# Residents' Survey 2024

Methodology

❏ Members were keen to understand the views of local residents, and find out their thoughts on their local area, local decision-making, local service provision and priorities for the town both now and in the future;

❏ An online survey was designed on Google forms for ease and at no cost;

❏ Survey consisted of 29 questions – mix of open and closed to assist with capturing key results and data, useful for analysis whilst also enabling residents to elaborate on their responses, for us to fully understand;

❏ The survey was promoted via the Uckfield Matters magazine (delivered to every household), social media pages, and via flyers and posters in the Civic Centre;

❏ Although an online survey, it was advised on the website and flyers that hard copies were available at the Civic Centre;

Analysis

❑A total of 173 responses were received online. This compares with the 138 received by the initial deadline of 2 December. We were hoping to reach 200 so in light of pressures on staffing during December, we extended the deadline to capture a greater number of responses;

❑With 6,456 households recorded for the parish in the 2021 census, this is a 2.7% response rate;

❑We are also aware that as the survey was online it picked up a handful of respondents who lived just outside of town;

❑For those questions where there were multiple responses, and more detailed data comparisons were required, the data was exported via excel to IBM SPSS Statistics to ensure the data captured was analysed accurately;
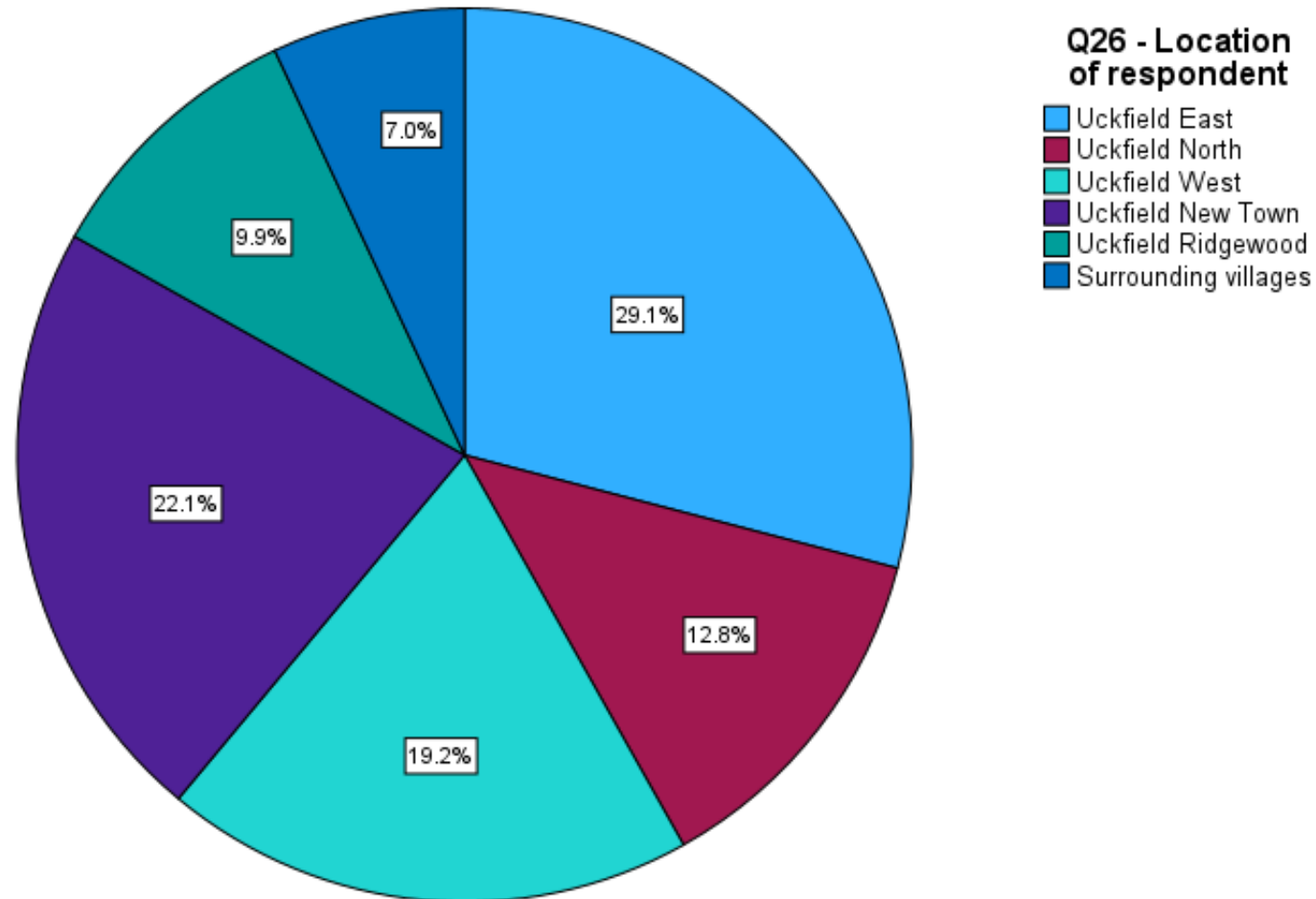
Demographics - Age

