

The State of UK Public Parks Report 2021

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State of Parks Research 2021

- Follow on from 2013 and 2016 research
- Over 25% of UK's Parks Services responded to this
- Never more popular with public
- Political profile high – 72% see Parks as a priority for their LA
- However, disappointing CSR



Headlines

- A further £190m cut from revenue budgets over past 5 years
- Cuts have not been equitable across the country – average loss £475k
- North West one area most affected by cuts and declining condition
- UK Parks collectively in worst condition since 2013
- Proportion of Parks in good condition lower than those in fair
- Areas showing highest amount of fair and poor Y&H, NE, WM
- Some concern that other areas of the country will level down rather than up as budgets continue to tighten
- $\frac{3}{4}$ of those reporting decline had seen decrease in revenue budgets

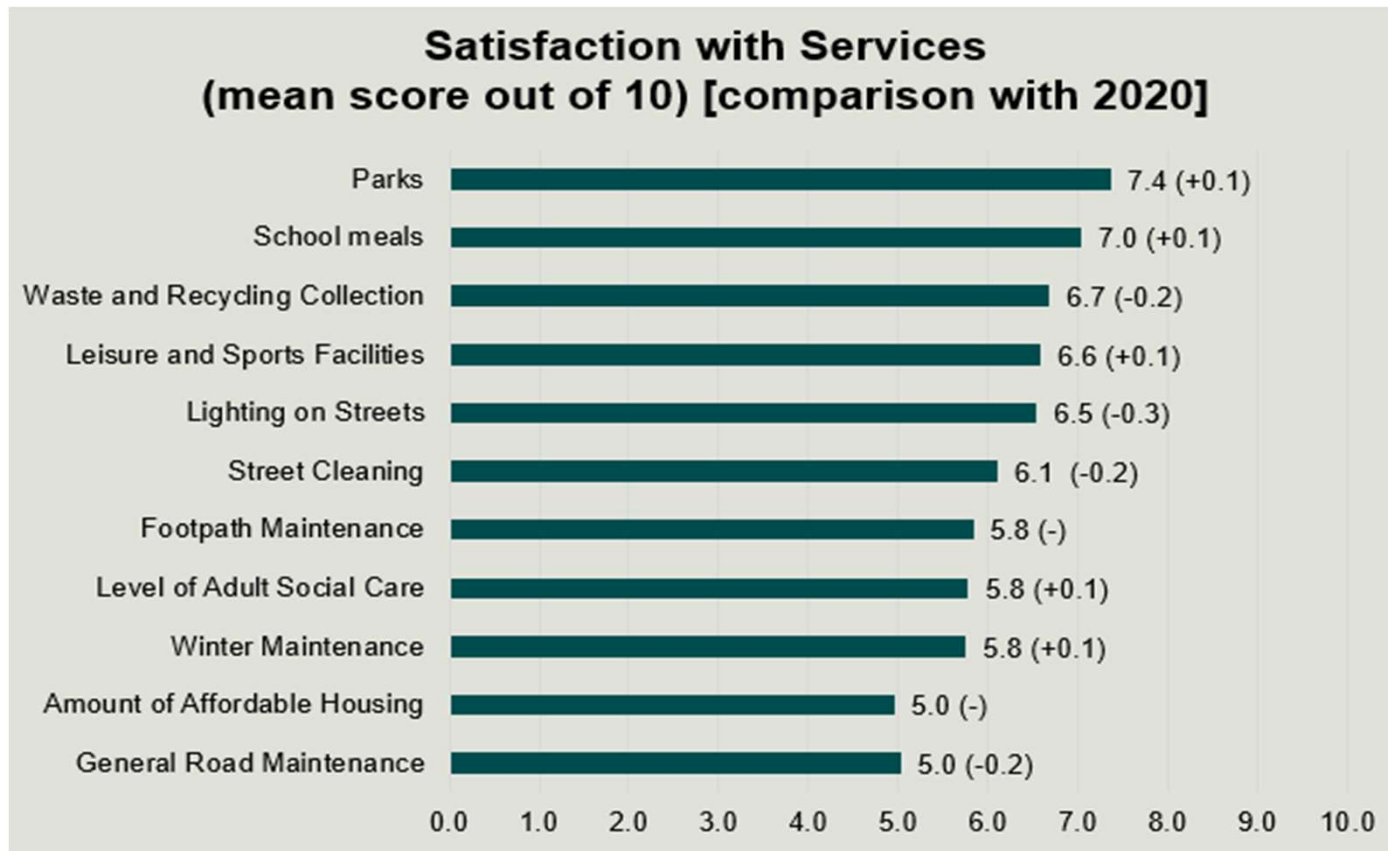
Headlines continued

- Some optimism 40% of LA's hoping condition will improve next 3 years
- However, 60% standing still or declining
- 32% reduction frontline staff, 41% management, 23% development
- Some hoping for increases next 3 years others remain concerned about further cuts to management and frontline staff
- Ageing workforce, Over 50% over 50, male and predominately white
- Need to change workforce profile and create career structure

