



WYCOMBE
DISTRICT COUNCIL

**Community
Governance Review:
Presentation of
Consultation Findings**

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The Commission and Consultation

Following the decision to create a single Unitary Authority for Buckinghamshire, four petitions to create new town or parish councils were received from residents in Sands, Micklefield, Totteridge wards and from the ten unparished wards of High Wycombe.

Consequently, Wycombe District Council appointed ORS consult town's residents and businesses, the surrounding town and parish councils, and other interested organisations, on the issues prior to the restructuring of local government in 2020.

Methodologies



Open Questionnaire

681 questionnaire responses



Residents' Survey

803 telephone interviews



Residents' Focus Groups

3 focus groups with diverse cross section of residents of High Wycombe



Submissions

5 submissions from Parish Councils, Councillors and members of the public

Quantitative responses by area (where known)



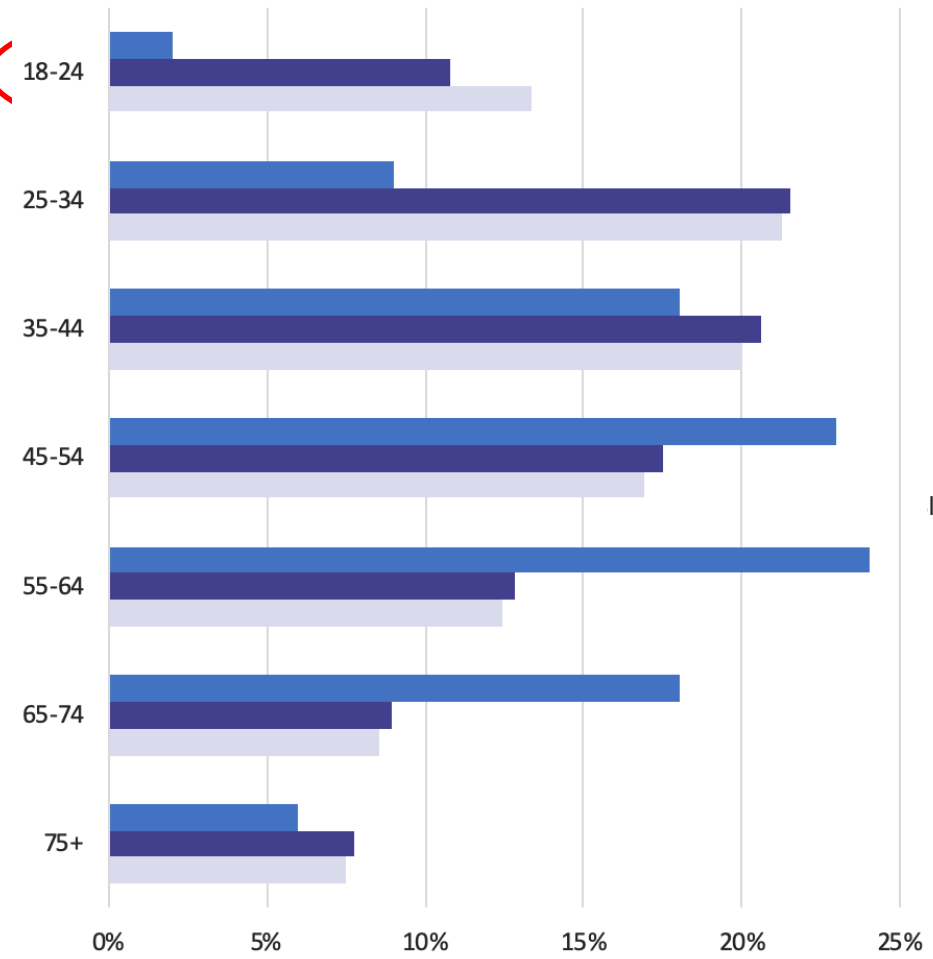
	Open Questionnaire (individuals only)		Residents Survey (weighted)		High Wycombe population 18+	
	Count	%	Count	%	Number	%
Abbey	63	12%	66	15%	8,188	15%
Booker and Cressex	21	4%	43	7%	3,934	7%
Bowerdean	27	5%	43	7%	4,067	7%
Disraeli	36	7%	41	8%	4,702	8%
Micklefield	39	8%	144	7%	4,136	7%
Oakridge and Castlefield	26	5%	65	12%	6,903	12%
Ryemead	75	15%	41	11%	6,237	11%
Sands	117	23%	146	9%	5,261	9%
Terriers and Amersham Hill	79	15%	63	13%	7,449	13%
Totteridge	33	6%	151	9%	5,264	9%
Total	516	100%	803	100%	56,141	100%
<i>Outside of High Wycombe</i>	<i>49</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>
<i>Not known</i>	<i>116</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>	<i>-</i>



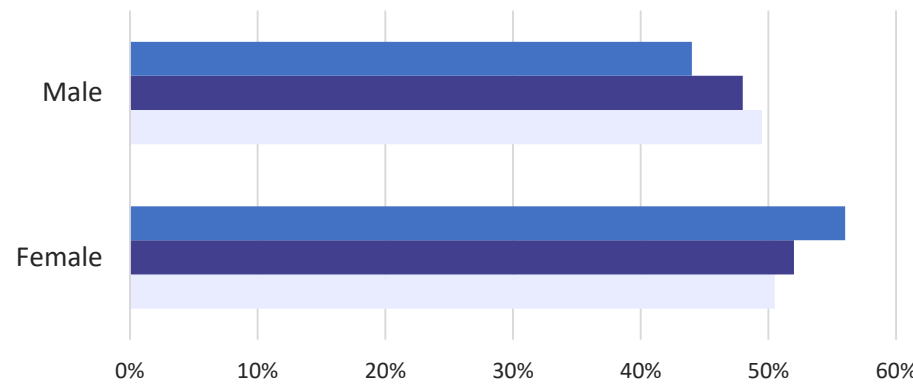
Comparison of Open Questionnaire and Residents Survey Responses

- Consultation Questionnaire (Unweighted)
- Residents' Survey (Weighted)
- Population (18+)

