



Evidence, data and state of the market

Wednesday 24 August 2016

Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks



Are parks really important?

- Growing recognition as to the value of parks to the nation's mental, physical and social well-being.
- Wider environmental value of parks to flood alleviation, ameliorating impacts of climate change, improving air quality, enhancing biodiversity and contribution to natural capital.
- Economic value of parks included in regeneration projects, attracting inward investment and promoting tourism.
- 68% of park users say spending time in parks is essential to their quality of life – **rising to 71% in urban areas (80% of UK's population is urban)**
- Parks are considered to be essential to 81% of parents with young children
- 34 million visits are made to UK parks each year (2014)

Obviously the argument is won - **isn't it?**



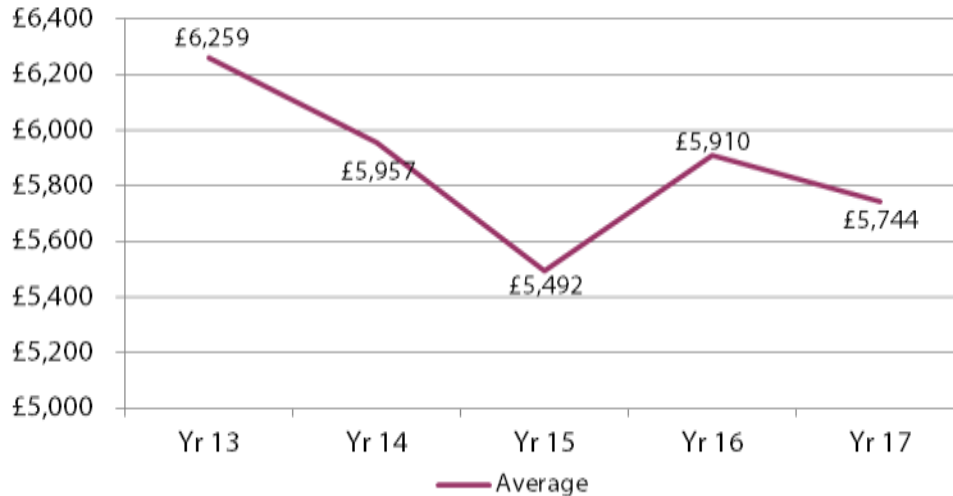
- Still a non-statutory service
- Easy target for budget cuts – anticipated up to 60% of parks and greenspace funding will be lost by 2020.
- Value is difficult to measure – generational benefits
- Saleable assets – local authorities have or are considering selling some of their greenspace



What is the evidence saying?

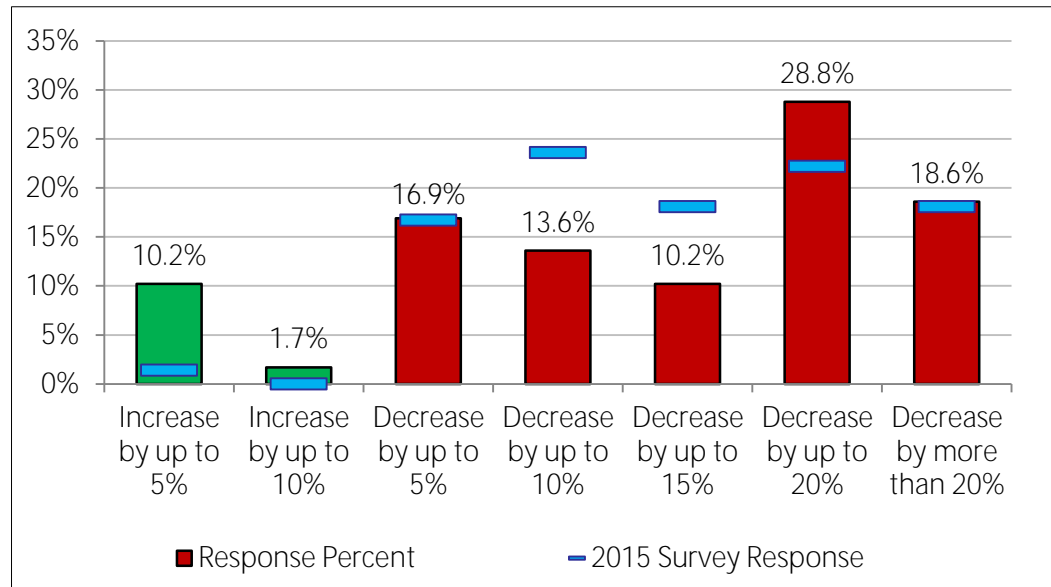


PI 02 Cost of service per hectare of maintained land (including CEC)



Parks, open spaces and horticultural services

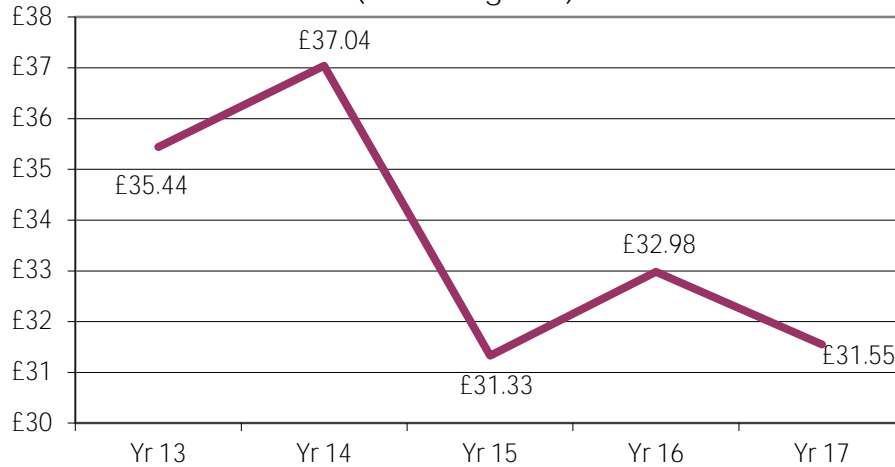
What is your expectation of the level of funding in your service budget in the coming five years?



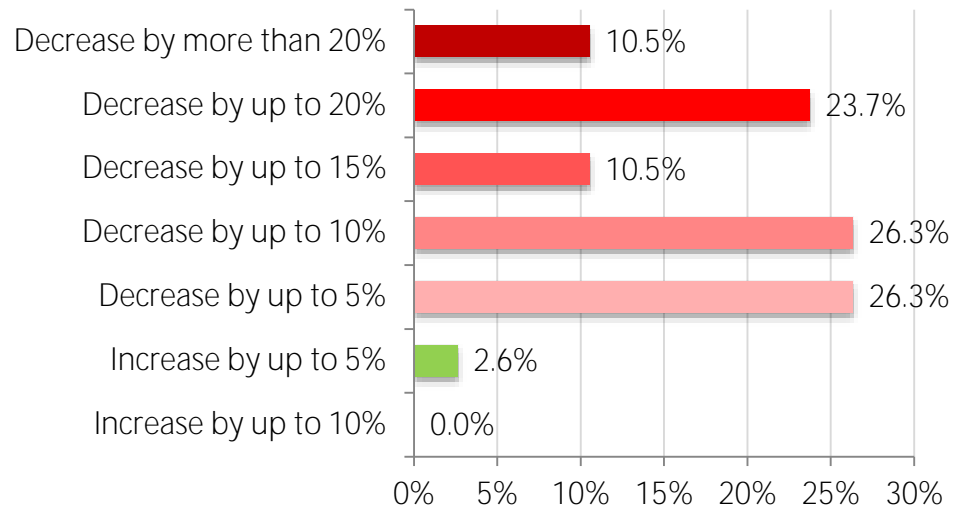
Street cleansing



PI 03 Cost of cleansing service per household (including CEC)



What is your expectation of the level of funding in your service budget in the coming five years?



