

Place Survey 2008/9

Ribble Valley

Research report

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1 Executive Summary

The Place Survey is a new postal survey that all county, district and metropolitan councils, and all London boroughs are required to complete. The survey collects 18 of the government's national indicators to measure performance in local authorities and their partnerships. The survey was run jointly between the Lancashire Partnership, Lancashire County Council and the twelve district councils in the county, led by the county council's Corporate Research and Intelligence Team.

The survey fieldwork was between October 2008 and January 2009, and 16,604 people gave their views on areas such as local quality of life, community safety and satisfaction with local services. More than one in three people contacted replied to the survey (36%). In Ribble Valley 1,327 people completed the survey.

1.1 Key findings

1.1.1 Attitudes to the local area

- In Ribble Valley, more than nine residents in ten are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (94%). This is a 12% increase compared with the same question asked in 2006, and is the highest score of any local authority in England for this measure.
- The most mentioned local priorities for improvement in Ribble Valley are activities for teenagers, improve road and pavement maintenance, and affordable decent housing.

1.1.2 Community cohesion

- Four in five respondents who express an opinion in Ribble Valley agree that local people from different backgrounds get on well together (79%). This is significantly higher than the county figure of 74%.

1.1.3 Belonging, influence and getting involved

- In Ribble Valley, three-quarters of people answer that they feel they belong to their neighbourhood (73%), which is higher than the county average. Three people in ten formally volunteer at least once a month (30%), which is also higher than the county average.

1.1.4 Community safety

- The overall measure of perceived anti-social behaviour in Ribble Valley is 8%, a significant fall of 14% on 2006. Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem 18% and drug use or dealing as a problem 16% have both had a large fall since 2006.

1.1.5 Health and wellbeing

- Four-fifths of Ribble Valley residents rate their own health as very or fairly good (80%), which is similar to the county average.

2 Background and Introduction

The Place Survey is a postal survey that replaces the best value performance indicator surveys which ran from 2000 to 2006. All county, district and metropolitan councils, and all London Boroughs are required to complete the survey. The survey collects 18 of the national indicators that require the views and perceptions of local residents. These include important areas such as perceptions of local quality of life, anti-social behaviour and community cohesion.

The survey was jointly procured by the Lancashire Partnership, Lancashire County Council and the twelve district councils in Lancashire. Ipsos MORI were selected to undertake the mailing and data processing of the survey, and provided data to each authority. Each district submitted their results to the Audit Commission to be weighted by their data supplier, Cobalt Sky. The Department for Communities and Local Government (CLG) finalised and published the results in late June 2009, with corrections in September 2009. The project was led by, and this data has been analysed by, the Corporate Research and Intelligence Team at Lancashire County Council.

3 Methodology

The survey was conducted by a postal methodology according to the guidelines supplied by the Audit Commission. The sampling frame was a random selection of 6000 addresses per district, provided by the Audit Commission from Royal Mail's Postal Address File (PAF). A random sample of addresses were initially selected to mail for each district. Twelve surveys were sent out with the county council and relevant district council branding and information in the questionnaire. Two reminder mailings (including the questionnaire) were sent to non-respondents. The fieldwork period was between October 2008 and January 2009.

Across all 12 Lancashire districts 45,660 questionnaires were sent, and 16,604 were completed. This equates to a 36% response rate, making it one of the largest surveys ever conducted in the county.

The data was weighted by age, ethnicity, gender and the number of people in the household to match current estimates of the proportions in each district. For the county results another factor was included to allow for the differing sizes of district. These weights mean the responses closely match the population profile of the county, and the weighted number of responses matches the total response of 16,604.

(For a description of reliability of survey results and significant differences, see appendix 5.2).

4 Main Research Findings

These findings constitute a summary of the main results, including key national indicator scores.

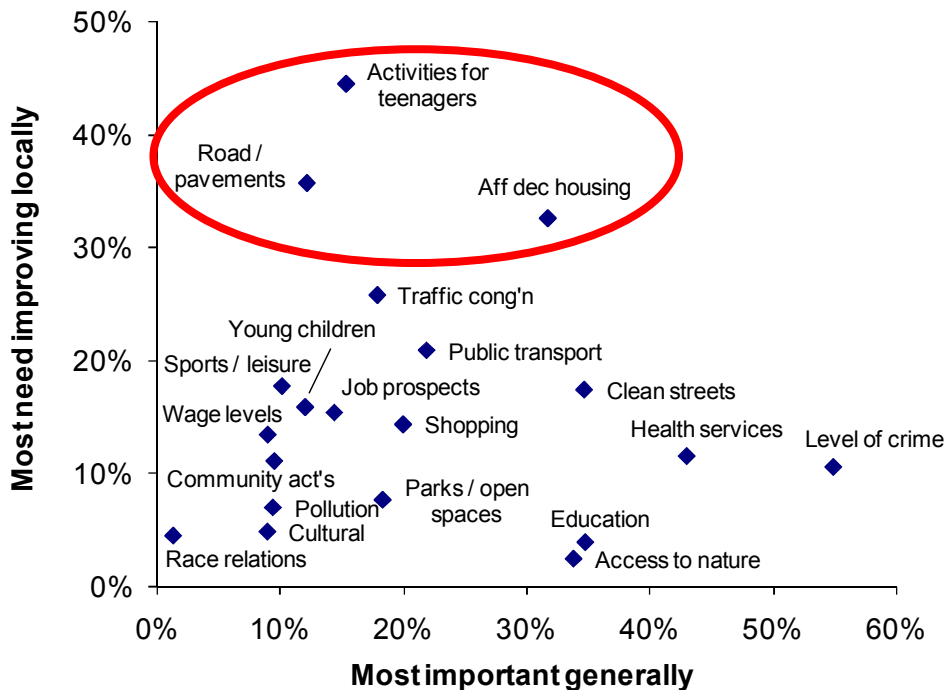
For further information please contact Steven Knuckey, Principal Research and Intelligence Officer (steven.knuckey@lancashire.gov.uk).

