2024 Survey

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Contents

Figures

Key Messages

Your area and local services...

Strong satisfaction with ER as a place to live, but fallen since 2019

Satisfied with Council services, but fallen since 2017

Most feel Council and employees represent Council values

Cost of living

9 in 10 have seen cost of living increases - mainly due to rising food, gas/electricity and fuel prices

Relatively few have spoken to organisations for financial help or advice

Climate change...

Most feel climate change is an urgent problem, but this proportion has fallen since 2020

Most have made changes to reduce climate impact, and are willing to make further changes

Safe and supportive communities...

Most feel sense of community, and have people can turn to

Feel people from different backgrounds get on well locally, but mixed views on how well specific groups are supported

Keeping active...

Generally positive about mental and emotional health

A significant decrease in those who have felt lonely

Large majority have taken part in some sport, physical activity and/or cultural events

Getting involved...

More than 3 in 4 have volunteered, although most want to know more about volunteering opportunities

Clear view that it is important to be able to influence local decisions, but most feel unable to do so

INTRODUCTION

The East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel continues to provide a means for residents to give their views. This report sets out findings from the most recent Citizens' Panel survey, conducted in early 2024. This survey sought Panel members' views on Council services, the cost of living, climate change, safe and supportive communities, and accessing services.

A total of 523 survey responses were received, equating to an overall response rate of 63%. This is a strong response to any survey and continues the 60%+ response seen over the last 10 surveys.

The survey also indicates continued growth of web-responses with more than 80% of responses submitted online (up from only around half of responses to the 2019 survey). A Panel refreshment exercise was carried out in 2023 to replace longer-standing members, and this improved representation of several socio-demographic groups such as people from minority ethnic backgrounds, people with a disability, and people living in the most deprived parts of East Renfrewshire. The refreshment also contributed to the positive overall survey response, with new members showing a higher response than others (and also being more likely to respond online).

The volume of response is sufficient to permit more detailed analysis of results within specific respondent groups such as electoral ward area, age, gender, disability and housing tenure. Survey analysis has also considered differences in views linked to socio-economic deprivation, on the basis of 'locality planning areas' (the most disadvantaged areas within East Renfrewshire). Further detail on the profile of respondents is provided in section 1 of the Technical Report.

The remainder of this report presents frequency results for each of the survey questions - full tabular results are provided at section 2 of the Technical Report. We round percentages to the nearest whole number; for some questions this means that percentages may not sum to 100%. Similarly, aggregate figures presented in the text (e.g. percentage of respondents answering 'strongly agree' or 'agree') may not sum to results presented in figures and tables.

YOUR AREA AND LOCAL SERVICES

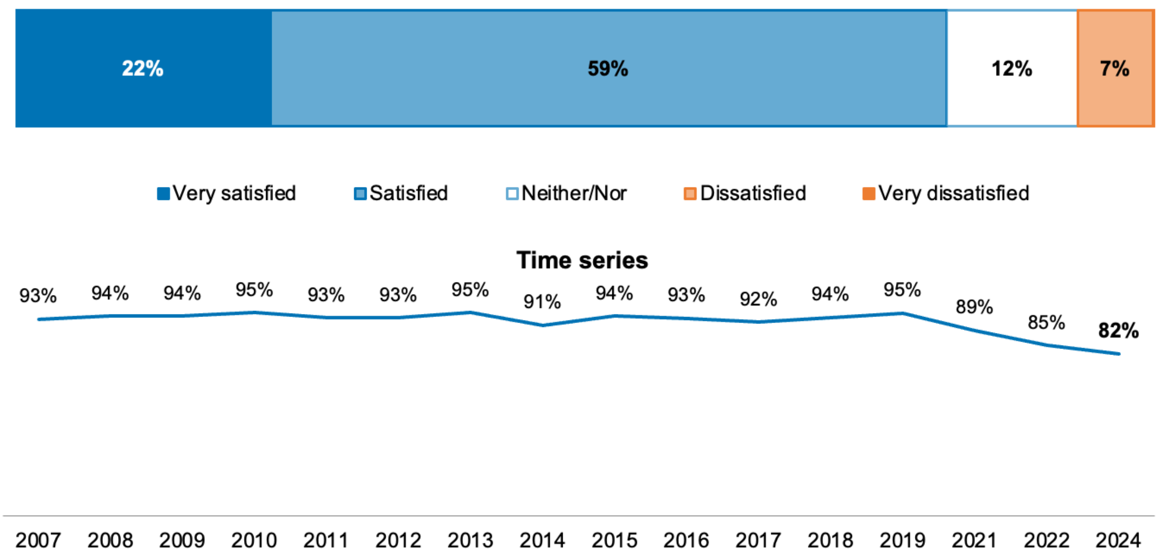
The first part of the survey sought Panel members' views on their local area and service provision.

East Renfrewshire as a place to live

Survey findings show high levels of satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live; 82% are satisfied with the area as a place to live. While this remains a strong rating, it has been falling steadily since 2019 and is below satisfaction results between 2013 and 2019 (which fell in the range 89-95%). The 82% satisfaction rating is also below that reported across Scotland as a whole through the Scottish Household Survey (95%).[1]

Survey results indicate that satisfaction levels are broadly consistent across key respondent groups, including geographic areas.

Figure 1: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live

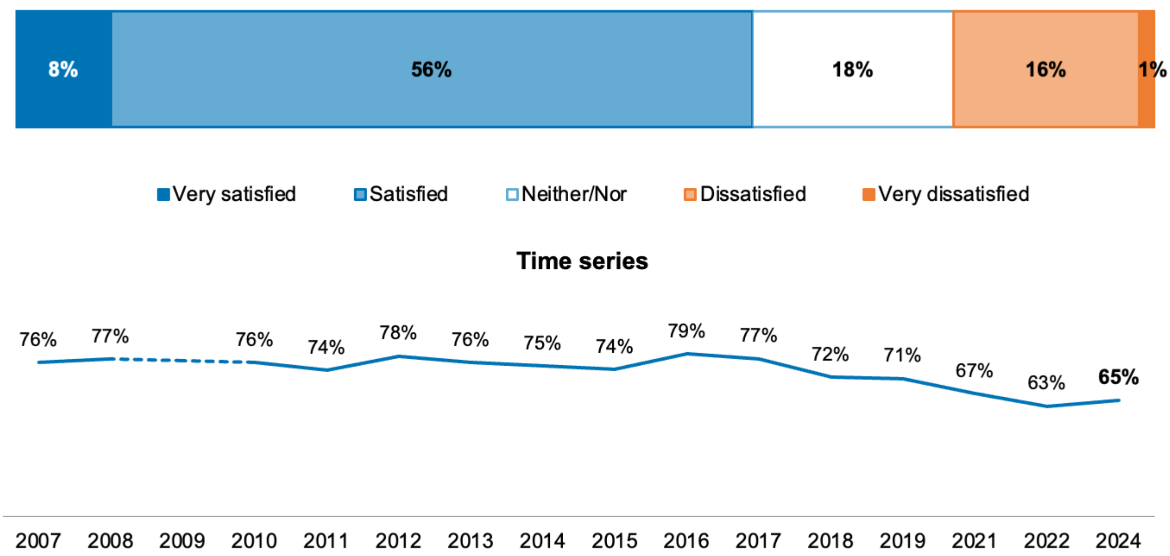


[1] https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings

Overall satisfaction with services

A majority of respondents (65%) indicated that they are satisfied with Council services overall. This is a positive overall satisfaction level, is broadly consistent across key respondent subgroups, and is within the range of comparator surveys for other local authorities (a range of 61% to 81%). Overall satisfaction has fallen from a peak in 2016, but has been broadly consistent over the last three surveys (in the range 63-67% since 2021).

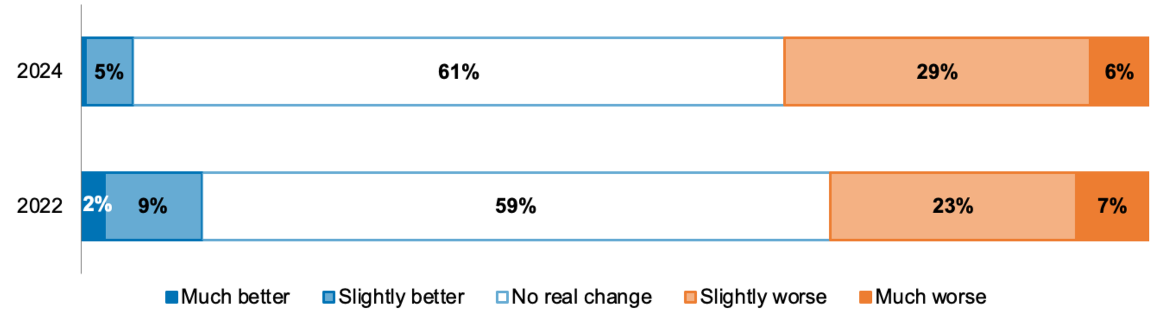
Figure 2: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire Council services overall



In addition to tracking satisfaction over time, the survey also specifically asked Panel members about whether they feel the standard of Council services has changed over the past year (Figure 3).

Respondents generally feel there has been no recent change in the standard of Council services; most suggested this has remained unchanged in the last year (61%). However, amongst those that had seen a change, respondents are more likely to have seen a decline in the quality of services (35%, compared to 5% who had seen an improvement). Survey results show some variation in findings across key respondent groups. In particular, those aged under 55, those in the Newton Mearns North & Neilston area, and homeowners were more likely than others to feel that Council services have worsened in the last year.

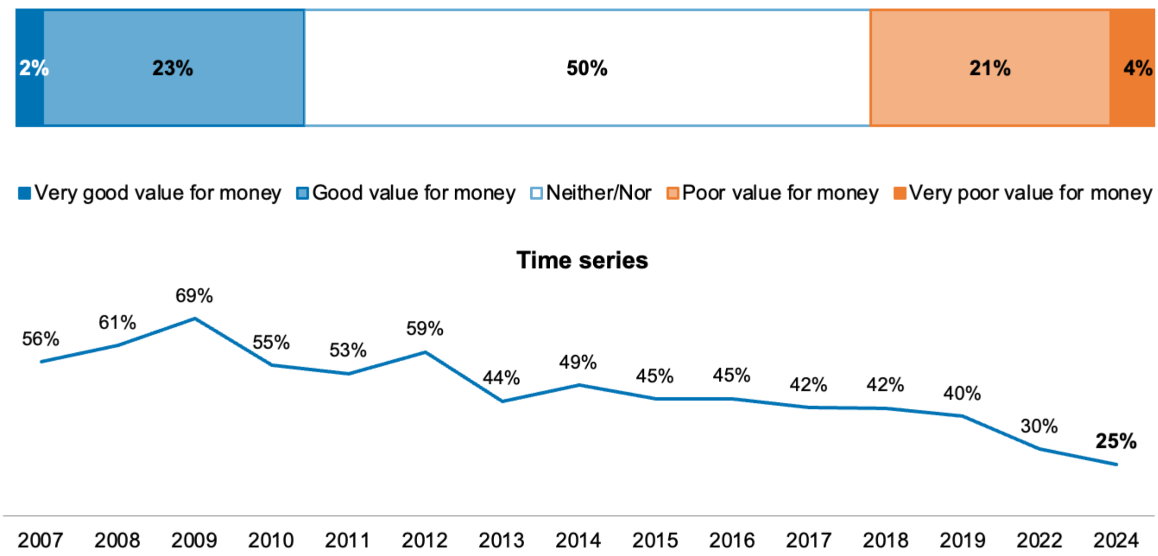
Figure 3: Whether the standard of Council services has changed in the last 12 months



Respondents are divided in their views on the extent to which Council services represent good value for money. While half of respondents selected the neutral "neither/nor" response (50%), others were evenly split between those who feel that services are good value (25%) and those who feel that services represent poor value for money (25%).

This represents a 15-point reduction since 2019 in the proportion of respondents who feel that Council services are good value for money. Survey results show some variation across key respondent groups: those in the Newton Mearns North & Neilston area, homeowners, males, and people with a disability were less likely to feel services are good value for money.

