Scottish Water

Seafield Customer Survey

Research report

October 2018

Executive summary

A research study has been completed in the area close to Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works to understand the views of local residents and businesses in regards to various topics including:

- Awareness and concerns about environmental matters
- Residents' awareness and experiences of odour from the treatment works
- The impact any odour experiences have on residents' daily lives
- Specific details of any odour including timing, duration and severity
- Perceptions on whether the odour has changed or improved over time
- Levels of satisfaction and trust with Scottish Water

Scottish Water commissioned independent market research agency, Explain Market Research, to engage with local people and businesses to understand their views around this topic.

Throughout July 2018 Explain talked with local people and businesses in the EH6, EH7 and EH15 areas through on-street and telephone surveys to obtain and understand opinions.

A total of 267 individuals have been engaged with as part of the study. Thank you to members of the community who engaged in the research. Results of this study have been compared with the last research on this topic, carried out in 2006.

Summary of findings

The headline result of the research is that there has been some reduction in the awareness, experiences and severity of odour pollution from the Seafield works, however continued work is required to further reduce the frequency and severity of the odour.

- 39% are aware of odour pollution in the area, which was 45% in 2006
- 84% of those aware (36% in total) have personally experienced odour pollution, which was 87% in 2006
- Odour pollution is mostly experienced once a month or every few months
- 31% of those who have experienced odour pollution regard it as 'very offensive', which was 47% in 2006
- The research found those living in peripheral wards (Broughton, Calton, Duddingston, Harbour, Meadowbank, Milton, Mountcastle, Newhaven), had significantly fewer and less severe odour experiences than those living in close proximity wards (Portobello, Leith Links, Restalrig, Lorne)

- The research found a reduction in the amount of complaints made about the odour, however, whilst fewer complaints are being made, there is an increase in dissatisfaction in how complaints are handled
- A quarter would like more notifications from Seafield which could include information on works and odour reduction activities
- Businesses experience the odour slightly less frequently than residents, however all regard odour as offensive and would like more notifications and updates from Seafield

Recommendations

Whilst Scottish Water is pleased the research shows slight reductions in the frequency and severity of odour pollution from Seafield, they acknowledge there is more to do.

The research recommends the following as important actions for Scottish Water.

- Continued work in odour reduction programmes
- Keep local residents and businesses aware of odour reduction developments
- Make it easier for residents and businesses to contact Scottish Water to find out what is being done
- Improve Scottish Water processes to ensure complaints and queries are handled more effectively and information is provided quickly
- Share information and tips with the community on how the odour and its impact can be reduced
- Let the community know in advance if there will be times when the odour will be more prevalent
- Further engagement with the local community on communication preferences

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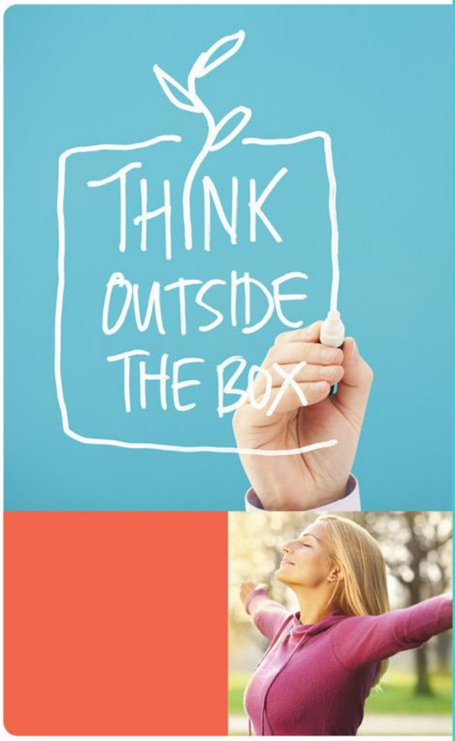
1.0 Introduction

Background to the research



Project background

Scottish Water, utilising a PFI outsourcing arrangement, currently provides a Waste Water Treatment service at a works which is based at Seafield in Edinburgh. It is one of the largest wastewater treatment works in Scotland, processing waste for the city of Edinburgh and a number of communities in East Lothian. Seafield WWTW plays an important part in Scotland's infrastructure and is critical to keeping the water cycle flowing in Edinburgh and the wider area, serving almost one million people.

In the past there have been contacts from customers in the surrounding areas regarding the odour emanating from the Treatment Works. This issue has been ongoing for some time, and Scottish Water have conducted research with local residents on this matter previously, in 2003, 2004 and 2006.

Scottish Water has invested a significant amount in improvements and upgrades at this plant to try and mitigate the odour problem, therefore further research was required in order to understand if the situation has improved or residents are still experiencing the impact of odour pollution.

Scottish Water wanted to understand local residents' views on the odour from the Seafield plant, and understand the nature, pattern and severity of any impact this issue may have on their lives.

Explain was commissioned to obtain these insights and provide a report of findings. Specific objectives included:

- Awareness and concerns about environmental matters
- Residents' awareness and experiences of odour from the treatment works
- Impact of any odour experiences on residents' daily lives
- Specific details of odour including timing, duration and severity
- Perceptions on whether the odour has changed / improved over time
- Perceptions of causes of odour
- Levels of satisfaction on communication from Seafield and future preferences
- Levels of complaints / contacts about Seafield and handling satisfaction
- Perceptions of Scottish Water and level of trust

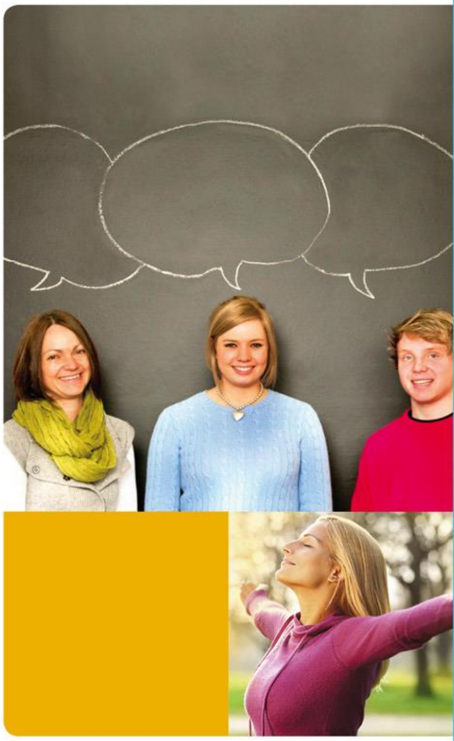
Research was carried out in July 2018 as the odour is more prominent in summer months.

Household customers living within a 1-mile radius of the Treatment Works were engaged with, as were businesses within this area, to establish the extent of the problem and obtain customer perceptions.

This report details the findings from this research and engagement project, including comparisons with the previous results from 2006. It also includes conclusions and recommendations for next steps.

2.0 Project methodology

An overview of the research process and the profile of respondents



Research process

A quantitative approach was adopted for the research, which consisted of telephone interviews and two days of on-street interviewing. The same questionnaire was used for both the on-street and telephone interviews. The telephone interviews targeted both residential and business customers, whilst the on-street interviews targeted residential only.

The questionnaire itself contained several questions from the previous research in 2006 for comparative purposes, plus several new questions which were jointly devised between Explain and Scottish Water. The questionnaire can be found in the appendix at the end of this report.

A total of **267** interviews were completed, **223** with residential customers and **44** with businesses, throughout July 2018.

The on-street interviews took place at Leith Links and Seafield Retail Park. A database of households and businesses in EH6, EH7 and EH15 postcode areas was purchased to carry out telephone interviews. Business interviews were carried out with the owner or Director of smaller organisations, or the person responsible for business premises in larger organisations.

Whilst households and businesses in EH6, EH7 and EH15 areas were targeted, Explain also obtained information relating to which council ward they lived in or were based in. There are 12 council wards in these areas, four of which are regarded as close proximity wards (to Seafield) and eight are peripheral areas. The research focused on achieving more interviews in the close proximity wards.

Close proximity wards:

Portobello

Leith Links

Restalrig

Lorne

Peripheral wards:

- Broughton
- Calton
- Duddingston
- Harbour
- Meadowbank
- Milton
- Mountcastle
- Newhaven

Where appropriate, results in this report have been split by wards for comparative purposes.

Profile of respondents

Ward

The table below details the number of interviews carried out in each of the ward areas, for residential and business. Of the 267 total interviews, 181 (68%) were carried out in close proximity wards, and 86 (32%) in peripheral area wards.

Ward	Sample group	Residential	Businesses	Total
Portobello	Close proximity wards	50	5	**55 (21%)**
Leith Links		71	22	**93 (35%)**
Restalrig		23	2	**25 (9%)**
Lorne		7	1	**8 (3%)**
Broughton	Peripheral area wards	11	2	**13 (5%)**
Calton		2	0	**2 (1%)**
Duddingston		21	0	**21 (8%)**
Harbour		4	1	**5 (2%)**
Meadowbank		7	4	**11 (4%)**
Milton		6	0	**6 (2%)**
Mountcastle		1	0	**1 (<1%)**
Newhaven		20	7	**27 (10%)**
TOTAL		**223**	**44**	**267 (100%)**

Age

A broad range of ages was represented within this research study, as detailed below. Respondents aged 55+ accounted 50% of the total sample size, whilst those aged below 34 account for 16%. Compared with the last study in 2006, there are now more people aged 55+ in the area and fewer people aged below 34.

Age	Residential	Businesses	Total
16-24	3	4	**7 (3%)**
25-34	22	12	**34 (13%)**
35-44	30	10	**40 (15%)**
45-54	36	9	**45 (17%)**
55-64	55	9	**64 (23%)**
65+	73	0	**73 (27%)**
Refused	4	0	**4 (2%)**
TOTAL	**223**	**44**	**267 (100%)**

Gender

A representative sample by gender was obtained in the study. 49% of respondents were male and 51% female. This is almost identical to national averages for gender in Scotland. In 2006 significantly more females (63%) took part in the research than males (37%).

Gender	Residential	Businesses	Total
Male	110	20	**130 (49%)**
Female	113	24	**137 (51%)**
TOTAL	**223**	**44**	**267 (100%)**

Socio-economic group

All socio-economic groups are represented in the research. 59% of respondents are ABC1 and 38% are C2DE. 3% refused to give occupation information. In the last Seafield odour research in 2006, 42% were ABC1 and 58% were C2DE, which suggests changes in the socio-economic make up of the area in the last 12 years.

SEG	Residential	Businesses	Total
AB	49	13	**62 (23%)**
C1	73	22	**95 (36%)**
C2	57	9	**66 (25%)**
DE	36	0	**36 (13%)**
Refused	8	0	**8 (3%)**
TOTAL	**223**	**44**	**267 (100%)**

Length of time in area

The survey asked the respondent how long have they lived or worked in the area. This information is displayed below. The majority of residents and businesses interviewed have lived in the area for over 10 years. 11% have lived in the area between 5 and 10 years, whilst 13% have lived in the area for 3 years or less. The last Seafield odour study was carried out in 2006, which suggests at least 33% of respondents may not have lived in the research target area at the time of this last research.

Length of time in area	Residential	Businesses	Total
Less than 1 year	2	5	**7 (3%)**
Between 1-3 years	17	10	**27 (10%)**
Between 3-5 years	14	7	**21 (8%)**
Between 5-10 years	26	4	**30 (11%)**
10 years or more	161	18	**179 (67%)**
Refused	3	0	**3 (1%)**
TOTAL	**223**	**44**	**267 (100%)**

Housing status

In the survey we asked residential respondents their housing status. A majority of respondents (62%) own a property, and just under a fifth are privately renting. 12% are living in social housing or some form of supported living. These figures are close to national averages, where 64% own their property, 19% privately rent and 17% are social renters.

Housing status	Residential
Own a property	139 (62%)
Privately renting	37 (18%)
Live in social housing	25 (11%)
Live with parents / family	4 (2%)
Live in supported living	3 (1%)
Other	5 (2%)
Refused	10 (4%)
TOTAL	**223 (100%)**

In the following analysis section of the report, these respondent profiles are used to compare results by different segments and highlight key differences which have emerged from the analysis.

Business respondents

The 44 business respondents are categorised into the following SIC sectors. Retail, charity and membership organisations make up a larger share of respondents, with others coming from professional services and construction / building sectors. It represents a good spread of organisations in the area.

SIC sector	Number
Retail trade	7
Charity	4
Food and beverage retail	4
Membership organisations	4
Human health and social work activities	2
Specialised construction activities	2
Sports activities	2
Accommodation and food service	1
Activities of head offices	1
Architectural and engineering activities	1
Creative arts and entertainment	1
Education	1
Manufacture of fabricated metals	1
Manufacture of food products	1
Motion picture, video and television production	1
Office administrative and office support activities	1
Personal service activities	1
Professional, scientific and technical activities	1
Publishing activities	1
Real estate activities	1
Repair of computers and household goods	1
Services to buildings and landscape activities	1
Travel agency and tour operators	1
Veterinary activities	1
Wholesale and retail of motors and motor repair	1
Wholesale trade	1
TOTAL	**44**

Project challenges and sample size justification

The original objective of the research was to achieve a total of 500 interviews, 50 with businesses and 450 with residents in the target geographical area. This sample size would have then matched the previous research carried out in 2006. Unfortunately achieving this number of residential interviews proved a significant challenge, due to the reasons below.

Data available and GDPR

In order to carry out the interviews by telephone, a database of residents with telephone numbers was required. These databases are available to purchase from data broker organisations, and this method was used in 2006 for the previous research. Unfortunately, due to more stringent data legislation and the introduction of GDPR (general data protection regulation) in May 2018, there is significantly less data available for purchase and use for research purposes. The reason being, all data lists are now ‘opt-in’, so people must give consent to be on such databases and receive research communications. This resulted in using a much smaller resident database than was hoped, which made obtaining the target number of interviews extremely challenging. Whilst Explain knew GDPR would reduce the amount of data available prior to starting the project, telephone interviews remains an effective way to carry out the research, ensuring the sample is representative and controlled, which is more difficult to achieve through online surveys.

Time of year

A requirement of the project was to conduct the interviews in the summer, when any odour from Seafield was more likely. All the interviews were carried out in July which is traditionally a harder month to carry out research due to school holidays and many people going on holiday. In addition, July 2018 was an extremely hot month and many people took extra holidays and days out, to enjoy the weather. This resulted in a significantly lower interview conversion rate, not just for the Seafield project, but for all research projects carried out at this time.

