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# Base Station Planners Research



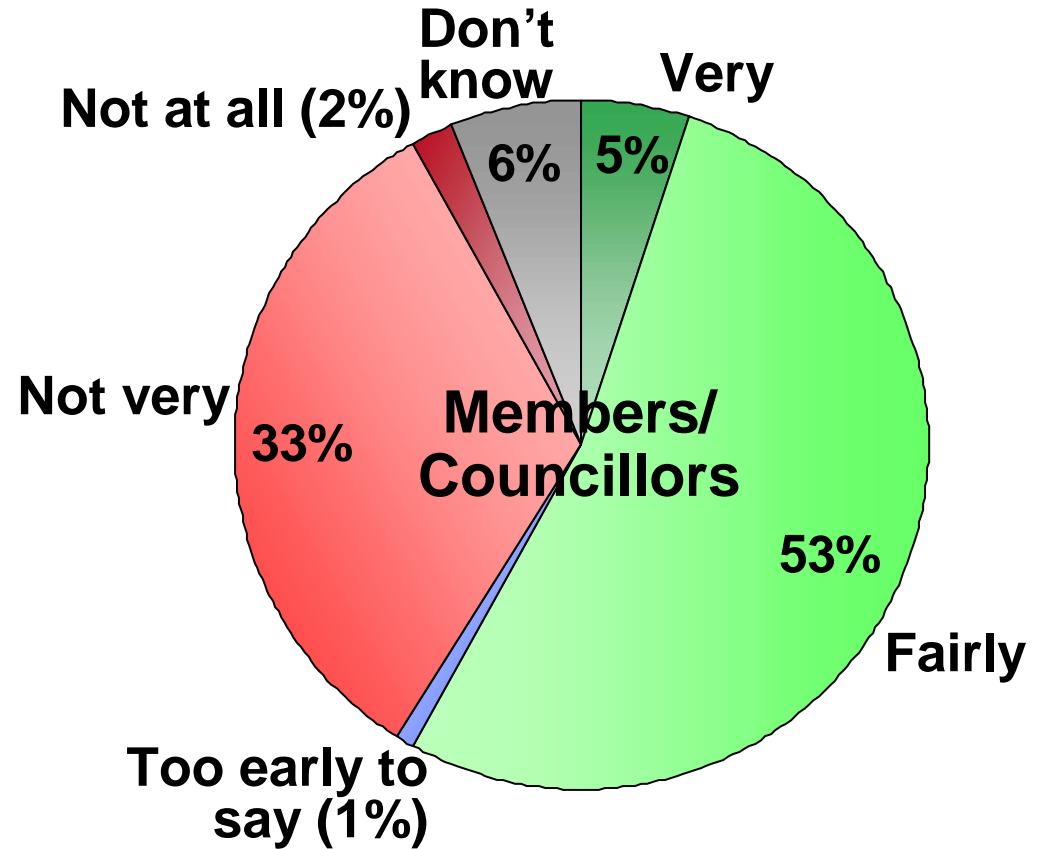
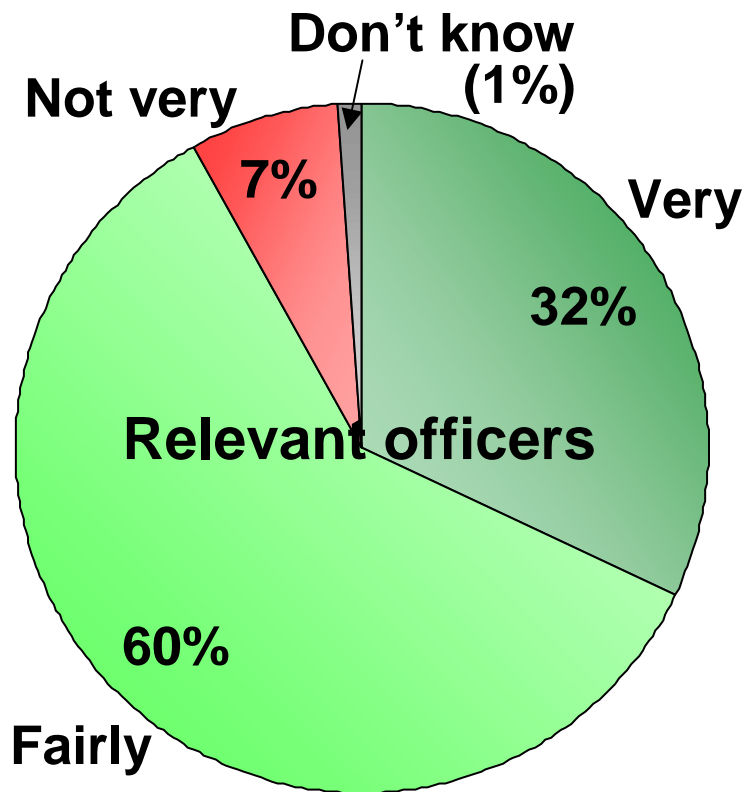
- To better understand planners' views of base station planning
- In particular, to assess whether planners perceive mobile phone operators to be:
  - producing adequate levels of information
  - co-operating with their needs
  - effectively addressing health issues

- 100 interviews were conducted with senior local authority planners involved in mobile phone base station planning
- A quota was set to ensure that the sample was representative of the different types of local councils across Great Britain
- Interviews were conducted by telephone between 11-16 May 2005
  - previous waves in May 2001, May 2002, May 2003 & May 2004
  - Since 2003 County Councils have not been included in the sample

# Local authority officers are still seen as more knowledgeable than councillors

Q How knowledgeable, if at all, do you think the relevant officers in your authority are about telecoms?

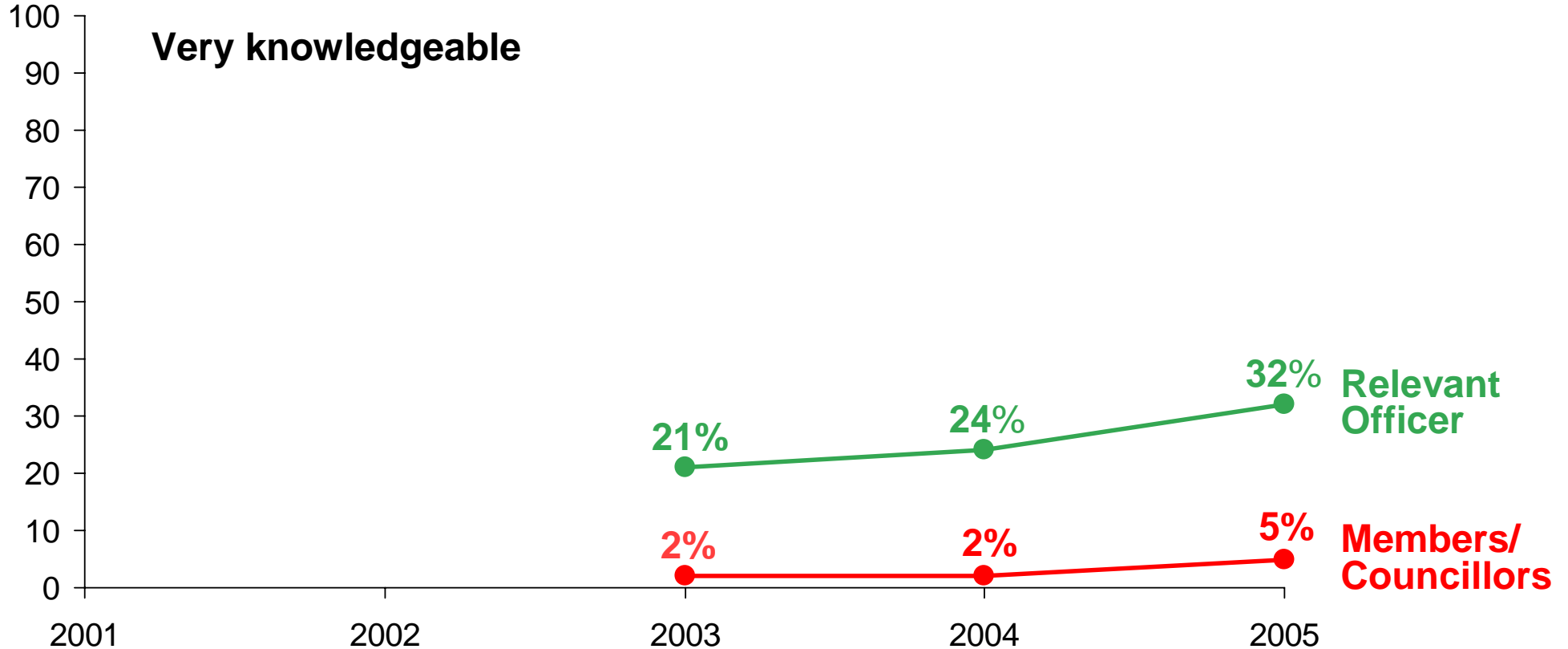
Q And how knowledgeable, if at all, do you think the responsible members/ councillors on your authority are about telecoms?



