# Customer Insight report
## 2014 – 2015

14 August 2015

Brighton & Hove City Council

# Contents





Brighton & Hove City Council

# Introduction

The purpose of this Customer Insight report is to bring together the information collected about the customer experience of using Brighton and Hove City Council services in 2014/15.

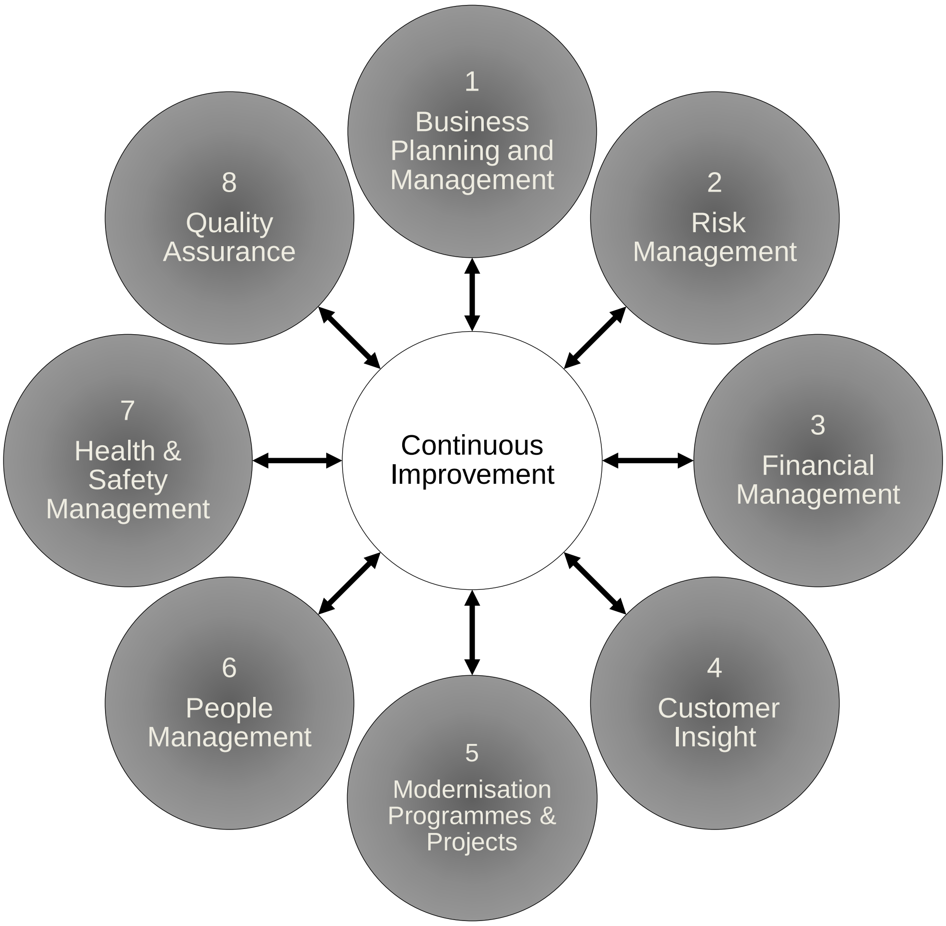
By customer we mean, any user of Council services, whether voluntary or involuntary. This includes residents and visitors to the City, service users and their representative and some commercial organisations.

The report presents what we currently know about our services so that we can continue to better understand our customer needs, and to learn and grow consistently from the feedback we receive by ensuring we are collating and using feedback in a consistent way across the organisation.

Further work is underway in 2015/16 to include other customer facing services not currently featured.

As part of the drive to Modernise the council, intelligence from this report will feed into the Customer First in a Digital Age Programme. The aims of this programme include: Closing the financial gap, managing demand, improving the customer experience, being ‘fit for the future’.

Customer Insight is also one element of our performance management framework that sets out how the council will manage performance in 2015-16, ensures everyone understands their responsibilities and accountabilities in order to achieve our purpose through delivering the principles and priorities as set out in our corporate plan, and provide a guide for all those involved in the performance management process.



# Section 1: Customer survey feedback

In 2013, Brighton and Hove has established two recommended standard questions for all customer-facing teams to use when surveying – Customer Satisfaction, and Ease of Effort. The wording is:

(1) How was the standard of customer service you received?
- Very good, fairly good, neither good nor poor, fairly poor, very poor

(2) How easy or difficult was it for you to use our service?
- Very easy, fairly easy, neither easy nor difficult, fairly difficult, very difficult

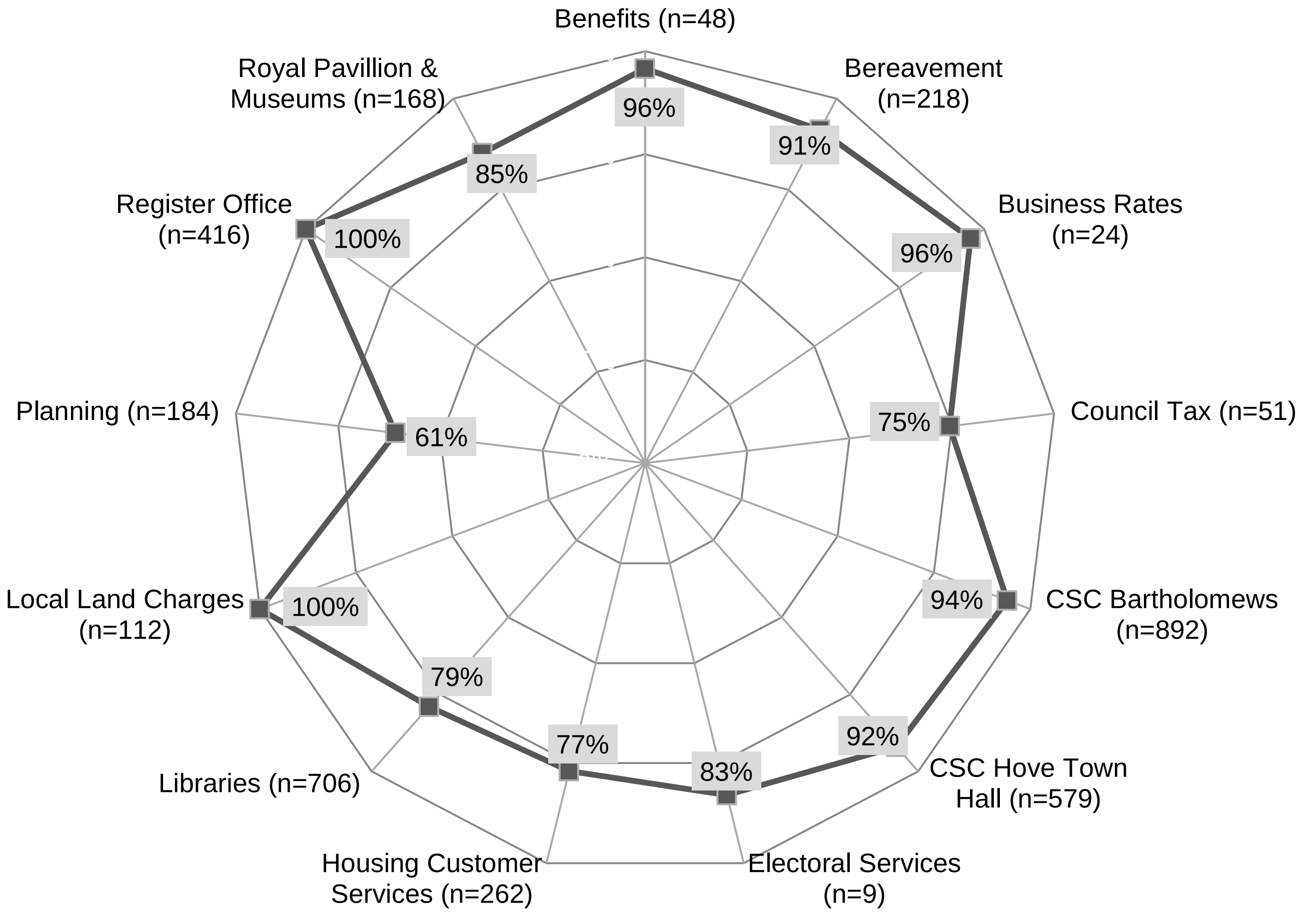
Two additional open ended questions allow space for general feedback:

(3) Is there anything we could have done to make your customer experience better?
(4) How could we have made our service easier to use?

The summary below reflects the response from services that have captured this information in 2014/15. Further work is underway in 2015/16 to include other customer facing services not currently featured.

## Customer Satisfaction

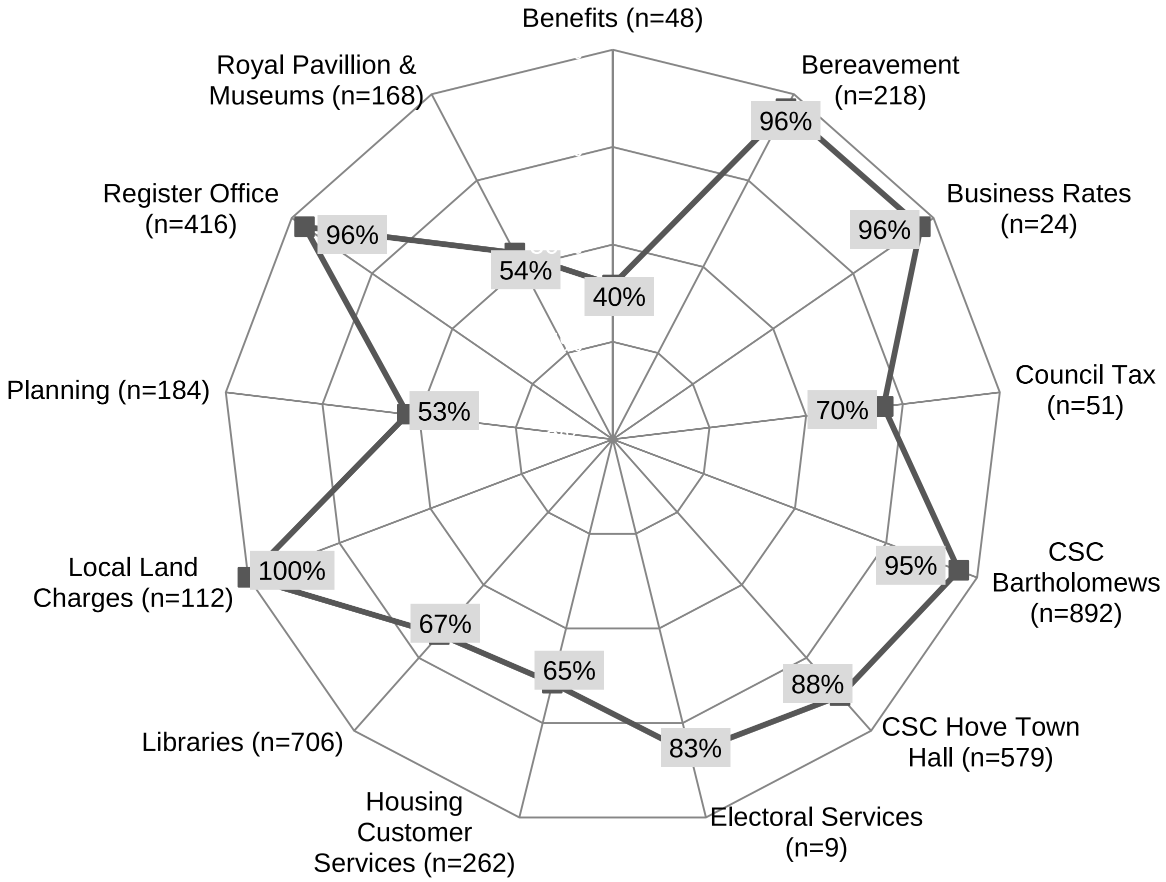
The below chart represents the count of the 'very good' responses.
n= number of survey respondents



