

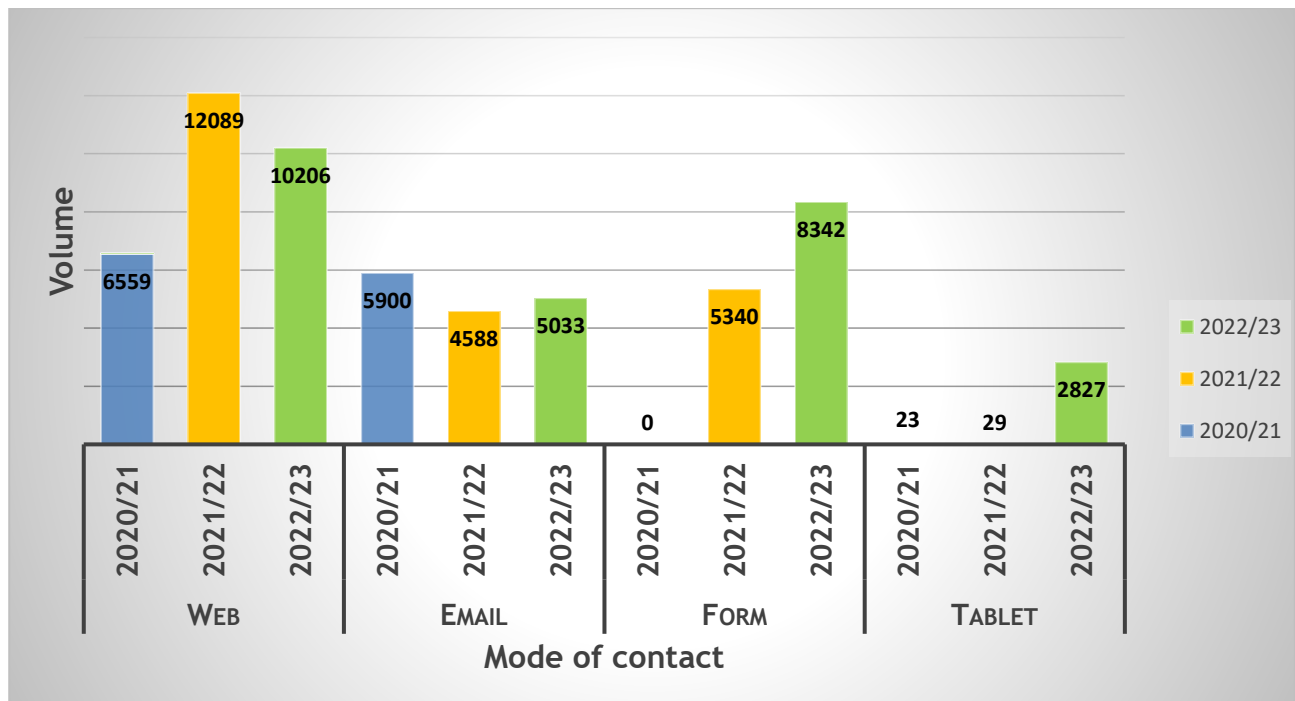
1.0 Customer Feedback in 2022/23

1.1 The collection of feedback from customers using our ESCC website and online forms, receiving email correspondence from teams and accessing services in-person has continued to assist in monitoring of customer satisfaction across the Council and to provide valuable insight which informs service improvements. The feedback from our website and forms continues to add value to the Council’s ambition for customers to self-serve as much as possible, while striving for a high level of customer service.

1.2 Headlines for customer feedback in 2022/23:

- We received over 26,000 ratings across all feedback surveys
- We received 5,871 verbatim comments from customers.
- Overall customer satisfaction rating for 2022/23 was 78%, which is an increase of 2% compared to the previous year.
- We resumed collecting feedback from customers in-person at libraries following the lifting of pandemic restrictions.
- Customer satisfaction decreased by 5% for emails and 2% for the website.
- Collection of feedback from ASC Portal forms began in July 2022 and customer satisfaction has remained high at 93%.
- Feedback surveys remain well used with most methods of contact seeing an increase.

