



STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

ANNUAL REPORT 2024-25

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WELCOME FROM THE MAYOR OF STOTFOLD TOWN COUNCIL

This past year marked a historic milestone as we proudly celebrated 50 years as a Town Council - a moment not just of commemoration, but of reflection and unity. Our golden anniversary brought the community together in a remarkable way, from heartfelt local stories to shared memories and celebrations that honoured our past while embracing the future.

Among our many achievements, we were thrilled to see our locally brewed beer receive national acclaim - an award that not only highlights the talent within our community but also brings well-deserved recognition to our town. Equally inspiring was the unveiling of stunning artwork that now enriches our shared spaces, a testament to the creativity and passion of our residents.

This year also saw a positive increase in community involvement from new residents. Their energy and ideas have brought fresh perspectives, reinforcing that our town's strength lies in its inclusivity and shared purpose. This spirit of collaboration continues to define who we are and where we're headed.

As we navigate the uncertainties and opportunities brought by a new government, we remain committed to evolving together adapting with resilience, advocating for our needs, and staying rooted in the values that make our town special. Change can be challenging, but our community has shown time and again that it thrives through unity, respect, and forward-thinking.

Thank you to everyone who contributed to making this 50th anniversary year so memorable.

Here's to the future we continue to build - together.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Steve Buck". The signature is stylized with a large, looped 'S' and a cursive 'Buck'.

Cllr Steve Buck

Mayor, Stotfold Town Council 2024-25

Mayoral Year 2024-25

At the Annual Town Council meeting held on 1 May 2024, Cllr Steve Buck was re-elected as Mayor, supported by Cllr Steve Hayes as Deputy Mayor.

The Mayor and Deputy Mayor represented the residents of Stotfold at 33 events and civic engagements during 2024-25.



D Day 80th Commemoration



5-a-side football fundraising



Society of Labologists Award Event



Newport Pagnell Civic Service



Fundraising

During 2024-25, the Mayor fundraised for Respite at Home, a Bedfordshire based charity offering friendship and support for adults living with life limiting illnesses and respite and time off each week for families caring for their loved ones. He raised £4,171.42



Who are your councillors?



Liz Anderson



Janice Bendell



Steve Buck



Mary Cooper



Satinderjit Dhaliwal



Steve Hayes



Jos Headington



Jane Hyde



Danny Matthews



Lisa Miller



Brian Saunders



Jonathan Smith



John Talbot



Nigel Venneear



Bryony Woods

Committee Structure & Responsibilities

FULL COUNCIL



PUBLIC REALM

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT
(buildings, street lights)
LEISURE MANAGEMENT
(play areas, allotments)
RECREATION MANAGEMENT
(open spaces)
CEMETERY
HIGHWAYS



COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT
COMMUNICATIONS
AND MEDIA
YOUTH SERVICES



GOVERNANCE & RESOURCES

POLICY REVIEW AND
DEVELOPMENT
FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT
RISK MANAGEMENT
HUMAN RESOURCES
STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT
OF HEALTH AND SAFETY