4.1 Attitudes to the local area

The first questions on the Place Survey look into people's preferences for local improvement. Activities for teenagers are the highest priority for residents in Ribble Valley, with road and pavement maintenance and affordable decent housing also seen as high priorities. (Ribble Valley was the only district in the county where providing affordable, decent housing was one of the top local priorities). The level of crime and quality of health services are considered the most important priorities for an area generally.

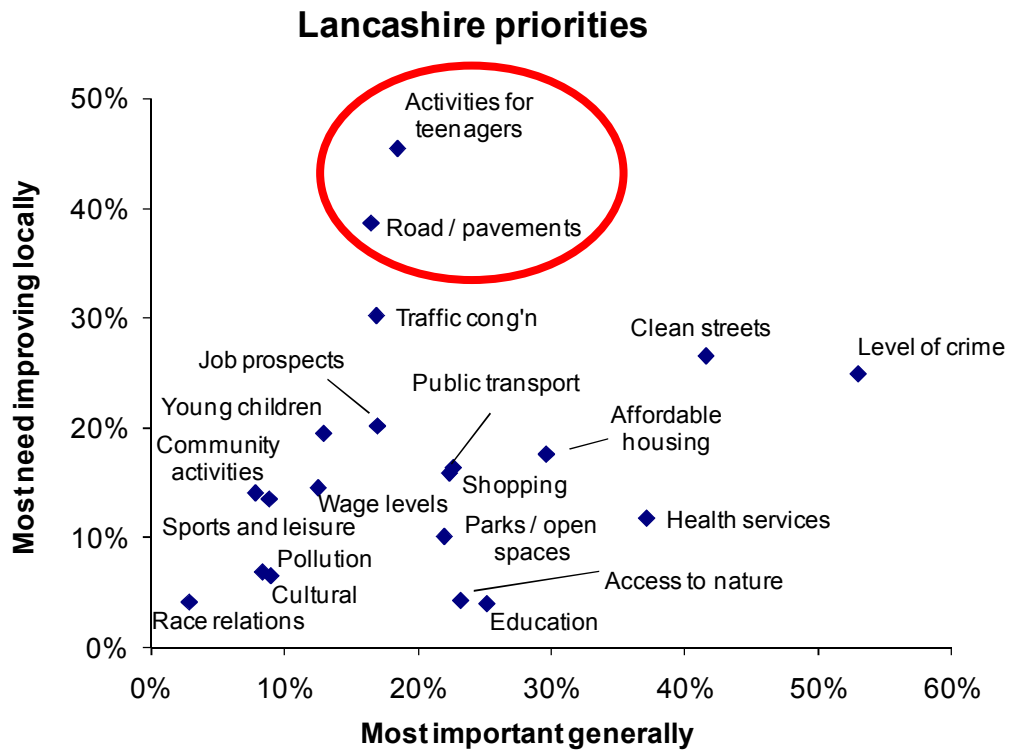
**Thinking generally, which of the things below would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?
And thinking about this local area, which of the things below, if any, do you think most need improving?**

Ribble Valley priorities



Base: All Ribble valley respondents (1,327)

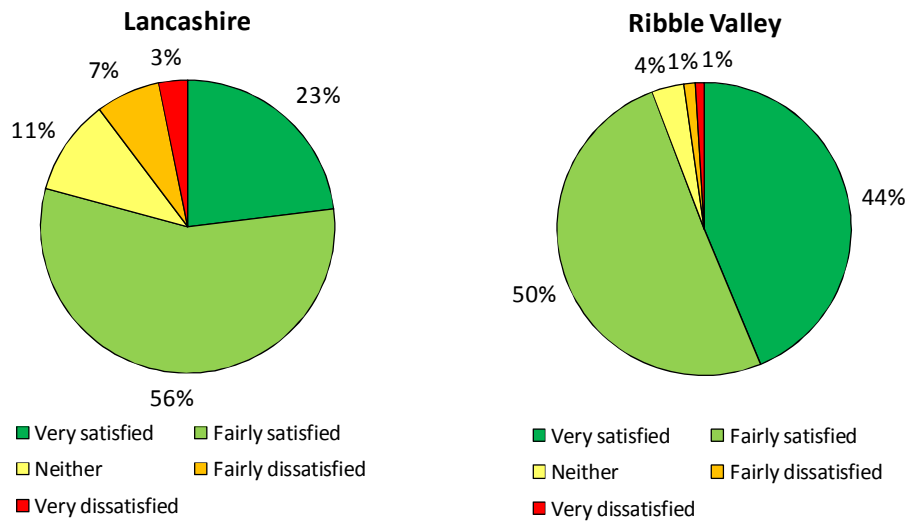
Below is a chart showing the same priorities for local improvement for Lancashire as a whole.



