



COUNCIL-OWNED NEIGHBOURHOOD  
PARADES SURVEY  
(PARADE TENANT SECTION)

JUNE 2021

## Introduction

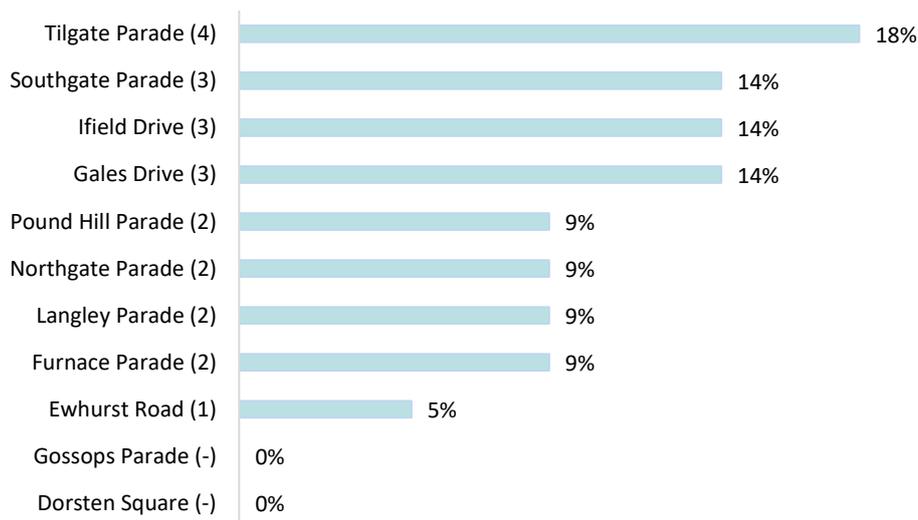
The survey was made available from 13<sup>th</sup> May until 11<sup>th</sup> June 2021 with data being gathered using an online survey hosted on the council's consultation page.

The quantitative and qualitative data for each question is contained under the corresponding question headings, along with the verbatim comments respondents gave within the survey where applicable.

Out of the 364 overall responses to the survey, 23 were from respondents stating that they were a parade tenant, equivalent to 6.3% of responses. Neighbourhood parade tenants were asked some additional questions to the public survey, the results of which are contained in the survey results section below.

## Survey results

### 1. On which Crawley neighbourhood parade is your premises situated?



### 2. How long have you been a tenant of a Council-owned parade unit?

The table below breaks down, by location, the average number of years that respondents stated they have been a tenant of a parade unit. The combined average tenancy length across all locations is 16.38 years.

Neighbourhood parade	No. of years as tenant of a Council-owned parade unit (average)
Tilgate Parade	11
Gales Drive	14
Ifield Drive	11

Southgate Parade	25
Furnace Parade	21
Langley Parade	9
Northgate Parade	14
Pound Hill Parade	24
Ewhurst Road	20
Dorsten Square	-
Gossops Parade	-

### 3. Did you have experience of owning your own business before taking on a parade unit?

Did you have experience of owning your own business before taking on a parade unit?	
Yes	No
39%	61%

The 39% of respondents who indicated that they had previous experience owning their own business, had an average of 16.1 years of experience.

*Please briefly outline your previous experience owning your own business*

#### 9 comments

- I was operation manager for RHM in charge of more than 20 units .
- Rented a barbers section in another Crawley Parade shop at Gossops Green for 3 years
- I was running the same business without owning the lease
- Restaurant in Ealing
- Have owned multiple business prior to tilgate . In West Croydon and Surbiton area . In total 5 businesses.
- Owned newsagent shop previously.
- I have been in the pet trade for 25 years before taking no 7 Tilgate parade
- I have been in my business field for many years, working in the industry and then owning my own. Business used to be very fulfilling, however now it feels like we are paying money just to survive.
- Owner of W king motors behind fouled shops

### 4. Before taking on a parade unit, were you given any business support advice by the Council?

Before taking on a parade unit, were you given any business support advice by the Council?	
Yes	No
5%	96%

*Please briefly describe the business support advice were you given*

**1 comment**

- About the health and safety of food.

