

From: Matthew Balfour, Cabinet Member – Environment and Transport
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To: Environment and Transport Cabinet Committee – 21 July 2015

Subject: **Results from the Highways, Transportation & Waste Annual Satisfaction Survey 2014**

Classification: **Unrestricted**

Electoral Division: **All**

Summary:

This report informs Cabinet Committee of the key results of the 2014 Resident, County Member and Parish/Town Council Highways, Transportation & Waste Satisfaction Survey. The full survey report is published on the KCC website.

Recommendations:

The Cabinet Committee is asked to **consider and comment** on the results from the Highways, Transportation & Waste Annual Satisfaction Survey 2014

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Satisfaction surveys to gauge perception of the highway service have been carried out since 1987. The 2014 survey was undertaken between November 2014 and January 2015 and sought views from residents, County Members and Parish/Town Councils.
- 1.2 The survey is designed to give an overall view of the service through the eyes of residents and elected representative bodies. The community voice is represented through Parish/Town Councils and County Members.
- 1.3 An independent market research company called BMG research was used to undertake the specialist face to face survey work with residents. All other survey work was undertaken by Highways, Transportation & Waste staff.
- 1.4 A summary of the results are presented in this report. This information will be used by the Director and his Divisional Management team to identify actions to help improve service delivery.
- 1.5 A total of 1,205 face to face interviews were carried out on a representative sample of Kent residents with approximately 100 interviews in each of the twelve Districts, reflecting age, gender and economic status. This sample size gives us a + or –2.8% accuracy of results at a County level and + or –10% for District results.

- 1.6 A total of 36 County Members responded (a response rate of 43%) and for Parish/Town Councils a total of 131 completed the survey (a response rate of 44%).
- 1.7 The survey comprised around 30 questions, ranging from satisfaction with the condition of roads, footways, streetlights and the cleaning of road drains through to views on congestion and road safety problem sites, safety cameras, the service delivered if customers have contacted us about a fault and, for the first time, questions on Waste Services provided by KCC.

2. Key findings from the 2014 survey results

- 2.1 To ensure independence in the analysis of the survey results BMG research was also commissioned to identify key issues emerging from the three stakeholder groups. The graphs in the following appendix present the results as the average % satisfied (solid green line) and % dissatisfied (dashed red line) across the three key stakeholder groups (Residents, County Members and Parish/Town Councils). Results will not add up to 100% as respondents are also offered a neither satisfied nor dissatisfied option if they have no strong positive or negative views. Across all stakeholder groups the full report highlights;

- a) Whilst 77% of residents **know how to report a fault** only 12% have actually reported a highway problem in the last 12 months. In terms of Members and Parishes 100% have reported faults.
- b) Across all three key stakeholders **respondents who have reported a fault** are more likely to indicate they were satisfied than dissatisfied. However for each of the three groups the proportion satisfied is a little lower than 2013, although the decline is only noticeable amongst County Members (from 85% to 72% satisfied).
- c) **District Managers and their Steward teams** continue to offer valuable liaison with community representatives, be it County Members or Parish Councils. Since their inception satisfaction levels have been strong and are now at 89% from Members and 68% from Parish/Town Councils.
- d) **Satisfaction with the Annual Parish Events** is the highest thus far recorded at 78% and the events provide a useful networking opportunity, although ideas for further improvement were noted by Parish/Town Councils.
- e) The key issue when considering the **condition of roads** remains potholes and flooding and these are the same as in 2013. Amongst Residents and Parish/Town Councils satisfaction has generally increased but County Members are comparatively more critical, particularly with the condition of town/village centre roads.

- f) Satisfaction with the **condition of footways** amongst Residents and Parish/Town Councils has improved but again there has been a decline in satisfaction levels amongst County Members, even more severe than that reported with roads. The two key areas of concern are unevenness and cracking.
- g) **Streetlighting** has been a positive indicator previously although compared to 2013 satisfaction levels have declined amongst all three groups. This decline is again most acute amongst County Members (down to 53% from 72% in 2013). Whilst the question posed asked views on streetlight 'repairs' the key improvements to service relate mainly to a lack of lighting and the need for them to be on for longer.
- h) Attitudes towards highway **drain and gully cleaning** has also declined amongst community representatives (19% Members satisfied and only 8% Parish/Town Councils satisfied). However Resident's satisfaction has increased to 71%.
- i) In terms of **Safety Cameras** "helping to make roads safer across Kent" there has been an increase across all three groups of those who agree with the statement. This increase is strongest in Residents up to 69% with Members at 59% and Parish Councils at 53%.
- j) Overall 51% of residents have used a **Household Waste Recycling Centres** in the last 12 months, with 96% of users expressing satisfaction.

2.2 Examples of some of the main results included in the full report are set out in Appendix 1. Figures 1-10 show the Residents views compared to the views of the combined County Members/Parish Town Council satisfaction results for Roads, Footways, Streetlights, Drainage and Satisfaction with Service Received (as these are reported at a Countywide level they have an accuracy of + or -2.8%).

