



Maldon District Business Survey 2021



Introduction

This report summarises the results of the 2021 District-wide survey of Businesses. The survey was the third set of business insight collected since 2019, collecting perceptions of the local area and council services. This was delivered through an online survey between November 1st to December 10th

Unfortunately, only 7 businesses responded, which means every participant represents 14%, and so changes in numbers do need to be thought about carefully

Core Objectives

- To understand overall satisfaction levels with MDC and see how this has changed since last year's survey.
- To measure perceptions of the business growth, engagement & potential within the District.
- To capture and baseline the voices of the Businesses, and identify learning in areas where we can start to act
- To gather insight on areas that are prioritised in our Corporate plan

Key changes

- Overall, a decrease in participant levels in comparison to 2020 and 2019
- A slight increase seen in businesses benefiting from local tourism in 2021.
- A 15% increase seen in satisfaction of `being a business in the Maldon District`
- A new set of questions identifying business perception to growth and expansion has given an initial positive response, however premises availability is an area of concern & potential restriction.
- There was a positive response as to how easy it is to contact MDC, with in person services being favoured as a hybrid approach for the future.
- There was minimal change in individual service satisfactions, but a slight decrease in Council wide service satisfaction.
- Overall, satisfaction increased for MDC engagement, feeling well informed and awareness to improvements within the District (tourism especially increased by c20%).
- A positive increase in perceptions as to how MDC has dealt with the COVID 19 pandemic

Areas of further targeted work

Participant Profile

- Although the responses reflect a percentage of the business population of Maldon, further work could be done to increase business reach to ensure true understanding of the Districts business needs.
- Further analysis and improvements to be delivered to increase business engagement to the annual survey.
- Ensure there is the correct engagement and information available for business to offer work placement schemes and health and wellbeing initiatives.

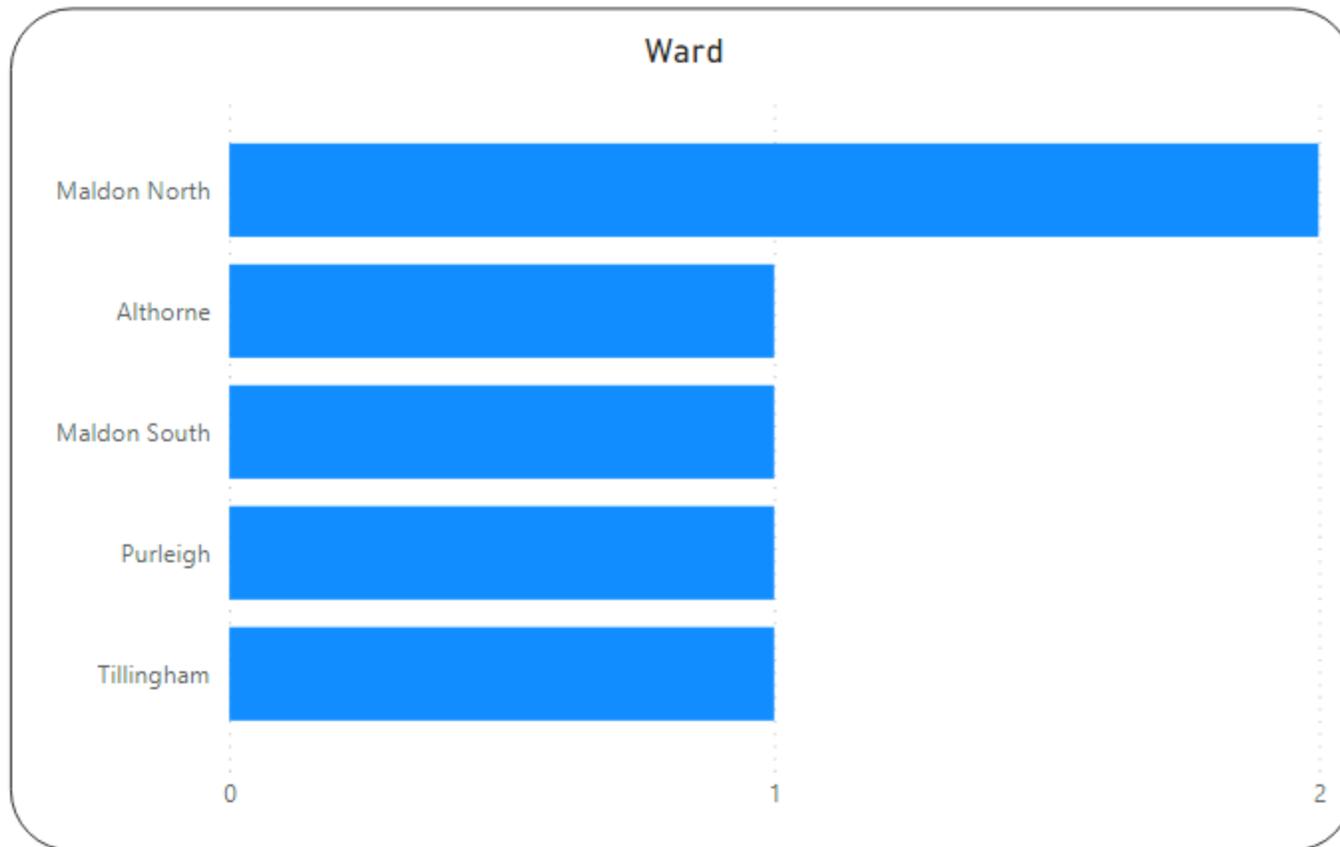
Local Area Perceptions

- Overall area perceptions improved in satisfaction, however there were two clear areas where business were not satisfied.
 - Broadband Connectivity
 - Premises availability.

