

Agenda Item: Annual Resident’s Survey 2026

Meeting Date: Monday, 1 June 2026

Contact Officer: Deputy Town Clerk
(Administrative Support Assistant – Communities & Engagement)

The purpose of this report is to present Members with the results of the annual residents’ satisfaction survey, conducted between February and May, regarding services overseen by this Committee.

Background

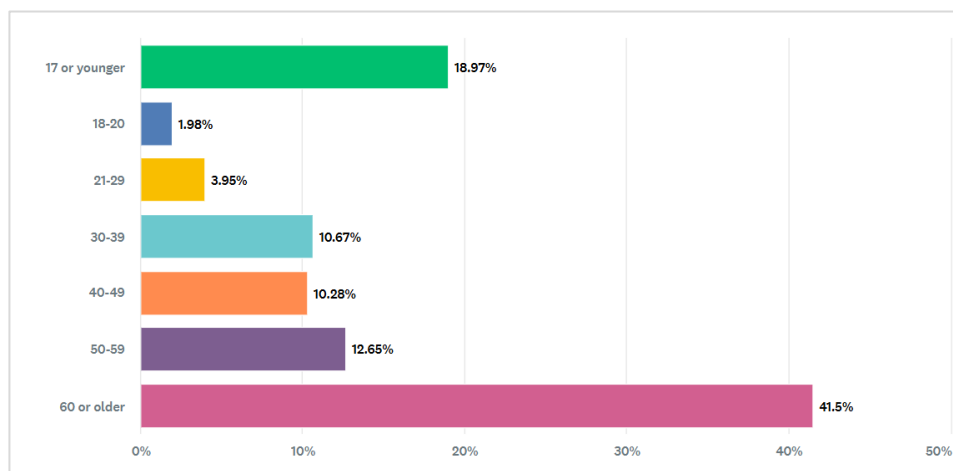
The survey was sent to every household in the post and was promoted online via social media and in the local secondary schools; 272 responses were received in total.

While the number of responses is a very small percentage of the population, the results are still an important resource in advising the Council in which areas projects, communications, and future spending should be considered and what matters to residents.

Current Situation

Responses from younger residents were noticeably lower this year, with participation from school-aged respondents (18 and under) decreasing from around 186 responses in 2024 and 122 responses in 2025 to 48 responses in 2026.

Respondent Age Demographics



Survey Scores Overall

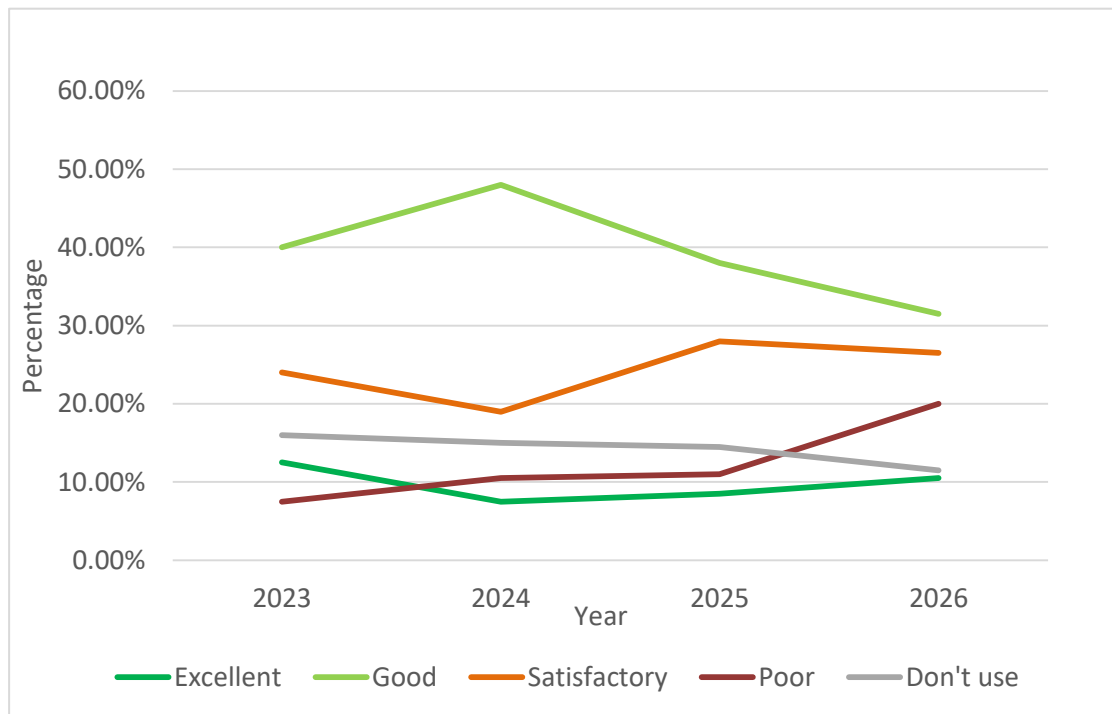
The following table shows how the services scored overall in the survey (with percentages rounded).

