APPENDIX C

BUDGET SURVEY

2022/2023

Undertaken Autumn 2021

ABSTRACT

The Budget Survey is undertaken on an annual basis to assist in the identification of spending priorities for the Council.

Report prepared by Corporate Insight, Communities and Governance Team

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Introduction

Maidstone Council are committed to providing high quality and good value services to meet the needs of the local community.

Reductions in central government funding and the coronavirus pandemic have had a major impact on the Council's finances and will continue to do so. Looking further ahead, the financial outlook for Maidstone Borough Council (MBC) is uncertain, given the lasting impact of the pandemic and lack of information about the level of central government support in the future.

As part of that process, the Council sought to understand residents' views on where they think savings should be made and what the Council's priorities for spending should be.

Methodology

The survey was open between 17 September and 31 October 2021. It was promoted online through the Council's website and its social media channels. Residents who signed up for consultation reminders were notified and sent an invitation to participate in the consultation. A reminder email was also sent to this group.

As an online survey is a self-selection methodology, residents are free to choose whether to participate or not. It was anticipated that returned responses would not necessarily be fully representative of the wider adult population. As a result, this report discusses the weighted results to overall responses, by demographic questions, to ensure that it more accurately matches the known profile of Maidstone Boroughs population by these characteristics.

The results have been weighted by age and gender based on the population in the ONS mid-year population estimates 2020. However, the under-representation of 18 to 34 year olds means that high weights have been applied to responses in this group. Results for this group should be treated with caution. It should also be noted that respondents from BME backgrounds are under-represented at 4.9% compared to 5.9% in the local area. The results for this group should also be treated with caution.

There were a total of 1073 responses to the survey, after weighting this reduced to 1041. Based on Maidstone's population aged 18 years and over, the overall results are accurate to ±2.54% at the 90% confidence level. This means if we repeated the same survey ,100 times, 90 times out of 100 the results would be between ±2.54% of the calculated response. Therefore the 'true' response could be 2.54% above or below the figures reported (i.e., a 50% agreement rate could in reality lie within the range of 47.46% to 52.54%).

Please note that not every respondent answered every question, therefore the total number of respondents refers to the number of respondents for the question being discussed not to the survey overall.

The data has been z-tested at the 95% confidence level. The z-test is a statistical test which determines if the percentage difference between subgroups is large enough to be statistically significant or whether the difference is likely to have occurred by chance. An equivalent test, known as a t-test has been used to assess differences in mean scores.

Rounding means that some charts may not add up to 100%.

Findings

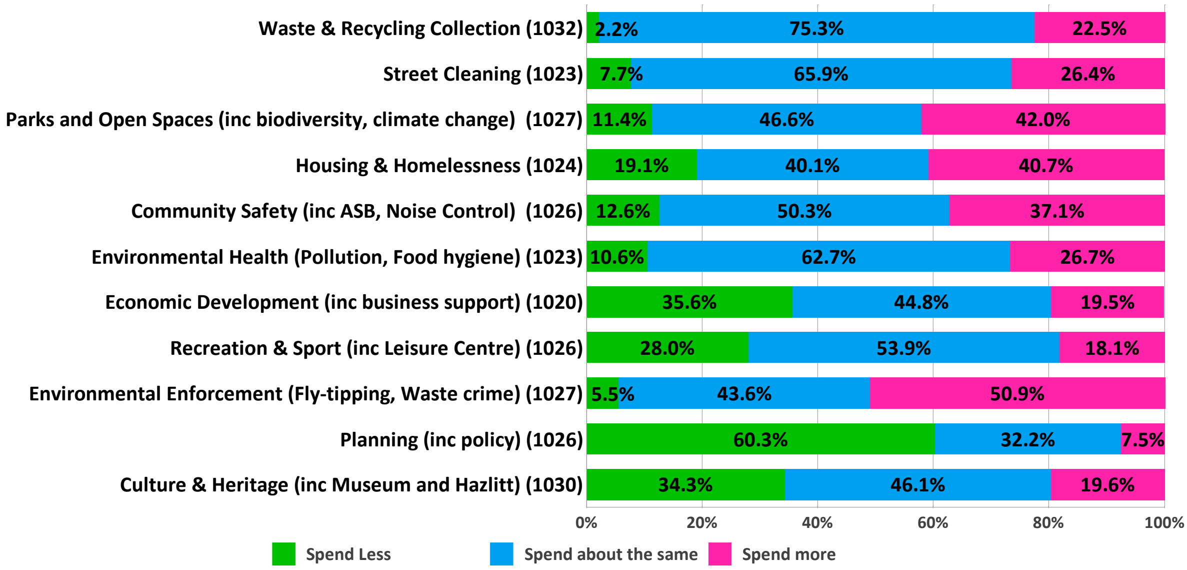
- Half of all respondents (50.9%) said that the Council should increase spending for Environmental Enforcement.
- Six in ten respondents (60.3%) said that the Council should reduce spending on Planning.
- Parks and Open Spaces had the second greatest proportion responding, 'spend more' and was ranked the second most important investment priority for the third year running. It was also ranked the third 'most important' service.
- Just under a quarter of respondents said there should be a Council Tax increase. The proportion responding 'no', there should not be an increase in Council Tax has increased from 60.8% in the 2021/22 Survey (undertaken Autumn 2020) to 66.0% (±2.9%) for this year.
- A greater proportion of respondents said there should be a Council Tax increase when presented with options for incremental increase. 42.8% (±3.0%) indicated that Council Tax should be raised by selecting a percentage increase compared to 24.6% (±2.6%) when directly asked if Council Tax should increase.
- The proportion responding 'no increase' when asked about specific proportional increases in Council Tax has increased by 9.7 percentage points since the 2020/21 survey (undertaken in Autumn 2019).
- The top three investment priorities remain in the same order as in the 2021/22 Budget survey:

    1. Infrastructure
    2. Parks & Open Spaces
    3. Leisure & Culture

- Respondents selected Waste Collection Services, Street Cleaning and Parks & Open Spaces as the most important services. Parks and Open Spaces also featured as the second area with the greatest proportion saying 'spend more' when asked about spending approaches.
- The most common comment about the Budget and the Council's spending approaches was in relation to financial concerns. Respondents raised concerns about affording increases in Council Tax, increases in the cost of living and decreases in income.
- Since 2018, when the 2019/20 survey was undertaken, the proportion agreeing that Maidstone Council provides value for money has declined year on year. In this time, it has dropped 5.3 percentage points to the current figure of 28.1% (±2.7%).
- Half of respondents said they were 'satisfied' with their local area as a place to live (51.0% (±3.2%)), half said they were proud of Maidstone (50.4% (±3.0%)) and just over a quarter of respondents agreed that Maidstone was a place where everyone can realise their potential (27.8% (±2.7%)).

Spending Priorities

Survey respondents were provided with a list of services provided by Maidstone Borough Council. They were asked to indicate what approach they thought MBC should take to funding with three answer options: 'spend Less', 'spend about the same' and 'spend more'.



The top three areas where respondents said 'spend more' were:

1. Environmental Enforcement
2. Parks & Open Spaces
3. Housing & Homelessness

The top three areas where respondents answered 'spend less' were:

1. Planning
2. Economic Development
3. Culture & Heritage

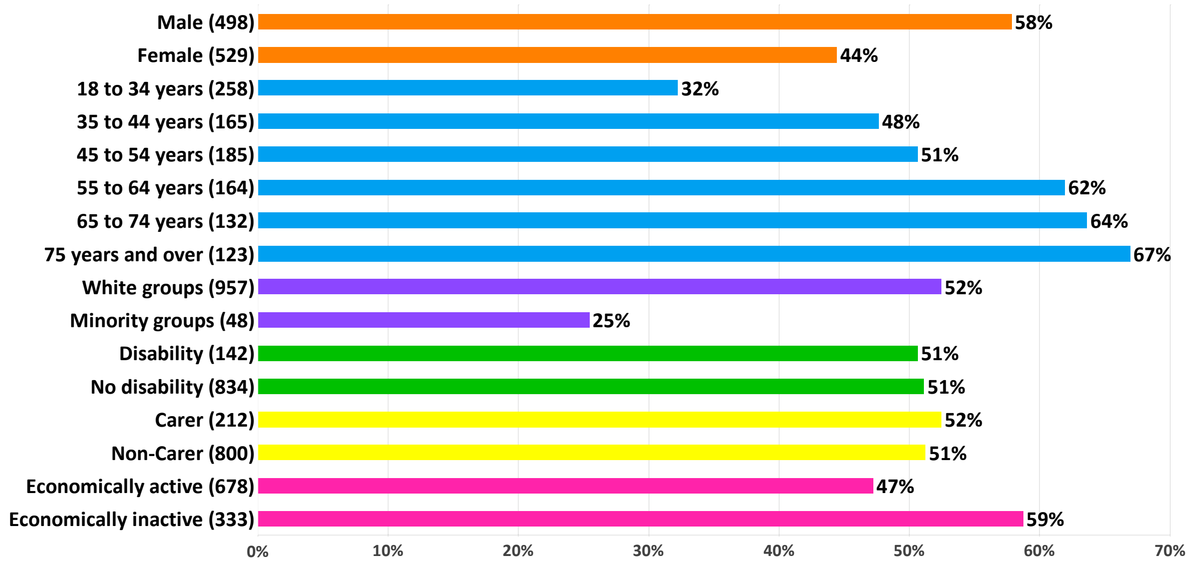
These spending areas are explored in more detail below.