Typical costs for street cleansing

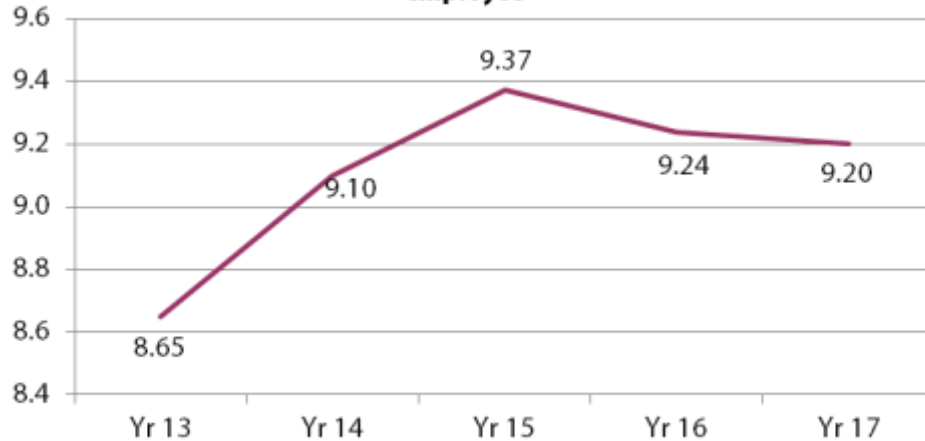


Cost area	2011/12	2012/13	2013/14	2014/15
Front line staff costs	56.77%	57.30 %	57.26 %	58.05 %
All staff costs	64.99%	66.08 %	66.55 %	67.05 %
Transport costs	21.83%	21.15 %	22.22 %	21.73 %
Central recharges	6.25%	6.65 %	6.67 %	7.06 %

Are productivity and quality being affected?

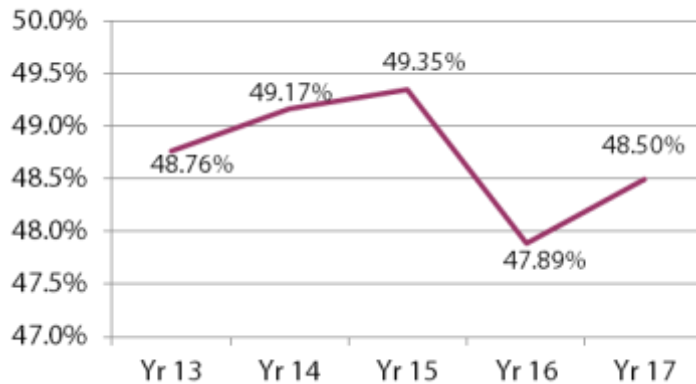


PI 12 Number of hectares maintained per FTE front line employee

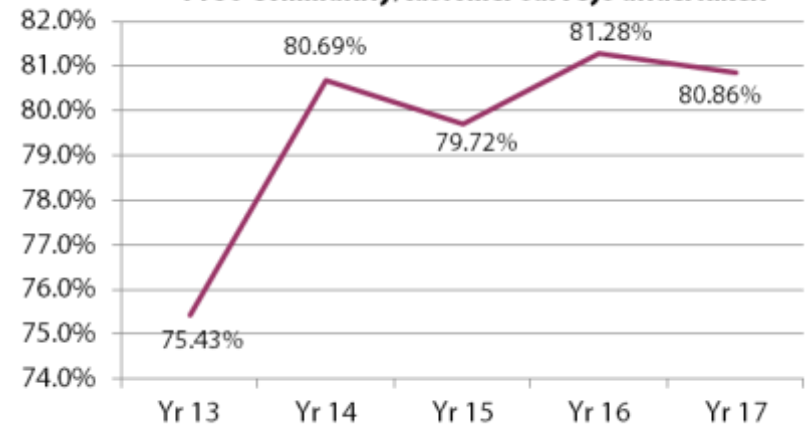


Parks, open spaces and horticultural services

PI 23 Output specification



PI 38 Community/customer surveys undertaken



Where do you see growth for the service over the next 12 months?



Community involvement/engagement	71.2%
Partnership working with other public bodies	65.4%
Sharing services with other local authorities	40.4%
Events in parks	34.6%
Offering a maintenance service to external organisations/private work	30.8%
Additional open space from housing developments	28.8%
Allotments/community gardens	25.0%
Capital projects (e.g. section 106)	21.2%
Offering a maintenance service to other local authorities	19.2%
Children's play	15.4%
Conservation and management of climate change	13.5%
Training	9.6%
Nursery production	1.9%

Where do you see future decreases in work for the service?