Base: All Lancashire respondents (16,604)

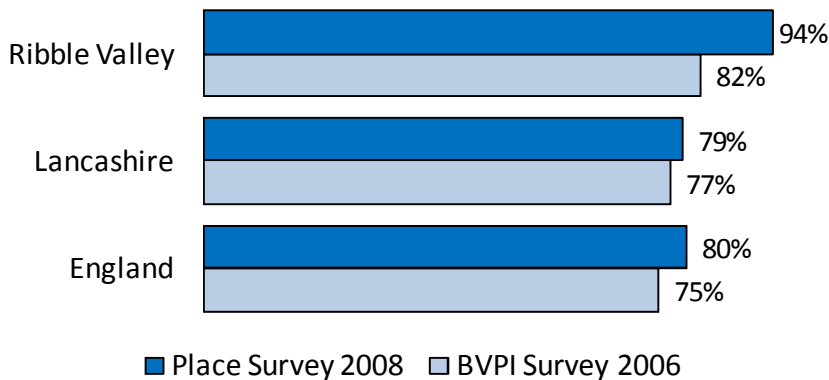
Respondents were next asked for their satisfaction with their local area as a place to live. Residents of Ribble Valley are more satisfied with their local area as a place to live (94%) than the county overall (79%). This level of satisfaction has increased by 12% compared with the same question asked on the BVPI 2006 survey, which is higher than the 5% rate of national increase. In addition, the score of 94% satisfaction in Ribble Valley is the highest local satisfaction score of any of the 352 English local authorities who ran the survey.

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



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

NI 5 – Overall satisfaction with the local area as a place to live

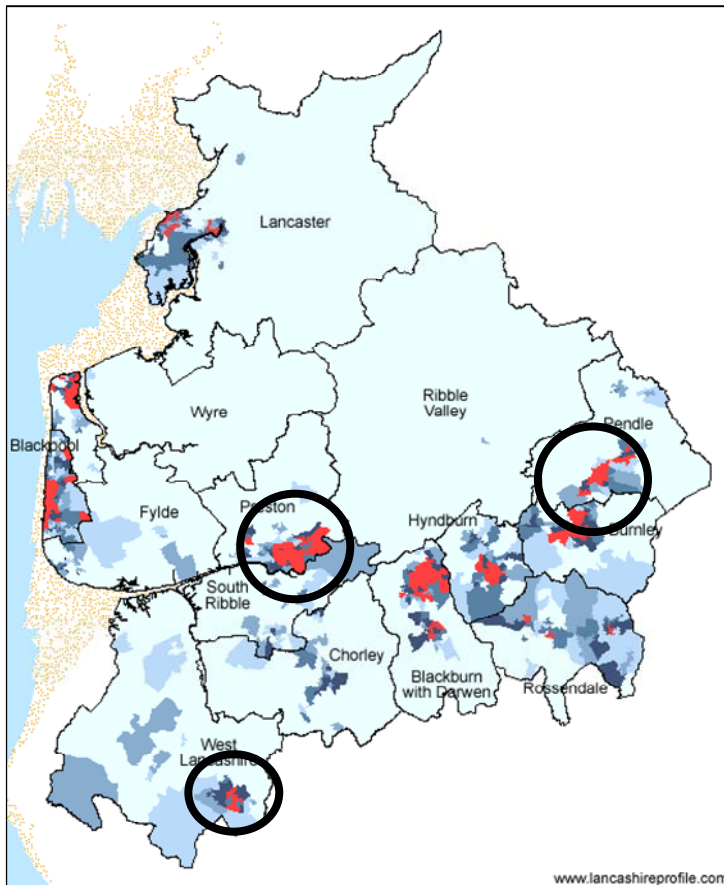


Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

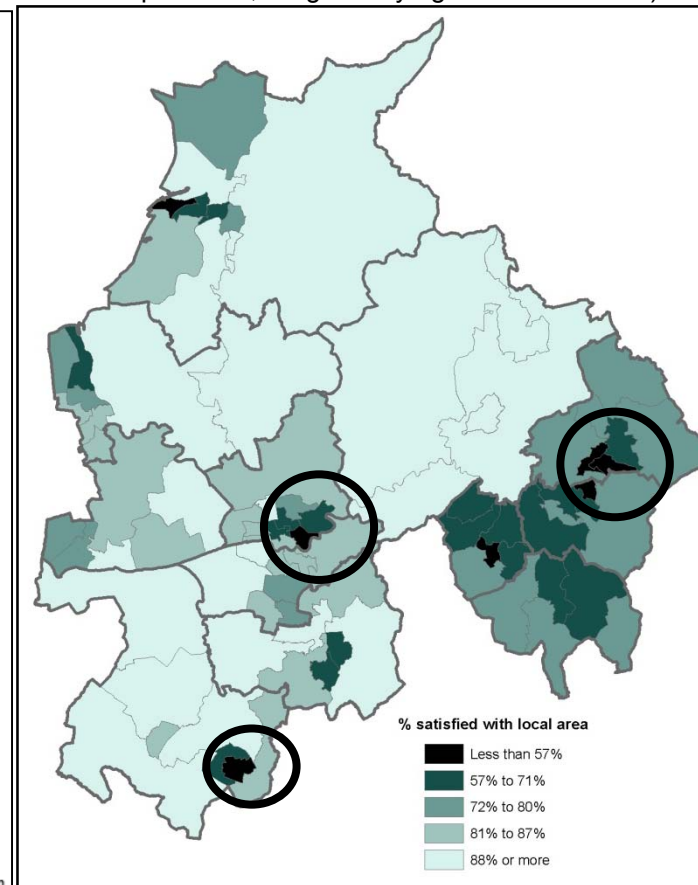
Satisfaction with the local area is strongly linked the level of local deprivation. Only about three in five residents of the 20% most deprived areas in the Lancashire are satisfied with their local area (58%). In comparison, nine in ten residents are satisfied in the 20% least deprived areas in the county (90%). The maps on the next page compare the levels of deprivation in the county from the Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007 with the levels of local satisfaction from the survey. The areas of highest deprivation in dark blue and red closely match the areas of lowest satisfaction on the second map in dark green and black.

Comparison between levels of deprivation and local satisfaction

Index of Multiple Deprivation 2007
(Areas in 10% most deprived nationally shown in red)



NI 5 – Overall satisfaction with local area by electoral district (Each area contains around 200 respondents, weighted by age to district levels).

