

Autumn Community Views Survey

A report by Healthwatch Harrow



November 2021

“As mask wearing is no longer mandatory and with legal backup I am increasingly concerned when travelling on public transport.

Trains, underground and buses are now carrying more people and I am usually in the minority so far as wearing a mask is concerned.”

“My worry is the people who refuse the vaccination and refuse to wear masks. They put everyone else at risk.”

Local Residents

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1. Introduction

Healthwatch Harrow wanted to hear about how residents were feeling about Covid 19, having lived with the virus for the past 18 months. We wanted to gain a snapshot of residents' experiences and sentiments this autumn (October to November 2021) as part of the journey tackling Covid 19 as a community.

This investigation was run over a 3 week period to capture key intelligence to inform commissioners in both the Health & Social Care Sectors. **Please note the survey was undertaken prior to the new Omicron variation and the re-introduction of face masks on public transport and in shops.**

During this time several people had received their first, second and booster vaccinations in Harrow. There are however pockets of the community who fall short and have high vaccine hesitancy according to public health sources.

Most of the respondents of this investigation were British white and therefore this snapshot does not reflect other ethnic minorities. Harrow is very diverse and other groups need to be reached in innovative sways. Surveys do not always bring out the full picture and increased effort and resources need to be applied in order to get the views of a wider reaching audience.

Generally, those who are vaccinated and following public health messages are nervous when near people who openly ignore these protocols. They are however more confident as they are able to live their lives but with a level of precaution.

The effect on people's livelihoods is progressively better since they are able to work and study. Things are not back to normal because each step of the way covid protocols are advised.

The questions in the survey will continue to be the focus of discussions moving forward as the pandemic has not gone away. Healthwatch Harrow have other mechanisms to collect data and report through our various reports as Covid 19 is not an isolated issue and overlaps with peoples' mental and physical health. Most residents want to be healthy in order to increase immunity to fight any viruses. Those with long term illnesses like diabetes, hypertension etc worry while those who are at risk try to mitigate against it through diet and exercise.

There are however people in the community who distrust vaccines and its effects and work continues to be done in Harrow and nationally to address vaccine hesitancy.

2. Background

In 2020 Healthwatch Harrow ran two investigations themed around Covid 19 and this snapshot is roughly a year since and shows a different picture now that there are vaccines in existence.

The cold months (autumn and winter) always come with seasonal flu and now additionally covid pandemic pressures on the NHS.

Health and social care are currently working jointly with other partners to provide solutions to Harrow residents through the Integrated Care Partnership. The voluntary and private sectors are also collaborating with statutory partners. This will hopefully give residents some confidence.

3. Methodology

A short survey using survey monkey (a digital platform) with key questions facilitated the thought process to gauge how people felt 18 months on.

Social media and the Healthwatch Harrow website which together reaches a wide audience was used to circulate the survey which was responded to by 65 people over the 3 week period.

Three questions were asked:

Would you take the Covid-19 booster vaccination when offered?

Would take the booster if offered?

Do you feel confident going about your daily life bearing in mind the Covid-19 risks in the community?

4. Strengths & Limitations

The survey was run over three weeks as a short, focussed piece of work. This did not allow for other data collection methods like focus sessions where a deep dive will tackle inequalities where seldom heard groups could have been engaged.

Because of the risk of Covid 19 we were unable to hold in person sessions aimed at driving conversations in some of the emerging communities and in different languages.

The survey was sent to some of the emerging communities to trigger conversations through an interpreter.

5. Executive Summary of Findings

In November 2021 we hosted a 'Community Views' survey, to get views on the Covid-19 booster vaccination, levels of confidence post-lockdown, and 'biggest worries' about the virus going forward.

67 local people completed the survey. This is a summary of key findings - see section 7 for the analysis in full.

Summary of Key Findings

Uptake of Booster Vaccination

- Around two-thirds of respondents (67%) indicate they would take the booster.
- When looking at age, we find that all those aged 65 plus would take it, while around half of 45-64 year olds (54%) and just a third of 25-44 year olds (33%) say they will.
- Men are 15% more likely to take it than women.
- Those living in the HA7 (85%) and HA3 (76%) postcode areas are significantly more likely to accept than those in HA5 (58%).

