



**FEASIBILITY STUDY – PROPOSED BRACKENFELL BUSINESS
IMPROVEMENT DISTRICT
SPECIAL RATING AREA**

PERCEPTION SURVEY REPORT

FEBRUARY 2013

This report was prepared for the Brackenfell Business Improvement District SRA Steering Committee in support of the feasibility study for the proposed Brackenfell Special Rating Area by Gene Lohrentz of Geocentric Information Systems.

Disclaimer

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INTRODUCTION

Many Brackenfell property and business owners have recognised that incidents of crime and grime including homelessness, aggressive begging, informal car guards and general urban degradation are escalating in the area. A group of concerned property owners has recognised the need to investigate and address the challenges facing the Brackenfell area.

In response a steering committee in association with the Brackenfell Community Police Forum and the Okavango Sakekamer was formed to establish the feasibility for a Brackenfell Special Rating Area (SRA). The steering committee does this work on a voluntary basis without any compensation.

As part of evaluating the feasibility and needs for a Special Ratings Area in the Brackenfell area and in support of the development of the business plan, the steering committee commissioned a perception survey amongst property owners, businesses and people working or visiting the area of the proposed SRA. This report summarises the survey results.

The establishment of an SRA will enable the formation of a statutory body in terms the City of Cape Town SRA by-law. If the SRA application is successful SRA levies will be collected by the local authority from ratepayers in the area and paid over to the SRA management board. Funds raised will be dedicated to supplement municipal services such as security, cleansing and urban management.

Questionnaire and methodology

The perception survey is designed to provide feedback from property owners, residents, businesses and people working or visiting the area on safety and security, social problems and urban management issues of the area. The survey is not intended to provide quantitative statistics but rather indicative trends upon which the needs in the area can be evaluated.

Geocentric collaborates closely with a research agency in respect to questionnaire and sample design and applies internationally accepted best practice in both instances. Each question is reviewed for its suitability before the questionnaires are used in the field. This supports the application of the results to the rest of the SRA establishment process.

Two target group-specific questionnaires were developed. The first group consists of business and property owners while the second group consist of shoppers and visitors using the Brackenfell and Brackenfell area. Similar themes were addressed in each questionnaire, but the angle of questioning was adapted to be appropriate for the identified target group.

Broadly speaking, the following themes were covered in each questionnaire:

- Perceptions about the levels of safety and security
- Perceptions about the cleanliness of the area
- Whether social issues such as vagrancy is a problem in the area
- What are the expectations of both business owner/tenant and shopper (user)
- Predisposition towards the establishment of an Improvement Area

The property owner and/or business owner or tenant survey as well as the shopper or user surveys were conducted by Geocentric.

In both instances, a structured questionnaire was used. A combination of face-to-face interviews and self-completion was applied in the data collection phase. A cover letter drafted by the Steering Committee explained the purpose of the survey and a copy of the letter was distributed to every survey respondent.

Participants were also asked to rank the importance of the above listed issues at the end of the questionnaire and were also given the opportunity to express general comments and concerns in writing.

The survey was conducted by contacting and interviewing property owners and businesses on an individual basis over a period of two weeks in January and February 2013.

Survey results and analysis

Survey participants

Fifty-eight (58) participants completed the full perception survey and 23 respondents completed the user survey. 62% of the participants that completed the full survey are business owners renting the properties they operate from, 12% are business owners owning the property they operate from (See Figure 1). A further 26% were employees and managers at businesses. Figure 2 shows the general geographic location of where the surveys were conducted.

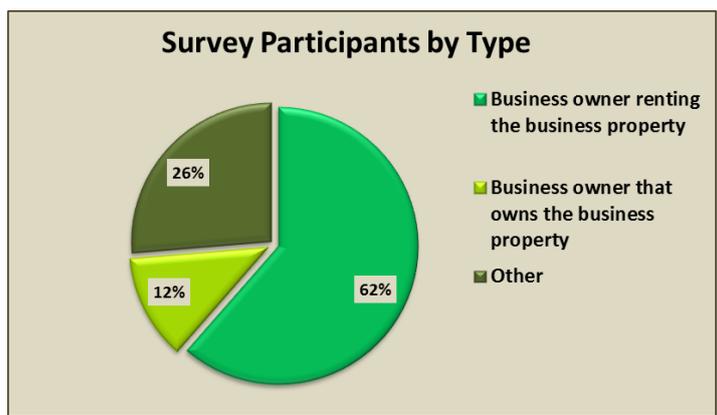


Figure 1 Survey participants by type

The shopper survey showed that 39% of the participants were working in the shopping district area whilst 31% were shoppers. Although respondents were not asked to provide any details of their income or financial status general observations on income and Lifestyle Measurements were recorded. Most participants could be categorised in the middle income groups.

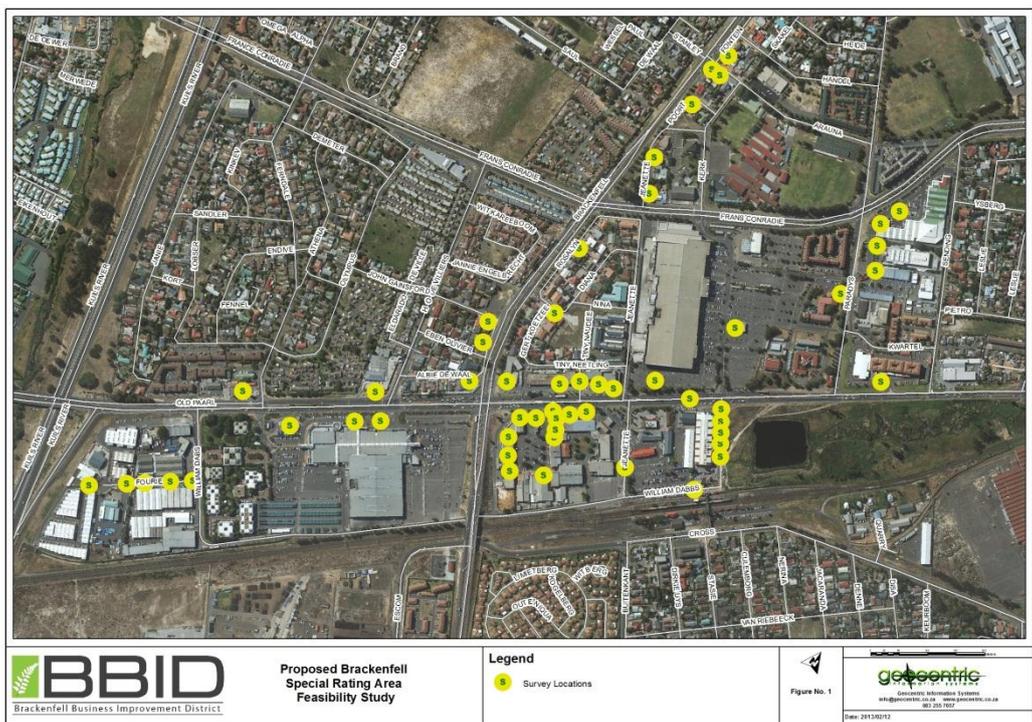


Figure 2 Indicative survey Locations

Survey results

Overall perception

The initial section of the survey tested the perception of the overall image of the Brackenfell area, especially the areas where the surveys were conducted. Figure 3 illustrates how most respondents view the area as very welcoming and clean but less safe and attractive.