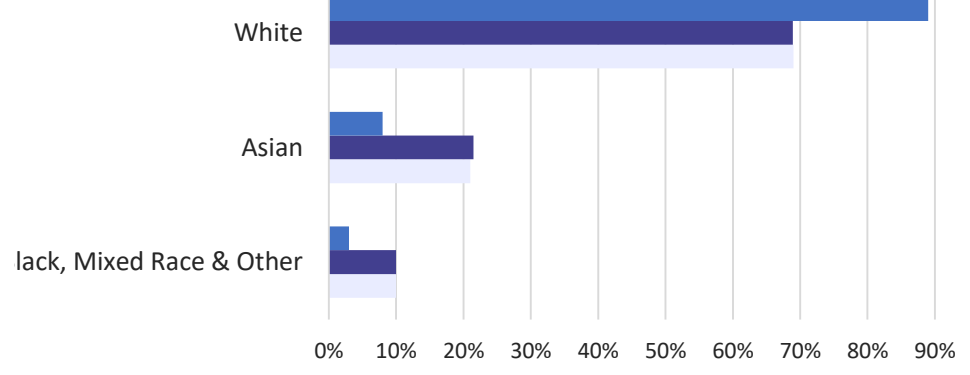
By Age



By Gender



By Ethnicity

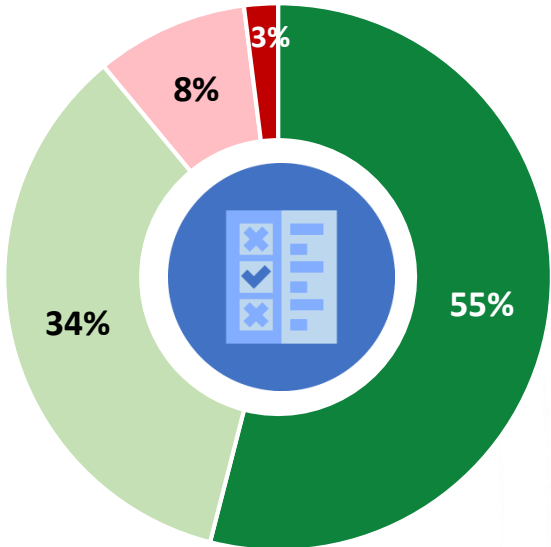




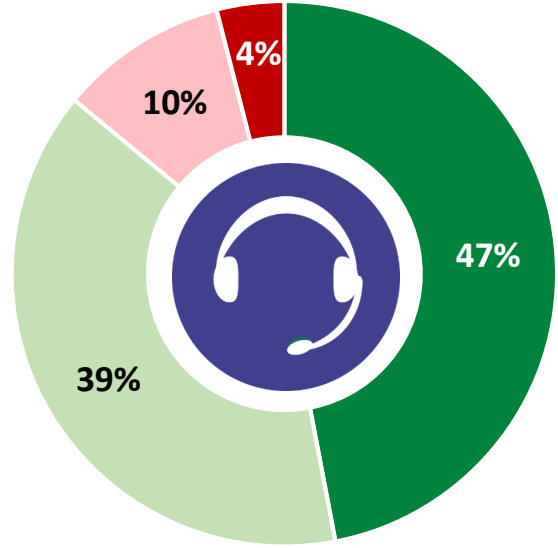
Main Findings

Large majorities identify strongly with High Wycombe as a town, even those in Micklefield, Sands and Totteridge

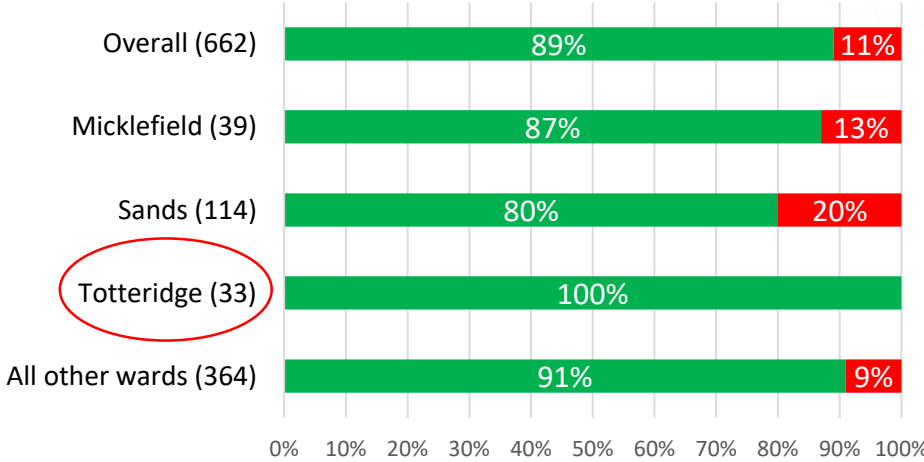
- Identify very strongly with High Wycombe
- Tend not to identify with High Wycombe



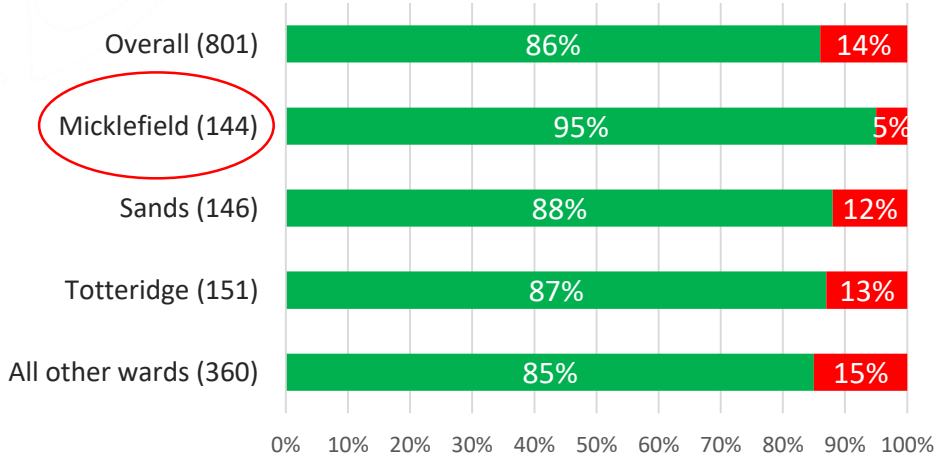
- Identify very strongly with High Wycombe
- Identify fairly strongly with High Wycombe
- Tend not to identify with High Wycombe
- Definitely do not identify with High Wycombe



OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE



RESIDENTS' SURVEY



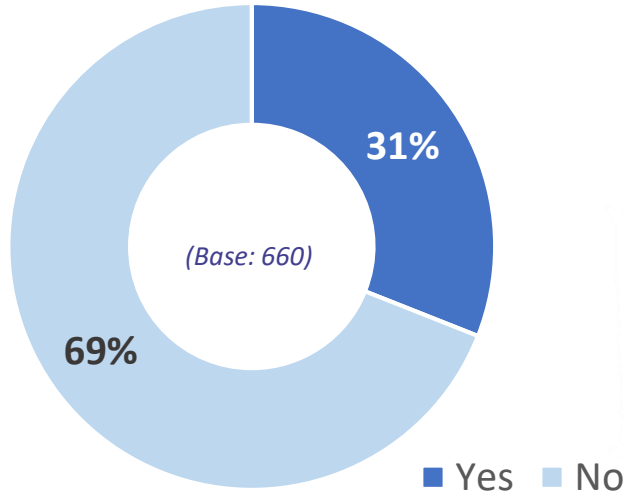
Identify strongly with High Wycombe Do not identify with High Wycombe

How strongly, if at all, do you identify with High Wycombe as a town you feel attached to? (Consultation Questionnaire Base: 662; Residents Survey Base: 801)

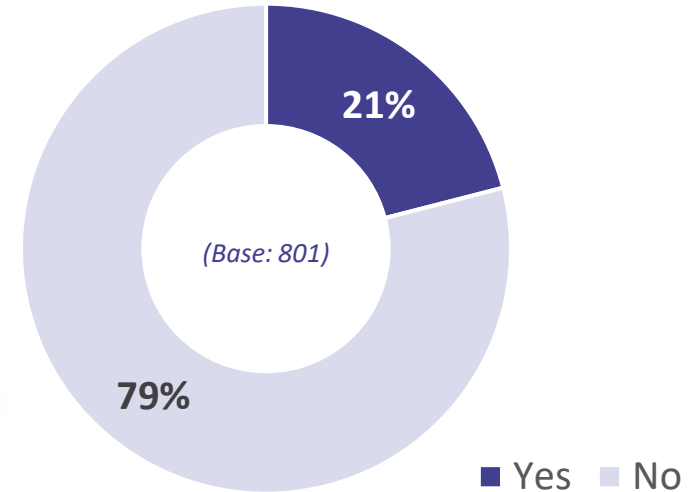
When asked if they feel attached to any areas other than High Wycombe...