Confidence in 'going about daily life'

- Again, around two thirds of respondents (67%) feel confident in going about their daily life.
- When looking at age, we find that those aged 65 plus are noticeably least confident in going about their daily lives.
- Men are some 30% more confident than women.
- Those living in HA3 (76%) and HA7 (75%) are noticeably more confident than those in HA5 (42%).

Top Trends

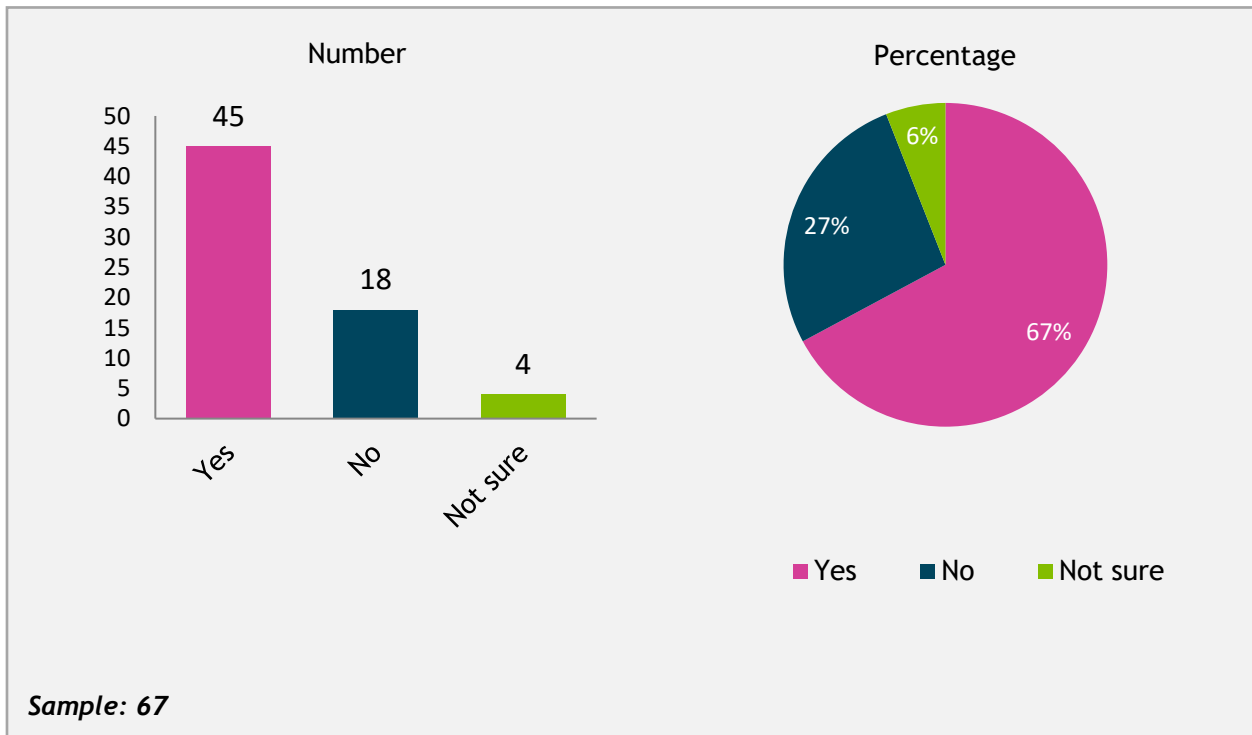
- When asking people specifically about their 'biggest worry', the clearest concern, receiving 24% of comments is a lack of taking basic precautions - particularly mask wearing.
- A fifth of respondents (21%) are worried about contracting the virus while 10% have concerns about passing it on to others.
- 15% are worried about the spread by unvaccinated people and 4% cite fears around vaccine efficacy.
- There is also a notable level of uncertainty (13%) and apprehension about and future lockdowns (12%).

