

Communication Survey Summary

Introduction

This survey was conducted to gather feedback from residents of Southwater Parish on how effectively the Parish Council communicates news, decisions, meetings, services and general information. The aim was to understand current perceptions, preferences, and barriers in accessing Council-related information, and to explore potential improvements in communication methods to better serve and engage the community. Whilst this survey as not as popular amongst residents as previous questionnaires, we still had a total of 64 responses that are important to concider.

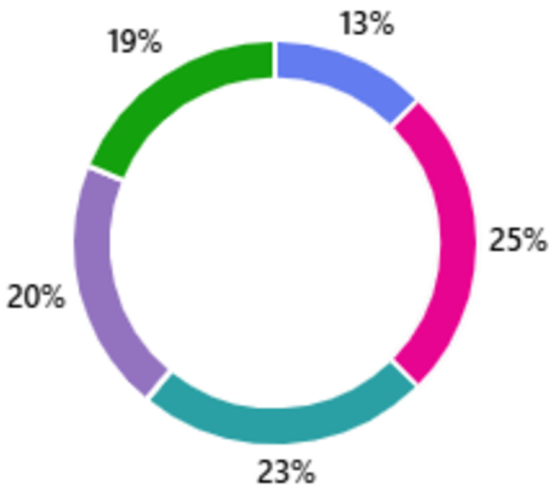
Survey Summary

Question 2: Regarding ease of Accessing Information

- A mix of experiences was reported:
 - Some residents found it "Very easy" to access Parish Council information.
 - Others described it as "Somewhat difficult" or "Somewhat easy", indicating room for improvement in accessibility.

2. How easy it is for you to find information about Parish Council related news, decisions, meetings and services?

Very easy	8
Somewhat easy	16
Neutral	15
Somewhat difficult	13
Very difficult	12

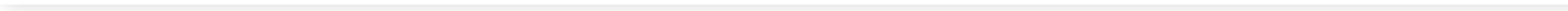


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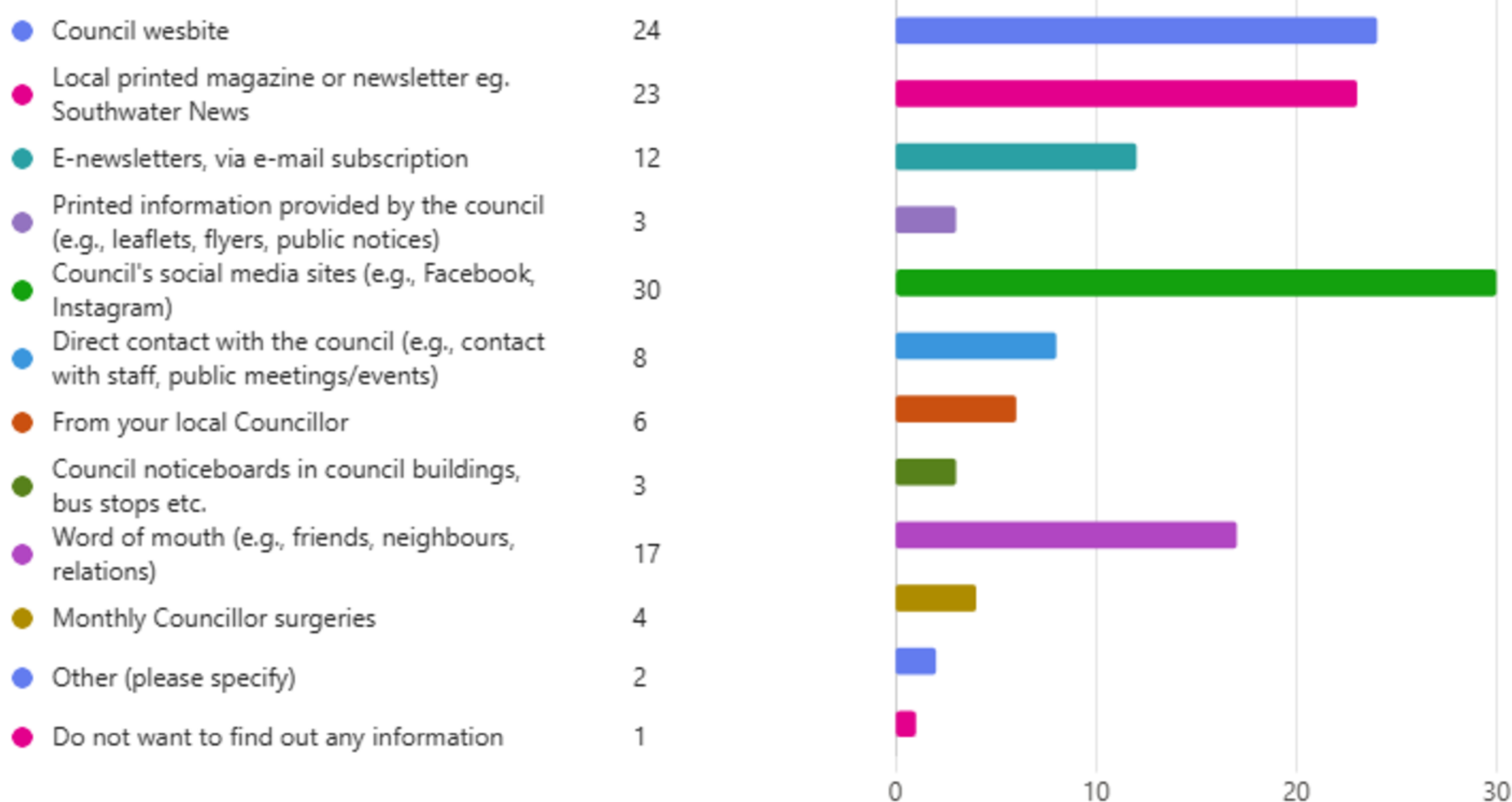
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Question 3: Current Channels for Receiving Information

