

HEADLINE REPORT

BVPI General Household Survey Findings

March 2007

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Summary

Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with way the authority runs things?



35% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with the way the authority runs things. This compares to 27% in 2003 (CI = +/- 2%)

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way in which your complaint was (were) handled?



35% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with the way their complaints were handled. This compares to 22% in 2003 (CI = +/- 5%)

How satisfied or dissatisfied are you that Rossendale Borough Council has this land clear of litter and refuse?



54% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** that Rossendale BC has kept this land clear of litter and refuse. This compares to 40% in 2003 (CI = +/- 3%)

Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide: *The waste collection service overall.*



64% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with the waste collection service overall. This compares to 72% in 2003 (CI = +/- 2%)

Please indicate whether you are satisfied or dissatisfied with each of the following elements of the service which we provide: *The provision of local recycling facilities overall.*



68% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with the provision of local recycling facilities overall. This compares to 69.7% in 2003 (CI = +/- 2%)

Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following services provided or supported by Rossendale Borough Council: *Sports/ facilities and events*



53% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with the sports and leisure facilities provided by Rossendale BC. This compares to 52.7% in 2003 (CI = +/- 3%)

Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following services provided or supported by Rossendale Borough Council: *Museums and Galleries.*



41% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with museums and galleries provided by Rossendale BC. This compares to 40.8% in 2003 and 44% (CI = +/- 3%)

Please indicate how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with each of the following services provided or supported by Rossendale Borough Council: *Parks and open spaces.*



58% state they are **very** or **fairly satisfied** with the parks and open spaces provided by Rossendale BC. This compares to 58% in 2003 (CI = +/- 3%)

Introduction and background

The Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) general survey was conducted between October and December 2006. Like the previous two BVPI general surveys it looks at the perception local residents have of quality of life issues and the quality of service delivery by Rossendale Borough Council.

1411 responses were received for the survey and this report contains data weighted to be broadly representative of the Rossendale population. The data is officially submitted to the Department for Communities and Local Government and is weighted by a complex series of factors such as age, social class, ethnicity and gender.

The weighted data received by central government has been put into the statistical package SPSS for further analysis. This report therefore contains a thorough analysis of the findings, examining the findings by main groups: age, ethnicity and disability. It should be noted that some groups of respondents (the under 25's and BME) are small samples and have also been weighted heavily to make them more representative of the Rossendale population so their findings, whilst interesting, should be treated with caution or as a springboard for further investigation.

The analysis in this report does not also examine every sub-group identifiable in the survey but instead highlights the key messages from the BVPI general household survey.

Quality of life

The questionnaire began by examining the issues which respondents felt were important and what most need improving about the quality of life in their neighbourhood. The findings for this section are summarised in figure 1.

It can be seen that low crime and clean streets are the most important factors in making somewhere a good place to live, whilst road and pavement repairs and activities for teenagers are seen as the most important areas for improvement

Figure 1: % and number of respondents who identified factors as to ‘most important to make somewhere a good place to live’ and most need improving in my area’

	Most Important		Needs Improving	
	Number	Percent	Number	Percent
Access to nature	327	21.6	52	3.5
Activities for teenagers	296	19.5	679	44.8
Affordable decent housing	576	37.9	220	14.5
Clean streets	678	44.6	490	32.3
Community activities	103	6.8	173	11.4
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	111	7.3	285	18.8
Education provision	433	28.5	71	4.7
Facilities for young children	191	12.6	263	17.3
Health services	633	41.7	330	21.7
Job prospects	317	20.9	273	18.0
The level of crime	873	57.5	506	33.4
The level of pollution	110	7.3	89	5.9
The level of traffic congestion	254	16.7	452	29.8
Parks and open spaces	281	18.5	208	13.7
Public transport	292	19.3	242	15.9
Race relations	64	4.2	94	6.2
Road and pavement repairs	351	23.1	727	47.9
Shopping facilities	299	19.7	306	20.2
Sports and leisure facilities	158	10.4	216	14.2
Wage level & local cost of living	187	12.3	196	12.9
Other	19	1.3	37	2.5
None of these	3	0.2	0	0.0
Don't know	1	0.1	6	0.4
No response	146	9.6	119	9.1

When we examine the issues which most need improving in their local area by the type of respondent some interesting trends emerge:

- Affordable decent housing is a much more significant issue for the BME community
- Education provision is nearly 10 times more likely to be seen as needing improvement by the BME community than the white
- Health services are also seen as being much more in need of improvement by the BME community
- Traffic is a more significant problem for the white community
- The under 25's are less likely to feel activities for teenagers are in need of improvement
- The under 25's are more likely to feel job prospects, community activities and cultural facilities need improving

Figure 2: % and number of respondents who identified factors as to 'most important to make somewhere a good place to live' and most need improving in my area' by type of respondent.

	Under 25	26-40	41-60	Over 61	White (n=1437)	BME (n=40)	Disabled
Access to nature	0.0	5.1	2.7	3.3	4.8	3.5	4.0
Activities for teenagers	32.4	49.7	47.6	40.7	45.0	45.9	42.7
Affordable decent housing	25.5	10.1	15.9	11.9	13.9	34.3	14.3
Clean streets	28.8	27.2	33.4	35.6	32.1	39.9	33.3
Community activities	18.1	10.8	10.9	9.8	11.7	3.9	12.3
Cultural facilities (e.g. cinemas, museums)	33.2	21.7	18.5	11.2	18.6	23.6	10.6
Education provision	9.3	4.0	4.6	4.0	3.9	37.9	4.7
Facilities for young children	16.1	19.4	17.2	15.7	17.6	14.6	20.4
Health services	17.2	24.3	21.4	22.1	21.3	43.5	21.6
Job prospects	25.9	15.4	18.6	15.4	18.2	13.4	20.0
The level of crime	32.5	28.6	34.6	35.2	33.1	51.7	38.4
The level of pollution	6.8	5.5	5.9	5.5	5.8	1.8	6.7
The level of traffic congestion	16.0	29.5	32.5	31.5	30.2	14.2	29.5
Parks and open spaces	20.4	18.4	9.5	13.2	14.0	6.1	10.7
Public transport	11.1	18.2	17.2	15.5	16.3	6.0	16.6
Race relations	7.0	5.1	7.3	5.6	5.5	36.0	6.7
Road and pavement repairs	33.9	46.0	48.6	54.1	49.0	16.3	50.1
Shopping facilities	26.7	20.4	19.3	17.8	19.9	23.6	18.6
Sports and leisure facilities	9.9	25.2	12.4	8.9	14.2	10.4	6.4
Wage level & local cost of living	19.3	14.9	13.5	8.0	12.7	27.1	13.7

The respondents were asked to rate how satisfied they were with their local area as a place to live. As can be seen from figure 3 below, nearly 65% of respondents are at least fairly satisfied with their local area as a place to live.