Activity, Services & Engagement

- Overall, satisfaction to MDC engagement increased. There is still further work to do in terms of perception of providing value for money and service satisfaction
- Businesses said they would value a hybrid contact for MDC services in future
- Ensure the business climate change priorities are reviewed when delivering the climate change strategy.

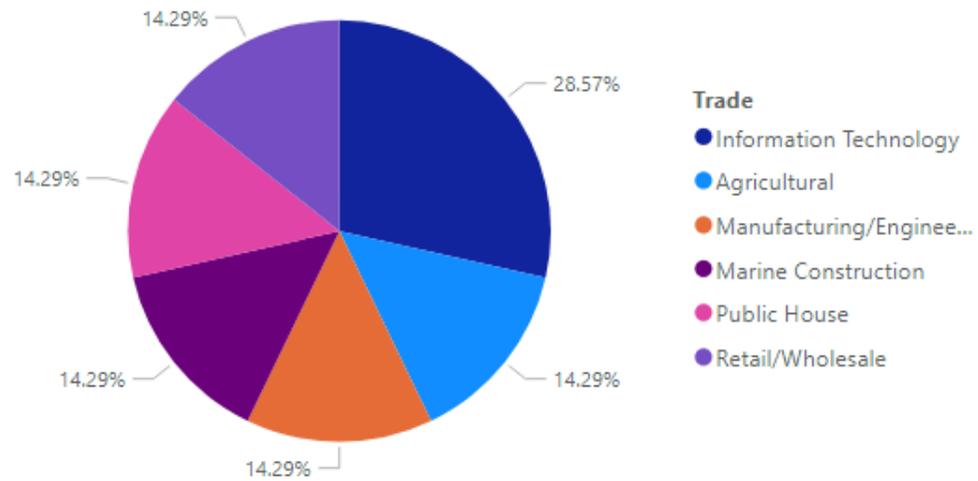
Ward Response Rate



- More respondents came from Maldon North than any other ward within the District.
- Overall, there was a 75% reduction in participation in comparison to 2020

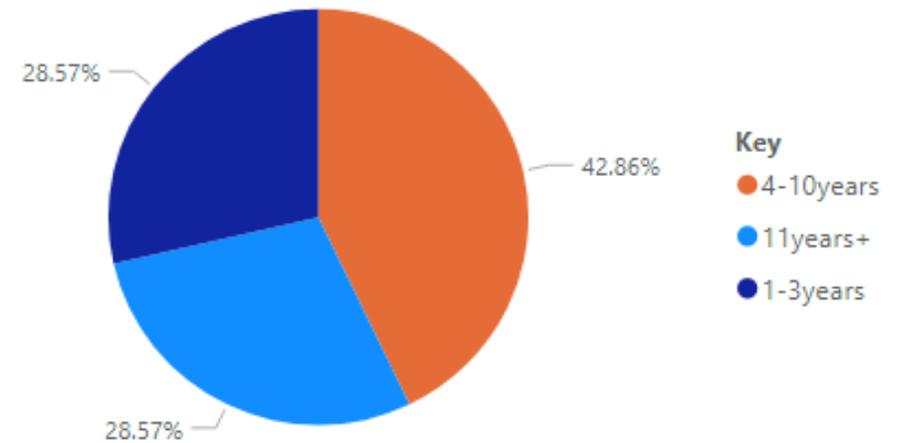
Participant Profile

Question: Please select which industry your business trades in?



- From the responses received a wide industrial demographic participated, with the largest cluster represented from the Information Technology trade

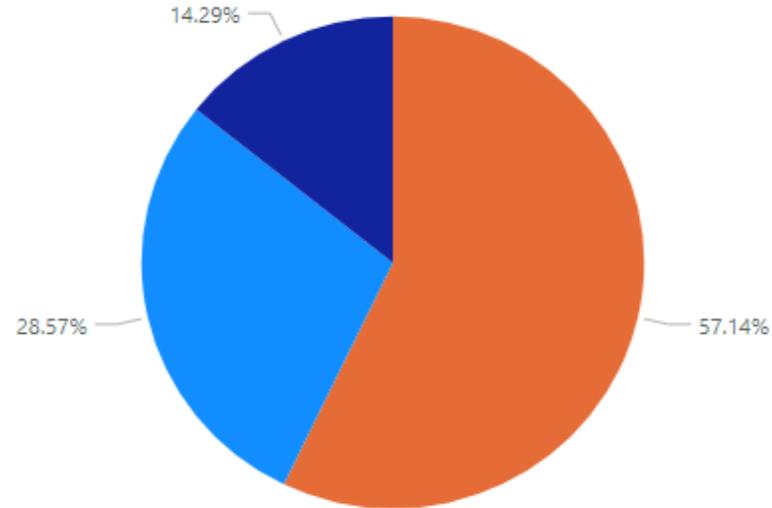
Question: How long has your business been in operation in the Maldon District?



- Of the responses received 43% have been in operation within the district for over 11 years. This reflects the highest category from 2020 survey.

