



Social
Research

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council Residents' Satisfaction Survey 2005

Report Prepared for
Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council



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Introduction

Background and Objectives

This report presents the findings of a residents’ survey conducted by the MORI Social Research Institute on behalf of Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council.

The principal objective for the survey is to provide the authority with robust data which accurately measure public opinion and satisfaction with the Council’s service provision, the awareness of council services as well as residents’ views about living in Blaenau Gwent.

The main body of the report sets out the detailed survey findings under the following sub-headings:

Blaenau Gwent as a Place to Live

- Satisfaction with Blaenau Gwent as a place to live;
- Reasons for satisfaction and dissatisfaction;
- Views on community cohesion and anti-social behaviour; and
- Residents’ priorities for improving quality of life.

The Council and its Services

- Overall satisfaction with the Council and the services it provides, specifically:
 - Social Services
 - Education
 - Leisure and Cultural Facilities
 - Environmental Services
 - Local Transport
- Council service usage

Communications and Contacting the Council

- Knowledge of, and interest in, Council services and benefits;
- Council contact experience;

- Preferred means of contacting the Council; and
- Voting in Elections.

Report layout

This report outlines the key findings from the survey. A guide to statistical reliability, social class definitions and a copy of the marked-up questionnaire are appended. A separate volume of computer tables accompanies this report.

Acknowledgements

MORI would like to thank Andrew Parker, Shelley Bosson and Wendy Cottis at Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council for their help and advice in developing this project. Special thanks also go to the 1,053 residents who took part in this survey.

Publication of Data

As the Council has engaged MORI to provide an objective and representative programme of research, it is important to protect the Council's interests by ensuring that it is accurately reflected in any press release or publication of the findings. As part of our standard terms and conditions, the publication of the data in this report is therefore subject to the advance approval of MORI. This would only be refused on the grounds of inaccuracy or misinterpretation of the findings.

Methodology

Sampling and Fieldwork

MORI interviewed a total of 1,053 residents aged 16+ in 104 randomly selected sample points across the Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council area.

Within each sample point, interviewer quotas were set to reflect the population profile of that area by age, gender and working status, using 2001 Census data. At the analysis stage, data were weighted to the known population profile of the County Borough Council area.

Fieldwork was conducted, face-to-face and in-home, between 10th January and 15th February 2005. It was carried out using MORI's own field force.

A map of the county showing the sampling points are shown on the page overleaf.

Presentation and Interpretation of Data

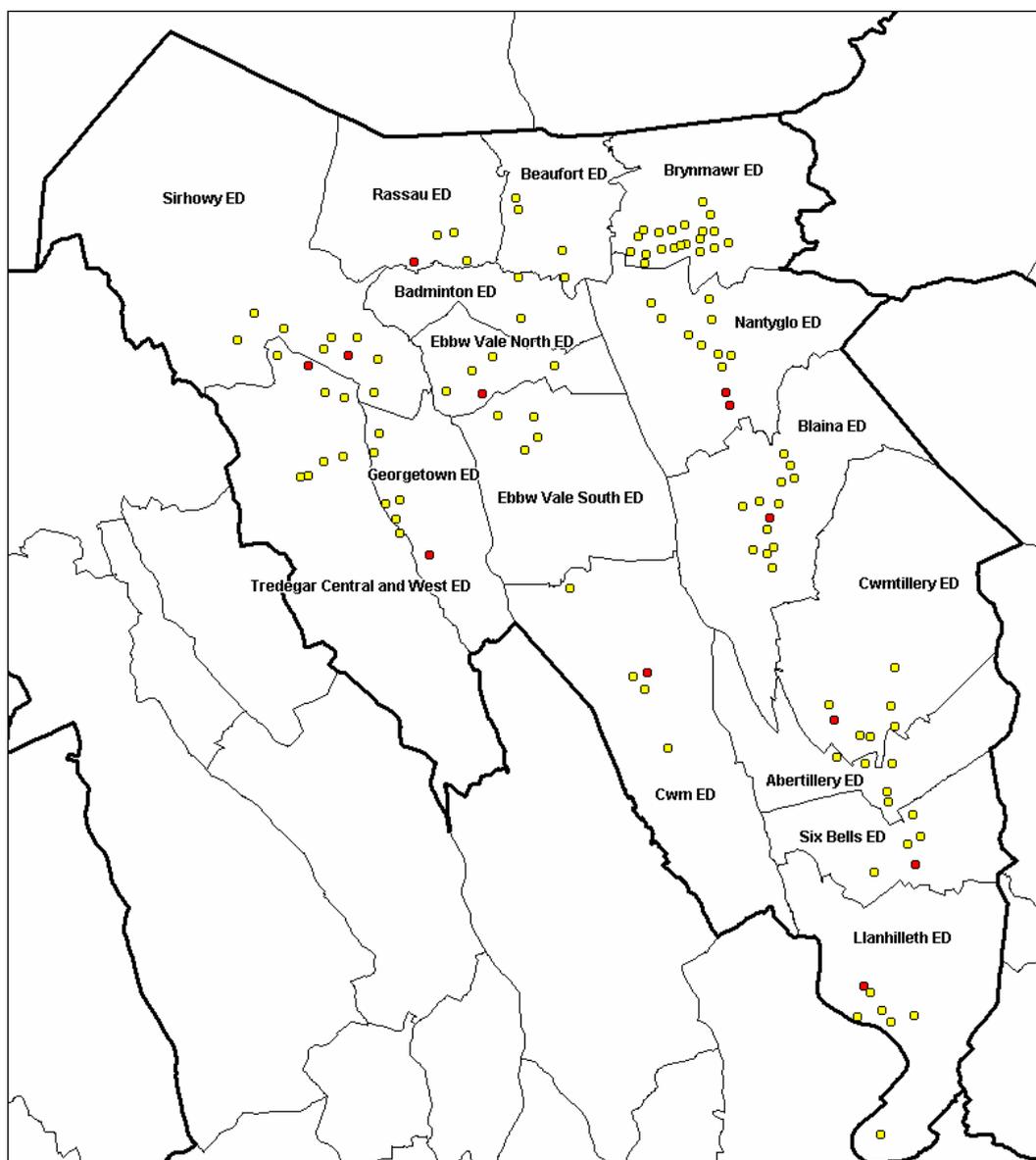
A further explanation of statistical reliability is appended, but it should be remembered at all times that a sample, rather than the entire population of Blaenau Gwent residents, has taken part in the survey. As a consequence, all results are subject to sampling tolerances, which means that not all differences are significant. Overall results are accurate to $\pm 3\%$ (assuming a 95% confidence interval). In future, when comparing changes over time we should look for differences of $\pm 3\%$ in order to conclude that a significant or real change has taken place.

Reference in this report is made to “net figures”. This represents the balance of opinion on attitudinal questions and provides a particularly useful means of comparing the results for a number of variables. In the case of a “net agree” figure, this represents the percentage who agree with a particular statement less the percentage who disagree. For example, if a statement records 40% agree (i.e. strongly/tend to agree) and 25% disagree (strongly/tend to disagree), then the net figure is +15 points.

Where percentages do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding, the exclusion of “don't know” categories, or multiple answers. Throughout the volume an asterisk (*) denotes any value less than half a per cent.

Survey Sampling Points

A map of the area showing each of the wards in the Borough is presented below. The map highlights the location of the 104 sampling points that were randomly selected and where the interviews were carried out. The yellow points on the map are the original sampling points selected and the red points are the reserve points.



Understanding the Local Population

For this report individual wards of Blaenau Gwent have been grouped together into town areas in order to look at geographical variations within the Council area. The groupings of wards within town areas are defined by the Council as follows:

<i>Abertillery Town</i>	Abertillery, Cwmtillery, Llanhilleth and Six Bells wards;
<i>Brynmawr Town</i>	Brynmawr ward;
<i>Ebbw Vale Town</i>	Badminton, Beaufort, Cwm, Ebbw Vale North, Ebbw Vale South and Rassau wards;
<i>Nantyglo & Blaina</i>	Nantyglo & Blaina wards; and
<i>Tredegar Town</i>	Georgetown, Sirhowy, Tredegar Central and West wards.

The sample was stratified to ensure that at least 200 interviews took place in each of the five town areas. The actual number of interviews achieved in each area was as follows:

- Abertillery Town – 214
- Brynmawr Town – 204
- Ebbw Vale Town – 217
- Nantyglo & Blaina – 207
- Tredegar Town – 211

The chart below shows how the age profiles of the town areas vary. The areas with the youngest population profiles are Abertillery Town and Nantyglo and Blaina, with the oldest population profile being found in Brynmawr Town.

Age profile by town area



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

There is not much variation by social class between the town areas, all of which contain relatively high proportions of C2DE residents. However, Brynmawr Town and Tredegar Town have the highest proportion of ABC1s – it is worth noting, these are also the two town areas with the highest proportion of older residents.

Social grade profile by town area



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Definition of Social Grades

In this report, we also make reference to the social class or social grade of respondents. These are the social class definitions used by the Institute of Practitioners in Advertising. These groups are standard on all surveys carried out by MORI, and are described in the table below.

Social Class		Occupation of Chief Income Earner
A	Upper Middle Class	Higher managerial, administrative or professional
B	Middle Class	Intermediate managerial, administrative or professional
C1	Lower Middle Class	Supervisor or clerical and junior managerial, administrative or professional
C2	Skilled Working Class	Skilled manual workers
D	Working Class	Semi and unskilled manual workers
E	Those at the lowest levels of subsistence	State pensioners, etc., with no other earnings

Normative Data and Comparisons

Where appropriate, this report compares data from the present survey with findings obtained by MORI in comparable local authorities over recent years. However, it is important to note that our normative data is not a league table since MORI has not worked for every council: comparisons simply provide a context in which the results of this survey can be interpreted. Please also note that these data are the copyright of MORI and should not be released to any third party without the written permission of MORI.

We also make reference to results from the 2003/2004 Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys that we carried out in all local authorities in England. Some caution should again be exercised here, given the different research methodologies employed (most of the BVPI surveys were carried out using a postal methodology) and the subsequent differences in results that this can lead to. Again though, the comparative findings are there to provide useful context.

Measuring Perceptions

It is also worth pointing out that this survey deals with residents' *perceptions* at the time the survey was conducted *rather than facts*. Residents' perceptions, therefore, may not accurately represent the level and quality of services that are currently provided in Blaenau Gwent. Indeed, one of the challenges will be to link these perceptions with other data that are available, for example, performance indicators or other measurements of service quality.

Citizens' Panel

The survey also provided the opportunity to recruit a new Citizens' Panel for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council - a standing panel of residents who are willing to take part in future research and consultation. A total of 375 survey participants agreed to join the Citizens' Panel.

Background: Current Themes in Local Government

In order to make the most of the findings, it is important to link the analysis with other patterns that have been observed both locally (for example, in other research carried out by the authority and its partners) and nationally. In this section, we have outlined some of the themes that MORI has observed recently in its work for local government. This may help to highlight areas that can be explored further using the data from this survey.

Some of the broad themes we have observed in our work recently include:

1. Rising concern about liveability and quality of life issues

Across Britain, we have found local people expressing concern about the same types of issues: cleanliness, activities for children and teenagers, petty crime/vandalism.

MORI’s report, *The Rising Prominence of Liveability*, provides the context for this (for details, see: <http://www.mori.com/pubinfo/liveability.shtml>).

The 2003/04 BVPI survey questions on quality of life, also incorporated into this survey for Blaenau Gwent, provide a framework for identifying the extent to which local concerns are consistent with patterns being observed in other authorities and nationally.

2. “Local government” is less well regarded than in the past – but the tide may be turning

“Corporate health” questions, taking an overview of how well local authorities are regarded, have tended to show a downward trend over the last few years. But in the last year or two, there is evidence that this trend has reversed. Nevertheless, the “institution” of local government is now generally less well regarded than many of the services it provides.

There is little evidence that concerns about council tax are seen as a major issue for the public, at least when they are thinking about the bigger issues facing Britain. But at the same time, we have found councils across the country struggling to improve their ratings on issues like value for money. The wider question about whether councils are being adversely affected by increased dissatisfaction with “government” and declining trust in politicians and public sector managers also needs to be considered.

There is now a considerable body of evidence showing that local councils are often not seen as particularly good communicators. We have found that those authorities which are more effective in putting across a clear message about what they are doing, and how services are being delivered, tend to be better regarded by residents. This is something for the council and partners perhaps to focus on in order to further improve satisfaction ratings. For example, 19% of Blaenau Gwent residents are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the way the Council is running the area. Further communications from the Council about what it is doing may serve to convert some of these ‘neutral’ residents into advocates.

3. High ratings on individual services

If local government is struggling to improve its ratings at the overall level, it is important to bear in mind that some of the individual services delivered by local government are among the best regarded public services in Britain. Examples here include libraries, refuse collection and (among parents) primary schools.

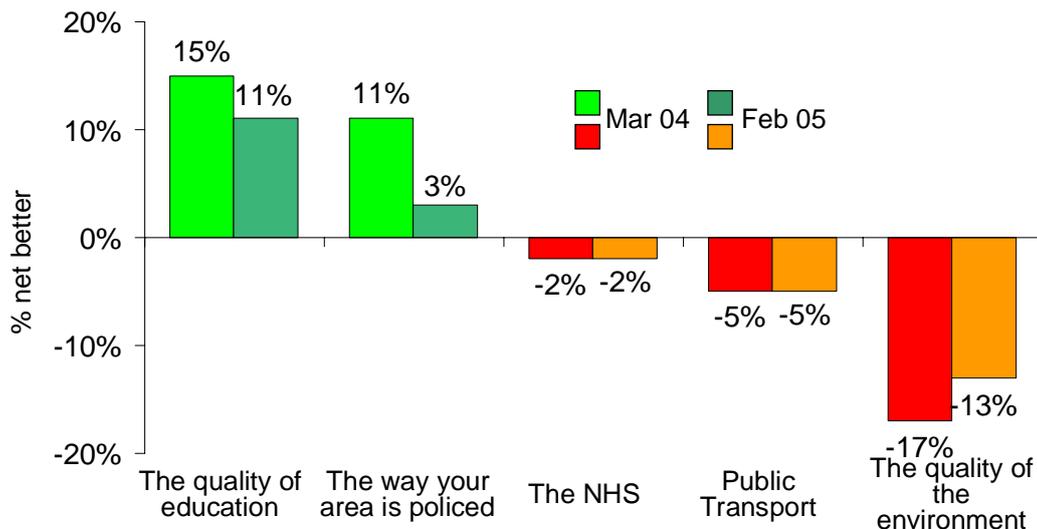
Whilst ratings of local government fluctuate over time, perceptions of the institution are consistently less well regarded than individual service areas. Latest findings show signs of a potential recovery after notable declines in ratings since the late 1990s. If an authority is perceived to provide generally good quality services and good value for money, then it is highly likely to also achieve strong satisfaction ratings. Indeed, perceptions on these attributes are consistently shown to be the strongest drivers of overall satisfaction across different studies and across key sub-groups within the population. In particular, high visibility street scene services have the biggest impact of all individual service areas on overall regard of an authority – particularly ratings of street cleaning (on which there are relatively large variations in performance across authorities). Ratings of services related to local development are also fairly prominent, reflecting general concerns about developmental issues in local areas.

4. Concerns about delivery – but a more positive picture locally?

At a national level, the public are often cautious about whether they expect to see improvements in key services. They are able to differentiate between key service areas, however, with education generally seen as more of a success than other priority areas.

Expectations of the Electorate

Q Thinking about... over the next few years, do you expect it to get better/worse?



Base: 963 British adults, 25-28 February 2005
 Source: MORI Social Research Institute Delivery Index

Source: MORI

Our recent work has highlighted the need to think about differences between what the public say when they think about the *national picture* (the state of Britain’s schools, what’s happening in the NHS, rising crime), and the *local situation*. Generally, we are finding more positive results when we ask people about services in their own area.

We hope that this report helps develop a framework for setting these patterns in a local context.

Key Findings and Implications

Quality of Life

Blaenau Gwent residents are positive about the area as a place to live. More than three in four residents (77%) say they are satisfied with Blaenau Gwent as a place to live. This rating is marginally lower than those from comparable authorities studied by MORI. Around one in seven (14%) residents are dissatisfied with their broad quality of life in Blaenau Gwent. Younger residents are less satisfied than their older counterparts (73% of 16-24 year olds are satisfied, compared to 84% of residents aged 65+).

When asked about **factors making Blaenau Gwent a good place to live**, residents point to the strong community spirit. They are most likely to say that they enjoy living in close proximity to family and friends. Access to the countryside and shops are also seen as positive aspects of life in the area. Turning to **negative perceptions of the area**, the lack of police, poor conditions of roads and footpaths and unemployment are all mentioned by just short of a quarter of residents (24%). These findings tie in with those recorded when residents are asked about the perceived seriousness of anti-social behaviour. It is rubbish and litter lying around (35%) which is most likely to be seen as a serious problem, and which will also contribute to negative perceptions around footpath maintenance.

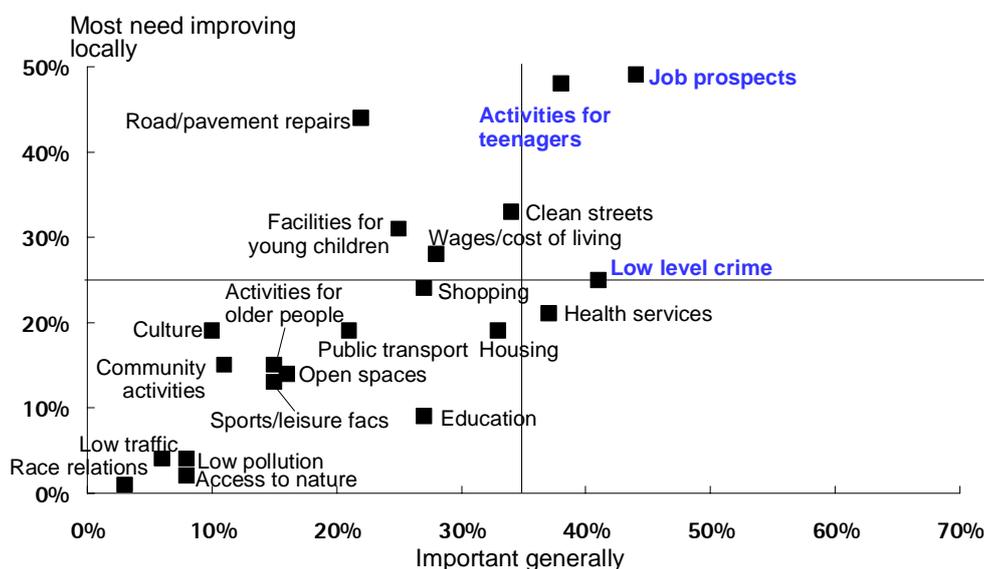
Echoing the above, residents select the following as priority actions which will help to build a positive vision for Blaenau Gwent:

- Good quality jobs (27%);
- Good quality hospitals (26%);
- Low levels of crime and disorder (26%);
- Good facilities for young people (26%);
- Affordable housing (23%); and
- Low unemployment (also 23%).

In further exploration of quality of life issues, we asked residents which factors are important *generally* in making somewhere a good place to live, as well as what most needs improvement locally. Looking at these two questions together provides another perspective on perceived priorities.

The chart below shows that job prospects and activities for teenagers are seen as being those factors which are most in need of improvement locally and are high up the list of residents’ more general desires for improving quality of life. It is interesting to note that local perceptions around crime differ somewhat from those recently recorded in the BVPI General User survey (aggregate data across England). Incidence of crime is seen as being the most important issue to address locally as well as the most important generally. In Blaenau Gwent, while still seen as important generally, less emphasis is placed on addressing crime locally.

Quality of Life - Ideal vs Needs Improving in Blaenau Gwent



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council

Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the area is below average in MORI’s experience, while individual services are well regarded. Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the area is some way below average when the authority’s score is compared to MORI normative data for surveys of authorities. While five in every ten residents (50%) say they are satisfied, three in ten (30%) are dissatisfied. However, it is notable that two in ten (19%) of Blaenau Gwent residents are neutral here – these people are neither satisfied nor dissatisfied with the Council. Other corporate measures indicate that the broader image of the authority could be improved. For example, the proportion of residents who disagree that the Council provides good value for money outweighs those who agree (46% disagree against 30% agree). Again, this result places the authority towards the bottom of the table of normative data.

