

**ROTHERHAM RESIDENT
SATISFACTION SURVEY**

Wave 13

August 2023

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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The Council would like to thank Yonder for conducting this polling, the participants in Rotherham who took part in the local survey and those who took part in the LGA national survey.

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INTRODUCTION

During 2015 and 2016, the LGA undertook four polling surveys to find out what residents of Rotherham thought about Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council (the Council) and the borough in general. The survey formed part of the improvement activity within the authority which began in May 2015, with the first survey taking place in June 2015. The survey asked about satisfaction with the Council, perceptions of value for money, responsiveness, trust and confidence in the Council, and satisfaction with aspects of life in Rotherham.

Following the LGA's support related to resident satisfaction ceasing, the Council has continued the surveys to monitor satisfaction levels and the extent to which the views of residents have changed over time. The Council has also wanted to explore residents' perceptions of safety, optimism about the future of the borough and town centre, and views on community cohesion.

This report details the findings of the most recent residents' satisfaction survey (Wave 13). It makes comparisons with the previous twelve waves of the survey in Rotherham and with the LGA's most recent national survey of British residents. The latest national poll was made up of a representative random sample of 1,001 British adults (aged 18 or over) and was carried out by telephone by Yonder in January 2023. The Rotherham survey sample was made up of 501 adults who were polled in June 2023.

Comparing Rotherham's results to the national picture provides useful context although many additional factors will influence resident views of councils at a local level. These include local demographics, social and economic factors, and media coverage prior to the survey. Therefore, whilst the results of the polling provide a good high-level indication of resident views of Rotherham and its council, it is important that they are seen as complementary to a wider approach to understanding and responding to communities at the local level.

The polling this year took place against a backdrop of challenging economic circumstances with the rising cost-of-living and inflation levels dominating national headlines and leading to increased food, energy, mortgage and rental costs for many. Globally, the lasting effects of the pandemic together with the ongoing war in Europe continue to impact the economy.

As noted in the Methodology section, the relatively small sample size in Rotherham means that small variations from one survey wave to another should not be interpreted as indicating a significant change in opinion. The results of this survey should be seen in the wider context provided by the patterns of the previous twelve surveys since 2015.

METHODOLOGY

In June 2023, a statistically representative random sample of 501 Rotherham residents (aged 18 or over) was polled mainly by landline telephone using quotas set by age and gender. The data was further weighted to reflect the age, gender, and social grade profile of Rotherham. This ensures that the sample is as representative of adults in the borough as possible, as there is often a bias in the profile of people who respond to any survey. The use of landline telephones has become increasingly problematic in surveying young adults aged 18-34, so additional people were polled by mobile phone to boost the number of younger respondents. Previous surveys took place in June 2015, December 2015, June 2016, December 2016, June 2017, February 2018, June 2018, December 2018, June 2019, June 2020, June 2021 and June 2022.

The questions used in the Rotherham survey are outlined in Annex A. Most of the questions also feature in the LGA's regular national polling on resident satisfaction. These questions were developed and tested by the LGA and Ipsos MORI, then modified and agreed via consultation with wider local government. Core questions have been repeated across all thirteen Rotherham surveys. Additional questions about perceptions of safety, community cohesion and optimism have also been asked since June 2017. A local question about satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live has been asked in each survey apart from Wave 5. Two further additional questions have been included relating to the Covid-19 pandemic, one in Wave 10 and 11 (discontinued for Wave 12) regarding the council's response to the pandemic and one in Wave 11 and 12 (discontinued in Wave 13) regarding travel to work intentions. In Wave 13, a new question was asked.

Where tables and figures report the base number, this description refers to the whole group of people who were asked the question. The number provided refers to the unweighted number of respondents who answered each question.

As mentioned, this report includes comparisons with the LGA's national results, where the questions asked are the same. Differences between the national survey and Rotherham's results are only highlighted within the report where they are statistically significant. The relatively small sample size of the Rotherham surveys means that only a difference of five per cent or more between different survey results indicates a statistically significant change. Caution is needed when comparing the results of individual surveys and interpreting small variations between waves. Where results fluctuate it can be useful to consider the average of several waves combined to provide a larger sample size and reduce the effect of random variation.

Please note the following when reading this report:

- Throughout the report, percentages in figures and tables may add up to more than 100 due to rounding.
- The following conventions are used in tables: '*' - less than 0.5 per cent; '0' – no observations; '-' – category not applicable/data not available.
- Where percentage increases or decreases are mentioned, this is in relation to percentage points rather than overall percentage increases or decreases (unless otherwise stated).

KEY FINDINGS

The Council commissioned a thirteenth survey (known as Wave 13) to capture what residents of Rotherham currently think about their local area, the wider borough, and the Council. The questions included six measures of resident satisfaction which also feature in the LGA's regular national polling. Additional questions were also asked about residents' feelings of safety, optimism about the future of the borough and town centre, their views on community cohesion and (from Wave 13) satisfaction regarding specific council service areas.