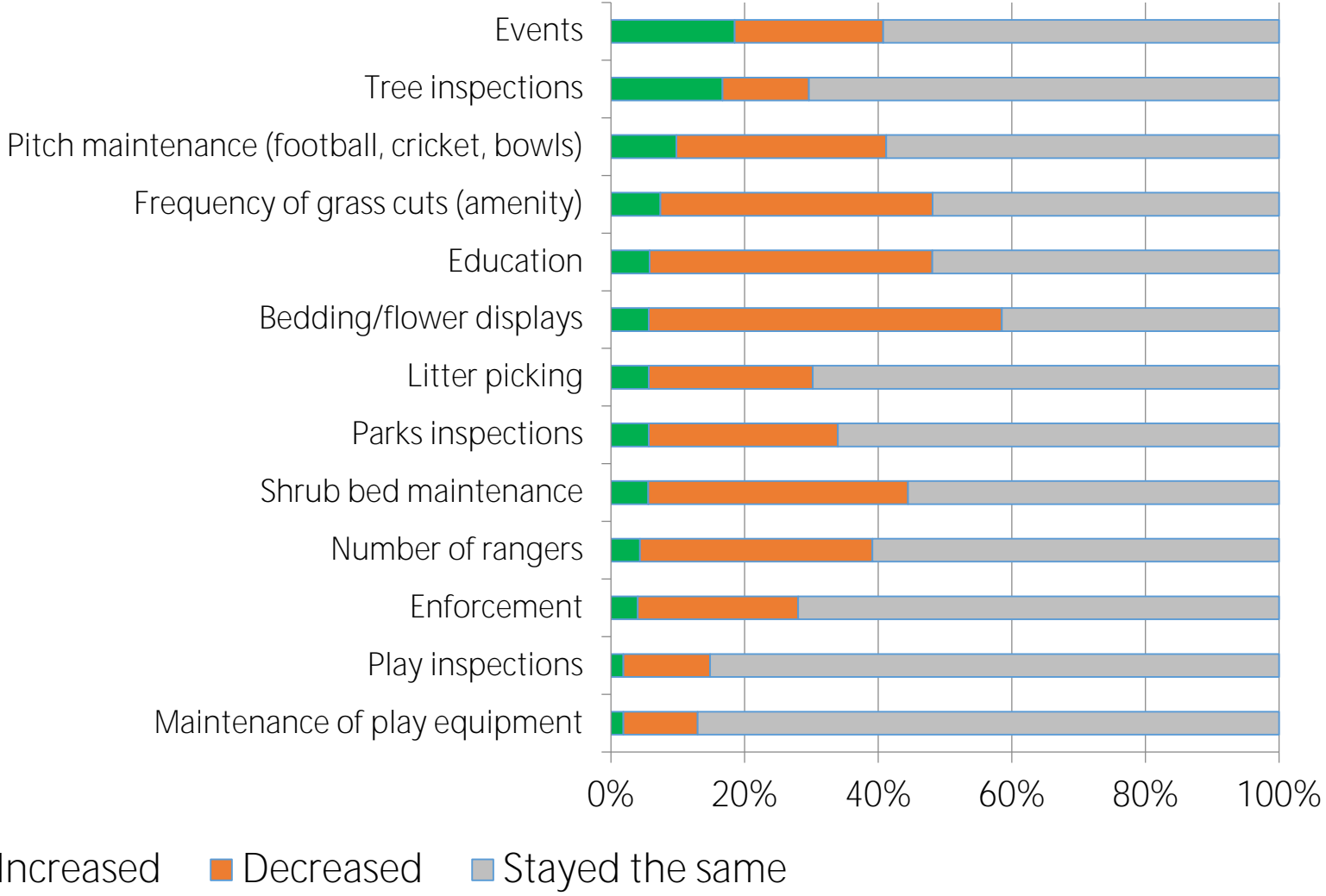


Reduced maintenance or frequency of maintenance of grounds	76.0%
Bedding, floral displays, regional shows, ornamental grass cutting, bowling greens, high amenity areas	74.0%
Reduction in service or standards	70.0%
Transfer of assets	40.0%
Sports provision	36.0%
Parks development activity	36.0%
Fewer parks and facilities	34.0%
Litter picking	32.0%
New development projects/capital investment schemes e.g. play area refurbishment	28.0%
Ranger service	28.0%
Landscaping and country parks	26.0%
Achievement in awards	26.0%
Housing grass cutting contracts	18.0%
Other council department service level agreements e.g. education, housing and leisure	16.0%
Cemeteries and closed churchyards	14.0%
Parks-specific community engagement	14.0%
Schools grounds maintenance	12.0%

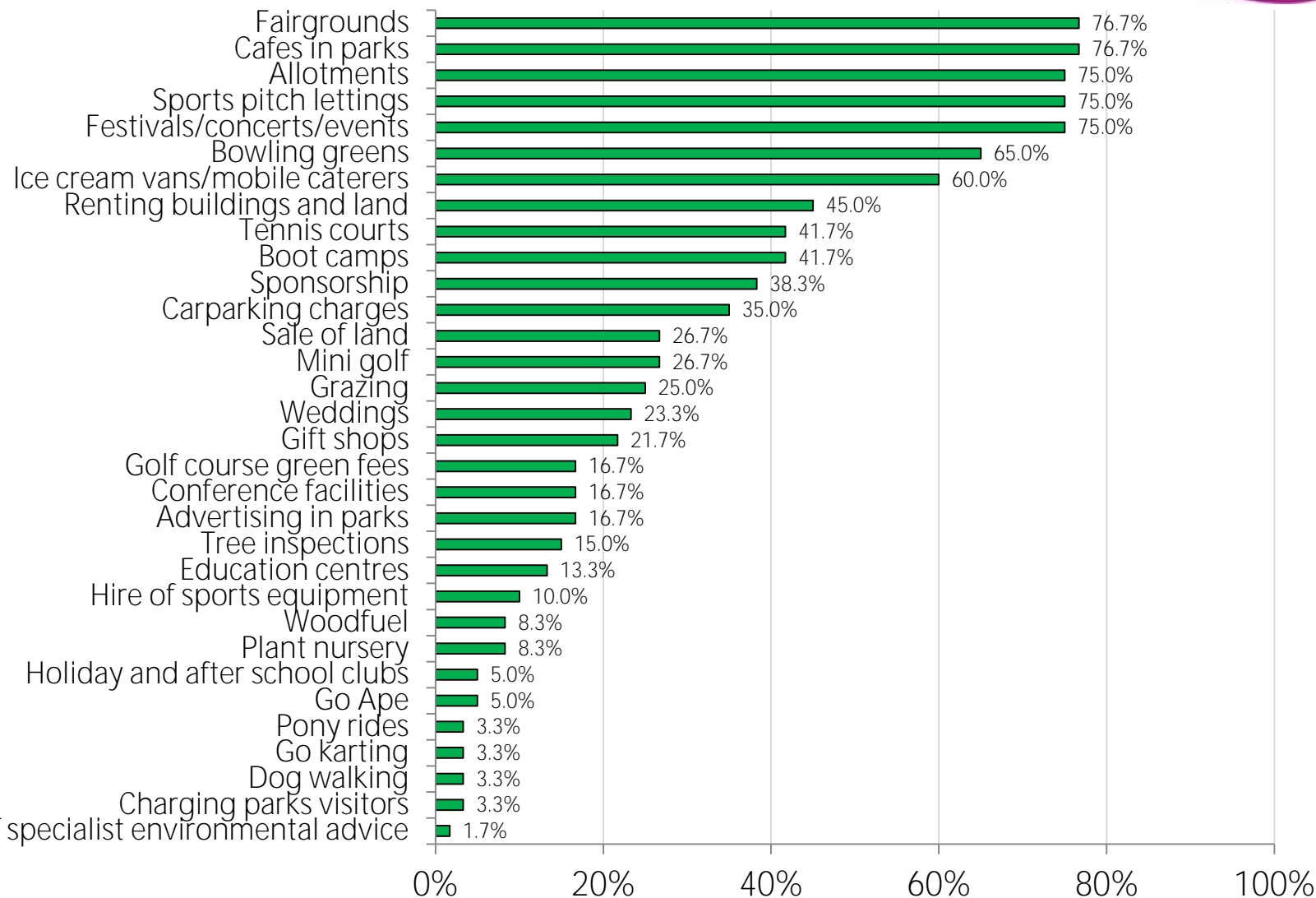
What do you think?

