

Surrey County Council
Highways Customer Panel
October 2015 Survey Data and Results



SURREY

Document Details

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Survey data analysis October 2015

Introduction

This report contains the data collected from the second highways customer panel survey, held during October 2015.

The purpose of this survey is to help us understand how satisfied our customers are with our service at the moment, and any areas in which they feel we could make improvements. We have said that we will be transparent with our findings, lessons learnt and any actions we take as a result of the survey.

A summary of all the results and actions we will take can be found on page 23 of this report.

The survey – October 2015

In the second survey the aim was to introduce some seasonal questions regarding our tree and vegetation management, a key subject throughout the summer months. This would allow us to analyse how our residents feel how well we are dealing with these issues whilst they are most apparent on our network.

Secondly as the first survey showed us that the majority of our customers use online methods to discover highways information, we wanted to investigate any improvements we could introduce to allow the use of our website to be as easy as possible.

We have also included a number of questions based around service satisfaction which also appeared in the first survey, to help us determine how we are performing as a service over periods of time.

Finally we wanted to know if our customers are aware of, and utilising their local committees to raise any issues they may have.

We sent the survey to 1385 members and received 836 responses, giving a response rate of 60.3%.

Feedback from management

Once the results were gathered a meeting took place between me and members of Surrey Highways management team to analyse the thoughts and views of each individual, and see what action we can take as a result of the feedback we received from you, the panel members.

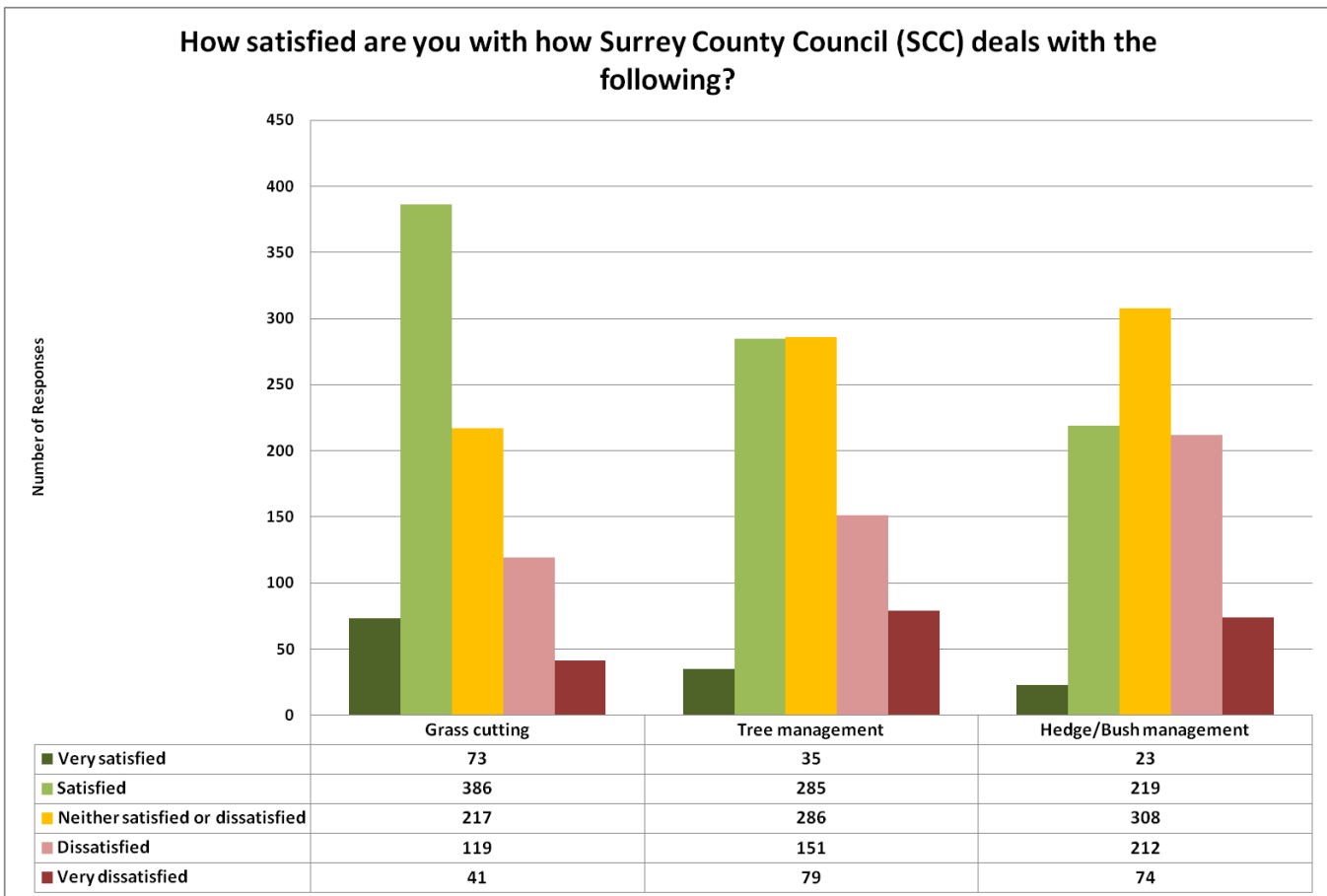
Reporting format

For this report I have decided to run through each question individually, showing the results in a graph format with commentary on the results alongside this. With this there will be any conclusions we as an organisation have made, before highlighting the key points in the conclusions page at the back of the report. Some questions did raise more specific points than others, and some questions also were not open to much feedback as they were designed for informative purposes.

I hope you enjoy viewing your results and the feedback we at Surrey County Council (SCC) Highways have for you.

The Survey: Results, Commentary and Feedback.

Question 1 – How satisfied are you with how Surrey County Council (SCC) deals with the following?