# Both groups show signs of improvement. A third of officers are now seen as very knowledgeable

**Q** *How knowledgeable, if at all, do you think the relevant officers in your authority are about telecoms?*

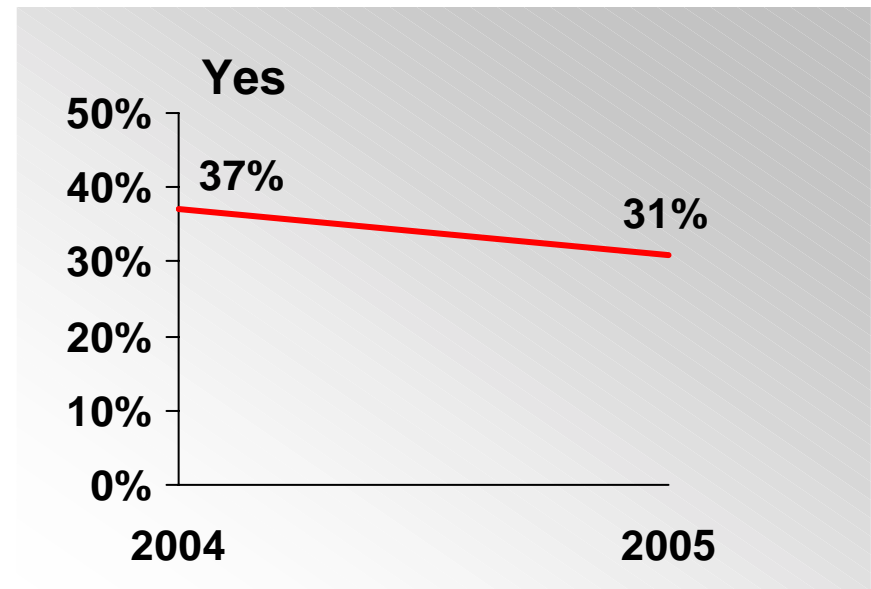
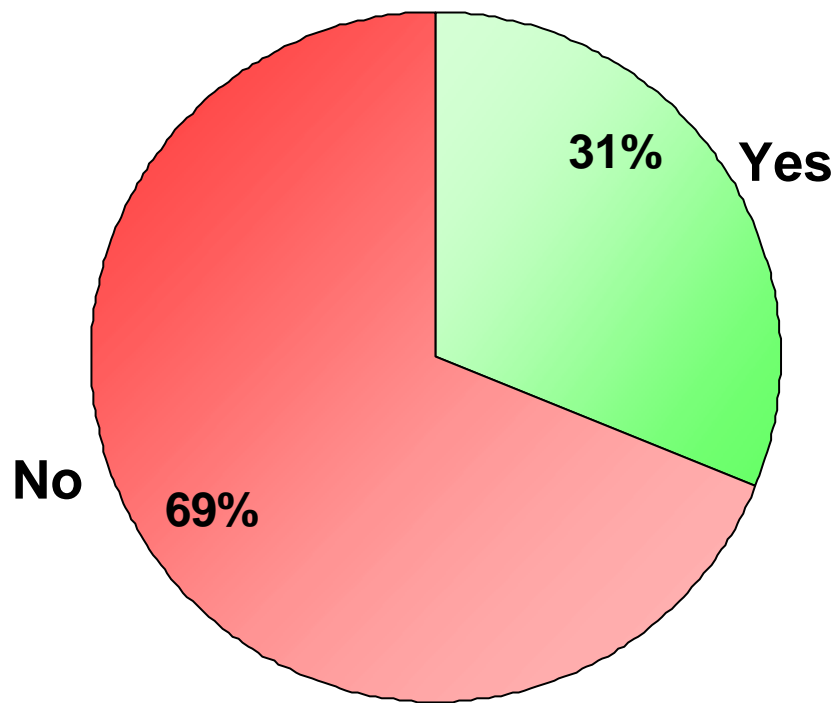
**Q** *And how knowledgeable, if at all, do you think the responsible members/ councillors on your authority are about telecoms?*



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: 100, May '03, '04 & '05

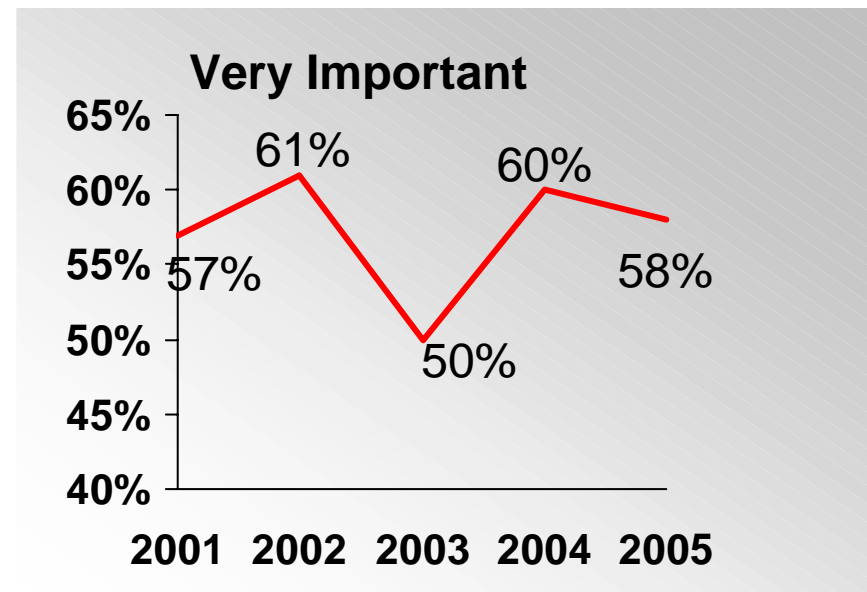
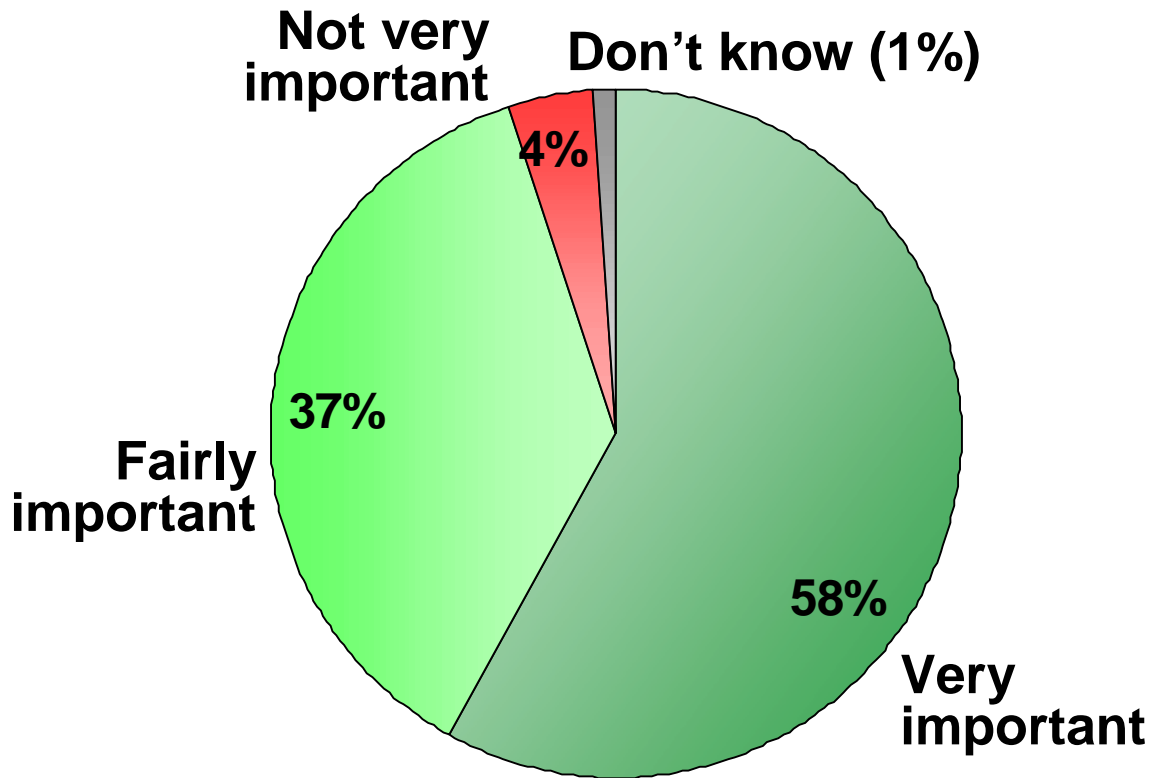
# Around a third of councils continue to have a dedicated telecoms officer