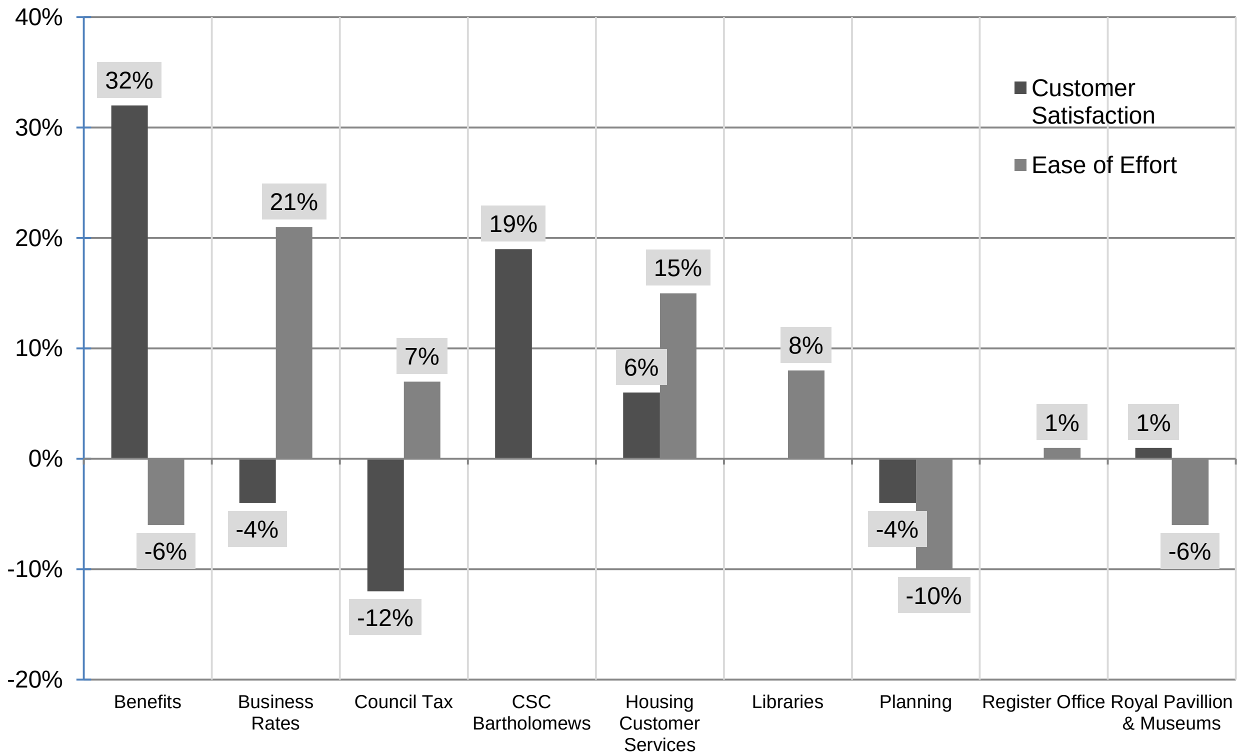
# Ease of Effort

The below chart represents the count of the ‘very easy’ responses.

n= number of survey respondents




## Difference from 2013/14



# Section 2: Customer volumes and metrics

Below are the counts of contacts made via telephone, visitor, online and other correspondence.

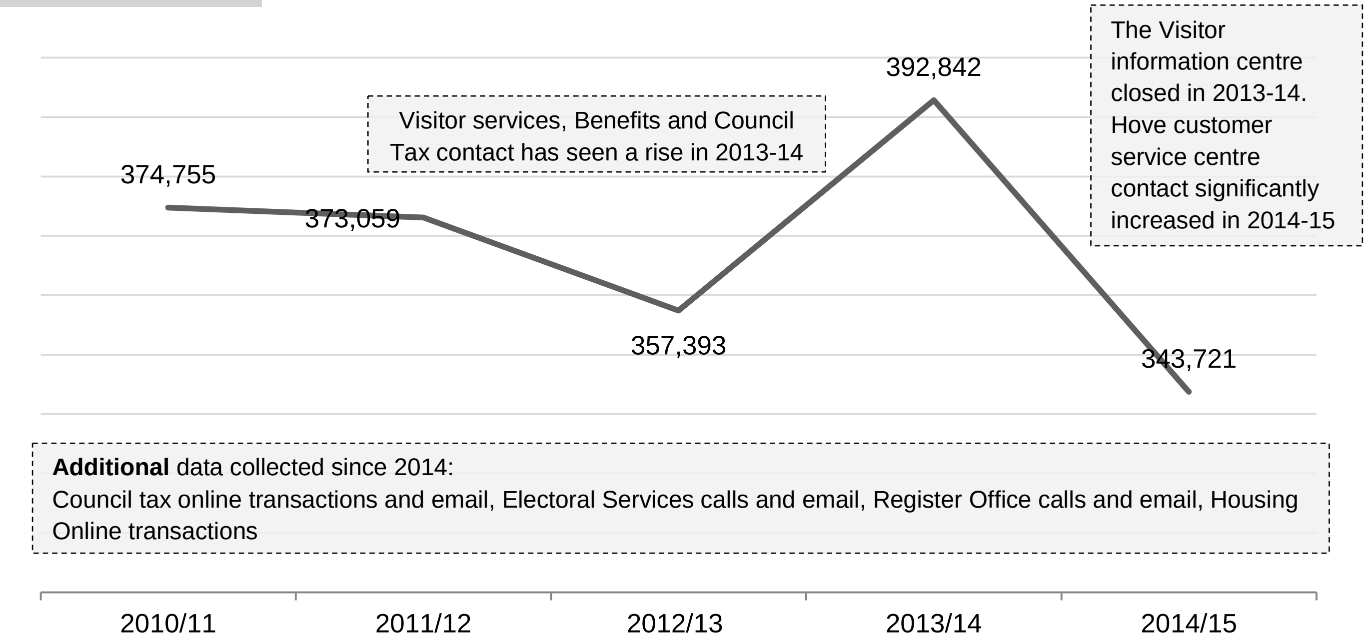
Starting in 2010, new counts introduced each year have been included in each annual total.

Each chart reflects the response from services capturing this information in 2014/15. Further work is underway in 2015/16 to include other customer-facing services not currently featured.

## Customer gross volume & contact type

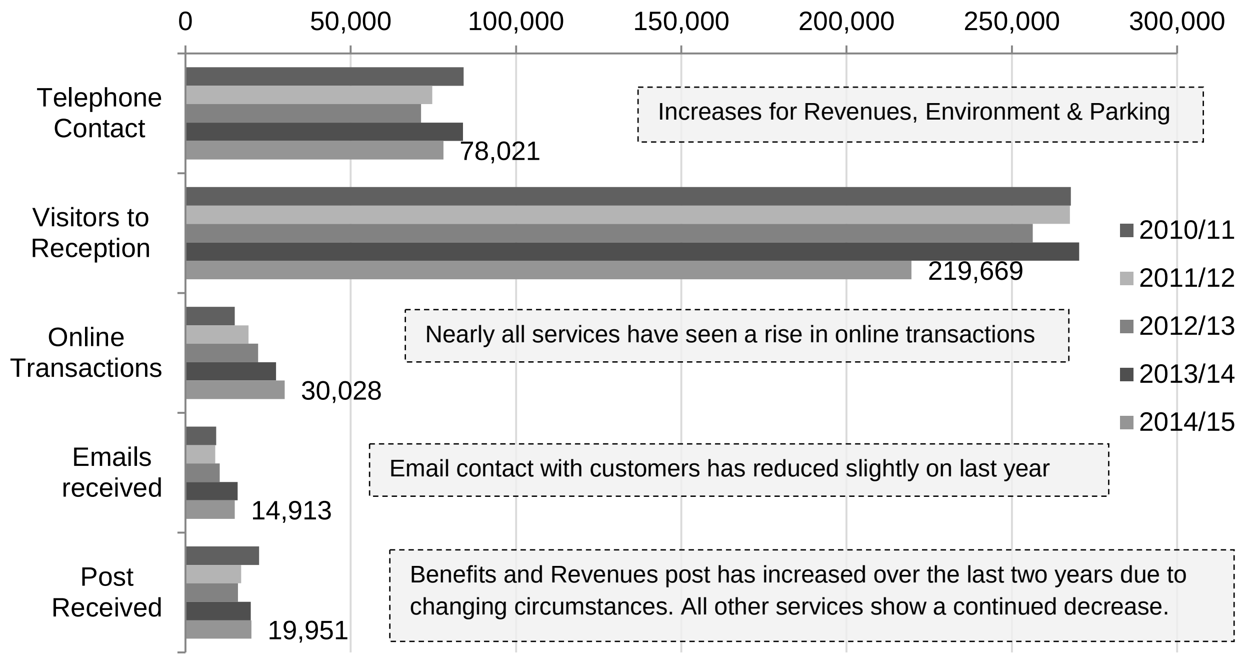
### Gross volume

(Average number of contacts per month)




### Contact type

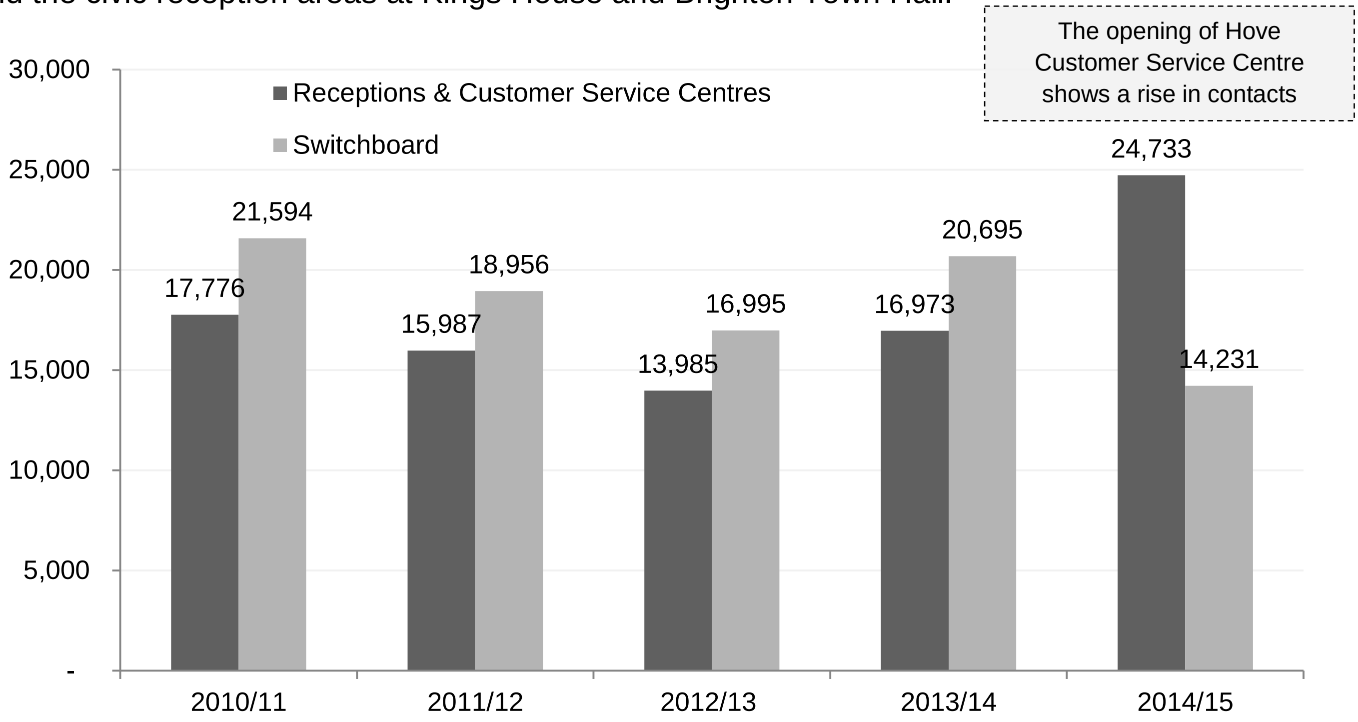
(Average number of contacts per month)



