

Sefton Council Customer Services

User Experience Survey Report

November 2025





1. Background

Delivering great customer service takes both understanding of what your customers want and a way to see that they receive it. Through our commitment to developing a culture where other people's views are listened to and valued, a survey have been commissioned to obtain feedback from our customers.

The main aim of the survey is to collect data from the users of our services to measure the overall experience of interacting with Customer Services and record their satisfaction with the service that they received from our One Stop Shops.

2. Introduction

Visits to Bootle One Stop shop are by a mix of pre-arranged appointments, mostly for Taxi Licensing, and drop-ins. All visits to Southport One Stop Shop must be by pre-arranged appointment. Customers can book an appointment by ringing Sefton Council's Contact Centre or arranging a further appointment on an initial/previous visit to the One Stop Shop. Additionally, customers can be contacted by letter and issued with an appointment as in the case of Taxi Licensing enquiries where it is identified that a licence renewal is due.

This report provides information regarding various questions posed in the form of an exit survey to customers who visited the One Stop Shops over a two-week period in November 2025. In Bootle 191 customers completed the survey, while 49 customers completed the survey in Southport.

3. Profiling information

Most respondents were over 30 years old. In Bootle, over 76% of respondents were under 60 years old whereas, in Southport, the majority, over 67% of respondents, were over 60.

In Bootle, there were significantly more male than female participants in the survey while, in Southport, the situation was reversed with more female participants.

At both sites, less than 20% of customers, who responded, stated that they had some form of disability. Despite the older demographic in Southport, fewer respondents stated they had some form of disability. (Less than 13% in Southport compared to over 16% in Bootle.)

Age Group	Bootle % of respondents	Southport % of respondents
Under 18	0.00%	0.00%
18-29	9.60%	4.65%
30-39	28.25%	4.65%
40-49	22.03%	13.95%
50-59	16.38%	9.30%
60-69	12.99%	23.26%
70-79	7.91%	32.56%
80-84	1.13%	9.30%
85+	1.69%	2.33%

Gender	Bootle % of respondents	Southport % of respondents
Male	81.14%	40.91%
Female	18.86%	59.09%

Disability	Bootle % of respondents	Southport % of respondents
Yes	16.67%	12.82%
No	83.33%	87.18%

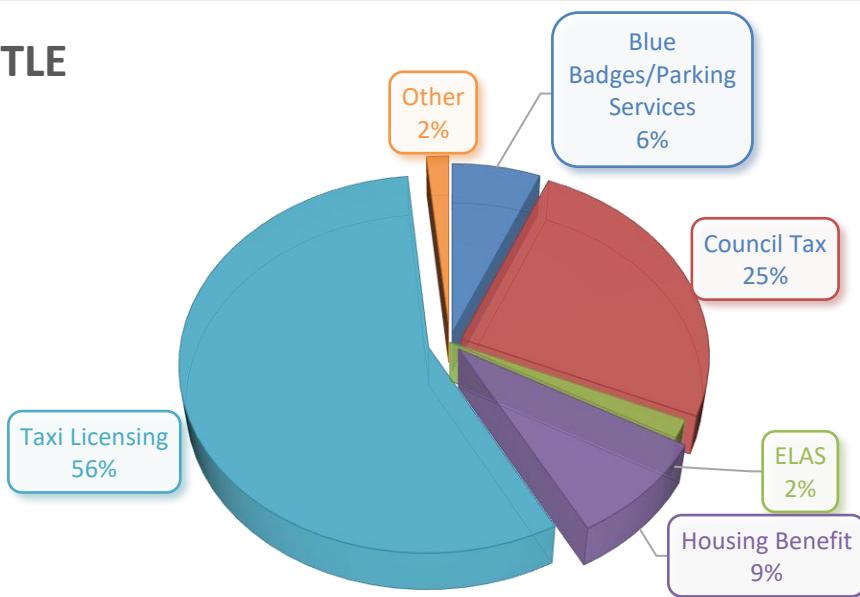
4. Key Findings and Questions

Customers were asked several questions detailed in the questionnaire shown in Appendix A. The charts below show the type of enquiries made by customers participating in the survey.