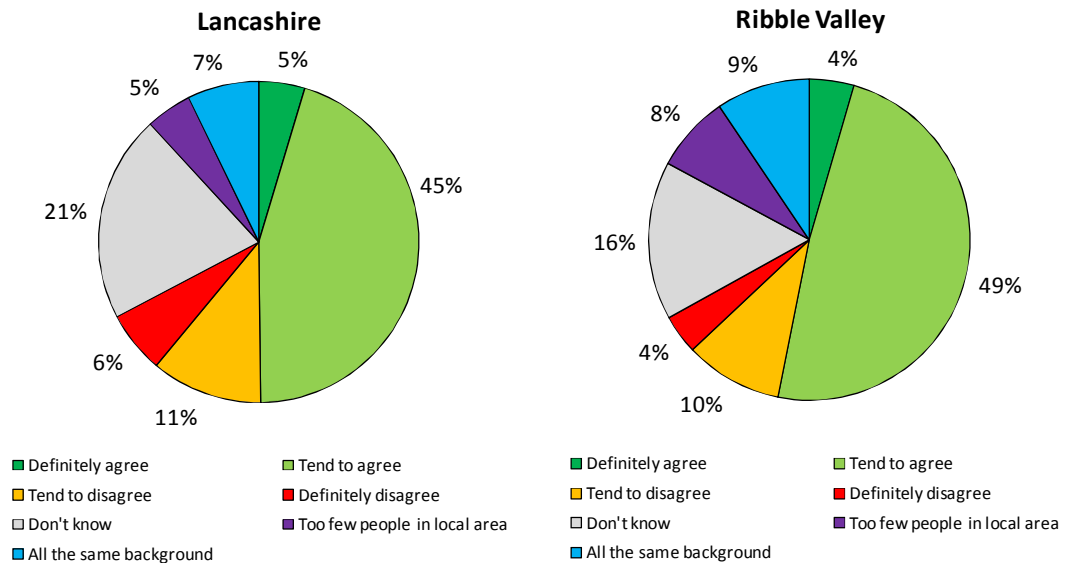


Source: Lancashire Profile (http://www.lancashire.gov.uk/office_of_the_chief_executive/lancashireprofile/index.asp), Place Survey 2008

4.2 Community Cohesion

Several questions on the survey looked into feelings of community in the local area. Key amongst these is the question below, looking into how well people from different backgrounds get on together.

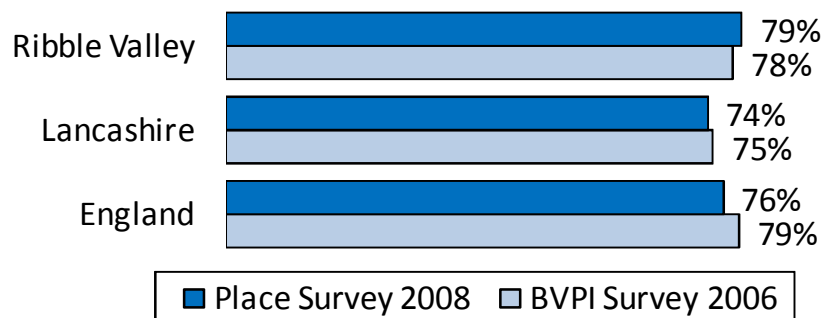
To what extent do you agree or disagree that this local area is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

Excluding the proportion giving “don’t know”, “too few people in local area” and “all the same background” answers, the proportion agreeing gives the figure for the first national indicator - NI 1. This is one of the main measures nationally for community cohesion, and is 74% on the current survey for Lancashire. Ribble Valley is higher with 79% agreeing that people from different backgrounds get along well locally.

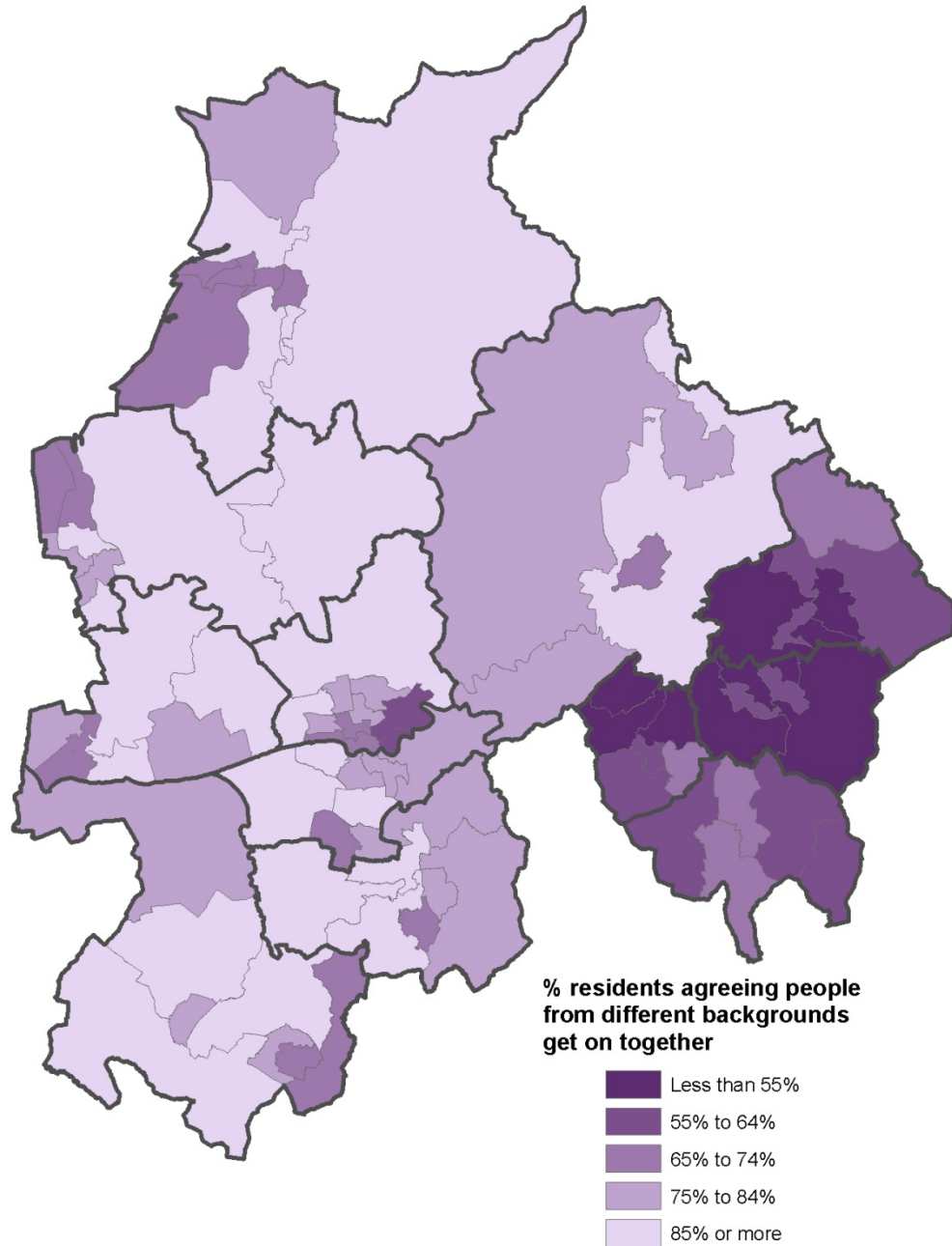
NI 1 - % of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area