Figure 3: Level of satisfaction with local area as a place to live

	Number	Percent
Very satisfied	142	9.9
Fairly satisfied	771	53.8
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	274	19.1
Fairly dissatisfied	195	13.6
Very dissatisfied	51	3.5
Total	1433	

When we look at respondent's satisfaction with their local area as a place to live by characteristic of Rossendale residents, we can see that the BME community (49.9%) is the least satisfied and the over 61's the most (70.1%)

Figure4: Level of satisfaction with local area as a place to live by type of respondent

	Percent satisfied
Under 25	54.2
26-40	62.2
41-60	64.1
Over 61	70.1
White	64.2
BME*	49.9
Disabled	59.8

* Note sample size small (40) and heavily weighted

Respondents were asked to state from a series of issues how much of a problem they felt specific issues were in their local area. The two biggest problems, cited by around two thirds of respondents, are parents not taking responsibility for their children and teenagers hanging around on streets. Rough sleepers and burnt out cars are not seen as a problem by many respondents locally (see figure 5 overleaf)

Figure5: % of respondents who feel issue is a big/fairly big problem in their area

	Big / fairly big problem
Parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children	67.1
People not treating other people with respect and consideration	50.4
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	18.5
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	64.6
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	51.7
People being attacked because of their skin, ethnic origin or religion	16.6
People using or dealing drugs	47.8
People sleeping rough on the streets or in other public places	40.4
People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces	6.1
Rubbish and litter lying around	54.2
Abandoned and burnt out cars	8.4

Taking these further and exploring differences between types of respondents in Rossendale:

- The under 25's and BME community see noisy neighbours or loud parties as more of a problem in their local area than the white community or those over 25.
- The BME community are particularly concerned about vandalism and drug dealing.
- The over 60's and the BME community see litter as a problem.
- The BME community are very concerned about rough sleeping. (Interestingly in the last rough sleepers count for Rossendale (December 2006) there were no rough sleepers identified.)

Figure 6: % of respondents who feel issue is a big/fairly big problem in their area by type of respondent

	Under 25*	26-40	41-60	Over 61	White	BME *	Disabled
Parents not taking responsibility for the behaviour of their children	57.4	68.7	67.4	68.0	67.5	67.2	70.4
People not treating other people with respect and consideration	52.1	55.2	50.3	44.2	50.7	53.7	52.1
Noisy neighbours or loud parties	35.8	16.3	18.1	13.7	17.5	63.1	20.2
Teenagers hanging around on the streets	68.4	64.0	68.5	56.3	64.0	92.1	66.3
Vandalism, graffiti and other deliberate damage to property or vehicles	44.2	50.4	53.5	52.2	50.6	83.5	55.8
People being attacked because of their skin, ethnic origin or religion	26.1	14.6	17.4	13.7	15.5	63.6	18.2
People using or dealing drugs	47.8	44.5	50.5	47.0	46.8	85.5	56.0
People sleeping rough on the streets or in other public places	7.7	6.5	5.1	6.9	5.7	56.0	8.5
People being drunk or rowdy in public spaces	50.7	42.1	41.6	32.6	40.0	71.6	44.7
Rubbish and litter lying around	51.2	46.7	54.7	61.5	53.1	88.1	59.7
Abandoned and burnt out cars	9.9	5.7	8.1	9.8	7.6	28.5	8.2

* Note sample size small (40) and heavily weighted

Cohesion

The survey went on to explore some perceptions that Rossendale residents have about community relations in their area. They were asked how much they agreed with the statement ‘this local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well.’ Around 40% of respondents agreed and a significant minority, 23.3%, disagreed. A number also felt that they did not know (19.7%)

Figure 7: Extent agree that this local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well

	Number	Percent
Definitely agree	53	3.5
Tend to agree	541	36.3
Tend to disagree	253	17.0
Definitely disagree	95	6.3
Don't know	294	19.7
Too few people in local area	114	7.7
All the same background	142	9.5
Total	1492	

When we examine Rossendale residents perception of community relations by type of respondent we see that there is a significantly more positive perception that their local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well by the under 25's (47% agree) and most strikingly the BME community (70.4%)

Figure 8: Extent agree that this local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well by type of respondent

	% at least tend to agree
Under 25	47.0
26-40	39.6
41-60	38.6
Over 61	39.5
White	38.6
BME	70.4
Disabled	37.0

When we examine change from the 2003 survey of the perception of Rossendale's residents that their local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well we find that there has been quite a significant decline from 46.4% who agreed in 2003 to 39.8% in 2006, a decline of 6.6% which is well outside of the confidence level of the survey (about +/-2.5%). However, we have yet to receive data which would allow us to understand whether this is a national trend or an issue in the wider region or an isolated result for the Borough.

Extent agree that this local neighbourhood is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well

Year	% Agree /Tend to agree
2003	46.4
2006	39.8

Waste Collection Services

The survey asked respondents to rate how satisfied they are with the waste collection services in Rossendale. A mixed picture emerges when we compare the findings to the 2003 survey. 54.1% are satisfied that Rossendale Borough Council has kept 'its land clear of litter and refuse'. This is a large and encouraging increase from 2003 (40%). However, fewer are satisfied with the bin provided for general household waste, the collection of bulky household waste and, surprisingly, the waste collection service overall. This may in part be due to the recent changes in the way bins are collected – the change over to an alternate fortnightly collection service - and new collection days and rounds. Satisfaction with how 'clean and tidy' the street is following the waste collection remains unchanged.

