



Aberdeenshire Council

2010 Residents Survey

Banff and Buchan Area Report

7th February 2011

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SUMMARY OF KEY ISSUES FOR BANFF AND BUCHAN

Whilst overall satisfaction levels are slightly lower in Banff and Buchan than in the Council area as a whole, they have improved considerably over the past two years, in line with the general Council trend.

Banff and Buchan residents are more positive about aspects of customer service than Aberdeenshire residents as a whole; they are also slightly more likely to use and prefer personal methods of communication (such as Council offices). They are slightly less likely than others to have used the Council website.

Ratings for the achievement of certain community wellbeing priorities are more positive in Banff and Buchan than elsewhere (for example, in relation to child protection, community integration, vulnerable adults and housing).

However, residents of Banff and Buchan are less likely to be positive about the Council's achievement of strategic priorities in relation to recreational opportunities and issues associated with anti-social behaviour.

Certain aspects of ratings for towns and villages (e.g. community spirit, vibrancy) are somewhat lower in Banff and Buchan than the Council average.

Overall ratings for quality of life are also slightly lower in Banff and Buchan than the Council average.

Banff and Buchan residents appear to be more satisfied than Aberdeenshire residents as a whole with regard to the Council's achievement of strategic priorities in relation to sustainable environment issues.

The ratings achieved for a range of universal services in Banff and Buchan are very much in line with the Council norm and better than the overall Council figures in relation to things like refuse collection and recycling.

A similar pattern is true in terms of satisfaction with services used by specific groups of people. In some areas (for example, local council offices, burial grounds, social work services) ratings are somewhat better in Banff and Buchan. However, they are lower than the Council average in relation to Council-run leisure and sports facilities.

Banff and Buchan residents have similar views to residents of the Council area as a whole as regards services that should be prioritised for budget protection. However, they do place slightly less emphasis than others on road maintenance, winter gritting/snow clearing and schools and greater emphasis on street cleaning. They are slightly more resistant to charging for some discretionary services than residents of the Council area as a whole.

1.0 BACKGROUND, OBJECTIVES AND METHODOLOGY

BACKGROUND

- 1.1 This 2010 Residents survey is the sixth full-scale survey of residents' views which Aberdeenshire Council has undertaken since 2000 (such surveys have now been undertaken in 2000, 2002, 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010). Specific in-depth items of research have also been conducted in the intervening years (2001, 2003, 2005, 2007 and 2009). The survey repeats a number of questions from the previous surveys, to allow for tracking of changes in perceptions over time. In some cases, it is possible to track changes back to the 2000 survey.
- 1.2 As in previous years, the results obtained for each of the Council's six Administrative Areas have been compared to the overall results from all responses received across Aberdeenshire Council as a whole. This report sets out the results for **Banff and Buchan**.
- 1.3 Until 2008, the survey questionnaire had evolved over time, with only fairly modest changes being made. However, for 2010 much more substantial changes were made both to capture information on perceived achievement of the Council's strategic priorities and to capture new information on budget priorities and charging issues. The resultant questionnaire was more comprehensive in nature but also more challenging to complete. It forms Appendix 1 of this report (appendices have been supplied under separate cover).
- 1.4 The original broad aims and objectives of the 2010 Residents' Survey were:
- To identify issues of importance to Aberdeenshire residents.
 - To determine perceptions of the Council's performance against these priorities.
 - To track changes in residents' perception over time.
 - To provide an overall "headline" measure of public satisfaction.
 - To consider residents' priorities for the future, with particular reference to future budget priorities.
 - To assist the process of setting goals, and planning actions, for future improvement.

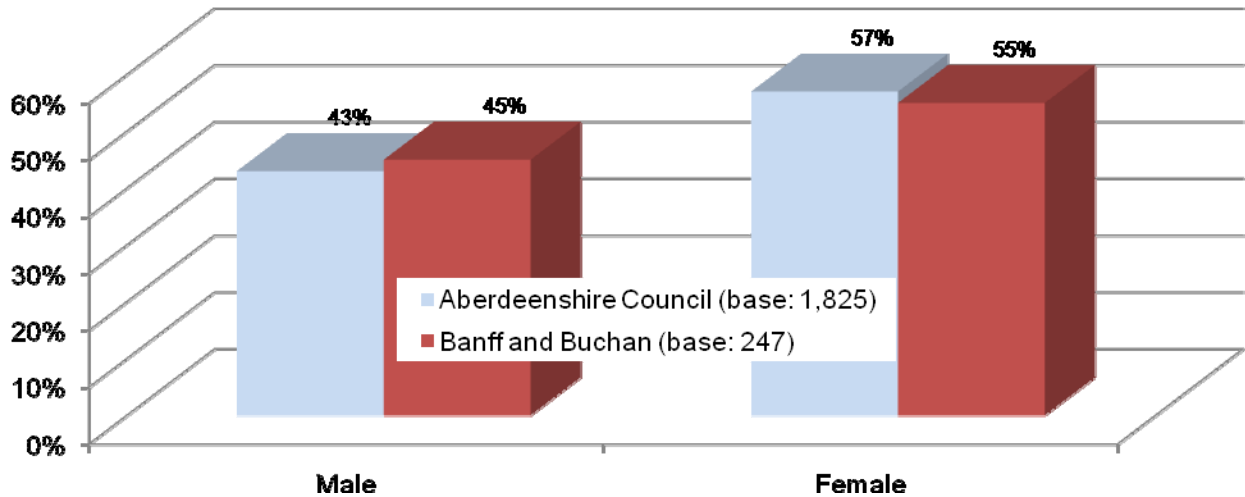
These broad aims were pursued in the first instance through the large scale postal survey as described below. An additional element of the survey for 2010 was a survey of young people, which included both an online response option (which school pupils were encouraged to complete) and self-completion surveys completed by young people engaging with the Council's youth services. In many cases the results of these two surveys have been merged to provide an overall view although there were also a number of questions asked in only one or other of the surveys. The survey of young people, however, did not gather data on respondents' geographical location so these results cannot be ascribed to a particular Administrative Area.

SURVEY RESPONSE

- 1.5 The "main" survey was conducted on a postal basis, with a total of 12,000 invitations being issued, at random, to households in Aberdeenshire, selected to be representative of the population in the Council's six administrative areas. This approach was similar to that undertaken in previous years. The fieldwork period covered late-May and June 2010.
- 1.6 A total of 1,799 responses were received for this survey including 1,780 postal and 19 online responses. This represents a response rate of approximately 15%. This is within the anticipated range of response rates for surveys of this nature which IBP would normally cite at between 10% and 20%. It is, however, lower than response rates achieved for the Council's previous residents' surveys, which ranged between 19% and 26% between 2002 and 2008. The main variable to have changed is the questionnaire content. A number of blank questionnaires were returned leaving 1,734 usable questionnaires. For the **Banff and Buchan** area specifically, a total of 254 completed questionnaires were received from a total of 1,964 invitations, giving a response rate of approximately 13%, slightly below that of the Council average.
- 1.7 There were a total of 161 responses to the young person's survey including 107 hard copy and 54 online responses. Taken together with the main survey, the total sample size is therefore 1,895.
- 1.8 For illustrative purposes, a randomly selected sample of 1,895 people provides a level of accuracy of +/- 2.24% for the Aberdeenshire population as a whole, which compares to a confidence interval of +/- 1.86% for the 2008 survey. The response numbers are therefore large enough for us to have an acceptable level of confidence in the findings. For the **Banff and Buchan** area specifically, there were 254 responses to the main survey and a random sample of this size gives a confidence interval of +/- 6.13%. The actual total number of respondents to the Banff and Buchan survey will be slightly higher than this but, as noted previously, we are not able to allocate respondents to the young person's survey to a specific geographical area.
- 1.9 It is, however, important to consider the profile of the achieved sample in an individual area when considering the comparability of the data to the overall results.

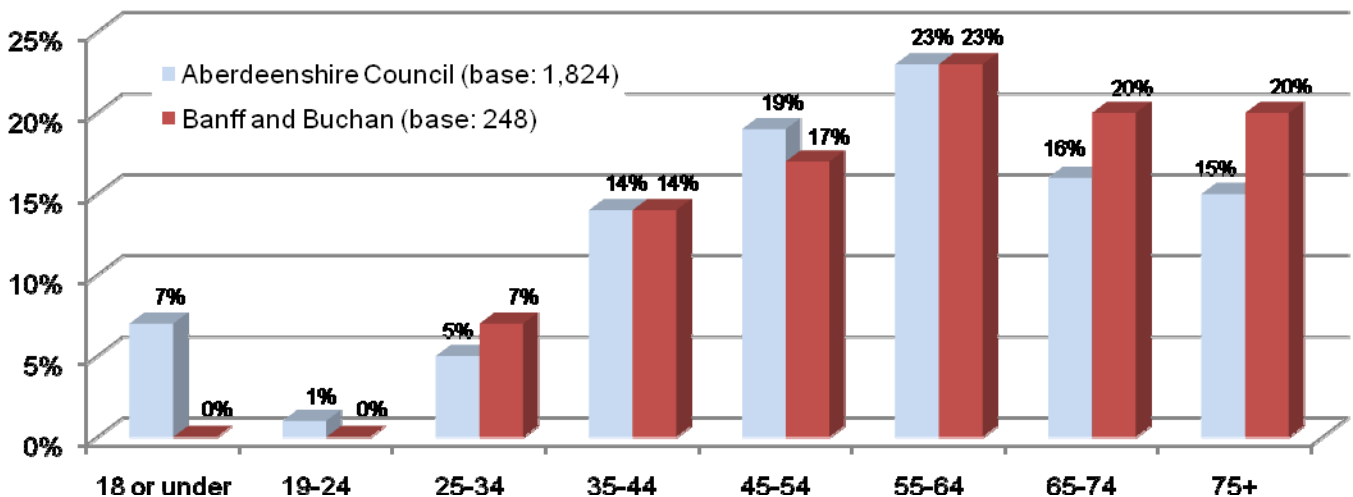
Figure 1.1 below illustrates that Banff and Buchan respondents were slightly more likely to be male than female compared to Aberdeenshire Council as a whole. It is worth noting at this point that, throughout the report, numbers may not add to 100% due to the effects of rounding.

Figure 1.1: Profile of Respondents (Gender)



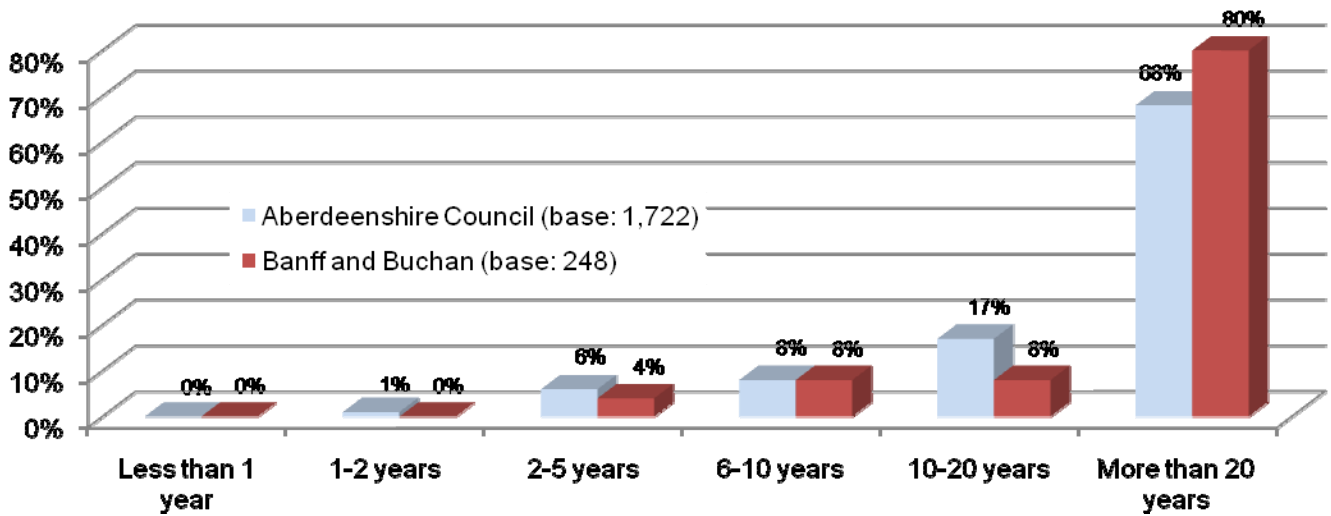
1.10 Due to the addition of the young person’s survey, the age profile of the overall survey has changed somewhat, with the addition of a significant number of responses from young people in the overall results. This is not reflected in the profile for Banff and Buchan below, which does not include the responses from the youth survey.

Figure 1.2: Profile of Respondents (Age)



1.11 Most survey respondents have lived in Aberdeenshire for some period of time as shown in Figure 1.3 below and this is evident to a greater extent in Banff and Buchan. It should be noted that not all descriptive questions were asked of young people so some aspects of the sample profile are based on the results of the main survey only.

**Figure 1.3: Profile of Respondents
(Time Lived in Aberdeenshire)**



1.12 The profile of responses by employment status is set out in Table 1.1 below, with proportionately fewer Banff and Buchan respondents in employment, with more respondents in retirement or long-term sick or disabled.

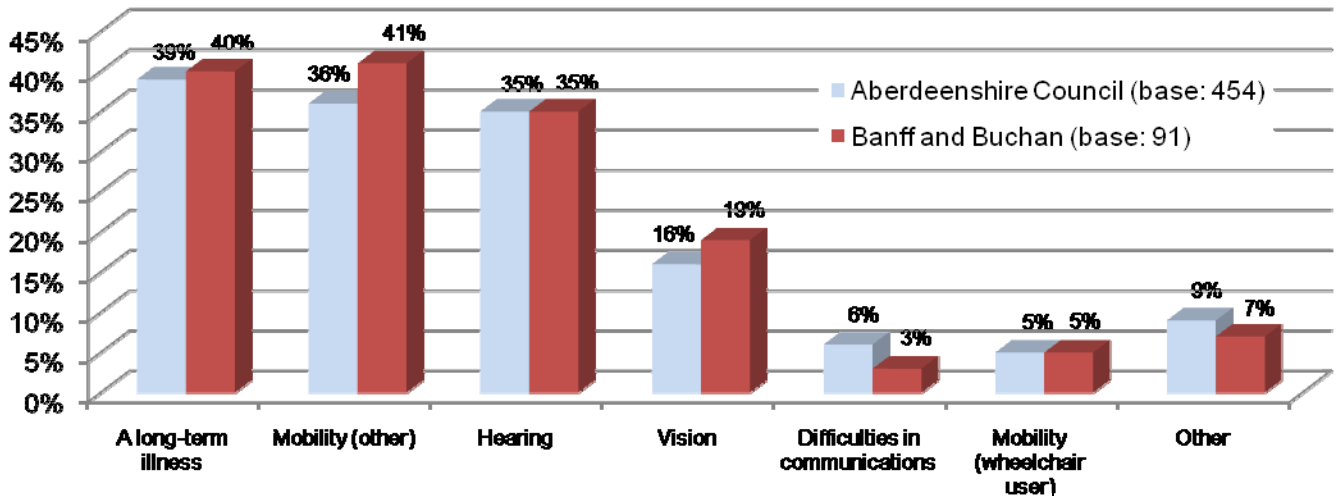
Table 1.1: Employment Status

Employment Status	Aberdeenshire Council	Banff and Buchan
Employee	39%	33%
Self-employed	9%	6%
Government employment and training programme	1%	1%
Unpaid family worker	1%	0%
Other employment	1%	2%
Unemployed	1%	1%
Student	0%	1%
Looking after family home	3%	3%
Temporarily sick or injured	1%	1%
Long-term sick or disabled	4%	7%
Waiting results of job application	0%	0%
No jobs available	-	0%
Not yet started looking	0%	0%
Do not need or want employment	1%	1%
Retired from paid work	35%	41%
Other	2%	0%
Not answered	3%	4%
Base:	1,734	254

1.13 80% of Banff and Buchan respondents described themselves as being of Scottish ethnicity (75% of all respondents) whilst 9% said English (12%). A further 5% described themselves as British (8%). 2% of people did not answer this question (3%) with the remaining 4% of responses being from people of various ethnicities (2%).