From the initial survey in 2015 (Wave 1) to June 2023 (Wave 13), the direction of travel locally across the survey questions is mixed, with fluctuating responses showing some improvements and some decline in satisfaction levels. However, in the most recent survey (Wave 13) the gap between Rotherham's results and the national average has narrowed or stayed the same on all measures where comparison is possible. This is the result of a combination of declining satisfaction in local councils at a national level, together with improvements at a local level. This is most notable on the national measures for acting on resident's concerns (with a local improvement between Waves 12 and 13 of nine percentage points compared to more static national results) and satisfaction with the local area (with a local improvement of six percentage points and a national fall of eight percentage points). Between Waves 12 and 13, the national measure for trust in local councils has fallen by 2 percentage points and value for money by 3 percentage points.

Resident satisfaction measures

The results from Wave 13 point to four key features of resident satisfaction (see also Figure 1).

- **Satisfaction with local area as a place to live:** The great majority of Rotherham residents are satisfied with their local area as a place to live (82 per cent of respondents were 'very' or 'fairly' satisfied), higher than the national average (73 per cent)
- **Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things:** 59 per cent reported feeling 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way the Council runs things – this remains unchanged from the figure in June 2022 and is above the Rotherham average of 54 per cent across all thirteen surveys. Satisfaction with the Council in Rotherham is now similar to the national average of 60 per cent, with national satisfaction levels falling over the last two surveys
- **Trust in the Council:** 52 per cent said they trusted the Council 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount' (unchanged from the figure in 2022). While nationally the figure for trust in the council is higher than in Rotherham, it has been falling over recent surveys (from 66 per cent in June 2021 (Wave 11) to 58 per cent in June 2022 (Wave 12) and now to 56 per cent in Wave 13. The average level of trust in the Council has increased from 46.5 per cent in the first five Waves (1-5), to 52.2 per cent in the most recent five Waves 9-13
- **Provision of value for money:** 36 per cent of Rotherham residents agreed that the Council provides value for money, lower than the Wave 12 figure of 39 per cent. A similar pattern followed nationally with 42 per cent of respondents agreeing that their council provided value for money, lower than the Wave 12 figure of 45 per cent. This is the only measure that hasn't seen local improvement (or remained static) between Waves 12 and 13 and is perhaps influenced by people's opinions on the current economic climate and cost-of-living.

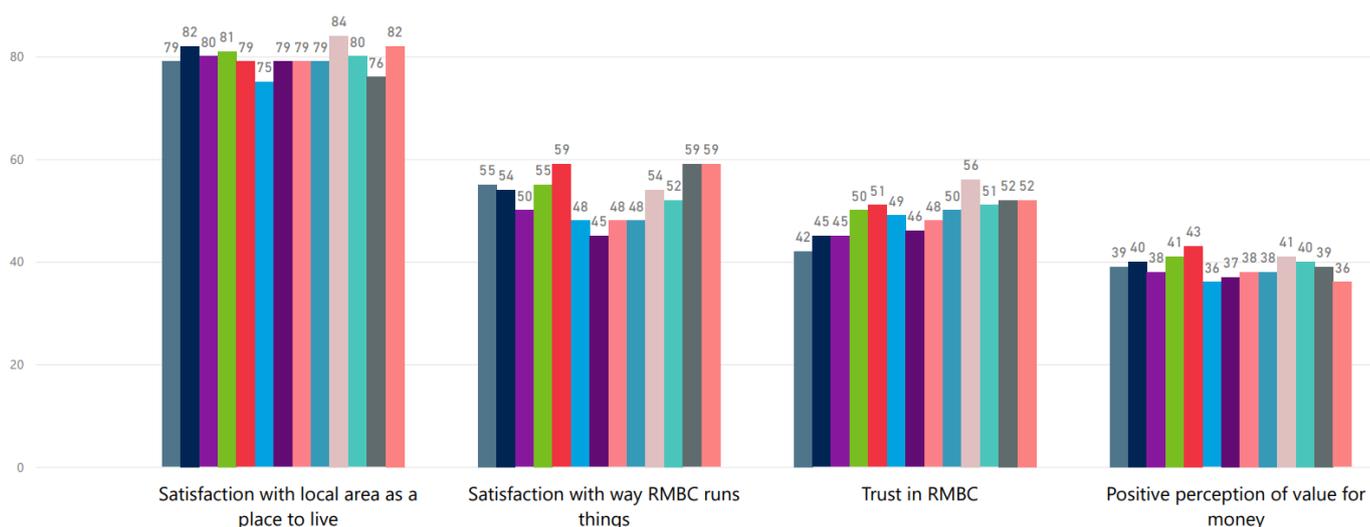
Satisfaction levels on how **well-informed** residents were by the Council have improved slightly between Wave 12 and Wave 13 (from 48 per cent in June 2022 to 50 percent in June 2023) but remain lower than the national figure of 55 per cent. Positive responses on this measure have fluctuated by up to fifteen percentage points between the polls.

Views on the **responsiveness** of the Council in June 2023 at 51 per cent showed an improvement of nine percentage points from June 2022 (42 per cent) and were similar to the national average of 52 per cent (which remained unchanged from June 2022).

