



SOUTH LONDON WASTE PARTNERSHIP

Report to: South London Waste Partnership Joint Committee

Date: 4 February 2020

Report of: South London Waste Partnership Management Group

Author(s):
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Chair of the Meeting: Councillor Stuart Collins

Report Title:

**Findings of Social Research Project:
'Measuring resident perceptions of recycling &
waste management 2019'**

Summary

This paper summarises the findings of a social research project carried out by an independent research company on behalf of the South London Waste Partnership in 2019. The research project investigated the attitudes and behaviours of local residents in relation to a wide range of recycling, waste management and waste treatment issues. The findings will play an important role in evaluating the success of our communications and engagement activities and in developing the 2020-2023 Communications Strategy for the Partnership.

Recommendations

The Committee is asked to note the findings of the social research project.

1. BACKGROUND

- 1.1 In July 2019, following a competitive tendering process, the South London Waste Partnership commissioned DJS Research to conduct social research on its behalf.
- 1.2 The aim of the research project was to obtain an independent, representative and robust measurement of resident perceptions of waste management across the Partnership region and to use benchmarking data from 2010, 2013 and 2016 comparable research projects to identify trends in opinions and behaviours.

2. KEY FINDINGS

- 2.1 A summary of the findings from the 2019 research project can be found at Appendix A.
- 2.2 Members of the Joint Waste Committee will be provided with a presentation of the findings at the Committee meeting.

3. NEXT STEPS

- 3.1 The findings from this research project will:
 - Help the Partnership in managing contracts with its commercial partners and evaluate the effectiveness of their communications and engagement activities
 - Enable the Partnership to monitor trends in resident attitudes and opinions on important issues such as landfill and alternative waste treatment methods, using benchmarking data from the 2010, 2013 and 2016 surveys
 - Provide elected members and senior officers from the four Partnership boroughs with balanced, objective information about the views of local people with regard to waste management and treatment
 - Provide robust data against which to measure the 'SMART' objectives set in the 2017-2019 SLWP Communications Strategy – this will be presented at the next meeting of the Joint Waste Committee
 - Inform the 2020-2023 Communications Strategy for the Partnership.

4. IMPACTS AND IMPLICATIONS

Legal

- 4.1 None

Finance

- 4.2 A £25,000 annual Communications Budget is available to support communications and engagement activities. An additional £40,000 was approved in the 2019/20 SLWP Communications Budget to pay for the social research study.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 5.1 The Committee is asked to note the contents of this report.

APPENDIX A

Summary of the findings from the 2019 research project:

'Measuring resident perceptions of recycling & waste management 2019'



