Summary of Responses to the Hendon Library Design Survey

1. Introduction

Proposals to create a new building for Hendon public library was a key part of the phase 1 Hendon Hub consultation conducted by GL Hearn, with library users encouraged to complete the online form or contact the Hendon Hub team via email or phone and/ or attend the virtual and face to face events to register their views.

In addition to this formal consultation, the Library Service has also commenced a programme of library customer engagement aimed specifically at informing the design of any future library provision in the area.

The first element of this engagement was a short survey (online and paper) which asked residents how the library in Hendon could be improved and for their opinions on a variety of additional services that might be provided from a new building. This survey was conducted between 3 March and 4 June 2021.

The survey was widely promoted using the following mechanisms:
- In the lobby of Hendon Library.
- On the libraries website and the Engage Barnet website.
- On Hendon Hub consultation boards.
- At the face to face and virtual Hendon Hub consultation events.
- Direct communications to local organisations and schools.
- Direct communications to umbrella organisations working with Hendon residents.
- In the bi-weekly library newsletter.
- In Barnet First (electronic version).
- On social media

The following report outlines the main themes in the responses to the questionnaire.

1.1 Response to the engagement questionnaire

The survey was split into three sections as outlined below:
- **Section 1:** The first section of the questionnaire looked at the services currently provided from Hendon Library and how to balance the requirements and wishes of different library customers within the proposed new building.
- **Section 2:** The second section looked at how the Library Service could improve the different sections of the library in the proposed new building.
- **Section 3:** The third section considered what **<u>new</u>** services could be provided.

Residents were invited to provide their responses to multiple choice questions, questions that asked them to rate options in terms of their importance and free text boxes for their own ideas and further comments.

1.2 Summary of key findings from questionnaire

In total 112 responses were received.

1.2.1 Section 1: Services currently provided by Hendon Library

➢ 61% respondents said they currently used Hendon Library, with a further 30% saying they had used the library in the past.

➢ Of those library users or recent users 33% used the library every week, 20% a couple of times a month and 27% roughly once a month.

➢ Table 1 below summarises the various uses made of the library.

➢ Respondents were then asked to rank the current library services in order of importance ranging from very important to not important. Respondents could choose 'don't know/ not sure if they did not hold an opinion. See table 2 below for the services ranked as 'very important.'

Table 1: Why you would usually visit Hendon Library?