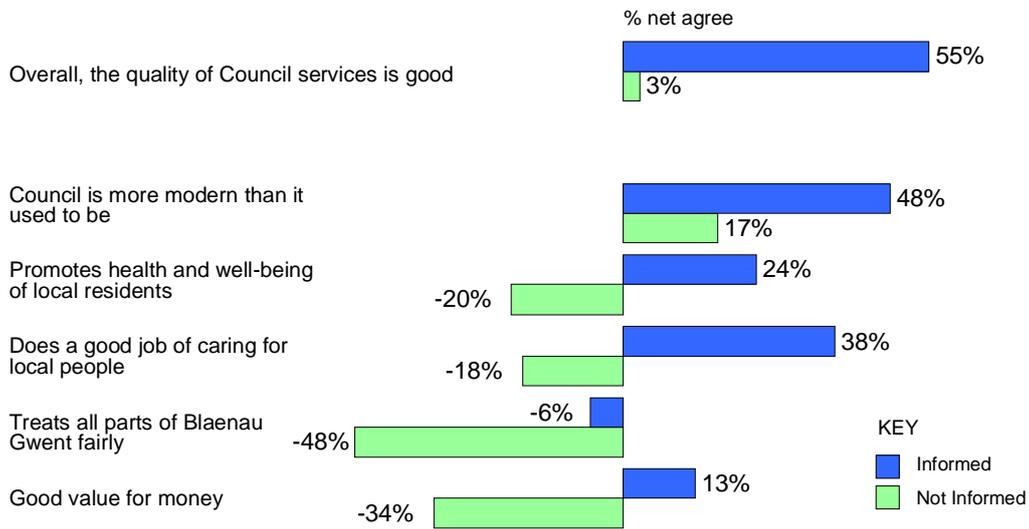
The story around satisfaction with individual services (both universal and among users) is more positive. Services such as those for the disabled and older residents are very well regarded, when compared to scores MORI has recorded in other authorities. Libraries and sports centres are also highly thought of by users, with scores comparing well to those recorded in other similar councils studied by MORI. Adult, primary education and youth clubs are again similarly well regarded, while the authority’s score for secondary education sits towards the middle of MORI normative data. However, and providing supporting evidence for residents more general views about their area, scores for road and pavement maintenance are weak in comparison to other areas studied by MORI.

An indication that Valleys Voice is a relatively recent initiative, Blaenau Gwent’s score on **information provision** does not compare well to other similar authorities studied by MORI. While two in five (38%) say they are very or fairly well informed about the work of the Council, more (60%) say they know a limited amount or not very much at all. This finding tallies with the fact that over half (55%) of our sample cannot remember receiving Valleys Voice.

One of the ways of countering negative feeling about the authority as a corporate body and getting across positive news about service success is through improving communications with local residents. The following chart illustrates how perceived high levels of knowledge about the Council leads to more positive perceptions about its work and services.

Knowledge of the Council: Sub-Group Analysis

Q I am going to read out a list of statements about the Council and I would like you to tell me, how strongly you agree or disagree with each?



Base: 1,035 Blaenau Gwent residents who are informed or not informed about the Council. interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Implications

This first corporate survey for Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council provides a detailed view of residents' perceptions of the area and of the authority. It provides some clear action points.

- There is scope for the authority to adopt further a **community leadership role**. Economic and community regeneration is required in an area that residents recognise has been severely affected by the decline of key industries. Initiatives to improve residents' quality of life and employment opportunities will, alongside existing perceived strengths of Blaenau Gwent, help to prevent population migration.
- **Relative service weaknesses should be addressed**. Services such as pavement maintenance and secondary education are those on which residents place emphasis and where expectations are highest. Certainly improving the former - a key service which helps residents to feel that an area is clean - will have a positive effect on overall satisfaction with both area and authority.
- **Build on communications work**. This survey shows that too many people are not receiving or do not recall receiving the Council newspaper, but more importantly, that the overall image of the authority is poor when compared to levels of satisfaction with the services it provides. More should therefore be done to narrow this gap and convince the public that the authority deserves a reputation which matches the quality of services.

Seeing outcomes from these actions will inevitably take time. There are, however, **next steps** which officers and members may wish to consider:

- look at the results and identify which findings are in line with expectations, and which are surprising. By asking 'why?', this will help stimulate debate and targeted action to help ensure that the Council keeps in touch with the needs of local residents;
- challenge the results and think about where attitudes appear to be based on a fair assessment of the issue or service concerned, and also those areas where residents' perceptions may be based on imperfect knowledge or misunderstanding; and
- consider what can be learned from case studies elsewhere – those authorities which appear to be enjoying higher satisfaction ratings for certain areas, or to think about what might be contributing towards low ratings in other councils.

The Council may then wish to consider:

- using the findings sensitively and effectively as part of its wider development of policies and services, for example, enabling a cross-section of staff and members to think seriously about what the results mean;
- developing an effective programme for communicating findings to, and using them with, the wider world (partner organisations, the media, and the local community itself, for example, residents’ newsletters, discussion days/events with partners, and the general public). The key message to residents could be “we asked you, you told us, and this is what we are doing (or indeed, not doing), as a result”.

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Checked & Approved:

April 2005

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Gary Welch

Amy Lee

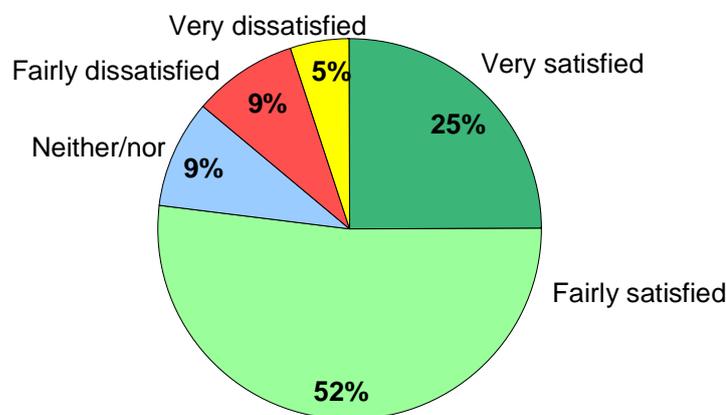
Blaenau Gwent as a Place to Live

Overall Satisfaction

Residents are generally very positive about living in Blaenau Gwent. Over three-quarters (77%) of residents say they are satisfied, with 14% of residents saying they are dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with your Area

Q Thinking about Blaenau Gwent on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it as a place to live?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Some differences emerge when we look at sub-groups within the data. Younger residents are least satisfied with their local area as a place to live, while those aged 65+ are most positive.

Residents from the higher social grades (ABC1) are less likely to be positive about their local area as a place to live than those from the lower social grades (C2DE).

Satisfaction with Blaenau Gwent as a Place to Live: Sub-group Analysis

Q Thinking about Blaenau Gwent, on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it as a place to live?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Overall Satisfaction: Comparative Data

The following table illustrates how Blaenau Gwent compares with other comparable authorities recently studied by MORI in which this question has been asked. With a net satisfaction of +63 percentage points recorded, Blaenau Gwent sits towards the bottom of the table.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with this area as a place to live?						
	Type	Month	Year	Satis- fied	Dis- satis- fied	Net satis- fied
<i>Base: All</i>				%	%	±
Devon	CC		2002	91	4	87
Dorset	CC		2002	91	5	86
Oxfordshire	CC		2002	89	5	84
Surrey	CC		2003	89	5	84
Essex	CC		2003	89	6	83
Carmarthenshire	W		2001	87	7	80
Derbyshire	CC		2002	88	8	80
Hampshire	CC		2003	86	8	78
Northamptonshire	CC		2002	85	10	75
Northumberland	CC		2003	84	10	74
Torfaen	W		2002	83	11	72
Lancashire	CC		2003	81	11	70
Blaenau Gwent	W		2005	77	14	63
Medway	U		2002	77	15	62
Stockton-on-Tees	U		2002	78	16	62
Southampton (1)	CC		2002	76	15	61
Portsmouth	U		2002	62	26	36

Wording:

(1) (within 10 minute walk from home)

Source: MORI

Differences in Satisfaction across Areas

The levels of satisfaction across the town areas used in this study are identified in the chart below. More than eight in ten (82%) people in Brynmawr Town are satisfied with their area as a place to live, compared with around seven in ten (73%) in Tredegar Town.

Satisfaction with Blaenau Gwent as a Place to Live: Area Sub-group Analysis

Q *Thinking about Blaenau Gwent, on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it as a place to live?*



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

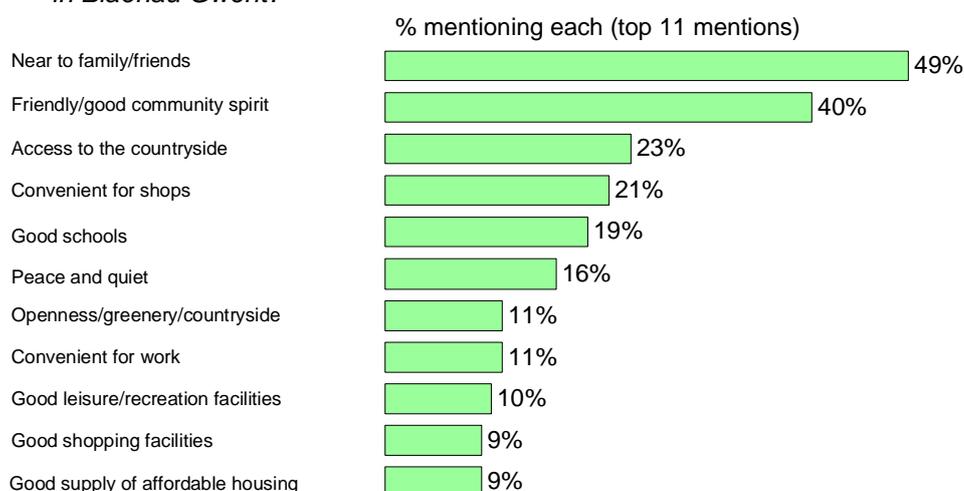
Source: MORI

Why is Blaenau Gwent a Good Place to Live?

Residents were shown a list from which to choose two or three things, if any that are good about living in Blaenau Gwent. The chart below shows perceived positive aspects of life in Blaenau Gwent. Reasons for satisfaction with Blaenau Gwent as a place to live focus on the importance of being close to family and friends (with 49% of residents mentioning this), community spirit (40%) and access to the countryside (23%).

Reasons for Satisfaction with Blaenau Gwent

Q Which two or three things, if any, would you say are good things about living in Blaenau Gwent?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

In terms of broad categories, the main drivers behind resident satisfaction are:

- Location (76%);
- General atmosphere/image (61%);
- Facilities/amenities (including education and health) (39%); and
- Transport (12%).

Reasons for Satisfaction: Sub-group Analysis

Having friends and family nearby and a good community spirit are viewed across all areas as positive aspects of life in Blaenau Gwent. Residents of Abertillery Town, Brynmawr Town and Nantyglo & Blaina are, relatively speaking, more likely to point to access to the countryside as a reason for satisfaction. Those living in Ebbw Vale Town consider amenities (and in particular convenience for shops) to be a main driver behind satisfaction, while in Tredegar Town schools and education are the reasons behind positive aspects of life in Blaenau Gwent.

Top three positive answers in each area are as follows:

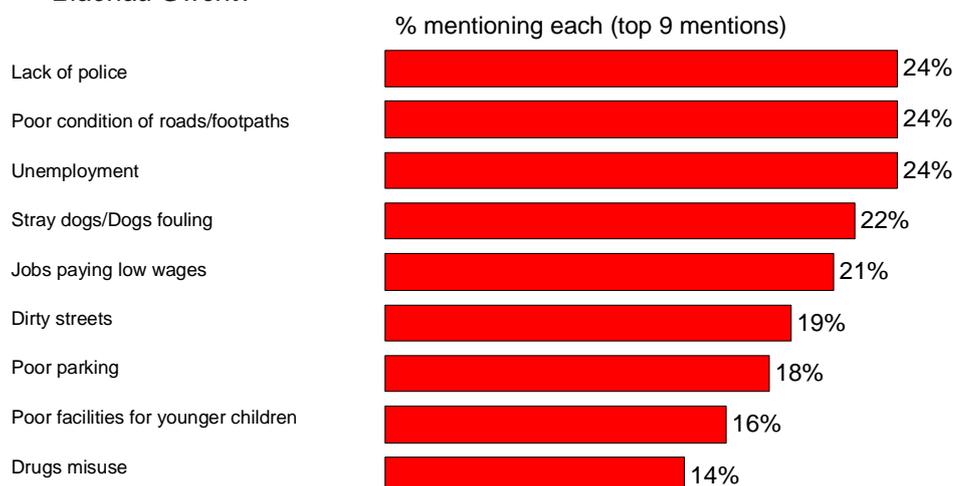
<i>Abertillery Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Near to family/friends (54%) 2. Friendly people/good community spirit (41%) 3. Access to the countryside (21%)
<i>Brynmawr Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Friendly people/good community spirit (47%) 2. Access to the countryside (42%) 3. Near to family/friends (30%)
<i>Ebbw Vale Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Near to family/friends (47%) 2. Friendly people/good community spirit (39%) 3. Convenient for shops (26%)
<i>Nantyglo & Blaina</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Near to family/friends (56%) 2. Friendly people/good community spirit (38%) 3. Access to the countryside (28%)
<i>Tredegar Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Near to family/friends (49%) 2. Friendly people/good community spirit (37%) 3. Good schools/education (20%)

What makes Blaenau Gwent a Less Desirable Place to Live?

Residents were shown a list from which to choose two or three things, if any that are bad about living in Blaenau Gwent. The lack of police, poor roads/footpaths and unemployment feature most predominantly as reasons for dissatisfaction with Blaenau Gwent as a place to live, with almost a quarter of residents highlighting these issues. While the last two issues feature regularly in similar MORI surveys, it is less common to find unemployment so high up the list of reasons for dissatisfaction. Some 22% of residents complain about stray dogs and just over one in five (21%) mention low wages as a reason for dissatisfaction with the area as a place to live. Almost a fifth (19%) of residents also cite the untidiness of the streets as a main cause for complaint.

Reasons for dissatisfaction with Blaenau Gwent

Q Which two or three things, if any, would you say are bad things about living in Blaenau Gwent?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Looking at broad categories of answers given, six in ten (60%) say they are dissatisfied with facilities and amenities available in Blaenau Gwent. Almost half (47%) mention something relating to the general atmosphere and image of the area, over a third (39%) mention some aspect of transport with almost a quarter of residents mention unemployment as a reason for dissatisfaction (24%).

Reasons for Dissatisfaction: Sub-group Analysis

There is uniform dissatisfaction with a lack of police in all town areas within Blaenau Gwent: at least one in four people (24%) stated it as a negative aspect of living in the area. Unemployment (24%) and low wages (21%) were also areas of concern for many residents. Residents of Abertillery, Brynmawr and Nantyglo & Blaina are, relatively speaking, more likely to point to transport issues as a reason for dissatisfaction, while in Ebbw Vale, residents also highlight the issue of stray dogs/dogs fouling in their area as a negative issue.

Top three negative answers in each area are as follows:

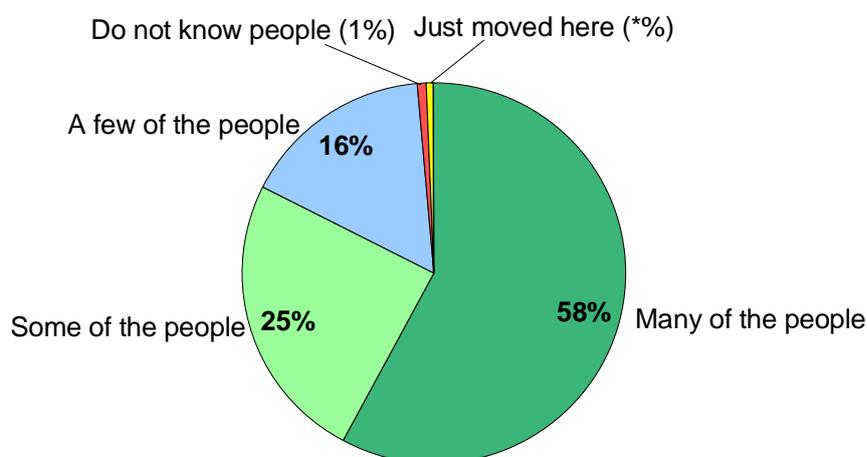
<i>Abertillery Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor condition of roads/footpaths (30%) 2. Poor parking (25%) 3. Lack of police (24%)
<i>Brynmawr Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Unemployment/poor job opportunities (60%) 2. Poor condition of roads/footpaths (31%) 3. Poor public transport (21%)
<i>Ebbw Vale Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Jobs paying low wages (24%) 2. Stray dogs/dogs fouling (24%) 3. Lack of police (23%)
<i>Nantyglo & Blaina</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Poor condition of roads/footpaths (29%) 2. Unemployment/poor job opportunities (25%) 3. Lack of police (21%)
<i>Tredegar Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Lack of police (28%) 2. Jobs paying low wages (22%) 3. Unemployment/poor job opportunities (21%)

Social Cohesion

The importance of being close to friends and family as well as having a feeling of community spirit fared highly among residents in Blaenau Gwent as a reason for satisfaction. It is perhaps not surprising, therefore, that when asked how many people they know in their neighbourhood, only 1% of residents said they do not know their neighbours.

Familiarity with Neighbours

Q *Now I'd like you to think about all the people who live in your neighbourhood. Would you say that you know . . . ?*



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Well over half (58%) of residents say that they know many of the people in their neighbourhood, with a further quarter (25%) saying that they know some of the people.

Looking at social cohesion by sub-group, it is apparent that people aged 25-34 are least likely to know many of their neighbours, perhaps due to the fact that they have lived in the area for a shorter time in comparison to other groups (14% have lived in the area less than 5 years). Older residents on the other hand are more likely to know many people in their neighbourhood, and again this could be due to the amount of time they have spent in the area (97% of 65+ year olds have lived in Blaenau Gwent for more than 10 years).

Social Cohesion: Sub-group Analysis

Q I'd like you to think about all the people who live in your neighbourhood, Would you say that you know...?

■ Know a few people
 ■ Know some people
 ■ Know many people



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Priorities for the Future

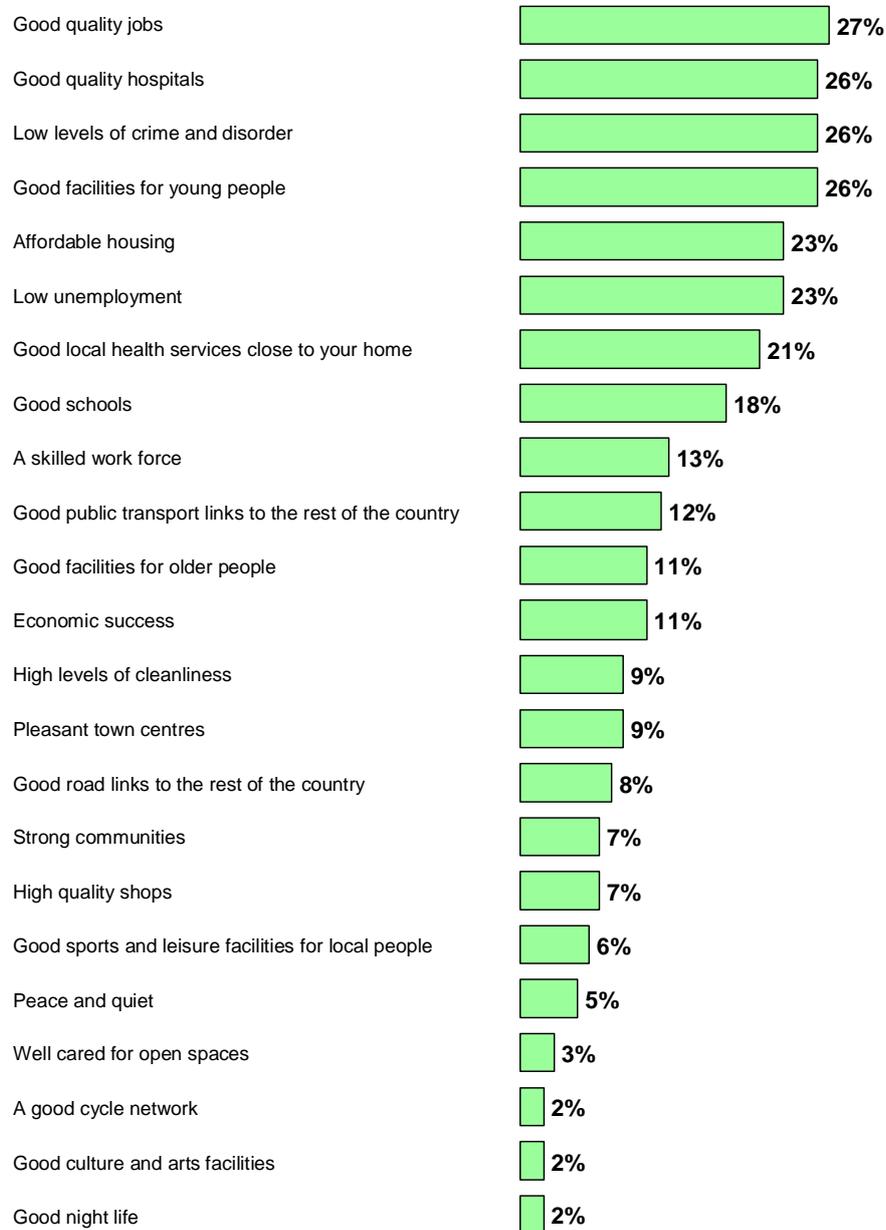
Residents were told about Blaenau Gwent’s vision for the future, to be a ‘better place to live and work’. When asked for their views on what it is most important to have over the next ten years, in line with their evident concerns, residents most want to have good quality jobs available in their area (27%).