BUILDING MANAGEMENT

MANAGEMENT OF ALL
BUILT ASSETS INCLUDING
BUILDING SPECIFIC
HEALTH AND SAFETY
AND COMPLIANCE
CONSIDERATIONS

PUBLIC REALM COMMITTEE

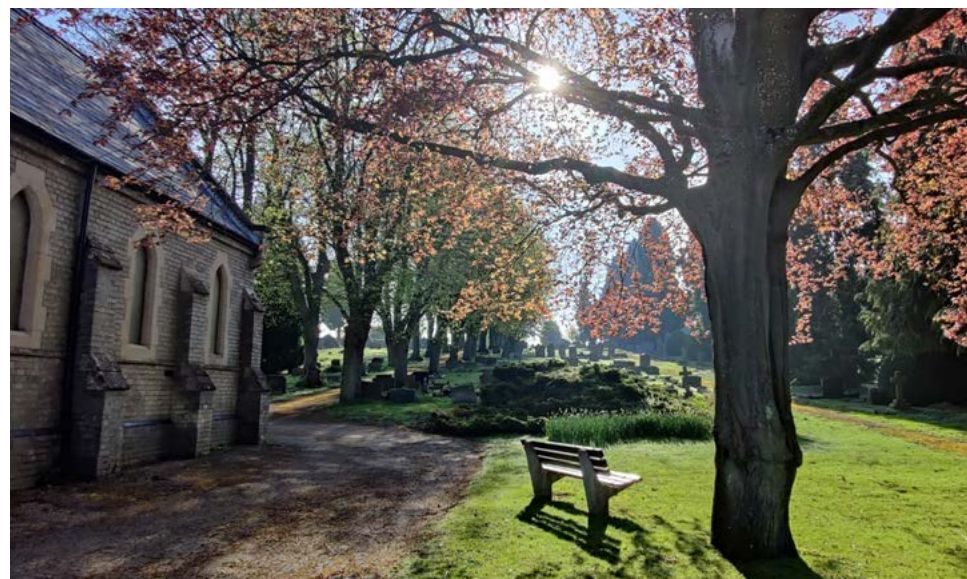
- Cllr Mary Cooper



In May 2024, a refreshed Public Realm Committee was launched which now includes the management of the cemetery. We've continued to improve safety and enhance the cemetery's appearance. There is a dedicated member of staff to manage burials, and with councillors, has reviewed and updated all documentation related to memorials, burials, and cremations - culminating in a new information handbook. We've also introduced a five-year memorial inspection plan to ensure ongoing safety. A volunteer group, Friends of the Cemetery, is being set up to support light maintenance and clean-up tasks. A Remembrance bench has been installed at the War Memorial.

Love Parks Week in July saw the launch of our Litter Angels scheme to collect rubbish while out walking. Play area signs now include What3Words references to help emergency services respond more quickly. Mobile security patrols were carried out randomly in the evenings to reduce antisocial behaviour. We're planning to replace some streetlight heads with energy-efficient LEDs. EV charge points at the Football Club and Brook Street are well-used, though those at the Memorial Hall remain offline.

We held our first Allotment Awards for best kept and eco-friendly plots across both sites. A composting toilet will soon be installed at Norton Road to improve facilities for plot holders. The Community Garden at The Haven was a great success last year.



Litter angels in action

GOVERNANCE AND RESOURCES COMMITTEE



- Cllr Steve Buck

The Governance and Resources Committee is responsible for the effective management of the Town Council's governance structure including its policies; strategic management of health and safety in the workplace and has a personnel responsibility for the Town Council staff. This involved a new performance management system and evaluation of staff training needs.

It is also responsible for ensuring that the Town Council's money is managed effectively and efficiently including investments. There was the appointment of a new internal auditor as well as a review of how the Town Council handled its VAT responsibilities.

Grants awarded during 2024-25 included:

- **The Rooms - £1500**
New defibrillator for the High Street
- **Just Out - £1000**
Youth club equipment
- **The Need Project - £1500**
Purchase of supplies for the Food Bank
- **Stotfold Bowls Club - £1500**
Towards purchase of specialised mower
- **Friends of Roecroft School - £1500**
Towards silent disco headphones
- **Stotfold Scouts - £1500**
Towards the cost of removing outbuildings at the scout hut
- **M J Ryalls Building Supplies Ltd - £1500**
New defibrillator for Norton Road
- **Pix Gymnastics Club CIC - £750**
Towards safety equipment
- **St. Mary's CE Academy - £1500**
Towards IT equipment
- **Stotfold Bowls Club - £600**
CCTV
- **Stotfold Runners Club - £200**
Towards professional affiliation fees
- **The Barn - £162**
Defibrillator spares



Defibrillator at M J Ryalls

BUILDING MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE



- Cllr Steve Hayes

The Buildings Management Committee oversees the upkeep and improvement of Town Council properties to ensure they are safe, functional, and suitable for hire. Over the past year, the committee has carried out essential maintenance and enhancement projects.

Routine tasks included servicing heating, ventilation, plumbing, and electrical systems to maintain operational standards. We also installed LED lighting at the Greenacre and Mossman Centres and upgraded ventilation at the Greenacre Centre, improving energy efficiency and comfort for staff.

Safety remains a priority. Annual asbestos surveys are commissioned to ensure compliance with health regulations, and regular Legionella testing forms part of our safety regime.

Challenges persist, particularly around ageing infrastructure. Some buildings now require significant renovation, and rising costs mean careful project prioritisation and budgeting are vital.

Looking ahead, key projects for 2025 include supporting the opening of the new library, which will provide residents with an enhanced service. Attention will then turn to the future of the Simpson Centre, for which we will seek community views.