3. Highways, Transportation & Waste Response

- 3.1 Overall the results continue to show a fairly positive trend when set against the difficult financial position facing local authorities.
- 3.2 The coming years will again be challenging and in 2015 we are undertaking a Service Re-Design to ensure the organisation is fit for purpose for the challenges ahead and this will also help us to deal with customer concerns outlined in the 2014 survey. Major changes last year included a KCC wide re-structure that saw the addition of Waste Management to the Highways and Transportation structure and the Service Re-Design will allow us to ensure we make the most of staff and business process synergies.
- 3.3 The contents of this annual survey report and the year on year tracking profile it provides continues to be key in helping us shape our future actions and improvement plans and as such is greatly valued. We have the exciting prospect of converting all streetlights to LED over the next few

years to help us both reduce the number of faults whilst significantly reducing energy costs. We were successful in 2014/15 receiving additional funds from central government that allowed us to deliver further maintenance to Kent's roads and footways.

- 3.4 Our aim is to ensure we manage expectations around the levels of service we are able to deliver. We are using the KCC website, our staff and Contact Point colleagues (when customers report faults to us) to better explain our services and listen to customers about their concerns. We continue to develop ways to listen and work better with local communities so we can collectively contribute to maintaining the asset in the long term. We will not always be able to say yes to requests for service or fault reports but we want to be clear and honest about what we can do and what we cannot.
- 3.5 Part of the GET Customer Service Review, is to improve the customer experience of existing on-line transactions. Analysis work is currently being undertaken to explore whether the current Highways Reporting system can be improved or replaced.

4. Further Information

- 4.1 The full tracker survey report is very large and contains much more information along with a detailed executive summary of the issues identified from the results. A copy of the full report is available on the KCC website.

5. Recommendations

5.1 The Cabinet Committee is asked to **consider and comment** on the results from the Highways, Transportation & Waste Annual Satisfaction Survey 2014.

5. Appendices:

Appendix A: Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2014 – Countywide results

6. Background Documents:

None

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Appendix A

Results from the Highway Tracker Survey 2014 – Countywide results

Figure 1 –Residents Results - with the condition of Roads in the local area

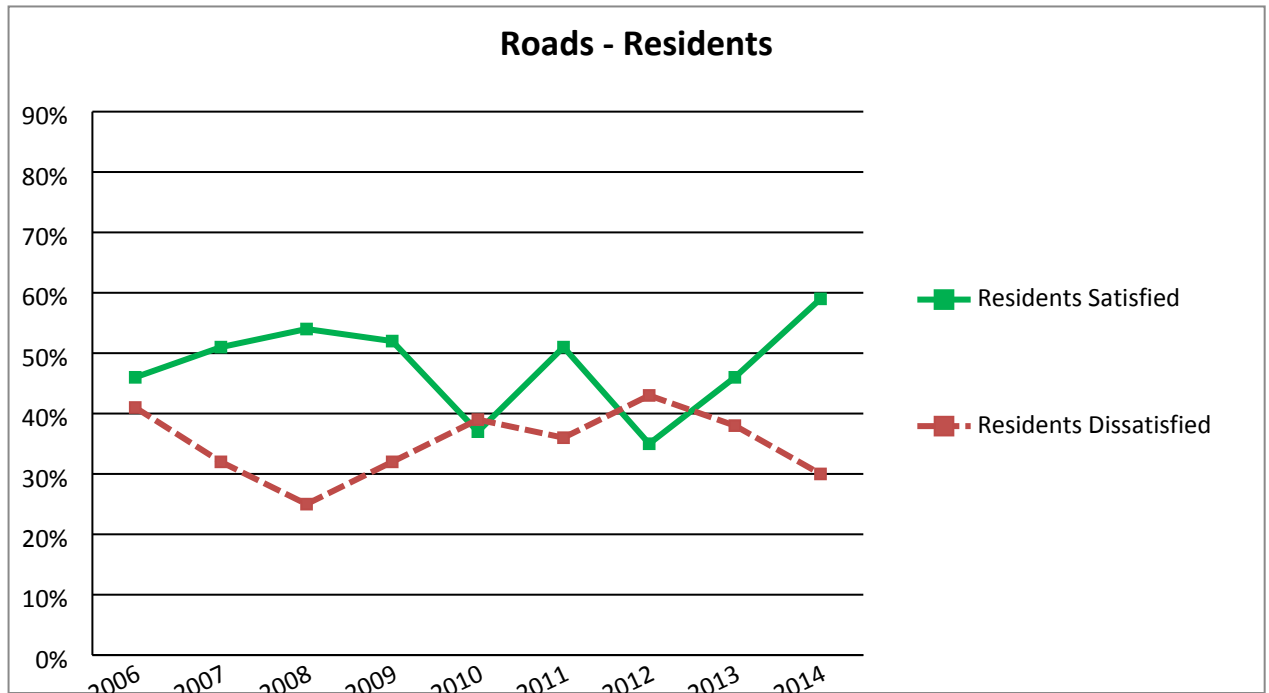


Figure 2 - Combined County Member and Parish/Town Council Results - with the condition of Roads in the local area (average of County Members & Parish/Town Councils)

