APPENDIX F

Survey of Maidstone Residents

Research Report

November 2009

Prepared by Lake Market Research

This report complies with ISO20252 specifications

Contents

1.0 Objectives & Methodology

Maidstone Borough Council undertook a research survey looking at public opinion on future council charges in terms of parking, park & ride, waste removal and the Hazlitt Theatre. The research was undertaken face-to-face both in street and door-to-door covering urban and rural areas of Maidstone.

Fieldwork was conducted between 12th October – 7th November.

The questionnaire took between 10 and 15 minutes to administer depending on usage of services. Show cards were used to accompany the questionnaire. No incentive was offered as part of this research.

A total sample of 1,252 interviews were achieved for this study, of these 1,008 interviews were completed with Maidstone residents and 244 interviews completed with respondents living outside of Maidstone. Within the achieved 1252 sample, 254 interviews were completed online via the Lake Local Opinion panel.

All interviewing was conducted via CAPI (computer assisted personal interviewing) using our team of 14 local ISO20252/IQCS trained interviewers. Accompaniments and spot checks were carried out on our interviews by their local area supervisor as part of our ISO20252 requirements.

10% back-checking was conducted on each interviewer on completion of their shifts.

Percentages in tables may not add up to 100% due to rounding.

2.0 Summary

Increase of council taxes / charges

When given the choice of service cuts or increase in council taxes and charges, the clear majority (63%) of residents wanted to see a cut in services. However, when asked to choose between no increase in taxes and charges under any circumstances and an acceptance that increases were not desirable but may have to be applied depending on where the cuts might be, 74% chose the latter course, 19% the former. The third choice of no service cuts but an increase in taxes and charges was selected by 7%.

The most common suggestion for cuts in service centred around economies in Council salaries and staff. 6% of residents specifically mentioned a reduction or cessation of 'artwork' projects.

Residents were asked their views regarding 'pay as you use' versus increased tax for each 7 services. The overall trend was a clear preference for an increase in *charge for use* especially with services such as the Hazlitt, Park and Ride and town centre car parks. The one service where the majority view was for an increase in Council tax was for *green waste removal*.

The overall level of increases in council tax and charges that residents would be prepared to pay to keep services as they are averaged 27.5p. This figure was based on the assumption (in the question asked) that an amount of 50p per week for each resident would be sufficient to keep services at the current level. This average varied across the different demographic groups but differences were relatively low ranging from 22.2p amongst the DE class group up to 32.9p for the AB group.

Parking Charges

The next section of the survey dealt with non food shopping in Maidstone and the possible affect of an increase in parking charges. Just over 90% of residents and 42% of non residents shopped in Maidstone. The *cost of parking* was considered quite important when using a car to shop in Maidstone but less important than the other 2 factors that respondents were asked to rate – *ease of access* and *product range*.

Using the basis of parking being charged at a rate of 50p per hour shoppers were asked the point at which parking charges would have to go up before they stopped using a location. The acceptable increases were relatively large with the overall average for residents coming out at an average increase per hour of 38.1p compared with 43.0p for non residents.

A comparison of acceptable increases by location revealed that Maidstone had the 5th lowest price increase 'tipping point' (the level of increase that would mean the location would no longer be used) with a figure of 40.9p. This compared with the best figure of 47.5p for Lakeside and the worst performer – Hempstead Valley with a figure of 30.3p. Overall, 39% of resident and 30% of non resident Maidstone shoppers would select the town as the first to stop using should the cost of parking be raised to the 'tipping point'.

There is a high usage level of parking in Maidstone (93% of residents and 84% of non residents claim to use the town centre car parks) and about half the sample of both groups considered the cost of parking to be 'about right' while a further 30% considered it only 'a little too much'. 17% of residents and 19% of non residents considered parking to be 'much too much'.

Park & Ride

Respondents were then asked about the Park and Ride service. Of the 22% of residents and 35% of non residents who claimed to use one or other of the Park and Ride services, the clear majority (around 80%) considered that the cost of using the service was 'about right'. Only 4% of residents and 20% of non residents thought the service was 'too expensive'.

By far the most common use of the service was for *shopping in the town* and the most important attributes were the fact that the *parking was free* and the *convenience*. When asked what they would do if there was no Park and Ride service almost 60% of respondents stated that they would drive into the town and park while 30% of residents and 14% of non residents would use the normal bus service. However, almost 10% of residents and 15% of non residents thought that they would go elsewhere if the service was not available.

Bulky refuse collection

The next section of the questionnaire dealt with the bulky refuse and green waste collection services. The clear majority of residents (73%) were aware of the bulky refuse freighters and just under half used them – of these 5% regularly and 44% occasionally. The household waste centre in Tovil was used by 74% of residents with 19% claiming to use it every month.

The home collection of bulky items attained similar levels of awareness (80%) and most residents knew that a charge was made for this service. Just over half the sample of residents who were aware of this service had used it.

Awareness of the wheelie bin hire was significantly lower at 62% of whom 25% had used the service. The proportion of awareness and use for the green waste sacks was 76% awareness and 50% usage with most of the sacks being purchased from local retailers (79%) or Council receptions (21%).

Residents using these 3 services were then asked to rate the value for money of the charges that were made. The bulky item and wheelie bin services performed very well with poor value ratings of only 19% for the former and 12% for the latter. However, 55% of the green sack users considered the cost of the sacks to be poor value for money (28% very poor).

Hazlitt

The final section of the questionnaire asked for the views of both residents and non residents towards the Hazlitt. 69% of residents and 37% of non residents had visited the theatre and both had visited similar types of events with the most common being pantomimes, plays and family shows. Perceived value for money at an average ticket price of £12.5 was quite high with only 10% rating it ‘poor value’ for money against 50% giving a ‘good’ and a further 41 % a ‘fair value’ for money rating.

3.0 Main findings

The following section reports on the results of every question in the questionnaire. The results are reported in terms of bar charts to show overall results and relevant differences amongst the various demographic groups and in some cases tabulations where it is necessary to show more complex data. In the case of the latter, the percentages are always to be read vertically with the sample size for each demographic group shown across the top of the tabulation.

These tabulations also show statistical differences at the 95% and 99% level by placing * for the former and ** for the latter. The basis for this calculation is described in full in the appendix to this report.

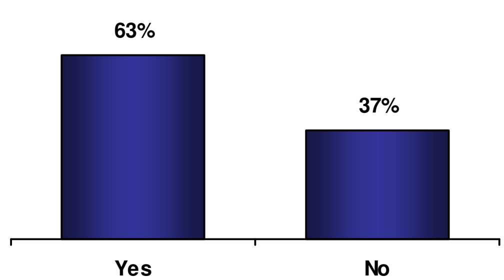
The main results are also described in words and those findings that show statistically relevant differences between population groups are commented upon.

The order of the report does not necessarily follow the order of the questionnaire.

3.1 Perceived preference for increase charges/ council taxes or reduce services

Q3 Do you want Maidstone Council to make efficiency savings and cuts in services to limit any increase in its council tax?

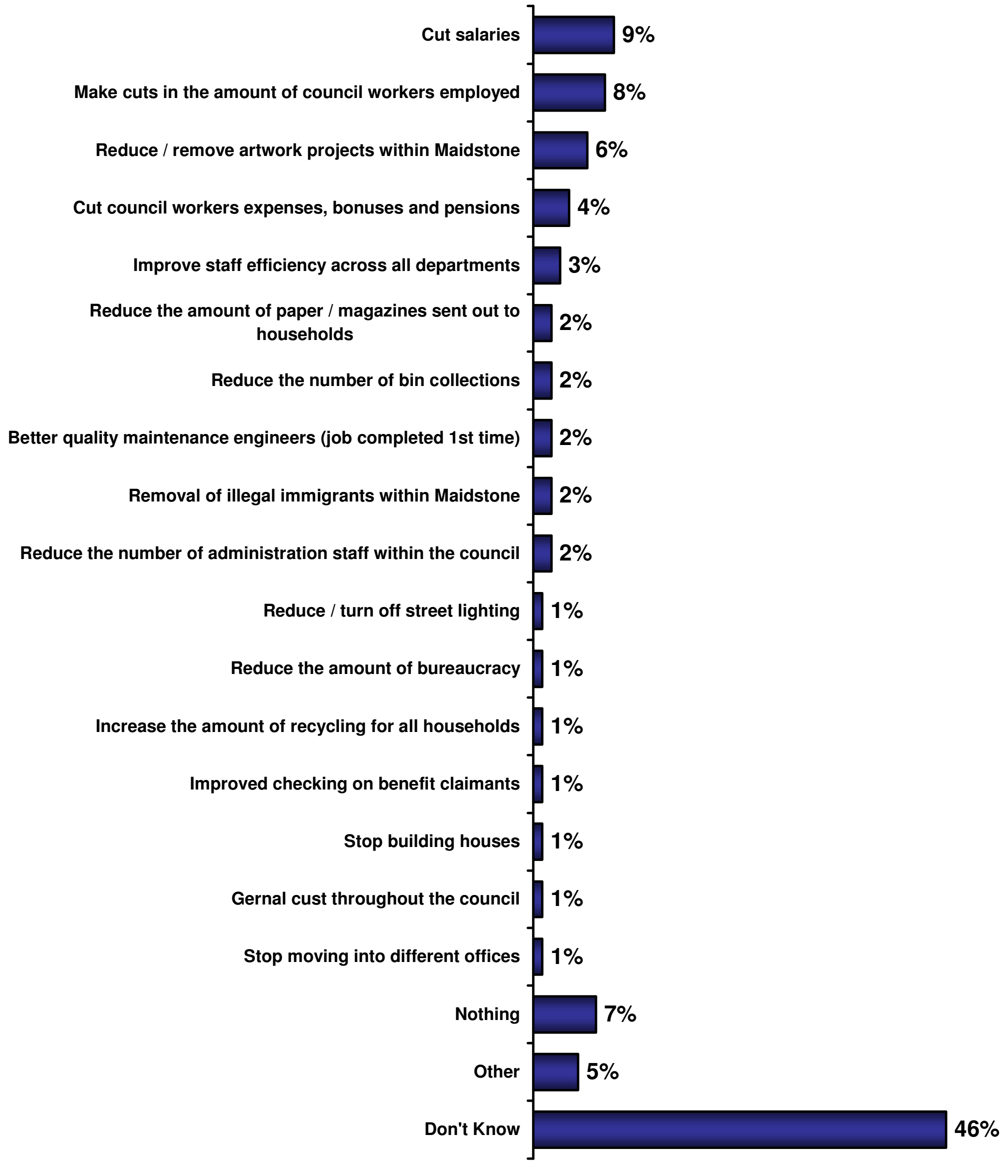
63% of all residents wanted the Council to make saving efficiencies and cuts in services to limit council tax increases and 37% did not. There were no statistically significant differences between the population groups. Those in the 16-34 year old age group were more likely to want cuts to be made while those in the AB class group were less likely to hold that view.



Base: All residents – 1008

Q4: Where do you think the council could make savings?

The complete list of responses is shown below:

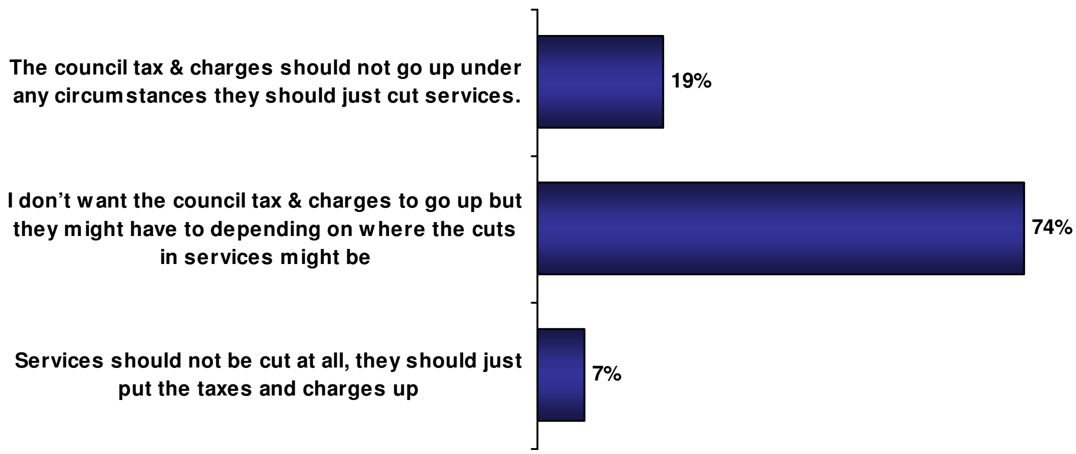


Base: All residents – 1008

Q5. In your opinion, do you think the council should put up taxes or make cuts in services - which of the following statements comes closest to your opinion?

Residents were then asked a similar question but one that had an additional answer that could reflect a compromise middle view.