**Q** *Does your Authority have a dedicated Telecoms Officer in the planning department?*



# Base stations remain a 'very important' issue. The majority say it is at least fairly important

**Q** *Within your local authority, how important is the issue of mobile phone base stations?*



**'Not at all important' remains 0%**

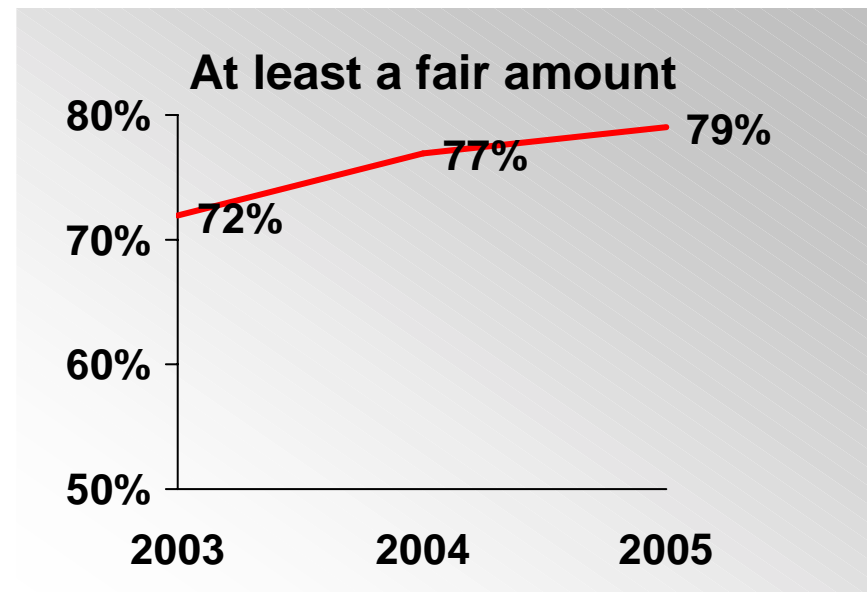
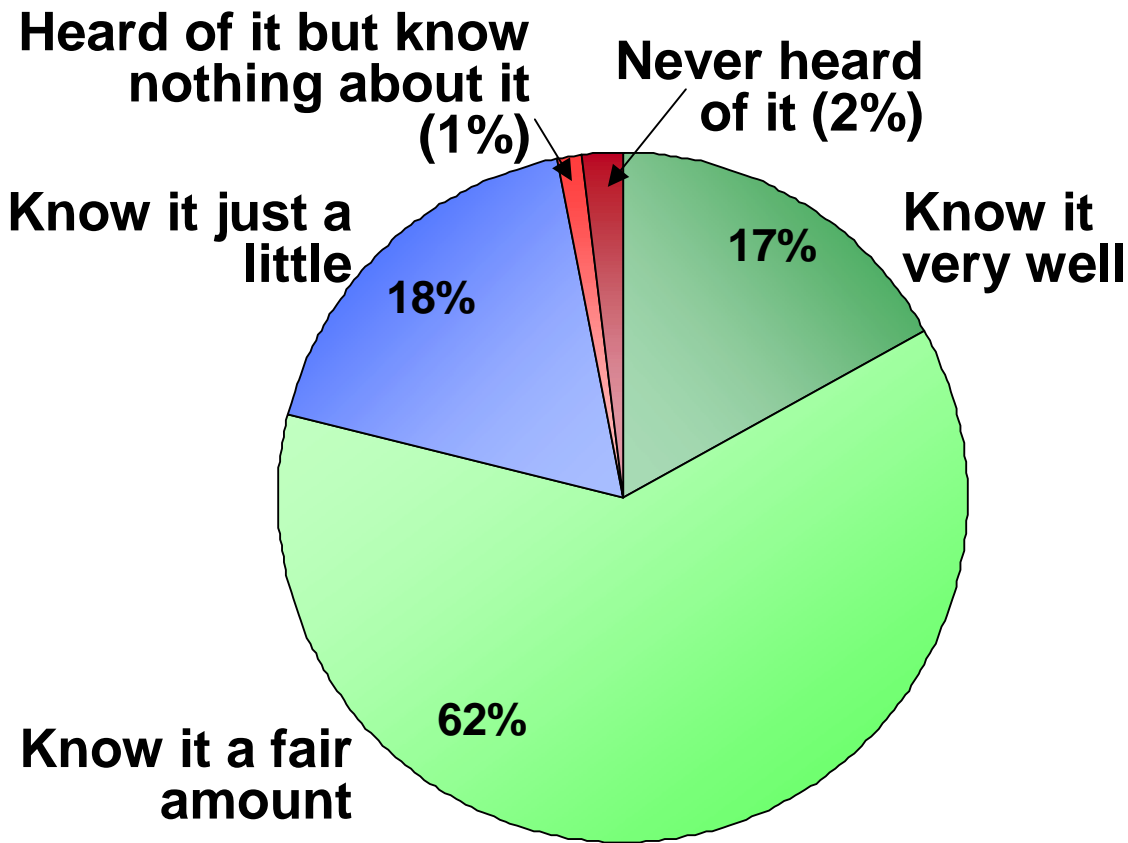
Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

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## ODPM Code of Best Practice

# Familiarity with the ODPM's code of conduct continues to increase

**Q** Could you please tell me how well you feel you know the ODPM's Code of Best Practice on Mobile Phone Network development?



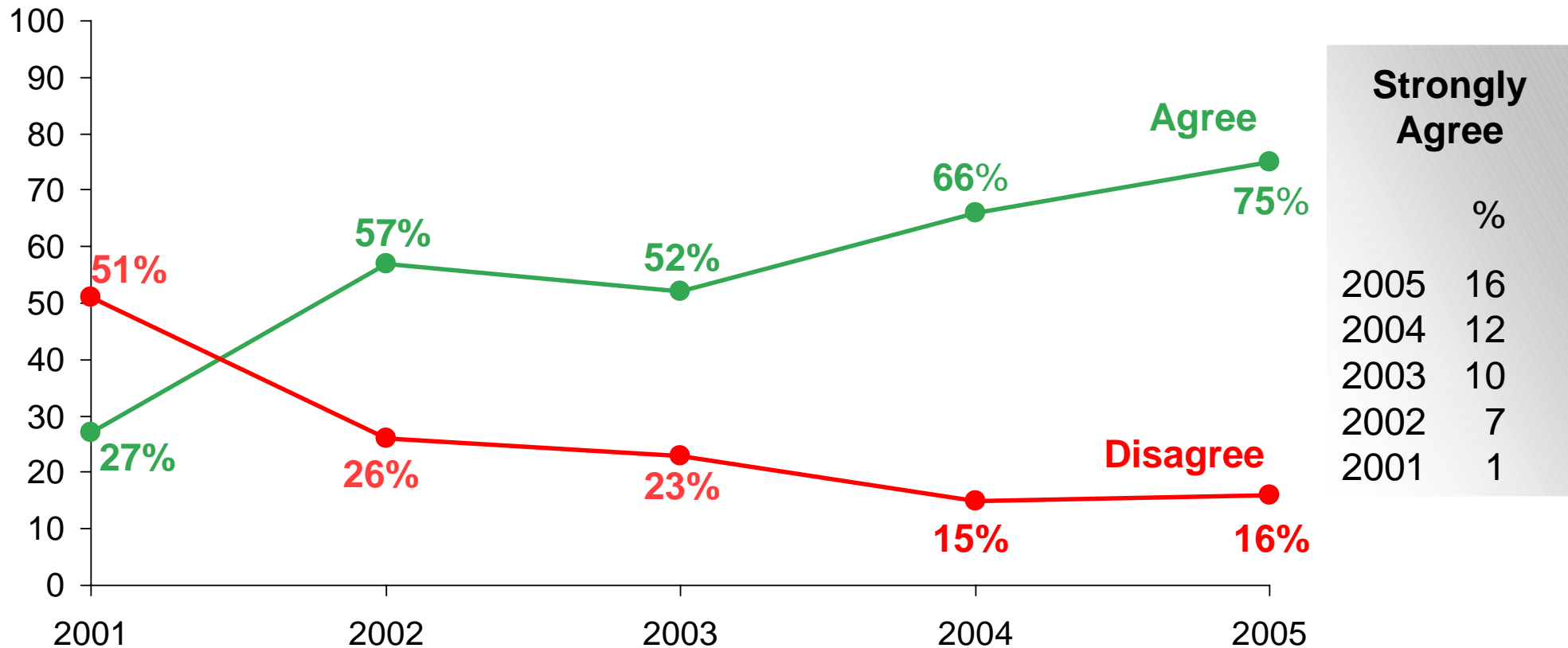
Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: 100, May '03, '04 & '05