Less than one third identify with/feel attached to another area in Bucks

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE



RESIDENTS' SURVEY



Of those who feel attached to another area in Buckinghamshire...

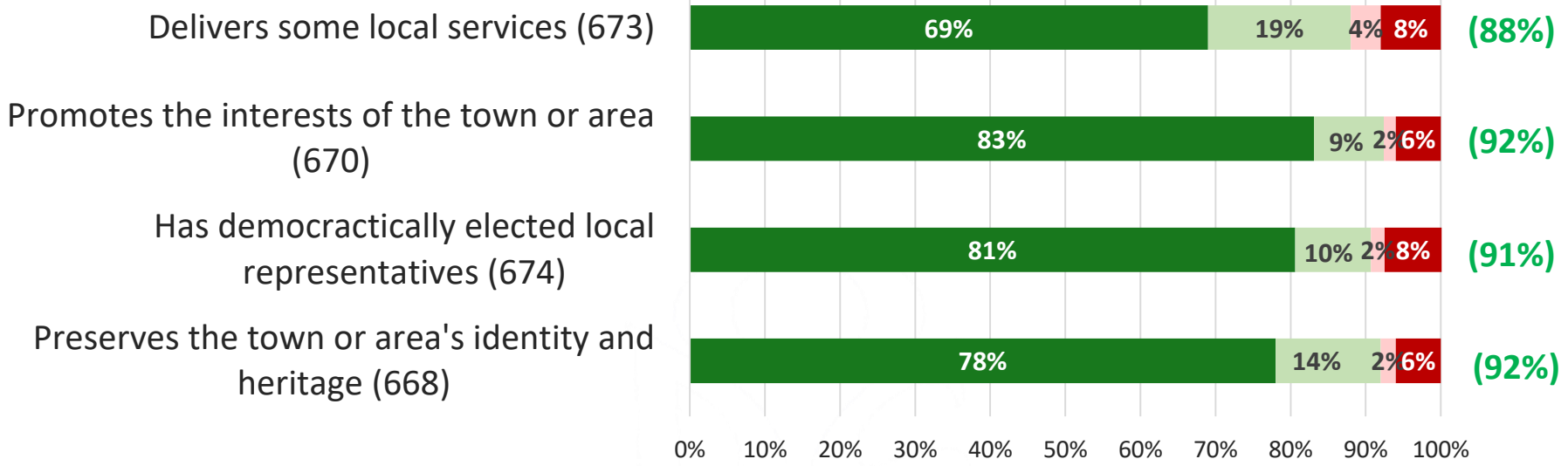
Consultation questionnaire: More than two fifths of Sands and Micklefield respondents mentioned their own ward; less than one fifth of Totteridge respondents did the same

Residents survey: Less than 1 in 10 in Sands, Micklefield or Totteridge mentioned their own ward



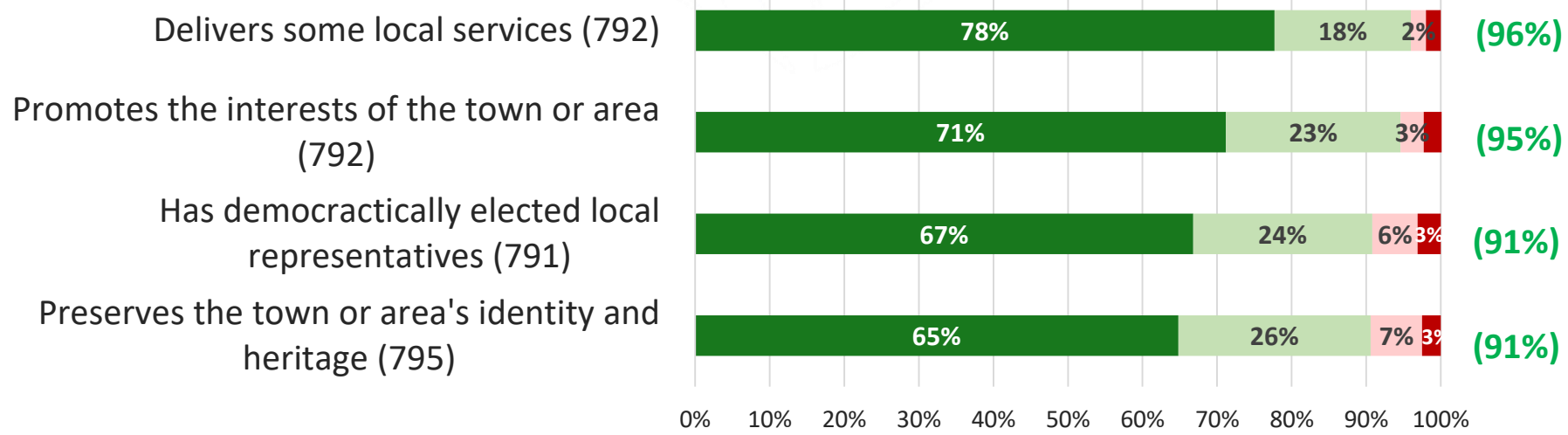
More than 9 in 10 believe it is important to have a Town Council in High Wycombe or a Parish Council in some areas that...

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE



■ Very important
 ■ Quite important
 ■ Not very important
 ■ Not at all important

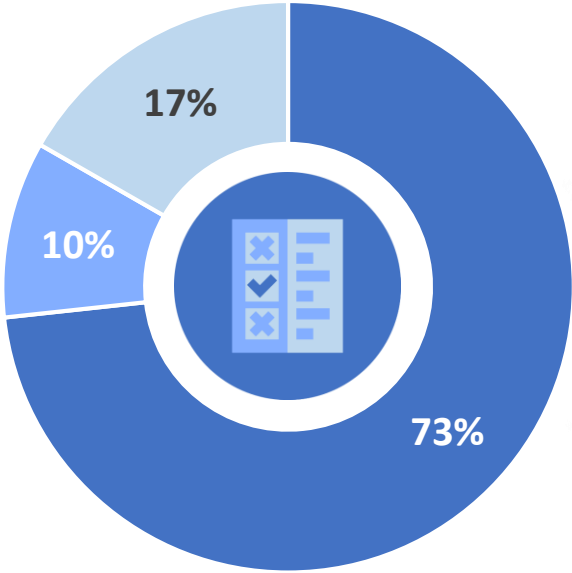
RESIDENTS' SURVEY



How important or unimportant is it to have either a Town Council in High Wycombe, or a Parish Council in some areas of High Wycombe that ...?

