



# Coventry Partnership Household Survey 2007

## SCS Theme Group Final Report – Positive Environmental Contribution

May 2008



Measurement ◆ Evaluation ◆ Learning  
Helping you deliver better public services

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## Position Statement – Key Point Summary

- ◆ More Coventry residents surveyed say they have started to reduce their domestic water usage since the start of the 'environmental contribution' survey questions in 2004. Across Coventry the average has increased from 38% to 65% (up 27%), one of the most rapid changes across the whole survey. Priority neighbourhood survey respondents are generally more likely to say they have reduced water usage over the past 12 months than those living in the rest of city. Although not statistically significant results also show that white survey respondents are more likely to have reduced water usage than BME respondents (68% compared to 52%).
- ◆ Similarly, the percentages saying they have reduced energy usage over the past 12 months has risen over the four surveys from 55% to 88% (up 33%), in fact an even faster change than for water usage. There is no difference on this indicator between priority neighbourhoods and the rest of city.
- ◆ It would be useful to compare these results against actual data on domestic water and energy consumption in Coventry and the theme group proposed that the feasibility of getting such data should be investigated.
- ◆ Those respondents in the survey claiming to be reducing the amount of household waste they produce has also risen from 26% to 41% (up 15%). On this indicator, the rest of city has improved much faster than priority neighbourhoods – opening up a 14% point gap compared to just 4% difference in 2004.
- ◆ The interpretation of the wording in the waste reduction question was felt to be unclear however, and representatives of the theme group have recommended that this question be replaced by a more incisive set of questions on waste minimisation actions and consumer purchasing behaviour in any future surveys.
- ◆ As stated in the 'cleaner, greener' theme report, those saying they recycle at least some of their waste have risen from 57% to 88% (up 31%) over the five years this specific question has been asked. Survey respondents in the rest of city (92%) continue to score better than those in priority neighbourhoods (83%) but the gap has narrowed; from 25% in 2003 to 9% this year.
- ◆ A small rise of 6% has occurred in those who encourage wildlife in the garden, the Coventry average now standing at 25%. Again an 11% point gap has developed between priority neighbourhoods and the rest of city, where the figure now stands at 30%. This may be a reflection of the type of domestic property, with the probability of a greater percentage of houses in the rest of city having gardens.
- ◆ The proportion of surveyed residents who have grown their own fruit and vegetables in the past 12 months has stayed broadly the same over the four years of these questions, the average now being 11%. There are no significant differences between priority neighbourhood and rest of city.
- ◆ Households using energy efficient light bulbs have grown steadily to reach a record high of 85% in the most recent 2007 survey. This is the highest of all the battery of environmental behaviour questions and there is no detectable difference between priority neighbourhoods and rest of city.
- ◆ On average 95% of households taking part in the survey say they have double glazed windows. This has not changed much over the four years of the survey, although there is some indication that priority neighbourhoods may have increased a little to reach the same average as the rest of city.
- ◆ In summary, the environmental behaviours amongst survey respondents have improved substantially over the past four years and there are relatively few examples of a significant gap between priority neighbourhoods and the rest of city.

