

Highways Customer Panel

May 2015 Survey Data and Results



Document Details

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Accessibility:

- Zoom in or out by holding down the Control key and turning the mouse wheel.
- CTRL and click on the table of contents to navigate.
- Press CTRL and Home key to return to the top of the document.
- Press Alt-left arrow to return to your previous location.

Survey data analysis May 2015

Introduction

This report contains the data collected from the first highways customer panel survey, held during May 2015.

The purpose of this survey is to help us understand how satisfied our customers are with our service at the moment, and any areas in which they feel we could make improvements. We have said that we will be transparent with our findings, lessons learnt and any actions we take as a result of the survey.

A summary of all the results and actions we will take can be found on page 23 of this report.

The survey – May 2015

As this survey is the first, we decided the survey would contain some more generic subject areas, so we can gain a general understanding into how our customers feel we are performing. Although we have tried to break down the questions into some more detail so we can target specific areas of improvement, the aim for future surveys will be to include some more seasonal specific questions such as; winter maintenance, vegetation and drainage.

In this survey we wanted to gain an understanding of how satisfied our customers are with road works, and our customer service. The subject matters included the quality and speed of our repairs, road condition, cycle routes, street lighting among other aspects of Surrey's highway network. We also wanted to establish how satisfied customers were with our customer service, this includes the information we provide, how accessible customers feel we are, how we deal with enquires and defect reporting.

We also decided to include some open responses, as this gives our customers the chance to explain why they have given the answers provided and also highlight any areas which may not have been included in the survey.

We sent the survey to 446 members and received 363 responses, giving a response rate of 81%, which for our first survey is an extremely high rate, giving us great confidence in this initiative.

Feedback from management

Once the results were gathered a meeting took place between me and members of Surrey Highways management team to analyse the thoughts and views of each individual, and see what action we can take as a result of the feedback we received from you, the panel members.

Reporting format

For this report I have decided to run through each question individually, showing the results in a graph format with commentary on the results alongside this. With this there will be the conclusions we as an organisation have made, before highlighting the key points in the conclusions page at the back of the report. Some questions did raise more specific points than others, and some questions also were not open to much feedback as they were designed for informative purposes.

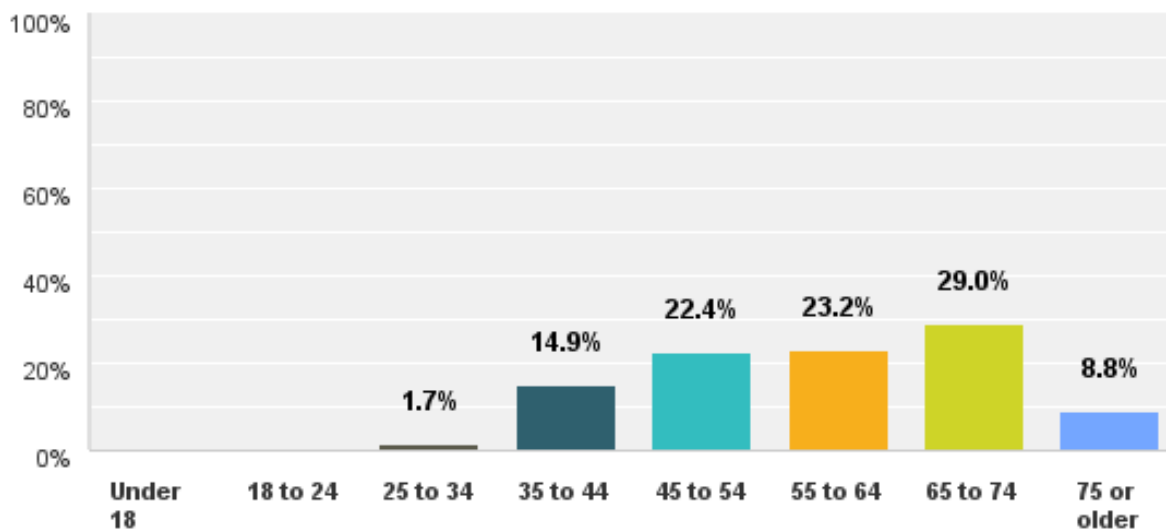
I hope you enjoy viewing your results and the feedback we at Surrey County Council Highways have for you.

The Survey: Results, Commentary and Feedback.

Question 1 - Please tell us your age group. This is designed to help us know how various age groups differ in their opinions towards highways matters.

Q1 Please tell us your age group. This is designed to help us know how various age groups differ in their opinions towards highways matters.

Answered: 362 Skipped: 1



[Key: X axis – Age Groups, Y axis – Percentage of respondents]

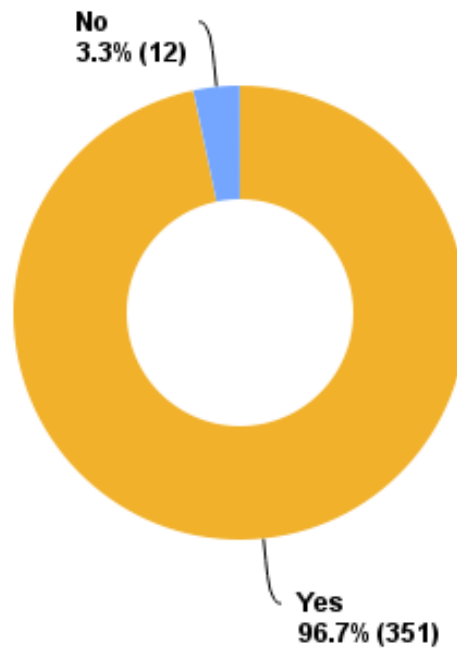
As you can see from the chart we had a fair spread of respondents aged between 45 and 74. 74.6% came from this age range, with a further 8.8% of members aged 75 or over.

This shows that the lower age ranges are not very well represented by the panel. This is possibly to be expected but we will seek to increase input from customers within the lower age range.

Question 2 - Have you had to contact Surrey County Council (SCC) Highways within the last 12 months?

Q2 Have you had to contact Surrey County Council (SCC) Highways within the last 12 months?

Answered: 363 Skipped: 0



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

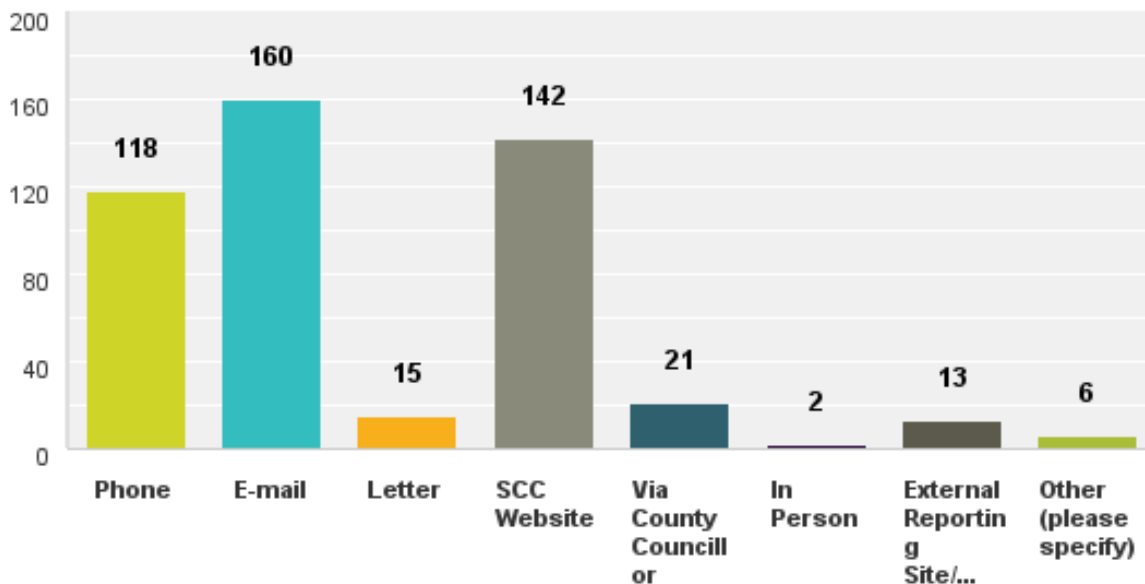
A vast majority (96.7%) of the respondents to this survey have had to contact Surrey County Council within the last 12 months.