Overall, more than two-thirds support the creation of a High Wycombe Town Council

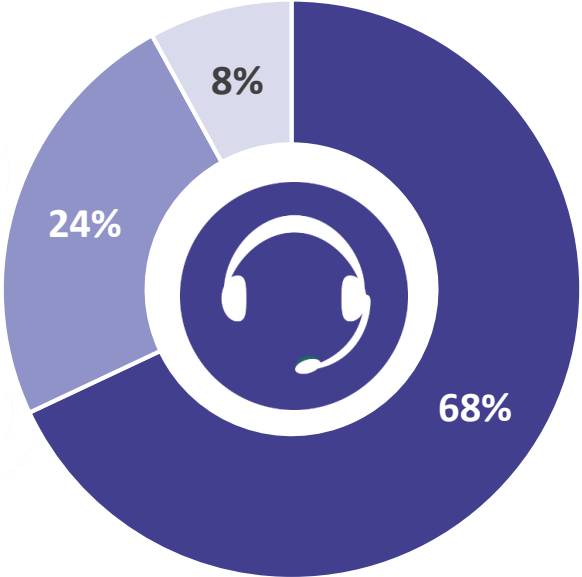
Open Questionnaire



- Option 1 – Create a new Town Council for High Wycombe
- Option 2 – No Town Council
- Option 3 – An alternative option

Which option would you prefer? (Base: 640 – excluding ‘Don’t Know’)

Residents Survey



- Option 1 – Create a new Town Council for High Wycombe
- Option 2 – No Town Council
- Option 3 – An alternative option

Micklefield less likely to prefer opt 1 (58%)
 Totteridge more likely to prefer opt 1 (81%)

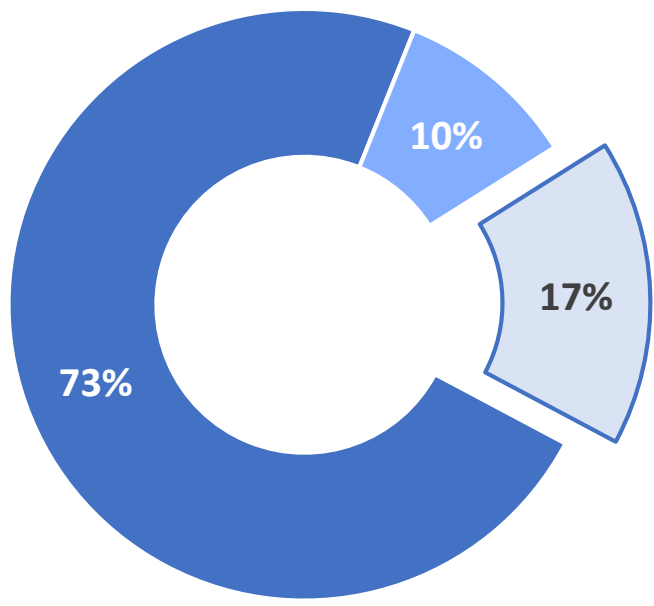
Which option would you prefer? (Base: 757 – excluding ‘Don’t Know’)

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE responses by area

	Micklefield (39)	Sands (115)	Totteridge (33)	Other areas (375)
Option 1: A new town council for HW	69%	43%	76%	83%
Option 2: No Town Council	10%	6%	12%	10%
Option 3: An alternative option	21%	51%	12%	6%

Option 3 – Alternatives

Open Questionnaire



Some comments did not identify possible alternatives – eg to retain two tier governance etc

Every ward should have a parish council

A parish council for Sands and a Town Council for the rest of High Wycombe

A parish council just for Micklefield

A parish council for just Totteridge

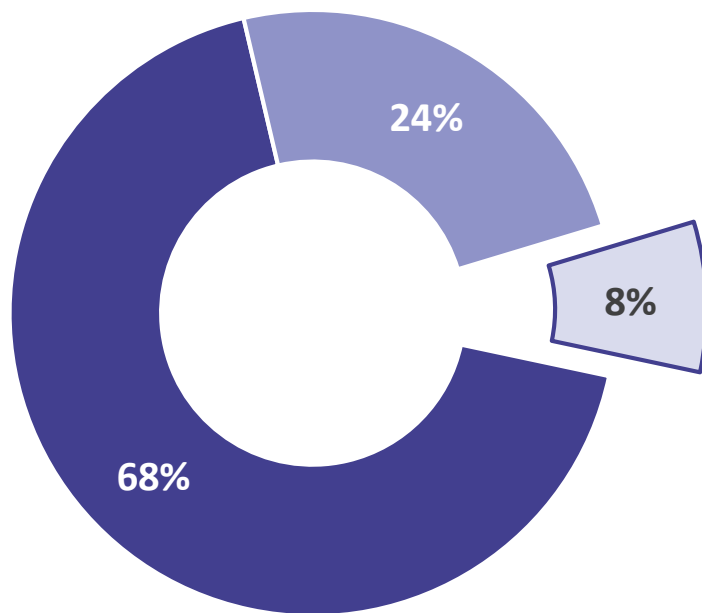
A parish council for Sands and a Town Council for the rest of High Wycombe

A separate parish council for those wards that have identified themselves as wanting a parish, plus a town council for those wards that don't wish to be a parish.

Which option would you prefer? (Base: 640 – excluding 'Don't Know')

Option 3 – Alternatives

Residents' Survey



A middle ground where we retain the Mayor and the Charter trustees and [also] have a Town Council

Every ward to have its own Parish Council

[An unspecified] mixture of / middle ground between Options 1 and 2

For the three petitioned wards to have their own Parish Council, and for the rest of High Wycombe to have a Town Council

Some comments did not identify possible alternatives – eg to retain two tier governance etc

Merge Micklefield and Totteridge

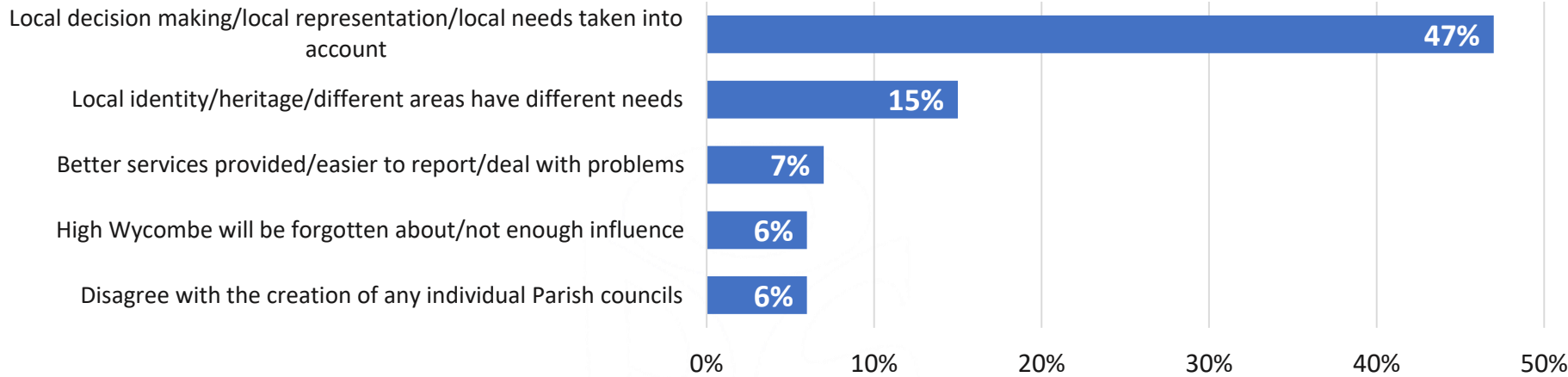
Local representation in a voluntary capacity like the way youth the clubs are run

