



# Yorkshire Water Ilkley engagement

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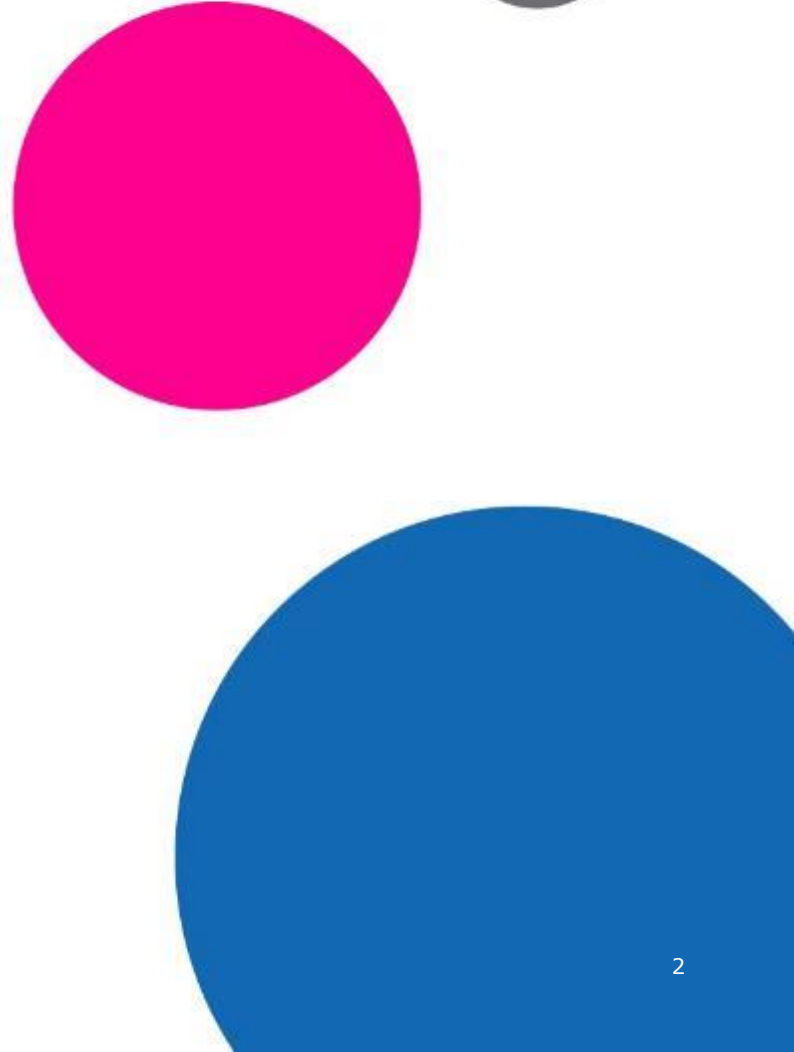


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# Background & objectives

Yorkshire Water (YW) has a need to **understand who its customers in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding areas are**; their general wants and needs in life, their perceptions of YW, and what they need from YW.

In addition, YW has a need to **understand the impact that the upcoming bathing water designation in Ilkley is having and might have on customer perceptions** of YW.

Findings from the research will be **set against YW's needs state-framework**, including;

- Where customers from the target areas typically sit on the needs-state wheel
- What their core expectations are

## Key objectives:

Develop a true understanding of customers in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding

1

Identify customers wants and needs from YW

2

Identify any issues customers in the target areas have with Yorkshire Water

3

What do customers already know about the services YW offer e.g. awareness of PSR, and improvement works in the area

4

Identify a baseline measure of customer perception of YW in the target areas and establish if/how this varies between different customer groups

5

To understand the value of the River Wharfe in Ilkley, exploring both the economic and social benefit/importance of the river

6



# YW's key Acorn group assumptions

There are three key groups of customer in the Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding area, plus a secondary group of interest (Rising prosperity). Within these groups, a number of assumptions about the general characteristics are made (as shown below). Throughout this report, we will identify areas where our research finds these assumptions to be either correct or misplaced.

Affluent achievers	Rising prosperity	Comfortable communities	Financially stretched
<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High earning executives/business owners</li><li>• 55+</li><li>• Detached house</li><li>• Owned outright</li><li>• Empty nesters</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wealthy, confident consumers &amp; investors</li><li>• Interests (foreign travel, dining out &amp; leisurely sports)</li></ul> <b>Key group</b>	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Educated young professionals/career climbers</li><li>• 25-44</li><li>• Apartments/maisonettes</li><li>• Privately renting</li><li>• Pre-family</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High earners but with high rents/expenditure</li><li>• Interests (cinema, organic foods, antiques)</li></ul> <b>Secondary group</b>	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Middle career professionals or established manual professions</li><li>• 35-64</li><li>• Semi/detached houses</li><li>• Mortgages/owned outright</li><li>• Families</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medium to above average income with manageable outgoings</li><li>• Interests (pets, DIY, nature)</li></ul> <b>Key group</b>	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Manual occupations or low paid/low skill occupations</li><li>• All ages</li><li>• Semi-detached/terraces</li><li>• Rental/council owned</li><li>• Mixed families &amp; empty nesters</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Lower incomes or single income families</li><li>• Interests (football, TV, gambling)</li></ul> <b>Key group</b>

# Methodology



**CAPI and CATI surveys with 273 customers aged 18+ living in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding with quotas on Acorn classification\***

**Qualitative element with 32 customers living in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding with quotas on Acorn classification\***

**The project started as CATI, using our in-house CATI unit and external sample purchased from Datascope. This approach was found to be unsuited to Ilkley, so a switch to CAPI was agreed.**

## **A two-step qualitative approach:**

- **Step one:** an ethnographic exercise with customers (using a specialist platform, Indeemo). Customers were given a number of tasks designed to dig deeper into their lives and get a better understanding of *who* they are \*\*
- **Step two:** 28x 1 hour 1-to-1 depth interviews & 1x 1.5 hour focus group (with 4 participants) to expand on the learnings from step one, and to develop a deeper understanding of perceptions and needs in relation to YW

**Face-to-face interviewers were sent to Ilkley and the surrounding areas to conduct door-to-door interviews in the specified areas.**

\*Quotas were set on Acorn classification to mirror – as closely as possible - YW's internal customer classification method, and to enable an understanding of how well assumptions of wants and needs based on Acorn hold up to scrutiny (see slide 5). Acorn group quotas were set to reflect the profile of customers in Ilkley.

\*\* Recruitment for stage one used a combination of telephone (using the DJS in-house recruitment team and purchased sample) and face-to-face free finding using our team of local recruiters.

Through the report this symbol represents feedback gained from the Indeemo Ethnography App





# Respondent profile: quantitative

## Respondents

**Affluent achievers:**  
34% (94 respondents)

**Rising prosperity:**  
13% (36 respondents)

**Comfortable communities:**  
32% (86 respondents)

**Financially stretched:**  
21% (57 respondents)

## Gender



Male:  
**51%**  
Female:  
**49%**

## Ethnicity



Ethnic minority: **4%**  
White: **95%**

## Disability



Yes (self): **14%**  
Yes (someone else in HH): **9%**  
No: **78%**

## Children (under 18)



Yes: **28%**  
No: **72%**

## Age



18-34:  
**9%**



35-54:  
**32%**



55+:  
**59%**

## Area

Ilkley: **50%**  
Addingham: **25%**  
Ben Rhydding: **25%**

## Community group involvement

Active in a community group: **38%**  
Not active in a community group: **61%**  
Ilkley Clean River Group: **2%**



# Respondent profile: qualitative



## Respondents

**Affluent achievers:**  
**12**

**Rising prosperity:**  
**2**

**Comfortable communities:**  
**10**

**Financially stretched:**  
**8**

## Gender



Male:  
**14**  
Female:  
**18**

## Ethnicity



Ethnic  
minority: **0**  
White: **32**

## Disability



Yes: **6**  
No: **26**

## Children



Yes: **12**  
No: **20**

## SEG



AB: **60%**  
C1: **22%**  
C2: **12%**  
DE: **6%**

## Age



16-34:  
**7**



35-64:  
**16**



65+:  
**9**

## Area

Ilkley: **10**  
Addingham: **12**  
Ben Rhydding: **10**



# Research considerations & limitations

The qualitative research was recruited (primarily\*) from telephone lists with Acorn data appended, while the quantitative research was recruited on-street with Acorn data appended retrospectively.

As far as possible, we used a quota sampling approach to ensure that our overall sample of respondents was broadly representative of the Ilkley population by Acorn classification.

A quota sampling approach is used to gather a broad brush picture of people's attitudes, behaviours and circumstances, but because we used this approach (rather than a random probability sample) we should not strictly generalise about the whole population sampled from.

Quota sampling will always be biased towards respondents willing to take part in the research, and as such we need to be mindful that there could be some population sub-groups which might not be fully represented in the research.

Unlike the similar research project conducted in the S5 area of Sheffield, we found participants in Ilkley to be more discerning and guarded. There was a particular resistance to opening up about their own personal circumstances and given the high emotions and strong opinions surrounding the issues relating to the River Wharfe, some participants – in both the quantitative and qualitative research – found the questions about themselves to be irrelevant and intrusive.

This sentiment was possibly perpetuated by a general sense of mistrust towards Yorkshire Water by some residents over the handling of the river water quality in the area and it did result in a large number of drop-outs in the qualitative phase, and a higher rate of refusals than expected in the quantitative stage (especially when completing interviews by telephone\*\*). However, once a sense of rapport had been established with residents, they were – generally – more willing to participate.

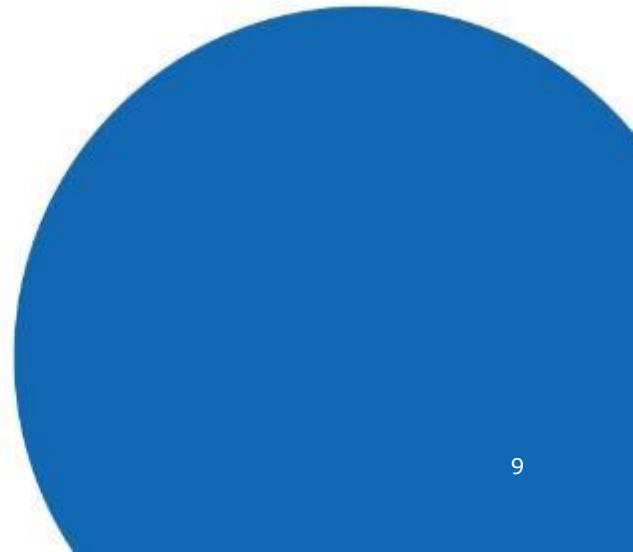
\*Qualitative research recruitment was supplemented by a local recruiter and a panel provider – with 9 respondents from 30 recruited through these channels.

\*\*69 interviews were completed via telephone interview (CATI), and 204 were completed via door to door interviewing (CAPI)



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# Key findings





# Acorn group assumptions

In the qualitative research we found that the Acorn profiles were not always very reflective of the financial or personal circumstances of those living within the properties profiled, particularly amongst 'comfortable communities' and 'financially stretched' profiles.

## For example, we found...

- A 'comfortable communities' resident who was living in council house
- Multiple 'comfortable communities' residents privately renting and just 'starting-out'
- Multiple 'financially stretched' households who were in fact financially very well-off or at least very comfortable in their finances.
- Affluent achievers who were living on single incomes or pensioners who were less affluent.

The average house price sold in Ilkley is £439,998. This is compared to an average sold price of £329,547 in the rest of the UK (inc. London)\*. This may result in residents in the Ilkley area having greater wealth than those living in comparable house types in other areas

## Anecdotally we also learned...

Some residents participating in the interviews noted the unusual way that house prices work in the area and that the exact same house style on one street could be owned by affluent professionals, whereas a few streets away, on a less desirable street, the identical house format could be a council owned house.

"In Ben Rhydding a lot of the streets have absolutely identical houses on them. Only those on the desirable side of the village might be worth nearly a hundred thousand more and yet some on other streets might be council tenants or rentals – it's a really bizarre place."

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 18-34**

"There's no way I could afford this house if I was privately renting. Never mind buying it. You won't find much under £300k round here."

**Comfortable communities,  
female, 35-64**

"The house types are very similar and limited but there are only a few streets in Ilkley where I could afford to live. There's absolutely nothing wrong with those streets, it's often based on local hearsay or proximity."

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 35-64**



# Acorn group assumptions: checklist for key groups

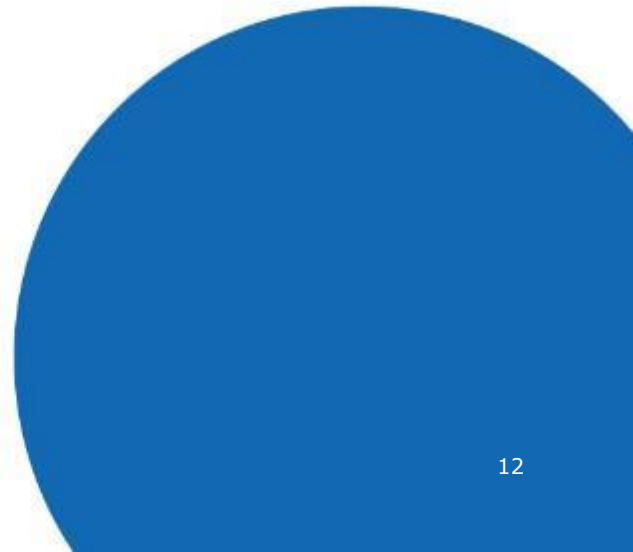
While we had some residents fit fairly well into the Acorn profiles they were classified under, there were many, if not just as many, that didn't fit at all well into their profile. Affluent achievers appeared to be the most reliable classification and financially stretched the least reliable.

Affluent achievers	Rising prosperity	Comfortable communities	Financially stretched
<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High earning executives/business owners</li><li>• 55+</li><li>✓ Detached house</li><li>• Owned outright</li><li>• Empty nesters</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Wealthy, confident consumers &amp; investors</li><li>✓ Interests (foreign travel, dining out &amp; leisurely sports)</li></ul>	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Educated young professionals/career climbers</li><li>• 25-44</li><li>× Apartments/maisonettes</li><li>✓ Privately renting</li><li>• Pre-family</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• High earners but with high rents/expenditure</li><li>• Interests (cinema, organic foods, antiques)</li></ul>	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Middle career professionals or established manual professions</li><li>• 35-64</li><li>✓ Semi/detached houses</li><li>× Mortgages/owned outright</li><li>× Families</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Medium to above average income with manageable outgoings</li><li>✓ Interests (pets, DIY, nature)</li></ul>	<b>Demographics</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>× Manual occupations or low paid/low skill occupations</li><li>✓ All ages</li><li>× Semi-detached/terraces</li><li>× Rental/council owned</li><li>× Mixed families &amp; empty nesters</li></ul> <b>Lifestyle</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>× Lower incomes or single income families</li><li>× Interests (football, TV, gambling)</li></ul>

X = Mostly not the case   ● = Often not the case   ✓ = Usually the case

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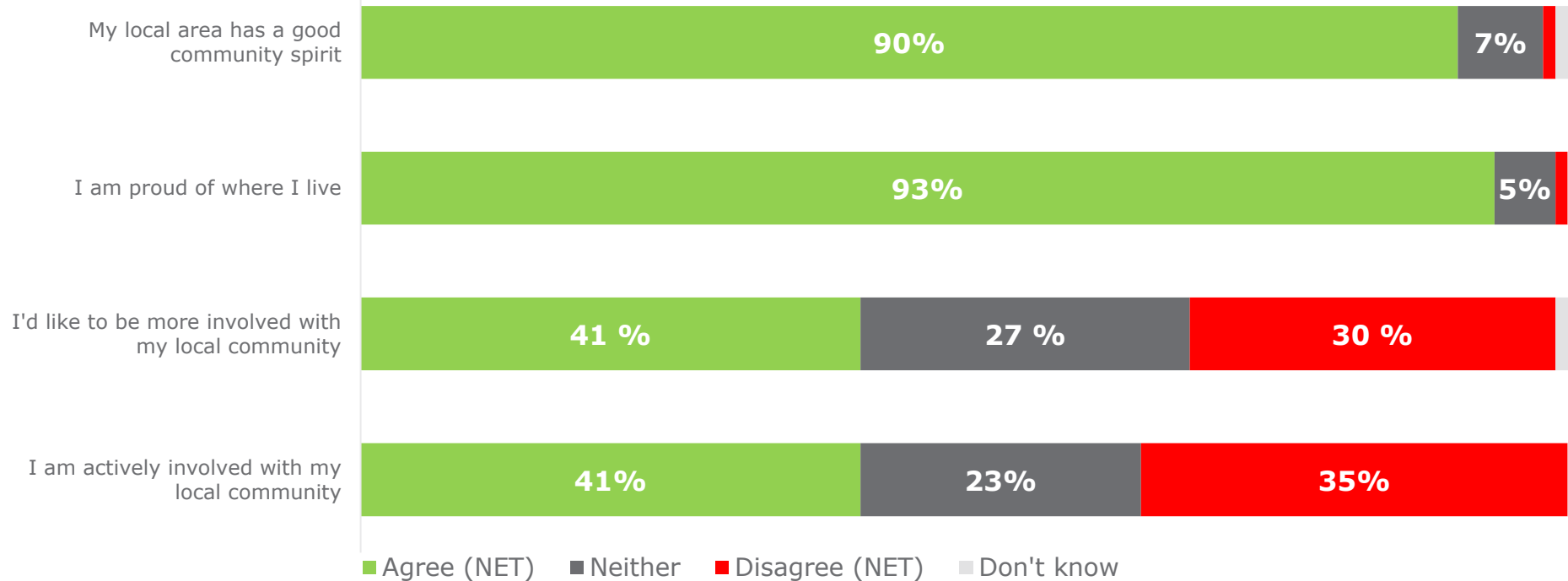
# The Ilkley community...



# A sense of pride and community spirit

Almost all agree that their local area has a good community spirit and that they are proud of where they live. Two in five are actively involved with their local community, and the same proportion would like to be more involved. (In the S5 research, just 18% were actively involved in their local community and just 26% said they would like to be more involved).

