



City of
WHITEHALL
Opportunity is Here

2020 Whitehall Community Attitudes Survey

Saperstein Associates, Inc. / Fall 2020

This research gives Whitehall residents a voice. It allows the voting public to express opinions on myriad issues – and, in doing so, provides city leadership valuable data as planning for the future continues.

Though similar to the surveys conducted in 2018 and 2016, the current study addresses two additional topics: the COVID-19 pandemic and diversity and inclusion.



Owner Name, Parcel ID,



Methodology

- Telephone interviews were conducted with a sample of 355 Whitehall residents.
- The sample was drawn from two sources – registered voters and parents of children enrolled in the Whitehall City Schools – as it was for the two previous surveys.
- Though most of the interviews were completed in English, five were completed in Spanish.
- With an average length of 25 minutes, the interviews were completed on cell phones (86%) and landlines (14%) from September 9 through October 7, 2020.
- The Margin of Error for this survey is estimated at $\leq \pm 5.2$ percentage points at the 95% level of confidence.
- To complete the interviews, 12,692 unique telephone numbers were dialed manually at least once, up from 9,039 in 2018, an increase of 40%.

- As the tables below reveal, the survey respondents represent Whitehall's adult residents on several key dimensions, including age, gender, and race.

	Whitehall: Actual*	Survey Sample
Younger than 25	9%	11%
25 to 34	23%	23%
35 to 44	18%	19%
45 to 54	15%	15%
55 to 64	16%	15%
65 to 74	11%	10%
Older than 74	8%	7%

	Whitehall: Actual*	Survey Sample
Male	50%	49%
Female	50%	51%
African American	36%	33%
White	46%	53%
Other, inc. Hispanic	18%	14%

- The survey respondents also represent the adult residents of Whitehall across the city's 11 precincts.

	Whitehall: Actual*	Survey Sample
Precinct 1A	12%	10%
Precinct 1B	9%	7%
Precinct 2A	9%	13%
Precinct 2B	7%	9%
Precinct 2C	9%	5%

	Whitehall: Actual*	Survey Sample
Precinct 3A	10%	15%
Precinct 3B	7%	7%
Precinct 3C	8%	6%
Precinct 4A	9%	7%
Precinct 4B	11%	13%
Precinct 4C	9%	8%



Resident Profile



51% Married (+7 pp*)

47% Live with children 18 or younger (+5 pp)

35% Have at least one child enrolled in Whitehall City Schools (+6 pp)

33% Follow the city on Facebook (+7 pp)

30% Bachelor's degree or higher (-1 pp)

30% Use public assistance (+7 pp)



58% Employed full-time (-9 pp)

29% Employed part-time (+16 pp)

17% Retired (0 pp)

4% Homemaker (+1 pp)



34% Younger than 35 (0 pp)

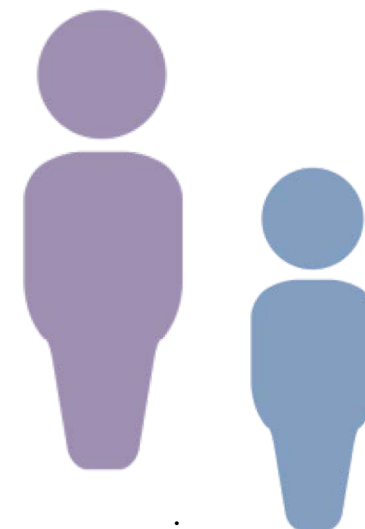
19% 35 to 44 (+2 pp)

14% 45 to 54 (-2 pp)

33% Older than 55 (0 pp)



51% Female (-1 pp)



Avg. years in Whitehall **14** (-1 yr)

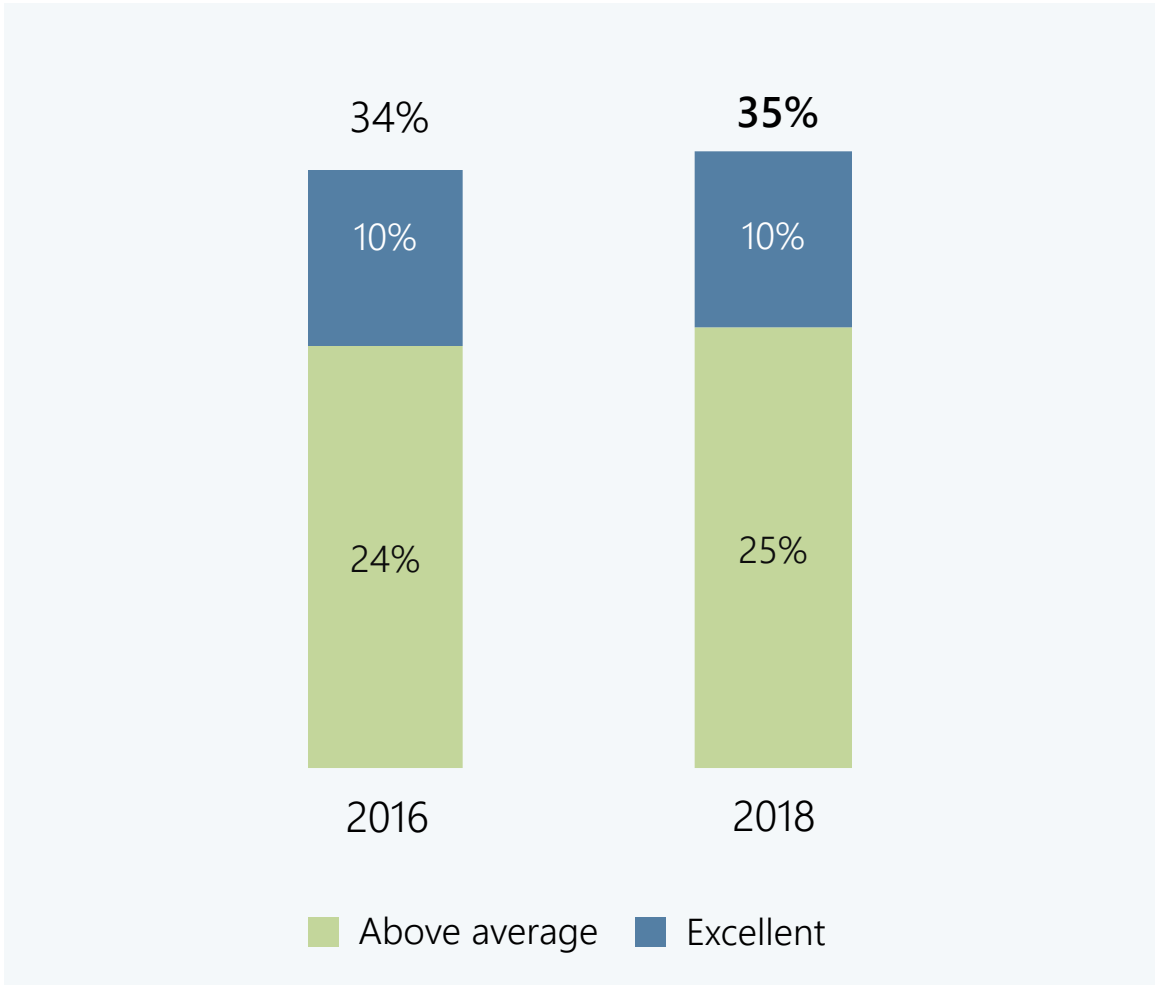
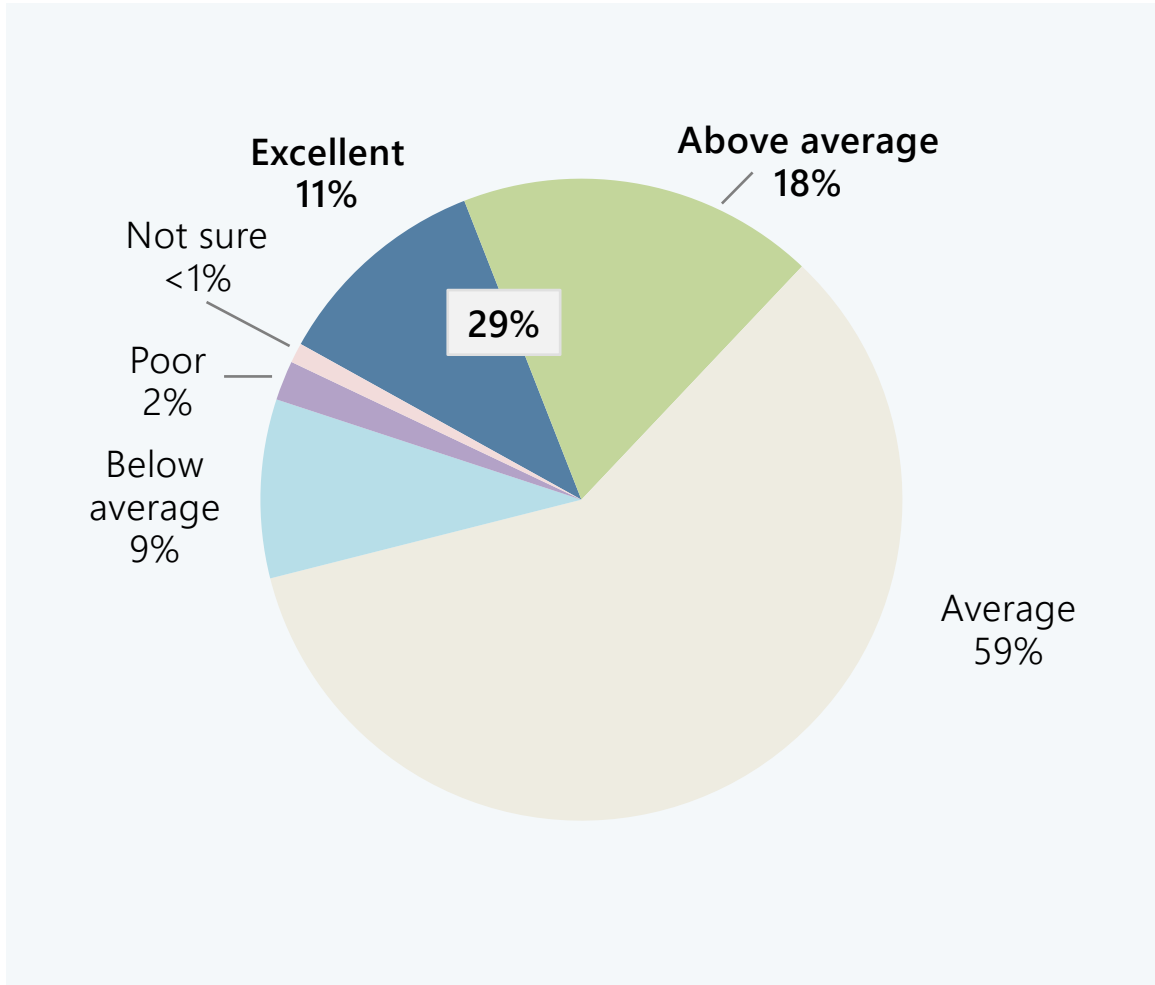
76% Likely to stay in Whitehall at least two more years (-7 pp)

36% Own home (-6 pp)