**5. Are there any elements of your approach to running your business (e.g. accounting), that would benefit from extra guidance or information?**

**13 comments**

- Yes. I had attended several management courses.
- I had a clear plan for the shop when i took it on and consulted with my Accountant fully and showed and discussed my plan with my Bank Manager to gain funds to pay the premium required to purchase and reassign the lease. This should be done by all incoming tenants.
- Some help with retail stats and help market the parade and business with shop local theme will help us getting more consumers.
- No
- Promote the parade business
- No I have been running my own business for 45 years
- Any tax relief opportunities.
- Yes definitely marketing skills / Council supporting the businesses like Horsham council through their dedicated economic development unit working with small businesses and supporting them through council run events /trade fairs and festivals such as the "Big Nibble" event
- No
- Yes , I think making sure that the tenant is aware of other financial implications regarding repairs and other insurance payments and accounting .
- No
- Not yet
- Marketing - I have for many years asked for help from the council to have access to my target market, such as OAPs that live alone that would benefit from our service.

**6. What is your experience of the operation of Council rent reviews?**

What is your experience of the operation of Council rent reviews?		
Positive	Neutral	Negative
13%	22%	65%

*Please provide any further comments in relation to your answer*

### 18 comments

#### Positive

- No any at the moment.

#### Neutral

- Yet to experience a rent review
- I guess the rents are to high as we have got two units closed one the Chinese which has been closed for ages.

#### Negative

- Exorbitant rent&we get full repairing lease as wel.
- Surprised rent reviews is a negotiation and expected it to be standardised. Expected the process to be more transparent.
- Over the years i have negotiated many times with different people from the council or their appointed representatives and have found a common approach from all of them of a THIS IS WHAT WE WANT, TAKE IT OR LEAVE approach, and then use a market rent from rents attained from their other properties who may not have paid a premium, and just tendered a rent for the unit, if they have not paid a premium then they can offer a higher rent, this still does not mean they will be successful as a business but their bid effects all of us tenants when our review comes up. I have also found that the Council have constantly been moving the goal posts over how they break down the rent between the shop and the flat, when i took out my last new lease i had the option of giving the flat back to the council, at the time there was a nominal fee for the flat because of the introduction of VAT on the shop, so i kept the unit together, but when it came to the next review suddenly the rent for the flat doubled with out any warning. on the next review it went up again to be the same as a three bedroom council rent. this was used for the next review but on my new lease renewal in 2018 yet another new formula was used with a commercial rent used and a discount of 35% given off the amount. this was not used on the previous review but the council negotiator seemed to think it had and produced a formula for me to show how it was worked out the last time but i was never shown this formula at the review, he also showed my neighbor a different formula to arrive at his rent for the flat on her previous review. The formula used now gives the Council a guaranteed high income from the flats but does not take into account the cost to the lease holder of updating the property from the 1950s state it was in when i took it on or the fact that the lease holder has to do all repairs and maintenance to the property. We also take all the risks of a rogue tenant, which can cost thousands of pounds to get evicted and repair damage done, this is not taken into account in the new formula used by the Council. To be honest the Flat can be a lot of risk for what is now a very small return.
- This should be calculated by retail price indexed rent reviews, which is the norm all over the country and will not cause any issues on the way forward
- Council only wants to increase the rent no matter what and this not a realistic approach. Its like the council is holding us as tenants for ransom and they are very quick to say if

you don't agree with us leave the shop(leaving shop means leaving our livelihoods)so thats an extortion in other way.

- Not thinking how one can save their business after 5-10 years if they keep on putting the rent up by 30-40% a year, not thinking about the future of the parade
- The council fail to understand the realities of the financial climate. They accept lower rent from the bakery on the parade, a year later offer us a substantial higher amount. Mr [REDACTED] has his selection of favourite business on the parade and seems to harass the others. Another example , coral betting shop. The rear of their unit is a mess, broken fence,broken gates . [REDACTED] will harass us threatening us to fix these issues . Coral store has not been touched since I have been on the parade . They have let the Co op return the upstairs property to the council but will not let the other businesses do the same . This leaves us all on a unfair disadvantages. The parade is riddled with drugs and crime. Mr [REDACTED] has not once come down to try fix the issue . The council just hide and do not actively come and talk to the businesses to make it a better atmosphere
- Rent increase is terribly high.
- Should consider the type of business,ie. one band man or big organisations co op. Domino's and openings hours.
- I have had a great deal of experience dealing with landlords in the past but never dealt with such a difficult and intransigent group of people over this rental negotiation. In answer to the next question a questionnaire would be a wast of time as they don't listen to anything the tenants say.
- There is no negotiation. Inly the council's option is presented. Any counter offers are not considered.
- The Council is running a monopoly whereby they are only comparing the rent with other neighbourhoods which are also run by themselves . The private sector rents have not gone up for the last 15years in Crawley yet the council is putting it up by 20%. How is this sustainable ???
- I believe the rent to be too high for the volume of customers that we get. People in Crawley have had their household incomes badly affected, which causes them to spend less. As a result, this has impacted income massively and to have such high overheads is worrying, to say the least.
- The Council makes a habit of demanding unreasonable increases at evrey review
- With covid not helpful

## 7. What would be your view of receiving a regular questionnaire regarding the Council's running of the neighbourhood parades?