6. Analysis of Feedback

In November 2021 we hosted a 'Community Views' survey, to get views on the Covid-19 booster vaccination, levels of confidence post-lockdown, and 'biggest worries' about the virus going forward.

67 local people completed the survey, this analysis is based on their collective feedback.

6.1 Would you take the Covid-19 booster vaccination when offered?



Initially we asked people whether they would take the booster vaccine, if offered. Around two-thirds of respondents (67%) indicate they would, while over a quarter (27%) would not.

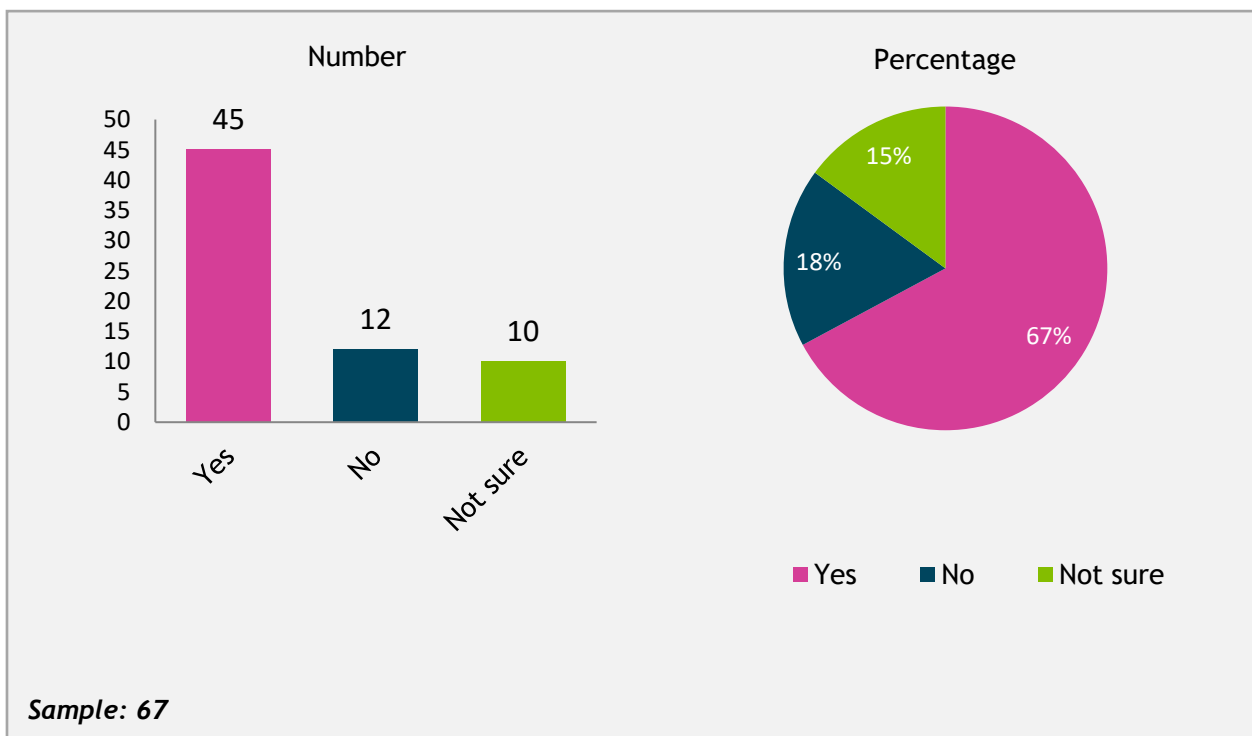
6.1.1 Would take the booster if offered (impact scale table)

	%
Aged 65+	100%
HA7 Postcode	85%
Male	82%
HA3 Postcode	76%
Female	67%
All respondents (baseline)	67%
HA5 Postcode	58%
Aged 45-64	54%
Aged 25-44	33%

When looking closer at age, we find that all those aged 65 plus would take the booster, while around half of 45-64 year olds (54%) and just a third of 25-44 year olds (33%) say they will.

