

Tamworth Borough Council's annual survey

Background

To help elected members set the council budget and priorities, every year we consult residents, businesses and the voluntary sector on spending and savings options in line with the council priorities. We also conduct a survey to hear what people think about Tamworth as a place to live.

Usually these are separate consultations, however, to avoid duplication and make an efficient use of resources, this year we've combined these into one annual survey.

This report outlines the findings of the 2022 annual survey.

712 people chose to take part in this, nearly 200 more than in 2021, and sees the most responses we've had to a consultation.

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Executive summary

Survey Purpose

The purpose of this survey is to engage local people in decision making about council budget and priorities and will be used by Councillors to inform their decisions.

Methodology

This is a self-selecting survey¹, and as such is not 'statistically representative'. However over 700 local people have shared their views, the highest we've ever seen, so there is a wealth of feedback and data to interpret.

Council priorities, spending and income

There is a clear endorsement from the majority of respondents of our council priorities, agreeing that all are very or fairly important. This would suggest the corporate priorities are, and remain, the right focus for Tamworth Borough Council.

There is a clear appetite for more spending on many of our very visible services:

- Parks and open spaces
- Tackling anti-social behaviour
- Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth

This is wholly consistent with the other findings in this survey, views around Tamworth as a place to live, responsiveness of the council and dissatisfaction match these same areas where people would like to see increases in spending.

Beyond increases, it is more difficult to make clear conclusions.

There is however appetite to reduce spending on

- Improved access to information/customer services
- Arts, Assembly Rooms and Events
- Voluntary sector grants and commissioning

This is also reflected in the question where we ask where people think we should make savings.

Respondents chose to increase charges for leisure and commercial property and opted for the lowest increase in council tax.

Tamworth as a place to live

Responses match those areas which where the council is already working hard to improve. So, while overall satisfaction results for Tamworth as a place to live have decreased from the previous survey carried out in March 2021, plans are already in place to address these concerns.

- 57% are satisfied with Tamworth as a place to live.
- 64% feel safe when out during the day, the feeling of safety decreases after dark.
- 31% agree people pull together to improve the local area.
- 44% agree people from different backgrounds get on well together.

In terms of 'problems in the area', the top three issues:

- Rubbish and litter
- People using or dealing drugs
- Vandalism, graffiti or deliberate damage

¹ Research shows that those with an issue/concern or gripe are more likely to proactively respond to this type of survey and are less likely to represent the views of the population in general.

Aside from people using or dealing drugs, the others were also the top issues in the 2021 survey. Showing these remain the key issues for local people, and confirms the council is right to seek improvements in these areas. There has also been an increase in the feeling that groups hanging around the streets has become a bigger issue. These factors could be adding to the fear of crime we're seeing in people feeling safe outside.

Interestingly, recent research by Sunlife Insurance² ranks Tamworth fourth in a list of safest places for over 60s to live in England and Wales. To compile the list, the company analysed the number of burglaries and thefts per person in UK towns to determine which is the least dangerous. They also considered the prevalence of influenza and ambulance response times.

Satisfaction with services

As we've seen in the previous section people are dissatisfied with Tamworth as a place to live, which is influenced by a much wider range of factors, many outside of Tamworth borough Council control or influence. However, it is likely people see Tamworth Borough Council (rightly or wrongly) behind some of that dissatisfaction.

- 37% satisfied with how the council runs things.
- 24% agree the council acts on the concerns of residents.

In terms of service satisfaction, people are least satisfied with street cleaning. The biggest issues connected to street cleaning appears to be littering, dog poo and graffiti. Tamworth Borough Council recognises this, and while the answer would be for perpetrators to simply not do these things, seeking to keep the borough clean and tidy is a priority.

- 60% satisfied with waste collection services.
- 36% satisfied with street cleaning services.
- 59% satisfied with sport and leisure.
- 57% satisfied with parks and open spaces.

Information and contacting the council

Social media is the top choice for finding out about council services.

90% would contact the council via digital means (non-digital means are via Councillor or 2% suggest visiting the TIC in the Assembly Rooms).

The answers here are at odds with the comments, where people are calling for more face-to-face access points, while they themselves would not use those services. Customer services data shows that in the last 12 months 100,000 contacts from customers have been digital and around 280 people a year contact the council face to face at the TIC in the Assembly Rooms.

Generally, people are not aware that the Assembly Rooms and Tamworth Castle are council services.

Demographics

In total, 60,400 people were eligible to take part in this survey (adults). 712 people actually took part, which is 1.2% of the eligible population.

Compared to our population, slightly more women than men chose to take part.

² See [report](#).

Around 2.5% of Tamworth's population have a non-white background, positively, 6% of respondents were from a diverse background.

Conclusion

There is a clear common theme that can be seen throughout the responses around how the borough looks, and other feelings and experiences associated with anti-social behaviour.

Collectively these visible issues can have impact on whether people feel safe, whether there is a feeling things are being tackled and generally whether people feel positive about where they live.

These themes can also be seen in views around spending, savings and income. With people prioritising higher spends in these areas.

The issues highlighted in the survey are already council priorities, actions achieved or in progress include:

- Supporting hundreds of community litter picks and local litter pick champions.
- Improving how street issues can be reported to the council on the My Tamworth app.
- Upgraded all council CCTV cameras providing better quality images and coverage.
- Taking all actions legally available to tackle unauthorised encampments.
- Secured over £20million government future high street funding to redevelop Tamworth Town Centre. With a further £20million bid to the Governments Levelling Up fund submitted.
- Closer working with police and other partners to reduce fear of crime. With the first 'Operation Safer Nights' in the town centre happening just a few weeks ago with more planned.
- Planned improvements to council housing estates including landscaping.
- Implementing the enhanced decent homes standard to all council housing.
- Activated the winter relief project to make sure no one is rough sleeping.
- Working to secure a dedicated mental health support worker to support housing tenants.
- Administered £4.5million energy rebate payments for local people.
- Removed 100% all offensive graffiti within target number of hours of it being reported.
- Removed 100% of fly tips on council land within target number of days if it being reported.
- Achieved Britain in Bloom Gold, showcasing community involvement across the borough, work at local nature reserves, involving schools and communities leading planting activity in residential areas.
- Secured local warm spaces for people to access, including the council's Assembly Rooms.
- £23million in business grants to support local business development growth.
- Delivered a full programme of free events, food markets, and much more as part of Castle Summer Fest.
- And much more.

Introduction and methodology

Introduction

To help elected members set the council budget and priorities, every year we consult residents, businesses and the voluntary sector on spending and savings options in line with the council priorities. We also conduct a survey to hear what people think about Tamworth as a place to live.

Usually these are separate consultations, however, to avoid duplication and make an efficient use of resources, this year we've combined these into one annual survey.

In this survey we asked questions about:

- What Tamworth is like as a place to live.
- Satisfaction with council services.
- How people are informed about the work of the council and contacting the council.
- Thoughts on council priorities.
- Council income and spending options.
- How we handle complaints.

Last year's survey helped elected members also set the new council priorities, as set out in the [2022-2025 Corporate Plan](#).

This report outlines the findings of the 2022 annual survey.

Methodology

This is a self-selecting survey – people must volunteer to take part, as such communications and marketing activity has been essential to the success of this survey.

The digital by default is the most environmentally friendly and cost-effective approach to delivering this survey, however we recognise that not everyone in the town has digital access so other options have been made available.

Paper copies of the surveys were available from the TIC and customer services staff have carried out telephone surveys for those less able to engage or for those without digital access.

To encourage responses, we have:

- Written to a random sample of 1,500 Tamworth residents inviting them to take part. This is roughly 145 addresses in each ward.
- Contacted specific groups directly inviting them to take part:
 - Our citizens' panel,
 - Community & Voluntary Groups,
 - Tamworth Businesses,
 - Housing tenants,
 - Tamworth Borough Council staff (many of which are residents).
- Issued press releases and delivered social media promoting the survey.
- Delivered targeted social media advertising towards the end of the survey period specifically encouraging underrepresented groups to take part.
- Elected members were also invited to share the survey with their constituents.

As an incentive, those taking part were also entered into a prize draw to win one of five £30 gift voucher prizes to spend at a Tamworth store.

Timetable

Action	Date
Cabinet	8 Sept 2022
Launch survey	20 Sept 2022
All members' budget seminar	10 Oct 2022
Survey close	23 Oct 2022
Survey results to CMT	Nov 2022
Survey results to elected members to inform budget setting decisions	End Nov 2022

Statistically representative

This is not a statistically representative survey of views, and we cannot claim that these views statistically represent Tamworth people.

This is because this is a self-selecting volunteer-based survey. Research shows that those with an issue/concern or gripe are more likely to proactively respond to this type of survey and are less likely to represent the views of the population in general.

A note on self-selection bias:

“There is likely to be a degree of self-selection bias. For example, the decision to participate in the study may reflect some inherent bias in the characteristics/traits of the participants (e.g. an employee with a ‘chip of his shoulder’ wanting to give an opinion).

“This can either lead to the sample not being representative of the population being studied or exaggerating some particular finding from the study.”

Gaganpreet Sharma, All Research Journal. Vol 3. 2017

To be statistically representative, where we can be sure the findings represent the views of the population, an alternative methodology would need to be followed. It may be appropriate to consider a different approach in the future.

Benchmarking and comparisons

We are able to benchmark our survey against our own past results from the 2021 residents' survey and against other councils.

To do this, we have followed the Local Government Association's recommended set questions. This allows us to benchmark against the LGA national polls.

