

Property and Asset Management

What do we do?

The Council manages a wide variety of properties and helps to make sure new developments can occur. Property and Asset Management team provides a wide range of services from maintaining and managing the Council's extensive portfolio of land and buildings to procuring new and exciting developments.

We monitor the condition of all the Council's properties and oversee maintenance to make sure they are repaired and in a safe condition. We design and manage construction of new buildings and other developments for the Council such as the car parks.

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torrridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We do this by:

Helping communities to meet their own needs by:

- using new initiatives with the crime prevention partnership to make sure new developments include crime reduction measures
- taking stakeholder views into account when developing our buildings and services

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life through developing a natural and distinctive environment by:

- continuing to use sustainable construction and materials where practical
- improving energy efficiency in buildings to protect the environment and reduce harmful emissions

Supporting the local economy and regenerating communities through design and innovation by:

- specifying locally sourced materials and services where practical
- using locally available skills and construction techniques rather than those that can only be obtained from specialist companies nationally

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the Torrridge District by:

- good design and presentation of schemes and services

Leading communities to achieve high quality public services by:

- continue to provide and use electronic information in line with the national indicator BVPI 157
- addressing current issues and using correct equipment for our tasks

What we said and did last year...

What we said we'd do...	What we did...
Complete the Industrial Units at Dobles Lane, Holsworthy	This was completed in March 2004
Begin the Quay building on Bideford Quay	This will be completed in August 2004
Start work on the new facilities in Victoria Park, Bideford	This will be completed in August 2004
Meet contract targets for all improvements within the Capital programme	We met our targets for most contracts
Improve all public conveniences in Torrridge	An ongoing programme of refurbishment and renewal is underway

Our plans for the future:

- to meet the requirements of the Disability Discrimination Act by Oct 2004
- to continue to meet targets of capital/revenue projects within budget and on time
- to let new grounds maintenance contracts for the District
- to start building an artificial turf pitch at Torrington School
- to begin the Caddsdwn (Phase 2) industrial development

Did you know?

- the unique fountain (produced by Property and Asset Management) will soon be entertaining visitors to Bideford Quayside
- Bideford Harbour can now accommodate ships of up to 3,000 tons which can be loaded and turned around within 24 hours

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Regeneration Services

What do we do?

Helping to make sure Torridge has a thriving economy and that local people have a good quality of life is an important part of the Council's work. The Regeneration Team is committed to improving the economy and community life in the area. Its responsibilities include economic development (including managing Caddsdawn Business Support Centre and Holsworthy Tamar Units), tourism, culture, recreation and community development. It aims to achieve good quality of life by making sure all available resources are put to best use and by working in partnership with other organisations to achieve the objectives set out in the Council's Corporate Plan and the Working Together Community Action Plan for Torridge.

Our community commitments:

We want to make Torridge a better place to live and work while sustaining our distinctive natural environment. We will do this by:

Helping communities meet their own

- supporting community planning partnerships in the area
- supporting the development of local sport, recreation and cultural organisations by giving advice and help in making the most of funding opportunities
- promoting sport, recreation, cultural and healthy living initiatives to encourage access for everyone
- encouraging and promoting access to learning, training and employment opportunities

Encouraging a sustainable quality of life through development of natural distinctive environment by:

- increasing people's access to walking and cycling trails, such as the Ruby and Tarka Trails
- encouraging sustainable tourism to enhance the natural environment
- promoting Northam Burrows Country Park while managing its use to make sure no activities detract from its natural diversity
- encouraging businesses to get more involved in recycling, waste reduction and waste minimisation work

Supporting the local economy and regenerating communities through design and innovation by:

- promoting rural regeneration through innovative and sustainable green tourism development, such as Ruby Country
- working in partnership with others to make the most of funding, skills and learning opportunities available to the area
- working with others to manage and develop a range of innovative and supportive workspace and employment land projects to support local employment needs

Promoting regeneration and recognition of Bideford and the Torridge District by:

- being a member of the Bideford Regeneration Partnership which has been set up to provide clear direction for the town's future
- managing Bideford Tourist Information Centre (TIC) and the Burton Art Gallery & Museum and providing grant funding to other TICs and museum & arts organisations
- working in partnership to manage Caddsdawn Business Support Centre and developing Phase 2 of the development project

Leading communities to achieve high quality public services by:

- working in partnership to make sure local issues are identified and addressed in the most effective way
- continuing further sports development participation in Torridge, such as school involvement and clubs
- continuing to promote Burton Art Galley, the Plough in Torrington and the Beaford Centre

What we said and did last year...

What we said we'd do...	What we did...
Achieve funding for Holsworthy Tamar Business Units	Completed 2004 and ready for occupation
Achieve funding for Caddstown Phase 2	Achieved, with work due to start on site shortly
Progress funding applications for Torrington Swimming Pool and multi use games area	Sport England Funding secured for pool, awaiting news from the Football Foundation about the multi-use games area
With partners, obtain a delegated fund (Rural Renaissance) for the area	Currently awaiting final approval from the South West Regional Development Agency (SWRDA)
Work with North Devon District Council on joint reviews of local tourism and the museum and arts sector	Joint review of tourism under way. Review of museum and arts sector (part funded by Arts Councils and SWLAC to follow shortly)

Our plans for the future:

- to develop further partnership working to make sure the services under the remit of the Regeneration Team are delivered in the most appropriate and cost effective way
- to research and implement health initiatives for older people
- to improve leisure access to the area's natural assets
- to make best use of future funding opportunities under the Rural Renaissance scheme to improve Torrington's economy
- to help communities progress projects identified in community action plans

Did you know?

- with others, the Council funds the North Devon and Exmoor Regeneration Company, which runs a series of free workshops to help community, voluntary and public sector organisations develop applications for European Objective 2 funding
- the Tourist Centre in Bideford has a Charter Mark for providing excellent customer services which is a high accolade
- last year our Sports Development Team were involved with more than 8 holiday sports programmes that over 2,000 children throughout North Devon attended

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Blue Flag award Westward Ho!

Projects for Improvement

The Council has embarked on a series of projects specially designed to significantly improve performance:

- the Vision of the Council for the next few years
- restructuring of the Council in order to provide an integrated style of working
- a review of all policies in order to facilitate the effective management of staff
- a radical review, and the monitoring, of performance
- leadership development for Councillors
- development of Managers in effectively managing the business of the Council
- looking at partnership working in order to achieve more
- fundamentally reviewing how we communicate within the Council and to our customers
- looking at various options in the management of the Council's housing stock
- considering all the risks associated with our business and what we do if it goes wrong
- looking at different ways of buying goods and services in order to save money
- looking at how we can best use computers and new technology to improve our services
- considering the implications of the unexpected happening and planning out these risks

This information is contained in the Council's Corporate Recovery Plan. This document is available on the Council's website – see below. This Plan is to be updated later this year.

We started by asking you what sort of Council you wanted and your aspirations for the future. This led us to develop a number of projects in order to realise the goal of being recognised as an 'excellent' Council by the year 2008.

The projects are interlinked and we have an internal mechanism to review their progress in relation to goals.

We are currently working on a communication strategy that will enable us to evaluate your reaction to our progress over the coming months.

The projects are providing the foundations on which we intend to build a strong, quality orientated and customer driven local authority. The work is already being fed into our Community Strategy that will be delivering benefits across the whole of the Torridge district. The Local Strategic Partnership is working to deliver changes in relation to sustainable communities; safer and stronger communities; healthier communities; children and young people.

The Council's recent performance has been poor across some of our services; although others are performing well. We are starting to spread the best practice, associated with our top performing services, throughout the Council and we are confident that you will notice the changes over the next few months. We have just embarked on improving our performance management systems so that we can effectively monitor progress.

You can get obtain an overview of the Vision and direction of the Council by looking at our new 'Corporate Plan'. You can ask for a hard copy or alternatively see it on our web site at www.torridge.gov.uk

You have provided us with great help and assistance in developing this plan. This is not the end of the process but just the beginning. Your help is still needed and valued. If you have any comments on our progress or would like to discuss any aspects of our improvement programme please contact: Mal Brown – Strategic Director (Improvement) on phone: 01237 428762 or e-mail: mal.brown@torridge.gov.uk

Restructuring

This project's remit is to:

- make sure the Council's functions are aligned to improve effectiveness and efficiency
- create a structure with roles, relationships and accountabilities that make the most of the way we manage performance and service improvement
- increase confidence and motivation within the Council to deliver our recovery and improvement plan
- enable appointments to be made to deliver and sustain necessary changes and improvements

What we've achieved so far:

- first phase of restructure - senior management – has been completed
- second phase of restructure – remainder of staff restructure - is underway

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- present the restructure to the Council's Policy & Resources Committee.
- Fill all posts, including any new posts, by the end of October 2004

'Our staff are our biggest asset. It's extremely important that we use them in the right way, linking roles and activities to agreed priorities, and regularly monitoring and evaluating what's happening. Before the end of 2004, the Council will have gone through this process and put in place new systems and amended structures to help us to better achieve the priorities we have'.

Comment from Project Champion – Mal Brown

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Policy Review

This Project's remit is to:

- develop Human Resources (HR) policies
- develop HR procedures
- get management and staff endorsement for its work
- communicate effectively
- provide support through links with the Members/Management development projects

What we've achieved so far:

- the HR strategy and action plan has been completed
- new HR policies and procedures have been developed and agreed
- staff handbook issued to every member of staff, policies are available in the handbook and on the Council's intranet
- implementation plans have been drawn up and agreed
- policy and procedure training has started

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- continue to implement the HR policies and procedures during 2004/5

'We want to develop a positive relationship with all our employees and we recognise the vital contribution they make to delivering services to local people. By working together, we can deliver the Council's vision into action'.

