

# **CAPTURING THE VOICE OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION FOR THE TAMESIDE INSPECTION**

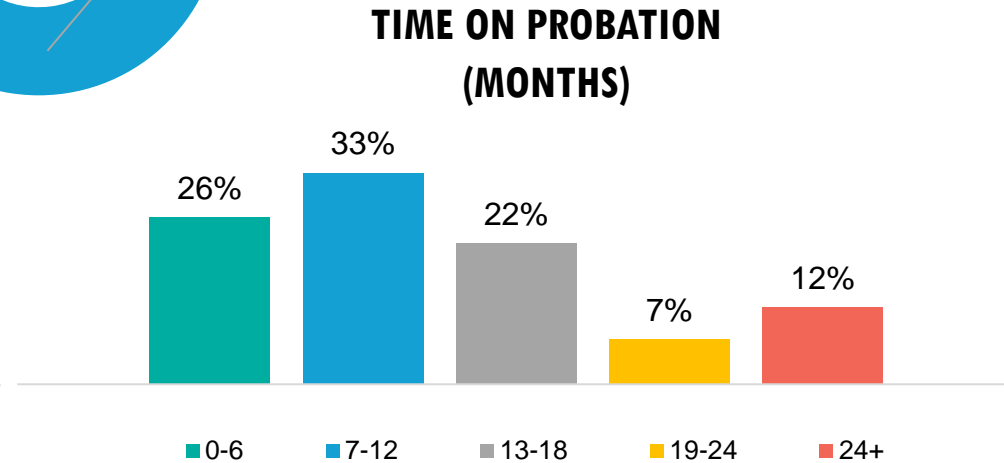
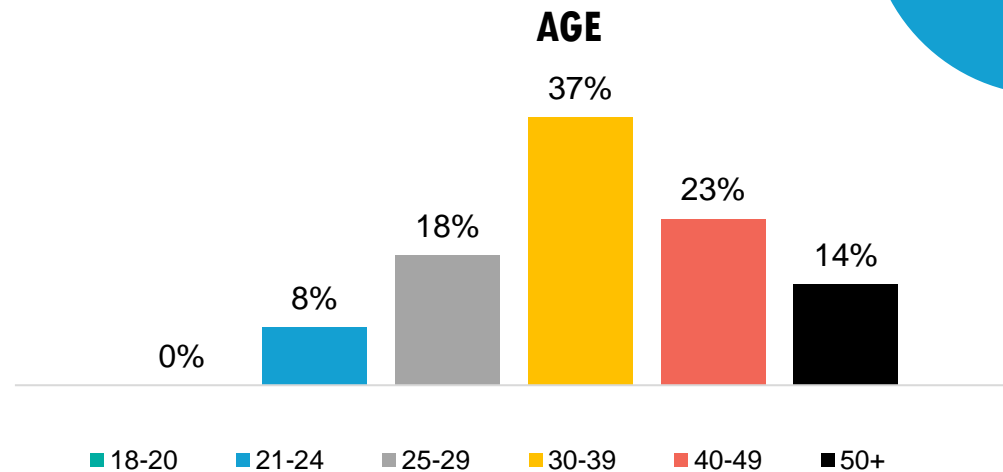