Question: Does your business offer work based training opportunities? E.g. apprenticeship, traineeships, restart placements

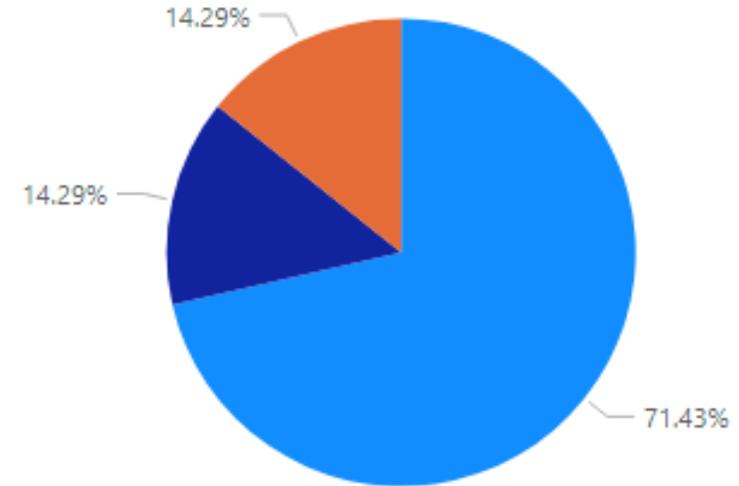
Key ● Yes ● No ● Not currently, but something I would consider



- 57% of the businesses do offer work base training schemes. An additional 14% said they don't, but it is something they would consider, and only 29% said that they do not offer apprenticeship schemes.
- This is 36% higher than those business in 2020 who offered work based training schemes.

Question: Does your business provide workplace health and wellbeing initiatives

Key ● No ● Not currently, but something I would consider ● Yes



- 71% of businesses do not offer workplace health and wellbeing initiatives as opposed to only 14% who do. Currently 14% businesses may consider offering this in the future.
- This is a significant increase(21%) in business who do not offer workplace health & wellbeing initiatives

Local Area Perceptions

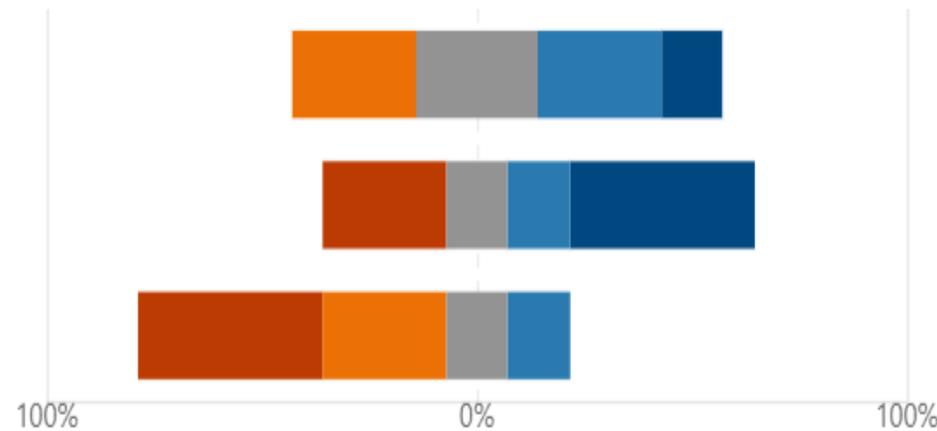
Question: Please tell us to what extent you agree with the following statements

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree

My business benefits from events & tourism in the District

I am satisfied with my current business broadband connection and speed

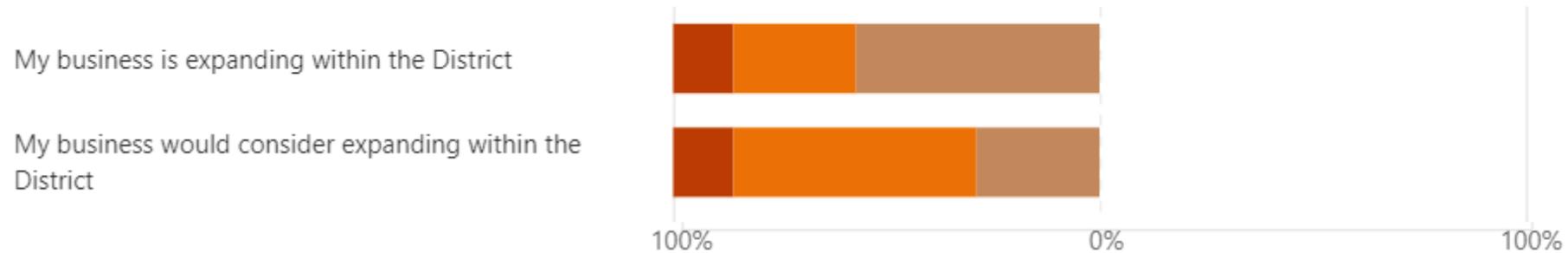
I am satisfied with being a business in the Maldon District



- Only 29% of businesses agreed that they benefit from events and tourism in the district, as opposed to 43% disagreeing with the same statement. Albeit there is a slight increase in comparison to 2020, COVID restrictions are potentially influencing these results due to a restricted visitor/tourism offer in 2021.
- 28.6% of business are happy with their current broadband connection and speed, with a large proportion staying neutral, however, 57% are unsatisfied. This is reduction in satisfaction in comparison to 2020
- 72% of business are satisfied with being a Business in the Maldon District, as opposed to only 14% disagreeing with the same statement. This is an 15% positive increase in comparison to 2020.