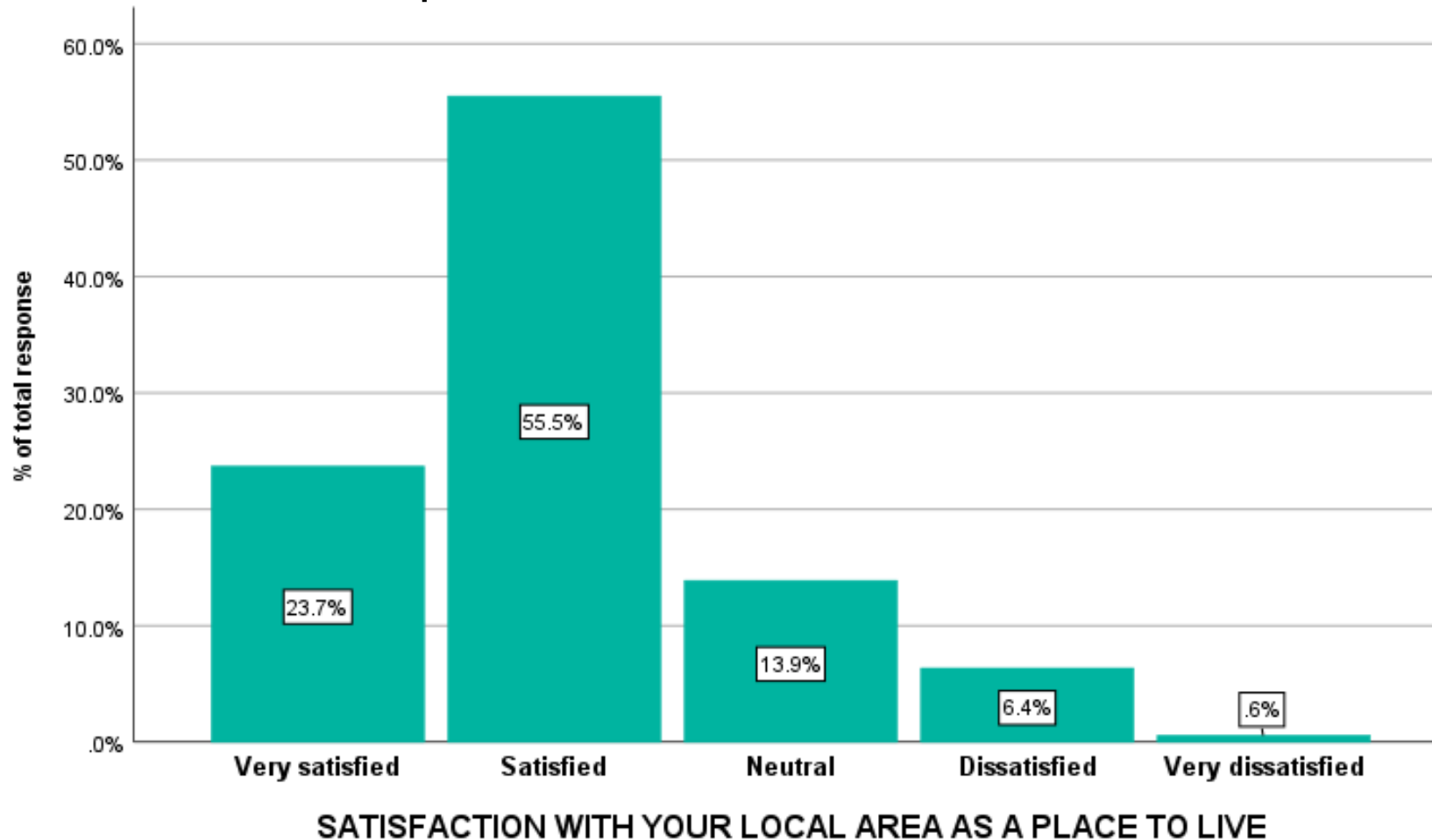Two thirds of respondents were aged 55 or over.
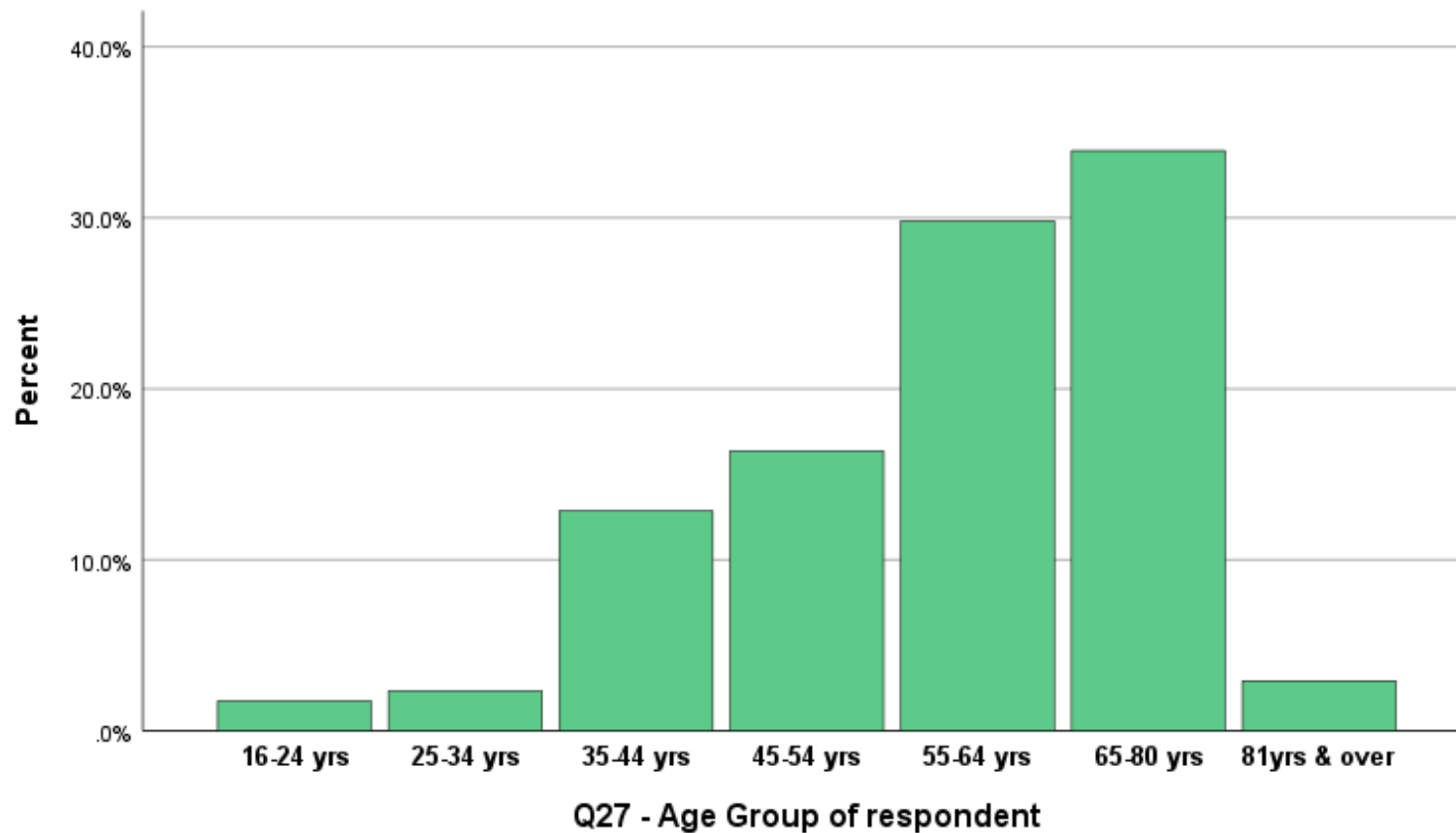
Demographics - Location

