Lancashire County Council

Living in Lancashire Wave 31 survey

Local measures

Prepared by Rebecca Robinson
Corporate Research and Intelligence Team
Policy Unit
Lancashire County Council
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1 Executive summary

This wave of the Living in Lancashire panel looked at people's views on their local area and on local public services, health and economic development. The survey was sent by post to all 4,026 members of the panel on 19 November. No reminders were sent and the fieldwork ended on 10 December 2010. In total 1,972 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 49%.

1.1 Key findings

- Around four fifths of respondents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (83%). BME respondents and those living in east Lancashire are more likely to be dissatisfied.
- The aspects that respondents think are most important in making somewhere a good place to live are the level of crime (60%), health services (55%) and clean streets (47%). The aspects that most need improving in respondents' local areas are road and pavement repairs (48%) and activities for teenagers (48%).
- Opinion is divided on whether local public services act on the concerns of local residents (30% agree, 27% disagree) and whether they promote the interests of local residents (28% agree, 24% disagree).
- Three fifths of respondents or more are satisfied with local services (GP, dentist, hospital, fire and rescue and police).
- Opinion is divided on whether the local district councils and Lancashire County Council provide value for money.
- Most respondents feel informed about how and where to vote (92%) and how their council tax is spent (70%). However, around three fifths do not feel well informed about other aspects of the county council (eg performance, how to complain).
- Around half of respondents were unsure when asked a series of questions about the county council.
- Just under half of respondents agree that overall the quality of county council services are good (46%). Less than a fifth of respondents agree that the county council treats all parts of Lancashire fairly (17%).
- Respondents who feel very well informed about the county council are more likely to strongly agree that the quality of county council services are good (43%).
- Around half of respondents are satisfied with how their local district council runs things (48%) and two fifths are satisfied with the way Lancashire County Council runs things (41%).
- The majority of respondents feel safe outside in their local area during the day (93%). This drops to around three fifths after dark (58%).

- Most respondents don't think there is much of a problem with various aspects of anti-social behaviour in their local area. The biggest issue is rubbish or litter lying around (34% think it is a very or fairly big problem).
- Around two thirds of respondents feel they are in very good or good health (67%) while only around one in ten think their health is bad or very bad (9%).
- A third of respondents are willing to travel for 30 minutes or more to get to work (33%).
- One in six respondents have used public transport to get to work in the last 12 months (16%). The most common reasons given for not using public transport to get to work are the time it takes (18%), the cost (12%) and the lack of service (12%).
- Three fifths of respondents think job prospects in Lancashire will get worse over the next two years (59%). A quarter of respondents are learning new skills to improve their job prospects (23%).
- A quarter of respondents are qualified to degree level (or equivalent, 24%) but a fifth have no formal qualifications (20%).
- Three in ten respondents intend to improve their skills in the next three years (30%).

1.2 Recommendations

For many of the questions about local public services and Lancashire County Council a large proportion of respondents were unsure (answering don't know or neither agree nor disagree). This suggests that the level of awareness of the work of public services is low. More work needs to be done to inform the public on what the council does and how well it does it. Respondents who feel very well informed about the county council overall are more likely to strongly agree that the council provides value for money and good quality services and more likely to be very satisfied with how the council runs things. It is unclear though whether these respondents have a good opinion of the council because they are well informed or whether they just have a good opinion of the council generally. The areas that respondents do feel informed about are topics which affect almost everyone (how to vote and how council tax is spent).

Only around a third of respondents think that Lancashire County Council provides value for money. We should look to improve on this perception. This is especially important at the moment given the cuts in budget – the public need to know we are using the money we do have effectively.

There seems to be an issue in distinguishing between the district councils and the county council. For the two questions which asked for an opinion on respondents' local district council and then Lancashire County Council, respondents were more likely to answer the same for both than to give different answers. Ideally work should be done to make it clearer to the public which services are provided by LCC and which by the district councils. In reality this is hard to do so it should be acknowledged that the performance of the district councils reflects on LCC and vice versa. More joint working to provide high quality services for local people may improve respondents' views of both district and county council.

The most common aspects of respondents' local areas that need improving have not changed since 2008 and, in fact, the proportion of respondents selecting them has increased. More needs to be done to improve road and pavement repairs and to provide activities for teenagers or to inform the public of improvements that have already been made.

Parts of east Lancashire seem to have more problems than other areas. In particular, respondents in Burnley and Pendle are more likely to be dissatisfied with their local area and local hospital and are more likely to think race relations need to be improved in their area. Respondents in Burnley are also more likely to: think the level of crime needs to be reduced; feel unsafe in their local area and think there is a problem with drugs in their area. These are clearly areas where improvements can be made.

Respondents' perceptions of different aspects of anti-social behaviour have not altered significantly since 2008. Any work that has been done to reduce anti-social behaviour has therefore not been noted by the public. Work should be done to improve this.

Only one in six respondents have travelled to work by public transport in the past 12 months. To increase the use of public transport by commuters, service provision and cost need to be improved.

The groups most likely to have no formal qualifications are BME respondents, those not in employment, disabled respondents and respondents in socio-economic class DE. It should be ensured that the opportunities exist for people in these groups to attain formal qualifications if desired. It may be useful to investigate whether respondents who have no formal qualifications and are not in employment have found it difficult to get employment because of their lack of qualifications.

There are indications of a widening skills gap between those in employment and those who aren't. Full time workers are more likely to be trying to improve their skills while those not in employment and in the lower socio-economic groups are not.

2 Introduction

Lancashire County Council has used Living in Lancashire regularly since August 2001 (formerly known as Life in Lancashire). A panel of willing participants is recruited and is approached on a regular basis to seek their views on a range of topics and themes. Panel members are voluntary participants in the research they complete and no incentives are given for completion.

The panel has been designed to be a representative cross-section of the county's population. The results for each survey are weighted in order to reflect the demographic profile of the county's population.

The panel provides access to a sufficiently large sample of the population so that reliable results can be reported at a county wide level. It also provides data at a number of sub-area and sub-group levels.

Each wave of Living in Lancashire is themed. Firstly, it enables sufficient coverage on a particular topic to be able to provide insight into that topic. And secondly, it comes across better to the residents completing the questionnaires if there is a clear theme (or 2-3 clear themes) within each survey.

The panel is refreshed periodically. New members are recruited to the panel and some current members are retired on a random basis. This means that the panel remains fresh and is not subject to conditioning i.e. the views of panel members become too informed with county council services to be representative of the population as a whole.

3 Research objectives

The objective of this survey is to look at people's views of their local area and local public services, their health and economic development. Questions looked specifically at:

- satisfaction of residents with their local area and public services;
- how people have been feeling over recent weeks; and
- people's views on travelling to work and improving their job prospects.

4 Methodology

This wave of Living in Lancashire research was sent to 4,026 members of the panel on 19 November. No reminder was sent and the closing date was 10 December. In total 1,972 questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 49%.

Living in Lancashire surveys are usually available by post or online depending on each panel member's preference. All members who don't respond to the initial mailing receive a reminder by post. Due to time constraints, there was no reminder mailing for this wave and so all surveys were sent by post to ensure all members received the survey.

All data are weighted by age, ethnicity and district to reflect the Lancashire overall population, and figures are based on all respondents unless otherwise stated. The weighted responses have been scaled to match the effective response of 1,332, which is the equivalent size of the data if it had not been weighted and was a perfect random sample.

4.1 Limitations

The table below shows the sample tolerances that apply to the results in this survey. Sampling tolerances vary with the size of the sample as well as the percentage results.

Number of respondents	50/50 + / -	30/70 + / -	10/90 + / -
50	14%	13%	8%
100	10%	9%	6%
200	7%	6%	4%
500	4%	4%	3%
1000	3%	3%	2%
2000	2%	2%	1%

On a question where 50% of the people in a sample of 1000 respond with a particular answer, the chances are 95 out of 100 that the answer would be between 47% and 53% (i.e. +/- 3%), versus a complete coverage of the entire Lancashire population using the same procedure.

The following table shows what the percentage differences between two samples on a statistic must be greater than, to be statistically significant.

Size of Sample A	Size of Sample B	50/50	70/30	90/10
100	100	14%	13%	8%
100	200	12%	11%	7%
500	1000	5%	5%	3%
2000	2000	3%	3%	2%

(Confidence interval at 95% certainty for a comparison of two samples)

For example, where the size of sample A and sample B is 2000 responses in each and the percentage result in each group you are comparing is around 50% in each category, the difference in the results needs to be more than 3% to be statistically significant. This is to say that the difference in the results of the two groups of people is not due to chance alone and is a statistically valid difference (e.g. of opinion, service usage).

For each question in the survey, comparisons have been made between different sub-groups of respondents (e.g. age, gender, disability, ethnicity, geographic area) to look for statistically significant differences in opinion. Statistically valid differences between sub-groups are described in the main body of the report.

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

Many of the questions asked in this survey have previously been asked in the Place Survey 2008 or the Life in Lancashire 2007 survey. The Place survey was a postal survey conducted for Lancashire County Council by Ipsos MORI. Surveys were sent to a random sample of addresses across the county. 16,604 people responded to the Place Survey, a response rate of 36%. The Place Survey used a random sample of the Lancashire population rather than a specific panel. The Life in Lancashire 2007 survey was conducted through face to face interviews by Ipsos MORI using a randomly selected sample of output areas. There were 2,451 interviews carried out. While results for these surveys are not exactly comparable with those found here because of the differing methodologies, comparisons are shown where relevant to give indicative results of changes in opinion.