The cemetery toilets, now outdated and suffering from structural issues, will be reviewed with options for renovation or replacement considered in consultation with the public.

Lastly, a feasibility study is planned for the Memorial Hall, aiming to assess the scope and cost of potential improvements to this valued community facility. Through these projects, the committee remains committed to ensuring Council buildings continue to meet the needs of residents and users.



Greenacre Centre

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT COMMITTEE

- Cllr Jos Headington



A strong community is built on strong engagement, and this belief lies at the heart of all we do. It's about ensuring every resident has a voice - and feels that their voice matters.

Established in 2024, the Community Engagement Committee has worked hard to connect the Town Council with the people of Stotfold. Highlights included enhancing the Christmas Lights Switch-On event and securing a five-year contract for stunning festive displays. The 2024 event drew 3,500 - 4,000 attendees, boosting community spirit and the local economy.

To mark the Town Council's 50th anniversary, we proudly launched Stotfest and continued with a full events programme including plans for a Silent Disco and Outdoor Cinema. Our aim is to create fun, inclusive experiences. In Easter 2025, our Augmented Reality Dinosaur Walking Trail has been enjoyed by over 2,000 residents.

But engagement is more than events. We've supported local schools through the Lego League to reinforce STEM within the curriculum. We're also listening to older residents, engaging regularly with the Stotfold Good Neighbour Group.

Communication is key. A new, accessible Town Council website is underway, and councillors now wear branded clothing at events to be more visible. This year's third annual Residents' Survey included paper copies sent to every household, with plans for a youth-focused survey next.

These achievements belong to the whole community. Thank you to every volunteer, partner, and resident for your continued support. Together, we are building a stronger, more connected Stotfold. We look forward to the year ahead and continuing this important work with you all.



Christmas Lights



Lego league handover

FINANCE REPORT

- Emma Payne, Town Clerk



The 2024 – 25 financial year had a freeze in the precept, the Town Council's portion of the Council Tax. Councillors were able to manage rising prices for utilities, materials, and staff without increasing the charge on residents.

Expenditure was allocated across key service areas, including buildings maintenance, grounds and open spaces, community engagement, and democratic services. Notable investments included improvements to council-owned buildings, enhanced Christmas lighting, support for local events such as Stotfest and Christmas lights, and environmental projects across the town. The Council also allocated funds to safety and compliance work, including Legionella testing, and the revaluation of the town council's buildings.

The Council remains committed to sound budget management, transparency, and delivering high-quality services that reflect the needs of the community. The 2024–25 budget ensured that Stotfold was well-placed to invest in its future while maintaining strong foundations.

