



# **CITIZENS' PANEL RESULTS**

## **SUMMER 2007**

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# Stratford-on-Avon District Council Citizens' Panel: Summer 2007 Results

## 1. Introduction

The Council has a Citizens' Panel, which contains a representative sample of people living in the District of Stratford-on-Avon. By surveying this Panel, it is possible to obtain views and opinions broadly representative of local residents. The following results are from the Summer 2007 Panel survey.

## 2. Methodology

1,284 questionnaires were mailed to the Citizens' Panel in July and August 2007, with 575 returned in the timeframe allowed. 31 questionnaires were returned not completed for various reasons (not known at this address, etc). This represents a response rate of 45.9%.

### **3. Summary of Results**

#### **Councillors**

- Almost a quarter of residents (23%) had contacted their Councillor for information about the Council or its services in the last three years.
- Two-thirds of respondents felt the help and support they received from the Councillor was very or fairly good. However, one in five felt it was fairly or very poor.
- 45% felt satisfied with the effectiveness of their District Councillor, with a further 47% neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.

#### **Your Review**

- Residents were asked if they would prefer to receive more, less or the same amount of printed information from the Council than they are receiving at present, or if they would prefer to request specific information as and when it was needed. Exactly two-thirds of respondents wanted to continue to receive the same amount of printed information. One in ten of those surveyed wanted more as opposed to 8% preferring less. 15% of residents would prefer to request specific information as and when needed.
- Respondents were questioned on the extent to which they read "Your Review". Four out of ten claimed to read all or nearly all of it and over a quarter (28%) said they read most of it. 16% stated that they read a few articles and 14% commented that they just glanced at it. Only 1% of those surveyed remarked that they do not look at "Your Review" at all and less than 1% said that they cannot remember to what extent they read it.
- Respondents were asked in they would like to receive a printed A to Z of Stratford-on-Avon District Council's services direct to their door. Of the 564 people who answered the question, three-quarters said yes and one quarter said no.

#### **Public Protection**

- Asked what are the most important areas of work the food safety, and health & safety teams do for their area; the inspection of food premises, responding to complaints about food premises, and investigating food poisoning incidents were the top three aspects recorded. In respect of licensing, the inspection of licensed premises, responding to complaints, and investigating incidents of alleged breaches of license conditions were the top three areas.

#### **Gender Equality Scheme**

- One in ten residents feel that widespread gender inequality exists today, with a further two-thirds saying it was in some areas of society.
- Residents were questioned as to whether they felt that men and women suffer from stereotyping of their roles and needs. Six out of ten (of the 566 who replied) thought that this was the case, as opposed to 36% who did not. 7% responded saying that they did not know.
- Whilst dealing with the Council, over nine out of ten people (93%) of the 533 replies, stated no when asked if they would prefer to be dealt with by a member of staff of the same gender. 7% of respondents said yes.
- 16% of respondents for housing and 14% for benefits felt there were some issues surrounding gender inequality for these Council services.

## **Planning Service**

- Three in ten Panel members had used some aspect of the Planning Service within the last twelve months, with the main reason to look at a planning application.
- 78% of those who obtained information about the Planning Service felt it was easy to understand.
- Overall, 56% were satisfied with the advice and help received from Planning, with 23% dissatisfied.
- 14% of residents had used the online planning service on the Councils' website. Respondents were then asked if they found the online service easy or difficult to use. Of the 75 people who replied, over half (55%) commented that it was either easy or very easy to use. Almost a third (32%) of those surveyed felt it was about average and only 13% claimed that it was difficult or very difficult.

## **Homelessness Strategy**

- 15% of people are concerned about the impact of household debt on their housing situation in the future, with 8% saying they had experienced housing difficulties whilst living in Stratford District.
- Almost half of residents (45%) who had experienced housing difficulties said that it happened four years ago or longer. A third of those surveyed experiencing difficulties stated they were two to three years ago and less than a quarter (23%) of respondents claimed that their difficulties had been within the last year.
- 12% of respondents were aware that SDC has a Housing Renewal Team which offers advice and practical solutions to anyone living in the District, enabling them to remain living independently in their own home.
- 17% of residents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: "There is a problem in the District with people having to sleep on sofas and floors of family and friends". However, almost the same percentage of those surveyed (16%) claimed to agree with the statement.
- So far as there being not enough affordable housing for local people, over three-quarters (77%) of residents were in agreement, compared to just 8% disagreeing.
- 64% of respondents felt that too many people come into the District from outside the area. Over a quarter (27%) declined to comment on the matter and only 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed.
- Half of those surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: "There are not enough housing options for elderly people in the District", compared to only 8% who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

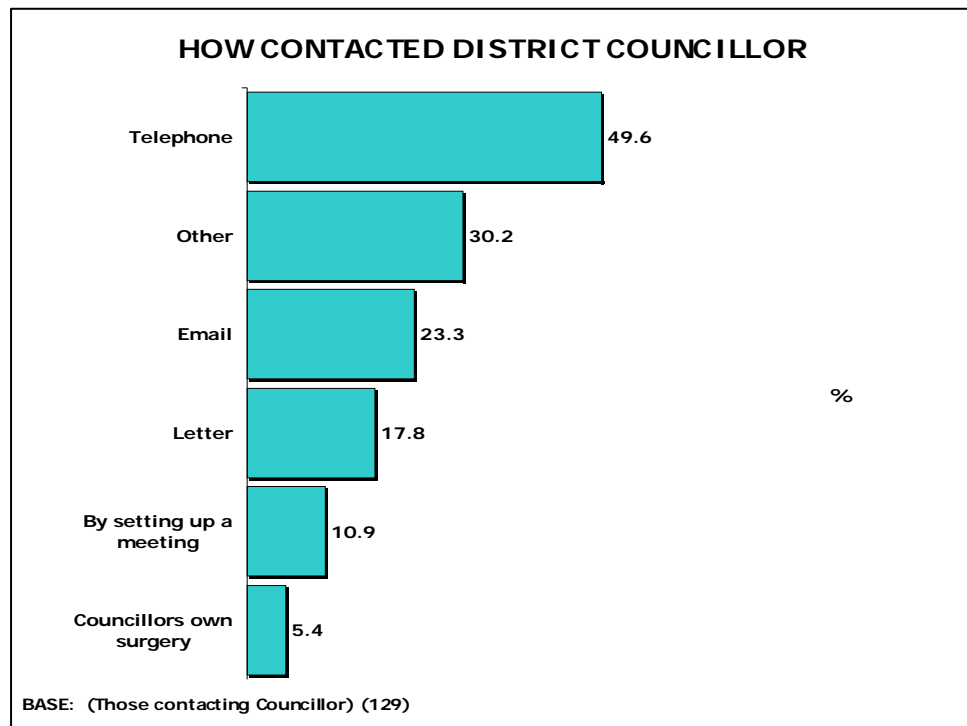
## 4. Results in Detail

### 4.1 Councillors

Residents were asked if they had contacted their Councillor for information about the Council or its services in the last three years. Almost a quarter (23%) said they had contacted a Councillor.

The main way of contacting their District Councillor was via the telephone (50%) and then e-mails (23%). One in ten set up meetings, 18% wrote a letter and 5% visited the Councillor's surgery. The 37 other ways are included in Appendix A.

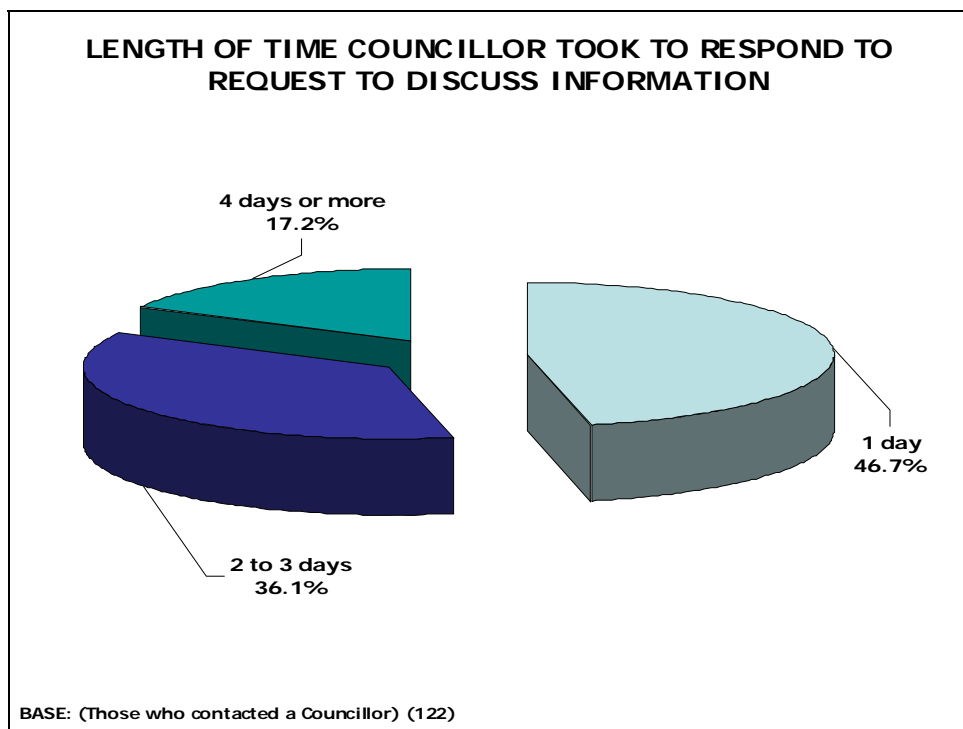
**Chart 1:**



47% of Councillors responded to a request to discuss information within one day, 36% took two to three days and 17% took four days or more.

By area, exactly half of the respondents from the Avon area, and 48% of those in the Stour area, stated two to three days, as opposed to less than one in ten (9%) residents from the Arden area quoting two to three days. Interestingly, almost two-thirds (64%) of respondents living in the Dassett region, claimed their Councillor only took one day to respond to their request to discuss information, whereas just 35% of Avon residents could say the same of their Councillor.

Chart 2:



Almost three-quarters of those surveyed rated the accuracy and completeness of any information provided by their Councillor as very or fairly good. Just over one in ten (12%) rated it as fairly or very poor.

In terms of the help and support received from their Councillor, two-thirds of respondents rated it very or fairly good, with one in five saying it was fairly or very poor.

**Table 1: Responses to questions concerning the contact residents had had with their District Councillor.**

	BASE	Very Good	Fairly Good	Neither Good nor Poor	Fairly Poor	Very Poor
<b>The accuracy and completeness of any information provided by your Councillor</b>	(122)	42.6%	31.1%	13.9%	5.7%	6.6%
<b>The help and support you received from your Councillor</b>	(123)	44.7%	22.8%	13.0%	8.9%	10.6%

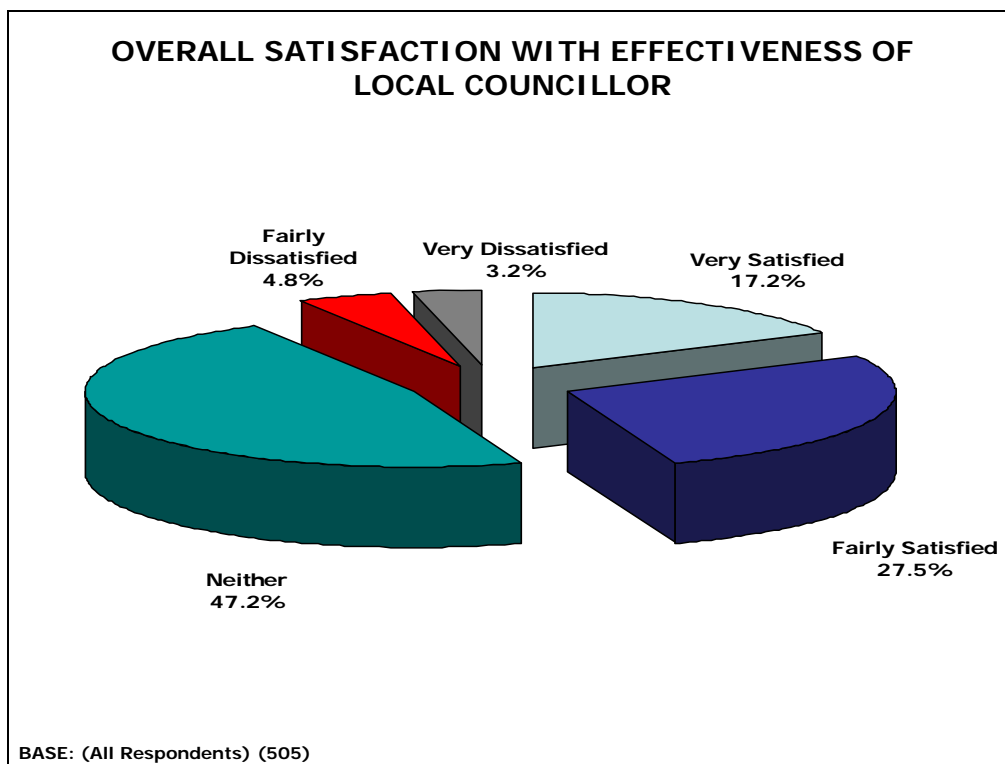
Almost two-thirds of respondents (66%) gave the reason for not contacting their Councillor for information about the Council or its services as having not needed information or help. The second most quoted reason, which given by almost a quarter of those surveyed, was that they had contacted the Council direct. Only 4% said that it was because they did not know how to contact their Councillor, and 3% remarked that they did not believe their Councillor would be effective in providing the help needed.

**Table 2: Reasons for not contacting their Councillor for information about the Council or its services.**

	%
Have not needed information or help	66.4
Contacted Council direct	24.7
Did not know how to contact Councillor	3.9
Did not believe Councillor would be effective in providing help needed	3.2
Other reason	1.8
<b>BASE:</b>	<b>(434)</b>

Residents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the effectiveness of their District Councillor. Almost half (47%) said that they were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 45% claimed to be very or fairly satisfied as opposed to less than one in ten (8%) stating that they were fairly or very dissatisfied with the effectiveness of their District Councillor.

**Chart 3:**



198 reasons were given as to how they could improve their effectiveness as a District Councillor and these are included in full in Appendix B.

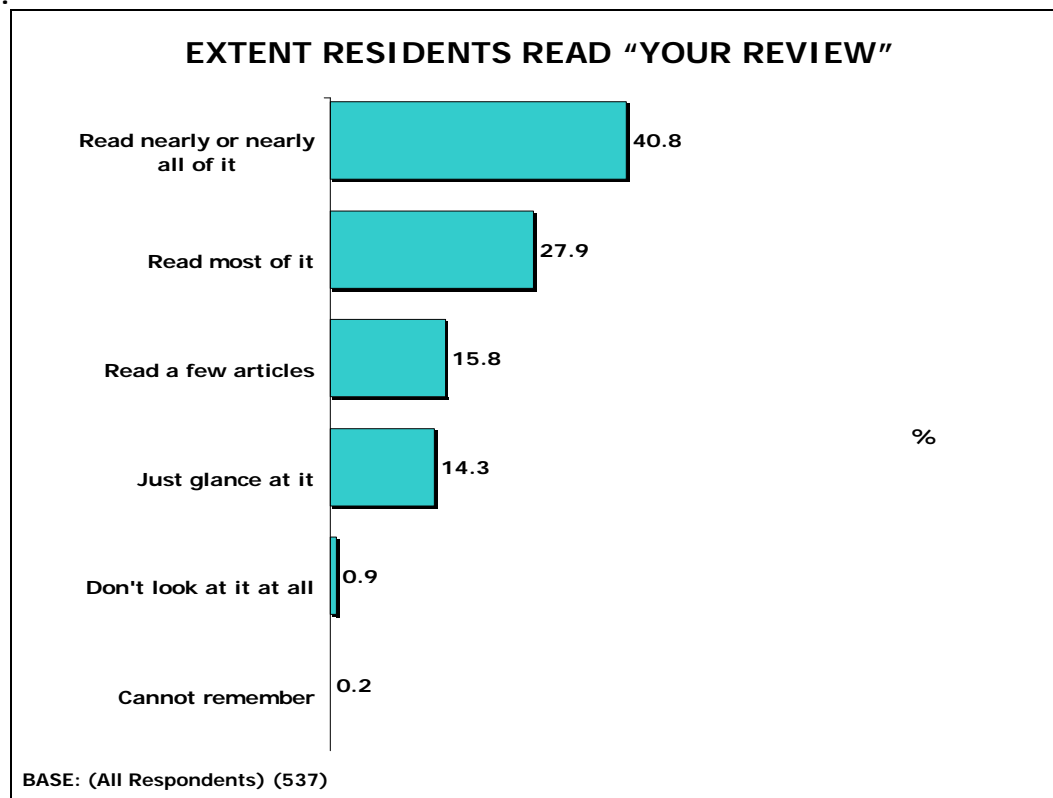


## 4.2 Your Review

Residents were asked if they had received a copy of "Your Review": a publication about Stratford District Council's services and news issued three times a year. Over nine out of ten (93%) confirmed they had, as opposed to 2% who had not. 4% of those surveyed could not remember. Just over 1% said that they received a copy; however, given the choice, they would prefer not to have "Your Review".