Questions: Please tell us to what extent you agree with the following statement

Strongly Agree Agree Neutral Disagree Strongly disagree Dont Know/ Not Applicable



Business Expansion

- The overall businesses view on expanding within the District was fairly positive, with all responses either being positive or neutral.
- 43% of responses said they are already expanding in the district, and in the further question 71% would consider expanding.
- Both questions have shown positive perception growth in comparison to 2019 & 2020

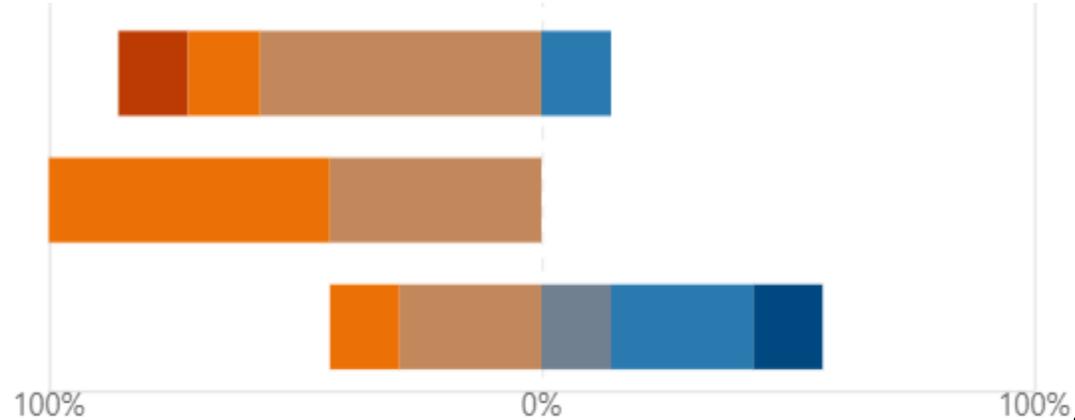
Questions: Please tell us to what extent you agree with the following statement

■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree
 ■ Dont Know/ Not Applicable

Maldon District is a good place for my business to grow and invest in.

I am satisfied with my current business premises

There is good availability of area/premises for my business to expand into



Area growth & investment

- 27% of responses agreed that Maldon District is a good place to grow and invest, with the bulk of responses being neutral, 57%

Premise Satisfaction

- All response to premises satisfaction were positive or neutral.
- 57% of responses showed positive satisfaction to their current business premise, with 43% feeling neutral.

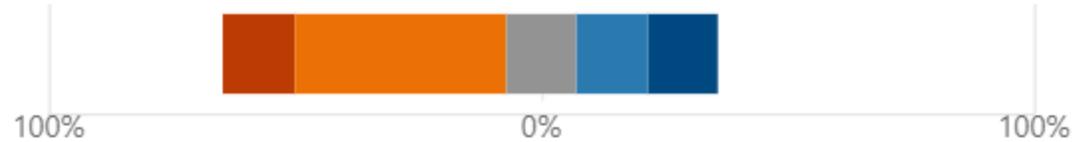
Premise availability

- There is a divide on the perception that there is a good availability of premises for business to expand into.
- 14% of responses agreed, where as 43% disagree & 43% felt neutral, or was unsure/not applicable

Questions: Please tell us to what extent you agree with the following statement

■ Strongly Agree ■ Agree ■ Neutral ■ Disagree ■ Strongly disagree

Maldon District is clean and tidy

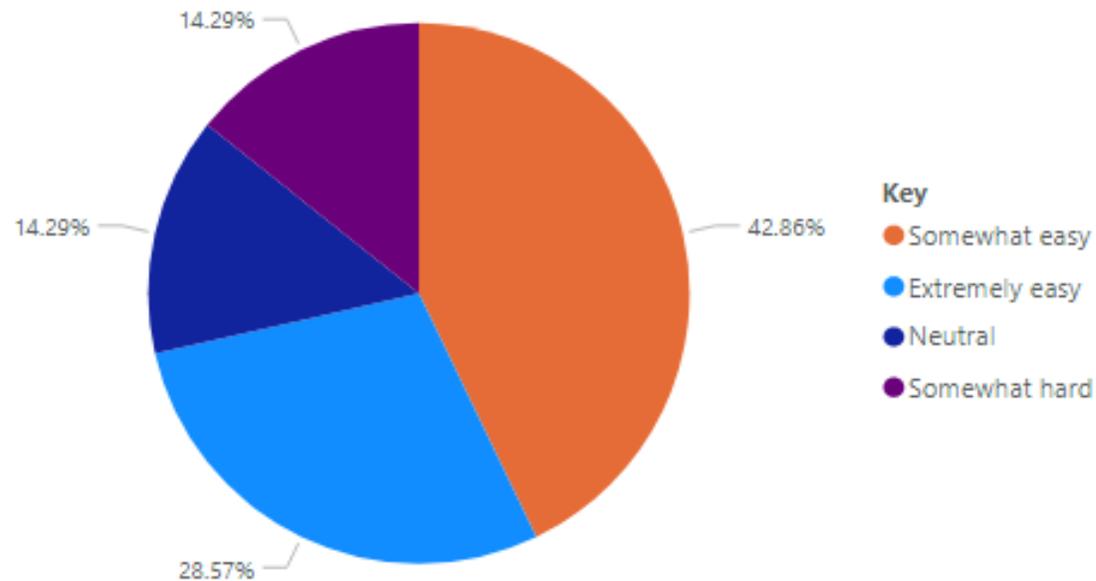


Area Satisfaction

- 57% of businesses agree that Maldon District is `clean and tidy` as opposed to only 29% who disagreed with the same statement
- This was an equal positive response rate to the same question in 2021

Activity, Services & Engagement

Question: How easy do you find it to contact Maldon District Council?