1.14 36% of the Banff and Buchan residents consider themselves to have a disability (26% of all respondents), with the profile of such disabilities being as shown on the following page:

Figure 1.4: Profile of Respondents (Disability)



1.15 A specific breakdown of the Banff and Buchan results by ward is enclosed, under separate cover, as Appendix 2. A full listing of the Banff and Buchan responses to the open-ended questions in the survey is included as Appendix 3.

2.0 OVERALL SATISFACTION

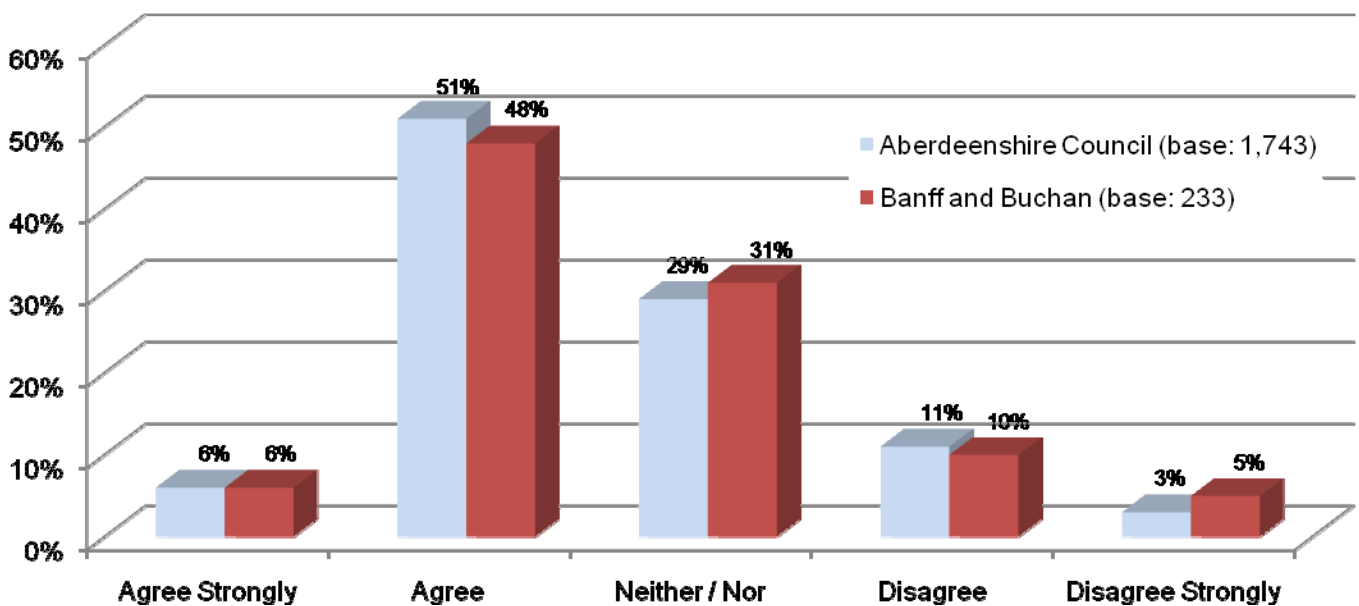
2.1 This section sets out patterns of overall satisfaction with Aberdeenshire Council, as identified by the quantitative survey.

A “headline” picture of overall satisfaction comes from levels of agreement with the statement *“I am satisfied with Aberdeenshire Council as a provider of local services”*.

The pattern in responses to this question shows that whilst overall satisfaction in Banff and Buchan is 54%, this is very slightly below that of Aberdeenshire Council as a whole as illustrated in Figure 2.1 below.

Within many of the graphs in this report, “net agreement” figures will be given. That is to say, the figure quoted is the % agreeing with a statement (or expressing satisfaction) less those disagreeing (or expressing dissatisfaction). This allows for agreement and disagreement levels to be taken into account in a single figure, thus allowing for large amounts of data to be summarised easily.

Figure 2.1: Overall Satisfaction



2.2 Figure 2.2 over the page profiles the trend in relation to net satisfaction with the Council as a service provider, based on the above statement.

Figure 2.2: Overall Net Satisfaction

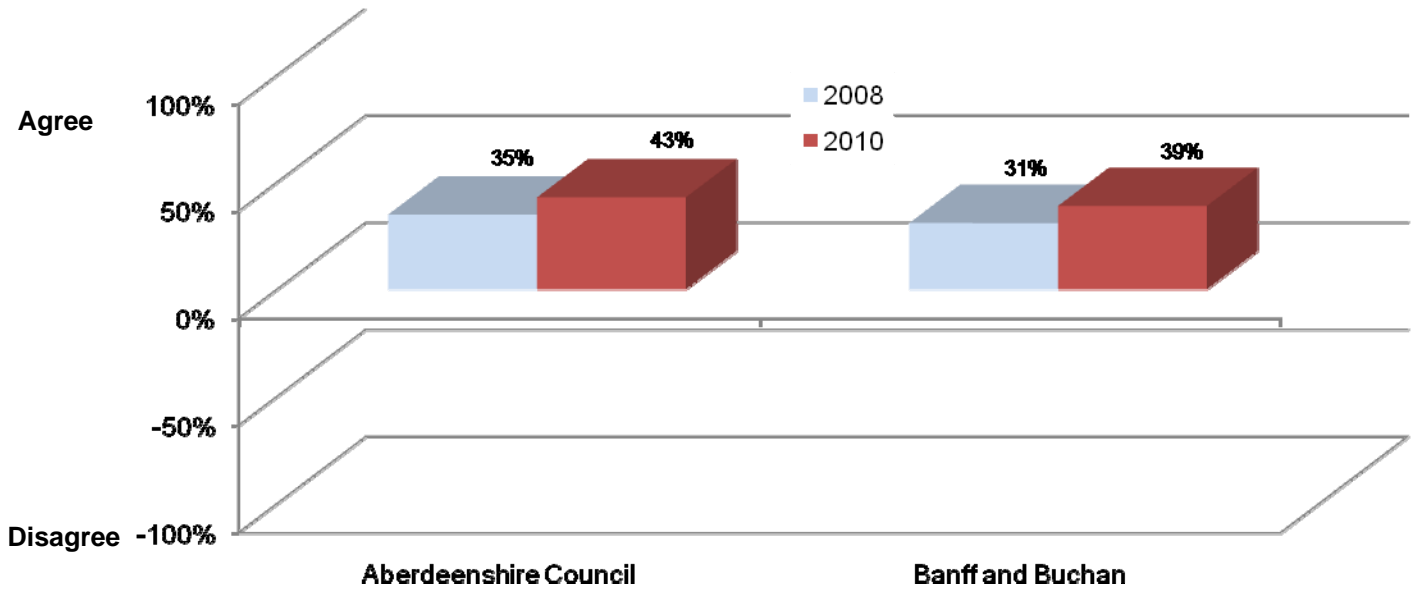
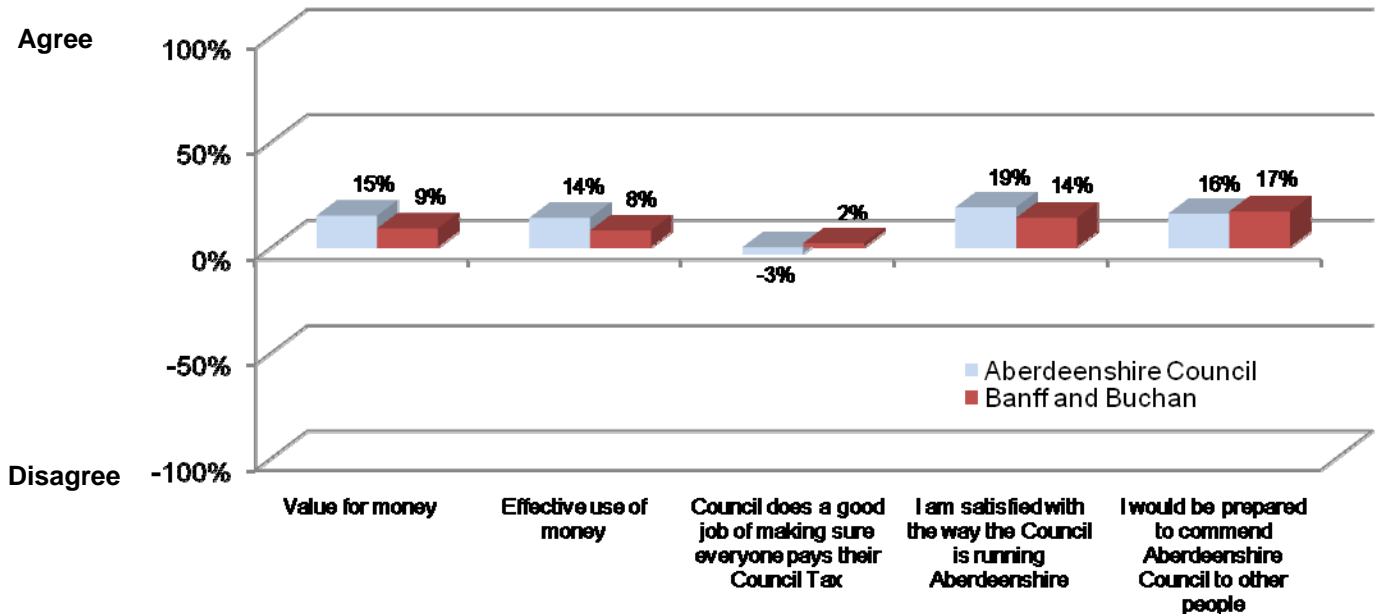


Figure 2.2 demonstrates that although net satisfaction in Banff and Buchan remains below that of the Council average, the rate of improvement has kept pace with a net increase of 8%.

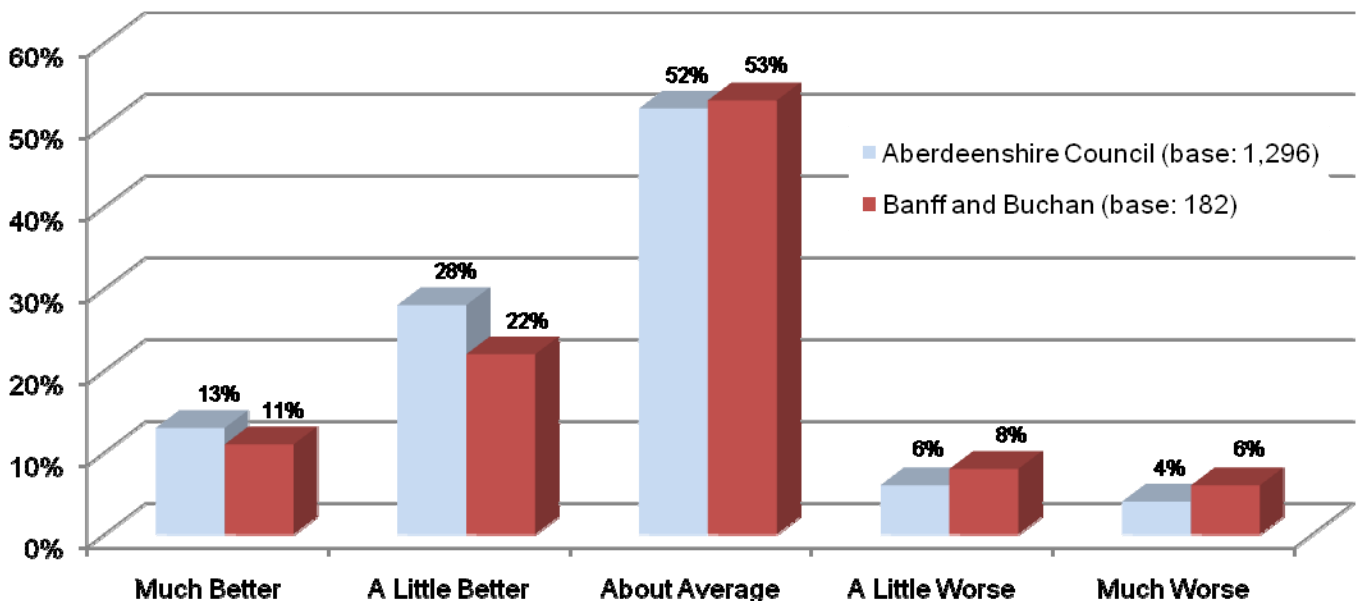
- 2.3 The overall views of respondents were explored by reference to a number of attitudinal statements. As can be seen in Figure 2.3, Banff and Buchan residents are somewhat less likely to perceive that the Council gives value for money, effectively uses the money available to it and to be satisfied with the way the Council is running Aberdeenshire. Banff and Buchan residents were more likely to feel that the Council does a good job of making sure everyone pays their Council Tax.

Figure 2.3: Overall Views on Key Issues



2.4 Aberdeenshire residents are generally more likely to view the Council more favourably to other Councils than unfavourably, although this view is held to a slightly lesser extent amongst Banff and Buchan residents.

Figure 2.4: Overall Views (Compared to Other Councils)



3.0 CUSTOMER SERVICE AND COMMUNICATIONS

3.1 14% of Banff and Buchan respondents do not remember ever having been in contact with the Council and these are excluded from the figures below, which profile reasons for the most recent contact with the Council (12% of all respondents fall into this category).