Respondents were questioned on the extent to which they read "Your Review". Four out of ten claimed to read all or nearly all of it and over a quarter (28%) said they read most of it. 16% stated that they read a few articles and 14% commented that they just glanced at it. 1% of those surveyed remarked that they do not look at "Your Review" at all and less than 1% said that they cannot remember to what extent they read it.

**Chart 4:**



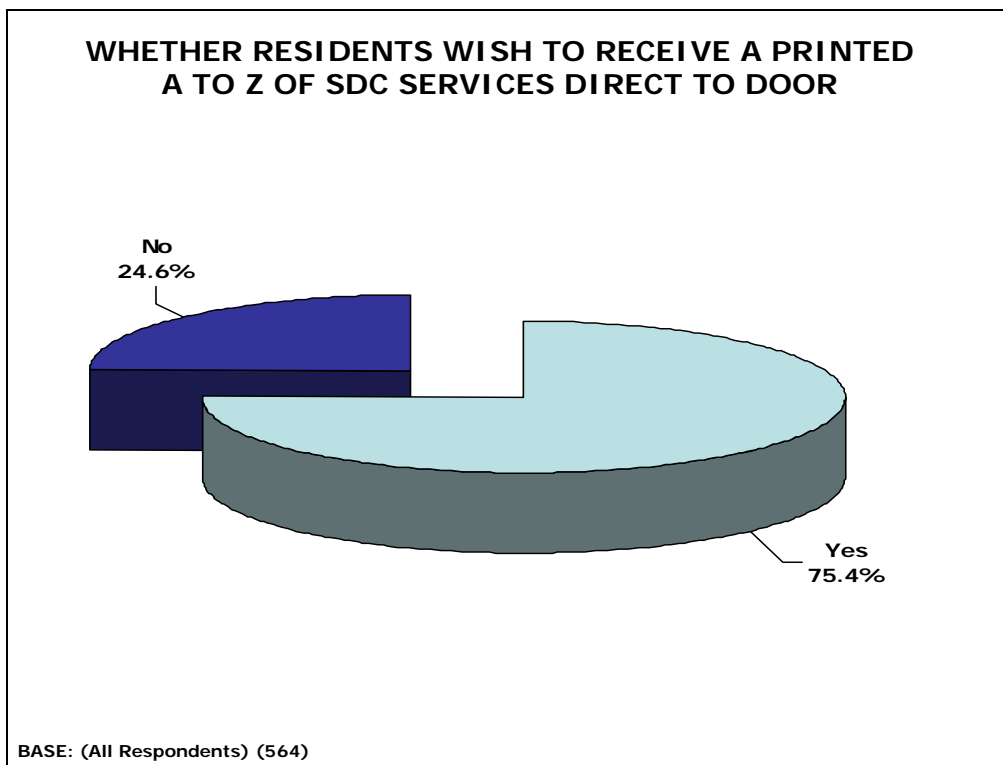
Residents were asked if they would prefer to receive more, less or the same amount of printed information from the Council than they are receiving at present, or if they would prefer to request specific information as and when it was needed. Exactly two-thirds of respondents wanted to continue to receive the same amount of printed information. One in ten of those surveyed wanted more as opposed to 8% preferring less. 15% of residents would prefer to request specific information as and when needed.

**Table 3: Respondents' preferences on receiving more, less or the same amount of printed information or requesting specific information when needed.**

	%
Receive the same amount of printed information as at present	66.6
Request specific information as and when needed	15.3
Receive more printed information than at present	10.1
Receive less printed information than at present	8.0
BASE:	(563)

Respondents were asked if they would like to receive a printed A to Z of Stratford-on-Avon District Council's services direct to their door. Of the 564 people who answered the question, three-quarters said yes and one quarter said no.

**Chart 5:**



The survey also queried whether residents wanted any regular articles about the work of the District Council included in "Your Review". A total of 286 comments were received, the main themes are shown in the table below, with the full list in Appendix C. Almost a quarter of those surveyed (23%) said they would like to see regular articles regarding the work of the planning department, including justifications and explanations of decisions made. 14% of residents wanted regular articles on the Council's recycling policy and a similar number of people said they wanted to be kept informed on planned roadworks. 12% of respondents wanted information on what the Council has done, including its performance. Over one in ten of those surveyed (11%) requested regular details on the Council's expenditure, its justifications and statistics.

When analysing residents' response according to which area within the Stratford-on-Avon District they lived, exactly a third of Avon residents wanted to see mentions of the planning department, including justifications and explanations of decisions made: contrasting strongly to just 3% of Dassetts' respondents wanting the same.

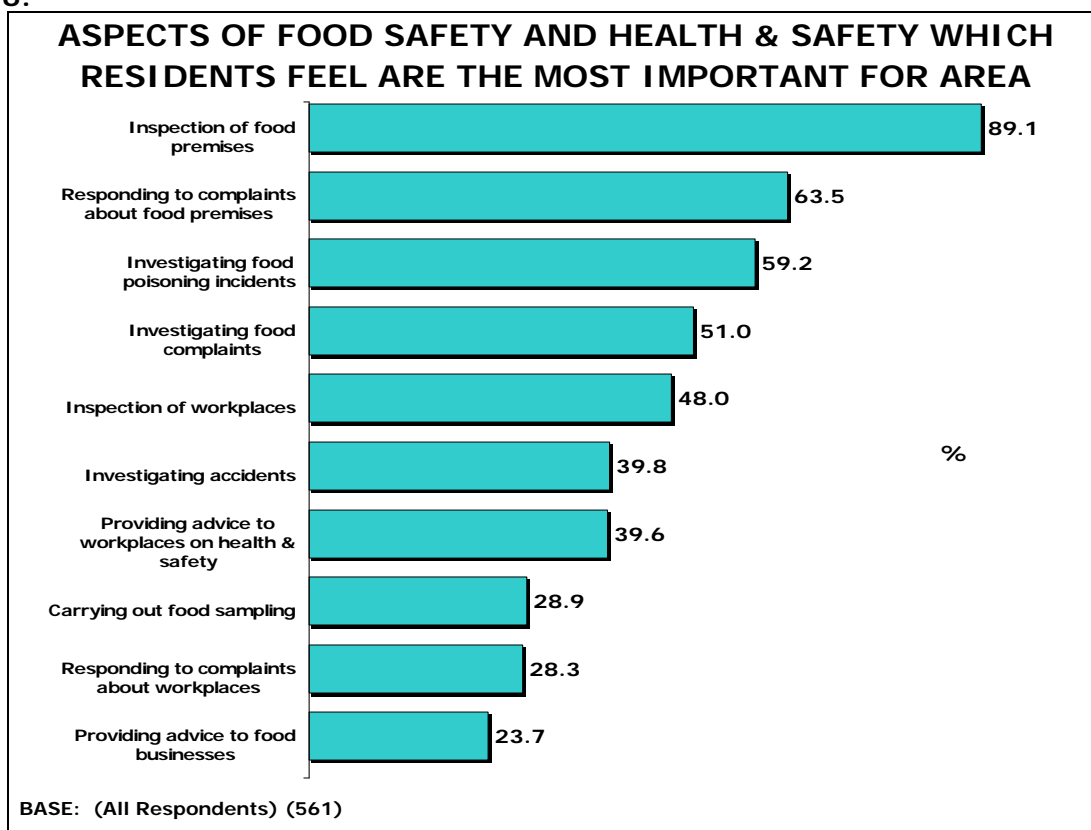
**Table 4: Regular articles about the work of the District Council which residents want to see included in "Your Review".**

	%
Mentions of planning department/justification/decisions explained	22.8
Policy on recycling	14.2
Planned roadworks	13.6
Information on what the Council has done/performance/explanations	12.3
Details on Council spend/justification/statistics	10.5
How Councillors vote/issues/minutes of meetings/meetings attended	8.0
Less self praising/ "pat on the back" exercise	6.8
Policy on rubbish	5.6
Mentions of cost of "Your Review"/expensive to print/too glossy	5.6
Local news	5.6
Policy on environment	4.3
Housing waiting list	4.3
Flood defence	3.7
All information on internet/save on costs	3.7
Highlight prob's/more upfront/more honest/not always "shade of pink"	3.7
Contact numbers/who to call for advice	3.1
Justification for tax rising	2.5
Format/content is fine/good at present	2.5
Focus on activities/parish highlights	1.9
More good news stories	1.9
Old age	1.2
Immigration	1.2
Kids activities	1.2
Anti-social behaviour/focus on teenage behaviour	1.2
More information for the disabled	1.2
Question and answer page	1.2
Regularity is boring/topics should be current/relevant	1.2
BASE:	(286)

### 4.3 Public Protection

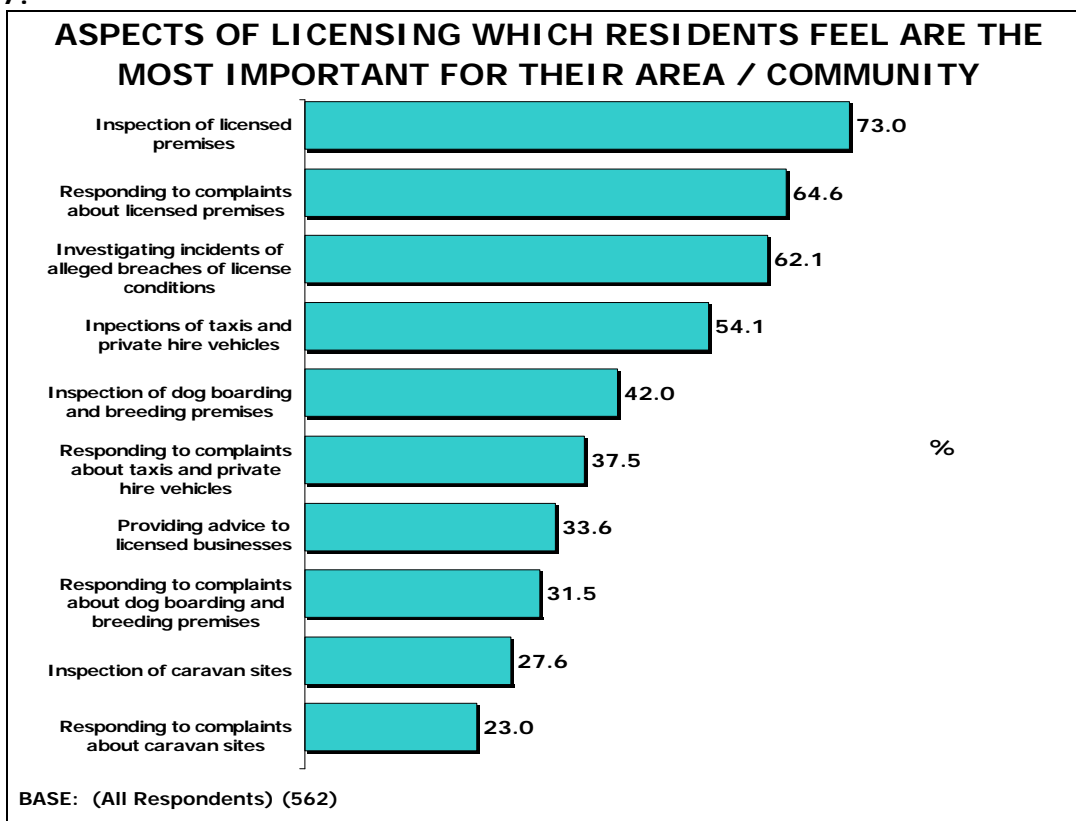
With reference to food safety and health and safety, residents were asked to confirm the five most important areas of work which they felt serve the needs of their local area or community. Nine out of ten people said “inspection of food premises”. 64% of respondents indicated “responding to complaints about food premises”. Six out of ten of those surveyed said “investigating food poisoning incidents” and over half (51%) said “investigating food complaints”. Almost half of residents (48%) commented on “inspection of workplaces”. Four out of ten respondents mentioned “investigating accidents”, with a similar number stating “providing advice to workplaces on health and safety”. Over a quarter of residents (29%) said “carrying out food sampling” and 28% quoted “responding to complaints about workplaces”. Less than a quarter of respondents stated “providing advice to food businesses”.

Chart 6:



The questionnaire also asked residents to indicate the five most important areas of work in respect of licensing which they felt serve the needs of their local area or community. Almost three-quarters (73%) said “inspection of licensed premises”. Nearly two-thirds (65%) stated “responding to complaints about licensed premises”. Six out of ten respondents quoted “investigating incidents of alleged breaches of license conditions”. Over half of those surveyed (54%) said “inspection of taxis and private hire vehicles”. Four out of ten residents indicated “inspection of dog boarding and breeding premises”, with a similar number saying “responding to complaints about taxis and private hire vehicles”. Just over a third (34%) of people questioned stated “providing advice to licensed businesses” and just under a third (32%) said “responding to complaints about dog boarding and breeding premises”. 28% of those surveyed mentioned “inspection of caravan sites” and 23% quoted “responding to complaints about caravan sites”.

Chart 7:



In order to assist the Licensing, Food and Health and Safety teams to review response times given to a complaint or for advice, respondents were asked to indicate which response time (from a range between 1 to 28 days) which they felt was applicable to three categories of work (the highest priority work, medium priority work and the lowest priority work). The results are displayed in Table 6 below.

Almost three-quarters (73%) of residents felt that the highest priority work should have a response time of 1 day and nearly a quarter (23%) said 3 days. Nobody gave a response rate of over 7 days for the highest priority work.

36% of those surveyed believed 5 days to be a suitable response time for medium priority work. Just over a third (34%) said 3 days and two out of ten residents said 7 days. Only 7% of respondents quoted 14 days and less than 1% said 21 or 28 days.

Finally, with reference to the lowest priority work, three out of ten residents felt that 14 days' response time should apply. A quarter of those surveyed stated 7 days and one in five said 5 days. 11% opted for 21 days with a similar number quoting 28 days. Less than 4% of respondents felt that 3 days or less was appropriate for the lowest priority work.

**Table 5: Response times which residents felt were applicable to differing priority workloads.**

	Highest priority work	Medium priority work	Lowest priority work
<b>1 day</b>	73.0%	1.3%	0.9%
<b>3 days</b>	23.3%	34.1%	3.9%
<b>5 days</b>	1.5%	35.5%	18.0%
<b>7 days</b>	2.2%	22.1%	24.5%
<b>14 days</b>	0.0%	6.6%	31.1%
<b>21 days</b>	0.0%	0.2%	11.0%
<b>28 days</b>	0.0%	0.2%	10.5%
<b>BASE:</b>	(545)	(533)	(534)

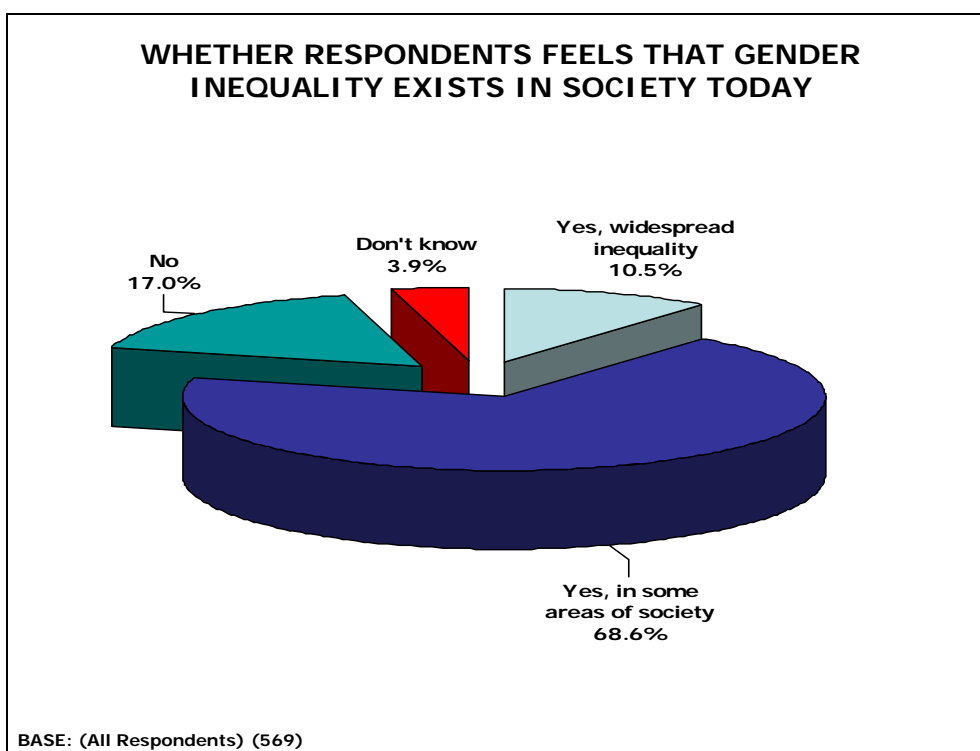
#### 4.4 Gender Equality Scheme

To help Stratford-on-Avon District Council to build upon its first Gender Equality Scheme, residents were asked a series of questions to ascertain their views. All Councils in Warwickshire used these questions.