Figure 10: % very/fairly satisfied with waste collection overall

	2003	2006
Level of satisfaction that Rossendale Borough Council has kept this land clear of litter and refuse	40.0	54.1
The bin provided for your general household waste	87.3	74.2
How "clean and tidy" the street is following the waste collection	70.5	69.1
The collection of bulky household waste	40.5	34.8
The waste collection service overall	72.0	63.9

Overall, recycling sees satisfaction rates relatively unchanged (lower than 2003, but not significantly) with a decline in how 'clean and tidy' the street is following the collection of items for recycling (66.9% from 74.7%) and an increase in satisfaction with the service for the collection of items for recycling overall (rising from 64.7% in 2003 to 69.7%).

Figure 11: % fairly/very satisfied with household recycling

	2003	2006
The container provided for items of recycling	67.4	69.8
The place you have to leave your items for recycling awaiting collection	70.0	67.6
The reliability of the collection of items for recycling	71.7	67.9
How "clean and tidy" the street is following the collection of items for recycling	74.7	66.9
The service for the collection of items for recycling overall	64.7	69.7

Rossendale residents appear to have higher expectations of the individual aspects of recycling centres than three years ago. Satisfaction with locations of facilities have seen a decline of nearly 8% from 2003, items which can be deposited 7% and how clean and tidy the site by 7%. However, interestingly, satisfaction with the provision of local recycling facilities overall has risen from 63% in 2003 to 68% in 2006. Interestingly the Council has provided additional recycling sites since 2003 and many of these were put in place as a result of communities asking for additional local facilities. There has also been an increase in what can be recycled at the sites therefore we may wish to undertake further research into why these perceptions exist. It should also be noted that as the Council now collects 7 different types of recyclable material from the doorstep fewer people are actually using the recycling bring sites.

Figure 12: % very/fairly satisfied with recycling centres

	2003	2006
The location of the recycling facilities	70.9	62.8
The items you can deposit for recycling	72.3	65.1
How "clean and tidy" the site is	52.1	59.0
The provision of local recycling facilities overall	62.6	68.2

Satisfaction with other services /facilities

When respondents were asked how they rated services such as sports/leisure facilities and events and parks and open spaces, the picture is comparable to that found in 2003. It should be noted that whilst satisfaction with museum and galleries (40.8%) and Theatres/Concert halls (22.1%) is relatively low the Borough Council only maintains one of the several local museums and there are no theatres managed by the Council within the Borough.

Figure 13: % very/fairly satisfied with services

	2003	2006
Sports/leisure facilities and events	55.8	52.7
Libraries	N/A	71.7
Museum and galleries	38.5	40.8
Theatres/Concert halls	N/A	22.1
Parks and open spaces	58	58.1

The survey went on to explore the frequency of use of facilities. As figure 14 shows the most commonly used facilities (at least one a month) were parks and open spaces (56.1%), libraries (33.4%) and sports/leisure facilities and events (29.9%). Museum and galleries (6%) and theatres/ concert halls (2.4%) are not regularly used.

Figure 14: Frequency of use of facilities

	Sports/leisure facilities and events (1463)	Libraries (1476)	Museum and galleries	Theatres/ Concert halls (1457)	Parks and open spaces (1488)
Almost Every day	2.7	1.1	0.2	0.1	13.3
At least once a week	16.3	13.1	0.5	0.2	24.1
About once a month	10.9	19.2	5.3	2.1	18.7
Within the last six months	13.4	13.8	13.8	9.2	15.3
Within the last year	12.3	11.9	14.4	13.9	11.2
Longer ago	18.4	23.5	31.4	28.6	8.2
Never	21.8	14.9	28.8	35.8	6.5
Does not apply /DK	4.2	2.4	5.6	10.1	2.6
At least once a month	29.9	33.4	6	2.4	56.1

Perceived change in the quality of services over the past three years was next to be explored. For two services, local recycling facilities and doorstep collection of items for recycling over a third of respondents thought the services had improved (see figure 15). Museums/galleries and theatres /concert halls had the fewest respondents who saw an improvement.

Figure 15: % of respondents who feel services have got better over past 3 years

Service over last 3 years	% better	
	2003	2006
Keeping public land clear of litter and refuse	13.8	20.6
Collection of household waste	25.4	27.8
Local recycling facilities	37.6	34.5
Doorstep collection of items for recycling	45.4	35.1
Sports/leisure facilities	8.1	12.5
Libraries	N/A	9.4
Museums/galleries	3.2	3.1
Theatres /concert halls	N/A	2.1
Parks and open spaces	7.5	9.2

Figure 16: % satisfied with planning & housing

	% satisfied 2003	% satisfied 2006	% satisfied have used in last 12 months
Planning Services	22.0	20.1	35.8

Taking everything into account 35.3% of respondents, are satisfied with the way the authority runs things. This marks a considerable improvement from 2003 where it was 26.5%. Those actively dissatisfied has seen a dramatic decline from 44.9% to 29.5%, with those very dissatisfied halved. This marks a very positive ‘step change’ in the perception of council performance and goes against the national trend of a 2% decline in satisfaction with district council services overall across the country. What should also be noted is that the number of respondents who have moved from dissatisfied to ‘neutral’ has also increased significantly since 2003 – this is a significant change in perceptions and should show continued growth in satisfaction in future years.

Figure 17: Taking everything into account, level of satisfaction with the way the authority runs things.