- Respondents currently receive news through a variety of sources:
 - Local printed magazines/newsletters (e.g., Southwater News)
 - Council website
 - Social media (Facebook, Instagram)
 - E-newsletters
 - Word of mouth



3. How do you normally receive Council related news and information about Southwater?



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Question 4

Preferred Communication Channels – Ranked

How would you prefer to receive council-related news and information? Please rank your answers, starting with most preferred (No. 1).

Top preferences, in order of popularity:

- Council website - The most preferred channel. Respondents want a reliable, centralised source of information that is easy to access and regularly updated.
- Local printed magazine or newsletter (e.g. Southwater News) - Physical newsletters remain a valued method of communication, especially for residents who may not engage online regularly.
- E-newsletters (via email subscription) - Digital newsletters are also highly favoured, likely for their convenience and direct delivery to inboxes.
- Council's social media sites (Facebook, Instagram) - Social platforms are seen as useful for timely updates and wider community engagement.
- Printed information provided by the Council (leaflets, flyers, public notices) - Flyers and leaflets still hold value, possibly for events or major updates.

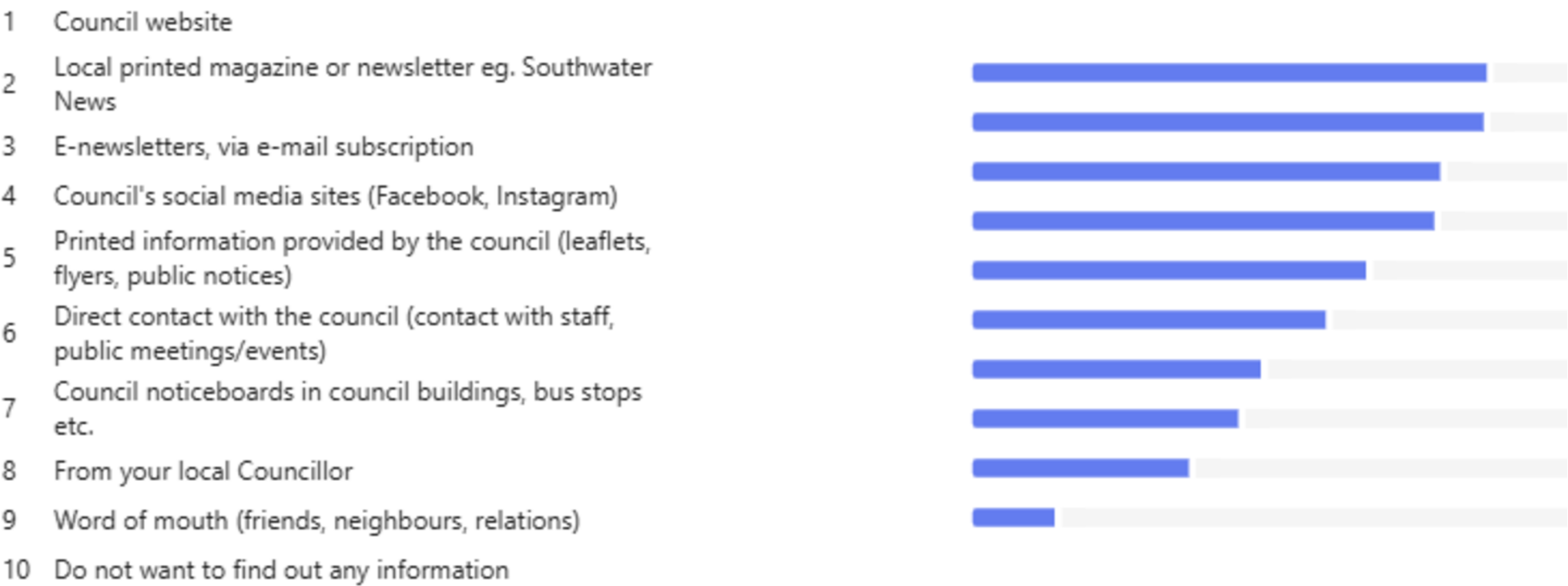


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- Direct contact with the Council (staff, public meetings/events) - While lower in ranking, some residents prefer personal interaction for specific matters.
- Council noticeboards in buildings, bus stops, etc. - Traditional noticeboards are moderately useful, perhaps as supplementary sources.
- From your local Councillor - Few people ranked this highly, suggesting councillor-based outreach may need strengthening or clearer visibility.
- Word of mouth (friends, neighbours, relations) - Least preferred among active channels, showing a general preference for official sources.
- Do not want to find out any information - Virtually no respondents chose this, indicating an overall desire to stay informed.

4. How would you prefer to receive council related news and information?
Please rank your answers, starting with most preferred (No. 1).



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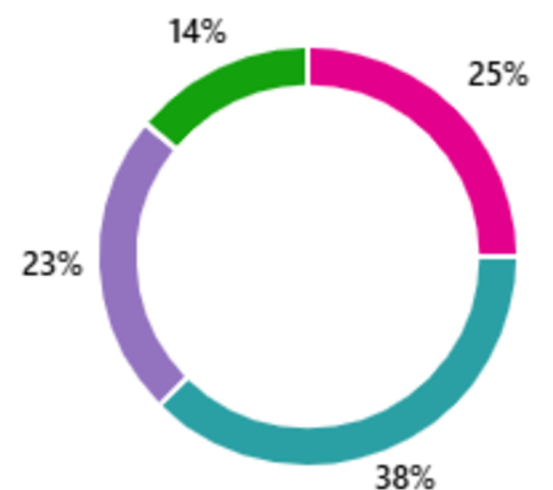
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Question 5: Frequency of Access

- The majority of residents access Parish Council information monthly or weekly, suggesting moderate engagement levels.

5. How frequently do you access information from the Parish Council through its different communication channels?

Daily	0
Weekly	16
Monthly	24
Every few months	15
I was not aware of these communication channels	9