Those surveyed were asked if they felt that gender inequality exists in society today. Over two-thirds (69%) felt that this was the case in some areas of society, however, only 11% of residents believed gender inequality to be widespread. Two out of ten respondents said no, they did not think gender inequality exists in society today and only 4% replied that they did not know.

Analysing results by gender shows that twice as many males than females do not believe that gender inequality exists in society today: 22% of males versus 11% of females.

**Chart 8:**



Residents were questioned as to whether they felt that men and women suffer from stereotyping of their roles and needs (for example, women in childcare, men as main income earner). Six out of ten (of the 566 who replied) thought that this was the case, as opposed to 36% who did not. 7% responded saying that they did not know.

Two-thirds of female residents against half of male residents believe men and women suffer from stereotyping of their roles and needs.

When asked if they felt that some Council services benefit one gender more than another, over half (54%) of the 565 respondents stated that they did not know. Almost a third (32%) of those surveyed said no, compared to 14% who said yes.

Six out of ten females as opposed to half of males indicated that they did not know whether some Council services were of benefit to one gender more than another.

55 people commented on which Council services they felt were of benefit to one gender more than another. These are listed in Appendix D.

Almost half (48%) of the 571 residents who responded to the question as to whether men and women face different barriers when communicating with Stratford-on-Avon District Council stated no, 45% replied that they did not know and only 7% said yes. Of the 29 people saying yes, these are found listed in Appendix E.

Whilst dealing with the Council, over nine out of ten people (93%) of the 533 replies, stated no when asked if they would prefer to be dealt with by a member of staff of the same gender. Only 7% of respondents said yes.

Residents were asked to indicate which Council services they feel need to address issues surrounding gender inequality. Overall, "don't know" was the most overwhelming response throughout, given by approximately half of respondents, followed by around a quarter to around a third of residents claiming no issues needed to be addressed, in contrast to between 16% and only 2% who believed they did.

On the subject of **Housing**, almost half (49%) of respondents said that they did not know, compared to nearly a quarter (24%) who said no issues needed addressing. However, 16% of those surveyed, responded yes, issues needed addressing, the highest recorded score in this category compared to the other services. By gender, almost a third (29%) of males versus almost a fifth (19%) of females stated no issues surrounding gender inequality in connection with the Council's Housing service.

Regarding **Benefits**, again half of those surveyed said that they did not know. Just over a quarter (26%) stated no issues needed addressing as opposed to 14% who believed they did. Again, by gender, almost a third (32%) of men compared to almost a fifth (19%) of women felt no issues regarding inequality needed addressing within the Benefits service.

With reference to **Council Tax**, a similar number (46%) indicated that they did not know. Almost a third (33%) did not feel any issues needed addressing, in comparison with one in ten of those surveyed thinking they did. Four in ten males, versus only a quarter of females believed no issues surrounding gender inequality needed addressing within the Council Tax service.

Over half of respondents (56%) claimed that they did not know if issues surrounding gender inequality needed addressing within the **Recruitment and Selection** service of Stratford-on-Avon District Council. A quarter did not think they did, whereas 11% stated yes, issues needed addressing.

So far as the **Refuse, Recycling and Cleansing** service was concerned, 47% of those surveyed said they did not know whether issues surrounding gender inequality needed addressing. Three out of ten residents claimed that none did, as opposed to 7% who believed they did. Like the Council Tax service, four in ten men against a quarter of women, did not think issues regarding gender inequality needed addressing within the Refuse, Recycling and Cleansing service.

More than half of respondents (56%) did not know whether issues surrounding gender inequality needed to be addressed regarding the Council's **Land Charges / Licensing service**. Just over a quarter (27%) stated they did not, compared to only 3% who did. Interestingly, almost two-thirds (64%) of female residents, as opposed to half of male residents, claimed they did not know whether issues to do with gender inequality needed addressing within the Council's Land Charges / Licensing service.

Regarding the **Electoral Register**, almost half (48%) of those surveyed stated "don't know", compared to over a third (37%) of residents who confirmed their belief that no issues needed addressing. Interestingly, at only 2%, the Electoral Register received the lowest score, across all of the services surveyed, for people feeling that issues did need addressing.

The **Care and Repair Scheme** service received the highest percentage (59%) of "don't know" responses when compared to that of all the other services. At 24%, over four times as many people felt no issues needed addressing than the 5% who claimed they did. Only half of males claimed they didn't know versus two thirds of females not knowing.

Half of respondents stated that they did not know if issues surrounding gender inequality needed addressing in respect of the Council's **Planning** services. Three out of ten people said no issues needed addressing, whereas 9% said the opposite. Four in ten males claimed no issues needed addressing, compared to only two in ten females.

The **Building Control** service received feedback which was much the same to that of Planning, with 52% stating "don't know", 29% saying that there were no issues, and 9% again saying yes there were issues which required to be addressed. Over a third (35%) of males stated no issues needed addressing, compared to only one fifth of females.

Likewise, a similar trend in response figures was received for the **Environmental Health** service and that of **Parks, Countryside and Grounds Maintenance**, as can be seen in Table 7 below. 37% of males versus 27% of females said no issues needed addressing regarding gender inequality within the Environmental Health service. Within the Parks, Countryside and Grounds Maintenance service, over a third of men compared to a quarter of women said no such issues needed addressing.

**Table 6: Respondents' views on which Council services they feel need to address issues surrounding gender inequality.**

	<b>BASE</b>	<b>Yes, issues need addressing</b>	<b>No, no issues need addressing</b>	<b>Don't know</b>	<b>N/A</b>
<b>Housing</b>	(484)	15.9%	24.2%	49.4%	10.5%
<b>Benefits</b>	(479)	13.6%	25.5%	49.5%	11.5%
<b>Council Tax</b>	(477)	10.3%	33.1%	45.9%	10.7%
<b>Recruitment &amp; Selection</b>	(468)	10.9%	24.6%	55.8%	8.8%
<b>Refuse, Recycling &amp; Cleansing</b>	(473)	7.4%	32.8%	47.1%	12.7%
<b>Land Charges / Licensing</b>	(467)	3.4%	26.8%	56.3%	13.5%
<b>Electoral Register</b>	(467)	2.4%	37.0%	48.4%	12.2%
<b>Care &amp; Repair Scheme</b>	(466)	4.9%	23.8%	59.0%	12.2%
<b>Planning</b>	(474)	8.6%	30.2%	49.6%	11.6%
<b>Building Control</b>	(470)	8.9%	28.5%	51.1%	11.5%
<b>Environmental Health</b>	(474)	8.4%	30.2%	48.7%	12.7%
<b>Parks, Countryside &amp; Grounds Maintenance</b>	(478)	7.9%	29.9%	49.8%	12.3%

92 reasons were given as to why respondents indicated that there were one or more services which they felt had gender equality issues. These can be found in Appendix F.

Over three quarters (76%) of those surveyed felt that information in the local press / media was one of the best ways in which to get information to men and women in different communities about gender equality. Specifically, Your Review, Stratford-on-Avon District Council's own publication, received 63% of residents' votes. At 45%, the third most popular communications method was that of displays / posters around the District. Three out of ten respondents (28%) felt that a letter was one of the best ways to communicate on this subject. Interestingly, one fifth (19%) of residents opted for a "forum / group meeting" approach which surprisingly was higher than the low number (15%) recommending e-mails. Only 6% of respondents mentioned the telephone. 8% of those surveyed stated other means of communication, which can be seen in Appendix G.



**Table 7: Respondents' views on the best way to get information to men and women in different communities about gender equality.**

	%
Information in the local press / media	76.3
Your Review (Council publication)	63.1
Displays / posters around the District	44.6
Letter	27.6
Forum / group meeting	18.5
E-mail	14.5
Other	7.7
Telephone	5.6
Fax	0.8
<b>BASE:</b>	<i>(518)</i>

Residents were asked if an Equalities and Diversity Forum was created in the Stratford District, whether they would be interested in becoming involved in it. Nine out of ten of those surveyed said "no", however, 8% gave a positive response, requesting more information on the proposed forum.

## 4.5 Planning Service

Stratford-on-Avon District Council wanted to find out residents' views on the planning service in terms of usage, the information provided, the service received, and the respondents' experience of the on-line planning system.

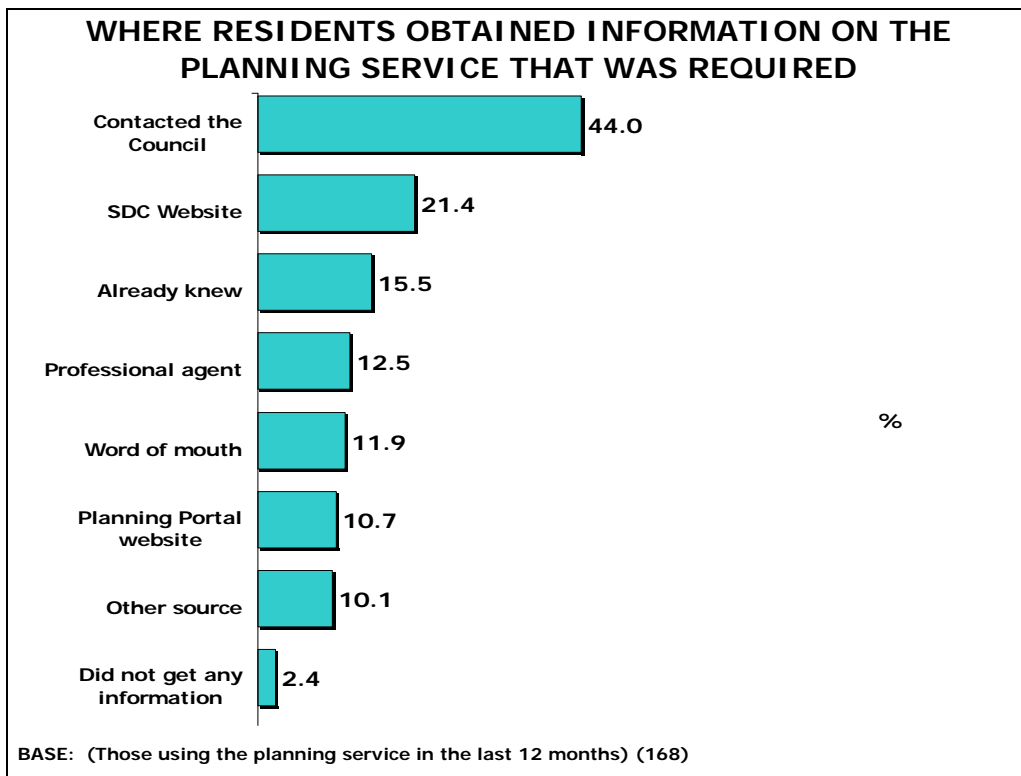
Initially, respondents were asked to indicate which aspects of the planning service they have used in the last 12 months. A considerable number: seven out of ten residents stated they had not used it in the last 12 months. 12% of respondents said they had commented on another person's planning application and 11% of residents said they wanted to look at a planning application. The same percentage (11%) of those surveyed remarked they had made a general enquiry about planning and 7% confirmed they had made a planning application. Only 4% replied that they had their building works inspected and 2% responded to a Local Development Framework consultation. The other reasons are included in Appendix I.

**Table 8: Residents' usage of the planning service in the last 12 months.**

	%
Not used the planning service in the last 12 months	70.1
I commented on another person's planning application	11.7
I wanted to look at a planning application	11.2
I made a general enquiry about planning	10.6
I made a planning application	7.4
I had my building works inspected	3.8
Other reason	2.2
I responded to a Local Development Framework consultation	2.0
I attended a surgery for pre-application advice	0.9
<b>BASE:</b>	<b>(555)</b>

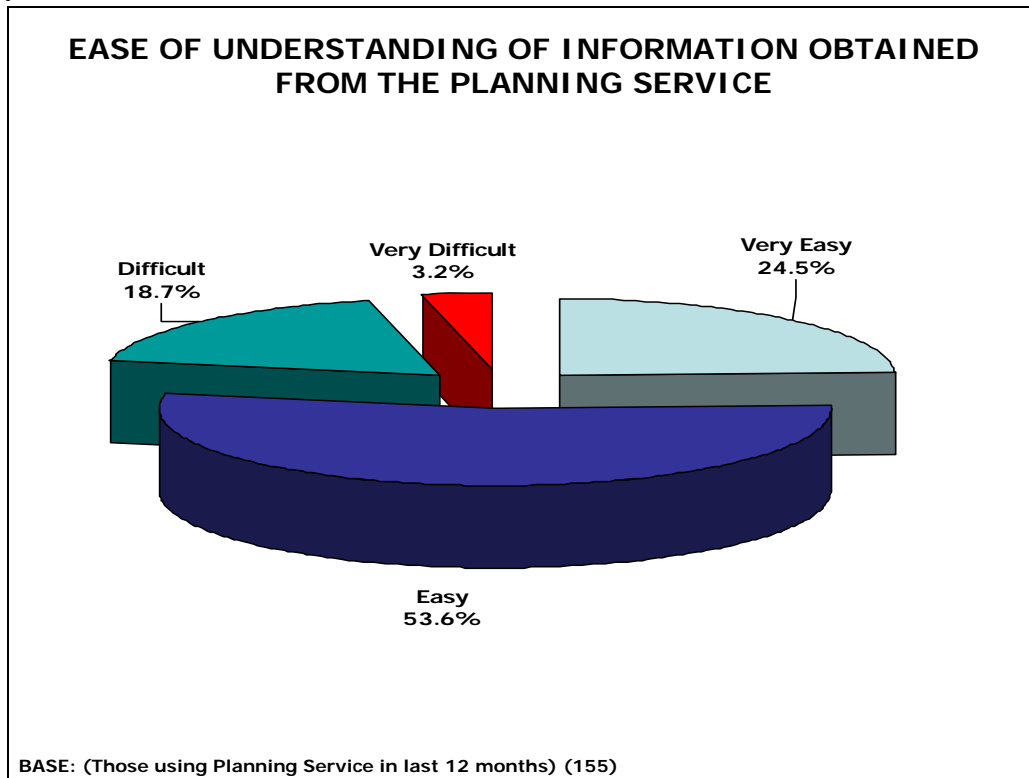
Further questions were then asked of those people who said they had used the planning service in the last 12 months, including the source of the information on the planning service that they required. Nearly half of those surveyed (44%) had contacted the Council and over a fifth (21%) had been on to the Stratford-on-Avon District Council website. One in ten residents quoted the Planning Portal website. 16% of respondents claimed they already knew the required information. 13% confirmed they had got the information they required on the planning service from a professional agent.

Chart 9:



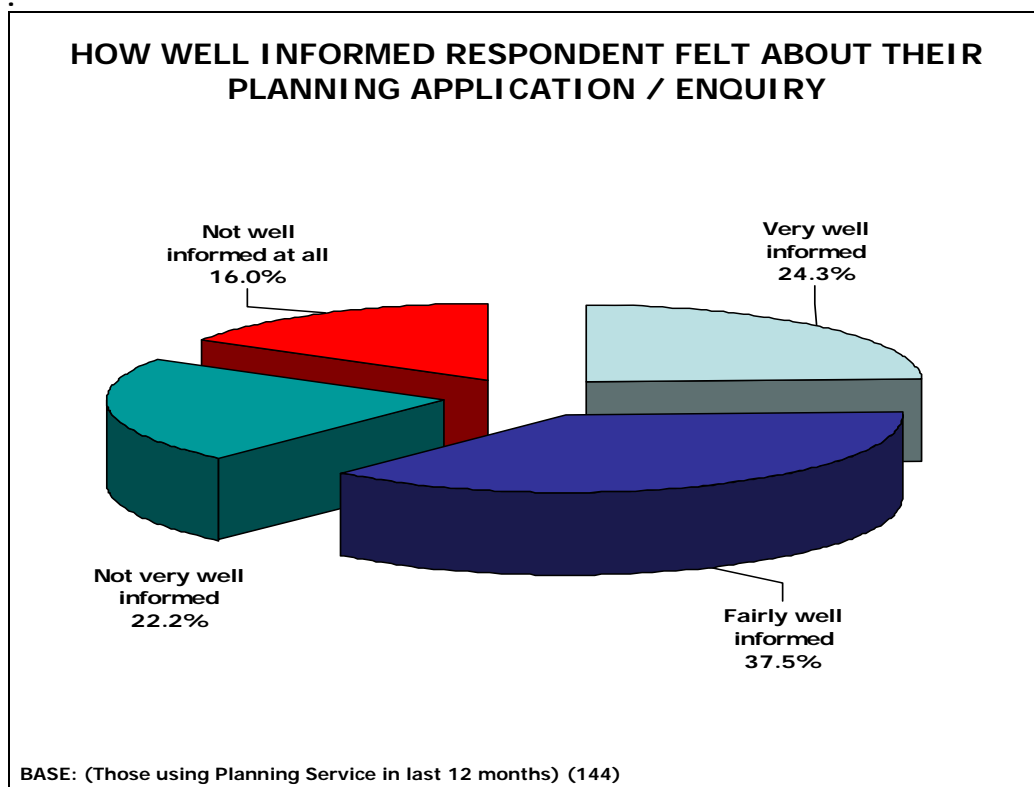
Users of the planning service in the last 12 months were also questioned on how easy or difficult it was to understand any information they had got about the planning service from Stratford-on-Avon District Council. Over three-quarters (78%) claimed that it was easy or very easy to understand, in contrast to 22% who found it either difficult or very difficult.