## To what extent do you agree or disagree that...



**50%**  
of those who'd like to be more involved in the community are already involved in some way

# Differences in desire to get more involved in the community differ by area and Acorn



% agree...

	Total	Addingham	Ben Rhydding	Ilkley	Affluent Achievers	Rising Prosperity	Comfortable Communities	Financially Stretched
Local area has good community spirit	90%	97%	83%	90%	88%	94%	93%	84%
Proud of where I live	93%	97%	96%	90%	96%	100%	92%	88%
I'd like to be more involved with my local community	41%	56%	43%	33%	47%	50%	38%	32%
Actively involved in my local community	41%	47%	29%	45%	50%	31%	45%	28%

 Significantly higher than total
  Significantly lower than total

**Base:** all respondents (273). **Q09b.** Using a scale of strongly disagree to strongly agree, to what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?



# A community with a strong sense of civic duty

One of the most striking features about residents in the Ilkley area is the strong sense of community and pride taken in maintaining this community dynamic. Many residents (just over a third) are proactively involved in a number of community groups and through these grass routes organisations, take part in activities and events to support or improve the town, its residents and the local environment.

We spoke to a range of residents who are members of the following:

Ilkley Civic Society	Ilkley Clean River Group	Ilkley WI
Climate Action Ilkley	Friends of Ilkley Moor	Ilkley Moor Litter Picking
Ilkley Allotments	Addingham Environment Group	Good Neighbours Society

The connected and mobilised nature of the community means that local residents are not only **very aware of issues and events** involving the town but often **actively involved in helping to resolve them**. This can result in a great level of knowledge and passion when it comes to local issues.

Residents also keep very connected through:

Ilkley chat Facebook group	Chat in local cafés & pubs	Chat in local interest groups (e.g. bridge groups or fitness classes)
Chat at school gates/ school WhatsApp groups	Parish newsletter	

This strong sense of community is **largely viewed positively** but for some residents the town can seem quite **cliquey** and **protectionist** at times, particularly for newcomers.

# Word of mouth and local newspapers are the driving force of local news

Over half rely on word of mouth to keep up to date with what is going on in the local area, and over four in five read local newspapers to keep up to date. A quarter use Facebook and over one in 10 use other social media platforms as well.

Word of mouth is the driving force for local news for **Rising Prosperity** (72%)

**Financially stretched** are significantly more likely to have no interest in keeping up to date with local matters (16%) than other Acorn groups.



52%  
Word of mouth



41%  
Local newspaper



25%  
Facebook groups



21%  
Local radio



14%  
Other socials



12%  
Whatsapp



11%  
Nextdoor app

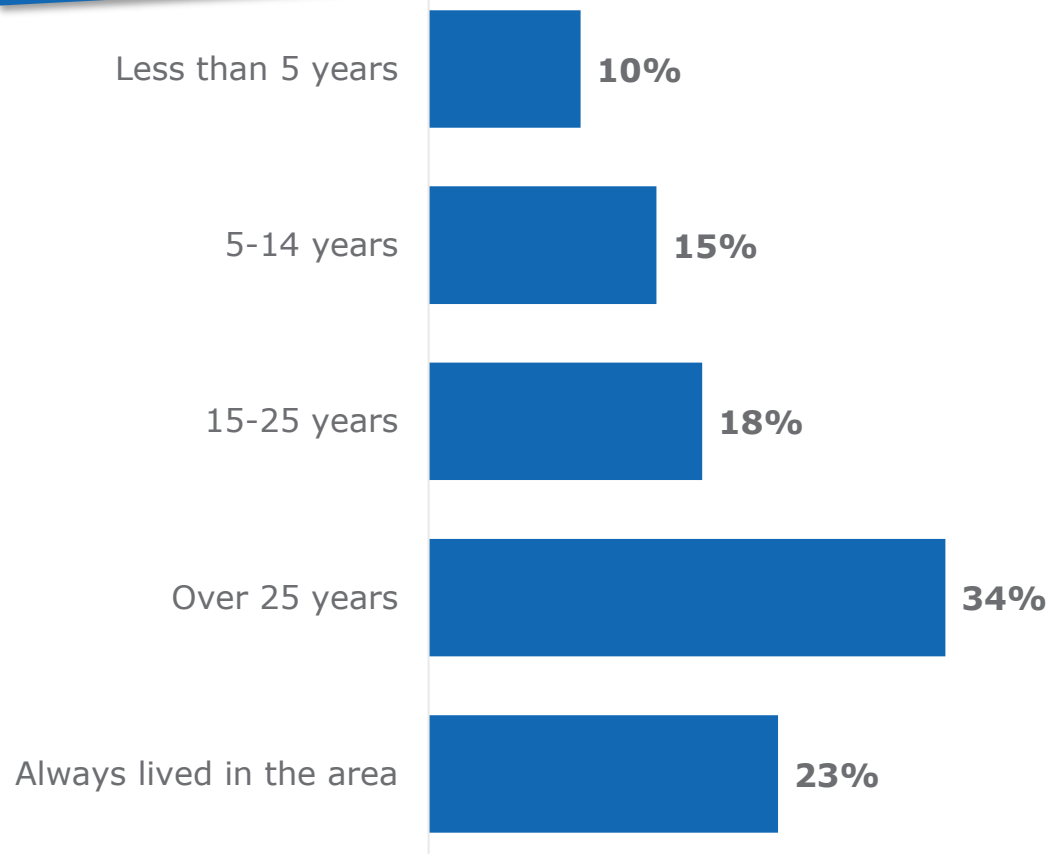


5%  
Not interested

# A largely established community

Almost a quarter of residents have always lived in the area, and just over a third have been in the area for 25 years or more. Just one in 10 have been in the area less than five years.

## Length of time as a local resident



**Rising Prosperity** are the group most likely to be relatively new to the area (17% less than five years). **Financially Stretched** are most likely to have always lived in the area (33%).

Residents in **Ben Rhydding** are **most likely to be relatively new to the area** (20% less than five years).

Over two-fifths (41%) of those who live in **Addingham** have always lived in the area.

# But quite diverse and divided

Ilkley is on the face of it, a very affluent and conservative town, especially when compared to surrounding towns and cities such as Bradford and Keighley. However, once you scratch the surface it is actually a very diverse and divided town in many ways. A number have noticed a change in the town's profile in more recent years, in part due to the influx of more cosmopolitan professionals and in part due to younger 'born and bred' residents being priced out of the area.

**Born & bred residents:** typically older & more conservative. High value assets (home if owned) but not always 'cash' wealthy.



**Their children:** often struggling to get onto the property market or finding renting too expensive so are likely to leave the town in coming years. Often 'starting out' in their careers or in lower paid jobs.



**Those who have moved into the area from some of the surrounding towns** as they have 'stepped up' financially over the years and perceive the area to be more 'exclusive'. They can often be keen on preserving this feeling of 'exclusivity'.

**Successful professionals moving from the South or larger cities** to make the most of the outdoor pursuits & good amenities. Typically, more liberal in their views and often with a strong environmental focus.



**Their parents:** who move into the area as it makes for a beautiful 'retirement town' and enjoy looking after their grandkids.



**Those who grew up in Ilkley and moved away for work or University but have since returned to their hometown.** Often more educated and with a greater social awareness.

**These different circumstances result in a broad mixture of household types from young singles, families to empty nesters. There is very little multi-generation house sharing.**

# A number of reasons to move to Ilkley

Ilkley has for many years been perceived a desirable town to live in and has always attracted higher than average asking prices on properties. However, **since the pandemic and the rise in remote/home working, the area has become even more desirable for high earning professionals** who are attracted to the area for several reasons.

Great schools



Good access to walks & outdoor activities



Great scenery



Good access to transport links into surrounding towns and cities



A 'community' feel



Relatively safe



There is a perception that the influx of residents to the area appears to be **gradually changing the demographics and feel of the town**, with more families and working professionals from larger towns and cities moving in.

"One of the main reasons we moved here was for the Montessori school here and it's a just a beautiful place to live too"

**Affluent achiever,  
female, 35-64**

"I like the outdoors and going hiking and cycling and that's all on your doorstep but then you can easily get into Leeds to go and visit an art gallery or go to a concert"

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 35-64**

# Ilkley: the best place to be for the family

As well as Ilkley generally being considered to be a lovely place to live, there is often a family connection for many of the residents living there. Whether it be:

- To stay close to family
- To move closer to family
- Or to move into the area because it's a great place to bring-up children.

A significant proportion of the residents we spoke to were also dog owners. Their dogs were often considered to be important family members and the dog friendly nature of the town and the great areas for walking were often mentioned in their reviews of Ilkley.

"My family are my world. I would be lost without them."

**Financially stretched,  
female, 18-34**



"I'd really like to stay in Ilkley if I can as I think it's a lovely place to bring up children. It feels very safe and there's so much to do outdoors but it's just so expensive so I don't know if I we will"

**Comfortable communities,  
female, 18-34**

"These guys are my future. Spending all the time I have with my husband and my baby. That's all I could ever want."

**Comfortable communities,  
female, 18-34**



**Family is extremely important to residents and often drives their views on what's best for the town as a whole as well as some of their anxieties about the town.**



# Influx of non-locals: a source of frustration

Those who have lived in Ilkley for all or most of their lives note the influx of cosmopolitan professionals to be one of the few downsides to living in the area, with this influx resulting in a number of demographic, cultural and structural shifts in the area.

## Rising house prices & greater demand for properties

Residents note struggling to get onto the property ladder or struggling to afford rents. Some feared having to leave the area due to affordability.

## Less of a 'familiar' community feel

Slightly older residents feel that the community has become less close and more diluted, with some of the busier families and professionals moving in possibly being less inclined or having less time to become overly involved in the community.

## Increasing number of extensions and building works

Some residents noted houses being purchased, extended and then sold on for a greater return. This has resulted in more noise & disruption.

## A cultural divide

There appears to be a cultural and political difference between those moving into the area versus the 'born and bred' residents with claims of snobbery from both sides of the divide.

## A greater number of families

A lot of those moving into the area appear to be younger families. This has resulted in more noise, cars, higher likelihood to extend properties and a generally 'busier' feel to the town.

## A strain on existing infrastructure (roads, sewers, leisure facilities)

Due to its positioning Ilkley cannot expand outwards to meet demand, therefore the number of additional residents and extended properties are putting an increasing strain on the existing resources, including extensions resulting in fewer areas for natural drainage.

"You see it at the school gates, the mums are in different groups and they are very cliquey. There's a lot of snobbery."

**Comfortable communities,  
female, 35-64**

# Accepting Ikley as a tourist town

Ikley is often described by its residents as 'a tourist town' because of many of the things that residents enjoy about the place so much:



'Newer' residents seem more willing to accept that they live in a tourist destination and therefore the circumstances that come along with it. While born and bred residents, or those that moved to Ikley for it's 'exclusive' feel, can be more despondent about the numbers of tourists that visit the area, particularly in summer months.



The great scenery

The great walks

The good high street

The nice places to eat & drink

The bathing facilities  
(River Wharfe & Lido)

- ✓ Increase in revenue for local businesses
- ✓ Better choice of food and drink outlets for locals to enjoy due to lucrative tourist trade
- ✓ Different events & activities taking place throughout the year

- ✗ Lack of parking in summer
- ✗ Perceived increase in antisocial behaviour
- ✗ Facilities busier/inaccessible at peak times
- ✗ Litter left behind

**Views on tourism can often be linked with views on bathing water status as we will explore later on**

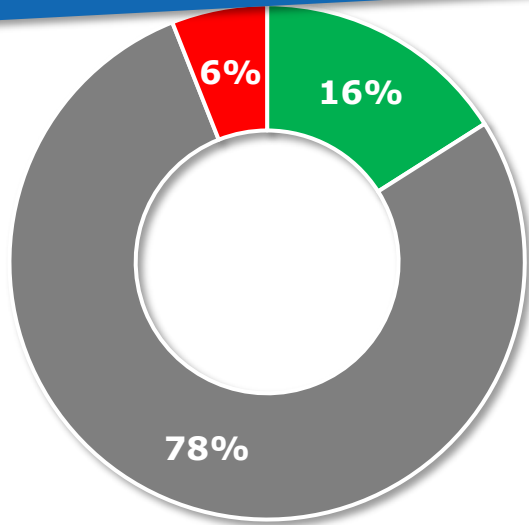
"It's a nightmare here in the summer. It's far too busy and the litter that gets left behind is horrendous. I don't think we should be encouraging more people to the town."

**Affluent achiever, female, 35-64**

# A stable standard of living

Over three-quarters say that the local area has not become any better or worse during their time as a resident, and less than one in 10 state that it has become a worse place to live.

Has the local area become a better or worse place to live?



■ Better place ■ No better or worse ■ A worse place

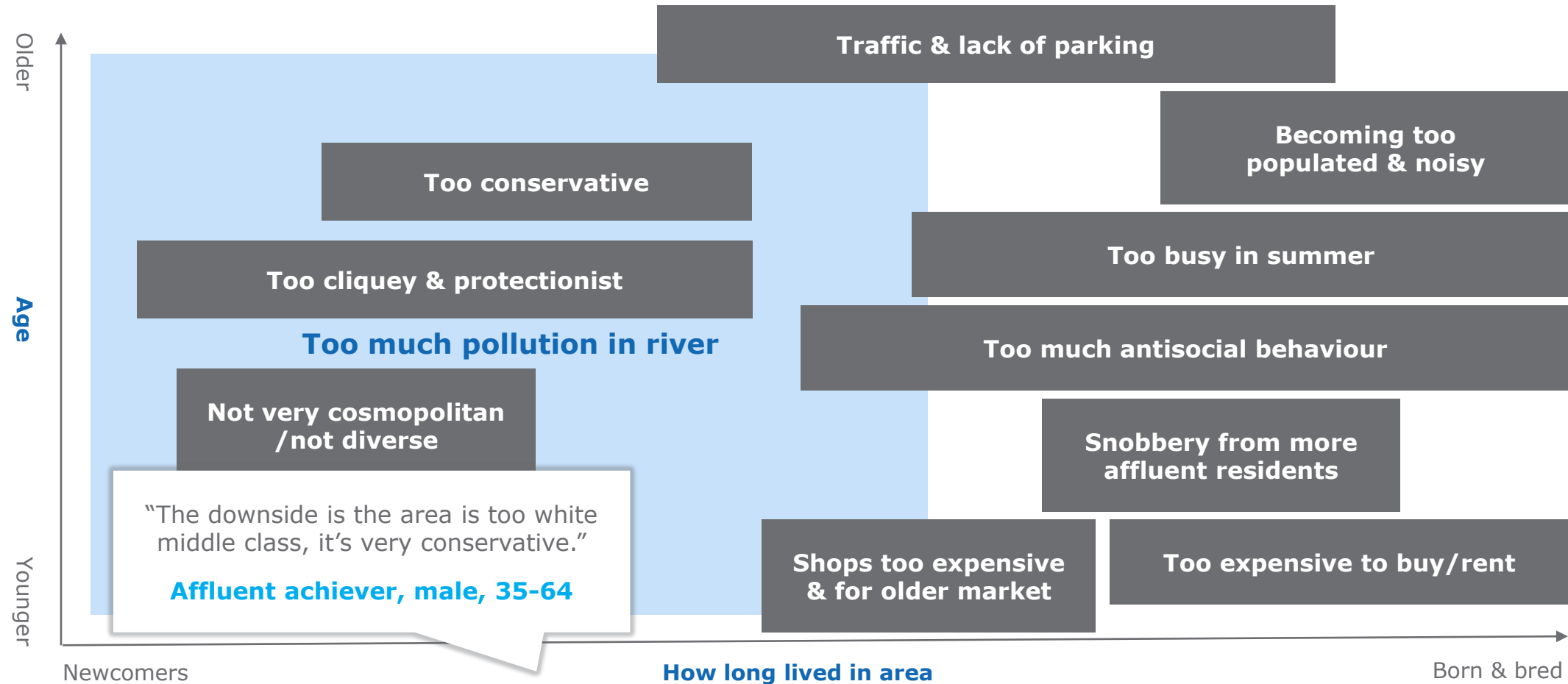
Residents in **Ben Rhydding**, and those classed as **Comfortable Communities** are slightly more likely to think the area has become a worse place to live (both 10%).

Those who have **lived in the area between 5 and 14 years** are most likely to think the local area has improved (22%).

Almost all of **those who have always lived in the area** think that it is no better or worse as a place to live (94%).

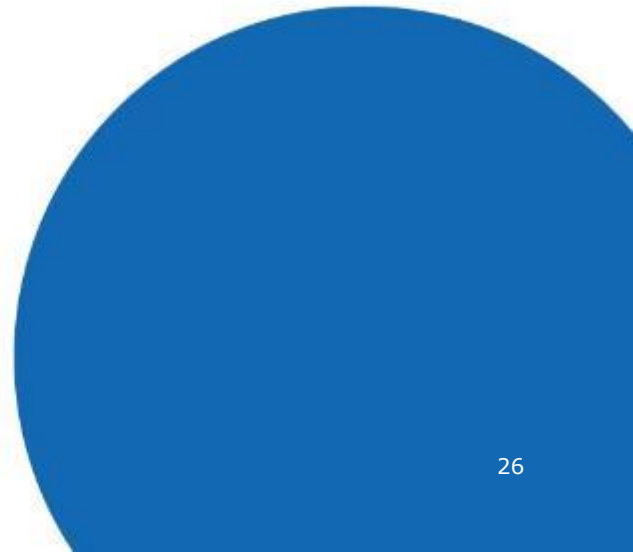
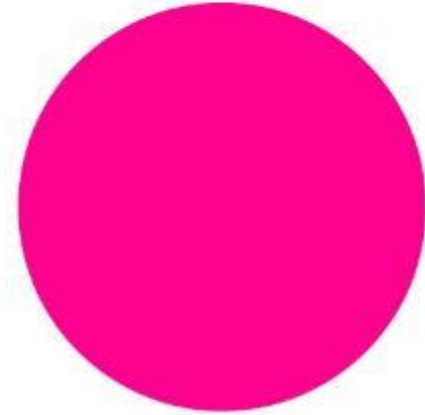
# Ilkley: not perfect for all

While residents often describe Ilkley as being a great place to live and describe the town positively, there are some aspects to life in Ilkley that are not perfect for all who live there. Pollution in the river is mentioned by the broadest cross-section of the community at this stage.