5 Main research findings

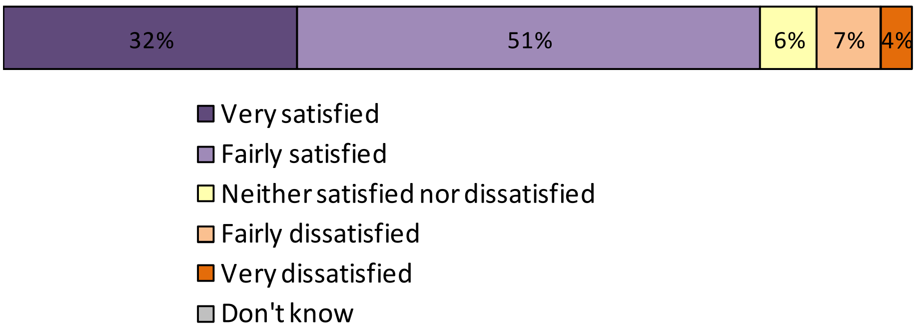
5.1 Views on the local area

The first section of the survey asked panel members about their local area. The 'local area' was defined as the area within 15-20 minutes' walk from home.

A third of respondents are very satisfied with their local area as a place to live (32%) and around half are fairly satisfied (51%). Only one in twenty respondents are very dissatisfied (4%).

This question was also asked in the Place Survey 2008. The proportion of respondents that are very satisfied with their local area as a place to live has increased by +9 points since 2008 (up from 23%). As discussed in section 4.1, comparisons with the Place Survey 2008 are indicative only.

Chart 1 - Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

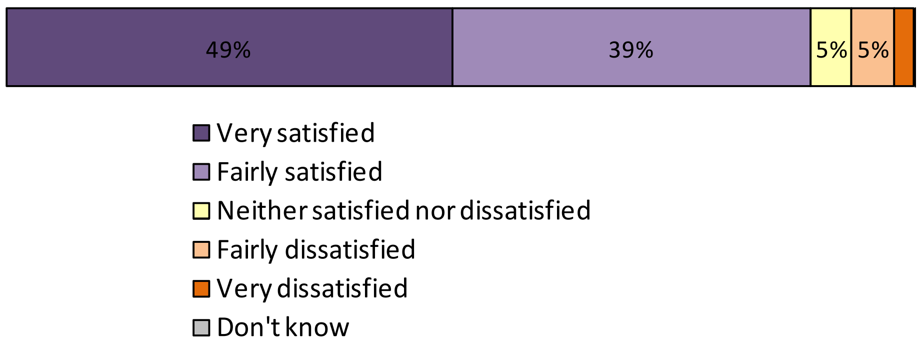


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1929, weighted 1387)

Respondents over the age of 60 and respondents in rural areas are more likely to be very satisfied with their local area as a place to live (43% and 47% very satisfied respectively) while respondents from BME backgrounds are more likely to be dissatisfied (33% very or fairly dissatisfied). Respondents from districts in eastern Lancashire are more likely to be dissatisfied (20%), particularly respondents in Burnley (27%) and Pendle (28%).

The vast majority of respondents are satisfied with their home as a place to live with around half being very satisfied (49%).

Chart 2 - And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your home as a place to live?



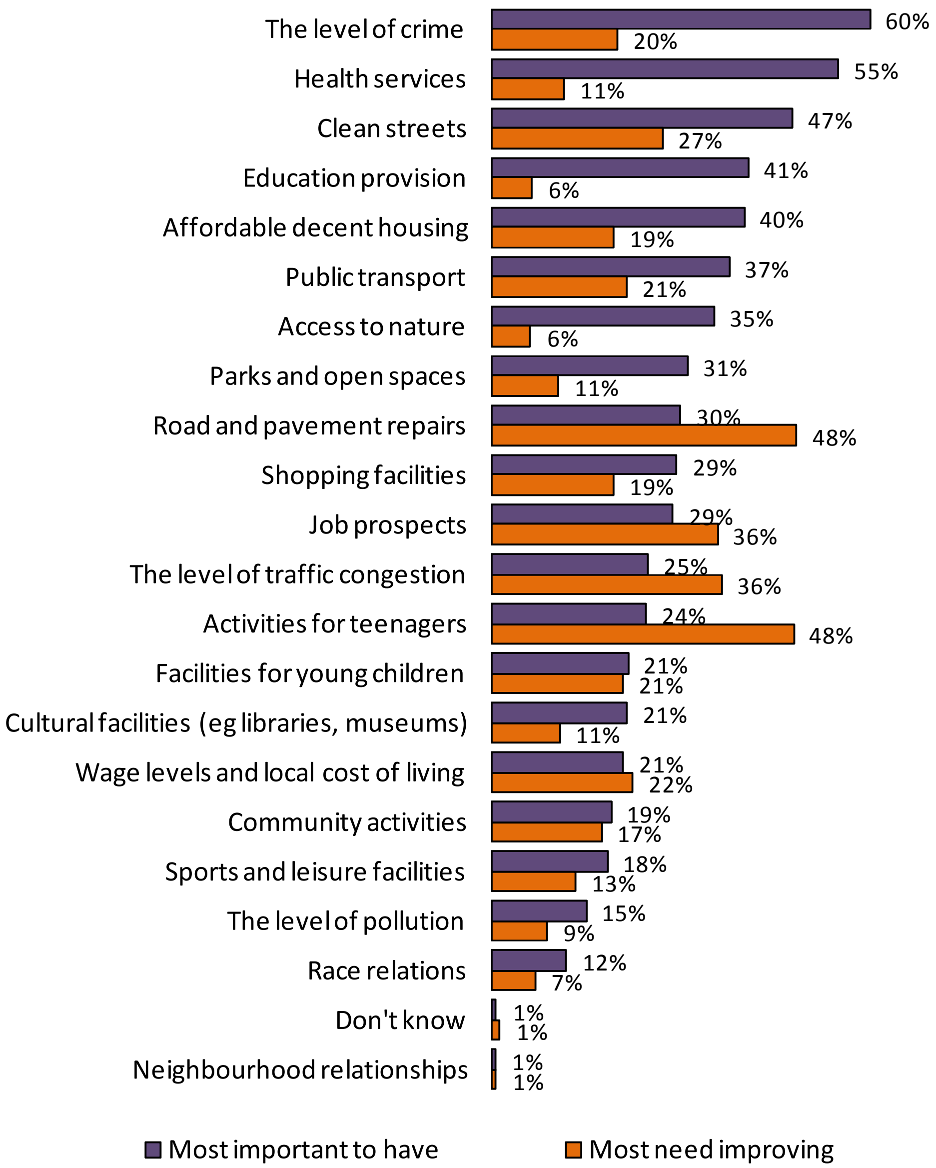
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1936, weighted 1394)

Home owners and older respondents (aged 60 and over) are more likely to be very satisfied with their home as a place to live (53% and 64% very satisfied respectively). BME respondents and respondents from Pendle are more likely to be dissatisfied (24% and 20% very or fairly dissatisfied respectively). Respondents who are very satisfied with their local area as a place to live are more likely to be very satisfied with their home as a place to live (85%).

Panel members were then asked about facilities in their local area. The top three aspects that are important to respondents in making somewhere a good place to live are the level of crime (60%), health services (55%) and clean streets (47%). The most common responses to which facilities most need improving in respondents' local area are road and pavement repairs (48%) and activities for teenagers (48%).

This question was also asked on the Place Survey 2008. The three most common responses to both questions have not changed since 2008. There has however been a large increase in the proportion of respondents selecting health services (+18), education provision (+15) and public transport (+15) as important in making somewhere a good place to live. Job prospects have increased as an aspect that most needs improving in respondents' local areas (+16).

Chart 3 - Which of the following facilities...
a) are the most important in making somewhere a good place to live?
b) do you think most need improving in your local area?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1837, weighted 1325)

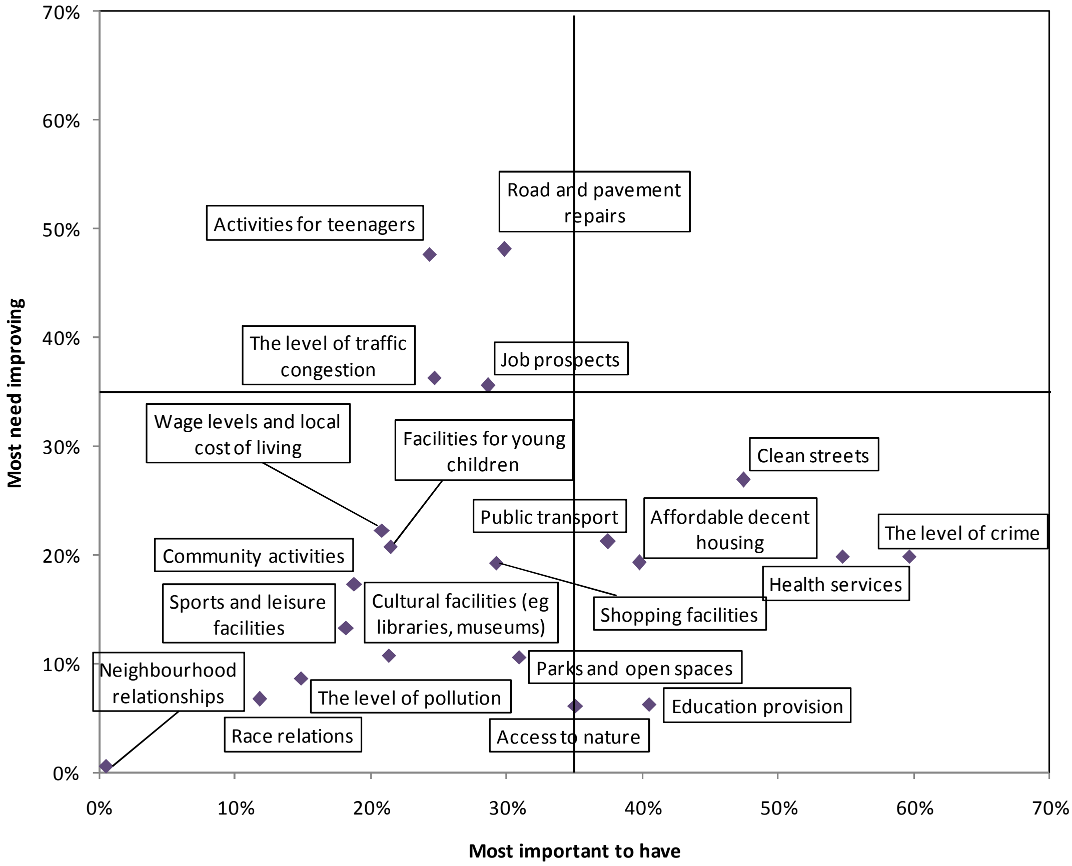
Female respondents and respondents aged 25-44 are more likely to think education provision is important in making somewhere a good area to live (48% and 50% respectively). Respondents over the age of 60 and disabled respondents are more likely to think health services (67% and 63% respectively) and public transport (47% and 44% respectively) are important. Elderly respondents also think road and pavement repairs are important

(39%). BME respondents are less likely to think the level of crime and access to nature are important (49% and 20% respectively). Job prospects are less important to respondents living in rural areas (17%) and the level of traffic congestion is less important to those in market towns (13%).

