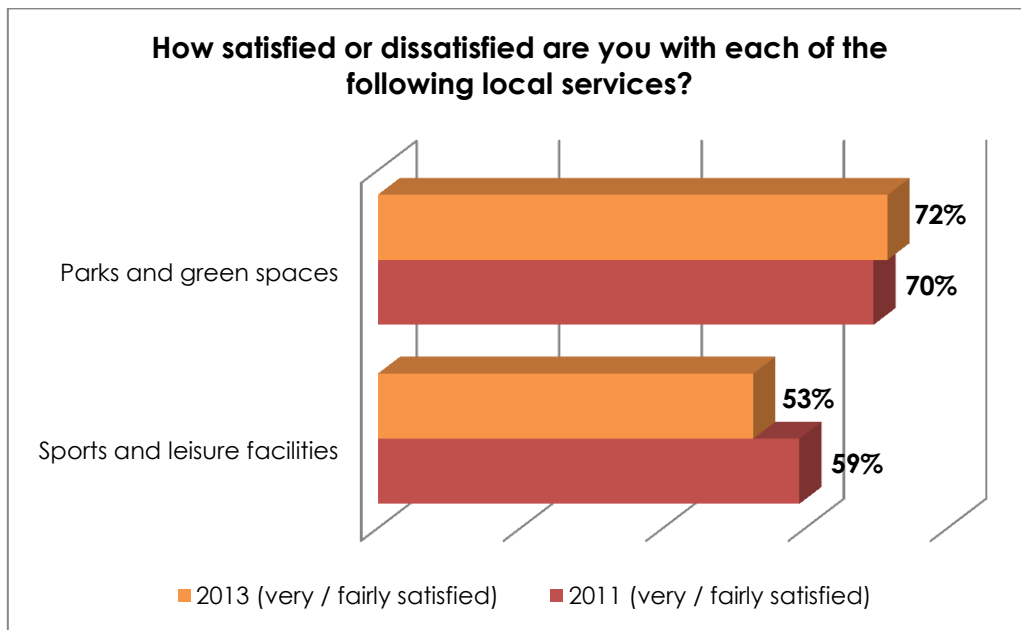
Although satisfaction was lower with theatres / art venues (43%) and customer information points (35%), more than two fifths of respondents said they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with both of these facilities (41% and 46% respectively).



**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council? Very / fairly satisfied**

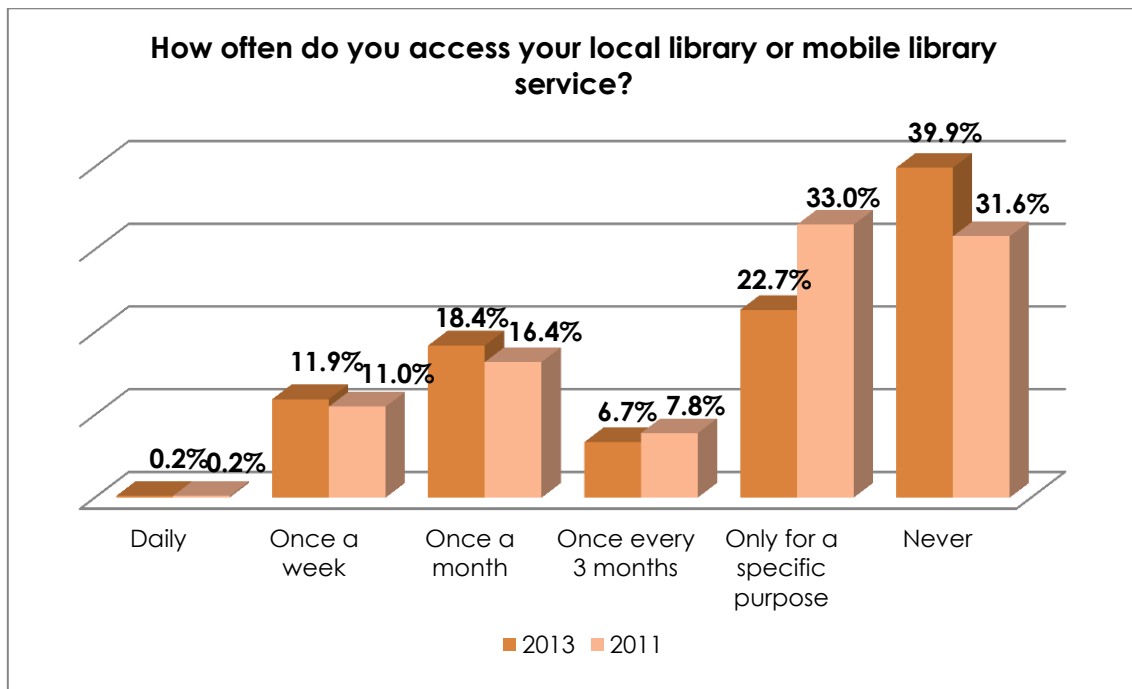
Service	Frequency of use			
	At least once a month (%)	Once every 3 months (%)	Once a year (%)	Less often (%)
Parks and green spaces	72.4	66.2	67.6	71.0
Sports and leisure facilities	59.2	60.3	47.2	47.7
Museums / galleries	77.1	64.9	45.7	28.6
Theatres / art venues	60.7	61.7	32.9	28.2
Customer information points	56.0	33.3	47.5	25.3

Again, satisfaction with local facilities provided or supported by the council tended to increase with frequency of use however, when considering parks and open spaces at least two thirds of all respondents expressed satisfaction (regardless of how frequently they had used the facilities).



When compared with 2011, there has been a slight increase in satisfaction towards the parks and green spaces in the local area (+2%) however; satisfaction towards the sports and leisure facilities provided or supported by Northumberland County Council has decreased by 6% since 2011.

#### 4.2.4 Library Service



Three fifths of respondents used the library / mobile library service, with more than a tenth (12%) doing so on at least a weekly basis. Around a quarter (23%) of respondents said although they used their local library / mobile library it was only when they had a specific reason to do so.

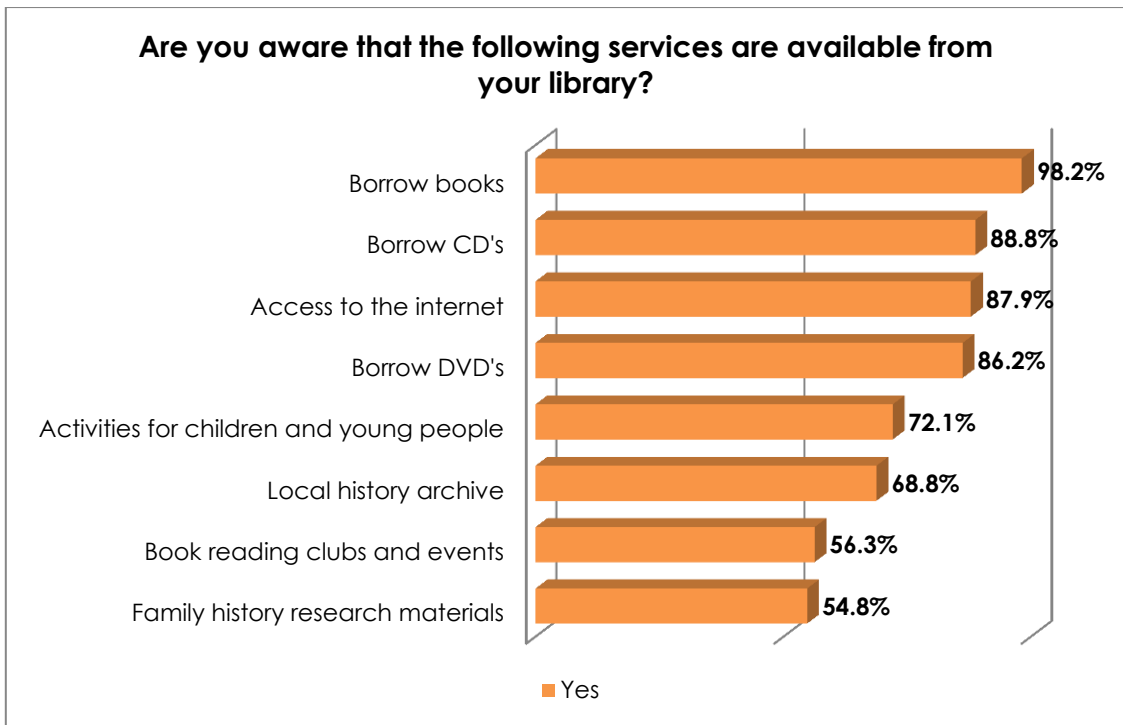
When compared with 2011 there has been an 8% increase in those who said they never used the library services (from 32% in 2011 to 40% in 2013); in contrast there has been a decrease of a tenth in respondents who said they used the library service when they had a specific reason.

Female respondents reported using the library / mobile library on a more frequent basis than male respondents, with 15% of females accessing the library on a weekly basis compared with a tenth of male respondents.

Respondents aged 60 and over were the most frequent library users, with 16% saying they accessed this service on at least a weekly basis. In contrast almost half (47%) of respondents aged 40 to 59 said that they never used their local library / mobile library service.

Library use varied by area; almost a fifth (16%) of those living in the North visited their local library / mobile library on a weekly basis compared with 12% of those in the South East and 8% of those in the West.

Among the 40% of respondents who did not use the local library / mobile library services around a quarter said this was due to being able to access the information online (26%) or because they purchased hard copy books (24%). A tenth of those who did not use the library / mobile library said it was simply because they did not want to access the services which it provided.



Almost all (98%) respondents expressed awareness that they were able to borrow books from their library; awareness was also high of the ability to borrow CD's (89%) and DVD's (86%), and that the library provided residents with facilities to access the internet.

Although awareness was lower that the library offered reading clubs / events and family history research materials, more than half of respondents expressed awareness of both of these services (56% and 55% respectively).

## 5.0 Section 2: Communication

### 5.1 Contacting the Council

#### 5.1.1 Preferred Method of Contacting the Council

How would you prefer to CONTACT the council?								
Situation	Letter /post (%)	Email (%)	Tele- phone (%)	Text (%)	Council website (%)	Face to face (%)	Social network (%)	Via local Council- lor (%)
To find out general information	9.5	13.7	28.2	1.4	<b>42.7</b>	2.3	1.0	1.2
To find out information in an emergency	4.0	12.3	<b>38.9</b>	6.2	<b>34.0</b>	1.3	2.6	0.6
To report a problem or fault	1.6	13.7	<b>67.9</b>	0.6	12.0	2.8	0.2	1.2
To make a complaint	8.4	16.5	<b>55.2</b>	0.2	8.6	9.6	0.2	1.2
To pay a bill	<b>29.7</b>	8.5	17.2	0.0	<b>27.8</b>	14.5	0.6	1.7
To book a service	2.1	12.9	<b>55.3</b>	0.4	21.5	6.7	0.4	0.6
To apply for a licence or permit	10.5	13.6	<b>30.2</b>	0.2	<b>27.9</b>	15.7	0.2	1.7
To register a birth, death or marriage, or to be on the electoral roll	9.8	6.9	15.7	0.0	14.2	<b>51.6</b>	0.0	1.8
To borrow library books	0.2	4.0	9.7	1.0	7.4	<b>75.1</b>	1.0	1.7

Respondents were provided with various scenarios and asked to select their preferred method of contacting the council in each. For each scenario the method(s) of contact which was selected most frequently is highlighted in bold.

For almost all situations given telephone and the council's website were selected as the two most preferred methods of contacting the council. The preference for telephone contact was particularly high when reporting a problem or fault (68%), booking a service (55%) and making a complaint (55%); the council website was most frequently selected as the preferred source for finding out general information (43%).

In contrast, the majority of respondents expressed a preference for face to face communication when registering a birth, death or marriage (52%) or when borrowing library books (75%); while letter / post was most frequently selected as the preferred method of paying a bill (30%).

Other scenarios in which respondents said they may contact the council were:

- to access councillors (2 respondents, preferred methods: face to face and email)
- report parking problems (1 respondent, preferred method: email)
- report street lighting problems (1 respondent, preferred method: email)
- access waste disposal dates (1 respondent, preferred method: council website)

How would you prefer to CONTACT the council?										
Situation	Letter/ post (%)		Email (%)		Telephone (%)		Council website (%)		Face to face (%)	
	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011
To find out general information	9.5	11.4	13.7	10.3	28.2	30.9	42.7	42.2	2.3	3.1
To find out information in an emergency	4.0	2.0	12.3	13.3	38.9	41.5	34.0	36.1	1.3	1.7
To report a problem or fault	1.6	2.5	13.7	16.9	67.9	71.3	12.0	5.4	2.8	3.3
To make a complaint	8.4	13.4	16.5	17.7	55.2	53.4	8.6	5.1	9.6	8.3
To pay a bill	29.7	37.3	8.5	7.3	17.2	16.4	27.8	21.6	14.5	15.8
To book a service	2.1	3.8	12.9	15.1	55.3	56.4	21.5	16.5	6.7	6.3
To apply for a licence or permit	10.5	17.8	13.6	12.5	30.2	31.4	27.9	22.3	15.7	14.1
To register a birth, death or marriage, or to be on the electoral roll	9.8	16.8	6.9	9.2	15.7	13.2	14.2	11.3	51.6	47.5
To borrow library books	0.2	3.0	4.0	3.0	9.7	7.6	7.4	5.9	75.1	77.3

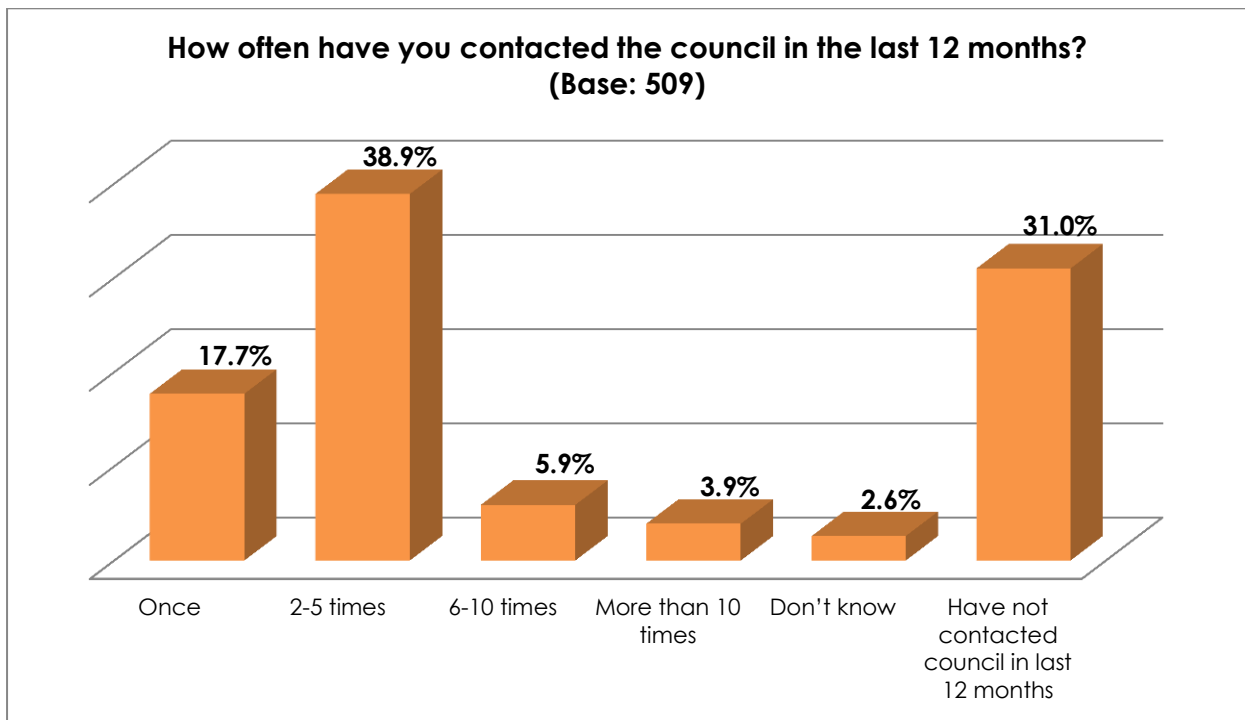
Since 2011, there has been a decrease in those who expressed a preference for contacting the council by letter / post; particularly when contacting to pay a bill (-7%), apply for a licence or permit (-7%) or to register a birth, death or marriage, or to be on the electoral roll (-6%).