SOUTH LONDON
WASTE PARTNERSHIP

2019 Resident Survey Findings and observations

John Haynes
Communications Advisor



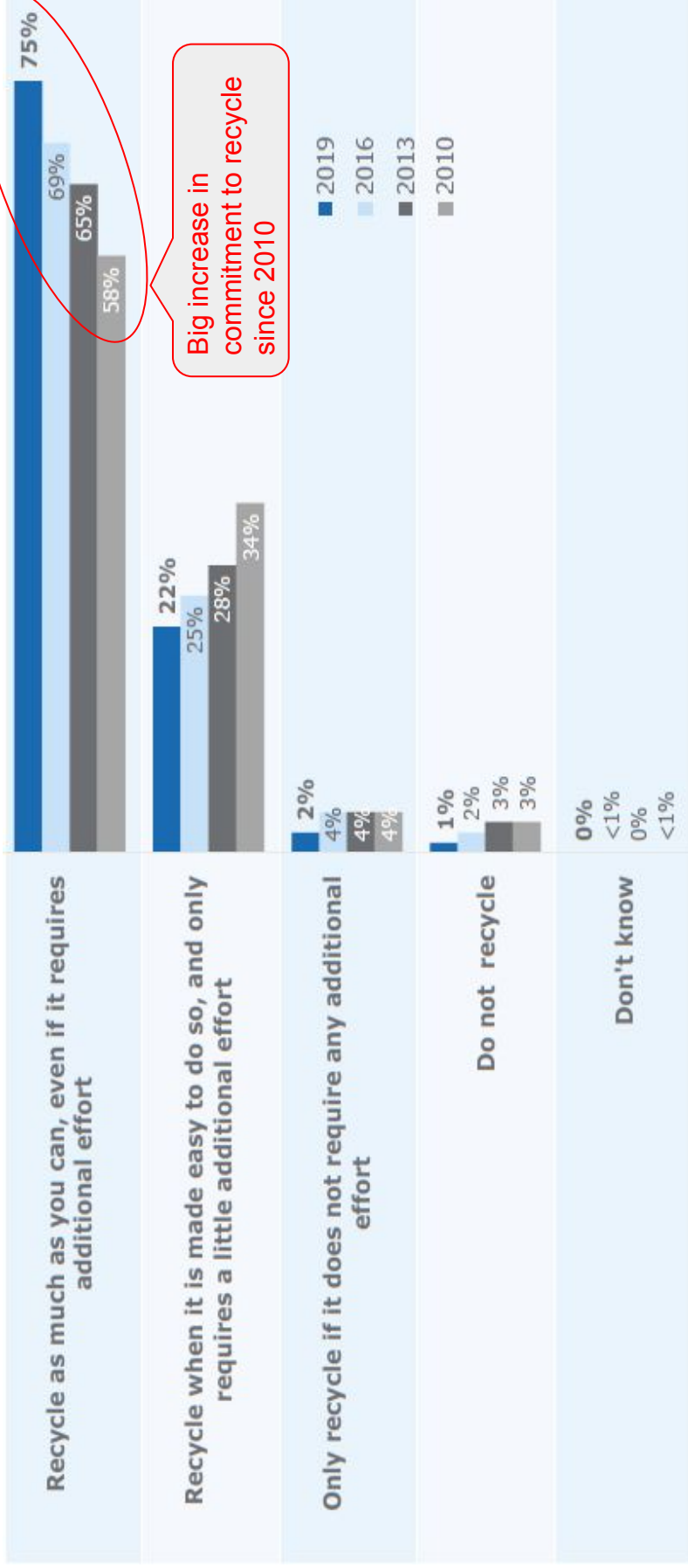
Methodology

- Conducted by leading independent research company, DJS Research
- 1,052 telephone interviews conducted (July-September 2019)
- Quotas (to ensure representative sample) set at a borough level by ward, age, gender and working status
- Findings subject to standard error of +/- 3% at the 95% confidence level
- 350 booster surveys conducted within the locality* of Beddington Landfill and Energy Recovery Facility sites - to see if views differ from the area as a whole
- Results compared against findings from 2010, 2013 and 2016 surveys where significant differences exist

** Residents who live in the six nearest wards: Beddington North, Wandle Valley, Broad Green, West Thornton, Cricket Green and Pollards Hill.*

Commitment to recycling continues to strengthen

Which of these statements best describes your attitude to recycling?



Millennials - still work to do, but the message is getting through

16-34 year-olds are still the least committed to recycling, but 61% is a big increase from the 54% recorded against the same age group in 2016.

Attitude to recycling by age

	16-34	35-44	45-54	55-64	65+
Recycle as much as you can, even if it requires additional effort	61%	82%	80%	81%	84%
Recycle when it is made easy to do so, and only requires a little additional effort	34%	17%	17%	16%	13%
Only recycle if it does not require any additional effort	4%	1%	2%	3%	1%
Do not recycle	2%	0%	1%	0%	1%
<i>Base: All respondents</i>	152	120	220	210	350

Less waste, more recycling - impact of service change

Do you think you produce more, less or about the same amount of waste as you did this time last year?



Big increase in number of people who say they are recycling more...

Would you say you recycle more, less or about the same as you did this time last year?



...and wasting less

Attitudes to recycling - a mixed bag

Concerning - despite increased efforts to recycle, people seem doubtful that their efforts are worthwhile. Perhaps they do it (recycle) because they 'know it's the right thing to do' but they are concerned their efforts are just a 'drop in the ocean'?



Encouraging - trust in the role of local councils in recycling continues to improve.

