

Evaluation of phase 1 Grounds Maintenance pilot areas

Nettleton Court & Dudeney Lodge and Wickhurst Rise Maisonette Flats

CONSULTATION

4.1 Estate Service Monitoring Group (ESMG) selected five pilot areas to test whether the ground maintenance concerns identified by the group are the same for residents living in the pilot locations

4.2 The five pilot locations are;

Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes	Mile Oak Portslade	West Area	Phase 1
Nettleton Court & Dudeney Lodge	Upper Hollingdean Road	North Area	Phase 1
Fitch Drive, Ryelands Drive and Thorndean Road	Bevendean and Bates Estate	East Area	Phase 2
Elwyn Jones Court (sheltered scheme)	Carden Avenue Patcham	North Area	Phase 2
Essex Street Hampshire Court and Wiltshire House	Eastern Road area	Central Area	Phase 3

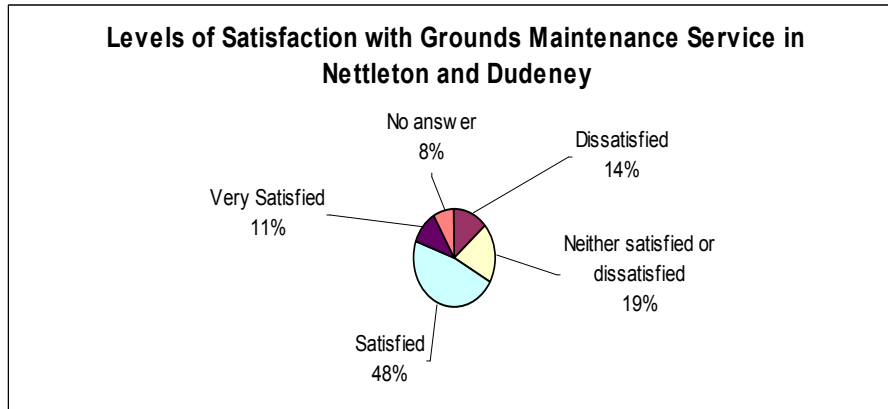
4.3 Due to the complexity and numbers of residents involved in the pilot areas, the areas have been split into phases. Phase 1 was completed on 4 October 2010, and phase 2 commenced on 13 October 2010 with phase 3 starting in November 2010. Residents are given three weeks to complete and return the questionnaire.

4.4 When the closing date for returns had passed residents were invited to an evening meeting with the Project Officer and CityParks Operations Manager to feed back the results of the questionnaire and give residents a further opportunity to comment on the grounds maintenance service and ask questions.

4.5 Residents living in the pilot areas received a questionnaire which gave them the opportunity to tell us what they thought about the current grounds maintenance service and how it could be improved. Those residents who have access to a computer had the option to complete the questionnaire on-line.

- 4.6 When this report went to press only the results of phase 1 pilot areas at Nettleton Court & Dudeney Lodge and Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes had been collated and evaluated.
- 4.7 Nettleton Court and Dudeney Lodge has 180 flats and 36 questionnaires were returned which equates to 18% return rate, which is excellent. This was in the main achieved because of the strong support officers received from the residents association.
- 4.8 When the submissions date for return of questionnaires had closed and the results collated, all residents of Nettleton and Dudeney were invited to evening meeting which had been arranged by the Residents Association. The Project officer and CityParks Operations Manager presented the results to the fifteen residents that had attended
- 4.9 Officers were expecting that shrub bed maintenance would be an area where residents were least satisfied with the service. This is due to a combination of poor maintenance and lack of replanting. Residents attending the meeting indicated that they wanted CityParks to improve on the areas where service standards had slipped, rather than provide any additional services.

Nettleton Court & Dudeney Lodge

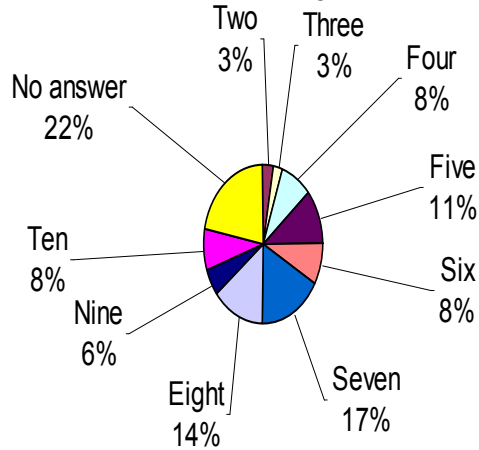


Overall how satisfied are you with the service?