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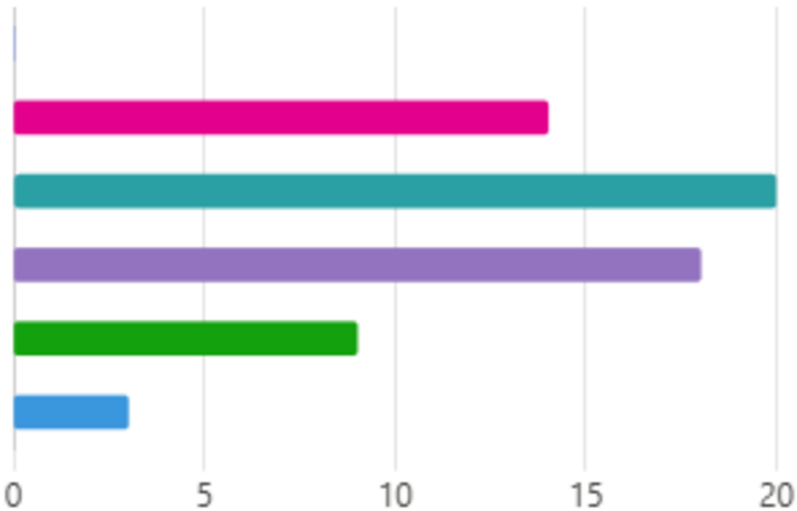
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Question 6 Timely and Relevant Information

- The most common response was "Sometimes" (20 respondents), suggesting that while some information is relevant or timely, this is not consistent.
- A combined 27 respondents answered either "Rarely" or "Never", highlighting that some people feel that communication is frequently lacking.
- Only 14 respondents felt the Council "Often" communicates effectively, and none selected "Always".