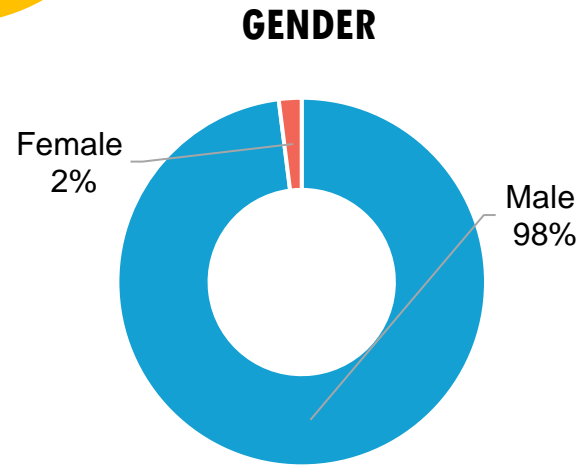
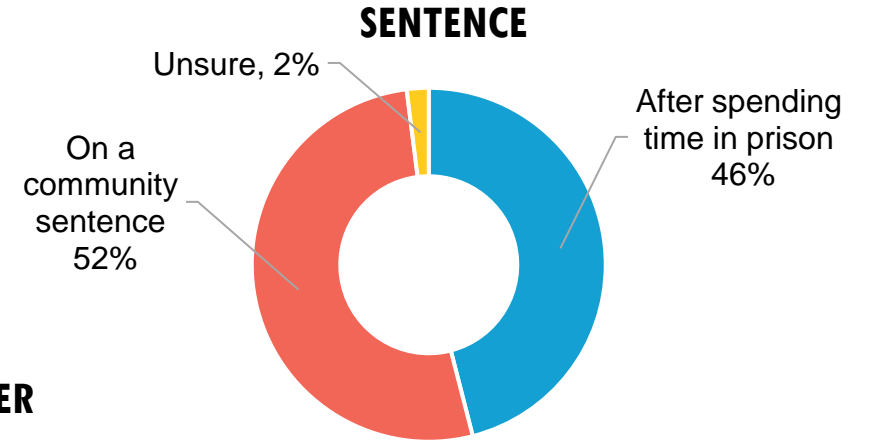
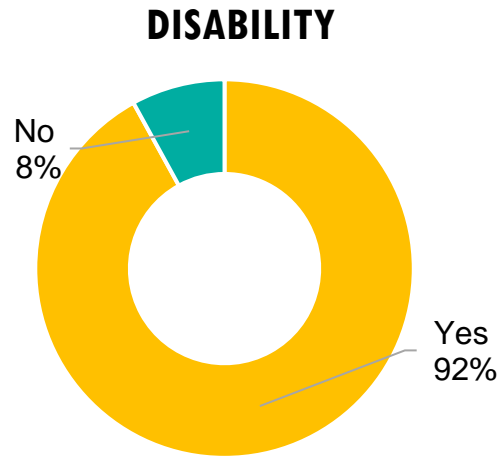
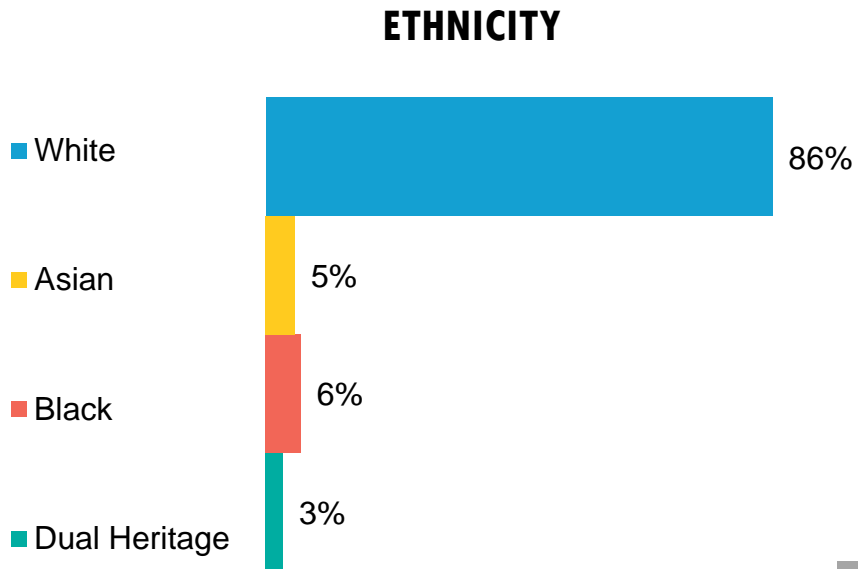
**PUBLISHED MAY 2023**

