

# **Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation Analysis Report 2022**

May 2022

# Contents

<b>1. Introduction</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>2. Executive decisions and formal consultation</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>3. How was the consultation promoted?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>4. How did consultees have their say?</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>5. Number and type of responses received</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>6. What did people say?</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>6.1 Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation Questionnaire</b>	<b>4</b>
6.1.1 About the respondent	<b>4</b>
6.1.2 Harmonisation of services	<b>6</b>
6.1.3 Harmonisation of charges	<b>10</b>
6.1.4 Garden waste collection	<b>14</b>
6.1.5 Using the service	<b>15</b>
6.1.6 Other means of disposal	<b>16</b>
6.1.7 Other comments	<b>18</b>
6.1.8 Demographic information	<b>21</b>
6.1.9 Consultation awareness channels	<b>22</b>
<b>6.2 Written responses</b>	<b>23</b>

## 1. Introduction

The purpose of this report is to set out the Garden Waste Collection Service consultation process, and key consultation findings (including an understanding of who participated in the consultation), the results of which will be used to help inform decisions on how North Northamptonshire Council (NNC) wants to harmonise the garden waste collection across the area, so all residents receive the same service.

To harmonise the kerbside garden waste service the Council needs to:

- Determine which months of the year a kerbside collection service would operate.
- Establish whether a universal garden waste service would be provided to all residents without an additional charge, and should that occur, to consider what impact this will have on other Council services.
- Establish whether a subsidised subscription-based garden waste service would be provided to residents who wish to subscribe to the service and pay a subscription charge.
- And, if a subscription charge was to be levied, the level of this charge.

## 2. Executive decisions and formal consultation

An [up-date on the Garden Waste Service](#) was presented to Executive on 22 February 2022. Executive approved a consultation on the proposals and the consultation commenced 14 March 2022 and concluded on 17 April 2022.

The public consultation was conducted by the Council's Consultation and Engagement Team. The structure and design of the consultation set out the proposals and enabled both online and non-digital means of participation, in accordance with nationally recognised good practice.

### **3. How was the consultation promoted?**

The consultation was hosted on the Council's Consultation Hub website. Councillors, local MPs, town and parish Councils, partner organisations, voluntary and community sector organisations, representatives of protected characteristic groups, local business groups including Chamber of Commerce and Federation of Small Businesses, and members of both the North Northamptonshire Residents' Panel (circa 600 members) and the Council's Consultation Register were invited to give their views and asked to promote the consultation to their members, or within their local area where appropriate.

Opportunities to take part in the consultation were also promoted in the local media via press releases. The press release went to 38 newsrooms (local and national, print and broadcast including the Northants Telegraph and BBC Radio Northampton), plus individual reporters and other local news sites. It was promoted through the Council's Leaders' Update, the Council's website, e-newsletters and social media channels, enabling both internal (e.g. staff) as well as external consultees to get involved in the process. The Facebook reach (i.e. the number of people who saw any content from or about the consultation web page) was 70,600; the Twitter Impressions (i.e. the number of times any content from or about the consultation web page entered a person's screen) was 4,829; and LinkedIn impressions were 151. It was also promoted to the Council's 733 Instagram followers.

### **4. How did consultees have their say?**

Local people, organisations and other interested parties were able to have their say about the proposals in a range of ways, by:

- Visiting the [Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation webpage](#) and completing the questionnaire or requesting a paper questionnaire
- Accessing the online questionnaire free of charge at any NNC library
- Emailing [gardenwasteconsultation@northnorthants.gov.uk](mailto:gardenwasteconsultation@northnorthants.gov.uk)
- Writing to North Northamptonshire Council, Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation, Sheerness House, Meadow Road, Kettering, NN16 8TL
- Contacting the Council by telephone to give verbal feedback

### **5. Number and type of responses received**

During the Garden Waste Collection Service consultation period, using the various means available to consultees, local people, interested parties and organisations contributed to the consultation 9,587 times. Nearly all of the feedback received was via the questionnaire, with 9,447 respondents participating via the questionnaire and 140 respondents submitting a written response.

Within the questionnaire, respondents could choose which questions they responded to, and so there are lower response numbers to each question when compared with the overall number of participants.

During the consultation period, an interim summary of the consultation responses received were circulated to senior Garden Waste Collection Service officers and all responses received were circulated to decision makers upon conclusion of the consultation to enable them to see each response in full.

## 6. What did people say?

This report is a summary of the feedback received. It is recommended that it is read in conjunction with the full consultation results. The full consultation results have been made available to Members and are available on the [Consultation Hub](#).

The following documents were published alongside the consultation questionnaire:

- [Frequently Asked Questions \(FAQs\)](#)
- [Equality Screening Assessment](#)
- [Garden Waste Service Executive Report 22 February 2022](#)
- [Waste and Recycling Policy](#)

### 6.1 Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation Questionnaire

In total, 9,447 respondents filled out a questionnaire on the Garden Waste Collection Service, either partially or fully. Respondents did not have to answer every question and so the total number of responses for each question differs and is shown in relation to each question.

#### 6.1.1 About the respondent

Respondents were asked in what capacity they were responding to the consultation. There were 9,323 responses to this question, with respondents being able to select more than one option if applicable. Nearly all of the respondents said they were local residents (9,251). The second highest respondents were Town and Parish Councillors (132), followed by North Northamptonshire Council Councillors (59). The following table details the various respondent types to the consultation questionnaire.

	Response number
A local resident	9,251
A North Northamptonshire Council Councillor	59
A representative of a Town/Parish Council	19
A Town or Parish Councillor	132
A local business	44
A representative of the voluntary sector or a community organisation	44
A representative of a user group	7
Other	24

The 24 respondents who made comment within the 'Other' text box, mostly identified themselves as their Parish or Town Council; or as an employee of North Northamptonshire Council; or a local community group.

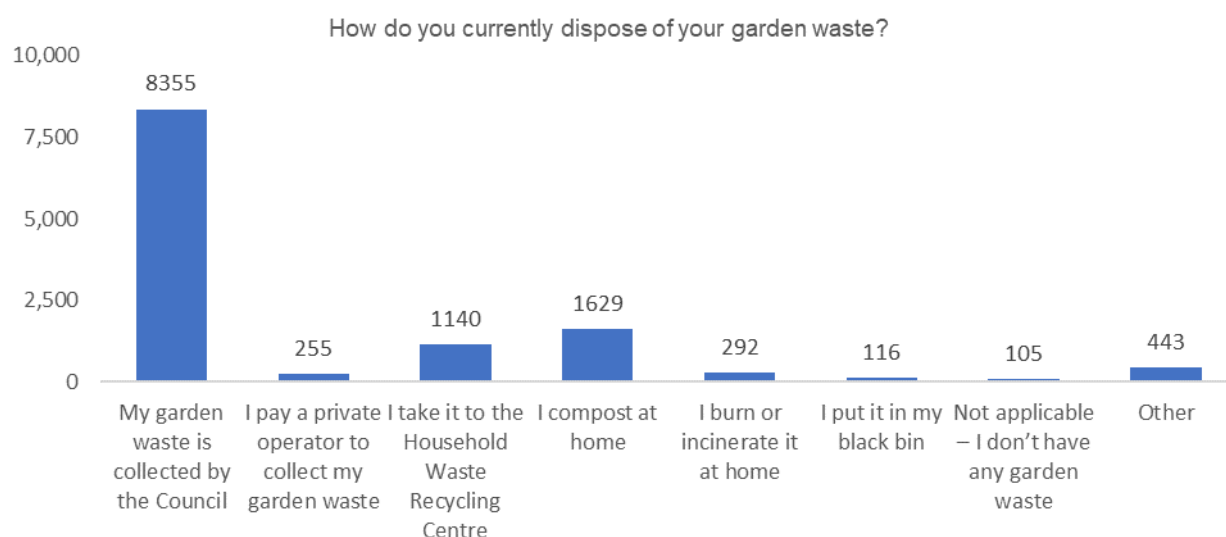
Respondents were asked to provide their postcode to give us an understanding of where respondents live. Of the 7,373 valid postcodes provided 7,187 were from within North Northamptonshire and 186 were from outside of the area. Further postcode analysis is detailed below within this report.

Respondents were asked if they have a garden at their property. A total of 9,263 respondents answered this question, with nearly all respondents (99.5%) saying they have a garden and only 0.5% saying they do not.

Respondents were then asked how they currently dispose of their garden waste. Before answering this question, respondents were reminded what contents is allowed to be disposed of via the black (refuse) bin.

There were 9,301 responses to this question. The vast majority of respondents who answered this question said their garden waste is collected by the Council (8,355). This was followed by 1,629 respondents who said they composted it at home; with 1,140 respondents taking it a Household Waste Recycling Centre (HWRC).