Most respondents were based in Uckfield East, West and New Town

Satisfaction with their local area as a place to live

79.2% of respondents were satisfied with their local area, compared with 7% who were dissatisfied.

Satisfaction with the local area

❑**Most satisfied residents** - Uckfield North (95.5%) and Uckfield West (93.9%)

❑**Least satisfied residents** - living in surrounding villages (50.0%) and Uckfield Ridgewood (70.6%)

❑**Most satisfied age group** - aged 81 or over (100.0%) and 45-54 years (82.1%).

❑**Least satisfied age group** – 16-24yrs (66.6%) and 35-44yrs (68.2%)

❑There was correlation that those dissatisfied with their local area, disagreed that they could influence decision-making

❑And of those dissatisfied, 70% had no children aged under 17 living within their household.

Satisfaction with the local area

❑**Top two things, respondents were most satisfied with:**
   (i) Community spirit (25.9%)

   (ii) Thriving High Street and variety of shops (15.5%)

Shortly followed by the open spaces in the town (13%)
and friendly people (13%)

❑**Top two things, respondents were least satisfied with:**
   (i) Parking capacity and parking enforcement (17.5%);

   (ii) Expansion of Uckfield through development (15.6%)

Shortly followed by the closure of retail and banking services (10.8%)
and traffic congestion (10.4%)

Satisfaction with the local area

"Great environment with a small town surrounded by countryside, and a good community spirit"

"The availability and accessibility of countryside and woodland surrounding the town.
The amenities - swimming pool, library, shops, children's playgrounds, pockets of green undeveloped land, industrial estate businesses."

"Lack of medical facilities (doctors, dentists etc) and poor parking on residential roads (people parking dangerously/on yellow lines/blocking access etc)"

"The state of the roads, pavements and twittens.
The state of our open spaces, there is always time to cut the grass on the football pitches but never enough to cut the grass on the rest of our open spaces, it is not all about football (twice a week in the season) other residents use our open spaces on a daily basis year round.
I would also like to see more waste bins in our open spaces."