Very Dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	5
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	7
Satisfied	17
Very Satisfied	4
No answer	3
Total	36

The overall satisfaction level of the grounds maintenance service is 59% with an additional 19% being neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. 14% being dissatisfied with the service is relatively low.

Rating out of ten for the Grounds Maintenance service in Nettleton and Dudeney

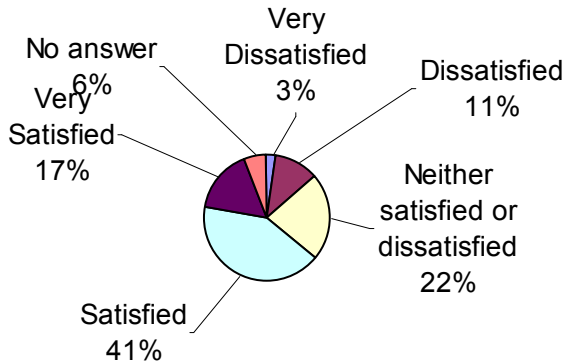


How would you rate this service out of 10?

One	0
Two	1
Three	1
Four	3
Five	4
Six	3
Seven	6
Eight	5
Nine	2
Ten	3
No answer	8
Total	36

The majority of residents rated the service between the scoring range of five and eight. With five residents rating the service either a nine or ten, while two residents scored the service as two or three.

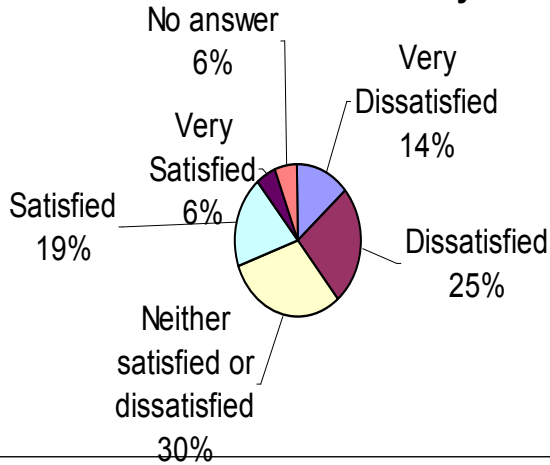
Levels of satisfaction with the standard of grass cutting in Nettleton and Dudeney



Very Dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	4
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	8
Satisfied	15
Very Satisfied	6
No answer	2
Total	36

Again the majority were satisfied with the service which was in accord with how officers assessed the grass cutting standard.

Levels of satisfaction with the attention paid to shrub bed and flowerbeds in Nettleton and Dudenev



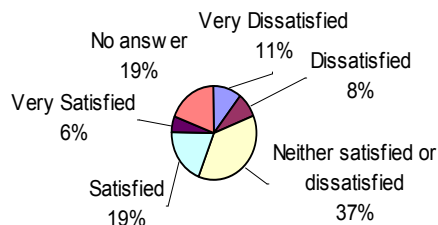
Very Dissatisfied	5
Dissatisfied	9
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	11
Satisfied	7
Very Satisfied	2
No answer	2
Total	36

The maintenance of shrub beds was the area of work where residents were least satisfied with the service. This was to be expected as the current grounds maintenance contract does not include any provision for replanting where shrubs have died and been removed or are past their best.

Self sown sycamores and other wild shrubs had invaded some beds and these will be removed.