## Summary of evidence on key issues

### 1. Environmental Actions

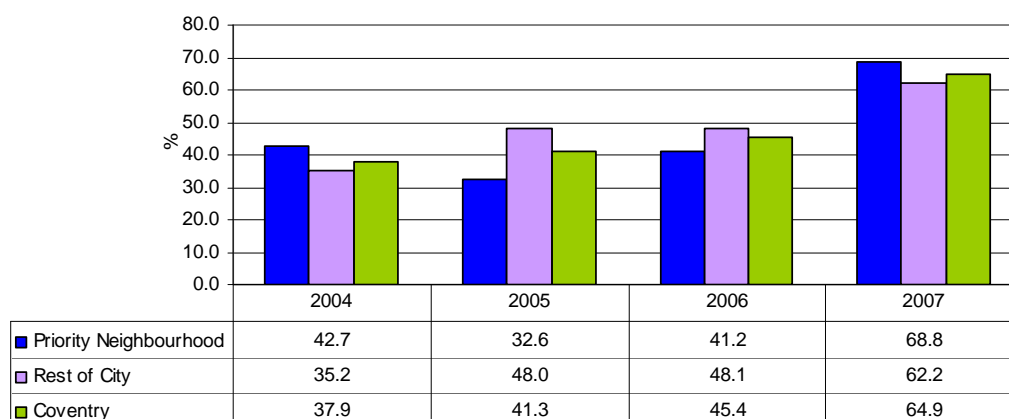
#### Water Usage

The graph below shows a considerable increase in the percentage of survey respondents who have reduced their water consumption in the last 12 months. Since 2006, an additional 20% of survey respondents are now making an effort to reduce water consumption. This may be as a result of increased media attention about climate change and environmental issues.

In priority neighbourhoods, a higher percentage of survey respondents have reduced their water consumption in the last 12 months (69% compared to 62% in the rest of the city).

Analysis by ethnicity indicates that White survey respondents are most likely to have reduced water usage (68%) compared to 48% of Asian respondents and 58% of Black respondents. A positive correlation with age also indicates that young survey respondents aged 16-24 are the least likely to have reduced their water consumption in the last 12 months (52%).

**Figure 1. Percentage of respondents who have reduced water use in their home over the last 12 months**



It would be helpful if the water supply industry could provide tangible outcome data on domestic water consumption in Coventry, to act as an external check on the public survey results. This should be discussed further by partners.

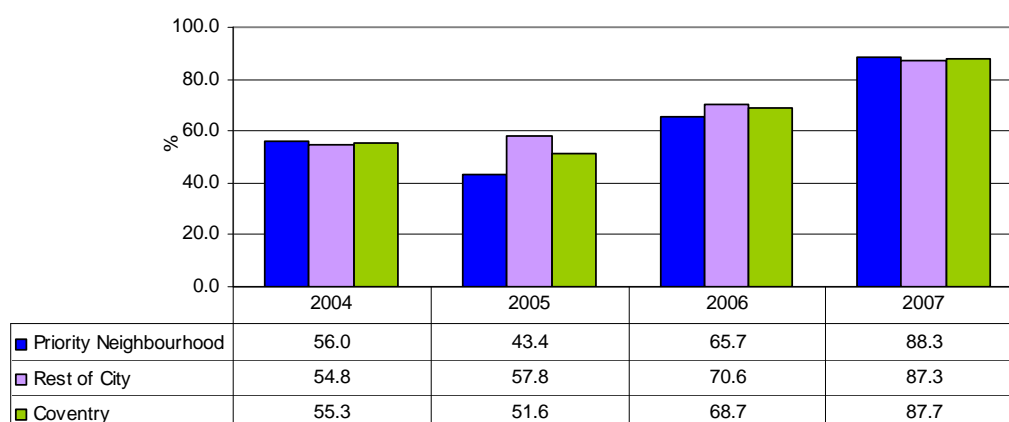
#### Energy Usage

The graph below shows a significant increase in the percentage of survey respondents who have reduced energy consumption in their home in the last 12 months. Since 2006, the percentage of survey respondents in priority neighbourhoods who have reduced energy consumption has increased by 23% and in the rest of the city it has increased by 17%.

There is however a strong correlation between energy consumption and age, 16-24 year olds are the least likely to have reduced their energy consumption (75%) compared to 45-54 year olds who are most likely to have reduced their energy consumption (95%).

Again it would be helpful if the energy supply sector could provide comparative outcome data on domestic energy consumption in Coventry.