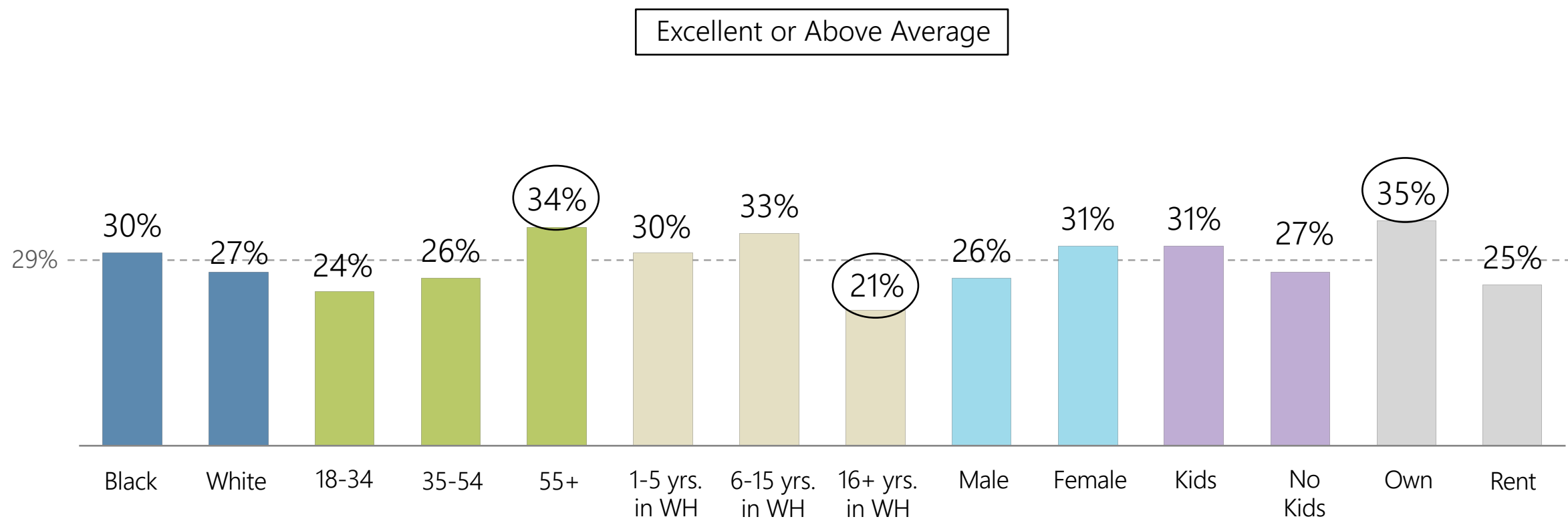


Whitehall as a Place to Live

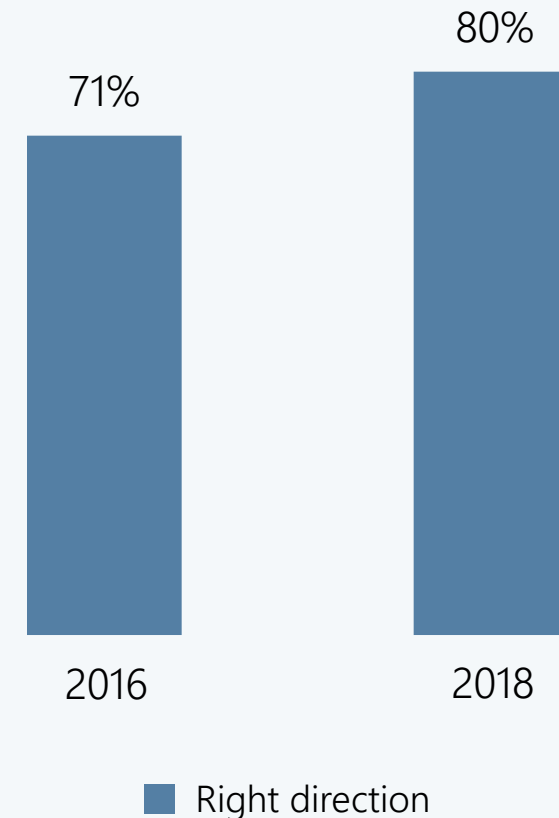
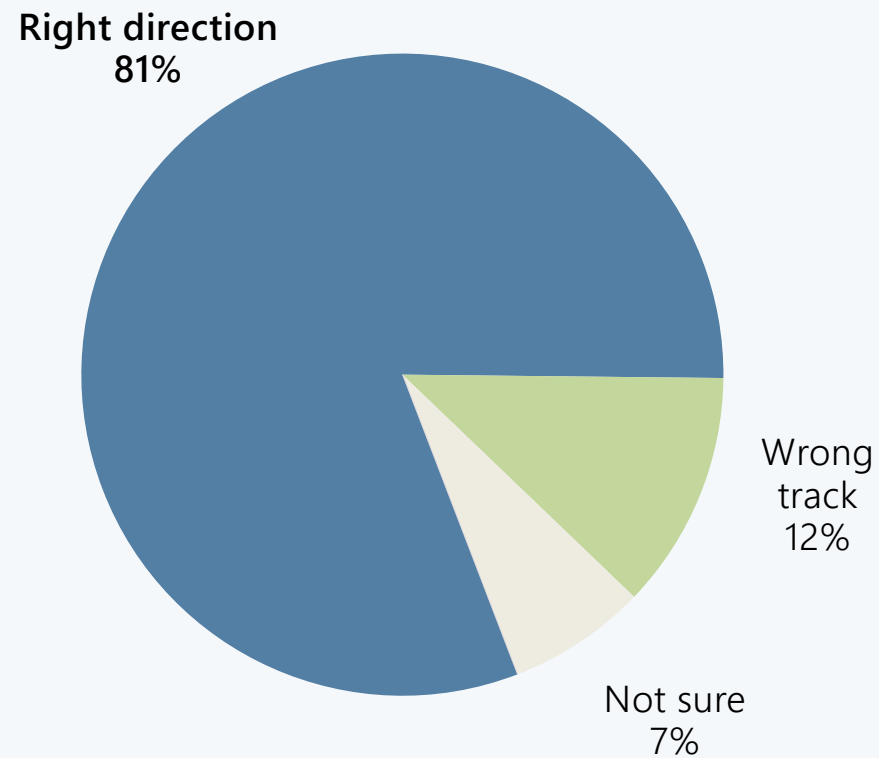
As a place to live, three out of ten residents (29%) consider Whitehall excellent or above average, down slightly from 2018 (35%).



Satisfaction with Whitehall is highest among older residents and homeowners.
It is lowest among residents who have lived in Whitehall the longest.



As in 2018, eight out of ten residents (81%) agree that Whitehall is heading in the right direction.

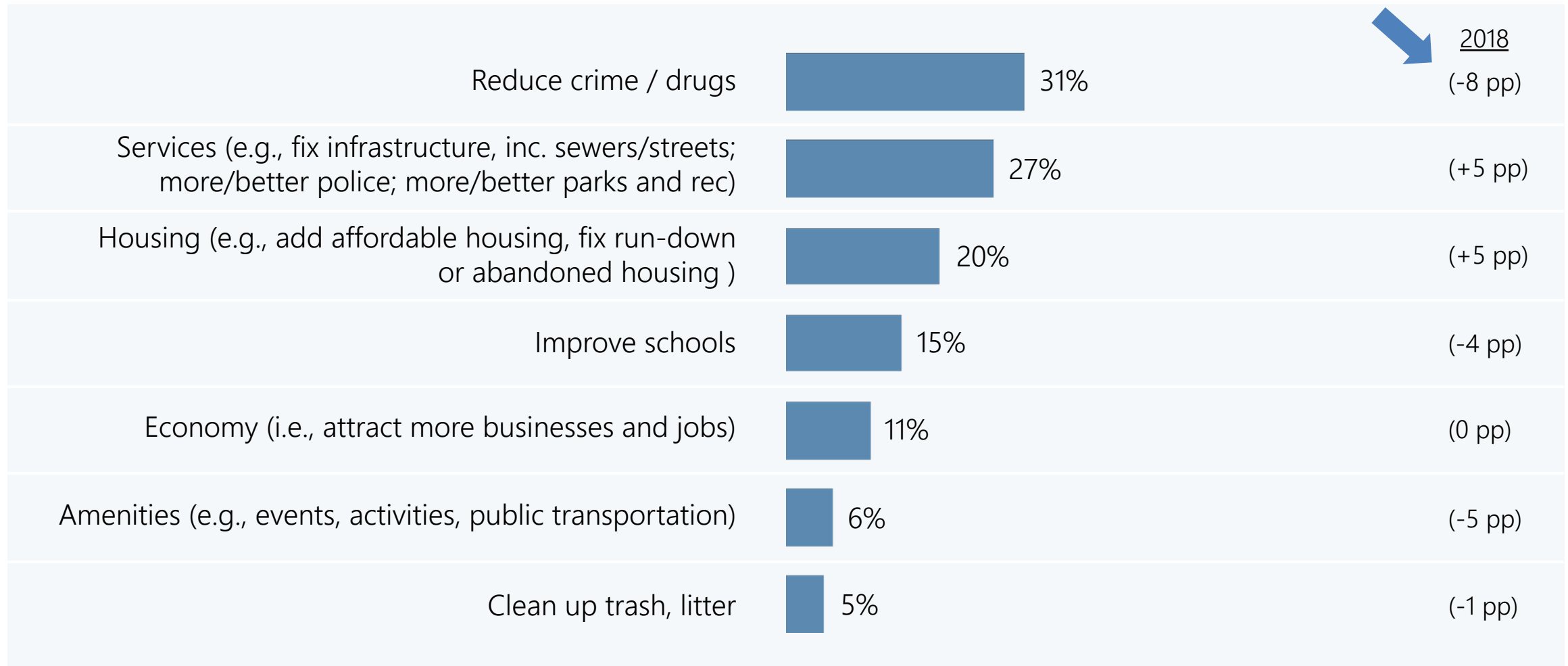


Residents were asked:

“When you think of issues, concerns, or problems facing the City of Whitehall, what should your local public officials consider their two or three highest priorities?”



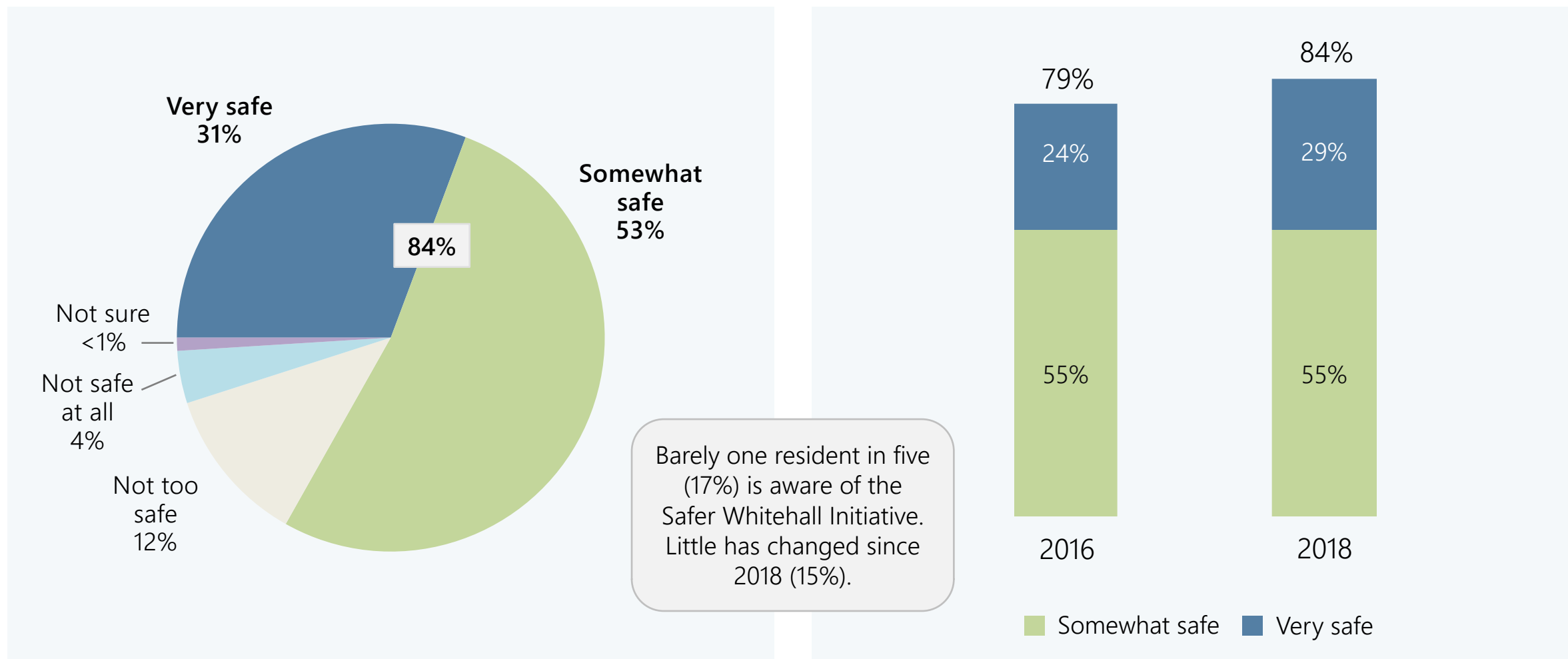
Though crime once again tops the list, it is mentioned less often this year than it was two years ago.



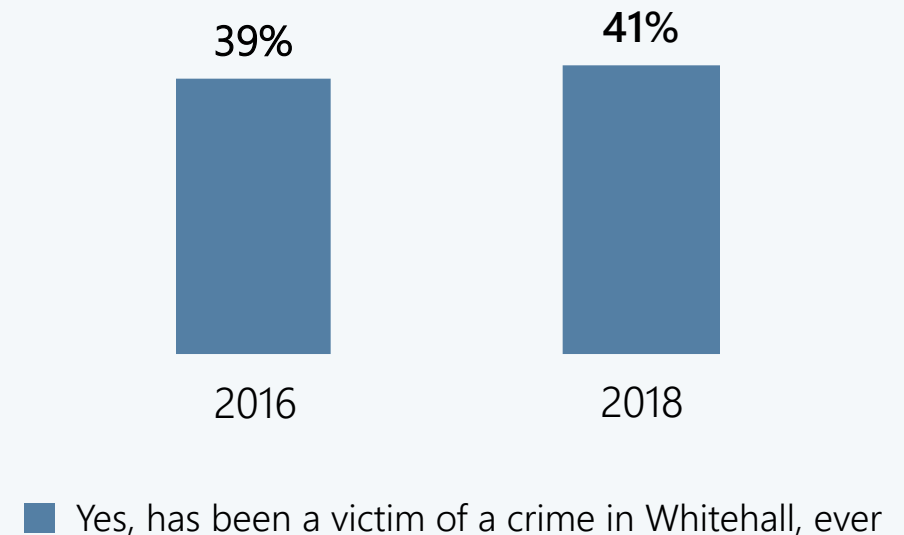
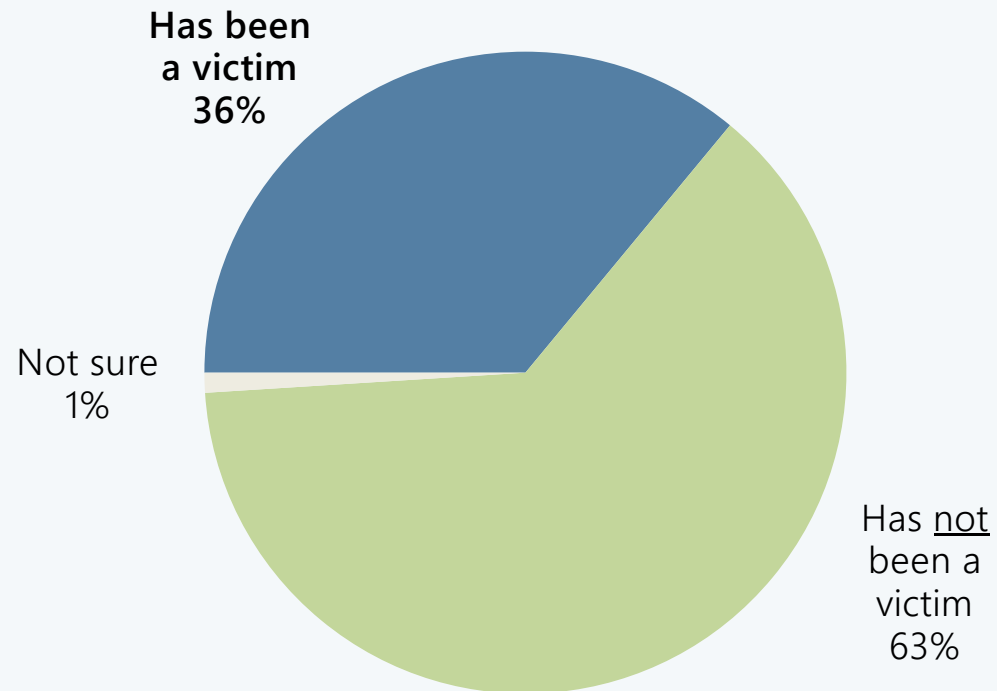