This helps us to evaluate our service when people have contacted us, and ascertain the methods they have chosen to do so.

Question 3 - Which of the following methods did you use to report/make an enquiry with us?

Q3 Which of the following methods did you use to report/make an enquiry with us?

Answered: 342 Skipped: 21



[Key: X axis – Method, Y axis – Number of respondents]

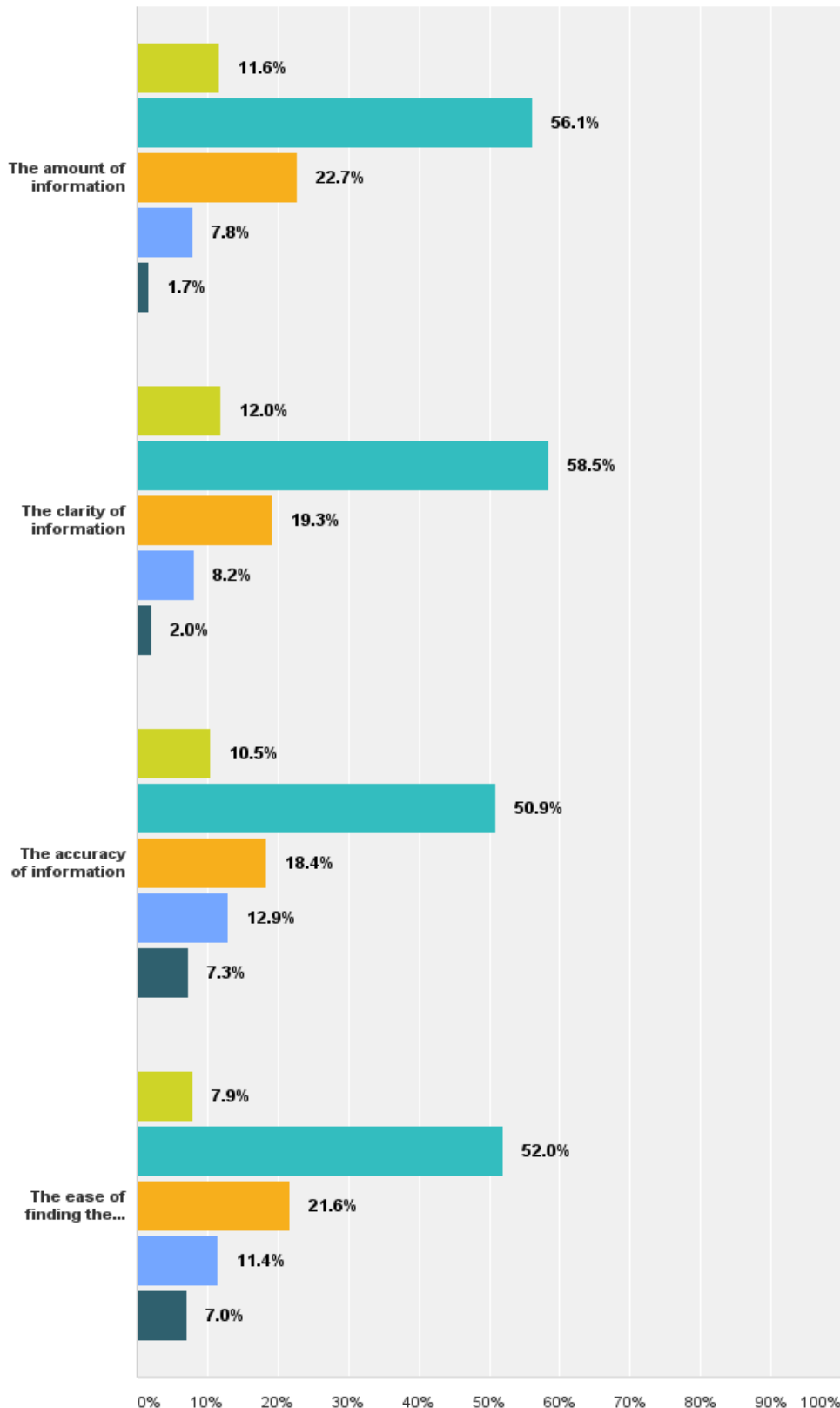
The most used contact methods are phone, e-mail and via the SCC website. A total of 477 answers were given, as members were allowed to choose multiple methods, 88% of the answers came from the top 3 categories.

This demonstrates how the use of digital equipment has become paramount, and we must always make sure that we are as accessible as possible via these methods. As it would seem most people are already using these methods, we must ensure that all 3 are as easy to use as we possibly can, which is why we are constantly looking at ways in which we can improve these for the customer. The aspect we found most surprising was that so many customers have contacted us directly by email; this shows although people are using the online tools, they like to make direct contact with us as well as self serve.

Question 4 - How satisfied were you with the following aspects of information you received?

Q4 How satisfied were you with the following aspects of information you received?

Answered: 344 Skipped: 19



Over half of the respondents to each question revealed that they are satisfied with the information we provide.

The main area for concern is the ease of finding the correct information. A combined 33% of respondents said they we're either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied. This shows us that people may be struggling to find the correct information when trying to self serve.

To improve this we will be undertaking reviews of our web pages and also working to improve the roadworks in my area web page.

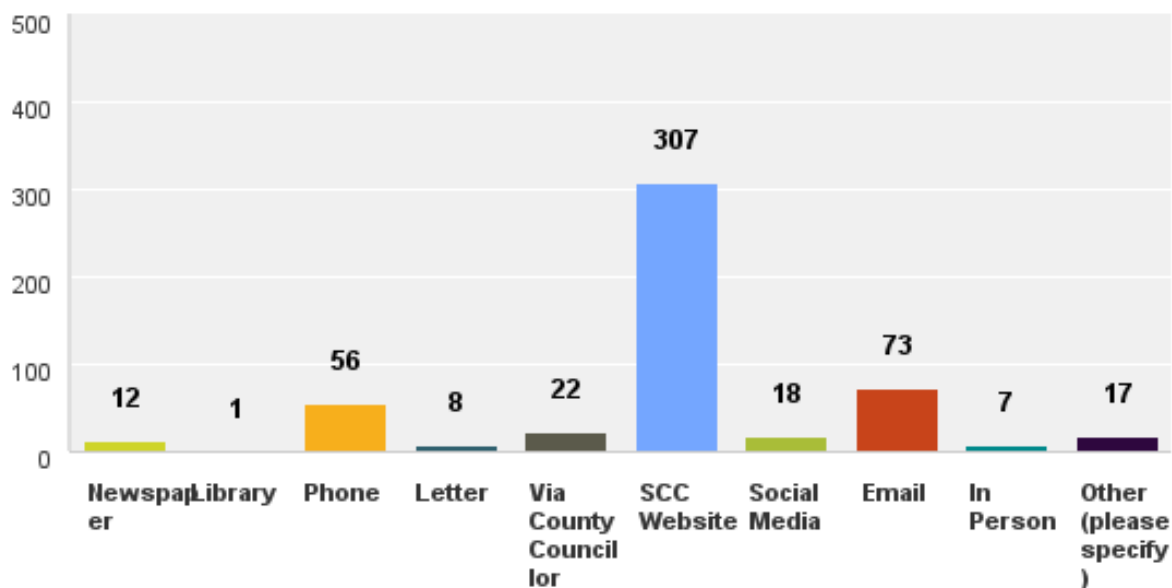
[Key: The ease of finding the...correct information]

Very Satisfied Satisfied Dissatisfied Very Dissatisfied Don't Know / No opinion

Question 5 - When attempting to find information regarding SCC Highways matters how would you do this?