We want all our staff to:

- have a clear sense of purpose about the service they work in and their role in contributing to success
- make an active contribution to the way we do our work
- be proud to work for Torridge
- feel they get the right amount of support, guidance and communication
- have the opportunity to develop their skills and experience
- feel valued and have their achievements and contributions recognised

Comment from Project Champion Mal Brown

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Performance Management

This project's remit is to:

- deliver an effective performance management system
- increase awareness of the importance of managing performance
- make sure decision making is supported by sound performance information
- set up effective benchmarking with other local authorities
- provide a clear link between individual and organisational performance

What we've achieved so far:

- installed a software programme (SPAR.net) help us monitor our performance
- undertaken value management training to help with reviews of our services
- organised staff awareness sessions for areas such as consultation

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- take part in the continuing development of our performance management system (SPAR.net)
- feed updates into the performance management team's portal on the intranet
- support the work towards improvement by involvement of the Service Review Teams
- make sure risk management protocol is part of the Best Value review programme for 2005/6.
- develop and introduce a staff development scheme
- seek the views of staff on our progress towards an effective performance-based culture.
- continue to develop a 'basket of indicators' to monitor our performance
- develop a strategy for how we manage our work when the Improvement & Development Agency leaves Torridge

'The overall aim of this project is to introduce at all levels of the Council the systems and staff awareness which will ensure that all the Council's corporate effort is focused on delivering the Council's priorities as set out and agreed in the Council's Vision and it's Corporate Plan. In due course, the live performance data upon which the Council will base it's decision making will be available to everyone via the Council's website'

Comment from Project Champion Cllr. William Isaac

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Member Development

This project's remit is to:

- improve elected members' and officers' understanding of one another's roles
- develop an improved approach to tackling issues
- produce a strategy and policy for developing members
- set up a programme for elected member development

What we've achieved so far:

- a project team has established a development policy, strategy and programme
- self appraisals for elected members have been piloted

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- to review the role of overview and scrutiny committees and to enhance this further
- to review the current arrangements for member support and to recommend how these may be enhanced
- the member appraisals have provided information on areas of priority to be addressed by a members' training programme

'The development of individuals in any organisation is very important. This project has been a great help in pursuing these aims with Councillors'.

Comment from Project Champion Cllr. Allin Bewes

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Partnerships

This project's remit is to:

- re-focus the Council's partnership working on priority areas
- secure improved and effective partnership working

What we've achieved so far:

- mapped existing partnership arrangements
- set up criteria for successful working
- mapped partnerships to corporate and Local Strategic Partnership objectives and determined new arrangements
- agreed a training and development programme (including performance management and project planning)

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- set up criteria for successful working
- undertake training programmes
- monitor and evaluate our work
- develop a compact for partnership working

'Increasingly, we can only meet the needs of our communities by working with other groups and agencies. Our challenge is to make sure that our partnership work is focused on the main priorities for the area and are effective. This project aims to realign partnerships to priorities and to make them more effective by agreeing criteria for success, backed up by training. This includes development of a project management approach and linking partnerships to a performance management system with clear aims and targets linked to the work of the Local Strategic Partnership and Corporate Plan. The project is fundamental to the work not only for this Council but our partner agencies and groups'.

Comment from Project Champion Cllr. Hugh Bone

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Management Development

This project's remit is to:

- make sure the Council's management and personal development is linked
- identify and use a set of behavioural management competencies
- produce a framework for developing our managers
- set up behavioural competencies for recruitment

What we've achieved so far:

- competency framework established and ready to use
- development and review forms piloted on training provided to the Council's directors
- development and review meetings set up for directors and senior managers
- budget assessed and applied for

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- continue skills gap analysis
- evaluate our work rigorously, regularly and continuously

'To be able to improve the Council's performance, we need to have managers who are able to see the 'big picture' as well as being effective in their day to day work. This project will help by looking at the strategic capability of senior managers. It will address the needs and aspirations of the organisation as well as those of the manager and our customers.

Staff development and review will enable the Council to develop a training programme responsive to the needs of managers and aligned with the achievement of council objectives.

The learning they undergo will be practical and at all times related directly back to the workplace. Managers will also have their analytical, leadership and managerial skills developed.

This project will help managers to apply learning into effective practice so that the Council can demonstrate it is making a positive difference to the lives of local people'.

Comment from Project Leader Mal Brown

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Improving Communications

This project's remit is to:

- improve internal and external communications
- engage with local people, our customers, partners, staff and other interested parties
- improve our relationship with the media
- improve the Council's image and people's awareness of it by consistent branding
- ensure a joined up and consistent approach to consultation
- improve local people's participation in our work

What we've achieved so far:

- communications consultant and officer now in place
- communications Strategy audit underway
- initial meetings with local media taking place
- published and distributed first issue of community newspaper 'Torridge First'

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- complete communications audit
- produce draft communications strategy
- consult on draft communications strategy
- get the strategy agreed and adopted by the Council
- implement strategy and actions

'We want this projects to bring a new structure, quality standards and shared ownership to the way the Council presents itself and communicates with its customers.

We have a clear incentive to improve communication:

- research shows that well-informed residents are more likely to be satisfied with their Council
 - good, honest, open, two-way communication is the lifeblood of any successful organisation
 - strong communication is essential to how we work and provide our services.
- Picking up the strategic lead given by the Council's Vision, our communications must reflect an organisation which is:

delivering high quality public services
making Torridge a better place to live, work and visit

Key principles

- all communication should be clear, easily understood, appropriate for the intended audience, timely and up-to-date
- communication is a two-way process which involves listening as well as informing
- written and electronic communications should meet the Council's corporate 'branding'
- the Council's reputation is a product of how customers view us. The way we deal with our customers in person or on the telephone and the appearance of buildings, vehicles, staff and signage are important elements in the way we communicate
- the Council is committed to the principles of equal opportunity and access for all and our communications must meet the needs of users with special needs'

Comment from Project Champion Mal Brown

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Housing Option Appraisal

This project's remit is to:

- agree the best options to fulfil the requirements of the Government's Communities Plan
- make sure the chosen option is supported by tenants, members, stakeholders and staff

What we've achieved so far:

- change management process and strategy agreed
- community priorities established
- consultation leaflet being distributed to all tenants and leaseholders
- value management training completed to help the service review
- forming of housing business unit agreed
- housing market assessment-process and timetable agreed
- tenant panel, steering and working groups set
- plans produced to help us consult and involve relevant people
- public/private housing stock condition surveys agreed and nearing completion

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- complete and send consultation leaflet to tenants
- review service with the help of value management methods
- complete stock condition survey and set up ways to maintain property databases

'The Housing Option Appraisal is one of the major projects facing the Council. The potential cost of bringing up all properties to the Decent Homes Standard will be very influential in the process. Tenants will be at the heart of this work, although ultimately it is the Council that must decide which of the four options available is the preferred one. We anticipate making that decision by the end of the year. It's a decision that will result in some degree of change for our tenants and we want to make sure the change benefits our current and future tenants'.

Comment from Project Champion Cllr. Margaret Brown

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Electronic (e)-Government

This project's remit is to:

- continue developing the Council's website and intranet
- implementation of electronic payments and billing
- replace the Council's computer servers
- make a variety of information, such as Council's minutes and agendas, available on line
- review and implement the Implementing Electronic Government IEG3 statement and submit IEG4
- achieve 100% electronic service delivery by the Government's target date
- develop a customer access strategy so that people can contact us in ways that are convenient to them
- develop an e-Government vision for the Council
- develop basic service level agreements for the Council's Information Technology (IT) service

What we've achieved so far:

- implemented e-payment and e-billing facilities
- implemented new financial and procurement software
- IEG3 submission approved by the Office of the Deputy Prime Minister (ODPM)
- installed new servers to increase capacity and performance
- agendas and minutes of Council and Committee meetings available on website

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- make sure all services are using IT to its fullest extent to help customers
- provide all application forms on the Council's web site
- implement Human Resources software package
- develop a customer charter and level of service promises on the web site for each service
- further develop our website and intranet
- pilot a customer relationship management software system within the Revenues and Benefits service
- improve our compliance with the national measurement for electronic services – Best Value Performance Indicator BVPI 157
- publish full agendas and minutes, including reports and relevant documents, on the website

'Torrige continues to develop its e-Government capacity, to make sure local people, our staff and elected members have access to accurate, up to date information and more convenient and improved access to Council services'.

Comment from Project Champion Cllr. Christine March

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Procurement

This project's remit is to:

- reduce and simplify procurement procedures
- reduce the overall costs of procuring items
- set up a consistent approach for all procurement - capital and revenue

What we've achieved so far:

- bought a new financial package
- implemented first phase of financial package
- implemented first phase of procurement procedures

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- implement the remaining phases of the financial package
- implement the remaining phases of procurement procedures
- select and train the procurement team
- review and develop the Council's procurement strategy
- implement phases one and two of electronic procurement

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Risk Management

This project's remit is to:

- make sure all risks are considered when we make all major decisions
- reduce or eliminate risks
- enhance the Council's reputation

What we've achieved so far:

- completed the first phase of officer training
- completed member training

What we intend to do over the next 12 months:

- install risk management module of the performance management software
- review and revise the Council's risk management strategy
- complete officer and member training
- appoint a risk management elected member champion
- review and confirm membership of the risk management group
- compile and review a risk register
- complete and review a risk assessment

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Reviewing Service Performance

Best Value- what is it?

All local authorities are charged with securing continuous improvement in the services and functions they provide. The Government's Best Value policy and modernisation programme provides the statutory framework to do so.

Best Value is about providing services that combine economy, efficiency and effectiveness: embodied in clear action plans with demanding targets. Service improvement involves the consideration of costs and giving local community choice and quality services that meet the ever rising tide of expectation.