Crime and Safety

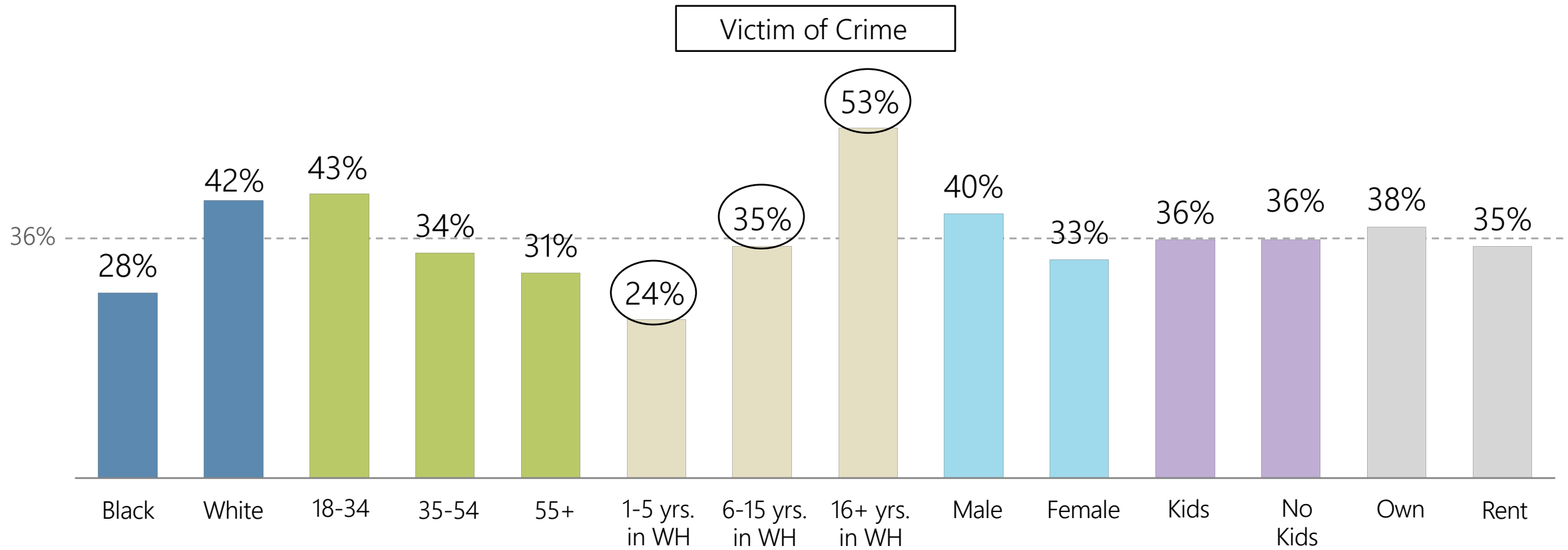
The previous comments notwithstanding, most residents (84%) feel either very or somewhat safe from crime and other dangerous behaviors.



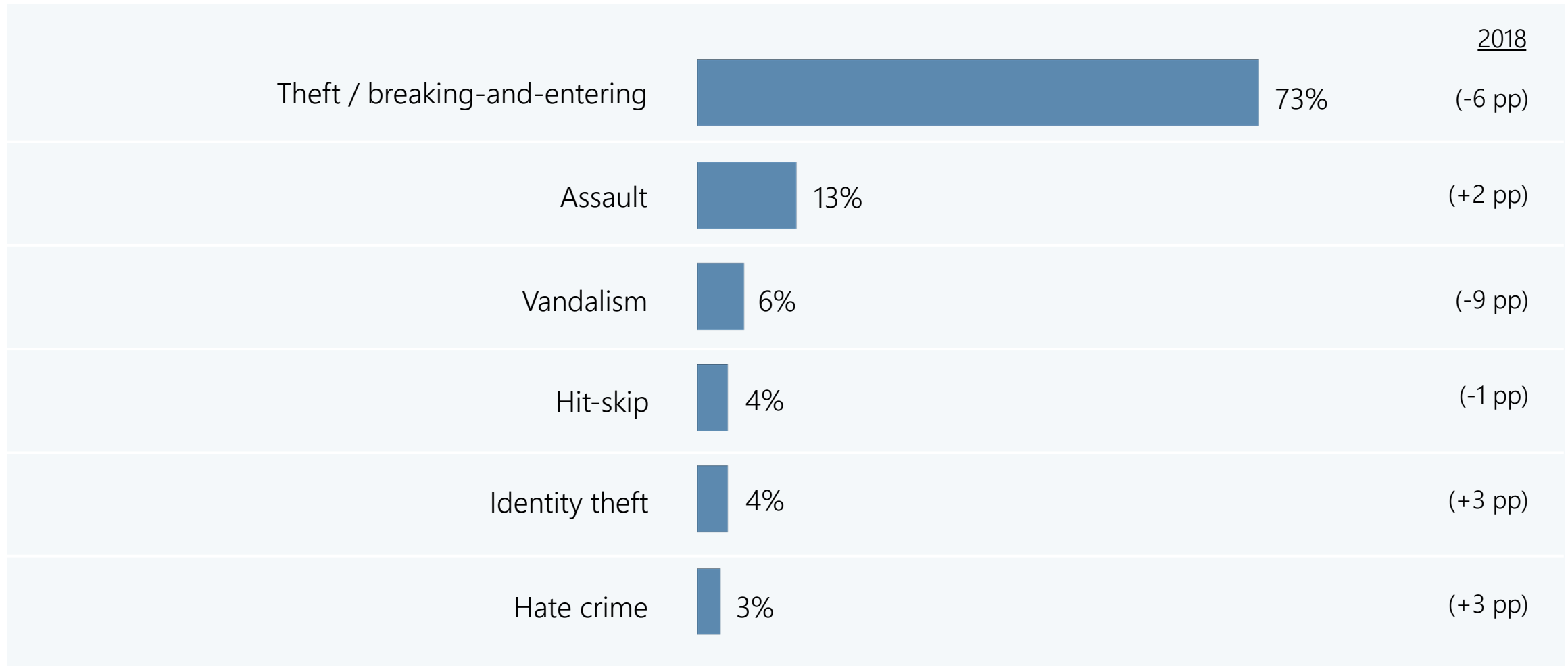
Approximately one resident in three (36%) has been a victim of crime in Whitehall, down slightly from both 2018 (41%) and 2016 (39%).



More than half of Whitehall's long-term residents (53%) have been a victim of crime locally.



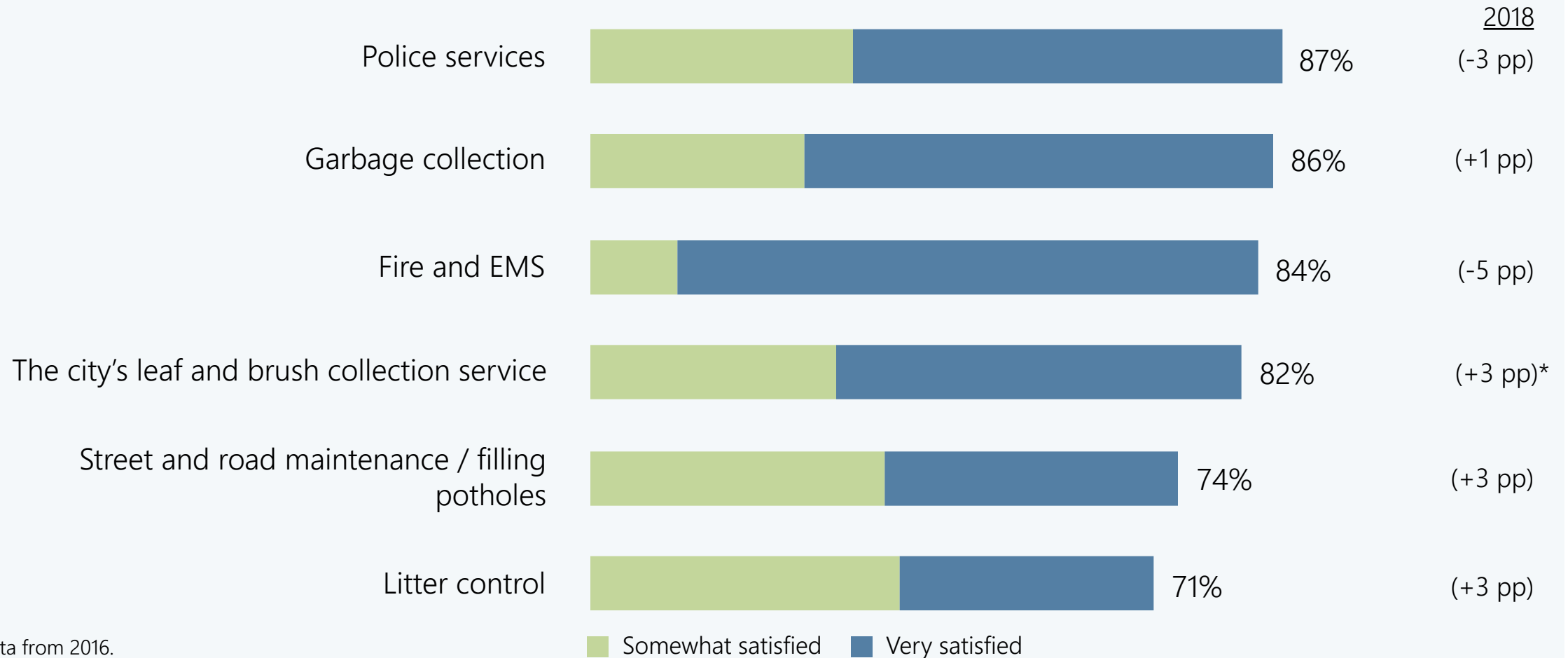
Though down slightly from 2018, theft remains the most common type of crime.



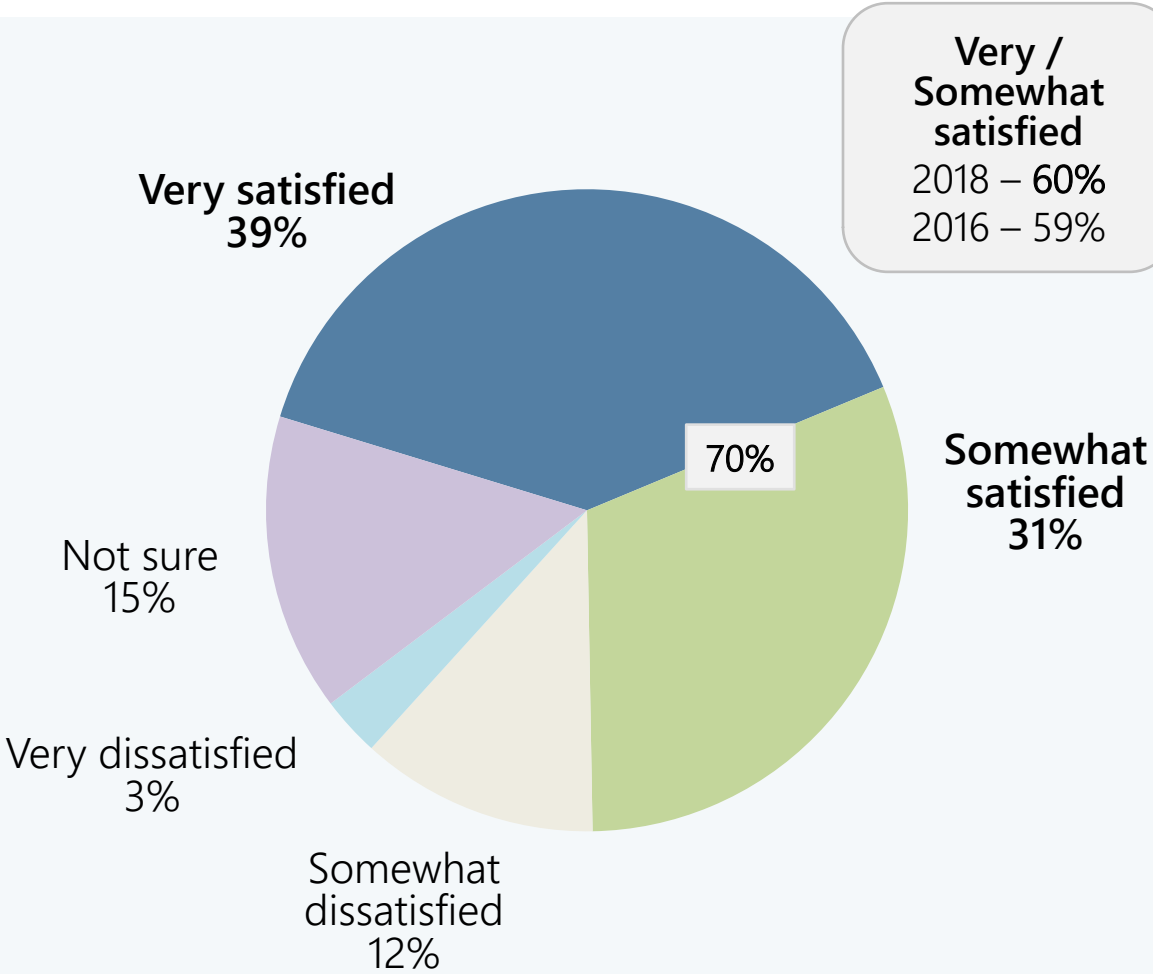


City Services

Across a variety of city services, most residents are satisfied.
For some services, such as Fire and EMS, many are *very* satisfied.