Q5 When attempting to find information regarding SCC Highways matters how would you do this?

Answered: 356 Skipped: 7



[Key: X axis – Method, Y axis – Number of respondents]

This data shows that a vast majority of our customers would choose to use our public website when attempting to find information regarding Surrey highways. Again this question was open to multiple responses as people may try various methods to gain the information they are looking for.

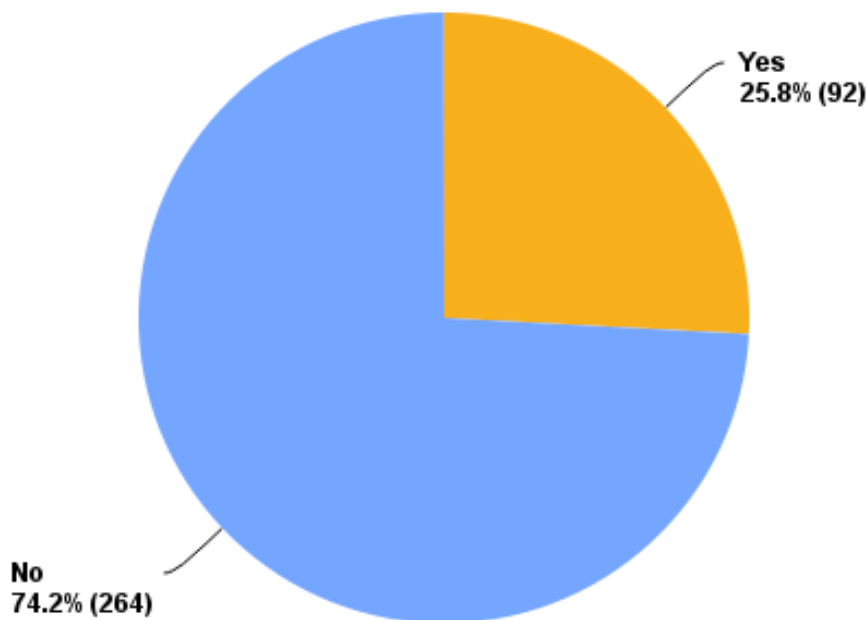
86% (307 of 356) of customers who answered this question said they would look for information online which would suggest that the majority of customers would prefer to self serve when possible. Linking to question 4 we are working to improve the availability of information online. In addition to this we are using information from customer enquiries to target where further information is required.

We have decided to review of our Highways information online web pages, to see how we can make these more effective as an information tools.

Question 6 - Would you use social media for information or reporting if it was available?

Q6 Would you use social media for information or reporting if it was available?

Answered: 356 Skipped: 7



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

Only a quarter of our customer panel said they would use social media to find out information or reporting defects if it was available. This could be methods such as Twitter or Facebook among others.

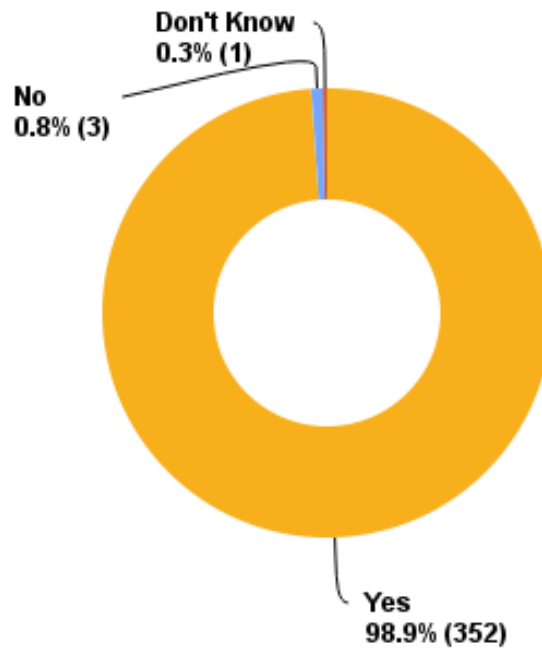
We recognise the need to be more proactive with distributing information and see social media as a quick, effective, low cost method of achieving this.

We will continue to look into the use of this which may also allow younger generations to come forward and report faults more regularly.

Question 7 - Have you encountered any roadworks on your journeys in the past 6 months?

Q7 Have you encountered any roadworks on your journeys in the past 6 months?

Answered: 356 Skipped: 7



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

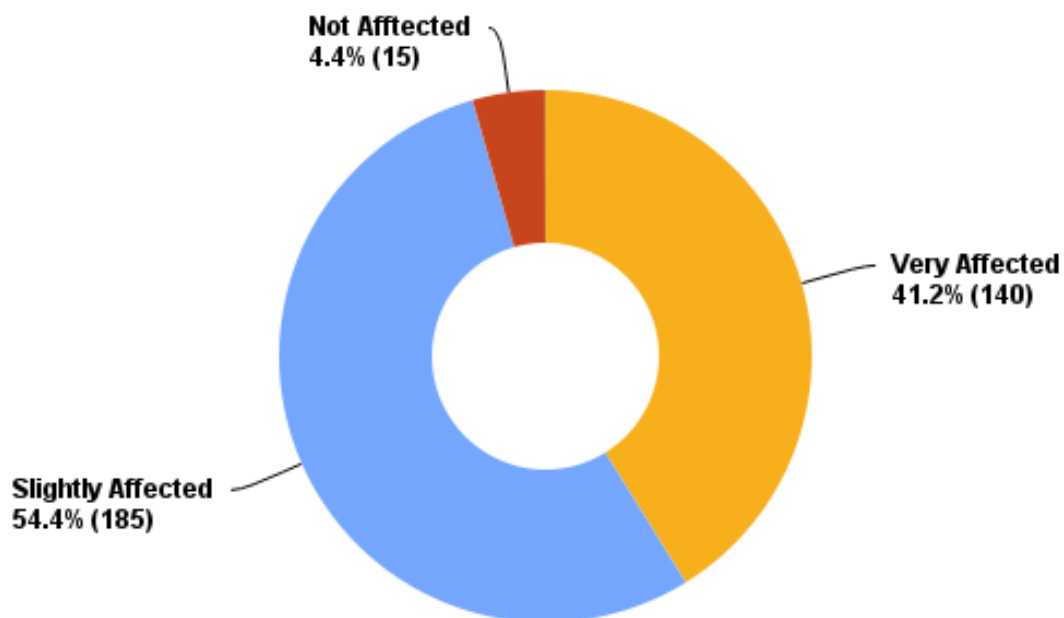
Nearly all of the respondents to the survey (98.9%) said they had encountered roadworks on their journeys within the last 6 months.

We have a vast amount of works being undertaken on our road network daily; however it may be unclear to many that in actual fact the majority of these works are undertaken by utility companies. Over the last 6 months (Jan 15 – June 15) there have been a total of 11597 planned works, and 10733 emergency works undertaken, giving a total of 22330 being completed on Surrey’s highways.

Question 8 - If Yes, how affected were you by the works?

Q8 If Yes, how affected were you by the works?

Answered: 340 Skipped: 23



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

A majority of people (54.4%) said that they were only slightly affected by the works they encountered, and 4.4% said they were not affected at all. This shows that in the majority of cases we are doing well at managing our roadworks and causing minimal disruption to road users in most cases.

41.2% however still said that they felt very affected by the works.

Of the 22330 works undertaken in total, only 30.2% were operated by Surrey County Council. Please see the table below for the details behind these numbers. Utility companies are licensed by central government to carry out works on and in the highway. As the highway authority we work with them to try and minimise disruption to road users as much a possible, however we do not have the authority to prevent the works taking place.

