



2021 Survey

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engage
scotland

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2021 Survey Key Messages

Your area and local services...

Strong satisfaction with ER as a place to live	Fairly strong satisfaction with Council services, but fallen since 2017	Most feel the Council and employees represent Council values
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Impact of COVID-19 for you...

Pandemic has affected quality of life for the great majority	Employment status/income been affected for 1 in 5 households	More than 1 in 3 have had to make changes due to economic impact
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Impact of COVID-19 for local services...

Large majority have seen an impact on local services	Generally positive on the Council's response to the pandemic, but 40% feel did not maintain key services, and 39% felt poorly informed
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Volunteering and community...

Most contributed or volunteered for local orgs during pandemic	43% felt less connected with local community, family and friends	Great majority have people they can turn to, but 49% have felt lonely
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Promoting equality for all...

Themes around children/young people and those with disabilities seen as most important for promoting equality for all	Employment opportunities for younger residents and disabled residents, digital inclusion for older residents also important
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Digital inclusion...

Great majority have home internet access, and great majority of these use internet for a range of purposes	Relatively few mentioned barriers to getting home internet - most common related to cost, skills/confidence, and privacy or security concerns
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Introduction

- 1.1. 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 spring 2021. This survey sought Panel members' views on a range of issues related to life in East Renfrewshire. Given the specific challenges faced by residents during the COVID-19 pandemic, this included questions on how the pandemic has affected Panel members and local services, alongside questions relating to active communities, promoting equality for all, and digital inclusion.
- 1.2. **A total of 581 survey responses were received**, equating to an overall response rate of 62%. This is a strong response to any survey and continues the 60%+ response seen over the last 10 surveys, and the continuing growth of web-responses with 68% of responses submitted online. The survey response, and the increase in online responses (14-point increase since 2019), is particularly positive given survey fieldwork was inevitably affected by government restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19. The Panel refreshment exercise carried out in 2020 appears to have contributed to this positive response, with new members showing a higher response than others.
- 1.3. The volume of response is also 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.
- 1.4. 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.

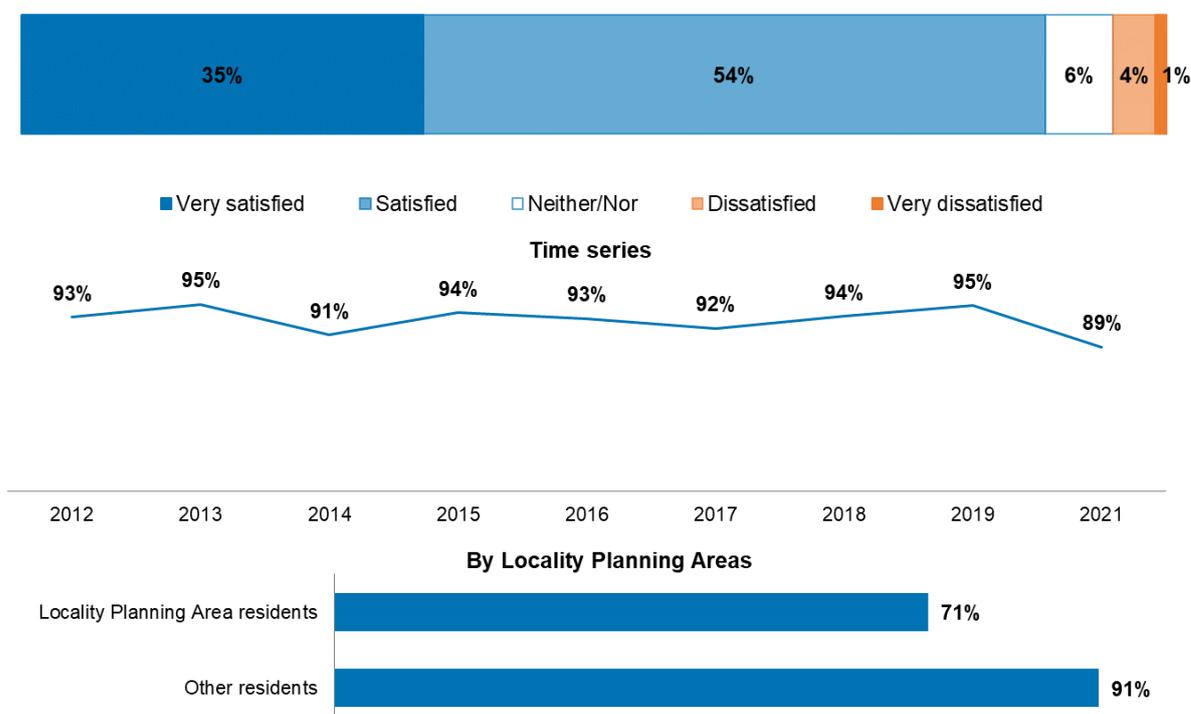
Your area and local services

- 2.1. The first part of the survey sought Panel members' views on their local area, including local service provision.

East Renfrewshire as a place to live

- 2.2. **Survey findings show high levels of satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live;** 89% indicated that they are satisfied with the area as a place to live.
- 2.3. While this remains a strong rating, it is at the lower end of satisfaction results across previous Panel surveys, which have been in the range of 91-95% since 2012. However, an 89% satisfaction rating remains similar to that reported across Scotland as a whole through the Scottish Household Survey (94%).
- 2.4. Survey results indicate that satisfaction ratings are broadly consistent across key respondent groups, including ward areas. However, it is notable that satisfaction is lower for residents of Locality Planning Areas (areas affected by deprivation across East Renfrewshire) than for others.

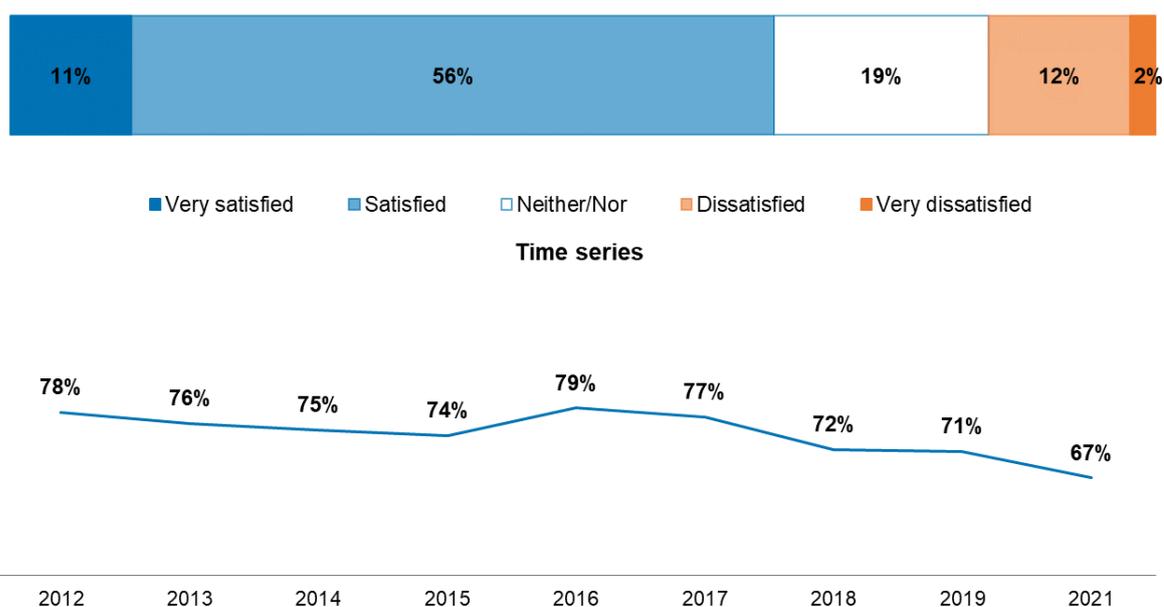
Figure 1: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire as a place to live



Satisfaction with services

- 2.5. **A majority of respondents (67%) 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 (range of 55% to 81%). However, this does represent a 10-point reduction in satisfaction ratings since 2017.