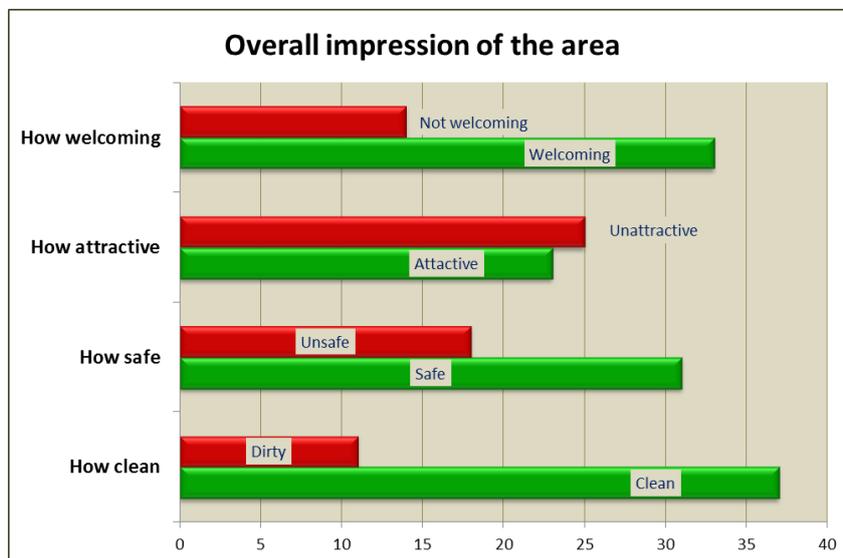


Figure 3 Overall impression of Brackenfell Area

The question on the overall impression of the Brackenfell area was followed by a measurement of the overall impression of municipal service delivery. Respondents were given a choice to select a range of answers from Excellent to Very Good, Good, Fair and Poor. **When these answers are analysed further, responses of Excellent and Very Good illustrates satisfaction, Good represents "middle of the road" acceptable while Fair and Poor represents dissatisfaction.** On this basis it is evident that up to 33% of the respondents are somewhat dissatisfied with municipal service delivery. Only 14% are clearly satisfied (refer to Figure 4).

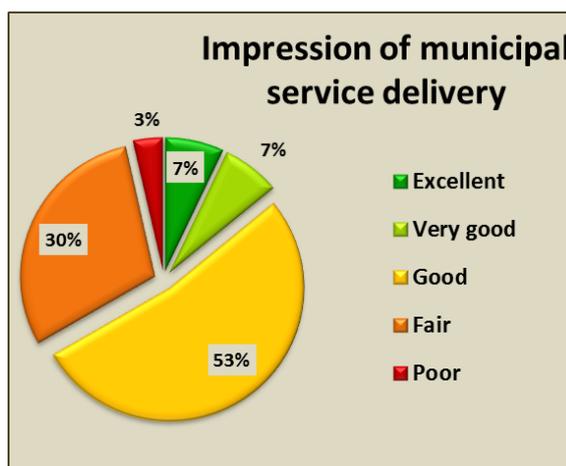


Figure 4 Impression of municipal service delivery

Section 1 - Safety and security

Section 1 focussed on safety and security. Participants were initially asked to rate the overall security situation in the Brackenfell area. Overall, 48% rated the overall security situation as good to excellent. 43% rated it as fair and 9% rated it as poor (see Figure 5). The analysis illustrates a level of dissatisfaction with the level of safety and security in the area.

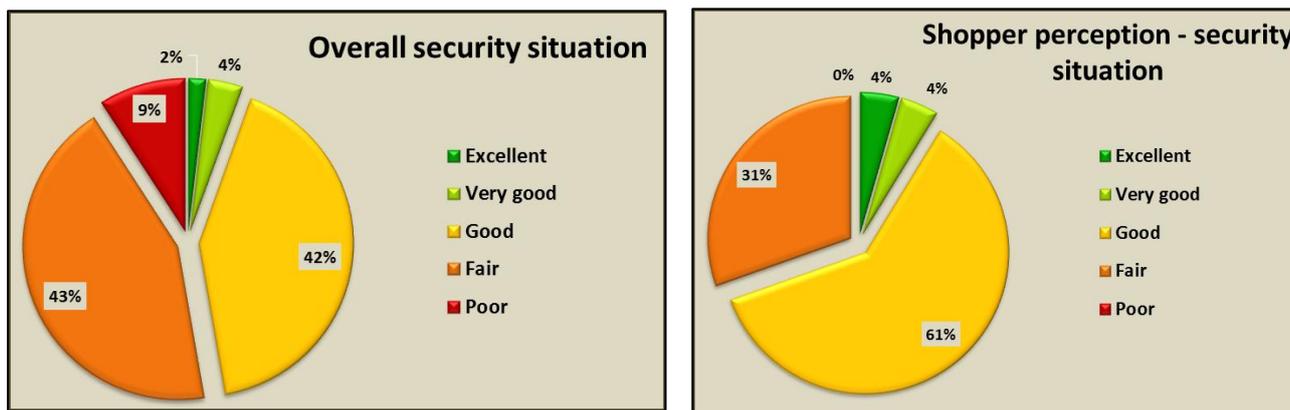


Figure 5 Overall security situation

Questions 6,7,9 and 10 focussed on respondents experience of crime in the Brackenfell area. Respondents were asked if they or someone close to them have been a victim of crime. Participants were given the opportunity to answer Yes or No. Fifty-eight (58) respondents answered the question. 31 Participants or 53% answered “Yes”. All of the shopper survey respondents answered “No”.