This issue is closely followed by a need for good quality hospitals in Blaenau Gwent, as well as a reduction in levels of crime and disorder (both 26%).

Over a quarter (26%) of residents also would like better facilities for young people – an answer consistent with residents’ perception that there are too many young people hanging around on the streets. Affordable housing (23%), low unemployment (23%), and good local health services (21%) also feature highly on residents’ list of priorities for the future.

Priorities for the Future

Q Which two or three of these, if any, do you think are most important for Blaenau Gwent to have in 10 years' time from now to support this vision of the future?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Priorities for the Future: Sub-group Analysis

The main differences between sub-groups and their priorities relate to social grade, age and area.

Residents from the higher social grades are generally more concerned by the economic issues. For example:

- Around a fifth (19%) of ABC1s prioritise economic success, whereas the figure for residents in social grades C2DE on the same issue is less than 1 in 10 (9%).
- Again, one in five (20%) of ABC1s prioritise creating a skilled workforce in the area, while just 11% of C2DEs consider this to be a priority.

In terms of town areas:

- Unemployment is an area of dissatisfaction amongst residents living in Blaenau Gwent, and in line with this, around half (51%) of the residents in Brynmawr Town mentioned economic success as a priority; this is over five times more than was stated in any other area in Blaenau Gwent. It would appear that health services in this area are also more of a problem than in other areas, as 35% of residents mentioned this as a top priority compared to just 18% in Nantyglo & Blaina, where it was mentioned least often by residents.
- Improving facilities for young people is a key action priority, mentioned by over a third (34%) of residents in Nantyglo & Blaina and by more than a quarter of residents in Abertillery Town (29%), Ebbw Vale Town (25%) and Tredegar Town (26%). This figure is lower however in Brynmawr Town, where only 13% mentioned it as a top priority (this reflects the relatively low figure of 16% of residents who consider teenagers hanging around on the streets to be a very big problem).

Looking at the age of residents:

- For young people aged 16-24 and 25-34, key priorities are for quality jobs (36% and 34% respectively) and good facilities being made available to them (43% and 30% respectively).
- Affordable housing is an issue for people aged between 25-34 and 35-54 (34% and 28% respectively), who are perhaps the group most likely to be in need of affordable housing.
- Older people aged 55-64 and 65+ also want good facilities to be made available to them (17% and 22%) respectively. One in ten people aged over 65 are also likely to prioritise peace and quiet as an important issue to make the area a better place to live.

Quality of Life in Blaenau Gwent

Residents were asked to give their views regarding a number of “quality of life” issues. Specifically we asked:

- what is important in making somewhere a good place to live **generally**; and
- what most needs improving **locally**.

In addition to looking at these questions in isolation, looking at the responses to these questions together will enable the Council to begin to develop priorities for the area.

It is worth noting that the same questions were asked on the BVPI surveys that were undertaken by each local authority in England in 2003/4. Whilst not directly applicable to Wales, a comparison with the aggregate results for England provides some useful context to the findings for Blaenau Gwent.

In general terms, the top five issues Blaenau Gwent residents say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live are:

- Job prospects (44%);
- Low levels of crime (41%);
- Activities for teenagers (38%);
- Health services (37%); and
- Clean streets (34%).

Job prospects emerge as a particular priority for Blaenau Gwent residents, with 44% citing this as an important factor in what makes somewhere a good place to live. The top three answers in each town area are as follows:

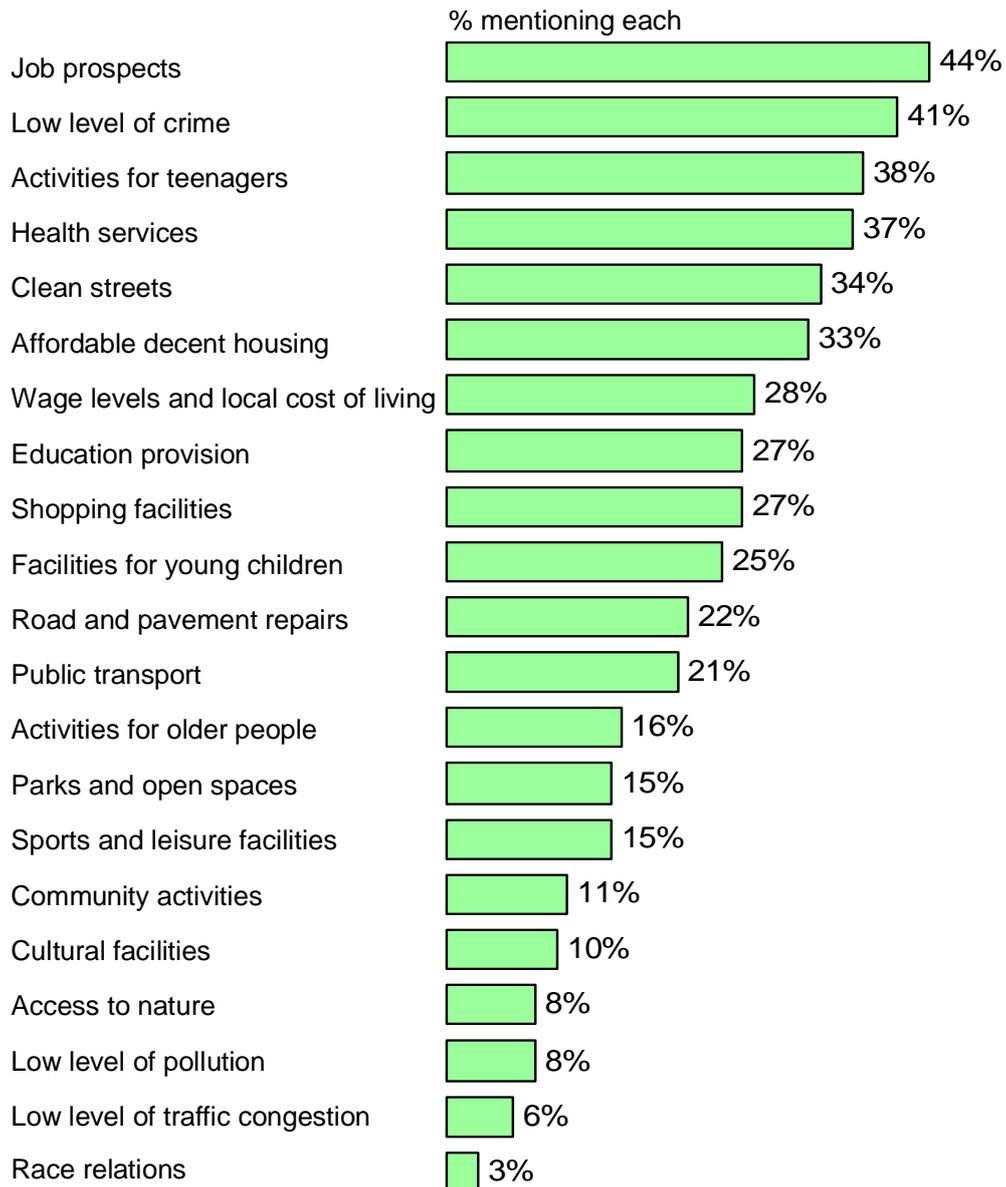
<i>Abertillery Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Job prospects (51%) 2. Low level of crime (45%) 3. Activities for teenagers (40%)
<i>Brynmawr Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Job prospects (65%) 2. Health services (57%) 3. Low level of crime/Road and pavement repairs (40%)
<i>Ebbw Vale Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Job prospects/Low level of crime (42%) 2. Clean streets (38%) 3. Activities for teenagers (37%)
<i>Nantyglo & Blaina</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Activities for teenagers (43%) 2. Job prospects (42%) 3. Low level of crime (40%)
<i>Tredegar Town</i>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Health services (43%) 2. Low level of crime (38%) 3. Activities for teenagers/Shopping facilities (35%)

In comparison, the top five reasons cited by residents across English local authorities in the 2003/4 BVPI surveys are:

- Low level crime;
- Health services;
- Clean streets;
- Affordable, decent housing; and
- Shopping facilities.

What makes Somewhere a Good Place to Live?

Q Thinking generally, which of the items on this list would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?



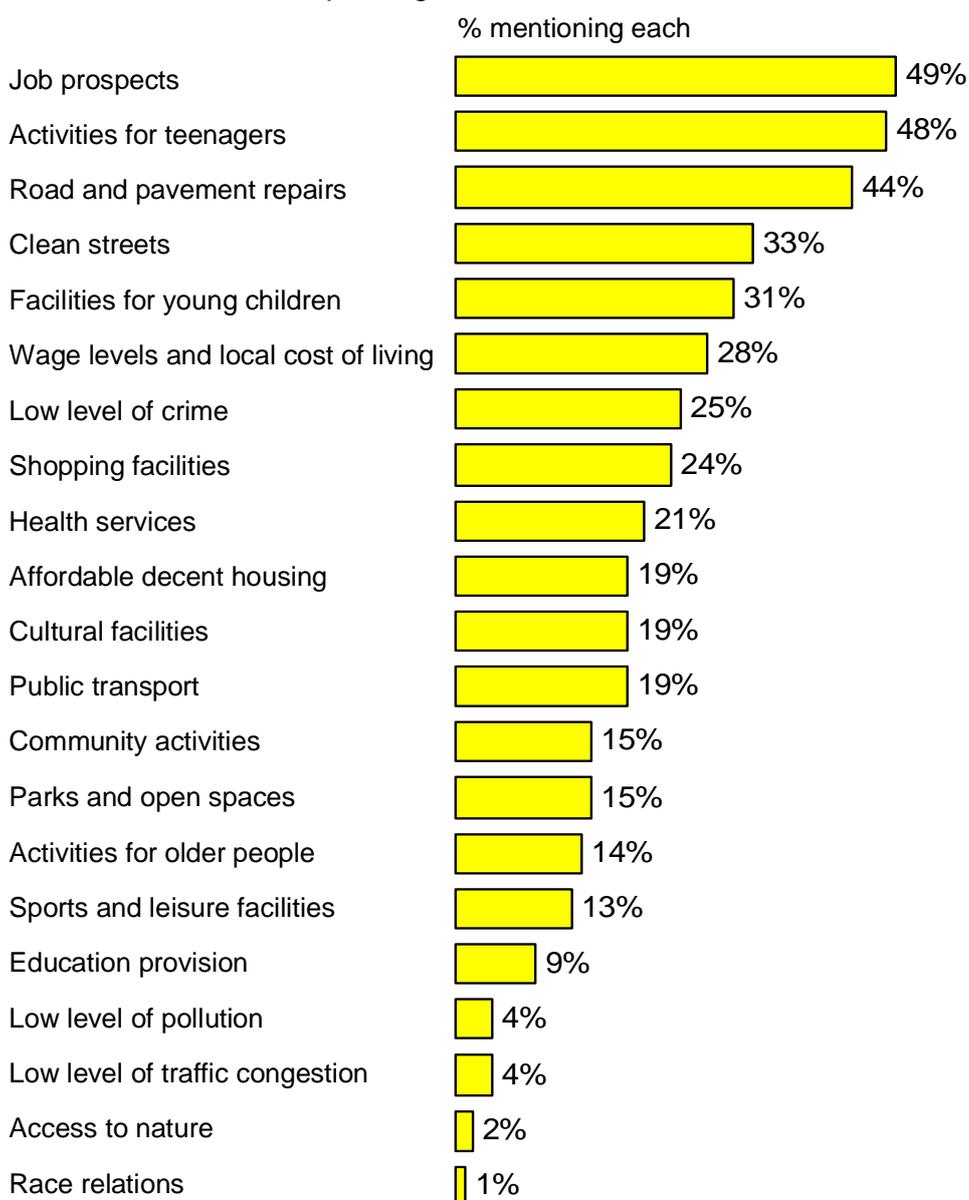
Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Residents’ top priorities *for improvement locally* are shown in the chart below. Job prospects, activities for teenagers and clean streets are again considered to be important. However, it is the addition of road and pavement repairs and facilities for young children that are seen as key issues for the Council to address at the local level. Whilst the need for low levels of crime is considered important generally, this is something that residents feel is less of an issue in Blaenau Gwent.

What most needs improving in Blaenau Gwent?

Q Thinking about this local area, which of these things, if any, do you think most need improving?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

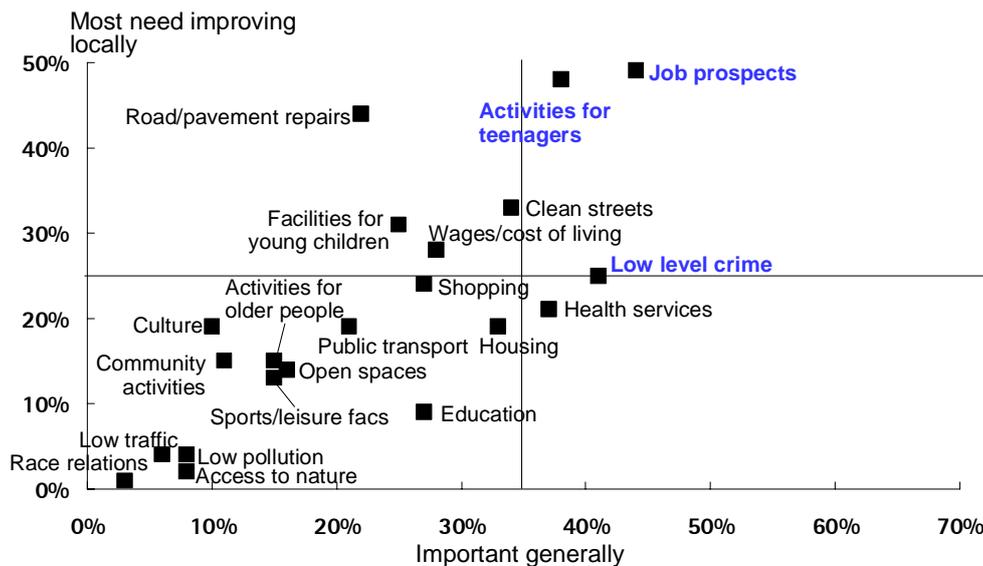
Developing Priorities for the Council

A quadrant analysis that brings together the results for the two questions is shown below. The percentage of people saying what is most important in making somewhere a good place to live is plotted on the horizontal x-axis, and the percentage of people saying what most needs improving locally on the vertical y-axis.

The quality of life issues that are in the top right-hand corner of the chart (in blue bold) are the ones the authority may wish to particularly note. Those are the issues that are both most important to residents in making somewhere a good place to live, and those that residents think are most in need of improvement locally. To Blaenau Gwent residents, job prospects, activities for teenagers and clean streets fall into this category.

Those in the top left corner are identified as needing improvement, but are of lower salience to residents (e.g. road and pavement repairs).

Quality of Life - Ideal vs Needs Improving in Blaenau Gwent



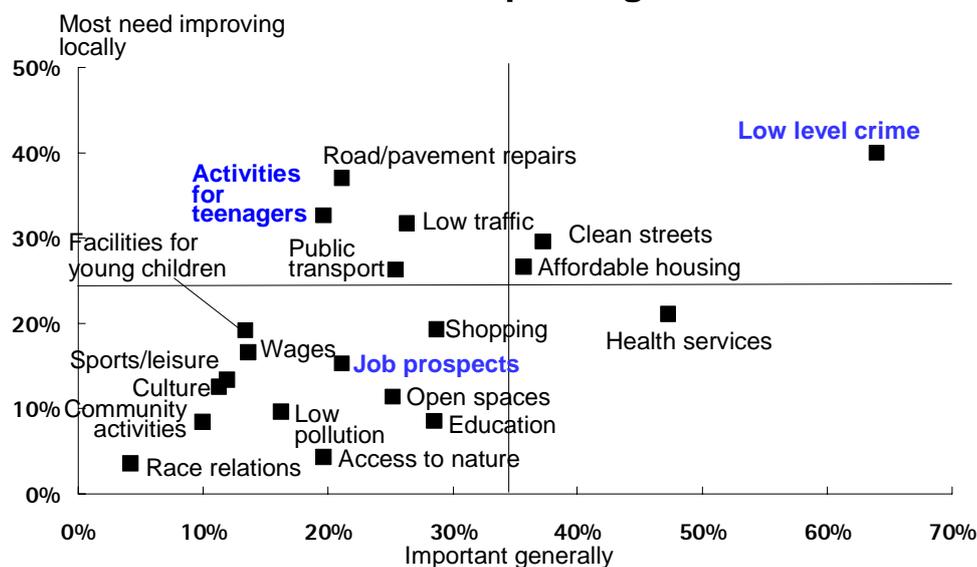
Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Those in the bottom right corner residents feel are important, but a smaller proportion say they need improving locally. For example, the need for affordable housing and good health services are considered to be important in general terms, but on the whole residents are broadly satisfied with the situation in Blaenau Gwent.

The following chart, which uses the English local authorities BVPI aggregates for 2003/4, shows how findings in Blaenau Gwent compare with the English picture in terms of perceived problem areas. The data show how low level crime is identified as the most important issue in England, although is considered far less important generally by residents of Blaenau Gwent. Conversely the importance of job prospects is far more of an issue locally than it is for English authorities as a whole.

Quality of Life from BVPI General User Surveys 2003/4 National Aggregates for Important vs Needs Improving



Base: valid 2003/4 BVPI responses

Source: MORI

Anti-social Behaviour

As can be in the following chart, the top three problems of anti-social behaviour according to residents in Blaenau Gwent are rubbish/litter, teenagers hanging around on the streets and vandalism/graffiti. Residents also worry about people using or dealing drugs and people being drunk and rowdy. Most residents do not have a problem with noisy neighbours or loud parties or feel that there is a problem with abandoned cars in their area.

Almost seven in ten residents (69%) say that **rubbish and litter lying around** is a very or fairly big problem. Those aged 16-24 (81%), those not working (73%) and those living in Abertillery (74%), Brynmawr (73%) or Ebbw Vale (71%) are more likely to say that this is a very or fairly big problem.

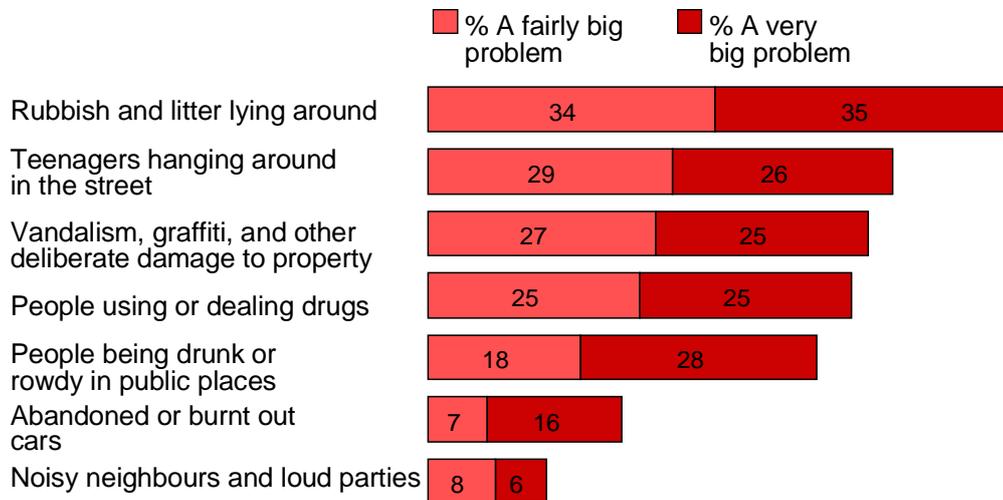
The second most commonly-cited problem is with **teenagers hanging around** in the street, with some 55% of residents stating that this as a fairly big or very big problem. Social grades C2DE (58%), those not working (61%) and those that are satisfied with the area (65%) are more likely to say that this is a very or fairly big problem.

Some 52% of all residents say that **vandalism/graffiti and deliberate damage to property or vehicles** is a very/fairly big problem. However those who are aged 16-24 (62%), not working (58%), and who are dissatisfied with the area (64%) are more likely to say this.

Half (50%) of Blaenau Gwent residents say that **people using or dealing drugs** is a fairly or very big problem. In particular, those aged 35-54 (57%), Brynmawr residents, households containing children (55%) and those dissatisfied with the Council (61%) are more likely to hold this view.