## Switchboard, receptions & customer service centres

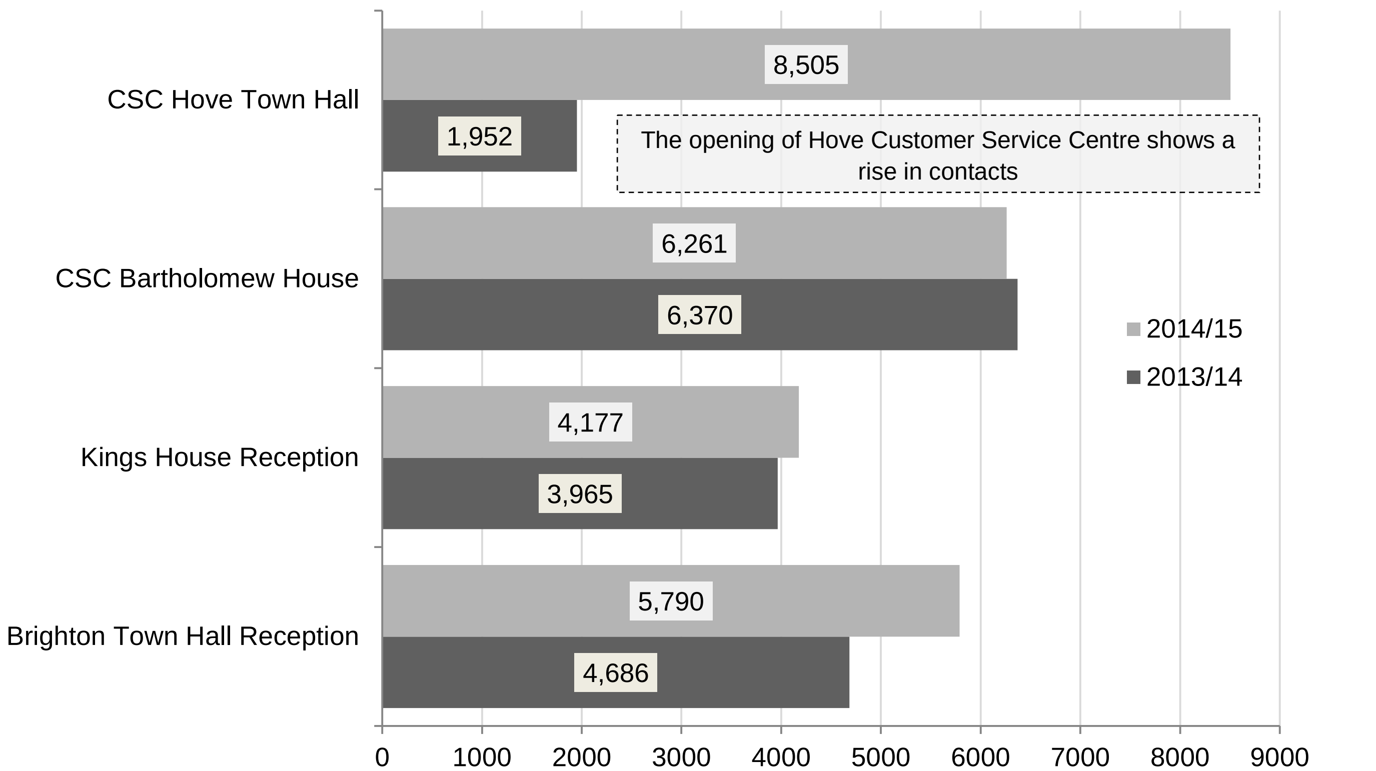
(Average number of contacts per month)

Below are the number of visitors to the customer service centres at Barts House, Hove Town Hall and the civic reception areas at Kings House and Brighton Town Hall.



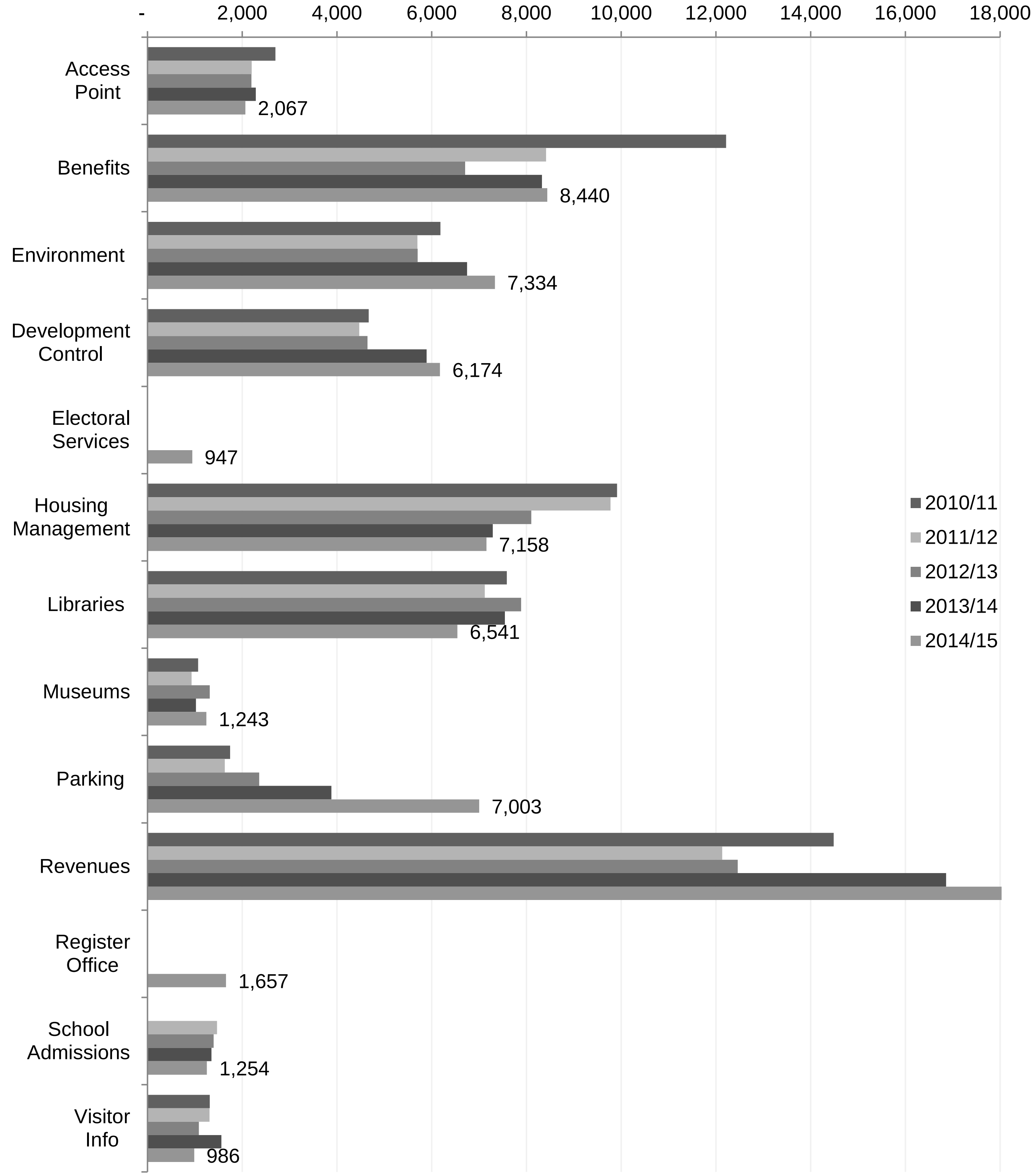

## Customer service centre (CSC) & reception contact trend

(Average number of contacts per month)



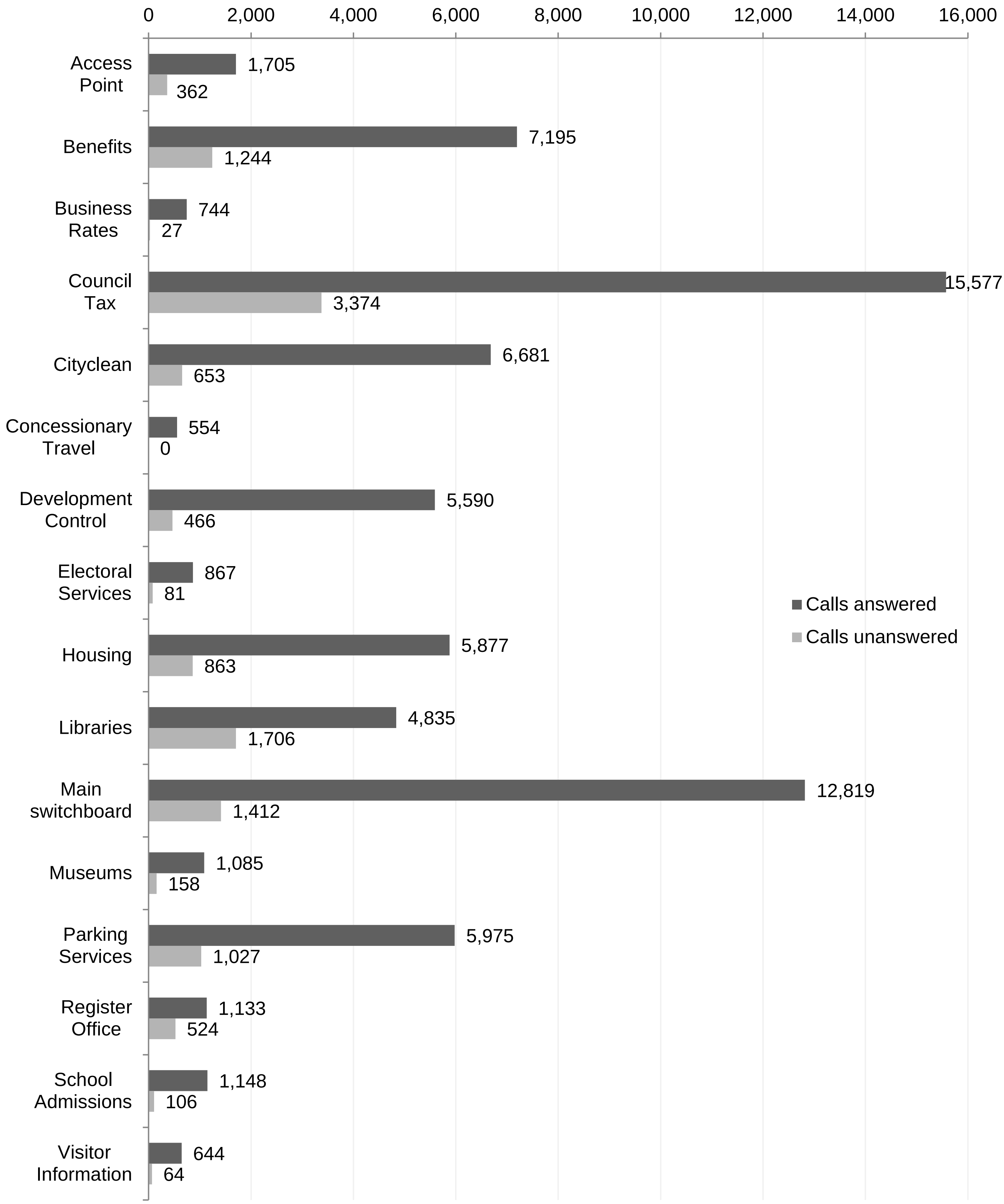
## Telephone (Calls answered and unanswered total - Average number of contacts per month)

- Decrease in Access Point, Housing Management, Libraries, School Admissions, and Visitor Info total calls
- Increase in Environment, Parking, and Revenues and Parking total calls