Figure 1 Key findings (Waves 1-13)

Resident satisfaction measures: key findings (%)

● W1 ● W2 ● W3 ● W4 ● W5 ● W6 ● W7 ● W8 ● W9 ● W10 ● W11 ● W12 ● W13



Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500

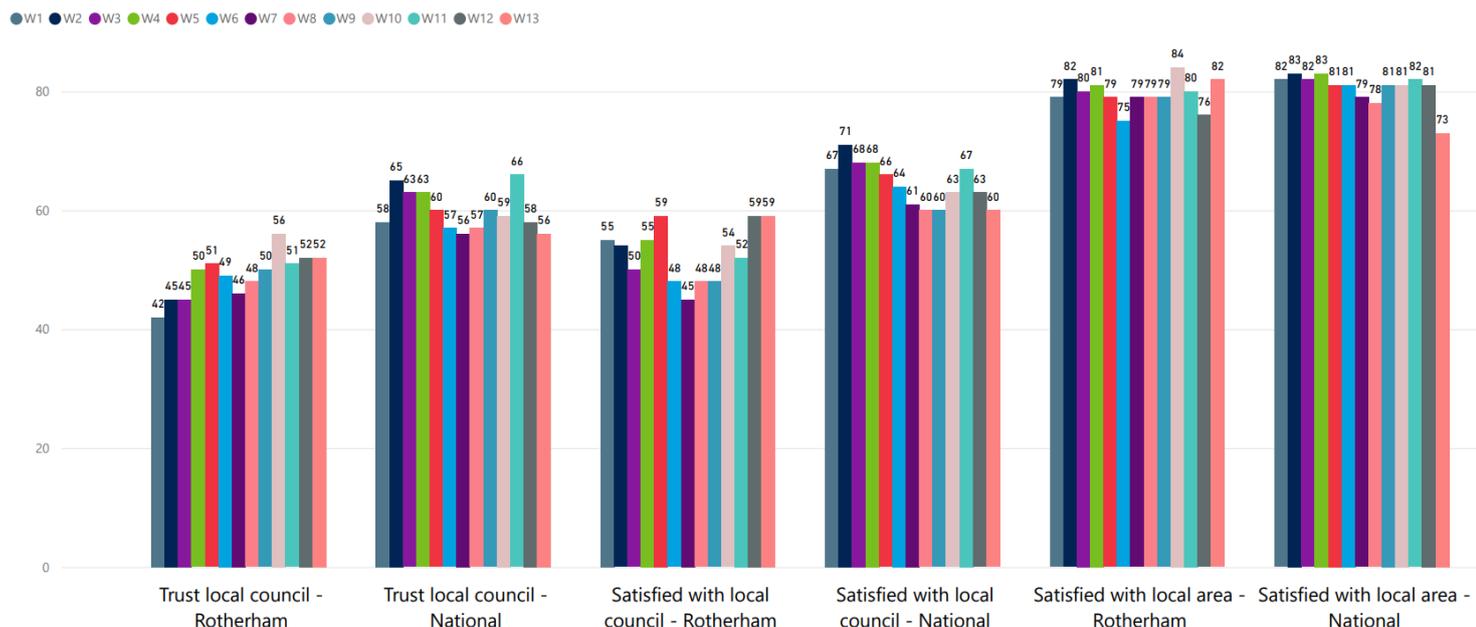
Figure 1 summarises the survey results for four indicators of resident satisfaction used in the Rotherham survey, combining the positive results achieved for each question (e.g. ‘a great deal’ and ‘a fair amount’).

Figure 1 shows a consistently high level of satisfaction with residents’ local area as a place to live and people remain far more satisfied on this measure than any other. Satisfaction with the way the Council runs things is the joint highest recorded level of satisfaction across all surveys, matching the 59 per cent satisfaction level recorded in Waves 5 and 12. Trust in the Council has increased since 2015-16. Positive perceptions of value for money are consistently the lowest of the four measures, averaging 39 per cent across all surveys.

Figure 2 summarises the results for three indicators of resident satisfaction used in the Rotherham survey, combining the positive results for each question (e.g. ‘a great deal’ and ‘a fair amount’). The results are presented alongside those from the LGA’s national polling survey for the nearest comparable time period.

Figure 2 Results for key indicators (Rotherham and GB)

