
Public Attitudes to Local Council Services 2023

Survation.

Introduction and Background

Survation were asked by the Association for Public Service Excellence (APSE) to provide a public opinion survey of attitudes to local neighbourhood services in 2023, covering the range of council services that would appear in their local area. Most questions mirrored questions asked in 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2023 with additional questions relating to budget cuts and tax.

Polling was conducted via online panel between 23rd-27th November 2023.

Data were weighted by age, sex, region, household income, education, 2019 GE vote and 2016 EU Referendum vote to be representative of all UK adults aged 18+.

The overall sample size was 1,659, including booster samples in Northern Ireland & Wales to ensure sub-samples of at least 100 persons in those regions.

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Key Points: Trust and Satisfaction

- 1. Public trust in Local Councils marginally lower than last year, remains significantly above other institutions such as national government and private companies.**
- 2. They trust you much more to spend their taxes than national government.**
- 3. Satisfaction levels with services are broadly similar to 2022, School Meals and Road maintenance, however, have seen a notable decrease.**

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Key Points: Current and future challenges

- 1. Councils the most trusted to provide and deliver services in people's local area.**
- 2. Climate change still a high priority, closely following affordable housing, social care, and road maintenance.**
- 3. Divided opinion about where cuts should be made if councils face bankruptcy**
- 4. This year we've also polled Councillors on their budget priorities and financial stability.**

Survation.

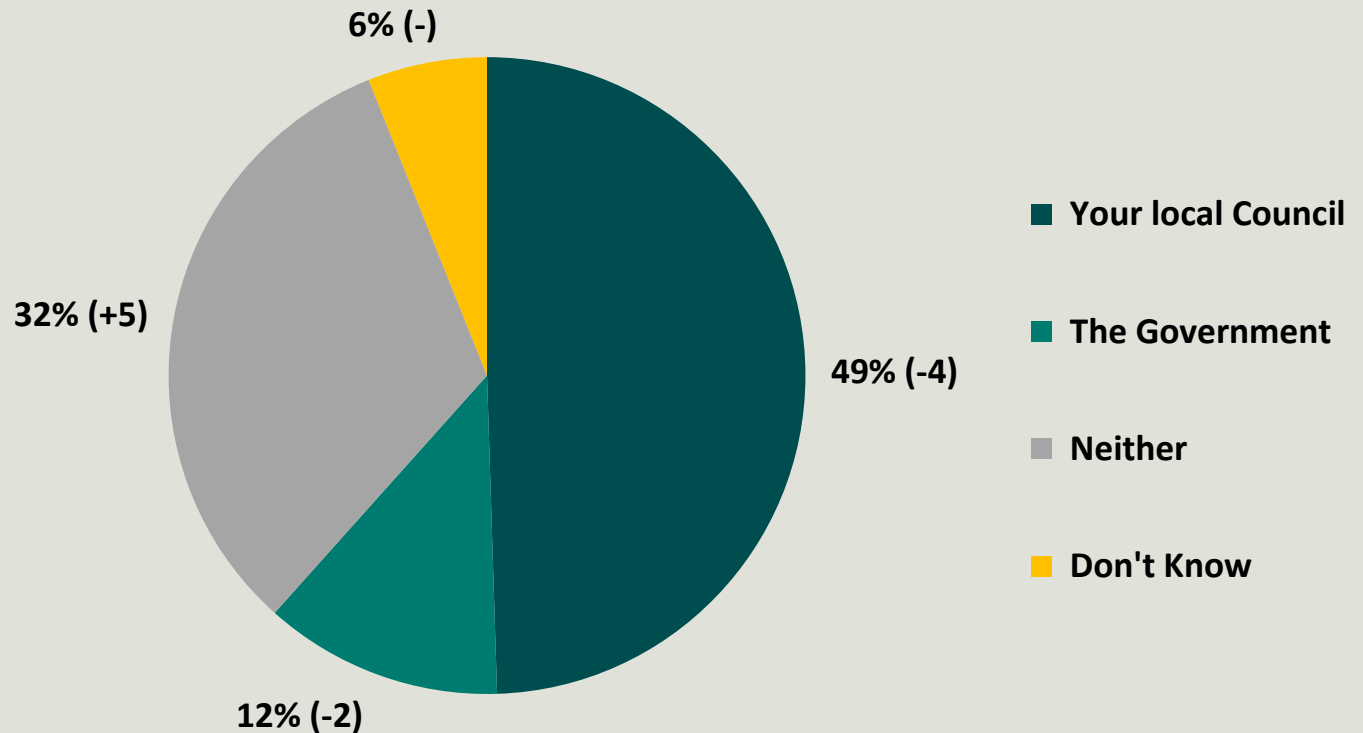
Key fact 1: Relative Trust in Councils high

Trust in Councils and Councillors has decreased very slightly in the past year, as trust in Government and Ministers has also declined. However, trust in Councils and Councillors is high overall compared to trust in Government and Ministers.

- **Four times as many people trust local councils (49%)** to make decisions about how services are delivered in their local areas compared to national government (12%).
- **Eight times as many people trust local councillors (51%)** more than government ministers (6%) to make decisions about how services are provided in their local area.
- **Local councils are trusted more than 4 times** than Government or Private companies to deliver services in their area

Councils trusted 4 times more than Government

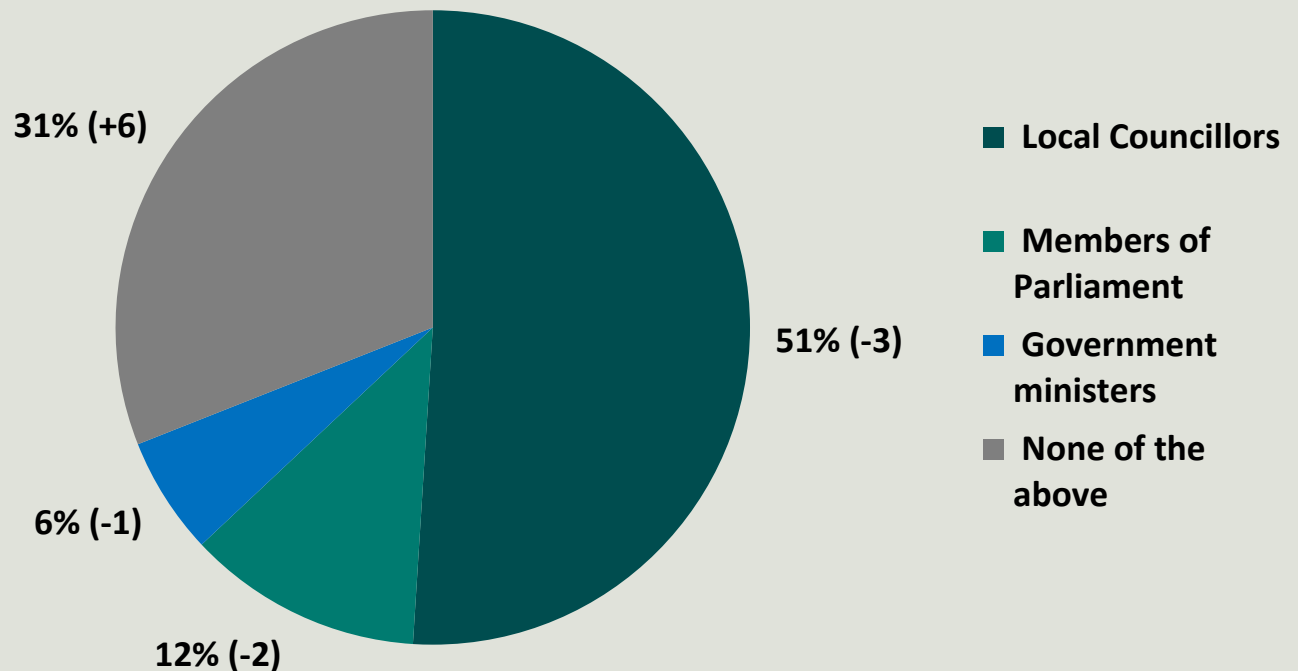
Who do you trust the most to make decisions about how services are delivered in your local area? [Comparison with 2022]



Councillors trusted 8x higher than Ministers

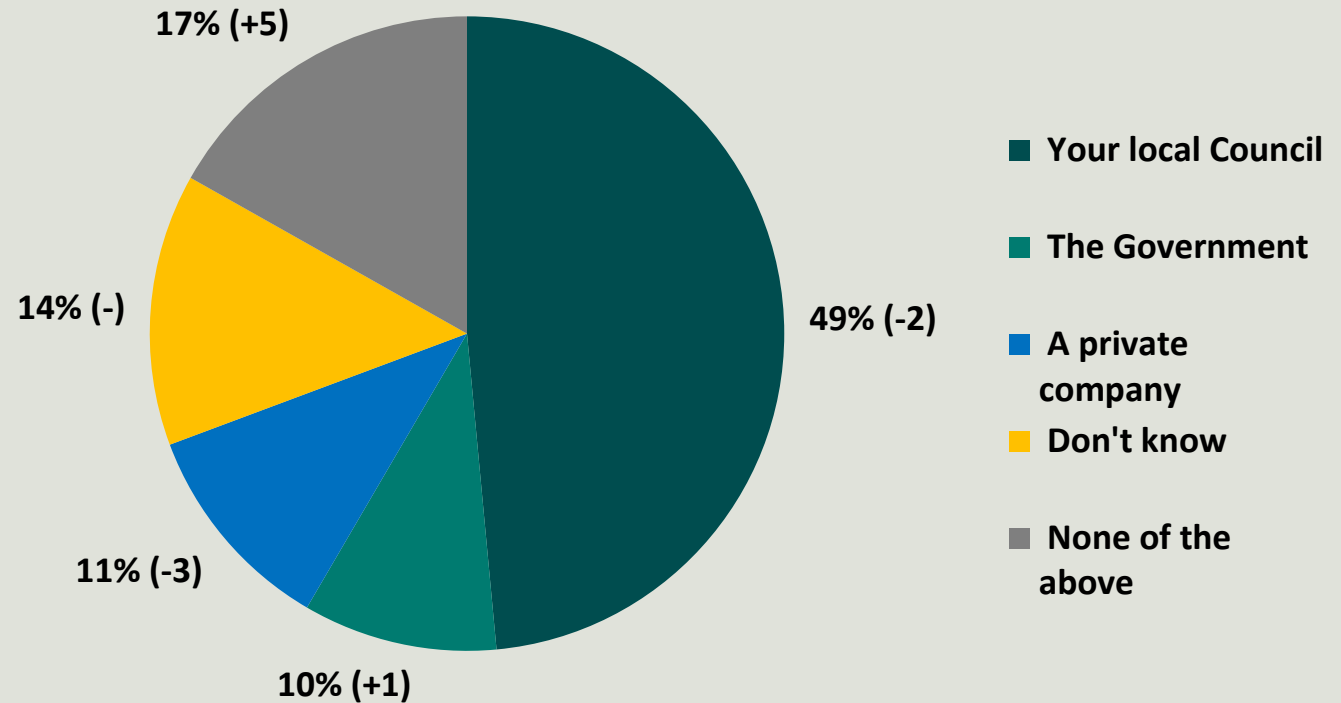
Who do you trust the most to make decisions about how services are provided in your local area?