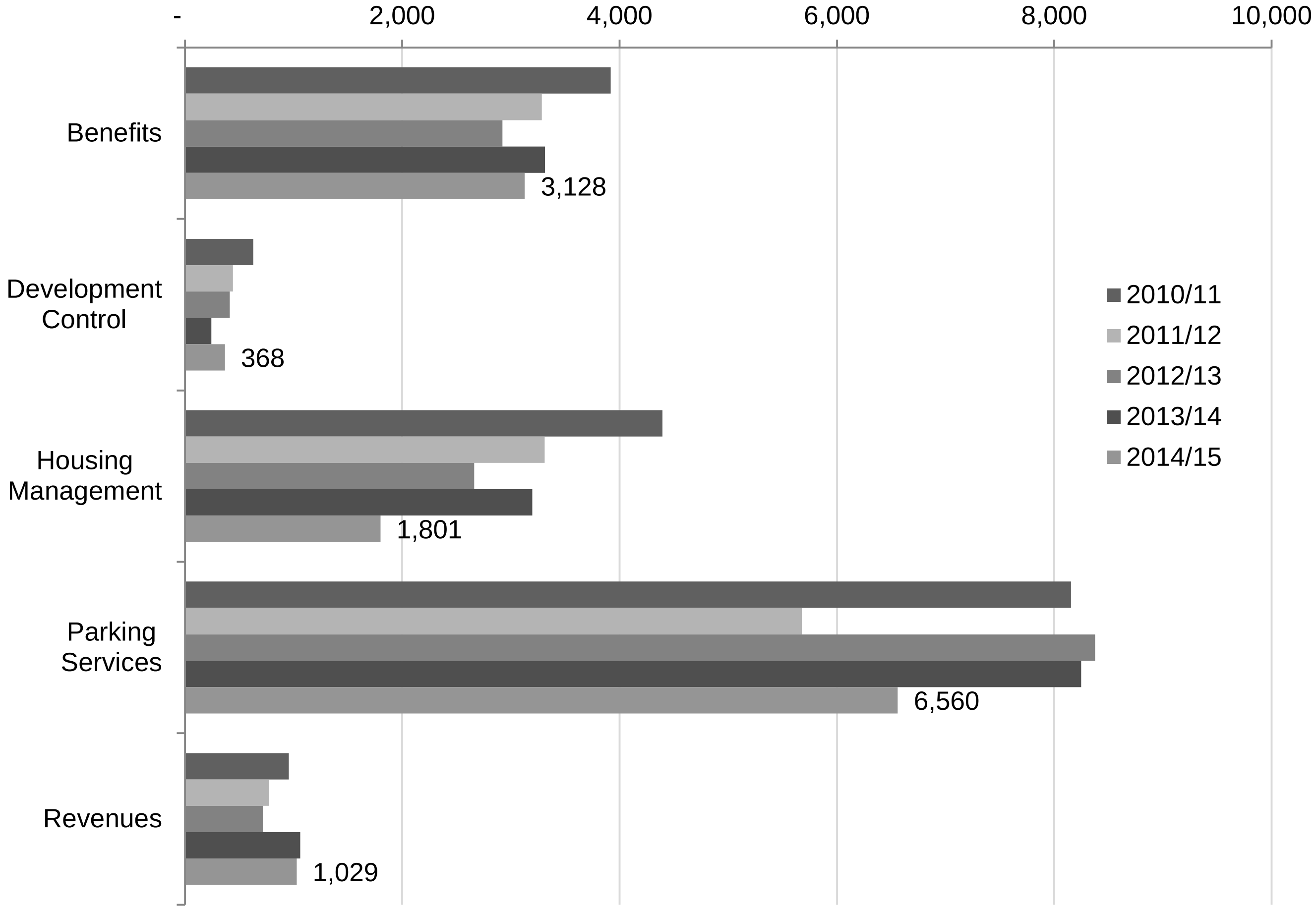
## Calls answered and unanswered in 2014/15

(Average number of contacts per month)



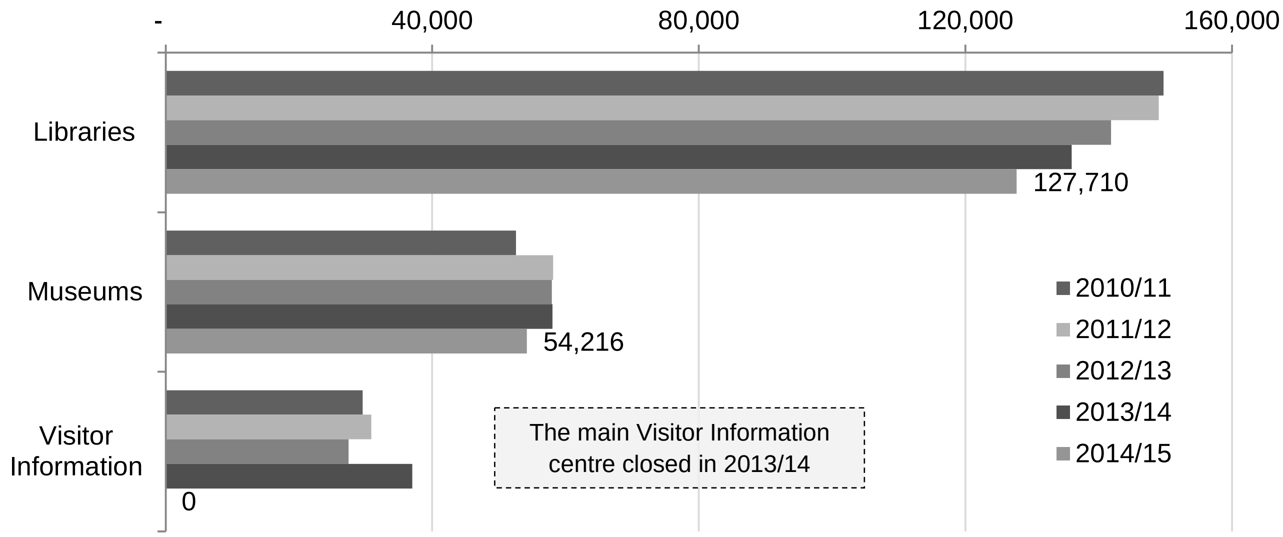
# Visitors (Average number of contacts per month)

- Significant decreases in the number of visitors to Housing and Parking Services
- Smaller decreases for Benefits, Development Control and Revenues



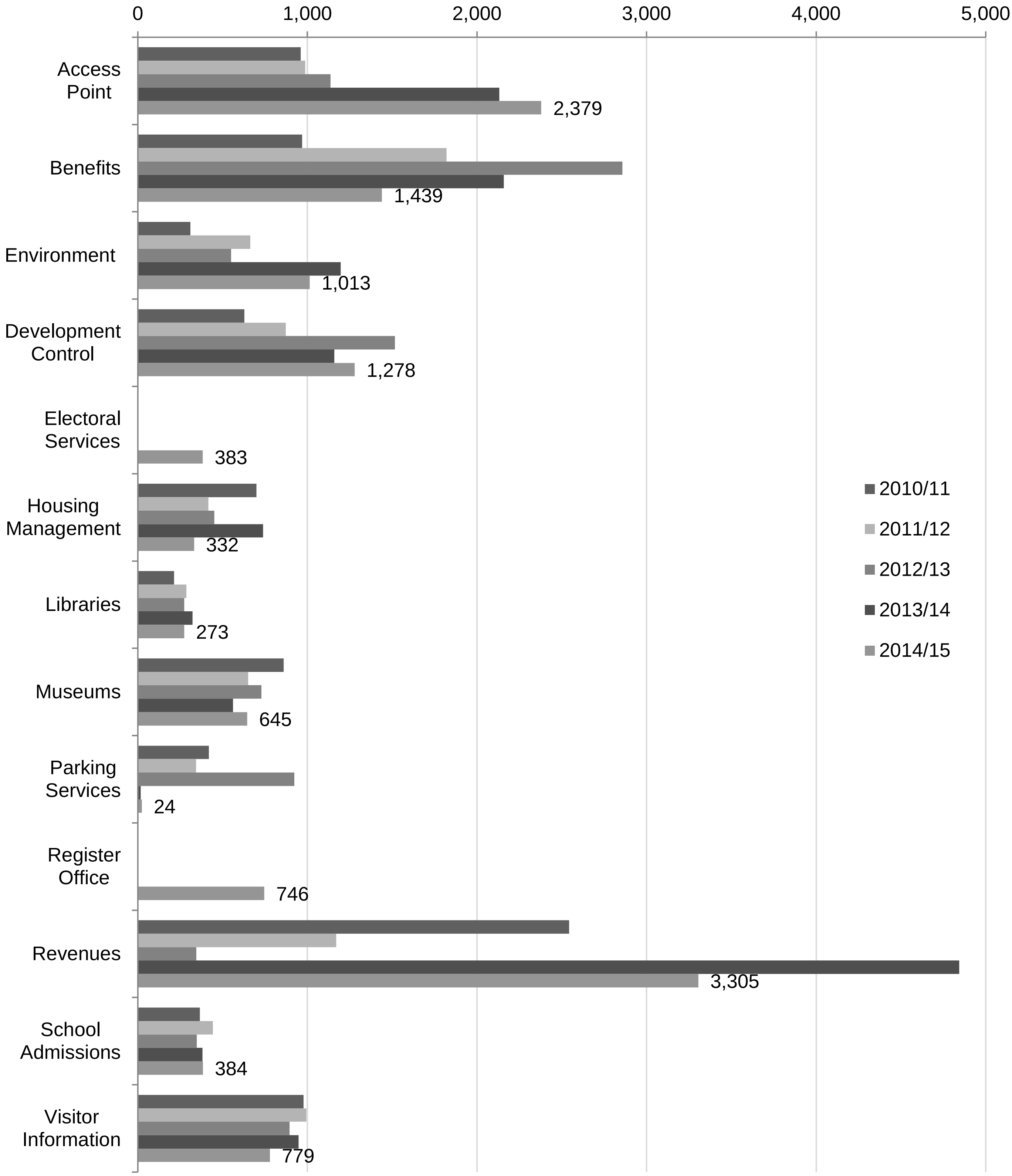

## High volume visitors at not exclusively transactional services

(Average number of contacts per month)



## **Email** (Average number of contacts per month)

- Continued increases for Access Point and Development Control
- Decrease for Environment and Visitor Info
- Significant decrease for Benefits, Revenues and Parking Services (now PCN appeals only)



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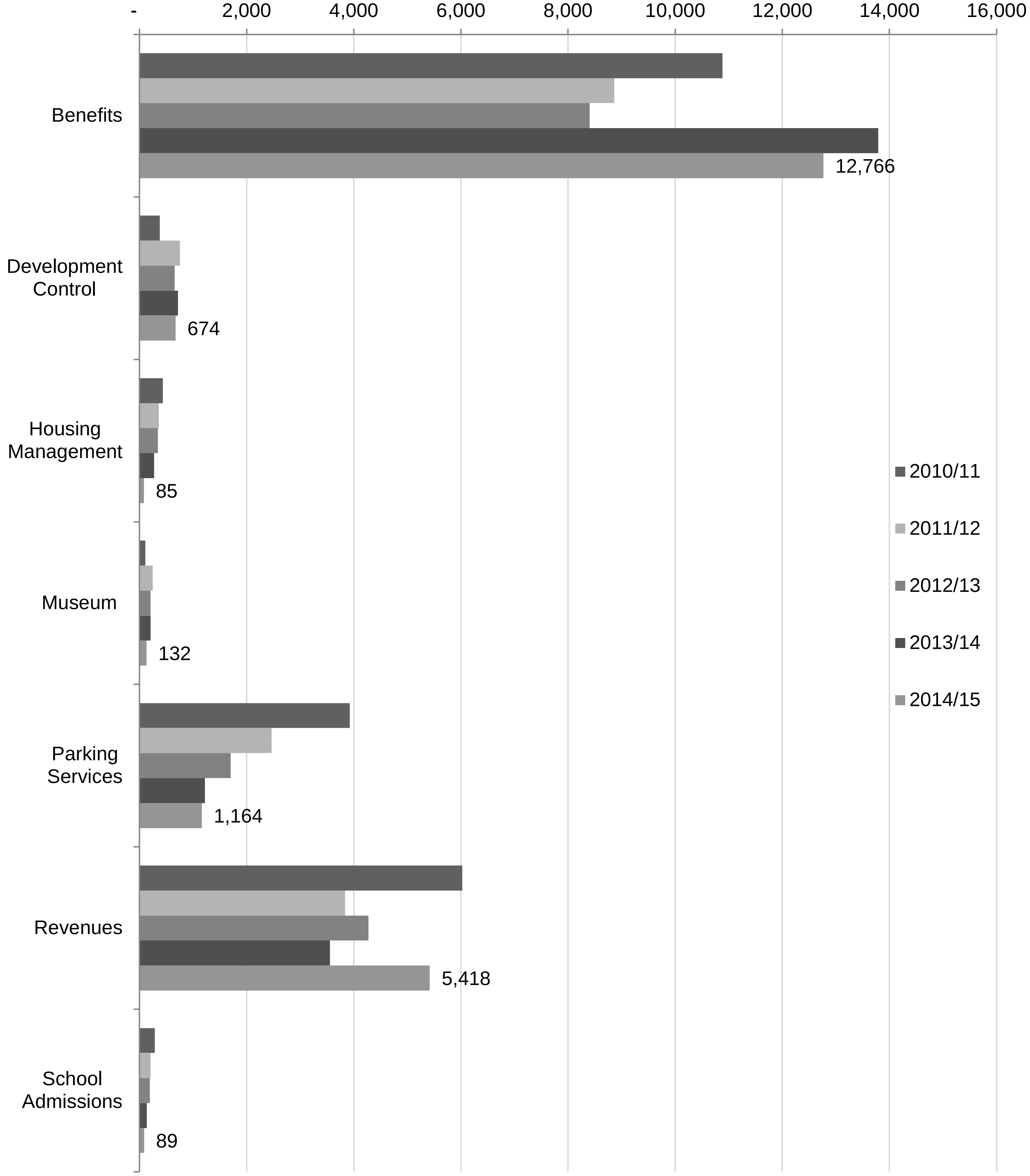
# Post