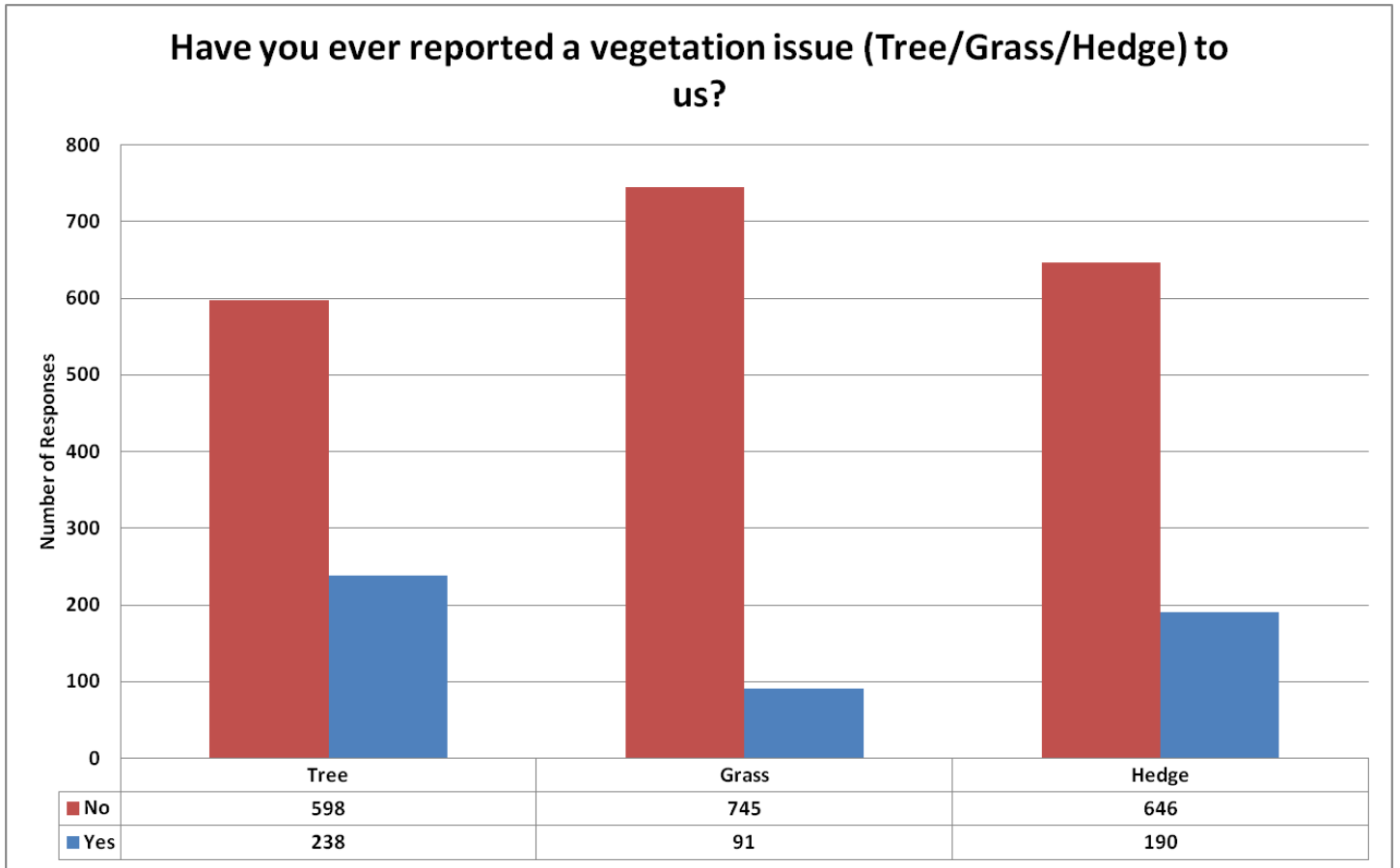


This survey we wanted to begin including seasonal related topics, to judge how we are performing directly after key times for certain issues. In this survey we focused on vegetation issues, as these become most apparent in the spring and summer months as vegetation growth is at its peak.

The high numbers of respondents selecting neither satisfied nor dissatisfied suggests that our residents are perhaps unaware of the work we carry out to deal with vegetation areas. You can find information on this by visiting <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning/trees-grass-and-vegetation>.

We are pleased to see that a majority of panel members are satisfied with how we manage our grass cutting duties, with 55% of the 836 respondents declaring this. Satisfaction levels are also reasonably high for tree management; however we are concerned with the dissatisfaction levels where hedge and bush management is concerned. 34% of panel members indicated dissatisfaction with this area, which is something we endeavour to keep under control by ensuring residents keep their hedges cut back to prevent encroachment onto the highway, thus keeping it safe for highway users. We have decided to investigate into the process of how we handle these issues, in order to guarantee we are handling them effectively.

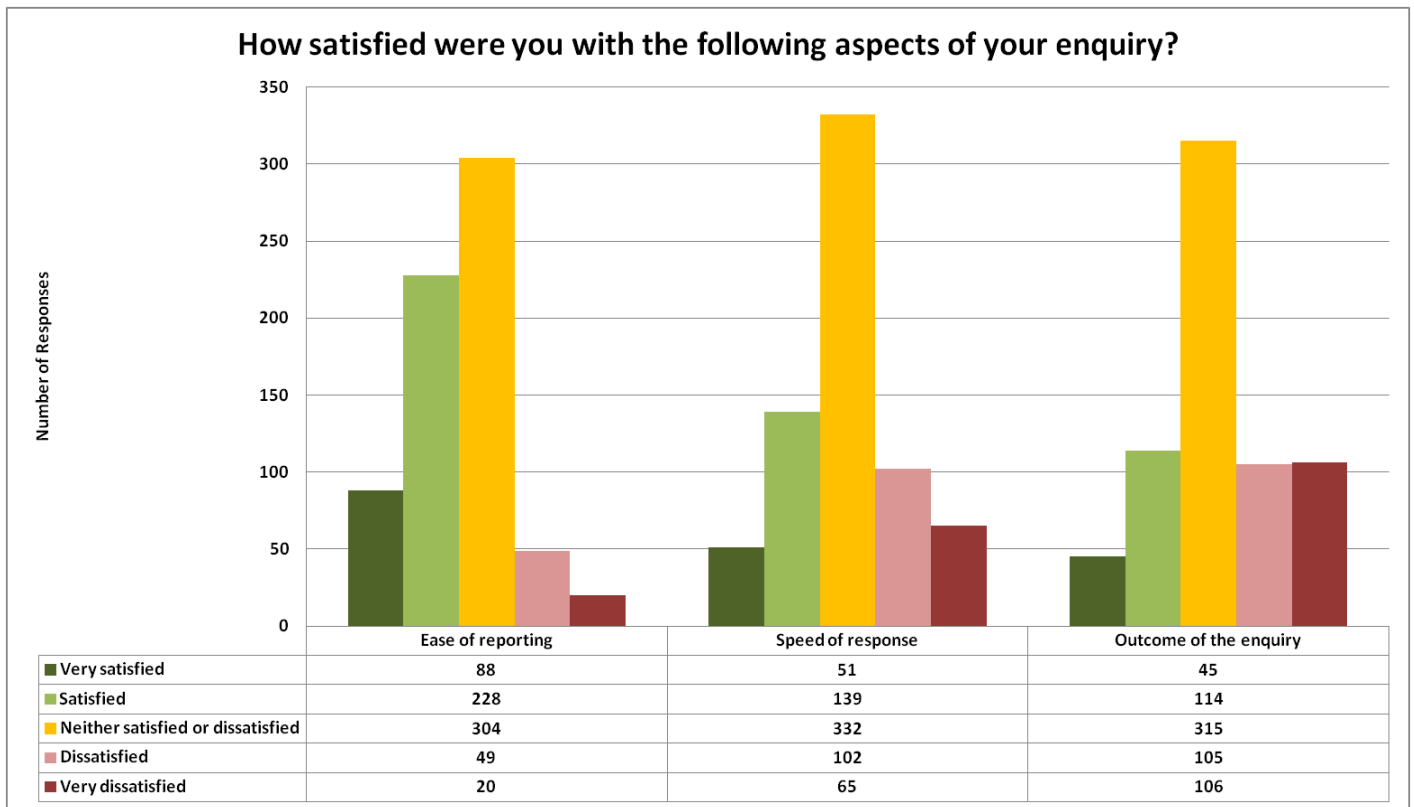
Question 2 – Have you ever reported a vegetation issue (Tree/Grass/Hedge) to us?



This question was designed to go hand-in-hand with the first, by evaluating how many of our customers have had to report issues we may have missed or that are concerning them. It is positive to see that only a minority of panel members have had to report a vegetation issue to us; 28% for Tree, 11% for Grass and 23% for Hedge.

This represents that there is a relatively low number of issues of major concern on our network, which contains an extremely large amount of vegetation, including over 2 million trees.