Interesting - as people make more effort to recycle, their desire for information about recycling also grows.

More realistic views on recycling rates

Residents now have a more accurate view on current borough recycling rates. A 10% difference in 2016 (50% cf. 40%) has now become a 3% difference in 2019 (45% cf. 48%).

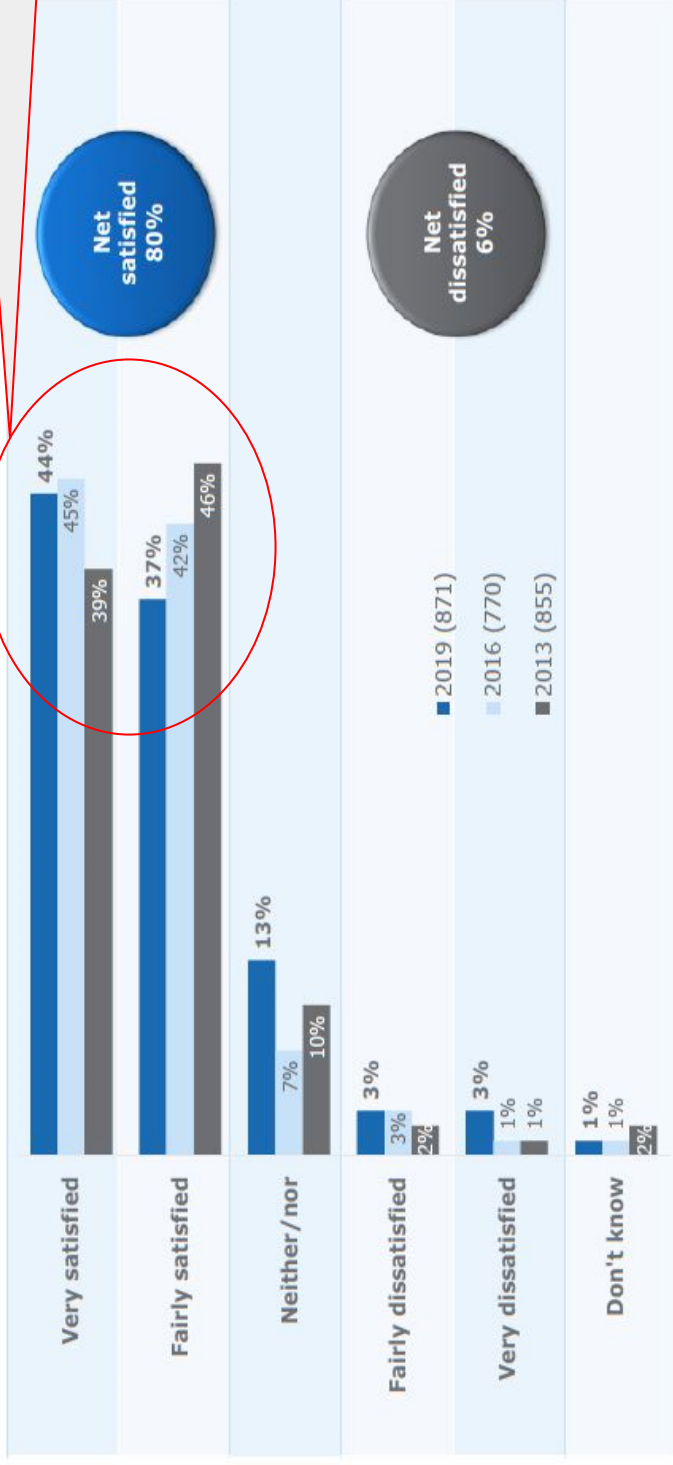


More accurate view on current recycling rates has led to more realistic ambitions for the future.