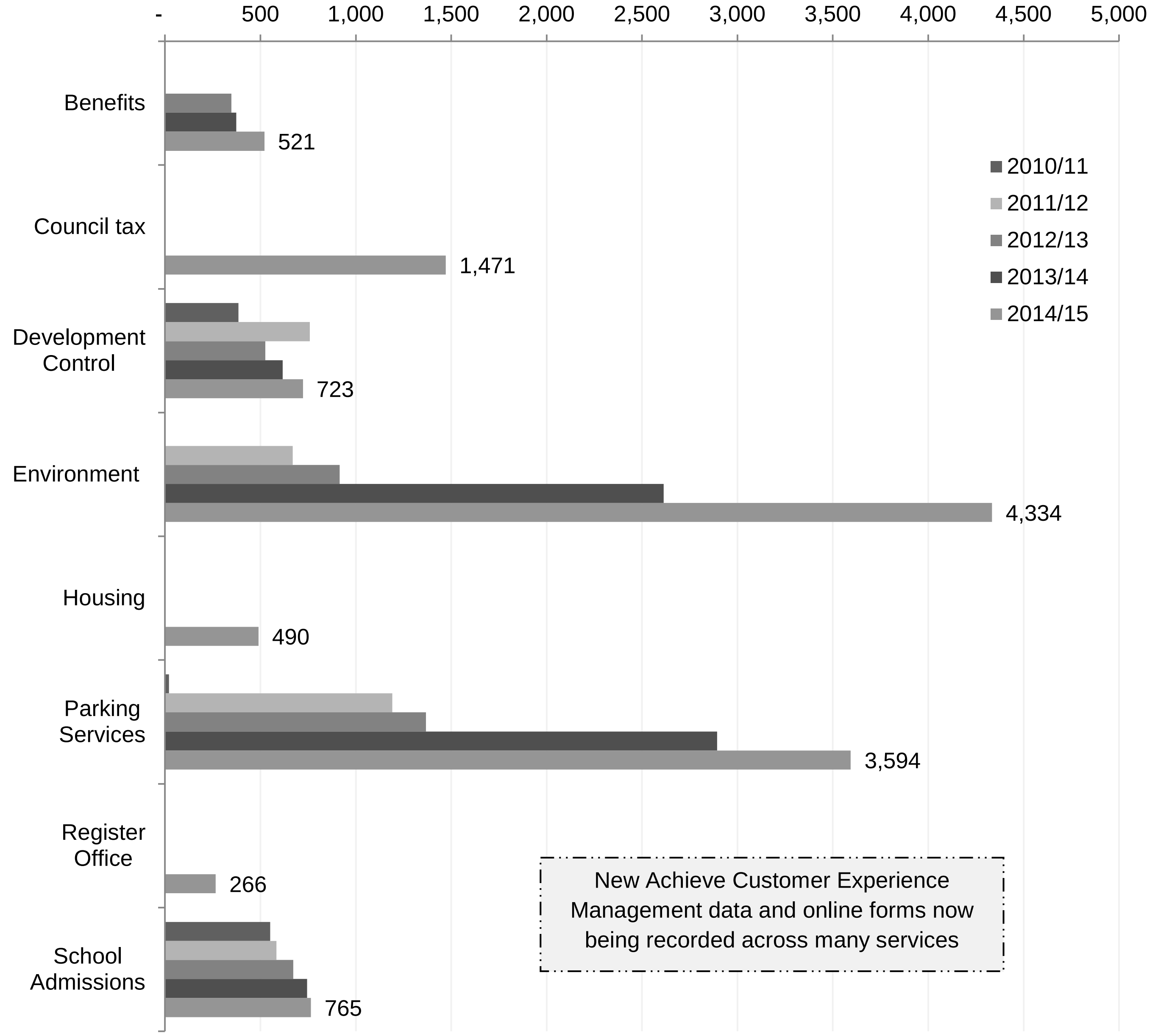
(Average number of contacts per month)

- Significant increases for Revenues and maintained high levels for Benefits
- Decrease for Parking Services, Development Control, School Admissions, Museums
- Significant decrease for Housing Management



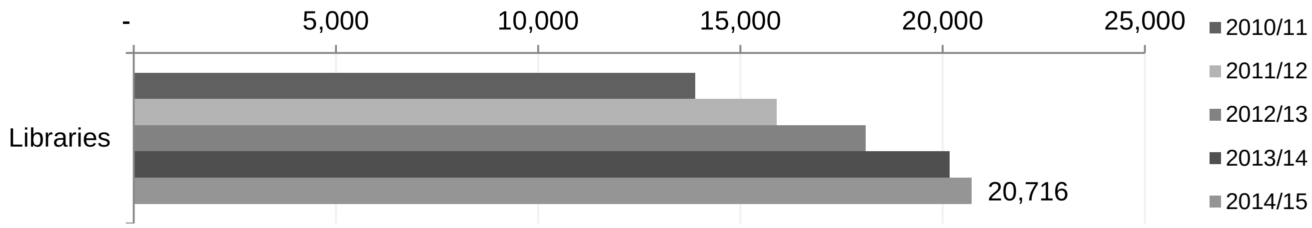
## Online Transactions (Average number of contacts per month)

- Significant increase for Benefits, Environment, and Parking
- Continued rises for School Admissions, Development Control




## High volume Online Transactions (Average number of contacts per month)

Includes e-books, online renewals, online reservations, joining online.



# Service Comments

The officers presenting the data for this report were asked for their thoughts on recent changes in contact volumes.

### Access Point

"The increase in emails is partly matched by a decrease in telephone calls as people move to email as an alternative to holding on the phone. We are also encouraging more people to email when they call, particularly professionals, and have a message on our phone advising people to email us instead. I would hope to see this trend continue with a decrease in calls as people move online more. We have seen a year on year increase in emails since Access Point opened. Increased awareness of Adult Safeguarding may also have contributed as we receive a higher volume of alerts by email now than in the past. We have also updated our web pages so I hope that the online referral form will be used more in the coming months."

### Benefits

"Over the last year, we have changed much of our documentation using nudge theory and pointing customers to the website which has avoided some unnecessary e-mail contact. The re-organisation of telephone rotas and more dynamic use of telephone messages have helped customers to use the website to get the information they need.

Much of our paperwork in Benefits, particularly the application form, has also been reviewed and on-line services advertised more prominently."

### Concessionary Travel

"At present residents can only access concessionary travel by telephone or visiting the Customer Service Centre. Work is underway to create an online service for these residents ensuring it is simple and easy to use. Currently when residents request a bus pass be it a new claim or a renewal, they are expected to provide necessary proof. The majority of the information required is already held but within different areas of the council. Similarly, residents requiring parking permits are requested to provide proof of residence, however work has allowed the online form to confirm this by data matching with the Council Tax database. This is the type of process I believe can be introduced for Concessionary Travel."

### Housing

"The decline in visitor numbers is an expected consequence of the phased closure of housing offices and cash desks as part of the Accommodation Review within Housing Management, and the resultant 'channel shift'. Throughout 2013/14 there were five offices and four cash desks, but by the end of 2014/15 there were three housing offices and no cash desks remaining, and the number of visitors to these offices declined over the year, from an average of 2,117 queries per month in the first half of the year to 1,486 queries in the second half. Although payments at cash desks are not included in these statistics, their presence generated a number of customer queries at the receptions with which they were co-located.

The majority of the customers affected by the closure of housing offices and cash desks have gradually moved onto other methods to make payments (particularly swipe card and over the phone) and queries (particularly over the phone), rather than going to other offices. The latter part of 2014/15 saw an increase in the number of phone calls to Housing Management, with an average of 6,489 calls answered per month during quarter four compared to an average of 5,672 for the first three quarters of the year.

As a further example of this 'channel shift', since December 2014, the Housing Customer Services team have based staff at Bartholomew House to handle queries there in addition to the three remaining housing offices.  However, take-up of this service has been fairly low (around 136 queries per month, when some housing offices could expect several times this many).

Email volumes have likely reduced because more customers have been emailing individual staff directly, rather than using generic email inbox addresses, and may have gradually become more familiar with the staff roles created as part of the restructure of Housing Management in July 2012. There have also been some improvements to email volume data quality, finding that some teams have been recording internal emails. This has been corrected to follow the definition."

### Libraries

"The reduction in answered and unanswered calls is welcomed and the Library Service will be taking action to reduce this number further by greater promotion of online services and the automated renewals telephone line. The visitor figures show a reduction in the number of visitors from last year, however from September we are actively encouraging residents to use the online services, and promoting internet access at each library. I would hope that this would cause this footfall to increase."

### Register Office

"The service definition of unanswered calls takes into consideration the following factors:

At point of the customer call there is an automated message signposting the customer to online bookings for all appointments. This encourages the caller to hang up and proceed with their enquiry via a different route which is the desired affect; however this would be recorded as an unanswered call.

In some areas of the service there are voicemails facilities which take the customer down a different route, and result in the caller leaving a message, and then hanging up. Again this type of call we believe to be recorded as an unanswered call. There is an ongoing communication with ICT to establish these details.

We are currently are unable to offer guidance to callers advising about the queues and position in queues which is another reason why customers hang up.

The significant increase of online forms and transactions reflect our continually improving online offer, including those customers referred by the automated telephone messages as mentioned above."

### Parking Services

"With an increase in answered and unanswered calls over the last 18 months, Parking and Blue Badge have implemented the Avaya CMS system in October 2013 that has enabled the reporting of increasingly accurate phone volumes. Two schemes were also introduced at the end of 2014 that have shown a slight increase in call volumes. The significant increase over the last two years of the number of online transactions via web forms is due to the introduction of customer contact forms through the Achieve system on the BHCC website. Recently the Hove Town Hall Customer Service Centre has started to open from 10am, encouraging more online usage."

### Revenues

"With the increase in the total number of calls (answered and unanswered), changes in legislation and policy around Council Tax Reduction and discounts and exemption have led to an increased demand for our services from customers who have not had to pay previously or are having to pay more. Many of these calls would have also been from residents chasing up an answer to correspondence sent in. The team are now solely allocated to complete the work received to reduce the waiting time and prevent the 'chasing' calls. Contact studies show that customers come in when they have failed to gain contact over the telephones. Following the changes made to the management of the telephones this should also help reduce the number of visitors further.