Graph 1 - Volume of customer feedback and comments, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23

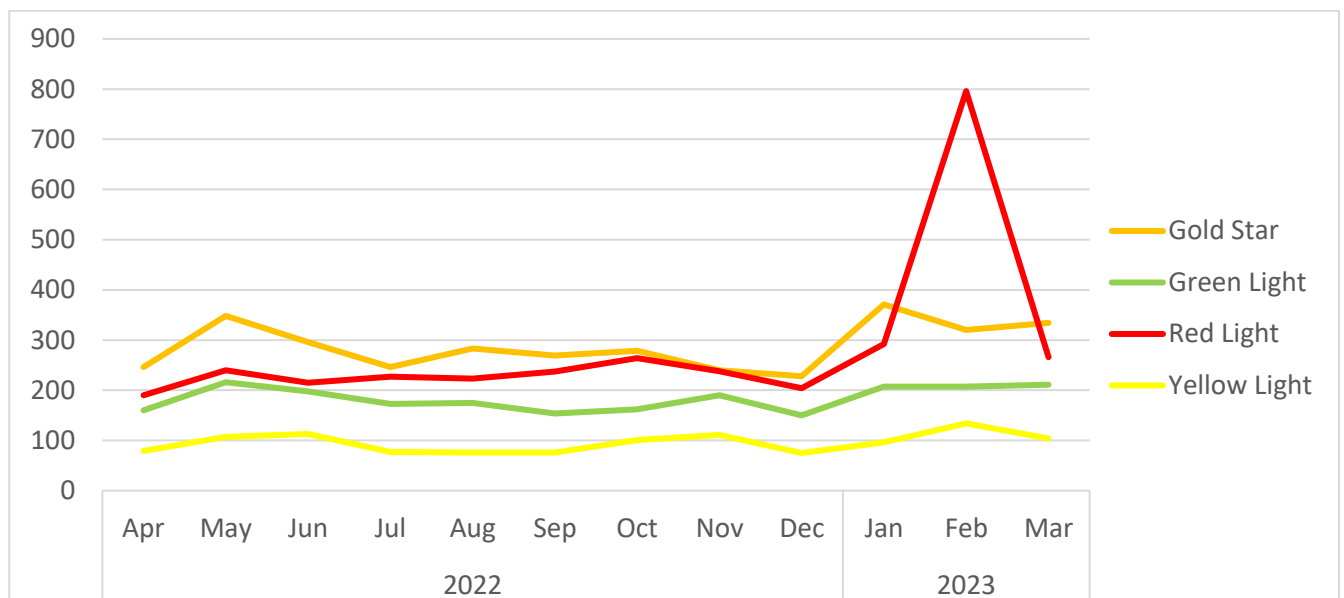


2.0 Website feedback 2022/23

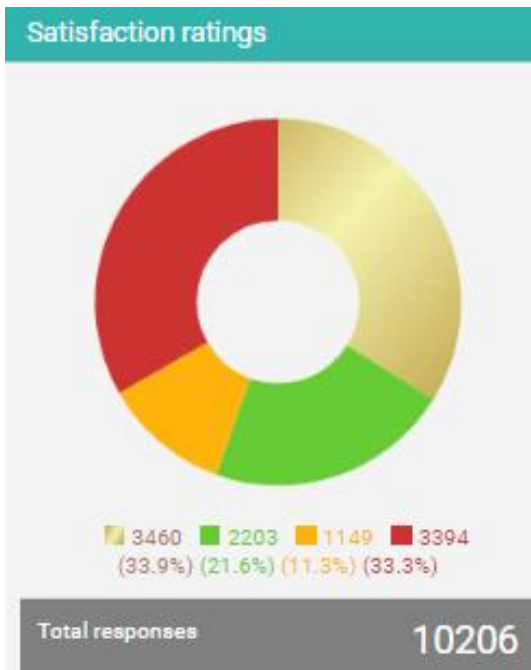
2.1 Key takeaways:

- Feedback surveys are available on 23% of our website content.
- The volume of website feedback decreased by 18% compared to the previous year. This is following an 84% increase in feedback last year; therefore, this still represents a 55% increase in feedback in comparison with 2020/21. The higher quantity of feedback on webpages in the previous year is likely due to more people self-serving via the website during pandemic restrictions.
- There was an increase in poor feedback for the website, notably due to a weekend in February where some website functionality was affected, however collection of feedback was unaffected and caused a spike in negative feedback for this month. This significantly affected several teams but notably the Transport Hub as this coincided with their peak time for bus pass renewals. In total, 1,458 responses were received for the month of February, over a third of these were received during the 3-day period 11-13 February and 87% of those were poor.
- Despite the spike in negative feedback during Q4, overall satisfaction for the year was 67%. The results indicate that residents are using self-service resources and the surveys highlight what isn't working so we can react quickly to our customers' feedback.