Regular reviews of local authority services are mandatory. The Council's corporate objectives and priorities determine which reviews are taken forward. Service reviews must embody the following principles:

- customer focus: being accountable to local people by concentrating on what service users and our customers really want to help improve everyone's quality of life.
- community leadership commitment: consulting with and listening to our community partners when seeking improvements
- people and change: involve the frontline staff at the outset
- challenge: should current services be provided? Are they really effective? Could some other organisation do it better?
- consult: involving stakeholders on service provision and priorities, analysing the results and formulating new ways forward
- compare: looking at what other councils are achieving and at what cost and closing the performance gap
- compete: seeking cost and quality improvement from our in-house teams by competitive tendering against the better performers from the private sector so that service delivery meets public aspirations
- continuous improvement: fit the review process and its improvement plan within the performance management framework the council is using to secure continuous improvement and value for money across the whole range of services

Torridge District Council has a legal duty to publish, year on year, a Best Value Performance Plan, (BVPP) which includes the Council's vision, its objectives and sets out what we have achieved.

The BVPP is a progress report made available to local people on the Council's web-site from 1 July 2004.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment - do we make the grade?

Principles are fine, but just how is the Council performing. Does it have a clear strategic and operational structure in place to deliver the continuous improvement of local services demanded? Is it listening to residents? Can it achieve continuous improvement in its services, in particular where delivery might be struggling?

The means by which these questions and others can be answered is the Government's introduction of Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA). It provides the framework for the Council, through self assessment and external examination, to judge if the Council has an

appropriate, well defined and transparent performance profile to deliver better services for it's community.

Torrige District Council was subject to a CPA review in June, with the results reported in October 2003. The Council was adjudged by the Audit Commission to be 'POOR'. The Council's aspirations lacked clarity and direction and a disconnected performance framework obscured development of improving services. In the area of performance management and improvement the CPA inspection report concluded, "there were no identifiable strengths in the area of managing performance and the Council did not have a robust performance management system". Furthermore, service development was not informed by information from users. However, the report acknowledged that some many services were also performing well, some of them in the upper quartile nationally.

Stung by the report's conclusions Torrige District Council has been galvanised into development of a major recovery programme that is to impact on all areas of the Council's activities. The management structure has been changed. A member development programme has been introduced. The Council has adopted a Corporate Recovery Plan and is committed making comprehensive improvements across that authority. We still have a long way to go, but many new processes are already in place.

A copy of the full CPA report can be obtained on the Council's website www.torrige.gov.uk

Performance Management: tools of success

Performance management is concerned with the alignment of resources, systems and business processes to achieve organisational objectives. Reviewing objectives and ongoing measurement of performance are essential to:

- measure improving performance against strategic targets
- set budgets that are open and clearly identify alignment between services and the Council's priorities
- target resources towards failing services
- structure monitoring and reporting arrangements that accurately reflect the health of the Council's services and provide members and managers an opportunity to make timely intervention should it be necessary

Managing performance and improvement in service delivery is about giving staff the appropriate tools to understand and take responsibility for their contribution to Council aspirations embodied in corporate targets.

The Council has recently installed a new performance management and measurement system. This system, known as 'SPAR.net', is being developed with a local company, Nexus, in a consortium with six other Devon District Councils. Similarly a new financial planning system has been installed. It will help ensure the Council is well equipped to make informed decisions on the deployment of resources that are clearly aligned to Council's key objectives and that the budget process addresses options, outcomes and consequences.

Performance Highlights for 2004/2005

Are we doing a good job?

Perhaps unsurprisingly, given the recent 'POOR' CPA review rating, the satisfaction survey confirmed that only 47 in every 100 people were satisfied with the overall performance of the Council, although 36% were neither satisfied nor dissatisfied. However, the Council has embarked on a strategy to address many of the issues through its Recovery Programme. Many of the changes or improvements already or about to be implemented have not yet had sufficient time to feed through in tangible ways that people can measure. The Council is committed to addressing improvement in those areas where service delivery is struggling.

Are we a good landlord?

The results of the Housing Survey conclude that as a responsible social housing landlord your Council is providing the kind of accommodation you are happy to live in and at a price you are willing to pay.

Whilst 89% of those surveyed were satisfied with our overall service, 93% were particularly satisfied with their accommodation and the satisfaction rate with the area in which they live exceeds 91%.

Most people found staff to be helpful and able to deal with problems successfully. We will ensure the number of people dissatisfied with the outcome of their enquiries is addressed as part of forthcoming housing reviews.

The way Torridge deals with repairs and maintenance of its housing accommodation receives a satisfaction rating of 88% and 91% of tenants were happy with the speed of repair work. Almost as many considered the overall quality of repairs to be good (87%).

The majority of tenants find the Council is keeping them informed about changes, nearly 92% considered their views were valued and taken into account a lot or at least, to some extent.

Some general observations

Improvement in Development Control is an issue of concern in the CPA report. During 2003/04 there was an improvement in the time taken to deal with planning applications in two (major, minor) out of three areas defined by application types (major, minor, other). While the time taken still lags behind national targets for these areas, improvements will continue to be sought through the introduction of new work practices and the recruitment and appointment of a Development Control Manager.

Planning costs have increased (+23%) and Torridge District Council has incurred some of these costs in defending contentious planning appeals (wind farms etc). While 68% of applicants remain satisfied with the service provided by planning this is a decline from the previous high of 83%. These concerns and others within the Planning service will be addressed during the service review to take place during 2004.

While the number of cases processed correctly by the Benefits Service remains high at 95% new work practices are being introduced to counter the lower level of user satisfaction. This year a service review will be carried out to ensure delivery of service improvement and increased customer satisfaction.

There has been a big increase in the number of days members of staff were sick to 12.21 days indicating a rise of 58%. This increase may be partly attributable to the use of more accurate data collection systems. As indicated the figure is significantly higher than previous years and one, which the authority will investigate, to better understand the issues.

While it is important for the Council to recognise areas in which there is room for improvement it is also important to recognise areas of achievement. Generally there has been a big effort made to introduce systems and methods of data collection, which has led to a big improvement in the scope, and accuracy of data collected. The Council, for data recently collected in 2003-2004m has been able to report on 7 Performance Indicators where previously systems were inadequate or unavailable to provide any data at all.

The 'Recycling rate for Torridge for 2003/4 is 22.7%. This is the figure for recycled household waste collected and composting combined. This exceeds the national target figure of 17% set by Central Government and is likely to improve further with the extension of the kerbside collection of recyclable material throughout Torridge during the current year. The current figure for the number of households served by a kerbside collection is already high at just over 78%.

The partnership approach to community safety is working extremely well in Torridge. This is shown in PI performance in an area of comparatively low crime incidence. Further work will be conducted to address the "Fear of Crime" concerns of residents.

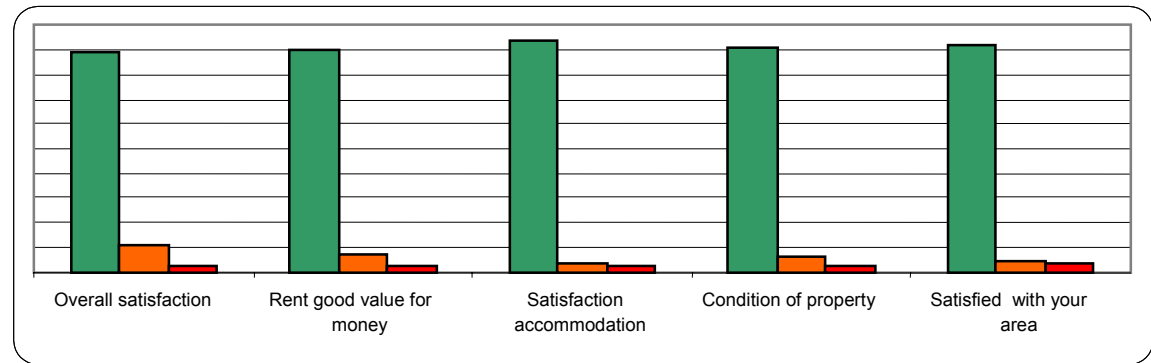
A summary of results for all indicators and comparisons against targets and previous years can be found on the Torridge website at www.torridge.gov.uk.

Survey Results

The Housing Status survey is one we have to carry out every three years and feed into our performance indicators. We have received the initial data and we are delighted to say the results are very positive. For the positive outcome we would like to thank all involved with the Housing Service including, Members, Officers, Tradesmen and of course our Tenants Associations.

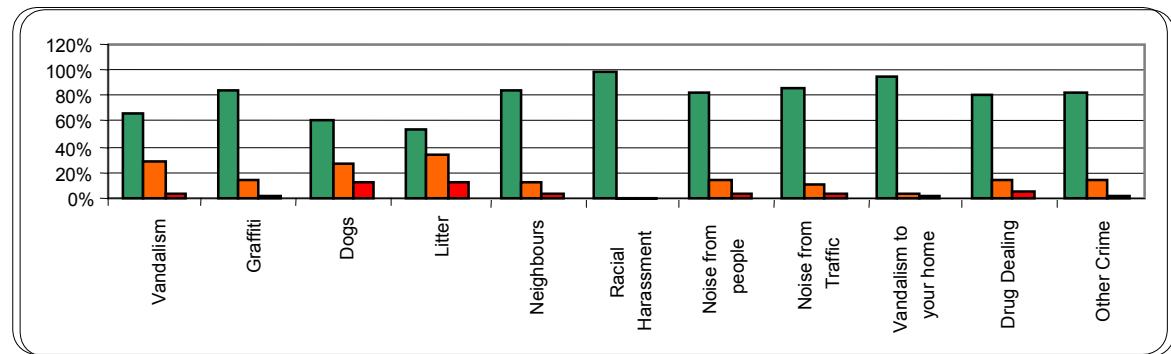
Satisfaction with the Landlord services

	Good or Satisfied	Neither	Poor or Dissatisfied
Overall satisfaction	88.8%	11.2%	2.2%
Rent good value for money	89.5%	7.7%	2.7%
Accommodation	93.4%	3.7%	3.0%
Condition of property	90.6%	6.5%	2.9%
Satisfied with your area	91.8%	4.4%	3.8%