# 72 PEOPLE HAD THEIR SAY:

7 ONLINE SURVEYS

59 FACE TO FACE SURVEYS

6 IN-DEPTH INTERVIEWS

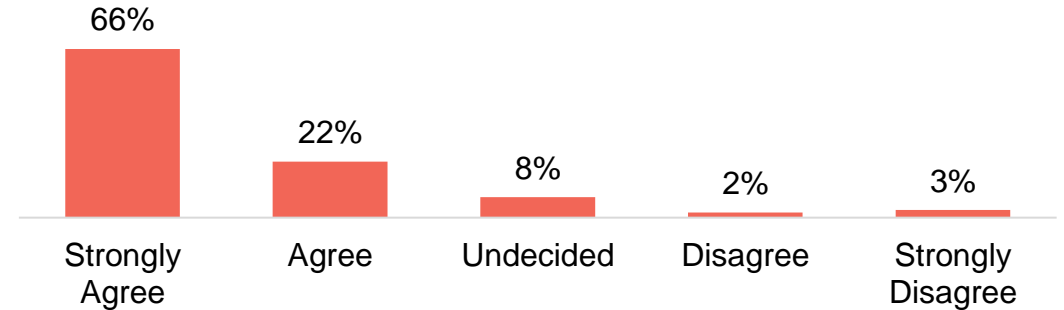


# PEOPLE ARE WAITING LONG PERIODS OF TIME FOR THEIR APPOINTMENTS

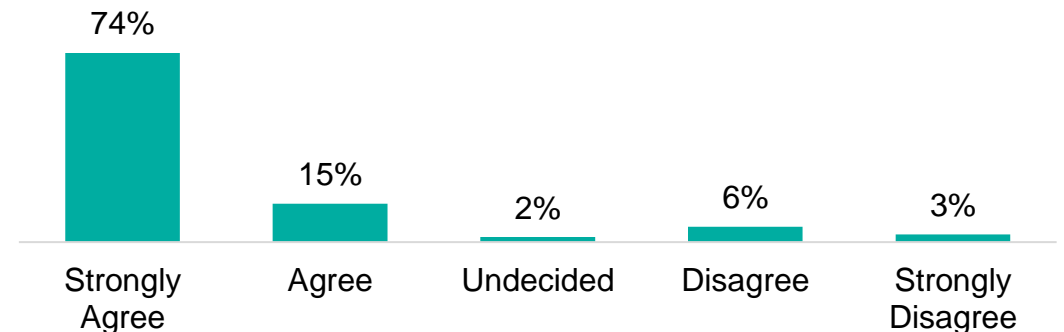
- **1 in 5** (13/66) reported '**Appointments**' as the biggest challenge whilst on probation – The most popular response for those with issues other than 'Nothing can be improved.'
- The main cause of dissatisfaction with appointments was the long waiting time. People on Probation believe that it is one rule for them and another for the Probation Officer – If they were so routinely late for appointments then they would be breached.
- **14%** (14/66) reported '**Appointments**' as what has been good regarding their probation experience.
- '**Reception**' was also among the most frequent positive response. People mentioned the members of staff being helpful and kind.
- Many people struggle with getting to appointments. '**Travel**' was the biggest issue for **11%** (7/66) of people in Tameside.

***“Reception are really nice, although there’s not much they can do to help.”***

Q: I have been able to contact my Probation Officer when needed



Q: I have been able to have appointments with my Probation Officer at a time that suits me



# THE VOICE OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION IN TAMESIDE REGARDING THEIR EXPERIENCE ATTENDING APPOINTMENTS

*"A bit more understanding than before, flexible around appointments as I started my own business. The Reception is very friendly as well."*

*"Yeah, I really do get what I need out of it, there is always something we can sort out."*

*"Most of the time we are waiting ages to be seen as they never have a room available or are seeing other people when they are meant to see me."*

*"Just a lot of waiting for appointments, so it should be equal though as I was sick before and they demanded a sick note even though I couldn't get to the doctors. It should be a lot more equal."*

*"I pay £5 to get here and they only give £2 back to me, on top of that I am waiting over 20 minutes for my appointment, cover our fares and see us on time."*

*"They are really flexible around appointments fitting into my work schedule, they have offered support too but not needed anything."*

*"Time is the issue, I turn up on time and never get seen at that time. They just need to respect the appointment times, sometimes they don't communicate with each other well, as I am fairly set this is the only issue for me but it seems like such a waste of time."*