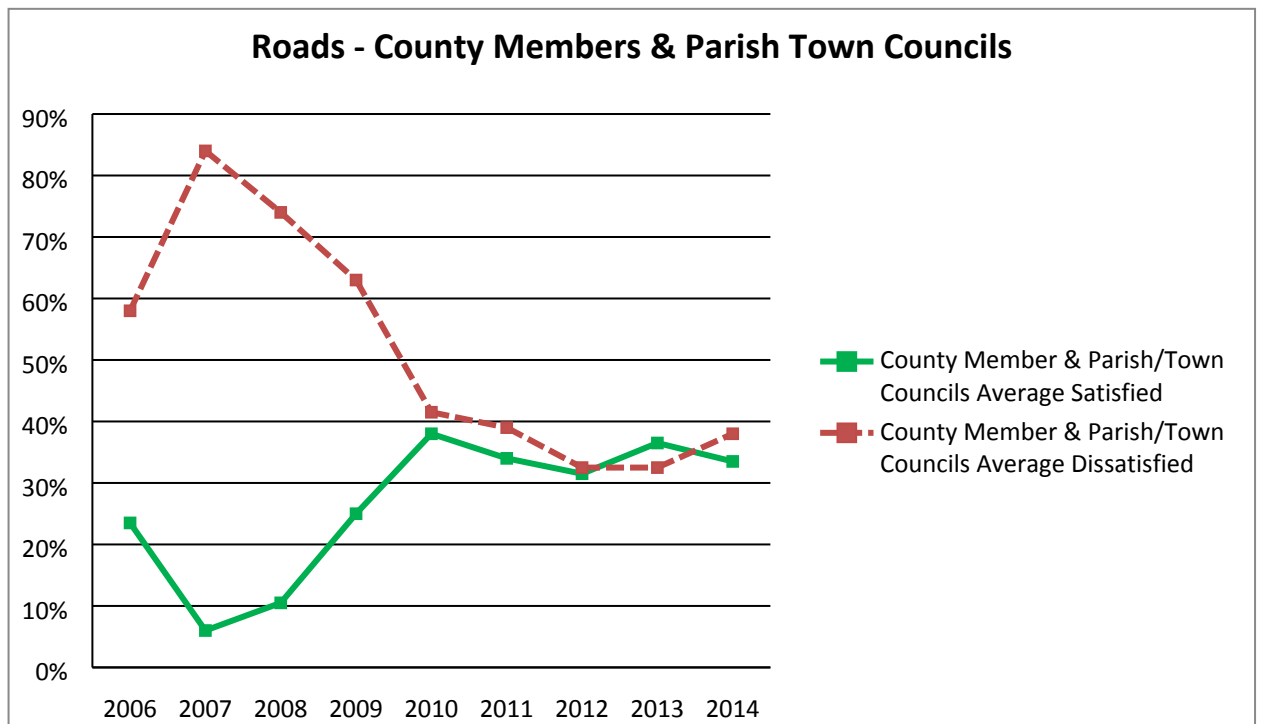


Figure 3 - Residents Results - with the condition of Footways in the local area

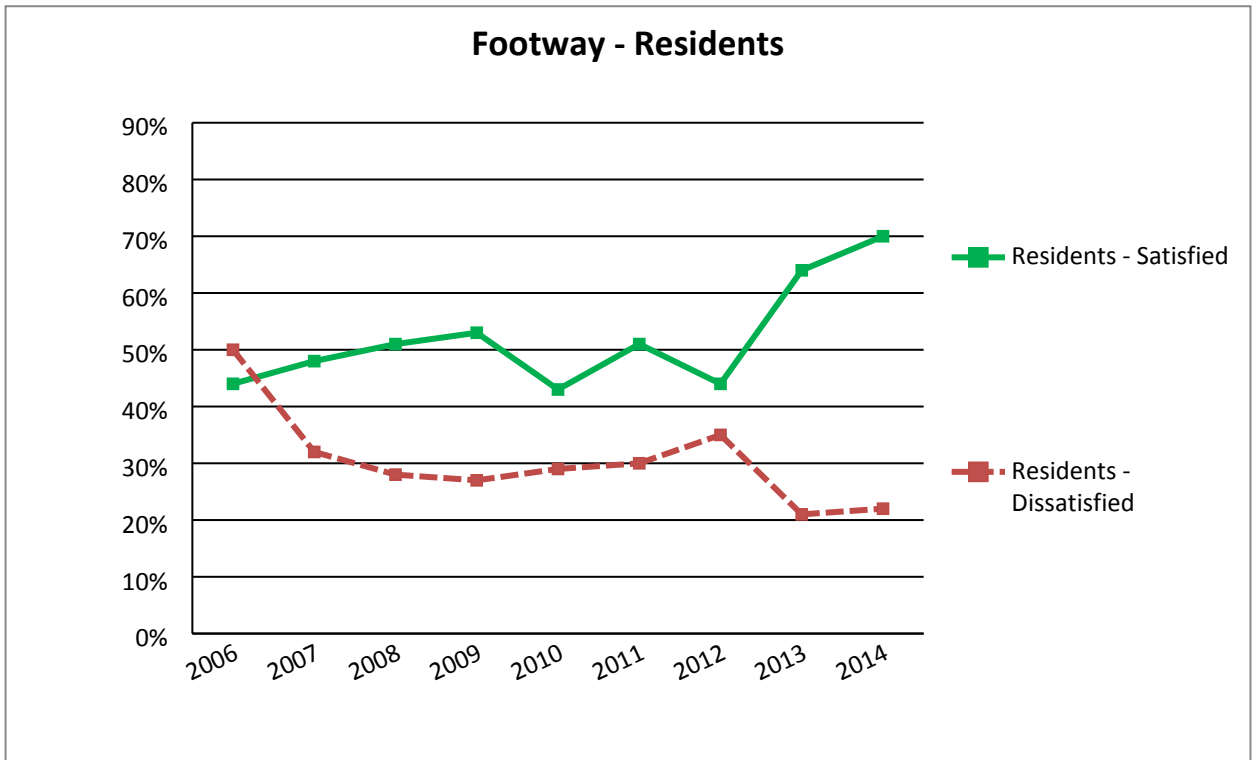


Figure 4 - Combined County Member and Parish/Town Council Results - with