Base: All respondents expressing an opinion (ie excluding don't know, all same background and too few people answers) Lancashire – 10,221

The map below gives the values for NI 1 by electoral division. The chart shows a difference between areas of eastern and western Lancashire for this measure.

NI 1 - People who believe people from different backgrounds get along by county council electoral division



Base: all people expressing an opinion (ie excluding don't know, all same background and too few people answers) (10,221)

4.3 Belonging, Influence and Getting Involved

A number of questions on the Place Survey asked about feelings of belonging and influence. The first of these asked how strongly people felt they belong to their immediate neighbourhood¹, giving the second national indicator, as shown below. The figure for Ribble Valley is significantly higher than for Lancashire (73% and 63% respectively).

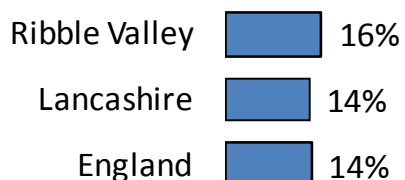
NI 2 - % of people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

To measure civic participation, the survey asked whether respondents had undertaken a range of specific civic activities in the last year (for example taking part in local decision-making groups on local crime or education, or being a local councillor). One person in seven answered that they have done at least one of these activities in the last 12 months in Lancashire and one in six for Ribble Valley.

NI 3 – Civic participation in the local area



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

Across Lancashire around one person in four takes part in formal volunteering at least once a month with a group, club, or organisation. The figures for Ribble Valley are higher than the county average (30%).

NI 6 - Participation in regular volunteering at least once a month



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

¹ While the 'local area' was defined in the survey as within a 10-15 minute walk of home, the meaning of "immediate neighbourhood" was left to the individual respondent.

The respondents were also asked whether they feel they can influence decisions in their local area. Across the county and in Ribble Valley three in ten people agree they can influence decisions (31%).

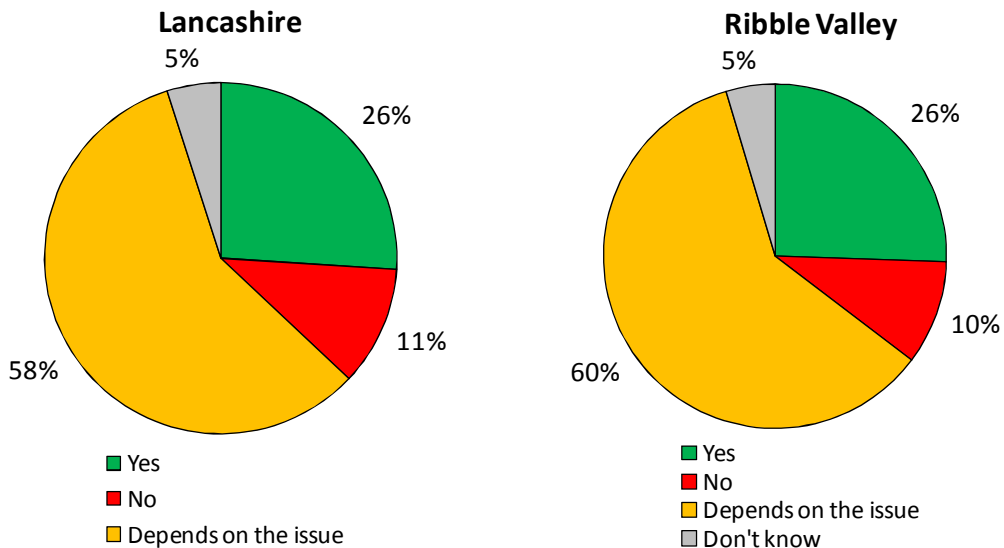
NI 4 – Feeling of influence locally



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

Following on from this, respondents were also asked whether they wanted to be more involved in local decisions. In both Ribble Valley and Lancashire, only around one person in four actually wants to be more involved (26% both, similar to the national average). This highlights the challenges in increasing community engagement levels.