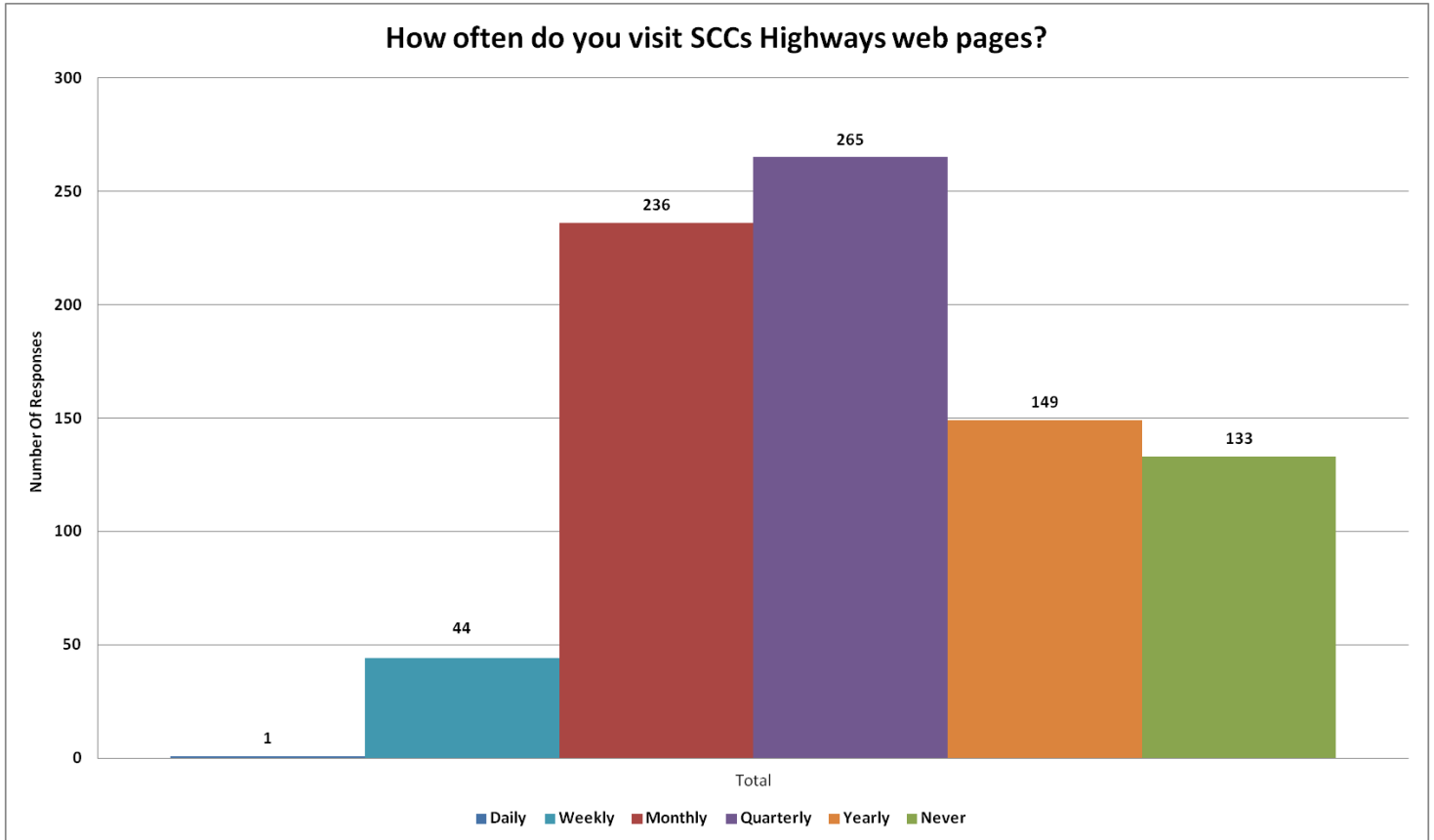
Question 3 – How satisfied were you with the following aspects of your enquiry?



We wanted to know, from the panel members that had reported an issue to us, how satisfied they were with how their enquiry was handled. This question was designed to be skipped by members who had answered no to the previous question; unfortunately these instructions were not clearly communicated and for this I apologise.

However for improvement purposes we can analyse the results based around general enquiry management. 46% of members who answered this question, 316, said they were satisfied with the ease of reporting an enquiry. Satisfaction with was significantly lower in terms of speed of response and outcome of the enquiry. Unfortunately we cannot always provide the outcome our customers’ desire; however we will work to improve the quality audits on our responses to ensure we are providing as much information as possible when explaining any outcomes.

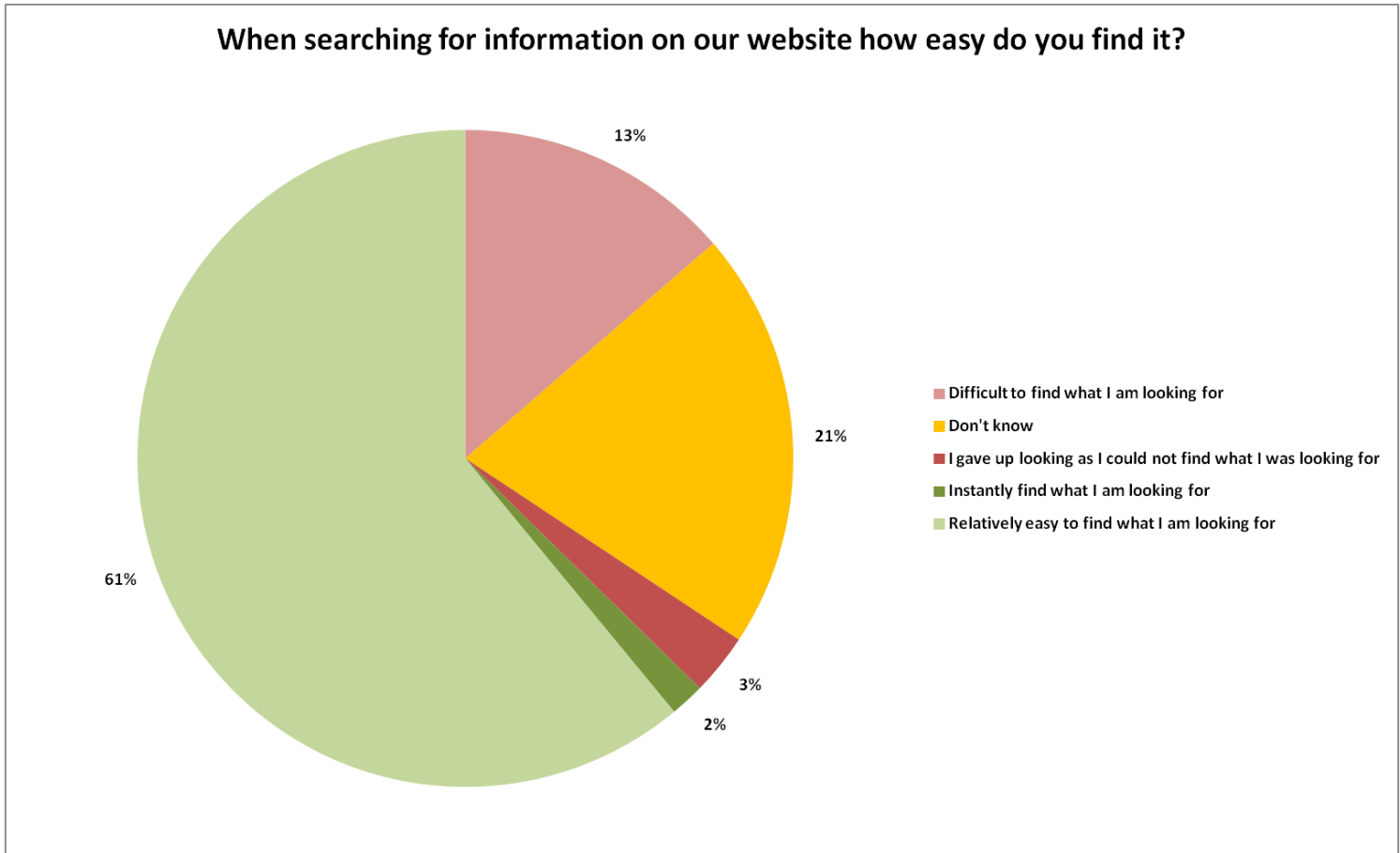
Question 4 – How often do you visit SCCs Highways web pages?