Resident satisfaction (%) Rotherham Waves 1-13 and GB 2015-2023

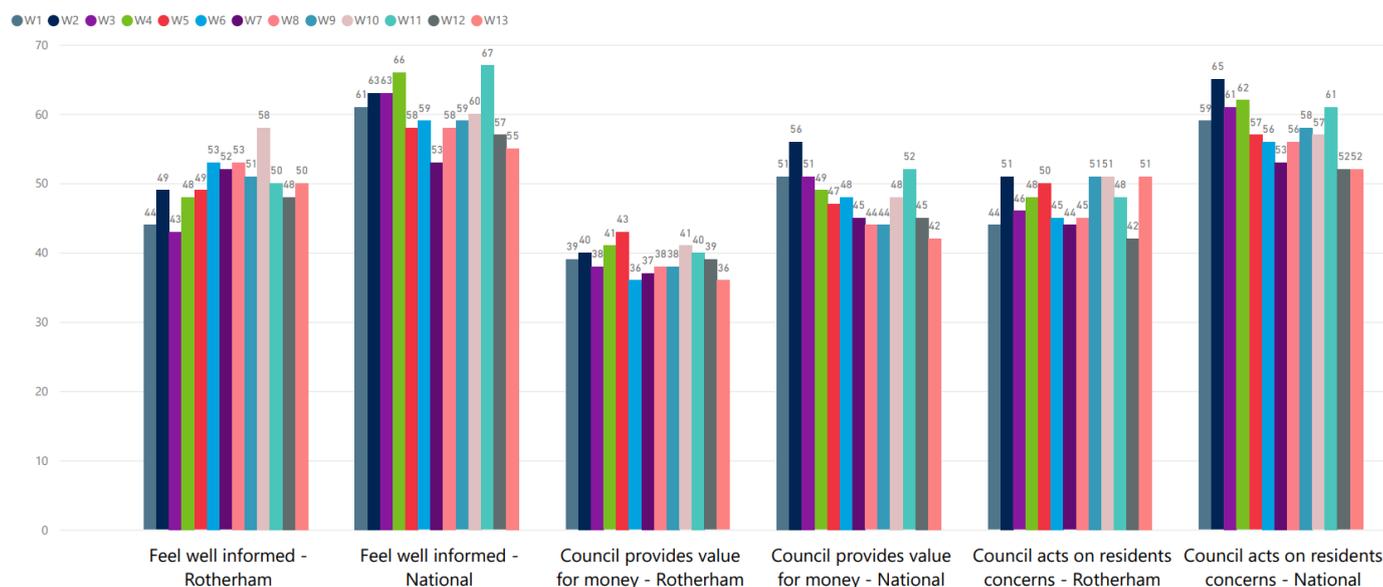


Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): Rotherham June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500. GB: between 1,001 and 1009

Figure 2 shows consistently high and stable satisfaction with residents' local area as a place to live, with this measure generally seeing Rotherham levels similar to and in the most recent survey, higher than the national average. Satisfaction levels with councils nationally has recently fallen, whilst the picture in Rotherham has stabilised over the last two surveys, with satisfaction levels in Waves 12 and 13 equalling the highest satisfaction level in Rotherham since the survey began and narrowing the gap with the national level to only one percentage point. Trust in the Council has tended to be higher since 2016 than previously. This initially contrasted with declining trust in councils nationally, however this recent improvement in Rotherham has levelled out at a similar percentage between Waves 11 and 13, whilst the national figure decreased by 10 percentage points over the same period.

Figure 3: Polling results for Council indicators (Rotherham and GB)

Resident satisfaction (%) Rotherham Waves 1-13 and GB 2015-2023



Base (all respondents – figure includes only those who gave a positive reply): Rotherham: June 2015: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500. GB: between 1,001 and 1,009.

Figure 3 follows the format of Figure 2, in comparing the thirteen local waves to the national picture. The chart shows that people in Rotherham feel less informed about council services than national respondents, although this gap has narrowed to five percentage points in Wave 13. Nationally, the proportion of people who think their council provides value for money has fallen by 3 percentage points between Waves 12 and 13, mirroring the picture in Rotherham. The satisfaction levels for councils acting on residents’ concerns have fallen to their lowest levels nationally in Waves 12 and 13. In Rotherham the patterns are mixed on this measure, although the most recent survey recorded the joint highest satisfaction levels for the council acting on residents’ concerns since the survey began, with an improvement of nine percentage points between Waves 12 and 13.

Confidence in the Council

In each survey wave, respondents were asked to state the extent to which they had confidence in the Council. In Wave 13, 51 per cent said they had a ‘great’ or ‘moderate’ amount of confidence in the Council. This is higher than the average percentage across all the other surveys (47%) – with the lowest percentage in June 2015 (41 per cent) and the highest percentage in June 2020 (54 per cent). There is no national comparator for this question.

Feelings of safety, optimism and cohesion

The following results were obtained in relation to three additional questions that were added to the polling survey from Wave 5 onwards:

Feelings of safety: Better feelings of safety in the local area during the day were reported by respondents in Rotherham than those reported nationally. Ninety-two per cent felt ‘very safe’ or

'fairly safe' during the day in Rotherham and 90 per cent nationally. However, feelings of safety in the local area after dark were worse in Rotherham than nationally (62 percent in Rotherham and 71 per cent nationally). There was a significant gender difference in feelings of safety after dark – 71 per cent of men but only 54 per cent of women said they felt 'very safe' or 'fairly safe'.

Feelings of optimism: Optimism among respondents about the future of Rotherham as a place to live was 56 per cent, up from 51 per cent in Wave 12 (either 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic'), but only 27 per cent felt the same about the future of Rotherham town centre (either 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic'), the latter being the same as in Wave 12. There is no national comparator for these questions.

Community cohesion perceptions: The results show a positive direction of travel on this measure, with more people agreeing that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, since the survey question was introduced (47 per cent agree, 30 per cent gave a neutral response/did not know and 24 per cent disagree in Wave 13). This was an increase from 45 per cent who agreed in Wave 12 (and 26 per cent who disagreed). People aged 18-44 were more likely to agree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together, than older people. There is no national comparator for this question.

ROTHERHAM'S SURVEY RESULTS

This section outlines the full set of results for the thirteenth Rotherham survey which took place in June 2023 (Wave 13).

Satisfaction with local area as a place to live

Satisfaction with the local area within Rotherham as a place to live has remained high and fairly stable since the first satisfaction survey in June 2015 (see Table 1). Across the thirteen waves, the average level of satisfaction has been 80 per cent and no previous survey result has varied from this by more than five per cent. The proportion of respondents who were either 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' across all previous polls was very similar to the national average over the same time period, until the most recent Wave 13 where local satisfaction was much higher than the levels recorded in the national survey.