- A small group (3 people) were "Unsure", possibly indicating lack of engagement or awareness of current communication efforts from their part.

6. Do you feel that the Parish Council provides timely and relevant information through its communication channels?

Always	0
Often	14
Sometimes	20
Rarely	18
Never	9
Unsure	3



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Question 7

Residents expressed a strong preference for digital, accessible, and interactive communication channels, particularly:

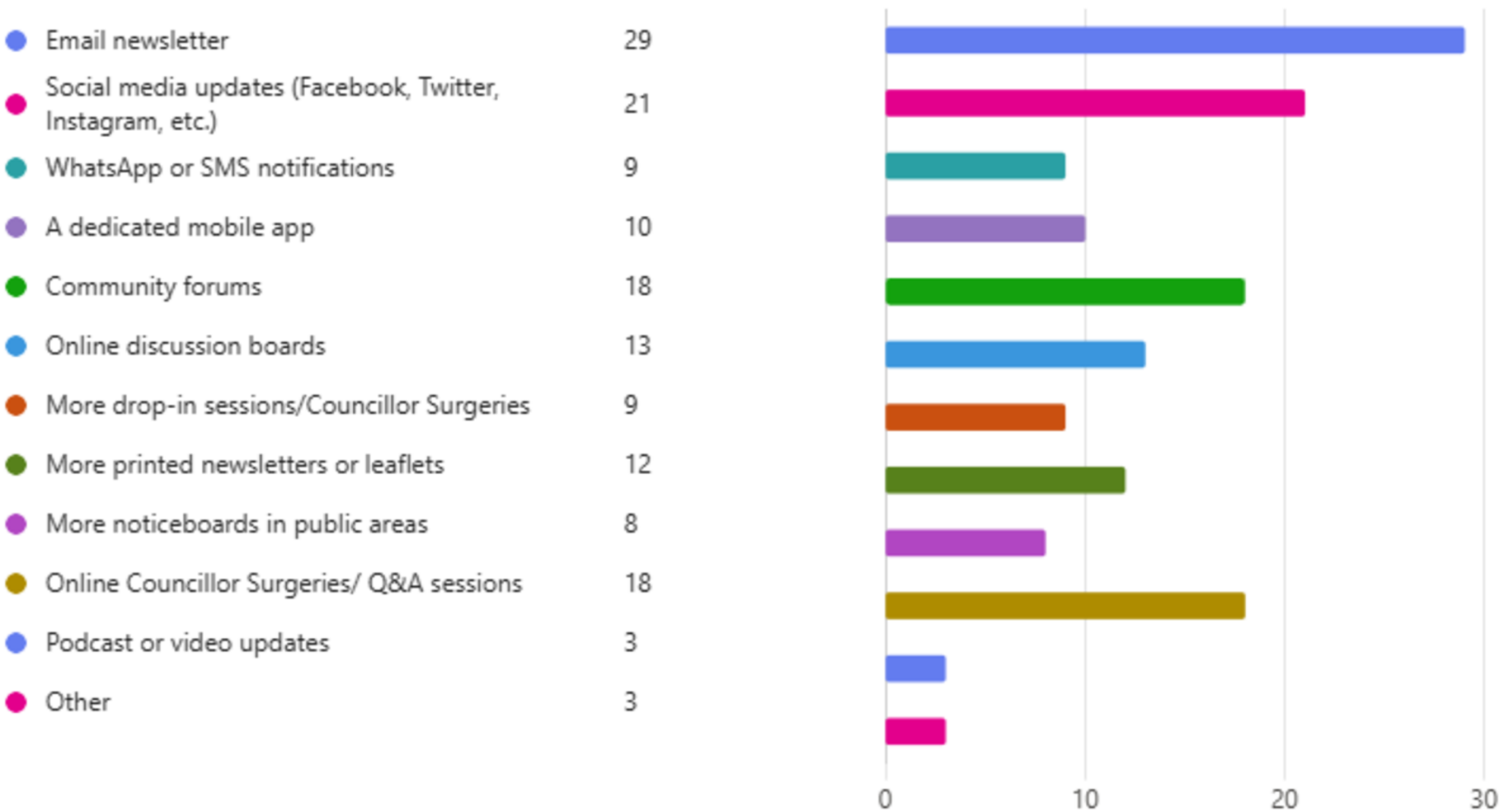
- Regular email newsletters
- Active social media engagement
- Opportunities for real-time dialogue (Q&As, forums)