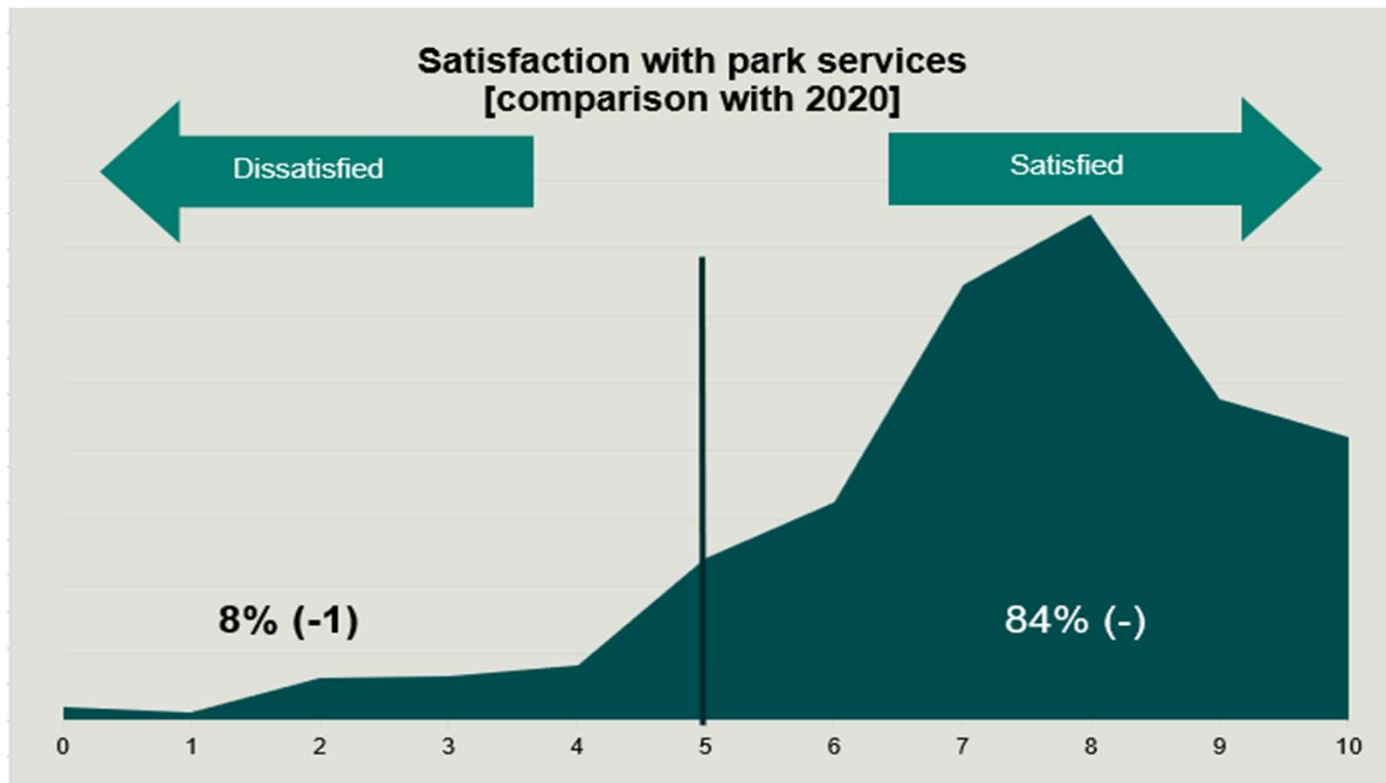
Covid issues

- Workforce isolating, redeployed and overran
- Wear and tear from huge numbers of visitors – 88% seen increases
- Income generation wiped out as restrictions impacted
- Loss of volunteers and friends groups
- 70% seen negative impacts on their parks during pandemic

Satisfaction levels vary between services



7.3 Parks



Parks and greenspace pointers

- Carbon emissions from property and facilities
- Active lifestyles and travel
- Mental health, social prescribing, outdoor exercise
- EV car clubs based out of leisure centres, car parks there already, Ebike hubs, bike hire, repair and lend
- Recycling green waste and water
- Renewables location
- Reforestation

Opportunities

- Pocket parks?
- Covid reminder
- Public health
- Political support
- Local priority
- Biodiversity net gain
- Climate action

Conclusions

- State of the market not a pretty picture
- Parks have an opportunity to reinvent themselves
- Public support
- Starting from a low point in terms of finance, condition and staff
- Council budgets 22/23
- Part of push to net zero

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