Answer Options	Agree strongly	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strongly	No opinion
The squeeze on public sector resources is affecting parks and green spaces disproportionately to other service areas	40.6%	37.5%	18.8%	0.0%	3.1%
Reductions in funding has resulted in a withdrawal of maintenance from some land and an increase in unmaintained land	35.9%	50.0%	12.5%	0.0%	1.6%
Lack of investment in parks and green spaces will have health and social impacts	68.8%	25.0%	4.7%	0.0%	1.6%
There is a clear link between parks/play provision and levels of crime/anti-social behaviour	42.2%	32.8%	6.3%	1.6%	17.2%
There's a limit to the extent to which volunteers can be involved in delivering parks and green space services	77.4%	14.5%	4.8%	3.2%	0.0%
The public should get free access to all parks	60.9%	26.6%	9.4%	3.1%	0.0%

Over the past year, have the following increased, decreased or stayed the same?

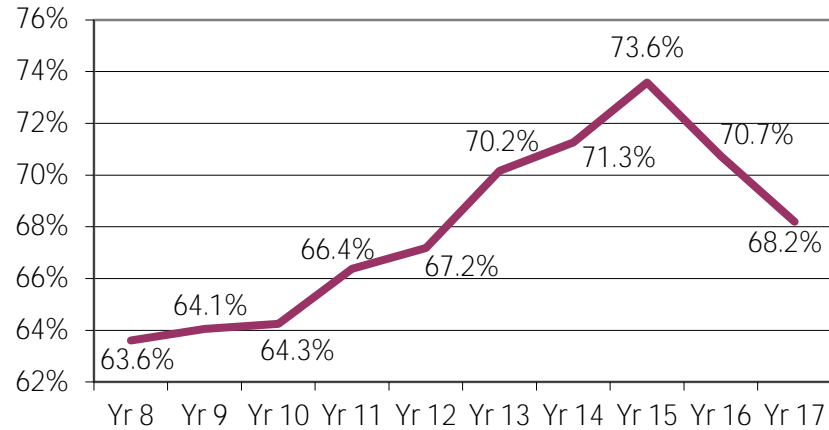


What areas do you currently generate income in through fees and charges?

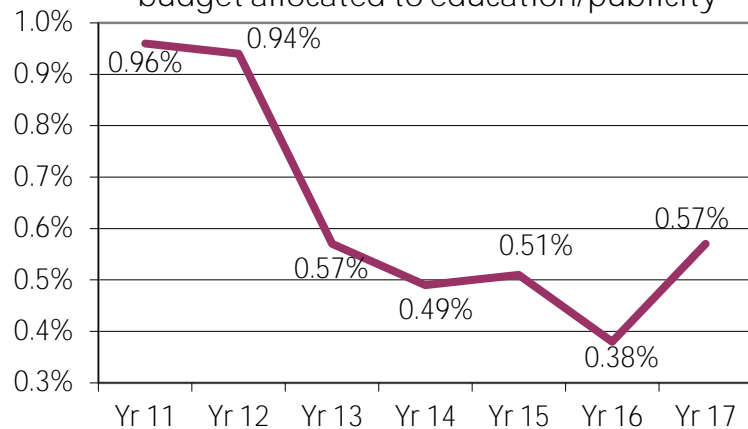


Street cleansing

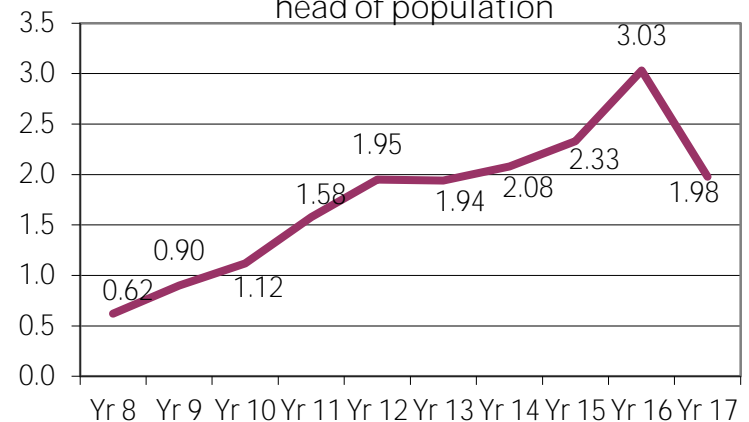
PI 39 Community / customer surveys undertaken satisfaction levels



PI 40 Percentage of street cleansing budget allocated to education/publicity

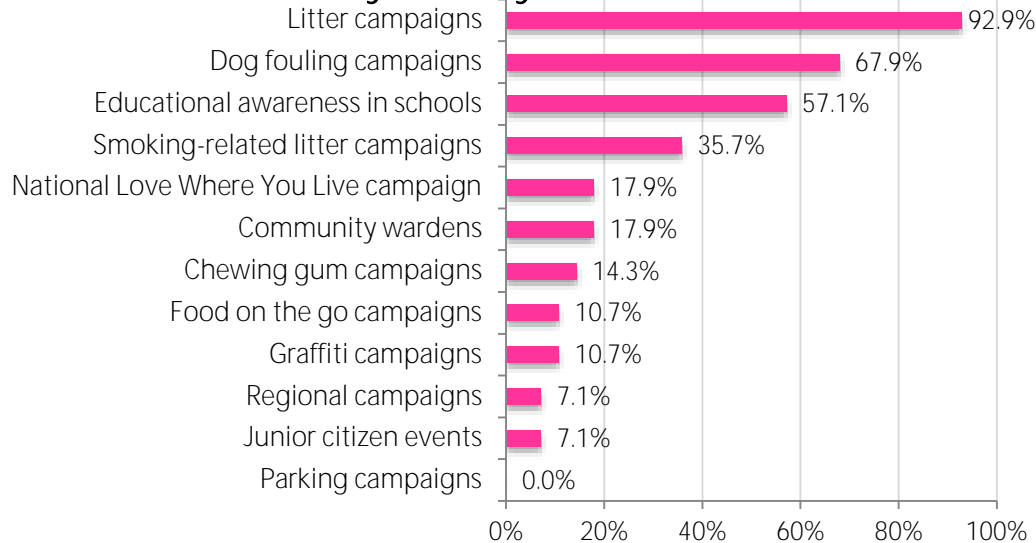


Fixed penalty notices issued per 1,000 head of population

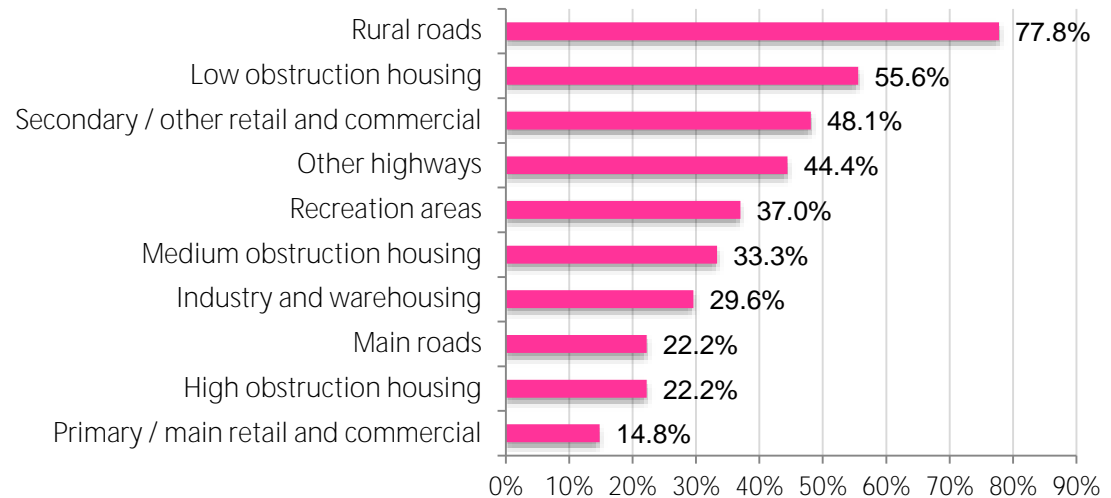




Are you planning any education campaigns in the next 2 years? If yes, what are these?