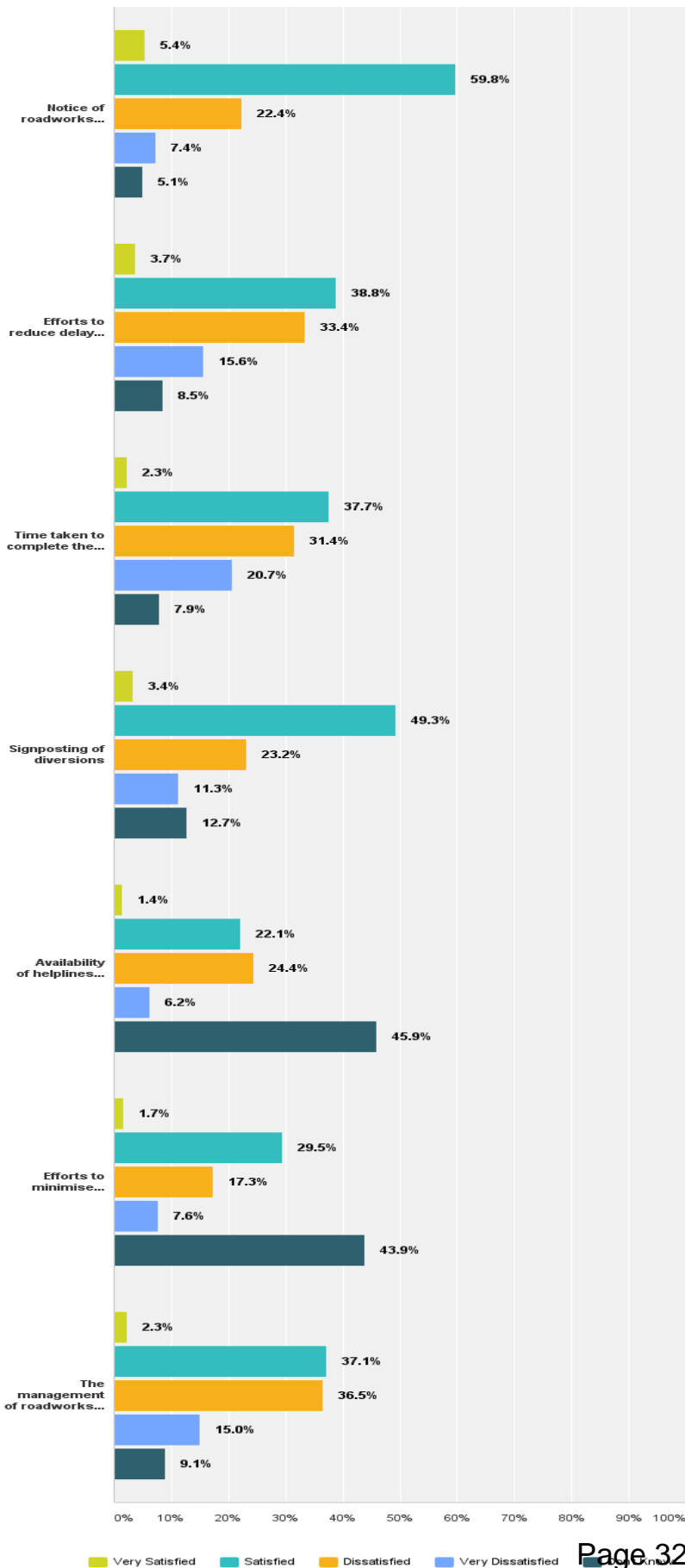
	Planned	Emergency	Overall Totals Emergency and Planned
Utility	10656	4915	15571
SCC	941	5818	6759
Total	11597	10733	22330

Table showing works on the highway from January 2015 – June 2015

Question 9 - Regarding SCC Highways roadworks, how satisfied are you with the following?

Q9 Regarding SCC Highways roadworks, how satisfied are you with the following?

Answered: 353 Skipped: 10



59.8% of respondents said that they are satisfied with the notice we give before works are undertaken. This means generally the information we provide to give warning of forthcoming works is good. We have also released up to date resurfacing reports detailing roads that are due to be resurfaced, on our horizon web page.

49% of customers were either dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with our efforts to reduce delays; we can assure you that Surrey Highways take as many measures as possible to ensure minimal impact to journey times.

The number of respondents that said they don't know to these questions raises concern again where information is concerned. These had a large percentage of don't know answers (45.9% and 43.9% respectively) showing that we need to make sure people have access to the help lines and know where to find them in case they require information.

We have decided to review the communications we give regarding our roadworks, including letter drops, signage, and online information to improve the customers experiences regarding roadworks, being implemented by our new Works Communication Team. We have been working hard to improve all aspects, for example our roadworks in your area tool.

Question 10 - Do you feel SCC provides you with sufficient information to help plan journeys in advance?

Q10 Do you feel SCC provides you with sufficient information to help plan journeys in advance?

Answered: 345 Skipped: 18



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

Following on from the previous question, we need to ensure people are aware of the various ways in which Surrey provide travel information; for example making people aware of the Surrey travel Twitter page, information via our website e.g. Highways Information Online.

As mentioned in the commentary from question 9, we are currently working to improve the information we provide to our customers regarding highways work. We feel the more information that our customers are provided with, the more likely they are to use the tools to plan journeys, and make travelling through Surrey’s network as easy as possible.

Question 11 - Are you aware of the website www.surreycc.gov.uk/roadworks?

Q11 Are you aware of the website www.surreycc.gov.uk/roadworks?

Answered: 353 Skipped: 10



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

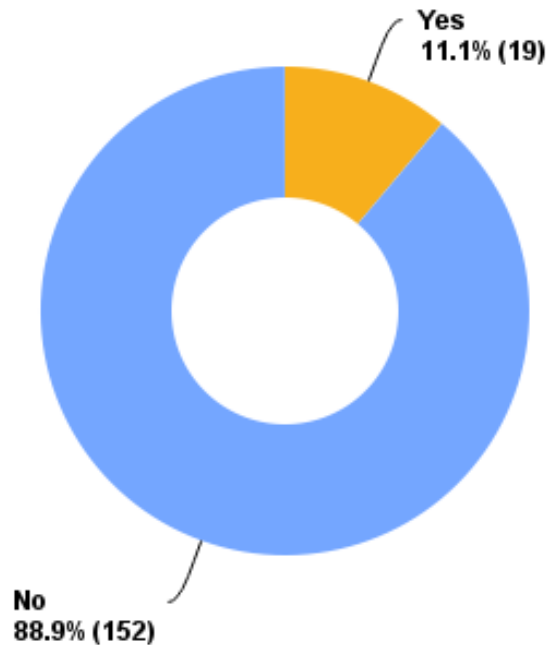
This shows that a majority of respondents (52.9%) are aware of the roadworks information section of our public website. However we still would ideally like to increase this, as the roadworks viewing tool is a superb one for finding information about any planned or ongoing work. This is another aspect where we could help you the customer self serve, to save both you and Surrey Highways time in the long run.

We have decided to look into ways in which we can promote this further, and make it as accessible as possible to our web users.

Question 12 - If yes, are you signed up to the alerts from www.surreycc.gov.uk/roadworks?

Q12 If yes, are you signed up to the alerts from www.surreycc.gov.uk/roadworks?

Answered: 171 Skipped: 192



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

Although 52.9% of our respondents are aware of our roadworks site, only 11.1% are actually signed up to alerts.