[Comparison to 2022]



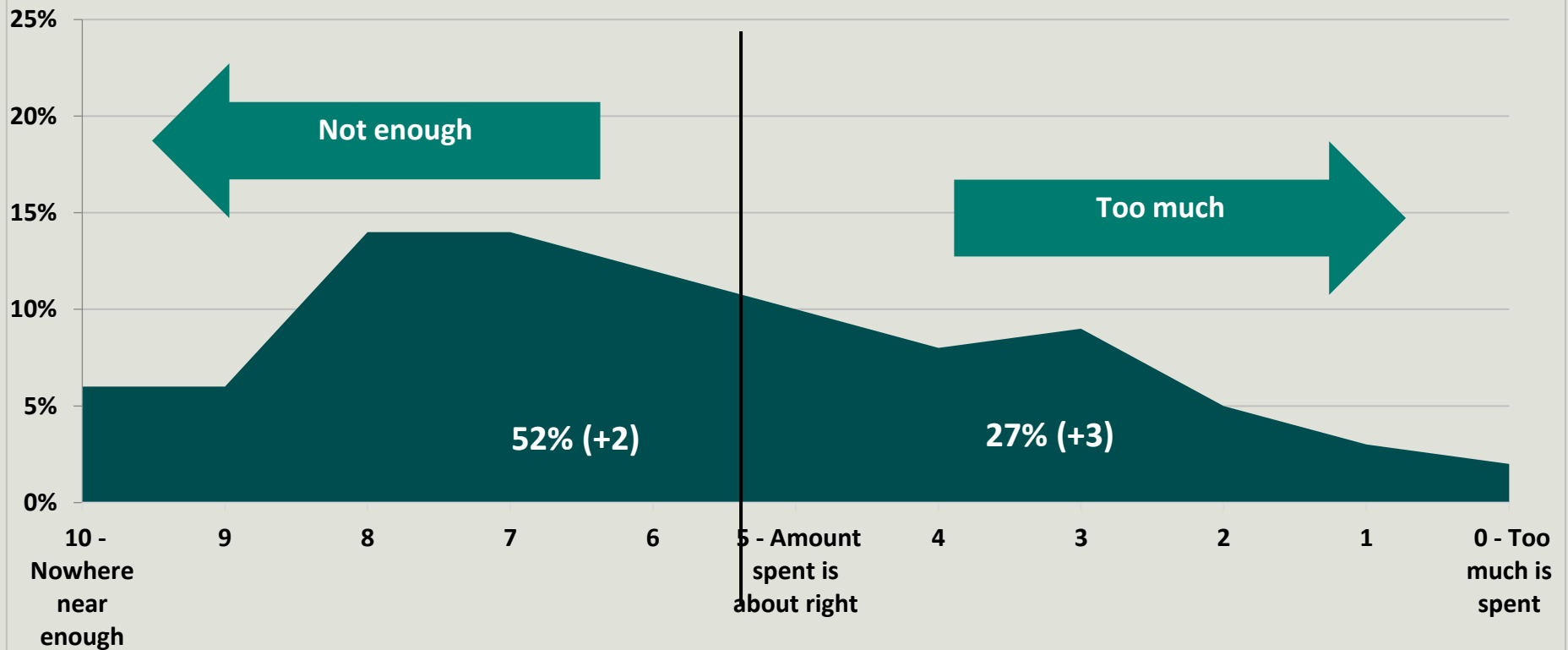
Councils trusted to deliver services over 4x more than the Government or private companies

Who do you trust the most to deliver services to your local area?
[Comparison to 2022]



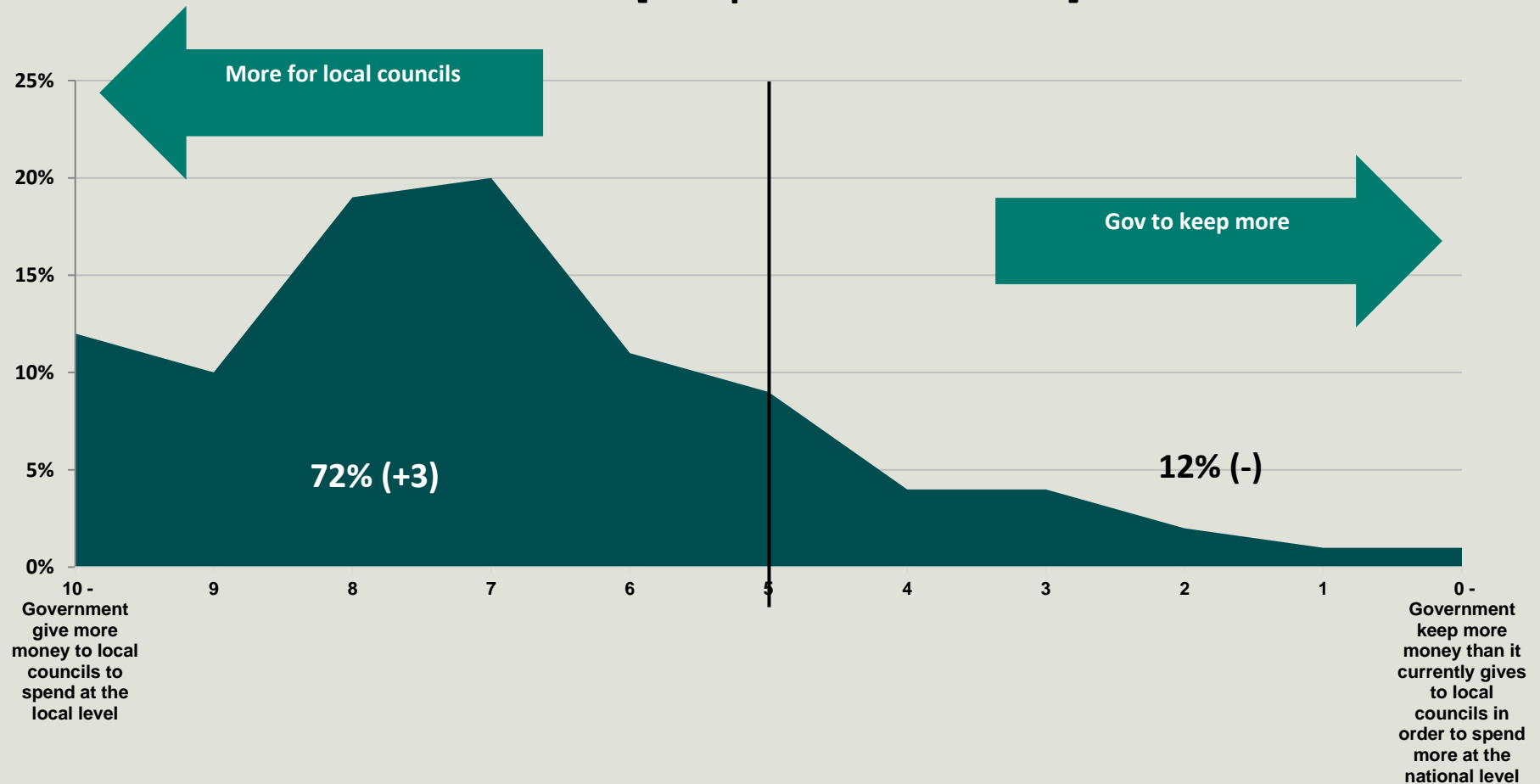
Enough of your taxes spent in your area?

Do you think that enough of your tax is spent on services in your local area? [comparison with 2022]



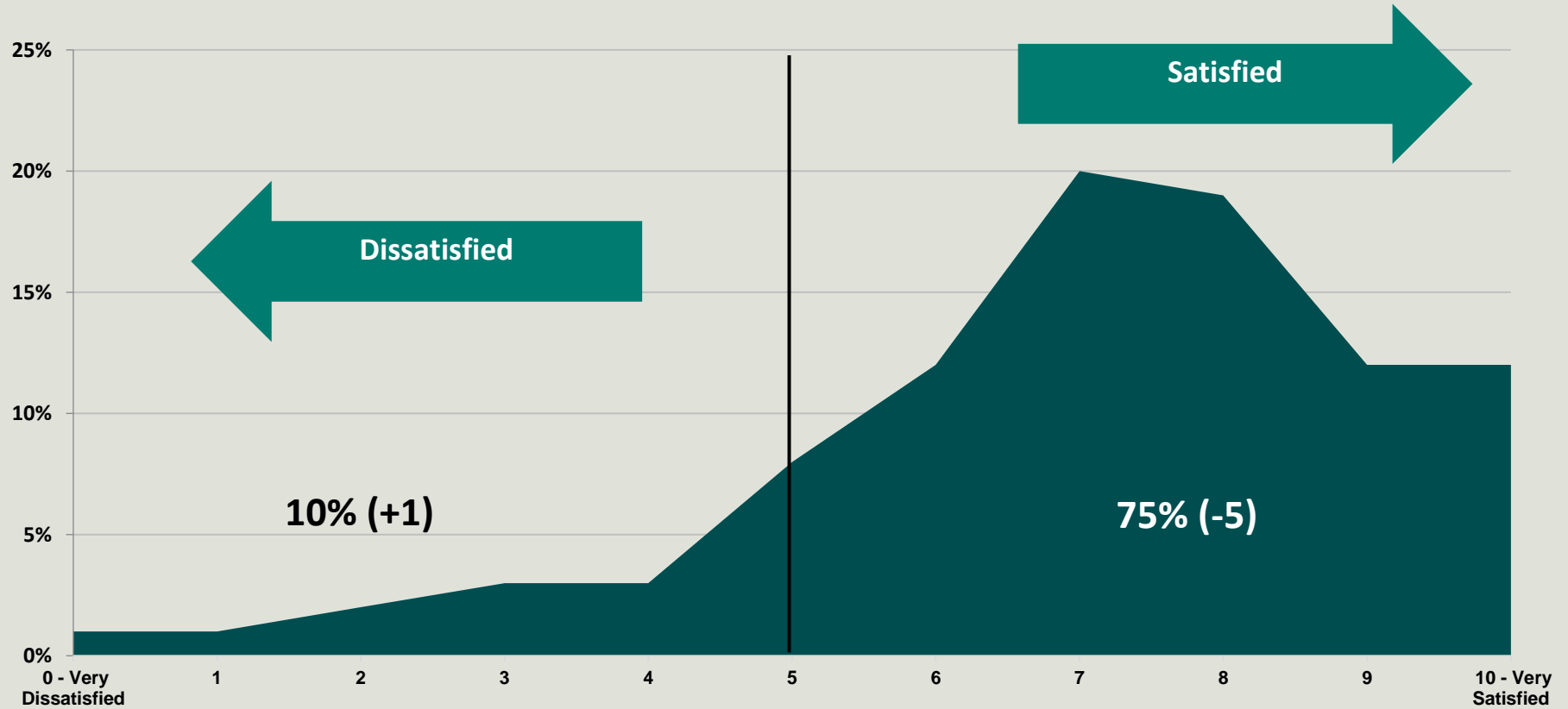
Public want Councils to get more funding

More funding for councils vs Gov to keep more
[comparison with 2022]



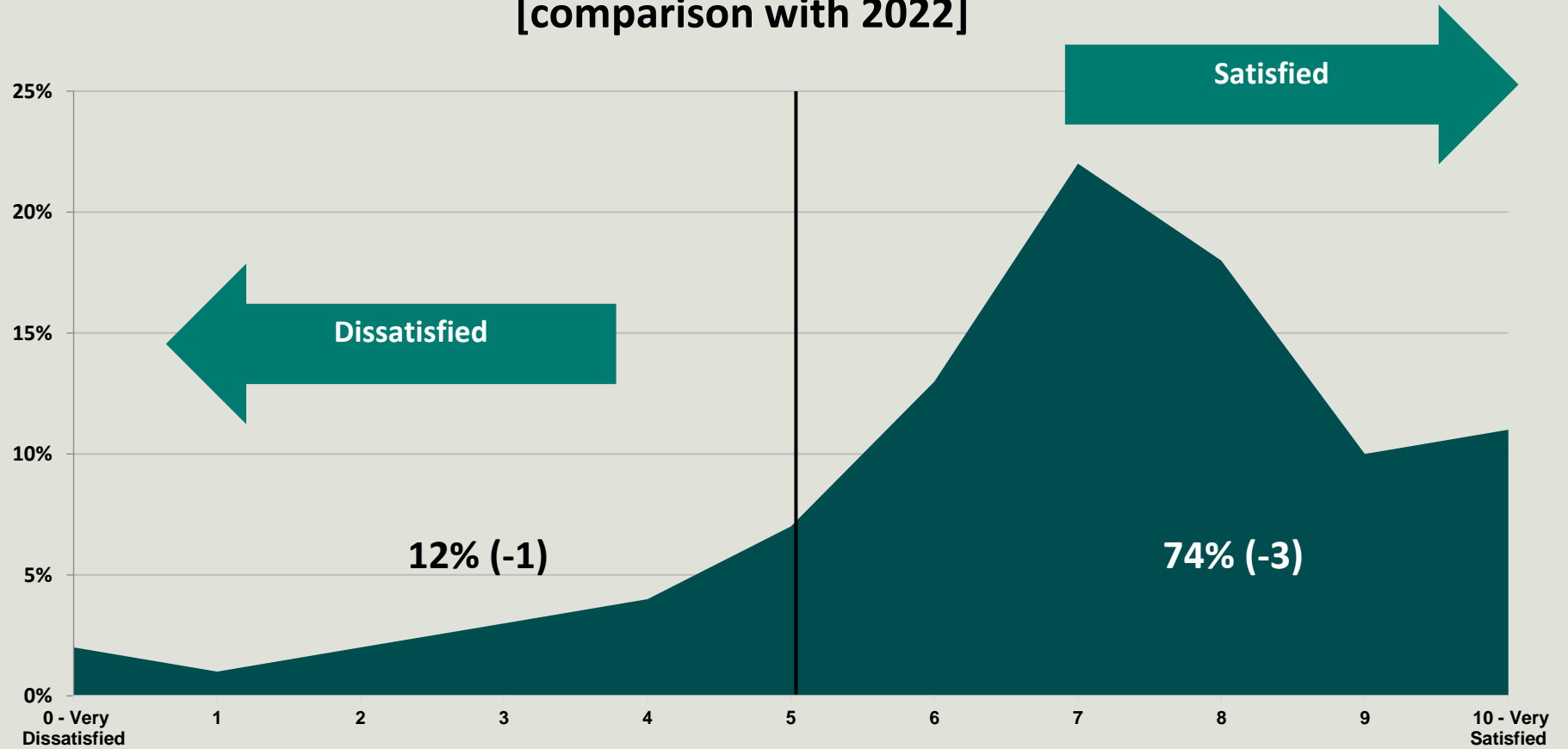
Parks

Satisfaction with park services
[comparison with 2022]