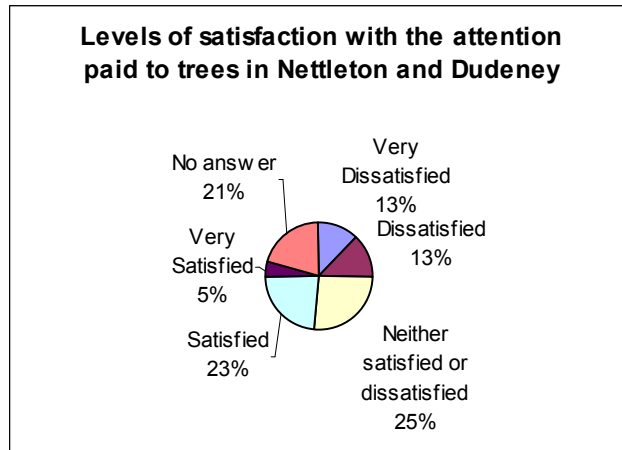
Two beds were also identified where shrubs had become woody and provided no added value or aesthetics and these will be replanted. A particular bed will be planted with County roses which will add colour and attract wildlife such as butterflies and bees.

Levels of satisfaction with the attention paid to paths, car parking spaces and garages in Nettleton and Dudenev



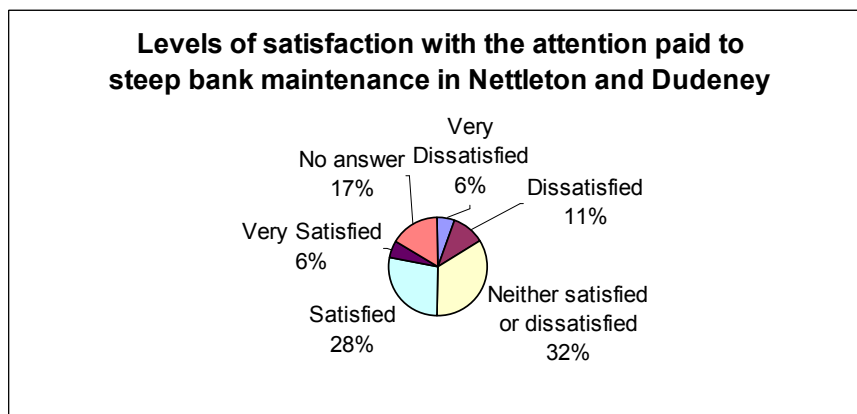
Very Dissatisfied	4
Dissatisfied	3
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	13
Satisfied	7
Very Satisfied	2
No answer	7
Total	36

This particular site has two large car parks and paved pedestrian areas which are prone to some weed growth. Although there is no provision within the contract to cover regular weed control on hard surfaces, this is a site where we are trialling CityParks and Estate Services working together to tackle this problem. As mentioned earlier, the square meterage of car parking and garage sites measured to establish the cost of engaging Highways to control weeds on these Housing Sites.



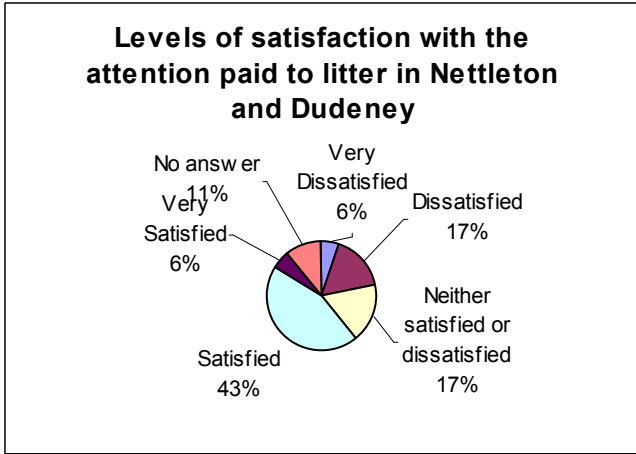
Very Dissatisfied	5
Dissatisfied	5
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	10
Satisfied	9
Very Satisfied	2
No answer	8
Total	36

This particular site overlooks the Hollingdean Depot. Along the boundary the roots of some self sown sycamores are undermining the boundary wall which will require the trees to be felled under Health & Safety requirements. The Arboriculture section have inspected the site and advised that other trees on the site will require pruning to meet Health & Safety requirements.