In Bootle, Taxi Licensing enquiries were the most common at 56%. 25% of enquiries were about Council Tax and the remaining 19% of enquiries was split between Housing Benefits, Blue Badges, Parking, ELAS and other services.

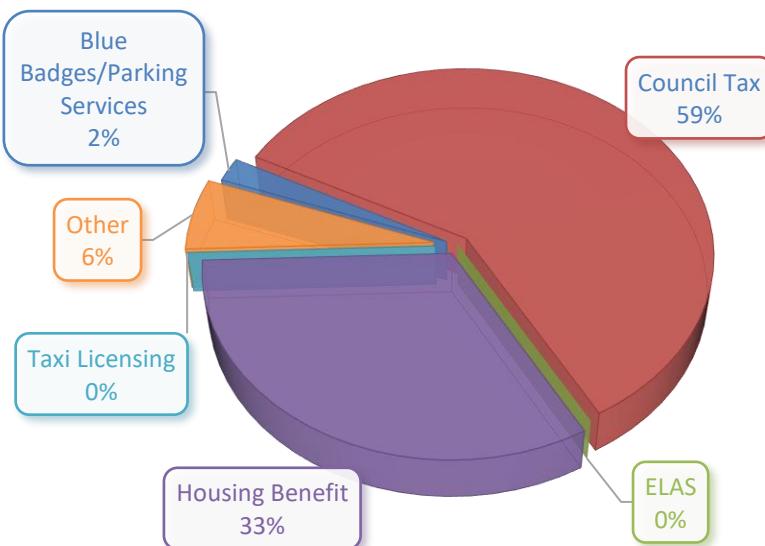


BOOTLE



In Southport, where there were no Taxi or ELAS enquiries, over half of all enquiries were about Council Tax, 33% were about Housing Benefits and, between them, Blue Badges/Parking and Other miscellaneous services accounted for just 8%.

