

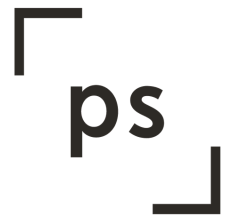


Ribble Valley
Borough Council

www.ribblevalley.gov.uk

Life in Ribble Valley.

Summary: June 2023.



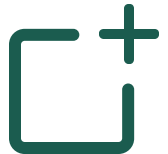
ps research

A new approach to the council's resident survey.



Ribble Valley Borough Council's regular resident survey methodology has gradually changed over time

Over the last ten years, the methodology of the council's resident survey (like many East Lancashire authorities) has gradually shifted and changed. Previously there was a healthy Citizens' Panel but this has naturally aged and shrunk over time which has come through in the sample of responses achieved. This has then been 'topped up' in recent surveys by sharing the survey online for anyone to have their say.



So a new approach to the resident survey was taken for 2023

Recognising there is less control over the sample from an open-access survey and so less emphasis on comparisons over time, the opportunity was taken to review questions included in the survey to ensure it feels shorter and more relevant for residents. This included a new section on climate change and more focus on their local area, with the survey re-branded from a 'Perception Survey' to 'Life in Ribble Valley'.



What is the impact of moving to an open-access methodology?

- The survey is more inclusive, with anyone in the borough able to complete the survey
- However, this means there will be self-selection bias in the sample - an open-access survey is more likely to attract those either more or less positive about the council and the area
- It is not possible to benchmark reliably over time given the lack of control over the sample each time the survey is run
- Steps have been taken to mitigate the limitations of this methodology, with analysis of sub-groups including area and segmenting those more likely to be positive or negative across a range of key issues

Promoting the Life in Ribble Valley survey.



The survey was shared and promoted in a range of ways to reach as many residents as possible

An online survey was launched on 30 January and closed on 13 March 2023, with paper copies also available in public buildings.

Promotion included:

- Media and press releases to local newspapers and on the council website
- Emails sent to councillors, staff and town and parish clerks
- Contact with local colleges and sixth forms
- Social media posts on Facebook groups and council accounts for Facebook, Twitter and Instagram

The nature of this promotion means the response sample is more likely to have a connection to the council, e.g. follow on social media.



The Life in Ribble Valley survey received more engagement from residents than in recent years

770 responses were received from local residents (plus over 30 responses from people working in and visiting the borough).

This is up from 608 responses in 2018 and 417 in 2015 (when a Citizens' Panel-only methodology was used).

In addition, there was a greater spread of age groups represented in the latest survey. In 2018, over half of responses were from residents aged 65 or over (down to 33% in this survey).

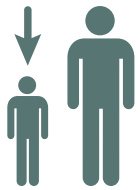
We reached over 800 people through the Life in Ribble Valley survey.

The survey asked different questions of three groups of respondents



Residents aged 25 and over

They were asked a full set of local area and council satisfaction questions and are the main focus of this report