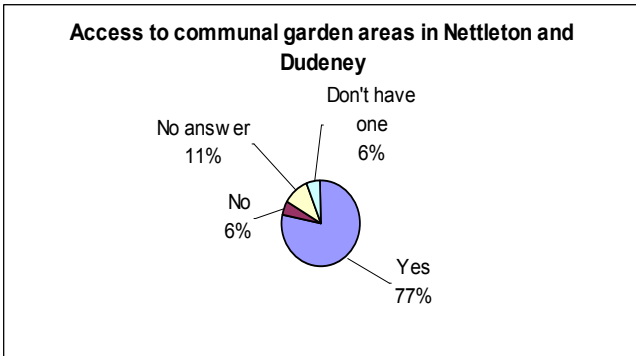
Very Dissatisfied	2
Dissatisfied	4
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	12
Satisfied	10
Very Satisfied	2
No answer	6
Total	36

The grassed bank area is minimal and is cut in line with the grass mowing schedule, which the residents are generally satisfied with.



Very Dissatisfied	2
Dissatisfied	6
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	6
Satisfied	16
Very Satisfied	2
No answer	4
Total	36

At the meeting residents acknowledged that the site is generally clear of litter which is due to the work of the conscientious Estate Services cleaner. These comments were welcomed as the route is used as a short cut by school children going to and from school.

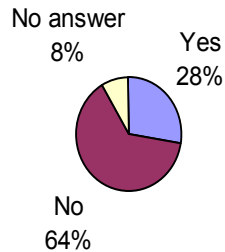


Are you able to gain access to the communal garden areas?

Yes	28
No	2
No answer	4
Don't have one	2
Total	36

The grounds are open to all residents and there are two seating areas. One between the two blocks which unfortunately gets no sun between 11am – 4pm. The other seating area is on the bank facing the blocks which is accessible by steps. Some residents commented on the questionnaire that they used these areas to relax, read and meet and talk with other residents.

Responses to 'Do you know how much you pay for Grounds Maintenance service?' in Nettleton and Dudeny

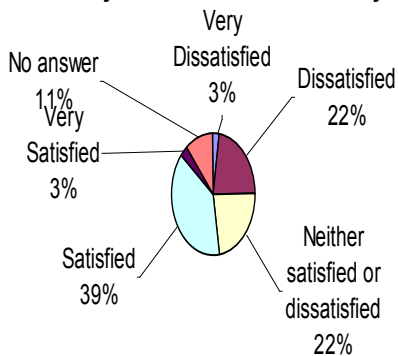


Do you know how much you pay for the grounds maintenance service?

Yes	10
No	23
No answer	3
Total	36

At the start of each financial year all residents receive a statement of their rent including what they pay towards grounds maintenance. It is therefore surprising that the majority of tenants did not know how much they contributed. Leaseholders receive a statement of their grounds maintenance contributions yearly.

Levels of satisfaction that the cost for Grounds Maintenance is good value for money in Nettleton and Dudeny

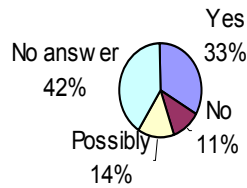


Are you satisfied the service charge you pay towards grounds maintenance represents good value for money

Very Dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	8
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	8
Satisfied	1
Very Satisfied	4
No answer	3
Total	6

Given the response to the previous question that the majority of residents surveyed did not know what they contributed towards the grounds maintenance service, it was surprising that fourteen residents were able to make the judgement that the service represented good value for money, when only ten knew what they paid.

Interest in receiving Boxed mown grassed area service in the future in Nettleton and Dudeney



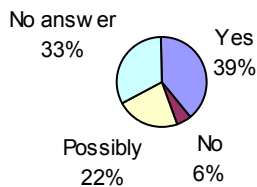
Yes	12
No	4
Possibly	5
No answer	15
Total	36

Boxed mown grassed area

12
4
5
15
36

A third of residents who responded were interested in receiving a boxed mown service. However, as this was not a majority view and was not identified as a priority area for residents, it would be difficult to justify box mowing, which would increase the service cost for residents.

Interest in receiving Raised flowerbed service in the future in Nettleton and Dudeney



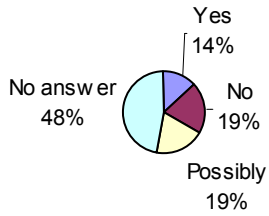
Yes	14
No	2
Possibly	8
No answer	12
Total	36

Raised flower beds

14
2
8
12
36

At the residents meeting we were advised that only one resident currently attends a flowerbed. There was evidence that other residents had created and maintained beds in the past, but these were now left unattended after residents had moved away or sadly died. It was agreed with the Resident Association that as these beds should pass to CityParks to manage or turf them over. Officers met with the resident who attends the flower bed and we have agreed arrangements so he can continue with his gardening hobby.

