



North Ayrshire Council
Comhairle Siorrachd Àir a Tuath

Ayrshire Equality Partnership Equality Outcome Consultation Results 2021 - 2025



Output of consultation

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Introduction

To support the development of a new Equality Outcome's plan to be published by April 2021, the Ayrshire Equality Outcome Partners undertook a consultation exercise during October and November 2020. This paper shall provide an overview of the responses received.

The consultation focussed on gathering opinion on the existing 4 Equality Outcomes, shared across Ayrshire. They are, that in Ayrshire:

- people experience safe and inclusive communities
- people have equal opportunities to access and shape our public services
- people have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life
- public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

Method

Due to restrictions in place as a result of the Covid-19 pandemic, members of the Ayrshire Equality Partnership (AEP) recognised the challenge in place for effective engagement. Physical events and traditional engagement methods were simply not possible.

The method adopted focussed on an online survey created using the Microsoft Forms software. The question set was designed and agreed by AEP members. In all, it contained 10 questions relating directly to Equality Outcomes, plus an additional 'about you' section asking people for relevant demographic information.

The questions in relation to Equality Outcomes took both an asset and deficit approach, in that we asked respondents to reflect on positive things they have experienced as well as any negatives. In analysing responses, we took a thematic approach in which we aimed to group responses by a recurring theme.

Duration

The consultation ran for a total of five weeks from 13th October 2020 until 18th November 2020

Responses

In total **128** responses were received from people across Ayrshire. An overview of all responses, broken down by broad demographics and protected characteristics can be found in appendix a.

A summary of responses are as follows. Of the 128 responses:

- 53 came from East Ayrshire, 44 from North Ayrshire and 24 from South Ayrshire. A further 2 were from people outside Ayrshire with 5 choosing to not respond.
- 65% of respondents were female, 26% were male. The remaining 9% preferred not to say. Further, 93% of respondents reported to be the same sex as assigned at birth. 7% preferred not to answer
- 64% of respondents were aged between 41 and 64.
- 19% of respondents confirmed they had a disability
- 90% of respondents identified as White or Scottish, 4% identified as BAME or Mixed, 5% preferred not to say
- 41% of respondents identified as Christian, 35% had no religion or belief, 17% preferred not to say. Only 6% of respondents identified with other religions (Jewish, Muslim, Pagan, Spiritual)
- 80% of respondents identified as Heterosexual, 13% preferred not to say. The remaining 7% were made up of people who identified as Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual or other.
- 8% of respondents were pregnant or had given birth in the last 26 weeks. 7% of respondents are currently on maternity or paternity leave.

Section 1 – Do you think these (Equality) outcomes are still relevant to take forward

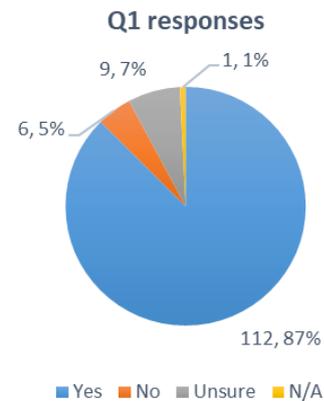
Q1. Do you think these (Equality) outcomes are still relevant to take forward?

This question was asked to help us identify if the equality outcomes we adopted in 2017 are still relevant to progress to our next plan.

As is evidenced from the chart opposite, of the 128 responses received, most respondents - 87% (112) - agreed that the Equality Outcomes are still relevant to take forward.

7% (9) of respondents were unsure in their response. In some instances, responders indicated they agreed with some of the outcomes, but not all.

5% (6) of those who responded disagreed with the outcomes and a further 1% (1) provided no response.



Summary of Comments

The majority of comments are positive however, state that there is room for improvement, the outcomes should be looked at in depth and that the outcomes should be continuously reviewed. Some of the suggestions are as follows:

- *I think our Councils make every effort to take on new ideas and support fair outcomes.we are all firefighting - sticking plasters when radical surgery is required.*
- *They are more important than ever since the corona pandemic has exposed greater suffering among disadvantaged people than in the rest of our community.*
- *Extremely relevant especially their right to have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life and having equal opportunities to access and shape our public services*
- *Yes, they are more important than ever since the corona pandemic has exposed greater suffering among disadvantaged people than in the rest of our community.*

There may be scope to make the Outcomes more meaningful; as one comment suggests:

- *instead of equal opportunities to access & shape public services, I'd prefer to see something about the actual outcomes as a result of that access. Similar for No. 3 having an opportunity isn't the same as a meaningful outcome.*

There were not many comments in relation those who said the outcomes were not relevant, one commented that they were meaningless waffle.

Section 2: In Ayrshire, people experience safe and inclusive communities

This section asked people to reflect on the above outcome. Two questions were asked to gather both positive and negative experiences.

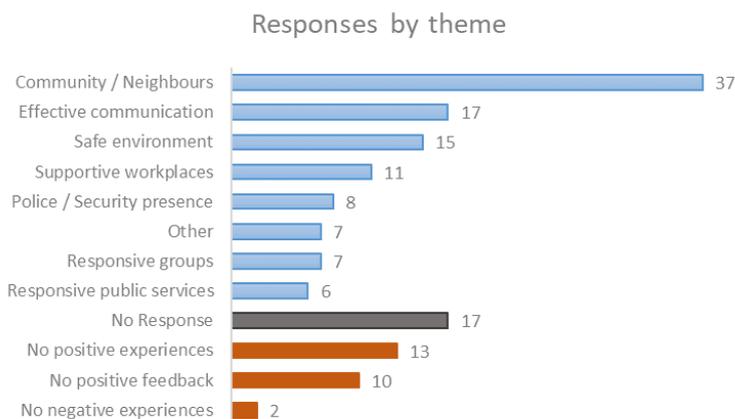
Q2. Please share any positive experiences you may have had which has made you feel more safe and included in Ayrshire.

Of the 128 responses received, 111 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 17 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 133 mappings were generated (150 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.



Q2. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below. Please note, that only themes that account for more than 10% of responses are included.

Community / Neighbours

A number of responses received related to a positive sense of 'Community or neighbours'. In total 37 (29%) responses were mapped to this theme.