Influencing local decision-making

27.8% of respondents agreed that they could influence local decision-making, compared with 35.9% who disagreed, and just over a third of respondents (36.4%) who neither agreed or disagreed.
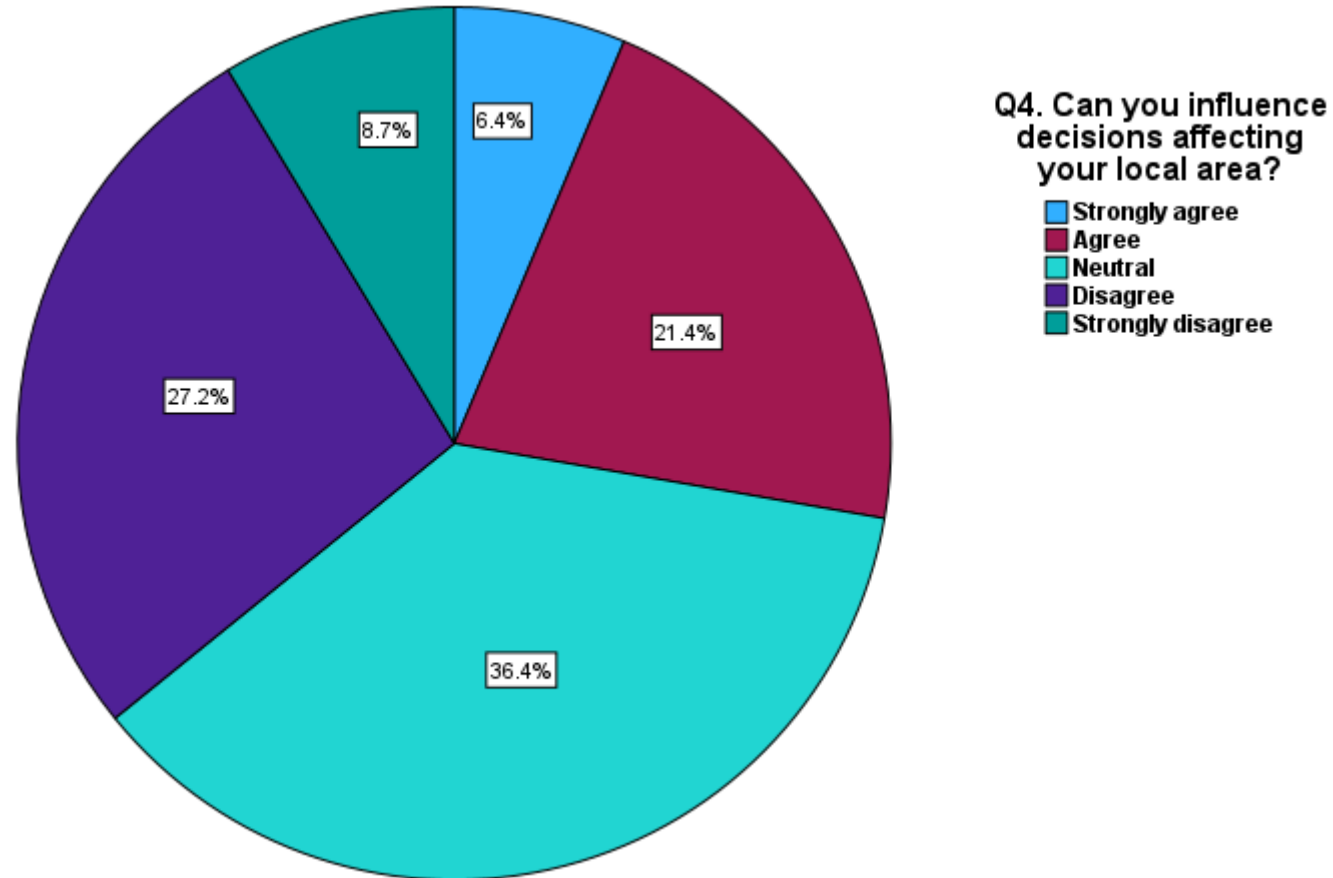
Influencing local decision-making

❑ **Respondents most agreeable to being able to influence decisions** - Uckfield West (33.3%) and Uckfield New Town (31.6%)

❑ **Respondents least agreeable to being able to influence decisions** - living in surrounding villages (8.3%) and Uckfield Ridgewood (23.5%)

❑ **Age group most in agreement** - aged 81 or over (40.0%) 16-24yrs (33.3%), and 45-54yrs (32.1%)

❑ **Age group least in agreement** – 35-44yrs (22.7%) and 25-34yrs (25.0%)

❑ Need to also realise that a good third of respondents had advised that they were neither nor (neutral) towards this question.

Preferred ways of getting involved

❑**Top two ways, respondents preferred to be involved in local-decision making:**
  (i) Consultations (23.0%)

  (ii) Social media (20.6%)

Shortly followed by public meetings (17.0%) and Council website (16.3%)

When analysing the responses by age group:
 - 65-80yrs – public meetings & consultations
 - 55-64yrs – social media and public meetings
 - 35-54yrs – social media and consultations
With 25-34yrs also preferring the council website and 16-24yrs also referring to e-bulletins.