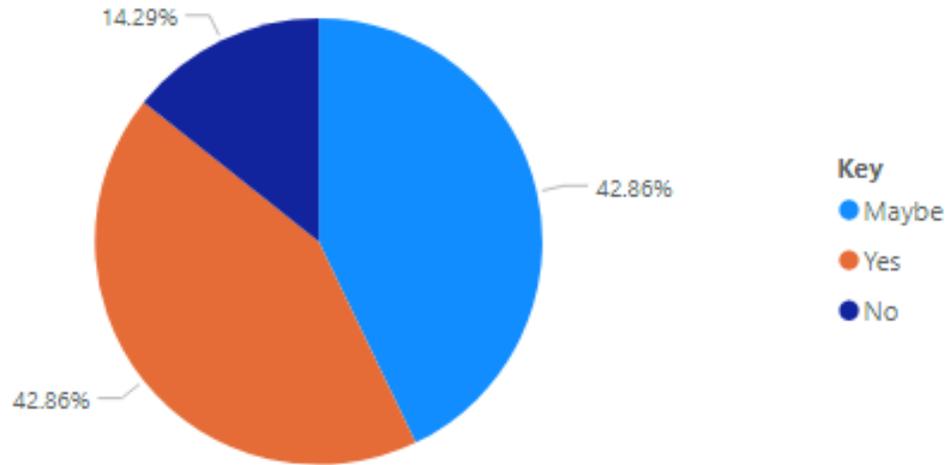
Contacting MDC

- This was a new question to understand how the pandemic has impacted the ability for business to contact MDC. Overall, 71% of businesses found it easy to contact MDC. 14% of the respondents did not agree and 14% felt neutral about it.

Feedback

- Of those businesses who gave feedback, the main theme:
 - Response times

Question: Would you value in person access to Maldon District Council in the future?



In Person Services

- As the offices have not been open to the public due to COVID-19, to inform our future ways of working as we start to exit the pandemic, we asked how valuable in person access is for our businesses. Overall, 43% of businesses value in person access to MDC offices. 14% of the respondents did not agree and 43% felt neutral about it.
- We also asked for feedback to support the businesses perception, which has been themed below.

In Person Services feedback

- Over 71% of comments indicated a hybrid solution would work best, covering a variety of reasons, but mainly to ensure there is direct contact for complex issues and enabling a direct contact.
 - 14% of businesses were happy with the online facilities, did not see the need for `in person` services.

Question: Please tell us to what extent you agree with the following statements

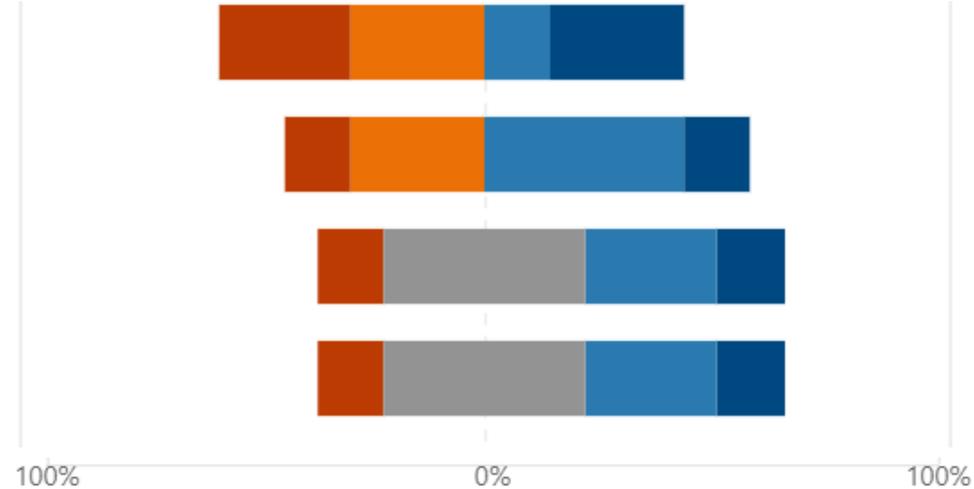
■ Strongly Agree
 ■ Agree
 ■ Neutral
 ■ Disagree
 ■ Strongly disagree

I feel well informed about the activity Maldon District Council undertakes

Maldon District Council engages and responds to the needs of its businesses

Maldon District Council provides value for money

I am satisfied with the Maldon District Council services I receive



Well informed

- Overall it was fairly equal with 57% of business feeling well informed about the activity MDC undertakes. 43% of the respondents did not agree.
- This is a positive increase compared to 2020, when only 26% felt well informed.

Engagement

- Overall, 43% of businesses feel engaged by and responded to by MDC. 57% of the respondents did not agree with the statement.
- In comparison to previous years, this is a 29% positive increase compared to 2020. This growth came from respondents previously feeling neutral.