Decline of landlines

In 2006 there were significantly more landlines than there is now. Some households don’t have landline numbers and even some that do, don’t have phones connected and just use mobile phones. Therefore, the number of landline numbers compared with 2006 is vastly reduced. The database used for the project did contain some mobile phone numbers, and Explain did call these numbers, however some individuals do not answer unknown numbers calling their mobile which reduces the interview conversion rate.

Dialling real numbers

The approach used by Explain was to call real phone numbers which were sourced from GDPR compliant, opt-in lists. Scottish Water was made aware of another approach from another research agency who stated they could get around the lack of data issue by dialling randomly generated Edinburgh landline numbers. Scottish Water felt this approach was inappropriate and potentially intrusive, so wanted to go ahead with verified list method utilised by Explain.

These factors made achieving the target number of residential interviews extremely difficult and Explain's objective was then to obtain as many interviews as possible in the time available.

However, whilst the project did not reach it's target of 500 interviews in total, the final sample size of 267 is well within the limits of being a robust and reliable sample size.

The combined population of EH6, EH7 and EH15 postcodes is 94,025 (2011 census) and to achieve research results which have a margin of error of +-6%, at 95% confidence level, 266 interviews are required. Therefore, the results of this study have a margin of error of +-6%, which is robust and reliable, whilst the previous study in 2006 had a margin of error of +-4% at the same confidence level.

In summary, whilst disappointing the project did not achieve 500 interviews, there were several reasons why there was a shortfall. However, ultimately the final sample size provides a robust and reliable piece of market research.

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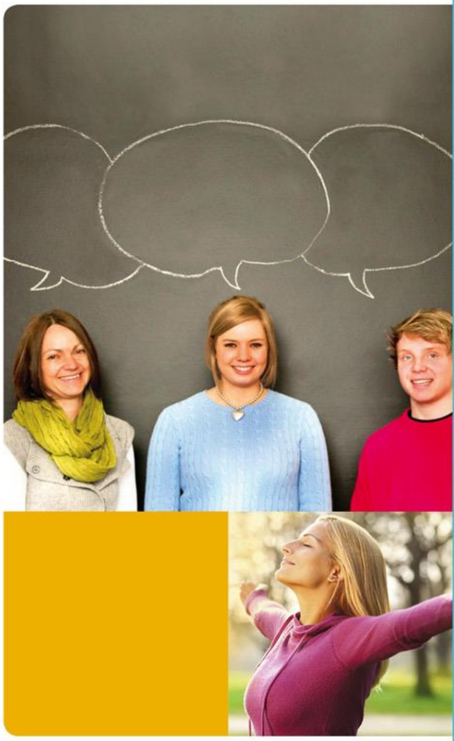
3.0 Analysis of results

A detailed overview of research results split by customer groups



The survey was split into the following sections. Each of these sections is described and analysis of questions within each section is provided below.

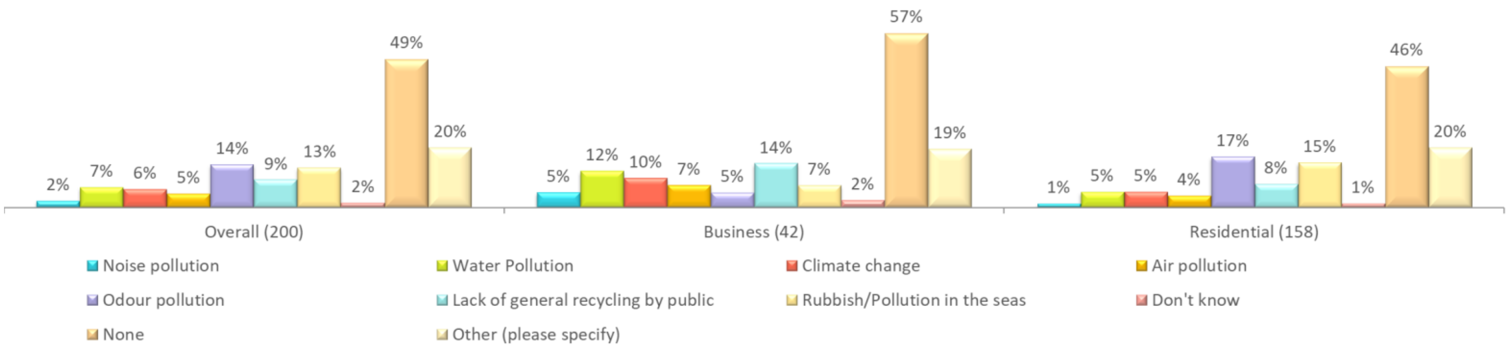
- Wider environmental concerns
- Environmental concerns in the area
- Odour pollution
- Action taken and complaints
- About Seafield
- Scottish Water satisfaction and trust

The numbers in brackets next to each chart represent sample sizes achieved for that question.

Wider environmental concerns

These questions were designed to ascertain levels of environmental concern more generally, rather than specifically relating to the local area.

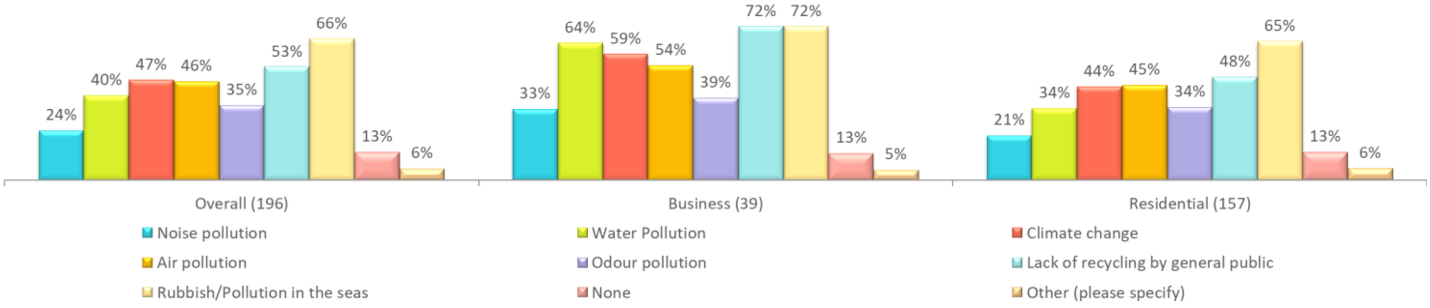
The first question asked unprompted, **'Thinking generally, can you tell me about any environmental issue that causes you concern or worry?'** Answers were then coded to a pre-determined list.



Nearly 50% of respondents said there is no environmental issue that causes them concern or worry. The next highest response was something other than an option on the pre-determined list. When these responses were coded, litter was the most common concern. Odour pollution was the third highest response, with 14% citing this. Looking at differences between business and resident results, businesses were less likely to cite odour pollution but more likely to reference water pollution and climate change.

When comparing the results against those from the 2006 survey, 'none' was also the highest response, followed by lack of recycling.

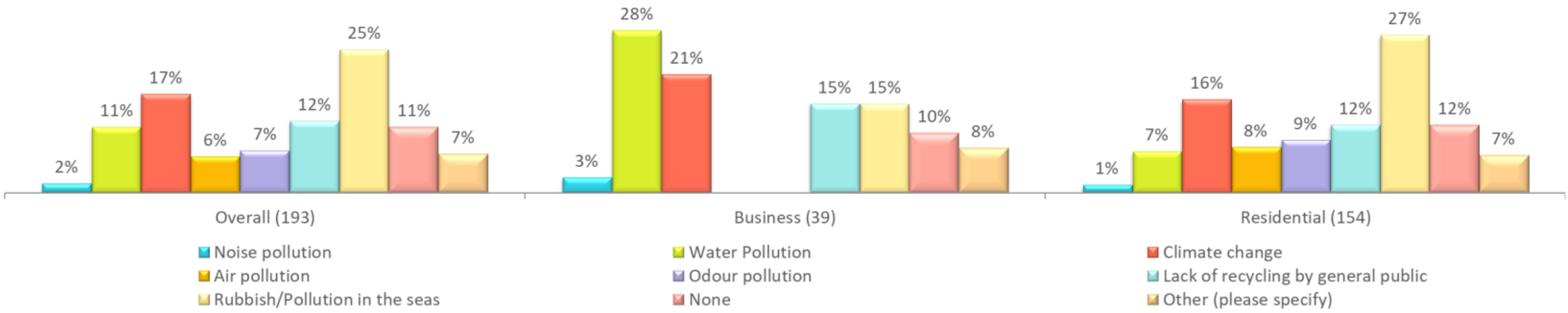
Respondents were asked **which other environmental issues cause concern**, but were prompted with a randomised list of answer options.



Rubbish and pollution in the seas was the most common response amongst both businesses and residents. Lack of recycling was the next most common response, with 53% of respondents citing this. Third highest with 47% of respondents stating this caused concern or worry was climate change. 35% said that odour pollution was a wider environmental concern, which has increased from 27% in the last survey.

Overall, more businesses are concerned about more issues than residents, with significantly more businesses being concerned about water pollution, climate change and lack of recycling than residents.

The survey went on to then ask **which of these issues they have just mentioned causes most**

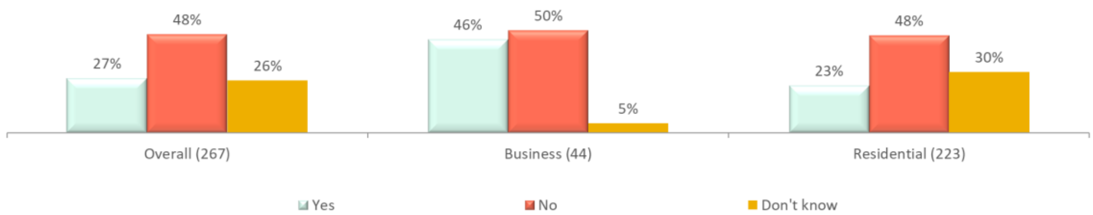


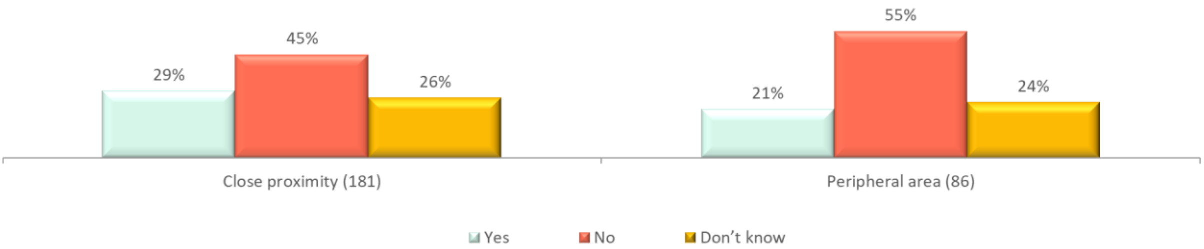
concern.

Overall, rubbish and pollution in the seas is the issue which causes the most concern in the wider environment, with 25% citing this. Climate change is the second highest with 17% overall saying this causes the most concern. Lack of recycling was third with 12%. Odour pollution was the fifth highest issue that causes most concern, with 7% citing this. In the last survey, 7% also said odour pollution causes the most concern.

Interestingly, air pollution and odour pollution was not referenced by any businesses as issues of most concern in the wider environment.

The following question asked **whether environmental concerns limit the respondent's activities or affect their behaviour in any way**. We wanted to understand whether worries about any environmental issues cause respondents to limit or change their day-to-day behaviour.



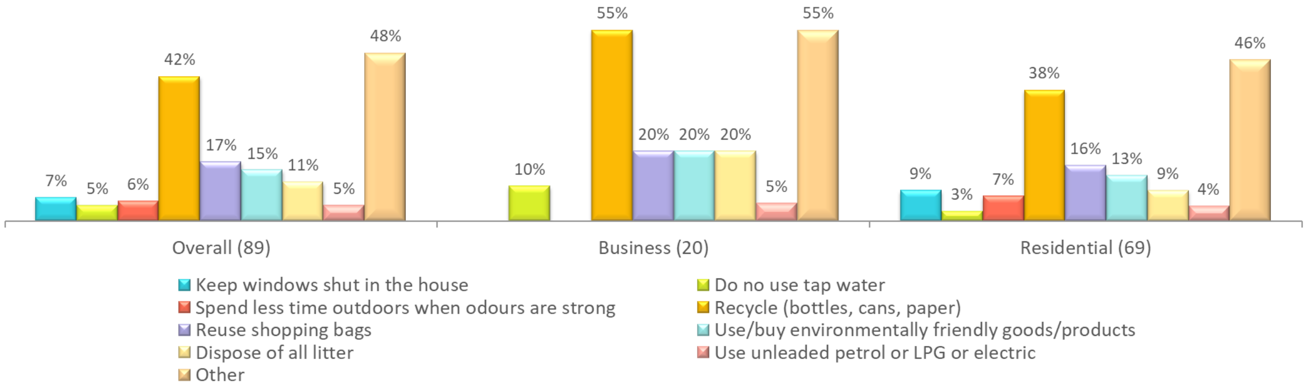


Overall, 27% said that environmental concerns limit their activities or affect their behaviour in some way. However, there was a significant difference between business and residential responses, with 46% of businesses saying their behaviour is affected, compared with 23% of residents.

29% of those living in close proximity areas said their behaviour is affected in some way, compared with 21% of those living in peripheral areas. This suggests being closer to Seafield is more likely to limit people's activities and affect their behaviour, than those living further away.

Comparing the results against the previous study in 2006, residential was at 24% (now 23%) so a slight decrease, but business was at 31% (now 46%), so a large increase in the proportion of businesses limiting their activities or changing their behaviour due to environmental concerns. However, as no businesses said odour pollution caused the most concern, these changes to behaviour are likely to be attributed to other environmental issues such as recycling and reducing CO2 emissions.

'How is your behaviour affected?' was then asked to those who said their behaviour was affected in some way. This question was asked unprompted and responses were coded accordingly.