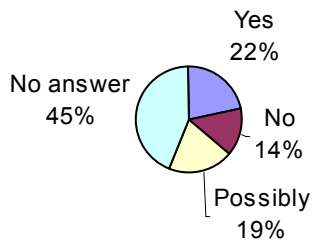
Interest in receiving Vegetable garden service in the future in Nettleton and Dudene y



	Vegetable garden
Yes	5
No	7
Possibly	7
No answer	17
Total	36

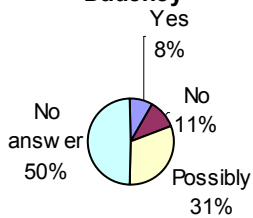
Limited interest from residents, although we would put residents in contact with the 'Harvest Project 'had they shown an overwhelming interest.

Interest in receiving Herb garden service in the future in Nettleton and Dudene y



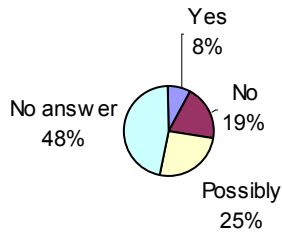
	Herb garden
Yes	8
No	5
Possibly	7
No answer	16
Total	36

Interest in receiving Sensory garden service in the future in Nettleton and Dudene y



	Sensory garden
Yes	3
No	4
Possibly	11
No answer	18
Total	36

Interest in receiving Ornamental garden service in the future in Nettleton and Dudene y



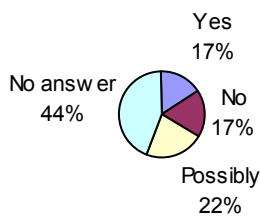
Yes	3
No	7
Possibly	9
No answer	17
Total	36

Ornament al garden

3
7
9
17
36

Residents had shown limited interest in Herb, Sensory and Ornamental gardens.

Interest in receiving Composting area service in the future in Nettleton and Dudene y



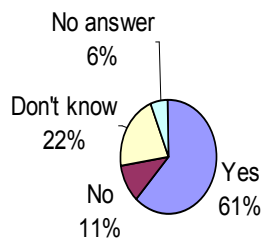
Yes	6
No	6
Possibly	8
No answer	16
Total	36

Composting area

6
6
8
16
36

There is a composting bin already on site that was used by the residents who previously maintained their flowerbeds.

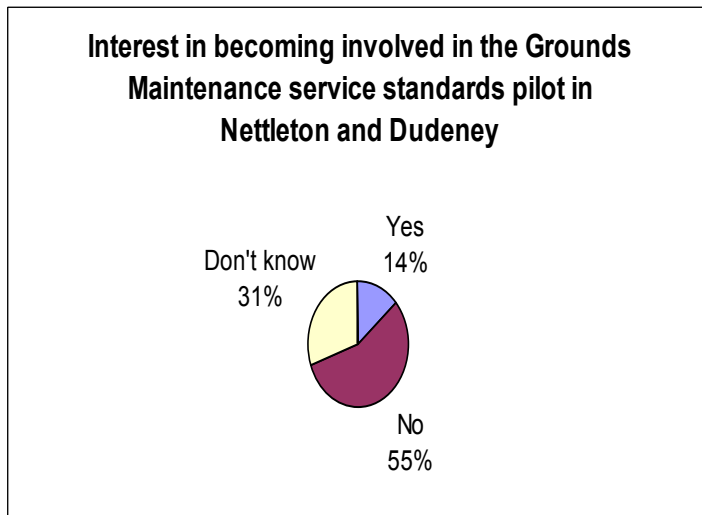
Interest in encouragement of wildlife and better conservation in Nettleton and Dudene y



Do you want the communal grounds to encourage wildlife and be better for conservation?