Top Three Areas – Spend More

Environmental Enforcement

A total of 1,027 respondents indicated a spending approach to Environmental Enforcement. The most common response was 'spend more' with 523 answering this way.

The chart below shows the proportions responding 'spend more' across the different demographic groups and the table that follows highlights any differences in response.

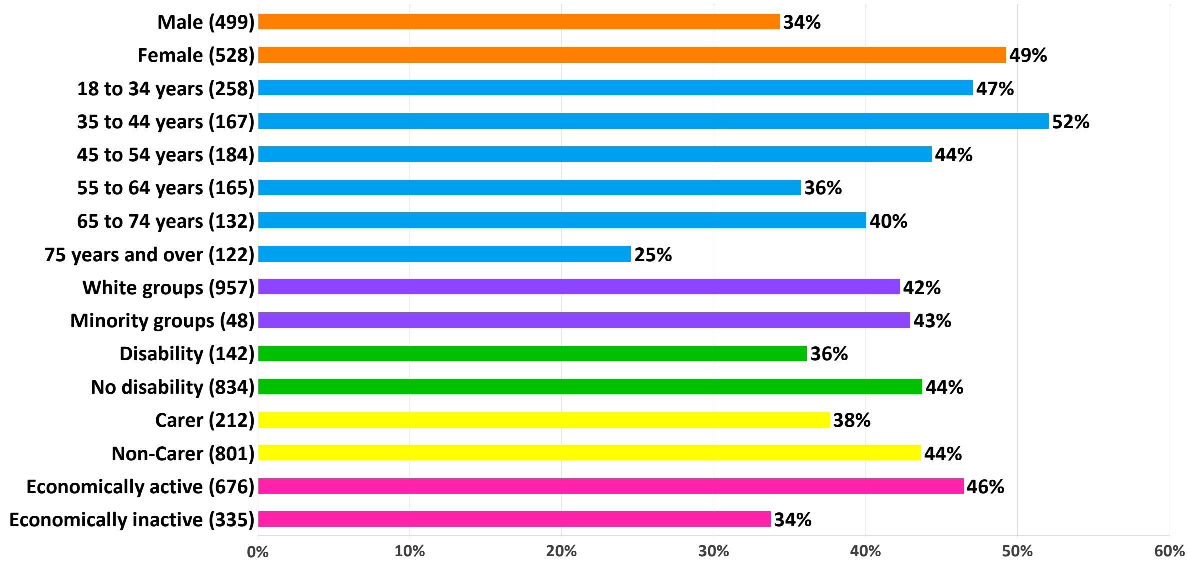


	While there was no significant difference between the proportion of male and female responders answering ‘spend less’, male respondents were significantly more likely to respond ‘spend more’ on Environmental Enforcement than female respondents. The most common answer for female responders was ‘spend about the same’.
	The data shows that the proportion responding ‘spend more’ on Environmental Enforcement increases as age increases and is significantly lower for the 18 to 34 age group when compared to the other age groups. The most common response for those aged 18-34 was ‘spend about the same’, whereas the most common response for the other age groups was ‘spend more’.
	There was no significant difference in the proportion of respondents from white groups and those from minority groups answering ‘spend less’. Minority group respondents were significantly more likely to respond ‘spend about the same’ with 67.1% (±13.2%) answering this way compared to 42.2% (±3.1%) answering the same from white groups.
	Economically inactive respondents had a greater proportion responding, ‘spend about the same’ than economically inactive respondents and a lower proportion answering ‘spend more’. These differences are significant however the gap is smaller than for other differences assessed between demographic groups.

Parks & Open Spaces

A total of 1,027 respondents indicated a spending approach to Parks & Open Spaces. The most common response was ‘spend about the same’ with 479 answering this way.

The chart below shows the proportions responding ‘spend more’ across the different demographic groups and with the table highlighting any differences in response.

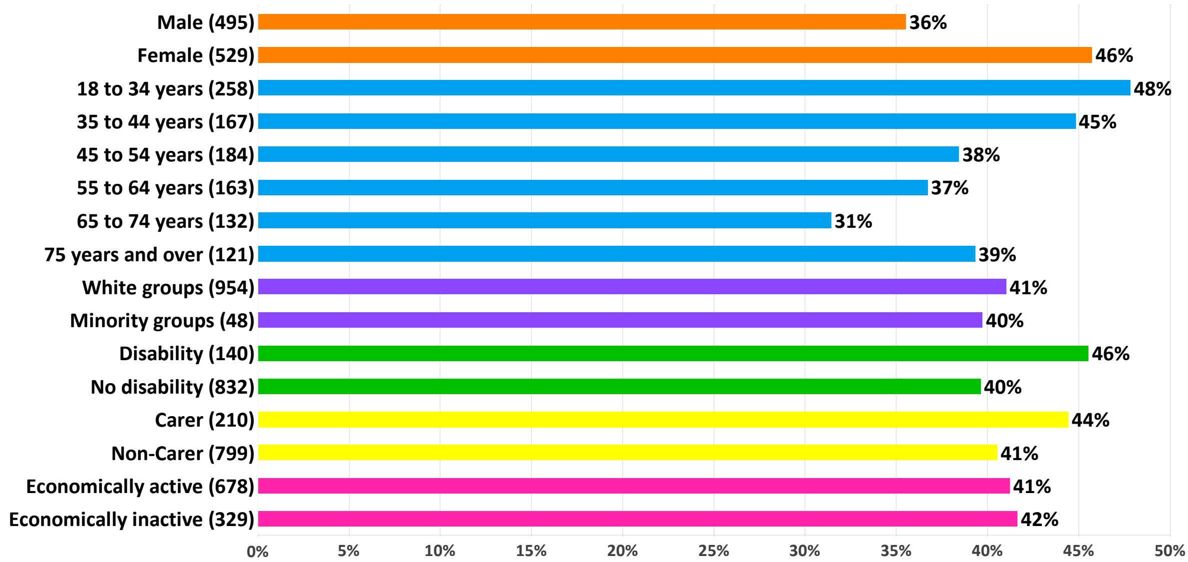


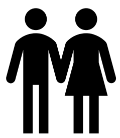
	There were significant differences in the proportions of male and female respondents selecting each answer option. The greatest difference was between the proportions responding 'spend more' with 34.3% (±4.2%) of male respondents answered this way, compared to 49.2% (±4.3%) of female respondents.
	There was variation across the age groups in the proportions answering 'spend less', but no trend was identified. The 75 years and over group had a significantly lower proportion responding 'spend more' compared to the other age groups. The 75 years and over group and the 55 to 64 age group had the greatest proportions responding 'spend more' at 15.0% (±6.3%) and 15.6% (±5.5%) respectively. The 35 to 44 years had the lowest proportion answering 'spend less' at 8.1% (±4.1%).
	There was a significant difference in the proportion responding 'spend less' between respondents that are carers and those that are not. 15.4% (±4.9%) of carers said there should be less spending on Parks & Open Spaces compared to 9.2% (±2.0%) of non-carers answering the same.
	Comparable proportions of economically active and economically inactive respondents answered 'spend less'. The most common response for economically inactive respondents was 'spend about the same' at 53.6% (±5.3%). This was significantly greater than the proportion of economically active respondents answering this way at 43.1% (±3.7%).

Housing & Homelessness

A total of 1024 respondents indicated a spending approach to Housing & Homelessness. The most common response was 'spend more' with 417 answering this way.

The chart below shows the proportions responding 'spend more' across the different demographic groups and with the table highlighting any differences in response.



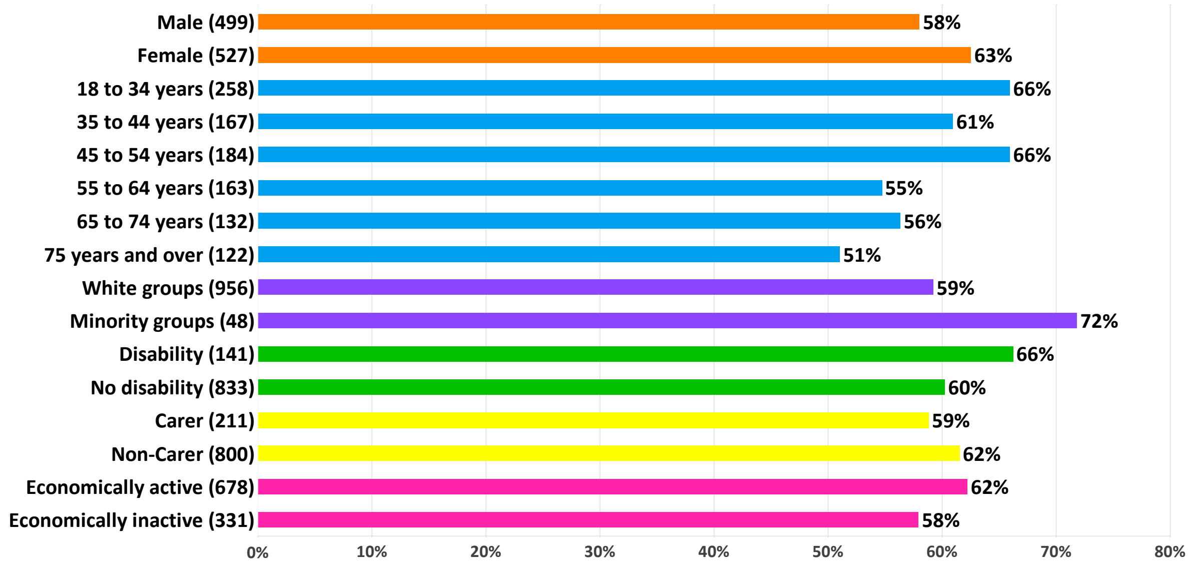
	There are significant differences between how male and female respondents have answered this question. The most common response for male respondents was ‘spend about the same’ at 37.2% (±4.3%), and for female respondents it was ‘spend more’ with 45.7% (±4.2%) answering this way. The biggest difference between these groups was for the answer ‘spend less’, with 27.3% (±2.9%) of male respondents answering this way compared to 11.5% (±2.7%) of female respondents.
	There was no significant difference across the age groups in the proportions responding ‘spend less’. The 65 to 74 years group had the lowest proportion responding, ‘spend more’ (31.4% (±7.9%) and the greatest proportion responding ‘spend about the same’ significantly different from the proportions responding the same for the 18 to 34 years and the 35 to 44 year age groups.
	Non-carers had a significantly greater proportion responding ‘spend less’ on Housing & Homelessness with 19.6% (±2.8%) answering this way compared to 13.5% (±4.6%) of carers.

