

Three Rivers District Council

MINISTERIAL FOREWORD

Local environmental quality – the ‘Cleaner, Safer, Greener’ agenda – matters to the people we serve, whether as political representatives or service managers, a fact repeatedly confirmed by countless opinion surveys.

This is why the Government, in the Sustainable Development Strategy 2005, committed to provide better joined up information on the local environment, where it matters to the public – namely, where they live.

This report is a realisation of that commitment, a commitment not only to see that councils have the best management information available to them to build on improvements to the quality of the local environment, but also for residents to judge for themselves an individual council's performance.

Since 2001, the Government has commissioned ENCAMS to undertake the annual Local Environmental Quality Survey of England (LEQSE), to provide Defra with relevant and reliable information on the state of the local environment. We use this information to develop policies, direct support to councils and to allocate priorities for action on the basis of actual evidence.

To help take improvements further, in April 2006 I asked ENCAMS to undertake not only the national LEQSE, but also to increase the size of the survey so that we could provide every English council with its own individual report (this being your council's) between 2007 and 2008.

As you will see, like the LEQSE, this report provides a detailed picture of how your council is performing on a range of local environmental quality issues, including: litter, detritus, graffiti, fly-posting, condition of highways and street furniture, right down to the condition and management of your bin stock.

However, this report isn't just a snapshot assessment of your council's performance, it is more than that. This report allows you to compare your performance with national and regional benchmarks, it provides you with detailed management information about which problems are greatest, where they are worst, who or what are causing them, and how they can best be overcome. All information to help you improve services still further so that your council, along with the government, is better placed to respond to the demands of the people that we serve, and to help us deliver the truly cleaner, safer, greener places that we aspire to.

I do hope that your council benefits from this report, and along with the support package that is being offered by ENCAMS it helps you realise improvements where needed, so that we can continue to report to the public on improvements to the quality of the local environment. After all, by publishing this report, along with those of other councils, on the Directgov website (www.direct.gov.uk) the public will rightly be able to judge our performance themselves.

Jonathan Shaw MP

Minister for Marine, Landscape & Rural Affairs and Minister for the South East



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1.0 Introduction

1.1 Purpose of the Report

- 1.1.1 The purpose of this report is to provide Three Rivers District Council with an assessment of Local Environmental Quality standards within the authority between April 2007 and March 2008
- 1.1.2 Section 2.0 is designed to enable Councillors and local residents to see how local standards compare with the current published national benchmarks derived from the Annual Local Environmental Quality Survey of England (LEQSE)
- 1.1.3 Section 3.0 contains more detailed information aimed at assisting local authority managers and Councillors to identify where there are problems and what is causing them, and to consider what action to take
- 1.1.4 Section 4.0 contains an explanation of the scope and design of the survey and the way in which the data has been presented, together with some useful definitions.
- 1.1.5 The information displayed at overall District level the survey is based on at least 300 observations which experience shows gives a very reliable assessment of overall standards.
- 1.1.6 At individual land use level the survey is based on a minimum of thirty survey sites. While not as reliable as the overall assessment experience shows that this provides good indicative management information at land use level.
- 1.1.7 Occasionally some environmental elements may not be present in all survey sites. This normally occurs in the case of street furniture, litter bins, bus stops and landscaping. Caution should be exercised, therefore, when interpreting data relating to such environmental elements at land use level on the Gauge Charts and Matrices. Where the number of observations at District level falls below 30, the shortfall is indicated on the District gauge chart with an asterisk.

2.0 Overall Results

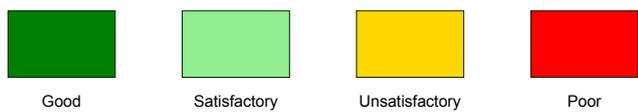
2.1 *Matrix Chart*

- 2.1.1 The Matrix Chart provides a strategic overview of standards by LEQ Issue across all relevant land uses, as well as at a District level.
- 2.1.2 The standard applicable to a particular LEQ Issues / Land Use is simply shown at an Overall Quality Standard level, using the relevant colour – Dark Green (Good), Light Green (Satisfactory), Amber (Unsatisfactory), or Red (Poor).
- 2.1.3 Standards in Three Rivers District Council can also be compared with National Benchmarks in terms of the percentage of headline environmental elements that in overall terms were assessed as 'Good', 'Satisfactory', 'Unsatisfactory' or 'Poor'.

Overall Quality Standard	Three Rivers District Council	National
Good	37%	28%
Satisfactory	29%	19%
Unsatisfactory	28%	48%
Poor	5%	5%

Matrix Report - Extended LEQSE Year 2 - Three Rivers District Council

	All Areas	Primary Retail/Commercial	Secondary Retail/Commercial	Transport Infrastructure	High Density Housing	Low Density Housing	Low Density Social Housing	Low Density Private Housing	Industry/Warehouse/Retail Sheds	Main Roads	Rural Roads	Other Highways	Public Open Spaces	Watersides
Cleansing Standards														
Litter	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Detritus	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor
Leaf Fall	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Cleansing Related														
Weed Growth	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Staining	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Flytipping	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Waste Placed Out	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Flyposting	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Graffiti	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Highway Infrastructure														
Paved Areas Obstruction	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Paved Obstruction No Upstand	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Channel Obstruction	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Paved Areas Condition	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Channel Condition	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Carriageway Condition	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Road Marking Condition	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Vehicle Flows	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Pedestrian Flows	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Street Furniture														
Posts & Poles	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Public Signs	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Other Street Furniture	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Buildings & Boundary Structures	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Litter Bins														
Cleanliness	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Condition	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory
Degree of Fill	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Bus Stops Etc.														
Litter	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Condition	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Staining	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Flyposting	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Graffiti	Satisfactory	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor	Poor
Landscaping														
Litter	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Poor	Poor
Maintenance	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Satisfactory	Poor	Poor	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	Satisfactory



Footnote: Please see section 1.1.7 in relation to interpreting data at a land use level.

2.2 *Gauge Chart*

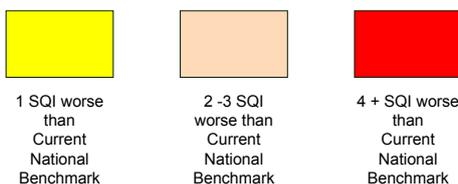
- 2.2.1 The Gauge Chart indicates the position of an environmental element within its overall quality category using a 'fuel gauge' graphic. Each of the four quality categories ('Good', 'Satisfactory', 'Unsatisfactory', and 'Poor') is sub-divided into four Standard Quality Intervals (SQI). Each SQI represents an interval over which a reasonably acute person should see that a small, qualitative difference in standard has occurred for the local environmental element being examined.
- 2.2.2 The scale on a Gauge Chart runs from +8 SQI at the upper end of the 'Good' category (with +4 SQI being the top end of the 'Satisfactory' scale) to -8 SQI at the bottom end of the 'Poor' category (with -4 SQI being the lower end of the 'Unsatisfactory' category). Please note that scale passes directly from +1SQI to -1SQI as there is no zero point.

2.3 *Target Issues Matrix Chart*

- 2.3.1 The Target Issues Matrix Chart for Three Rivers District Council gives a picture of how standards in the district compare with the country-wide benchmarks for each environmental element, both overall and for each Standard Land Use.
- 2.3.2 The Target Issues Matrix shows standards that:
- a. fall just 1 SQI below the benchmarks (in yellow);
 - b. fall 2 or 3 SQI below the benchmarks (in stone); and,
 - c. fall 4 or more SQI below the benchmarks (in red).
- 2.3.3 By focusing on these issues and land uses, and adopting a 'worst first' strategy, a structured approach can be taken to developing an action plan for improving and sustaining local standards.
- 2.3.4 Unless there is the need for significant capital investment elements highlighted in yellow can usually be rectified by management intervention
- 2.3.5 Elements highlighted in stone or red can require a significant capital input to improve standards, whilst this is not always possible it is best to try to make sure that when the Capital is available it is spent in an appropriate way to ensure the low standards don't return.
- 2.3.6 If the environmental element is not an item that is normally within your area of responsibility (for example Paved Area Obstruction) it is suggested that you contact the relevant responsible department about future capital expenditure and try to work on a specification that assists your future service delivery
- 2.3.7 The areas in white are where standards are equal to, or exceed the current national benchmarks.

Target Issues Matrix Report - Extended LEQSE Year 2 - Three Rivers District Council

	All Areas	Primary Retail/Commercial	Secondary Retail/Commercial	Transport Infrastructure	High Density Housing	Low Density Housing	Low Density Social Housing	Low Density Private Housing	Industry/Wareh/g/Retail Sheds	Main Roads	Rural Roads	Other Highways	Public Open Spaces	Watersides
Cleansing Standards														
Litter														
Detritus														
Leaf Fall														
Cleansing Related														
Weed Growth														
Staining														
Flytipping														
Waste Placed Out														
Flyposting														
Graffiti														
Highway Infrastructure														
Paved Areas Obstruction														
Paved Obstruction No Upstand														
Channel Obstruction														
Paved Areas Condition														
Channel Condition														
Carriageway Condition														
Road Marking Condition														
Vehicle Flows														
Pedestrian Flows														
Street Furniture														
Posts & Poles														
Public Signs														
Other Street Furniture														
Buildings & Boundary Structures														
Litter Bins														
Cleanliness														
Condition														
Degree of Fill														
Bus Stops Etc.														
Litter														
Condition														
Staining														
Flyposting														
Graffiti														
Landscaping														
Litter														
Maintenance														

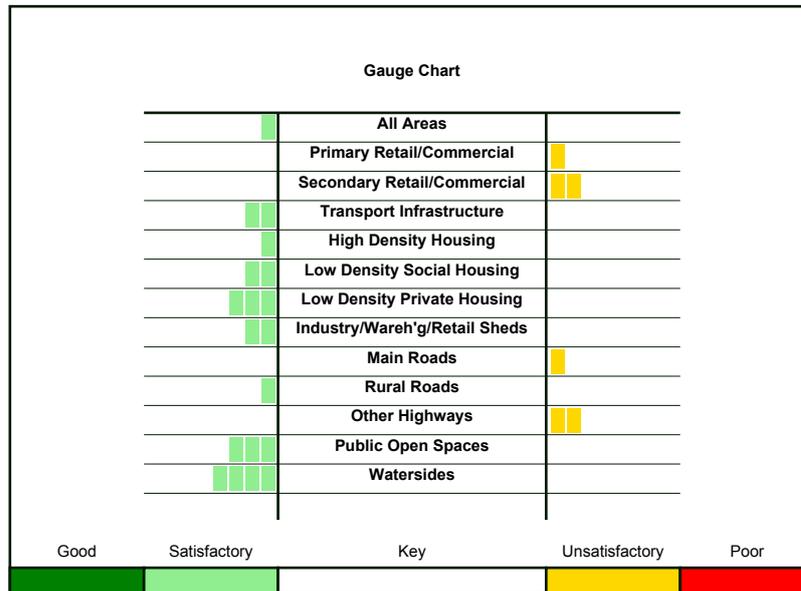


Footnote: Please see section 1.1.7 in relation to interpreting data at a land use level.

3.0 Management Information

3.1 Litter

Litter Standards Chart by Land Use Category

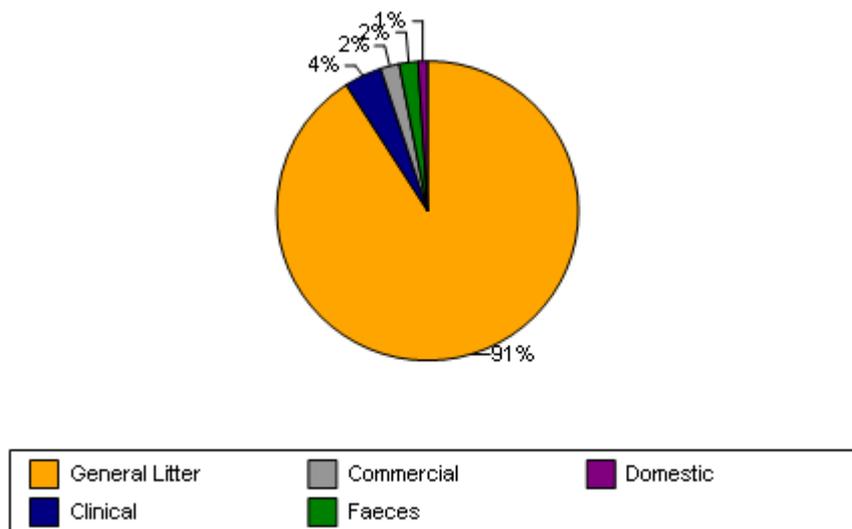


3.1.1 The overall standard for Litter was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

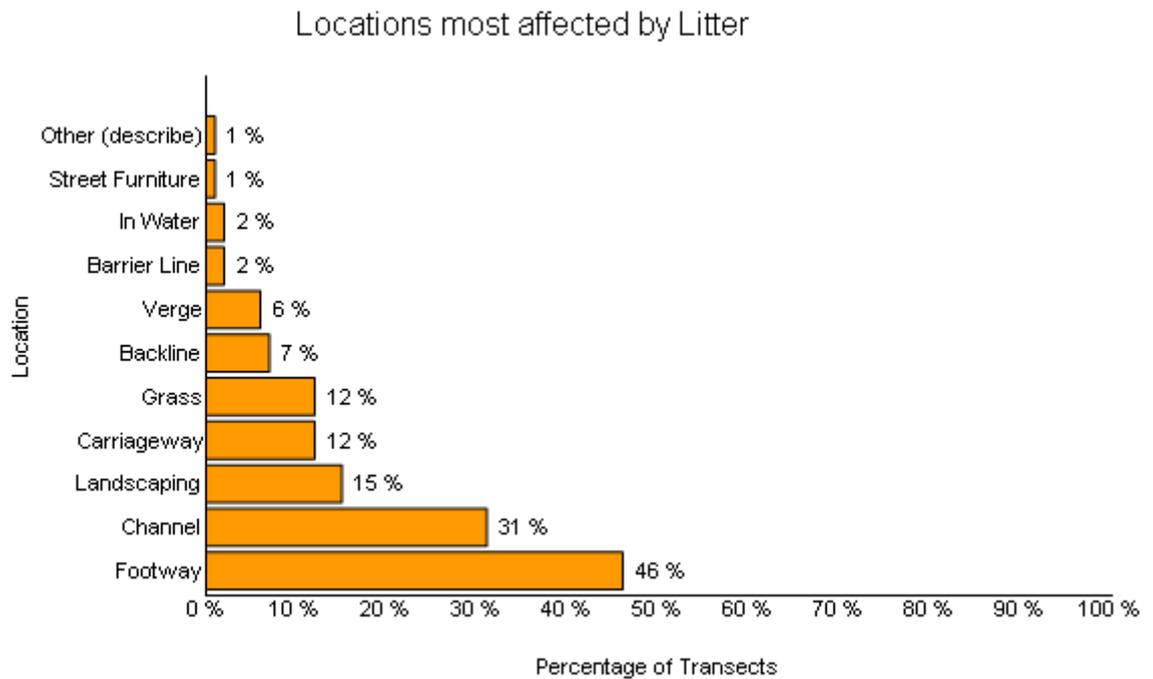
- a. 4 SQI in Watersides, to
- b. -2 SQI in multiple landuses including; Secondary Retail/Commercial and Other Highways.