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



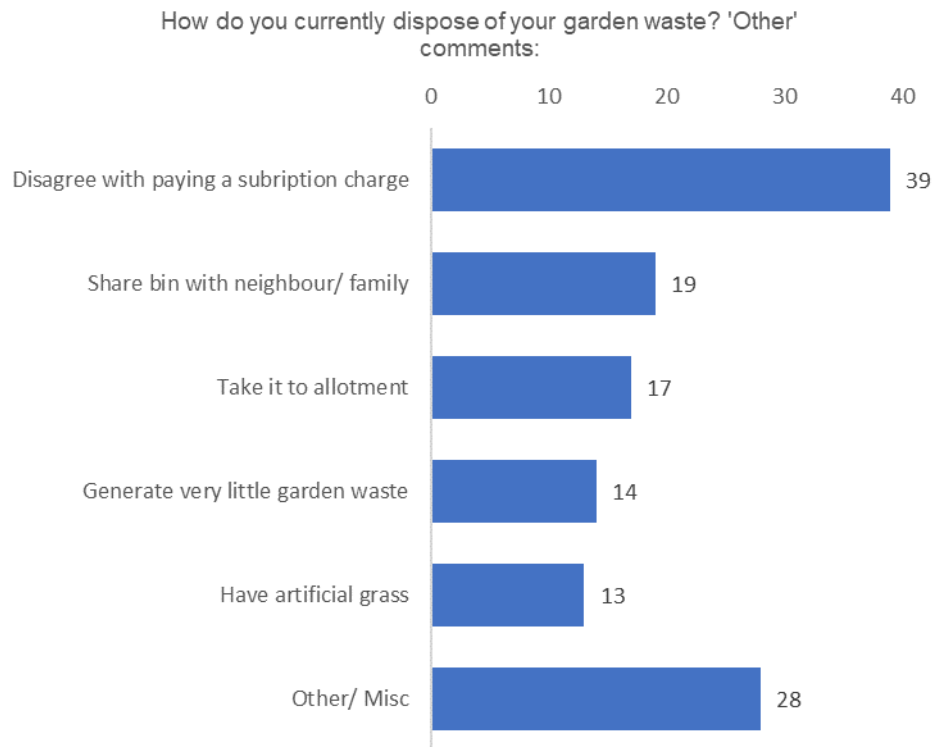
There were 443 respondents who made comment within the 'Other' text box. Many respondents took this opportunity to explain how they dispose of their waste and either duplicated the question answer options or went into more detail regarding the answer options they had already provided. Where this has been done their answers have been added to the above totals.

Several respondents commented on how they disagree with the concept of paying a subscription charge, with some saying their Council Tax is already high, and that introducing a subscription fee would be 'double-charging'. Some of these respondents also raised their concerns of increased fly-tipping.

The most frequently mentioned alternative methods respondents use to dispose of their waste were sharing a bin with a neighbour or family member; followed by taking their garden waste to their allotment. A few respondents said they generate very little garden waste with some having artificial grass.

Other comments included the frequency of collection; that their garden waste is disposed of by either a landlord, robotic lawnmower or a woodchipper. A small number said they were new residents of the area and had yet to decide how to manage their garden waste.

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within the 'Other' comments.



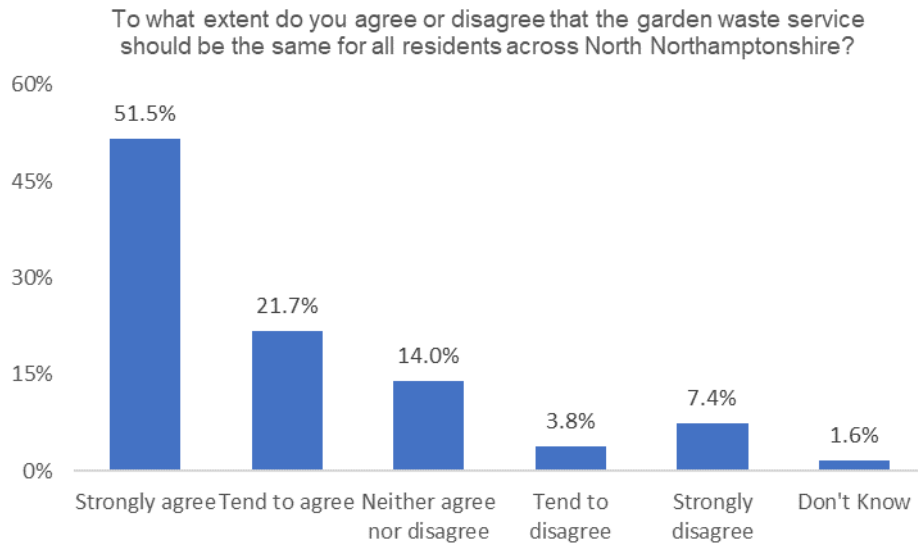
### 6.1.2 Harmonisation of services

Respondents were then reminded that following local government reorganisation last year, the new unitary NNC has inherited different approaches to the fortnightly kerbside garden waste collections from the previous local authorities and that NNC wants to harmonise the garden waste collection across the area, so all residents receive the same service.

In the former Corby and Kettering area, the service is currently provided all year at no extra charge, whilst in the former Wellingborough area, it operates between March and November with no additional cost for users of the service. In the former East Northamptonshire area, the year-round scheme has a £55 annual subscription charge, paid by users of the service.

Respondents were asked to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the garden waste service should be the same for all residents across North Northamptonshire. There were 8,630 responses to this question. Nearly three quarters of respondents (73.2%) said they strongly agree or tend to agree with the proposal, whilst 11.2% said they strongly disagree or tend to disagree with the proposal.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.

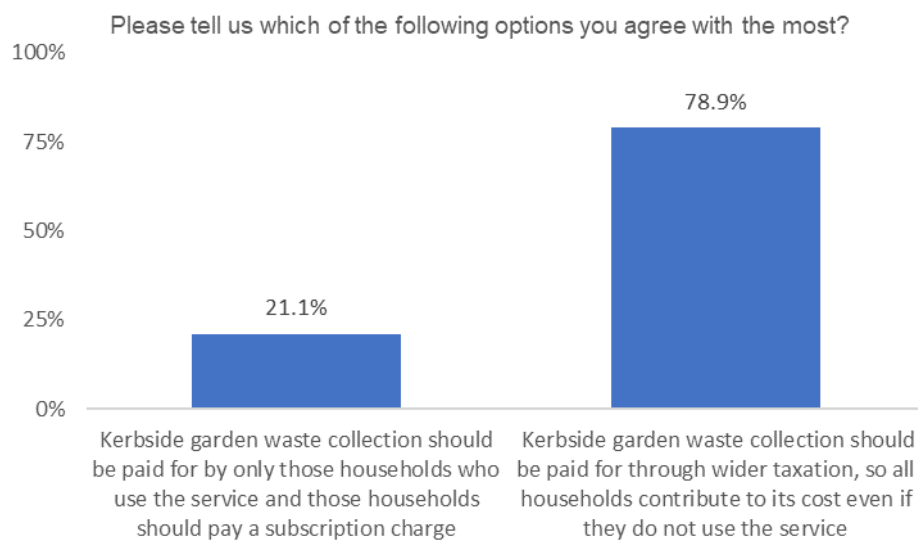


Respondents were then presented with the following two statements and asked which option they agreed with the most:

- Kerbside garden waste collection should be paid for by only those households who use the service and those households should pay a subscription charge.
- Kerbside garden waste collection should be paid for through wider taxation, so all households contribute to its cost even if they do not use the service.

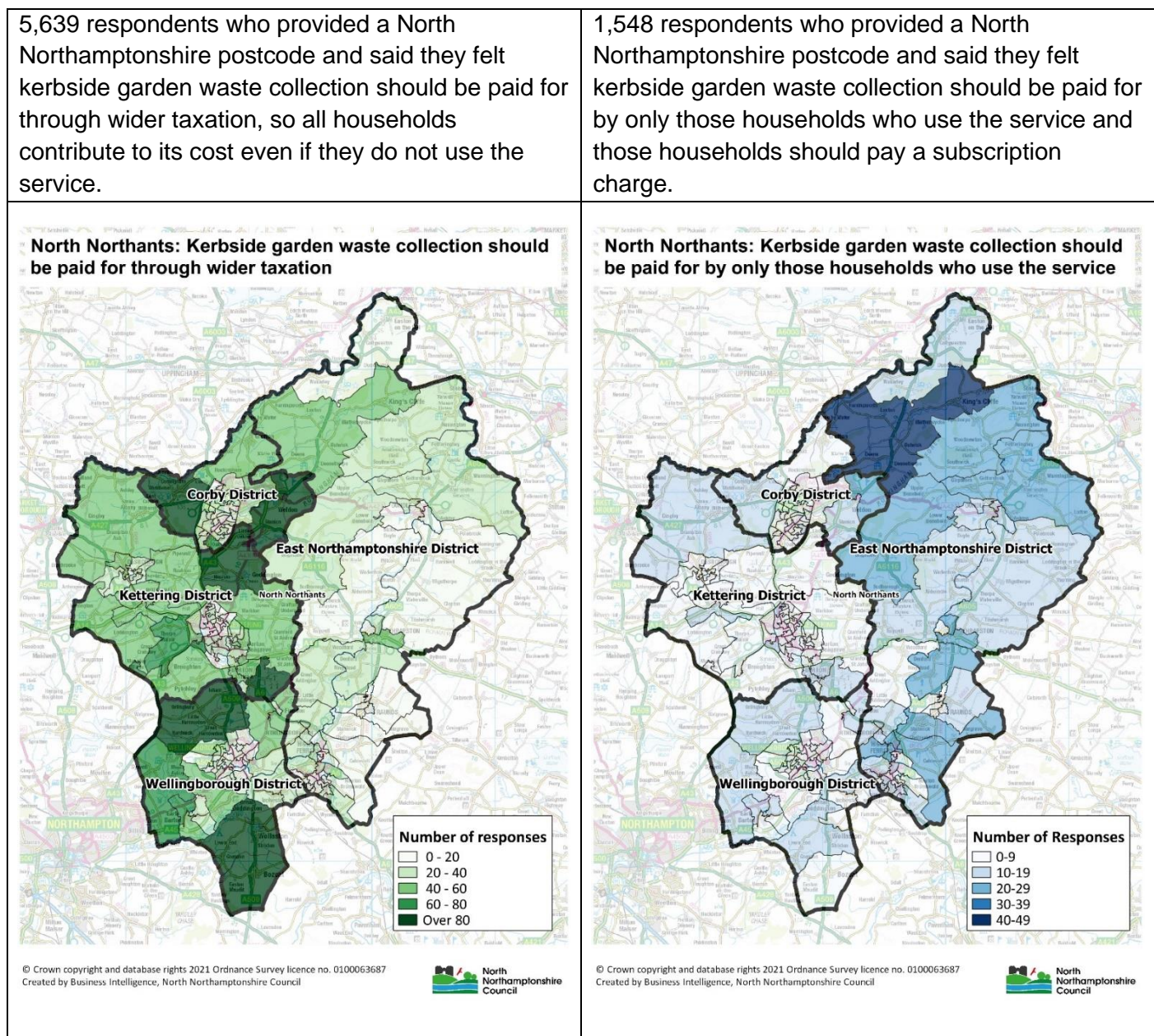
A total of 7,969 respondents answered this question, with 78.9% of respondents saying they believe garden waste collection should be paid for through wider taxation, so all households contribute to its cost even if they do not use the service. Whilst 21.1% said garden waste collection should be paid for by only those households who use the service and those households should pay a subscription charge.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