the condition of Footways in the local area (average of County Members & Parish/Town Councils)

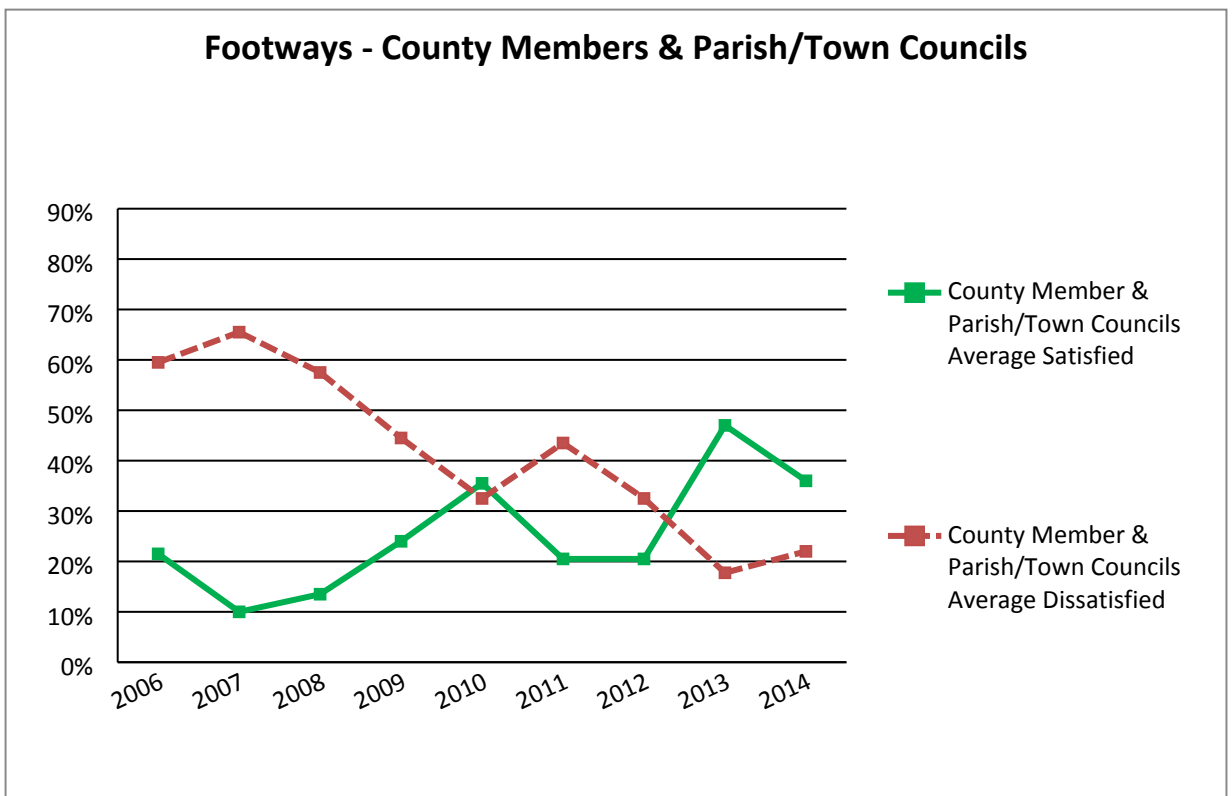


Figure 5 - Residents Results - with Street Lighting in the local area - year-on-year comparison.