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# The lives of Ilkley residents...



# Car & bus are the most common methods of travel, followed by walking

Perhaps unsurprisingly, the car is by far the most commonly used method of transport in the local area (63%). Over a quarter (26%) mostly walk to travel around the local area, and 7% tend to use the bus. Just 1% cycle, and just 1% use local trains.

## Top local travel methods



63%  
Car travel



26%  
Walking



7%  
Bus

Residents in **Addingham** are less likely to walk (12%) than those in other areas, and instead have a greater reliance on cars (75%) as their main mode of transport.

**Rising Prosperity** are more likely to rely on a car (72%) than average.

**Financially Stretched** are more likely to use a bus (16%) than average.



# Daily lives closely connected to the town & local amenities

Residents in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding tend to have a very close connection with the surrounding area and amenities. **They find solace and happiness for the most part within their own town**, with most residents enjoying spending their time in a range of settings within the area.

However, it could be argued that this desire to stay within Ilkley **also contributes to perceptions of the town being quite insular**.

The surrounding woods provide a great place for wildlife watching & exploring with the kids

Many residents spend time walking on the Moor, particularly for family walks or dog walking

Fitness is important to many residents, with some opting to use the local gym

Ilkley is noted to have a good, busy high street with a number boutique shops with some larger chains

Ilkley Lido provides a fun and safe day out for young families (if they can get in!)


The town provides a good range of pubs and eateries where residents can enjoy some social time

# Ilkley residents lead busy & full lives

Residents often **lead very busy lives**, particularly those who are still in work (many of whom are in **high pressured, professional work**) and those with **young families** to care for.


However, even residents that are now retired appear to find a number of ways to fill their lives, particularly by **involving themselves in the community** and local projects or taking care of grandchildren.

There are also some residents who are no longer working due to ill health, these residents still often have commitments of their own such as caring for elderly relatives or again finding ways to volunteer or be part of community groups.



"I am now retired but my days are busy helping my son with childcare for my young three grandchildren, especially since their mother passed away."

**Comfortable communities,  
female, 65+**



"I've been retired for many years but I do French lessons and daily swimming as well as my community work volunteering for the Green party and chair of Friends of Ilkley Moor."

**Affluent achiever,  
male, 65+**

# Hobbies & interests

Ilkley residents appear to be particularly 'outdoorsy' in nature and outdoor activities are especially important to residents who are working from home, allowing them an escape from their domestic workplaces. Newer and younger residents also appear to have brought some quirkier and more alternative pursuits too.

## The culture vultures

- Art exhibitions
- Museums
- Interest in current affairs
- Theatre & shows
- Listening to Radio 4

## The outdoors adventurers

- Mountain biking
- Wild swimming
- Canoeing
- Hiking
- Skiing
- Golfing

## The altruists

- Volunteering
- Community groups
- Caring for elderly neighbours
- Litter picking

## The home birds

- Home décor
- Gardening
- Cooking & baking
- Reading
- Movies
- Gaming/VR

## The self-developers

- Further education
- Learning instruments
- Design work
- Art & crafts
- Language classes

## The alternative types

- Witchcraft
- Death positivity & graveyard walking
- Asian Tea ceremonies
- Furry meet-ups
- Meditation
- Creative make-up



"A series of illustrations I'm working on."

**Comfortable communities, male, 65+**

Some residents transcend across hobby types

# What makes them happy

There appears to be three broad categories for the things that bring joy and happiness to the lives of Ilkley residents. The outdoors and local environment play a key role in many resident's happiness and the simple pleasures some find happiness in are perhaps indicative of the busy lives many residents lead.

## Traditional values

Meeting friends  
at a good pub

Spending time  
with family

Helping a  
neighbour

Good  
health

Watching  
their kids  
play happily

Enjoying a nice  
meal with  
friends/family

Everyone  
getting along

"My daughter makes me happy,  
watching her explore and make  
friends."

**Comfortable communities,  
female, 18-34**

## Connecting with nature

Walking the dog

A peaceful  
walk

Watching the local wildlife

Walking the moors

Sitting  
by the  
river

Watching children  
play in the river

"Walking Milo  
on the moor."

**Rising prosperity,  
male, 18-34**

## Simple pleasures

Going to bed

A nice cup of  
tea/coffee

Doing their make-up

Reading a  
good book

Quiet time  
alone

Cuddles with  
the dog

Having a  
clean house

"I think reading is so important  
for the mind and soul. When I'm  
struggling to juggle everything  
the escapism keeps me going."

**Financially stretched,  
female, 34-64**

# What worries them

The **state of the world** more generally and the **health and future of the environment** appears to play on the minds of some residents...

"I feel like we're on a road to an uncertain future, but I hope along with my husband to guide our family to a comfortable and happy place, where we are all safe and well. And our earth is protected."

**Affluent achiever,  
female, 35-64**



"I chose this image based on the current state of the UK. There is so much uncertainty at the moment and it feels like anything that brings us the littlest bit of joy or help is always taken away."

**Financially stretched,  
female, 18-34**



Whereas others have more immediate concerns, such as their **own health, mental health or that of their families...**

"My daughter makes me worried when she's sick like she is at the moment."

**Comfortable  
communities,  
female, 18-34**



"What I worry about is the reality of living with chronic illness. Having chronic fatigue is very debilitating and I worry how I will be able to care for my mother as my condition deteriorates."

**Financially  
stretched, 35-64**



# Future aspirations

For many residents their hope is to successfully **get on the property ladder** or find somewhere else to live in Ilkley...

"It's all consuming at the moment thinking about the future. I'm looking forward to finding somewhere new to live in Ilkley which isn't easy. I'm looking forward to starting the next chapter of my life."

**Financially stretched, 35-64**



"In the future I'm really hoping to get on the property ladder and find a new house to live in. Ideally in Ilkley but it may be out of my budget unfortunately"

**Comfortable communities, 18-34**



For many residents there is also a desire to **get back to more post pandemic normality**, particularly more foreign travel and socialising...

"Once the pandemic is finally over or at least we have some kind of new normality, I look forward to spending happy times with family and friends, travelling again, and within a few years, retirement and all the extra freedom that might bring."

**Affluent achiever, female, 35-64**



"Start travelling again going to all the places I want and abroad again. Future me wants to get back to past freedom and travel."

**Financially stretched, 35-64**



"In the future I hope to be more adventurous and do more skiing if we can travel."

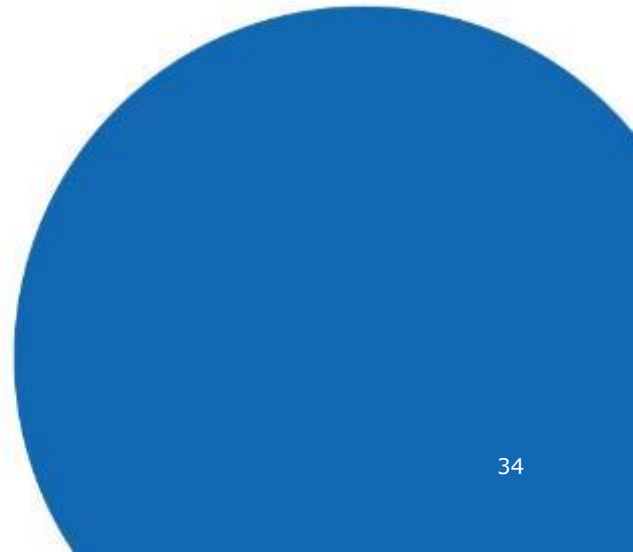
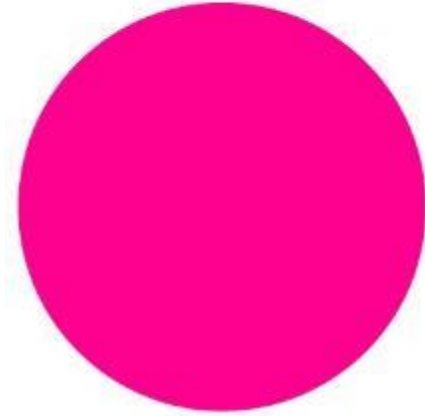
**Financially stretched, 35-64**





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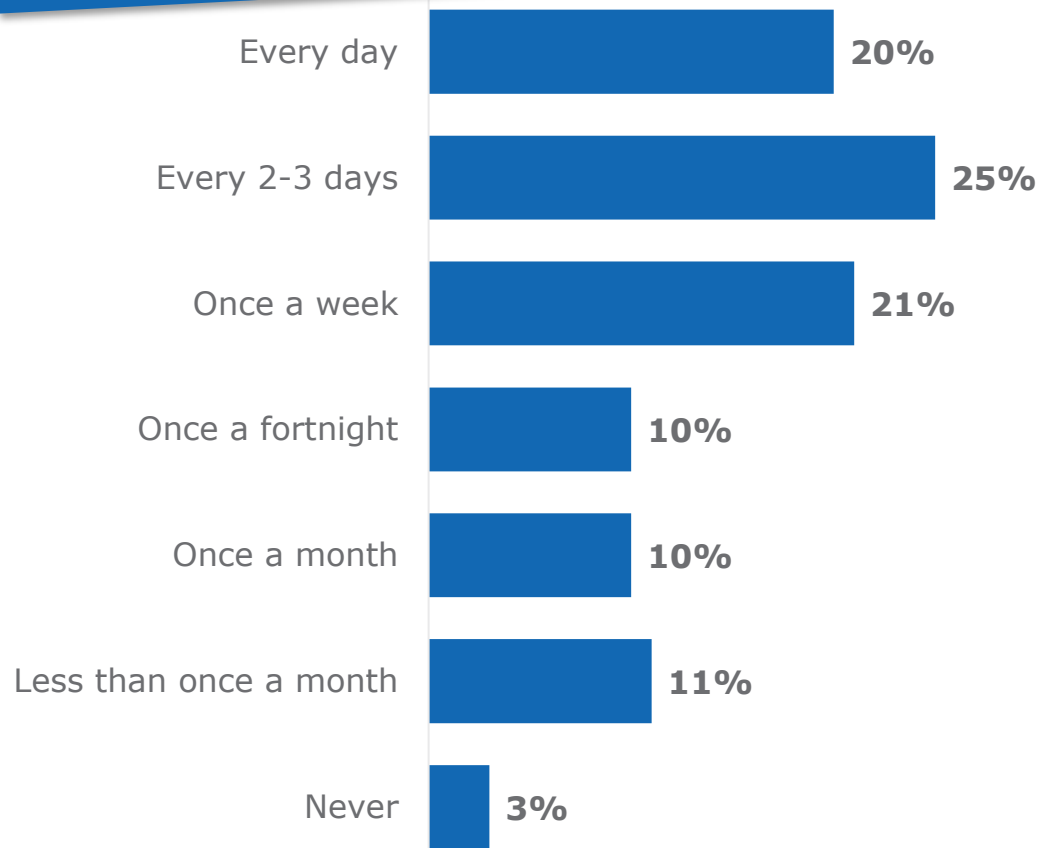
# Relationship with the Wharfe...



# Visiting the River Wharfe

Two-thirds visit the River Wharfe at least on a weekly basis, with a fifth visiting every day.

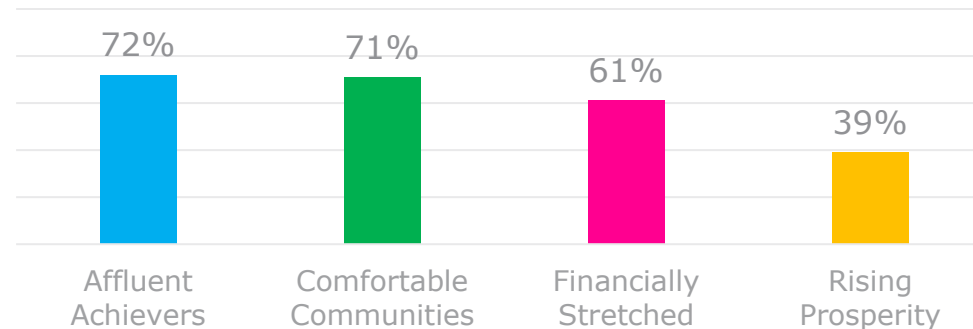
## Frequency of visiting the River Wharfe



66%  
visit at  
least once  
a week

Residents in **Ilkley** (74%) are most likely to visit on a weekly basis (62% Addingham, 51% Ben Rhydding)

## Visit at least once a week by Acorn



# The importance of the River Wharfe

The river is integral to the Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding communities, with it running through both the landscape and the daily lives of those who live near it. The river appears to be one constant the community can depend upon in the general unpredictability of life and proves to be one of the main reasons for either moving to or choosing to stay in the area.

## Attracting new residents in

"The river was the main reason for moving here as Wharfedale has been significant in my life since a child; visiting, walking etc. The river in particular has played a big part in both of our lives. To be honest it's been a lifesaver as it's one of the few things I can enjoy in life these days."

**Affluent achiever, male,  
disabled, 75+**

## Drawing residents to stay

"Having the river on our doorstep is great for us. We get so much quality time as a family from going down there, it's become a key part of our routine now. We wouldn't want to ever move away from that if we can help it."

**Affluent achiever, female,  
disabled, 35-64**

## Keeping residents going

"When I'm having a difficult day I find the river to be one constant and reassuring presence. It really helps me emotionally to be able to carry on."

**Financially stretched,  
female, disabled, 35-64**

**The River Wharfe is referred to as the 'life blood' of the area and a vital resource that helps to connect the different residents and communities who live along it.**

# The River Wharfe as a key part of the local area

Just over three-quarters say the River Wharfe is very or quite important to them personally, while just 3% say it is not important. Those in Addingham, and Rising Prosperity residents are less likely to consider the River Wharfe as particularly important to them.

## Importance of the River Wharfe

	Total	Addingham	Ben Rhydding	Ilkley	Affluent Achievers	Rising Prosperity	Comfortable Communities	Financially Stretched
Important (top 2 box)	77%	69%	79%	80%	75%	60%	89%	71%
Important (top 3 box)	94%	91%	95%	95%	96%	87%	98%	91%
Not important	3%	4%	2%	2%	2%	7%	0%	5%

3% don't know



Significantly higher than total



Significantly lower than total

# The River Wharfe: a key to happiness for many

The River Wharfe was spontaneously mentioned by a number of residents in the pre-task (at least a quarter) as being a key part of their routine or lives and often mentioned in relation to what makes them happy or what they enjoy doing.

The river has **become more important to those working from home** in the area – providing **respite from the stresses and strains of work**.

"Walking Milo next to the river. A time for reflection and chewing over work issues."

**Rising prosperity, male, 18-34**



"I work a lot, most of it is in front of a computer, so I really relish my time outside and in the water. I've always spent a huge amount of time in the water, be it pools, lakes, rivers, oceans – swimming brings me a special kind of joy."

**Comfortable communities, male, 35-64**



The river has **become more important since the pandemic to those living alone** as a place where they can **bump into neighbours** for chat.

"Things that make me happy - the River Wharfe, a few hundred yards from my house. Lovely to see nature and wildlife. Also sometimes nice to bump into neighbours and friends for a catch up!"

**Affluent achiever, male, 35-64, living alone**



The river appears to be particularly **important in providing an easily accessible and enjoyable walk** for both disabled and elderly residents.

"My happy place is when I cross the bridge at Addingham and see the view towards the Dales. I get a tremendous lift in spirits. It is easy to access the river, it is my happy place whatever the weather."

**Affluent achiever, female, 75+**



# River Wharfe: a source of water & fascination

Ilkley residents appear to also have a complicated relationship with the river. While residents often enjoy the many benefits the river provides and the associated activities, there is also an element of fascination with the river which is often a topic of conversation and even contention. The fear of flooding and antisocial behaviour also means that the river remains in the forefront of residents' minds.

"There's a local phenomena known as '**The river is high**' so when the river breaks its banks ...everybody goes to the old bridge and goes to have a look at it. So, this is like a social event. You just go down and look at it and I will see and see at least five or six people I know...that's a regular thing that like most people in town will do."

**A hot topic within community groups & social media pages**

**Closely monitored & observed by residents**

**At the heart of social activities & community traditions**

**Often a centre point for anti-social behaviour or negative events**

"On the Facebook groups people are always arguing over the river and debating about the bathing water status. People get very passionate about it."

**Affluent achiever, female, 35-64**

"Whenever the police are called to Ilkley it's generally happening at the river. There have been so many people that have drowned or died falling off the bridge, there's always something."

**Financially stretched, female, 35-64**

# The benefits of the River Wharfe

The benefits the River Wharfe provides to the areas surrounding Ilkley go far beyond the natural beauty and tranquillity it provides.

Some residents see the benefits of the river being from a completely aesthetic point of view but for others it is the main reason for leaving the house or a focal point for their social lives. Some even have a deeper and more emotional connection with the river with the benefits going as far as supporting their mental health.

"It encourages us to get out and have a walk which is good for us, as there's always something to see, there's so much wildlife."

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 65+**

"Businesses place themselves there for the footfall, it's an attraction for lots of visitors and nice for locals to visit it too. Brings in people from all over which helps the local economy and shops to thrive which in turn locals benefit from."

**Affluent achievers,  
male, 35-64**

## Benefits include...

**Wellbeing**

**Health**

**Social**

**Economic**

"I live by myself and it can be lonely sometimes but I often find that if I go for a walk by the river I will always bump into someone I know."

**Affluent achievers, male, 65+**

The river appears to **invoke a great sense of pride and belonging amongst some residents** – this can **translate into some residents becoming especially impassioned and vocal on topics relating to it.**

# The summer influx: “The Chavalanche”

One of the greatest sources of contention around the river relates to the influx of visitors who pour into Ilkley in the summer months in order to swim, sunbathe and socialise. Locally this is referred to as “The Chavalanche”.

This influx appears to **put some pressure on local resources** and there is a more serious **concern around crime, littering and antisocial behaviour**.

Visitors can come from far and wide to visit but the influx of people from the surrounding towns (such as Keighley and Bradford) appears to frustrate some sections of the community the most, with the visitors from these areas being particularly **blamed for issues related to antisocial behaviour**.