Figure 4: Value for money of East Renfrewshire Council services

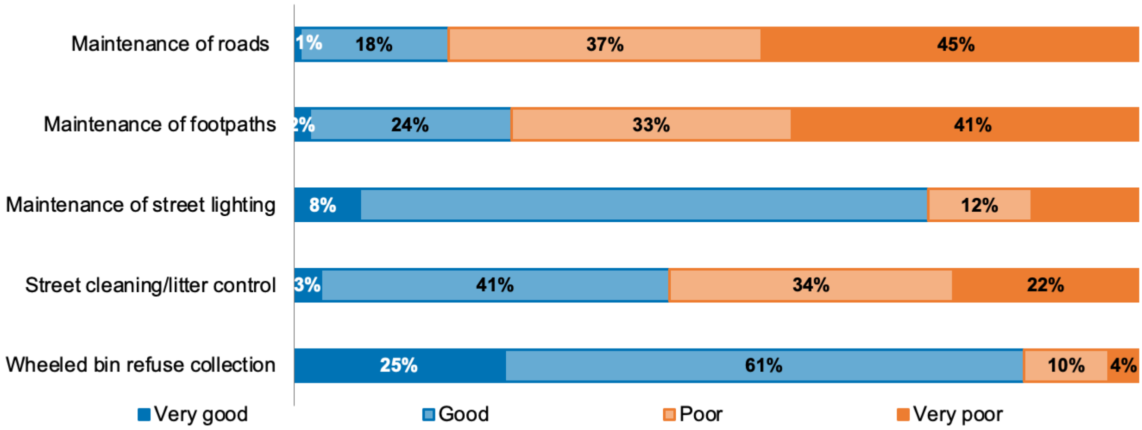


Satisfaction with specific services

In terms of views on the quality of specific Council services, the survey first asked about a number of 'universal' services provided to and/or affecting all East Renfrewshire residents. Figure 5 summarises views.

Ratings are most positive in relation to wheeled bin refuse collection and maintenance of street lighting, and least positive for maintenance of roads and footpaths. Wheeled bin collection is rated as good by 86% of respondents, and maintenance of street lighting by 75%. In contrast, maintenance of roads and footpaths are the only services which a majority of respondents rated as poor or very poor; 82% rated roads and 74% rated footpaths as poor. The overall ranking of these services has remained largely unchanged over recent surveys.

Figure 5: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire Council services used by all

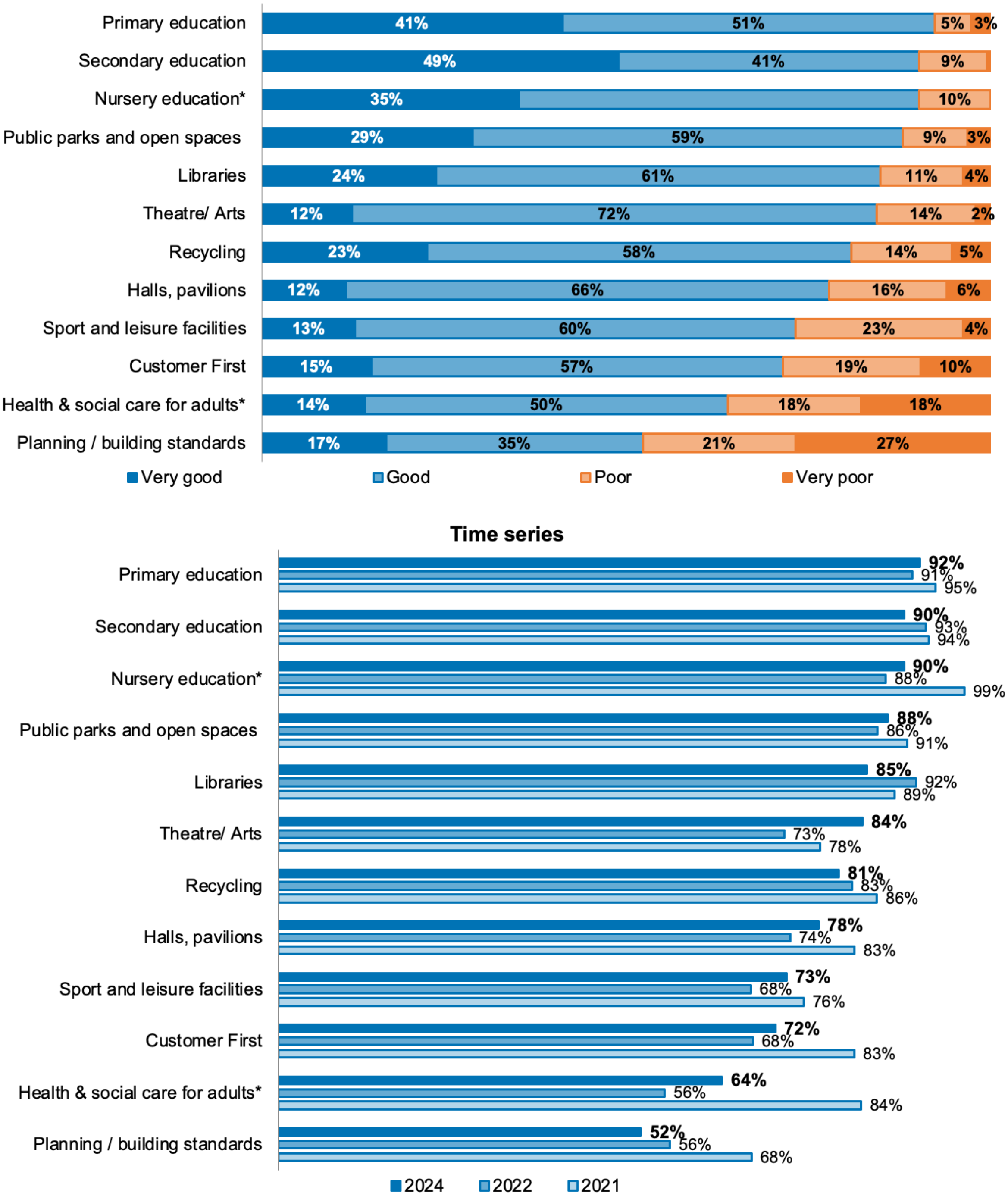


The survey also asked for Panel members' views on specific Council services that they may or may not have used over the last year. Figure 6 over the page summarises views on the quality of these services.

All services for which results are available received a positive rating, including some which the overwhelming majority of respondents rate as "very good" or "good". Respondents are most positive about education services, with 92% rating primary education, 90% rating secondary education and 90% rating nursery education positively. Views were also very positive in relation to public parks and open spaces (88% rating positively, libraries (85%), theatre and arts (84%) and recycling (81%).

The overall ranking of Council services has remained broadly consistent with education, parks/open spaces and libraries amongst the top-rated services for a number of years. Comparator survey results are available for a small number of the services listed at Figure 6, and suggest that residents' views on these services in East Renfrewshire are generally similar to those across other areas.

Figure 6: Satisfaction with specific East Renfrewshire Council services



* Indicates services which a small number of respondents have used.

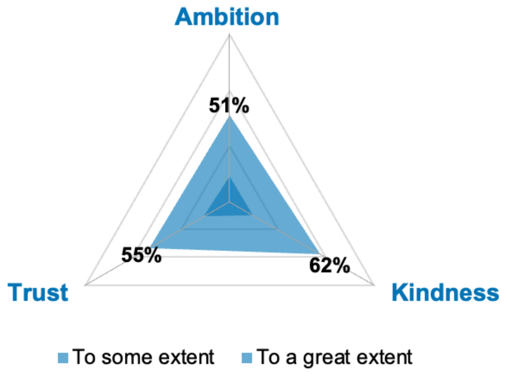
Council values

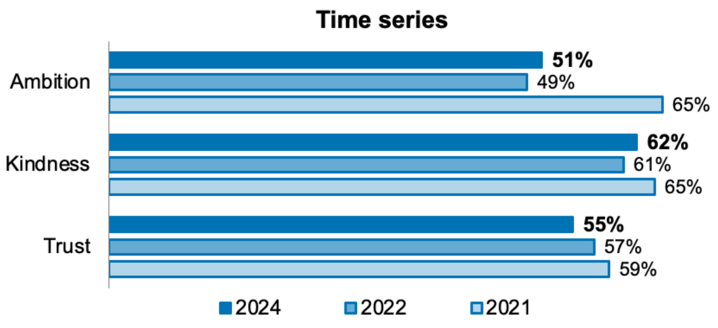
In addition to views on the quality of Council services, Panel members were also asked to consider the extent to which they feel that Council employees represent the three Council values (Figure 7), and whether the Council as an organisation represents a range of other attributes (Figure 8).

Most respondents feel that Council employees represent the three Council values to some extent. This was particularly the case for “kindness”, with 62% of the view that the Council represents these; 55% feel the Council represents “trust” and 51% feel the Council represents “ambition”.

There has been a 14-point reduction since 2021 in the proportion of respondents who feel Council employees represent “ambition”, but no significant change in views on whether employees represent “kindness” or “trust”. Views are broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although it is notable that those in the Newton Mearns North & Neilston area are less positive than others about Council employees representing these values.

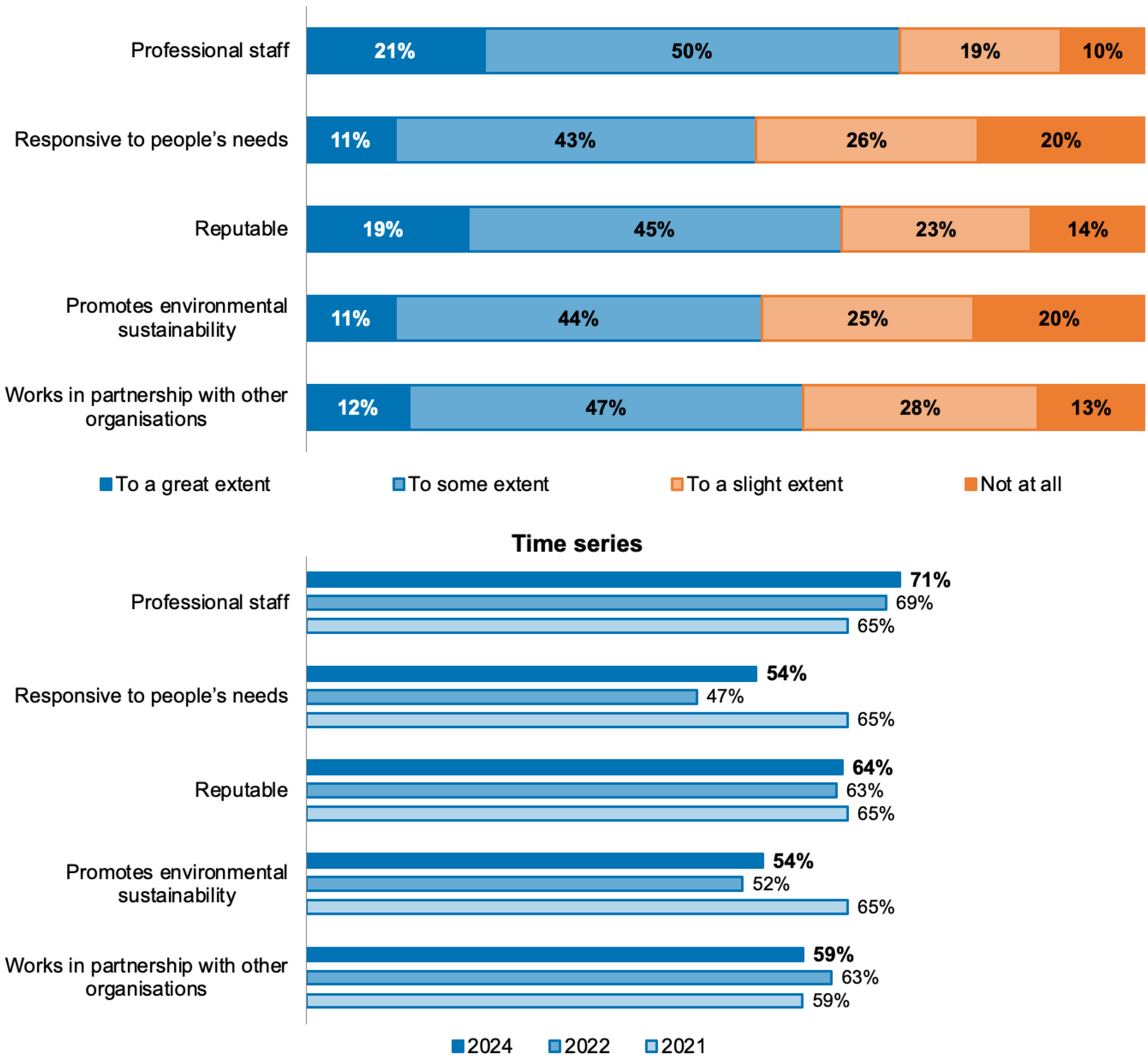
Figure 7: Extent to which employees represent Council values





Respondents generally agree that the Council as an organisation represents the range of attributes listed at Figure 8. Views are most positive in relation to “professional staff” (71% agree with this), “reputable” (64%) and “helpful” (63%). A little more than half of respondents feel that the Council represents the other listed values. It is notable that there has been a reduction since 2021 in the proportion of respondents who feel that the Council is responsive to people’s needs, customer focused, and promotes environmental sustainability.