Figure 2: Satisfaction with East Renfrewshire Council services overall

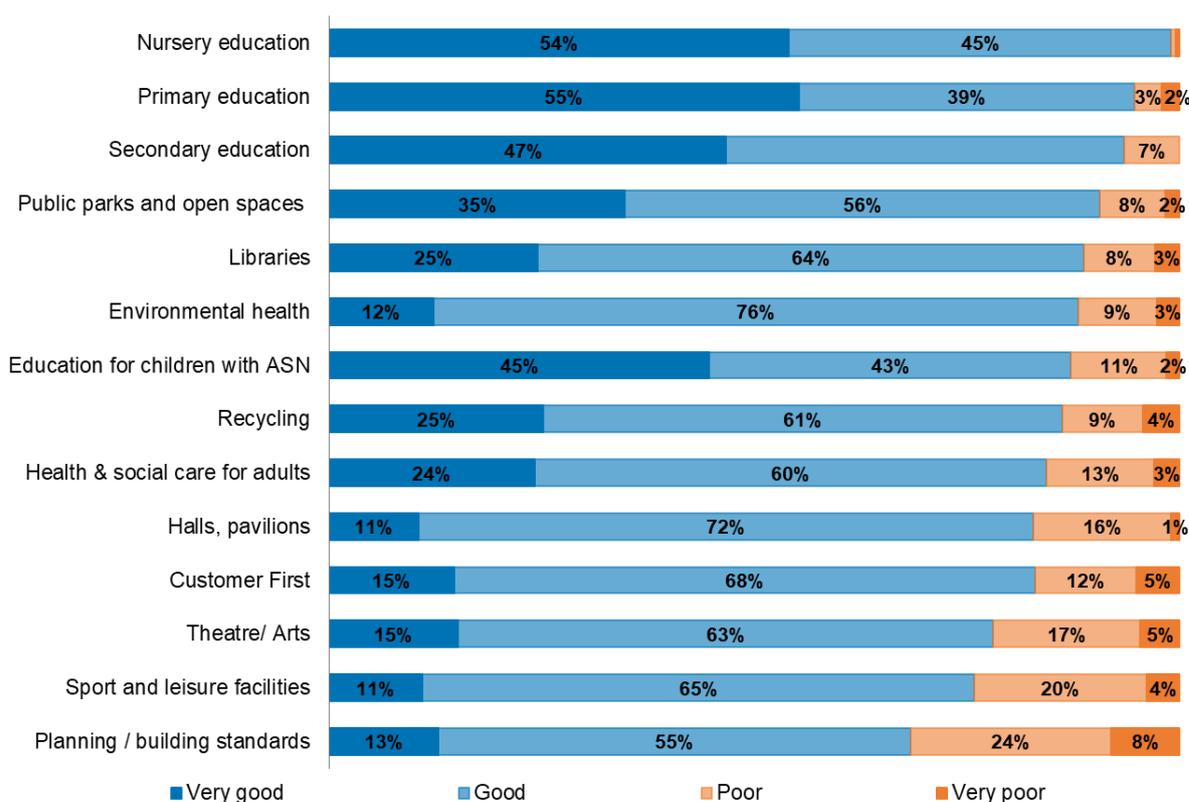


- 2.6. The survey also asked for Panel members' views on specific Council services that they may or may not have used over the last year. Consistent with previous surveys, public parks & open spaces and recycling services are by far the most commonly used; 84% and 83% respectively have used these in the last year.
- 2.7. Figure 3 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, 99% rating nursery education, 95% rating primary education and 94% rating secondary education positively, and 88% rating education for children with Additional Support Needs positively;
 - Public parks and open spaces, 91% rating positively;
 - Libraries, 89%;

- Environmental health, 88%; and
- Recycling, 86%.

2.8. The overall ranking of Council services has remained broadly consistent, with education, libraries, and parks/open spaces 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 3, but these suggest that residents' views on these services in East Renfrewshire are generally similar to those reported across other local authority areas.

Figure 3: Satisfaction with specific East Renfrewshire Council services



Council values

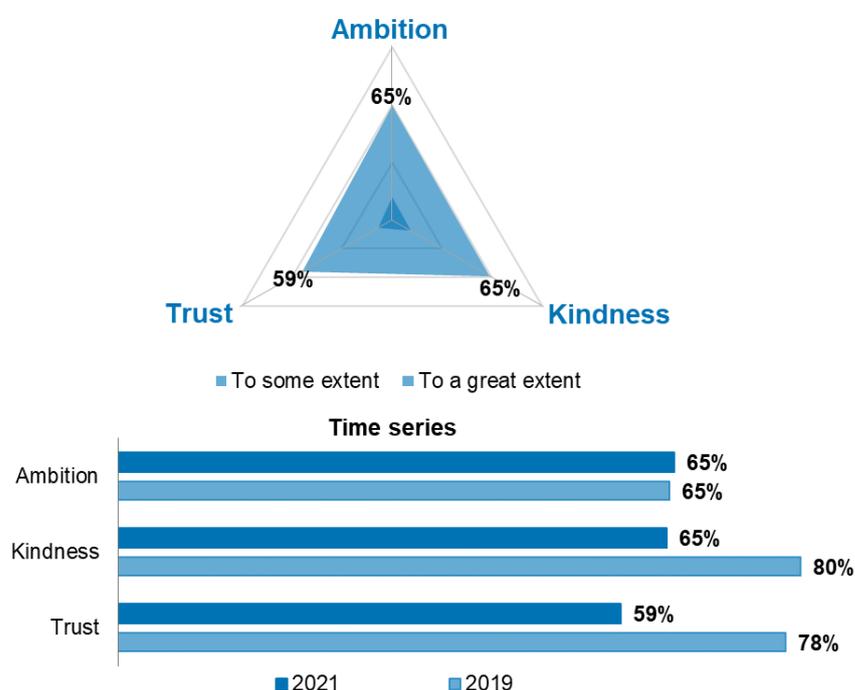
2.9. In addition to views on the quality of Council services, Panel members were also asked to consider the extent to which they feel that the Council and its employees represent the three Council values launched in August 2019 (Figure 4 over the page).

2.10. **Most respondents feel that the Council and its employees represent the three Council values to some extent.** This was particularly the case for "ambition" and "kindness" – around two thirds felt that the Council represents

each of these (65% for each) compared with 59% who felt the Council represents “trust”.

- 2.11. There has been a reduction since 2019 in the proportion of respondents who feel the Council represents “kindness” and “trust”; a 15-point reduction in relation to “kindness” and 19-point in relation to “trust”. The survey also shows some variation in views across key respondent groups. For example, with those aged 45-54 least likely to feel that Council employees represent kindness and trust.

Figure 4: Extent to which Council and employees represent Council values



Key messages

Survey findings show high levels of satisfaction (89%) with East Renfrewshire as a place to live.

A majority of respondents (67%) indicated that they are satisfied with Council services overall, although this represents a 10-point reduction since 2017.

In terms of specific services, views are most positive in relation to education public parks/open spaces, libraries, environmental health and recycling.

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

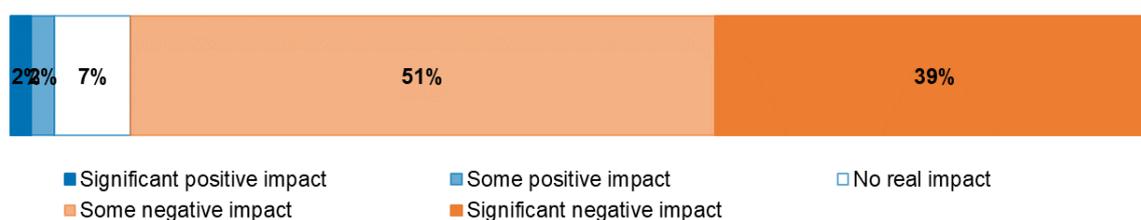
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic for you

3.1. This section considers views on the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic for Panel members and their families. This includes their quality of life and wellbeing, specifically in relation to employment and finances.

Quality of life and wellbeing

3.2. **The great majority (90%) of respondents feel their quality of life has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic** – this includes 39% who feel their quality of life has been “significantly” negatively affected. This finding was broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although those living outwith Locality Planning Areas were more likely to feel that their quality of life has been significantly negatively affected.