However, a note of caution. The LGA responses are derived from a statistically representative socio-economic sample of respondents, meaning the results are 100% representative give or take +1.5% to -1.5%.

The methodology followed for the Tamworth survey is self-selecting so has drawbacks and does not give us this certainty. So, when making comparisons we are not comparing like for like.

The LGA benchmark comparisons are taken from their June 2022 poll.

To enable comparative benchmarking, we could in future consider commissioning a representative sample survey.

Interpreting the results

This report contains tables, infographics and charts.

In some instances, the responses may not add up to 100%. There are several reasons why this might happen:

- The question may have allowed each respondent to give more than one answer
- Only the most common responses may be shown in the table or chart
- Individual percentages are rounded to the nearest whole number so the total may come to 99% or 101%
- A response of between 0% and 0.5% is shown as 0%.

Where there is a difference in responses between men and women, ethnicity etc that will be mentioned. If there is no mention, there is no material difference based on demographic characteristics.

Note, the order of the questions in the survey differ to how the feedback is presented here. For the purposes of reporting, the report focuses first on information to support the budget setting process, other questions are then grouped according to theme.

Compliments, comments and complaints

As part of the survey, we asked views about our draft new compliments, comments and complaints policy. These results are not included here, as there is a separate process around the review and adoption of this policy.

Council priorities, spending and income

All five council priorities remain important to local people

Spend more

- Parks & open spaces
- Tackling ASB
- Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth

Spend less

- Improved access to information/customer services
- Arts, Assembly Rooms and events
- Voluntary sector grants and commissioning

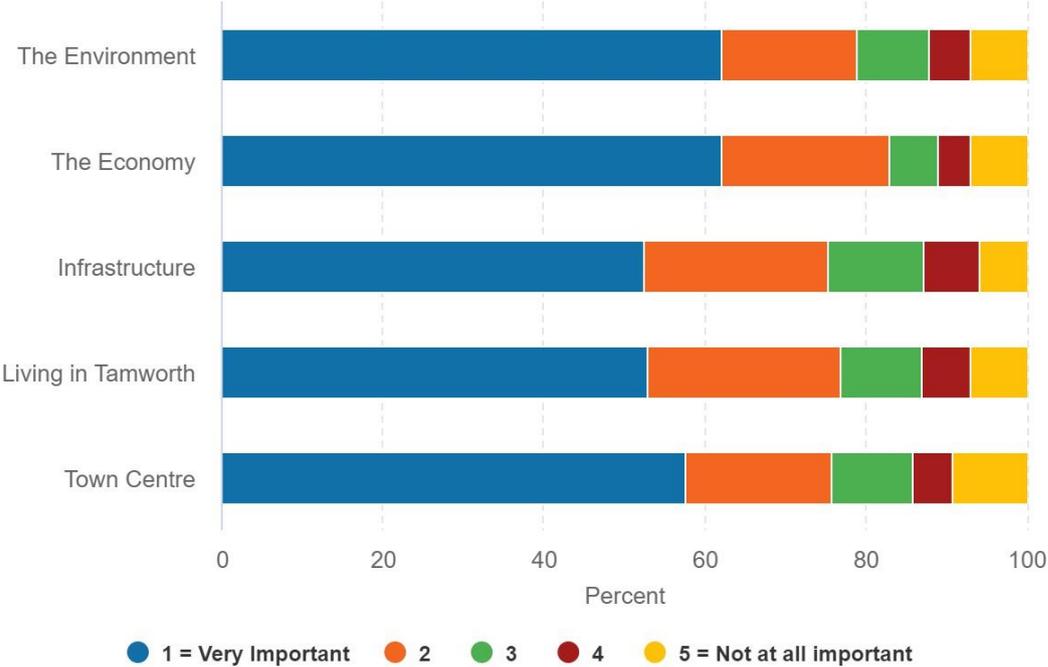
The largest proportion of respondents (39%) want to see the smallest council tax increase

Priorities

Earlier this year, Councillors set out Tamworth Borough Council's [2022-2025 Corporate Plan](#). Outlining five council priorities.

In the survey, we shared the full list of priorities and then asked people to consider how important they thought there were, on a scale of 1-5, where 1 was very important.

Members have already debated these priorities at the State of Tamworth debate held on Tuesday 25 October.



There is a clear endorsement from the majority of respondents of our council priorities, agreeing that all are very or fairly important. This would suggest the corporate priorities are, and remain, the right focus for Tamworth Borough Council.

Providing value for money

While only ten pence in every pound of council tax collected comes to Tamworth Borough Council, respondents do not think the council provides value for money.

As will be seen throughout this report, there is a theme around dissatisfaction with things such as crime and feeling safe, anti-social behaviour, litter, and the visual aspects of Tamworth, including those issues outside of council control such as surface water flooding, roads and pavements and access to a GP for example.

In answering this question, we're potentially seeing people feeling more unhappy with their surroundings, and a perception that those who can change things are not.

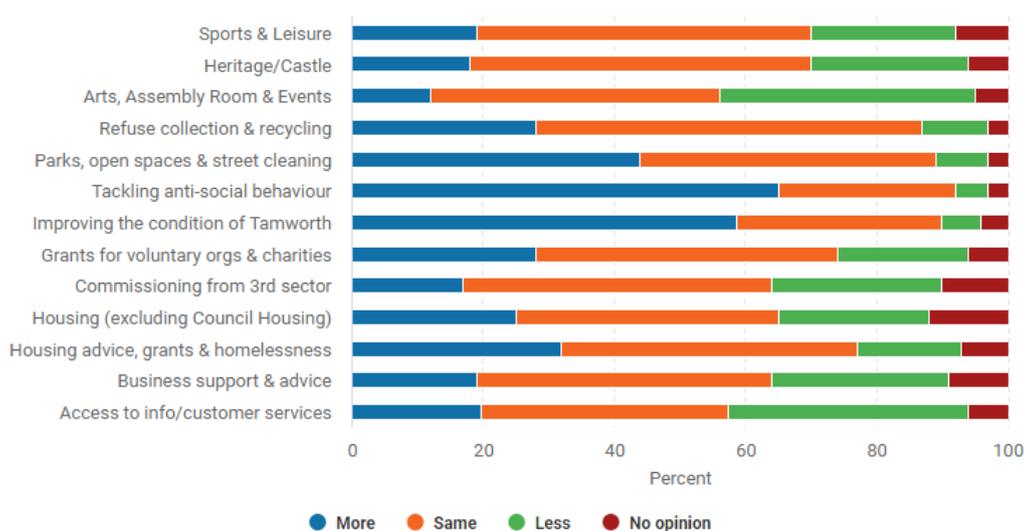
	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
Strongly or tend to agree	29%	44%	45%
Neither agree or disagree	32%	31%	28%
Tend to or strongly disagree	41%	23%	24%
Don't know	2%	2%	

Spending

Financial stability is and has been the key requirement for local authorities. Following the national response to the pandemic, it is likely that Government funding to local council will reduce in the future.

As part of this survey, for our key areas of spending, we asked if people thought we should spend more, the same or less.

For the following services, do you think we should spend more, the same or less?



*See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

There is a clear appetite for more spending on many of our very visible services:

- Parks and open spaces
- Tackling anti-social behaviour
- Improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth

This is wholly consistent with the other findings in this survey, views around Tamworth as a place to live, responsiveness of the council and dissatisfaction match these same areas where people would like to see increases in spending.

Beyond increases, it is more difficult to make clear conclusions.

There is however appetite to reduce spending on

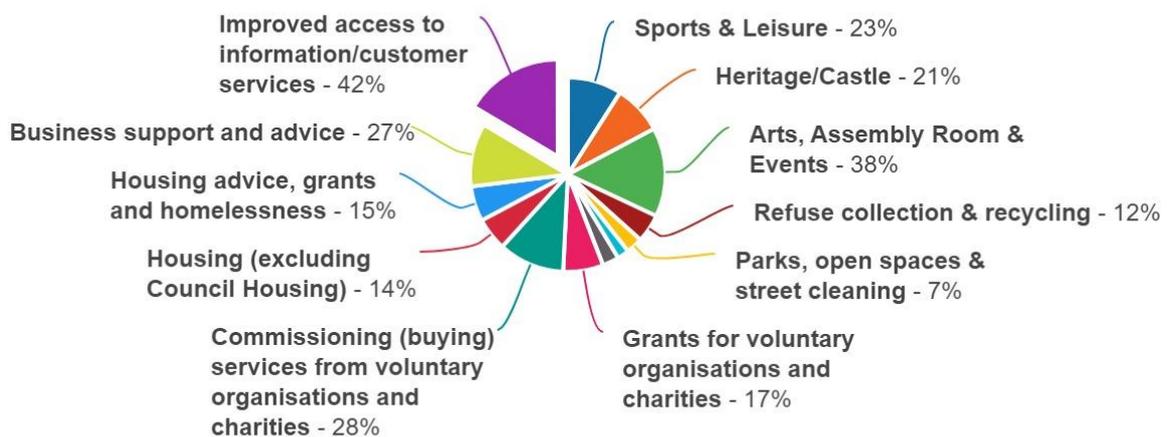
- Improved access to information/customer services
- Arts, Assembly Rooms and Events
- Voluntary sector grants and commissioning

This is also reflected in the following question about where to make savings.

Where to make savings

Here we asked people to choose up to three areas.

From the services listed, if we had to make savings or reduce costs, which services do you think we should look at?