Generally speaking, would you like to be more involved in the decisions that affect your local area?

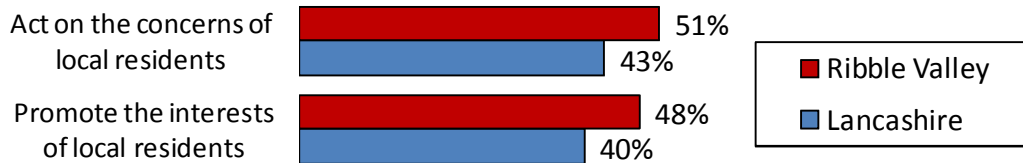


Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

The survey also included questions on perceptions of local services. Two of the key questions are given below, with 51% of people in Ribble Valley feeling that local services act on the concerns of local residents and 48% consider that services promote residents' interests. (National comparisons are yet to be released).

Here are some things that people have said about their local public services. To what extent do you think that these statements apply to public services in your local area?

Local public services.....



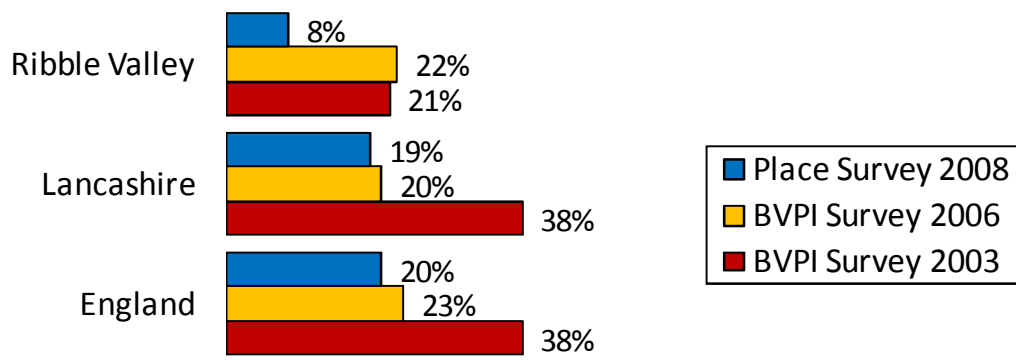
% of respondents answering "a great deal" or "to some extent"
Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

4.4 Community Safety

One of the main sections of the Place Survey was on aspects of community safety, particularly perceptions of anti-social behaviour. Questions on seven aspects of anti-social behaviour were combined together make the overall measure of perceived anti-social behaviour used by the Home Office (NI 17 - % rating anti-social behaviour as problem in their area). The same questions were asked both in 2006 and 2003, and these figures are compared in the chart below.

Only 8% of Ribble Valley residents' rate anti-social behaviour as high using the measure, a fall of 14% on 2006, bringing the district below the national average.

NI 17 - % rating anti-social behaviour as problem in their area by district

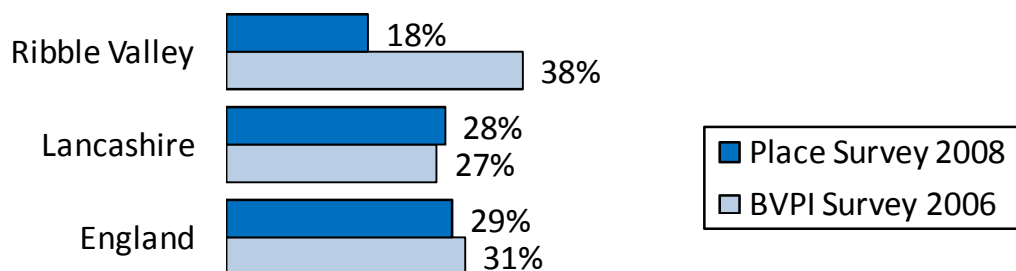


Base: 2008 (16,604); 2006/7 (1,679); 2003/4 (1,110)

Two of the aspects of anti-social behaviour are themselves national indicators. These are the perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour and drug use or dealing. The proportion of respondents rating each of these as a fairly or very big problem locally are shown in the two charts below, both for the Place Survey in 2008 and the BVPI 2006 survey, (these results were not published for 2003).

Across Lancashire, 28% rated drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem locally, and in Ribble Valley this was 18%, which 20% less than in 2006.

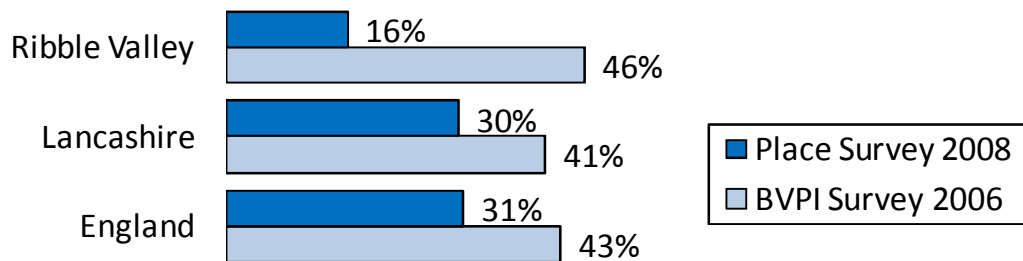
NI 41 - Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behavior as a very or fairly big problem



Base: 2008 (16,604); 2006/7 (1,679); 2003/4 (1,110)

The proportion rating drug use or dealing as a problem has fallen very far by 30% in Ribble Valley. The final proportion of 16% is now half of the county and national averages.