Table 2: Services rated as very important
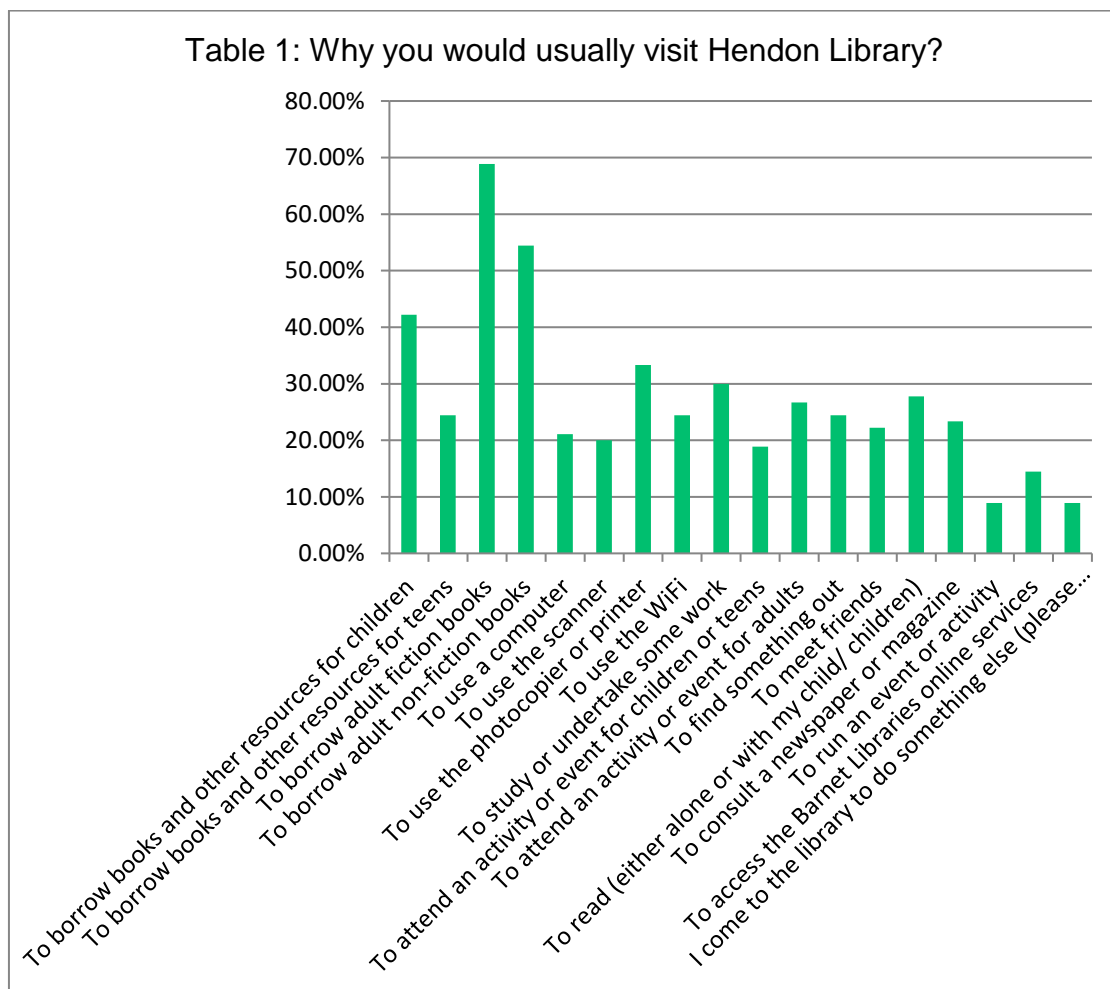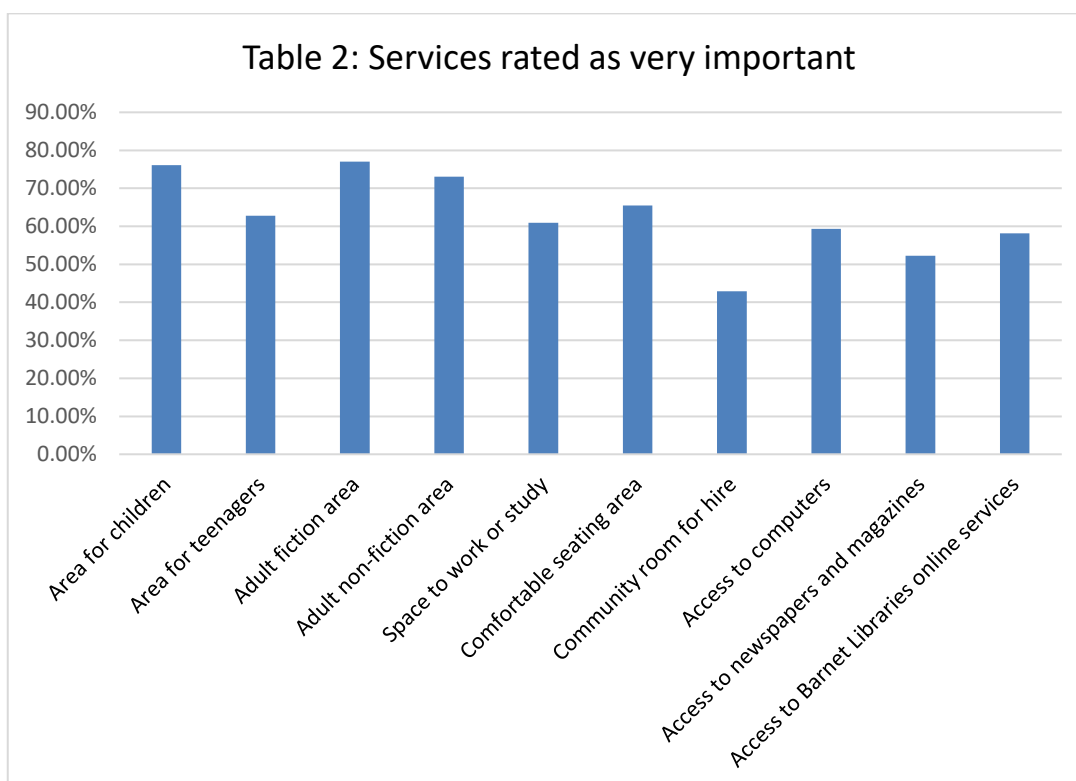
1.2.2 Section 2: Improving the library

In this part of the survey, residents were given a series of options that might improve each section of the library and were asked if they agreed or disagreed. They were then asked if they had any further ideas of their own. The areas of the library concerned were: the children's library; the teenage library; the adult library; the community/ activity room and the local studies service.

The options for which there was generally strong agreement are summarised below:

<u>The Children's Library</u>

➢ More books for children (66% 'strongly agree').
➢ Comfortable seating for shared reading (65%)
➢ A storytelling/ rhymetime area (61%)
➢ Technology to support learning (55%)

There was slightly less support for more homework tables (49% strongly agree); a tactile area for young children (47%); space for display of children's work (43%); access to Barnet Libraries online (38%).

There were a total of 43 additional comments. The most common themes are summarised below:

➢ Need for a wider and more comprehensive book stock for children.
➢ Need for a fun, comfortable and inviting space suitable not just for very young children but also children becoming more independent.

- ➢ A larger space. Many comments made reference to the size of the children's library prior to 2017 and expressed a desire for it to return to this footprint.
- ➢ Soundproofing/ the ability to separate the children's section from other parts of the library.

The Teenage Library

- ➢ Technology to support study (68% 'strongly agree').
- ➢ More study tables (63%)
- ➢ More books for leisure (62%)
- ➢ More books for study (60%)
- ➢ More comfortable seating (53%)

There was slightly less support for access to Barnet Libraries online (46% strongly agree); technology to support leisure (34%); information boards (38%)

There were a total of 35 additional comments. The most common themes are summarised below:

- ➢ Need for a wider range of the most popular books for young people.
- ➢ The need for access to quiet space to study away from other distractions.
- ➢ Several respondents commented that they did not know the library had a teenage section or where it was suggesting the need for the area to have a greater sense of identity distinct from other parts of the library. It should be noted that only 20% of respondents were current users of the teenage library.