The answer to this question was compared with the 7,187 valid North Northamptonshire postcodes.  
 7 | North Northamptonshire Council – Garden Waste Collection Service Consultation Analysis Report 2022

As can be seen in the below map, there is a preference from respondents who reside outside of the legacy area of East Northamptonshire District for garden waste collection to be paid through wider taxation, so all households contribute to its cost even if they do not use the service. Whereas the households within the legacy area of East Northamptonshire District were more supportive of garden waste being paid for by only those households who subscribe to the service.



Respondents were then invited to say why they answered the previous question in the way that they did. There were 5,044 comments made in relation to this question.

When reviewing the feedback given by respondents who said, ‘Kerbside garden waste collection should be paid for through wider taxation, so all households contribute to its cost even if they do not use the service’, their comments focussed mainly on three themes.

The correct disposal of waste was the largest theme as respondents had several fears regarding how proposed changes may impact this. Respondents were worried that a subscription change would lead to

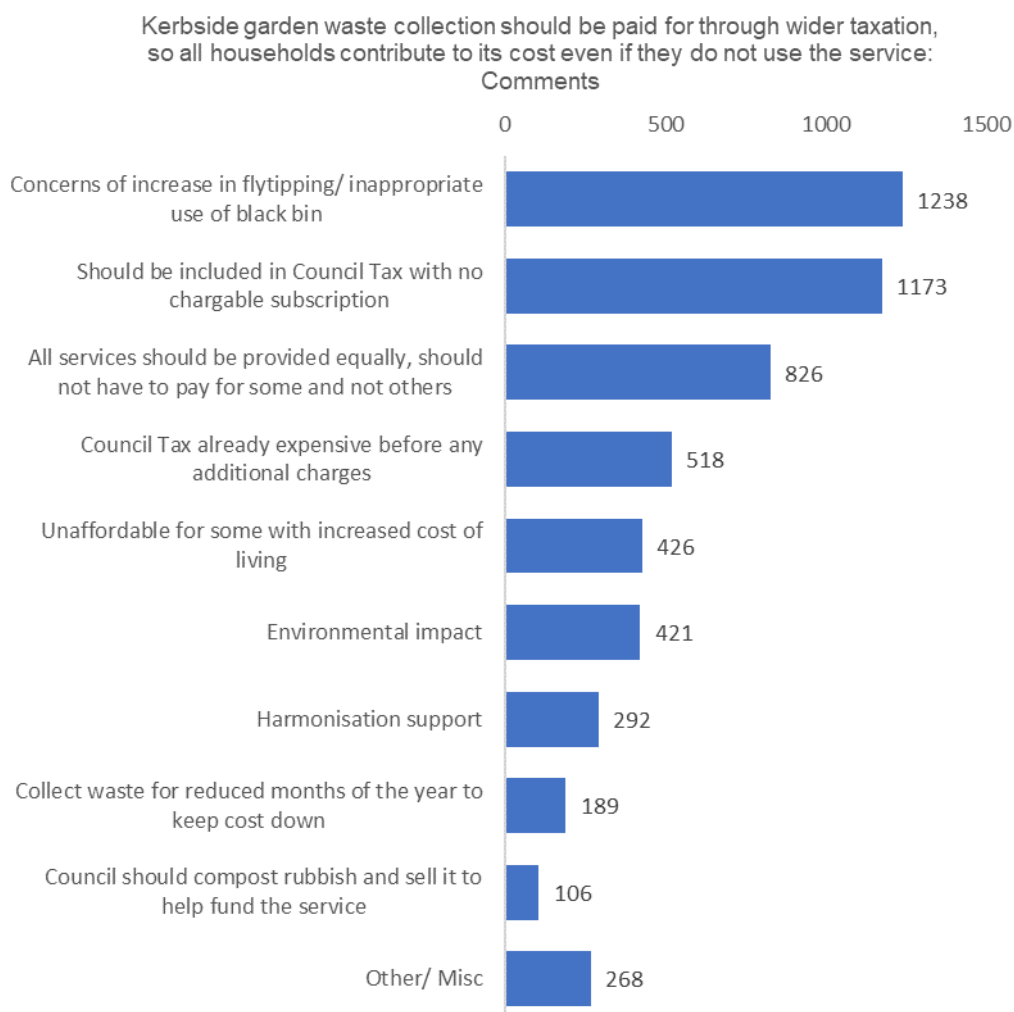


more residents disposing of their garden waste by either putting it in the black bin, burning the waste or resorting to flytipping. Flytipping in particular was a major worry for many respondents, particularly given how they believe this is already an issue within North Northamptonshire that is costing the council large amounts of money, which raises environmental concerns.

The second largest theme was about how respondents already receive kerbside collection for garden waste as part of their council tax. Many of these respondents said they were reluctant to pay any more, and many respondents highlighted with the cost-of-living crisis worsening they don't know how they will be able to pay. Some respondents also questioned the harmonisation of charges and said it felt more biased towards the rest of the North Northamptonshire having to adopt a chargeable scheme similar to the former East Northamptonshire area, whereas they would prefer their local non-chargeable scheme be adopted by households within former East Northamptonshire.

Thirdly, respondents asked questions about how what makes garden waste collection different from other services. They commented that they pay council tax to cover several services that the council provides, without them using many of those services themselves. Respondents expressed a lot of displeasure with this, saying if the Council starts this then what stops residents asking only to pay for services they directly use themselves.

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within this question.



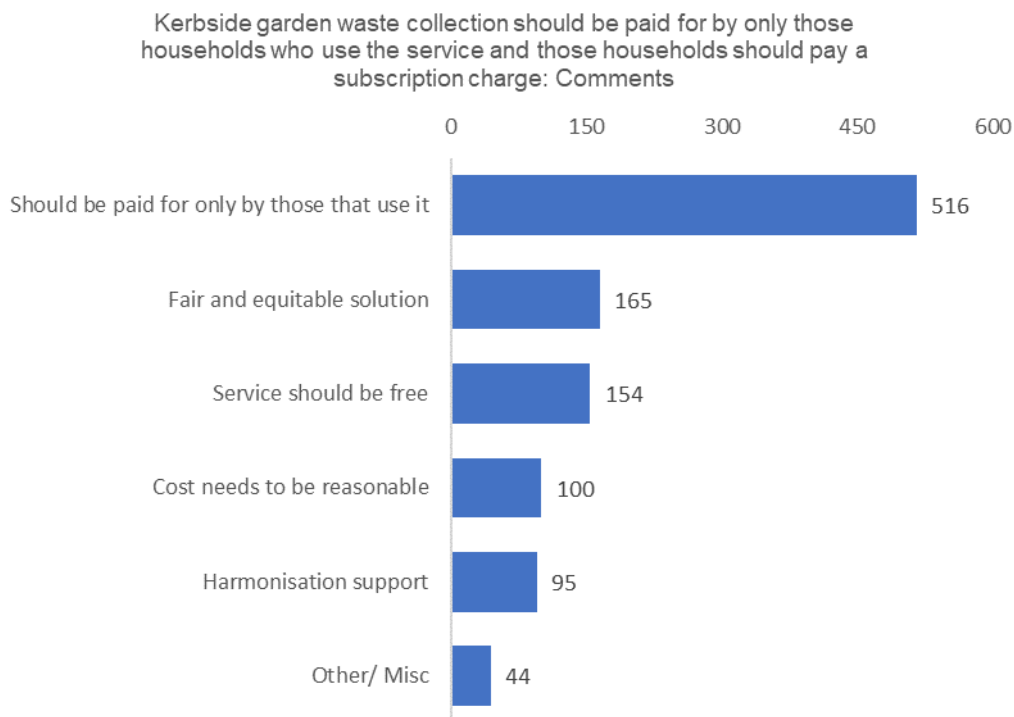
There were a lot less comments made here from the respondents who said, 'Kerbside garden waste collection should be paid for through wider taxation, so all households contribute to its cost even if they do not use the service.'

From these responses, the dominant theme was that households who use this service should be the ones to pay for it. A lot of people believe it's unfair for people who live in flats or only have small gardens that require minimal maintenance to pay for others to use the service more regularly.