There was an increase in respondents who selected the council's website as their preferred method of contacting the council to:

- Report a problem or fault (+7%)
- Pay a bill (+6%)
- Apply for a licence or permit (+6%)
- Book a service (+5%)

In most of the situations given, indicating a preference for contact via email, telephone and face to face is similar to 2011 (+/-3%).

### 5.1.2 Recent Contact

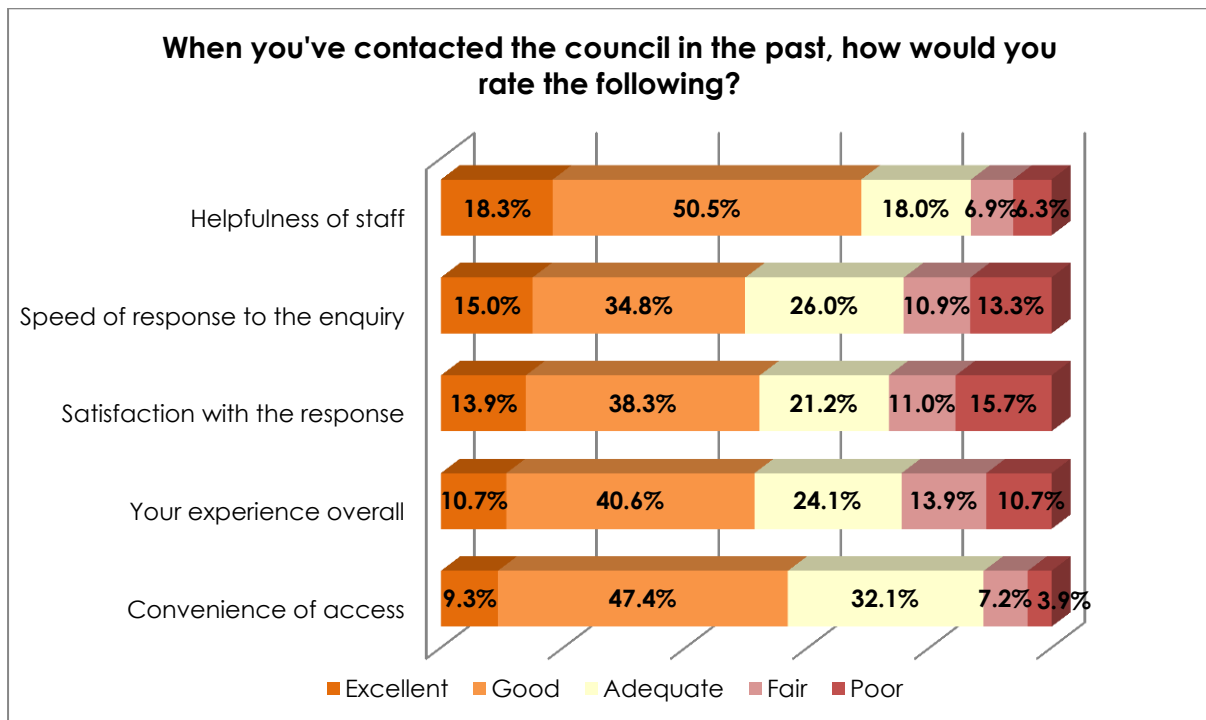


Around a fifth (18%) of respondents had contacted the council once in the previous 12 months and a further 39% had made contact between two and five times. A significant proportion of respondents (31%) had not contacted the council in the 12 months prior to taking part in the consultation.

Two fifths of respondents who lived within the North area had not had contact with the council in the previous 12 months; contact was more common among those who lived within the West and South East as around half had made contact on two or more occasions (52% and 47% respectively).

Contact with the council tended to decrease with age as seven out of ten respondents aged 60 and over had contacted the council within the timeframe considered compared with 61% of those aged 18 to 39.

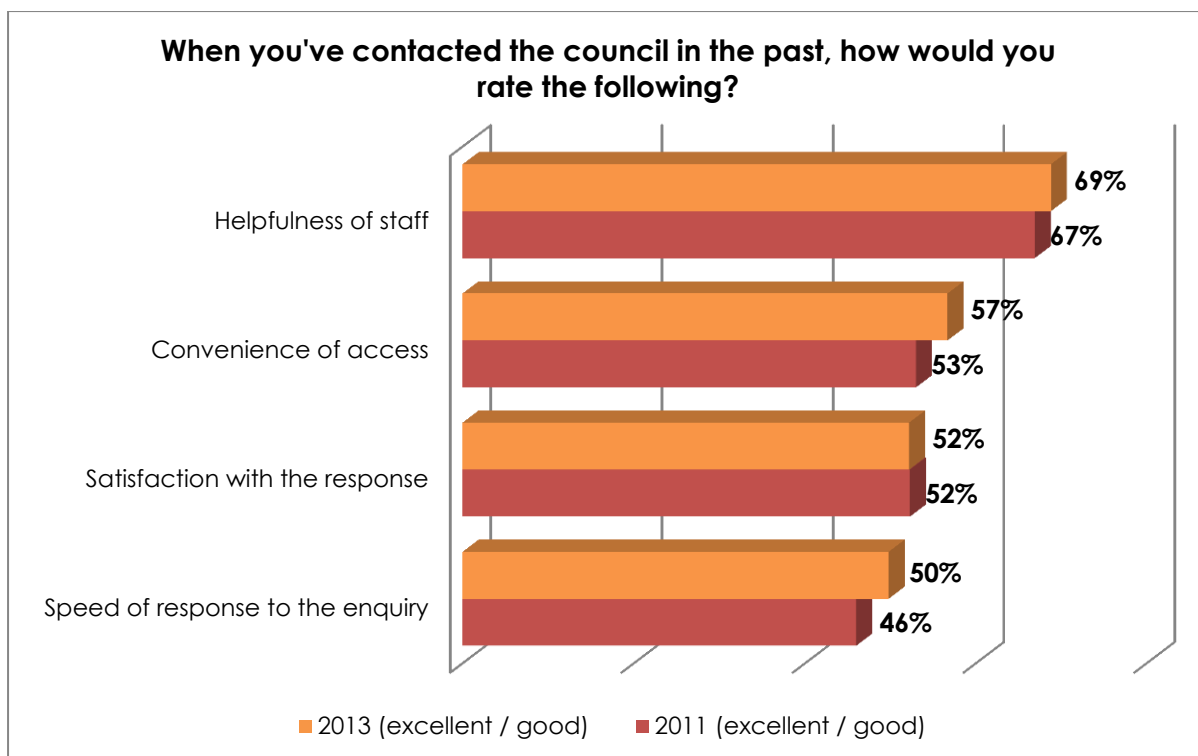
### 5.1.3 Experience of Contact



Respondents who had contacted the council were asked to rate various aspects of their experience of doing so.

Almost seven tenths (69%) rated the helpfulness of staff positively, with 18% considering this aspect of the service to be excellent. For all other aspects considered, at least half of respondents gave a rating of either excellent or good.

Respondents tended to be less positive when considering the satisfaction with the response they had received, with 11% rating the response as fair and 16% considering it be poor. Despite this more than half (52%) of respondents rated the response they had received as either excellent or good.



Positive opinion has increased or remained consistent towards all aspects of contacting the council when compared with 2011.

The most significant increases in ratings of excellent or good occurred towards the convenience of access (+4%) and the speed of response to the enquiry (+4%); positive opinion towards the helpfulness of staff had also increased slightly (+2%) when compared with 2011.



## 5.2 Customer Information Points and Contact Centres

### 5.2.1 Recent Contact

Around a quarter (26%) of respondents had visited a council customer information point in the 12 months prior to taking part in the consultation, meaning almost three quarters (74%) had not.

Female respondents (28%), those aged 60 and over (29%) and respondents with a disability (37%) most frequently said they had visited a customer information point within the timeframe specified. It was also more common for those within the South East (31%) to have visited a customer information point; particularly when compared with those in the West (20%).

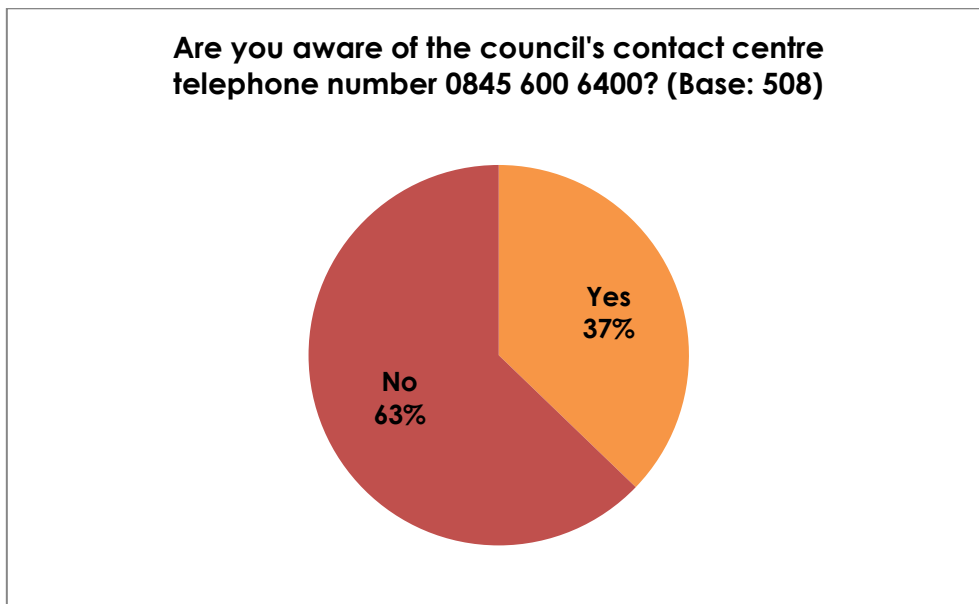
### 5.2.2 Reason for Visit

If yes, what was your reason for visiting? (Base: 130)		
Reason	Number	Percentage
Licencing, permits and passes	49	37.7
Waste disposal enquiries	35	26.9
To pay a bill	26	20.0
Highway and maintenance enquiries	22	16.9
Council tax enquiries	19	14.6
Planning enquiries	19	14.6
Benefits enquiries	14	10.8
To register a birth, death or marriage	14	10.8
Children's services enquiries	3	2.3
Advice on adult social care or health	2	1.5
Other	12	9.2

Respondents who had visited a customer information point were asked to specify the reason for their visit.

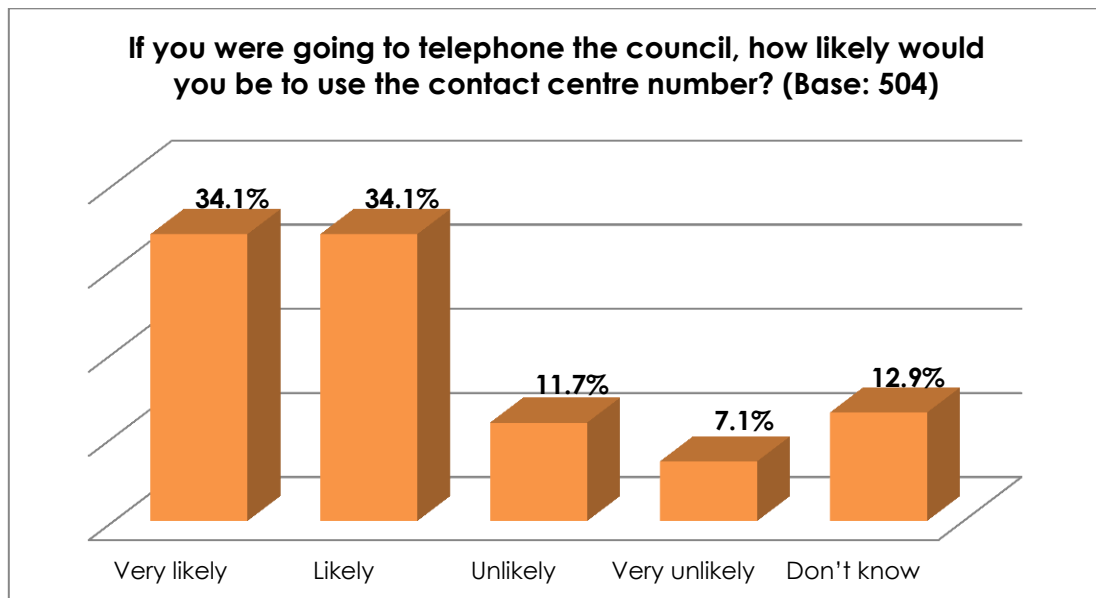
Among the 130 respondents who had visited a customer information point, around two fifths (38%) had done so in relation to licencing, permits and passes; it was also common for respondents to have visited for waste disposal enquiries (27%) and to pay a bill (20%).

### 5.2.3 Contact Centre



More than a third (37%) of respondents were aware of the council's contact centre telephone number, meaning 63% were not.