	2006			2003
	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent	Percent
Very satisfied	30	2.1	2.1	1.4
Fairly satisfied	468	33.2	35.3	25.1
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	492	34.8	70.2	28.6
Fairly dissatisfied	304	21.6	91.7	30.6
Very dissatisfied	117	7.7		14.3

There is some variation in the overall satisfaction with the Council with the over 61's and the BME community being the most satisfied and the 26-40 year olds the least (see figure 18 below)

Figure 18: Taking everything into account, level of satisfaction with the way the authority runs things % at least satisfied by type of resident

	Percent satisfied
Under 25	33.6
26-40	30.4
41-60	33.2
Over 61	43.6
White	34.8
BME	52.6
Disabled	38.0

Figure 19 shows once again significantly higher satisfaction ratings, with three times as many respondents feeling that over the past three years the way the authority runs things has got better and 76% feeling things are at least the same compared to 50% in 2003.

Figure 19: Perception of the change in the way authority runs things over the last three years

	2003	2006 (n=1284)
Better	6.9	19.1
Stayed the same	43.4	56.9
Worse	49.6	24.1

Priorities for Rossendale

Rossendale Council asked respondents some optional questions which looked at the three priorities that should be a priority for Rossendale Borough Council- this is summarised in figure 20 below. The three priorities identified by the most respondents were; improving the way we collect bins and clean the streets, regenerating Rossendale and promoting the Borough as a place to live, work, visit and invest. Fewest respondents (17.8%) identified improving Council Tax collection and benefits services.

Figure 20: Top Three Priorities

	% saying it is a priority
Improving the way we collect bins and clean the streets	55.1
Improving leisure facilities in the Borough	42.3
Ensuring that you can contact the council quickly & that when you do you are dealt with quickly	43.7
Regenerating Rossendale	54.8
Improving Council Tax collection and benefits services	17.8
Promoting the Borough as a place to live, work, visit or invest	53.2
Other Priority	13.2

When we examine the top three priorities by type of respondent we see that differences do occur between different parts of the community:

- The under 25's and BME community are the most likely to cite improving the way we collect bins and clean the streets;
- Disabled respondents are the least likely to see leisure facilities as a priority;
- The over 60's want to contact the Council quickly;
- BME respondents do not feel promoting Rossendale to be important.

Figure 21: Top Three Priorities by type of respondent

	Under 25	26-40	41-60	Over 61	White	BME	Disabled
Improving the way we collect bins and clean the streets	64.0	52.1	56.0	52.1	55.2	63.3	55.1
Improving leisure facilities in the Borough	47.5	54.9	41.8	30.2	41.8	59.8	33.6
Ensuring that you can contact the council quickly & that when you do you are dealt with quickly	39.2	28.7	39.9	65.4	43.4	59.8	56.0
Regenerating Rossendale	49.3	64.5	62.6	51.5	59.1	42.0	51.1
Improving Council Tax collection and benefits services	41.0	13.4	13.7	18.9	17.9	22.3	21.5
Promoting the Borough as a place to live, work, visit or invest	53.8	53.0	55.5	52.0	54.7	25.2	52.4
Other Priority	7.6	16.0	17.5	6.6	13.3	15.0	11.3

Sports and leisure

Rossendale Borough Council also wanted to explore the use of sports and leisure facilities in the borough. As can be seen from figure 22 the most used facilities are parks and open spaces, with the most commonly used single site being Marl Pits Swimming Pool.

Figure 22: Current use of facilities

	% who use facilities
Bacup Leisure Hall	8.9
Marl Pits Swimming Pool	17.0
Haslingden Sports Centre	15.0
Haslingden Pool	10.9
Ski Rossendale	6.2
Whitworth Pool	7.9
Football Pitches	8.7
Bowls Greens	5.1
Parks and open spaces	45.2
Other Facilities	3.2

The most highly rated facility (see figure 23 below) is Haslingden Sports Centre, with 64% stating it to be at least good. Four of the facilities had more than 50% satisfaction rating. The facilities with the lowest satisfaction were Bacup Leisure Hall (35.7%) and football pitches (36.8%).

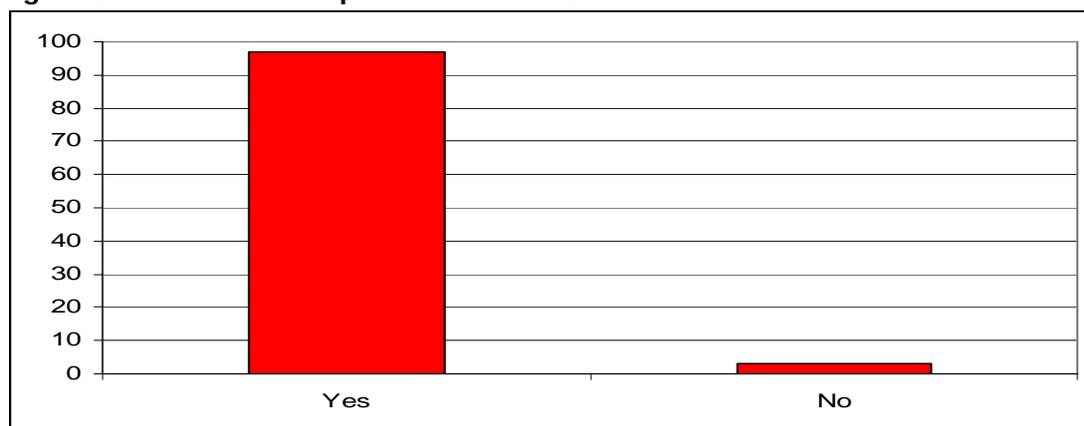
Figure 23: Opinion of facilities

	% feel at least good
Bacup Leisure Hall	35.7
Marl Pits Swimming Pool	58.7
Haslingden Sports Centre	63.8
Haslingden Pool	41.8
Ski Rossendale	59.2
Whitworth Pool	47.0
Football Pitches	36.8
Bowls Greens	39.7
Parks and open spaces	59.8
Other Facilities	29.7

Finance and credit unions

Following some previous research within the Valley the survey went on to explore some issues around financial inclusion – as part of this we asked questions about access to bank accounts, credit services and awareness of Credit Unions. As can be seen from figure 24 below, 96% of respondents have a bank account.