Figure 5: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Panel members’ quality of life



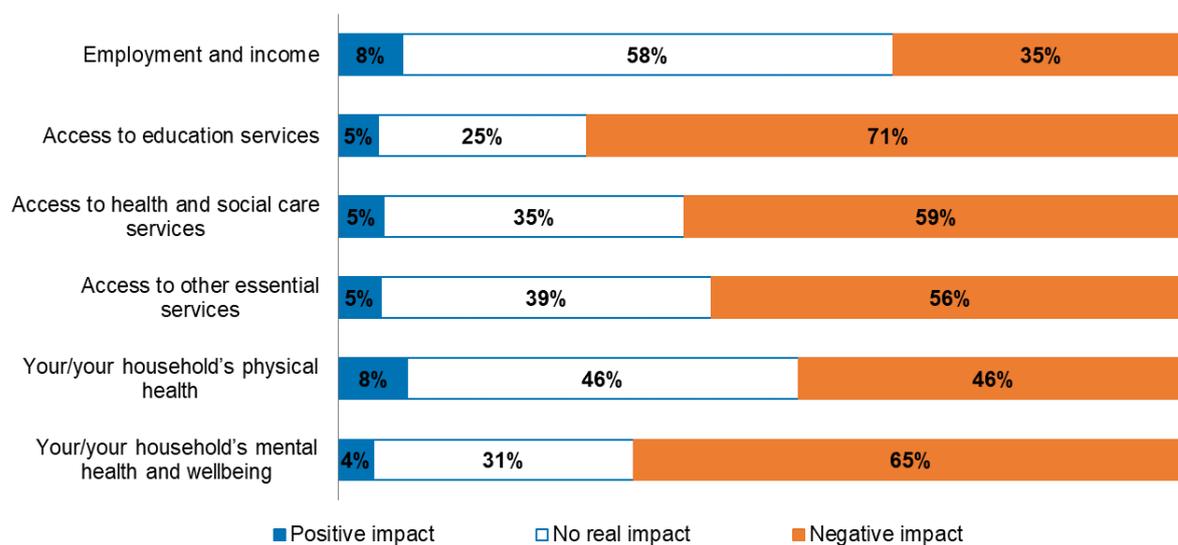
3.3. Survey responses indicate that **the COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact across multiple aspects of Panel members’ quality of life and wellbeing**. As Figure 6 shows, the majority of respondents reported a negative impact across nearly all of the points listed. Negative impacts were most commonly reported in relation to access to education services (71%), mental health and wellbeing (65%), and access to health and social care services (59%). Respondents were less likely to report negative impact on their employment and income, although there remained more than a third (35%) for whom the pandemic had negatively affected their employment and income.

3.4. Survey results show some variation across key respondent groups in experience of the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular:

- Locality Planning Area residents were most likely to report a negative impact on their employment and income.
- Barrhead, Liboside and Uplawmoor residents were least likely to report a negative impact on access to education.

- Those aged under 55 were most likely to report a negative impact on access to education, and on their mental health and wellbeing.
- Those with a disability or long-term condition were most likely to report a negative impact on their access to health and social care services.

Figure 6: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on Panel members' household wellbeing



3.5. As Figure 7 over the page shows, **a substantial proportion of respondents reported that their daily life had changed during the COVID-19 pandemic.** The most common changes for survey respondents were:

- An increase in use of electronic means to interact with family and friends (78% reported this);
- Change in the time spent outside in nature or parks (43% reported an increase, 36% a decrease); and
- Change in the amount of physical activity (48% reported a decrease, 30% an increase).

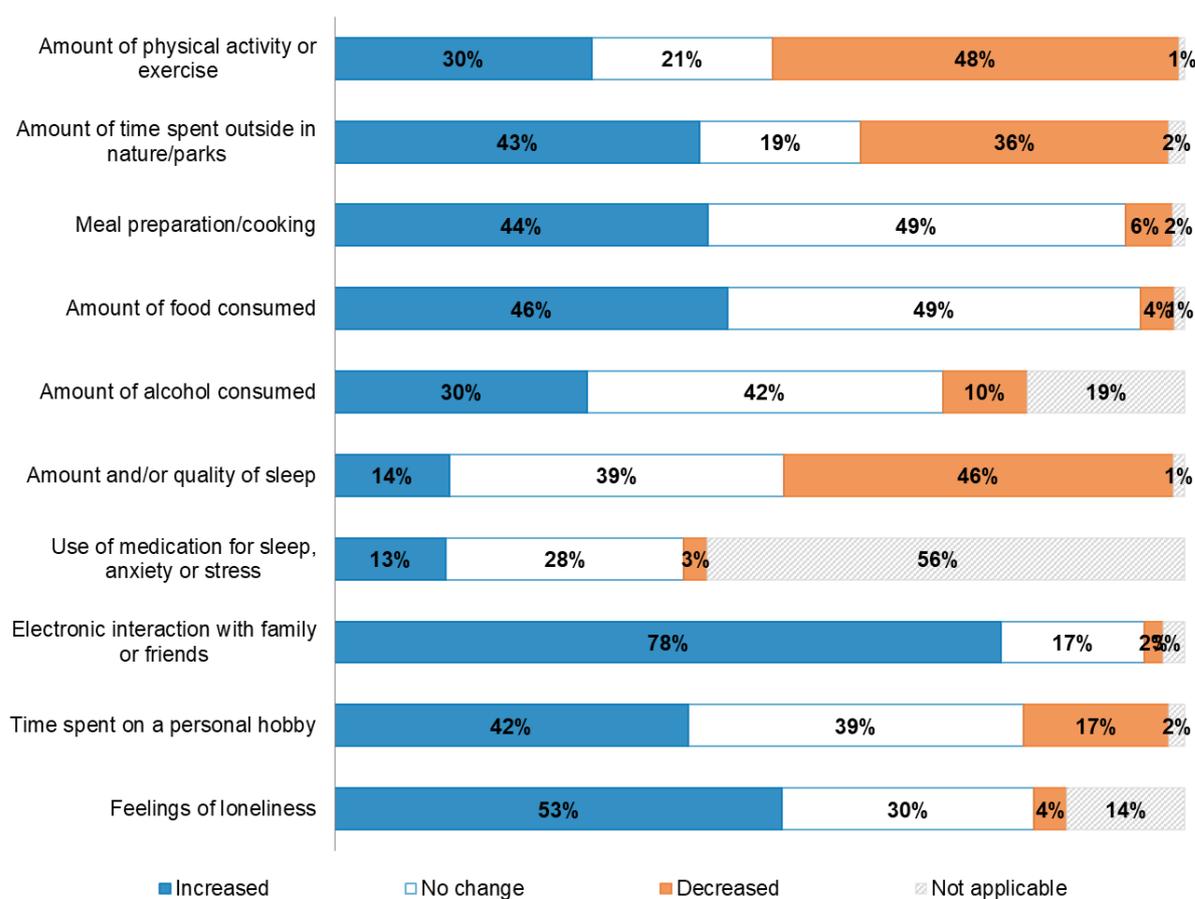
3.6. Respondents were less likely to report a change in their meal preparation or feed consumption (although nearly half reported that these had increased), and their alcohol consumption (although 30% reported that this had increased).

3.7. A small number of respondents identified other ways in which their lives had changed during the pandemic. These most commonly related to access to local services and facilities (such as health and social care, mental health, education and leisure facilities), and being unable to visit family members. Respondents linked both of these issues to a deterioration in their mental health and wellbeing.

3.8. Survey results show some variation across key respondent groups in how life changed during the COVID-19 pandemic. In particular:

- Those living in Locality Planning Areas were less likely to have seen an increase in electronic interaction with family and friends.
- Those aged under 55 were more likely to have increased their food consumption, and those aged under 65 were more likely to have felt lonely more often.
- Those with a disability were less likely to report an increase in the time they spent outside, and less likely to report increased alcohol consumption.
- Those who own their homes were more likely to report an increase in the time they spent outside, and were more likely to have increased electronic interaction with family and friends.