After the major theme explained above, there are two more themes that stand out. The first is that the subscription service offered is a fair and equitable solution. Similar to the sentiment of only those who use the service should pay, respondents believed this was a good solution. They were keen to learn if the subscription was annual or per use but overall felt it made sense.

Thirdly, much like the other option respondents still believed this service should be free for residents. They believed a subscription could help in reducing costs by reducing the numbers of bins collected and distance travelled by refuse collectors to reduce costs and the environmental impact. This could be achieved without increasing the cost to residents.

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within this question.

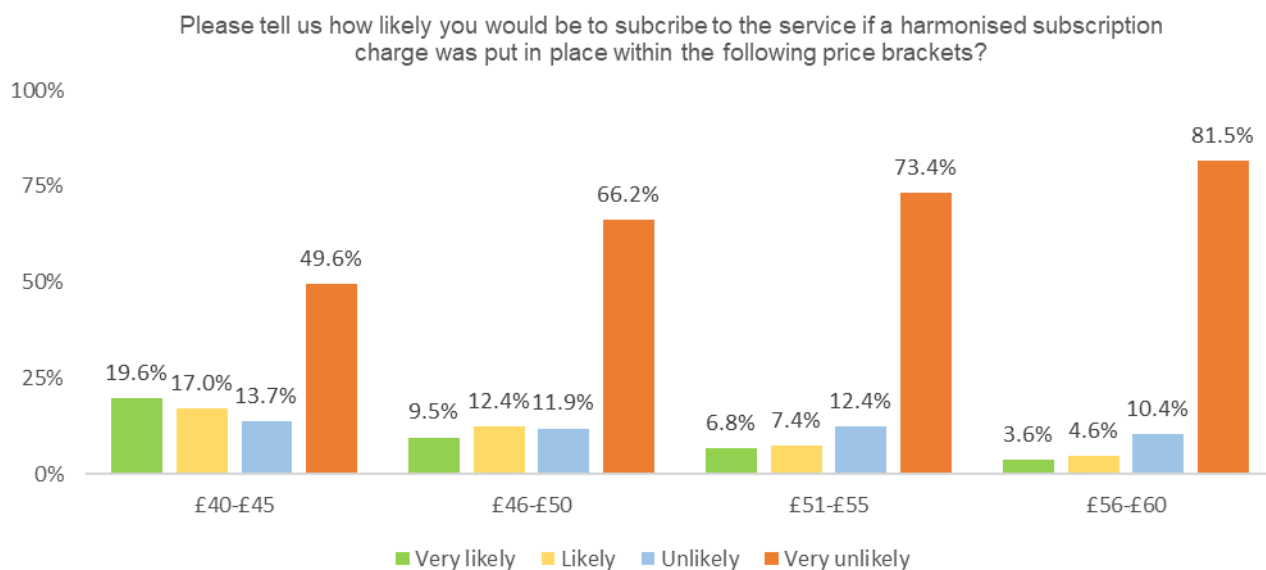


### 6.1.3 Harmonisation of charges

Respondents were then asked how likely they would be to subscribe to the service if a harmonised subscription charge was put in place, with respondents being provided with various price points.

There were 8,152 responses to this question. As can be seen in the below graph, there was a strong negative response from many of the respondents to pay a subscription charge regardless of the amount, with the unlikelihood of subscribing increasing from 63.3% for a £40-45 per annum charge up to 91.9% for a £56-£60 charge. The likelihood of respondents subscribing to a chargeable service ranged slowly declined as the cost increased from 36.6% for £40-£45; 21.9% for £46-£50; 14.2% for £51-£55; and 8.2% for £56-£60.

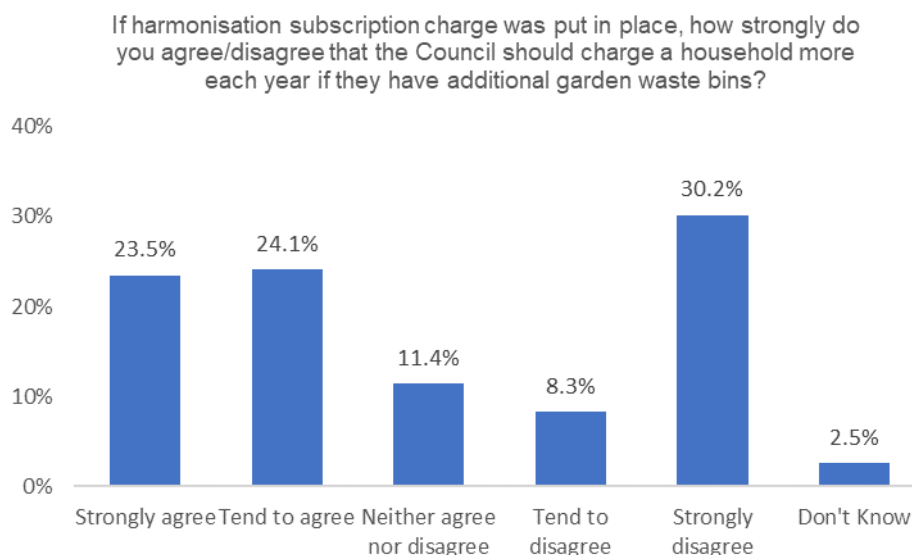
The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



The questionnaire then explained that some households may produce more garden waste than can fit within one garden waste bin and in these circumstances, the Council could provide additional bins to the household, so they have additional capacity for their garden waste, and that there is a cost to the Council for providing the extra bin(s) and for emptying them.

Respondents were then asked if a harmonised subscription charge was put in place, to what extent they agreed or disagreed that the Council should charge a household more each year if they have additional garden waste bins. There were 8,189 responses to this question. Nearly half of the respondents (47.6%) said they strongly agree or tend to agree, while 38.5% said they strongly disagree or tend to disagree.

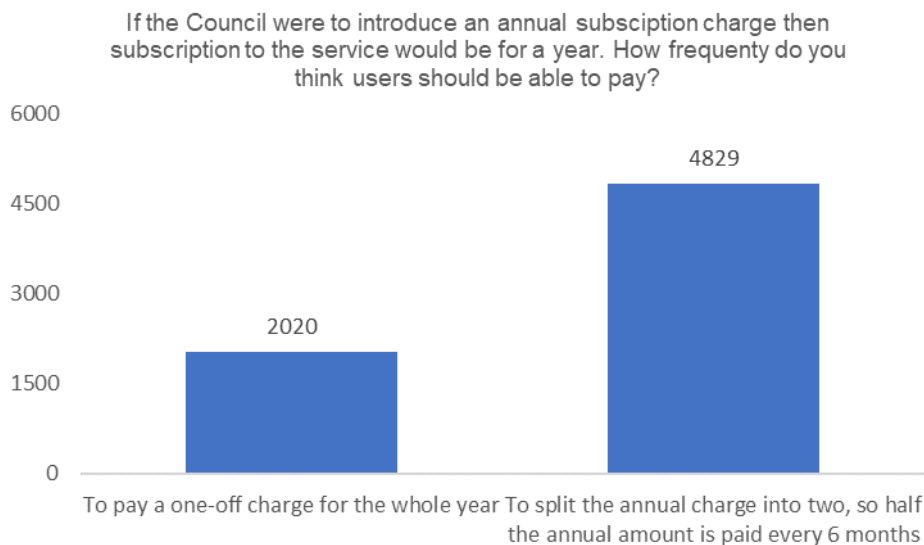
The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



Respondents were then informed that if the Council were to introduce an annual subscription charge, then subscription to the service would be for a year. They were then asked how frequently they think users should be able to pay. Respondents were able to select either or both answers. There were 6,525 responses to this question. The majority of respondents (4,829) felt the annual charge should be split into two, so half the

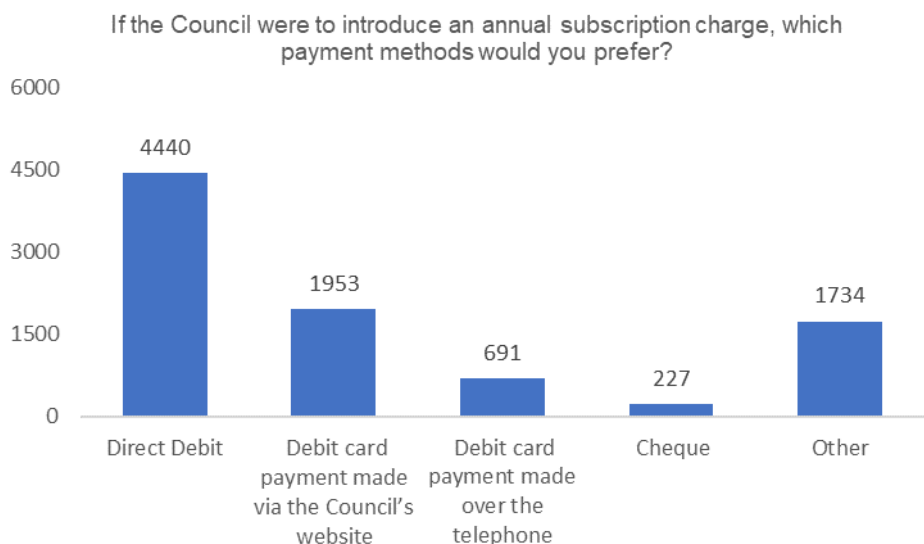
annual amount is paid every six months. Whereas a total of 2,020 felt there should be a one-off charge for the whole year.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



Respondents were asked which payment methods they would prefer if the Council were to introduce an annual subscription charge. There were 6,947 responses to this question. The most popular option presented was Direct Debit, with 4,440 respondents selecting this option. This was followed by debit card payments made via the Council's website (1,953); debit card payment made over the telephone (691); and cheque (227).