In the last survey the panel members informed us that the majority of customers use our online methods when attempting to discover information regarding SCC highway works. To investigate this further we wanted to know how often our panel members are utilising our online service, in order to ensure we are providing up to date information and keeping our web pages current.

Of the 828 responses we had to this question, over a third (33%) of panel members indicated they regularly (monthly or more frequently) visited our website for information. Alongside this only 16% of members said they have never visited our website, showing that it is accessible to the majority of our residents, and a key tool in providing information.

Question 5 – When searching for information on our website how easy do you find it?



Positively, 61% of panel members indicated that they found it relatively easy to find what they were looking for when using our highways web pages. Ideally we would like to get to a point where all of customers using online methods can near enough instantly find what they are looking for. We want to drive self service by providing as much useful and up to date information as possible.

This has helped to see that the information we are currently providing is accessible, and our customers can find it without too much hassle.

Question 6 - Please specify any improvements you feel we could make to our website that would make finding information easier for you.

We wanted to include an open text question to provide our customers with the opportunity to describe ways in which we could improve the website for them. As expected there were a number of various comments, varying depending on the issues each individual had. It was positive to see a number of comments praising the current website, which we have been working on to make self service as easy as possible for our customers.

All of the comments have been reviewed by Surrey Highways, and will also be passed onto the web and digital services team for analysis, so they may determine where any improvements can be made which are out of Highways remit.

We have identified a number of recurring themes in the comments provided including; a page identifying what SCC or District/Borough Councils are responsible for, more detailed information on roadworks, easier to identify complaints page, user login interface, better search facilities and making ourselves easier to contact.

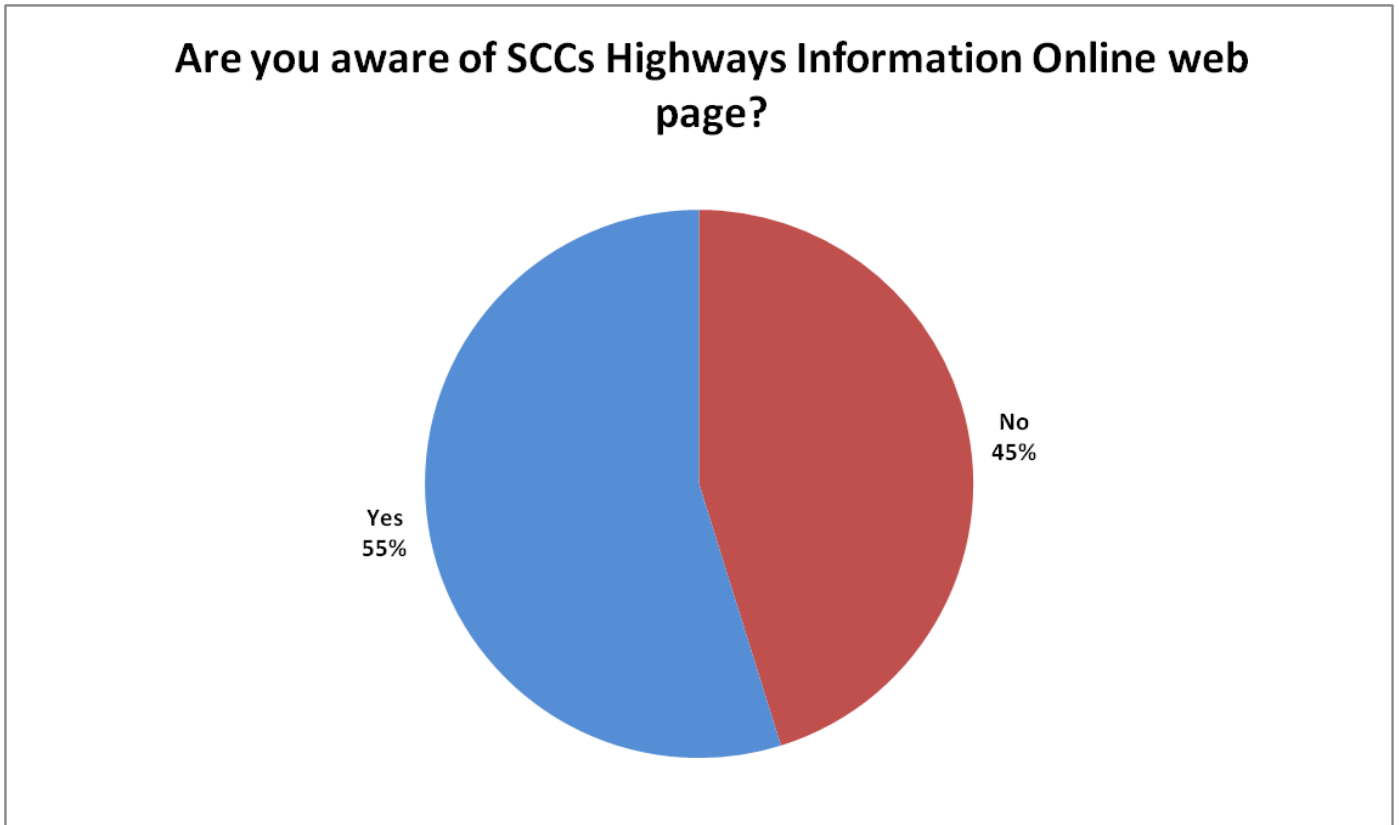
At Surrey we have been investigating the opportunity for individual customer logins, to make logging defects and enquiries as simple as possible. Allowing customers to save their details and view their logged issues would greatly increase the amount of self service taking place, meaning that the flow of information would be better for all parties. We will keep you updated with any progress that is made towards this feature.

For more detailed information on roadworks taking place on our network please see the analysis on question 9 in this report.

We have reviewed the need for a page detailing where responsibility lies between SCC and the District and Borough Councils. Unfortunately due to the large range of services provided by each, which differ depending on which District or Borough our customers live in, we feel the creation of such a page would be of little benefit. Currently you can search for the particular issue you are interested in, for example dog fouling, and our website will bring up pages detailing who to contact regarding the issue.