**Figure 2. Percentage of respondents who have reduced energy use in their home over the last 12 months**



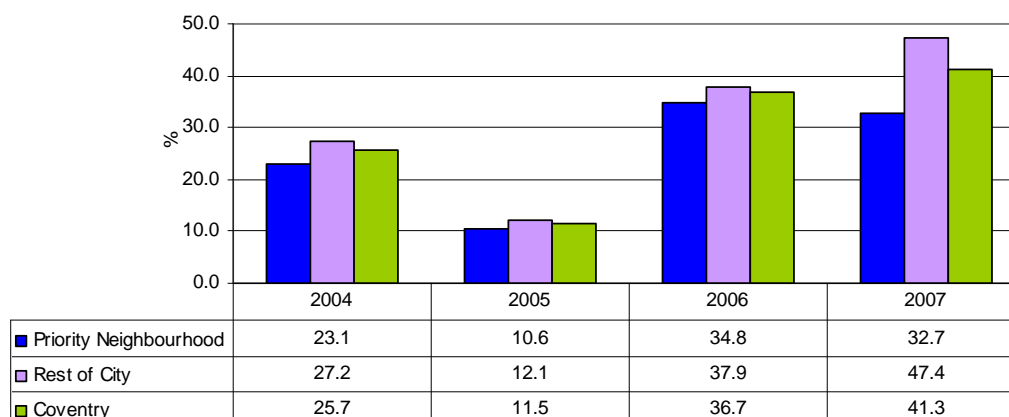
### Waste Reduction

Whilst there has been an increase in the percentage of survey respondents cutting down on waste in the rest of the city since 2006, there has actually been a decrease from 35% in 2006 to 33% in 2007 in priority neighbourhoods.

Again a positive correlation with age shows that survey respondents aged 16-24 are least likely to have reduced the amount of waste they produce (29%) compared to 55-59 year olds who are the most likely to have done so (57%).

Analysis by ethnicity shows that White survey respondents are most likely to say they have reduced the amount of waste they produce (43%) compared to 35% of Asian respondents and 19% of Black respondents. This needs further investigation in future to see whether this means BME households have been slower to reduce their waste, or possibly that they have simply less waste, or have already reduced as much as they feel they can.

**Figure 3. Percentage of respondents who have reduced the amount of waste they produce in their home over the last 12 months**



Overall the theme group were unsure how survey respondents may have interpreted this question and believe this question on 'reducing waste' needs to be revised in future surveys.

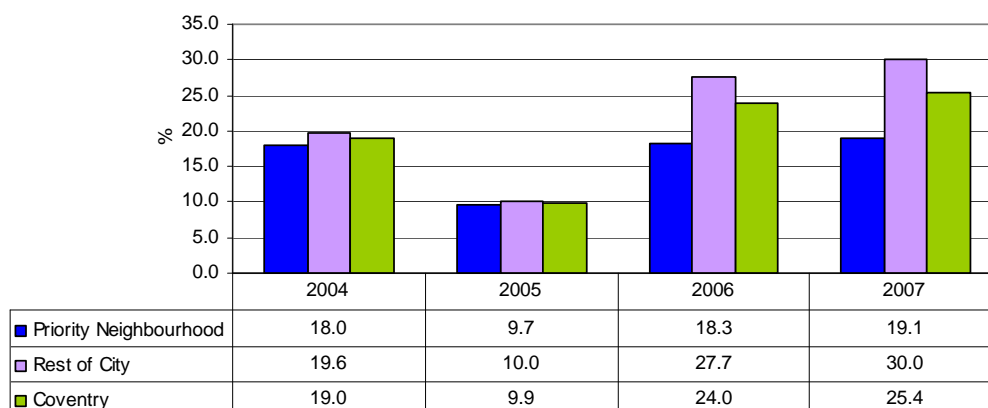
For instance are people thinking purely of household residual waste (i.e. they are reducing waste by diverting more 'waste' to recycling), or actually minimising waste production, whether recycled or not. Are people thinking of other behaviours too – like wasteful purchasing, or buying goods with less packaging?

A revised / enhanced question set covering 'waste minimisation' and consumer purchasing behaviour should therefore be considered in any future surveys.

### Encouraging Wildlife

The percentage of survey respondents who have encouraged wildlife into their garden in the last 12 months has slightly increased since 2006. There is a 11% gap between those who encouraged wildlife into their gardens in priority neighbourhoods (19%) in comparison to the rest of the city (30%). However this may be due to the type of house respondents live in, and whether or not they have a garden.

