

ISLANDERS are increasingly satisfied with the IW Council and are more positive about living on the Island.

These are two key findings from the 2008 Residents' Survey conducted by the IW Council who asked a representative sample of more than 800 residents a range of questions in telephone interviews between June 9 and 20 this year.

The survey is an annual exercise carried out by the council over the last three years to help it get a clearer picture of residents' concerns, identify service improvements and to also help it to decide spending priorities.

This year's study revealed overall satisfaction with the council had increased by nine percentage points since from 2007 to 63 percent. In terms of particular services, the area of most satisfaction were libraries, parks and beaches and open spaces, closely followed by street cleaning and refuse collection - a marked difference to many other authorities nationally who are experiencing more concern from residents as a result of fortnightly bin collections.

Resident perception about problems in the area has also dropped significantly with nine out of 12 issues that could be perceived as problems – such as speeding, litter, dog fouling and drugs - showing improvements and the other three remaining stable.

Areas of greatest concern included highway maintenance and public toilets – both of which are to be improved by multi-million pound schemes already announced by the IW Council. Perhaps in recognition of this investment, the survey highlights a feeling that the council is making changes to improve its services.

IW Council leader Cllr David Pugh said the results of the latest survey were encouraging.

“While we still recognise that there are a number of areas in which the council needs to continue to improve, the increased levels of satisfaction are particularly pleasing and provide good evidence that we are moving in the right direction.

“It is also heartening that we already have plans in place to tackle many of the areas highlighted as concerns. We are spending £5 million on highway maintenance schemes this year, some of which are underway, and similar amounts in the years leading up to 2011 when the £325 million PFI money becomes available.

“We are also spending many millions on providing new eco-toilets across the Island.

“As this work continues, then we would hope the level of satisfaction with our services will continue to rise. For our part, it is down to us to make sure we continue to communicate the work we are doing to improve the lives of residents.”