Yes	22
No	4
Don't know	8
No answer	2
Total	36

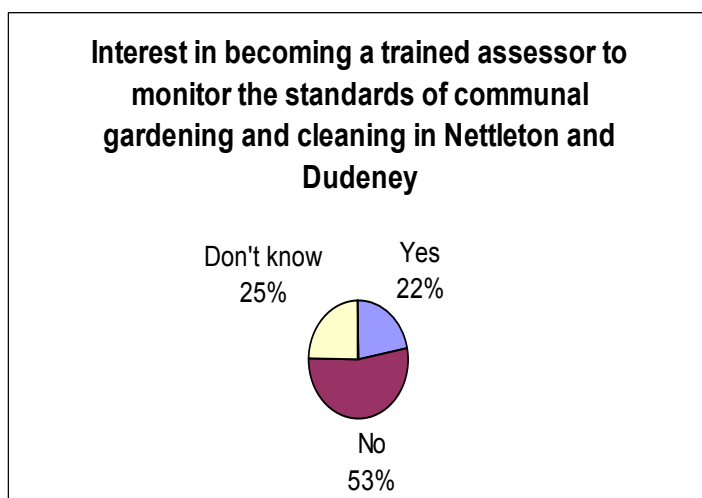
Residents gave an overwhelming support to encourage wildlife and be better for conservation. A wooded area has already been identified within the grounds which will be developed by residents and the Sussex Wildlife Trust Access to Nature project officer who is working with the project.



Would you like to become involved in the grounds maintenance service standards pilot?

Yes	5
No	20
Don't know	11
No answer	0
Total	36

Where residents have indicated that they would like to become involved they will be invited to become a trained resident assessor, or perhaps become involved in the wildlife project



Would you like to be a trained assessor to work with us to monitor the standard of the communal gardening and cleaning services?

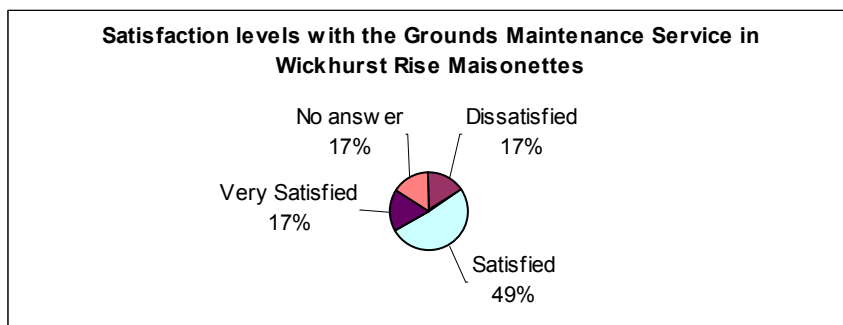
Yes	8
No	19
Don't know	9
No answer	0
Total	36

Where residents have provided their contact details we will be inviting them to future training events to become Resident Assessors

Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes

- 4.9 The Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes consists of 32 maisonettes. All residents were surveyed and six questionnaires were returned which equated to 16% return rate.

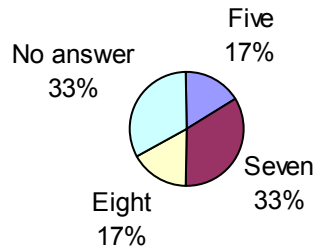
- 4.10 Disappointingly, only one resident attended the evening meeting with officers, so we just had one persons view. Officers have decided that they will concentrate on improving those areas of the contract where residents identified concerns in the questionnaire.
- 4.11 The grounds at Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes are predominantly grass with few shrub beds or trees. Three residents who responded to the questionnaire were satisfied with grass cutting standard, with one neither satisfied nor dissatisfied.
- 4.12 Overall satisfaction with the grounds maintenance service was favourable, despite the service being limited in the main to grass cutting.
- 4.13 Where residents have provided their contact details and indicated that they would like to become a resident assessor they will be invited to become a trained assessor.
- 4.14 Once again the majority of residents who returned the questionnaire did not know how much grounds maintenance service charge they paid.
- 4.15 Residents took the opportunity to raise issues outside grounds maintenance such as poor lighting and public ways needed painting. Residents also made positive comments that the cleaning standards had improved.
- 4.16 Residents did identify dog fouling as a concern and a local event will be held with the Animal Welfare Officer to promote responsible dog ownership among residents.
- 4.17 The Residents Association have secured an Estates Development Bid to have raised beds and a seating area behind the flats. This is expected to be provided in the New Year.