Top Three Areas – Spend Less

Planning

A total of 1026 respondents indicated a spending approach to Planning. The most common response was ‘spend less’ with 618 answering this way.

The chart below shows the proportions responding ‘spend less’ across the different demographic groups and with the table highlighting any differences in response.

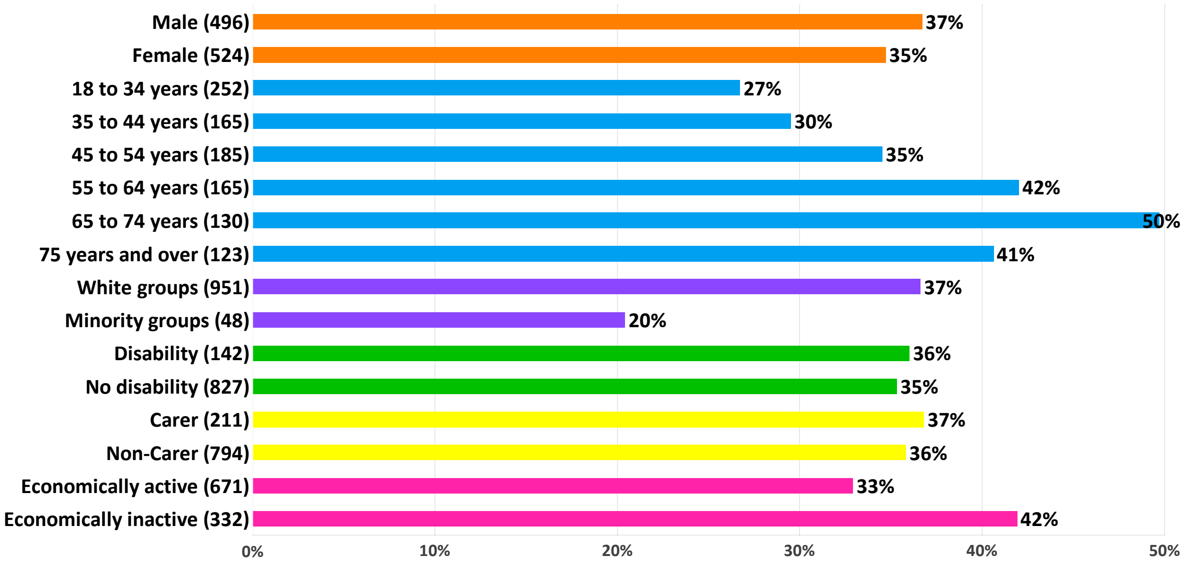


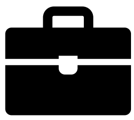
	Comparable proportions of male and female respondents answered, 'spend less' and 'spend about the same' when asked about spending approaches for Planning. 'Spend about the same was the most common response for both sexes. 10.3% (2.7%) of Male respondents answered, 'spend more', compared to 4.9% (±1.8%) of females answering the same – this difference is significant.
	'Spend less' was the most common response across all age groups. The 18 to 34 years group had the greatest proportion responding 'spend more' at 11.2% (±3.8%), the 64 to 74 years and 75 years and over age groups had the lowest proportions responding 'spend more' at 4.8% (±3.8%).
	Respondents with a disability had a lower proportion responding 'spend more' than non-disabled respondents when asked about Planning. 3.4% (±3.0%) of disabled respondents answered this way compared to 8.3% (±1.9%) of non-disabled respondents.
	Economically inactive respondents had a greater proportion responding 'spending less' than economically active respondents at 36.9% (±5.2%) compared to 29.0% (±3.4%) respectively. Economically active respondents had a greater proportion responding 'spend more' at 8.7% (±2.1%) compared to economically inactive respondents with 5.2% (±2.4%) answering this way.

Economic Development

A total of 1,020 respondents indicated a spending approach to Economic Development. The most common response was 'spend about the same' with 457 answering this way.

The chart below shows the proportions responding 'spend less' across the different demographic groups and with the table highlighting any differences in response.

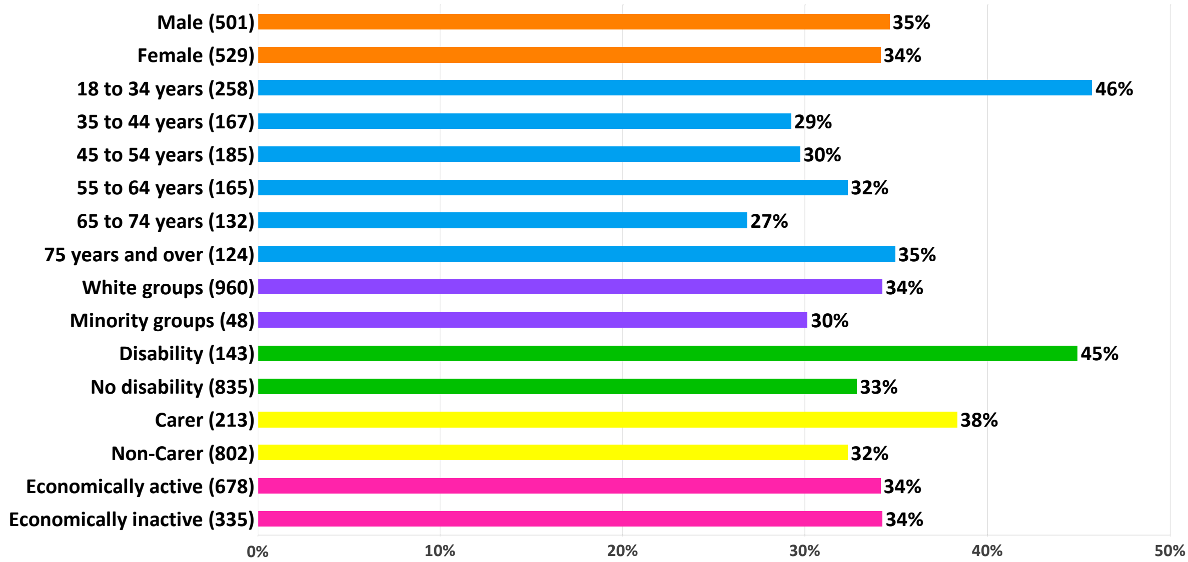


	The most common response for the 64 to 74 years and the 75 years and over age groups was 'spend less'. For all other age groups the most common response was 'spend about the same'. The 18 to 34 age group had the greatest proportion responding 'spend more' at 24.3% (±5.3%). The 64 to 74 age group had the lowest proportion responding this way at 15.1% (±6.2%) – this difference is significant.
	A significantly greater proportion of respondents from white groups answered 'spend less' than respondents from minority groups. 36.6% (±3.1%) of white groups answered this way compared to 20.4% (±11.3%) of minority groups. No other significant differences were observed.
	A significantly greater proportion of economically inactive respondents answered 'spend less' than economically active respondents. 41.9% (±5.3%) of the economically inactive group answered this way compared to 32.9% (±3.6%) of the economically active group. No other significant differences were observed.

Culture & Heritage

A total of 1,028 respondents indicated a spending approach to Culture & Heritage. The most common response was 'spend about the same' with 475 answering this way.

The chart below shows the proportions responding 'spend less' across the different demographic groups and with the table highlighting any differences in response.