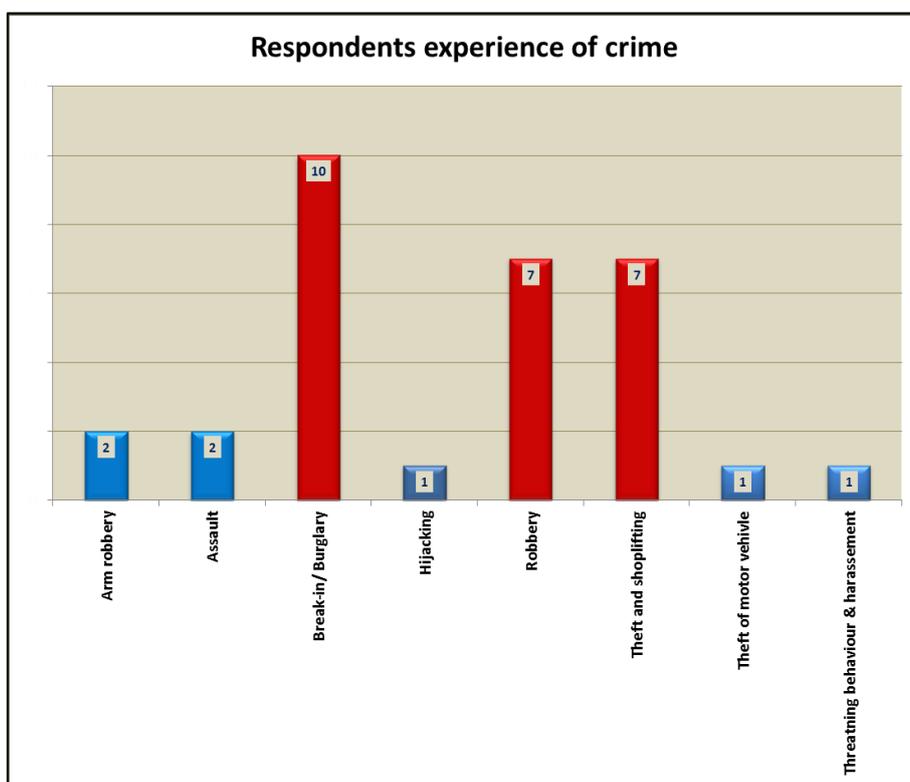


Figure 6 Experience of crime

Figure 8 illustrates the responses of the participants who answered “Yes”. Theft, robbery and burglaries are mentioned more often and indicate that property related crime most frequently occur while contact crimes are also present but fewer. 45% of the respondents indicated that the crimes took place between 08:00 and 16:00, and 29% indicated between 16:00 and 24:00 illustrating a tendency for crimes to be committed during the day and or early evening.

Beyond their personal experiences participants were asked to identify the types of crime that occur most frequently in their area and were provided with a list of typical criminal activities. Participants were also given the opportunity to specify any activity not listed.

Figure 9 illustrates the various criminal activities highlighted in the questionnaire and the frequency that each activity was listed by the participants. Although these figures cannot be regarded as

accurate crime statistics or empirical evidence of crime, it illustrates that theft from property, theft from motor vehicles or theft of vehicles and shoplifting occurs most often in the area.

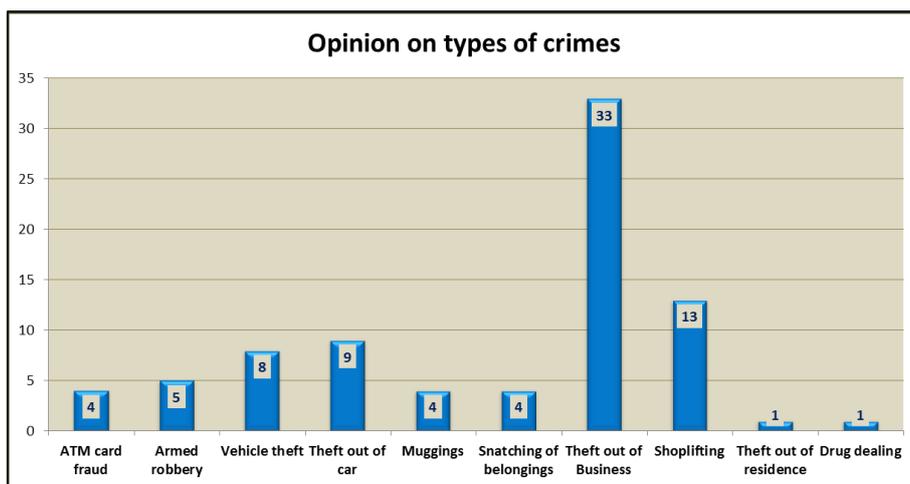


Figure 7 - Number of times that participants listed typical criminal activities

Participants were also asked to identify the location where most crimes occur. Table 1 lists the various locations and the frequency these were listed as locations of criminal activity.

Table 1 Listed criminal activity locations

Location	Count
Business areas	5
Shopping centres	3
Brackenfell CBD	3
Station	3
Old Paarl Road	3
Shops	3
Parking areas	2
Pick 'n Pay	1
Brackenfell Centre	1
City Centre	1
Industrial (William Dabs)	1
Fourie Street (behind Ranch Meat)	1
Industrial	1
Jeanette Road	1
Protea Heights	1

The shopper survey specifically focussed on the use of public transport, especially busses, trains and taxis. Respondents were asked to indicate whether they feel that the taxis, busses and train stations are safe to use. It is accepted that not all the respondents utilise public transport. 60% of the respondents regarded public transport as safe.

Participants further indicated that crimes take place at various hours of the day but most indicated that they perceive crime to take place during the day and early evenings from 08:00 until 24:00. Figure 10 illustrates this graphically.

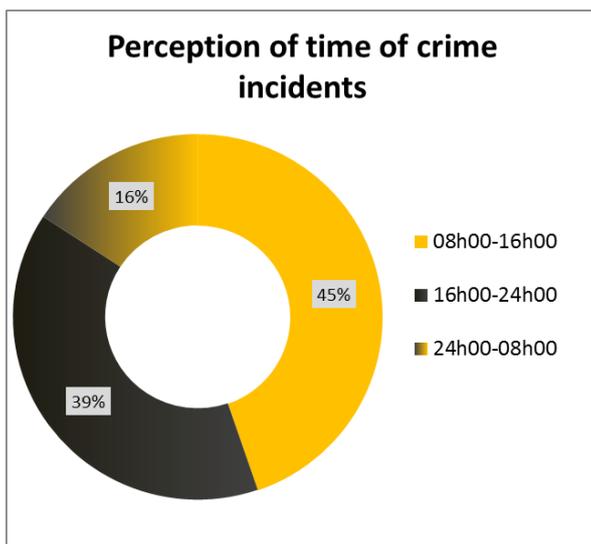


Figure 8 Perception of when crime takes place

Participants were asked to express their opinion regarding the effectiveness of current policing efforts. 46% agreed that current efforts are ineffective ranging between fair to poor. 35% has the opinion that the local SAPS service is good. This is illustrated in the graph shown in Figure 9. Some of the comments listed regarding the opinion on SAPS effectiveness (ineffectiveness) include:

- Hardly ever see them around
- Sometimes take too long before responding to call out
- Response is slow

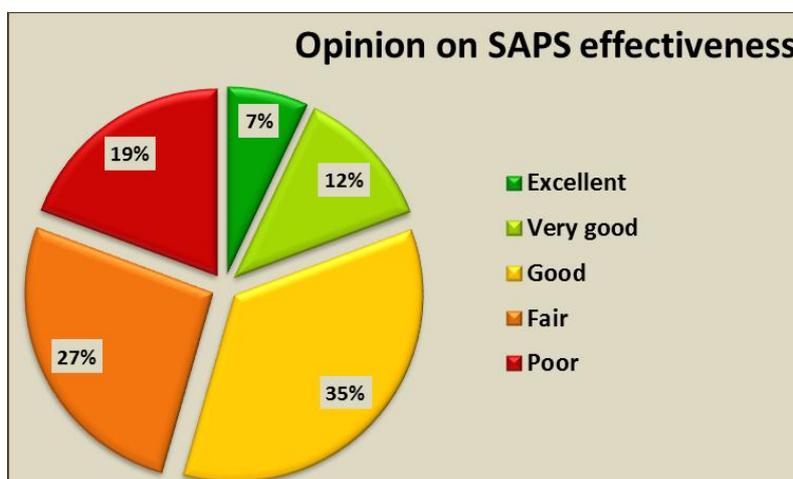


Figure 9 Opinion on SAPS effectiveness

Most often survey respondents listed lack of support and a lack of presence and visibility in support of their opinion on SAPS effectiveness.