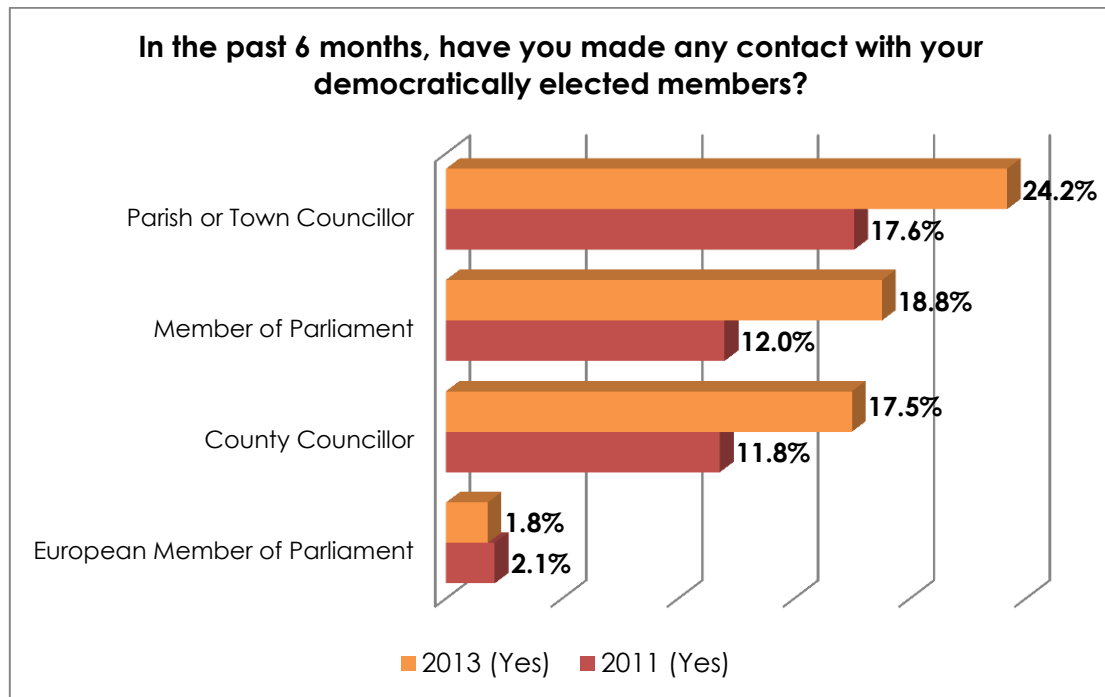
Awareness of the contact centre number tended to increase with age as 19% of respondents aged 18 to 39 expressed awareness compared with 43% of respondents aged 60 and over. Awareness of the council's contact centre number also varied by area; with awareness among those living in the North (44%) being significantly higher than among those living in the South East (32%).



Although 37% of respondents were aware of the contact centre number, more than two thirds (68%) said they would be likely to use this number should they want to contact the council by telephone. Only 7% of respondents said it was very unlikely that they would use the council's contact centre number if they were to contact the council via telephone.

## 5.3 Locally Elected Members

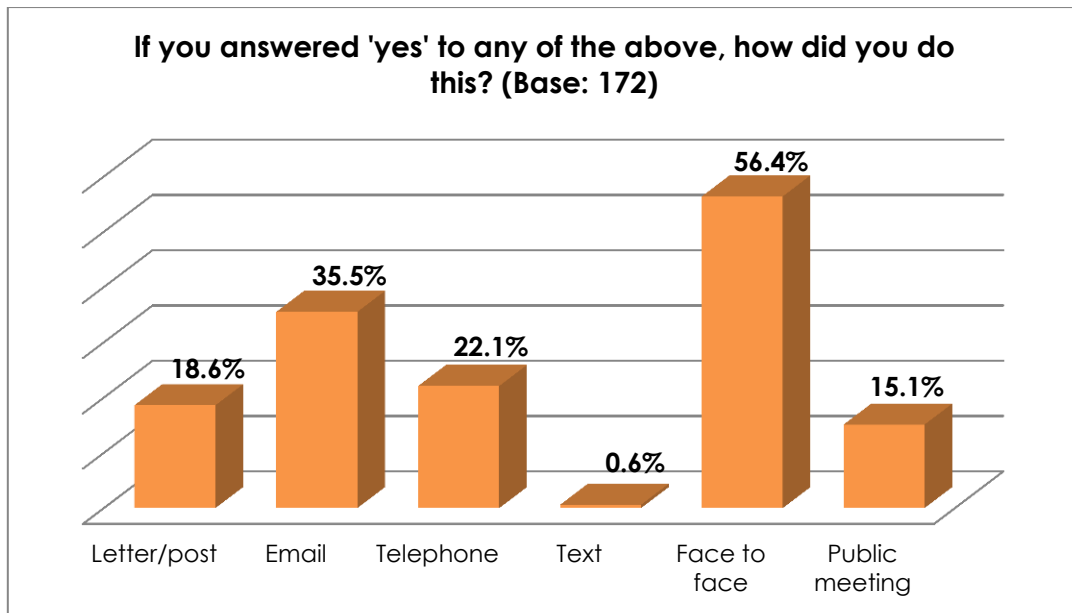
### 5.3.1 Contact with Members



Around a quarter (24%) of respondents had contacted their Parish or Town Councillor in the 6 months prior to taking part in the consultation, while just under a fifth had contacted their Member of Parliament (19%) or County Councillor (18%). Only 2% of respondents had contacted their European Member of Parliament.

When compared with 2011, it has become more common for respondents to have contacted three of their democratically elected members, with increases of 6% (County Councillor) and 7% (Member of Parliament, Parish or Town Councillor).

Contact with the European Member of Parliament was low in both 2011 (2%) and 2013 (2%).



Respondents who had contacted a democratically elected member tended to have done so either in person (56%) or via email (36%); around a fifth of respondents had made contact over the telephone (22%) or through letter / post (19%). Fewer than 1% of respondents had contacted a locally elected member via text.

## 5.4 Receiving Information

### 5.4.1 Preferred Method of Receiving Information

How would you prefer to RECEIVE information from the council?								
Situation	Letter / post (%)	Email (%)	Tele- phone (%)	Text (%)	Council website (%)	Face to face (%)	Social networks (%)	N/land News (%)
General information	37.1	17.1	2.4	1.3	34.7	0.2	1.3	5.8
Emergency information	15.7	21.5	22.0	11.2	25.3	0.2	2.0	2.0
Range of services	38.8	15.2	2.7	0.6	36.7	0.2	1.1	4.6
Eligibility for services	40.0	16.0	5.0	0.6	32.0	1.7	1.0	3.7
Availability of services	34.6	14.4	3.1	0.4	40.0	0.4	1.0	6.0
Receiving bills	80.1	15.0	0.2	0.0	4.1	0.0	0.2	0.4
Other	36.4	31.8	9.1	0.0	13.6	0.0	0.0	9.1

Respondents were asked to specify how they would prefer to receive various types of information provided by the council.

For all of the types of information listed the greatest proportion of respondents expressed a preference for receiving the information through letter / post or the council website.

There was little variation in respondents' preferred method for receiving bills; eight out of ten respondents indicated a preference for postal format while 15% said they would prefer this information to be sent via email.

In contrast there was great disparity in the preferred method of receiving emergency information; council website (25%), telephone (22%) and email (22%) were all selected by at least a fifth of respondents.

For all types of information, less than 2% of respondents indicated a preference for receiving information face to face or through social media. Although for most types of information text message was selected by few respondents, more than a tenth (11%) expressed a preference for receiving emergency information in this format.

How would you prefer to RECEIVE information from the council?								
Situation	Letter / post (%)		Email (%)		Telephone (%)		Council website (%)	
	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011	2013	2011
General information	37.1	36.5	17.1	16.7	2.4	2.9	34.7	30.3
Emergency information	15.7	12.7	21.5	21.1	22.0	22.0	25.3	30.4
Range of services	38.8	28.4	15.2	12.5	2.7	4.4	36.7	41.3
Eligibility for services	40.0	31.7	16.0	13.3	5.0	8.1	32.0	34.8
Availability of services	34.6	25.8	14.4	13.0	3.1	6.1	40.0	40.5
Receiving bills	80.1	78.5	15.0	16.5	0.2	0.6	4.1	3.0

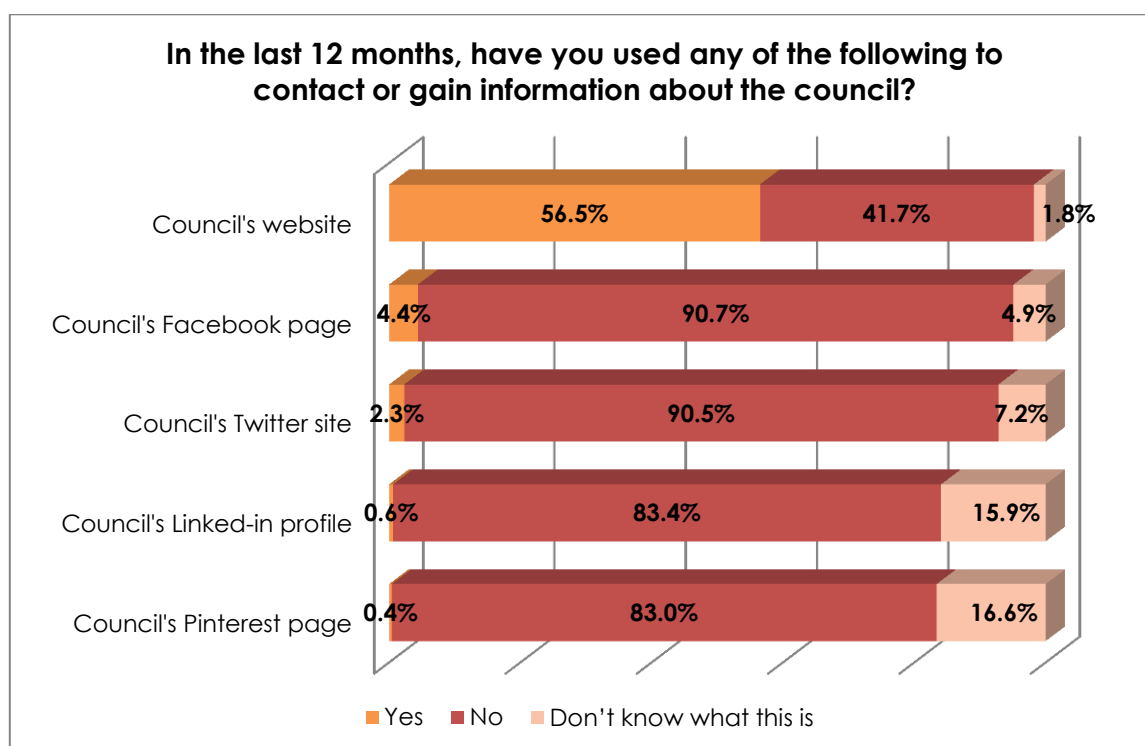
In three of the given scenarios, there have been significant increases in respondents who expressed a preference for receiving information from the council by letter / post:

- Range of services (+10%)
- Availability of services (+9%)
- Eligibility for services (+8%)

Although there has been a 5% increase in respondents who indicated a preference for receiving general information through the council's website (from 30% to 35%), there has been an equal decrease in those who selected the council website as their preferred method for receiving emergency information (from 30% to 25%).

The proportion of respondents who expressed a preference for receiving information via email and telephone was similar in 2011 and 2013.

## 5.4.2 Online Information



Almost three fifths (57%) of respondents had used the council's website to gain information about the council and only 2% of respondents were not aware of this source of information.

Less than 5% of respondents had used any other online source to access information about or to make contact with the council. Awareness was particularly low when asked about the council's Linked in profile (16%) and Pinterest page (17%).

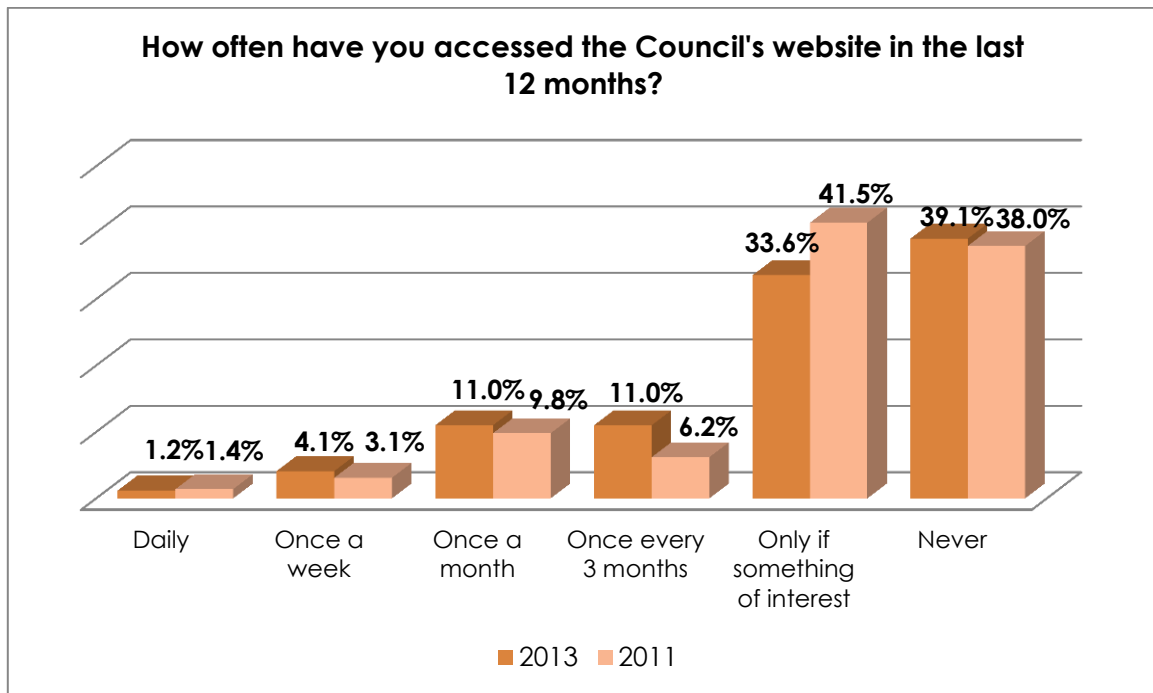
### If you have not used any of the above, why is this? (Base: 193)

Reason	Number	Percentage
Have not had the need to contact the council / access these services	72	37.3
I don't have access to a computer / mobile phone	40	20.7
Do not use / not interested in social networking sites	26	13.5
Not interested in their content	22	11.4
Did not know they existed / what they are / they were available	19	9.8

Respondents who had not accessed information or contacted the council through online sources most frequently said this was as they had not had the need to do so (37%); in addition around a fifth (21%) said they did not have access to a computer / mobile phone.