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



There were 1,734 respondents who made comment within the 'Other' text box. Similar to earlier in the questionnaire, many responses duplicated the question answer options or went into more detail regarding the answer options they had already provided. Where this has been done their answers have been added to the above totals.

Over half of the respondents who made a comment to this question took the opportunity to express their strong disagreement with the prospect of paying a subscription charge. Many felt the cost should be covered within the existing council tax amount, with some asking for a reduction in their bill should they not subscribe to the scheme if one were imposed within their locality. A few felt as the consultation was asking questions about payment options that implementation of a subscription charge would be inevitable. Many respondents stated they would not subscribe to a paid for scheme.

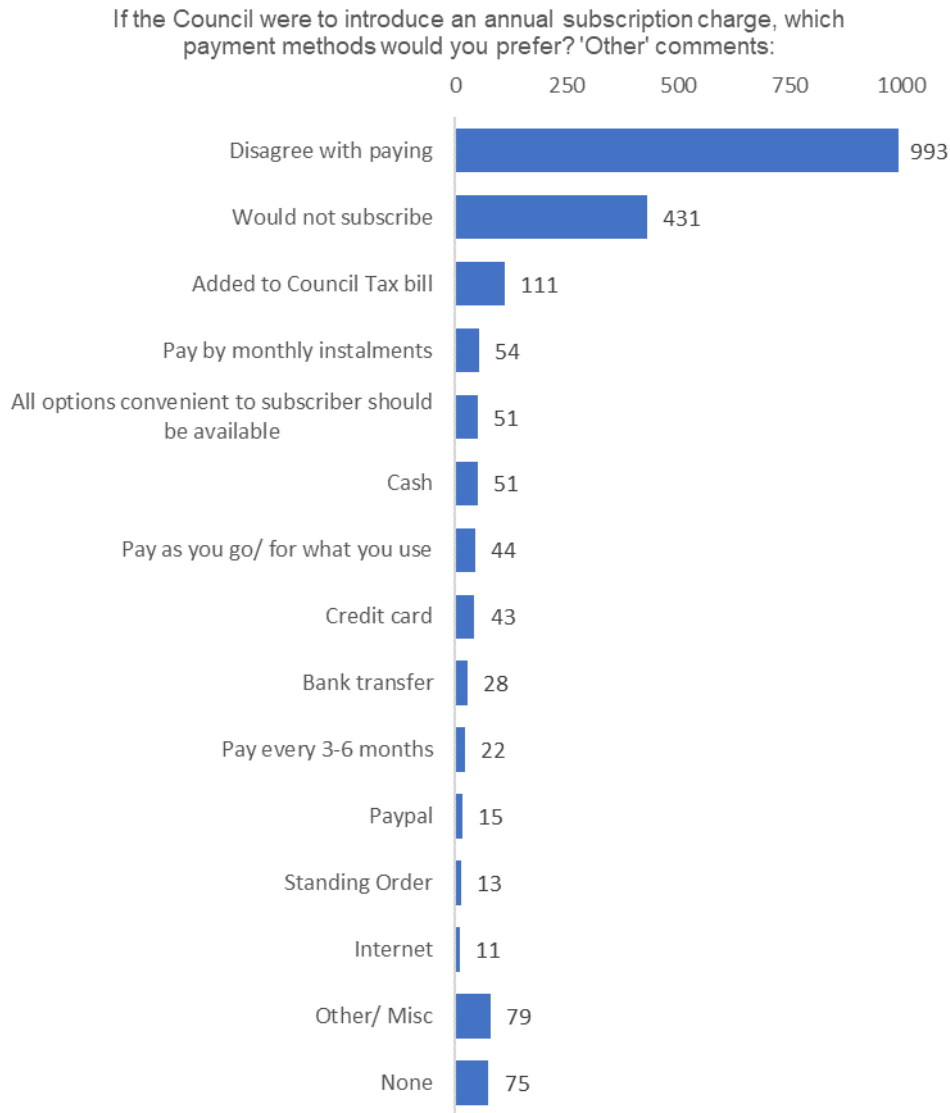
Other payment method suggestions included to have payment as an add-on to the council tax bill so amount can be spread over 10 monthly instalments; to pay by cash; credit card; bank transfer; Paypal; standing order instead of a direct debit; and that payment should be able to be processed via the internet. Several respondents also said that all payment options that are convenient to subscribers should be available.

Respondents also mentioned the frequency of payments, with some feeling that monthly instalments should be available to help spread out the costs. The option to pay every 3-6 months was also suggested, as was the ability to pay as you go/ for what you use.

Several respondents simply commented 'None'. Due to the succinct response, it is not clear if these respondents had no other suggestions to make, were against a proposed payment or felt that none of the answer options were suitable.

Other comments included that the cost should relate to the frequency of collection. There were also a few complaints about the current service and that it was unfair for households within the former East Northamptonshire area to pay a subscription charge whilst other localities within North Northamptonshire do not. Other payment suggestions included cryptocurrency; Bitcoin; Apple/ Google pay; via council offices; and over the phone.

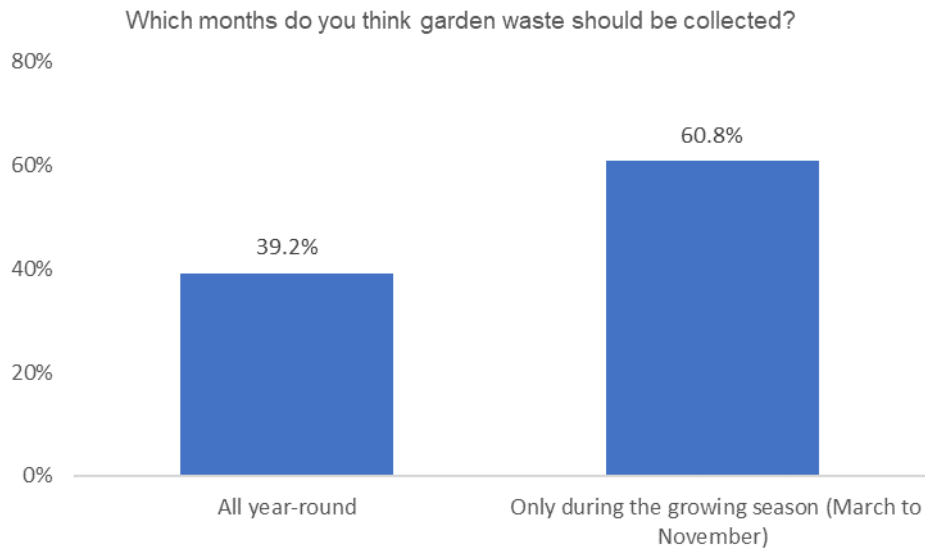
The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within the 'Other' comments.



### 6.1.4 Garden waste collection

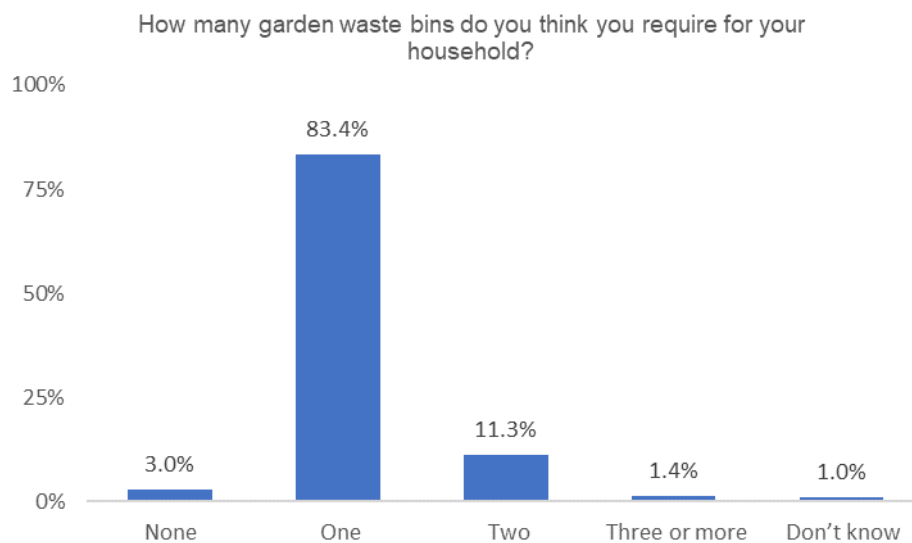
Respondents were reminded that garden waste is currently collected all year-round in some areas of North Northamptonshire, and only between March and November in others. They were then asked which months they think garden waste should be collected. There were 8,151 responses to this question. Nearly two thirds of respondents (60.8%) said they would prefer collection to be collected only during the growing season (March to November). Although 39.2% said they want the service to be delivered all year-round.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



Respondents were then asked how many garden waste bins they think they would require for their household. There were 8,230 responses to this question. By far the most frequent amount respondents said they require is one (83.4%). A total of 11.3% said they require two bins and 1.4% said three or more. There were 3.0% of respondents who said none.