2023/24

Precept: £913,926

Band D: £248.76

£4.78 per week

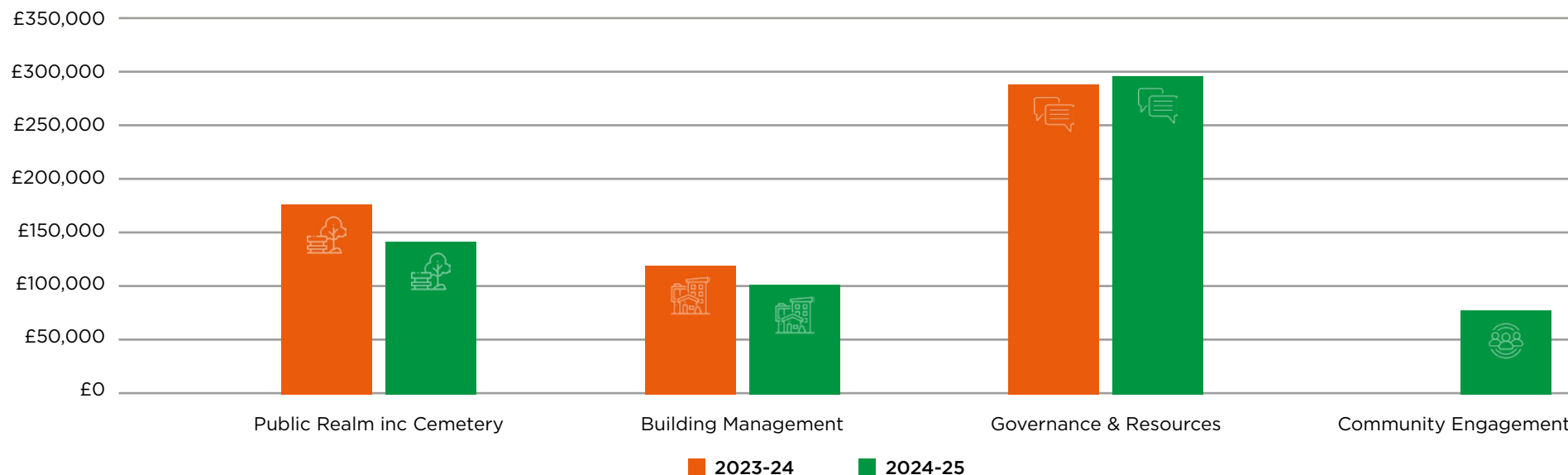
2024/25

Precept: £913,482

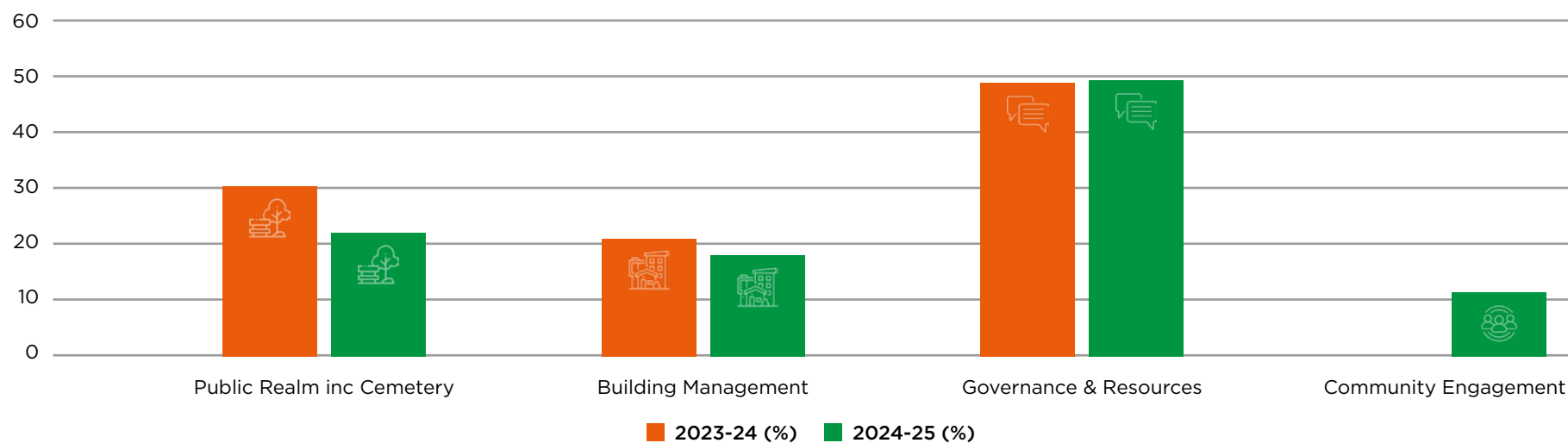
Band D: £244.18

£4.78 per week

Committee Expenditure £



Committee Expenditure %



RESIDENT'S SURVEY



- Cllr Jon Smith

The 2024/25 Resident Survey was designed to gather feedback from the Stotfold community about local issues, council services, and priorities for the future. For the first time, paper copies were sent to all households to ensure broader participation across all demographics. This significantly increased the response rate to over 600 responses this year.

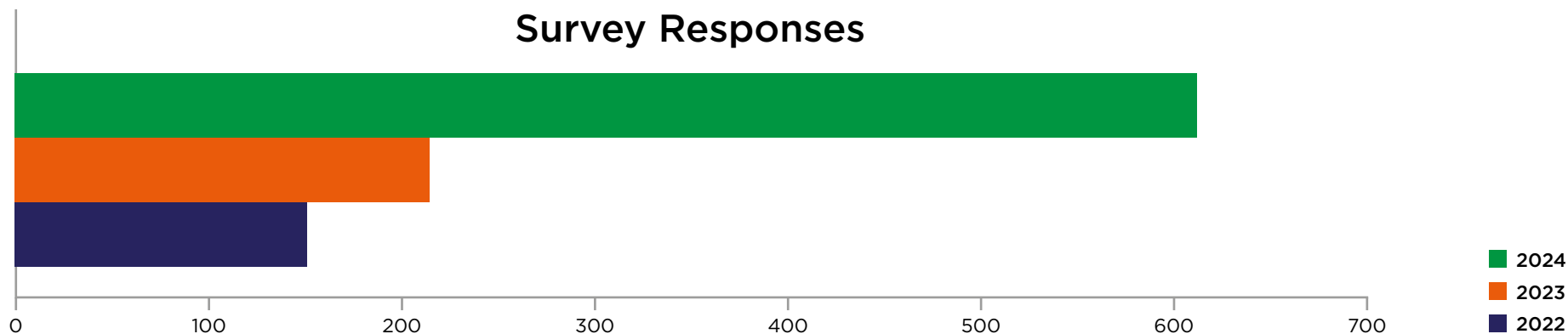
Residents were asked what first comes to mind when they think of Stotfold, followed by a series of questions assessing their views on the town and the Town Council. Topics included the quality of life in Stotfold, perceptions of safety, local facilities, and the effectiveness of council services. Respondents were also invited to highlight specific local concerns.