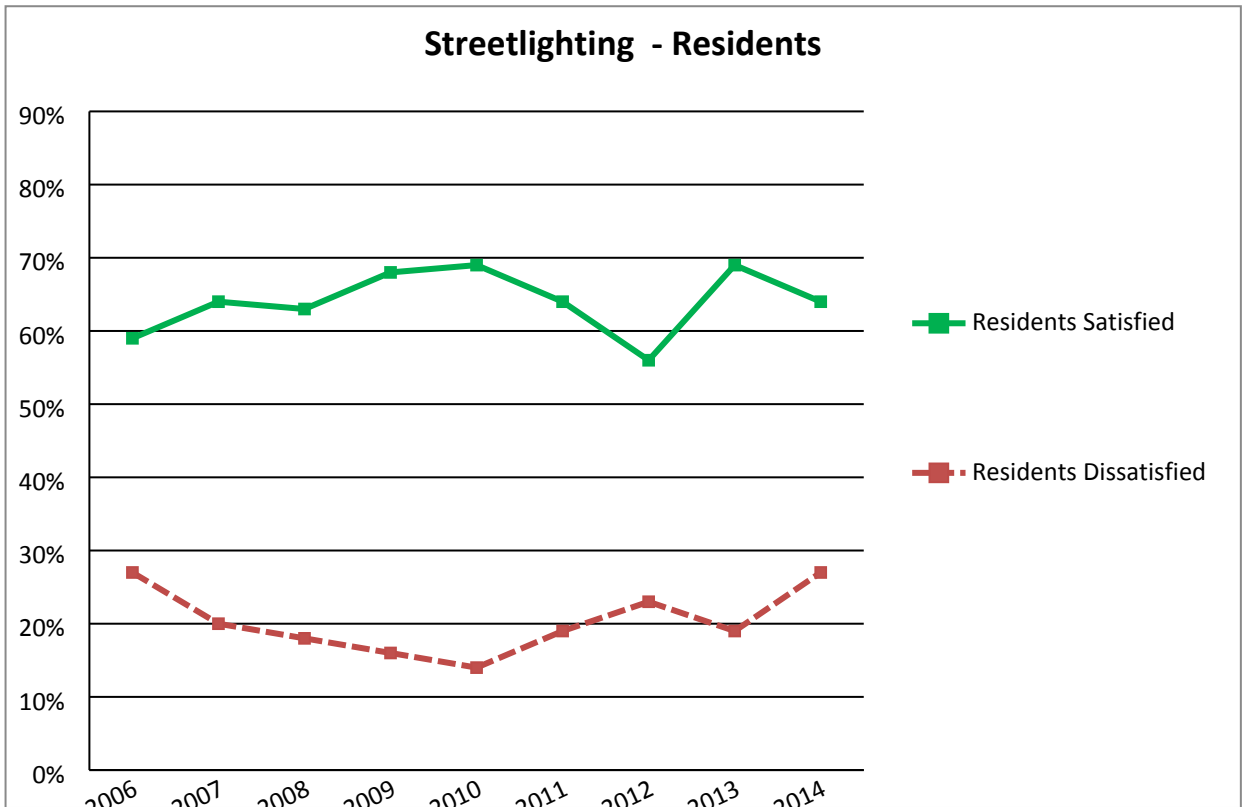


Figure 6 - Combined County Member and Parish/Town Council Results - with the condition of Streetlighting in the local area (average of County Members & Parish/Town Councils)

