

Appendix 1

Ward Forum Feedback Survey

Summary Report (Oct 2013)

Introduction

Since its inception in September 2008, Ward Forums have offered Ealing residents an opportunity to be involved in local democracy and have their say on local issues.

Led by ward councillors, the 23 forums feature joint problem solving on local concerns, including discussions on issues such as community safety, traffic and transport schemes, parks and street improvements. With an annual budget of £37,500, each forum combines the collective local knowledge of residents and ward councillors to recommend local improvement projects to benefit their ward.

Information on council services, forthcoming consultations and events that affect each ward are also provided. Forums are open to all Ealing residents, meeting at least three times a year in informal and accessible local venues.

The Ward Forum Feedback Survey

A short feedback form to capture residents' feedback on the effectiveness and operation of the ward forums was introduced in January 2009, initially available in paper form and distributed at the ward forum meetings. In late 2011, an online version of the survey was also made available and ward forum attendees were encouraged to complete the survey online. Surveys can still be completed on paper and returned via the Neighbourhood Co-ordinator for or by post to the Neighbourhood Governance Team.

The online ward forum survey also enables those who have not attended a meeting to have their say about the forums. Residents can complete an online form on the council web site page - <http://www.ealing.gov.uk/wardforum>.

Key findings from the survey 2009-2013

This document highlights the key findings of the survey during the period January 2009 – October 2013. A total of 618 responses were received during this period, representing less than one per cent of the total number of people who attended ward forum meetings, including special item meetings during the period. Attendance at ward forum meetings has been shown below:

Period	No. of meetings	No. of residents attended
Sept 2008 - Mar 2009	60	2,515
Apr 2009 - Mar 2010	69	2,194
Apr 2010 - Mar 2011	70	2,250
Apr 2011 - Mar 2012	72	2,357
Apr 2012 - Mar 2013	71	2,518
Apr 2013 – Oct 2013	19	684
Total	361	12,518

At the end of each meeting feedback forms were handed out to interested residents to measure their thoughts about the meetings themselves and their attitudes toward the local community as a result of the forums.

A breakdown of the 618 responses received during the period September 2008 to October 2013 is shown below. Ealing Broadway was the ward with the highest feedback from ward forum meetings (88 people). Feedback was generally low for all five wards in the Southall area.

Ward	No. of feedback surveys completed
Ealing Broadway	88
Cleveland	61
Hobbayne	50
North Greenford	48
Northolt Mandeville	43
Greenford Green	36
Northfield	34
Ealing Common	33
Greenford Broadway	31
Perivale	30
Elthorne	29
Southfield	27
Hanger Hill	25
Acton Central	24
Northolt West End	13
East Acton	12
Dormers Wells	8
Southall Green	7
South Acton	6
Norwood Green	5
Southall Broadway	4
Walpole	3
Lady Margaret	1
Total	618

Because of the small number of responses received from most wards, it is not possible to analyse the results at ward level. Therefore most of the analysis in this document has been focused on the overall feedback about all ward forums; although where possible the top wards for a particular measure have been highlighted. Wards where less than 30 responses were received in total have been excluded from this analysis for reason of very small numbers.

1. Role of Ward Forums in Engagement and Local Involvement

Overall, the feedback received through the survey shows that ward forums have been successful in improving local engagement and involvement in decision-making. Just over 70% of respondents agreed that ward forums have succeeded in engaging them in decision-making, and that ward forums have made decision making more local (78%). Similarly, just over 70% said they were able to have a say in how the money allocated to ward forums was spent.