The Adult Library

- ➢ More adult fiction books (70% 'strongly agree').
- ➢ More adult non-fiction books (66%)
- ➢ More comfortable seating (61%)
- ➢ More computers (51%)

There was slightly less support for access to Barnet Libraries Online (48%); information notice boards (42%); study or work tables (41%)

There were a total of 38 additional comments. The most common themes are summarised below:

- ➢ The need for a wider and more diverse book stock.
- ➢ A desire for more comfortable reading spaces.
- ➢ The wish to have the upper floors of the building reinstated as part of the library footprint.

The Community Room/ Activity Room

The majority of respondents were not current users of the community room (8% only). The potential improvement which garnered the greatest level of support was an increase in the size of the room with 58% strongly agreeing with this option. There was slightly less support for display boards (42%); equipment for hire (43%); projector/ audio-visual equipment (44%)

There were a total of 28 additional comments. The most common themes are summarised below:

➢ Better ventilation.
➢ More information about events and activities being delivered in the community room.

The Local Studies Service

All three suggestions for how to improve the Local Studies Service received reasonable support:

➢ Better access to local history resources online (61% 'strongly agree').
➢ Designated space to consult local history resources (54%)
➢ Display space for local history resources (53%)

There were a total of 28 additional comments. The most common themes are summarised below:

➢ The need for a more accessible and welcoming service. Some respondents commented that this element of the service is not well known and could have more benefit to local schools.

General comments

In many cases the same comments were repeated in answer to each section and did not relate specifically to one particular area of the library. Several respondents were supportive of the options to improve the library but only if the service remained in the current building. The desire for all floors of the building to be part of the library footprint was mentioned frequently.

1.2.3 Section 3: Potential new services

Respondents were also asked what they thought about a series of potential new services that could be provided from a new building. These were: the creation of a technology Makerspace; pop-up space for community services; exhibition space and business support/ work space. Responses are summarised below:

Option	Strongly agree & tend to agree	Tend to disagree & strongly disagree
Makerspace	50	11
Pop-up space for community services	54	11
Exhibition space	49	12
Business support/ work space	37	21

Finally, respondents were asked if they supported the idea of the library having a specific focus or theme with more events and services designed to reflect this particular area of

activity. Health and well-being was considered marginally more important than the other themes. Responses are summarised below:

Theme/ Focus	Very important	Fairly important	Total
Digital Literacy	31	24	55
Employment Support	26	25	51
Creative Arts	27	21	48
Local History	28	24	52
Health and Well-Being	29	28	57

Some respondents commented that they felt this was a gimmick and 37 participants opted to skip this question. The view that any new services should be accommodated within the existing building was repeated. Other comments included the desire to have more author events and talks and to use the library as a place to meet. Suggestions for other themes included a focus on books or on STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering, Maths).
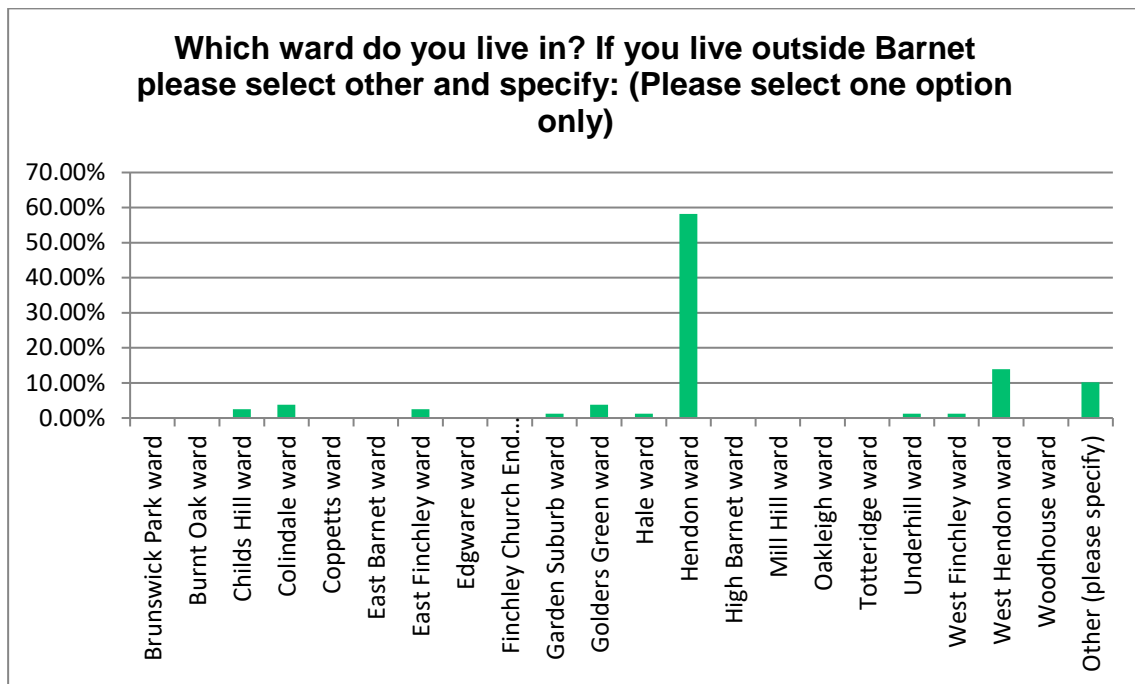
At the end of the survey respondents were asked for any other suggestions for services they would like to see in any new library. Comments not already expressed elsewhere in the survey included:

➢ Citizens Advice.
➢ The Boost Team.
➢ Better opening hours.
➢ More staffed hours.
➢ Outdoor spaces.
➢ Digital display screens.
➢ Adult education classes.
➢ A café.
➢ Book clubs for all ages.