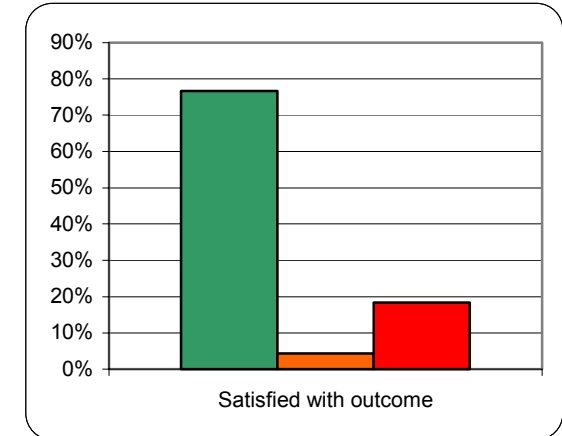
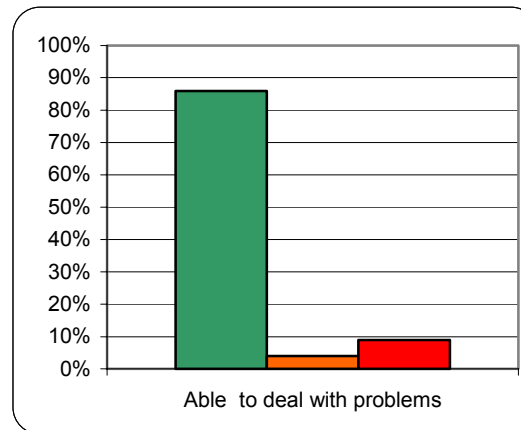
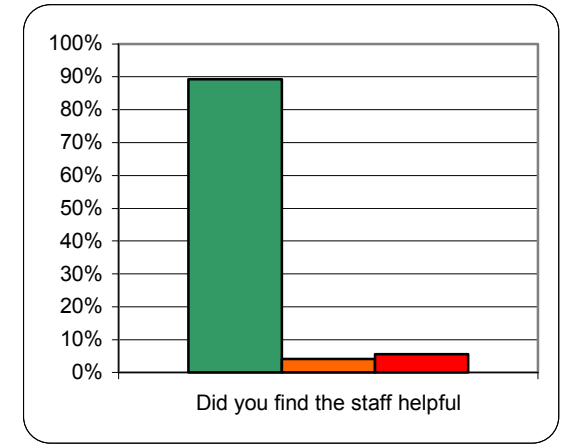
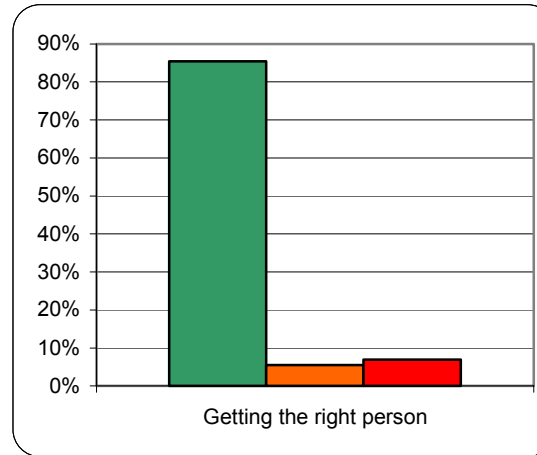
How serious is each of the following in your neighbourhood

	No Problem	Slight Problem	A Serious Problem
Vandalism	66.8%	28.9%	4.2%
Graffiti	84.1%	13.8%	2.0%
Dogs	60.1%	27.4%	12.7%
Litter	53.1%	34.2%	12.7%
Neighbours	83.4%	13.4%	3.4%
Racial Harassment	98.9%	0.5%	0.6%
Noise from people	81.8%	15.4%	3.7%
Noise from Traffic	85.7%	11.2%	3.1%
Vandalism to your home	94.8%	4.1%	1.2%
Drug Dealing	81.2%	13.9%	5.0%
Other Crime	83.2%	14.0%	2.6%



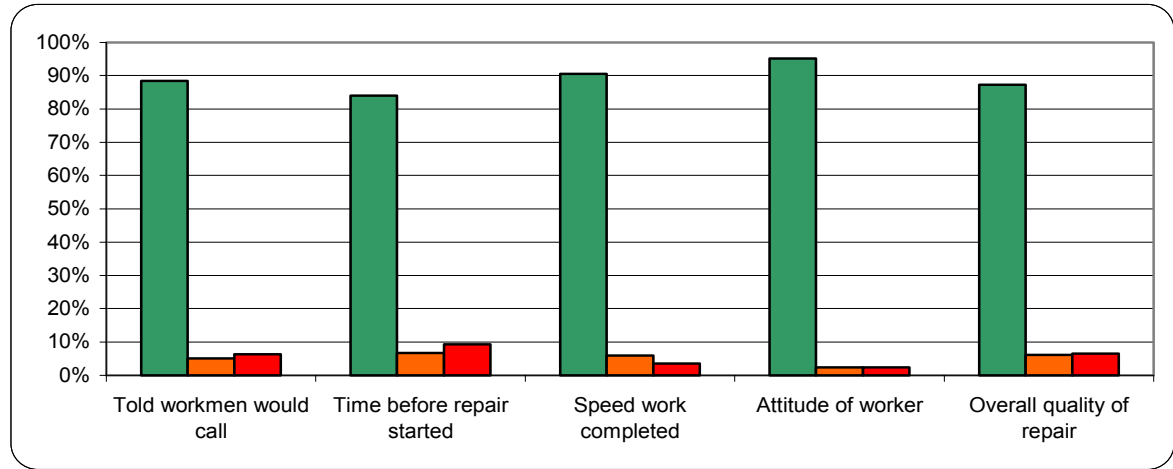
Dealing with staff at Torridge District Council

	Easy	Neither	Difficult
Getting the right person	85.5%	5.5%	6.9%
	Helpful	Neither	Unhelpful
Did you find the staff helpful	89.2%	4.1%	5.5%
	Yes	Neither	No
Able to deal with problems	85.9%	3.9%	9.0%
	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied
Satisfied with outcome	76.6%	4.3%	18.4%



Satisfaction with the way Torridge District Council deal with Repairs and Maintenance

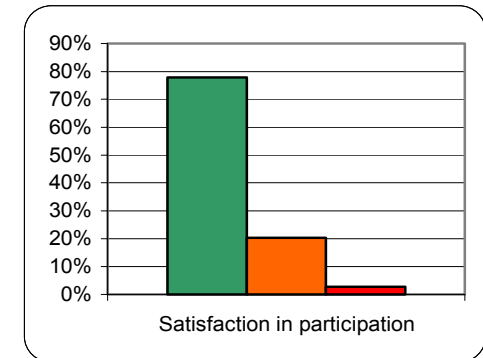
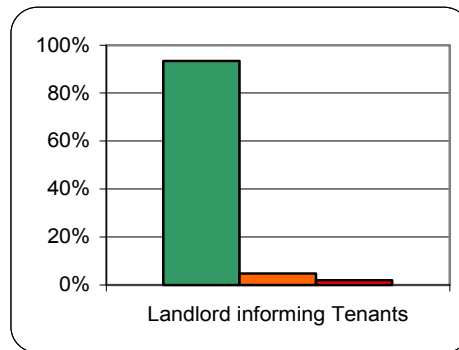
	Good	Neither	Poor
Told workmen would call	88.5%	5.1%	6.4%
Time before repair started	84.0%	6.7%	9.3%
Speed work completed	90.6%	5.9%	3.5%
Attitude of worker	95.2%	2.4%	2.4%
Overall quality of repair	87.3%	6.1%	6.6%



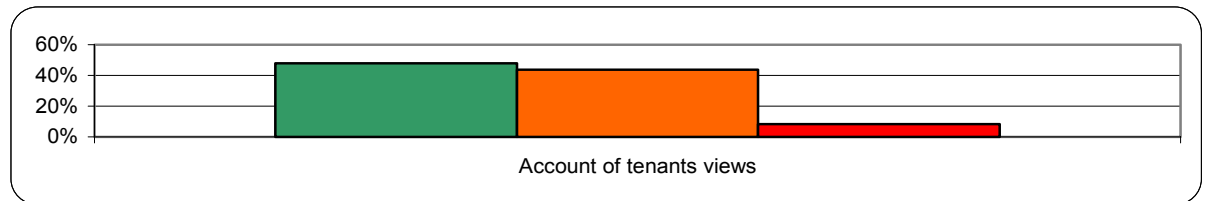
Are Tenants being kept informed about changes

	Good	Neither	Poor
Landlord informing Tenants	93.4%	4.7%	1.9%

	Satisfied	Neither	Dissatisfied
Satisfaction in participation	77.9%	20.3%	2.8%



	A lot	A little	None at all
Account of tenants views	48.0%	43.7%	8.2%



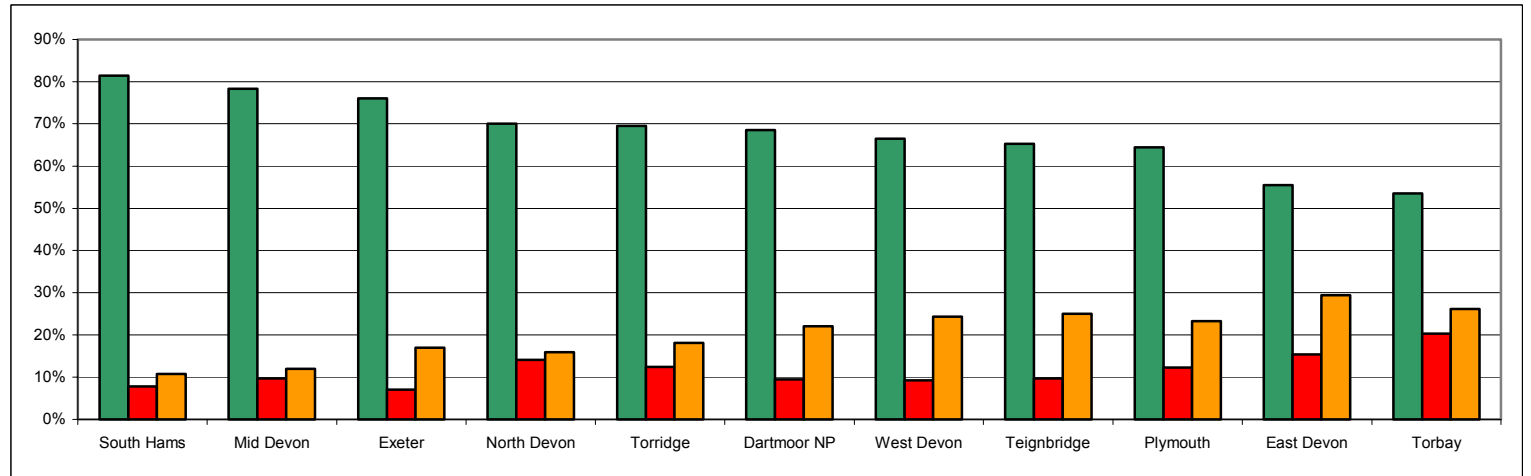
PLANNING SURVEY RESULTS 2003/04

This is a comparison of some of the findings of the national survey or local government planning services between Dartmoor National Park, East Devon District Council, Exeter City Council, Mid Devon District Council, North Devon District Council, South Hams District Council, Teignbridge District Council, Torridge District Council, West Devon District Council and Plymouth Unitary Council.