As a comparison, the figures/percentages from the previous three years' surveys are included.

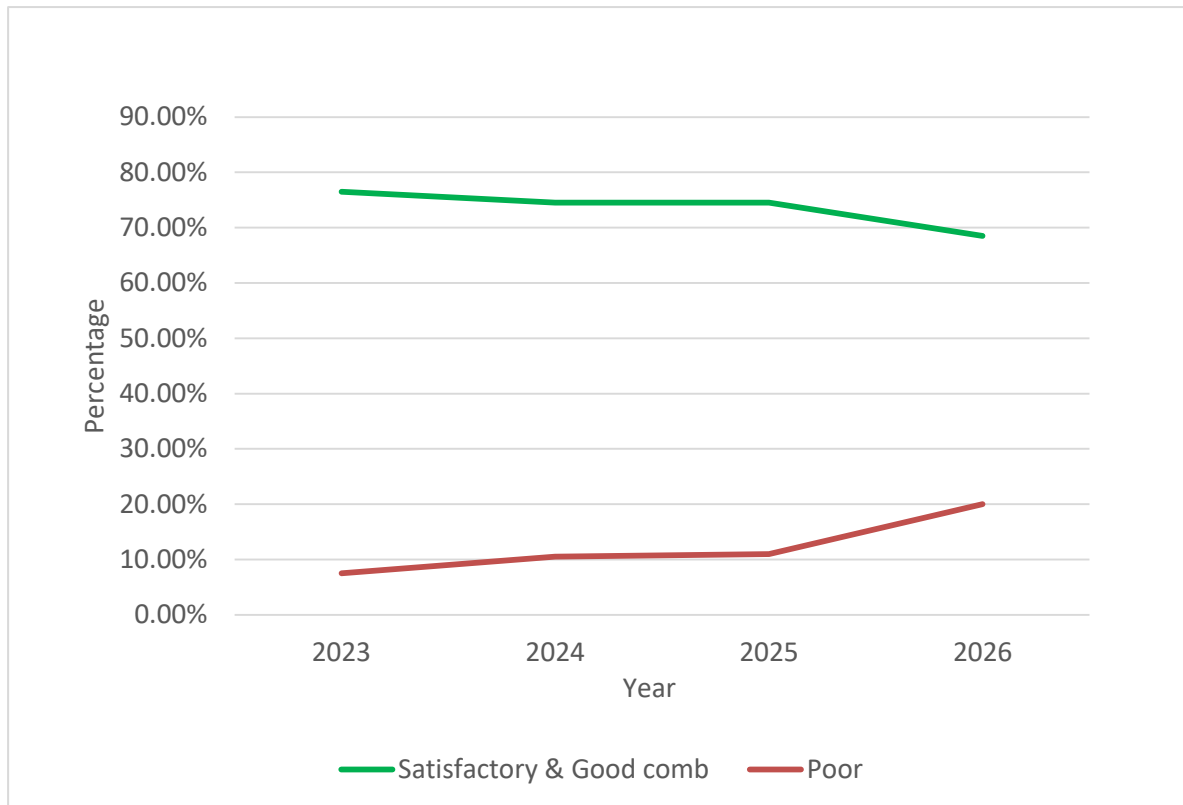
Service		Excellent	Good	Satisfactory	% comb	Poor	Don't use	Resp
Recreation Grounds/Play Areas/ Open Spaces	2026	10.5% (28)	31.5% (86)	26.5% (72)	68.50%	20% (54)	11.5% (31)	271
	2025	8.5% (29)	38% (131)	28% (96)	74.50%	11% (37)	14.5% (49)	342
	2024	7.5% (33)	48% (207)	19% (82)	74.50%	10.5% (45)	15% (65)	432
	2023	12.5% (27)	40% (86)	24% (52)	76.50%	7.5% (16)	16% (34)	215
The Leys Splash & Adventure Parks	2026	11% (30)	23.5% (62)	18.5% (66)	53%	5% (14)	41.5% (66)	270
	2025	6.5% (22)	23.5% (81)	18% (62)	48.00%	16.5% (56)	35.5% (121)	342
	2024	11% (48)	27% (117)	20% (87)	58.00%	11.0% (48)	31% (134)	434
	2023	11% (23)	31% (66)	11% (24)	53.00%	7.0% (15)	40% (86)	214