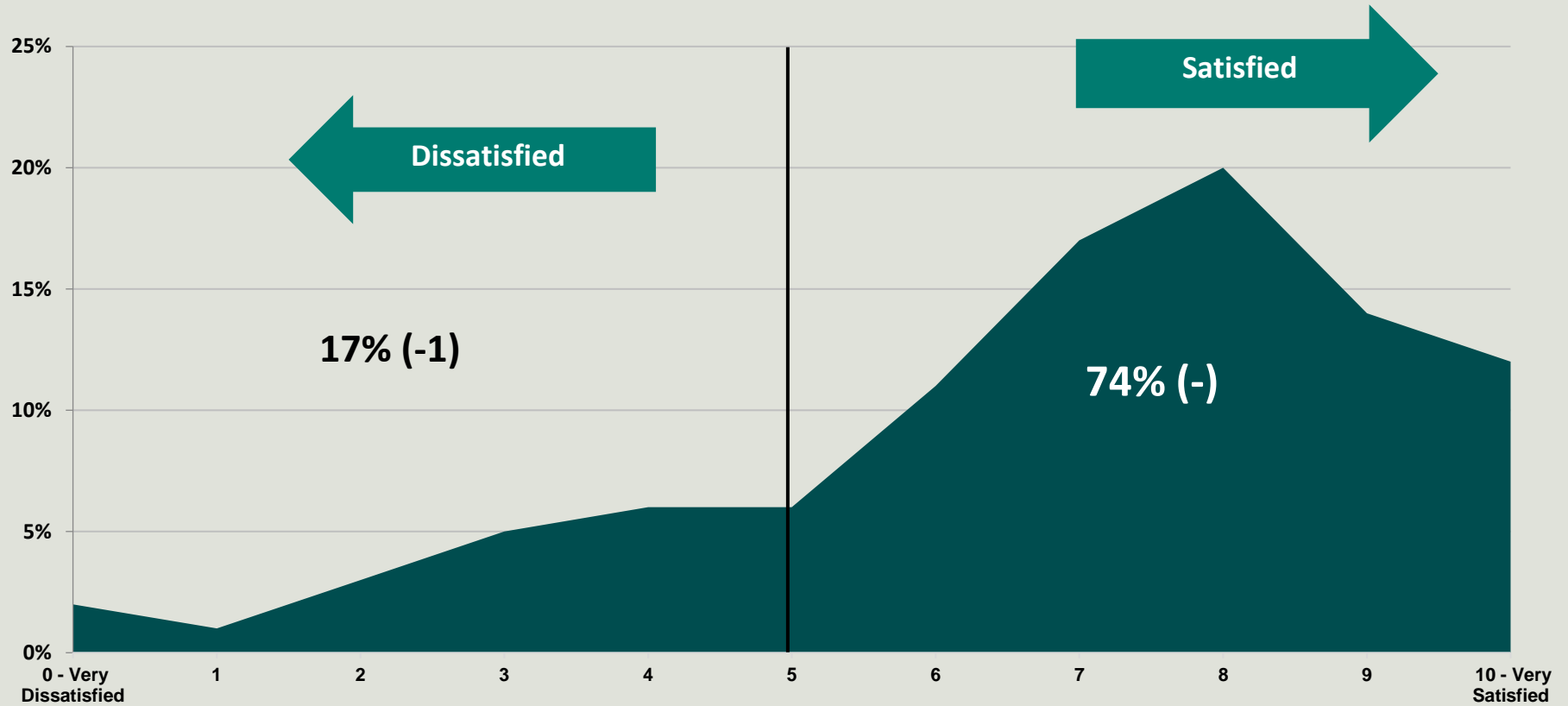
School Meals

Satisfaction with school meals
[comparison with 2022]



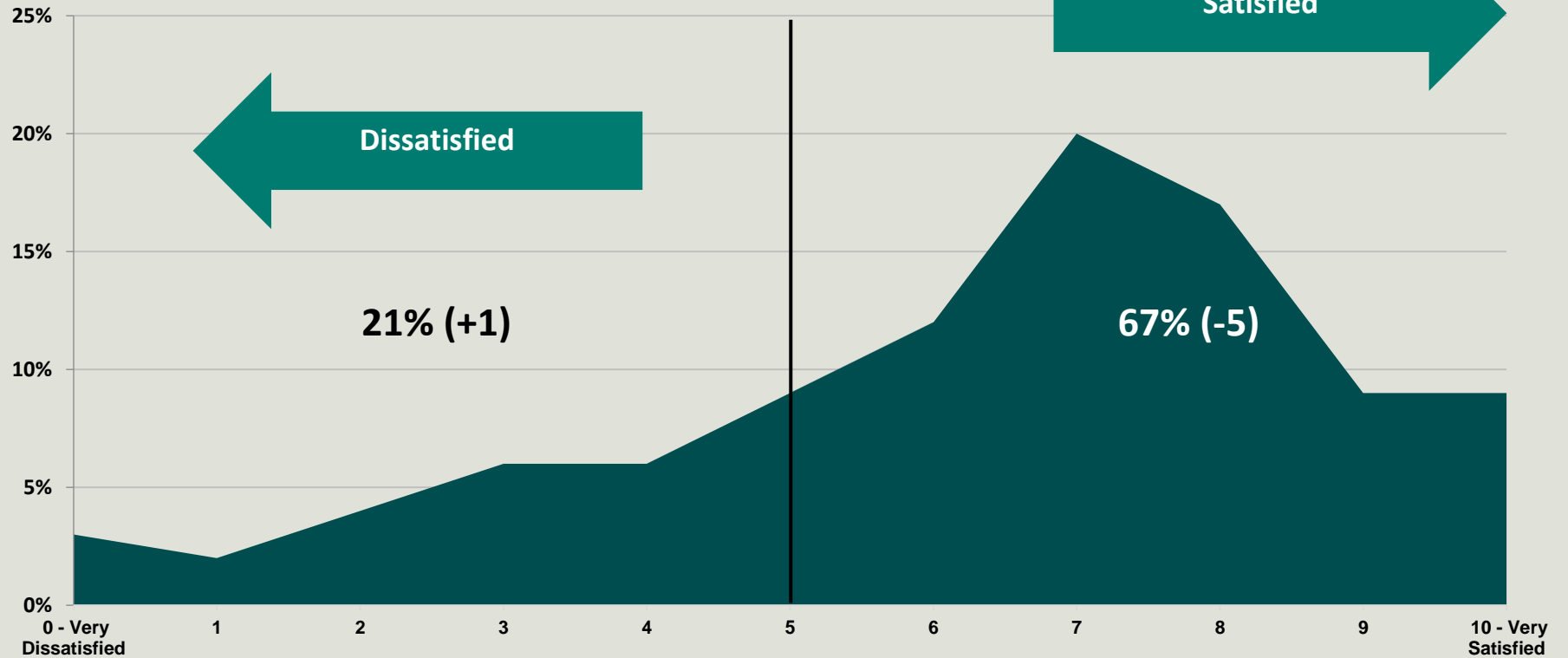
Waste and Recycling

Satisfaction with waste and recycling collection
[comparison with 2022]



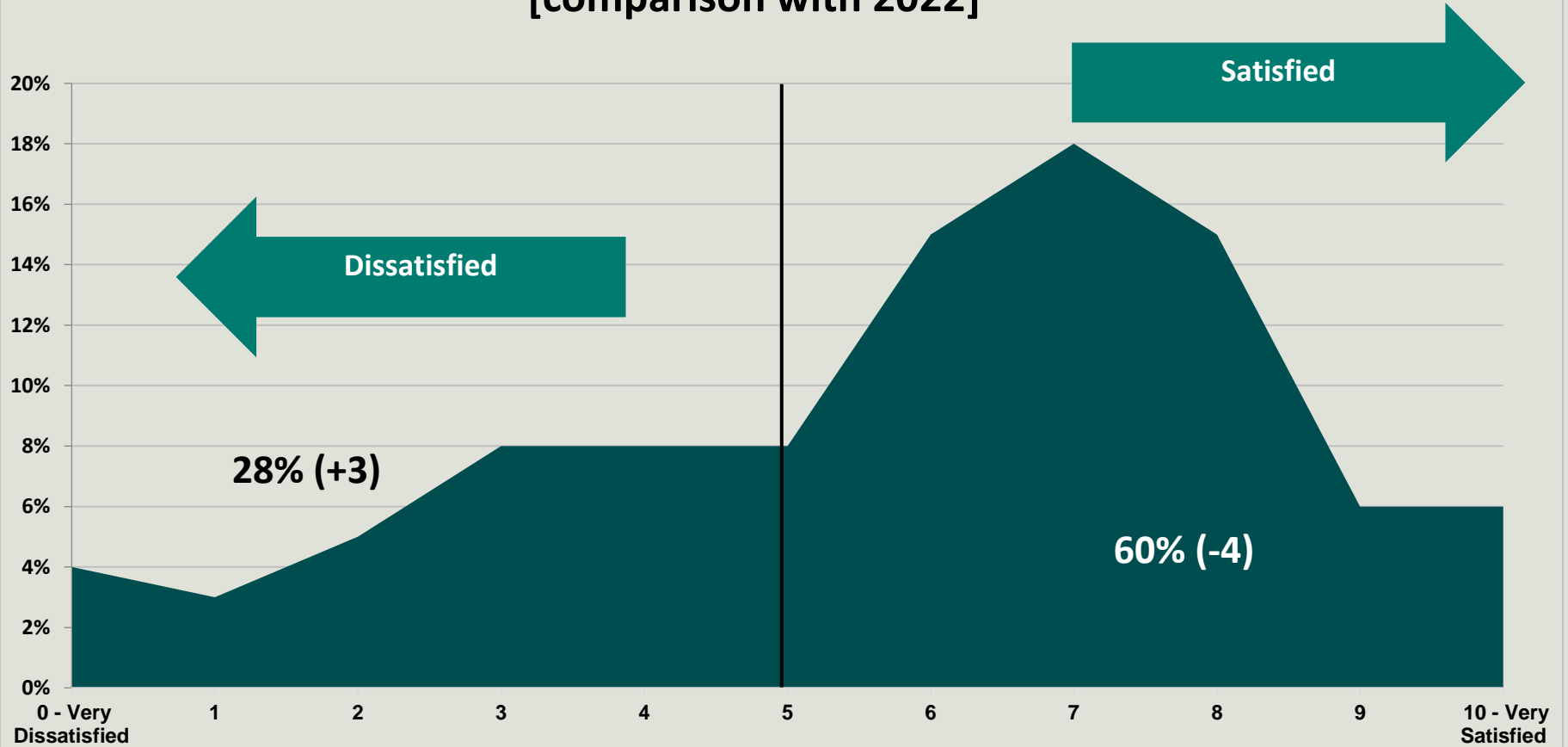
Street Lighting

Satisfaction with street lighting
[comparison with 2022₁]



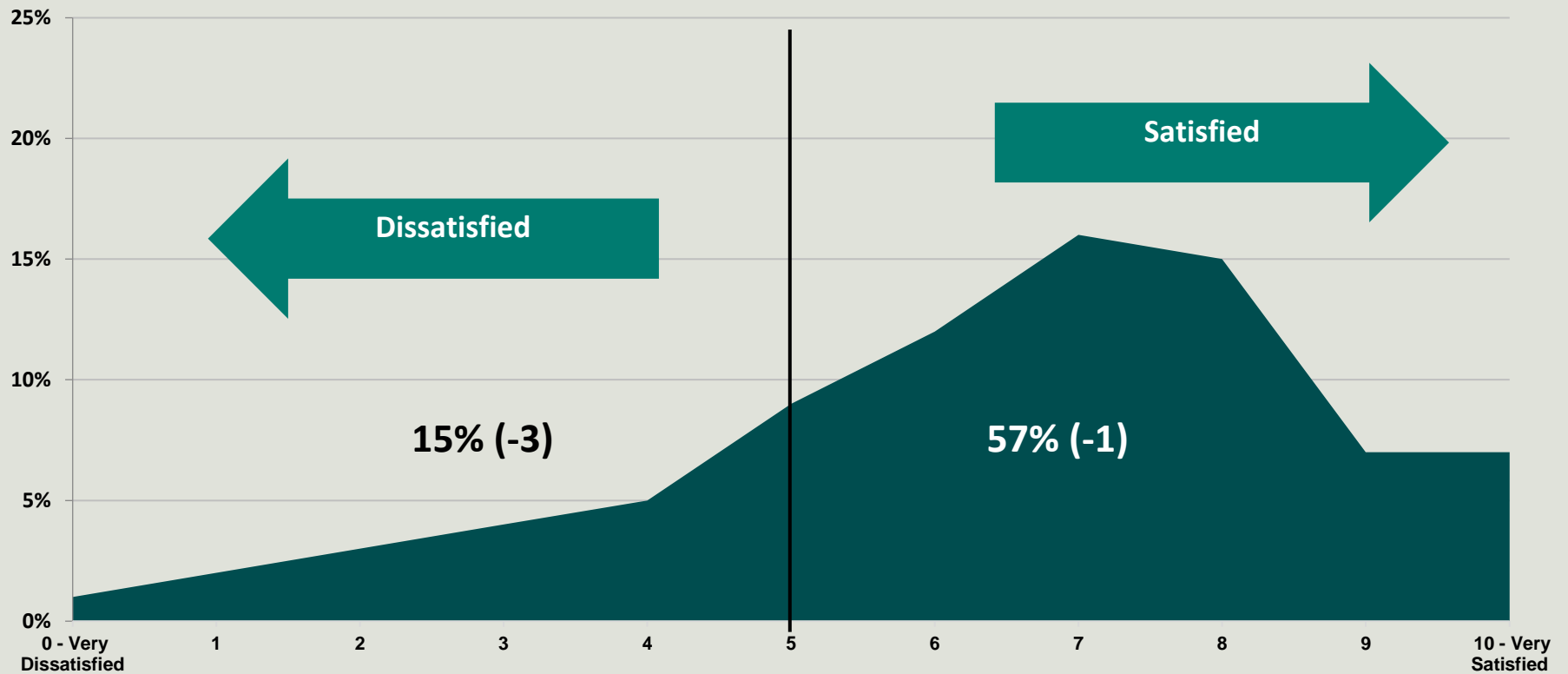
Street Cleaning

Satisfaction with street cleaning services
[comparison with 2022]