The survey measured satisfaction with council services, asking whether residents had used amenities such as parks, allotments, or the cemetery, and how satisfied they were with maintenance, communication, and event provision. Participants also identified areas for improvement, with particular interest in youth services, green spaces, and community events.

The survey captured demographic data to help the Council understand the needs of different age groups, genders, and ethnic backgrounds.

Overall feedback indicates growing engagement and satisfaction, with many respondents expressing appreciation for recent improvements. The results will guide the Council's priorities for 2025 and beyond, supporting inclusive and responsive community planning.

Survey Responses



Thinking about Stotfold, to what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Stotfold is a great place to live

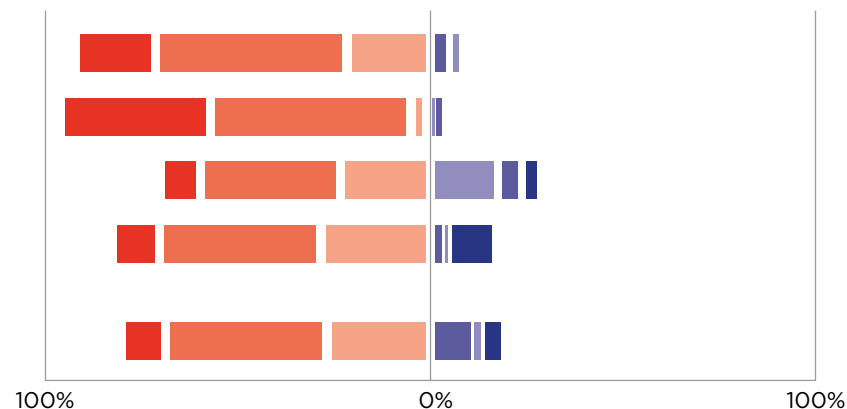
I feel safe out and about in Stotfold during the day

I feel safe out and about in Stotfold after dark

Stotfold is a place where people from different ethnic backgrounds get on together

People in Stotfold pull together to improve the local area

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know



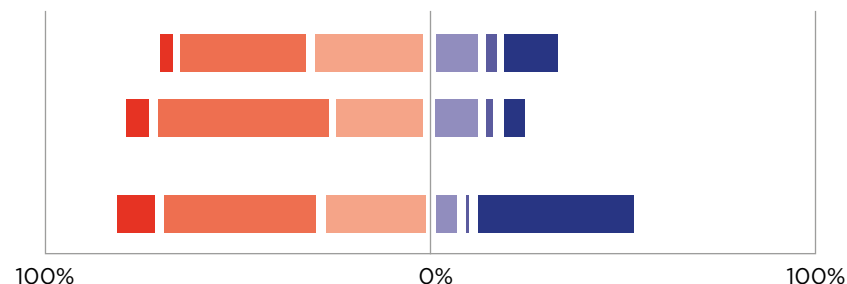
Thinking about Stotfold Town Council, to what extent to you agree or disagree with the following statements:

Stotfold Town Council acts on the concerns of its residents

Stotfold Town Council keeps its residents informed about the services and benefits it provides