Figure 7: How daily life has changed during the COVID-19 pandemic



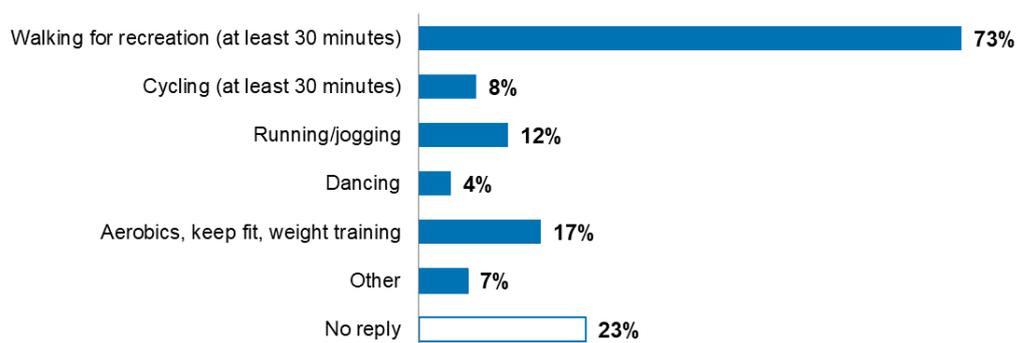
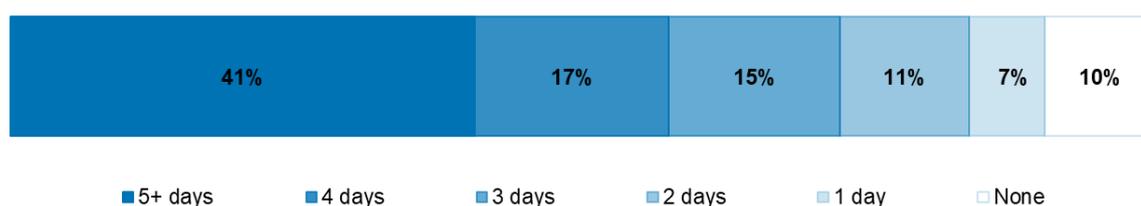
- 3.9. The survey also invited Panel members to provide written responses highlighting any **positive changes they had seen during the COVID-19 pandemic**, which they would like to retain. Around a third of respondents provided comment here. Identifying a broad range of positive changes.
- 3.10. A stronger sense of community was the most commonly mentioned positive change. This included reference to giving and receiving support from local friends and neighbours, and volunteering for local organisations, but also a more general sense of people in their community being more open and friendly towards one another.
- 3.11. More use of outdoor spaces was also a commonly mentioned positive change. This included survey respondents having more opportunity to use outdoor spaces, and being pleased to see more people in their community also using these spaces (respondents also noted that this had been an opportunity to have more contact with people in their local community). Some also specifically referred to outdoor access being an important opportunity for them to take more exercise via walking or cycling.
- 3.12. Respondents also mentioned enjoying a better quality of local environment, with reference to reduced traffic, less road and other noise, and a greater awareness of nature and wildlife in their local area. Some also referred more generally to having enjoyed a slower pace of life during the pandemic. These respondents indicated that they had felt more able to “focus on what really matters” such as spending more time with family and friends or enjoying hobbies or personal interests. For some, this was also linked to being able to work from home and reducing their travel (the latter also highlighted in terms of reducing carbon emissions).
- 3.13. Respondents also highlighted a number of **ways in which the Council may be able to support them to maintain the positive changes noted above**. These are summarised below.
- The most common suggestions were for the Council to encourage or support more community services and activities. Specific suggestions ranged from funding for community organisations to encouraging/supporting community events to further develop a sense of community. Some also wished to see the Council take a role in raising awareness of local community events and organisations.
 - Doing more to encourage walking and cycling was also a common suggestion. This included reference to improvement and better

maintenance of existing walkways, providing new walkways, extending cycling infrastructure, and doing more to encourage residents to walk and cycle.

- Respondents also saw a role for the Council in minimising car use, including reference to potential benefits to the quality of local environment. Suggestions here included supporting better and cleaner public transport, pedestrianisation, and supporting local businesses to encourage residents to shop locally.
- Some wished to see the Council work to improve local open spaces and facilities. This included suggestions for improvements to local parks, and more generally a desire to see the Council working to ensure the quality and cleanliness of the local environment.
- Some saw a need for more work to improve digital connectivity and skills/capacity, to enable more people to keep in touch with family and friends via digital means.

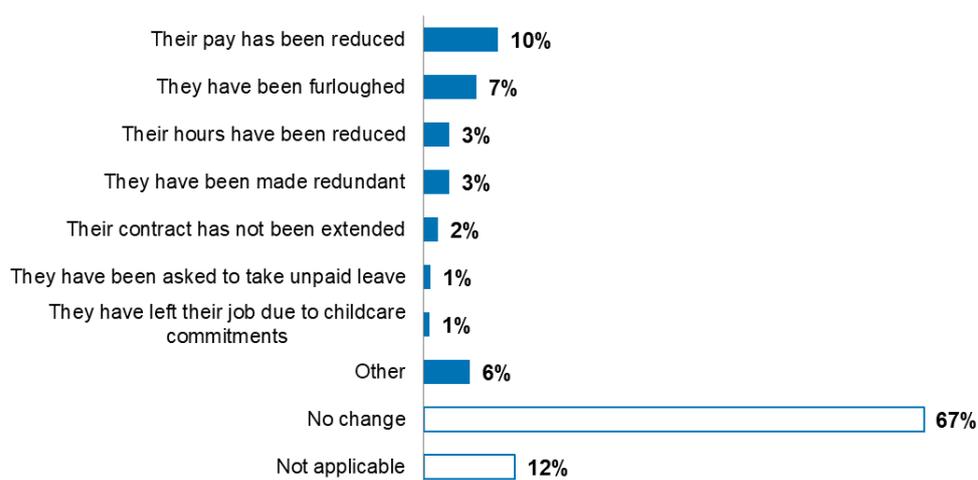
Keeping active

- 3.14. **The majority of respondents (77%) have taken part in some sport or physical activity in the last 4 weeks.** This is similar to the level reported by the 2019 Scottish Household Survey (80%), but represents a 10-point reduction since 2019.
- 3.15. Physical activity most commonly involved walking for recreation (73% having walked for at least 30 minutes in the last 4 weeks). In terms of other activities, the most commonly mentioned were aerobics/keep fit/weights (17%) and running/jogging (12%).
- 3.16. **Most respondents report taking physical activity on a relatively frequent basis;** nearly three quarters (73%) of all respondents had taken 30+ minutes of exercise on at least 3 days a week over the last four weeks. This included 41% who had taken 30+ minutes of exercise on at least 5 days a week. These findings are broadly similar to those reported in 2019, and were consistent across most key respondent groups, although those with a disability typically took physical activity less often than others.

Figure 8: Physical activity taken in the last 4 weeks**Figure 9: Number of days per week taken 30+ minutes of exercise (in last 4 weeks)**

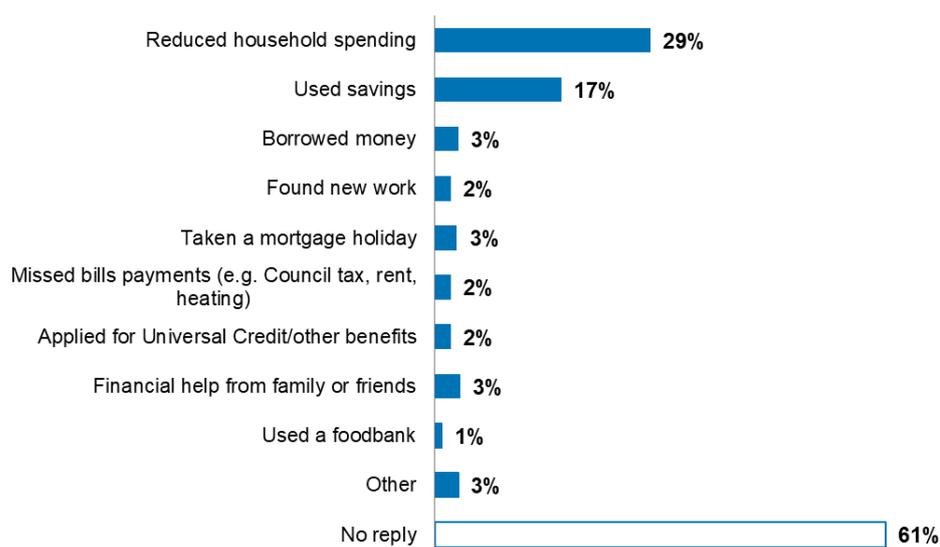
Impact on employment and financial circumstances

- 3.17. **Around a fifth of respondents (22%) indicated that the employment status or income of their household's main earner had been affected by the COVID-19 pandemic.** This was broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although those aged under 55 were more likely to report an impact on employment or income. As Figure 10 shows, this impact was most commonly a reduction in pay (10% of all respondents mentioned this) or the main earner having been furloughed (7%).

Figure 10: Impact of COVID-19 pandemic on employment status/income of main earner

- 3.18. **More than a third of respondents (39%) have had to make changes due to the impact of the pandemic on their employment and/or income.** As Figure 11 shows, this was most commonly reducing household spending (29% of all respondents have had to do this) and using savings (17%).
- 3.19. Survey results show some variation across key respondent groups, with those living outwith Locality Planning Areas and owner occupiers most likely to have made changes to their household finances.

Figure 11: Whether had to make changes due to impact on employment status/income of main earner



Key messages

The great majority (90%) feel their quality of life has been negatively affected by the COVID-19 pandemic – 39% “significantly” affected.

Impacts on access to education, mental health/wellbeing, and access to health/social care were most common. Also reporting more electronic contact with family/friends, and more time spent outside.

Employment status of the main earner had been affected for around a fifth (22%), and more than a third (39%) had to make changes due to the impact of the pandemic on their employment and/or income.