1.3   Response profile

To assist us in complying with the duty under the Equality Act 2010 we asked respondents to provide equalities monitoring data and explained that collecting this information will help us understand the needs of our different communities and that all the information provided will be treated in the strictest confidence and will be stored securely in accordance with our responsibilities under data protection legislation (such as the General Data Protection Regulation or the Data Protection Act 2018). The response profile for each protected characteristic is shown below. Due to the low completion of these questions and small sample sizes it has not been possible to analyse or draw out any conclusion on the findings by protected characteristics.
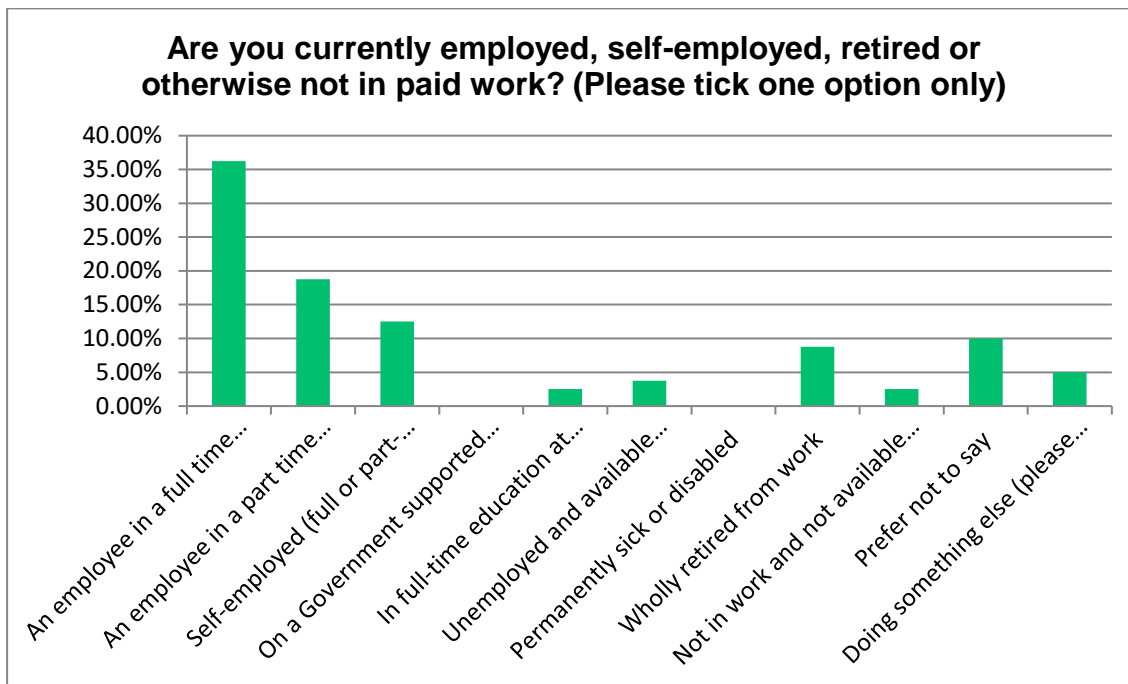
➢ 58% respondents live within the Hendon ward and 14% within the West Hendon ward.33 respondents elected to skip this question.

Which ward do you live in? If you live outside Barnet please select other and specify: (Please select one option only)
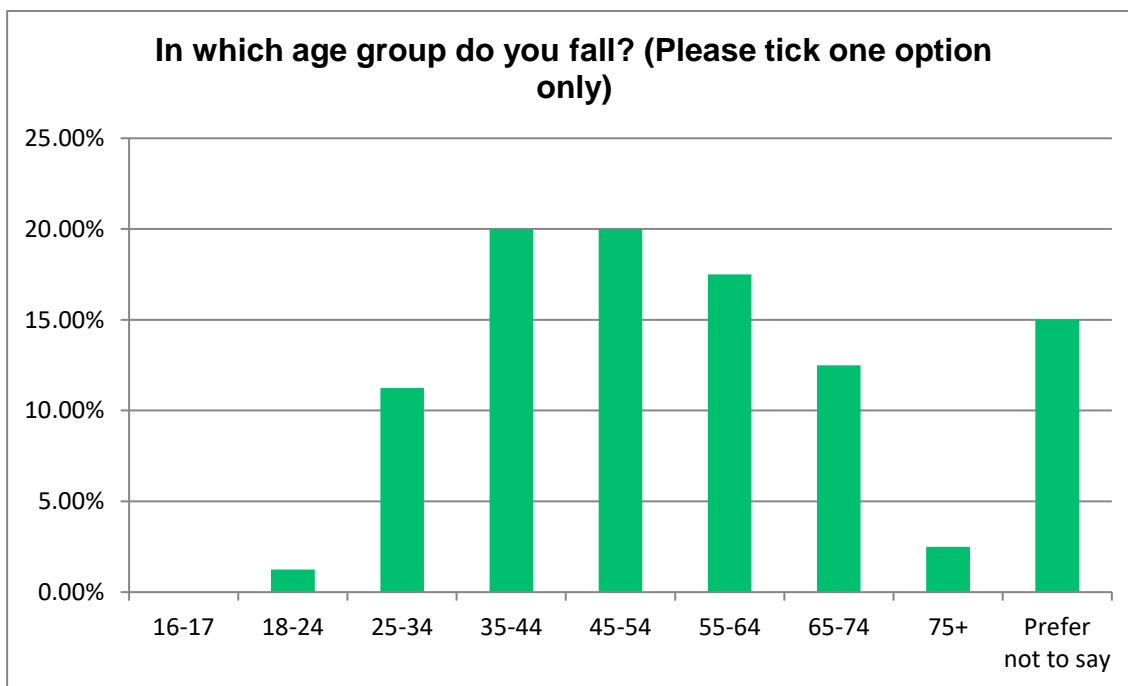