Against this theme respondents identified the positive aspects they have experienced in their local communities, such as having friendly neighbours, supportive community groups and even supportive local businesses. A few statements also reflected how this sense of community has become more apparent during the lockdown period.

Below is an example of some of the statements received:

- *Acts of kindness from others during these difficult times with people looking out for neighbours and vulnerable people.*
- *Local volunteering schemes during the pandemic show that, on the whole, there is goodwill in our community to lend a helping hand to people in need. - e.g. via foodbanks; collection of prescriptions for vulnerable people.*
- *I have good neighbours, as a local community I feel we look out for each other*

Conclusion

People feel safe in when they are part of a strong supportive community.

Effective Communication

17 (13%) responses indicated the value in good communication locally. Responses here included the ability of people to access information, the range of communication options provided by local groups, organisations and public bodies and also the opportunity for people to contribute to local consultations and surveys. Some responses also referenced good communication between public services.

Below is an example of some of the statements received:

- *Positive social media by all equality partners, councils, police*
- *Lots of opportunities to participate in surveys and discussion groups.*
- *Regular and informative emails keeping me up to date regarding whats going on in Ayrshire*
- *Communication and collaborative working between individual specialists and different Dept's within the HSCP, providers and families that know and view the person as a whole person with unique characters and values.*

Conclusion

Effective communication will help people feel more informed and valued.

Safe Environment

15 (12%) responses suggested that people live in neighbourhoods that they regard as safe places to be. Responses include reference to safe streets, the availability of Keep Safe places and current adherence to Covid-19 safety protocols.

Below is an example of some of the statements received:

- *well-lit streets and folks generally being respectful of others while I'm out in town/neighbourhood*
- *I like the Keep Safe places as I know that these are safe places to go if anyone needs support*
- *you are not allowed to enter any place without face covering and social distancing and use sanitising product*

Conclusion

Creating safe and supportive community environments contributes to the wellbeing for local people.

Negative Responses

In some instances, people could not respond with any positive experiences.

10 (8%) responses provided not positive feedback, that is to say they responded with comments such as; "None".

13 (10%) of responses stated that they could not identify any positive examples, with some responses stating that there were none. For example:

- *I haven't had any positive experiences.*
- *Can't think of any. The streets are littered and mugging and drug misuse are everywhere.*
- *I Cannot Think Of Any Positive Changes In My Area In The Past 4 Years*

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected favourably on a number of other area. These include:

- **Supportive workplaces:** *In my workplace in always feel safe and valuable.*
- **Police/ Security Presence:** *Police have a strong presence in my local area*
- **Responsive groups:** *Local voluntary agencies are supportive where others find us hard to reach.*
- *Z1 youth group for example*

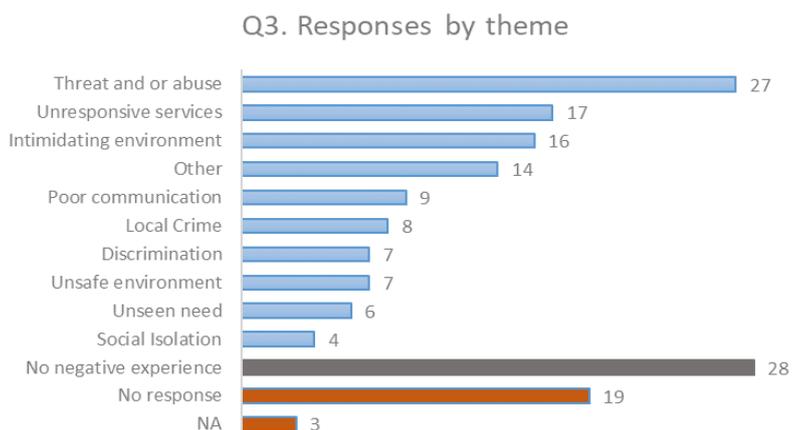
Q3. Please give us examples of anything that has happened that made you feel unsafe and/or excluded.

Of the 128 responses received, 106 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 22 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 143 mappings were generated (165 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.



Q3. Response by Theme

No negative experience

Most of the responses to this question were mapped under the 'No negative experience' theme. 28 (22%) responses, indicated that they could not provide any examples of anything that has happened that made them feel unsafe or excluded.

Threat and/or Abuse

27 (21%) of responses indicated that they have faced some form of threat or abuse in the past. Responses range from verbal abuse, being harassed while out in the community, discrimination or being intimidated by individuals or groups and online abuse. In many these instances, it has been expressed that no action has been taken by any authority to address the issues

Below is an example of some of the statements received:

- *Being harrassed at bus stops or walking home during the afternoon/night.*
- *Acts of verbal abuse and vandalism in some parts of Ayrshire from youths.*
- *Going to the top of my street and a big man standing in front of my wheelchair ,stopping me going anywhere and demanding money. I dot know what was wrong with him . But it scared me.*
- *My partner once reported a hate crime that happened to him in Irvine Town Centre to the police and was basically told they could not do anything, surely this is not the way forward, they keep banging on that this will not be tolerated, yet when it does get reported nothing is done, then they wonder why people don't bother reporting these issues, we need these crimes to be taken more seriously, they do not realise the impact these things can have on someone's life.*

Conclusion

Many local people still experience threat and abuse from many areas in there community. There is also a sense that there is little that can be done to address it.

Unresponsive service

17 (13%) of responses indicated a frustration with services being unresponsive to local need. This includes responses where people have had no response to a concerns they have raised, poor access to local services' perception of poor services in rural areas or where people feel local areas are being ignored.

Below is an example of some of the statements received:

- *often 3rd sector agencies advertise they cover pan Ayrshire but often if you are from a rural area they wont come (Barnardos/ womens aid)*
- *My experiences of the GP and community mental health services is that they are unwilling to offer support for those suffering badly with mental health issues.*
- *Not being given adequate access to GP surgery, not open enough, got worse over past few years. Not enough police presence to deal with anti social behaviour, for example illegal activity, like drugs.*
- *My area has very high crime at the moment, people have been moved in to the area from elsewhere and there are lots of break ins of cars and houses. This puts me on edge. Other people in the community have contacted local councillors and the likes but nothing is being done. These crimes are happening on a daily basis.*

Conclusion

Services must respond quickly and effectively to concerns raised and seek to actively address existing issues in local communities.