Chart 10:



Residents were then asked about how well informed the Council had kept them regarding their planning applications or enquiries. Six out of ten believed they were fairly well or very well informed, unlike four out of ten who felt not very well informed, or not informed at all.

**Chart 11:**



For almost a third of those 152 people surveyed for using the planning service within the last 12 months, the actual question of understanding the reason for the decision of a planning application or commenting on another person's planning application, was not applicable. However, less than half (43%) of the residents who had used the planning service over the last year claimed to understand the reason for the decision. Nearly one in four respondents (24%) did not understand the reason for the decision.

When analysing results by area, over half (54%) of those surveyed living in the Avon area stated that they did understand the reason for the decision when they made a planning application or commented on somebody else's planning application. However, only 15% of Stour residents claimed to understand the reason for the decision in their area. At 42%, the Stour area had the highest percentage of respondents not understanding the reasons for the decisions made, as opposed to just 13% of residents not understanding such reasons in the Dassett area.

Residents who had used the planning service in the last 12 months were then asked to comment on how much they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements regarding their contact with the service. Over half of those surveyed agreed with the statements, around one fifth to around one quarter neither agreed nor disagreed, together with a range of between 5% and 25% of residents disagreeing with the statements.

So far as advice being clear and easy to understand, two-thirds of respondents either agreed or strongly agreed, compared to 16% disagreeing or strongly disagreeing.

Six out of ten residents agreed or strongly agreed with the statement "I found that the advice was helpful". 19% neither agreed nor disagreed and over a fifth (22%) disagreed or strongly disagreed.

Over half of those surveyed (55%) felt that the Council had provided them with advice promptly, in contrast to a quarter who did not.

On the subject of the staff providing the advice being knowledgeable, again over half of residents (54%) were in agreement, as opposed to a fifth who were not. More than a quarter of respondents (26%) did not agree or disagree with the statement.

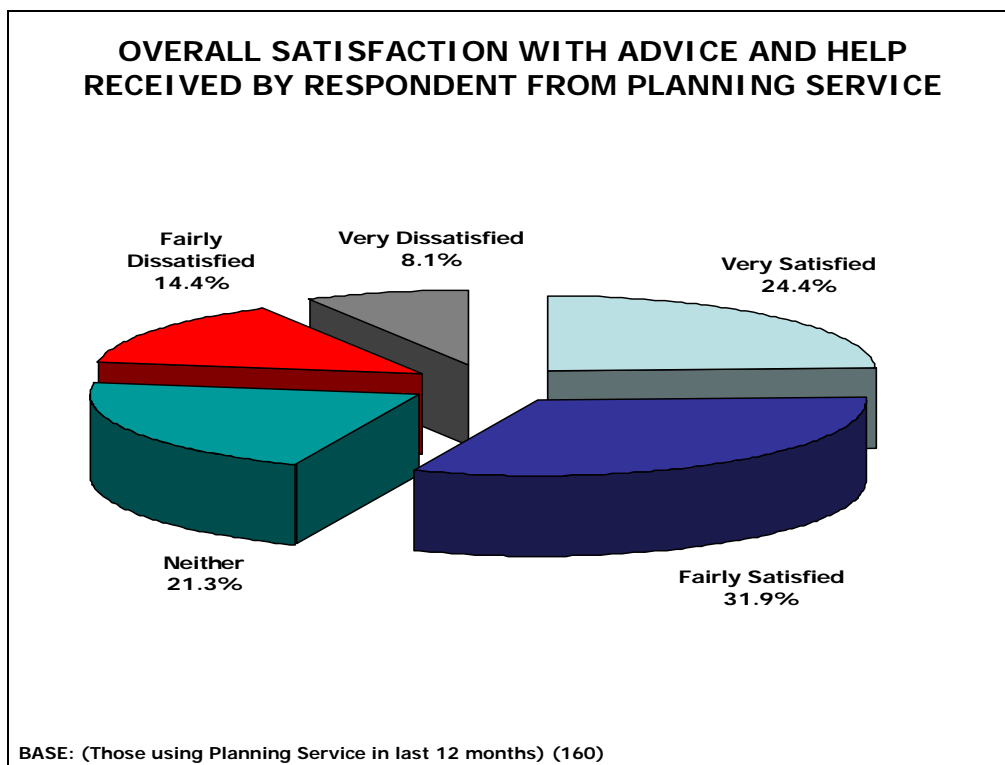
Over three-quarters of residents (77%) agreed or strongly agreed that the staff providing the advice were courteous. Only 5% disagreed or strongly disagreed with this statement and almost one fifth (18%) neither agreed nor disagreed.

**Table 9: Respondents' levels of agreement with the following statements regarding their contact with the planning service.**

	<b>BASE</b>	<b>Strongly Agree</b>	<b>Agree</b>	<b>Neither Agree nor Disagree</b>	<b>Disagree</b>	<b>Strongly Disagree</b>
<b>The advice I received was clear and easily understood</b>	(141)	19.9%	46.1%	18.4%	7.1%	8.5%
<b>I found that the advice was helpful</b>	(139)	13.7%	45.3%	18.7%	13.0%	9.4%
<b>The Council provided me with advice promptly</b>	(137)	13.1%	42.3%	19.7%	16.1%	8.8%
<b>The staff providing the advice were knowledgeable</b>	(137)	13.9%	40.2%	26.3%	10.2%	9.5%
<b>The staff providing the advice were courteous</b>	(140)	22.1%	55.0%	17.9%	2.1%	2.9%

Taking everything into account, respondents were asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the advice and help which they received from the planning service. Over a half (56%) were very or fairly satisfied, in comparison with 23% of residents who claimed to be fairly or very dissatisfied. One fifth (21%) of those surveyed expressed neither satisfaction nor dissatisfaction.

Chart 12:



All residents were asked whether they had used the planning online service on Stratford-on-Avon District Council’s website. 548 people replied, most (86%) said they had not used it, however, 14% confirmed they had made use of it.

Users of the planning online service were then questioned about what they actually used it for. Almost three-quarters (72%) said for viewing current and previous planning applications. Three out of ten confirmed that it was for viewing a planning decision. Almost a fifth (18%) used the planning online service to comment on a planning application and the same percentage of users made use of the service for viewing a weekly list. Interestingly, only 4% of planning online service users made use of the facility for submitting an application.

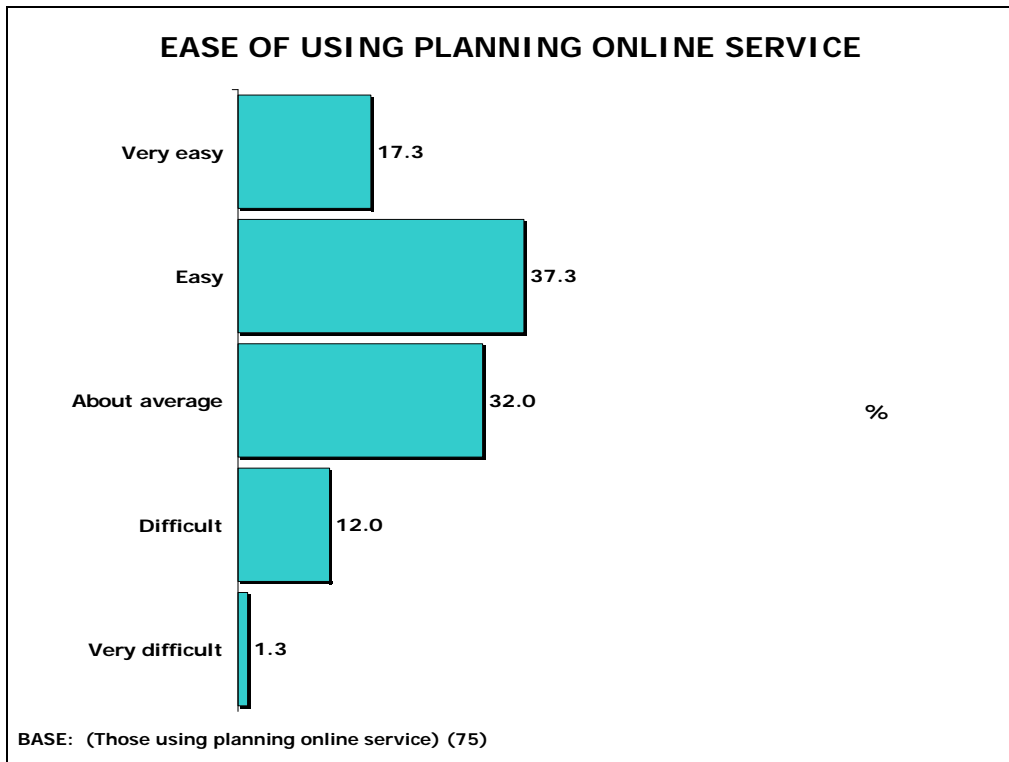
When examining responses according to the area in which the resident lived, with specific reference to the 30% of those surveyed who had used the online planning service for viewing a planning decision, it was noted that exactly half of Stour’s residents and four out of ten Avon residents, were using planning online to view decisions, in total contrast to none of Arden residents, as not one of them used the service for such a purpose.

**Table 10: Reasons why residents used the planning online service.**

	%
Viewing current and previous planning applications	72.4
Viewing a planning decision(s)	30.3
Commenting on a planning application	18.4
Viewing a weekly list(s)	18.4
Other reason	5.3
Submitting an application	3.9
BASE:	(76)

Respondents were then asked if they found the online service easy or difficult to use. Of the 75 people who replied, over half (55%) commented that it was either easy or very easy to use. Almost a third (32%) of those surveyed felt it was about average and only 13% claimed that it was difficult or very difficult.

**Chart 13:**



## 4.6 Homelessness Strategy 2008-11

Stratford-on-Avon District Council informed residents that it had committed to producing a new Homelessness Strategy by April 2008. As part of the research process, respondents were asked to comment on a series of questions.

Recent research carried out by the Council showed that many people were concerned about the impact that household debt may have on their housing situation in the future. Interestingly, however, 85% of those surveyed in this instance, stated that they were not worried in contrast to only 15% who said that it was something that was worrying them.

Significantly, 89% residents who owned their accommodation outright were not worried about the impact that household debt may have on their housing situation in the future, in comparison with only seven out of ten residents who were renting from a private landlord and three-quarters of those renting from a Housing Association / Trust feeling the same way.

Appendix I indicates the types of debt that may give the 15% of residents, quoted above, cause for concern.

The survey then went on to ask whether respondents had ever experienced housing difficulties, such as homelessness or the threat thereof, or any unsatisfactory conditions in the home, whilst living in the Stratford District. Over nine out of ten (92%) of those surveyed claimed they had not, however, 8% confirmed they had actually experienced housing difficulties. 11% of females said they had, against only 5% of males. The nature of the difficulties quoted are included in Appendix J.

Three out of ten residents who claimed to have experienced housing difficulties in the Stratford District were renting from a private landlord. Similarly, 29% of those renting from a Housing Association / Trust had experienced problems. However, only 4% of residents who occupied their accommodation outright and 8% of those buying on mortgage said that they had experienced housing difficulties whilst living in the Stratford District.

Almost half of residents (45%) who had experienced housing difficulties said that it happened four years ago or longer. A third of those surveyed experiencing difficulties stated they were two to three years ago and less than a quarter (23%) or respondents claimed that their difficulties had been within the last year.

All respondents were asked to comment on which organisations or individuals they would approach if they had housing difficulties and almost half (47%) replied the Council (in general).

Interestingly, when analysing results by respondents' accommodation, over half (55%) of residents who were buying on mortgage said that they would go to the Council if they had housing difficulties, as opposed to 28% of those renting from a Housing Association / Trust.

Just over a quarter (26%) of respondents said they would contact the Citizens Advice Bureau.

Housing Association / South Warwickshire was the third most popular choice, as indicated by 13% of residents. Four out of ten people renting from a Housing Association / Trust confirmed that they would approach the Housing Association / South Warwickshire if they had housing difficulties, in comparison with only 8% of those who owned their accommodation outright and 13% of those buying on mortgage. Notably, a quarter of residents renting from private landlords stated would approach the Housing Association / South Warwickshire.

One in ten stated that they would contact their Local Councillor and a similar number specifically quoted the Council Housing Department. 7% of those surveyed indicated that they would contact friends or family if they experienced housing difficulties.



**Table 11: Organisations or individuals which respondents would go to if they had housing difficulties.**

	%
Council (General)	47.0
Citizens Advice Bureau	26.2
Housing Association / South Warwickshire	13.4
Local Councillor	11.0
Council Housing Department	10.4
Friends / Family	6.8
Bank / Building Society	3.9
Social Services	2.7
Mortgage Provider	2.1
Solicitor	2.1
Myself	1.8
MP	1.2
Age Concern	1.2
Shelter	1.2
Other	3.0
<b>BASE:</b>	<b>(336)</b>

Residents aged 50 or over were asked what they thought were the most important issues which may affect their ability to remain in their home in the future.

The most popular response, quoted by a third of those surveyed, was “needing adaptations to my home due to health problems / disability”.

Analysing results by respondents’ manner of household occupation showed that almost half (46%) of those who owned their home outright and three out of ten residents renting from a Housing Association / Trust, quoted the above statement, as opposed to only 12% of those buying on mortgage.

Over a quarter (26%) of residents were concerned with problems due to lack of access to transport: over a third (34%) of those who owned their accommodation outright and 32% of those renting from a Housing Association / Trust gave this reason. By contrast, only 11% of those buying on mortgage said likewise.

Just under a quarter (24%) of respondents felt that their need for help with gardening might affect their ability to stay in their home in the future.

Over two out of ten (23%) of those surveyed were worried about finding reliable / trustworthy builders: a particular concern to just over a third (34%) of those who owned their accommodation outright, in comparison with only one in ten residents buying on mortgage.

17% of residents mentioned needing help with shopping. 15% of respondents were concerned about needing more help with access to services and advice and 13% named disrepair as one of the most important issues. Other issues are included in Appendix K.

**Table 12: Most important issues over 50s feel affect their ability to remain in their home in the future**

	%
Needing adaptations to my home due to health problems/disability	32.3
I am not 50+ years old	28.4
Problems due to lack of access to transport	26.1
Needing help with gardening	23.7
Worried about finding reliable / trustworthy builders	23.1
Needing help with shopping	17.1
Needing more help with access to services and advice	15.2
Disrepair	12.5
Cannot pay for any of the above	11.0
None of these	14.1
Other	10.3
BASE:	(545)

Nine out of ten of those surveyed were not aware of the Council’s Housing Renewal team, which offers advice and practical solutions to anyone living in the Stratford-on-Avon District, enabling them to remain living independently in their own home. 12% of residents confirmed that they knew this service was available: three out of ten residents renting from a Housing Association / Trust stated they were aware, as opposed to only 8% of those buying on a mortgage.

When asked where they had heard about it, almost half of the respondents (41%) who were aware of the Council’s Housing Renewal team said that it was due to word of mouth. Almost a fifth (18%) stated that it was through Council staff and the same percentage of residents quoted Age Concern. 17% of those surveyed confirmed they had heard about the Housing Renewal team via leaflets. A further 17% of respondents gave other sources, and these are included in appendix L.

One in ten residents found out about the Housing Renewal team through the Council website as well as one in ten residents finding out about it via the voluntary sector.

**Table 13: Means by which respondents had heard about the service of the Housing Renewal team.**

	%
Word of mouth	40.9
Council staff	18.2
Age Concern	18.2
Leaflet	16.7
Council website	10.6
Voluntary sector	10.6
Local councillor	7.6
Citizens Advice Bureau	6.1
Poster	3.0
Other means	16.7
BASE:	(66)

The questionnaire then went on to ask all respondents to state how strongly they agreed or disagreed with a series of statements in respect of housing.