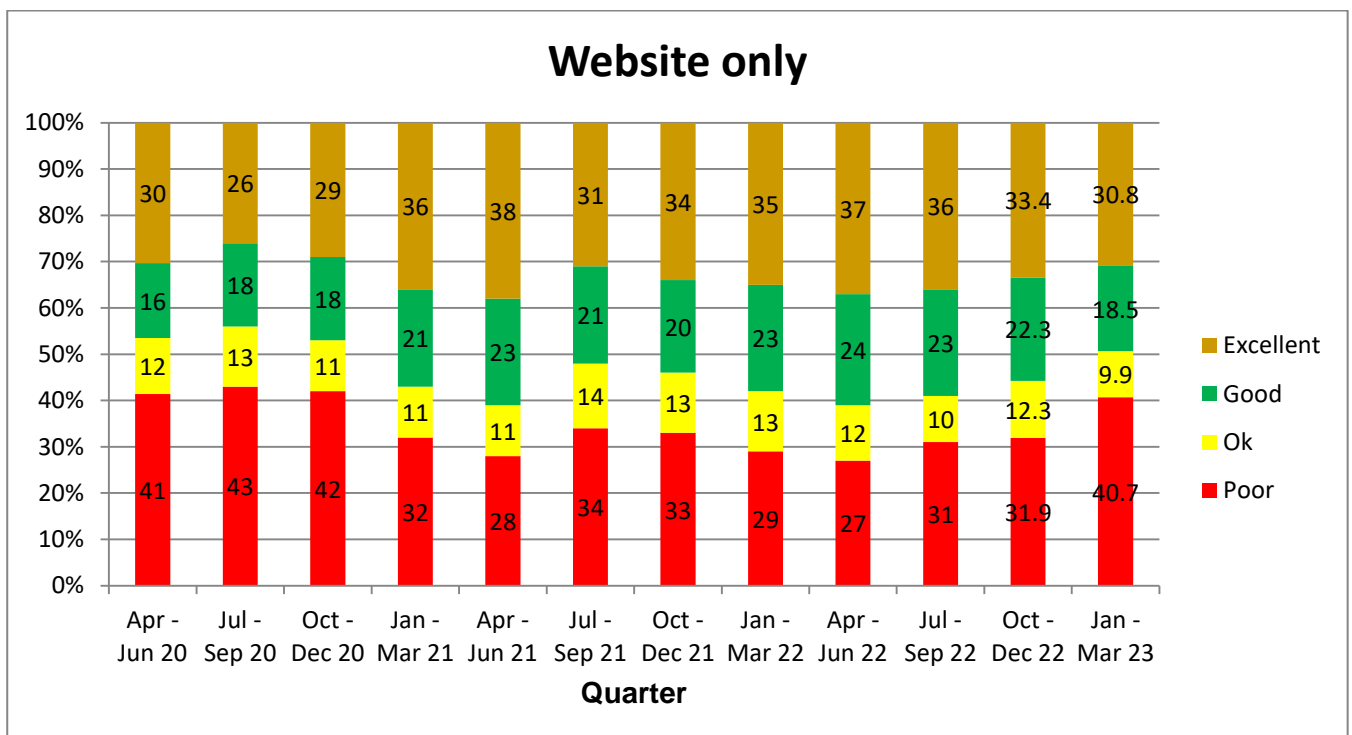
Graph 2 - spike in negative feedback for the website in February 2023.



Graph 3 - Customer satisfaction ratings: Website, 2022/23



Graph 4 - Website satisfaction ratings: three-year comparison, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23



2.2 Services continue to analyse which areas of their content could be improved in response to feedback. The following points provide information on developments to the ESCC website in 2022/23 that are relevant to improving customer experience:

- Additional links to content have been added where customers have identified they would be useful within existing content.
- Feedback is used to review web content and ensure that signposting is clear and accurate.