The last part of the section on safety and security dealt with the actions by property owners or businesses to ensure their own security. Participants were asked to indicate if they have private security such as a personal alarm system and/or armed response.

98% of participants indicated that they have some form of safety and security in place (See Figure 10). Only 2% have no security measures. 70% of respondents indicated that they would prefer any additional security services to be 24 hours per day.

It would seem that the overall security in the Brackenfell area is dominated by property related crime, especially targeting the shopping areas and that many of the problems occur during the

day and early evening. The retailers are more vulnerable to crime related to robbery, shoplifting and snatching of handbags etc. which coincides with shopping activities during business hours.

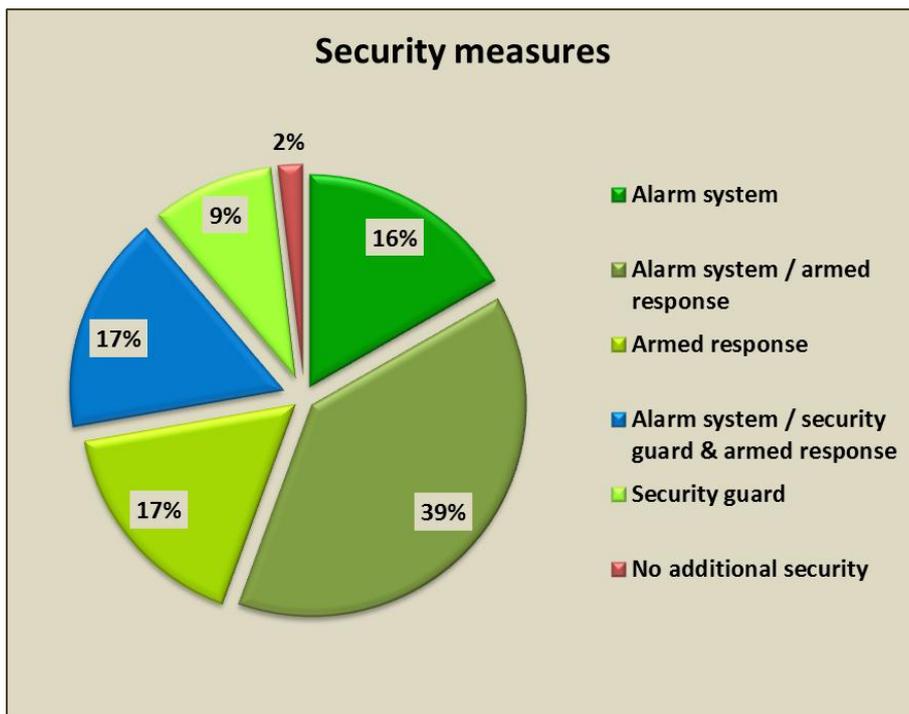


Figure 10 Personal security measures

Section 2 - Litter and cleanliness

Section two of the survey asked participants for their opinion on litter and cleanliness. The opinion of people regarding litter and cleanliness can be very subjective and difficult to measure. The responses received should be regarded as observations by the participants although it can be argued that the responses are based on people’s desire for their area compared to the current situation. Overall, most participants regard the general state of cleanliness as good (47%) while another 16% regarded it as very good to excellent illustrating a substantial measure of satisfaction with current circumstances. Only 4% of survey respondent participating in the main survey regarded it as poor. None of the user survey participants viewed it as poor (See Figure 11).

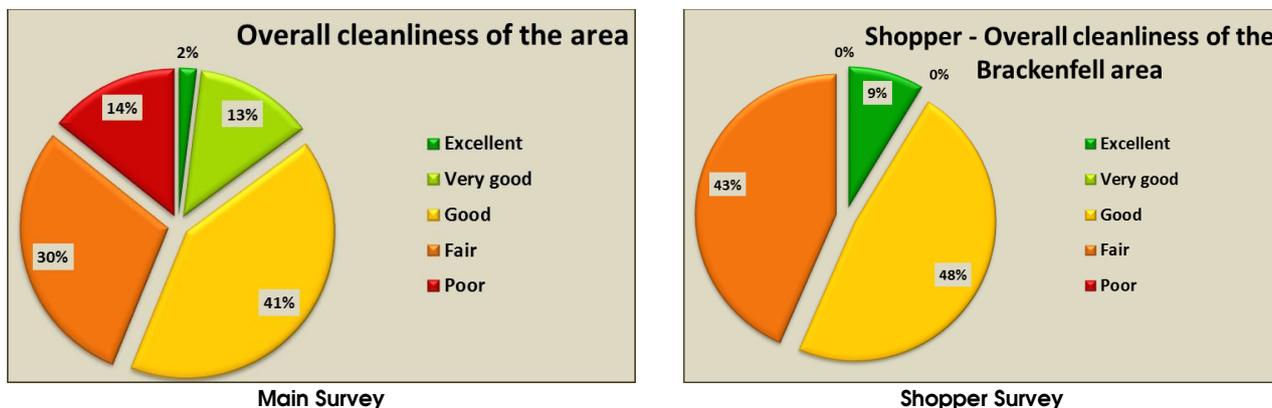


Figure 11 Overall opinion of cleanliness of the area

Figures 12 and 13 illustrate a summary of the opinions regarding litter and cleanliness. Litter in the public areas seem to be a general problem according to the survey participants. In some cases it is the opinion that there are insufficient public litter bins. It would seem that general refuse removal does not present a problem in the area.