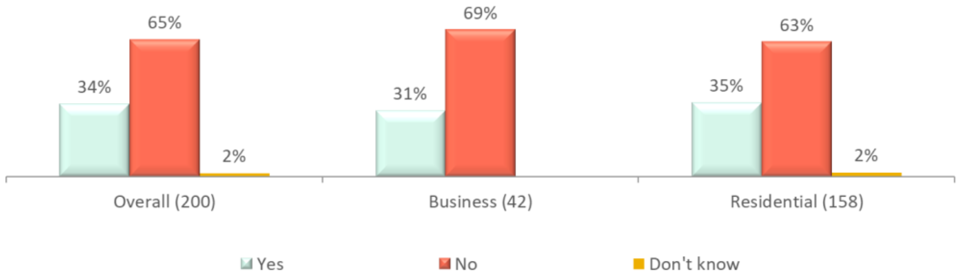
More recycling was the most common behaviour, with 42% overall citing this. Reusing bags was the second highest response with 17% stating this, and using / buying environmentally friendly products was third highest at 15%. 7% stated 'keeping windows shut' which is down from 13% in the previous research study.

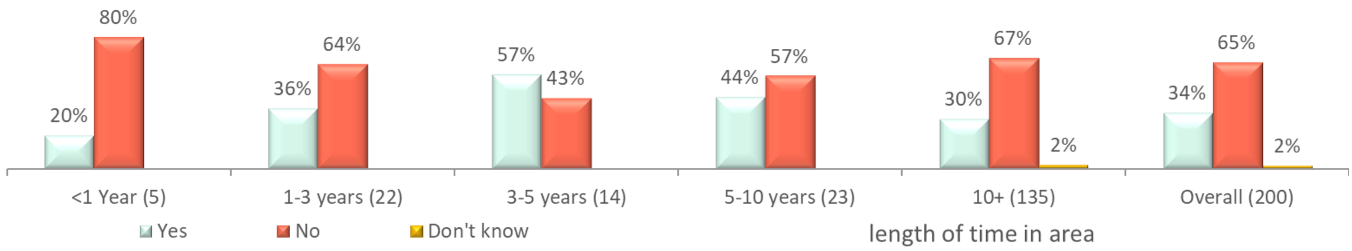
Most frequent behaviours in the 'others' category is responsible disposal of waste, using environmentally responsible methods of transport and avoiding certain polluted areas.

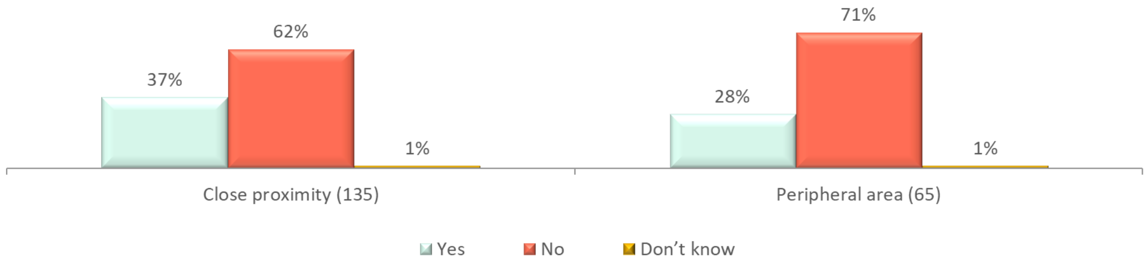
Businesses' behaviour has most commonly changed through increased recycling and using / buying more environmentally friendly goods / products.

Environmental concerns in area

The survey went on to look more specifically at environmental concerns in the local area. Respondents were asked first **whether they are aware of any environmental issues in their area.**



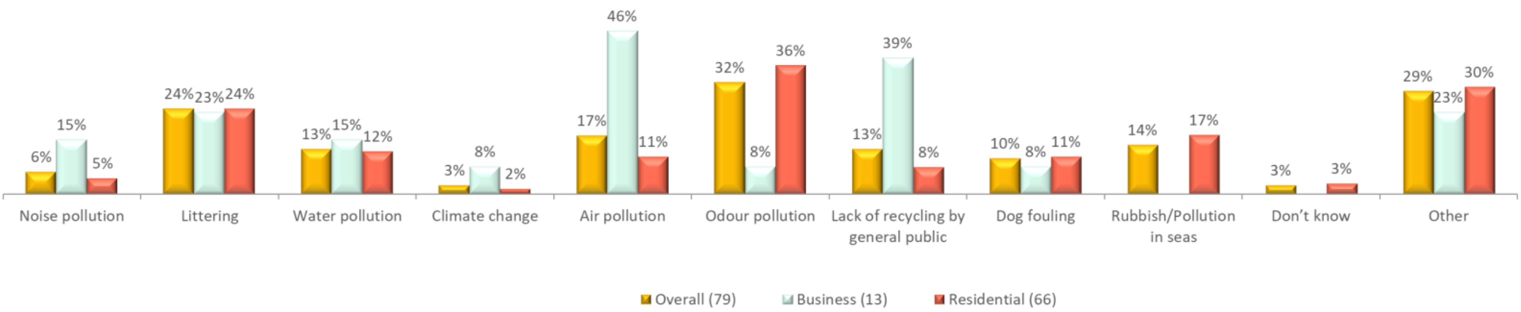




At an overall level, 34% are aware of environmental issues in the area, 31% of businesses and 35% of residents. Those living in close proximity areas are significantly more likely to be aware (37%) than those living in peripheral areas (27%).

The research also identified that awareness of any environmental issues is higher amongst those who have lived in the area over three years. Awareness drops amongst those who have lived in the area for over 10 years, which may be down to the fact that residents have simply become used to any environmental issues in the area or have forgotten about them.

Respondents who said they were aware of environmental issues in their area were asked unprompted **what they believed these issues to be.** Responses were then coded accordingly.

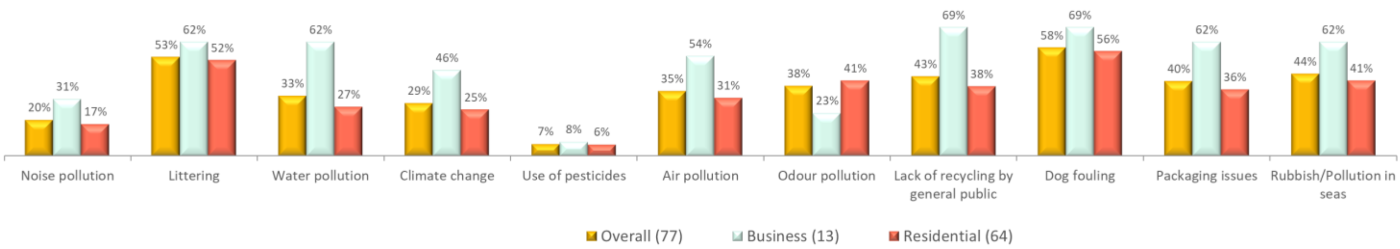


Odour pollution was the highest issue overall, with 32% stating this. However, it was significantly lower amongst business respondents, with only 8% citing odour pollution. Littering was next highest with 24%, and air pollution third with 16%.

Amongst business respondents, air pollution was the highest response, with lack of recycling the second highest, which were very different figures to residential.

Odour pollution in peripheral areas was significantly lower (20%) than the residential overall average (36%), which suggests much greater unprompted awareness of odour pollution in those close proximity areas to Seafield.

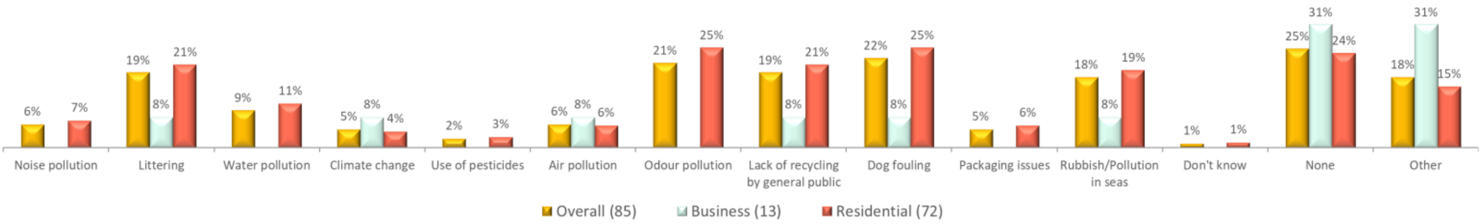
Respondents were asked the question, **whether they were aware of any of the following environmental issues in their area,** and a prompted list was now used.



Dog fouling was the most common response, with 58% saying this was an issue in the area. Littering (53%), rubbish / pollution in the sea (44%) and lack of recycling (43%) were the next highest issues identified in the area. Odour pollution was the 6th highest environmental issue in the area, with 37% of respondents overall saying they are aware of it as an issue.

Odour pollution was fairly consistent across wards, but lower amongst businesses. 23% of business respondents said they were aware of odour pollution as an issue in their area, compared with 41% of residents.

Thinking specifically about the area the respondent lives in, the survey asked if the respondent **could name any environmental issues that causes them concern or worry**, but this was asked unprompted and answers were coded to a pre-determined list.

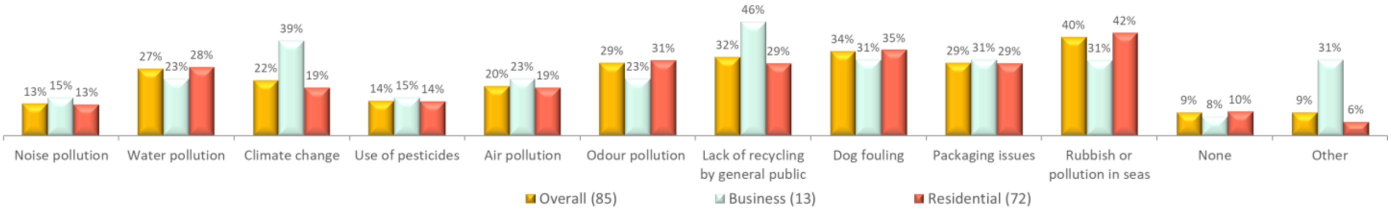


25% of respondents said there is no environmental issue that causes them concern or worry in the area. Dog fouling was the most common response, with 22% citing this. Odour pollution was next highest with 21% saying it causes them concern or worry, followed by littering (19%) and pollution in the sea (18%).

Odour pollution was not mentioned by any business respondents and we also observed that odour pollution drops to 18% in peripheral areas, meaning it is much more front of mind amongst those people who live closer to Seafield.

Other concerns that were mentioned in the 'other' category included pollution caused by traffic and plastic litter on local beaches.

Respondents were then asked a similar question, but a randomised prompted list was read out. So, **still thinking about the area you live in, which of these issues cause you concern?**

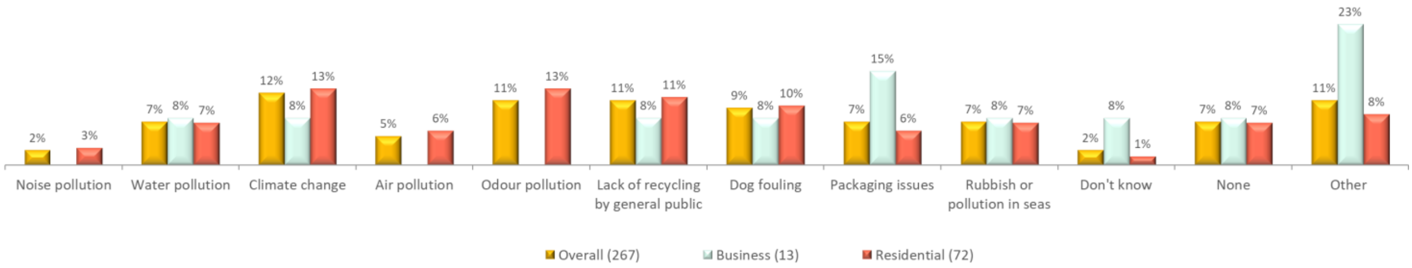


Pollution in the sea was most commonly cited, with 40% saying this issue causes them concern. This was followed by dog fouling (34%), lack of recycling (32%) and packaging issues (29%). Odour pollution was 5th most commonly cited, with 29% saying this issue causes them concern or worry.

Odour pollution is regarded as less of a concern amongst businesses, with 23% saying it causes them concern or worry.

However, the research did find that odour pollution was twice as likely to be mentioned in close proximity areas (34%) than peripheral (17%).

Finally, in this section of the survey, we asked **which of these issues mentioned causes most concern in your area.** A prompted list was provided to respondents.



The research found pollution in the sea causes the most concern in the area (16%), followed by climate change (12%), lack of recycling (11%), odour pollution (11%) and dog fouling (9%).

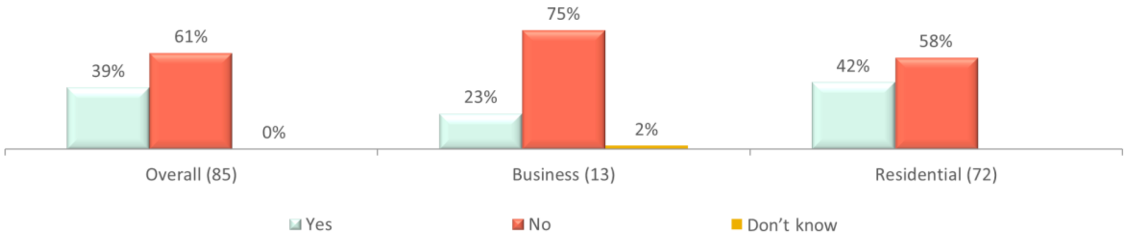
Interestingly, no businesses stated odour pollution as the issue which causes most concern in the area. Packaging issues was the issue that causes most concern amongst businesses in the area. It is possible odour pollution does not feature for businesses due to the fact those interviewed are less likely to live in the area.

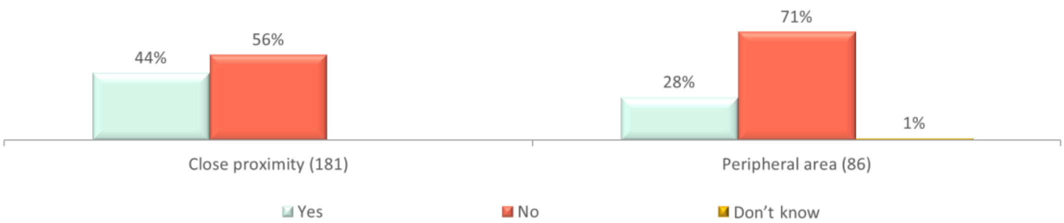
Odour pollution was three times more likely to be chosen as the issue which causes most concern, in close proximity areas (13%), than peripheral areas (4%).