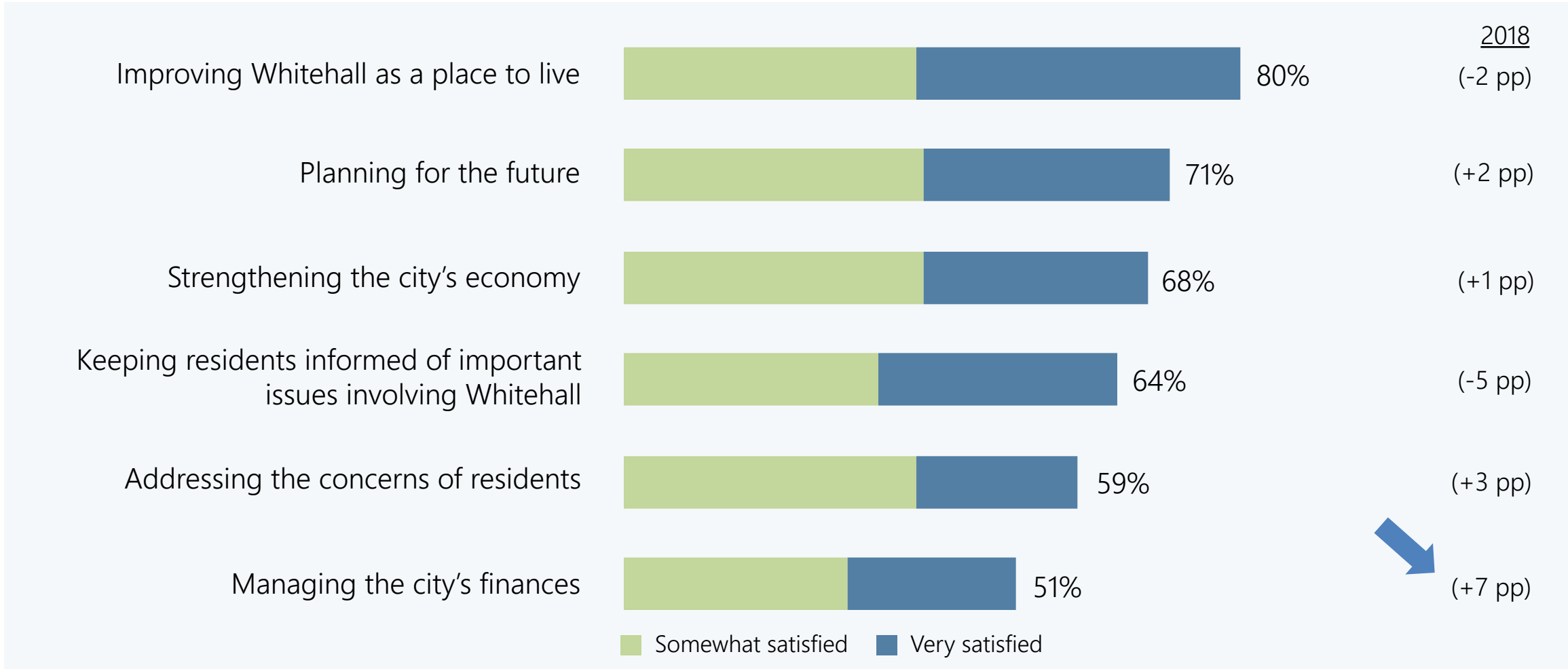
Satisfaction also is high with the programs organized through the city's Parks and Recreation Department (70%) ...
... up from 2018 (60%).





City Officials

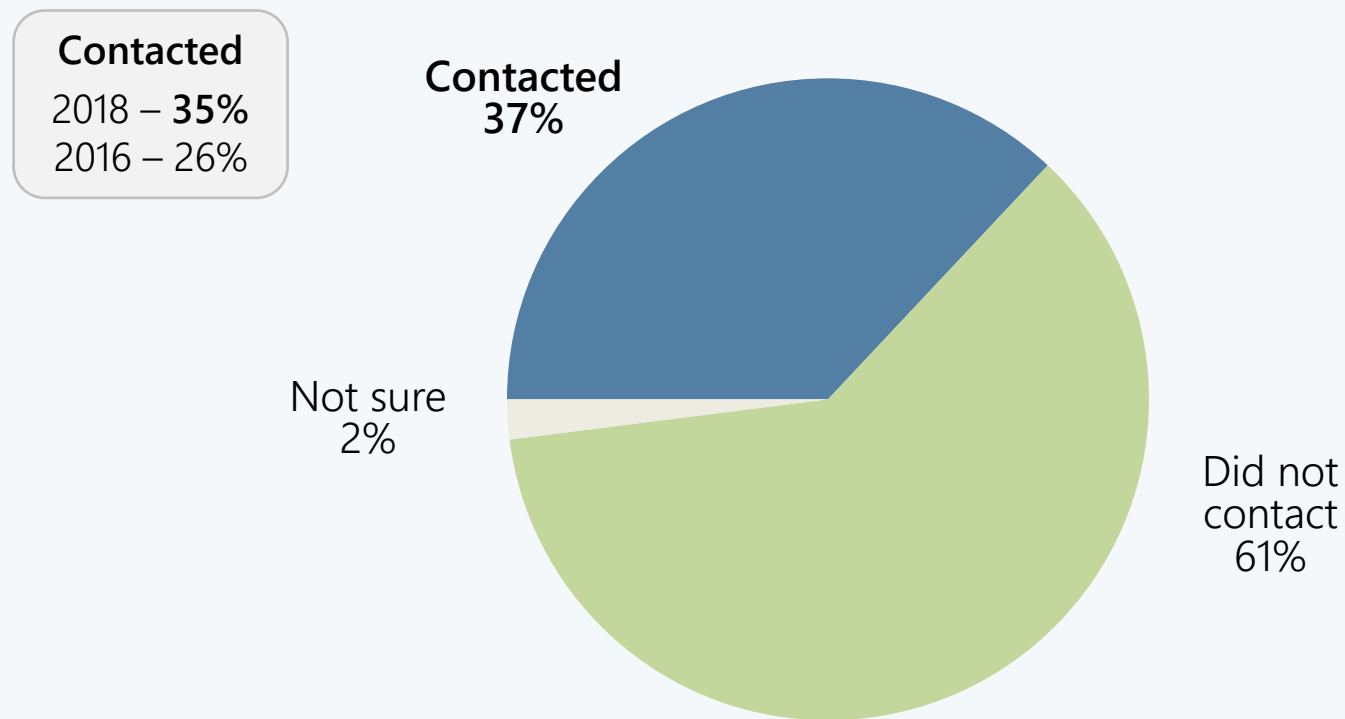
Satisfaction with city officials varies widely, from eight out of ten (80%) for improving Whitehall as a place to live to five out of ten (51%) for managing the city's finances.



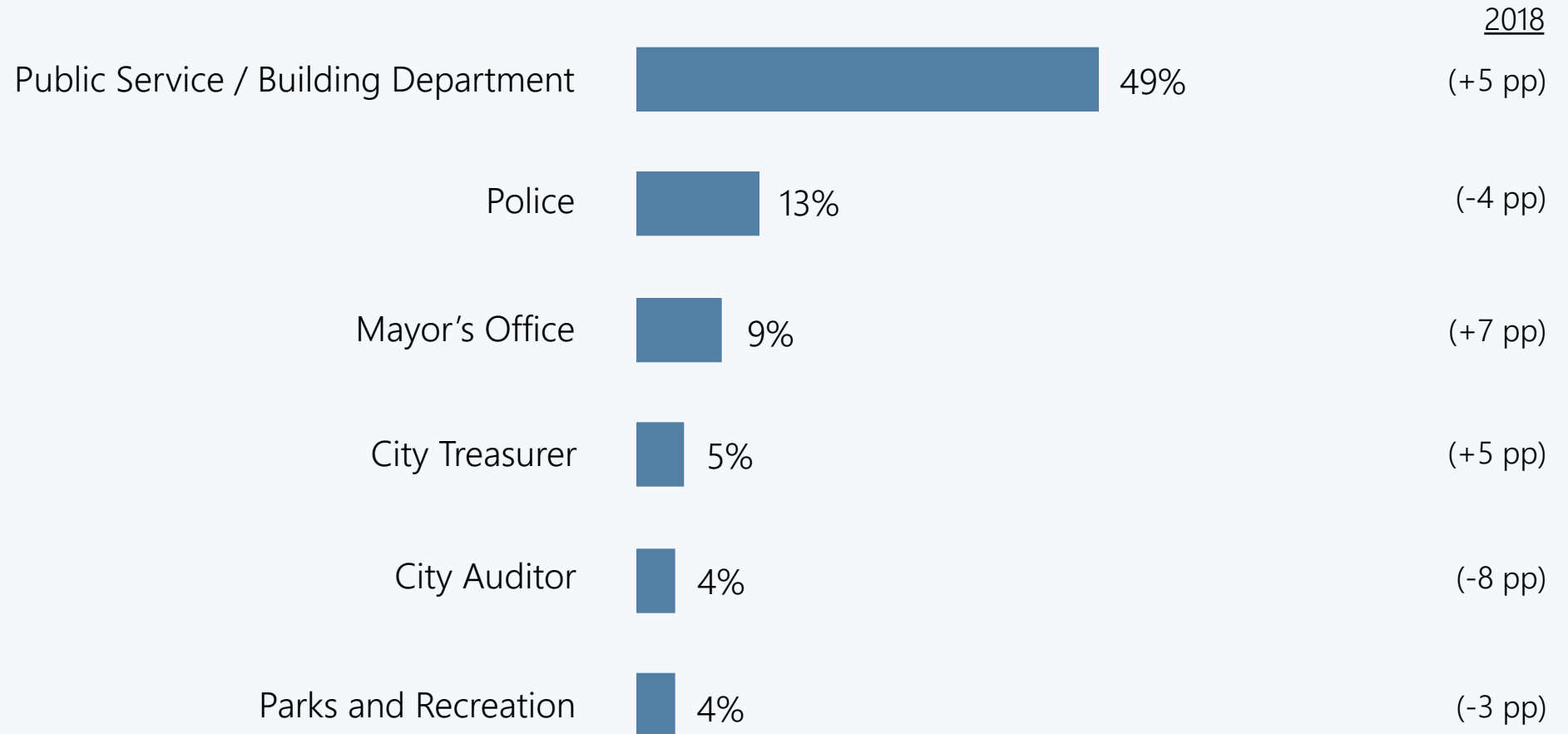


Contacting the City

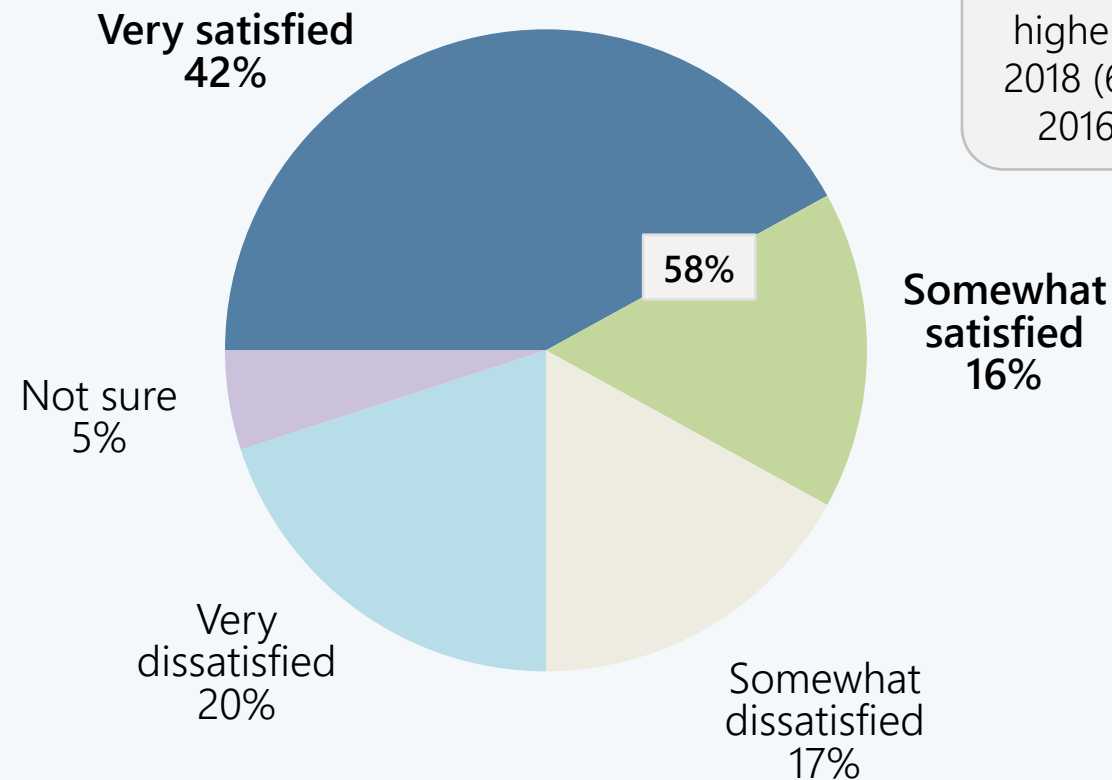
Nearly four out of ten residents (37%) claim to have contacted a city office during the past year to raise an issue, express a concern, or get information. Little has changed since 2018 (35%).



By far, Whitehall's Public Service / Building Department was contacted by residents more than any of other city department (49%).