Intimidating environment

16 (13%) of responses indicated that some areas feel unsafe. These responses include a blend of unwelcoming environments (poor lighting/ boarded up buildings) and perceived anti-social behaviour (groups of youths hanging around).

Below is an example of some of the statements received:

- *It's quite intimidating going into shops in Bellfield, due to addicts hanging around outside waiting for methadone at pharmacy.*
- *Kilmarnock town centre is unsafe as there are too many people loitering*
- *Number of teenagers that like to hang out outside Tesco in the evening is also intimidating/unsafe.*
- *Dog attack. Car keyed outside home. Drugs being sold from cars and properties. litter and dog waste. Seagulls attacking also. Boarded up properties and burnt out property make area undesirable*

Conclusion

Work must be done to make all areas in Ayrshire safe and welcoming spaces.

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected unfavourably on a number of other areas. These include:

- **Poor communication:** *The polarisation of social media is unhelpful as we are more in the digital age.*
- **Local Crime:** *Sometimes gangs of youths hanging around the play park adjacent to my home, can be intimidating. There has also been an increase in attempted burglaries in the area.*
- **Discrimination:** *still a massive stigma around substance use. Many people and services are not all that kind to people with substance use problems*

Section 3: In Ayrshire people have equal opportunities to access and shape our public services

This section asked people to reflect on the above outcome. Two questions were asked to gather both positive and negative experiences.

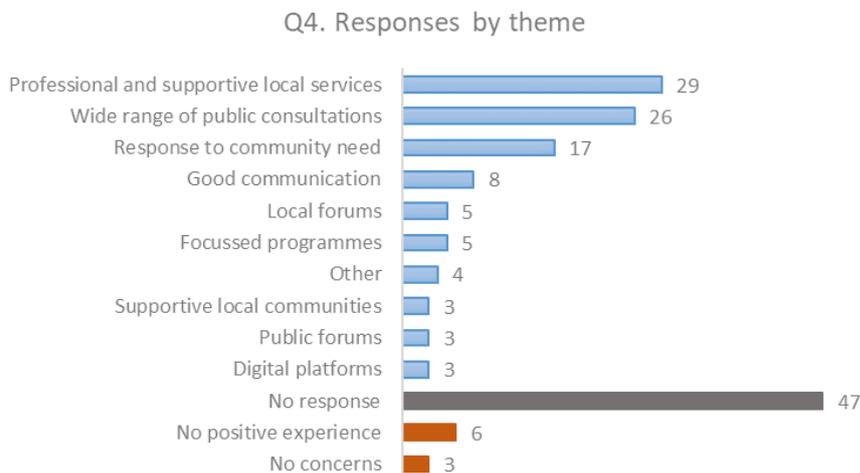
Q4. Please share any positive experiences you may have had which has made you feel more safe and included in Ayrshire.

Of the 128 responses received, 81 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 47 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 112 mappings were generated (159 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.



Q4. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below. Please note, that only themes that account for more than 10% of responses are included.

Professional and Supportive local services

29 (23%) of responses indicated a satisfaction of the local services supporting Ayrshire. This includes good local bus routes, appreciation for local refuse collection and experience of helpful and supportive staff.

Some examples of responses received are:

- Local bus routes are available, local convenience shops are also available. These are services which have worked well to support the communities. And myself during this year - local shops more than public transport.
- Local pharmacies, saves trips into town - more accessible for communities.
- There are many public services that provide an excellent relationship with member of the public and perform fantastic services.
- statutory addiction services (or public services) have been excellent - very welcoming and very helpful in promoting recovery

Conclusion

There is a high level of support and respect for local services.

Wide range of public Consultations

26 (20%) of responses indicated that there were a number of opportunities to be involved in local decision making. This included various consultations and surveys and various forms of community engagement

Some examples of responses received are:

- *Various consultations by the Council, NHS A&A, ADP and HSCP to both the public and staff. This was especially positive during lockdown e.g. providing free school meals etc to vulnerable families.*
- *Consultations from local authority on decisions effecting local areas eg town centre planning.*
- *The annual budget setting consultation process, and the participatory budget meetings have enabled local decision making.*
- *The three councils do well when they actively engage with communities. Unfortunately too often they are viewed as "the enemy" by said communities.*

Conclusion

Many people are aware of attempts made by local services to actively engage, and appear keen to be involved.

Response to community need

17 (13%) of responses highlighted that local public sector bodies are good at responding to local need. This has included lots of reference to the recent response to Covid-19 pandemic, and also highlighting the output of plans following public consultations and service responses to individual need.

Some examples of responses received are:

- *I have been involved with nac in a lot of discussions in my local community regarding food poverty*
- *The locality planning forums have started to develop and drive the solutions to issues.*
- *Elderly parents have been supported through lockdown via food parcels whilst shielding. Haven't experienced anything personally but there are initiatives out there offering support.*
- *The local hubs in North Ayrshire have been of great benefit - all agencies working together to ensure people have access to food, medicine and advice on money matters*

Conclusion

Many people feel that mechanisms are in place for local bodies to effectively respond to identified local need.

Negative responses

6 (5%) of responses were received with the respondent suggesting poor local services. Some comments provided where:

- *No positive comment to provide.*
- *Didn't need support. I have always found Council hr to be slow and quite frankly useless. Better off being direct*
- *Always feel decisions are made before consultations and often made on stats which are not helpful to rural communities.*

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected unfavourably on a number of other These include:

- **Good communication:** *Partnership working information sharing is improving*
- **Local Forums:** *The locality planning forums have started to develop and drive the solutions to issues.*
- **Focussed Programmes:** *SIMD1 and 2 areas have more opportunity due to the supports in place and communication highlighting opportunities from local authority representatives*

Q5. What concerns do you have, or barriers have you faced when trying to access local services or being involved in local decision-making?

Of the 128 responses received, 93 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 35 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 120 mappings were generated (155 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.

Q5. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below. Please note, that only themes that account for more than 10% of responses are included.

Poor Communication

30 (23%) of responses indicated that local public bodies have poor communication. Responses range from accessible formats, limited promotion of public events, poor response from services and limited knowledge of available local services.