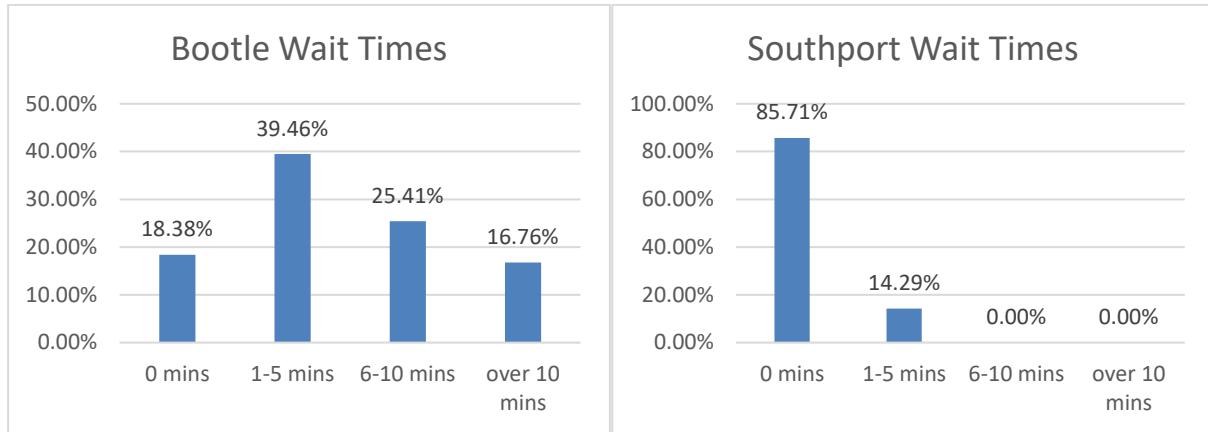
SOUTHPORT



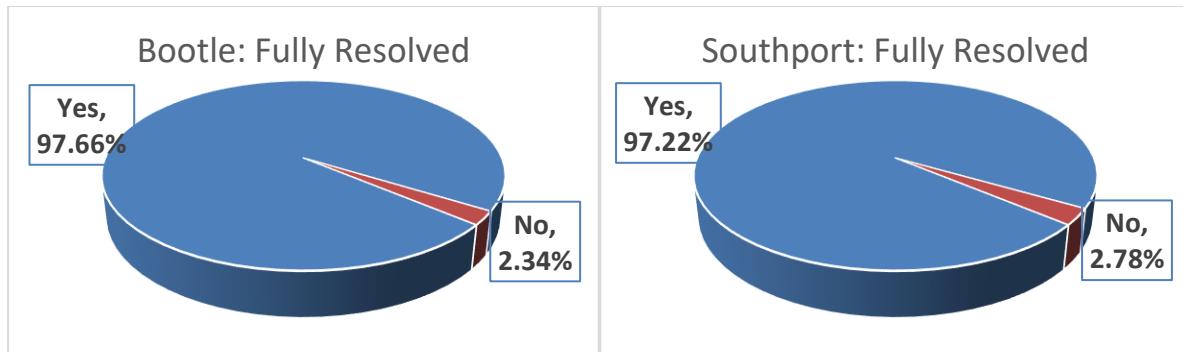
4.1 Waiting times and Service delivery

Customers were asked how long they had to wait, from time of arrival, before a CSA called them over. In Bootle, where the One Stop Shop operates a mix of appointments and