HRRCs - satisfaction down slightly

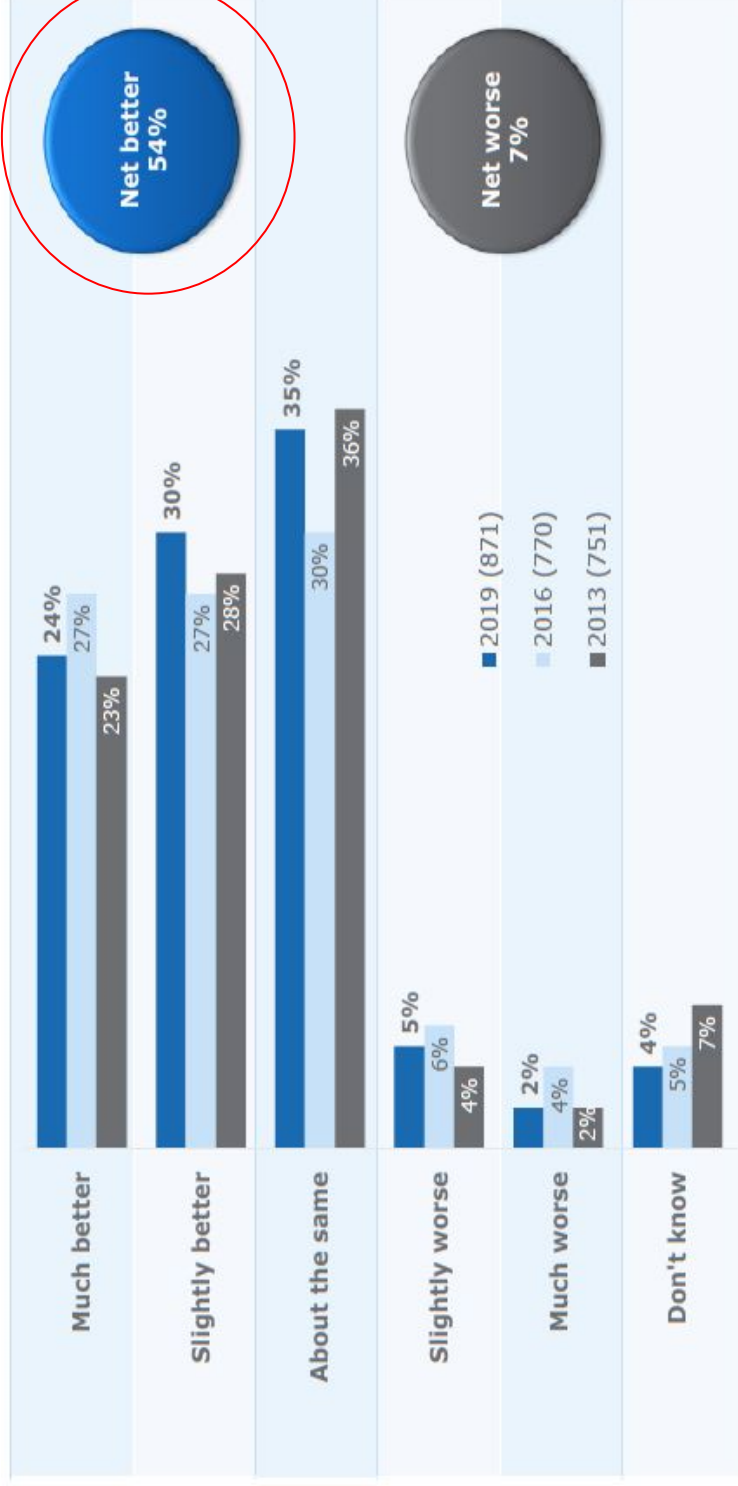
How satisfied are you with the service provided by your local tip?

Satisfaction with HRRC's remains high but has dropped from 86% in 2016 to 80% in 2019.



HRRCs - services improving

Thinking about the last few years, has the service at your local tip got better or worse?