Figure 8: Extent to which Council represents attributes



Key messages

Survey findings show high levels of satisfaction (82%) with East Renfrewshire as a place to live, although satisfaction has been falling since 2019.

A majority of respondents (65%) are satisfied with Council services overall, although this represents a 14-point reduction since 2016.

Respondents are divided in their views on whether Council services represent good value for money.

In terms of specific services, views are most positive in relation to education, public parks/open spaces and libraries, and least positive on roads.

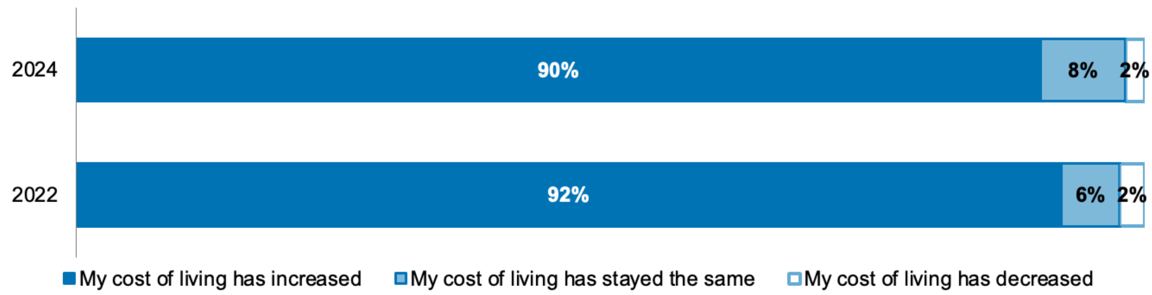
Most respondents feel that the Council and its employees represent the three Council values to some extent, particularly “kindness”.

COST OF LIVING

This section considers Panel members' experience and views in relation to changing cost of living pressures.

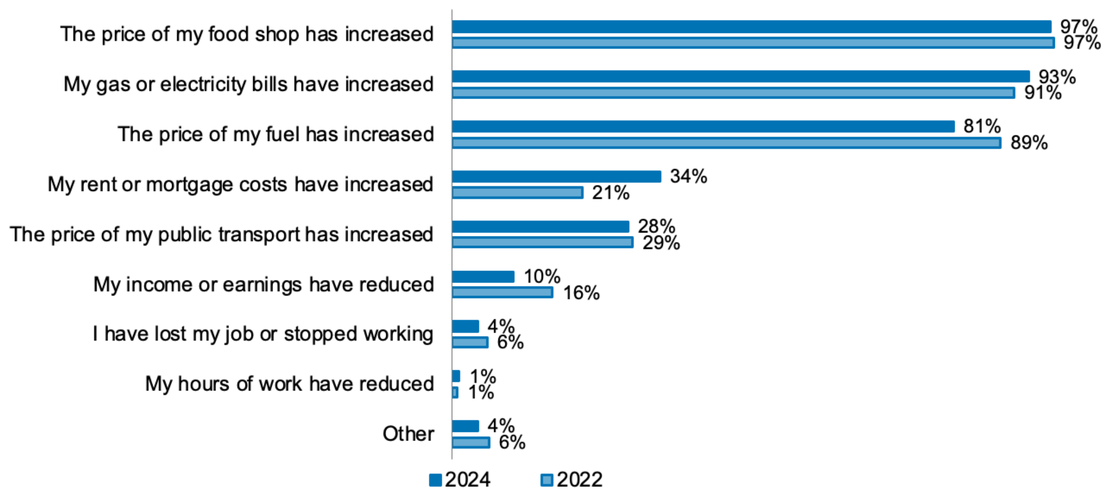
A large majority of respondents (90%) report that their cost of living has increased over the last 12 months. Only 10% indicate that their cost of living has remained unchanged or had decreased. This balance of views is similar to that reported in 2022, and is consistent across all key respondent subgroups.

Figure 9: Change in cost of living over last 12 months



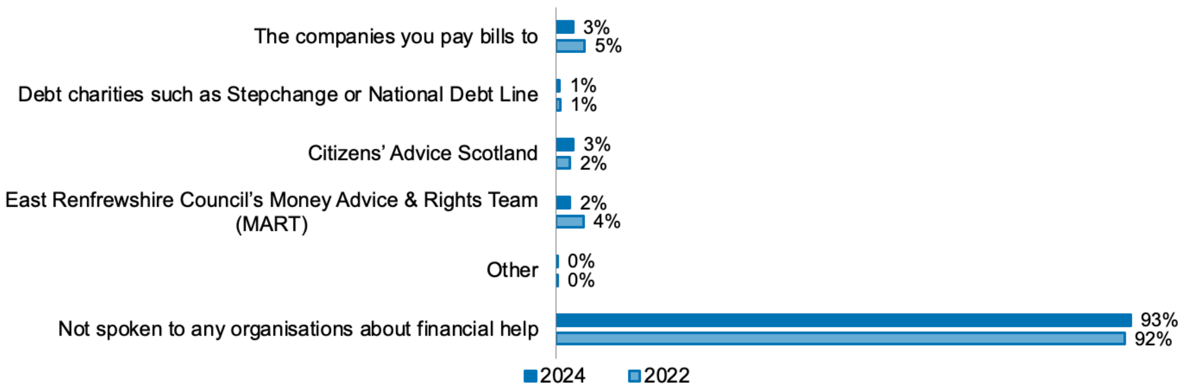
Increases in the price of food, gas/electricity and fuel are the key factors highlighted by respondents as contributing to increases in their cost of living; these were mentioned by 97%, 93% and 81% respectively. Rising rent/mortgages costs were also mentioned by around a third of respondents (34%), a 13-point increase since 2022.

Figure 10: Factors contributing to an increase in cost of living



Relatively few respondents (7%) have spoken to any organisations for financial help or advice. These respondents described positive examples of engaging with organisations including MART and Citizens' Advice. However, some also suggested that there was little that organisations could do, for example where their financial difficulties were the result of cost of living increases.

Figure 11: Whether spoken to organisations for financial help or advice



Key messages

A large majority of respondents (90%) report that their cost of living has increased over the last 12 months.

Increases in the price of food, gas/electricity and fuel are the key factors contributing to increases in respondents' cost of living.

Relatively few respondents (7%) have spoken to any organisations for financial help or advice.

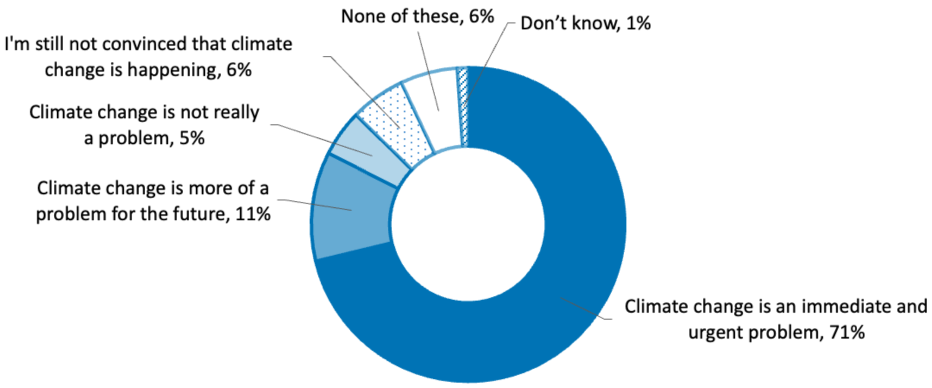
CLIMATE CHANGE

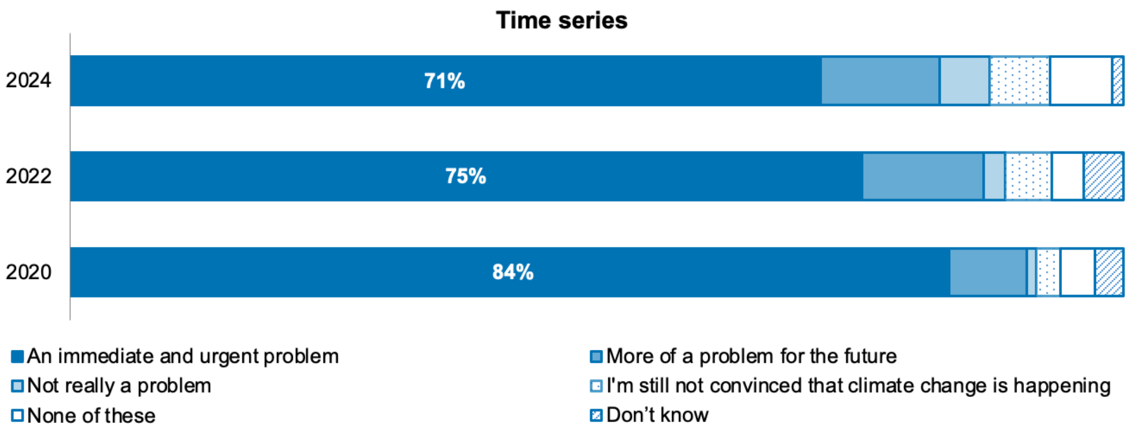
This section considers Panel members' views on climate change and approaches to address its impact.

A majority of respondents (71%) feel that climate change is an immediate and urgent problem, but there remains more than 1 in 5 respondents (22%) who feel that climate change is more of a problem for the future, is not a problem or is not happening. There has been a 13-point reduction since 2020 in the proportion of respondents who feel that climate change is an immediate and urgent problem.

These findings were broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although it is notable that renters and those living in Locality Planning Areas are less likely than others to feel that climate change is an urgent problem.

Figure 12: Personal view on climate change

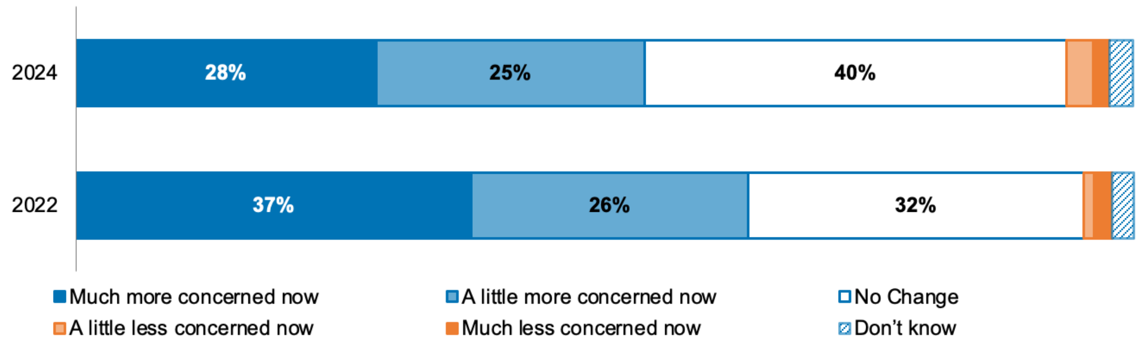




While survey results show a fall in the proportion of respondents who feel that climate change is an urgent problem, more than half (54%) indicated that they are more concerned about climate change now than 12 months ago. This includes 28% who have become "much more concerned" over the last 12 months. Only 4% of respondents have become less concerned about climate change. These findings were broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although it is notable that women were more likely than men to have become more concerned about climate change.