Agreement with statements regarding council's handling of application

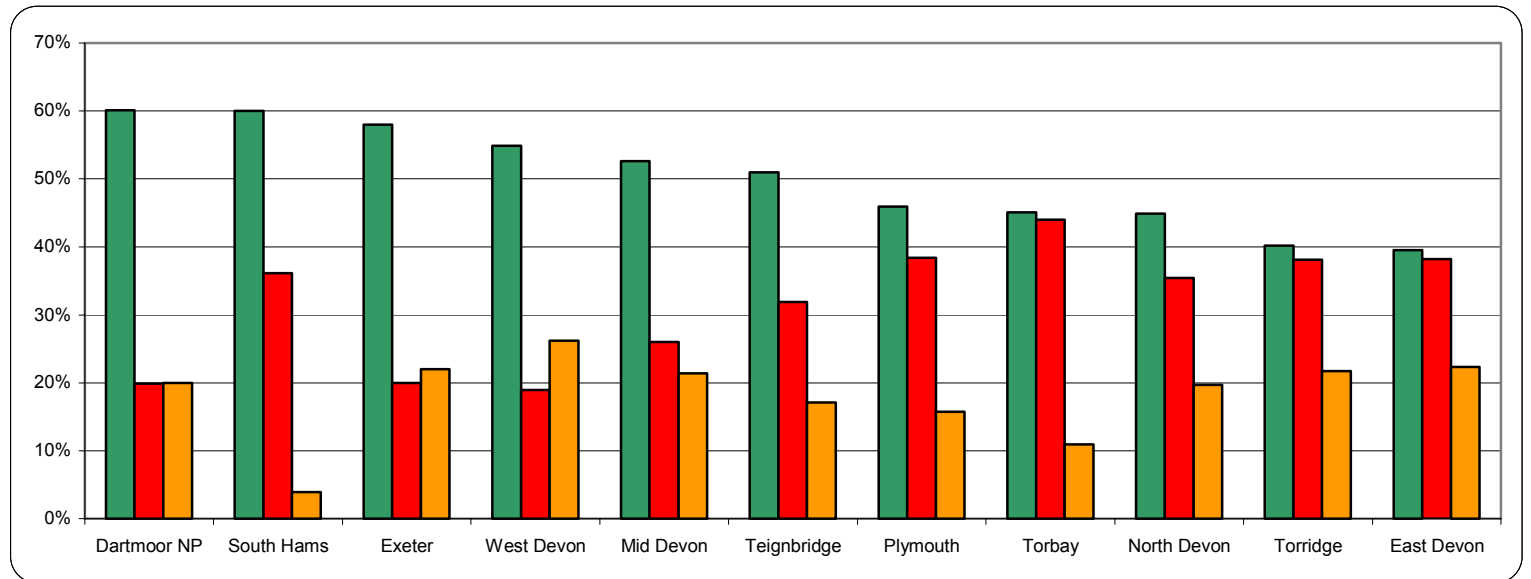
given advice and help needed to submit application correctly

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
South Hams	81.4%	10.8%	7.8%
Mid Devon	78.3%	12.0%	9.7%
Exeter	76.0%	17.0%	7.0%
North Devon	70.0%	15.9%	14.1%
Torridge	69.5%	18.1%	12.4%
Dartmoor NP	68.5%	22.1%	9.4%
West Devon	66.5%	24.3%	9.2%
Teignbridge	65.3%	25.0%	9.7%
Plymouth	64.4%	23.3%	12.3%
East Devon	55.5%	29.4%	15.4%
Torbay	53.5%	26.2%	20.3%



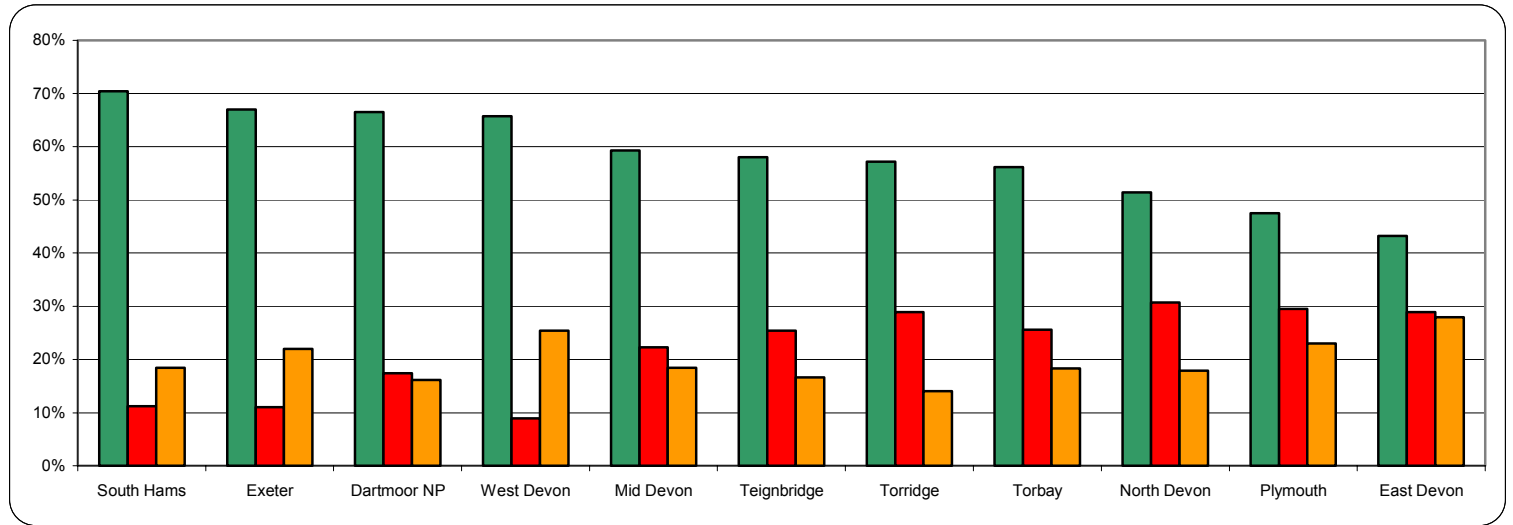
kept informed about progress of application correctly

	Strongly agree or agree	Neither	Disagree/strongly disagree
Dartmoor NP	60.1%	20.0%	19.9%
South Hams	60.0%	3.9%	36.1%
Exeter	58.0%	22.0%	20.0%
West Devon	54.9%	26.2%	18.9%
Mid Devon	52.6%	21.4%	26.0%
Teignbridge	51.0%	17.1%	31.9%
Plymouth	45.9%	15.7%	38.4%
Torbay	45.1%	10.9%	44.0%
North Devon	44.9%	19.7%	35.4%
Torridge	40.2%	21.7%	38.1%
East Devon	39.5%	22.3%	38.2%



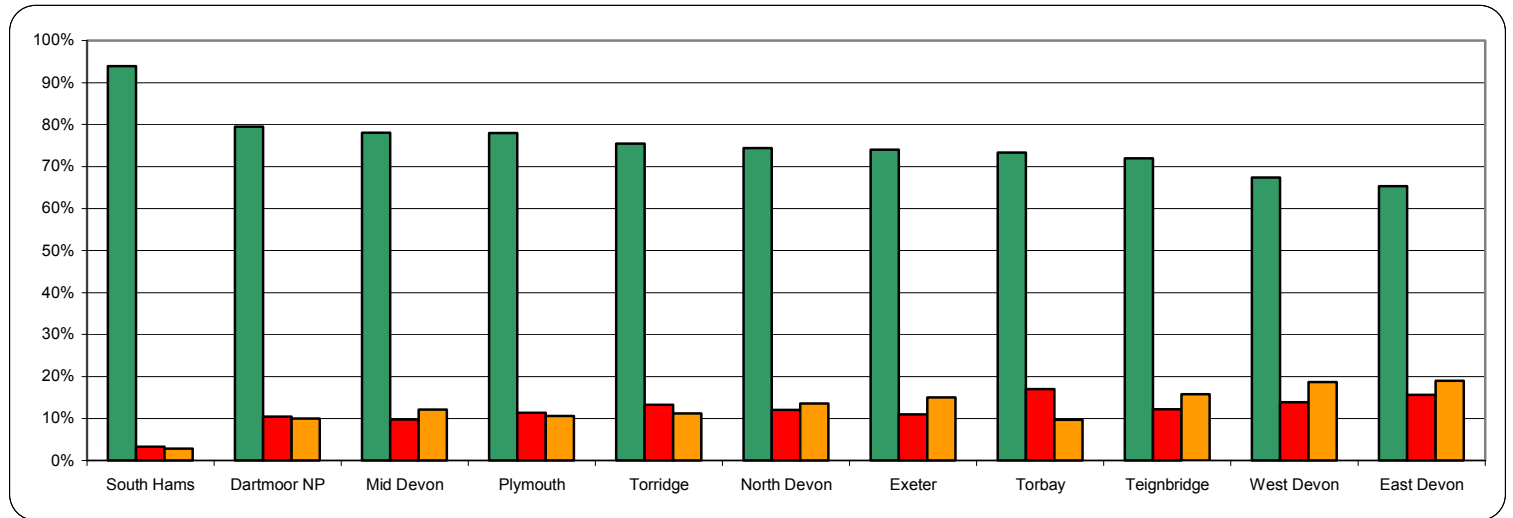
dealt promptly with queries

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
South Hams	70.4%	18.4%	11.2%
Exeter	67.0%	22.0%	11.0%
Dartmoor NP	66.5%	16.1%	17.4%
West Devon	65.7%	25.4%	8.9%
Mid Devon	59.3%	18.4%	22.3%
Teignbridge	58.0%	16.6%	25.4%
Torrige	57.2%	14.0%	28.9%
Torbay	56.1%	18.3%	25.6%
North Devon	51.4%	17.9%	30.7%
Plymouth	47.5%	23.0%	29.5%
East Devon	43.2%	27.9%	28.9%