Anti-Social Behaviour in Blaenau Gwent

Q Thinking about this local area, how much of a problem do you think ... are?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

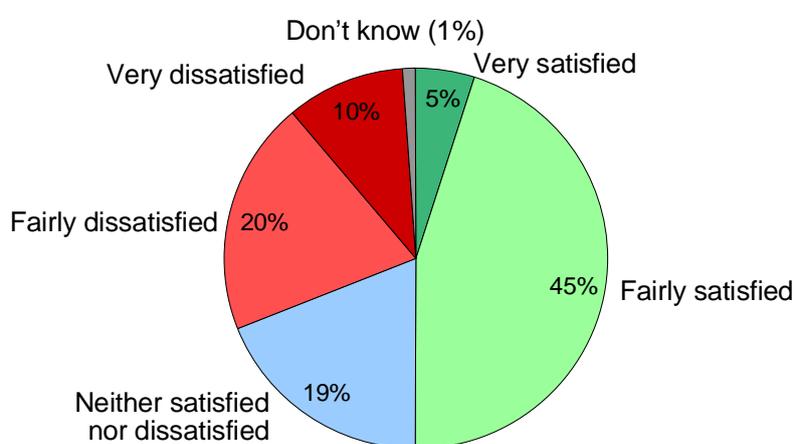
Satisfaction with the Council

Overall Satisfaction

Half (50%) of the residents in Blaenau Gwent are satisfied with the way the Council is running the Borough. In contrast 30% are dissatisfied, including a small minority (10%) who say they are *very* dissatisfied. This gives a net score – the balance of those satisfied less those dissatisfied – of +20 percentage points.

Satisfaction with the way the Council is running the Borough

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the Borough?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Overall Satisfaction: Sub-group Analysis

In summary, those who are most satisfied with the way the Council is running the Borough are:

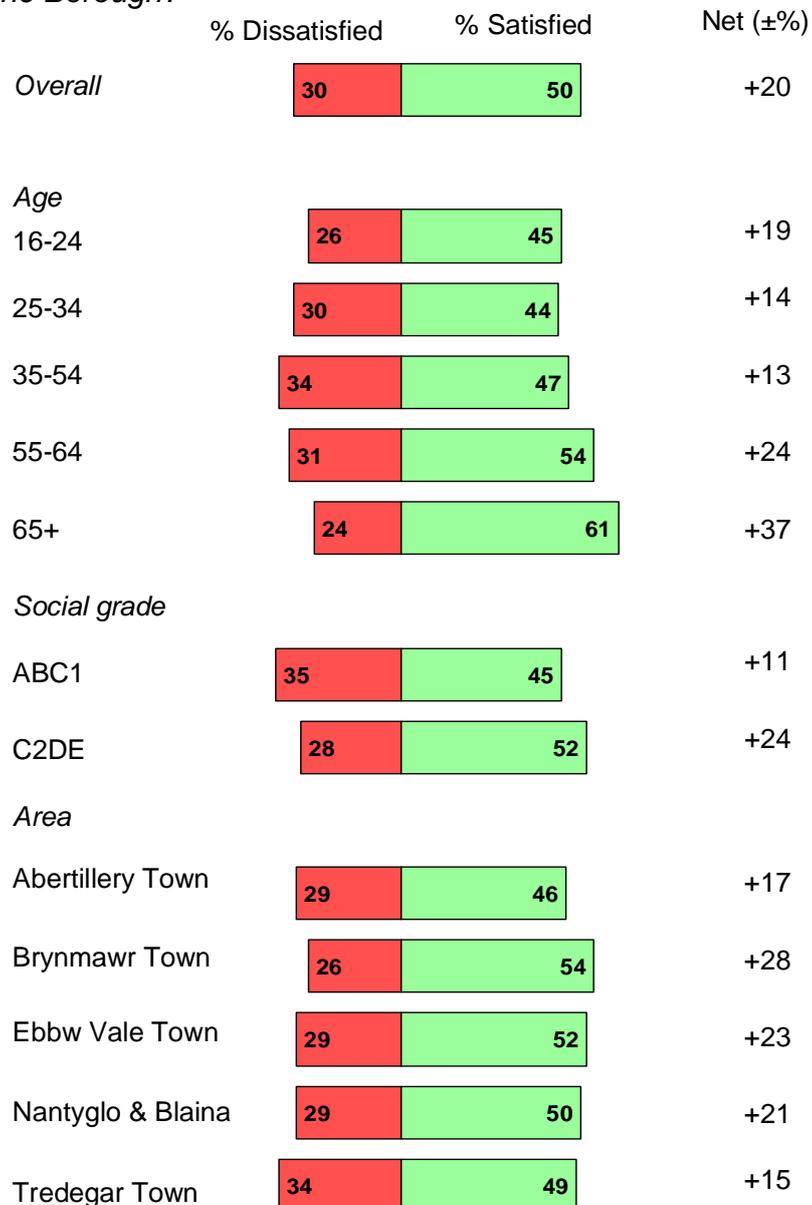
- Residents aged 65+ (61%);
- Retired residents (59%);
- Those with no children living in the household (53%);
- Those who are satisfied with the area as a place to live (58%);
- Those who feel informed (72%); and
- Advocates of the Council (86%).

Conversely, those who are most dissatisfied with the Council are:

- Those who are dissatisfied with the area as a place to live (64%);
- Those who do not feel informed (40%); and
- Critics of the Council (59%).

Satisfaction with Blaenau Gwent Council: Sub-group Analysis

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the Borough?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

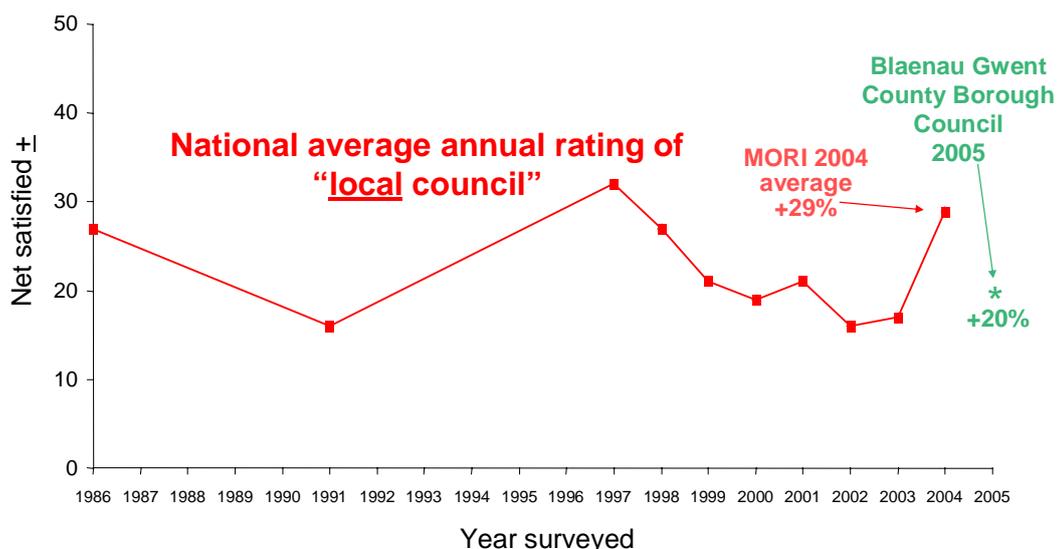
Source: MORI

Satisfaction with the Council: National Comparisons

The following chart shows that Blaenau Gwent is just below the average when compared with local government generally, as measured by MORI’s periodic national surveys of all local authorities in Britain (includes unitary, metropolitan, district and London borough councils as well as county councils).

Satisfaction with councils

Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way... is running the area/runs things?*



Source: MORI

The MORI normative data also bear this out, as shown in the table below. Here, though, some caution must be exercised in making interpretations between English Councils (operating in a two-tier system) and Welsh Councils, which are effectively unitaries.

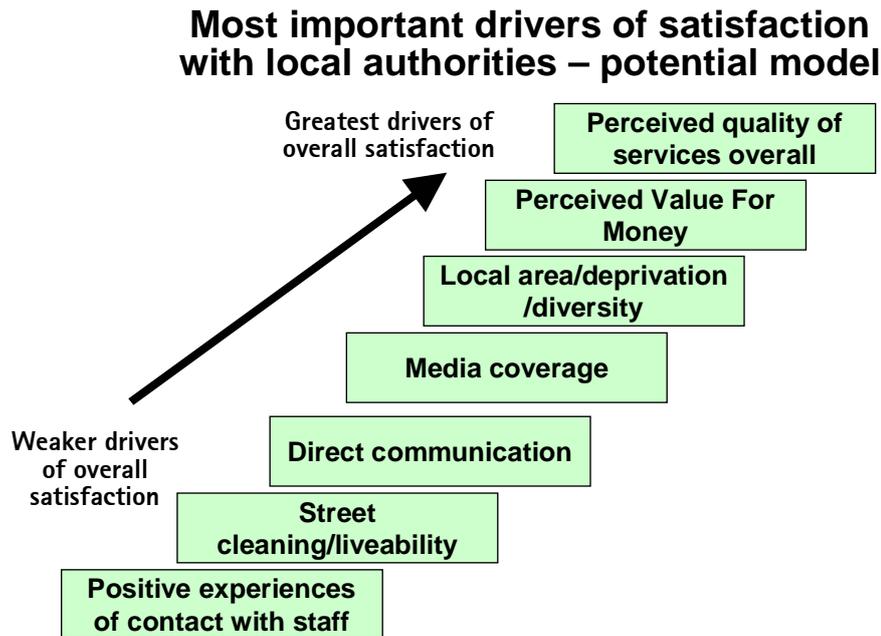
Q *How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the area?*

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisf	Net
			%	%	
<i>Base: All</i>					
Hertfordshire	CC	2003	67	12	55
Hampshire	CC	2004	66	12	54
Dorset	CC	2002	66	14	52
Torfaen	W	2002	68	19	49
Derbyshire	CC	2002	63	16	47
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	56	13	43
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	60	18	42
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	56	14	42
Medway	U	2002	56	21	35
Surrey	CC	2003	51	16	35
Southampton	U	2002	55	21	34
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	54	26	28
Stockton on Tees	U	2002	51	28	23
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	50	30	20
Portsmouth	U	2002	44	26	18

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with Local Authorities – The Bigger Picture

The detailed analysis of MORI normative data shows that two key image attributes emerge as very strong predictors of overall satisfaction with a local authority. If someone agrees their authority provides good quality services or that it gives good value for money, then they are significantly more likely to be satisfied overall. The chart below (from a recent MORI report, *What Drives Public Satisfaction with Local Government?*, carried out for the Local Government Association) shows these factors as well as other key drivers to emerge from our research.



Source: MORI

The Council's Image

Quality of Council Services

While the majority of residents (53%) perceive Council services to be good overall, there is a significant minority who do not (30%). The groups who are most likely to disagree that the quality of Council services is good overall include:

- those aged between 35 and 54 (35% disagree);
- those living in Tredegar Town (37%); and
- those who do not feel they are informed about the Council (38%).

The following table shows how the results from the Blaenau Gwent survey compare with results for other authorities that MORI has surveyed, and reveals that the Council's service ratings are generally lower than those for other comparable authorities.

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement "the quality of Council services is good overall"?

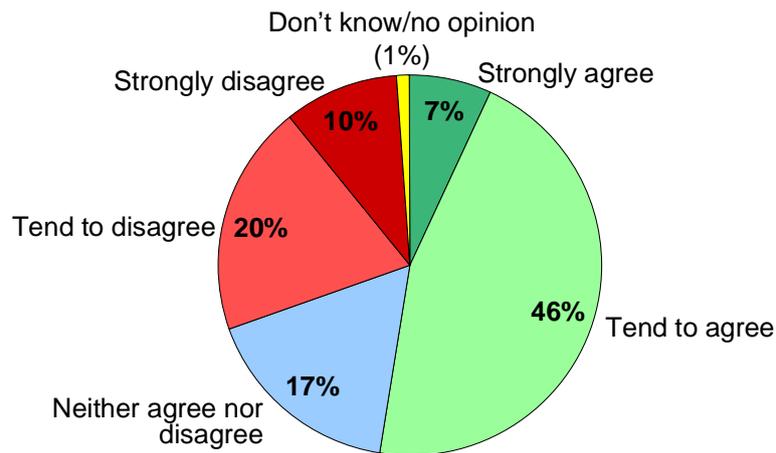
	Type	Year	Agree	Disagree	Net
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Wokingham	U	2000	65	8	57
Hampshire	CC	2003	67	12	55
BV Pilots	CC	2000	66	13	53
Dorset	CC	2002	66	13	53
Southend-on-Sea	U	2001	64	16	48
Stockton on Tees	U	2002	64	16	48
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	60	15	45
Lancashire	CC	2003	58	19	39
Derbyshire	CC	2002	58	20	38
Plymouth	U	2000	61	25	36
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	57	22	35
Portsmouth	U	2002	54	19	35
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	55	21	34
Leicester	U	2001	56	23	33
Southampton	U	2002	53	21	32
Torfaen	W	2002	55	23	32
Kent	CC	2001	51	21	30
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	53	30	23
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	48	26	22

Source: MORI

Residents were asked about their attitudes towards more detailed aspects of the Council’s image. As the chart below shows, a slight majority of residents (53%) agree that the quality of Council services is good overall, with a net agreement figure of +24 percentage points.

Satisfaction with Council Services

Q Overall, the quality of Council services is good.



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Other Aspects of Corporate Image

The following section measures resident attitudes to other aspects of the Council’s image.

Remote and Impersonal

More residents agree that the Council is too remote and impersonal (45%) than disagree (26%), and those who are most likely to agree include:

- those aged between 35-54 (52% agree);
- full-time workers (52%);
- residents living in Nantyglo & Blaina (53%); and
- those that do not feel they are informed about the Council (54%).

As the table below shows, the Council fares slightly better on this issue compared with other local authorities MORI has surveyed (the lower “net agree” score, the better).

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement “the Council is too remote and impersonal”?

	Type	Year	Agree	Disagree	Net
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	58	17	41
Kent	CC	2001	55	22	33
Dorset	CC	2002	49	20	29
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	51	23	28
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	47	19	28
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	44	22	22
Torfaen	W	2002	46	24	22
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	44	24	20
Hampshire	CC	2003	45	25	20
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	45	26	19
Lancashire	CC	2003	43	25	18
Southampton	U	2002	43	25	18
Derbyshire	CC	2002	42	25	17
Leicester	U	2001	44	27	17
BV Pilots	CC	2000	44	30	14
Portsmouth	U	2002	40	26	14
Southend-on-Sea	U	2001	40	26	14
Stockton on Tees	U	2002	36	33	3
Wokingham	U	2000	36	35	1

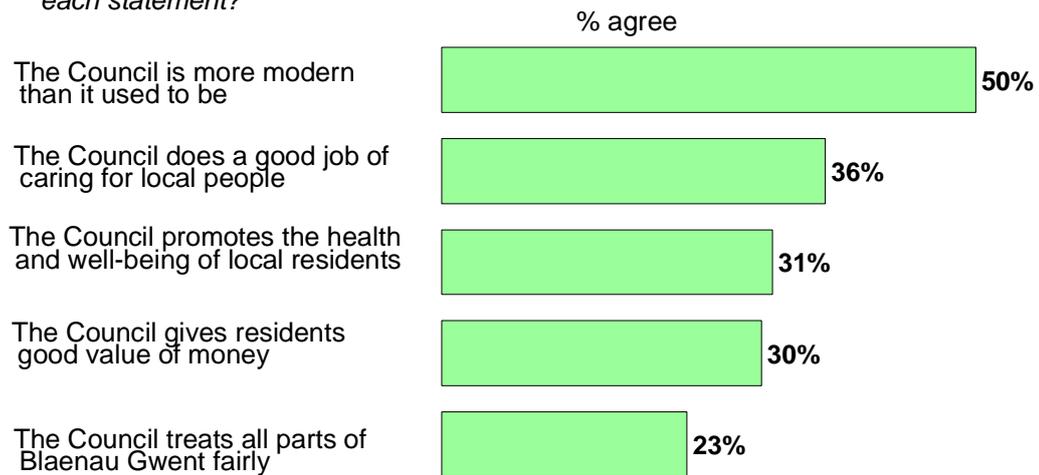
Source: MORI

Corporate Issues

Residents are most likely to agree that the Council is more modern than it used to be (50% agree). However there is concern that not all parts of Blaenau Gwent are treated fairly with just under a quarter of residents agreeing with this assertion (23%).

Satisfaction with Corporate Council Issues

Q *I would like you to tell me from this card, how strongly you agree or disagree with each statement?*



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

The areas in which residents are most likely to be negative on this issue are Nantyglo & Blaina and Brynmawr Town (-50 points and -46 points net satisfaction respectively).

Value for Money

On balance, residents do not think that the Council provides good value for money. Some three in ten residents (30%) agree with this and just under half (46%) disagree. With a net agreement score of -14 percentage points, this compares poorly to MORI's normative data.

Those most likely to disagree include:

- those aged 35-54 (52% disagree);
- full-time workers (53%);
- residents living in Tredegar Town (50%);
- home owners (49%); and
- those that do not feel they are informed about the Council (55%).

Q To what extent do you agree or disagree with the statement "the Council gives residents good value for money"?

	Type	Year	Agree	Disagree	Net
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Southend-on-Sea	U	2001	39	27	12
Hampshire	CC	2003	38	29	9
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	42	34	8
Derbyshire	CC	2002	38	32	6
Leicester	U	2001	37	33	4
Southampton	U	2002	36	33	3
Torfaen	W	2002	37	35	2
Dorset	CC	2002	34	33	1
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	31	30	1
Stockton on Tees	U	2002	35	34	1
Kent	CC	2001	33	34	-1
Lancashire	CC	2003	32	37	-5
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	28	34	-6
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	32	38	-6
Portsmouth(1)	U	2002	28	36	-8
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	25	34	-9
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	30	46	-16

Wording:

(1) Council tax payers

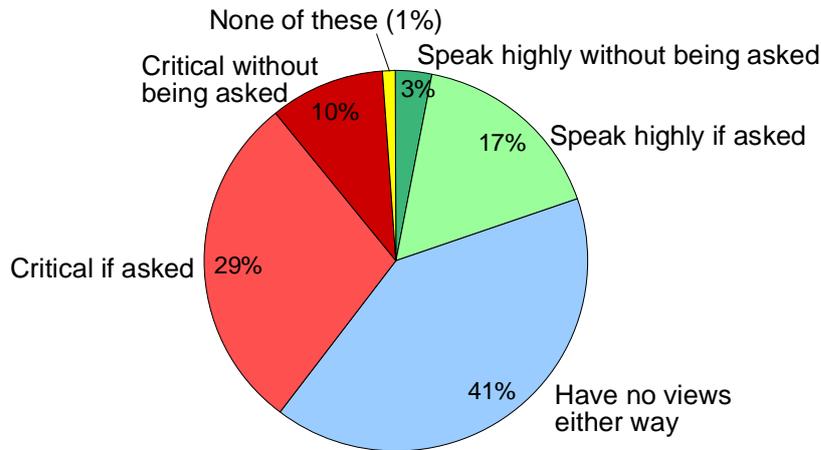
Source: MORI

Council Advocacy

As can be seen from the chart below, one in five residents (20%) of Blaenau Gwent speak highly of the Council. Nearly twice as many (39%) would be critical of the Council however, including one in ten residents who say they would be critical of the Council without being asked.

Council Advocacy

Q Which one of these statements comes closest to how you feel about Blaenau Gwent Borough Council as a whole?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

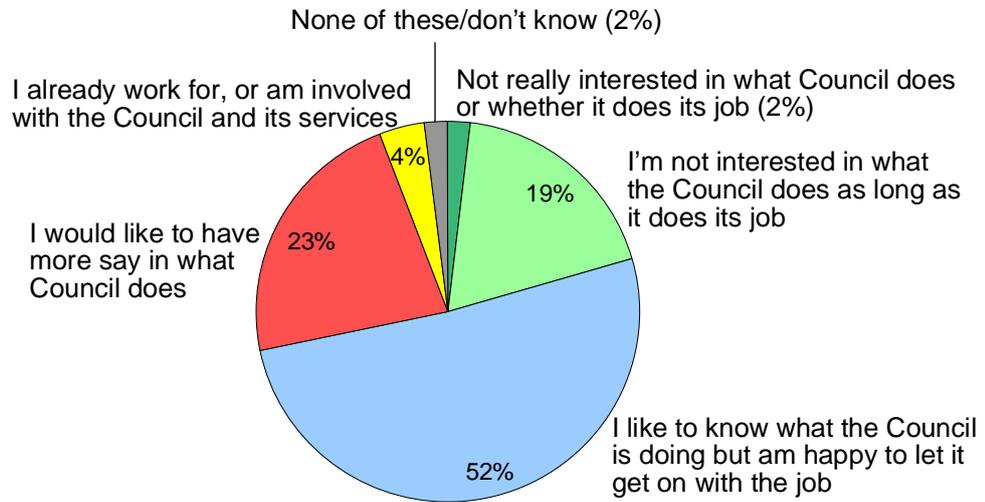
Those who are most likely to be advocates of the Council are elderly residents aged 65+ (24% would speak highly), residents living in Brynmawr Town (34%) and those who are informed about the Council (34%).

In contrast, those that are most likely to be critical of the council are middle-aged residents (45% of residents aged 35-54 would be critical of the Council), who are full-time workers (45%), residents of Tredegar Town (44%) and who are not informed about the Council (48%).