At the same time, many still value traditional print formats, noticeboards, and face-to-face opportunities like Councillor Surgeries.

The feedback also highlights a desire for more genuine engagement, not just information dissemination. This points to an opportunity for the Parish Council to foster more two-way communication and involve residents in decision-making processes more transparently.

7. Are there any additional communication methods you would like the Parish Council to introduce to better engage with residents?

Please select any methods that would improve communication. You can add your own suggestion under "Other."



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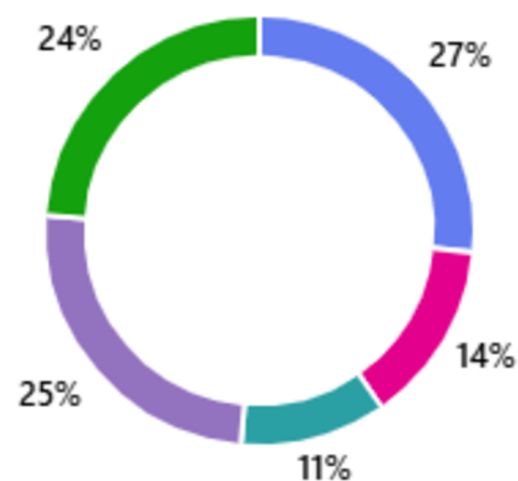
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Question 8 Desired improvements in communication

Residents want updates more often and in clearer, more accessible format, especially through improved website navigation, which we are continuously working on, and more engagement via social media. The respondents were able to select multiple options. Amongst the most desired improvements shorter and more concise messages have been marked with the same importance as more visual content.

8. What improvements would you like to see in the way the Parish Council communicates with residents?

More frequent updates	29
Shorter and more concise messages	15
More visual content (e.g.: infographics, videos)	12
Better website navigation	27
More engagement via social media	26



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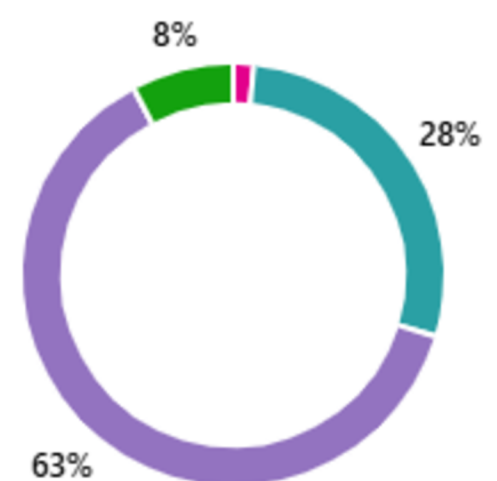
Question 9

Engagement with monthly Councillor Surgeries

- Most respondents "Never attended" the monthly Councillor Surgeries.
- A few attend "Sometimes", showing low physical engagement with face-to-face Council events.