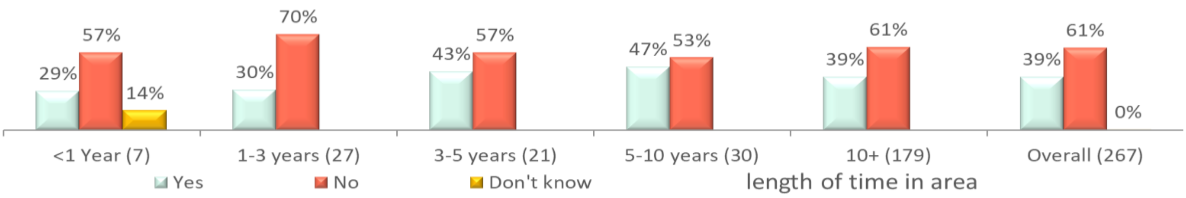
Odour pollution

This section investigates awareness levels of any odour pollution in the area and respondent's own experiences and how it may have affected them.

The survey first asked whether the respondent **was aware of any odour pollution within the area**.







39% overall are aware of odour pollution within the area, 42% of residents and 23% of businesses. In 2006 residential was 46% and business was 35%.

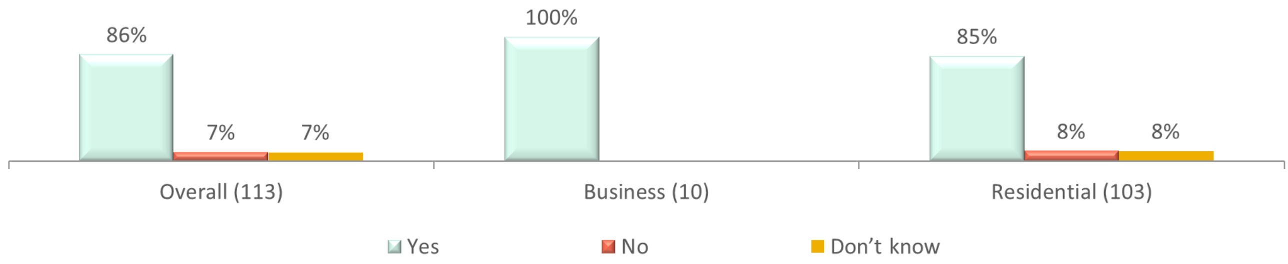
Those living in close proximity areas are significantly more likely to be aware of odour pollution in the area than those living in peripheral areas.

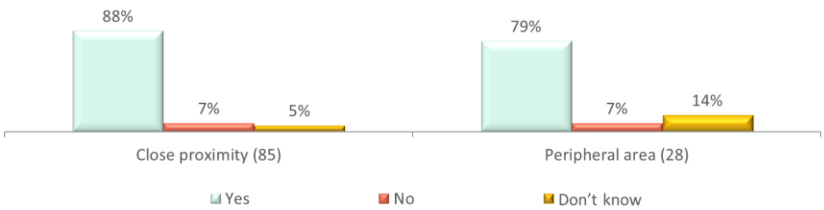
Awareness was highest amongst those living in the area between 5-10 years, and lowest amongst people living in the area under 3 years.

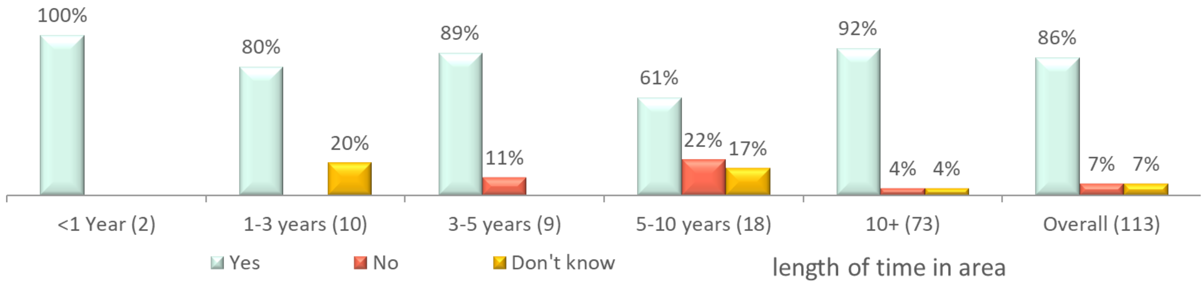
The clear finding here was that awareness of odour pollution in the area increases with the longer people are in the area, and also increases the closer they live to Seafield.

It is positive that awareness of odour pollution has dropped amongst residents and businesses since the last research.

Those who said they are aware of odour pollution in the area, were then asked **whether they had personally experienced any odour pollution within the area.**





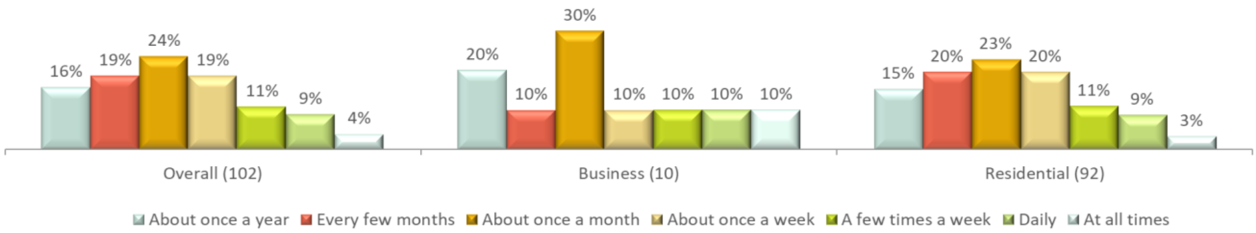


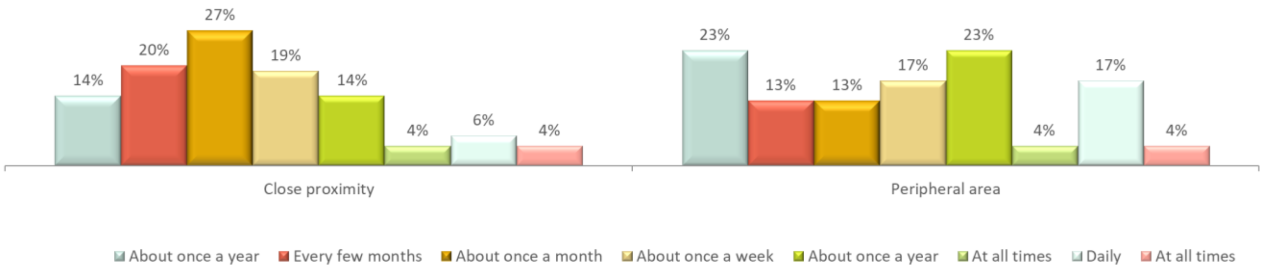
86% of those who are aware of odour pollution in the area have personally experienced it. This represents 36% of the total sample size.

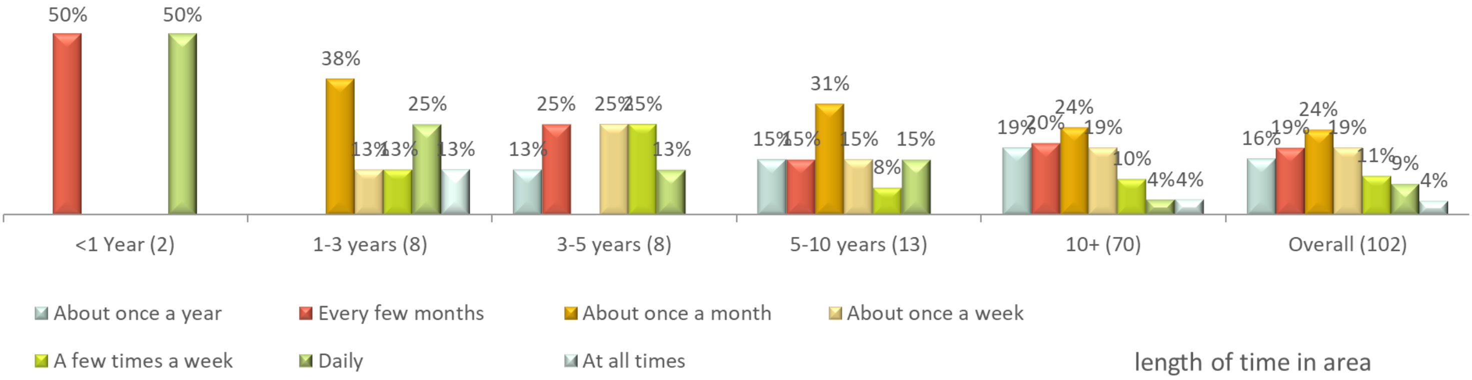
85% of residents who are aware of the odour pollution have experienced it, whilst 100% of businesses who are aware have experienced it. This is an improvement for residential (was 87%) but business has increased from 97% in the previous research.

Those in close proximity areas are more likely to have experienced the odour, but less of a clear relationship based on length of time in the area.

Respondents who have experienced odour pollution in the area were asked **how frequently have they experienced this odour.**





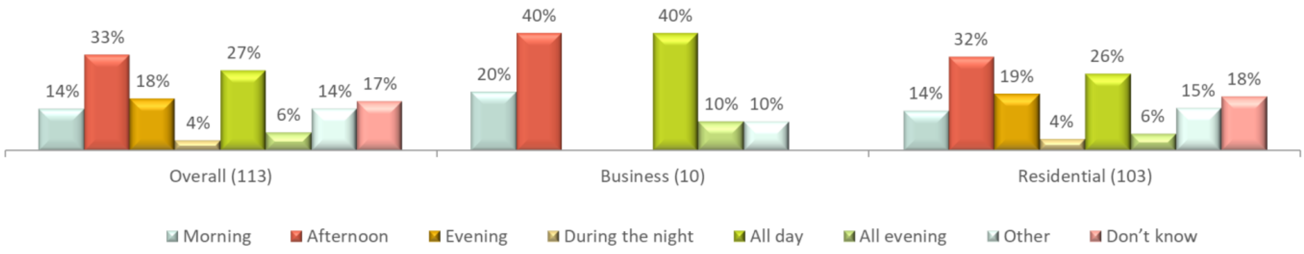


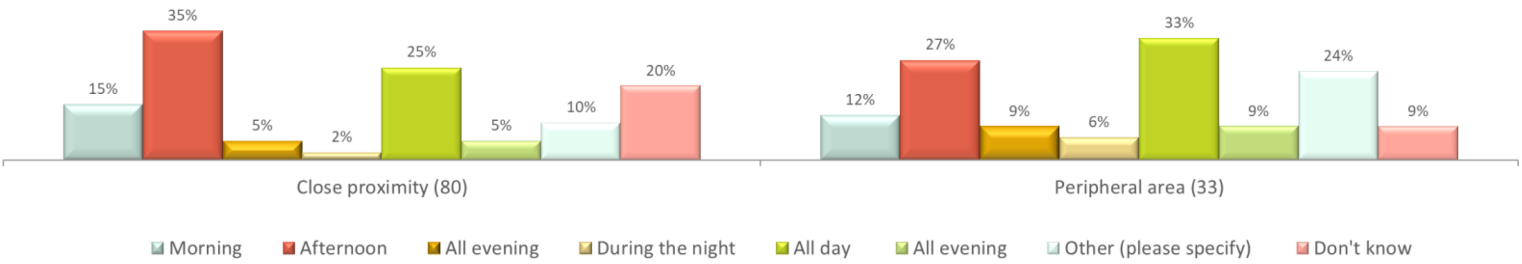
Once a month and every few months were the most frequently cited occasions that people had experienced the odour. At all times and daily, were the cited the least.

There is no clear pattern based on length of time in the area. Similarly, little evidence here to suggest that people living in close proximity areas experience the odour more frequently than those living in more peripheral areas.

At an overall level, there has been a small reduction in the proportion of people who are experiencing the odour at all times, from 6% in 2006 to 4% now.

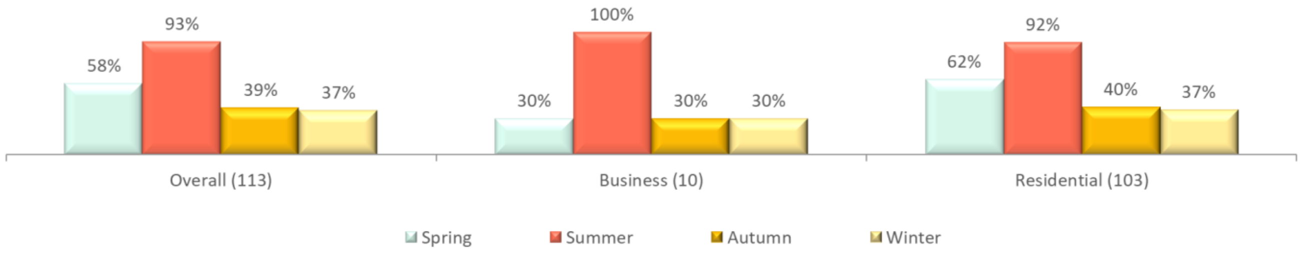
The survey then asked these respondents **at what particular times of the day is this odour experienced**.





The results showed similar outcomes across all groups, with no discernible differences. Afternoon (33%), all day (27%) and evening (18%) were most commonly cited at an overall level. During the night and morning were the least common times respondents experienced the odour.