Eighty-two per cent of respondents in Wave 13 reported feeling 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' which is just above the average recorded level across all waves. Adults aged 45-54 were the *least* likely to report being 'satisfied' (74 per cent). People aged 18-24 years and aged 65+ are the *most* likely to be satisfied with their local area (91 and 84 per cent respectively).

It should be noted that the 'local area' refers to the local neighbourhood or village where residents live and not the whole of Rotherham. Residents' satisfaction with their local area far exceeds their satisfaction with Rotherham Borough, which was 65 per cent in Wave 13 (see Table 11).

Table 1: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area (within a 15 to 20 minute walk from your home) as a place to live?

Survey Date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	GB
Very or fairly satisfied	79	82	80	81	79	75	79	79	79	84	80	76	82	73
Very satisfied	35	31	35	35	35	29	33	32	30	38	30	33	27	26
Fairly satisfied	44	51	45	45	44	46	46	47	49	47	50	43	55	47
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	9	6	9	8	8	11	8	7	9	7	9	12	8	14
Fairly dissatisfied	7	6	6	7	8	9	7	10	7	6	5	6	8	7
Very dissatisfied	5	6	5	4	4	5	6	5	5	2	6	5	3	6
Don't know	-	-	*	*	*	*	*	*	*	-	-	2	*	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

Satisfaction with how the Council runs things

Fifty-nine per cent of respondents in Wave 13 were 'very satisfied' or 'fairly satisfied' with the way the Council runs things (see Table 2). This was the same percentage as the response in Wave 12, and equal highest rating since the survey began. Respondents aged 65+ were most likely to report being satisfied with the way the Council runs things (70 per cent). Residents aged 45-54 were most likely to be dissatisfied (39 per cent).

Compared to the most recent national figure for satisfaction with the council, the gap between local and national figures has narrowed to only 1 percentage point (in Wave 12 the gap was 4 percentage points - Rotherham 59 per cent/National 63 per cent).

Table 2: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23	
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		GB
Very or fairly satisfied	55	54	50	55	59	48	45	48	48	54	52	59	59		60
Very satisfied	12	15	12	14	15	10	11	12	10	11	12	17	13		14
Fairly satisfied	42	39	38	41	43	38	33	36	38	43	40	42	46		46
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	14	16	17	13	15	14	14	14	18	18	16	14	13		19
Fairly dissatisfied	16	18	20	19	17	21	22	22	17	17	17	14	16		12
Very dissatisfied	14	12	13	11	9	16	19	16	17	11	14	11	11		8
Don't know	*	*	*	1	*	*	1	*	*	*	*	1	1		2

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 23 GB: 1,001

Provision of value for money by the Council

Thirty-six per cent of respondents would 'tend to agree' or 'strongly agree' that the Council provides value for money (see Table 3). This is the lowest level of satisfaction for this question across all polls. The result is lower than the proportion observed nationally (42 per cent).

It is notable that 35 per cent of respondents expressed a neutral opinion and 27 per cent expressed a negative view. Young people aged 18-24 (47 per cent) were most likely to agree that the Council provides value for money, whilst people aged 55-64 years (40 per cent) were most likely to disagree.

Table 3: To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23	
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13		GB
Strongly or tend to agree	39	40	38	41	43	36	37	38	38	41	40	39	36		42
Strongly agree	8	10	7	7	9	7	8	8	7	8	7	10	5		9
Tend to agree	31	31	31	34	34	30	29	30	32	33	33	29	31		33
Neither agree nor disagree	28	33	29	30	30	27	28	28	29	31	29	28	35		32
Tend to disagree	19	17	19	19	19	21	22	20	18	18	18	17	15		15
Strongly disagree	13	8	13	9	7	14	13	13	14	10	12	13	12		9
Don't know	1	1	*	2	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	2		2

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

Responsiveness of the Council

Council responsiveness is an important measure of local accountability as it relates to whether councils are perceived to be receptive to local issues and problems raised (see Table 4).

Residents were asked for their opinion about services provided by the Council to the community as a whole, as well as to their own household.

Fifty-one per cent of respondents in Rotherham answered positively when asked about the extent to which the Council acts on the concerns of residents (i.e. 'a great deal' or 'a fair amount'). This is the joint highest response across all surveys and similar to the national result (52 per cent).

Locally there was an increase of nine percentage points in satisfaction levels between Waves 12 and 13. Respondents aged 18-24 were most likely to think that the Council acts on the concerns of local residents (82 per cent responded positively) whilst those aged 55-64 were least likely to have this view.

Table 4: To what extent do you think that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	GB
A great deal or fair amount	44	51	46	48	50	45	44	45	51	51	48	42	51	52
A great deal	5	7	6	6	8	5	6	6	5	8	3	6	5	7
A fair amount	39	44	40	42	42	41	38	39	46	43	45	36	46	45
Not very much	37	36	37	36	37	37	39	36	34	36	35	42	34	35
Not at all	12	9	13	11	9	13	13	14	12	10	13	9	9	9
Don't know	7	4	4	5	3	5	4	6	3	3	5	7	6	5

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

Keeping residents informed

Fifty per cent of Rotherham respondents in Wave 13 said that the Council keeps residents 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed about the services and benefits it provides (see Table 5). This is lower than the most recent national result (55 per cent) and the same as the average percentage across all Rotherham surveys (50 per cent). Younger respondents (aged 18-24) were more likely than older people to think that the Council keeps residents well informed. It should be noted that this measure covers not only corporate communications but could also refer to face to face or any other types of council touchpoint that the customer experiences.