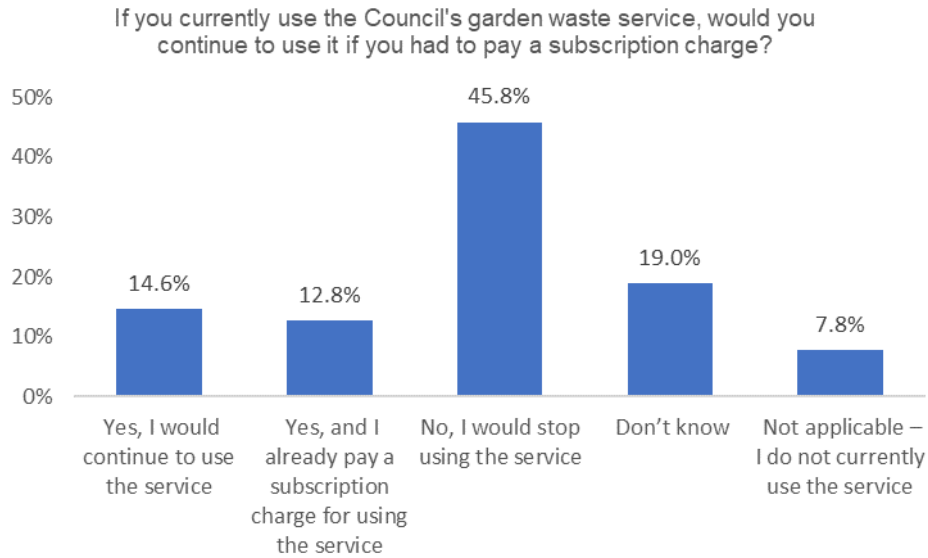
The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



### 6.1.5 Using the service

Respondents were then asked if they currently use the Council's garden waste collection service, would they continue to use it if they had to pay a subscription charge. There were 8,196 responses to this question. Nearly half of respondents (45.8%) said they would stop using the service. A total of 27.4% of respondents said they would continue to use the service, with 12.8% of these already paying a subscription charge. Almost one in five respondents (19.0%) said they did not know.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.



### 6.1.6 Other means of disposal

Those respondents who said 'No, I would stop using the service' to the above question were asked how they would dispose of their garden waste.

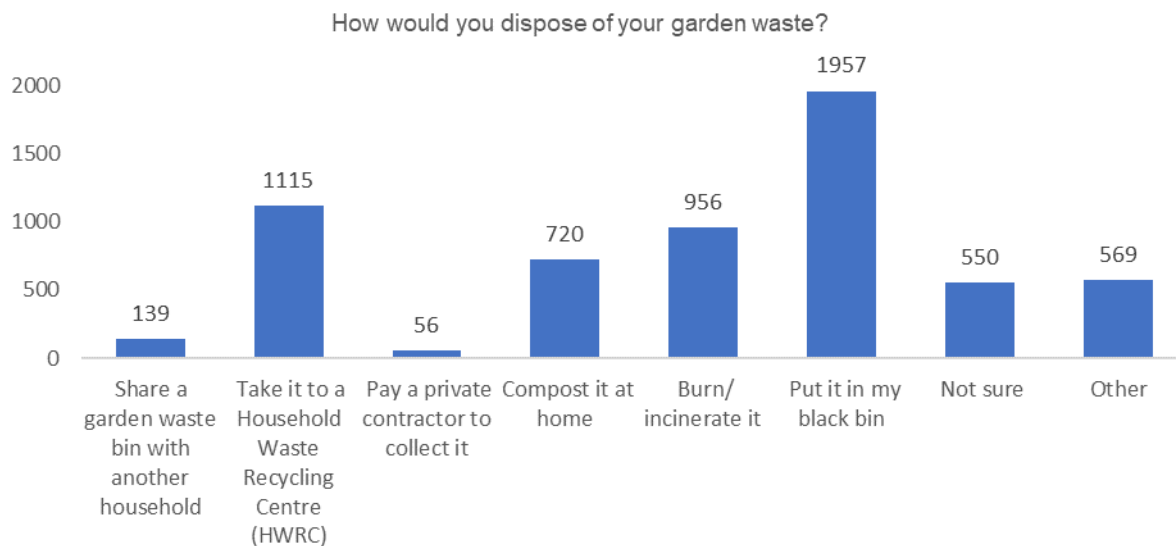
Before answering this question, respondents were reminded what contents is allowed to be disposed of via the black (refuse) bin.

There were 3,670 responses to this question. Respondents listed several different ways for how they may dispose of their garden waste. The most frequent answer to this question was to dispose of their garden waste in their black bin (1,957). This was followed by taking it to a HWRC (1115); burning it (956); and composting it (720). A total of 139 respondents said they would share a garden waste bin with another household and 56 would pay a private contractor to collect it. A total of 550 said they were not sure how they would dispose of it.

When comparing answer options here to the earlier question asking how respondents currently dispose of their garden waste, a sharp increase can be seen in the potential for households to dispose of garden waste in the black refuse bin, with 1,957 selecting this answer here compared to 116 respondents who said they already use it for this purpose. There is also a significant increase in the number of respondents who said they would burn their waste, with 956 mentioning it here compared to 292 who currently incinerate it.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.





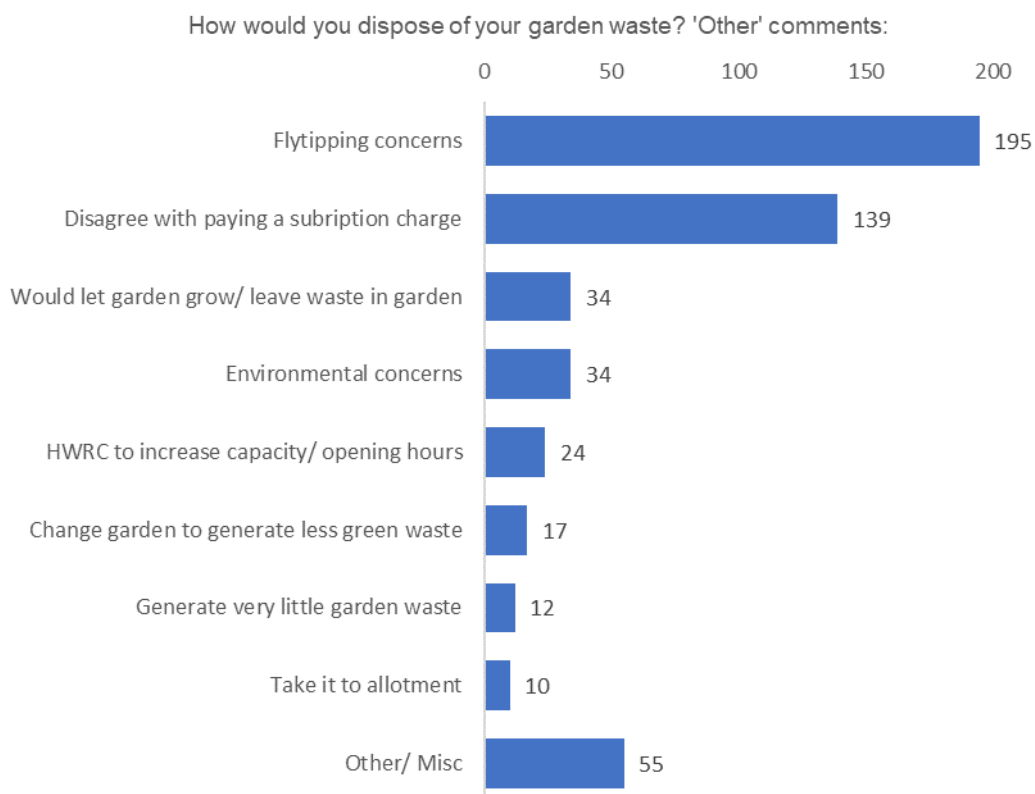
There were 569 respondents who made comment within the 'Other' text box. Similar to earlier on in the questionnaire, many responses duplicated the question answer options or went into more detail regarding the answer options they had already provided. Where this has been done their answers have been added to the above totals.

Whilst many respondents took this opportunity to comment on how they disagree with the concept of paying a subscription charge, the most frequently mentioned comment made within the 'Other' text box were concerns regarding flytipping, with respondents expecting this to increase should a subscription charge be introduced across North Northamptonshire. Several respondents said they would prefer to fly-tip their garden waste than pay a charge. Several respondents also raised their concerns over the potential environmental impact of activities such as increased burning of waste and vehicles accessing HWRCs. Several comments were also made requesting increased capacity and opening hours of the HWRCs to accommodate the potential extra usage.

Other methods of disposal mentioned by respondents included leaving gardens to either grow or accumulate waste; to change gardens so they generate less garden waste; and to take their waste to an allotment. A small number of respondents said they currently generated very little garden waste.

Other comments included using local council bins and asking family or friends to help. A small number said their garden was too small for composting; explained their physical difficulty removing waste; or that the waste they dispose of came from council owned grass and/or trees. Several respondents said they did not wish to disclose how they would dispose of their garden waste.

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within the 'Other' comments.



### 6.1.7 Other comments

Respondents were invited to tell us of any negative impacts they feel the proposals may make, along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be reduced or avoided. There were 4,030 responses to this question.

Consistently, respondents saw the proposal as being unjust and unfair. They said its impact would have varying effects on residents, on the environment and on the reputation of the new Council. Many felt bitter about the proposal and said the Council would be extracting extra payments from residents at a time when household budgets were either stretched or severely reduced. Respondents also objected for practical reasons such as access to HWRCs, increasing carbon footprint, and increased cost of fuel. Some said that they would not pay whereas others objected to having to pay. Some said that they would pay but reluctantly.

Majority of respondents expressed their concerns about increases in flytipping and the illegal disposal of garden waste. They said that this increase would harm the environment and cost the Council more to clear up. They said a free centralised collection of garden waste would be more efficient in the long run. Respondents also expressed their sense of current community service with some saying that they help maintain footpaths/ street tree debris and would stop doing this if they had to pay for its removal. They added that this would lead to general unkempt footpaths etc which would in turn encourage flytipping.