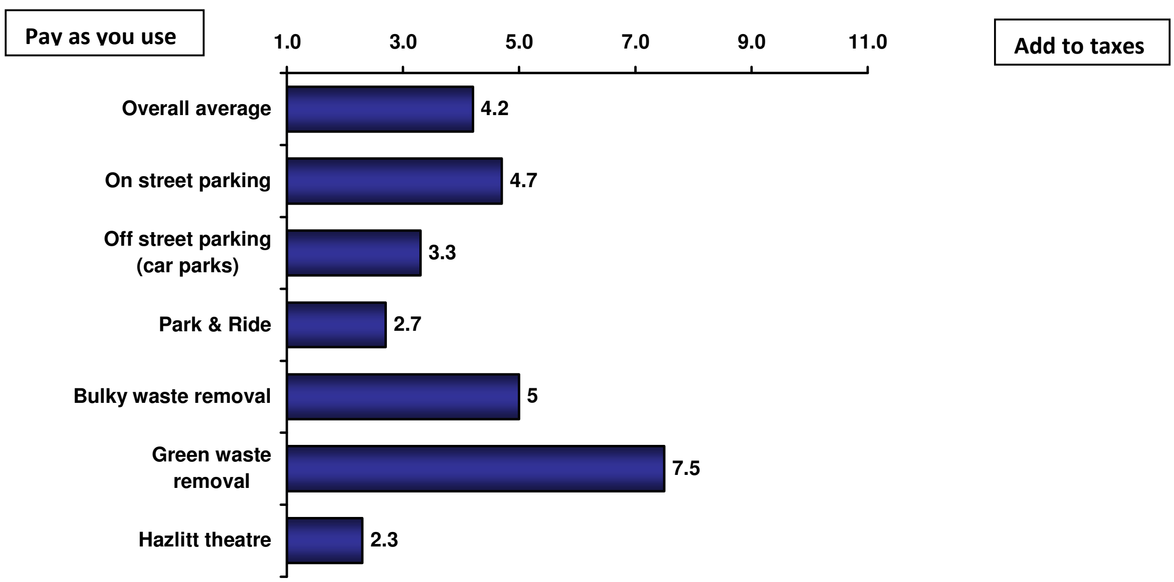
To this question the clear majority – 74%, agreed that council charges may have to go up depending on where the service cuts might be. The C1 class group were significantly less likely to suggest the first statement while those aged 16-34 were significantly more likely.



Base: All residents – 1008

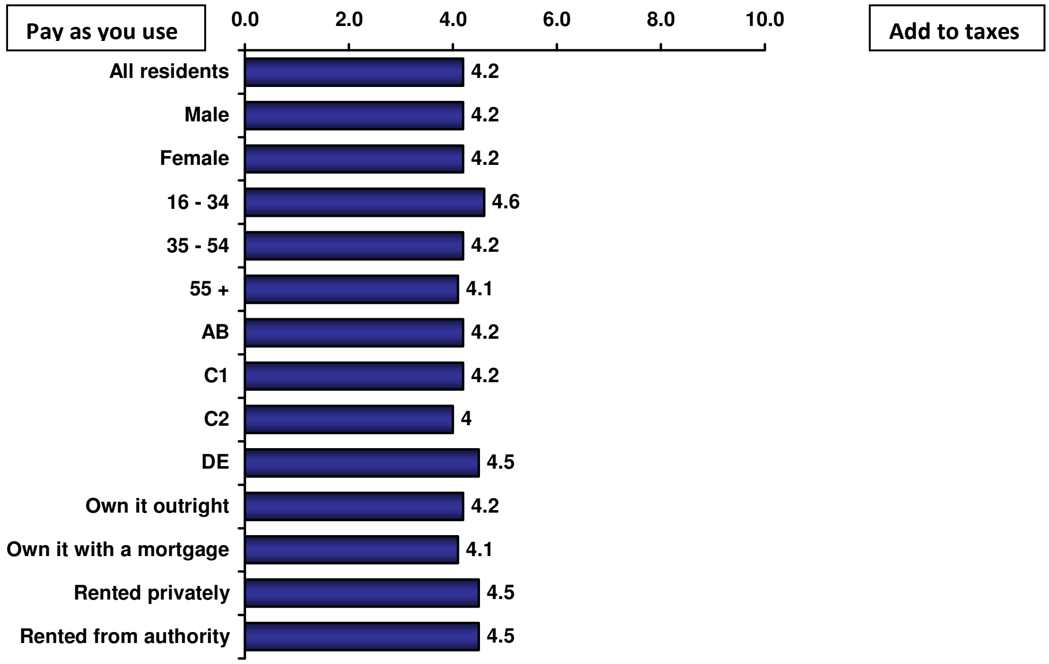
Q2 Preference for pay as you use compared with increases in council tax for each of the Council's services. A score of 0 means that respondents felt that all additional revenue should be raised by increasing 'pay as you use' while a score of 10 means that additional revenue should be raised from an increase in council taxes. The numbers in between would be ticked if respondents' views fell somewhere in between?

The average score by category is shown below with the Hazlitt theatre showing a score of 1.3 indicating that most people would like this to be 'pay as you use' while Green waste removal achieved the highest score of 7.5 indicating that on balance most people would like to see this put on the council tax (for the purposes of the scoring, 0 is scored as 1 through to 11 for the score of 10, the mid point score would therefore be 6.0).



Base: All residents – 1008

The following chart shows the differences between the various population groups. Compared with the overall average score of 4.2 the 16-34 year old age group and those in the DE socio-economic class group were significantly more likely to want an increase in taxes compared with other groups.



Base: All residents – 1028

The table below shows the breakdown by individual category and shows that the highest score was 8.0 for green waste removal amongst the 16-34 year age group while the lowest was 2.0 for the Hazlitt theatre amongst the DE class group. .

		Gender		Age group			Social class				Home ownership			
	Total	Male	Female	16 – 34	35 – 54	55 +	AB	C1	C2	DE	Own it outright	Own it with a mortgage	Rented privately	Rented from authority
Total	1008	499	509	230	315	463	182	344	191	281	399	292	155	159
On street parking	4.7	4.5	4.9	5.3*	4.8	4.3*	4.2	4.5	4.7	5.2*	4.4	4.4	5.3*	5.3*
Car parks	3.3	3.0*	3.6*	3.7	3.4	3.1*	2.8*	3.1	3.3	3.9**	3.1	2.9*	4.0*	4.0**
Park & Ride	2.7	2.9	2.5	3.0	2.4*	2.8	2.8	2.8	2.3*	2.9	2.8	2.6	2.4	3.0
Bulky waste removal	5.0	5.2	4.8	5.7**	5.0	4.6*	4.8	4.9	4.7	5.5*	4.9	4.8	5.2	5.3
Green waste removal	7.5	7.5	7.4	8.0*	7.5	7.2	7.8	7.5	7.0	7.5	7.5	7.4	7.9	7.1
Hazlitt Theatre	2.3	2.4	2.2	2.1	2.3	2.4	2.6	2.4	2.1	2.0	2.4	2.3	2.1	2.3
Average score	4.2	4.2	4.2	4.6**	4.2	4.1*	4.2	4.2	4.0	4.5*	4.2	4.1	4.5	4.5

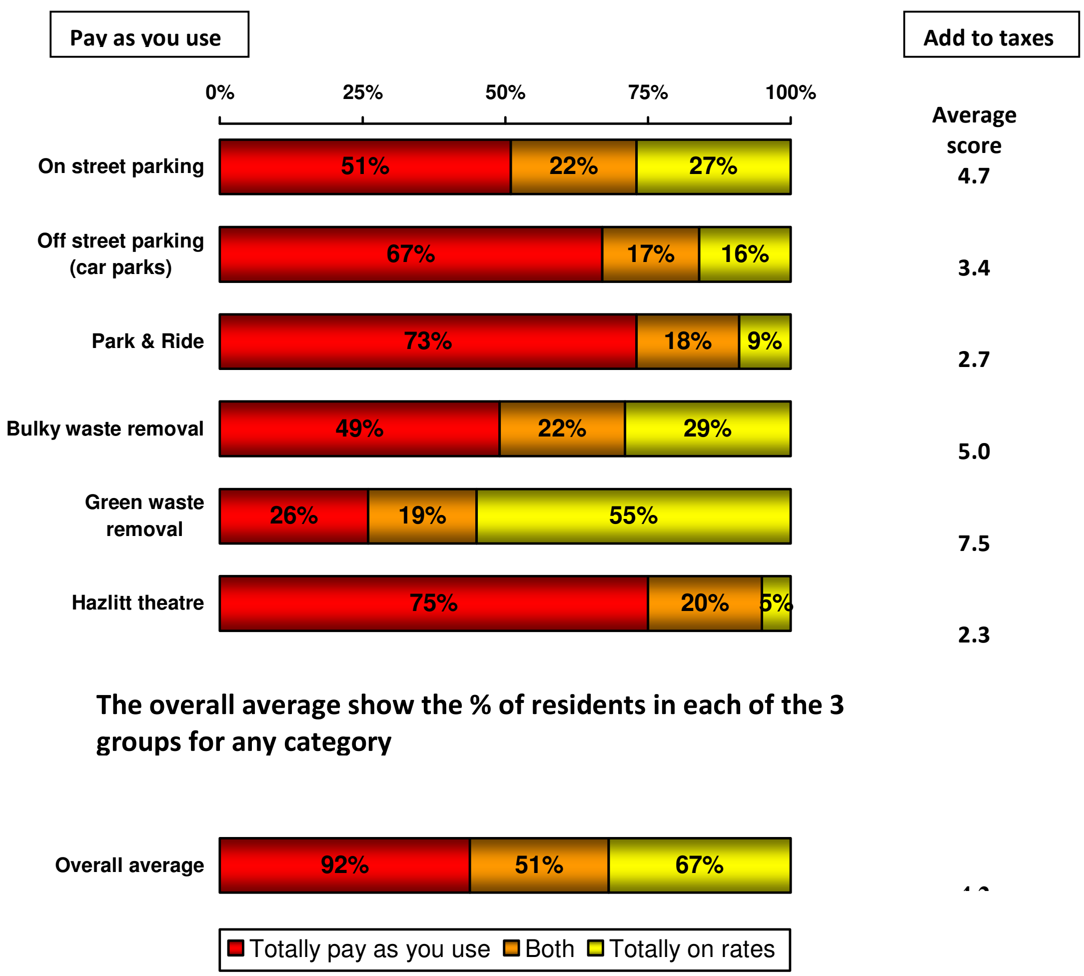
Base: All Maidstone residents

95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

The following chart shows the percentage distribution by score. The red section shows the percentage giving a score of 0 (totally ‘pay as you use’), the orange section shows the proportion giving a score between 1 and 9 while the yellow section shows the proportion giving a score of 10 (totally on the taxes).

This chart shows that 75% of all respondents gave the Hazlitt a score of 0, 20% gave a score between 2 and 9 and 5% gave a score of 10. By comparison only 26% gave a score of 0 for Green waste removal, 19% gave a score between 2 and 9 and 55% gave a score of 10.

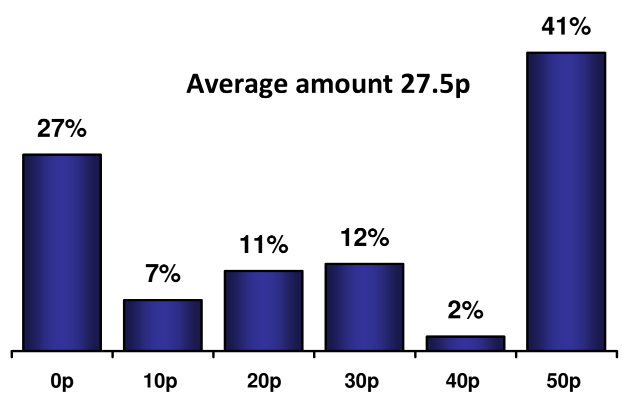
The separate bar at the bottom of this chart shows the proportion of residents giving an answer in any of the 3 groups and shows that while each individual section performance (main bar chart) tended to show a clear majority at one end of the scale or the other, over 50% of residents at some time gave a response that suggested that they could hold a ‘compromise’ position.



Base: All residents – 1028

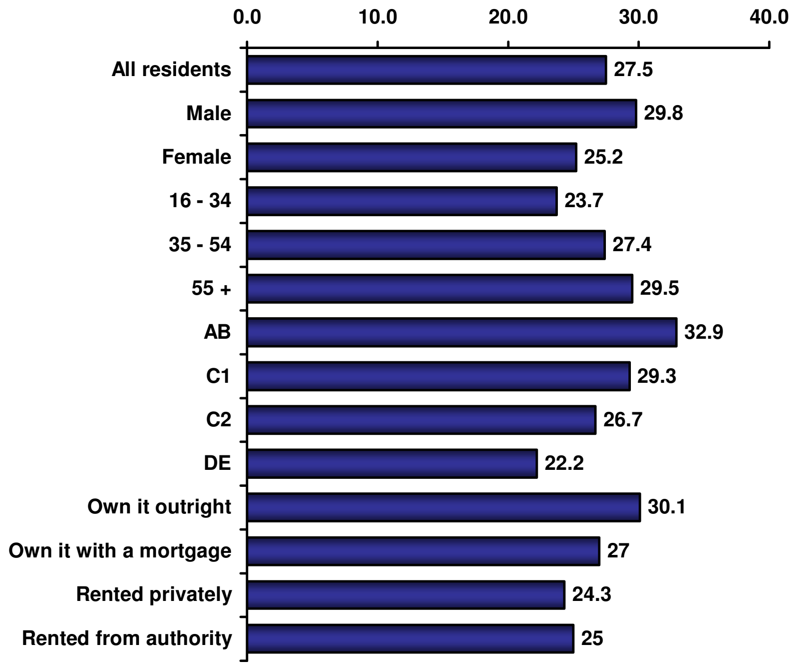
Q6. If I was to say that to keep services as they are the council would need to raise an extra 50p per week from each resident, how much of this would you be prepared to pay to keep services as they are?