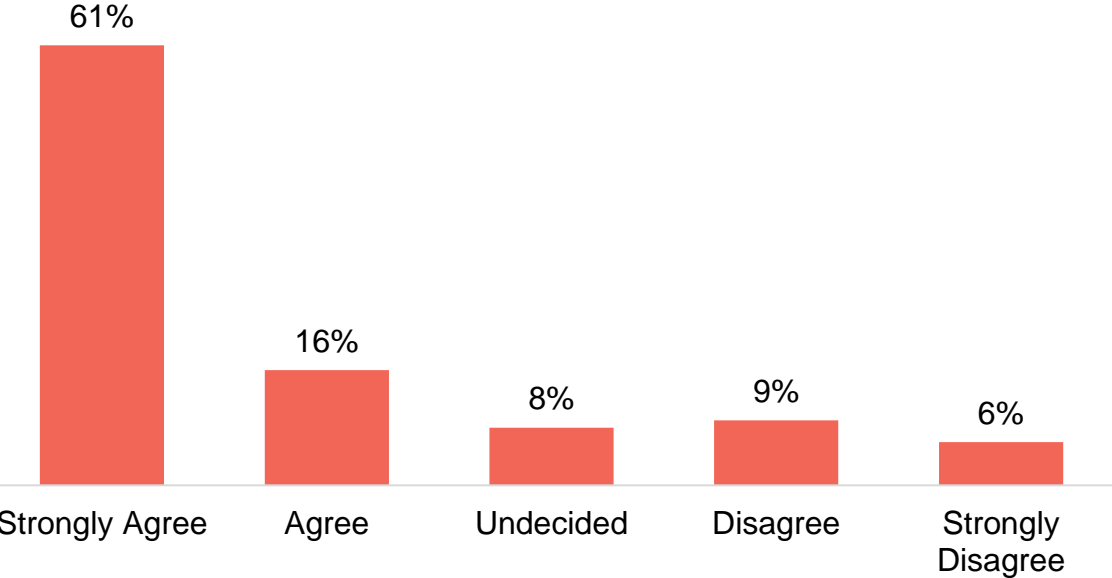
*"Always waiting ages to be seen, if I was late I would get breached but it's never an issue for them, they won't even apologize. Just need to see us on time or get a bigger building if they got no space."*

*"Yeah, I really do get what I need out of it, there is always something we can sort out."*

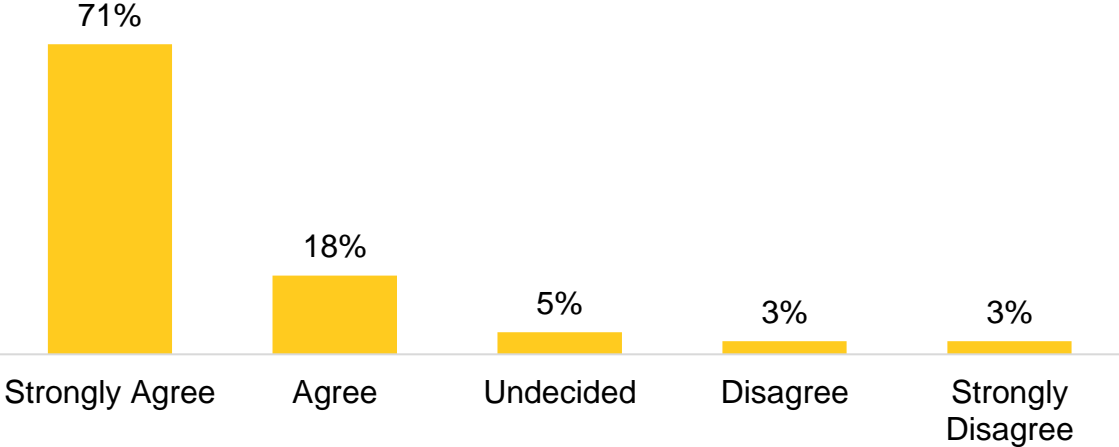
*"Bus fares are a joke, paying loads to get here and they don't even cover half of it. Either cover the fare or do it over the phone."*

# THERE ARE MINIMAL ISSUES WITH SAFETY AT THE TAMESIDE OFFICE

**Q:** When needed, I have been able to have conversations in private with my Probation Officer



**Q:** I feel safe accessing the Probation Office



# 1 IN 3 THINK THE RELATIONSHIP WITH THEIR PO IS THE BEST PART OF THEIR PROBATION EXPERIENCE

- In general, people in Tameside have a positive experience with their Probation Officers.
- **31%** (20/66) of responses cited the 'Relationship with their Probation Officer' when asked 'What has been good about your probation experience'. This was the most common positive aspect of probation experience.
- Only **3%** (2/66) see their relationship with their Probation Officer as their biggest challenge whilst on probation – This is low compared to the **14%** seen nationally.
- The majority of **17%** (11/66) labelled 'Other' as their biggest challenge, stated that they have been threatened with breach or have been unfairly recalled during their time on probation.