When asked about which facilities most need improving in their local area, respondents aged 25-44 are more likely to select facilities for young children (28%). Respondents in the lowest socio-economic group (DE) are more likely to say wage levels and local cost of living need improving (33%). Respondents in rural areas are less likely to say that the cleanliness of streets needs improving (16%) while respondents in east Lancashire districts are less likely to say the level of traffic congestion needs improving (27%). Respondents in West Lancashire district are more likely to say public transport needs improving (42%). Respondents in Burnley are more likely to think the level of crime needs reducing (39%) and respondents in Burnley and Pendle think race relations need improving (22% and 20% respectively).

The following chart compares respondents' views on the facilities that are most important in making somewhere a good place to live and the facilities that most need improving in their local area. The facilities that are most important to have in an area are all in the bottom right quadrant so are rated low on needing improvement ie respondents are satisfied with these facilities. The facilities in the top left quadrant are most in need of improvement.

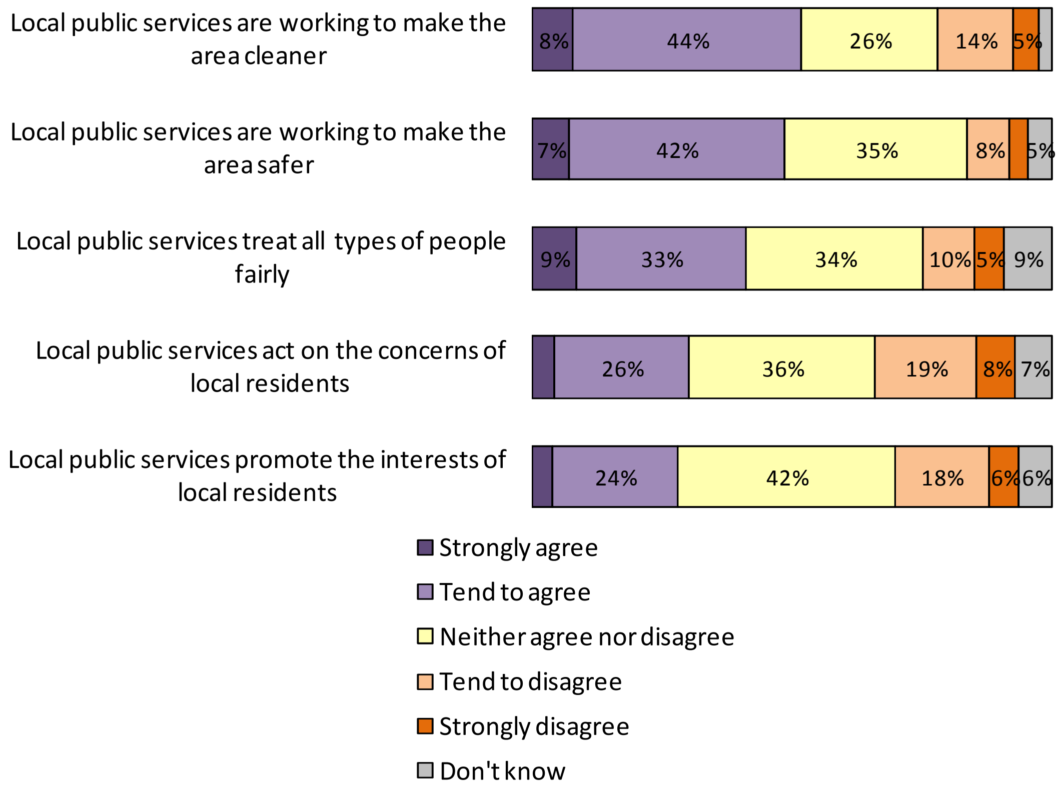
Chart 4 - Comparison of facilities most important in making somewhere a good place to live and most in need of improvement in respondents' local areas



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1837, weighted 1325)

Panel members were then asked a series of questions about public services in their local area. While around half of respondents agree that local public services are working to make the area cleaner (52%) and to make the area safer (49%), opinion is divided on whether local public services act on the concerns of local residents (30% agree, 27% disagree) and whether they promote the interests of local residents (28% agree, 24% disagree). For all of the statements, a significant proportion of respondents are unsure (answering 'neither agree nor disagree' or 'don't know') suggesting more could be done to make the public aware of the work of public services.

Chart 5 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about public services in your local area?



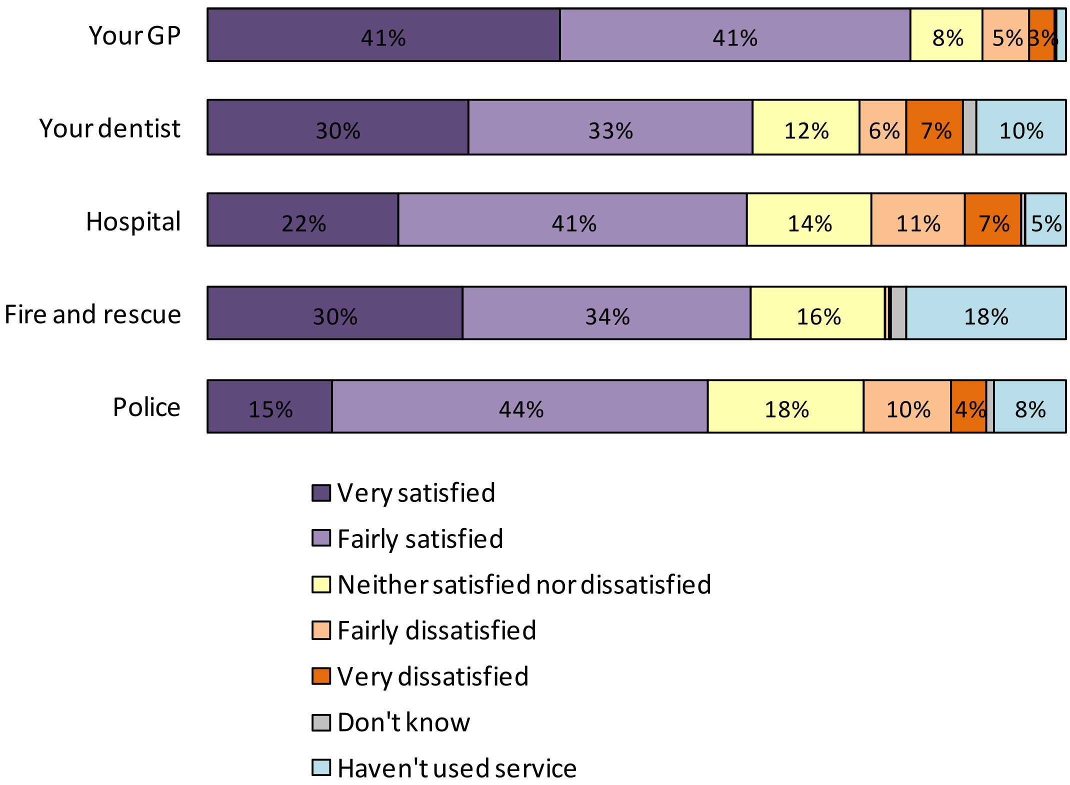
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1897, weighted 1368)

Male respondents are more likely to disagree that local public services promote the interests of local residents (29% tend to disagree or strongly disagree). Respondents who work full time are more likely to disagree that local public services act on the concerns of local residents (31%).

Panel members were asked how satisfied they are with each of the public services in their area. The majority of respondents are satisfied with their GP (82% very or fairly satisfied), with two fifths being very satisfied (41%). The service that respondents are least satisfied with is the police (59% very satisfied or fairly satisfied). Around a fifth of respondents have not used the fire and rescue service (18%).

Responses to these questions have not changed significantly from the responses received for the Place Survey 2008.

Chart 6 - To what extent are you satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following public services in your local area?