27% were not prepared to spend any more to avoid service cuts while 41% were prepared to spend the full 50p. The overall average spend was 27.5p.



Base: All residents – 1008

This average spend varied between the population groups and is shown in the graph overleaf. Against the overall average of 27.5p, response was contained within a range of between the lowest of 22.2p for the DE class group up to the highest of 32.9p for the AB class group.

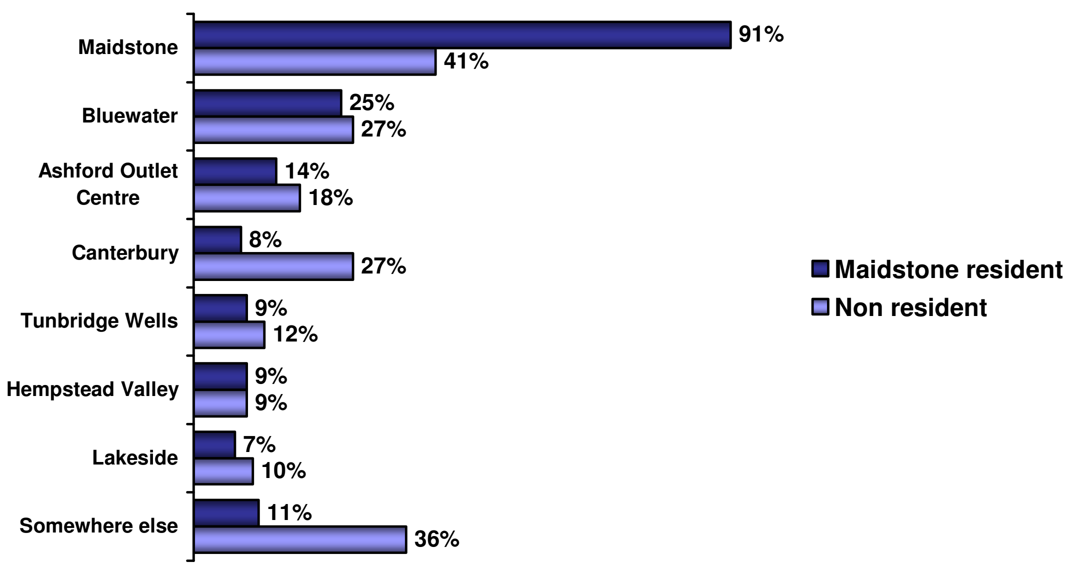


Base: All residents – 1008

3.2 Shopping in Maidstone and the perceived effects of an increase in parking charges

Q7 Looking at this list, where do you normally do your non-food shopping?

91% of the residents interviewed and 41% of the non residents claimed to normally do their non food shopping in Maidstone. Of the named areas the most popular location outside of Maidstone was Bluewater which was use by 25% of residents. For non residents, the most popular were Canterbury and Bluewater used by 27%.



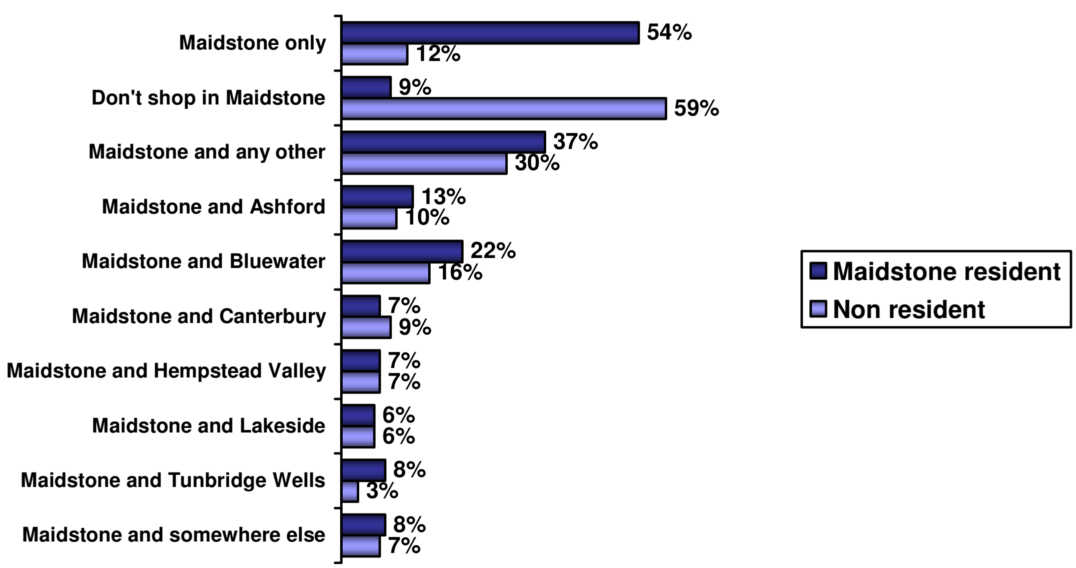
Base: All respondents – 1252

The table overleaf shows the demographic differences between those using the various sites. Maidstone tended to be used more by the 16-34 age group and the DE class group

	Total	Maidstone	Bluewater	Ashford	Canterbury	Tunbridge Wells	Hempstead	Lakeside	Somewhere else
Total	1252	1020	324	185	150	122	108	92	200
Male	48%	48%	47%	48%	45%	42%	40%	45%	57%*
Female	52%	52%	53%	52%	55%	58%	60%	55%	43%**
16 - 34	22%	24%**	24%	16%*	19%	9%**	11%**	25%	17%*
35 - 54	33%	32%	40%**	42%**	33%	34%	29%	38%	35%
55 +	44%	44%	36%**	42%	49%	57%**	60%**	37%	49%
AB	20%	18%**	27%**	22%	34%**	39%**	24%	20%	27%**
C1	34%	34%	40%*	36%	37%	34%	38%	38%	31%
C2	19%	20%	20%	26%**	13%*	13%	19%	23%	17%
DE	26%	28%**	11%**	15%**	13%**	13%**	18%*	17%*	24%

Base: All respondents - 1252
95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

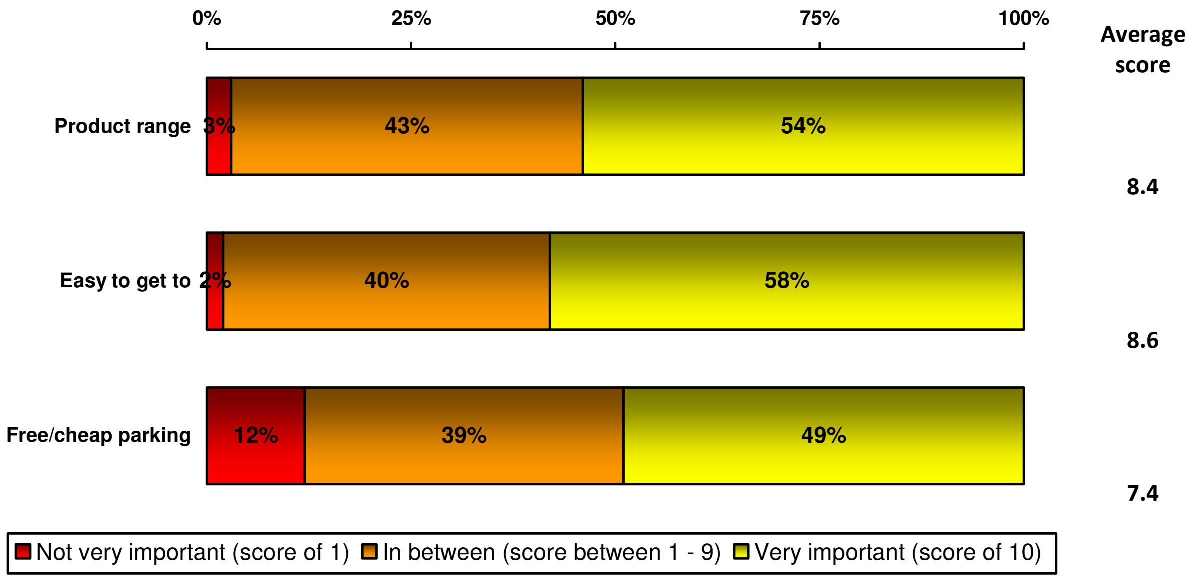
The following chart summarises the combination or areas used by respondents for non food shopping. 54% of Maidstone residents claimed to only shop in Maidstone. The most common named areas used as well as Maidstone were Bluewater – 22% and Ashford – 13%.



Base: All respondents - 1252

Q10a Rating of importance when shopping for non food items.

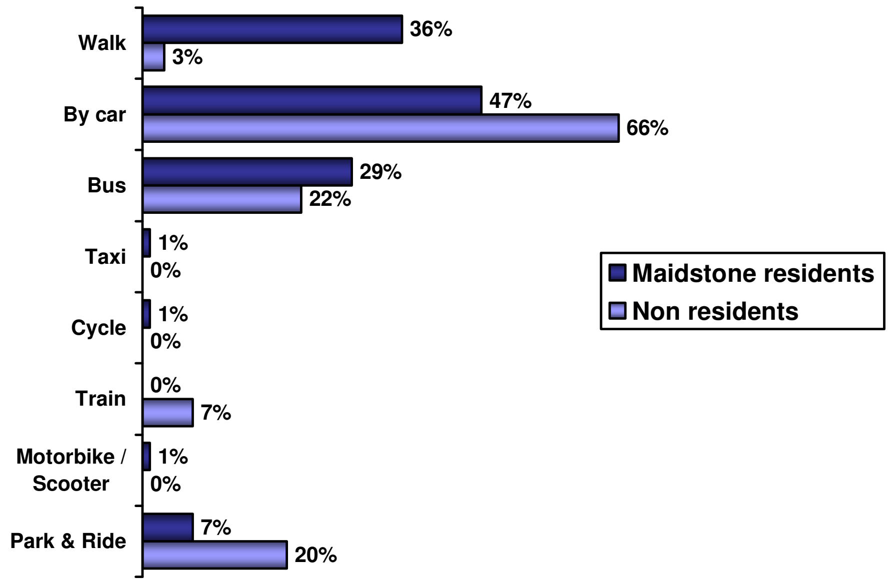
Respondents were asked to rate three factors by giving a score out of 10 where 1 = not very important, 10 very important. The scores 2 – 9 were given for views lying between these two extremes. Free/cheap parking was considered the least important of the 3 factors.



Base: All respondents – 1252

Q10 What method of transport do you use when going into Maidstone for non-food shopping?

The most common form of transport into Maidstone for non food shopping was the car used by 47% of residents and 66% of non residents. The bus was used by 29% of residents and 22% of non residents while 7% of the former and 20% of the latter used Park and Ride. Over a third of residents – 36% claimed to walk into the town.