- 87% said that they were responding as Barnet residents, 12% as people who work in the borough and 1% as a representative of a public sector organisation. 30 respondents skipped this question.

Are you responding as: (Please tick one option only)
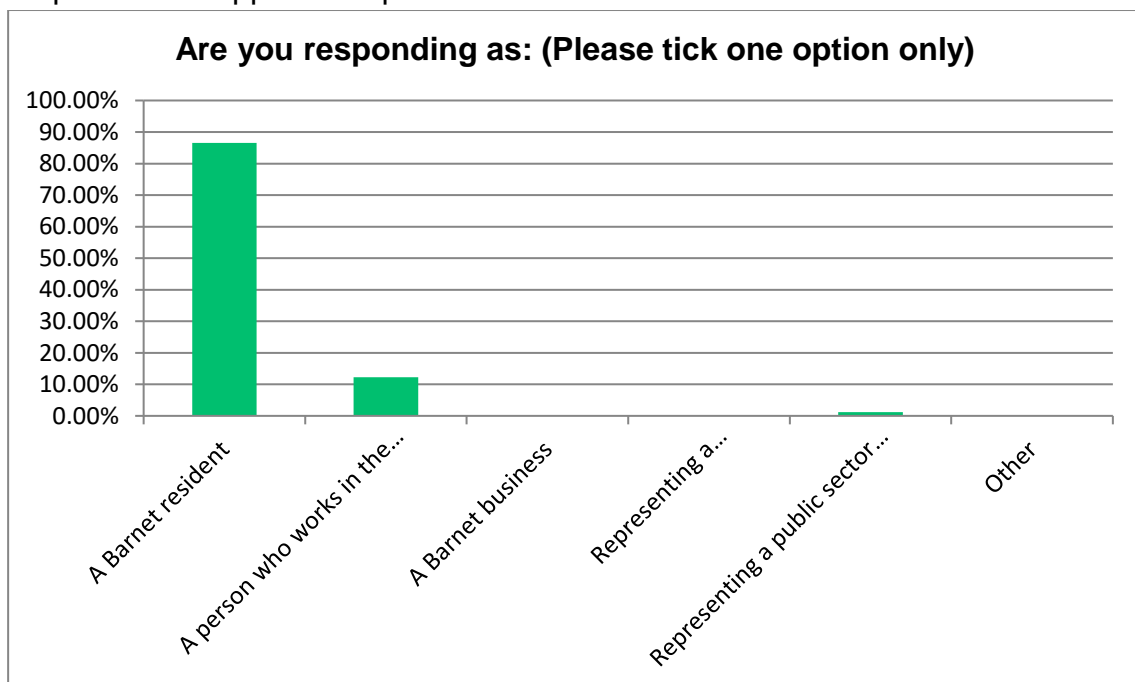
- The majority of respondents were either in full (36%) or part-time (19%) employment. 32 respondents skipped this question.

**Are you currently employed, self-employed, retired or otherwise not in paid work? (Please tick one option only)**

➢ 58% respondents were aged between 35 and 64. 32 respondents skipped this question.

**In which age group do you fall? (Please tick one option only)**

➢ 33% respondents stated they owned they accommodation through a mortgage or loan, a further 30% stated that they owned property outright, and 10% that they rented through a private landlord. 32 individuals skipped this question.