Additional feedback identified a range of factors that have contributed to changing attitudes about climate change. This was, most commonly, Panel members indicating that they have become more concerned about climate change as a result of increasing extreme weather events, news reporting (including around changing government policy and climate targets), and discussion with family/friends. A small number also reported becoming less concerned about climate change as a result of mistrust of news reporting, and increasing concern with other priorities such as cost of living.

Figure 13: Whether personal view on climate change has changed over last 12 months



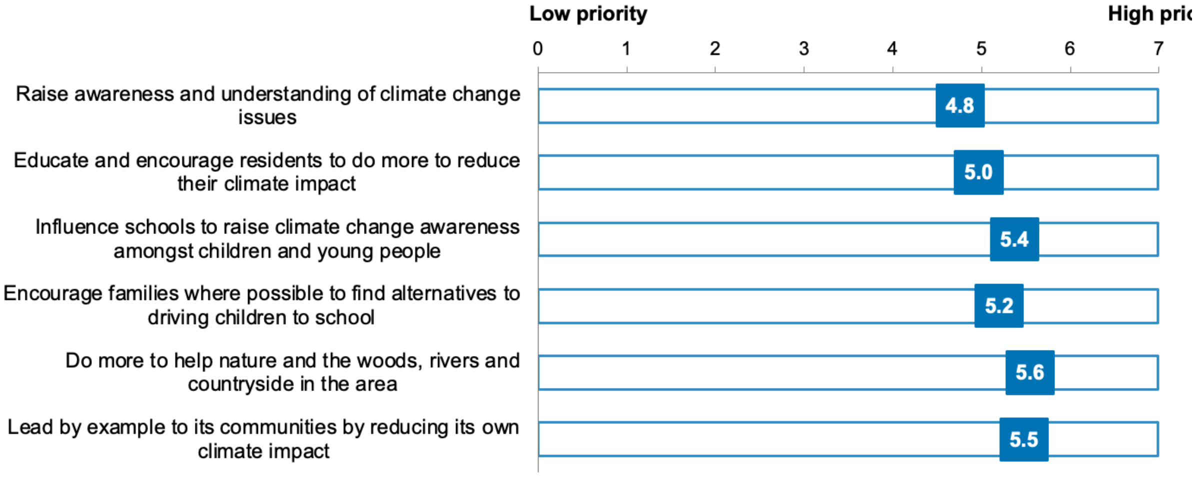
Reducing the impact of climate change

Respondents were asked to consider a range of options for the Council in relation to climate change. As Figure 14 shows, **respondents see all as a priority, with doing more to help nature in the area and reducing the Council's own climate impact identified as the highest priorities**. Survey results show some variation in views across key respondent subgroups:

- Those aged 65+ are more likely than others to prioritise raising awareness and encouraging families to reduce driving to school.

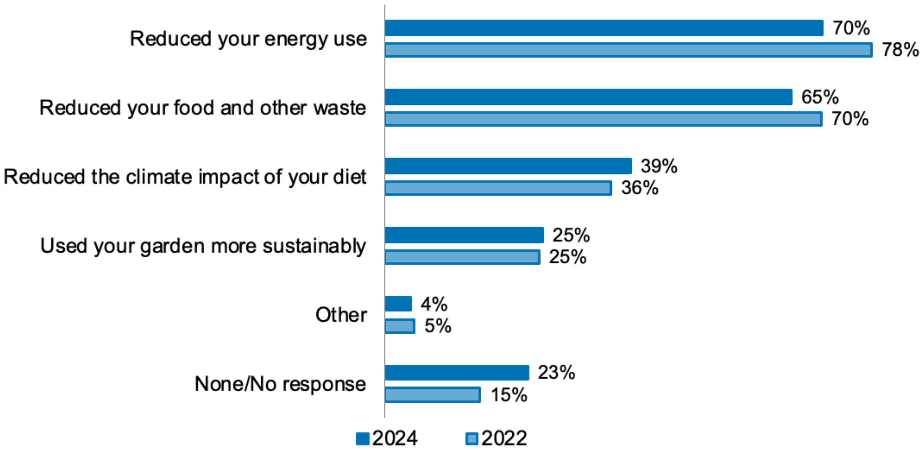
- Women are more likely than men to prioritise schools raising awareness amongst children and young people.
- Homeowners are more likely than others to prioritise the Council reducing its own climate impact.

Figure 14: Views on priority areas for the Council in relation to climate change



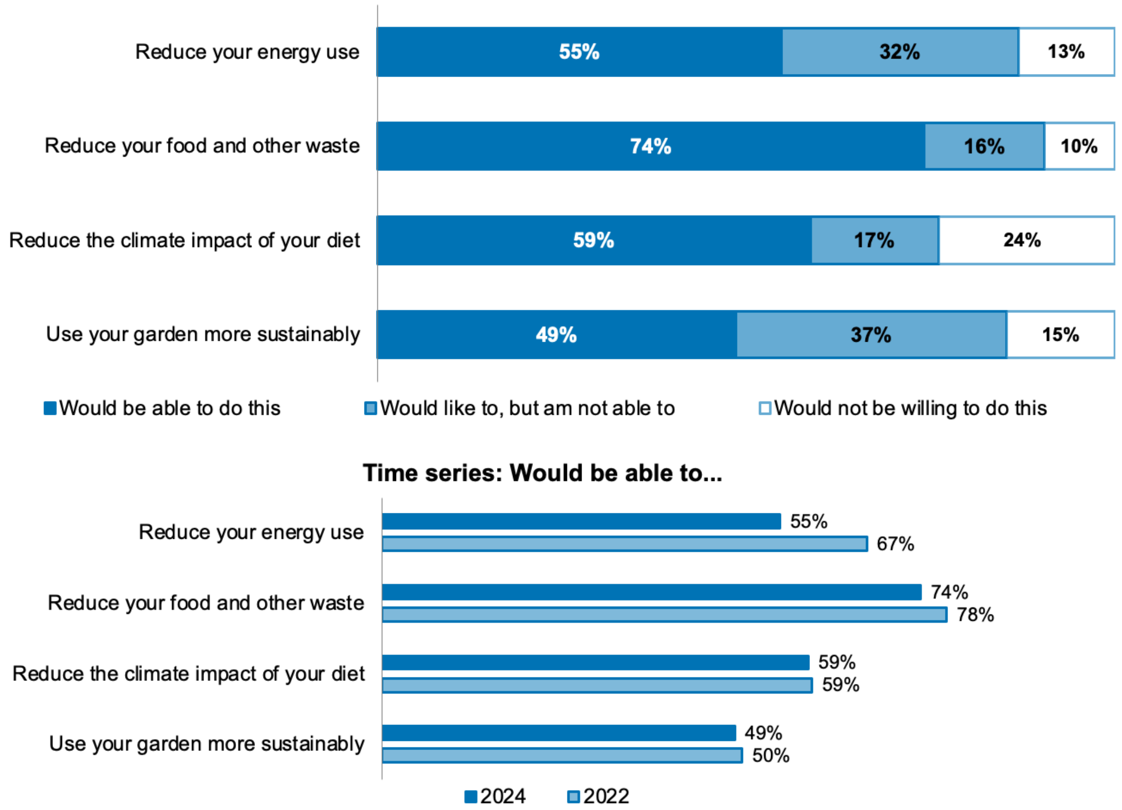
The majority of respondents (77%) report having made changes in the last 2 years to reduce their climate impact. The most common changes are reducing energy use (70% have done this) and reducing food and other waste (65%). These findings are similar to the 2022 survey, although there has been an 8-point reduction in the proportion of respondents who have made changes to reduce their climate impact.

Figure 15: Changes made in last 2 years to help reduce climate impact



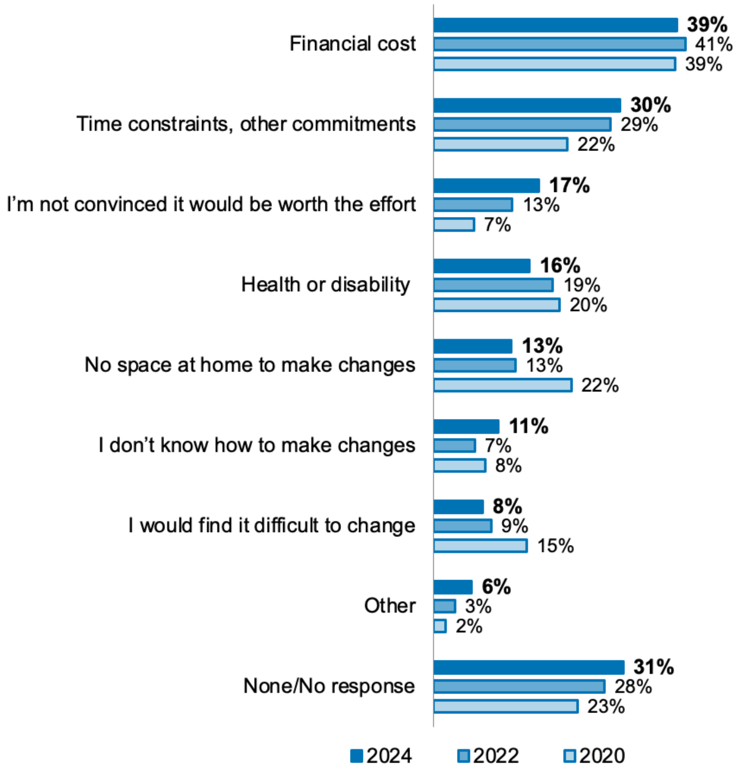
The majority of respondents (81%) feel that they would be able to make one or more of the changes listed at Figure 16 to reduce their climate impact. Respondents are most likely to feel able to reduce their food and other waste (74% indicated this). It is notable that there has been a 12-point reduction since 2022 in the proportion of respondents who feel they would be able to reduce their energy use.

Figure 16: Willingness to make changes to reduce climate impact over next 12 months



Most respondents (69%) feel that there are barriers limiting the changes they can make to reduce their climate impact. The most commonly identified barrier is financial cost (mentioned by 39%) and time constraints or other commitments (30%). Respondents also mentioned not being convinced that change would be worth the effort (17%) and being limited by their health or disability (16%). This mix of barriers is broadly similar to that reported in previous surveys, although there has been a 10-point increase since 2020 in the proportion who are not convinced that change to reduce their climate impact would be worth the effort.

Figure 17: Barriers preventing individuals from making changes to reduce climate impact



Key messages

A majority of respondents (71%) feel that climate change is an immediate and urgent problem.

More than half (54%) are more concerned about climate change now than 12 months ago.

The majority (77%) have made changes to reduce their climate impact, and most (81%) could make changes in the next 12 months.

But the proportion who feel that climate change is an immediate problem has fallen since 2020, and there has been an increase in those who are unconvinced that making changes to reduce their climate impact would be worth the effort.

SAFE AND SUPPORTIVE COMMUNITIES

This section considers Panel members' views on their local community, including how people get on with each other and concern about scams.