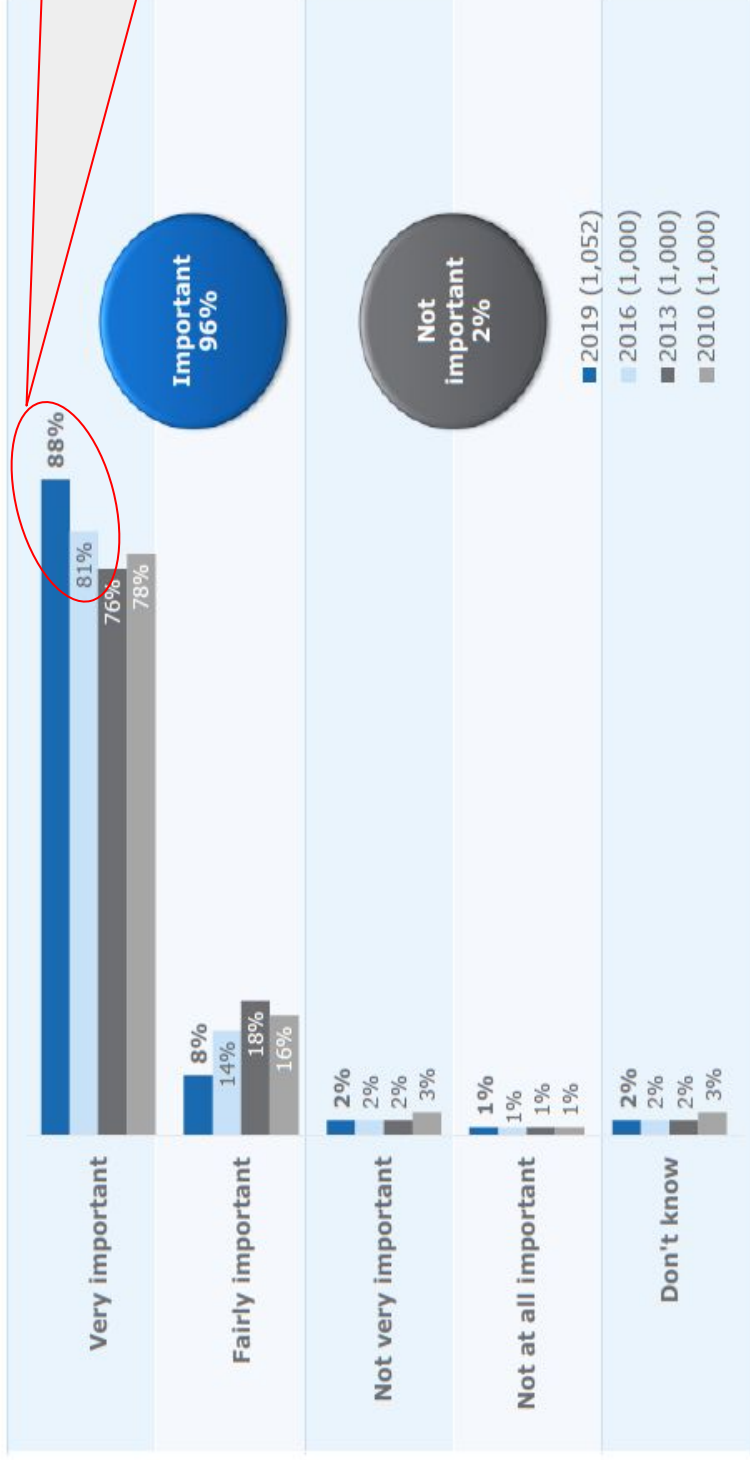


Despite the small drop in satisfaction rates, residents believe HRRC services have improved in recent years.

Perhaps expectations are rising faster than standards?