Does your household own or rent your accommodation? (Please tick one option only)
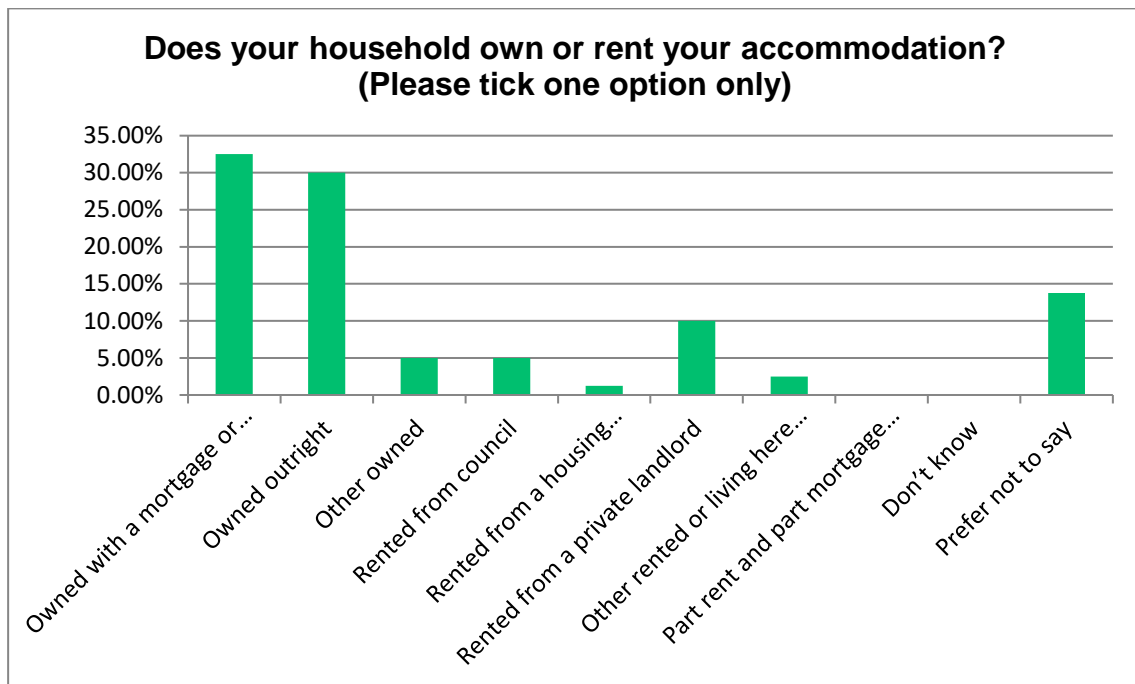
- 66% respondents identified as female, 20% as male and 14% chose 'prefer not to say.' 32 respondents skipped this question.
- 85% of respondents stated that their gender was the same as your sex registered at birth, with the remaining 15% preferring not to say. 34 individuals opted to skip this question.
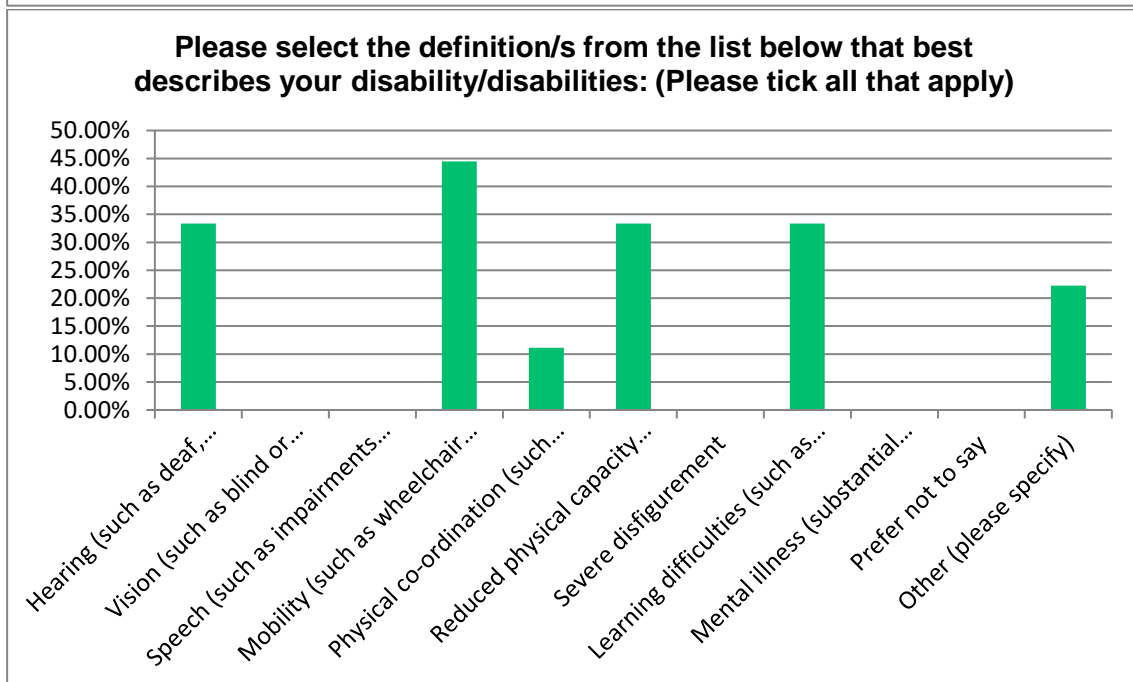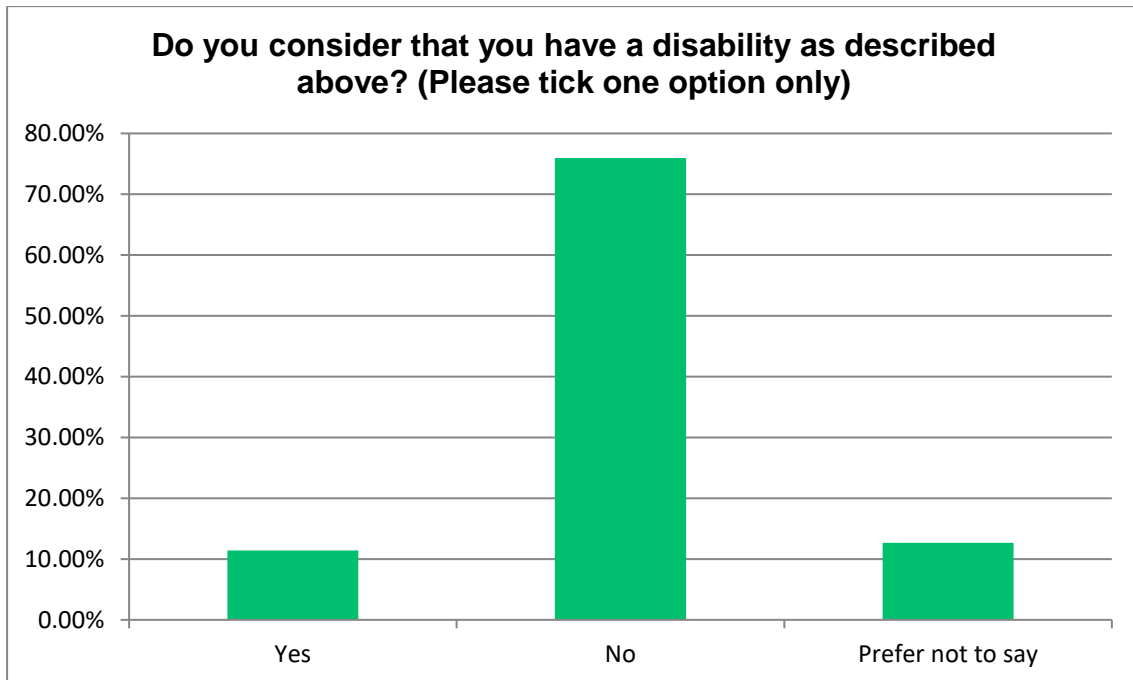