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## Information Levels

# Three-quarters agree that operators currently supply sufficient information

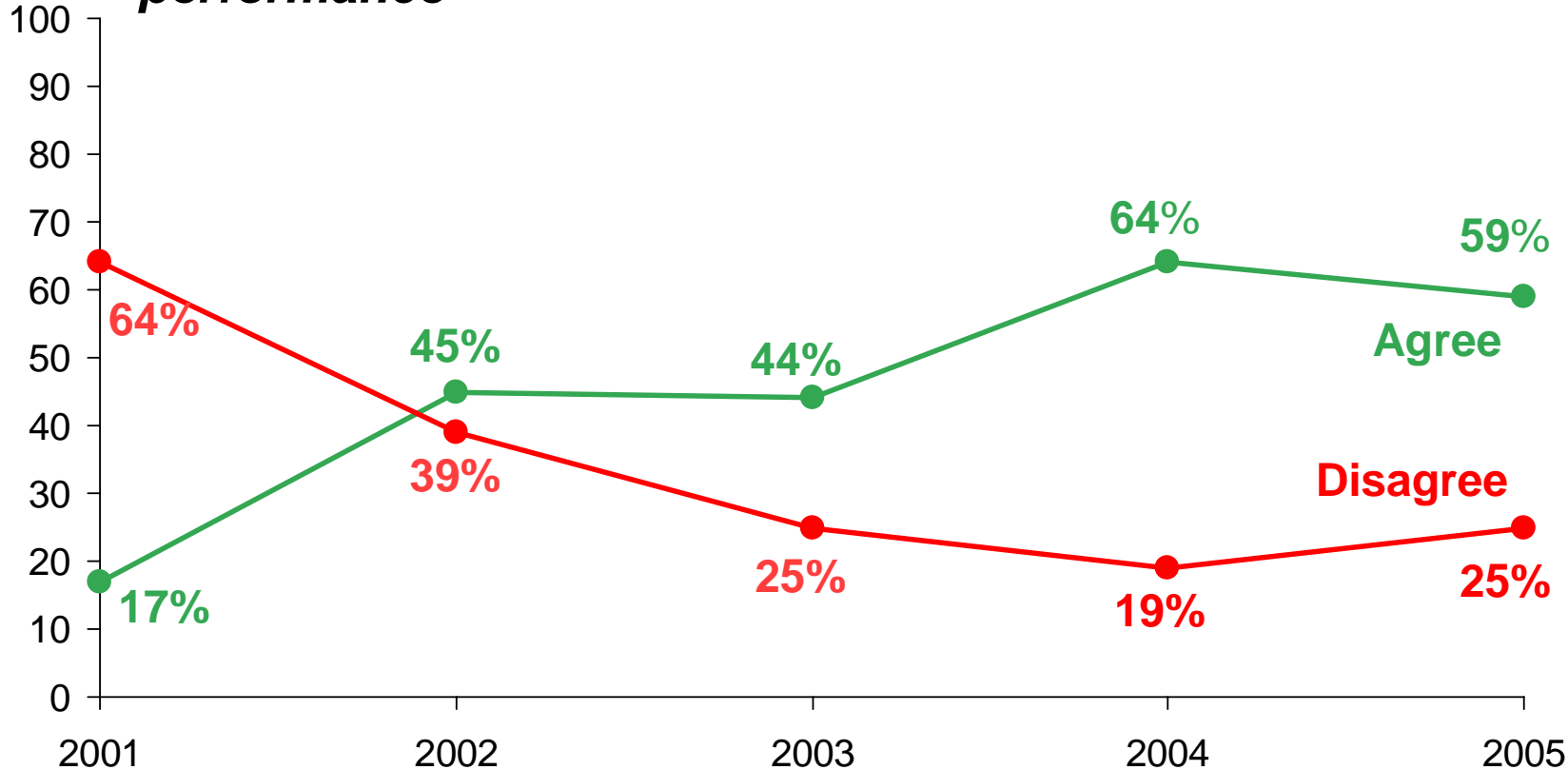
**Q** *To what extent do you agree or disagree ... the mobile phone operators provide me with enough information about their plans for mobile phone base stations within the area covered by this local authority*



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# Satisfaction with specific information has however reduced

**Q To what extent do you agree or disagree ... the mobile phone operators provide enough information about their plans in specific local areas such as site options, justifications and technical information, for example, radio wave emission levels and performance**

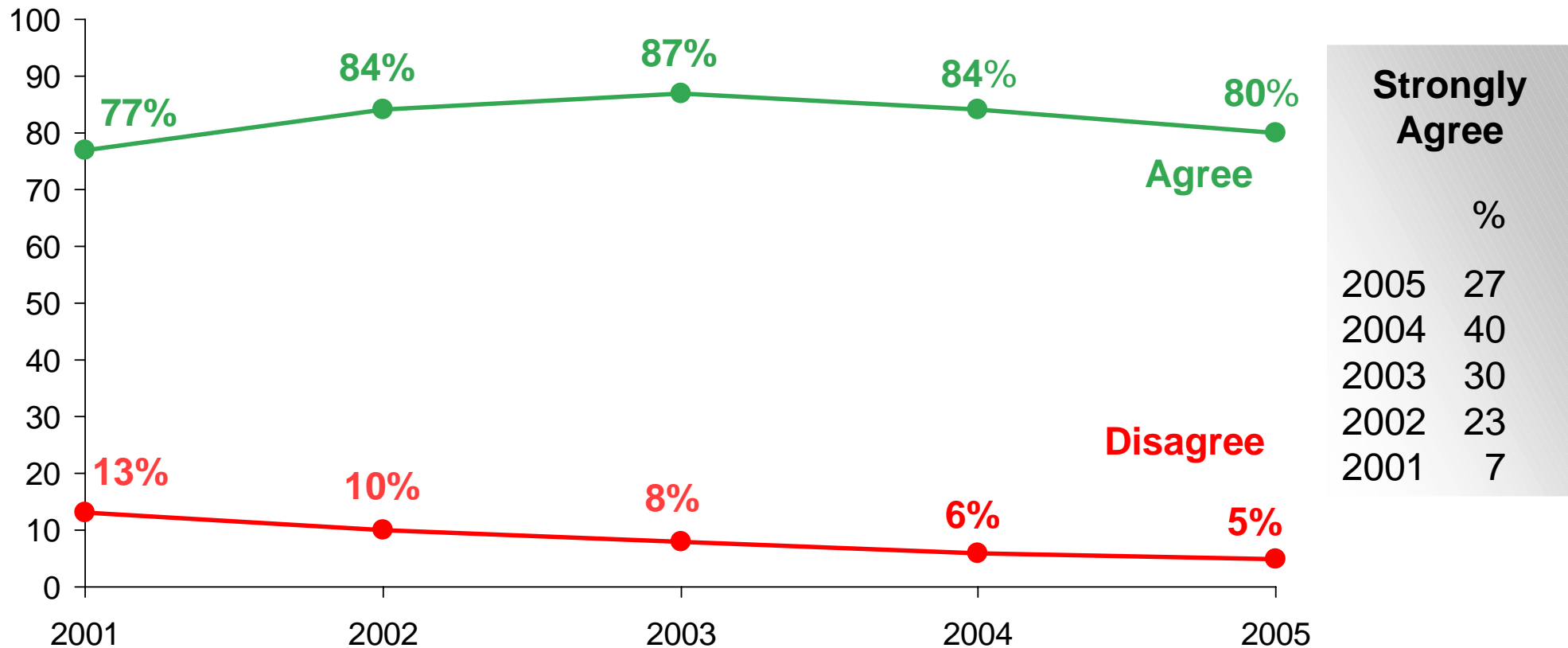


Strongly Agree	
	%
2005	9
2004	10
2003	1
2002	6
2001	1

Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# The quality of information and level of consultation remains high, although fewer now say there's been a year on year increase

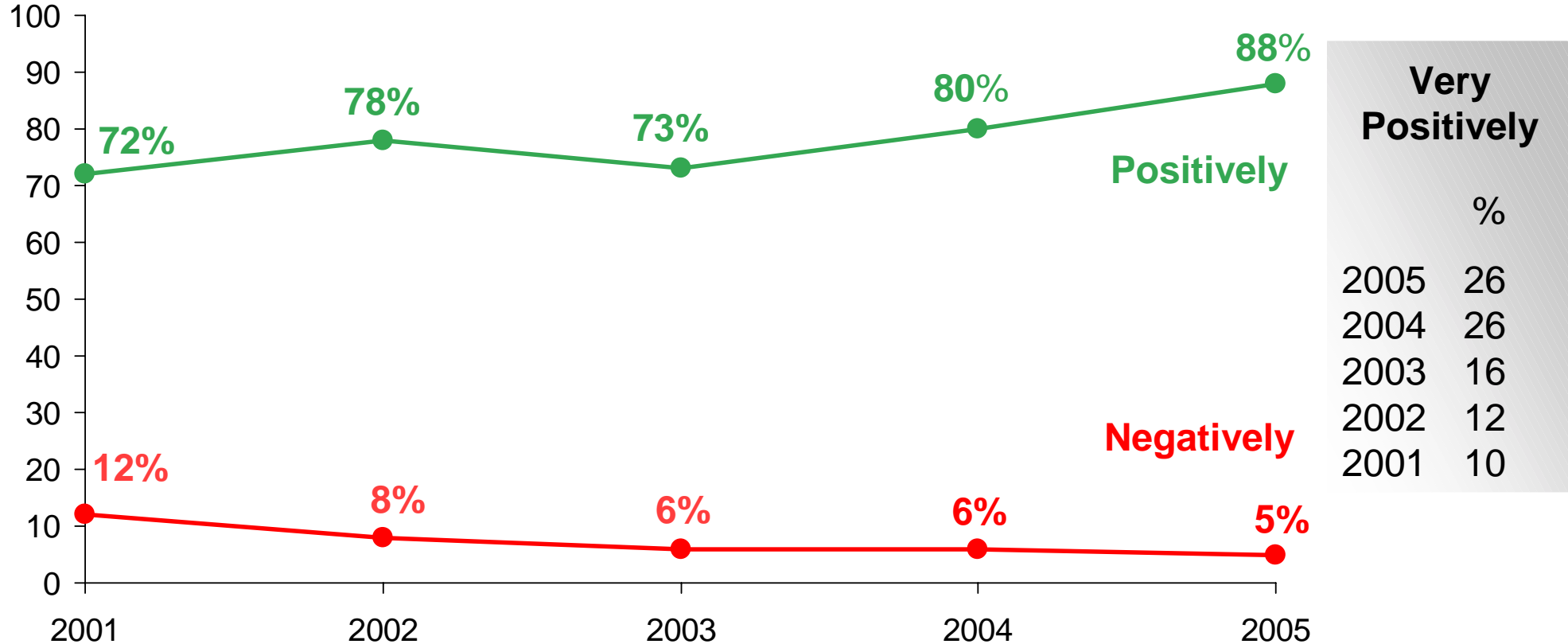
**Q** *To what extent do you agree or disagree ... there has been an improvement in the quality of information and level of consultation by the mobile phone operators when making planning applications for base stations*



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# Requests from planners for further information are being met increasingly positively

**Q** *How positively or negatively do mobile phone operators co-operate with requests from you for more information about planning applications?*