*"She just gives me peace of mind and is always available to have a chit chat, we get on really well. I haven't got a bad word to say."*

*"They are a friendly bunch here and my probation worker is great, I can open up to her and share challenges I may have."*

*"A good one, as whatever I come in with she will always find a solution. I even get food parcels dropped to me."*

*"I feel like they are constantly trying to stitch me up and get me recalled. They hold things against me, I'd just like to be treated equally."*

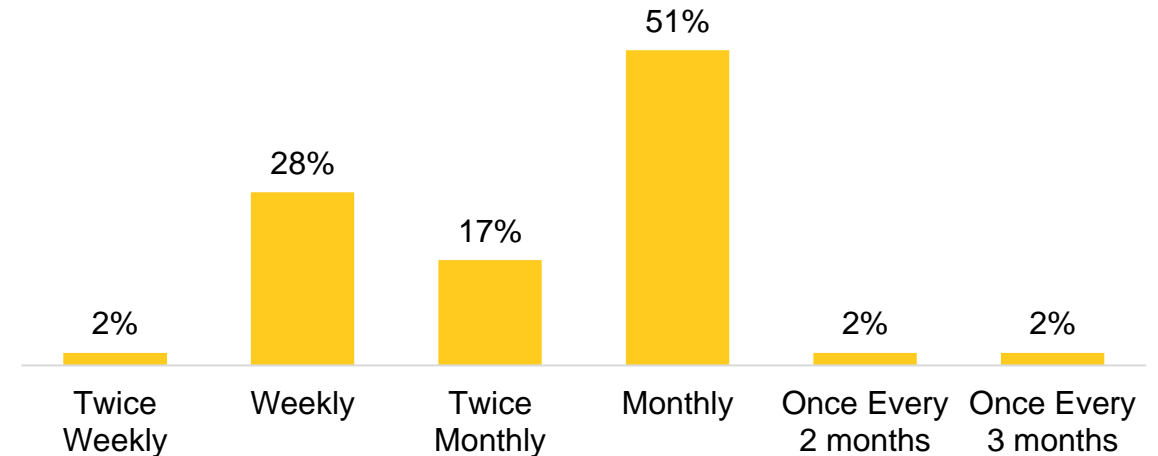
*"They keep changing probation staff so regularly it feels like you have to start all over again. They need better staff handovers."*

*"She has helped me get mental health support and support with the law in trying to get my daughter into my custody. She has also got me a flat, she's just been a star, a lot of understanding around my mental health, flexible around appointments, Olivia has been brilliant to me."*

# HALF OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION WANT MONTHLY APPOINTMENTS

- The type of contact People On Probation want varies, with the slight majority preferring face-to-face contact over telephone contact.
- A tailored approach based on what works for both the Person on Probation and Probation Officer is recommended.
- **51%** (48/76) stated that they should see their Probation Officer monthly; by far the most popular answer to the question 'How often do you think you should see your Probation Officer?'.

Q: How often do you think you should see your Probation Officer?