Table 5: Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	GB
Very or fairly well informed	44	49	43	48	49	53	52	53	51	58	50	48	50	55
Very well informed	6	8	7	8	7	7	10	9	7	12	8	12	9	13
Fairly well informed	38	42	36	40	42	46	42	45	44	46	42	37	41	42
Not very well informed	37	35	38	34	39	34	31	31	34	29	34	38	34	31
Not well informed at all	15	14	18	17	11	13	16	15	14	12	14	10	15	13
Don't know	3	2	*	1	1	1	1	1	*	1	2	4	2	2

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

Trust in the Council

Fifty-two per cent of respondents said they trusted the Council ‘a great deal’ or ‘a fair amount’ (see Table 6). Trust in councils nationally has fallen in recent years - from 66 per cent in Wave 11 to 58 per cent in Wave 12 and now 56 per cent in Wave 13.

The three most recent local survey results show that levels of trust in Rotherham have stabilised (since June 2021), averaging around 52 per cent and show an improvement in trust compared to the first three polls (average 44 per cent). In Wave 13 the level of trust in the Council is highest amongst people aged 25-34 (64 per cent) and lowest amongst those aged 55-64 years. Women (59 per cent) had higher levels of trust than men (46 per cent).

Table 6: How much do you trust Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	GB
A great deal or fair amount	42	45	45	50	51	49	46	48	50	56	51	52	52	56
A great deal	6	7	5	9	9	8	8	7	4	7	5	7	7	6
A fair amount	35	38	40	42	43	41	38	42	46	48	46	45	45	50
Not very much	34	39	32	32	32	30	34	33	33	29	32	29	34	31
Not at all	22	15	22	15	15	20	18	17	16	14	15	14	11	11
Don't know	2	1	1	2	2	2	1	2	1	1	2	5	2	2

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

Residents’ trust in their council is an important aspect of reputation, which is likely to impact on issues such as democratic legitimacy and engagement. In terms of what the word ‘trust’ means to residents, it is useful to look at the results of the cognitive testing carried out as part of the review to develop this question.

The testing indicated that respondents based their answers on criteria including: transparency and openness, upholding promises, responding to residents, reliability, and recollection of ‘scandal’. Recollection of the past failings of the Council in relation to child sexual exploitation is likely to be one factor which contributes to trust in the Council slightly lower than the national average.

Confidence in the Council

As Table 7 shows, 51 per cent of respondents in Wave 13 stated that they have confidence in the Council (either ‘to a great extent’ or ‘to a moderate extent’). This is the same percentage as Wave 12 and is above the average percentage of 47 per cent across all surveys. Respondents aged 25-34 have the highest confidence in the council (69 per cent). There is no national comparison for this question.

The results for trust (Table 6) and confidence (Table 7) in the Council show a very close alignment which demonstrates a strong association between the two in the public mind. People who trust the Council are almost certain to have confidence in the organisation.

Table 7: To what extent would you say that you have confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
To a great or moderate extent	41	45	44	49	50	46	45	45	48	54	47	51	51
To a great extent	6	7	4	7	7	6	8	7	6	8	6	7	6
To a moderate extent	35	38	39	42	43	41	38	38	42	46	41	43	46
To a small extent	33	37	32	31	35	33	35	35	34	30	34	29	33
Not at all	25	18	23	19	14	20	20	20	18	16	19	17	15
Don't know	1	*	1	1	1	*	*	*	1	1	1	2	1

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; June 2017: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; Dec 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500

Feelings of safety

From Wave 5 onwards, the Rotherham surveys asked two questions about feelings of personal safety, which also feature in the LGA's national survey. Ninety-two per cent of respondents in Rotherham said they felt 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' during the day when outside in their local area (higher than the figures observed nationally at 90 per cent). However, only 62 per cent reported the same feelings of safety after dark, (much lower than the figures observed nationally at 71 per cent) although this was an improvement of six percentage points between Waves 12 and 13.

Table 8a: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day? Please consider your local area to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home.

Survey date	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23
Wave	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	GB
Very safe or fairly safe	83	88	83	85	87	90	90	87	92	90
Very safe	34	42	45	39	40	50	43	45	42	55
Fairly safe	49	46	39	46	47	40	47	42	50	35
Neither safe nor unsafe	7	6	9	5	6	6	6	3	3	6
Fairly unsafe	5	4	6	6	5	3	4	4	4	2
Very unsafe	4	2	1	3	2	2	1	3	1	2
Don't know	*	*	1	*	-	-	*	3	*	*

Base (all respondents): Rotherham June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

Table 8b: How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark?
Please consider your local area to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home.