The continual change to welfare reform is resulting in more residents being expected to pay Council Tax each year. Revenues have also experienced a backlog resulting in delays to accounts being dealt with and naturally residents chased decisions/outcomes. Changing the approach to the work has allowed a team to dedicate their time resulting in resident’s queries being dealt with quicker.

### Visitor Information Centre

“The main Visitor Information Centre (VIC) closed in September 2013. When the VIC closed we set up a further 9 of these VIPs in a range of businesses around the city - in hotels, shopping centres, libaries and venues. The VIP at the Brighton Centre Box Office is our flagship office and can also help with same-day accommodation bookings for walk-in customers, plus sales of attraction and transport tickets. We have since grown this network to 15 VIPs, the most recent one opened last month at Rottingdean library. With the closure of the extended service, the new model allows us to still ensure that visitors receive quality information and a high level of service. One benefit is that we have now taken the service out to where the visitor is, rather than expecting them to find their way to us. It is challenging to ensure all the VIPs are collecting enquiry statistics, but we are confident that across the network in 2014-15 they helped over 10,000 visitors, while the City Champions, working only at weekends, have helped 13,000 over the same period.”

# Total contact volumes

April 2014 to March 2015 (12 month count unless stated)

PLEASE NOTE THE BELOW FIGURES ARE NOT THE AVERAGES USED IN THE CHARTS

| Service | Phone Answered & Unanswered | Visitors | Home visits | Outreach / Promotion / SMS | Emails | Post | Online Forms |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Access Point | 24806 | | | | 28545 | | 22 |
| Benefits | 101274 | 37540 | | | 17269 | 153191 | 6256 |
| Concessionary Travel | 6650* (answered) | 5885 | | | | | |
| Development Control | 75854 | 4410 | 3589 | 949 | 15331 | 8086 | 5934 |
| Environment (City clean & parks) | 88003 | | | | 12153 | | 17768 |
| Electoral Services | 11365 | | | | 4596 | | |
| Housing Management | 80878 | 21615 | 10511 | | 3983 | 1018 | 5884* (inc. Housing Strategy) |
| Council Tax | 227416 | 12103 | | | 35438 | 59413 | 17650 |
| Business Rates | 9241 | 243 | | | 4216 | 5608 | |
| Libraries | 78491 | 1532518 | | 3753 | 3275 | 185 | 242080 |
| Museums | 14915 | 650589 | | 3199 | 7735 | 1581 | |
| Parking Services | 84031 | 78722 | | | 284 | 13970 | 43129 |
| Register Office | 19880 | | | | 8954 | 2354 | 3194 |
| School Admissions | 15047 | | | 14099 | 4607 | 1603 | 9174 |
| Visitor Information | 8505 | | | | 9348 | 245 | |
| Brighton Town Hall Reception | | 69485 | | | | | |
| CSC Bartholomew House | | 75136 | | | | | |
| CSC Hove Town Hall | | 102063 | | | | | |
| Kings House Reception | | 50124 | | | | | |
| Main switchboard | 170771 | | | | | | |
| info@brighton-hove.gov.uk | | | | | 9592 | | |

# Section 3: Complaints

| Performance Indicator | Unit | Target | Result | Status |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Formal Complaints per 10,000 population | No. | 5.5 | 5.8 | Amber |
| Stage 1 organisational complaints upheld or partially upheld | % | 33.2 | 38.4 | Red |
| Complaints responded to in 10 working days | % | - | 53.9 | - |

The target for Formal Complaints per 10,000 population result is based on the number of complaints received at Stage One per 10,000 head of population and is an average taken over the preceding 24 months.

The target for % of stage 1 organisational complaints upheld or partially upheld was set by taking the average result for 2012/13 and 2013/14.

## Formal Complaints per 10,000 population

The target for the end of year at March 2015 was 5.5 complaints per 10,000 head of population. The results are showing a continual improvement, reducing from 6.2 in December to 5.8 in March which is similar to the figure of 5.7 for April 2014.

Over the course of the year the level of complaints increased at Quarter 2, however, the Quarter 3 results showed that complaints performance for most service areas was improving or had levelled out . Overall the improvements have continued into Quarter 4 which has been very encouraging. There is clear evidence that services are taking a far more proactive approach to the way they deal with complaints.

The commentary below relating to specific services explains some of the proactive steps being taken by services to reduce the level of complaints and to understand customer feedback.

There is clear evidence throughout the year of a strong complaints performance and a positive attitude towards reducing the level of dissatisfaction experienced by customers. To enhance this strong performance the Complaints team is available to provide support and this is being supplemented with easily accessible guidance, day to day help and training opportunities for individuals and teams.

The level of Stage One complaints compared to the previous two years has increased but when the results for Cityclean are removed we see the underlying level of Stage One complaints has shown a slight increase of 66 Stage One complaints over a three year period to a total of 1485. Within this overall increase there have been fluctuations in complaint levels within services. In future regular reports to Departmental Management Teams those trends will become apparent and can be acted upon.

The aim for all services should be to resolve issues of dissatisfaction before they become formal complaints. If this is achieved the proportion of upheld complaints should reduce because services should be able to resolve mistakes before they enter the formal process. Where complaints are not upheld a high quality response empathising with the customer and explaining the reason for the decision should reduce the proportion of cases escalating to Stage Two.

# City Clean

Complaints increased in Quarter 2 as a consequence of industrial dispute during the summer. However there has been continual improvement from that time through into Quarter 4:

- Stage One complaints have reduced (Q1=96, Q2=198, Q3=119, Q4=60)
- The proportion of upheld complaints has on average for the year been 81%. For each quarter the figures were Q1=81%, Q2=89%, Q3=82%, Q4=56%). The high proportion of upheld complaints relate to missed collections
- The Stage Two complaints have reduced in line with the pattern for Stage One complaints (Q1=4, Q2=14, Q3=8, Q4=5)

The Head of Service has commented that the reduction in complaints reflects improved service reliability as the Cityclean dispute has reduced in intensity. The amount of missed collections has decreased significantly and this is also reflected in reduced customer contact through the environment contact centre.

A monthly complaints surgery has been established at management team level to analyse recurring complaints and take corrective action. There was a slight increase in the number of complaints in March, mainly relating to refuse collections.  There was no single reason for this slight peak in complaints but this will be kept under review.

# City Parks

In the level of complaints has improved throughout the year with a slight increase in Quarter 4:

- Stage One complaints increased slightly (Q1=30, Q2=31, Q3=11, Q4=14).
- The proportion of upheld complaints for the year has been 43%. For each quarter the figures were Q1=47%, Q2=26%, Q3=10%, Q4=23%.
- Stage Two complaints have been comparatively high when compared to the number of Stage One complaints, better explanations why Stage One complaints are not upheld may improve this results. (Q1=0, Q2=3, Q3=4, Q4=3).

The Head of Service has commented that the majority of complaints in City Parks relate to weed growth and the cutting of verges, which is why the number of complaints are higher in Quarters 1 and 2 (spring and summer).  Growth of weeds and grass is weather dependent, with wet summers leading to more prolific growth and increased levels of complaints.  Complaints are kept under regular review.

# Housing Repairs & Maintenance

In Quarter 4 there have been continued improvements in that:

- Stage One complaints have reduced (Q1=59, Q2=60, Q3=56, Q4=52)
- The proportion of upheld complaints overall for the year has been 53%. Results for the year have been (Q1=51%, Q2=68%, Q3=49%, Q4=43%)
- The Stage Two complaints have reduced (Q1=10, Q2=5, Q3=9, Q4=5)

The Head of Service has commented that Property & Investment and their partners take a very pro-active approach to managing complaints and enquiries and learning from them. All actions arising from a complaint are logged and tracked and they monitor the logs to ensure they are completed effectively. Each month managers meet to look in detail at complaints and make changes to service delivery to address any service issues; there are also separate monthly reviews of the headline complaints data which forms part of their performance indicator suite. Recently the service has made the following changes on the back of customer complaints:

- Tracker to ensure commitments and actions are implemented within the repairs partnership
- Publication of three year programme on council website
- Planned review of damp and condensation management

In addition every opportunity to resolve a complaint at Stage One is taken and this has led to sustained reduction in Stage Two complaints. By tracking commitments and actions arising from a Stage One complaint we are able to intervene and work towards quickly resolving dissatisfaction and avoiding the need for a further escalation of their complaint.

# Housing Services

The Interim Head of Housing has explained that more effort is being put into resolving customer dissatisfaction before it becomes a formal complaint and they are working harder at providing better complaint responses to prevent escalation to Stage Two. In Quarter 4 the results are:

- Stage One complaints peaked in Quarter 2 (Q1=66, Q2=79, Q3=32, Q4=45) with improvements throughout the remainder of the year
- The proportion of upheld complaints over the year has been 33%. Results for the year have been (Q1=13%, Q2=51%, Q3=30%, Q4=30%)
- The number Stage Two cases has followed a very similar pattern to Stage One complaints (Q1=8, Q2=12, Q3=5, Q4=6)

The Head of Service has commented that it is difficult to accurately determine the reason for the significant decrease in complaints from Q2 to Q3, and then the slight increase from Q3 to Q4. However, as much as Housing Services seek to resolve issues for tenants as effectively and at the earliest stages possible, they also continue to support them to make formal complaints when they wish to do so.

Housing will continue to seek to resolve tenants' complaints in an effective and sensitive manner at Stage One with an ongoing commitment to respond to all aspects of the complaint, see the matter from the tenant's perspective, responding as clearly as they can, and contacting the tenant early if they are unsure of the exact nature of their dissatisfaction.

# Revenues and Benefits

There has been a steady improving trend throughout the year for Revenues and Benefits apart from a sudden increase in March.

- The Stage One complaints have reduced consistently (Q1=44, Q2= 42, Q3=38, Q4=30)
- The proportion upheld have reduced (Q1=60%, Q2=54%, Q3=48%, Q4=39%)
- There has been a reducing trend for Stage 2 cases (Q1=5, Q2=2, Q3=4, Q4=3)

The Head of Service has commented that in March people were issued with their new Council Tax bills. For most people there would have been an increase in the amount they were being asked to pay. In addition to the 1.99% Council Tax rise those people who were eligible for Council Tax Reduction will have seen an increase of 15%.

There is a cyclical nature to the number of complaints received in Revenues & Benefits. Understandably there is a tendency for an increase in complaints around the March to May period when nearly 140000 new bills and 27,000 notifications are issued, particularly when these documents reflect increases in amounts to pay and reductions in levels of support.

This is a period of peak demand for the service. The end of the first and start of second quarter sees the most intense period of follow up action in respect of council tax and this does generate complaints. The third and fourth quarters are quieter until the latter part of March.

In terms of addressing complaints Revenues and Benefits work with the Communications team to try and improve the quality of information regarding start of financial year budget and legislative changes to minimise complaints about the financial impact. This improved communication extends to promoting early engagement with the tax collection process to avoid reminders/ summons etc further down the line and regularly reviewing the content and quality of the documents sent.

In terms of dealing with peak telephone demand the service has tightened the strategic management of Revenues & Benefit resources to maximise opportunities to reduce web/email and postal response times. This approach reduces phone failure demand and combined with tighter operational management of the phone service, creates capacity to increase the number of calls taken and subsequently should minimise the number of complaints about access to the service.

# Planning (Development Control)

The performance has been:

- Stage One complaints have been quite variable but increased in Q4 (Q1=7,Q2=11, Q3=4, Q4=21)
- The proportion upheld has been good (Q1=14% ,Q2=28%, Q3=25%, Q4=16%)
- The Stage Two cases have been variable (Q1=3, Q2=4, Q3=0, Q4=7)

The service has taken the following action to drive down the number of Stage1 complaints:

A programme of Open Evenings in our Customer Contact Centre has been held so we can receive feedback by discussion direct with our customers. There have been two in the last 6 months. These have been successful and we have been able to respond positively. For instance we have changed our contact times for case officers to ensure that they are available daily in the afternoons on the telephone. Feedback has been positive. They have identified additional support for officers in making more comprehensive Stage One responses to keep fewer complaints escalating to Stage Two.