3.1.2 The proportional contributions of Sources of Litter are outlined in the Pie Chart below

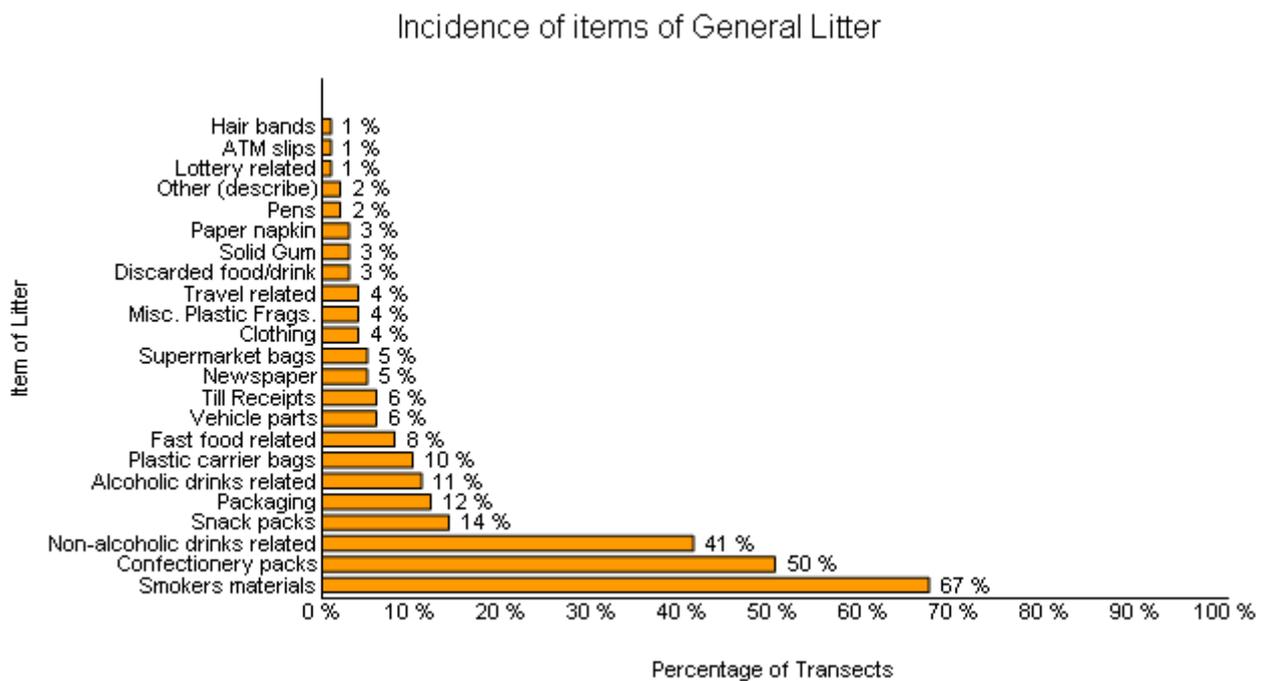
Proportionate Sources of Litter



3.1.3 The graphic below shows the most heavily littered locations on transect

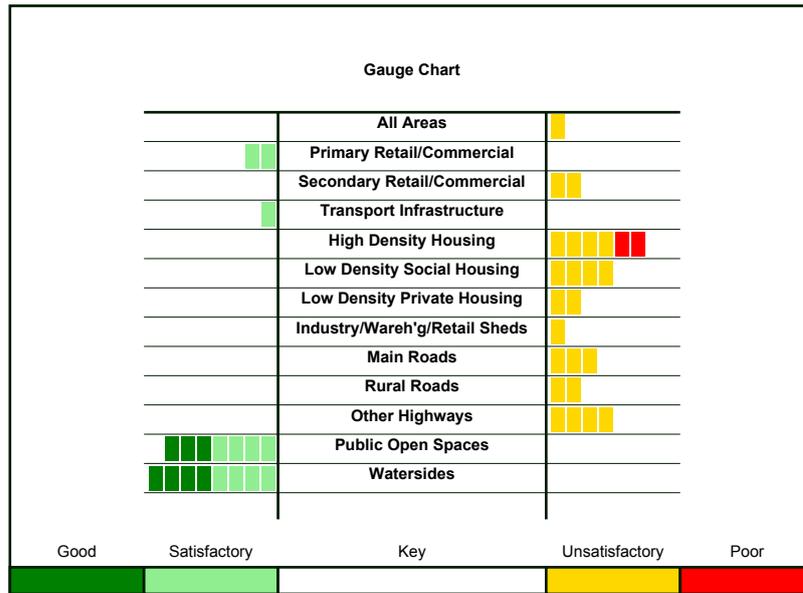


3.1.4 The graphic below shows the incidence of Types of General Litter



3.2 *Detritus*

Detritus Standards Chart by Land Use Category

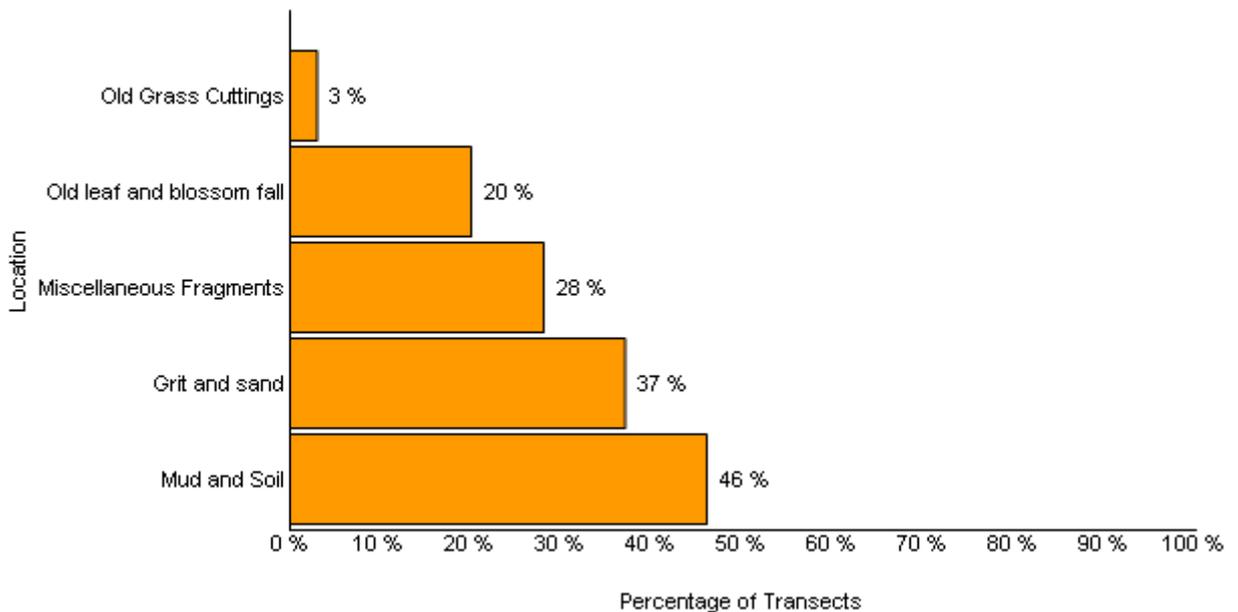


3.2.1 The overall standard for detritus was Unsatisfactory -1 SQI, ranging from

- a. 8 SQI in Watersides, to
- b. -6 SQI in High Density Housing.

3.2.2 The Graphic below shows the occurrence of different types of Detritus

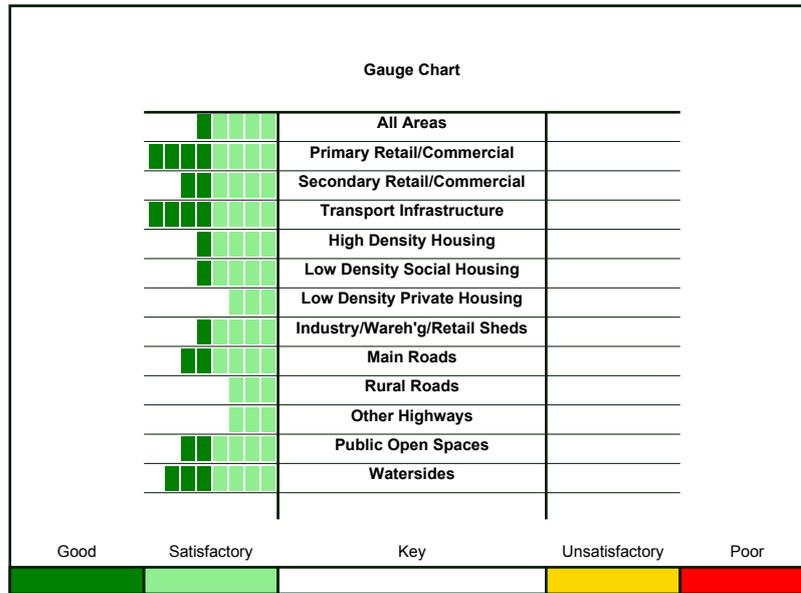
Incidence of types of Detritus



3.3

Leaf Fall

Leaf Fall Standards Chart by Land Use Category



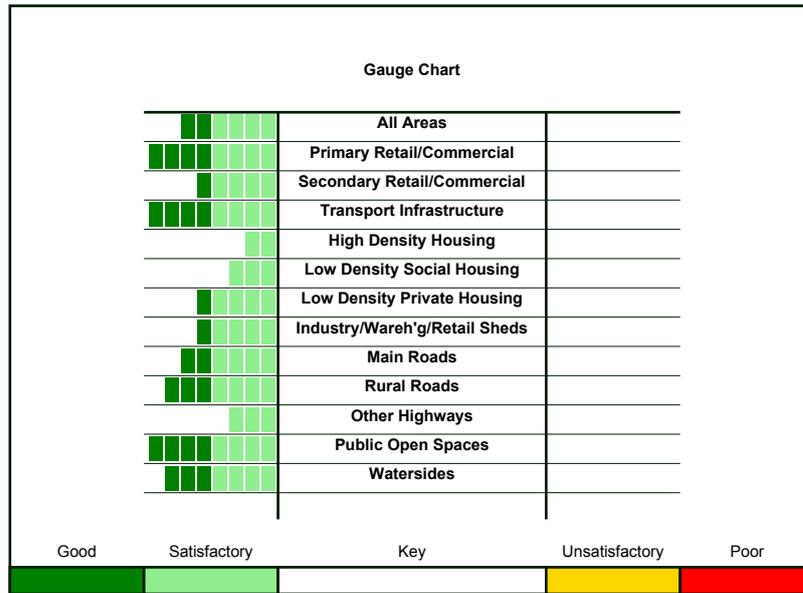
3.3.1 The overall standard for leaf fall was Good 5 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial and Transport Infrastructure, to
- b. 3 SQI in multiple landuses including; Low Density Private Housing, Rural Roads and Other Highways.

3.4

Weed Growth

Weed Growth Standards Chart by Land Use Category

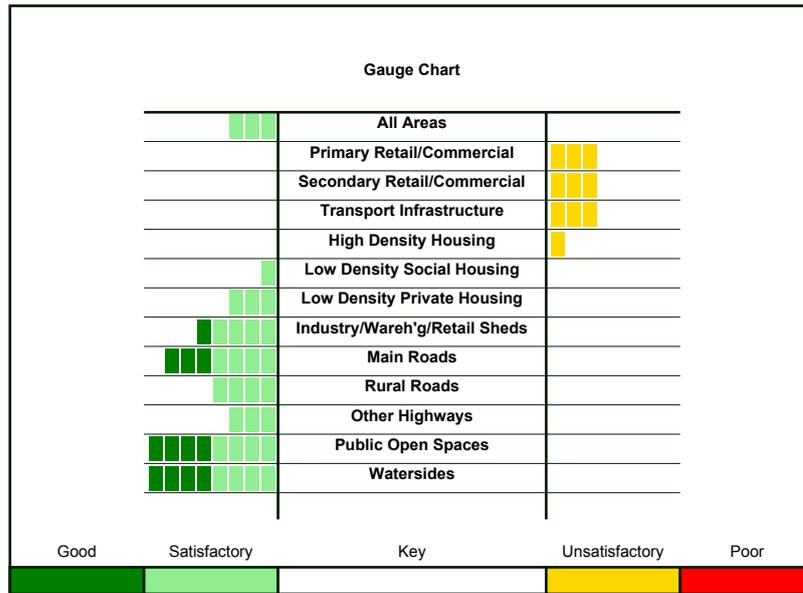


3.4.1 The overall standard for Weed Growth was Good 6 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial, Transport Infrastructure and Public Open Spaces, to
- b. 2 SQI in High Density Housing.