## 5.5 Council's Website

### 5.5.1 Frequency of Use

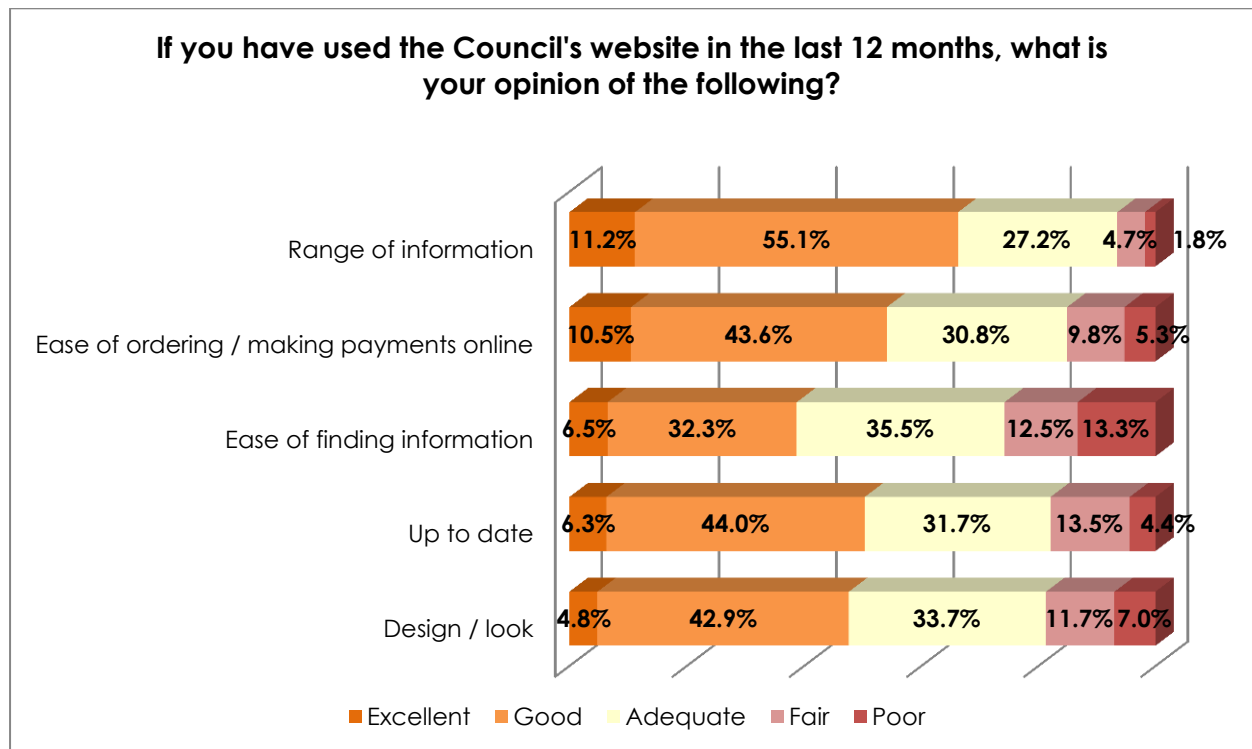


Around three fifths (61%) of respondents had accessed the council's website in the 12 months prior to taking part in the consultation, with 5% saying they had done so on at least a weekly basis. More than a third (34%) of respondents who had accessed the website said this had only been when there was something of interest.

When compared with 2011, there has been an 8% decrease in respondents who said they only visited the council's website if there was something of interest (from 42% to 34%); respondents who reported visiting the website once every 3 months has increased by 5% since 2011 (from 6% to 11%).

More than half of respondents (51%) aged 60 and over had not accessed the council's website in the timeframe considered; use of the website was significantly higher among those aged 18 to 39 (85%) and 40 to 59 (71%).

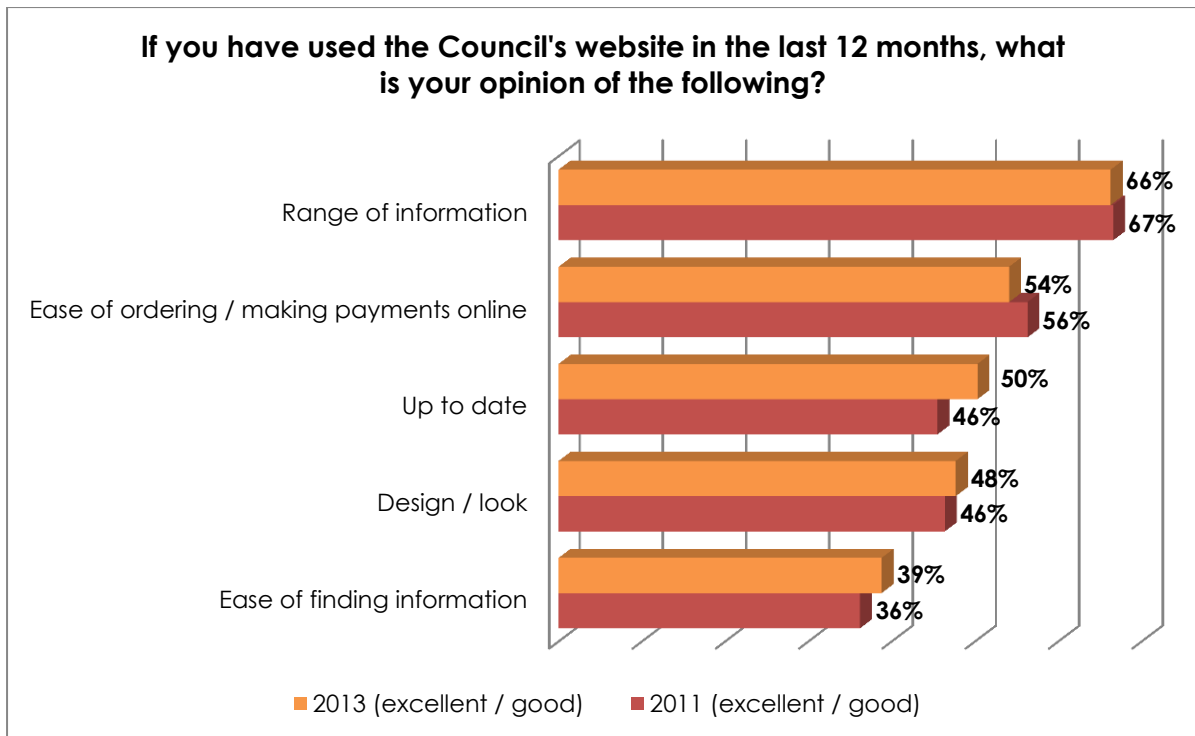
## 5.5.2 Opinion of the Website



More than a tenth (11%) of respondents considered the range of information available on the council's website to be excellent and a further 55% rated it as good. At least half of respondents also rated the ease of ordering / making payments online (54%) and the website being up-to-date (50%) as either excellent or good.

Respondents tended to be less positive about the ease of finding information, as more than a tenth (13%) rated this element as fair and a further 13% said this aspect of the website was poor.





Positive opinion had increased towards three of the five aspects of the council's website which were considered, with the most significant increase being towards how up to date the website was (+4%).

Although responses of excellent / good have decreased when considering the range of information and the ease of ordering / making payments online, in both cases the decrease has been slight (by 1% and 2% respectively).

### 5.5.3 Improvements

What 3 improvements would you like to be made to the Council's website?				
Improvement	% selecting as 1,2 or 3	Distribution		
		1 (%)	2 (%)	3 (%)
The ability to report problems or faults	22.7	39.1	32.8	28.1
The alerts system – providing information about school closures/weather alerts etc	14.2	46.3	27.5	26.3
The content of web pages	13.1	47.3	21.6	31.1
The ability to apply for Council services online	12.9	28.8	34.2	37.0
The ability to make a complaint	12.4	24.3	35.7	40.0
The ability to make a payment	7.8	13.6	47.7	38.6
The front page	6.9	48.7	33.3	17.9
The ability to book appointments with council service/officers	6.6	13.5	43.2	43.2
The ability to apply for a licence	3.4	15.8	31.6	52.6

Around a quarter (23%) of respondents selected the ability to report problems / faults as one of the three improvements they would like to be made to the council's website, with 39% of these respondents selecting it as the first improvement which they would like to be made.

In addition more than a tenth of respondents included the following as one of the three improvements they would like to be made to the council's website:

- The alert system (14%)
- The content of web pages (13%)
- The ability to apply for council services online (13%)
- The ability to make a complaint (12%)

Only 3% of respondents said they would like to improve the ability to apply for licences through the council's website (including first, second and third improvements), and of this 3% only 16% selected it as their first choice.

### 5.5.4 Additional Comments

<b>Please use the space below to provide any detailed information such as specific web pages you would like improved (Base: 69)</b>		
<b>Webpage</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Website in general	38	82.6
Planning	5	10.9
Home page	2	4.3
Council tax	1	2.2

Respondents were given the opportunity to provide information on specific improvements which they would like to be made, including pages which they felt could be improved.

Of the 69 respondents who provided information on the page which they would like to be improved, 83% said it was the website overall whereas 11% identified the planning page as requiring improvement.

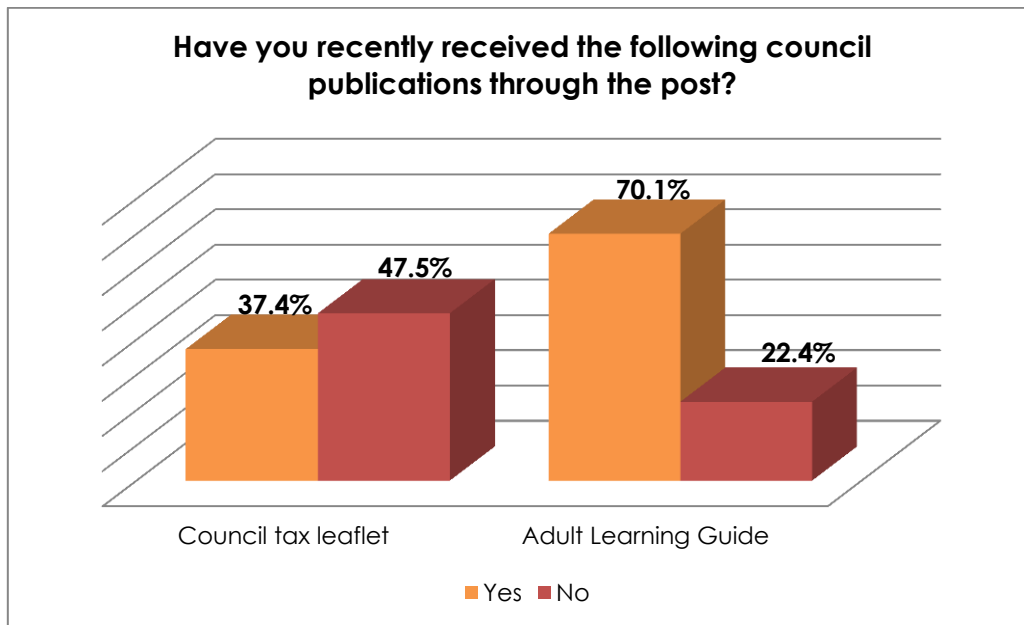
<b>Please use the space below to provide any detailed information such as any issues you have experienced using the council's website (Base: 45)</b>		
<b>Issue</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Better / clearer design required	17	37.8
Make easier to navigate	16	35.6
More / accurate information	10	22.2
More features / functions required	8	17.8
Ensure website is fully functioning at all times	6	13.3

Respondents were also asked to give any issues they had experienced or general changes which they felt would improve the website. Among the 45 respondents who gave a response to this question, almost two fifths said a better / clearer design was required (38%) and the website should be easier to navigate (36%). Around a quarter (22%) of respondents also said the council's website could be improved with more / accurate information.

A list of all comments and suggestions given can be found in the appendices.

## 5.6 Local Publications

### 5.6.1 Council Publications

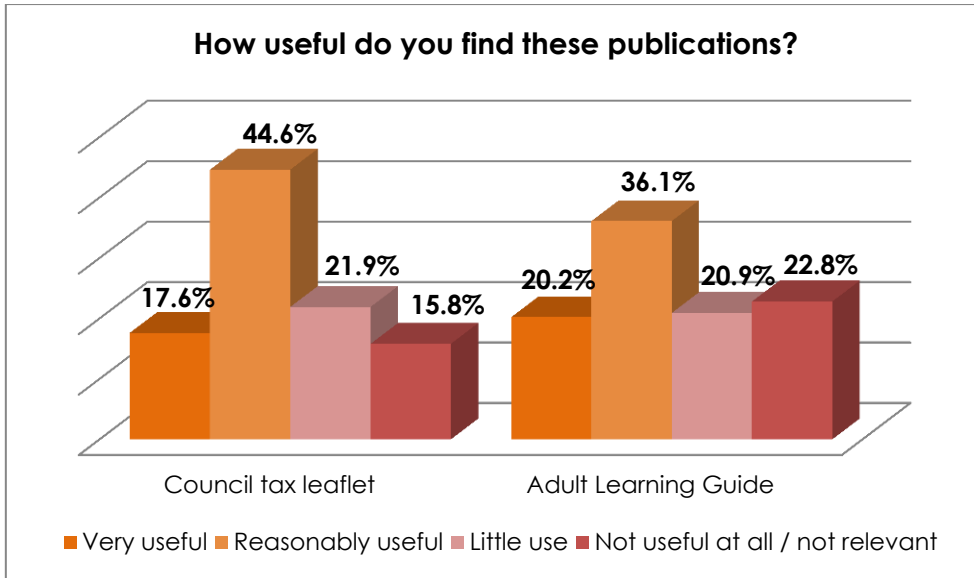


Seven out of ten respondents had received an Adult Learning Guide through the post, while more than a third (37%) reported recently receiving a council tax leaflet.

When compared with 2011 there has been a 15% increase in respondents who had received an Adult Learning Guide however, there has been a decrease of around a quarter (23%) in those who had received a leaflet regarding council tax.

Other council publications which respondents had recently received were:

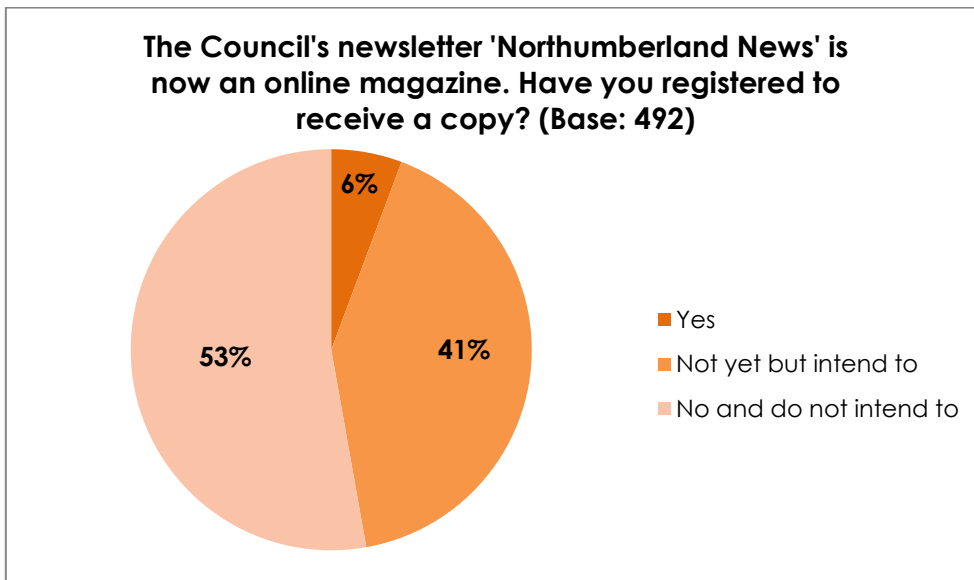
- Waste collection leaflet (3 respondents)
- Northumberland News (1 respondent)
- Newsletter (1 respondent)
- Core planning strategy leaflet (1 respondent)
- Bus timetable (1 respondent)
- Compost bin offer (1 respondent)



Almost a fifth (18%) of respondents who had received a council tax leaflet said it had been very useful, while a further 45% considered it to be fairly useful; 16% of respondents said the council tax leaflet was either not useful at all or something which was not relevant to them.

The Adult Learning Guide was also considered to be useful by more than half (56%) of respondents, with a fifth saying it was very useful to them. There was however, almost a quarter (23%) of respondents who had found the publication not useful at all or not relevant.

### 5.6.2 Northumberland News



Although only 6% of respondents had registered to receive a copy of Northumberland News, a further 41% said that it was something which they planned to subscribe to in the future. More than half (53%) of respondents said that they had not registered to receive the Northumberland News nor were they planning to in the future.