Making contact with the Town Council

Of the 66 respondents who made contact with the Town Council in the past 12 months, nearly three quarters were satisfied with the service they received (71.2%).
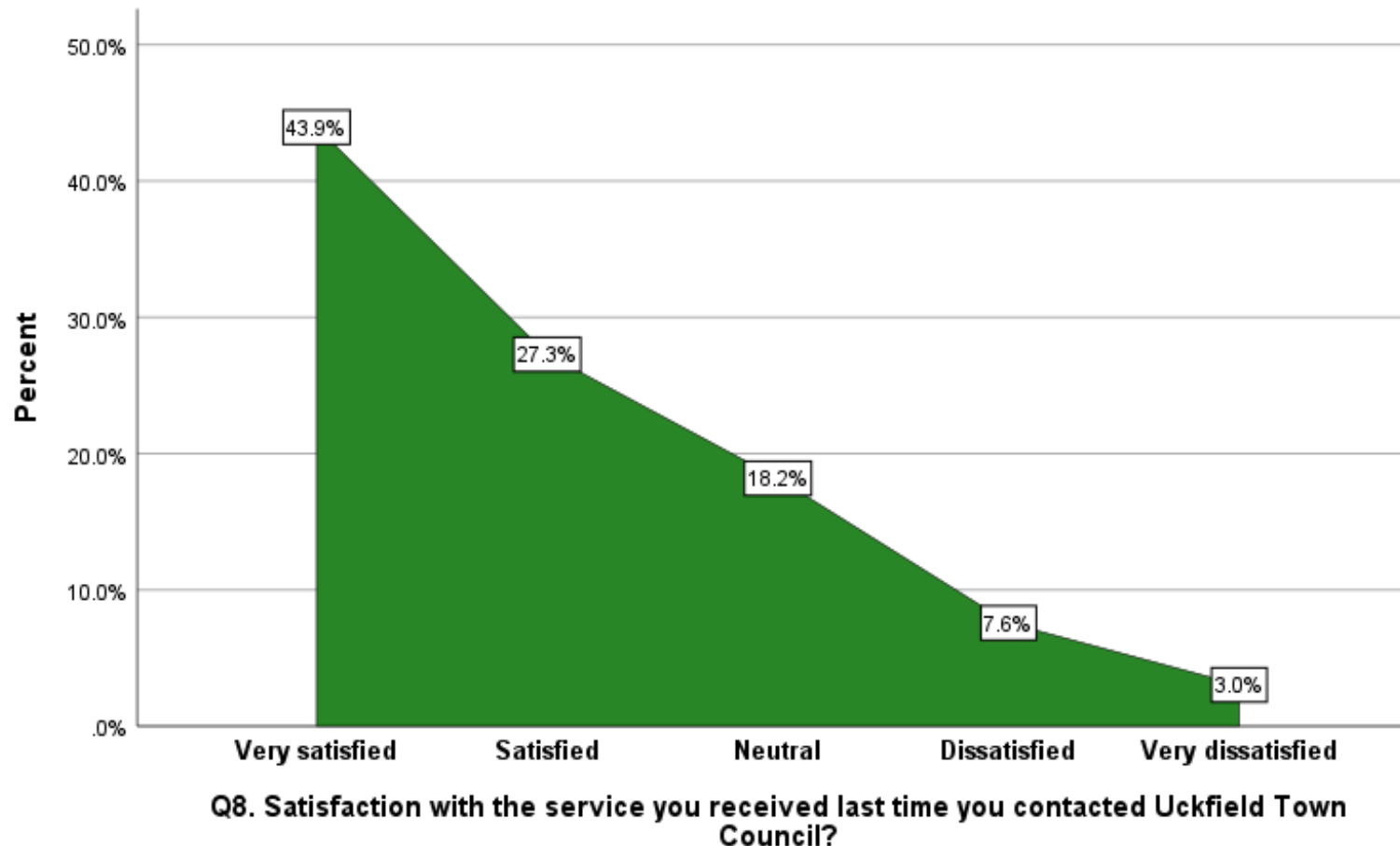
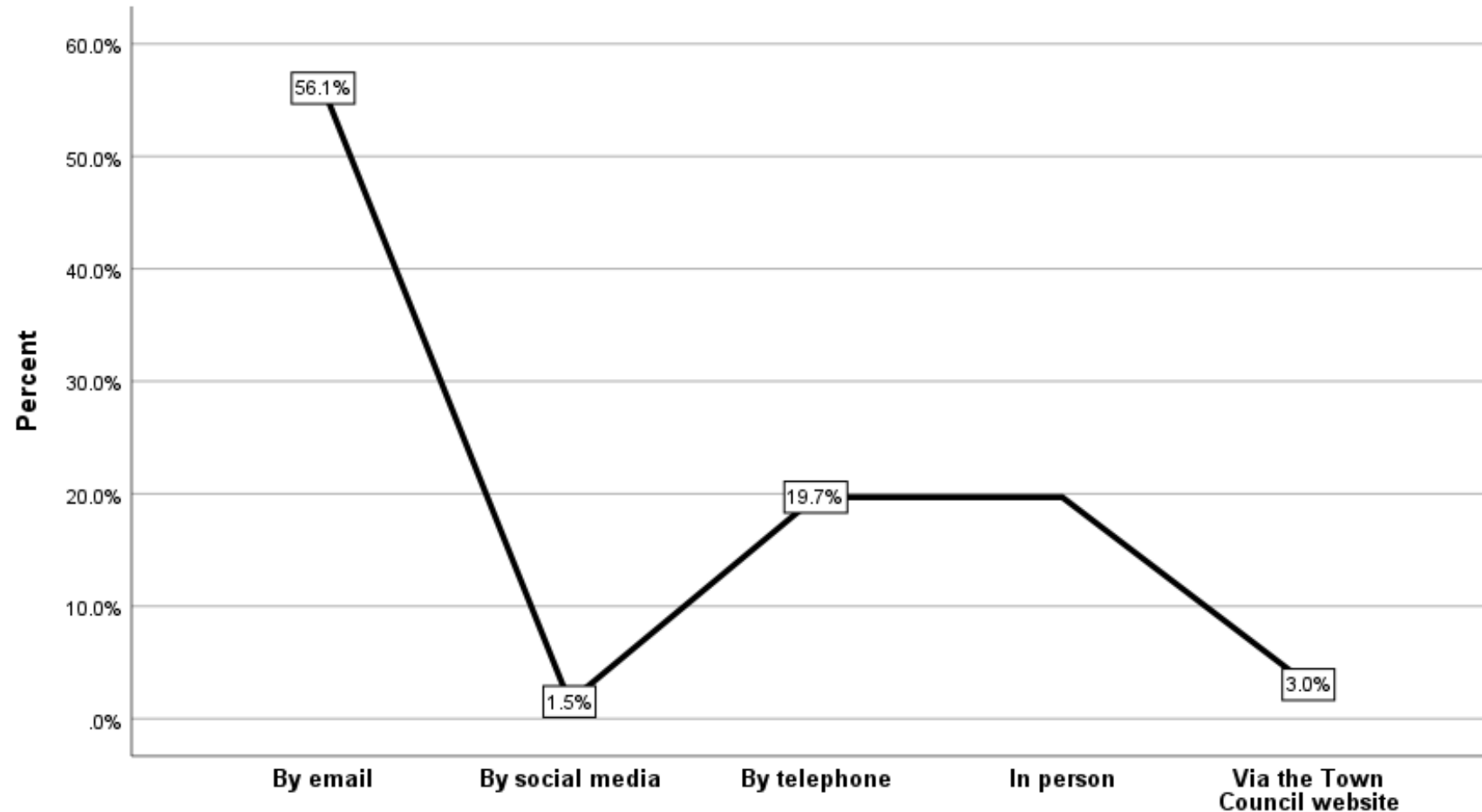Q8. Satisfaction with the service you received last time you contacted Uckfield Town Council?