drop-ins, over 83% of respondents were seen in under 10 minutes. In Southport, where customers

are seen on an appointment only basis, all respondents were seen in under 10 minutes and over 85% were seen immediately on arrival.

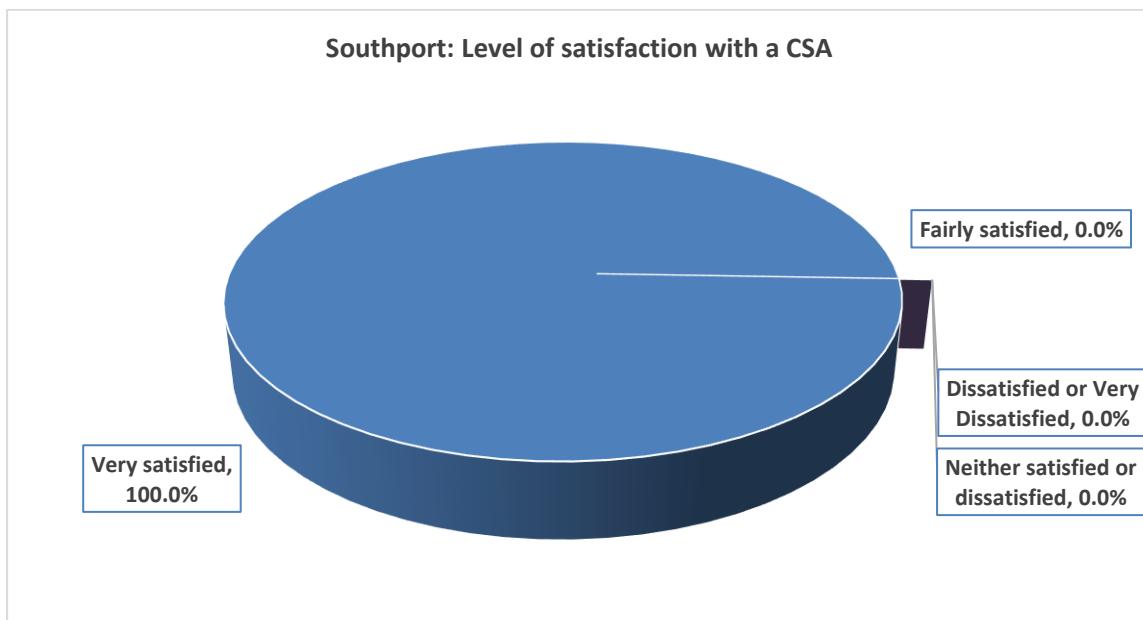
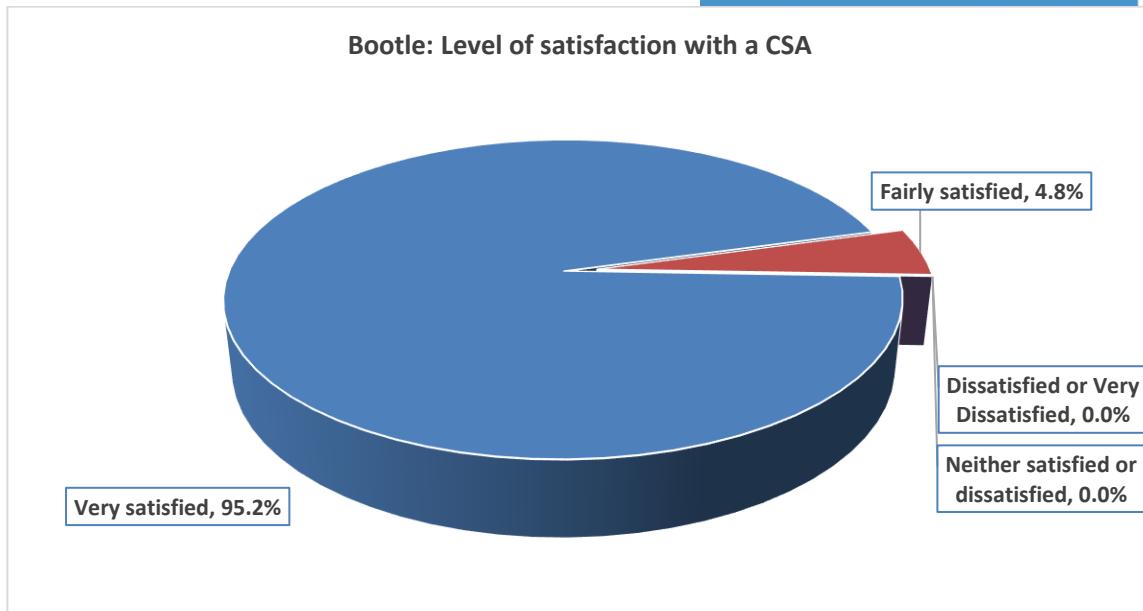