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

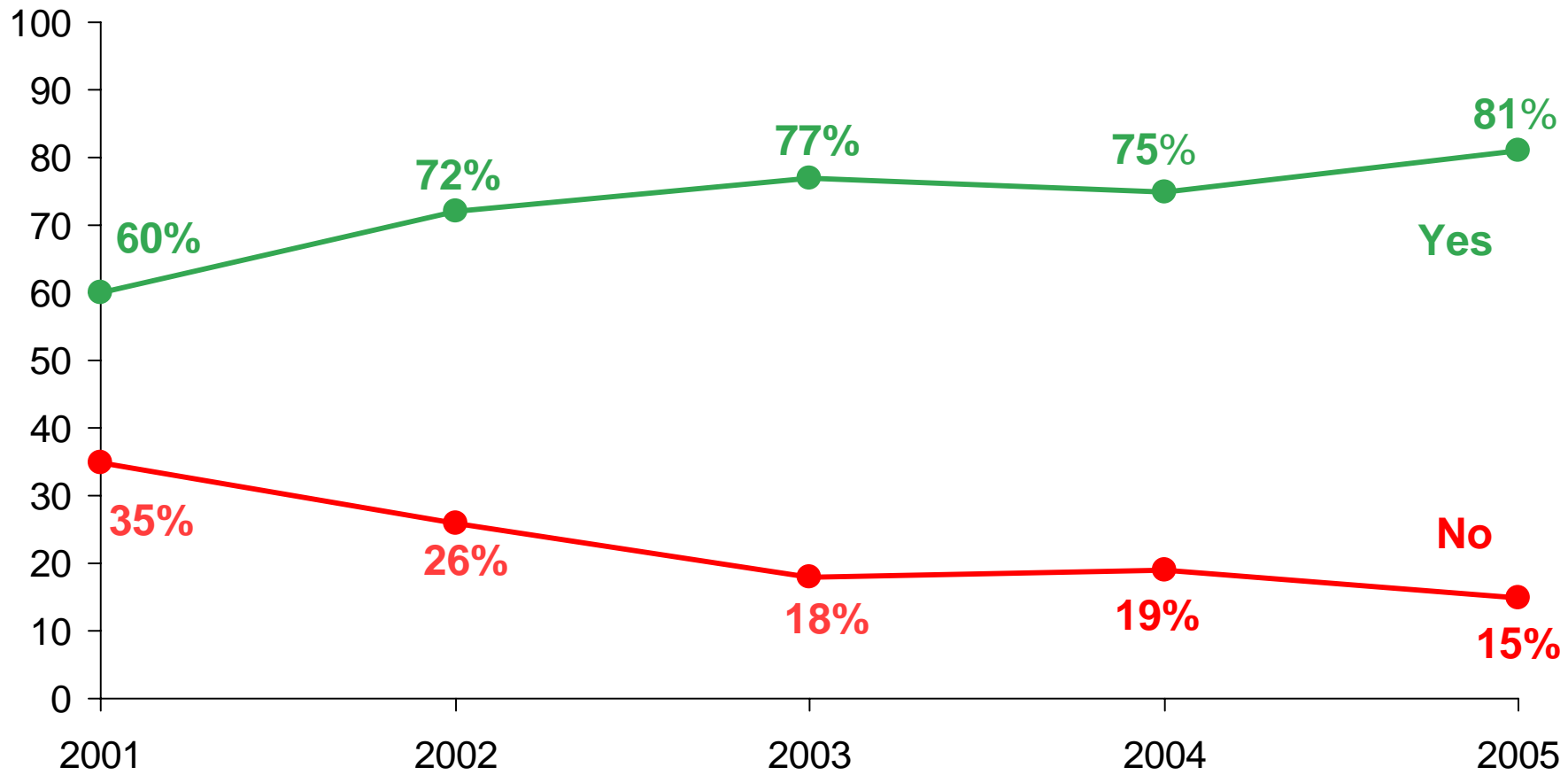
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# Consultation

# Four in five planners say operators make themselves available prior to submission of applications

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**Q** *Do the mobile phone operators make themselves available to meet and discuss their plans with you prior to submitting planning applications?*

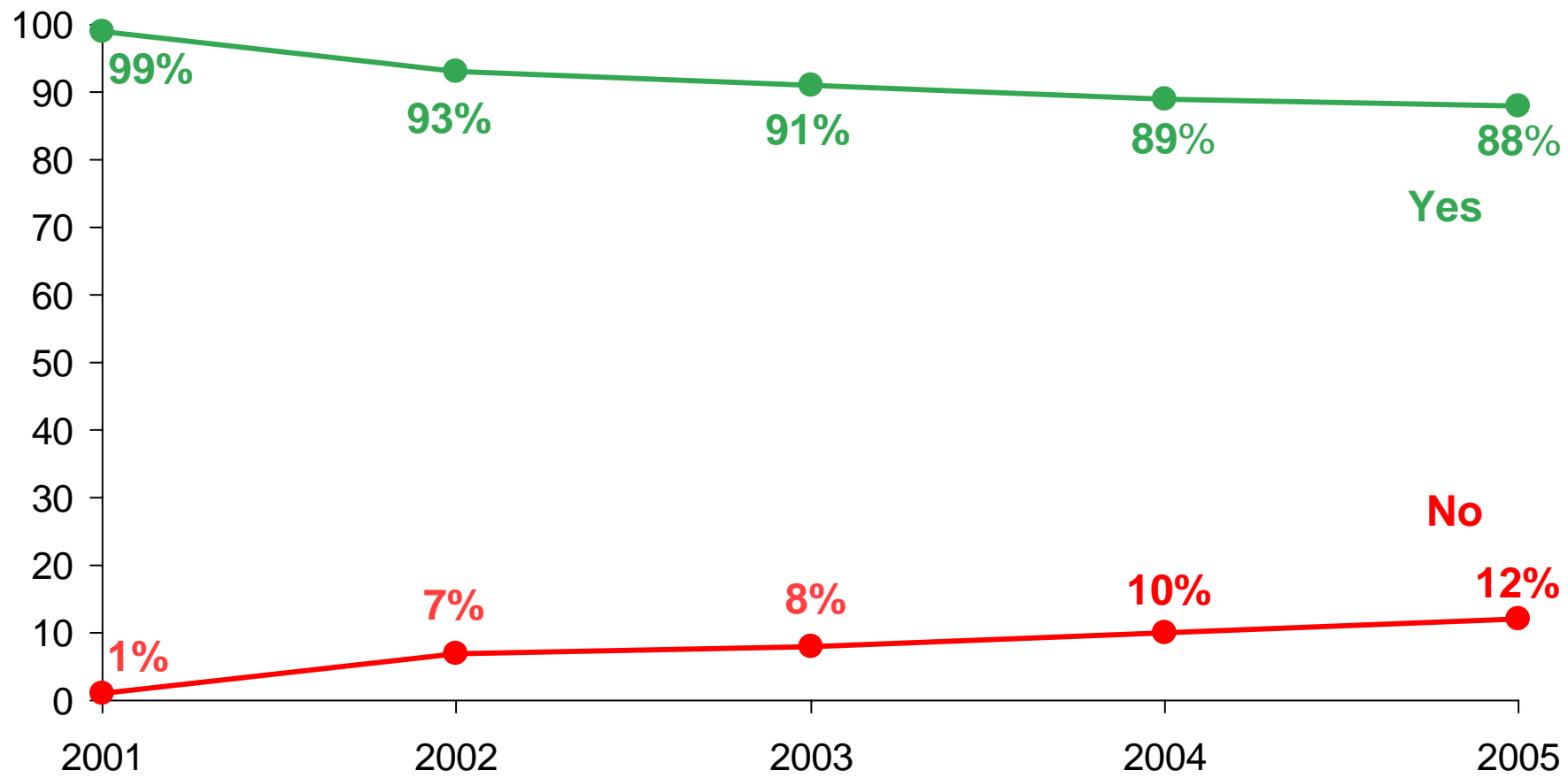


Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# One in eight planners are not willing to discuss plans