More than one in five (21%) residents in Blaenau Gwent are not interested in what the Council does, including 2% who have no interest in whether the Council even does its job. Encouragingly though, the majority of people do like to know what the Council is doing (52%), and almost a quarter of residents claim that they would like to have a bigger input into what the Council does. Advocates of the Council are generally happier to let them ‘get on with the job’ (66% of advocates hold this opinion compared to 39% of critics).

Interest in the Council

Q Thinking about the Council now, which of these statements comes closest to your own attitude towards the Council?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

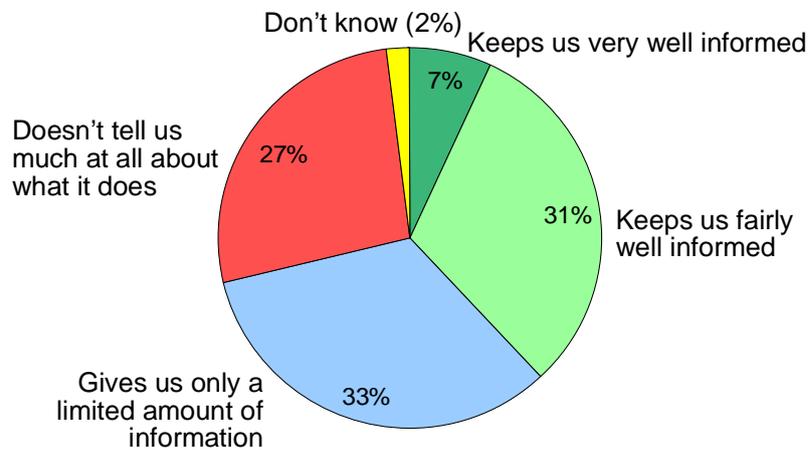
Source: MORI

Information Provision

Around a third of residents feel that Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council keeps them very or fairly well-informed about the services and benefits it provides. Of these however, most feel they are kept *fairly* rather than *very* well informed (31% against 7%). The majority of residents (60%) therefore say they are only given a limited amount of information or that the Council does not tell them much at all about what it does.

Information from the Council

Q How well informed, if at all, do you think the Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Driving Satisfaction through Information Provision

MORI’s wider work for local authorities shows that information provision and residents’ satisfaction ratings are linked – residents who feel informed about their authority are typically more satisfied with overall performance than those who do not feel informed.

The following table shows that Blaenau Gwent’s performance on information provision is low compared to other authorities MORI has surveyed in recent years.

Q How well informed do you think the Council keeps you about the services and benefits it provides?					
		Year	Very/ Fairly well informed	Limited/ not much at all	Net informed
			%	%	%
Medway	U	2001	54	40	14
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	55	41	14
Essex	CC	2003	55	42	13
Southend-on-Sea	U	2001	53	42	11
Lancashire	CC	2003	37	27	10
Hertfordshire	CC	2003	54	45	9
Dorset	CC	2002	51	43	8
Hampshire	CC	2004	52	48	4
Medway	U	2002	50	47	3
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	50	48	2
Torfaen	W	2002	48	47	1
Leicestershire	CC	2001	48	49	-1
Southampton	CC	2002	48	49	-1
Birmingham	CC	2002	40	55	-5
Derbyshire	CC	2002	44	51	-7
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	45	52	-7
Hampshire	CC	2003	42	55	-13
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	42	56	-14
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	39	57	-18
Kent	CC	2001	38	59	-21
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	38	60	-22
Surrey	CC	2003	37	61	-24
Northamptonshire CP	CC	2002	33	63	-30

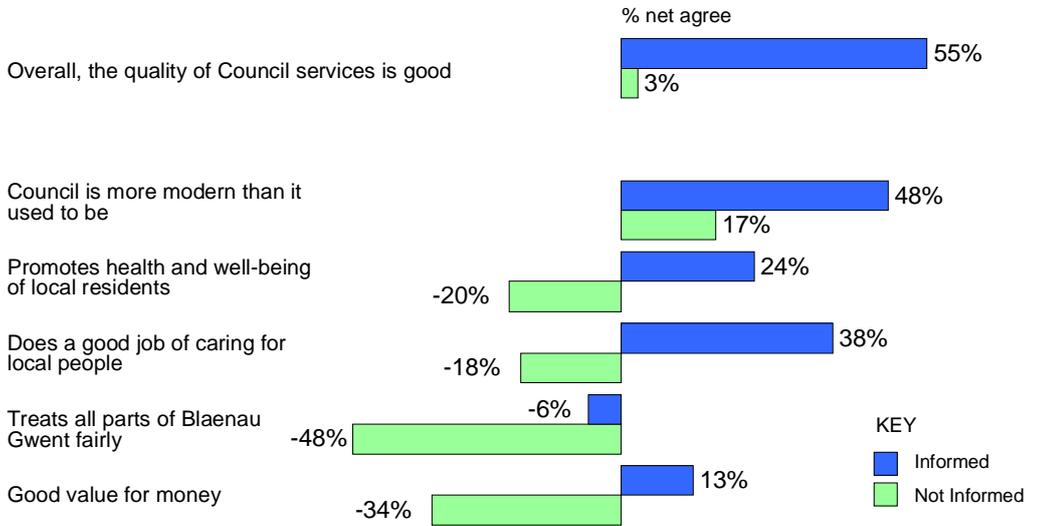
Source: MORI

The Effect of Information

The effect of information spreads beyond overall satisfaction. As is typically the case, those who feel informed about the Council and the services it provides are more positive towards the Council generally. For example, those who are informed are more positive that the Council does a good job of caring for local people (net agreement score is +38 points), while those who do not feel informed disagree with the statement (net agreement score is -18 points).

Knowledge of the Council: Sub-Group Analysis

Q I am going to read out a list of statements about the Council and I would like you to tell me, how strongly you agree or disagree with each?



Base: 1,035 Blaenau Gwent residents who are informed or not informed about the Council. interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

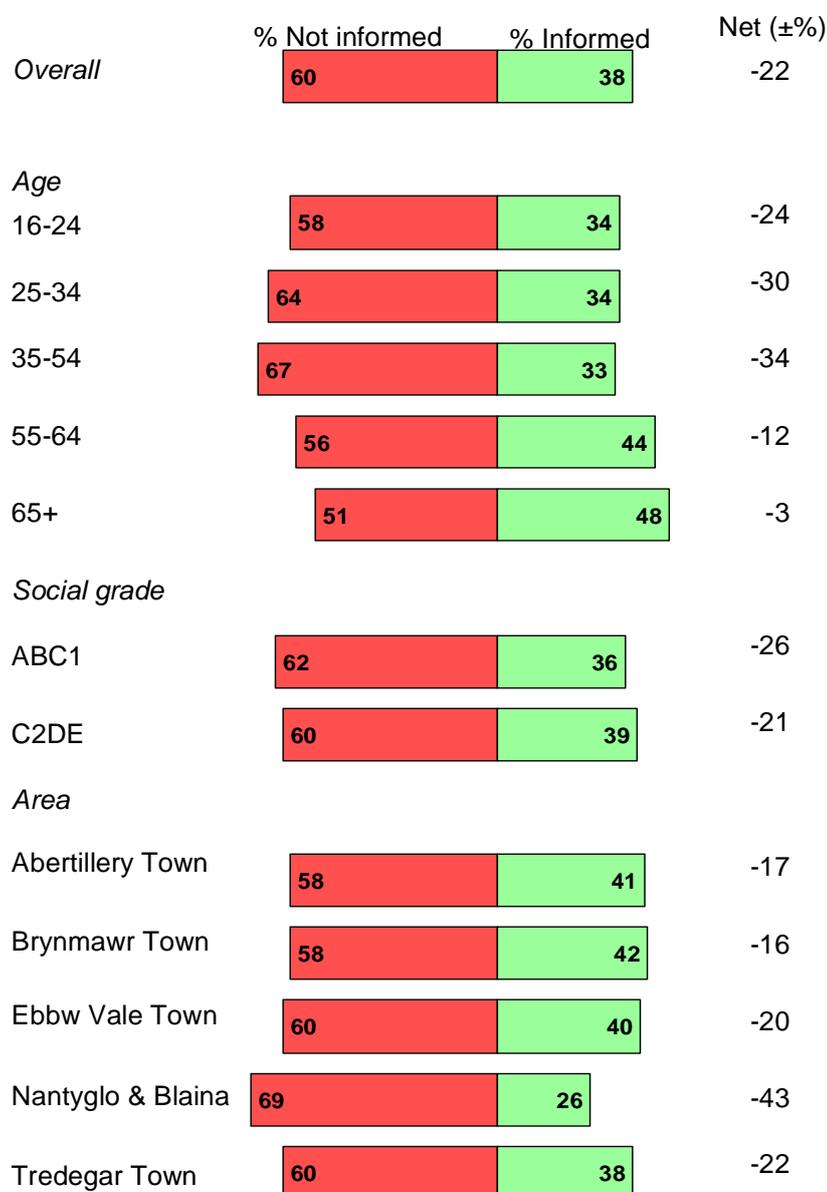
Source: MORI

Who is more Informed?

As is the case in all MORI local government work, older residents feel more informed than middle-aged and younger people, although it is worth noting that there is still a sizeable proportion of older residents (about half) who do not feel informed. Information provision also varies by area, with residents in Nantyglo & Blaina feeling least informed by the Council (69% claim they are not informed).

Information Provision: Sub-group Analysis

Q How well informed, if at all, do you think the Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?



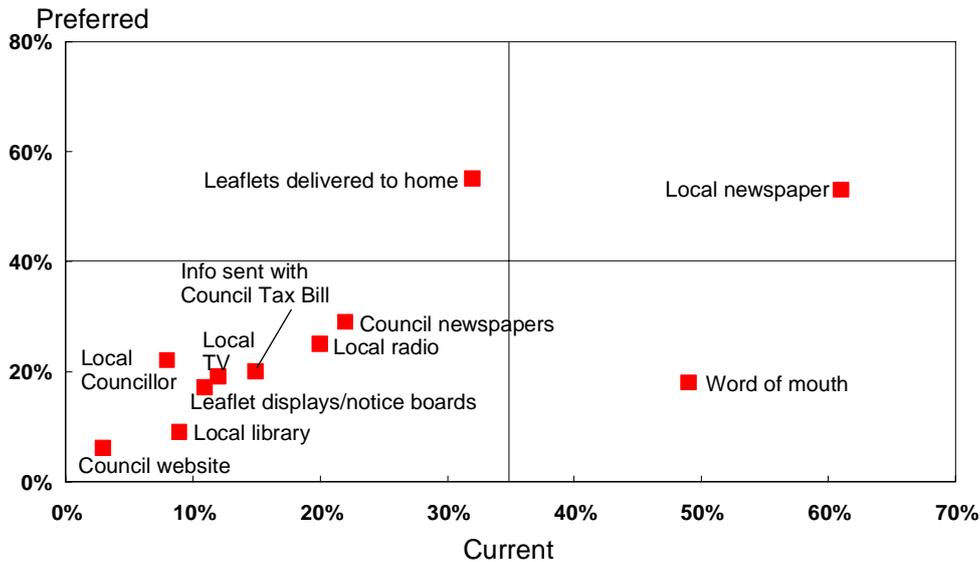
Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Sources of Information

As is frequently the case in MORI’s experience, local newspapers, the Council newspaper (*Valleys Voice*) and leaflets through the door dominate residents’ current and preferred sources of information about the Council. The local newspaper is the most used source of information about the Council (used by 61% of residents). Word of mouth is a popular source for obtaining information about the Council (49%), followed by leaflets delivered to residents’ homes, identified by 32%. Local newspapers and leaflets are also the most preferred sources, chosen by 53% and 55% respectively.

Council Communications



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

The above chart compares residents’ current and preferred means of communication from the Council. The most important area of the chart is in the top left-hand quadrant. Channels found in this area are preferred by residents but are currently under-utilised. Leaflets delivered to homes are preferred by over half of residents (55%), yet only a third of residents (32%) actually receive information via this source. Conversely, much of residents’ information about local public services comes via word of mouth (49%) even though only 18% would prefer this.

MORI has consistently emphasised the importance of good communications. Our research shows that how residents feel about service delivery (most of which they will not use directly) in their area and value for money is likely to be shaped by direct council communications and local press coverage.

In our experience, to be successful, communications must focus on the issues that are shown to impact on residents’ perceptions: quality of services, value for money, and efficiencies. They should ideally look to close the communication-consultation loop, i.e. tell people how they can have a say and demonstrate how those who have given their views have had a real impact.

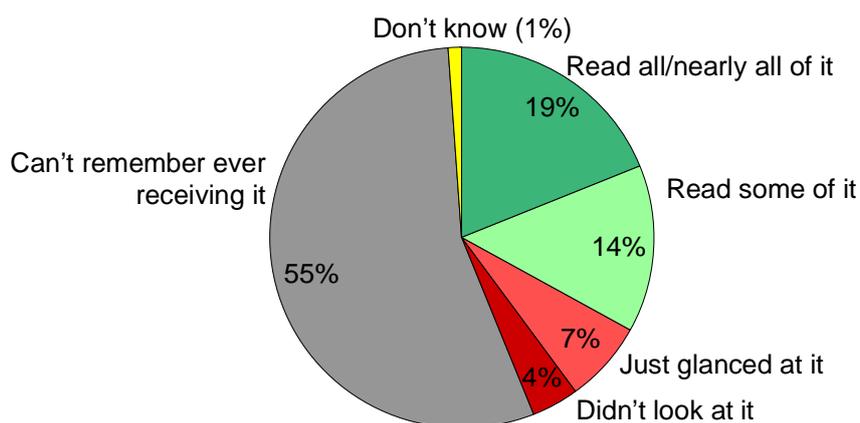
Local TV (12%) and radio (20%) are used less than local printed media, and only 3% say they use the Council’s website to obtain most of their information about the Council. The survey reveals, though, that demand for these sources outweighs usage (19% would prefer to get information about the Council from local TV compared with 12% who actually do; 25% would prefer to get information about the Council from local radio than 20% who actually do; 6% would prefer to use the Council website, compared with 3% who do).

Readership of the Local Council Newspaper – *Valleys Voice*

A third (33%) of residents have read the Council newspaper. However there is still a large proportion (66%) of residents who have not read the newspaper, not least because 55% of all residents do not even remember receiving *Valleys Voice*.

Council Newspaper Readership

Q *There is a free newspaper published quarterly by the Council called ‘Valleys Voice’ that is delivered in your area. Which of these applies to you?*



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

The table below shows how well *Valleys Voice* is read in comparison to other newspapers produced by local councils (ranked by net readership: Read nearly all/most of it – Didn't look at it/just glanced at it) .

Q [Re. the Council newspaper] would you say you . . . ?

	Type	Year	Didn't look at it at all	Just glanced at it	Read a few articles	Read all or nearly all of it	Read most of it	Net Readership
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%	%	%	%
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	6	16	19	38	19	+35
Torfaen	W	2002	8	27	n/a	32	33	+30
Medway	U	2002	8	17	21	26	26	+27
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	4	7	7	7	19	+15
Hampshire	CC	2003	9	25	24	19	23	+8
Lancashire	CC	2003	11	21	15	27	n/a	-5
Surrey	CC	2003	9	33	33	22	n/a	-20

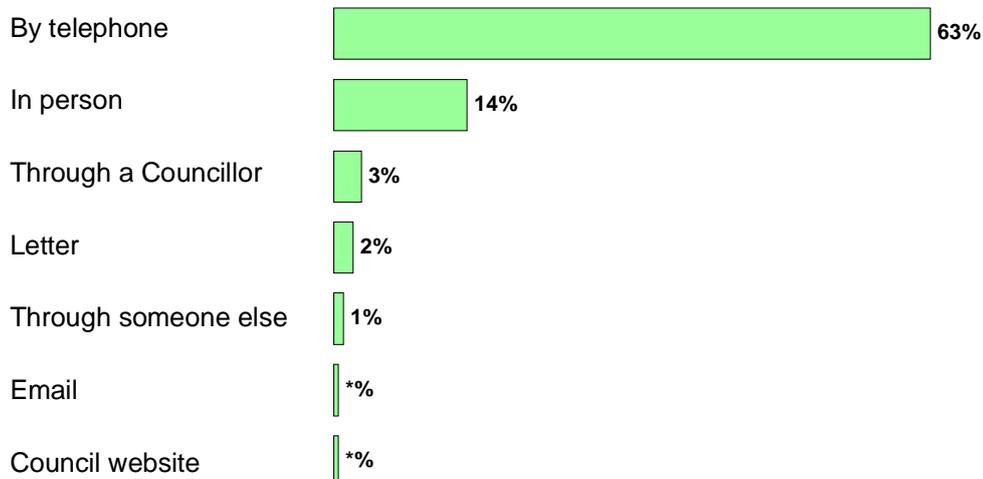
Source: MORI

How do Residents contact the Council?

Almost two-thirds (63%) of residents choose to use the telephone to contact the Council. Some 14% chose to visit the Council in person, with various other methods (e.g. via a Councillor, via email, letter etc) not proving popular (all less than or equal to 3%). Residents in the lower social classes are most likely to have contacted the Council in person (15%), while residents of a higher social class are more likely to have written to the Council (4%) or contacted them through a Councillor (5%).

Most Recent Method of Contact

Q Thinking now about your most recent contact with the Council, can you tell me how you last got in touch with them?



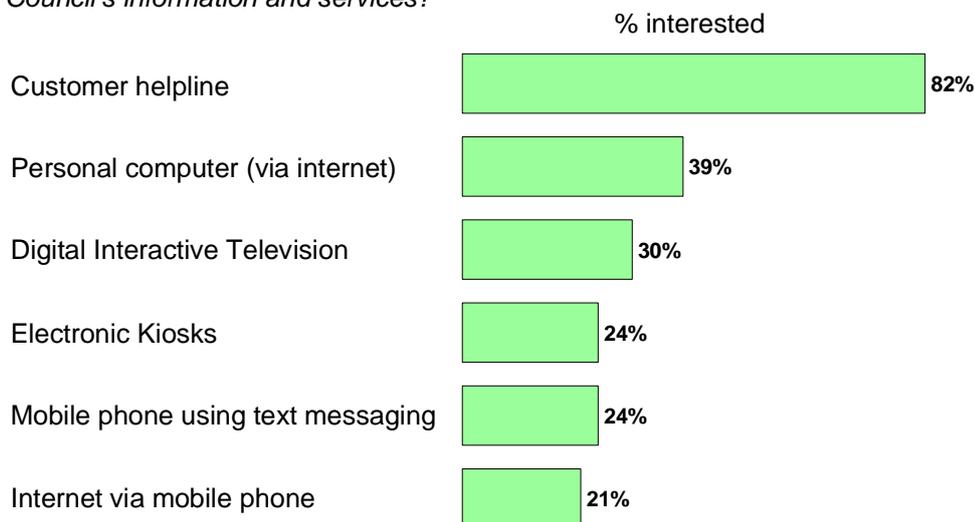
Base: All respondents who have contacted the Council (878)

Source: MORI

Residents are interested, to varying degrees, in **possible new methods** the Council are introducing to contact them. The telephone still remains most popular though, in particular a customer helpline (82%), as well as online (39%) and Digital Interactive Television (30%) also proving popular options.

Interest in New Ways to Access the Council

Q How interested, if at all, are you in using the following devices to access the Council's information and services?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Generally, it is younger residents who prefer to use new technology such as mobile phone text messaging when dealing with the Council (59% of 16-24 year olds are interested, compared to just 2% of residents aged 65+), while older residents prefer to use the telephone instead. More affluent residents are also more likely to be keen in using computer technology (53% ABC1s are interested in this method, compared to only 34% C2DEs).

Service Usage and Satisfaction

This section moves on from perceptions of the Council as a whole, to look at usage of and satisfaction with key services.

Our experience is that whilst ratings of local government fluctuate over time, perceptions of the institution are consistently less well regarded than individual service areas. If an authority is perceived to provide generally good quality services and good value for money, then it is highly likely to also achieve strong satisfaction ratings. Indeed, perceptions on these attributes are consistently shown to be the strongest drivers of overall satisfaction across different studies and across key sub-groups within the population.