The following graphs track performance over the previous four years for these services in the previous three years.

Recreation Grounds/Play Areas/Open Spaces (all)



Recreation Grounds/Play Areas/Open Spaces (satisfactory & above vs poor)



Comments

In addition to the results above, the survey also welcomes specific comments, all of which relating to this Committee can be seen below:

- “I am a young resident of Witney and am writing on behalf of myself and my friends about something that matters to us and the future of Witney. Right now, there are very few affordable places where young people can safely meet, spend time and feel welcome. Most cafes and shops in town are aimed at adults or are too expensive for us to use. Without safe welcoming hangouts, we often end up with nowhere to go after school or on the weekends. We’re not asking for handouts. We’re asking for Witney to be a town where young people can belong.”
- “Please provide more bins to dispose of waste when in public spaces”
- “The parks are good, but I think more benches in them and picnic tables would satisfy lots of people and having lots of swings in playgrounds increases the likelihood of young people over 12 to go to the park”
- “it would be nice if you could keep the leys and lake free of bikes, scooters & dogs”
- “Improvement of sporting areas across Witney, allowing a variety of people to stay active needed.”

- “Lots of litter around but still beautiful sites to be in.”
- “As a teenager, I wish there were more places to just sit, in a field for example and just relax with some friends”
- “More community events would be good, it helps create a sense of community. The splash park should be switched on when the weather is good earlier in the year. Some of the smaller parks could do with more equipment (have a drive round somewhere like ambroseden and see all the little parks) During Covid when market square was full of tables and chairs and the pubs and restaurants were allowed outside seating it was so lovely, during the summer it felt like being abroad and there was a buzzing little atmosphere. Witney has such a great community that can be enhanced by promoting and providing the opportunity to come together. Every year Bicester does a ‘big lunch’ it’s well advertised and everyone is encouraged to bring a picnic together, this could be done on a summer afternoon at the leys, perhaps get Witney radio to provide music and make it an annual event?”
- “please could we have more benches in the playpark”
- “Recreation provision in the town is shocking for a community of this size.”
- “Raleigh Crescent play area still dreadful. Swings too high to get on. Slide thing about only thing a 4-6 yr old can use.”
- “The Leys Splash park was very poor over summer 2025 , (We took our Grandson on several occasions).- Equipment out of action, or removed and not replaced. You need to close -off or, better, open up for a new play activity , the hedged space in the corner of the Leys playground .
- The area adjacent to the gate and crazy golf. The children congregate there, and can’t be seen. On one occasion we discovered that children had found a full beer bottle.- Suffice to say, it wasn’t filled with beer....”
- “The Leys Play area needs a lot of tlc. New splash area is nice but the rest is a state”
- “Can something be done about the dogs running loose on the Leys? When I was young, there were signs saying 'no cycling' & 'dogs must be kept on a lead', but these have all gone now & it is a free-for-all. Not to mention the electric Deliveroo bikes bombing across there in the dark between Sainsbury's & McDonald's. It would be nice to sit and watch a game of cricket, on a peaceful summer's afternoon, again, without these menaces.”
- “Additional equipment for small children in Unterhaching Park”
- “Parks: Please consider providing a dedicated dog park and make parks with sports pitches, eg King George’s Field, dog-free parks. Sadly dog owners cannot be trusted to clean up after their animals and it is unsafe for children and adults alike. Thank you.”