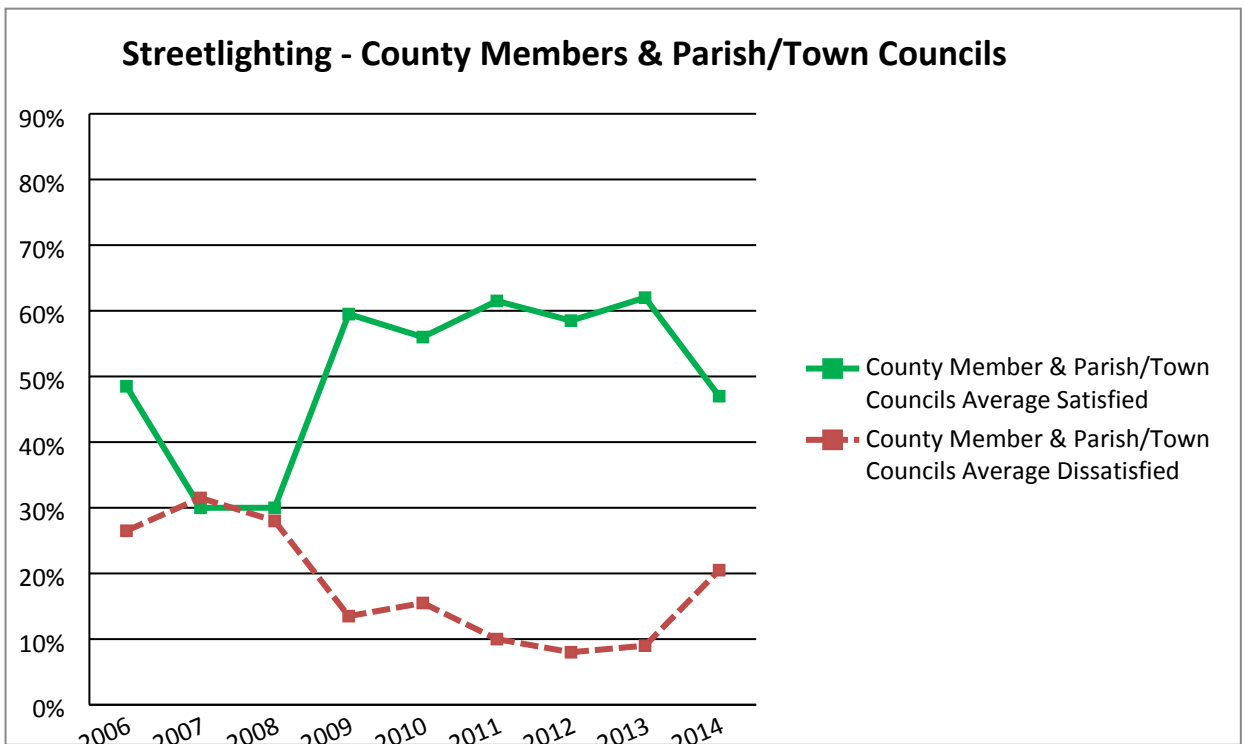


Figure 7 - Residents Results - with Road Drains/Gullies kept clean

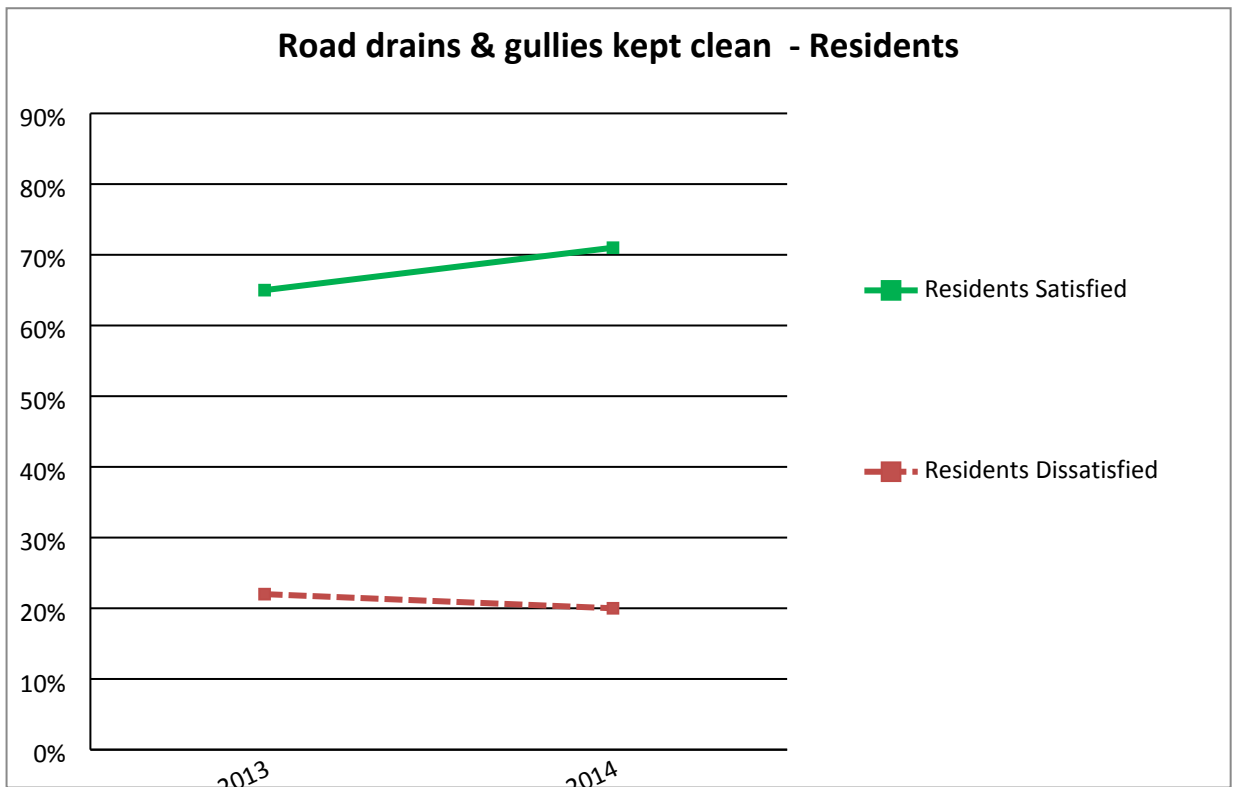


Figure 8 - Combined County Member and Parish/Town Council Results - with the condition of Road Drains/Gullies kept clean in the local area (average of County Members & Parish/Town Councils)