- Format changes have been considered where comments have suggested content is difficult to follow, e.g., using one longer page of content, rather than navigating through several smaller pages. The impact on accessibility and reading age always need to be considered when changes are being made.
- Feedback is being used as a monitoring tool for trialling improvements to see if they have increased the clarity of tasks.

2.3 Ongoing developments include:

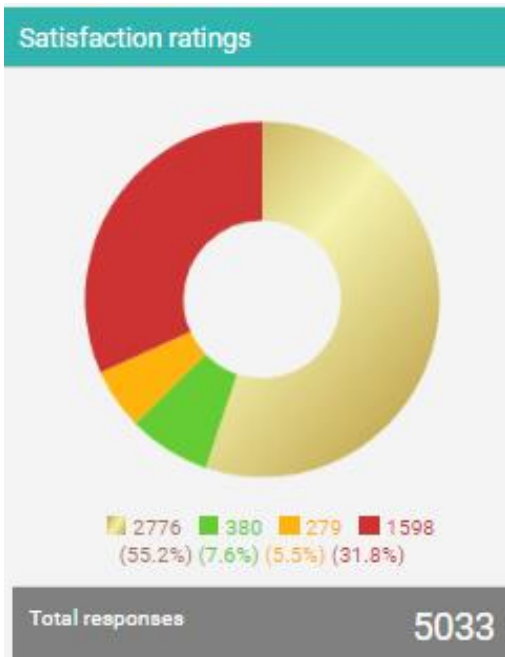
- The transfer of documents published on the ESCC website to accessible html pages has meant that the scope for collecting feedback from the website has increased due to the ability to add surveys to these pages and allow collection of feedback on guidance documents, policies and other resources which were previously PDF documents.
- It is accepted that feedback is affected by a certain level of dissatisfaction due to the services we provide based on policy, particularly enforcement decisions we take. We intend to begin collecting feedback at the start of customer journeys through surveys on web contact forms to gauge customers satisfaction at different stages of their experience, rather than only following an outcome they may disagree with.
- Digital Services began the Microsites Project and Governance Group with the aim of transferring eligible sites to the in-house web editing software, Umbraco. The Microsites Project Team have published guidance on creating microsites and microsite standards to ensure the necessary considerations for budget, governance, security, accessibility and content to ensure a positive customer experience. Microsites which aren't transferred are being reviewed to ensure privacy and accessibility criteria are met.
- Planned upgrade to NSL Apply in response to feedback and to improve accessibility when applying for permits.
- Procurement of a new mapping system by Parking Services to replace PDF maps with interactive ones, in response to feedback that maps need updating and improving.