When asked if their query was fully resolved during their interview at the One Stop Shop, a very high number of respondents at both sites said yes, their query was fully resolved. (over 97% at both sites).



Customers were asked how satisfied they were with their interaction with a Customer Services Advisor during their visit to the One Stop Shop. 100% of respondents were either 'Very Satisfied' or 'Fairly Satisfied'.

The charts below show customer satisfaction levels at both sites.

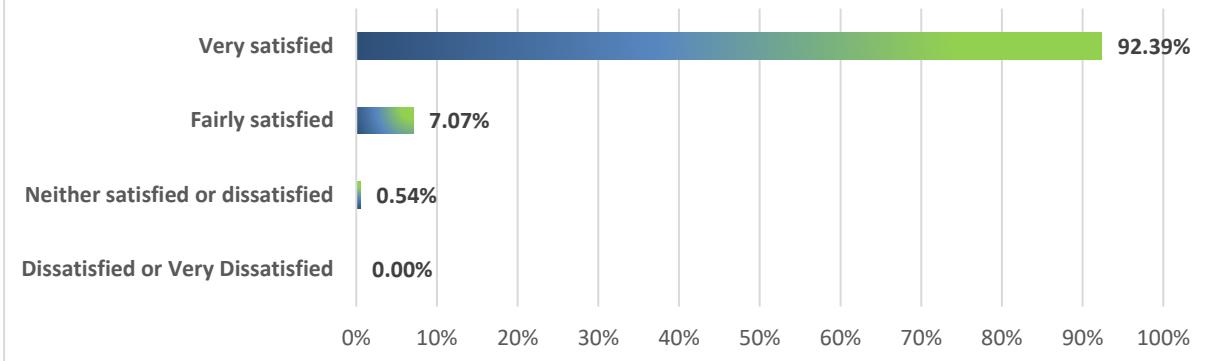


4.2 Overall Satisfaction

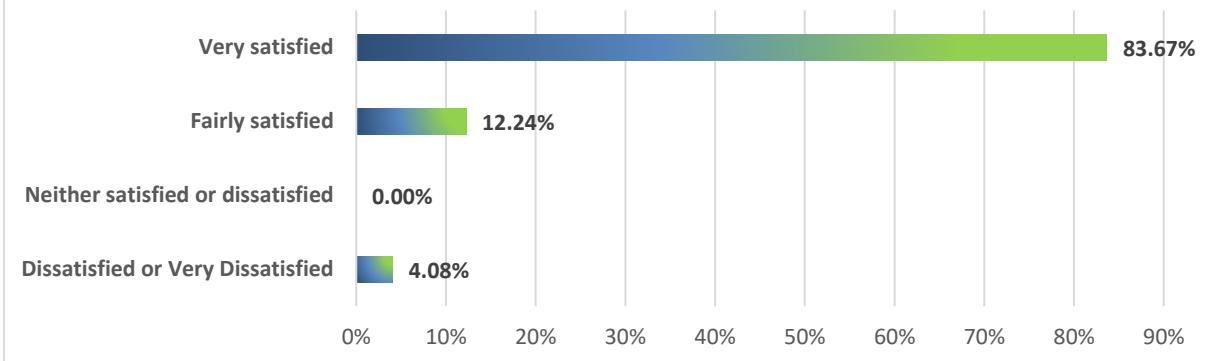
To measure overall satisfaction, customers were asked how satisfied they were with their whole experience of interacting with Sefton Council via Customer Services in respect of their most recent enquiry only.

The following results summaries show that over 99% of respondents in Bootle, and over 95% in Southport, were 'Satisfied' with the service.

Bootle: Overall customer satisfaction



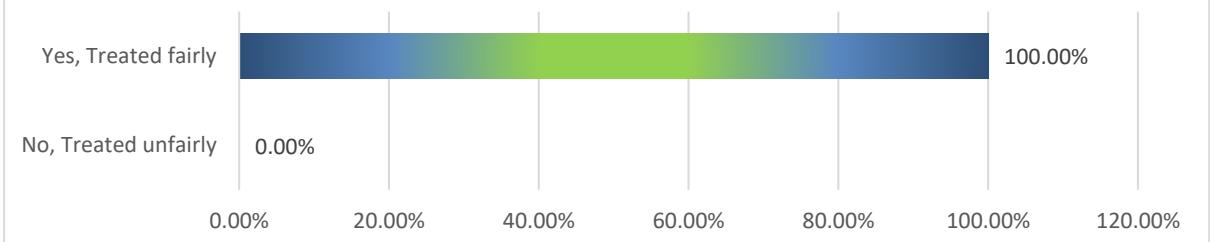
Southport: Overall customer satisfaction



4.3 Fairness

Customers were asked whether they felt they had been treated fairly, during their latest visit to the One Stop Shop. 100% of all respondents at both sites said, yes, they did feel they had been treated fairly.

Combined: Do you feel you were treated fairly?



5. Using Online Services

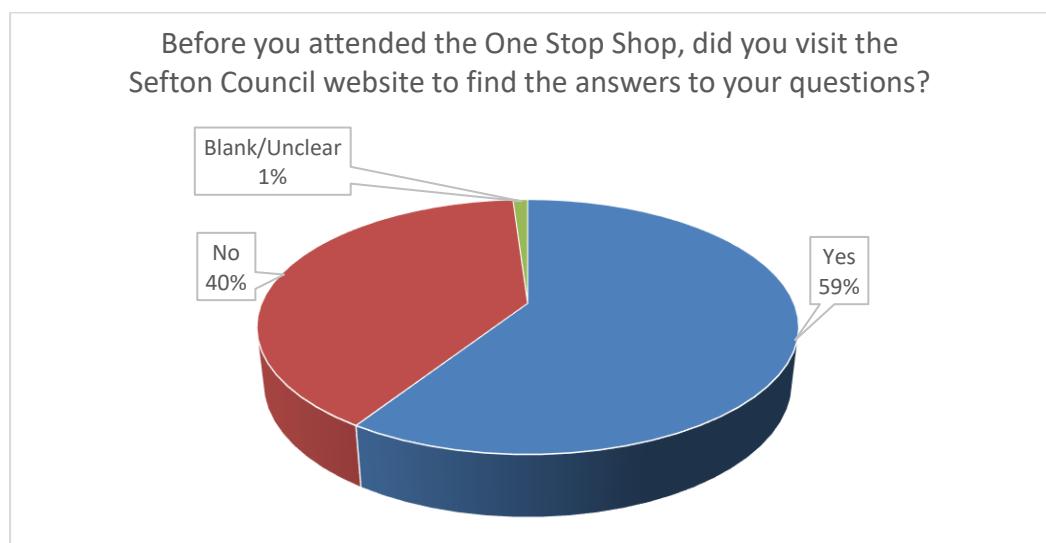
In order to try and understand why customers were electing to visit the One Stop Shops, rather than using any online services provided, customers were asked whether they had attempted to visit the

Council's website, to meet their needs, before they came. If they had, they were asked why they still needed to visit the One Stop Shop. If they hadn't tried the website first, they were asked why not:

Before you attended the One Stop Shop, did you visit the Sefton Council website to find the answers to your questions?

