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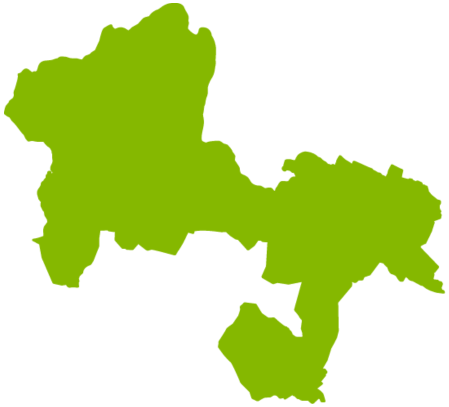
Royal Borough of Windsor & Maidenhead

2022 RBWM Residents Survey

Headline Results



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Introduction

Our 2022 RBWM Residents Survey was carried out in July and August 2022.

Lake Market Research, working on behalf of RBWM contacted 1740 residents including:

- 1626 by telephone
- 114 face to face in the street

Residents were randomly selected and quotas set to ensure the profile of respondents was representative of the borough.

The survey focused on residents' perception of:

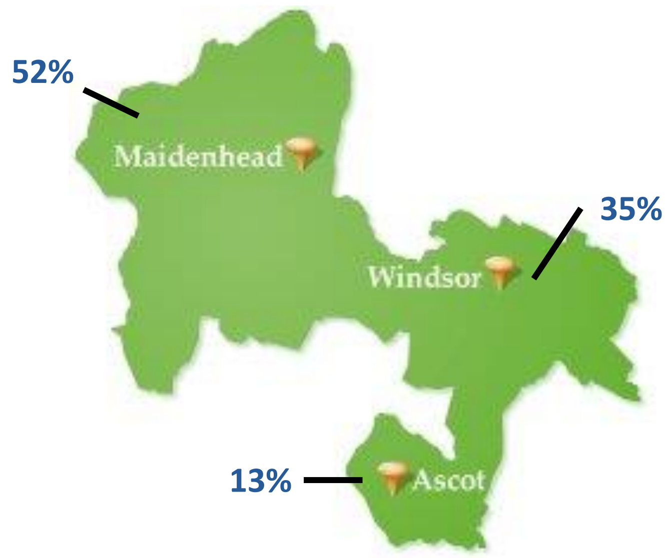
- The Council
- The Community & Local Area – including strengths and challenges
- The Individual - including household concerns & finances, health & wellbeing

We will use the Survey's insights extensively to support our work, including but not limited to:

1. Refreshing our Corporate Plan
2. Developing key evidence bases for council planning and decision making
3. Updating our Service Plans

Profile of residents surveyed

Representative against the following quotas



Age:

- 22% aged 18-34
- 39% aged 35-54
- 27% aged 55-74
- 12% aged 75 & over

Home ownership:

- 68% home owner / buying with mortgage
- 13% rent from council, housing association or trust
- 16% rent from private landlord

Working status:

- 64% working
- 9% not working
- 26% retired

Ethnicity:

- 72% White
- 11% White Other
- 3% Black / Black British
- 10% Asian / Asian British
- 2% Mixed

Gender:

- 50% male
- 50% female

Activities limited due to health condition or illness:

- 15% yes
- 84% no

A Council trusted to deliver its promises

Residents' perceptions of the council are high, and are above the Local Government Association national benchmarks on trust, satisfaction with the council and value for money.

70%

Trust in the Council

70% of respondents said they had a fair amount or a great deal of trust in the RBWM, this was considerably higher than the LGA benchmark of 58% and slightly higher than the 2018 RBWM survey.

66%

Satisfaction with the Council

66% of those surveyed were very or fairly satisfied with the way the RBWM runs things. This is higher than the LGA benchmark of 63% but shows a decrease from the 74% expressing satisfaction in 2018.

52%

Value for Money

Just over half agree that the council provides value for Money (52%). This is higher than the LGA benchmark of 45%, but lower than the 2018 result of 63%.

The LGA benchmark sees fluctuation in these metrics over time, with an increase in rates at the height of the pandemic, and then fall.

Those who live in Maidenhead, not in work and those with a disability showed lower satisfaction across all three metrics.

Communicating and accessing services

Most residents happy to use our online services

Online services

71% of respondents indicated they would or already access transactional services online.

17% indicated they would not.

Why not? The most common reasons were:

- a preference for alternative means of contact, 21%
- not using the council's online services before, 19%
- concern whether a response would be received online, 16%

Those less likely to use online services include:

- Women
- those over 75,
- those not working
- those with a disability
- social renters.