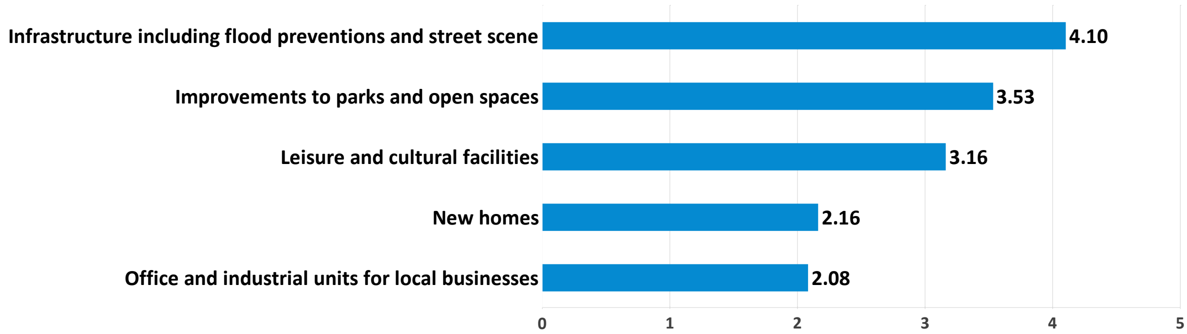
	The most common answer for the 18-34 years group was 'spend less' with 45.7% (±6.1%) answering this way. This was significantly greater than the proportion responding this way across the other age groups. The most common response for the remaining age groups was 'spend about the same'. The 35 to 45 years group had the greatest proportion responding 'spend more' at 24.4% (±6.5%). The 55 to 64 years and the 75 years and over groups had the lowest proportions responding this way at 14.1% - the difference here is significant.
	The most common answer for disabled respondents was 'spend less' with 44.9% (±8.1%) answering this way. This was significantly greater than the proportion responding this way for non-disabled respondents. The most common answer for non-disabled respondents was 'spend about the same. Respondents without a disability had a significantly greater proportion answering 'spend more' with 20.8% (±2.8%) answering this way compared to 12.5% (±5.4%) of disabled respondents.
	The proportion of carers and non-carers answering 'spend less' were comparable. Non-carer respondents had a significantly greater proportion answering 'spend more' on Heritage and Culture with 21.1% (±2.8%) answering this way compared to 14.6% (±4.7%) of carer respondents.
	The proportions responding, 'spend about the same' and 'spend more' for economically active and economically inactive respondents show significant differences. 22.6% (±3.1%) of economically active respondents said 'spend more' compared to 14.4% (±3.8%) of economically inactive respondents.

Investment Priorities

Survey respondents were asked to place a list of investment programme priorities into their preferred order of importance. A total of 1,016 respondents ranked the investment priorities.

To assess this data, a weighted average has been used. The programmes placed first received 5 points and the programmes ranked last were given 1 point. These were then added together and divided by the number of respondents to give a weighted average.

Please note that not every respondent ranked each item.



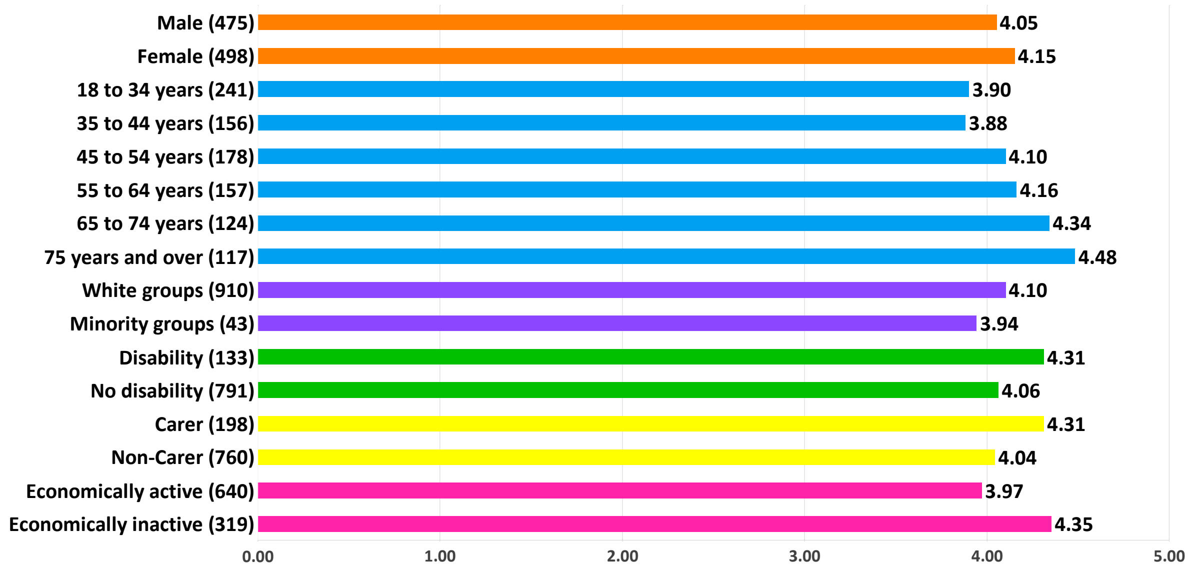
This question was asked in the 2021/22 Budget Survey, undertaken in Autumn 2020. The order of the top three programmes is unchanged. New Homes was ranked as fifth in 2021/22 but this year it has moved up a place to fourth and Office and industrial units for local businesses has dropped from fourth to fifth.

Infrastructure including flood prevention and street scene

Overall, 510 (52.4%) respondents placed 'Infrastructure including flood prevention and street scene' as their top investment priority

In the 2021/22 Budget Survey, 467 (53.2%) respondents placed 'Infrastructure including flood preventions and street scene' as their top investment priority and in the 2020/21 Budget survey 52.2% placed this priority as first.

The following chart shows the mean score across the demographic groups for the priority 'Infrastructure including flood prevention and street scene'.



Analysis suggests a relationship between age and ranking of this priority with the proportion placing this priority first and second increasing with age. The scores for the 18 to 34 years and 35 to 44 years groups are significantly different than the scores for the 65 to 74 years and the 75 years and over group.

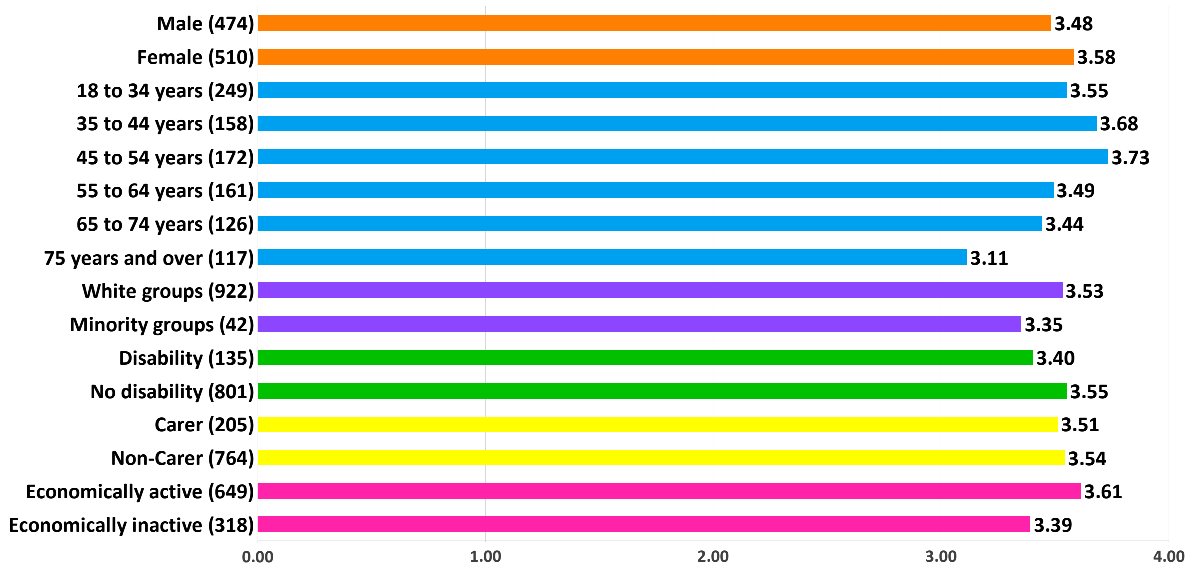
	The difference in score between carer and non-carer respondents is significant. 61.0% (±6.8%) of carers placed this priority as first compared to 50.7% (±3.6%) of non-carers.
	The difference in score between economically active and economically inactive respondents is significant. 61.9% (±5.3%) of economically inactive respondents placed this priority first compared to 47.6% (±3.9 %) of economically active respondents. 13.6% (±2.7%) of economically active respondents placed this priority as fourth or fifth, significantly greater than the proportion responding the same from the economically inactive group (6.0% (±2.6%)).

Improvements to parks & open spaces

Overall, 212 (21.6%) respondents placed ‘improvements to parks and open spaces’ as their top investment priority

In the 2021/22 Budget Survey, 203 (22.9%) respondents placed ‘Improvements to parks and open spaces’ as their top investment priority.

The following chart shows the mean score across the demographic groups for the priority ‘improvements to parks and open spaces’.



	The score for respondents aged 75 years and over is significantly lower than the scores for the age groups up to 64 years. 33.9% (±8.5%) of the 75 years and over age group placed this priority as fourth or fifth. The 35 to 44 age group had the greatest proportion placing this priority as first at 29.9% (±7.1%) while the 45 to 54 age group had the lowest proportion placing this in fourth or fifth at 12.2% (±4.9%).
	The difference in score between economically active and economically inactive respondents is significant. 24.8% (±3.3%) of the economically active placed this priority first compared to 15.1% (±3.9%) of economically inactive respondents.

Council Tax Changes

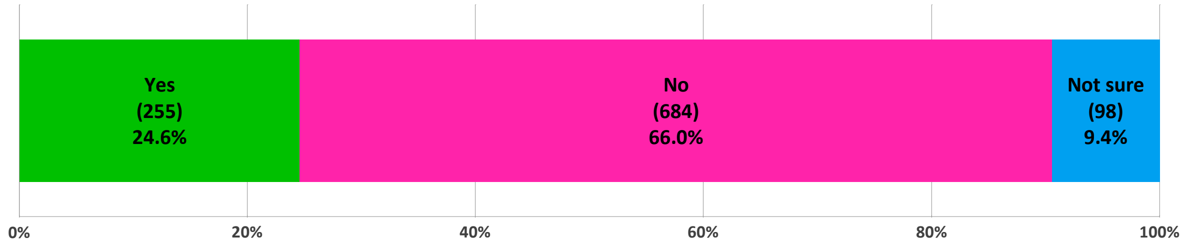
Appetite for increase

The survey explained that the council funds a significant proportion of its spending through council tax, and that Maidstone's share of Council Tax for a Band D taxpayer is £270.90 out of a total of £1,988.63, the rest being made up of charges from Kent County Council, the Police and the Fire and Rescue Service.