Some examples of responses received are:

- *Meetings and opportunities to be involved are not always well publicised at grass roots levels*
- *Aware of not all Council templates, letters and forms accessible or clearly written, or have a standard comment that they are available in other languages, Braille etc.*
- *It is concerning that decisions appear to be made at local Council meetings with councillors with these decisions then appearing the local newspaper or Social Media. There appears very little advertising of such meetings and therefore the public has no input.*
- *Communication. Sometimes you get an email or see something online, but mostly there is no consistent ie monthly update on things that impact you or you could engage in.*

Conclusion

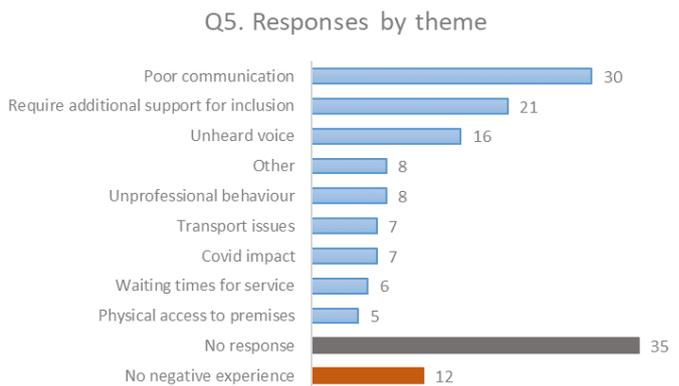
Opportunities for engagement should be more widely publicised. Communication across the board could be improved with special consideration taken to ensure information is accessible by all.

Require additional support for inclusion

21 (16%) of responses were from individuals who identified as requiring further support to help them effectively access local services or engage in local decisions making. This is reference to people with physical disabilities and sensory impairments. Responses also reflect on the lack of physical meetings at present, suggesting more innovative ways of working are required. Suggestion was also made of low skill levels in the community

Some examples of responses received are:

- *I am disabled and cannot do big crowds of people. That effects where I go and what I do*
- *Services are relatively scarce in East Ayrshire and I personally do not feel that they are well set up to support those with hearing or vision impairments or from different backgrounds and cultures.*
- *We require to ensure effective digital access, particularly for the most vulnerable and isolated in our communities.*



- *Difficulty in having public meetings due to COVID. Costs of including signers/translaters at public meetings are considered prohibitive.*
- *I am not great with computers and little confidence with technology. I probably put up my own barriers*

Conclusion

Ensure provision is made to those members of our communities who require additional support to access services and local events. Consider range of local community learning opportunities.

Unheard voice

16 (13%) of responses reflect a concern that often the voices and concerns of the community go unheard.

Some comments provided include:

- *Ensuring views are captured are representative of all the community including those people who are seldom heard.*
- *My Community Council experience has confirmed my suspicions that we are not valued, listened to or encouraged by NAC.*
- *Generally I feel the system is opaque - I feel I have no ability to be involved.*

Conclusion

More needs to be done to improve the voice and involvement of local people and employees.

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected unfavourably on a number of other These include:

Unprofessional behaviour: *Indifference from public authority employees*

Transport issues: *Transport is a major barrier for people who don't live in the bigger towns.*

Covid Impact: *Most people are experiencing barriers accessing local services most due to Covid.*

Waiting times for service: *I needed a commode as I could not get up stairs alone at the end of last year . It didn't come for a few days because of certain days to deliver to each area , it meant i could not be left alone for a few days*

Section 4: In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential throughout life

This section asked people to reflect on the above outcome. Two questions were asked to gather both positive and negative experiences.

Q6. Please share any positive experiences or achievements you have made in pursuing your goals/ambitions.

the 128 responses received, 88 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 44 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 112 mappings were generated (152 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.



Q6. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below. Please note, that only themes that account for more than 10% of responses are included.

Supportive workplace

26 (20%) of responses to this question reflected on the support and opportunity they have received from their workplace. Comments include opportunities for on the job training, supportive and friendly colleagues, and demonstrating pride in the work they do.

Some examples of responses received are:

- *I am doing my social work training and my employer allows me to take unpaid leave to allow me to achieve my career goal.*
- *I feel very lucky to work for EAC and I am proud of the work they do around engaging communities and furthering inclusion*
- *I have had positive opportunities to fulfil my potential both as a former employee with an Ayrshire local authority and as a member of my community*
- *Within my Service in the Council we are encouraged to undertake additional courses and achieve.*

Conclusion

A supportive workplace that looks after and offers opportunities to its employees is of great value to both the individual and the employer.

Community Support

19 (15%) of respondents indicated that the support they received in their local community was of great value in terms of them pursuing their personal goals. In many cases, people reflect on the value of social interaction, some reflect on the various activity groups and support programmes available to them.

Some examples of responses received are:

- *In normal times I have good access to societies and other groups which keep my brain active and let me feel connected to our community. It has been a great loss that these groups have not been able to meet during the pandemic. I look forward to resuming these activities as soon as possible.*
- *There are opportunities across sectors and the Community Link workers have really helped.*
- *I don't feel this applies to my personal life however there are more projects in place to enable people to achieve their aspirations. This may be by finding work, volunteering, or making life style choices. We have used a life-coaching approach which has been really successful and is totally person centred.*
- *I was engaged with The Ayrshire Community Trust who helped me during a period of unemployment. They were excellent.*

Conclusion

Support and opportunities available through community groups and third/independent sector organisations can provide a valued focus for local people to participate on local learning and volunteering activities.

Achieving own goals

14 (11%) of responses indicated that many local people had already achieved many of their personal goals. Many indicated a level of life satisfaction, working in their chosen field and being able to buy their own home.

Some examples of responses received are:

- *I feel myself and my husband have achieved big goals like buying our own house and upgrading it. I don't feel there are any barriers.*
- *I have had success as a trade union representative and have assisted my husband in becoming self employed, I help him daily in his business*
- *My dream job.*
- *I work in music, in recent years I have achieved several accolades, some supported by different music organisations such as MOBO.*

Conclusion

People have different aspirations and life goals. Many people have been able to succeed facing few barriers. Also, job and life satisfaction appear more important than financial gain.

No positive experience

4 (3%) of respondents indicated that they had not had any positive experiences when pursuing their goals or ambitions.