NI 42 - Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a very or fairly big problem

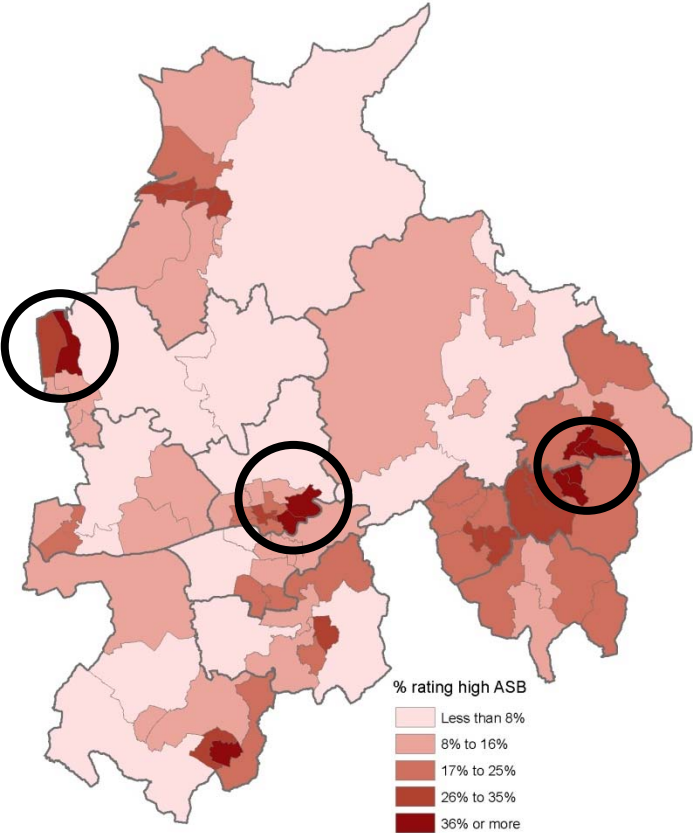


Base: 2008 (16,604); 2006/7 (1,679); 2003/4 (1,110)

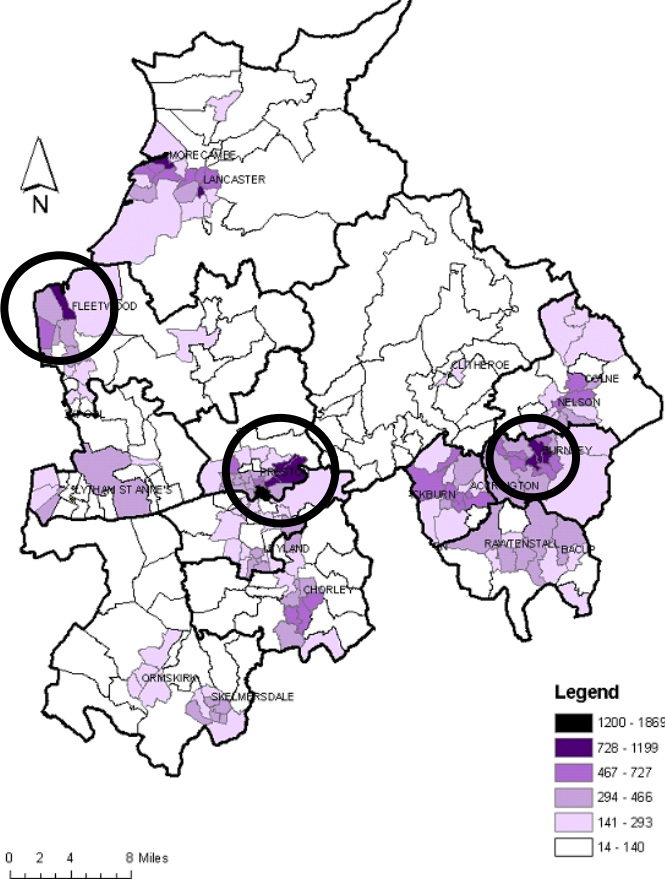
Similarly to overall satisfaction with the local area, the perceptions of anti-social behaviour are strongly linked to the level of local deprivation. Perceptions of anti-social behaviour increase with deprivation, with the scores for NI 17 rising from only 6% rating anti-social behaviour as high in the 20% least deprived areas of the county, up to 46% in the most deprived 20% of areas. The map overleaf maps the scores of NI 17 (perceived ASB) by electoral division, which gives a similar profile to that seen earlier for satisfaction with the local area. The second map shows the number of calls about ASB made to the police in 2008/9. The areas with the highest numbers of calls tend to also have the highest perceptions of ASB, adding further weight to the findings of the survey.

Comparison between perceived high anti-social behaviour and calls to police about anti-social behaviour

NI 17 - Perceived anti-social behaviour



Number of calls to the police about anti-social behaviour between 01/04/2008 and 28/02/2009

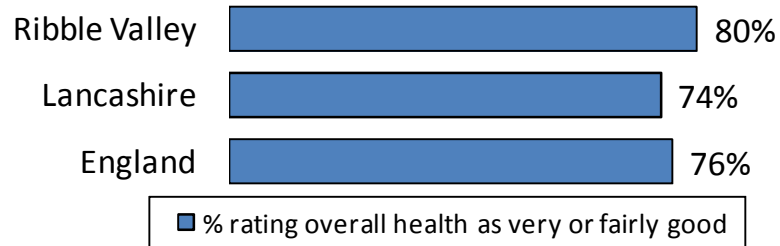


Base: Place Survey; Multi Agency Data Exchange (MADE, www.safellancashire.co.uk/made)

4.5 Health and Wellbeing

The main question about health on the Place Survey asked for a self assessment of overall health. This gives the data for the national indicator NI 119, and is shown in the chart below². Ribble Valley's score of 80% is higher than the Lancashire average of 74%.

NI 119 - How is your health in general? Would you say it is...