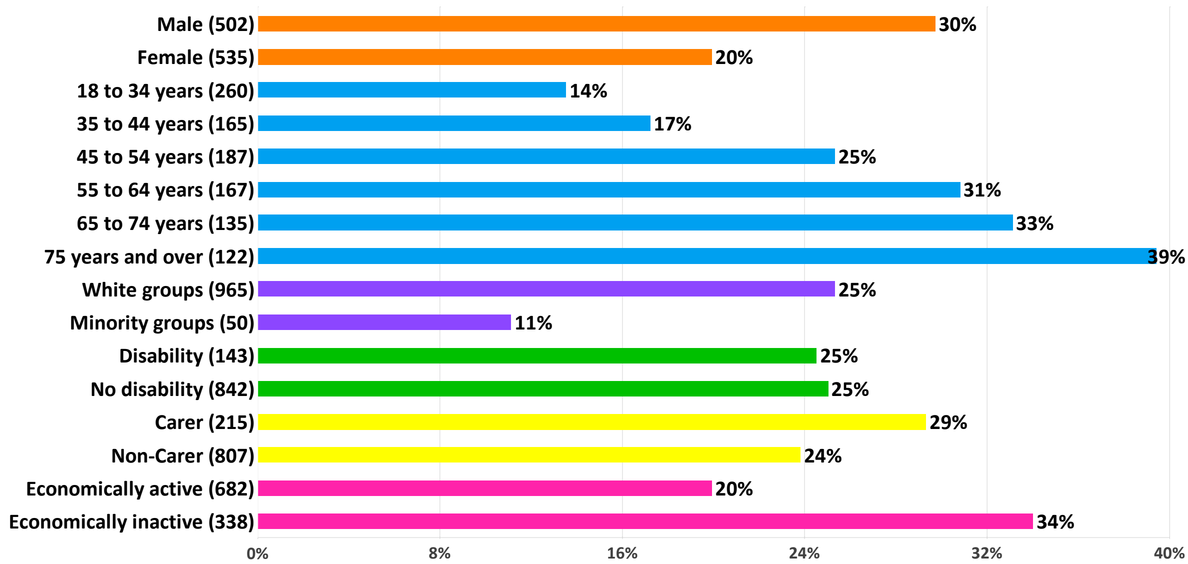
The survey asked respondents if they thought that Council Tax for 2022/23 should be increased. There were 1,037 responses to this question.

The most common response was 'no' with 684 responding this way. 24.6% (±2.6%) of respondents said that Council Tax should increase. This question was asked in the 2021/22 Budget Consultation where 28.4% (±2.8%) responded 'Yes'.

The proportion responding 'No' has increased from 60.8% in the 2021/22 Survey to 66.0% (±2.9%) for this year.



The chart below shows the proportion of respondents across the different demographic groups responding 'yes'. Differences in response between demographic groups are explored in the table below.



	Male respondents had a significantly greater proportion answering ‘yes’ at 29.7% (±4.0%) compared to female respondents where 19.9% (±3.4%) answered this way). Female respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding ‘not sure’ compared to male respondents. The same differences were observed in the 2021/22 Budget Survey.
	Analysis shows that there is a liner relationship between this question and age. The proportions responding ‘no’ decreases with age and the proportion responding ‘yes’ increases with age. The same pattern was observed in the 2021/22 Budget Survey.
	Respondents from white groups had a significantly greater proportion answering ‘yes’ at 25.3% (±2.7%) compared to respondents from minority groups where 11.1% (±8.7%) answered this way. No other significant differences between these groups were observed and the previous Budget Survey (2021/22) did not show any significant difference between these groups.
	Non-carer respondents had a significantly greater proportion answering ‘No’ with 68.0% (±3.2%) responding this way compared to 56.1% (±6.6%) of carer respondents. Carer respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding ‘not sure’ compared to non-carers at 14.6% (±4.7%) compared to 8.1% (±1.8%).
	There were significant differences between the proportions of Economically active and Economically inactive respondents answering both positively and negatively. 73.4% (±3.3%) of Economically active respondents answered ‘No’ compared to 50.6% (±5.3%) of Economically inactive respondents.

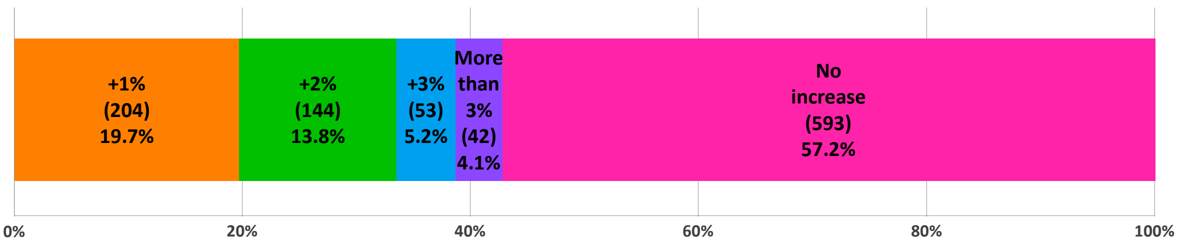
Acceptable levels for increase

Survey respondents were asked to indicate how much more, if any, Council Tax they would be willing to pay. There were 1,037 responses to this question.

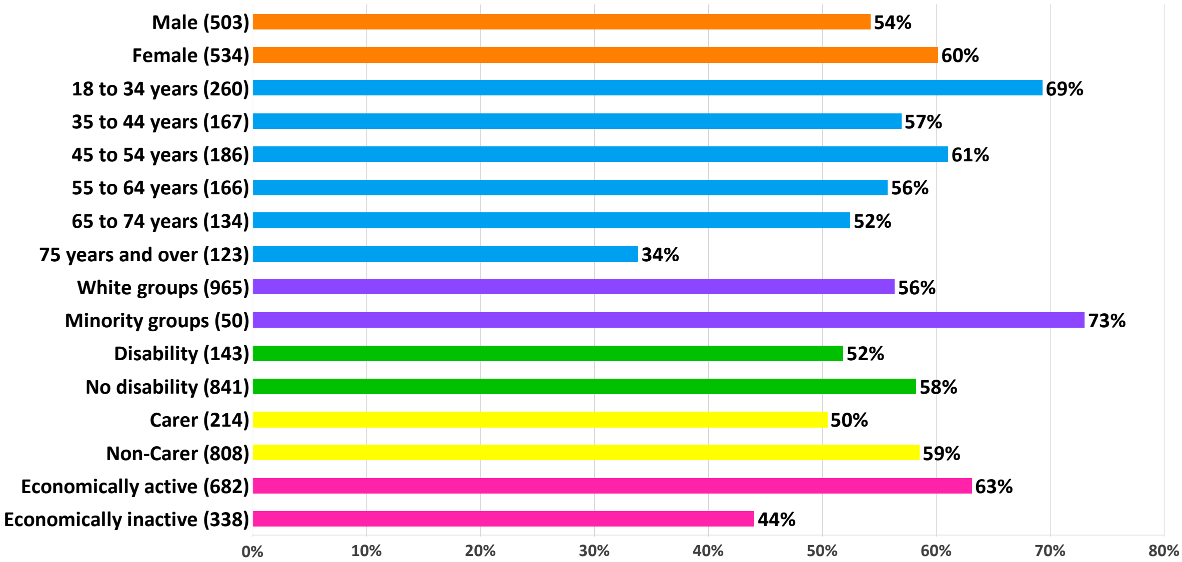
The most common response was ‘no increase’ with 57.2% (±3.0%) answering this way. Overall, 42.8% (±3.0%) indicated that Council Tax should be raised by selecting a percentage increase.

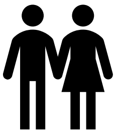
This is significantly greater than the proportion responding ‘yes’ to the previous, more general question.

The proportion responding ‘no increase’ has increased by 9.7 percentage points since 2019 when this question was asked as part of the 2019/20 Budget Survey and again in the 2020/21 Budget Survey, increasing from 47.5% to 57.2%.



The chart below shows the proportion responding ‘no increase’ across the different demographic groups. Differences in response between demographic groups are explored in the table below.