17% of residents either disagreed or strongly disagreed with the statement: **“There is a problem in the District with people having to sleep on sofas and floors of family and friends”**. However, almost the same percentage of those surveyed (16%) claimed to agree with the statement. The majority of respondents: seven out of ten people surveyed, neither agreed nor disagreed with the statement. Interestingly, over a third (35%) of residents

renting from a Housing Association / Trust and one in three residents renting from a private landlord agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. However, by contrast, only 13% of those buying on mortgage and 14% of those who owned their accommodation outright agreed or strongly agreed with it.

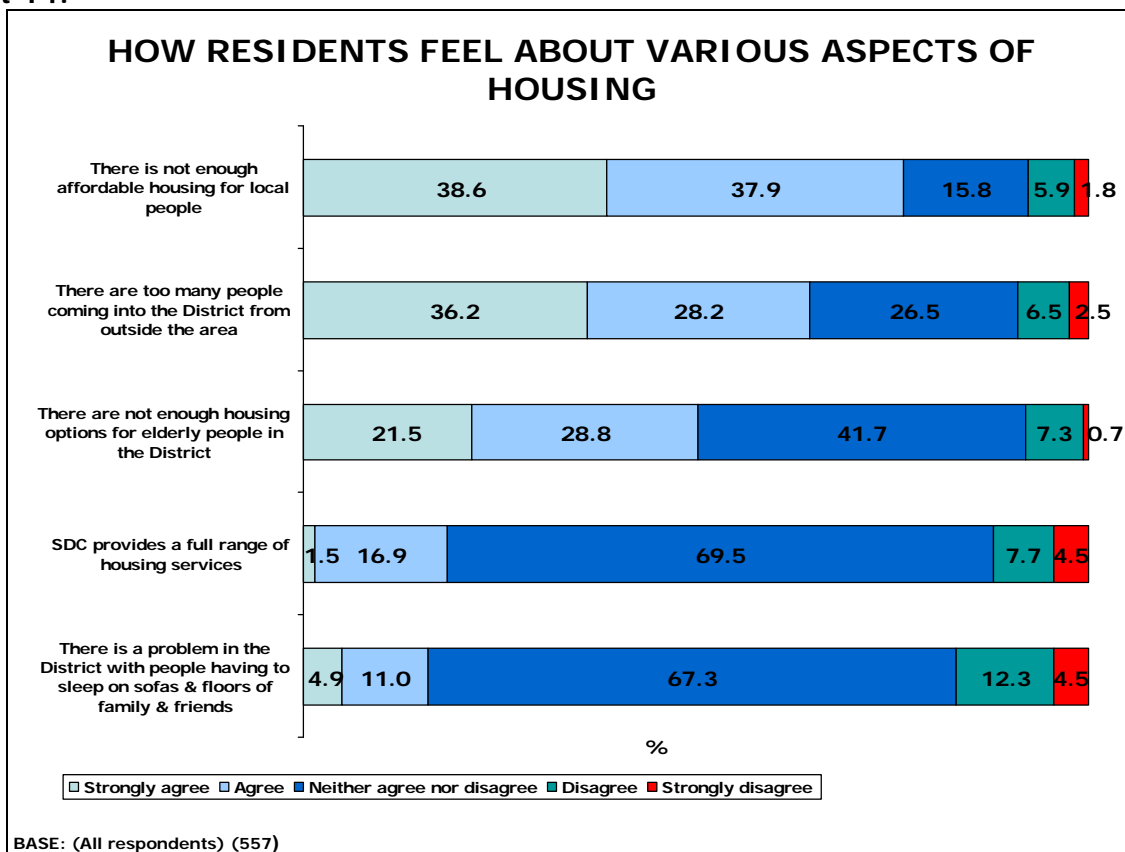
So far as there being **not enough affordable housing for local people**, over three-quarters (77%) of residents agreed, compared to just 8% disagreeing. When analysing results by area, eight out of ten residents from the Avon, Dassett and Stour areas agreed or strongly agreed that there was insufficient housing for local people, as opposed to only six out of ten Arden residents feeling the same way. Significantly, all of the respondents who rented from a private landlord agreed or strongly agreed with this, as did nine out of ten of those renting from a Housing Association / Trust. This was in contrast to only seven out of ten residents who owned their accommodation outright and eight out of ten buying on mortgage, feeling the same way. Comparing responses by gender, half of women, versus a third of men, strongly agreed with the statement regarding insufficient affordable housing for local people.

64% of respondents felt that **too many people come into the District from outside the area**. Over a quarter (27%) declined to comment on the matter and only 9% disagreed or strongly disagreed. Over three-quarters (76%) of Avon residents and 61% of Arden residents agreed or strongly disagreed that too many people come into the District from outside the area, as opposed to just a half (51%) of respondents from the Stour area and 55% of those living in the Dassett area.

Half of those surveyed either agreed or strongly agreed with the statement: **“There are not enough housing options for elderly people in the District”**, compared to only 8% who disagreed or strongly disagreed.

As to whether Stratford-on-Avon District Council provides **a full range of housing services**, seven out of ten residents said that they neither agreed nor disagreed. However, almost one fifth of those surveyed (18%) agreed or strongly agreed that this was the case, as opposed to 12% of respondents who disagreed or strongly disagreed. Significantly, almost two-thirds (64%) of residents renting from a Housing Association / Trust agreed or strongly agreed with this particular statement, as opposed to only 12% of those buying on mortgage and 17% of those owning their accommodation outright, being in agreement.

Chart 14:



#### 4.7 Focus Groups

Stratford-on-Avon District Council informed residents that it organised focus groups across the District in order to get residents' views about its services and policies. When asked whether they would like to be involved in the future, over half (59%) of those surveyed said no, in comparison to 41% who stated yes.

#### 4.8 Respondents' Profile

Just over half (52%) of those surveyed were male and 48% were female.

Almost two thirds (64%) of those surveyed were aged 55 and over.

**Table 14: Age group of respondents.**

	%
16-24	0.9
25-34	6.7
35-44	14.9
45-54	14.0
55-64	29.4
65-74	22.8
75+	11.4
BASE:	(571)

Almost two thirds (62%) of residents said that they had two adults living in their household.

**Table 15: Number of adults living in respondents' households.**

	%
1	25.2
2	62.2
3	9.6
4	2.8
More than 4	0.2
BASE:	(531)

**Table 16: % of households with children in different age groups.**

	%
Age 0-4	12.4
Aged 5-10	8.9
Aged 11-15	6.3
Aged 16-17	4.2
BASE:	(575)

With regard to how the respondents' households occupied their accommodation, more than half (54%) claimed to own it outright, compared to just over a third (34%) who stated that they were buying on mortgage. Only 6% of residents confirmed that they were renting from a housing association / trust compared to 5% renting from private landlords.

**Table 17: Ways in which respondents' households occupy their accommodation.**

	%
Owned outright	53.9
Buying on mortgage	34.2
Rent from Housing Association / Trust	5.6
Rent from private landlord	4.9
Other	1.4
BASE:	(570)

Respondents were asked to state how long they had been living in the District of Stratford-on-Avon. Just over half (51%) of those surveyed had lived in the District for over 20 years. One in five residents claimed to have lived in the District for between 10 and 20 years and 15% stated between 5 and 10 years. Interestingly, when analysing results by area, over a fifth (21%) of Arden residents had lived in the District of Stratford-on-Avon for between 5 and 10 years, in comparison with only one in ten residents from the Stour area and 12% of those living in the Avon area.

**Table 18: Length of time that respondents' have lived in the District.**

	%
1 year or less	1.4
Between 1 and 2 years	2.1
Between 2 and 5 years	9.7
Between 5 and 10 years	14.6
Between 10 and 20 years	21.4
Over 20 years	50.8
BASE:	(569)

Residents were asked which activity best described what they were doing at present. Just over a third (34%) stated that they were wholly retired from work and 30% confirmed that they were employed full-time (30 hours plus per week). 14% of those surveyed claimed to be self-employed, full or part-time and one in ten residents said they worked part-time (under 30 hours per week).

**Table 19: Activities of respondents.**

	%
Wholly retired from work	33.8
Employee in full-time job (30 hours plus per week)	30.0
Self-employed, full or part time	13.8
Employee in part-time job (under 30 hours per week)	10.4
Looking after the home	5.0
Permanently sick / disabled	3.9
Doing something else	1.4
Unemployed and available for work	1.3
Full-time education at school, college or university	0.4
BASE:	(557)

As regards to religion or belief, eight out of ten residents stated that they were Christian compared to 17% claiming that they had no religion.

**Table 20: Religion or belief of respondents.**

	%
Christian	80.0
No religion	17.3
Other	1.8
Buddhist	0.4
Jewish	0.4
Sikh	0.2
Hindu	0.0
Muslim	0.0
BASE:	<i>(561)</i>

When asked whether they had any long-term illness, health problems or disability which limited their daily activities or the work they could do, 81% of those surveyed confirmed they did not. 565 people gave a reply to this question. Less than a fifth (19%) of respondents, however, claimed to have a long-term illness, health problem, or disability, affecting their daily activities or work undertaken.

**Table 21: Groups to which respondents consider they belong.**

	%
White British	97.4
White – Irish	0.7
White – Other	1.2
Mixed – White & Black Caribbean	0.2
Mixed – White & Asian	0.2
Any other ethnic background	0.4
BASE:	<i>(568)</i>

# APPENDICES

***APPENDIX A – OTHER WAYS OF CONTACTING THEIR DISTRICT COUNCILLOR  
(37 responses)***

"Council meeting in village"  
"Spoke to him in the street because I know him well"  
"At Parish council meeting"  
"Went into the Council offices and spoke to the relevant person"  
"Met in the street"  
"Meeting at Council office"  
"Parish Council Meeting"  
"In person - lives locally"  
"Face to face"  
"Letter received"  
"Society"  
"Parish Council meeting"  
"Parish Council meeting"  
"Visit to office"  
"Local village meeting"  
"Person to Person"  
"Following a Parish Council meeting & while he was canvassing at the May 07 DC election time."  
"Socially"  
"Face to face"  
"Personal contact"  
"Parish Council meetings, his report on topics regarding District Council actions relevant to village"  
"Personal discussion at meetings"  
"Parish Council meeting"  
"Personally - lives in our village"  
"Met in street"  
"During a conversation"  
"Via Parish meeting"  
"Spoke personally"  
"We met casually"  
"Engaged in monthly Parish Council meetings"  
"Meeting about a particular problem"  
"Word of mouth"  
"Met in the local"  
"Planning surgery / discussion"  
"Visited house"  
"Met him"  
"Personal contact"



**APPENDIX B – HOW THEY COULD IMPROVE THEIR EFFECTIVENESS AS A DISTRICT COUNCILLOR**  
**(198 responses)**

- Most people probably still do not know who their district councillor is: He/She needs more publicity and a higher profile.
- Try and act in the belief that the cause or subject matter in point should be resolved without any political influence or on a personal ego trip.
- By sending out a simple leaflet to every house hold with their photo, telephone no, contact address on, explaining that they are the representative for your household and would therefore welcome any inquiries problems or ideas that the people in their district would like to express. It would be appreciated if this could be done in a way that did not eulogies the Councillor and didn't mention their 'achievements' but was signed by them in acknowledgment of their personal interest. We only see to know our Councillor at election times and most of us bin the papers afterwards! After election it is of no consequence which party they represent, they there to help us all. But some householders resent 'party' of their opposition mentioned.
- Increase awareness of their role.
- How do we contact our Councillor?
- Needs to be aware of the 'real world' limited to his knowledge of any outside Councillor business.
- Mix more with real village people. Very liberal to much politics. Should concentrate more on affordable housing.
- More visible worthwhile projects - my parents live in Wychavon who do a great job on this level.
- Push for local amenities e.g. rubbish tip for Studley area. Its crazy that we have to drive to Stratford ( particularly when there's a local tip just 'over the border'.
- By listening to the wishes of the residents over a development in our village.
- A twice yearly newspaper to explain what they have done for us or the community.
- They should question and challenge the information and policies put forward by officer and party headers more vigorously, they are often too close and have their own agenda.
- Know who it is! I have no idea! Have a job description - what can we expect of a local Councillor.
- I do not know who my Councillor is - Cyril Bennis is the only one I know of who does anything good for the people of Stratford.
- Inspect some of the roads, too many holes!
- Licensing and acting on needs of individuals
- More details on who they are, how to contact them and what they can do.
- I feel there is no need for the improvement as Councillor Jackson does an excellent job.
- By keeping on top of any new developments being implemented by the District council - e.g. Housing, Planning, Council tax, Recycling. Whether any changes would benefit their constituents - not being afraid to express opinions - fighting for the rights of the people who voted them in office. Making sure that the District council don't waste our council Tax money.
- A very unapproachable person , sullen and unhelpful.
- More active involvement in problems
- Improve info documented in town about what they are doing.
- I am the only one of many thousand and I understand that a one to one help is limited. This is why I try and solve problems myself. I do believe that Councillors delegate a lot which then turns into an impossibility.
- Activity is needed not words and promises. There is a problem in Station Road. 1. Need extra traffic lights to alert cars from School Road that there is a cross road. Accidents happen. 2. No sign of a cul-de-sac. Big lorries, fire engines etc try to go through and have difficulty turning. 3. Need to restrict parking. Why assurances , promises, no action?
- No involvement - cant make a judgement.
- Between election there seems to be no contact between Councillors and the community they serve. They need to get closer to everyday people on a regular basis. I.E being Councillor comes certain responsibilities and commitment other than politics to the council.

- I have been here for two years and as y have not contacted a councillor therefore I cannot judge his or her effectiveness.
- Listen to what people of Stratford want and then act on it.
- We are fortunate in Alcester in having councillors who have lived in the town all their lives ( or most of ) Politics play no part.
- Ensure that the current system of waste collection also Green bins/paper /bottles remains at the current levels. I.E waste - weekly, Paper/Bottles bi-weekly
- Buy a more positive approach to problems.
- Call and make themselves known.
- For a start for them to be known, I have no idea, who the district Councillor is.
- Resolve long standing problems regarding the regular flooding of Wotton Wawen.
- Getting to know their constituents
- Appeal to take notice and action on local issues not centre on Stratford-on--Avon town issues.
- Not very useful getting back to me and not rely helpful with info more explanation needed.
- Follow up on questions, with phone call or letter. I made a specific enquiry about a non-enforcement of a planning decision
- Not an approachable person , just a social climber.
- Take seriously issues like litter being dropped by school children who have ASBO credentials. There is little power that the school can take. Put cameras up and around Henley and give a minimum £1000 fine for any offenders who litter. Also rubbish burning should be discouraged not only domestic but also commercial. Yes commercial as some businesses need more warnings.
- By replying more promptly. By not de-electing actions to someone else.
- There is a lot of crime in Wellesbourne it seems to be increasing, what is being done about it. Playground equipment is now poor and in a bad state. Nothing has been done about it.
- Make themselves more known.
- Be more available.
- Too many hats
- Be more visible within the community. Other than Parish council meetings - not a great forum in which to have open access to the majority of residents. Email newsletters briefing on current issues facing the ward.
- There needs to be a review of the requirements / qualifications required to be considered before a person becomes eligible to become a district councillor. Experience in Shipston on tour shows that the district council has members who have no skill or experience and matters brought before the council do not seem to be dealt with in a business / professional manner. Councillors are dealing with issues that require / use public finances and therefore need to be more accountable.
- They are always very helpful.
- They could make what they are doing and why more apparent. How, for example, does the letting of shop premises in prime sites to 'down market' businesses (e.g. betting shops, superdrug, Barratts) square with class Stratford aspirations. What influence do the councillors have on this? what are their aspirations for the quality of shops / restaurants in the town?
- Represent the interests of the people who elect them rather than side with senior Council officers in the pursuit of their own political ambitions.
- Meet and Greet - do they ever visit the community? Have a point of contact for locals / i.e. a local representative who understands the area and is available to speak to directly regarding any issues, perhaps online!
- Take time out to listen carefully to views expressed from well informed and educated residents.
- Don't know till I need to contact them how effective their response will be.
- Extend days by another 6 hours!
- My DC is a helpful man whenever his help is needed. I could not ask for more than that.
- A very complicated question involving many factors!! However , one aspect would be - if parties could invite on major issues i.e. infrastructure, housing etc to form a strong united front then the 'not able to do' answer form the appropriate authority would at least clarify to the voting public where the problem lay.