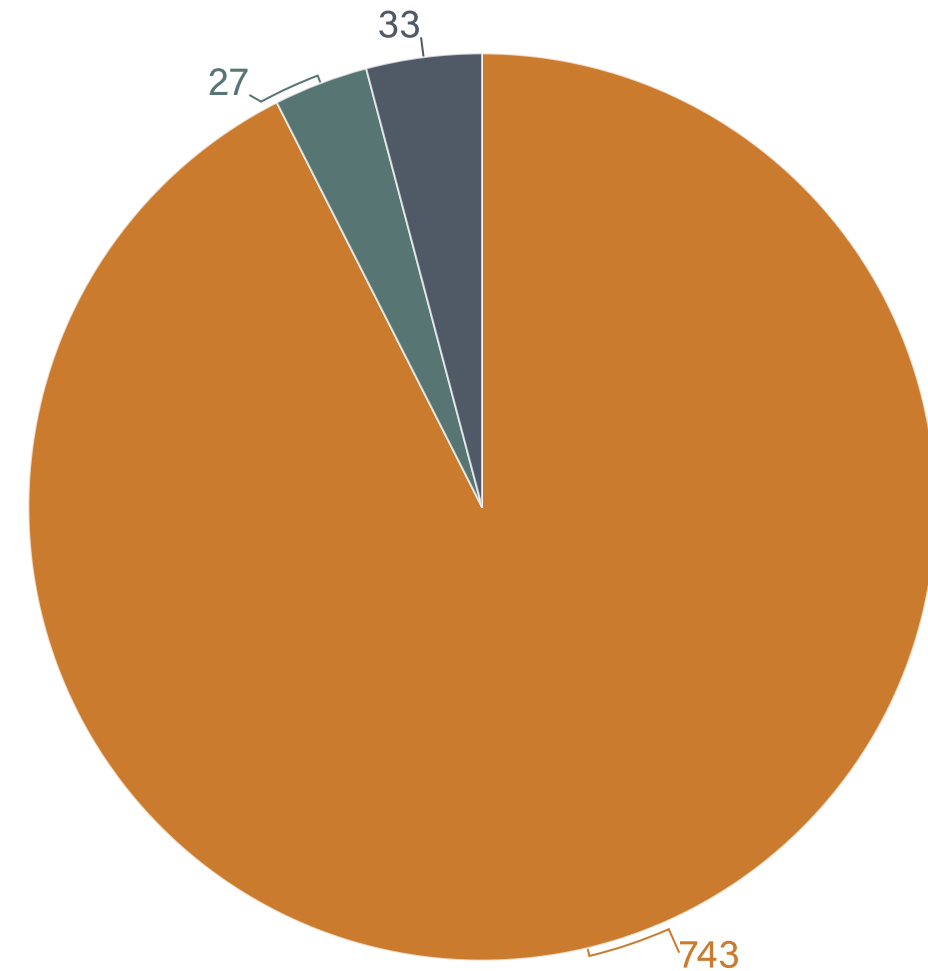
Young residents aged 16 to 24

This group are typically underrepresented in local research and were asked a short set of questions - a summary of their feedback can be found later in the report



Non-residents (such as workers or visitors)

Their general views on the borough were also captured - again a summary of their feedback is included at the end of this report