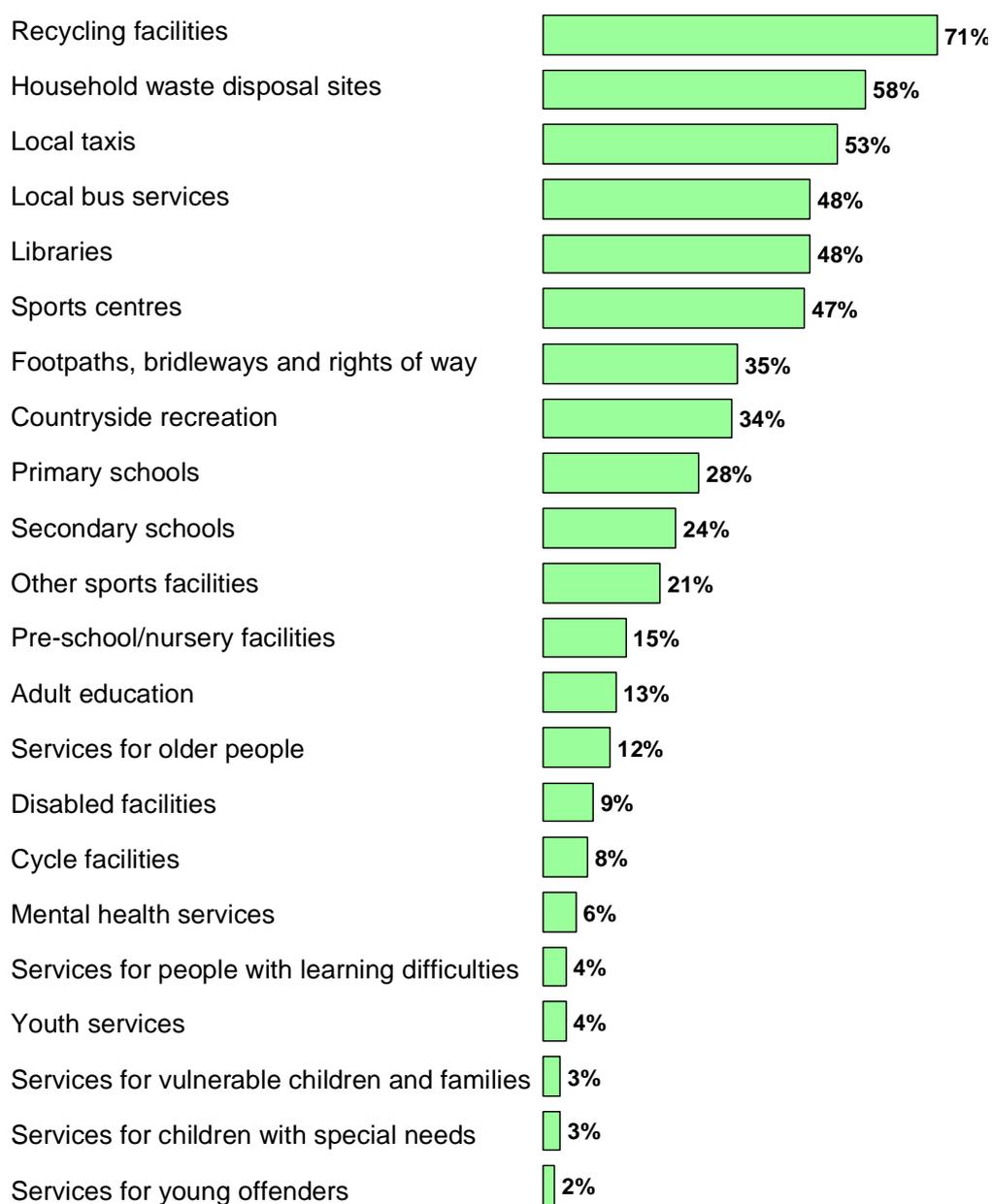
In particular, liveability factors (especially high visibility street scene services) have been highlighted in previous research as being of most importance to residents and we have seen evidence from different authorities of how increases or decreases in the ratings of key services have appeared to have had a significant impact on overall image ratings.

Before looking at satisfaction with individual services, it is interesting to look at broad patterns of service usage (both universal and non-universal services) among Blaenau Gwent residents. A more detailed view of the composition of the user base for key services is provided in sections of this report which deal with ratings of the individual services.

Overall Usage of Services

It is promising to see that, given the benefits of recycling, over 7 in every 10 people (71%) use local recycling facilities. As well as over half (53%) of residents taking advantage of local taxis, it is also encouraging that almost half (48%) use the local bus service, helping to reduce traffic congestion in the Blaenau Gwent area.

Overall Service Usage



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

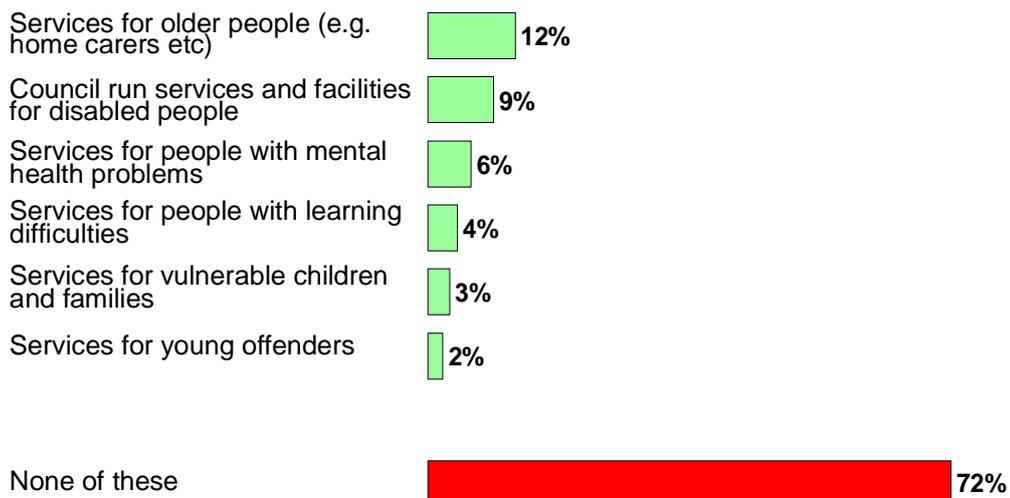
Reported usage of libraries and sports centres is high compared to other services, with just fewer than half (48% and 47% respectively) taking advantage of these universal services.

Social Services

Almost three-quarters of Blaenau Gwent residents have not used any of the Council’s social services. Almost a fifth (18%) of residents aged 65+ have used or benefited from services for older people. Of this group, 81% say that they are satisfied with the service they receive.

Usage of Social Services

Q Which social services provided by the Council have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

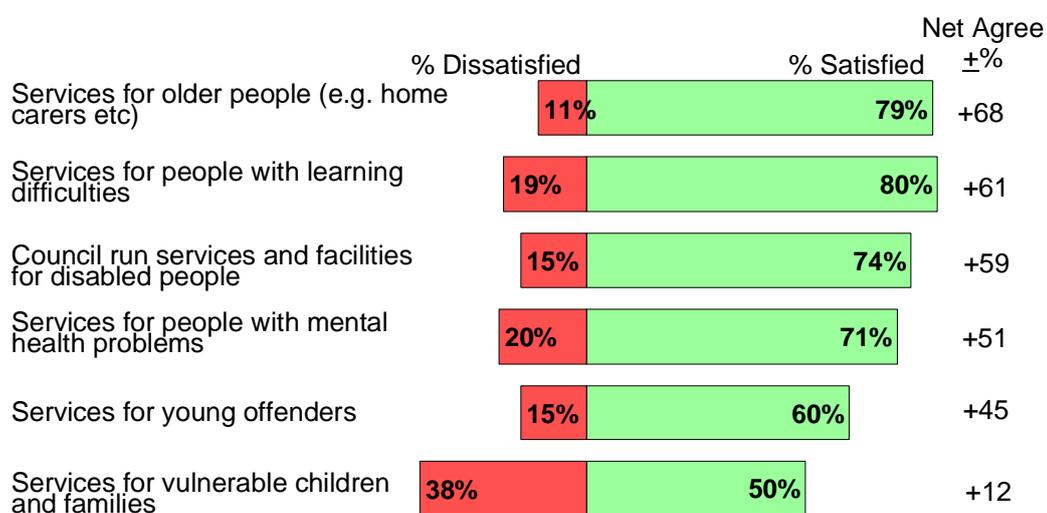
A relatively low proportion (18%) of residents who are disabled or live with someone who has a disability, have used or benefited from facilities for disabled people, though, of this group, three-quarters (74%) are satisfied with the Council service.

Satisfaction amongst users of social services is generally high, with older people and those with learning difficulties being most likely to say they are satisfied with the services they receive (net satisfaction is +68 points and +61 points respectively). While half (50%) are satisfied with the service they receive, over a third (38%) of people that use services for vulnerable children and families say they are dissatisfied with the services they receive¹.

¹ Caution – small base size (29)

Satisfaction with Social Services

Q And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of these social services is provided in your local area?



Base: All respondents who have used or benefited from at least one social service (298)

Source: MORI

Normative Data: How does Blaenau Gwent compare?

Satisfaction with various social services in Blaenau Gwent is high in comparison to other councils, as indicated in the tables of normative data, which compare satisfaction amongst users of care services for elderly people and those with disabilities to levels recorded in other areas surveyed by MORI.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the care of the elderly?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
			%	%	±
<i>Base: Users</i>					
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	79	11	68
Surrey (2)	CC	2003	76	10	66
Dorset (5)	CC	2002	71	16	55
Lancashire (6)	CC	2003	67	24	43
Hampshire	CC	2003	59	19	40
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	61	26	35
Derbyshire (1)	CC	2002	60	26	34
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	57	24	33
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	58	25	33
Stockton-on-Tees (3)	U	2002	59	26	33
Torfaen (4)	W	2002	56	23	33
Essex	CC	2003	55	25	30
Medway (2)	U	2002	40	23	17

Wording:

- (1) care for elderly people in their own homes
- (2) services and facilities for the elderly
- (3) Support services for elderly people
- (4) Care for elderly people
- (5) Social Services for older people
- (6) Services for older people

Source: MORI

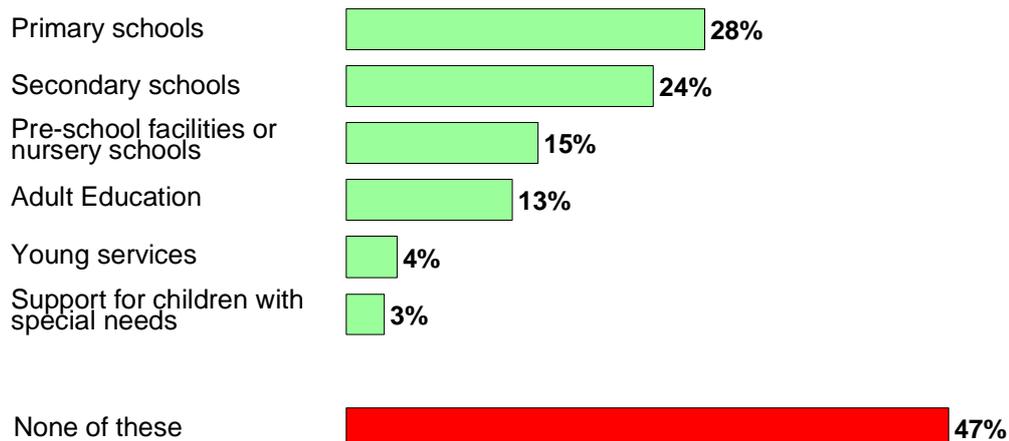
Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with services for the disabled?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
			%	%	±
<i>Base: Users</i>					
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	74	15	59
Lancashire (7)	CC	2003	68	17	51
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	69	18	51
Surrey (6)	CC	2003	62	13	49
Dorset (5)	CC	2002	57	22	35
Buckinghamshire (2)	CC	2002	59	28	31
Oxfordshire (4)	CC	2002	50	27	23
Hampshire	CC	2003	50	30	20
Derbyshire (3)	CC	2002	51	32	19
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	33	15	18
Medway	U	2001	49	38	11
Torfaen (1)	W	2002	40	41	-1
Wording:					
(1) facilities for disabled people					
(2) care for people with a physical disability					
(3) support for disabled people					
(4) support/ care for vulnerable groups such as people with disabilities and mental health problems					
(5) Social Services for people with disabilities					
(6) Council services for people with disabilities or mental health problems					
(7) Council run services for disabled people					
<i>Source: MORI</i>					

Education Services

Just over half of residents in Blaenau Gwent (53%) make use of the education services, the most popular being primary schools, which are used by more than a quarter of households (28%).

Usage of Education Services

Q Which of these education services provided by the Council have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

A third of residents aged 25-34 (who are more likely to have young children) have used pre-school facilities. Of this group, more than nine in ten (91%) are satisfied with the services provided. This same age group is also the most common user of primary school facilities (54%), and again, reported satisfaction is high at 94%.

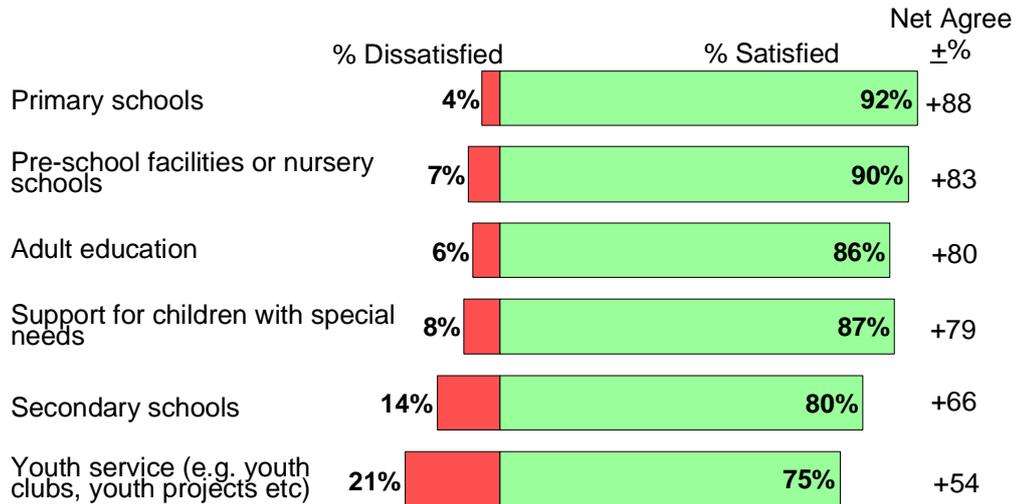
It is interesting to look at satisfaction with secondary schools – as might be expected the most common users are those aged 16-24 (38%) and 35-54 (35%, who are most likely the parents of teenagers). Satisfaction varies between these two groups, however, with younger people giving a net satisfaction score of +55 points compared to +73% amongst their older counterparts.

Youth services are used by one in ten people aged 16-24 in Blaenau Gwent, and of those that benefit from the services, 81% are satisfied.

Users of educational services are highly satisfied with the services they receive, most notably those who make use of primary and pre-school facilities (net satisfaction is +88 points and +83 points respectively).

Satisfaction with Education Services

Q And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of these services is provided in your local area?



Base: All respondents who have used at least one educational service (596)

Source: MORI

Normative Data: How does Blaenau Gwent compare?

The following tables show that Blaenau Gwent's users of educational services are very satisfied compared to other council areas that MORI has surveyed, yet caution must be made when interpreting the data as there is a low usability score when comparing adult education and youth service usage.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with nursery schools?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Users</i>			%	%	±
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	90	3	87
Lancashire (5)	CC	2003	90	5	85
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	90	7	83
Torfaen (1)	W	2002	87	4	83
Surrey	CC	2003	85	6	79
Torfaen (1)	W	2001	85	6	79
Essex	CC	2003	85	7	78
Medway	U	2002	85	8	77
Oxfordshire (4)	CC	2002	84	10	74
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	84	10	74
Medway	U	2001	78	11	67
Buckinghamshire (1)	CC	2002	76	12	64
Dorset	CC	2002	75	11	64
Leicester (3)	U	2001	68	15	53
Carmarthenshire (2)	W	2001	66	14	52

Wording :

- (1) nursery schools and classes
- (2) nursery education
- (3) family centres, nursery schools
- (4) Early years education
- (5) Pre-school facilities or nursery schools

Source: MORI

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with primary schools?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Users</i>			%	%	±
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	92	4	88
Surrey	CC	2003	92	4	88
Lancashire	CC	2003	90	5	85
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	89	6	83
Torfaen	W	2002	87	4	83
Oxfordshire (1)	CC	2002	85	6	79
Dorset	CC	2002	85	7	78
Essex	CC	2003	85	7	78
Medway	U	2002	83	5	78
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	84	7	77
Derbyshire	CC	2002	84	8	76
Hampshire	CC	2003	84	8	76
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	83	8	75
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	84	10	74
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	81	9	72
Leicester	U	2001	81	11	70

Wording:

(1) Primary school education (up to 11 years)

Source: MORI

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with secondary schools?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Surrey	CC	2003	86	7	+79
Oxfordshire	CC	2000	86	8	+78
Lancashire	CC	2000	85	9	+76
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	83	7	+76
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	83	12	+71
Derbyshire	CC	2002	80	13	+67
Essex	CC	2003	79	12	+67
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	80	14	+66
Torfaen	W	2002	76	10	+66
Dorset	CC	2002	77	12	+65
Hampshire	CC	2003	74	12	+62
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	72	16	+56
Camden	LB	2001	68	14	+54
Medway	U	2001	71	18	+53
Leicester	U	2001	66	21	+45
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	63	23	+40

Source: MORI

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with adult education?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base:: Users</i>			%	%	±
Surrey	CC	2003	90	3	87
Torfaen (2)	W	2002	89	3	86
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	87	5	82
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	87	5	82
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	85	5	80
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	85	5	80
Leicester	U	2001	85	6	79
Lancashire	CC	2003	85	7	78
Essex	CC	2003	82	6	76
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	79	6	73
Hampshire	CC	2003	79	7	72
Dorset	CC	2002	78	10	68
Medway	U	2001	74	8	66
Stockton-on-Tees (1)	U	2002	75	12	63
Derbyshire	CC	2002	67	13	54
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	66	13	53

Wording:

- (1) Day/ evening classes for adults
- (2) Opportunities for adults to learn

Source: MORI

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with youth service and clubs?					
	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base:: Users</i>			%	%	±
Lancashire (5)	CC	2003	69	14	55
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	75	21	54
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	52	24	28
Oxfordshire (3)	CC	2002	54	27	27
Northamptonshire (1)	CC	2002	39	44	5
Torfaen (1)	W	2002	40	35	5
Dorset (4)	CC	2002	40	37	3
Carmarthenshire (1)	W	2001	32	44	-12
Stockton-on-Tees (1)	U	2002	32	50	-18
Derbyshire (1)	CC	2002	27	54	-27
Medway (2)	U	2002	24	52	-28
Hampshire	CC	2003	26	57	-31

Wording:
 (1) youth clubs and other facilities/ services for young people
 (2) facilities for young people
 (3) youth centres and other facilities for young people
 (4) Youth Service facilities
 (5) youth services

Source: MORI

Improving Participation in Education

Almost half of residents (47%) have not benefited from an education service in the last year; of these, more than three quarters (77%) do not intend to begin to learn or study. With 'feeling too old' being the main reason preventing people from learning (43%), it is not surprising that those most unlikely to begin learning are residents aged 65+ (95% do not intend to study), and those in social grades C2DE (82% do not intend to study), who are also more likely to be older, retired residents.

Reasons that Prevent Learning or Studying

Q What, if anything, is preventing you or your family from learning or studying new things in the next year?



Base: All who have not benefited from any education service and do not intend to study in the next 12 months (399)

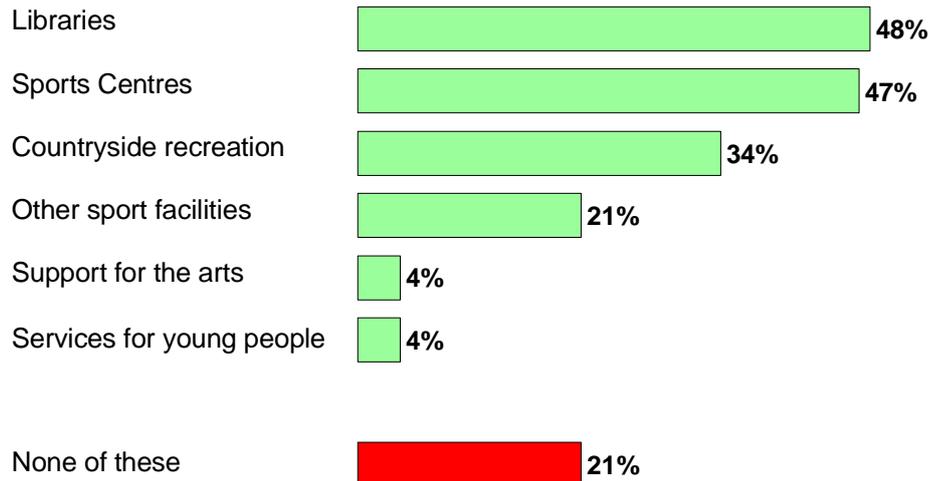
Source: MORI

Leisure and Cultural facilities

Almost eight out of every 10 people (79%) in Blaenau Gwent report that they make use of leisure and cultural facilities in their area.