- They must take from the paid officials all decisions. They must have complete control over all matters only influenced but not dictated by technical or legal advice given by these officials. It is only this action which will ensure the electorates wishes are carried out to the letter.
- Make house calls regularly and talk to residents.
- I Don't know who my district councillor is, so firstly improve visibility of members.
- Take a stand on an issue rather than 'try to represent the views of constituents which are obviously going to be split
- More communication
- Greater regular(email) communication only seem to hear when they are canvassing in run up to elections
- Be more visible through the local media. Details at local post office for contact.
- Listen more to the views of the local people.
- By returning to original councils where each district was controlled by a local council.
- By seeking the views and opinions and concerns of the people they claim to represent. 2. By acting and voting in accordance with their residents views instead of (as now) following the direction given by their political party/ and/ or council officers. 3. By reading , studying and understanding documents letters and other briefing material, in order to make informed and independent judgements on planning matters and other issues of public interest ( their performance in council meetings makes it obvious that they don't do this properly - if at all)
- Have meetings locally either on general or specific issues.
- Make themselves more recognised to the general public.
- By listening to the people and acting on what they have heard and not what their political party has laid down.
- By being more aware of community concerns.
- Divorce themselves from the main political parties (the old rates party)
- More information about what they do and how they help/ assist.
- I Don't know what their powers are or how the system works. I Don't feel the council act in my interests - I just feel they have their own agenda. I would like someone to contact me to discuss what can happen.
- Listen to what the public want not what the government says or what the Councillor wants.
- Be more in personal touch with important matters e.g. world Stratford. It was would class prior to introduction of Stratford upon Avon district council. Borough council was a more effective and professional organisation and more caring.
- I phoned the council several times regarding missed green recycling bins (5 in all) and was given various excuses, and several different days to rectify. Finally I emailed the Councillor and the bins were emptied the following day.
- Circulate information on their work regularly - could they be given an allowance to enable them to do this?
- Represent the residents and voters of Stratford. Consistently the views and concerns of the residents are ignored or failed to be acted on. For instance - ones development, new pedestrian bridge, parking charges, new relief road, protecting the recreation ground of residents.
- Continue to attend local meetings.
- I only know who they are at election time.
- Make themselves more known and contactable. Regular updates of what they are doing to improve alert. The only time we hear what they stand for is at voting time?!
- Talk and communicate with people
- Cannot comment as I have only ever met the councillors for pre-election visits.
- Have a higher profile so more people are aware of who they are and the services they can offer. The pages 4 and 5 of your review were good, perhaps an expansion of each individuals local role and accessibility could be made available.
- Socialising more in Wellesbourne i.e. pubs, clubs, an local shops, so that they meet and talk to more of the public.
- Yes improvement is always looked for as much interaction with the public as possible.
- Let us know who they are.
- Not making promises and then failing to carry them out

- They could stay to listen to an entire parish council meeting more frequently. They often only hear half the agenda. 2. They both, for our diversion, have limited experience having less than 5 years on the DC one has less than 2 years.
- Be more independent of the slavish control of the party whip and put the views of their constituents who elected them, before the wishes of their party.
- More power to local councillors less from central government and far less from the permanent officials - council employees are or should be servants of the council who employ them.
- It would be useful if a poster was listed in the village that stated the members of the district council so we knew the issues relevant to his/hers role, e.g. planning query, local blocked drain, issue regarding school dinners.
- They could make themselves known more around their district, talk to people.
- By using influence to persuade council to listen to wishes of local population regarding Budgets, Bancroft etc etc
- Councillors are becoming too much like corporate animals. Their allegiance is to party and Council rather than seeing to the needs of the constituents.
- A delivery of local news information every six months
- Applies only to Anita MacAulay other councillors non-existent
- Make themselves more aware to the people in the District ( more high profile)
- Reduce bureaucracy
- They could make themselves better known in the area by campaigning on an issue that affects the district.
- Make sure we are given information about themselves - our previous councillor sent a newsletter with information about issues in which he had been involved etc. I have found that we are expected to vote for a councillor for our area with little or no information about the candidates.
- Spend less time at unnecessary meetings having more time to meet the people face to face.
- Need to be more proactive. No real knowledge of activities or priorities.
- Be more contactable more ' High profile' actually represent the views of their constituents regardless of 'party political line' Are constituency surgeries held? If they are then publicise them! Hold them at times when people in work can attend.
- Spend money on starter homes not new council offices etc. 2. Be more accountable to us for their spending and consider needs of areas that come under Stratford upon Avon but are not in the town itself. 3. Stratford upon Avon whilst being a tourist destination is not all it is, or should not be allocated large amounts of money, 4. Councillors should use common sense on many occasions I have seen council employees carrying out routine work on weekends and bank holidays. At an increase cost to us the tax payer i.e. time and a half / double time? Why can you not arrange your resources better or as I said above is it because you are not really accountable for what or each section spends?
- I feel that to expect anything from councillors council is living in cuckoo land. You seem to have no or little interest in the wishes of ordinary people like myself.
- Essentially independent on their experience/ability and personal views. Electors effectively reflect this when voting i.e. they improve or lose.
- Visibility, Don't know who DC is or what stands for/against.
- I think it was dreadful that during the recent terrible flooding in Alcester that the council produced no help whatsoever. I know they had problems elsewhere but still
- Provide some contact with public no idea where or how he/she operates
- I'm not really aware of what they can do for me. It would be helpful have a 'typical' list of the type of things Councillors get involved in and how they can help out members of the public.
- It would be nice to know who they are
- Personal newsletters
- Be easier to contact on telephone and not be passed around so much
- Higher profile in area - I.e. communicate more regularly
- Equality between money spent in different geographical areas
- Listen to more public opinion
- Listening to representatives. It is clear that there is a general view that when matters are put out to a public examination that the view of the public are ignored and the council do what they had originally planned.

- It is a known fact that the SDC concentrate more on the effectiveness of their own office and the running of the main town than rural areas. Our district councillor constantly shows SDC our problems but they are never seen to be priority by SDC. Therefore I feel effectiveness can only be found by re-arrangement of SDC work plans.
- By talking local issues, head on, and trying to represent the people of the town
- Perhaps have monthly surgeries
- I emailed regarding rubbish left out in Albany road and received no reply. However when I contacted the council direct (by phone) I found the council employee helpful and the problem was resolved.
- Stop speeding in our village. Reduce council tax. Reduce flooding in the village, the number of houses in the village has quadrupled without any improvements in main drainage systems. Reduce disruption to traffic caused by schools.
- Take more interest in rural communities and less interest in Stratford town. Communicate with residents in rural communities.
- Monitor council departmental performances more studiously.
- I have contacted district councillors over the past 15 years when they have called the bi-elections with regards to the lack of dropped kerbs at the entrance to Birch Abbey and also re the surface of Abbey Tuay for wheelchairs. So far nothing has been done and so I have lost faith in the effectiveness of any district councillor
- Become more accessible by for example writing an article in local parish magazine
- Regular meetings in villages
- In the second case by realising that residents do not always agree with their plans and by realising that many council payers do not have spare money which to support them. As a general rule the council is far too eager to spend money - which many of us struggle to pay much to liberally and things we do not wish to be done
- In this particular instance it might be difficult to improve on existing excellence.
- A greater public profile, I'm not sure what it is
- Hold more local surgeries to allow elder members to get better access to local councillors
- See through a process until the end and push the council to do the same.
- Website link. Mail drop /flyer to outline role availability etc.
- Be independent of any political parties.
- Be a bit more of a 'face' locally, be seen a bit more.
- By being more visible and tackling issues that are pertinent to local issues/people e.g. affordable housing for 1st time buyers and transport for young and old people who do not have cars of their own.
- Let us know who they are!
- By making themselves known locally e.g. perhaps a short paragraph in our local Harbury news once a month.
- Make themselves known to people - circulate e.g. knock doors not just at election times.
- Be more visible for example make themselves known in local press/ village news letters.
- As they are known to the population they take care of there should be known trouble and the fact that they are readily available.
- Not qualified to judge.
- By spending time to understand our concerns/issues with current plans / actions of the council.
- By replying to correspondence.
- Very Satisfied.
- The answer could be in direct contrast to above but for me personally it has first and foremost ( little ad general approachability) most people would be more inclined to ask for help and advice if there were more friendly means to do so.
- By soliciting the views of those they represent.
- Councillors should reflect voters wishes. At SDC probably like most councils they reflect the party 100%
- Regrettably my district councillor Keith Lloyd has left his seat. He was the only Councillor apart from former Mayor Bill Lowe in whom I had any faith or confidence. Councillors Beckett and Short both fail to reply to correspondence. The latter need not adopt a much more positive approach. I have not had any contact from or with my new conservative councillor. I hope she proves rather more competent. Councillors should be totally independent of political parties and wholly concerned with their constituents (the people)
- My councillor was only elected this year. Never heard of her before-never met her during or after the election. A more visible person would be much appreciated.

- On important matters e.g. RSC Bridge and RSC makeover, it is a pity that they can be overruled by County and themselves overrule wishes of the town and townspeople.
- To listen to what Stratfordians want and not do the opposite. We do not want a new pedestrian bridge. We do not want trees felled in Bancroft. We do want to keep some of Stratfords heritage and not to destroy the towns anymore as it already has been. we would like council to represent the peoples wishes.
- I feel the councils lack of visibility - the only time that the council activity becomes prominent is (in my opinion) during election campaigns. Maybe updating their constituents via newsletter or email could be options to highlight local initiatives or give information about availability/local surgeries.
- Have local surgeries make themselves more available.
- By listening to Stratfordians.
- Regular advertised drop in surgery. Personal visit to a cross-section of homes within the ward. Published attendance at meetings. Become more visible to local residents. Perhaps advertise on the web, so we can see which councillors are actually attending meetings.
- Councillors not from this area do not respond to local feelings on important issues i.e. word class Stratford. I feel we have no input! To Warwickshire council.
- Be more available and take note of what is said to them to more represent the views of residents. At present I feel they only represent themselves.
- A little unfair since I am now represented by a new councillor who seem conscientious. However I have lived in over 6 previous administrations in my adult life. I find SDC overbearing , some councillors arrogant but perhaps this is compensated by there being one or two who have been excellent. Effectiveness might be improved if only more higher quality could be attracted to the task.
- Issue to every household in the district a very brief outline of ways in which district councillors can be of help to the community.
- Listen to people and their views more instead of thinking they know best.
- By listening to the residents and acting as requested by the majority - not following the party.
- I cant see how their effectiveness could be improved. This surely depends upon the individual and I am very satisfied with mine.
- Be more open and listen to the public that they represent.
- No knowledge of work or role.
- Make themselves more available especially for the elderly and disabled
- When they state that they listen to the public ( who they represent) they should respond accordingly to the majority of the publics responses to problems i.e. no budge, no cutting down of trees, no attention to canal bridge etc..... all protested against by the public, but over ruled by the councillors who just follow political mantra. They should be deselected in due course. Councillors who over ride residents wishes should be made to make a 'reason for statement' in the review.
- Be more pro-active. Get involved with local issues instead of waiting for the general public to kick up a fuss.
- If power between councillors was even. A lot of people in xxx are scared of xxx
- Clean out Drains more often and also put more guttering in main road.
- Meet the people more - hold surgeries, visit schools, community groups, churches.
- Make contact easier, provide an information/contact card with all contact details telephone number, fax, email, web. On a credit card size card or fridge magnet.
- I think Stratford district council could improve on their reactions to various complaints, complete public services with more efficiency ( mowing grass verges to the edges all of them at once, pruning tree branches back so pedestrians Don't scrape their heads on the wood of overhanging boughs and branches) I even reported a vandalised road name sign ( foster avenue in Studley) to a police officer and in turn reported it to you (Stratford district council) but I am still waiting to see a replacement.
- Be more visible I wouldn't know who he/she is.
- I have no idea who they are. (apart from election campaigns)
- Don't know
- Treat all persons the same whether a large or small problem. A small problem to some is large.
- More high profile. More contactable. Take part in local issues (active) litter picking days charity events etc.

- Although I have not needed to contact my District council I am aware that she is very responsive to requests for help or information from the local community.
- Advertise surgeries. Flyer to each house/home contact details.
- I have no visibility of my local councillor and so I am not sure what he/she does and how he/she can help.
- Make an effort to introduce themselves.
- Stratford should listen to Southam - not abuse their (remote) power.
- I have no Idea.
- Pro-actively Communicate with residents to whom they are responsible. This should not be by written word, regular public and publicised meetings.
- Ill be honest I Don't know what they do.
- It would be good to get a quality report on what they do. What committees they are on , key decisions before the council etc. Some objective information - often what we get is tainted by political bias.
- Don't Know
- Don't really know what their performance is, therefore unable to comment on how effective they are or how they could improve. To be honest Don't even know who they are.
- District councillors should take more account of the views of local towns councils.
- Very little information about their role or capabilities.
- By communicating with the electorate between elections
- Be more visible village meetings.
- Better sourced.
- I understand that our Councillor attends the local PC regularly so he does all he can to be visible
- By representing the views of the public and by baring this in mind - and not just arbitrary decisions - emailers do not listen to the public vote.
- They actually need to be more accountable for what they do. More action less spin. Do what they said they would do.

**APPENDIX C – REGULAR ARTICLES ABOUT THE WORK OF THE DISTRICT COUNCIL WHICH RESIDENTS WANT TO SEE INCLUDED IN “YOUR REVIEW” (286 responses)**

- The format of "Your review" is very good, but the printing costs of such a "glossy" issue could probably be reduced if provided in black & white on cheaper paper
- Policy on rubbish collection and recycling
- Focus on individual parishes within the district to give them the opportunity to highlight their activities for the following year. This may encourage neighbouring localities to become more energised themselves
- Details of continual cost down programme. Data per department on budgets versus actual spend. We constantly see squandering of cash. Look above Q11 where you're quite willing to issue A-Z to every household. Q23 where you're prepared to telephone, fax, email society about gender, equality, cut costs!! Road signs - you place the sign on both sides of the road. You have count down signs, 300 yards, 200 yds, 100 yds on both sides of the road. Do you need 8 signs when one would do? What would affect would this have on your budget & then make redundant more than 50% your workforce. Truly isn't it time you acted as though it was your money (Like the private sector) And not, we can always tax more. Houses aren't like customers they cannot move, so lets put up council tax above inflation again! You won't act on this, as you are set in your 1950's union attitude. SAVE COSTS - Try for once to cut council tax, not mindlessly increasing year on year. Haven't you seen car prices cut over the years. Food prices cut, electrical goods cut. change your thinking.
- Q11. Possible all information on internet with access info printed on council tax forms, thus saving extra postage
- The most important aspect is financial control. Let's understand why rates continue to rise above inflation. If it's government actions e.g. "cascading" taxes downwards, then let's understand that government is increasing taxation and not let them get away with headline "income tax reduction" smokescreen
- Recycling improvements
- Planned road works
- What & where to recycle, days out, kids activities, library services. A lot less self praising more facts
- \*Details on focus on increasing ease of re-cycling. \* Details on efforts to reduce litter. \* Details on efforts to reduce dog fouling/growth in fining dog owners for allowing this
- A twice yearly newspaper to explain what they have done for us or the community.
- Why can't it be A5 size, I would like a 'what has your council done for you' section
- It would be good if the council could produce "your review" more cheaply than at present. People feel that too much taxpayers money is spent on the publication. There is no need for all the pretty colour pictures. It is too extravagant in it's production
- Less of the self congratulation stuff. If life here is so wonderful why is there still no RING ROAD? Why is swimming pool closed at a time of peak demand?
- Information on town planning, policy for the medium/long term & future development of structure plan for the district
- Yes, what is being planned for the town (before it has been approved) (Trees in Bancroft) town council
- Yes, justification for tax rising more than inflation, year after year, after year
- Present format is very good
- No, topics should be relevant to issues at hand. Regular publication on specific topics becomes stale if they are not current issues
- How Councillors vote on important matters
- Policy on road improvement in side streets. Patching holes is no good
- Focus on behaviour of teenagers
- Information from planning office regarding development
- Collection of rubbish in rural areas particularly of plastics
- Local
- Information on environmental matters such as compost sales at recycling centres
- More on how planning applications are handled, & how the council planning dept. takes account of village plans & parish council decisions.
- More local news. Very little is mentioned regarding Henley
- Being made aware of local planning applications or more aware