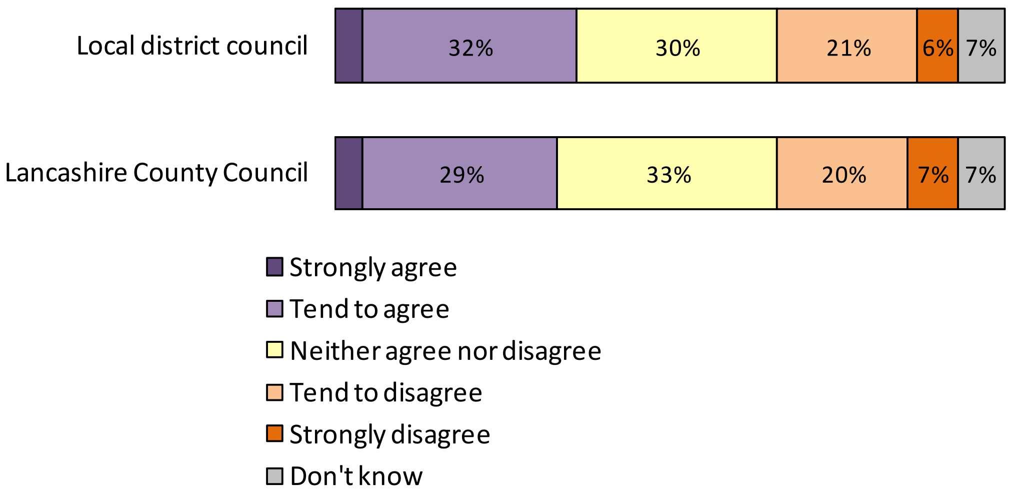


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1926, weighted 1383)

Respondents aged over 60 are more likely to be very satisfied with their local public services (54% GP, 40% dentist, 27% hospital and 36% fire and rescue). Respondents in Burnley, Pendle and Rossendale are more likely to be dissatisfied with their local hospital (46%, 33% and 45% fairly or very dissatisfied respectively). Respondents living in social housing are more likely to be very satisfied with their GP (57%) but BME respondents are more likely to be dissatisfied (19% very or fairly dissatisfied).

Opinion is divided on whether the local district councils and Lancashire County Council provide value for money. Again a large proportion of respondents are unsure.

Chart 7 - To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local district council and Lancashire County Council provide value for money?



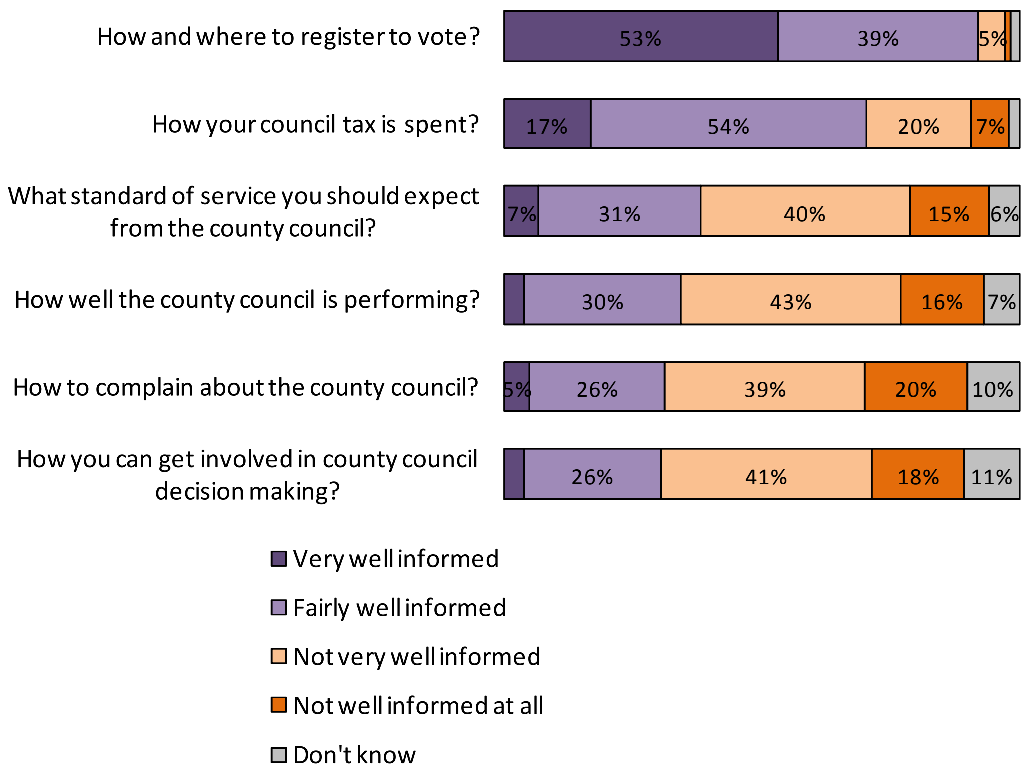
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1932, weighted 1392)

Respondents in Rossendale are more likely to disagree that their local district council provides value for money (45% tend to disagree or strongly disagree) while respondents in Pendle are more likely to disagree that Lancashire County Council provides value for money (35%).

Respondents are more likely to have the same view on value for money for both their local district council and Lancashire County Council. For example, respondents who strongly agree that their local district council provides value for money are more likely to strongly agree that Lancashire County Council provides value for money (68%) and similarly respondents who strongly disagree that their district council provides value for money are more likely to strongly disagree that LCC provides value for money (66%). This suggests that people are unclear on the separate functions of the district and county councils and instead see 'the council' as one organisation.

Panel members were asked how well informed they feel by Lancashire County Council on a range of things. The majority of respondents feel informed about how and where to register to vote (92% very or fairly well informed) and seven in ten respondents feel informed about how their council tax is spent (70%). However, around three fifths of respondents feel not very well informed or not well informed at all about the other statements.

Chart 8 - Thinking specifically about Lancashire County Council, how informed do you think you are about each of the following?

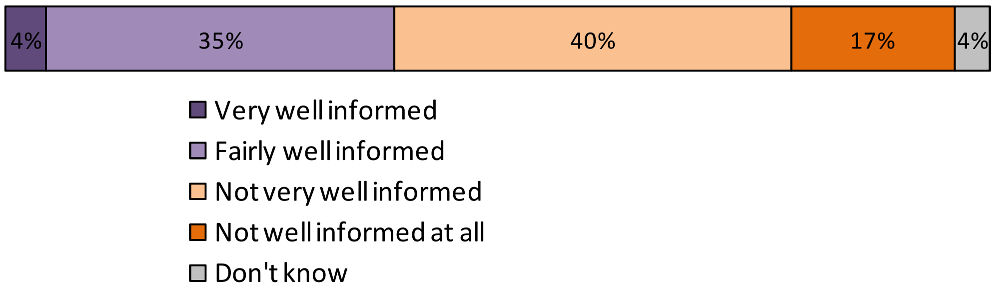


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1899, weighted 1371)

Respondents aged over 60 are more likely to feel very well informed about how and where to register to vote (62%) while BME respondents are less likely to feel very well informed (38%). BME respondents are more likely to feel not well informed at all about how council tax is spent (17%).

When asked about how well informed they feel about the county council overall, only one in twenty feel very well informed (4%) while nearly a fifth say they are not well informed at all (17%).

Chart 9 - Overall, how well informed do you feel about the county council?



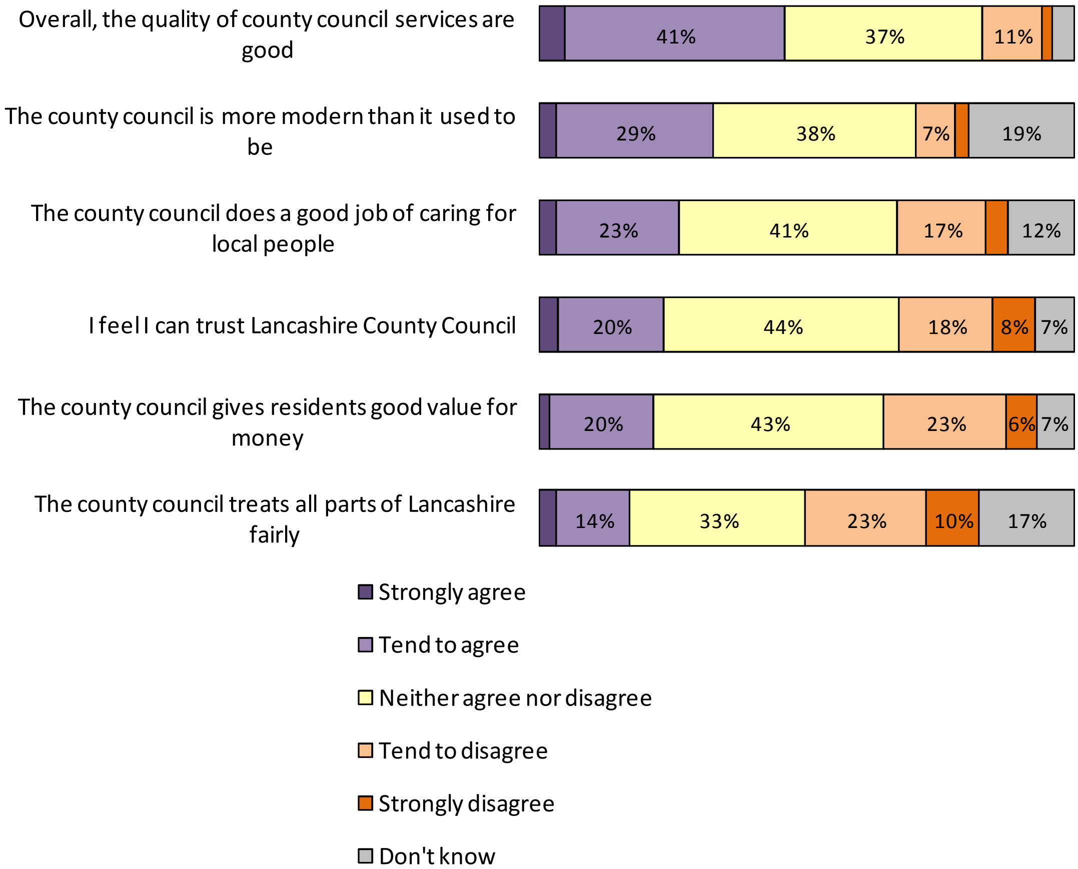
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1936, weighted 1391)

BME respondents are more likely to say they are not well informed at all (32%). Respondents who feel very well informed about the county council are more likely to strongly agree that Lancashire County Council provides value for money (44%).

Panel members were asked how much they agree with a series of positive statements about Lancashire County Council. Around half of respondents are unsure about all the statements (neither agree nor disagree or don't know). This suggests the level of awareness of the work the council does is low. Just under half of respondents agree that overall the quality of county council services are good (46%). Less than a fifth of respondents agree that the county council treats all parts of Lancashire fairly (17%). Opinion is mixed on the other statements.