The increase in Stage One complaints in March 2015 (Quarter 4) relates to one development which commenced on site. Nearby residents complained that they did not know about the planning application. There were no errors in our publicity arrangements. However, Development Control are working closely with Brighton & Hove Independent on a Government funded project to see if we can increase the reach of our notifications to ensure full awareness of planning applications. Pilot findings are due to be reported in early August 2015.

# Children’s Services

- Stage One complaints reduced throughout the year but increased in Q4 (Q1=32, Q2=29, Q3=23, Q4=37)
- The proportion upheld has been (Q1=31%, Q2=17%, Q3=43%, Q4=41%)
- The Stage Two cases have been (Q1=4, Q2=0, Q3=9, Q4=4)

The main reason for the sudden increase in Stage One complaints in Quarter 4 appears to have been complaints that there has been a lack of support for parents during contact or a feeling that parents have been unable to discuss their concerns. Children’s Services are keen to identify how complaints and compliments can result in improvements to their services. With regard to the Contact Service opening hours have been extended and one of the contact centres is now open on Saturdays. This has proved successful and will continue. These changes have been introduced to make a service which is more receptive to the needs of children and families by giving greater choice.

In Quarter 3 the major issue of Stage 2 complaints was dissatisfaction from non-resident parents that their views had not been sought in the production of reports which subsequently went to Court, in response to this a set of good practices were identified and put into practice.

# Adult Services

## Assessment, Provider and commissioned Independent Providers

- Complaints and Concerns increased considerably in the last quarter (Q1=21, Q2=31, Q3=28, Q4=45
- The proportion upheld/partially upheld reduced by the last quarter (Q1=47.6%, Q2=41.9%, Q3=53.6%, Q4=24.4%)

Adult Social Care (ASC) complaints are frequently complex, involving a number of issues, different services including those that are commissioned and sometimes delivered by external organisations such as health trusts.

Robust and co-ordinated systems have developed between the ASC element of the Complaints Team and the managers at operational and general level. A standardised complaints report is presented to both the Assessment and Provider Senior Management Teams quarterly. Included is data about themes, outcomes and response times. The trends in ASC complaints vary, but common themes centre upon social care assessment outcomes, financial assessment outcomes, staff attitude, communication, delays and service quality. Compliments are plentiful (255 for the year) and themes include staff understanding, professionalism, sensitivity, seeking resolutions and paying attention to detail.

Importantly, action and learning points are identified and where learning can be shared across different service areas, this is highlighted. For example, where there have been complaints about insufficient financial information being provided to service users and their families, an action has been identified to develop and deliver training for all ASC services about financial procedures. Where people are dissatisfied with social care assessment outcomes, it is common practice for their needs to be re-assessed. Complaints concerning medication issues in provider services have been addressed with review of medication policies, and providing information in writing has become a common response to situations where there have been discrepancies/inadequate information. In the independent sector where concerns were raised about carer lateness, a care agency has appointed someone specifically to manage rota allocations.

# Section 4: City Tracker survey

This annual survey of 1000 residents measures, primarily, the perception of council and partner services, as well as propensity for social action.

## Summary

Using the proportion of respondent satisfied with a given scenario in a perception survey where respondents can choose from five options (two positive, two negative and one neutral) is only one way of looking at responses. Sometimes it can be more helpful to look at dissatisfaction, particularly if this is the area of most concern to policy makers.

For example looking at the question ‘overall how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live’ from the city tracker surveys in the autumn of 2012, 13 and 14.   While overall satisfaction has fallen from 93 per cent in 2012 to 80 per cent in 2014, dissatisfaction has remained at just one in 20 residents (five to six per cent) across all three years.

When look at satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the different public service organisation in the city, the same pattern of dissatisfaction staying similar between 2013 and 2014 can be seen.  In the case of Brighton & Hove city council dissatisfaction decreased from 32 per cent in 2013 to 27 per cent in 2014 (see table below).

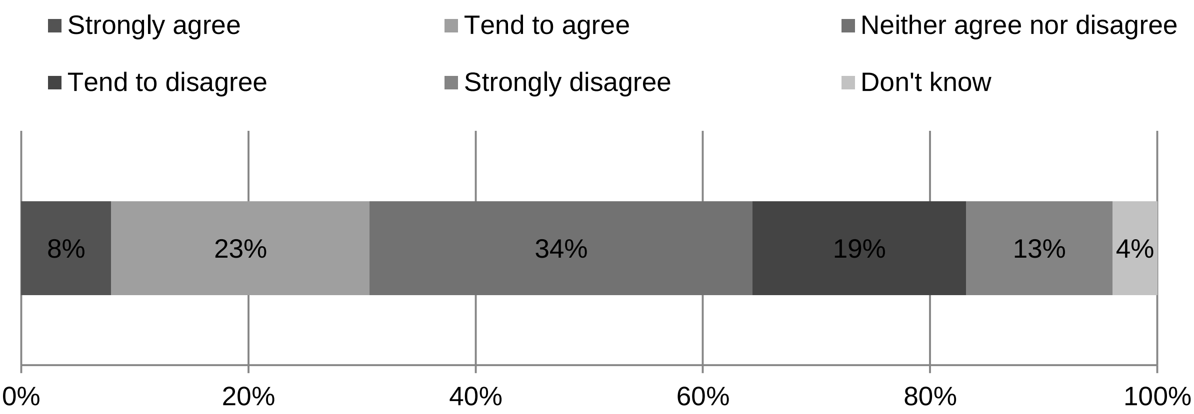
| **Taking everything into account, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the following organisation in your local area?** | | |
|---|---|---|
| | **Percentage fairly dissatisfied or very dissatisfied** | |
| | **Autumn 2013** | **Autumn 2014** |
| Brighton & Hove City Council | 32% | 27% |
| Your GP | 7% | 9% |
| Your local NHS hospital | 5% | 9% |
| Mental Health services | 25% | 24% |
| NHS dentist | 10% | 10% |
| Your local chemist | 2% | 2% |
| Sussex Police | 11% | 14% |
| East Sussex Fire and Rescue | 0% | 2% |
| Local charities and community groups | 1% | 2% |

*Base: All respondents who answered the question about satisfaction/dissatisfaction and had used the service in the past 12 months*

- Four in every five residents are satisfied with Brighton & Hove in general and their local area specifically as a place to live
- Figures place Brighton & Hove close to the national average for England as a whole according to latest LGA figures
- However, overall satisfaction is down on previous waves
- Similarly, levels of satisfaction with the way streets look and are maintained are considerably down on previous comparison years. This reflects disruption to local waste and recycling collections in the city during the survey period
- And this is confirmed by a steep decline in satisfaction with refuse collection, which has more than halved when compared with 2013 and 2012
- Satisfaction with recycling collection has also declined sharply
- The unrest may have impacted broader attitudes to the Council, which continue to lag behind other public and third sector providers in the city for perceived wise use of budget
- At this point in time Brighton & Hove City Council also under-performs national benchmarks for trustworthiness and perceived value for money, as well as being below average for acting on the concerns of residents and keeping them informed
- Meanwhile, Brighton & Hove residents are slightly above the national average for feeling they live in an area where people from different backgrounds get on well together
- They are also more likely than the national average to feel their local area is getting better and to feel that locals are pulling together to improve the neighbourhood
- There are some concerns for the future, though, with more than one in five worried about meeting basic living expenses in the next 12 months.

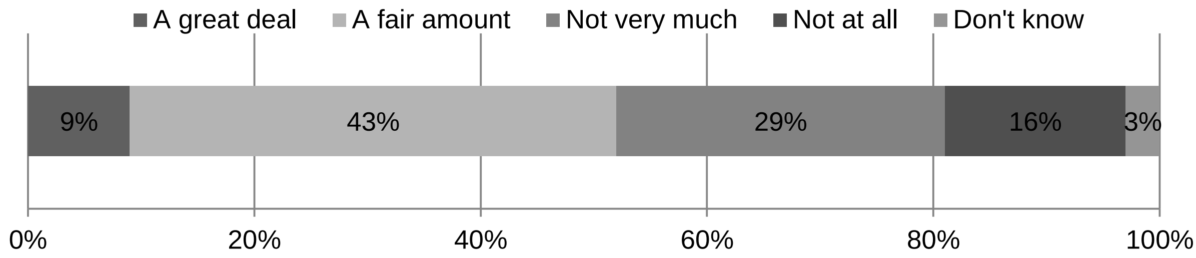
# Results

## Perceived value for money




Opinion is evenly divided on the extent to which Brighton & Hove City Council provides value for money: Around a third (31%) of residents agree that they do get value for money, but 32% disagree. Meanwhile, the final third (34%) say they “neither agree nor disagree”. When compared with the national LGA benchmark, Brighton & Hove residents are less positive than the national average. Nationwide, 49% agree that their local council gives value for money while 22% feel this is not the case.

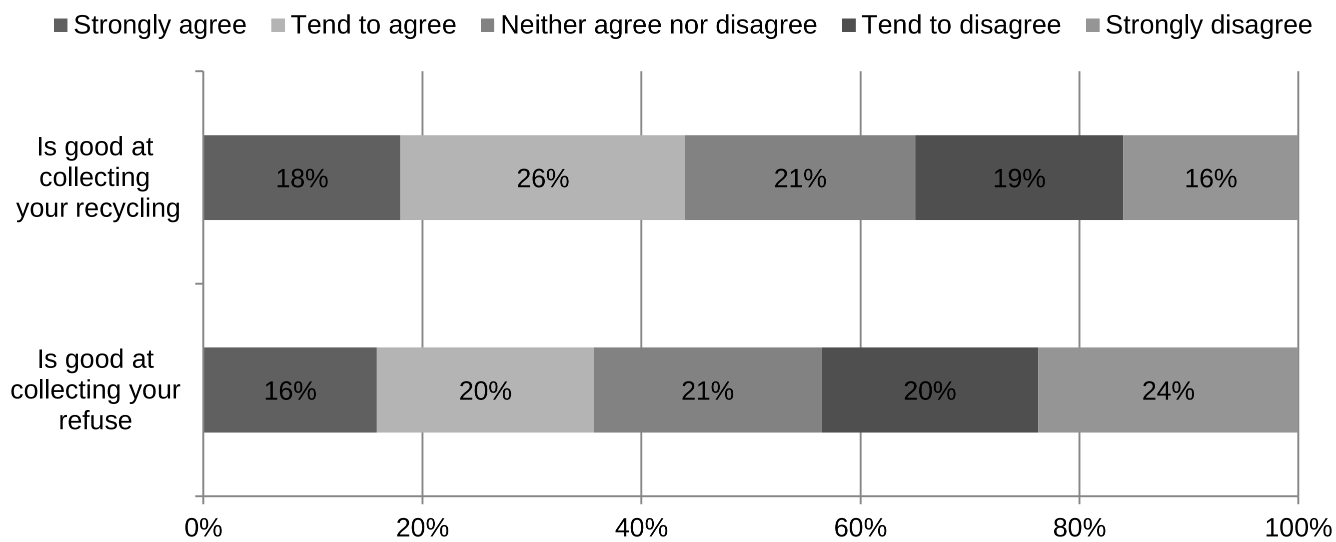
## Trustworthiness




Overall, more than half (52%) trust the City Council a great deal or a fair amount. However, 29% feel they don't trust the council very much and 16% don't have any trust at all.