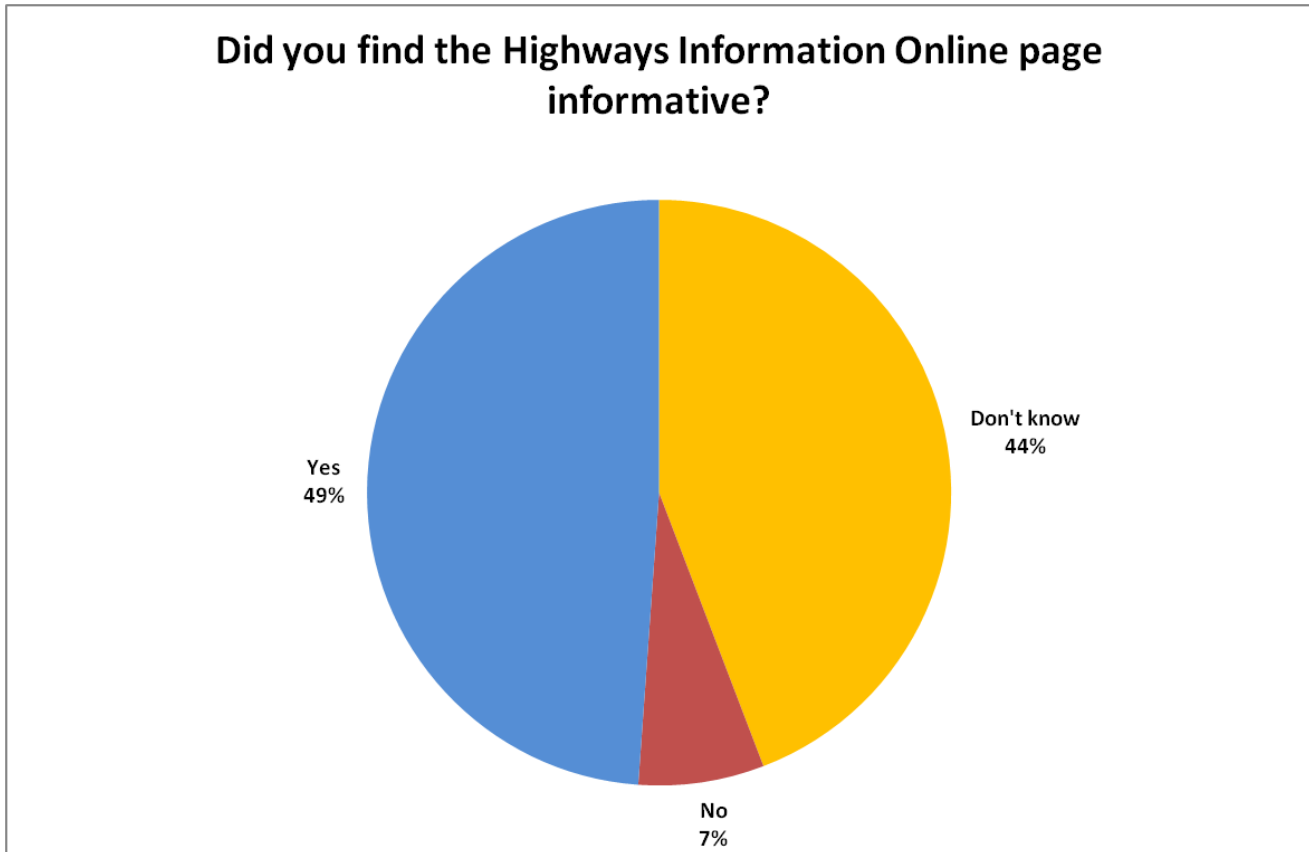
In regards to ease of making complaints regarding the council, if our customers search for “complaint” on our public website, they will be directed to a page named “How to make a complaint about the council” which can be found by following this link, <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/your-council/complaints-comments-and-compliments/how-to-make-a-complaint-about-the-council>.

Question 7 – Are you aware of SCCs Highways Information Online web page?



Our highways information online web page is one we are looking to improve specifically, in order to create a central hub which our highways customers can use as a reference point when trying to gather information. It was pleasing to see that the majority of our panel members were already aware of the highways information online page, for the remaining 45% who were unaware; I provided a link to the page so that they may take a look.

Question 8 – Did you find the Highways Information Online page informative?



Following from the previous question, we wanted to discover how informative the panel members thought the page is in its current format.

We were again pleased to see that only a small minority, 7%, of panel members felt the page was not informative, meaning the information currently on the web page is going some way to providing the information our customers need.

Question 9 - What information would you like included within the Highways Information Online web page? Please specify below.

All of the comments in this question have been read and analysed by management staff within Surrey Highways, and a number of common themes were identified including; more information on roadworks, the ability to view already reported issues, more regular winter updates, more informative videos, information about our defect priorities and live traffic information.

With regards to providing more information on roadworks, we have decided to further publicise our roadworks in my area web page. This is an extremely powerful tool which allows customers to view, on a live interactive map, details of all permitted roadworks on our network. It provides information on who is undertaking the works, severity and impact, work duration as well as live traffic information through filtered layers. A facility is also in place which allows customers to sign up to email alerts which notify them of any new works occurring in their defined area or region. You can find the application by visiting <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning/roadworks-in-my-area>. We will also be including information regarding this facility on the highways information online web page in order to make it as accessible as possible to our customers.

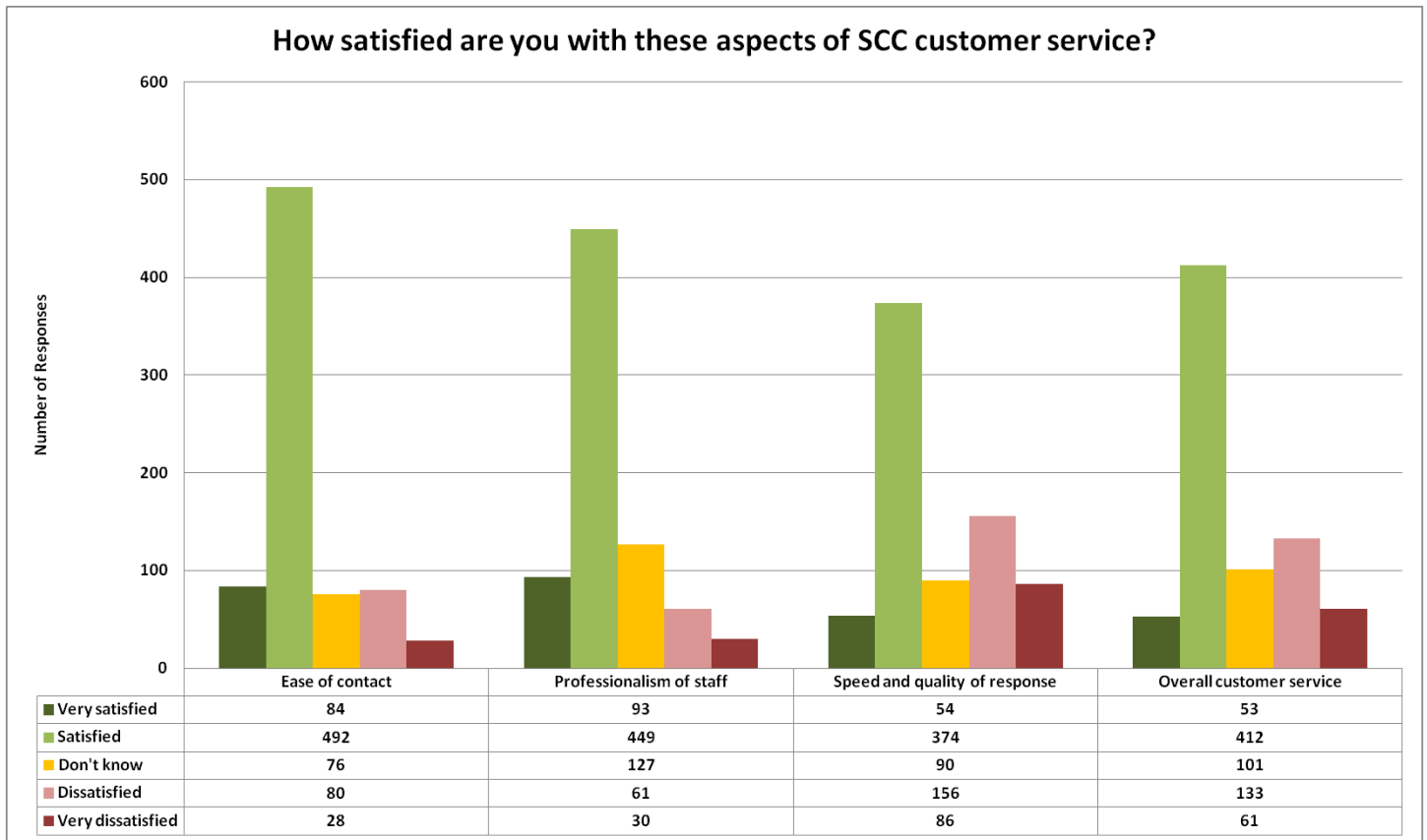
Having consulted the winter maintenance team, we are investigating the possibility of creating regular updates via the highways information online page so that our customers are aware of any activities which may affect their journeys or activities on our network.