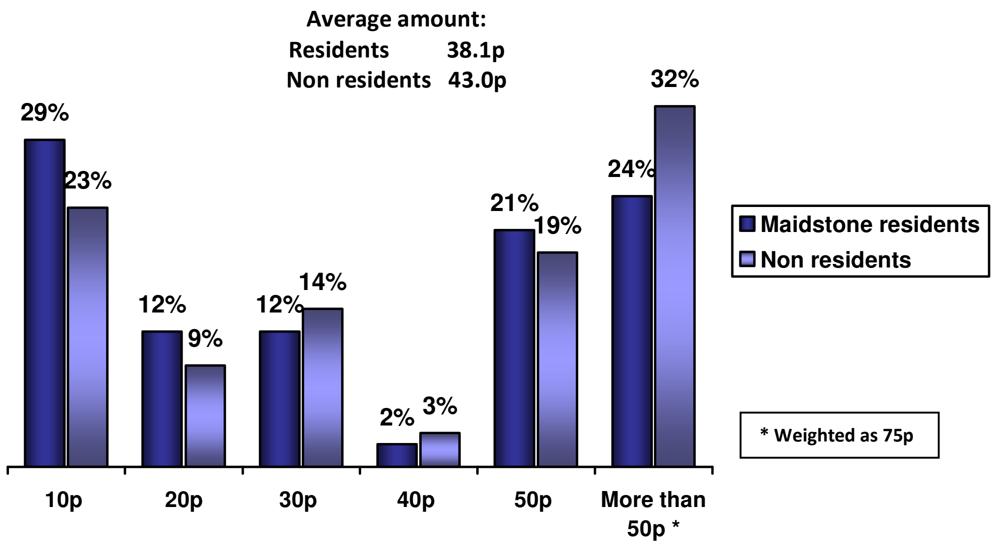


Base: All using Maidstone for non food shopping - 967

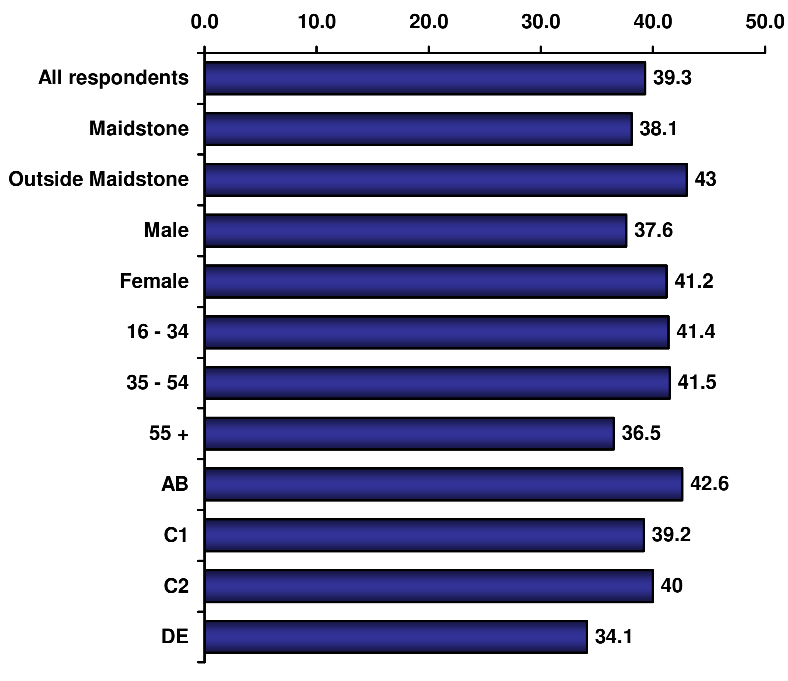
Q12 If it costs 50p per hour to park, how much would it have to go up before you would stop using the location for shopping?

Those using a car to go into Maidstone for non food shopping were asked how much parking would have to go up per hour (assuming a current cost of 50p per hour) before they stopped using a location. The 2 charts below show the distribution, average amount and the difference in average amount by demographic group. The 'tipping point' for residents was lower than non residents at 38.1p for the former and 43p for the latter.

Variance by demographic group showed a logical pattern with the lowest tipping points registered for the DE class group at 34.1p and those aged 55+ at 36.5p while the highest were for the AB class group at 42.6 and the 35-54 age group at 41.5p.



Base: All using the car for Maidstone non food shopping - 617



Base: All using the car for Maidstone non food shopping – 617

Q11 If the cost of parking were to be significantly increased or applied where it was currently free, which non food shopping location would be the first you would stop visiting?

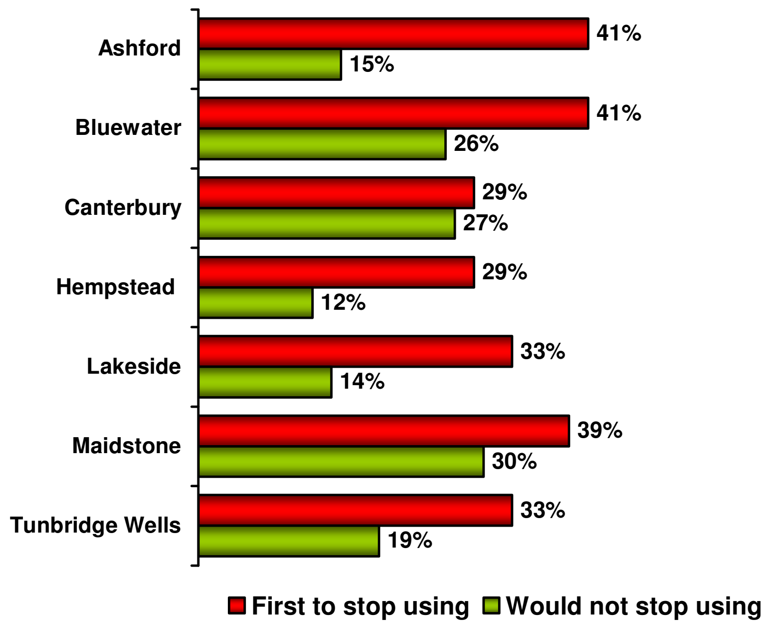
The chart overleaf shows the relative propensity for shoppers to stop using certain locations should the cost of parking be increased or introduced. The relative tipping point for each location is shown on the right side of the chart. Those residents who only use Maidstone are excluded from the analysis for ease of comparison.

Maidstone, Ashford and Bluewater appear to be the most sensitive to a parking cost increase. Obviously the situation for Bluewater is different to the other two because for Bluewater, users are responding to the concept of an introduction of parking fees where currently there are none. Maidstone appears to be the most at risk of the three because its ‘tipping point’ is higher at 40.9p than the other two. Hempstead Valley has the equal lowest proportion of ‘first to stop using’ although its tipping point is also the lowest at 30.3p.

At the bottom of the tipping point scale on the right is the tipping point for residents who only shop at Maidstone. This is a relatively low 33.0p although this is as much a reflection of disposable income than the poor performance of Maidstone as a shopping area.

Maidstone does come out top on the proportion who would not stop using a location. However given that the interviewing was being carried out in Maidstone, this proportion would be expected to be comparatively high.

All shopping by car for non food shopping



Price increase tipping point (average – 42.0p)
42.7
43.3
38.9
30.3
47.5
40.9
41.7
*33.0

Base: All respondents using car for non food shopping in Maidstone – 539

(Maidstone data excludes those only shopping in Maidstone)

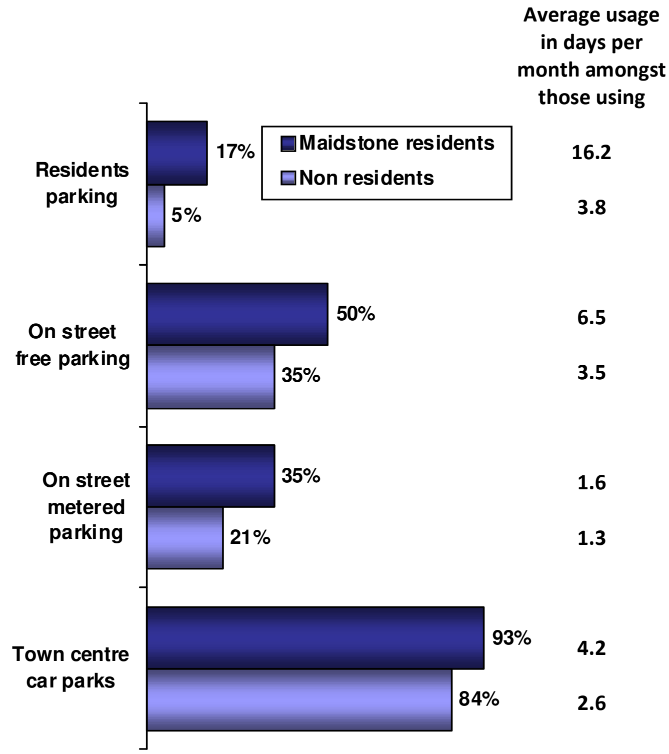
* This is the tipping point for Maidstone residents who only shop in Maidstone

Q13a Do you use any of the following in and around Maidstone? And how often do you use each?

The chart overleaf shows the percentage of residents and non residents using the various sources of parking. For residents, the use of town centre parking was nearly three times as popular as on street metered parking with usage rates of 93% and 35% respectively. For non residents the differential was 4 to 1 in favour of the car parks.

Frequency of parking use in days per month is shown to the right of the graph. Non residents used car parks twice as frequently per month as 'on street' metered parking with usage rates of 2.6 days and 1.3 days per month respectively.

The two tables below the graph shows the demographic differences in parking habits.



Base: All respondents using car – 644

Percentage using each type of parking

	Total	Gender: Male	Gender: Female	Age group: 16 – 34	Age group: 35 – 54	Age group: 55 +	Social class: AB	Social class: C1	Social class: C2	Social class: DE	Home ownership: Own it outright	Home ownership: Own it with a mortgage	Home ownership: Rented privately	Home ownership: Rented from authority
Total	640	332	307	103	259	278	167	219	132	112	256	268	58	50
Residents parking	91	42	49	17	44	30*	15*	32	25	19	23**	40	14*	13*
	14%	13%	16%	17%	17%	11%	9%	15%	19%	17%	9%	15%	24%	26%
On street free parking	294	173**	121**	56	120	118	69	96	66	59	106	126	30	29
	46%	52%	39%	54%	46%	42%	41%	44%	50%	53%	41%	47%	52%	58%
On street metered parking	198	118**	80*	32	91	75	56	66	44	30	68	96*	18	15
	31%	36%	26%	31%	35%	27%	34%	30%	33%	27%	27%	36%	31%	30%
Town centre car parks	578	296	281	96	242*	240**	150	195	124	100	221**	248	54	47
	90%	89%	92%	93%	93%	86%	90%	89%	94%	89%	86%	93%	93%	94%

Base: All using car in Maidstone for non food shopping

95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

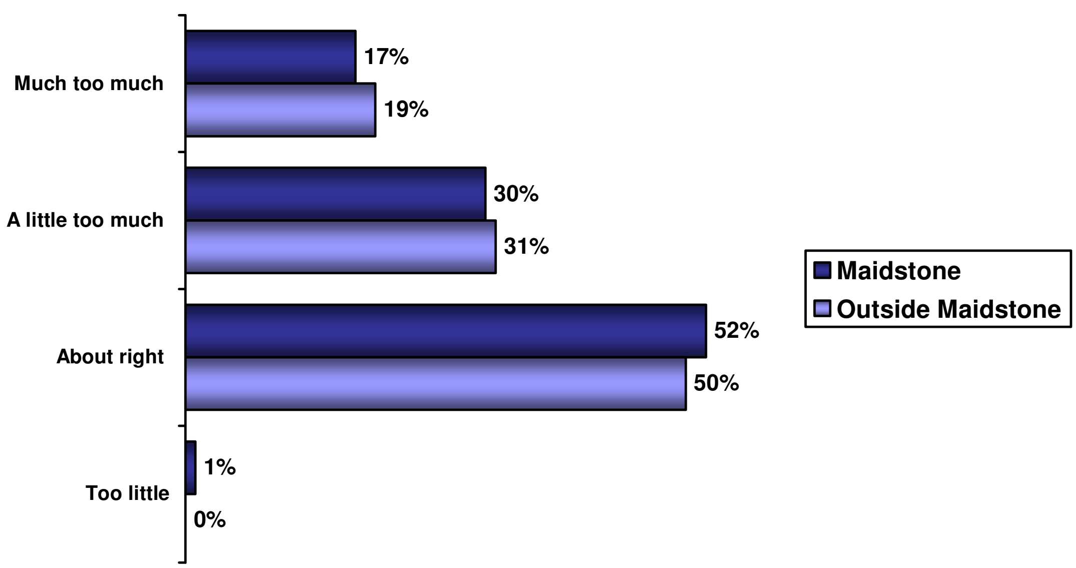
Frequency of use – days per month

	Total	Gender		Age group			Social class				Home ownership			
		Male	Female	16 – 34	35 – 54	55 +	AB	C1	C2	DE	Own it outright	Own it with a mortgage	Rented privately	Rented from authority
Residents parking	14.9	16.5	13.6	18.1	14.3	14.1	15.9	11.3	17.2	17.3	12.3	11.2*	26.5 **	19.7
On street free parking	5.9	6.5	5.1	8.8**	5.0	5.5	4.8	6.3	5.2	7.3	3.9**	6.6	7.9	8.3
On street metered	1.5	1.5	1.5	2.2	1.5	1.3	1.7	1.6	1.5	1.3	1.4	1.7	1.0	1.7
Town centre car parks	3.8	4.1	3.5	5.3**	3.6	3.3*	3.8	3.7	3.7	4.2	3.6	3.8	4.0	4.5

Base: All using residents parking in Maidstone for non food shopping
95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q14 Generally speaking, would you say the cost of parking in Maidstone town centre is...?

At the end of the parking section, respondents were asked to give a general rating of the cost of parking in Maidstone. About half the sample of both residents and non residents felt the cost of parking was about right with a further 30% rating it as a 'little too much'. 7% of residents and 19% of non residents felt that the cost was 'much too much'.