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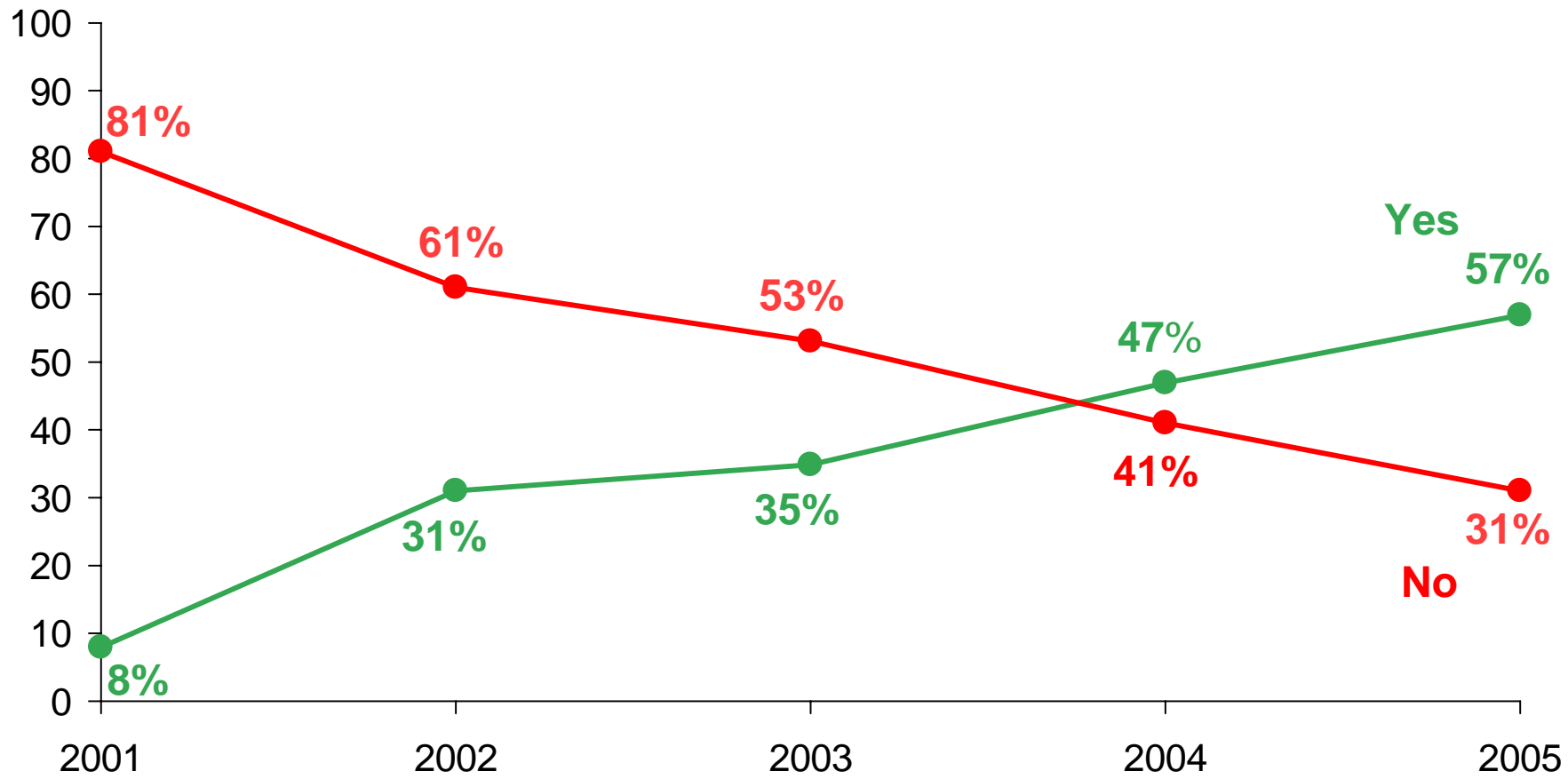
**Q** *If mobile phone operators request to meet and discuss their plans with you prior to submitting planning applications, do you generally try to make yourselves available?*



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# Over half now say operators show willing to consult local people directly

**Q** *Do mobile phone operators show willingness to consult local people directly about possible site locations?*

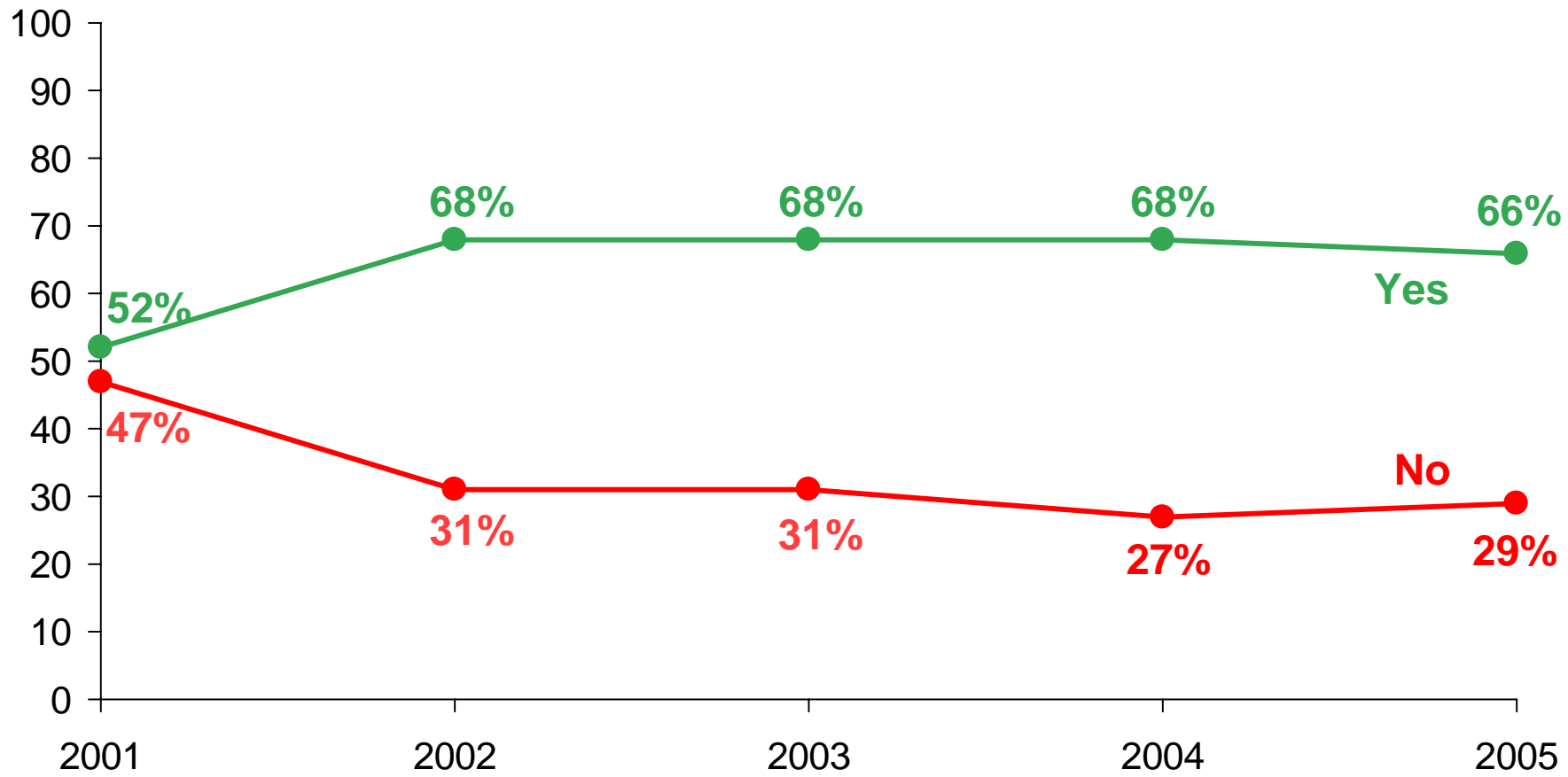


Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# The use of a mast registers appears to have peaked at around two thirds

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**Q** Does your local authority have a mast register?



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

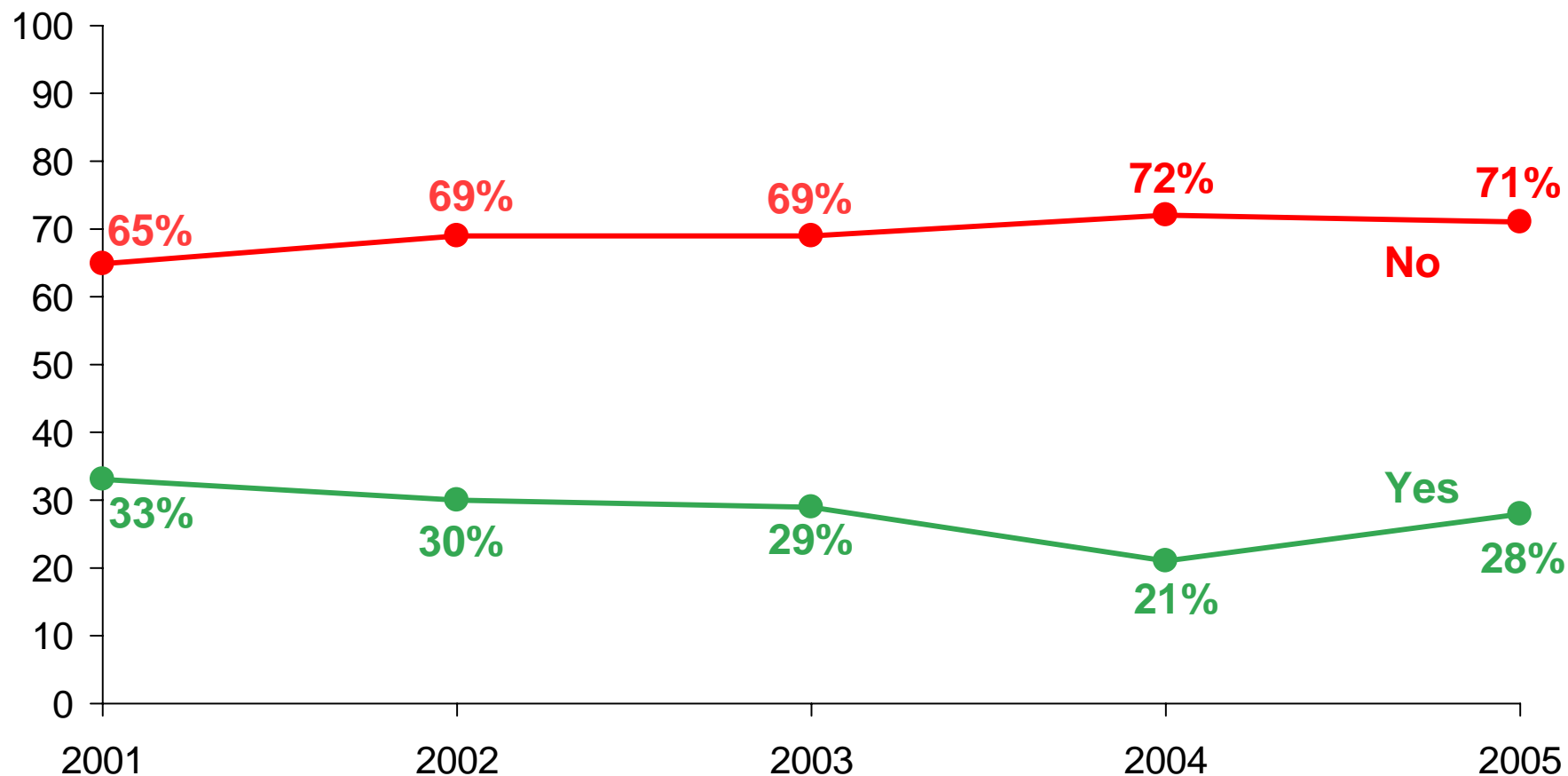
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## Formal Policies