Value for Money

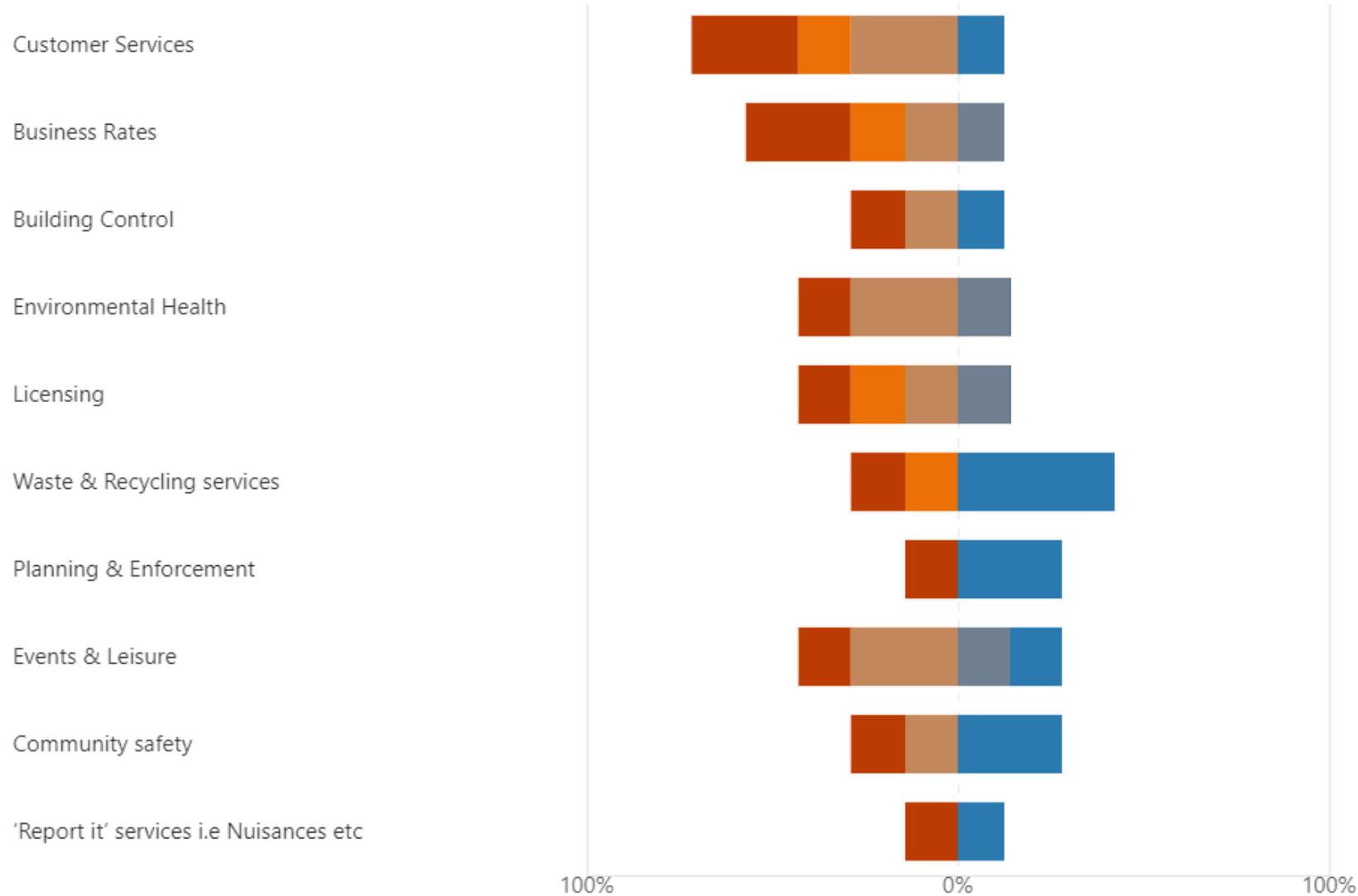
- The majority of businesses (43%) gave a neutral response to this question which was also equal to respondents (43%) who disagreed as opposed to only 14% who felt MDC provides value for money.
- This breakdown of results are reflective of previous years surveys

Service Satisfaction

- Overall, 14% of businesses are happy with the services offered by MDC. 43% of the respondents did not agree with the statement and 43% felt neutral about it.
- In comparison to previous years, this is a 7% decrease in satisfaction compared to 2020.

Question: Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the way the following Council services are provided

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Somewhat satisfied
 ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
 ■ Somewhat dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied
■ Have not used this service