Base: All respondents using car – 391

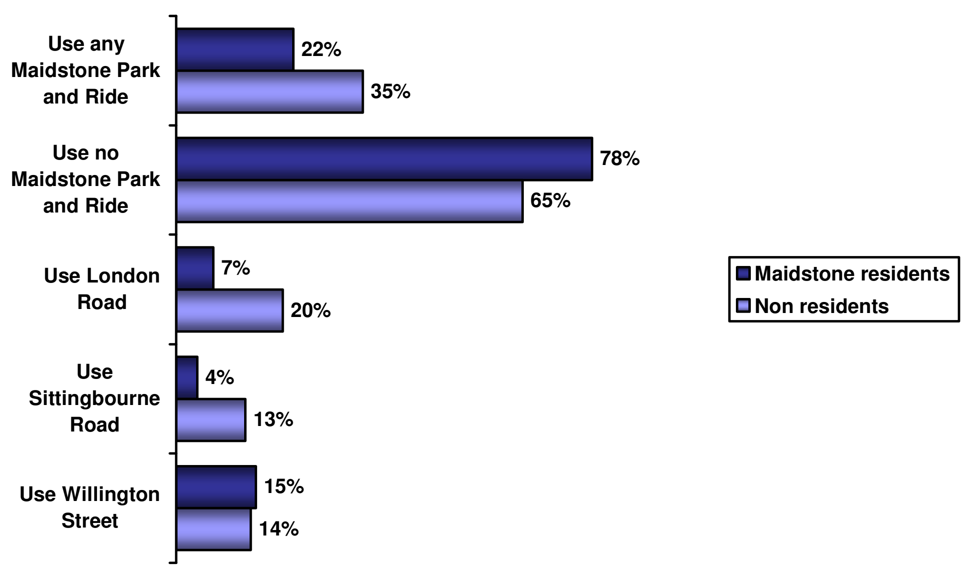
3.3 Use of and attitudes towards Park and Ride

Q18 How often have you used each of the following Park & Ride sites, if ever? - London Road (behind DFS)

The following chart shows the proportion of respondents who use the various Park and Ride sites. Overall 22% of residents and 35% of non residents claim to have used one of the Maidstone sites.

The London road site was the most commonly used by non residents with 20% claiming use while amongst residents Willington street was used the most.

The table following the chart contains frequency of use and shows the relatively low frequency. The mean score at the bottom of the table represents the average number of occasions that the site is used by users and shows that the highest frequency was attained by residents using Willington street on 2.6 occasions a month.

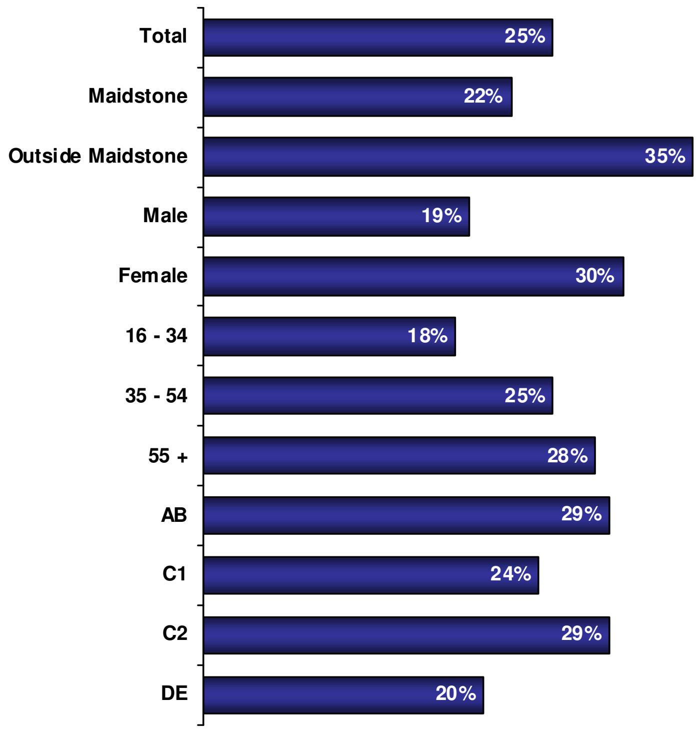


Base: All respondents – 1252

		London Road		Sittingbourne		Willington	
		Maidstone	Outside Maidstone	Maidstone	Outside Maidstone	Maidstone	Outside Maidstone
Total		1008	244	1008	244	1008	244
Every day	(30.0)	*%	-%	*%	*%	*%	-%
2 - 3 times a week	(10.0)	1%	1%	*%	1%	2%	-%
Once a week	(4.0)	1%	1%	*%	-%	2%	-%
2 - 3 times a month	(2.5)	1%	1%	*%	1%	1%	1%
Once a month	(1.0)	1%	4%	*%	3%	2%	3%
Less often	(0.5)	4%	13%	3%	8%	8%	10%
Never/not aware	(0.0)	93%	80%	96%	87%	85%	86%
Mean score amongst all users		2.5	1.3	2.0	2.3	2.6	0.8

Base: All respondents - 1252

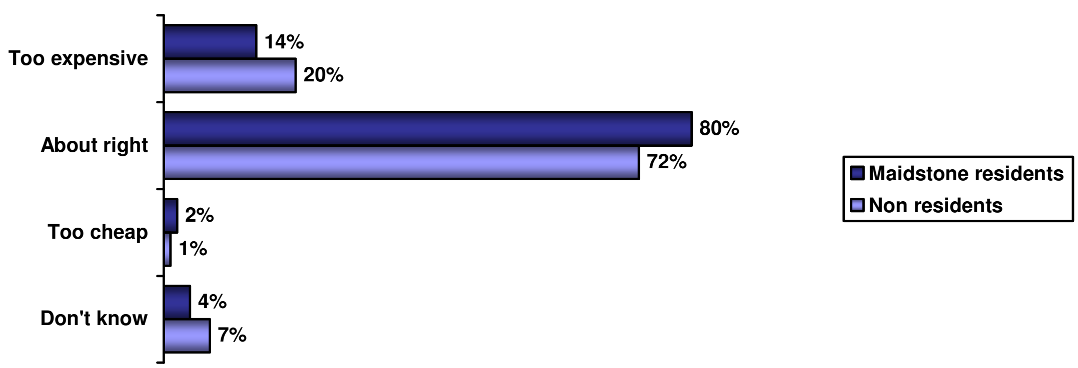
The chart below shows the percentage of the various demographic groups that claim use of any of the Park and Ride sites. Usage was significantly higher for females, AB and C1 class groups and lower amongst males, the 16-34 age group and the DE class group.



Base: All respondents – 1252

Q20 Do you think the park and ride fare is...?

Only 14% of residents and 20% of non residents felt that the Park and Ride fare was 'too expensive'. There were little significant differences between the various population groups.

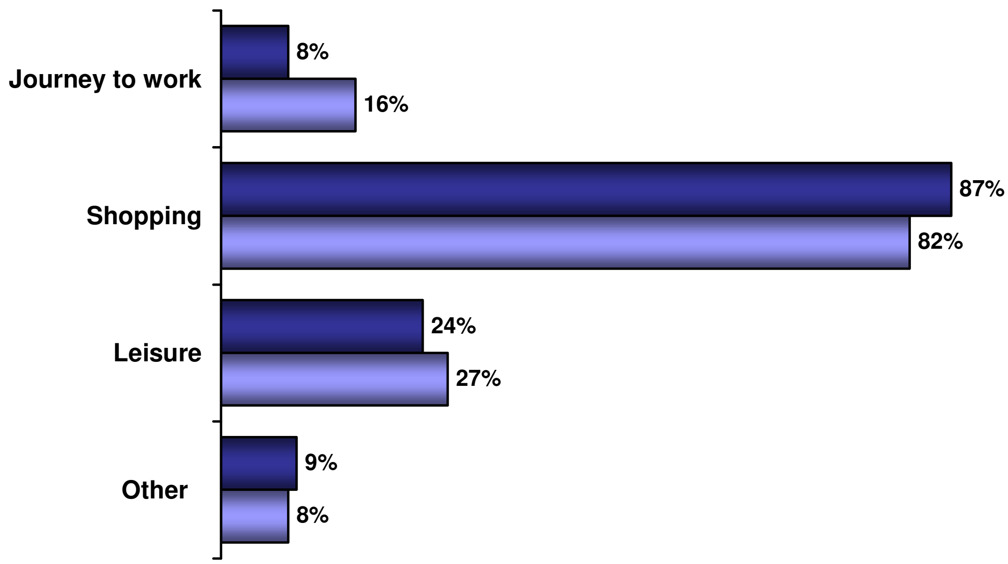


Base: All respondents using Park and Ride – 310

Q22 What do you use the park & ride service for?

The clear majority of both residents and non residents used the Park and Ride service for shopping in Maidstone with 87% of Maidstone residents and 82% of non residents using it for this purpose.

The table below the chart shows that males were significantly more likely to use the service for leisure purposes than females while the 55+ year old age group were significantly more likely at 91% to use the service for shopping.



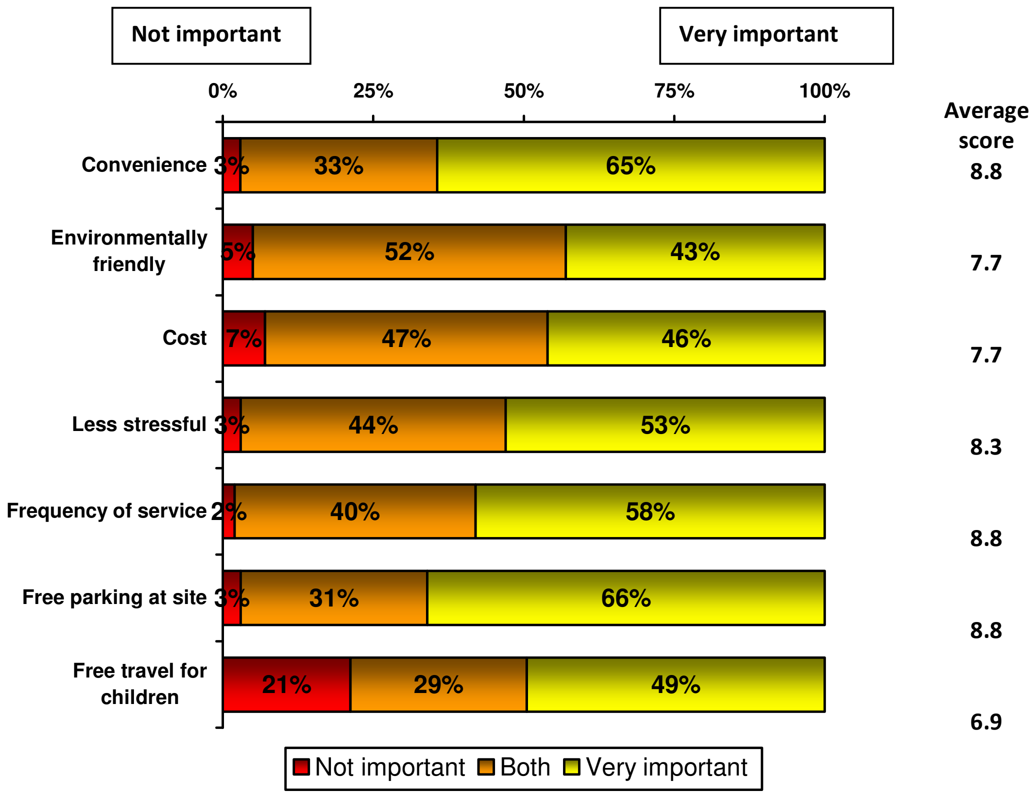
Base: All respondents using Park and Ride – 310

	Total	Residency: Maidstone	Residency: Outside Maidstone	Gender: Male	Gender: Female	Age group: 16 – 34	Age group: 35 – 54	Age group: 55 +
Total	308	223	85	112	195	51	103	154
Journey to work	31	17*	14*	12	19	10*	11	10*
	10%	8%	16%	11%	10%	20%	11%	6%
Shopping	263	193	70	95	168	40	83	140**
	85%	87%	82%	85%	86%	78%	81%	91%
Leisure	76	53	23	39**	37**	15	27	34
	25%	24%	27%	35%	19%	29%	26%	22%
Other	26	19	7	8	17	3	9	14
	8%	9%	8%	7%	9%	6%	9%	9%

Base: All USING Park and Ride
95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q21a On a scale of 1 to 10, where 1 is not at all important and 10 is very important, please rate each of the following attributes when considering the reasons for using the Park & Ride service?

The chart below summarises the response to this question. As before, the red section shows the proportion of all respondents considering the attribute not important (score of 0), the yellow section shows the proportion rating the attribute very important (score of 10), while the orange section represents scores in between these two extremes (score of 2-9). The table following the chart shows the mean scores by the differing population groups.