Figure 24: Percent of respondents with a Bank Account



Awareness of credit unions is fairly low with only 54.6% aware of them and 4.4% actually have a credit union account. This appears to be on par with the national average. Around a tenth of respondents have debts which worry them, but encouragingly only 3.3% have borrowed money from a doorstep money lender. A third of respondents have visited their local citizen’s advice bureau.

Figure 25: Percent of respondents agreeing with statement below regarding financial issues.

Credit Union Account	4.4
Know what a credit union is	54.6
Borrowed from doorstep money lender	3.3
Debts which worry you	11.9
Visited Local Citizen's advice Bureau	33.6

When we examine the financial issues explored in figure 26 by type of respondent we see some worrying differences. Only 65.4% of those who are unemployed have a bank account and 17.5% have borrowed from doorstep money lender. Those looking after their home, 14.6, and the under 25's, 9.4%, are also much more likely to borrow from a doorstep lender. BME respondents and those looking after home are the most likely users of a credit union. This information will go towards assisting the Council and its partners tackle issues around financial exclusion within the Borough.

Figure 26: Percent of respondents agreeing with statement below regarding financial issues by type of respondent

	Under 25	26-40	41-60	Over 61	White	BME	Disabled	Unemployed	Looking after home
Have a bank account	95.2	97.3	97.6	96.3	96.8	100	94.2	65.4	96.0
Credit Union Account	3.7	5.6	4.3	3.3	4.3	7.8	4.4	0.0	7.4
Borrowed from doorstep money lender	9.4	5.1	2.1	0.5	3.4	0.0	6.6	17.5	14.6
Debts which worry you	27.5	18.3	9.7	3.0	11.7	19.2	13.3	38.5	15.5

Communications

Respondents were then asked to consider the communications they receive from the Council. Figure 27 summarises how well respondents feel the Council communicates on various issues. Over 80% feel at least fairly well informed about how to pay bills to the Council and how and where to register to vote. Relatively few respondents feel well informed about whether the Council is delivering on its promises and what the Council is doing to tackle anti-social behaviour in the local area.

Figure 27: % of respondents who feel at least fairly well informed

	% at Least Fairly well informed
How to pay bills to the Council	84.1
How and where to register to vote	84.0
How you can get involved in local decision making	29.4
How to complain to the Council	40.9
What the Council spends its money on	39.2
What standard of service you should expect from the Council	37.8
Whether the Council is delivering on its promises	21.4
What the Council is doing to tackle anti-social behaviour in your local area	17.4
How well the Council is performing	24.6

As can be seen from figure 28 below, disabled respondents and the over 61's are on average the most informed, the under 25's the least.

Figure 28: % who feel at least fairly well informed by type of respondent

	Under 25	26-40	41-60	Over 61	White	BME	Disabled
How to pay bills to the Council	63.3	81.4	86.7	91.8	92.2	84.6	85.9
How and where to register to vote	54.5	76.9	89.4	96.3	83.4	97.9	89.4
How you can get involved in local decision making	17.5	23.8	32.4	36.4	22.1	28.1	33.4
How to complain to the Council	34.4	32.4	41.1	52.2	40.3	57.7	45.1
What the Council spends its money on	35.8	33.5	40.3	46.0	39.6	29.0	36.6
What standard of service you should expect from the Council	37.8	30.9	36.0	48.5	37.4	53.0	39.9
Whether the Council is delivering on its promises	16.2	20.5	20.8	26.2	21.1	34.2	23.0
What the Council is doing to tackle anti-social behaviour in your local area	18.9	14.1	14.3	26.0	17.1	37.1	22.3
How well the Council is performing	26.9	20.0	24.0	30.3	24.1	37.0	26.8

There has been a slight decline in the overall percent who agree that their Council keeps residents informed about the services and benefits it provides, from 36.2% in 2003 to 31.3% in 2006. Interestingly this is despite the council introducing its residents newspaper – Rossendale Alive – three times a year to every household.

Figure 29: % who agree they are well informed

	2003	2006
Overall, how well informed do you think your Council keeps residents about the services and benefits it provides	36.2	31.3

When we look at the percentage who agree that their Council keeps residents informed about the services and benefits it provides by type of respondent shown in figure 30, once again disabled respondents and the over 61's are the most likely to agree, with 26-40 year olds the least.

Figure 30: % who agree they are well informed by type of respondent

	% who agree
Under 25	29.7
26-40	26.9
41-60	30.1
Over 61	39.1
White	31.6
BME	35.0
Disabled	35.8

Figure 31 below shows that the local media is the main source used to find out about Rossendale Council, followed by information provided by the Council. Local Councillors are the least used source.

Figure 31: Main source used to find out about Rossendale Council

	Number	Percent
Local media (newspapers, television, radio)	564	37.8
Information provided by the Council (newspaper/leaflets etc)	376	25.2
Council website/internet	81	5.4
From local Councillor	15	1.0
Direct contact with the Council	78	5.2
Word of mouth (e.g. family or friends)	165	11.0
Other source	181	12.1
None	14	1.0
Don't know	19	1.3
total	1493	

Complaints

Just over a quarter (27%) of respondents suggested that they have contacted the authority in the last 12 months with a complaint. Interestingly in the twelve months to December 2006 only 170 complaints were recorded as received into the council.

Figure 32: Contacted the authority in the last 12 months with a complaint(s)

	Number	Percent
Yes	394	27.0
No	1067	73.0
Total	1462	

Figure 33 shows that on the whole, there is no real variation in the level of complaint by the personal characteristics of respondent.

Figure 33: Contacted the authority in the last 12 months with a complaint(s)

Under 25	21.8
26-40	24.2
41-60	29.7
Over 61	27.9
White	26.5
BME	27.3
Disabled	26.7

31.5% of those who made a complaint were satisfied with the outcome. This is a considerable increase from 22% in 2003. It should be noted however, that 60.1% were not satisfied.

Figure 34: Level of satisfaction with the way in which complaint(s) handled

	Number	Percent	Cumulative Percent
Very satisfied	45	11.5	11.5
Fairly satisfied	78	20.0	31.5
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	32	8.3	
Fairly dissatisfied	80	20.7	
Very dissatisfied	153	39.4	
Total	288		

Contacting the Council

The respondents were asked to consider how they have contact the Council over the past twelve months. The most frequently cited reason for contacting the Council was asking for advice or information (22.8%) or to report a problem or issue (19.1%).