3.0 Email feedback 2022/23

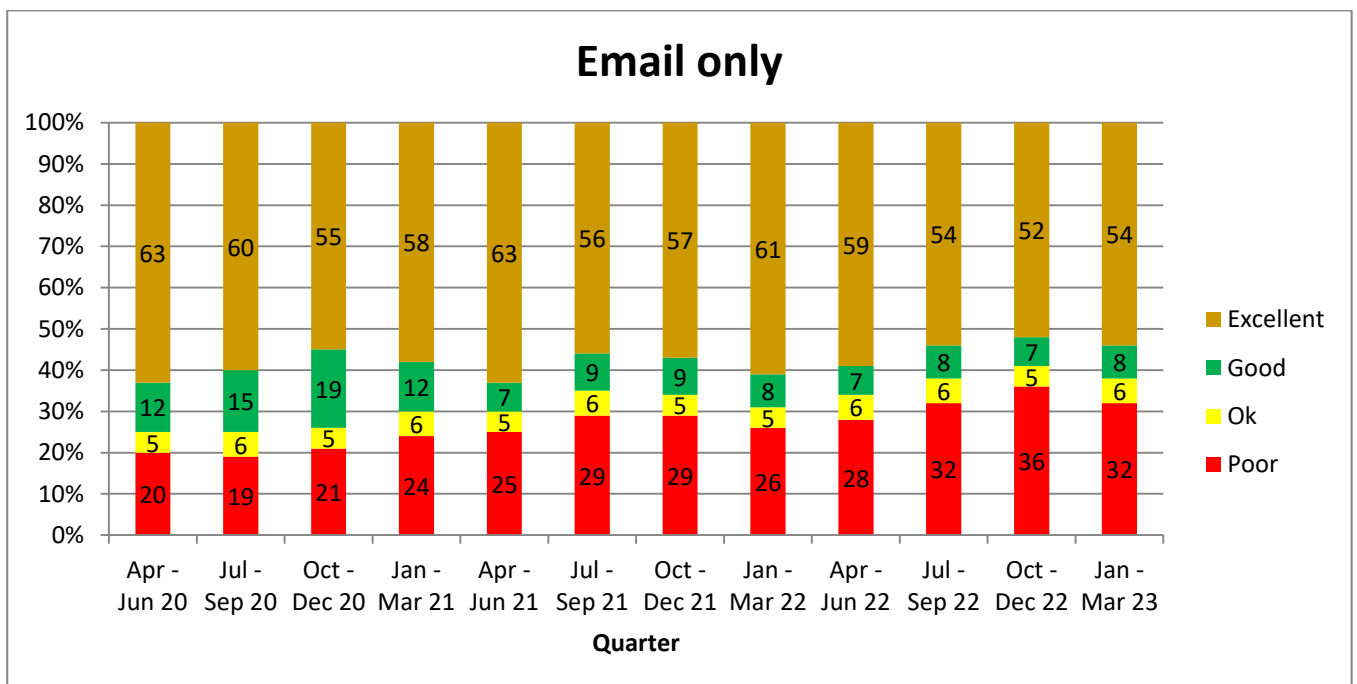
3.1 Key takeaways:

- We received over 5,000 pieces of feedback, which is a 9% increase compared to the previous year.
- 14 teams are using the email feedback surveys, the same number as last year. Five additional email surveys are set to begin collecting feedback in 2023/24.
- Overall customer satisfaction rating for emails was 68%, five percent lower than in 2021/22.
- The largest volume of negative ratings for email correspondence relate to services that engage with a large section of our residents by virtue of the services they provide, e.g., highways, parking and school admissions.

Graph 5 - Customer satisfaction ratings: Email, 2022/23



Graph 6 - Email satisfaction ratings: three-year comparison, 2020/21, 2021/22 and 2022/23



3.2 Analysis of customer feedback and staff comments shows that:

- Dissatisfaction mainly relates to where services are defending the decision of the Council to (a) uphold an initial decision or (b) to not act regarding a reported issue. However, comments regarding customer service suggest slow responses and negative tone of replies.
- In response, some teams have increased peer proofreading of their replies and ensuring plain English is used where circumstances can be technical.
- Staff have voiced frustration where feedback is provided but no details are given for them to follow up on concerns raised. The surveys do make clear that responses are anonymous, and customers can reply directly to services for any further conversation needed. Where

sufficient information is provided to investigate the response, this is undertaken by services.

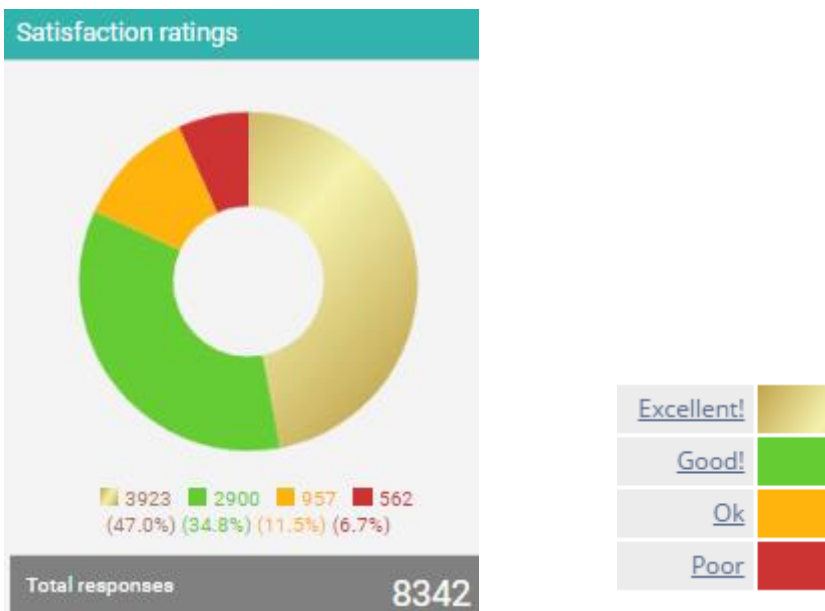
- Comments provided with ‘excellent’ ratings provide compliments about staff, quick service, satisfaction with replies and good communication.
- Despite the overall slight decrease in satisfaction for email feedback, individual team managers have confirmed these surveys assist in reviewing the quality of email correspondence and there is value to the teams in receiving the positive responses of customers.
- Unfortunately, some comments are received which are unpleasant in nature, offensive, or abusive and the step to block a particular IP address has been taken by the service to prevent further comments. This only blocks an individual user from using the anonymous feedback survey.