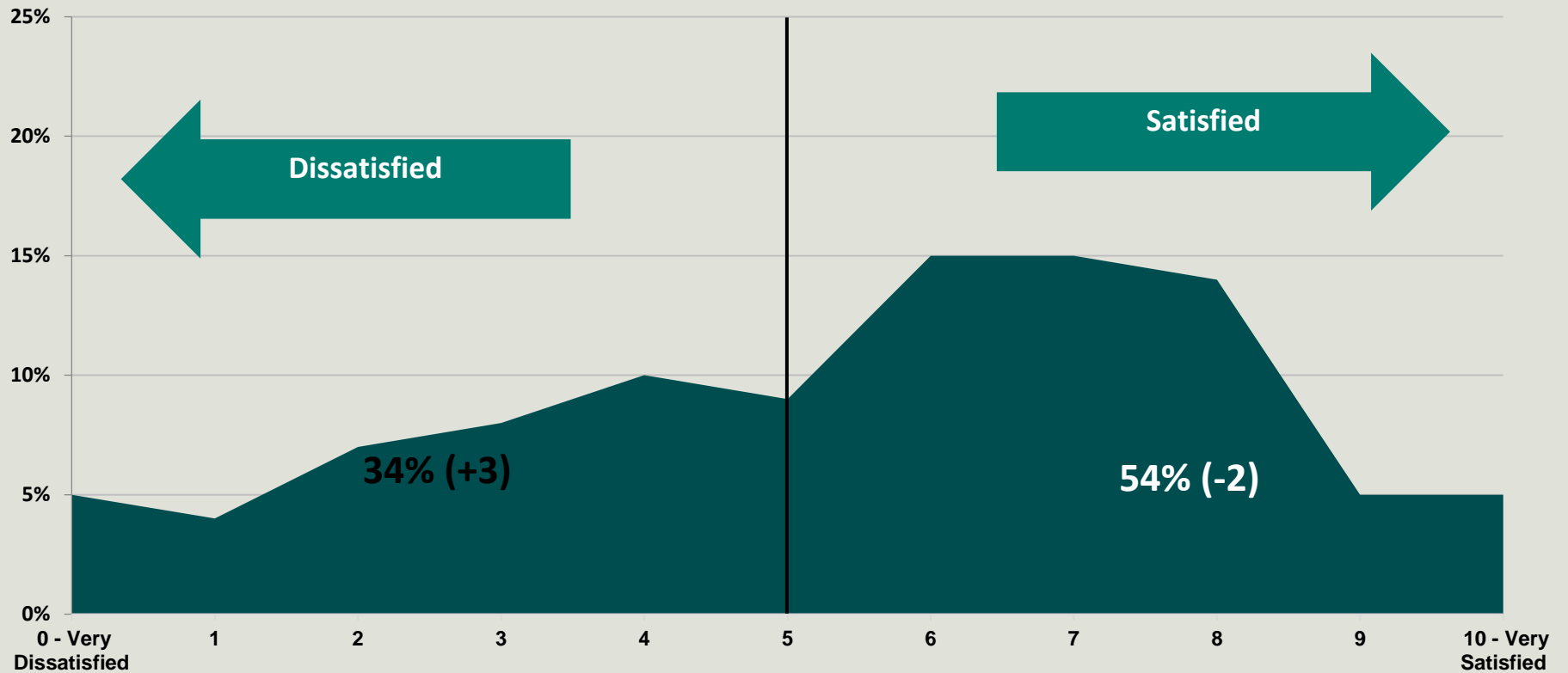
Leisure and Sports

Satisfaction with leisure and sports facilities
[comparison with 2022]



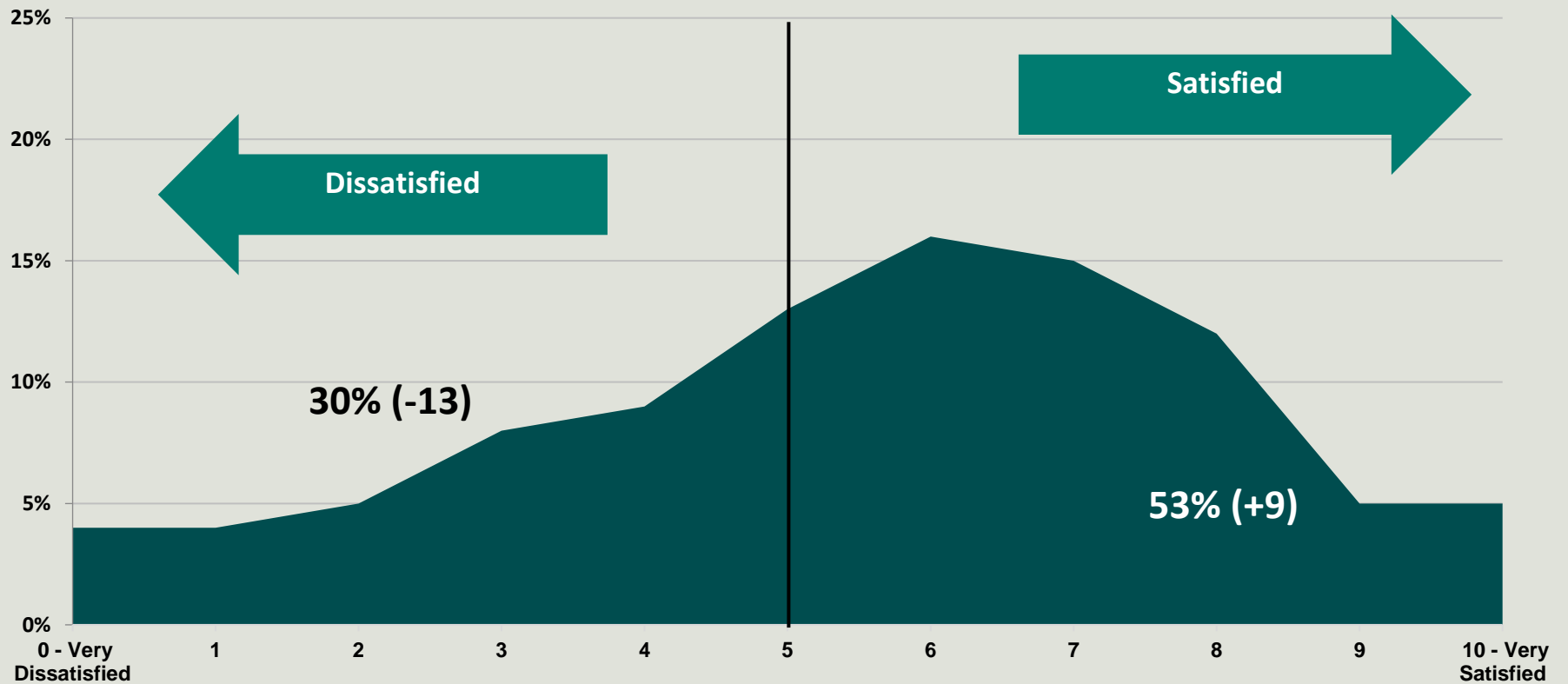
Footpath maintenance

Satisfaction with footpath maintenance [comparison with 2022]



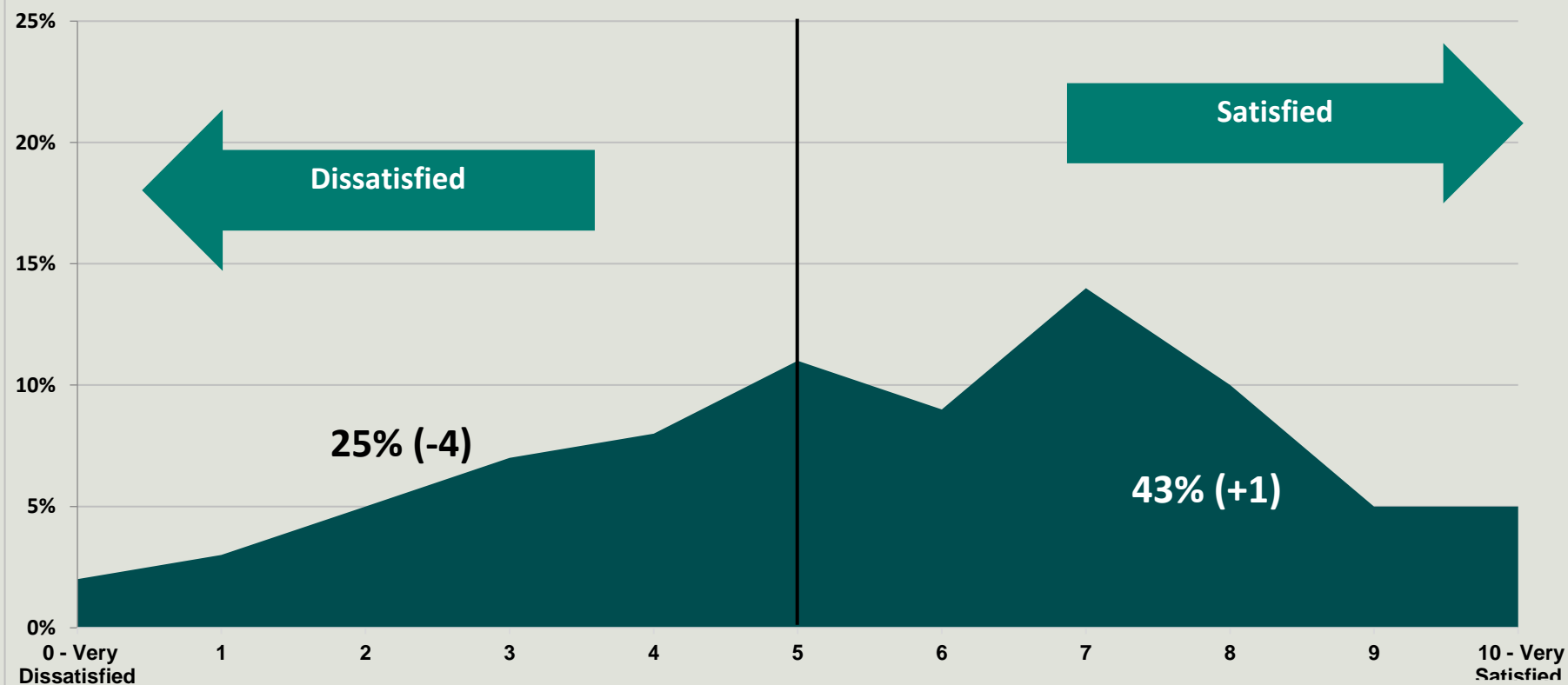
Winter Maintenance

Satisfaction with winter maintenance
[comparison with 2022]