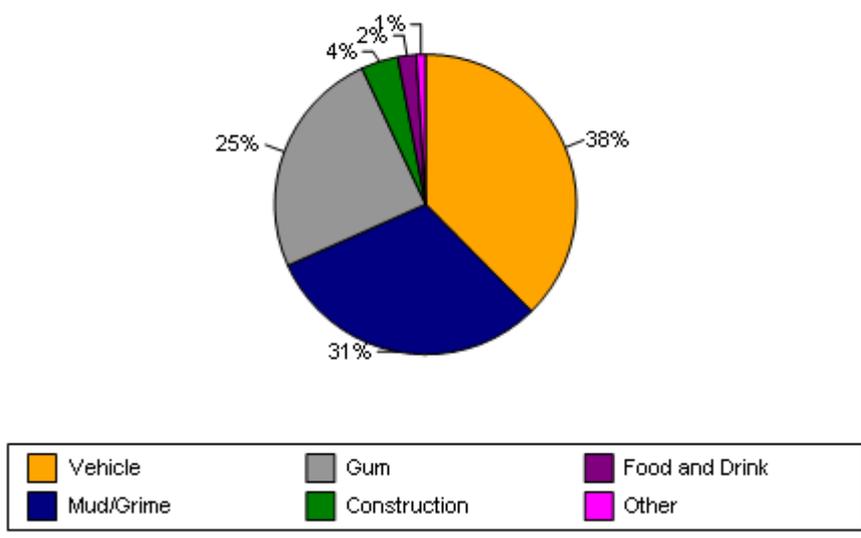
3.5 Staining

Staining Standards Chart by Land Use Category



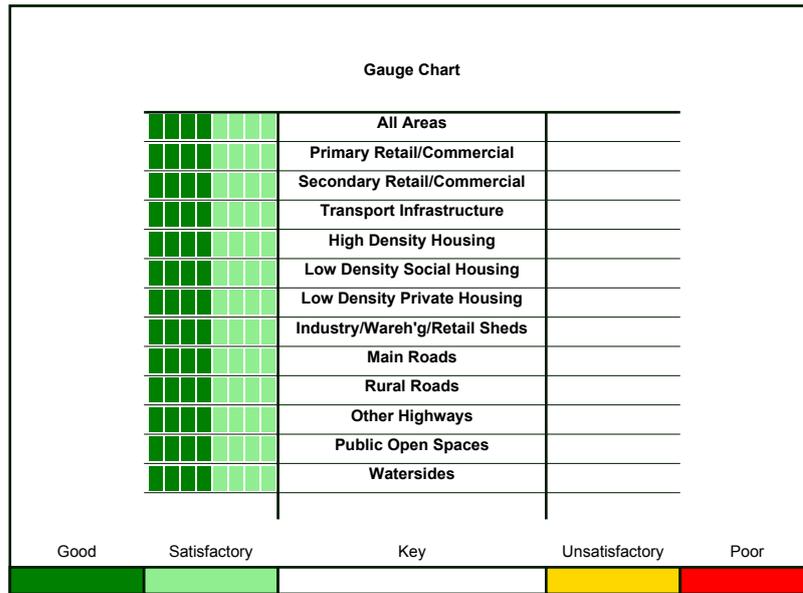
- 3.5.1 The overall standard for Staining was Satisfactory 3 SQI, ranging from:
- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Public Open Spaces and Watersides, to
 - b. -3 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial, Secondary Retail/Commercial and Transport Infrastructure.
- 3.5.2 The proportional contributions of Staining are outlined in the Pie Chart below

Staining Composition



3.6 *Flytipping*

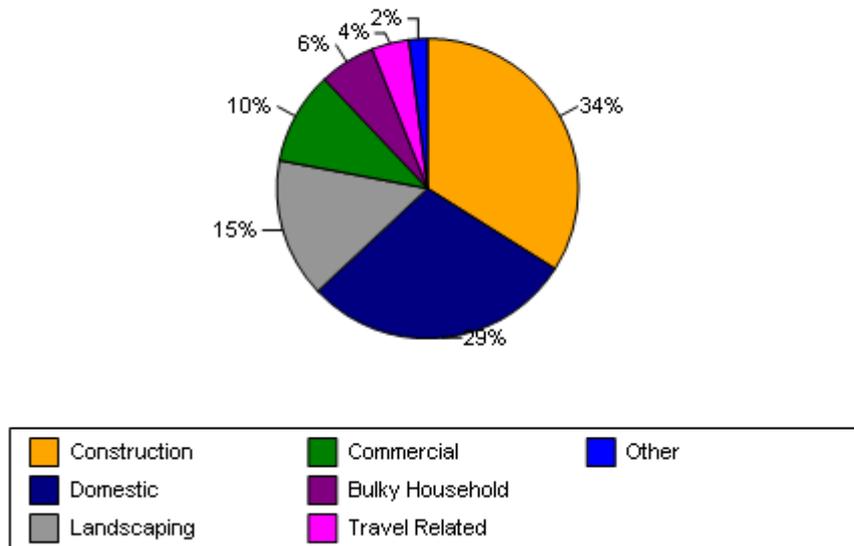
Flytipping Standards Chart by Land Use Category



3.6.1 The overall standard for Flytipping was Good 8 SQI

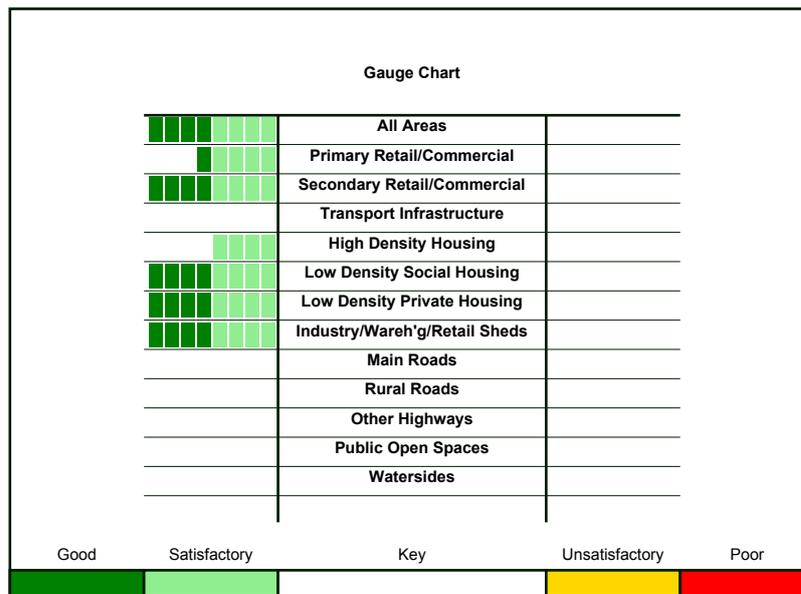
3.6.2 The proportional contribution of different types of Flytipping is displayed in the Pie Chart below;

Flytipping Composition



3.7 *Wastes Placed Out*

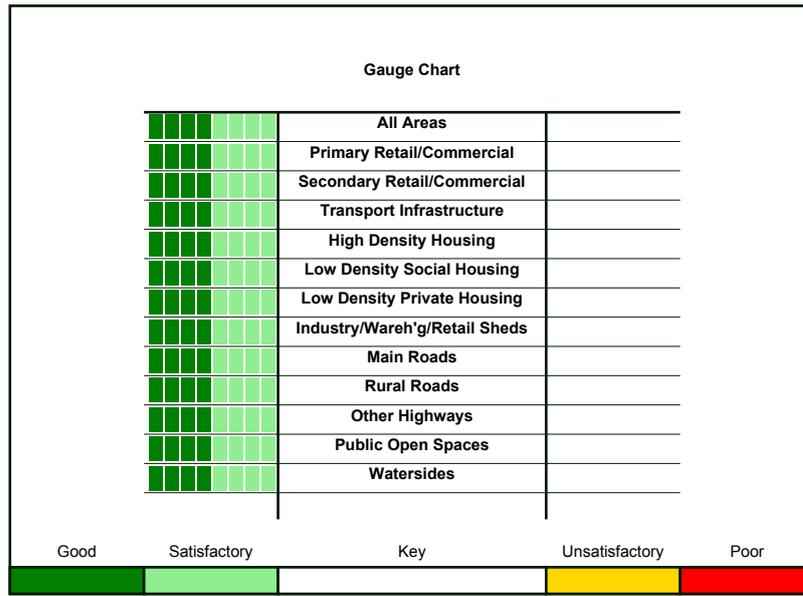
Waste Placed Out Standards Chart by Land Use Category



- 3.7.1 The overall standard for Wastes Placed Out was Good 8 SQI, ranging from:
- 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Secondary Retail/Commercial, Low Density Social Housing, Low Density Private Housing and Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds, to
 - 4 SQI in High Density Housing.

3.8 *Flyposting*

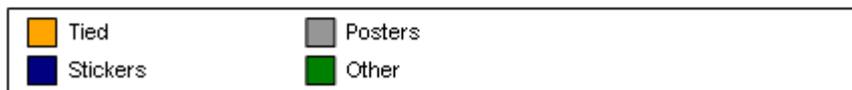
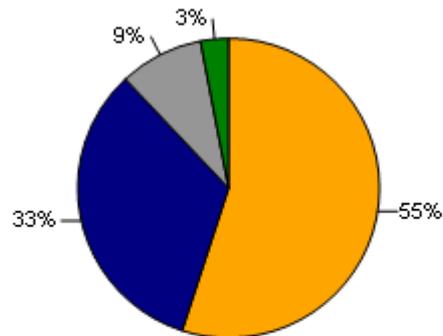
Flyposting Standards Chart by Land Use Category



3.8.1 The overall standard for Flyposting was Good 8 SQI

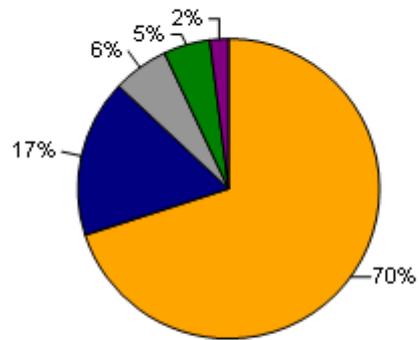
3.8.2 The proportional contribution of different forms of Flyposting are outlined in the Pie Chart Below

Flyposting Form



3.8.3 The proportional contribution of different types of Flyposting is outlined in the Pie Chart Below;

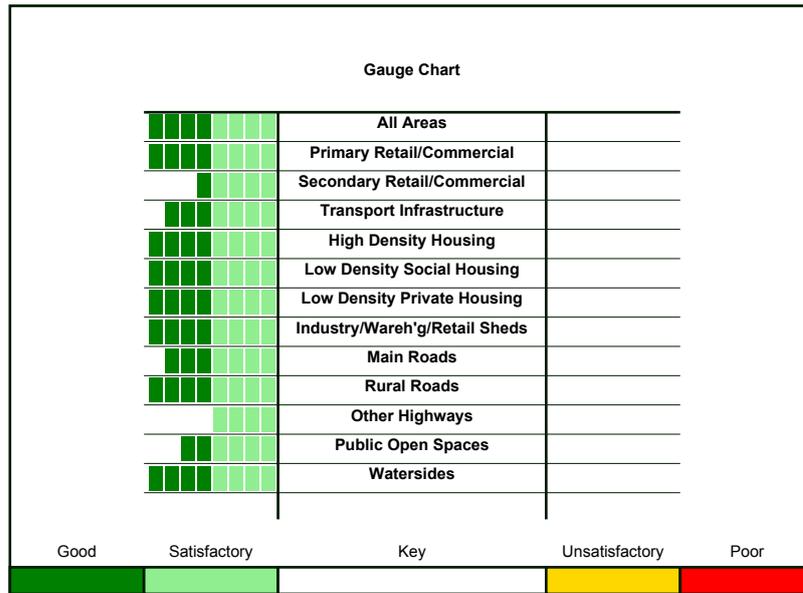
Flyposting Type



Footnote - definitions of the different types and forms of Flyposting can be found in section 4.3.1 c.

3.9 Graffiti

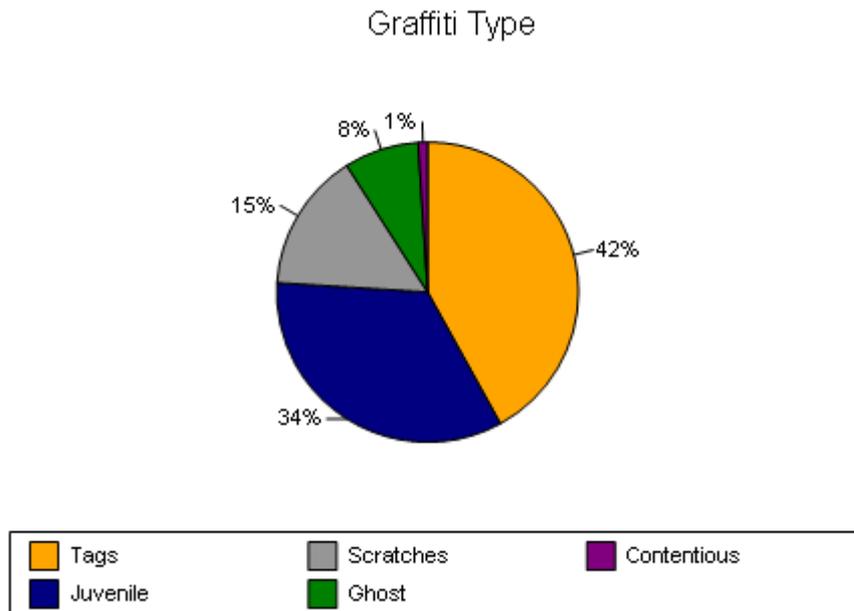
Graffiti Standards Chart by Land Use Category



3.9.1 The overall standard for Graffiti was Good 8 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial, High Density Housing, Low Density Social Housing, Low Density Private Housing, Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds, Rural Roads and Watersides, to
- b. 4 SQI in Other Highways.

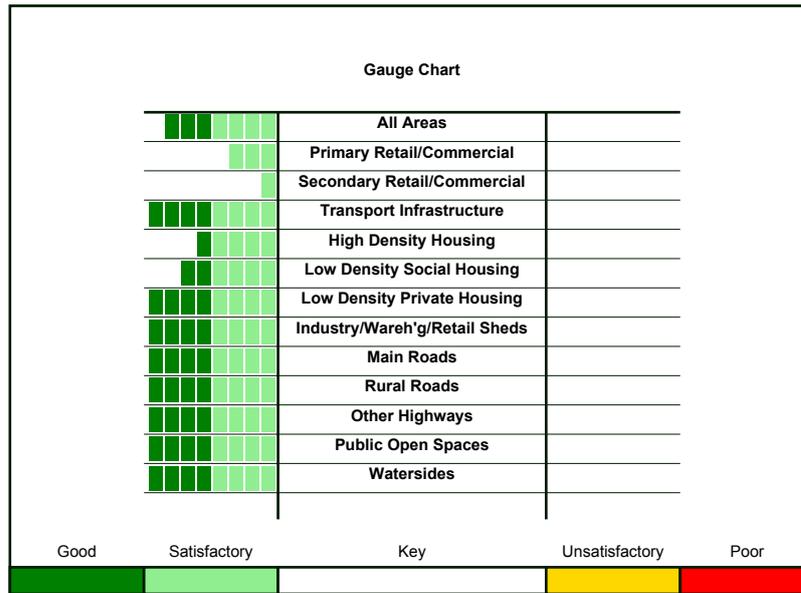
3.9.2 The proportional contributions of different types of Graffiti are displayed in the Pie Chart below;



Definitions of different types of Graffiti can be found in section 4.3.1 c at the back of this report.