When asked to choose where to make savings, the top choices from respondents were:

- Improved access to information/customer services (*however there are a lot of comments about customer access where many are calling for further enhanced face to face service additional to that offered at the moment at the TIC in the Assembly Rooms and outreach surgeries in communities. Feedback from respondents however show that over 90% would choose a digital route to access, so comments we're not made from their own personal perspective or experiences*).
- Arts, Assembly Rooms and Events
- Voluntary sector grants and commissioning

This feedback around arts and events is interesting, as it goes against the positive feedback we have for our free outdoor events, Castle Summer Fest and others, where we see people asking for more of these opportunities.

This list of savings options is however consistent with the above question around spending more, the same or less.

And in terms of events and leisure, the findings are consistent with the following questions about increasing charges.

It is important to note however, that from the comments people shared with us, people do not know the role the voluntary sector plays in supporting vulnerable people in Tamworth and our role in commissioning services from this sector to further support the most vulnerable.

Positively, as outlined in the [State of Tamworth debate report](#), those areas identified by respondents for increased spending are already priority areas where a significant amount of work is happening:

Achieved:

- Closer working with police and other partners to reduce fear of crime. With the first 'Operation Safer Nights' in the town centre happening just a few weeks ago with more planned.
- Upgraded all council CCTV cameras providing better quality images and coverage.
- ASB Housemark accreditation renewed.
- Dementia Friendly Community status reconfirmed.
- Grant provided to Betterway Recovery for alcoholism peer support.
- Working with MPFT for a dedicated mental health officer for housing.
- Business grants of £23million issued.
- Run several business support programmes.
- Business consultants appointed to support town centre businesses.
- Supporting hundreds of community litter picks and local litter pick champions.
- Secured over £20million government future high street funding to redevelop Tamworth Town Centre. With a further £20million bid to the Governments Levelling Up fund submitted.
- Taking all actions legally available to tackle unauthorised encampments.
- Achieved Britain in Bloom Gold, showcasing community involvement across the borough, work at local nature reserves, involving schools and communities leading planting activity in residential areas.
- £23million in business grants to support local business development growth.
- Delivered a full programme of free events, food markets, and much more as part of Castle Summer Fest.

In progress:

- Estate improvements & landscaping.
- Employment of an ASB Youth Engagement Officer to work in 'hotspots'.
- Develop positive diversionary activities.
- Community Safety Strategic Assessment to identify priorities and inform new plans.
- Appoint Community Cohesion Officer.
- Develop homelessness advice hub for face-to-face support.
- Extend Winter Relief project to all year.
- Improving how street issues can be reported to the council on the My Tamworth app.

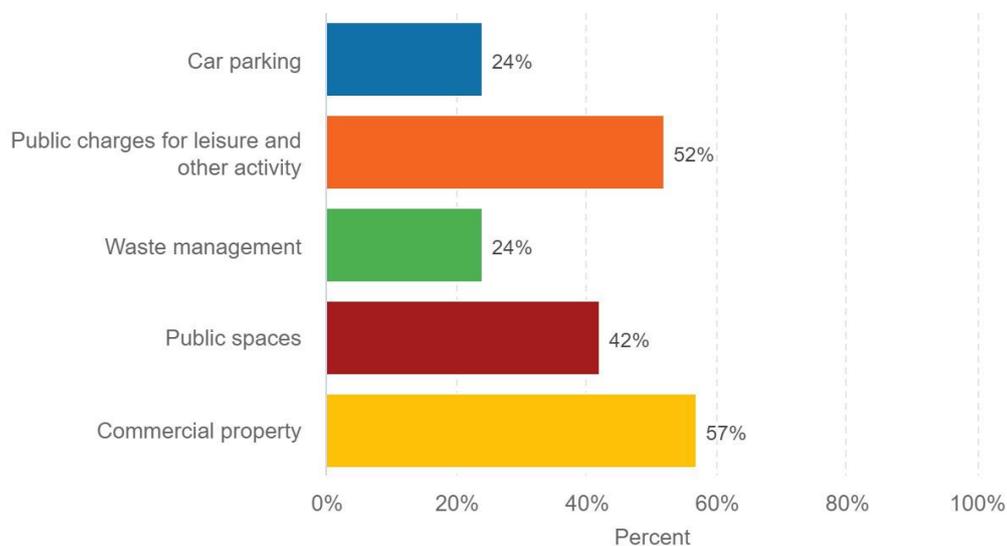
- Implementing the enhanced decent homes standard to all council housing.
- Planned improvements to council housing estates including landscaping.

Increasing charges

Respondents chose to increase charges for leisure and commercial property. However, we also know from comments and that increasing charges for Assembly Rooms performances and the castle would be unpopular.

Interesting to note respondents have selected to increase charges for commercial property, while conversely there is also a desire for us to increase spending improving the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of Tamworth, which commercial property contributes to.

If we were to increase the amount we charge residents and business, which two areas should we consider?

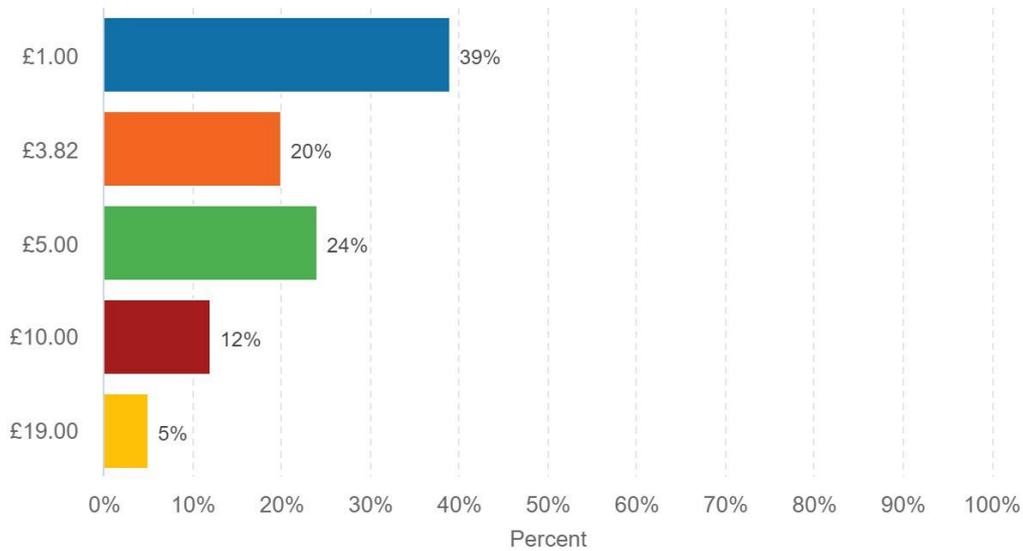


Council Tax increases

While we appreciate that tax increases are a burden to us all, we asked for views on council tax increases. Nothing our five-year budget plan included a £5 per year increase (based on a band D property).

Most respondents, **39%** have opted for the minimal council tax increase. However, those over 55 are more likely to suggest a larger increase.

What would you consider to be an acceptable Council Tax increase (based on a band D council tax property)?



Comments

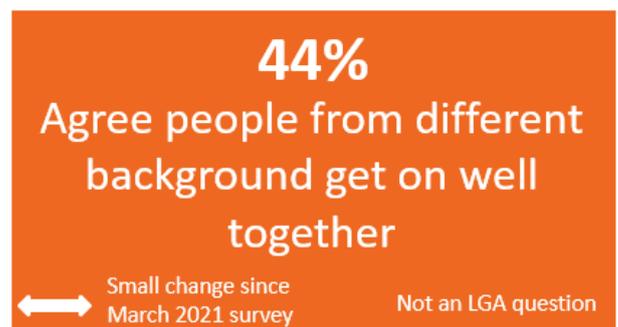
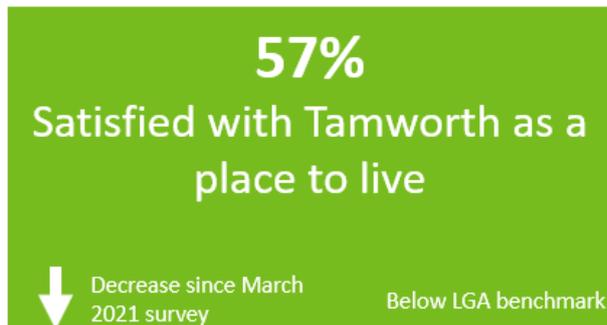
For each financial service area, we also invited comments from people, inviting them to share ways we could reduce spending.

There are no clear common recommendations for any budget topics. Many comments suggest there may be inefficiencies while others make suggestions that would significantly increase spending.

It is however important to note, that those residents commenting are unclear on how the council spends money.

The full list of comments can be read in **Annex A**.

Tamworth as a place to live



The overall satisfaction results for Tamworth as a place to live have decreased from the previous survey carried out in March 2021 and continue to be lower than the Local Government Association benchmark.

It is difficult to identify the reasons for this decline, however it is possible the challenges people are now facing in their private lives, around the cost-of-living crisis etc may be negatively impacting perceptions.

Additionally, just before the survey went live and at the time the survey was open, there were a number of negative stories circulating on social media which may have also influenced the view of those taking part; we know majority of people taking part saw the survey on social media.