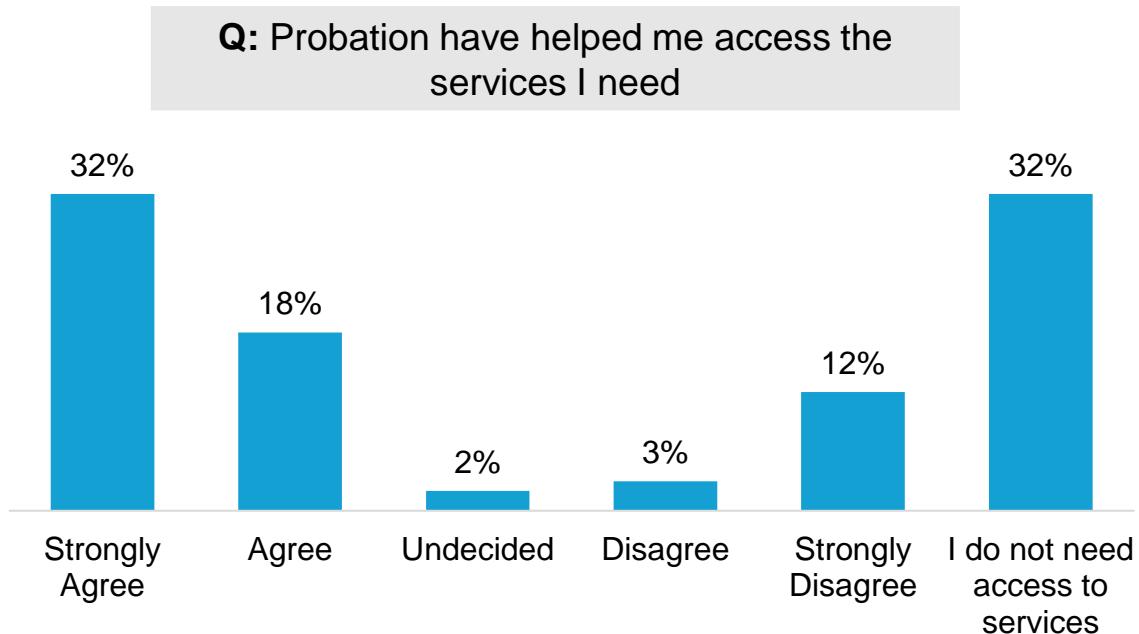
*"It helps me with it being face-to-face and keeps me on the straight and narrow being weekly."*

*"Combination of telephone and face to face."*

*"Telephone is better as I work a lot of hours."*

# GOOD ACCESS TO VITAL SERVICES IN TAMESIDE

- **3 in 4** (33/44) of those that need help accessing services felt like they received the support they needed.
- Many people stated that accessing the following services was the best part of their probation experience:
  - Mental health provision (**17%**)
  - Housing support (**15%**)
  - Education, training and employment (**12%**)



*"Yes, mental health services. They have been a big influence on my life since getting out."*

*"I got into a course with stepwise and it's been really helpful. They want to give me a bus pass to travel there and I have got a mental health worker."*

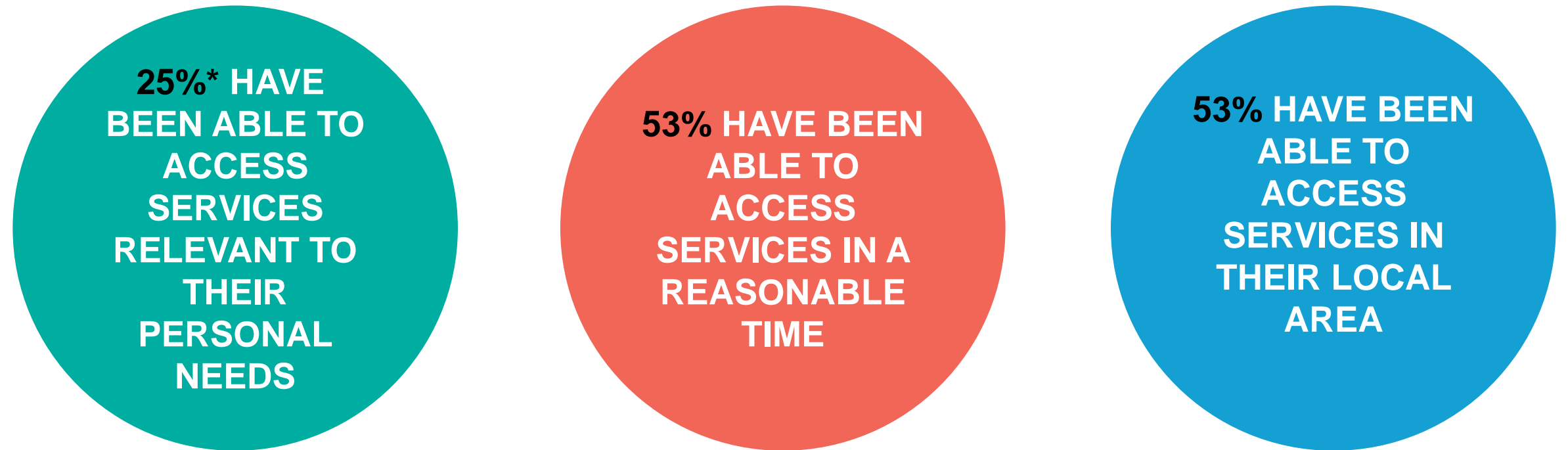
*"They are really helpful, got me some housing and onto a forklift course."*