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected favourably on a number of other areas which people have indicated have supported them. These include:

Available training: *Being able to access online learning.*

Health and Wellbeing: *Joining a gym*

Further Education: *I went to college age 40*

Value in volunteering: *I have started volunteering again! Yea! After bringing up my children and being too pushed for time to commit properly I have managed to start doing some hours every Saturday in my local community*

Q7. What concerns do you have, or barriers have you faced that prevent you from working towards your goals/ambitions

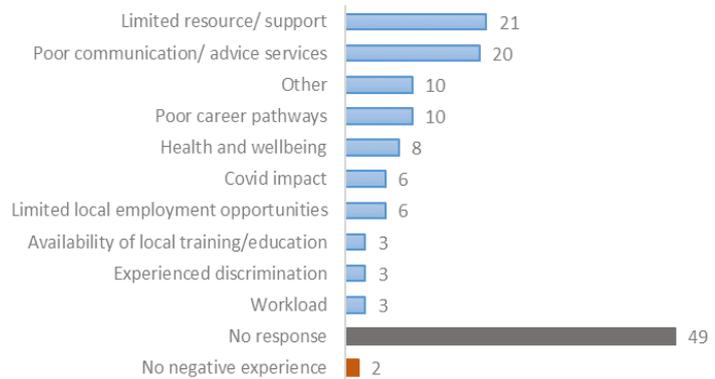
Of the 128 responses received, 79 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 49 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 92 mappings were generated (141 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.

Q7. Responses by theme



Q7. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below.

Limited resource / support

21 (16%) respondents indicated a lack of resources or support as a barrier to them progressing in their goals. Comments referenced a lack of available support services, financial concerns, limited local venues or poor funding opportunities.

Some comments received include:

- *mainly training venue's closed at present and not all clients are comfortable doing training courses on line*
- *More recently I feel my employer is less inclined to support me professionally.*
- *In Ayrshire, there seems to be no support or opportunity for arts.*
- *I would like to study at university however I would be unable to afford to give up my job and I am not sure of what funding would be available to help with this.*
- *No meaningful programme of evening or weekend education*
- *Funding to find the right provider that shall support me to be more able and require less services in the future*

Conclusion

People recognise the many barriers they face in achieving their personal goals to be one of access to resources and funding.

Poor communication/ advice services

20 (16%) indicated that a frustration with the communication of information or general advice services. In relation to employment opportunities, people reflect that promotional information is either too late or unclear. There was also comments that indicated people did always know where to go for help or advice. Further, people suggested a frustration when trying to communicate with support services (GP/ Council / Local services)

Some comments received include:

- *Not knowing where to look or who to go to for help*
- *No knowing what opportunities are out there. Information is patchy and some of it is so hard to find. Wish it was consistent and covered everyone.*
- *trying to get through on phone ie doctors/council dept and then having to listen to Long Information Broadcast before getting to push button section required to deal with enquiry*

- *Rely on others to say when jobs are advertised, whether they are internal (mostly) or not, progression within my career can be limited in EA due to management structures, jobs seem to be withheld until the last minute.*

Conclusion

Services must endeavour to communicate clearly and effectively. Advice pathways should be widely shared and accessible by all.

Poor career pathways

10 (8%) indicated a frustration of accessing employment opportunities and/or progressing in their careers. Comments here also reflected on lack of available job opportunities, highlighting that people often have to leave the area for work.

Some comments received include:

- *Unfortunately since leaving HM Forces, it has become clear that the same encouragement and support I enjoyed during my military career is not available in civilian life. There is very little to no career development, and most positions are considered jobs for life, especially within the Council.*
- *Access to suitable employment opportunities are difficult in Ayrshire.*
- *Lack of permanent teaching vacancies in EAC. HR also provide conflicting information regarding contracts. The few vacancies advertised are always much later than neighbouring authorities. Many local people want to work for the council and give back to education and the community.*
- *I moved from Ayrshire to get my further Education and have spent the majority of my working life having to commute to Glasgow due to limited work and career opportunities in Ayrshire. I don't believe Ayrshire does enough to attract bigger companies to invest in the area and create job opportunities.*

Conclusion

Local employment opportunities must improve. Also, public bodies should consider identifying and supporting clear 'career pathways' for employees that clearly demonstrate how an individual can progress in their career.

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected unfavourably on a number of other areas. These include:

Health and wellbeing: *lack of understanding of my mental health and learning needs*

Covid Impact: *The impact of Covid and the ability to speak to clinicians face to face about my health.*

Limited local employment opportunities: *Rural area, not enough good jobs. To achieve goals most people need to travel to the cities which is prevents people achieving their goals, especially if they have other commitments, like family, childcare, everything is much harder to achieve, most need a car as public transport is extremely poor.*

Section 5: In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

This section asked people to reflect on the above outcome. Two questions were asked to gather both positive and negative experiences.

Q8. Please share any positive experiences you may have had in working with a public organisation in Ayrshire.

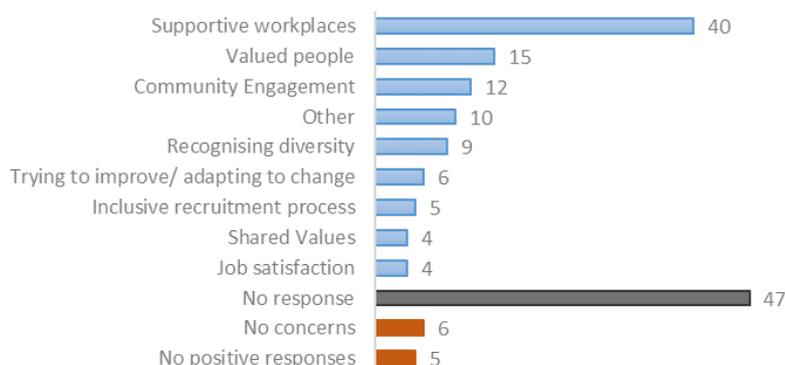
Of the 128 responses received, 81 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 47 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 116 mappings were generated (163 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.

Q8. Responses by theme



Q8. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below. Please note, that only themes with more than 10 responses are included.

Supportive workplaces

40 (31%) of responses indicated that public organisations in Ayrshire are supportive places to work. Responses include reference to training opportunities, good colleagues and caring management.