Base: All respondents (Lancashire - 16,604; Ribble Valley - 1,327)

² A similar question is used by the Office for National Statistics along with other statistics to estimate average life expectancy in an area

5 Appendix

5.1 National Indicator Scores by District

NI	Lancashire	Burnley	Chorley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster	Pendle	Preston	Ribble Valley	Rossendale	South Ribble	West Lancs	Wyre	England
NI 1 - people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area	74.0%	55.7%	81.9%	85.5%	58.2%	79.8%	52.4%	76.2%	79.4%	61.0%	81.0%	83.6%	83.3%	76.4%
NI 2 - people who feel that they belong to their neighbourhood	62.9%	60.5%	63.6%	66.1%	58.6%	59.5%	60.2%	57.8%	73.2%	62.2%	61.4%	67.3%	67.5%	58.7%
NI 3 - Civic participation in the local area	13.6%	13.4%	13.8%	13.6%	14.6%	14.2%	13.7%	15.1%	15.7%	15.4%	12.9%	11.8%	11.1%	14.0%
NI 4 - People who feel they can influence decisions in their locality	28.3%	25.8%	31.7%	26.7%	27.1%	26.3%	28.5%	32.1%	31.0%	24.9%	29.9%	27.3%	27.5%	28.9%
NI 5 - Overall / general satisfaction with local area	79.2%	68.6%	84.0%	85.8%	68.2%	80.1%	66.2%	77.5%	94.2%	71.7%	83.7%	82.5%	84.2%	79.7%
NI 6 - Participation in regular volunteering	23.9%	18.5%	22.8%	26.1%	25.0%	25.7%	23.8%	24.9%	29.5%	23.0%	23.1%	23.7%	22.3%	23.2%
NI 17 - % rating ASB as problem in their area	18.6%	33.8%	13.6%	11.3%	23.2%	17.3%	31.0%	23.1%	7.9%	19.3%	13.6%	17.2%	14.6%	20.0%
NI 21 - Dealing with local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police	29.8%	22.8%	30.5%	32.2%	27.5%	29.2%	24.0%	32.2%	40.1%	24.0%	30.8%	30.3%	33.3%	26.3%
NI 22 - Parents taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children in the area	30.6%	23.8%	33.2%	37.5%	21.8%	31.5%	21.8%	30.0%	50.0%	25.8%	28.3%	37.3%	28.6%	29.6%

NI	Lancashire	Burnley	Chorley	Fylde	Hyndburn	Lancaster	Pendle	Preston	Ribble Valley	Rossendale	South Ribble	West Lancs	Wyre	England
NI 23 - Perceptions that people in the area treat one another with respect and consideration	29.4%	42.3%	23.7%	22.2%	39.9%	28.2%	46.8%	30.4%	14.9%	36.4%	25.9%	23.8%	23.9%	31.2%
NI 27 - Understanding of local concerns about anti-social behaviour and crime by the local council and police	28.4%	22.5%	28.2%	34.7%	27.8%	28.9%	21.6%	32.5%	29.9%	24.9%	28.0%	28.9%	31.3%	24.8%
NI 37 - Awareness of civil protection arrangements in the local area	14.5%	14.2%	15.1%	14.7%	11.8%	16.2%	13.9%	14.0%	16.5%	11.6%	14.3%	13.2%	17.1%	15.3%
NI 41 - Perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem	28.0%	37.4%	24.2%	25.5%	34.6%	28.1%	39.4%	28.3%	18.2%	31.0%	25.2%	21.5%	26.0%	29.0%
NI 42 - Perceptions of drug use or drug dealing as a problem	29.8%	41.9%	27.7%	22.9%	34.3%	26.6%	46.0%	31.9%	15.5%	36.3%	24.2%	26.8%	25.9%	30.5%
NI 119 - Self-reported measure of people's overall health and wellbeing	73.7%	71.7%	73.5%	77.7%	71.1%	74.8%	68.6%	72.8%	80.1%	72.3%	76.1%	75.7%	72.6%	75.8%
NI 138 - Satisfaction of people over 65 with both home and neighbourhood	84.1%	74.4%	84.2%	90.2%	79.1%	85.1%	75.2%	81.3%	93.2%	76.1%	88.0%	86.2%	88.1%	83.9%
NI 139 - The extent to which older people receive the support they need to live independently at home	32.9%	33.2%	33.2%	34.1%	34.3%	35.1%	35.9%	29.9%	39.0%	30.0%	32.2%	27.5%	32.4%	30.0%
NI 140 - Fair treatment by local services	70.8%	64.3%	73.4%	73.8%	66.8%	66.2%	66.1%	69.4%	80.9%	65.0%	77.2%	73.7%	74.4%	

5.2 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey, which is the certainty on the accuracy of a statistic that depends on the value and the number of respondents. The very large size of the survey means that this uncertainty is very low.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
1000	3%	3%	2%
2000	2%	2%	1%
5000	3%	3%	2%
10000	1.0%	0.9%	0.6%
15000	0.8%	0.7%	0.5%

For example, on a question where 50% of 1000 people respond with a particular answer (eg the answer for a district), the chances are 95 out of 100 that the true answer would be between 47% and 53% (ie +/- 3%).

In charts or tables where responses do not add up to 100%, this is due to multiple responses or computer rounding.

Some of the questions on the Place Survey were asked in the BVPI 2003 and BVPI 2006 surveys, which were undertaken by all local authorities in England and Wales in the respective years. Where possible, these figures have been included for comparison. However differences in methodology, questions asked and their order mean that any differences could be due to the differing surveys rather than a real effect. In particular, the Lancashire figure for the Place Survey is made up of a combination of 12 district surveys weighted to account for their different sizes, whereas the BVPI surveys for Lancashire were single county surveys with no district weighting.