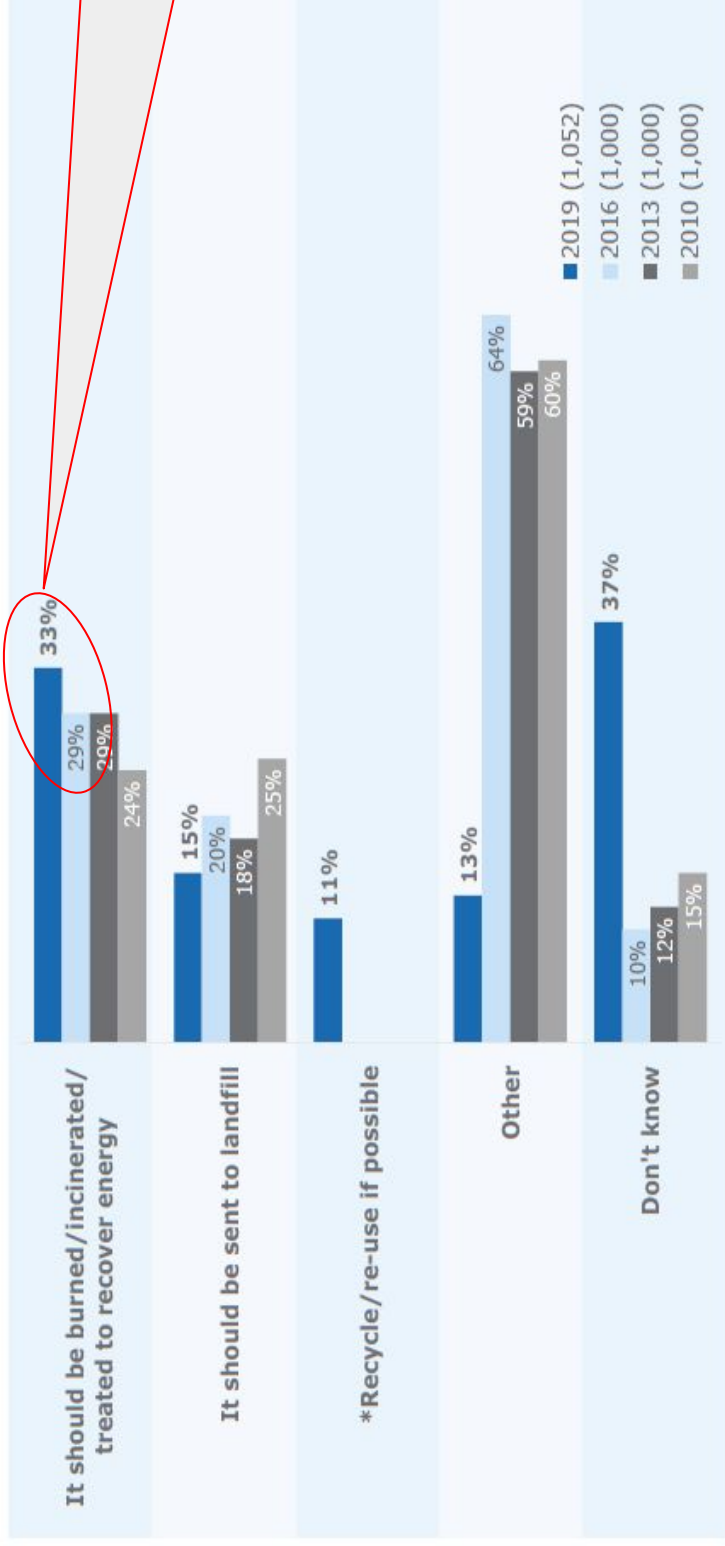
Landfill - strengthening support to find alternatives

How important, if at all, do you think it is to send less waste to landfill?



Energy recovery still seen as best option for waste

Once we have reduced, reused and recycled as much as we can, it is inevitable that some waste will be left over. What do you think should be done with this non-recyclable waste?

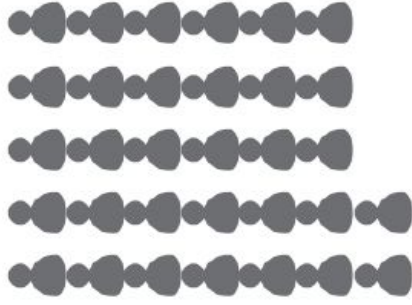


Awareness of Beddington ERF on the rise

Are you aware that an Energy Recovery Facility has been built in Beddington, Sutton?

Awareness of Beddington ERF across SLWP (32%) region hasn't changed significantly since 2016 (30%). But large variation between boroughs: Sutton: 51% / Croydon: 32% / Merton: 25% / Kingston: 16%.