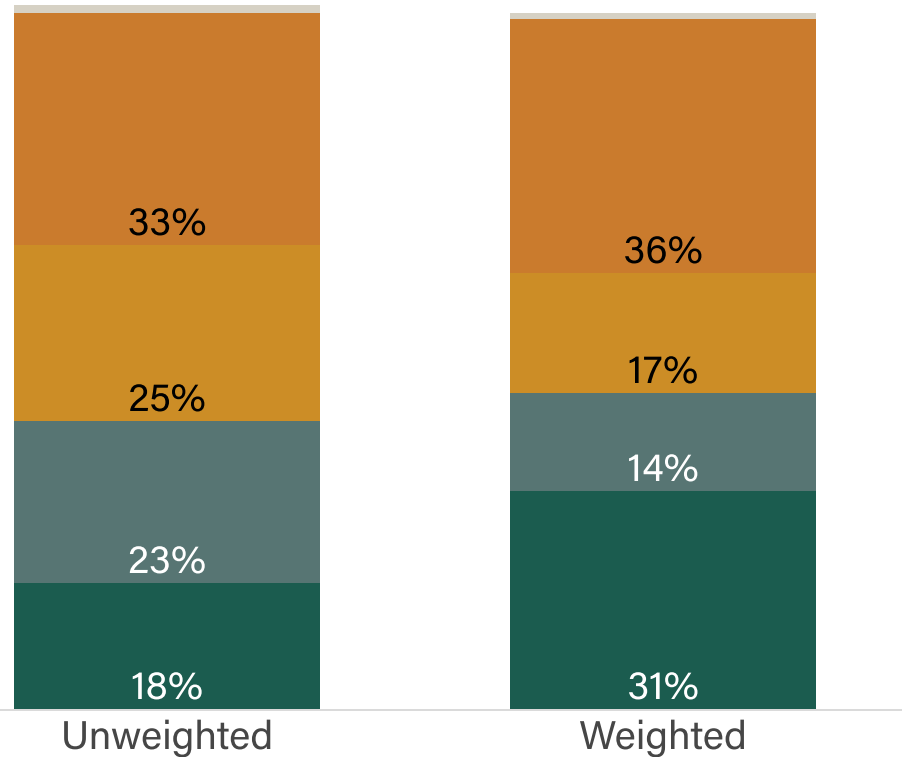


● Residents aged 25+ ● Residents aged 16 to 24 ● Non-residents

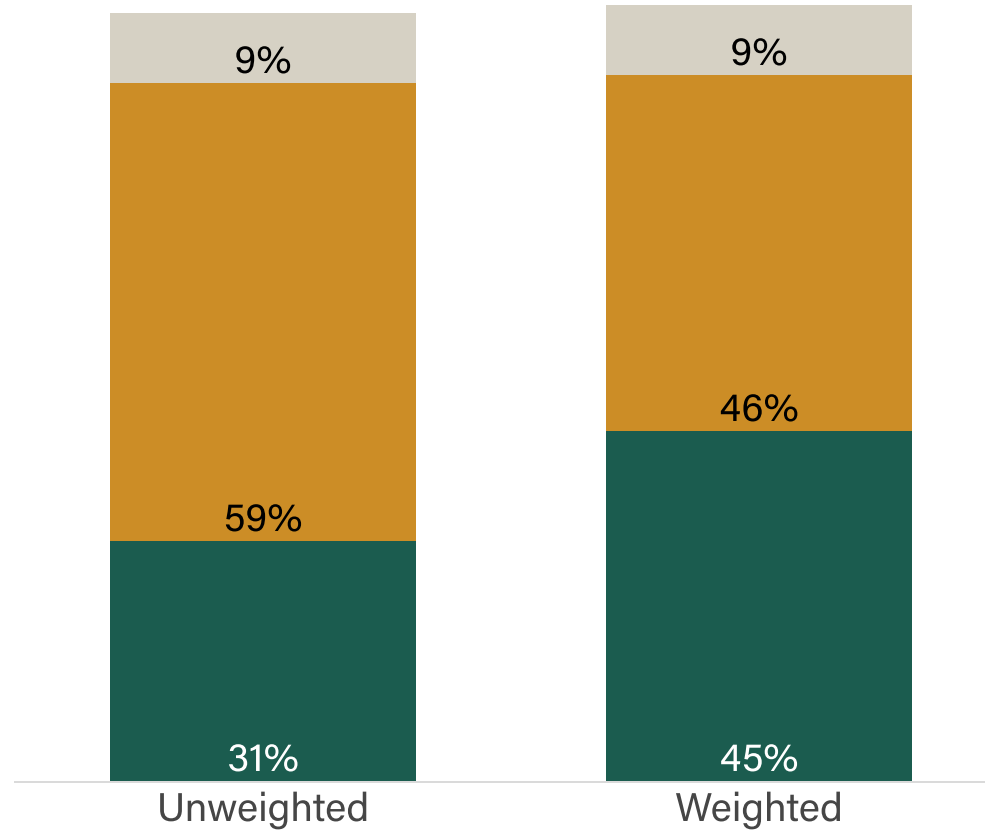
Data is weighted by age and gender to be representative of the borough.

Weighting is a statistical process to ensure the survey sample more closely reflects the actual Ribble Valley population

More 45 to 64 year olds responded compared to the actual population



More females responded compared to the actual population



18%

Have a long-term physical or mental condition or illness

69% do not have;
12% prefer not to say

89%

Describe themselves as White

1% are in another ethnic group; 10% prefer not to say

Q. Which age group do you belong to?
(All Residents aged 25+ - n = 743)

Q. What is your gender?
(All Residents aged 25+ - n = 743)

People from all over the borough responded to the survey.