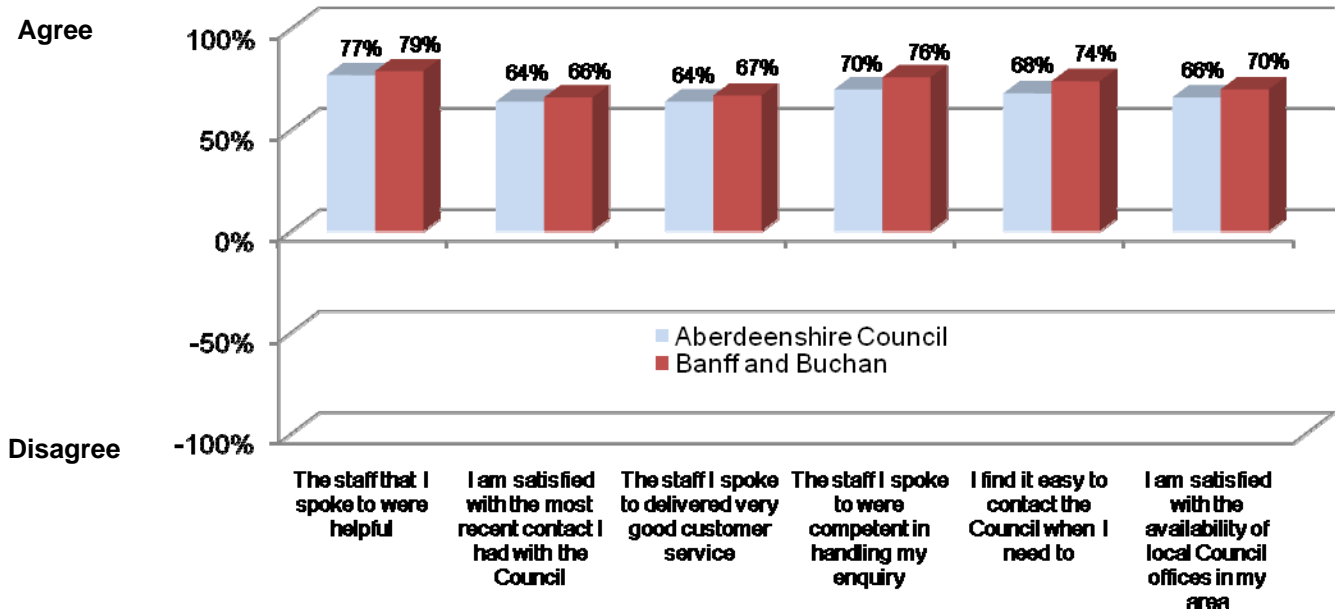
Table 3.1: Reason for Most Recent Contact

Reason for Contact	Aberdeenshire Council	Banff and Buchan
To make a payment	18%	17%
To request a Council service	15%	22%
To make an application for something	13%	10%
To report a problem	13%	17%
To get information or advice about a Council service	11%	7%
In response to a communication from the Council	6%	5%
To make a complaint about a Council service	4%	4%
To get more general information or advice	4%	5%
To make a complaint about something else	3%	3%
On a business-related matter	2%	2%
For another reason	11%	8%
Base:	1,434	219

Banff and Buchan residents were more likely to have contacted the Council with regard to requesting a Council service or to report a problem, but less likely to have done so to make an application for something or to get information or advice about a Council service.

3.2 Figure 3.1 on the following page profiles net agreement with a number of statements concerning how such contacts have been managed, with Banff and Buchan respondents generally giving slightly higher ratings for these elements of contact, particularly in relation to the competency of staff and the ease of contacting the Council. There are varying base numbers of responses to these questions, which are detailed in the appendices.

Figure 3.1: Agreement with Attitudinal Statements



3.3 The generally higher ratings observed for Banff and Buchan in Figure 3.1 are reflected in ratings for a range of service attributes with some exceptions. Banff and Buchan residents gave better ratings with regard to the convenience of opening hours and staff being clear about why they had made a decision but gave a worse rating regarding the provision of services from a single place. These results are set out in figures 3.2(a) and (b) on the following page.

Figure 3.2(a): Customer Service and Contact Management

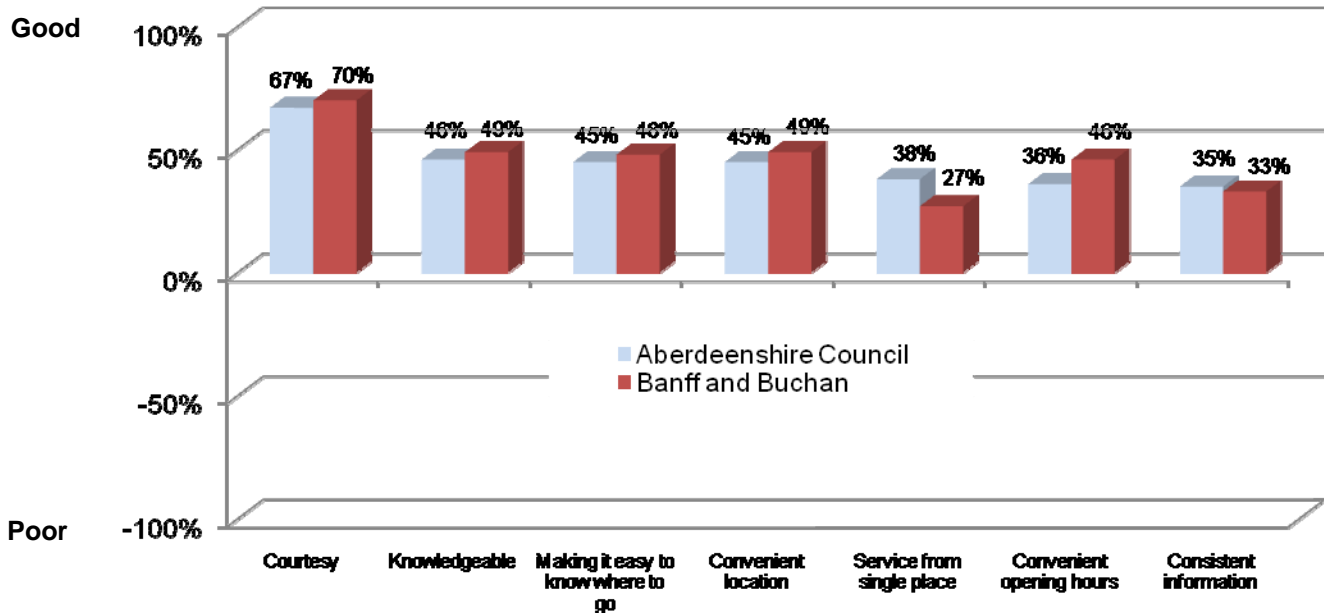
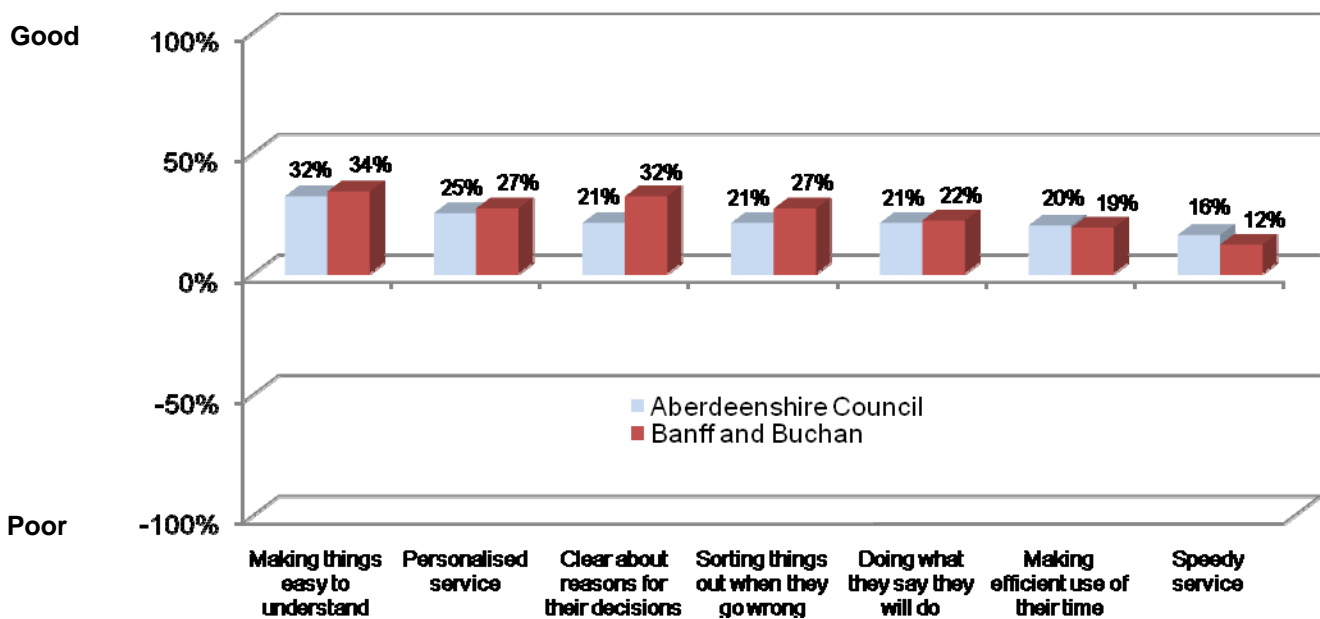


Figure 3.2(b): Customer Service and Contact Management



3.4 The 2010 survey profiled preferred methods of contacting the Council for a range of services as illustrated below with the figures for Banff and Buchan shown above and the figures for Aberdeenshire Council shown below in italics and brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

Table 3.2: Preferred Methods of Contact

Service	Post	Personal visit to Central Office of Service Point	Telephone	Electronic methods (such as email or internet)	Other
Apply for a Council house and track your position on the waiting list	3% <i>(9%)</i>	50% <i>(31%)</i>	24% <i>(25%)</i>	19% <i>(33%)</i>	5% <i>(2%)</i>
Apply for Council Tax Benefit and / or Housing Benefit	8% <i>(15%)</i>	54% <i>(35%)</i>	18% <i>(24%)</i>	17% <i>(24%)</i>	4% <i>(2%)</i>
Arrange and / or pay for a bulky uplift	1% <i>(1%)</i>	24% <i>(10%)</i>	58% <i>(64%)</i>	15% <i>(24%)</i>	2% <i>(1%)</i>
Book and pay for a leisure activity	5% <i>(5%)</i>	22% <i>(18%)</i>	50% <i>(39%)</i>	22% <i>(36%)</i>	2% <i>(1%)</i>
Book and / or pay for an evening class	6% <i>(4%)</i>	26% <i>(19%)</i>	36% <i>(35%)</i>	31% <i>(41%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Book and / or pay for school-based activities	6% <i>(7%)</i>	28% <i>(20%)</i>	30% <i>(26%)</i>	31% <i>(43%)</i>	4% <i>(4%)</i>
Inform the Council of a change of address	16% <i>(19%)</i>	26% <i>(12%)</i>	31% <i>(32%)</i>	26% <i>(37%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Pay a parking fine	28% <i>(30%)</i>	29% <i>(19%)</i>	7% <i>(11%)</i>	33% <i>(38%)</i>	2% <i>(2%)</i>
Pay your Council Tax	8% <i>(8%)</i>	33% <i>(20%)</i>	4% <i>(5%)</i>	33% <i>(41%)</i>	21% <i>(25%)</i>
Report a housing repair	2% <i>(2%)</i>	28% <i>(15%)</i>	57% <i>(57%)</i>	12% <i>(23%)</i>	1% <i>(2%)</i>
Report an incident of anti-social behaviour	1% <i>(2%)</i>	26% <i>(14%)</i>	63% <i>(65%)</i>	9% <i>(17%)</i>	2% <i>(1%)</i>
Report and track a road or street light fault	2% <i>(1%)</i>	14% <i>(7%)</i>	65% <i>(61%)</i>	19% <i>(30%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>
Submit a social work assessment form	13% <i>(20%)</i>	42% <i>(26%)</i>	24% <i>(24%)</i>	20% <i>(29%)</i>	1% <i>(2%)</i>
Submit and / or pay for a planning application	19% <i>(25%)</i>	47% <i>(30%)</i>	8% <i>(9%)</i>	25% <i>(34%)</i>	1% <i>(1%)</i>

Banff and Buchan respondents generally have a greater preference for personal visits to Council offices compared to Aberdeenshire as a whole and less of a preference for electronic methods.

3.5 The 2010 survey asked how residents currently contacted the Council and went on to ask their preferred method of contact as set out below:

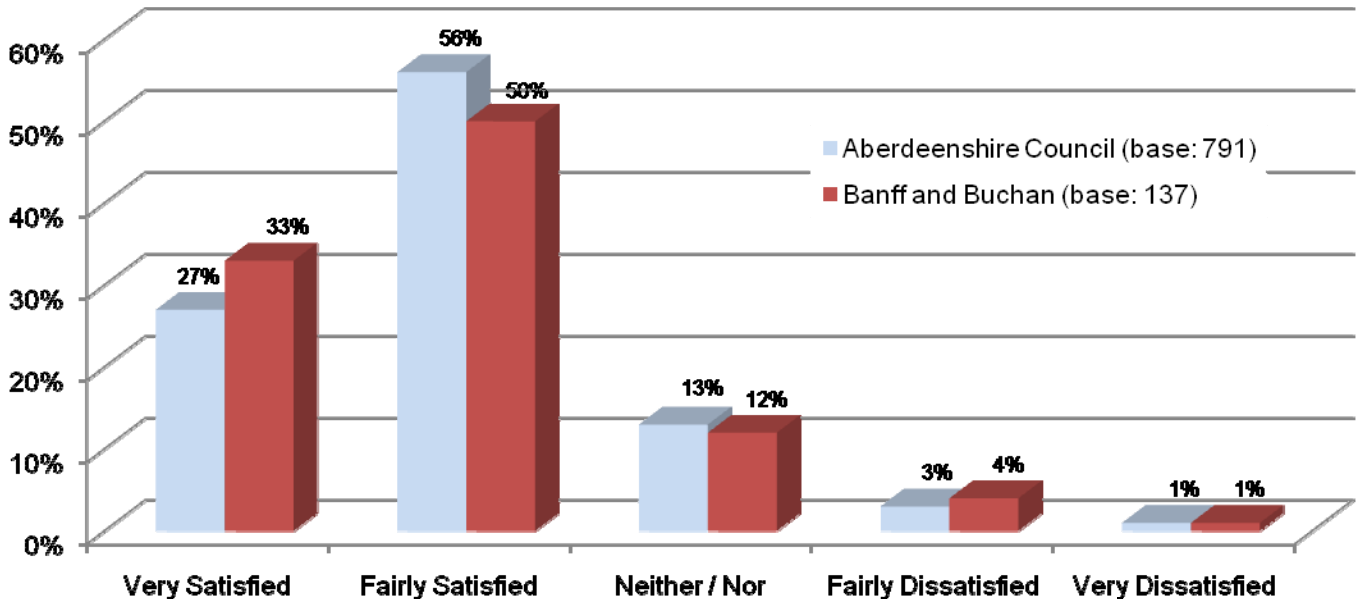
Table 3.3: Methods of Receiving Council Information

Method of Contact	Current		Preferred	
	Council	B&B	Council	B&B
Through the Council's website	38%	29%	37%	30%
Through the Council Tax mailing	45%	48%	36%	38%
Leaflets, posters or newspapers provided directly by the Council	52%	59%	47%	51%
From direct mailings	29%	29%	38%	42%
From pages of information contained in the local newspaper	49%	51%	38%	39%
Local Councillors	7%	10%	12%	12%
Community Councils, community groups or tenants' groups	9%	7%	11%	10%
Word of mouth	33%	37%	12%	11%
Text messaging	1%	1%	5%	<1%
Through social networking sites	<1%	0%	6%	1%
Other	1%	<1%	2%	2%
Base:	1,678¹	241	1,820	242

3.6 56% of Banff and Buchan respondents said they had previously used the Council offices (compared to 48% of all respondents). A reasonably high level of satisfaction with offices was apparent as shown in Figure 3.3 on the following page, with Banff and Buchan respondents more likely to be very satisfied.