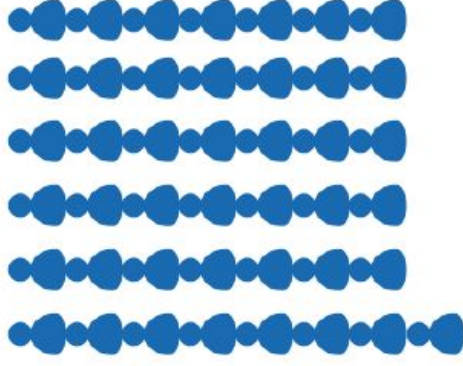
Core



32%
aware

Higher awareness (43%) in six Wards closest to the Beddington site.

Booster



43%
aware

Beddington ERF - controversial or not?

When prompted, ERF is still seen as a good option for non-recyclable waste, but support has diminished slightly since 2016.

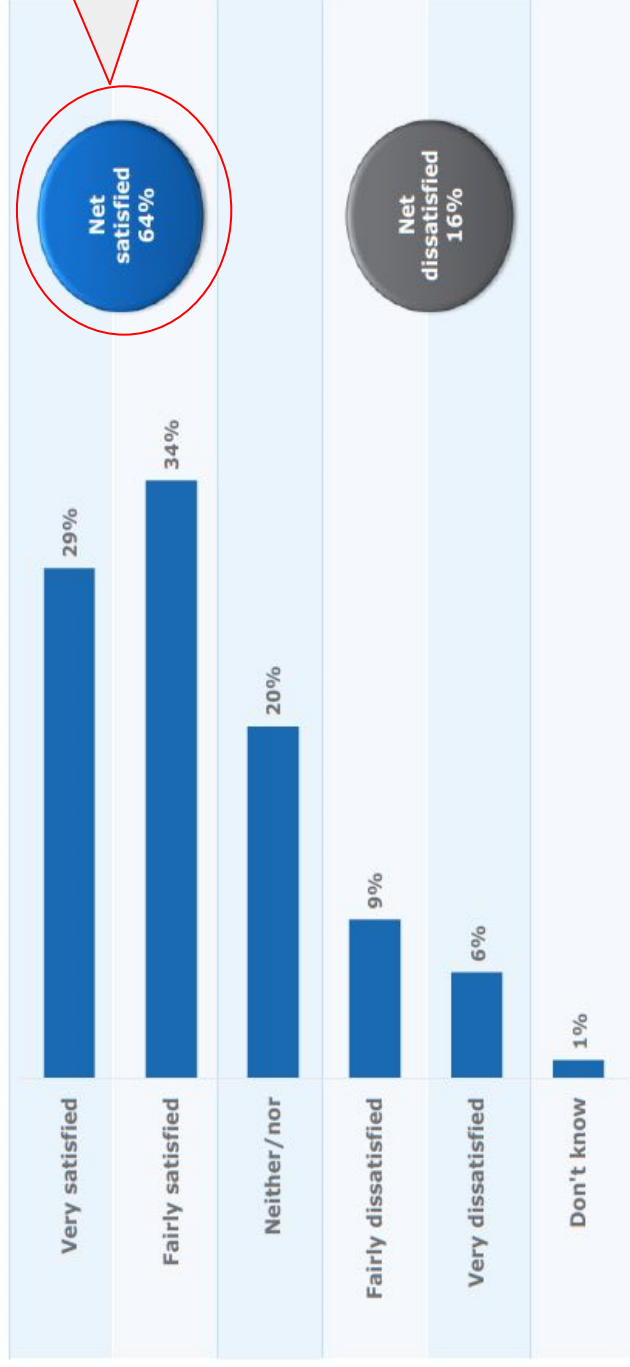


Support for ERFs is slightly higher in six Wards closest to Beddington site.

■ Don't know ■ Strongly disagree ■ Tend to disagree ■ Neither/nor ■ Tend to agree ■ Strongly agree

Satisfaction with collection service

Overall, how satisfied are you with your recycling and waste collection service?