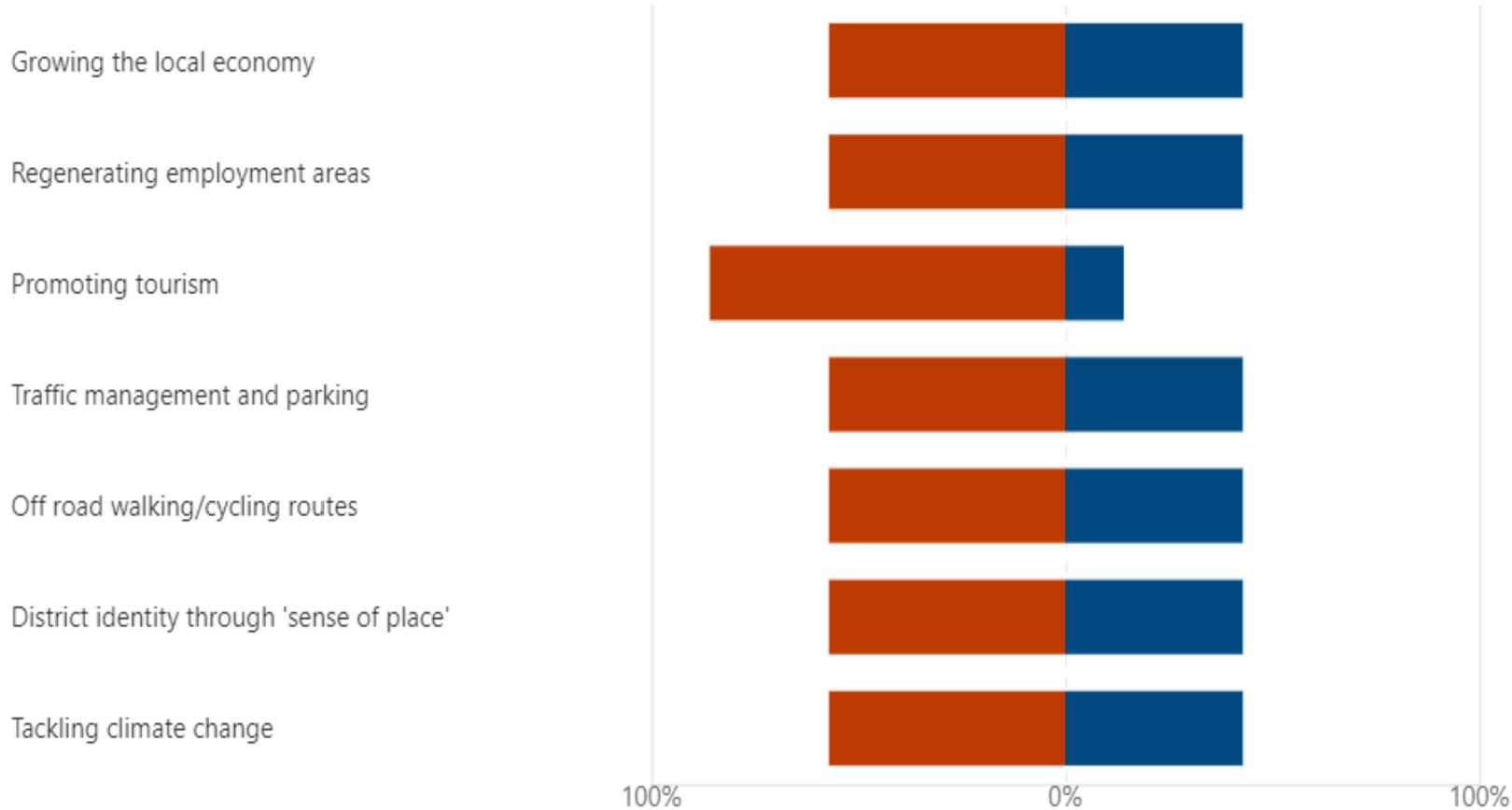


Service Satisfaction

- Overall, the services that businesses are most satisfied with are:
 - Business Rates (43%)
 - Customer Services (43%).
 - Licensing (27%)
- All 3 of these areas, also had a high satisfaction rate in comparison to 2020.
- The service that business are most dissatisfied with is:
 - Waste & Recycling services (43%)
 - planning and enforcement (29%).
 - Community Safety (29%)
- This was also the dissatisfied perception in 2020 for Waste services & planning and Enforcement.

Question: Are you aware that the Maldon District Council is working to improve the following

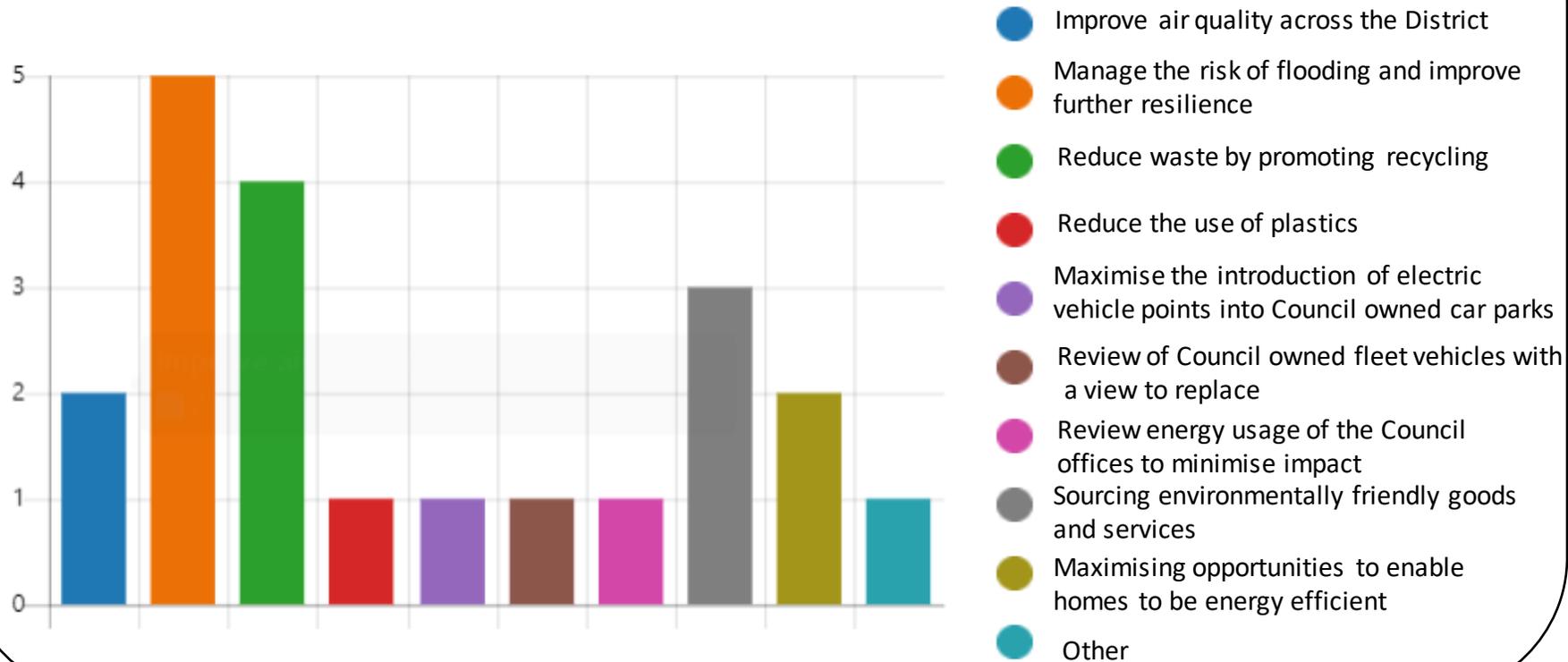
■ Aware ■ Unaware



District Improvements

- Overall, there has been an increase in Business awareness of what MDC are working on to improve the District.
- The most improved area bring promoting tourism within the district, 20% of respondents being more aware.
- All other areas are fairly equal, showing around 57% awareness.
- The most improved areas in terms of awareness between 2020 and 2021
 - Regeneration of employment areas
 - Off road walking/cycling routes
 - District Identity through `sense of place`.