This question was also asked in 2011 when the council were in the process of changing the method in which they distributed the Northumberland News. When compared with 2011 there has been a 3% increase in respondents who had registered to receive the publication (from 3% to 6%) and an increase of almost a fifth (17%) in those who said they had not yet registered but intended to do so in the future.

<b>If not, why not? (Base: 365)</b>		
<b>Reason</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Wasn't aware that there was one	213	58.4
Not interested in its content	90	24.7
I don't have access to a computer / the internet	65	17.8
Get copy (paper based) from the library	30	8.2

Respondents who had not registered to receive a copy of the Northumberland News most frequently said this was due to a lack of awareness, with 58% of respondents saying that they did not know that there was one. Respondents also frequently said they had not subscribed due to a lack of interest in the content (25%) or not having access to a computer / the internet (18%).

### 5.6.3 Local Newspapers

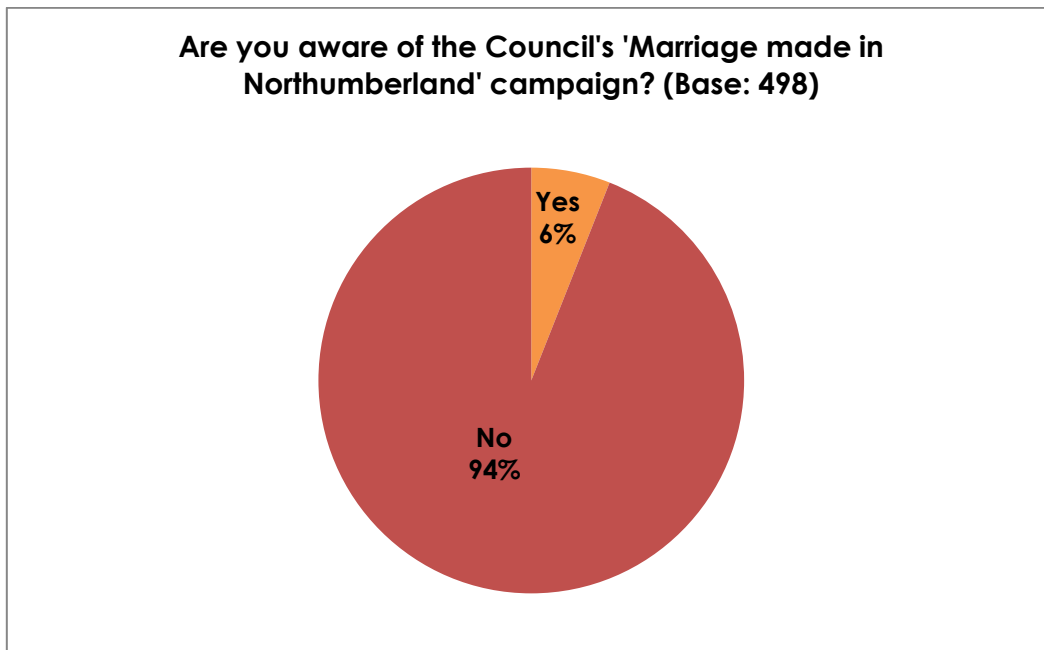
<b>Do you read (buy or access online) any of the following local newspapers?</b>						
<b>Publication</b>	<b>Every day (%)</b>	<b>Every week (%)</b>	<b>Once a month (%)</b>	<b>Once every 3 months (%)</b>	<b>Only if it contains an article of interest (%)</b>	<b>Never (%)</b>
The Journal	19.0	13.7	6.0	3.6	18.3	39.4
Evening Chronicle	8.9	8.1	6.6	6.1	22.4	47.8
News Post Leader	0.2	37.8	1.7	1.7	4.0	54.5
Hexham Courant	0.0	21.9	4.1	4.1	8.0	61.9
Northumberland Gazette	0.0	10.3	3.1	2.5	7.8	76.4
Morpeth Herald	0.0	7.0	2.8	2.5	6.5	81.1
Chronicle Extra	0.3	1.5	0.6	1.8	6.4	89.4
Berwick Advertiser	0.3	6.0	1.1	0.3	1.7	90.6

Around a fifth (19%) of respondents read The Journal every day and 14% read this publication every week; in addition 18% of respondents reported reading The Journal when it contained an article which was of interest. Almost two fifths (38%) of respondents indicated that they read the News Post Leader on a weekly basis (including every day) and more than a fifth (22%) read the Hexham Courant this frequently.

The Chronicle Extra and Berwick Advertiser were less popular among respondents, with around nine out of ten saying that they never read these publications.

## 5.7 Council Campaigns

### 5.7.1 Marriage Made in Northumberland

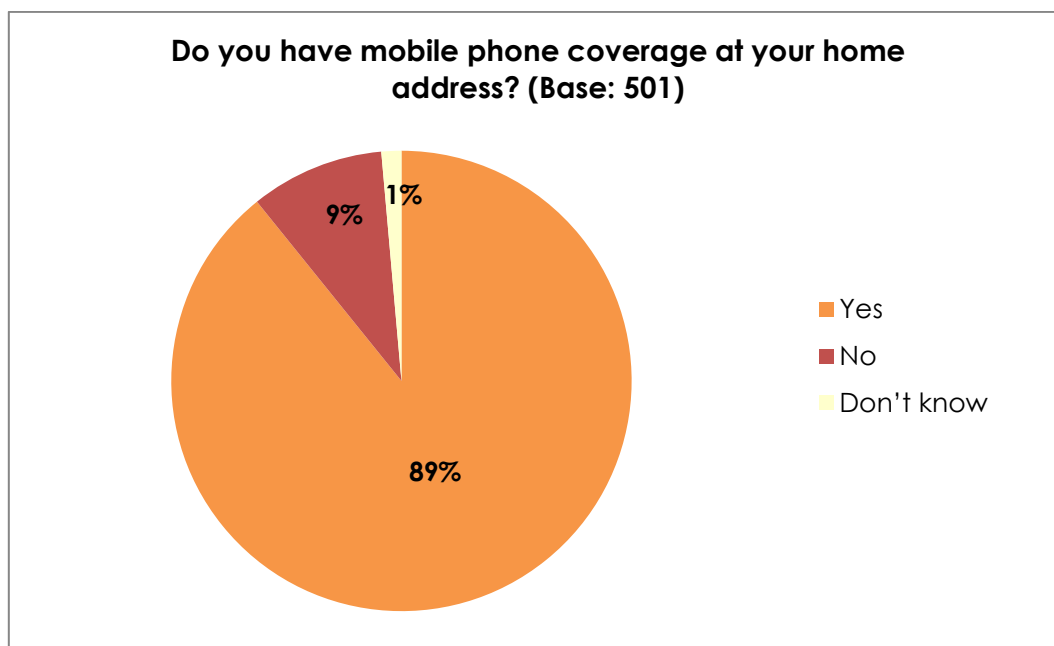


In July 2011 Northumberland County Council launched their Marriage made in Northumberland campaign which aimed to raise awareness of the area as a wedding location; 6% of respondents indicated awareness of this campaign meaning the majority (94%) said they were not.

There was little variation in awareness across demographic groups however, awareness was higher among those living in the North (7%) and South East (7%) and lower among those in the West (2%).

## 6.0 Section 3: Broadband / Connectivity

### 6.1 Mobile Coverage



Around nine out of ten respondents reported having mobile phone coverage at their home address, meaning a tenth either did not have coverage (9%) or were not sure if their home address had mobile phone coverage (1%).

The proportion of respondents who reported having mobile phone coverage at their home address has increased by 2% when compared with 2011.

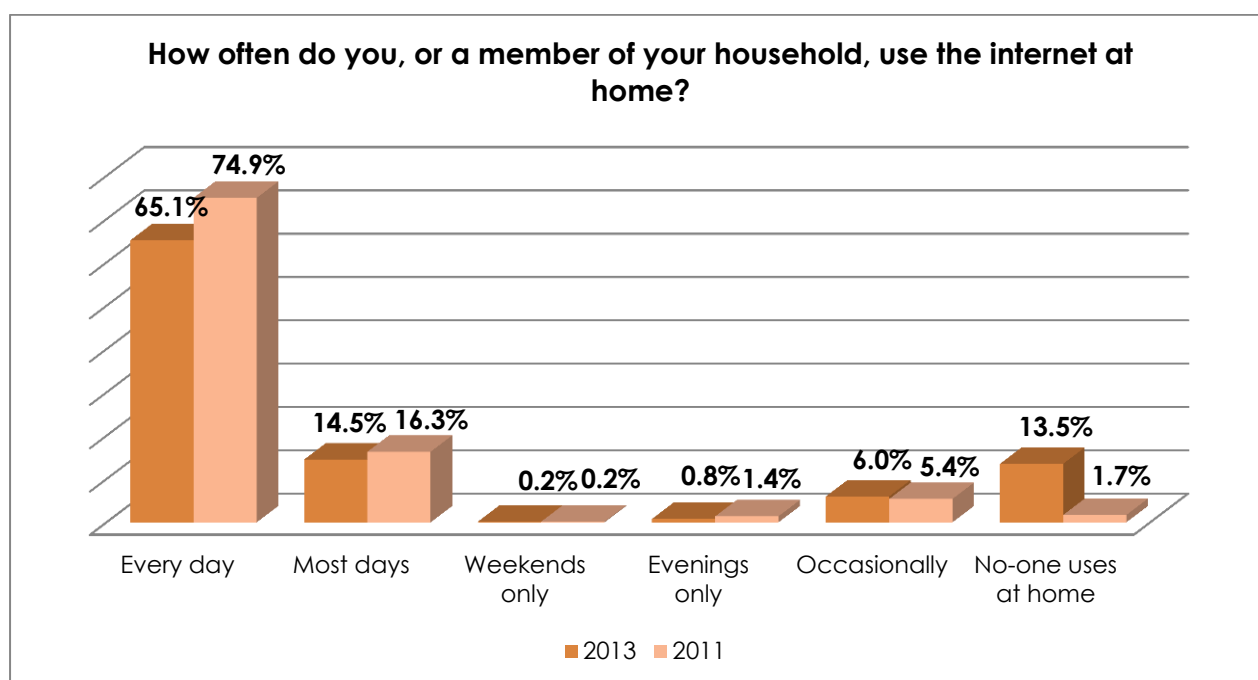
Respondents aged 60 and over less frequently reported having mobile phone coverage at their home address, with 86% saying they had coverage and 12% saying they did not.

More than nine tenths (93%) of respondents within the South East had mobile phone coverage at their home address; fewer respondents living within the West (87%) and North (86%) indicated that they had coverage.



## 6.2 Internet Usage

### 6.2.1 Frequency of Use



Almost two thirds (65%) of respondents said either themselves or another member of their family used the internet on a daily basis, while another 15% said the internet was used most days. Only 14% of respondents said that no-one in their household used the internet at home.

Respondents who said either themselves or someone else within the household used the internet at home on a daily basis has decreased by a tenth since 2011; in contrast there has been an increase of more than a tenth (12%) in respondents who said that no-one within their household used the internet when at home.

Seven tenths of male respondents said that the internet was used every day within their home; a tenth higher than female respondents who said that this was the case.

More than eight out of ten respondents aged 18 to 39 (84%) and 40 to 59 (81%) said their household used the internet at home every day; just half of respondents aged 60 and over said the internet was accessed within their home on a daily basis.

## 6.2.2 Method of Access

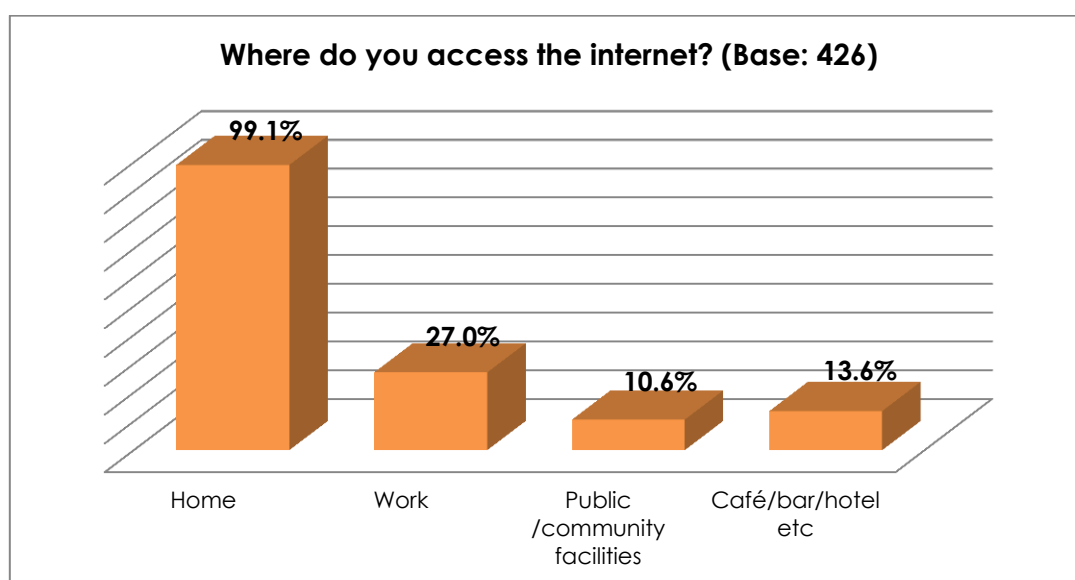
How do you usually access the internet? (Base: 428)		
Method	Number	Percentage
Fixed broadband	281	65.7
Wireless / Wi-Fi	207	48.4
3G / 4G	65	15.2
TV	21	4.9
Satellite	9	2.1
Don't know / not sure	11	2.6

Around two thirds (66%) of respondents who accessed the internet at home said this was through fixed broadband; around half (48%) said their access was wireless or through Wi-Fi.

Almost three quarters (72%) of male respondents said they usually accessed the internet through fixed broadband; 15% higher than female respondents who gave this as their usual method of accessing the internet.

Accessing the internet through 3G / 4G was most common among those aged 18 to 39 (36%) and 40 to 59 (20%); only 8% of respondents aged 60 and over accessed the internet in this way. Respondents aged 18 to 39 (65%) and 40 to 59 (58%) were also more likely than those aged 60 and over (36%) to report accessing the internet through wireless / Wi-Fi.