Usage of Leisure and Cultural Services

Q Which of these services have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

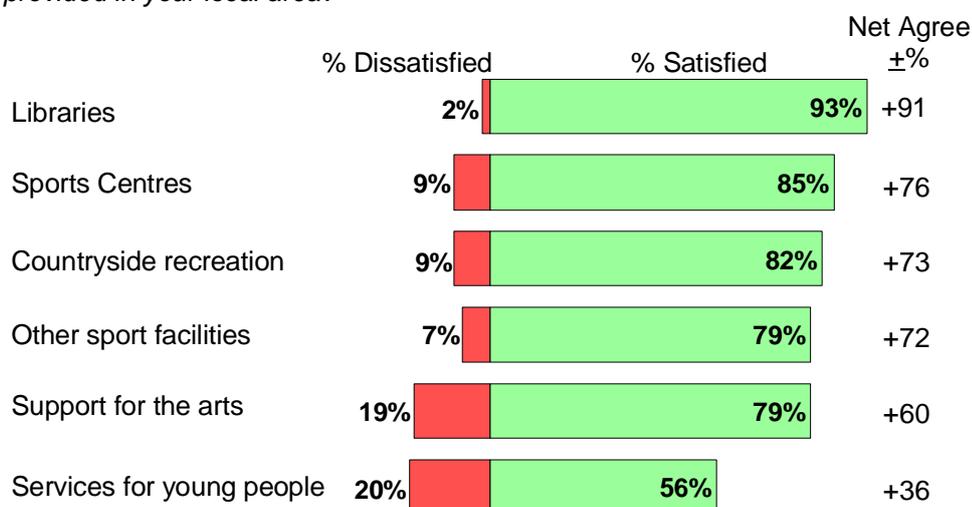
Around half of residents claim to have used libraries in Blaenau Gwent. Those most likely to benefit from the service are women (52%), residents aged 25-34 (59%), and those in the ABC1 social grades (56%).

Sports centres are also commonly used, with 47% of residents taking advantage of the service. Younger people aged 16-24 and 25-34 are significantly most likely to benefit from sports centres (69% and 67% respectively). Satisfaction is also high among these two groups (86% and 87% respectively).

Countryside recreation is used by around a third of Blaenau Gwent residents (34%). Those that use the facilities most extensively are residents aged 25-34 (52%). This group appear to be satisfied with the facilities (net satisfaction is +80 points), though it is older residents aged 65+ who are most satisfied, even though they do not benefit from countryside recreation as frequently (net satisfaction is +88 points, but usage is 20%).

Satisfaction with Leisure and Cultural Services

Q And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of these services is provided in your local area?



Base: All respondents who have used at least one leisure/cultural service (835)

Source: MORI

Normative Comparison of Leisure and Cultural Facilities

Overall satisfaction with library facilities is overwhelmingly high compared to other councils, with a net score of +91 points, and countryside recreation also fares well in comparison to other councils (+73 points).

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with libraries?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
			%	%	±
<i>Base: Users</i>					
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	93	2	91
Lancashire	CC	2003	93	4	89
Dorset	CC	2002	91	3	88
Essex	CC	2003	91	4	87
Surrey	CC	2003	91	4	87
Bedfordshire	CC	2001	90	4	86
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	90	4	86
Torfaen	W	2002	89	3	86
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	90	5	85
Hertfordshire	CC	2003	87	4	83
Hampshire	CC	2003	84	2	82
Medway	U	2002	88	6	82
Stockton-on-Tees	U	2002	88	6	82
Derbyshire	CC	2002	83	6	77
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	82	9	73

Source: MORI

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with country parks and picnic sites?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: Users</i>			%	%	±
Carmarthenshire (2)	W	2001	89	4	85
Northamptonshire (1)	CC	2002	87	6	81
Hampshire	CC	2003	85	6	79
Essex	CC	2003	85	7	78
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	82	9	73
Dorset (2)	CC	2002	81	9	72
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	69	13	56

Wording:

(1) Country parks

(2) Countryside Conservation and Country parks

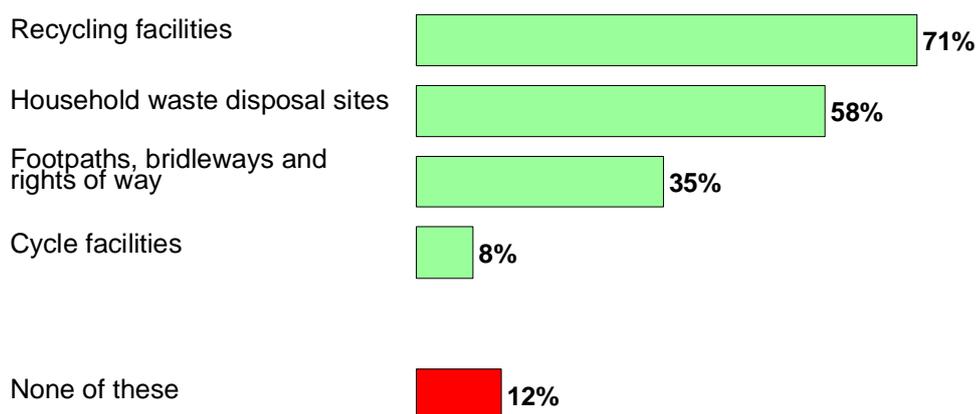
Source: MORI

Environmental Services

Environmental services are used by the majority of residents in Blaenau Gwent (88%). Of this group, almost three-quarters of residents report that they use local recycling facilities. Younger residents are least likely to use them, while reported usage is highest among residents aged 65+.

Usage of Environmental Services

Q Which of these services have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

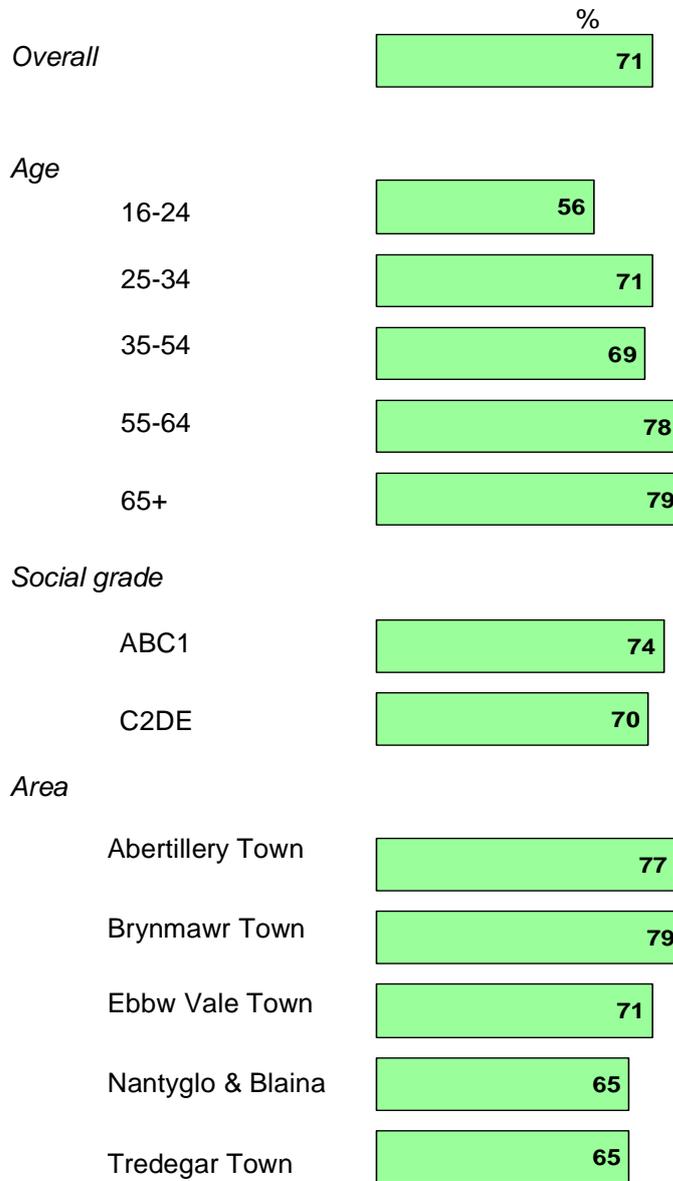
Source: MORI

Footpaths are used by over a third of residents (35%), which is important to note, as the ‘poor condition of roads/footpaths’ was mentioned by around a quarter of residents (24%) as a bad thing about living in Blaenau Gwent. Those most likely to use footpaths are residents aged 25-34 (51%), and these are also the people who are most commonly citing their condition as negative (30%).

There is also high utilisation of household waste sites amongst residents in Blaenau Gwent (58%). Those most likely to use the service are men (62%, compared to 55% women), those aged 25-54 (63%), and residents in ABC1 social grades (42%, compared to C2DE: 32%). As is frequently the case, residents from the higher social grades (ABC1) say they are more likely to take advantage of local recycling facilities than C2DE residents. Looking at results by area, usage is lowest (65%) in Tredegar Town and Nantyglo & Blaina, while in Brynmawr Town and Abertillery Town around eight out of every ten people (79% and 77% respectively) state that they use local recycling facilities.

Recycling Facilities: Sub-group Analysis

Q Which of these services have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months – recycling facilities?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Overall, just fewer than four in five users say they are satisfied with civic amenities sites, including local recycling facilities and waste disposal sites. MORI’s normative data indicate that Blaenau Gwent compares highly with other authorities offering recycling services.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with recycling?

	Type	Month	Year	Satisfied	Dis-satisfied	Net satisfied
<i>Base: All</i>				%	%	±
Lancashire	CC		2003	87	9	78
Bedfordshire	CC		2001	83	10	73
Blaenau Gwent (3)	W		2005	79	8	71
Leicester	U		2001	77	9	68
Hampshire	CC		2003	77	13	64
Oxfordshire (2)	CC		2002	75	13	62
Medway	U		2002	72	22	50
Stockton-on-Tees (1)	U		2002	61	20	41
Northamptonshire	CC		2002	65	26	39
Kent	CC		2001	61	23	38
Portsmouth (1)	U		2002	62	25	37
Southampton (1)	CC		2002	54	20	34
Torfaen (1)	W		2002	55	26	29
Carmarthenshire	W		2001	48	25	23

Wording:

(1) recycling facilities

(2) recycling facilities (collection and recycling centres)

(3) civic amenities (e.g. recycling facilities, waste disposal sites)

Source: MORI

It is also encouraging to note that satisfaction with recycling services amongst all residents of Blaenau Gwent is above the average score for England as recorded in the 2003/4 BVPI surveys. In the national exercise 68% of all residents say they are satisfied with local recycling facilities overall,² compared to 79% of all residents in Blaenau Gwent saying they are satisfied with the local recycling service.

² Best Value User Satisfaction Surveys 2003/4. Fieldwork took place in local authorities across England and Wales between September and November 2003.

It is clear that usage of local recycling services has an impact on satisfaction. Older residents, who are significantly more likely to use the service, are more satisfied than their younger counterparts (net satisfaction is +74 points for residents aged 55+, compared to +61 points satisfaction for those aged 16-24). This is also the case when analysing satisfaction between town areas – residents in Brynmawr Town and Abertillery Town show a net satisfaction rating of +81 points and +80 points respectively, compared to net satisfaction of +67 points in Tredegar Town, where recycling usage is lowest.

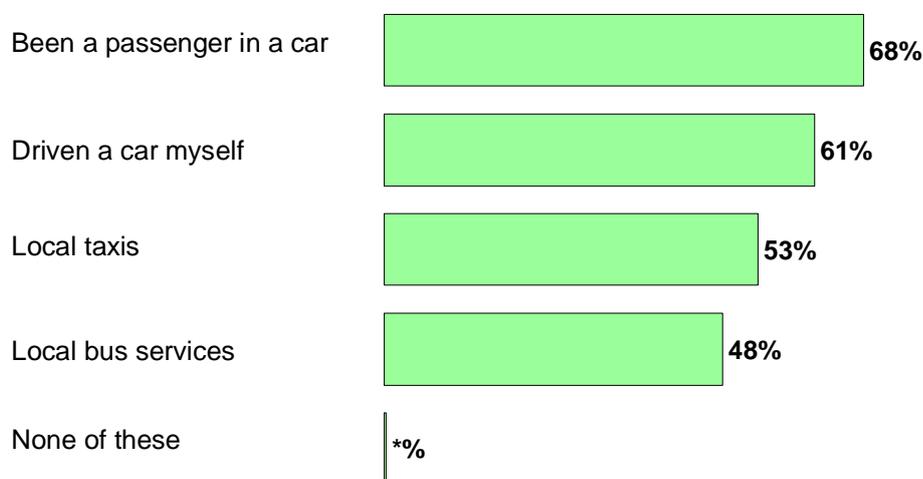
More than half of residents (58%) report that they use household waste disposal sites (local tips). As with recycling, younger residents are least likely to use this service, as are those from lower social grades.

Transport Services

One in five (21%) residents in Blaenau Gwent think that public transport is important in making somewhere a good place to live. This service is also cited most frequently by those aged 65+ (27%) as being the most important public service in their area. Although, overall 8% of residents think public transport is a positive aspect to living in Blaenau Gwent, one in ten think the service is a negative aspect of life in their local area and almost one in five (19%) think that public transport needs to be improved.

Usage of Local Transport Services

Q Which of these modes of transport have you or your family used in the last twelve months?



Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Around half of residents report that they use local buses. Residents in the youngest (16-24) and oldest (65+) age categories are most likely to use them (65% and 54% respectively) as are those in social grades C2DE (52%). The use of local buses is also most likely among those living in Abertillery Town (62%) and is least likely for those living in Nantyglo & Blaina (39%).

Bus and rail facilities are the main perceived priority which residents believe the Council needs to improve (50%). This is followed closely by the preference to improve existing roads, street lighting and bridges (48%), which is unsurprising considering nearly a quarter (24%) of residents claim poor road conditions are a reason for dissatisfaction with living Blaenau Gwent.

Satisfaction with Universal Services: Street Lighting and Pavement Maintenance

Over four in five residents say they are satisfied with street lighting, a score which compares favourably with those gathered in other local authorities studied by MORI.

The scores for pavement maintenance are less positive. On this service, more residents are dissatisfied than are satisfied (66% versus 28%), which positions Blaenau Gwent towards the bottom of the table of normative data collected by MORI.

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with street lighting?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net
			%	%	%
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Leicestershire	CC	2001	88	7	81
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	85	8	77
Stockton on Tees	U	2002	85	9	76
South Tyneside	M	2003	83	8	75
Blaenau Gwent	W	2005	83	12	71
Leicester	U	2001	81	10	71
Oxfordshire	CC	2002	80	9	71
Southampton	U	2002	79	9	70
Westminster	LB	2003	80	10	70
Gateshead	M	2002	80	15	65
Barking and Dagenham	LB	2000	79	15	64
Brent	LB	2002	76	14	62
Tameside	M	2000	76	15	61
Sunderland	M	2003	77	17	60
Enfield	LB	2004	74	15	59
Lancashire	CC	2000	77	18	59
Portsmouth	U	2002	72	14	58
Dorset	CC	2002	71	13	58
Hampshire	CC	2004	75	17	58
Torfaen	W	2002	74	17	57
Southend-on-Sea	U	2001	72	17	55
Northamptonshire	CC	2002	72	19	53
Medway	U	2002	69	20	49
Birmingham	M	2004	67	18	49
Camden	LB	2001	64	18	46
Southwark	LB	2004	66	20	46
Kent	CC	2001	51	33	18

Source: MORI

Satisfaction with Pavement Maintenance

Q How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with pavement maintenance?

	Type	Year	Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Net
<i>Base: All</i>			%	%	%
Westminster	LB	2003	63	18	45
Carmarthenshire	W	2001	59	25	34
Leicestershire	CC	2001	60	31	29
Wokingham	U	2000	51	30	21
South Tyneside	M	2002	52	31	21
Dorset	CC	2002	48	28	20
Sunderland	M	2003	55	36	19
Gateshead	M	2002	48	39	9
Torfaen	W	2002	33	28	5
Camden	LB	2001	42	38	4
Barking and Dagenham	LB	2000	44	42	2
Stockton on Tees	U	2002	43	44	-1
Enfield	LB	2004	41	44	-3
Hampshire	CC	2004	41	44	-3
Leicester	U	2001	42	46	-4
Lancashire	CC	2000	42	46	-4
Derbyshire	CC	2002	39	45	-6
Buckinghamshire	CC	2002	34	45	-11
Medway	U	2002	37	49	-12
Portsmouth	U	2002	36	48	-12
Southend-on-Sea	U	2001	36	51	-15
Southampton	U	2002	29	53	-24
Kent	CC	2001	25	58	-33
<i>Blaenau Gwent</i>	<i>W</i>	<i>2005</i>	<i>28</i>	<i>66</i>	<i>-38</i>

Source: MORI

Voting and Local Democracy

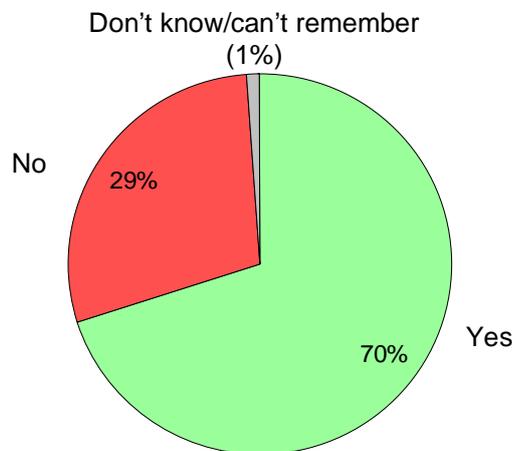
The majority of residents in Blaenau Gwent claim to have voted in the local elections held in June 2004. Those most likely to say they voted are those:

- aged 55-64 and 65+ (84% and 86% respectively claim to have voted);
- living in Brynmawr Town and Nantyglo & Blaina (79% and 78% respectively); and
- who are satisfied with and feel informed by the Council (75%).

Least likely to say they voted are people aged 16-24 (67% - though obviously this figure is lower due to under 18s included in this group being too young to vote) and those living in Ebbw Vale Town and Tredegar Town (35% and 29% say they did not vote respectively).

Voting in the Election

Q *Did you vote in the previous election held in Blaenau Gwent? (This was the Electoral Wards, Town Council and European Elections held in June 2004)*



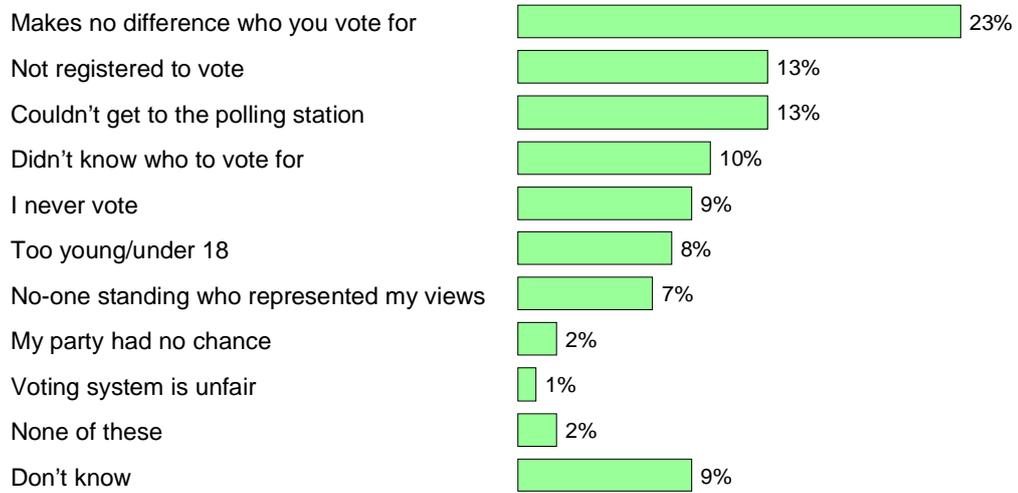
Base: 1,053 Blaenau Gwent residents aged 16+, interviewed 10th January – 15th February 2005

Source: MORI

Voter disengagement is an issue in Blaenau Gwent. Of the people who said they did not vote, the main reason for not doing so is a belief that it makes no difference who you vote for (23%). Around one in eight respondents say that the reason they did not vote was because they are not registered to vote (13%), and there is also a difficulty for residents in getting to the polling station (13%).

Reasons for not Voting

Q Why did you not vote in the previous election held in Blaenau Gwent? (This was the Electoral Wards, Town Council and European Elections held in June 2004)



Base: All respondents who did not vote (302)

Source: MORI

Appendices

Marked Up Questionnaire

Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council
Residents Satisfaction Survey 2005
Topline Results
25/02/05

- Results based on a representative sample of 1053 respondents in Blaenau Gwent.
- Results are weighted by gender, age, work status and area to the known population profile of Blaenau Gwent.
- Fieldwork carried out face-to-face between 10 January 2005 and 15 February 2005.
- Where results do not sum to 100, this may be due to computer rounding or multiple responses or the exclusion of don't knows or non-responses.
- An asterisk (*) indicates a finding of less than 0.5%, but greater than zero.
- Base: All unless otherwise stated; caution should be applied to interpreting data where base sizes are small.

QUALITY OF LIFE

Q1. Thinking about Blaenau Gwent, on the whole, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with it as a place to live?

	%
Very satisfied	25
Fairly satisfied	52
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9
Fairly dissatisfied	9
Very dissatisfied	5
Don't know	-

Q2. And how long have you lived in Blaenau Gwent?