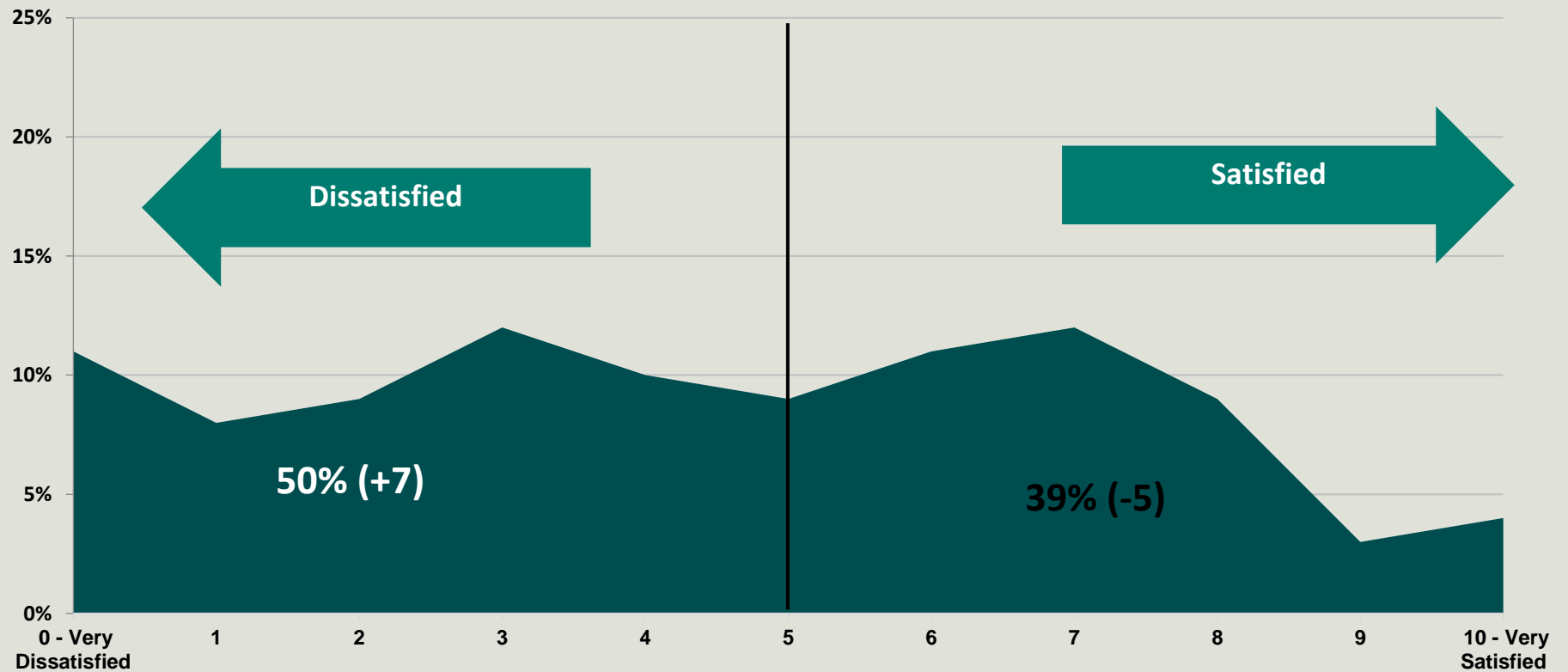
Level of Social Care

Satisfaction with level of social care
[comparison with 2022]



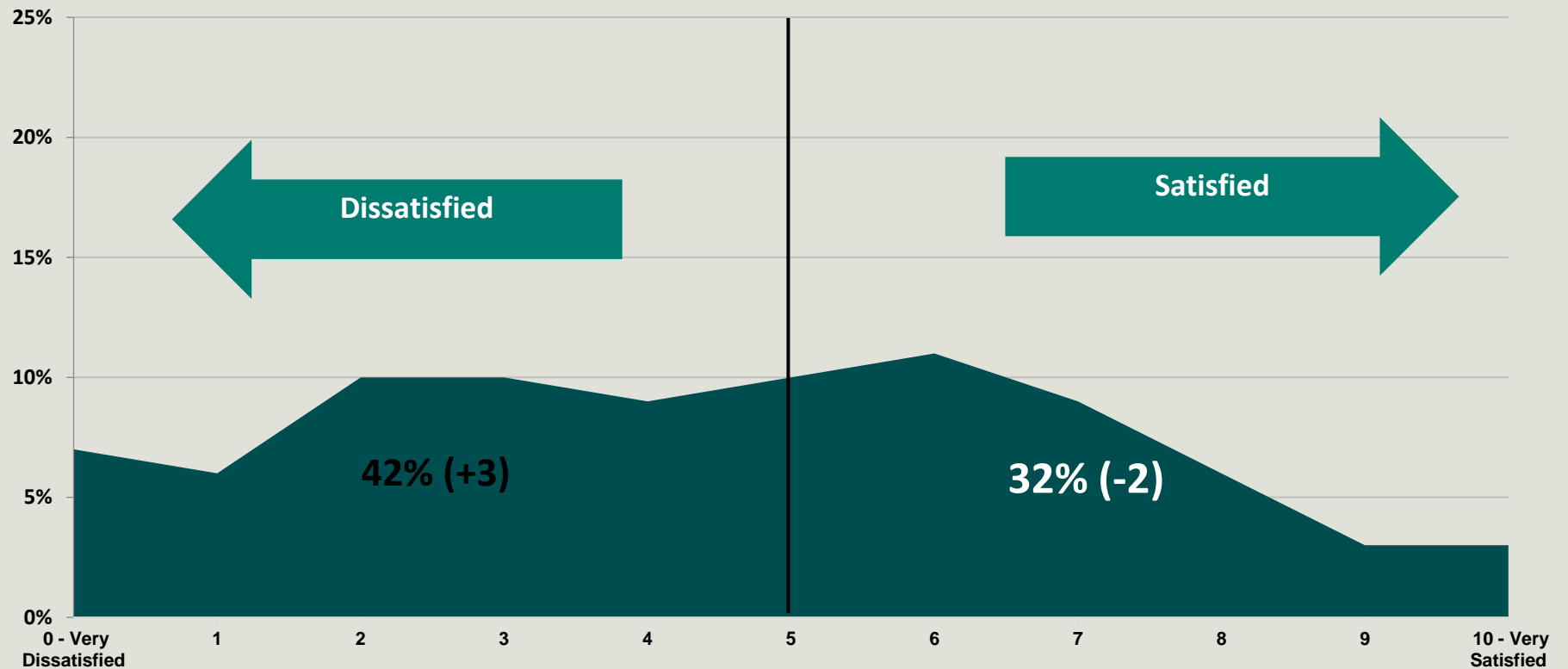
Road maintenance

Satisfaction with general road maintenance [comparison with 2022]



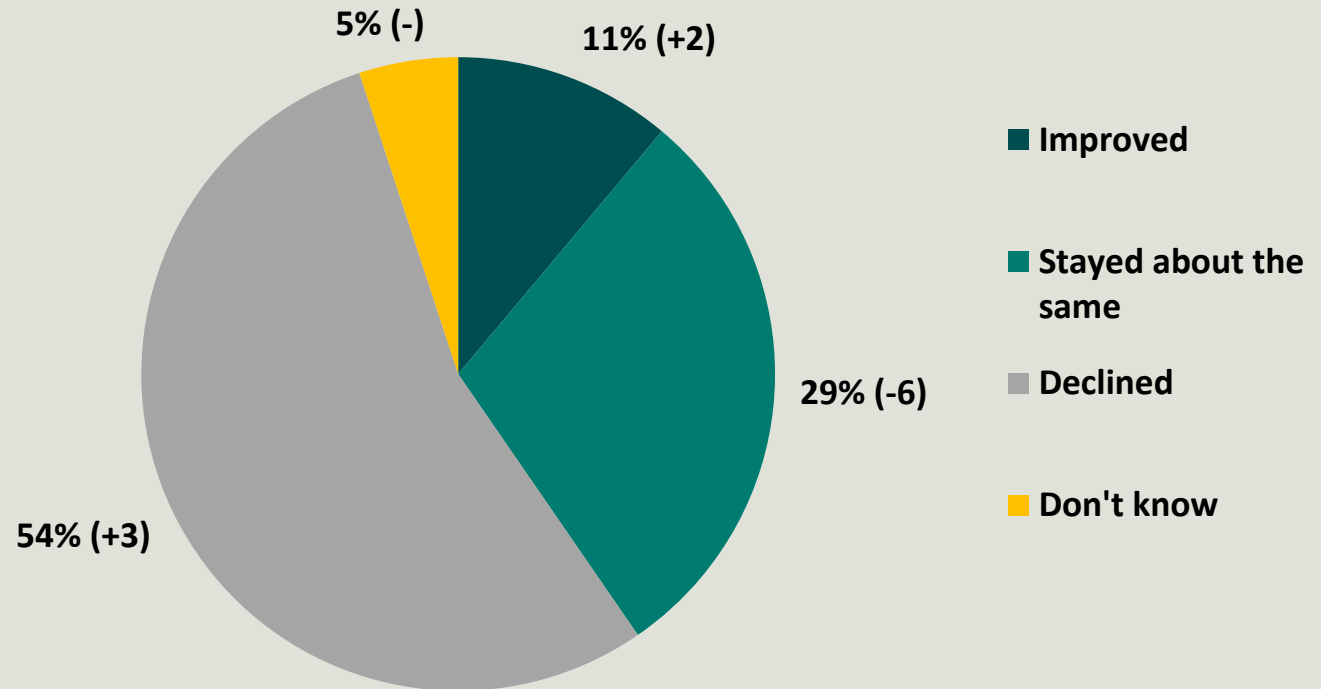
Affordable Housing

Satisfaction with affordable housing [comparison with 2022]



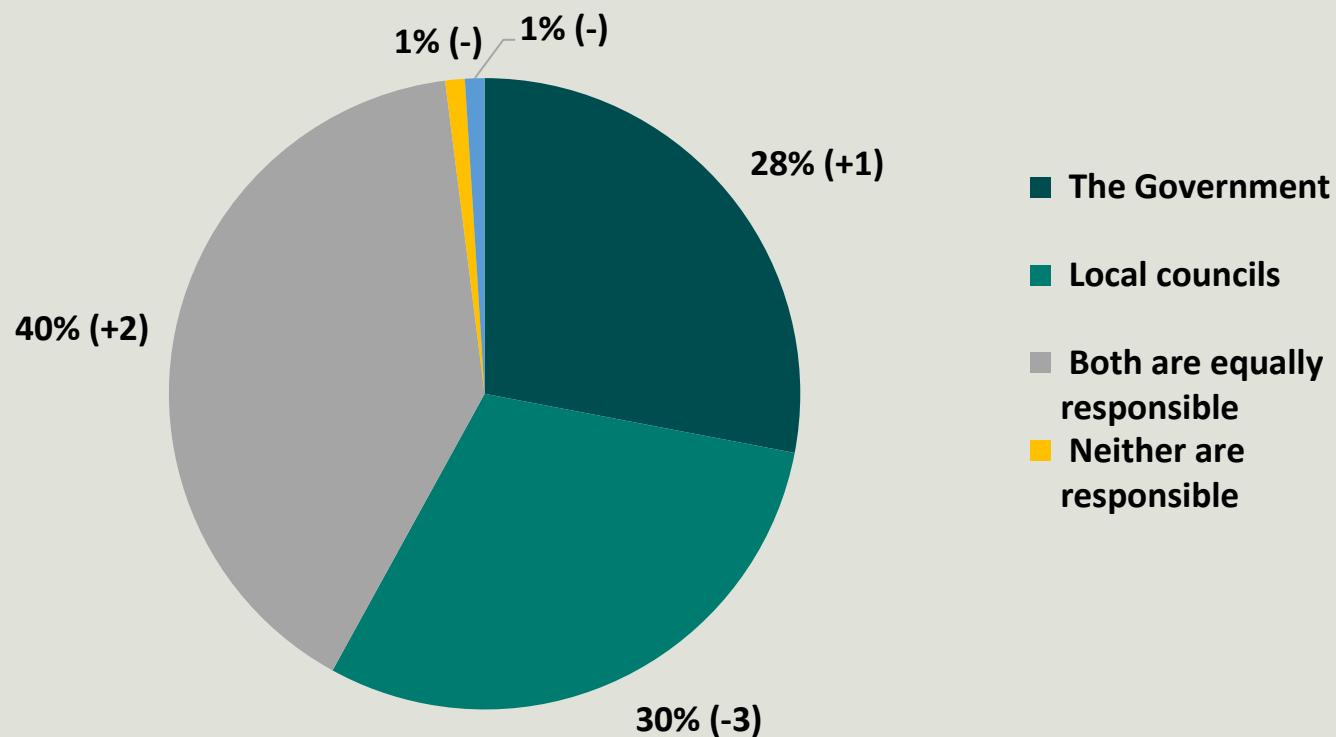
Public feel that local services are declining

Do you think that local services have declined or improved in your local area in recent years? [comparison with 2022]