Some comments received include:

- *All my experiences working with public organisations have been good as everyone I have come across are working towards the same goals.*
- *I have always found my employer to be supportive and my hard work has been rewarded by gaining job promotions over the years.*
- *My current public sector employer has been supportive in the past year but I worked for a previous local authority and I lost my job because I was unable to cope and they were equipped/prepared to offer appropriate support.*
- *Any courses I require that are work related, I can apply for.*

Conclusion

People appreciate and recognise employers who create supportive environments.

Valued people

16 (13%) of responses indicated feeling valued as employees of local public bodies. This is reflected in comments suggesting people feel included and part of the team as well as the clear message that their wellbeing is a priority for management.

Some comments received include:

- *Although the job I applied for was taken, they saw potential in me and put me forward for another role which I secured.*
- *I feel EAC is very inclusive. I have worked with a young lady with learning disabilities for years and I have seen her confidence grow and she has picked up great new skills.*

- *Good work ethic; Feel valued as an employee*
- *I feel the local authority is an inclusive place to work.*

Conclusion

Local public bodies contribute to people feeling valued in their working life.

Community Engagement

12 (9%) of responses reflected positively on the engagement activity public bodies have with local communities. People recognise the positive impact community-based initiatives have on local communities.

Some comments received include:

- *Good support from vibrant communities, schools and opportunities for all.*
- *i work for east ayrshire council and they are doing a great job supporting communities and clients*
- *Community always grateful for any help on offer and thankful*
- *I work for North Ayrshire Council and I am proud of our inclusive approach to not only recruitment but to the involvement of the local communities at all levels.*
- *I was well impressed by the Council's carers who supported my mother in her later years. All of them formed a good relationship with her and showed genuine interest in what she had to say, as well as caring for her personal needs.*

Conclusion

People recognise the positive impact public bodies have on the people and communities of Ayrshire.

No positive responses

6 (5%) of comments received indicated people had no positive responses to make. Comments here range from people being overlooked for their hard work, feeling unsupported in the workplace and dissatisfaction with the pay structure.

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected favourably on a number of other areas which people have highlighted. These include:

Recognising diversity: *Good to see positive statements about different groups and celebrating key dates.*

Trying to improve/adapting to change: *Working in the same position for number of years, the council have had positive change in last few years and are constantly trying to change, modernise and better itself for the future.*

Inclusive recruitment process: *Local Authority has introduced a very inclusive recruitment process. Interviews having support from a BSL interpreter, phone/zoom meetings, access to various free training - online, virtual or face to face (prior covid)*

Q9. What concerns did you have, or barriers have you faced when applying for or working for a public organisation in Ayrshire.

Of the 128 responses received, 88 provided a response to this question.

A 'No response' was provided by 40 respondents.

Some responses were mapped against more than one theme. In total, 111 mappings were generated (151 including no responses).

The output of the themed analysis can be seen in the chart opposite.

Q9. Responses by theme



Q9. Response by theme

The key themes, as identified in the chart above are summarised below. Please note, that only themes that account for 10 or more responses are included.

No Negative experience

32 (25%) of responses indicated that they could not identify any negative experiences of working with Public Bodies in Ayrshire.

Application process

24 (19%) of responses indicated a frustration with the application process to public bodies. Comments referenced complex application forms, poor websites. There is also concern that in some cases, the application process is a tick box exercise as employers have already identified preferred candidates.

Some comments received include:

- *Application process can be difficult if you don't know that it is better to complete responses to questions on a Word document first and to cut & paste to the application. If not very difficult for some people to navigate*
- *applying for a job that knew was not going to get as we were told who was getting the job prior to interview, this concerned me and have never applied for anymore this is mainly due to being happy at what do and do not actually look for other jobs*
- *Having applied for numerous positions with public organisations it is clear that previous experiences, skills and knowledge have little effect on your application. Most positions are already filled and the Council is simply going through the motions with their recruitment policy.*
- *The application process can be challenging for some and often closed off to externals.*

Conclusion

Online application processes are often not user friendly. Consideration should also be given to the transparency around job interviews. Should candidates know if they are interviewing against an internal candidate?

Unprofessional practice

15 (12%) of responses indicated having experience some form of unprofessional behaviour when engaging with a public sector employer. Some feedback from employees suggest poor management and workplace etiquette. Comments include rigid and strict policies, unqualified staff, increasing workloads, management mis-interpreting policy, and inflexible working arrangements.

Some comments received include:

- *Recently (last 5 or so years) I have felt as though my employer is more interested in squeezing everything out of me, by over committing workloads, setting unrealistic deadlines (eg. frequently told via email "need this tomorrow") and failing to recognise work completed. I often feel trampled on!*
- *Barrier - promotion opportunities not open to all. Seems like only people in the cliques get promoted. The jobs or promotions process doesn't seem fair or equal.*
- *Some managers attempt to enforce their version of policy which differs from the official version at times, largely because they do not seem to comprehend it*
- *Useless middle management who actually think they are competent*
- *The council. It's almost as simple as that. I believe most people have a role and think doing the bare minimum keeps it. They don't go over and above. They don't need innovate and they don't take risks.*

Conclusion

Many responses indicate people are sceptical of the fairness in public bodies, particularly in relation to job application and promotion opportunities. In addition, there is concern that public bodies have many unqualified staff members.

Poor support/ recognition of those with protected characteristics

11 (9%) suggest that employers are poor at identifying and supporting people with protected characteristics. Many comments have indicated that a unique characteristic people have has acted as a barrier to them in the workplace.

Some comments received include:

- *Whilst I am grateful to have secure employment, especially in the current climate, the experience of being the lonely black figure has significantly impacted on my mental health over the years.*
- *My disability is invisible so I am often overlooked or dismissed.*
- *As I said before. I'm dyslexia. The main barriers I have are my own doing*
- *Being male and not working in certain offices*
- *There is age bias which limits promotion.*

Conclusion

Employers must do more to recognise and support those with protected characteristics. Service must not assume that all is well at all times.