## Views around this annual visitor influx appears to divide the town:

“When they arrive with their shirts off and cans of beer it’s clear to see they’re not from Ilkley so they stand out but they’re no more or less responsible than the teens in this area – I know because I was one of them once!”

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 18-34**

“It gets busy and the littering is really bad but the river is for everyone and we have to accept that.”

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 65+**

“A lot of the rhetoric around this relates to some unpleasant views around elitism and even racism. It’s more of a perception than a reality.”

**Affluent achiever,  
male, 35-64**

“In the summer It’s that bad that I won’t let my own kids go and play by the river.”

**Affluent achiever,  
female, 35-64**

“I don’t know anyone in Ilkley who let’s their kids go to the river. It’s a dangerous place in summer.”

**Financially stretched,  
female, 35-64**

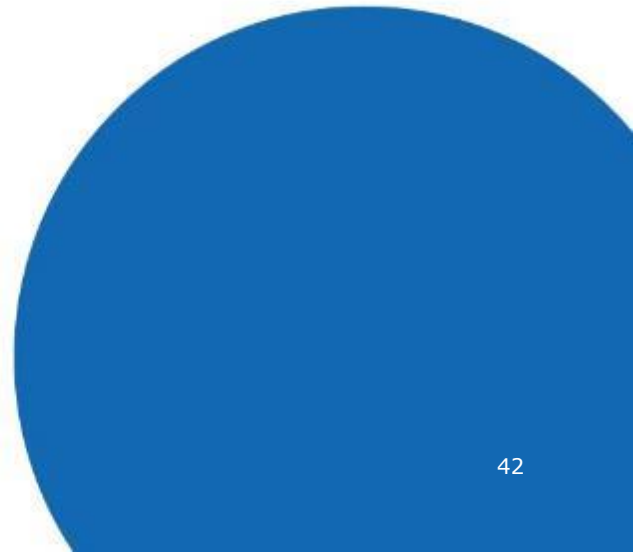
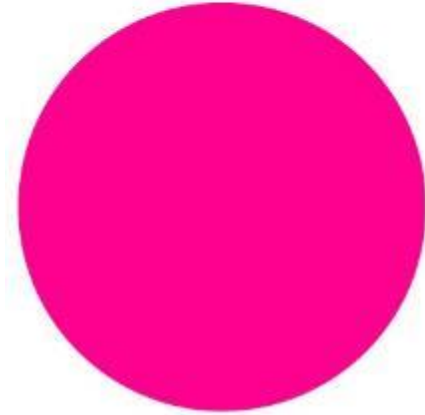
“It brings in all these people from the other towns and it’s not a good thing. Locals can’t lead their normal lives.”

**Financially stretched,  
female, 35-64**



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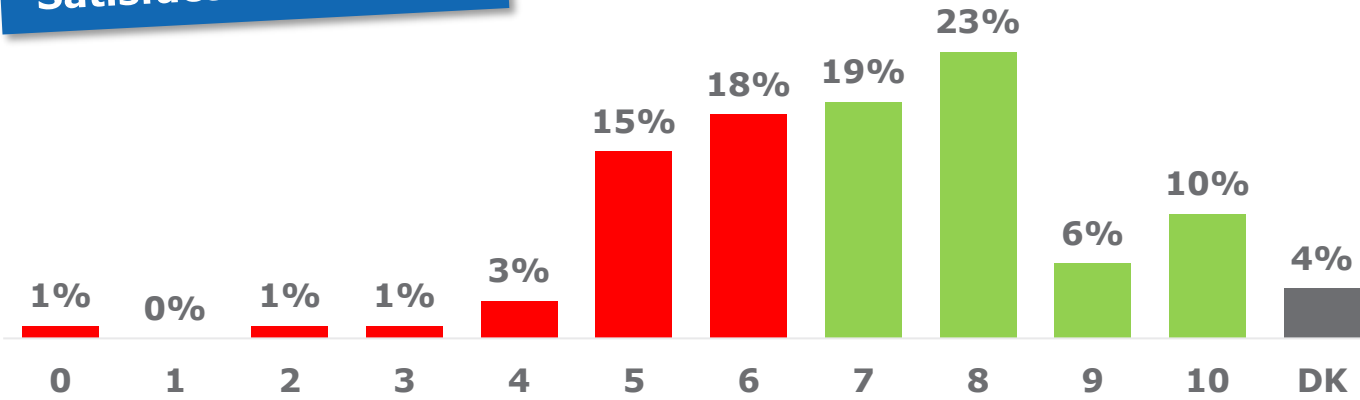
# Relationship with Yorkshire Water...



# Mixed perceptions of YW

A majority (58%) are satisfied with YW, but a significant minority (38%) are dissatisfied.

## Satisfaction with YW



% 0-6  
(dissatisfied)

38%

% 7-10  
(satisfied)

58%

Residents in **Ilkley** are **least likely to be satisfied** (51%), while those in **Ben Rhydding** are **most likely to be satisfied** with YW (68%).

**Financially Stretched** (42%) are **significantly less likely to be satisfied** with YW than other Acorn groups.

**Rising Prosperity** (72%) are **significantly more likely to be satisfied** with YW than other Acorn groups.

**Age and length of time as a resident** are further strong indicators of satisfaction, with younger customers being significantly more satisfied than older customers (18-34, 83%; 35-54, 62%; 55+, 52%), and newer residents more satisfied than established residents (less than 5 years, 75%; 5-14 years 63%; 15+ years 57%; lifetime resident, 47%).

# Words associated with YW are mixed

When asked what words they associate with YW, Ilkley residents are quite mixed in their response. Very few have had many negative experiences from a domestic supply perspective but for those who are especially concerned about the river pollution their views on this outweigh any positive or hassle-free customer experiences.

## Negative

"Polluters"

"Expensive"

"Monopoly"

"Take  
advantage"

"Unregulated"

"Dishonest"

"Not transparent"

"Non-responsive"

Most likely to be those most aware of or  
passionate about the river water quality issues

Most words in relation  
to river pollution issues

## Neutral

"Essential"

"Reasonable"

"No issues"

"Meets expectations"

## Positive

"Informative"

"Responsive"

"Visible"

"Efficient"

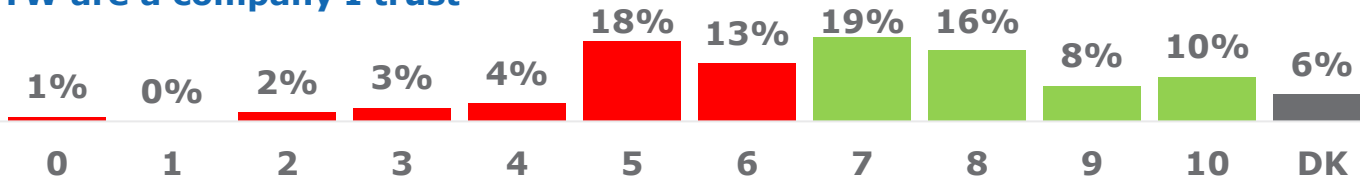
"Reliable"

Most words in relation to  
domestic supply experiences

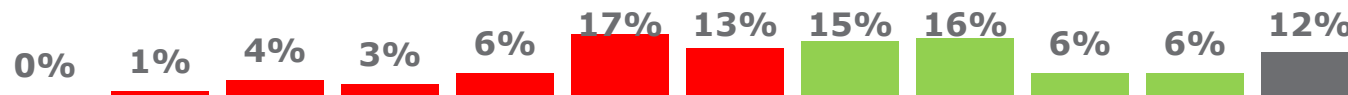
Most likely to be those  
who are less aware or  
passionate about the river  
water quality issues

# A lack of belief that YW care about the local area and environment

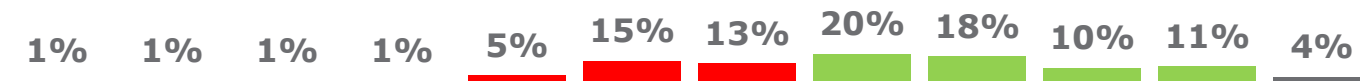
## YW are a company I trust



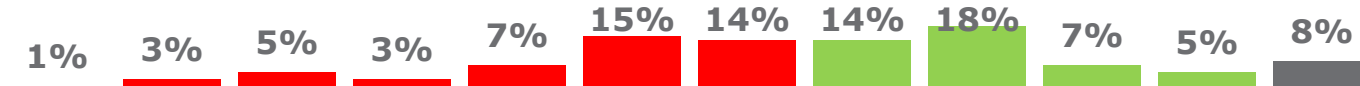
## YW care about my local area



## Yorkshire Water are a company I can rely on



## Yorkshire Water care about the environment



% 0-6  
(disagree)

42%

% 7-10  
(agree)

52%

44%

44%

38%

59%

48%

44%

# A lack of trust, particularly in Ilkley and among the Financially Stretched

% agree (ratings of 7-10)

	Total	Addingham	Ben Rhydding	Ilkley	Affluent Achievers	Rising Prosperity	Comfortable Communities	Financially Stretched
YW are a company I trust	52%	60%	68%	39%	56%	58%	53%	37%
YW care about my local area	44%	51%	61%	32%	50%	47%	42%	37%
Yorkshire Water are a company I can rely on	59%	60%	67%	54%	65%	69%	63%	35%
Yorkshire Water care about the environment	44%	47%	64%	33%	45%	50%	47%	37%

 Significantly higher than total
  Significantly lower than total

# Negative associations driven by river pollution

Conversations relating to Yorkshire Water often quickly turn to concerns relating to the river pollution amongst those who are most aware or most passionate about this issue.

## Driven by concerns about pollution

"Polluters"

"Take advantage"

"Unregulated"

"I've had positive experiences with YW, they do a lot of environmental work. I find it frustrating and disappointing how they have handled this issue around pumping pollution into the river. They are much better than this."

**Affluent achiever, female, 65+**

## Driven by concerns about shareholder pay & privatisation rather than affordability

"Monopoly"

"Expensive"

"Should be owned and run for the community and not for private profit. Because you get mixed priorities. Money gets diverted away, you know, into executive pay and shareholders."

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 35-64**

"They're expensive. I don't mind paying more but they should at least be using it to stop polluting the river and paying out to shareholders."

**Affluent achiever, female, 35-64**

## Driven by frustrations around the handling and communications around the pollution

"Non-responsive"

"Dishonest"

"Not transparent"

"Yorkshire Water didn't do themselves any favours by denying and not facing up to the issue until being forced into it by local community groups. People have lost a lot of confidence in them because of that."

**Comfortable communities,  
male, 35-64**

# Positive perceptions driven by reliability & communication

Driven by lack of issues with domestic supply or with any issues quickly resolved.

"Responsive"

"Reliable"

"Efficient"

"From the first moment when we first phoned them up to say that we were moving here, and we are on a water meter they were brilliant, they were so nice and then the guy comes to read the meter occasionally, you see them outside."

**Affluent achiever, female, 65+**

Many residents note having received communications from YW about work undertaken in the area

"Informative"

"I've noticed a lot more communications recently regarding work they were doing. Appear to be making more of a 'noise' about what work they are undertaking."

**Comfortable communities, male, 35-64**

Some residents note regularly seeing YW out and about in the area conducting work.

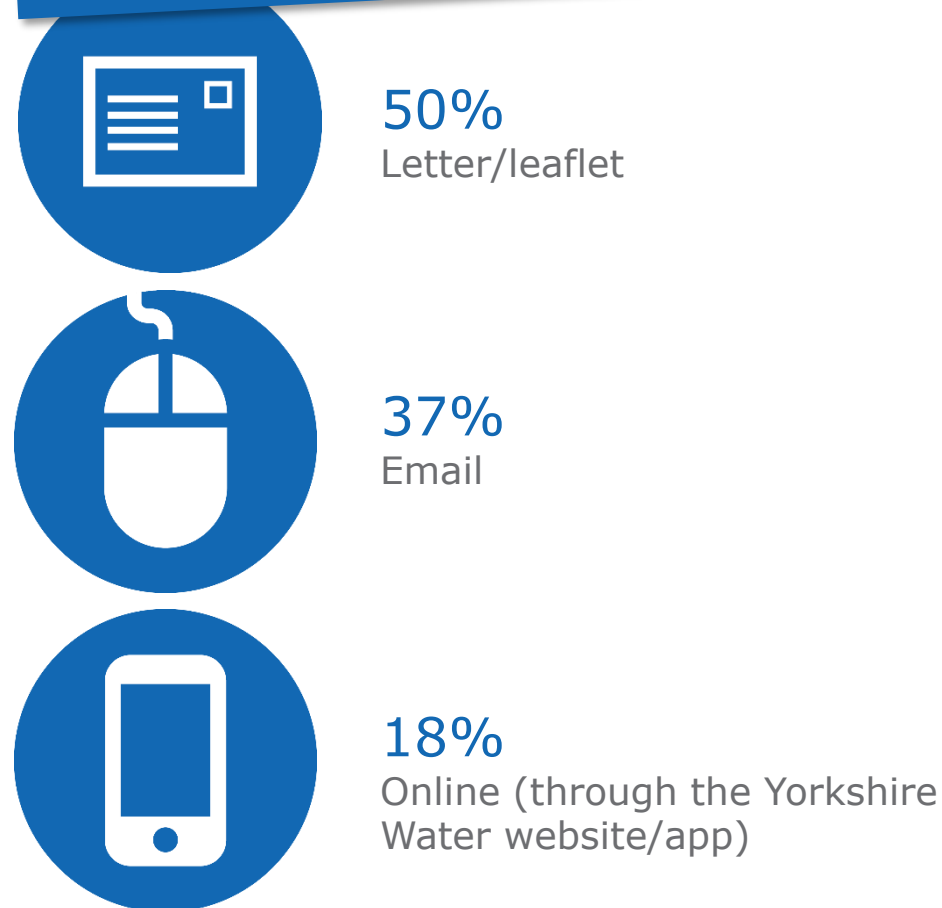
"Visible"

"We often see them out and about in their vans and testing the water, they seem very 'on it.'"

**Financially stretched, male, 65+**

# Letter or leaflet is the preferred communication method overall

## Preferred methods of communication



Base: all respondents (273) Q31. How would you prefer to hear from Yorkshire Water?

Almost a quarter of **Financially Stretched** (23%) say they are not interested in hearing from Yorkshire Water

Residents in **Addingham** are most likely to want to be contacted by letter / leaflet (68%)

Residents in **Ben Rhydding** have a slight preference for email over letter or leaflet (41% cf. 38%)

There is **little difference in communication preference by age.**



# Awareness of specific work undertaken by YW limited...

When asked what work, if any, residents are aware that YW are undertaking in the area answers are often widespread, unthematic and **limited to smaller domestic or street level activities.**

**Any activities relating to the river appear to be limited to water testing or checking during flood risks.**

Although communication is noted, few seem to know exactly what work is being undertaken.



"I've had a few maintenance letters recently, but I don't really take that much notice apart from when and where; maybe they should make what it's for a bit more obvious in the letter"

**Rising prosperity,  
male, 18-34**

"They sent a letter a couple of weeks ago to say they were doing some work and that the water might be cloudy for a few days, but we didn't even notice it"

**Affluent achiever,  
female, 35-64**

"The end of our road is being dug up at the moment. Something to do with the sewer. It's not a busy road so it doesn't cause any issues."

**Financially stretched,  
female, 35-64**

"You see them with their vans down by the river, testing and checking things."

**Affluent achiever,  
female, 35-64**

# Awareness of comms about sewer blockages is strong, but not always linked to YW

% yes (seen, heard or read something)

	Total	Addingham	Ben Rhydding	Ilkley	Affluent Achievers	Rising Prosperity	Comfortable Communities	Financially Stretched
Seen anything about sewer blockages	40%	28%	45%	44%	43%	25%	47%	37%
Seen anything about sewer blockages specifically from YW	22%	19%	25%	22%	23%	14%	23%	23%



Significantly higher than total



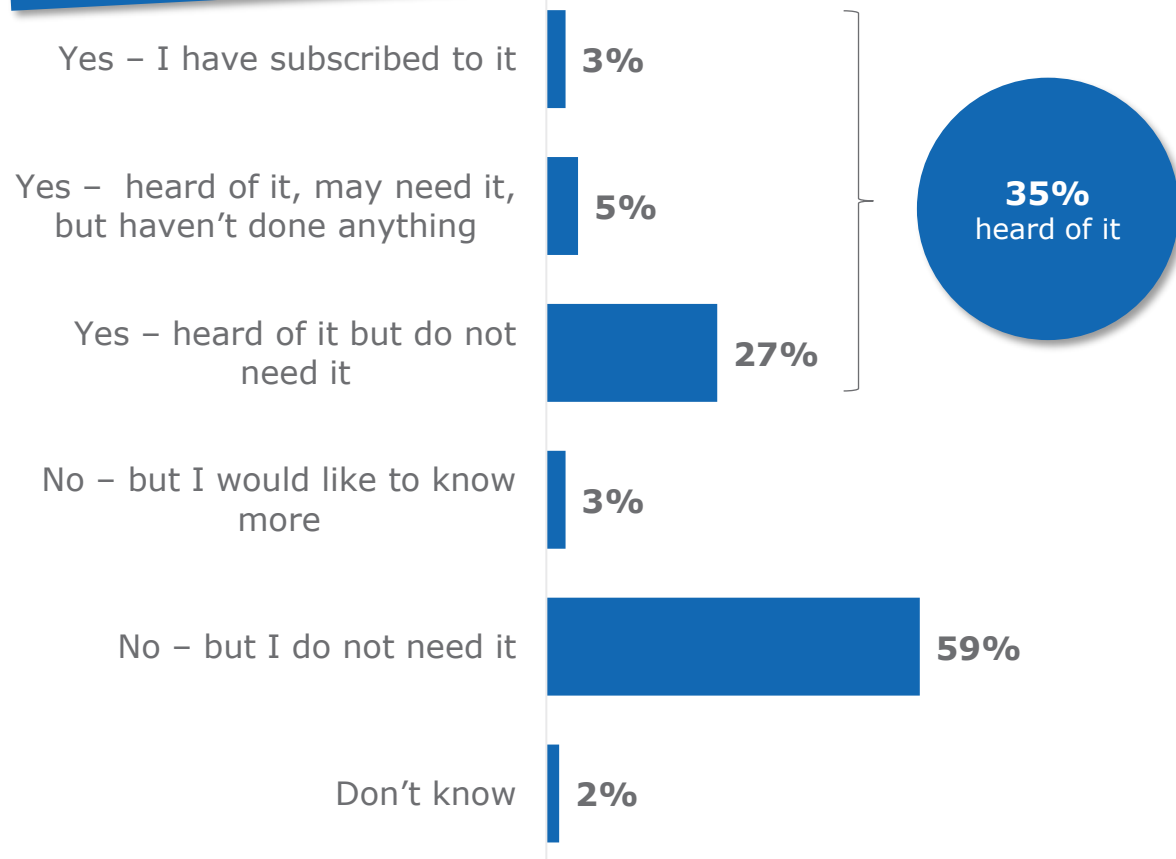
Significantly lower than total

**Base:** all respondents (273). **Q32.** Have you seen or heard anything in the media or the local area about preventing sewer blockages by putting things in the bin instead of flushing them or putting them down the drain? / **Q33.** More specifically, have you seen or heard anything from Yorkshire Water about this?