*"They are alright here. They have been very supportive in trying to get me into employment, I am just waiting on a referral to get onto a course."*

*"They have helped me get contact with my daughter now, as well as this I am now on a HGV course so I feel like it's really helped turn things around for me."*



## **3 IN 5 FELT SUPPORTED IN REGARD TO ACCESSING SERVICES RELEVANT TO THEIR PERSONAL NEEDS**



**25%\* HAVE  
BEEN ABLE TO  
ACCESS  
SERVICES  
RELEVANT TO  
THEIR  
PERSONAL  
NEEDS**

**53% HAVE BEEN  
ABLE TO  
ACCESS  
SERVICES IN A  
REASONABLE  
TIME**

**53% HAVE BEEN  
ABLE TO  
ACCESS  
SERVICES IN  
THEIR LOCAL  
AREA**

\* **75%** responded 'Undecided' as they didn't feel that services needed to be relevant to their personal needs i.e. Ethnicity, Gender, etc.

# INDUCTION EXPERIENCES VARY FROM PERSON TO PERSON

- Some People on Probation received an insightful induction where they were informed of probation processes and available help.
- Whereas others found the experience not to be useful and rushed.

*"It was a challenge to get there, they were okay but I didn't find it useful and it was all very one way!"*

*"It was awful, got released and they forced me into shared accommodation and in the induction I felt ignored."*

*"They were friendly and really supportive; they understood my health challenges and made a plan around me."*

*"It was okay, when I got out they helped me sort somewhere to stay better once it was a permanent place. The induction was more sorting stuff out for me."*

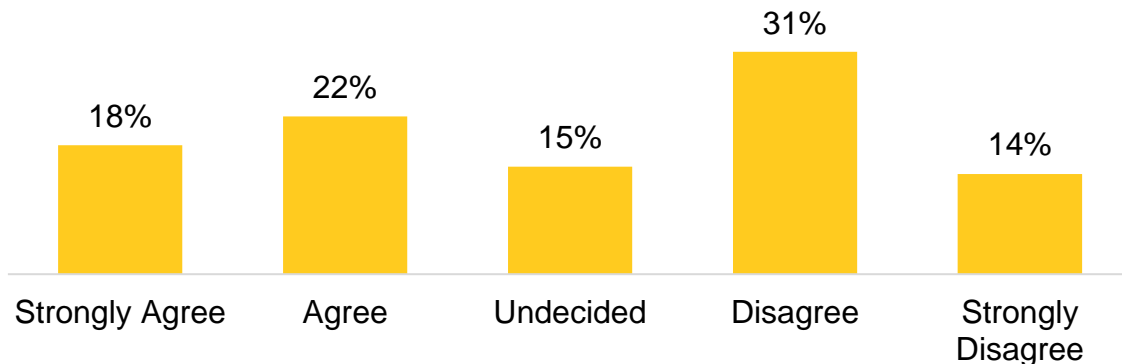
*"Not great, it was all rushed and the person I saw wasn't even my Probation Officer."*

*"It was fine, we spoke about what they would like me to do and what they can do for me. It was a reasonable experience."*

# 40% OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION FEEL HEARD REGARDING THEIR SUPERVISION IN TAMESIDE

- **2 in 5** (26/66) people surveyed felt like probation services had asked for their views about being on supervision. This is a relatively high percentage compared to recent inspections.
- **Nobody** interviewed felt they had a say about how the service is run in Tameside.
- **2 out of 6** people interviewed felt like they could raise complaints. Those that felt they could not, responded that they either didn't know how to or fearing to be treated differently afterwards.