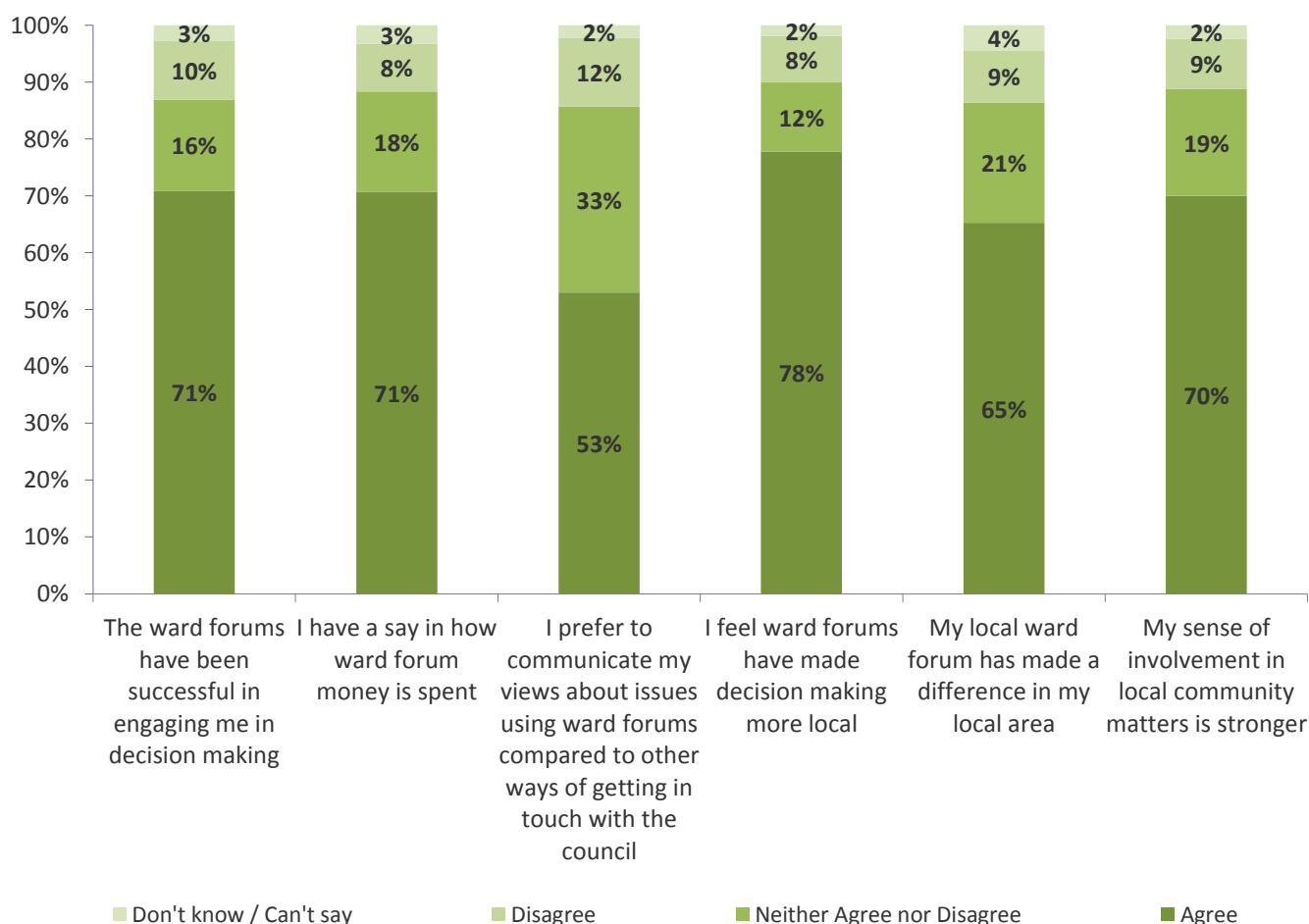
Ward forums as a preferred channel for communicating local concerns was the only aspect where the lowest proportion of residents agreed, although this was a still majority feeling (53%).

Ward forums were also seen as making a difference in the local area, with just under two thirds of the respondents agreeing with this statement.

Ealing Broadway was the ward with the most positive responses to all aspects of this section. This was closely followed by Cleveland, North Greenford and Hobbayne.

Responses to all questions in this section of the survey are shown in the chart below.

To what extent do you agree or disagree with the below proposals?