	%
Up to 1 year	1
1-2 years	2
3-5 years	2
6-10 years	2
Over 10 years	92
Don't know	*

Q3. Which of the statements on this card best describes why you moved to this area?

	%
I moved here to look for work	4
I moved here because of job relocation	13
I moved here for family reasons	31
I moved here to retire	6
I moved here to seek affordable housing	36
My parents moved here when I was younger	2
I moved here to study	-
Other	4
Don't know/None of these	5

Base: All who have lived in the area for up to 5 years (60)

Q4. Which one of these statements comes closest to how you feel about Blaenau Gwent as a place to live?

	%
I speak highly of Blaenau Gwent without being asked	9
I speak highly of Blaenau Gwent if I am asked about it	30
I have no views one way or the other	30
I am critical of Blaenau Gwent if I am asked about it	23
I am critical of Blaenau Gwent without being asked	7
None of these	*

Q5. Which two or three things, if any, would you say are good things about living in Blaenau Gwent?

	%
Near to family/friends	49
Friendly people/good community spirit	40
Access to the countryside	23
Convenient for shops	21
Good schools/education	19
Peace and quiet	16
Convenient for work	11
Openness/greenery/countryside	11
Good leisure/recreation facilities	10
Good shopping facilities	9
Good supply of affordable housing	9
Good health facilities	8
Adequate public transport	8
Safe area/low crime rate	6
Low levels of pollution	6
Clean streets	4
Low levels of Council Tax	4
Good roads	3
Low levels of development	2
Good childcare facilities	1
Good facilities for young people	1
Adequate parking	1
Good job opportunities	1
Other	*
None of these/no good things	2
Don't know	*

Q6. And which two or three things, if any, would you say are bad things about living in Blaenau Gwent?

	%
Lack of police	24
Poor condition of roads/footpaths	24
Unemployment/poor job opportunities	24
Stray dogs/dog fouling	22
Jobs paying low wages	21
Dirty streets	19
Poor parking	18
Poor facilities for younger children	16
Drugs misuse	14
Poor shopping facilities	12
Poor public transport	10
Vandalism/graffiti	10
Poor leisure/recreation facilities	8
Inconvenient for work	7
Unsafe area/high crime rate	7
Inconvenient for shops	6
Poor housing	5
Lack of peace and quiet	4
Poor health facilities	4
Poor schools/education	3
Poor childcare facilities	3
Expensive housing	3
Poor access to other places	2
Far away from family/friends	1
Neighbours/people/community cohesion	1
Lack of openness/greenery/countryside	1
High levels of pollution	*
Other	2
None of these/no bad things	2
Don't know	*

Q7. Thinking generally, which of these aspects would you say are most important in making somewhere a good place to live?

	%
Job prospects	44
Low level of crime	41
Activities for teenagers	38
Health services	37
Clean streets	34
Affordable decent housing	33
Wage levels and local cost of living	28
Shopping facilities	27
Education provision	27
Facilities for young children	25
Road and pavement repairs	22
Public transport	21
Activities for older people	16
Parks and open spaces	15
Sports and leisure facilities	15
Community activities	11
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	10
Access to nature	8
Low level of pollution	8
Low level of traffic congestion	6
Race relations	3
Other	*
None of these	*
Don't know/no opinion	1

Q8. Thinking about this local area, which of these aspects, if any, do you think most need improving?

	%
Job prospects	49
Activities for teenagers	48
Road and pavement repairs	44
Clean streets	33
Facilities for young children	31
Wage levels and local cost of living	28
Level of crime	25
Shopping facilities	24
Health services	21
Affordable decent housing	19
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	19
Public transport	19
Parks and open spaces	15
Community activities	15
Activities for older people	14
Sports and leisure facilities	13
Education provision	9
Level of pollution	4
Level of traffic congestion	4
Access to nature	2
Race relations	1
Other	2
None of these	*
Don't know	1

SOCIAL COHESION AND ANTISOCIAL BEHAVIOUR

Q9. Now I'd like you to think about all the people who live in your neighbourhood. Would you say that you know...

	%
Many of the people in your neighbourhood	58
Some of the people in your neighbourhood	25
A few of the people in your neighbourhood	16
You do not know people in your neighbourhood	1
Just moved here	*
Don't know	-

Q10. **Thinking about your local area, for each of the following issues that I read out, please tell me how much of a problem you think it is...?**

	A very big problem	A fairly big problem	Not a very big problem	Not a problem at all	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	6	8	18	68	-
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	26	29	21	24	-
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	25	27	24	24	*
People using or dealing drugs	25	25	16	26	8
People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces	18	28	26	27	2
Rubbish and litter lying around	34	35	21	9	*
Abandoned or burnt out cars	7	16	26	50	1

CORPORATE ISSUES

Q11. **I am going to read out a list of statements about the Council and I would like you to tell me, from this card, how strongly you agree or disagree with each?**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/no opinion
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Overall, the quality of Council services is good	7	46	17	20	10	1
The Council is too remote and impersonal	12	33	23	22	3	5
The Council gives residents good value for money	4	27	20	31	15	3
The Council treats all parts of Blaenau Gwent fairly	3	21	15	32	23	7
The Council does a good job of caring for local people	4	32	26	21	11	6
The Council promotes the health and well-being of local residents	3	29	28	22	11	6
The Council is more modern than it used to be	7	43	21	14	7	7

SOCIAL SERVICES

Q12. Which social services provided by the Council have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?

	%
Services for older people (e.g. home carers, meals on wheels etc.)	12
Council run services and facilities for disabled people	9
Services for people with mental health problems	6
Services for people with learning difficulties	4
Services for vulnerable children and families	3
Services for young offenders	2
Other	1
None of these	72
Don't know	*

Q13. And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of these social services is provided in your local area?

		Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither /Nor	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
	<i>Base</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Services for older people (e.g. home carers, meals on wheels etc.)	(120)	45	34	10	4	7	-
Council run services and facilities for disabled people	(104)	41	33	9	9	6	-
Services for people with mental health problems	(55)	37	34	6	8	12	-
Services for people with learning difficulties	(36)	33	47	-	16	3	-
Services for vulnerable children and families	(24)	10	40	13	18	20	-
Services for young offenders	(12)	16	44	7	11	4	8

Base: All who have used or benefited from at least one social service

EDUCATION

Q14. Which of these education services provided by the Council have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?

	%
Pre-school facilities or nursery schools	15
Primary schools	28
Secondary schools	24
Support for children with special needs	3
Adult education	13
Youth service (e.g. youth clubs, youth projects etc)	4
Other	*
None of these	47
Don't know	-

Q15. And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of these services is provided in your local area?

		Very satis- fied	Fairly satis- fied	Neither/ Nor	Fairly dis- Satis- Fied	Very dis- satis- fied	Don't know
	<i>Base</i>	%	%	%	%	%	%
Pre-school facilities or nursery schools	(157)	56	34	2	6	1	1
Primary schools	(283)	56	36	2	2	2	*
Secondary schools	(235)	36	44	5	9	5	*
Support for children with special needs	(41)	42	45	2	3	5	-
Adult education	(137)	43	43	1	5	1	1
Youth service (e.g. youth clubs, youth projects etc)	(42)	33	42	-	21	-	-

Base: All who have used or benefited from at least one education service

Q16. Do you or your family intend to learn or study in the next twelve months?

	%
Yes	20
No	77
Don't know	3

Base: All who have not used or benefited from at least one education service (515)

Q17. What, if anything, is preventing you or your family from learning or studying new things in the next year?

	%
I feel I am too old	43
Not enough time	9
Learning/studying is not relevant to me	7
Can't see the point	6
Don't want to learn new things	5
Health reasons	5
I have better things to do with my spare time	4
Work pressures/hours of work	4
No suitable courses available	2
Don't know what is available	2
No courses that interest me in my local area	2
Haven't got around to doing it	2
No reason	2
No time/too busy	1
Disabled	1
Family/Childcare commitments	1
Lack of transport	1
Lack of confidence	1
Fear of exams	1
Don't want to go back to college because it is full of young people	1
Am already learning/studying	1
Bad memories of school	*
Have just completed a course	*
Previous courses I've done were a waste of time	*
Too expensive/can't afford it	*
Don't feel colleges/centres are welcoming	-
Too far to travel	-
My family/friends would be unsupportive	-
Other	13
Don't know	3

Base: All who do not use any education service and are not/don't know whether they are intending to learn or study in the next 12 months (422)

LEISURE AND CULTURAL FACILITIES

Q18. Which of these services have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?

	%
Libraries	48
Sports Centres	47
Countryside recreation (e.g. country parks, picnic sites etc)	34
Other sports facilities (e.g. playing fields and multi-use games areas)	21
Support for the arts	4
Services for young people	4
None of these	21
Don't know	*

Q19. And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of these services is provided in your local area?

		Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/ Nor	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
	Base	%	%	%	%	%	%
Libraries	(511)	61	32	3	2	*	1
Support for the arts	(57)	30	49	2	18	-	-
Sports Centres	(478)	37	48	4	8	1	1
Other sports facilities (e.g. playing fields and multi-use games areas)	(206)	29	50	12	5	2	-
Countryside recreation (e.g. country parks, picnic sites etc)	(350)	33	49	6	7	2	-
Services for young people	(36)	20	36	11	13	7	-

Base: All who have used at least one leisure or cultural facility

ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES

Q20. Which of these services have you or your family used or benefited from in the last twelve months?

	%
Recycling facilities	71
Household waste disposal sites	58
Footpaths, bridleways and rights of way	35
Cycle facilities (e.g. cycle paths)	8
None of these	12
Don't know	*

Q21. **And how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way each of the following are provided in your local area?**

	Very satisfied	Fairly satisfied	Neither/ Nor	Fairly dissatisfied	Very dissatisfied	Don't know
	%	%	%	%	%	%
Street lighting	34	49	4	8	4	*
Road maintenance and repairs	4	22	8	27	39	*
Pavement maintenance	4	24	10	27	34	1
Traffic management (e.g. signs and signalling)	9	49	20	11	8	3
Traffic calming measures	6	34	19	20	17	5
Road safety	8	46	17	15	12	2
Cycle facilities (e.g. cycle paths)	2	15	26	17	20	19
Footpaths, bridleways and rights of way	5	42	21	14	10	8
Civic Amenities Sites (e.g. recycling facilities, waste disposal sites)	28	51	8	5	4	4
Kerbside recycling facilities	36	38	11	6	5	4

LOCAL TRANSPORT

Q22. **Which of these modes of transport have you or your family used in the last twelve months?**

	%
Local bus services	48
Local taxis	53
Driven a car myself	61
Been a passenger in a car	68
None of these	*

Q23. **Still thinking about transport, which of the following two or three local transport issues do you think should be the main priorities for the Council?**

	%
Improving bus and rail facilities	50
Improving existing roads, street lighting and bridges	48
Providing safer routes to schools	32
Improving pedestrian facilities (e.g. improved crossings, pavements)	32
Providing more information about bus and train services	21
Improving road safety	20
Improving cycling facilities	14
Building new roads	12
Reducing delays to traffic	12
Other	1
None of these	4
Don't know	1

COMMUNICATIONS

Q24. How well informed, if at all, do you think the Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides?

	%
Keeps us very well informed	7
Keeps us fairly well informed	31
Gives us only a limited amount of information	33
Doesn't tell us much at all about what it does	27
Don't know	2

Q25. From which, if any, of these sources do you obtain most of your information about local public services, such as those provided by the Council?

Q26. And from which three or four would you prefer to find out about local public services, such as those provided by the Council?

	Q25 (current) %	Q26 (preferred) %
Local newspaper	61	53
Council newspaper (Valleys Voice)	22	29
Information sent with the Council Tax bill	15	20
Local councillor	8	22
Council website	3	6
Word of mouth (from family, friends etc)	49	18
Leaflet(s) delivered to my home	32	55
Leaflet displays/ noticeboards	11	17
Local radio	20	25
Local TV	12	19
Local library	9	9
Other	1	1
None of these	1	1
Don't get information	1	-
Don't know	*	1

Q27. There is a free newspaper published quarterly by the Council called 'Valleys Voice' that is delivered in your area. Which of these applies to you?

	%
Read all, or nearly all, of it	19
Read a bit of it	7
Read a few articles	7
Just glanced at it	7
Didn't look at it	4
Can't remember ever receiving it	55
Don't know	1

CONTACTING THE COUNCIL

Q28. Thinking now about your most recent contact with the Council, can you tell me how you last got in touch with them?

	%
In person at a specific council building or office	14
By telephone	63
Letter	2
Fax	-
Email	*
Via Council website	*
SMS (text messaging)	-
Through a Councillor	3
Through someone else	1
Have never contacted the council	15
Don't know/can't remember	2

Q29. How interested, if at all, are you in using the following devices to access the Council's information and services?

	Very interested %	Fairly interested %	Not very interested %	Not at all interested %	Don't know %
Customer helpline	40	42	10	8	*
Mobile phone connected to the Internet	5	16	16	62	1
Mobile phone using text messaging	8	17	16	59	*
Personal computer (connected to the Internet)	16	23	9	51	*
Digital Interactive Television	9	21	13	56	1
Electronic Kiosks	6	18	17	55	3

VOTING, LOCAL DEMOCRACY AND THE ROLE OF COUNCILLORS

Q30. **Did you vote in the previous election held in Blaenau Gwent (This was the Electoral Wards, Town Council and European Elections held in June 2004)**

	%
Yes	70
No	29
Don't know/Can't remember	1

Q31. **Why did you not vote in this election?**

	%
It makes no difference who you vote for	23
I am not interested in politics	14
I couldn't get to the polling station	13
I was not registered to vote	13
I am too busy to vote	12
I didn't know who to vote for	10
I never vote	9
Too young/under 18	8
There was no-one standing who represented my views	7
Too ill/health reasons/in hospital	3
My party had no chance of winning	2
Away at time/didn't live here then	2
The voting system is unfair	1
Didn't know candidate	1
Forgot	1
My candidate had no chance of winning	*
On holiday	*
None of these	2
Other	9
Don't know	2

Base: All who did not vote (274)

Q32. **I am going to read out a list of statements about your local County Borough Councillors and I would like you to tell me, how strongly you agree or disagree with each?**

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Neither agree nor disagree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know/no opinion
	%	%	%	%	%	%
I understand how the Council takes decisions	5	28	16	27	22	2
I am aware who my local County Borough Councillor is	32	25	6	13	23	1
I know how to contact my local County Borough Councillor	29	28	4	17	22	1
My local County Borough Councillor is involved in my local neighbourhood	18	25	12	15	13	16

Q33. Which one of these statements comes closest to how you feel about **Blaenau Gwent Borough Council** as a whole?

	%
I speak highly of the Council without being asked	3
I speak highly of the Council if I am asked about it	17
I have no views one way or the other	41
I am critical of the Council if I am asked about it	29
I am critical of the Council without being asked	10
None of these	1

Q34. Thinking about the Council now, which of these statements comes closest to your own attitude towards the Council?

	%
I'm not really interested in what the Council does, or whether it does its job	2
I'm not interested in what the Council does as long as it does its job	19
I like to know what the Council is doing, but I'm happy to let it get on with the job	52
I would like to have more of a say in what the Council does	23
I already work for, or am already involved with the Council and the services it provides	4
None of these	1
Don't know	1

Q35. How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the Council is running the Borough?

	%
Very satisfied	5
Fairly satisfied	45
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	19
Fairly dissatisfied	20
Very dissatisfied	10
Don't know	1

- Q36. Blaenau Gwent County Borough Council's vision for the local area is 'A *BETTER PLACE TO LIVE AND WORK*'. From this list, please tell me which two or three of these, if any, you think are most important for Blaenau Gwent to have in 10 years from now to support this vision of the future.

	%
Good quality jobs	27
Good quality hospitals	26
Low levels of crime and disorder	26
Good facilities for young people	26
Affordable housing	23
Low unemployment	23
Good local health services close to your home	21
Good schools	18
A skilled work force	13
Good public transport links to the rest of the country	12
Good facilities for older people	11
Economic success	11
High levels of cleanliness	9
Pleasant town centres	9
Good road links to the rest of the country	8
High quality shops	7
Strong communities	7
Good sports and leisure facilities for local people	6
Peace and quiet	5
Well cared for open spaces	3
A good cycle network	2
Good culture and arts facilities	2
Good night life	2
None of these	-
Don't know	1

BLAENAU GWENT COUNTY BOROUGH COUNCIL CITIZENS PANEL

- RP. The Council are considering setting up a panel of local residents who would be asked from time to time to participate in research on local issues.

Can we give your name and address to the Council so that they could send you more information about the Citizens Panel?

	%
Yes	36
No	64
Don't know	*

DEMOGRAPHICS

QA	Gender	%
	Male	48
	Female	52

QB	Age	%
	16-24	13
	25-34	17
	35-44	19
	45-54	15
	55-59	7
	60-64	8
	65-74	12
	75+	9

QC Working Status of Respondent:

	%
Working - Full time (30+ hrs)	35
- Part-time (9-29 hrs)	6
Unemployed	5
Not working - retired	28
- looking after house/children	13
- invalid/disabled	10
Student	3
Other	*

QD	Class	%
	A	*
	B	6
	C1	20
	C2	24
	D	25
	E	25

QE	Respondent is:	%
	Chief Income Earner	64
	Not Chief Income Earner	35

QF Which of the groups do you consider you belong to?

	%
WHITE	99
British	89
Any other white background	10
MIXED	*
White and Black Caribbean	-
White and Black African	-
White and Asian	*
Any other mixed background	-
ASIAN OR ASIAN BRITISH	*
Indian	*
Pakistani	-
Bangladeshi	-
Any other Asian background	-
BLACK OR BLACK BRITISH	*
Caribbean	-
African	-
Any other black background	*
CHINESE OR OTHER ETHNIC GROUP	-
Chinese	-
Any other background	-
Refused	*

QG Tenure:

	%
Owned outright by household	33
Being bought on mortgage	30
Rented from Local Authority	26
Rented from Housing Association	2
Rented from private landlord	6
Tied accommodation	*
Other	*

QH Children in household:

	%
Aged 0-4	15
Aged 5-8	11
Aged 9-11	11
Aged 12-17	21
None under 18	58

QI Elderly in household:

	%
Aged 60-74	24
Aged 75+	9
None aged 60+	66

QJ Do you, or does anybody else in your household, have any long-term illness, health problem, or disability, which limits your daily activities or the work you can do?

	%
Yes, myself	29
Yes, other household member	18
No	59
Refused	*

QK Can you understand, speak, read or write Welsh?.

	%
Understand spoken Welsh	5
Speak Welsh	2
Read Welsh	2
Write Welsh	2
None of the above	93

Sample Profile

Sample profile

	Number	Unweighted	Weighted
	<i>n</i>	%	%
Total	1,053		
Sex			
Male	505	48	48
Female	548	52	52
Age			
16 to 24	129	12	13
25 to 34	154	15	17
35 to 54	344	33	34
55 to 64	181	17	15
65+	245	23	21
Work status			
Working full time	335	32	35
Not working full time	718	68	65
Area			
Abertillery Town	214	20	24
Brynmawr Town	204	19	8
Ebbw Vale Town	217	21	34
Nantyglo & Blaina	207	20	13
Tredegar Town	211	20	21

Source: MORI

Statistical Reliability

It should be remembered that a sample, not the entire population responded to this survey. Therefore the figures obtained may not be exactly those if everyone had been interviewed (the “true” values). However, the variation between the sample results and the “true” values can be predicted from the knowledge of the size of the samples on which the results are based and the number of times that a particular answer is given. The confidence with which this prediction can be made is usually chosen to be 95% - that is, the chances are 95 in 100 that the “true” value will fall within a specified range.

The table below illustrates the predicted ranges for different sample sizes and percentage results at the “95% confidence interval”.

For example, with the total sample size of 1053 completed questionnaires, where 50% give a particular answer, the chances are 19 in 20 that the “true” value (which would have been obtained if the whole population had been interviewed) will fall within the range of +/- 3 percentage points from the sample result; in fact the actual result is proportionately more likely to be closer to the centre (50%) than the extremes of the range (47% or 53%).

Approximate sampling tolerances applicable to percentages at or near these levels			
Sample Size	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
400	3	5	5
500	3	4	4
800	2	3	4
1,000	2	3	3
1,053	2	3	3

Source: MORI

When the results are compared between separate sub-groups within a sample, different results may be obtained. The difference may be “real”, or it may occur by chance (because not everyone in the population has been interviewed). To test if the difference is a real one - i.e. if it is “statistically significant” - it is again necessary to know the total population, the size of the samples, the percentage giving a certain answer, and the degree of confidence chosen. Assuming “95% confidence interval”, the differences between the two sub-sample results must be greater than the values given in the table on the next page.

Differences required for significance at or near these levels			
Sample Size	10% or 90%	30% or 70%	50%
	±	±	±
250 vs 250	5	8	9
250 vs 500	5	7	8
500 vs 500	4	6	6
500 vs 1,000	3	5	5
1,000 vs 1,000	3	4	4

Source: MORI