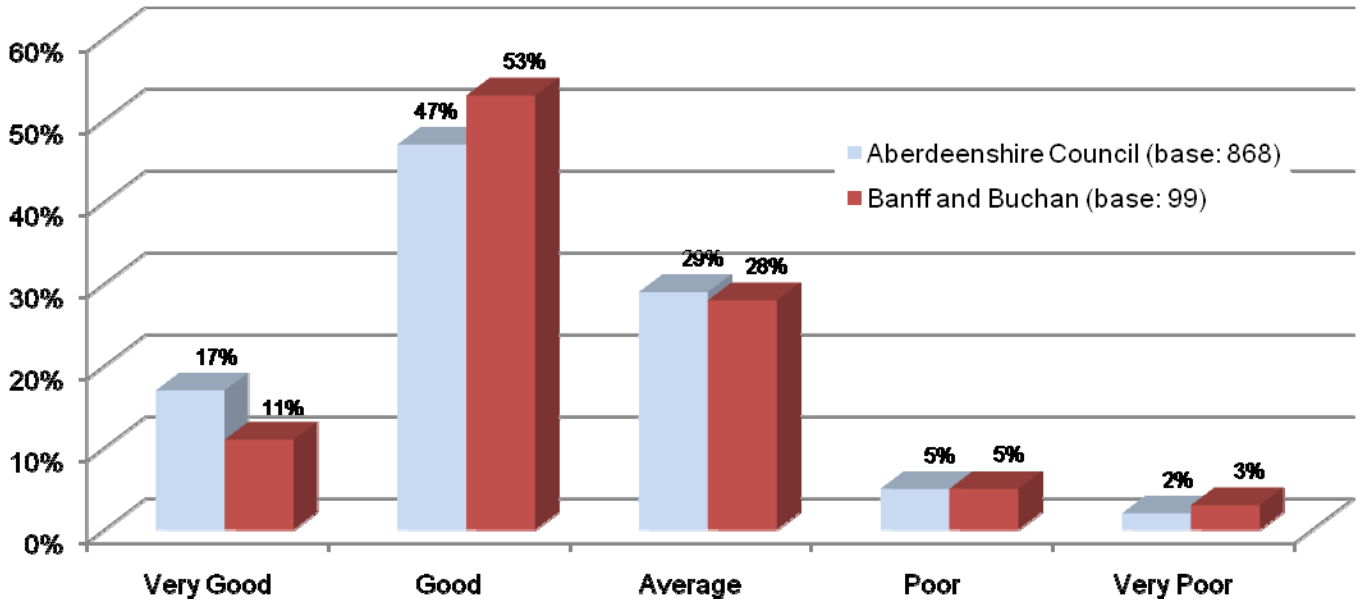
¹ Young people were not asked this question for reasons of space.

Figure 3.3: Satisfaction with Council Offices



- 3.7 62% of those Banff and Buchan respondents who answered the question said that they had seen the Council’s Guide to Council Services, which was issued in 2010 with Council Tax demands (compared to 65% of all respondents). Of these, 87% say that they have a copy available to them (compared to 81%) and 88% of those who express an opinion believe it to be a useful publication (compared to 90%).
- 3.8 Only 14% of Banff and Buchan residents (compared to 18% of all respondents) were aware of the network of digital screens that have been located in a range of libraries, community centres and supermarkets. Of these respondents, 64% said that they had seen the screens (compared to 77%) and 81% of those who had done so considered them to be useful.
- 3.9 39% of Banff and Buchan respondents had used the Council’s website (compared to 47% of all respondents) and expressed an opinion about it, the results of which are summarised on the following page.

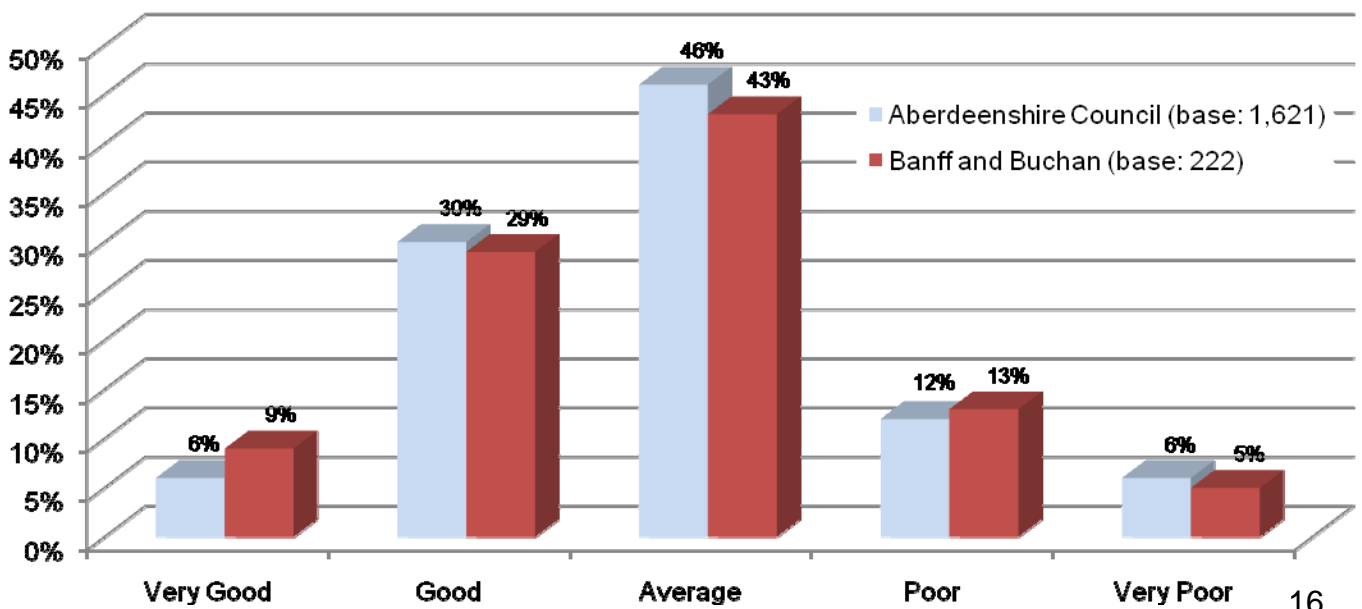
Figure 3.4: Experience of Using Council Website



The rating of the Council’s website is more lukewarm amongst Banff and Buchan residents.

3.10 Overall, more people express a positive view than a negative view when asked to rate the Council’s overall communications with Banff and Buchan residents slightly more likely to give a good or very good rating.

Figure 3.5: Council’s Overall Communications



4.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – COMMUNITY WELLBEING

4.1 The 2010 survey asked residents how well they perceived the Council to be achieving its strategic priorities. These are set out in a number of themes:

- Community Wellbeing
- Jobs and the Economy
- Lifelong Learning
- Sustainable Environment.

Chapters 4 to 7 detail the results of responses in relation to each of these strategic priorities.

4.2 The Council's strategic priority in relation to Community Wellbeing was described as thus in the questionnaire:

“The Council is committed to working with its partners to ensure that people in Aberdeenshire feel safe, live in good quality affordable housing, located in thriving communities and have access to resources and services which encourage and support healthy and productive lifestyles. The Council is committed to ensuring that individuals, families and communities are actively involved in Council decisions and to ensuring that vulnerable people receive care and support to enhance the quality of their lives.”

4.3 Respondents were then asked to rate the Council's performance in relation to a range of issues. In the first instance we have tabulated responses to these questions in Table 4.1, setting out the results in detail. Again, the results from Banff and Buchan are shown above, with the results from Aberdeenshire as a whole shown below in italics and brackets.

Table 4.1: Detailed Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Improving road safety	4% (3%)	23% (24%)	21% (21%)	16% (20%)	8% (7%)	28% (26%)
Tackling anti-social behaviour	1% (1%)	13% (12%)	14% (17%)	23% (20%)	11% (7%)	37% (43%)
Tackling issues caused by the misuse of alcohol or other drugs	2% (1%)	10% (10%)	14% (16%)	22% (19%)	13% (7%)	40% (46%)
Ensuring child protection measures are in place to protect vulnerable children	2% (2%)	22% (17%)	12% (13%)	3% (5%)	6% (2%)	54% (60%)
Ensuring the needs of vulnerable adults are met	4% (2%)	23% (19%)	11% (13%)	7% (8%)	4% (3%)	51% (56%)
Ensuring a wide enough range of housing choices	1% (0%)	13% (8%)	17% (12%)	11% (14%)	7% (5%)	51% (60%)
Ensuring that the Council's housing stock is of an appropriate standard	2% (1%)	18% (11%)	13% (11%)	6% (8%)	6% (4%)	56% (66%)
Ensuring that the needs of homeless people are met	6% (2%)	11% (9%)	12% (12%)	4% (7%)	7% (4%)	61% (66%)
Regenerating priority areas	2% (1%)	13% (8%)	17% (16%)	15% (10%)	7% (4%)	49% (62%)
Integrating migrant workers and ethnic minority groups into Aberdeenshire's communities	6% (3%)	15% (11%)	17% (12%)	4% (4%)	2% (2%)	56% (68%)
Providing recreational opportunities in well maintained public spaces	2% (3%)	26% (28%)	17% (19%)	16% (16%)	10% (6%)	29% (29%)

4.4 These issues are analysed further in Figures 4.1(a) and (b), which summarises the findings **amongst those who gave a response**, although care should be taken in comparing results as a number of low base numbers exist (a full breakdown is included in the appendices).