understand reasons for the decision

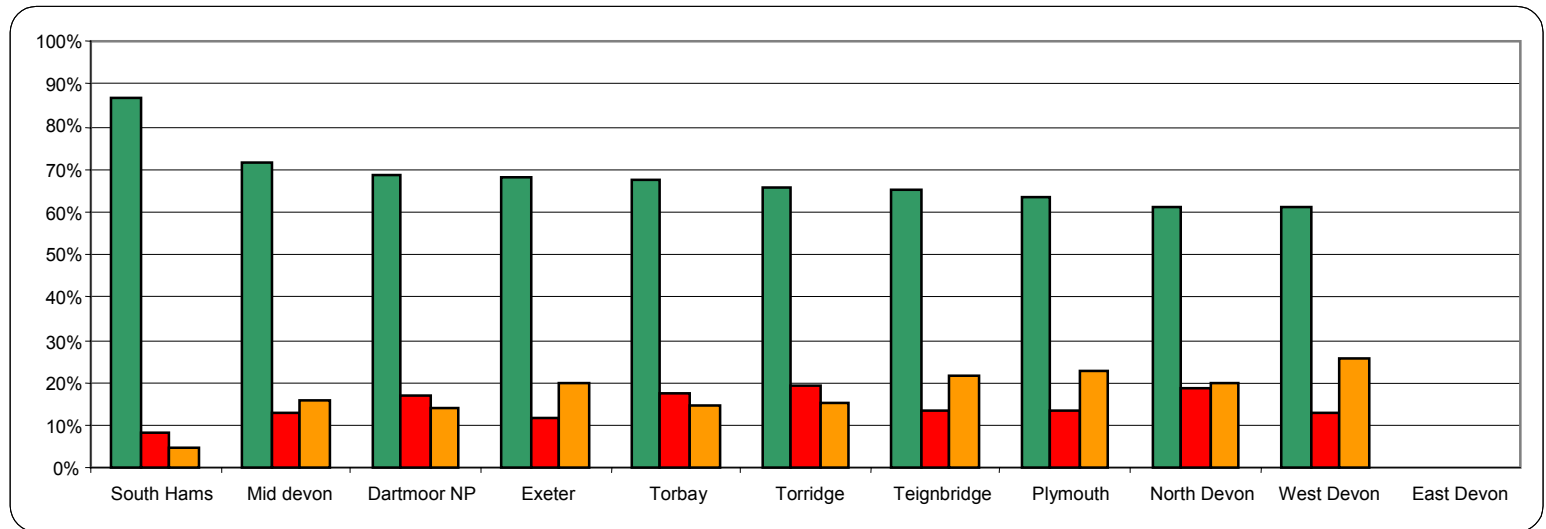
	Agree	Neither	Disagree
South Hams	93.9%	2.8%	3.3%
Dartmoor NP	79.5%	10.0%	10.5%
Mid Devon	78.1%	12.1%	9.8%
Plymouth	78.0%	10.6%	11.4%
Torrige	75.5%	11.2%	13.3%
North Devon	74.4%	13.6%	12.0%
Exeter	74.0%	15.0%	11.0%
Torbay	73.3%	9.7%	17.0%
Teignbridge	72.0%	15.8%	12.2%
West Devon	67.4%	18.7%	13.9%
East Devon	65.3%	19.0%	15.7%



Agreement with statements regarding Council's handling of application

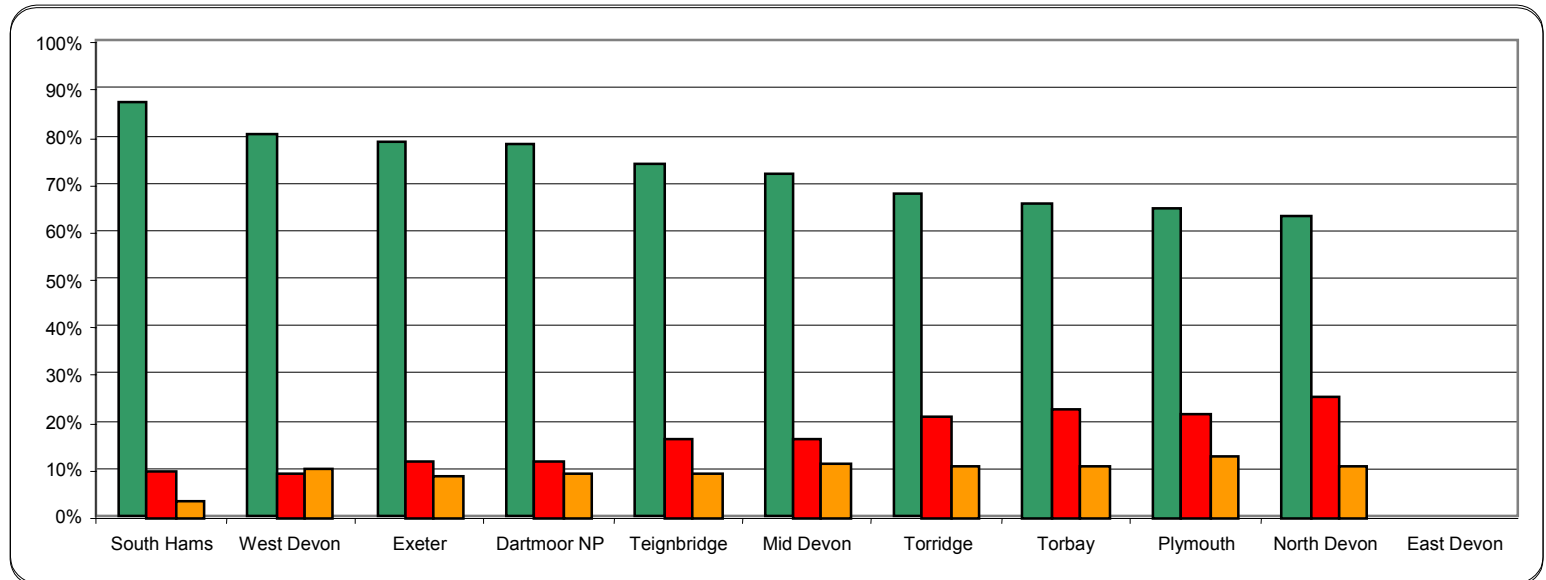
treated fairly and viewpoint was listened to

	Agree	Neither	Disagree
South Hams	86.9%	4.9%	8.2%
Mid Devon	71.5%	15.8%	12.7%
Dartmoor NP	68.9%	13.9%	17.2%
Exeter	68.0%	20.0%	12.0%
Torbay	67.5%	14.7%	17.8%
Torrige	65.8%	15.2%	19.1%
Teignbridge	65.1%	21.4%	13.5%
Plymouth	63.7%	22.6%	13.7%
North Devon	61.3%	19.7%	19.0%
West Devon	61.3%	25.8%	12.9%
East Devon	52.8%	25.3%	21.9%