If you are anticipating future reductions in sweeping and litter picking work, which areas of land do you think this will relate to?



Environmental

Broxtowe Borough Council

- Vehicles readily available
- Encouraging teams to be out between certain times
- Vehicle tracker
- Reviewed maintenance of equipment
- Joined up working
- More responsibility to Team Leaders

Chelmsford City Council

- 12,800 volunteer hours p.a. ensuring standards are maintained
- More natural biodiversity maintenance
- Machinery and equipment changed
- Using quality assurance programmes

Conwy Council

- Introduced wildflower and pictorial meadow areas
- Introduced newer herbicides
- Reviewed rounds and work schedules
- Reviewed boundaries/areas covered
- Amalgamation of Countryside services and Parks & Gardens

Gedling Borough Council

- New management regime including team suggestions to improve efficiency
- New waste management software
- Regular review of rounds
- Listening to customer feedback and keeping customers informed

Gateshead Council

- Building capacity with friends of and community groups
- New machinery
- New thinking to support wildlife and biodiversity
- Changing working arrangements to meet demand
- Maximising event utilisation
- Partnerships with local groups

Leicester City Council

- Introduction of grassland strategy
- Organisational review aimed to reduce management costs
- Introduced a volunteering programme
- Removed bonus payment scheme and undertook job evaluation

West Dunbartonshire Council

- Re-alignment of front line staff structures
- Maximised use of ride-on/stand-on mowers and tractor mounted equipment
- Changed weed-killing and summer bedding supply contracts

Preston City Council

- Review of collection methods
- Changes from recycling boxes to wheeled bins
- Round design software and vehicle tracking
- Scheduled replacement of most waste management vehicle fleet and CCTV recording equipment fitted



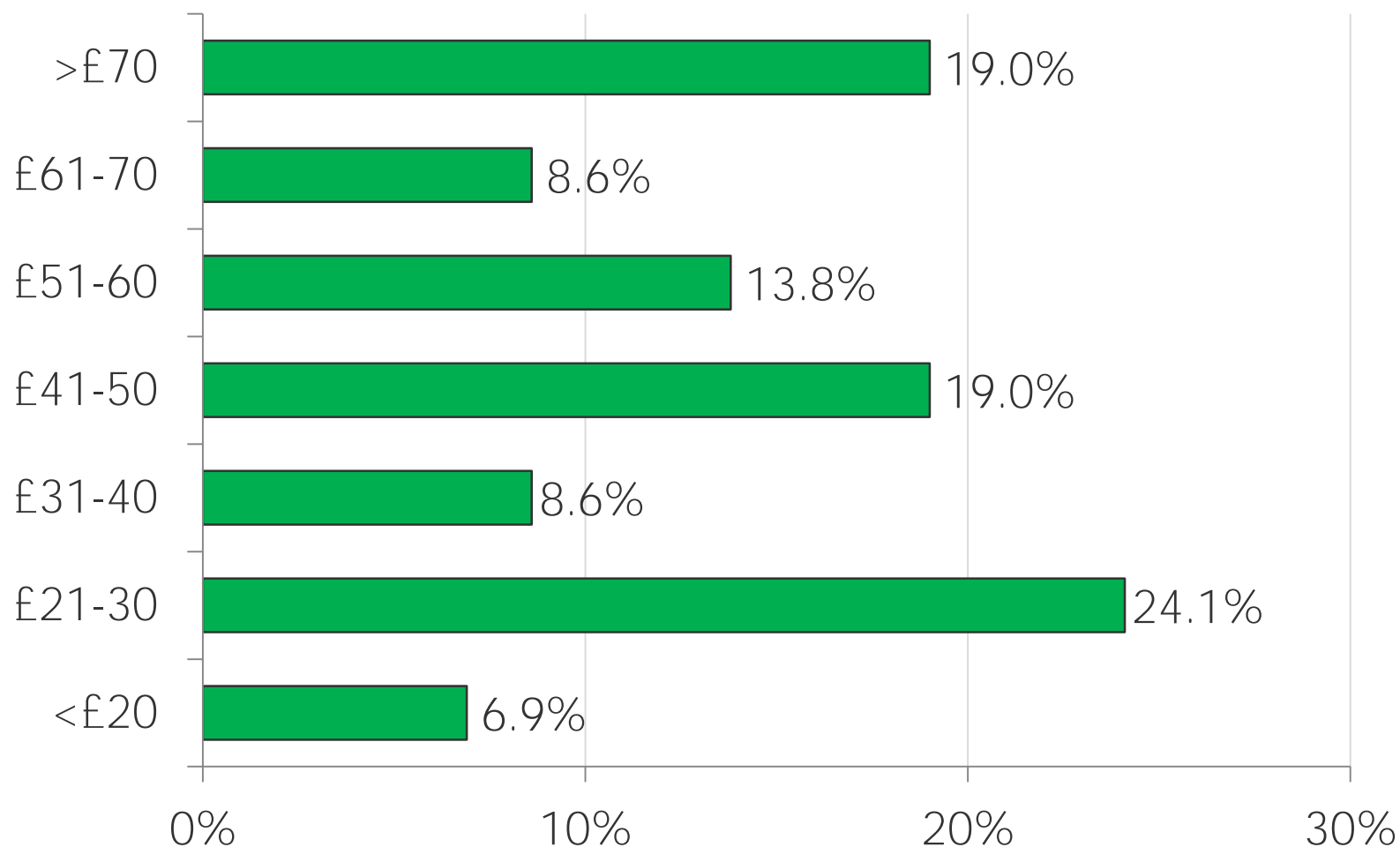
State of the Market in Allotments 2016

Overview of the results:

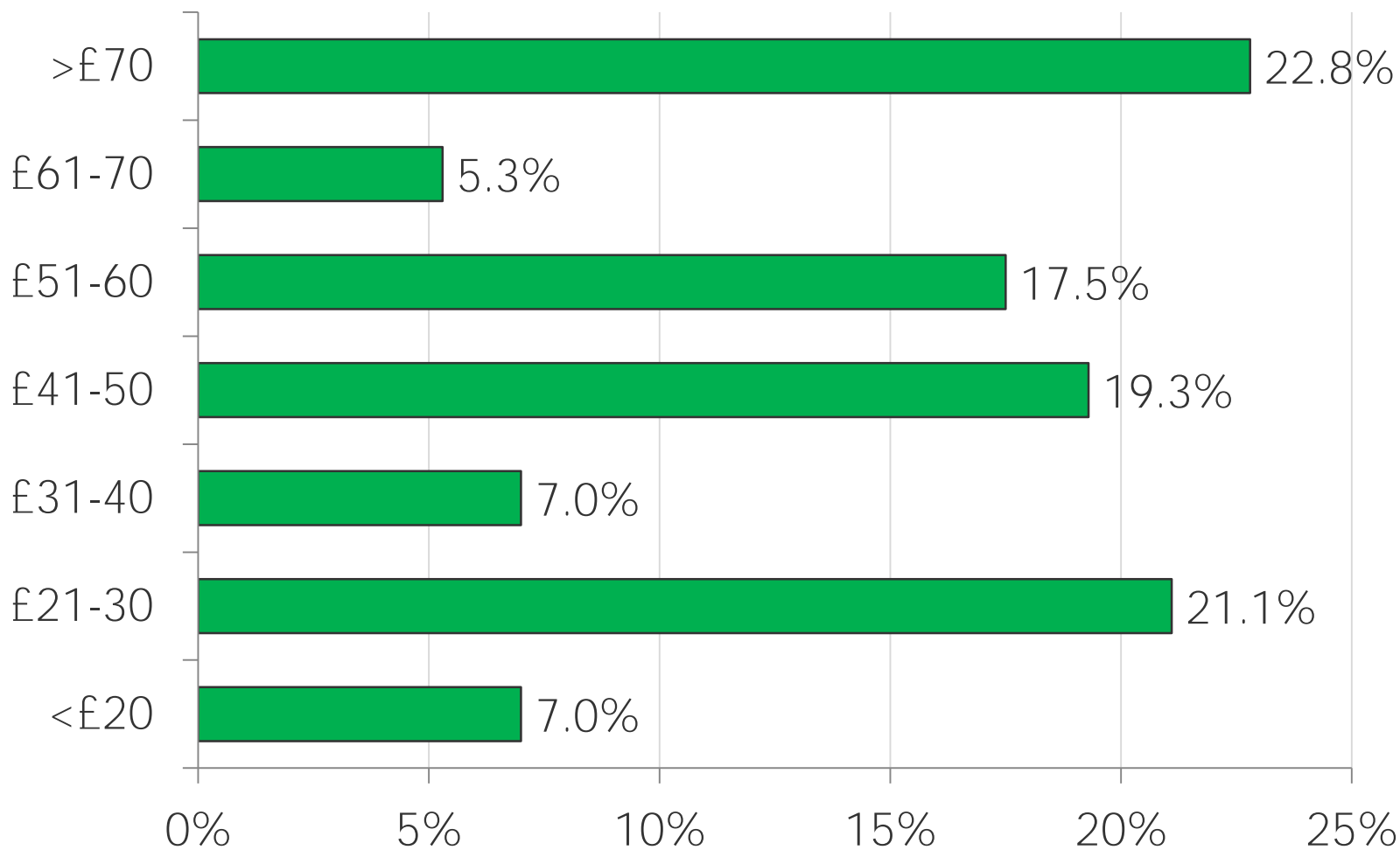


- 96.9% of respondents have council owned allotments within their authority.
- 37.1% of allotments are directly managed by a council officer, 6.5% are managed through a site committee/association and 56.5% are managed by a mixture of both.
- Waiting list demand is high. 38.4% have 100-400 people in their waiting lists, with 5.8% having over 1000 people.
- 63.9% offer concessionary prices (from those that offer concessions - 93.8% pensioners, 60.6% unemployed/on income support, 61.3% disabilities, 23.3% students). The most common discount is 40-50% (except students, 20-30%).
- 55.6% have an allotment strategy in place.

Cost per annum to rent an allotment plot in 2015-16 (Note: please use the cost for a typical 250 square meter plot including water).