3.10 *Paved Area Obstruction*

Paved Areas Obstruction Standards Chart by Land Use Category

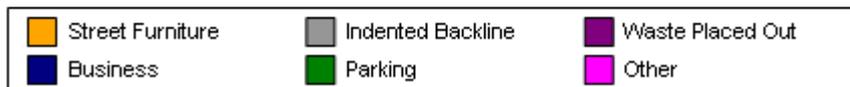
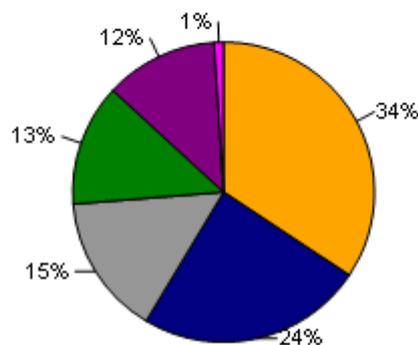


3.10.1 The overall standard for Paved Area Obstruction was Good 7 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Transport Infrastructure, Low Density Private Housing, Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds, Main Roads, Rural Roads, Other Highways, Public Open Spaces and Watersides, to
- b. 1 SQI in Secondary Retail/Commercial.

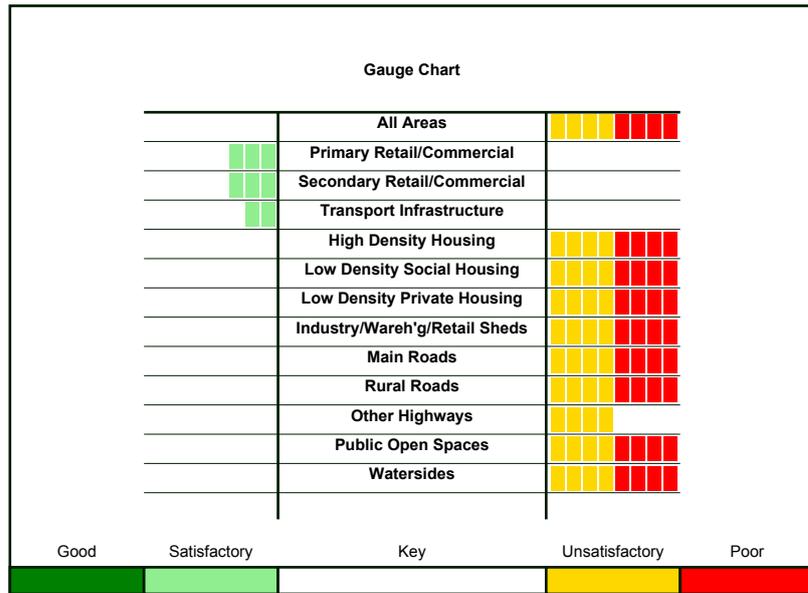
3.10.2 The proportional contribution of different types of Paved Area Obstruction are displayed in the Pie Chart below

Pavement Obstruction Form



3.11 *Paved Area Obstruction (No Upstand)*

Paved Obstruction No Upstand Standards Chart by Land Use Category



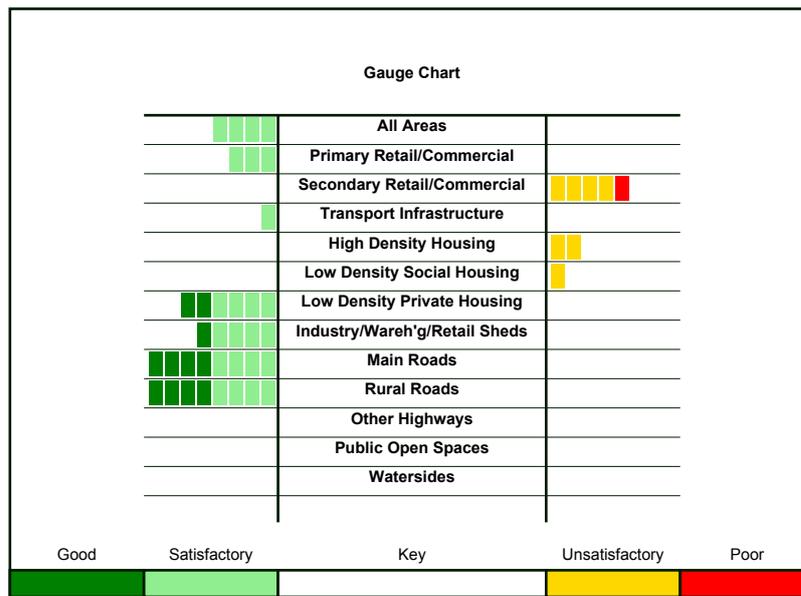
3.11.1 The overall standard for Paved Area Obstruction (No Upstand) was Poor -8 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 3 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial and Secondary Retail/Commercial, to
- b. -8 SQI in multiple landuses including; High Density Housing, Low Density Social Housing, Low Density Private Housing, Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds, Main Roads, Rural Roads, Public Open Spaces and Watersides.

3.12

Channel Obstruction

Channel Obstruction Standards Chart by Land Use Category

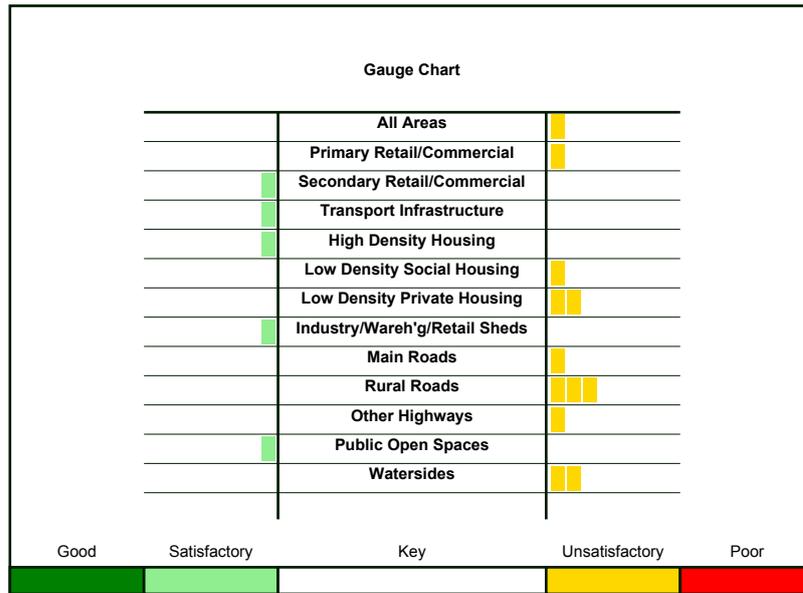


- 3.12.1 The overall standard for Channel Obstruction was Satisfactory 4 SQI, ranging from:
- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Main Roads and Rural Roads, to
 - b. -5 SQI in Secondary Retail/Commercial.

3.13

Paved Area Condition

Paved Areas Condition Standards Chart by Land Use Category



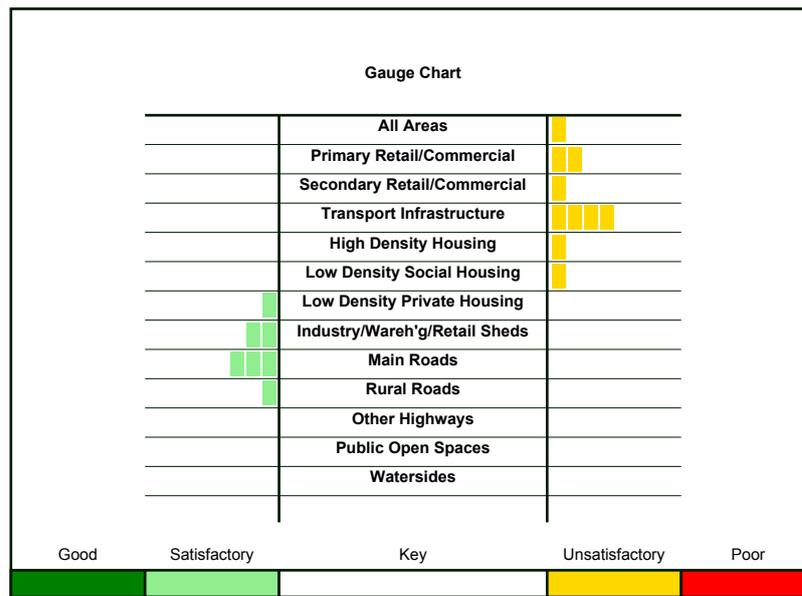
3.13.1 The overall standard for Paved Area Condition was Unsatisfactory -1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 1 SQI in multiple landuses including; Secondary Retail/Commercial, Transport Infrastructure, High Density Housing, Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds and Public Open Spaces, to
- b. -3 SQI in Rural Roads.

3.14

Channel Condition

Channel Condition Standards Chart by Land Use Category



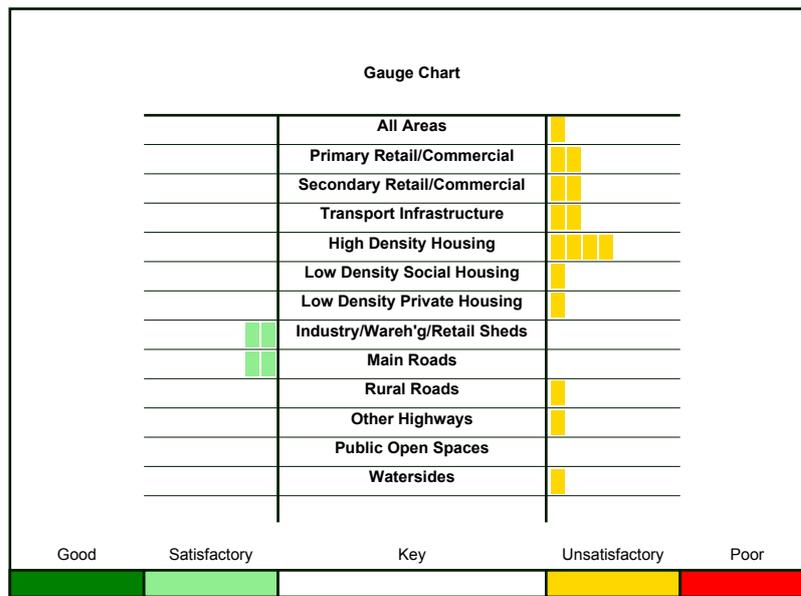
3.14.1 The overall standard for Channel Condition was Unsatisfactory -1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 3 SQI in Main Roads, to
- b. -4 SQI in Transport Infrastructure.

3.15

Carriageway Condition

Carriageway Condition Standards Chart by Land Use Category

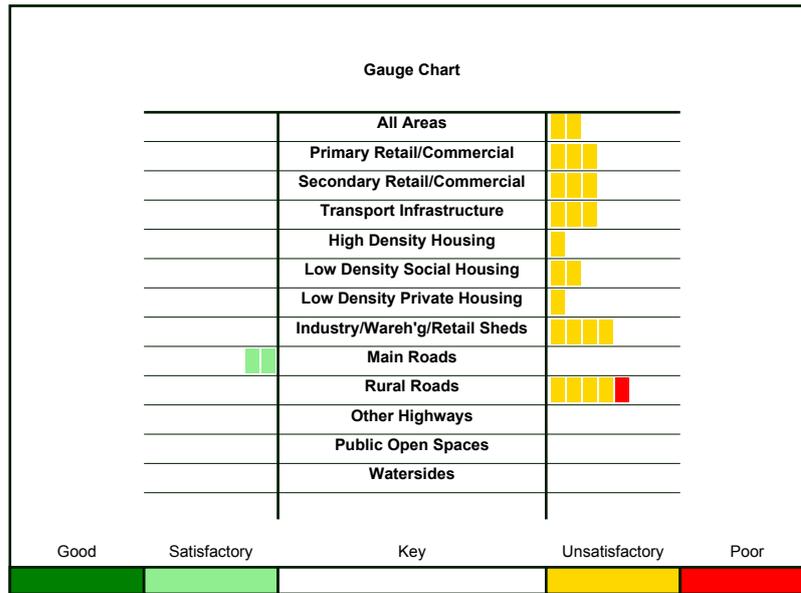


- 3.15.1 The overall standard for Carriageway Condition was Unsatisfactory -1 SQI, ranging from:
- a. 2 SQI in multiple landuses including; Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds and Main Roads, to
 - b. -4 SQI in High Density Housing.

3.16

Road Marking Condition

Road Marking Condition Standards Chart by Land Use Category



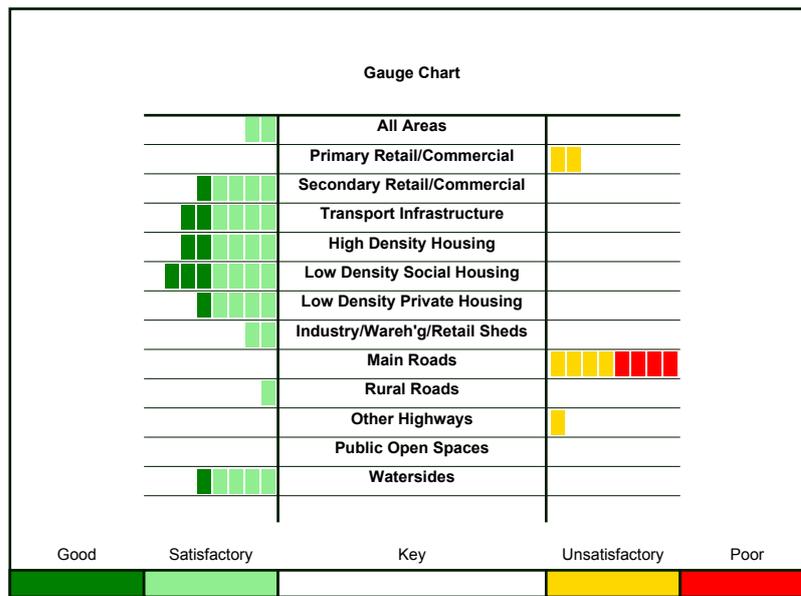
3.16.1 The overall standard for Road Marking Condition was Unsatisfactory -2 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 2 SQI in Main Roads, to
- b. -5 SQI in Rural Roads.