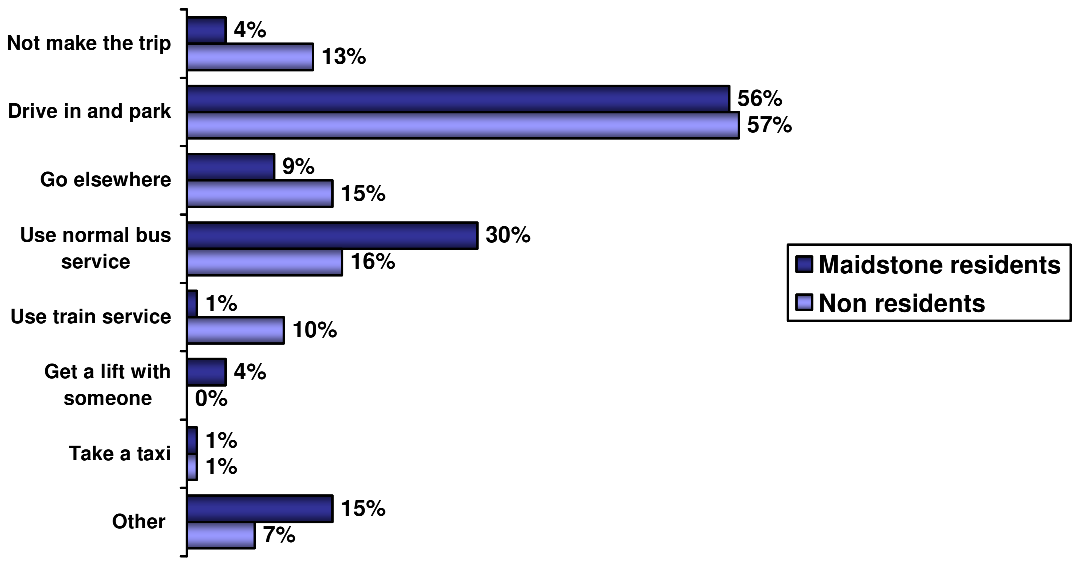
Base: All respondents using Park and Ride – 294

	Total	Residency: Maidstone	Residency: Outside Maidstone	Gender: Male	Gender: Female	Age group: 16 - 34	Age group: 35 - 54	Age group: 55 +	Social class: AB	Social class: C1	Social class: C2	Social class: DE
Total	294	214	80	109	184	49	96	149	67	97	63	62
Convenience	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.9	8.7	8.4*	9.1*	8.6	8.9	8.9	9.0
Environmentally friendly	7.7	7.9	7.3	7.6	7.8	7.2	7.5	8.1*	7.3	8.3*	7.4	7.6
Cost	7.7	7.7	7.8	7.1*	8.0*	7.8	7.9	7.5	7.7	7.8	7.1	8.0
Less stressful	8.3	8.3	8.3	8.0	8.5*	7.9	8.3	8.4	7.5**	8.7	8.7	8.2
Frequency of service	8.8	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.8	8.7	9.0	8.9	8.5
Free parking at the site	8.8	8.8	8.7	8.7	8.8	8.5	8.6	9.0	8.7	8.9	8.7	8.8
Free travel for children	6.9	7.3**	5.9**	6.4	7.2	7.2	7.4	6.5	6.2	7.7*	6.9	6.7

Base: All USING Park and Ride
95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q23 If the Park & Ride service was no longer available, how would you then journey into the town?

If the Park and Ride was no longer available, just over half of the respondents who use it claimed that they would drive in instead while 30% of residents and 16% of non residents would use the normal bus service. 9% of residents and 15% of non residents claimed that they would go elsewhere. The table following the graph summarises the demographic differences.



Base: All respondents using Park and Ride – 310

		Residency		Gender		Age group			Social class			
	Total	Maid stone	Ou tside Maid stone	Male	Fe male	16 - 34	35 - 54	55 +	AB	C1	C2	DE
Total	309	226	83	112	196	52	103	154	42	77	53	42
Not make the trip	6%	4%**	13%**	6%	6%	2%	7%	7%	2%	3%	4%	-%
Drive in and park	56%	57%	55%	54%	58%	52%	73%**	47%**	62%	51%	57%	38%*
Go elsewhere	11%	9%	16%	10%	11%	8%	10%	12%	5%	5%	9%	-%*
Use normal bus service	26%	30%*	16%*	27%	26%	29%	13%**	34%**	17%	34%	26%	45%*
Use train service	4%	1%**	12%**	4%	5%	10%*	8%*	-%**	5%	-%*	2%	2%
Get a lift with someone	3%	4%	-%	2%	3%	6%	1%	3%	2%	1%	-%	5%
Take a taxi	1%	1%	1%	2%	1%	-%	1%	1%	2%	1%	-%	-%
Other (No verbatim required)	13%	15%	8%	15%	12%	19%	13%	11%	21%	13%	15%	19%

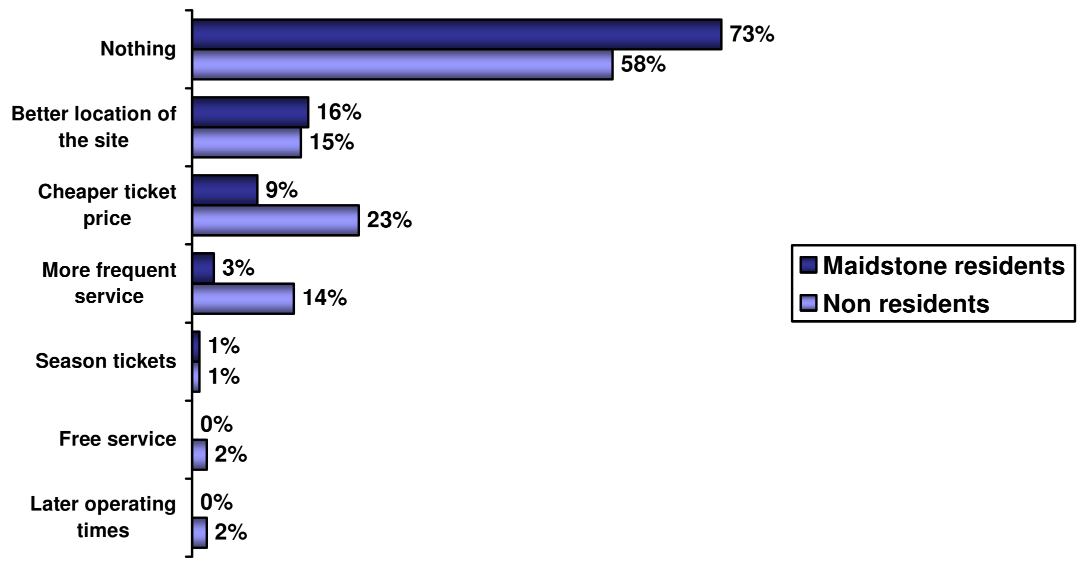
Base: All respondents using Park and Ride

95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q24 What if anything would influence your decision to use the service if you do not currently use it or do not use it very often?

A summary of the response to this question is shown below. While for 74% of residents nothing could be done to promote use of the service, non residents appear to be conducive to potential use with only 58% stating that they would not use the service.

The three most important service improvements were 'better site locations', 'cheaper ticket prices' and 'more frequent services'.

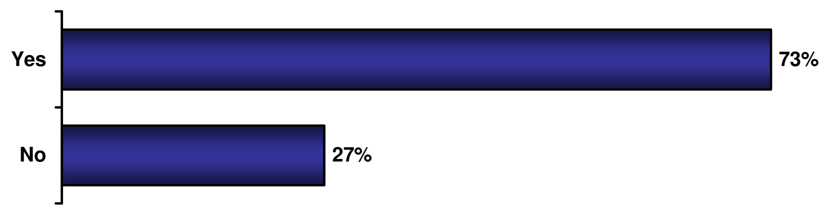


Base: All respondents – 1243

3.4 Use of and attitudes towards the bulky refuse collection services

Q25 Are you aware that there is a service available in Maidstone for the collection of bulky refuse in freighters (dust carts) in the local community such as at Allington Shopping Centre?

73% of residents claimed to be aware of the bulky refuse collection service. Of these respondents who were aware of the service, 5% claimed to use the service regularly and 44% occasionally .The table below the chart shows that use was higher amongst the 55+ age group and lower amongst the 16-34 age group. Usage was also lower amongst those residents living in privately rented property.



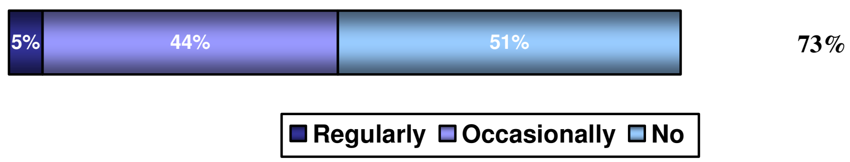
Base: All residents – 1028

	Total	Age group: 16 - 34	Age group: 35 - 54	Age group: 55 +	Home ownership: Own it out right	Home ownership: Own it with a mortgage	Home ownership: Rented privately	Home ownership: Rented from authority
Total	1008	230	315	463	399	292	155	159
Yes	740	138**	236	366**	310*	217	92**	118
	73%	60%	75%	79%	78%	74%	59%	74%
No	268	92**	79	97**	89*	75	63**	41
	27%	40%	25%	21%	22%	26%	41%	26%

Base: Maidstone residents
95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q26 Frequency of service usage

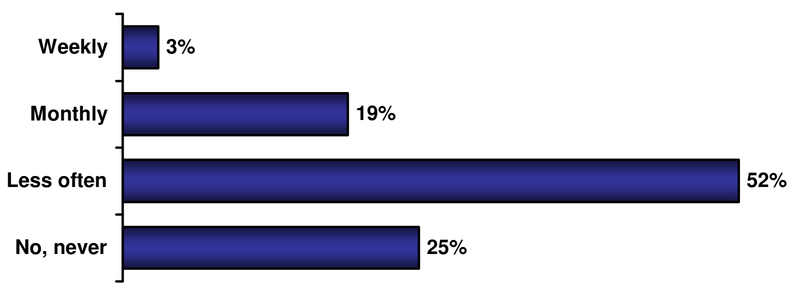
Amongst those using the service, 5% used regularly, 44% occasionally and 51% less often



Base: All users - 740

Q27 How often, if ever, have you used the household waste centre in Tovil?

3% of all residents claimed to use the centre every week, 19% monthly, 52% less often and 25% never used. The table following the chart shows usage was higher amongst older residents (55+) and lower amongst younger residents (16-34). There was also higher usage amongst those who own their own home compared with those in rented property where usage was lower.



Base: Maidstone residents 1028

		Age group			Social class				Home ownership			
	Total	16 - 34	35 - 54	55 +	AB	C1	C2	DE	Own it outright	Own it with a mortgage	Rented privately	Rented from authority
Total	1008	230	315	463	182	344	191	281	399	292	155	159
Weekly	33	6	6	21*	10	4**	12**	7	16	10	5	2
	3%	3%	2%	5%	5%	1%	6%	2%	4%	3%	3%	1%
Monthly	196	28**	71	97	47*	81*	31	35**	96**	78**	8**	13**
	19%	12%	23%	21%	26%	24%	16%	12%	24%	27%	5%	8%
Less often	527	98**	168	261*	88	184	104	146	218	160	64**	83
	52%	43%	53%	56%	48%	53%	54%	52%	55%	55%	41%	52%
No, never	252	98**	70	84**	37	75	44	93**	69**	44**	78**	61**
	25%	43%	22%	18%	20%	22%	23%	33%	17%	15%	50%	38%

Base: Maidstone residents

95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q28 Were you aware that the freighters (dust carts) and recycling centres are free to use?

89% of residents claimed to be aware that the freighter and recycling centres were free to use.

Again, older residents and those with their own property were more aware. Younger residents and those in rented property were less aware.

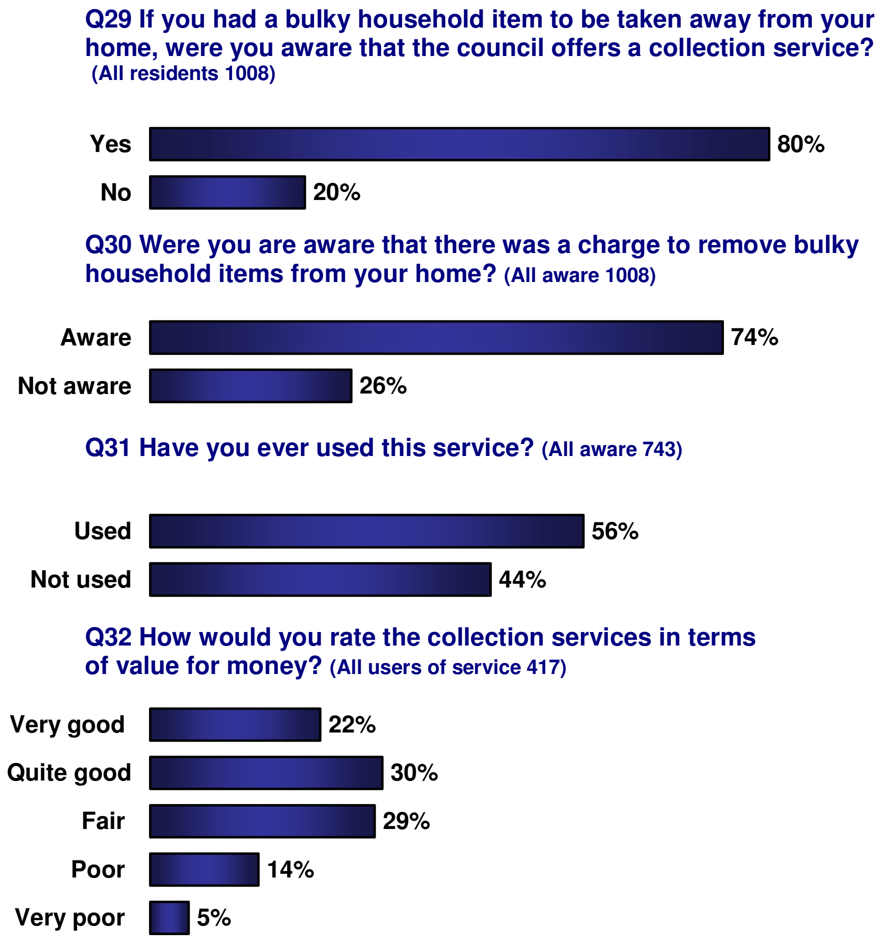
Base: All residents - 1028

Q29-Q32 Removal of bulky items

The following chart summarises the percentage of residents who were aware of the bulky item collection service, the fact that the service carried a charge, use of the service and the perceived value for money.