2. Attitudes towards Various Aspects of Ward Forum Meetings

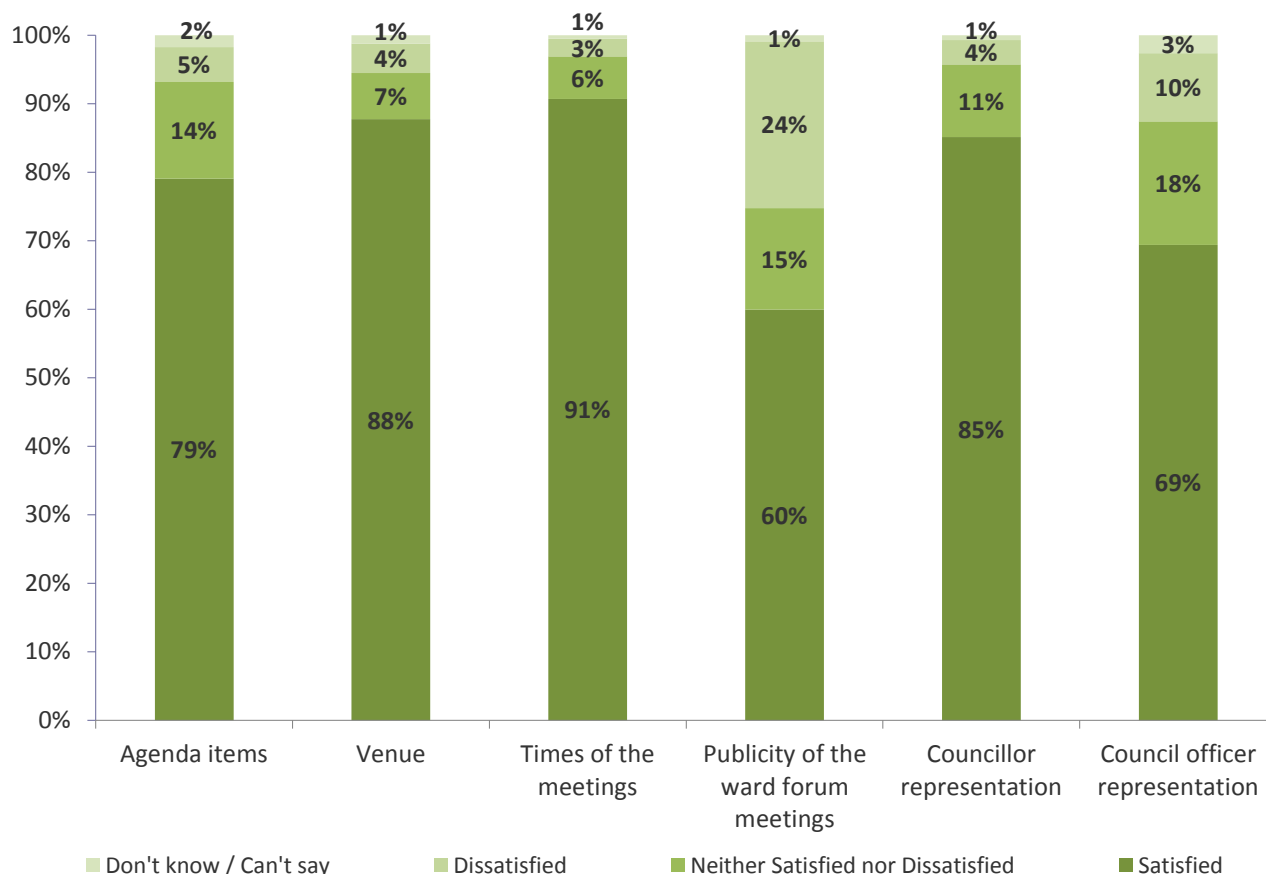
An overwhelming majority of those who responded to the feedback survey said they were satisfied with various aspects of the ward forum meetings such as meeting times, venue, agenda items, etc. Nine out of every ten residents found times of the meetings suitable, and a similar proportion were also satisfied with the meeting venue. All respondents from Northfields were satisfied with the venue.

Over four in five residents also expressed satisfaction with the agenda items for discussion as well as councillor representation at the meetings. Agenda items found the most favour in Greenford green (97%), whereas the highest proportion of those disagreeing (15%, as opposed to 5% on an average for all wards) with agenda items was from Southfield ward.