# Awareness of Priority Services is mixed

Just over a third are aware of Priority Services, and over half are not aware but say they don't require additional services. Just 3% haven't heard but would like to know more.

## Aware of additional services?



**Financially Stretched** (7%) are slightly more likely to have subscribed.

**Affluent Achievers** (57%) are most likely to say they haven't heard of the additional services and they don't need them.

There are very **few sub-group differences when looking at those who would like to know more**, but **those with more than three or more adults** in the household are **slightly more likely** (7%).

**Base:** respondents (273) **Q020.** Are you aware of any additional services offered by Yorkshire Water, such as large braille bills for people who need them, passwords to check that company callers are genuine, or liaison with customers who need a constant supply of water, for example, those on dialysis? You may know this additional support as 'Priority Services' or 'Helping Hands'.

# Lack of awareness among some otherwise well-informed groups...

Despite many Ilkley residents being very well informed when it comes to current affairs and wider cultural and social issues the awareness of the PSR is very low, **even amongst residents who are very aware of Yorkshire Water's remit and responsibilities more generally.**

**This lack of awareness is well recognised as being 'a shame' for Ilkley given that there are a large number of elderly residents living in the area who may well benefit from such services.**



Those who are members of community groups express a **desire for Yorkshire Water to work with them to better promote such services** and make use of their close network.

**Only 4  
out of 32  
aware**

"I wasn't aware of that but I think that's great that they do something like that. I work with a lot of social workers though the school and I think they would be really keen to learn about that type of service and especially financial support for those in the area struggling."

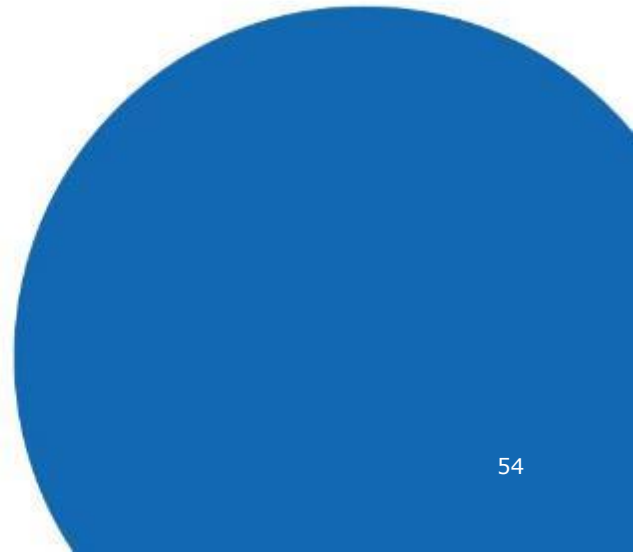
**Comfortable communities,  
male, 18-34**

"I think it's probably good to get in touch with organisations like the Civic Society and Addingham Good Neighbours because they can get in touch with members and say did you know about this."

**Financially stretched,  
male, 65+**

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# The River Wharfe & bathing water status...



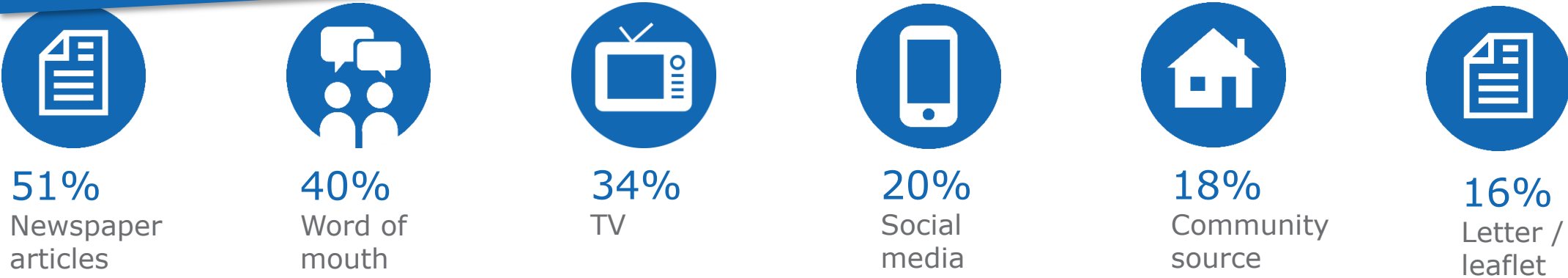
# Most are aware of news about the Wharfe

Almost three-quarters have seen something about the Wharfe (rising to 84% in Ilkley). In the main, awareness is being driven by newspaper articles and word of mouth / community sources.

% yes (seen, heard or read something)		Total	Addingham	Ben Rhydding	Ilkley	Affluent Achievers	Rising Prosperity	Comfortable Communities	Financially Stretched
Seen anything about the River Wharfe in Ilkley in the last 12 months		72%	65%	57%	84%	77%	50%	84%	61%

● Significantly higher than total
 ● Significantly lower than total

## Source of awareness



Base: all respondents (273) / all who have seen, heard or read something about the Wharfe in Ilkley in the last 12 months ( . Q22. Have you seen, heard or read anything about the River Wharfe in Ilkley in the past 12 months? / Q24. Where have you seen, heard or read information about the River Wharfe in Ilkley?

# Sewage and pollution are the key messages seen

Over three-quarters say that the local area has not become any better or worse during their time as a resident, and less than one in 10 state that it has become a worse place to live.

## Sewage and pollution

The majority simply mention that they are aware of sewage and pollution going into the river. However, a number elaborate further and suggest that it's a problem for Yorkshire Water to solve, and that local community groups are pressing for improvements.

"Just about the sewerage and pollution problem in the River Wharfe."

**Male, 55-64, Comfortable Communities, Ilkley**

"Sewage discharge into the river and litter."

**Female, 35-44, Financially Stretched, Addingham**

"The river is polluted, and it's not safe to swim in."

**Female, 35-44, Rising Prosperity, Ben Rhydding**

## Confusion about the bathing status

There is a degree of confusion among some about *what* the bathing status means – and the role of Yorkshire Water in the designation. For some, there is an understanding that the water was safe, but has become unsafe due to YW's management of sewerage systems.

"Firstly I heard that it received an award about bathing, secondly I heard completely opposite about human sewage going into the river."

**Female, 45-54, Affluent Achievers, Ilkley**

"The water was designated and clean for swimming. Yorkshire Water then allows sewage to run into the water."

**Male, 65-74, Comfortable Communities, Addingham**

"It was suitable for bathing, but Yorkshire Water couldn't fix the sewage problems. Because of the sewage problem, it is not suitable for bathing anymore.."

**Male, 65-74, Affluent Achievers, Addingham**

# The vast majority are aware of the bathing status change

% aware of the bathing status change

	Total	Addingham	Ben Rhydding	Ilkley	Affluent Achievers	Rising Prosperity	Comfortable Communities	Financially Stretched
Aware of the bathing status change to the River Wharfe in Ilkley	83%	79%	74%	89%	85%	72%	91%	74%

● Significantly higher than total ● Significantly lower than total

**Under 35s (67%) are significantly less likely to be aware** than older residents (35-54, 87%; 55+, 83%).

**Over nine in 10 (92%) of those who have always lived in the area are aware** compared to **just 64% of those** who have been **in the area less than 5 years**.

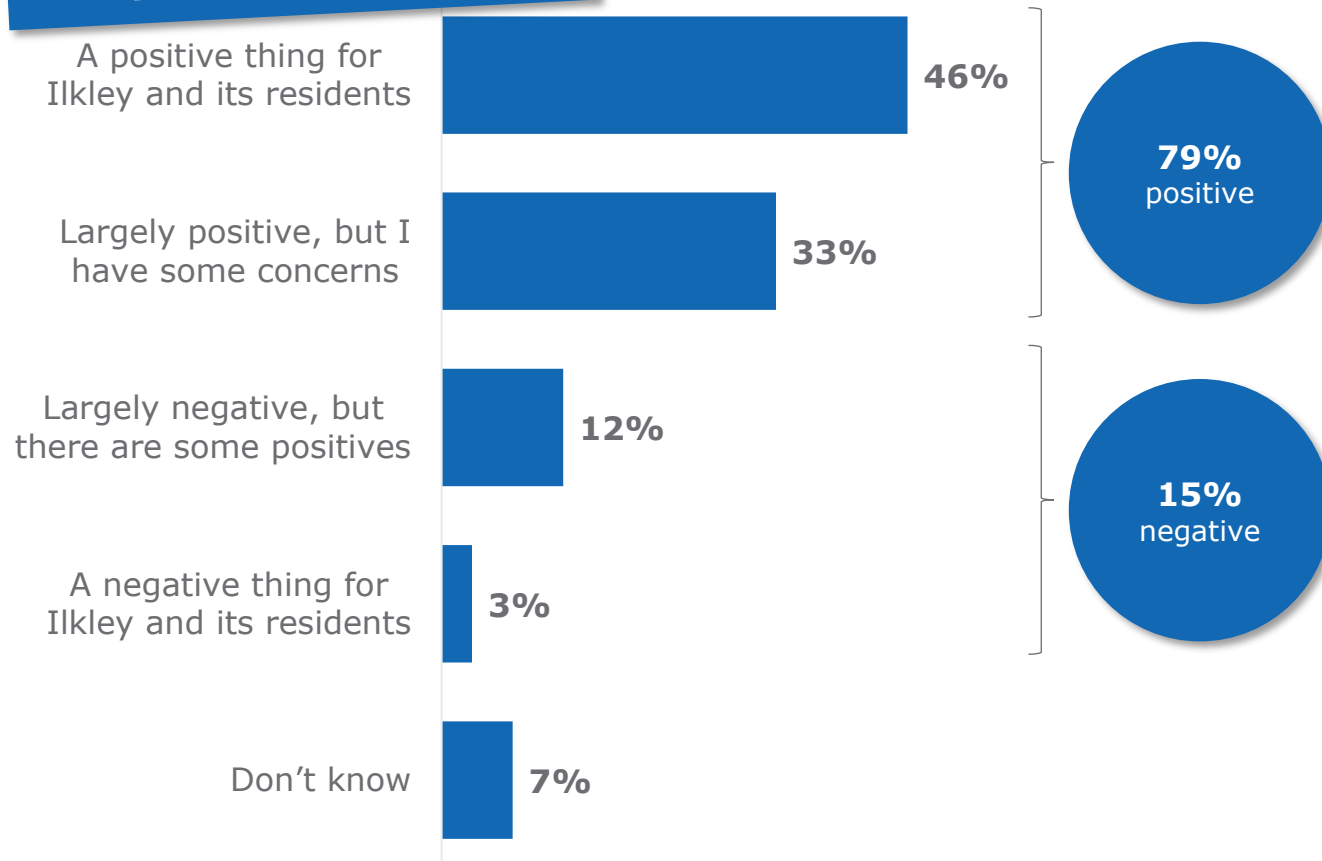
**95% of those active in a local community group are aware** compared to 76% of those who aren't.

**Financially stretched** are least likely to be satisfied with YW, least likely to want to hear from you, and among the least likely to be aware of the bathing status change – suggesting that the bathing status is not the sole issue locally.



# Less than half think the bathing status change is entirely positive

## The change to the bathing water status is...



**19%** of those **aware in Ilkley** think it's either **largely or wholly negative**, compared to 12% in Ben Rhydding and 8% in Addingham.

**Financially Stretched** are significantly less likely to consider it a wholly positive thing (21%).

**Affluent Achievers** and **Comfortable Communities** are most likely to consider it either a wholly or largely positive thing (both 88%, cf. 73% **Rising Prosperity** and 48% **Financially Stretched**)

There are a variety of views and positions when it comes to the Wharfe and bathing water status...

*I think it's very wise of Yorkshire Water to be doing this research to fully understand the community as there is a risk here of listening to a very vocal and mobilised element of the population and assuming that it is representative of the whole of Ilkley*

There are four broad categories into which residents fall...

Around a third

**Status champions**

Around a third

**Pragmatics**

Between a tenth to a fifth

**Ambivalents**

Between a tenth to a fifth

**Opposers**

# Status champions: a topic that has mobilised & strongly impassioned parts of the community

There is a good proportion of the community that feels very strongly on the issues relating to pollution. They have often been actively or staunchly in favour of the bathing water status in order to ensure that these issues are, in their minds, adequately addressed.

## Those who are most staunchly in favour of bathing water status tend to be:

- Well integrated or even influential in the community (members of community groups, connections to local government etc.)
- More likely to be doing activities in the water (canoeing, swimming etc.)
- Those that like to let their kids or dogs paddle in the water
- Very environmentally aware
- Those who are more up to date on current affairs
- Often very negative perceptions of YW based on this issue

"We know the sewage works is insufficient for the amount of sewage which goes through it on far too many days of the year. We know they're overflowing for around a third of the year which is unacceptable. They're pumping raw sewage into the river"

**Financially stretched, male, 65+**

"The main objective for us pushing the status bid was to force YW to pay attention to river quality on a national stage main problem is a misconnected sewer, we have proof of this. Yorkshire Water deny it and blame agriculture"

**Affluent achiever, male, 35-64**

**These residents are often claim to be highly knowledgeable on the issues around the pollution and are keen to learn about Yorkshire Water's plans in light of the bathing water status which they strongly supported. They believe investment cannot come quick enough.**

# Pragmatics: a challenge but good thing for Yorkshire Water to do

There is also a small proportion of the community who are aware of the issues, are relatively in favour of bathing water status, but they take a more pragmatic view and accept that it is not an easy issue to fix and that there are many factors and players contributing to the problem.

## Those who take a favourable but moderate view:

- Have often lived in a variety of places and realise that the river is fairly clean in comparison to other places or cleaner than it may have been some years ago (but still in favour of it being cleaner)
- Are quite socially and politically aware but not staunchly involved in local politics or groups
- Often fairly positive perceptions of Yorkshire Water

"It's not ideal and it would be great to sort it but it's just a fact of life that when it rains a lot of it overflows and it has to go somewhere and that won't be easy to sort"

**Affluent achievers, male, 65+**

"I'm in favour of them investing, it's never going to be a bad thing but I do have some concerns over how that is managed and hopefully not over managed to the point where it restricts what people can and can't do around the river"

**Comfortable communities, male, 18-34**

**These residents can often acknowledge the concerns some have around bathing water status and may have some questions themselves but are largely in favour of it and supportive of investment.**

# Ambivalents: bathing water status & related issues are not top of mind for all

There are a lot of very vocal and passionate voices and opinions surrounding the issues relating to the Wharfe and bathing water status. However, it is **important to note that not all residents are as acutely aware of the topic** as some and **not all have strong or divided opinions on the matter**.

## Those who are more apathetic to the issue tend to be:

- Those who are not well integrated into the community (not following community social media pages, not part of community group)
- Those who are less 'outdoorsy'
- Those who are less environmentally aware
- Those who do not follow news and current affairs
- Those who are less sceptical/questioning of big businesses
- Also largely disengaged with or neutral towards YW

"No, it's news to me. I've not heard anyone in café talking about it. Mind you, I try not to get involved in anything political or anything like that."

**Financially stretched, female, 35-64**

"I think I heard something on Yorkshire television a few weeks ago about pollution in the river but I'm not sure. I've not heard about the bathing thing, that's good though they should let people know about that."

**Affluent achiever, female, 65+**

**These residents appear to be reasonably supportive of bathing water status upon learning about it and feel that it will add to the community and appeal of the area.**

# Opposers: some residents are concerned about the impact of bathing water status

There is also a proportion of Ilkley residents who have some **concerns relating to bathing water status** and whether it **may encourage more visitors to the area** in summer and further **exacerbate littering and antisocial behaviours**. There are also some **concerns about water safety** and whether the status may result in more accidents and drownings.

## Those who are opposed to bathing water status tend to be:

- Those who have been living in the area all their lives or moved into because of the perception that it is an 'exclusive' area
- Follow and interact on local community social media pages but less likely to be involved in active community groups or volunteering
- Less likely to be environmentally aware or concerned about the environment
- Less likely to be well informed or up to date on news and current affairs
- More likely to have children

"People in Ilkley don't want more people to come and swim in the river because people in Ilkley don't do that. They've already had to close off the bridge because of people jumping off it and that's a nightmare for people who need to use it"

**Financially stretched, female, 35-64**

"It's bad enough as it is already. I can't let my boys out by themselves in the summer. I think there's a lot of people that have concerns about it. I mean are we going to get extra policing?"