As an organisation we are also currently in the process of investigating a system which will allow customers to view issues on our network that have already been reported, so that we may prevent duplication of reports, saving time for both our customers and ourselves.

We will also be including our safety matrix on the highways information online webpage, so that our customers can see exactly how we prioritise defects that are present on our network and the reasons why work may or may not be carried out.

We received some positive feedback with regards to the content on the page which I would like to thank our members for, in particular regarding the informative surface dressing video we have placed on there. We will be aiming to include a larger number of informative videos, so that our customers are made aware of the various processes we undertake, and are aware of any issues that these may cause.

Question 10 – How satisfied are you with these aspects of SCC customer service?



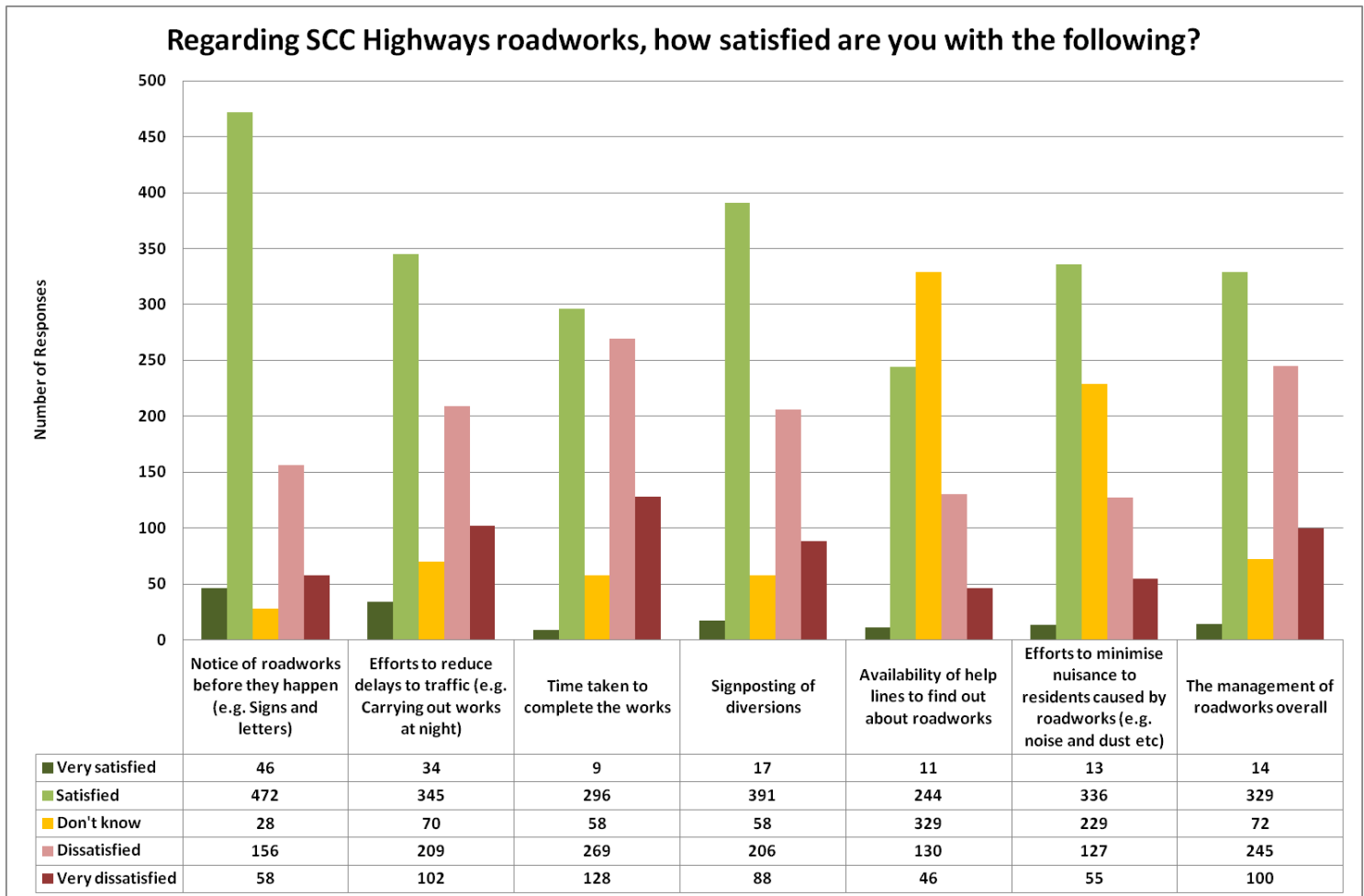
We have decided to include the following three satisfaction questions in all of our surveys, to allow us to evaluate how satisfaction rates vary across the life time of the customer panel.

We are extremely pleased to see that 75% of customers are either very satisfied or satisfied with the ease of contacting SCC, despite a 2% fall since last survey we have had almost double the number of responses, so to see the new members are just as satisfied as the members who took the previous survey, is a superb indicator that we are making ourselves accessible.

Alongside this 71% of panel members said they were pleased with the professionalism of our customer service staff, and only 12% dissatisfied. Again this goes to show the training we are providing our staff works effectively to ensure all of our customers receive top quality customer service at all times.

The most concerning area is with our speed and quality of response. 32% of customers responded that they are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with this aspect of our customer service. As mentioned previously, we will be ensuring our audits on responses are extremely thorough allowing us to make sure our officers are providing as much information as possible when explaining any outcomes.

Question 11 – Regarding SCC Highways roadworks, how satisfied are you with the following?