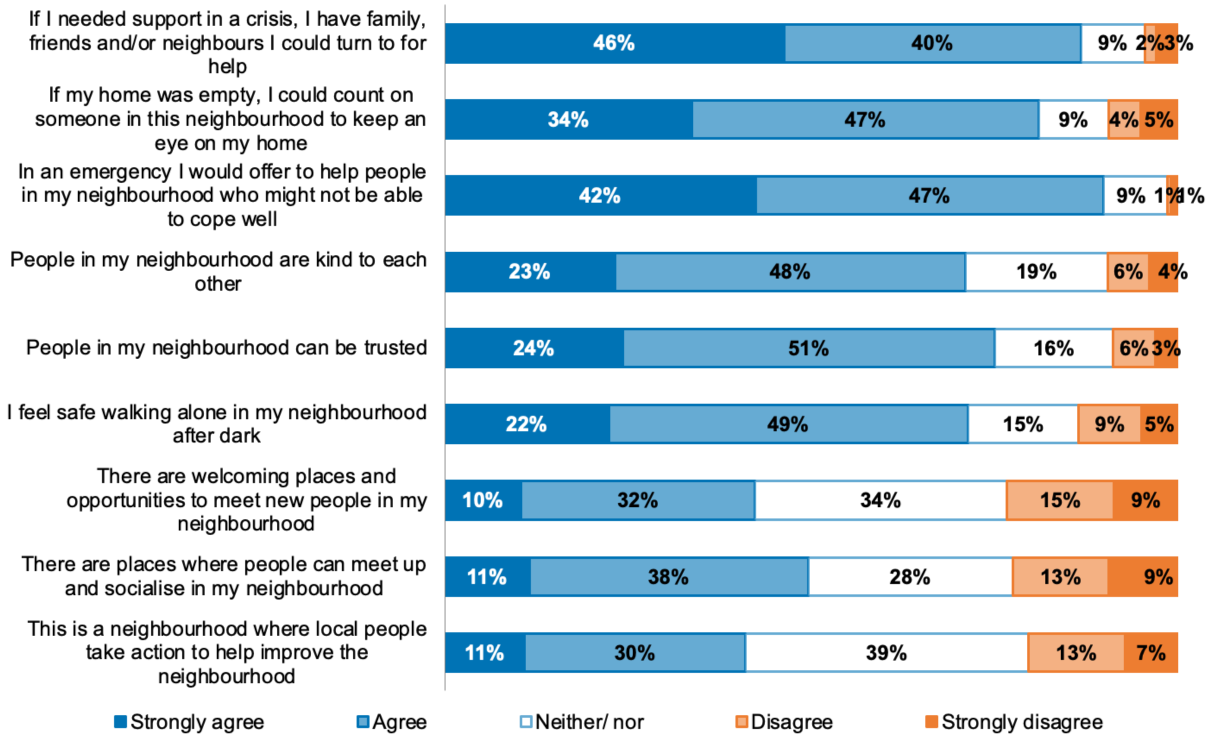
Panel members were asked for their views on a range of statements related to feeling safe and supported in their community. **Most respondents have people they can turn to in a crisis, would offer their help to others, and feel that people in their community are kind and trustworthy** – but views are less positive about having opportunities to meet new people and local people taking action to improve the area.

- A large majority have people they can turn to for help; 87% have people to provide support in a crisis, and 81% could count on someone to watch their home if it was empty. The great majority (90%) would offer help to people in their neighbourhood in an emergency. Homeowners are more likely than renters to have people they can turn to.
- Most respondents feel that people in their neighbourhood can be trusted (75% agree) and are kind to each other (71%). However, trust in people in their area remains below the level reported for East Renfrewshire in the NHS Health and Wellbeing Survey (88% feel people in area can be trusted)[2] and the national average as reported by the Scottish Household Survey (82%)[3].
- Most respondents feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark (71%), although women and those in the Barrhead, Liboside & Uplawmoor area are less likely to feel safe walking alone in their neighbourhood after dark.
- Around half agree that there are places in their neighbourhood where people can socialise (49%, below the national Scottish Household Survey figure of 57%), but a smaller proportion feel there are welcoming opportunities to meet new people (42%).

[2] NHSGGC 2022/23 Health & Wellbeing Survey (East Renfrewshire).
[3] https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings

- Around 2 in 5 feel that people in their neighbourhood take action to help improve things (41%).

Figure 18: Views on feeling safe and supported

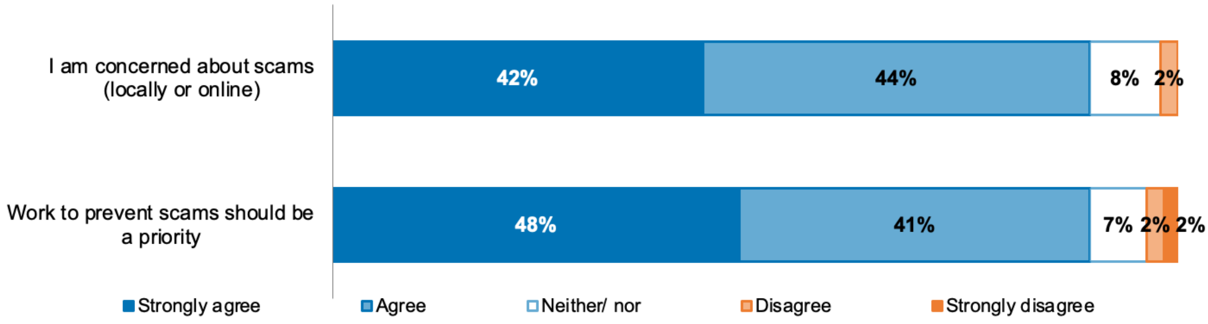


Notes: “Don’t know” excluded from analysis

Also in relation to feeling safe and supported, **a large majority of respondents are concerned about local or online scams** (86%), and feel that work to prevent scams should be a priority (89%). Concern about scams was widespread across all key respondent groups, and is consistent with that reported in 2022.

Additional written responses referred to experience of a range of scams relating to banking, online shopping and attempts to harvest personal details. These were primarily online scams via fraudulent emails or websites. Several respondents noted that they had lost money due to scams, although there was also reference to financial protections enabling individuals to get a refund via their bank or credit card. Respondents noted that they have become more cautious as a result of their experience, for example when dealing with emails or browsing the internet, or blocking unknown calls.

Figure 19: Views on online and in-person scams

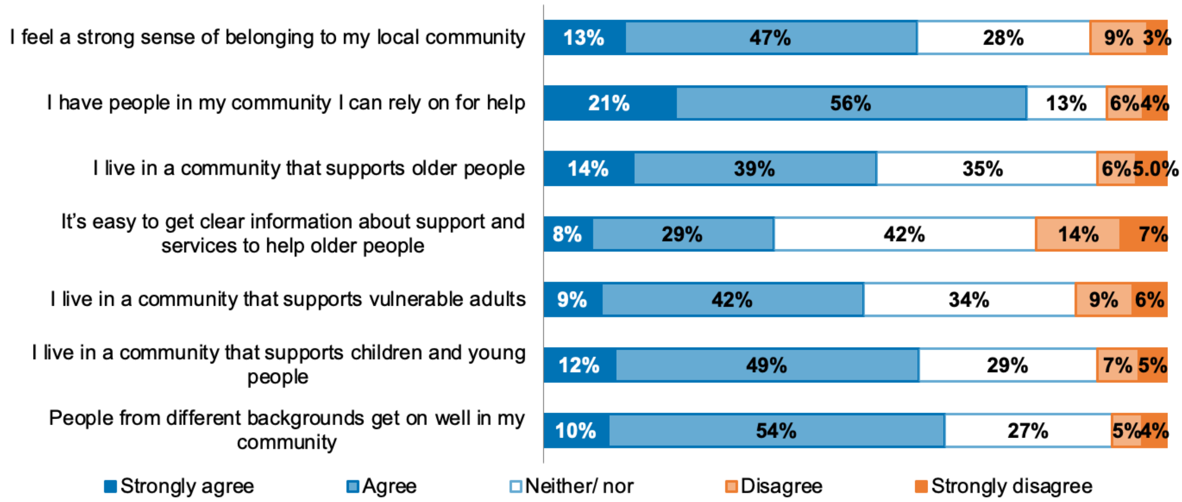


Panel members were asked for their views on a range of statements related to diversity and how different people get on with each other in their community. **Respondents generally feel a strong sense of community and that people from different backgrounds get on well, but views are more mixed on how well communities support specific groups**.

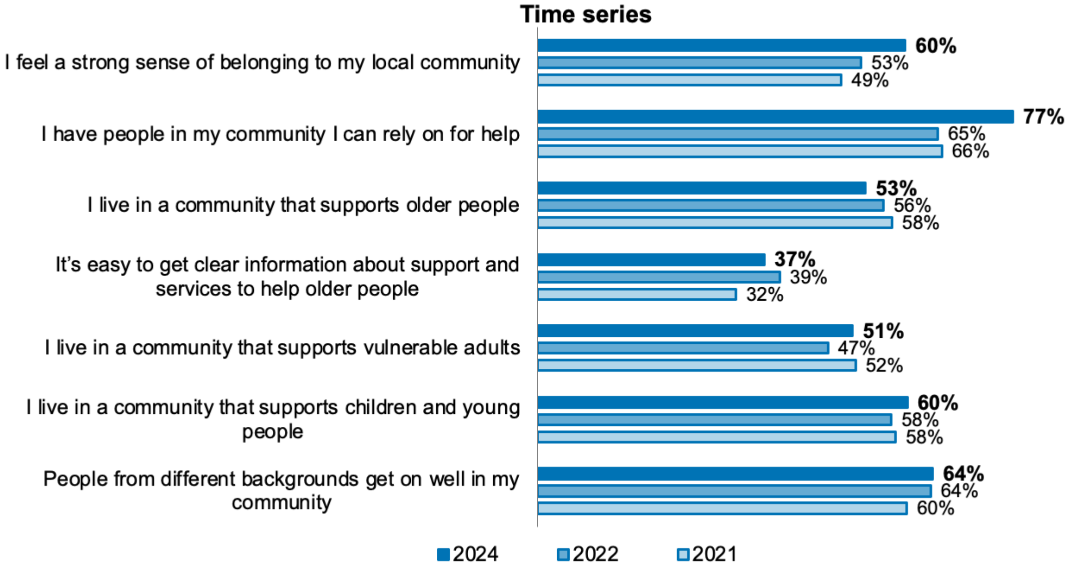
- Most respondents have a strong sense of belonging to their community (60% agreed, a 10-point increase since 2021) and have people in their community they can rely on for help (77% agreed, a 12-point increase since 2021). These findings are broadly similar across key respondent groups, although renters are less likely than others to feel that they have people they can rely on for help.
- Most respondents feel that people from different backgrounds get on well in their community (64% agreed, similar to the Scottish Household Survey national average of 68%)[4].
- Respondents generally feel that their community supports older people (53% agreed, 11% disagreed), but are less positive on whether it is easy to get information about support and services to help older people (37% agreed, 21% disagreed).
- Most respondents feel that their community supports children and young people (60% agreed).
- Around half of respondents feel that their community supports vulnerable adults (51% agreed, 15% disagreed).

[4] https://www.gov.scot/publications/scottish-household-survey-2022-key-findings

Figure 20: Views on how people get on with and support each other



Notes: "Don't know" excluded from analysis



Key messages

Most have people they can turn to in a crisis, and feel that people in their community are kind and trustworthy.

Views are less positive about opportunities to meet new people.

The majority feel a strong sense of community and have people in their community they can rely on for help – both findings show a significant increase since 2020.

Respondents generally feel that people from different backgrounds get on well, but views are more mixed on how well their community supports specific groups.