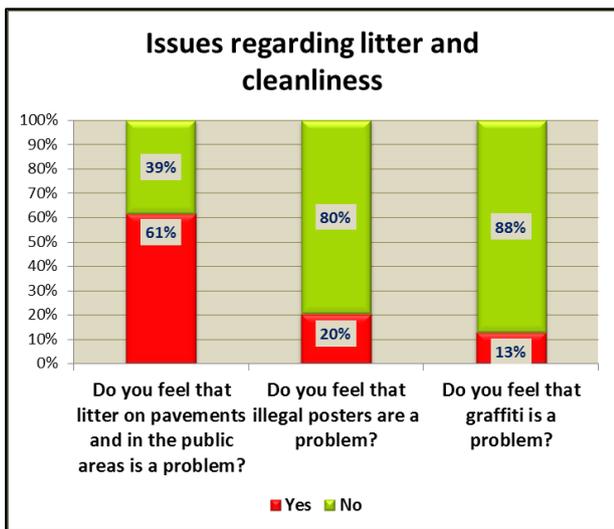


Figure 12 Opinion on litter and cleanliness

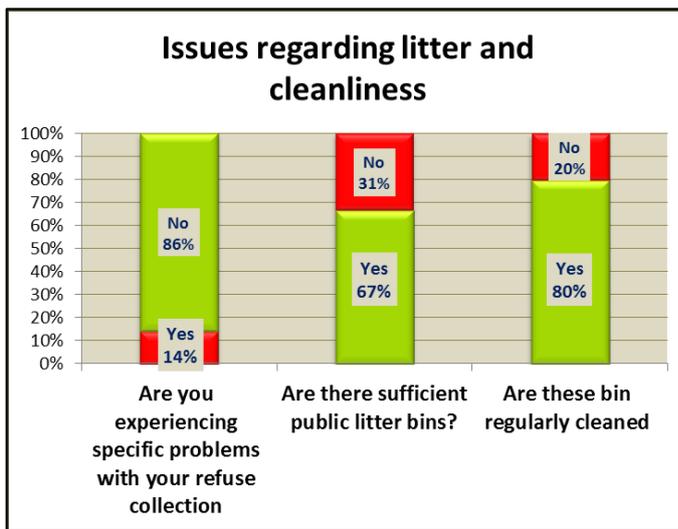


Figure 13 Opinion on litter and cleanliness

Figures 14 to 17 illustrate some issues of littering in the public areas which seems to occur infrequently in the area. Although 61% of the survey respondents indicated that litter on pavements and in public places is a problem it seems to be problematic in specific areas. In contrast Figures 18 to 21 illustrate areas that clearly show a clean public environment.



Figure 14 Litter on sidewalks and in street



Figure 15 Litter in public open space



Figure 16 Litter left by vagrants on sidewalks



Figure 17 Litter on vacant land



Figure 18 Clean streets and sidewalks



Figure 19 Clean streets and sidewalks



Figure 20 Clean streets and sidewalks



Figure 21 Clean streets and sidewalks

In contrast, only 12.5% of survey participants indicated that there is a problem with graffiti in the Brackenfell area and only 21% regarded illegal posters and advertising as a problem. The photographic survey found numerous incidents of graffiti and illegal public posters in the area as illustrated in Figures 22 to 25. Most of the graffiti can be categorised as “tagging” and most often it defaces public infrastructure.



Figure 22 Graffiti on a building



Figure 23 Graffiti and posters on bus stop



Figure 24 Illegal posters on light pole



Figure 25 Graffiti and posters on electrical box

Table 2 lists the places and the frequency that they were mentioned as locations of littering.

Table 2 Where is litter a problem

Location	Count	Location	Count
Station	8	Fourie Street (litter)	1
Shopping Centres	4	Frans Conradie	1
Old Paarl Road	4	Main business area	1
Vacant Land	3	Main Roads	1
Taxi rank	3	PnP Hyper Market	1
Everywhere	2	Ranch meat	1
Brackenfell Boulevard	2	Public areas	1
Street sleepers trash	2	William Dabbs	1
Business premises	1	Jeanette Street	1

Two specific cleaning issues were surveyed separately. This relates to illegal dumping and bin picking.

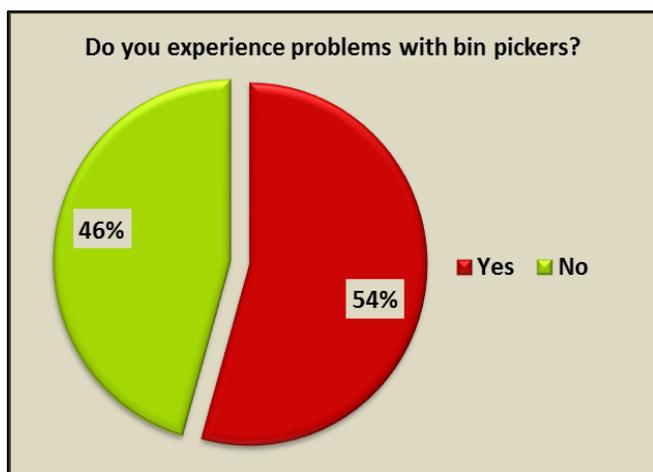


Figure 26 Problems with bin picking?

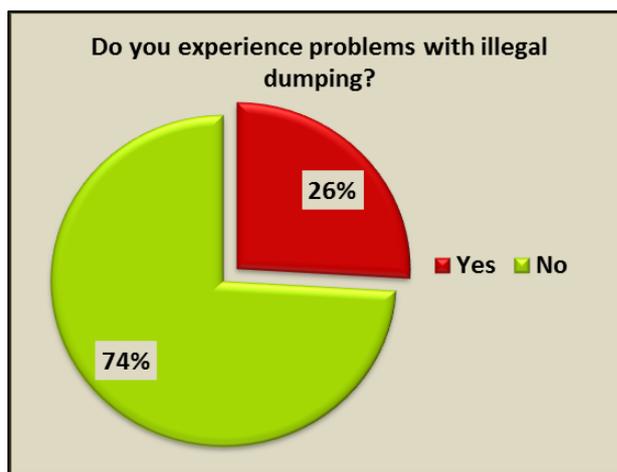


Figure 27 Perception on illegal dumping

Only 26% of respondents highlighted illegal dumping as an issue (Figure 27). Most of the participants that indicated that this is a problem also indicated where the most illegal dumping takes place. Vacant land areas and parks are frequently mentioned as a location for illegal dumping. General household waste, garden waste and builders rubble is the most common types of waste illegally dumped. The photographic survey found **very limited** evidence of illegal dumping as shown in Figures 28 and 29.



Figure 28 Illegal dumping of garden refuse



Figure 29 Illegal dumping of garden refuse and household waste

Bin picking is mostly associated with the presence of homeless and unemployed people that frequent the area, especially on refuse collection days, to find food and recyclable materials from refuse bins. Sadly, this practice also results in additional littering when bin pickers sort the waste on sidewalks leaving the area littered and dirty. Significant numbers of homeless people and bin pickers were found in the area during the photographic survey and support the claim of 54% of the respondents who indicated problems associated with bin picking. Figures 30 and 31 illustrate the issue of bin picking and associated littering.



Figure 30 Bin pickers sorting waste on sidewalks



Figure 31 Bin pickers sorting waste on sidewalks

The need for waste recycling clearly exists in the area. 74.5% of all participants indicated that there is a need for recycling. Figure 32 illustrates the required types of recycling that respondents indicated as important and the frequency that it was listed. Figure 33 show that some properties already have large recycling bins. 66% of participants indicated that they would like to have a separate recycle bin.