Of those who told us where they live (one in three did not provide a full postcode or refused), these were matched to wards and then grouped into six Ribble Valley 'areas'

North East

Chatburn; Gisburn and Rimington

North West

Alston and Hothersall; Derby and Thornley; Dilworth; Ribchester; Chipping

Central

West Bradford and Grindleton; Bowland; Waddington, Bashall Eaves and Mitton; Hurst Green and Whitewell

Clitheroe

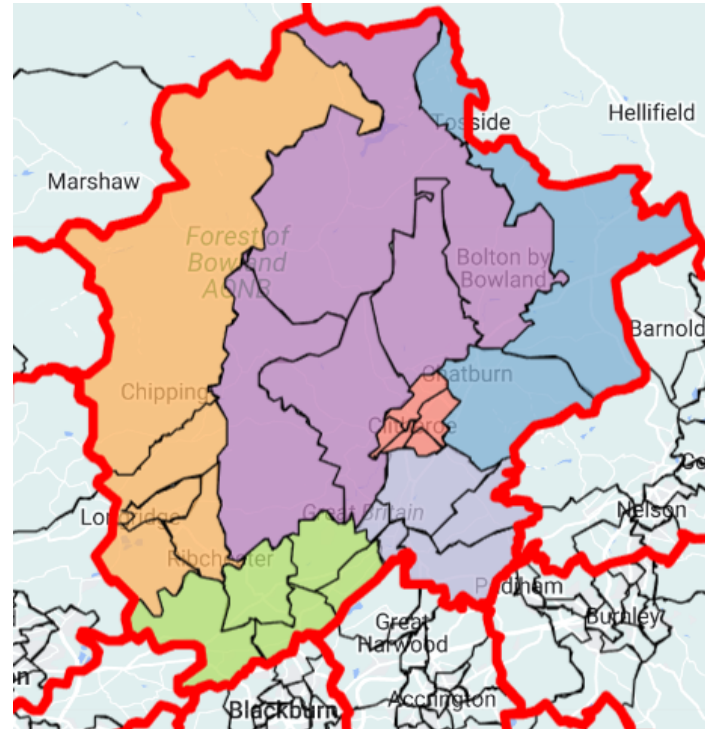
Edisford and Low Moor; St Mary's; Salthill; Primrose; Littlemoor

South East

East Whalley, Read and Simonstone; Whalley Nethertown; Whalley and Painter Wood; Wiswell and Barrow; Sabden

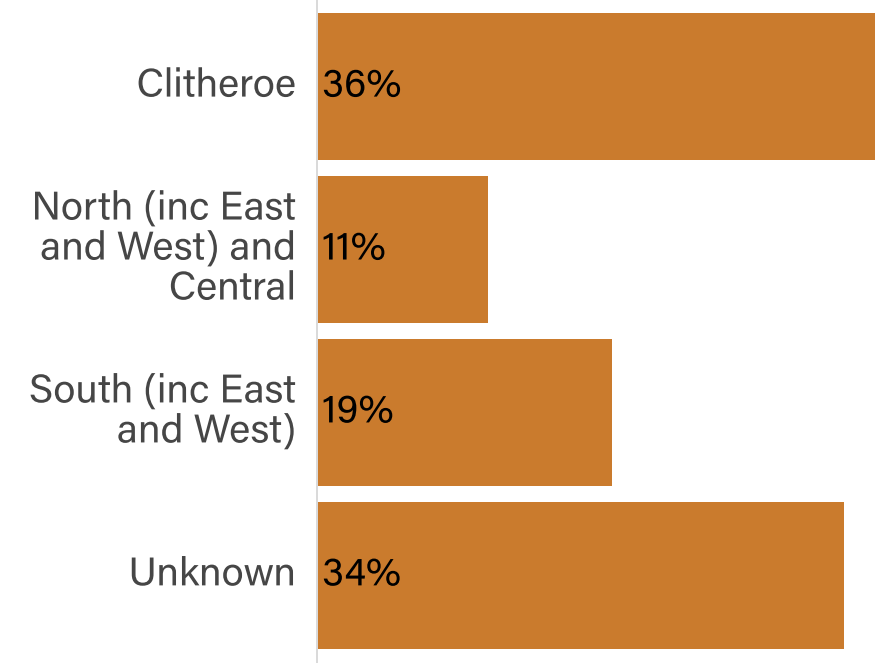
South West

Mellor; Clayton-le-Dale and Salesbury; Wilpshire and Ramsgreave; Billington and Langho; Brockhall and Dinckley



For the analysis within this report we have grouped these further into three broad areas

Clitheroe residents are overrepresented compared to the actual population, but analysis tests indicate this has little impact on headline statistics within this report



Overall, residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live.