4 Form feedback 2022/23

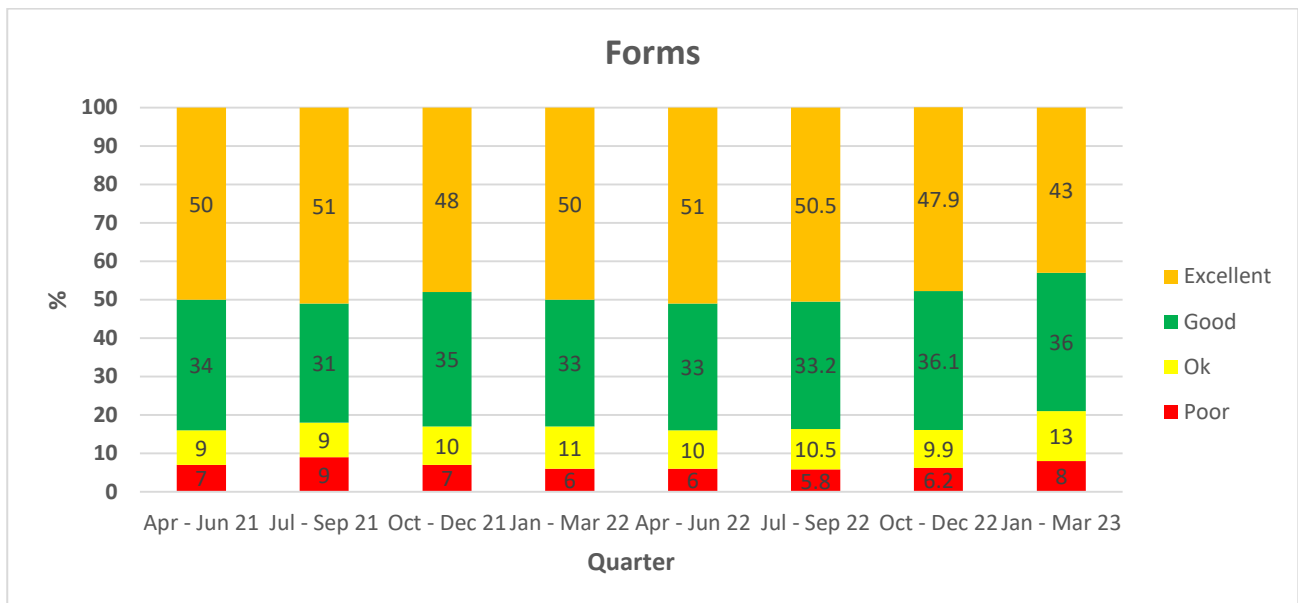
4.1. Following the success of collecting feedback through the Highways reporting and School Admissions forms in 2021/22, we began collecting feedback from seven ASC Portal forms and one CSD Portal form in 2022/23. All these surveys are well-used, and the feedback indicates that the process of using the forms is user-friendly and creates a positive customer journey with consistently high satisfaction ratings. Three additional ASC portal forms and one CSD portal form are in place to begin collecting feedback in 2023/24.