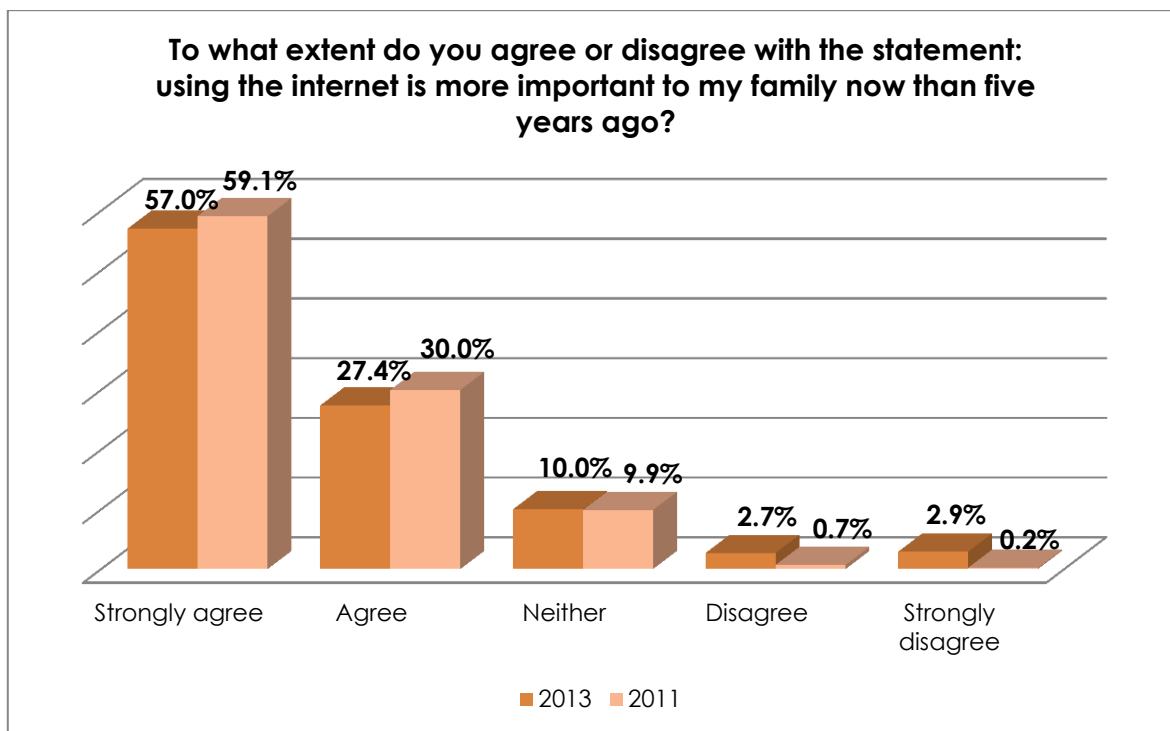
## 6.2.3 Location



Almost all respondents who accessed the internet did so at home (99%) and more than a quarter indicated that they had access at work (27%). More than a tenth of respondents accessed the internet in the public locations mentioned, with 11% doing so at public /community facilities and 14% at cafés, bars and/or hotels.

Respondents who did not access the internet at home said this was as they did not have a computer (2 respondents), were not sure how to use / access the internet (2 respondents), did not need, like or have interest in the internet (3 respondents) or felt their age prevented them from accessing the internet (1 respondent).

#### 6.2.4 Importance of the Internet

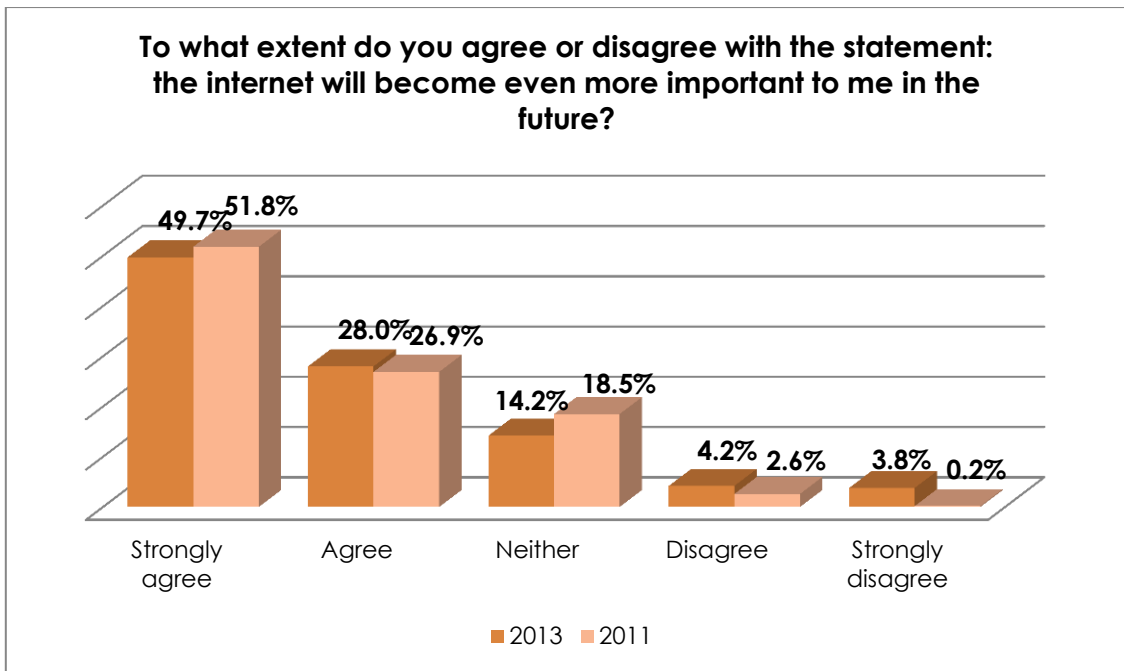


Almost three fifths (57%) of respondents strongly agreed that the internet was now more important to their family than it had been five years ago; a further 27% agreed that this was the case. Only 6% of respondents disagreed that the internet was more important than it had been five years previously.

When compared with 2011, there has been a 5% decrease in respondents who expressed agreement that the internet now had greater importance than five years prior to undertaking the consultation (from 89% to 84%).

Almost nine tenths (88%) of male respondents agreed that the internet had increased in importance; 8% higher than agreement that this was the case among female respondents. There was also a significant difference in agreement among those who had a disability (68%) and those who did not (86%).

The perception that the internet was more important than it had been five years ago was significantly higher among those aged 18 to 39 (94%) and 40 to 59 (92%); only 76% of respondents aged 60 and over said that the internet had increased in importance.



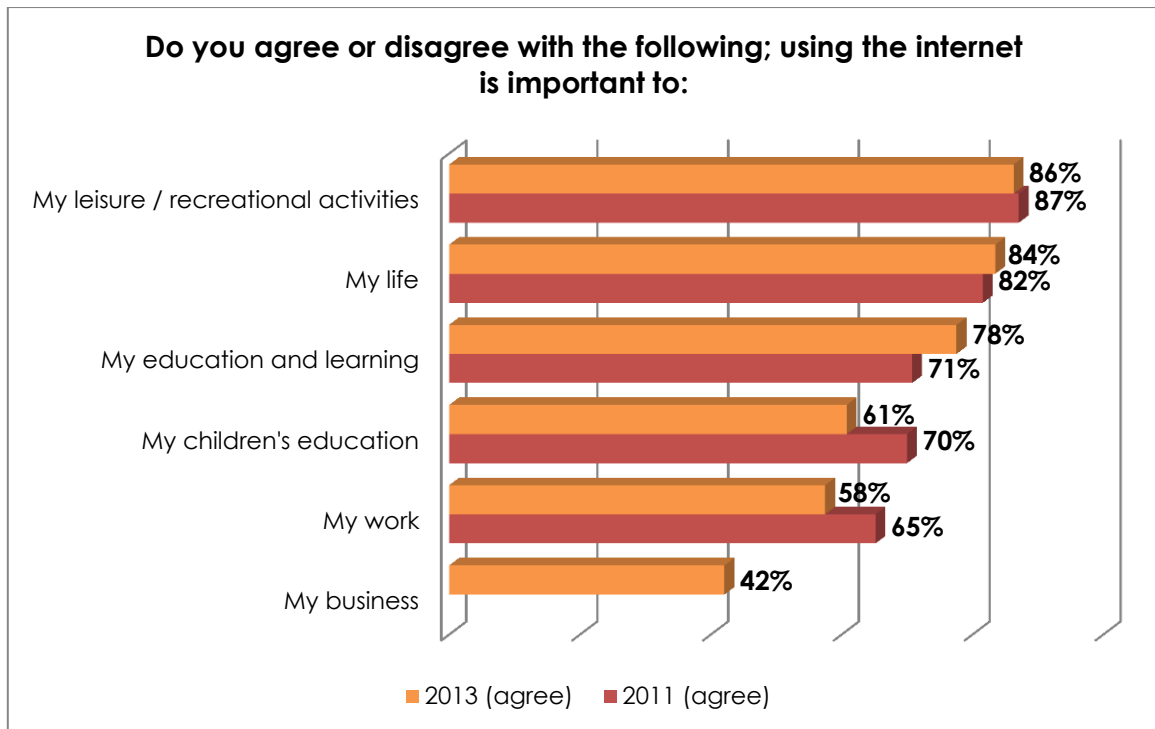
More than three quarters (78%) of respondents agreed that the internet will become more important to them in the future, with half of respondents being in strong agreement that this would be the case. Only 4% of respondents strongly disagreed that the internet would become more important to them in the future.

Agreement that the internet would become more important in the future was consistent with 2011.

Eight out of ten male respondents agreed the internet would become more important to them in the future; 5% higher than agreement that this was the case among female respondents.

Similar to the previous statement, respondents who had a disability (65%) were less likely than those who did not (79%) to agree that the internet would increase in importance.

Agreement that the internet would increase in importance tended to decrease with age; 91% of respondents aged 18 to 39 and 83% of those aged 40 to 59 agreed that this would be the case compared with 71% of respondents aged 60 and over.



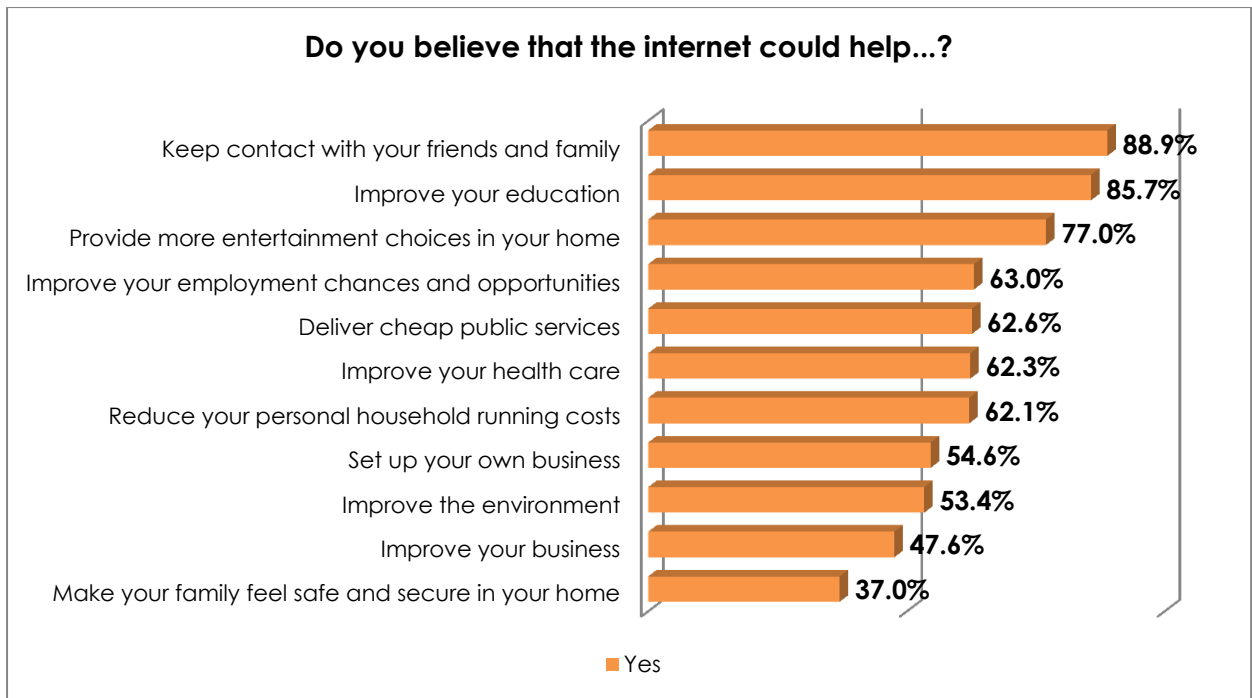
More than four fifths of respondents agreed that the internet was important to their leisure / recreational activities (86%) and their life as a whole (84%); agreement was also high that the internet was important to the respondent's personal education and learning (78%) as well as the education of their children (61%).

Fewer respondents agreed that internet usage was important to their work (58%) and their business (42%).

When compared with 2011, there have been increases in agreement that the internet is important to the respondent's life (+2%) and their education and learning (+7%). In contrast fewer respondents expressed agreement that the internet was important to their children's education (-9%) or their work (-7%).

For all statements relating to the importance of the internet, agreement was higher among male respondents than females, with the most significant difference occurring when considering the statement *using the internet is important to my business*.

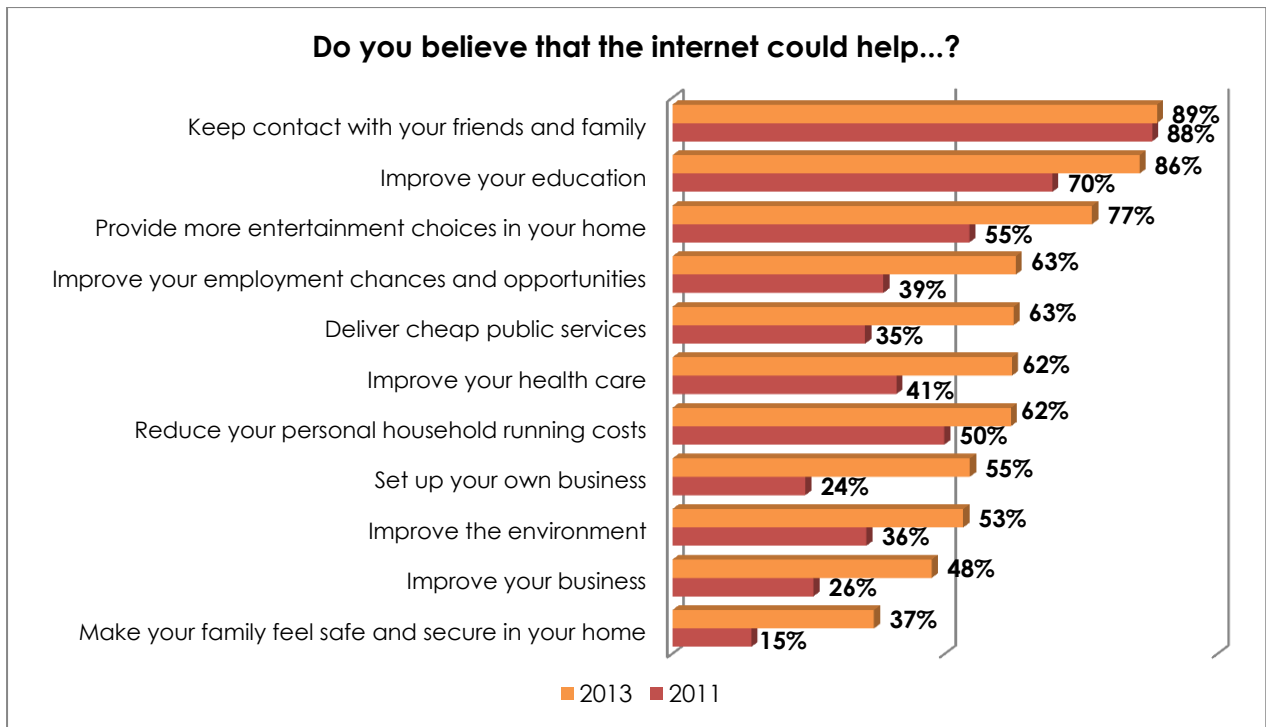
For all statements respondents within the North expressed higher agreement towards the importance which the internet had; agreement was consistently lower among those living in the South East.