Overall how satisfied are you with the service?

Very Dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	1
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	0
Satisfied	3
Very Satisfied	1
No answer	1
Total	6

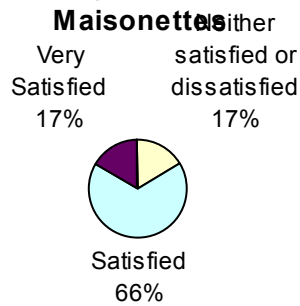
Ratings out of ten for the Grounds Maintenance service in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



How would you rate this service out of 10?

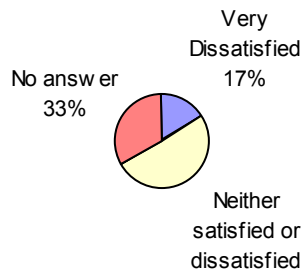
One	0
Two	0
Three	0
Four	0
Five	1
Six	0
Seven	2
Eight	1
Nine	0
Ten	0
No answer	2
Total	6

Satisfaction levels with the standard of grass cutting in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



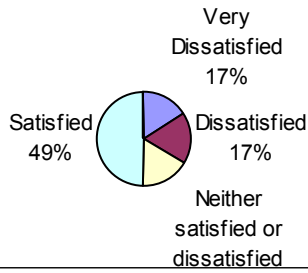
Very Dissatisfied	0
Dissatisfied	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	1
Satisfied	4
Very Satisfied	1
No answer	0
Total	6

Satisfaction levels with attention paid to shrub bed and flower beds in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



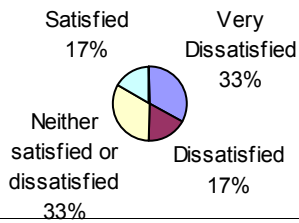
Very Dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	3
Satisfied	0
Very Satisfied	0
No answer	2
Total	6

Satisfaction levels with the attention paid to paths, car parking spaces and garage areas in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



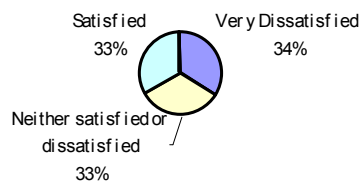
Very Dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	1
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	1
Satisfied	3
Very Satisfied	0
No answer	0
Total	6

Satisfaction levels with the attention paid to trees in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



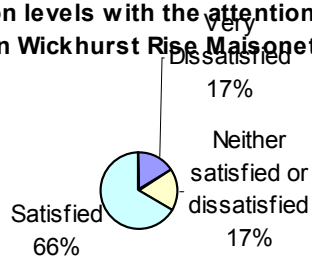
Very Dissatisfied	2
Dissatisfied	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	2
Satisfied	2
Very Satisfied	0
No answer	0
Total	6

Satisfaction levels with the attention paid to steep bank maintenance in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Very Dissatisfied	2
Dissatisfied	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	2
Satisfied	2
Very Satisfied	0
No answer	0
Total	6

Satisfaction levels with the attention paid to litter in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Very Dissatisfied	1
Dissatisfied	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	1
Satisfied	4
Very Satisfied	0
No answer	0
Total	6

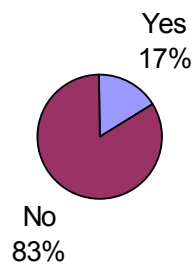
**Access to communal gardens in
Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes**



**Are you able to gain access to
the communal garden areas?**

Yes	6
No	0
No answer	0
Don't have one	0
Total	6

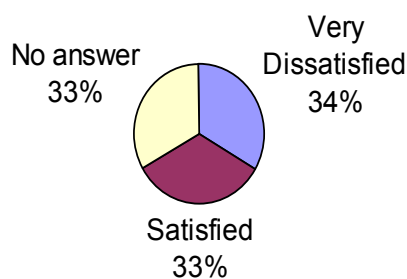
**Responses to "Do you know how much you
pay for Grounds Maintenance service?" in
Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes**



**Do you know how much you
pay for the grounds
maintenance service?**

Yes	1
No	5
No answer	0
Total	6

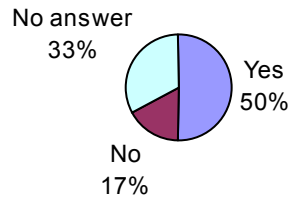
**Satisfaction levels with the cost of
Grounds Maintenance services being
value for money in Wickhurst Rise
Maisonettes**