9. Do you attend the monthly Councillor Surgeries? (Held on the first Saturday of every month from 10AM at Beeson Ho use, except August, when the Surgery doesn't run.)

Always	0
Often	1
Sometimes	18
Never attended	40
Never heard of this	5



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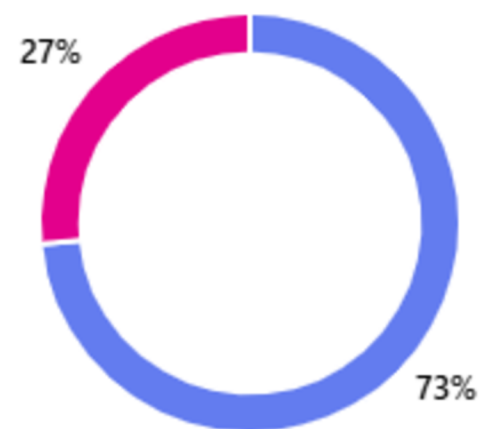
Question 10

Satisfaction with Surgery Schedule

- Most people were satisfied with the current timing (first Saturday each month, starting at 10AM).
- Those who were not satisfied suggested that weekday evenings would be more accessible.

10. Are you satisfied with the time and date of the monthly Councillor Surgeries?

● Yes	47
● No	17



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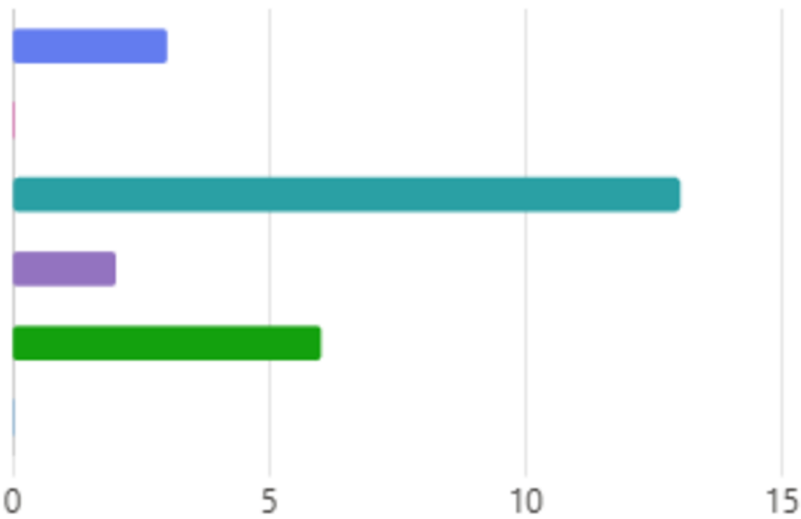
Question 11 Preferred Alternative Times for Councillor Surgeries

Only respondents who answered "No" in Q10 were shown this question.

- The strongest preference for an alternative time is weekday evenings, suggesting potential benefit in trialling a weekday evening option for increased accessibility.
- Those who were not satisfied suggested that weekday evenings would be more accessible.

11. If answered "No", please specify when would you be more likely to attend Councillor Surgeries?

Weekday mornings	3
Weekday afternoons	0
Weekday evenings	13
Saturday afternoon	2
The current time and day is the best option for me	6
I would not like to attend at all	0



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Purpose of the Survey

This survey was conducted to assess how well Southwater Parish Council is currently communicating with residents and to identify opportunities for improvement in terms of clarity, frequency, relevance, and accessibility of information.

Summary of Survey Findings

The Parish Council's recent communication survey showed that residents want clearer, more consistent, and more engaging updates. While many people currently use the website and printed newsletters, email and social media were also strongly preferred for future communication.

Most respondents felt the Council "sometimes" provides timely and relevant information, but many said this only happens rarely or not at all. There's a clear desire for more regular updates, improved website navigation, and more visual, concise and easy to understand messaging. Residents are also using the printed and email newsletters, would be open to online Q&A sessions as a new channel of communication.

In terms of face-to-face engagement, most people are happy with the current timing of Councillor Surgeries, but a few would prefer weekday evening options.