The only aspects where satisfaction was not as high were council officer representation (69% satisfied) and publicity of the ward forum meetings (60%).

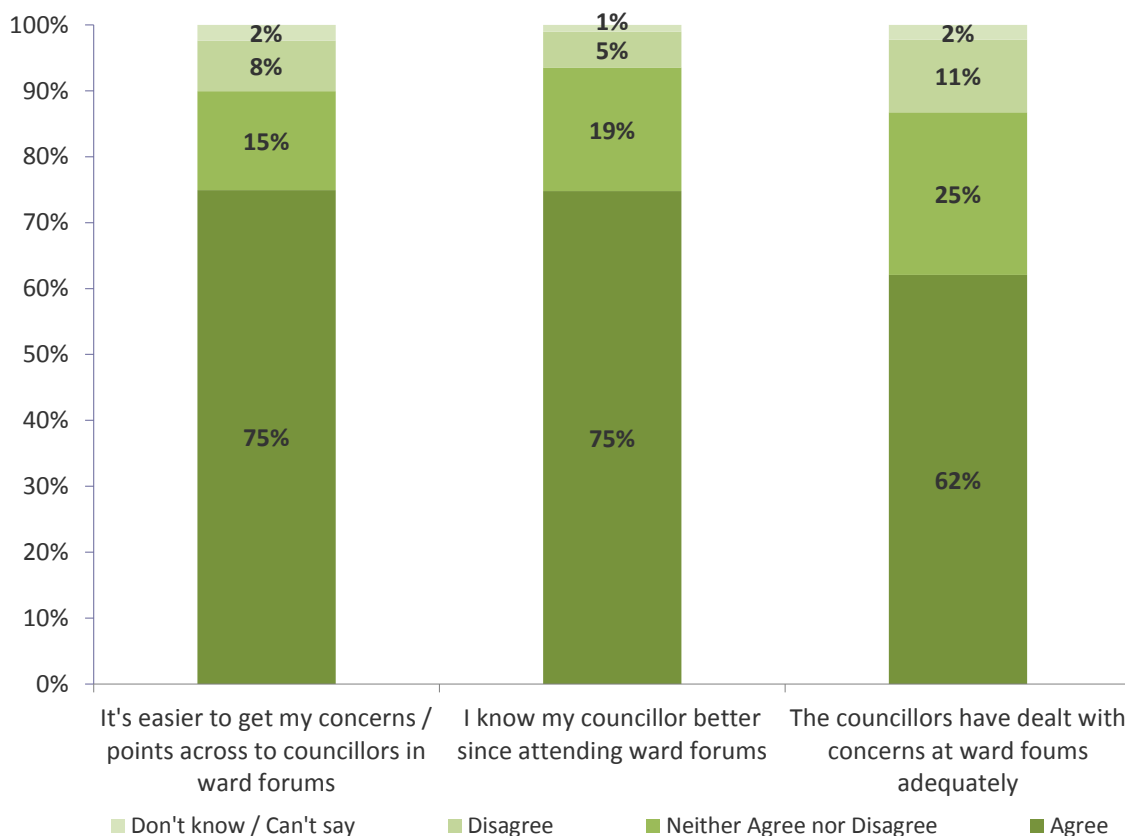
The chart below shows all the results.

How satisfied are you with the following aspects of the ward forums?