These questions were also asked in the Life in Lancashire 2007 survey. For all questions, the proportion of respondents answering neither satisfied nor dissatisfied has increased by around 15 points while the proportion that tend to agree has decreased by around 15 points.

Chart 10 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Lancashire County Council?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1920, weighted 1376)

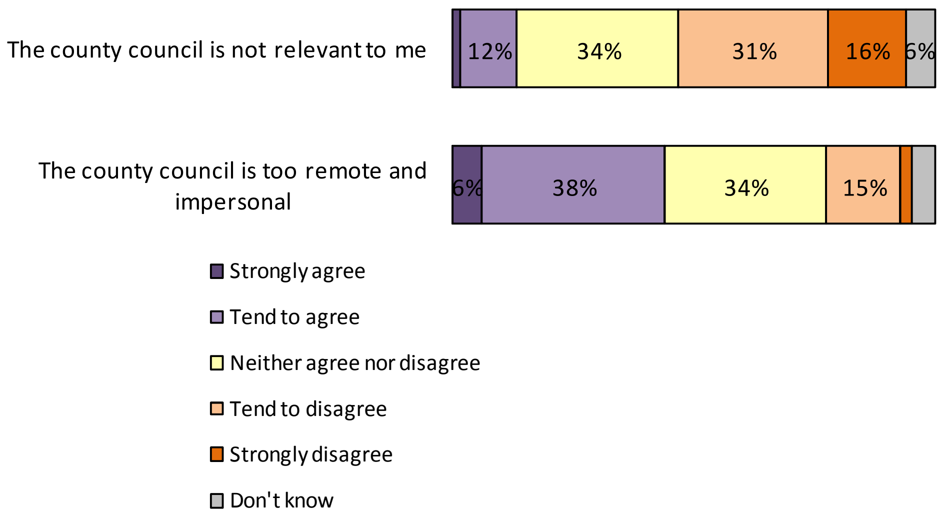
BME respondents are more likely to disagree that the quality of county council services are good (27% tend to disagree or strongly disagree) and that the county council gives residents good value for money (44% disagree). Respondents in Pendle and Rossendale are more likely to disagree that the county council treats all parts of Lancashire fairly (51% and 54% disagree respectively).

Respondents who earlier stated that they feel very well informed by Lancashire County Council are more likely to strongly agree that the quality of council services are good (43%).

Respondents were then asked how much they agree with some negative statements about Lancashire County Council. Around two fifths of respondents are unsure. Only one in seven respondents agree that the county council is not relevant to them (14%). However, around two fifths of respondents agree that the county council is too remote and impersonal (44%).

The proportion of respondents who neither agree nor disagree that the county council is too remote and impersonal has increased by 15 points since the Life in Lancashire 2007 survey. The results for the statement 'the county council is not relevant to me' have not changed significantly.

Chart 11 - To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements about Lancashire County Council?

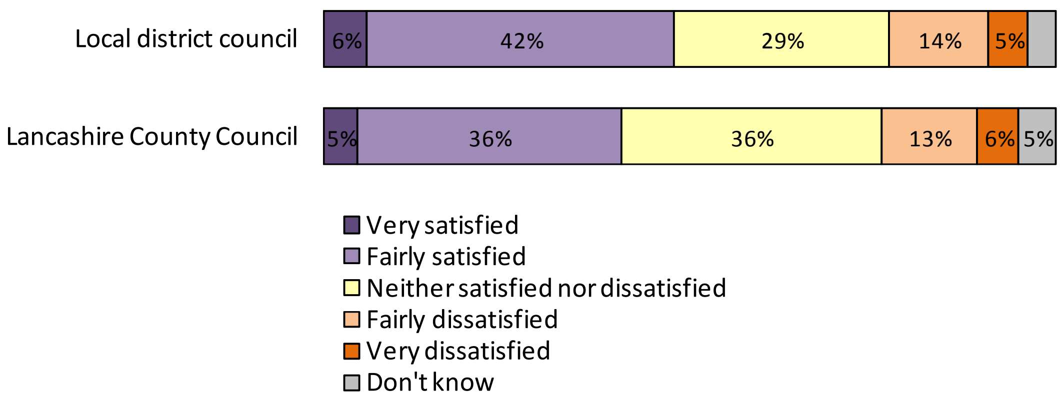


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1893, weighted 1360)

BME respondents are more likely to agree that the county council is not relevant to them (26% strongly agree or tend to agree).

Around half of respondents are satisfied with the way their local district council runs things (48%) while two fifths are satisfied with the way Lancashire County Council runs things (41%). A fifth of respondents are dissatisfied with both their local district council and Lancashire County Council (19% dissatisfied for both). Around a third of respondents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. Responses have not changed significantly since the Place Survey 2008.

Chart 12 - And now taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way your local district council and Lancashire County Council run things?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1925, weighted 1379)

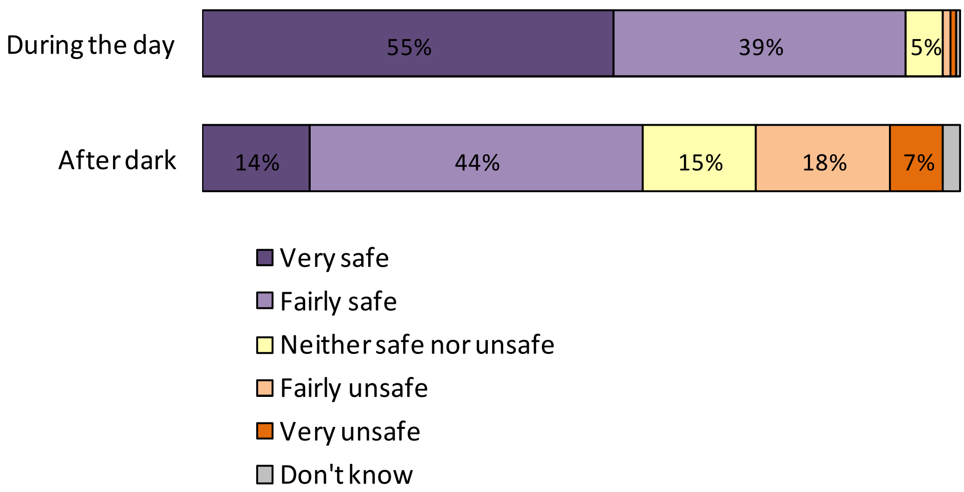
Respondents over the age of 60 are more likely to be satisfied with how their local district council runs things (57%) while BME respondents and respondents from Rossendale are more likely to be dissatisfied (29% dissatisfied for both). Male respondents are more likely to be dissatisfied with the way Lancashire County Council runs things (25% dissatisfied).

Respondents who feel very well informed about the county council overall are more likely to be very satisfied with the way LCC runs things (27%). As with the earlier question on value for money, respondents are more likely to give the same response for local district council and Lancashire County Council (eg respondents who are very satisfied with their local district council are more likely to be very satisfied with LCC, 60%). This suggests that respondents struggle to separate the work of the district councils and the county council.

5.2 Community safety

The majority of respondents feel safe outside in their local area during the day (93%) with over half feeling very safe (55%). The proportion of respondents feeling safe drops to around three fifths after dark (58%). Responses have not changed significantly since the Place Survey 2008.

Chart 13 - How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area...?



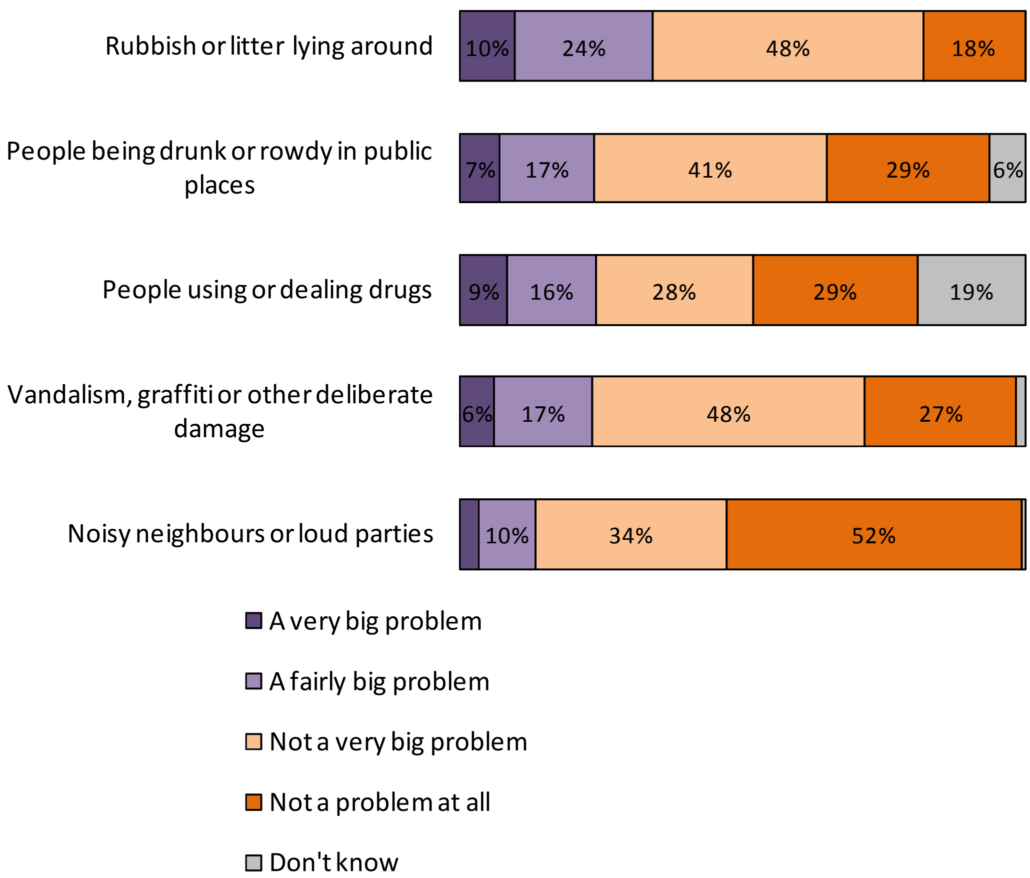
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1919, weighted 1369)

Respondents in the highest socio-economic group (AB), respondents in rural areas and respondents in Ribble Valley are more likely to feel safe after dark (68%, 69% and 75% respectively). Respondents in Burnley and disabled respondents are more likely to feel unsafe after dark (43% and 32% respectively). Respondents in Burnley are less likely to feel very safe during the day (32%).