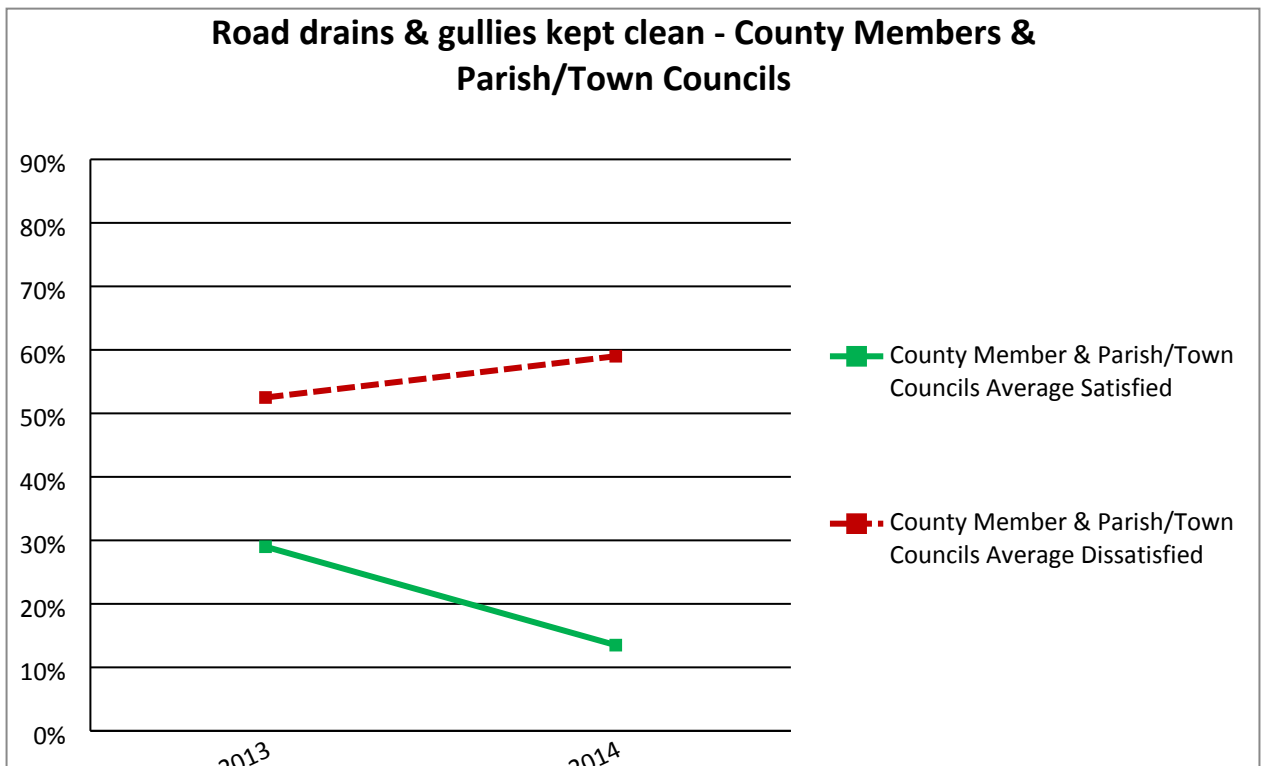


Figure 9 - Residents Results –with the Service Received when asking for information or reporting a problem.