Though a majority of residents (58%) were satisfied with these contacts, many (37%) were not. Unclear is whether this dissatisfaction reflects bad service or bad news.





facebook

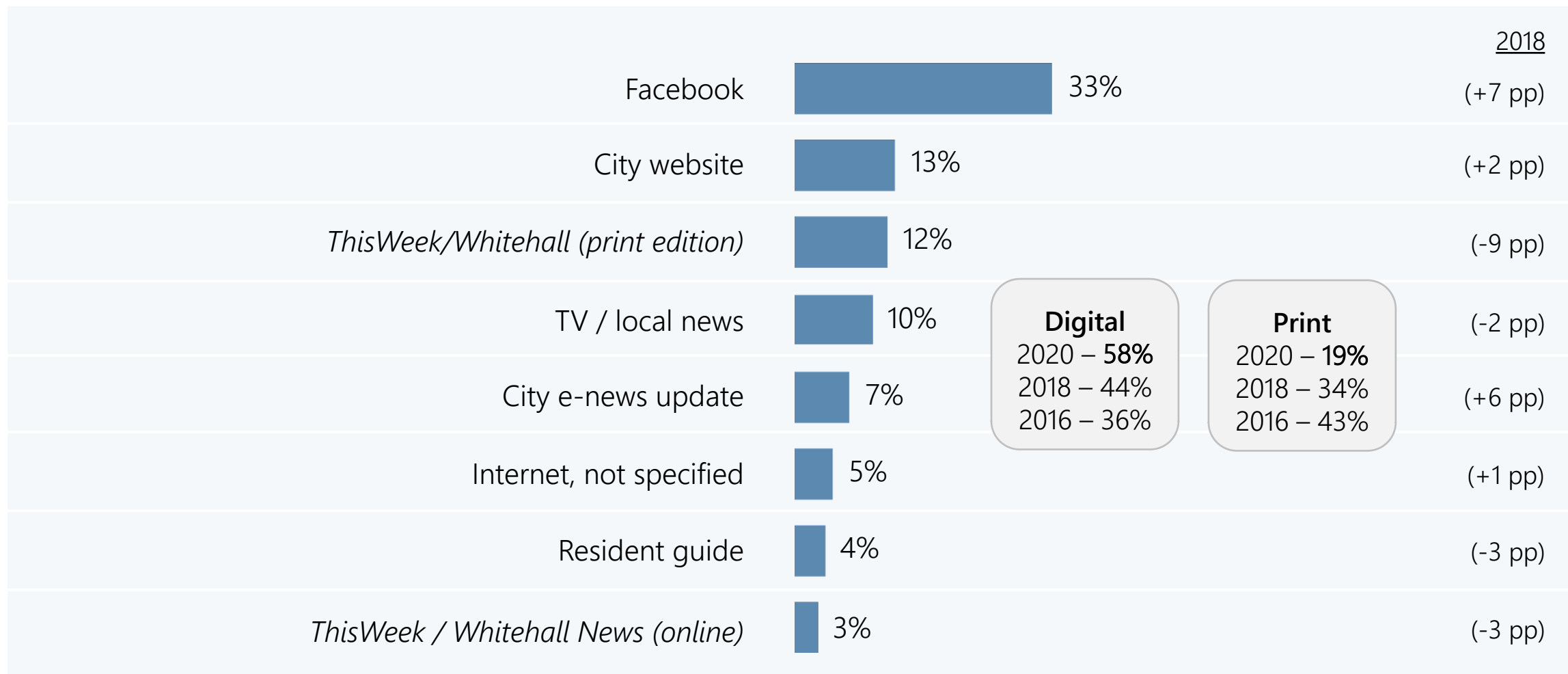
Communication

Log In

[Forgot Password?](#)

Create New Account

In 2020, the most common source of news and information about Whitehall is Facebook.
Digital sources now dominate print.

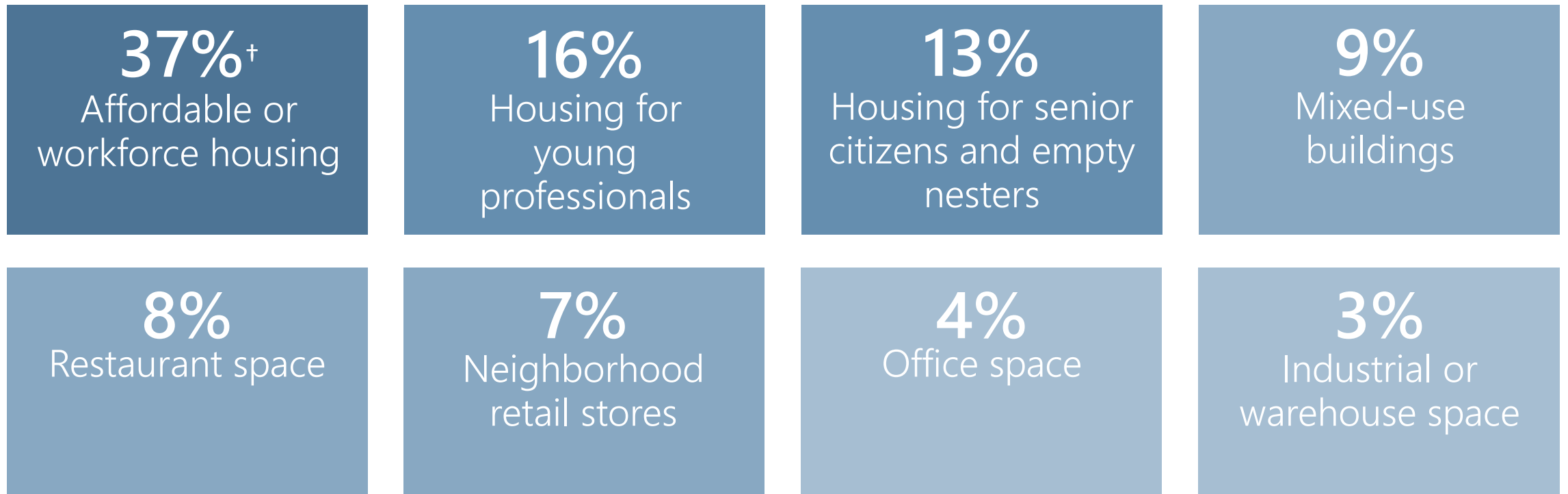




Priorities

Residents were told of eight potential community initiatives*
and encouraged to identify their top priority.

The initiatives include:



*The initiatives were presented in a randomized sequence. / [†]Highest priority

Residents were presented with three additional potential community initiatives* and, choosing from these, were, again, encouraged to identify their top priority.

These initiatives include:

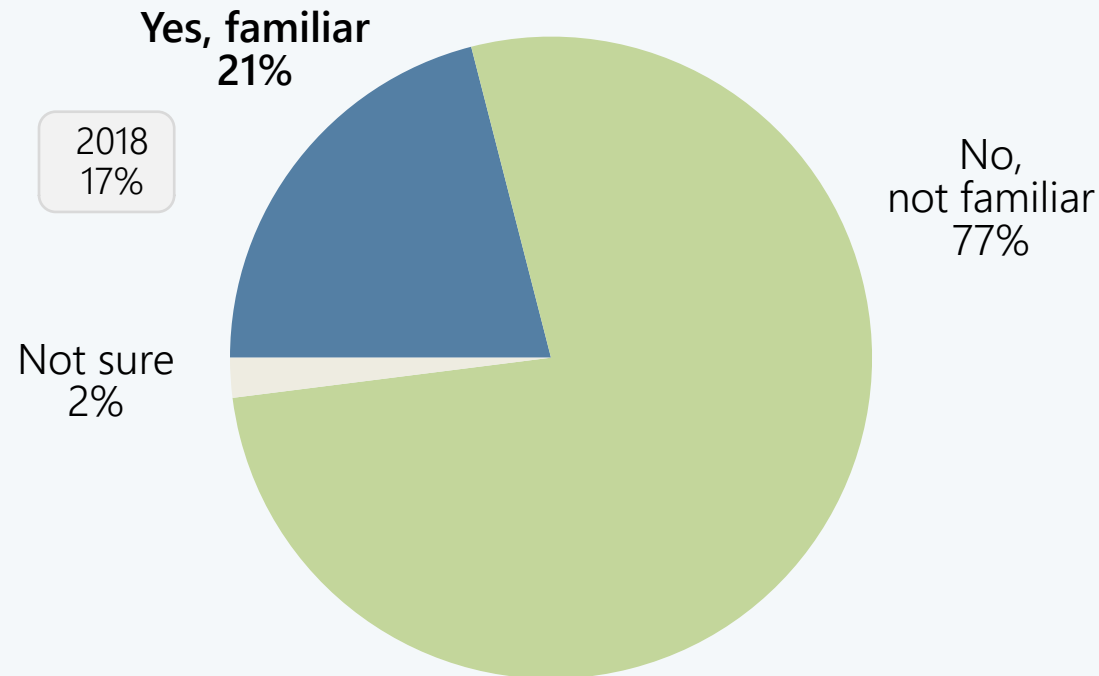


*The initiatives were presented in a randomized sequence. / [†]Highest priority / [‡]Data from 2018.

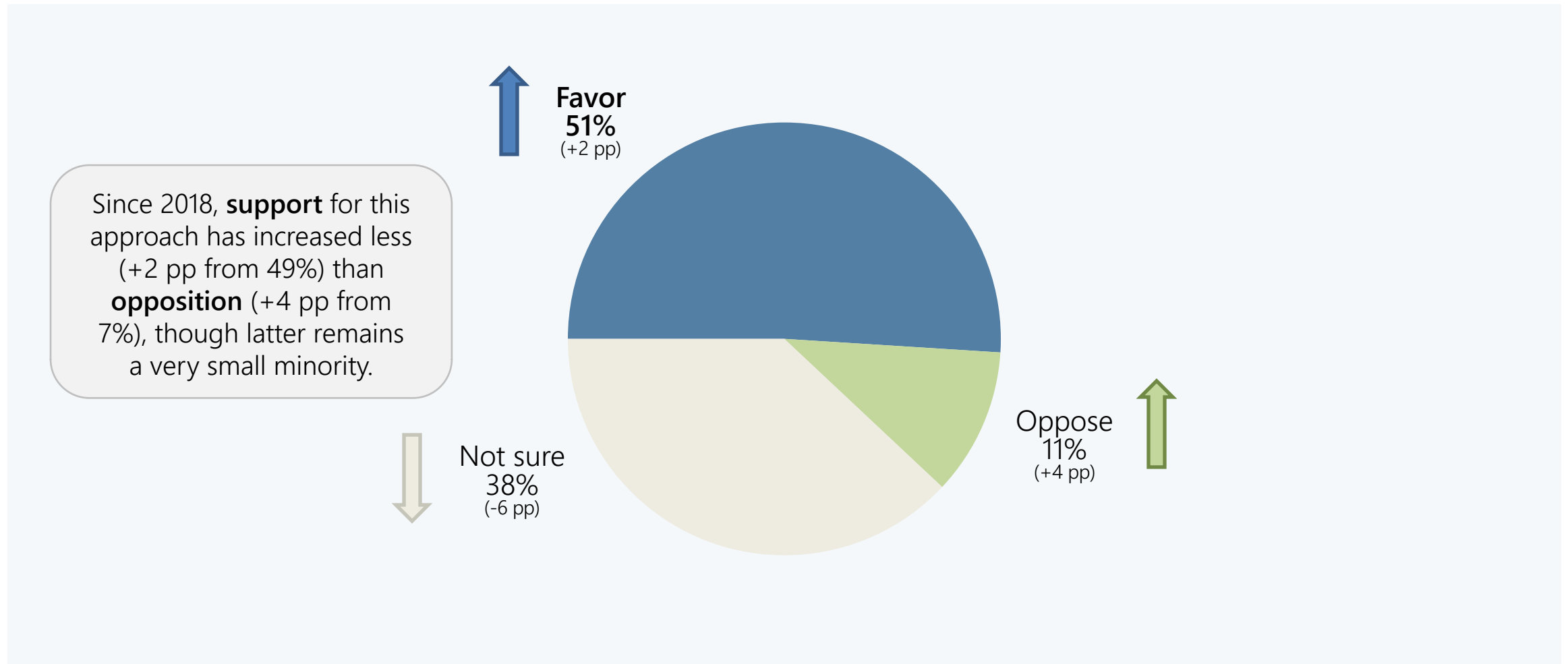


Development

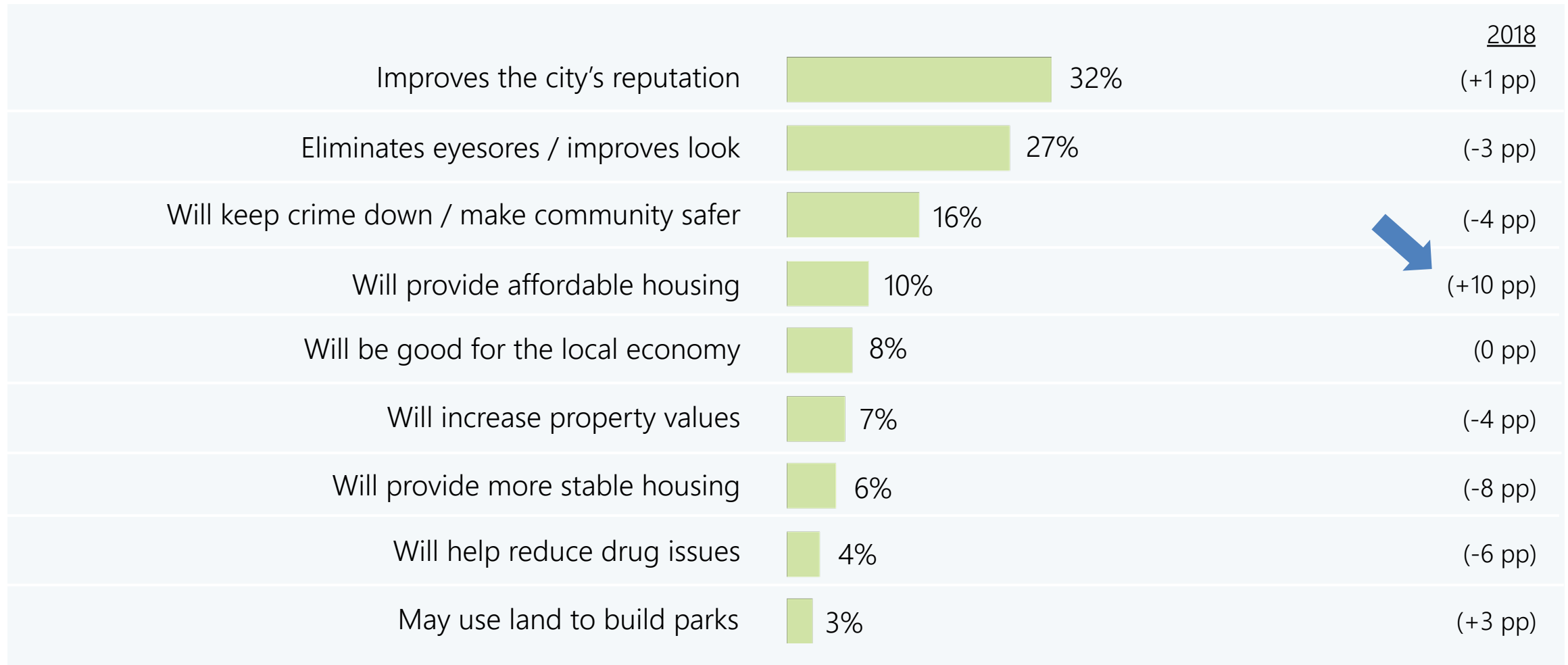
Only one resident in five (21%) is familiar with the city's plan to use 100% of the net income tax generated from the Heartland Bank facility for parks improvements. Little has changed since 2018 (17%).