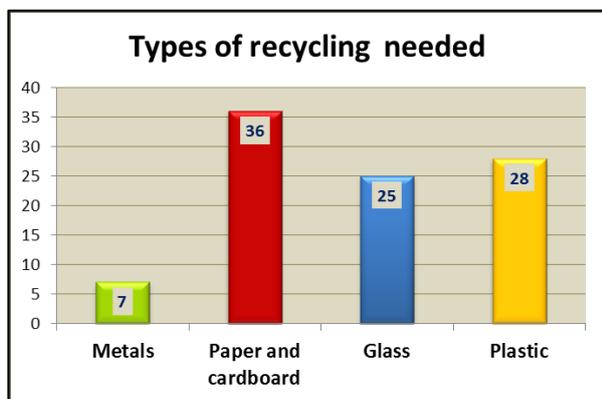


Figure 32 Types of recycling listed

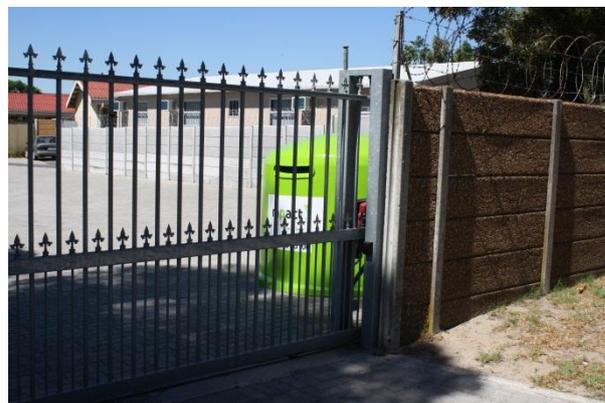


Figure 33 Existing recycling bins at public parking area

Section 3 - Lighting and traffic

The third section of the survey sought the opinion of participants regarding the lighting of streets and pavements and the standards of traffic signs and road markings.

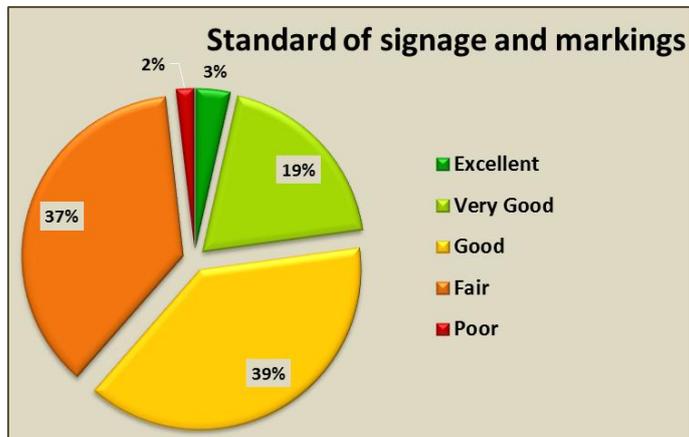


Figure 34 Standard of signage and markings

61% of the participants regarded the standard of street signage and markings as good to excellent while 39% regarded it as of a fair to poor standard (See Figure 34). Figures 35 and 36 illustrate the status of signage and road markings in the Brackenfell area. Bent, disorientated and faded signage illustrates the opinion of some of the survey participants.



Figure 35 Bent and damaged sign



Figure 36 Faded or old sign

Sixty-eight percent (68%) of the participants regarded the street lighting as sufficient.

Section 4 - The public environment

The fourth section of the survey collected opinions regarding the public environment, especially the participants' opinion regarding the maintenance and safety of pavements and the general state of public spaces such as parks and other public amenities. Participants were asked to provide an overall rating of the public environment. As illustrated in Figure 37, only 39% of the participants

rated the overall quality of the public environment as fair to poor. Most rated it as **good to excellent**.

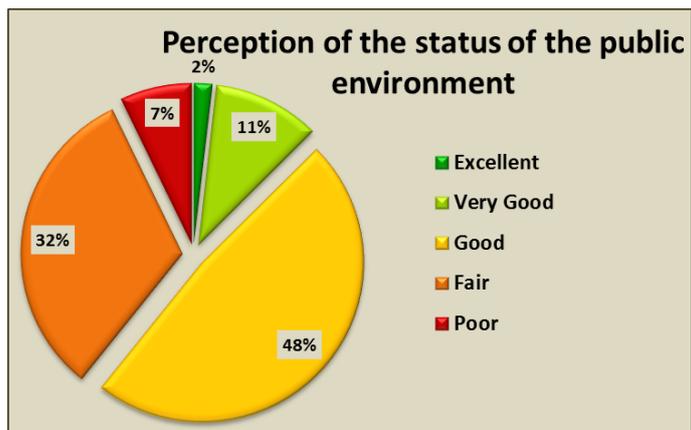


Figure 37 Rating of the overall public environment

In general the public areas in the Brackenfell CBD are well maintained and clean. High quality landscaping is visible in many areas although some maintenance of paving and grassed areas is required. Some public areas offer attractive locations for the residents and visitors of the area. This includes shaded areas on wide verges with public seating in some areas and improved amenities such as paved sidewalks at the Brackenfell station (see Figure 38).



Figure 38 General areas and verges with new paving and good landscaping with maintenance taking place

Figure 39 illustrates the responses received and shows that most of participants are satisfied with the maintenance of the pavements in the area.

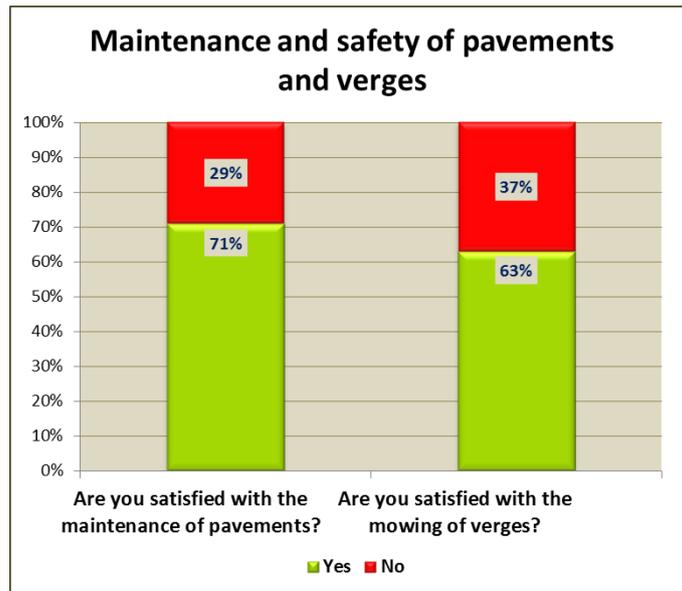


Figure 39 Maintenance and safety of pavements

Figures 40 to 43 illustrate the findings of the photographic survey. The photo results support the perception of the respondents although it can be noted that the sidewalks in some side streets and other areas are bad in terms of surface and safety.



Figure 40 Poor sidewalks in some of the streets



Figure 41 Overgrown sidewalks



Figure 42 manhole on sidewalk without proper cover



Figure 43 Sidewalk maintenance not completed

In general, some isolated portions of the public environment can be described as “in distress” with some element suffering from neglect and general deterioration. These elements include street furniture such as public signage and items such as public phones, and litter bins. Figures 44 and 45 illustrate these issues picked up during the photographic survey.