Encouragingly, when asked about different aspects of anti-social behaviour, most respondents don't think they are a problem in their local area. The biggest problem is rubbish or litter lying around (34% think it is a very or fairly big problem).

Responses have not changed significantly since the Place Survey 2008 suggesting that, while anti-social behaviour is not felt to have increased, any initiatives to try and reduce anti-social behaviour do not appear to be changing respondents' perceptions.

Chart 14 - Thinking about your local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are...?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1935, weighted 1393)

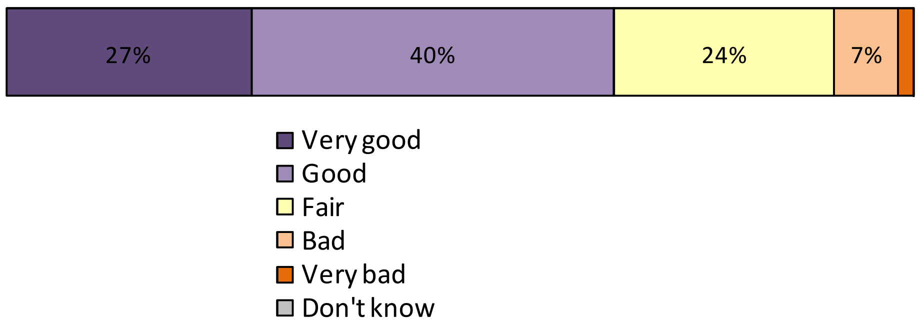
BME respondents are more likely to think that all of these issues are a problem in their local area: rubbish 60% (very or fairly big problem); being drunk/rowdy 59%, drugs 61%, vandalism 52% and noisy neighbours 41%. Respondents in Burnley are more likely to think that vandalism and drugs are a problem in their local area (43% very or fairly big problem for both). People using or dealing drugs is also seen as a problem by respondents in socio-economic class DE (39%).

Respondents in Ribble Valley are more likely to say that rubbish or litter lying around and vandalism, graffiti or other deliberate damage are not problems at all (36% and 47% respectively). Respondents in rural areas are more likely to think that rubbish, drugs and people being drunk or rowdy are not problems in their local area (79%, 66% and 81% not a very big problem or not a problem at all respectively).

5.3 Health

Almost seven in ten respondents feel their health is very good or good (67%). Only one in ten respondents rate their health as bad or very bad (9%). Responses have not changed significantly since the Place Survey 2008.

Chart 15 - How is your health in general? Would you say it is...



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1948, weighted 1400)

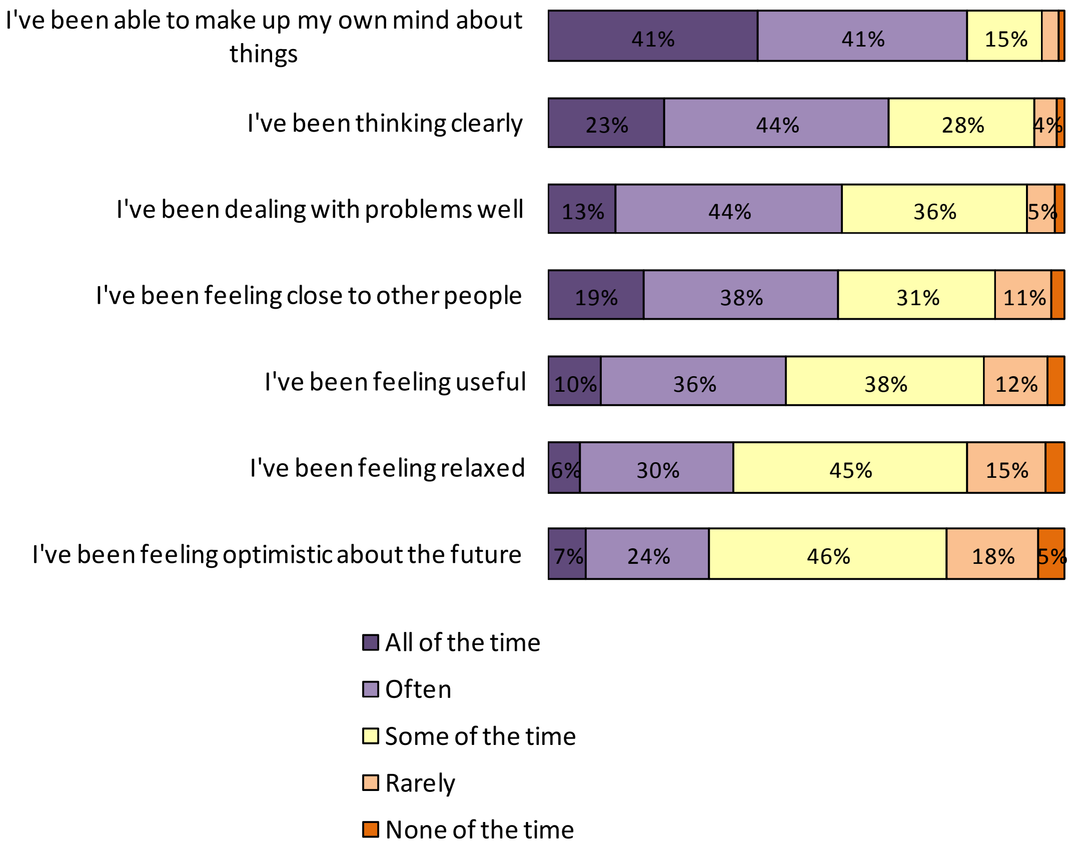
Respondents aged 25-44 and those in socio-economic group AB are more likely to rate their health as very good or good (80% 25-44 year olds, 83% AB). Disabled respondents are less likely to say their health is very good or good (35%).

Respondents were asked seven questions looking at mental health. These are half of the questions making up the Warwick Edinburgh Mental Well-Being Scale (WEMWBS)[1], which is seen as a robust quantitative measure of mental well-being. Four fifths of respondents have been able to make up their own mind about things all of the time or often (82%). Nearly a quarter of respondents have been feeling optimistic about the future rarely or none of the time (23%).

Responses have not changed significantly since the Place Survey 2008.

[1] The Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Well-being Scale was developed by the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh, and is jointly owned by NHS Health Scotland, the University of Warwick and the University of Edinburgh.

Chart 16 - Below are some statements about feelings and thoughts. Please tick the box that best describes your experience of each over the last two weeks.



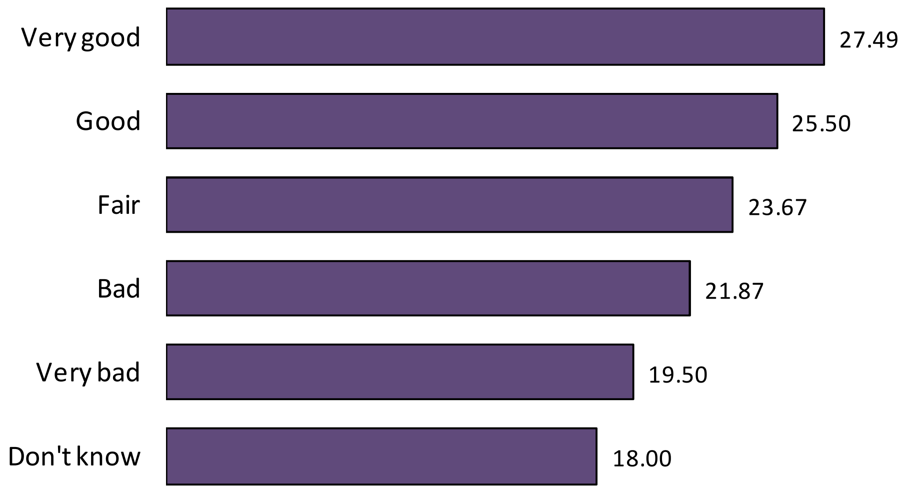
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1877, weighted 1360)

The answers to these questions can be converted into a score which gives a measure linked to mental health. The scores range from seven to 35 and a lower score represents poorer mental health. The mean WEMWBS score for this survey is 24.94.

Respondents in the highest socio-economic group (AB), females and respondents in Ribble Valley are more likely to have a high score (mean scores of 26.56, 25.48 and 26.33 respectively). BME respondents and disabled respondents are more likely to have a poor score (21.57 and 24.14 respectively).

There is a link between the WEMWBS score and respondents' self-perceived overall health.