4 in 5 residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live

Lower in Clitheroe than other areas



Most feel their area is a safe place where people get on well together



Living in and close to countryside is by far the thing residents of all ages like most about their local area



But beyond that, different age groups are more likely to value different things

- 25 to 44 year olds are more likely to value the variety of shops in their area
- 45 to 54 year olds are more likely to comment on the quiet, village/town feel
- Residents aged 65+ are more likely to value access to shops and services



But there are a wide range of things that residents would change about their local area

This was most likely to focus on roads, the level of housing development and cleanliness of streets / public spaces



Those not satisfied with their local area were more likely than others to highlight cleanliness of streets, litter and dog fouling



Despite feeling safe in their area, some felt there were a number of anti-social behaviour issues

- A third of people feel taking or dealing drugs in their local area is a problem
- More than one in five feel teenagers hanging around streets, vandalism/deliberate damage or people being drunk/rowdy in public is a problem in their area

But satisfaction is lower with Ribble Valley Borough Council.



General satisfaction on the way Ribble Valley Borough Council runs things and whether the council provides value-for-money is mixed

- 40% are satisfied with the way the council runs things, whilst 26% are neutral and 32% are dissatisfied
- 40% agree that the council provides value-for-money, whilst 24% are neutral and 31% are dissatisfied



Those dissatisfied with the council were more likely to feel they can't influence decisions and highlight a range of issues in their area

These issues included the cleanliness of streets, crime levels and anti-social behaviour



When residents contact the council, the method they use appears to impact on satisfaction

- Two in five residents had contacted the council in the last six months
- They were more likely to make contact if they were under the age of 65 and were not satisfied with their area
- Three in five made contact by telephone, with a third using email and 17% in-person
- 35% of those contacting by email were dissatisfied with the experience, compared to 20% of those visiting in-person and 25% using the telephone

There is a link between feeling informed and how residents view the council.



More than half of residents do not feel informed about council services



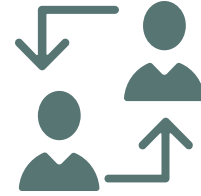
There's a link between feeling informed about council services and feeling that it delivers value-for-money

64% of residents who feel well informed agree that the council provides value for money, compared to 27% of those who do not feel well informed



And three in five residents do not feel they can influence decisions in their local area

This group were more likely than others to highlight fewer housing developments as something that would improve their local area



So what do residents want from communication and engagement with the council?

- Frequency of communication across different methods - social media, emails, in the community
- Engage as well as communicate - listening and consulting on changes that affect them