Which option would you prefer? (Base: 757 – excluding 'Don't Know')

Reasons for wanting a Town Council: Almost half want some local decision-making and representation

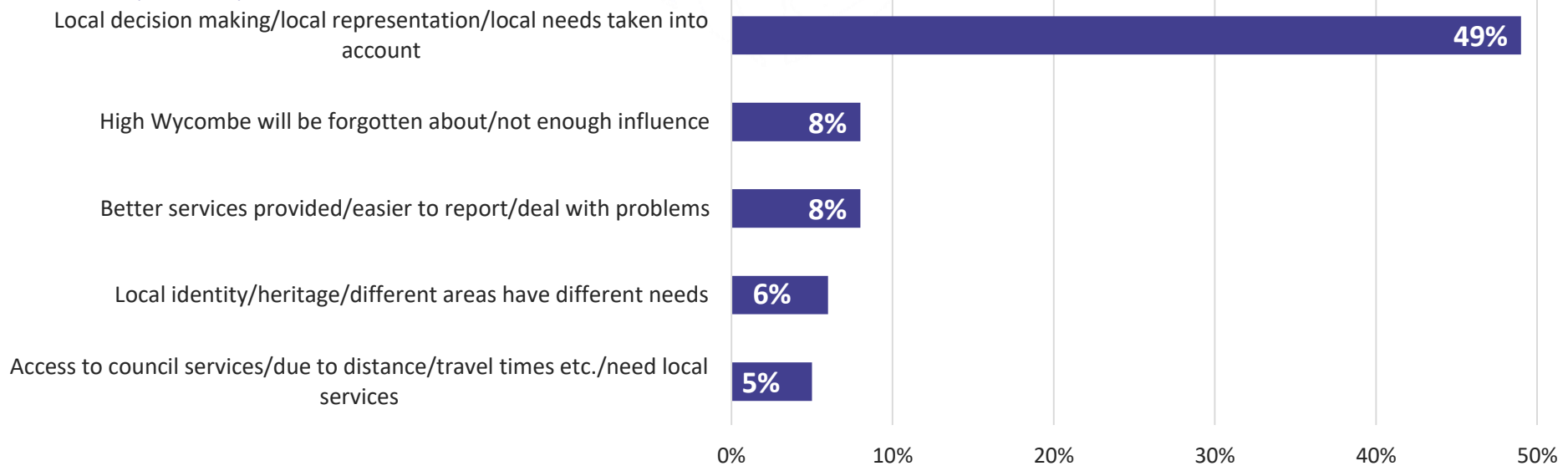
OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE

Base: 466 (All Option 1 responses)



RESIDENTS' SURVEY

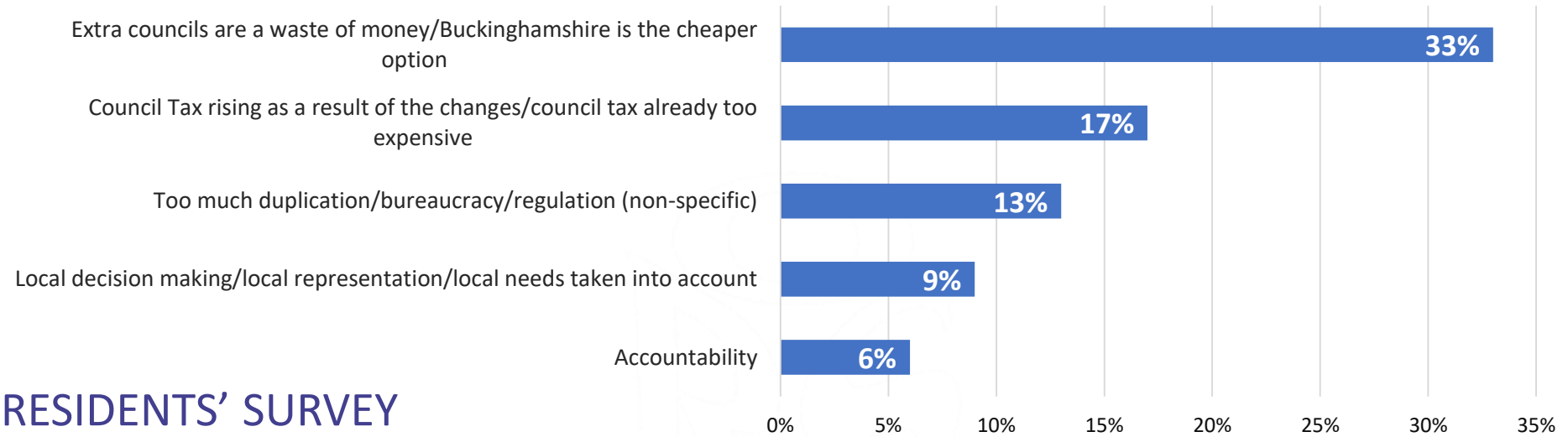
Base: 530 (All Option 1 responses)



Reasons for NOT wanting a Town Council: More than a quarter were concerned about potential costs

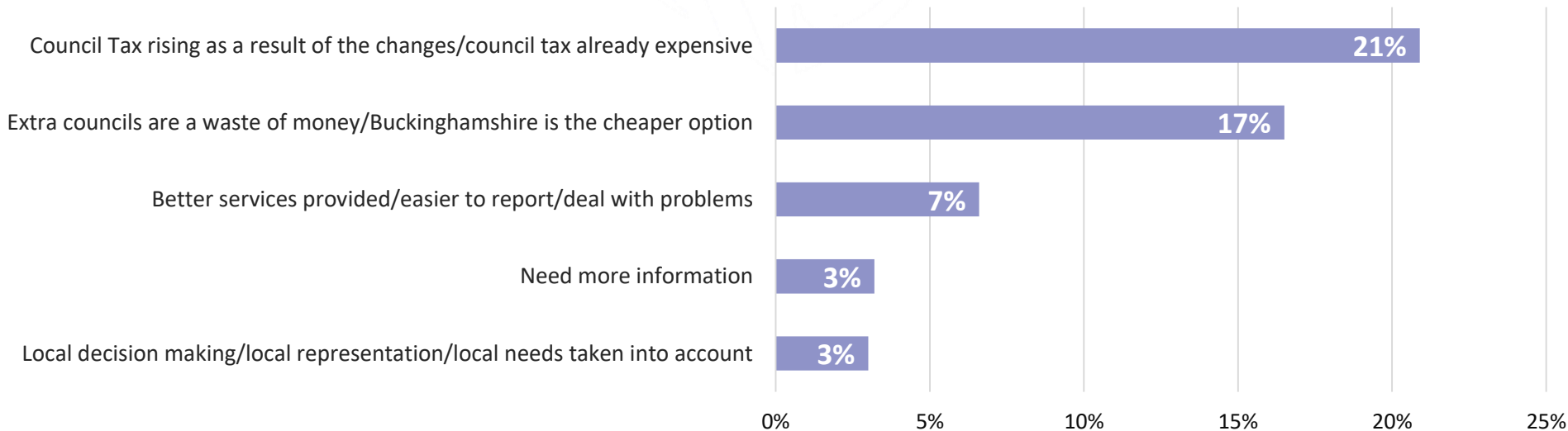
OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE

Base: 64 (All Option 2 responses)



RESIDENTS' SURVEY

Base: 163 (Option 2 responses)

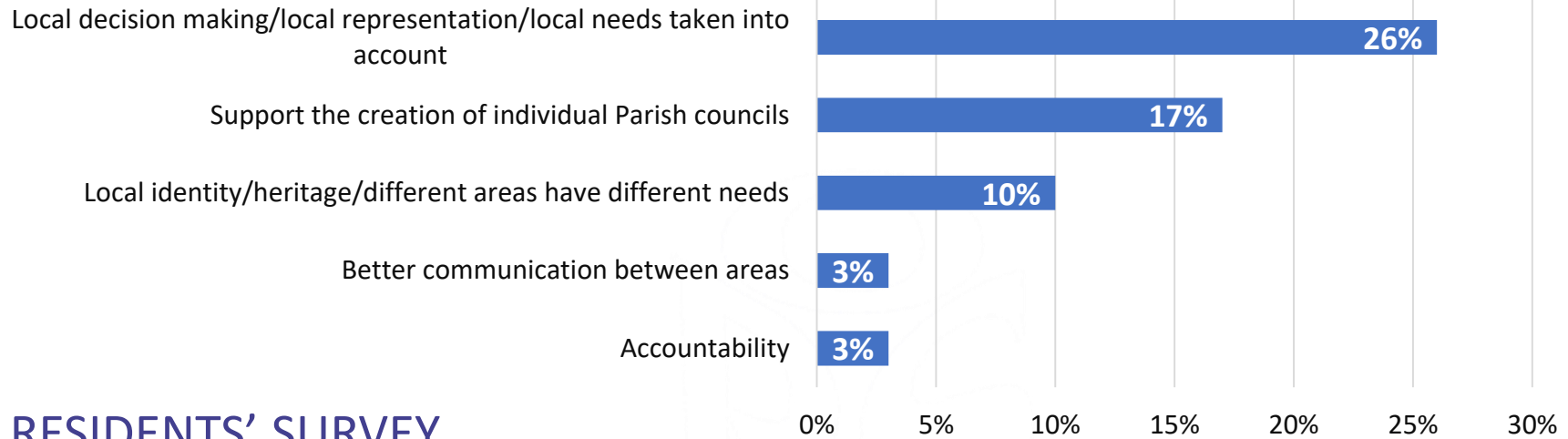




Reasons for an Alternative Option: More than a quarter want local representation/needs taken into account

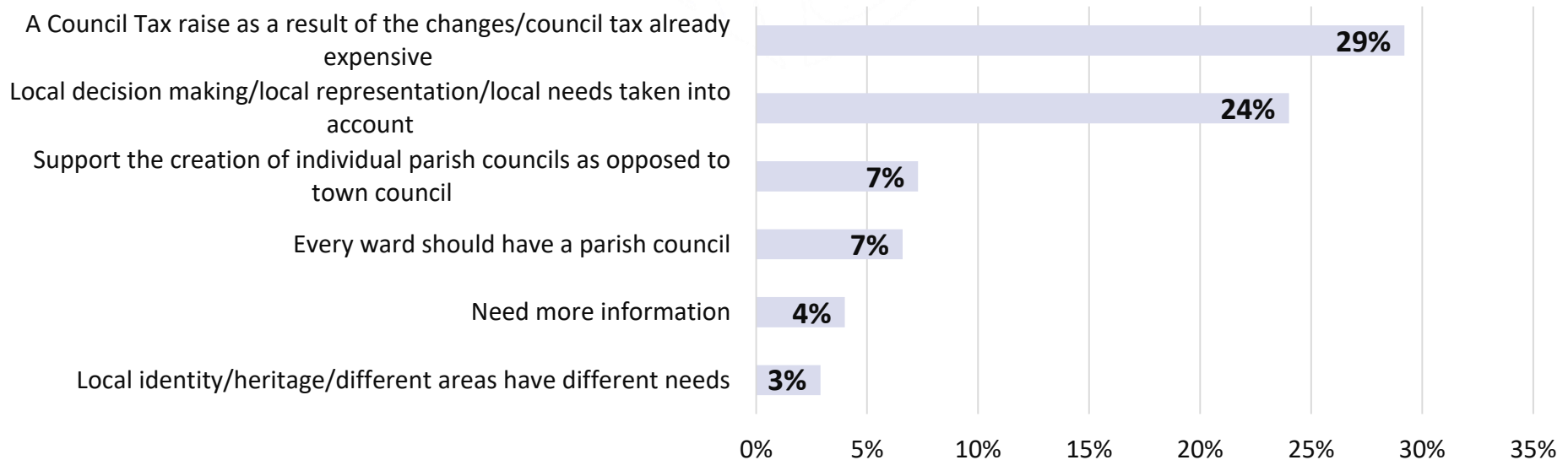
OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE

Base: 107 (All Option 3 responses)



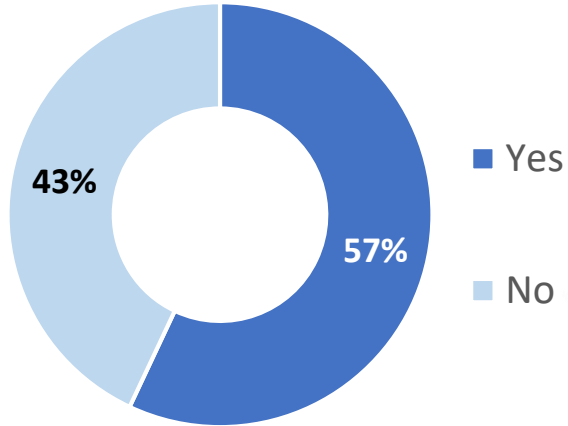
RESIDENTS' SURVEY

Base: (55 – Alternative/Option 3 responses)



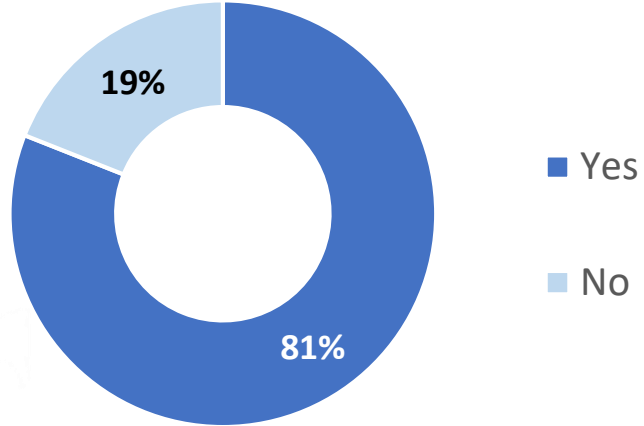
People who live in Micklefield are significantly more likely to want their own Parish Council