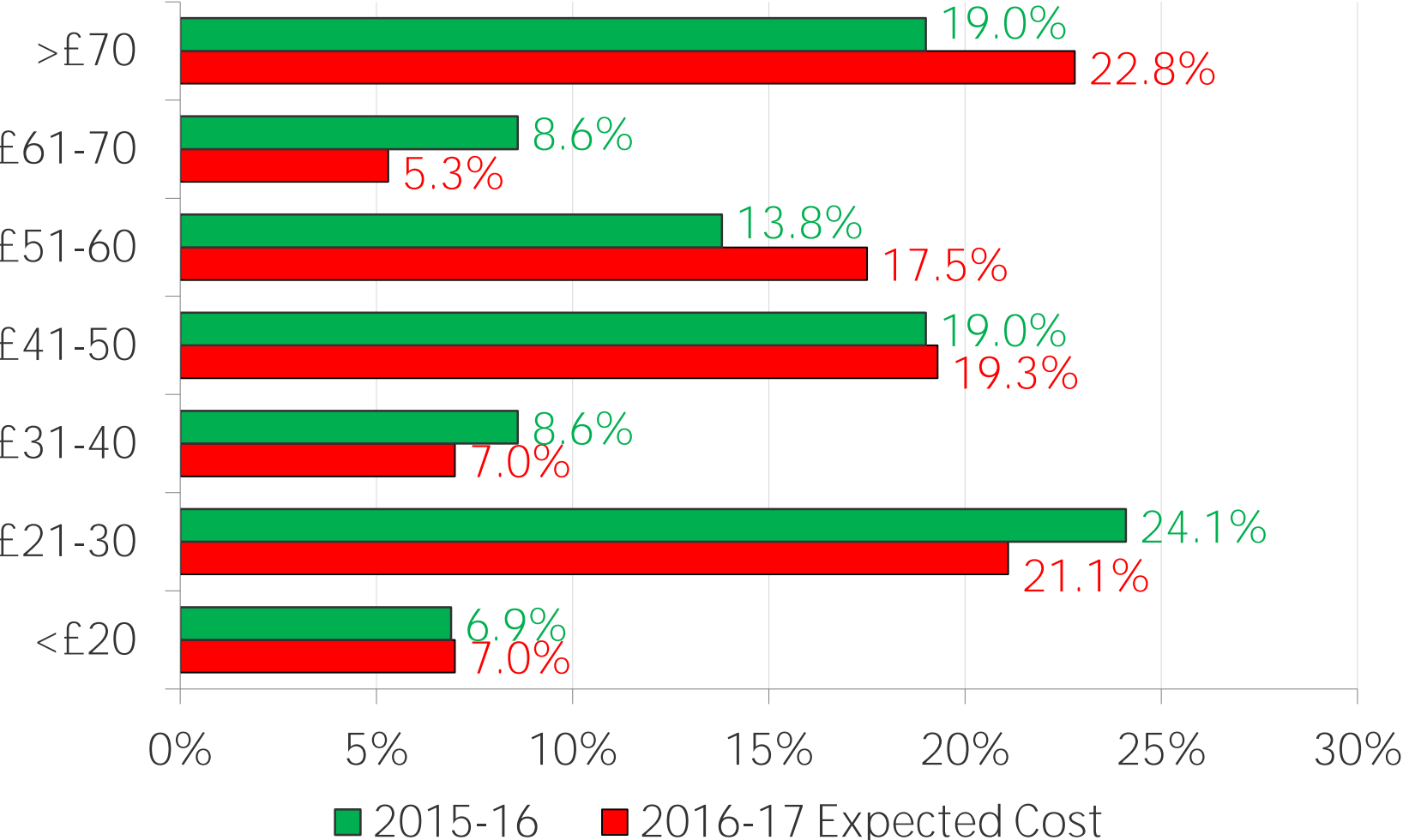


Expected cost per annum to rent an allotment plot in 2016/17





Comparison of allotment plot cost per annum in 2015-16 and expected cost in 2016-17

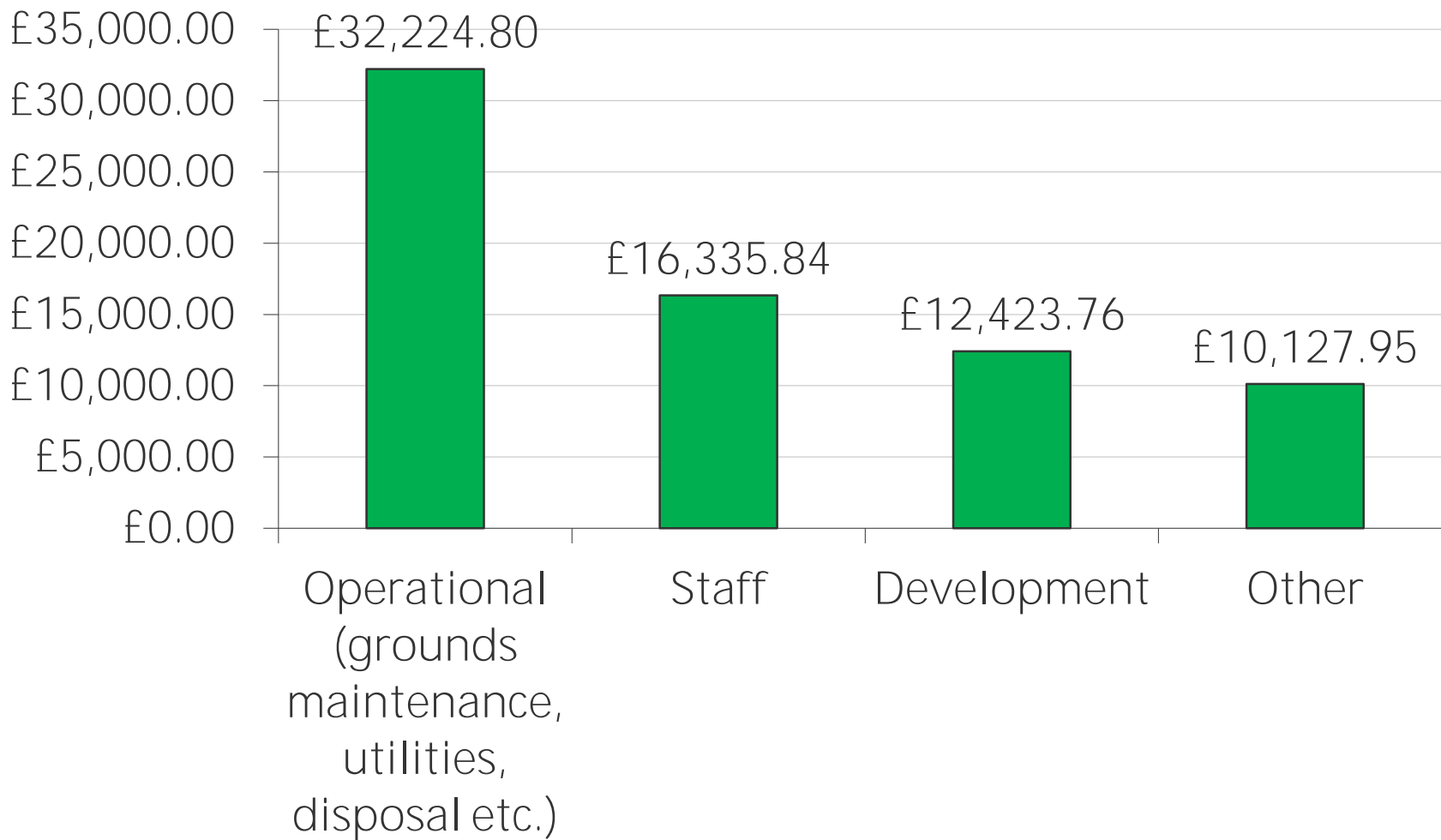


The cost of allotments:



- 67.2% said the charge is directly related to the area of the allotment, 21.3% said this is standard regardless of the size. 250-299 square metres is the most common size.
- Allotments are still mainly subsidised (67.3%), while 30.6% break even and only 2.0% make a surplus.
- 33.3% intend to increase the price of allotment plots within the next 2 years. Of those intending to increase prices, 75.0% stated that the council would still have to subsidise the service.

What is the annual budget for allotments in £?



Budgets include responsibility for:



Paths/roads/steps – construction and maintenance/repair	98%
Perimeter walls/fencing provision and maintenance/repair	96%
Water bills	90%
Waste disposal – skip hire	46%
Waste disposal - other	40%
Promotion activities for allotments (social, educational, etc.)	31%
Provision and maintenance of community huts/rooms	27%
Waste disposal – Green waste disposal	25%
Electricity bills	15%
Provision and repair of individual sheds/glasshouses	6%
Gas bills	2%

Allotment site provisions:



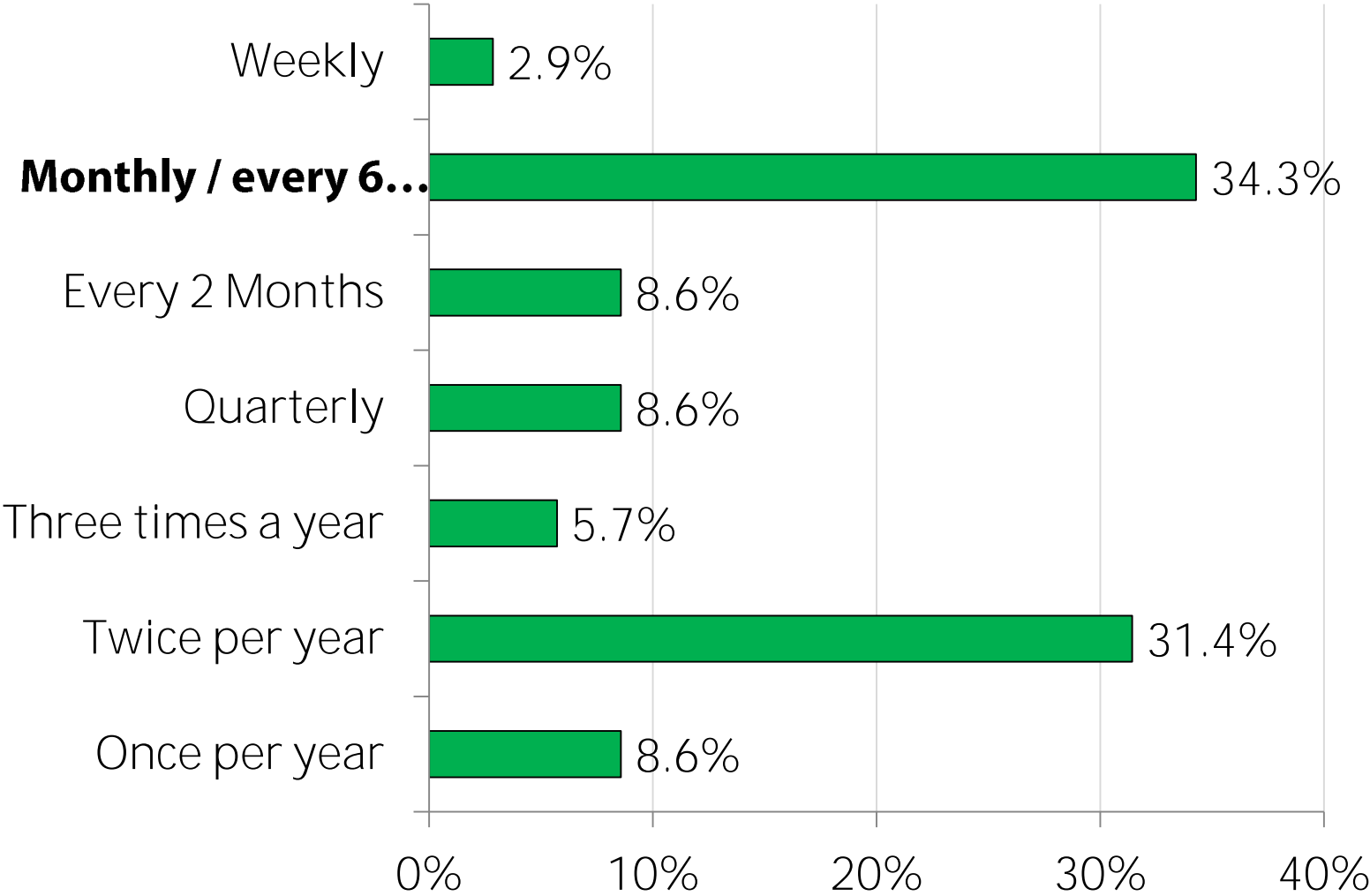
Fencing	89.5%
Mains water	78.5%
Clearly defined access roads	73.5%
Composting	52.2%
Lock up/store shed	38.8%
Community rooms/huts	35.6%
Provision for those with special needs	24.9%
Toilet facilities	23.8%
Washing facilities	19.4%
Livestock plot	15.5%
Mains electricity	4.4%

Grounds maintenance at allotment sites is carried out as:



By the plot-holders/site association	70.2%
As an integral part of grounds maintenance	55.3%
By volunteers	23.4%
As part of rehabilitation programmes (health, offenders etc)	21.3%
By a dedicated allotments team/person	14.9%
No grounds maintenance is carried out on the sites	2.1%

Cultivation standards are monitored:



Biodiversity is being promoted amongst plot-holders in the following ways:



Areas being set aside for wildlife	80.0%
Planting pollinator friendly species	73.3%
Information on how to improve biodiversity	53.3%
Promoting native crops	26.7%

Method of increasing the number of allotments:



Provision by builders/developers as part of a housing/planning policy	72.7%
Direct provision by the council for additional plots	66.7%
Provision by community groups supported/facilitated by council	50.0%
Provision by other council departments (e.g. Education, Social Work) as part of a healthy lifestyles/eco-schools/health type project	27.8%



Process benchmarking

Setting up process benchmarking



- Structure
- Establish sub-groups?
- Frequency and location
- Identify focus in advance
- Format: presentations, discussion lead, open debate
- Facilitator/chair
- Sharing the information:
 - Email
 - Web portal
- Sustainability

Tips for effective benchmarking



- About process benchmarking
 - Data drilling
 - Identify 2-3 performance indicators
 - Explore key processes:
 - Cost
 - Resources
 - Time
 - Systems
 - Use of technology
- Examples

Scottish building maintenance process benchmarking phase 1

To download a report and appendices from the list below, right click on the name of the file and select "Save target as..." and choose a destination folder on your hard drive or network to save the file to.

Report

[Phase 1 combined report](#) 

Appendices

[Appendix 6 - Gas servicing, repair and maintenance](#) 

[Appendix 7 - Kitchen refurbishment](#) 

[Appendix 9 - Voids](#) 

[Appendix 10 - Post inspections](#) 

[Appendix 12 - Sickness absence](#) 

[Appendix 13 - Customer satisfaction](#) 

[Appendix 14 - Quality systems](#) 

[Appendix 15 - No access procedures](#) 

 services

direction of travel statements

Service Profile Tables (SPT)

logout

Process benchmarking: Scottish roads and street lighting

To download a template or document from the list below, right click on the name of the file and select "Save target as..." to save the file to.

To view or print a template or document from the list below, simply click on the file description.

[Machine Surfacing Collated Risk Assessment](#)

Roads and Street Lighting – Process Benchmarking Machine Surfacing – Collated Risk Assessment

[Patching Collated Risk Assessment](#)

Roads and Street Lighting – Process Benchmarking Patching – Collated Risk Assessment

[Presentation on Previous Reports](#)

APSE Process Benchmarking Roads & Street Lighting - Review of 2010 Reports to Assess Future Work

[Report 1 of 4 – Communication](#)

This report deals with Communication and is the first in a series of four reports comparing some key roads and street lighting activities in eleven Scottish authorities.

[Report 2 of 4 – Stores and Procurement](#)

This report deals with Stores and Procurement and is the second in a series of four reports comparing some key roads and street lighting activities in eleven Scottish authorities.

[Report 3 of 4 – Risk Assessments](#)

This report deals with Risk Assessments and is the third in a series of four reports comparing some key roads and street lighting activities in eleven Scottish authorities.



Contact details

Debbie Johns, Head of Performance Networks

Email: djohns@apse.org.uk

Mobile: 07834 334193

Association for Public Service Excellence
2nd floor Washbrook House, Lancastrian Office Centre, Talbot Road,
Old Trafford, Manchester M32 0FP.
telephone: 0161 772 1810
fax: 0161 772 1811
web: www.apse.org.uk



INVESTOR IN PEOPLE



ISO 14001

REGISTERED FIRM

GB 11409



ISO 9001

REGISTERED FIRM

GB 11132



ISO 27001

REGISTERED FIRM

GB 14074