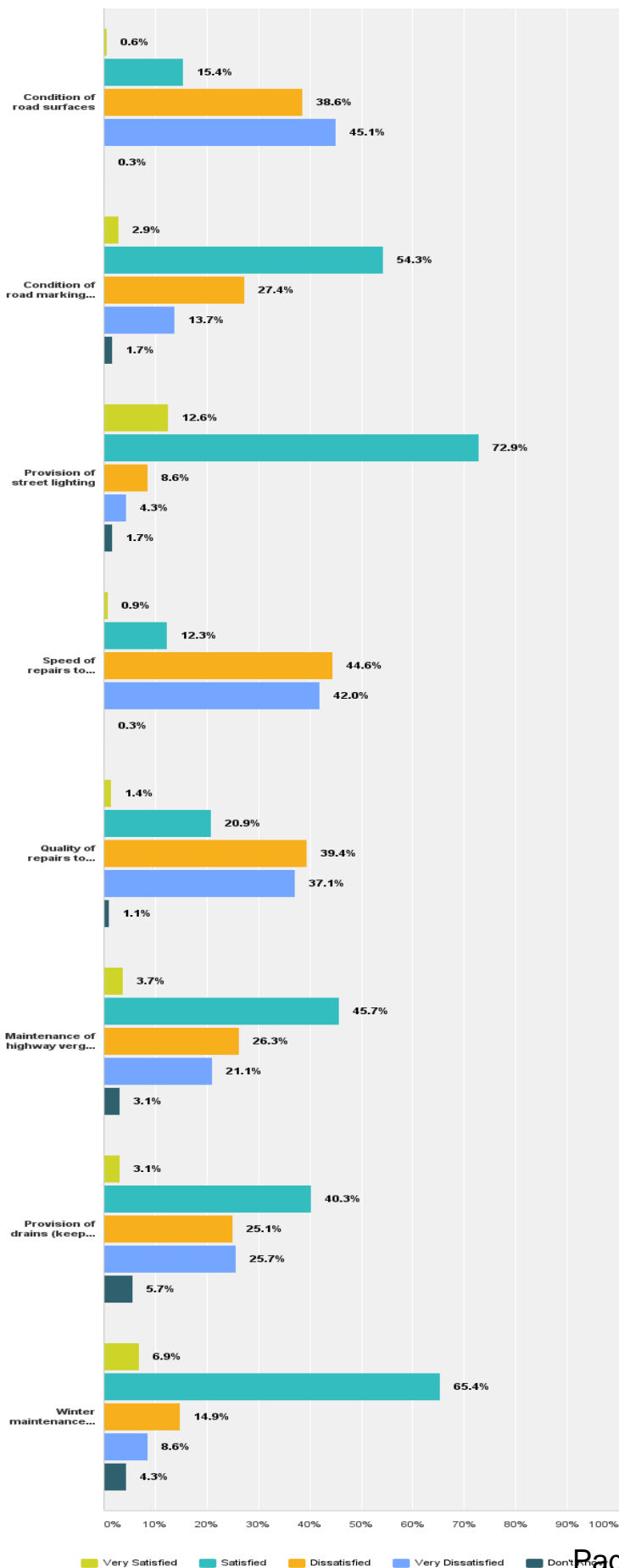
This is a great tool which allows you to sign up to alerts, based on an area of the County, and set the frequency of how often you receive these, preventing you from being overloaded. Again this will form part of the web review into how we can advertise the benefits of signing up to the alerts. This site is extremely powerful and will even populate when emergency works have been put in place.

As a result of this we have now placed a guide on how to sign up to the alerts on the roadworks in my area web page on the Surrey County Council site.

Question 13 - How satisfied are you with these aspects of SCC Highways works?

Q13 How satisfied are you with these aspects of SCC Highways works?

Answered: 350 Skipped: 13



The most positive of these results is the satisfaction with our provision of street lighting and winter maintenance. As you can see these had the highest total satisfied percentages (Satisfied and Very Satisfied) of all, 85.5% and 72.3% respectively. At Surrey we always endeavour to provide you with confidence that the winters will be safe on our road network.

The three areas which raise most concern is the condition of road surfaces, the speed of repairs to damaged roads and the quality of repairs to damaged roads.

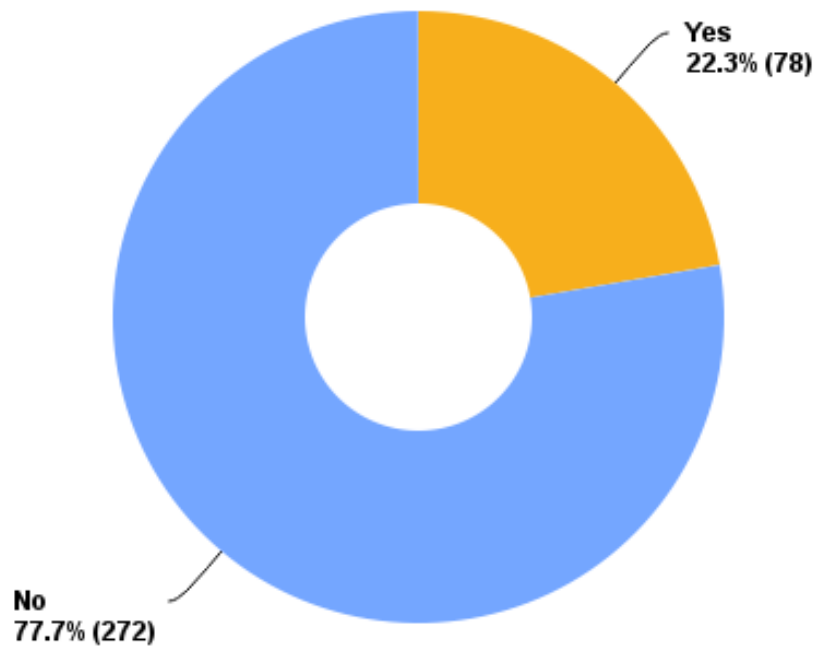
In order to improve the conditions of our road surfaces we started a new scheme called Project Horizon. If you would like to view any more information regarding Project Horizon please visit: new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highways-information-online/horizon.

The quality and speed of repairs to damaged roads is something we are constantly working with our contractors to improve. This is one major area that we will be taking forward in our service improvements for the future.

Question 14 - Are you aware of how SCC prioritises defect repairs?

Q14 Are you aware of how SCC prioritises defect repairs?