3.17

Vehicle Flows

Vehicle Flows Standards Chart by Land Use Category



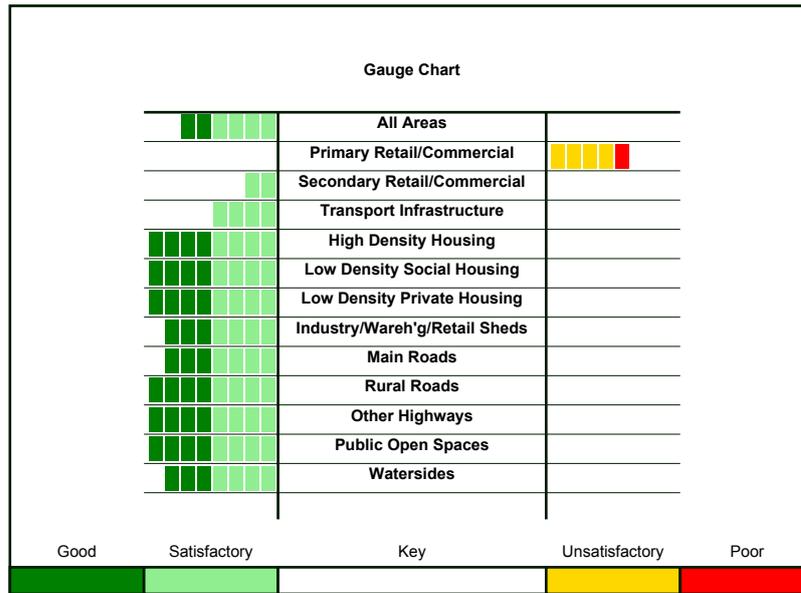
3.17.1 The overall standard for Vehicle Flows was Satisfactory 2 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 7 SQI in Low Density Social Housing, to
- b. -8 SQI in Main Roads.

3.18

Pedestrian Flows

Pedestrian Flows Standards Chart by Land Use Category



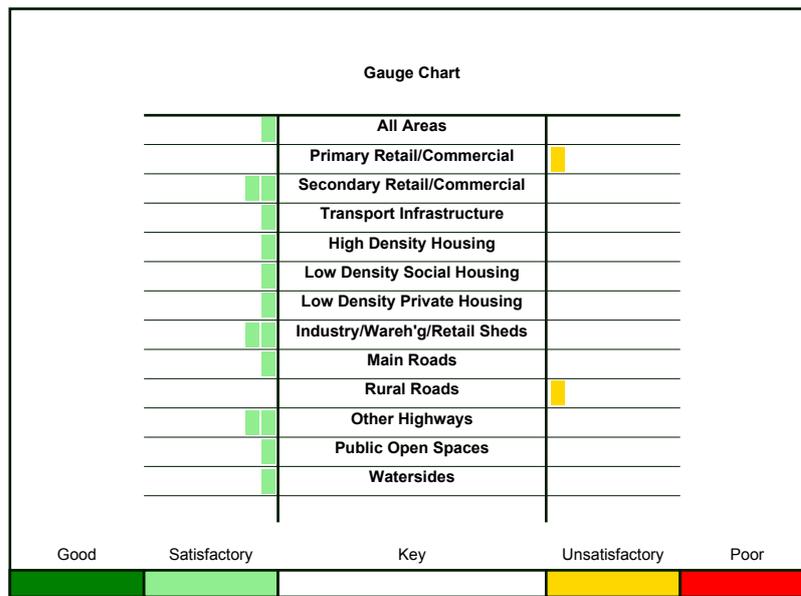
3.18.1 The overall standard for Pedestrian Flows was Good 6 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; High Density Housing, Low Density Social Housing, Low Density Private Housing, Rural Roads, Other Highways and Public Open Spaces, to
- b. -5 SQI in Primary Retail/Commercial.

3.19

Posts and Poles

Posts & Poles Standards Chart by Land Use Category



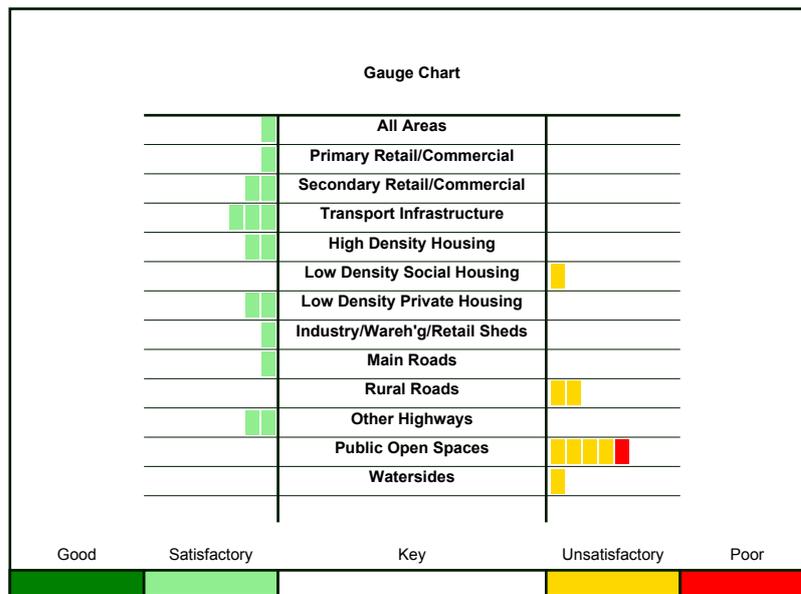
3.19.1 The overall standard for Posts and Poles was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 2 SQI in multiple landuses including; Secondary Retail/Commercial, Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds and Other Highways, to
- b. -1 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial and Rural Roads.

3.20

Public Signs

Public Signs Standards Chart by Land Use Category



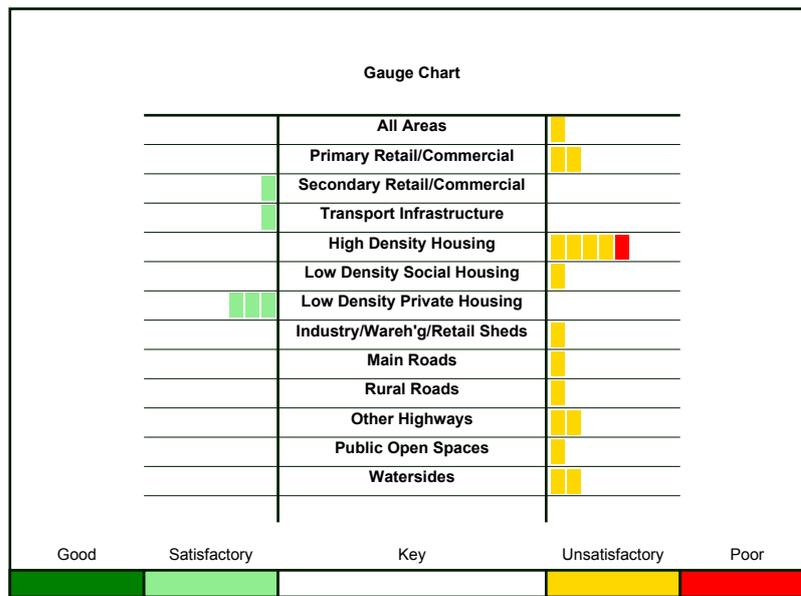
3.20.1 The overall standard for Public Signs was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 3 SQI in Transport Infrastructure, to
- b. -5 SQI in Public Open Spaces.

3.21

Other Street Furniture

Other Street Furniture Standards Chart by Land Use Category

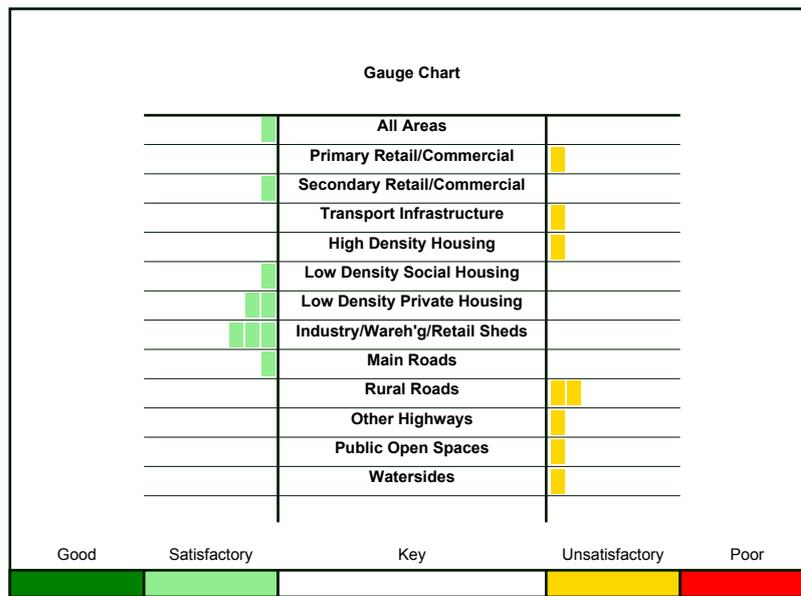


3.21.1 The overall standard for Other Street Furniture was Unsatisfactory -1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 3 SQI in Low Density Private Housing, to
- b. -5 SQI in High Density Housing.

3.22 *Buildings and Boundary Structures*

Buildings & Boundary Structures Standards Chart by Land Use Category



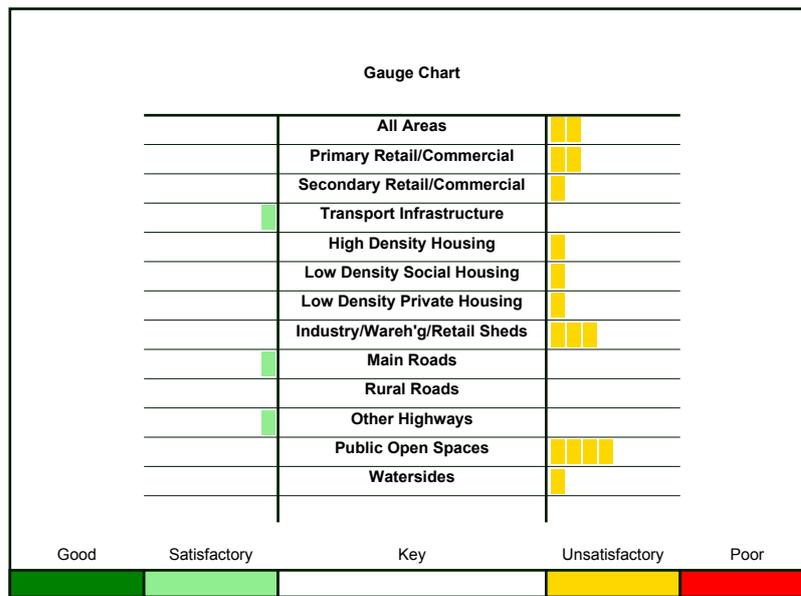
3.22.1 The overall standard for Buildings and Boundary Structures was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 3 SQI in Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds, to
- b. -2 SQI in Rural Roads.

3.23

Litter Bin Cleanliness

Bin Cleanliness Standards Chart by Land Use Category



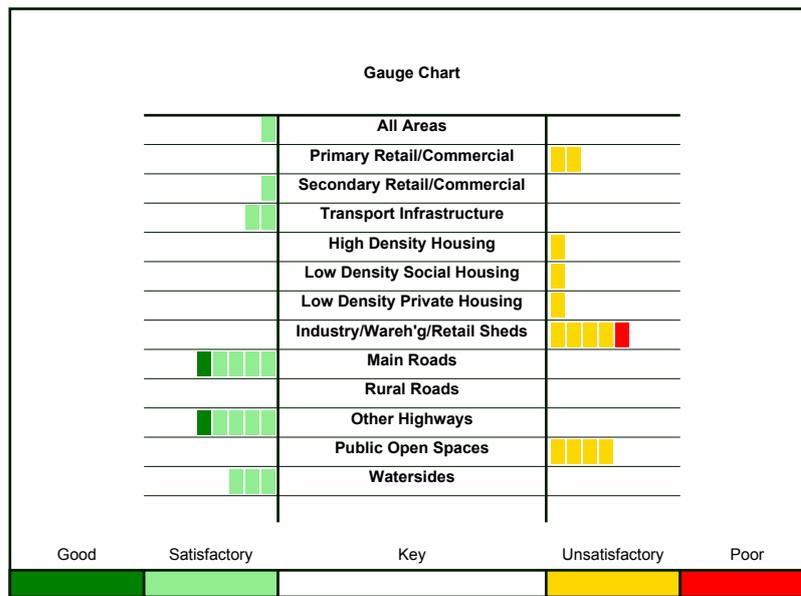
3.23.1 The overall standard for Litter Bin Cleanliness was Unsatisfactory -2 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 1 SQI in multiple landuses including; Transport Infrastructure, Main Roads and Other Highways, to
- b. -4 SQI in Public Open Spaces.

3.24

Litter Bin Condition

Bin Condition Standards Chart by Land Use Category



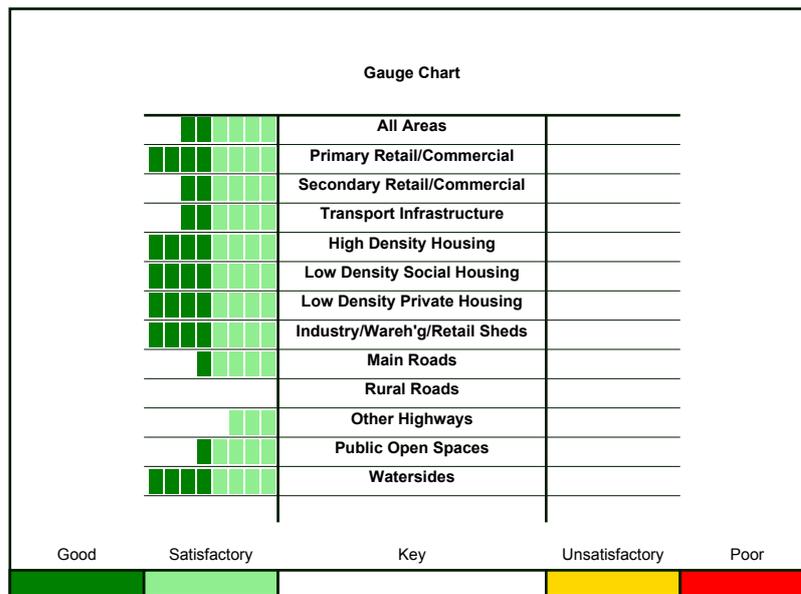
3.24.1 The overall standard for Litter Bin Condition was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 5 SQI in multiple landuses including; Main Roads and Other Highways, to
- b. -5 SQI in Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds.