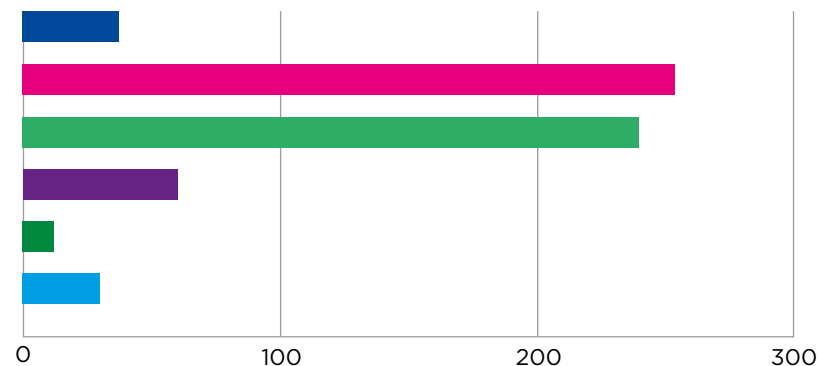
It is easy to get hold of Councillors when I need to

Strongly agree Agree Neither agree nor disagree Disagree Strongly disagree Don't know



On balance, which of the following statements is closest to how you feel about Stotfold Town Council:

Very positive	37
Positive	252
Neither positive nor negative	238
Negative	60
Very negative	13
Don't know	29



How satisfied or dissatisfied are you overall with Stotfold Town Council's...?

Play parks / green areas

Services and support for young people

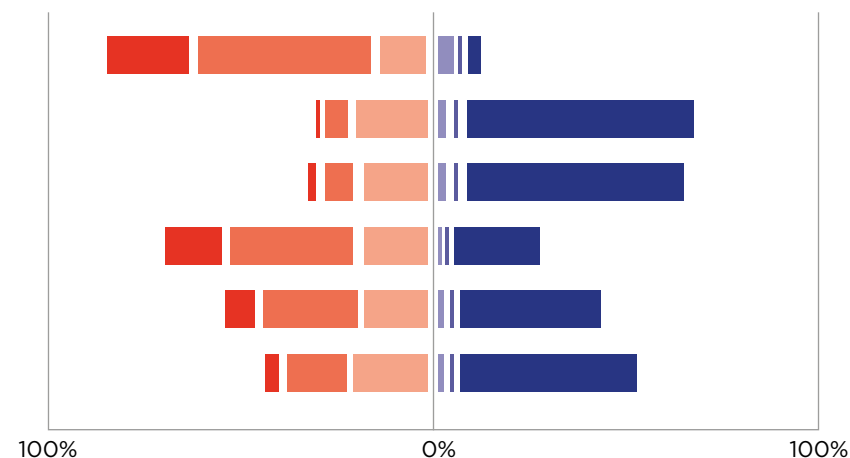
Services and support for older people

Council community events

Support for local organisations

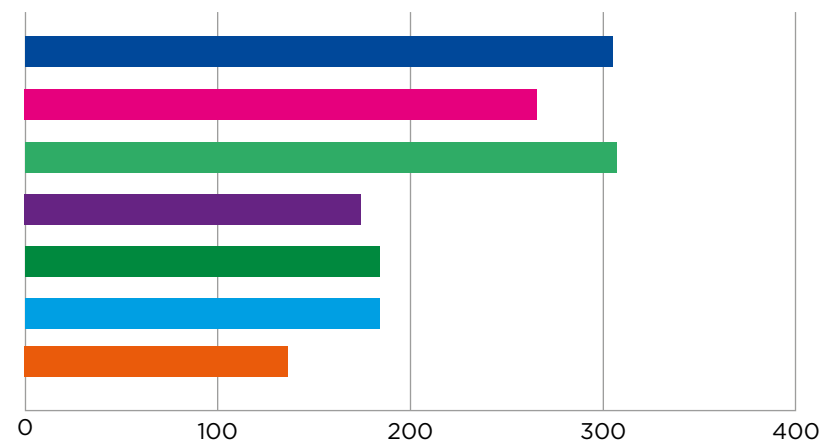
Support for local businesses

■ Very satisfied
 ■ Fairly satisfied
 ■ Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied
■ Fairly dissatisfied
 ■ Very dissatisfied
 ■ Don't know



Which areas would you like to see Stotfold Town Council prioritise?

■ Play parks and green areas	306
■ Services and support for children and younger people	267
■ Services and support for older people	310
■ Council community events	177
■ Support for local organisations	184
■ Support for local businesses	185
■ Other	142





CONTACT US:

📍 Stotfold Town Council, The Greenacre Centre, Valerian Way, Stotfold, Hitchin, Herts SG5 4HG

✉ 01462 730064

📧 enquiries@stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

🌐 www.stotfoldtowncouncil.gov.uk