82% of respondents indicated that they supported receiving a regular questionnaire regarding the Council's running of the neighbourhood parades. Respondents opposed to the proposal totalled 5%, with the remaining 14% of respondents neither in support nor in opposition.

Preferred regular questionnaire frequency				
Every month	Every three months	Every six months	Every year	Every two years
11%	6%	22%	56%	6%

## 8. What is your view of the balance between the Council's maintenance responsibilities and your own?

What is your view of the balance between the Council's maintenance responsibilities and your own?		
Well-balanced	Neutral	Not well-balanced
-	26%	74%

*Please briefly describe the reasons for your answer, along with any further suggestions*

### 19 Comments

- Council asking for maximum money & we are responsible for everything. Security of the parade none existing. Too many breaking in the parades. Unsociable behaviour is too high.
- The current lease is full maintenance and repair including structural liabilities. The council have no liability what so ever we even pay council insurance which covers nothing.
- On Southgate Parade we have had one make over in 60 years, it may have cost 300k at the time but this is not much compared to the amount of rent received over that 60 years period. we have flat roof area's that have not been replaced for over 30 years and are starting to leak. We are made to keep the Shops and Flats up to a standard, but the Council are slow to reinvest in their own properties which the majority are now well over 60 years old. we have had some work done over the last couple of years to the guttering which was very welcome.
- The Council made the tenants take out building insurance with them, which is more expensive and any issues are not passed to the insurance company to resolve, yet the surveyor at CBC will come and attend to give a recommendation, surely if we are paying an insurance firm, they should send a surveyor.
- Every rent review council gives us the list of dilapidations to sort out.(within the set time). Whereas for them to keep the building's outside and inside they only do when there is an issue not to maintain.
- Council don't maintain the properly it's very dirty I run a restaurant and from where my customer sitting you can see the pillars they haven't been painted for a good 5-10 years they got chewing gum on the pavement is very dirty always there is rubbish everywhere on parade
- The parade is filthy, full of drug dealers and crime . The parade is not well illuminated in the evenings and does not feel safe . The council have neglected this parade and put it on the businesses to look after the parade . Again Mr [REDACTED] is not approachable and he himself has said he will try try make it as difficult as possible for us here until we sign new rent contract .
- They should do repairs in and out but they never do. E.g. Toilet repairs/Plumbing roof repair. They took no responsibility for this.

- Full maintenance lease as well as hi insurance is very unfair
- Wouldn't it be a good idea if they had some parade meetings to discover if there is some mutual agreement that could be reached.
- Most of the Both parties take care of their maintenance responsibilities.
- The council was doing the external maintenance previously but now its has been put to the tenant . I think if the council takes the maintenance of the external work then the parades would look much cleaner as some tenants are not doing the external work as they should.
- Far too much falls on the tenants shoulders, not proportionate to the amount of rent charged. In addition there seems to be some confusion amongst tenants regarding standards of upkeep in particular with the flats e.g. some flats have broken and boarded up windows and rubbish everywhere, others are in a good state of repair.
- I have completely refurbished the flat above as it was inhabitable for rental . I also have refurbished the salon .
- Not any at the moment.
- It feels as if we are paying rent, doing all the maintenance, and not getting any support from to council in return. Usually, the landlord should be in charge of maintenance and repairs, however, we are paying a high rent value for nothing in return, we're paying rent to have the right to do business.
- The council seem to expect all maintenance to be carried out by the tenant
- Amount of up keep
- We pay more out

## 9. Does your parade unit include a flat or maisonette?

A total of 77% indicated that their unit included a flat or maisonette. These respondents were then asked a supplementary question on how the included flat or maisonette was being utilised.

Flat or maisonette is currently...		
Occupied	Rented out	Used for business purposes
47%	41%	12%

## 10. Would you be interested in attending a meeting of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel?

Would you be interested in attending a meeting of the Council-owned Neighbourhood Parades Scrutiny Panel?	
Yes	No
61%	39%