Location	Yes	No	Blank/Unclear
Bootle	113	76	2
Southport	2	47	0
Combined	115	123	2

Combined Results:



Although the proportion of respondents who had tried the website increased from our previous survey, a high proportion of respondents at both sites still said "No" they had not visited the website first. Among those who skipped the website altogether, responses revealed strong barriers:

- **Digital Exclusion.** Many explicitly stated that they could not access online services for various reasons.
- **Tech confidence, access, or cognitive challenges** clearly impacted usage.
- **Lack of Access to the Internet** was cited by a couple of respondents.
- **Unawareness or Misinformation;** "Did not know about the website". This suggests either a visibility gap or unclear messaging around what the website can do.
- **Preference for Human Interaction;** This remains common, especially among older respondents, or those managing multiple services at once.

While all Customer Service staff will encourage the use of all available online services, practical, in-person help remains available to all One Stop Shop visitors who genuinely require it.

Self-service computers are made available in Bootle One Stop Shop and in the library adjacent to the Southport One Stop Shop.

One Stop Shop signpost users in need to these machines and will provide practical assistance. where necessary. Our staff proactively signpost One Stop Shop visitors toward relevant online services to educate users and encourage them to try the convenience of online services in the future.

Many people did try the website but were left needing further support. The key themes were:

- **Website Usability Issues:** “doesn’t answer my question”, “too difficult to navigate” etc. Several respondents also cited learning difficulties as a barrier to usability.
- **Users found forms confusing, incomplete, or inaccessible.**
- **Transaction Couldn’t Be Completed Online.** This remains common for services like taxi badge renewal, blue badge applications, or document verification.
- **Personal Support Preferred or Required.** Some cited errors or portal problems and needed human help. Others, even with successful navigation, said they preferred reassurance through direct conversation.

As issues with online forms and services are brought to the attention of Customer Services staff, we continue to feed back the issues to the service areas responsible and work with those service areas toward addressing problems and improving their online offering.

Conclusions

1. The Website Alone Isn’t Enough:

Even digitally active users found the website insufficient or too cumbersome. This shows a need for better design, accessibility, and clearer task completion paths.

2. Digital Exclusion Is Real and Widespread:

Digital inclusion strategies, like assisted digital support, training, and simplified portals, are essential.

3. In-person service Is not just a convenience, it’s a necessity:

For many, especially those with vulnerabilities or language/access needs, the One Stop Shop is a lifeline, not just a fallback.

Our Response

The need for digital assistance continues, especially for Bootle One Stop Shop customers using the Taxi Licensing portal. Also, the continuing shift to greater online access by many council services and external services such as Universal Credit drive a need for digital support along with other influences like cost of living pressures driving residents to want to access online assistance such as Council Tax Reduction, Housing Benefit, ELAS, Household Support Fund etc.

In response to this need, we continue our commitment to:

- provide digital assistance to anyone with a genuine need,
- provide equipment (and help to use it) at both our sites,
- encourage and educate our customers regarding the online services that Sefton Council already has available and,
- work with our partners to address problems with and continually improve their online services.

Appendix A: The Questionnaire:

Customer Service Satisfaction Survey

One Stop Shop –

Survey Period –

We would like to know how the service was from us today. This will help us to continue to improve our service.

Section A

Q1. What was the purpose of your visit to the One Stop Shop today?

Q2. Before you attended the One Stop Shop, did you visit the Sefton Council website to find the answers to your questions?

Yes

No

Q3. If Yes, you did try the Council website, please explain why you still needed to visit the One stop Shop?

Q4. If No, you did not use the Council website please explain why you did not visit the website first?

Section B

Q5. From your arrival at the One Stop Shop, how long did you wait for a Customer Service Advisor to call you over?