3.25

Litter Bin Degree of Fill

Bin Degree of Fill Standards Chart by Land Use Category



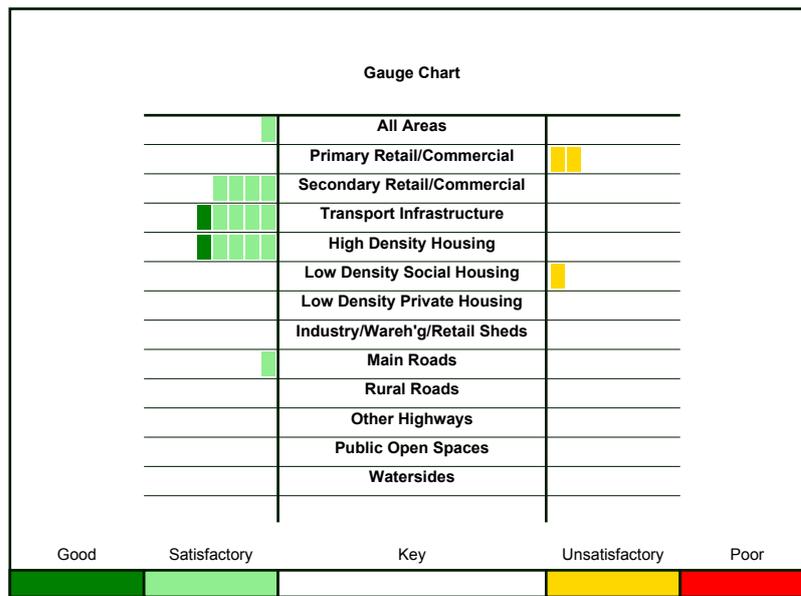
3.25.1 The overall standard for Litter Bin Degree of Fill was Good 6 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial, High Density Housing, Low Density Social Housing, Low Density Private Housing, Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds and Watersides, to
- b. 3 SQI in Other Highways.

3.26

Bus/Tram Stops Litter

Bus Stops Litter Standards Chart by Land Use Category



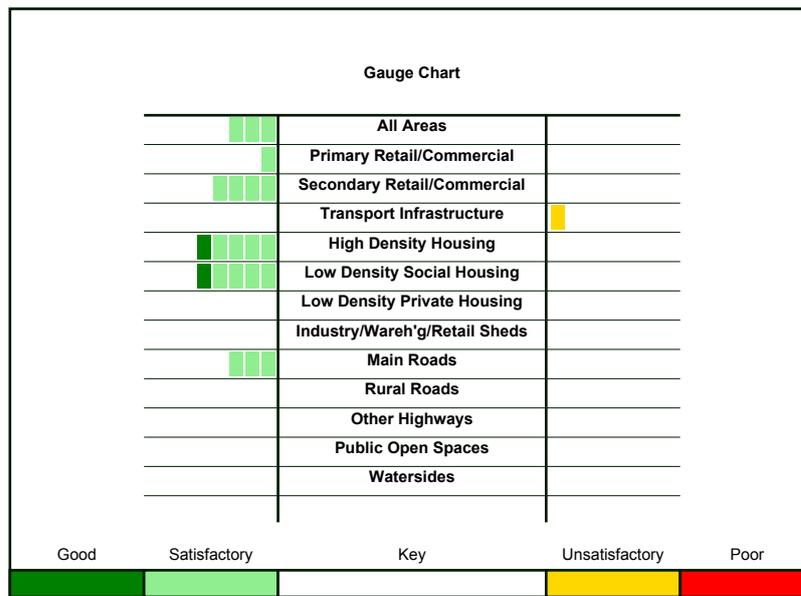
3.26.1 The overall standard for Litter Bus/Tram Stops Litter was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 5 SQI in multiple landuses including; Transport Infrastructure and High Density Housing, to
- b. -2 SQI in Primary Retail/Commercial.

3.27

Bus/Tram Stops Condition

Bus Stops Condition Standards Chart by Land Use Category



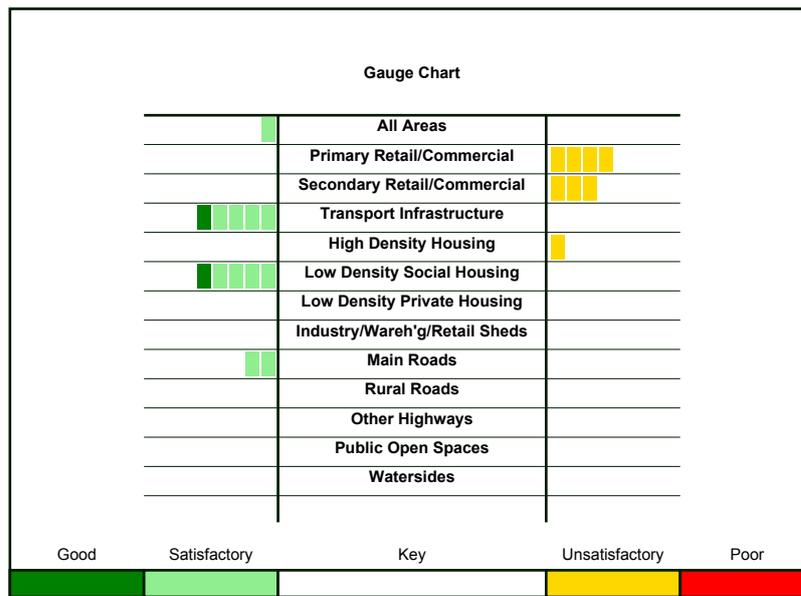
3.27.1 The overall standard for Bus/Tram Stops Condition was Satisfactory 3 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 5 SQI in multiple landuses including; High Density Housing and Low Density Social Housing, to
- b. -1 SQI in Transport Infrastructure.

3.28

Bus/Tram Stops Staining

Bus Stops Staining Standards Chart by Land Use Category



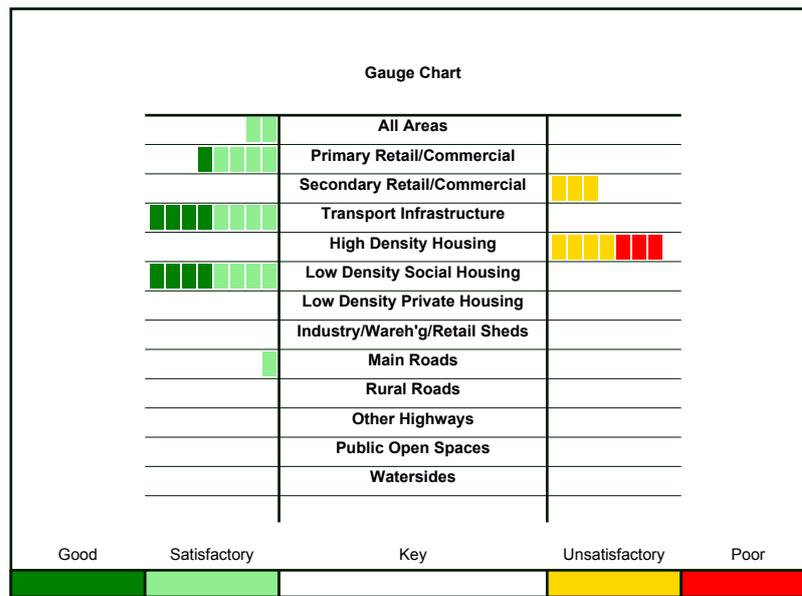
3.28.1 The overall standard for Bus/Tram Stops Staining was Satisfactory 1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 5 SQI in multiple landuses including; Transport Infrastructure and Low Density Social Housing, to
- b. -4 SQI in Primary Retail/Commercial.

3.29

Bus/Tram Stops Graffiti

Bus Stops Graffiti Standards Chart by Land Use Category



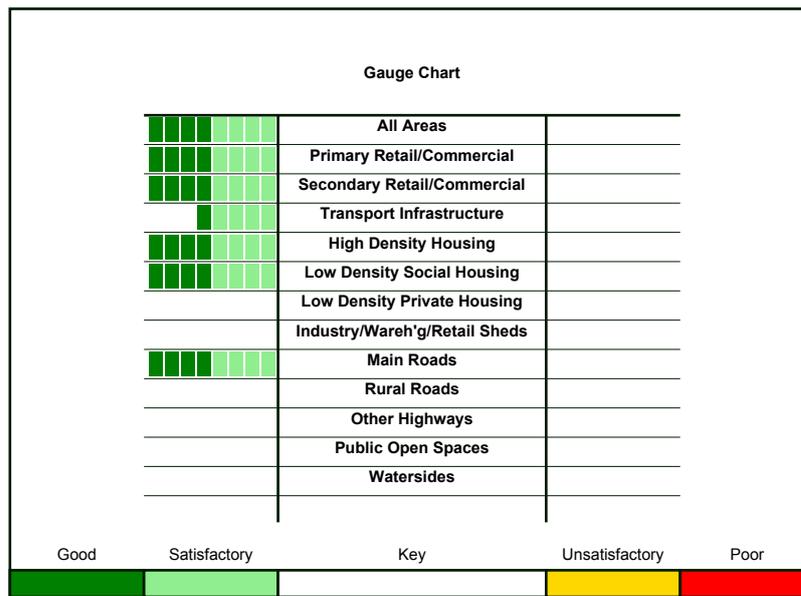
3.29.1 The overall standard for Bus/Tram Stops Graffiti was Satisfactory 2 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Transport Infrastructure and Low Density Social Housing, to
- b. -7 SQI in High Density Housing.

3.30

Bus/Tram Stops Flyposting

Bus Stops Flyposting Standards Chart by Land Use Category



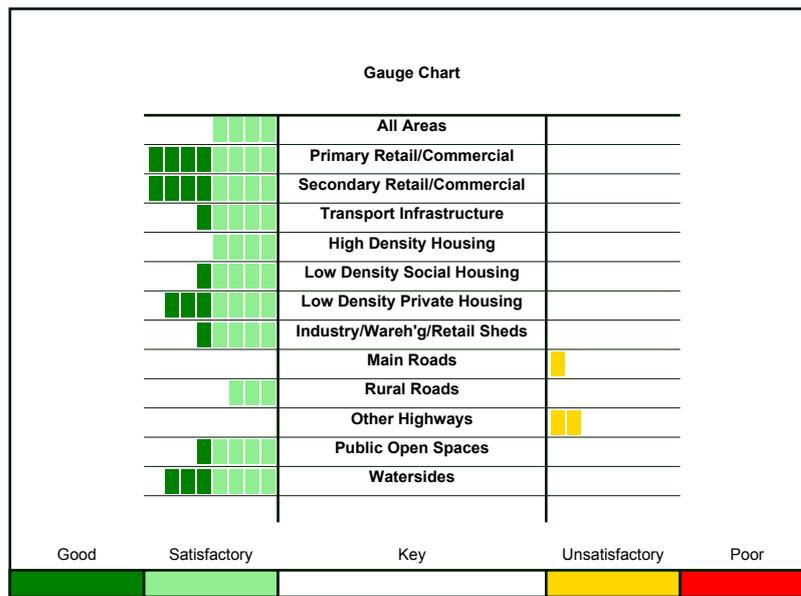
3.30.1 The overall standard for Bus/Tram Stops Flyposting was Good 8 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial, Secondary Retail/Commercial, High Density Housing, Low Density Social Housing and Main Roads, to
- b. 5 SQI in Transport Infrastructure.

3.31

Litter in Landscaping

Litter in Landscaping Standards Chart by Land Use Category



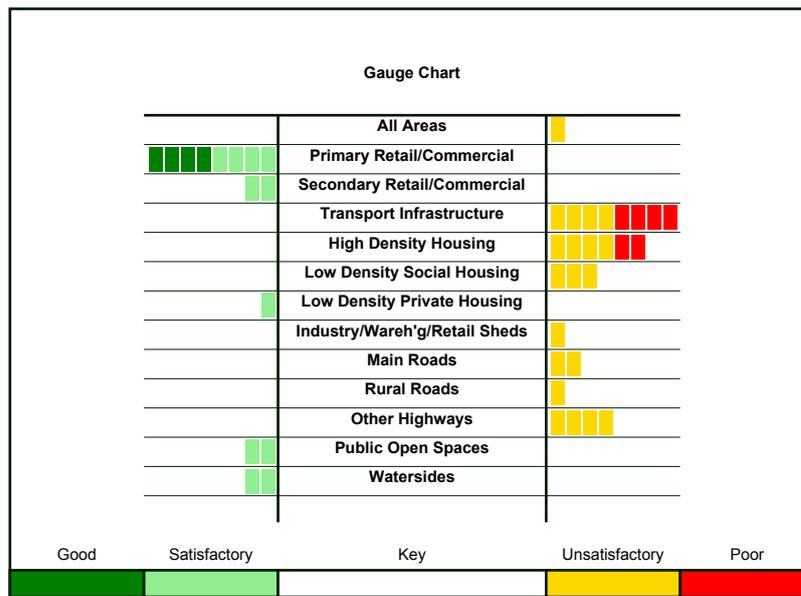
3.31.1 The overall standard for Litter in Landscaping was Satisfactory 4 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in multiple landuses including; Primary Retail/Commercial and Secondary Retail/Commercial, to
- b. -2 SQI in Other Highways.

3.32

Landscaping Maintenance

Landscaping Maintenance Standards Chart by Land Use Category



3.32.1 The overall standard for Landscaping Maintenance was Unsatisfactory -1 SQI, ranging from:

- a. 8 SQI in Primary Retail/Commercial, to
- b. -8 SQI in Transport Infrastructure.