Men are 15% more likely than women, and those living in the HA7 and HA3 postcode areas are significantly more likely to accept than those in HA5.

6.2 Do you feel confident going about your daily life bearing in mind the Covid-19 risks in the community?



Around two thirds of respondents (67%) feel confident in going about their daily life, while 18% do not. A further 15% are unsure.

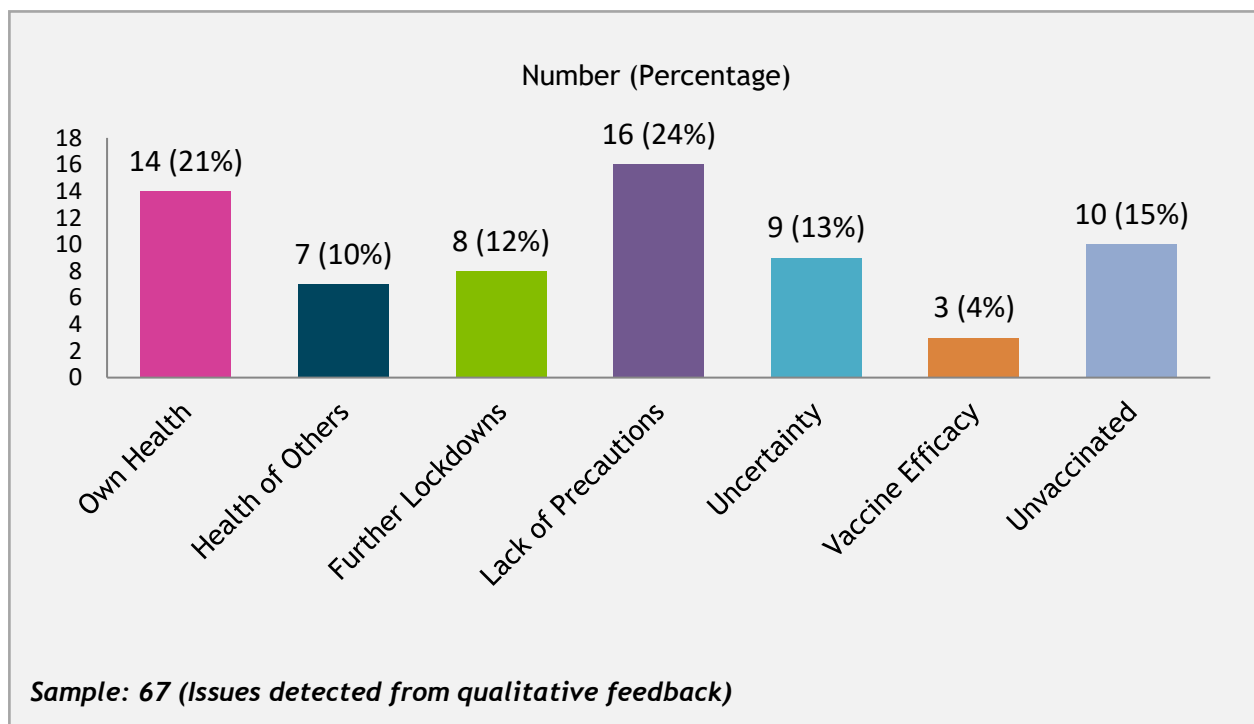
6.2.1 Feel confident in going about daily life (impact scale table)

	%
Male	88%
HA3 Postcode	76%
HA7 Postcode	75%
Aged 45-64	75%
Aged 25-44	67%
All respondents (baseline)	67%
Aged 65+	58%
Female	58%
HA5 Postcode	42%

When looking at age, we find that those aged 65 plus are noticeably least confident in going about their daily lives.

Men are some 30% more confident than women, while those living in HA3 and HA7 are noticeably more confident than those in HA5.

6.3 What is your biggest worry about Covid-19?



When asking people specifically about their 'biggest worry', the clearest concern, receiving 24% of comments is a lack of taking basic precautions - particularly mask wearing.