3. Councillor Involvement

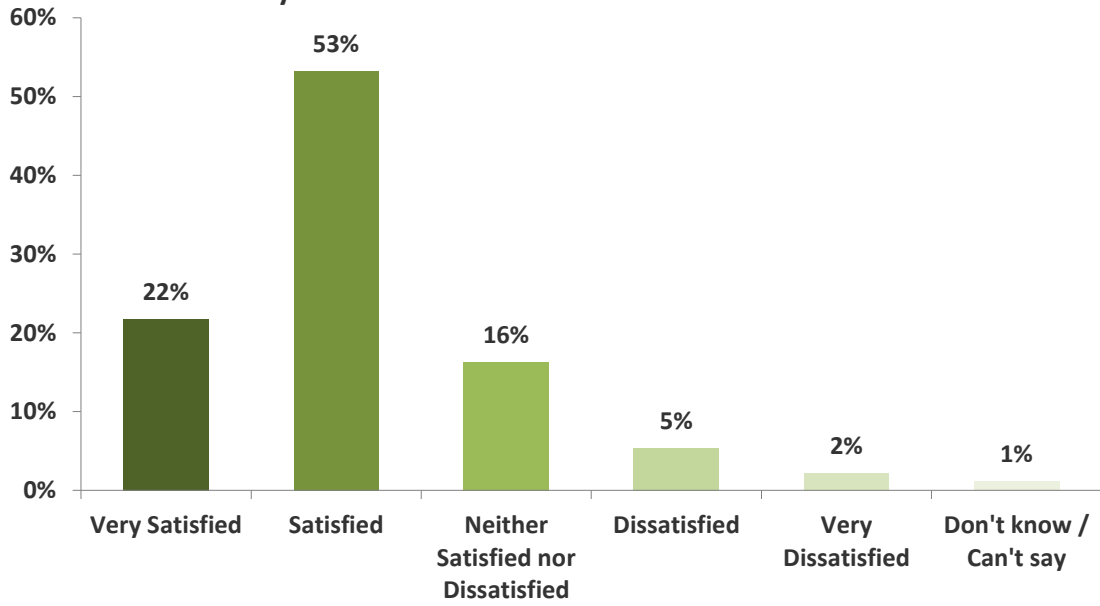
Three in four respondents agreed they got to know their councillor better as a result of attending a ward forum meeting. Further, although a similar proportion also said they found it easier to get their concerns across to the councillors through the ward forums (highest in Greenford Green at 97%), not all of them were satisfied with the extent to which these concerns were dealt with (62% agreed across the borough). Respondents from Greenford Green agreed the most that their concerns were dealt with adequately (86%), and this proportion was the lowest in North Greenford (42%). However the respondents also did not just disagree with this statement; instead, almost a third stated a neutral position ('neither agree nor disagree').



Ward forums also seem to provide a fair opportunity to interact with the local councillors. When asked how satisfied or dissatisfied they were with the level of contact they had had with councillors at the ward forum meetings, three in every four respondents said they were satisfied overall. More than a fifth (22%) said they were 'very satisfied' whereas over half (53%) expressed adequate satisfaction. The full results are shown in the chart below.

Satisfaction with the opportunity for contact with the councillor was highest in Greenford Green (97%), whereas North Greenford ranked the lowest (57%)

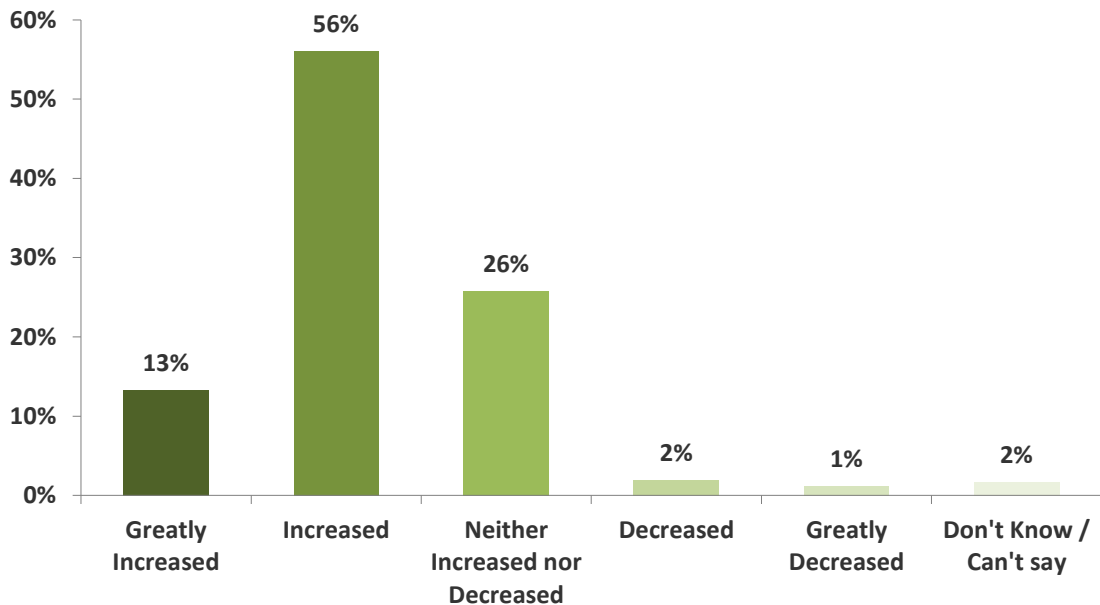
Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the level of contact you have had with councillors at ward forums?