Satisfaction with service in processing application

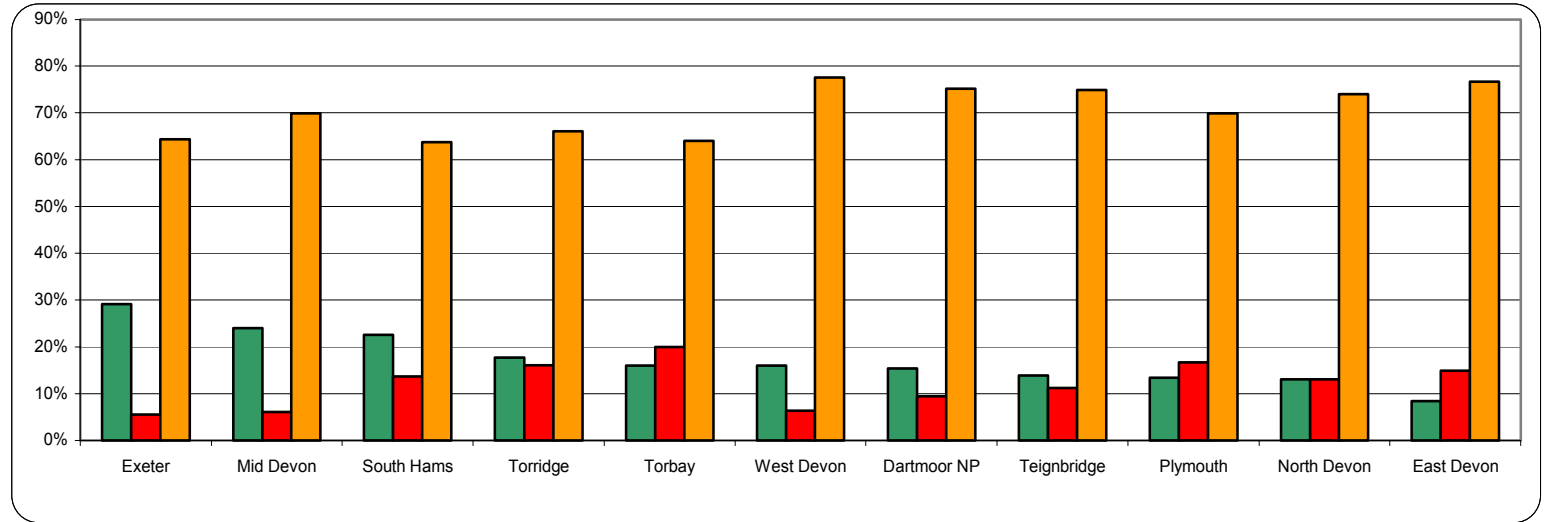
	Very/fairly satisfied	Neither	Fairly/very dissatisfied
South Hams	86.9%	3.4%	9.7%
West Devon	80.3%	10.5%	9.2%
Exeter	79.0%	9.0%	12.0%
Dartmoor NP	78.5%	9.4%	12.1%
Teignbridge	74.0%	9.6%	16.4%
Mid Devon	72.2%	11.2%	16.6%
Torrige	68.0%	10.8%	21.2%
Torbay	66.2%	10.8%	23.0%
Plymouth	65.0%	12.9%	22.1%
North Devon	63.7%	11.0%	25.3%
East Devon	60.5%	13.2%	26.3%



Service better or worse over the last three years:

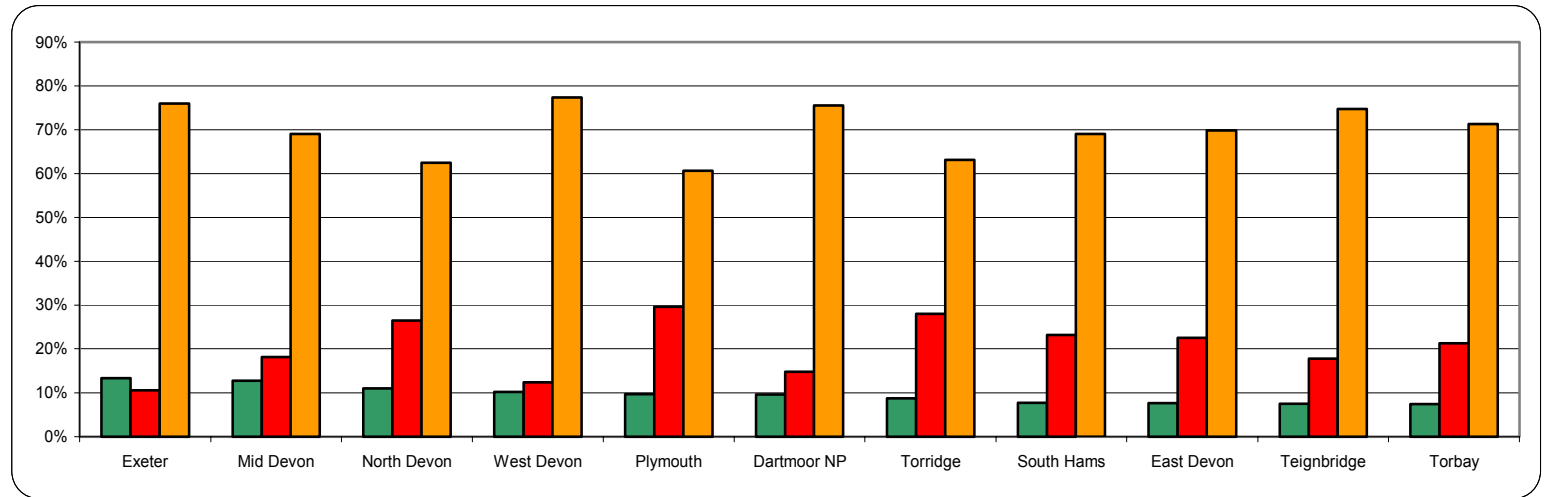
advice and help provided to submit application

	Better	Neither	Worse
Exeter	29.1%	64.4%	5.5%
Mid Devon	24.0%	69.9%	6.1%
South Hams	22.6%	63.7%	13.7%
Torrige	17.7%	66.1%	16.1%
Torbay	16.0%	64.0%	20.0%
West Devon	16.0%	77.6%	6.4%
Dartmoor NP	15.4%	75.2%	9.4%
Teignbridge	13.9%	74.9%	11.2%
Plymouth	13.4%	69.9%	16.7%
North Devon	13.0%	74.0%	13.0%
East Devon	8.4%	76.7%	14.9%



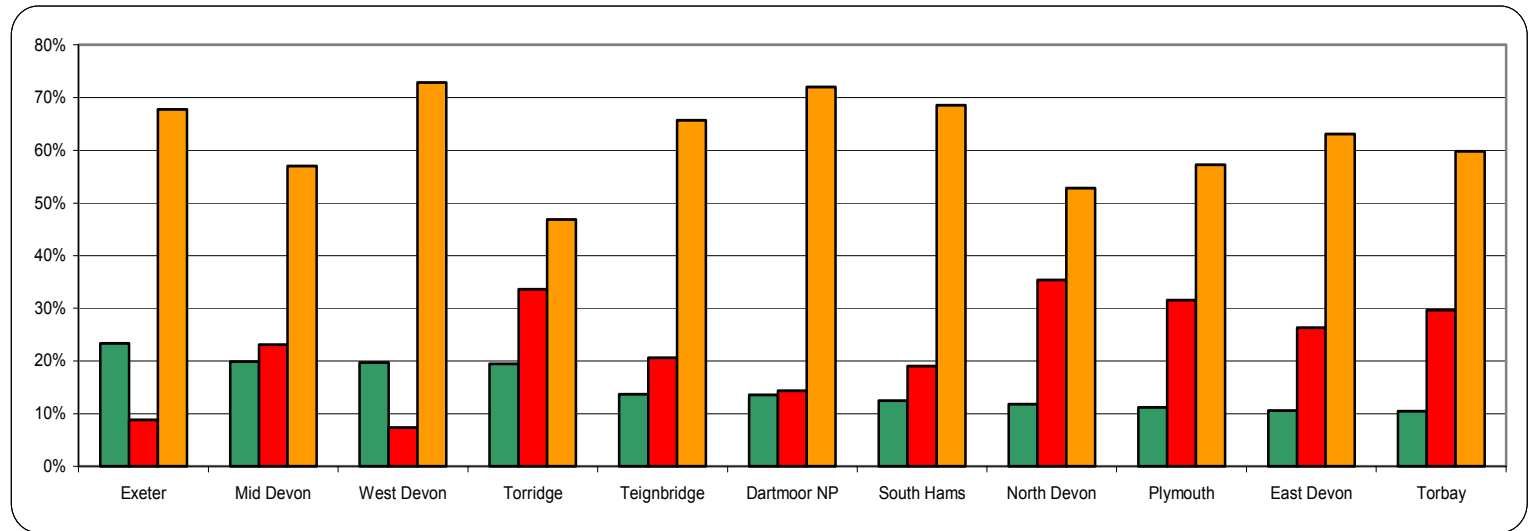
information provided about progress of application

	Better	Neither	Worse
Exeter	13.4%	76.0%	10.6%
Mid Devon	12.8%	69.1%	18.1%
North Devon	11.0%	62.5%	26.5%
West Devon	10.2%	77.4%	12.4%
Plymouth	9.7%	60.7%	29.6%
Dartmoor NP	9.6%	75.6%	14.8%
Torrige	8.8%	63.2%	28.0%
South Hams	7.7%	69.1%	23.2%
East Devon	7.6%	69.9%	22.5%
Teignbridge	7.5%	74.7%	17.8%
Torbay	7.4%	71.3%	21.3%



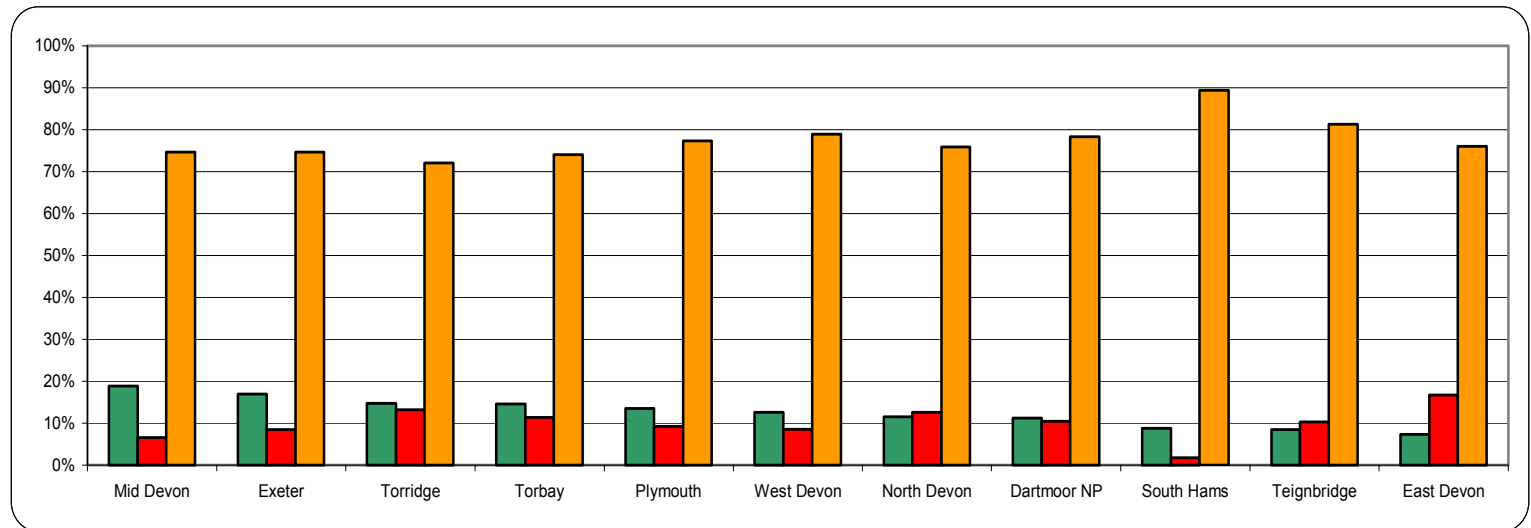
promptness with which queries were dealt with