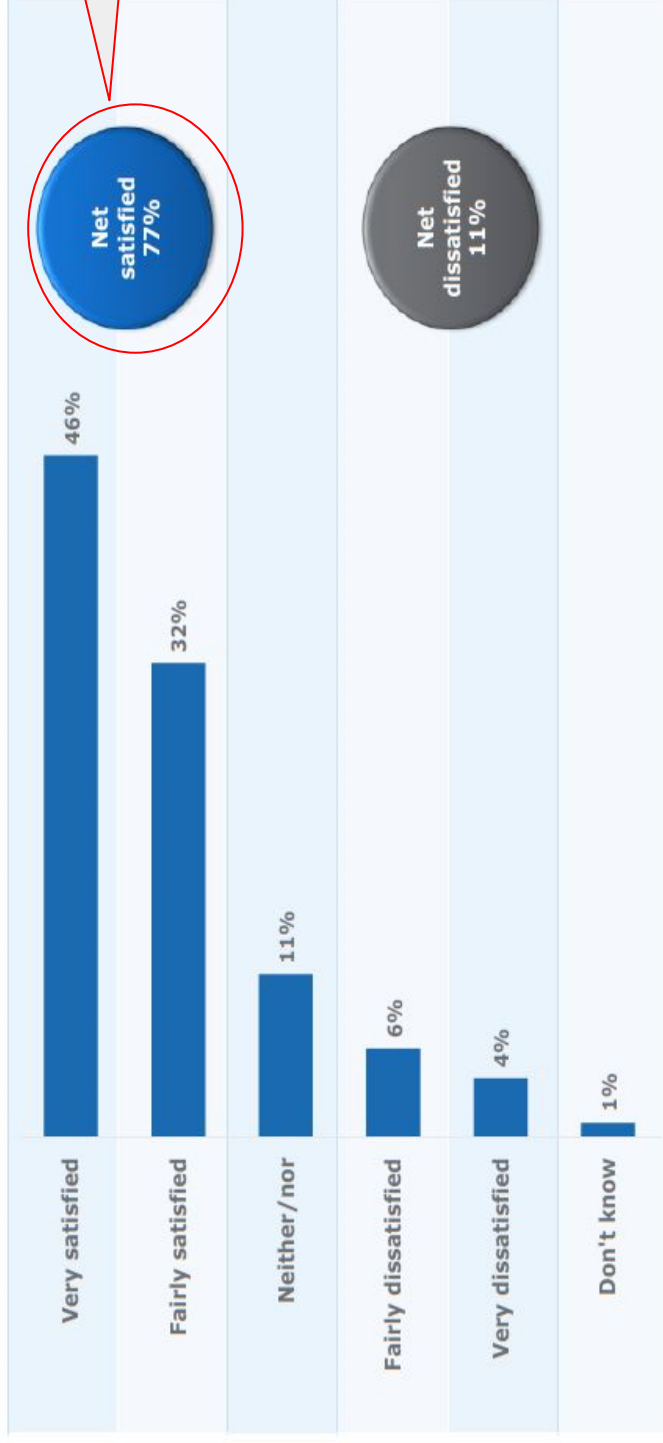


Satisfaction rates are directly linked to how recently and how substantially the collection service has changed; satisfaction is highest in Kingstons, where the service has not changed significantly in 10 years.

Satisfaction with garden waste service

Three in ten respondents subscribe to the garden waste service. Most common reasons for not subscribing: Don't produce enough garden waste (20%), Too expensive (20%) No garden (19%) and, Easier to take to HRRC (18%)

Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your garden waste collection service?



Satisfaction with street cleanliness

Q40. Overall, how satisfied are you with the cleanliness of the streets in your area?



Satisfaction with street cleanliness is low (particularly in town centres).

Q41. And thinking about the cleanliness of the streets in your local area over the last two years, would you say they have...



More people feel street cleanliness has got worse than better.

Conclusions

Challenges:

- Satisfaction with street cleanliness and recycling & waste collections
- Increased demand for information on recycling
- Residents concerned that their efforts are not worthwhile and don't 'make a difference'

Reasons to be encouraged:

- Increased commitment to recycle
- Younger residents are making more effort to recycle
- Trust in councils is improving
- More accurate view of current recycling rates and realistic targets for the future
- Strong support to find alternatives to landfill (energy recovery seen as a sensible option)
- High awareness of Beddington ERF in Wards surrounding the Beddington site and strong levels of support for energy recovery as an alternative to landfill.