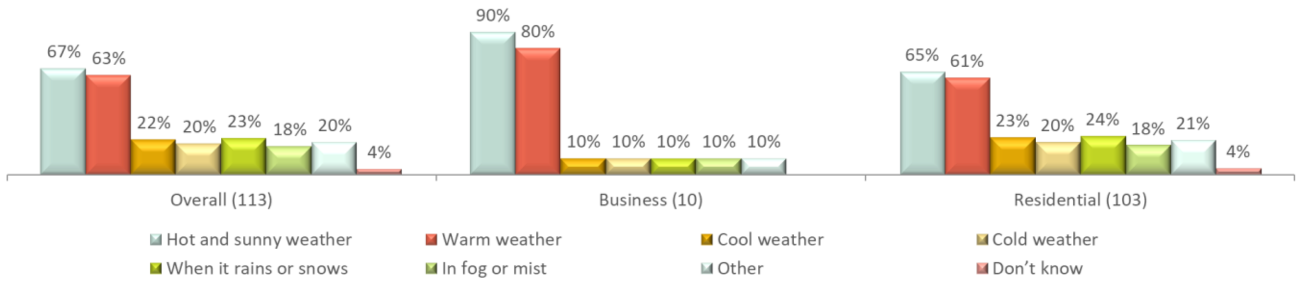
In addition to time of day, respondents were asked **in which seasons of the year do they experience this odour.**



Across all groups, it was unanimous that odour is experienced most in summer months. Spring is the second most likely season that odour is experienced. Odour experiences in autumn and winter were very similar, and the times of the year when odour is least likely.

This is an almost identical situation to that found in the 2006 research.

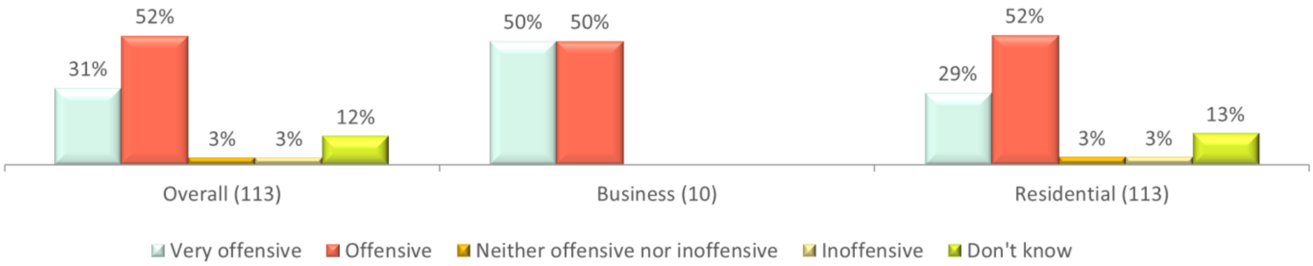
The survey went on to ask respondents, **in what type of weather do they experience this odour.**

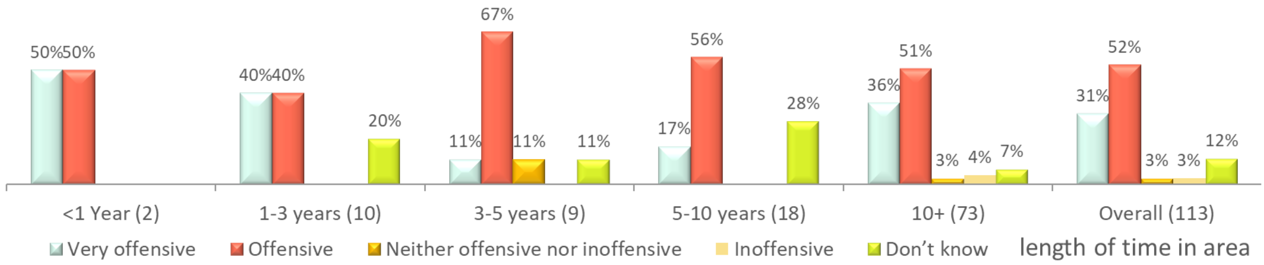


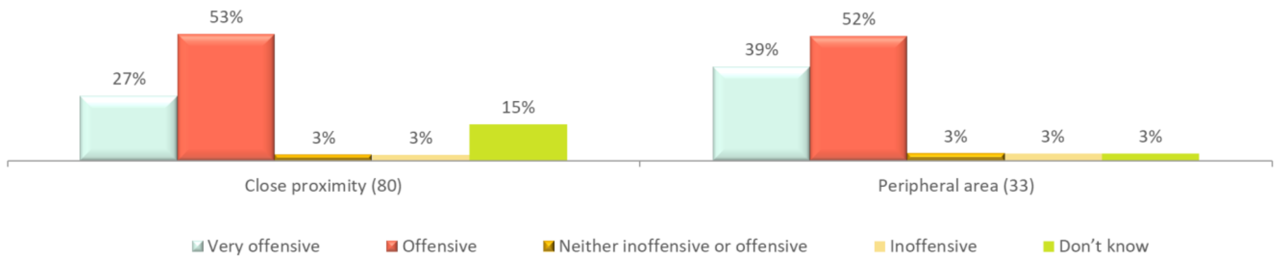
As with the times of day and seasons that the odour is experienced most, there was little difference between groups of respondents with regards to what type of weather do they experience this odour in.

Hot, sunny and warm weather are the conditions in which the odour is most likely. In cold weather and when there is fog and mist, is the odour least likely to be experienced.

Respondents who had previously experienced the odour were asked **to categorise this odour** on a scale from very inoffensive to very offensive.



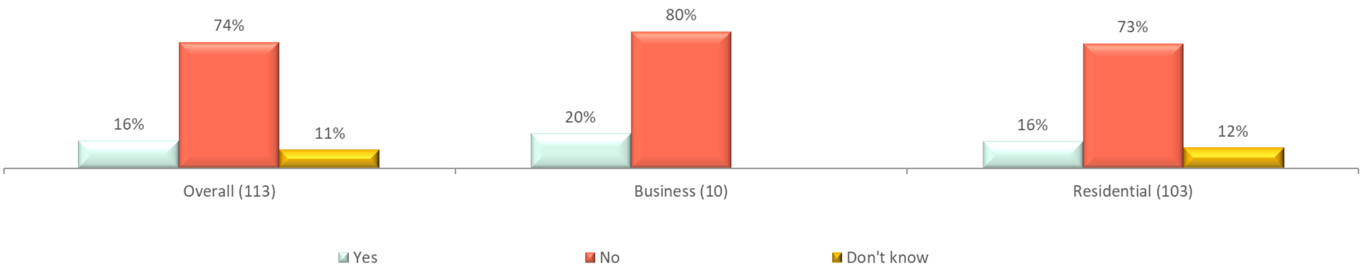


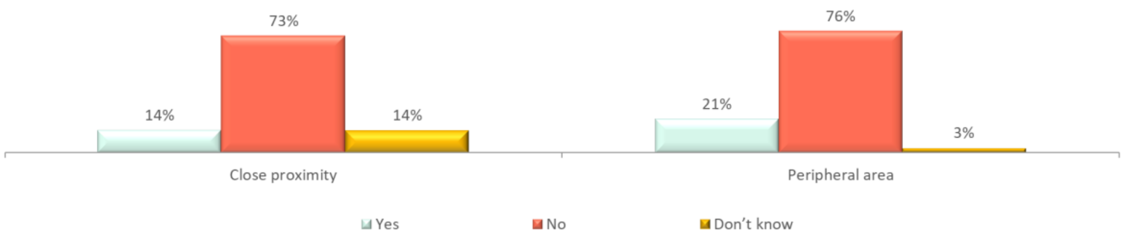


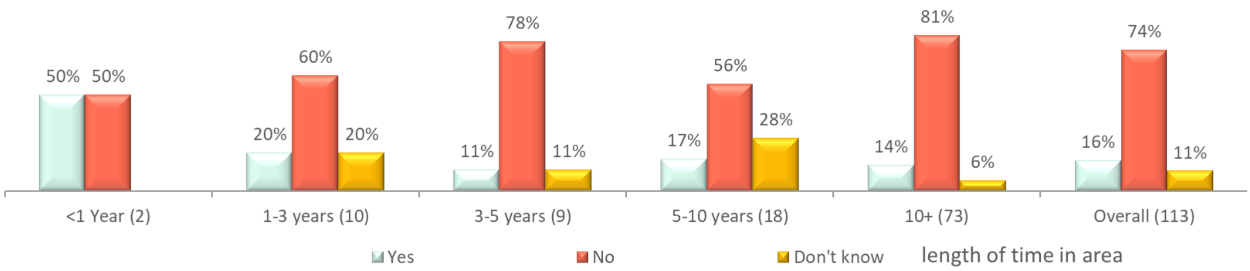
At an overall level, 31% categorised the odour as very offensive and 52% as offensive. This represents a reduction in the proportion of respondents classifying the odour as very offensive since the 2006 study. In this research it was 47%, now at 31%. The number of people judging the odour to be offensive has increased from 34% to 52%. Also, 3% of people now judge the odour to be inoffensive, compared with 0% in 2006.

The research also found the odour is slightly less offensive to people newer to the area, and people in close proximity areas are more likely to categorise the odour as very offensive, compared to those in peripheral areas.

The research then wanted to know **whether this odour pollution was affecting the respondent's day to day activities.** The percentages are of those who have experienced odour pollution, not of the total sample size.





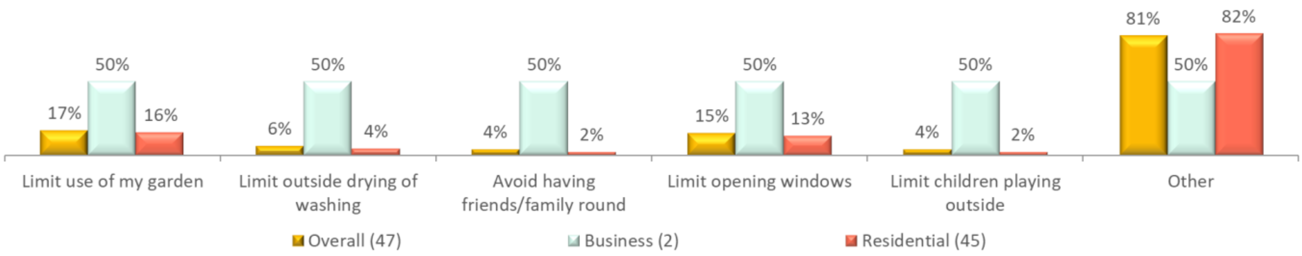


length of time in area

Odour is affecting the day to day behaviour of 16% overall of those who have experienced odour pollution. 16% of residents said the odour affects their behaviour, and this was 17% in 2006, so little change.

The research found small differences based on time in the area, however significant differences based on where people live. 20% of those who have experienced the odour and live in close proximity areas said it affects their day to day activities, compared with 4% of those who live in peripheral areas.

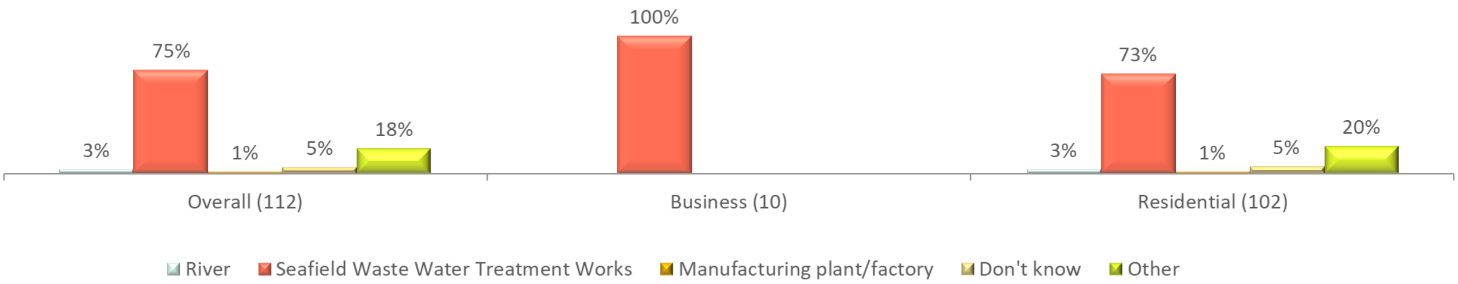
Respondents who stated odour pollution is affecting their day to day lives, the survey asked **in what ways is this pollution affecting their life.** This was asked unprompted and responses were coded against a predetermined list.



At an overall level, 17% limit the use of their garden, 15% limit opening windows and 6% limit putting washing out. These are all significantly less than was found in the 2006 research, when 57% limited the use of their garden, 49% limited opening windows and 27% limited putting washing out.

Sample sizes are too small to ascertain differences by area and time lived in area. Only two businesses answered this question, which accounts for the high business percentages.

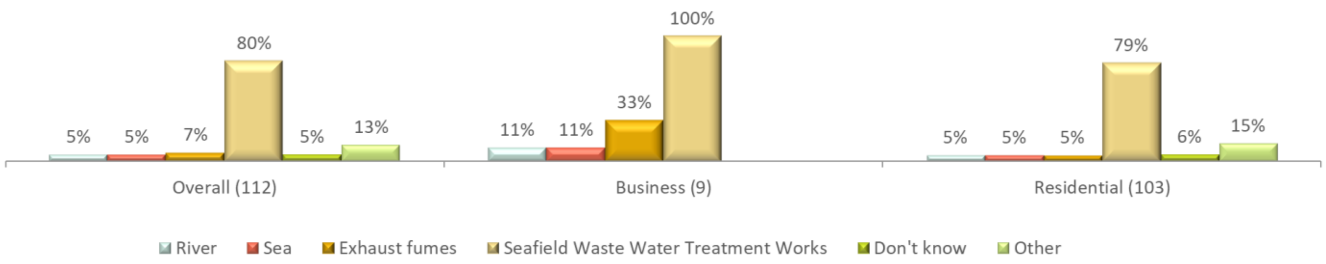
The survey asked all respondents who are aware of the odour, **where they think the odour comes from, unprompted.**



All business respondents and 73% of residents believe the odour comes from Seafield. Overall, 75% stated Seafield, compared with 71% in 2006. Other potential sources were very low.

There was very little difference of opinion based on time in the area. However, 81% in close proximity areas cited Seafield, compared with 57% of those in peripheral areas.