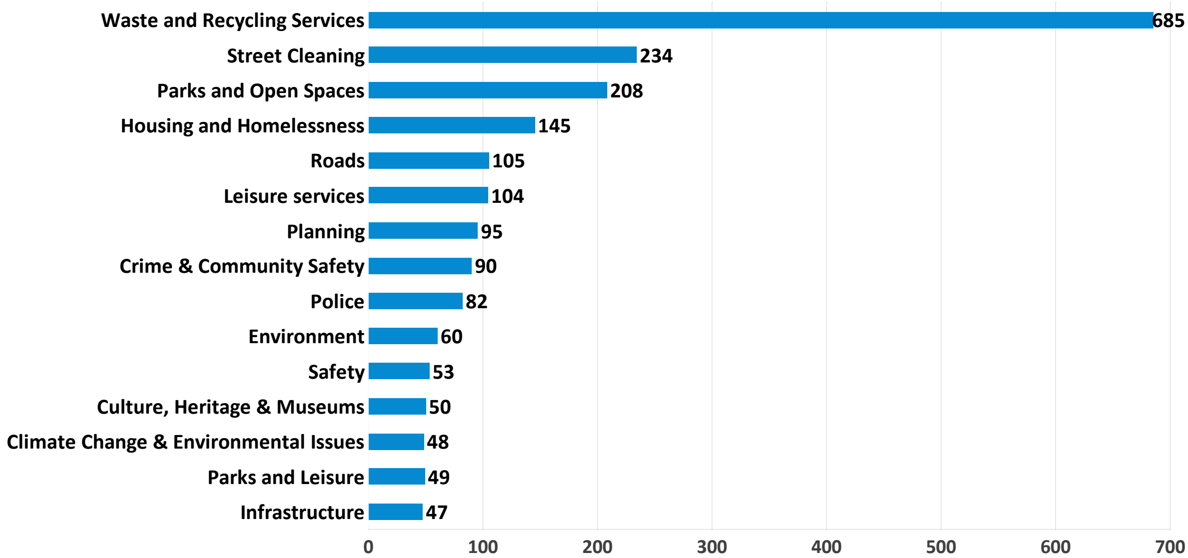
	Female respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding 1% increase with 25.0% (±3.7%) selecting this response compared to male respondents with 14.1% (±3.0%) answered this way. Male respondents had greater proportions selecting an increase over 1% compared to female respondents.
	Respondents aged 75 years and over had a significantly lower proportion responding ‘no increase’ compared to the other age groups. This group also had a significantly greater proportion in favour of an increase of up to 2%, at 49.3% (±8.8%) compared to the other age groups.
	Respondents from minority groups had a significantly greater proportion responding ‘no increase’ compared to those from white groups. 43.7% (±3.1%) of white group respondents selected an increase amount compared to 27.0% (±12.4%) of respondents from minority groups.
	Carers had a greater proportion selecting a 1% increase and a lower proportion selecting ‘no increase’ compared to non-carer respondents. 24.9% (±5.8%) of carers selected a 1% increase in Council Tax compared to 18.5% (±2.7%) of non-Carers.
	Economically inactive respondents had the lowest proportion responding ‘no increase’ with 44.0% (±5.3%) answering this way compared to 63.1% (±3.6%) economically active respondents. The economically inactive group had greater proportions for all the incremental council tax increase options listed.

Important Services

Survey respondents were asked what three services were most important to them and provided with three open text boxes to provide a response. The answers have been cleansed so that counts can be obtained (e.g., ‘street cleansing’, ‘clean streets’, ‘cleanliness’ and ‘clean and tidy’ and such terms were all amended to ‘street cleaning’. However, ‘Street maintenance’ would not be included in the street cleaning category as it is unclear if the respondent is referring to the fabric of streets such as condition of the pavement or the cleanliness of the street).

A total of 935 respondents answered this question. Please note that not all respondents that answered this question gave three services. The word cloud below shows the top 50 responses where three or more respondents have said the same thing.

The top 15 services are shown below.



In the 2021/22 Budget Survey, the top three most important services were: Waste Collection, Parks & Open Spaces and Roads & Highways.

Comments

Respondents to the survey were given the opportunity to make additional comments about the Council's budget and the funding of services. A total of 385 comments were received. These comments have been grouped into themes, with some comments containing multiple themes. The table below shows a summary of the comments for each of the top ten themes identified.

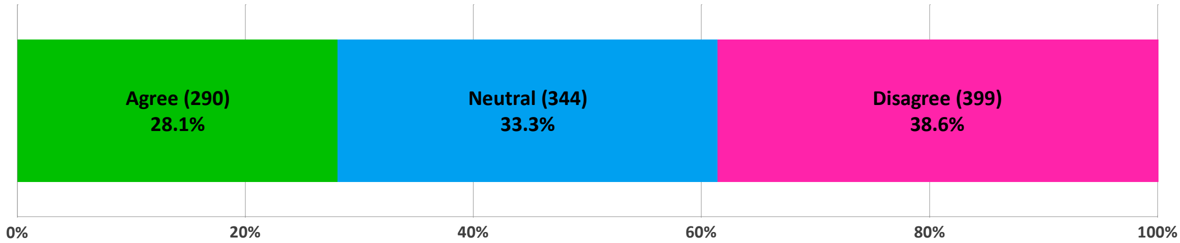
Theme	No. Comments	Summary
Finance Concerns/CT increase too high	82	• Requests for no more increases. • Wages not increasing at same rate. • People on fixed incomes. • Would not be able to afford an increase. • Council tax is too expensive.
Council/Budget Management	62	• Spend money more wisely. • Don't spend money on 'vanity' projects. • Better contracts for services. • Do more for less.
No improvements/ Not VFM	60	• Delivery of services not up to standard (empty shops, street cleaning). • Do not feel there is value for money from the amount of Council Tax paid (rural locations and suspension of services mentioned)
New Homes/ Growth/ Infrastructure	51	• Queried why CT needs to increase since there should be more revenue received from new housing. • Stop building new homes. • No infrastructure improvements to support growth.
Council Salaries	38	• Cut staff salaries. • Cut Members Allowances. • Reduce management.
Priorities	35	• Climate change & environmental issues should feature. • Improve town centre. • Localise improvements.
Accepting of CT increases	23	• Good services cost money. • Increase in line with inflation. • All living costs going up.
KCC Services	16	• Charges for tip use. • Condition of roads. • Support Social Services.
Income Comment /Suggestion	15	• Try crowd funding. • Increase charges for planning and licensing. • Increase revenue streams from enforcement activity and business development. • Partnership run services.
Provide essential/statutory services only	12	• Get essentials right first. • Find savings from non-essential services. • Stop all non-essential spending.

Resident feelings

Value for Money

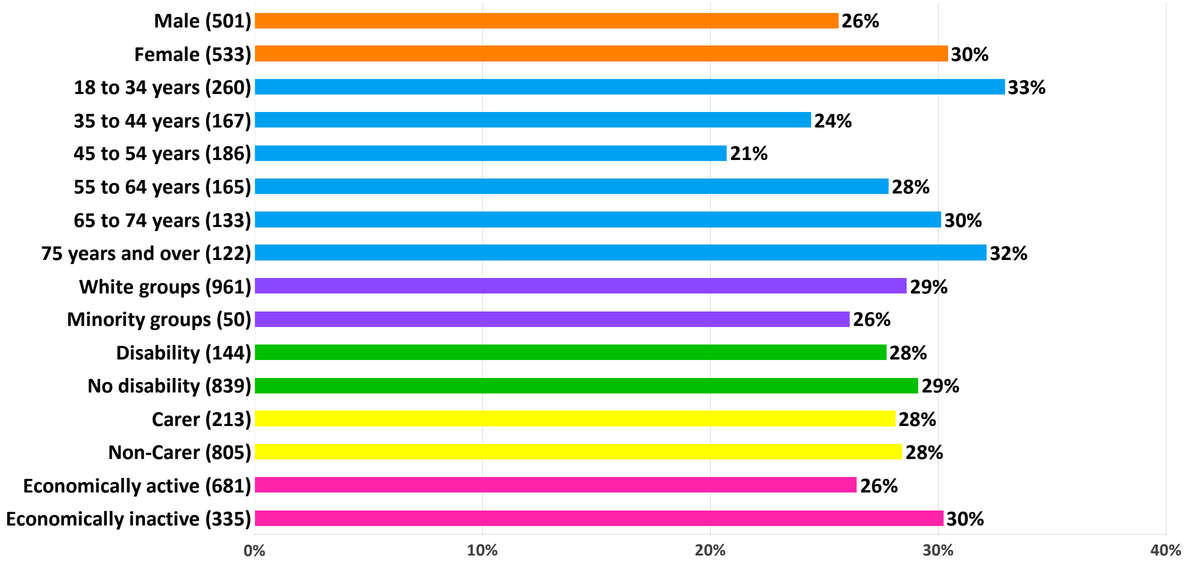
Survey respondents were asked to ‘what extent do you agree or disagree that Maidstone Borough Council provides value for money’. There was a total of 1033 responses.

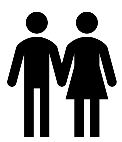
The most common response was ‘neither agree nor disagree’ with 344 responding this way. Overall, 28.1% (±2.7%).

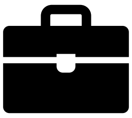


This question has been asked in previous Budget surveys. In the 2021/22 survey 29.3% (±2.8%) of respondents agreed that Maidstone Borough Council provided value for money. In the 2020/21 survey 33.2% of residents agreed with this question and in the 2019/20 Budget Survey 33.4% agreed.

The chart below shows the proportions responding positively (strongly agree and agree combined).



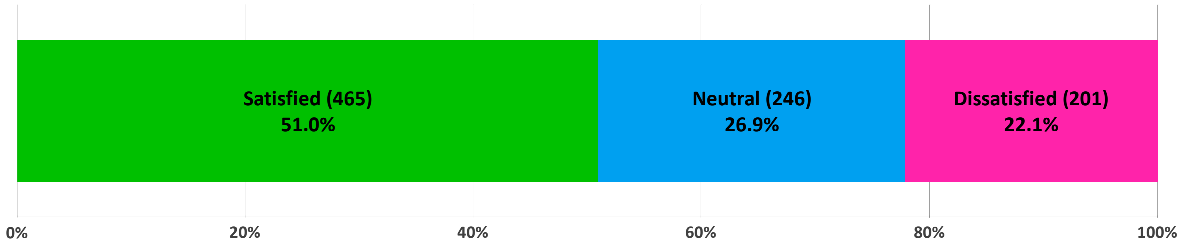
	The overall proportions answering positively are not significantly different between gender. However, female respondents had a significantly greater proportion that responded, ‘strongly agree’. Male respondents had a greater proportion responding neutrally at 36.8% (±4.2%) compared to 30.0% (3.9± %) of females.
	The 18 to 34 years group had the greatest proportions responding both positively and negatively. The data suggests that there is a liner relation between a negative response to this question, as age increases, the proportions responding negatively decreases.