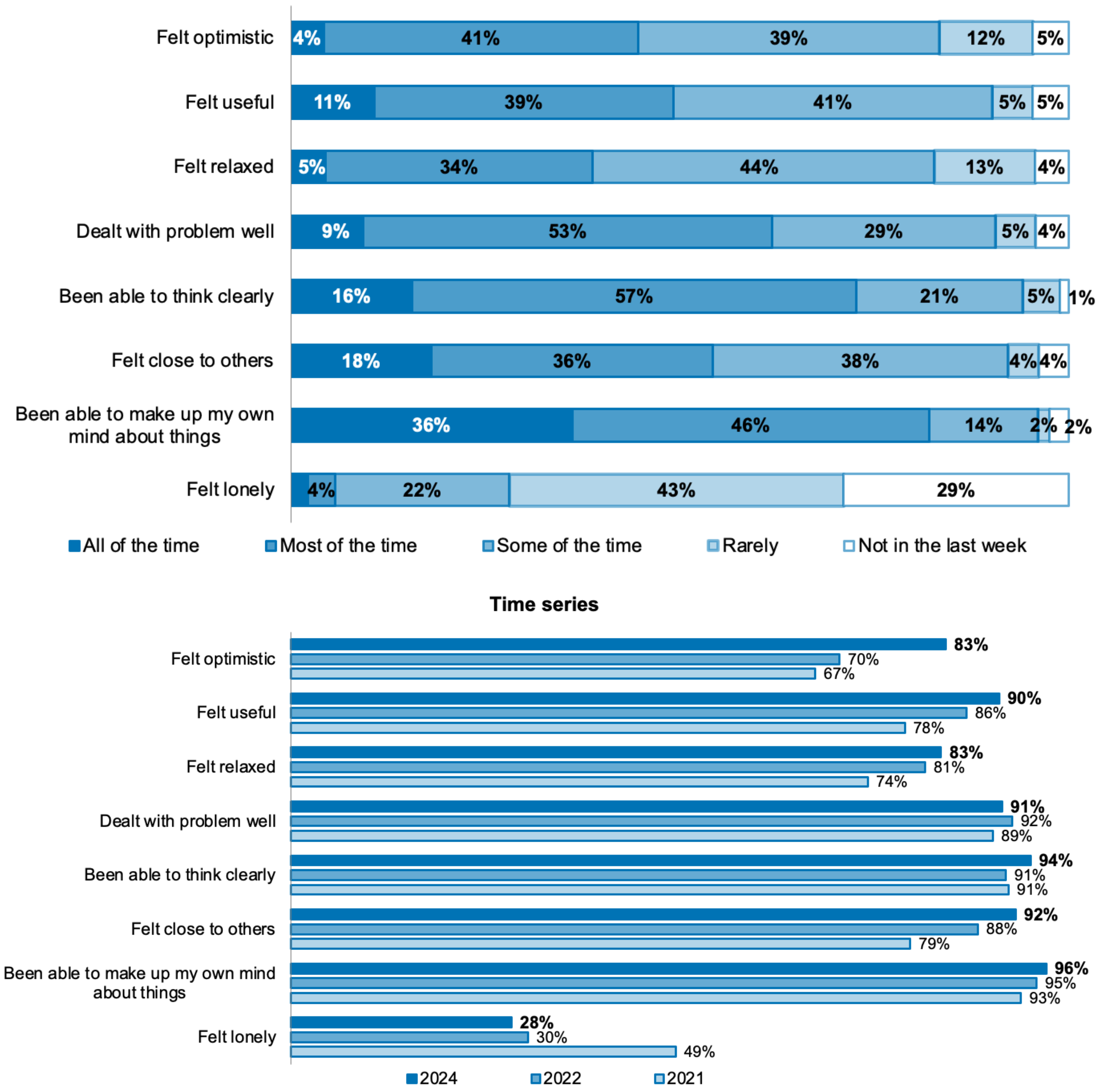
KEEPING ACTIVE

This section considers Panel members' feedback on their mental and physical health, and keeping active.

As Figure 21 shows, **respondents were generally positive about their recent mental and emotional wellbeing**, particularly in relation to being able to make up their own mind about things, thinking clearly and dealing with problems.

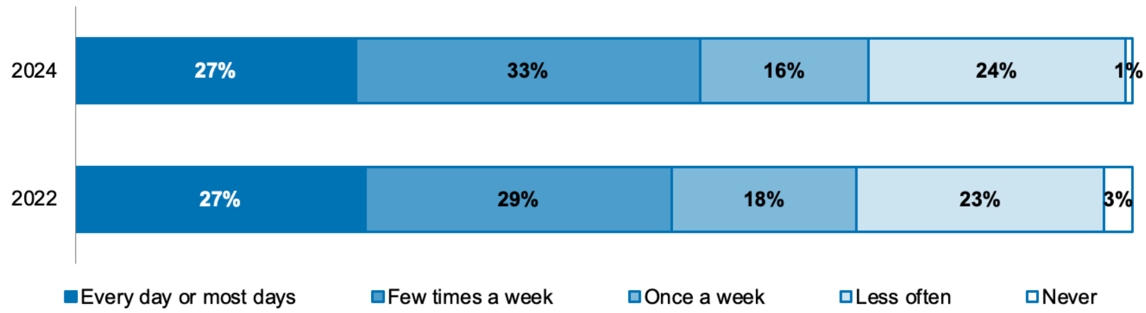
- The majority of respondents have felt optimistic, useful and relaxed at least some of the time in the last week (83%, 90% and 83% respectively). The proportion of respondents who have felt optimistic and useful has increased in recent years (by 17-points and 12-points respectively since 2021). Those with a disability were less likely than others to have felt optimistic and useful.
- A large majority have felt able to think clearly, to deal with problems well, and to make up their own mind over the last week (94%, 91% and 96% respectively).
- A large majority have felt close to others most of the time in the last week (92%), a 13-point increase since 2021. Those with a disability and renters were less likely than others to have felt close to others.
- More than a quarter (28%) have felt lonely at least some time in the week prior to the survey, although those in rented are more likely than others to have felt lonely in the last week. The proportion of respondents who have experienced loneliness has reduced significantly from the peak of 49% in the 2021 survey (conducted during ongoing restrictions to control the spread of COVID-19) but remains above the national average (23% reported by the Scottish Household Survey).

Figure 21: Mental and emotional wellbeing in the last week



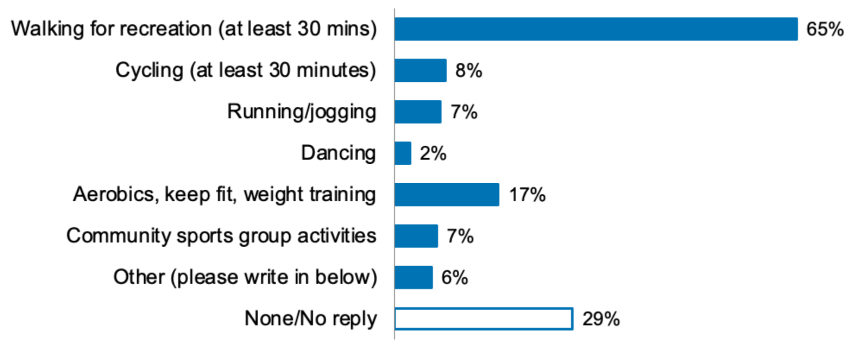
Three quarters of respondents (75%) have met with family, friends or neighbours at least once a week in the last year, including more than a quarter (27%) who met socially every day or most days. However, there remains a similar proportion (25%) who met socially no more than a few times a month. It is notable that those in rented housing are less likely to have met socially with family and friends at least once a week.

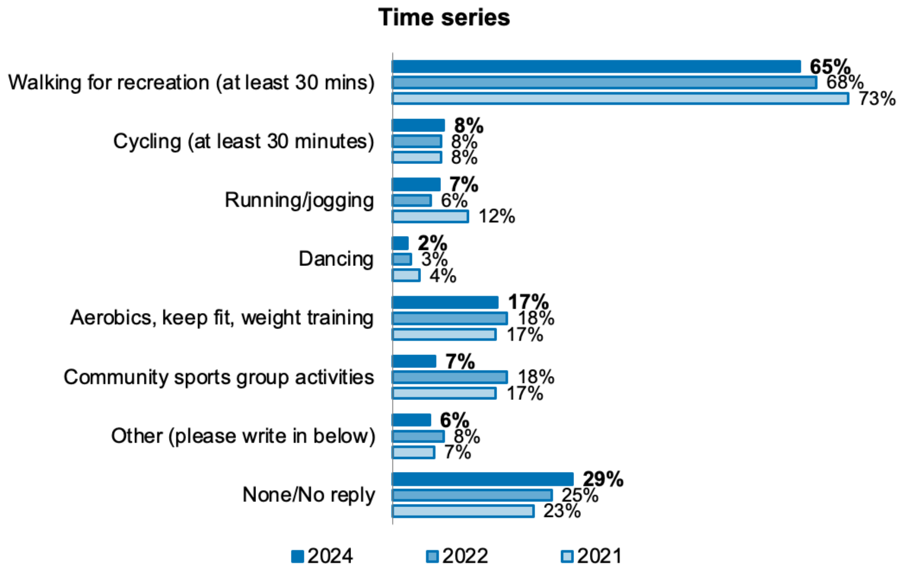
Figure 22: How often met socially with family, friends, neighbours in the last 12 months



A large majority of respondents have taken part in some sport or physical activity in the last 4 weeks (71%), below the level reported by the Scottish Household Survey (82%). Physical activity most commonly involved walking for recreation (65% having walked for at least 30 minutes in the last 4 weeks). The profile of physical activity has remained largely unchanged over the last three years, and is consistent across key respondent subgroups.

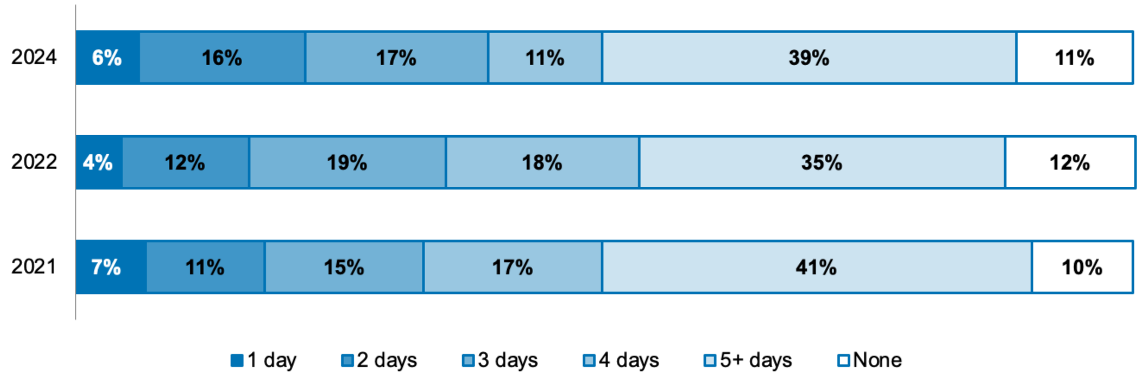
Figure 23: Physical activity in the last 4 weeks





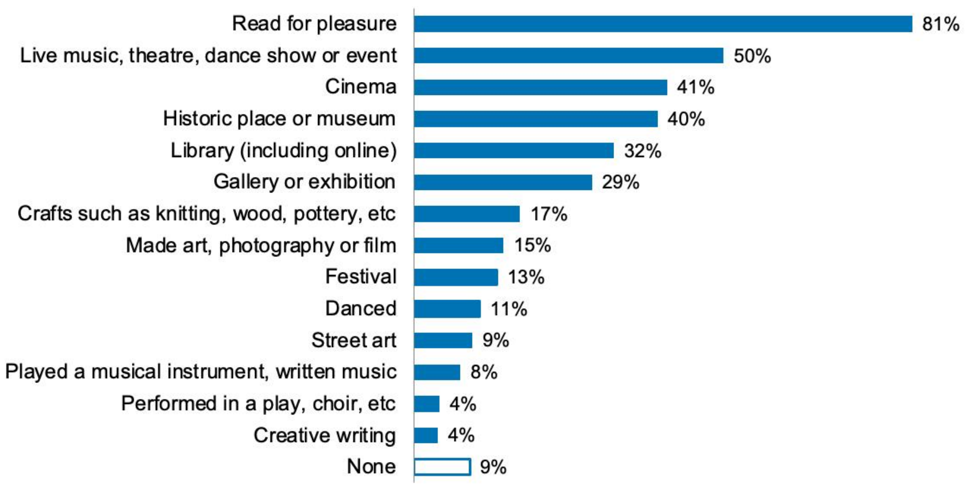
Most respondents report taking physical activity on a relatively frequent basis; around two thirds (67%) of all respondents had taken 30+ minutes of exercise on at least 3 days a week over the last four weeks. This included more than a third (39%) who had taken 30+ minutes of exercise on at least 5 days a week. Survey results indicate that those aged 65+ and those living in Locality Planning Areas are less likely than others to take exercise on three or more days a week.

Figure 24: Frequency of physical activity in the last 4 weeks



A large majority of respondents have participated in cultural events or activities in the last year (91%). This has most commonly involved reading for pleasure (81%), live music/theatre/dance (50%), cinema (41%) or historic place or museum (40%). Less commonly mentioned activities included creative writing (4%) and performing (4%).

Figure 25: Participation in cultural activities over the last 12 months



More than a quarter of respondents (27%) would like to attend other types of activity or event if they were available in East Renfrewshire. Written comments included respondents expressing interest in:

- Local food and drink related events such as festivals or farmer's markets
- Cultural activities such as fairs, author or book events, art/craft classes, community theatre, comedy or music events.
- Physical activities and sports activities such as cycling events, walking clubs, and local sports teams.
- Community food production, allotments and gardening events.
- Activities for specific groups including older age groups and families/ children.
- Specific interest activities such as historical societies.