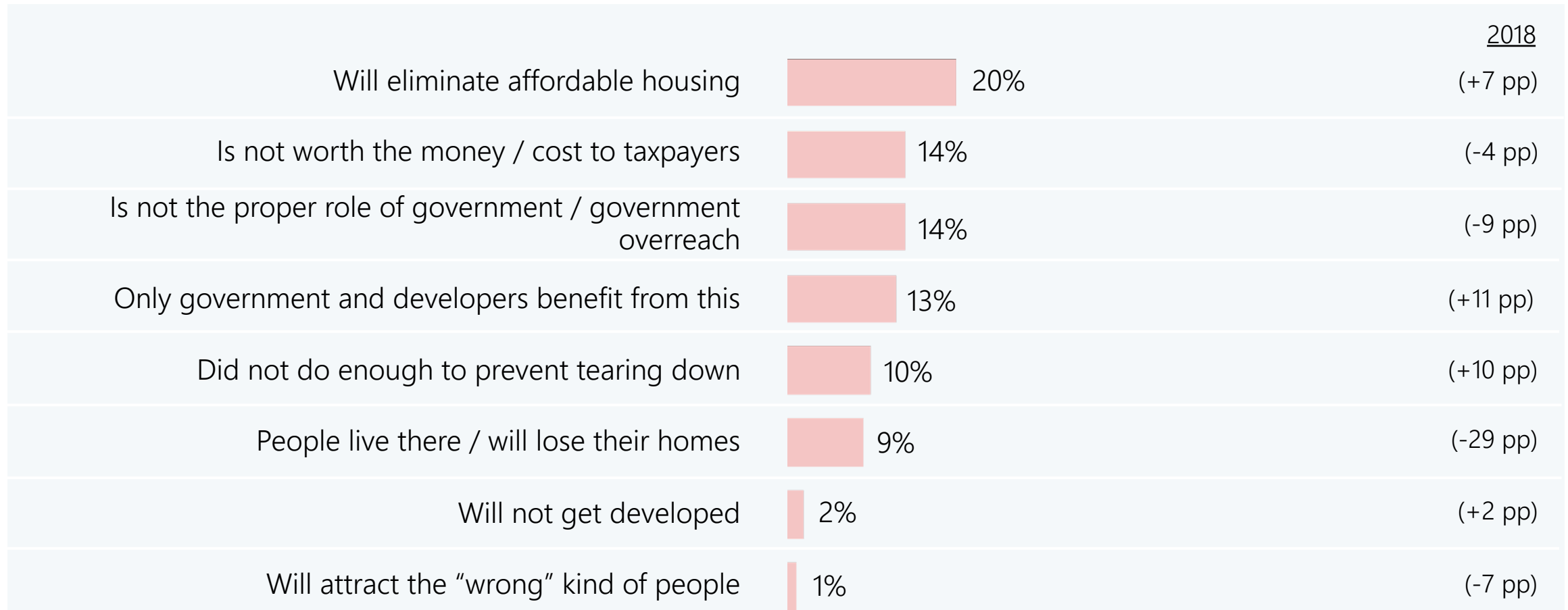
Half the residents (51%) favor the city's approach of acquiring blighted and nuisance properties for redevelopment.
Nearly everyone else (38%) is uncertain.



The most common reasons for **favoring** the city's approach of acquiring blighted and nuisance properties for redevelopment involve improvements to the city's reputation and the elimination of eyesores.



The most common reason for **opposing** the city's approach of acquiring blighted and nuisance properties for redevelopment involve the elimination of affordable housing.*

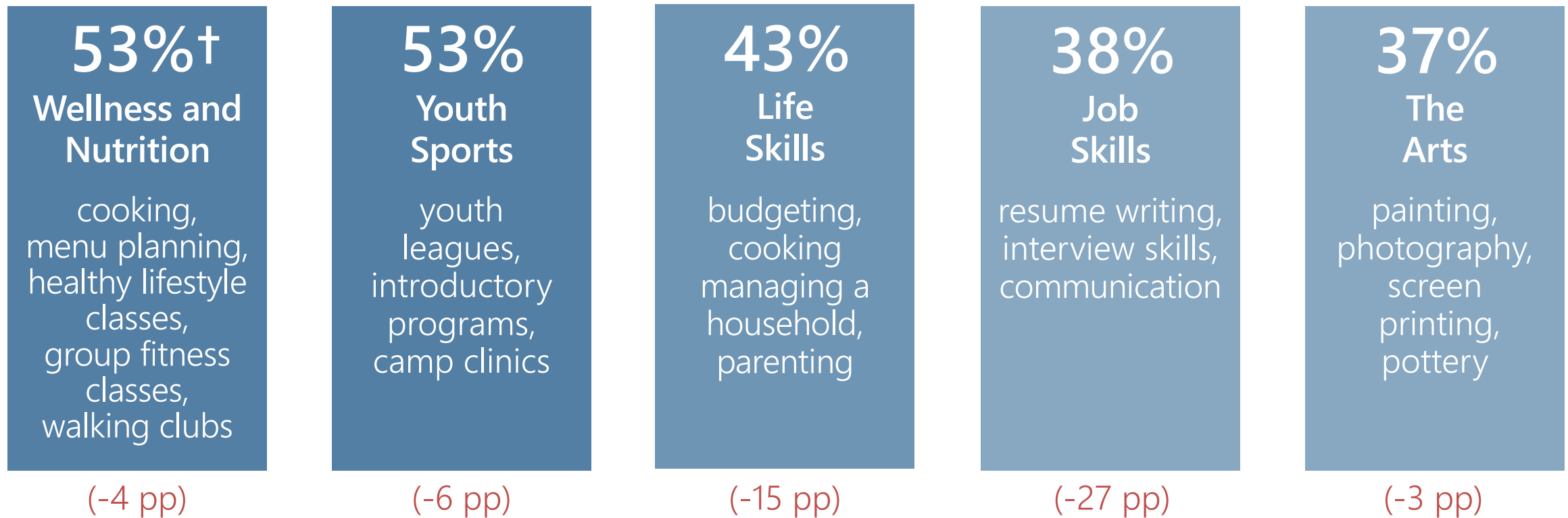


*Because a small number of residents answered this question, the percentages presented should be interpreted with caution.

Parks and Recreation Programming



Among five programs offered by the city's Parks and Recreation Department, interest – once the pandemic has ended – is likely to be strongest in Wellness and Nutrition (53%) and Youth Sports (also 53%). Compared with 2018, interest is notably lower in skills-related programs.



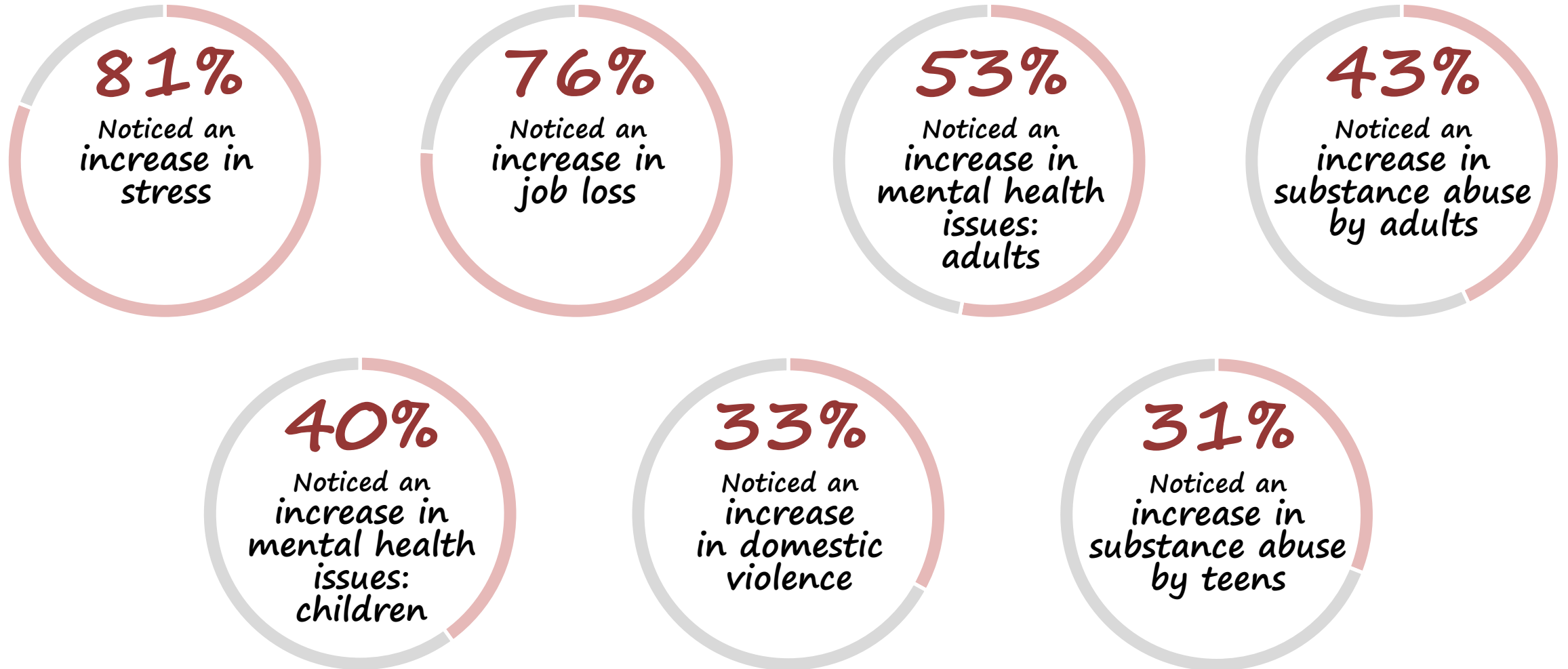
*The programming options were presented in a randomized sequence.