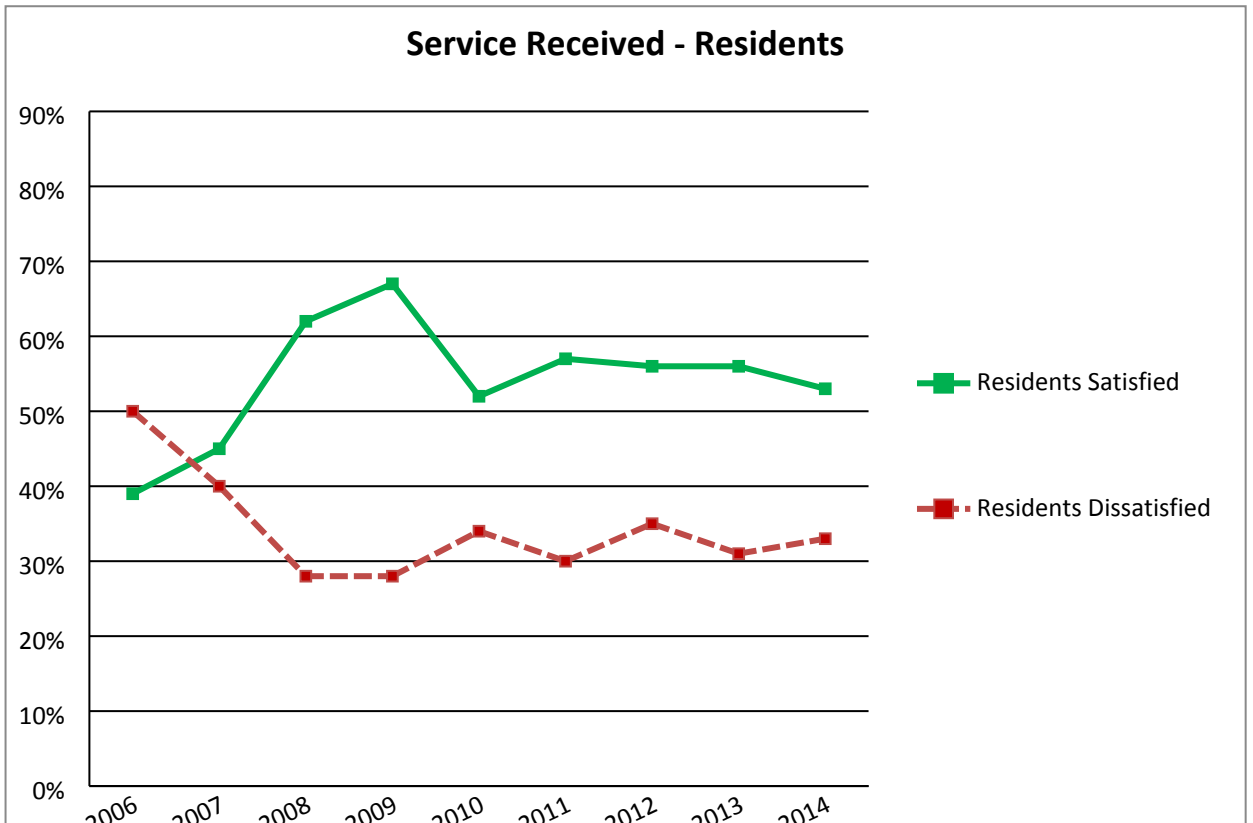
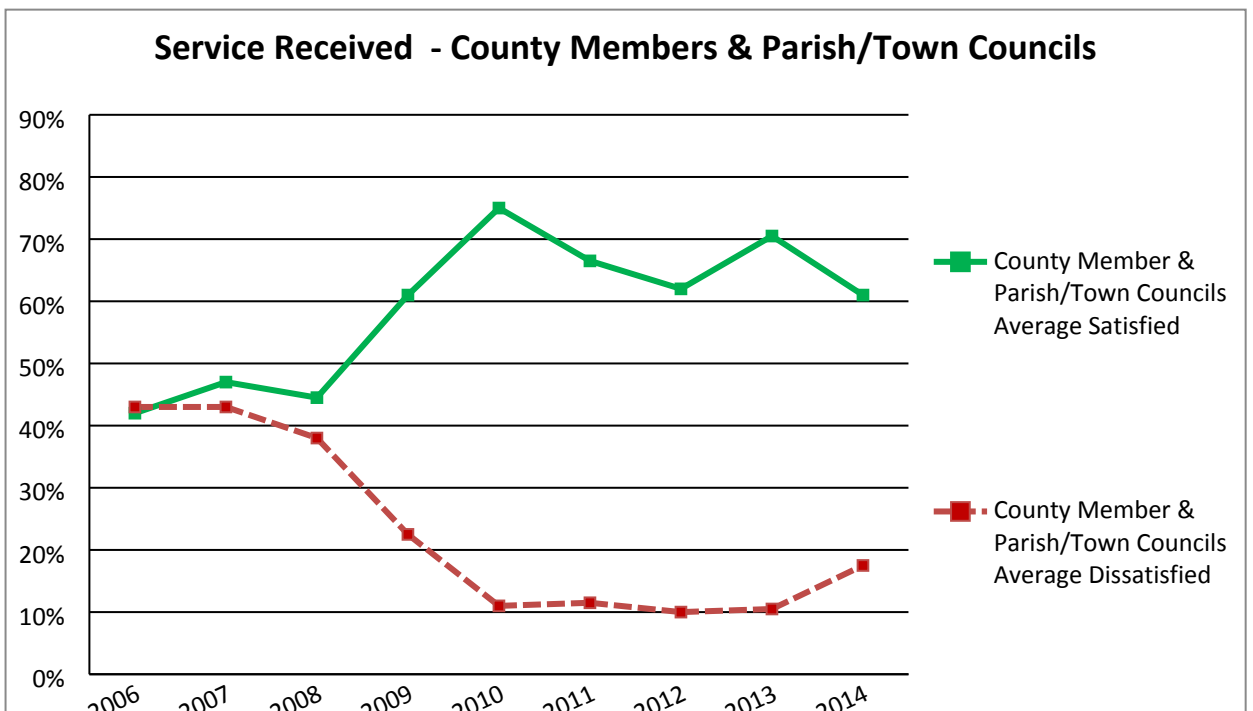


Figure 10 - Combined County Member and Parish/Town Council Results - with the Service Received when asking for information or reporting a problem (average of County Members & Parish/Town Councils)



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