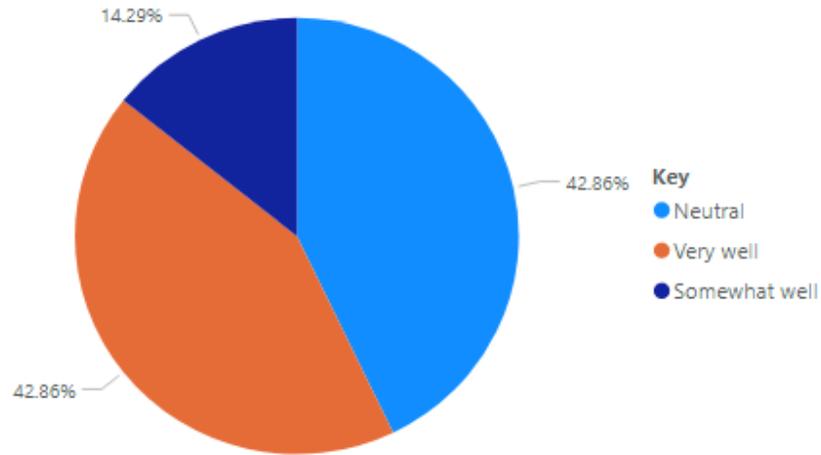
Question: Please select up to three of the following that you think are priorities when protecting the environment and tackling climate change for Maldon District Council



Climate Change Priorities

- It is very clear that `Managing the risk of flooding and improving further resilience` is what the Businesses feel should be the priority for MDC, closely followed by `Reduce waste by promoting recycling`. `Sourcing environmentally friendly goods and services` was the third priority. The priority was also the same when this question was last asked in 2019.
- This year, there was also an opportunity to submit priorities that were not specifically listed, these constitute the `Other` category. The suggestion was aligned to supporting carbon reduction.

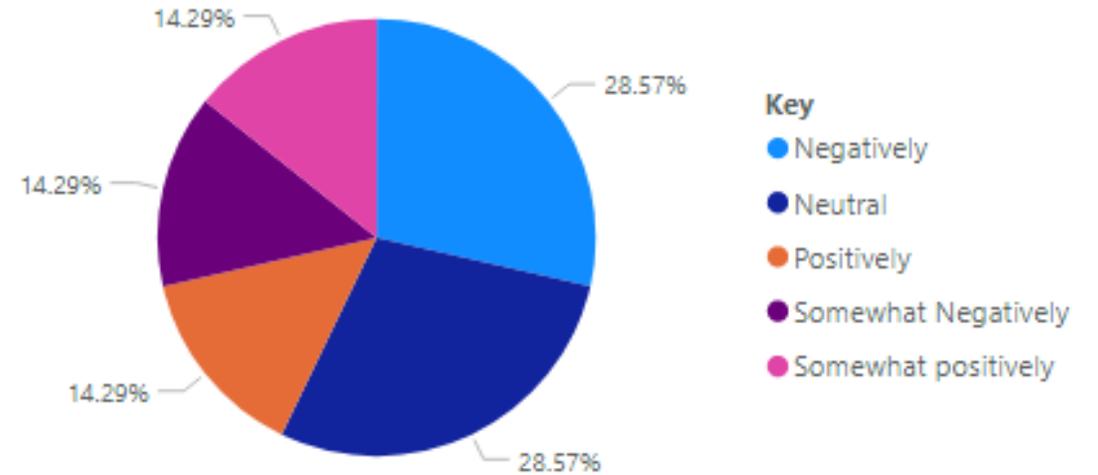
Question: How do you feel Maldon District Council has responded to Covid-19?



MDC's COVID-19 Response

- 57% of businesses were positive to MDC COVID 19 response, where as only 43% were neutral. This was a 34% positive increase to same questions asked in 2020.
- There were no negative perceptions where as this accounted for 14% of respondents back in 2020.

Question: How do you feel Covid-19 has had an impact on your Business?

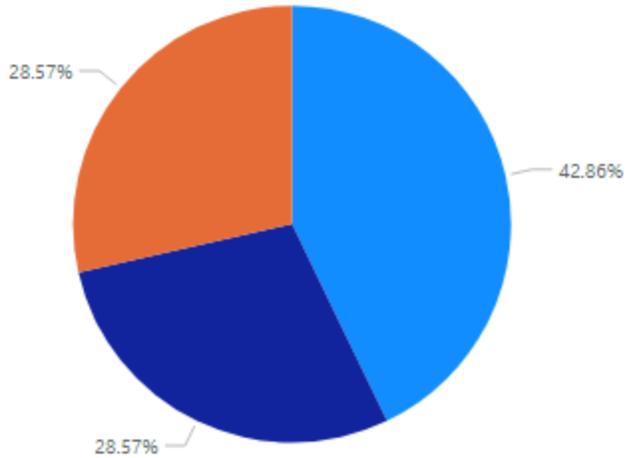


Online Facilities

- 43% of businesses felt Covid-19 has had a negative impact on their business, and a further 29% were neutral or unsure, only 29% feeling that the affect was positive.
- This years response had a much more even split of perception than in 2020, where by negative impacts accounted for nearly 70% of respondents.

Question: Has your business been able to recover from the impacts of Covid-19?

Key ● It has been fairly unaffected through the pande... ● It is on track for full recovery ● It may never or take years to recover



- There is a fairly even divide on the businesses being able to recover from COVID 19.
- Although 29% of businesses said their business may never or take years to recover from the impact of Covid-19, 29% of business were on track for a full recovery and 43% felt they had not really been affected during the pandemic.

- 28% of comments indicated that there was either nothing within MDC's remit that they can do, or suggested things that MDC are unable to influence
- 43% of business felt continued or further support for all business types, from financial grants to 'free business promotion/publication'

Question: What do you feel needs to be done to enable the area to continue to recover from Covid-19?