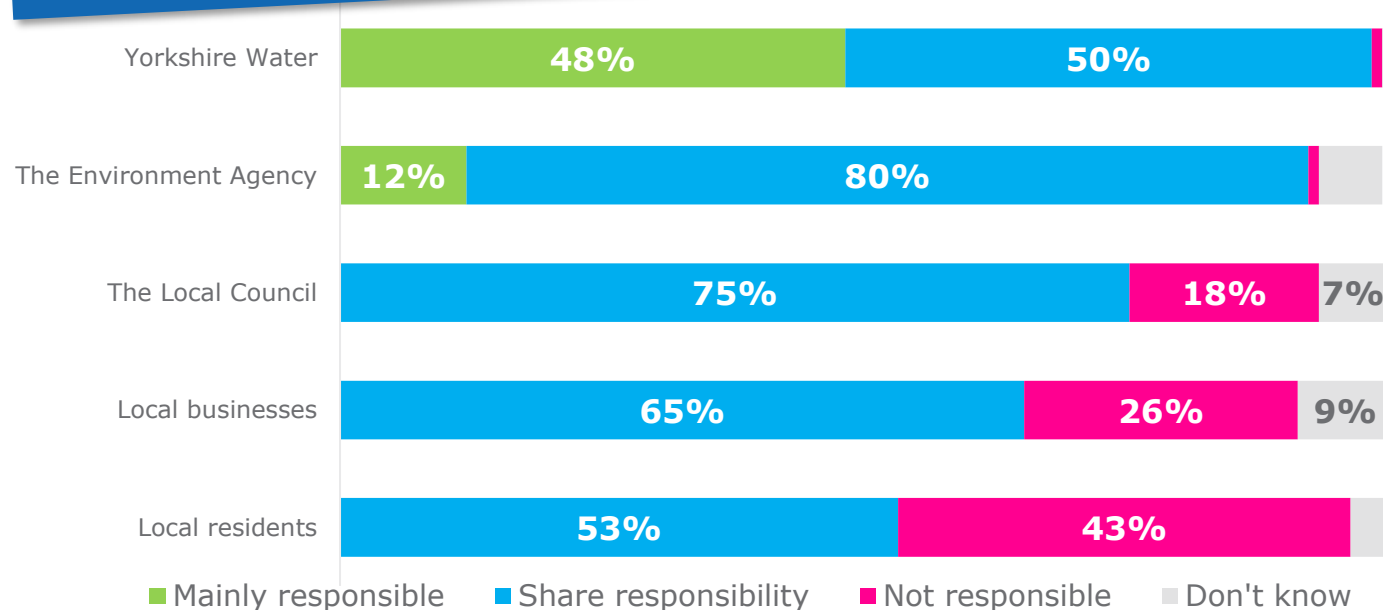
**Financially stretched, female, 35-64**

**The concerns these residents have around how busy the area is and antisocial behaviour appear to supersede any concerns they have about the water quality. They would often rather see investment made in other areas such as flooding defences.**

# Almost half think YW is mainly responsible

Almost half of residents think YW is mainly responsible for the water quality in the River Wharfe, while none think the local council, local businesses, or local residents are mainly responsible. However, just over half think local residents have shared responsibility

## Responsibility for water quality in the River Wharfe



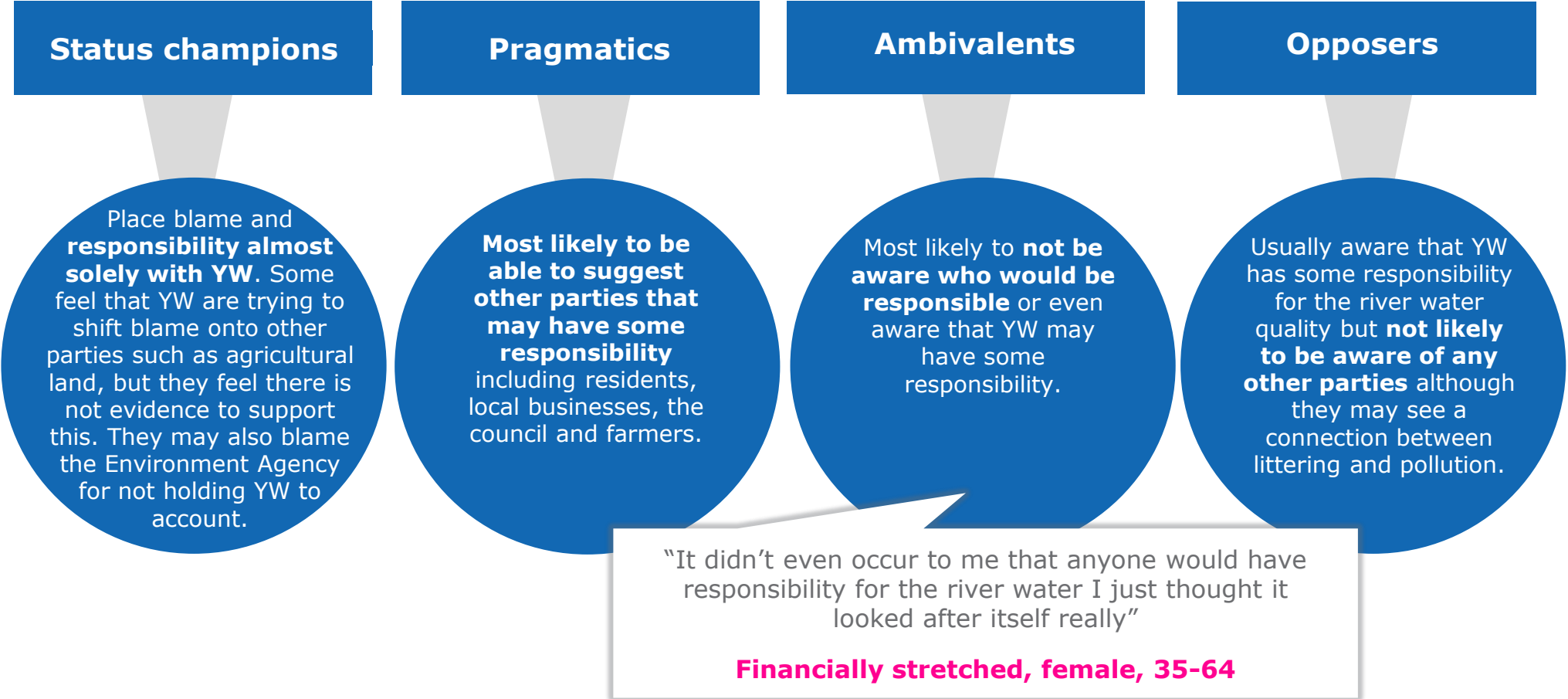
**Just 35% in Ilkley think YW are mainly responsible** for the water quality in the River Wharfe (cf. Addingham, 63% and; Ben Rhydding, 52%)

**Financially Stretched** are least likely to think YW is mainly responsible (32%)

**Comfortable Communities** (63%) are **most likely to think local residents have a shared responsibility**

# Awareness of responsibility beyond YW is limited

Most residents who are aware of the bathing water status and issues relating to pollution believe that YW holds most, if not all, of the responsibility when it comes to the levels of pollution in the River Wharfe.

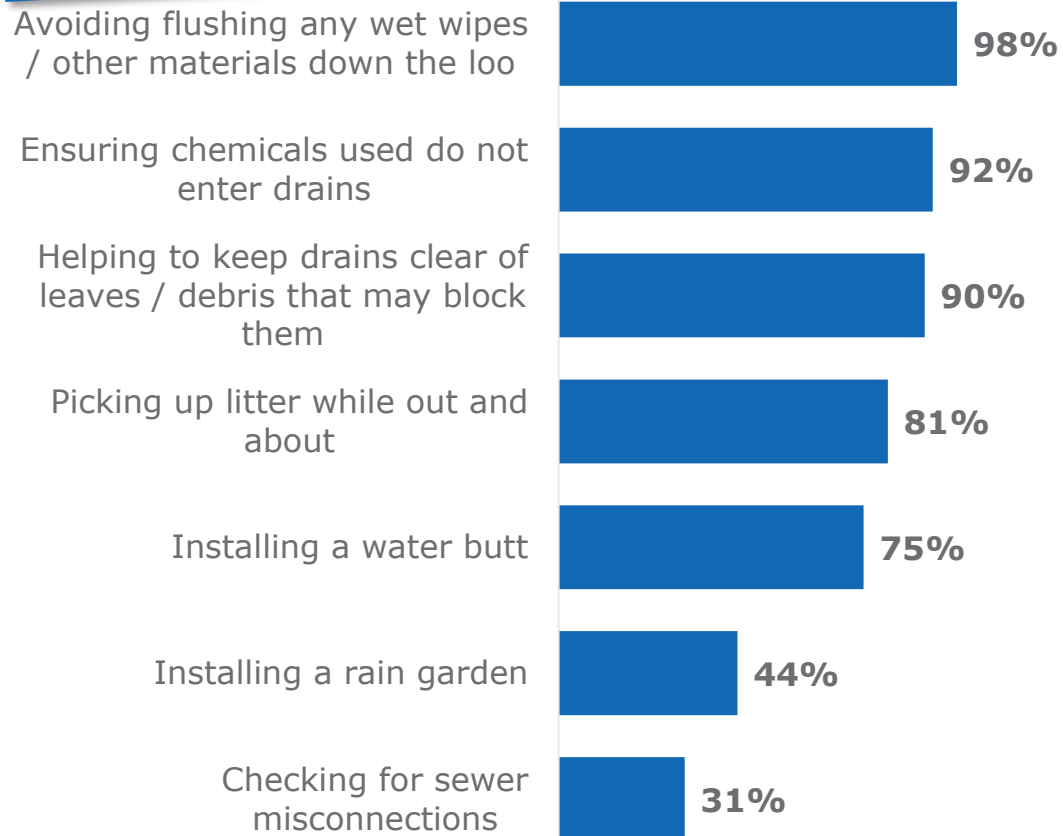




# Willingness to change behaviour

Over nine in 10 are willing to avoid flushing non-flushables, ensuring chemicals do not enter drains and helping to keep drains clear of leaves and other debris. However, only a third would check for sewer misconnections.

## Willingness to (% net likely)...



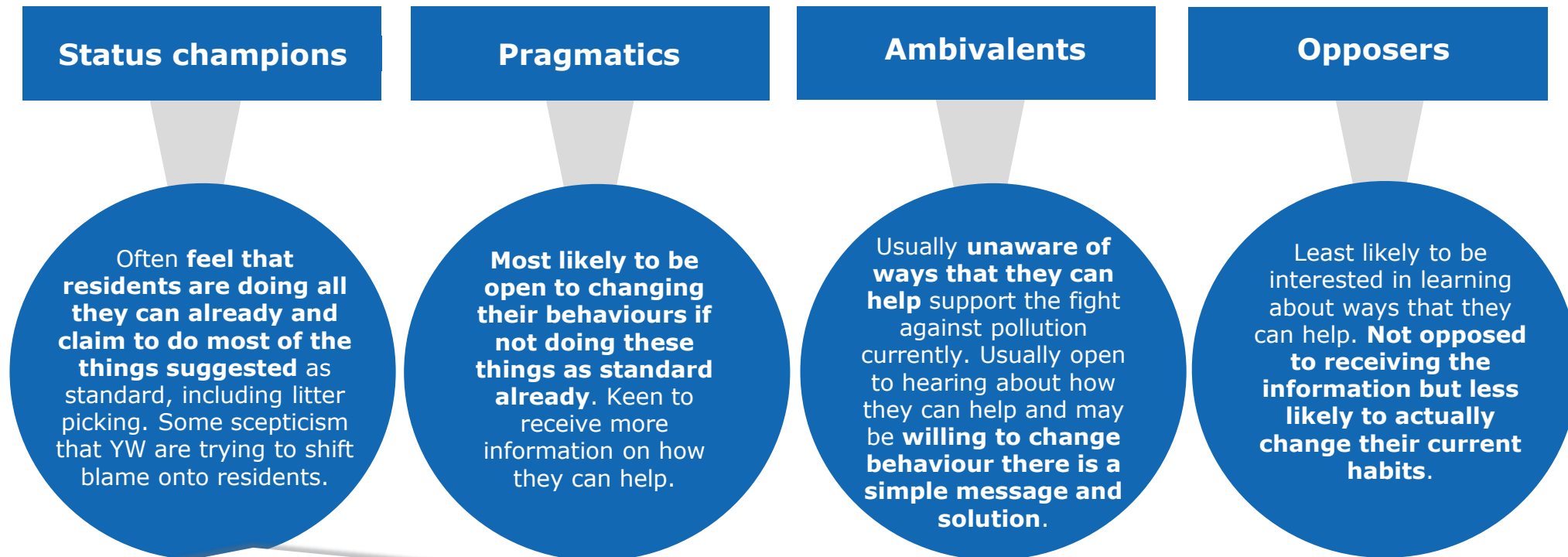
**Younger customers (18-34) are less willing to change behaviour** (average 3.2 behaviours they would be willing to change, cf. 35-54s, 4.1 and 55+ 4.2)

**Financially Stretched** less willing to change behaviours than other Acorn groups.

**Base:** all respondents (273). **Q29.** As well as investment from Yorkshire Water to improve the water quality of the River Wharfe in Ilkley, there are a number of things that customers could do to improve the quality of water and reduce the chances of flooding and sewer flooding that can contribute to the pollution in the River Wharfe. To what extent would you be willing or unwilling to do the following?

# Willingness to change behaviours varies amongst residents

Residents have mixed opinions and varying levels of willingness when it comes to changing behaviours that may contribute toward river pollution.



"These are common sense really. Most mindful people will be doing these things already and if they're not then they're probably the types of people that never will"

**Comfortable communities, male, 65+**

# Awareness raising and support required in some areas

There is a clear need in some areas for YW to consider awareness and education campaigns to support residents.



## Litter picking

Most residents **already feel that the community is doing as much as they can** to help tackle littering with many community and volunteering groups already having picking events in place periodically. Many residents also claim to pick up litter ad-hoc as they visit the river. Some call for YW to **work with the council to provide more bins and collections in the busy summer months.**



## Checking misconnections

The majority of residents spoken to **feel they wouldn't be confident to know where or what to look for** in order to identify misconnections. This is an area where residents tend to feel YW need to support them to do this either by **offering it as a service or providing clear guidance on how to do this.**



## Drain misuse & maintenance

Most residents were **not aware that they should not allow things such as soap suds from car washing or cleaning fluids to go down the public drain**, most assumed this would be processed prior to entering waterways. It is suggested that YW should **provide clearer comms around how street level drains work** and where they go. Most residents seem willing to check for leaves in the drains around their own properties.



## Toilet misuse

Most residents **feel that this issue is already well-known and most say they are already doing what they should be** in this area. Some believe that **those still misusing drains in this way do so out of laziness and disregard rather than a lack of awareness.**

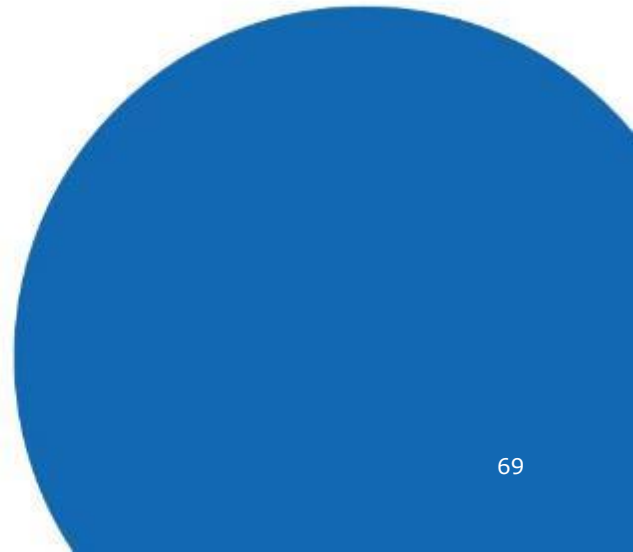
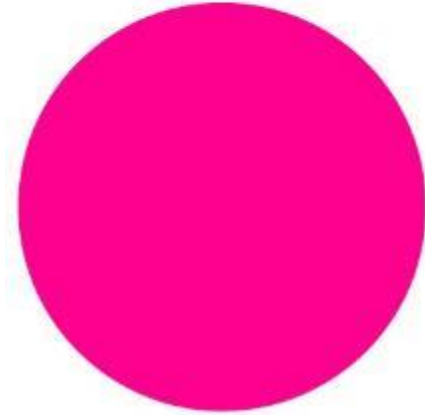


## Rainwater collection devices

Older and more financially comfortable residents seem quite willing to consider purchasing devices such as water butts and rain gardens. Those who are less well-off or are slightly younger feel that YW should **support residents to make such purchases including subsidies and special offers.** It was also suggested YW should **consider teaming up with local suppliers** to support campaigns in this area.

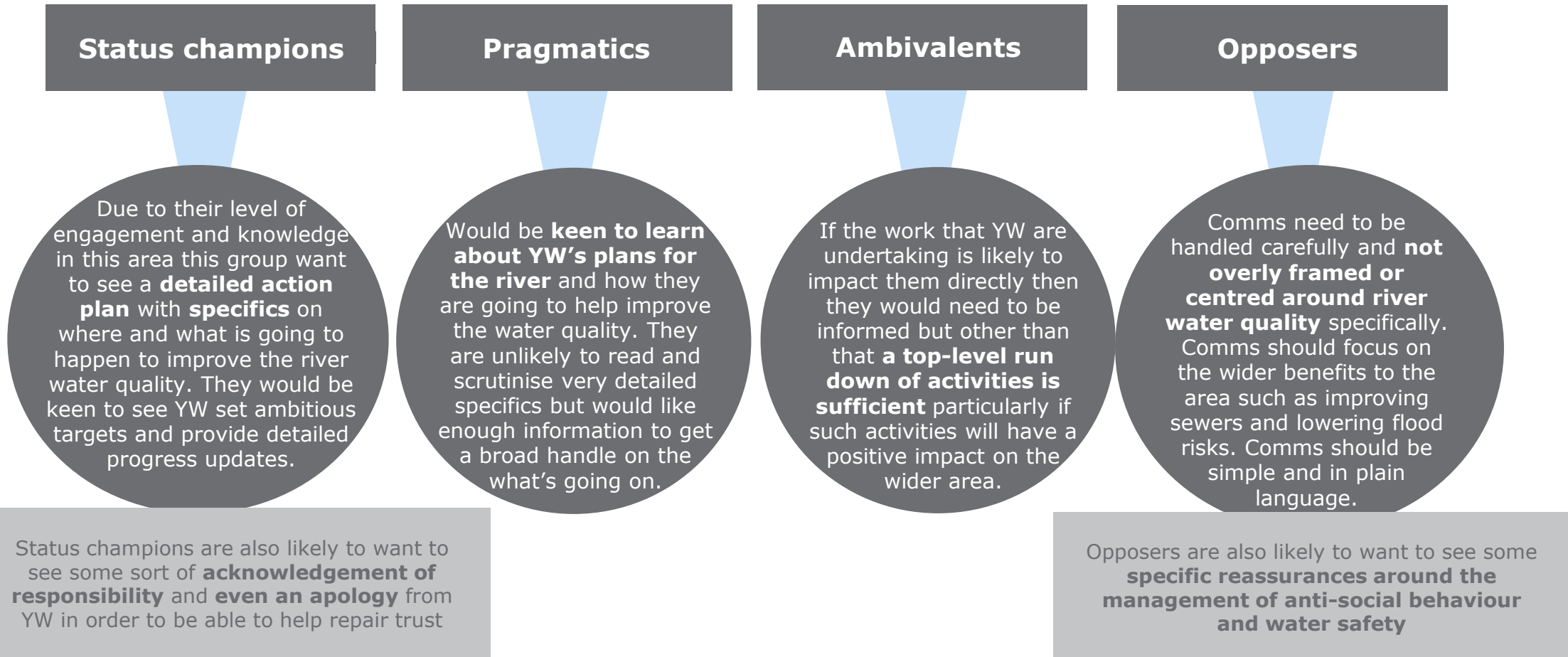
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# Communicating to residents...