Figure 44 Public infrastructure in a state of disrepair



Figure 45 Broken infrastructure such as public phones shows neglect of certain aspects.

Participants were asked to rate the maintenance of infrastructure such as water supply, storm water drains and street gutters. 38% of respondents indicated dissatisfaction with the maintenance of this type of infrastructure rating the maintenance as fair to poor. The photographic survey captured **some isolated** locations of poor infrastructure maintenance in some of the streets in the Brackenfell area (see Figures 46 and 47).



Figure 46 Some sidewalks and roads show kerb inlet and drains blocked due to litter



Figure 47 Some road surfaces and parking areas are without manhole covers

Participants were also questioned about informal trade activities and how it contributes to the economy of the Brackenfell area. Respondents were offered a list of statements regarding informal trade and informal trade management. Table 3 lists the statements and shows the percentage of respondents that agreed or disagreed with each statement.

Table 3 Opinions regarding informal trade

Statements on informal trade. Do you agree or disagree?	Agree	Disagree
Informal trade is important as it contributes to the local economy	57%	43%
It needs more support	55%	45%
Informal trade is problematic as it impact negatively on formal economy	48%	52%
Support and better regulation should go hand in hand	85%	15%
Informal trading should take place in specially demarcated areas	85%	15%

Informal trade does not take place in many areas of the Brackenfell CBD. Traders are mostly found around the Brackenfell Station and mostly consist of vendors exhibiting goods on sidewalks. It would seem that better regulation and trading areas that are well managed would support this industry sector. What is evident is that traders are overtrading in some areas, occupying the entire sidewalk and often anchor trading stands to public infrastructure such as fences and trees creating a less desirable impact on the public environment. The regulation thereof is a priority agreed upon by most respondents (see Table 3 and Figures 48 and 49).



Figure 48 Informal traders on the side walk at the station



Figure 49 Lack of management and control of informal trade leads to an offering that often blocks the sidewalks and detracts from more organised trading

Section 5 - Social environment

Social issues

The fifth section of the detailed survey focussed on the social environment. Most areas experience a level of homelessness with vagrants using the opportunities to beg for food and money. Homeless people often utilise **public areas** such as parks and alleyways for shelter and congregate on areas of potential income such as parking areas, traffic signals and shopping malls. Homelessness seems to be a problem everywhere in the area in general. This becomes more evident in the fact that 75% of participants perceive homelessness as a problem. If this is considered along with the fact that Brackenfell has many public open areas and places where homeless people can congregate and more opportunities for begging, this perception is quite valid. Figure 51 illustrates this difference in opinion clearly.

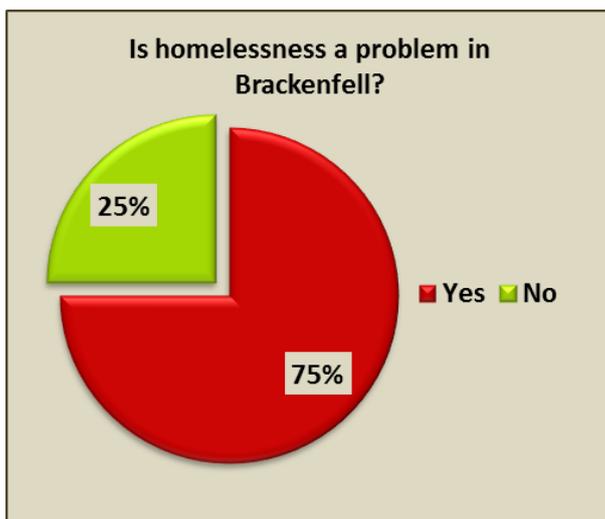


Figure 50 Perception of homelessness in the Brackenfell area

Participants were asked to identify the issues associated with homeless people in the area. The most frequently identified issues in the area in order of priority is begging, sleeping in the area, bin picking, alcohol and drug abuse, loitering and theft as shown in Figure 51 below.

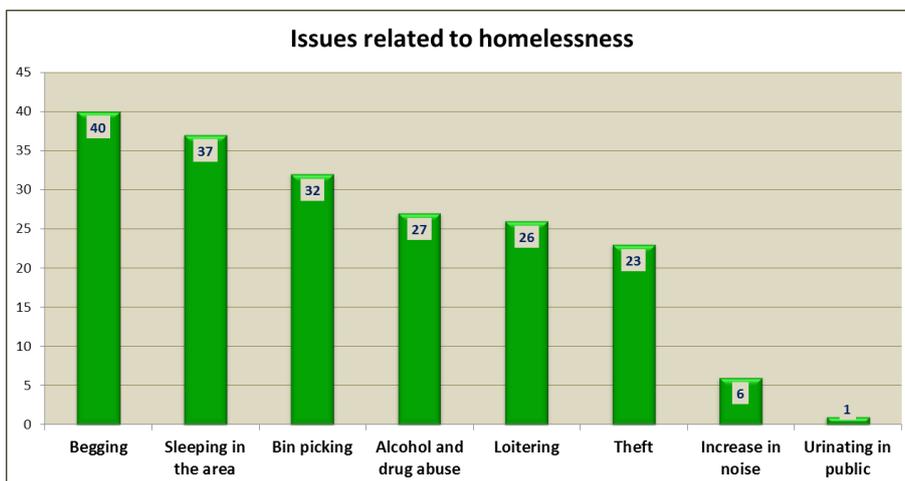


Figure 51 Issues related to homelessness and the social environment

Participants to the survey indicated various locations and public areas, especially around the shops as locations frequently used by homeless people. Table 4 lists the locations frequented by homeless people. Figures 52 to 55 illustrate the typical activities of homeless people in the area.

Table 4 Location frequented by homeless people

Location	Count	Location	Count
Hypermarket	7	Taxi Rank	1
Station	6	Cnr Old Paarl & Jeanette Roads	1
Behind Pick 'n Pay and 7 Eleven	5	Poort Street	1
Old Paarl Road	5	Springbok Park (behind shop)	1
Everywhere	4	Main roads, post office, churches	1
Robots	2	Cnr Arauna & Brackenfell	1
Business areas	2	Brackenfell Boulevard (under bridge)	1
John Gainsford Road	2	Behind Nedbank	1
In shopping centre	2		1



Figure 52 Groups of homeless people behind the Hypermarket



Figure 53 Homeless sleeps in parks and open areas



Figure 54 Homeless sleeps on sidewalks



Figure 55 Homeless sleeps on sidewalks

Section 6 - Marketing of Brackenfell

Survey participants were asked if it would be useful to have events in order to build a community spirit in Brackenfell. 80% of respondents answered yes and supported the idea of community events. Participants were asked to indicate what type of events they would prefer and support. Figure 56 illustrates the type of events and the number of participants that selected each type of event.