4. Role of Ward Forums in Increasing Sense of Community

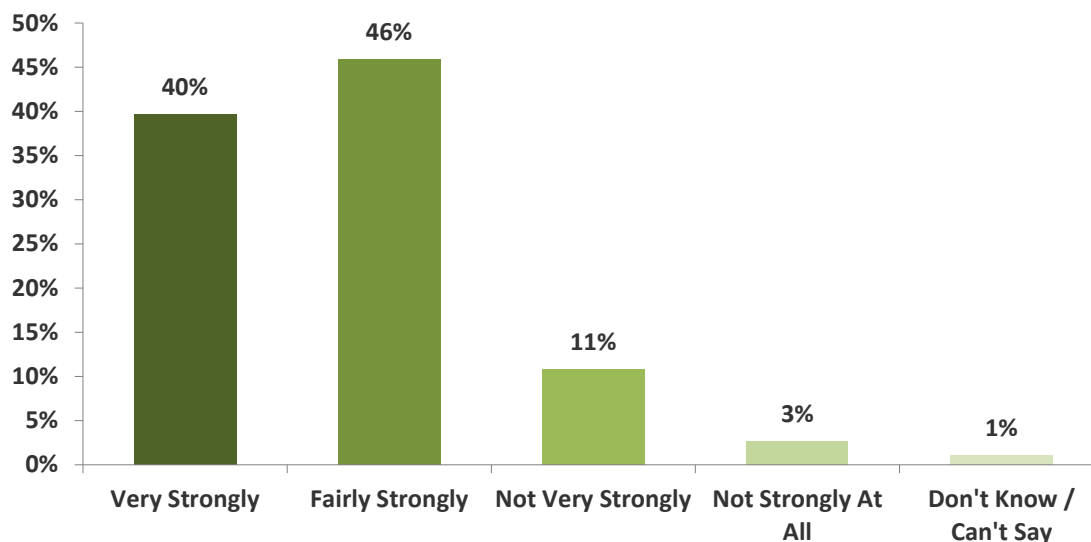
The survey also aimed to gauge if ward forums made any difference in the strength of community feeling that residents have. Results were again positive, with almost 70% feeling their sense of community had increased as a result of attending the ward forum meetings and 13% feeling it had greatly increased.

To what extent do you feel that your sense of community has increased or decreased by attending ward forums?