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE



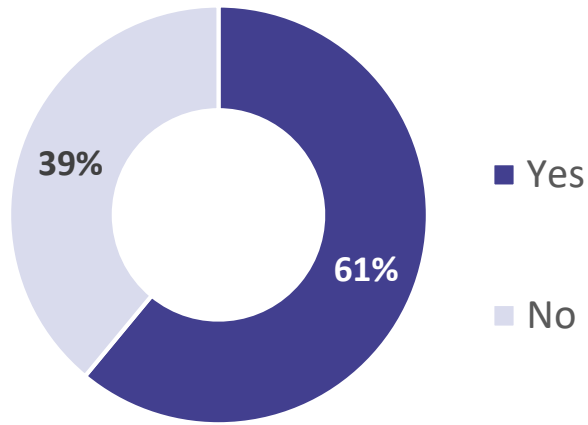
Base: 481 (All those who did not choose Option 1)

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE (Micklefield)



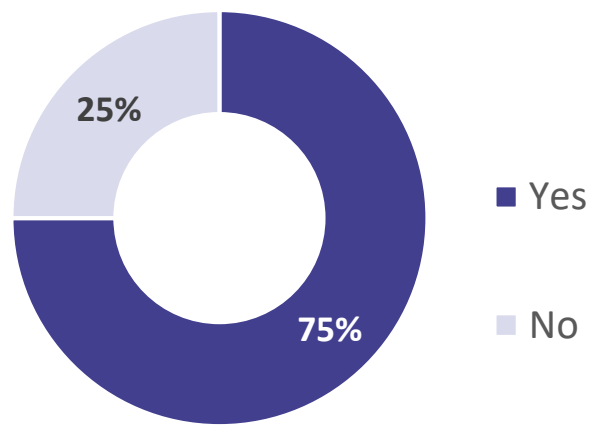
Base: 37 (Micklefield residents who did not choose Option 1)

RESIDENTS' SURVEY



Base: 608 (All those who did not choose Option 1)

RESIDENTS' SURVEY (Micklefield)

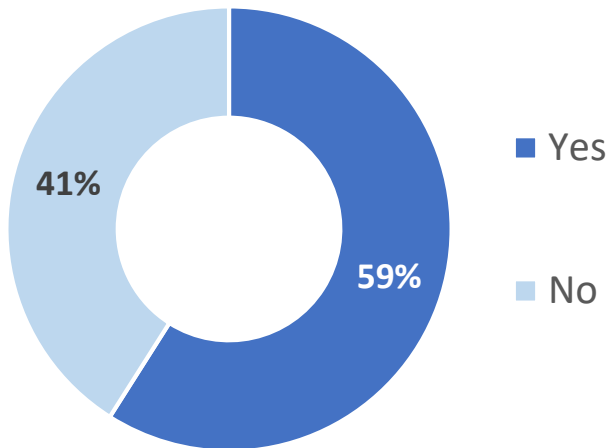


Base: 130 (Micklefield residents who did not choose Option 1)

Do you support having a separate Parish Council for Micklefield (if a Town Council is not created)?

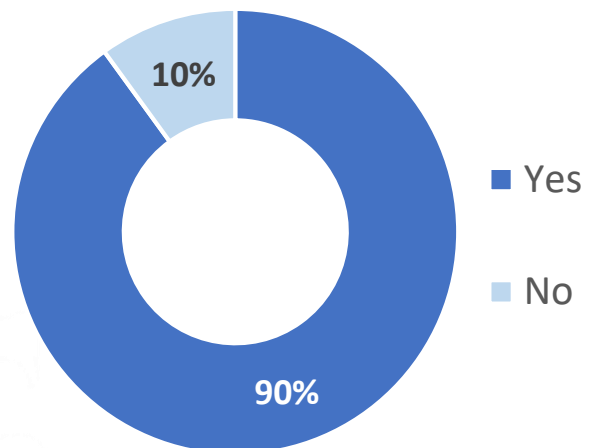
People who live in Sands are significantly more likely to want their own Parish Council

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE



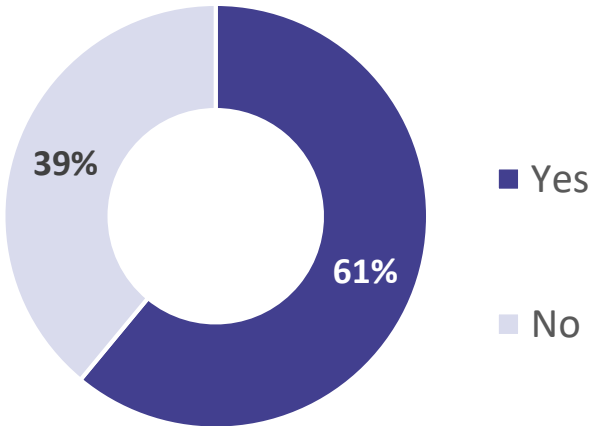
Base: 510 (All those who did not choose Option 1)

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE (Sands)



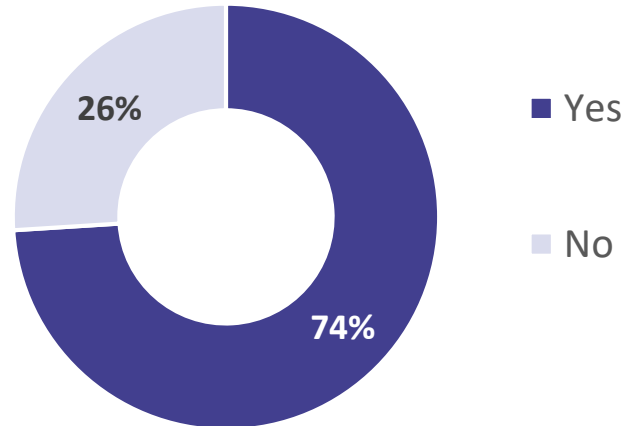
Base: 114 (Sands residents who did not choose Option 1)

RESIDENTS' SURVEY



Base: 621 (All those who did not choose Option 1)

RESIDENTS SURVEY (Sands)

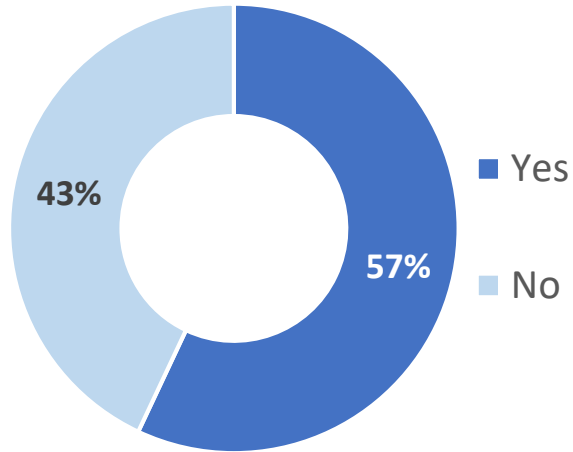


Base: 129 (Sands residents who did not choose Option 1)

Do you support having a separate Parish Council for Sands (if a Town Council is not created)?