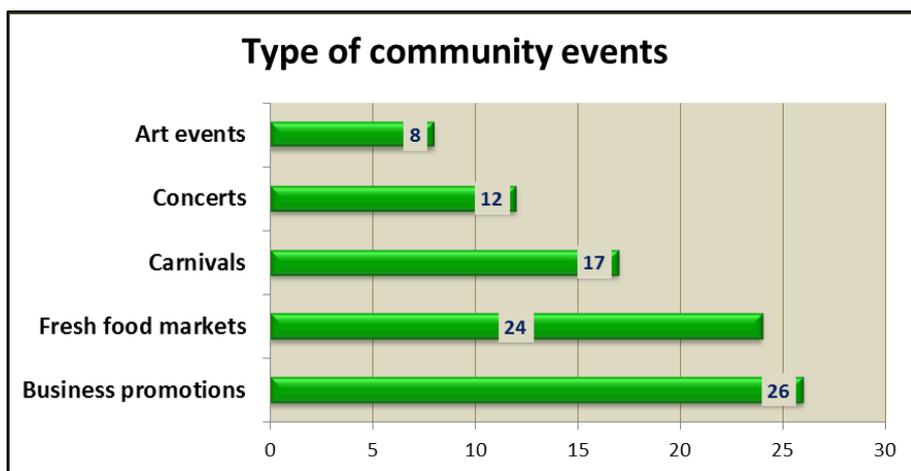


Figure 56 Types of community events selected by respondents

Ranking the priorities for Brackenfell

This survey element of the questionnaire concluded with an opportunity for participants to rank each of the seven general themes of the survey in terms of its importance (See Table 5). As shown in Table 5, 89% of the respondents that responded ranked safety and security as the most important issue. Litter and cleanliness was selected as the second highest priority in Brackenfell. It is interesting to note that maintenance of the public spaces and social issues such as vagrancy and begging were ranked quite equally as a third priority and therefore both issues were indicated as the third highest priority in the area.

Table 5 Ranking of priorities for Brackenfell

Service delivery category	Most important	2nd most important	3rd most important
Safety and security (including lighting)	89% selected		
Litter and cleanliness		55% selected	
Road and street signage			
Maintenance of public spaces			23% selected
Social issues such as vagrancy and begging			22% selected
Health and environmental safety			
Marketing of the area			

Respondents’ predisposition towards the establishment of an Improvement Area was tested by asking participants if they would be prepared to pay a top-up levy on their rates bill for more and improved municipal services and public security in the area. Overall, 53 respondents answered the question. Only 22% are prepared to pay an additional rate. In addition some participants indicated how much they are willing to pay as an additional rate. Eleven participants indicated monthly amounts ranging from R 50 to R 200 with an amount of R 100 most frequently mentioned.

Both the main survey participants as well as the shopper and user survey respondents were asked to indicate their opinion on the change in the status of the area over the last five years. 24% of the respondents of the main opinion survey indicated that the area has improved. 35% indicated that it has deteriorated. The shopper survey was mainly conducted amongst visitors and shoppers in the business area. Seventy four percent (74%) of respondents were of the opinion that the area has remained the same and 26% was of the opinion that it has improved. No-one indicated a deterioration of the area. See Figures 56 and 57.

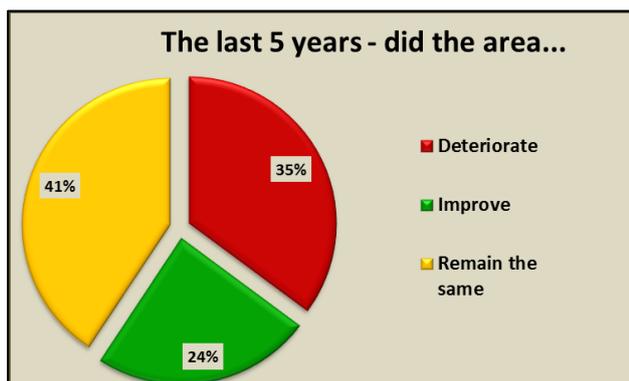


Figure 57 Status of the area over last 5 years

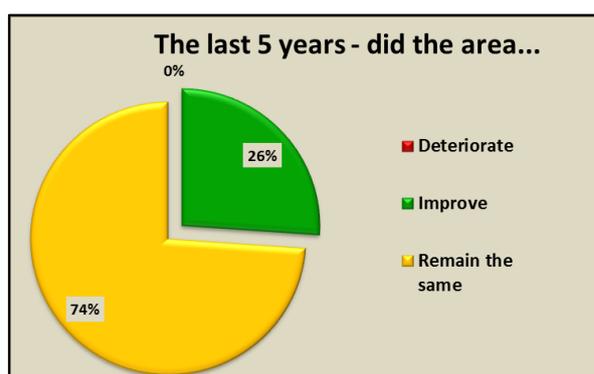


Figure 58 Status of area over last 5 years according to shoppers

General Comments

All participants were given the opportunity to express their concerns by providing specific comments at the end of the survey form. These comments were as far as possible captured directly as they were provided with due consideration of grammar and spelling where possible. However, details of the comments were not changed in any manner and in ***most cases captured with obvious errors***. Table 6 lists some of the responses received.

Table 6 Comments and responses received

General Comments & Suggestions
Too much beggars at door (selling something).
Taxi rank, illegal parking. Bad condition of public areas. Working on gardening/flowers in area.
Safety risk; Residents flat emptied as they get home at night (theft) overcrowding in Fairbridge; Hyper Villas and Flats in Windmeul Street/Everite Bridge.
Need to market Brackenfell as a safe and easy place to do shopping (business). Promote Brackenfell more with events; more visible security.
Keep Brackenfell safe & clean. We are to be proud of our suburb. Appoint a mayor for each suburb as yesteryear. Each suburb to take care of itself with its rates & taxes.
Its ridiculous to think the rate payer would want more fees to be dumped on them. Good initiative but costing should work by donation or call centre collection request.
Informal trade will cause a mess; it will be fine if someone is going to clean up after them.
Changing the business at the station, maybe putting up build in stalls for cleaner business.
Brackenfell Boulevard needs 2 lanes going over the N1 highway, due to infrastructure in B/fell & surrounds it cannot handle the amount of traffic in the mornings & afternoons.

Conclusion

The survey was conducted over a period of two weeks in January and February 2013. From the responses received it would seem that many participants are aware of crime, concerned about crime or have been directly affected by crime. However, crime seems to be focussed on property related crimes and it is perceived that most crimes are committed during the day and early evenings.

Clearly, the management of the public environment is important to those who own property or businesses in the area but once again this seems to be specific to certain roads and areas more than other. Although problems of safety and some deterioration of the Brackenfell infrastructure is evident most participants are not prepared to pay additional rates to improve the current situation. The area also has distinct social problems.

Timely intervention through coordinated management of the area will preserve and maintain the existing infrastructure and ensure the future viability of the area as a vibrant neighbourhood and business district. The problems and issues of the area can be addressed through a number of formal and/or civic mechanisms which may include the formation of an SRA.