80% of residents were aware of this service, of which 74% were aware of the charge. Of these residents, 56% had used the service, of which 29% felt that the service was fair and 52% good value for money.

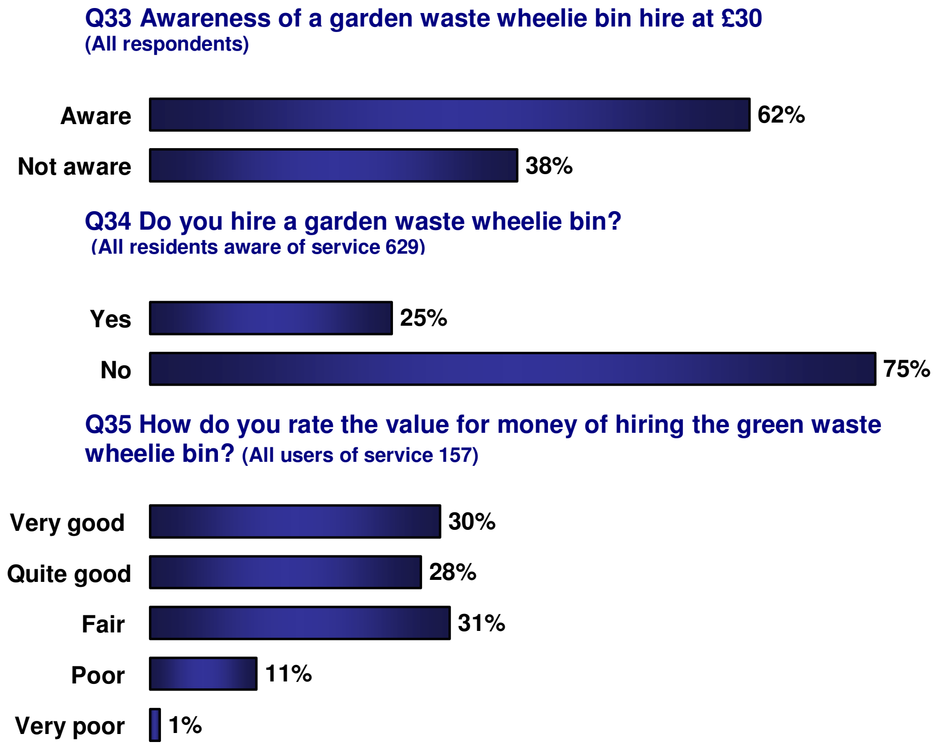
As with previous bulky refuse collection findings, awareness and use of the service was greater amongst older residents and those owning their own property.



Base: All residents - 1008

Q33 – Q35. Hiring a garden waste wheelie bin at £30 per year

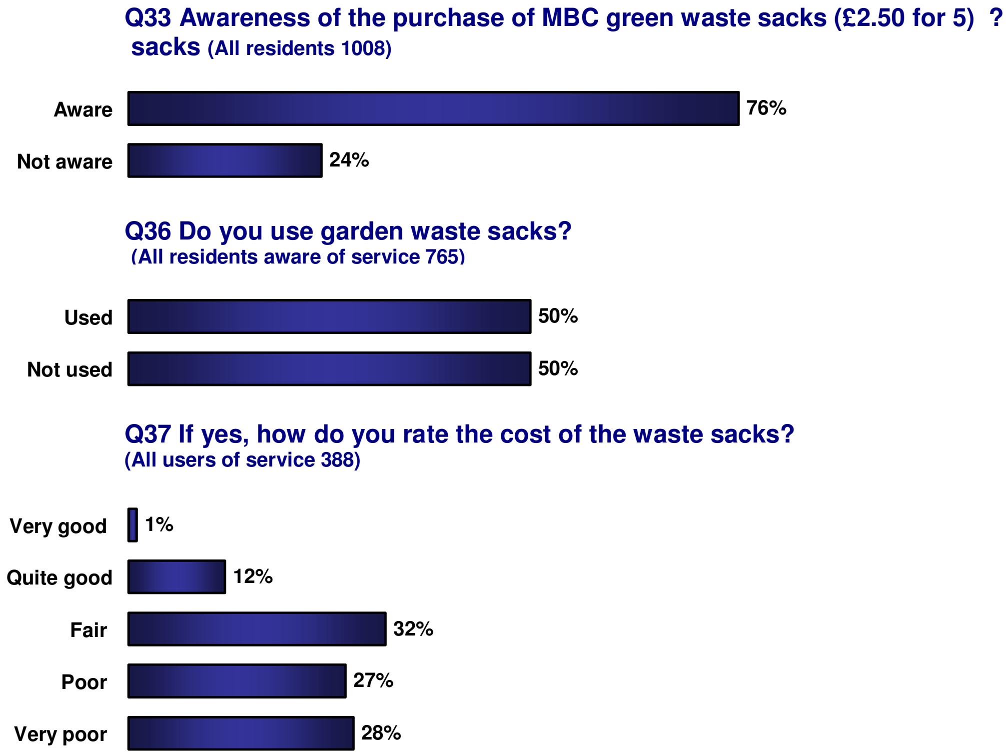
The next chart deals with the garden waste wheelie bin service. 62% of residents were aware of the wheelie bin service, and 25% of these residents had used the service. Of these residents, 56% had used the service, of which 31% felt that the service was fair and 58% good value for money. Again the older residents and those with their own property were more likely to be aware and use the wheelie bin service while younger residents and those in rented property had a lower awareness and use.



Base: All residents - 1028

Q33 – Q36, Q37 MBC green waste sacks (£2.50 for 5)?

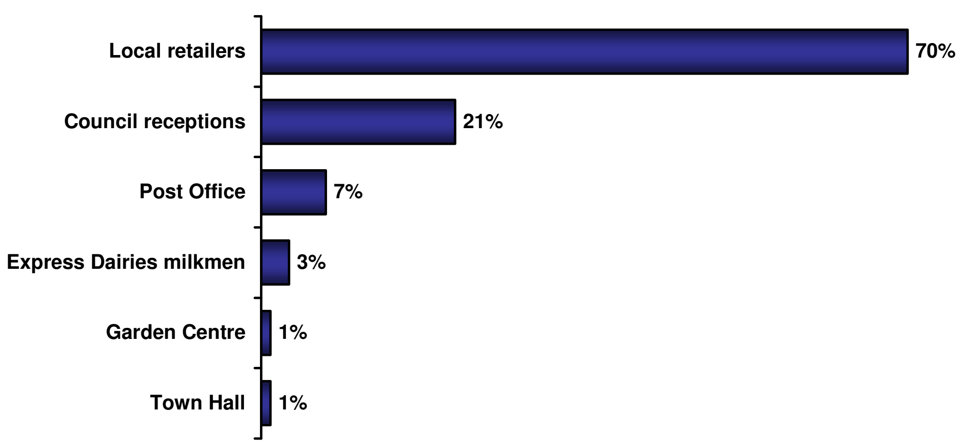
76% of residents were aware of MBC green waste sacks and 50% of residents had used them. The rating of value for money was significantly lower than for the other refuse services with the majority of users rating the value for money of the green sacks as poor (28% very poor). There were the same demographic differences in awareness and usage.



Base: All residents - 1028

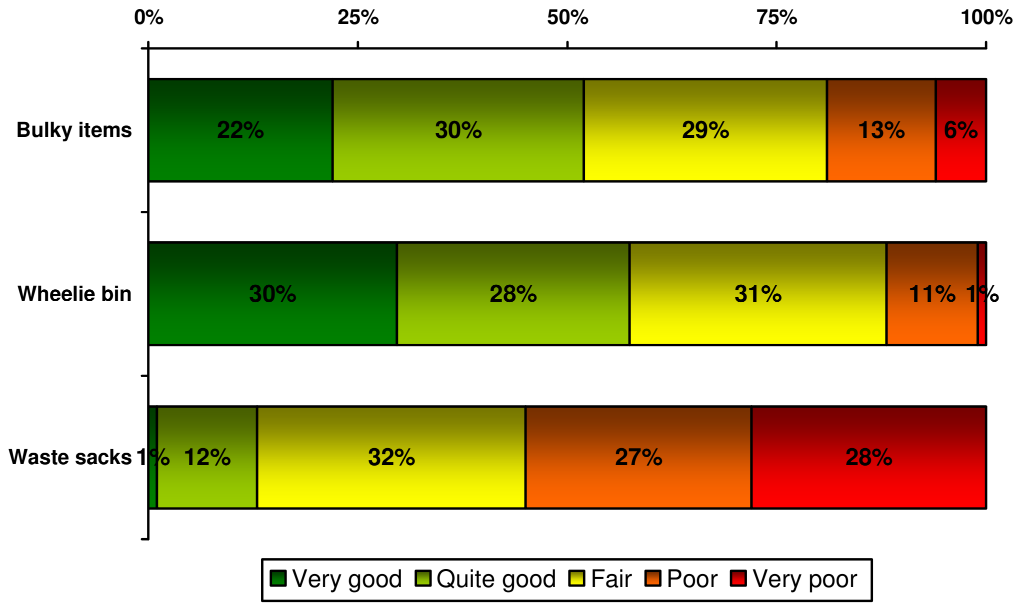
Q38 Where do you purchase the waste sacks from?

The most common sources for the green waste sacks were local retailers, which were used by 70% of users, 21% bought them from Council receptions, 7% from the Post Office.



Base: All buying waste sacks - 388

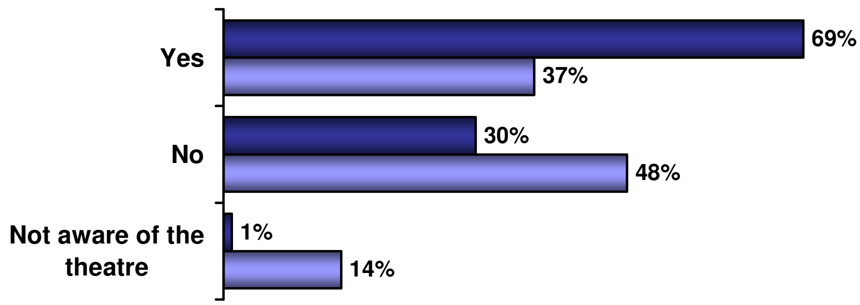
The following summary chart shows the perceived value for money of the three forms of refuse services detailed above and shows quite clearly how much lower users rate the value for money of green sacks compared with the other two services.



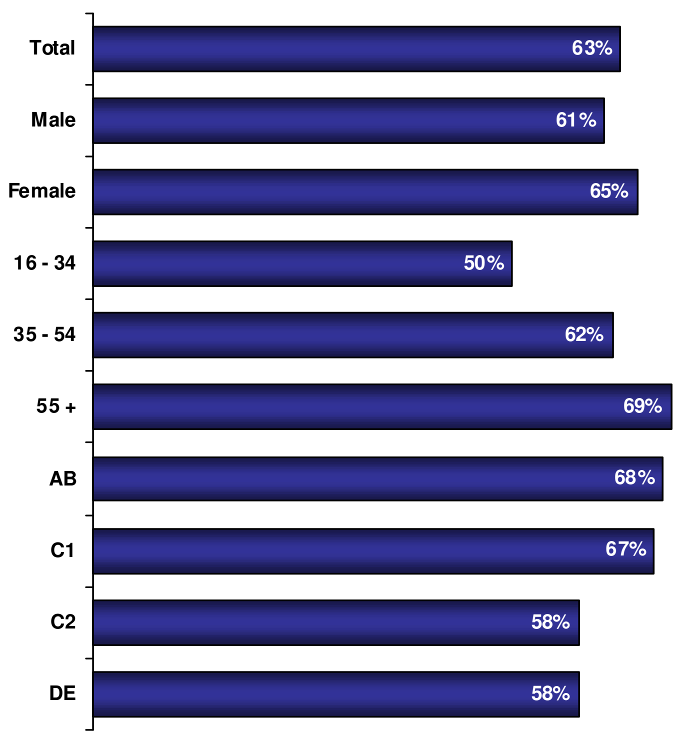
3.5 Use of and attitudes towards the Hazlitt Theatre

Q40 Have you ever visited the Hazlitt Theatre/Hazlitt Art Centre?