Some also report positive changes during the pandemic - supporting community services/activities and encouraging walking/cycling the main ways that the Council can help sustain these.

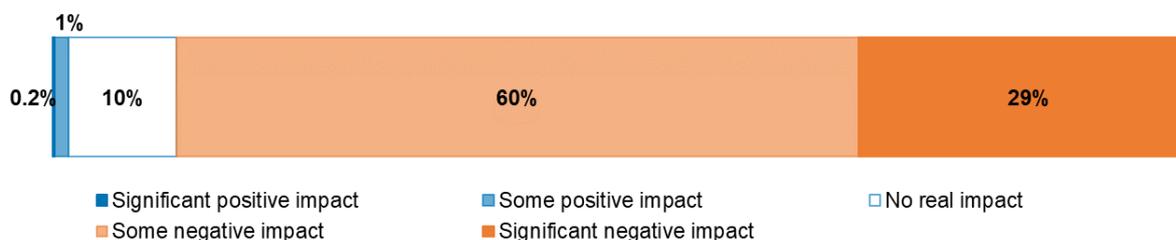
Impact of COVID-19 pandemic for local services

4.1. This section considers views on how the COVID-19 pandemic has impacted local services, and how East Renfrewshire Council has responded to the pandemic.

Impact on local services

4.2. **A large majority (89%) of respondents feel that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on Council services**, including 29% who have seen a “significant” negative impact on services. This finding was consistent across key respondent groups.

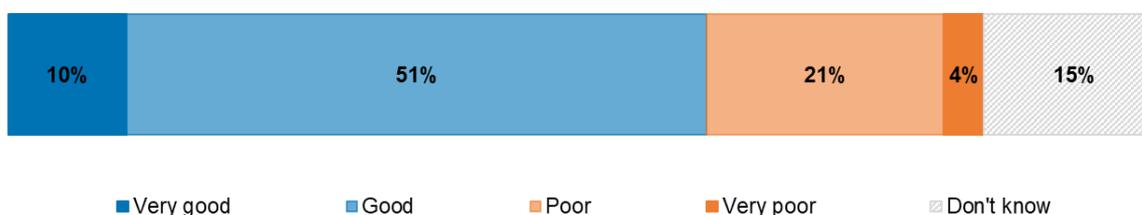
Figure 12: Views on impact of COVID-19 pandemic on East Renfrewshire Council services



Council response to the pandemic

4.3. **Respondents were generally positive about how East Renfrewshire Council has responded to the pandemic**; 61% of all respondents rated the Council’s response positively. This is equivalent to 71% of those offering a view, when “don’t know” responses are discounted. Nevertheless, there remained a quarter (25%) of all respondents (28% of those offering a view) who described the Council’s response as “poor”. This balance of views was consistent across key respondent groups.

Figure 13: Views on Council performance in managing local response to the COVID-19



- 4.4. **Views were mixed on whether the Council has continued to provide key services during the pandemic.** As Figure 14 shows, half (50%) of respondents felt that the Council had continued to provide most or all key services. However, there remained 40% of all respondents who felt that the Council had not maintained most key services, including 6% who felt that the Council had not maintained any key services. Again, this balance of views was consistent across key respondent groups.
- 4.5. Respondents were also asked to detail the key services which they felt the Council had not maintained during the pandemic. A reduction in waste and recycling services was by some margin the most commonly mentioned by respondents (by more than half of those providing comment). In addition, respondents referred to a reduction in environmental services (including maintenance of open spaces and street cleaning), roads services (including winter maintenance and road repairs), leisure and sports facilities, education, and health/social care services (including mental health services).

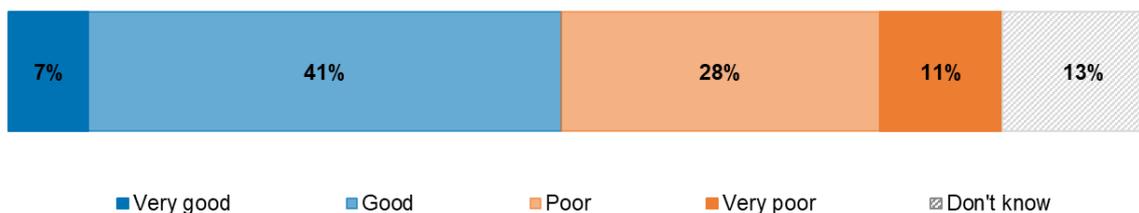
Figure 14: Views on whether Council has continued to provide key services



Keeping residents informed

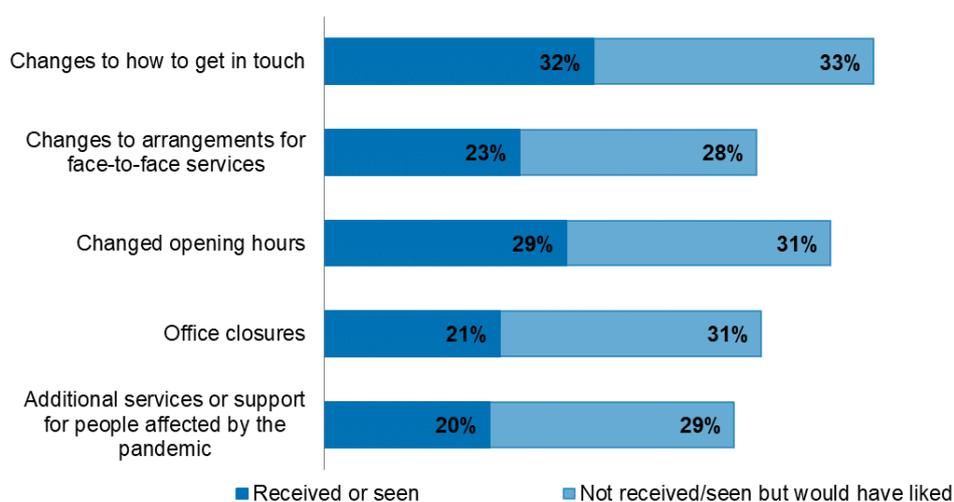
- 4.6. Consistent with views on Council service provision, **views were mixed on the Council's performance in keeping residents informed about services and support during the pandemic.** As Figure 15 over the page shows, nearly half (48%) of respondents felt that the Council had done well in keeping residents informed. However, 39% of respondents disagreed and felt that the Council's performance here had been poor. Survey results indicate that Newton Mearns North and Neilston residents were most likely to feel that the Council had performed poorly in keeping residents informed.

Figure 15: Views on Council performance in keeping residents informed about services and support during the COVID-19 pandemic



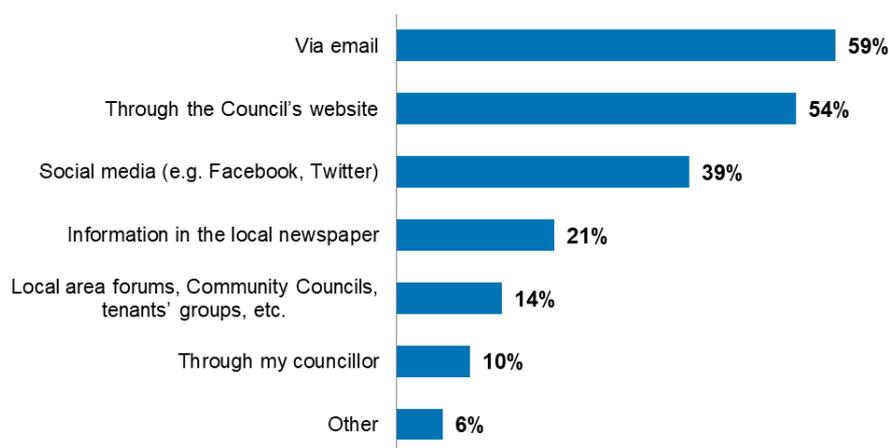
- 4.7. **Around 2 in 4 (39%) respondents reported having received or seen information from East Renfrewshire Council on services during the pandemic.** This was most commonly information on changes to how residents can contact services during the pandemic (32% had seen this information) and changed opening hours (29%).
- 4.8. There remained 37% of respondents who indicated that they had not received any information on services during the pandemic, but who would like to access information. This level of interest was particularly high for Newton Mearns North and Neilston residents, but was strong across all key respondent groups.
- 4.9. Interest was strongest for information on changes to how to contact services, changed opening hours and office closures. Written responses from respondents also identified an interest in information on changes to waste and recycling services.