4.2. Feedback captured during the last year remains positive at an overall 93% satisfaction rating. The Shared Care Information systems (SCIS) Development Team have reported that the data from the surveys is invaluable to improving the Customer Portal. They have identified a few bugs through the feedback; one of which was a significant problem around Apple devices which has been flagged with the supplier and has been fixed in the next version of the system. They are also looking at changes to wording for some areas that have been repeatedly reported as not clear.

Graph 7 - Customer satisfaction ratings - Forms, 2022/23



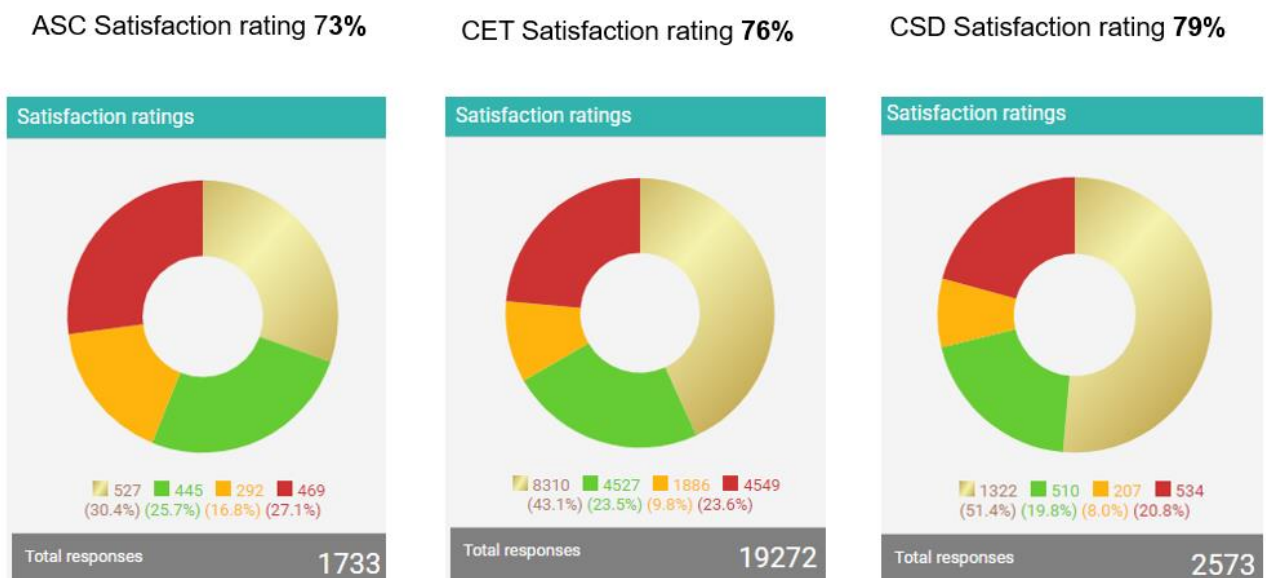
Graph 8 - Form satisfaction ratings: 2022/23



5.0 Comparison of feedback surveys received by department, 2022/23

5.1 The following graph provides satisfaction ratings and volumes by department. There is higher usage of feedback surveys in CET where there is more web content which covers the diverse range of services delivered by CET. Of the 23% of corporate website webpages which have feedback surveys, 15% is CET, ASC is 3% and CSD is 5%. CET also has 9 of the 14 surveys on emails.

Graph 9 - Customer satisfaction ratings by department (excluding face to face) - 2022/23