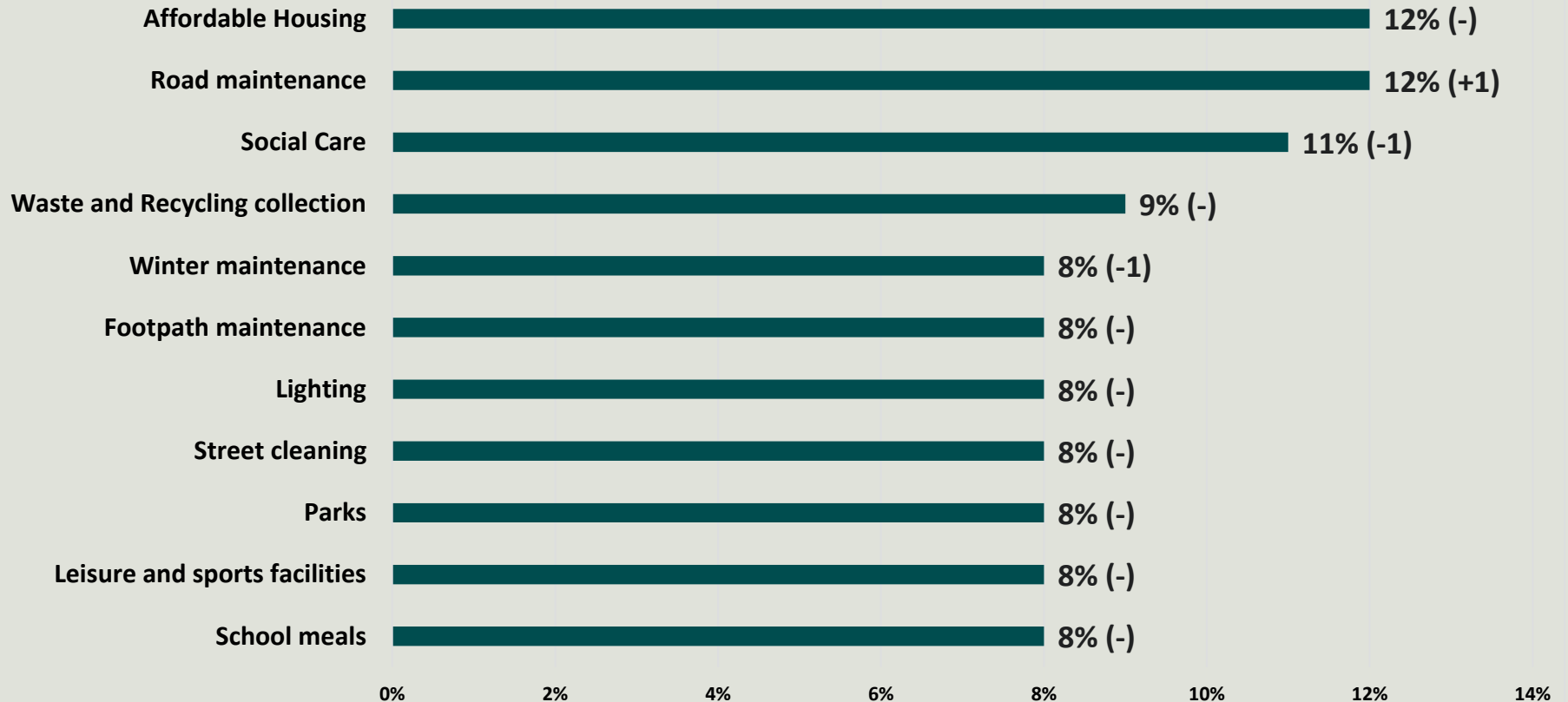
Opinion divided about where blame for decline lies

You said that local services have declined in your local area in recent years. Who do you think is the most responsible for this? [Comparison with 2022]



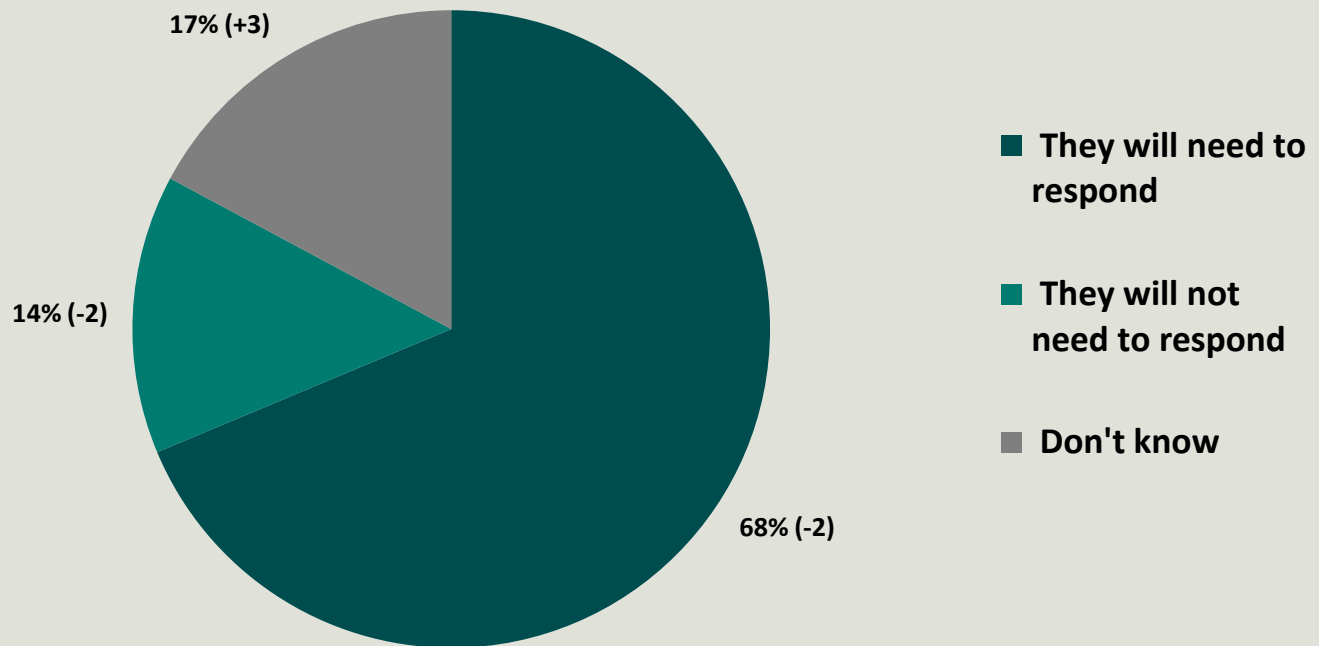
Affordable housing a top choice for new spending

If you had the choice, what percentage of the extra money would be spent on each of the 11 services below? [Comparison with 2022]



68% of people think their local community will need to respond to climate change

Do you expect that local communities in the UK will need to respond to the effects of climate change on the local environment in the next 10 years? [Comparison to 2022]



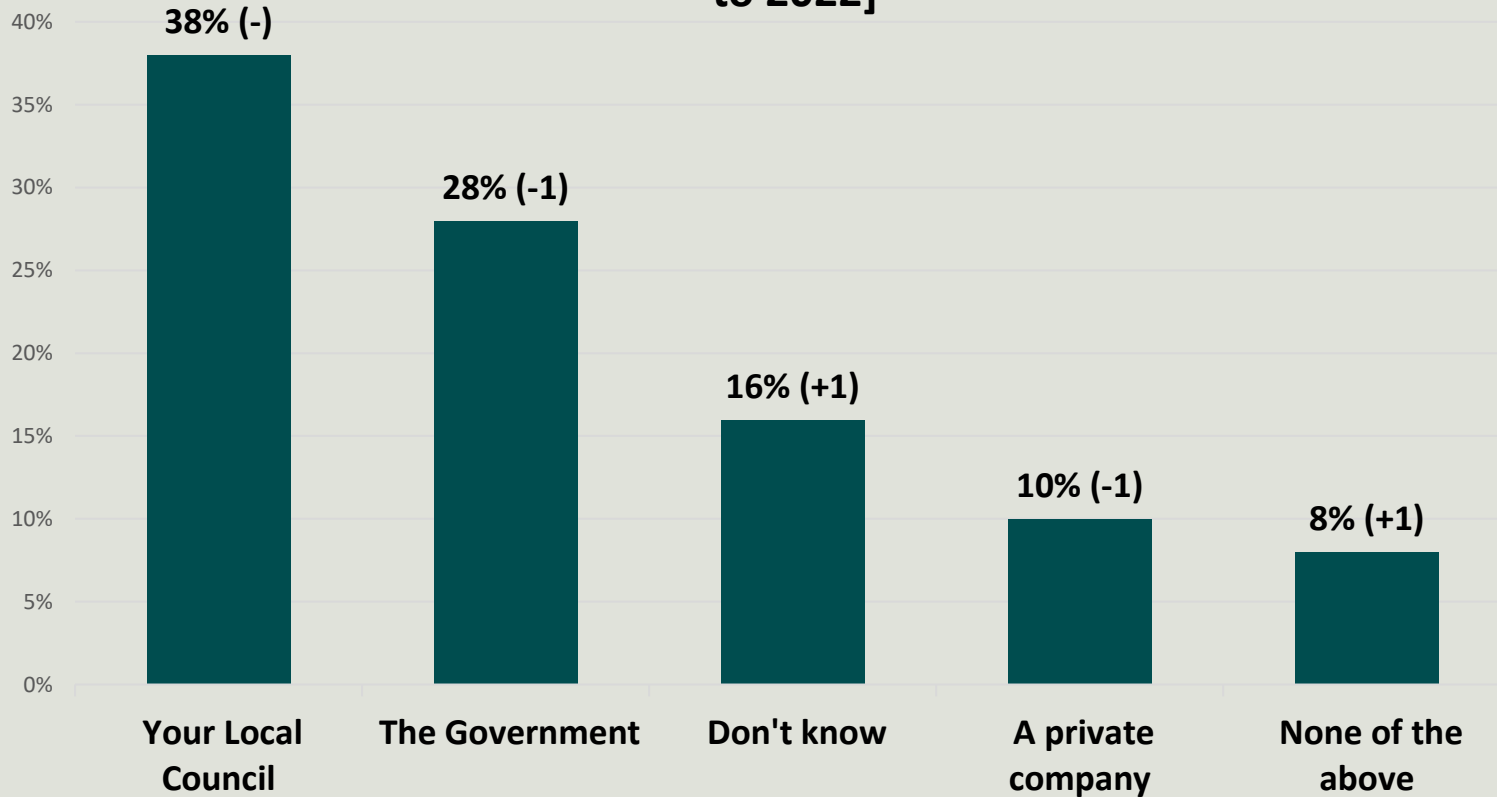
52% support more funds for Councils to combat climate change locally

Would you like to see more of your taxes given to local Councils to address climate change in local communities? [comparison with 2022]



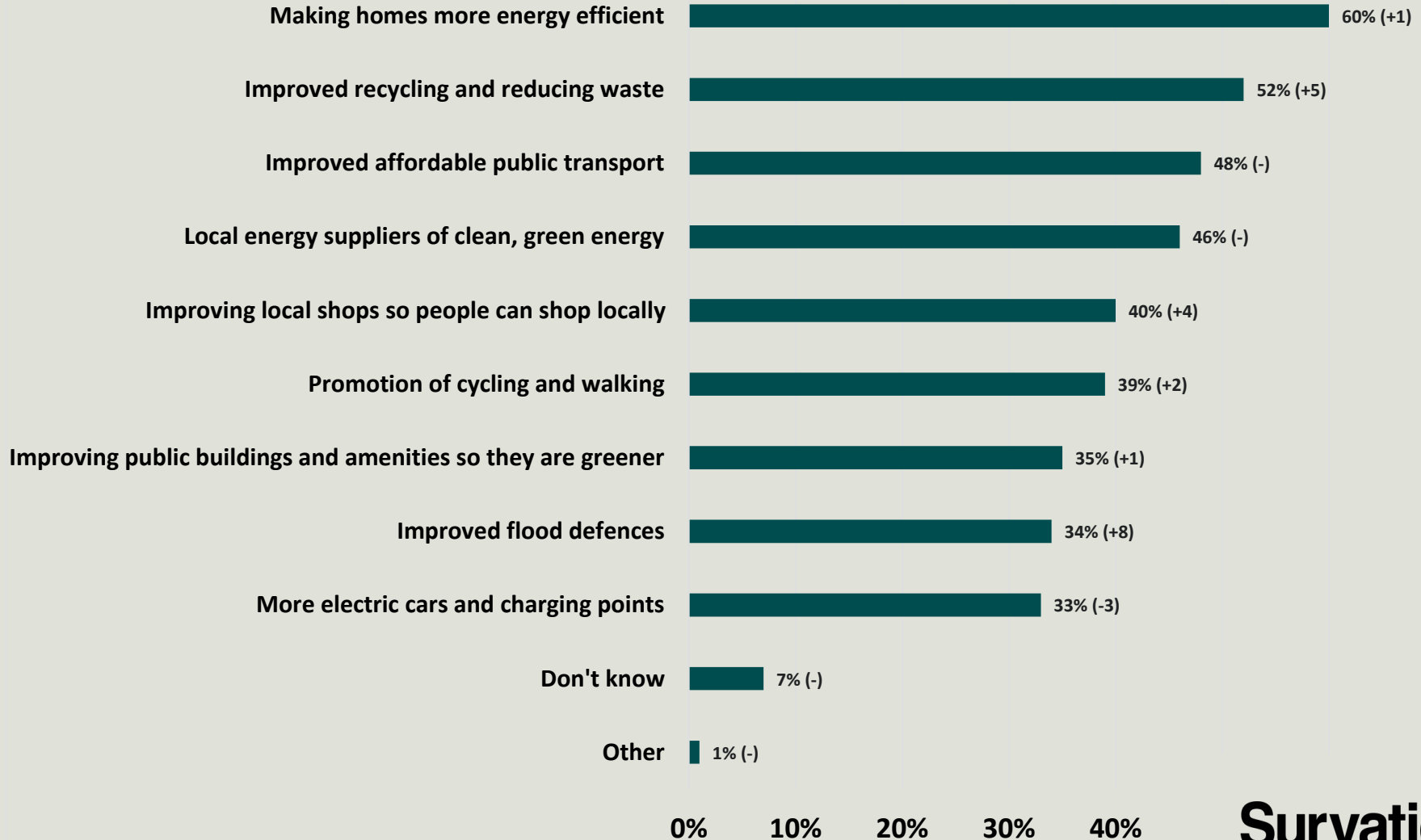
Councils trusted over government to combat effects of climate change