A fifth of respondents (21%) are worried about contracting the virus while 10% have concerns about passing it on to others.

15% are worried about the spread by unvaccinated people and 4% cite fears around vaccine efficacy.

There is also a notable level of uncertainty (13%) and apprehension about and future lockdowns (12%).

6.4 Lack of Precautions

16 people (24%) express concerns about a general reduction in mask wearing - with public transport frequently mentioned.

Some feel that a lack of clarity and encouragement from the government is a direct contributing factor.

Selected Comments

"As mask wearing is no longer mandatory and with legal backup I am increasingly concerned when travelling on public transport. Trains, underground and buses are now carrying more people and I am usually in the minority so far as wearing a mask is concerned."

"People are no longer wearing masks in enclosed spaces, particularly the underground."

"People on transport and theatres and cinemas and shops not wearing face coverings."

"I avoid parties and large gatherings especially where alcohol makes people a little less cautious. Some act as if it is all over which is worrying for the NHS and the vulnerable."

"I feel the government should firmly say that masks should be worn in enclosed public spaces."

"Clear message from Government & NHS that wearing a mask, washing hands and fresh air are essential for survival. It is not asking too much of its citizens."

6.5 Own Health

14 people (21%) are worried about contracting the virus, and the longer term effects on health.

Selected Comments

"I believe it is a silent killer."

"The effect of catching it on my long-term health."

"Long Covid is a worry for me because I spent a fortnight in Northwick Park Hospital with the virus a year ago. It took me 2-3 months to fully recover."

6.6 Unvaccinated

10 people (15%) are resentful of those who are not vaccinated, with fears around the workplace, mutations and further lockdowns expressed - as a consequence.

Selected Comments

"Young unvaccinated people spreading the virus unknowingly."

"My worry is the people who refuse the vaccination and refuse to wear masks. They put everyone else at risk."

"Health care workers not taking the vaccination, when we the public do."

"That there will be another mutation if people do not get vaccinated and that it will not be stopped by the vaccine."

6.7 Uncertainty

9 people (13%) comment on uncertainty, with some suggesting that 'fake news' or false information is a key contributor. Others note that the virus is now a permanent feature of daily life.

Selected Comments

"Fake news and people believing it."

"That people will never stop behaving fearfully about one particular tiny pathogen."

"The fear it spreads."

"That it will remain a risk in our lives for many years to come."

"That we will never get back to normal again."

6.8 Further Lockdowns

8 people (12%) fear that increasing case numbers will lead to future lockdowns.

Selected Comments

“A surge in cases leading to another lockdown.”

“The figures will rise and restrictions will need to be implemented again.”

6.9 Health of Others

7 people (10%) are anxious about spreading the virus to family members, or to those who may be vulnerable. One person questions the school environment.

Selected Comments

“That my clinically extremely vulnerable husband catches it and dies.”

“Getting Covid and passing it onto more vulnerable people without knowing.”

“Spread of covid. I have vulnerable parents and so afraid of them catching it.”

“To get it and transfer it to my child.”

“Vulnerable people who cannot recover.”

“Schools mainly, I don't feel they are safe for children.”

6.10 Vaccine Efficacy

3 people (4%) express concerns about the efficacy of general, or certain vaccines.

Selected Comments

“Being forced to have regular boosters on an unproven vaccination.”

“The vaccine does not offer total protection.”

“I don't want Pfizer. I will take a 3rd dose of AstraZeneca.”

7. Distribution and Comment

This report is available to the general public via our website and is shared with our statutory and community partners. Accessible formats are available. If you have any comments on this report or wish to share your views and experiences, please contact us:

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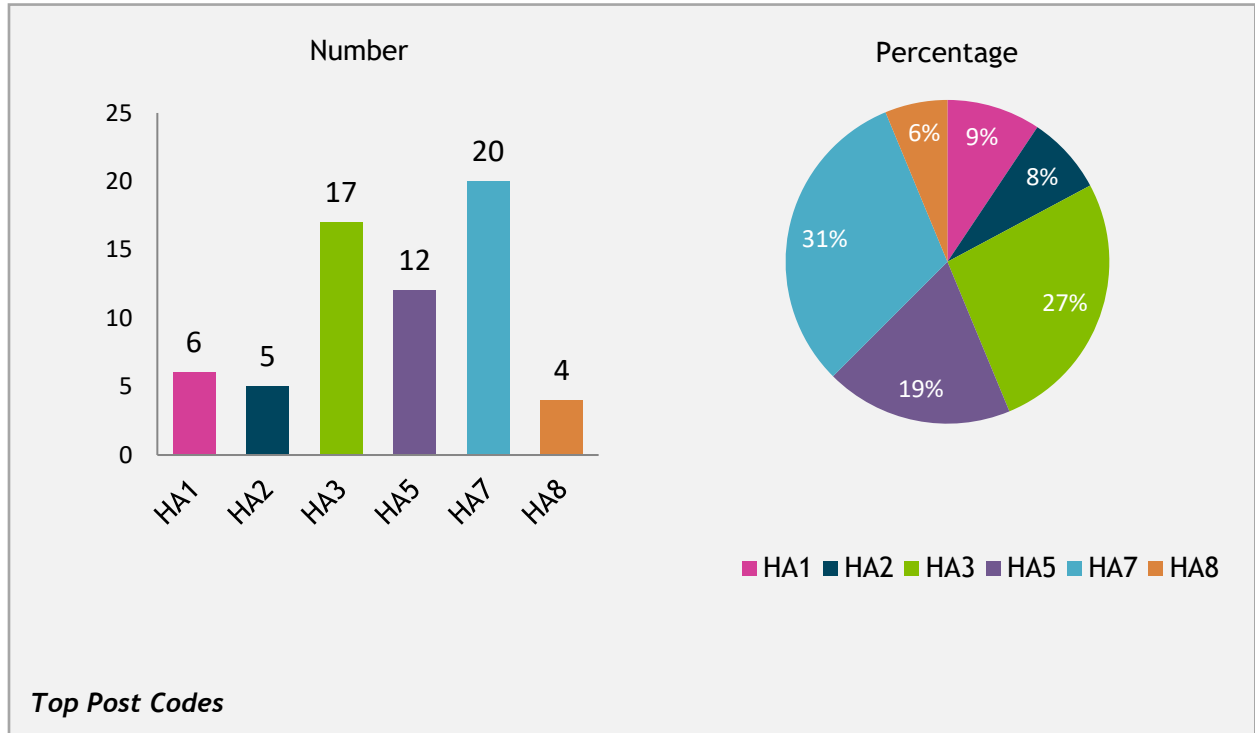
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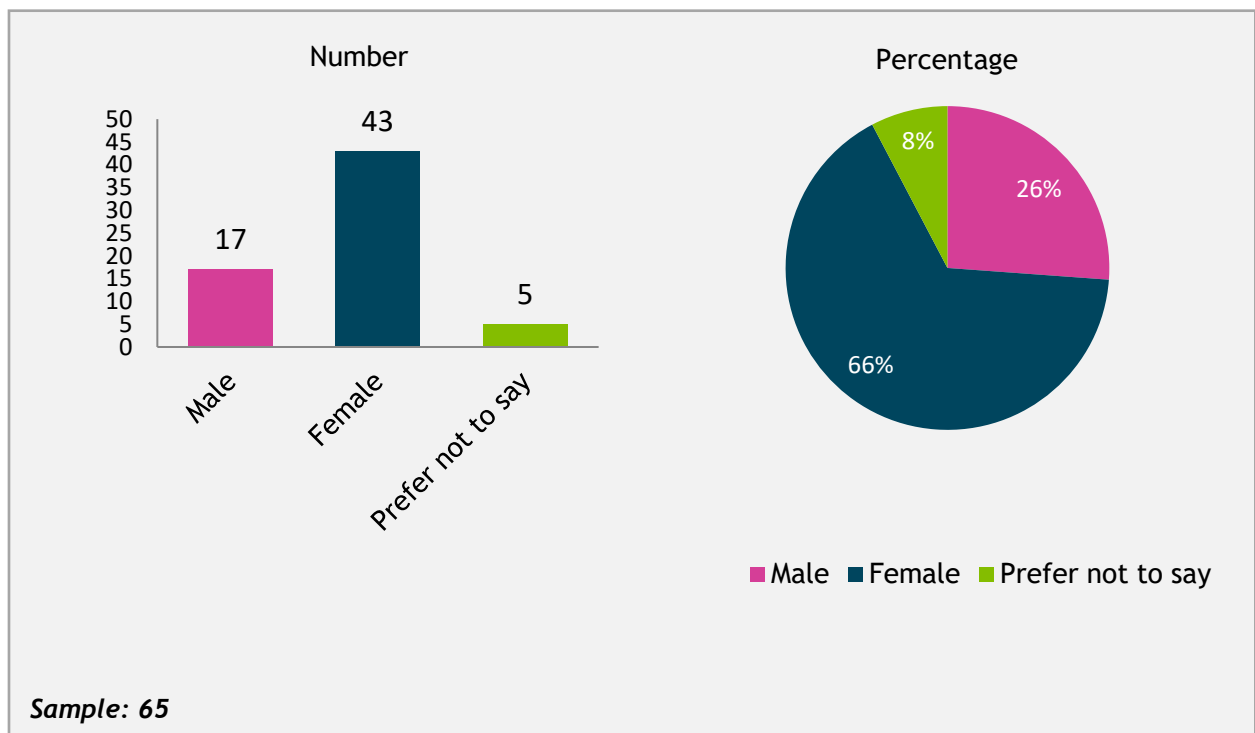
Appendix 1 - Demographics