- Would like more openness about plans for the district rather than finding out when it is a fait accompli
- District development plans, building proposals, distribution of income & expenditure split between towns & villages and what the money is spent on in each area
- Possible a little more guidance on how to contribute to the recycling programme effectively
- The Review presents (perhaps understandably) the councils success - but is less honest and clear about it's "features" and ongoing issues
- Would like to see more good news stories
- Questions & answers page
- Partnership working with local town & parish councils
- Housing - waiting list & what is being done to reduce this. Refuse collection - in particularly recycling. Services - available in the rural areas for elderly/disabled people. Sometimes we are given the impression that certain services are not available outside Stratford town.
- No, I would rather the money spent on publishing the review was used on council services
- Major planning proposals
- How to be heard and counted by council on continuous important issues before decisions are made I.e. "Footbridge over Avon", 'Banbury Road' work of art - it is but not for Stratford there is a very worthwhile space in a nautical town! 'Road calming@
- The local rubbish tip at Stratford - General recycling. (Any bottle banks in Studley?) I can't find them this is an important area. E.g. The rubbish tip at Redditch (Recently closed to people outside Worc's Redditch area, will take old car wheels & tyres) Stratford won't why? This only results in fly tipping which I see all around my area. The general refuse & garden refuse collection in the Stratford area is excellent. Minor road maintenance & overgrowing trees etc. - Poor new housing development - Stratford ruined by it.
- Yes, how your address the problems created by travellers, also who to contact for which service you need and some examples of problems tackled. I have a dreadful problem with pigeons who live on the roof of the next door neighbour
- Resolution and visibility of issues in the area
- The current scope & content are good
- Planning, Road changes/improvements, recycling plans
- Wish to see their performance measured against key criteria e.g. success rates, problems solved, issues remedied etc
- How planning decisions are made. In particular controversial issues!! Trees, Bancroft Gardens, hideous rusty metal art, (so called) at roundabouts e.g. Banbury Rd!!
- More statistics, \* Housing, \*Spend for each area, \* Cost for area, \* Planning strategy
- The different times of publications touch most subject. I wish SDC would help boost more confidence into it's support for Studley
- Flood defence. How to protect your home from flooding, how to receive sandbags, how to get any help and information re: flooding
- Commentary on major planning issues. 2. News of progress on transport issues - parking policies - park & ride - bus station - rail developments etc. 3. Updates on local development framework. 4. Problem areas regarding planning policy, finance staffing, contacts etc. And what is being done about them. Please - No more self-congratulation on meeting your self-imposed targets, utterly boring!
- Future housing targets & where, flood defence strategies, latest legislation to affect local community & charges
- Repair work on roads & footpaths in villages when and if its going to happen
- More transparency of council finances, especially proportion of council taxes being absorbed by pensions
- Future planning & environmental issues
- The reason people are in certain orders in the housing lists. Why people are above others on the list. Why local people as in the past do not get priority. (Work up the list, not put down again)
- Recycling, anti social behaviour
- More practical articles on how to improve services like refuse collection, road maintenance, ditch maintenance, who is responsible for road repairs and who to contact when things go wrong

- Planning - what are they going to housing, I am very worried about it. Green spaces/verges/roundabouts - they seem to be left to look terrible where is the care & attention. Drains/canals/rivers, who is cleaning the sludge & leaf mould out for when the rains come. Someone used to have a job doing that - now it does not get done well enough
- Nothing hidden!!! until it has been decided
- Major planning applications that have been applied for, approved and refused
- No - the opposite. We need informative articles re - current issues & problems. Regularity can be boring
- On recycling and rubbish disposal
- Old age
- More about the recycling effects that are being made from the disposing of food wrappings, margarine cartons etc
- Information about out recycling of plastics and cardboard
- What is happening about improvements to resurfacing appalling road conditions
- I feel the "Your Review" is a big PR paper for the district council it's 95% pat on the back
- In depth illustration of income and expenditure
- A prices of the activities, failures, success etc of each branch of the council's work is useful. (Which as is done now) It is very important that the allocation/distribution of finances is made clear as well as future proposed spending
- More information on road repairs and activities for the young
- Planning for building, work always a controversial issue - should be as open as possible
- Yes, attendance at meetings - how often and how long do DC's stay at a meeting - meetings to include D.C. and P.C. meetings. What courses do they complete to further their knowledge. Their expenses. At the moment I fear these are only published by the newspaper which you have to purchase.
- Road surveys, future building plans
- Planning issues & reasons for. 2. Community concern issues. 3. Regeneration of infrastructure for example, flooding issues Birmingham Road
- Planning and building control
- No, save the money
- Work on flooding and roads
- Statistics are always interesting
- Anything that would provide more information to the general public in an easy to read form
- An article explaining why district council planners ignore wishes of local population!
- Flood prevention
- I know that "Your Review" has to cater for a wide audience, but some of the details behind the headlines would be useful. It might also be refreshing to hear about what is not going so well and why? The world is not always a shade of "rose pink"
- Local improvement issues. Development (if any) News. List of telephone no's for the council & departments
- Footpaths and road maintenance. Housing policy & new/proposed housing developments
- Employment, criminality and immigration
- Maintenance information concerning roads & pavements I.e. repair of potholes & surfaces
- Planning, Support of Arts projects
- Basic details of services and details of councillors is sufficient. Your Review could be less colourful - it only needs to be basic & black & white - otherwise more and more expense and increased council tax
- More information and consultation about road schemes
- Again, as with the councillor I'm not as aware as I would like to be or feel I ought to be on what the District Council can and will do. It would be useful to have an idiots guide to this is what the District Council does, this is what the County Council does, this is what the Parish Council does etc.
- Environmental issues especially recycling
- Medium & long term plans
- I would like reports on how Stratford D.C. and Warwickshire County Council work together. Mainly about waste disposal and recycling

- More information on repairs/replacements in our homes e.g. why does one half of our streets get new bathrooms/kitchens etc and the other half has to wait for 2/3 years with no sensible reason why
- More information regarding Studley
- No, it is a self justifying document that is a waste of money
- I would like to see a list of SDC's work plan over the next 4 months. I would like residents to remark on these.
- Yes, minutes of meetings and follow up action plans in order to able to make some informed judgement/assessment of the elected District Council's effectiveness
- Action on flood relief and what are they going to do to prevent further flooding
- Be better kept in touch with planning and traffic big pictures
- I'd like to know who represents this area ( and other area) N.B. We live right on the Worcs border so tend to hear more about Worcs than Warwickshire
- Performance statistics
- It would appear from "Your Reviews" and the pie charts confirmed there in that although the district is largely rural very little money or other resources is directed towards the countryside which is shrinking and neglected
- Could all be handles on website
- Each department to write an article on a project or activity they are responsible for, to show what is involved what resources are needed, the cost of running, the benefits it brings the community and the quantity of people & sectors it serves. How the activity has changed over the past 10-20years, the future demand/requirements, improvement/efficiency and a common metric for all to show the cost/benefit of this service. In summary "what do I get for my money"
- Useful new initiatives, less ??
- Recycling updates and tips. Information about what happens after it's collected.
- Planned major road works in advance
- How my village directly benefits from the council tax I pay
- Some "success" stories on what individual councillors have achieved in their ward
- Factual articles that do not attempt to promote what a good job the D.C. is doing
- recycling & green issues
- Not really, the balance seems to be good at the present time
- I'd be happy to use the web based service
- Perhaps the expenditure of council funds
- Progress reports on projects/targets
- I think it is adequately stated in "Your Review"
- We should be informed of issues/items being discussed by council so that we can inform our councillor our views that could easily be done on line via email. A summary of these issues could be sorted by councillor & passed on.
- The responses etc to Citizens Panel or have I missed it!
- Housing conditions and co-operative policy with local police in the more rural areas
- I would like to know how much revenue is obtained from parking and how this is used to benefits the local area
- Planning and traffic information
- I would like to see the "review" cease to continually telling us how good you are. That is for the voters to judge. A correspondence column would be useful and a summary of ALL the questions & answers, specifically by the chief & leaders each quarter!!
- Yes, how they reach some of their bizarre decisions!
- Like to know more about housing allocation. My son has been waiting over 30 years and has lived in the district over 35 years. Last we heard was that he was 75 on the list. Since then we have heard of gypsies and people from other countries being housed
- Street cleansing & dumping black spots!
- More about recycling. No mention of Warwickshire County Councils cheap "Composers" in last review . had to ring up to find out if the scheme was still in operation
- Local contact details & processes
- This is not a priority to me
- Would very much like to have information on cost cutting by the council - need to have council tax charges stabilised
- More on disability for people in wheelchairs
- Building plans for social housing

- Yes, the rationale for planning decisions I.e. how committees make decisions & what factors they take into account
- At the moment it is all about the good things - what about the downside?
- Refuse collection/disposal, green issues, housing
- More articles about Southern and surrounding villages
- Perhaps a 'focus spot' for each councillor in turn. I.e. One per publication, so we feel we know them a bit better - only seem to have personal statements at election time!
- More affordable homes for the aged/disabled
- Explanations in articles about council dictates! I.E. More domestic & explanatory in a "Reason Column" LIKE. An explanation why you have to pay 2% interest on your council tax if you pay by debit/credit card. 2% of £2300 is £46 .... extortionate! Not everyone wants to pay direct debit. A general "grass root" explanation on the reason for planning approvals/rejections on major applications of interest. I.e. Maudsley site.. great Alne. Railway/housing site. Housing at Shottery. No big deal politically.... but could be informative in an "open book" way
- Less self congratulations. I am not interested in looking at photos of staff from various departments patting each other on the back!!
- Explain the differences between Mayor, Chairman, C.E.O., Leader of the Council
- Grass verges, tree pruning, repairs etc. Where these happen, when they are regularly performed, who carries out these tasks
- Forecast of road works due in year?
- How much you spent on housing benefit yearly, how much you spent on job seekers allowance yearly, how many escape paying council tax
- Information on what our local councillors cover and what their duties are
- Focus on environment. 2. Transport. 3. Street cleaning etc (Including education on these issues)
- What amount of monies are collected by Stratford Council from 106 agreements under planning legislation and how the money is spent
- What's happening in Southern
- I would like to see services on-line and save paper & postage
- Improvement to recycling policy & practice
- recycling & green issues, roadworks & planned ones
- Planning considerations, more on recycling, more on what challenges the council face regarding budgets etc
- How money is spent and what a difference it makes and to whom. Illustrations of value for money. Income from recycling & car parks and how this helps other areas. More open and clearer idea of strategies in each area - they are presented very complicated and unclear manner which emerge as you need to do or know something. Specific information regarding particular areas I.e. rural strategy to rural owners and town strategy to those in town. We have different priorities!
- To be honest too much junk mail comes through the door & too busy to read the council stuff, so all get buried. I get more annoyed by how much is spent on postage & paper (Printing , sending all the stuff "we" the public don't read
- A less expensive, less glossy publication giving a realistic account would be more acceptable. The very real debate about certain issues, for example the felling of healthy trees on the Bancroft and the demolition of the canal bridge are ignored in reports of the development of that area
- Information on development of recreation services. Also focus out of the town and more on the wider district
- A clear indication of just what % of the total council expenditure is not ring fenced by central government
- recycling
- Prefer to see the review, Offered on-line to those who wish to view it, so that costs would be reduced
- recycling
- Reasons why Councillors make their decisions which go against public views

**APPENDIX D – WHICH SERVICES BENEFIT ONE GENDER MORE THAN ANOTHER  
(55 responses)**

- Refuse Collection
- Single mother
- Clerical
- Waste collection for men, environmental for men.
- Childcare
- Housing
- Child services
- Housing, recruitment
- Men - security work, Women - women's only service officers
- Housing
- Office Admin & Technical I.e. planning etc
- Always influenced by heads of department not resulting in best man / woman for the job.
- Groundworks / Post control
- Housing - single parent
- Social services, healthcare, police
- Social services, Planning regulations
- Work with elderly infirm
- Council tax & housing benefit. They shouldn't be able to claim both.
- Family matters and medical items
- Housing
- Physical labour (intensive) - male, social care - female
- Education
- Housing
- Dustbins, road sweeping, any construction work
- All of them
- Social & Families
- Housing
- Housing - planning
- Reverse discrimination for women
- Technical & Inspection
- Services involving manual work
- Heavy physical work
- Health & housing
- All of them
- Repairing roads
- Child access, Housing list
- Services that require higher physical strength & stamina unless physical assists can be applied
- As usual the letter of financially are as a big advantage.
- Housing
- Housing - heard of more females with kids housed than males - hearsay maybe!
- Refuse collection, Gardens upkeep
- Not services but employment is heavily in favour of females in SDC.
- Teaching and social services
- Housing
- Polish immigrants
- Women refuse collectors
- Housing - single mothers
- Housing seems to benefit women more
- Physical work
- Health & safety matters, complaints etc
- Waste collection for example
- Provision of things for children such as baby changing facilities
- Benefit to unmarried women / girls
- Social services
- Housing

**APPENDIX E – BARRIERS FACED WHEN COMMUNICATING WITH THE COUNCIL**  
**(55 responses)**

- As a woman I can find myself looked down on by a man if it's a technical complaint
- People prefer to talk to the same gender
- Still inequality between sexes
- Women seem to be treated like the second person in any household, not to be needed as much as the male.
- Opposite genders can cause problems
- Women can get passed off as emotional
- Council's pre-conception (even if only imagined)
- Opposite sexes on each side result in less hostile conversations
- Stereotyping
- In some cases when a male replies to a woman they talk down to them.
- Men are breadwinners; women's place is to be in the home.
- Certain areas still considered by council officials to belong in a mans world
- I don't think even today women are taken as seriously as men and men especially feel they do not have to.
- If dealing with male member of Council & its officials - their attitude to a woman can be condescending
- Men are taken more seriously in most cases
- Women as a rule are treated like mindless halfwits
- Men dealing with women I.e. single mothers
- Men are still seen as the breadwinner
- Women find it harder to explain and make people understand their query
- Men show favour over women - especially older women.
- I think that women are treated a little better
- Women are more likely to be talked down to
- Women find it difficult sometimes to talk to male council workers regarding planning related matters.
- Generally females are less familiar with technical language - please use plain language.
- Women sometimes treated as if don't understand complexities of an issue - could apply to either gender.
- You think less if a woman comes to you with a problem
- Many women callers prefer talking to a man
- Some people are reluctant to talk to someone of the opposite sex.
- Emphasis / bias towards women

**APPENDIX F – SERVICES WHERE RESIDENTS FEEL THERE IS A GENDER EQUALITY ISSUE AND THE REASONS THEY FEEL THIS WAY  
(92 responses)**

- Too much priority given to single parents, immigration and so called disability. Especially to people who don't or won't work. Better off on benefits.
- I feel the majority focus of this particular questionnaire was about political correctness. (Gender/race etc) Rather than focus on the areas the council can target to drive improvement in the living conditions for ALL people in the catchment area
- Housing - Why is it so hard for single dads to get a home? Benefits - Seemed to be in favour of single mothers (of which I'm one) but I have single male friends who feel 'looked down on' if they claim, like they should be able to provide! Council Tax - good single person benefit - but some women earn less than men - why not a sliding scale? Recruitment & Selection - Need I say more! Ageism exists too! Care & Repair - Women treated like idiots & men who need it seem as inept.
- Lone female parents seem to get more priority
- Refuse - Carrying heavy bags for collection. (Although our dustmen are very helpful) Electoral Register - automatically assume male's are used for main address.
- Planning rules can befuddle women
- Believe it is fixed for women to receive benefits than men
- The indicated services are better dealt with by men
- Only those in these services there is a possibility
- I think gender inequality problems are important but over emphasised. Age discrimination is equally important seemingly ignored in this questionnaire
- While there are no doubt individual cases, too much time is spent on politically correct 'equality' issues
- More need to prevent benefit. Fraud - especially single parent families. I.E. Father of children should be made to contribute
- Local housing legislation appears to benefit women & recruitment tends to favour men
- The issues in both are male orientated and only seem to be taken seriously if enforced by a male.
- I note I have never met a female building control officer
- Pro-active information to single occupants re: typically council tax
- Benefits & tax should take account of the need for one parent (not necessarily mother) to spend more time with children and therefore less time in paid employment
- Benefits do not always appear equal, more consideration needed to people living alone on low income
- Benefits appear impossible for a single man. Housing appear impossible for a single man. Council tax - not gender but far too much goes to central government
- Benefits assessment and taxation need to be dealt with by same gender
- Men are not helped as women in housing issues
- Gender of services exec's/managers noted over the years in literature
- I have never seen a women collecting refuse & recycling or working at the local tip, why is this?
- People coming into this county got everything they require and more. Whilst our own people got what's left
- Most depots are male led. Those that are female led are, however regrettably not as unbiased as they should be
- I believe the council tax should be more attentive to women living alone or on limited means
- Preferential treatment given to single mothers who abuse the system
- Priority should be given to local people
- It is assumed men can sleep rough where women with children needs accommodation. This stops men having access to their children
- Any enquirer may feel happier - relaxed with single gender official
- Yes - The council obviously have to prioritise young women with children often at the expense of vulnerable elderly or young men.
- I do not think gender equality is the issue. It's a social one
- One parent families are unduly favoured
- I just know of a case where a lady wants an O.A.P bungalow in the village where she lives and they are always given to others.