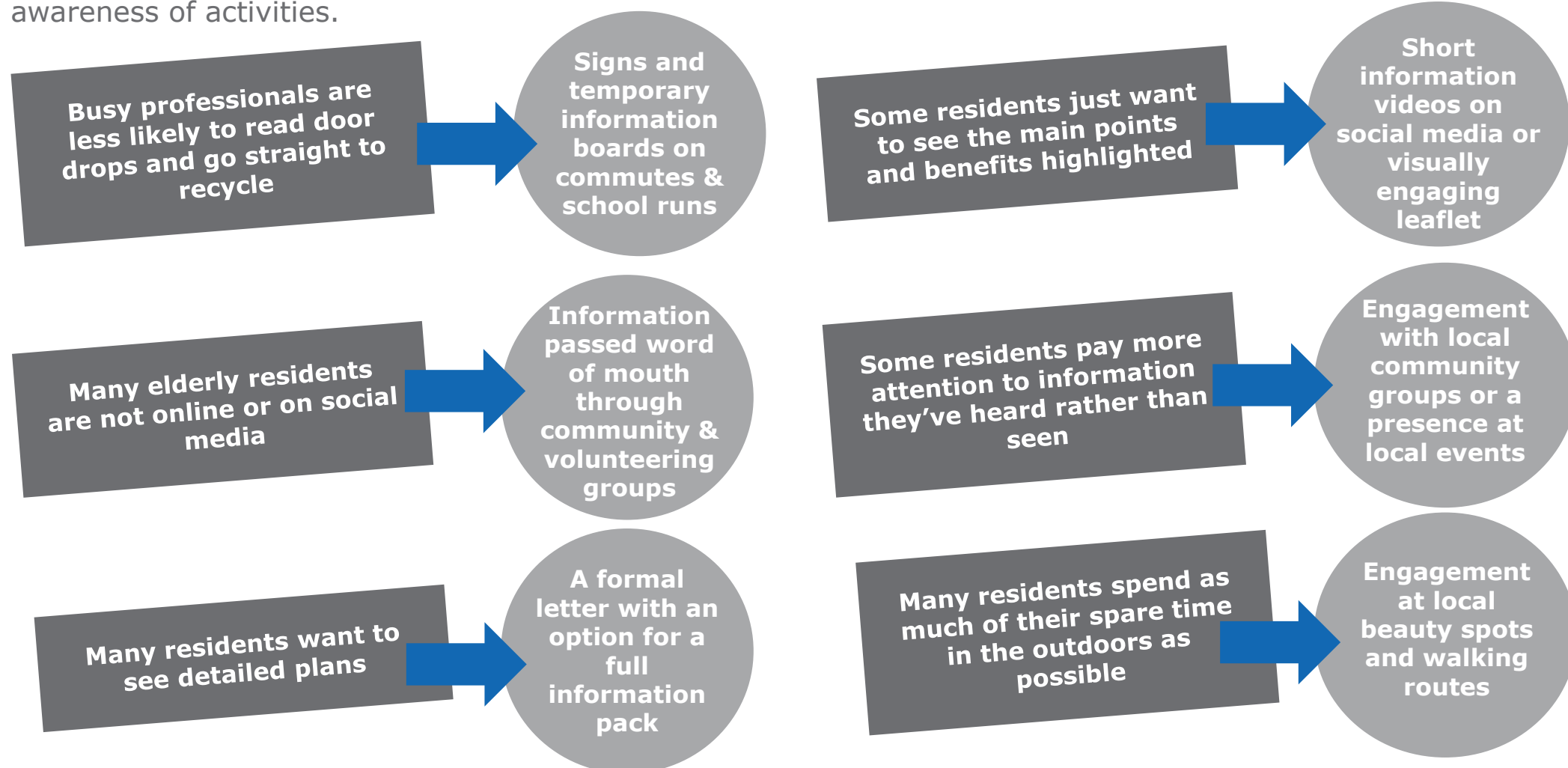
# Information and detail required is dependent on views relating to bathing water status

'Status champions' and 'Opposers' have particularly opposing needs when it comes to information requirements.



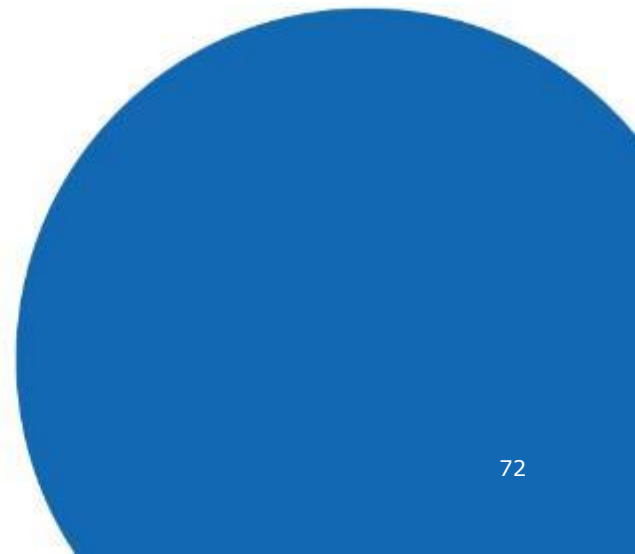
# Just like residents, comms channel preferences are varied and diverse

Yorkshire Water should consider a multi-channel approach with some grass routes engagement to maximise awareness of activities.



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# Conclusions & recommendations...





# Conclusions

**The Acorn groups don't always accurately fit the demographics and lifestyle of residents in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding, however, there are a number of (quantitative) attitudinal differences that highlight the differing wants, needs and priorities of the four Acorn groups.** Residents classed as Financially Stretched are least likely to be positive towards Yorkshire Water, but the River Wharfe doesn't appear to be a key driver of those lower scores. Affluent Achievers and Comfortable Communities, meanwhile, are more likely to see the River Wharfe as a key part of the local area, and to be more satisfied with YW overall.

**The vast majority of residents are proud of where they live, and feel that there is a strong sense of community spirit. This is driven, at least in part, by the high levels of involvement in community projects and groups – especially among Affluent Achievers and Comfortable Communities.** However, despite the strong sense of community spirit, there are a number of cultural and attitudinal clashes that residents have to deal with. Primarily, this revolves around those members of the community who have always lived in the local area, and those who have moved to the area more recently – with more established members of the community tending to have more traditional and conservative values, and more recent movers having more liberal and progressive attitudes.

**Despite those cultural and attitudinal differences, almost all residents are united in agreement that the River Wharfe forms a vitally important part of the area.**

The majority of residents are aware of the change in bathing status, and although there is widespread support for this, it's by no means universal. The qualitative research reveals four key groups of residents, from the status champions (those ardently in favour of the bathing status change), to the opposers (those who think it's a negative thing for the area).





# Conclusions

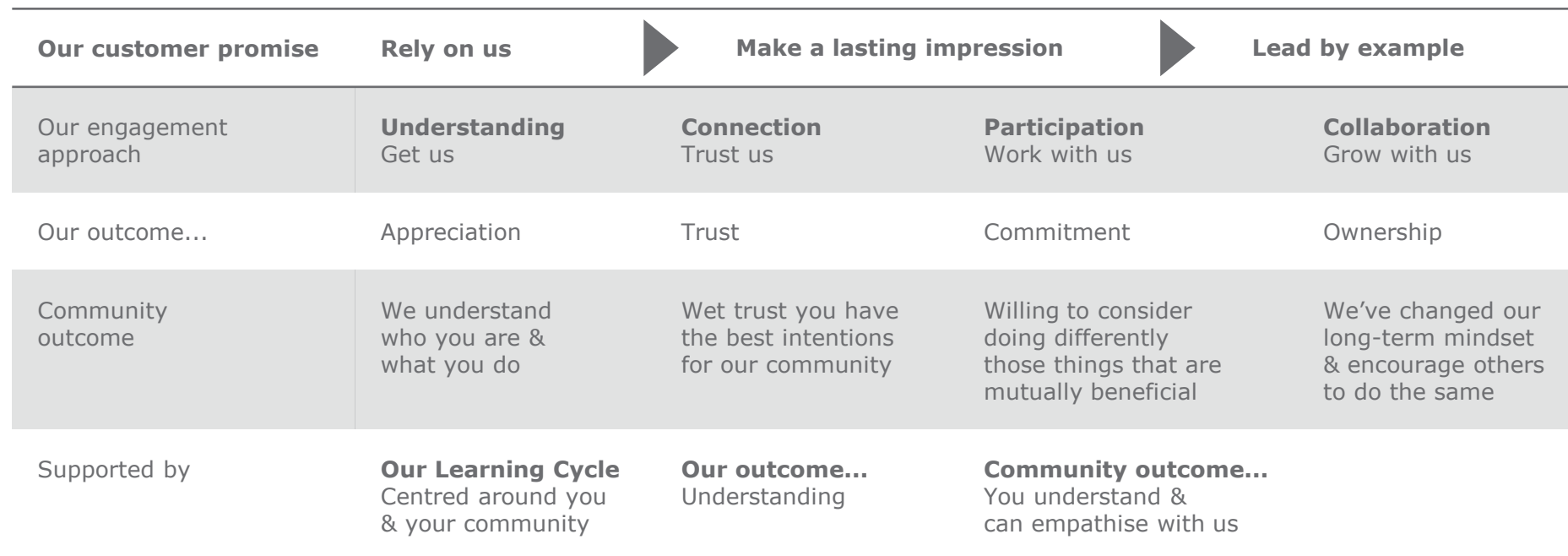
**Almost half of residents say that YW is mainly responsible for the quality of water in the River Wharfe** (with just 12% thinking the Environment Agency are mostly responsible, and 0% thinking the local council, local residents or businesses are mainly responsible). **This points towards the general belief that YW are responsible for any issues with the water quality in the river, but that they are also responsible** (along with others) **for improvements.**

**While there is a** (quantitatively) **high level of willingness to change behaviour, the qualitative research suggests that a number of residents** (especially those already engaged in community projects), **are already 'doing all they can' to support and promote improved water quality in the River Wharfe.** This suggests that YW will need to step up its communications around why it is necessary for residents to engage in positive behaviour change to improve the water quality in the River Wharfe, alongside details of what YW are doing in this area as well.

**In the main, local residents get their information about local matters** (including information about the water quality in the River Wharfe), **through local newspapers and word of mouth. While there is a degree of awareness of YW through leaflets, letters and social media etc. it appears that local community groups have a significant advantage over YW in being able to communicate and articulate their concerns and objectives, and that YW is – relatively speaking – lacking a 'voice' that is being heard and understood by residents.**



# 'Yorkshire Engagement' straw model



Customers in Ilkley, Addingham and Ben Rhydding feel like they have a good understanding of YW, but this often driven by information from other sources than YW.

YW need to open up dialogue with Affluent Achievers and Comfortable Communities to communicate its position on the River Wharfe in particular. For Financially Stretched and Rising Prosperity, the objectives are slightly different, and should be focused on wider education about YW that extends beyond the River Wharfe.

There are a number of different cultural and attitudinal differences within different pockets of the community, suggesting that a 'one size fits all' approach might not be suitable, and that a more tailored approach might be necessary.



# Recommendations: A tailored approach required

## Status champions

## Pragmatics

## Ambivalents

## Opposers

### Main take outs:

Place blame and responsibility almost solely with YW. Some feel that YW are trying to shift blame onto other parties such as agricultural land but they feel there is not evidence to support this. They may also blame the environment agency for not holding YW to account.

Most likely to be able to suggest other parties that may have some responsibility including residents, local businesses, the council and farmers.

Most likely to not be aware who would be responsible or even aware that YW may have some responsibility.

Usually aware that YW has some responsibility for the river water quality but not likely to be aware of any other parties although they may see a connection between littering and pollution.

Often feel that residents are doing all they can already and claim to do most of the things suggested as standard, including litter picking. Some scepticism that YW are trying to shift blame onto residents.

Most likely to be open to changing their behaviours if not doing these things as standard already. Keen to receive more information on how they can help.

Usually unaware of ways that they can help support the fight against pollution currently. Usually open to hearing about how they can help and may be willing to change behaviour there is a simple message and solution.

Least likely to be interested in learning about ways that they can help. Not opposed to receiving the information but less likely to actually change their current habits.

### Comms approach needed:

Due to their level of engagement and knowledge in this area this group want to see a detailed action plan with specifics on where and what is going to happen to improve the river water quality. They would be keen to see YW set ambitious targets and provide detailed progress updates.

Would be **keen to learn about YW's plans for the river** and how they are going to help improve the water quality. They are unlikely to read and scrutinise very detailed specifics but would like enough information to get a broad handle on the what's going on.

If the work that YW are undertaking is likely to impact them directly then they would need to be informed but other than that **a top-level run down of activities is sufficient** particularly if such activities will have a positive impact on the wider area.

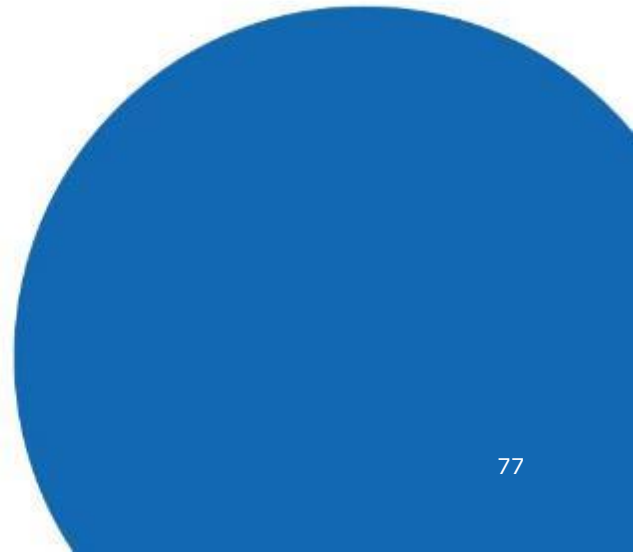
Comms need to be handled carefully and **not overly framed or centred around river water quality** specifically. Comms should focus on the wider benefits to the area such as improving sewers and lowering flood risks. Comms should be simple and in plain language.

Status champions are also likely to want to see some sort of acknowledgement of responsibility and even an apology from YW in order to be able to help repair trust

Opposers are also likely to want to see some specific reassurances around the management of anti-social behaviour and water safety

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# Appendix





xxx believes life is for living and has a renewed zest for life since downsizing to a property in the Addingham area after living outside of Ilkley in other areas of the West Yorkshire region. She is fit and active and enjoys indoors exercise classes with some outdoors activities. She is extremely sociable so enjoys her job at the local café when she's not travelling or partaking in one of her many activity classes.

**Since downsizing from her marital home, xxx now lives alone with her dog and cat. Her children have long since flown the nest and live in different parts of the country.**

Since her divorce, she has decided to **live life more adventurously** and tries to experience new things. Now she has downsized her property, this has **freed her up financially** to do so. She now **challenges herself to go outside of her comfort zone**, including taking up skiing for the first time, but she also enjoys a lot of home-based activities such as decorating.

As she lives alone, **socialising is very important** to her, so aims to pack her days with lots of classes and activities. She even took a **part time job at the local café** in order to get the opportunity to **get to know people in the local community** more. She **hears about what's going on in the area through conversations rather than through the media**.

She has a **positive and upbeat attitude** to life and **tries not to worry about things** that are out of her control so avoids watching or listening to too much news.

*Ilkley is stunning and a lovely place to live but I'm here by default really. I would much rather be living somewhere abroad if I could, in a warmer climate. However, the river is beautiful to look at and it's a nice social space for people in the summer which is great for local business – even if it does bring with it some difficulties.*

**Leisurely lifestyle**

**House proud**

**Oblivious**

**Positive attitudes**

She has **little knowledge or awareness of the issues related to the river water quality**, bathing water status or Yorkshire Water's involvement. She assumes the bathing water status and investment to be a positive thing for the area and she is open to supporting Yorkshire Water with their efforts by making smaller lifestyle changes where she can.

### My relationship with the river...

As she works in a café, she appreciates the benefits the river brings to local businesses in terms of the increase in tourism and visitors who come to enjoy it. She does however also acknowledge that this brings with it an element of antisocial behaviour which is a shame but outweighed by the boost to the local economy and likes the fact that people can enjoy the space for paddling and picnics in the summer. She is not aware of reports of pollution in the river.

### My relationship with Yorkshire Water...

She is not particularly knowledgeable about YW or its activities other than not having had any supply issues and that they own the field she lives next to. She feels that YW is expensive as her bill is unusually high for a household of her size but she has not got round to fully challenging it as she tends to focus her time on more positive things.

### My attitudes to the Wharfe & bathing water status...

She had no awareness of YW's involvement or responsibilities with the Wharfe – she assumed it managed itself and believes the river to be very clean at present. She wasn't aware of the bathing water status but feels it would be a positive for the area and help ensure the river water quality for everyone's benefit. She was surprised to learn of ways that residents can also help support the river water quality and was keen to learn ways that she could help but would perhaps not have the know-how to check for misconnections or to know how best to collect rainwater.