Are you: (Please tick one option only)
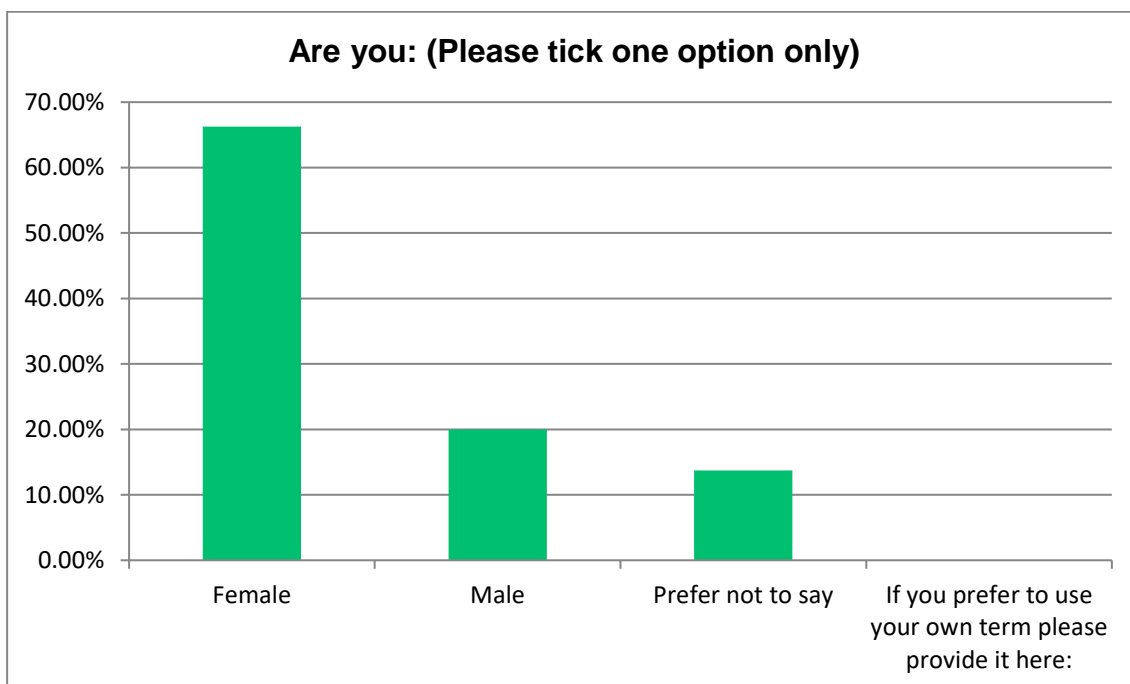
- The ethnicity of respondents is outline below:

Asian - Indian	3.80%	3
Asian - Pakistani	1.27%	1
Black - African	1.27%	1
Black - British	2.53%	2

Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	1.27%	1
White - British	49.37%	39
White - Irish	2.53%	2
White - any other	12.66%	10
Prefer not to say	20.25%	16
Any other ethnic group (please specify)	5.06%	4
	Answered	**79**
	Skipped	**33**

➢ 11% respondents considered themselves to have a disability. 33 respondents skipped this question.

Do you consider that you have a disability as described above? (Please tick one option only)

Please select the definition/s from the list below that best describes your disability/disabilities: (Please tick all that apply)

➢ Respondents described their faith in the following ways:

Christian	23.08%	18
Hindu	2.56%	2
Jewish	26.92%	21
Muslim	2.56%	2
No religion	20.51%	16
Prefer not to say	23.08%	18
Other religion/belief (please specify)	1.28%	1
	Answered	**78**
	Skipped	**34**

➢ 44% of respondents stated that they were married, 2.5% that they were divorced, 17% that they were single, and 9% that they were co-habiting. 34 people chose to skip this question.