- Education - biased towards female applicants
- Too much emphasis on being "P.C."
- Housing for single males. Females get pregnant - there is accommodation waiting for them
- There are jobs suited to men who have the strength to carry out these operations
- Housing/benefits should be available to permanent residents as a priority, over immigrants as the district seems to have a higher number of immigrants. Recent publications show a low number of immigrants claiming benefit which should be upheld
- Type of work involved
- Housing for young males doesn't appear to be given the same priority as young females. (Females seem more vulnerable) Jobs advertised are worded as though the roles is for a male.
- Single women seem to take priority over single men for housing
- I think that women are placed above men especially where housing is concerned
- Needs more women to have say in planning & licensing
- Housing needs to restructure its draft strategy on housing priorities & not let gender, race etc influence who has housing & who doesn't. Why should a non drug taking, non alcoholic , clean living person or couple sit at the base of housing allocation?
- See recruitment ads by most councils
- Sometimes harder for women to work if they have children, especially if the sole carer. There should be more encouragement to employees to offer roles to allow women to work and collect their children from school. There are more 9.30 - 2.30 jobs, term time and with decent pay and career opportunities. There is a very capable workforce not being properly utilised.
- Women tend to be treated as though they don't understand the details of housing benefits etc. "Talked down to" comes to mind
- Women are a rarity in these areas
- In the main I think that women would be more cautious when granting permits on buildings generally
- Single women would be entitled to accommodation & benefits that a man would not
- Women treated more favourably with housing needs
- Gender inequality is endemic in our society though mostly unconscious. Despite equality legislation since the 1980's it is still not a fact in the U.K. In almost all areas of our society
- Refuse
- Gender representation in some areas is unbalanced
- In all of the job world there is inequality between men & women in terms of pay & promotion
- I have a "perception" that housing issues favour females
- Often it is men who can sometimes expect a greater understanding and you can be left feeling inadequate because of a lack of knowledge
- Personal experience with certain personnel
- I feel there are far more important issues for the council to apply their energy to. This looks like an overdose of political correctness
- Presumably your recruitment selection includes equal opportunities
- In my opinion these services are male orientated.
- Accommodation, transport need special attention
- Housing often favours women. Recruitment to certain jobs very stereotypical. This may not be the fault of council but few refuse/recycling personal are women
- Can be difficult to access and women can be treated differently
- More social housing should be allocated for young, single males who have no chance of getting affordable housing. Young females (Single with a child) always get priority
- It is always interesting note that there are no visible women involved in direct refuse collections in our area
- Traditionally most here are 'male' occupations and the majority are still male with the acceptance of cleaners who tend to be female
- Recruitment. How many women refuse collectors are there?
- I believe local people may not be at a disadvantage due to so many Europeans coming to live & work in the UK. Local people have been contributing to society for many years
- My answer is simple and maybe not the answer that would normally be acceptable. The issue concerning me is homosexuality and people living this lifestyle dealing with families and single parents, or any family orientated problem.



- Certain stigmas still exist surrounding receipt/entitlement to benefits which can be influenced by gender
- Advantage to female requirements
- Females have better response on these
- Housing - Single mothers. Benefits - Single mothers, household responsibilities. Recruitment - men stereotypes
- Male are considered in the main to be leaders. All should be treated equally
- Where the service is given by appointment or correspondence I have never found gender significant and so far always helpful
- Some male staff treat families ignorant - they may be but everyone has to learn
- My son has been of no fixed abode for 2 years. Sleeping wherever he can
- Both housing & council tax are "core" subjections disciplined by finance. An equal mix of male/female old and young should be represented. Old being 60-65!
- Housing recruitment, polish immigrants are given priority
- I have not seen a women in service
- Ensure no positive discrimination in recruitment where the best applicants to not get an appointment after selection ranking
- I have had not contact with the council over there's matters and therefore don't know owe they are dealt with. However, housing benefits are certainly gender sensitive as is recruitment and mechanisms should be in place to acknowledge this
- Experience of family members
- There should be MUCH tighter control over housing benefits job seekers allowances etc. Thousands of pounds are wasted this way.
- Planning - building control, controlled by men
- As a transsexual I find there is some problems regarding contact with myself by staff members
- I have never seen a women collecting rubbish, I don't know if any actually want to do it but there you go
- There appears to be preferential treatment afforded to single, unmarried and ethnic minorities
- Many women live alone into old age - they seem to be forgotten.

**APPENDIX G – OTHER WAYS TO GET INFORMATION TO MEN AND WOMEN IN DIFFERENT COMMUNITIES ABOUT GENDER EQUALITY**  
**(39 responses)**

- Should be aware of the law in this country, if not discuss the situation when it warrants it.
- Web sites, Libraries
- Target individual work places
- On the Council's website. It is a primary info source today.
- Best and most realistic thing Council can do is - masterful inactivity
- Internet
- Shipston Forum
- Contact Residents Association
- CAB
- Usage of first names also in correspondence and other areas
- Local supermarkets
- Website
- This is not an issue Council should be wasting time on, stick to providing essential services!
- Teach them to read the letters & booklets available / just teach them to read.
- Not required, enough is done generally
- Workplace information
- Printed on Council tax bill / other correspondences. Email - cheapest - keep it cost effective
- Educate council officials
- Newsletters
- In practice, when council employees or councillors are one to one with a person.
- Why do you need to spend money on this!! Do you feel you have a problem?
- Education from early age
- Website
- Parish / Town Council meetings
- Website
- Local radio slots
- Community meetings, a stall in town
- Word of mouth
- Website
- If there is equality it is communicated by policies & staff - not information
- No real action seems indicated over current policy
- Job centres, posters etc
- TV or radio adverts
- Website
- Support or attend group meetings I.e. religious groups etc.
- Radio (local)
- Website
- Information to Parish Councils
- Through other agencies

***APPENDIX H – OTHER REASONS TO USE PLANNING SERVICE IN LAST 12 MONTHS  
(12 responses)***

- Village plan
- Local planning dispute
- As Parish Councillor
- Disabled access
- Information concerning building Regs, planning etc in relation to protected animals.
- I have inspected lots of planning apps. SDC should read all PC's statements, very important.
- I made an application for listed building consent
- Concerned about the large scale tipping in the quiet of a planning app
- Building Regs
- Plans to build houses next door which would take away what I rent.
- Checked on my own planning application
- Problem with previous planning application and noise nuisance

## **APPENDIX I – THE TYPES OF DEBT THAT MAY GIVE RESIDENTS CAUSE FOR CONCERN**

**(77 responses)**

- Rising interest charges are causing concern & may cause problems with - mortgage, - personal loan, - credit cards. Rising utility & fuel bills are also a major problem.
- No personally. I do have concerns for my children with regards to their mortgage & student fees. (And council tax that year on year rises above inflation)
- Interest payments, council tax, stamp duty
- High rent on properties, trouble paying council tax but our income is "too high" to receive help
- Council tax, Home maintenance
- Increase in mortgage payments. Increase in housing bills, energy, council tax water etc
- Not being able to pay off mortgage - having to go into rented accommodation which we could not afford. Being low priority for council housing
- Mortgage
- More outgoing expense, increased parking charges forcing me to other towns and generally all of the small things. Extra £1 for this extra £1 for that. I am waiting for an extra hidden charge to re-build the Bancroft. Why!! I may have to leave the area or even the country!
- Student loans, huge mortgages due to lack of affordable housing
- Council tax far too high, unfair. We paid more council tax than our mortgage & now we are retired it is very worrying
- The cost of council tax, over the last 8 years
- Housing maintenance costs, rates, general cost of living
- Overall difficulties from redundancy, inability to work through ill-health or age!
- If I was to lose my house what would I do about accommodation? How would I afford it?
- Too many people have too much money on credit cards
- Mortgage, bills, general increase in cost of living
- Council tax
- Just keeping up with household bills, council tax, utility bills, insurances etc
- Credit cards, rising interest rates on mortgages, council tax increases
- Paying ground rent
- Mortgage, borrowing requirements (Credit cards)
- Repossession of property when unable to pay mortgage
- Affordable housing
- Bank loans, mortgage repayments as interest rates rise and real wage levels do not
- Most people have far too much credit
- Borrowing of far more finance can be afforded by large numbers of people
- Paying off loans for son's university education, so not being able to save for pension. Also the possibility of taking on more loans to cover costs of repairs to an older house
- Council Tax
- It often takes 2 salaries of a couple to get onto the mortgage ladder at full stretch. When couples then start a family they can neither afford to work (due to childcare costs) or stay at home (need income for mortgage) All causes family stress and breakdown.
- General over commitments to loans/overdrafts etc. Rising interest rates, consequent rise in mortgage repayments
- Credit rating systems are adversely affected simply by enquiries. Reasons for any given credit rating are heard to obtain, and again adversely affect rating. This is a systematic bias that should be legislated against. Household debt can leave a tenant trapped in unsuitable housing as they are unable to raise the bond needed for a move. Debt to utility companies can leave householders without light, heat or water.
- I am concerned for young people who even if they can get into the property market pay unfair costs in council tax, when others find ways to pay less (I.e. 2 or more properties owned) If people buy property to let out, they should pay more as it takes a property off the market
- Not being able to meet charges for council tax and utilities the speed and size of increases
- General financial concerns, high mortgage repayments, rising fuel and tax bills. Increased in cost of commuting
- Collecting all council tax

- Mortgage, rent, rates, elect, water. One of the problems are when you phone a company you never speak to the same person twice
- Loss of job, illness
- Mortgage interest rates, no pension or income in retirement
- Credit Card & Mortgage
- Mortgage
- Credit cards
- High mortgage to earnings ratio, potential for alternative employment of equal salary
- Increase in council tax, which many would be unable to pay
- Credit card use. Ease of obtaining a loan
- Ease of obtaining loans, aged people and credit card debt
- Increasing interest rates meaning higher mortgage payments, possibly too high!
- Rising fuel costs
- May not be able to afford rent and taxes, heating etc
- Credit card and that as a result of redundancy especially if one pays rent
- Re-mortgage, loans, credit cards, car finance, catalogues
- People should be strictly limited to one plastic card which should be monitored to minimise debt. As a law abiding ratepayer/object most strongly to any propping up of the inadequate or those with a sloppy attitude to their financial affairs
- Mortgage forthcoming by bank or building society for families instead of long advice & counselling service
- Yes, mortgage and mortgage flexibility. Interest rates, cost of living, council tax, utility bills
- If council tax continues to rise, we shall not be able to stay in our present home as we are on a fixed income
- Cost of housing in relation to two teenage sons, one of whom has been homeless in S.O.A. Rental accommodation is relatively very expensive. Cost of borrowing to finance house/home or flat will be a big issue
- Council tax, utilities, bills. My partner was diagnosed as epileptic, neither of us can work at present. Living on incapacity benefit, we are all a step from poverty
- I am concerned about young people & their ability to afford accommodation - rented, shared ownership or purchase. I am also concerned about the levels of social housing too low
- The biggest debt is council tax to pensioners on fixed income! It's double in 10 years but our income/pension hasn't. Action/more consideration should be shown to pensioners in this area
- If one of your over 21 children take out a loan whilst living at your address
- Not me personally as we live in a tied house, but for those in our village/church community. Mortgage interest payments becoming too high credit/loan debt (Our local Credit Union is helping to raise awareness of help available)
- Cost of living & repairs & maintenance
- I am currently unable to work due to a health issues therefore constant. I have no income of my own (Except on benefit) and can't afford a house
- Mortgage
- Rent, council tax, loan
- Council tax, essential maintenance
- My house is on the camp at Gaydon, no-one seems to want to run the houses here. I would like to see the council take over as I believe this may have a drop in house prices in the future. I also have to pay council tax and estate fees
- mortgage, increasing, gas, electronic & water charges, council tax
- Currently living with my mother, can't afford my own household. In the future when this is not an option housing cost/debt will be an issue for me
- Debt card, mortgage
- I am concerned regarding the cost of local housing particularly young people who just can not get affordable property in the area and the policy of providing property to unmarried mothers this I feel encourages the situation
- mortgage
- Pensioner, increasing costs have outgrown income
- All types as I have been declared bankrupt and I have worries re all housing and such issues. I am also mentally ill and worry under the smallest circumstances
- Council tax - re banding

- Rent, council arrears, plus household debts on address
- Inability to pay rent & community tax due to loan income

**APPENDIX J – WHETHER RESIDENTS EVER EXPERIENCED HOUSING DIFFICULTIES  
WHILST LIVING IN STRATFORD DISTRICT  
(44 responses)**

- Lack of sufficient properties for potentially homeless people. Private sector too expensive
- My parents became homeless in 2000 and received no help whatsoever as they were under 65 and not young and pregnant or foreign! This is so unfair as they always paid their taxes etc. My father sadly died in 2002 and my mum had to move in with my granddad. He died in November last year and mums sisters want to sell the house now she'll be homeless again. Who will help her?
- Threatened homelessness. Conditions of property i.e. damp
- months ago needed new rental home (wife & 4 daughters). We are not foreign, illiterate, nor held down to two 9-5 well paid jobs so no chance of 3/4 bed house. Word of mouth helped so I sorted it no thanks to you! Sorry
- Too expensive, can't get a mortgage. Housing in Stratford seems to be for teenage mothers and immigrants only!!
- Finding property which was affordable
- Homelessness
- Not much low cost housing available - little choice and a lottery
- Not personally but my daughter, partner and their 2month old baby girl could not be given housing even though they had to get out of the place they were in because they could not be classed as a 'family' until my granddaughter was one year old. They were a family as soon as she was born!
- As a young resident there were no options other than the private sector for me.
- Noise
- Unfair treatment of Alcester and a total disregard for Alcester Town Councils opinion. I very much feel the council is not interested in Alcester in the same way as residents are.
- Through contact with a homeless family - relatives of a friend
- Still on council waiting list after three years
- I was homeless
- My son has had housing problems
- Yes but it was a long time ago, trying to save enough for a deposit and earn enough to get a mortgage to buy a house, my husband took a job with a tied cottage for us to live in. I think the same problem will occur again for our son.
- Too long on list when my boyfriend is disabled
- Problem with a private landlord
- SDC knew of my epilepsy, but put me in first floor flats - I fell down stairs in both blocks. SDC should study all details of resident to be.
- Flooding
- Lost tied cottage in 1996 when farm sold resulting in redundancy. SDC refused to help even though I'd been on the list for 10 years, having vacated a council property. Have been in private rented property ever since. Hoping for a dwelling in Mart Mill Lane when I can no longer live where I am now.
- Cost availability
- Trying to get my daughter housed from an abusive relationship (with 2 children) going through a difficult divorce, into a housing in the district. At the time it seemed to take too long.
- House prices too high to allow me to get onto the housing ladder as a single person. Was not able to do this until I was married.
- We lived in a tithed house and when my husband was 65 we had to get out, we were put into an OAP bungalow and told that we were not entitled to anything larger so we've lived in misery for sixteen years and I still hate it. I'm 67 now and I still cry myself to sleep.
- Son and girlfriend were suddenly homeless and felt obliged to house them. Council house / flat list endless!
- Mr Wallis has been on the waiting list since 1976
- Out of work - Council offered no assistance with rent forcing me to become homeless.
- Finding sheltered housing for frail and elderly parents
- 19 year old man homeless could not provide references or give deposit on bed-sit. No council accommodation available.
- Homelessness
- Business failure forced loss of home.

- Availability of suitable ground floor accommodation for the aged / infirm / disabled
- No homes available for young couples with one child, had to go into rented rooms for first five years of marriage, then had to buy home privately (50 years ago).
- Coming out of a rented house for a larger one due to increasing family.
- Not recent 1971-1976
- 30 years ago landlord made us move from cottage next door - now he is trying to do it again so that he can build 5 houses where 2 now stand.
- We took the option to buy our council house like many others. Now it seems the down and outs and problem families are being put amongst us causing more problems - noise, police, mess etc. Is this fair on pensioners trying to keep the standards up
- Lack of interest
- Abuse due to what I am and where I live.
- Confusion over entitlement. Interference of employee nearly lost me my home.
- Eviction due to divorce - tied property



**APPENDIX K – OTHER REASONS WHICH MAY AFFECT ABILITY TO REMAIN IN HOME  
IN THE FUTURE  
(28 responses)**

- Rising costs of series & council tax over pension rates. Expenditure exceeding income.
- Can't afford to stay here when retired.
- Council Tax
- Inability to work or ill health
- Escalating residential taxes
- Council tax
- Payment of Council tax
- Loneliness
- Financial reasons mainly
- Good family & friends if help needed
- Increased council tax
- Redundancy
- Health
- Ever increasing Council Tax
- Younger friends & relatives
- Council tax payment difficulties
- Being able to drive
- General outgoings - tax service charges etc
- Increase in council tax & utility bills
- Community Charge
- Bad health
- Losing independence through not being able to drive my car
- Suitable neighbours
- Council Tax
- Congestion in the town
- If can't drive anymore
- I think 50 years is far too low an age for these questions unless you are disabled.
- Insufficient pension income!

***APPENDIX L – OTHER WAYS HEARD ABOUT HOUSING RENEWAL TEAM  
(11 responses)***

- Rother House Surgery
- Friends with District Councillor, always willing to converse
- Used by elderly relative
- Most Councils do!
- People who have this service
- Social services adult care team
- Review
- Working for Council in past
- Stretford's senior citizen advice network
- Family member - elderly mother in area
- Social services