# Nearly three in ten councils currently employ a formal policy

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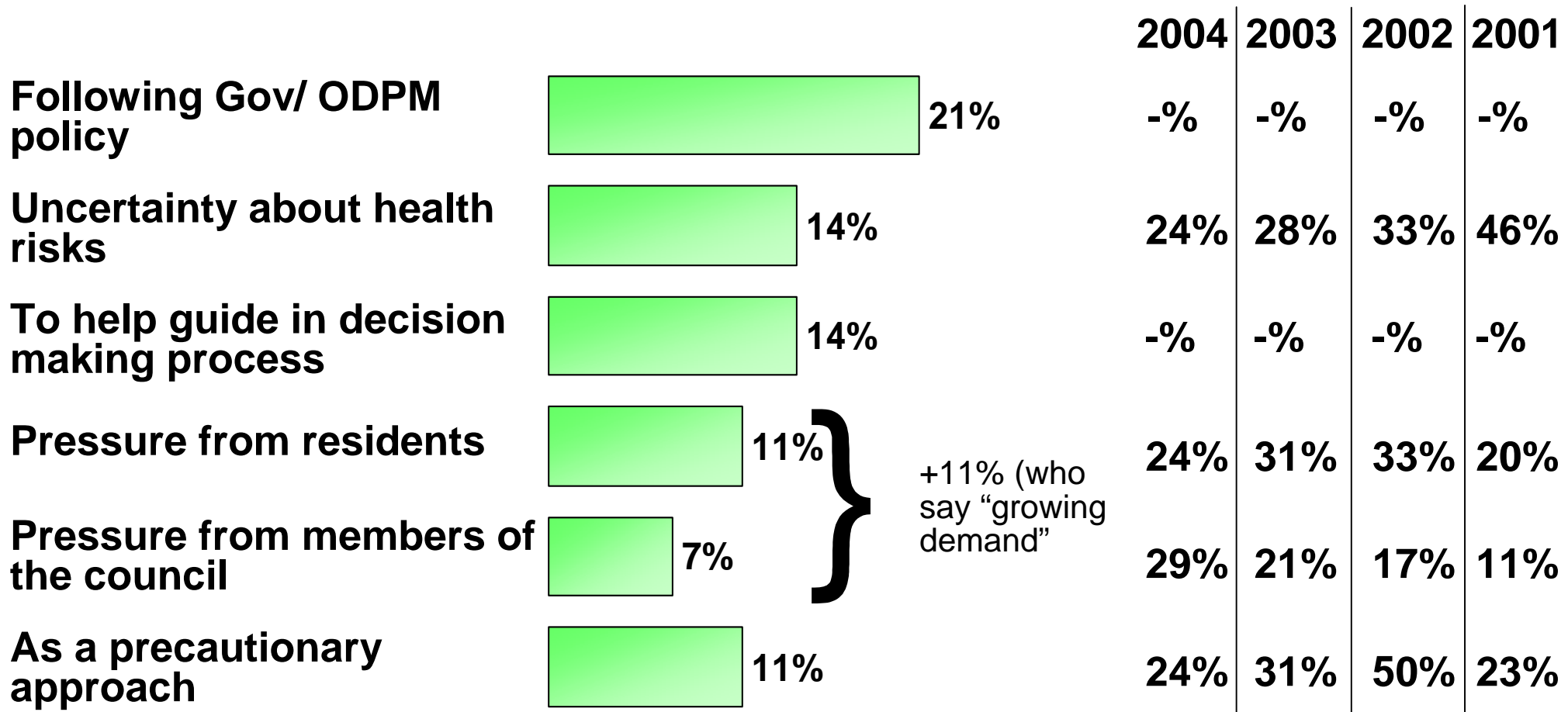
**Q Does your local authority have a formal policy on the development of mobile phone base stations which relates to possible health risks, for example the prevention of use of council property?**



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# Many councils feel they are simply following ODPM policy. Others are responding to various pressures

**Q Why do you have this policy?**



**CAUTION SMALL BASE**

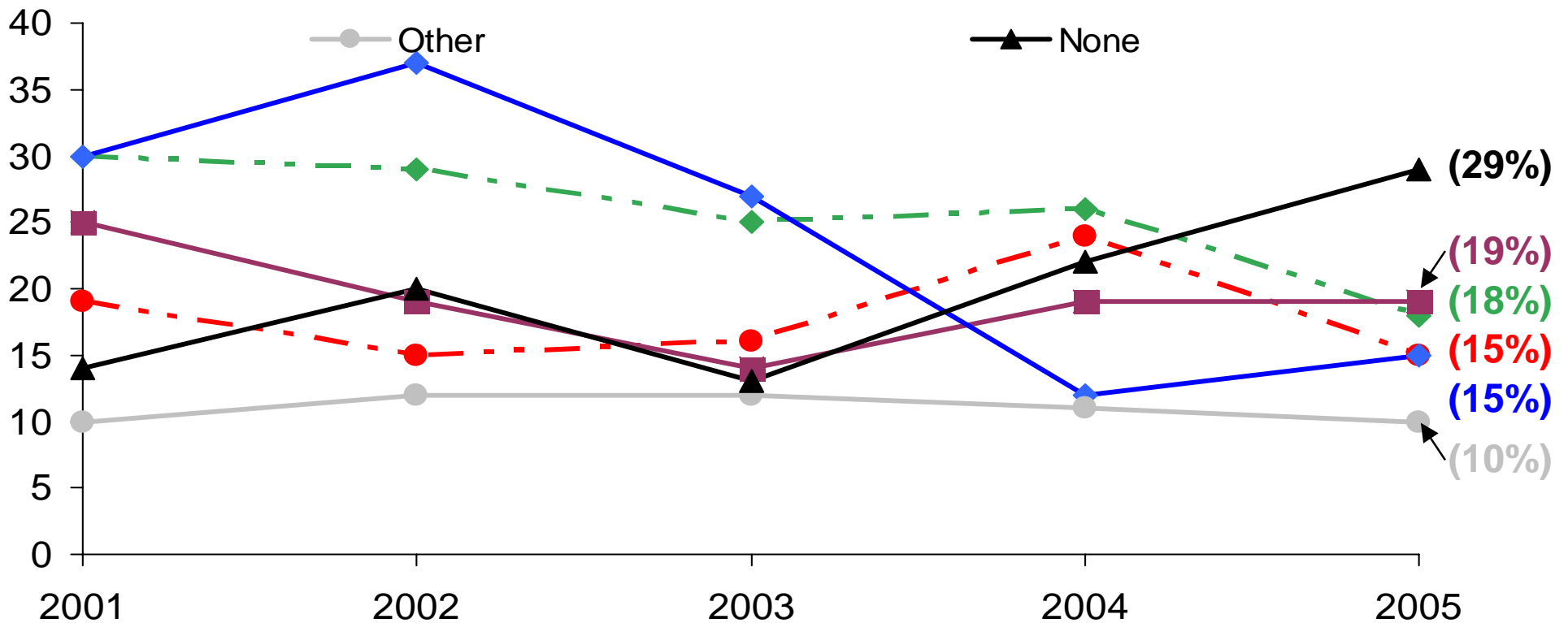
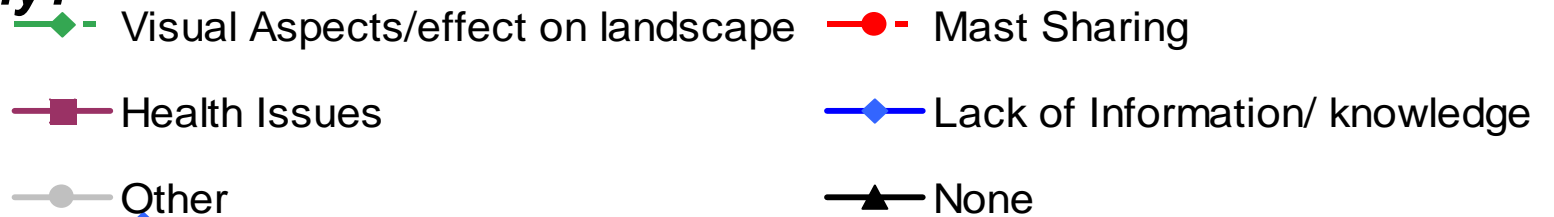
Base: All planners whose council have a formal policy on base station development relating to potential health risks (28) May 2005, May 2004; May 2003; May 2002 & May 2001

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## Health Issues

# Nearly a third seem content that there are no areas to address more effectively

**Q Are there any issues relating to mobile phone base stations which you feel mobile phone operators could be addressing more effectively?**