Negative stories on social media examples:

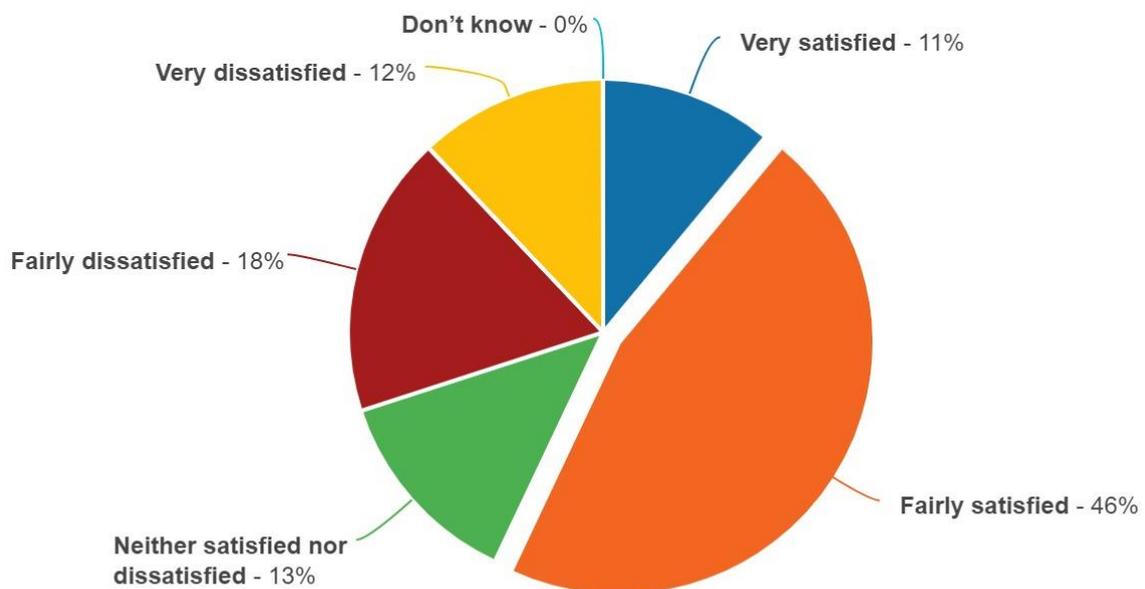
Unauthorised encampments, stories around the Tamworth MP, hotel to be used for asylum seekers (cast in a negative light), many issues with potholes, bollards not working in the pedestrian areas of town, knife crime/violent crime and other anti-social behaviour.

Satisfaction with Tamworth as a place to live

Overall, this has decreased since the previous survey, and remains lower than the local government benchmark.

This question is the first asked on the survey, so is not directly related to council services but does show a general dissatisfaction with Tamworth as a place to live. Again, as noted above many things could be influencing this view, including elements that are beyond the control of the borough council.

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



	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June2022 Benchmark
Very or fairly satisfied	57%	70%	81%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	13%	11%	11%
Fairly or very dissatisfied	30%	17%	8%

Interestingly, recent research by Sunlife Insurance³ ranks Tamworth fourth in a list of safest places for over 60s to live in England and Wales. To compile the list, the company analysed the number of burglaries and thefts per person in UK towns to determine which is the least dangerous. They also considered the prevalence of influenza and ambulance response times.

* See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

³ See [report](#).

Belonging to the local area

We have a decline in people feeling they belong to their local area. However, those over 45 are more likely to respond positively to this question.

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021
Very strongly	18%	22%
Fairly strongly	41%	43%
Not very strongly	26%	11%
Not at all strongly	13%	17%
Don't know	2%	2%

In recognition of local need, earlier this year Cabinet created a new Cabinet portfolio for Engagement, Civic Pride and Pride in Place. Following this, the council have held the first Civic Pride event, recognising local people for their work supporting the local community. It has also been recently agreed to support the Tamworth Pride event, which celebrates the LGBTQ+ community and allies.

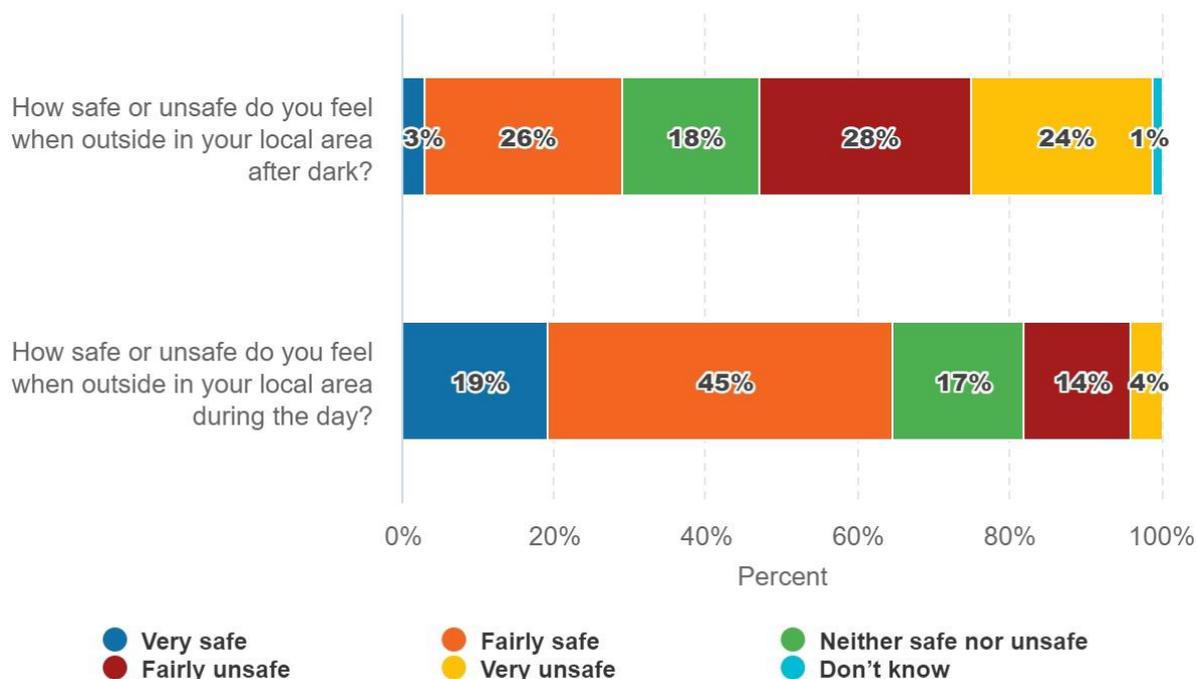
In partnership with Midlands Partnership NHS Foundation Trust, Tamworth Borough Council has also recently launched local warm spaces to support those struggling with the cost of living and energy costs.

Community safety, in the day and after dark

There has been a decline in those feeling safe outside in the day and a significant decline in those feeling safe outside after dark.

Women are more likely than men to say they feel unsafe outside after dark or during the day, and those under 45 are more likely to say they feel unsafe after dark.

Community Safety



Feeling safe outside after dark

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
Very or fairly safe	29%	40%	76%
Neither safe or unsafe	19%	19%	10%
Fairly or very unsafe	52%	41%	11%

Feeling safe outside during the day

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
Very or fairly safe	64%	74%	95%
Neither safe or unsafe	17%	14%	2%
Fairly or very unsafe	19%	13%	2%

While data shows Tamworth is ranked fourth as the safest place to live in England and Wales by Sunlife insurance, it is recognised that fear of crime and the impact on that on feeling of safe is a local issue.

This is why steps are being taken to reduce anti-social behaviour and increase feelings of safety. Actions include:

- Improving how street issues can be reported to the council on the My Tamworth app.
- Upgraded all council CCTV cameras providing better quality images and coverage.
- Taking all actions legally available to tackle unauthorised encampments.
- Closer working with police and other partners to reduce fear of crime. With the first 'Operation Safer Nights' in the town centre happening just a few weeks ago with more planned.
- Planned improvements to council housing estates including landscaping.
- Activated the winter relief project to make sure no one is rough sleeping.
- Working to secure a dedicated mental health support worker to support housing tenants.
- Estate improvements & landscaping.
- Employment of an ASB Youth Engagement Officer to work in hotspots.
- Develop positive diversionary activities.
- Community Safety Strategic Assessment to identify priorities and inform new plans.
- Appoint Community Cohesion Officer.

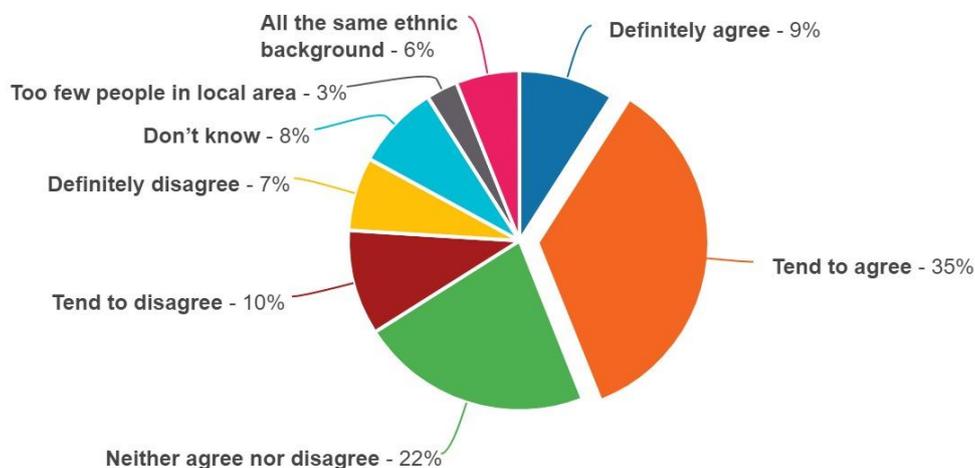
Different backgrounds get on well together

This is very roughly the same compared to previous years. While there is a change, the difference is not by a significant amount. The question was also changed slightly this year to give two more options for people to select. That may also account for the difference.