Receiving communications

Residents top choices for receiving communications about council services and local issues were:

- **email newsletters, 30%**
- **the council website, 24%**
- **printed information, 19%**

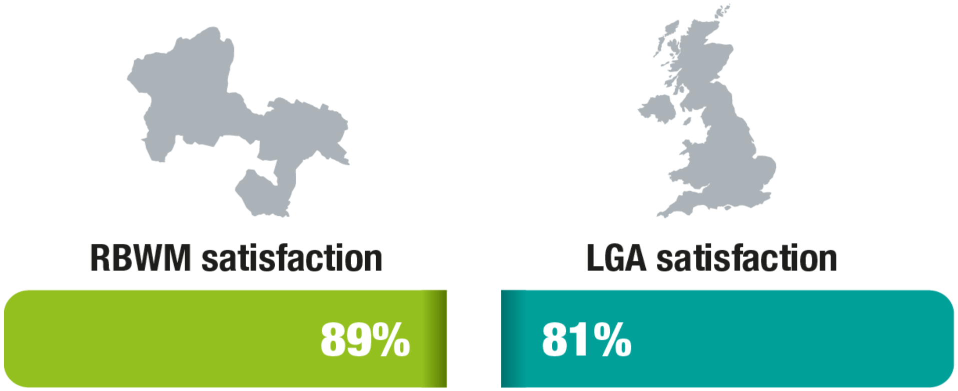
The council's social media, and speaking to council staff were the next popular options at 7% each.

Printed information was a higher priority for residents over 55, those with a disability and those finding it hard financially.

Satisfaction with Local Area as a place to live

Most residents satisfied with the local area

The vast majority of our residents (89%) are satisfied with the area as a place to live. Only 6% of residents are dissatisfied. This is above the LGA benchmark.



Satisfaction is high across all groups, but is notably lower amongst

- residents living in Maidenhead
- female residents
- residents aged 75 & over
- residents whose activities are limited due to a health condition (henceforth, those with a disability)
- residents renting from the council, housing association or trust

These same groups also tend to score less positively across other questions around satisfaction.

What makes the area a good place to live

The natural environment is key to RBWM Residents

When asked what makes the area a good place to live, the borough's green and open spaces were the top two responses:

- **the quality of parks & open spaces (45%)**
- **access to nature / the countryside (34%)**

Almost **two thirds (66%)** of our residents are **accessing green spaces** at least once a week.

The **vast majority (94%)** consider it **easy to access** quality green spaces in the Borough; 62% find it very easy.

Private renters,18-34s and disabled residents are **least likely** to say it is very easy to access green spaces.

Concerns about mobility, a lack of car parking facilities and not being able to visit without a car were cited as the key barriers.

More than four in five residents (84%) said that tackling climate change should be a priority for the council.

What needs improving?

Transport and waste are top areas of improvement for residents

The top five things that residents would like to see improved in their local area are focused on transport, waste and high streets.

28% **Road maintenance (28%)**

19% **Rubbish and refuse collection (19%)**

14% **Town centres/ High Streets / Shopping facilities (14%)**

14% **Parking (14%)**

12% **Traffic and congestion (12%)**

Strength of Community

RBWM Residents have a strong sense of community

Just under three quarters of respondents (72%) agree people pull together to improve their local area.

This was higher than comparable national results of 65%[1].

- 23% of respondents said that community support and helping each other was what makes the area a good place to live (the 3rd highest response).
- **64% have helped a friend or neighbour over the past year.** Helping neighbours and friends is the most common way for people to engage with their community.
- **Almost three quarters (72%) agree that there are opportunities to get involved with community activities**. And just over a third (36%) of respondents claim they take part in local community groups, activities or events at least once a month.
- Engagement in community activities is lower amongst residents aged 75 & over, residents with a disability, and residents who rent from the council, housing association or trust. More than half of these groups do not engage in any community activities.

[1] Community Life Survey 2020/21 - GOV.UK (www.gov.uk)

Feelings of Safety – Women's Safety

Residents feel safe but gender matters

- **97% of Residents feel safe** in their local area in the day, **82% after dark**. These are **higher** than the LGA benchmarks of 95% and 76% respectively.

- However, **women feel less safe than men** both in the day and at night. Whilst similar proportions feel "**safe**" in the day, only 64% of women feel "**very safe"** in the day, compared to 70% of men.

This gender gap in feeling safe is even more pronounced after dark:

75% of Women feel safe in their local area at night

This is significantly lower for those 75+ & Social Renters

89% of Men feel safe in their local area at night

This is stable across groups, with no group <87%

Concern about anti-social behaviour

ASB is not the primary concern for most residents

Just over a quarter (27%) of residents indicated they are concerned about anti-social behaviour in their local area; 40% are not concerned.