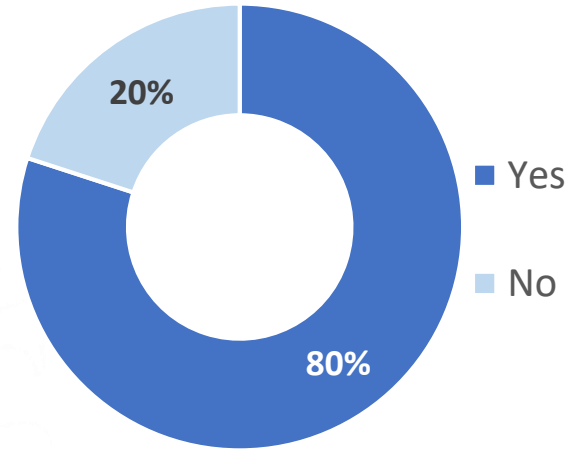
People who live in Totteridge are significantly more likely to want their own Parish Council

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE



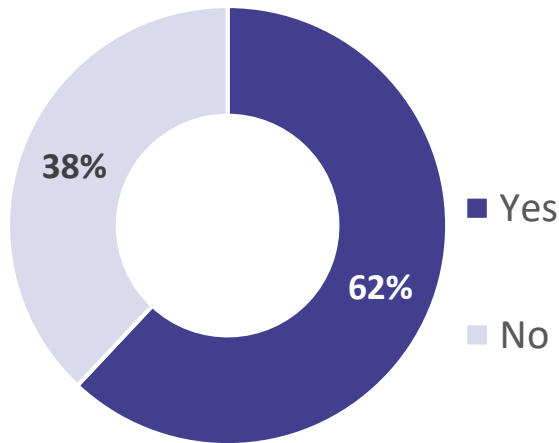
Base: 482 (All those who did not choose Option 1)

OPEN QUESTIONNAIRE (Totteridge)



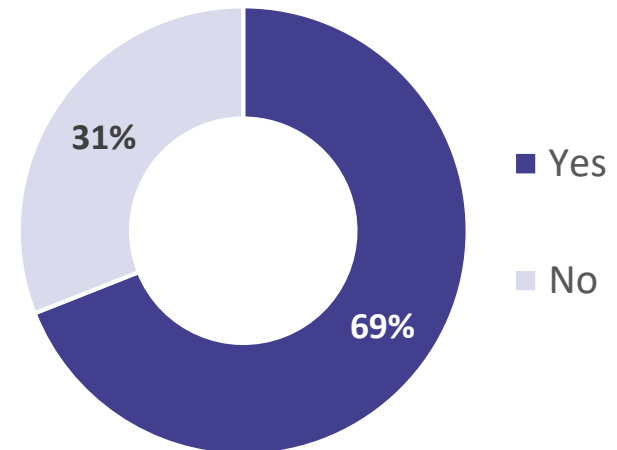
Base: 30 (Totteridge residents who did not choose Option 1)

RESIDENTS' SURVEY



Base: 626 (All those who did not choose Option 1)

RESIDENTS' SURVEY (Totteridge)



Base: 129 (Totteridge residents who did not choose Option 1)

Do you support having a separate Parish Council for Totteridge (if a Town Council is not created)?

Re Parish Councils in Sands/ Micklefield/Totteridge

For

I don't mind the petition wards getting what they want, but the cost must be theirs alone

The petition wards are on the periphery of the town [so they] can get neglected

You need more parish councils in the more rural areas

It would give [the ward/Parish] more clout to argue with the unitarian authority

I don't think it will make any difference

[We] want overall governance for the community

Against

There needs to be a presiding council [...] to unify the community

All of High Wycombe should have the same system

I think the areas are too small to justify [...] – it will fragment the town rather than pulling together

8 Organisations responded

- Wycombe Labour Party
- Small independent restaurant based in High Wycombe town centre
- BCC Cllr for West Wycombe including Sands
- Parish Councils:
 - Walters Ash, Widmer End
 - Wooburn and Bourne End Parish Council
 - Hazlemere Parish Council
 - Hughenden representing four wards: Great Kingshill, Hughenden Valley, Naphill &
- Residents' Associations
 - Sands Residents' Association
 - Brands Hill Residents Association

All believe it is important to have an organisation that promotes the interests of the town

6 support new Town Council covering all 10 wards,

1 supports a smaller TC with parish councils for petitioning wards

1 unsure – depends on costs and how well new arrangements work (Buckinghamshire Council with a High Wycombe Town Committee)

Three Focus Groups



Group 1

The lesser evil is the town council because we need that voice. In an ideal world I would probably go for a parish council for every parish. It's all or nothing

NO CONSENSUS. Some for parish councils for own wards (eg Sands); others for parish councils in all wards; others for single Town Council for all-HW

I think a parish council for every parish but, if not, 3 is better than nothing... perhaps there would be a knock-on effect and Crescent might get a parish council as well

Group 2

I think it's important to have local representation. Simple as that!

All wanted TOWN COUNCIL for all-HW, particularly as their own wards had not petitioned for a Parish Council

Having a voice is good; knowing that you have a voice because sometimes that missing link is ourselves ... Wycombe is sort of losing a little bit every year – it's about replenishing that

Group 3

I'd like to protect the heritage of the town and protect the nice areas"

Most wanted TOWN COUNCIL for all-HW but some felt parish councils provide closer links with communities

We need to raise the profile of the town and regenerate the areas with local priorities in mind

Five Submissions



Downley Parish Council

... firmly believes there should be no change in the current boundaries or responsibilities. It also believes the financial impact would impact Disraeli disproportionately

West Wycombe Parish

...wholeheartedly supports a new localised tier of local government for High Wycombe so that it's not left as the only major unparished town

Pimms Action Group

... does not believe there should be any further layers of bureaucracy in the form of Parish Councils (more fragmented). Instead supports a unified Town Council: more able to deal with contentious issues

Councillor Darren Hayday

... is in favour of a Parish Council in Sands; believes Parish Councils more able to give communities the resources they need to flourish

Cllr. Brian Pearce

(Booker & Cressex ward)

... strongly supports a town council: otherwise others towns would have influence over HW. A TC would have the influence, ability and finances to get things done; avoid fragmentation into individual parishes

Summary Conclusions



- Big majorities identify strongly with High Wycombe, even residents in Totteridge, Sands and Micklefield
- Less than a third identify with and feel attached to another area in Buckinghamshire, or named their own ward
- 90+% feel it is important to have Town Council in High Wycombe or Parish Councils in some areas that...
 - Preserves the town's/area's identity and heritage
 - Promotes the interests of the town/area
 - Has democratically elected local representatives
 - Delivers some local services
- More than two-thirds support Town Council in High Wycombe
 - Primarily for greater local decision-making & representation, and improving the town
 - Main criticisms are disagreement with need for additional tier of local government, extra councils are a waste of money, CT already expensive & rising as result of changes
- Main alternatives include:
 - Individual parish councils for all 10 wards;
 - A smaller TC for the centre covering fewer wards, with PCs for other wards that want it
- If a Town Council were not created, strong support for creation of parish councils in in Micklefield, Sands & Totteridge
 - Residents of those wards are significantly more likely to support a PC in their ward



WYCOMBE

DISTRICT COUNCIL

Community Governance Review

SUBMISSIONS in more detail