Figure 4.1(a): Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities

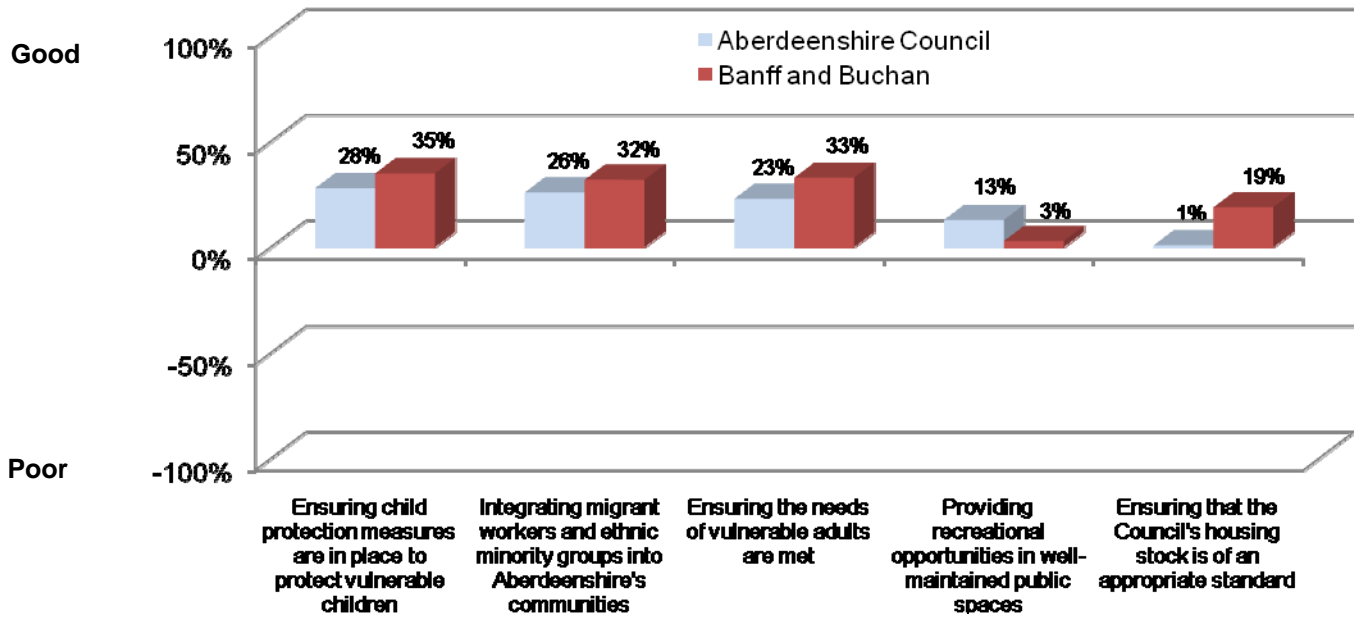
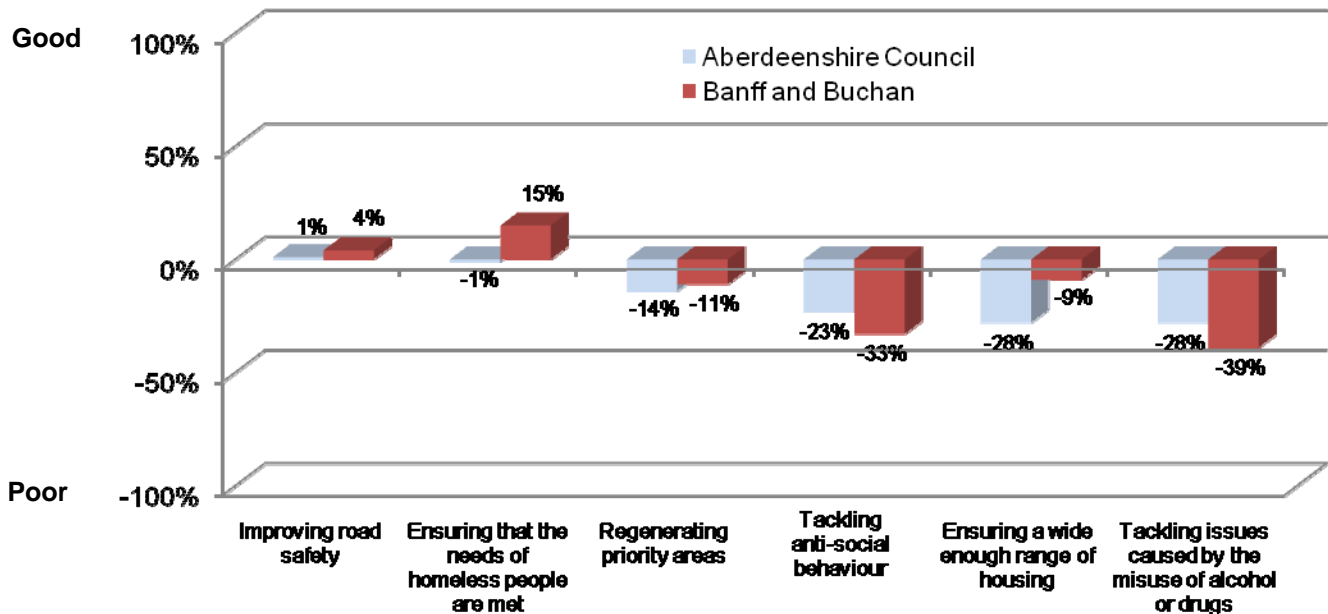
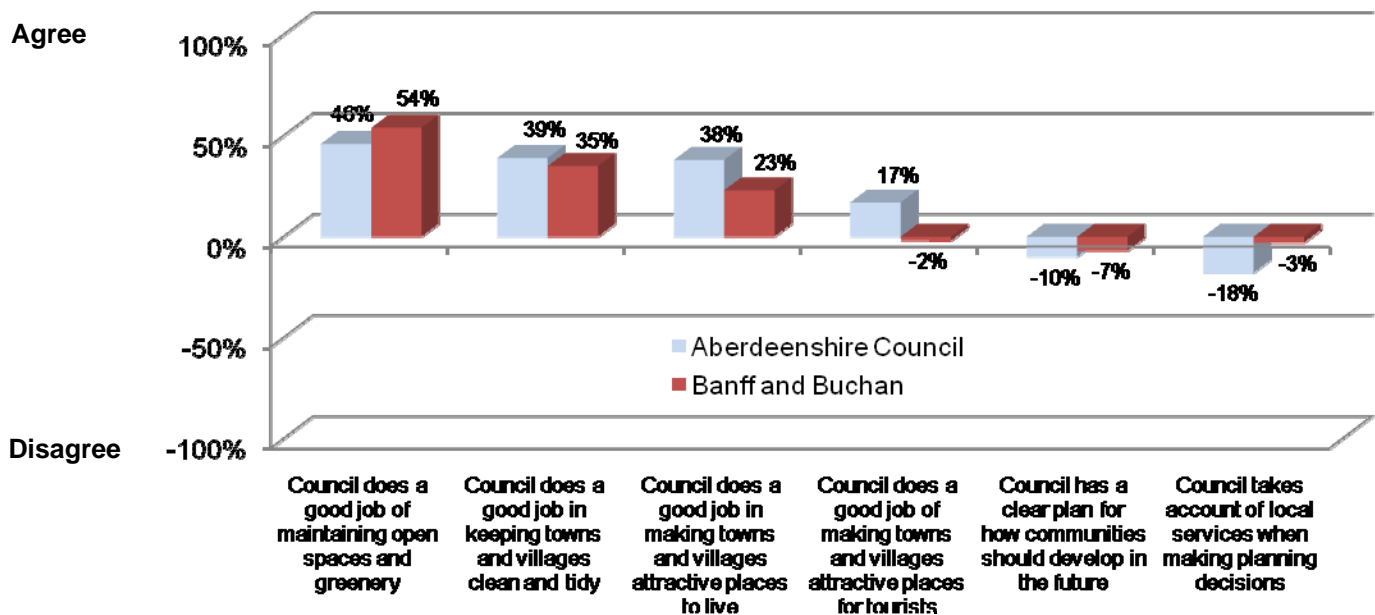


Figure 4.1(b): Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities



4.5 The strength of agreement / disagreement with a number of issues concerning Aberdeenshire’s towns and villages is set out below (bases for these questions vary).

Figure 4.2: Towns and Villages

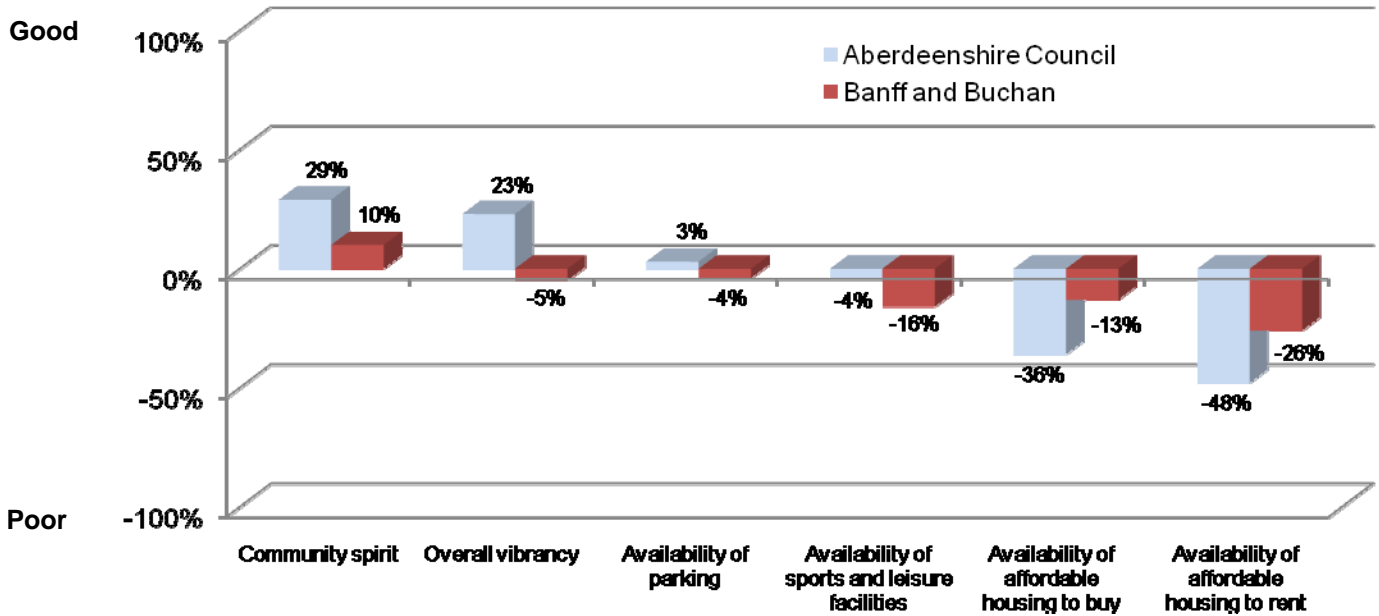


Banff and Buchan residents were generally more likely to agree that the Council does a good job of maintaining open spaces and greenery and that the Council takes account of local services when making planning decisions. However, they were less likely to agree that the Council does a good job of making towns and villages attractive places to live and that it does a good job of making towns and villages attractive places for tourists.

4.6 Respondents were also asked to provide ratings for a number of features of the town or village in which they live, the results of which are set out on the following page (the figure given is a net figure whereby very good / good ratings are calculated and poor / very poor ratings are subtracted from this).

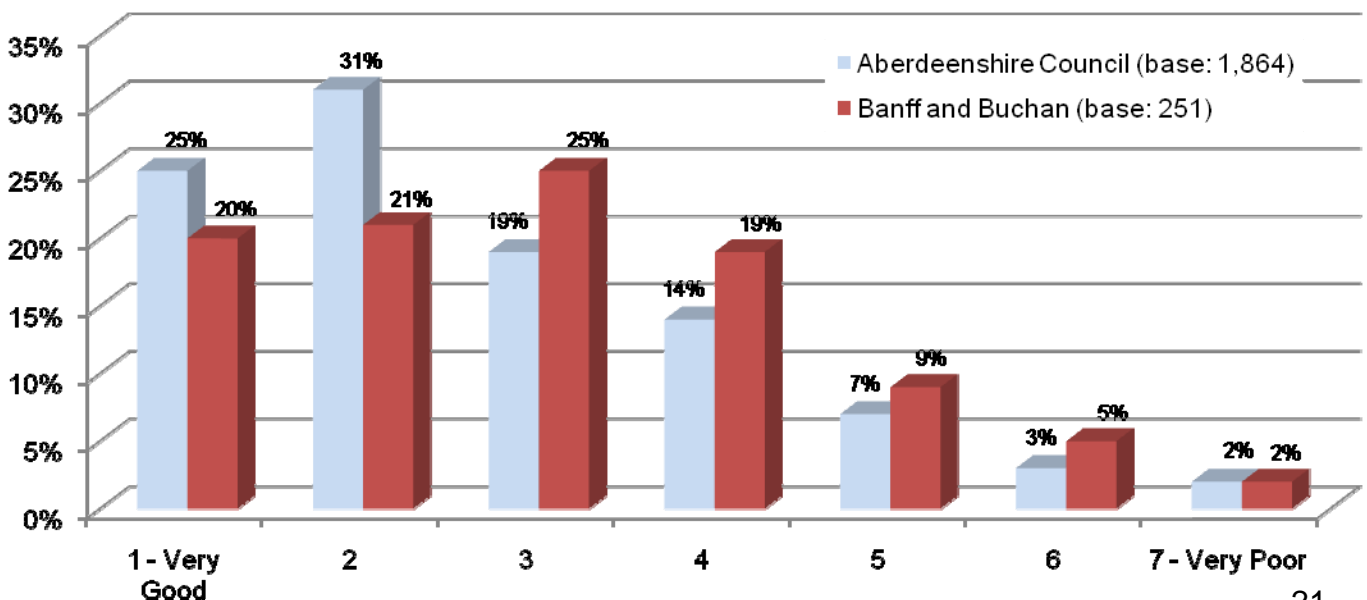
Compared to the Council average, poorer ratings were received in Banff and Buchan in relation to community spirit, overall vibrancy, availability of parking and availability of sports and leisure facilities. Better ratings were received (whilst still negative overall) for the availability of affordable housing to buy and affordable housing to rent.

Figure 4.3: Community Issues



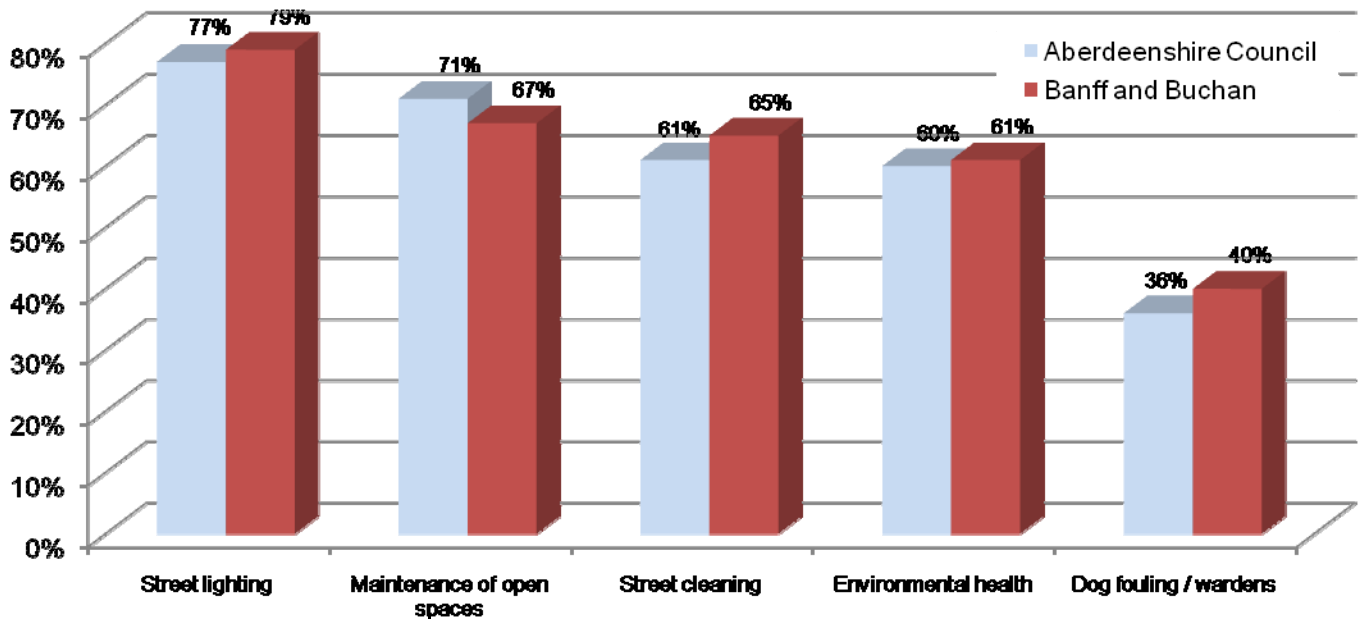
4.7 To provide an overall baseline of perceptions of quality of life, respondents were asked to rate their overall quality of life on a scale from 1 (very good) to 7 (very poor). Results for this showed an overall mean score of 2.97 for Banff and Buchan residents (compared to all respondents' overall mean score of 2.63) meaning that, on average, people in Banff and Buchan are slightly less likely to rate their quality of life positively.

Figure 4.4: Rating of Quality of Life



4.8 A number of questions regarding certain “universal” Council services that were posed in the questionnaire relate to the issue of community wellbeing. These results are detailed below (figures given are overall satisfaction figures, not net satisfaction):

**Figure 4.5: Rating of Universal Services
Community Wellbeing**



There are no significant variations between the ratings received in Banff and Buchan when compared to the wider Council area.