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# Addressing Health Issues

**Q** *How could the mobile phone operators address health issues relating to base stations more effectively?*

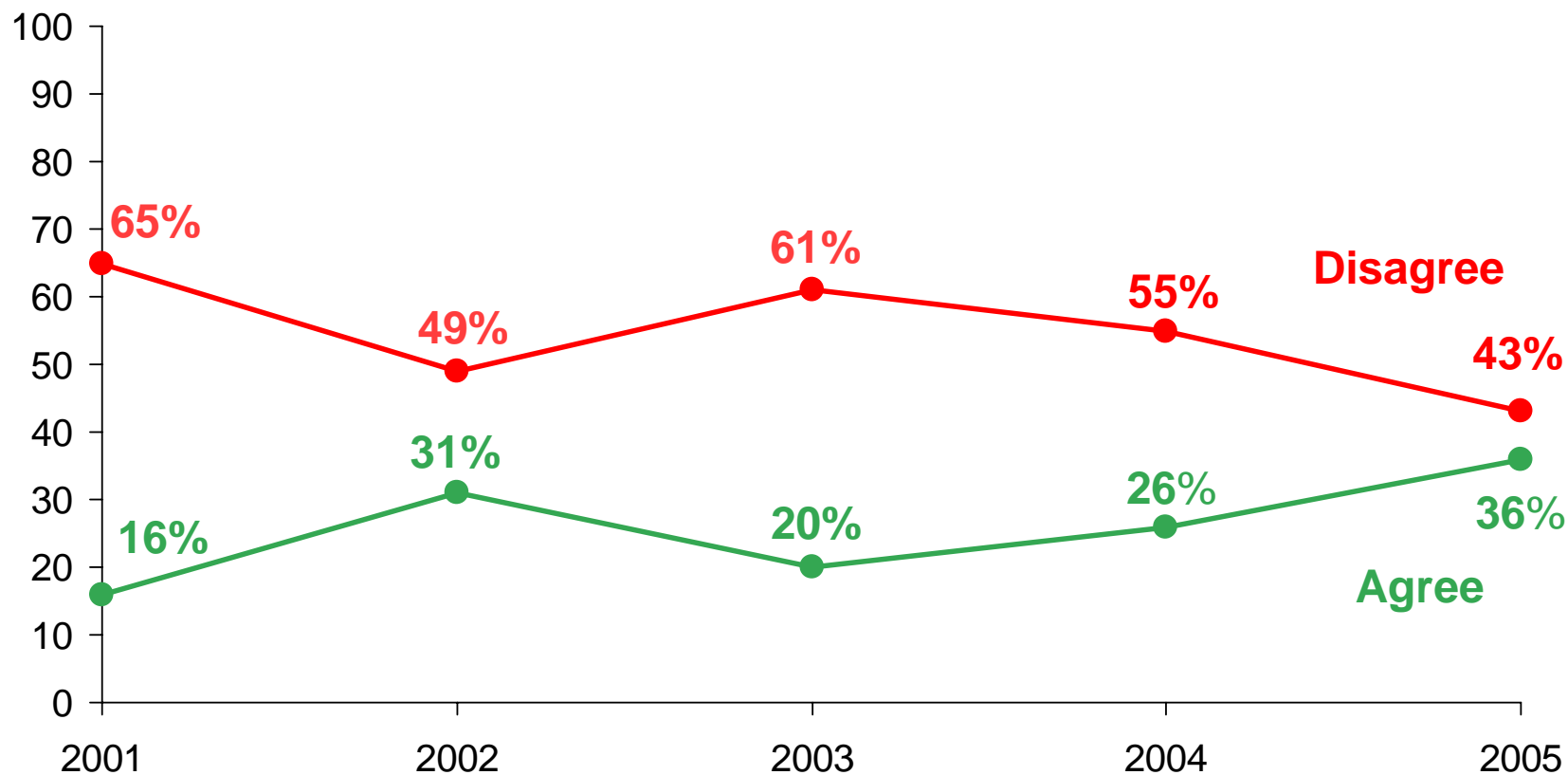
**There could be more general publicity about masts and output levels. They could also try and make it simpler to understand and be less technical.**

**They need to work more constructively with local communities and not dismiss their genuine concerns. Basically they need to win hearts and minds**

**The general public are well informed these days what with the internet/ the operators have to remain as transparent as possible/ members of the public are also voicing concerns about property prices being affected by their proximity to base stations/ the operators need to address these concerns**

# Over a third now agree that operators make sufficient effort to share existing base stations

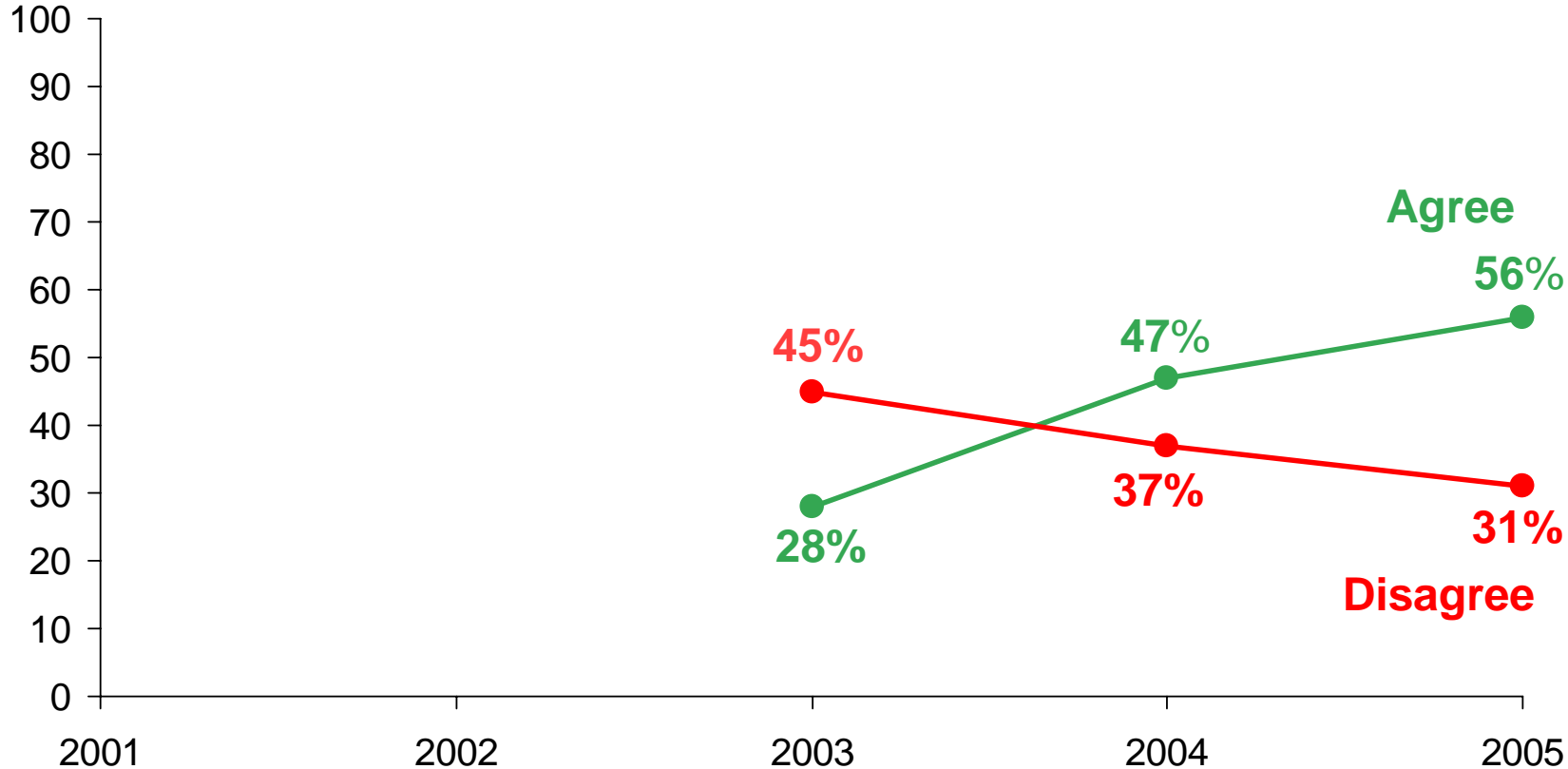
**Q** *To what extent do you agree or disagree that mobile phone operators make sufficient effort to share existing base stations?*



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: c.100, May '01, '02, '03, '04 & '05

# Over half agree that operators provide evidence of considering mast sharing, but almost a third disagree

**Q To what extent do you agree or disagree that mobile phone operators have provided evidence of consideration of sharing other operators sites when submitting applications?**



Base: Local authority planners involved in base station development: 100, May '03, '04 & '05

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# Summary

- The perceived telecoms knowledge of council officers has increased significantly since 2003.
- There has been a significant increase in the number of planners who are aware of the ODPM code – four in five now say they know at least a fair amount
- The quality of information and level of consultation is still perceived to be high – there have been big increases in satisfaction with information received from the operators. This increase has been coupled with an perceived increase in operators cooperation
- Operators are increasingly willing to meet and hold discussions with both the council planners and local population. In contrast, one in eight planners are not willing to meet and discuss plans with operators
- Around three in ten councils continue to have a formal policy. 21% of those say they are simply following ODPM policy
- More now say there is nothing that operators could address more effectively! The issue of health has remained consistent, whilst fewer planners now believe that operators could be doing more with regard to mast sharing