4.0 SURVEY SCOPE AND DEFINITIONS

4.1 Scope and Design of the Survey

4.1.1 On every site selected for survey throughout the authority, 191 fields of information were assessed that are relevant to people's experience of their local environment. The data fields are divided into two broad types:

- a. **Headline Issues** – of which there are 32. These appear in the main coloured graphics and are listed in paragraph 4.1.2, below.
- b. **Subsidiary Information** – much other data is collected in support of the Headline Issues, identifying the sources, causes, and distributions of significant problems. This information is reported in sections 3.0.

4.1.2 The Headline Issues are gathered into Thematic Groups, which provide a range of perspectives on local environmental quality that reflect most people's daily experiences.

a. *Street Cleansing Standards*

The presence of litter (including synthetic materials), detritus (dust, decayed matter etc.), and leaf fall (fallen leaves, twigs, seeds and blossom), is widely regarded by people as a basic test of a local area's environment and a council's service efficiency. The issues assessed are:

Litter
Detritus
Leaf Fall

b. *Cleansing / Fear of Crime Issues*

When assessing how clean an area is people often take account of other issues, including some that are closely related to, or are the direct responsibility of the street cleansing service.

Some of the issues in this group - the 'Signal Crimes' of graffiti, flyposting and flytipping - are also linked to Fear of Crime. The 'Broken Windows Theory' and other similar works have long recognised that poor local environmental standards can cause law-abiding people to fear criminal activity unduly. Conversely, low standards can send signals to criminals that an area is 'fair game' for anti-social or more serious criminal behaviour. This is why the LEQS collects information about a range of 'signal crimes' and other symptoms, including:

Weed Growth
Staining
Wastes Placed Out
Graffiti
Flyposting
Flytipping

c. *Highways Related Issues*

A variety of information is collected about the highway, ranging from the physical condition of its various parts; the extent to which it is obstructed by parked vehicles and other objects; and the amount of traffic present in an area. The aim is twofold: to assess problems faced by people, especially vulnerable users such as pedestrians, disabled people, and cyclists; and to evaluate how easy – or difficult – an area is to clean. The issues assessed are:

Paved Area

Obstruction
Road Drainage Channel Obstruction
Paved Area Condition
Road Drainage Channel Condition
Carriageway Condition
Condition of Road Markings
Vehicle Flows
Pedestrian Flows

d. *Street Furniture*

The condition of street furniture not only contributes to the visual quality of an area, but in many cases, also to people's physical enjoyment. A dirty, vandalised or decayed bench can deter people from sitting down and enjoying a view or a rest. The issues assessed are:

Condition of Public Signage Poles and Lamp Posts
Legibility and Condition of Public Signs
Condition of Other Street Furniture
Condition of Adjacent Buildings and Boundary Structures

e. *Litter Bins*

Litter bins are some of the most exposed, hard-used, and necessary pieces of street furniture. It is important that they are clean, physically intact, and regularly emptied – basic criteria that are assessed by this survey are:

Cleanliness
Physical Condition
Extent to Which Bins Are Filled

f. *Bus and Tram Stops*

The need for people to travel by more sustainable means of transport has never been more pressing. However, the quality of the public transport environment will be important in determining the willingness of car drivers to transfer to buses, trams or trains. For this reason, the survey measures a range of issues, including the following relating to bus and tram stops:

Litter
Physical Condition
Staining
Graffiti
Flyposting

g. *Landscaping*

Landscaped areas can play an important part in determining the quality and variety of public spaces. Unfortunately, because landscaping is relatively cheap to install – but requires long-term maintenance – many schemes funded through capital investment programmes rapidly become neglected. The survey assesses, therefore:

Levels of Litter in Landscaped Areas
Quality of Horticultural Maintenance.

- 4.1.3 The principal aim of the LEQS is to provide robust benchmark statements about relevant aspects of LEQ. However, the data set also allows the identification of the specific issues where, lower overall standards are encountered, and the types of locations where they occur. The Subsidiary Information then enables the general sources and causes of the shortfalls to be diagnosed.

- 4.1.4 The survey is designed, therefore, to be representative of standards prevailing across designated areas and of the types of locations where different standards apply. The survey also supplies information about the proportions of sites affected by LEQ problems during the survey, and the extent to which they were affected. For this reason, the survey is highly structured in the way it is planned and executed, rather than random.
- 4.1.5 The LEQS, therefore, quickly identifies issues needing to be managed; whether they are widespread or limited to specific locations. This enables communities and their representatives to make choices and set measurable targets, and for service managers to plan strategic responses to problems and to measure changes in standards over time. LEQS, therefore, helps communities set a targeted agenda for action that is related both to the issues they face and local priorities.
- 4.1.6 Up to 360 standard sample sites are drawn from each authority within the 12 standard Landuse classes used for the national Local Environmental Quality Survey of England (LEQSE). Within each authority, survey sites have been taken from sample wards that are selected at intervals across the range of deprivation present within the authority, in a similar fashion to the statutory BV199 Cleanliness Performance Indicator survey.
- 4.1.7 As for BV199 a, b and c, the survey is carried out in three periods throughout the year – April to July; August to November and December to March. In each of these three periods one third of the sites are surveyed in order to make sure that the survey reflects the varying weather conditions throughout the year.
- 4.1.8 Local Development Plans and detailed maps are used to help identify main land use classes and in the planning of the survey. Survey sites have been concentrated, as far as possible, within the sample wards to maximise surveying efficiency, while ensuring that they are representative of the range of physical conditions within the ward. Surveyors have discretion to go outside sample wards to meet the target for each land use class, but only if necessary.
- 4.2 *Report Format*
- 4.2.1 This report sets out relevant information in a standard order, using a standard set of graphics, which have been developed over many years to be understood by non-specialist as well as technical audiences.
- 4.2.2 Although the report provides an overview of all the topics covered by the survey – including those where standards may be better than the National benchmarks – the main emphasis is on identifying issues and locations where standards are lower.
- 4.2.3 In general terms the report answers the following sequence of questions:
- a. How is the District doing compared to National as a whole?
 - b. What, and where, are the District's local environmental problems?
 - c. How consistent are standards across the District?
 - d. What are the sources and/or causes of the identified problems?
 - e. Where exactly are the problems most frequently found?

4.3 *Definitions*

4.3.1 A range of terms is used in this report relating to: a) the survey system; b) Standard Land Uses; and, c) the LEQ elements and issues covered by the survey. This section sets out definitions of each category of main terms.

a. **Survey System**

Transect / Survey Site - a 50 metre length of road, or a site of similar dimensions within a car park, or within a recreation area, to which the public has access.

Overall Quality Standard – There are four overall quality standards used in the LEQS, which are defined as follows:

- i. 'Good' - an exceptionally high standard that is unlikely to be maintained in all places, at all times, but should be aimed at being achieved after an area has been serviced or a physical element has been replaced or refurbished;
- ii. 'Satisfactory' - the site being surveyed will not be free of the environmental issue that is being reported on - for example, there may be some litter or graffiti present. However, the extent to which it is present is unlikely to be noticed by most people walking or travelling through the survey site, or be regarded as having a significant adverse effect on the quality of the local environment. The aim of service managers should be to ensure that no element in the environment falls below the lower end of the 'satisfactory' scale before the next service intervention takes place;
- iii. 'Unsatisfactory' - The environmental element in question is present to such a degree that many people will notice it, and some may regard it as worthy of criticism, leading to some complaints to the council.

However, many 'unsatisfactory' situations are capable of remedy and improvement to a 'satisfactory' or better standard within current policy and resource frameworks through focused management action.

- iv. 'Poor' - the environmental element in question is present to such a degree that few people would fail to notice it, and most people would regard it as a matter for criticism. A 'poor' assessment is normally a reflection of one or more of the following: a significant mismatch between maintenance requirements and policy and strategic frameworks; the impacts of external factors (for example, very high levels of physical obstruction, or of pedestrian traffic); a lack of co-ordination between responsible agencies; or there has been a fundamental breakdown in service management.

Standard Quality Interval (SQI)

Each of the four Overall Quality Standards spans a significant range. Therefore, each Quality Standard is divided into four units. These units are called 'Standard Quality Intervals (SQIs)'. An SQI is an interval (measured in terms of quality, rather than time) over which an observant person can reliably detect that a difference in the standard of an aspect of the visible environment has occurred. The maximum range in the 'satisfactory' and 'good' categories is from +1 SQI to +8 SQI. Similarly, the maximum range in the 'unsatisfactory' and 'poor' categories is from -1 SQI to -8 SQI.

b. **Standard Land Uses**

There can be wide variations in social, economic and physical environmental characteristics across districts that comprise a large city like National. In order to provide benchmarks that each District can use for comparison, the Local Environmental Quality Survey (LEQS) uses a series of Standard Land Use Classes.

These Standard Land Use Classes are based on ENCAMS' experience gained from its applied research work for a wide range of local authorities over 15 years, and have provided a satisfactory and universal basis of comparison since 2000. The following definitions are used to determine the 12 standard LEQS land use categories.

Primary Retail and Commercial Areas cover town and city centres, which normally contain a choice of outlets in many retail and commercial sectors (including national and international brand names), and a range of major public facilities. Urban tourist 'hot spots', for example, Durham Cathedral Close, are also included in this standard land use category.

Secondary Retail and Commercial Areas cover retail and commercial areas, normally located outside town centres (but excluding 'retail shed' developments, which are included with industrial and warehousing areas). Secondary Retail and Commercial Areas have a minimum frontage of 50 metres and include a range of retail and commercial facilities that meet people's routine needs provided mainly by individual businesses, regional chains, and occasional national brand names.

Public Transport Facilities include main and other railway, tram and bus stations, together with other purpose made interchange facilities, including park and ride sites and taxi ranks. A number of locations are surveyed at each site to reflect the typical sequence that would be observed by passengers passing through the facilities, from the forecourt to the platform etc...

Higher Density Housing / Mixed Areas include varying types, for example:

- i. housing in inner areas of towns and cities;
- ii. terraced housing in industrial and post-industrial villages;
- iii. short terraces, inter-war semi-detached houses, flats and maisonettes with only limited off-street parking.

Such housing areas sometimes include small, individual retail, office, manufacturing and workshop premises.

There may be some areas of housing where there is a mixture of on-street and off-street parking. Individual transects are assigned to this class if the proportion of dwellings with off-street parking facilities is 50% or less. Otherwise, they are assigned to one of the two lower density housing categories, as appropriate. 'Off-street parking' may include specially formed parking bays, or areas of hard standing on grassed areas or within some curtilages.

Lower Density Social Housing Areas include lower density social housing areas where more than 50% of the properties are provided with usable off-street garaging / parking, including higher-rise developments with relatively large areas of open space and usable off-street parking for the majority of residents.

Lower Density Private Housing Areas - areas of low-density housing where the majority of properties have adequate, purpose made off-street parking, and appear to be privately owned.

Industry/Warehousing/Retail Sheds include:

- i. low-density industrial / warehousing developments;
- ii. out-of-town non-food retailing;
- iii. out-of-town food retailing (superstores);
- iv. science parks containing offices, laboratories and manufacturing processes;

to which free public access is permitted.

Main Roads include stretches of 'A' road, and lengths of 'B' roads that effectively act as main roads within the local road network, except where the roads run through Primary and Secondary Retail and Commercial Areas and High Density Housing locations within urban areas.

The exceptions are High Density Housing Areas where selective demolition has taken place in order to create a wider, often landscaped, main road corridor; all 'Red Routes'; and retail and commercial areas that are served by separate service roads and footways located parallel to the Main Road.

Rural Roads - comprise highways located outside built-up areas, but excluding A-roads. Rural roads in National have to be adjoined by farmland or other open land on both sides. Survey sites are selected in safe locations where there are footways or wide, easily walked verges.

Other Highways include:

- i. formal and informal lay-bys;
- ii. the first 50 metres of 'BOATS'*; 'RUPPS'* and bridleways leading from metalled public highways;
- iii. redundant highway infrastructure still accessible to the public, and stub roads;
- iv. narrow roads, back alleys and linking footpaths within housing areas that are not directly overlooked from adjacent dwellings;
- v. dedicated cycleways that are separated from other land use classes and highways trafficked by vehicles.

* - 'BOATS' are 'Byways Open To All Traffic'; 'RUPPS' are 'Roads Used as Public Paths'.

Public Open Spaces - include parks and open spaces, country parks, picnic sites and de-consecrated cemeteries located on sites that are demarcated from adjacent land uses. Also included are officially named and signed, off-road cycle routes and footpaths, including official long-distance trails and local networks.

Watersides - include all publicly accessible areas adjacent to ponds, lakes, reservoirs, canals, rivers, and estuaries, but exclude coastal areas. To be included, watersides must be of sufficient size to have a side with a minimum continuous public access of 50 metres.

c. LEQ Elements and Issues

Litter – comprising:

General Litter - the commonest type of litter, mainly deposited by people walking or travelling through public areas. The materials frequently involve those associated with eating, drinking and smoking (see fuller definitions of items comprising General Litter, below);

Domestic Refuse Occurring as Litter - this comprises items normally found in domestic waste containers;

Commercial Wastes Occurring as Litter - this comprises items associated with retail, commercial, industrial, transport and other business enterprises;

Construction Wastes Occurring as Litter are identified as a separate category of commercial wastes and include materials associated with building and civil engineering projects, and street works undertaken by utilities companies;

Animal and Other Faeces - this includes all types of faecal deposits in public areas, with the exception of human faeces and occurrences of animal faeces that appear to be associated with veterinary sources;

Clinical Wastes - a broad definition of clinical waste is used covering all materials which have, or which could have, come into contact with human or animal body fluids; are associated with medical, dental, pharmaceutical or veterinary activities; or materials of similar kinds which may have emanated from domestic or other residential properties;

Putrescible Materials - include animal carcasses and all food wastes found deposited in significant quantities;

Harmful Materials - items of litter that could present a significant risk to humans, animals and/or the environment generally, including larger quantities of broken glass, batteries, uncut plastic drinks can holders;

Other Wastes Occurring as Litter - any other materials that are either peculiar to the location or which cannot be allocated accurately to the preceding categories. Items are often included in this category if they physically remain intact but their identity has been lost, either through effects of mechanical abrasion or decay.

Definitions of Components of General Litter - The following items comprise the main components of 'General Litter:

Smokers' Materials - all types of items discarded by people using tobacco products.

Confectionery Packs - all types of confectionery packaging, including that associated with frozen confectionery.

Snack Packs - all items of litter (excluding the contents) that are associated with all forms of pre-baked / pre-prepared food stuffs that have reasonably long shelf-lives, and which are intended to be consumed easily, including in public areas.