Chart 17 - Self-perceived overall health versus WEMWBS score

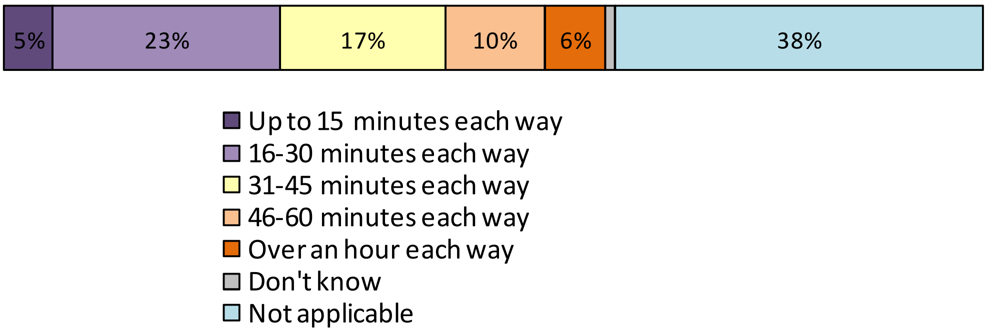


Base: Respondents who rated their health and answered the WEMWBS questions

5.4 Economic development

Panel members were asked how long they would be prepared to travel to get to their regular place of work. A third of respondents would travel for 30 minutes or more each way (33%). Two fifths of respondents answered not applicable (38%) and the majority of these respondents are not in full or part time employment.

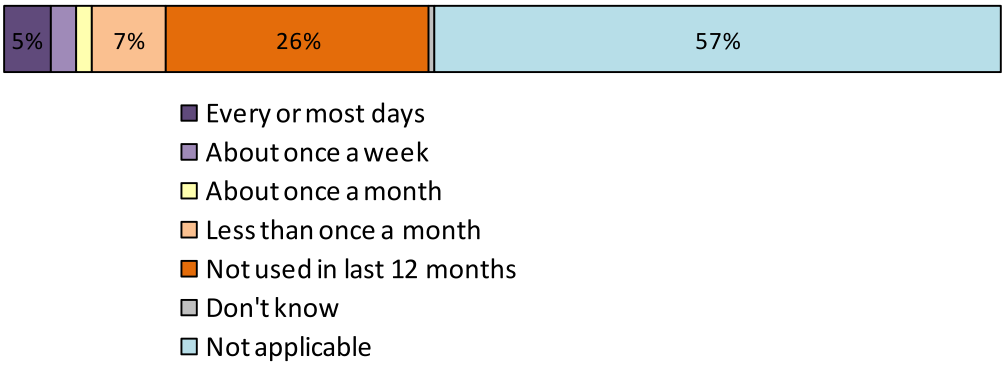
Chart 18 - How long would you be prepared to travel to get to your regular place of work?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1924, weighted 1387)

Only around one in six respondents have travelled to work by public transport in the last 12 months (16%). Three fifths of respondents answered not applicable suggesting they don't work or don't have to travel to work (57%). One in twenty respondents travel to work on public transport every or most days (5%).

Chart 19 - How often do you travel to work by public transport?

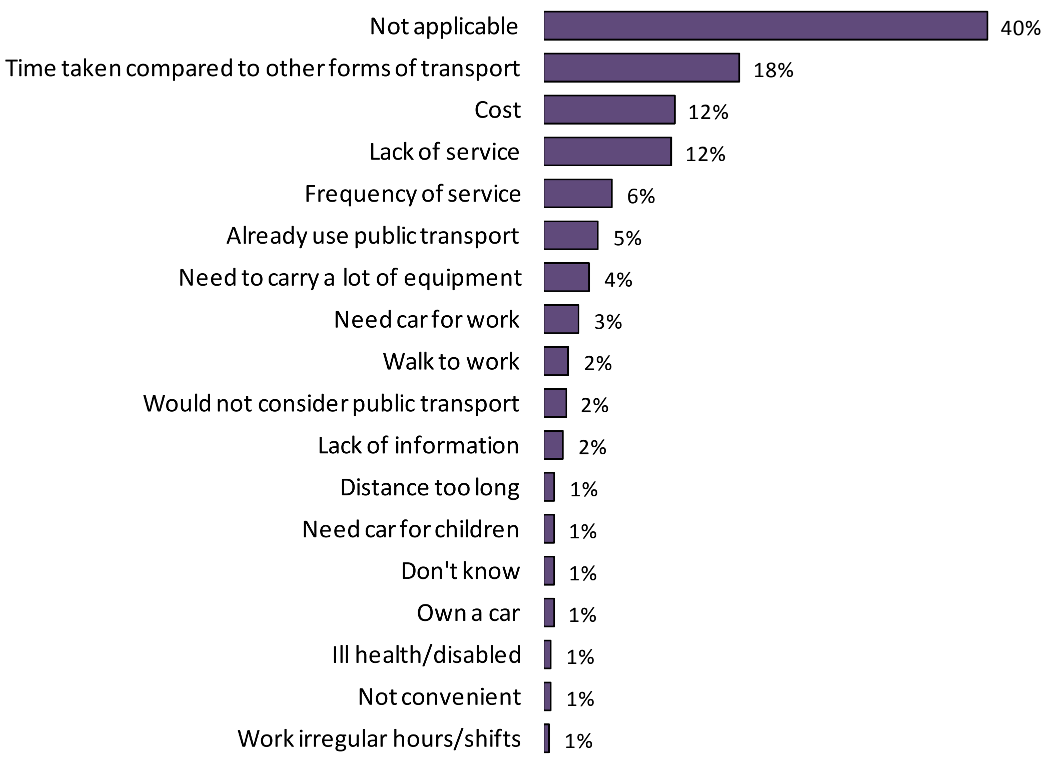


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1920, weighted 1381)

Full time workers are more likely not to have travelled to work by public transport in the last 12 months (45%).

When asked what the single most important factor is that prevents respondents from using public transport to get to work, the most common responses were time taken compared to other forms of transport (18%), cost (12%) and lack of service (12%).

Chart 20 - What is the single most important factor that prevents you from using public transport to get to work?

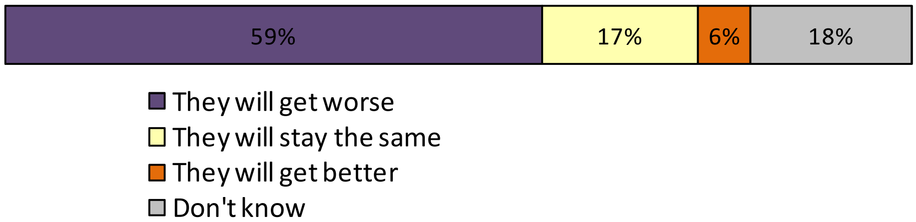


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1937, weighted 1396)

BME respondents are more likely to say that cost (34%) and frequency of service (15%) are the factors that prevent them from using public transport to get to work.

Three fifths of respondents think job prospects in Lancashire will get worse over the next two years (59%). Only around one in twenty respondents think prospects will get better (6%).

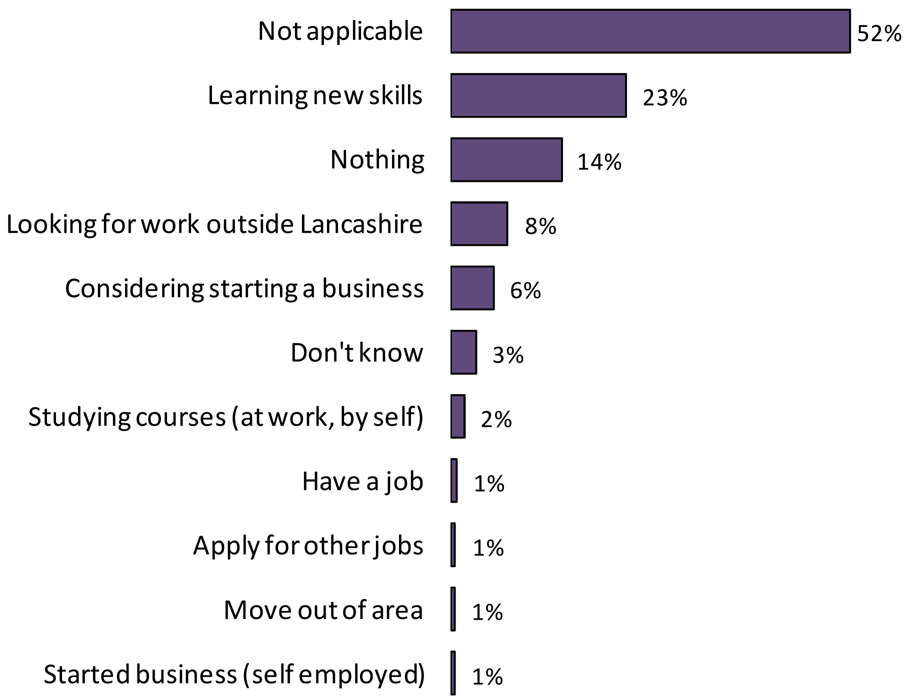
Chart 21 - What are your views of future job prospects in Lancashire over the next two years?



Base: All respondents (unweighted 1911, weighted 1383)

While half of respondents answered not applicable when asked what they are doing to improve their job prospects (52%), around a quarter of respondents are learning new skills (23%).

Chart 22 - What, if anything, are you doing to improve your job prospects?

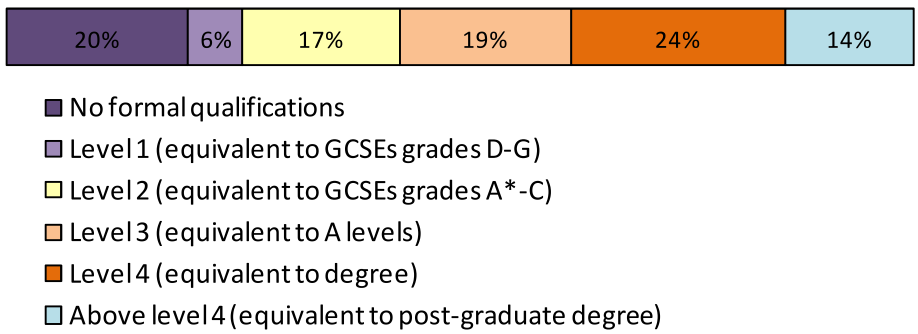


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1913, weighted 1380)

Respondents in socio-economic group C2 are less likely to be learning new skills to improve their job prospects (11%). Respondents working full time are more likely to say they are looking for work outside Lancashire (13%) and considering starting their own business (10%).