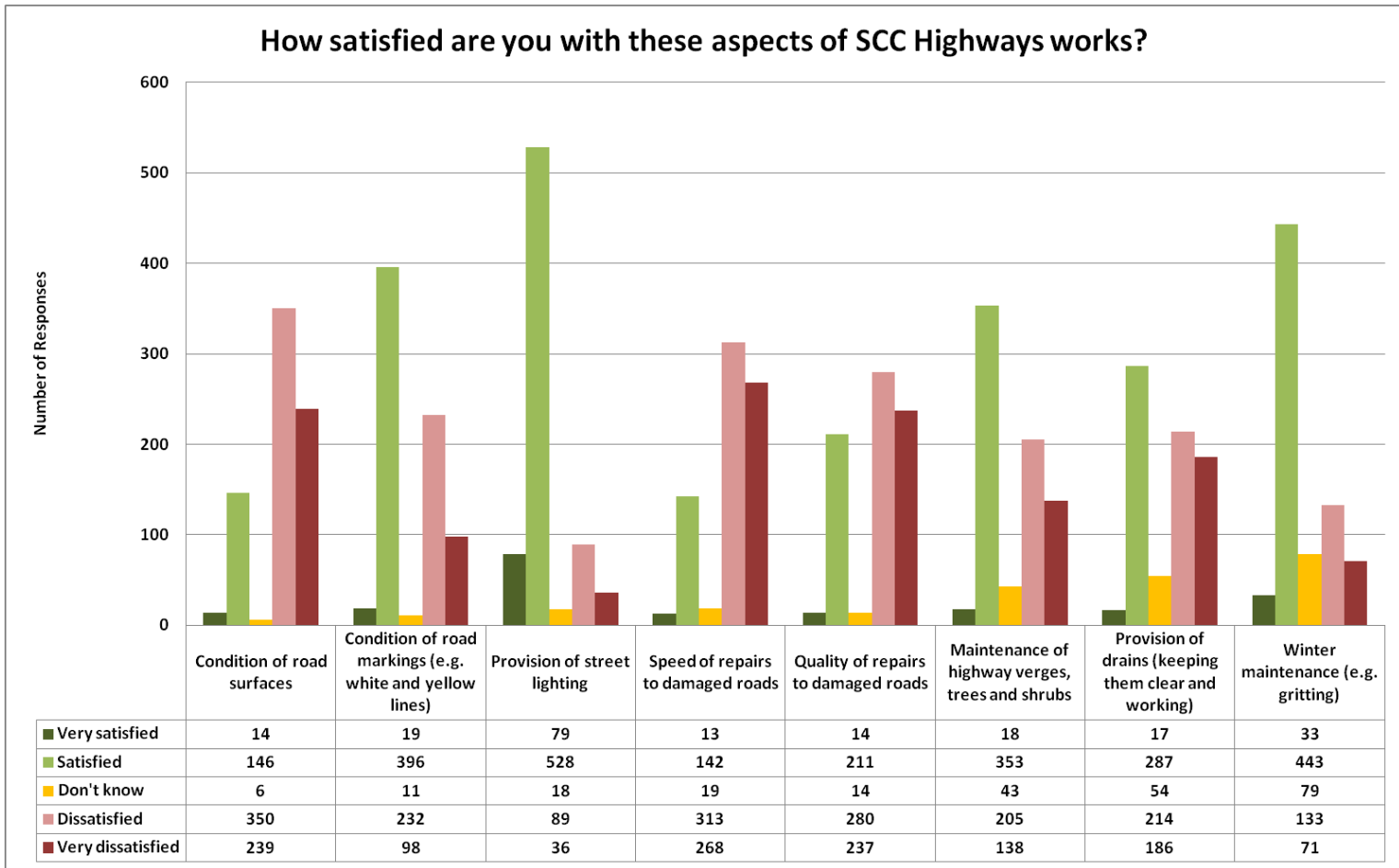


The two main themes we identified from this question were that our customers are unsatisfied with the time we take to complete works, and that they are unaware of available help to find out about roadworks. Over half of panel members (52%) declared that they are either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the time it takes us to complete works. Panel members also told us that they are unaware of help lines to find out information regarding roadworks, with 46% indicating that they don't know about these.

Unfortunately delays to roadworks are often inevitable, however in order to reduce the effect this has on our customers, we are going to be improving the information we provide to our customers so that they are aware of why delays are caused and accurate information on how this will effect durations of works. We also monitor our contractors through audits to ensure their works are completed to set service timescales.

The issues regarding available help lines to find out information have been passed to the works communication team leader. We have decided to make our roadworks information much more accessible through platforms such as our website. We are working to improve the system we currently have at our disposal, which can be visited here: <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning/roadworks-in-my-area>.

Question 12 – How satisfied are you with these aspects of SCC Highways works?



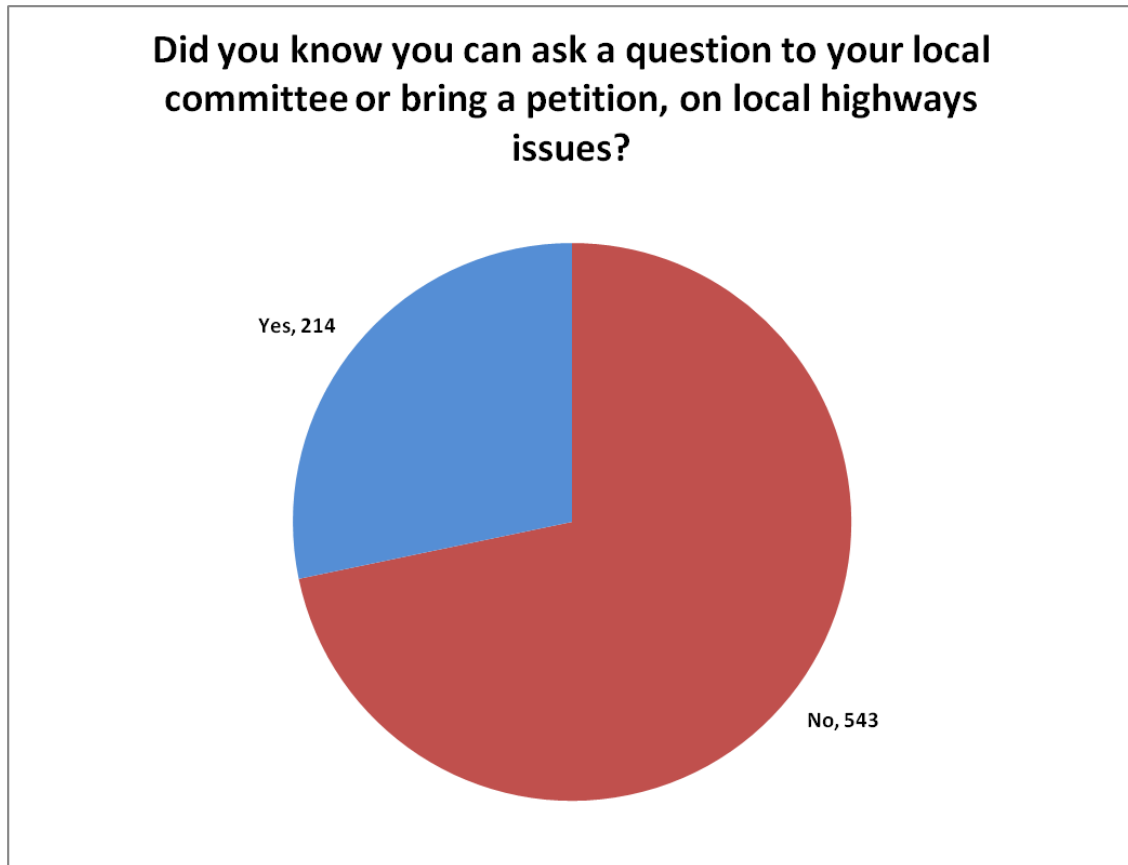
Three main themes concerning dissatisfaction appeared here with the condition of road surfaces, speed and quality of repairs to damaged roads and provision of drains all receiving high levels of dissatisfaction.

78% of panel members said they were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the condition of road surfaces in Surrey.

A large majority of panel members, 73%, indicated dissatisfaction with speed and 68% with quality of repairs to damaged roads. In order to monitor our repair work we have a compliance team in place to ensure that our contractors are carrying out repair works to timescale and to a high standard. Through key performance indicators (KPIs) and audits, alongside material testing in our laboratory we aim to ensure that we get the best work possible in the allocated timescales. Any remedial works that are required due to correct poor repair work is undertaken by our contractors, at no extra cost to us, as we pay a fixed sum as part of our contract and any remedial works do not affect our budgets.

Over half of panel members (53%) indicated they were dissatisfied with the way SCC keeps our drains clear and working. As a result of this we have now ordered three extra machines to help us deal with issues around blocked connections, jammed lids and the cleaning of soakaways. As we are coming into the winter period we are also currently investigating the possibility of utilising an extra machine, to help react to any emergency issues that may arise, whilst also helping with regular cleaning whilst no issues are present.