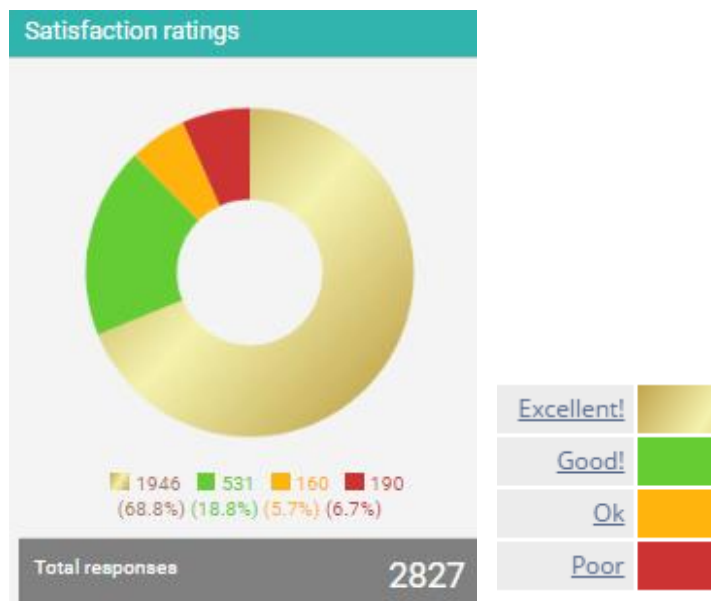


6.0 Face to face feedback 2022/23

6.1 Since the lift of pandemic restrictions in April 2022, feedback devices have been reinstalled at Eastbourne Library, Hastings Library and County Hall reception.

6.2 The devices have been well used since their reinstatement and the level of satisfaction with accessing services in-person is high at 94%. This is an increase in usage and satisfaction from pre-pandemic responses.

Graph 10 - Customer satisfaction ratings - Tablets, 2022/23



7.0 Telephone feedback

7.1 As in the previous year, during 2022/23 East Sussex Highways (ESH) remained the only service to continue collecting feedback by telephone. Numbers remain relatively low however they have still found the telephone surveys valuable in addition to other measures that make up the customer satisfaction performance indicator for the Highways contract.

7.2 There were 378 customers who provided feedback during 2022/23, slightly lower than the previous year (392), and 68% of customers were satisfied with the service they had received. This indicates that overall satisfaction was slightly lower in 2022/23. This reflects that ESH had a higher number of potholes and enquiries relating to highways than in previous years which placed additional pressure on the service when compared with previous years.

The table below highlights customers satisfaction with different elements of their experience.

Table 1 - Telephone survey statistics: East Sussex Highways, 2022/23

Services	No. surveys answered	Overall satisfaction	Satisfaction with:			
			Time taken to respond	Helpfulness and politeness of staff	Fully understood your needs	Quality of information and advice given
2020/21	480	70%	72%	83%	79%	72%
2021/22	392	70%	68%	79%	78%	72%
2022/23	378	68%	66%	77%	76%	70%

7.3 At the Customer Experience Board in March 2023, it was agreed to postpone a re-trial of telephone surveys and additional SMS surveys for other services across the Council until we have the necessary statistics of the number of telephone calls (part of the Customer Contact Data Project) and a new telephony system is in place which will make it technically possible, in order to gain more valuable results from a feedback survey, which were first trialled in 2018.

8.0 Customer Service Network

8.1 The Customer Services Network sessions in 2022/23 continued to be useful for sharing lessons learned and best practice internally, for example, new accessibility tools and microsite guidance. They have also provided a forum for information to be shared by external partners and disseminated to customer-facing teams, for example, Sussex Police's Click Call Connect Campaign.

8.2 The meetings have allowed us to share feedback results from the feedback surveys and gain valuable insight from services in response to their own feedback. We have also shared the approved recommendations from the Customer Experience Board and used the network to encourage the use of Customer Thermometer (feedback software) across a broad spectrum of services, as well as gaining input on possible methods of feedback.

8.3 Significant updates shared with teams have been the revision of the Unreasonable Customer Behaviour Policy and the expansion of customer thermometer surveys across existing and new methods of contact.

9.0 Conclusions

9.1 The increased quantity of customer feedback gathered during 2022/23 (around 4,000 more responses) is due to the reinstatement of face-to-face feedback devices and the increase in number of forms available through the ASC and CSD Portals. The level of positive feedback recorded from these forms is a positive step towards increased use of self-service methods of contact.

9.2 Teams' familiarity with this method of feedback maximises the value of the feedback to aid colleagues and customers and has been recommended by staff to colleagues, which is currently supporting the success of the further rollout of Customer Thermometer across existing methods.

9.3 We will continue to work with teams to increase the use of Customer Thermometer via existing methods. We will also increase the number of places where customers can provide feedback through the planned further rollout of the customer feedback surveys, to meet our commitment to providing valuable information for reviewing and improving services for customers.

9.4 Service-specific feedback still proves valuable to allow individual services to review their own feedback and make local changes, while the analysis of all surveys by the Customer Services Team provides a useful Council-wide overview.