Figure 34: Why contacted the Council

Why contacted council	Number	Percent
Reported a problem / issue	289	19.1
Asked for advice / info	346	22.8
Applied for a service	154	10.2
Don't Know	153	10.1
Other	117	7.7

Figure 36 shows that traditional methods, in particular the telephone, are far more popular ways to contact the Council than e-methods such as the internet and e-mail.

Figure 36: Method of contact with Council (of those who contacted the Council)

	Number	Percent
In person	241	25.8
By telephone	298	74.9
By e-mail	56	6.0
Via a website/internet	25	2.7
By letter	84	9.0
Other method	13	1.4
Total	933	

Around half of all respondents are satisfied with the customer care aspects of contacting the Council, with 59% satisfied with the information given.

Figure 37: Satisfaction with contact with the council

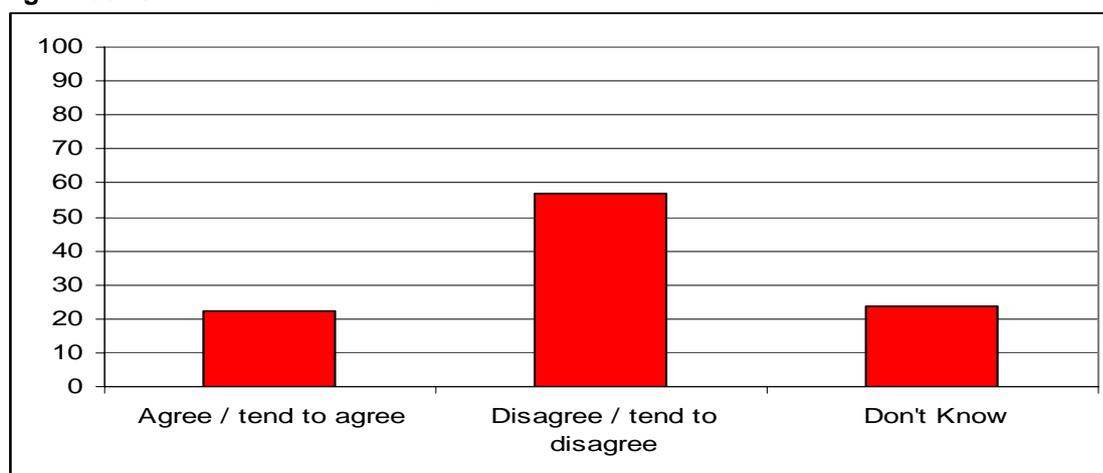
	% at least Fairly satisfied
How easy it was to find the right person to deal with	57.6
How helpful the staff were	55.9
The length of time it took to deal with the person you contacted	56.2
How competent the staff were	57.1
Any information your were given	59.0
The final outcome	49.4

It is disappointing to note that only 19% of respondents are satisfied with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by the Council and as Figure 38 shows, just over 20% feel that they can influence decisions made in their local area. This is despite the council introducing neighbourhood forums since 2003.

Figure 38: Satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by the Council

	% at least fairly satisfied
Satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by the Council	19.0

Figure 38: Can influence decisions in local area



As figure 39 shows, there are some differences in how involved Rossendale residents feel according to their personal circumstances. The 26-40 year olds and disabled residents are least satisfied with the opportunities to participate in local decision making and the under 25's are the least likely to feel they can influence decisions in their local area.

Figure 39: Satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by the Council and percent who feel they can influence decisions in local area by type of respondent

	Satisfaction with the opportunities for participation in local decision-making provided by the Council	Can influence decisions in local area
Under 25	19.7	19.9
26-40	16.2	22.6
41-60	19.4	22.0
Over 61	20.6	24.7

White	19.0	22.3
BME	23.5	25.4
Disabled	16.3	21.7

Depending on the issue, nearly 80% of the population would, to some extent, like to be involved in decision making.

Figure 40: Would like to become involved in decision-making

	%
Yes	23.3
No	15.0
Depends on issue	55.1
Don't Know	7.6

The Council has introduced a new approach to engaging local communities – and it hopes that this will change the way in which people influence services.

The role of the Council

The survey went on to ask respondents how much they agreed with various statements about Rossendale Council, summarised in figure 41 below.

Over half of the respondents feel that the Council is working to make the area cleaner and greener and is making the local area a better place to live and over 40% feel that Rossendale Council treats all types of people fairly and is working to make the area safer.

However, on a less positive note nearly half of the respondents feel the Council is remote and impersonal and only a quarter feel that Rossendale ‘provides good value for money’.

Figure 41: Percent of respondents who agree/disagree with statements

	A great deal	To some extent	Not very much	Not at all	Don't know	great deal / to some extent
is working to make the area cleaner and greener	10.2	49.6	23.9	10.7	5.5	59.8
is making the local area a better place to live	5.2	47.6	29.7	12.5	5.0	52.8
is remote and impersonal	10.2	38.7	19.7	12.0	19.4	48.9
treats all types of people fairly	8.6	37.9	11.0	10.4	32.2	46.4
is working to make the area safer	5.2	38.4	33.0	13.5	9.9	43.6
promotes the interests of local residents	3.2	35.0	31.3	13.8	16.7	38.2
acts on the concerns of local residents	3.6	33.4	30.8	15.3	16.9	37.0
is trustworthy	4.7	28.9	21.1	18.8	26.4	33.6
is efficient and well run	3.9	27.8	30.4	23.1	14.7	31.7
provides good value for money	3.5	21.4	31.3	30.5	13.4	24.8

Figure 42 shows how different types of respondents feel about the Council with their responses to the statements shown previously in figure 41.