Q: Probation services have asked for my views about being on supervision



*"I haven't had to so I am not sure."*

*"Yeah, I think everything is tailored around me."*

*"No and I wouldn't want to as I know if I do, I will get treated differently. I wanted to get my Probation Officer changed but I am scared to try and do that."*

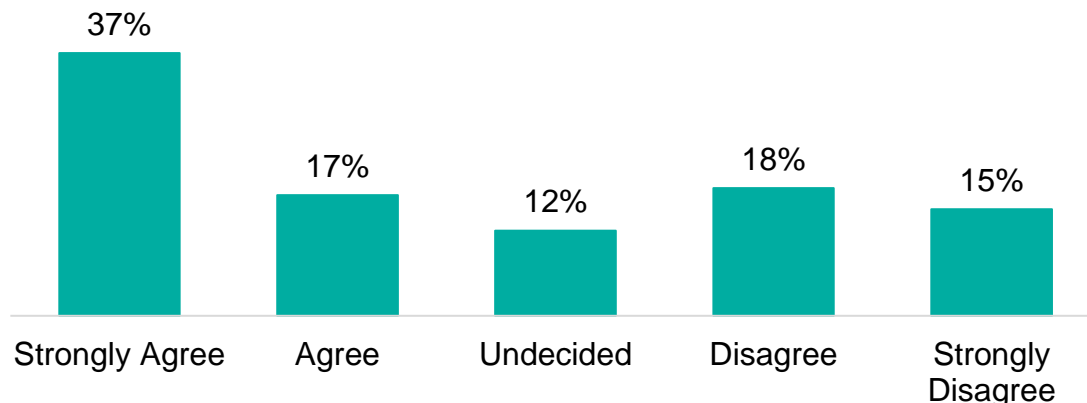
*"No, I wouldn't know how to do so."*

*"Yes, I know that I can ask Reception if I need to and they would help."*

# OVER **HALF** OF PEOPLE ON PROBATION IN TAMESIDE ARE HAPPY WITH THE SUPPORT THEY RECEIVE

- **3%** (20/66) either 'Agreed or 'Strongly agreed' that they are happy with the overall support from probation. This is mainly due to having an effective Probation Officer and good access to services.
- **46%** (30/66) stated that nothing could be improved with the service.
- However, **32%** (21/66) stated that there were no positives regarding their probation experience.

Q: Overall, I am happy with the support I have received from probation



*"It's been good, they got me a flat so have my own space now. They are also really flexible with appointments around my work."*

*"My probation worker is really nice, understanding of my situation and listens to me. They also got me referred to CGL which I am waiting to start with."*

*"My probation worker is good, lots of referrals, I have got mental health support as well as a housing referral made and she is just generally nice."*

*"They helped me a lot, getting into employment and a CIS card. Cash is a brilliant officer, she always listens to me and helps me in any way she can."*

*"No positives. I have done everything for my self, the only thing my supervisor does is slow processes down."*

# PEOPLE ON PROBATION'S SOLUTIONS TO THE ISSUES THEY FACE

- People want their appointments to start on time and feel like there should be a maximum waiting time.
- Many in Tameside believe there are frequently threatened with breach unnecessarily – They feel Probation Officers should be more understanding.
- People on Probation want more constructive conversations during their appointments around the future rather than focus on their past.
- People on Probation need support with travel. Some of them are suffering financially and having to spend the extra time and money traveling is difficult.
- Continuity with their Probation Officers is imperative. Those experiencing revolving doors of Probation Officers struggle to get the help they need.

*"Would be nice to be seen on time, as they'd breach you if you were late. Maybe they should do something where if you are waiting more than 15 minutes you can go."*

*"Time is the issue, I turn up on time and never get seen at that time. They just need to respect the appointment times, sometimes they don't communicate with each other well, as I am fairly set this is the only issue for me but it seems like such a waste of time."*

*"They don't cover my travel cost to the office, it's £5 each time I come here. They should help with that and also they are always late seeing us so if I was late, they'd breach me but if they are late it seems to be okay. They should put a rule in place around that."*

*"More talking about the future instead of judging you."*

*"Feels like a tick-box exercise, they force me to go to Alcoholics Anonymous and don't cover my travel. They should at least cover this if they are going to force you into doing something."*

*"They keep changing probation staff so regularly it feels like you have to start all over again. They need better staff handovers."*

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