Figure 16: Information seen from the Council on services during the COVID-19 pandemic



4.10. Panel members were also asked how they would prefer to access Council service information during the COVID-19 pandemic. As Figure 17 shows, information via email and the Council's website were the most preferred options (by 59% and 54% respectively). Social media was also preferred by 39% of respondents. Survey results show some variation in preferences across key respondent groups, with under 55s being more likely than others to prefer information via social media,

Figure 17: Preferences for accessing Council information on services during the COVID-19 pandemic



Key messages

A large majority (89%) feel that the COVID-19 pandemic has had a negative impact on Council services.

Views were generally positive about how the Council has responded to the pandemic; 61% rated the Council's response positively.

Views were mixed on whether the Council has continued to provide key services during the pandemic; 50% positive and 40% negative.

Views were mixed also on the Council keeping residents informed about services and support during the pandemic; 39% felt the Council had performed poorly here.

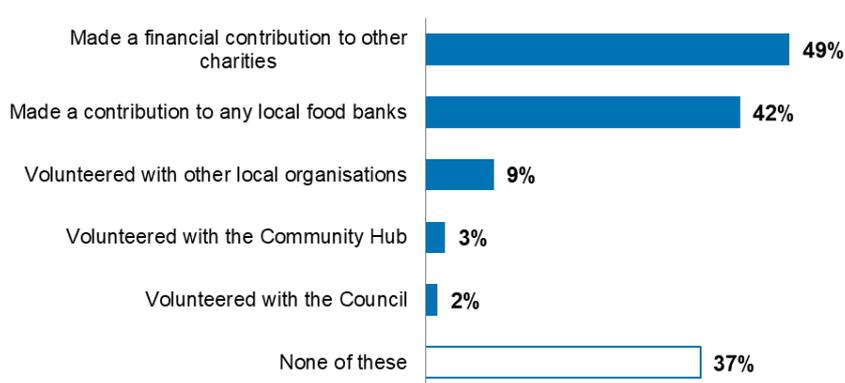
Volunteering and community

5.1. This section considers Panel members' involvement in volunteering activity, the extent to which they feel that they live in a supportive community, and their support networks.

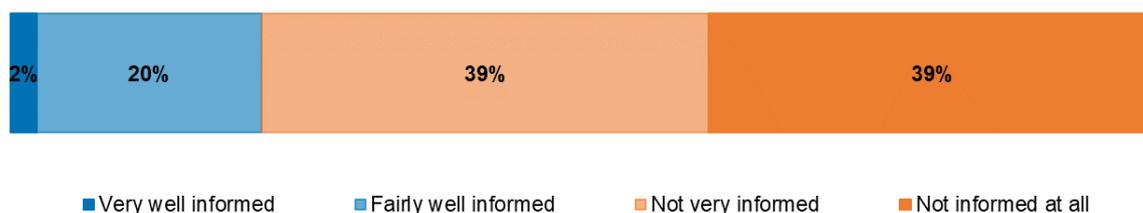
Volunteering

- 5.2. **The majority of respondents (63%) had contributed to or volunteered for local organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic.** This finding was broadly consistent across key respondent groups, although Newton Mearns North and Neilston residents were less likely than others to have contributed or volunteered.
- 5.3. As Figure 18 shows, respondents had most commonly made a financial contribution to a local charity (49% had done so) or made a contribution to local food banks (42%). There was some variation across respondent groups in how respondents had contributed to local organisations. Specifically, women were more likely than men to have contributed to a local food bank, and owner occupiers were more likely than renters to have made a financial contribution.

Figure 18: Whether contributed or volunteered for local organisations during COVID-19 pandemic

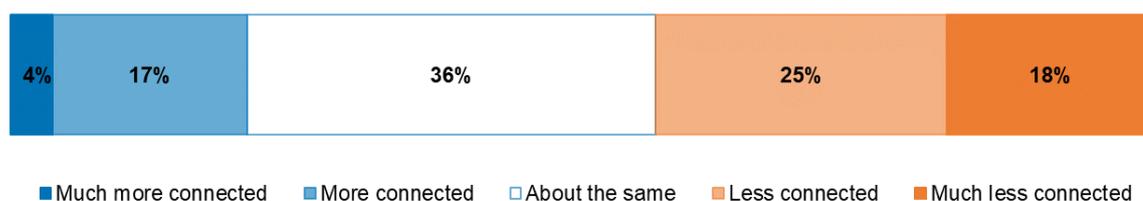


- 5.4. **Panel members generally do not feel well informed about volunteering opportunities in East Renfrewshire.** As Figure 19 over the page shows, more than three quarters (78%) of respondents indicated that they did not feel well informed about volunteering opportunities. Only around a fifth (22%) of respondents felt well informed about volunteering opportunities. This balance of views was broadly consistent across key respondent groups.

Figure 19: How informed feel about volunteering opportunities in East Renfrewshire

Sense of community

- 5.5. **A substantial proportion of respondents feel less connected with their local community, family and friends since the pandemic.** While around a fifth of respondents (21%) feel more connected, 43% feel less connected since the pandemic (including 18% who feel “much less” connected).
- 5.6. It is interesting to note that this appears to contradict findings reported earlier (see para 3.10) which indicate that some respondents saw a stronger sense of community as a key positive change during the pandemic. This suggests that different groups of respondents may have had quite different experiences of the pandemic in terms of remaining connected with their community. In this context, it is notable that those with a disability were more likely than others to feel less connected with their community than before the pandemic.

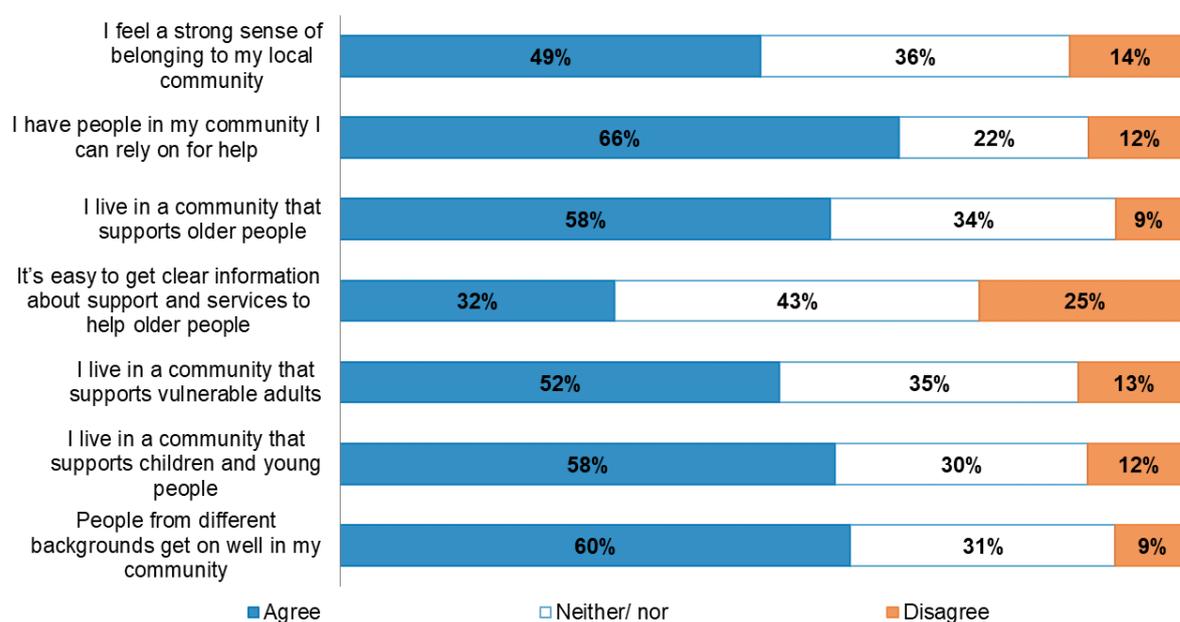
Figure 20: How connected feel to local community, family, friends now compared to before the COVID-19 pandemic

- 5.7. 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 the community. **Respondents generally feel a strong sense of community and that people from different backgrounds get on well, but are more mixed in their views on how well their community supports specific groups:**
- Around half of respondents have a strong sense of belonging to their community (49% agreed, a 16-point decrease since 2017), and most have people in their community they can rely on for help (66% agreed). Those

in the Newton Mearns South and Eaglesham area were less likely than others to feel a strong sense of community.

- Most respondents feel that people from different backgrounds get on well in their community (60% agreed, 9% disagreed). Women were more likely than men to feel that people from different backgrounds get on well.
- Respondents generally feel that their community supports older people (58% agreed, 9% disagreed), but are less positive on whether it is easy to get information about support and services to help older people (32% agreed, but 25% disagreed).
- Most respondents feel that their community supports children and young people (58% agreed, 12% disagreed).
- Around half of respondents feel that their community supports vulnerable adults (52% agreed), and 13% feel that their community does not support vulnerable adults.