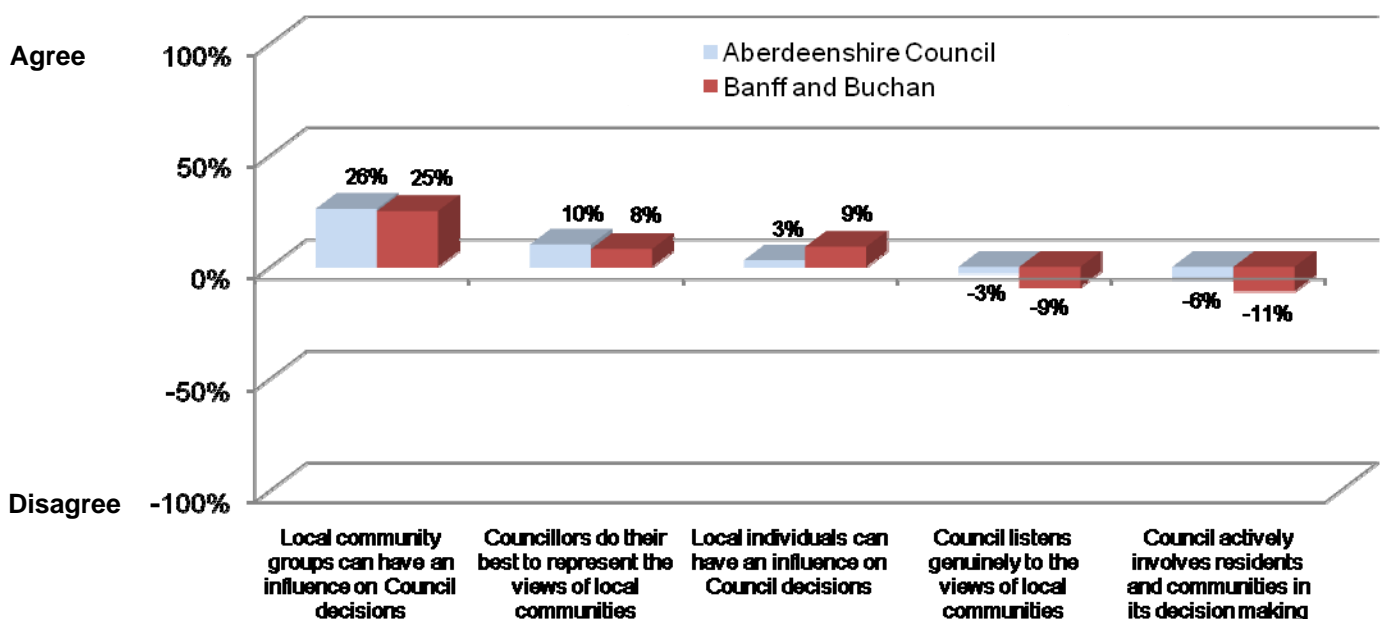
4.9 Certain of the questions asked of people were users of specific services also relate to the strategic priority of community wellbeing. Satisfaction levels amongst **users** of these services are tabulated on the following page. The figures given are for Banff and Buchan with the comparative figures for Aberdeenshire as a whole in brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

Table 4.2: Rating of Specific Services – Community Wellbeing

Service	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither / Nor	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not answered	% of respondents who use service
Burial grounds	24% (30%)	55% (47%)	9% (9%)	7% (6%)	3% (2%)	3% (5%)	41% (28%)
Council housing services	24% (23%)	43% (43%)	12% (14%)	7% (6%)	5% (5%)	10% (8%)	17% (11%)
Council-run leisure / sports facilities	12% (14%)	44% (56%)	22% (15%)	12% (9%)	6% (4%)	4% (2%)	30% (39%)
Country parks	27% (29%)	57% (55%)	11% (10%)	2% (3%)	1% (1%)	2% (2%)	59% (63%)
Social work services	52% (37%)	34% (35%)	5% (10%)	7% (7%)	2% (2%)	0% (8%)	17% (14%)
Trading standards	21% (19%)	26% (40%)	37% (19%)	11% (8%)	0% (6%)	5% (8%)	7% (8%)

4.10 Figure 4.6 below shows ratings for a number of issues relating to Council decision-making and consultation, which is itself an important dimension of community wellbeing. Banff and Buchan residents were more likely to agree that local individuals can have an influence on Council decisions and less likely to agree that the Council listens genuinely to the views of local communities and that the Council actively involves residents and communities in its decision making. These distinctions are fairly marginal, however,

Figure 4.6: Council Decision Making and Consultation



5.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – JOBS AND THE ECONOMY

5.1 The following description of the Council's strategic priority for Jobs and the Economy was set out as:

“Aberdeenshire has a broad economic base from traditional industries such as agriculture, fishing and forestry to those that have grown over the last 30 years such as the energy and service sectors. The Council is committed to working with partners to help the Aberdeenshire economy become more resilient and adaptive to change. With the lowest unemployment rate in mainland Scotland, Aberdeenshire is an attractive area to live in and aims to have the necessary infrastructure for new and existing businesses, both large and small, to thrive.”

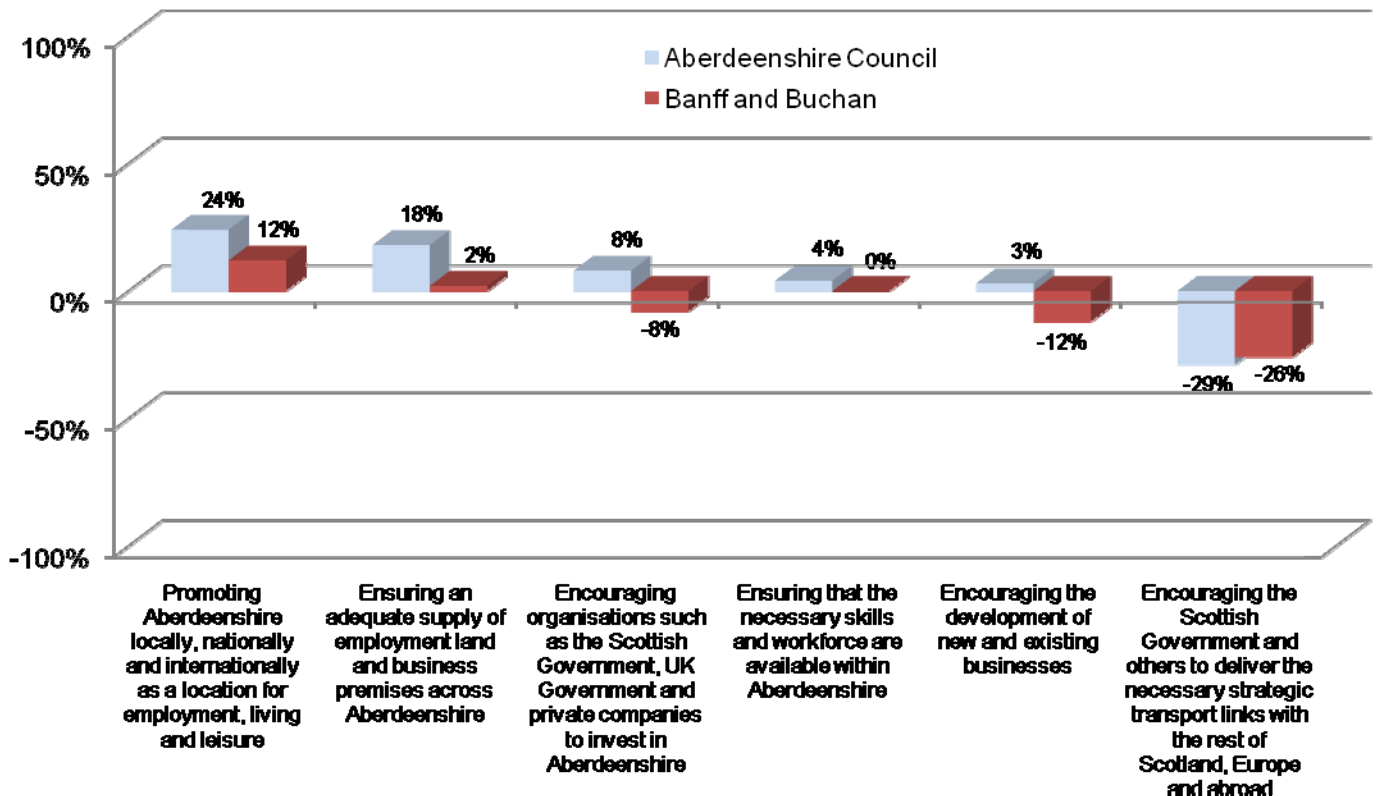
5.2 With regard to residents rating of the Council's performance with regard to Jobs and the Economy, Table 5.1 sets out the results obtained. The figures given are for Banff and Buchan with overall Aberdeenshire Council figures in brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

Table 5.1: Detailed Rating of Community Wellbeing Activities

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Promoting Aberdeenshire locally, nationally and internationally as a location for employment, living and leisure	5% (3%)	17% (22%)	28% (28%)	13% (8%)	2% (2%)	35% (37%)
Encouraging organisations such as the Scottish Government, UK Government and private companies to invest in Aberdeenshire	4% (2%)	12% (16%)	24% (25%)	16% (11%)	5% (3%)	39% (43%)
Ensuring an adequate supply of employment land and business premises across Aberdeenshire	2% (2%)	14% (18%)	30% (25%)	11% (8%)	4% (3%)	39% (44%)
Ensuring that the necessary skills and workforce are available within Aberdeenshire	3% (1%)	15% (14%)	29% (26%)	12% (10%)	5% (4%)	36% (45%)
Encouraging the development of new and existing businesses	2% (2%)	13% (16%)	24% (27%)	16% (12%)	8% (4%)	36% (39%)
Encouraging the Scottish Government and others to deliver the necessary strategic transport links with the rest of Scotland, Europe and abroad	2% (2%)	9% (10%)	26% (23%)	16% (18%)	12% (12%)	35% (37%)

5.3 Amongst those respondents who gave an answer with regard to the aspects of Jobs and the Economy previously noted, Figure 5.1 details these results in further detail. Please note that comparison between Aberdeenshire and Banff and Buchan should be treated with some caution due to low base numbers (full details are included in the appendices).

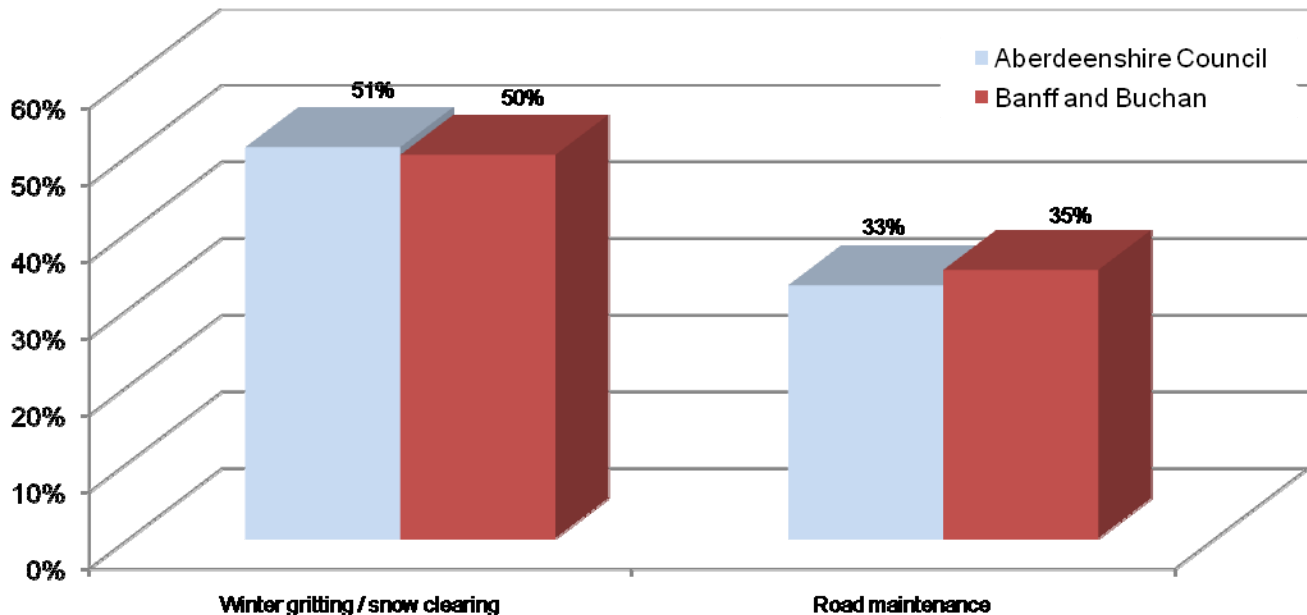
Figure 5.1: Rating of Jobs and the Economy Performance



5.4 The following questions regarding universal Council services are considered to relate specifically to Jobs and the Economy, with the figures quoted being the overall satisfaction² of residents who expressed an opinion. Little variation is apparent between Banff and Buchan and Aberdeenshire as a whole.

² Overall satisfaction is defined as the proportion of respondents who stated that they were either very or fairly satisfied with a service. Respondents who gave a don't know response or did not provide an answer have been excluded from the analysis.

Figure 5.2: Rating of Universal Services – Jobs and the Economy



5.5 A small number of specific services used also related to this theme as tabulated below. The figures given are for Banff and Buchan with the figures for Aberdeenshire as a whole in brackets (bases vary and are detailed in full in the appendices).

Table 5.2: Rating of Specific Services – Jobs and the Economy

Service	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither / Nor	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not answered	% of respondents who use service
Planning and building control	13% (13%)	34% (42%)	22% (16%)	19% (18%)	9% (7%)	3% (4%)	30% (28%)
Support to local businesses	14% (9%)	46% (42%)	18% (22%)	11% (13%)	4% (4%)	7% (10%)	11% (10%)
Training and employment initiatives	0% (16%)	47% (33%)	29% (18%)	12% (15%)	6% (6%)	6% (13%)	7% (7%)

6.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – LIFELONG LEARNING

6.1 The following description of the Lifelong Learning priority was included:

“With over 400 facilities including schools, recreation centres, community centres, libraries, museums and other cultural venues the Council plays a vital part in making Aberdeenshire a great place for learning and leisure.”