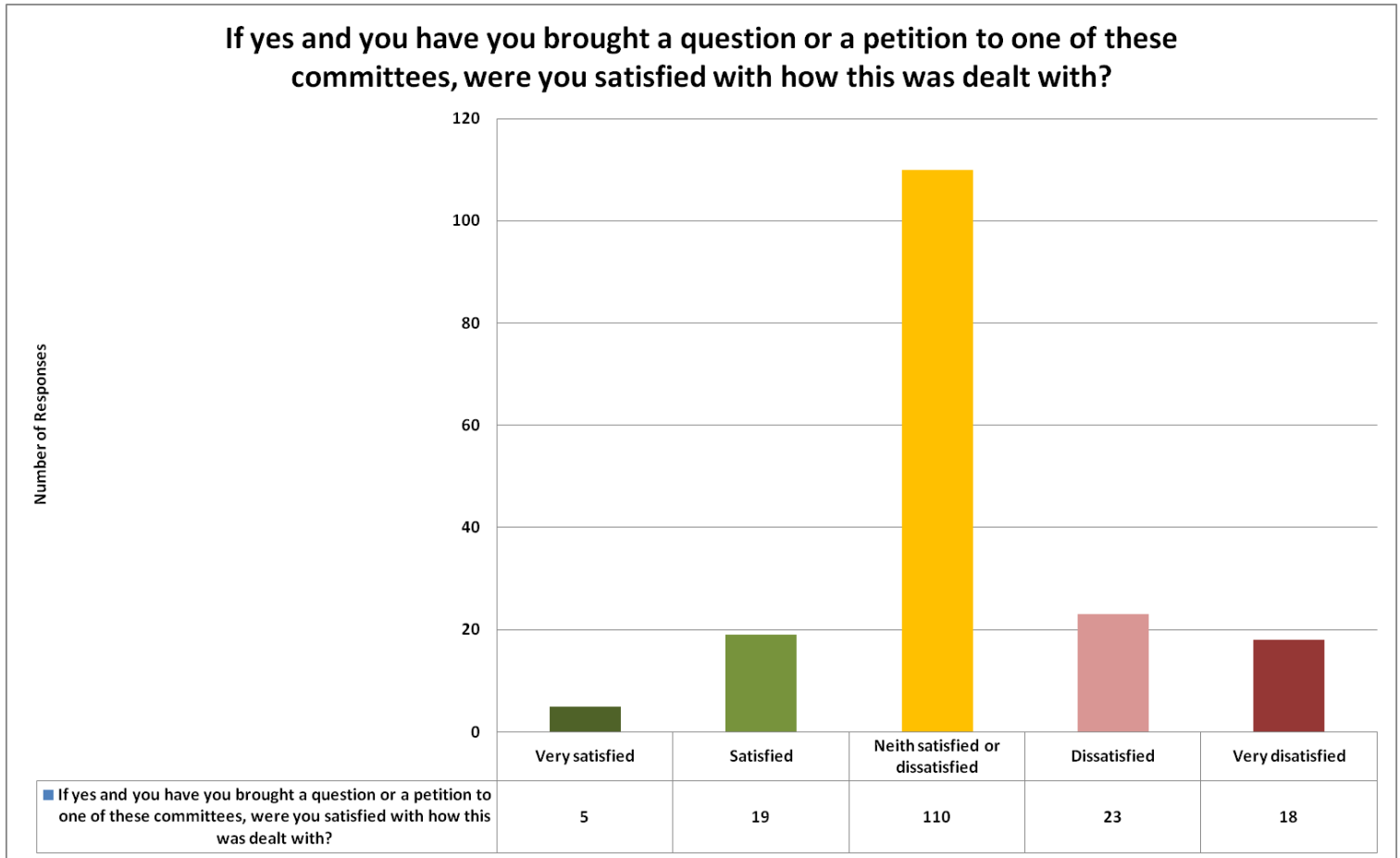
Question 13 – Did you know you can ask a question to your local committee or bring a petition, on local highways issues?



Only 28% of panel members said they are aware that our customers can ask a question or bring a petition to local committees. Each district has its own local committee, to find out more information about how you can get involved please see the following link, <http://www.surreycc.gov.uk/get-involved/your-local-area>, and select the appropriate area.

We have decided that we need to increase advertisement of our local committees, in order to promote involvement from our residents. To do this we will be making commitments in publicising the available committees, along with schedules and outcomes to show what outcomes they can achieve.

Question 14 – If yes and you have brought a question or a petition to one of these committees, were you satisfied with how this was dealt with?



We asked panel members to describe their experience of times when they had taken a comment or petition to their local committee, so that we could understand in more depth, where improvements can be made.

The comments have been gathered, and will be passed onto the appropriate team for analysis.

Summary

Trees and Vegetation

- 55% of members are satisfied with how we manage grass cutting. However 34% of panel members are dissatisfied with our hedge/bush management. We will be investigating the process regarding how we handle these issues.
- A minority of panel members have reported a vegetation issue to us, 28% for Tree, 11% for Grass and 23% for Hedge.
- 46% of members are satisfied with the ease of reporting issues; however satisfaction is significantly lower with speed and outcome of response. We will be working to improve the quality of response audits to ensure they are as comprehensive as possible.

Website and Highways Information Online

- Over a third of panel members regularly (monthly or more frequently) use Surrey Highways online service.
- 61% of panel members indicated that they find it relatively easy to gather information using our website.
- We have analysed improvement comments and passed them to web and digital services team within Surrey County Council. We are investigating possibility of having customer logins as well as a number of other features.
- 55% of panel members are aware of the Highways Information Online web page.
- Only 7% of panel members said they did not find the Highways Information Online web page informative.
- We have decided to publicise and make more accessible our roadworks in my area web page, as this is a key tool with various helpful features.
- We will investigate ways in which we can provide regular updates throughout the winter period with regard to maintenance.
- Promotion of our safety matrix will be paramount so customers can understand the ways in which we operate.

Customer Service

- 75% of customers are satisfied with how easy it is to contact SCC, down 2%.
- 71% indicated they were satisfied with the professionalism of our staff, showing our training methods are provided effectively.
- 32% of members are dissatisfied with the speed and quality of our responses, meaning we will ensure our audits are thorough making sure our officers provide comprehensive information to timescales.

Highways Roadworks

- 52% of panel members were not satisfied with the time it takes us to complete works, we monitor our contractors to ensure they are completing works to timescales.

- 46% of customers don't know about help to find out about roadworks, which is why we will be working to improve our roadworks in my area web page, as well as the advertisement of it.

Highways Works

- 78% of customers are dissatisfied with the condition of road surfaces within Surrey.
- 73% and 68% of customer declared dissatisfaction with speed and quality of repairs to damaged roads respectively. We monitor our contractors through audits and key performance indicators to ensure we receive the highest quality works within the set timescales. Any remedial works do not affect the cost to us or the tax payer as these are paid for by the contractor themselves.
- 53% of panel members indicated they were dissatisfied with the way SCC keeps our drains clear and working. Due to this we are investing in three extra machines to help deal with issues regarding blocked connections, jammed lids and the cleaning of soakaways.

Local Committees

- 28% of panel members are aware that they can ask a question or bring a petition to local committees. We need to increase advertisement of these committees to promote as much public involvement as possible.
- The comments regarding local committee experience have been passed to the appropriate team for analysis and action.

Surrey Highways Customer Panel – What to expect next

In the next survey we have decided to, following feedback from panel members, include many more open text questions to allow members to describe exactly why they have given the answers they have chosen and to help us pinpoint detailed areas for improvement.

We will send e-mails out to our members with any further details of updated information, as well as dates and information regarding any future surveys. These will contain any relevant links you will need.

Please send any questions you may have regarding this report or anything panel related to highways.customerpanel@surreycc.gov.uk.

If you feel anybody you know would be interested in joining the panel and giving us their feedback, please send them to <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highways-information-online/highways-customer-panel> and from there they can follow the link to sign up.

If for any reason you feel you no longer want to be a part of the Highways Customer Panel you can cancel your membership through the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=7ketzC3rIjy%2b4R4Pg4cOfw%3d%3d>

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all of us at Surrey Highways, to thank you for taking part in this Highways Customer Panel survey. I hope you enjoyed the experience and feel like the whole process has been productive. I very much look forward to the next instalments, and hope you are as excited as I am in shaping a better highways service for you, the customer.