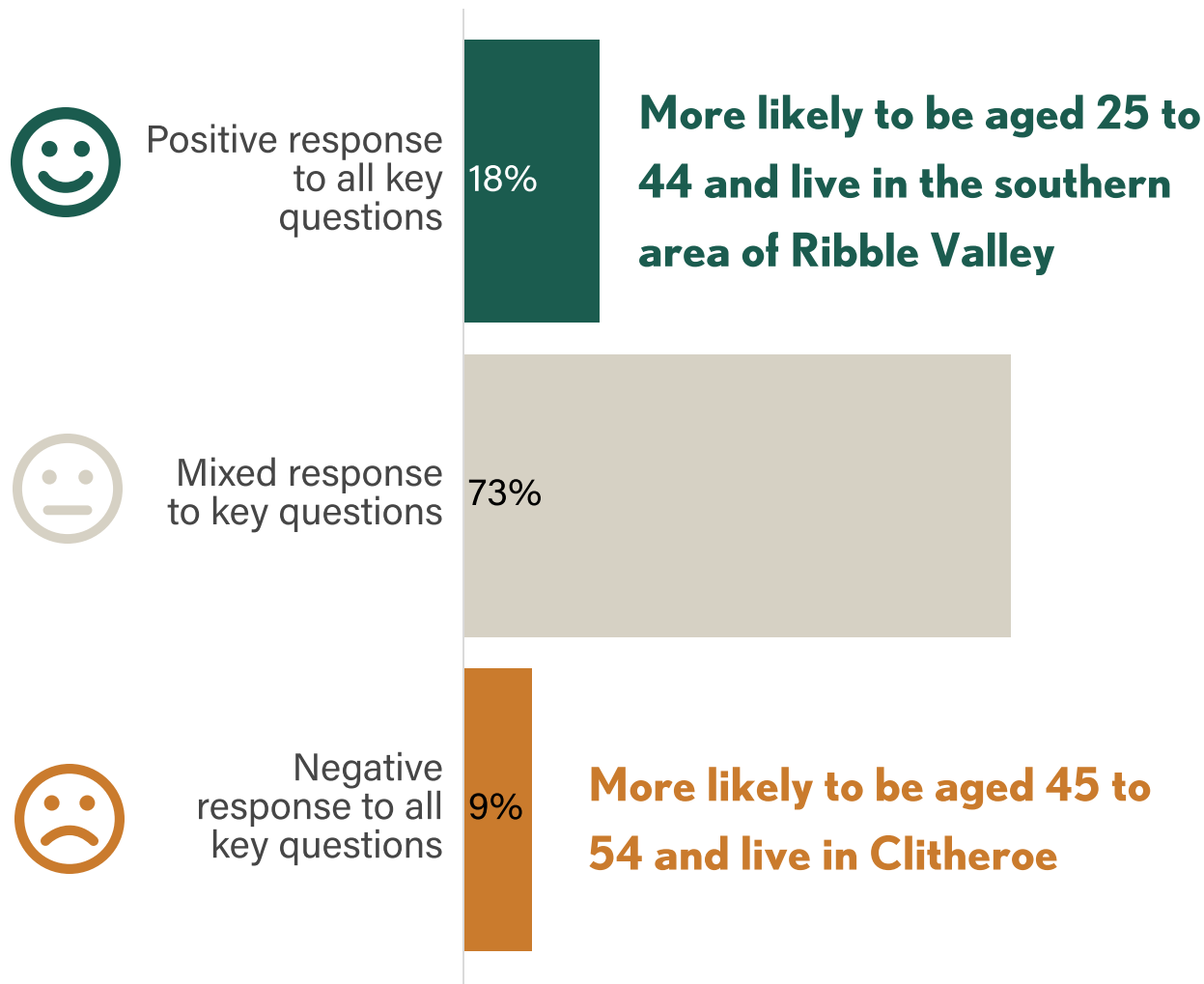
Age is a factor in the types of communication methods residents are more likely to engage with

- 25 to 44 year olds are more likely to find information about their area on social media, particularly local groups
- 45 to 54 year olds also use social media in this way, but not quite to the same extent
- 55 to 64 year olds are more likely than others to use local news websites
- Those aged 65+ are more likely to read local newspapers and want info straight through their door

One in ten residents are negative across a range of key questions.

Residents have been grouped based on their response to a set of key questions: satisfaction with the local area, satisfaction with the way Ribble Valley Borough Council runs things, agreement that the council provides value-for-money and how well informed they feel the council keeps them about services

9% of residents were negative in all key questions



What stands out about the positive respondents?

- Value the variety of shops in their area and small town/village feel
- More likely to feel parks and open spaces, access to GPs/health services and low levels of crime are important
- Less likely to feel improvements are needed in the cleanliness of streets and crime levels
- But more likely than others to want improvements in public transport links

And what are the issues for the negative respondents?

They are significantly more likely to raise issues with:

- Cleanliness of streets and level of dog fouling
- Condition of roads and pavements
- Levels of crime and anti-social behaviour

The biggest areas for improvement are not borough council services.

When asked to select the top three things most in need of improvement in the Ribble Valley area, the most selected issues were:



State of roads, pavements and traffic management

84% of respondents selected this

"It is time the roads were properly repaired and not just patched up. Their condition endangers the people of the town and makes leisure activities such as cycling too hazardous."



Access to GPs and other health services

41% of respondents selected this

"Better access to health services - no NHS dentist availability, no specialist audiology either private or NHS"



Transport links, including public transport

37% of respondents selected this

"Improvement of public transport. More frequent bus services to places that are not as accessible at current moment."