69% of residents and 37% of non residents claimed to have visited the theatre. 4% of non residents were not aware of it. The demographic profile chart indicates that usage was significantly higher amongst older (55+) ABCI respondents and lower amongst the 16-34 year old age group and C2DE respondents.



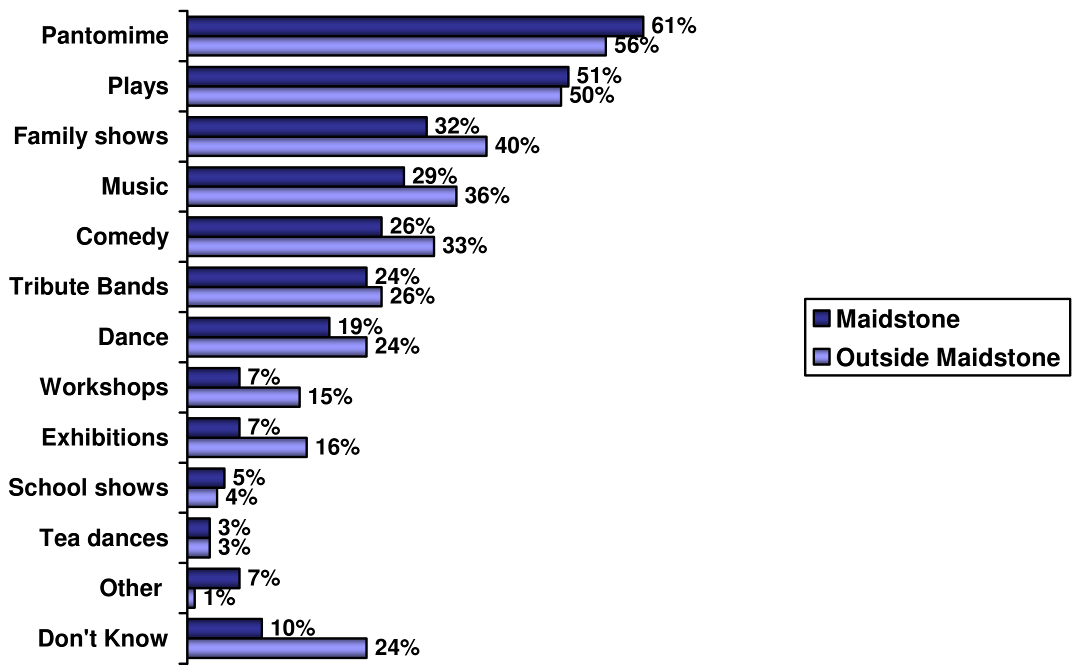
Base: All respondents – 1252



Base: All respondents – 1252

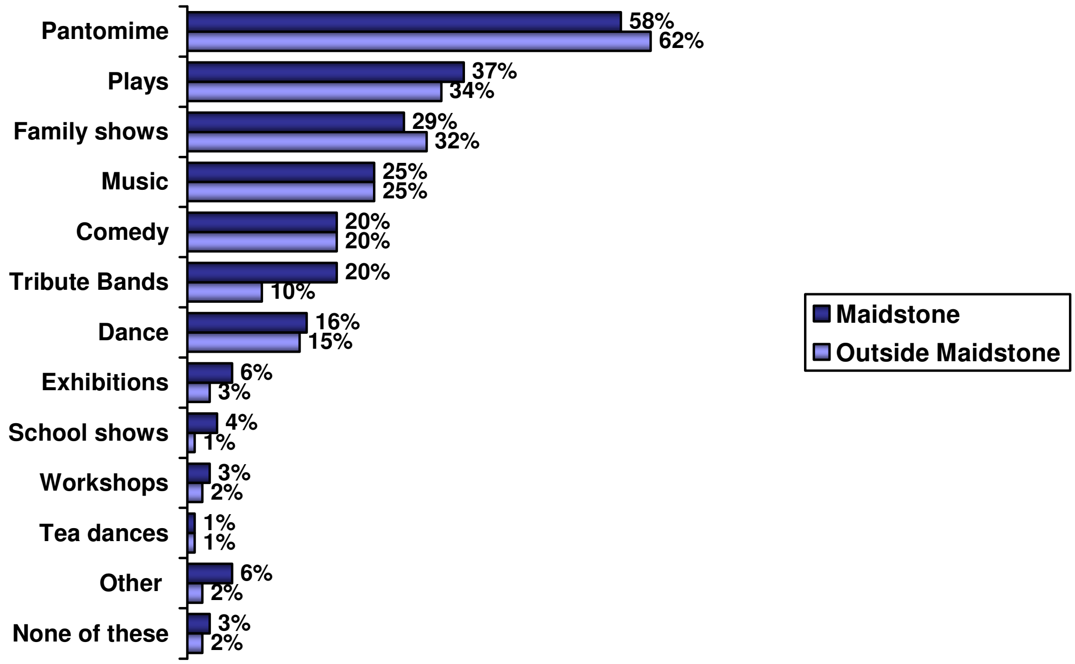
Q41 What sort of events do you think are held at the theatre?

The chart below shows the perceived content of Hazlitt theatre events and the chart that follows it summarises the events that have been visited. The pattern for both is quite similar with Pantomime plays and family shows being the events that respondents were most aware of and attended. The pattern for non residents was very similar to residents although the former appear to have a higher awareness of most events although usage was similar between the two groups.



Base: All aware of the Hazlitt theatre - 1202

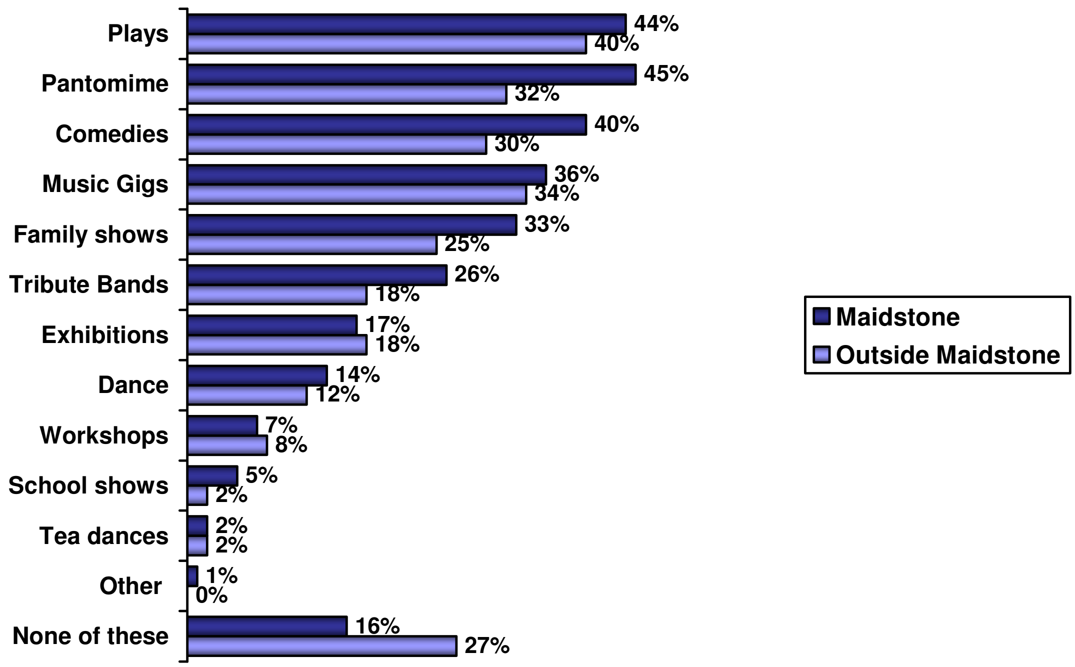
Q42 Have you ever been to any of the following events at the Hazlitt Theatre/Hazlitt Art Centre?



Base: All aware of the type of events at the Hazlitt theatre - 784

Q44 Would you consider going to any of the following events at the Hazlitt Theatre/Hazlitt Art Centre?

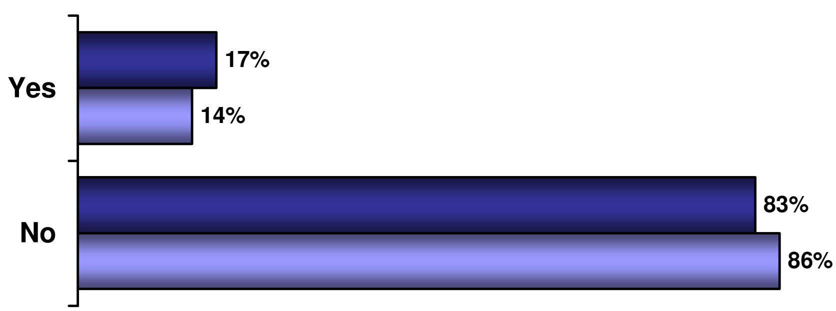
The pattern for potential future use was very similar to the previous two charts although non residents appeared to be less likely to use the theatre with 27% stating that they would not visit the theatre for any of the specified events compared with 16% of residents.



Base: All aware of the type of events at the Hazlitt theatre - 784

Q46 Have you ever looked at the Hazlitt Theatre/Hazlitt Art Centre website to check out performances?

17% of residents and 14% of non residents claimed to have used the Theatre web site for event information. The table overleaf shows that web site usage was highest amongst the 35-54 year old age group and the AB class group.



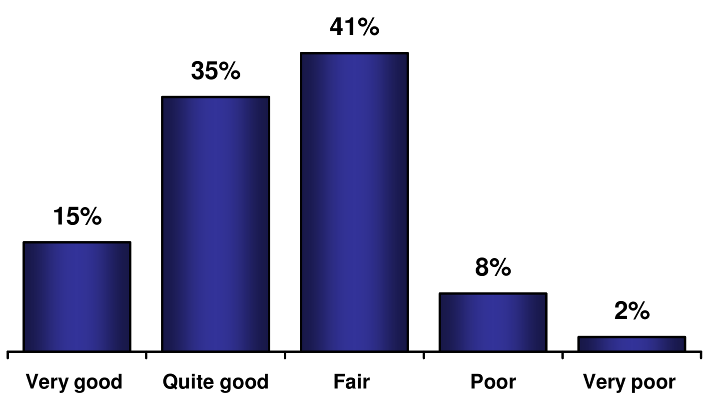
Base: All aware of the Hazlitt theatre - 1206

	Total	Age group 16 - 34	35 - 54	55 +	Social class AB	C1	C2	DE
Total	1202	258	401	543	232	418	221	316
Yes	198	41	89**	68**	51*	80	34	31**
	16%	16%	22%	13%	22%	19%	15%	10%
No	1004	217	312**	475**	181*	338	187	285**
	84%	84%	78%	87%	78%	81%	85%	90%

Base: All aware of the Hazlitt theatre
95 percent as lower case or *, 99 percent as UPPER CASE or **

Q47 The average ticket price for the theatre is £12.50, how would you rate this in terms of value for money?

51% of respondents who were aware of the Hazlitt thought that ticket prices were good and a further 41% fair. Only 10% described them as poor.



Base: All aware of the Hazlitt theatre - 1206

Appendix

Sampling Error

The survey tabulations include either a single * or double * against cells to indicate if the data is significantly different at the 90% level or the 95% level respectively within the population group that contains the *. In the example below, the proportion of 'Yes' answers was significantly greater(at the 95% level) amongst the 65+ age group compared with the other age groups while male respondents were significantly more likely to say 'yes' (at the 90% level) than females.

		Age group				Gender	
	Total	16 – 34 (a)	35 – 54 (b)	55 – 64 (c)	65+ (d)	Male (e)	Female (f)
Total	1076	67	316	299	391	444	627
Yes	239	14	48	59	117**	112*	125
	22%	21%	15%	20%	30%	25%	20%
No	837	53	268**	240**	274	332	502*
	78%	79%	85%	80%	70%	75%	80%

The error calculation assumes that the sample is purely random. In practice, sampling variations and non-response decay the accuracy of any sample and the sample was not designed to be a straight random sample. Sampling variations are corrected to a certain degree by weighting and we have adopted industry standard in calculating error.

Non-response comes in 2 forms; a refusal to conduct the interview and a 'don't know' answer for a particular question. The level of non response to the interview was acceptable and what would be expected of the methodology. 'Don't know' answers to individual questions have been excluded and percentages based on those answering.

The structure of the sample is summarised below:

Q48 Which of the following age groups do you fall into?
Base: All respondents

	Total	Maidstone	Outside Maidstone
Total	1252	1008	244
16 - 24	8%	8%	8%
25 - 34	14%	14%	12%
35 - 44	16%	16%	19%
45 -54	17%	15%	23%
55-64	22%	21%	25%
65-74	15%	16%	10%
75+	7%	8%	3%

Q49 Gender of respondent.

	Total	Maidstone	Outside Maidstone
Total	1252	1008	244
Male	48%	50%	43%
Female	52%	50%	57%

Q51 Social Grade.

	Total	Maidstone	Outside Maidstone
Total	1252	1008	244
AB	20%	18%	26%
C1	34%	34%	34%
C2	19%	19%	18%
DE	26%	28%	19%
Refused	1%	1%	3%