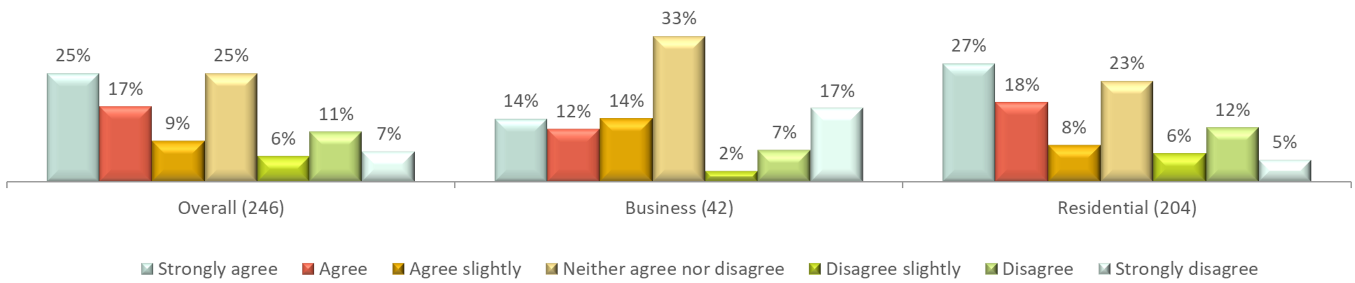
Respondents were asked **whether they thought the odour comes from various different places**, and a list of options was read out to the respondent.



80% overall believe the odour comes from Seafield. 7% believe exhaust fumes is the source of the odour, and 5% believed it came from the river and 5% the sea. The research found very little difference between time in area and where they lived, when a prompted list was provided.

Overall, the research has found most people believe the odour comes from Seafield.

Finally, in this section all respondents were asked **to what extent would they agree this odour pollution is a concern within their community**. Answer options ranged from strongly agree to strongly disagree.



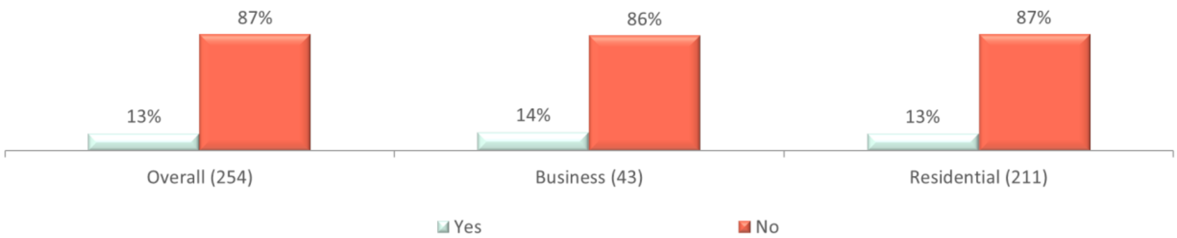
At an overall level, 51% in total agreed that odour pollution is a concern in their community. 24% in disagreed that odour pollution is a concern in the community.

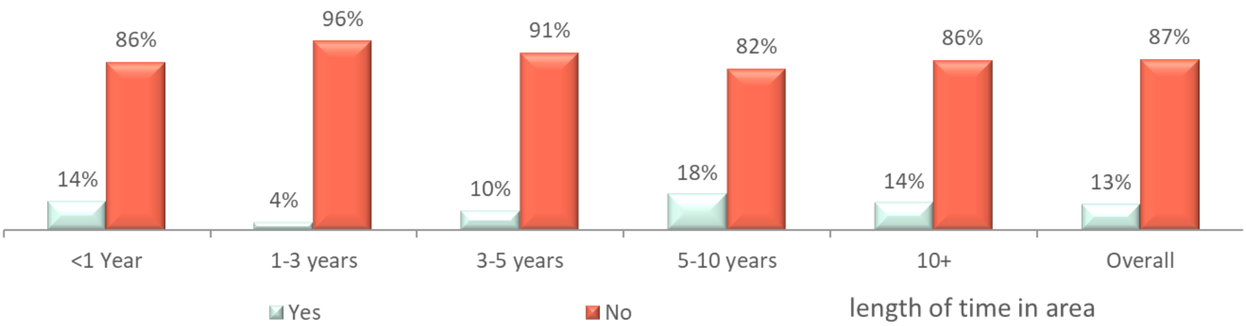
The research found that people living in peripheral areas were significantly less likely to agree than those living in close proximity areas to Seafield. Also, people living in the area under 5 years were half as likely to agree as those living in the area over 5 years.

Whilst undoubtably odour pollution is a concern in the area, it is perhaps not as widespread as first thought. Also, people who live in the peripheral areas, and those who are newer to the area (typically under 5 years in the area) are significantly less affected by the odour, and see it less of a problem. This would suggest some improvements and a reduction in the odour in recent years.

Action taken and complaints

The survey asked all respondents **whether they have taken any action as a result of the odour.**





At an overall level, 13% have taken some form of action as a result of the odour. This is down from 27% in 2006.

The number of businesses who have taken action is very similar to the number of residents. Those living in close proximity were slightly more likely to have acted than those living in peripheral areas. The research also found those living in the area over 5 years were more likely to have took some action when compared with those newer to the area. The only exception being those living in the area under 1 year, but this was a very small sample (7 people).

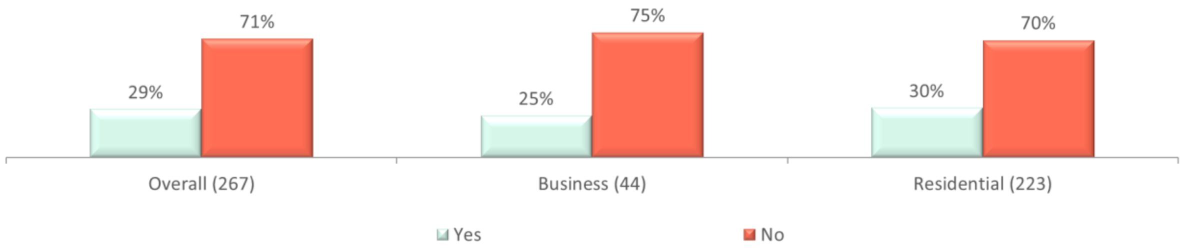
Those who have took some action as a result of the odour were then asked **what action did they take.** Answers were recorded and coded accordingly.

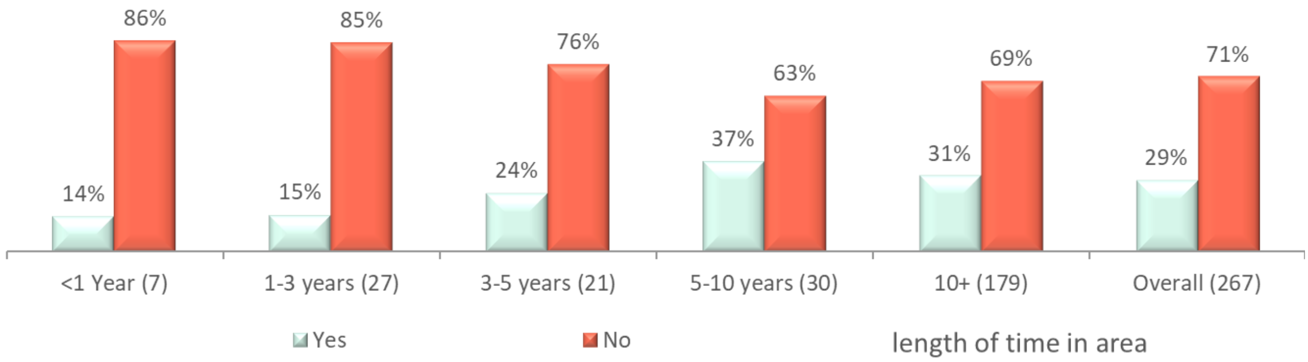
Reported or spoken to local council (18)	**Avoid the surrounding area (4)**	**Contacted MSPs (4)**
Signed petitions (4)	**Keep windows/doors closed (3)**	**Contacted Seafield WwTW (2)**

The most commonly cited action taken as a result of the order was to contact the local council. One respondent stated that they "phoned up the council to report it. My friend bought a property, he was told that it was being covered by 2016 by Scottish Water. It was common knowledge that this was going to occur, but it hasn't."

Avoiding the surrounding area, contacting MSPs and signing petitions were the next most frequently cited action taken. One respondent discussed concerns of keeping children away from the odour, while others discussed SMPs being involved with petitions they had signed.

All respondents were asked **whether they are aware of any local campaigning around Seafield.**





At an overall level, 29% are aware of local campaigning around Seafield. Amongst businesses, it drops slightly to 25%. Those in close proximity areas are more aware of campaigning (32%) than those in peripheral areas (23%). Also, interesting to note is that those living in the area over 3 years were much more likely to be aware of campaigning than those in the area under 3 years.

Similar to other areas within the research, length of time in the area and where they live has an impact on awareness levels and experiences.

Those who said they were aware of local campaigning, were asked **what have they heard or seen.** Answers were recorded and coded accordingly.

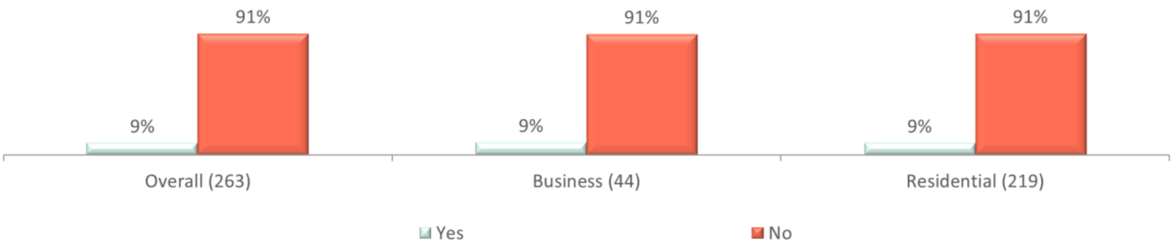
Reports in the media (18)	**Discussion about Seafield online (13)**	**Discussion from local people (11)**
Leaflets, flyer or newsletters (8)	**Protests or campign groups (7)**	**Updates from Seafield WwTW (6)**

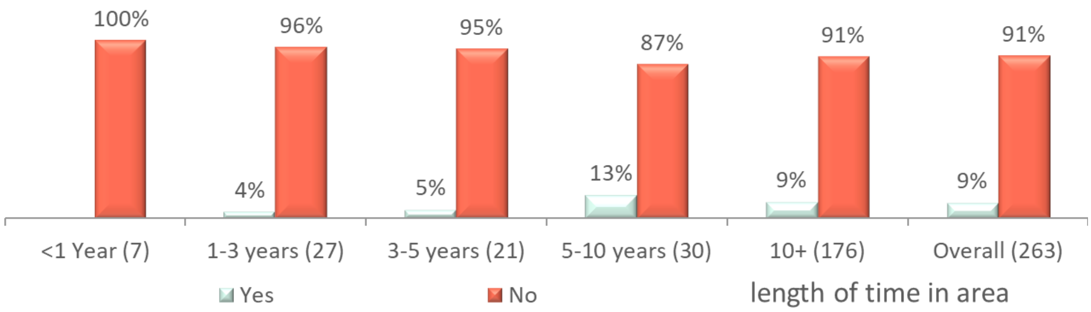
Of those who stated that they were aware of local campaigning around Seafield, 18 suggested they heard about this through reports in the media. One member stating they had heard about it from "the news, television and the local paper". A further 13 suggested they had heard about it online, either through social media or other websites, and 11 from local people within the community. Leaflets, flyers or newsletters, followed by protest or campaign groups and updates directly from Seafield were the next most frequently mentioned.

Interesting to note that leaflets and flyers from protest or campaign groups have been seen by 20% of those who are aware of the campaigning, which is 6% of the total sample size.

Awareness or recollection of these sources is higher amongst people who live in closer proximity to Seafield.

The survey asked all respondents **whether they have made a complaint about the odour.**

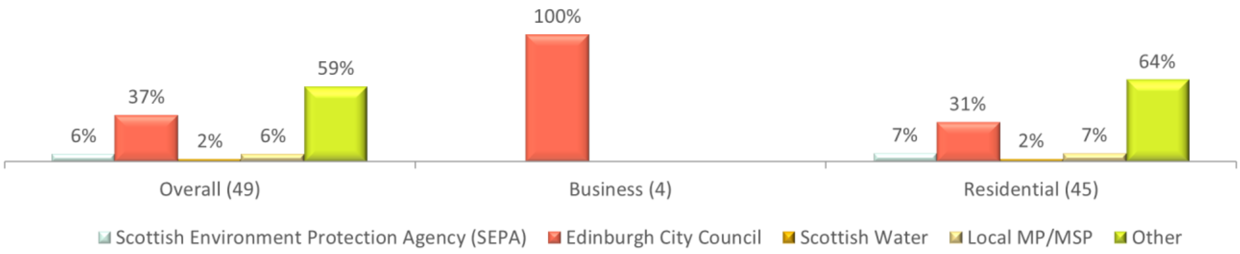




9% overall have made a complaint about the odour, which is down from 17% in 2006. In the closer proximity areas, 10% have made a complaint, compared with 6% in the peripheral areas.

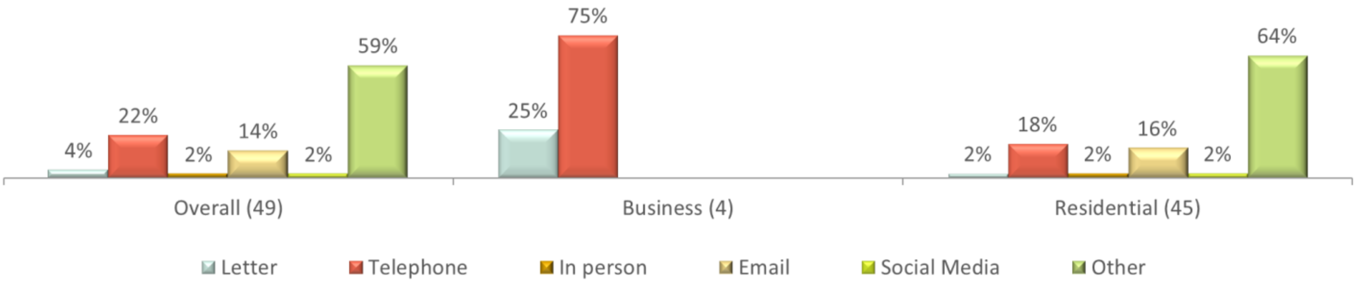
Interestingly, the proportion of people who have made a complaint doubles after being in the area over 5 years. Whilst being in an area for longer obviously increases the chance of someone making a complaint, the research suggests those in the area up to five years have still experienced the odour from Seafield, yet are less likely to make a complaint about it. Possibly due to the odour being less severe or less frequent than it was previously.