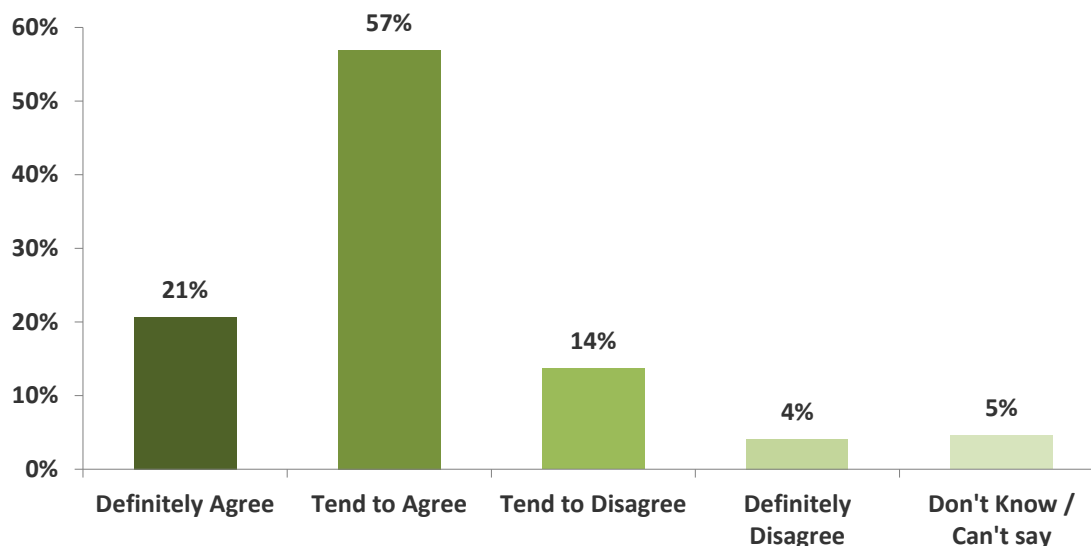


Residents were also asked to indicate how strongly they felt they belonged to their immediate neighbourhood, and if they could influence local decisions. An overwhelming majority agreed to both these questions, as shown in the two charts below. This feeling of belonging was strongest in Northfield, Greenford Green, and Cleveland, as compared to Hobbayne, North Greenford and Northolt Mandeville.

How strongly do you feel you belong to your immediate neighbourhood?

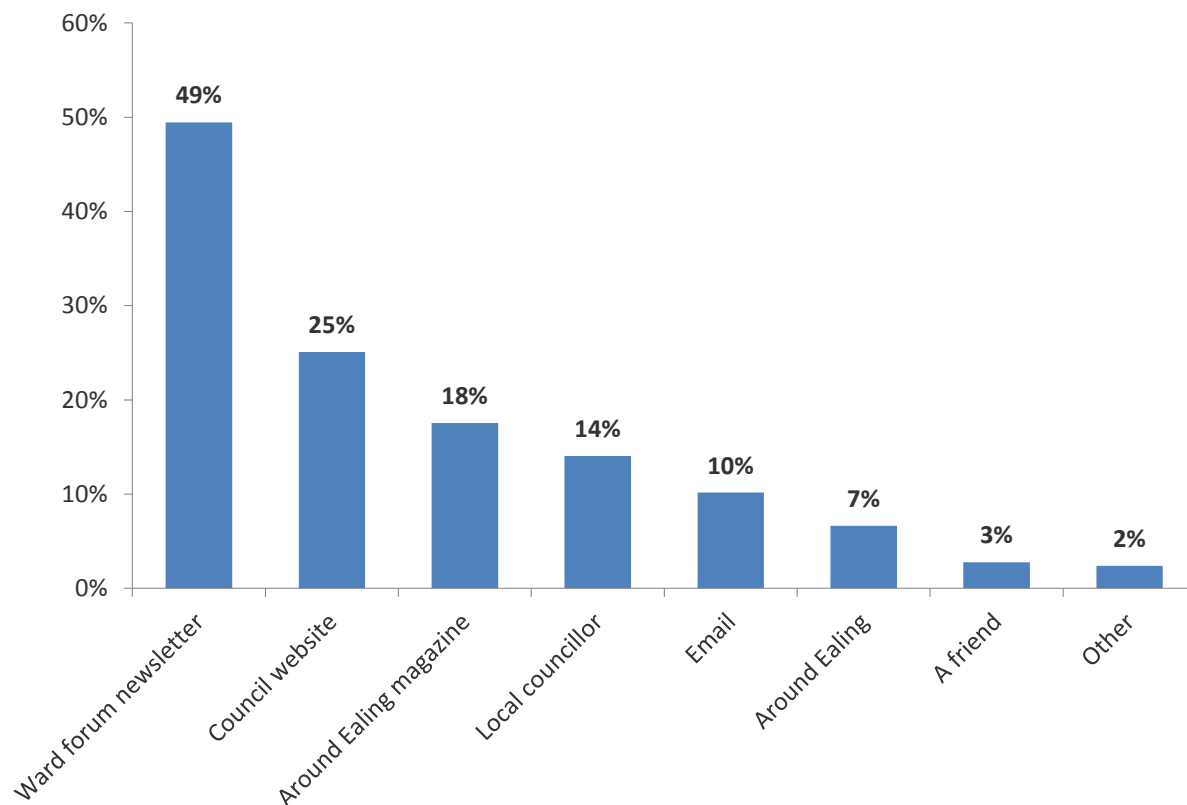


Do you agree or disagree that you can influence decisions affecting your local area?