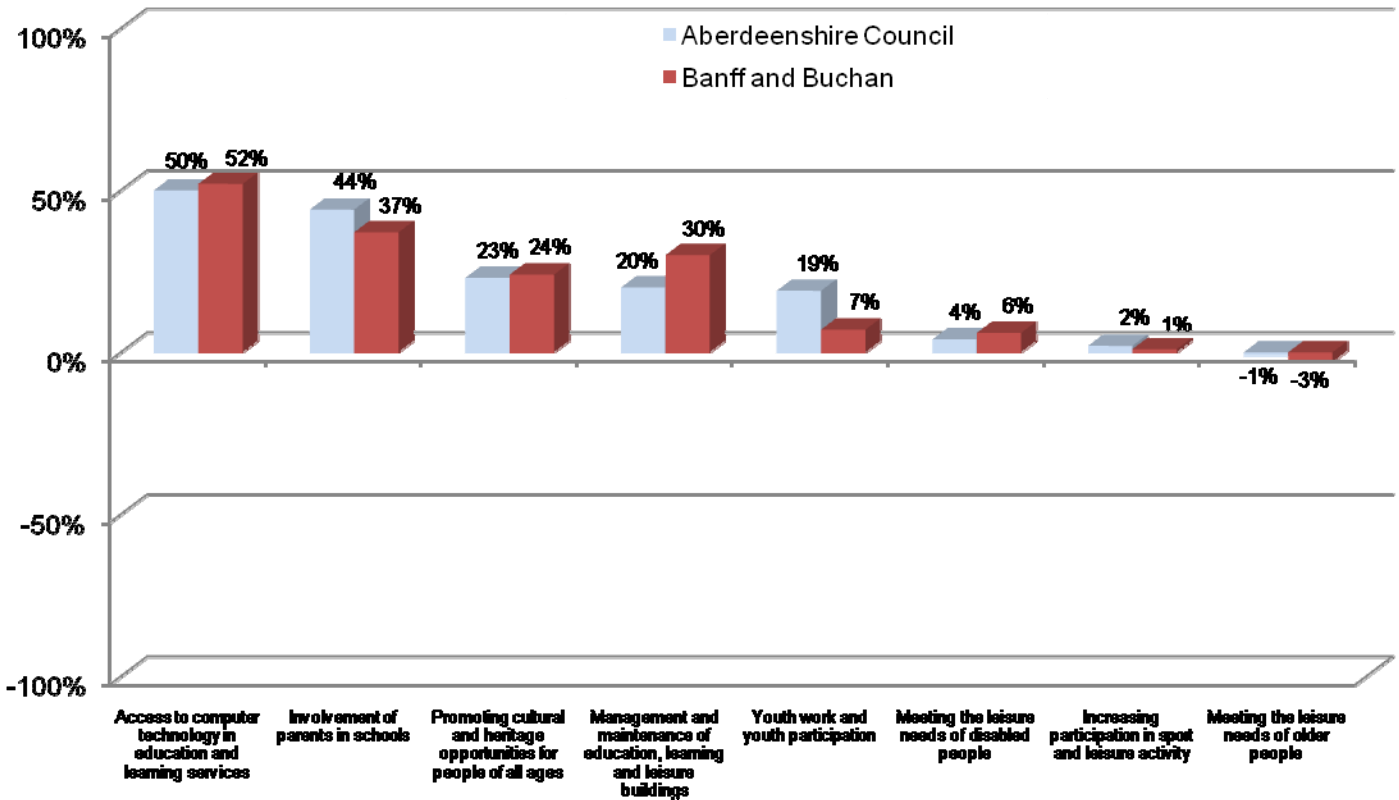
6.2 Detailed ratings in relation to the Council's performance with regard to the issues explored under “Lifelong Learning” are shown below, including “don't know” responses (the small number of people who did not answer the question are excluded and base numbers therefore vary for each question and are set out in full in the appendices). The figures given are for Banff and Buchan with the figures for Aberdeenshire Council as a whole provided in brackets.

Table 6.1: Detailed Rating of Lifelong Learning Performance

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Management and maintenance of education, learning and leisure buildings	4% (4%)	26% (24%)	28% (29%)	7% (10%)	3% (4%)	33% (32%)
Access to computer technology in education and learning services	7% (6%)	30% (30%)	20% (21%)	4% (4%)	1% (1%)	37% (37%)
Youth work and youth participation	4% (4%)	16% (16%)	19% (18%)	11% (7%)	4% (3%)	46% (52%)
Involvement of parents in schools	6% (5%)	23% (22%)	16% (17%)	7% (4%)	3% (2%)	45% (50%)
Promoting cultural and heritage opportunities for people of all ages	4% (2%)	22% (19%)	24% (25%)	9% (7%)	2% (2%)	39% (45%)
Meeting the leisure needs of disabled people	4% (2%)	13% (12%)	18% (16%)	9% (8%)	6% (5%)	51% (58%)
Meeting the leisure needs of older people	5% (2%)	13% (15%)	19% (19%)	13% (12%)	7% (5%)	44% (46%)
Increasing participation in sport and leisure activity	2% (2%)	16% (15%)	25% (25%)	12% (12%)	6% (4%)	39% (42%)

6.3 Perceptions of the Council’s performance in delivering these strategic priorities are summarised below, based on those respondents that expressed a view (base numbers vary and are detailed in the appendices):

Figure 6.1: Rating of Lifelong Learning Performance



Again, direct comparison of results should be undertaken with caution due to the low base numbers in Banff and Buchan. It would seem that Banff and Buchan performs comparatively well in relation to these indicators with the exception of youth work and youth participation.

- 6.4 Certain specific services that people use relate to the Lifelong Learning theme. Results in relation to these are tabulated below, again with the Banff and Buchan results followed by Aberdeenshire results in brackets (full details of the base number of responses are set out in the appendices).

Table 6.2: Rating of Specific Services – Lifelong Learning

Service	Very Satisfied	Fairly Satisfied	Neither / Nor	Fairly Dissatisfied	Very Dissatisfied	Not answered	% of respondents who use service
Adult education	39% (34%)	56% (48%)	0% (6%)	6% (5%)	0% (4%)	0% (3%)	7% (10%)
Before and after school care	13% (39%)	50% (36%)	13% (4%)	0% (5%)	25% (11%)	0% (4%)	3% (4%)
Education and training for people with disabilities	46% (27%)	15% (35%)	8% (12%)	15% (15%)	8% (2%)	8% (10%)	5% (6%)
Library services	49% (45%)	39% (41%)	5% (6%)	2% (3%)	1% (1%)	4% (4%)	50% (51%)
Museums and arts	33% (28%)	50% (53%)	7% (9%)	7% (5%)	1% (1%)	1% (4%)	33% (37%)
Your child / children's school(s)	24% (31%)	48% (47%)	13% (9%)	11% (7%)	0% (1%)	4% (5%)	21% (25%)
Youth clubs and services	31% (30%)	38% (44%)	15% (9%)	0% (6%)	8% (4%)	8% (7%)	10% (13%)

7.0 THE COUNCIL'S STRATEGIC PRIORITIES – SUSTAINABLE ENVIRONMENT

7.1 The following description of the Sustainable Environment priority was included:

“The Council is committed to ensuring that what the economy and society does now in terms of meeting the needs of the current generation does not compromise the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. We are committed to providing a range of initiatives promoting renewable energy, energy conservation, waste management, strategic development, cultural heritage and education. The Council is further committed to reducing its carbon emissions with the aim of being a carbon neutral organisation in the short to medium term.”

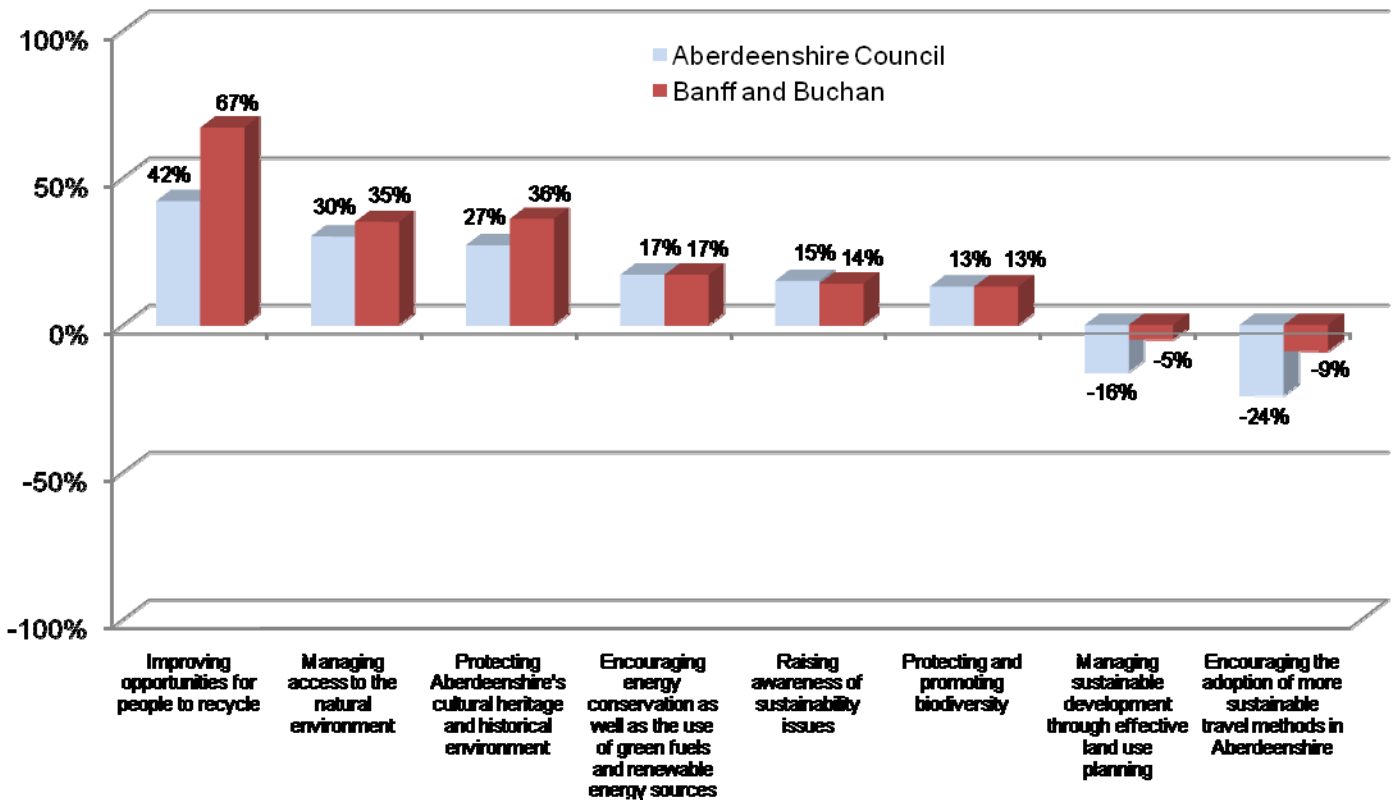
7.2 The detailed results in relation to perception of the Council's performance with regard to these aspects of the Sustainable Environment priority are detailed below, including “don't know” responses (the small number of people who did not answer the question are excluded and base numbers therefore vary for each question and are set out in full in the appendices). The figures given are for Banff and Buchan with the figures for Aberdeenshire Council as a whole provided in brackets.

Table 7.1: Detailed Rating of Sustainable Environment Performance

	Very Good	Good	Neither / Nor	Poor	Very Poor	Don't Know
Encouraging energy conservation as well as the use of green fuels and renewable energy sources	6% (3%)	20% (21%)	26% (28%)	9% (10%)	2% (2%)	38% (36%)
Raising awareness of sustainability issues	6% (3%)	17% (20%)	25% (27%)	12% (11%)	2% (2%)	39% (37%)
Managing sustainable development through effective land use planning	2% (1%)	11% (8%)	18% (20%)	13% (13%)	3% (4%)	53% (54%)
Encouraging the adoption of more sustainable travel methods in Aberdeenshire	4% (2%)	16% (12%)	19% (23%)	16% (19%)	9% (9%)	36% (35%)
Protecting Aberdeenshire's cultural heritage and historical environment	6% (3%)	27% (25%)	26% (29%)	6% (7%)	2% (3%)	32% (33%)
Managing access to the natural environment	5% (2%)	25% (25%)	24% (27%)	5% (6%)	3% (2%)	38% (37%)
Protecting and promoting biodiversity	3% (1%)	17% (12%)	17% (22%)	5% (6%)	2% (2%)	56% (57%)
Improving opportunities for people to recycle	21% (12%)	40% (39%)	19% (24%)	3% (8%)	2% (5%)	16% (12%)

7.3 Ratings of performance in relation to the Sustainable Environment priority are set out below amongst those that expressed a direct opinion (base numbers vary and are detailed in the appendices):

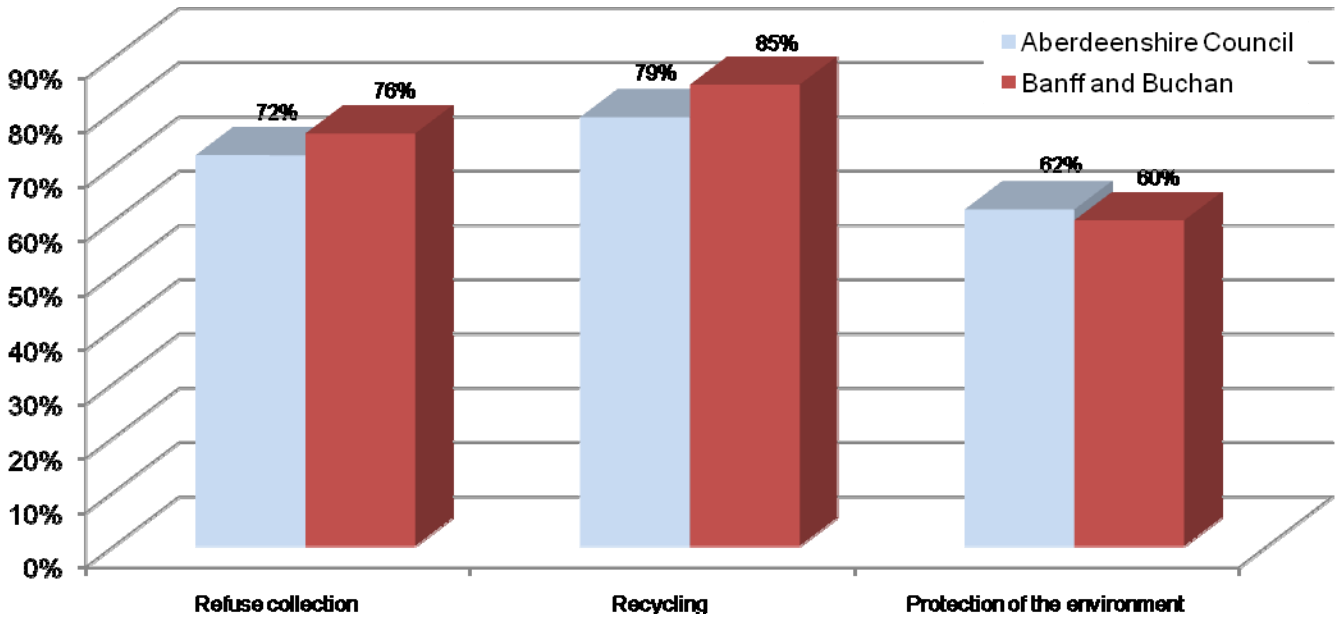
Figure 7.1: Rating of Sustainable Environment Performance



Comparison between Aberdeenshire Council's overall results and Banff and Buchan should be undertaken with some caution owing to low base numbers. However, the Banff and Buchan ratings for a number of these indicators appear to be better than the Council average.

7.4 Certain of the universal services for which ratings were identified related to the Sustainable Environment priority. These ratings are summarised in the figure below.