Respondents were concerned with the financial impacts of charging. Some felt the charge was too much and unnecessary at a time when household budgets were experiencing pressure. Necessities would take precedent i.e. managing with the increase in utility and food bills, along with general cost of living rises. Respondents who were of low income and or vulnerable and who did not have alternative solution to dispose of garden waste wanted the Council to consider a free collection for them or for them to have some other types of concessions.

Others strongly felt that they were paying for this service already through their council tax and that recent increases in council tax should make allowance for having a free garden waste service. Those that lived in legacy Council areas where garden waste was not charged for felt that if the previous smaller councils had managed finances for no charges, a larger potentially more efficient unitary Council should be able to carry out the service with no extra charge to residents. Those respondents that currently pay a charge said that they should not be paying a charge at all and be treated the same as others who paid not charge.

When mentioning HWRCs, respondents again were concerned about their access to them. They said the proposal would increase the volume of traffic and in turn increase emissions. They felt having a collection service produces less emission compared to multiple short journeys to the HWRCs. Others said that it was impractical to get to their local HWRC due to the various opening times, the travelling distance from where they lived, and the increased demand being placed on the recycling centres. Others cited their own physical wellbeing and not having the time to take the waste to a centre for disposal.

Respondents added that many people would start to use the black bin for garden waste. This many said would be a backward step as more would end up in landfill. Others commented that they or others would burn garden waste resulting in increased air pollution.

Comments were provided on issues of biodiversity and land management. Respondents expressed a reduction in the willingness of residents to plant or maintain trees and other plants. This would reduce soft landscaping and increase hard landscaping resulting in negative impact on run-off and flooding.

Respondents mentioned that garden waste could be turned into compost and generate an income which the Council could offset against the collection of garden waste. Others questioned the administration costs of the scheme, how it would work in practice and how enforcement would be carried out. Some mentioned specific collection like that of Christmas trees which they felt were important.

Respondents made comments about the operating times of the scheme – with some suggesting making collections in growing periods and not collecting in winter. Others mentioned the number of bins and the cost of each bin.

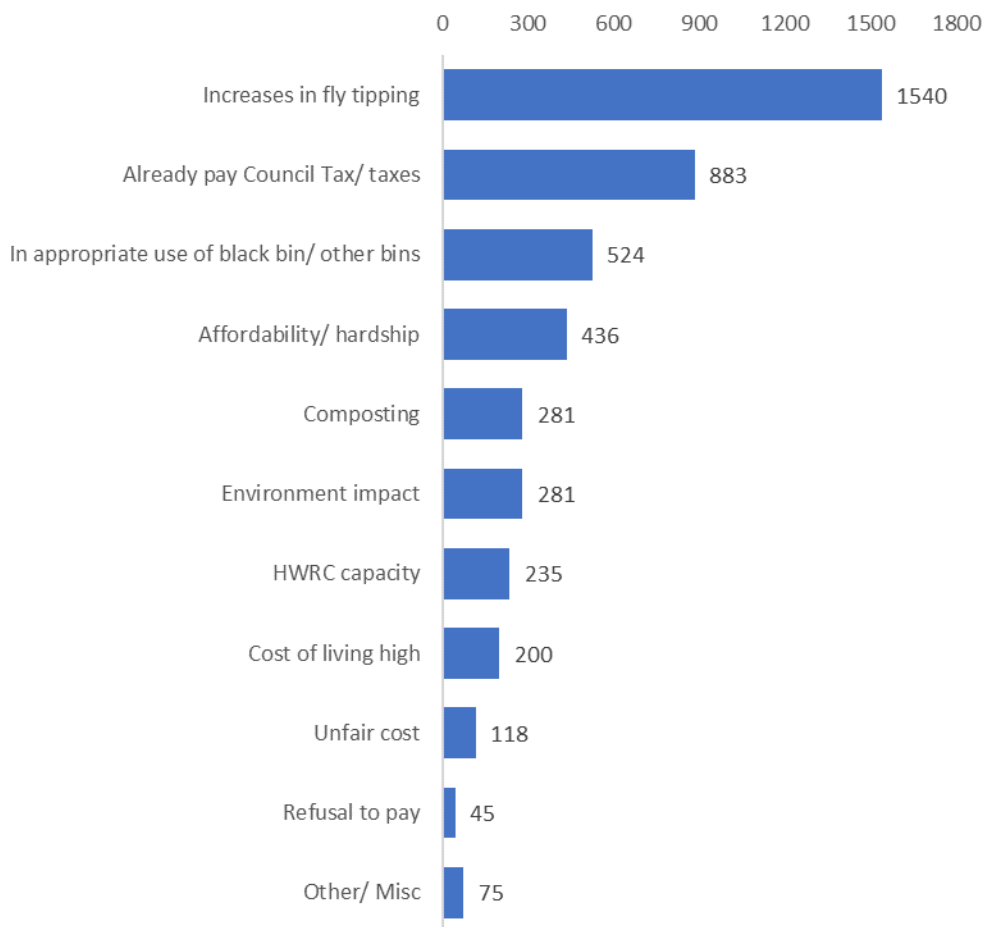
A few respondents said they did not warrant paying a subscription as they generated little to no garden waste; or composted or that they already take their waste to the HWRC and so the proposal would not have direct impact on them; however, they still expressed a sense of resentment over the proposal.

Suggestions included:

- more communal bins to encourage people to recycle
- incorporating the cost of the scheme with the council tax rather than as a separate scheme
- reduce the council tax rate if this proposal is introduced
- spreading the cost of the payment over the calendar year; pay instalments
- reduce the months the scheme operates for; or the number of times garden waste is collected
- concession or reduced subscription rates for those on low income; and for the disabled; and or on pensionable age or in receipt of council tax reduction
- reduced rate of second or more bins
- have opportunities to share bins with neighbours
- making HWRCs more accessible and open for longer
- Council should think of other ways/ options to save money

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within this question.

If you feel any of the above proposals would have a negative impact, please tell us what you think that impact would be, along with any suggestions on how any potential negative impacts could be reduced or avoided:



Respondents were then given an opportunity to tell us of any other comments they would like to make that they have not already told us. There were 1,986 responses to this question. Feedback here mirrored much of what had already been mentioned elsewhere within the questionnaire.

There were four main subjects that arose from this question. The most frequent was the sentiment that residents should not pay an additional subscription charge for the collection of their garden waste. The majority of respondents to this question appear to currently receive this service without an additional subscription charge, and they detailed how they did not want to pay an extra charge, especially given the current cost of living crisis.

Secondly, respondents expressed their negative thoughts of the proposals. They mentioned their negative opinions of the former Northamptonshire County Council and East Northamptonshire Council and expressed their distrust of how NNC could properly manage this change to benefit residents. Some also felt the consultation results could be biased towards outcomes that would not help residents.

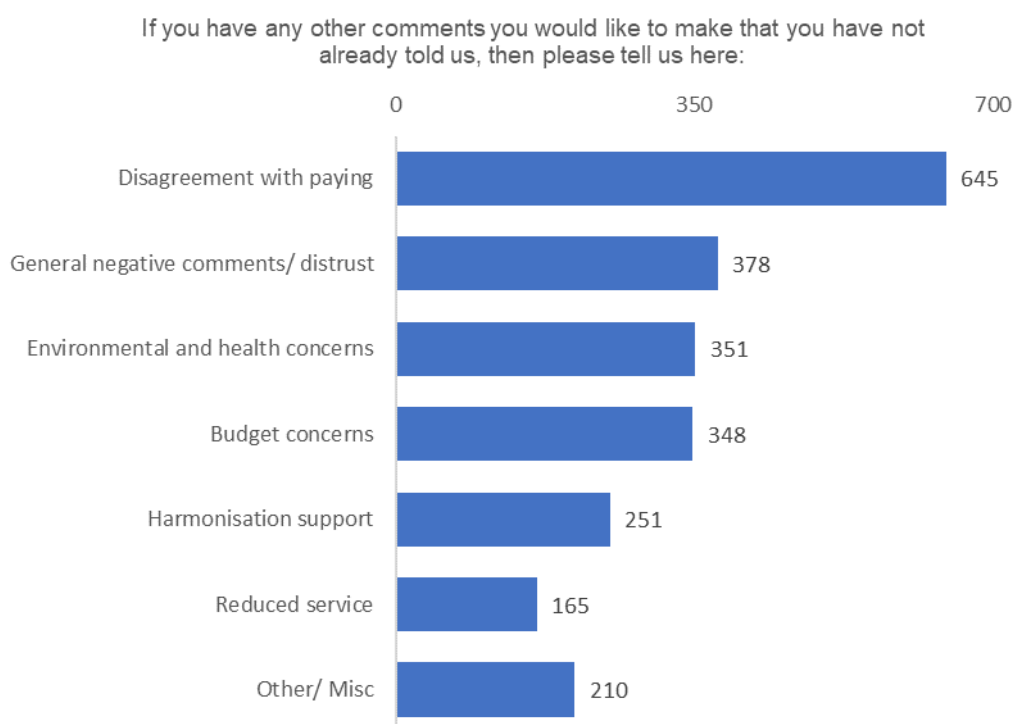
Thirdly, respondents raised their concerns about how this would affect the environmental and health of North Northamptonshire residents. Respondents felt charging for garden waste collection will lead to a lot more fly-tipping and residents neglecting their gardens. They also mentioned how gardening can improve peoples mental and physical health and that the current proposal may conflict with this.