- “I've noticed there's a lot of rubbish around especially when walking down past The Leys past that Gym (can't remember the name) seem to be cups from McDonalds etc. Thanks to voluntary litter pickers who recently picked up litter on Burford Rd.”
- “I rated Burwell Hall because of the general mess and litter in the car park which often blows on to the field. The litter mainly originates from the adjacent shops, and no one appears to want to take any responsibility for it. It has become an ongoing health hazard as well as being an eyesore. It must be very off-putting for anyone using the hall or fields”
- “Sports facilities need better care and maintenance. The Leys should be protected when events are held there so that the park is not damaged for months afterwards.”
- While the Splash park is good the Adventure okay needs some attention at the Leys, I'm concerned about the muddy areas at the Leys entrances can something g be done please”
- “This season, our pitch capacity at The Leys was reduced by 50% for four months due to damage caused by Witney Feast. This situation was entirely foreseeable and avoidable.”
- “More money invested in the sports facilities locally. Football changing rooms and social area for local grass roots football players. I think Tower Hill and Ducklington have a clubhouse maybe something for Vikings. Maybe develop a current location like Burwell Hall into a club house? Dual purpose! Not just football but our local athletic club. Witney Roadrunners is one of the best clubs in the county. Their youth athletes have never had a home and never even had a track to train on. It's the only club that doesn't have a track in the county. With all the developments around I think priorities should be school, shops, sports facilities etc.”

Analysis

Play Areas

Comments highlighted concerns about litter, maintenance, muddy access points, damaged grounds following events, and insufficient seating and bins. There were also repeated requests for more inclusive and age-appropriate play equipment, particularly for teenagers and younger children, alongside calls for safer and more welcoming social spaces for young people.

The Leys Splash Park & Adventure Play Area

The upgraded Splash Park had been positively received by some residents, with recognition that the new facilities are an improvement. However, concerns remain about the wider Adventure Play Area, with comments describing sections as tired, poorly maintained, and in need of investment. Residents also raised issues relating to muddy entrances, inaccessible or unused spaces within the park, damaged or removed equipment, and anti-social behaviour including cycling, loose dogs, and littering.

Facilities

Residents raised concerns regarding pitch maintenance and reduced pitch availability due to event damage. Suggestions include improved changing facilities and the development of multi-purpose sports and community spaces.

Community Use

Residents expressed concerns about littering and waste management particularly around The Leys and Burwell Hall, with called for additional bins and stronger enforcement around dog control and anti-social behaviour.

Corporate Strategy

The Council's Strategic Plan 2025–29 sets out the Council's long-term priorities and direction, supporting its mission to 'make Witney a great place to live, work and visit.' This report contributes to the delivery of the following strategic pillar of the plan:

2. An Engaged & Supported Community

Impact Assessments

The Town Council has a duty to consider the effects of its decisions, functions and activities on equality, biodiversity, and crime & disorder. Consideration should also be given to effects on the environment, given the Council's Climate Emergency declaration in 2019.

- a) Equality - The residents' survey helps identify service inequalities and amplify underrepresented voices, supporting fairer, more inclusive decision-making. It may also highlight items which need addressing under the Equality Act 2010.
- b) Biodiversity - The Council must ensure any issues are dealt with in line with biodiversity legislation and its own policy.
- c) Crime & Disorder - The survey provides the ability to highlight concerns about safety and anti-social behaviour. The survey can inform targeted responses, resource allocation, and partnership working with police and community safety teams. It may help identify hotspots, vulnerable groups, and areas needing intervention such as the cemeteries.
- d) Environment & Climate Emergency – The survey supports the Council's climate emergency commitments by ensuring resident feedback can help shape relevant policies and actions.

Risk

In decision making Councillors should give consideration to any risks to the Council and any action it can take to limit or negate its liability.

There is a reputational risk if the Council does not address comments received in its satisfaction survey as it will be seen as not listening to residents.

The Council's committees will have competing demands on the overall Council budget, so any additional project funding has to be balanced and proportionate. Additions should be in line with Councils objectives and adopted policies/strategies.

Social Value

Social value is the positive change the Council creates in the local community within which it operates.

Listening to residents' feedback on Council services delivers significant social value by showing empowerment, inclusion, trust, and community wellbeing; It affirms that their opinions matter and helps build a sense of respect and transparency. This is especially important for the Council, where inclusive decision-making ensures diverse needs are reflected in service design and delivery.

Internally, it supports continuous improvement across the Council's services and helps identify future objectives thereby demonstrating meaningful change.

Financial implications

- There are no new implications from the contents of this report at this point. The Committee may like to consider further projects based on the feedback or increasing/creating budgets for any item.

Recommendations

Members are invited to note the report and consider the following:

1. What action is required from the results of the survey for services under the remit of this Committee.