	The overall proportions answering positively are not significantly different between economically active and economically inactive respondents. However, a significantly greater proportion of economically active respondents answered negatively with 43.8% (±3.7%) answering this way compared to 28.6% (±4.8%) of economically inactive respondents.

Local area Satisfaction

Survey respondents were asked: 'How satisfied or dissatisfied are you with your local area as a place to live?' and given a five-point scale from 'very satisfied' to 'very dissatisfied'. There was a total of 912 respondents.

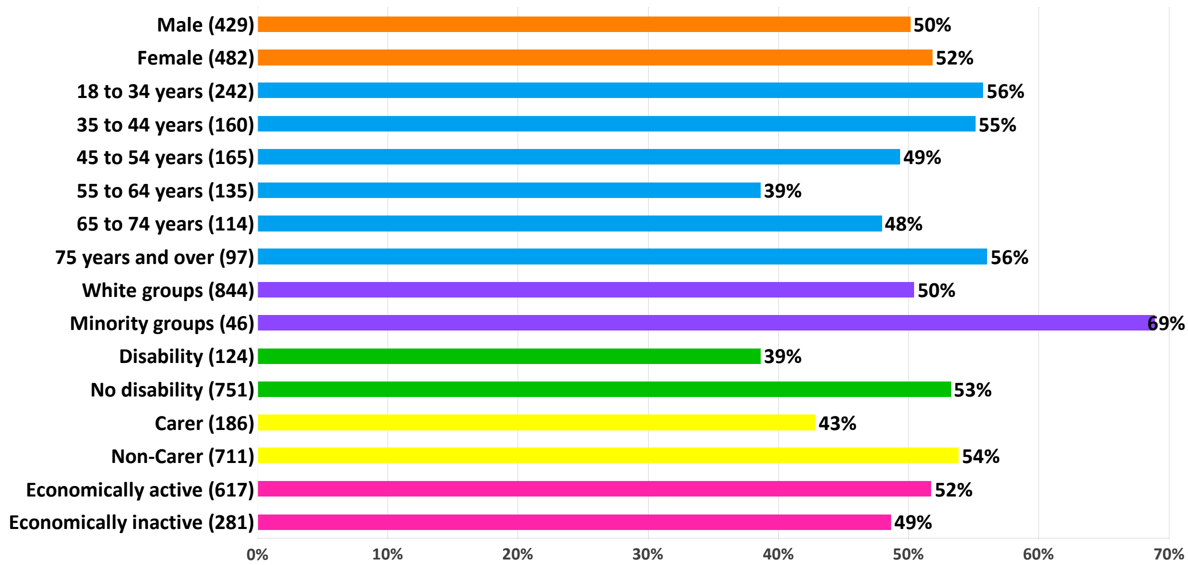
The most common response was 'fairly satisfied' with 394 answering this way. Overall, just over half of respondents said they were 'satisfied' with their local area as a place to live (51.0% (±3.2%).



This question was last asked in the 2021/22 Budget Survey. At this time 52.2% said they were 'satisfied' and in the 2020/21 survey 53.1% were 'satisfied'.

Last year there had been a reduction in the proportion responding negatively from 28.9% in 2020/21 to 19.9% for 2021/22. This year there was a 2.2 percentage point increase in the proportion answering this way (22.1% (±2.7%)).

The chart below shows the proportion responding 'satisfied' across the demographic groups.

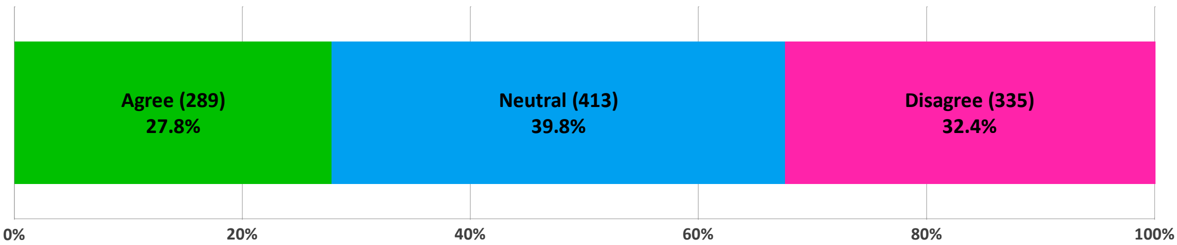


	Male respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding negatively with 25.0% (±4.1%) answering this way compared to 19.5% (±3.5%) of female respondents.
	The proportions responding positively from the 18 to 34 years and the 35 to 44 age groups were significantly greater than the proportion answering the same from the 55 to 64 age group. The 55 to 64 age group had the greatest proportion responding negatively at 27.3% (±7.5%). In the 2021/22 Budget Survey the 55 to 64 age group also had the lowest proportion answering negatively.
	Minority group respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding positively with 68.9% (±13.4%) answering this way compared to 50.4% (±3.4%) of respondents from white groups
	Disabled respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding negatively with 29.7% (±8.0%) answering this way compared to 20.9% (±2.9%) of non-disabled respondents answering the same.
	Non-carer respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding to this question positively and significantly less responding negatively when compared to carer respondents. 27.6% (±6.4%) of carer respondents answered negatively compared to 19.4% (±2.9%) of non-carer respondents.

Realising Potential

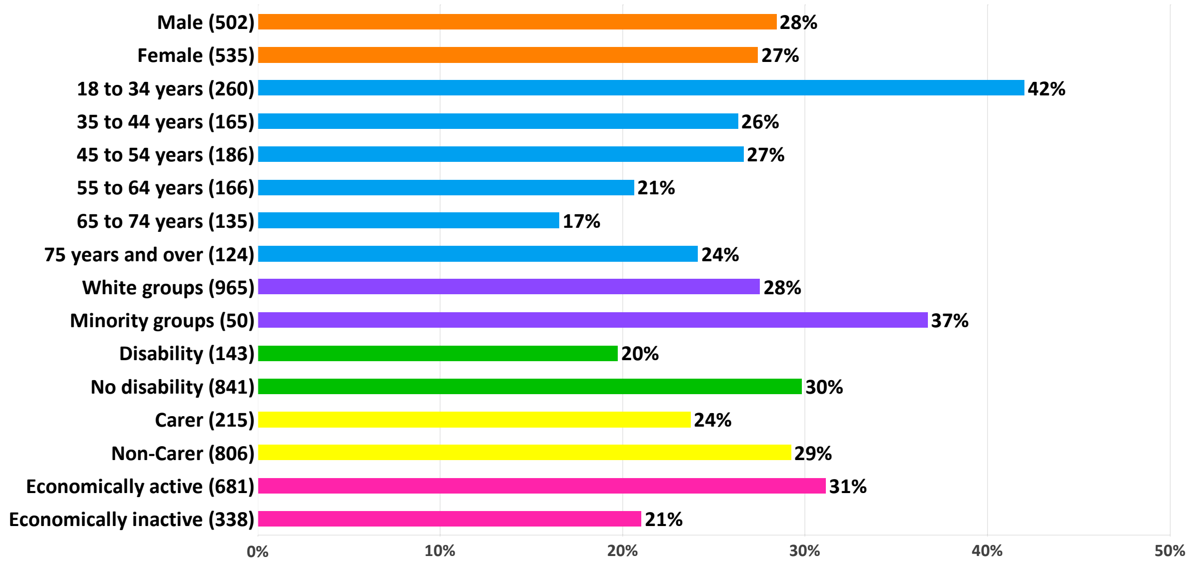
The survey asked respondents: 'To what extent do you agree or disagree that Maidstone is a place where everyone can realise their potential?'. A total of 1,037 people responded to this question.

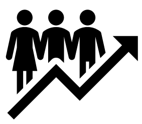
Overall, 27.8% (±2.7%) of respondents said that they agreed that Maidstone was a place where everyone can realise their potential. The most common response was 'neither agree nor disagree' with 39.8% (±3.0%) responding this way.



Since the 2021/22 Survey, undertaken in Autumn 2020, the proportion of those responding negatively has increased by two percentage points (2021/22 Survey, 30.4%). The proportion responding positively has increased marginally by 0.7 percentage points (2021/22 Survey, 27.1%).

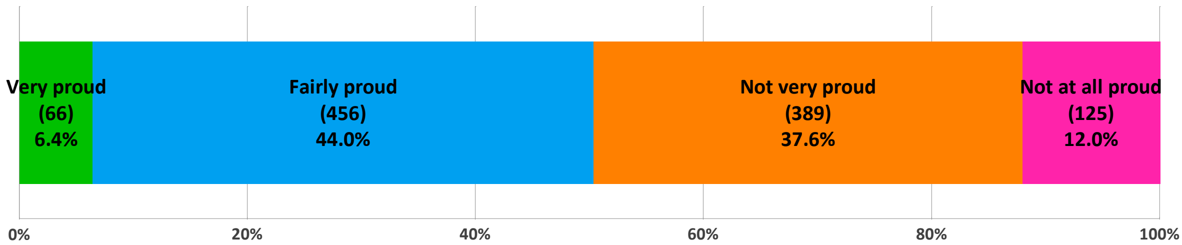
The following chart shows the proportion of those responding 'agree' across the different demographic groups.