Who do you think is best placed to implement practical local steps to combat the effects of climate change in the local area? [Comparison to 2022]



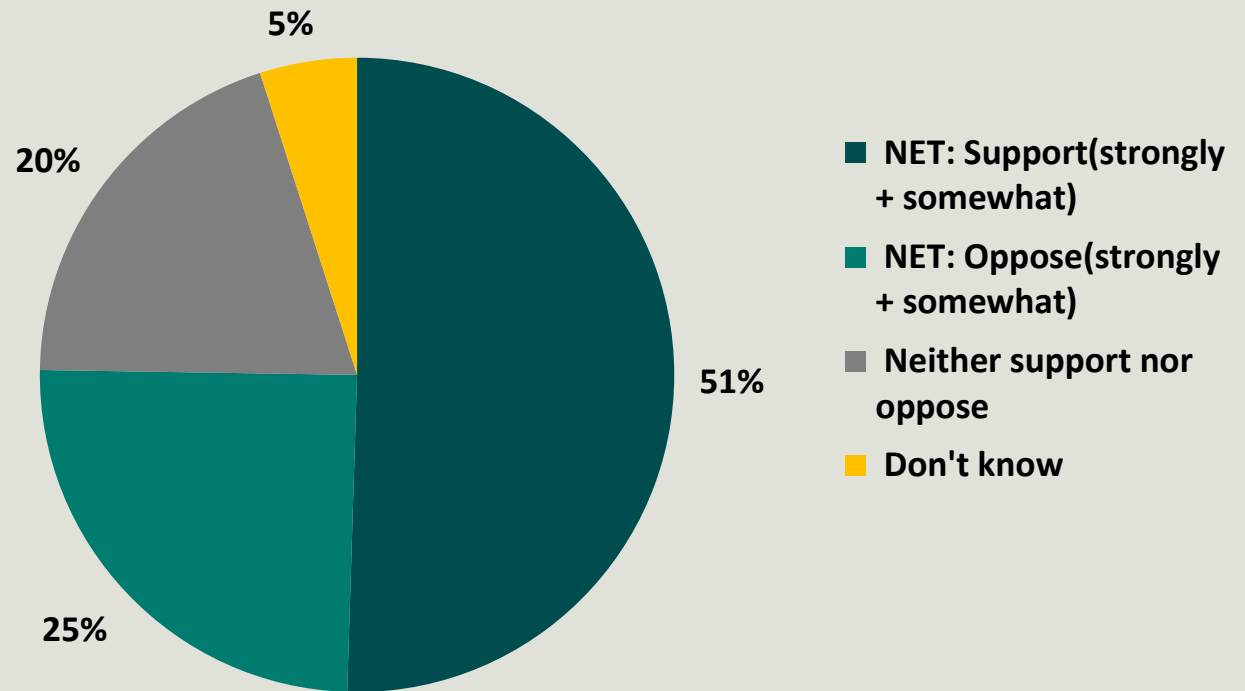
Home energy efficiency a top priority for combatting climate change

Thinking about your local area what sort of steps or actions do you think will be required to combat the effects of climate change? [comparison with 2022]



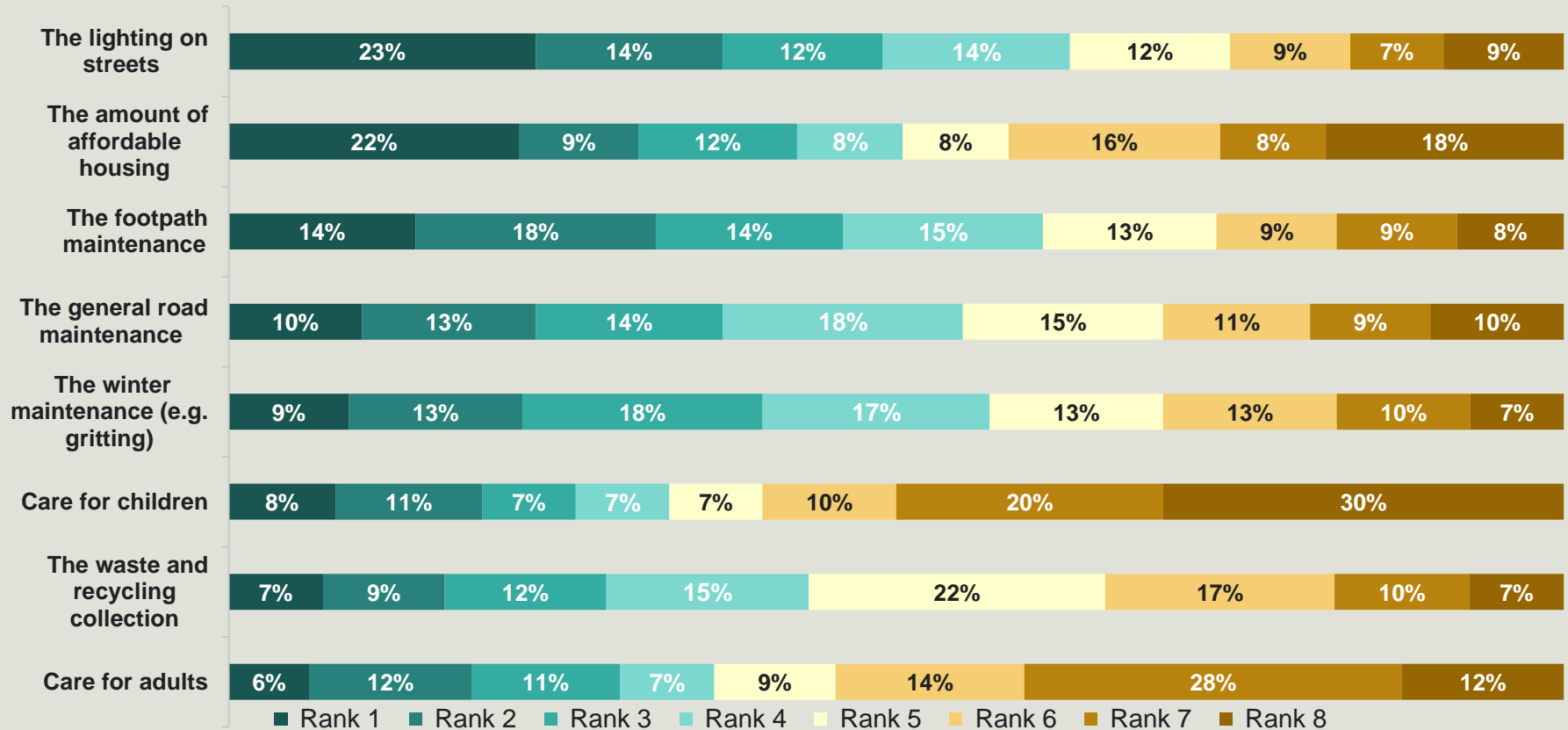
Majority support ULEZ-Style schemes to improve health

Low-traffic neighbourhoods Ultra-low emission zone and congestion charges. Support / Oppose?

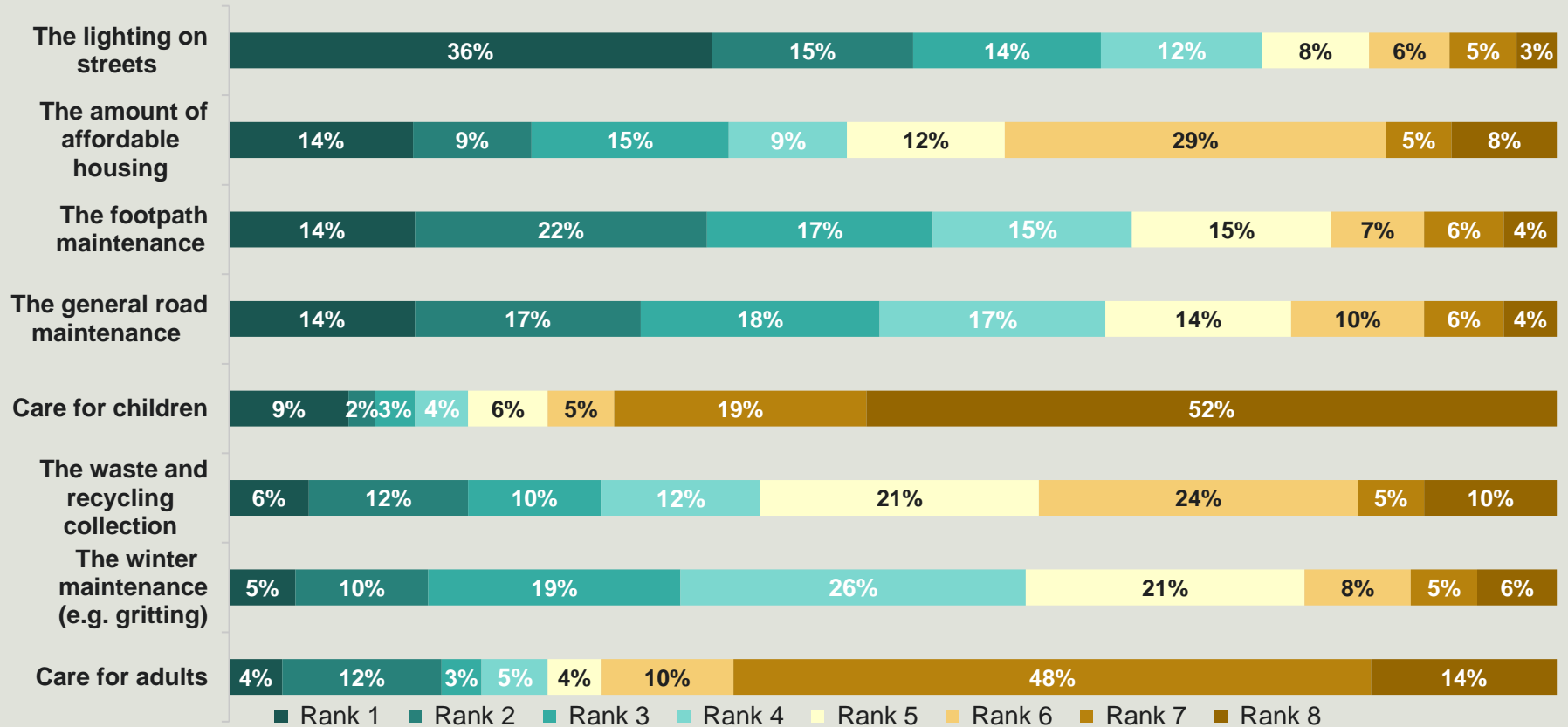


Street lighting and Affordable housing top preferences for cuts in face of bankruptcy

Birmingham City Council declared itself bankrupt. 26 other local authorities are potentially facing bankruptcy. One way local authorities try to avoid this is by cutting spending on certain services or stop providing altogether. Rank by cutting priority:

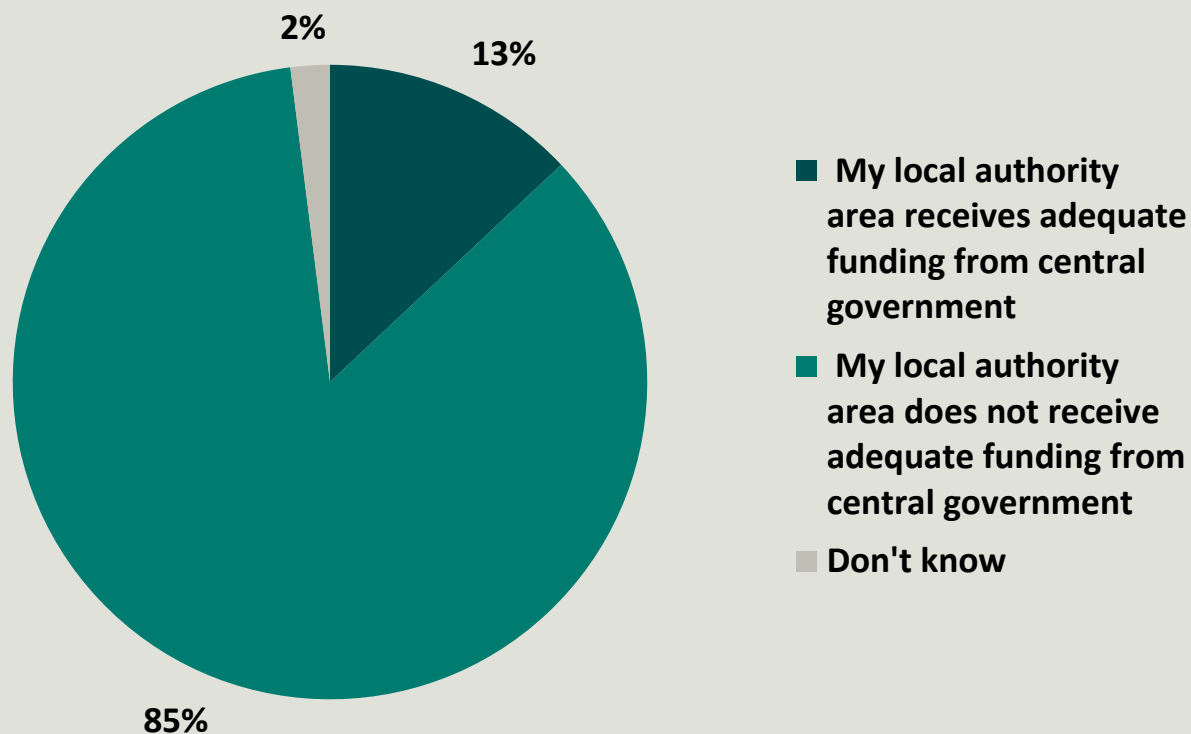


Councillors' views are broadly similar, although there is less enthusiasm for cutting the amount of affordable housing and (even) stronger resistance to cutting care



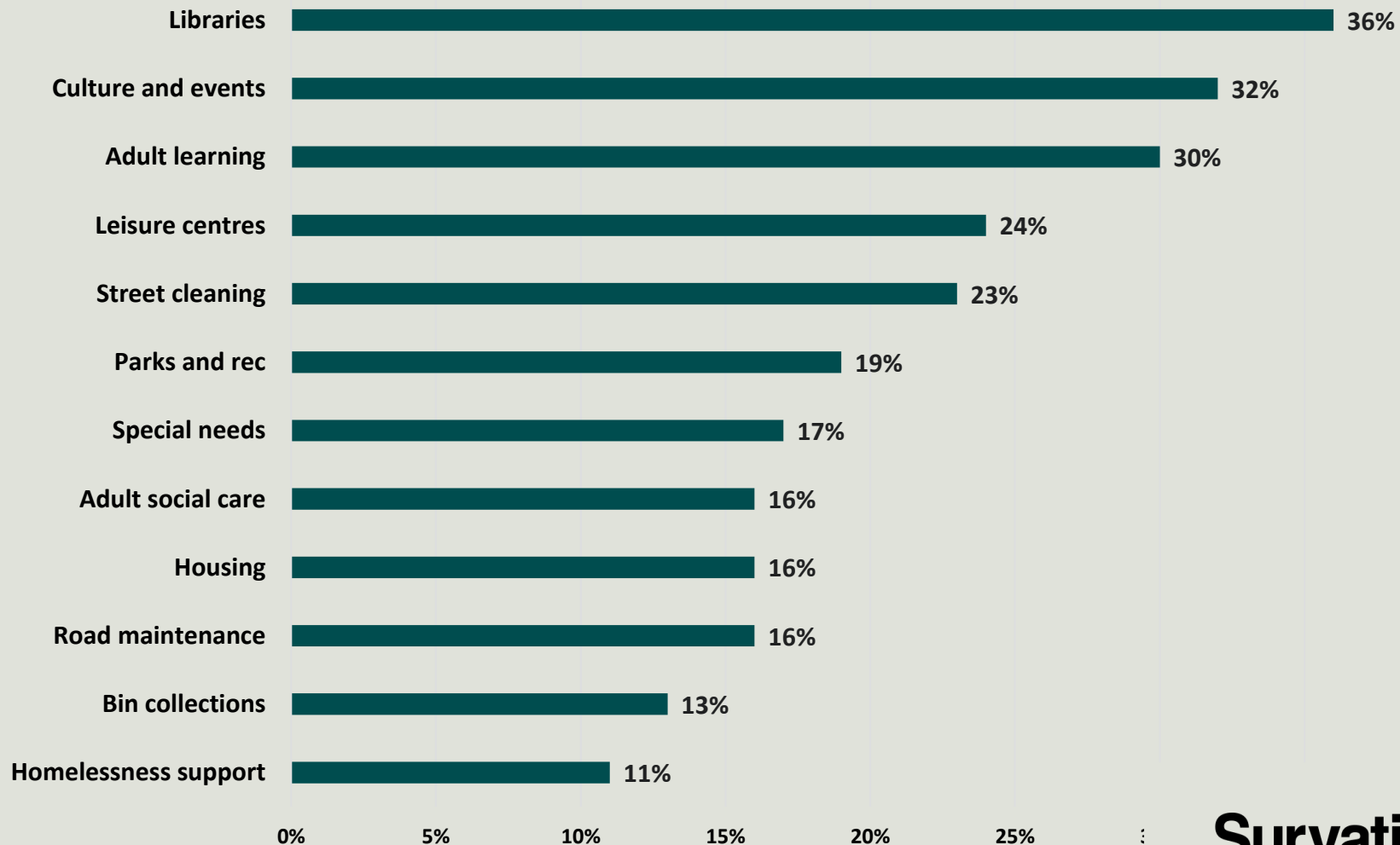
Councillors do not believe their local authority receives adequate funding

Which of the following is closest to your view?



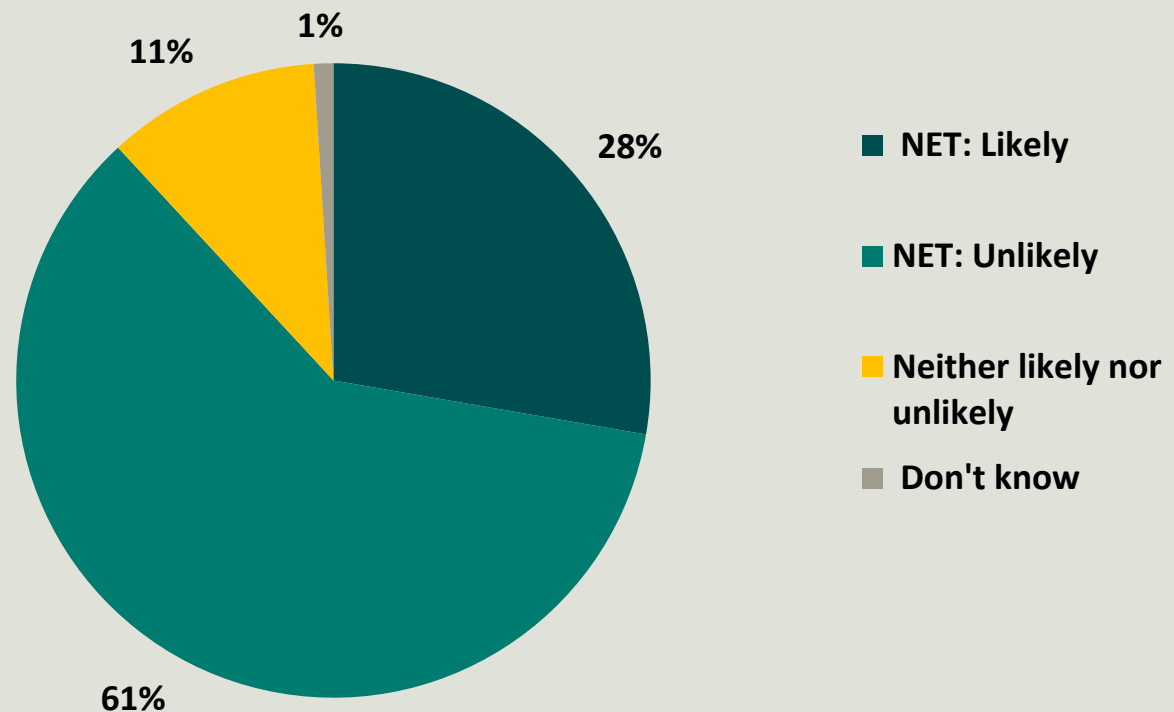
Councillors report their local authorities have been forced to close or cut many services since 2010

Which of the following services, if any, has your local authority had to cancel or close since 2010?



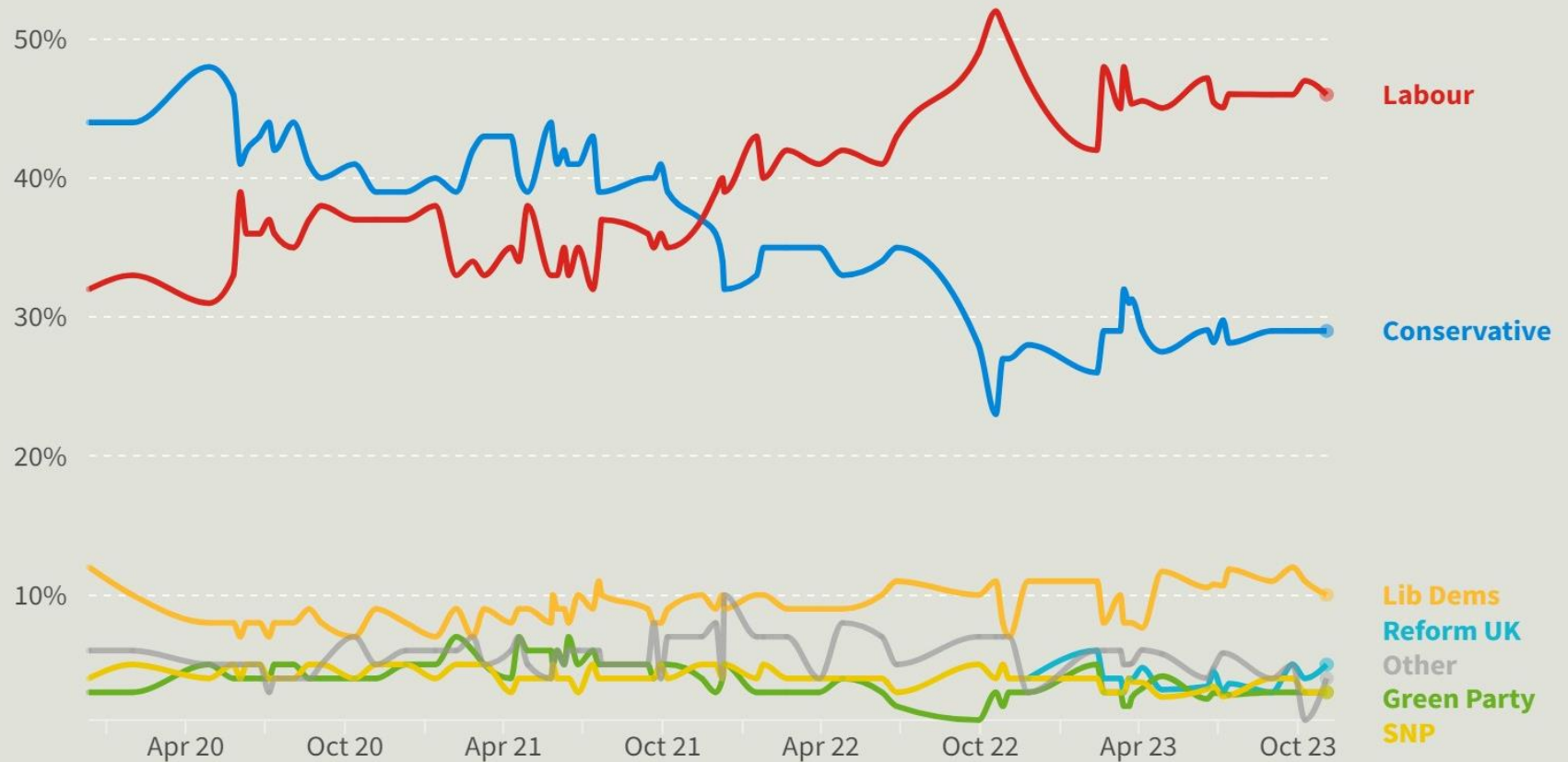
One in four Councillors polled think their local authority is at risk of bankruptcy within the next five years

Earlier this year, Birmingham City Council issued a section 114 notice, effectively declaring bankruptcy. This has recently been followed by Nottingham Council. How likely, if at all, would you say it is that your local authority will have to take similar



Looking ahead to 2024...

General Election Voting Intention Tracker



Source: Survation

If the Westminster Election was taking place tomorrow, and there was a candidate from all political parties standing in your constituency, which party do you think you would vote for?

Survation.

For more information

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