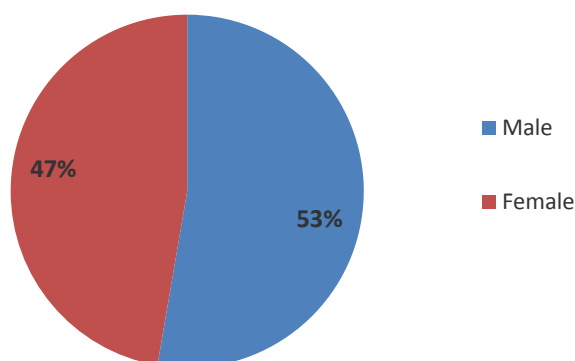
5. Methods of Finding out about Ward Forums

When asked which methods they preferred to find out about ward forums, the ward forum newsletter was mentioned by the largest proportion (49%) of respondents. This was followed by the council website (25%) and the around Ealing magazine (18%). Exactly 14% of respondents also found out through their local councillor.

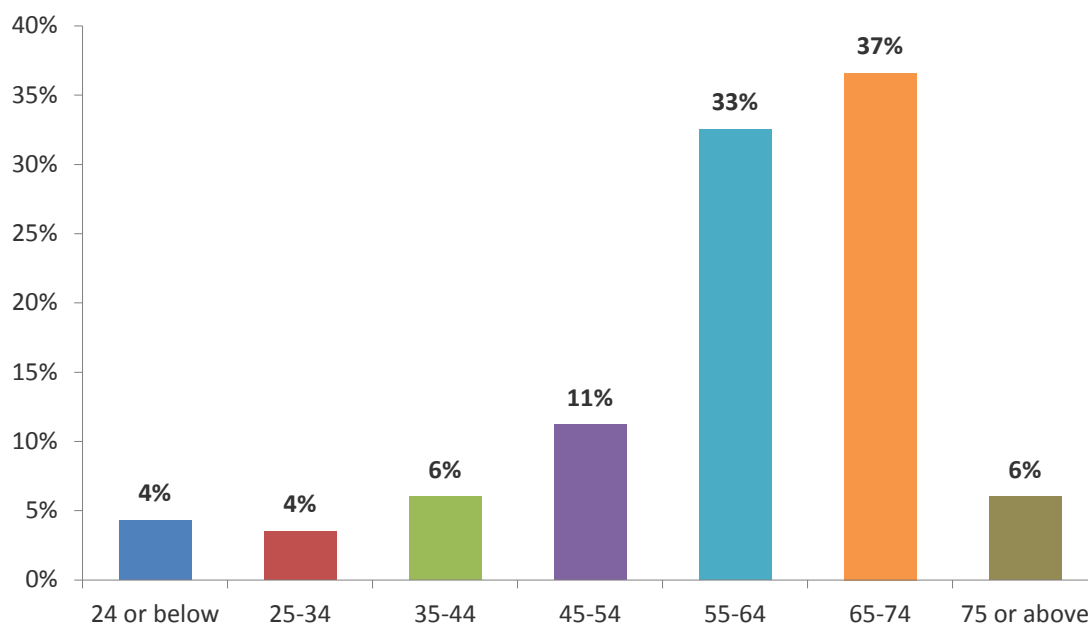


6. Respondent Profile

Residents who completed a feedback survey were almost equally represented by way of gender, with slightly more men (53%) responding as compared to women (47%).



In terms of age, the distribution was more heavily skewed towards older age groups. Over two thirds of the respondents were aged 55-74 years, although there was some representation from younger residents aged less than 24 years (4%).



Feedback on ward forums also came predominantly from the White British ethnic group, with very few residents from other ethnic groups completing a survey. Low representation of Asian and other ethnic groups may also be due to a low response to the survey from the Southall area, which is where most residents from other ethnic groups live.