**Figure 4. Percentage of respondents who have encouraged wildlife in their garden over the last 12 months**

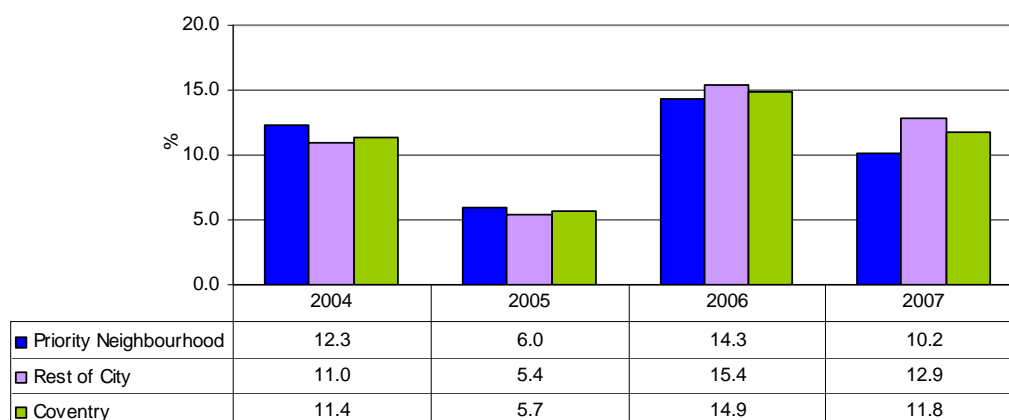


### Growing your own fruit and vegetables

In contrast to the other findings in this report, the percentage of respondents who have grown their own fruit or vegetables in the past year, has actually declined since 2006. The results are now similar to those from 2003.

Survey respondents aged 55-59 are the most likely to have grown their own fruit or veg in the last year (22%) compared to respondents aged 16-24 (8%).

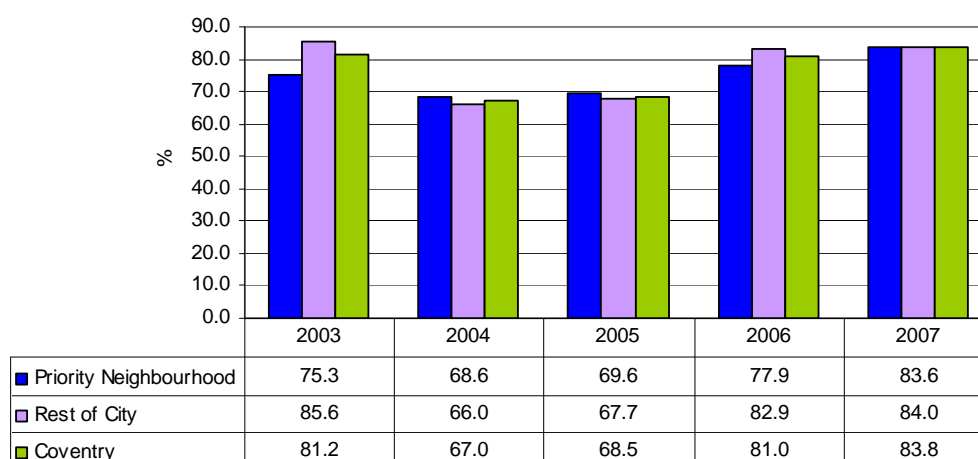
**Figure 5. Percentage of respondents who have grown their own fruit or vegetables in the last 12 months**



### Energy Saving Light Bulbs

Around 84% of survey respondents have at least one energy saving light bulb in their house, which is a slight increase since 2003 when 81% of respondents had at least one energy saving light bulb. In 2004 and 2005 there was a decline in the number of respondents who said they have energy saving light bulbs fitted in their houses, however in 2006 and 2007 the percentage increased again. Households in priority neighbourhoods are just as likely as those in the rest of the city to have energy saving light bulbs fitted.