Food-on-the-Go Packaging & Other Food / Drink-Related Litter – including items of packaging etc. associated with premises selling freshly prepared foods (including drinks containers that are clearly identifiable as having come from fast-food premises) that have been dropped by customers consuming food and drink while sitting or travelling through an area. Food-on-the-Go premises include hot food takeaway premises, all other retail outlets that sell pre-prepared foods in a format that can be consumed in public places, including bakeries, supermarkets, newsagents and convenience stores, and mobile food stalls.

Drinks Related - all items associated with soft and alcoholic drinks containers are included. Non-alcoholic and alcoholic items are identified separately.

Discarded Food and Drink - all discarded food and drink items, including frozen and sweet confectionery and freshly deposited chewing gum, before it has become trodden in, transforming it into a form of staining.

Paper Tissues - all types of paper tissues, except for those associated with the consumption of foods-on-the-go.

Telephone Related - mobile and other telephone cards and their packaging.

Lottery Related - all items associated with all types of lotteries.

Travel-Related Litter - items mainly comprise discarded public transport tickets and related items, car parking and fixed penalty tickets, and other official notices that can be affixed to vehicles.

Vehicle Components - including materials that appear to be associated with people carrying out roadside repairs, and components falling off vehicles, including those associated with crashes.

ATM Slips - financial receipts associated with automatic cash machines.

Carrier Bags - including all (mainly plastic) bags with handles that are distributed free-of-charge, or for a small charge, by retail outlets. Bags that are clearly identified as being associated with fast-food businesses are included under fast-food packaging.

Pen Related – pens, pencils, refills, cartridges etc. which appear to have been dropped by members of the public rather than being from a domestic or commercial source. If small biro pens are observed in the direct vicinity of bookmakers or premises that are known to use such pens, then they would be assessed as commercial waste.

Other Litter includes other items of litter that are not covered by any of the preceding General Litter categories.

Detritus - comprises dust, grit, decayed organic material and small fragments of brittle litter, such as broken glass or hard plastics, where the physical form - and identity - of the item from which the fragments have been derived, has been lost. Detritus specifically includes all leaves, twigs, blossom fall etc. where their physical form has been eroded through wetting, drying, abrasion and other processes of decay.

Leaf Fall – comprises all fresh leaf, mast and blossom fall.

Weed Growth - any plant that is growing in a location where it is not intended, including where plants or grass are encroaching on paved areas in an unplanned way - usually by means of them colonising accumulations of detritus or cracks and joints in paving.

Staining - any material that discolours surfaces that comprise public spaces in an unplanned way, including chewing gum after it has been trodden into a paved surface, and general mud and grime that can build up in the absence of sufficient rainfall or street washing.

Wastes Placed Out - Any waste either contained or uncontained which is judged to have been placed out for collection. If there is any evidence that the waste has been intentionally dumped or abandoned, then it would be recorded as Flytipping.

Graffiti - any informal or illegal marks, scratchings, carvings, drawings or paintings that have been deliberately made by a person or persons on any physical element comprising the visible outdoor environment, usually with a view to communicating some message or symbol etc. to others.

The definitions of the types of Graffiti are;

Juvenile – generally takes the form of “x loves y” type messages or lists of first names. They are usually written with felt-tip or marker pens.

Tags – stylised personal graphic identifiers depicting names or nicknames, which are often large and in bold colours. Tags can be pictorial, drawn free hand or using stencils, and are usually painted with spray cans or drawn with marker pens.

Scratches – marks caused by the deliberate use of a sharp instrument to cut into painted surfaces, wood, plastic, brick etc. However, if these scratches form words, then they are classified as 'juvenile' or 'tags' as appropriate.

Ghost – graffiti which has been partially removed or has faded to such an extent that it has lost its initial visual impact.

Contentious – any graffiti which could be offensive to particular members of the general public. This would include any obscene, racist, political, religious graffiti.

Stencil – any graffiti which has been sprayed through a stencil, unless it is deemed that it forms a 'tag' (see above).

Other – any other type of graffiti which can not be assigned to any of the above categories.

Flyposting - any printed material and associated remains informally or illegally fixed to any structure. It excludes approved and managed advertising hoardings and Flyposting sites, and other valid, legally placed signs and notices. It includes any size of material from small stickers up to large posters – often advertising popular music recordings, concerts and other events. Placards affixed with zip ties are a form of Flyposting. The definitions of the types of Flyposting are;

Entertainments – usually takes the form of posters, and generally advertises events, music and attractions.

Business – any flyposting which is advertising the sale of goods and/or services, or offering employment.

Contentious – any flyposting which could be offensive to particular members of the general public. This would include any obscene, racist, political, religious flyposting.

Old Local Authority notices – any Local Authority notice that has been attached usually to a post or pole, which is more than three months past the notification date stated on the notice.

Personal – flyposting placed out by individuals, for example students in city centres advertising places in a student flat or house, someone trying to find a lost cat or dog etc.

Remnants - the remains of flyposting. This would include, partially removed posters, stickers etc, also tie-bands or other forms of fastening which remain after a notice has been removed it is normally impossible to ascertain what this type of Flyposting originally was used for.

Other – any other type of flyposting which can not be assigned to any of the above categories.

The definitions of the forms of Flyposting are;

Posters – paper or card size A5 or above which has been glued to the surface.

Stickers – self-adhesive stickers from shop price stickers to large glossy logo stickers.

Tied – flyposting which has been tied to surface by zip-ties, string cord etc.

Remnants – the remains of flyposting. This would include, partially removed posters, stickers etc, also tie-bands or other forms of fastening which remain after a notice has been removed.

Other – any other form of flyposting which can not be assigned to any of the above categories.

Flytipping – materials knowingly abandoned on an illegal basis in quantities ranging from a small carrier bag up to lorry loads or multiples thereof. The sources may vary - for example, domestic refuse, bulky household goods, commercial or construction wastes.

Highway Related Issues - Certain elements in the local environment can obstruct or impede normal cleansing processes and the delivery of other environmental services. They can similarly affect cyclists and pedestrians, especially more vulnerable users, such as disabled people, children, and people with pushchairs. The elements examined are:

The degree to which pavements are obstructed by fixed and moveable objects, and/or which lacked upstands along backlines and around verges and landscaped areas against which effective sweeping can take place;

The degree to which road drainage channels are obstructed by parked vehicles and other large objects;

The physical condition of pavement surfaces – assessing both for their potential to act as a trip hazard and as traps for litter.

The physical condition of road drainage channels – reference is made to the cleansibility of the channel;

The physical condition of road surfaces – in particular the potential effects of surface condition on cyclists' safety are taken into account;

The condition of road markings – this takes account both of their legibility, and of deteriorated markings' potential to detract from LEQ;

The degree of obstruction related to vehicle flows – this assesses the level of congestion present in an area;

The degree of obstruction related to pedestrian flows – as above.

When evaluating the survey findings for these elements, however, it is important to take into account the density of population, the complexity of land uses, and the economic vitality of a District / sub-area. To a significant extent, obstruction is an inevitable consequence of these 'success factors'.

Street Furniture – the physical condition and utility of a range of street furniture – posts, public signs, seats, fences etc. – are assessed.

Condition of Adjacent Buildings and Boundary Structures – although not always publicly owned and maintained, assessment is made for three main reasons: these structures provide the 'back drop' to the local public realm and help set the 'tone' of the area; their condition can be an indicator of economic vitality; and, vacant and damaged premises can be associated with criminal activities, such as drug dealing.

Litter Bins – this section of the survey assesses the cleanliness, physical condition and degree of fill of all types of container that are intended receive litter from the public. Generally, litter bins range between 25 – 200 litres in capacity.

Bus and Metro Stops – 5 aspects of LEQ are measured in and around bus and metro stops that are located on or near survey transects.

Landscape Maintenance – landscaped areas are classified into four types, which are assessed for the degree to which they are littered, and their quality of maintenance. The maintenance assessment is based on the type of landscaping it is intended to be. The four types are:

- i. Traditional ornate, labour-intensive, horticultural designs, such as floral clocks, plant beds and finely mown grassed areas;
- ii. Lower maintenance designs including areas of grass and shrub planting;
- iii. Areas of 'natural' planting, including grassed, shrubbed and treed areas maintained at relatively low frequencies, which may have been planted, and are being managed with ecological principles in mind;
- iv. Hard landscaped areas, including paved surfaces that are primarily designed to be decorative or sculptural, which may or may not have a practical purpose. They include raised decorative paving that is intended to deter pedestrians from following particular routes.

4.4 *The Presentation of Data*

4.4.1 The survey information is presented using standard formats and graphics. These are designed to be both easy to prepare and to comprehend, in order that the information available to Districts is both timely and useful.

a. *LEQ Target Index*

The LEQ Target Index has been developed in order to summarise better the overall differences in LEQ standards between areas. This expresses the extent to which Three Rivers District Council achieves an average target standard of +4 SQI for each environmental element. This is then compared to the Nation-Wide Target Index.

To calculate this index, the number of Satisfactory and Good standard SQIs are first totalled (i.e. the total number of green coloured blocks, ranging from +1 - +8 SQI). This number is then divided by the maximum score based on the average +4 SQI target, which is calculated by multiplying the total number of local environmental elements applicable to the land use by 4. The resulting number is then multiplied by 100 to obtain the % of target achieved. The data used are deliberately unweighted.

b. *Matrix Chart*

The Matrix Chart provides a strategic overview of standards by LEQ Issue across all relevant land uses, as well as at a District level.

The standard applicable to a particular LEQ Issues / Land Use is simply shown at an Overall Quality Standard level, using the relevant colour – Dark Green (Good), Light Green (Satisfactory), Amber (Unsatisfactory), or Red (Poor).

c. *Gauge Chart*

The next level of analysis – The Gauge Chart - indicates the position of an environmental element within its overall quality category using a 'fuel gauge' graphic. Each of the four quality categories ('Good', 'Satisfactory', 'Unsatisfactory', and 'Poor') is sub-divided into four Standard Quality Intervals (SQI). Each SQI represents an interval over which a reasonably acute person should see that a small, qualitative difference in standard has occurred for the local environmental element being examined.

The scale on a Gauge Chart runs from +8 SQI at the upper end of the 'Good' category (with +4 SQI being the top end of the 'Satisfactory' scale) to -8 SQI at the bottom end of the 'Poor' category (with -4 SQI being the lower end of the 'Unsatisfactory' category).

d. *Target Issues Matrix Chart*

The aim of the LEQS is to assist communities, their managing agencies, and other involved stakeholders, to improve and sustain higher local environmental quality. To do this, it is necessary to focus efforts on raising those areas where standards are below the applicable benchmarks – in this case, the National Benchmark.

The Target Issues Matrix Chart does this by identifying in a Stone colour those issues where the current District standard falls significantly below the applicable benchmark (by 2 - 3 SQI). The LEQ issues where the standard is far below the applicable benchmark (by 4 or more SQI) are shown in Red.

The parts of a Target Issues Matrix that are white relate to those topics where the standard is better than, equal to, or just under the applicable benchmark (by 1 SQI).

The issues identified on a Target Issues Matrix are divided into two groups these are outlined below;

- i. Thematic Issues – which are ones where standards are significantly or more below the applicable benchmarks in at least one third of applicable land use categories.

If an issue is identified to be thematic it might indicate that there is a systemic problem with, say, the service specification, communication or delivery across all or most of the District.

- ii. Location Specific Issues – are LEQ issues where the standard is significantly or more below the applicable benchmarks in less than a third of applicable land uses.

A location specific issue may arise because of a particular set of circumstances that only occur in one, or a limited number of locations. Evidence revealed in the subsequent sections of the report may even indicate that the sources / causes of a particular shortfall in standard may be different in each of the affected land uses.

e. *Proportional Contribution Chart*

The LEQS also uses a method - called the Proportionate Contribution Protocol - to estimate the sources / causes of various local environmental quality problems, and the size of contribution made by each source / cause to the problem in question.

This method of assessment is primarily designed to rank in order of importance the sources / causes found within each transect, and to give some understanding of the overall magnitude of the contribution made by each to the problem in question. The technique is not intended to produce data that is as precise as that which is derived from more time-consuming methods, such as counting and categorising each occurrence of an LEQ issue that is encountered.

This information is vital if managers are to move from a 'palliative' approach to service delivery - one that simply one that clears up problems - to a 'systematically managed service', which is one that seeks also to remove or reduce the sources and causes of problems.

f. *Incidence Graph*

This horizontal bar chart shows the proportion of survey sites on which a particular component of an LEQ issue was encountered. For example, the proportions of sites on which the various components of General Litter occurred.

g. *Location Graphs*

In this use of the horizontal bar chart format, the precise locations within survey transects where a problem was greatest is shown. Again, the chart shows the proportion of transects where each detailed location was affected by the problem in question (i.e. the proportion of transects where the Road Drainage Channel was most littered, etc.).

FOOT NOTES

1.0 THE LEQS BACKGROUND AND METHODOLOGY

- 1.1 The Local Environmental Quality Survey (LEQS) protocols have been developed over 16 years on a wide range of projects for public and private sector clients in the UK and overseas. The aim of the survey is to model the physical aspects of the local environment that affect most people's quality of life. The survey also records diagnostic information about social, economic and other sources and causes of physical environmental problems that are identified.

Local Environmental Quality Survey of England

- 1.2 The Annual Local Environmental Quality Survey of England (LEQSE), which ENCAMS undertakes on behalf of the Government (sponsored by Defra), represents one of the most extensive use of LEQS protocols.
- 1.3 The development of the LEQSE began in 2000, at the request of the Government, which was keen to have data that would assist in forming its emerging Liveability and Sustainable Communities policies. The first LEQSE Report was published in 2001 / 02.
- 1.4 Now in its seventh year, the Survey is in a position to identify trends, especially in relation to those aspects of the local environment at which Government policy has been directed. These include street cleansing and signal crimes.
- 1.5 The purpose of the LEQSE is to measure standards and record information about the things that we encounter when going about our daily lives, which enhance or diminish our quality of life.
- 1.6 Consequently, the LEQSE examines in detail issues relating to street cleansing, environmental crime and fear of crime, the condition, management and design of pavements, roads, street furniture, litter bins, bus stops, litter bins, bus stops and the maintenance of landscaped areas.
- 1.7 The survey expresses this information in easily understood graphics showing National Benchmarks for England and for 12 standard land uses, as well as for each of the 9 English Regional Development Agency (RDA) areas.