Making contact with the Town Council

Of the 66 respondents who made contact with the Town Council in the past 12 months, just over half contacted the Council by email.

Q7. Of those who contacted the Council, what method of communication did they use

Preferred method of communication

❑**Top two ways, respondents prefer to receive communication and find out what's happening:**
  (i) Social media (43.9%)

  (ii) Uckfield Matters (23.4%)

Shortly followed by the Council website (11.7%).

Importance of work programmes for Town Council buildings

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Improvements to plumbing/heating	50.8%	13.9%	35.3%
Installation of renewable technologies	65.9%	9.8%	24.3%
Renting space at market value to increase income streams	65.4%	5.8%	28.9%
Providing space for community use	91.3%	-	8.7%
Installing modern technologies in Town Council buildings	78.7%	5.2%	16.2%
Improve internal decoration	46.8%	6.9%	46.2%
Invest in external fabric of building	61.9%	6.9%	31.2%
Resurface car parks adjacent to Town Council buildings	53.7%	8.1%	38.2%

1). **Providing space for community use**
2). **Installing modern technologies**
3). **Installation of renewable technologies**
4). **Renting space at market value to increase income streams**
5). **Invest in external fabric of building**

Importance of Grounds work programmes

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Maintenance and care of Snatts Road Cemetery	47.4%	14.4%	38.2%
Management of Town Council owned woodlands and handling of diseased trees	85.0%	2.9%	12.1%
Wildlife monitoring	67.0%	12.2%	20.8%
Maintenance and improvements to sports pitches	72.8%	6.4%	20.8%
Mowing open spaces and Town Council land	82.0%	4.6%	13.3%
Hedgecutting and general upkeep	87.3%	2.3%	10.4%
Creating wildflower areas and planting	75.7%	6.3%	17.9%
Providing and emptying/disposing of litter bins on Town Council land	96.5%	-	3.5%
Upgrading and routinely inspecting play areas	83.8%	4.0%	12.1%
Identifying space to increase cemetery provision	43.9%	13.9%	42.2%
Identifying space to increase allotment provision	50.8%	9.8%	39.3%
Planting trees or community orchards	72.6%	8.1%	19.1%

Importance of work programmes in Grounds services

1). Providing and emptying/disposing of litter bins on Town Council land
2). Hedgecutting and general upkeep
3). Management of Town Council owned woodlands and handling of diseased trees
4). Upgrading and routinely inspecting play areas
5). Mowing open spaces and Town Council land

Importance of community activities

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Civic Centre Events Programme	57.8%	9.8%	32.4%
Organising outdoor community events such as Weald on the Field	79.8%	5.2%	15.0%
Provision and maintenance of Town Centre CCTV	89.0%	3.4%	7.5%
Floral displays in the High Street	77.5%	3.5%	19.1%
Christmas lights in the Town Centre	87.9%	4.1%	8.1%
Funding community grants to community groups	82.1%	4.6%	13.3%
Providing community toilets in the Civic Centre and Victoria Ground	90.7%	2.9%	6.4%
Introducing a heritage plaque scheme for notable people or buildings	26.4%	24.9%	46.8%
Delivering projects to increase the town's tourism offer	50.9%	16.2%	32.9%
Lobbying for more banking presence or a banking hub	77.5%	5.8%	16.8%
Working with key partner agencies to address food poverty	72.3%	11.5%	16.2%

1). **Providing community toilets**
2). **Provision and maintenance of Town Centre CCTV**
3). **Christmas lights in the Town Centre**
4). **Funding community grants to community groups**
5). **Organising outdoor community events such as Weald on the Field**

Importance of future improvements to Transport and Access

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Access to local bus and town-based shuttle services	83.2%	3.5%	13.3%
Increasing the frequency of train services	80.3%	4.7%	15.0%
Supporting reinstatement of the railway line (U&L)	72.8%	11.5%	15.6%
Developing a walk adjacent to the River Uck	74.6%	6.3%	19.1%
See creation of a Greenway between U&L	72.9%	7.6%	19.7%
Improving existing and creating new footways/cycleways	78.0%	4.7%	17.3%