Key messages

Respondents were generally positive about their recent mental and emotional wellbeing, and there has been a significant decrease in the proportion who have felt lonely in the last week (from 49% to 28%).

A large majority (71%) have taken part in some sport or physical activity in the last 4 weeks, and have participated in cultural events or activities (91%).

GETTING INVOLVED IN YOUR COMMUNITY

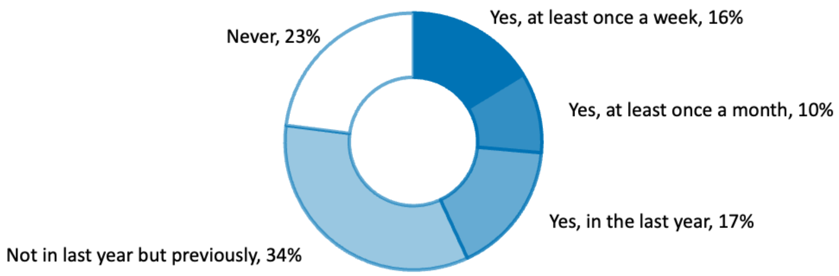
The final section of the survey sought views on getting involved in the local community, influencing local decision making and access to local services.

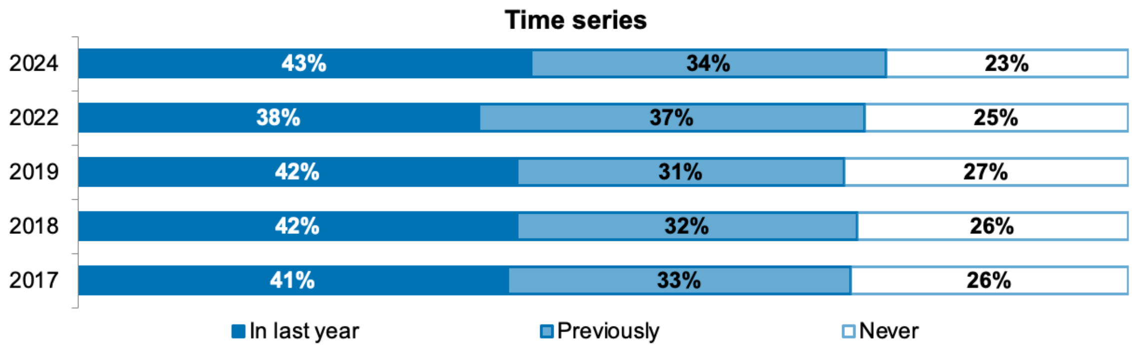
Volunteering

As Figure 26 indicates, **more than three quarters of respondents have given up time to help clubs, charities or other organisations** (77%). This includes 43% who have volunteered in the last year and a quarter (26%) who do so at least once a month. Findings were broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although those in the Newton Mearns North & Neilston and Newton Mearns South & Eaglesham wards are more likely to volunteer.

Comparison with other data suggests that Panel members are more likely than the wider public to volunteer. The 43% who have volunteered in the last year has been consistent across previous surveys, is higher than the 30% reported for East Renfrewshire in the NHS Health & Wellbeing Survey, and is higher than the 26% reported nationally by the Scottish Household Survey.

Figure 26: Whether given up unpaid time in the last 12 months

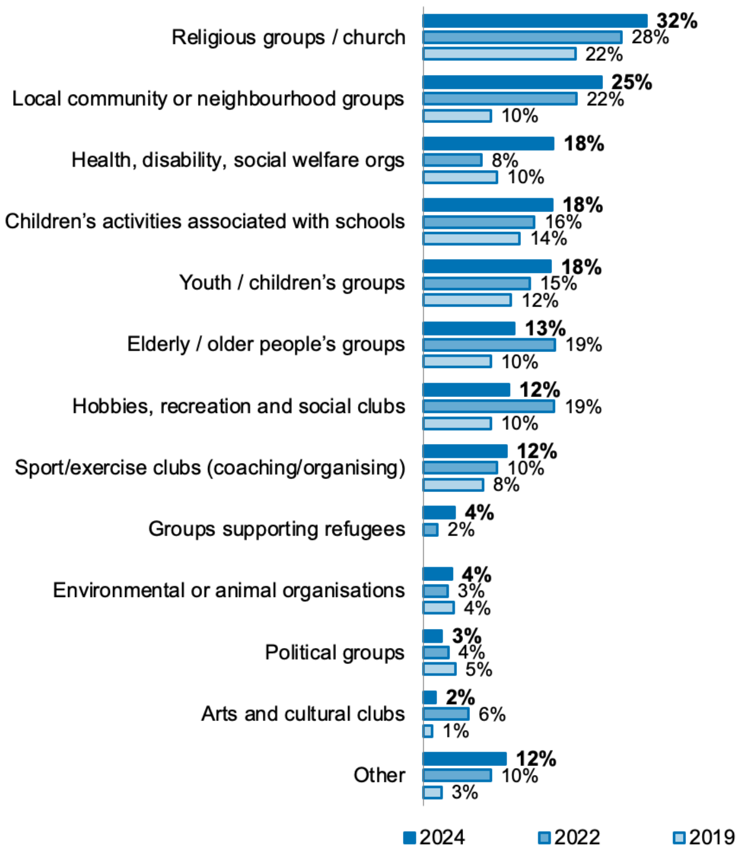




Respondents have given up time for a range of types of organisation. The most common are: religious groups (32% of those who have volunteered); local community or neighbourhood groups (25%); health, disability and social welfare groups (18%); and children's activities linked to schools (18%).

Survey results show some variation across key respondent groups in the kinds of groups that respondents give their time to. Perhaps unsurprisingly, respondents are generally more likely to give their time to groups that are relevant to their own socio-demographic group; for example, under 45s and those with children are more likely to be involved in school-related activities, those aged 65+ in older people's groups, and those with a disability in health or disability-related groups.

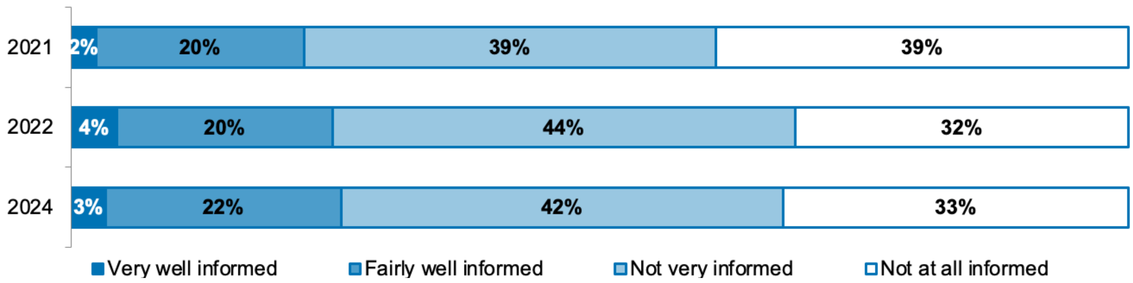
Figure 27: Types of organisation given up time for



Around 1 in 7 respondents (15%) have stopped volunteering in the last 2 years. This was most commonly due to other time commitments; most of those who had stopped volunteering mentioned family and/or work commitments. Respondents also referred to poor health as having made it difficult to continue volunteering.

Despite the relatively high level of volunteering activity, Panel members generally do not feel well informed about volunteering opportunities in East Renfrewshire. As Figure 28 shows, three quarters (75%) do not feel well informed while around a quarter (26%) feel fairly well informed. This balance of views has been consistent across recent surveys.

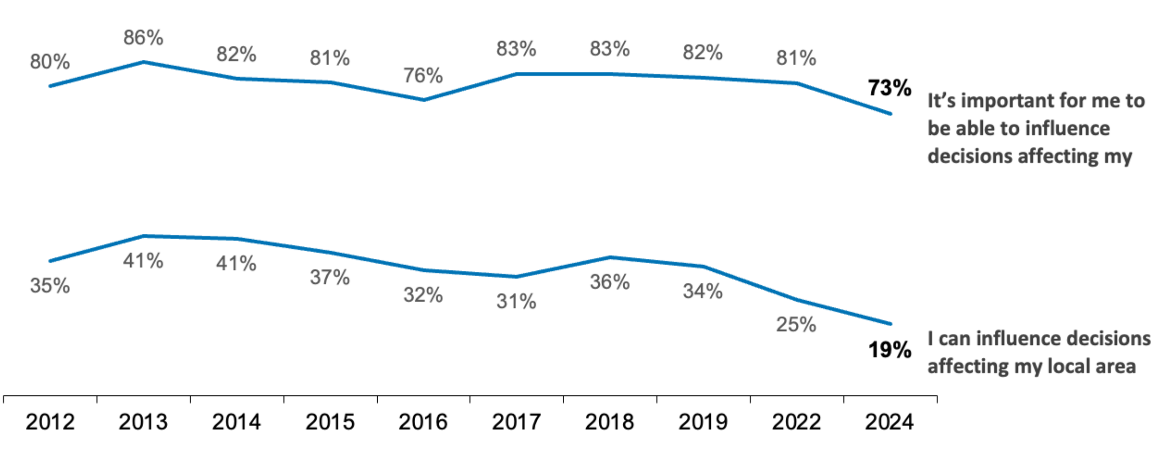
Figure 28: Whether feel informed about volunteering opportunities in East Renfrewshire



Tackling inequalities - local decision making

As Figure 29 shows, **Panel members are clear in their view that it is important for them to be able to influence decisions affecting their local area**; 73% agree with this and only 3% disagree. However, Panel members generally feel that they are not able to influence local decisions; 41% feel they are not able to do so, more than twice the proportion (19%) who do feel able to influence decisions. The proportion of respondents who feel able to influence local decisions shows a 15-point decrease since 2019, similar to the trend seen nationally (the Scottish Household Survey reports that 18% of Scottish households feel they can influence local decisions).

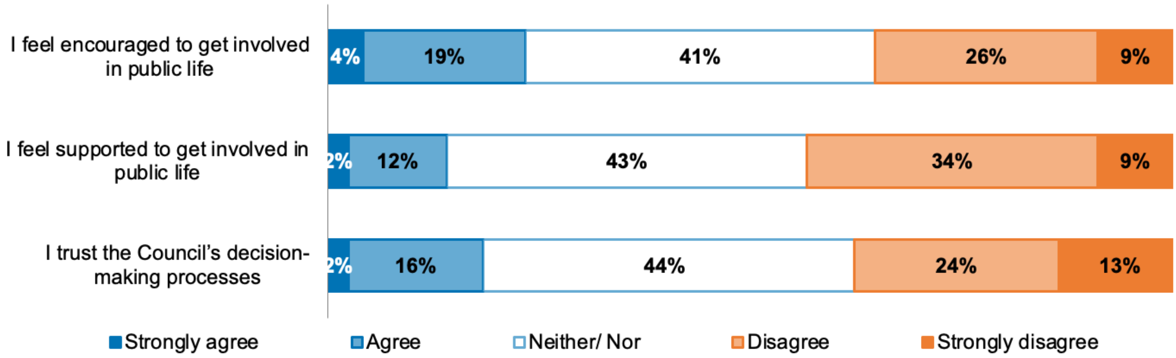
Figure 29: Views on influencing local decisions



As Figure 30 shows, **views were somewhat divided but Panel members generally do not feel encouraged or supported to get involved in public life**. A large proportion of respondents selected the neutral "neither/nor" response, but others were more likely to indicate that they do not feel encouraged or supported; 35% do not feel encouraged while 23% do, and 43% do not feel supported while 14% do. This balance of views was broadly consistent across key respondent groups.

Panel members also generally do not trust the Council's decision-making processes; 38% indicated this compared with 18% who do trust these processes. These findings were also consistent across key respondent groups.