Those respondents who have made a complaint were asked **who did they complain to.**



Given this was a small sample size (23) it could not be broken down by other customer groups. Edinburgh City Council was the most common response. Very few complained to Scottish Water, SEPA or their local MP / MSP. Within the other category was Seafield WwTW and the respondents housing association.

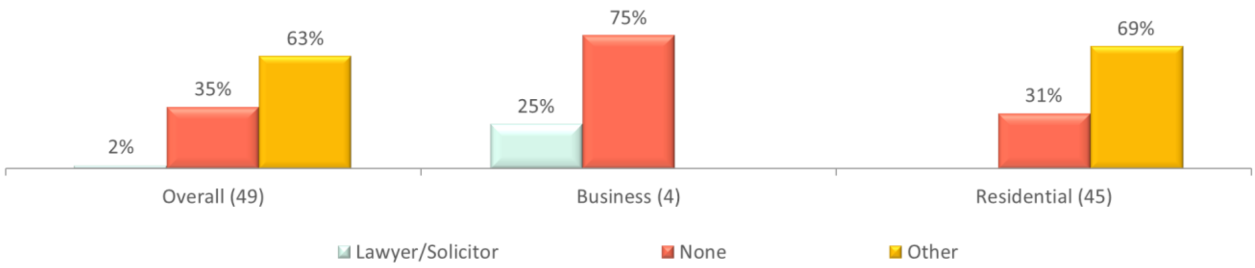
With an unprompted question, these respondents who complained were asked **how did they complain about the odour.**



The highest response which is within the 'other' category is signing petitions. The next highest is by telephone (22%) followed by email (14%). Small numbers of people complained by letter, in person or social media.

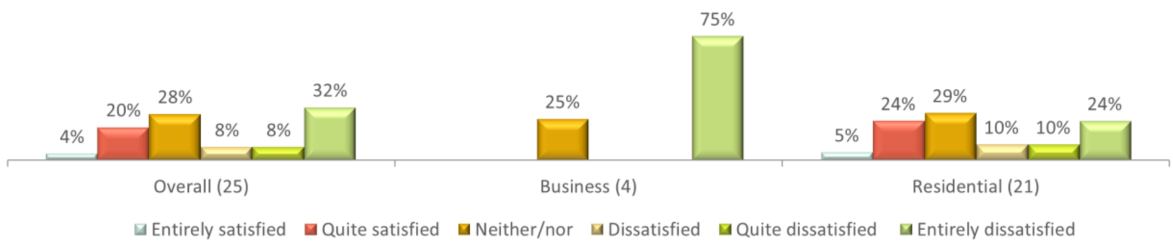
Since the 2006 research, the proportion of complaints made by telephone has halved (was 44%) and the proportion of complaints by email has more than doubled (was 6%).

Those who did complain were asked if they **referred to any other information sources, and if so, what sources.**



Most did not refer to any other information sources before making their complaint. A small number referred to newspapers, leaflets and online information to provide some context and background before making their complaint. Only one business respondent said they sought legal advice before making their complaint.

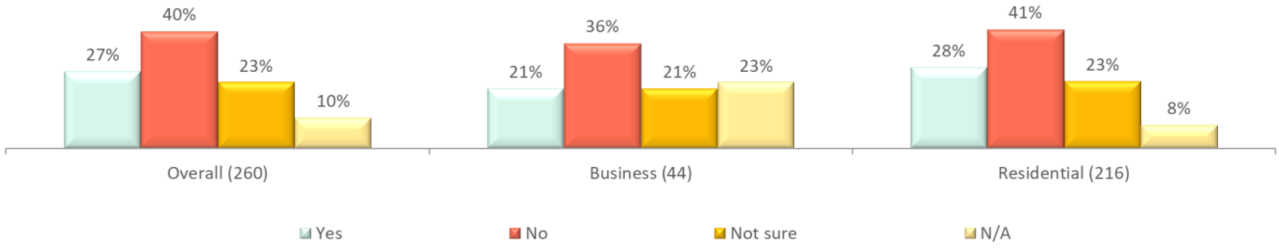
The respondents who made a complaint were asked **how satisfied were they with the way in which their complaint was dealt with.** Answer options were entirely satisfied to entirely dissatisfied.

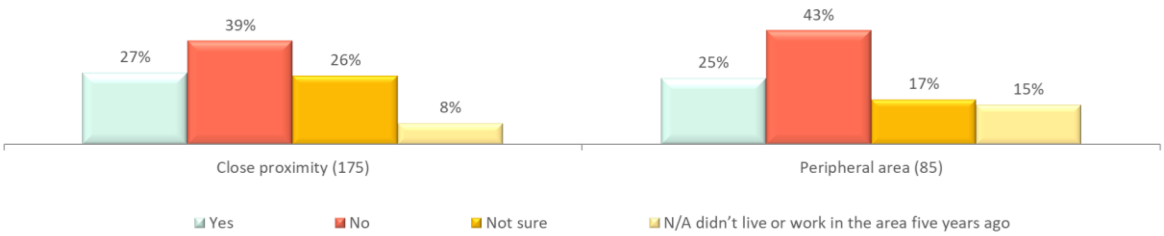


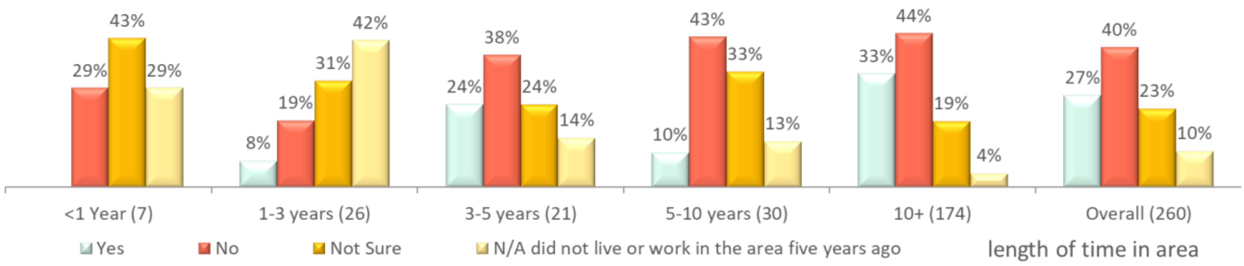
Satisfied combined equates to 24% and dissatisfied combined comes to 48%. Comparing the results against the 2006 research, there has been a 9% drop in the proportion of people who are satisfied with how their complaint has been handled. Also, the proportion of people dissatisfied with how their complaint has been handled, has increased by 14% when compared with the previous research.

These are small sample sizes so treat with some caution, however it is fairly clear that people are less satisfied with how complaints about Seafield are handled now, compared with in 2006 at the time of the last research.

All respondents were asked **whether they have seen an improvement / reduction in the odour in the last five years.**







Overall, 27% have seen an improvement / reduction in the odour in the last five years. 40% stated they have not seen any improvement and 23% are not sure whether there has been an improvement or not. More residents than businesses have noticed an improvement or reduction in the odour.

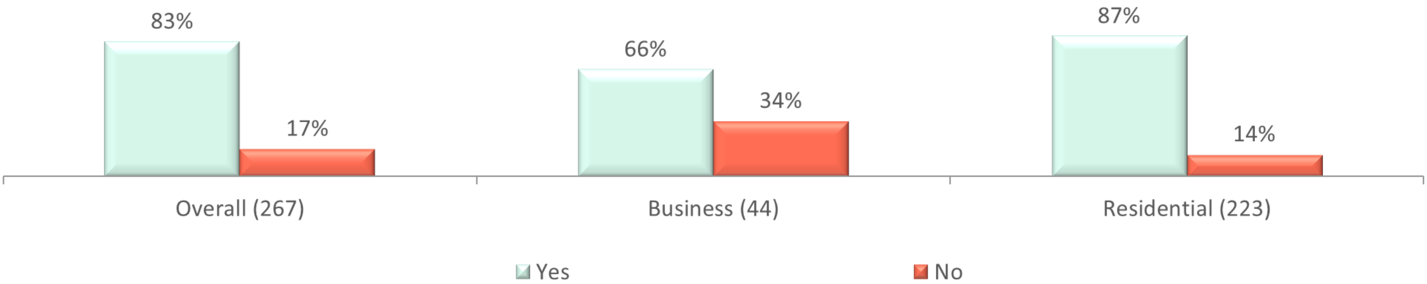
A slightly higher proportion of people in close proximity areas have noticed an improvement, when compared with those living in peripheral areas.

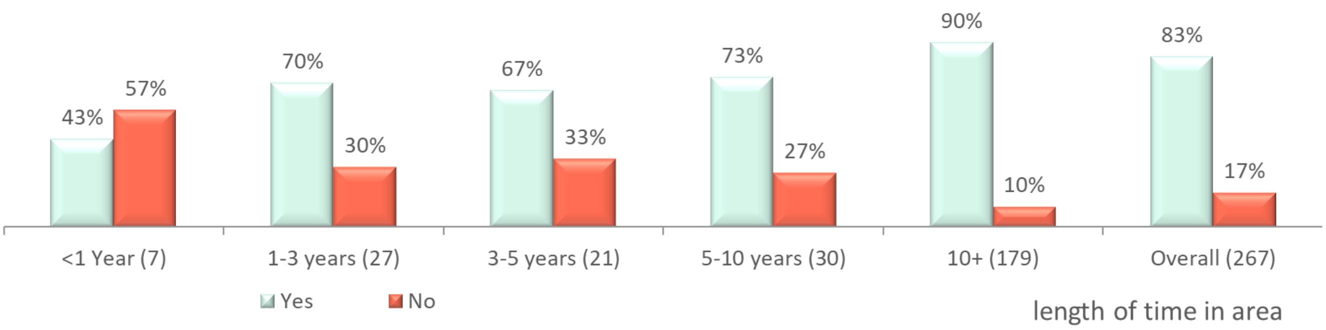
Those living in the area over 10 years have seen the biggest improvement, with 33% citing that the odour has reduced / improved in the last five years.

This suggests that whilst a majority have not seen an improvement, or are not sure if the odour has improved, a significant proportion, particularly amongst those in the area for over 10 years, have seen an improvement, which would suggest some improvements and reductions have been made. However, these are small steps and much more work is required.

About Seafield

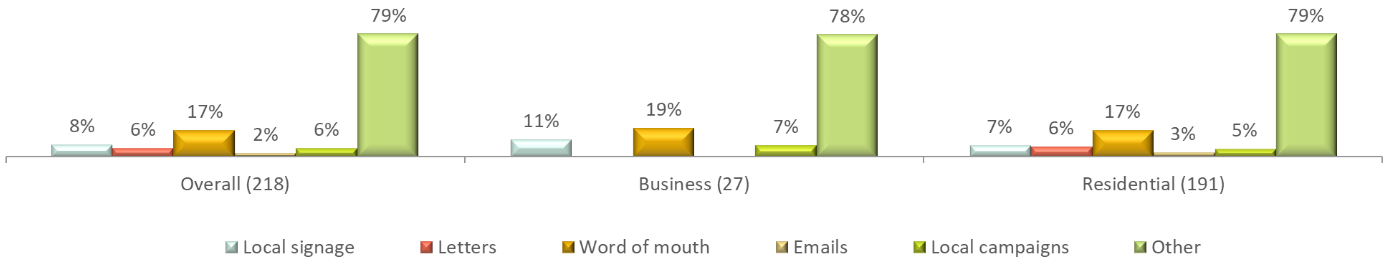
All respondents were asked **whether or not they have heard of Seafield Waste Water Treatment Works.**





There is widespread awareness of Seafield, with 83% overall aware. 87% of residents are aware, but less businesses (66%) are aware. The research found that, perhaps unsurprisingly, awareness of Seafield increases with time in the area. There was little difference of awareness between close and peripheral areas.

Those who have heard of Seafield were asked **how have they heard of Seafield**, in an unpromoted question. Responses were then assigned to a pre-coded list.



'Other' responses have been categorised as per the below, numbers are how many times that response was cited. Living nearby and travelling past Seafield are the most common ways people have heard of Seafield. Media coverage, heard about after experiencing the odour and from other local people were common ways people are aware of Seafield.

6% were aware through local campaigns, 6% through letters received and 2% through emails. These are considerably lower than the other methods, and also lower than word of mouth and local signage.

This indicates that awareness is high anyway, and formal communications just reinforce pre-existing awareness.

Live near by
(52)

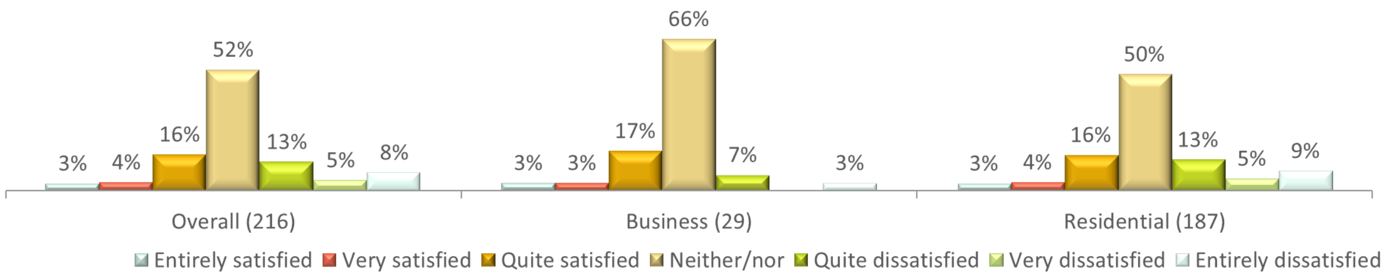
Travel past
(48)

Heard about after experincing the odour
(21)

Media
(20)

Local people
(20)

Respondents who were aware of Seafield were asked **how satisfied were they with the communication from Seafield.** A sliding scale was provided, from entirely satisfied to entirely dissatisfied.