Figure 42: Percent of respondents who agree/disagree with statements by type of respondent

	Under 25	26-40	41-60	Over 61	White	BME	Disabled
is working to make the area cleaner and greener	54.3	64.8	55.6	64.7	60.3	53.0	62.9
is making the local area a better place to live	58.5	56.5	47.8	56.2	53.5	35.0	53.4
is working to make the area safer	48.4	40.4	41.7	48.9	44.5	31.1	44.5
treats all types of people fairly	56.4	48.8	41.0	49.3	46.6	55.9	46.3
is remote and impersonal	40.3	47.5	50.5	52.2	49.4	31.0	50.6
acts on the concerns of local residents	37.8	35.6	34.9	43.4	37.2	51.2	40.9
promotes the interests of local residents	41.4	37.3	37.1	41.6	38.4	46.2	38.7
is trustworthy	33.4	30.3	29.3	45.8	34.2	52.0	37.2
is efficient and well run	41.8	26.7	28.3	37.9	32.2	27.2	36.0
provides good value for money	26.8	25.4	19.9	31.2	25.3	23.3	29.7

Respondent Profile

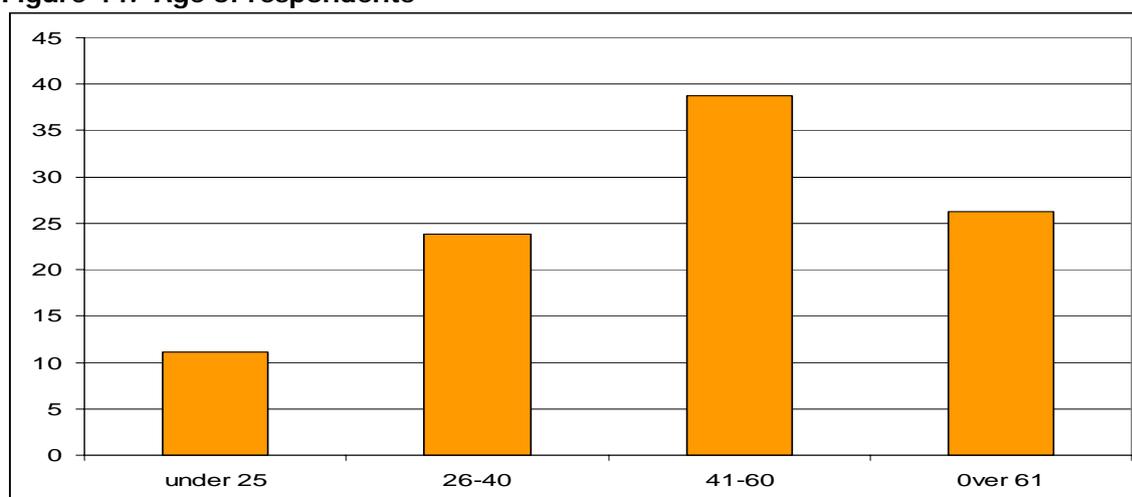
When the data was sent to the Audit Commission for validation they weighted the data to make it more representative of Rossendale's population. This analysis throughout the report uses this weighted data. (The Office of National Statistics estimates for 2004 suggest Rossendale has a ratio of 48.7% male residents and 51.3 female residents.)

Figure 43: Gender

	Number	%
Male	673	44.8
Female	828	55.2

As figure 44 below shows, the majority of respondents (just under 40%) are aged between 41 and 60 years of age.

Figure 44: Age of respondents



This table indicates the 2005 mid year population estimates from the ONS

Age of population (2005)						
	All people	0-14	15-24	25-44	45-64	65+
Rossendale	66,000	19.7	12.1	27.6	26.4	14.2

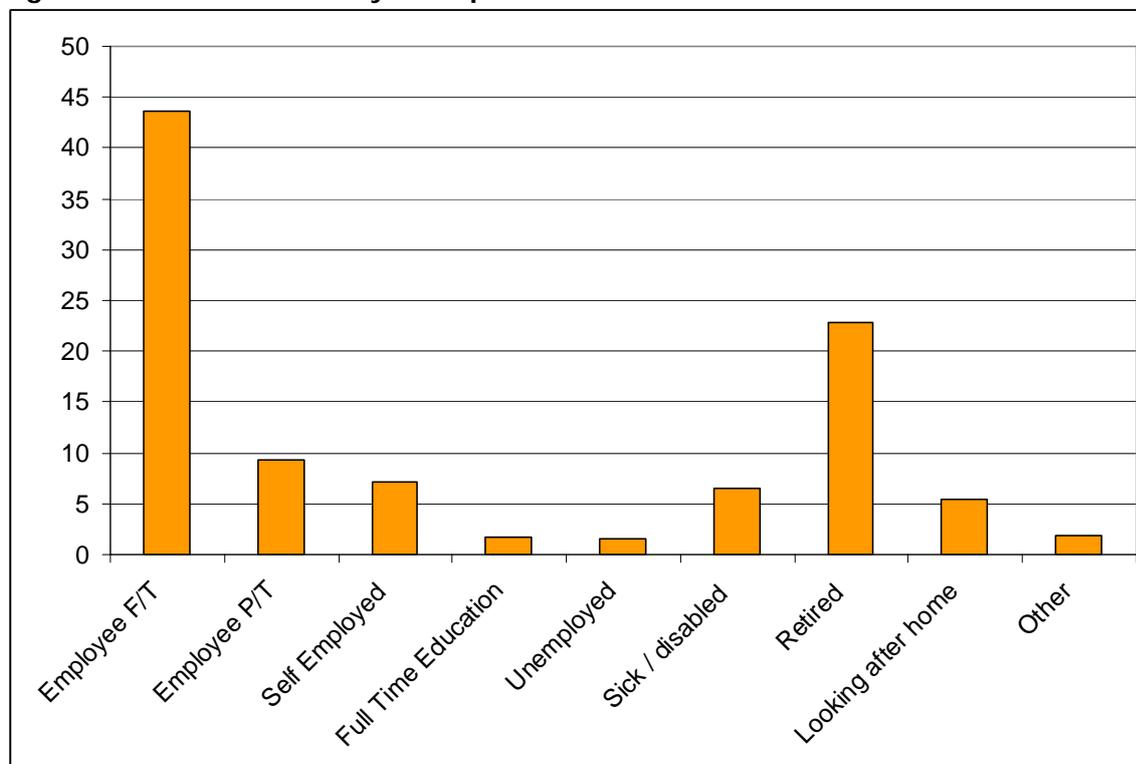
The majority of respondents are owner occupiers with just over 80% owning their property outright or buying their property. A further 14% are in social rented accommodation and just under 5% are privately renting. The Rossendale Profile shows 72% of residents are owner occupiers and 18% are in socially rented accommodation.