84% of residents feel the state of roads, pavements and traffic management is an area for improvement across the borough.

Comments in the survey reveal a wide range of concerns about roads, contributing factors and how it has an impact



There were a range of issues raised specifically about the roads

- State and condition of the roads
- Volume of traffic on the roads
- Level of roadworks and suitability of the road network
- Unsafe parking on streets and roads
- Speeding and unsafe driving



A number of contributing factors were highlighted

- Level of housing development - increase in local population, increased heavy duty vehicles
- Lack of/ insufficient public transport networks (particularly from younger people)
- Lack of/ limited cycle lanes
- Lack of pedestrianisation, e.g. crossings



A ripple effect of impacts

- Road safety for cars/drivers
- Road safety for cyclists and pedestrians, particularly children
- Climate impact with increased traffic
- General inconvenience - congestion, journeys taking longer

Residents aged 25 to 44 appear to have different needs to older residents.

All residents value access to countryside and nature across the borough, but when we look beyond that we can see differences amongst the 25 to 44 year old age group

They are more likely to...



Value access to good schools



Also value the night-time economy, but would like to see more on this




Want to see improvement in facilities and activities for children and young people, including parks and open spaces



Want more career and job prospects in the borough

And we can see different priorities in different parts of the borough.

 **There was a noticeably different response from Clitheroe residents around area satisfaction and council views**

 They are less likely to feel they can influence decisions, higher dissatisfaction with how dog fouling is being tackled, higher dissatisfaction with the council overall and more likely to disagree that the council provides value-for-money



But there are different priorities and areas of improvement highlighted by residents across the borough



Clitheroe

- More likely to highlight easy access to shops and services as the best thing about their area (but want to see improvements in the variety and offer)
- More likely to want cleaner streets and improvements to the condition of roads and pavements



North and Central

- Countryside particularly important to them
- More likely to feel community is important to an area, as well as low crime levels
- Much more likely than others to feel transport links need improving across the borough



South

- Also appreciate the countryside, but also value the quiet, small town/village feel of their area
- Less likely to want better facilities in their local area
- More likely to feel clean streets and transport links are important in the borough

Some residents feel the fabric of the borough is starting to change.



When asked what one change they would like to see over the next ten years, the strongest theme was concern around future house building and developments

Even more so than roads and cleanliness which was a bigger immediate issue for many residents



Residents are concerned about the long-term impact on the countryside and character of the area

They feel they might lose the thing that they value most about living in the borough, with countryside and green spaces being 'spoilt' - the character of Ribble Valley's towns and villages came through strongly as something non-residents value too

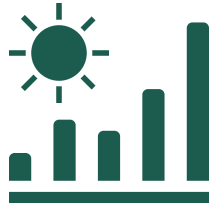
It's not just about housing developments though...



There is a perception from some that residents and the council are not taking enough pride in the area

Some feel the deterioration in the state of roads, increase in litter and level of dog fouling over recent years suggests a general lack of care in the borough - levelled both at residents and the council

Over half of residents are very concerned about climate change.



Four in five are at least a little concerned about climate change

Of those not concerned at all, they are more likely to be male residents



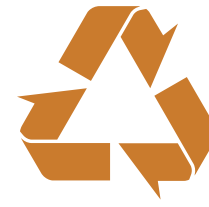
Four in five are also doing something already to help reduce carbon emissions

Over half of these want to do more



But one in five admit they are not doing much

- And half of these are not looking to do anything at the moment
- Those who do want to do something are more likely to be aged 25 to 44



Recycling is the biggest area people are doing something around or willing to do more on

This was an area residents felt the council could do more to support and enable residents



There were some differences in the things people would do by age

- 25 to 44 year olds are more interested than others in renewable energy sources
- 45 to 54 year olds more interested in growing their own food
- Those aged 65+ more likely to use or be willing to use public transport



A wide range of suggestions were made about how the council and other local organisations could 'lead by example' on climate change



Report by Adam Pearson and Emma Slater.

psresearch.co.uk | hello@psresearch.co.uk