Answered: 350 Skipped: 13



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

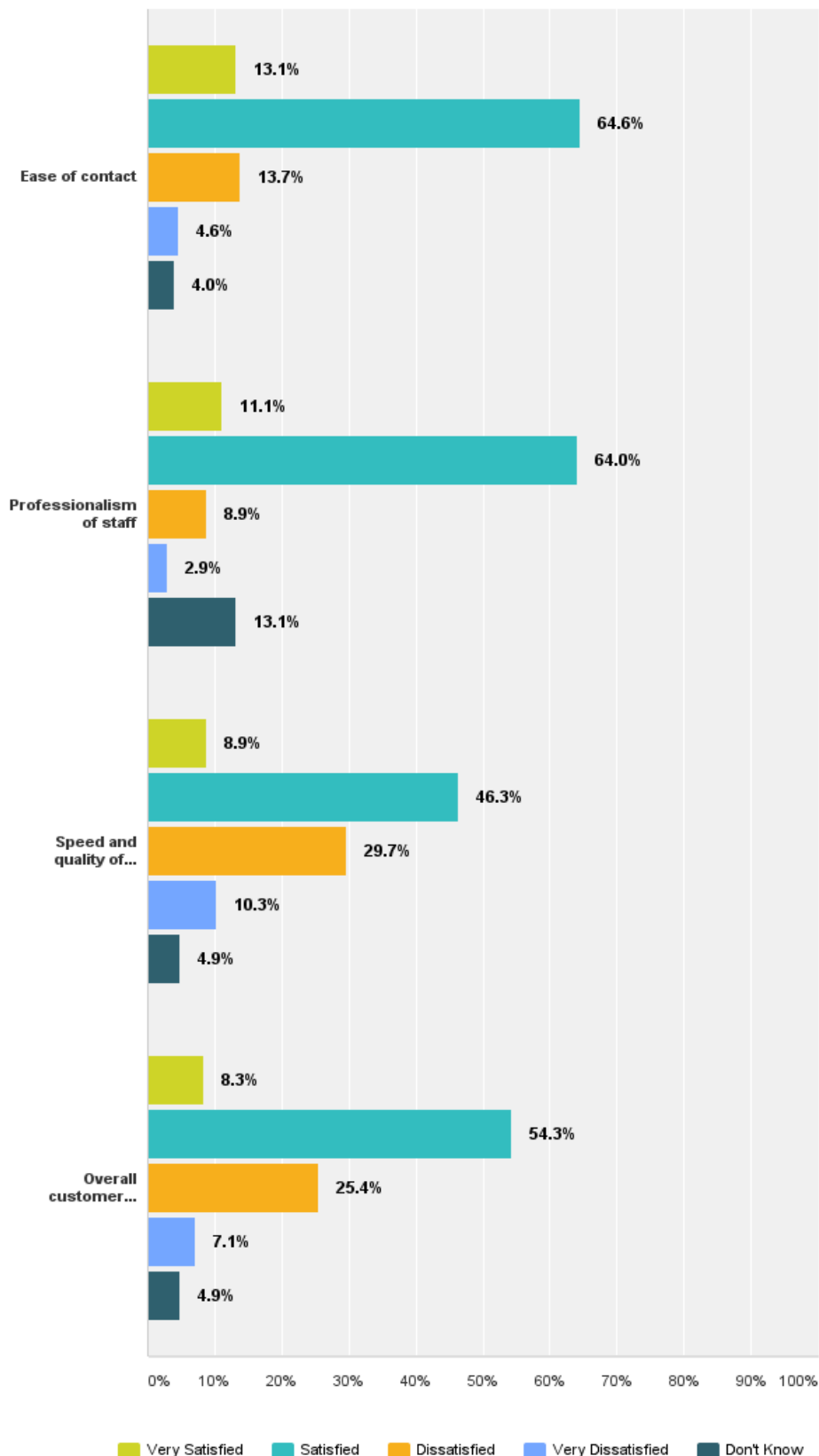
77.7% of respondents said they were not aware of how we prioritise defect repairs. This is something we are going to review and improve so that our customers are aware, and can view it with ease.

If you would like to view how we prioritise defect repairs please go to: <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/road-maintenance-and-cleaning/our-highways-maintenance-contract/highways-contract-performance>.

Question 15 - How satisfied are you with these aspects of SCC customer service?

Q15 How satisfied are you with these aspects of SCC customer service?

Answered: 350 Skipped: 13



77.7% of the panel are satisfied or very satisfied with how easy it is to contact us. At Surrey we strive to make ourselves accessible to all of our customers. This shows we are achieving this via the various contact methods we offer.

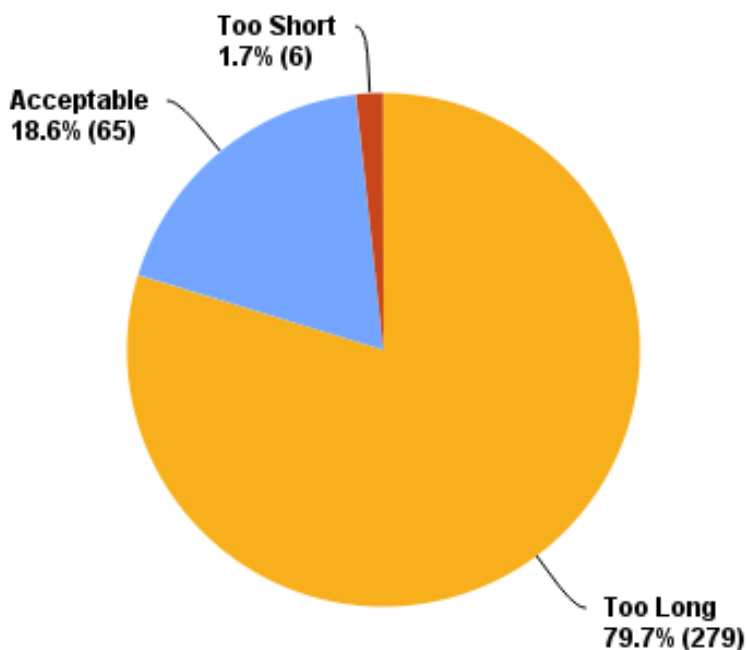
75.1% of respondents said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the professionalism of our staff; this is an excellent result, as it proves that our training programmes are paying dividends and our staff are working hard to ensure you have the best experience possible when communicating with us.

The area where improvement has been most identified is the speed and quality of our responses. At Surrey Highways try to answer enquiries as quickly as possible, and manage this on a high percentage of occasions. As for the quality we are working to step up our response audits to ensure that all aspects of our responses are of the highest possible quality.

Question 16 - SCC aims to answer all enquiries within a 28 day period, do you feel this is:

Q16 SCC aims to answer all enquiries within a 28 day period, Do you feel this is:

Answered: 350 Skipped: 13



[Key: Percentage of respondents (number of respondents)]

As shown above a vast majority (78.7%) of panel members felt that our enquiry response time of 28 days was too long.

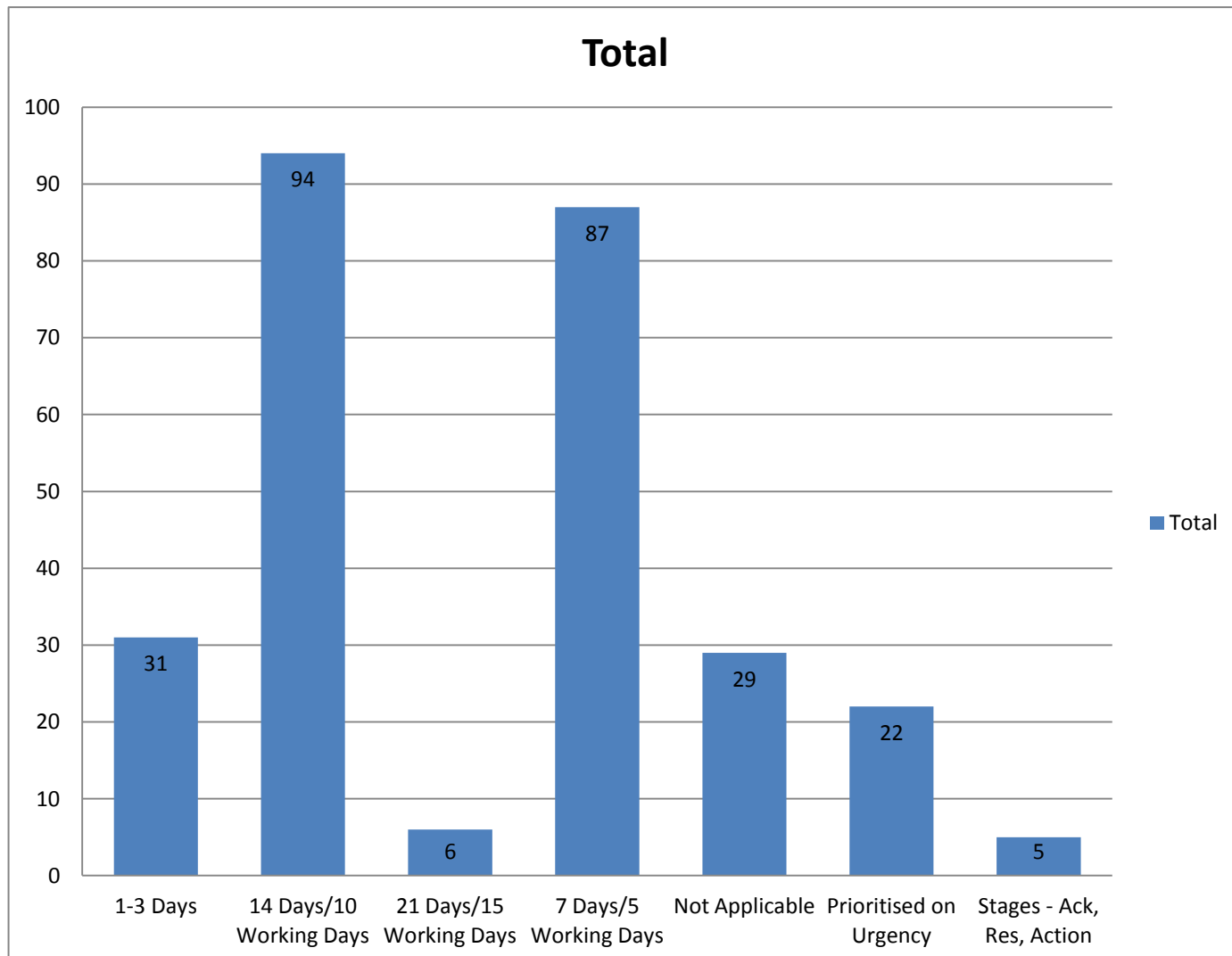
The 28 day period is a limit, and at Surrey Highways we do our utmost to respond to enquiries as soon as possible where we can. Some enquires we receive can be more complex however, and can mean communications between various departments.