Other comments

In addition to the above, responses also reflected unfavourably on a number of other areas which people have indicated have caused them concern. These include:

- **Experience of discrimination:** *Perception that there may be an anti-catholic culture at times, in relation to attitudes of some personnel I have met.*
- **Poor communication / information sharing:** *HR cannot provide accurate information. Lack of vacancies which are advertised in June (very late for teaching). Continued culture of 'who you know'*
- **Undervalued employees:** *jobs in NAC are low paid for what they expect you to do. Managers sit on their massive salaries and delegate all their work to the low paid people. It's shocking.*

Impact by protected characteristic

This section will offer a summary of comments made by people who identified with a recognised protected characteristic. As detailed in the demographic summary, the majority of responses are mostly from groups that are generally 'over-represented' (e.g. White, Heterosexual, Adult age).

Further, as the largest proportion of responses were from local females, no specific section will be provided below for the protected characteristic of Sex.

Age

Young People

10 responses came from young people aged 12 to 16.

9 of those responding agreed the outcomes were still relevant to take forward.

Outcome 1: In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

When asked to share positive experiences of the outcome 7 did not provide a response. 1 individual commented that Police, pleasant people and clean streets had a positive impact. 1 other referenced a liking for local shops.

When asked for concerns, 4 people did not respond. To others had felt threatened or intimidated in their local community, an other was aware of local violent crime and another indicated feeling unsafe due to attacking seagulls.

Outcome 2: In Ayrshire people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services

4 responses were received against the positive aspect of this outcome. Comments reflected local professional services and inspiring/supportive individuals.

In terms of negative experiences or concerns, 1 comment identified a concern that their physical and mental health could be a barrier to participation.

Outcome 3: In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential through life

2 individuals provided a positive response, reflecting on support received in school and having confidence after passing a test.

A further 2 individuals reflect concerns around Covid pandemic and appropriate support not being in place in schools.

Outcome 4: In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

Overall, there was no response to this question from this age group.

Older People (65+)

6 responses came from people in this age group.

2 of those responding agreed with the outcomes to take forward. 1 did not respond. The remaining 3 were categorised as unsure as the responses did not give a clear indication of answer.

Outcome 1: In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

5 respondents in this age group provided a response to the positive aspect of this outcome. It was highlighted that local policing, volunteering schemes and friendly neighbourhoods were cited as things that made them feel safe and included.

In terms of negatives, 4 people provided a response. Concerns were expressed, such as areas considered 'affluent' are often over looked for additional support, concern over lack of services due to Covid outbreak, concern over information being shared effectively among the deaf community and concern over local drug use.

Outcome 2: In Ayrshire people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services

3 people provided a positive response under this outcome. Comments include being engaged by local services during the pandemic and highlighting the many opportunities for community engagement.

5 people responded to the negative aspect of the outcome. Some comments suggested communities are ignored by authorities, difficulty in contacting authorities, limited information on opportunities to engage and concern over translation and interpretation (BSL)

Outcome 3: In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential through life

3 people responded to the positive aspect of this outcome. Comments highlighted, accessing online learning, engaging in social groups within the community and supporting others with translation and communication.

Only 1 person responded to the negative side of the outcome, highlighting that age discrimination still exists, highlighting that older people are experienced and able to effectively contribute.

Outcome 4: In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

2 people responded positively under this outcome. Comments included appreciation for local services they and their family have received

1 negative comment was received were an individual used to work with a local council but felt unsupported.

Race

5 responses came from people who identified as either; Black/African/Caribbean/Black British, Asian/Asian British or Mixed or Multiple Ethnic group.

4 of the respondents agreed with the outcomes to take forward, with 1 suggesting it is 'meaningless waffle'.

Outcome 1: In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

4 responded to the positive experiences, highlighting friendly communities and supportive colleagues. One comment suggested that while nothing negative has happened, they also have not felt particularly included.

In terms of unsafe or excluded experiences, 3 people confirmed to receiving verbal racial abuse. Another person highlighted people had shouted at them but did not state if this was racially motivated.

Outcome 2: In Ayrshire people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services

2 people responded with a positive experience under this outcome, both suggesting positive support from public service staff.

2 responses came in relation to barriers. It was highlighted that people from BME communities will not purposely go out of there way to access opportunities were they will not feel welcome.

Outcome 3: In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential through life

2 people responded with positive experiences, one highlighted a successful career in music and other was supported by someone who encouraged them.

In terms of barriers or challenges, 3 responses were received, one highlighting they have limited there ambition due to feeling their 'face does no fit'. Another commented that there appears to a lot of good intention on paper, but little action. One commented that locally there is little opportunity or funding for the arts.

Outcome 4: In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

2 people confirmed working for or with a public body. One comment highlighted the positive community support available for local initiatives, particularly at times of need. The other comment suggested it was positive the person was still employment.

2 comments were received in relation to barriers and challenges. One comment highlighted that it is difficult being the only black person in the workplace and has had a negative impact on them. The other expressed frustration over local council's slow reaction to support communities and the local arts scene.

Sexual Orientation

6 people who responded to the survey identified as Gay, Gay Woman/Lesbian, Bisexual or Other

All agreed the outcomes are still relevant

Outcome 1: In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

In relation to positive experiences, 3 people provided responses. One reflected on a decrease in homophobic comments they experience in the workplace. Others commented on Pandemic measures in local places and reflected on friendly neighbours.

4 people responded highlighting concerns. One individual has been subject to abuse in the workplace, another has been subject to bullying at school with little support from authorities. Others reflected on abusive people and local crime.

Outcome 2: In Ayrshire people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services

4 people responded to the positive aspect of this question. People reflected positively on support through the pandemic and on local support services (NHS and Transport).

In terms of challenges, 3 responses were received. Comments indicating that public bodies are slow to act when providing support, difficulty in accessing/contacting local services and personal conditions as barriers to participation.

Outcome 3: In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential through life

3 people responded positively under this outcome, highlighting access to digital learning, providing support to others during lockdown and workplace achievements.

5 people identified barriers they perceived. These include, not being aware of available training/learning, poor managers who do not value staff, lockdown and poor support in local schools.

Outcome 4: In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

2 people provided a positive response against this outcome. Comments included, workplaces supporting your health and wellbeing, support to local communities

1 person highlighted negative experiences they had, that related to a manager taking credit for work they had done, leaving them feeling undervalued.