Women are more likely to agree people from different backgrounds get on well together.

*See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

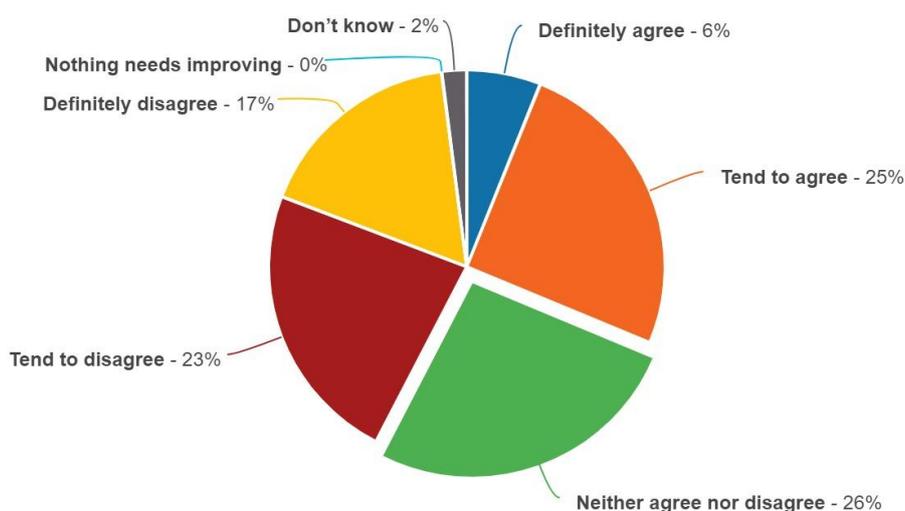
To what extent do you agree or disagree that your local area is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on well together? By getting on well together, we mean treating each other with respect.



	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021
Definitely or tend to agree	44%	48%
Neither agree or disagree	22%	30%
Tend to disagree or definitely disagree	17%	14%
Don't know	8%	7%
Too few people in the local area	3%	
All the same ethnic background	6%	

People pull together to improve the local area

To what extent would you agree or disagree that people in this local area pull together to improve the local area?



Here we have seen a more significant change. With more people disagreeing with this statement.

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021
Definitely or tend to agree	31%	42%
Neither agree or disagree	26%	22%
Tend to disagree or definitely disagree	40%	33%
Don't know		3%
Nothing needs improving	2%	1%

How much of a problem is....

The top three issues:

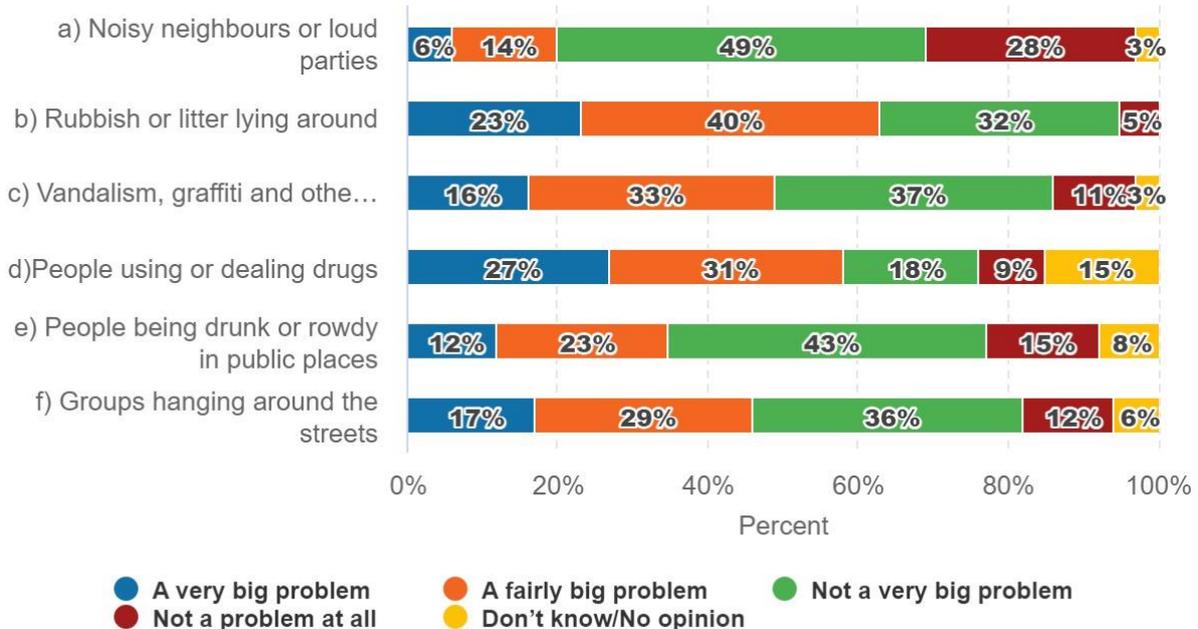
- Rubbish and litter
- People using or dealing drugs
- Vandalism, graffiti or deliberate damage

Aside from people using or dealing drugs, the others were also the top issues in the 2021 survey, showing these remain the key issues for local people. There has also been an increase in the feeling that groups hanging around the streets has become a bigger issue. These factors could be adding to the fear of crime we're seeing in people feeling safe outside.

Interestingly there are no material differences in answers between men and women, but there are variations when compared to age:

- Under 45s more likely to say rubbish and litter is a problem.
- Under 55s more likely to say people using or dealing drugs is a problem.

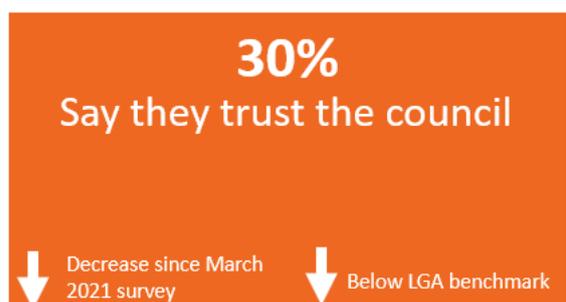
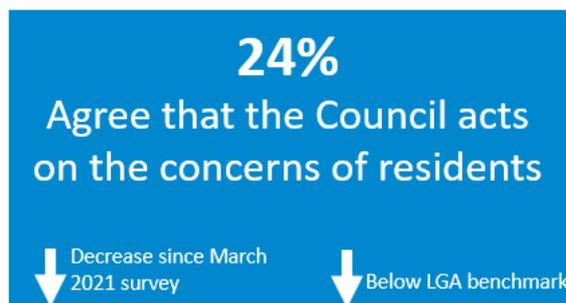
Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think each of the following are....



	A very or fairly big problem		Not a very big or not a problem		Don't know	
	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021
Noisy neighbours and loud parties	20%	13%	77%%	85%	3%	2%
Rubbish or litter lying around	63%	66%	37%	34%		
Vandalism, graffiti and deliberate damage	49%	35%	48%	64%	3%	2%
People using or dealing drugs	59%	45%	19%	40%	22%	15%
People being drunk or rowdy	35%	22%	57%	72%	8%	6%
Groups hanging around the streets	47%	32%	48%	63%	5%	5%

As shown earlier in this report, work is happening to target these key areas to seek to improve the lives of Tamworth residents.

Satisfaction with services

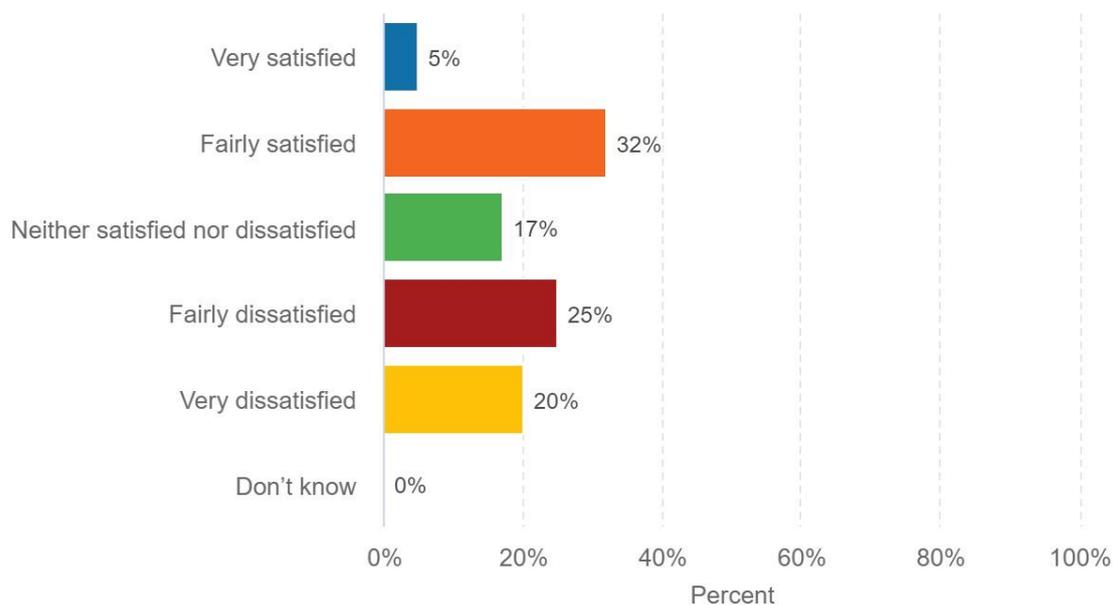


Satisfaction with how Tamworth Borough Council runs things

A number of people are dissatisfied with how the council runs things. As we've seen in the previous section people are dissatisfied with Tamworth as a place to live. It is likely people see Tamworth Borough Council (rightly or wrongly) behind some of that dissatisfaction.