	The 45 to 54 and the 55 to 64 age groups had the greatest proportions responding negatively at 37.3% (±6.9%) and 40.6% (±7.5%) respectively and the lowest proportions responding neutrally. The 75 years and over had the lowest proportion responding negatively at 25.5% (±7.7%). The 65 to 74 age group had the greatest proportion responding neutrally at 56.9% (±8.4%).
	Although there were no significant differences in the proportion responding positively and neutrally between respondents from minority groups and respondents from white groups, white groups had a significantly greater proportion responding negatively with 32.9% (±3.0%) answering this way compared to 17.7% (±10.6%) of respondents from minority groups.
	Disabled respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding negatively with 40.2% (±8.0%) answering this way compared to 30.7% (±3.1%) of non-disabled respondents.
	Half of economically inactive respondents responded neutrally, significantly greater than the proportion responding the same who were economically active. Economically active respondents had significantly greater proportions answering both positively and negatively.

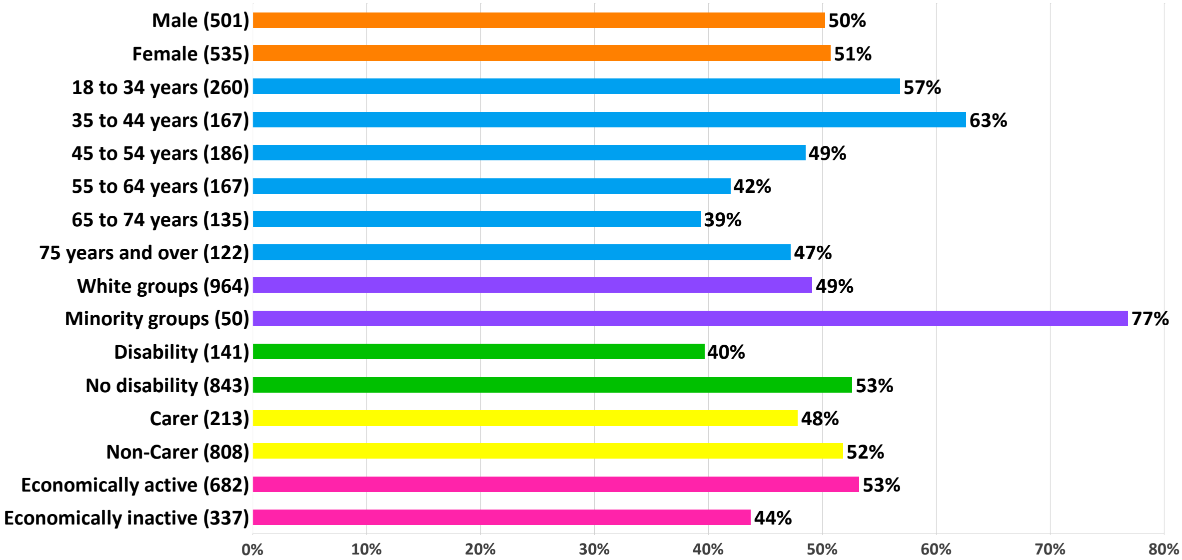
Pride in Maidstone Borough

The survey asked respondents: 'How proud are you of Maidstone Borough?', a total of 1036 responded to this question.



Overall, 50.4% (±3.0%) said they were either ‘very proud’ or ‘fairly proud’ of Maidstone Borough, a marginal decline from the 2021/22 Budget survey, undertaken Autumn 2020, where 51.1% (±3.1%) answered this way. The most common response was ‘fairly proud’ with 456 answering this way.

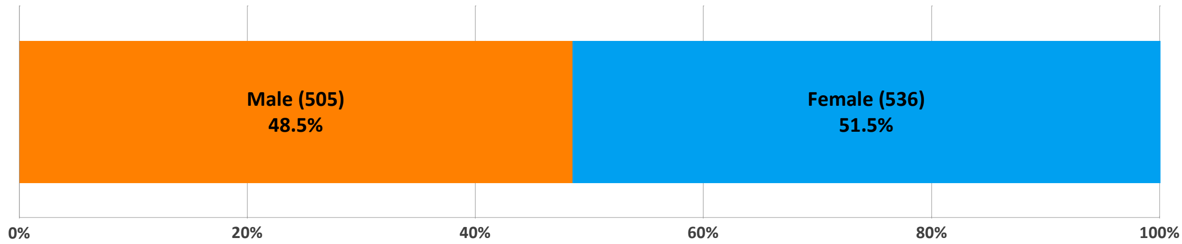
The chart below shows the proportion responding positively across the different demographic groups.



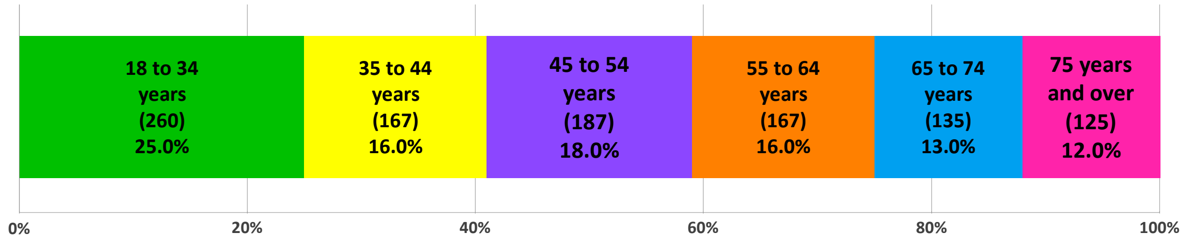
	Respondents in the 35 to 44 age group had the lowest proportion responding negatively. This result is significant when compared to the proportions responding the same from the ages groups over 45 years.
	The difference in the proportion of respondents answering positively between minority groups and white groups is significant. 50.9% (±3.9% of white group respondents answered negatively compared to 23.2% (±11.8%) of minority group respondents answering the same.
	Disabled respondents had a significantly greater proportion responding negatively with 60.4% (±8.1%) answering this way compared to 47.4% (±3.4%) of non-disabled respondents.
	A significantly greater proportion of economically inactive respondents answered negatively with 56.3% (±5.3%) answering this way compared to 46.8% (±3.7%) of economically active respondents.

Survey Demographics

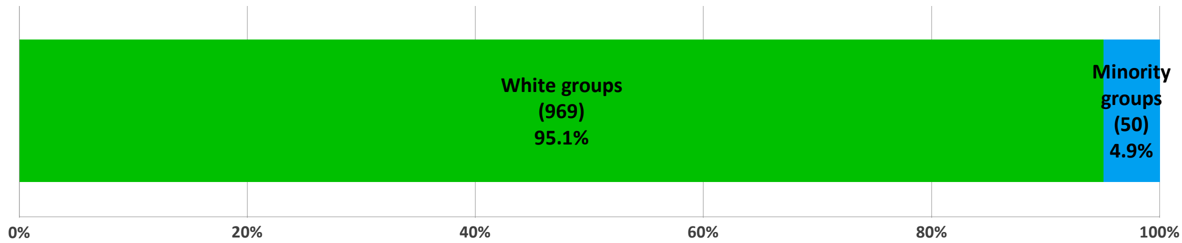
Gender



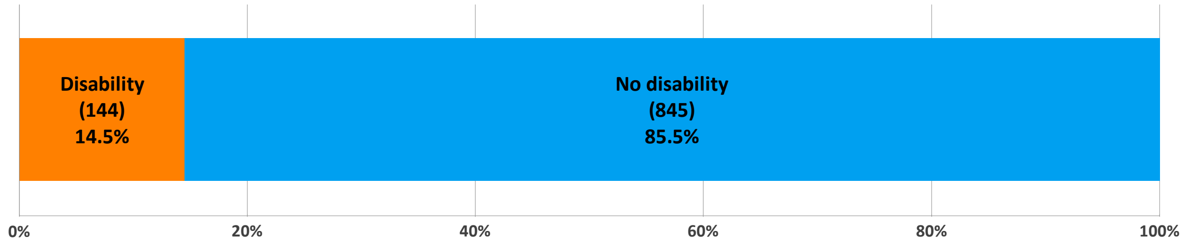
Age



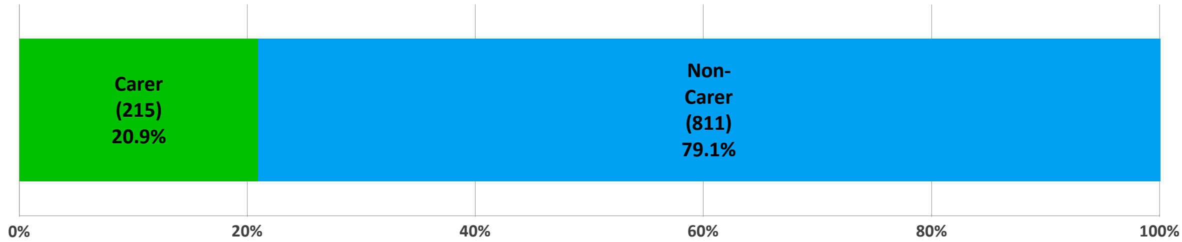
Ethnicity



Disability



Carers



Economic Activity