**Attitude to bathing water status:**  
Ambivalent

**Interactions with river:**  
Dog walking

**Perceptions of YW:**  
Neutral

**Receptive to supporting clean-up efforts:**  
Receptive to change

### How to talk my language...

- Friendly/informal
- Visually engaging
- Top line information

### What I want to see & hear from you...

- No current awareness of the bathing water status - needs information that clearly explains the full situation and doesn't assume prior knowledge
- Open to learning about ways to help support the river water quality
- Money saving advice



xxx has lived in the Ilkley area all her life and while she's proud of where she comes from she can feel like an outsider within her town at times. She feels far removed from the influx of wealthier professionals that have moved into the area but is also wary of numbers of visitors to the area in the summer from surrounding towns who she feels creates a lot of problems for local residents.

**She lives in a council owned house in Ben Rhydding with her husband and two young sons. Her husband works in a manual job while she works part-time in a charity-run soft play centre.**

The centre provides **local lower income families** with a **low-cost option for entertaining their children**. She feels this is important as she claims that there is little to do in the area for kids and that it is **too expensive** to take the family outside of the town to access the types of **indoor entertainment activities** they tend to enjoy.

She feels the area has changed over the years in terms the population and she is disgruntled with the higher rental prices the influx of affluent professionals to the area has brought with them, as well as the perceived **cultural divide** between people like her and the newcomers who she claims can be "snobbish" at times.

On the other hand, she is also extremely **wary of visitors from surrounding towns** who she feels bring 'trouble' and crime, to the extent that she **prevents her sons from playing by the river** to avoiding mixing with the groups of youths that congregate there. She learns about the latest 'goings on' in the area through social media groups include '**Ilkley chat**'.

*No one that is from Ilkley originally goes down to the river. It's dirty and it's dangerous. I wouldn't let my kids go near it. It's full of rats anyway. I don't know why we would want to be advertising the bathing water status and attracting more people to the town as it's a nightmare as it is. Locals don't go swimming in there, it's not our thing.*

**Family focussed**

**Financially cautious**

**Insular**



She has some awareness of the pollution in the river but **her concerns around the influx of outsiders into the area surpass any desire for Yorkshire Water to invest into the water quality** to ensure the water is safer for bathing. She would rather see investments focussed on benefits to 'locals', such as lower bills or improved flooding defences.

### My relationship with the river...

She and her family are generally not very outdoorsy types. When they do go out for family friendly strolls in the summer, they actively avoid the river as she dislikes the influx of tourism and visitors and is fearful of the safety of the water with rats, pollution, under currents and anti-social behaviour being of particular concern to her.

### My relationship with Yorkshire Water...

She feels that she pays too much for her water and she struggles to understand how her bills are worked out as they often don't seem to reflect her usage. She feels that Yorkshire Water are not very transparent in this area. She is aware of YW conducting a lot of investigative work in the area and says that they have been good at communicating when this is likely to happen, although she doesn't know what the work was being conducted for.

### My attitudes to the Wharfe & bathing water status...

She worries that the bathing water status will encourage people to swim in the river which she feels will result in more fatalities, due to the water being unsafe. She refers to it as 'advertising to encourage more people' which she worries will attract more youths to the area, which in turn may increase antisocial behaviour. She feels that residents already do a lot in terms of litter picking but she does not feel that people will actually make any major changes within their own homes unless there was a wider benefit to them, such as lowered bills by saving water etc. She feels it may be worthwhile targeting awareness at children as they are likely to be more environmentally aware when they get older.

**Attitude to bathing water status:**  
**Against**

**Interactions with river:**  
**None**

**Perceptions of YW:**  
**Neutral**

**Receptive to supporting clean-up efforts:**  
**Unreceptive to change**

### How to talk my language...

- Uncomplicated
- Top line information
- Focussed on personal benefits

### What I want to see & hear from you...

- Information needs to be focussed on the benefits to the wider Ilkley community and specifically local residents (e.g flooding)
- Avoid focussing too much on investments and improvements being in relations to 'bathing water status'





xxx lives alone and has lived in a number of different areas in his life so doesn't consider anywhere to be 'home' as such. He likes Ilkley for being accessible to both the countryside for his outdoor pursuits as well as the city for more cultural activities and a livelier atmosphere, which suits his more cosmopolitan nature. He has a dislike for 'small town' mentalities and is very environmentally aware.

**He moved to Ilkley 8 years ago for his job as a lecturer. He's lived in many areas of the UK, generally moving for work. Now he is partly retired he's decided to stay in Ilkley because of his passion for the outdoors, being a keen cyclist and hill runner.**

His passion for the outdoors extends to a wider passion and **concern for the environment** which is a key focus in his life and often drives his decisions around how he travels and the products he buys.

As well as keeping fit and exploring the great outdoors he also appreciates **cultural activities** such as visiting art galleries and museums. He often visits surrounding towns and cities to attend exhibitions of interest. As much as he likes living in Ilkley for the countryside, he prefers to go drinking or dining in Leeds where there is a more quirky and trendy set of places to visit. He **can't stand larger chains** and prefers to support independent businesses.

He is quite socially and **politically engaged** and will often **read the broadsheets** such as the Guardian. He is very keen that big businesses, such as Yorkshire Water, do more in terms of their corporate social responsibility and that profits are re-invested into environmental improvements where possible.

*I would say I am quite politically aware and that can sometimes result in bugbears with how things are run, such as the government and large corporations. I like to do a diverse range of things and visit exhibitions and gigs. I spend a lot of time outdoors and I guess that has in part driven my frustration around how we treat our environment.*

**Cultured**

**Environmentalist**

**Discerning**

**Cosmopolitan**

xxx is very much aware of the issues relating to pollution in the river and **strongly in favour of bathing water status**. His views on this completely taint his perceptions of Yorkshire Water despite never having experienced any issues with the company. His personal views around large corporations owning environmental assets also contribute to his feelings of disdain.

### My relationship with the river...

He regularly interacts with the river as part of his outdoor pursuits, including a daily running circuit that follows the river. He would like to be able to swim in the river but is too concerned about pollution. He feels very passionately about cleaning up the river and is appalled by the sewage released into it and the potential impact that is having on the local environment and ecosystems.

### My relationship with Yorkshire Water...

He describes YW as being 'unregulated polluters' and he finds it particularly unacceptable that the extent of the pollution in the river has been not only ignored but not transparently communicated to residents.

He feels that Yorkshire Water warn the community when sewage is released so that they can avoid entering the water.

He generally dislikes the way water companies are privatised and would like to see them nationalised.

### My attitudes to the Wharfe & bathing water status...

He is keen that YW address the river water quality as a priority. He is very much in favour of the bathing water status as he hopes it will ensure greater 'policing' of the polluters, who he recognises are not just YW but local agricultural industries, and businesses to a lesser extent.

He cannot understand the views of some residents who are against the bathing water status and strongly believes that the environment should be enjoyed and interacted with by all, and for Ilkley not to become "a retirement village where everyone just drives around in cars looking at it".

He is very switched on in terms of ways to save water and reduce pollution but is keen that YW don't "greenwash" over the issue by passing the buck onto residents.

**Attitude to bathing water status:**  
Strongly in favour

**Interactions with river:**  
Frequent for running/cycling

**Perceptions of YW:**  
Quite negative

**Receptive to supporting clean-up efforts:**  
Already doing many

### How to talk my language...

- Environmentally focussed
- CSR focussed
- Unflashy & transparent
- Quite detailed information

### What I want to see & hear from you...

- To see full details of actions undertaken by YW
- To understand the environmental impact of current pollution levels
- Receptive to hearing about any issues YW face in terms of reducing the amount of pollution, so long as they do not 'blame shift' or 'greenwash' the issue

xxx lives in Ben Rhydding with his girlfriend and pet tortoise. He is from the Ilkley area originally but moved away for some years for University and training and has since returned to his hometown. Both he and his girlfriend are teachers and they live and breathe what they do. He spends lots of time in and around the river and doesn't let anything put him off from going for a swim.

happy  
place

**xxx specialises in teaching kids who have been previously expelled or with behavioural issues which he finds very rewarding.**

He enjoys teaching because he **loves discussing ideas and debating issues in a non-confrontational way**. He is highly inquisitive and tries his best to understand other peoples' opinions, even if they are not reflective of his own. When he's not teaching, he can often be **found swimming, meditating or paddle boarding in the Wharfe**. He is a free spirit with a lot of energy that he feels the need to 'burn-off' through exercise and work. He coaches a local youth football team as well.

He had **previously lived in Bradford which he notes is an area considered by Ilkley residents to be 'out of bounds'** with there being an element of snobbery, prejudice and fear of people from these types of areas. He notes that Ilkley has become an increasingly desirable and **expensive tourist town** with many external investors buying up properties, adding on extensions, and selling for large profits. He also notes an element of deprivation in the areas populated by those who have lived in the area all their lives. He believes this has resulted in a **polarised population, with some 'over-exaggerated' views from both sides of the divide**.

*Ilkley is a strange place to live, in many ways. You have this sense of snobbery of those from outside of the town but you also get this polarisation of residents within it as well with people living in essentially the same house style but one is a council houses and the other is a high earning professional. There is a fascination with the river in Ilkley with it often being the topic of debate and general conversation.*

Pragmatic

Free-spirit

Inquisitive

Passionate teacher

xxx is aware of the water quality issues but only found out after being warned by a passer by as he was swimming one day. It doesn't put him off swimming though – he just avoids the worst areas. He accepts that YW sometimes needs to release the overflow. He is keen that residents can access the river regardless of sewage as he believes it is largely safe.

### My relationship with the river...

He has grown up spending time down by the river with friends. Now he likes to exercise and spend time unwinding by the river through swimming, paddle boarding and meditation. He also notes a big social aspect to his relationship with the river, including partaking in a local social tradition known as the 'the river is high' where locals gather to observe the river when it is close to breaking its banks from the old bridge.

He recognises that Ilkley is a tourist town, that the river plays an integral part of that and by choosing to live there you need to accept the sharing of such resources.

### My relationship with Yorkshire Water...

He has had very few interactions with YW which he deems to be a good thing and that it demonstrates that they are very good at ensuring a consistent and reliable supply. He also was pleasantly surprised to learn about services provided for vulnerable customers which he feels is very important to provide.

### My attitudes to the Wharfe & bathing water status...

Despite being a keen wild swimmer and being aware of the pollution in the river, he is quite accepting of the fact that sometimes the overflow needs to be released by YW and he accepts it will be a difficult job trying to resolve that. His main concern is that residents continue to have free and unrestricted access to the river and his only fear around bathing water status relates to residents possibly being limited to only being able to swim at certain times if there were greater policing of when it was deemed safe or not safe to swim due to pollution.

He is, however, largely supportive of investment being made to improve the infrastructure that in turn will help improve the water quality.

### Attitude to bathing water status: Supportive but wary

### Interactions with river: Regular swimming & paddle boarding

### Perceptions of YW: Fairly positive

### Receptive to supporting clean-up efforts: Quite receptive to change

### How to talk my language...

- CSR focussed
- Friendly & engaging
- A reasonable level of information & detail

### What I want to see & hear from you...

- Wants to better understand what bathing water status actually means and how it may or may not change access to the river
- Need some reassurance about the role of YW and how the river will be managed
- Interested to learn about ways he can help but feel it needs to be a simple solution for most residents to embrace

A couple downsized and moved into the Addingham area three years ago to be closer to their children as they grow older. They are very proud to have moved into the area as they consider it to be an 'exclusive' place to live. They love the village feel and the very active 'civic' element to the community, throwing themselves into full village life by becoming active members of numerous community groups.

An  
important  
issue

They love living in the Ilkley area and **see very few faults in the area**, for them it is the **ideal place to retire to**. They fully appreciate and embrace the **community feel** of the area and have fully immersed themselves into a number of civic, environmental and charitable community groups.

When they're not spending time with their grandkids, taking them on trips around the local outdoor attractions and areas of beauty, they can often be found being **good citizens** providing help and support to more elderly or less able residents. They are very keen for the area to retain that community feel and not become a 'holiday village'.

Despite being fairly new to the area, they do have **some bugbears with how busy the area has become** since lockdown, particularly with visitors coming into the town in summer months and how this impacts on their ability to park etc.

As a result of the husband's previous job in the water industry and their **community group involvement**, they are highly engaged, **knowledgeable** and **passionate** about the issues relating to the river pollution and bathing water status. They have been part of or privy to many conversations with key stakeholders and leading voices in the calls for bathing water status and have very strong and negative opinions on Yorkshire Water.

*What really annoys me and other people is that YW has known about this for a lot of years and have done nothing about it. They just need to upgrade their sewage works and whatever sewage tank system is at Addingham. We know that the sewage holding area in Addingham keeps overflowing and pumps it directly in the river and even when it isn't overflowing directs it to Ilkley*

Proud, active resident

Highly knowledgeable

Nature lover

Community focussed

He is very knowledgeable and highly engaged in the issues surrounding the Wharfe and bathing water status. He strongly believes that YW have misled residents and tried to evade responsibility. He believes he knows exactly what the problems are and is very certain of how YW should be fixing them.

### My relationship with the river...

He believes that the river forms a very important part of the community and is a key asset that residents, including him, care deeply about. He and his wife appreciate the scenery and the amount of wildlife it attracts. It provides them with an enormous sense of wellbeing to go down to the river and spot the otters. They enjoy taking their grandchildren down to paddle in the water.

**An  
important  
issue**

### My relationship with Yorkshire Water...

Having worked for a water company as an environmental consultant, he is very knowledgeable in terms of YW's roles and responsibilities and he claims to have had an unproblematic relationship as a domestic customer. His negative views of YW have been formed almost entirely on his perceptions of the organisation's dealings and perceived mismanagement of the sewage facilities along the river which he deems to be unacceptable.

### My attitudes to the Wharfe & bathing water status...

He wants to see action and investment made straight away. He doesn't want any more consultations or reports – he wants YW to get on with the job. He fears that YW may look to find excuses for delaying or not completing the work as planned. He feels that residents are all very keen for the work to take place and that they will willingly accept any amount of investment or indeed disruption to get the issues fixed. He feels that bathing water status is the best way to ensure that YW make active improvements and to ensure greater scrutiny going forward. While he recognises that agricultural waste may also be contributing to the pollution he feels this is used by YW as an excuse for not fixing their side of the problem.

**Attitude to bathing water status:**  
Strongly in favour

**Interactions with river:**  
Nature watching & walks

**Perceptions of YW:**  
Very negative

**Receptive to supporting  
clean-up efforts:**  
It's common sense/  
already doing them

### How to talk my language...

- Formal and 'unfluffy'
- Transparent & taking ownership
- Very detailed information

### What I want to see & hear from you...

- Full details on actions undertaken by YW and strategy for investment
- Less reporting and assessment and more planning and execution
- YW taking responsibility – he believes residents who care about the issue are already largely doing what they can to help





xxx has recently moved back to Addingham where she lived as a child for a couple of years. When she is not rushing after her four daughters, she enjoys going out for meals with her friends. She is a stay at home mum who is very family focused and finds she has very little time to herself. She feels her connection to the Addingham community is hampered by her children not going to the local school.

### Routine

**She moved back to Addingham from California where she lived for 10 years with her American husband. They chose to live in Addingham so that her husband was close to Leeds-Bradford Airport and so their children could attend the Montessori school in Bolton Abbey.**

Her husband is often away from home due to work so she spends her time looking after her 4 children aged from 1 to 11. Her **priority** is ensuring that her **family are happy and safe**. She struggles to make time for herself as her parenting duties come above all else. Her **protective nature** is reflected in her relationship with the river as she will **not** let her children go in the river in **Ilkley** as she suspects **pollution** to be high.

She does not know many other families in Addingham as her children **do not attend the local primary school** where most local children go. She feels she does not always know what is going on in the local area because of this. She does however have a **greater connection** with her more immediate neighbours in **Low Mill** as she is **friendly** with her **elderly neighbours** who do know the local goings on.

*I am a slightly exhausted parent. There is never enough time in the day or the weeks to get everyone to their activities. Our section of the river is right before a Yorkshire Water station that is where they start dropping things in the river. I find it quite embarrassing that we have this issue, it's not a nice thing to live next to and lets the area down. I also worry about how it may impact m children's health.*

**Affluent**

**Family oriented**

**Protective**

**Rushed**



She has a positive perception of Yorkshire Water when it comes to her home supply of water. She does however believe that YW should be doing more to address the pollution levels in the river. While she thinks farmers also contribute to the pollution she believes YW to be the main polluter. She believes they drop sewage into the river from a station near her house.

### My relationship with the river...

In the summer, her children enjoy going to "Secret Beach" (an area of the river that can not be seen from the road) to paddle as well as finding rocks and river glass. The children feel a real sense of ownership over this small part of the river by their house. She sees the river as a vital part of the community especially as the local residents enjoy swimming in the river.

### Routine

### My relationship with Yorkshire Water...

She believes YW to be a reliable utility company and has never had any issues with household supply. Her only direct contact with YW was when she was informed that her water might be cloudy and brown. She was pleased to be informed well in advance and that the problem was solved quicker than YW suggested it would be. However, she also thinks that YW should be doing more to address the pollution problem in the river.

### My attitudes to the Wharfe & bathing water status...

While she made no direct reference to the bathing status, she was aware of YW and the River Wharfe being in the national press because of the pollution issue. It is likely that she would support the change to bathing status as she wants YW to address the pollution problem. There is a Yorkshire Water station at the end of her lane where she believes that sewage is dumped in the river. She thinks this is part of an agreement with the government where YW can drop sewage into the water to prevent flooding. However, she believes the amount they dump does not add up with the number of floods. She believes for the price they pay there should be no sewage in the river but she would be willing to pay higher bills to see the issue addressed.

### Attitude to bathing water status: In favour

### Interactions with river: Paddling in the summer with children

### Perceptions of YW: Mixed

### Receptive to supporting clean-up efforts: Receptive but already doing many

### How to talk my language...

- Focus on increased safety for residents & their families
- A reasonable level of information & detail

### What I want to see & hear from you...

- Greater transparency about when YW let sewage into the river (a warning or traffic light system)
- A timeline of YW's plans to address the pollution issue
- An apology to earn back some of the goodwill from people.