Overall respondents tended to be positive about the benefits which the internet could have on the various aspects of their life, community and employment. In particular, the internet was considered to be useful for keeping in contact with friends and family (89%) and improving the individual's education (86%).

In addition, more than three quarters (77%) of respondents felt that the internet could provide more entertainment choices in their home, while 63% said it could improve their employment chances and opportunities.

Although 55% of respondents said the internet could help set up a new business, fewer respondents felt it could help improve an existing business (48%). There was also scepticism regarding feelings of safety and security in the home, as just 37% of respondents said the internet could help with this.



The perceived importance of the internet was higher in 2013 than in 2011, with an increase in respondents who said that the internet could help each of the aspects mentioned.

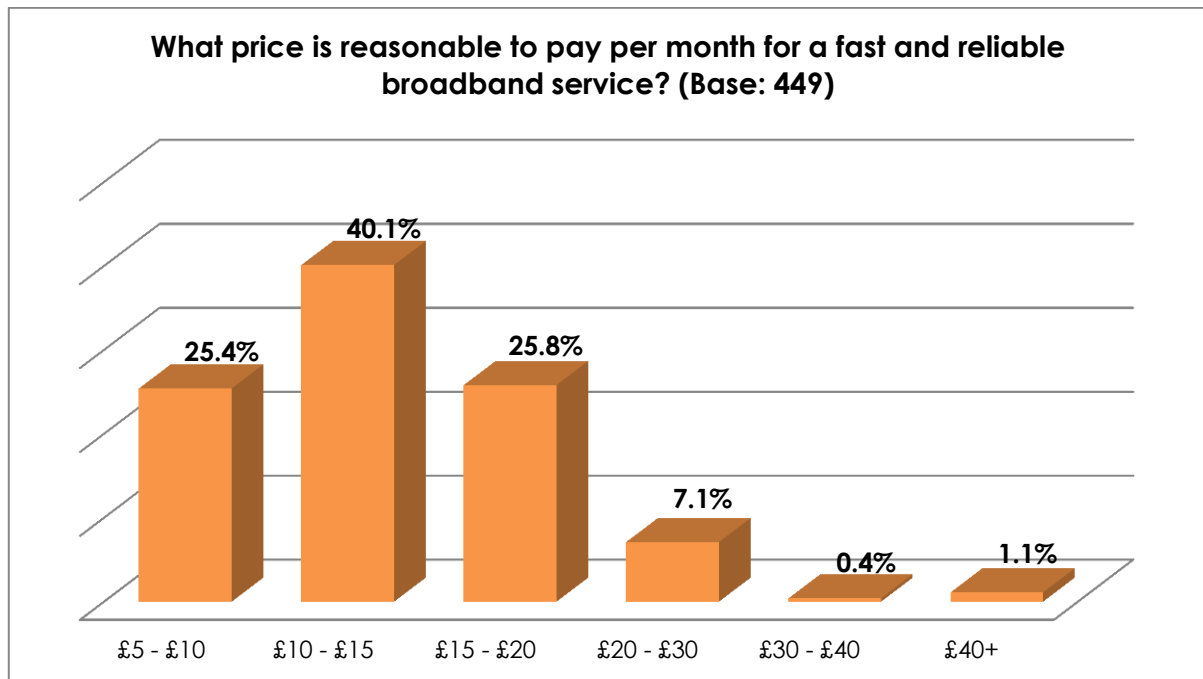
In both 2011 and 2013 the majority of respondents felt the internet could help in keeping in contact with friends and family (2011: 88%, 2013: 89%).

Although fewer respondents felt the internet could make the home feel safe and secure (37%), agreement that this was the case has increased by 23% when compared with 2011.

There has been an increase of three tenths in respondents who felt the internet could help them to set up their own business, while those who felt the internet could help to deliver cheaper public services has increased by more than a quarter (27%).

## 6.3 Broadband

### 6.3.1 Cost



When asked to state how much they felt was a reasonable amount to pay for a fast and reliable broadband service, the largest proportion (40%) considered £10 to £15 to be appropriate. Although 26% said it would be reasonable to pay £15 to £20 for this provision, a further 25% felt £5 to £10 was appropriate.

Only 2% of respondents considered it reasonable to pay an amount greater than £30 each month for fast and reliable broadband.

Respondents who lived within the South East (33%) most frequently said £5 to £10 would be a reasonable cost for monthly broadband; only 19% of respondents in this area indicated that £15 to £20 would be reasonable. In contrast 19% of those in the North felt £5 to £10 was reasonable, whereas around a third (32%) of respondents in this area considered £15 to £20 to be an appropriate cost.



### 6.3.2 Additional Comments

**Please use the space below to provide any additional comments relating to broadband.  
(Base: 109)**

<b>Comment</b>	<b>Number</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Broadband speed / connection slow in general	17	15.6
Superfast / fibre optic broadband wanted / needed	10	9.2
Broadband speed / connection should be improved	9	8.3
Broadband speed / connection unreliable	6	5.5
Broadband is becoming essential to everyday living	5	4.6
Broadband is free / cheap as part of a bundle with provider (e.g. Sky)	5	4.6

In conclusion, respondents were asked to provide any additional comments they had in relation to broadband. Overall, respondents who provided an answer tended to comment on the speed of the broadband / connection.

The six most frequently given comments are shown in the table above and a list of all comments can be found in the appendix.

## Appendices

### Appendix 1 Letter

# NORTHUMBERLAND

Northumberland County Council

Your Ref:  
Our Ref:

Enquiries to: Kirsten Francis  
Direct Line: 01670624741  
E-mail: [Kirsten.francis@northumberland.gov.uk](mailto:Kirsten.francis@northumberland.gov.uk)

Date: 9 April 2013

Dear

#### **Northumberland People's Panel – Access to Services Questionnaire 2013**

Thank you for continuing to take part in our People's Panel survey programme. Our latest survey focuses on 'access to services'. We want your views about a range of topics from broadband to the Council's website. This will help us to understand where we are doing well and where we need to make improvements in these areas.

We would very much appreciate your involvement in ensuring that we provide the services that meet your needs. You can do this by completing the enclosed questionnaire and returning it in the freepost envelope (no stamp required) supplied before **Monday 4<sup>th</sup> March 2013**.

Improvements made since the last access to services questionnaire have been included on the reverse of this letter so you can see how we have used the information you provided to make things better for people across Northumberland. We have also included a feedback report on the results of the previous Lifestyle questionnaire that you took part in last year. This includes key results and what the Council is planning as a result. I hope you find it interesting reading.

We are once again offering a prize of a £25 Voucher to be spent in one of our Tourist Information Centres on a wide range of Northumbrian goods or towards a day out at one of Northumberland's top attractions. The winner will be drawn by SMSR who administer the People's Panel Surveys on behalf of the Council on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2013 and be informed by letter within two weeks of the draw date.

Many thanks again for your continued involvement in the People's Panel. It provides us with invaluable information that helps shape the services and policies of the Council.

Yours sincerely



Stacey Bulet

Stacey Bulet, Head of Customer and Cultural Services  
County Hall, Morpeth, Northumberland, NE61 2EF



## Appendix 2 Questionnaire

Page 1

### PEOPLE'S PANEL - SPRING 2013

#### Access to Services

**Q1 Overall, how satisfied are you with the way the council runs things? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Very satisfied		Fairly satisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Fairly dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Don't know	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

**Q2 Overall, how well informed do you feel about the council and its services? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Very well informed		Fairly well informed		Not very well informed		Not at all informed	
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

**Q3 The council is a key provider of public services locally, so we would like your views on some of the services we provide.**

**How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Very satisfied		Fairly satisfied		Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied		Fairly dissatisfied		Very dissatisfied		Don't know	
Street cleaning	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Street lighting	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Household refuse and recycling collections	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Garden waste collections	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Road maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Pavement maintenance	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Winter maintenance (e.g. gritting, snow clearing)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Upkeep of grass verges, flower beds, trees and shrubs in streets and public spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Cycleway provision	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Facilities for public transport passengers	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Planning service	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

**Q4 How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with each of the following services provided or supported by the council? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Very satisfied	1	Fairly satisfied	2	Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	3	Fairly dissatisfied	4	Very dissatisfied	5	Don't know	6
Local tips/recycling centres	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Parks and green spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Museums/galleries	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Theatres/arts venues	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sports and leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Concessionary bus travel	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bus timetable information at bus stops	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Home to school/college transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Car parks	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Customer information points	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Q5 Please specify how frequently you have used the following public services provided or supported by the council? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Every day	1	Every week	2	Once a month	3	Once every 3 months	4	Once a year	5	Less often	6	Never used/ doesn't apply	7
Local tips/recycling centres	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Parks and green spaces	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Museums/galleries	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Theatres/arts venues	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Sports and leisure facilities	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Public rights of way (footpaths and bridleways)	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Concessionary bus travel	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Bus timetable information at bus stops	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Home to school/college transport	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Car parks	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	
Customer information points	<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>		<input type="checkbox"/>	

**Q6 The following are statements that people have made about their local public services. To what extent do you think that they apply to public services in your local area?**

**Local public services...(Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	A great deal	1	To some extent	2	Not very much	3	Not at all	4	Don't know	5
Are easy to access locally	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Are working to make the area safer	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Are working to make the area cleaner and greener	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Promote the interests of local residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Act on the concerns of local residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Are in touch with the local needs of residents	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Treat all type of people fairly	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5
Are improving access to local services by providing roads, footways and cycle ways	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5

**Q7 How often do you access your local library or mobile library service? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Daily (go to Q9)	Once a week (go to Q9)	Once a month (go to Q9)	Once every 3 months (go to Q9)	Only for a specific purpose (go to Q9)	Never (go to Q8)
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

**Q8 Why do you not use your local library?**

**Q9 Are you aware that the following services are available from your library? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Yes	1	No	2
Borrow books	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Borrow CDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Borrow DVDs	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Access to the internet	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Book reading clubs and events	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Activities for children and young people	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Local history archive	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Family history research materials	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

## Communication

**Q10** How would you prefer to contact the council? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)

	Letter/ Post	Email	Tele- phone	Text	Council Website	Face to Face	Social Networks	Via local Council- lor	
To find out general information (e.g. school term times)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To find out information in an emergency (e.g. school closures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To report a problem or fault	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To make a complaint	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To pay a bill	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To book a service	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To apply for a licence or permit	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To register a birth, death, or marriage; or to be on the electoral roll	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
To borrow library books	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>
Other (please specify below)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>	6 <input type="checkbox"/>	7 <input type="checkbox"/>	8 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q11** How often have you contacted the Council in the last 12 months? (Tick ✓ one box only)

Once	2-5 times	6-10 times	More than 10 times	Don't know	I have not contacted the Council (go to Q13)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
					6 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q12** When you've contacted the council in the past, how would you rate the following? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor	Don't know /can't recall
Convenience of access (opening times)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Helpfulness of staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Speed of response to the enquiry	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Satisfaction with the response	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>
Your experience overall	<input type="checkbox"/>	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>	3 <input type="checkbox"/>	4 <input type="checkbox"/>	5 <input type="checkbox"/>

**Q13 Have you visited one of the Council's customer information points in the last 12 months? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

- Yes .....  1  
 No .....  2

**Q14 If yes, what was your reason for visiting? (Tick ✓ all that apply)**

- Benefits enquiries (including housing advice) .....  01  
 Council tax enquiries .....  02  
 To pay a bill (e.g. council tax or rent) .....  03  
 To register a birth, death or marriage .....  04  
 Planning enquiries .....  05  
 Waste disposal enquiries (including garden waste) .....  06  
 Highway and maintenance enquiries .....  07  
 Advice on adult social care or health .....  08  
 Children's services enquiries .....  09  
 Licencing, permits and passes (including Blue Badge applications) .....  10  
 Other .....  11

**Q15 Are you aware of the Council's contact centre telephone number 0845 600 6400? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

- Yes .....  1  
 No .....  2

**Q16 If you were going to telephone the Council, how likely would you be to use the contact centre number? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

- Very likely      Likely      Unlikely      Very unlikely      Don't know  
      1            2            3            4            5

**Q17 In the past six months, have you made any contact with your democratically elected members? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Yes		No	
Member of Parliament	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
European Member of Parliament	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
County Councillor	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Parish or Town Councillor	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

**Q18 If you answered 'yes' to any of the above, how did you do this? (Tick ✓ all that apply)**

- Letter/post      Email      Telephone      Text      Face to face      At a public meeting  
      1            2            3            4            5            6



**Q19 How would you like to receive information from the council about ... (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Letter/ Post	1	Email	2	Tele- phone	3	Text	4	Council Website	5	Face to Face	6	Social Networks	7	N/land News	8
General information (e.g. school term times)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Emergency information (e.g. school closures)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Range of services	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Eligibility for services (e.g. concessionary travel)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Availability of services (e.g. opening hours, what's on)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Receiving bills	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8
Other (please specify)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6	<input type="checkbox"/>	7	<input type="checkbox"/>	8

**Q20 In the last 12 months, have you used any of the following to contact or gain information about the Council? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Yes	1	No	2	Don't know what this is	3
The Council's website	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
The Council's Facebook page	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
The Council's Twitter site	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
The Council's Pinterest page (photo sharing website)	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3
The Council's Linked-in profile	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

**Q21 If you have not used any of the above, why is this?**

**Q22 How often have you accessed the Council's website in the last 12 months? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Daily .....  1

Once a week .....  2

Once a month.....  3

Once every 3 months .....  4

Only if there is something of specific interest .....  5

Never.....  6



**Q23 If you have used the Council's website in the last 12 months, what is your opinion of the following? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Excellent	Good	Adequate	Fair	Poor	Don't know /can't recall	Does not apply to me
Range of information	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Design/look	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
How easy it is to find information	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Extent to which it is up to date	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7
Ease of ordering/making payments online	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6	<input type="checkbox"/> 7

**Q24 What three improvements would you like to be made to the Council's website?**

**Please rank these in order with 1 being the most important and 3 the least important.**

- The content of web pages .....
- The front page .....
- The ability to report problems or faults .....
- The ability to book appointments with council service/officers .....
- The alerts system - providing information about school closures/weather alerts etc. ....
- The ability to make a complaint .....
- The ability to make a payment .....
- The ability to apply for a licence .....
- The ability to apply for Council services online .....