[†]High interest

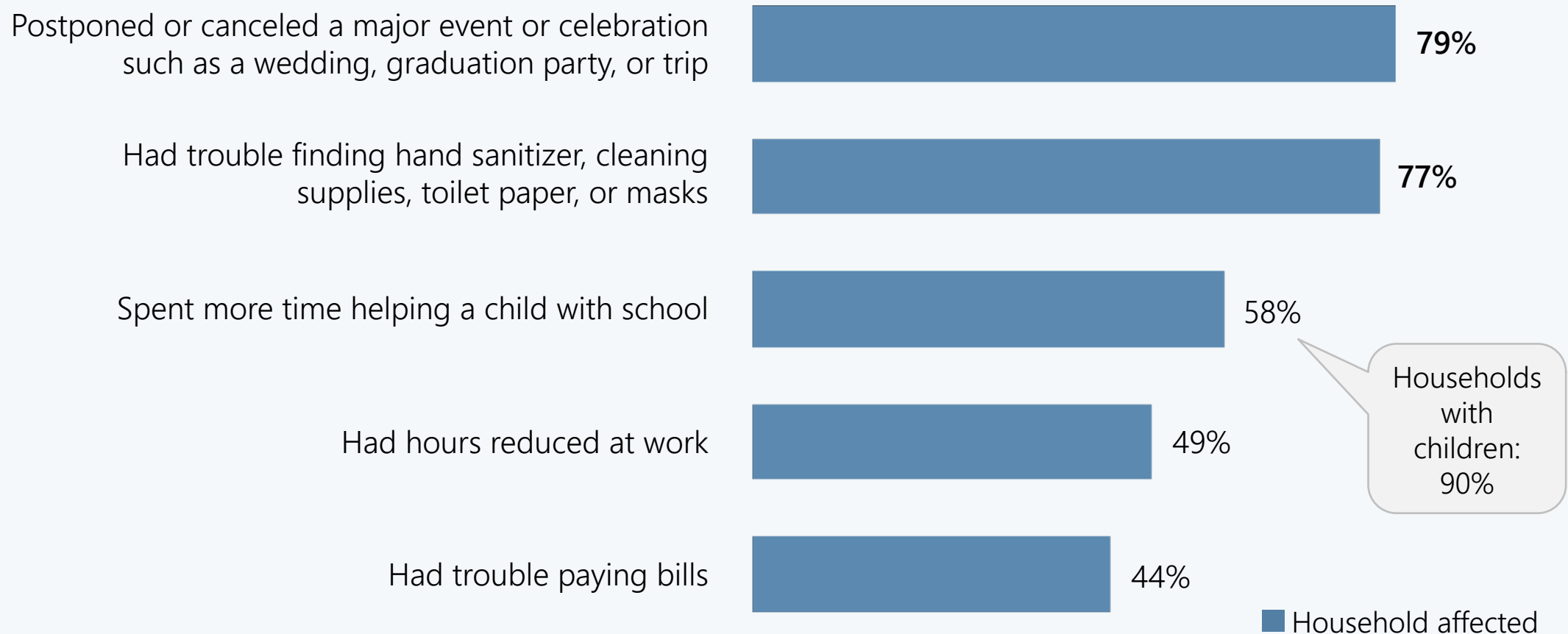


COVID-19 Pandemic

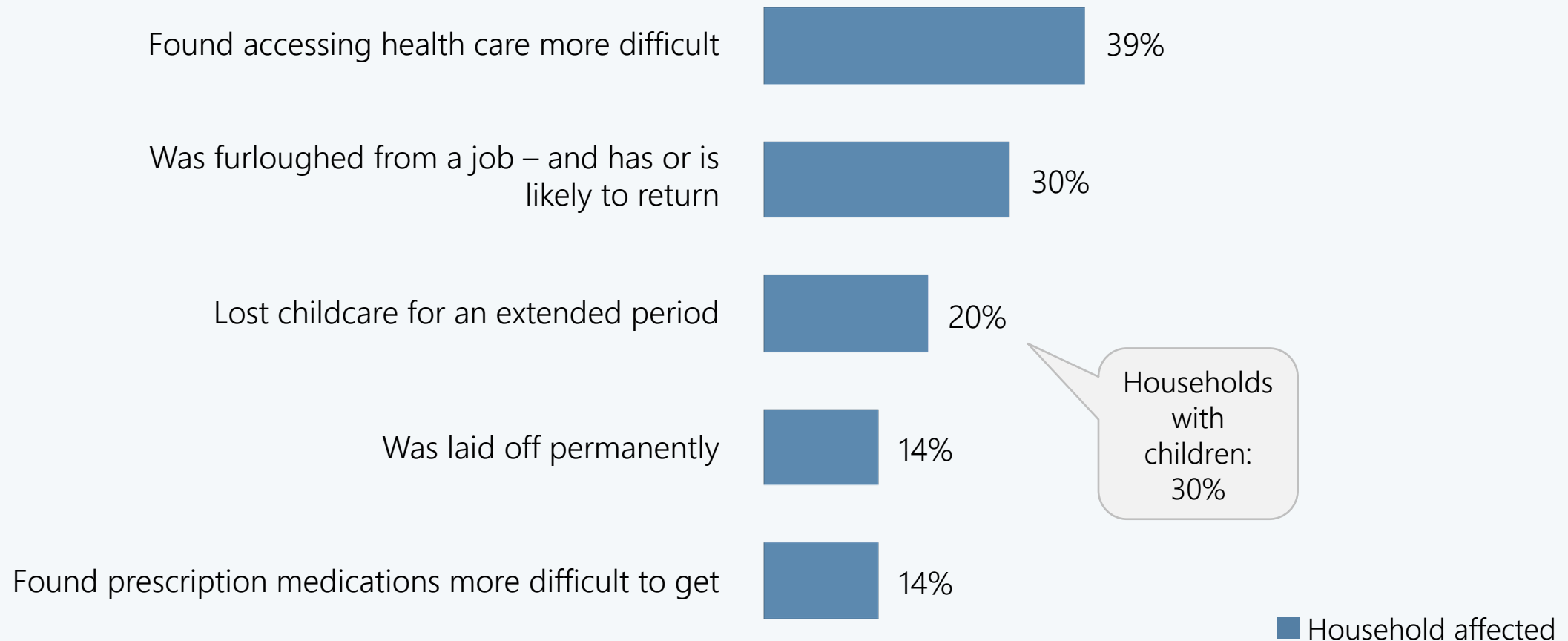
The COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on Whitehall residents ...



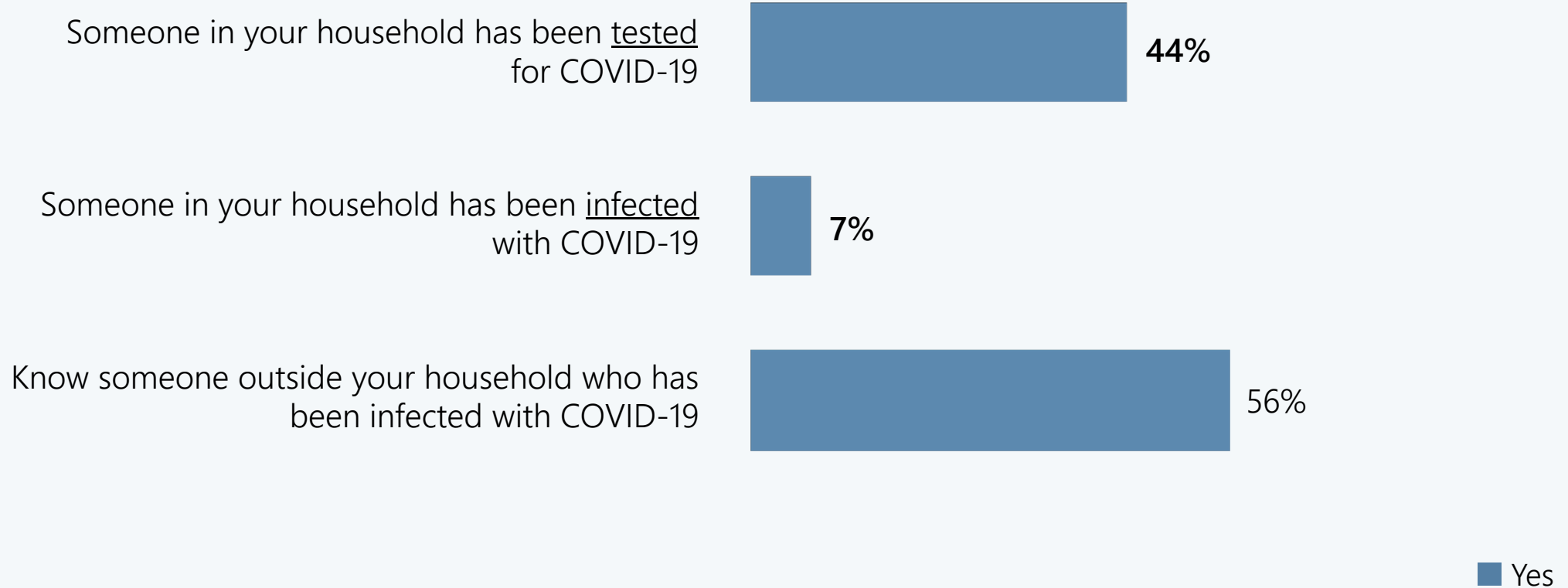
Moreover, eight out of ten residents (79%) postponed or canceled a major event or celebration, while almost as many (77%) struggled with finding products for personal hygiene and safety.



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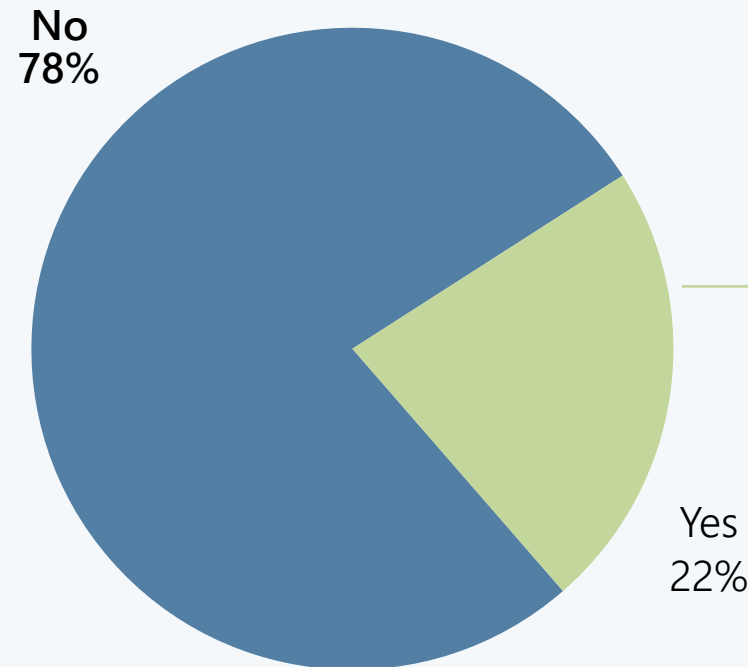
In two out of five Whitehall households (44%), at least one resident was tested for COVID-19. Infections were much less common (7%).



The most trusted source of information about COVID-19 was the news media (36%), followed by federal public health officials (18%).

News media	36%
Federal public health officials (CDC; Surgeon General; Drs. Fauci, Birx)	18%
Personal health care professionals	13%
Social media	10%
Family, friends	9%
State elected officials (governor, lt. governor, legislators)	9%
State of Ohio COVID-19 website	8%
Work / employer	7%
State public health officials (Dr. Acton)	3%
Federal elected officials (president, legislators)	2%
City of Whitehall	1%

Eight out of ten Whitehall residents (78%) could not identify any type of support *not* available from local, state, or federal sources, that *should* have been.

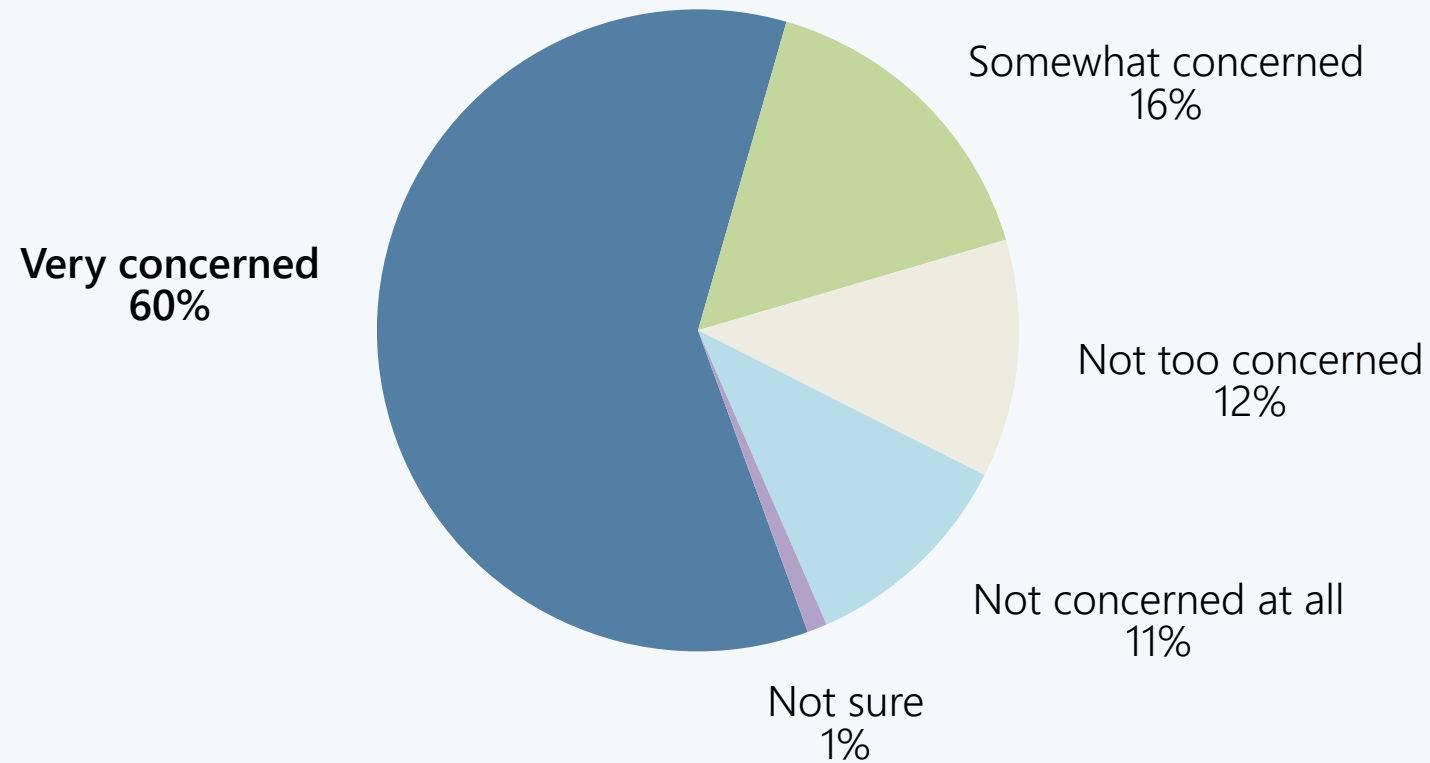


Residents who suggested that additional support was needed mentioned:*

- More financial support
- Data easier to understand
- A more coordinated federal response
- Access to testing
- Hand sanitizer, toilet paper, cleaning / disinfectant wipes, masks
- Appliances
- Data specific to Whitehall
- Food

*Mentioned by at least 1% of respondents, but not more than 6%.