**Are you satisfied the service
charge you pay towards grounds
maintenance represents good
value for money**

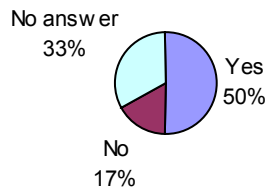
Very Dissatisfied	2
Dissatisfied	0
Neither satisfied or dissatisfied	0
Satisfied	2
Very Satisfied	0
No answer	2
Total	6

Interest in receiving Boxed mown grassed area service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



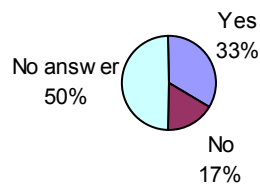
Yes	3
No	1
Possibly	0
No answer	2
Total	6

Interest in receiving raised flower beds service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



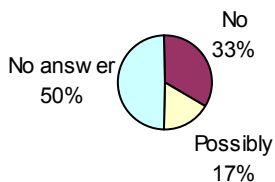
Yes	3
No	1
Possibly	0
No answer	2
Total	6

Interest in receiving vegetable garden service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



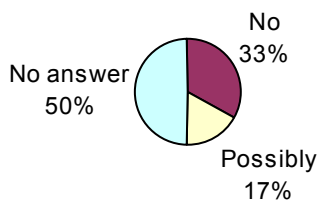
Yes	2
No	1
Possibly	0
No answer	3
Total	6

Interest in receiving herb garden service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Yes	0
No	2
Possibly	1
No answer	3
Total	6

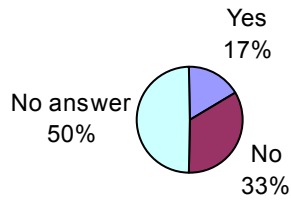
Interest in receiving sensory garden service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



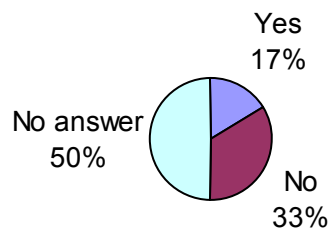
Yes	0
No	2
Possibly	1
No answer	3
Total	6

Yes	1
No	2
Possibly	0
No answer	3
Total	6

Interest in receiving ornamental garden service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes

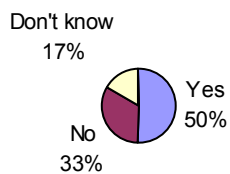


Interest in receiving Composting area service in the future in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Yes	1
No	2
Possibly	0
No answer	3
Total	6

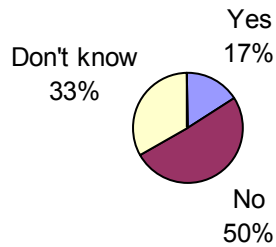
Interest in the encouragement of wildlife and conservation in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Do you want the communal grounds to encourage wildlife and be better for conservation?

Yes	3
No	2
Don't know	1
No answer	0
Total	6

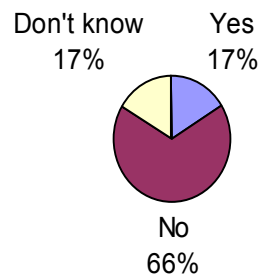
Interest in becoming involved in the Grounds Maintenance service standards pilot in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Would you like to become involved in the grounds maintenance service standards pilot?

Yes	1
No	3
Don't know	2
No answer	0
Total	6

Interest in becoming a trained assessor to monitor the standard of the communal gardening and cleaning service in Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes



Would you like to be a trained assessor to work with us to monitor the standard of the communal gardening and cleaning services?

Yes	1
No	4
Don't know	1
No answer	0
Total	6

4.18 Without a clear guide and consensus from the residents of Wickhurst Rise Maisonettes we will focus our attentions on ensuring that the grounds maintenance service standards are met and weed control hard surfaces.

4.19 As the Project completes phases 2 and 3 the results will be published.

Graham Page,
Housing Manager
293354

Project Officer leading on the Grounds Maintenance Review