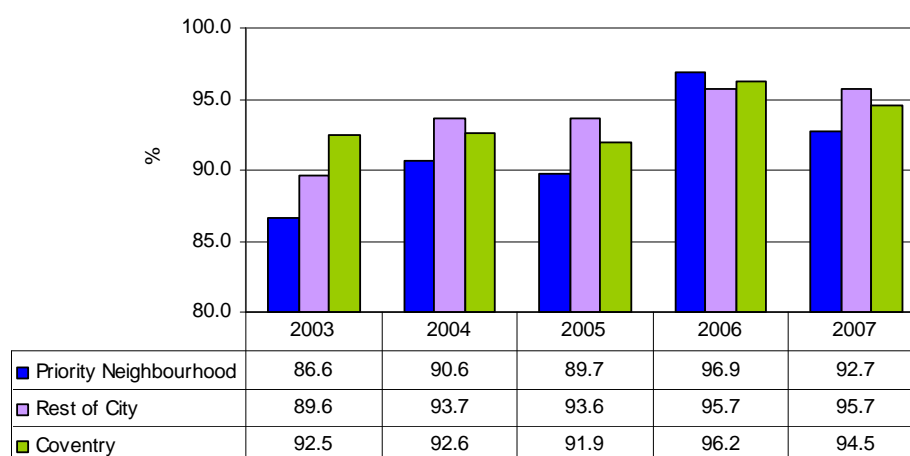
**Figure 6. The percentage of respondents who have energy saving light bulbs fitted in their house**



### Double Glazing

The percentage of survey respondents who said they had double glazing was at its highest in 2006 in priority neighbourhoods (97%), in the latest survey year the percentage has declined to 93%. In the rest of the city, the percentage of respondents with double glazed windows has remained constant over the last two survey years.

**Figure 7. The percentage of respondents who have double glazed windows**



### Recycling

Over time, the percentage of survey respondents who say they recycle has increased across all areas of the city, this not surprisingly due to general increased awareness about recycling and the introduction of more doorstep recycling services in Coventry. The gap between the priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city has narrowed over time to 9% in 2007.

**Figure 8. Percentage of respondents who recycle**

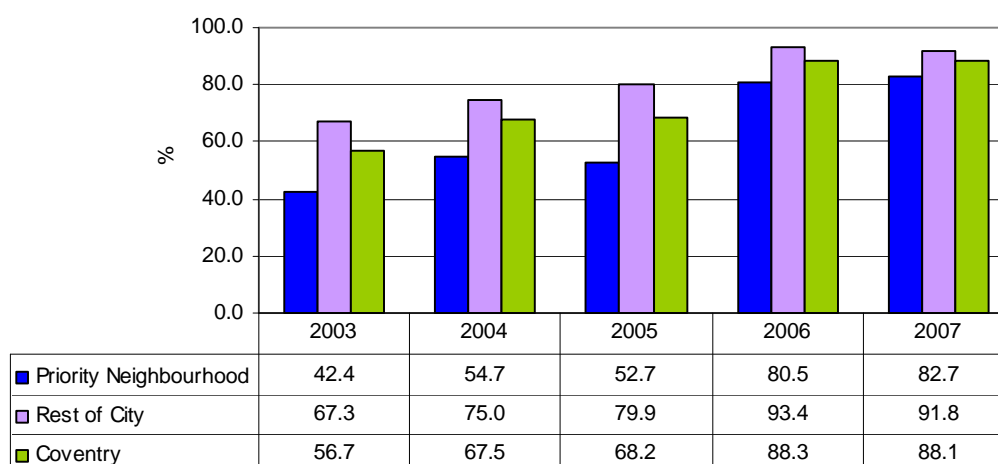
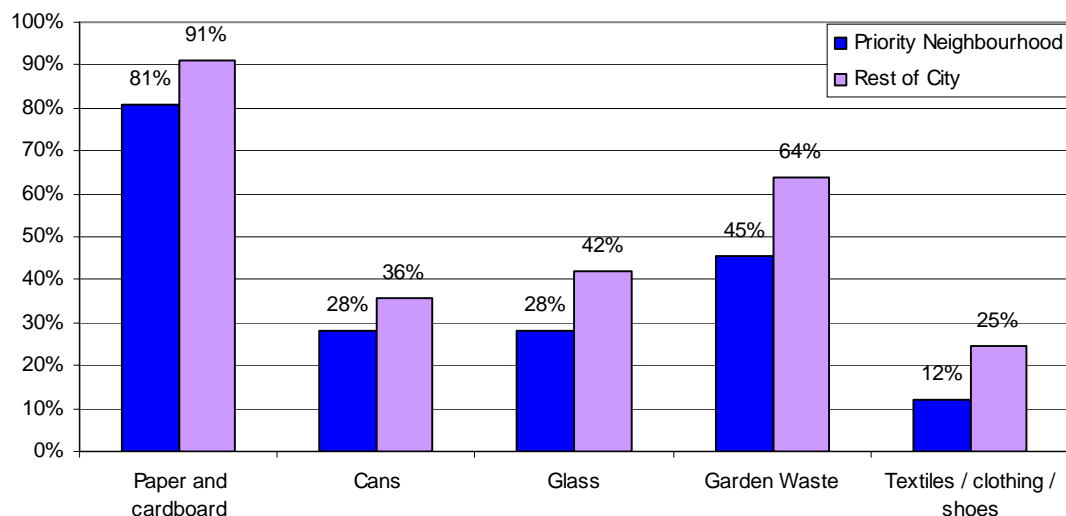