1). Access to local bus and town-based shuttle services
2). Increasing frequency of train services
3). Improving existing and creating new footways/cycleways

Importance of future improvements to Environment & Health

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
Improving the quality of the River Uck, and local watercourses	85.5%	1.2%	13.3%
Preserving the town's green corridors	91.9%	0.0%	8.1%
Adding signage and markers to open spaces (e.g walking distances and activities)	65.9%	7.6%	26.6%
Creating a Local Biodiversity Action Plan – recording species and plants	69.9%	11.0%	19.1%
Making applications to Natural England and DEFRA to ensure important green spaces are designated	84.4%	1.7%	13.9%

1). **Preserving the town's green corridors**
2). **Improving the quality of the River Uck and local watercourses**
3). **Making applications to Natural England and DEFRA to ensure important green spaces are designated.**

Importance of future improvements to Infrastructure and Recreation

Work programme	Important	Not important	Neutral
New developments providing sport and recreation space	72.9%	5.8%	21.4%
New developments providing allotment land	55.5%	12.7%	31.8%
Improving existing football pitches, and facilities	61.3%	12.1%	26.6%
Improving existing cricket pitch, and facilities	52.1%	14.5%	33.5%
Improving the skate park	44.5%	14.5%	41.0%
Providing further sports pavilions to support increased usage of the pitches	50.9%	16.8%	32.4%
Providing further sports ground (i.e. grass or 3G pitches)	43.4%	18.5%	38.2%
Providing an athletic track	39.3%	24.9%	35.8%
Creating a website or mapping tool to display key facilities and maps of Uckfield	58.4%	14.5%	27.2%

1). **New developments providing sport and recreational space**
2). **Improving existing football pitches and facilities**
3). **Mapping tool to display key facilities and maps of Uckfield**

How often respondents visit the Town Centre

Over a third of respondents visited the Town Centre every day (37.6%) and a further 56.6% visited at least once a week.
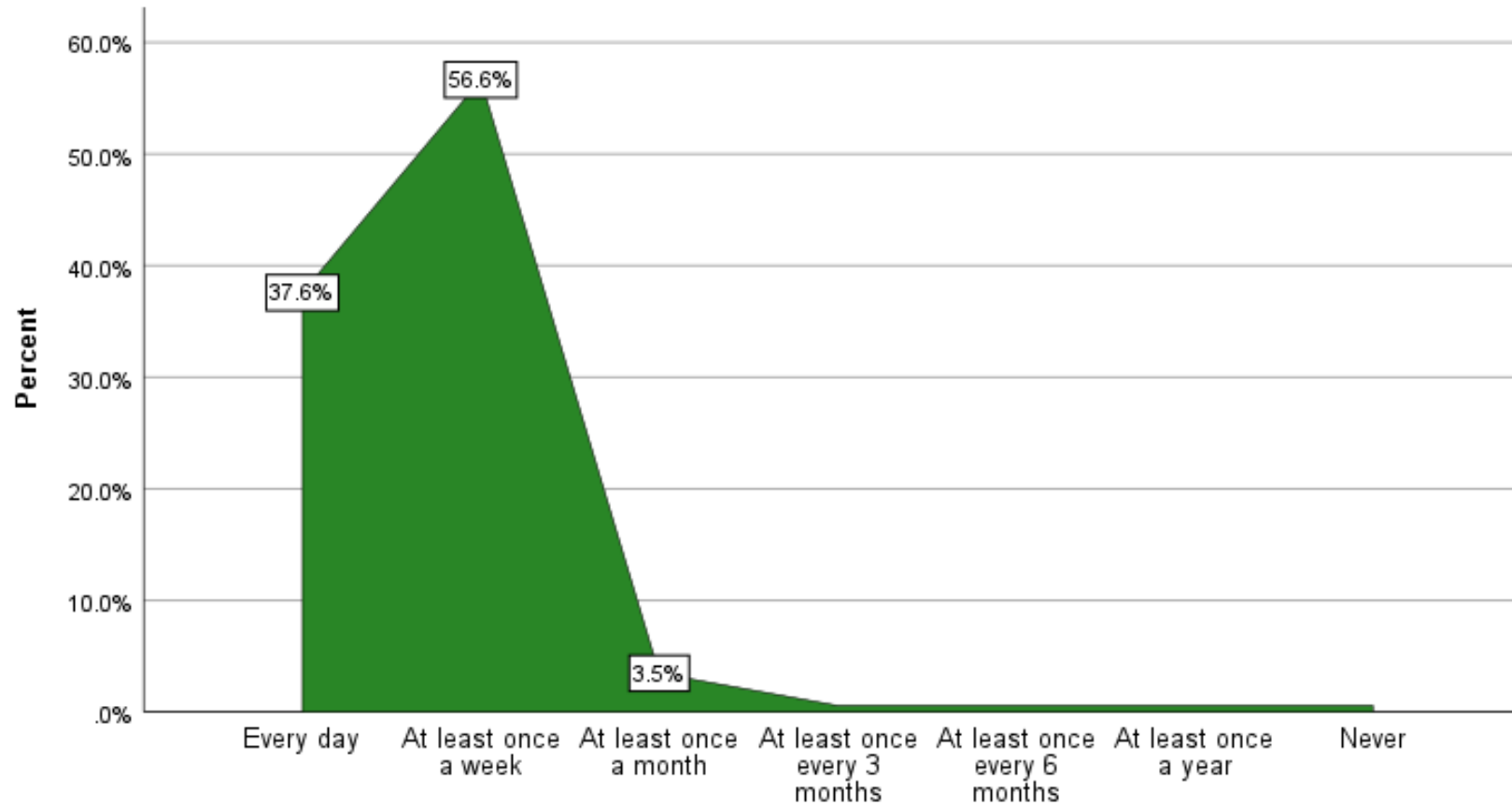
Q21 - How often respondents visit the town