<input type="checkbox"/> Immediate, 0 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> Waited 6 -10 mins
<input type="checkbox"/> Waited 1 to 5 mins	<input type="checkbox"/> Waited over 10 mins

Q6. Was your query resolved during this visit to the One Stop Shop?

<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No
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Q7. When you were in the One Stop Shop, how satisfied were you with your interaction with the Customer Services Advisor?

<input type="checkbox"/> Very satisfied	<input type="checkbox"/> Fairly satisfied
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Neither satisfied or
dissatisfied

Dissatisfied
 Very dissatisfied

Please explain why you chose this answer.

Q8. Now thinking about using the One Stop Shop and your latest visit only.

How satisfied are you with your whole experience of interacting with Sefton Council via Customer Services?

Very satisfied

Dissatisfied

Fairly satisfied

Very dissatisfied

Neither satisfied or
dissatisfied

Section C

Q9. Now thinking about your experience in the One Stop Shop and your latest visit only. Do you feel you were treated fairly?

Yes, treated fairly

No, treated unfairly

Q10. If you feel you were treated unfairly, please explain why?

Q10. If you feel you were treated unfairly, please tell us what could have been done differently so that you felt fairly treated?

Q11. If you feel you were treated unfairly, please tell us what could have been done differently so that you felt fairly treated?

Some Questions About You.

These questions are optional, you do not have to answer them. All this information is private. We bring together the answers. This information will **not** be able to tell us who you

are, but it will help us to understand if we are missing people out.

1. Do you consent to providing your details in line with the privacy notice?

Yes. No.

2. How old are you?

<input type="checkbox"/>	Under 18.	<input type="checkbox"/>	18 – 29.
<input type="checkbox"/>	30 – 39.	<input type="checkbox"/>	40 – 49.
<input type="checkbox"/>	50 – 59.	<input type="checkbox"/>	60 – 69.
<input type="checkbox"/>	70 – 79.	<input type="checkbox"/>	80 – 84.
<input type="checkbox"/>	85+	<input type="checkbox"/>	Prefer not to say.

3. Gender.

Male.
 Female.
 Prefer not to say.

4. Is the gender you identify with the same as your sex registered at birth?

Yes.
 No.
 Prefer not to say.

5. Do you currently live as your birth sex?

Yes.

No.

Prefer not to say.

If no, please tell us your gender identity?

6. Relationships - How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Heterosexual or straight.

Gay.

Lesbian.

Bisexual.

Prefer not to say.

I identify differently.

Please tell us how you identify.

7. Are you cared for by Sefton Council? This means a child or young person who is being cared for by the council.

Yes.

No.

Prefer not to say.

8. Have you ever been cared for as a child by Sefton Council or any other council?

Yes.

No.

Prefer not to say.

9. Disability - Do you have any of the following?

Physical Impairment.

Visual Impairment.

Hearing Impairment / Deaf.

Learning difficulty.

Learning Disabilities.

Autism Spectrum Condition.

Long term illness that affects your daily life.

Dementia.

Mental Health Condition.

Prefer not to say.

If you have Cancer, diabetes, or HIV this is seen as a disability under the Equalities Law.

Or you have selected any of the boxes in question 6 (above).

10. Do you think of yourself as disabled?

Yes.

No.

Prefer not to say.

11. What is your religion or belief?

- No religion or belief.
- Christian.
- Hindu.
- Muslim.
- Jewish.
- Sikh.
- Prefer not to say.
- Other. Please tell us.

12. Race and ethnicity - do you identify as:

- Prefer not to say.

White.

- English, Welsh, Scottish, Northern Irish, British.
- Irish.
- Gypsy or Irish Traveller.
- Roma.
- Polish
- Portuguese.
- Latvian.
- Other White Background. Please tell us.

Mixed or Multiple ethnic groups.

White and Black Caribbean.

White and Black African.

White and Asian.

Other Mixed/Multiple ethnic background.

Asian or Asian British.

Indian.

Bangladeshi.

Pakistani.

Chinese.

Other Asian background. Please tell us.

Black or Black British.

African.

Caribbean.

Other Black/African/Caribbean backgrounds.

Please tell us.

Other Ethnic Group.

Arab. Other Ethnic background. Please tell us.