A quarter of respondents are educated to level 4 (degree level, 24%). However, a fifth of respondents have no formal qualifications (20%).

Chart 23 - What is your highest level of qualification?



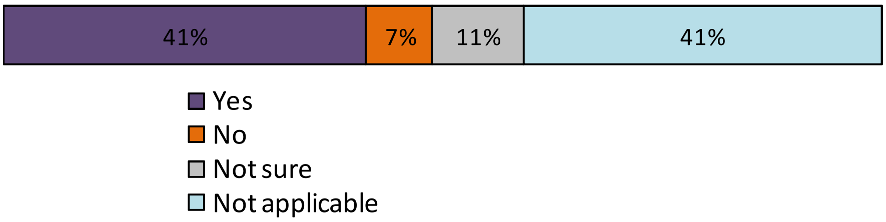
Base: All respondents (unweighted 1805, weighted 1325)

Respondents in socio-economic group AB and those working full time are more likely to be qualified to level 4 (38% and 30% respectively). Respondents in class AB are also more likely to have qualifications above level 4 (40%). The groups most likely to have no formal qualifications are respondents over the age of 60 (40%), disabled respondents (34%), BME respondents (29%), respondents not in employment (31%) and respondents in socio-economic group DE (38%).

Panel members were asked if they were currently studying, or planning to study soon, and in what subject. Only around one in six respondents replied that they are currently studying or planning to study (15%). The subjects being studied are varied with no specific area standing out.

Two fifths of respondents are confident that they currently have the skills and abilities needed for their future employment (41%).

Chart 24 - Are you confident that you currently have the skills and abilities you will need for your future employment?

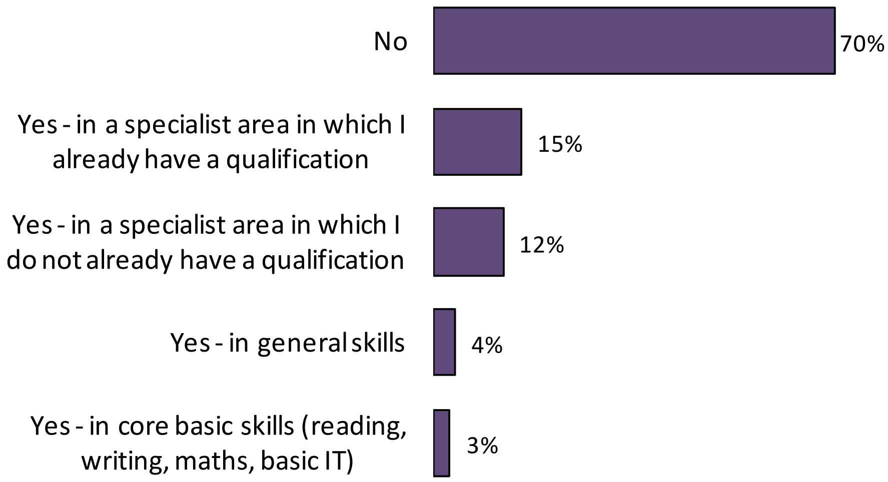


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1864, weighted 1354)

BME respondents and respondents in Pendle are more likely to say that they aren't confident that they currently have the skills and abilities needed for future employment (20% and 21% respectively).

Three in ten respondents intend to improve their skills in the next three years (30%). One in six respondents intend to improve their skills in a specialist area in which they already have a qualification (15%) while a similar proportion want to improve skills in a specialist are in which they don't already have a qualification (12%).

Chart 25 - Do you intend to improve your skills in the next three years (to be at least one level higher than currently)?

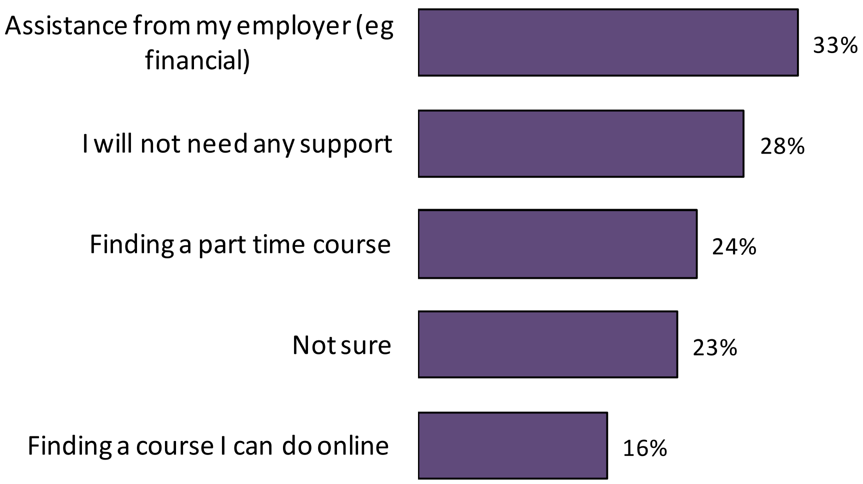


Base: All respondents (unweighted 1713, weighted 1277)

Unsurprisingly, respondents aged over 60 are more likely to say they don't intend to improve their skills in the next three years (94%). Respondents in the 25-44 age group are more likely to intend to improve their skills in specialist areas, both in which they already have a qualification (28%) and in a new area (20%). Full time workers are more likely to intend to improve their skills in a specialist area in which they already have a qualification (24%). Respondents in Burnley are more likely to intend to improve their core basic skills (14%).

Of the respondents who intend to improve their skills over the next three years, a third of them are depending on assistance from their employer (33%). Around three in ten though say they will not need support (28%).

Chart 26 - Does being able to improve your skills depend on any of the following?



Base: Respondents who intend to improve their skills (unweighted 819, weighted 709)

Respondents aged over 60 who intend to improve their skills are more likely to say that they will not need support (58%). BME respondents are more likely to need to find a part time course (35%). Respondents who work full time and respondents in socio-economic groups AB and C1 are all more likely to say improving their skills depends on assistance from their employer (49%, 49% and 40% respectively).

6 Conclusions and recommendations

For many of the questions about local public services and Lancashire County Council a large proportion of respondents were unsure (answering don't know or neither agree nor disagree). This suggests that the level of awareness of the work of public services is low. More work needs to be done to inform the public on what the council does and how well it does it. Respondents who feel very well informed about the county council overall are more likely to strongly agree that the council provides value for money and good quality services and more likely to be very satisfied with how the council runs things. It is unclear though whether these respondents have a good opinion of the council because they are well informed or whether they just have a good opinion of the council generally. The areas that respondents do feel informed about are topics which affect almost everyone (how to vote and how council tax is spent).

Only around a third of respondents think that Lancashire County Council provides value for money. We should look to improve on this perception. This is especially important at the moment given the cuts in budget – the public need to know we are using the money we do have effectively.

There seems to be an issue in distinguishing between the district councils and the county council. For the two questions which asked for an opinion on respondents' local district council and then Lancashire County Council, respondents were more likely to answer the same for both than to give different answers. Ideally work should be done to make it clearer to the public which services are provided by LCC and which by the district councils. In reality this is hard to do so it should be acknowledged that the performance of the district councils reflects on LCC and vice versa. More joint working to provide high quality services for local people may improve respondents' views of both district and county council.

The most common aspects of respondents' local areas that need improving have not changed since 2008 and, in fact, the proportion of respondents selecting them has increased. More needs to be done to improve road and pavement repairs and to provide activities for teenagers or to inform the public of improvements that have already been made.

Parts of east Lancashire seem to have more problems than other areas. In particular, respondents in Burnley and Pendle are more likely to be dissatisfied with their local area and local hospital and are more likely to think race relations need to be improved in their area. Respondents in Burnley are also more likely to: think the level of crime needs to be reduced; feel unsafe in their local area and think there is a problem with drugs in their area. These are clearly areas where improvements can be made.

Respondents' perceptions of different aspects of anti-social behaviour have not altered significantly since 2008. Any work that has been done to reduce anti-social behaviour has therefore not been noted by the public. Work should be done to improve this.

Only one in six respondents have travelled to work by public transport in the past 12 months. To increase the use of public transport by commuters, service provision and cost need to be improved.

The groups most likely to have no formal qualifications are BME respondents, those not in employment, disabled respondents and respondents in socio-economic class DE. It should be ensured that the opportunities exist for people in these groups to attain formal qualifications if desired. It may be useful to investigate whether respondents who have no formal qualifications and are not in employment have found it difficult to get employment because of their lack of qualifications.

There are indications of a widening skills gap between those in employment and those who aren't. Full time workers are more likely to be trying to improve their skills while those not in employment and in the lower socio-economic groups are not.

7 Appendix

7.1 Socio-Economic-Group Definitions

These groups are based on Market Research Society definitions and on the respondent. They are graded as A, B, C1, C2, D and E.

Group A
- Professional people, very senior managers in business or commerce or top-level civil servants.
- Retired people, previously grade A, and their widows

Group B
- Middle management executives in large organisations, with appropriate qualifications
- Principle officers in local government and civil service
- Top management or owners of small business concerns, educational and service establishments
- Retired people, previously grade B, and their widows

Group C1
- Junior management, owners of small establishments, and all others in non-manual positions
- Jobs in this group have very varied responsibilities and educational requirements
- Retired people, previously grade C1, and their widows

Group C2
- All skilled manual workers, and those manual workers with responsibility for other people
- Retired people, previously grade C2, with pensions from their job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group D
- All semi skilled and unskilled manual workers, and apprentices and trainees to skilled workers
- Retired people, previously grade D, with pensions from their late job
- Widows, if receiving pensions from their late partner's job

Group E
- All those entirely dependent on the state long term, through sickness, unemployment, old age or other reasons
- Those unemployed for a period exceeding six months (otherwise classified on previous occupation)
- Casual workers and those without a regular income