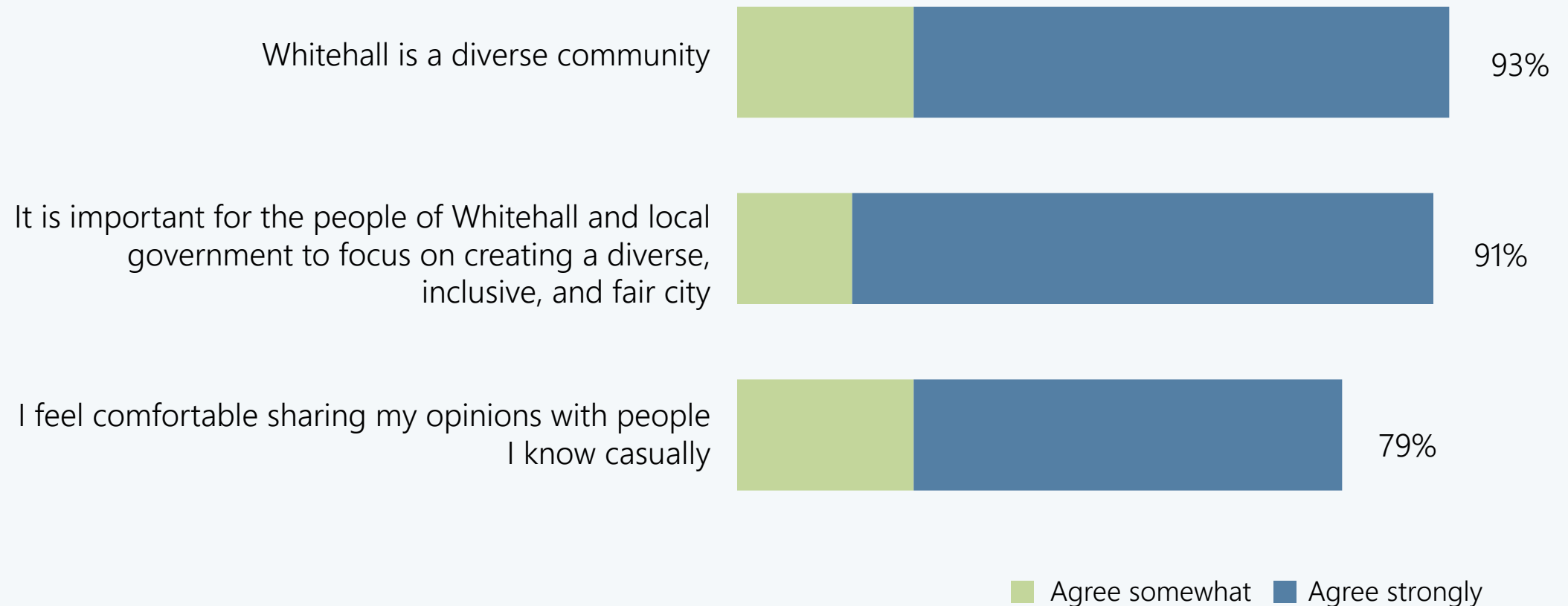
Six out of ten Whitehall residents (60%) are very concerned about another wave of COVID-19 infections.



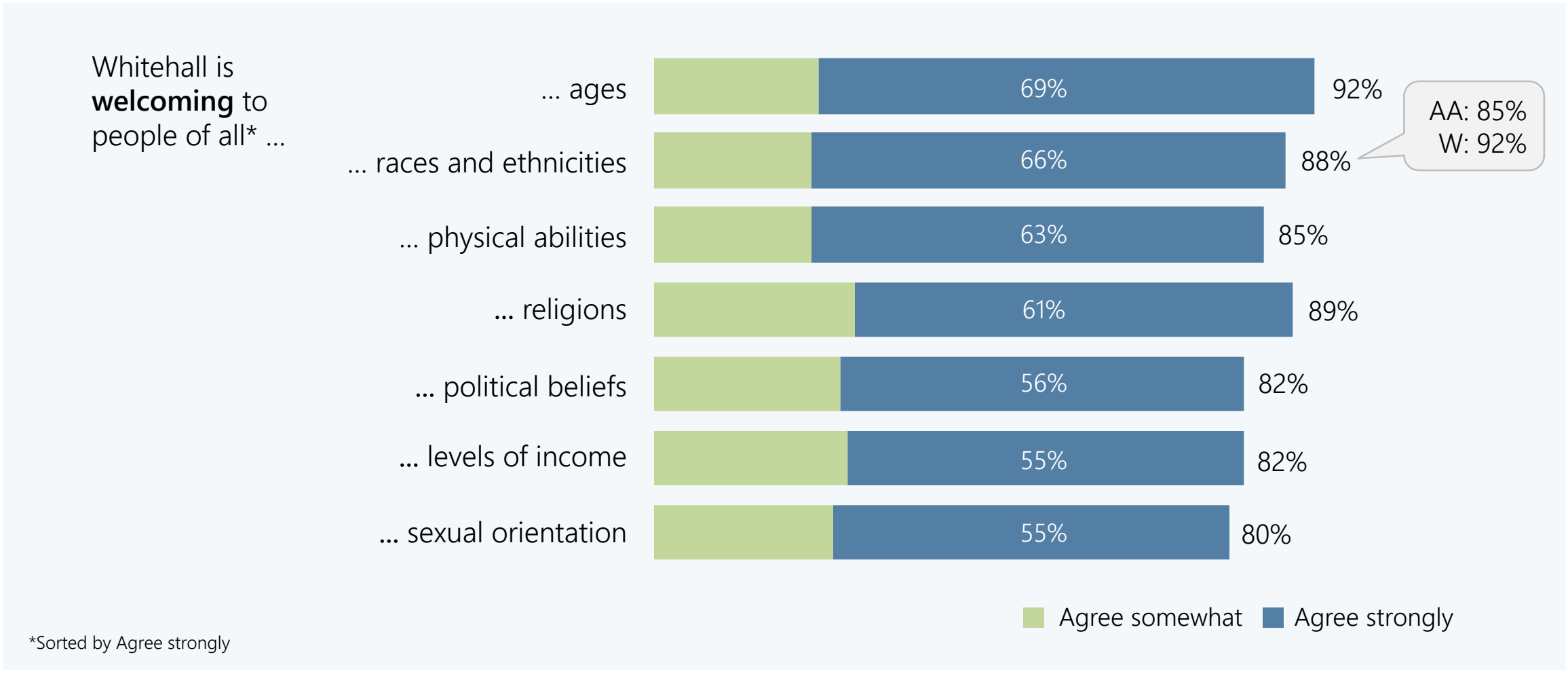


Diversity and Inclusion

Residents agree strongly that Whitehall is a diverse community –
and that living *in* a diverse community is important.

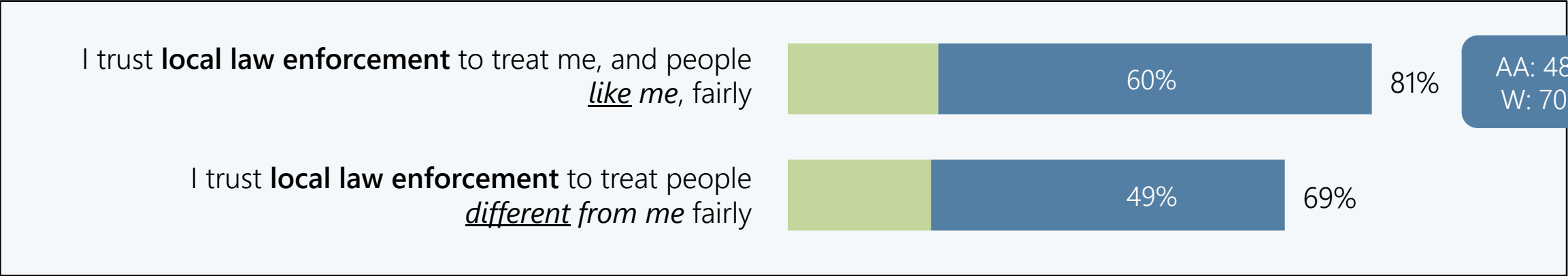
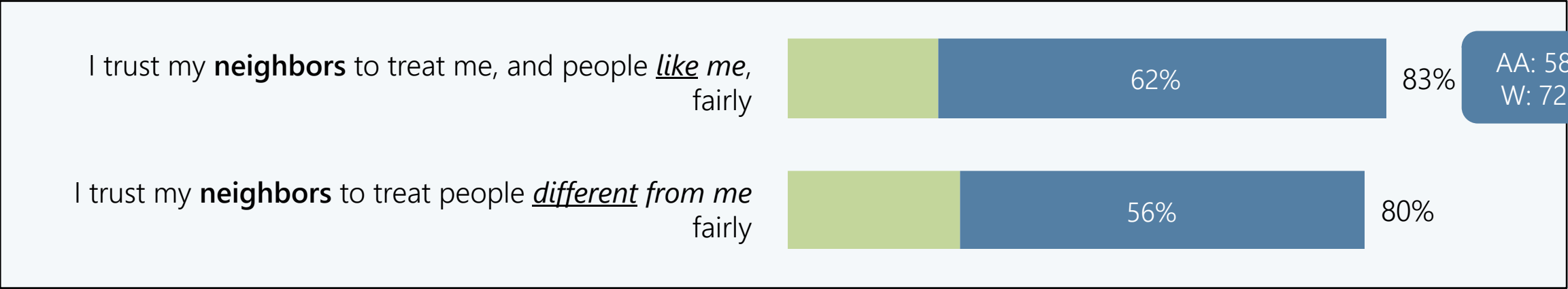


Most residents also agree strongly that Whitehall is a welcoming community.

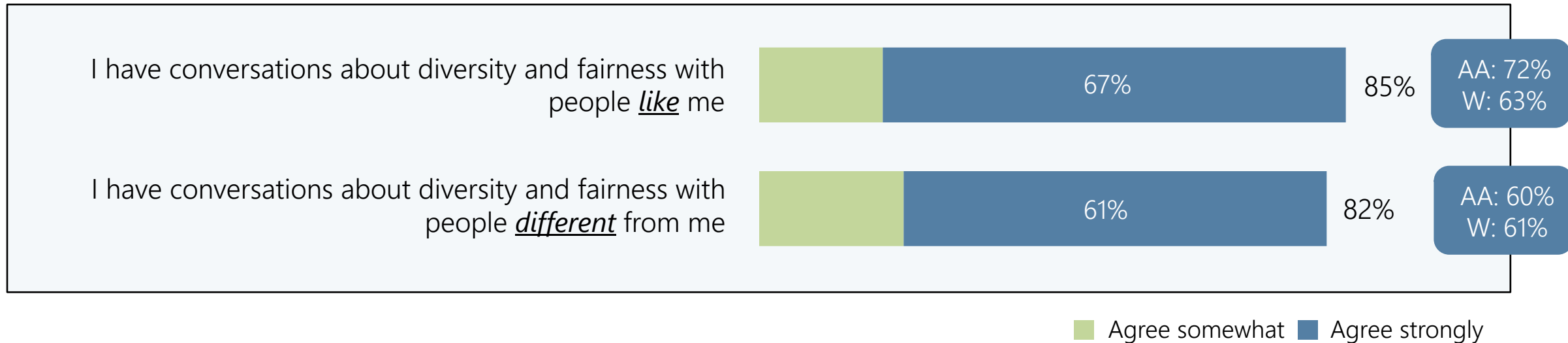


Most residents agree that people *similar* to themselves are treated fairly by neighbors, law enforcement, and local government.

Fewer believe the same is true for people *different* from themselves.



A similar pattern exists with conversations about diversity and fairness.



The most common suggestions for promoting diversity and inclusion in Whitehall focus on events and festivals.

Host festivals / events (e.g., TED Talks)	24%
This is not needed / already taking place	13%
Encourage people to treat everyone the same	7%
Business community should be more welcoming / create opportunities	5%
Encourage people to follow the golden rule	5%
Reform the police / adopt BLM	5%
Encourage discussion and listening	4%
Have more diversity in government / policies / legislation	4%
Offer programs in school and through social service agencies	3%
Communicate to residents what is being / has been done	2%
Have more affordable housing / lower tax / economic incentives	2%



Summary

General Findings

- As a place to live, most Whitehall residents consider the city average or better. Most also agree, as they had in 2018, that Whitehall is “heading in the right direction.”
- Crime and drugs, once again, are the most common concerns among residents, followed by worn out infrastructure, and a lack of affordable housing. Despite this, satisfaction is high with basic city services, including the programs organized by the Parks and Recreation Department. For some services, such as Fire and EMS, satisfaction is *very* high.
- Satisfaction also is high with city officials, who residents believe are improving Whitehall as a place to live.
- Among the minority of residents who contacted a city office, a third were dissatisfied with the experience. Unclear is whether this dissatisfaction reflects bad service or bad news.

- Facebook is the most common source of news and information about the city. Collectively, digital sources dominate print, including the paper edition of *ThisWeek/Whitehall*. In 2016, the balance was tipped in the other direction.
- Among eight potential community initiatives, a plurality of residents want affordable or workforce housing to serve as the city's highest priority.
- Repairing and repaving the city's streets garnered more support than adding Parks and Rec programs and offering emergency preparedness training.
- As in 2018, few residents are familiar with the city's plan to use 100% of the net income tax generated from the Heartland Bank facility for parks improvements.
- Support for the city's approach to redevelopment (involving blighted and nuisance properties) continues to hover around 50%.

- Among five programs offered by the city's Parks and Recreation Department, interest – once the pandemic has ended – is likely to be strongest in Wellness and Nutrition and Youth Sports.

The COVID-19 Pandemic

- Predictably, the COVID-19 pandemic has had a significant impact on Whitehall residents. Increases in stress and job loss were mentioned frequently, as were mental health issues among both adults and children.
- Most residents have cancelled a major event or celebration and had trouble finding products for personal hygiene and safety. In addition, parents of school-age children have stepped in for teachers.
- Despite all of this, most residents could not identify any type of support *not* available from local, state, or federal sources that *should* have been.
- Many are concerned about another wave of COVID-19 infections.

Diversity and Inclusion

- Residents agree that Whitehall is a diverse community – and that living *in* a diverse community is important. Residents also agree that Whitehall is a welcoming community.
- Most residents believe that people similar to themselves are treated fairly by neighbors, law enforcement, and local government. Slightly fewer believe the same is true for people different from themselves. Ideally, no difference would exist.
- Among White residents, seven out of ten strongly agree that local law enforcement treats them, and people like them, fairly. Among African American residents, the corresponding figure is lower.
- Finally, the most common suggestions for promoting diversity and inclusion in Whitehall involve events and festivals.

Questions?

This study was conducted by
Saperstein Associates
4942 Reed Road
Columbus, Ohio 43220
(614) 261-0065