	Better	Neither	Worse
Exeter	23.4%	67.8%	8.8%
Mid Devon	19.9%	57.0%	23.1%
West Devon	19.7%	72.9%	7.4%
Torrige	19.5%	46.9%	33.6%
Teignbridge	13.7%	65.7%	20.6%
Dartmoor NP	13.6%	72.0%	14.4%
South Hams	12.5%	68.5%	19.0%
North Devon	11.8%	52.8%	35.4%
Plymouth	11.2%	57.2%	31.6%
East Devon	10.6%	63.1%	26.3%
Torbay	10.5%	59.8%	29.7%



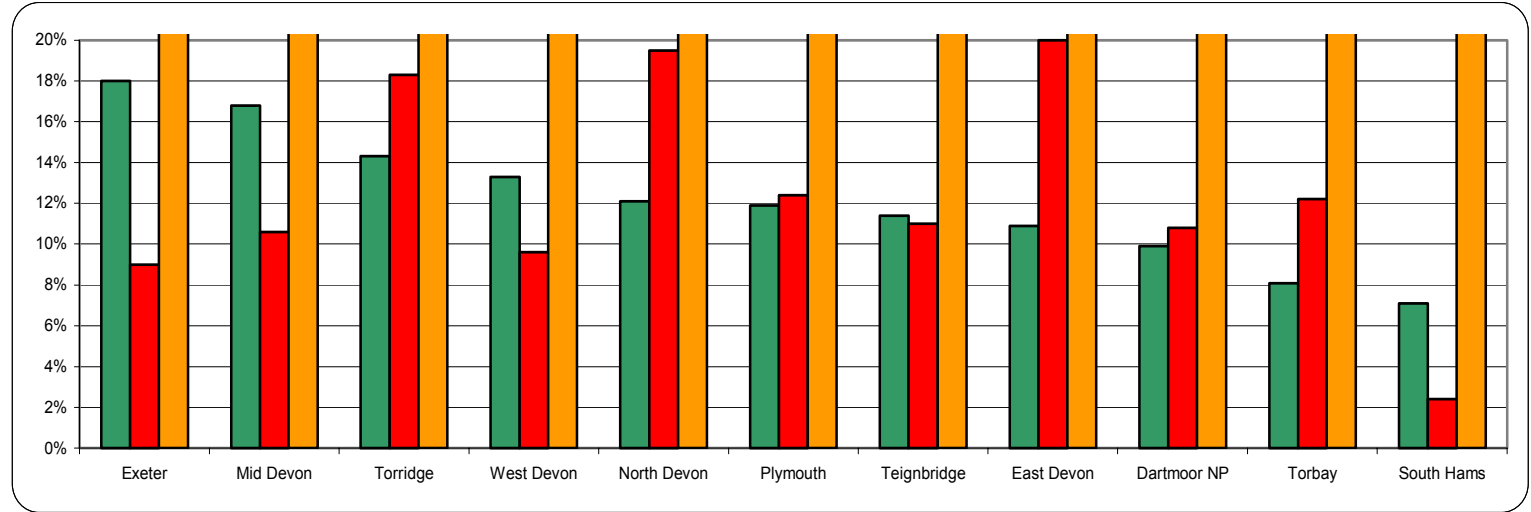
clarity of reasons for decision

	Better	Neither	Worse
Mid Devon	18.8%	74.6%	6.6%
Exeter	17.0%	74.6%	8.4%
Torrige	14.7%	72.1%	13.2%
Torbay	14.6%	74.0%	11.4%
Plymouth	13.5%	77.3%	9.2%
West Devon	12.6%	78.9%	8.5%
North Devon	11.5%	75.9%	12.6%
Dartmoor NP	11.2%	78.3%	10.5%
South Hams	8.8%	89.4%	1.8%
Teignbridge	8.4%	81.3%	10.3%
East Devon	7.3%	76.0%	16.7%



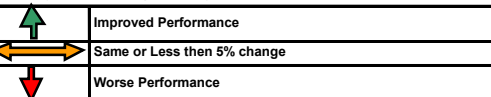
fairness with which application was dealt with and viewpoint listened to

	Better	Neither	Worse
Exeter	18.0%	73.0%	9.0%
Mid Devon	16.8%	72.6%	10.6%
Torridge	14.3%	67.5%	18.3%
West Devon	13.3%	77.1%	9.6%
North Devon	12.1%	68.4%	19.5%
Plymouth	11.9%	75.7%	12.4%
Teignbridge	11.4%	77.6%	11.0%
East Devon	10.9%	69.1%	20.0%
Dartmoor NP	9.9%	79.3%	10.8%
Torbay	8.1%	79.7%	12.2%
South Hams	7.1%	90.5%	2.4%



Best Value Performance Indicators 2003/04

Key - % Change analysis 2002/3 to 2003/4



PI No.	Description	Content format	2002/03 Actual	2003/04 Targets	2003/04 Actual	% change 2002-04 Actual	Better Worse	2004/2005 Targets	2005/6 Targets	2006/07 Targets	Comments
CORPORATE HEALTH											
1a	Community strategy with LSP	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	↔	Yes	Yes	Yes	Completed with revised working arrangements planned
1b	When will Community / LSP strategy review be completed?	Date - 00/mm/yy	-	01/01/2004	29/03/2004	-	-	-	01/04/2005	-	Planned for 1 April 2005
1c	Progress reported	Yes/No	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	↔	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
1d	When will strategy be in place? (put 00/00/00 if no timetable & 1a is 'No')	Date - 00/mm/yy									
2a	Equality Standard for Local Government Level	Number (1-5)	0	1	0	-	↔	1	2	2	Work has commenced with equalities, fairness and diversity, respect at work and the psychological contract
2b	The duty to promote race checklist score	%		0.00%	0.00%	-	-	25.00%	40.00%	50.00%	Complaints checklist in place. More work to do.
3	Citizens satisfied with the overall service provided	% satisfied	63.40% 2000/2001	65.00%	47.00%	-25.9%	↓			75.00%	Next survey 2006/2007
4	Complainants satisfied with the handling of their complaint	% satisfied	41.10% 2000/2001	43.00%	30.20%	-26.5%	↓			50.00%	Next survey 2006/2007
8	Invoices paid on time	%	Not collected	Not collected	92.32%	-	↑	100.00%	100.00%	100.00%	Mandatory National Target. Previously 'not collected' new systems now in place to accurately record data for 2004/2005.
9	Council Tax collected	%	97.05%	97.50%	97.23%	0.2%	↔	97.55%	97.80%	98.00%	Further improvements planned
10	NNDR collected	%	97.29%	97.50%	98.06%	0.8%	↔	98.50%	98.75%	99.00%	Further improvements planned
11a	% of top 5% earners that are women	%	29.41%	33.30%	28.57%	-2.9%	↔	33.30%	33.30%	33.30%	Further improvements planned
11b	% of top 5% earners that are from ethnic minorities	%	0.00%	4.80%	0.00%	0.0%	↔	0.00%	0.00%	0.00%	Policies and practices exist to encourage ethnicity - no significant ethnic groups within the County. Target altered from an unattainable 4.8% to 0%
12	Days sick per member of staff	Days/full time equiv. employee	7.70	6.80	12.21	58.6%	↓	6.50	6.00	6.00	New reporting policy in place which has increased the figure. Proposed area for investigation.
14	Early retirements / staff	%	0.30%	0.45%	1.68%	460.0%	↓	0.45%	0.45%	0.45%	Recent re-structuring
15	Ill health retirements / staff	%	0.30%	0.35%	0.34%	13.3%	↓	0.35%	0.35%	0.35%	Reducing but being monitored more closely
16a	Staff with disabilities	%	0.90%	12.00%	0.60%	-33.3%	↓	12.00%	12.00%	12.00%	Target altered from the unattainable 12% to 2%
16b	Working age (18-65) people with disabilities	%	15.39%		15.39%	0.0%					Next census
17a	Staff from ethnic minorities	%	0.30%	0.30%	0.00%	-100.0%	↓	0.30%	0.30%	0.30%	Policies and practices exist to encourage ethnicity - no significant ethnic groups within the County
17b	Working age (18-65) people from ethnic minorities	%	0.41%		0.7%	75.6%					Next census
156	Buildings w/facilities for people with disabilities	%	48.57%	48.57%	76.92%	58.4%	↑	80.00%	85.00%	90.00%	The Authority has undertaken to enhance its public buildings in response to the Disability Discrimination Act
157	Types of interaction delivered electronically	%	18.00%	39.00%	36.39%	102.2%	↑	80.00%	100.00%	100.00%	National Target is 100% by 2005. TDC have decided to exclude Telephone interactions from its figures.
180a(i)	Actual/'Typical' energy consumption LA buildings - electricity (2003/04)	%	103.00%	102.00%	Not required for 2003/2004	-	-	75.00%	74.00%	73.00%	Further guidance from Central Government was due 03/04 but was not forthcoming. Therefore no requirement to report 03/04.
180a(ii)	Actual/'Typical' energy consumption LA buildings - fossil fuels (2003/04)	%	111.00%	110.00%	Not required for 2003/2004	-	-	77.00%	76.00%	75.00%	Further guidance from Central Government was due 03/04 but was not forthcoming. Therefore no requirement to report 03/04.