- For those who are concerned, their top concerns were around groups of young people and drug taking or dealing.
- 18% of residents felt that low crime and safety makes the local area a good place to live. This is twice the number (9%) who felt that crime and safety is something that needs improving.
- A lower proportion of under 35s and over 75's indicated they were concerned compared to other age groups. The proportion 'concerned' is comparably higher amongst residents of Windsor, Ascot and the south.

Finances and the Cost of Living

Cost of living a key concern for residents

The cost of living is the biggest concern for residents over the next 1-3 years.

Over half of respondents (53%) named it as their top worry, and over two thirds (70%) of 18-34s.

- Rates of concern were also very high among private renters (74%), social renters (70%), and those who already finding things difficult (95%).
- **Over two thirds say their household is living comfortably financially or doing all right**. Just under a third are just about getting by or finding it difficult. Of these 6% are finding things quite or very difficult. 25% are just getting by.
- There is wide variation across groups. 48% of younger residents (18-34) are just about getting by or finding it difficult, compared to only 15% of over 75s.
- Those who are not working, have a disability, of Black / Asian / Mixed ethnicity and renting socially or privately are also more likely to be just about getting by or finding it difficult.

Loneliness and health

Most residents feel healthy and supported, but loneliness is more common among certain groups.

72%

Just under three quarters (72%) claim they never or hardly ever feel lonely.

12%

12% indicated they feel lonely always, often or some of the time Over a quarter (26%) of those with a disability felt lonely always, often or some of the time, one in five (20%) of those who are not working, and 15% of over 75s.

82%

82% consider their health to be good or very good in general, with rates declining with age, as might be expected. Those who are not working, or who are renting from the council, housing association or trust, also reported more ill health.

Mental health and life satisfaction

Most residents are satisfied with life, but with variations

85%

The majority of respondents (85%) indicated a high level of satisfaction with their life nowadays, rating their satisfaction as at least 7 out of 10.

- However, high satisfaction scores were less common among respondents who are finding it difficult financially (54%) or living with a health condition (61%).
- 29% of residents reported high levels of anxiety about the future. This rose to over half (53%) of those finding it difficult financially.
- Women (35%) were more likely to feel anxious about the future than men (24%).
- The groups most likely to report mental health as one of their key concerns over the next 1-3 years were 18-34s (19%) and social renters (18%). These are at least three times the overall rate of 6%.

Housing

Housing a key concern among younger residents

- Almost a third (31%) of 18-34 year olds cited **access to affordable housing** as one of their biggest concerns over the next 1-3years, much higher than the 13% of all residents.
- 18-44 yr olds were more likely to say they were **considering moving out of the borough** than the 45+ age groups
- 40% of 18-34 year olds cited the affordability of housing as a reason.

- **Renters (social and private) were more concerned about their household finances.** 74% of social renters and 70% of private renters reported being very or extremely concerned about the rising cost of living.

- 65% of those socially renting and 60% of those privately renting said that financially their households were just about getting by or finding it difficult, compared to 32% of residents overall.

Snapshot – variations by area

Ascot and surrounding areas

- Most satisfied with their local area and with the council.
- Most likely to agree that people pull together to improve the local area.
- Find it less easy to access green spaces.
- Most concerned about rising cost of living.

Windsor

- Less likely to feel safe after dark, and more likely to list crime and safety as a concern.
- More likely to state concerns about housing security/affordability.
- Scoring between Ascot and Maidenhead on satisfaction and other key statistics.

Maidenhead

- Residents had significantly lower rates of satisfaction with their local area, satisfaction with and trust in the council, and perceptions of value for money.
- Maidenhead residents were more likely to list over-development / losing the greenbelt as concerns.
- More likely to want to be involved in community activities.
- More likely to visit green spaces at least once per week.
- Less concerned about ASB.

Snapshot – variations by cohort

Analysis reveals specific cohorts experiencing difficulty and whose contrasting opinions need to be considered in future strategy

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18 – 34 Year Olds

Responses indicate **high levels of concern about housing, financial security**, and **mental health & wellbeing** in next 1-3 years.

Not Working (excluding Retired)

Responses indicate higher levels of **loneliness,** and **lower overall health. Respondents were** also more likely to be finding it **difficult financially.**

Black, Asian & Mixed Ethnicities

Responses indicate higher levels of concern about **access to housing** and the **cost of living.** Also finding it **harder to access quality green spaces**.

Activities limited due to health condition or illness

Responses indicate lower rates of **life** and **local area satisfaction and higher rates of loneliness**. Plus **lower rates** of **community engagement**.