Survey	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23	Jan 23
Wave	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	GB
Very safe or fairly safe	59	58	61	54	59	63	56	56	62	71
Very safe	17	15	17	14	15	19	15	18	12	30
Fairly safe	43	43	44	41	44	44	41	37	50	41
Neither safe nor unsafe	10	15	13	13	15	17	16	15	17	11
Fairly unsafe	18	17	17	20	16	13	19	13	13	10
Very unsafe	10	8	7	11	9	6	8	10	7	7
Don't know	2	3	1	1	1	*	1	6	1	2

Base (all respondents): Rotherham June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500; Jan 2023 GB: 1,001

There was a significant difference between men and women's feelings of safety after dark in the Rotherham survey, with 71 per cent of men reporting feeling 'very safe' or 'fairly safe' compared to only 54 per cent of women. Young people aged 18-24 are most likely to feel safe after dark and those aged 25-34 least likely to feel safe. People with low skilled, manual occupational backgrounds are least likely to feel safe.

Feelings of optimism

The last nine Rotherham surveys have asked two questions about people's feelings of optimism about both Rotherham as a place to live (table 9a) and Rotherham town centre (table 9b). Fifty-six per cent of respondents reported feeling 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic' about the future of Rotherham as a place to live, above the 54 per cent average across all surveys. People aged 25-34 were the most likely to be optimistic about the future of Rotherham as a place to live (70 per cent) and men were more optimistic than women overall.

Table 9a: How optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham as a place to live?

Survey date	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23
Wave	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Very optimistic or fairly optimistic	53	52	54	53	52	58	57	51	56
Very optimistic	7	10	10	11	8	10	8	11	8
Fairly optimistic	45	42	44	42	45	48	49	40	48
Not very optimistic	34	30	29	28	32	29	31	27	29
Not optimistic at all	13	17	16	18	15	13	10	17	13
Don't know	*	1	1	1	1	*	1	5	2

Base (all respondents): Rotherham June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500

Table 9b: How optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham town centre?

Survey date	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23
Wave	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Very optimistic or fairly optimistic	26	18	21	19	22	22	24	27	27
Very optimistic	5	4	3	2	3	4	5	5	6
Fairly optimistic	21	14	17	16	19	18	19	22	21
Not very optimistic	38	34	36	32	35	36	30	29	31
Not optimistic at all	33	43	41	47	41	40	41	36	40
Don't know	3	4	2	3	2	2	5	7	3

Base (all respondents): Rotherham June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500

Far fewer respondents felt as positive about the future of Rotherham town centre as they did about the future of the wider borough (27 per cent of respondents across the borough felt 'very optimistic' or 'fairly optimistic'). This is above the average of 23 per cent across all nine surveys, and the joint highest result since the question was first asked in June 2017. Forty per cent of respondents were not optimistic at all about the town centre. Young people aged 18-24 years were the most optimistic about the future of Rotherham town centre (44 per cent were optimistic), whereas people aged 55-64 were most likely to not be optimistic. There is no comparable national data for these questions.

Community cohesion perceptions

The last nine Rotherham surveys have asked for views on whether people from different backgrounds get on well together. This is a question commonly used to measure community cohesion and the survey has consistently generated mixed responses. In Wave 13 more respondents agreed that people from different backgrounds get on well together than in any other previous survey (47 per cent), with 27 per cent giving a neutral response and 24 per cent disagreeing. Interpretation of the question could relate to views about residents' local areas and/or perceptions about Rotherham as a whole, but views about community relations since the question was first asked in June 2017 have generally become more positive.

Table 10: To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together?

Survey date	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23
Wave	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Strongly agree or tend to agree	34	32	32	29	32	42	39	45	47
Strongly agree	5	7	7	7	6	11	8	15	10
Tend to agree	28	25	24	21	26	31	31	30	37
Neither agree nor disagree	27	29	30	27	28	27	30	24	27
Tend to disagree	23	18	20	23	20	17	16	17	13
Strongly disagree	15	18	17	19	19	12	14	9	11
Don't know	2	3	1	3	1	2	2	5	3

Base (all respondents): June 2017: 520; February 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500

The following explanation was added after this question: “By getting on well together, we mean living alongside each other with respect.”

People aged 25-34 were the most likely to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together (56 per cent), and people aged 45-54 were the most likely to disagree with the statement (30 per cent). People with low skilled, manual occupational backgrounds were most likely to agree that people from different backgrounds get on well together. There is no national comparator for this question.

Satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live

Respondents were asked, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with Rotherham borough as a place to live (Table 11). Sixty-five per cent of respondents said that, overall, they were satisfied. This was above the average across all of the previous surveys (61.5 per cent), although there has been considerable fluctuation between waves.

The variation in satisfaction with the borough as a place to live differs from residents' more consistent satisfaction with their local area as a place to live (Table 1). Residents are significantly more satisfied with their own local area (average 80 per cent across all surveys) than the borough as a whole (average 61.5 per cent).

Within Wave 13, respondents aged 18-24 were most likely to feel satisfied with Rotherham as a place to live, with 73 per cent satisfied. Respondents aged 45-54 had the lowest level of satisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live, with only 59 per cent satisfied. Dissatisfaction with Rotherham as a place to live was highest amongst people aged 45-54.

This question was not asked in Wave 5 so there is no data for this in Table 11. There is no national comparator for this question.

Table 11: Overall, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Rotherham Borough as a place to live?