Over 28 days	126
20 - 28 Days	264
10 - 19 Days	524
0 - 9 Days	2058
Not Complete	510
Total	3482

The table on the left shows enquiries that required a response in May 2015. We answered 59.1% of all these enquires within 0-9 days, a further 15% answered in 10-19 days and 7.5% within 20-28 days. This gives a total of 81.6% answered to timescale, and as you can see from the figures above, the majority of those are answered before 20 says. We are constantly working to improve prove our response times and tracking performance to ensure the best possible customer service.

Enquiries in May 2015 and response times

Question 17 - If too long, why do you feel this is and what would you consider to be an acceptable period of time?



[Key: X axis – Suggested Period/Method, Y axis – Number of Respondents]

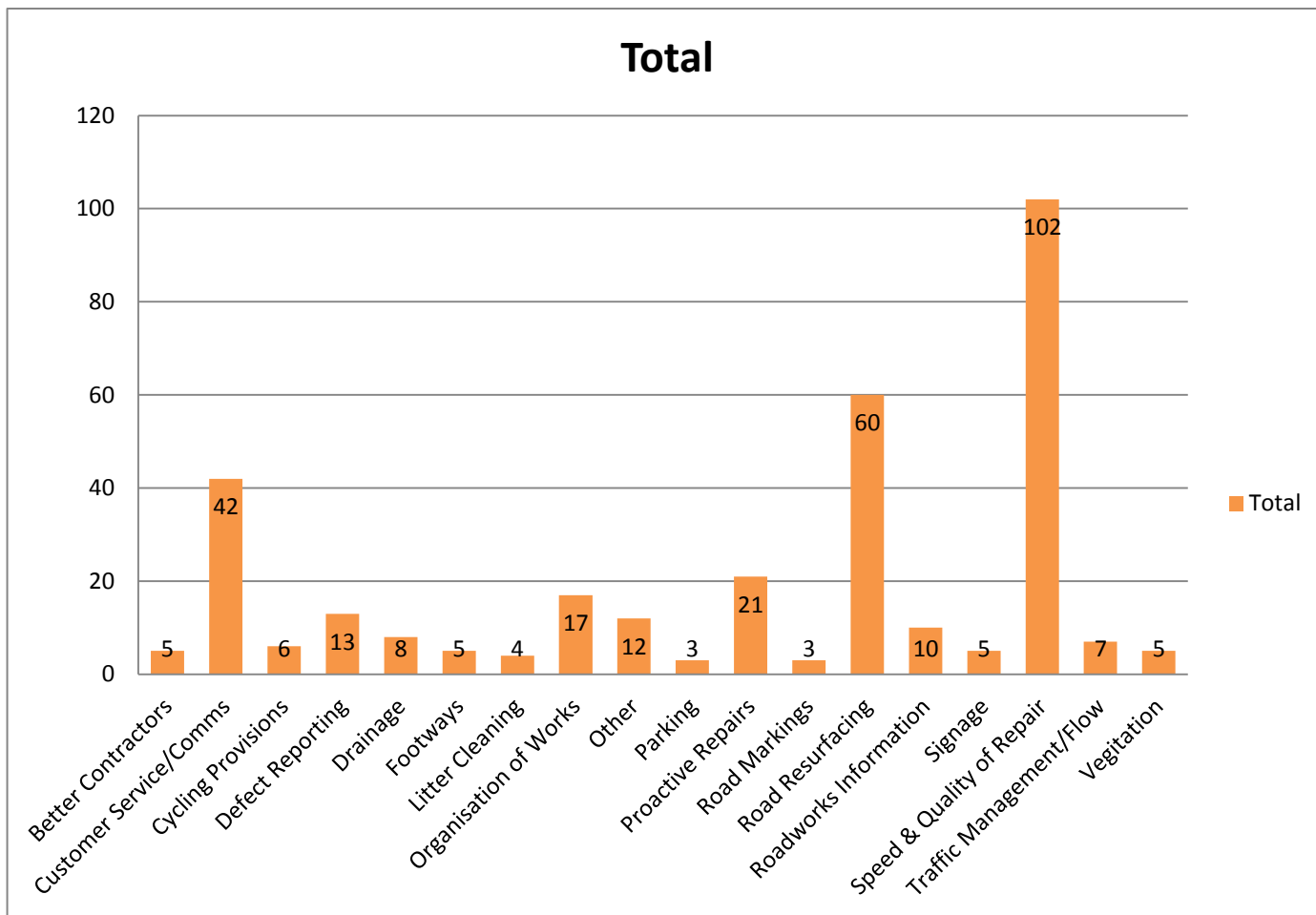
The top response, with 34% of responses, was 14 days. Second was 7 days with 31%, and third was 1-3 days with 11%.

8% of respondents said the timescales should vary depending on the urgency of a defect, whilst 1% said they would like answers in stages of Acknowledgement, Response and Action.

78% (274 out of 350) of respondents who answered question 16, thought that our current target response time of 28 days was too long.

As you can see from the data on page 19 we do reply to the majority of our enquiries within 0 – 20 days. The responses have been read by our management team and have been noted.

Question 18 – If we could improve one area, what do you think it should be?



This question was an open answer one, however the comments have been analysed and categorised for reporting purposes.

The top area in which our respondents thought we could improve was in the speed and quality of our repair work, 31% of the 326 respondents thought this. Including response times and longer lasting repairs.

Second was road resurfacing improvements with 18% of respondents, this category includes subjects such as; B roads, resurfacing rather than patching, maintaining promises to resurface roads, the speed of resurfacing works, road prioritising.

Next we have customer service and communications. 12% of all respondents thought this was a key area of improvement. Includes; faster responses, allowing direct contact with highways, making public more aware of the works within our remit, clear communication of actions and reasons, saying works are complete when they aren't, feedback and follow-ups, if not happy with reply not having to start process again.

Proactive repairs – repairing multiple defects down same road at same time and more inspections.

Organisation of works – planning works to cause minor disruption to residents and road users.

Defect reporting – the ease of reporting defects to us, especially via website.

Roadworks Information – Warning signs, Diversion routes and info on upcoming works.

Traffic Management/Flow – The way systems are planned to ease peoples' journeys/ prevent pollution.

Better Contractors – Workmanship, quality/professionalism of our contractors.

Again the main area of improvement was speed and quality of repairs.