We can already see from anecdotal evidence online, that there are increasing issues with potholes, pavements, traffic, visibility of crime plus a feeling there has been an increase in anti-social behaviour locally which will all contribute to a feeling that as the council we should be doing more. However, contact from local people about litter, reporting a problem with trees/bushes, anti-social behaviour is NOT part of the top enquiries to the council. So, while people are reporting dissatisfaction here, this does not correspond to request for services from the council.

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Tamworth Borough Council runs things?



	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
Very or fairly satisfied	37%	54%	63%
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	17%	21%	18%
Fairly or very dissatisfied	46%	24%	18%

Extent believe Tamworth Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents

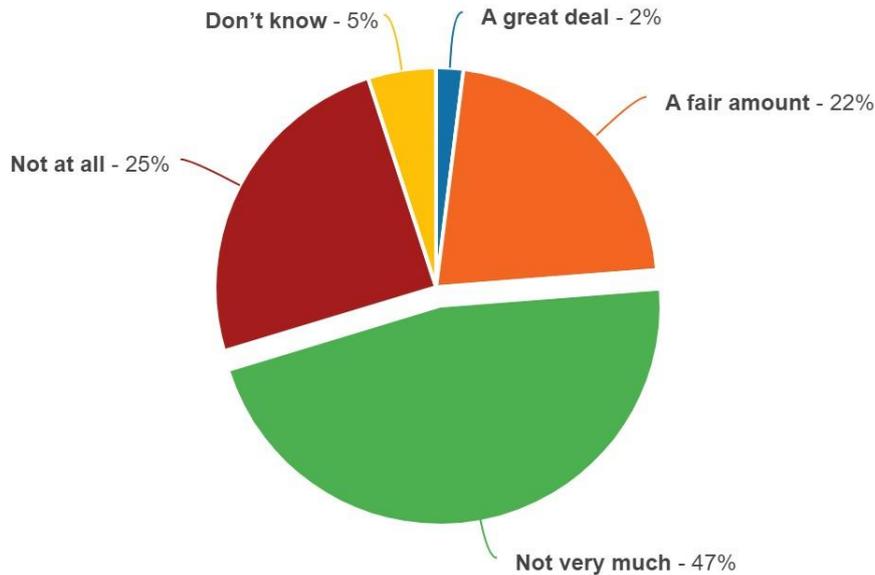
This has decreased since the survey in March 2021.

Those over 55 are more likely to be positive, while men in general are more negative when answering this question.

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
A great deal or fair amount	24%	44%	52%
Not very much or not at all	46%	49%	41%
Don't know	30%	7%	6%

* See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

To what extent do you think Tamworth Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?



How do you feel about Tamworth Borough Council

We have seen a decline in those speaking positively about the council. Answers to this question are likely to relate to the question above, where respondents do not feel concerns of local residents are acted upon.

This may also relate to the anti-social behaviour issues and feelings of dissatisfaction around litter and street cleaning, particularly if there is a feeling these things have not improved or changed in recent times. These are also issues we see regularly spoken about on social media but conversely, not amongst the top enquiries submitted to us.

Generally, those over 55 are more likely to respond positively.

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021
I speak positively of the council without being asked	4%	8%
I speak positively of the council if I'm asked	16%	31%
I have no views	28%	29%
I speak negatively about the council if I'm asked	39%	24%
I speak negatively about the council without being asked	12%	7%
Don't know	1%	2%

Positively, as outlined above on page 11, in the [State of Tamworth debate report](#), those areas identified by respondents as priorities are already areas where the council has instigated a significant amount of work:

Achieved:

- Closer working with police and other partners to reduce fear of crime. With the first 'Operation Safer Nights' in the town centre happening just a few weeks ago with more planned.
- Upgraded all council CCTV cameras providing better quality images and coverage.

- ASB Housemark accreditation renewed.
- Dementia Friendly Community status reconfirmed.
- Grant provided to Betterway Recovery for alcoholism peer support.
- Working with MPFT for a dedicated mental health officer for housing.
- Business grants of £23million issued.
- Run several business support programmes.
- Business consultants appointed to support town centre businesses.
- Supporting hundreds of community litter picks and local litter pick champions.
- Secured over £20million government future high street funding to redevelop Tamworth Town Centre. With a further £20million bid to the Governments Levelling Up fund submitted.
- Taking all actions legally available to tackle unauthorised encampments.
- Achieved Britain in Bloom Gold, showcasing community involvement across the borough, work at local nature reserves, involving schools and communities leading planting activity in residential areas.
- £23million in business grants to support local business development growth.
- Delivered a full programme of free events, food markets, and much more as part of Castle Summer Fest.

In progress:

- Estate improvements & landscaping.
- Employment of an ASB Youth Engagement Officer to work in 'hotspots'.
- Develop positive diversionary activities.
- Community Safety Strategic Assessment to identify priorities and inform new plans.
- Appoint Community Cohesion Officer.
- Develop homelessness advice hub for face-to-face support.
- Extend Winter Relief project to all year.
- Improving how street issues can be reported to the council on the My Tamworth app.
- Implementing the enhanced decent homes standard to all council housing.
- Planned improvements to council housing estates including landscaping.

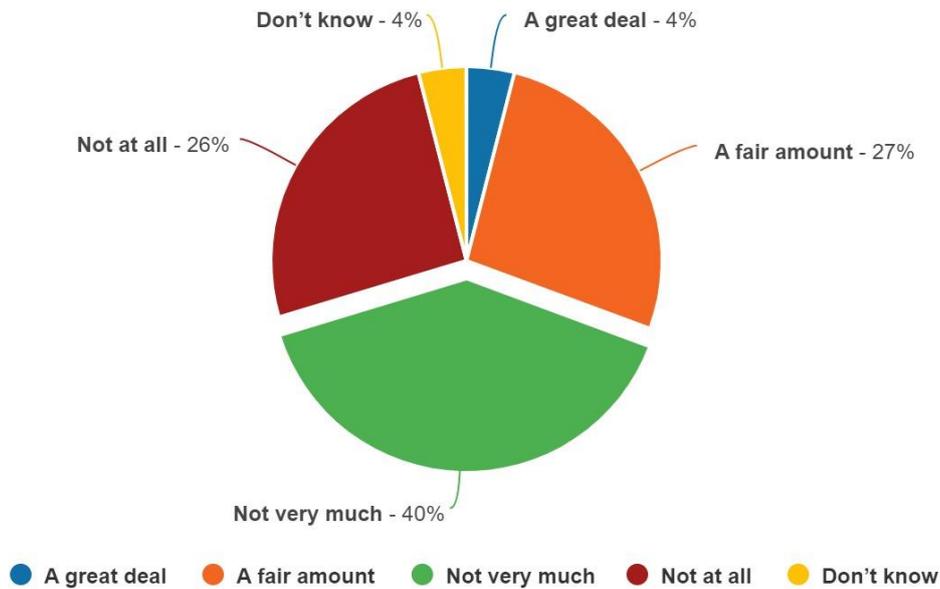
As also outlined on page 17, measures to tackle anti-social behaviour and the fear of crime are also moving at pace.

How much do you trust Tamworth Borough Council

This is the first time we have asked this question. But compared to the benchmark, the level of trust in the council is low. Further work around trust to understand the issues may be appropriate.

As with the questions above, those over 55 are more likely to trust the council.

How much do you trust Tamworth Borough Council?



	Tamworth 2022	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
A great deal or fair amount	30%	58%
Not very much or not at all	40%	40%
Don't know	30%	2%

Satisfaction with services

This question was specifically included so we could benchmark against other councils.

The question asked, how satisfied people were with:

- Waste collection
- Street cleaning
- Sport and leisure services (castle, assembly rooms, castle grounds, events etc)
- Parks and green spaces
- Social housing (note we added this specifically as it is a key service for us).

This is the first time we have asked these questions, so the answers here are our baseline for future surveys.

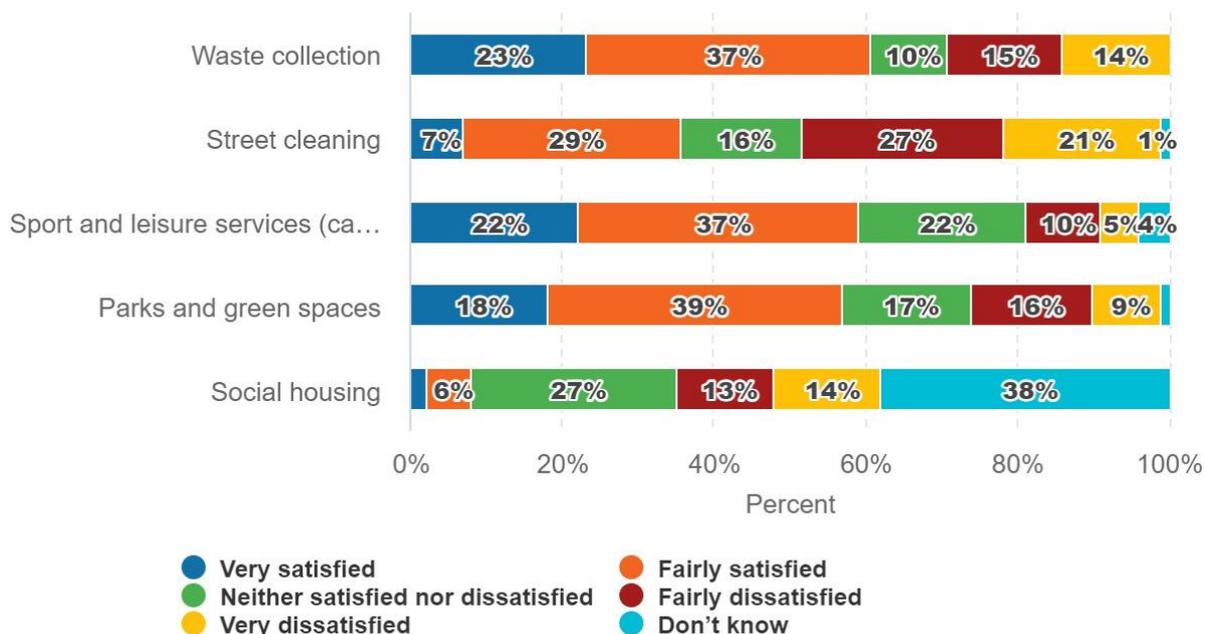
Men are more likely to be dissatisfied with waste collection and street cleaning than women. While women are more likely to be satisfied with sport and leisure services.