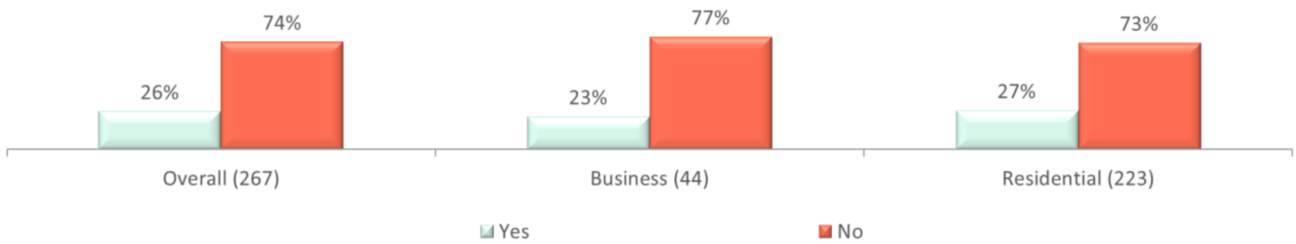


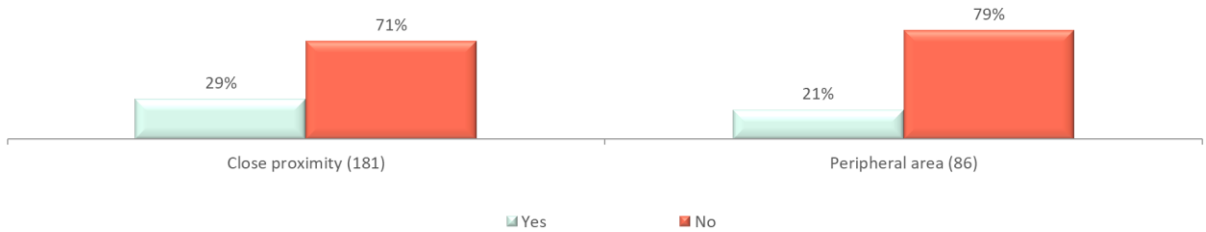
Overall, 23% said they are satisfied with the communication from Seafield, however 26% said they are dissatisfied. 51% stated they are neither / nor satisfied with the communication.

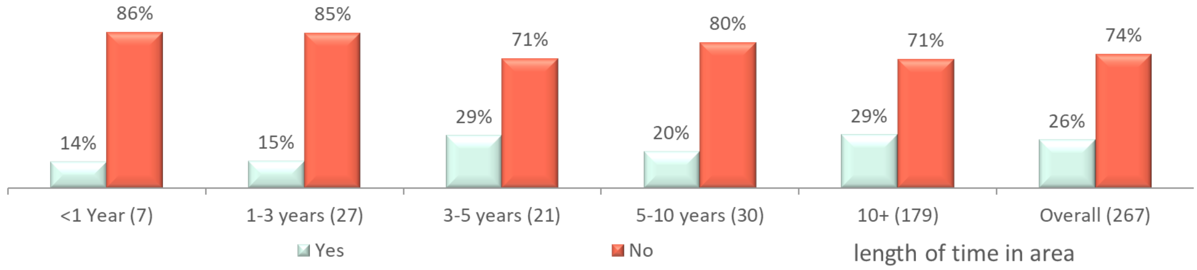
Between businesses and residents there was no difference in terms of how many are satisfied with the communication, however significantly more residents are dissatisfied than businesses. Also, the research found those living in close proximity areas are more satisfied (26%) than those living in peripheral areas (15%).

This can conclude that the current communication from Seafield is not meeting the expectations of residents and businesses in the area, both in terms of frequency and content.

The survey asked all respondents **whether they would like notifications / news updates in relation to Seafield.** These could include updates on any works or odour events.





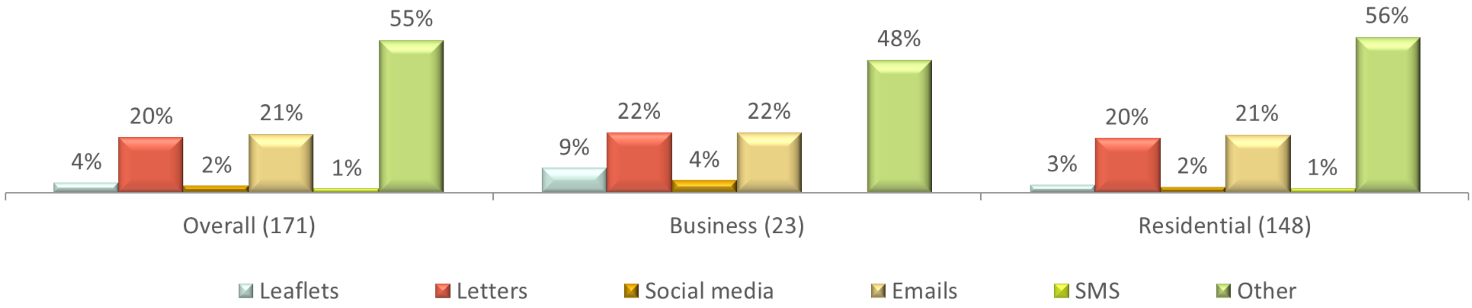


Overall, 26% would like these notifications and 74% said they wouldn't. There is more appetite for news updates from residents than businesses.

The research found there is slightly more demand from close proximity areas (29%) than peripheral areas (21%) which is perhaps unsurprising, given they are closer to Seafield and more likely to experience the odour.

Demand for notifications is highest amongst people who have lived in the area for over 10 years, and lowest amongst those who have lived in the area under one year. This shows that people who have experienced the odour for longer are keener to hear about news updates about Seafield.

Those who said they would like to receive notifications and news updates from Seafield were asked **how would they like to receive these news updates.** This was a smaller sample size so only reported overall and by residents and businesses.

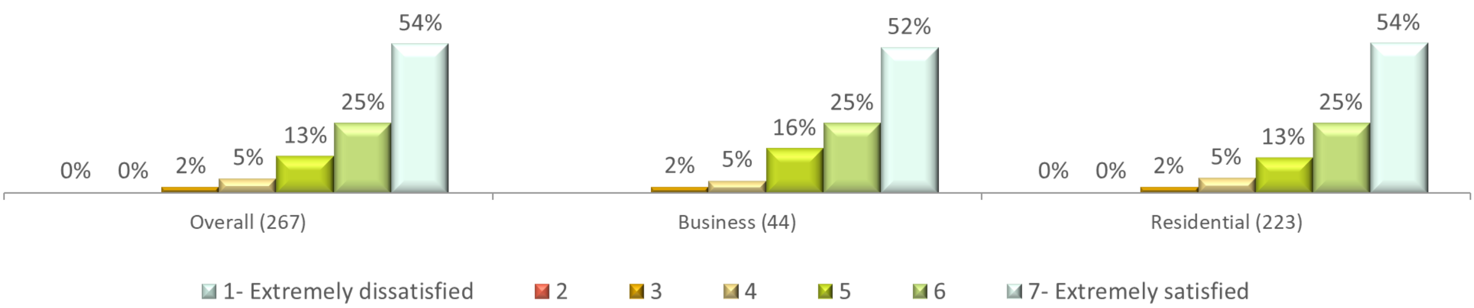


The most common method cited in ‘other’ was local media channels, including newspapers, radio and television. 21% would like to receive notifications via email where possible, 20% via letter. Respondents seemed to favour a personal approach which could be achieved through letters and emails, rather than a blanket approach which would be achieved through leaflets.

Perhaps surprisingly the research found low levels of demand for notifications through SMS and social media. However, this is quite a small sample size, so would recommend further research on this topic.

Scottish Water satisfaction and trust

All respondents were asked **overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are they with the drinking water and waste water services supplied by Scottish Water?** Respondents were asked to provide a score between 1-7, where 1 is extremely dissatisfied and 7 is extremely satisfied, and the reason why they gave that score.



Mean satisfaction score by segment	Score
Overall	6.2
Residential	6.2
Business	6.2
Close proximity	6.2
Peripheral	6.1
In area: <1 year	6.4
In area: 1-3 years	6.3
In area: 3-5 years	6.5
In area: 5-10 years	5.8
In area: 10 years+	6.2

Overall, the quality of water was largely seen as a reason for the high satisfaction score for drinking and waste water services supplied by Scottish Water, with this being cited by 124 respondents. Examples of this being the below.

"I just think the service is excellent. The water is really lovely. Always tasty and cold. Recently Scottish Water had to do some work in the house and renew pipes. The service is excellent"

A total of 19 members however, disagreed and stated the quality of water was poor.

Not having a problem with the water supply was suggested by 90 respondents as the reason they are satisfied with Scottish Water, and good service was mentioned by 16 respondents and bad service by eight. Issues with the smell was also mentioned by 12 respondents, with an example of this being

"The water is clean and drinkable and I never have a problem with the waste water unless it's the smell and that depends on the weather".

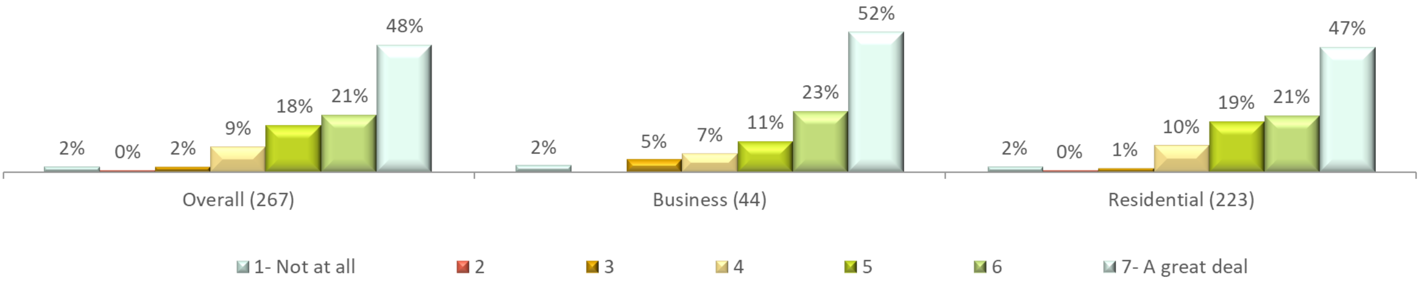
Comments provided about satisfaction with Scottish Water were categorised as follows, with the number of occurrences this topic was raised.

Good quality water (124)	**No problems (90)**	**Bad quality of water (19)**
Good service (17)	**Issues with the smell (12)**	**Bad service (8)**

The below quote from a respondent summarises quite well what many people said in response to why they gave the score they did for satisfaction with Scottish Water.

"I do like Edinburgh's water. We have good tap water here. As far as I know there are issues with the water treatment but the drinking water is absolutely fine. The odour is the Seafield Stink which has got better over the years. It is famous in our area for its stink. It has got better in the last few years. It used to be every few weeks. It was something we learned to live with. It was a farm yard and sewage smell. They pretty much dealt with it in the last few years. It has got much better. I know there was a few vicarious groups that were formed but I did not have any reason to get involved with them".

At the conclusion of the survey, all respondents were asked **overall, to what extent, if at all, would you say you TRUST Scottish Water?** Respondents were asked to provide a score between 1-7, where 1 is not at all and 7 is a great deal, and the reason why they gave that score.



Mean trust score by segment	Score
Overall	5.9
Residential	5.9
Business	6.0
Close proximity	6.0
Peripheral	5.9
In area: <1 year	6.1
In area: 1-3 years	5.8
In area: 3-5 years	6.1
In area: 5-10 years	5.6
In area: 10 years+	6.0

As with the satisfaction question, scores between business and residential vary very little. Also, between close proximity areas and peripheral areas, there is very little difference in scores. Trust is highest amongst people living in the area under one year, and lowest amongst those in the area between 5-10 years.

The major driver for trust is providing a safe, reliable supply and the factor which influences distrust the most is occurrences of chlorine taste in the water. Seafield is very rarely mentioned as an influence on trust or satisfaction with Scottish Water.

"I trust Scottish Water because I think it is very good. The water actually tastes good, I used to live in London and there would be lime scale in the shower within two days but here there is not. You can actually drink from the tap"

"The water is often cloudy; the tap needs to be running for a while for it to clear"

explain
market research

4.0 Conclusions and recommendations

Includes common objections, concerns and recommendations

Conclusions and recommendations

This section highlights some conclusions and recommendations based on the findings from the research.

Overall, odour from Seafield is still a significant problem in the local area, with over a third of residents and businesses aware of the odour and have experienced it. The research has found slight reductions in awareness, experiences, severity and frequency of the odour when compared with the last research in 2006, however, it can still be regarded as too high so further action to reduce and limit odour pollution from Seafield is necessary.

The research did find significant differences in odour experiences between those living in close proximity areas and those in peripheral areas. Residents and businesses in the close proximity wards – Portobello, Leith Links, Restalrig and Lorne – are far more likely to experience the odour, more frequently, and when they do it is more severe. Comparing results with the previous research has found the biggest improvements have been seen in the peripheral areas of Broughton, Calton, Duddingston, Harbour, Meadowbank, Milton, Mountcastle and Newhaven.

The research also found that odour awareness, experiences and perceived severity was lower amongst those who have lived in the area under five years, which indicates some improvement in recent years.

The following are Explain's recommendations based on the outcomes of the research.

Improved complaint handling experience

Whilst the research identified a reduction in the number of complaints about Seafield, there was an increase in dissatisfaction with how complaints are handled. Explain recommend Scottish Water and Edinburgh City Council look at the complaint handling process and consider how it can be improved, specifically handling times, communication methods, communication clarity, information provided and next steps / complaint follow up.

Increased frequency of communications from Seafield and improved content

Over a quarter of respondents would like to see more notifications and news from Seafield, in terms of action being taken to reduce the odour and any other information which might be useful to the community, for example, tips which may help mitigate the odour around the home. Scottish Water could engage the wider community further to understand communication channel preferences, given the research here was with a smaller sample. However, the research did identify a demand for personalised, e.g. emails and letters, communications.

The research identified that more people are dissatisfied with the communication from Seafield than those who are satisfied with it, so Explain recommends reviewing the communication content at the earliest opportunity.

Transparency about Seafield developments

As part of the communications with the local community, Explain recommends honesty and transparency with regards to all developments at Seafield. The research identified that the odour is particularly severe in summer months during hot weather, and one suggestion is to pre-warn the community before a spell of hot weather and look to minimise any distress caused by the odour to homes and businesses.

Continued work to improve the odour issue

Whilst there have been some improvements, further work is required to continue to minimise and reduce the impact of odour from Seafield. Such actions should be communicated to the local community. Explain also recommend future research to track changes in odour awareness and experiences amongst the local community, to gauge improvements.

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