The demographics of participants are stated as follows.

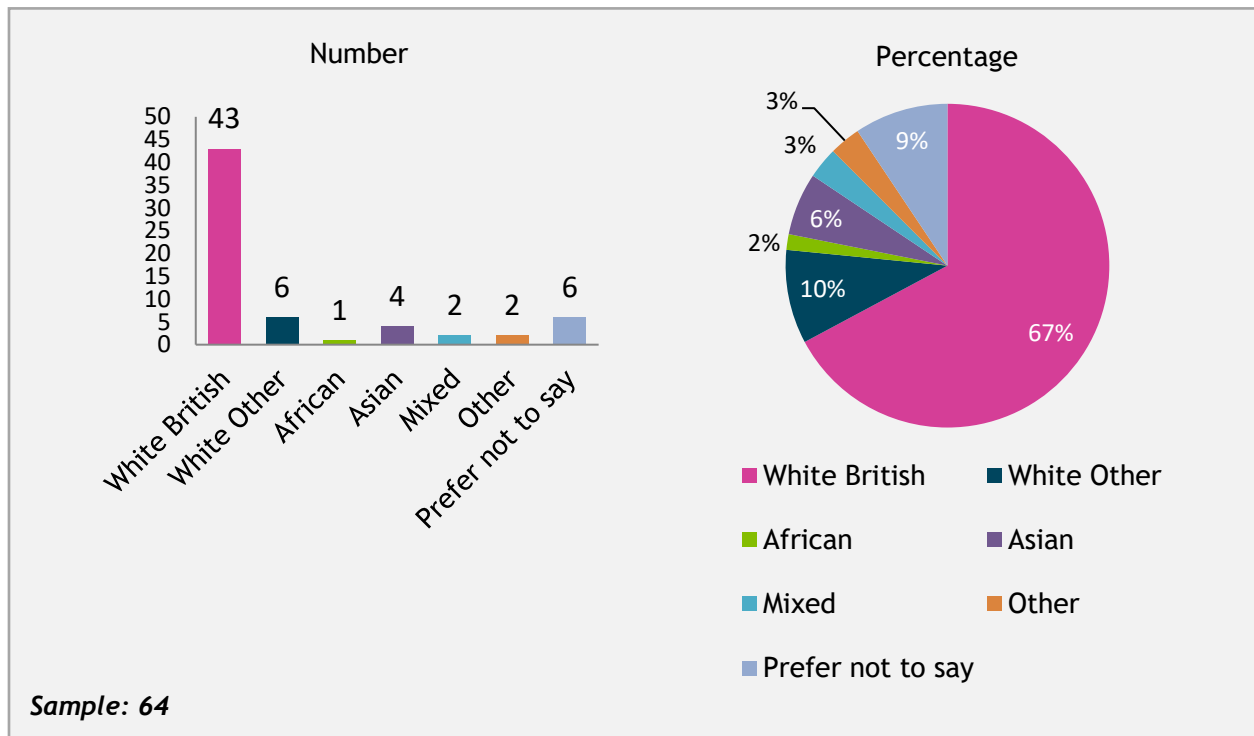
Post Code Area



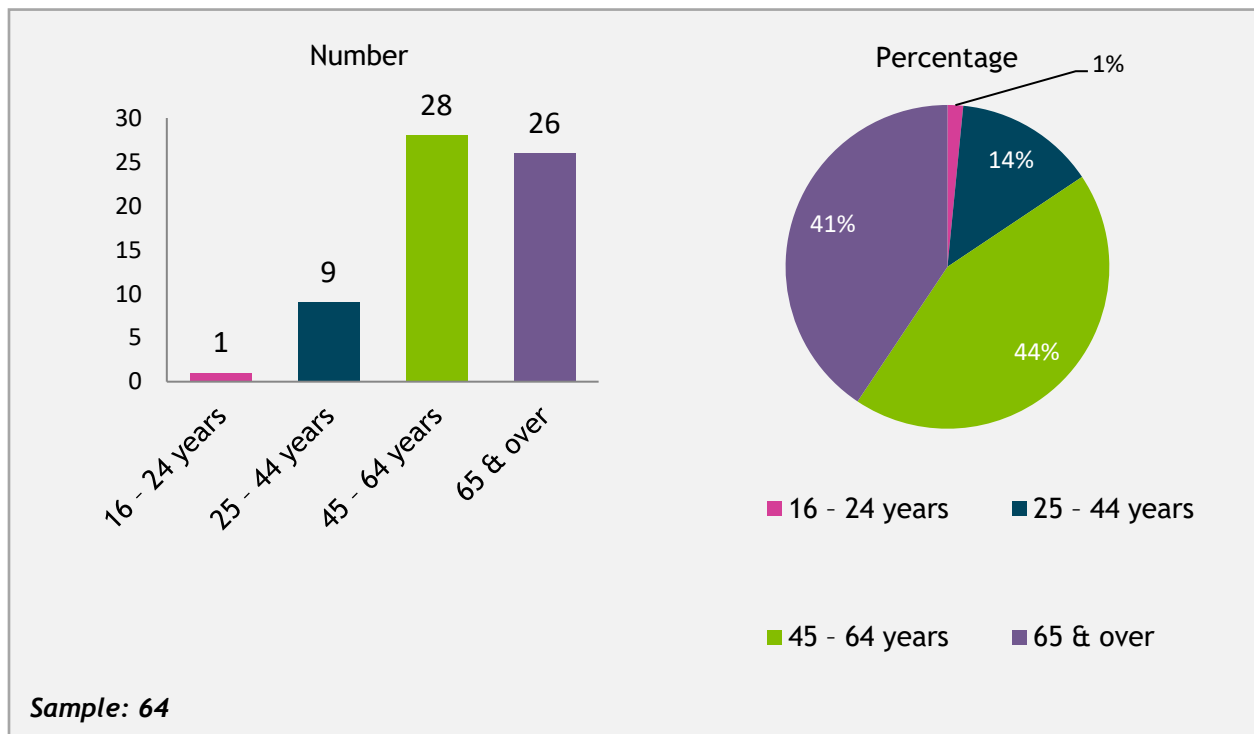
Gender



Ethnicity



Age



“It occupies our lives for a long time to come. We need to learn to live with it...”

Local Resident