Those over 55 are more likely to be satisfied with waste collection services.

For sport and leisure, we are above the LGA benchmark.

* See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

How satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following services:



Overall people are least satisfied with street cleaning. This is in line with the questions above around litter, graffiti and vandalism being seen as the biggest local issues.

Comparison to the LGA June 2022 benchmarks

Waste collection

	Very or fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Don't know
Tamworth	60%	30%	10%	
LGA benchmark*	81%	8%	5%	-

Street cleaning

	Very or fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Don't know
Tamworth	36%	48%	16%	
LGA benchmark*	66%	22%	11%	1%

Sport and leisure

	Very or fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Don't know
Tamworth	59%	15%	22%	4%
LGA benchmark*	55%	14%	21%	10%

Parks and green spaces

	Very or fairly satisfied	Fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied	Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	Don't know
Tamworth	57%	25%	17%	1%

* See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

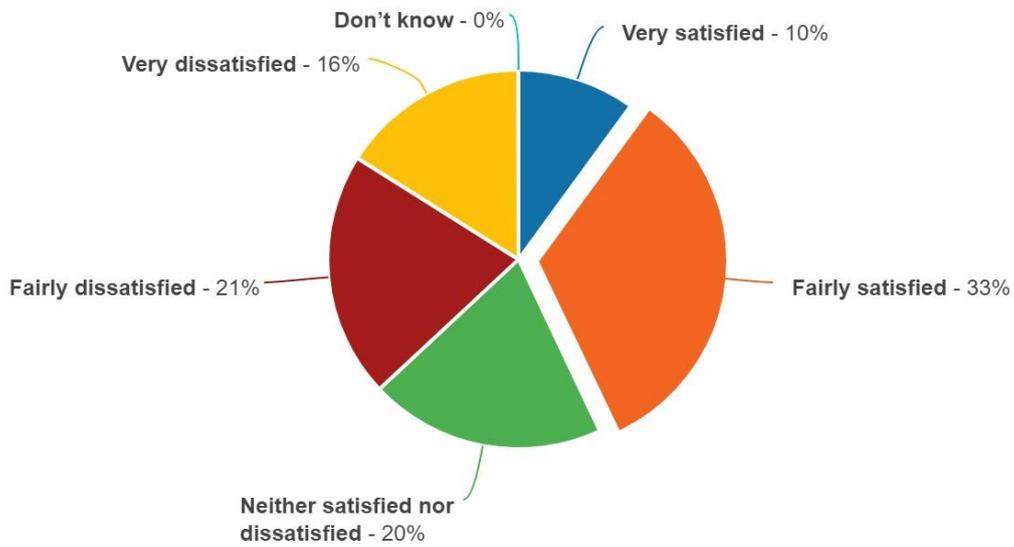
LGA benchmark*	82%	9%	8%	2%
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Satisfaction with leisure, entertainment, shopping facilities and amenities that are available in and around Tamworth

People are slightly more satisfied than dissatisfied with shopping facilities and amenities.

Again, this is the first time we've asked this question and will act as a baseline for the future.

How satisfied are you with leisure, entertainment, shopping facilities and amenities that are available in and around Tamworth?



* See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

Information and contacting the council



Social media is the top choice for finding out about council services

90% would contact the council via digital means

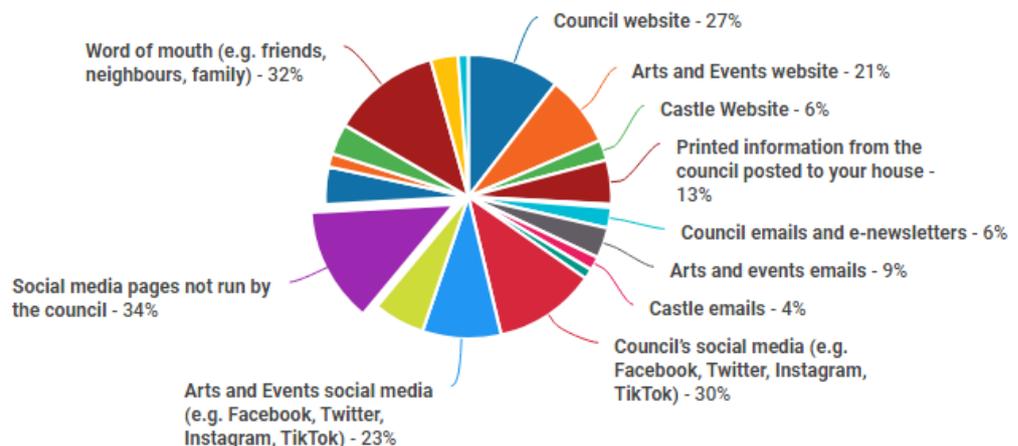
60% of respondents have contacted the council for services in the last 12 months

How do you find out about Tamworth Borough Council and the services it provides (inc events in the Castle Grounds, at the Assembly Rooms and Castle)?

Social media is the main channel for respondents to find out about council services and events.

There may be bias here, for although the survey was promoted in local media and 1,500 local people were written to inviting them to take part, the vast majority heard about the survey via social media, so it follows that our respondents use social media more widely for information.

How do you currently find out about Tamworth Borough Council and the services it provides, including events in the Castle Grounds, at the Assembly Rooms and Castle?



When did you last contact the council to request a service, report a problem or make a complaint

A very high proportion of respondents (60%) have contacted the council for a service within the last 12 months. This rises to over 80% when you include those who contacted us over year ago.

This is not representative of the borough; our customer services team are not in regular contact with 60% of borough residents.

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021
In the last month	22%	25%
More than a month ago, but in the last six months	26%	23%
More than six months ago, but in the last year	12%	16%
Over a year ago	26%	36%
Never	14%	23%

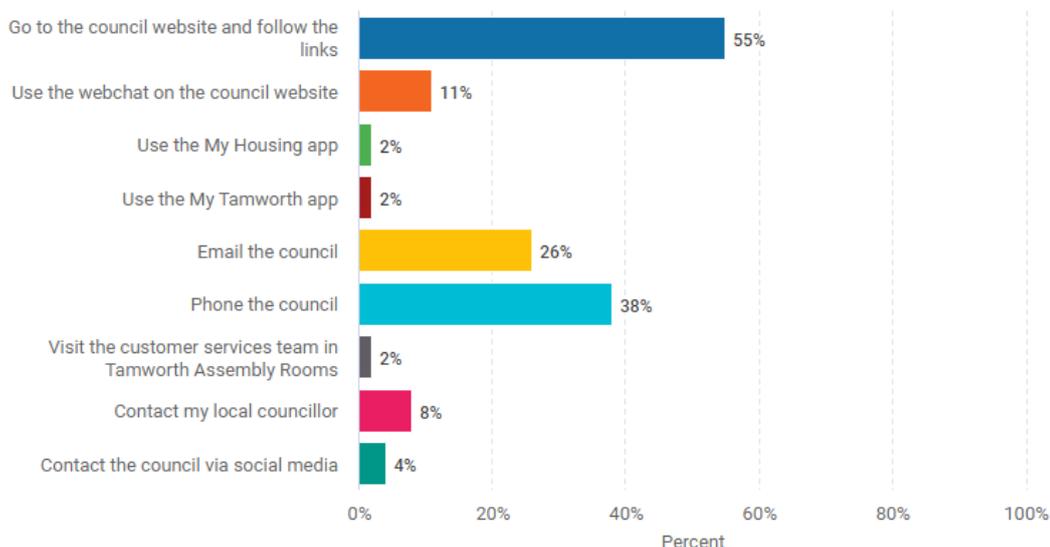
If you had to contact the council, what would you do

The responses to this question are very interesting. Only 10% of respondents would choose a non-digital option to contact the council (selecting contact via Councillor or visiting the TIC in the Assembly Rooms).

This matches in house statistics and customer data from the council's customer services team, where the vast majority of all customer enquiries are dealt with digitally, with few accessing the face-to-face services at the Tamworth Information Centre in the Assembly Rooms or the outreach activities held in communities.

This feedback is particularly at odds with the comments seen in the comments on council income and spending. Where many are calling for more face-to-face access points, while they themselves would not use those services. Customer services data shows that in the last 12 months 100,000 contacts from customers have been digital and around 280 people a year contact the council face to face at the TIC in the Assembly Rooms.

If you had to contact Tamworth Borough Council to request a service, report a problem or make a complaint what would you do?