Gender Reassignment

In response to the 'Please tell us your sex' question, no body identified as Tran-sexual, Trans-gender, Non-Binary or in any other way. 12 people responded to this question as 'Prefer not to say'.

In addition, we asked people to if they were the same sex as they were assigned at birth. To this 9 people responded with 'Prefer not to say'.

As such, we are unable to identify if any comments received were from the Trans community. On review of the comments on those who preferred not to say, there was no mention of any Trans issues.

Pregnancy & Maternity

Nobody who responded to the survey confirmed of they were pregnant or had recently given birth, or if they were currently on maternity or paternity leave. When asked these questions, 10 people responded with 'prefer not to say'.

No comments from these 10 responses indicated any issues in relation to Pregnancy and Maternity.

Religion or belief

8 people who responded to the survey identified their religion other than Christian or No belief. Respondents identified as Jewish, Buddhist, Spiritual, Pagan and Muslim.

All agreed the outcomes are still relevant

No comments from these 8 responses indicated any issues in relation to Religion or Belief.

Disability

24 people who responded identified as having some form of disability.

20 agreed that the outcomes as still relevant. 2 disagreed. 1 was unsure and a further comment referred to additional supports required.

Outcome 1: In Ayrshire people experience safe and inclusive communities

In terms of positive responses, people reflected on some of the good things in there communities, such as the value of Keep Safe spaces, friendly communities and access to local hobby or support groups. People also reflected on their local environment as a positive (small villages for example). Mention was also made to the local authority checking up on vulnerable people during lockdown and the ability to access local consultations.

In relation to negative responses, some individuals reported being intimidated by people in their own communities. It is also suggested that transport work (where roads may be closed) can adversely impact people with a disability as finding alternative transport can be challenging.

Responses also referred to no action following hate crime.

Reference was also made to Deaf people's understanding of the pandemic. Communication with the Deaf community could be better.

Outcome 2: In Ayrshire people have equal opportunity to access and shape our public services

In terms of positive responses, people reflected positively on the support they have received from local public services. This included, support with Anti-social behaviour, reporting local faults, excellent local health services, and public bodies willingness to engage with local people.

In terms of challenges, many people reflected on personal barriers to engagement, for example social anxieties, physical disabilities or poor digital access. Others reflected on being nervous using local transport due to infrastructure.

Physical mobility was raised as an issue as well as disability friendly buildings.

Also, respondents felt the public bodies could communicate better, especially during crisis periods.

Outcome 3: In Ayrshire people have opportunities to fulfil their potential through life

In terms of positive responses, people shared a range of aspects that they considered positive. Some people reflected on support and advice they received to improve their health and wellbeing. Others mentioned access to

local community groups and services as a positive experience. Others highlighted accessing further education and securing employment.

Likewise, people with a disability also recognised a number of challenges, including; not knowing where to turn to for advice, reduced support services particularly throughout the pandemic period, and digital barriers.

A number of people also referenced their personal conditions as barriers. Some responses indicated that people felt anxious about revealing their conditions, with others indicating that potential employers do not make the effort to understand and support people's unique needs. We need to listen more.

Outcome 4: In Ayrshire public bodies will be inclusive and diverse employers

In terms of positive responses, many people responded positively with their experiences of working with a local public sector organisation. Comments suggested people perceived public bodies to be positive places to work, with supportive colleagues and practices. Some comments reflected the feeling of being included and being part of an organisation that helped people locally. Others suggested that public bodies are diverse places to work (age and sex mix) and in some cases experience competent management.

In terms of barriers or challenges, again people see their own disabilities as a barrier. In some cases that is an anxiety over their condition, or concern that potential employers will not understand the condition and not provide adequate support.

Other concerns include application processes, with various concerns, including complex application systems and unfair recruitment process appear to benefit only select few candidates. Others expressed concern over more and more services moving on-line.

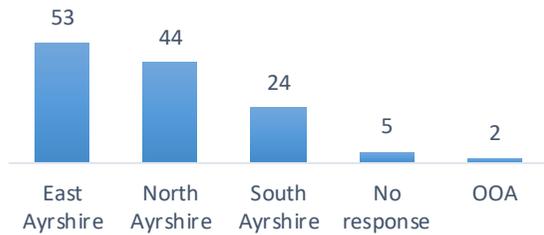
Annex a

AYRSHIRE EQUALITY OUTCOMES CONSULTATION

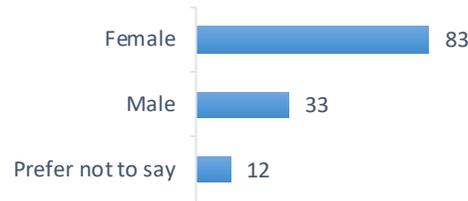
Demographic Dashboard

	Value	%
Total Responses	128	100
Sub-total	128	100%

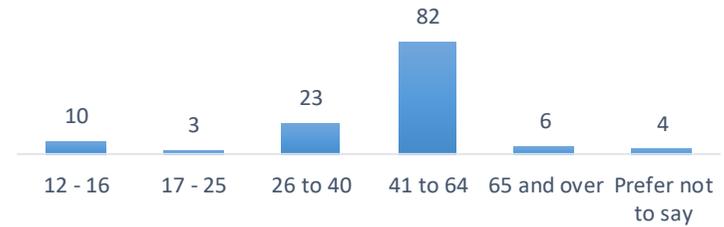
By location



By Gender



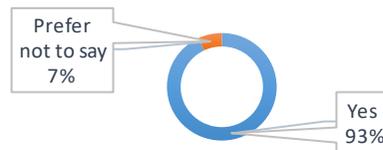
By Age Group



By Disability response



Is your sex the same assigned to you at birth



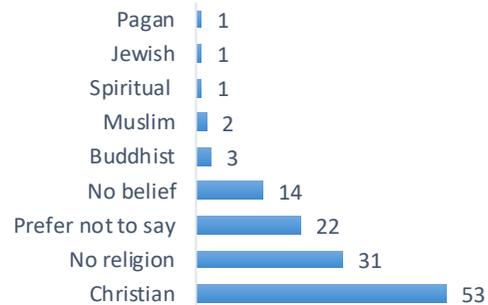
By Pregnancy/Maternity (Prefer not to say)



By Ethnic Group



By Religion or Belief



By Sexual Orientation