Male residents are more likely to say they don't trust the Council at all (20%) than female residents (13%). Over-55s are also more likely than average to say they don't trust the Council at all (21%), compared with 15% of 35-54s and 13% of 18-34s. White British residents are most likely to have no trust in the Council (17%) compared with Other White residents (9%) and other ethnic minority residents (8%)

## Refuse and recycling

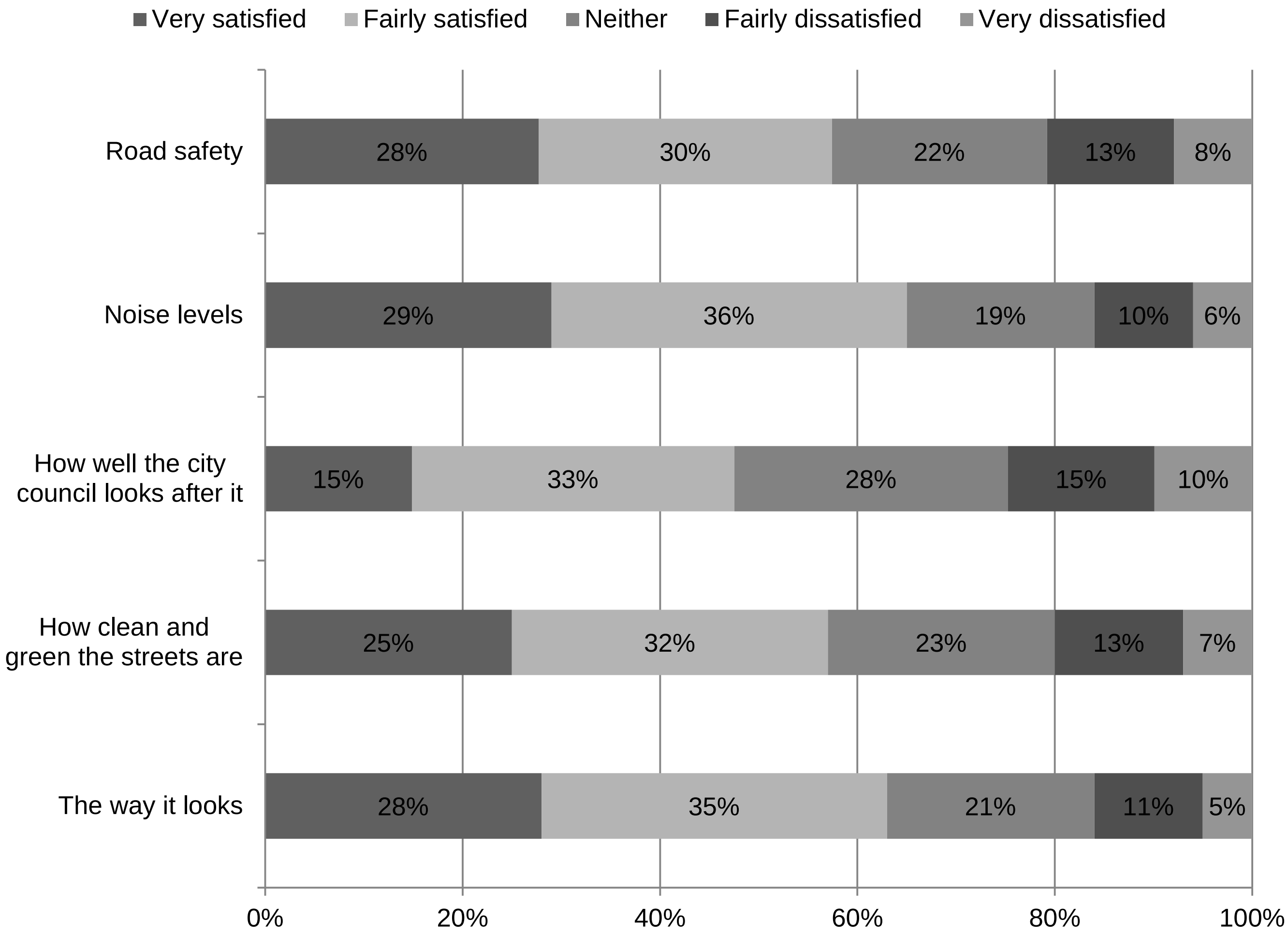



Following recent disruption to waste and recycling collection services in the city, a high proportion of residents do not feel the council is good at refuse collection (44%) or recycling collection (35%). However, despite the disruption, 36% agree that refuse collection is good while 44% believe this is the case for recycling.

Those aged 55+ are most likely to strongly agree (22%) that the Council is good at refuse collection compared with 15% of 35-54s and 11% of 18-34s. Older residents are also more likely to strongly agree that recycling collections are good (23%), compared with 16% of 35-54s and 17% of 18-34s.

Comparison with 2013 and 2012 reveals just how much impact the recent events have had on attitudes. In 2013, 75% agreed that refuse collection was good, while 74% said they felt this way about recycling collection. In 2012, figures were even higher – 89% thought the council was good at refuse collection while 86% said it was good at recycling.

## Satisfaction with the street where you live

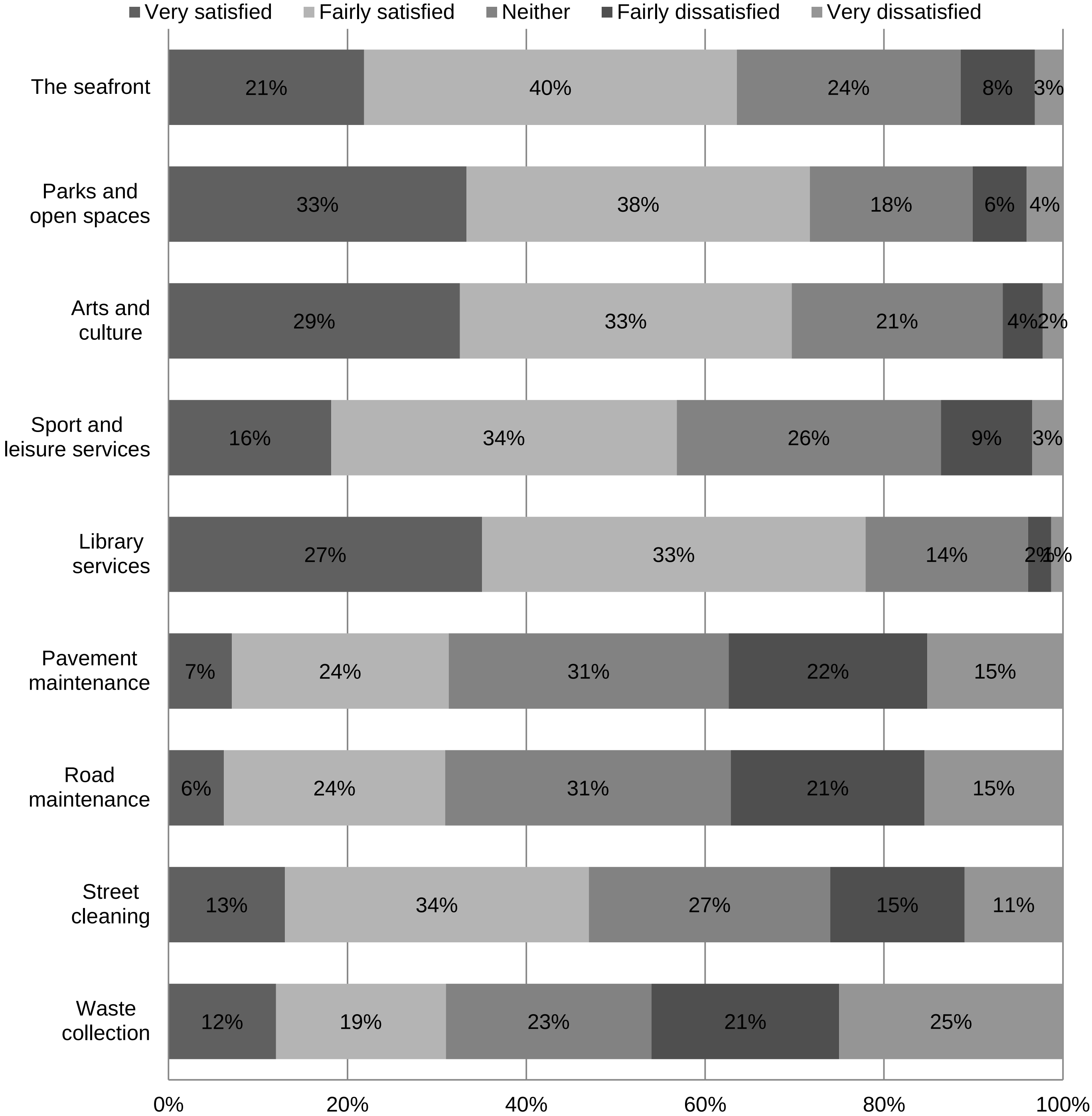



More than half (58%) are satisfied with road safety in their immediate neighbourhood. Meanwhile, one in five (21%) say they are dissatisfied. When compared with previous surveys, satisfaction is lower – down from 74% in 2013 and 73% in 2012.

Almost two-thirds (65%) of residents are very or fairly satisfied with noise levels in their street. However, 16% say they are dissatisfied with this aspect of their environment. Satisfaction with noise levels has also declined - 81% were satisfied in 2013 and the equivalent figure for 2012 stood at 84%

The majority of residents are very or fairly satisfied with the way their street looks (63%). Fewer than one in five (16%) are dissatisfied. However, satisfaction with the way the street looks is down from 82% in 2013 and 80% 2012. 57% are satisfied with how clean and green their street is, while one in five is very/fairly dissatisfied. Satisfaction with having a clean and green street is down from 77% in 2013 and 78% in 2012. Residents in BN1 (26%), BN2 (24%) and BN3 (28%) are more likely to be very satisfied that their street is clean and green than those living in BN41 (13%). Almost half (48%) are satisfied with the way the City Council looks after their street, however, one in four is dissatisfied. Levels of satisfaction with the way the Council looks after the street have dipped sharply, down from 73% in 2013 and 76% in 2012.

## Satisfaction with the city environment, waste collection, street cleaning, maintenance and cultural services




Brighton & Hove residents report a considerable level of dissatisfaction with waste collection at this point in time – in total 46% are very/fairly dissatisfied. This is in sharp contrast to national figures – the latest LGA survey data reports 80% satisfied overall with waste collection, while the figure for Brighton & Hove is just 31%. 20% of those aged 55+ are very satisfied with waste collection, compared with 8% of 18-34s and 9% of 35-54s.

Fewer than half the residents in the survey (47%) are satisfied with street cleaning in the city, with around a quarter (26%) dissatisfied. The LGA survey comparison figure for street cleaning is notably higher, standing at 73%.

For both road and pavement maintenance, residents are more likely to be dissatisfied than satisfied – with dissatisfaction levels at 36% and 37%, respectively. The national LGA survey figure for satisfaction with road maintenance of 39% is well above the equivalent figure for Brighton and Hove (30%). This is also the case with pavement maintenance where 31% of residents are satisfied compared with a national average of 54%

Six in ten residents are satisfied with library services in the city, while just 3% report dissatisfaction (22% say they "don't know"). However, the national LGA benchmark figure for satisfaction with library services is even higher, standing at 71%. Female residents (30%) are more likely to be very satisfied with library services than males (24%).

Half of the survey participants who express an opinion are satisfied with sports and leisure services in the city. Meanwhile, 12% report dissatisfaction. Nationally, the benchmark LGA survey figure for sports and leisure services stands at 64%. Male residents (13%) are less likely to be very satisfied with sports and leisure services than females (18%). 18-34s are most satisfied (20% very satisfied) compared with 14% of 35-54s and 12% of those aged 55+.

More than six in ten (62%) are satisfied with arts and culture in the city, with just 6% reporting dissatisfaction (12% say "don't know"). There is no benchmark data for this question.

More than seven in ten (71%) are satisfied with parks and open spaces in the city. Meanwhile, one in ten is dissatisfied. In previous years, with a slightly different question wording*, satisfaction was considerably higher: 89% in 2012 and 91% in 2013. The very satisfied proportion is highest in BN1 (38%) and BN3 (37%) and weaker in BN41 (29%) and BN2 (25%).

A total of 61% are very or fairly satisfied with the Seafront, while 11% report a level of dissatisfaction. One in four (25%) of 18-34s are very satisfied with the Seafront, compared with 22% of 55+ residents and 18% in the 35-54 age bracket.

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