**Q25 Please use the space below to provide any detailed information such as specific web pages you would like improved or any issues you have experienced using the Council's website...**

**Q26 Have you recently received the following council publications through the post? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Yes	No	Don't know
Council Tax leaflet	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Adult learning guide	<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3
Other, please specify.....	<input type="text"/>		

**Q27 How useful do you find these publications? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Very useful	1	Reasonably useful	2	Little Use	3	Not useful at all/not relevant	4
Council tax leaflet	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Adult learning guide	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
Other	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4

**Q28 The Council's newsletter 'Northumberland News' is now an online magazine. Have you registered to receive a copy? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Yes	1	Not yet but intend to	2	No, and do not intend to	3
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3

**Q29 If not, why not? (Tick ✓ all that apply)**

- Wasn't aware that there was one .....  1
- Not interested in its content.....  2
- I don't have access to a computer/ internet.....  3
- Get copy (paper based) from the library.....  4

**Q30 Are you aware of the Council's 'Marriage made in Northumberland' campaign? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

- Yes .....  1
- No .....  2

**Q31 Do you read (buy or access online) any of the following local newspapers? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Every day	1	Every week	2	Once a month	3	Once every 3 months	4	Only if it contains an article of specific interest	5	Never	6
Morpeth Herald	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Berwick Advertiser	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Hexham Courant	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Northumberland Gazette	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
News Post Leader	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Chronicle Extra	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
The Journal	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6
Evening Chronicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>	6

## Broadband/Connectivity

**Q32 Do you have mobile phone coverage at your home address? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Yes		No		Don't Know
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
				3

**Q33 To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements: (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Strongly agree	Agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Disagree	Strongly disagree
Using the internet is more important to my family now than five years ago	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
			3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
				5	<input type="checkbox"/>
The internet will become even more important to me in the future	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>
			3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4
				5	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Q34 How often do you, or a member of your household, use the internet? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

Every day		Most days		Weekends only		Evenings only		Occasionally		No-one uses the internet in my home (go to Q39)
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
										6

**Q35 How do you usually access the internet? (Tick ✓ all that apply)**

Fixed Broadband		3G/4G		Satellite		Wireless/Wi-Fi		TV		Don't know / not sure
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>	4	<input type="checkbox"/>	5	<input type="checkbox"/>
										6

**Q36 Where do you access the internet? (Tick ✓ all that apply)**

Home		Work		Public/community facilities		Café/bar/hotel etc
<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2	<input type="checkbox"/>	3	<input type="checkbox"/>
						4

**Q37 If you do not access the internet at home, why is this?**

**Q38 Please agree or disagree with the following; using the internet is important to... (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Agree		Disagree
My life	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
My work	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
My business	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
My education and learning	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
My leisure/recreational activities	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
My children's education	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>
			2

**Q39 Do you believe that the internet could help...? (Tick ✓ one option for each row)**

	Yes		No	
Improve your health care	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Improve your education	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Improve you employment chances and opportunities	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Provide more entertainment choices in your home	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Set up your own business	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Keep contact with your friends and family	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Deliver cheap public services	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Improve the environment	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Reduce your personal household running costs	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Make your family feel safe and secure in your home	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2
Improve your business	<input type="checkbox"/>	1	<input type="checkbox"/>	2

**Q40 What price is reasonable to pay per month for a fast and reliable broadband service? (Tick ✓ one box only)**

£5-10	£10-15	£15-20	£20-30	£30-40	£40+
<input type="checkbox"/> 1	<input type="checkbox"/> 2	<input type="checkbox"/> 3	<input type="checkbox"/> 4	<input type="checkbox"/> 5	<input type="checkbox"/> 6

**Q41 Please use the space below to provide any additional comments relating to Broadband.**

## Appendix 3 Additional Comments

### Council's Website

Q: Please use the space below to provide any detailed information such as specific web pages you would like improved or any issues you have experienced using the council's website.

As I have stated in previous surveys the website is not user friendly (although it has improved a little) it is not of current design and is somewhat dated in format and structure.
Bin collection could be clearer. Some categories are not listed under main headings e.g. dropped kerbs (lack of not repair or replace). There is no means to ask about road/pavements that are not in place only repair of or maintenance.
Bit messy front page, lots of information but bit cluttered. Red - not a good colour.
Clarity in list of departments and their functions.
Could be made easier to navigate to specific areas.
Could not find details of on-going road improvement scheme on web site. Information obtained by email query.
Council tax page.
Ease of navigation of the site. Found it impossible to find out info about refuse collections. Website seemed to take me in a loop and I am fairly IT savvy.
Efficient navigation. The search option doesn't always produce a result.
Find the website too cluttered. Increase simplicity.
Garden waste payment could not be done online, dates of refuse collection were not functional several times.
Home page cluttered and intimidating. 3 unattractive app shaped images waste time as they look like links but are not. The adverts look like intrusive pop ups and use space that could contain interesting news headlines. The alphabet search and the list it leads to are fiddly. Does staff login need to be on homepage? Not tablet or smartphone friendly.
I am not a computer user so these services are no help to an older pensioner.
I am quite happy with the set-up of the council website.
I do not find it at all easy to navigate. Too many clicks needed to find the info required.
I have found paying business rates online very cumbersome.
I personally feel it is very dis-jointed and it does not give adequate information. It is difficult to navigate.
I quite like the website it's useful. Sometimes info is difficult to find. My internet access is variable. School weather alerts are good, just sometimes a little slow.
I thought website offered relevant info - no need to change in my opinion.
I tried to report a street light which wasn't working on the website 25th Feb 2013 but could not get access to the appropriate page on 4 occasions!!
Information on removal of household item and answer was contradicted by a following phone call. Please ensure telephonists do have my current information. This isn't happening at present.
Information on road gritting and clearing during bad weather snow and ice.
It is often lacking in detail and out of date.
It may already be available via twitter, but a general "air your views" section would be useful for both the council and their customers. Although a section for the positives would be nice as well.
Links to pay items or order services take you to a page where you have to search for the

section you want. The home page should have a pay now list so the link takes you straight to the payment section for waste, council tax, etc.
Make navigating the website more simple.
More accountability by the county council as opposed to the parish council - more visibility.
None of the above are possible unless significant changes are made to the website. It is painful trying to locate information or supposedly accessible services.
None, I find it an easy site to work around.
Only used website to get info. Always successfully cannot really say what needs to be changed.
Overall the site appears good. I have not accessed all of it but it seems pretty comprehensive. Layout and appearance as well as content seem to be quite adequate. Only complaint is that planning section is pitiful. One should be able to put in a reference no and get immediate access. This just does not happen and the site is totally user unfriendly.
Planning information readily available with good access to drawings/comments and all relevant details of an application.
Planning pages difficult to use and often not up-to-date.
Planning portal would benefit from links to other sites and examples, not necessarily for developers who have paid/experienced staff. However, things like design and access statements may be alien to small developers
Planning website is far too confusing unless you are a professional. Ability to make a complaint or report a problem not easy.
Planning website is very difficult to use and is invariably out of date.
Please try to keep website working when bad weather hits. We need it for school/transport news. It has been down several times when really needed.
Provide a weekly current newsletter on current council business.
Recently I went to the website, was given a number to call and ended up going in circles, very, very frustrating, furious at the time!!
Refuse collection dates for bank holidays.
Reporting a problem (such as street lighting) is rather more complicated than it needs to be - should not have to give the same information on 3 different pages.
Search facility is poor, FAQs are non-existent, would like to be able to email service from that service's web page.
So much info crammed in it is a bit hard to navigate around it.
Sometimes when trying to check for school closures the site fails to respond due to the number of people trying to access the information. Not very helpful when you need a prompt answer.
The search facility is very difficult to use and doesn't always find what you are looking for, even when you know it's there. Categories on the left hand side are confusing - it isn't easy to work out which one you need.
There always seems to be a lot of information on one screen, making it appear crowded.
There is a lot of text to wade through. More succinct info would be helpful.
This morning when it was snowing and roads were bad I could not access the alerts part of the website so could not see about bus services, school closures or road info.
Very crowded layout, too much info on front pages can put people off especially those with reading disabilities etc.
Very hard to access when reporting problems regarding green spaces, parks etc.
Web interface is ok I guess, it's the people who are behind that who deliver a poor service i.e. I made a request, get an e-acknowledgement but no resolution on closedown contact - the work may or may not get done - useless!
Website adequate for my needs. Don't really use it enough to suggest improvements

## Broadband

Q Please use the space below to provide any additional comments relating to Broadband.

A faster service.
Figures should include line rental.
Although £5-£10 per month does not seem much it is for poor families. Remember maybe on-top of a telephone line charge.
As I often work from home any increase in speed available as technology improves should be made available.
As in many places in Europe local internet 'Hot Spots' should be provided.
As normal North West Northumberland isn't even in the pecking order.
As we are at the furthest point from my local telephone exchange it is not possible to get any broadband at present I therefore have to access this on my days at work or at my parents' home.
Berwick needs fibre optic broadband as soon as possible.
Blyth area in which I live has an infrastructure (cables etc.) which is old, overloaded and frequently fails due to water ingress into the underground cables/joints causing broadband to be unreliable often.
Broadband coverage in my area is getting better and better. I just wish my mobile signal would do the same!
Broadband is not fast enough in North Northumberland and is not reliable enough.
Broadband often 'bundled' with other services so hard to answer Q40.
Broadband should be as easily available as water.
Broadband should be available to all, it is a way for all to use even elderly can learn to use computers and the web to keep in touch with family all over the world. It's our future!
Broadband should be made clearer for everyone just another bill.
Broadband speed could be faster.
Broadband speed slow in my area of the village. Internet radio often drops out as speed is variable.
Care not to place total reliance on broadband (without back up). Systems temperamental subject to breakdown with varying degree of support service and fault diagnosis.
Combined phone (possibly regarding price i.e. broadband and phone bundle).
Connection to broadband in the area is slow, a query - is it the area in general or the provider?
Could be faster.
Council have failed to make the case for constant superfast connections, forget many services that you provide and concentrate on fixing this as priority.
Council IT department should investigate running its own broadband (NorthumbriaBroadband.co.uk) might be worth a few quid for Northumberland county.
Council needs to make every effort to improve broadband speed, doesn't appear to have done much so far.
Do not have a computer and cannot afford one.
Do not use any company with call centres in India!
Don't have broadband, not planning to get it.
Don't have broadband. Son in law complains that it is very slow to connect when he tries to use smart phone at ours.
Don't have these services.



Don't know anything about broadband personally and I'm too old to find out anyway. If I did find out about it and did become able to use it in anyway, I would expect to get it cheaply or for free. That's the price of a hard pressed pensioner.
Don't know as I haven't got broadband and don't want it.
Don't know what cost would be.
Don't know what it is?
Fast reliable broadband should be a service to all NCC residents, those who cannot receive it are disadvantaged in all areas of life.
Fast speed essential and total coverage.
Fibre optic has improved the facilities and usefulness of the internet in Ashington.
Free broadband with provider.
Free with Sky.
Have no idea as have not got broadband.
Have no idea, always coming out with new things, just do not want to keep changing if they are happy as they are.
High speed broadband should be low cost service to every address in Northumberland.
I am not interested in broadband. I thought councils were hard up this is a complete waste of money.
I currently receive a broadband speed of around 3mbs which in today's standard is not very fast. Fibre optic broadband should be installed in the area.
I disagree with the extra fee on-top of the line rental.
I do not feel qualified to comment, as I do not use broadband.
I do not have a computer nor do I wish to have one, do not need broadband.
I do not have broadband.
I do not have IT.
I do not require it.
I don't have a business but for those who have one it will be good to them.
I don't have the internet.
I hate using internet if I have to, rather just make a call to office base for information, its more direct and internet doesn't always have the answer you need, as questions are geared towards your convenience and not mine.
I have no idea about the merits of broadband.
I have very little need to use internet - so I cannot see any access in the foreseeable future
I intend to install TV, computer etc. when I retire in 2015. At present I access a friend's computer. Library not convenient for me.
I know nothing about the internet.
If I had a computer I would use it for work.
If it includes on demand video and/or telecoms then the price should be more than indicated above. Current 3G service is not very good.
If the broadband was very, very fast £20-30.
Improved broadband speed is vital for business. It is very poor in this area at present.
It is really convenient to use broadband for accessing shopping and services at home.
It is relevant to everyone in today's lifestyle climate and so therefore should be accessible to all at a reasonable cost and efficiently.
It should be fast and affordable for everyone. It is becoming an essential utility in order to participate in modern life and work. I feel very concerned that the county council has in my view failed to provide a fast and affordable internet connection to the small parts of



the county. It is very worrying indeed and will have serious implications for social and business life in these areas in the future.
It should be free.
Love to have the opportunities think having a computer would give me however being a pensioner and on a fixed pension. I find it hard to afford BT prices.
More and more services are provided by broadband; tax returns, booking GP appointments, enquiries on rail transport etc. soon or maybe soon no other method will be provided, that is why I need to keep up.
My broadband is provided via Sky and is anything but fast, but I get it free with my TV and telephone package.
My husband has broadband /phone with BT.
My use of broadband is related to my age as I am elderly. My laptop was purchased only three years ago.
Need for a superfast network.
No computer so don't need broadband or any other services.
No computer therefore no broadband.
No intention of acquiring a computer.
Not as fast as it should be considering I live so close to a telephone exchange.
Not everything on the internet is true.
Not interested.
Not interested - no computer!!
People in rural areas should be made aware that the only choice in BB is whether they are with BT or not. BT=7Mb, others=none or erratic service.
Present speed are pitiful and need some action to improve it.
Questions about broadband are not relevant to me.
Quite satisfied as we are.
Receive broadband from Sky - free with Sky Plus.
Rural areas need access to fibre optic broadband.
Rural speeds are slower than in towns, which disadvantages residents especially disabled or others who cannot easily access facilities in urban centres e.g. it would be simpler to watch a movie at home than have to go all the way to Newcastle where wheelchair spaces are usually right at the front!
Schools should provide advice to parents on protecting children from accessing unsuitable sites on the internet.
See the advantage of internet in terms of making tasks easier, but do not consider it the be all and end all of my routine. I prefer to talk face to face or over the phone. I do not think it will improve my health or wellbeing or education level. It does provide me with ease and choice of product selection etc and cheaper easier contact with family.
Slow and interrupted service in general.
Talk Talk and BT internet are sharks better regulation of providers needed.
The council should not assume everyone choses to use the internet as a means of communication.
The internet makes living in a remote county such as ours even more attractive.
The problem with internet - people have forgotten the art of conversation. If we have power cuts and the computers go down we are stuffed. What happened to councillors knocking on doors, not just elections.
The usual not getting the speed at which the provider says.
There is no fast reliable broadband service in West Cramlington.

Very slow and unreliable. Need to have better updated connections!
Very slow at times.
Visitors to our home find the speed of our broadband laughable. We have friends and family all over the UK and our broadband is the slowest by far.
Vital service, when my system is off it is terrible. My family and I use it multiple times a day for various things. It makes an enormous difference for living in a rural area, much easier to find cheaper prices, information before you travel. Please can we have superfast broadband asap?
Waiting for fibre optic lines, but think it will be expensive.
We actually pay much more than this. The question is rather ambiguous.
We have been with the same broadband provider ever since we started using broadband as we get free international phone calls with them otherwise we would switch.
We pay too much in this country for broadband and the speed is poor compared to other countries.
We use Sky package TV, phone, broadband.
When will fibre optic broadband come to Prudroe?
Why is Westwood Grange by-passed for fibre-optic broadband? The whole area should be covered. Areas should not be discriminated against with fast broadband.
Widdrington has a very slow internet connection whereas Longhirst is much better
Would be useful - but not absolutely necessary to have higher speed(present 2Mb) up to 50Mb.
Would like to see improved speed in rural Northumberland.