Figure 9 below shows that survey respondents in the rest of the city are more likely to recycle all types of materials than respondents in priority neighbourhoods. The biggest difference (19%) is between respondents recycling garden waste in the rest of the city (64%) compared to those in priority neighbourhoods (45%).

Materials such as garden waste, glass and cans are not collected on the doorstep in Coventry and therefore residents have to physically take this type of waste to a recycling centre. This is easier for people who have access to cars, which may explain the discrepancy between recycling rates in the rest of the city and the priority neighbourhoods. There is currently a blue box scheme trial underway in Coventry, which is a doorstep recycling collection for glass,

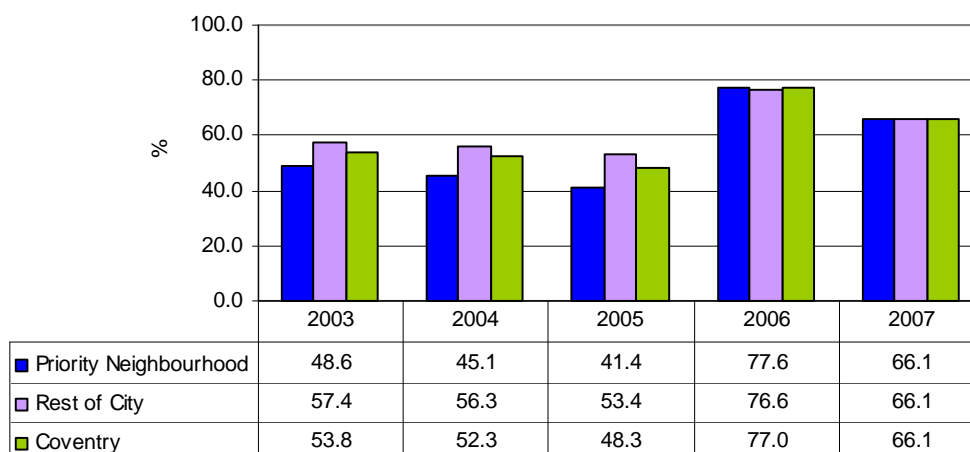
cans and plastic milk bottles. It will be interesting to track the impact of this collection service over time to see if it narrows the gap between recycling rates in the priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city.

**Figure 9. Percentage of respondents who recycle different materials**



Satisfaction with recycling services has increased in all areas of the city since 2003. Looking at the results more closely shows a gradual decline in satisfaction between 2003-2005 possibly when kerbside collections were first introduced and people were getting used to the service, a leap in satisfaction in 2006 followed by a slight dip in 2007. Over the five survey years, Coventry City Council has been successful in totally eliminating the gap in satisfaction between priority neighbourhoods and the rest of the city.

**Figure 10. Satisfaction with the provision of recycling facilities in your neighbourhood**





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