Paying for parking in the Town Centre

Residents were asked:

"We are fortunate to have free on and off street parking in Uckfield - in Luxford and Regency Close car parks, supermarket car parks, and on-street parking bays. Looking to the future, would you be willing to pay for parking in any of the following circumstances"

(i)   On-street parking only (33.8%)

(ii)   Not willing to pay (26.3%)

(iii) Resident Parking permits (12.8%)

(iv) Both – on and off street (9.8%)

(v)   Off-street parking only (9.0%)

(vi) Other parking comments (8.3%)

Distance and travel to work
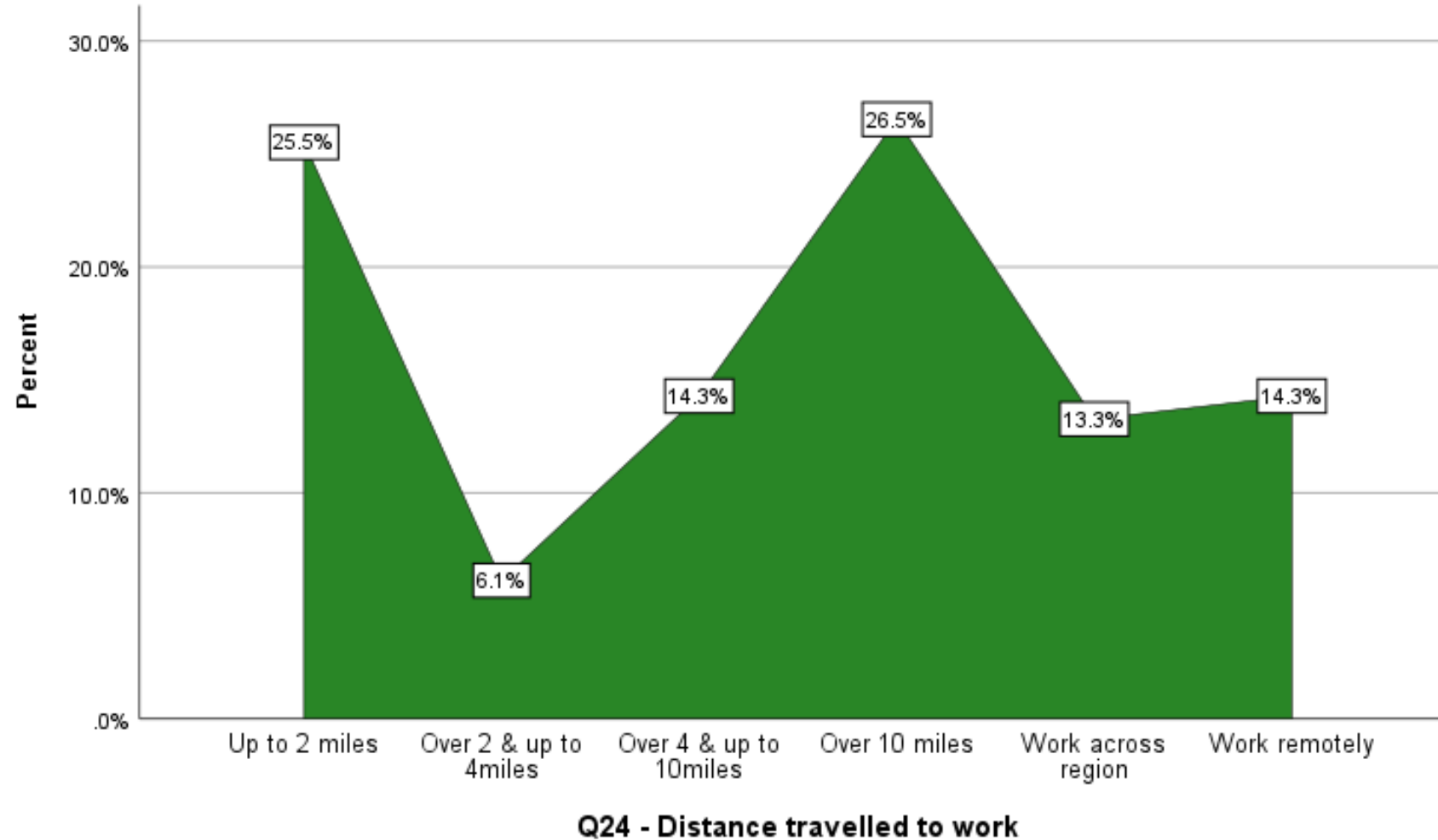
Travel to work

(i)   Car/van (on own) (52.1%)

(ii) Walk (17.6%)

(iii) Train (11.8%)

A large proportion of residents also worked remotely or hybrid (so part week at home, and part week in their place of employment.

Next steps

❑Senior mgrs and Town Councillors to review the comments and report;

❑Ensure priority given to those areas we can focus our attention on;

❑Communication of results;

❑Further polls on specific issues of interest;