How well informed do you think Tamworth Borough Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides

	Tamworth 2022	Tamworth 2021	LGA* June 2022 Benchmark
Very or fairly well informed	29%	53%	57%
Not very well or not at all well informed	42%	37%	40%
Don't know	29%	11%	3%

The results interestingly show that we match the LGA benchmark for 'not very well etc' and the disparity compared to the LGA comes with a very large proportion of respondents selecting don't know.

Information about council services are shared in many ways, including:

- Via council run websites; Tamworth Borough Council, Transforming Tamworth, Tamworth Castle, Tamworth Arts and Events and Visit Tamworth.
- Via traditional press releases, these are posted on the main Tamworth Borough Council website and shared with news outlets. Majority are picked up and used by local media and local Tamworth information Facebook sites.
- Via council run social media; over 16+ channels for the different services. E.g. Facebook for Tamworth Borough Council, Tamworth Assembly Room, Tamworth Castle and Visit Tamworth. Plus twitter and Instagram for most of these services.
- Direct mail to those people signed up to Castle, arts and events mailing lists.
- Tenant newsletter to social housing tenants.
- And via our customer services team and outreach services for vulnerable people.

Plans are in place to share more information about those priorities local people have identified in this survey.

Did you know...

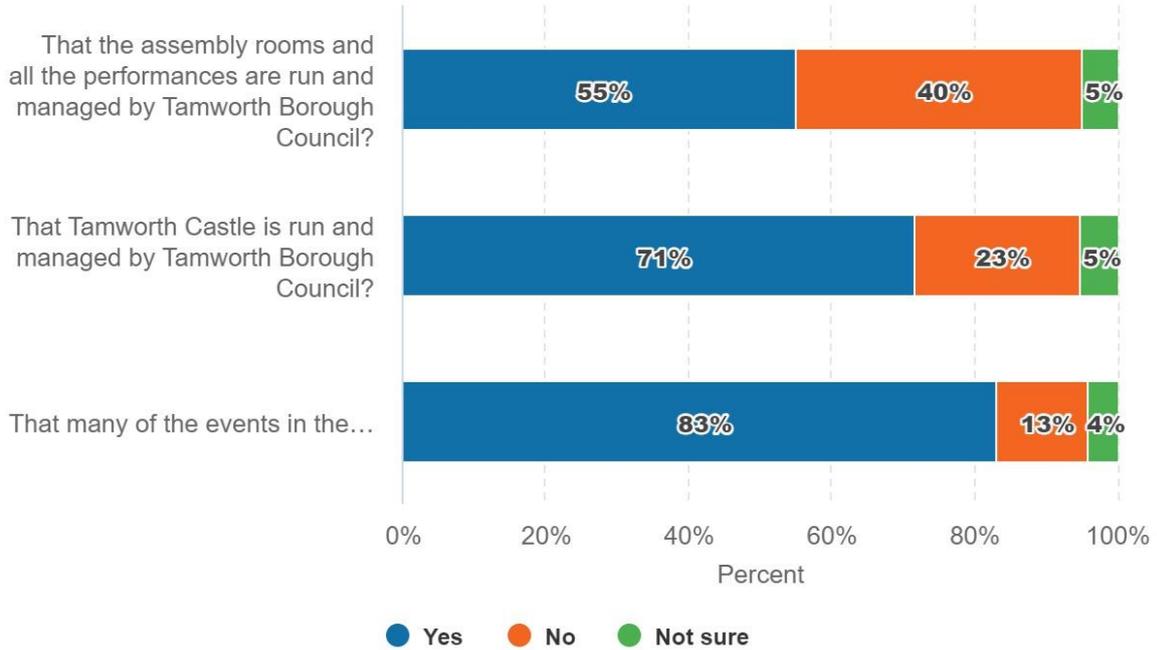
This question was asked to determine how many people realise Tamworth Borough Council run and manage the assembly rooms, the castle and majority of outdoor events in the castle grounds.

This question is particularly important, as it was also used as a way of increasing knowledge of respondents ahead of questions around spending, increasing charges and savings which came later in the survey.

Awareness that the council run and manage the assembly rooms and castle increases with age.

*See note on benchmarking and comparisons on page 5

Did you know



Knowledge about our responsibilities for the Assembly Rooms, and to a lesser extent Tamworth Castle is lower than expected. It is important for transparency in spending, priorities, and decision making that local people know and understand these are council functions.

Demographics

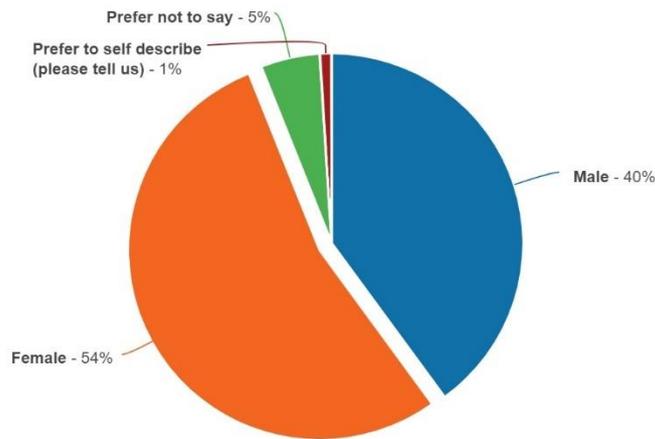
In total, 60,400 people were eligible to take part in this survey (adults) according to the latest census figures.

712 people actually took part, which is 1.2% of the eligible population.

Gender

Tamworth's population is 51% female and 49% male. So compared to our population, slightly more women than men chose to take part.

Which of the following best describes you?



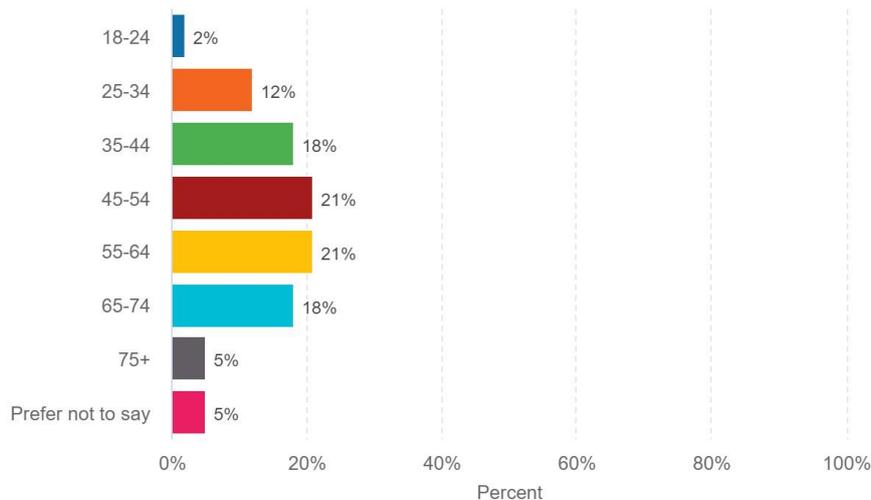
Ethnicity

Around 2.5% of Tamworth's population have a non-white background, positively, 6% of respondents were from a diverse background. However, 11% of respondents chose not to disclose their ethnicity.

Age profile of respondents:

We are slightly underrepresented by younger age groups compared to population statistics.

What is your age?



Who are you?

We asked in what capacity people were responding, as a resident, as a business etc. 97% of respondents were local residents.

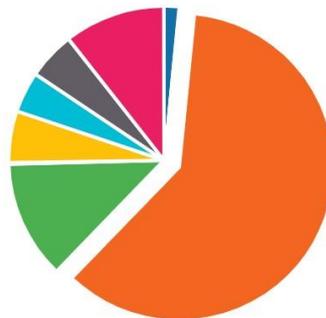
Where did you hear about the survey?

To help us successfully share future consultation opportunities, it is helpful to know how people found out about the survey.

As we can see, for our respondents, the most successful method of communication was social media with 61% of respondents hearing through this channel.

Others heard mainly through direct communications from the council. Interestingly we wrote to 1,500 local residents and promoted via local print media, but majority saw the consultation opportunity via social media.

Please tell us where you heard about this survey



- In the Tamworth Herald
- On social media
- From a letter sent by the council
- Picked up a copy from the Assembly Rooms/Tamworth Library
- In a tenants email from the council
- In a business email from the council
- In a community and voluntary sector email from the council
- Other (please tell us):

Conclusion

With over 700 responses, this is the most successful 'self-selecting' survey we've carried out, and we have a wealth of information and data to scrutinise.

However. We do not know what bias our self-selecting, social media savvy sample brings. In statistical terms, we cannot claim that this survey represents the views of everyone living in Tamworth. This also makes comparing ourselves to the benchmark challenging too, the different methodologies mean we are not comparing like for like. *But* we should not dismiss the feedback because of these issues.

There is a clear common theme that can be seen throughout the responses around how the borough looks, and other feelings and experiences associated with anti-social behaviour. Collectively these visible issues can have impact on whether people feel safe, whether there is a feeling things are being tackled and generally whether people feel positive about where they live.

These themes can also be seen in views around spending, savings and income. With people prioritising higher spends in these areas.

Positively, as outlined above on page 11, in the [State of Tamworth debate report](#), those areas identified by respondents as priorities are already areas where the council has instigated a significant amount of work.

We have also seen a large number of those taking part sign up to be part of our Citizens' Panel; a group of local people we regularly consult about council issues. It is very positive to see people wanting to engage more democracy and the work the council does.

In future, along with other forms of consultation and engagement, we may want to consider commissioning a statistically representative survey understand any bias and to identify the views from people across all walks of life.