Figure 46: Tenure

	Number	Valid Percent
Owned outright	481	32.6
Buying on a mortgage	712	48.2
Rent from Council	117	7.9
Rent from Housing Association/Trust	86	5.8
Rented from private landlord	70	4.7
Other	12	0.8

As figure 46 shows around 60% of respondents are economically active and just over a fifth are retired. The Rossendale Profile indicates that 79.6% of those of working age within the population are economically active.

Figure 46: Economic Activity of respondents



Just over a quarter of respondents have a long standing illness, disability or infirmity. (Self defined within the survey).

Figure 47: Long-standing illness, disability or infirmity

	Number	Valid Percent
Yes	390	26.8
No	1064	73.2

The vast majority of respondents are white in ethnic origin, with Bangladeshi (1.2%) being the second largest group. The Rossendale Profile shows that 3.5% of the population is non white.

Figure 48: Group belong to

	Percent
White:British	95.8
White: Irish	1.0
Other White background	0.5
Mixed: White & Asian	0.2
Other Mixed background	0.1
Black or Black British African	0.1
Asian: Indian	0.2
Asian: Pakistani	0.9
Asian: Bangladeshi	1.2
Asian: Other	0.1

A third of respondents have children under 18 living with them and most have access to a car. A quarter showed interest in joining the Citizens' Panel.

Figure 49: Other characteristics

	Dependant children under 18yrs living in household	Own a car	Interested in Feedb@ck Citizens' Panel
Yes	30.2	81.1	25.2
No	68.8	18.9	

Policy implications and key issues

- The BME community identifies significantly different issues for improvement in their local neighbourhood. As a result, there is the need to consider these differences in any activity or initiative that is tasked with improving the local area
- BME and younger respondents are less satisfied with Rossendale as a place to live. Without further investigation it is difficult to understand exactly why this is the case. If Rossendale want to pursue this understanding further it will be important to speak to these groups separately and involve them directly in trying to improve satisfaction with the area
- Teenagers and facilities for them appear to be a key issue. Interestingly, this is considered to be more of a problem by non-teenagers, although a third of the under 25 age group state this to be a problem – it is also important to note that facilities for teenagers are provided in the main by the County Council not the Borough Council
- Seemingly the two largest social problems facing the Borough are parents not taking responsibility for their children and teenagers loitering on streets
- Big differences in perception of how well people get on exists between the BME and white community. This is by no means a unique finding in Rossendale alone but never the less something which needs careful consideration and thought as to why this might be the case.
- Overall, there has been a perceived decline in community relations over the 3 year period. However, in the recent citizens panel survey carried out - Living and Working in East Lancashire - comparing the 2004 responses to the 2006 responses there appears to be an opposite trend, whereby the % agreeing with the statement 'people from different backgrounds get on well' has risen from 2004 to 2006 and the proportion disagreeing has fallen.

- There are good levels of satisfaction with waste and recycling services
- Museum and galleries and theatres/concert halls have relatively low levels of satisfaction. How much this is driven by the limited number of these in Rossendale and the relatively short trip to Manchester is not known. However, if this is the case, it provides an opportunity to consider how we further leisure and interest in the area and reduce spillage into the Manchester region
- There is a significant increase in the overall satisfaction with the Council
- Three clear priorities have been identified by residents of Rossendale. These are improving the way we collect bins and clean the streets, regenerating Rossendale and promoting the Borough as a place to live, work, visit or invest. It is important that these factors are taken forward and residents are told that what they have said is being considered. To improve satisfaction levels further, listening to your audience and taking action of a result of that is extremely powerful and something that the recent White Paper actively promotes.
- Financial issues are strongly identified for the under 25's and unemployed. The link to house prices will most likely have a role to play in this and the work being undertaken in the Bacup/Stacksteads area (linked to the Elevate project), alongside the Council's affordable housing planning policy can be seen as a positive step to help provide more affordable housing.
- Residents do not feel informed about Council services and benefits that it provides. They also do not feel informed as to whether the Council is delivering on its promises and what the Council is doing to tackle anti social behaviour. Again, this is an opportunity that perhaps cannot be missed. Rossendale are doing sterling work across the Borough and the message appears not to be getting across to residents. The communication strategy needs to be examined to understand why this is the case.

- Whilst significant improvements have been made, there is still some way to go in resolving complaints. The Rossendale Winter Survey goes into much more detail regarding the process of contacting your Council and satisfaction with specific aspects of the service that Rossendale provide. This survey provides clearer guidance as to how the Council can improve their complaints procedure even further
- E-methods of contact with the Council are still not widely being used. Whether this is down to individual preference, lack of understanding/awareness that these mediums are available or limited access to electronic communication isn't known. Further investigation into this area will yield more detail behind these headline findings
- Local media is the main source in finding out about what is happening at the Council. As a result, residents are not getting the complete picture in terms of what Rossendale Borough Council is doing and achieving and hence this reflects in part some why some of these key issues have been raised
- Very few feel that they can influence decisions made in their local area, even though a high percentage would like to be involved in decision making (depending on the issues). This is a finding that cannot be ignored – a willing and interested community that want to take part in helping decide how the future of the area unfolds. Rossendale need to think about how they can best utilise this resource to ensure the process and outputs are effective
- Rossendale Borough Council still needs to 'sell' some aspects of itself to the local population particularly around efficiency and value for money. This cannot be underestimated, as local residents simply are not getting the message. Again, this may be down to communication or the fact that Rossendale just don't shout loud enough!