Question 19 – Do you have any other comments you would like to add?

All of the comments have been read, and were carried into the meeting with senior managers to view. Some of the common comments are mentioned below.

We had a number of members that used this opportunity to express how pleased they felt that we were providing them with the chance to give us feedback, and have a positive effect on our service. “I admire you seeking feedback. It’s a great way to engage with stakeholders such as residents” and “I’m pleased to see that you’re giving people the chance to provide this feedback – it should help you target where improvements can be made with the most direct impact”.

We also received a number of positive comments towards our service such as; “SCC overall do a good job”, “Overall I am happy with the standard of the roads”, as well as “very happy with the amount of gritting the last few years” And “staff very helpful on the phone”.

One area we received multiple comments about is the reporting system on our website, for example; “possibly to design a... app that requires a log in etc... one that enables a photo of a road defect but uses GPS co-ordinates...” this is currently being addressed and we have a new reporting system which is due to be released this year. This new site will allow users reporting defects from a mobile device to take a picture and instantly upload it, as well as map location and greater ease when detailing the size of the defect.

Another area that received a large number of comments was asking why potholes that are close together are not filled in at the same time, for example; “Need to ensure all maintenance of a section of road is done at the same time to avoid repeatedly digging up the same stretch”. Our contractors work from scheduled work programmes, these programmes are made to ensure the gangs have solid amounts of work for the day, to ensure maximum productivity. If the gang does locate a defect, that meets the levels for intervention based on our safety matrix, then they are instructed to fix it providing materials and time will allow it. If for any particular reason they cannot repair the defect, they will record it and report it back so that it may be placed on a future schedule of works. Surrey Highways are constantly working with our contractors to ensure the best possible service is provided.

Communication was also a key factor in many of the comments we received throughout the survey, and one point in particular was our use of a no reply e-mail address. Our e-mailing system is pretty much in common with public bodies and private companies up and down the country. If something is submitted via the web, you will get an automated e-mail acknowledgement but if you wish to re-engage you will need to fill in a web form or phone the Contact Centre quoting the reference number. We receive between up to 10,000 enquiries per month concerning highway issues. Each gets an automated acknowledgement. If we opened this automated e-mail up as another communication channel it would be unworkable.

Summary

The Panel and Contact

- The Highways Customer Panel needs greater representation from the 44 and under age groups. Meaning we will endeavour to advertise to these age groups.
- The majority of panel members that have contacted us chose to do so using online methods or phone; however we need to ensure we are still accessible through other means such as letters or County Councillors.
- Customers were generally satisfied with the information they were provided with when contacting us, showing we perform well when dealing with customer seeking information.
- The vast majority of panel members would look to our website when seeking general information. Meaning a review of the highways information we provide via the website to ensure is as up to date and accurate as possible.
- Only a quarter of members would use social media for information and reporting, however we still believe this will be a key aspect for communications on the future.

Roadworks

- Nearly all of our members have encountered roadworks on their journeys in the past 6 months, however under half were very effected by the works. We are doing well when managing our works to ensure minimal disruption to the public, however there is room for improvement and a project team is currently working towards improving this. We also work with utility companies to ensure their works are being carried out to the highest standards.
- Panel members are generally satisfied with the notice we provide before roadworks are undertaken, and over our signing of diversion routes.
- Areas identified for improvement are our efforts to reduce delays and the time taken to complete the works.
- We have also learnt that we need to make help lines more available to residents as a large number responded as not know these were available to them. As well as this we need to communicate the efforts we take to minimise disruption to residents around noise etc, more effectively to residents so they know what we are doing to be as helpful as possible.
- Our panel members are split in terms of overall satisfaction with our management of roadworks, which shows it seems to be only particular areas which individuals seem to be dissatisfied with.
- 54% of panel members feel Surrey Highways do not provide sufficient information to help residents plan journeys in advance. We are working to improve all aspects of the information we provide residents with, through various platforms such as the website and social media.
- A majority (52.9%) of panel members are aware of the roadworks information page on our website. However only 11.1% of these people are signed up to the alerts on offer. We need to update our information to ensure people are aware of the alerts and signing up is as easy as possible.
- The results show that the 3 areas customers are least satisfied with, regarding the different aspects of SCC highways works, are the condition of road services, the speed of repairs and the quality of repairs.

- Customers are most satisfied with the provision of our street lighting, the conditions of road markings and winter maintenance.
- The majority (77.7%) of customers were not aware of how we prioritise our defect repairs.

Customer Service

- The majority of our respondents are satisfied with our customer service. People find we are easy to contact, our staff are professional and that as a customer they have a good experience when contacting us overall.
- The area identified for improvement was our speed and quality of response. This is possibly where our customers have received a lack of contact from us once raising an issue.
- A vast majority of our panel members feel that our enquiry response time of 28 days was too long.
- The customers who felt that the 28 day period was too long then gave us time periods that they felt would be more appropriate; the top 2 time periods they suggested were 14 days/10 working days and 7 working days/5 working days.

General

- The 3 main areas that panel members identified where improvement is needed are; the speed and quality of our repair work, road resurfacing and our customer service and communications.
- We received many various other comments all of which have been read through. There were many positive comments praising our current work and the Highways Customer Panel initiative.
- We received many comments regarding the speed and quality of work, communications and customer service, and our reporting systems among various others. Any changes we can make as a result of these comments will be communicated with the panel and the public as they happen.

Actions as a result of feedback

- We will continue to advertise the Customer Panel to increase the panel's strength and in particular advertise it to people aged 45 and younger to try and increase representation from the younger age groups.
- Continue to ensure we are accessible to all of Surrey's residents, and ensure that our most used contact methods – e-mail, phone and our website – are as efficient as possible.
- Review and update the information we provide online to allow as many of our residents to easily self serve making collecting information as hassle free as possible. We will be updating our Highways Information Online page very shortly.
- Review our use of social media for informing and reporting.
- Use the results of this survey to assist in the ongoing project to improve the information we provide to our customers regarding roadworks.
- Updated our Horizon webpage with up to date reports allowing residents to see the progress we are making with our resurfacing schemes.
- Promote and advertise our roadworks in my area page to ensure as many customers as possible know there is information available regarding roadworks and can use it to their advantage.
- We have now added a guide to this webpage to show our customers how to sign up to alerts detailing works in a selected area, helping them to plan journeys and prevent any surprises.

- The speed and quality of repairs is something that Surrey Highways is constantly working with our contractors to improve, the results of this survey will be considered when looking into this in the future.
- We must ensure that our defect priority guides are as accessible to the public as possible, so they are aware how we work it out and which defects take priority. We will review how easy this information is to find and endeavour to make it easier to get for our customers.
- Review the response auditing process to ensure as many responses as possible are to the agreed timescale, and that they are of the highest quality answering all of the customer' questions and explaining any reasons behind decisions.

Surrey Highways Customer Panel – What to expect next

We will send e-mails out to our members with any further details of updated information, as well as dates and information regarding any future surveys. These will contain any relevant links you will need.

Please send any questions you may have regarding this report or anything panel related to highways.customerpanel@surreycc.gov.uk.

If you feel anybody you know would be interested in joining the panel and giving us their feedback, please send them to <http://new.surreycc.gov.uk/roads-and-transport/highways-information-online/highways-customer-panel> and from there they can follow the link to sign up.

If for any reason you feel you no longer want to be a part of the Highways Customer Panel you can cancel your membership through the following link:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/?sm=7ketzC3rIjy%2b4R4Pg4cOfw%3d%3d>

I would like to take this opportunity, on behalf of all of us at Surrey Highways, to thank you for taking part in the first Highways Customer Panel survey. I hope you enjoyed the experience and feel like the whole process has been productive. I very much look forward to the next instalments, and hope you are as excited as I am in shaping a better highways service for you, the customer.

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