The last of the major topics covered respondents concerns about how residents would be able to budget for an additional charge and how the Council was already budgeting for it. They mentioned the current cost of living crisis; that the cost of collection is already included within the Council's budget; and a misunderstanding that the Council profits from compost sales. Respondents felt the proposal was not fair and raised concerns over the mental stress of finding the extra funding could cause some people if a charge were introduced within their locality.

Other frequently mentioned comments included support of harmonisation; and suggestions of a reduced service to help keep costs lower.

There were also a number of comments that could not be properly grouped. These included various topics including comments about home composting; collection of food waste; and requests for a council tax rebate for those households who do not subscribe to a chargeable subscription service should one be implemented.

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within this question.



### 6.1.8 Demographic information

The questionnaire then invited organisational respondents to provide more detail about their organisation by providing their organisations name and their job title/ role. The 15 respondents who provided this information identified themselves as Town and Parish Councils; community associations and committees; religious organisations; local businesses; and a political party. We have not listed the job titles/ roles of respondents within this report to ensure respondents' anonymity is retained.

Respondents who were not responding on behalf of an organisation were asked a range of equality monitoring questions to help us understand the characteristics of people who have taken part in the consultation.

Many respondents provided this information. From the data received by those respondents who completed this section, the information demonstrates that the respondents are broadly representative of the population of North Northamptonshire. However, when compared with known population statistics the data does highlight that more females answered the questionnaire than males. The following is a brief summary of the data

received. For the purpose of this analysis, respondents who answered 'Prefer not to say' to an equality monitoring question have not been included within the below percentages.

More females (65.2%) appear to have completed the questionnaire than males (34.5%), with 0.2% stating they are either other or non-binary. The majority of respondents (99.4%) said they were the same gender as they were assigned at birth. There was a fairly even split between respondents aged 49 years or younger (44.2%) and those aged 50 to 74 (49.5%), with 6.3% of respondents being 75 years or older.

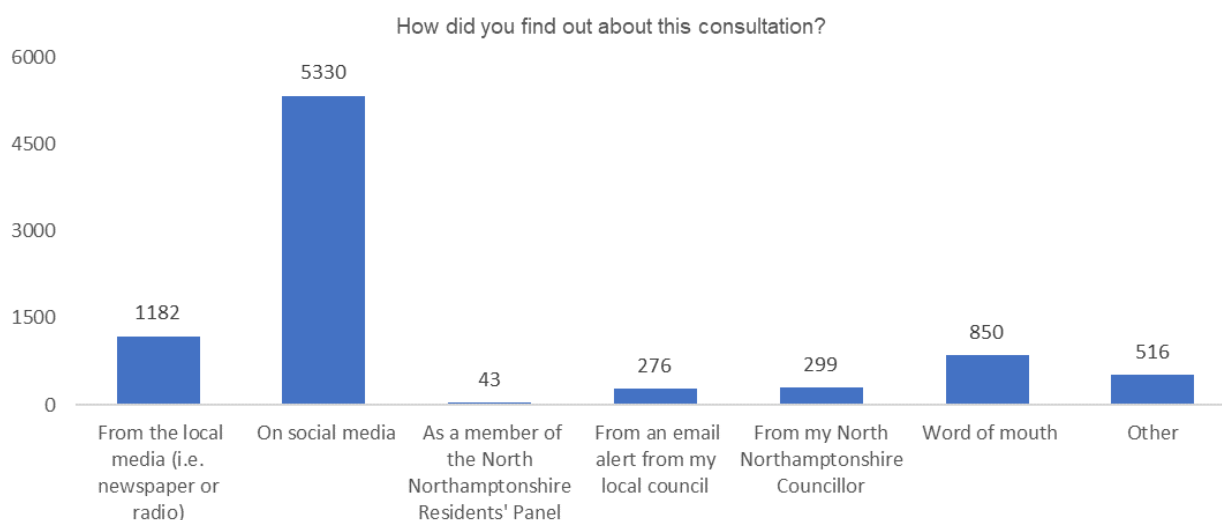
Most of the respondents identified themselves as being married (64.2%), 12.9% cohabiting, 0.8% in a civil partnership; 12.8% being single; 4.7% being widowed; 2.6% divorced; 0.6% separated; and 1.4% stating Other. The majority of respondents said they were heterosexual (96.5%); with 1.8% being gay or lesbian; 1.4% being bisexual; and 0.4% being either self-defined or unsure.

Other identified demographic information provided by respondents demonstrated that 15.4% were disabled. Predominantly respondents identified themselves as White British (95.5%), with the remainder saying they were from another ethnic background. The most frequent religion identified was Christian (51.1%), with 46.8% of respondents choosing 'None'. Other religions included Buddhist (0.3%), Hindu (0.2%) Jewish (0.1%), Muslim (0.1%), and Other (1.3%).

### 6.1.9 Consultation awareness channels

The final question within the questionnaire asked respondents how they found out about the consultation. A total of 7,902 respondents answered this question. The majority of respondents said they were made aware of the consultation via social media (5,330). Other awareness raising channels included via the local media i.e. newspaper/ radio (1,182); word of mouth (850); from a North Northamptonshire Councillor (299); from an email alert from the Council (276); and as a member of the North Northamptonshire Residents' Panel (43).

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers to this question.

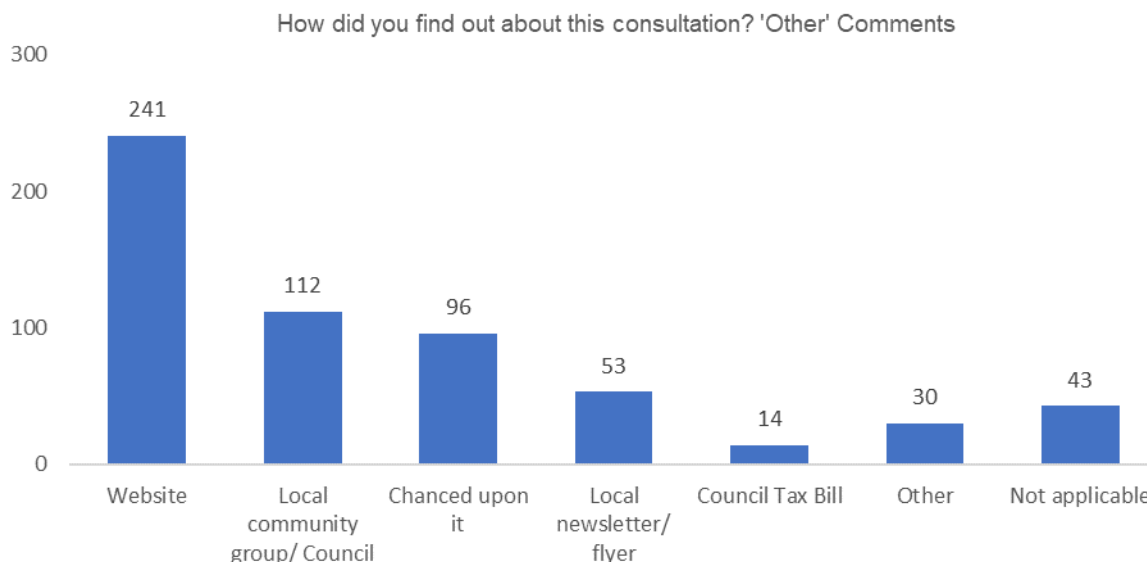


There were 516 respondents who made comment within the 'Other' text box. Similar to earlier on in the questionnaire, several responses duplicated the question answer options or went into more detail regarding the answer options they had already provided. Where this has been done their answers have been added to the above totals.

Almost half of the respondents who made a comment within the 'Other' text box said they were made aware of the consultation via the Council's website, this was followed by being notified by a local community group,

Town or Parish Council or politician. Some respondents said they found out about the consultation by chance. Respondents said they also found out about the consultation via a local newsletter/ flyer or within their council tax notification. Other means included being notified by NNC staff during interaction with the Council; during the renewal of their current subscription; or in their role as an NNC employee or Councillor.

The below graph shows the frequency of response answers of those that made an 'Other' comment.



## 6.2 Written responses

There were 140 written responses received in relation to the Garden Waste Collection Service consultation, including both letters and emails. Comments made by these respondents were similar to those made within the questionnaire feedback.

The majority of written respondents said they disagreed with the prospect of paying for a subscription charge, with several saying they feel the service is already paid for within their existing council tax. Whilst some respondents expressed their support for a harmonised service, many respondents were concerned a subscription charge would result in increased flytipping, inappropriate use of black bins, and more households burning their garden waste. Similar to some questionnaire respondents, there was also concern if the local HWRC's would be able to cope with the perceived extra demand. It was also commented that for these reasons the proposals may result in a negative impact on the environment.

Several written respondents also mentioned the current cost of living crisis and the financial pressures either they or other households are currently experiencing, and that a subscription charge would not be affordable by some.

Some asked for a reduced collection period, mainly focused within the growing season, when there is greater demand for the service, as a way to help reduce the service cost.

A few written respondents expressed their support for a paid for subscription service, whereas some wanted there to be no subscription charge for the former East Northamptonshire area, and felt it was unfair these households were paying for the service whilst other localities in North Northamptonshire are not subject to a subscription charge.

Other comments included composting, and how this should be greater utilised by the Council to help fund the service; the health benefits of gardening; how some residents are not able to dispose of their garden waste by other means; dissatisfaction with the consultation; and that some of the garden waste generated is the result of households voluntarily maintaining council owned trees and grass verges.

The below graph shows the frequency of response themes mentioned within these written responses.