Figure 21: Views on supportive communities

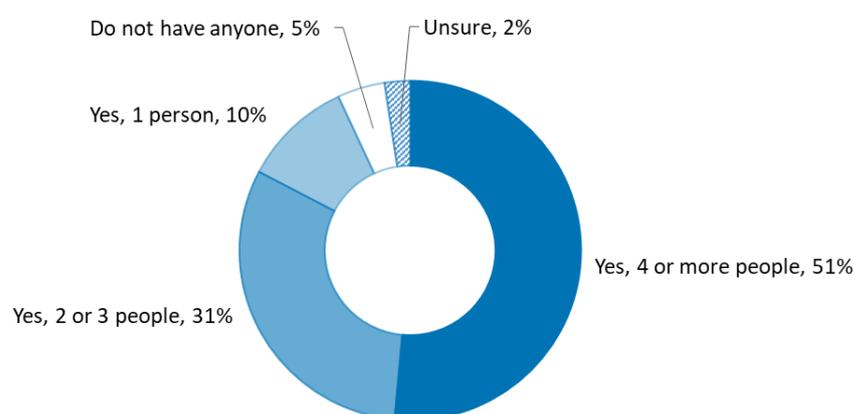


Notes: "Don't know" excluded from analysis

Support networks

- 5.8. As Figure 22 over the page shows, **the great majority of respondents have family, friends and/or neighbours they could turn to for support in a crisis;** 93% indicated this, including around half (51%) who have four or more people they could turn to for support.
- 5.9. Across all key respondent groups, the great majority of respondents have multiple people they can turn to in a crisis. However, survey findings indicate that some respondent groups feel they have a smaller support network; men and those in rented housing are less likely than others to have four or more people they can turn to.

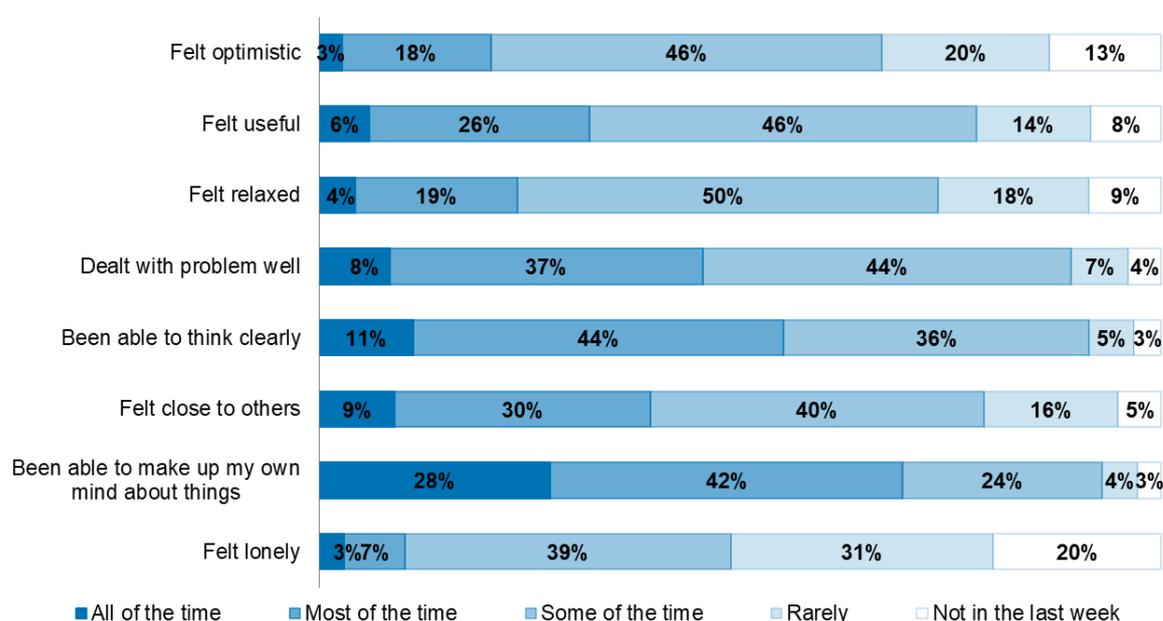
Figure 22: Whether have family, friends and/or neighbours can turn to in a crisis



- 5.10. As Figure 23 over the page shows, **respondents were generally positive about their recent mental and emotional wellbeing**, including in relation to feeling optimistic and relaxed, and ability to think clearly. This is despite 65% of respondents indicating that their and/or their household's mental health had been negatively affected by the pandemic (see Figure 6).
- The majority of respondents have felt optimistic, useful and relaxed at least some of the time in the last week (67%, 78% and 74% respectively). Those aged under 65 were more likely than others to have felt useful most of the last week.
 - A large majority have felt able to deal with problems well, to think clearly, and to make up their own mind most of the time over the last week (89%, 91% and 93% respectively). Those aged 55+ were more likely than others to have been able to think clearly.

- Most have felt close to others most of the time in the last week (79%). Those with a disability and renters were less likely than others to have felt close to others.
- Nearly half (49%) of respondents had felt lonely at least some of the time in the week prior to completing the survey, including 1 in 10 (10%) who had felt lonely most or all of the time during the last week. This represents a significant 22-point increase since the 2019 survey, and it is notable that those in rented housing are more likely than others to have felt lonely in the last week.

Figure 23: Mental and emotional wellbeing in the last week



Key messages

The majority (63%) had contributed to or volunteered for local organisations during the COVID-19 pandemic, but most (78%) do not feel well informed about local volunteering opportunities.

A substantial proportion of respondents (43%) feel less connected with their local community, family and friends since the pandemic.

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

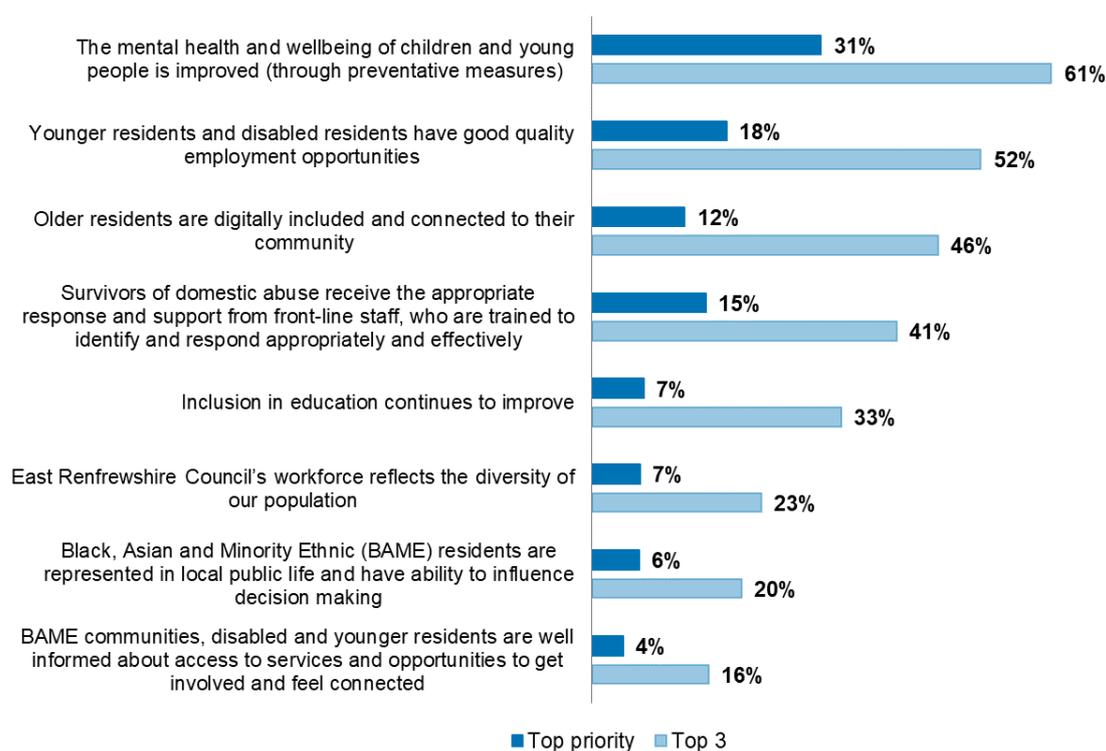
The great majority of respondents (93%) have family, friends and/or neighbours they could turn to for support in a crisis.