What is your marital status? (Please tick one option only)
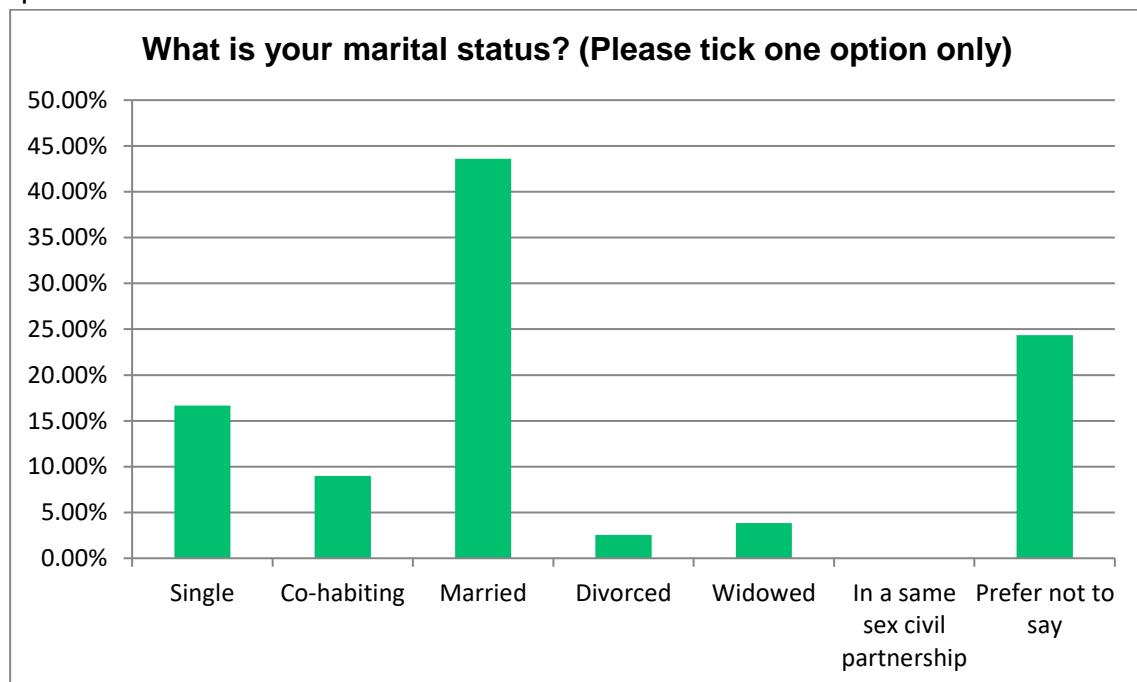
➢ Only 2% of individuals said that they were pregnant, and a further 2% said that they were currently on maternity leave

Are you pregnant and/or on maternity leave? (Please tick one option on each row)

Legend:
- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say
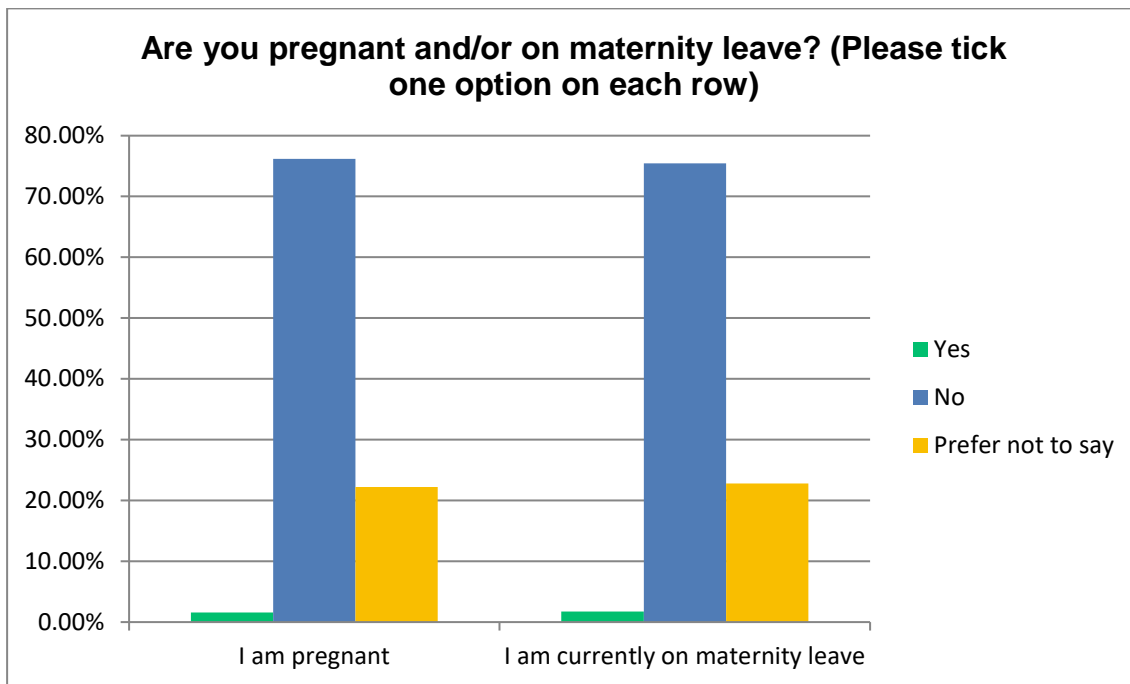
➤ 66% of respondents identified as straight or heterosexual, with 1% identifying as gay or lesbian, and a further 4% identifying with another sexual orientation. 29% preferred not to say and 35 individuals skipped this question.

What is your sexual orientation? (Please tick one option only)