Survey date	Jun 15	Dec 15	Jun 16	Dec 16	Jun 17	Feb 18	Jun 18	Dec 18	Jun 19	Jun 20	Jun 21	Jun 22	Jun 23
Wave	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
Very or fairly satisfied	69	61	62	66	-	56	57	61	58	64	62	57	65
Very satisfied	19	18	18	19	-	13	17	14	15	16	14	18	13
Fairly satisfied	50	43	44	47	-	43	41	46	43	48	48	39	52
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	15	20	17	15	-	21	18	15	16	19	18	24	19
Fairly dissatisfied	9	11	13	12	-	15	14	14	15	9	11	12	10
Very dissatisfied	7	7	8	7	-	8	11	10	10	7	10	5	6
Don't know	-	-	*	*	-	*	*	*	1	*	*	3	*

Base (all respondents): June 2015 Rotherham: 531; Dec 2015: 528; June 2016: 520; Dec 2016: 520; Feb 2018: 517; June 2018: 515; December 2018: 515; June 2019: 515; June 2020: 504; June 2021: 503; June 2022: 501; June 2023: 500

Satisfaction with specific Council services

In Wave 13, nine service specific questions have been introduced (Table 12). The survey questions asked respondents how satisfied or dissatisfied they were overall with the Council's:

- Waste collection
- Street cleaning
- Road maintenance
- Pavement maintenance
- Sport and leisure services
- Services and support for older people
- Services and support for children and young people
- Parks and green spaces.

Table 12: How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with your Council's....

Satisfaction level	Waste collection	Street cleaning	Road maintenance	Pavement maintenance	Library services	Sport & leisure services	Services and support for older people	Services and support for children & young people	Parks & green spaces
Very or fairly satisfied	84	47	28	46	53	50	35	36	66
Very satisfied	39	13	5	10	23	13	7	8	21
Fairly satisfied	45	34	23	36	30	38	28	28	45
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	7	15	13	15	25	27	35	32	16
Fairly dissatisfied	7	24	26	20	7	11	11	14	8
Very dissatisfied	2	14	32	19	6	7	9	9	10
Don't know	-	*	1	*	9	5	10	10	*

Residents were most satisfied with their waste collection (84 per cent satisfied) and with parks and green spaces (66 per cent satisfied). The service areas with the lowest satisfaction levels were road maintenance (28 per cent satisfied) and services and support for older people (35 per cent satisfied). The service areas with the highest neutral responses (neither satisfied not dissatisfied) were services and support for older people (35 per cent) and services and support for children and young people (32 per cent) suggesting that respondents had no experience of using these services and were therefore not inclined to give an opinion on them. There are no national comparators for these questions.

ANNEX A: POLLING QUESTIONS

1. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?

Please consider your local area to be the area within 15-20 minutes walking distance from your home.

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

Your local area receives services from Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council. Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council is responsible for a range of services such as refuse collection, street cleaning, planning, education, social care services and road maintenance.

2. Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council runs things?

- Very satisfied
- Fairly satisfied
- Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
- Fairly dissatisfied
- Very dissatisfied
- Don't know

In considering the next question, please think about the range of services Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides to the community as a whole, as well as the services your household uses. It does not matter if you do not know all of the services Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides to the community. We would like your general opinion.

3. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council provides value for money?

- Strongly agree
- Tend to agree
- Neither agree nor disagree
- Tend to disagree
- Strongly disagree
- Don't know

4. To what extent do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council acts on the concerns of local residents?

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all

Don't know

5. Overall, how well informed do you think Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council keeps residents?

- Very well informed
- Fairly well informed
- Not very well informed
- Not well informed at all
- Don't know

6. How much do you trust Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?

- A great deal
- A fair amount
- Not very much
- Not at all
- Don't know

7. To what extent would you say that you have confidence in Rotherham Metropolitan Borough Council?

- To a great extent
- To a moderate extent
- To a small extent
- Not at all
- Don't know

8. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area during the day? *Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home*

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Fairly unsafe
- Very unsafe
- Don't know

8a. How safe or unsafe do you feel when outside in your local area after dark? *Please consider your local area to be the area within 15 – 20 minutes walking distance from your home*

- Very safe
- Fairly safe
- Neither safe nor unsafe
- Fairly unsafe
- Very unsafe
- Don't know

9. How optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham as a place to live?

Very optimistic
Fairly optimistic
Not very optimistic
Not optimistic at all
Don't know

10. And, more specifically, how optimistic do you feel about the future of Rotherham town centre?

Very optimistic
Fairly optimistic
Not very optimistic
Not optimistic at all
Don't know

11. To what extent do you agree or disagree that Rotherham is a place where people from different backgrounds get on well together? *By getting on well together, we mean living alongside each other with respect.*

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

12. Overall, all things considered, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with Rotherham Borough as a place to live?

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know

13. I am going to read out a number of different types of services that are provided by your council in your area. I would like you to tell me how satisfied or dissatisfied you are with your councils...

- **Waste collection**
- **Street cleaning**
- **Road maintenance**
- **Pavement maintenance**
- **Library services**
- **Sport and leisure services**
- **Services and support for older people**
- **Services and support for children and young people**
- **Parks and green spaces**

Very satisfied
Fairly satisfied
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
Fairly dissatisfied
Very dissatisfied
Don't know

Rotherham Council

Riverside House

Main Street,

Rotherham S60 1AE

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