Figure 7.2: Rating of Universal Services – Sustainable Environment



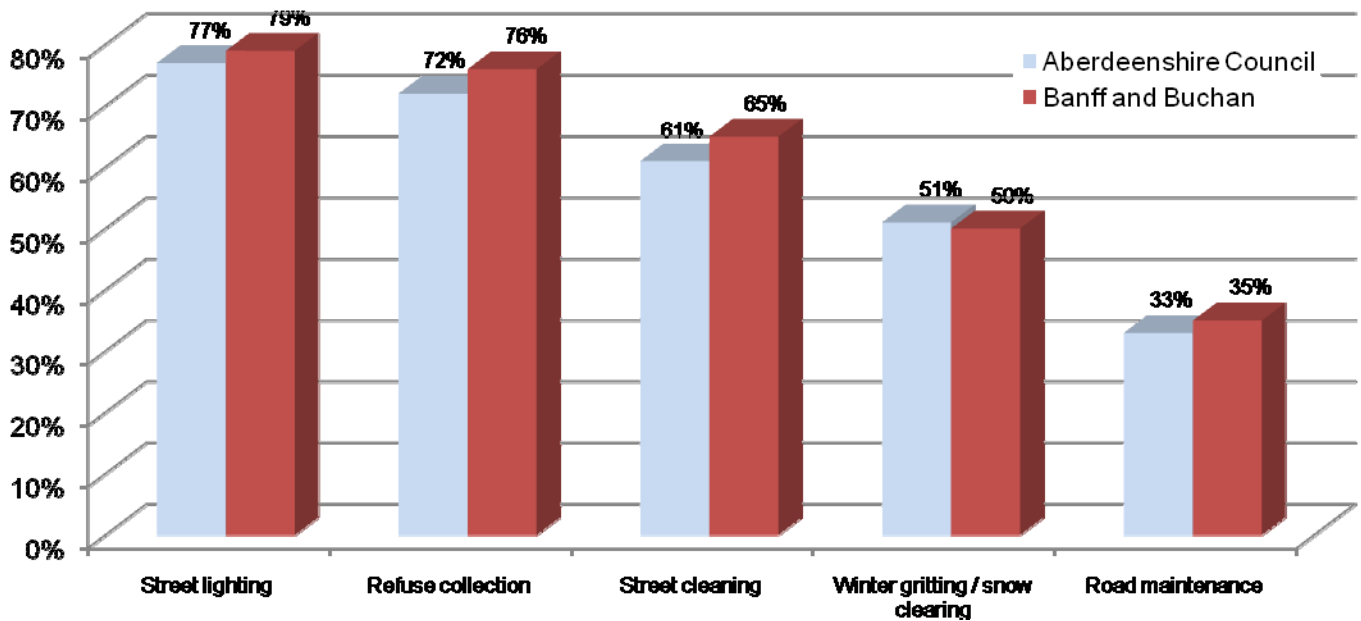
Residents in Banff and Buchan were notably more likely to be satisfied with recycling than Aberdeenshire residents as a whole.

8.0 SATISFACTION WITH COUNCIL SERVICES

8.1 The various satisfaction ratings have already been incorporated in chapters 4-7. However, as these have previously been incorporated in a single chapter of the Residents' Report we have included these results here, for completeness.

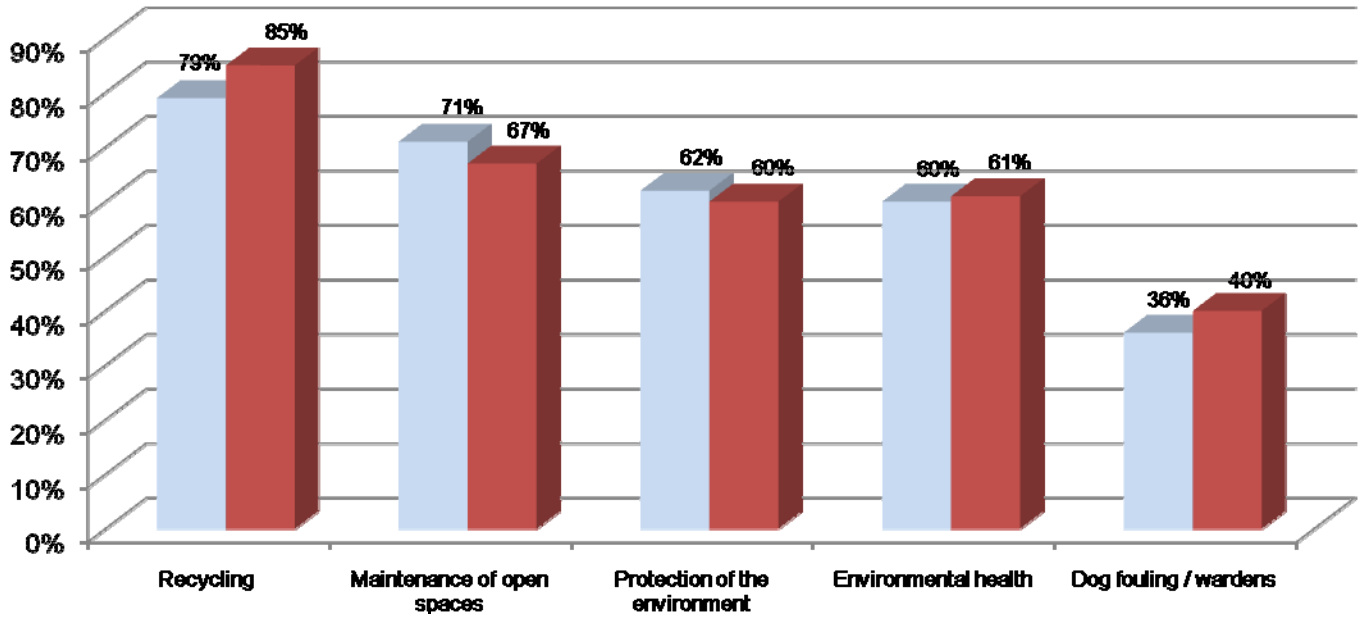
8.2 Ratings for a range of universal services are set out below:

Figure 8.1(a): Rating of Universal Services



8.3 In 2010, a number of new questions were asked under this heading and ratings for these are summarised on the following page:

Figure 8.1(b): Rating of Universal Services



- 8.4 Ratings for a number of specific services that people either have a need for or choose to use are tabulated below (not answered responses included). Results are provided in full for reference but the very low base number of respondents in some cases should be noted.

Table 8.1: Usage and Satisfaction with Services

Service	Aberdeenshire Council			Banff and Buchan		
	% of respondents who use service	Base	Satisfaction	% of respondents who use service	Base	Satisfaction
Library services	51%	967	86%	50%	122	92%
Country parks	63%	1,195	84%	59%	147	86%
Adult education	10%	166	82%	7%	18	94%
Museums and arts	37%	696	81%	33%	83	84%
Local Council offices	48%	825	80%	56%	137	82%
Burial grounds	28%	472	78%	41%	101	81%
Your child / children's school(s)	25%	481	78%	21%	52	75%
Before and after school care	4%	67	75%	3%	8	63%
Youth clubs and services	13%	245	74%	10%	24	75%
Social work services	14%	262	73%	17%	44	86%
Council-run leisure / sports facilities	39%	730	70%	30%	74	58%
Council housing services	11%	191	67%	17%	38	74%
Education and training for people with disabilities	6%	110	62%	5%	12	67%
Trading standards	8%	144	59%	7%	18	50%
Planning and building control	28%	486	55%	30%	75	48%
Support to local businesses	10%	180	52%	11%	26	65%
Training and employment initiatives	8%	132	48%	7%	16	50%

9.0 FUTURE PRIORITIES

BUDGET PRIORITIES

- 9.1 A new section of the questionnaire concerned issues around the Council's future budget priorities. The following preamble was included in the questionnaire:

“Due to the well publicised expected reduction in government grant funding, all local authorities will need to make significant budget savings over the next few years. Your answers to questions in this section will be one of the things that the Council takes into account in setting its budgets in the future.”

- 9.2 Respondents were then asked to nominate up to 10 service options they considered MOST important to protect and up to 10 that they considered LEAST important.³ The results of this are set out over the page, organised in order of the “net figure” accorded to each service (it should be noted that the information in Figure 9.1 is based only on the results of the “main” survey). The figures provided are for Banff and Buchan with the figures for Aberdeenshire Council as a whole being provided in brackets.

³ For reasons of space, young people were only asked the question as to what was MOST important to protect and the information in Table 9.1 is based only on the results of the main survey.

Table 9.1: Usage of Services

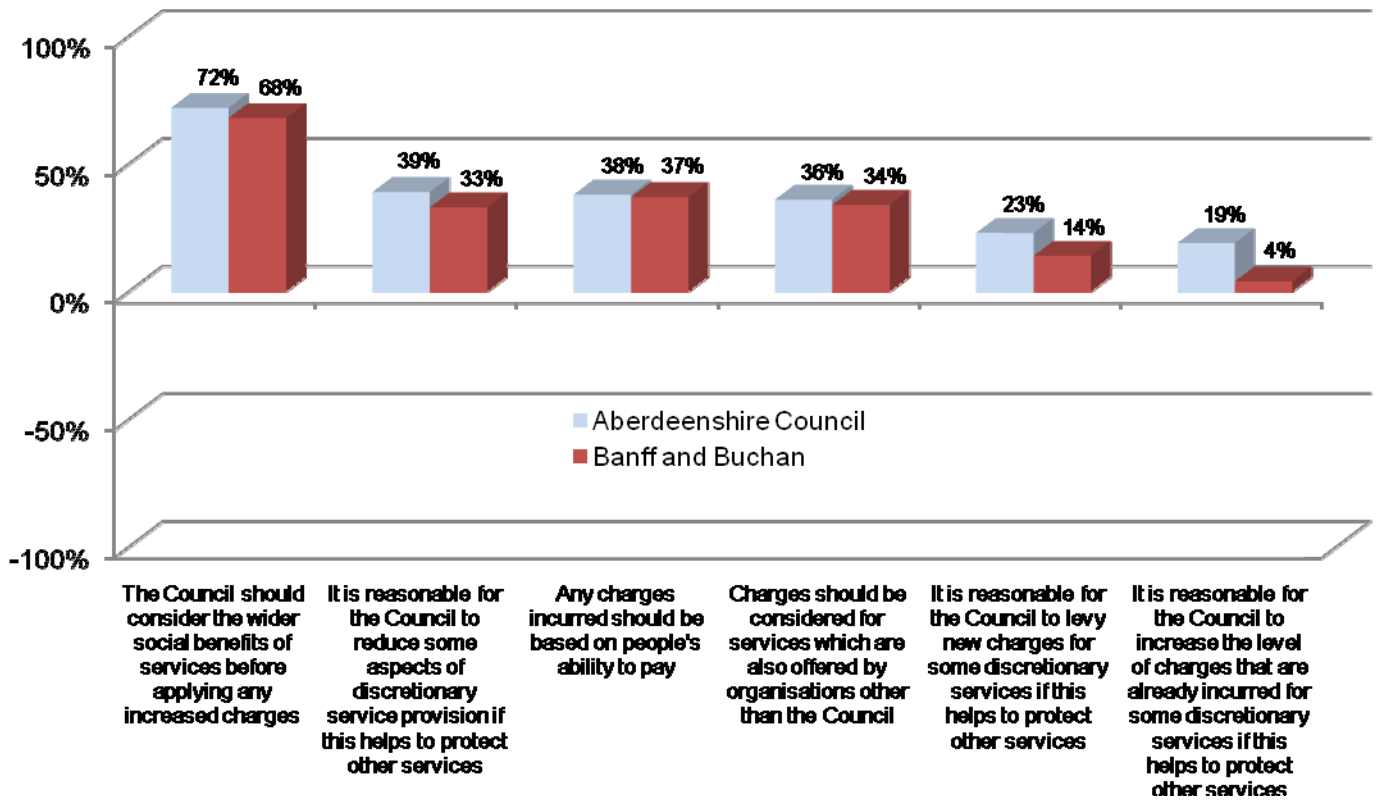
Service	Proportion Nominating as Most Important to Protect	Proportion Nominating as Least Important to Protect	Net Figure ⁴ (proportion nominating as most important less proportion nominating as least important)
Refuse collection	72% (72%)	3% (3%)	+69% (+69%)
Road maintenance	58% (71%)	6% (2%)	+52% (+69%)
Winter gritting / snow clearing	60% (69%)	8% (5%)	+52% (+64%)
Child protection	63% (61%)	4% (4%)	+59% (+57%)
Recycling	56% (56%)	12% (10%)	+44% (+46%)
Your child / children's school(s)	35% (45%)	16% (10%)	+19% (+35%)
Street cleaning	43% (38%)	7% (12%)	+35% (+26%)
Education and training for people with disabilities	38% (38%)	10% (11%)	+28% (+27%)
Maintenance of burial grounds	48% (38%)	14% (16%)	+34% (+22%)
Council-run leisure / sports facilities	34% (36%)	22% (19%)	+12% (+17%)
Library services	36% (37%)	24% (22%)	+12% (+15%)
Street lighting	37% (33%)	17% (17%)	+20% (+16%)
Council housing services	32% (31%)	16% (17%)	+16% (+14%)
Social work services	23% (27%)	16% (14%)	+7% (+13%)
Protection of the environment	35% (29%)	19% (19%)	+15% (+10%)
Maintenance of open spaces	27% (31%)	28% (22%)	0% (+9%)
Environmental health	26% (28%)	20% (21%)	+6% (+7%)
Country parks	25% (26%)	28% (24%)	-2% (+2%)
Planning and building control	22% (24%)	28% (22%)	-6% (+2%)
Youth clubs and services	16% (22%)	23% (23%)	-7% (-1%)
Training and employment initiatives	18% (19%)	24% (27%)	-6% (-8%)
Dog fouling / wardens	26% (25%)	33% (35%)	-7% (-10%)
Before and after school care	20% (21%)	34% (32%)	-14% (-11%)
Adult education	24% (18%)	26% (31%)	-2% (-13%)
Local Council offices	20% (18%)	29% (33%)	-9% (-15%)
Support to local businesses	19% (18%)	29% (35%)	-10% (-17%)
Trading standards	8% (8%)	44% (41%)	-36% (-33%)
Museums and arts	12% (11%)	46% (46%)	-34% (-35%)
Base		254 (1,734)	

The general pattern of responses is broadly similar in Banff and Buchan to the Council as a whole. However, residents of Banff and Buchan are slightly less likely to see issues such as road maintenance, winter gritting/snow clearing and schools as being priorities for protection but slightly more likely to consider street cleaning as a priority.

⁴ Allowing for rounding

9.3 Respondents to the main survey were then asked to agree or disagree with a range of statements regarding the Council’s approach to charging, with the results of this being set out below (the figures provided represent “net agreement”):

Figure 9.1: Agreement with Charging Statements



Banff and Buchan respondents are slightly less likely to agree that it is reasonable for the Council to levy new charges for some discretionary services if it helps protect other services and that it is reasonable for the Council to increase the level of charges that are already incurred for some discretionary services if it helps to protect other services.