Respondents were generally positive about their recent mental and emotional wellbeing, but there has been a significant increase in the proportion who have felt lonely in the last week (from 27% to 49%).

Promoting equality for all

- 6.1. This section considers Panel members' views on a range of themes relating to the promotion of equality for all. Findings will inform the Council's ongoing work to shape and plan future action that will help to eliminate discrimination, foster good relations and advance equality of opportunity for protected characteristic groups.
- 6.2. As this shows, **themes relating to children/young people and those with disabilities were rated as the most important in terms of promoting equality for all**. Improving the mental health/wellbeing of children and young people was the top priority; 61% included this in their top three priorities, and 31% rated this as the top priority. Good employment opportunities for younger residents and disabled residents (52% included this in their top 3) and digital inclusion for older residents were also rated as high priorities.
- 6.3. In contrast, relatively few respondents ascribed priority to representation of BAME residents and keeping BAME communities, disabled and younger residents informed (only around a fifth included these in their top three priorities).

Figure 24: Prioritising themes to promote equality for all



- 6.4. A small number of respondents provided written comments suggesting how the Council could further promote equalities and digital inclusion in East Renfrewshire.
- Expanding provision of digital technologies to children through schools and other means, for example including Chromebook or tablet provision.
 - Classes and other initiatives to improve residents' skills and confidence in using digital technologies, including suggestions for peer-led classes. Raising awareness of opportunities for residents to improve their skills and confidence.
 - Working to improve the quality and speed of local internet connections, including specific reference to support for families and children lacking access to a home internet connection.
 - Ensuring better representation of protected characteristics across all Council activities, including the Council workforce and leadership roles. Some suggested a potential role for 'ambassadors' for each protected characteristic.
 - Ensuring that equality is embedded in education provision, and that children have an understanding of equalities and protected characteristics.
 - Doing more to reach out to under-represented parts of the local population, including specific reference to BAME communities and faith communities.

Key messages

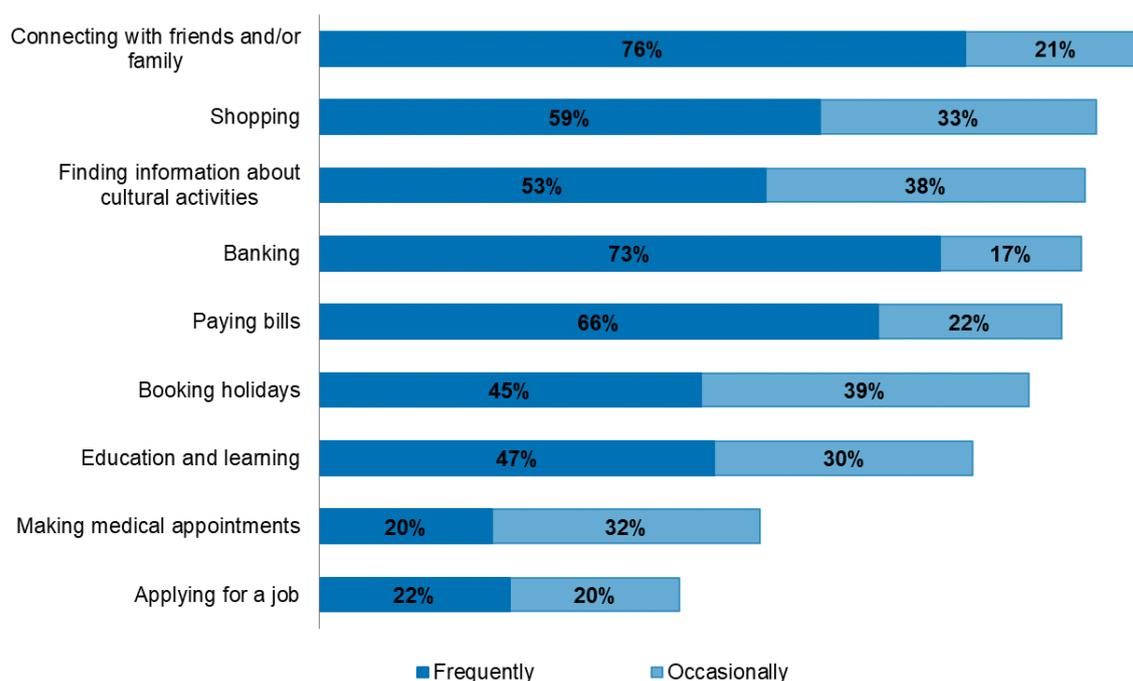
Themes relating to children/young people and those with disabilities were rated as the most important in terms of promoting equality for all.

Relatively few ascribed priority to representation of BAME residents, and keeping BAME communities, disabled and younger residents informed.

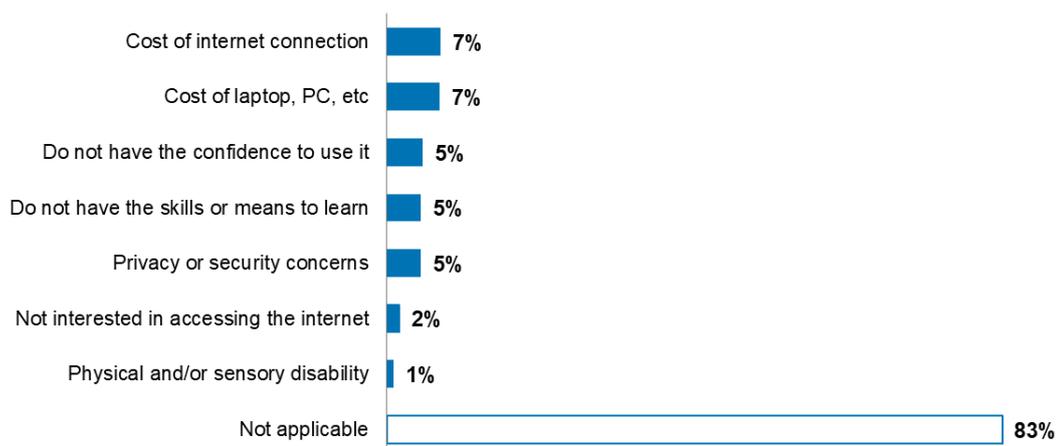
Digital inclusion

- 7.1. The final part of the survey considered Panel members' views and experiences in relation to digital inclusion.
- 7.2. **The great majority of respondents (96%) have direct access to the internet at home**, and nearly all of these respondents (99%) indicated that they have used the internet for at least once of the activities listed at Figure 25. As Figure 25 shows, respondents were most likely to have used the internet for connecting with friends and family (97% had done so), online shopping (91%), finding information about cultural activities (90%), and online banking (90%). Respondents were less likely to have used the internet to make medical appointments or apply for a job.

Figure 25: Whether use internet for specific activities



- 7.3. Reflecting the high level of internet access, **relatively few respondents (17%) mentioned barriers to getting home internet**. For these, the most commonly mentioned barriers related to cost (of connection and equipment), internet skills/confidence, and privacy or security concerns.

Figure 26: Factors preventing Panel members from getting home internet access

Key messages

The great majority of respondents (96%) have home internet access, and the great majority of these use the internet for a range of purposes.

Relatively few respondents (17%) mentioned barriers to getting home internet, with the most common related to cost, internet skills and confidence, and privacy or security concerns.

Concluding Remarks

- 8.1. This report has provided an overview of results from the latest East Renfrewshire Citizens' Panel survey, conducted in spring 2021 with a focus on issues related to life in East Renfrewshire, including the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. More detailed findings are provided in the Technical Report.
- 8.2. **The level of survey response achieved for the current survey suggests a strong level of engagement from Panel members**, with 62% responding and an increasing proportion taking part online. This is particularly positive given survey fieldwork was inevitably affected by government restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19. The Panel refreshment exercise carried out in 2020 appears to have contributed to this positive response, and suggests a continuing strong level of engagement across the Panel membership.
- 8.3. 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, are sufficient to support robust detailed survey analysis.
- 8.4. It is also notable that the Panel refreshment exercise in 2020 improved representation of several population groups, and as a result the profile of respondents to the present survey differs somewhat from the 2019 survey. In particular, respondents to the present survey include a larger proportion of those aged under 45 (and fewer aged 65+), and a larger proportion of respondents in minority ethnic groups.
- 8.5. 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. Indeed, we may have expected an even stronger response to the present survey given the topic, but survey fieldwork was inevitably affected by government restrictions to limit the spread of COVID-19. In that context, we would like to express our gratitude to Panel members who felt able to engage with the survey at this time.
- 8.6. 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).