Figure 30: Views on being well represented in public life



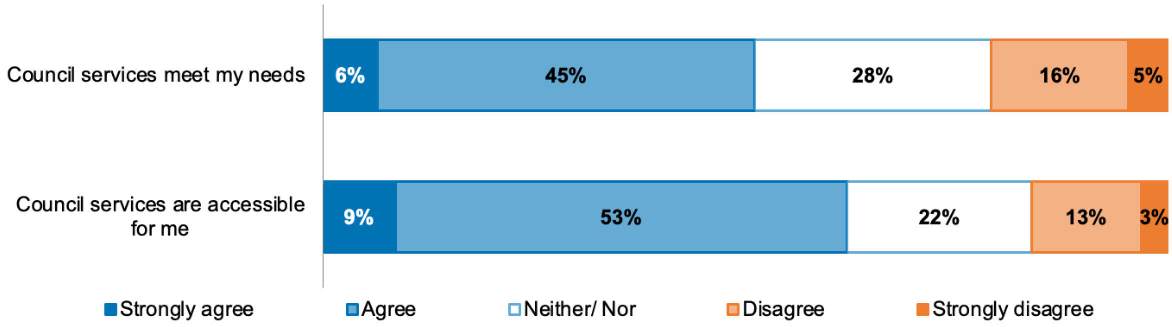
Respondents suggested a number of areas where they feel that change could help more people to contribute to local decision making. These included:

- Increasing local opportunities to contribute to decision making, and raising awareness of available opportunities.
- A better approach to public consultations to ensure these are accessible to all, such as allowing residents more time to respond to consultations and ensuring community meetings are at different times of the day and evening,
- Ensuring engagement opportunities are not dominated by vested interests or "the very vocal minority" and provide an accurate account of local views.
- Being more transparent around the purpose of public engagement and what is achievable and providing clear feedback on how consultation results have been used in local decisions.

Tackling inequalities - accessing services

Panel members generally feel that Council services are accessible for them and, to a lesser extent, that services meet their needs. Most respondents agreed that Council services are accessible for them (62%, 16% disagreed) and around half (51%) agreed that services meet their needs (21% disagreed). Views were broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although it is notable that those with a disability were less likely than others to feel that Council services meet their needs.

Figure 31: Views on access to Council services



Those who feel that Council services do not meet their needs and/or are not accessible referred to a range of issues, most commonly transport barriers (including access to parking), especially for those with a disability and/or limited mobility. Respondents also cited examples of services failing to respond to requests, and a perceived reduction in available Council services, including a lack of support for specific groups. Several potential changes were suggested to ensure that Council services are accessible and meet people's needs:

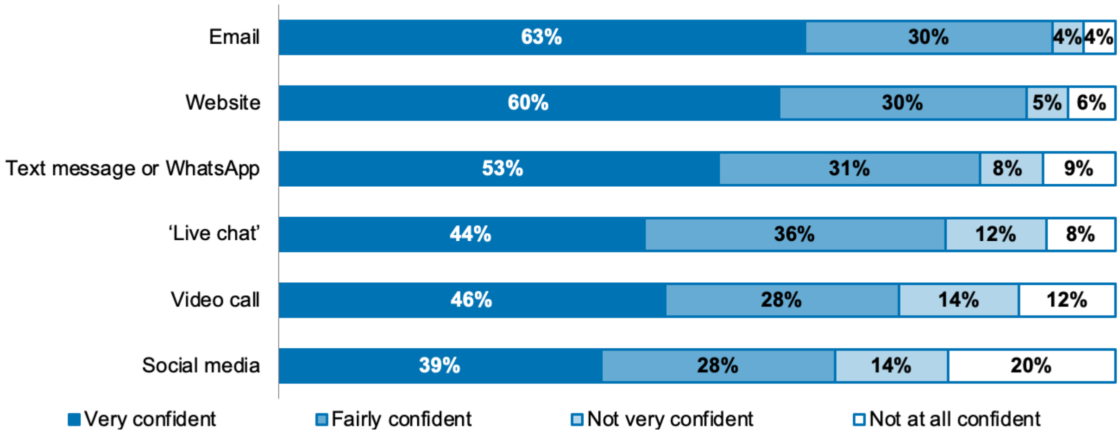
- Improve transport options, including better and cheaper public transport.
- Ensure Council services are easier to access including reference to speed of phone calls being answered, a perceived need for the Council website to be improved, and more options for face to face contact. There were also calls for the Council to be more accessible as an organisation, such as through regular (online and local) meetings with elected members.

- Be more open and honest in communication with residents, including where the Council is not performing well.
- Reduce charges for Council services.

As Figure 32 shows, **most Panel members would feel confident using digital options to access Council or other services**. The great majority (94%) indicated that they would feel confident using one or more of the digital options listed, with confidence highest in relation to email, websites, messaging and 'live chat'. Survey results indicate that confidence in digital options is broadly consistent across key respondent groups.

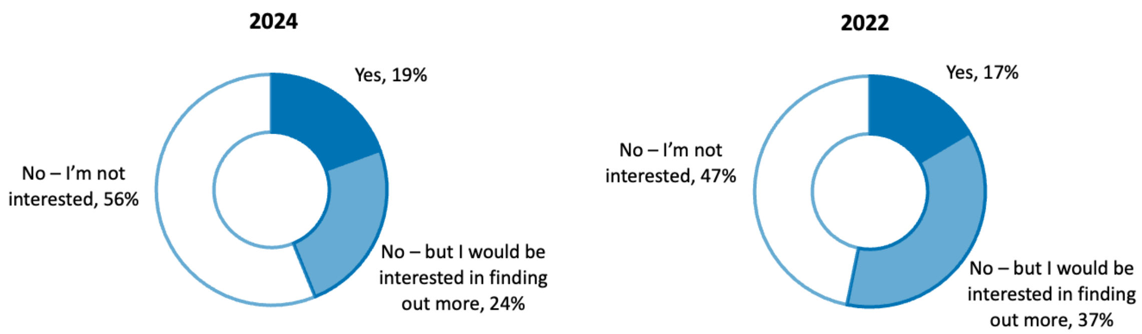
For the minority of respondents who would not feel confident using digital options, this was most likely due to a lack of confidence in using the internet or digital devices. A small number also referred to physical disability and/or sensory impairment as limiting their ability to use digital options. These respondents suggested ways in which digital services could be made more accessible, including classes to develop digital skills, and support with the cost of devices and connectivity. There was also a perceived need to ensure that people can access alternative contact methods where additional needs limit their ability to use digital options.

Figure 32: Confidence using digital options to access Council services



Relatively few respondents (19%) are aware of local services providing support and information on digital learning and access. Survey results suggest that a further quarter of respondents (24%) would be interested in finding out more about these services.

Figure 33: Awareness of local support or information to help people use digital services



Key messages

More than three quarters of respondents (77%) have volunteered to help clubs, charities or other organisations, but most do not feel well informed about local volunteering opportunities.

Panel members are clear in their view that it is important for them to be able to influence decisions affecting their local area, but generally feel that they are not able to influence those decisions.

Panel members generally feel Council services are accessible for them (62%) and, to a lesser extent, that services meet their needs (51%).

CONCLUDING REMARKS

This report has provided an overview of results from the latest East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel survey, conducted in early 2024 with a focus on Council services, the cost of living, climate change, safe and supportive communities, and accessing services. More detailed findings are provided in the Technical Report.

The level of survey response achieved for the current survey suggests a strong level of engagement from Panel members, with 63% responding and an increasing proportion taking part online. The Panel refreshment exercise carried out in 2023 improved representation of several socio-demographic groups (such as people from minority ethnic backgrounds, people with a disability, and people living in the most deprived areas). The refreshment also contributed to the positive overall survey response, with new members showing a higher response than others (and also being more likely to respond online).

The statistical reliability of survey results is determined primarily by the number of survey responses achieved, and **the strong response from Panel members has produced a robust set of survey results**. These provide an accurate representation of the views of East Renfrewshire residents, and are sufficient to support robust detailed survey analysis.

A key focus for the ongoing Panel programme will be to maintain – and where possible improve – Panel member engagement. This is key to ensuring that consultation results continue to provide a robust and reliable resource for the Council and partners. Continuing use of the Panel to consider views on new survey topics should support strong ongoing engagement.

Meaningful feedback of consultation findings is an important factor in maintaining Panel members' engagement. This is provided via feedback to Panel members, and online publication of survey reports (at www.eastrenfrewshire.gov.uk/citizenspanel).

Ward profiles

Summary findings for each ward area are provided over the following pages.

These include comparison of results for each ward with the East Renfrewshire average and consideration of trend results across the last three surveys – arrow icons indicate whether results for the ward are higher than (↑), lower than (↓) or similar to (↔) the comparator.. Due to the relatively small sample sizes involved, **comparison with East Renfrewshire and previous surveys are indicative only**.

Ward 1 Barrhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor

Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services	± ER average	Trend over time
84% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live	⇔	⇔
68% satisfied with Council services	⇔	⇔
42% feel Council services are good value for money	⇧	⇔
Safe and supportive communities		
65% feel a sense of community	⇧	⇔
86% have people they can turn to for support in a crisis	⇔	n/a
35% felt lonely in the last week	⇔	⇔
70% given unpaid help, 43% in last year	⇔	⇔
Being active		
74% taken part in sport/physical activity	⇔	⇔
Climate change		
67% have become more concerned about climate change in the last 12 months	⇔	n/a
Cost of living		
88% seen increased cost of living – most commonly due to food and fuel costs	⇔	n/a

Ward 2 Newton Mearns North and Neilston

Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services	± ER average	Trend over time
81% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live	⇔	⇩
62% satisfied with Council services	⇔	⇔
31% feel Council services are good value for money	⇔	⇔
Safe and supportive communities		
64% feel a sense of community	⇧	⇔
85% have people they can turn to for support in a crisis	⇔	n/a
31% felt lonely in the last week	⇔	⇔
72% given unpaid help, 23% in last year	⇩	⇩
Being active		
67% taken part in sport/physical activity	⇔	⇩
Climate change		
52% have become more concerned about climate change in the last 12 months	⇩	n/a
Cost of living		
96% seen increased cost of living – most commonly due to food and fuel costs	⇔	n/a

Ward 3: Giffnock and Thornliebank

Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services	± ER average	Trend over time
90% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live	⇔	⇩
64% satisfied with Council services	⇔	⇩
29% feel Council services are good value for money	⇔	⇩
Safe and supportive communities		
50% feel a sense of community	⇔	⇩
76% have people they can turn to for support in a crisis	⇩	n/a
37% felt lonely in the last week	⇧	⇔
80% given unpaid help, 36% in last year	⇔	⇔
Being active		
76% taken part in sport/physical activity	⇔	⇩
Climate change		
67% have become more concerned about climate change in the last 12 months	⇔	n/a
Cost of living		
89% seen increased cost of living – most commonly due to food and fuel costs	⇔	n/a

Ward 4 Clarkston, Netherlee and Williamwood

Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services	± ER average	Trend over time
80% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live	⇔	⇩
62% satisfied with Council services	⇔	⇩
33% feel Council services are good value for money	⇔	⇔
Safe and supportive communities		
48% feel a sense of community	⇔	⇩
87% have people they can turn to for support in a crisis	⇔	n/a
23% felt lonely in the last week	⇩	⇔
74% given unpaid help, 39% in last year	⇔	⇔
Being active		
73% taken part in sport/physical activity	⇔	⇩
Climate change		
60% have become more concerned about climate change in the last 12 months	⇔	n/a
Cost of living		
94% seen increased cost of living – most commonly due to food and fuel costs	⇔	n/a

Ward 5 Newton Mearns South and Eaglesham

Life in in East Renfrewshire and local services	± ER average	Trend over time
87% satisfied with East Renfrewshire as a place to live	⇔	⇩
59% satisfied with Council services	⇔	⇩
23% feel Council services are good value for money	⇩	⇩

Safe and supportive communities	± ER average	Trend over time
47% feel a sense of community	⇔	⇔
84% have people they can turn to for support in a crisis	⇔	n/a
25% felt lonely in the last week	⇔	⇔
77% given unpaid help, 40% in last year	⇔	⇔

Being active	± ER average	Trend over time
76% taken part in sport/physical activity	⇔	⇩

Climate change	± ER average	Trend over time
66% have become more concerned about climate change in the last 12 months	⇔	n/a

Cost of living	± ER average	Trend over time
93% seen increased cost of living – most commonly due to food and fuel costs	⇔	n/a